

REPORT

PR Trends and Challenges in 2024

Introduction

If there's one sentence that could be applied to the development of PR from year to year, then it's definitely this one:

| The only constant is change.

There wasn't a time when this was more true (not only in PR). In 2023, the world made a huge step towards a more digitalized world with the grand entrance of AI in almost all spheres of life. To investigate how the PR world has changed and what the future holds for the industry, we've gathered PR professionals from different industries and different company sizes to discuss their current struggles and their predictions for the next year.

About the survey

We surveyed 300 participants through an online survey form and HARO.

Participants were asked to answer each question truthfully, enabling them to choose multiple answers to most questions.

Survey overview

About the participants

- | Represented industries
- | Size of organization
- | Ways of proving value of work to C-suite and clients
- | Most time-consuming tasks

Public Relations now

- | PR tactics to earn coverage
- | Team challenges
- | Data collection methods
- | Tracking and analyzing media mentions
- | Metrics for evaluating media monitoring results
- | Media monitoring challenges

Innovations in 2024

- | Skills & competencies
- | AI in Public Relations
- | PR and marketing channels
- | PR and marketing tools
- | Improvements in media monitoring
- | PR trends predictions

Key Takeaways

Public Relations Now

- | 8 out of 10 PR professionals use media coverage and reach as a way to prove the value of their work to the C-suite.
- | Content creation and media relations are the most time-consuming tasks for PR pros.
- | Press releases and social media campaigns are PR tactics employed by the majority of PR professionals.
- | The primary challenge in a PR team is budget limitations.
- | Surveys and social listening are PR professionals' most preferred data collection methods.
- | PR professionals rely on media monitoring platforms to track and analyze their brands' media mentions.
- | 7 out of 10 PR professionals prioritize reach and engagement when evaluating media monitoring results.
- | PR professionals encounter challenges in media monitoring related to information quality, accuracy, timeliness, and data management.

Key Takeaways

Innovation in 2024

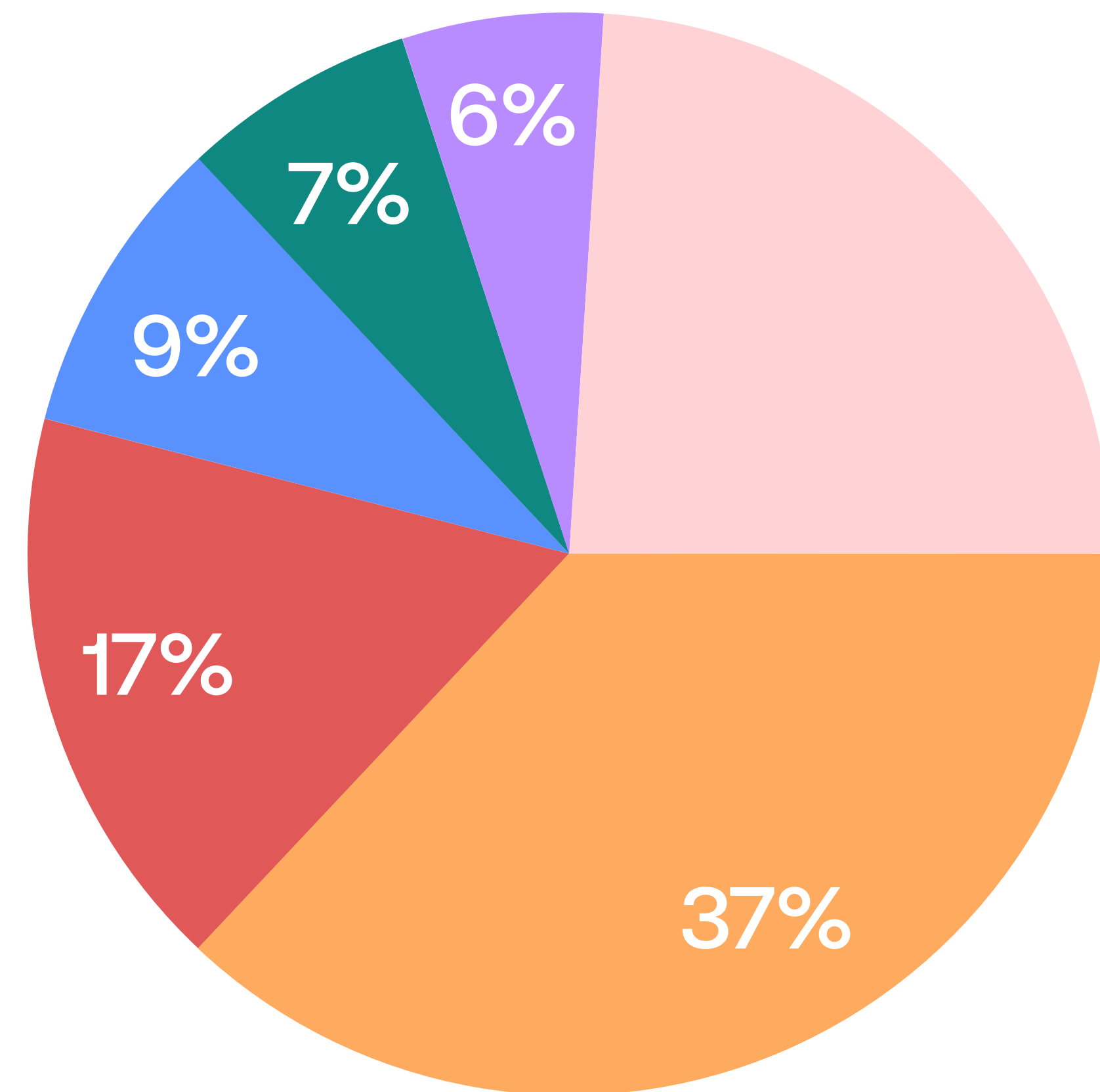
- | Businesses acknowledge AI and technology integration as a critical skill for success, irrespective of their size.
- | 8 out of 10 PR professionals will use AI for content creation and writing assistance.
- | PR professionals will leverage various platforms and channels to achieve goals in 2024.
- | The majority of PR professionals plans to use media monitoring tools and content calendars in 2024.
- | PR professionals are expressing a demand for 2024 for tools that can forecast future events.
- | Professionals believe 2024 will be a year toward ethical, transparent, and socially responsible PR efforts.

About the participants





Which industry do you work in?

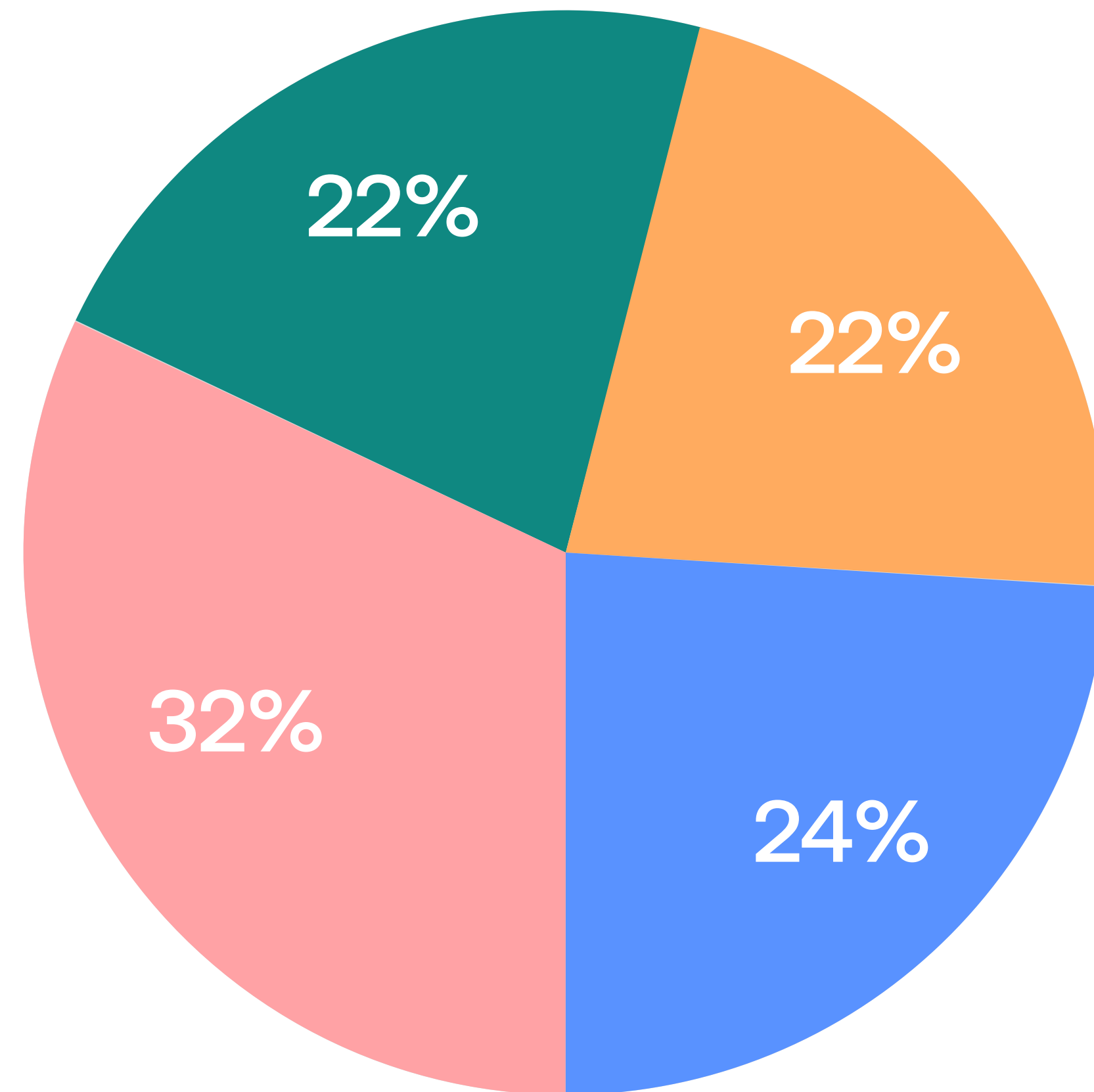
- PR, Media & Communication **37%**
- Technology **17%**
- Nonprofits **9%**
- Government **7%**
- Education **6%**
- Others less than 5%

