

New Research:

# Large Tradeshow Event Industry Insights

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Who Is EVOLIO Marketing?



## **Your Strategic Partner in Event Success**

EVOLIO Marketing delivers comprehensive solutions for show organizers:

- Attendee and exhibitor research
- Industry business intelligence and insights
- Measurement and optimization



# Exhibitor Sentiment and Outlook Industry Study

## Annual Study

conducted with The Exhibitor Advocate.

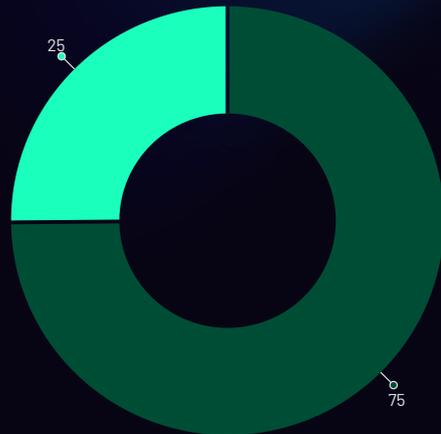
## 179 Responses

Preliminary results:  
Exhibitor feedback collected October 20 - currently in collection.

## Pulse Surveys

Continuous insights throughout the year tracking market shifts

# Exhibiting Value Remains Strong



■ Excellent/Very Good   ■ Other Ratings

## Strong Baseline Performance

**75% of exhibitors rate overall value as excellent or very good**

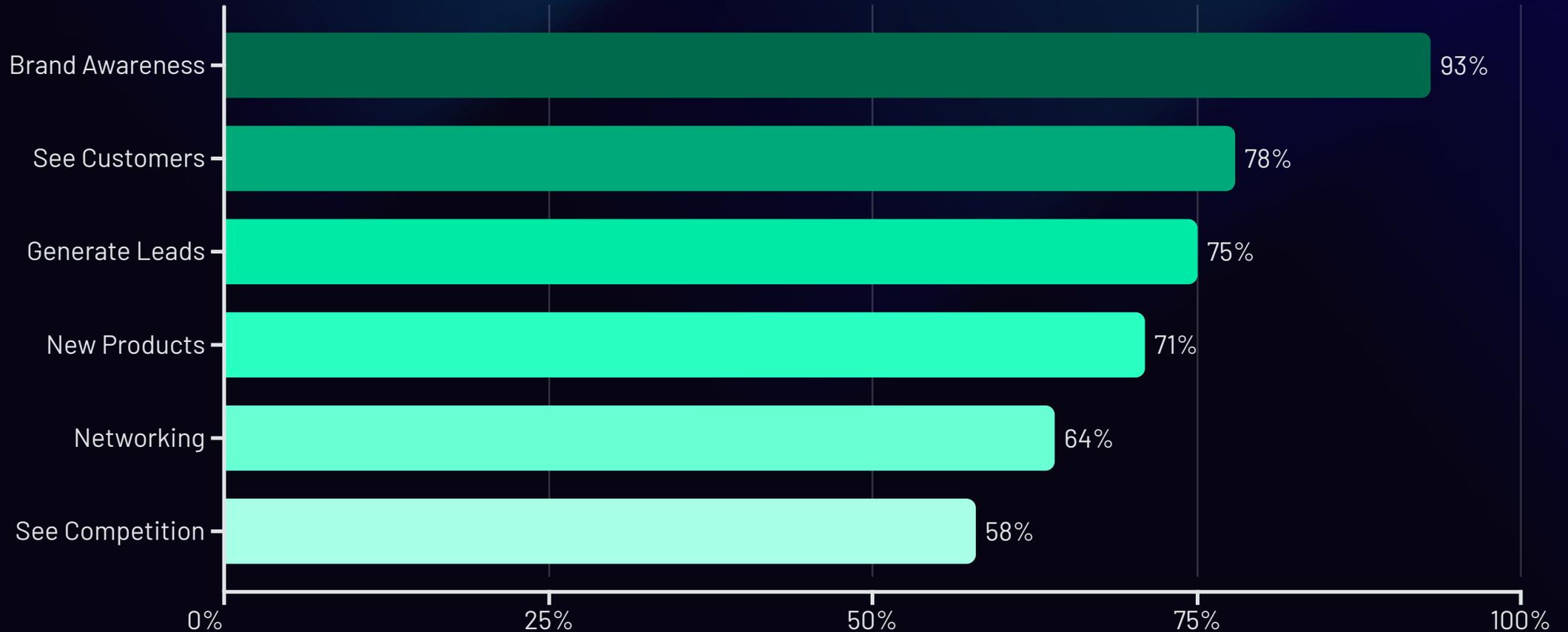
However, there are concerns on the horizon.



