

REPORT

The State of Analytics:

From digital friction to embedded insights

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Executive summary

Despite substantial investments in analytics infrastructure, organizations are struggling with costly inefficiencies. Navigating between applications and searching for analytics wastes valuable hours every day. Yet most have normalized this productivity drain, viewing it as an unavoidable cost of doing business.

While organizations firmly believe they have control of their data, they often make decisions without it—particularly when analytics are too difficult to access. This disconnect between perceived and actual data availability creates a blind spot for leadership teams, who may overestimate their analytical capabilities.

Analytics infrastructure maintenance exhausts resources, preventing organizations from prioritizing innovation. As a result, the promise of AI-driven efficiency remains largely unrealized. Although organizations have identified numerous AI use cases, implementation lags behind and leaves many initiatives in pilot purgatory.

In an effort to gain a deeper understanding of the current state of analytics, we surveyed 500+ data professionals about their challenges with data accessibility, AI adoption, and product innovations. The results reveal an industry at a crossroads.

While organizations overwhelmingly recognize the importance of embedded no-code analytics, they must overcome significant investment and implementation barriers before adopting these solutions. For most, this involves reassessing their reliance on traditional business intelligence (BI) tools.

As this report reveals, the path forward requires organizations to rethink their approach to analytics. For many, this may mean investing in analytics platform as a service (AnPaaS), a cloud-native solution that embeds real-time intelligence directly into existing applications without requiring dedicated data scientists.



Key takeaways



Productivity paradox

Digital friction saps up to 50% of the workday for many organizations. They spend up to ten hours each week searching for data, losing invaluable time and productivity.



Accessibility illusion

Despite most organizations asserting good control over their data, almost half report that only specialists can access analytics. As a result, 76% admit making decisions without data.



Innovation roadblock

Almost half of organizations have abandoned three to five product innovations due to analytics integration challenges. Most focus resources on maintenance, not development.



AI implementation gap

Although most organizations claim to want more automation and AI-driven efficiency, few invest in solving adoption barriers. Technical challenges and cost issues stand in the way.

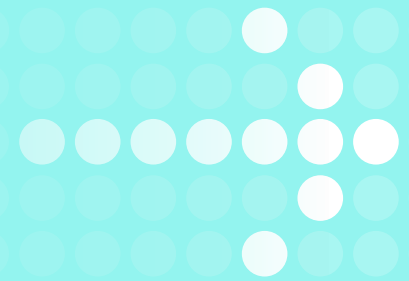


Invisible analytics imperative

Companies prefer embedded, low-code, and white-label analytics solutions. These solutions reduce implementation barriers, allowing faster adoption and better user access.



Chapter 1:



Digital friction eats the workday

Organizations struggle with disconnected tools, inefficient workflows, and knowledge limitations. Many have seemingly accepted these issues without a full understanding of the costs or the potential solutions.

Traditional BI tools are likely responsible for much of this digital friction, as they remain detached from work processes, slowing both analysis and action. AnPaaS solutions that provide essential infrastructure and embed analytics into workflows can help overcome these hurdles.

At Measuremen, digital friction has led to operational inefficiencies in how we delivered reports to our clients following project completion. Previously, our data validation and reporting systems were not integrated with a BI tool, resulting in extensive manual data entry, which caused delays and errors. This issue necessitated additional staffing to manage these tasks, ultimately driving up costs.

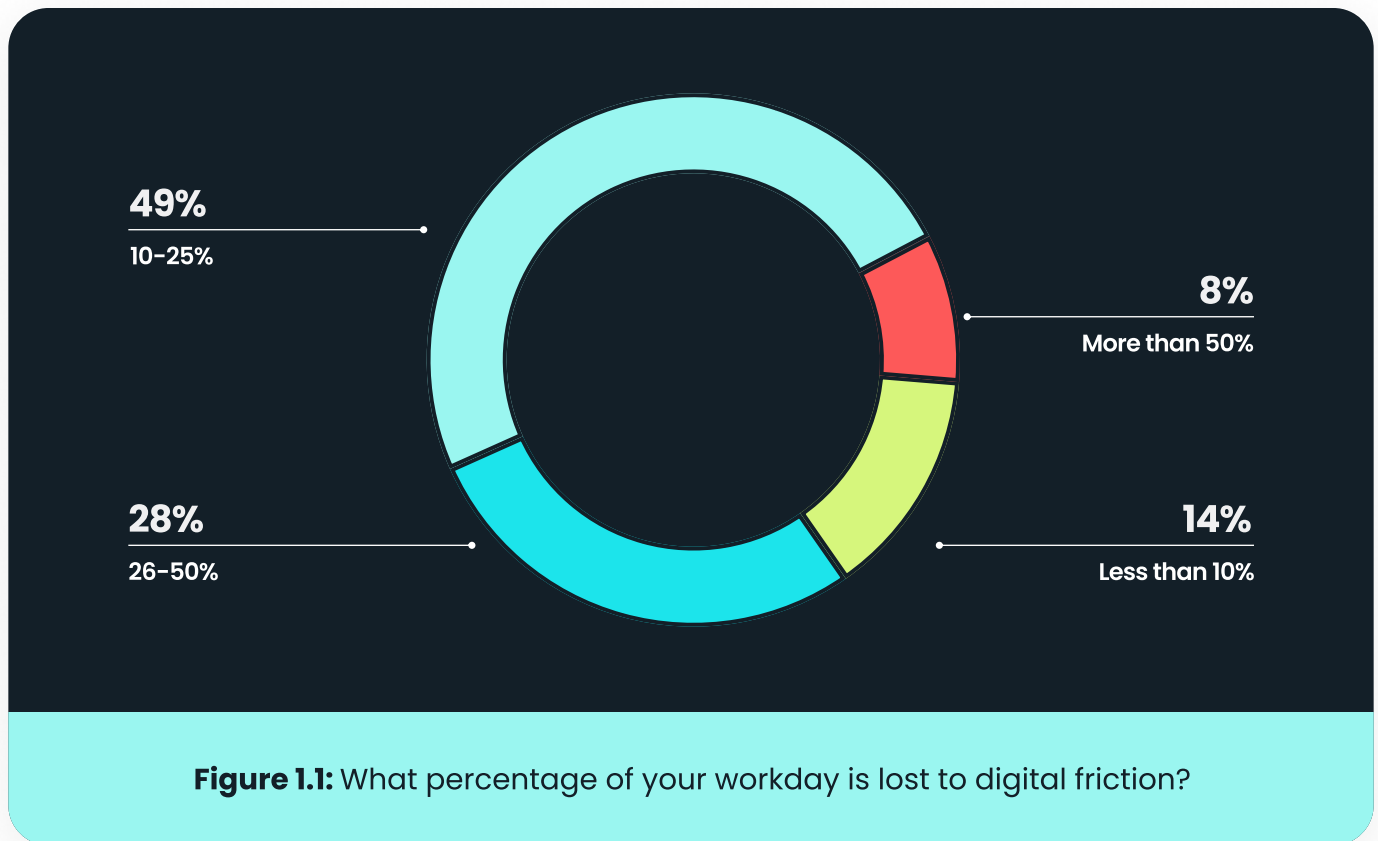


Natacha Willhalm

Product Manager, Measuremen



Over three-quarters (78%) of respondents report losing 10–50% of their workday to digital friction (Figure 1.1). Spending time switching between apps and searching for information creates substantial inefficiencies—to the tune of up to 4 hours per day.



This productivity loss has a major hidden cost. Up to half of a full-time employee’s time and salary could be wasted on navigating between apps and searching for information instead of performing valuable work. Across the entire organization, this impact is enormous.



Looking for analytics is a particularly large drain on productivity. For 75% of organizations, the average employee spends two to ten hours searching for the right data each week (Figure 1.2). When multiplied across a 1,000–employee organization, this equals up to 10,000 lost hours every week.

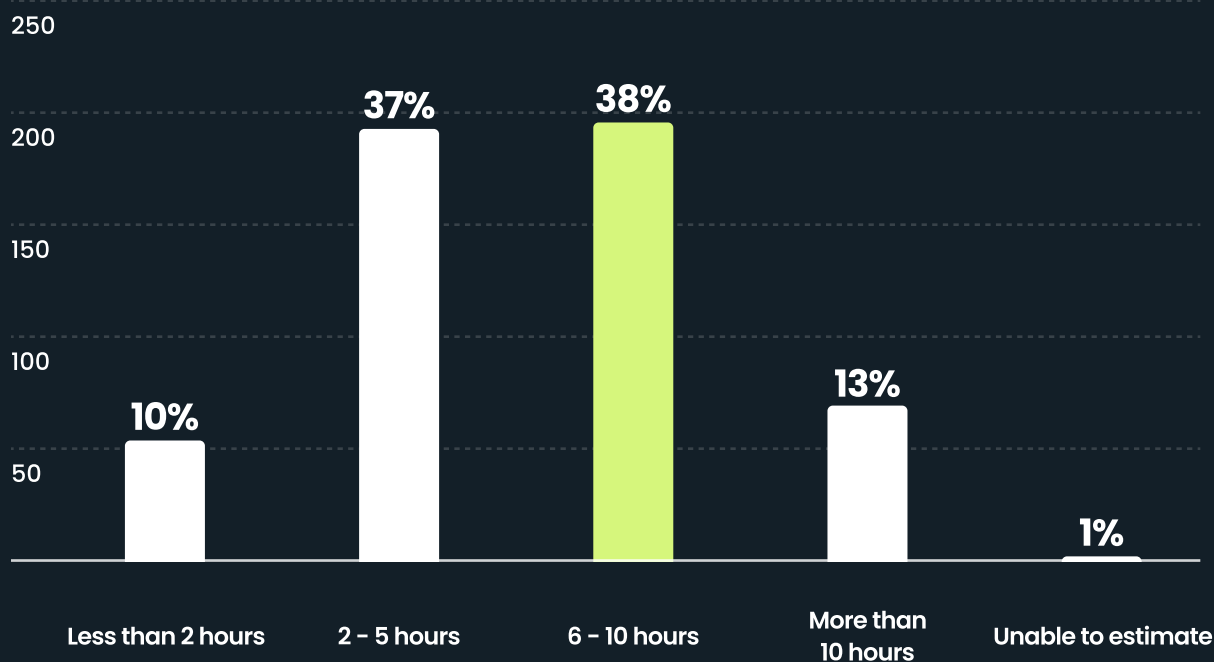


Figure 1.2: How many hours per week does your average employee spend searching for the right data?



Context switching is to blame for some of this lost productivity. About half (51%) of respondents use four to six applications in a typical workday, while an additional 31% use seven to ten applications (Figure 1.3).

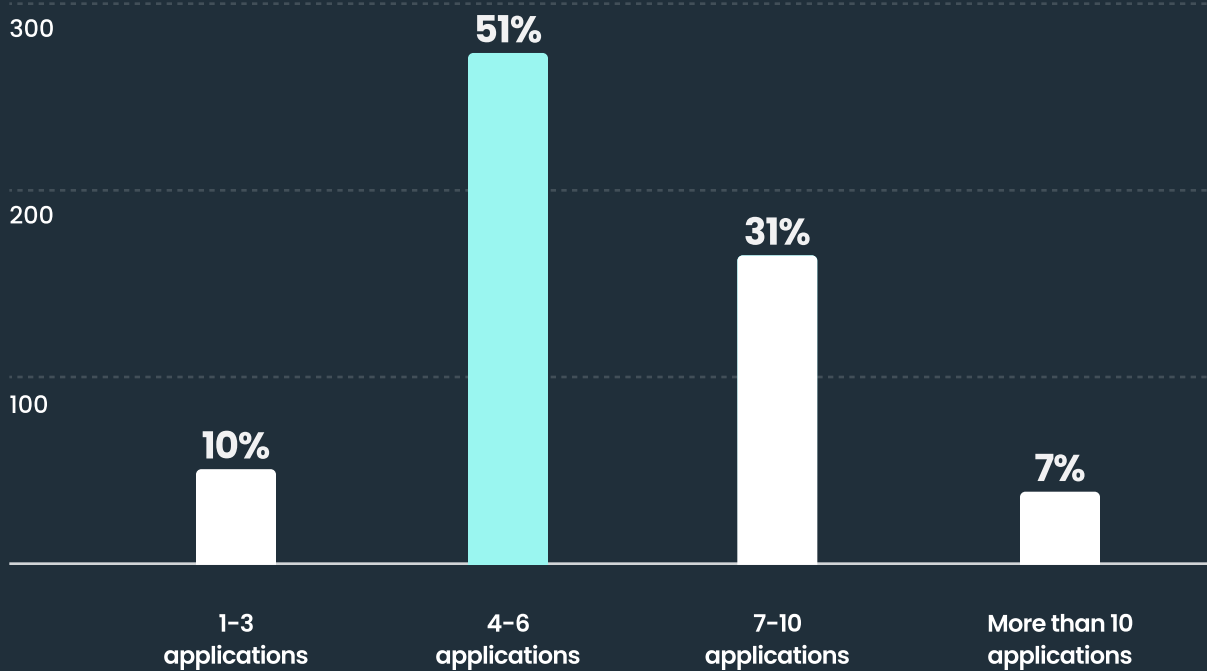


Figure 1.3: How many applications do you actively use in a typical workday?

