THE AI ADVANTAGE

2026 Technology Perceptions Survey Report

INTAPP

Introduction

The AI landscape is evolving rapidly. What was emerging just a few years ago is now embedded in everyday work, reshaping how firms operate.

Last year's research focused on whether AI was gaining traction and how firms were beginning to experiment with new tools. This year, the questions have shifted. With AI now widely adopted, the focus turns to how employees, clients, and firms are navigating the next phase of AI adoption.

Professional and financial services firms are at a pivotal moment in AI adoption, advancing from early use cases to more sophisticated applications. This report explores the momentum building across the workforce, measurable value, the challenges that remain, and the strategic choices ahead as AI redefines the competitive landscape.

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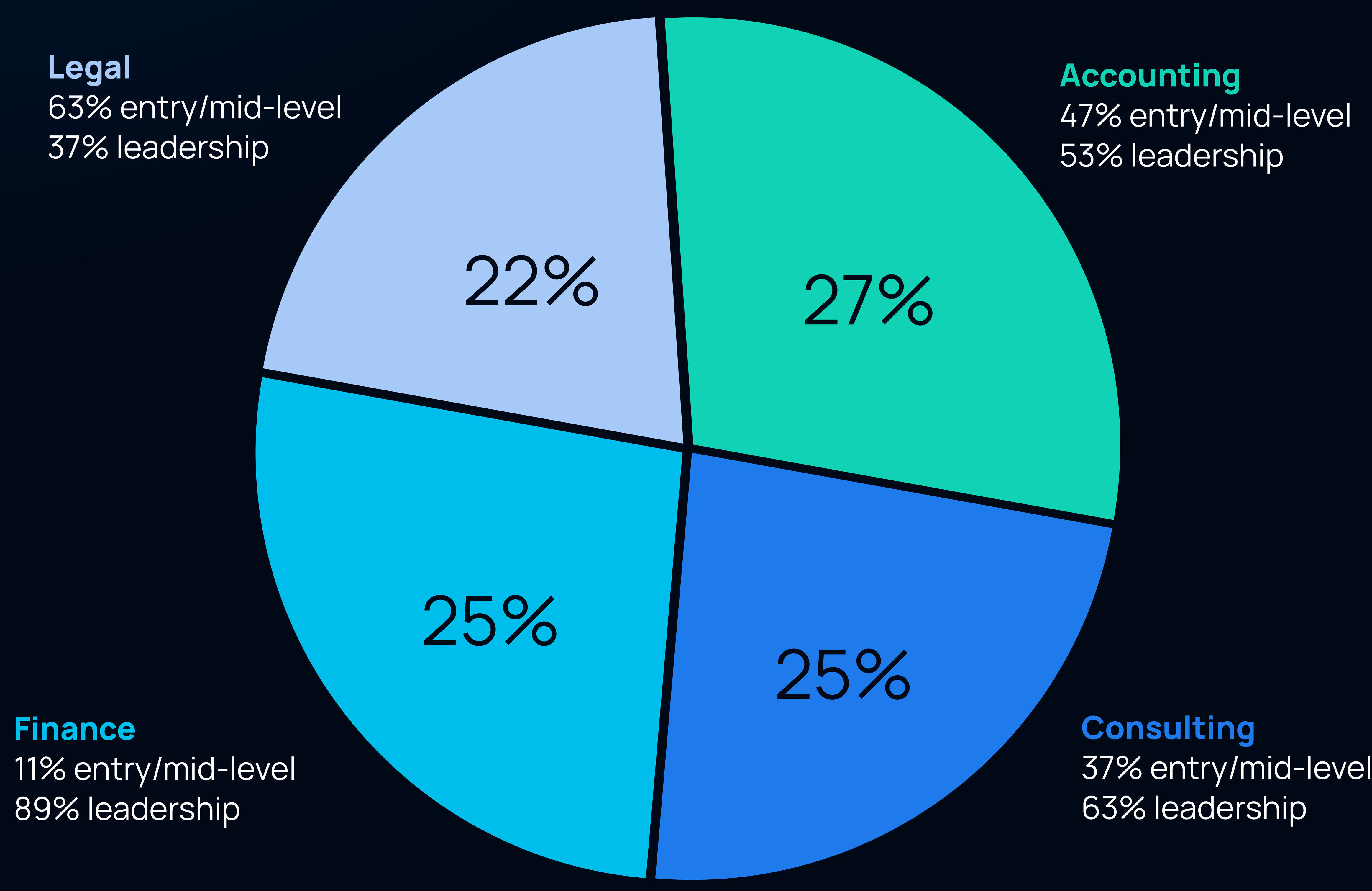
Who we surveyed

800 professionals



Audience qualifications

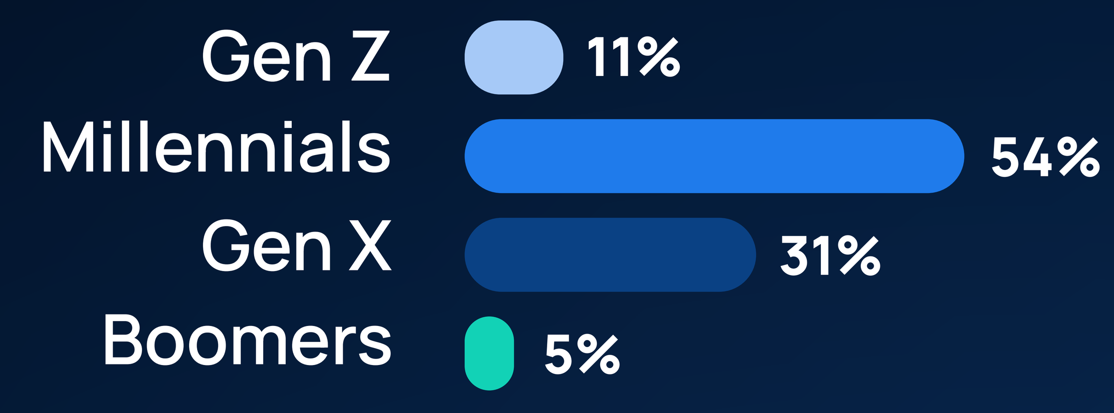
18+ years old

Fee-earner (not admin staff) at a U.S.- or U.K.- based firm

Employed at a law, accounting, consulting, or financial services (investment banking, private equity, real assets) firm

Firm size

Generation



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Survey fielding was managed by Radius Insights via an online survey targeting U.S. and U.K. knowledge workers (fee earners) conducted November 3–14, 2025. The margin of error for results is +/-3.2% in total and +/-4.6% by country at the 95% confidence level. Respondents were split evenly between the U.S. and U.K.