**The #1 Reason  
Companies  
Exhibit Is No  
Longer Lead  
Generation**

# Why Companies Exhibit Today

Understanding evolving motivations is critical for consultative selling



# Additional Exhibitor Motivations

## Strategic Goals

- **54%** Thought leadership positioning
- **37%** Support association mission

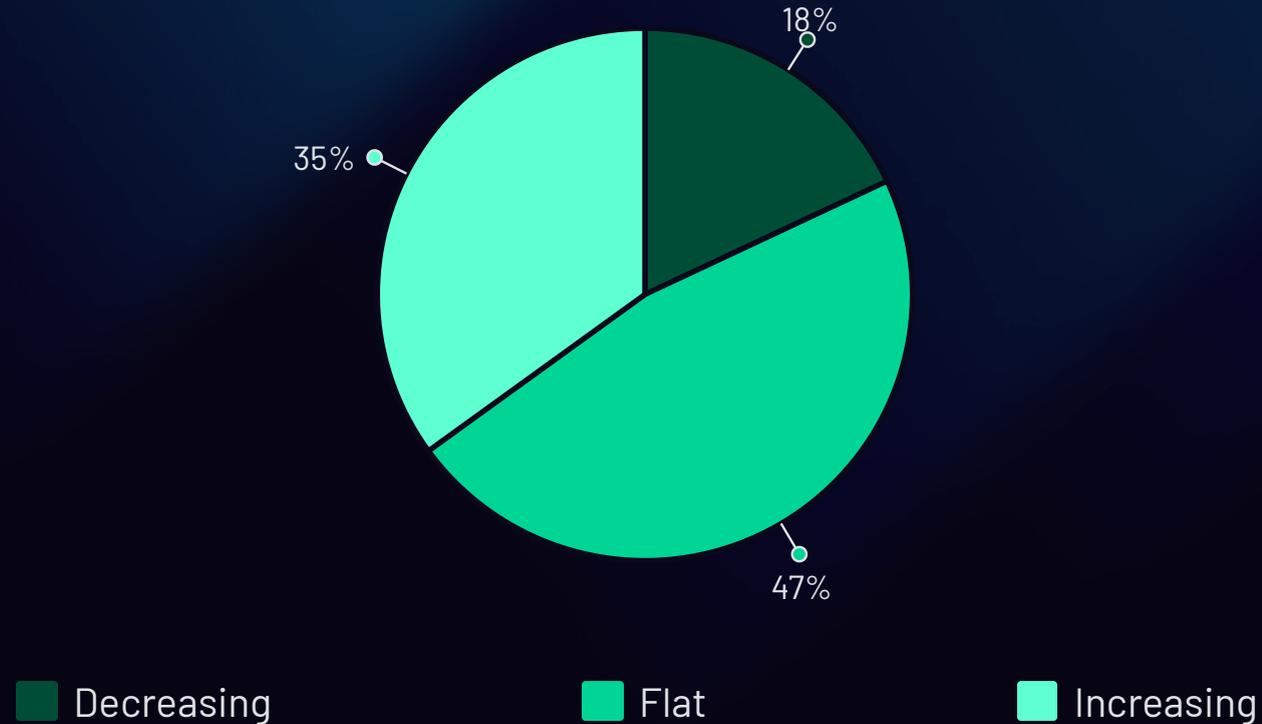


### The Question for You:

How well do you understand your customers' needs, challenges, and strategic objectives?