Moving between these apps does more than just disrupt workflows. It requires context switching, which adds a cognitive load that slows performance and compromises concentration. A more efficient solution like invisible analytics would eliminate much of this cognitive burden.



Instead of trying to pull people into your application or your workflow, figure out how you can bring your insights into the end-user's existing workflow. For example, there is a time and place for reviewing dashboards or discussing metrics, often in wide forums where questions are bound to arise. However, when I need to take action that is time sensitive, bring it to me where I am, whether that's in Slack, email, or my phone.



Andrew Loomis,
Sr. Director Global Field Services, Sisense

In fact, 52% switch between different applications four to six times to complete a single analytics-related task. An additional 24% require seven to ten applications (Figure 1.4).

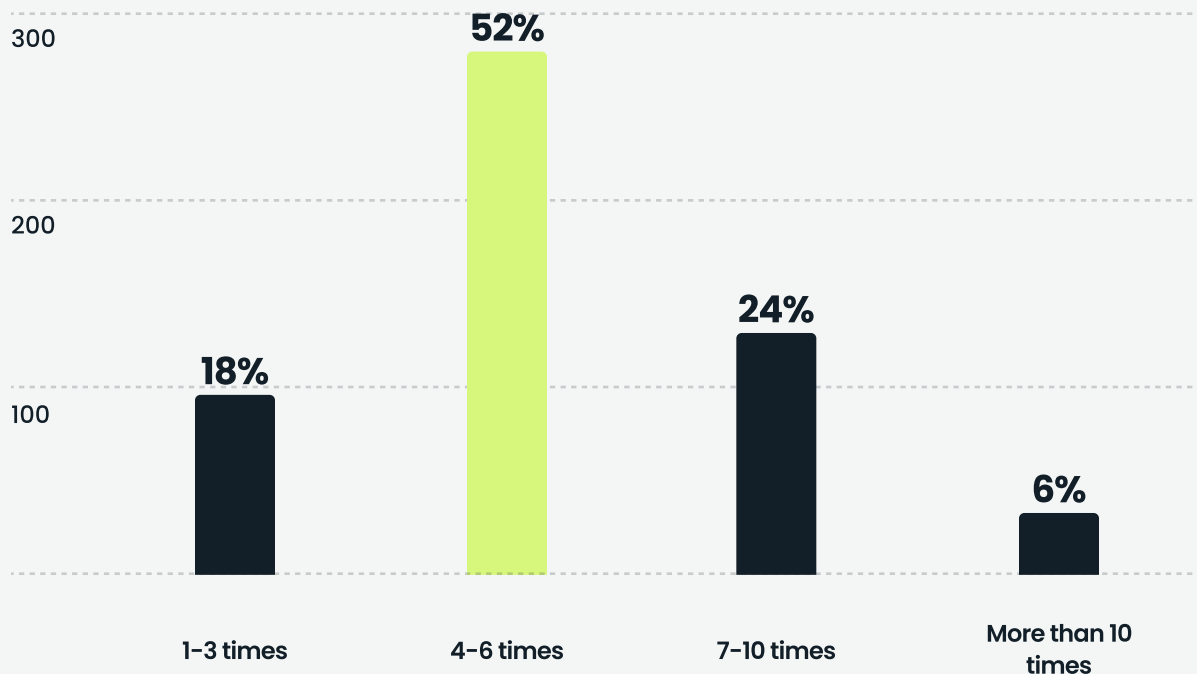


Figure 1.4: How many times per day do you switch between different applications to complete a single analytics-related task?



Traditional BI tools often require users to leave their workflow to access the insights they need. This disruption may cause employees to resist seeking the right data to support their workflows, especially when they can't accommodate the high cognitive cost.

Over two-thirds (68%) report that up to 50% of their employee training time is spent on analytics tools rather than core job functions (Figure 1.5). This reveals both the steep learning curve that traditional tools require and the need for an embedded solution.

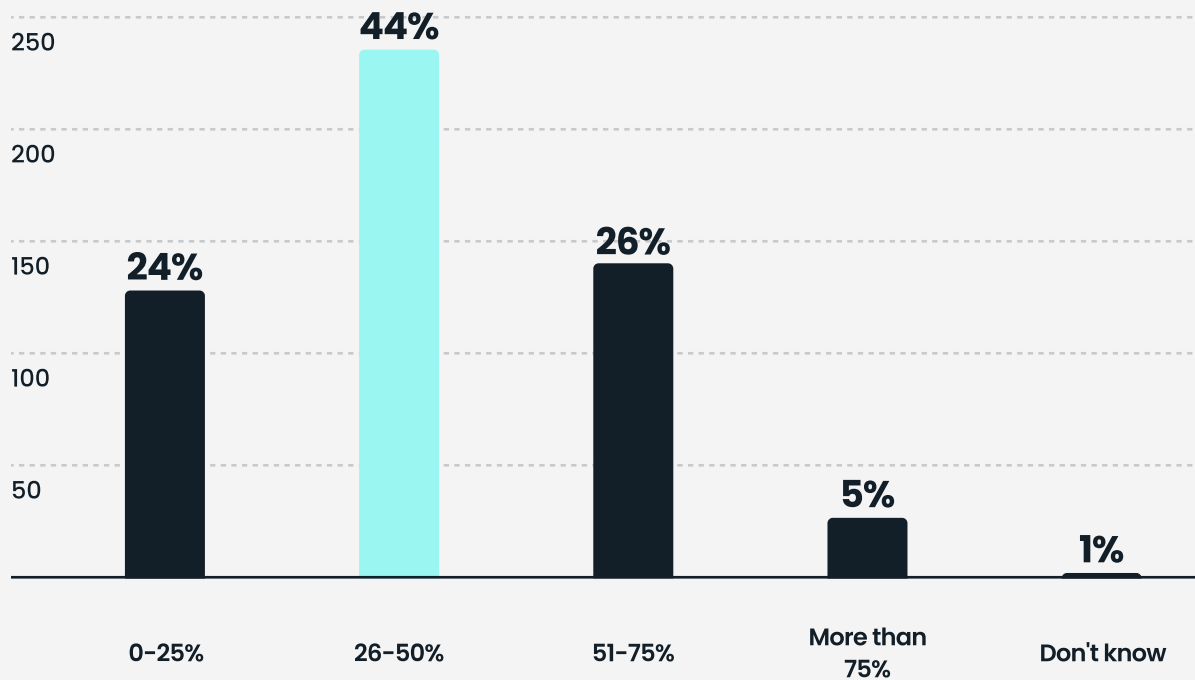
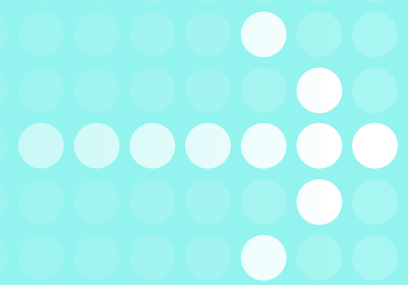


Figure 1.5: What percentage of employee training time is spent on analytics tools vs. core job functions?

This data uncovers another hidden cost. Rather than encouraging employees to develop their primary skills, organizations invest resources into teaching employees to use complex analytics tools. Because these tools require such high levels of expertise, they create a continued dependency on specialists and an obstacle to information flow.



Chapter 2:



Business decisions happen in the dark

Organizations face a serious contradiction in their relationship with data. While they claim control over their analytics, their actions show a different reality. Leadership teams regularly make critical business decisions without relevant data.

Traditional BI solutions have established barriers between decision makers and data, often requiring specialists to access analytics. By adopting an AnPaaS approach, organizations democratize access, embedding analytics into workflows and allowing users to locate critical insights without IT bottlenecks.

At Measuremen, one of our core values is that data-driven insights guide our decisions. We believe that ‘numbers tell the tale,’ and as a company, we prioritize making all business decisions based on actionable metrics and analytics. This philosophy extends to our client work, as we empower customers to make informed decisions by providing them with clear, data-backed reports and analysis.



Natacha Willhalm

Product Manager, Measuremen



42% of organizations report that between a quarter and a half of their analytics tools' advanced features go unused due to complexity (Figure 2.1). This points to both a major missed opportunity and a potential overinvestment in analytics software.

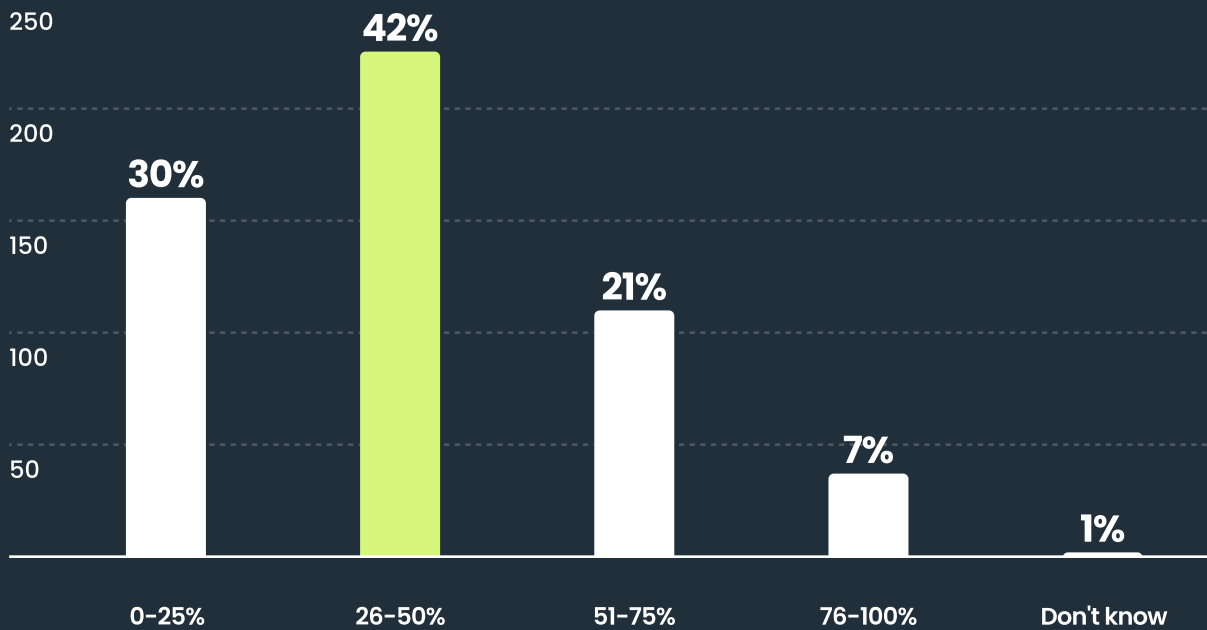


Figure 2.1: What percentage of your analytics tools' advanced features go unused due to complexity?

This complexity often stems from investing in analytics tools designed for specialists. When BI tools require extensive training or technical knowledge to operate, the data becomes siloed. This creates a growing gap between analytics potential and business reality.



[Our analytics platform] allows data to be accessible in a way that everyone can see it, understand it, and filter it independently. That was probably the biggest win for us.

Brent Allen

Director of Infrastructure and WebOps, Skullcandy

Altogether, nearly two-thirds (64%) of organizations can't reliably access data for decision-making. 47% say that only specialists can effectively access their organization's analytics. The rest technically have the data but struggle to access or use it (Figure 2.2).

