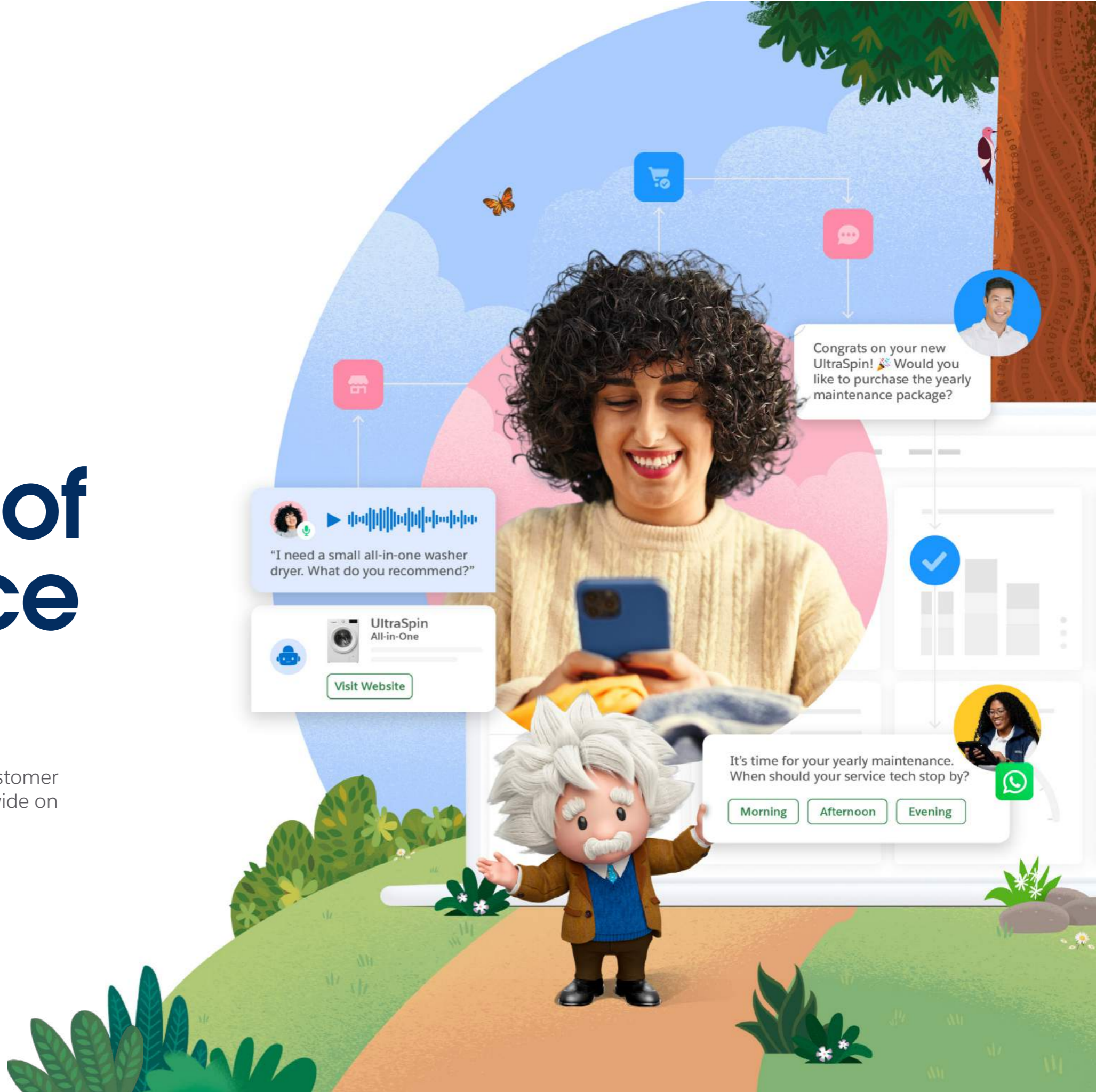




SIXTH EDITION

State of Service

Insights from over 5,500 customer service professionals worldwide on support in the AI era.



Executive Letter



Service is in a state of flux – and full of opportunity. Today's customers demand fast, consistent, and personalised interactions every time they engage with a company. They're looking for brands that offer exceptional service and protect their data – all while delivering service at scale (driven by technologies like AI).

We're only beginning to understand the possibilities and implications of AI, but one thing is clear: the companies that use it effectively and ethically will come out on top. At Salesforce, we strongly believe that now is the time for businesses to create efficient, innovative, and secure customer experiences with trust as a number-one priority.

In our latest "State of Service" report, we surveyed over 5,500 service professionals worldwide to get the latest answers to today's most pressing questions. Our findings reveal that high-performing organisations are meeting the challenge of customers' rising expectations. And as leaders focus more attention on generating revenue, the pressure is on to invest in technology that directly impacts the bottom line.

Insights from today's service professionals are a valuable guide for turning that vision into a reality. We hope this research will serve as a helpful resource as you navigate what's next in customer service – so you can face the future with confidence.

Kishan Chetan

Kishan Chetan

EVP & GM
Salesforce Service Cloud

What You'll Find in This Report

For the sixth edition of the “State of Service” report, Salesforce surveyed over 5,500 service professionals worldwide to discover:

- How service organisations are adapting to rising customer expectations
- Which metrics and channels are most important to high-performing service leaders
- How artificial intelligence (AI) is reshaping roles and operations

Due to rounding, not all percentage totals in this report sum to 100%. All comparison calculations are made from total numbers (not rounded numbers).

Data in this report is from a double-anonymous survey conducted from December 8, 2023, through January 22, 2024. Respondents represent 30 countries across five continents. All respondents are third-party panelists. For further survey demographics, see page 36.



5,550 service professionals surveyed worldwide

Who We Surveyed

In this report, we refer to the following respondent groups.

Decision Makers

Service vice presidents, directors, and team leaders

Service Operations

Service professionals who oversee operations and equip internal teams with tools, systems, and processes

Agents

Frontline employees who support customers from the employee's home, store, or office

Mobile Workers

Frontline employees who provide support in the field, at the customer's home or business – in-person or virtually

Service Professionals

All survey respondents, inclusive of all groups above



What You'll Find in This Report

Throughout this report, we classify survey respondents across the following tiers of service performance.

Service Performance Levels



49% **High performers**
rate their customer satisfaction as excellent

Moderate performers
rate their customer satisfaction as good

43%

8% **Underperformers**
rate their customer satisfaction as fair or poor




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Executive Summary

Customer service is in a state of flux. As budgets and staffing levels increase, so have customer expectations, keeping efficiency critical for delivering higher quality of service.

Decision makers are looking to technologies like AI and automation to help their organisations meet these challenges. They hope that these tools will allow them to achieve both the speed and quality of next-generation customer service.

01 Faster, More Personalised Service Becomes the Norm

Customers want better, faster service that's tailored just for them. In fact, **82% of agents and 76% of mobile workers say customers ask for more than they used to.** The good news is service organisations are getting better at meeting that demand. **Sixty-nine percent of agents say balancing customer service speed and quality is difficult – down from 76% in 2022.**

02 Service Organisations Double Down on Revenue Generation

Amid growing headcounts and budgets, service organisations are under pressure to find new ways to increase revenue and efficiency. **Eighty-five percent of decision makers say service is expected to contribute a larger share of revenue this year.**

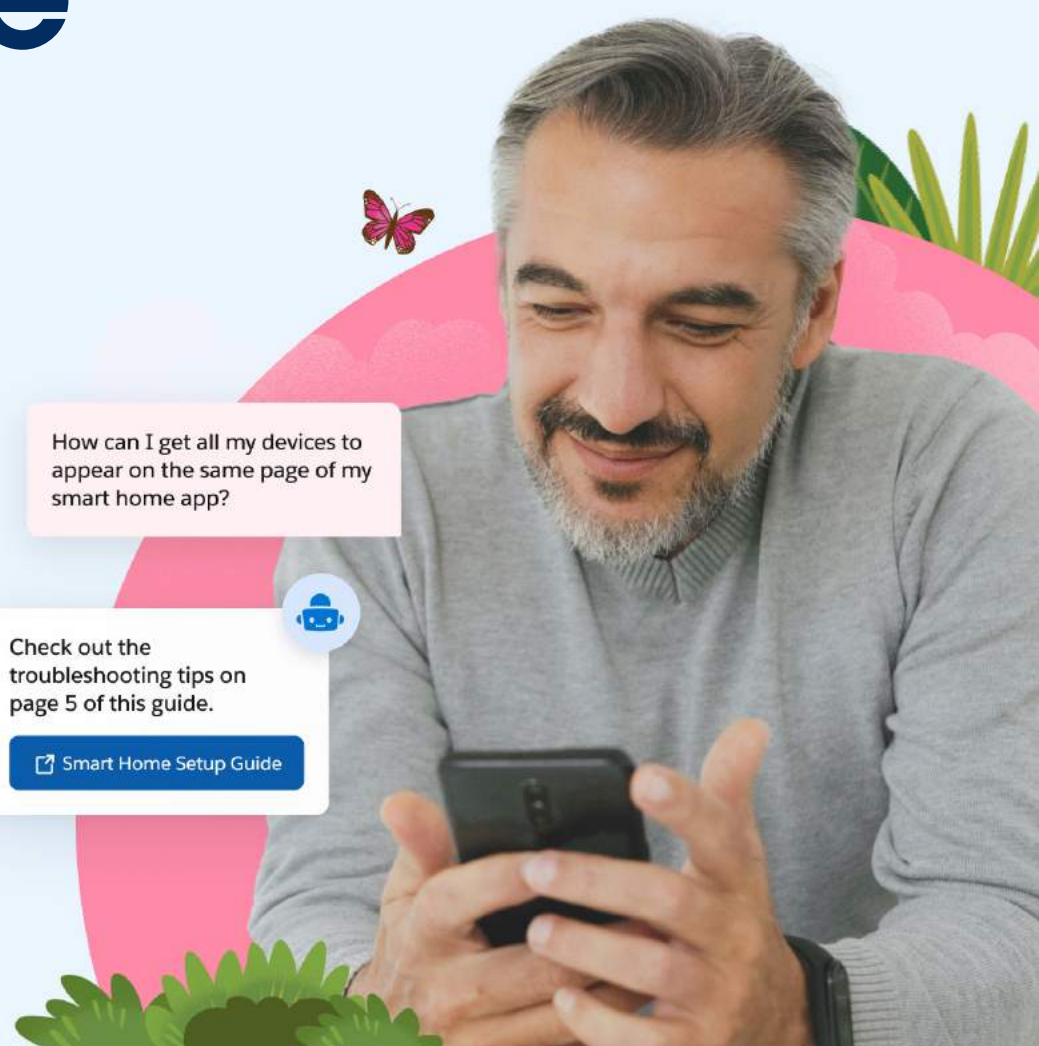
03 Organisations Lean into AI and Automation

While the widespread adoption of AI may still be in its early stages, benefits are already clear. **Among service professionals at organisations investing in AI, 93% say the technology saves them time on the job.**



1

Faster, More Personalised Service Becomes the Norm



How can I get all my devices to appear on the same page of my smart home app?

Check out the troubleshooting tips on page 5 of this guide.

[Smart Home Setup Guide](#)

01

Service Teams Rise to Meet New Challenges

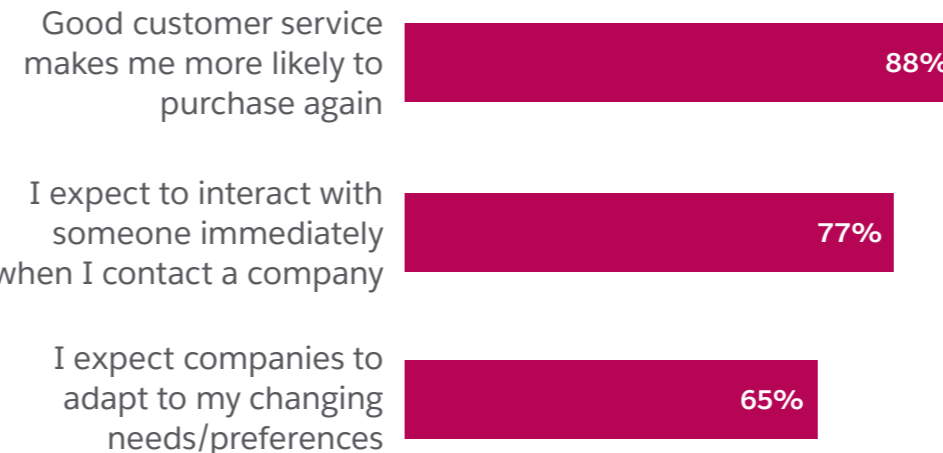
Customers' expectations continue to increase. They want faster, more personalised service and expect companies to adapt. When companies meet these expectations, customers are more likely to purchase again – making quality interactions essential to keep customers coming back.

Service organisations say they're getting better at delivering what customers demand. Compared to 2022, fewer agents struggle to balance speed with quality – and the share of “underperformers” in State of Service surveys dropped from 14% to just 8%.