AI is now standard practice, with near-universal adoption

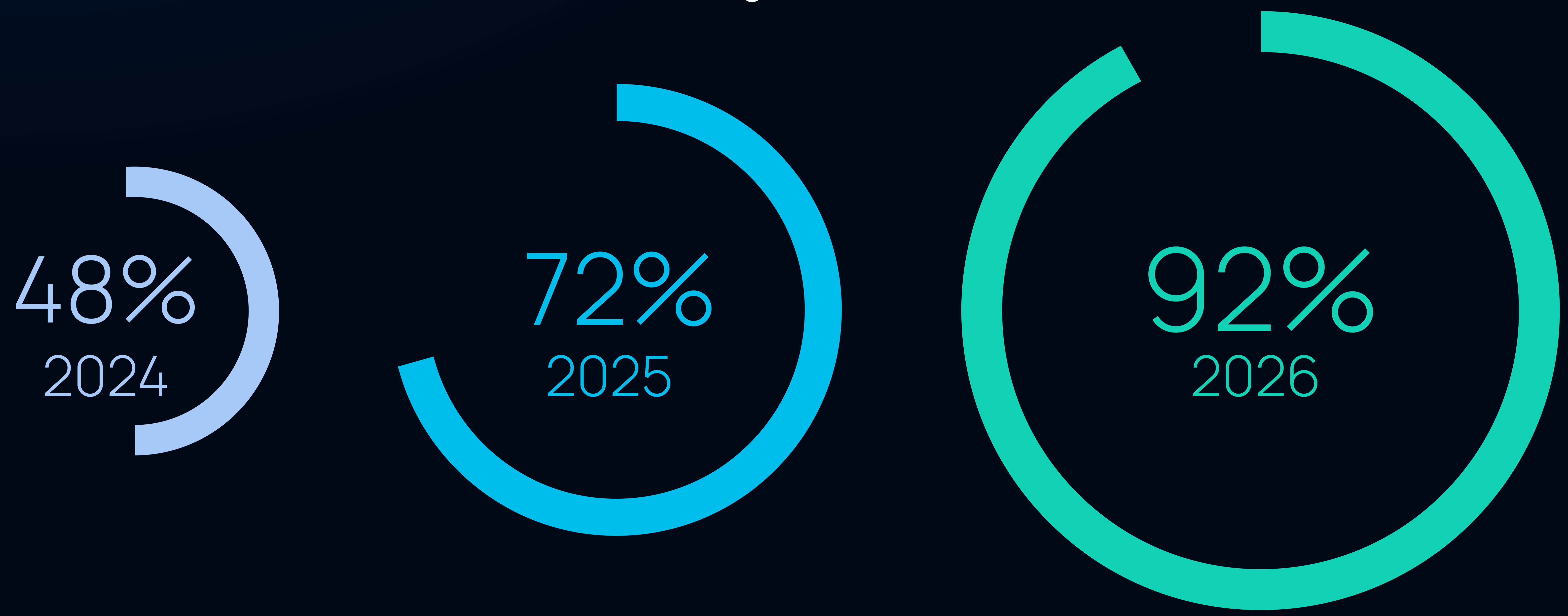
92% of professionals now use AI at work (a 44% increase since 2024).

60% of professionals identify as “advanced” or “expert” AI users.

77% of professionals feel their jobs are safe as AI adoption increases.

From emerging to essential in just 3 years

AI usage at work



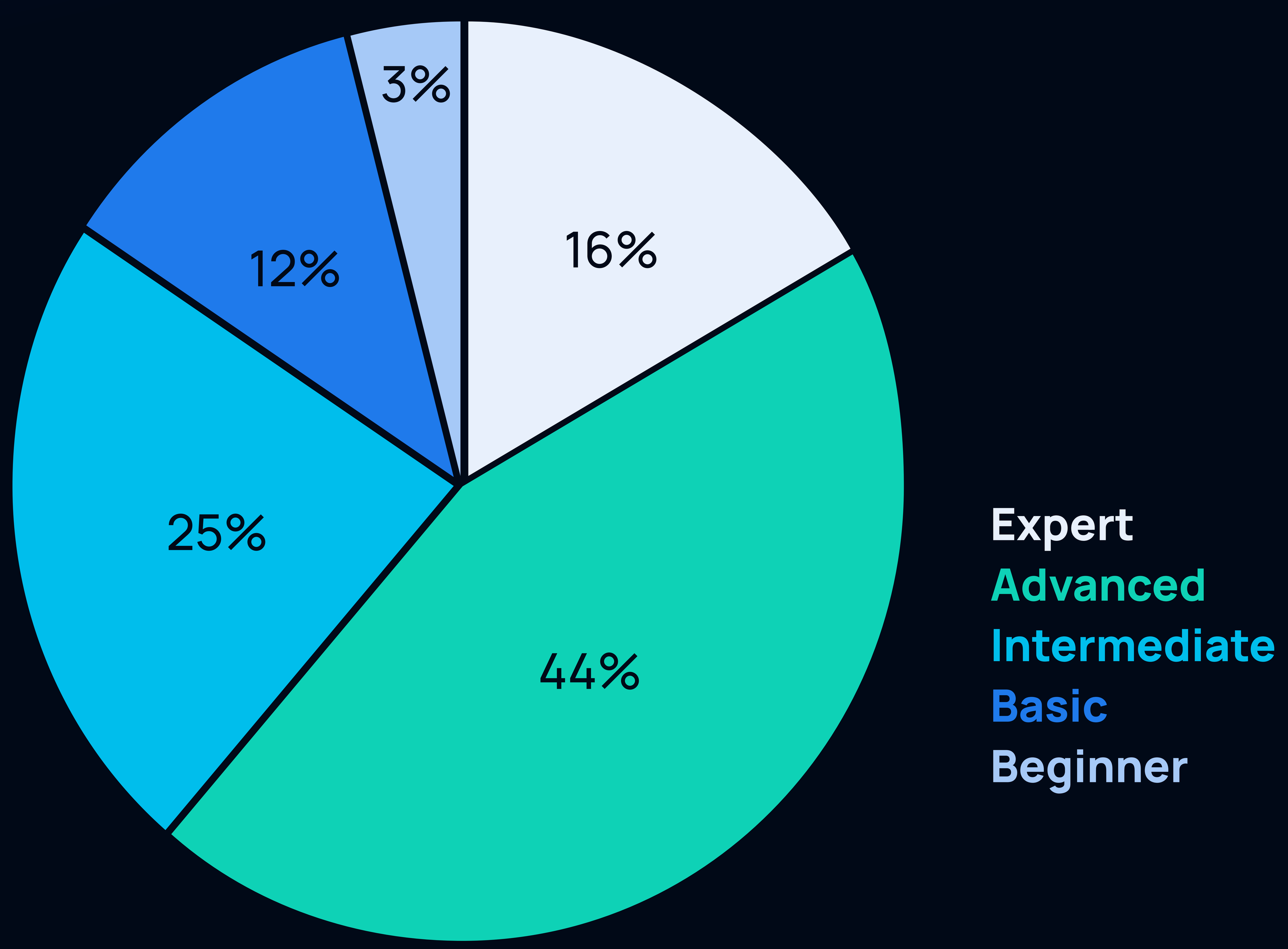
Measures have evolved over time, so trends should be interpreted directionally

AI adoption has crossed from early adoption into the mainstream. In three years, AI usage has become nearly universal among professionals. What was recently driven by early enthusiasts is now embedded in everyday workflows, signaling a fundamental shift in how work gets done.

Base size: 800 in 2026 I 820 in 2025 I 805 in 2024
Q10. What types of AI tools are you currently using for work? (2026)
Q10. Which of the following best describes your usage of AI at your firm?(2024 and 2025) Top five answers shown.