# Exhibitor Budget Outlook



**Critical insight: 65% of exhibitors face down or flat budgets, while exhibiting costs have increased 30% since 2019**

# Budget Reality Check

## The Consistency Factor

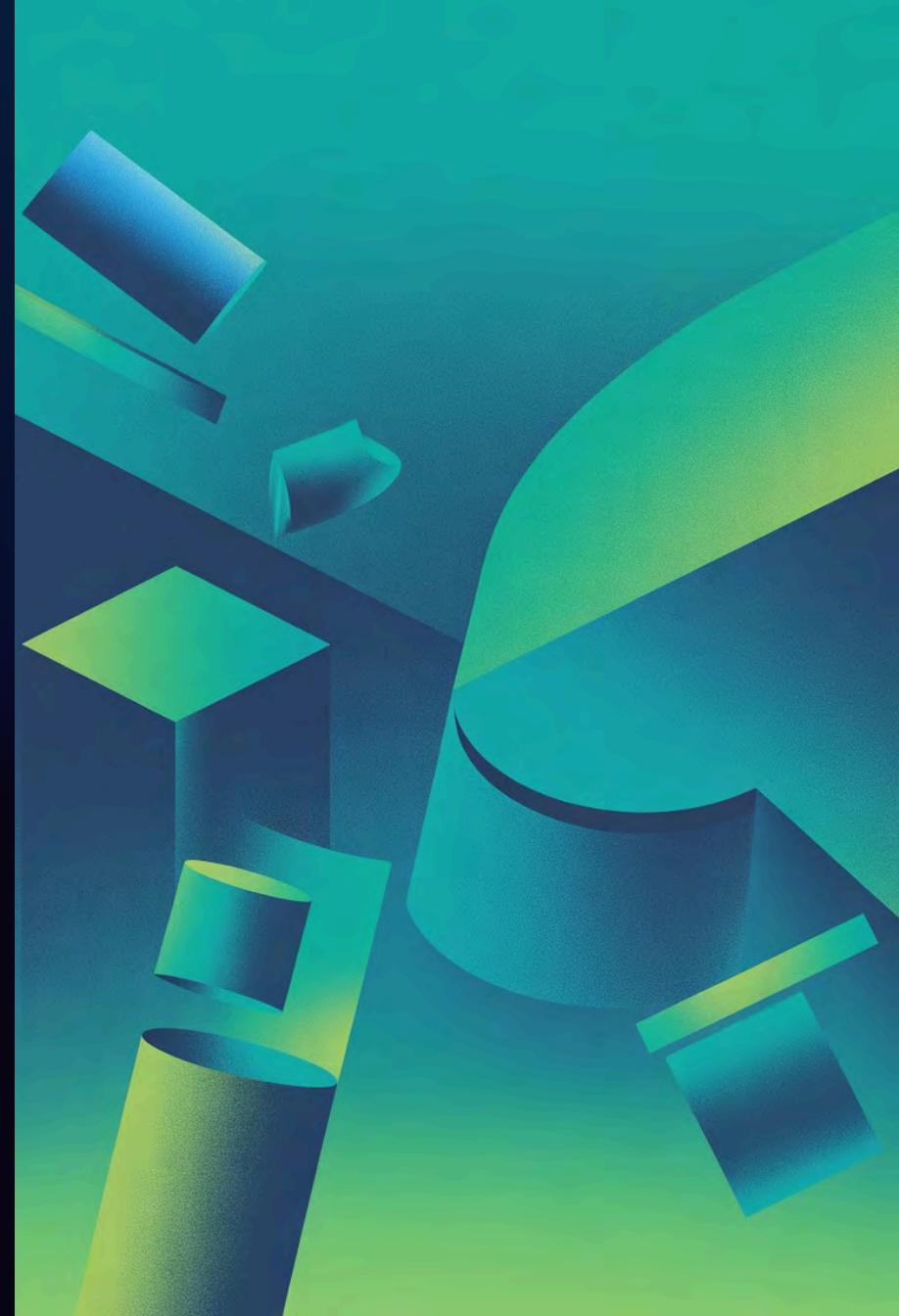
exhibitors' budgets have remained relatively consistent across 4 survey pulses over 12 months

## The Math Problem

65% flat or decreasing budgets

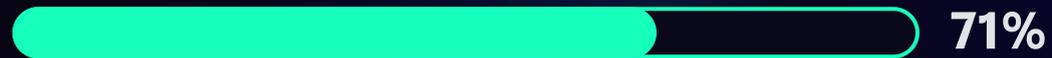
30% cost increases since 2019

Something has to give



# Impact of Rising Costs

How exhibitors are responding to the budget-cost squeeze:



**Scale Back Presence**



**Reevaluate Strategy**



**Reevaluate Budgets**



**Send Fewer Staff**



**Do Fewer Sponsorships**



**Decrease Event Count**



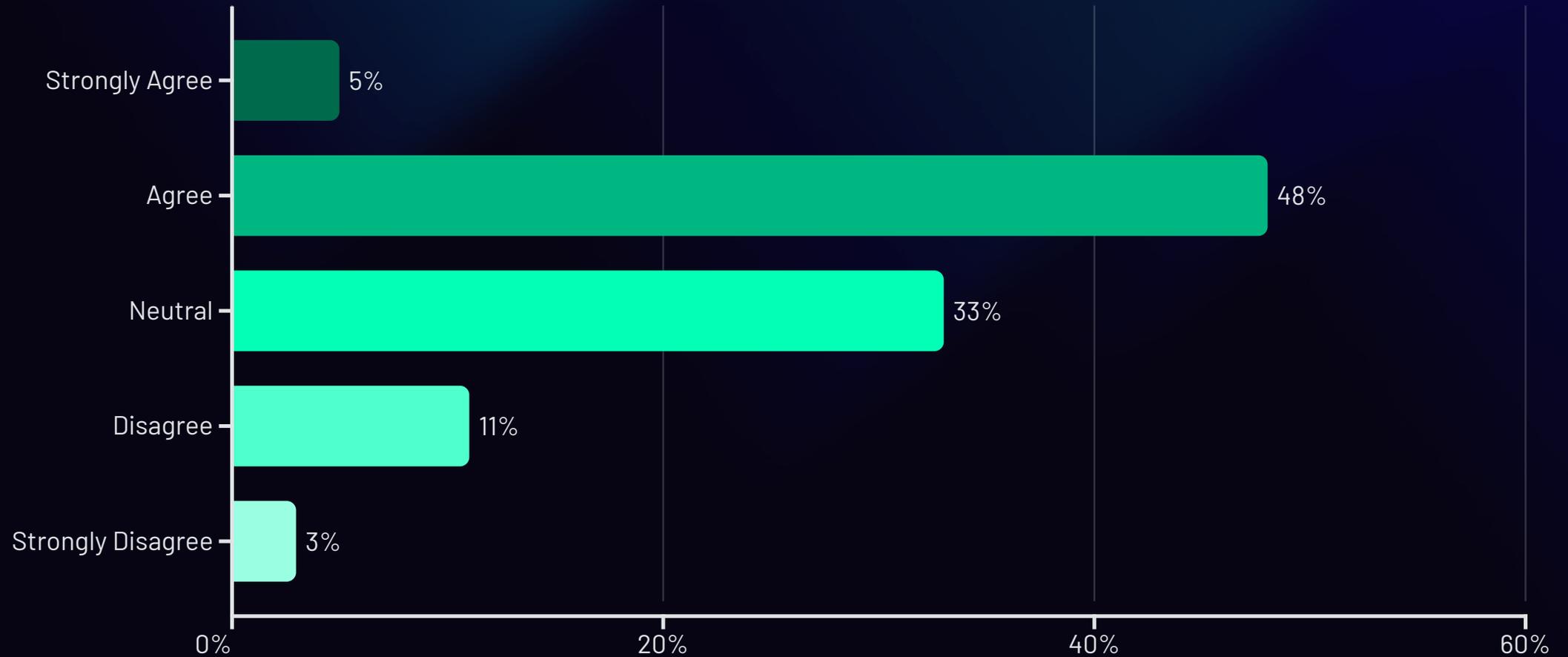
## **The Revenue Impact**

**Flat budgets + increased travel and I&D costs = decreased exhibit space and sponsorship spend**

**Show organizers directly lose revenue as exhibitors make difficult choices**

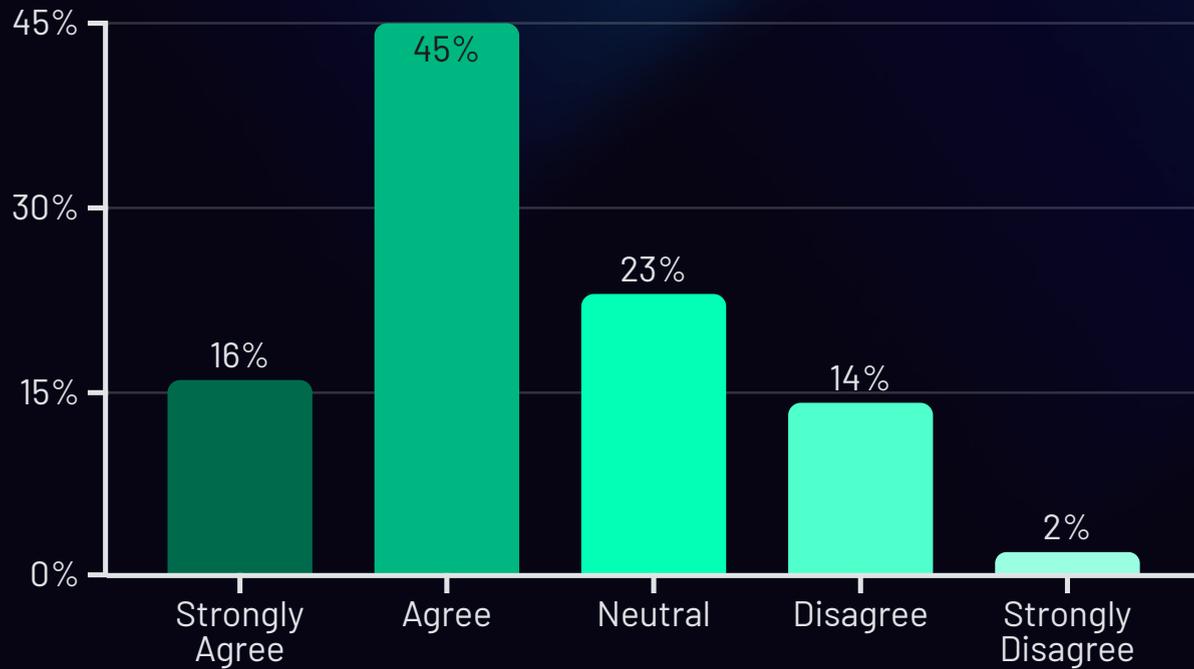
# Exhibitor Sentiment: Alignment with Objectives