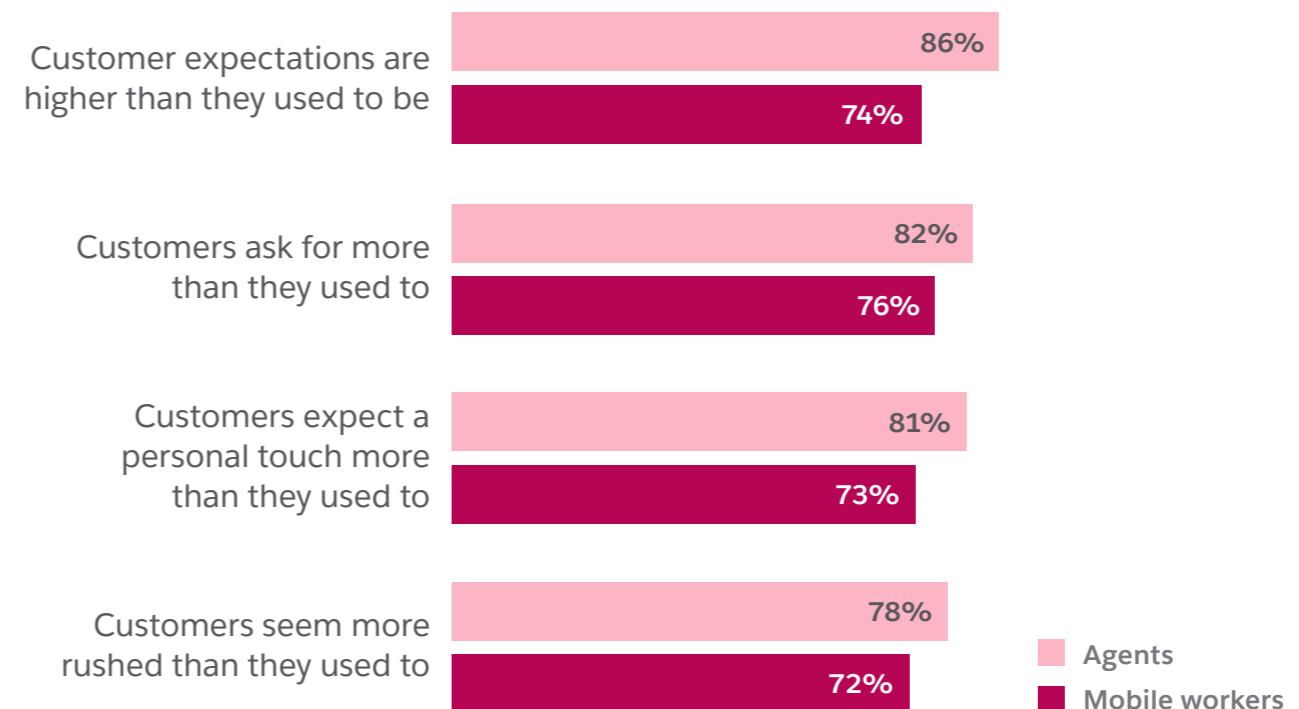
69% of agents say balancing speed and quality is difficult — down from 76% in 2022.

Service Contends with Speed and Personalisation Demands

Customers Who Say the Following*



Service Professionals Who Say the Following



01

Customer Experience Tops Both Priorities and Challenges

From technical to financial to operational concerns, service decision makers balance many competing needs. For example, they may be looking at how to cut costs while upskilling the workforce and optimising operations for productivity.

Ultimately, the customer is service organisations' primary focus. Decision makers' top priority is improving the customer experience and their biggest challenge is keeping pace with customer expectations.

Customers Are Top-of Mind Amid Many Priorities and Concerns

Top 5 Service Priorities

- 1 Improve the customer experience
- 2 Improve service technologies
- 3 Improve data quality and reliability
- 4 Optimise operations to reduce costs
- 5 Improve workforce skills

Base: Decision makers

Top 5 Service Challenges

- 1 Keeping up with changing customer expectations
- 2 Pressure to reduce costs to serve
- 3 Budgetary constraints
- 4 Ineffective or inefficient processes
- 5 Insufficient tools and technologies

Base: Decision makers



01

Service Organisations Expand Channel Offerings

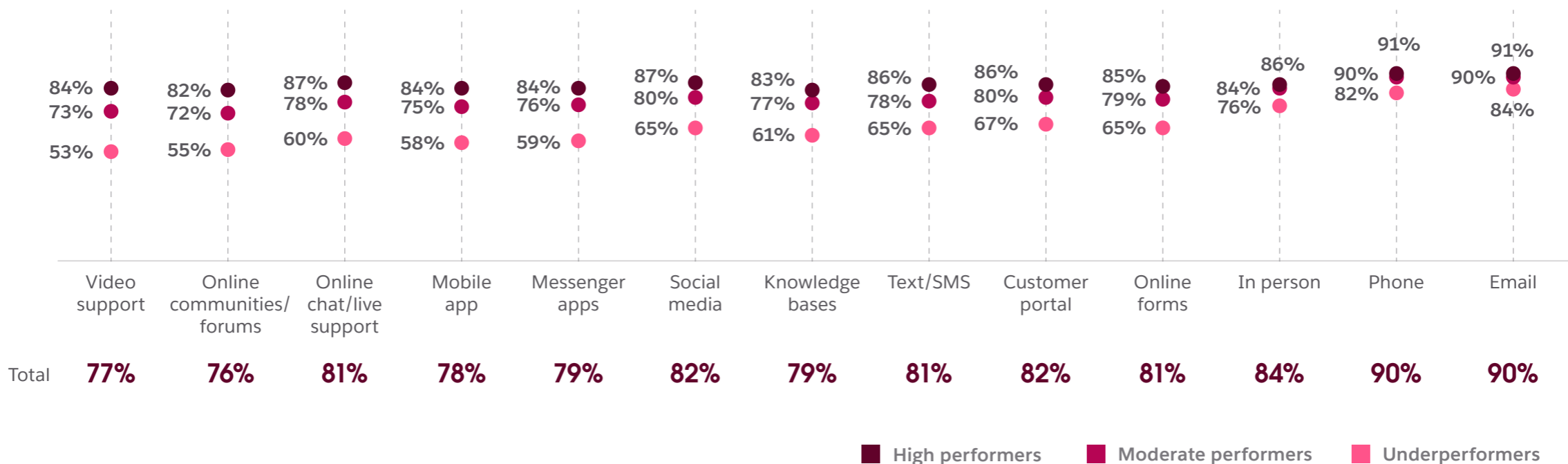
Service professionals are taking a closer look at their channel strategies, making sure they meet customers where, when, and how those customers want to engage.

84% of decision makers say they're reevaluating their channel resourcing this year.

High-performing organisations provide service across a broader range of channels than underperformers. This disparity is especially notable in live chat, adopted by nearly nine in 10 high performers – but just 60% of underperformers. There are also substantial performance-based gaps in channels like video support and online community forums.

Video, Chat, and Online Communities Mirror Service Performance

Service Organisations That Use the Following Channels



Base: Service professionals

01

Messenger Apps Take Off

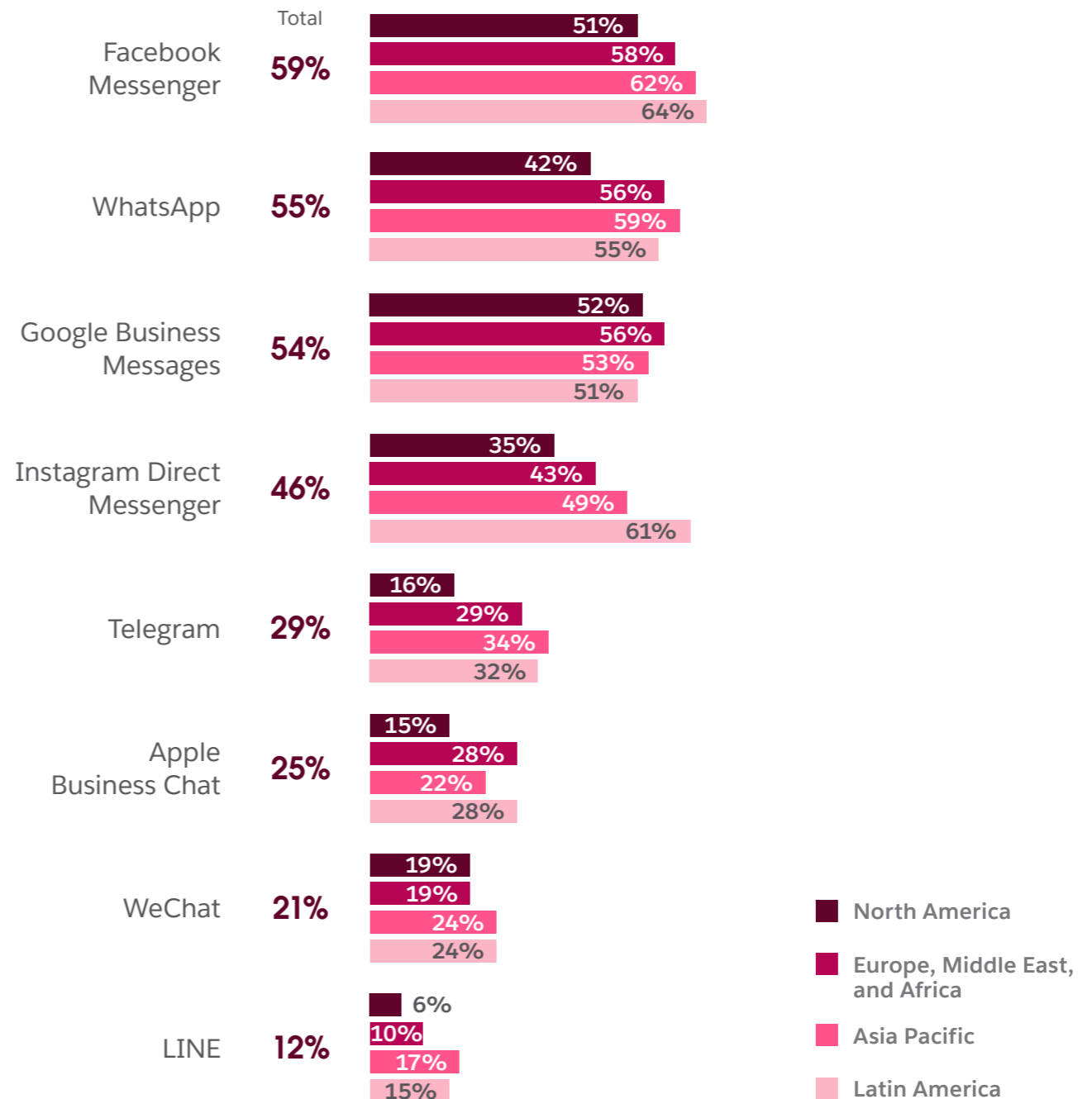
Adoption of messaging apps among service organisations is on the rise worldwide, led by Asian and Latin American organisations.

79% of service organisations use messenger apps — up from 70% in 2020.

Although Facebook Messenger and WhatsApp reign supreme globally, penetration of different apps varies across regions. For example, 59% of service organisations worldwide use Meta's Facebook Messenger, with Instagram a very close second in Latin America.

Facebook Messenger and WhatsApp Lead in Worldwide Usage

Service Organisations That Use the Following Messaging Apps



Base: Service professionals



01

Self-Service Is a Win-Win for Customers and Organisations

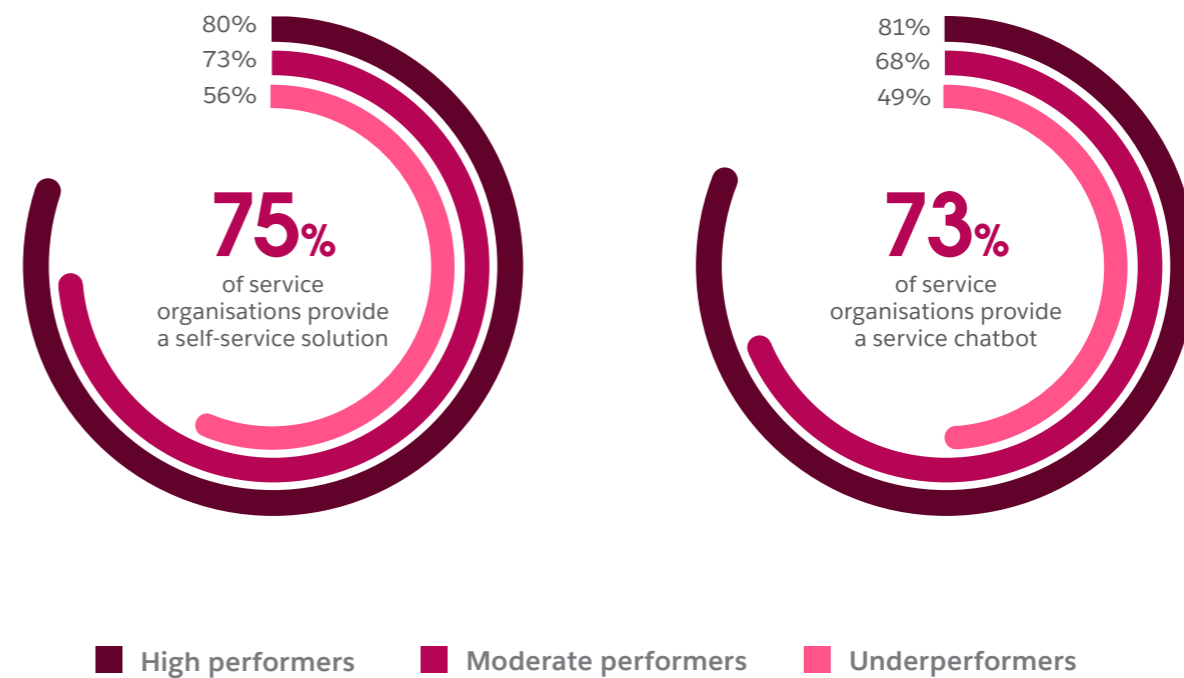
Empowering customers to solve their own issues with self-service tools can be a win-win for organisations, catering to customer preferences while saving resources.