Majority of professionals rate themselves as AI-proficient

Self-reported AI proficiency

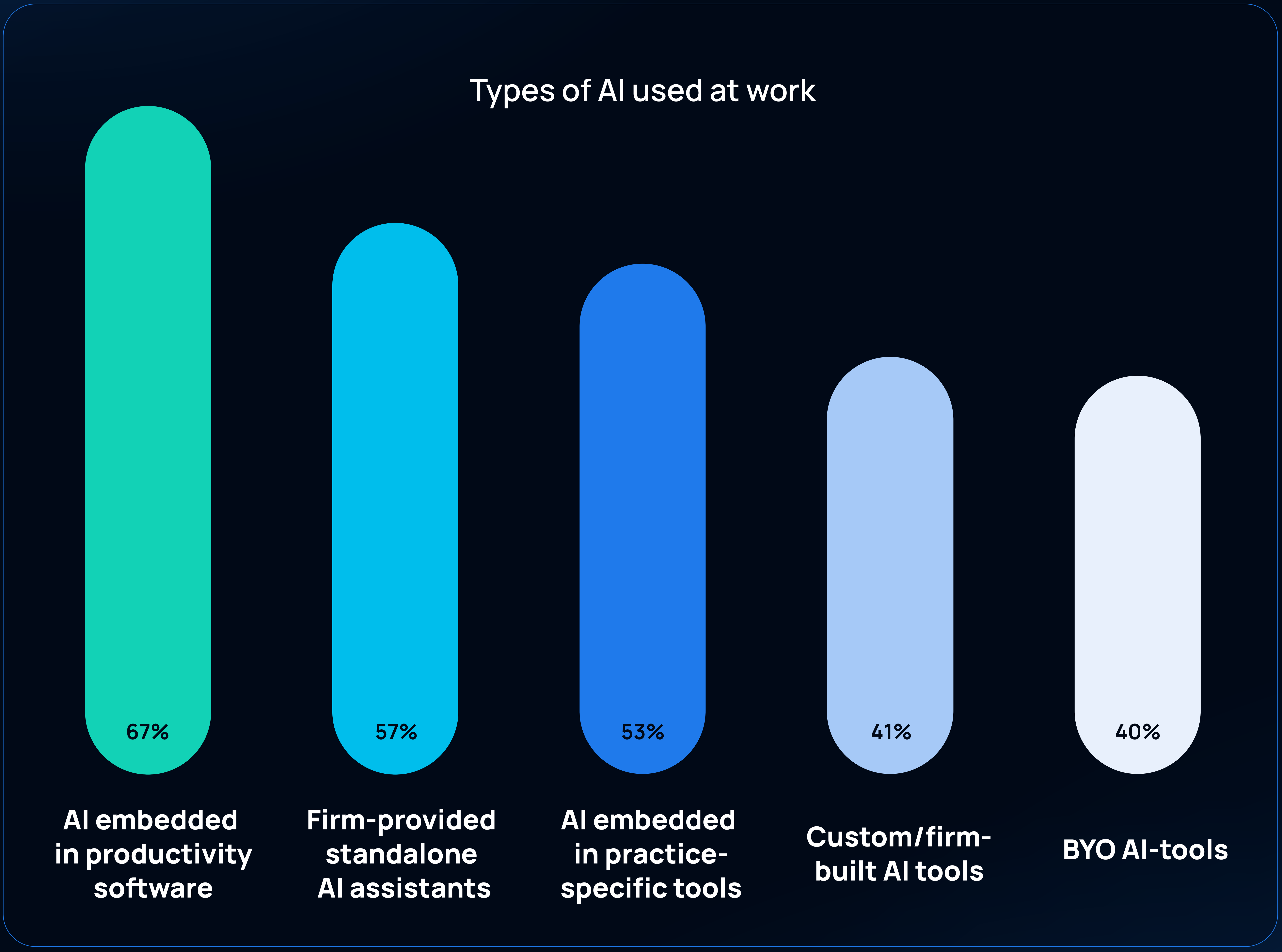


60%

of professionals using AI identify as advanced or expert AI users

Base size: 734
Q45. Which of the following best describes your personal proficiency using AI? Top five answers shown.

AI usage is expanding across a diverse range of tools



This varied ecosystem highlights both the ubiquity of AI and the need for firms to ensure that employees rely on tools that align with workflows, compliance, and client expectations.

Base size: 800
S10. What types of AI tools are you currently using for work? Top five answers shown.

Professionals are comfortable using AI for daily tasks

AI use is already mainstream across everyday tasks. Comfort with AI spans both routine and high-value work, demonstrating broad readiness to incorporate AI into daily workflows.

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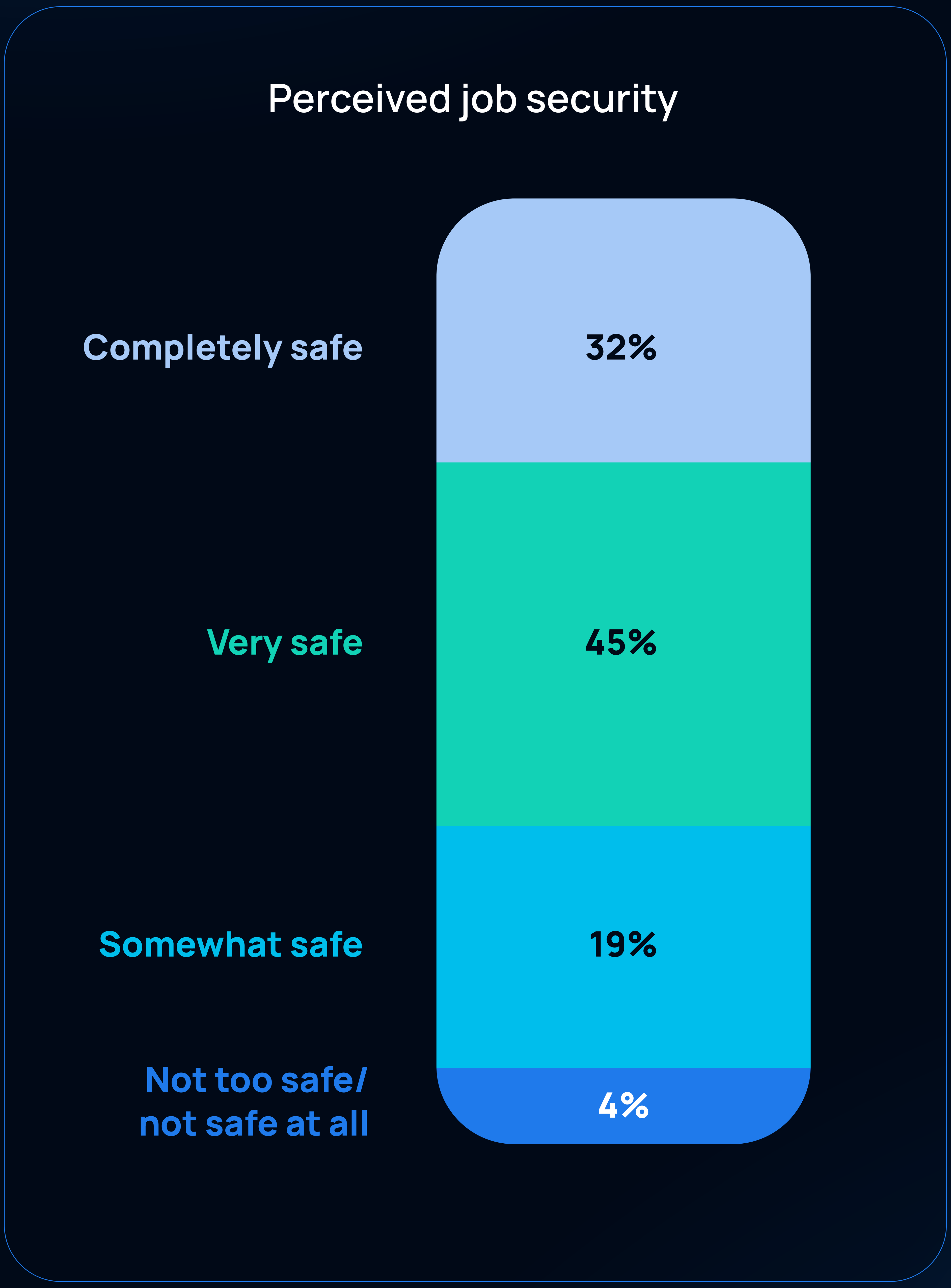
Base size: 765-791 (filtered by task relevance)
Q43. For each of the following, please indicate your current comfort level with using AI. Top five answers shown.