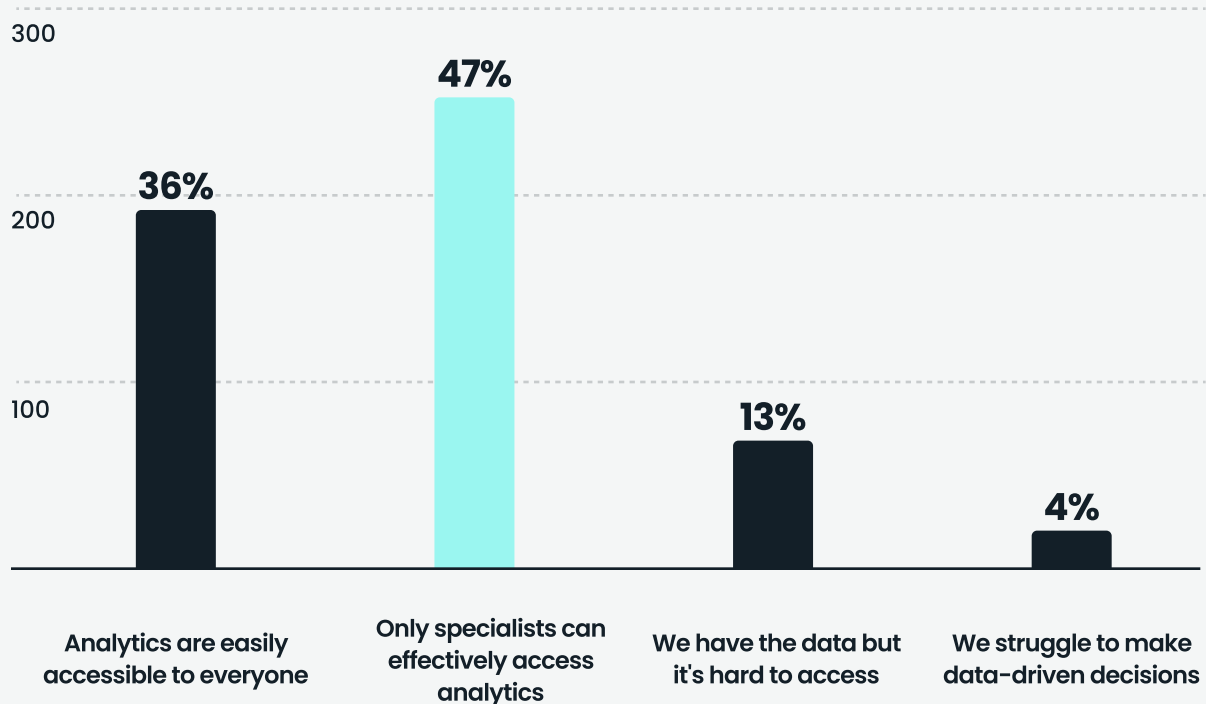


Figure 2.2: Which statement best describes your organization's analytics accessibility?



The dependence on specialists slows the data-to-decision pipeline. These specialists inevitably become gatekeepers who manage a constant stream of data requests. Decision-makers who won't wait for their turn in the queue may proceed without insights.

As organizations grow and their analytics needs scale, they face a difficult choice. They either have to hire more specialists, prioritize specific requests, or switch to a more accessible analytics solution with self-serve capabilities.

ROI tracking, reporting, and optimization went from a really painful pipe dream to a robust, successful reality. We have the insights now to become better partners.

Jason Brown

CEO, Chief Strategy Officer, Brown Parker & Demarinis

Despite the lack of access and the resulting bottlenecks, 81% of organizations say they have either complete or a good level of control over their data (Figure 2.3). This perception gap suggests a misunderstanding about the potential value of and applications for the data.



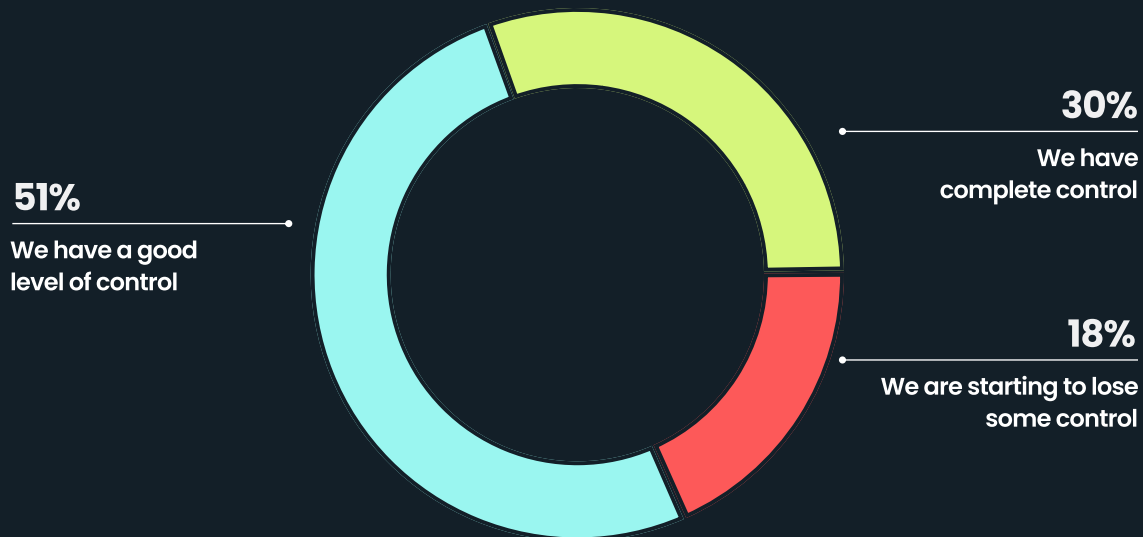


Figure 2.3: To what extent do you feel that your organization is losing control over its data as it becomes increasingly complex and distributed?

Maintaining complete control involves much more than simply safeguarding data. It also entails providing data access to improve decision-making throughout the organization. Those that prioritize protection over utilization end up with secure yet inaccessible data.

Over and over again, we hear from our prospects that the proliferation of disconnected data sources has become one of the most significant barriers to achieving strategic objectives. When critical information remains siloed across systems, organizations are missing on valuable insights that could help drive innovation and growth.



Uri Bahar
Director, Solution Engineering, Sisense



In fact, 76% of respondents admit that in the past month, they occasionally or frequently made business decisions without consulting available data because it was too difficult to access (Figure 2.4).

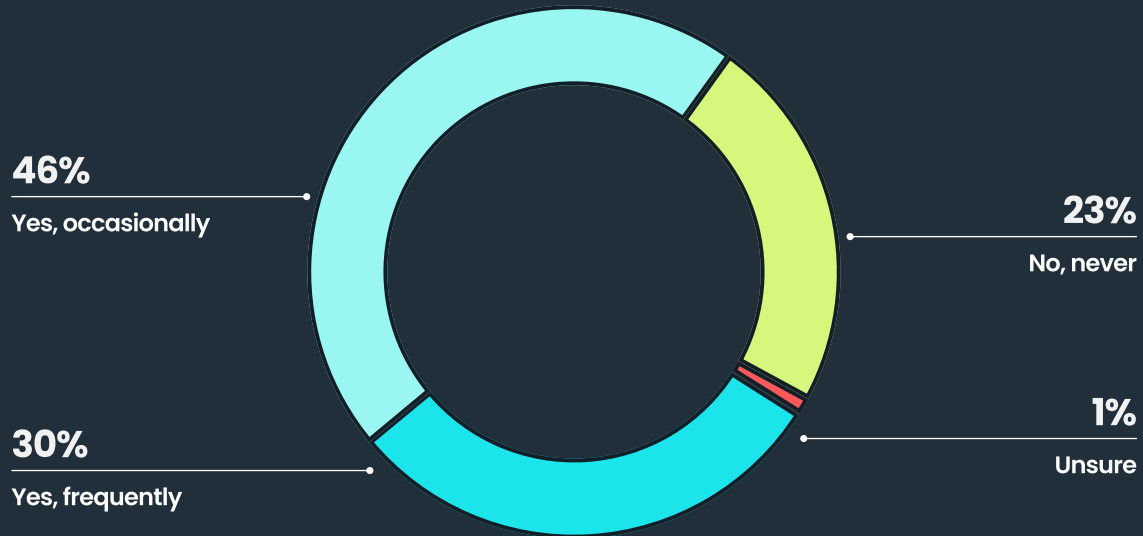


Figure 2.4: In the past month, have you made a business decision without consulting available data because it was too difficult to access?

Organizations are missing an incredible number of opportunities to use real-time data to make more informed decisions. With embedded analytics, organizations can eliminate context switching, eliminate technical requirements, and provide just-in-time insights.



I don't have to dig through menus to find the battery level of my phone, and when I need to charge it, it sends me an alert that it's running low. When a part of our business needs attention, we need to notify the decision makers on the spot, not hope they can find it during their next business review.

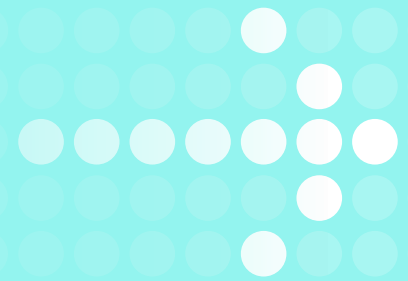


Andrew Loomis

Sr. Director Global Field Services, Sisense



Chapter 3:



Development and innovation move to the back burner

Organizations budget hundreds of thousands of dollars into analytics infrastructure each year. Yet this investment tends to increase total cost of ownership (TCO) while yielding diminishing returns. Rather than prioritizing new development, teams end up drowning in maintenance tasks.

As a result, advanced features remain underutilized while innovations are perpetually delayed or abandoned. But with the right analytics solution, organizations can change this equation, transforming analytics from a drain on resources to a business accelerator and focusing team efforts on actionable insights instead of complex system maintenance.

Automating certain aspects of our data preparation process has allowed us to save valuable time, enabling our analysts to focus on deriving insights rather than performing time-consuming data cleaning tasks.

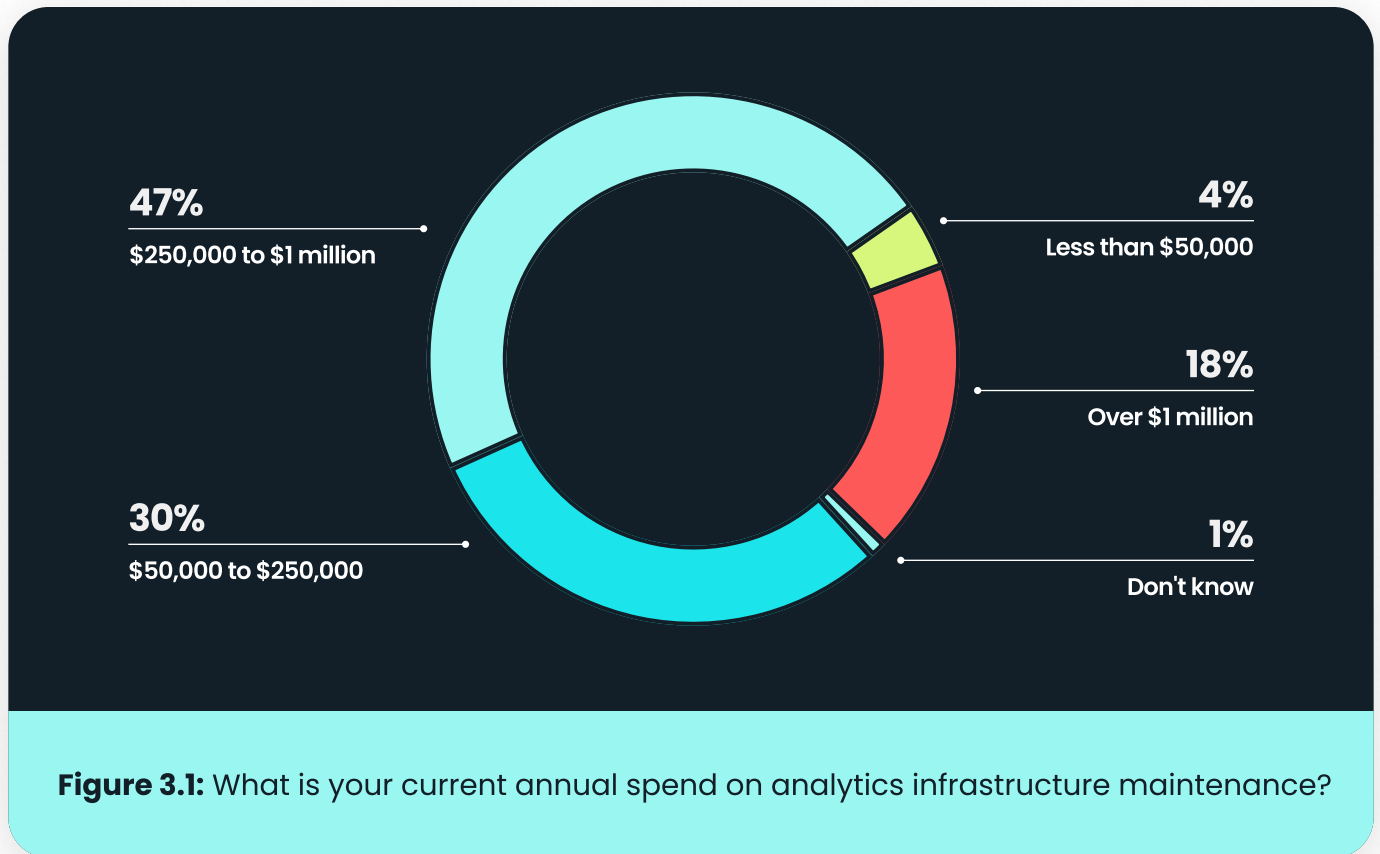


Natacha Willhalm

Product Manager, Measurement



Most organizations make substantial investments in analytics. Nearly two-thirds (65%) of respondents spend \$250,000 or more on analytics infrastructure maintenance each year (Figure 3.1). This significant financial commitment shows that companies recognize the value of analytics and data-driven decision-making.