61% of customers would rather use self-service for simple issues.*

Self-service can take many forms – from knowledge-powered help centers, to customer portals, to AI-powered chatbots. High-performing organisations are much more likely than underperformers to provide such tools. However, there's little room for error: 72% of customers won't reuse a company's chatbot after just one negative experience.*

*Salesforce State of the Connected Customer, August 2023

High Performers Lead in Self-Service



Base: Service professionals



High Performers Embrace Self-Service

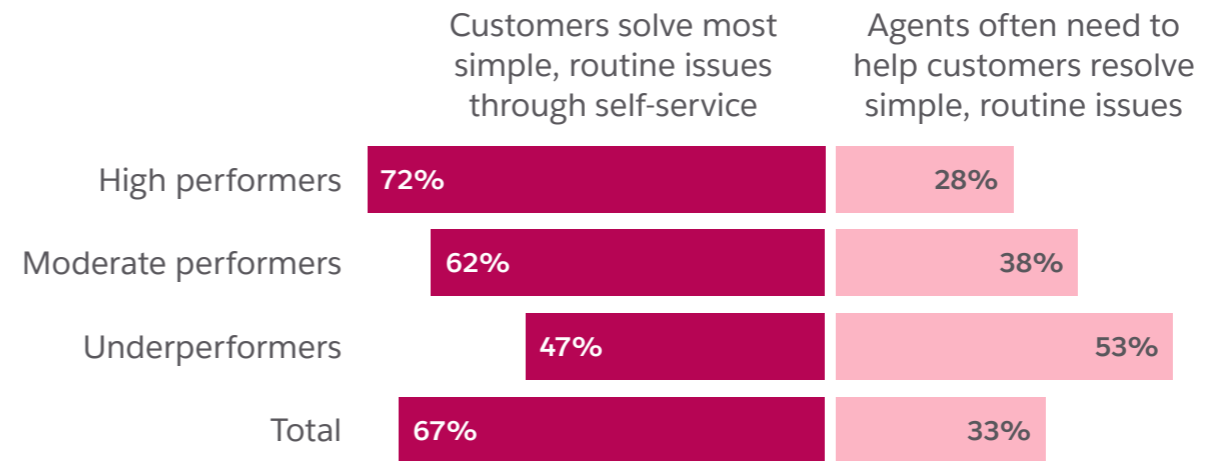
High-performing organisations see greater success than their peers in resolving cases via self-service – but self-service doesn't work for every engagement.

Sometimes customer issues can be too unique for self-service, requiring human agents. Here, agents are key to resolving cases and preserving relationships. However, some issues with self-service are more under companies' control, such as simplifying instructions and keeping materials up-to-date.

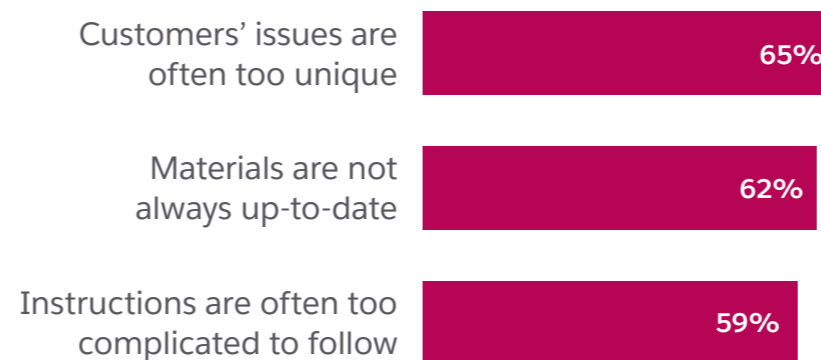
Self-service solves an estimated 54% of customer issues, on average, at organisations that use it.

High Performers Offer More Effective Self-Service

Service Professionals Who Say the Following*



Agents Who Say the Following About Self-Service at Their Organisation*



*Base: Has self-service



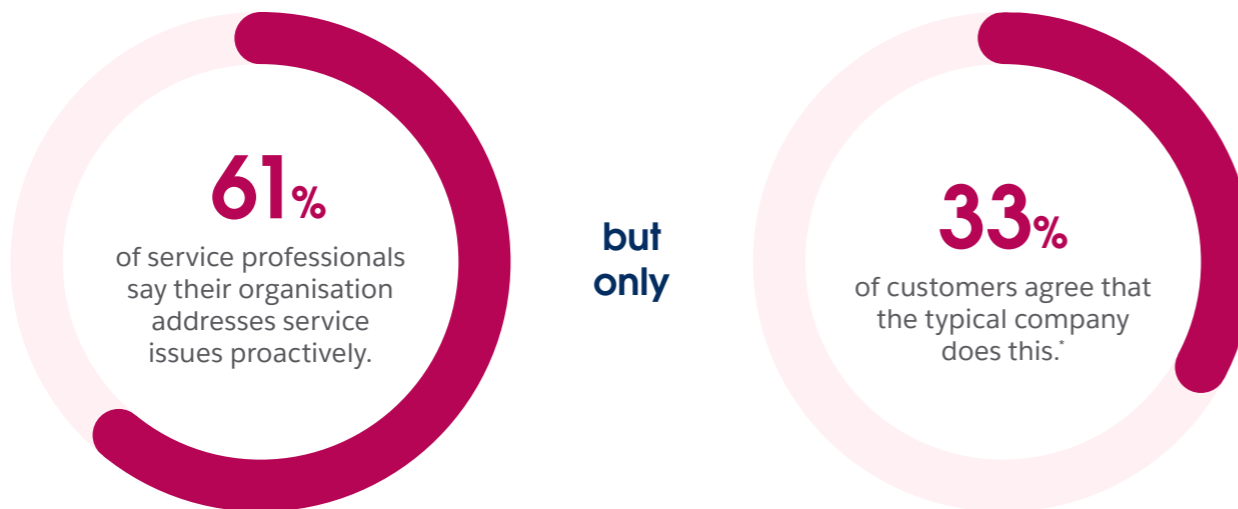


SPOTLIGHT: Proactive Support Remains an Opportunity

When it comes to proactive support, service professionals and their customers don't see eye-to-eye.

Sixty-one percent of service professionals say their organisations address issues proactively – for example, by communicating or even resolving an issue before customers reach out. However, only a third of customers agree. This could indicate company overconfidence.

Customers Say Proactive Support is Rare



“It's essential to proactively resolve issues before they have any significant business impact. This means keeping up with technology solutions to scale service and meet customers where they are.”

JULES O'DONNELL
SALESFORCE ADMINISTRATION MANAGER,
QUICKBASE

[Salesforce State of the Connected Customer, August 2023](#)



2

Service Organisations Double Down on Revenue Generation



02

Budgets, Headcount, Cases Poised to Rise

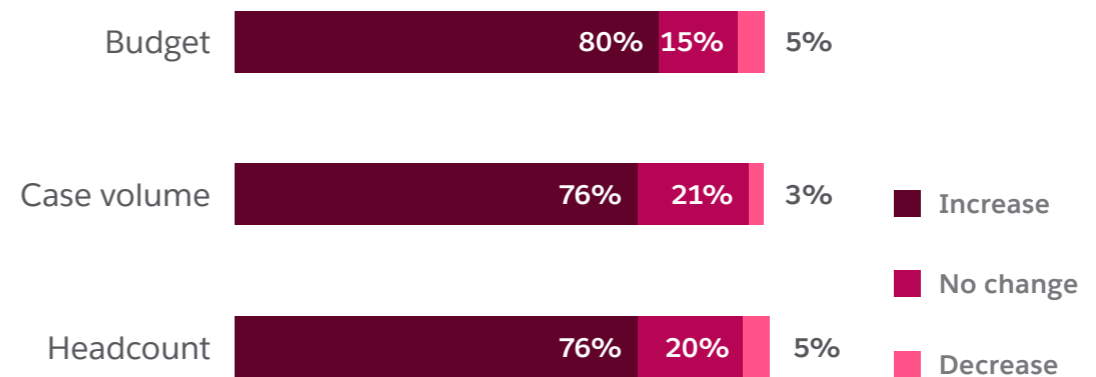
Delivering excellent customer service at every touchpoint is worthwhile but potentially costly. Indeed, most service professionals say they need more budget to hit their goals. This is especially true of service ops and team leads, who may be closer to the action than many service leaders but still have a bird’s-eye view of all that needs doing.

The good news is bigger budgets and increased headcounts may be on the horizon. However, service organisations are also bracing for an anticipated uptick in case volume, raising the question: will higher budgets keep pace with customer demand?

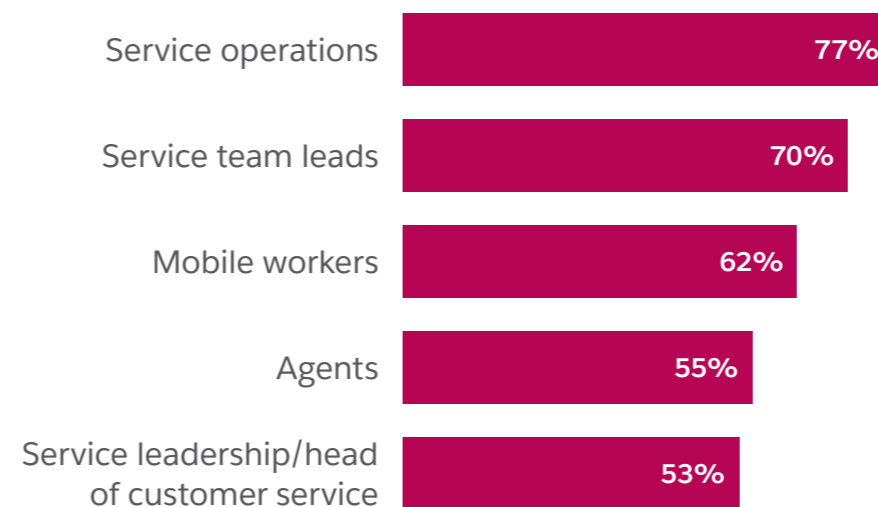
Decision makers expect service budgets to increase by an average of 23% over the next year.