<5%: Healthcare, Startups, Entertainment, Finance, Hospitality and Tourism, Art and Culture, Food and Beverage, Transportation and Logistics, E-commerce, Construction and Engineering, Energy, Environmental, Automotive, Legal, Agriculture, Retail, Fashion.



What is the size of your brand/organization?

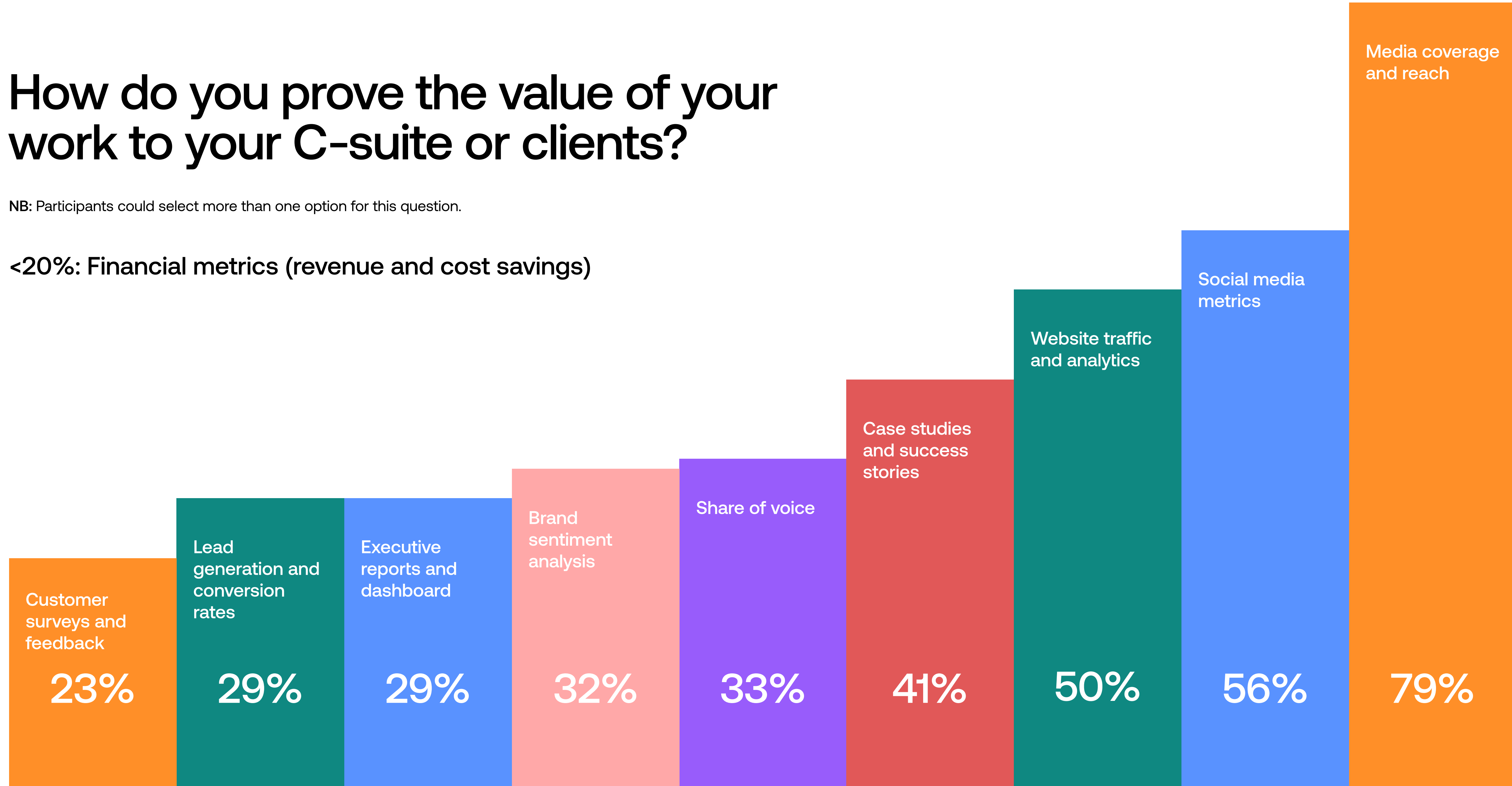
-  **Large-sized business**
More than 250 employees
-  **Medium business**
50-249 employees
-  **Small-sized business**
10-49 employees
-  **Micro-sized business**
Less than 10 employees



How do you prove the value of your work to your C-suite or clients?

NB: Participants could select more than one option for this question.

<20%: Financial metrics (revenue and cost savings)



8 out of 10 PR professionals use media coverage and reach to demonstrate value.

Strong emphasis on external visibility

PR professionals primarily prove the value of their work through media coverage and reach. This underscores the enduring significance of securing media placements and reaching a wide audience as a key metric in demonstrating PR impact.

Digital metrics and online engagement on the rise

There is a growing impact of digital platforms, with half of the participants prioritizing social media metrics and website traffic and analytics. This dual focus underscores the shift toward digital measurement strategies. The findings highlight a strategic response to the digital transformation in PR, emphasizing the critical role social media and online interactions in shaping the success of communication efforts.

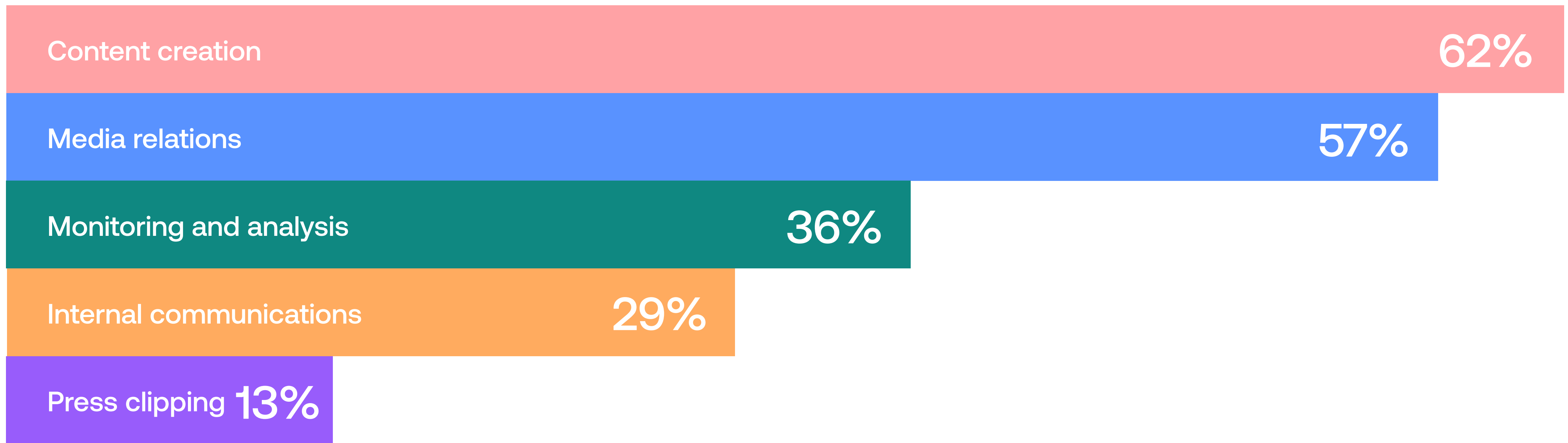


Natalie Homer
Director of Public Relations
HiBob

“I'm not going to tell you whether you need or don't need PR, but let me just show you what PR does. So I did, with a media monitoring tool. Well, they (the C-suite) didn't get rid of PR, so, you know, I think it saved that function.”