Yet their investment allocation reveals misaligned priorities. Only 24% evenly allocate budgets between maintenance, development, and training. 42% allocate their analytics budget primarily to new feature development, while 24% focus mainly on infrastructure maintenance (Figure 3.2).

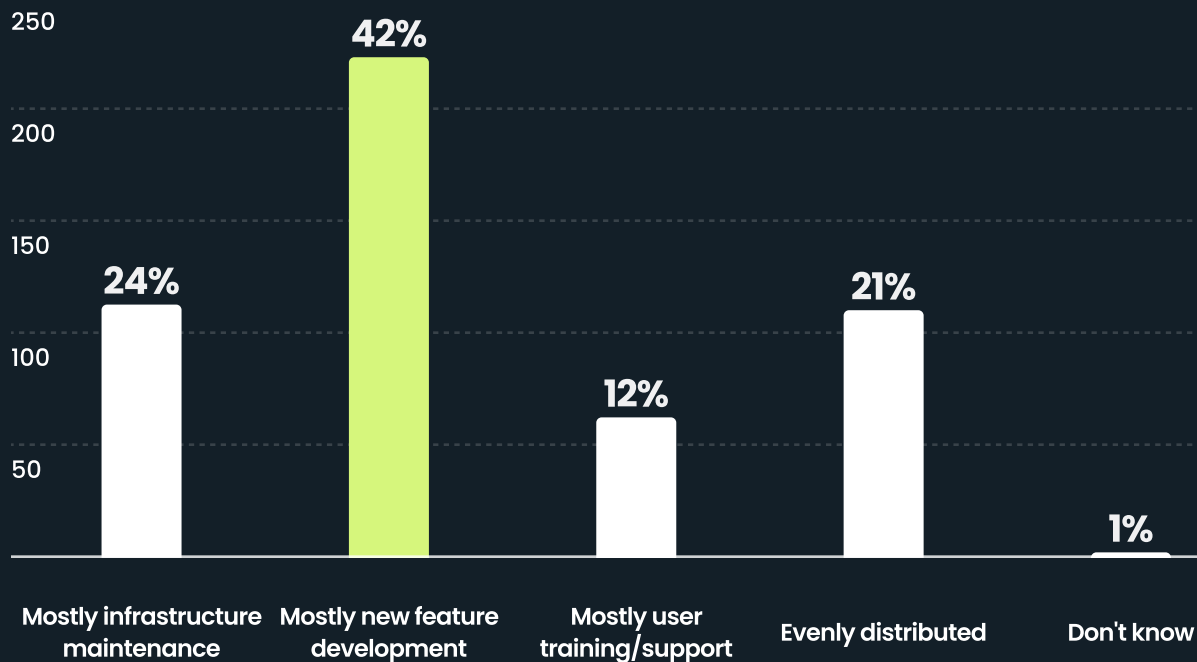


Figure 3.2: How is your analytics budget typically distributed?

When organizations neglect to balance innovation goals with maintenance needs, technical debt tends to accumulate. Indeed, more than two-thirds (68%) of organizations say that up to 50% of their development resources are consumed by maintaining existing analytics integrations (Figure 3.3).



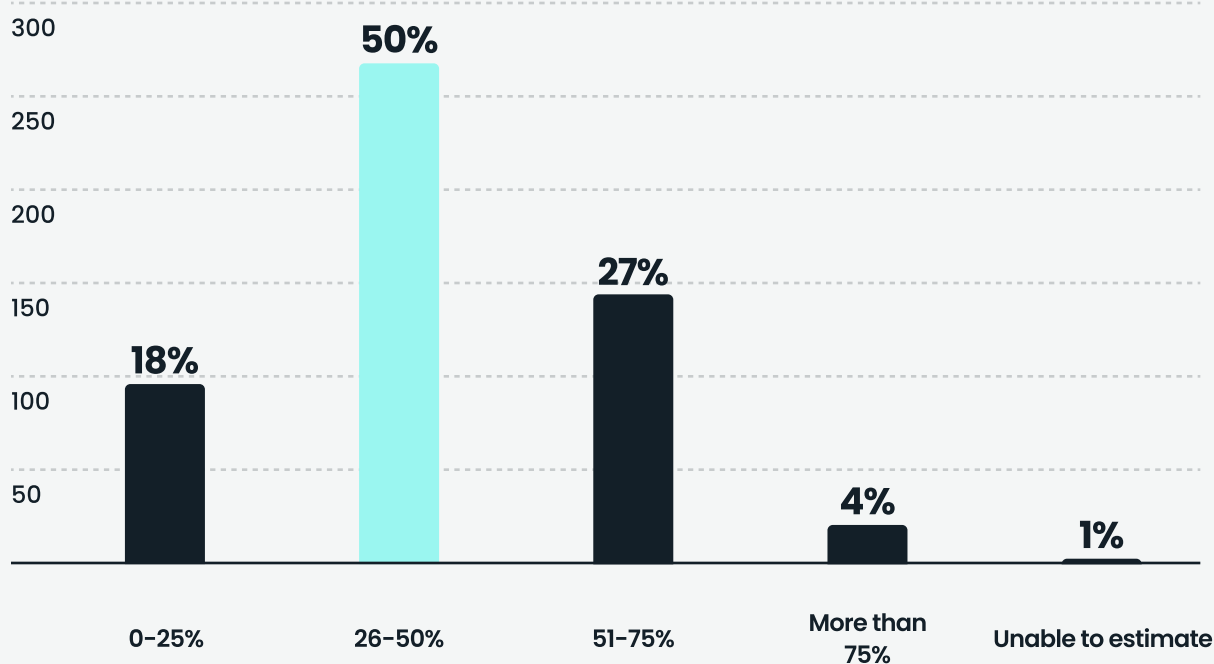


Figure 3.3: What percentage of your development resources are consumed by maintaining existing analytics integrations?

This keeps organizations in maintenance mode rather than in active development. More than a mere technical challenge, it's a strategic barrier that prevents organizations from capturing go-to-market (GTM) opportunities.

When a development team focuses half of its bandwidth on keeping systems operational, the capacity for innovation becomes constrained. This highlights a need for an alternative analytics solution that optimizes infrastructure management and decreases TCO.



The efficiencies we've built with [our analytics partner] are tremendous, transforming our ability to deliver timely, impactful reports.



Patrick Murphy

Senior Director of Data and Product, USA Swimming

55% of respondents require scaling either in real time (22%) or within hours (33%) (Figure 3.4). However, many still struggle with implementation, leading to challenges with scaling analytics workloads.

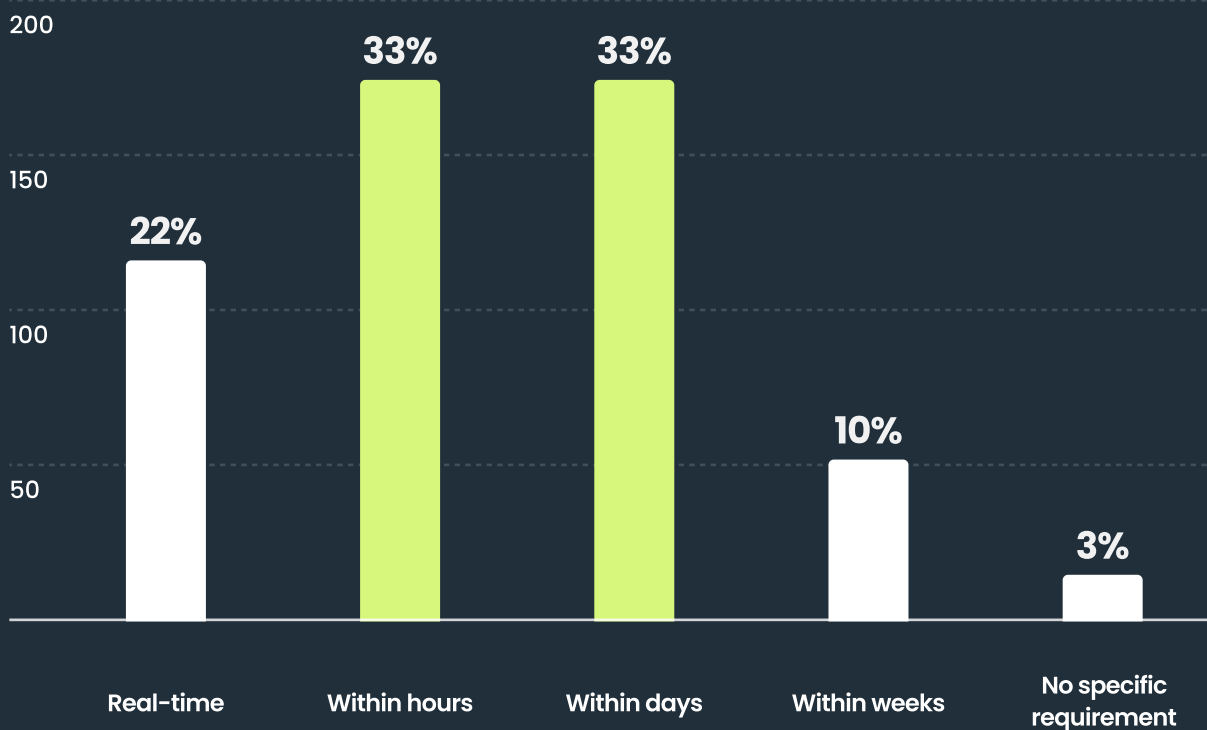


Figure 3.4: What is your required time to scale analytics workloads up or down?



This gap between expectations and capabilities reveals how traditional analytics solutions fail to meet business demands for agility and responsiveness. For 38% of organizations, implementing a new analytics use case takes 1 to 3 months. Just 9% can move from request to deployment in less than a week (Figure 3.5).

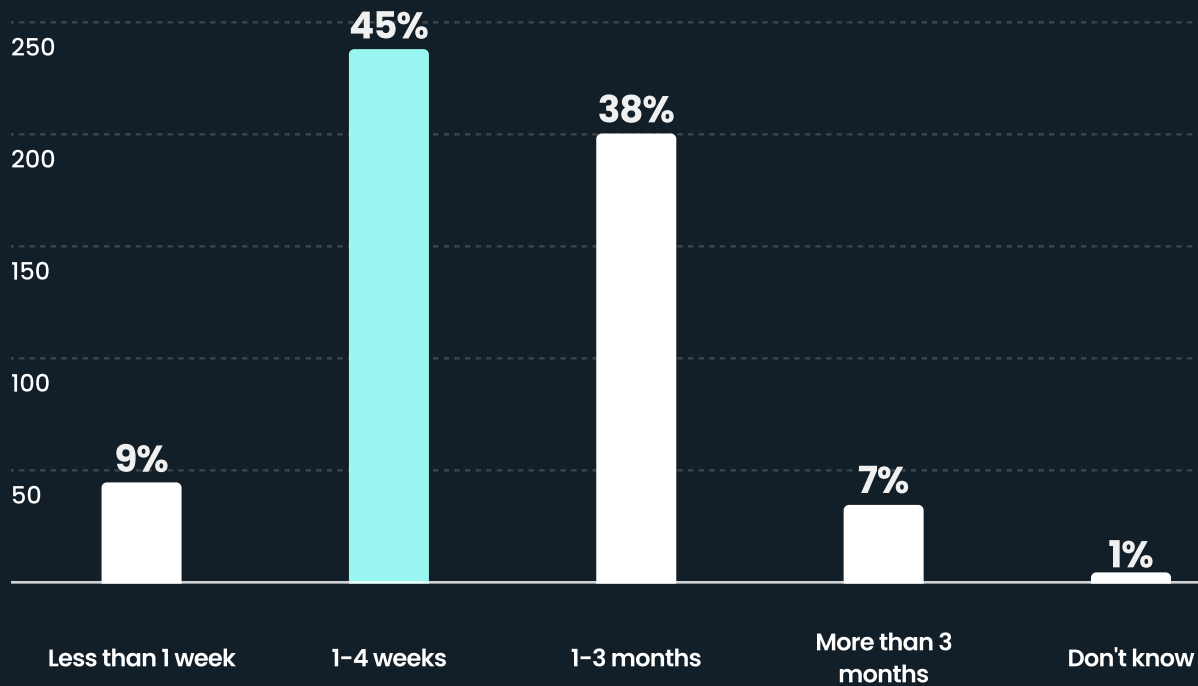


Figure 3.5: How long does it typically take to implement a new analytics use case from request to deployment?