Service Organisations Foresee Higher Budgets and Case Volume

Changes Decision Makers Anticipate Over the Next Year



Service Professionals Who Say Team Can't Reach Goals Without More Budget



02

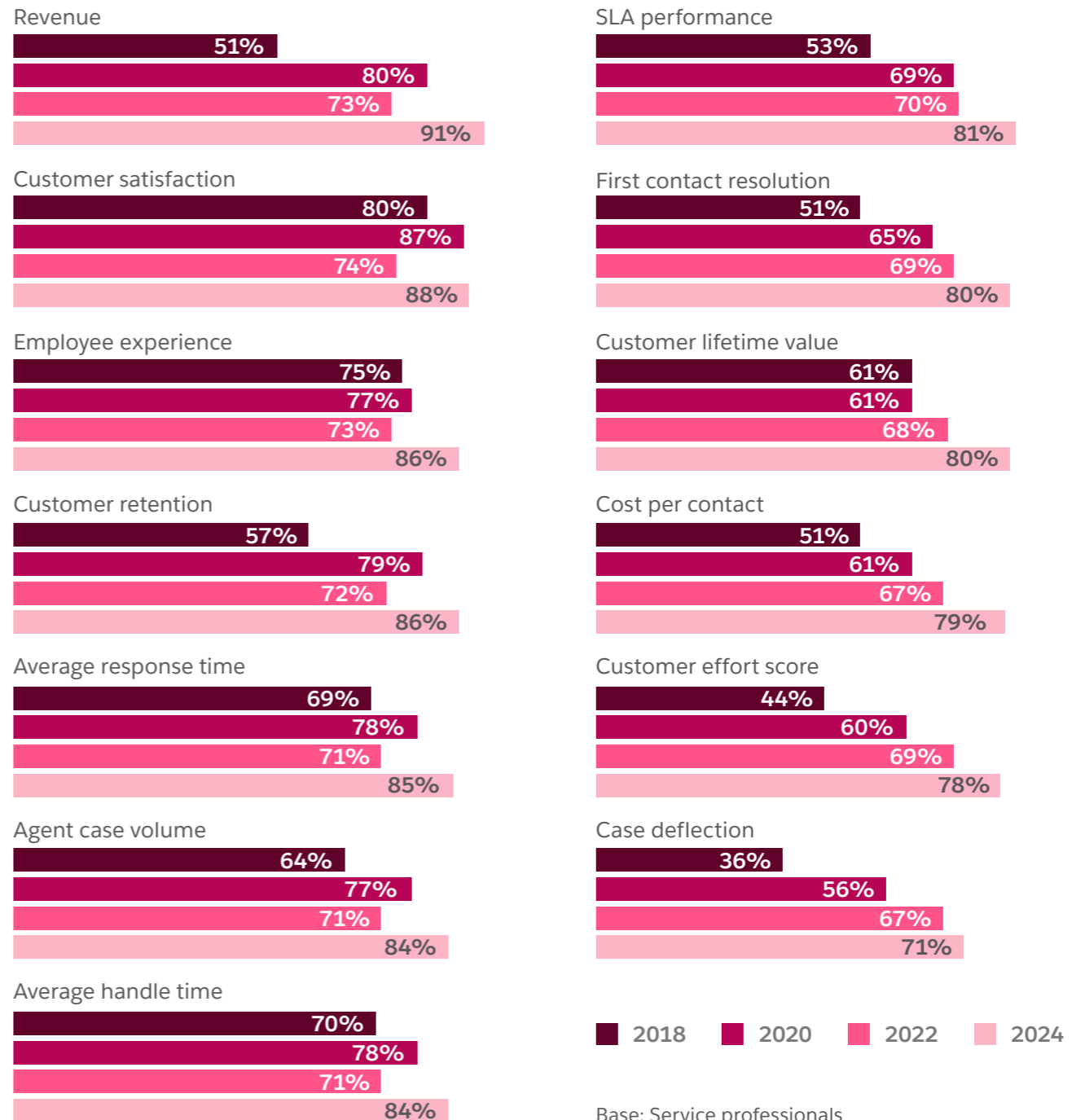
KPIs Show Growing Focus on Financial Metrics

2022 saw an uptick in service organisations measuring case deflection, signalling a focus on efficiency. Two years later, revenue growth is joining the roster of popular KPIs.

Compared to 2022, companies now track more metrics overall. The fastest growing KPIs are linked to tangible business outcomes. For instance, the share of service organisations tracking revenue generation has nearly doubled since 2018, from 51% to 91%. Meanwhile, the share tracking customer retention rose by 29 percentage points over the same period.

Revenue Leads Surge in Metrics Tracking

Service Organisations That Track the Following Metrics



Base: Service professionals



02

Revenue Generation Grows as a Service Function

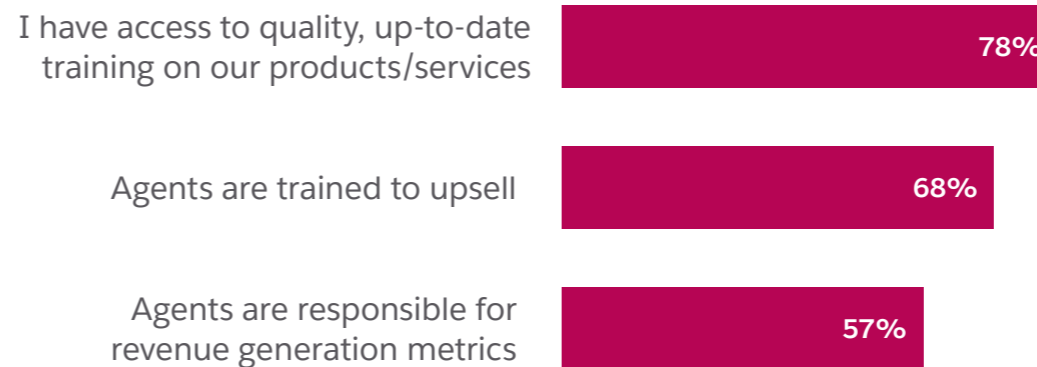
Companies are looking for new ways to drive growth and protect their margins, with many seeing service as a prime opportunity.

Both agents and mobile workers are up close and personal with customers. These professionals have a huge potential to influence buying decisions, suggest new subscriptions or equipment upgrades, and make proactive recommendations for follow-up service.

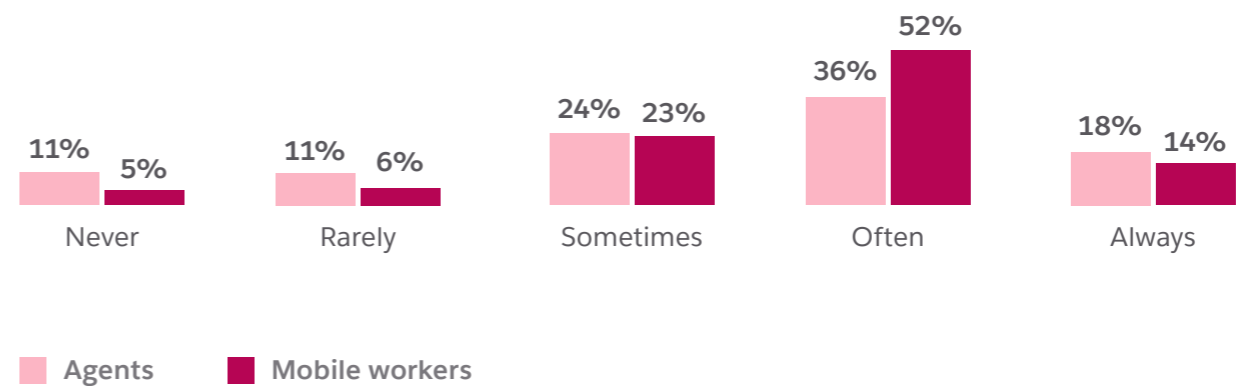
85% of decision makers say service is expected to contribute a larger share of revenue this year.

Organisations Leverage Service for Additional Revenue

Agents Who Say the Following



Frequency with Which the Following Service Professionals Try to Upsell



02

Service Depends on Cross-Company Data

The path to purchase can be complex, influenced by touch points across multiple teams. Smooth partnerships with sales and marketing are critical as more customers expect connected, cohesive interactions.

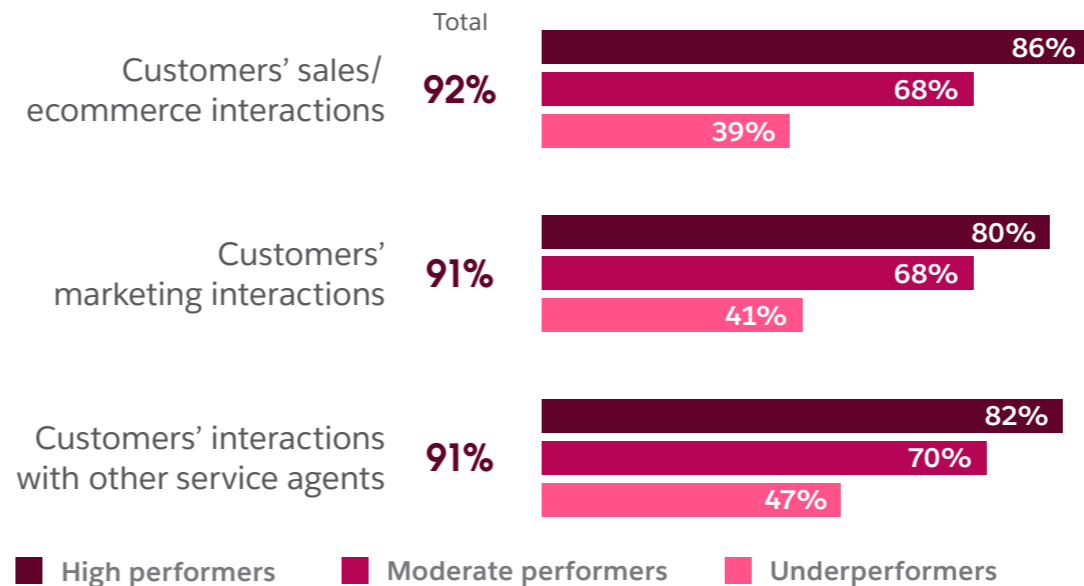
79% of customers expect consistency across departments — but 56% often have to repeat information to different representatives.*

While agents at high-performing service organisations have much more visibility into customers’ sales, marketing, and service data, over one in four agents of agents still lack that insight.

*Salesforce State of the Connected Customer, August 2023

High Performers Benefit from Integrated Customer Data

Service Professionals Who Say Agents Have a Complete and Accessible View of the Following



■ High performers ■ Moderate performers ■ Underperformers



of agents say they often lack context about a customer's situation

■ High performers ■ Moderate Performers ■ Underperformers

80%

of agents say better access to other departments' data would improve their work.

83%

of decision makers plan to invest more in data integration over the next year.



02

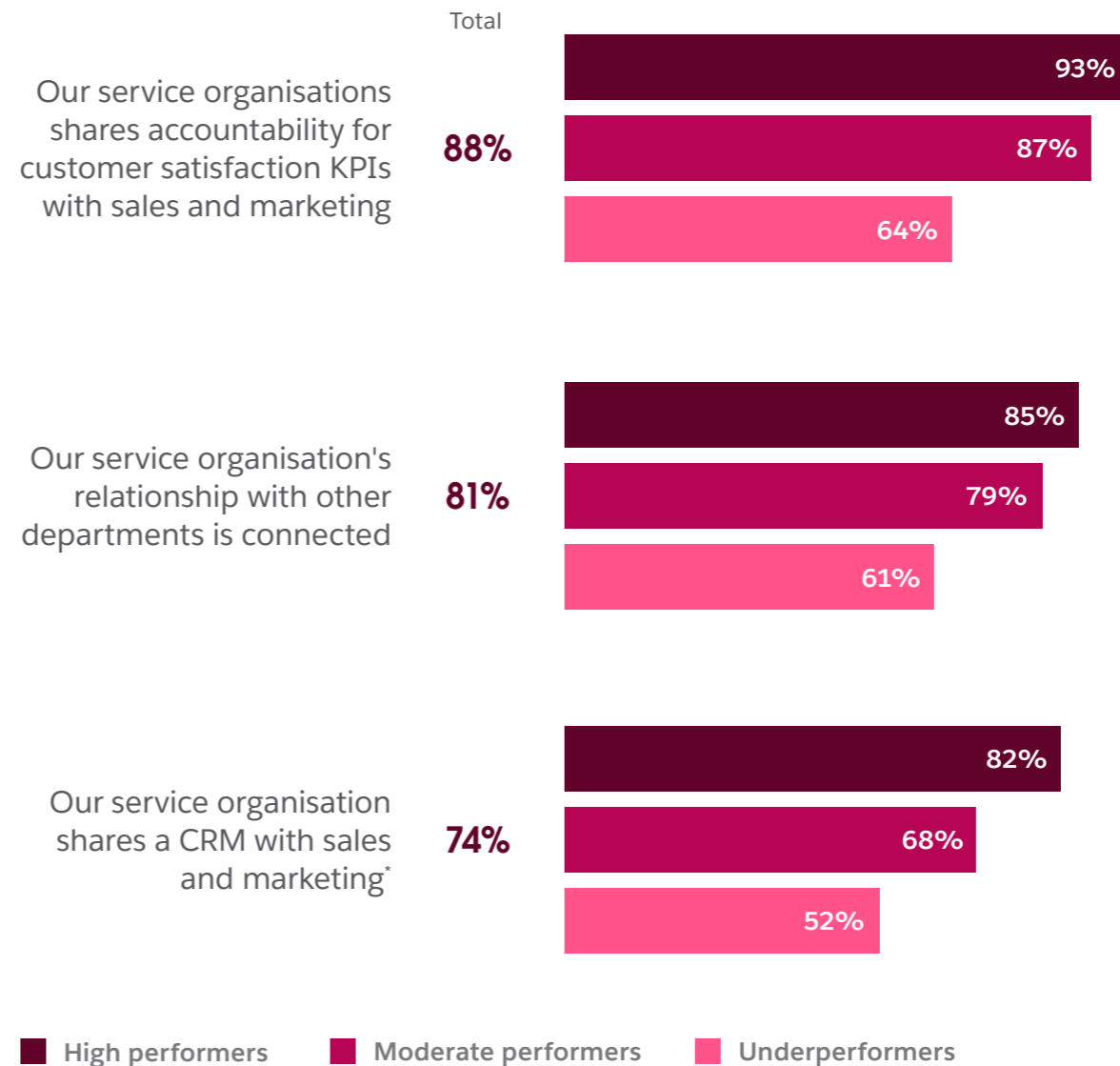
Organisations Strive for Consistent Customer Experiences

Service organisations are aligning more closely with sales and marketing to achieve more connected customer experiences. For example, many teams are connecting customer relationship management (CRM) systems and sharing accountability for metrics like CSAT. These efforts cultivate a better understanding of customers' interactions across the company, which helps service organisations better serve their needs.