What is the most time-consuming task in your role?

NB: Participants could select more than one option for this question.



Content creation and media relations are the most time-consuming tasks for PR pros.

Emphasis on crafting messages

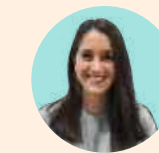
Majority of participants identified content creation, including crafting pitches and writing press releases, as the most time-consuming task. This suggests a significant investment of time and effort in developing materials for communication and outreach.

Nurturing relationships

Tasks like finding journalists, sources, and nurturing relationships, is a major time-consuming aspect. Building and maintaining connections with the media appear to be demanding tasks for many in this role.

Importance of data interpretation

Analyzing data consumes a considerable amount of time, which involves interpreting media coverage, assessing campaign performance and drawing insights from various metrics.



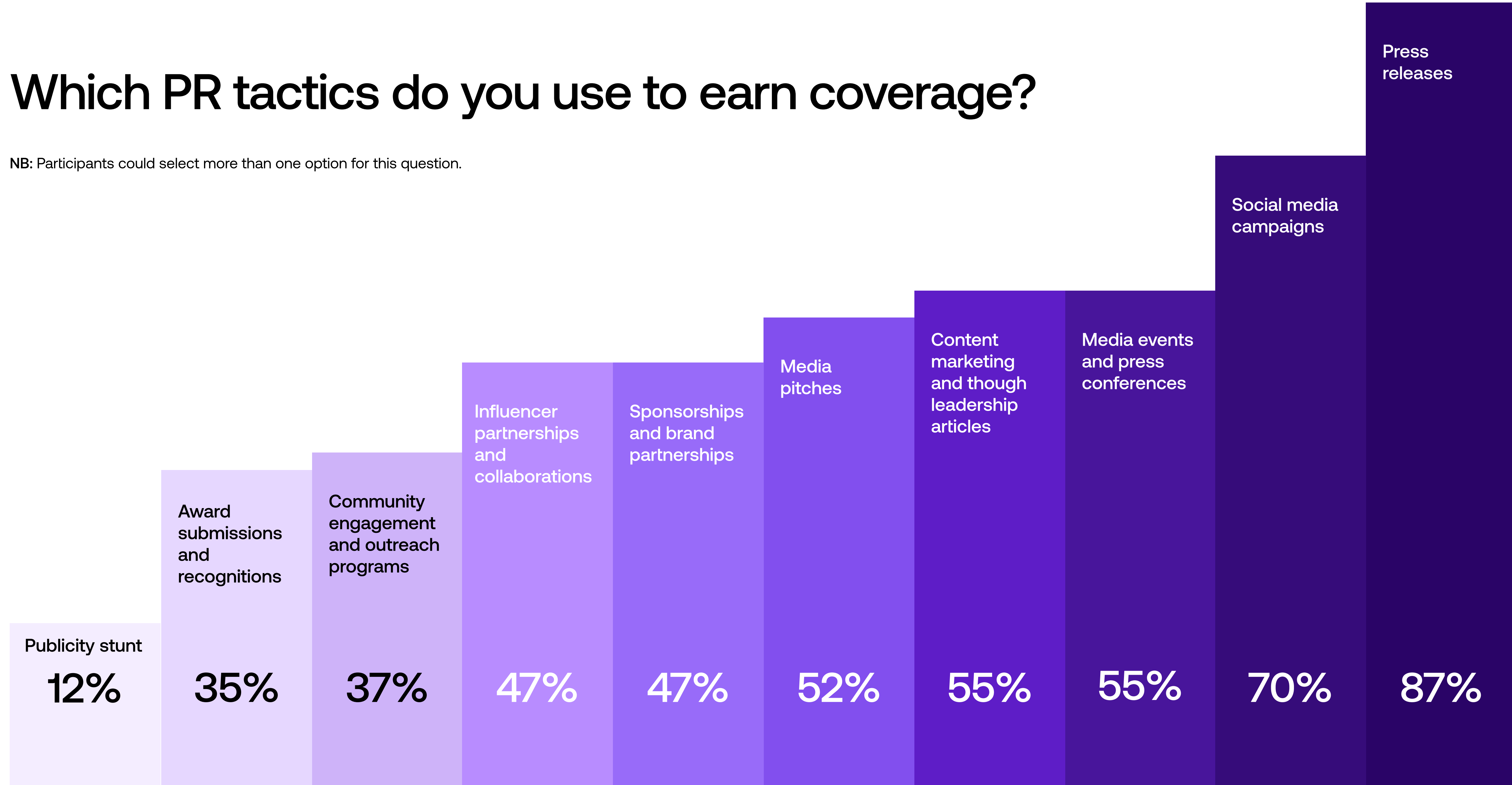
Ivona Mrvoš
Marketing Manager
Include

“We spent so much time using Google trying to find where we were mentioned online. It was one of the most consuming tasks for us but we soon realized that that was a big waste of time, because media monitoring tools exist.”

Public Relations now

Which PR tactics do you use to earn coverage?

NB: Participants could select more than one option for this question.



Press releases and social media campaigns are PR tactics employed by the majority of PR professionals.

Diverse PR approach

The combination of press releases, social media campaigns, media events and press conferences, and media pitches indicates a multifaceted PR approach. PR professionals recognize the value of employing various tactics, blending traditional methods with modern digital strategies to maximize media coverage.

Strategic relationship building

The balanced usage of partnerships and collaborations alongside community engagement efforts suggests that PR professionals understand the importance of strategic relationship-building. Leveraging external relationships, whether through sponsorships, brand partnerships, influencer collaborations, or community outreach, plays a crucial role in enhancing brand visibility and reputation.



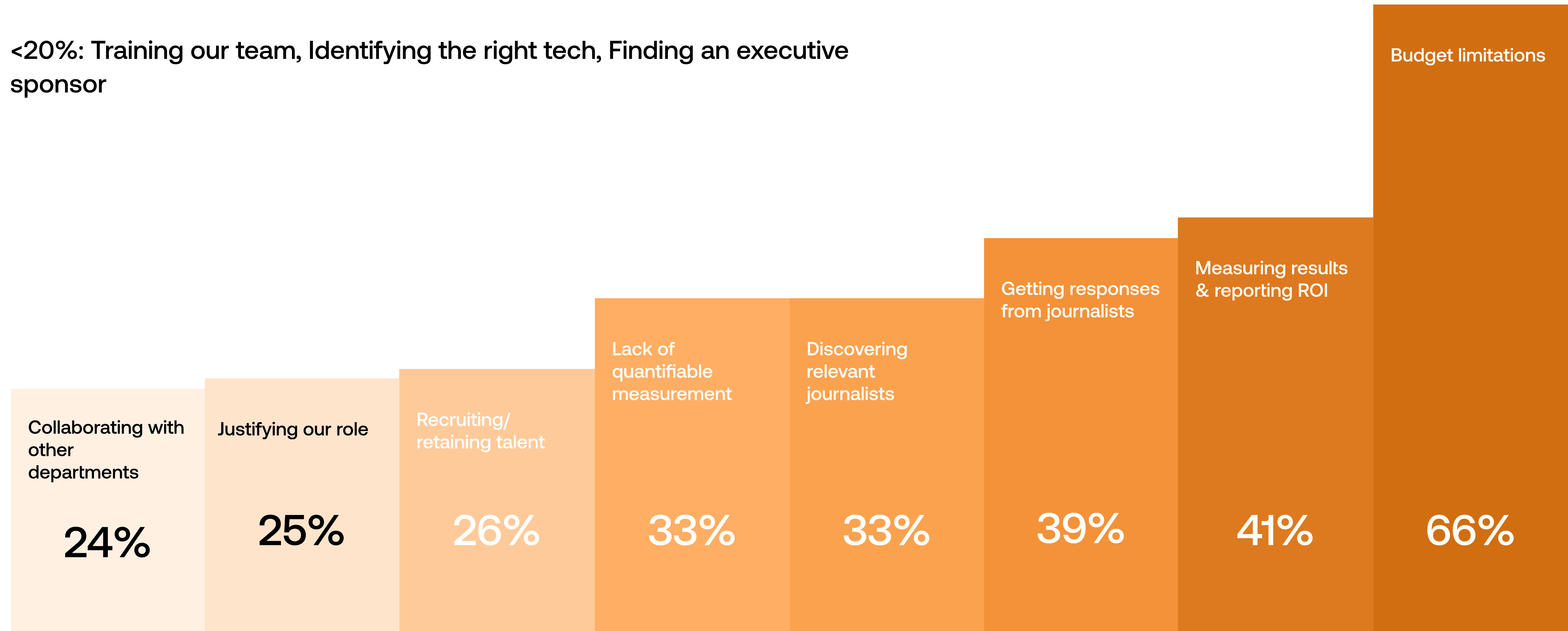
Milosz Krasinski
Managing Director
Chilli Fruit Web Consulting