*"Show organizers provide options that align with my company's objectives"*



# The Value Equation Concern

*"Increased costs of event marketing are outweighing the value of the investment"*



**61% agree** costs are outpacing value



# The Offsite Alternative

*"At some tradeshow, holding our own offsite activities is preferred instead of exhibiting"*

## **47% Consider It**

Strongly agree or agree that offsite activities are preferred

## **20% Neutral**

Weighing options and evaluating ROI

## **33% Disagree**

Still see value in traditional exhibiting

# Show Organizer Perspective: Research in Progress

1

## Partnership Research

EVOLIO Marketing with  
Tradeshow Executive  
Magazine and Lippman  
Connects

2

## 105 Respondents

Data collection period:  
October 27 - November 16,  
2025

Survey still open for  
additional insights

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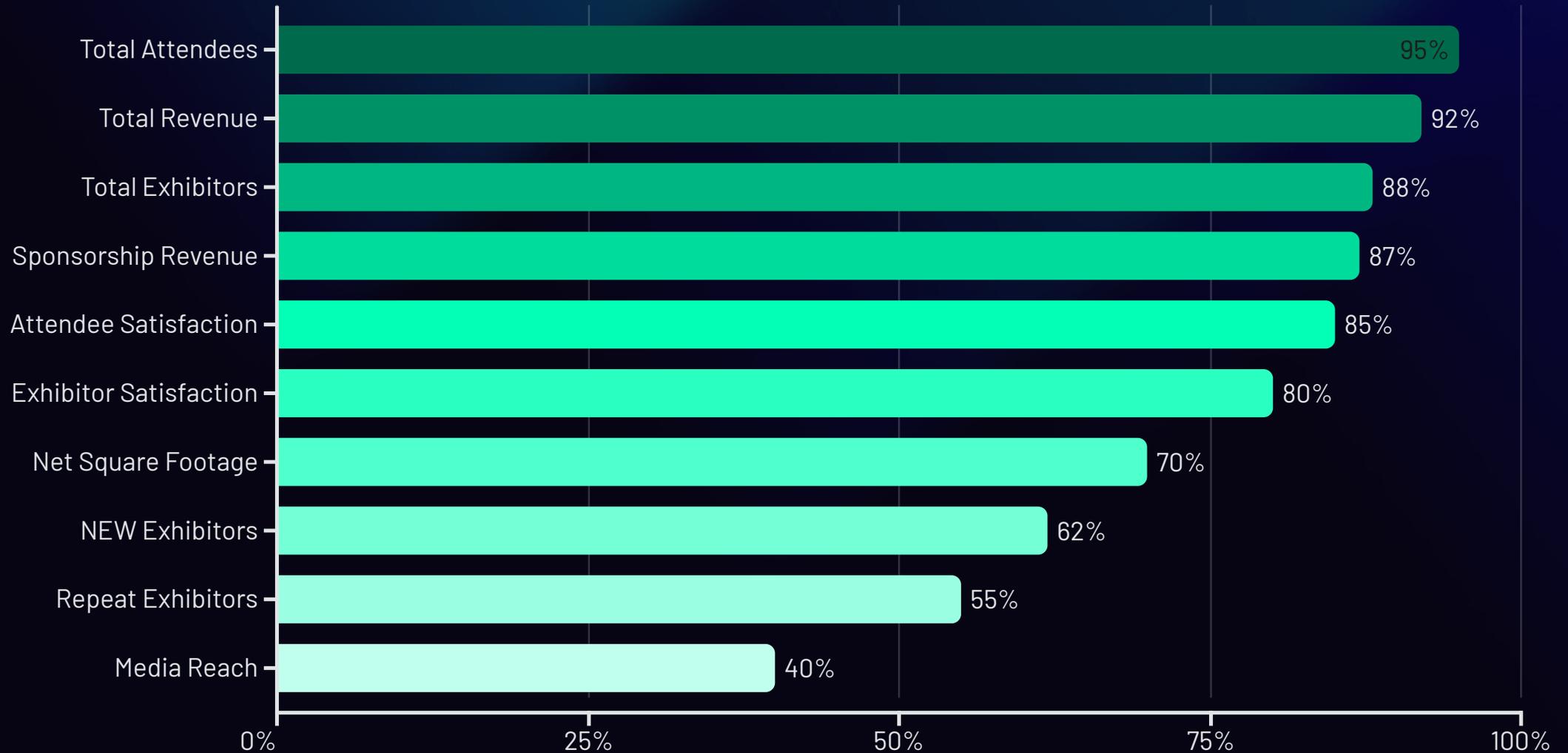
## Whitepaper Delivery

