

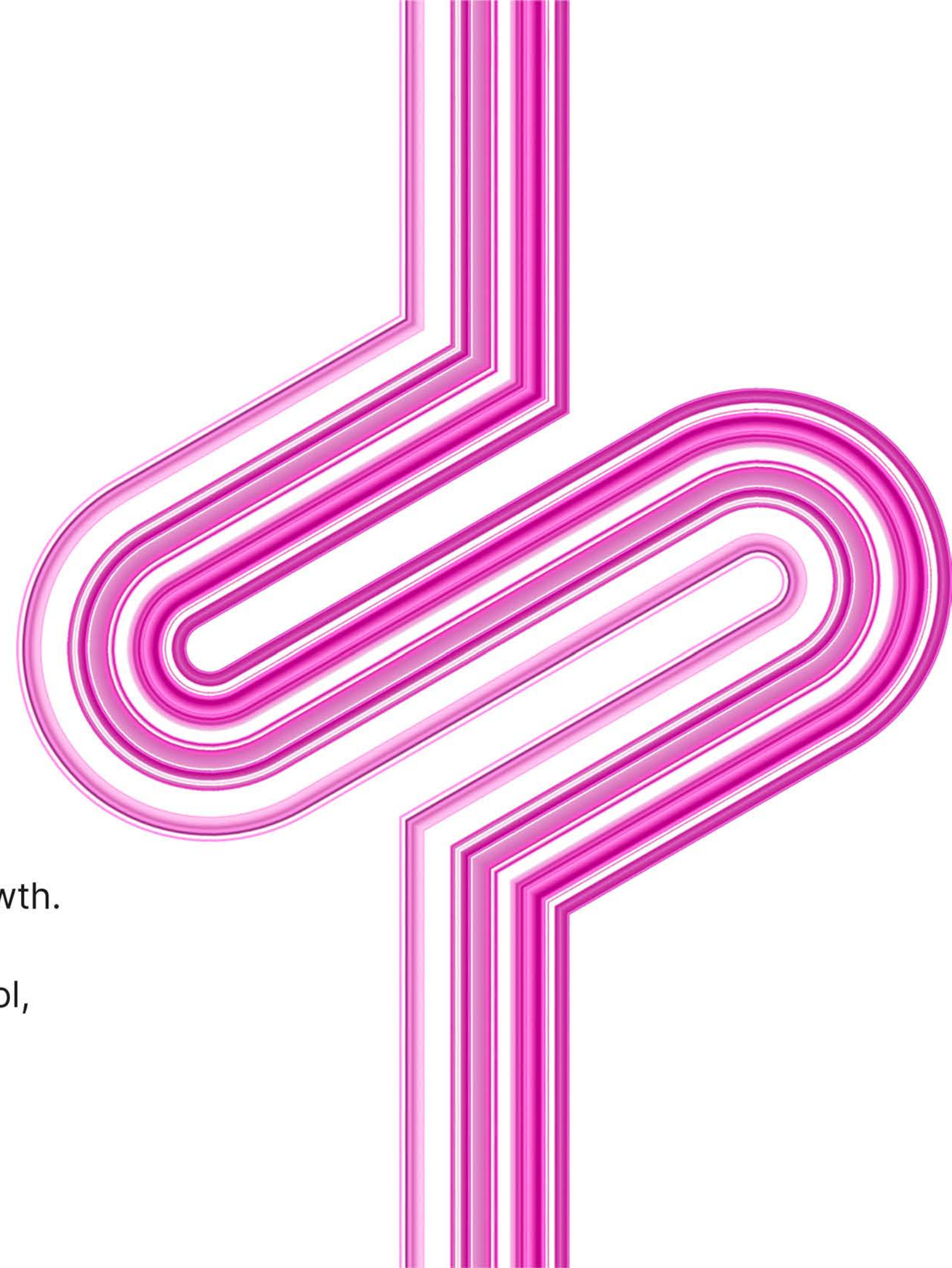


2026

State of AI in Sales Report

How is AI Reshaping Lead Generation, Prospecting, and Pipeline Growth.

Discover insights to how AI is impacting sales process, strategies, tool, and more in the 2026 State of AI in Sales report featuring exclusive insights from top-performing sales pros, like you.





Executive Summary

AI adoption in sales is rising, but the core problem hasn't changed: finding quality leads is still the biggest barrier to hitting quota.

We released the State of AI In Sales Survey Report in 2025 and 2026, and for two years in a row, prospecting remained the top AI use case for surveyors, while trust in AI for buyer prioritization rose sharply.