A connected experience is a huge differentiator. High-performing service organisations are more connected to other departments, sharing goals and technologies with sales and marketing.

Top Service Teams Align with Sales and Marketing

Service Professionals Who Say the Following



*Base: Service professionals at organisations with a CRM





SPOTLIGHT: Field Service Technology

Mobile workers say dedicated field service technologies make them safer and more effective at their jobs – empowering them to be better brand ambassadors.

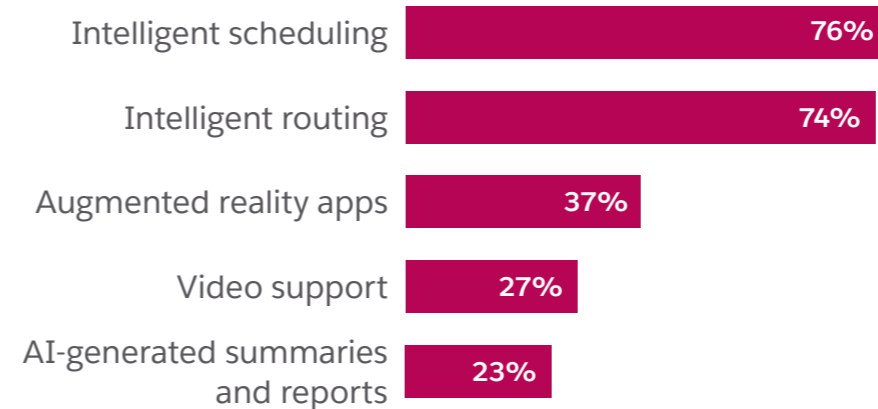
90% of decision makers say their company invests in specialised technology to improve mobile worker productivity.*

The most common field service technologies are intelligent scheduling and routing. However, some organisations use video, AI-generated reports, and augmented reality – which can create detailed 3D rendering of large areas in seconds.

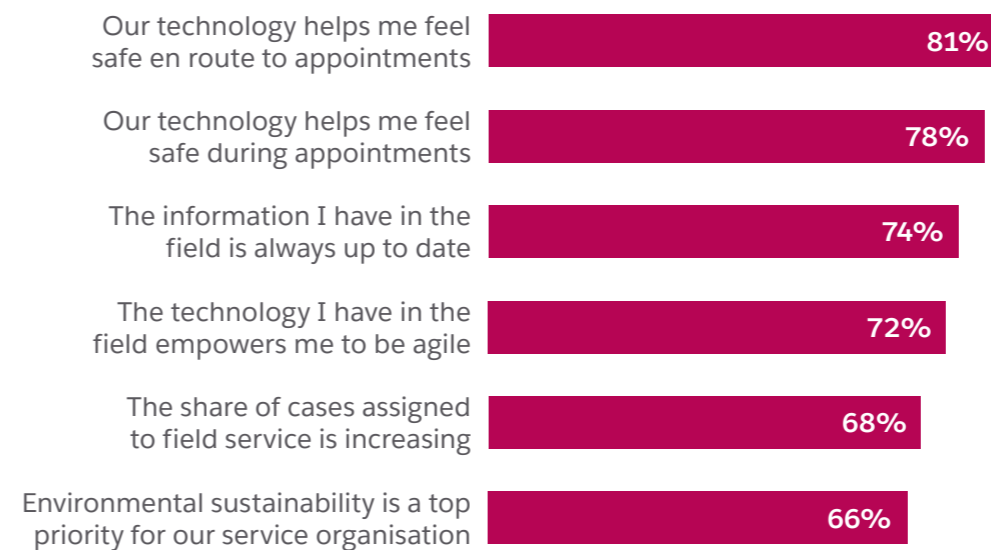
*Base: Decision makers at organisations with mobile workers.

Technology Helps Mobile Workers Feel Safer, More Effective

Mobile Workers with the Following Capabilities



Mobile Workers Who Agree with the Following



3

Organisations Lean into AI and Automation



03

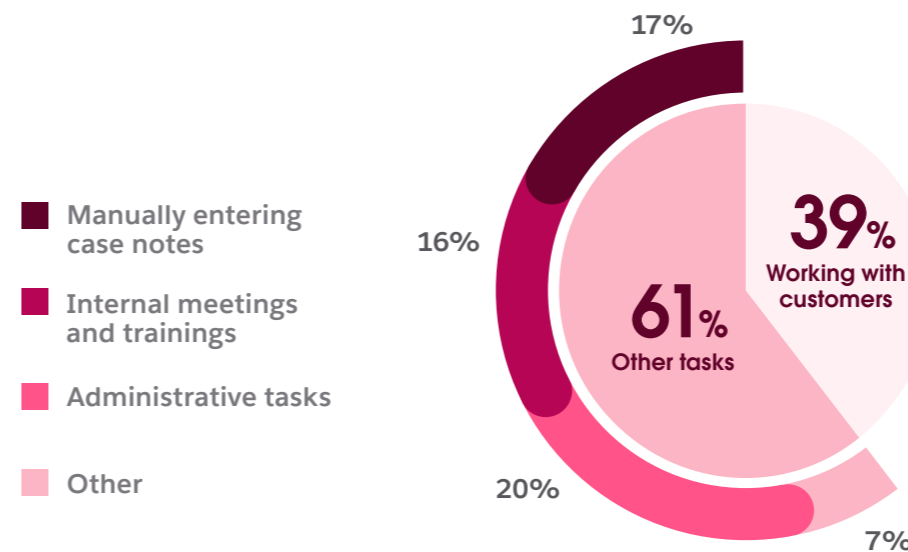
Manual Processes Pull Agents Away from Customers

Inefficient processes and manual taskwork monopolise agents' time and jeopardise the customer experience. Administrative work, internal meetings, and other mundane tasks take up nearly two-thirds of agents' workday.

Another productivity blocker is disjointed processes. Over half of agents at underperforming organisations have to click between multiple screens just to access the information they need to do their job. This fragmented workflow slows agents down and may also increase the risk of errors.

Nearly Two-Thirds of Agent Time Spent Away from Customers

How Agents Spend Their Time During an Average Week



58% of agents at underperforming organisations toggle between multiple screens to find what they need — compared to 36% at high performers.



03

Organisations Seek Efficiency Amid Tougher Workloads

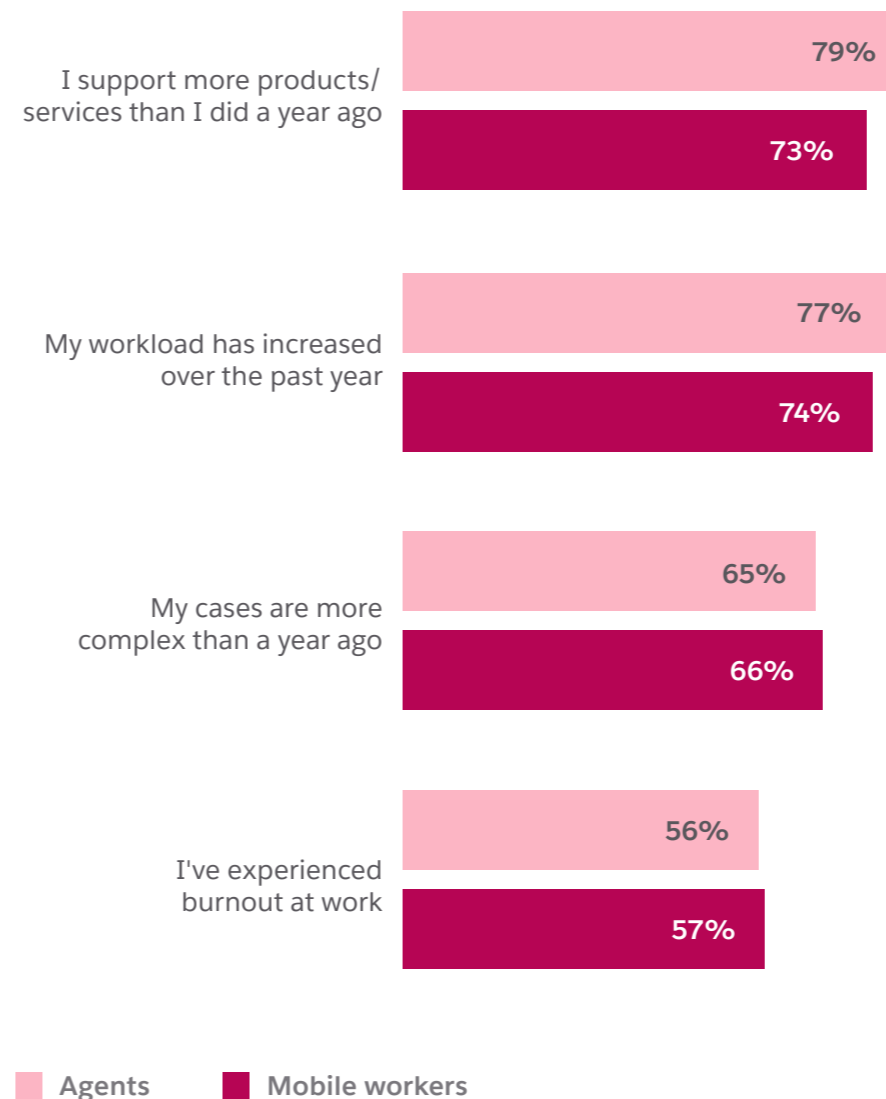
Customer service professionals are spread thin. In fact, 77% of agents and 74% of mobile workers report increased and more complex workloads compared to just one year ago. Over half say they've experienced burnout, whether they work in a contact centre or in the field.

Fortunately, organisations are taking steps to improve the issue. The success of these efforts could affect companies' abilities to attract and retain high-performing employees.

69% of service decision makers say agent attrition is a major or moderate challenge.

Case Complexity and Supported Products Are Increasing

Service Professionals Who Say the Following



03

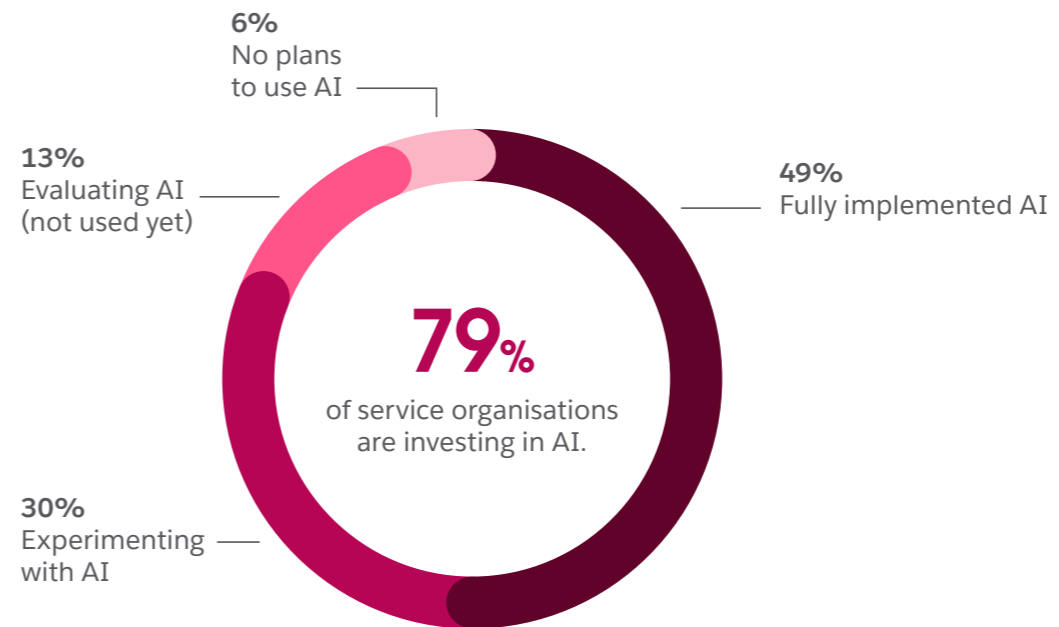
AI Investments Increase

Most service organisations are investing in AI. Eighty-three percent of decision makers expect this investment to increase over the next year, while only 6% say they have no plans for the technology.

For years, companies have used predictive AI for tasks like providing next best actions and analysing trends. Today's generative AI can create original content like text, imagery, and video using large language models. This may be why, despite being fairly new, generative AI is quickly gaining traction.