Survey respondents will receive comprehensive results

**Trade Show Executive**  
News, Views and Tools for Trade Show and Event Executives



# Organizer KPIs: What Gets Measured



# KPI Insight: Growth Metrics are Critical

## New vs. Repeat Business

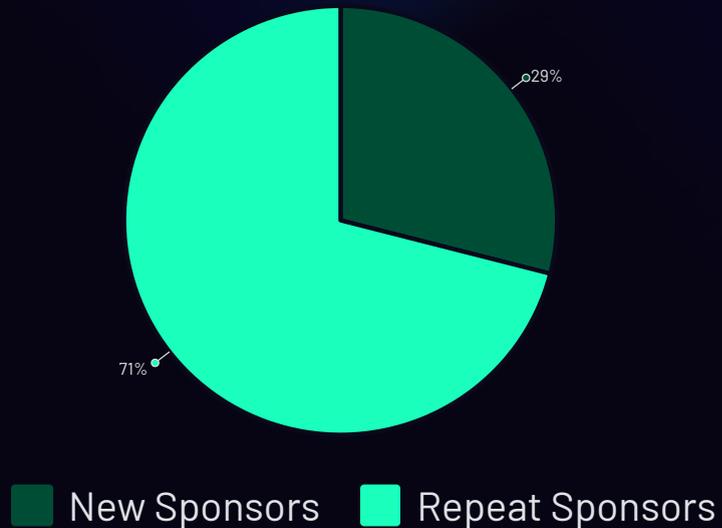
- **56%** Track number of new attendees
- **62%** Track number of new exhibiting companies
- **39%** Track new sponsorship revenue
- **31%** Track new sponsorship count

## Beyond Traditional Metrics

- **32%** Social media and press analytics
- **22%** Press/analyst attendance

# Sponsorship Requests

## Sponsorships: New vs. Repeat Revenue



## What Sponsors Want

- **85%** Custom sponsorships
- **83%** Thought leadership opportunities
- **55%** Exclusive group events
- **35%** Outside venue activations
- **28%** Year-long partnerships

# Organizer Flexibility re: Sponsorship Requests

Are organizers accommodating custom sponsorship requests?



**17% Always**



**55% Frequently**



**25% Occasionally**



**2% Rarely**

 **72% of organizers regularly accommodate custom requests**

# Cost and Sales Trends

## Pricing Changes

- Space costs per sq ft: 66% increased
- Sponsorship prices: 66% increased

## Revenue Impact

- Exhibit space revenue: 59% increased
- Sponsorship revenue: 68% increased

## Volume Changes

### Number of exhibiting companies:

- 44% increased
- 24% decreased

### Number of sponsors:

- 57% increased
- 13% decreased

Q: Compared with 2 years ago (2023), how have each of the following changed for your most recent largest event(s)?