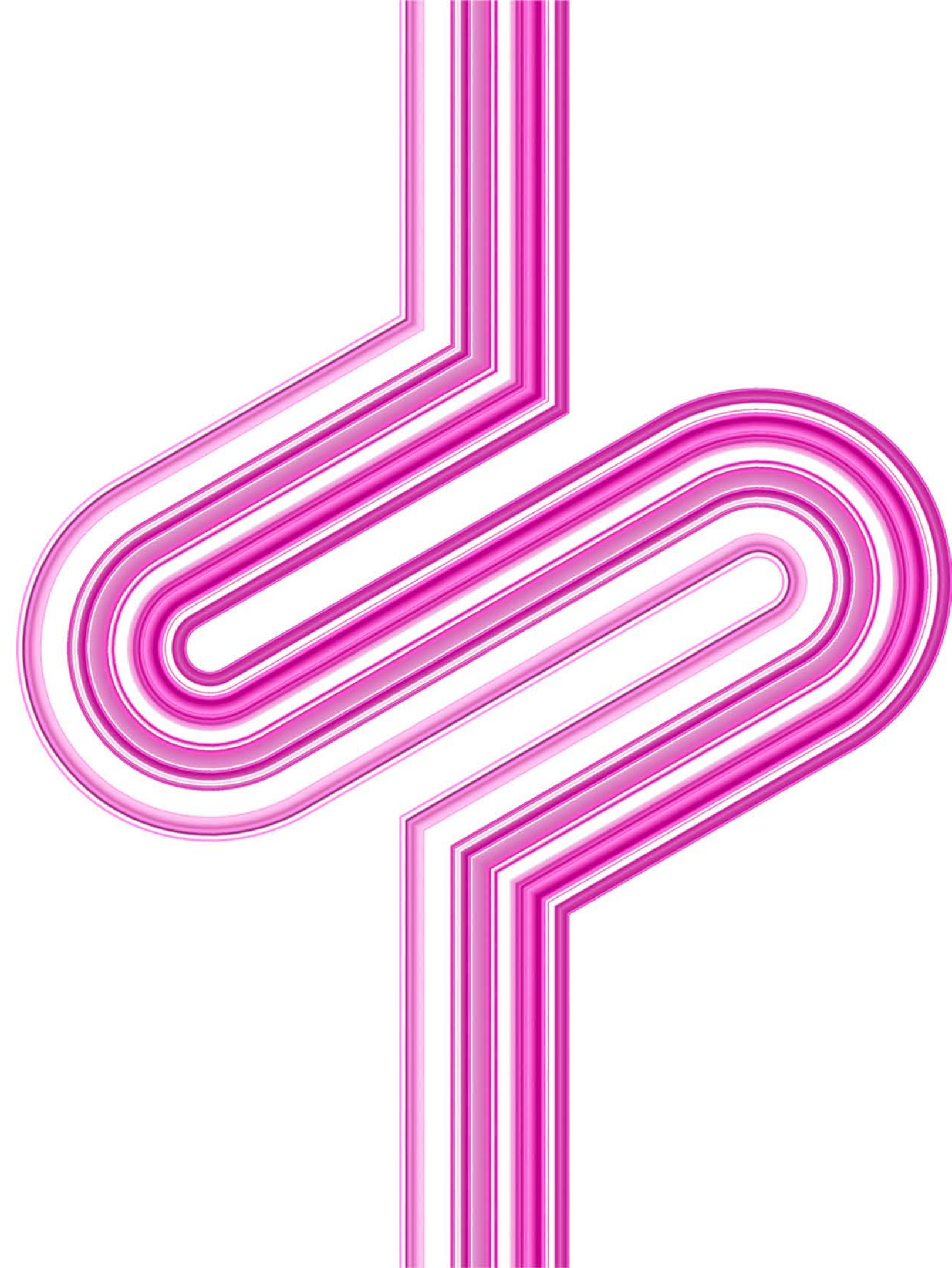
At the same time, sales teams are becoming more interested in workflow automation, but they still want and need human oversight in high-value outreach.