“The personal touch in PR will reign supreme. The era of generic press releases is waning. Now a time has come for personalized storytelling, where content is tailored to the nuances of each segment.”

Which challenges is your team currently facing?

NB: Participants could select more than one option for this question.

<20%: Training our team, Identifying the right tech, Finding an executive sponsor



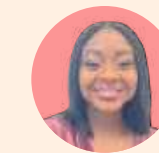
The primary challenge in a PR team is budget limitations.

Budget vs Impact

PR professionals face challenges in measuring results and reporting return on investment (ROI), emphasizing the necessity for improved metrics. This situation underscores a careful balance between financial limitations and the need for tangible returns on PR investments, necessitating strategic finesse for optimal outcomes.

Journalist outreach

The struggles in eliciting responses from journalists and identifying relevant contacts may stem from heightened competition for media attention and difficulties in effectively pitching stories, highlighting the need for improved outreach strategies.

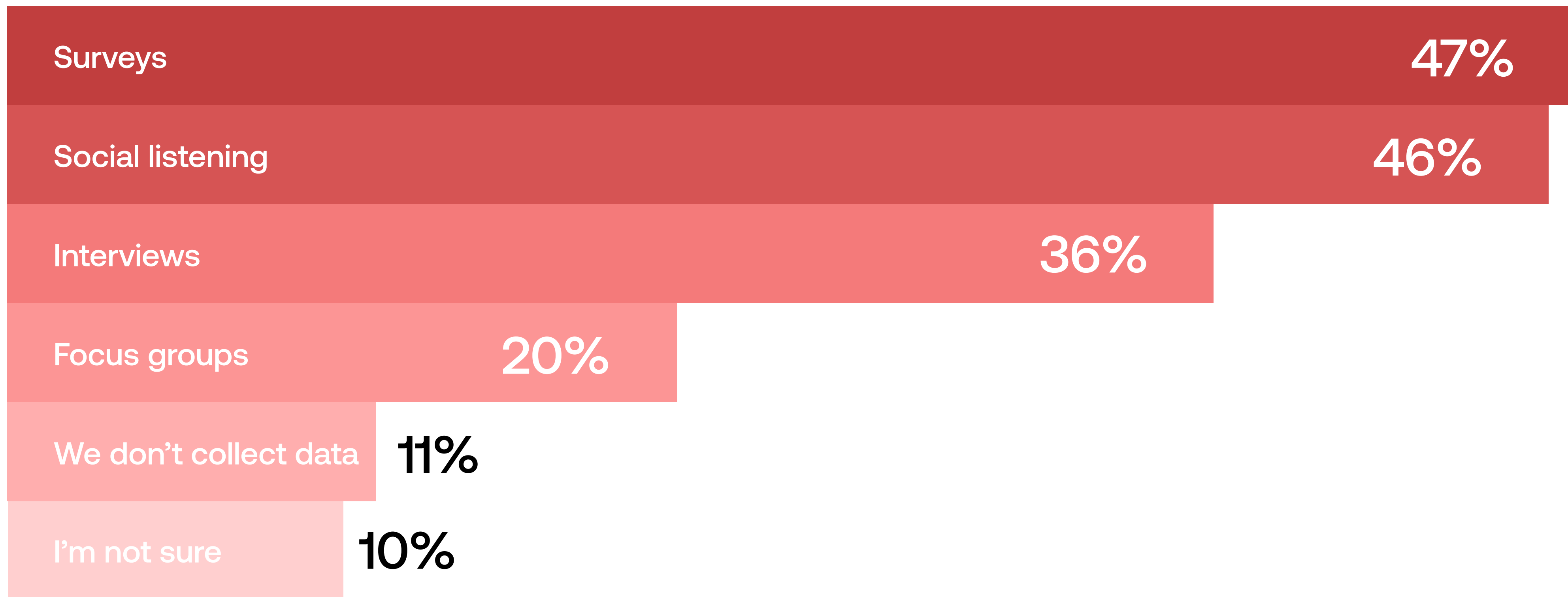


Gabrielle Pickens
Independent PR consultant
Pickens Kreative

“Independent remote PR Consultants will be the silent partners small businesses need to earn media coverage that matters, for a fraction of the advertising costs associated with top media coverage. Proving that PR is in fact a necessary evil in business growth -not a luxury service only available to large companies with budgets.”

Which of these data collection methods has your organization used in the past 12 months?

NB: Participants could select more than one option for this question.



Surveys and social listening are PR professionals' most preferred data collection methods.

Diverse data collection methods

PR professionals employ various data collection methods, with surveys, social listening, and interviews being prevalent, reflecting a comprehensive strategy that incorporates both quantitative and qualitative approaches to gain valuable insights within the PR field. The presence of organizations not collecting data or being unsure about their methods underscores the variability in data practices within the PR landscape.

Emphasis on resource accessibility

Small and micro-sized businesses, facing resource limitations, rely on accessible social listening platforms to understand audience sentiment and trends. In contrast, medium and large-sized businesses, with potentially more resources, opt for surveys, providing a structured and tailored approach to gather in-depth insights.