Professionals are confident in job security as AI adoption grows



77%

feel their roles are very or completely safe

Base size: 800
Q59. How safe do you feel your role is from being replaced by AI? Top five answers shown.

Firms adopt AI as part of their baseline infrastructure

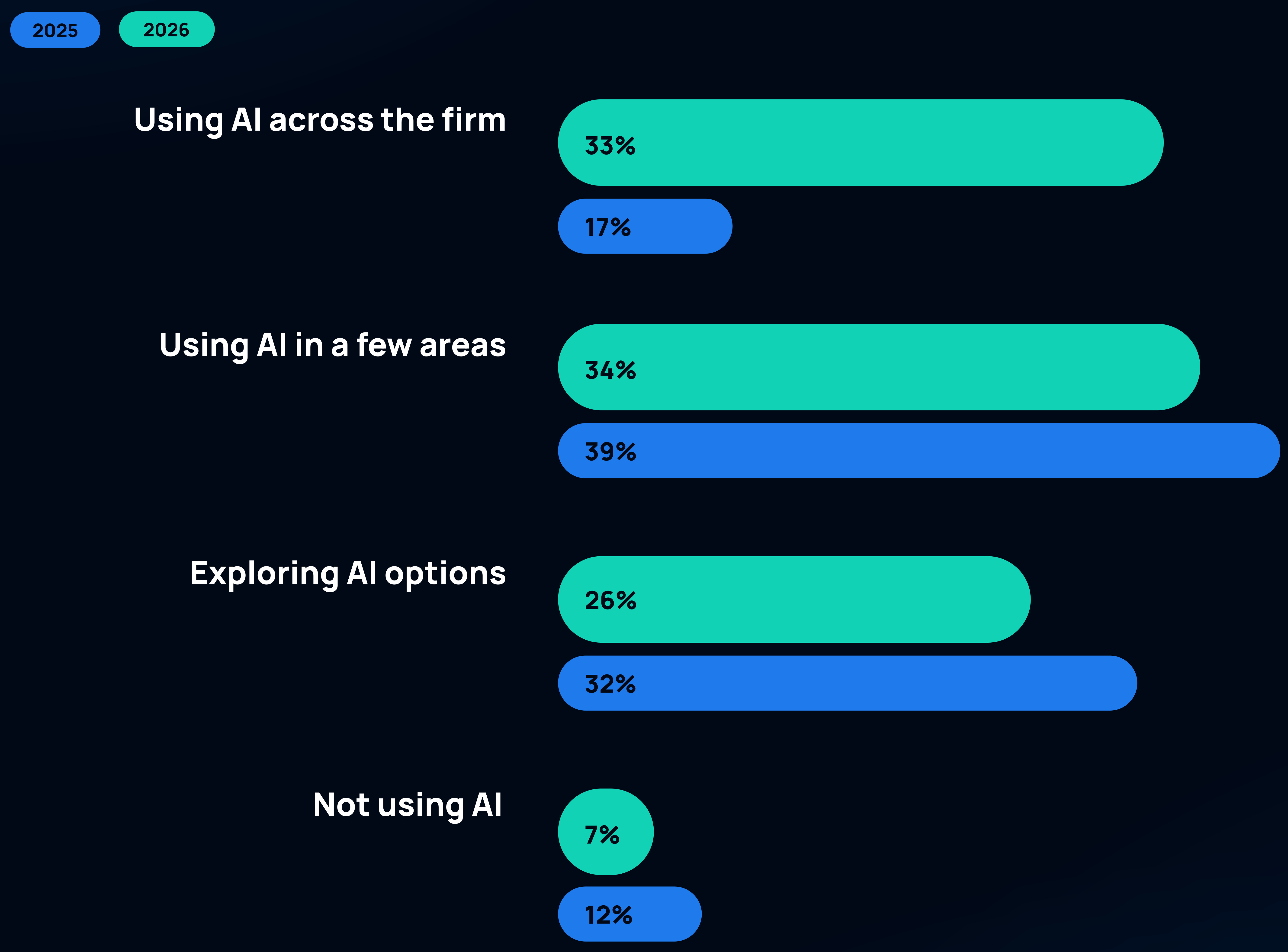
Firms are in active adoption mode, with 33% using AI firmwide – up from 17% in 2025.

90% of professionals grade their firm's AI rollout as an A or a B.

76% of professionals are using unauthorized AI at work despite increased firm adoption.

Firms are moving from exploration to active adoption

Firm AI adoption



Firms that are exploring options or are resistant to AI are diminishing, while firms that are adopting AI in some capacity are increasing. They're no longer experimenting — they're looking to scale AI firmwide.

Base size: 785 in 2026 | 802 in 2025
Q20. Where is your firm in the process of adopting AI technologies? Top five answers shown.

Firms are heavily invested in maximizing AI adoption

How firms are supporting rollouts and adoption

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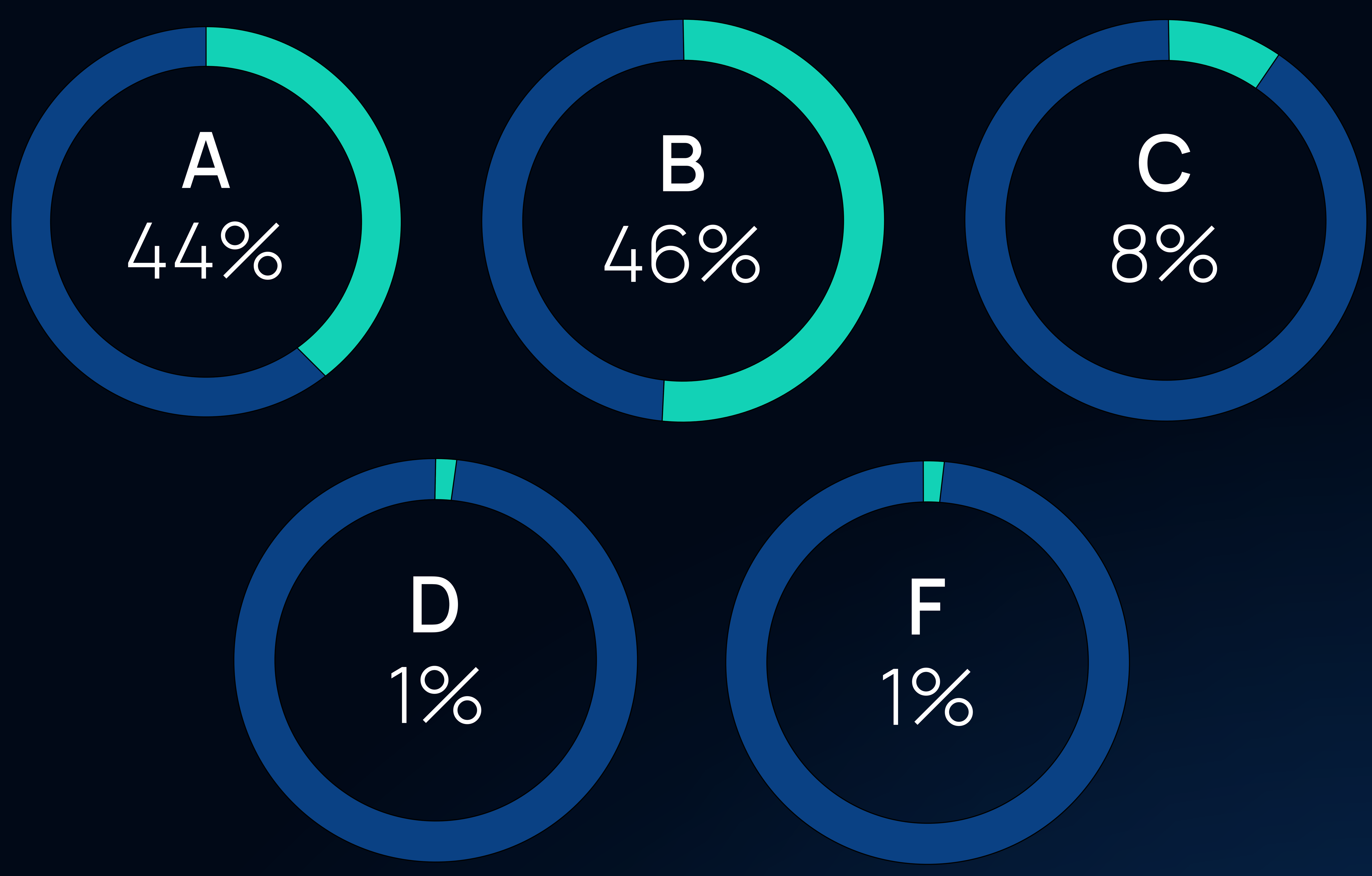
Base size: 522 firms using AI
Q40. Which of the following is your firm doing to drive the rollout and adoption of AI? Top five answers shown.