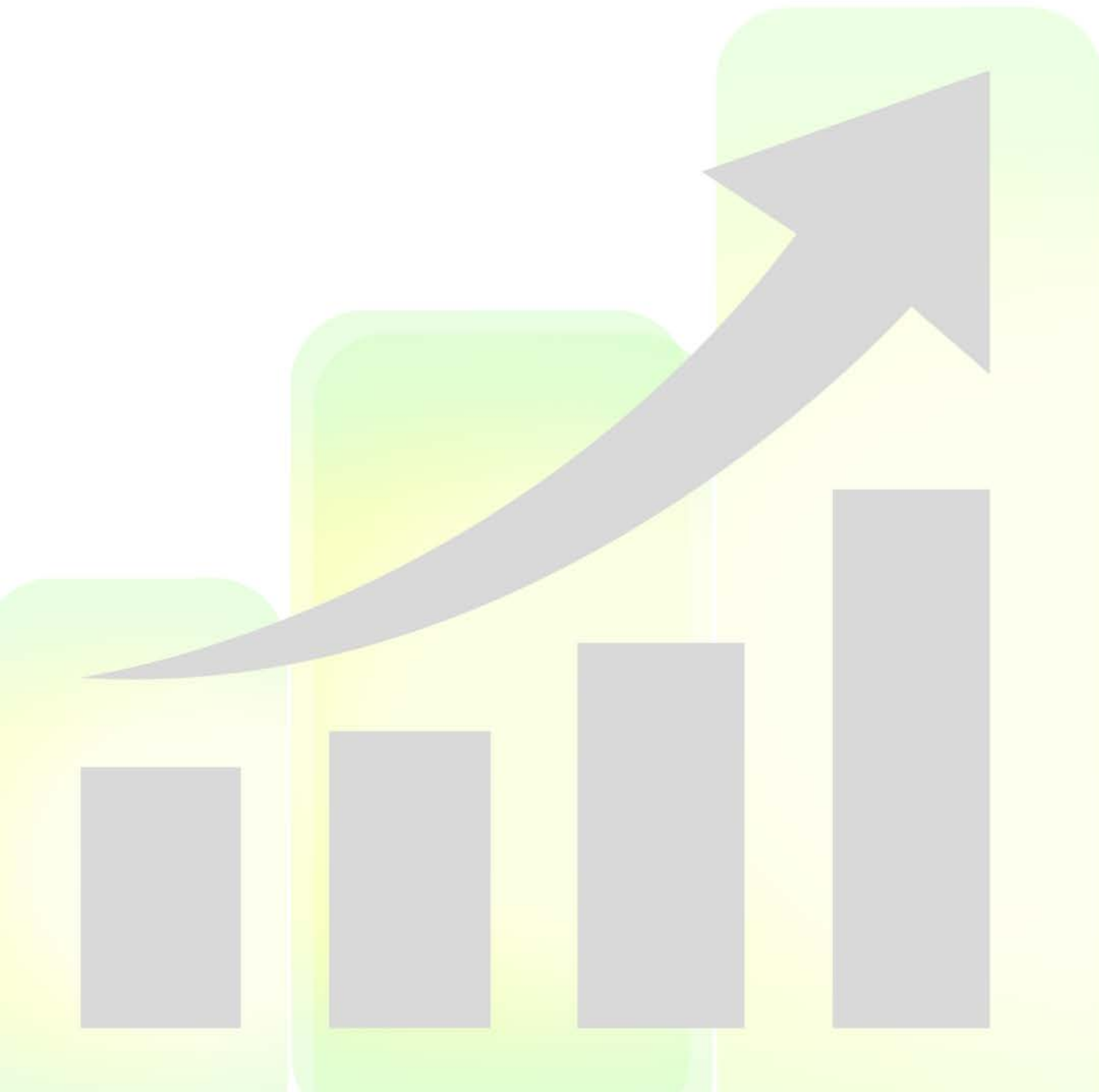


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Key Themes



01

Lead generation is the top pain point for sales professionals.

(64% → 53%)

02

Prospecting remains the top AI use case among sales pros.

(65% → 57%)

03

Reliance on AI for 90%-accurate buyer prediction surged.

(37% → 77%)