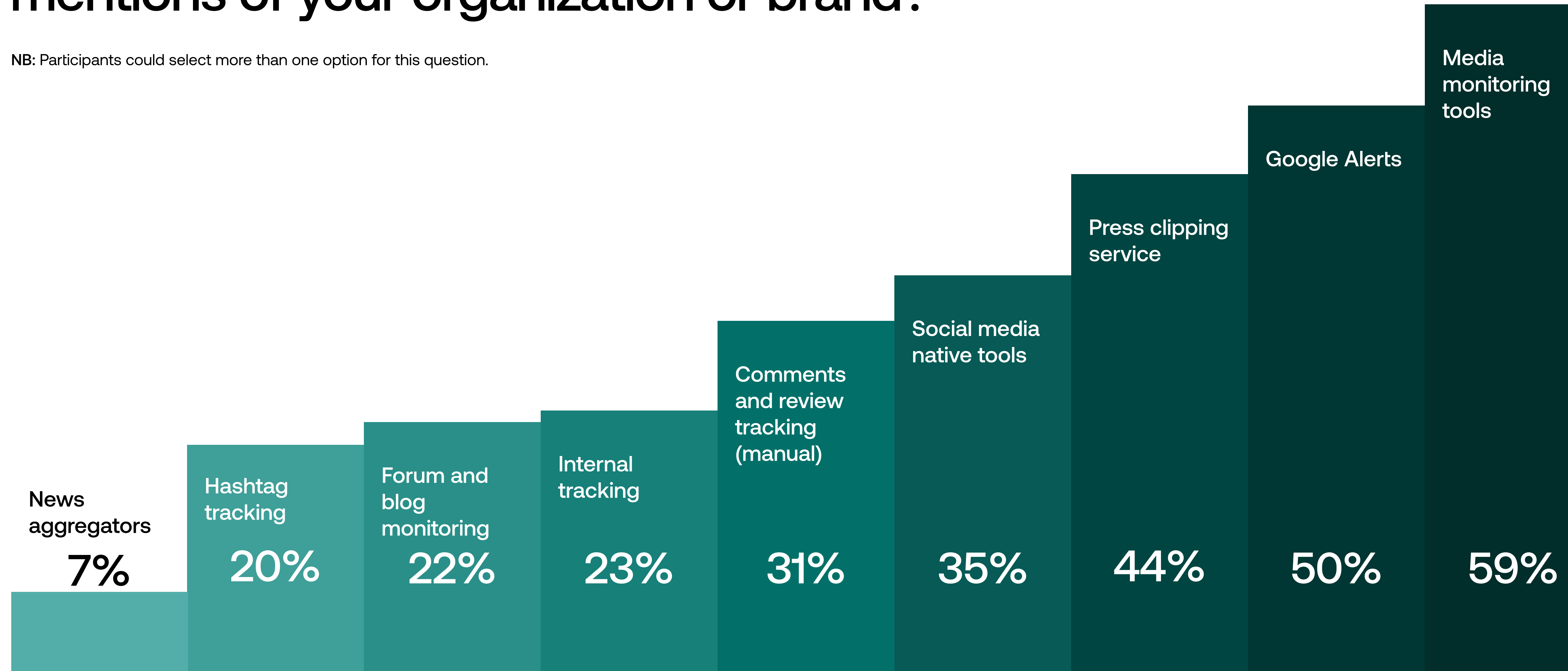


Resa Prasetyo
Regional data and analytics director
TBWA

“We use social listening for planning what we should do. But we can also see our campaign's impact. For example, when we launch a new model and see how people react and gather all information that we need.”

How do you currently track and analyze media mentions of your organization or brand?

NB: Participants could select more than one option for this question.



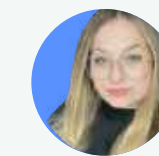
PR professionals rely on media monitoring platforms to track and analyze their brands' media mentions.

Comprehensive solutions

A significant majority of PR professionals opt for specialized media monitoring tools and press clipping services, highlighting a preference for comprehensive and automated solutions to effectively track and analyze media mentions. This preference suggests a recognition of the need for in-depth analysis and broad coverage in managing brand visibility.

Reliance on free solutions

Half of the respondents utilize accessible tools like Google Alerts and other manual methods for basic media mention tracking. This widespread reliance on cost-effective or free solutions reflects a practical approach in resource allocation, particularly among those who may prioritize essential tracking without the need for extensive features or analysis tools.

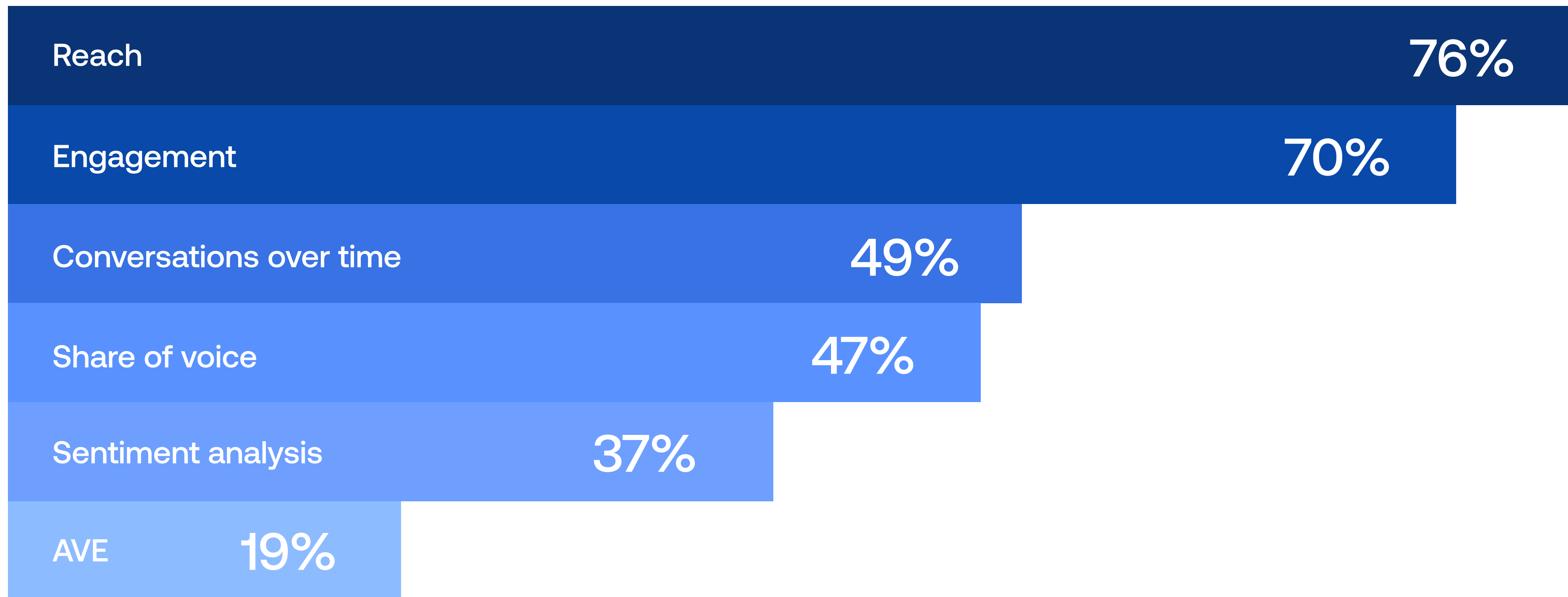


Martina Crnčević
Marketing & Web Associate
Zadar Tourist Board

“Numerous times, something happened, and we were the last to know. Now, we are timely informed of everything. We check Determ every day, and if something important occurs, we automatically get a Spike alert and are able to react immediately.”

What metrics do you prioritize when evaluating media monitoring results?

NB: Participants could select more than one option for this question.



7 out of 10 PR professionals prioritize reach and engagement when evaluating media monitoring results.

Dual emphasis on quantitative and qualitative metrics

PR professionals prioritize not only broad visibility and brand awareness (reach) but also the nuanced aspects of audience interaction and emotional tone (engagement and sentiment analysis). Additionally, it is observed that small-sized businesses prioritize engagement over reach, while medium and large-sized businesses focus more on reach. Small businesses may be prioritizing meaningful connections, and larger businesses may be pursuing a broader, brand-awareness-oriented strategy.

Comprehensive measurement approaches

PR professionals give less priority to Advertising Value Equivalency (AVE), signaling a move away from traditional financial metrics. This shift aligns with industry trends recognizing AVE limitations in measuring the true impact of earned media.