AI rollouts earn high marks

90%

of professionals grade their firm's rollout an A or B

How professionals grade their firm's rollout



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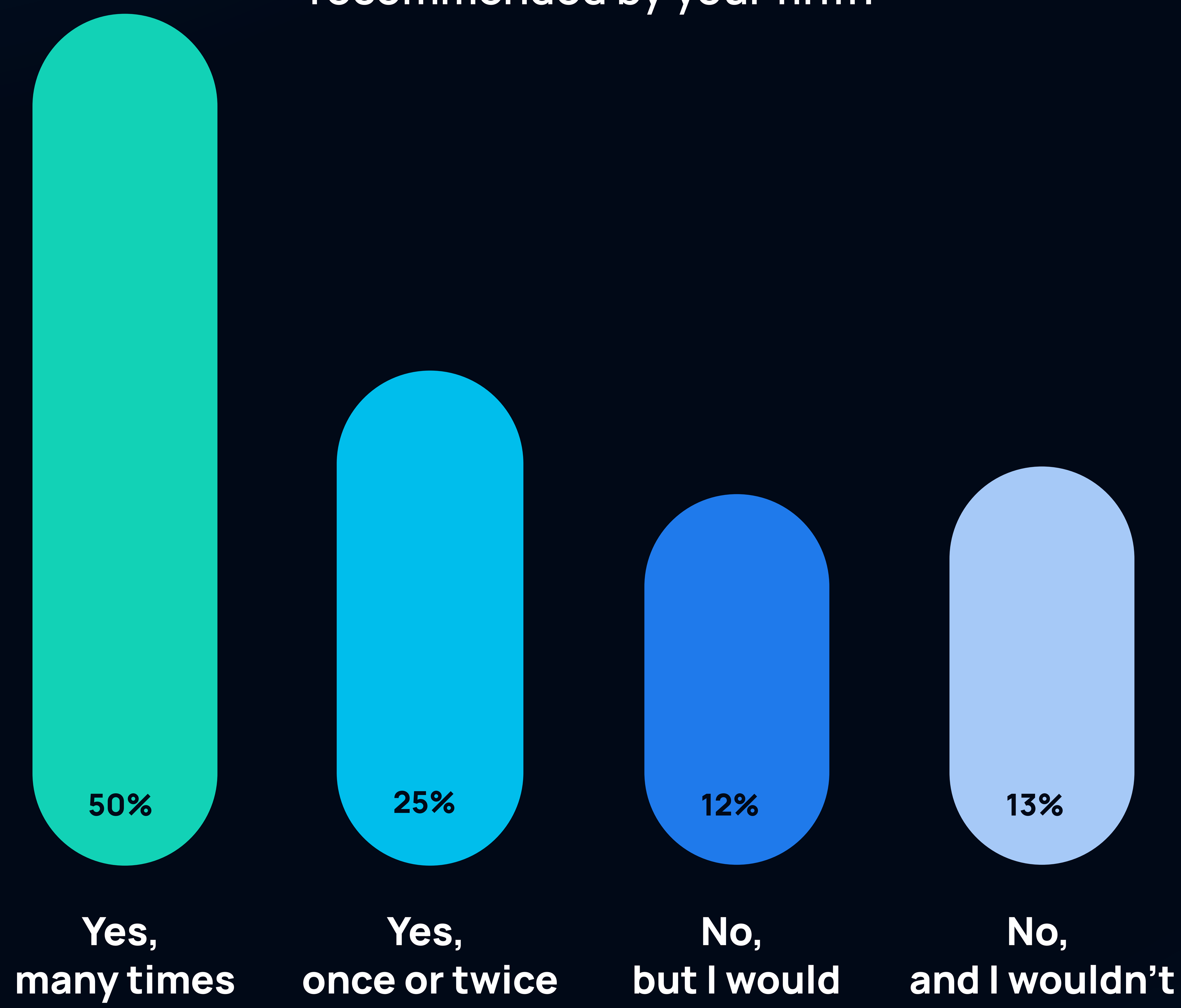
Base size: 522 (firms using AI)
Q41. What grade would you give your firm on its AI rollout? Top five answers shown.

Shadow AI thrives — even with increased firm adoption

Have you ever used an AI tool for work that wasn't provided or recommended by your firm?



76% of professionals have used unauthorized AI tools

58% of firms limit or block unapproved AI tools

Base size: 800
Q26. Have you ever used an AI tool for work that was not provided or recommended by your firm?
Base size: 522
Q40. Which of the following is your firm doing to drive the rollout and adoption of AI? Top five answers shown.

AI is rapidly raising the competitive baseline

9 in 10 professionals believe client expectations are evolving in parallel with firm AI adoption.

Clients expect higher quality work, more innovation, faster turnaround times, and increased transparency from firms using AI.

93% of professionals report that their clients are aware they 're using AI, up from 77% in 2025.