04

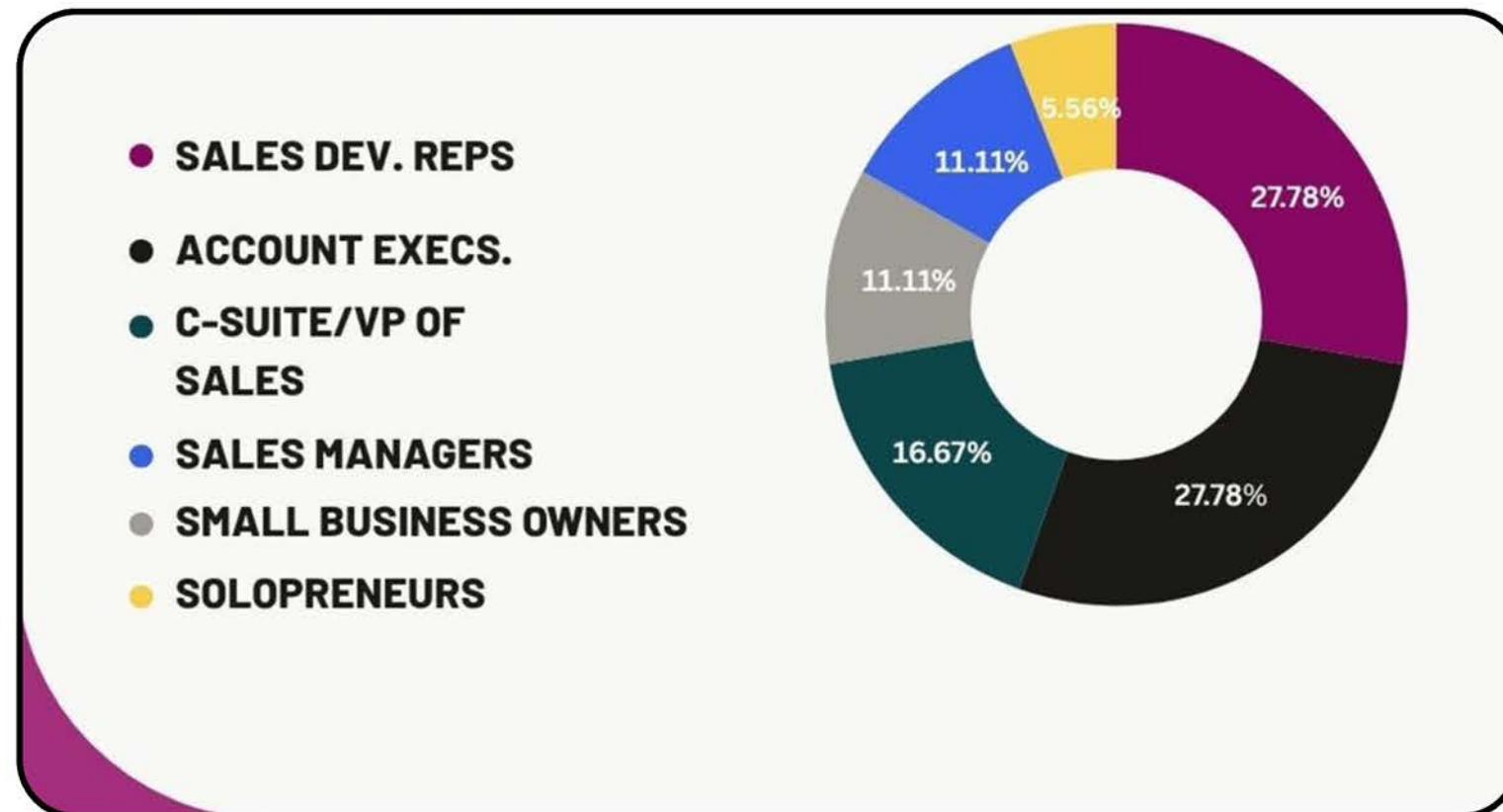
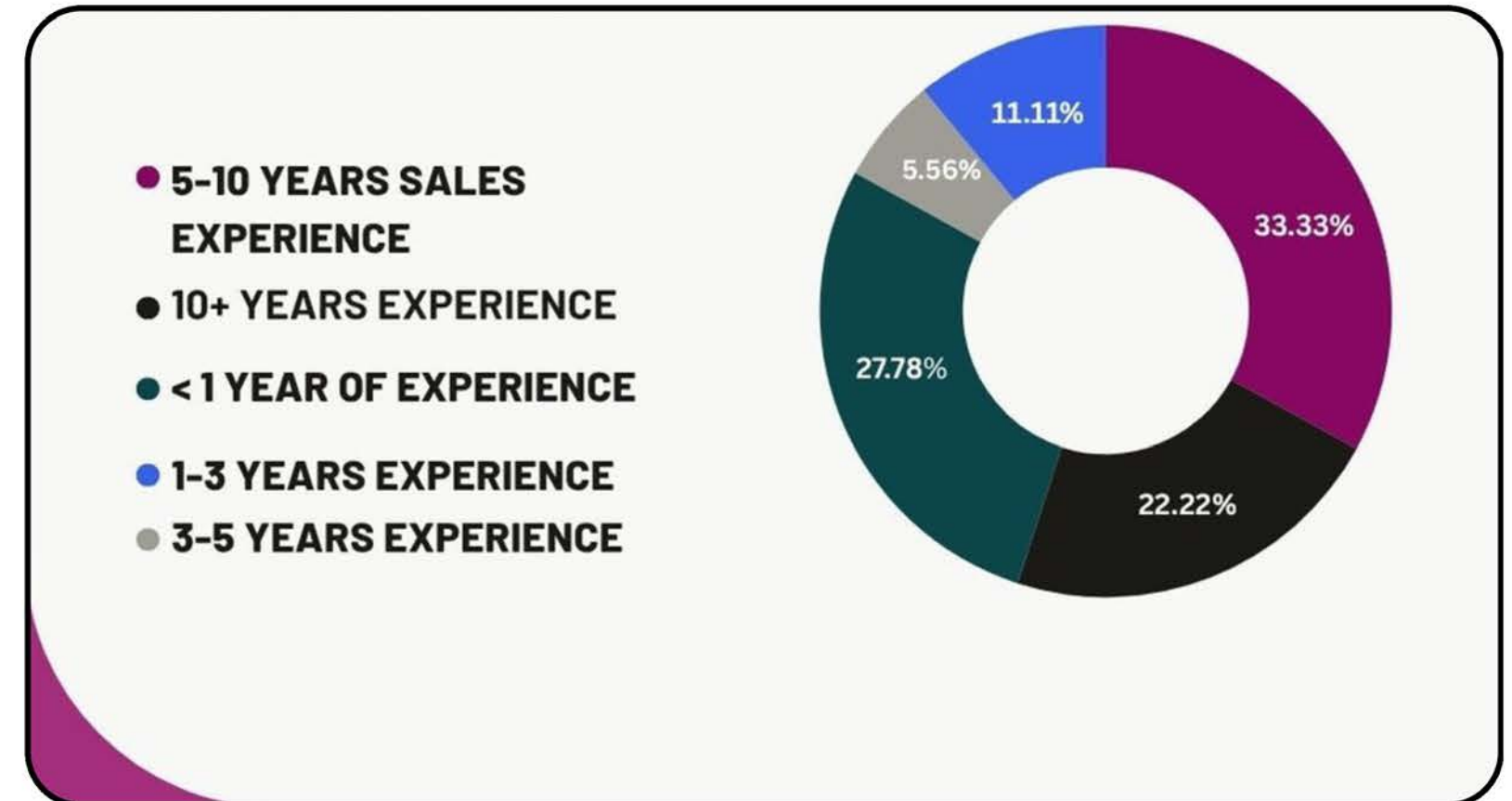