This lengthy development timeline highlights a major bottleneck. A multi-month delay in implementing analytics can lead to costly outcomes like missed GTM opportunities and sidelined competitive advantages.



Indeed, most organizations report serious development chokepoints. 56% say that one to three quarters of their team's product releases were delayed in the past year due to analytics-related bottlenecks (Figure 3.6).

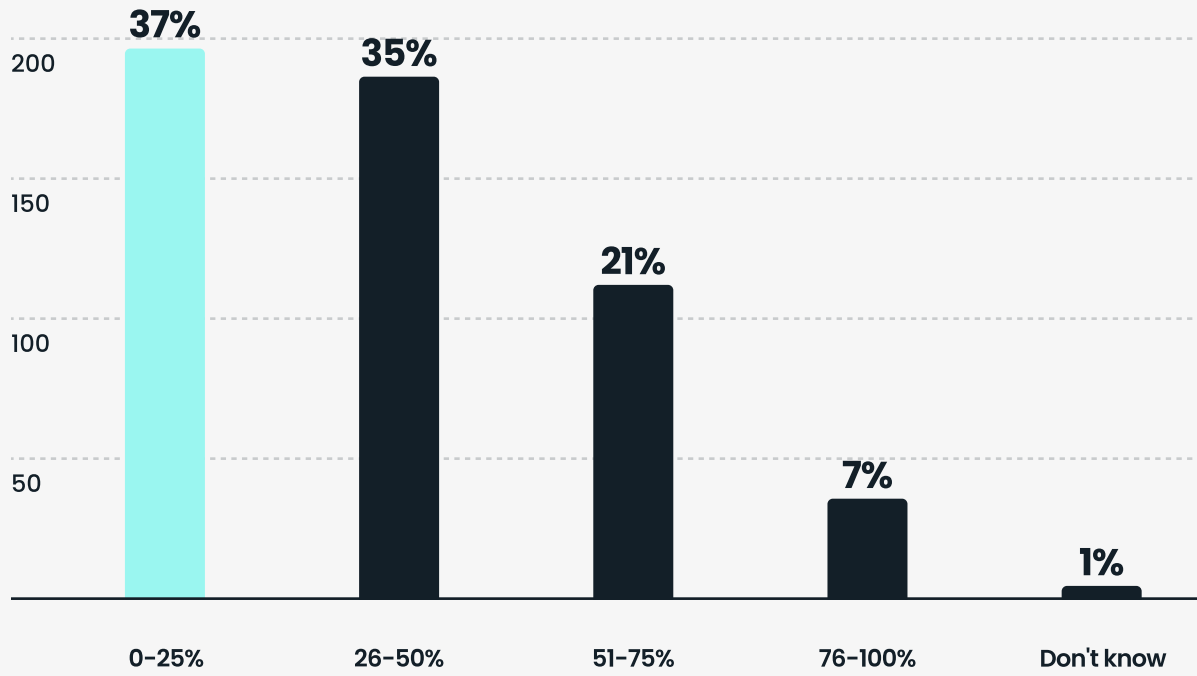


Figure 3.6: What percentage of your team's product releases were delayed in the past year due to analytics-related bottlenecks?



These delays cause a sizable number of projects to be scrapped, seriously limiting innovation. Nearly half (46%) report that three to five potential product innovations were delayed or abandoned due to analytics integration challenges (Figure 3.7).

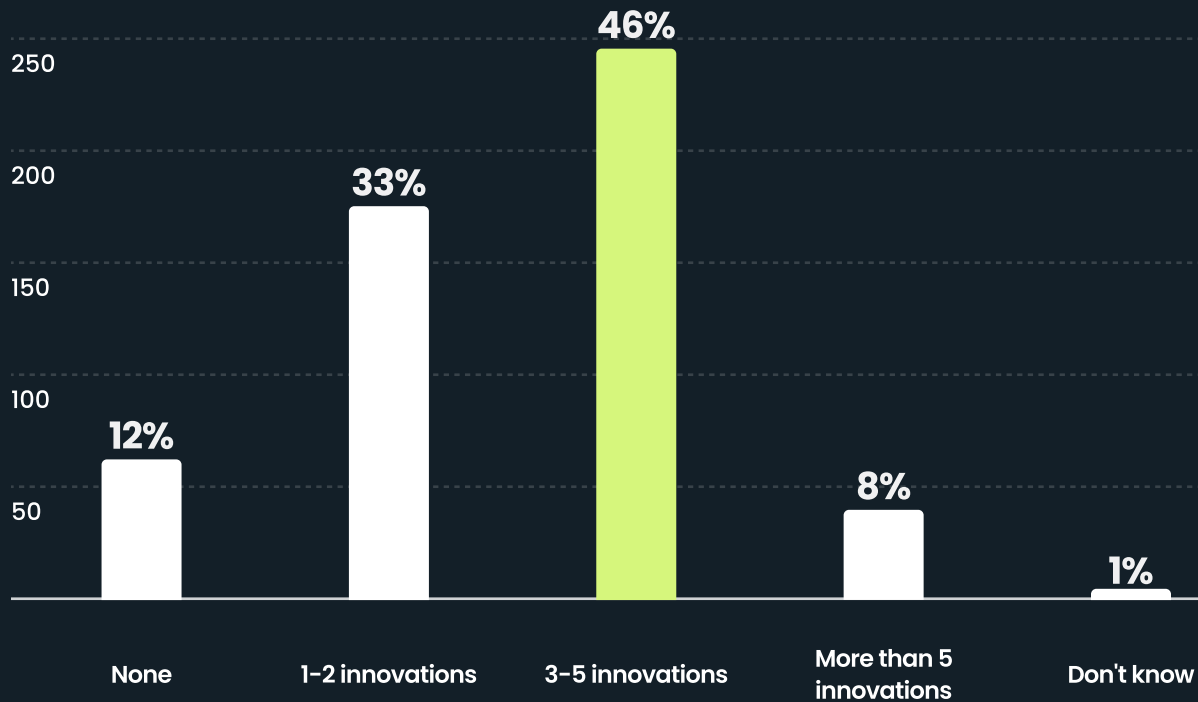
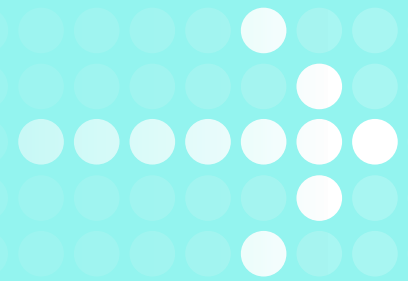


Figure 3.7: How many potential product innovations were delayed or abandoned due to analytics integration challenges?

This statistic should alarm any organization that invests in analytics. When almost half of companies regularly abandon product innovations due to integration issues, the true cost of analytics maintenance becomes clear.



Chapter 4:



Businesses are stuck in AI pilot purgatory

Despite ambitious AI adoption goals, organizations face significant hurdles when moving beyond initial experimentation. Technical challenges and integration issues have created a pilot purgatory with stalled AI initiatives. Gartner's prediction that by the end of 2025, 30% of generative AI projects will be abandoned after proof of concept reinforces this reality.

While BCG advises organizations to manage costs carefully in the near term, the firm finds that 86% intend to invest in AI and advanced analytics. With an analytics solution that allows for continuous improvement, organizations can speed up product development while reducing related costs.

Know the actions you want your end-users to take. It's one thing to present people with data, it's another thing to ensure people know what to do with that data. This is where AI can play a significant role: here is what the data is showing and what you should do next. When people start checking your analytics the way they check the weather or the stock market, you'll know you've designed a great experience for your end-users.



Andrew Loomis

Sr. Director Global Field Services, Sisense



By 2026, over half (53%) of respondents expect more than 50% of their workflows to be AI-assisted or automated (Figure 4.1). This optimistic outlook implies that organizations should be actively adopting or integrating AI tools.

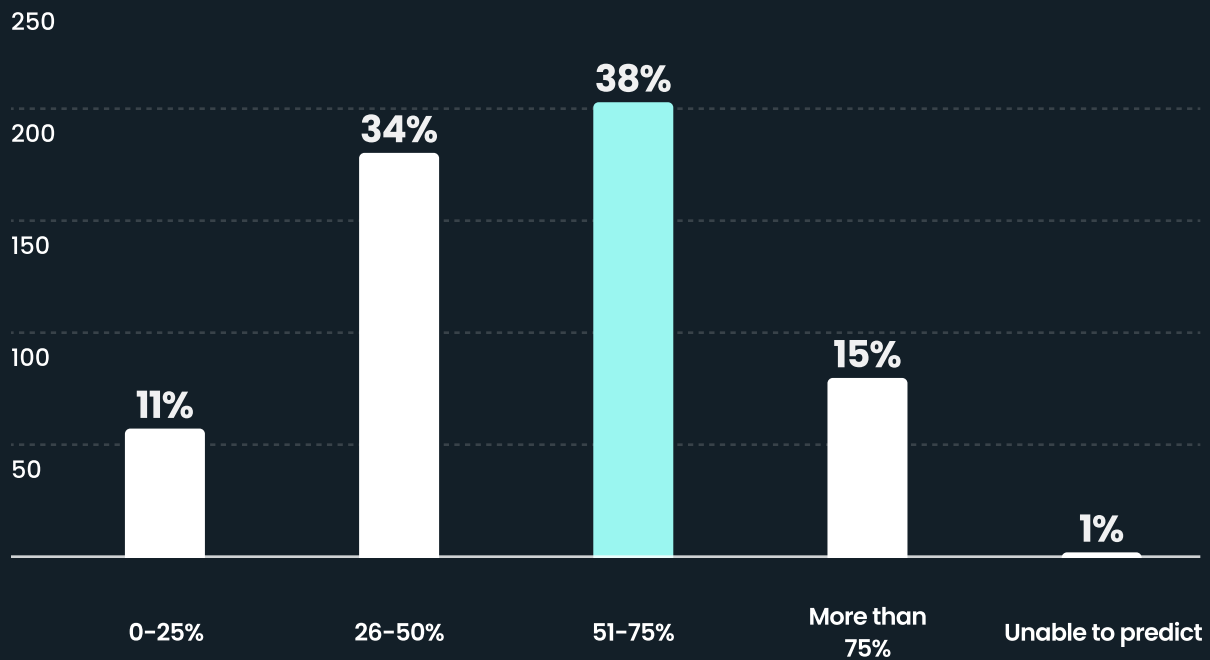


Figure 4.1: By 2026, what percentage of your workflows do you expect to be automated or AI assisted?



However, AI adoption remains stalled. Nearly half (49%) have four to six potential AI use cases identified but not implemented, while 17% have seven to 10 (or more) use cases awaiting development (Figure 4.2).