AI is driving increased client expectations and firm performance

Top client expectations driven by AI

1. Higher-quality work
2. More innovative solutions
3. Faster turnaround
4. Increased transparency

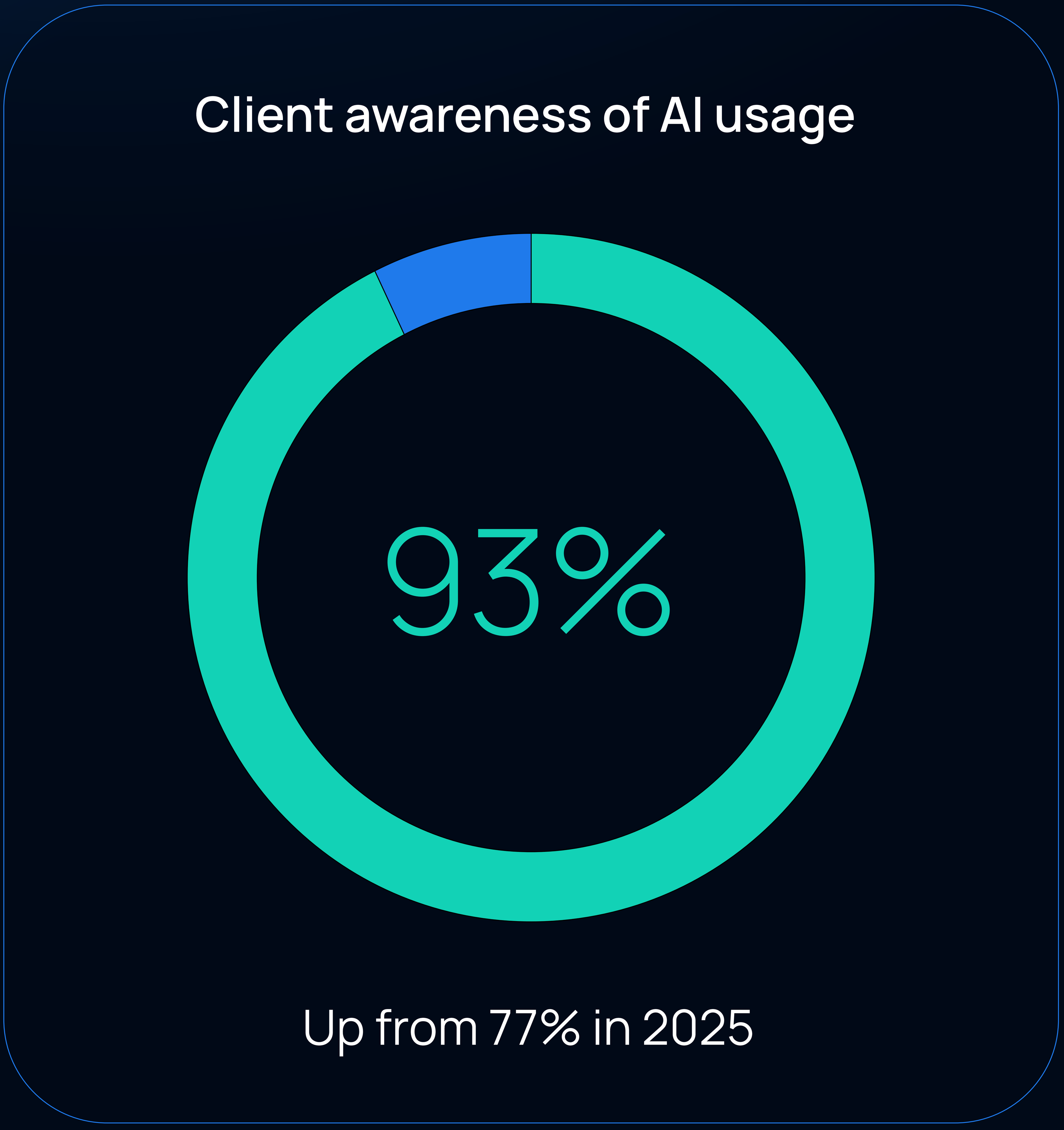
86%

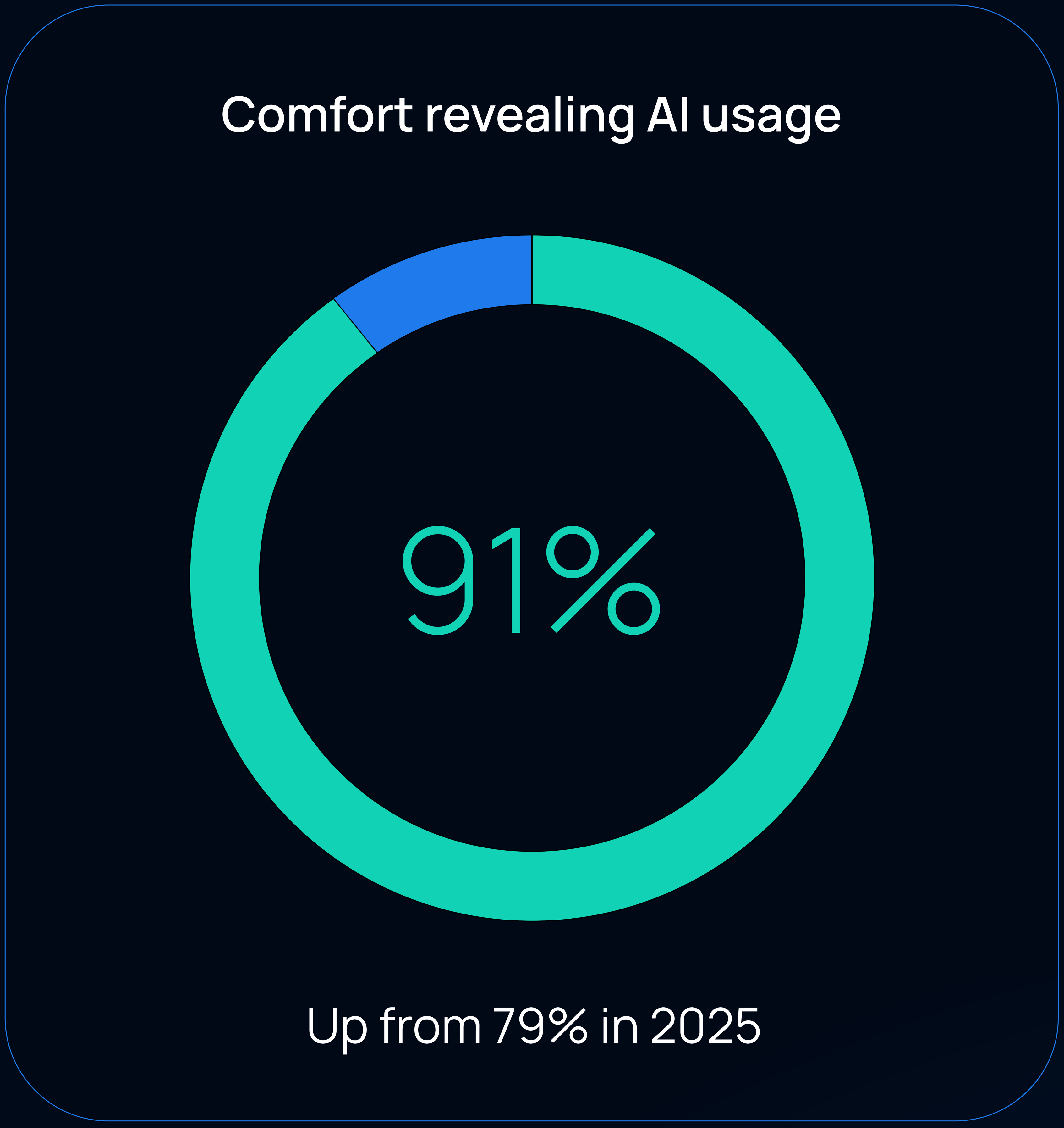
of professionals at firms using AI believe it has improved client satisfaction. Notably, findings show a clear alignment between where AI is increasing client expectations and where it is driving improved service delivery.

9 in 10 professionals report that client expectations are evolving in parallel with firm AI adoption

Base size: 522 (firms using AI)
Q51. How, if at all, have your clients' expectations changed due to your firm's use of AI? Top five answers shown.