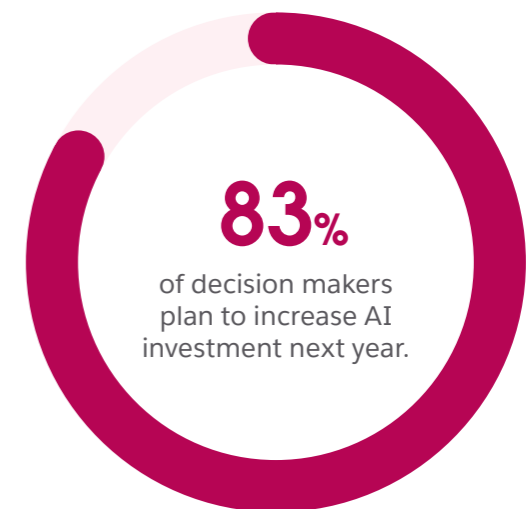
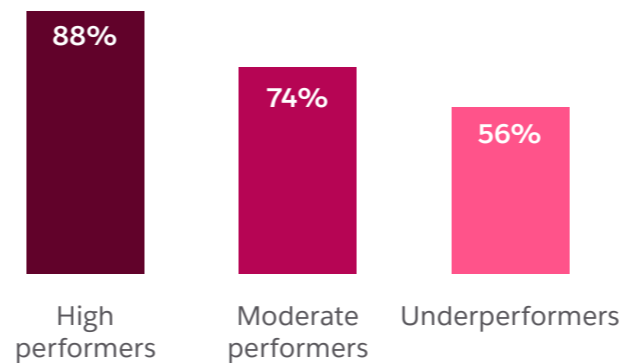
24% of service employees have used generative AI.*

A Majority of Teams Plan to Increase Their AI Investment



Base: Service professionals

Service Organisations Investing in AI



*Salesforce State of the Connected Customer, August 2023



03

Automation Resolves Simple Tasks So Agents Can Get Strategic

Service organisations are turning toward automation and AI amid a push for efficiency.

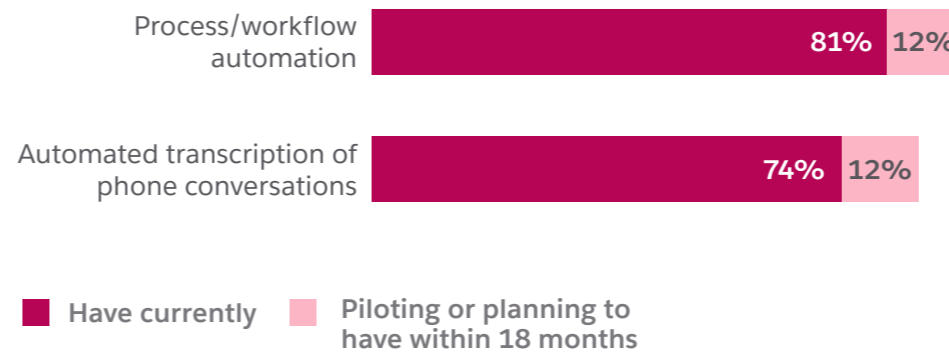
Nearly all organisations have invested in workflow automation. Plans for further investment suggest confidence in the technology to drive productivity.

83% of decision makers plan to increase investments in automation over the next year.

Time savings tops the list of workflow automation benefits. Additionally, the bulk of automation users credit the technology with fewer errors and more time with customers.

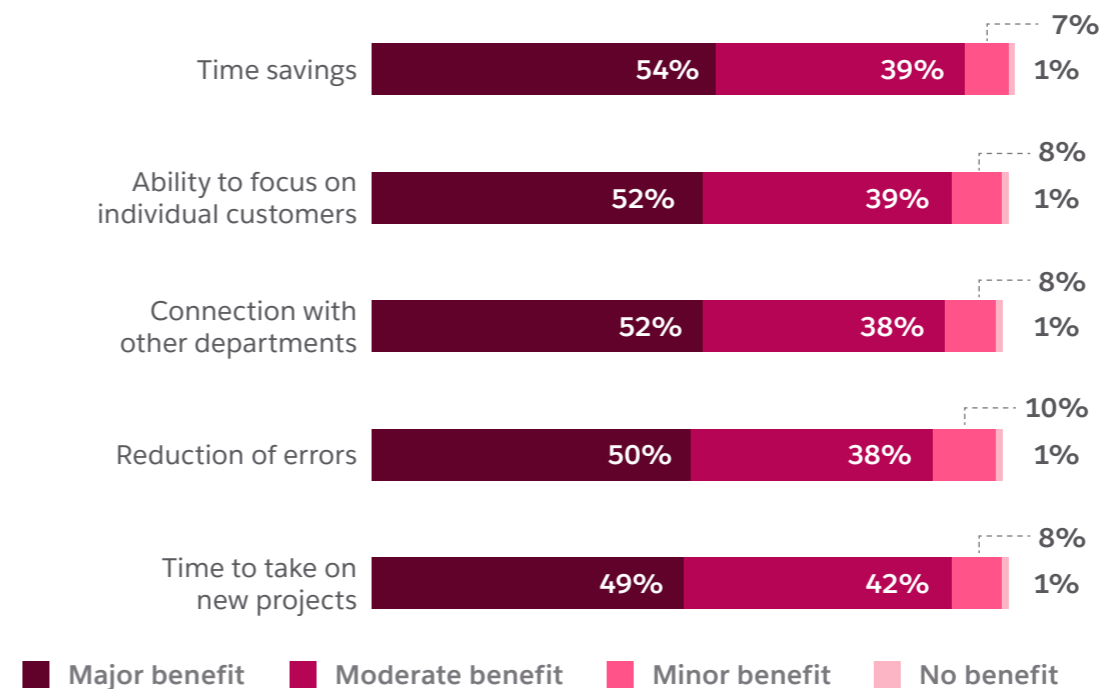
Automation Provides More Time to Focus on Customers

Service Organisations That Have or Plan to Have the Following



Base: Service professionals

Reported Benefits of Automation



Base: Service professionals at organisations using automation





SPOTLIGHT: AI Drives Demand for Trusted Data

Instilling trust in AI means instilling trust in the data that powers it. Service organisations see more room for improvement on this front than their peers in other departments.

92% of analytics and IT leaders say the need for trustworthy data is higher than ever.

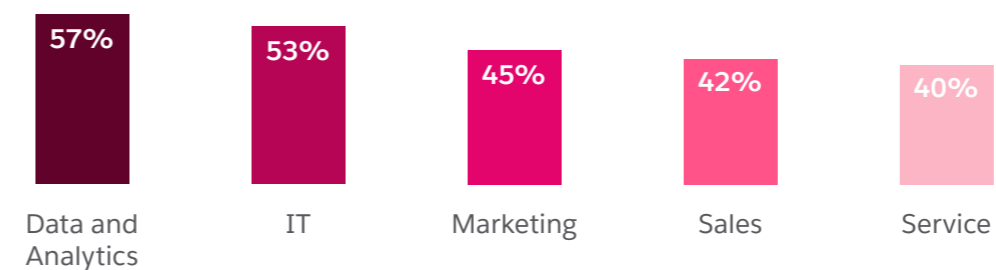
People closest to the data, like data and analytics teams, have the highest confidence in their data. This level of trust is less common among line-of-business leaders, revealing an opportunity to inspire more confidence in marketing, sales, and service data – and, by extension, more trust in AI accuracy.

Data on this page comes from Salesforce's [State of Data and Analytics](#).

Leaders Stress Need for Better Data Management



Departments Completely Confident in Data Accuracy



AI Linked to Better Customer Service

Service organisations most commonly use AI in customer-facing intelligent assistants. Other common use cases include generating service responses and making intelligent offers and recommendations.

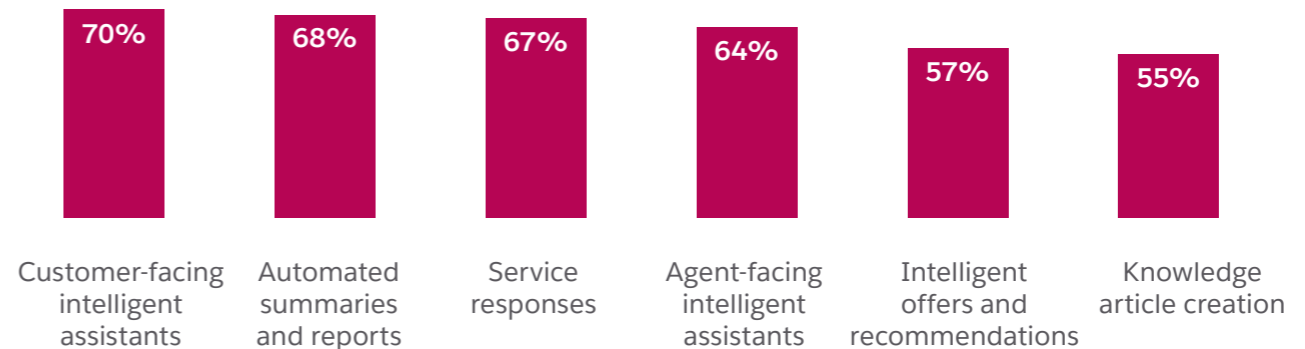
The benefits are clear: over nine in 10 organisations with AI report cost and time savings. Service ops professionals are especially bullish on the technology; nearly all agree that generative AI, in particular, will help their companies improve customer service.

“The best technology implementations are about making my service agents' lives easier – like using AI to suggest an appropriate response in real time during a live chat session or a next best action for an agent to take.”

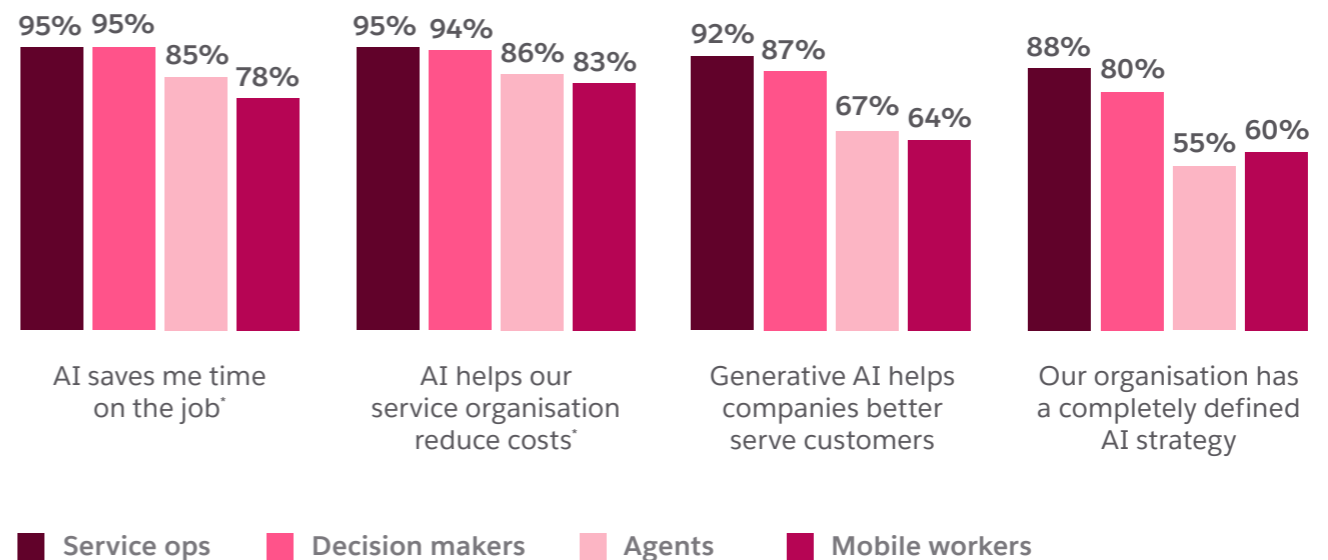
JOSH RAY
CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE BUSINESS
SYSTEMS ANALYST

AI Boosts Customer Experience, Saves Time, and Reduces Costs

How Service Organisations Use AI*



Service Professionals Who Say the Following



*Base: Organisation invests in AI



03

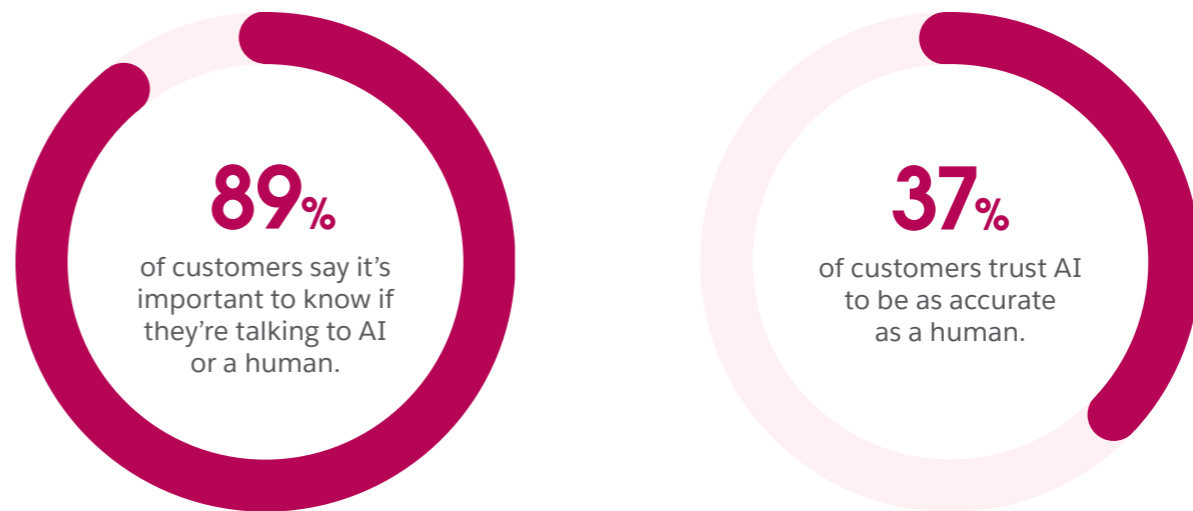
Human Connection Builds Trust as Technology Evolves

While the capabilities of AI and automation are exciting, it's important to remember that these technologies can't replace frontline workers. Instead, AI and automation give employees the time and tools to do their best work.