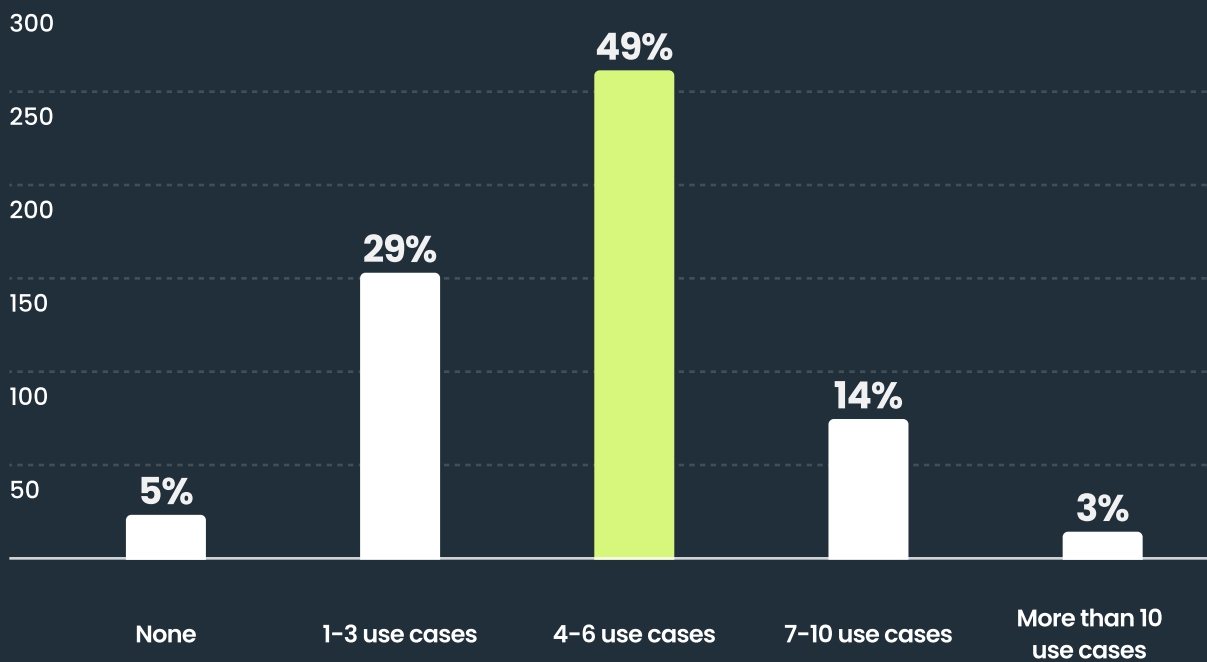


Figure 4.2: How many potential use cases for AI in analytics have you identified but not implemented?

This data reveals a serious issue with AI implementation, as the backlog signals a disconnect between ambition and execution. Overreliance on BI systems that don't support AI integrations may be a contributing factor.



Among AI initiatives stuck in pilot purgatory, nearly one-third (32%) cite integration headaches. Cost issues represent another major hurdle, with 24% saying these initiatives are too expensive to scale. An additional 21% mention data quality issues, indicating that they can't trust the data (Figure 4.3).

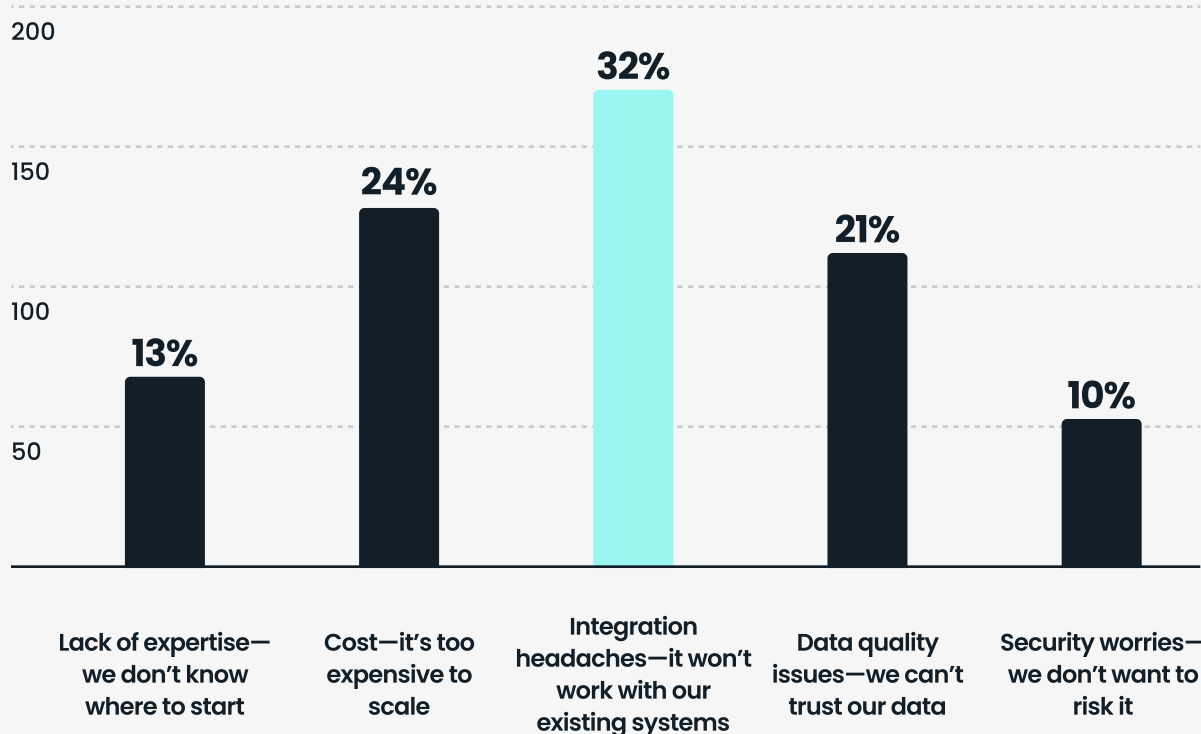


Figure 4.3: What's the biggest reason your AI initiatives are stuck in pilot purgatory?

For organizations looking to move past pilot purgatory, AnPaaS offers a clear path forward. By consolidating data analysis and warehousing tools, this advanced analytics solution alleviates integration headaches while leveraging AI throughout workflows.



Every company is looking to add AI to their product, but very few are doing it in meaningful ways. You can't just add an LLM to your product and think that's going to solve all your problems. The companies doing it the best are being thoughtful about the AI experience. How we as humans interact with digital information has fundamentally shifted. So for any company looking to incorporate AI into their product(s), the ones doing it best are the ones thinking about the experience and how it will save their end-users time or money.

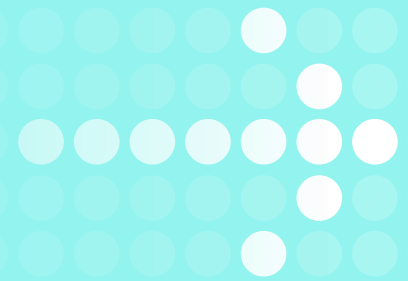


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Chapter 5:



The future centers on low-code integrations and invisible analytics

Organizations today recognize the transformative potential of embedded analytics, yet implementation challenges hold them back from realizing their vision. As [KPMG reports](#), many are increasingly turning to low-code solutions to drive digital transformation.

More than just a technological shift, these changes highlight how organizations are rethinking analytics workflows. Low-code integrations and invisible analytics transcend traditional dashboards, overcoming digital friction and implementation bottlenecks.

When organizations begin integrating low-code platforms and encounter skill gaps, a common solution is to offer additional training opportunities. However, in my view, the most effective approach is to foster close collaboration between business teams and developers. Encouraging cross-functional communication can bridge any potential gaps and ensure that both technical and non-technical teams work together seamlessly to maximize the potential of these new tools.



Natacha Willhalm

Product Manager, Measurement



The survey data shows a clear consensus. 80% of respondents say that invisible or ambient analytics will be very important or critical to their organization's future (5.1).

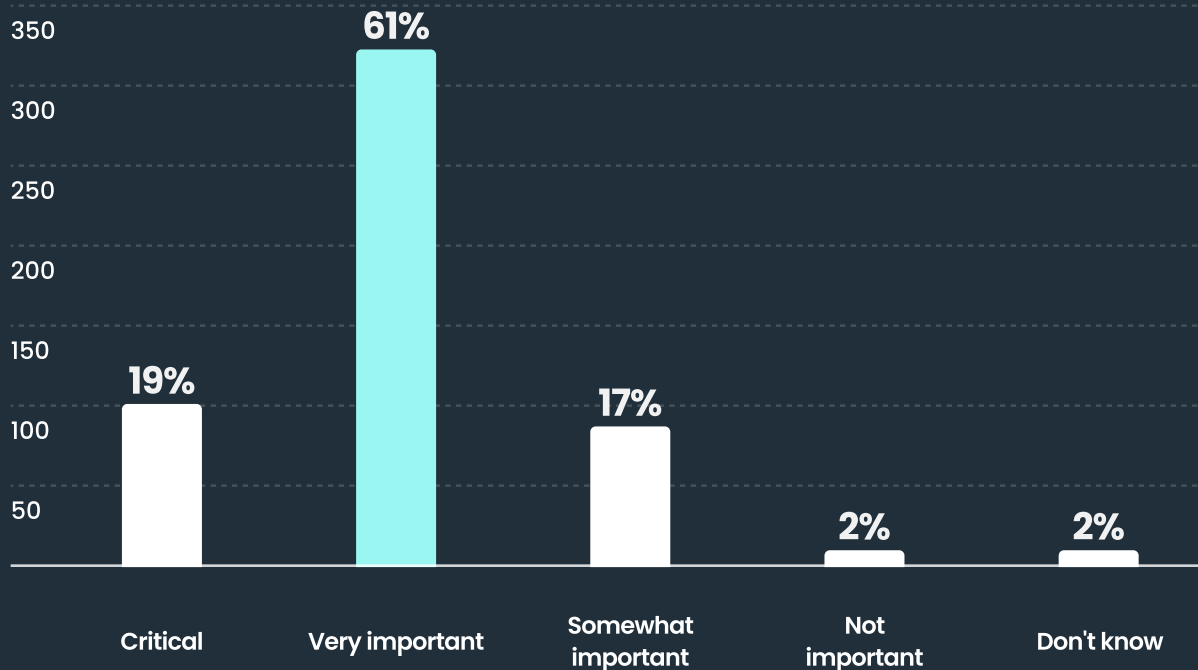


Figure 5.1: How important will invisible or ambient analytics be to your organization's future success?

This overwhelming endorsement indicates a fundamental change in how businesses envision analytics delivery. Rather than relying on users to switch between applications or use separate reporting interfaces, embedded analytics integrates insights directly into existing workflows.



77% say that white-label capabilities for analytics are very important or critical for their business (Figure 5.2). This reaffirms the need to focus on core competencies while seamlessly integrating analytics solutions—preferably those that appear as natural extensions of existing applications rather than third-party widgets.

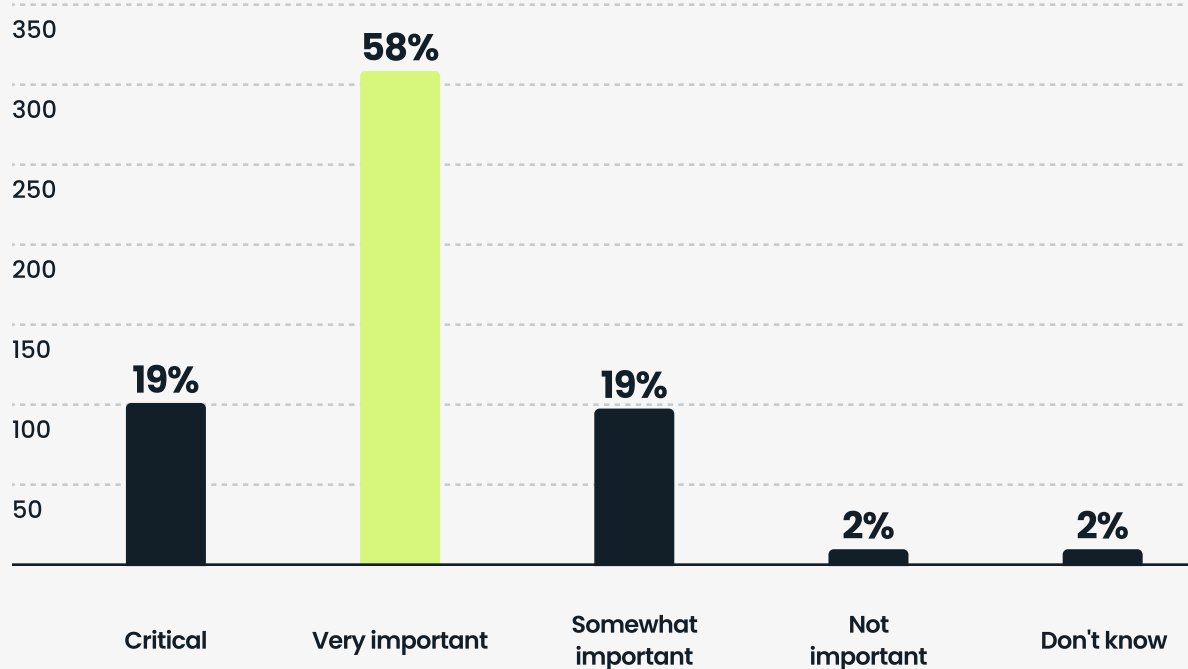


Figure 5.2: How important is white-labeling capability for your analytics integration?



70% believe that no-code analytics development is very important or critical to the business (Figure 5.3). This confirms a preference for less technical integrations that allow easier accessibility and require a lower investment from development teams.

[Our analytics partners] allowed us to empower viewers to do more on their own, reducing dependency on the dev team which was inundated with a backlog of new requirements and change requests.