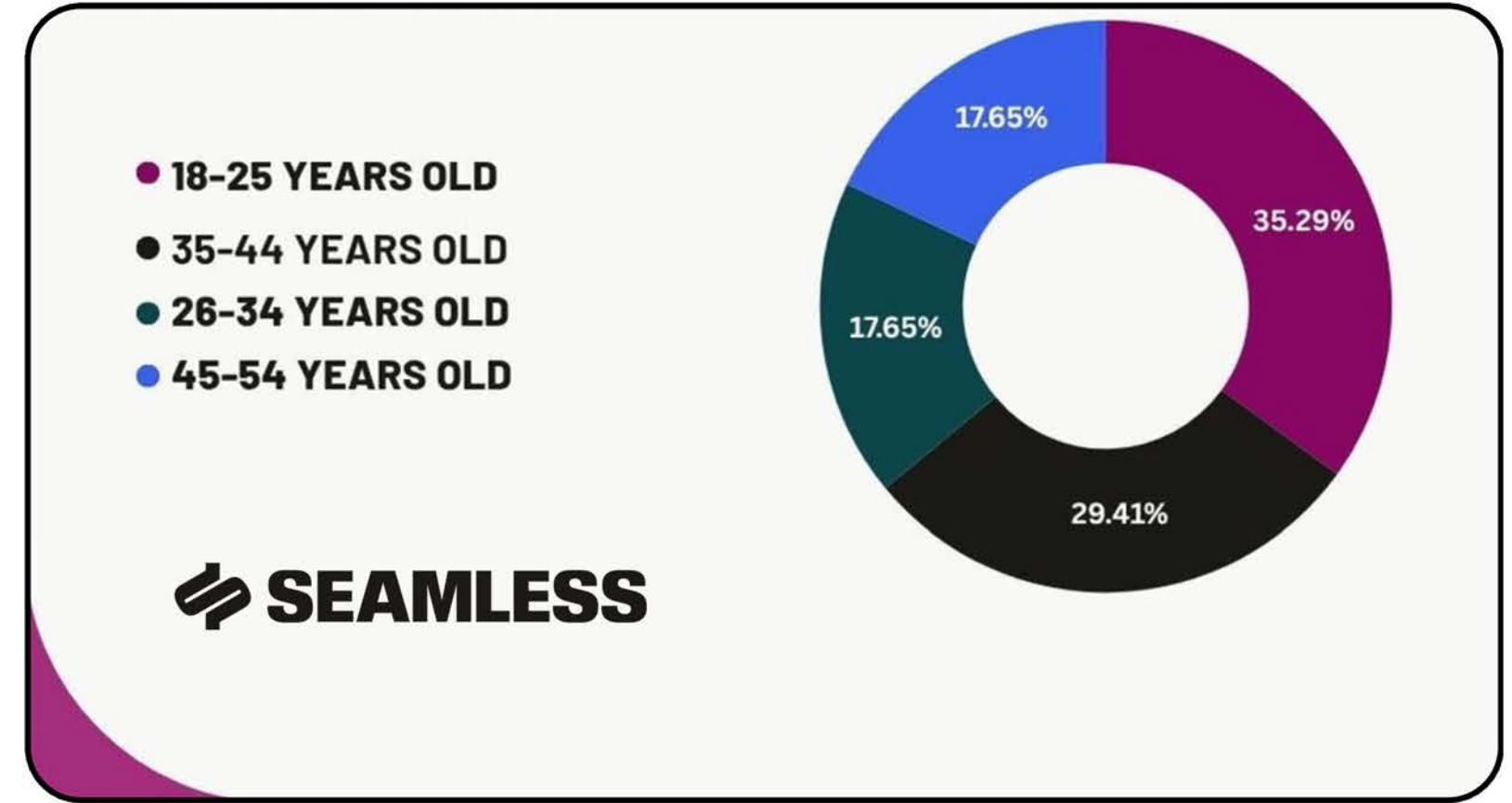
Excitement around workflow automation jumped dramatically.