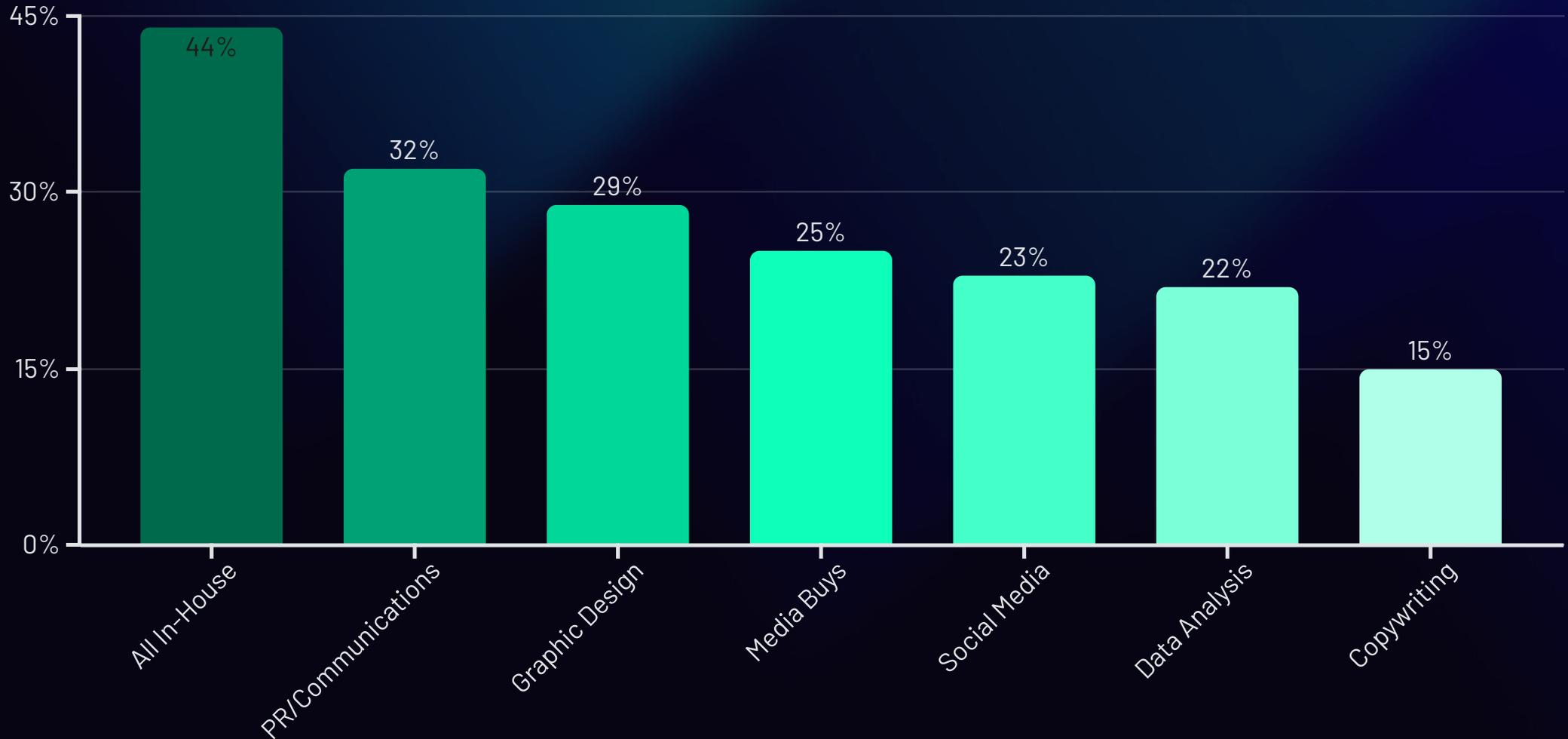
**The Large Exhibitor Challenge**  
**69%** of organizers report  
**medium/large exhibitors**  
**decreased spend in past 2**  
**years**

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**Key finding: Medium/large**  
**exhibitors have decreased their**  
**spend by an average of 21%**



# Outsourced Marketing Tactics



While 44% of organizers manage attendee acquisition entirely in-house, many strategically outsource specialized functions like PR/communications (32%), graphic design (29%), and media buys (25%).

# Attendee Trends



## Registration Fees

59% increased  
39% stayed flat  
0% decreased



## Total Attendance

48% increased  
30% stayed flat  
22% decreased



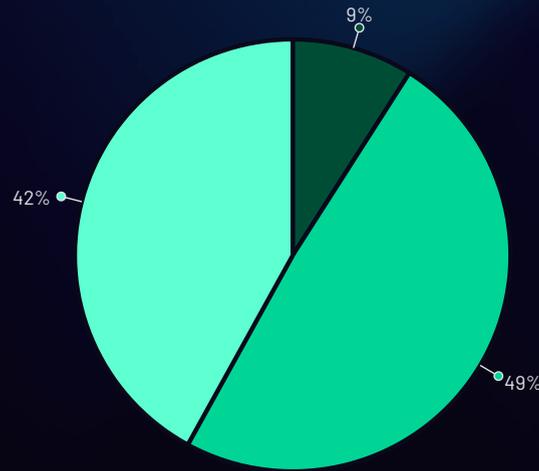
## Attendees per Company

19% increased  
33% stayed flat  
16% decreased

 **Key Insight for Organizers:** While registration fees are generally increasing, attendance growth is mixed, and group sizes are shrinking.