Christian Murphy

Data and Customer Success Manager, ZeroNorth

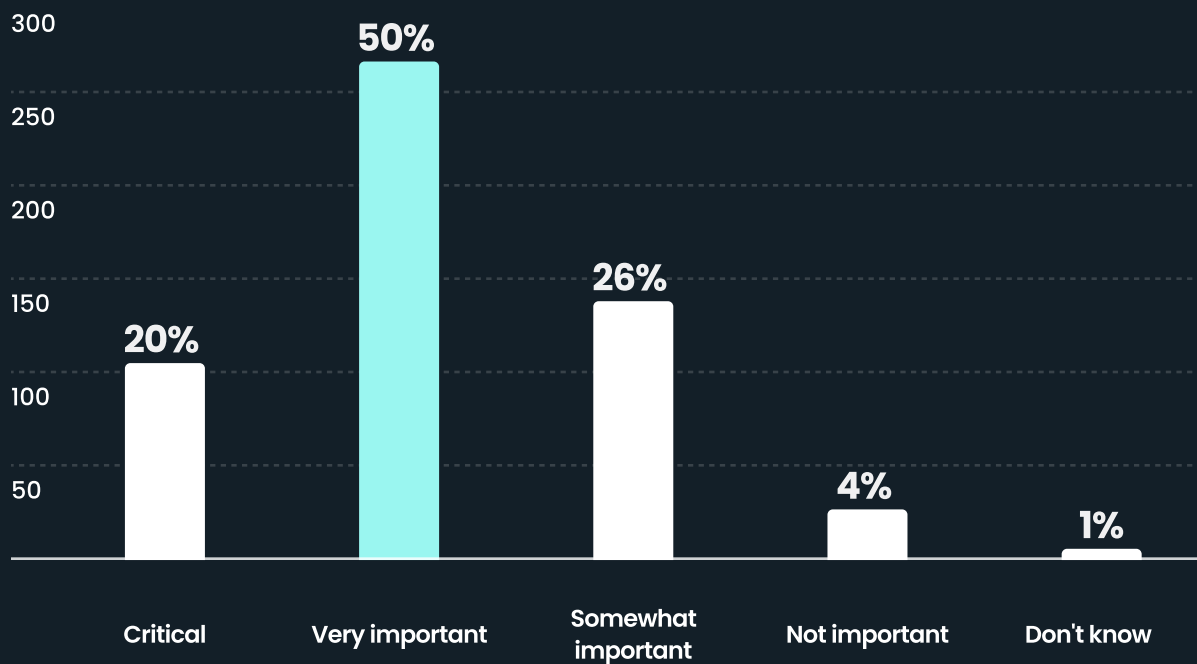


Figure 5.3: How important is no-code analytics development for your organization?



Despite seeking seamless integrations, 55% still prefer custom API integration for analytics (Figure 5.4). This points to a gap between aspiration and implementation, where organizations continue to rely on development resource-intensive approaches.

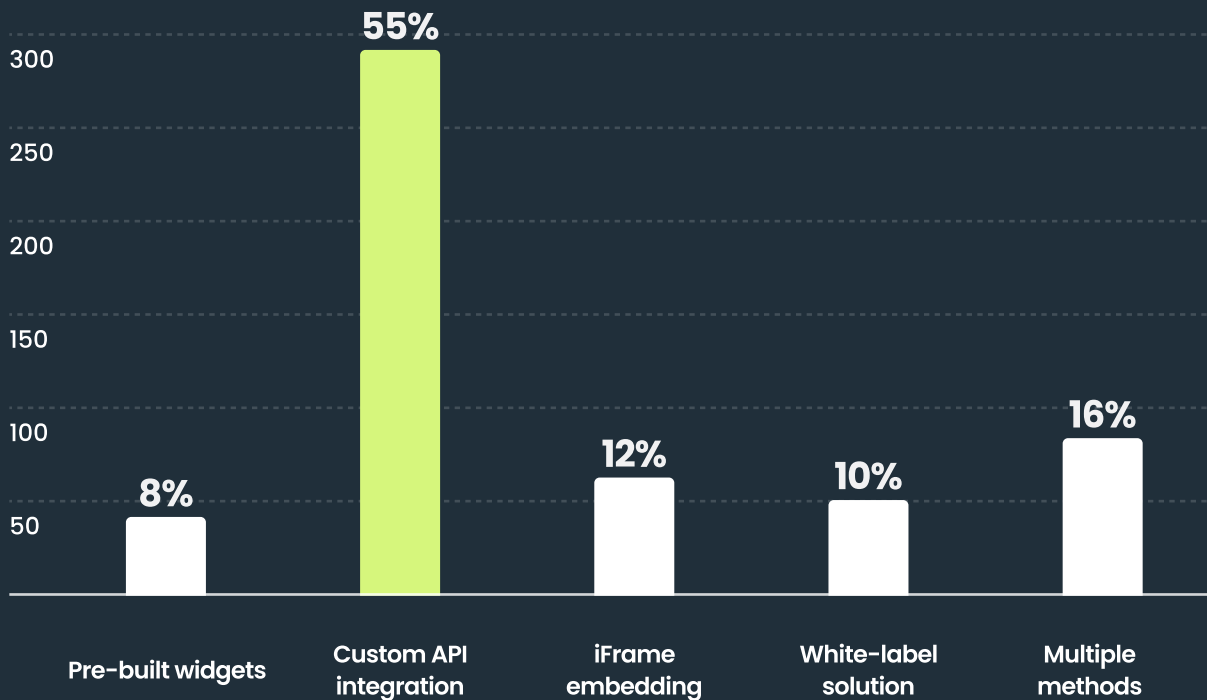


Figure 5.4: How do you prefer to integrate analytics into your applications?

32% favor a mixed approach for embedding analytics, while 23% each prefer low-code integration or full SDK access (Figure 5.5). This indicates that organizations are transitioning toward low- and no-code solutions, balancing immediate needs with strategic direction.



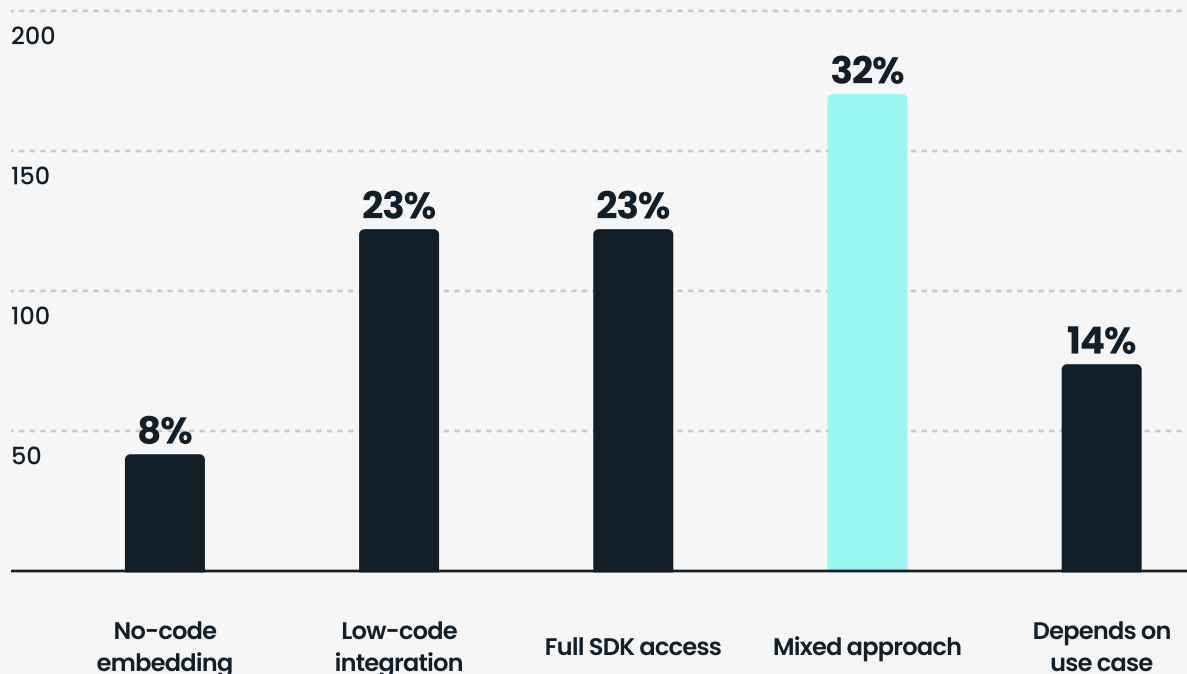


Figure 5.5: What is your preferred method for embedding analytics?

UX is paramount. The more people have to ‘find the insights’ the less likely you are to succeed. Find a way to deliver the insights to the end-user where they’re at—whether that be phone, email, or chat.



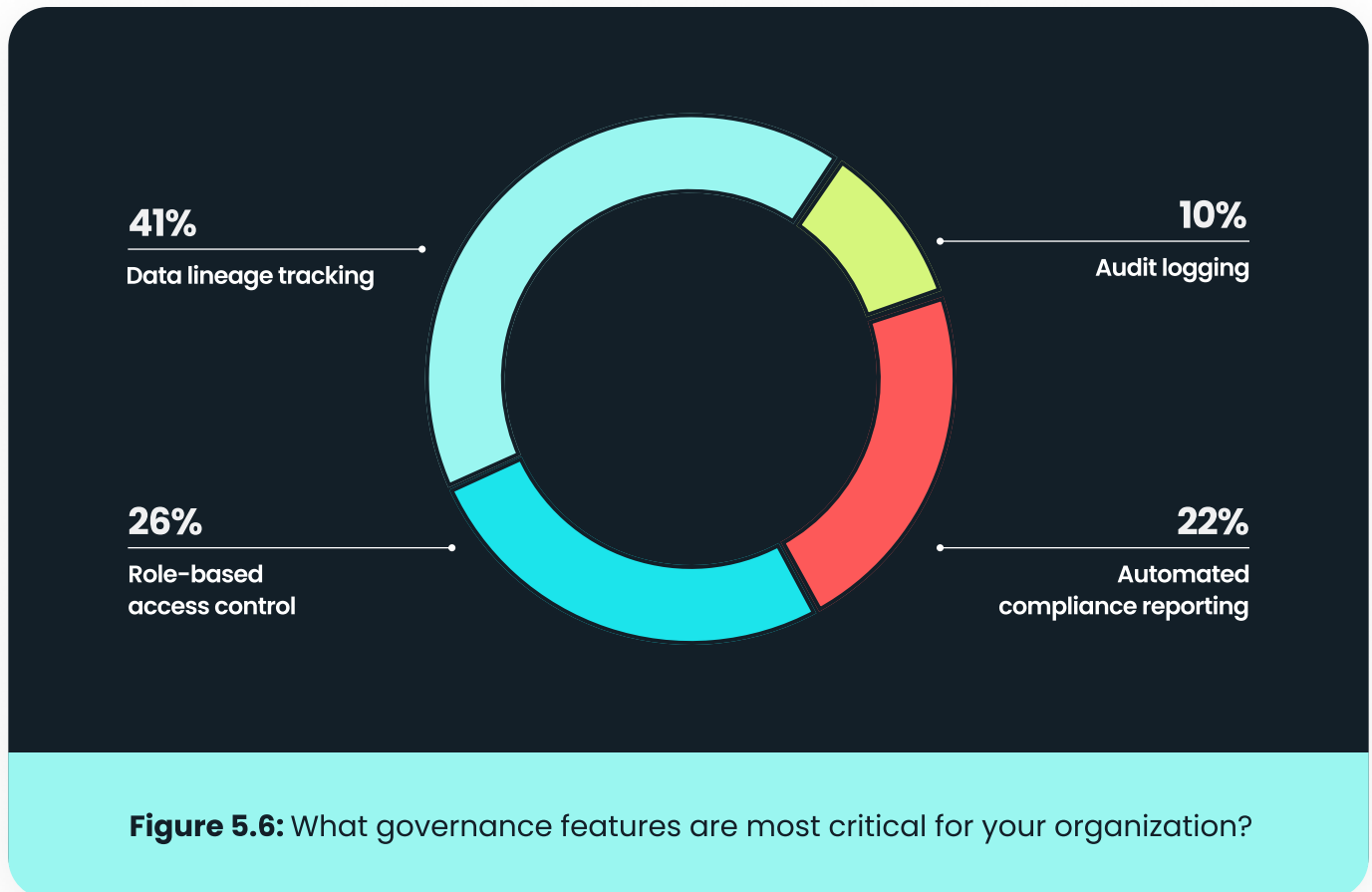
Andrew Loomis

Sr. Director Global Field Services, Sisense

For organizations looking to move past pilot purgatory, AnPaaS offers a clear path forward. By consolidating data analysis and warehousing tools, this advanced analytics solution alleviates integration headaches while leveraging AI throughout workflows.