Transparency about AI usage is now the norm





"AI helps me draft detailed client reports by analyzing large data sets in minutes and highlighting key trends and anomalies. This makes my reports more accurate and saves me three to four hours each week."

— Accounting professional, U.K.

Base size: 522 in 2026 I 590 in 2025 (firms/professionals using AI)
Q31. To the best of your knowledge, do your [clients, etc.] know that your firm is using AI? (Reporting the percent who said some or most/all their clients are aware)
Q32. How comfortable would you feel telling your [clients, etc.] that you used AI to create an important deliverable? (Reporting the percent who said somewhat or very comfortable)

AI is a career differentiator

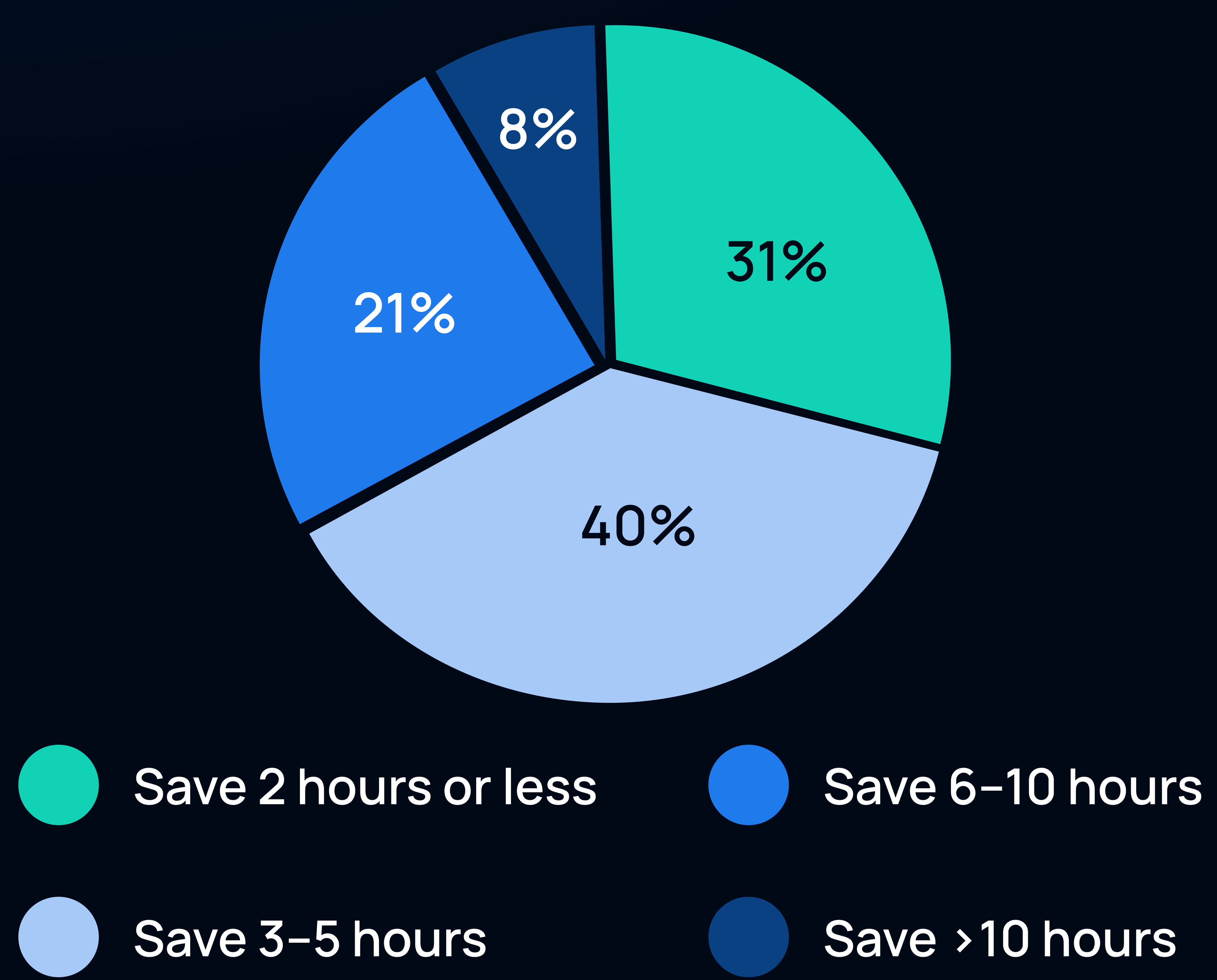
AI saves professionals around five hours each week, freeing up time for higher-value work and enabling better work-life balance.

AI enhances the quality of work, not just the speed.

72% of professionals see AI as essential to their future success (up from 55% in 2025).

AI frees up time that professionals reinvest in higher-value work

Weekly time savings with AI



AI saves professionals ~5 hours each week

Where reclaimed time goes

1. Personal time
2. Higher-level client work
3. Strategic initiatives and planning
4. Completing more rote tasks
5. Client relationship-building

Base size: 718–729
Q24. In a typical work week, how much time do you estimate you are saving by using AI?
Q25. How have you used the time saved by using AI?
Top five responses shown.

AI doesn’t just speed up work, it makes it better

Work improved by AI

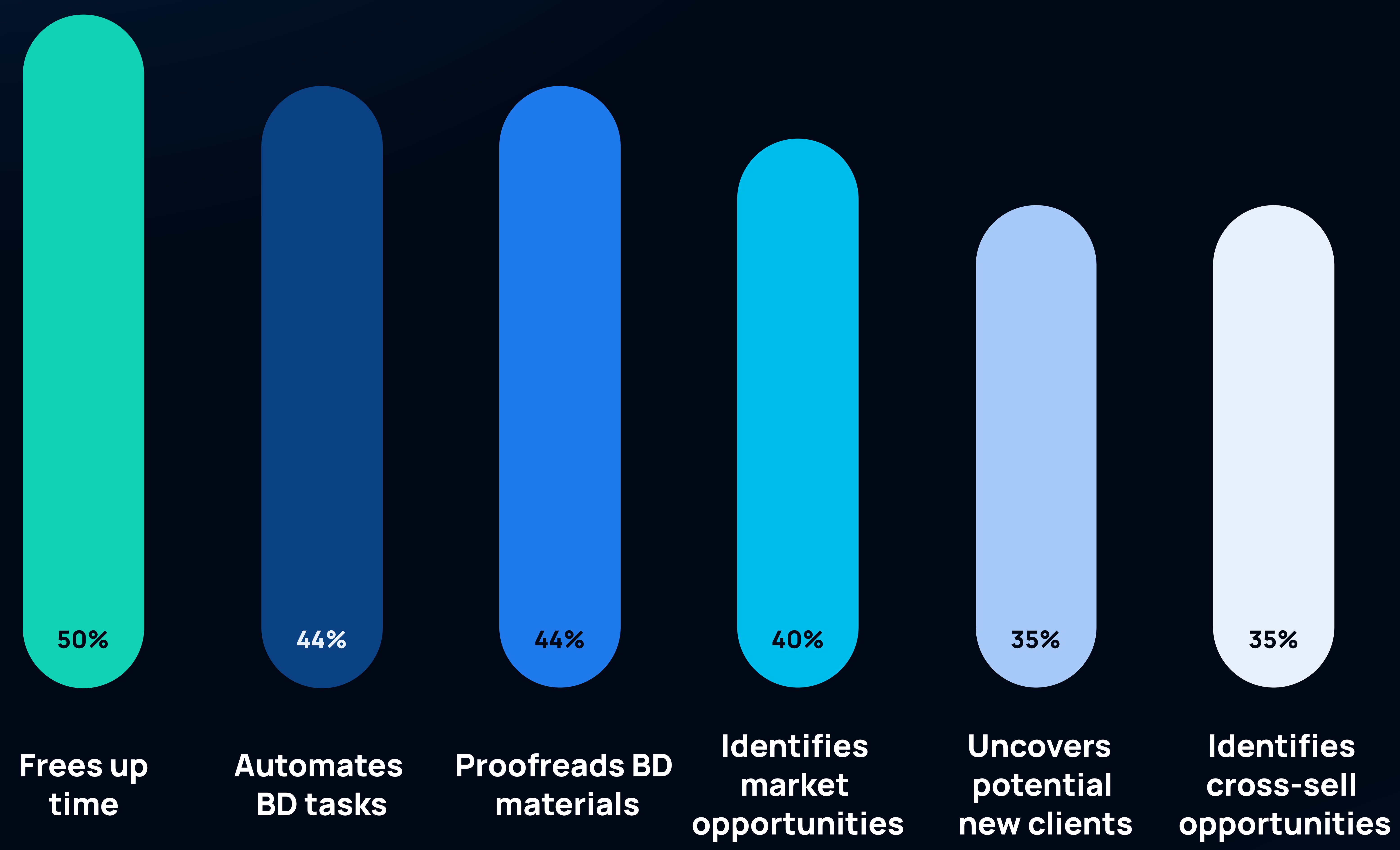
“I use AI to proof contracts and ensure they cover the information needed to protect both parties. AI also helps me find business information like relevant cash flow, EBITDA data, and financial trends in large files.”