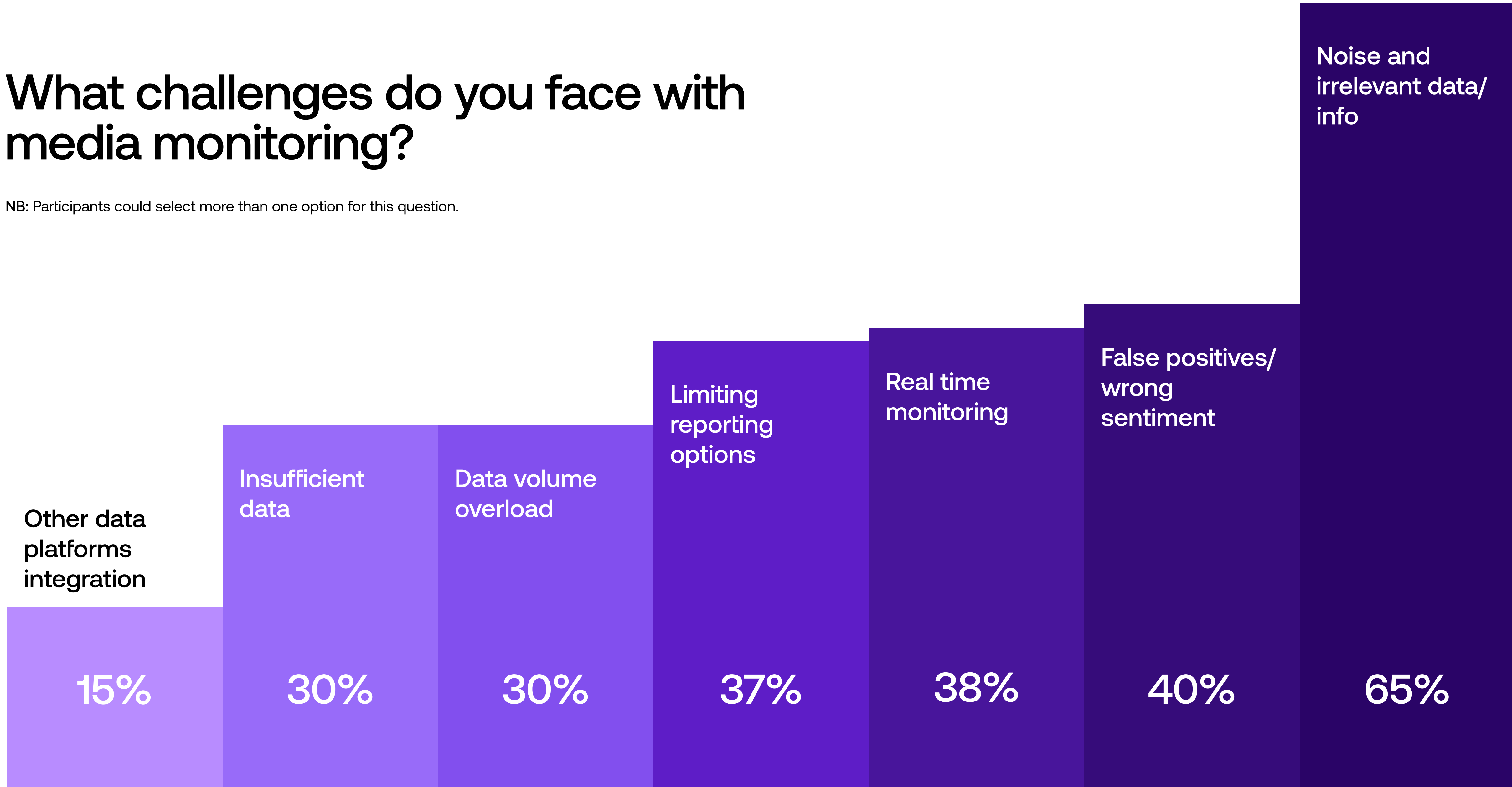


Tatjana Paunoski
Head of PR & Marketing
Bingo d.o.o

"My favorite thing is at the end of the year when I summarize what Marketing has done in the past year. The number of mentions in the millions that I could not prove otherwise. And when I compare it to the competition, no one can tell me we didn't do a good job."

What challenges do you face with media monitoring?

NB: Participants could select more than one option for this question.



PR professionals encounter challenges in media monitoring related to information quality, accuracy, timeliness, and data management.

Data quality and relevance

The overwhelming majority of PR professionals grapple with challenges related to noise and irrelevant data, emphasizing the need for advanced filtering mechanisms and tailored solutions to ensure the focus on meaningful media mentions amidst the data deluge.

Accuracy and timeliness

PR professionals face challenges with false positives and incorrect sentiment analysis, highlighting the complexity of accurately interpreting media mentions. This underscores the demand for tools that not only provide real-time insights but also ensure precision in sentiment analysis to enhance the effectiveness of media monitoring strategies.



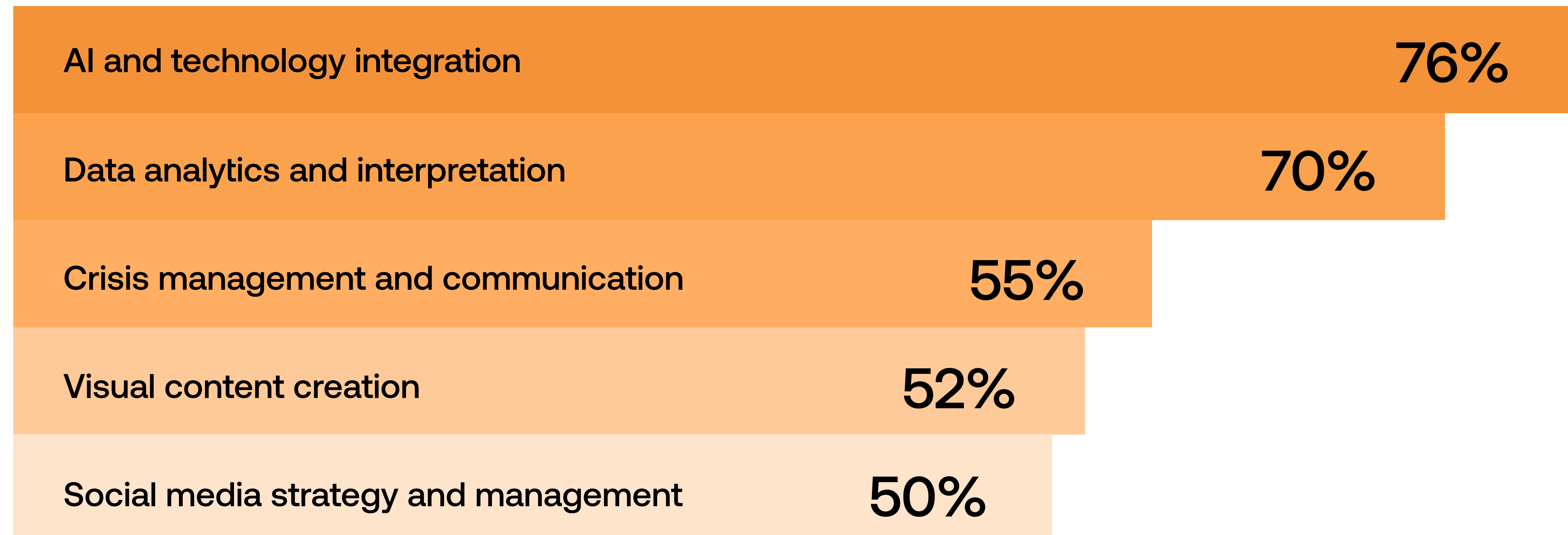
Natalie Homer
Director of Public Relations
HiBob

“Sometimes I do Google searches on press coverage, and the story I've seen in Determ hasn't appeared on my Google feed. So it would take hours. (...) But you know, I spend no more than two or three hours a month now, including the data cleansing, to generate reports that would otherwise take me... What days? Just days.”

Innovation in 2024

What new skills and competencies do you think PR & Marketing professionals will need to thrive in 2024?

NB: Participants could select more than one option for this question.



Businesses acknowledge AI and technology integration as a critical skill for success, irrespective of their size.

AI and technology integration

Professionals in PR & Marketing are anticipated to demonstrate proficiency in leveraging emerging technologies, potentially for automation, personalization, and other innovative applications in their field.

Data analytics and interpretation

As the industry increasingly values data-driven decision-making, professionals are expected to excel in analyzing data for insights and making informed strategic decisions.

Crisis management and communication

A heightened awareness of the industry's unpredictable nature underscores the importance of effective preparation and communication during challenging situations.