92% of service professionals say nurturing customer relationships is increasingly important.

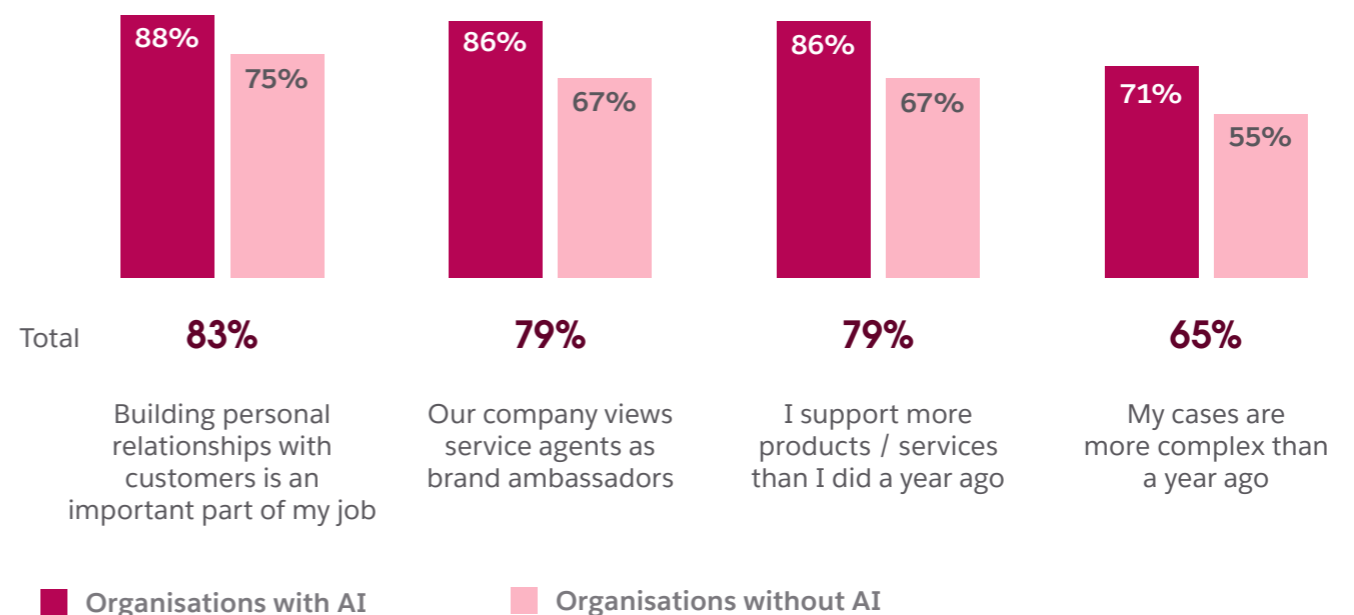
Employees at companies with AI have greater bandwidth to tackle complex casework and support a wide range of products. While technology excels at optimising processes and resolving simple cases, frontline employees are wide-ranging experts who engage with customers in uniquely human ways, building trusted relationships that AI could not on its own.

Employees Tackle More Challenging Work at Organisations with AI



[Salesforce State of the Connected Customer, August 2023](#)

Agents Who Say the Following



Autonomous AI: The Next Evolution in Proactive Service

Generative AI has only recently taken the world by storm, but there's already a new wave coming – autonomous AI. While generative AI can create new content based on a prompt, autonomous AI will perform tasks without human intervention.

For example, if a customer wants to plan a trip to Mexico, an autonomous chatbot won't just offer intelligent service recommendations. It will actually take concrete actions on a customer's behalf: visiting websites, making plans, and even booking tickets.

“As we move from AI generating content to AI taking action, trust becomes even more critical. That requires grounding your AI on a foundation of trusted customer data, knowledge, and service policies. The AI revolution is really a data revolution.”



RYAN NICHOLS
CHIEF PRODUCT OFFICER,
SALESFORCE SERVICE CLOUD

The Transformation of AI

Predictive AI

Uses historical data to recognise patterns over time

Generative AI

Creates new content based on user prompts

Autonomous AI

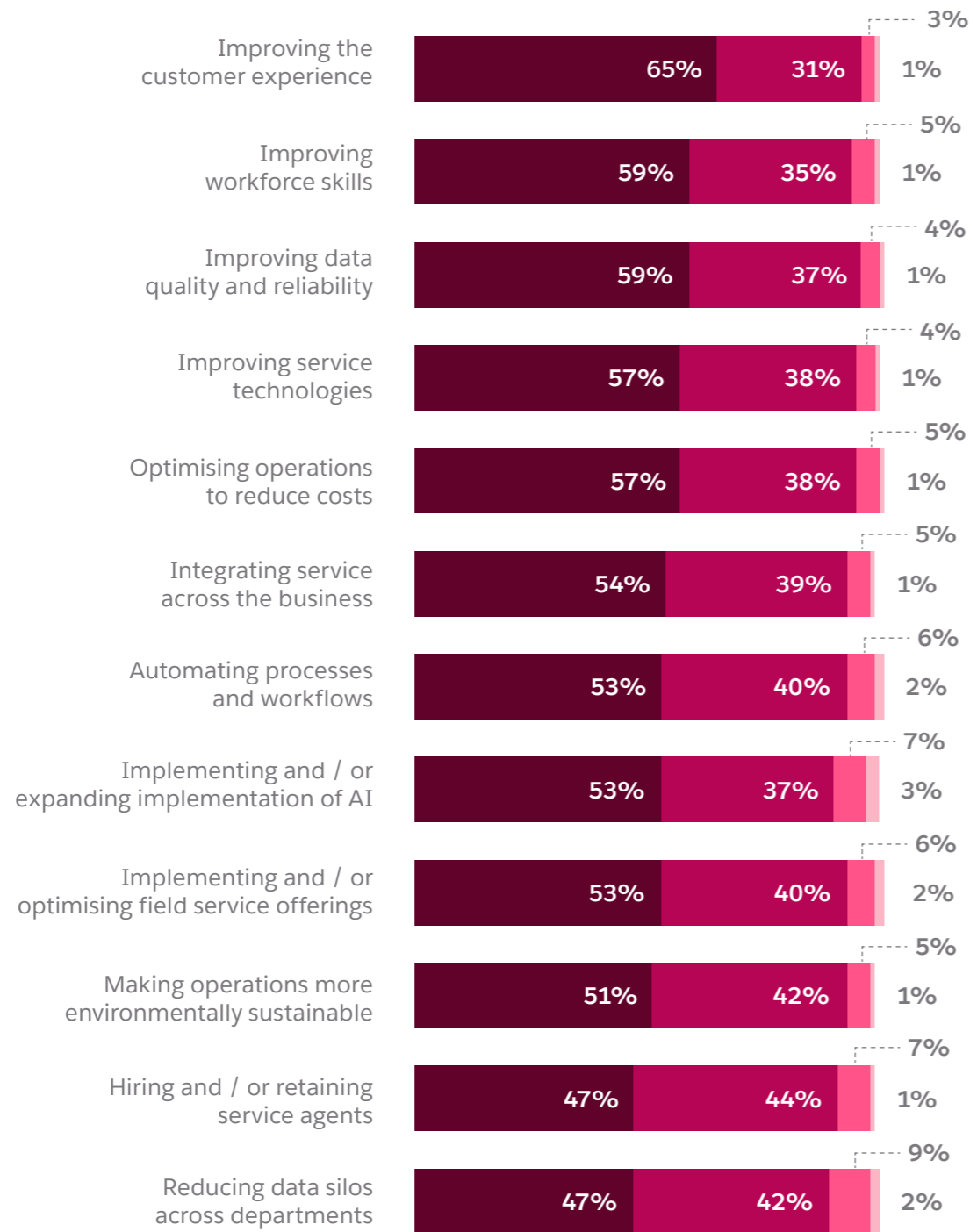
Performs tasks without human intervention