As organizations move toward invisible analytics, 41% consider data lineage tracking the most critical governance feature (Figure 5.6). This highlights the need for transparency in analytics integrations, especially as insights become more deeply embedded in the decision-making process across the organization.



Because AnPaaS solutions have built-in governance capabilities, they allow organizations to maintain security and compliance standards while improving data accessibility. This approach reduces infrastructure costs and mitigates security risk while allowing for seamless scaling.

If analytics were seamlessly integrated into workflows, nearly a third (30%) would improve customer service. 27% would develop new products or features, and 23% would focus on strategic initiatives (Figure 5.7). This highlights several valuable opportunities for low-code integrations and invisible analytics.



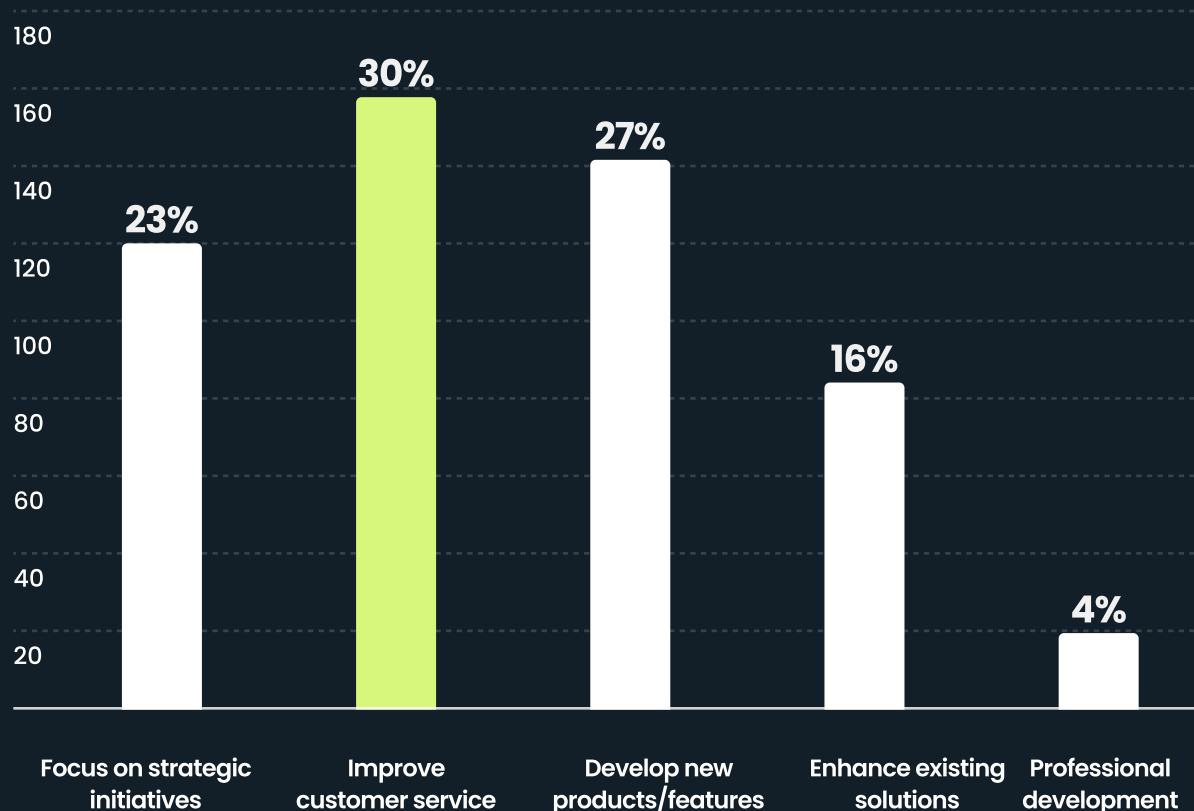


Figure 5.2: How important is white-labeling capability for your analytics integration?

These responses show that analytics must evolve beyond traditional reporting and dashboards to embedded analytics that support rather than interrupt workflows. As ecosystems become more complex and user attention becomes more fragmented, the future belongs to analytics that deliver actionable insights when and where decisions are made.



Conclusion

The findings from this survey reveal several interconnected challenges for data and analytics professionals. Digital friction consumes valuable hours every day, while business-critical decisions happen without data due to accessibility barriers. At the same time, maintenance consumes development resources, preventing product innovations and AI initiatives from moving forward.

While most organizations recognize the value of ambient analytics and aim to prioritize no-code development, many struggle with complex integrations and specialist-dependent tools. The disconnect between aspiration and implementation reveals an opportunity for transformation.

AnPaaS is the necessary evolution of analytics, prioritizing seamless integrations, self-serve capabilities, and real-time data. With an API-first AnPaaS solution, organizations can shorten deployment cycles and scale analytics workloads without downtime. Designed to optimize infrastructure management and lower TCO, AnPaaS allows organizations to focus entirely on generating value through insights, not allocating resources to maintenance.



Methodology & demographics

Sisense commissioned an independent market survey from UserEvidence of 536 data and analytics professionals in North America. The research sample was vendor-neutral and did not target Sisense or UserEvidence customers, although they were not excluded from participating.

Most respondents (82%) were from organizations with 100 to 1,000 employees. 41% were from organizations with 100 to 500 employees, and 41% were from organizations with 500 to 1,000 employees (Figure 0.1).

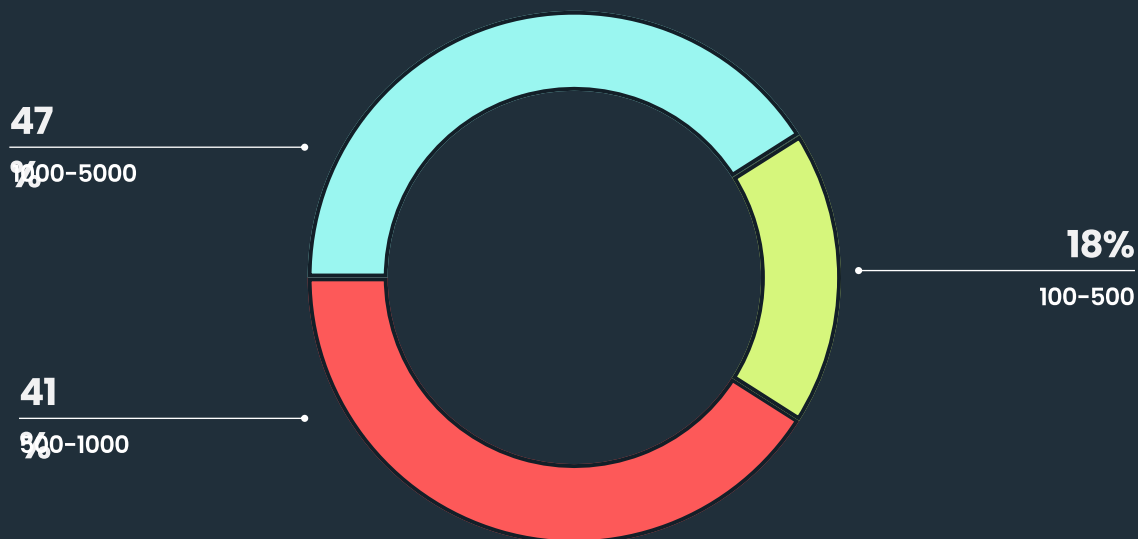


Figure 0.1: How big is your current employer?



Respondents were divided among several industries. 25% were in manufacturing, 19% were in fintech, 16% were in financial services. The remaining respondents were in healthtech, healthcare, martech, and supply chain (Figure 0.2).

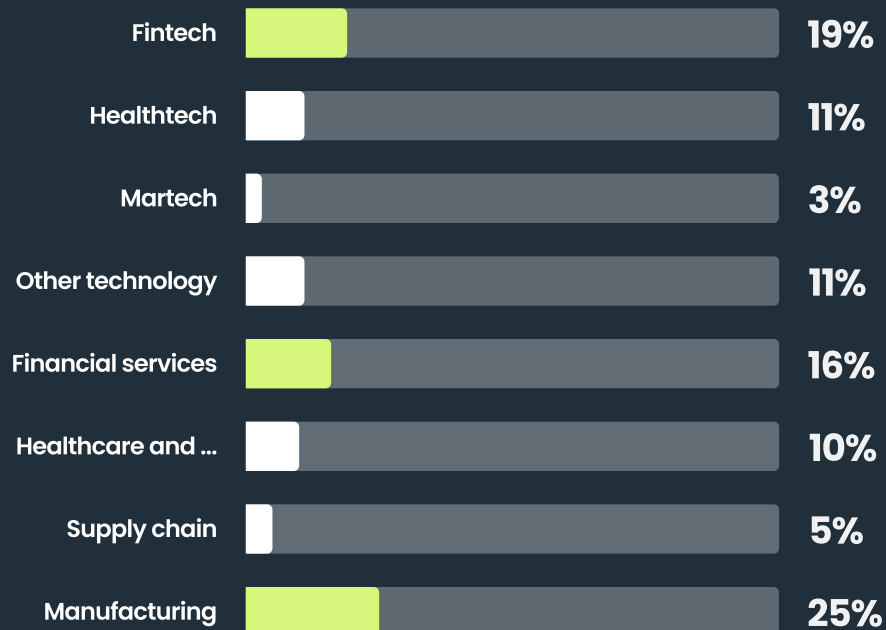


Figure 0.2: What industry do you work in?



About UserEvidence

UserEvidence is a software company and independent research partner that helps B2B technology companies produce original research content from practitioners in their industry. All research completed by UserEvidence is verified and authentic according to their research principles: Identity verification, significance and representation, quality and independence, and transparency. All UserEvidence research is based on real user feedback without interference, bias, or spin from our clients.

UserEvidence research principles

These principles guide all research efforts at UserEvidence—whether working with a vendor’s users for our Customer Evidence offering, or industry practitioners in a specific field for our Research Content offering. The goal of these principles is to give buyers trust and confidence that you are viewing authentic and verified research based on real user feedback, without interference, bias, and spin from the vendor.

1 Identity verification

In every study we conduct, UserEvidence independently verifies that a participant in our research study is a real user of a vendor (in the case of Customer Evidence) or an industry practitioner (in the case of Research Content). We use a variety of human and algorithmic verification mechanisms, including corporate email domain verification (i.e., so a vendor can’t just create 17 Gmail addresses that all give positive reviews), and pattern-based bot and AI deflection.



2 Significance and representation

UserEvidence believes trust is built by showing an honest and complete representation of the success (or lack thereof) of users. We pursue statistical significance in our research, and substantiate our findings with a large and representative set of user responses to create more confidence in our analysis. We aim to canvas a diverse swatch of users across industries, seniorities, personas—to provide the whole picture of usage, and allow buyers to find relevant data from other users in their segment, not just a handful of vendor-curated happy customers.

3 Quality and independence

UserEvidence is committed to producing quality and independent research at all times. This starts at the beginning of the research process with survey and questionnaire design to drive accurate and substantive responses. We aim to reduce bias in our study design, and use large sample sizes of respondents where possible. While UserEvidence is compensated by the vendor for conducting the research, trust is our business and our priority, and we do not allow vendors to change, influence, or misrepresent the results (even if they are unfavorable) at any time.

4 Transparency

We believe research should not be done in a black box. For transparency, all UserEvidence research includes the statistical N (number of respondents), and buyers can explore the underlying blinded (de-identified) raw data and responses associated with any statistic, chart, or study. UserEvidence provides clear citation guidelines for clients when leveraging research that includes guidelines on sharing research methodology and sample size.



About Sisense

Sisense is the leading AI-first analytics platform as a service (AnPaaS) that democratizes data access, empowering developers, app builders, and business users to embed actionable insights into their products and workflows. Our developer-forward approach enables enterprises of all sizes to transform complex data into accessible, actionable experiences.

With a complete suite of no-, low-, and pro-code tools, Sisense simplifies data preparation, uncovers deep insights, and seamlessly embeds analytics into applications, catering to both technical and non-technical users. The Sisense flexible analytics platform, composed of Fusion Embed, Sisense Cloud, and Compose SDK, enables customers like Seismic, USA Swimming, and Air Canada to infuse actionable insights into their customer experiences. Founded in Israel in 2004, Sisense maintains ISO 27701 privacy and ISO 27001 information security management certifications. For more information, visit www.sisense.com.