# Attendee Registration Behavior

## Attendees Continue to Register Late



■ Register ASAP ■ Between early bird and last... ■ Last minute

## Discount Strategy

**94% of shows offer registration discounts**

27% of events' discounts expire 4 weeks before the event starts

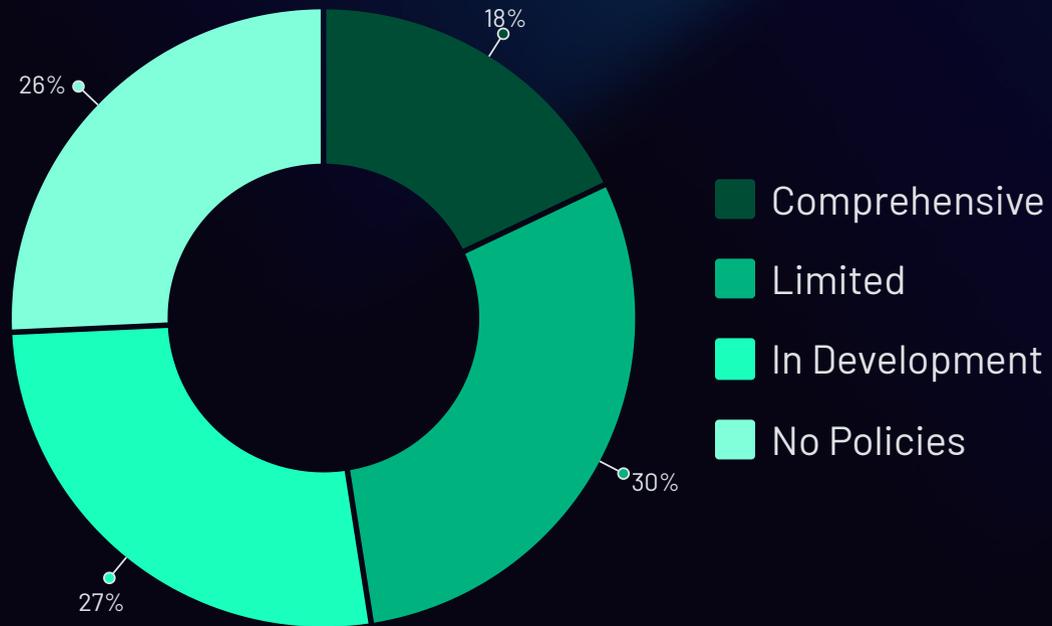
53% expire 1 to 2 months before the event starts

**Key Insight for Organizers:** While almost all organizers offer discounts, the majority of attendees are still registering closer to the event dates which begs the question, do discounts drive much attendance? Would cutting them impact attendance?

# AI Adoption in Events



# AI Policy Landscape



## Policy Status

Only 48% have formal AI policies in place

27% actively developing guidelines

26% operate without formal policies



# AI for Assistance with your Exhibit & Sponsorship Sales Strategy

Acting as the world's best strategic exhibit and sponsorship sales guru, please assist me in elevating my game to consultatively sell more exhibit space and sponsorships to both existing and potential new companies.

My show is CATTLECON, and our sales have been growing, but not at the pace I'd like. We're currently at 8% growth, and I'd like to bring in 25% growth over the next 3 years. Based on our current and past exhibitors and sponsors, what are the top 25 companies I should have on my hit list?

Please conduct DEEP RESEARCH to help me understand what other shows do they exhibit at, at what level, and booth size?

What are their main product/solution categories, and how do they align with our categories?

What USP can I use to have each of them invest in CATTLECON?

Based on our attendees and their targets, please estimate the size of their target audience and recommended booth size and sponsorship opportunity to speak with them about.

Provide a good, better, best scenario for each. Explain their ROI potential and give examples of how similar companies have achieved success by being in CATTLECON.

For each of the companies you recommend, can you put the results into a table and in a Word doc with 2 pages of info per company?

What questions or info do you need from me?

[Click here to see results](#)

[Learn more about EVOLIO](#)



# AI for Assistance with your Attendee Acquisition Strategy

## PROMPT:

Acting as a tradeshow executive and strategist for attendee acquisition, looking to grow my show and identify new attendee segments, can you help me create a strategic plan to increase attendance for my 2026 and future events? Based on our current attendee numbers and profile information, I am looking for the following DEEP RESEARCH regarding this show: CATTLECON.

Increasing current attendance by 10% next year and 25% over the next 5 years

Identify the most critical issues and challenges faced in the cattle industry.

What are some emerging attendee segments to identify?

What other events could my attendees attend instead of my event? Local? Regional? National?

What attendee segments may be missing that we should be marketing to?

How do I retain attendees?

How do I get cattle folks to send more people from their ranch or organization without disrupting their business by being away?

How do I position my event as a must-attend, justifying the time and expense for them to attend?

Who are the "Sweet spot" attendee profiles I should use ZoomInfo, Apollo.ai, Seamless.ai, or Clay.com to identify to build my marketing lists?

What are the best sources to market my event to (print, digital, social, local advertising, etc.). Can you create a marketing plan for me covering those sources, indicating estimated costs?

What questions do you have for me?

[Click here to see the results](#)

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