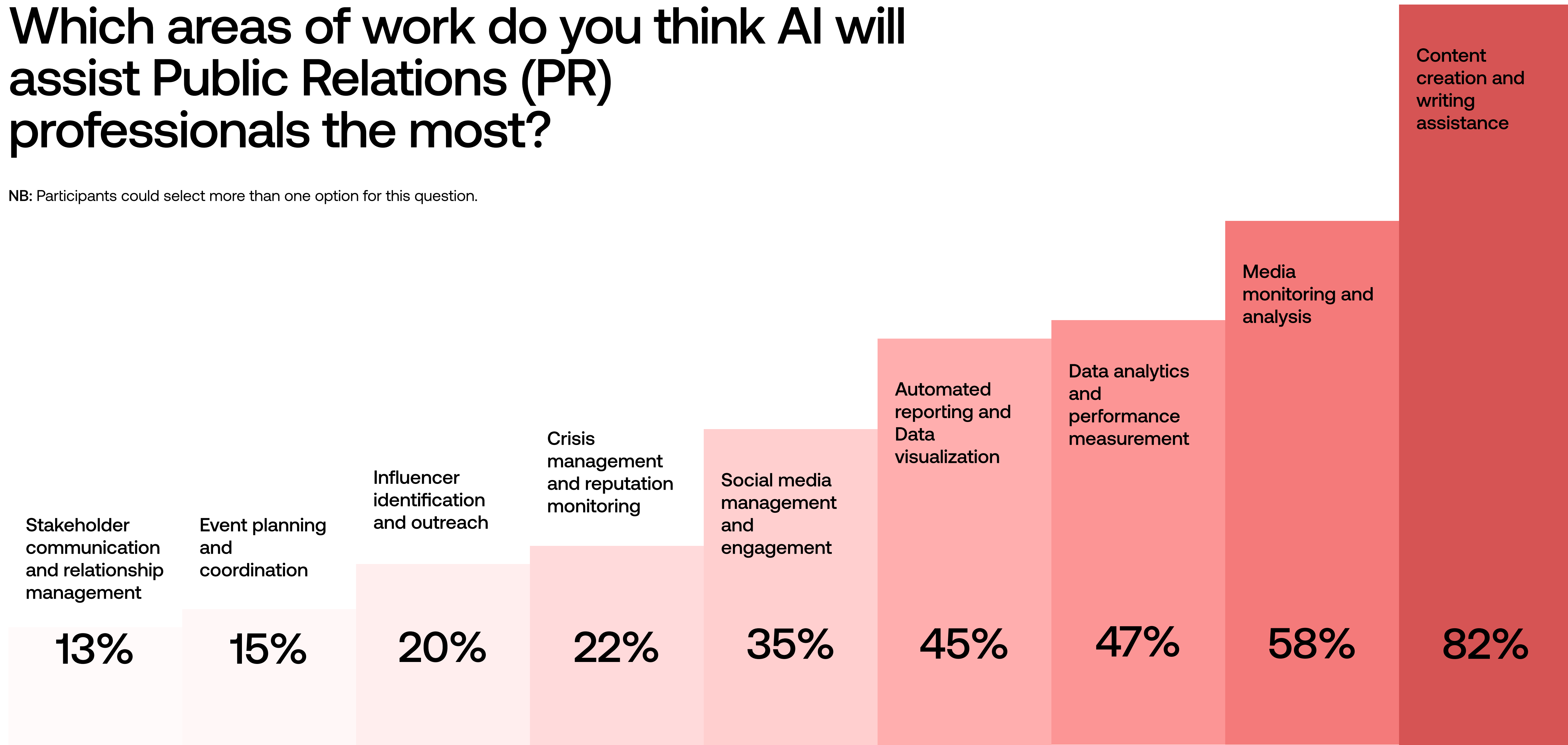


Markus Kraus
Head of Sales and Marketing
Trading Verstehen

“AI tools will not only streamline the process of media monitoring and analytics but also allow for hyper-personalization in PR campaigns, enabling companies to engage with stakeholders in a more meaningful way.”

Which areas of work do you think AI will assist Public Relations (PR) professionals the most?

NB: Participants could select more than one option for this question.



8 out of 10 PR professionals will use AI for content creation and writing assistance.

Content creation and writing assistance

AI-driven tools, such as natural language generation, will become essential in generating press releases, articles, and other content.

Media monitoring and analysis

AI's ability to efficiently monitor vast amounts of data and extract relevant insights will transform media monitoring and analysis. PR professionals will turn to AI for real-time tracking of news and social media mentions, which will enable them to respond promptly to developments.

Data analytics and performance measurement

PR professionals see AI's potential in data analytics and performance measurement, indicating a growing demand for advanced data-driven insights in PR decision-making.



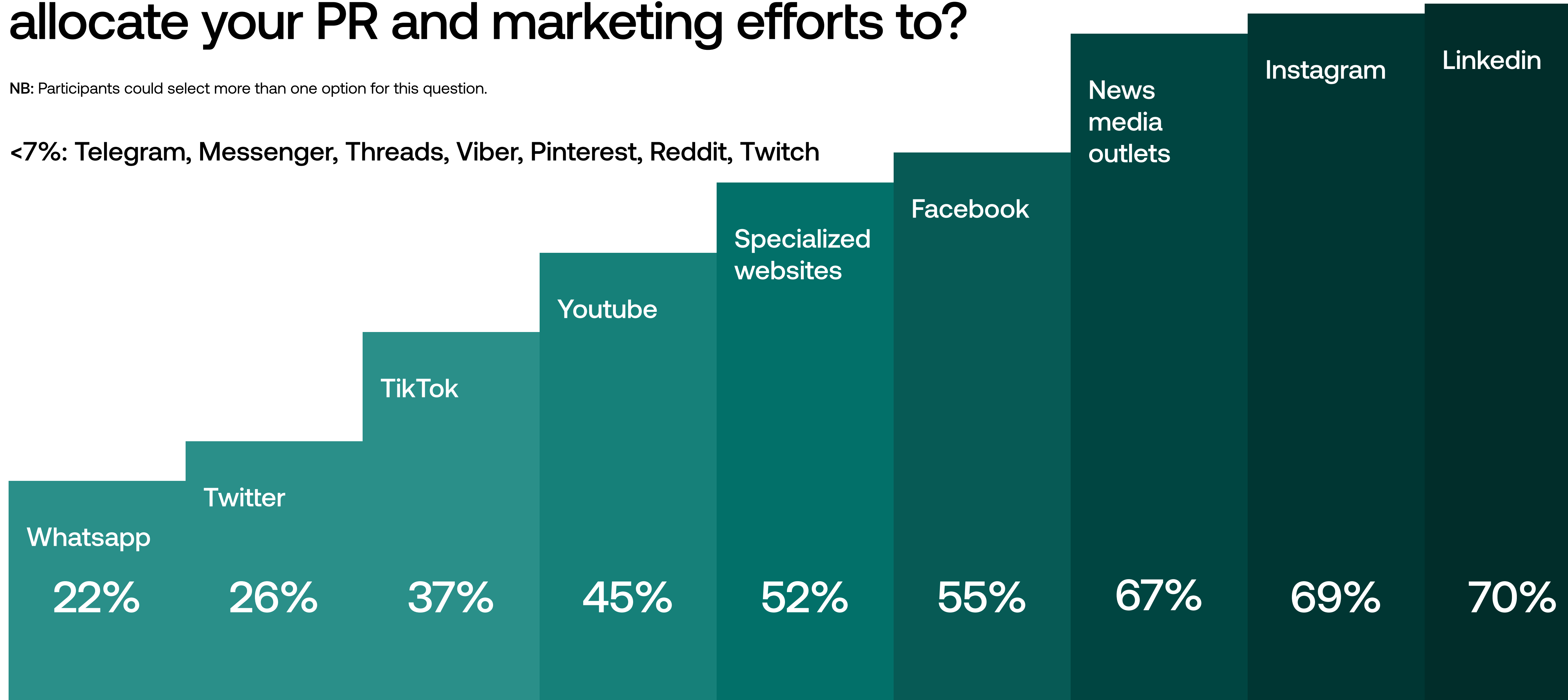
Milosz Krasinski
Managing Director
Chilli Fruit Web Consulting

“AI's role in PR will transcend mere analytics, it will craft narratives that resonate on a personal level, leveraging data to understand and predict audience behaviours and preferences.”

In 2024, which channels do you plan to allocate your PR and marketing efforts to?

NB: Participants could select more than one option for this question.

<7%: Telegram, Messenger, Threads, Viber, Pinterest, Reddit, Twitch



PR professionals will leverage various platforms and channels to achieve goals in 2024.

Diverse platform landscape

LinkedIn stands out as a platform PR professionals use, indicating a collective emphasis on professional networking and B2B marketing, followed closely by Instagram, reinforcing its role as a primary channel for visual content and audience engagement. The efforts allocation to news media outlets highlights the continued importance of traditional media coverage.

Strategic alignment with business size

Emphasizing Instagram, smaller businesses prioritize visually engaging content, influencer collaborations, and direct engagement, connecting with their target demographic through visual storytelling. Medium and large-sized businesses lean towards news media outlets, strategically focusing on traditional channels for broader reach, enhanced brand credibility, and aligned coverage.