(10% → 46%)

Survey Participants

The majority of survey respondents held frontline sales roles: SDRs and AEs each made up 28% of respondents.

Those with 5–10 years of experience were the highest segment in 2026 at 33%, compared to 16% in 2025.



THE BIG PROBLEM



Lead Generation Is Still the Biggest Barrier to Growth

Here's Why That Matters.

For all the momentum around AI, the biggest sales challenge remains the same: **finding quality leads**.

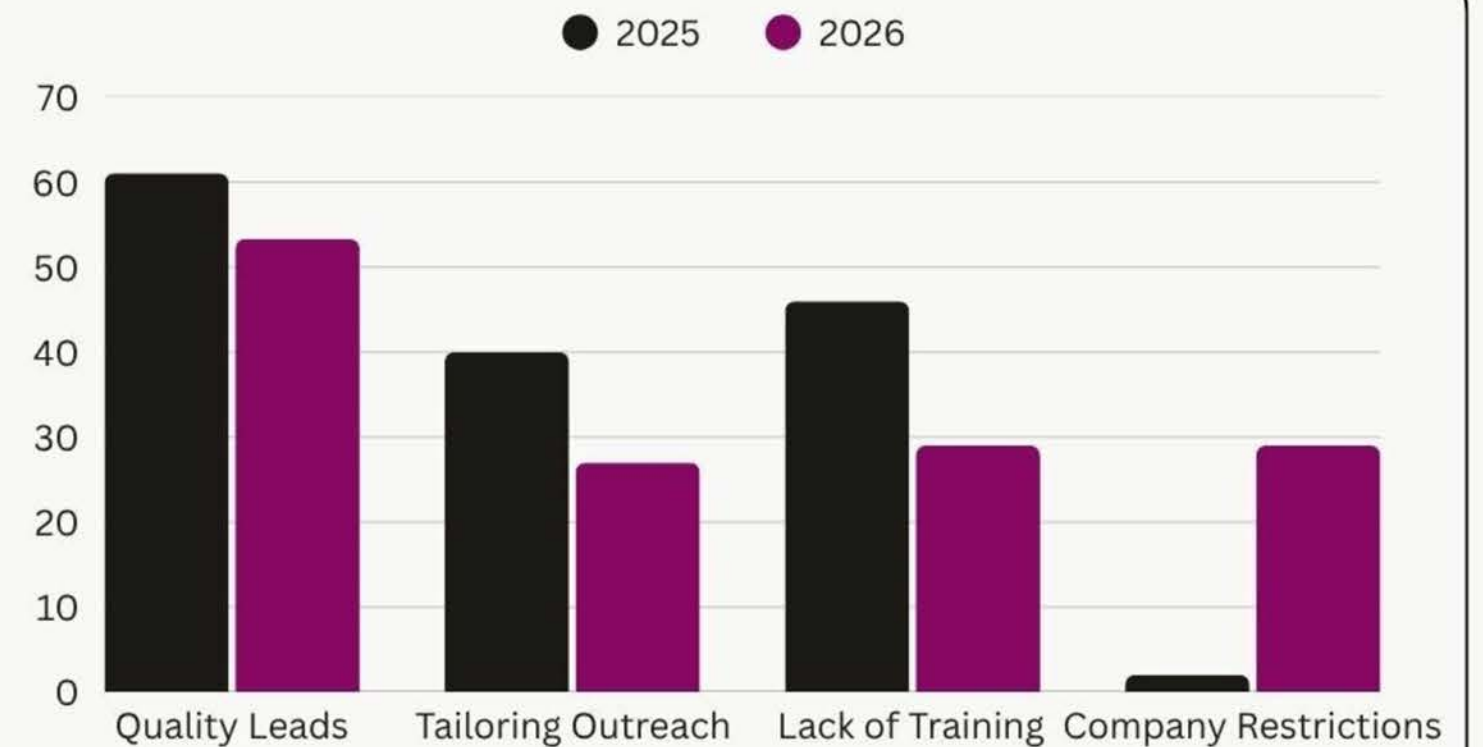
In 2025, 61% said it was one of their biggest challenges in **hitting quota**, while down slightly in 2026 at 53%, it's still cited as the top challenge.

Sales teams don't just need more activity, they need **better prospects**, better targeting, and a more reliable path to pipeline.

Training and personalization both dropped this year while company policy or sales restrictions gained.

"The #1 sales challenge remains finding quality leads."

2026 TRENDS VS. 2025: TOP CHALLENGES



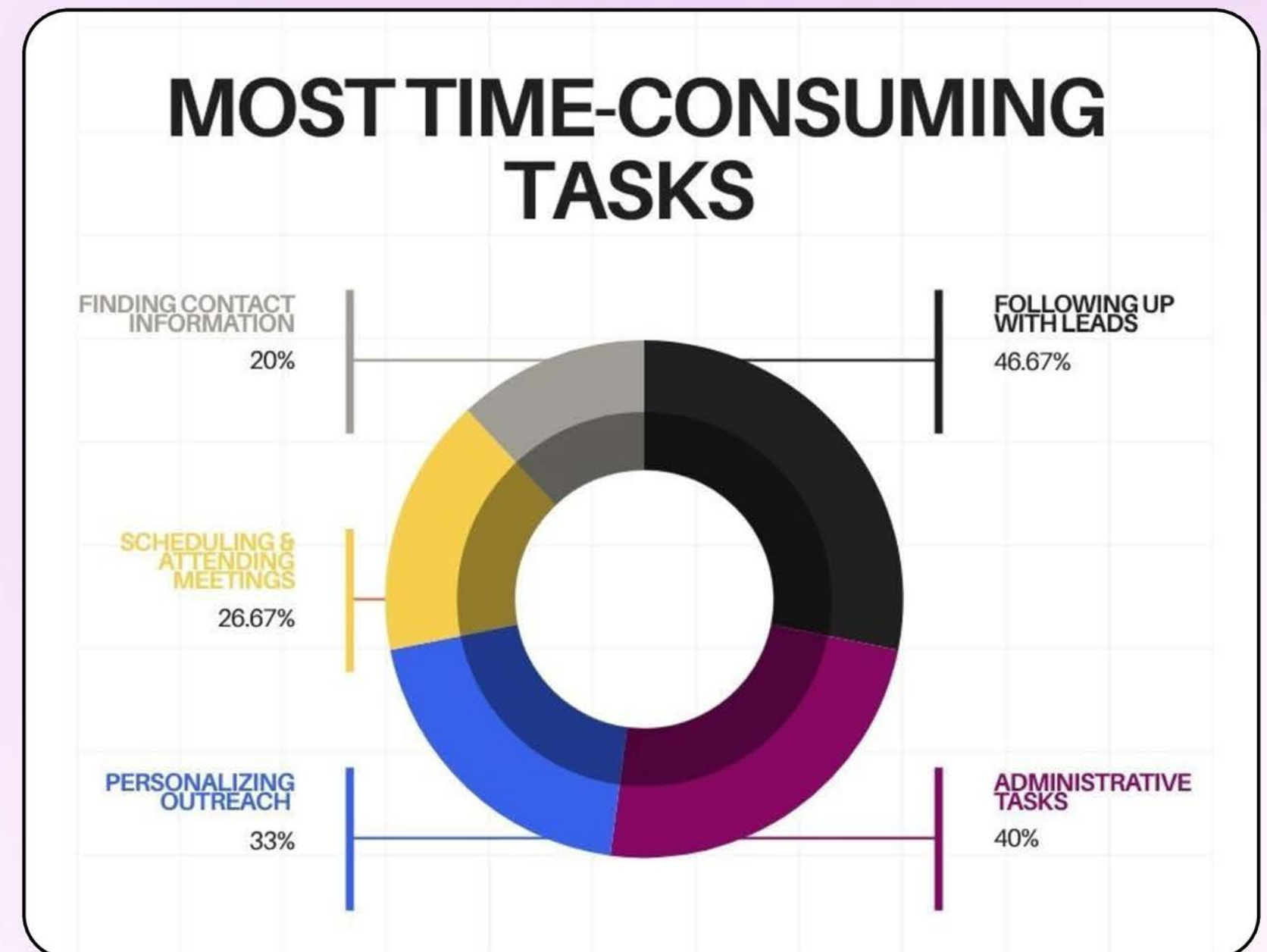
Bad Lead Processes Create a Time Problem