— Finance professional, U.S.

Base size: 306–379, asked of those using AI for each use case
Q48. Since you started using AI for these activities, how, if at all, has the quality of your work changed in the following compared to before you used AI?

AI increases business development capacity and quality

AI's impact on business development (BD)



52%

of professionals spend more time on business development now that they're using AI

"I use AI to discover and research possible new revenue streams and industries to target for future growth."

— Consulting professional, U.S.

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Base size: 306–713
Q47. Since you started using AI for these activities, how has the amount of time you spend on each changed compared to before you used AI? (Only asked of those using AI for BD)
Q49. How does your use of AI impact the way you spend time on business development?

Professionals see AI as essential to their future success

Base size: 800 in 2026 | 820 in 2025 | 805 in 2024
Q13. Please evaluate the following statements about the impact of AI over the next two years.

AI is empowering career confidence

AI elevates professionals' careers by helping them:

- Think of creative solutions
- Synthesize information
- Stay organized
- Focus on higher-value work
- Focus on work they enjoy

"AI helps me organize my CRM and billing data much more efficiently. It reduces errors, speeds up routine tasks, and frees me up to spend more time on client engagements."

— Finance professional, U.K.

Base size: 734, those using AI
Q29. In which of the following ways, if any, has AI impacted your career? Top five answers shown.

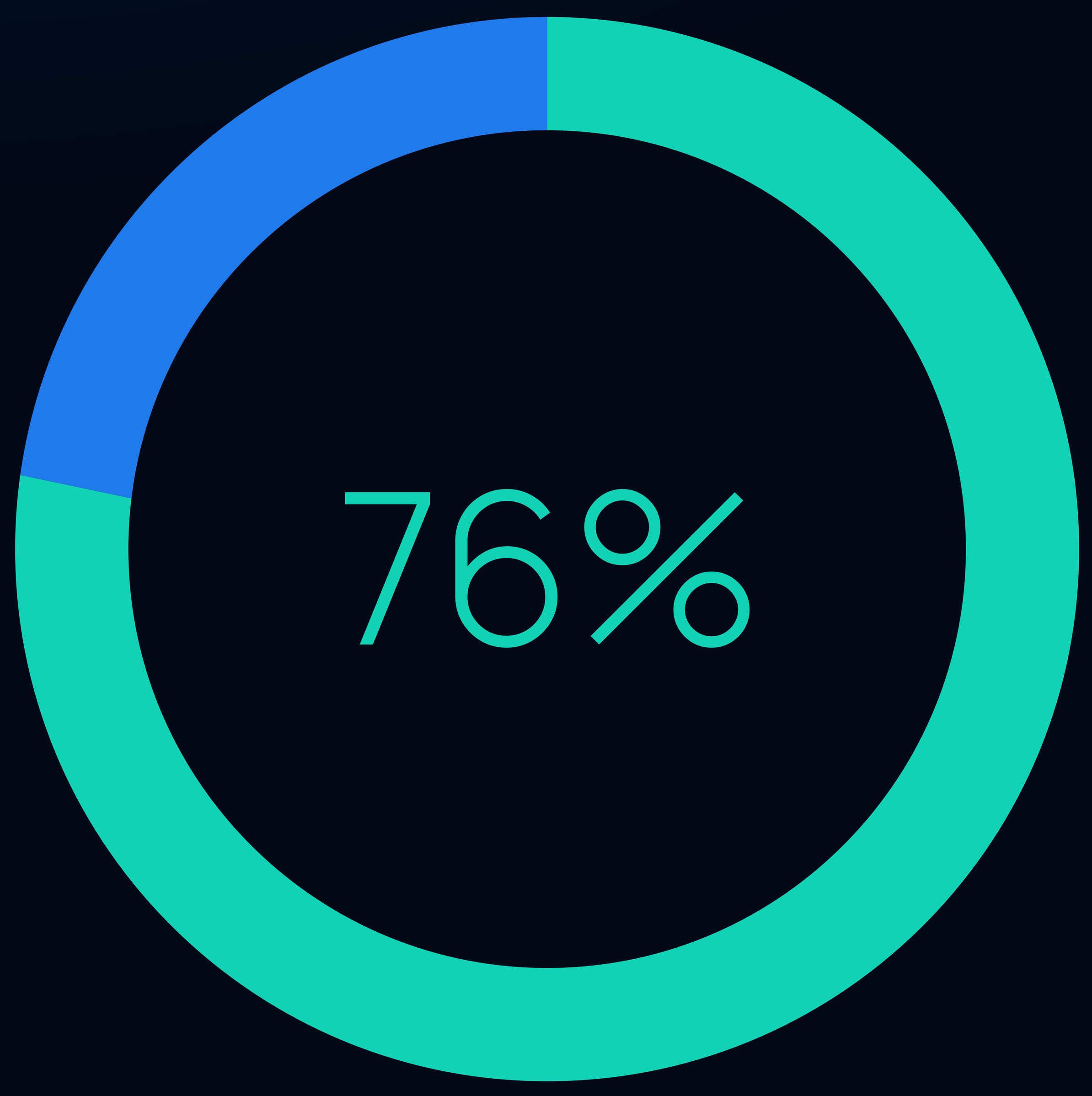
AI drives higher employee satisfaction and retention

Employee satisfaction at firms using AI

Base size: 800
Q1. Overall, how satisfied are you with your firm?
Q2. How likely are you to continue working at the firm in the next two years?
Q3. How likely are you to recommend your firm to peers and colleagues as a place to work?

AI drives firm growth and efficiency

AI will make my firm more competitive



Up from 67% in 2025

Impact of AI

1. Improves new business acquisition
2. Reduces firm or client costs
3. Increases worker productivity
4. Automates administrative work
5. Improves access to firmwide data

Base size: 800
Q13. Please evaluate the following statements about the impact of AI over the next two years.
Base size: 522, firms using AI
Q34. Which of the following business outcomes has your firm's usage of AI had the greatest impact on?

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