Appendix

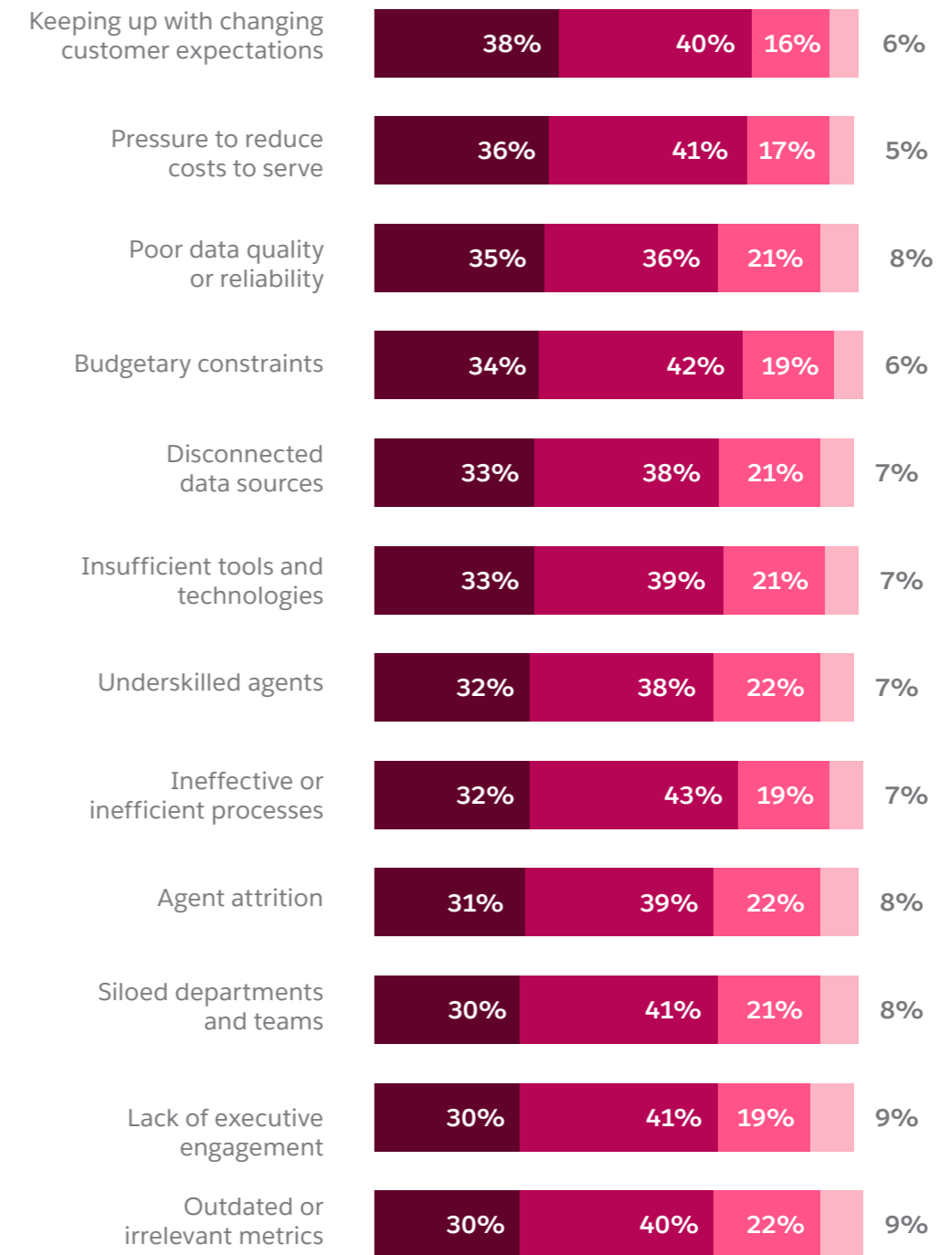


Service Priorities



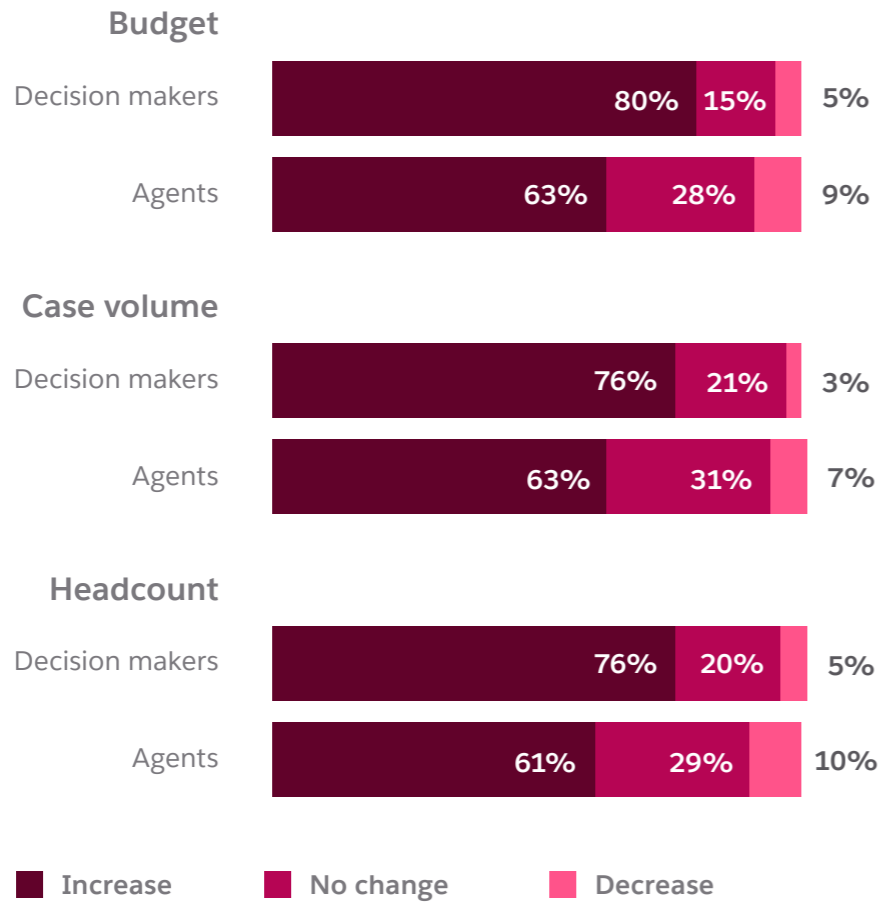
High priority Moderate priority Low priority Not a priority

Service Challenges

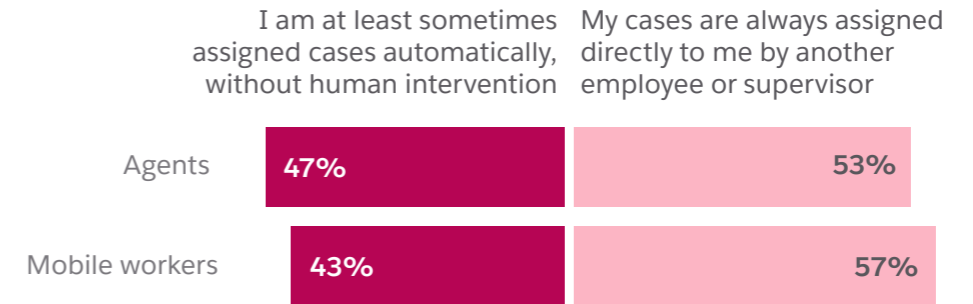


Major challenge Moderate challenge Slight challenge Not at all a challenge

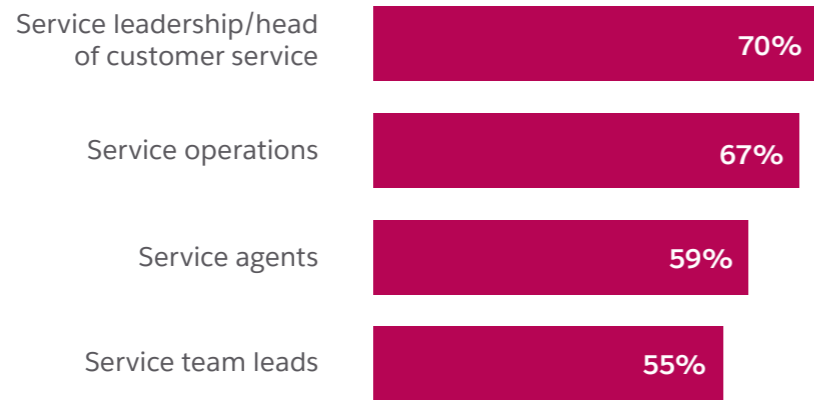
Anticipated Changes to the Following Over the Next Year



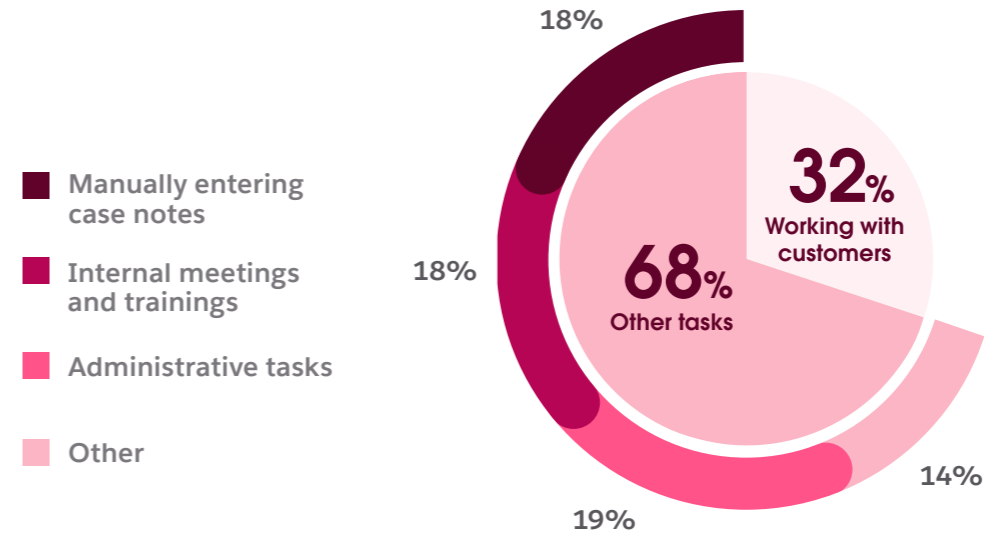
Service Professionals Who Say the Following



Service Professionals Who Say Their Organisation Responds to Service Issues Proactively



How Mobile Workers Spend Their Time During an Average Week



Survey Demographics



Survey Demographics

Country

Australia	5%
Belgium	2%
Brazil	5%
Canada	5%
Chile	3%
Colombia	3%
Denmark.....	<1%
Finland.....	1%
France	5%
Germany.....	5%
India.....	5%
Indonesia	3%
Ireland	2%
Italy	4%
Japan	5%
Mexico	5%
Netherlands	3%
New Zealand.....	1%
Norway	1%
Philippines.....	4%
Poland	4%
Portugal.....	2%
Singapore	2%
South Africa	4%
Spain	4%

Sweden.....	1%
Switzerland.....	2%
United Arab Emirates.....	2%
United Kingdom	5%
United States	9%

Industry

Architecture, engineering, and construction.....	9%
Automotive	6%
Communications.....	5%
Consumer goods	7%
Energy and utilities.....	6%
Financial services.....	7%
Government.....	2%
Healthcare.....	7%
Life sciences and biotechnology.....	4%
Manufacturing	5%
Media and entertainment	3%
Nonprofit.....	5%
Professional and business services.....	9%
Retail.....	7%
Supply chain and logistics	4%
Technology.....	9%
Travel and hospitality	4%
Other	2%

Role Within Service

Service operations.....	32%
Service agent	24%
Mobile worker.....	3%
Service manager or director.....	31%
Service leadership/head of service	9%

Company Size

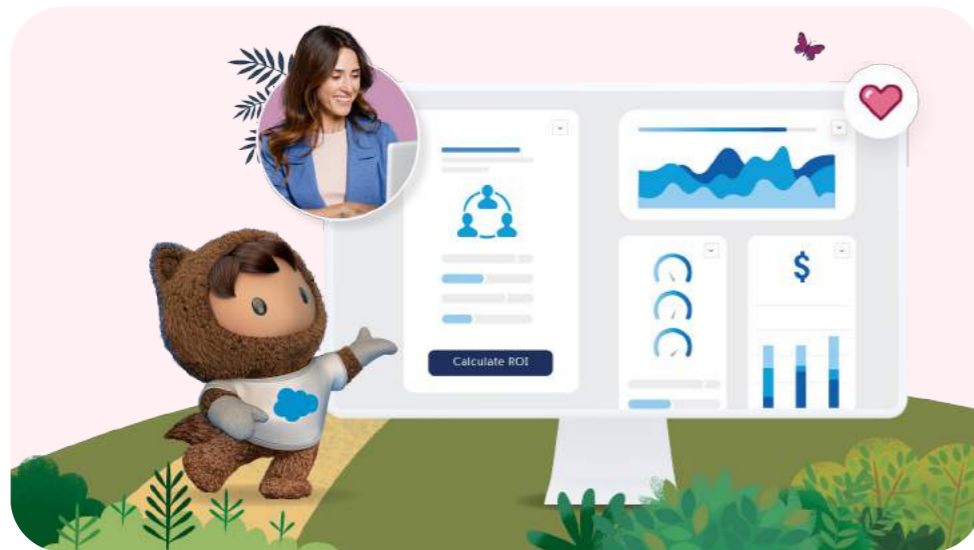
Small and medium-sized businesses (21-100 employees).....	30%
Mid-market businesses (101-3,500 employees).....	50%
Enterprises (over 3,500 employees).....	20%

Business Model

Business-to-business (B2B).....	20%
Business-to-consumer (B2C)	44%
Business-to-business-to-consumer (B2B2C).....	35%



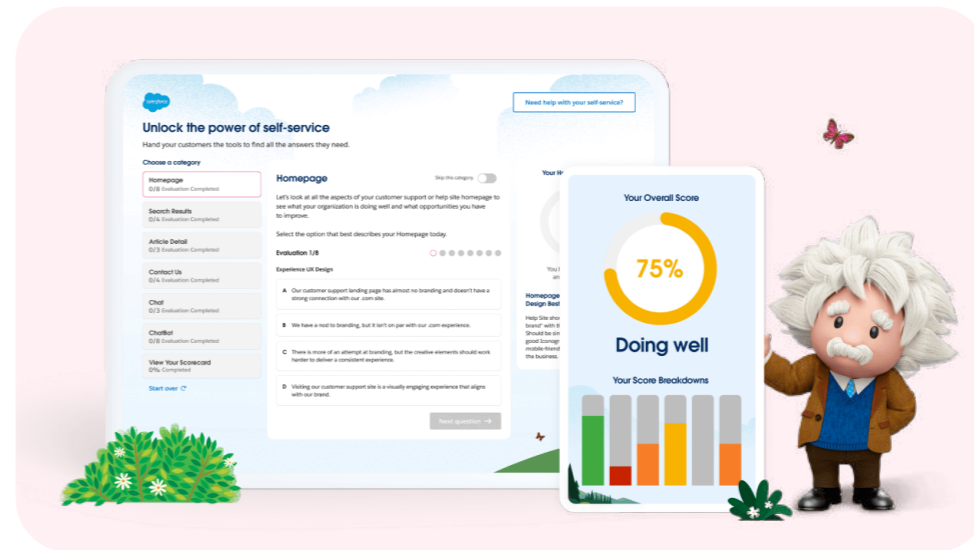
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Learn how to kickstart your service transformation.

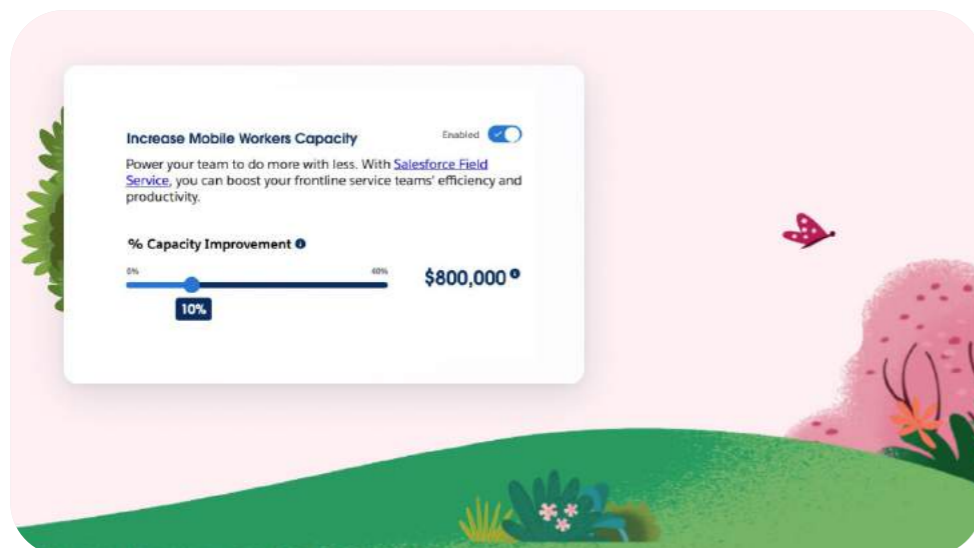
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