Lead generation inefficiency doesn't stop at **list building or contact data**. This issue spills over and negatively affects the rest of the sales workflow.

In 2026, 46% said following up with leads was one of their **most time-consuming tasks**, while 40% cited administrative work like CRM updates and reporting as bottlenecks.

In 2025, 43% said personalizing outreach messages was **highly time-consuming**, 35% identified follow-up as a problem, and 34% said admin work was a major time drainer.

"Pipeline problems are also workflow problems."



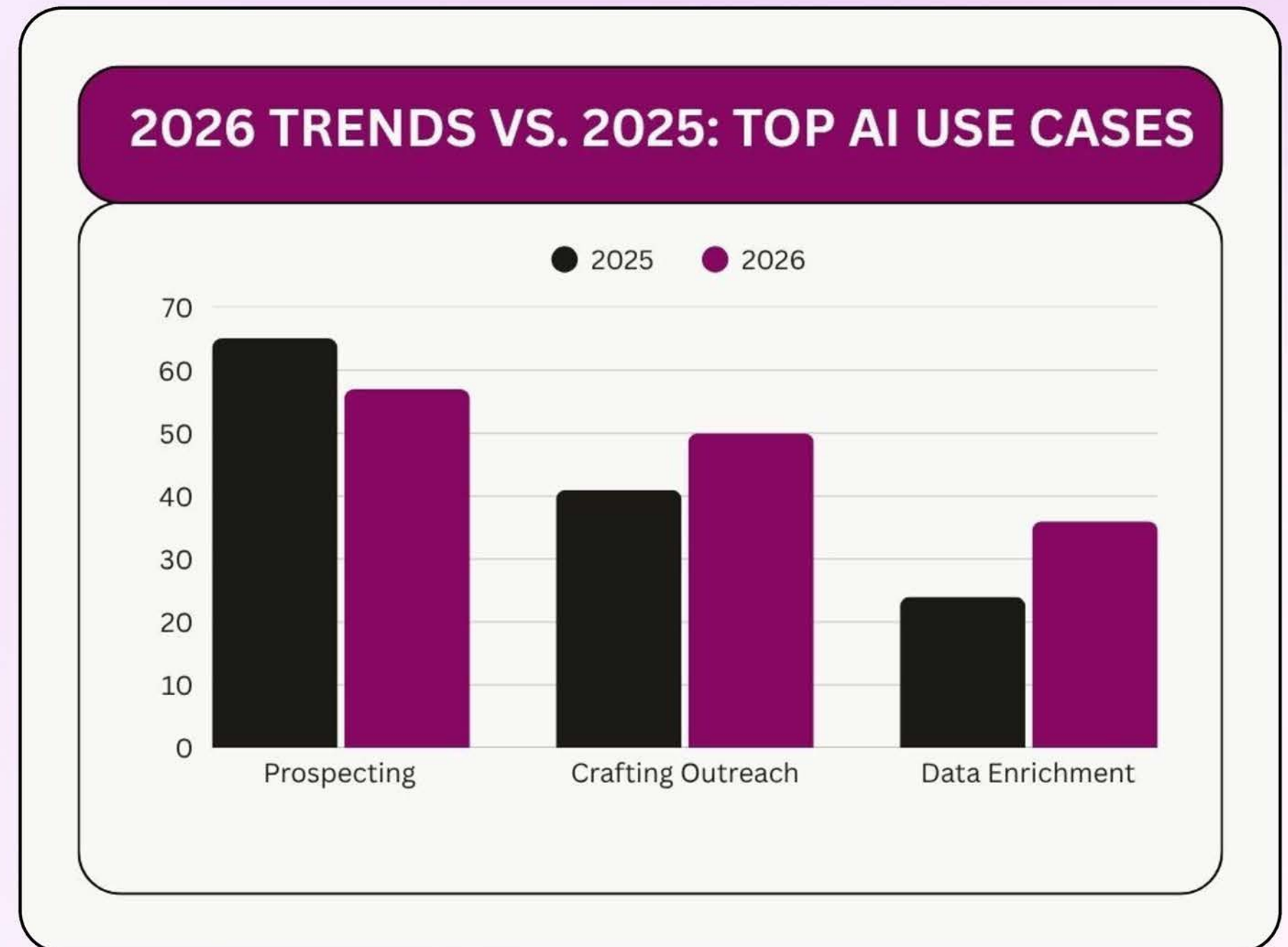
AI's Biggest Wins Are Happening at the Top of the Funnel