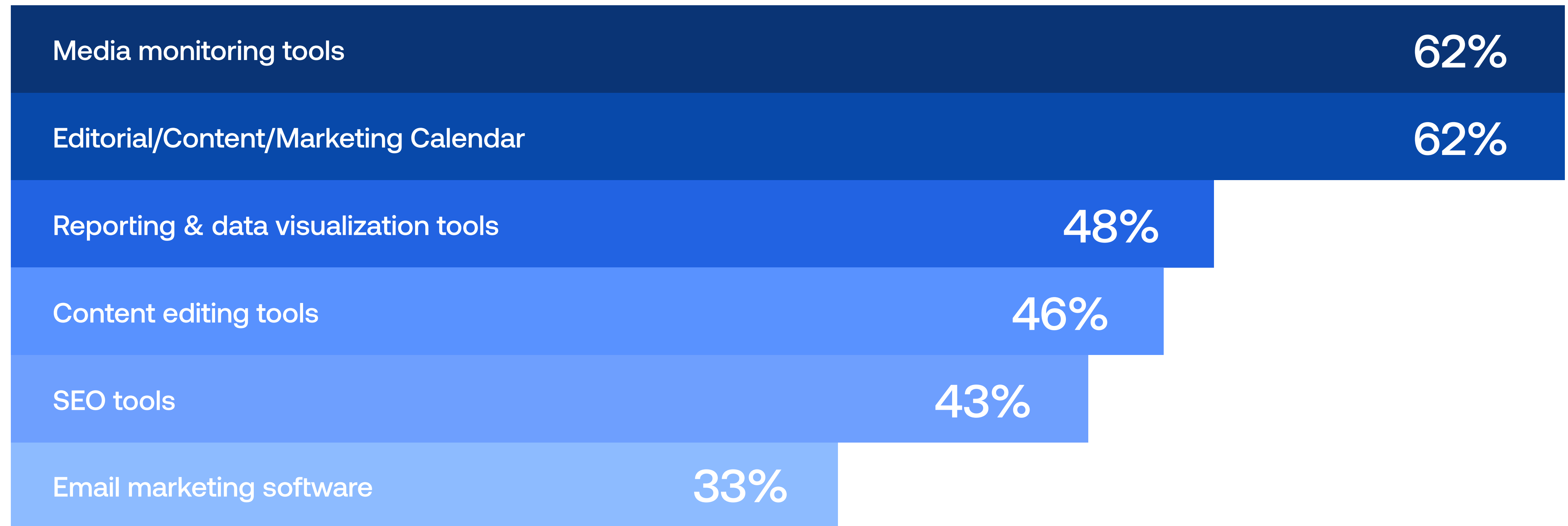


Stephen Gagnon
SEO and website designer
Calgary/Airdrie

“The media landscape will continue to evolve, with an increasing focus on niche and alternative media channels. PR professionals need to diversify their media outreach strategies, including collaborations with influencers, podcasts, and emerging digital platforms. Building relationships with non-traditional media outlets will be crucial for comprehensive coverage.”

Which tool does your team use or plans to use in 2024?

NB: Participants could select more than one option for this question.



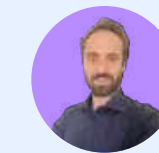
The majority of PR professionals plans to use media monitoring tools and content calendars in 2024.

Planning and monitoring solutions

A collective interest in integrated solutions for media coverage tracking and content planning emerges, aligning monitoring and planning efforts strategically. Large and medium-sized businesses prefer media monitoring tools, reflecting their need for comprehensive tracking, while small and micro businesses lean toward calendars, emphasizing organized content planning for limited-resource teams.

Data-driven decision-making

The significant adoption of reporting & data visualization tools underscores a broader recognition of the importance of data-driven decision-making across business sizes. This trend reflects a desire for tools that facilitate the communication of insights in visually compelling ways, emphasizing the growing role of analytics in shaping business strategies.

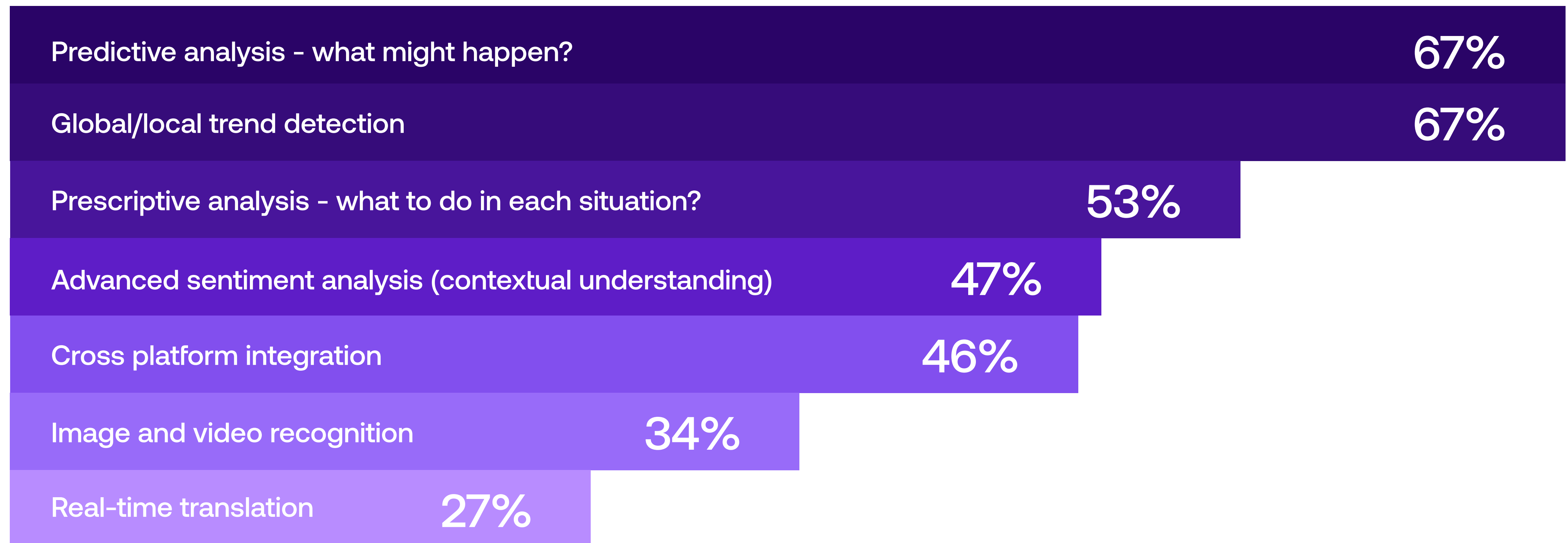


Gianluca Ferruggia
General Manager
Design Rush

“PR professionals must craft stories that resonate on a personal level, and that are truly relevant to the audience. This means moving away from the traditional and generic press release and shifting towards a more tailored narrative that can speak to diverse audience segments.”

What improvements or new features would you like to see in media monitoring tools for 2024?

NB: Participants could select more than one option for this question.



PR professionals are expressing a demand for tools that can forecast future events.

Advanced analytics demand

PR professionals express a strong demand for advanced analytics features, including predictive analytics and trend detection. This reflects a growing recognition within the industry of the need for tools that can not only analyze historical data but also forecast future events, providing valuable insights for strategic planning and decision-making.

Integrated insights

A significant percentage emphasizes the importance of cross-platform integration and image/video recognition, indicating a desire for tools that seamlessly integrate data from various sources, including visual content, to provide a comprehensive view of media landscapes. The emphasis on image and video recognition aligns with the industry's acknowledgment of the increasing prevalence of visual content in online communication.



Jim Christy
Head of Sales and Marketing
Midwest Cards

“In 2024, the use of AI for predictive analytics and more personalized content will be paramount. AI can analyze large datasets to forecast media trends, enabling us to tailor our messages to audiences more effectively.”

What do you think will be the main trends that will shape global PR efforts in 2024?

NB: Participants could select more than one option for this question.



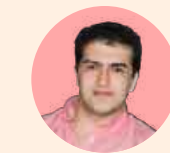
Professionals believe 2024 will be a year toward ethical, transparent, and socially responsible PR efforts.

Ethical and values-driven practices

Both Environmental, Social, and Corporate Governance (ESG) and a focus on authenticity and transparency reflect a commitment to ethical business practices and genuine communication, aligning with broader societal expectations for responsible and transparent corporate behavior.

Inclusive and socially responsible strategies

The anticipated trends in Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion (DEI), Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), and Employee Advocacy collectively signify a shift towards more inclusive, socially responsible PR strategies. This involves fostering diversity, contributing to societal concerns, and leveraging employees as advocates, reflecting a broader commitment to responsible and socially conscious communication approaches.



Max Shak
Founder/CEO
nerDigital

“PR efforts will increasingly revolve around purpose-driven communication. Companies will align their messaging with social and environmental causes, reflecting the values of their audience. Purpose-driven PR fosters authenticity and builds stronger connections with stakeholders.”

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4.4/5 on Capterra



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Click on the use case
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Make sense