Across both reports, the strongest AI use cases are tightly linked to **pipeline creation**.

Prospecting remained the top AI use case in both years, while more sales professionals are increasingly using **AI to craft outreach messages** and run data enrichment.

The biggest year-over-year difference came from using **AI for Data Enrichment**, while crafting outreach messaging also gained.

"Prospecting remained the #1 AI use case in both years."



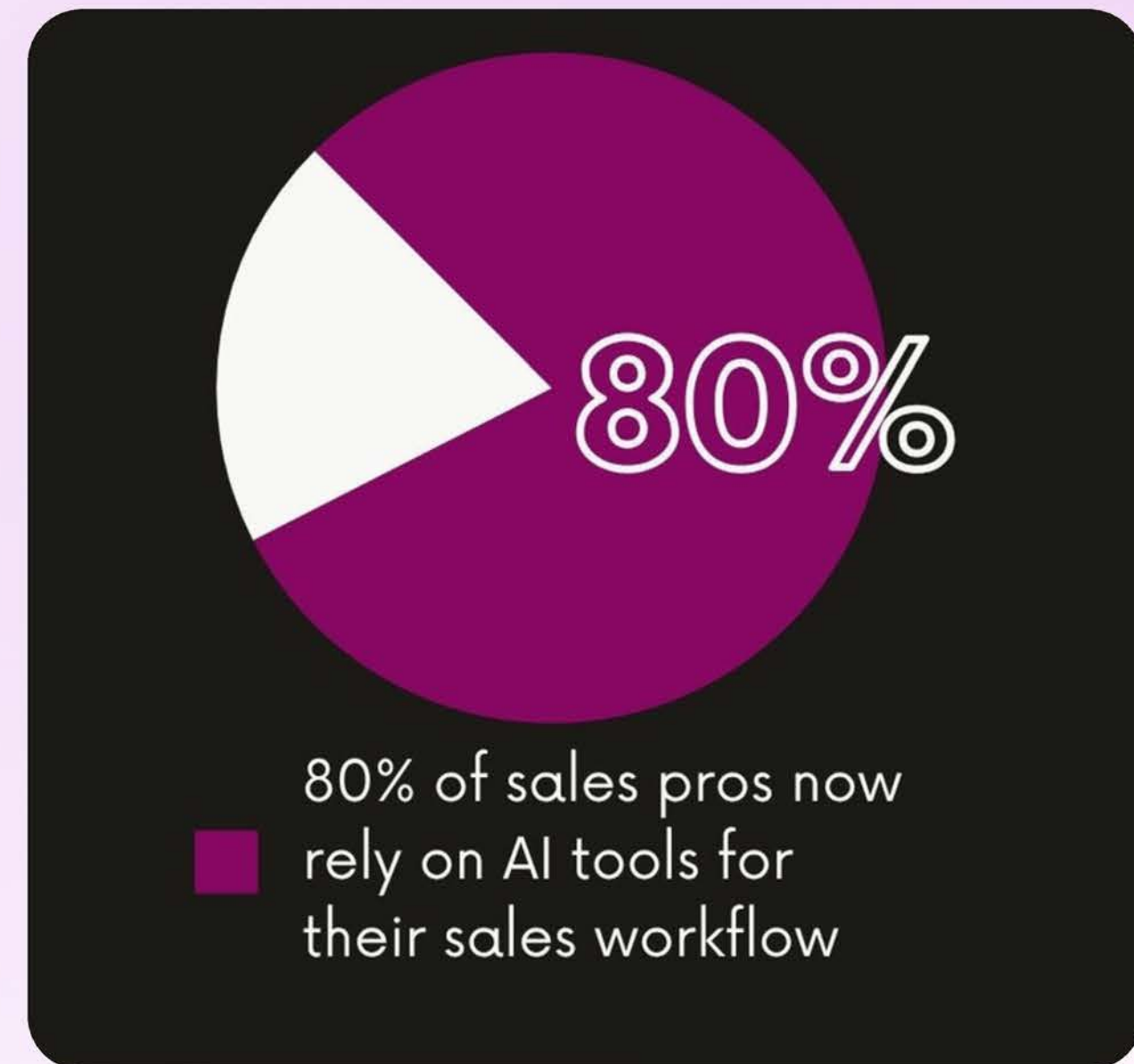
Sales Teams Have Moved Beyond AI Curiosity

AI is no longer a fringe experiment in sales.

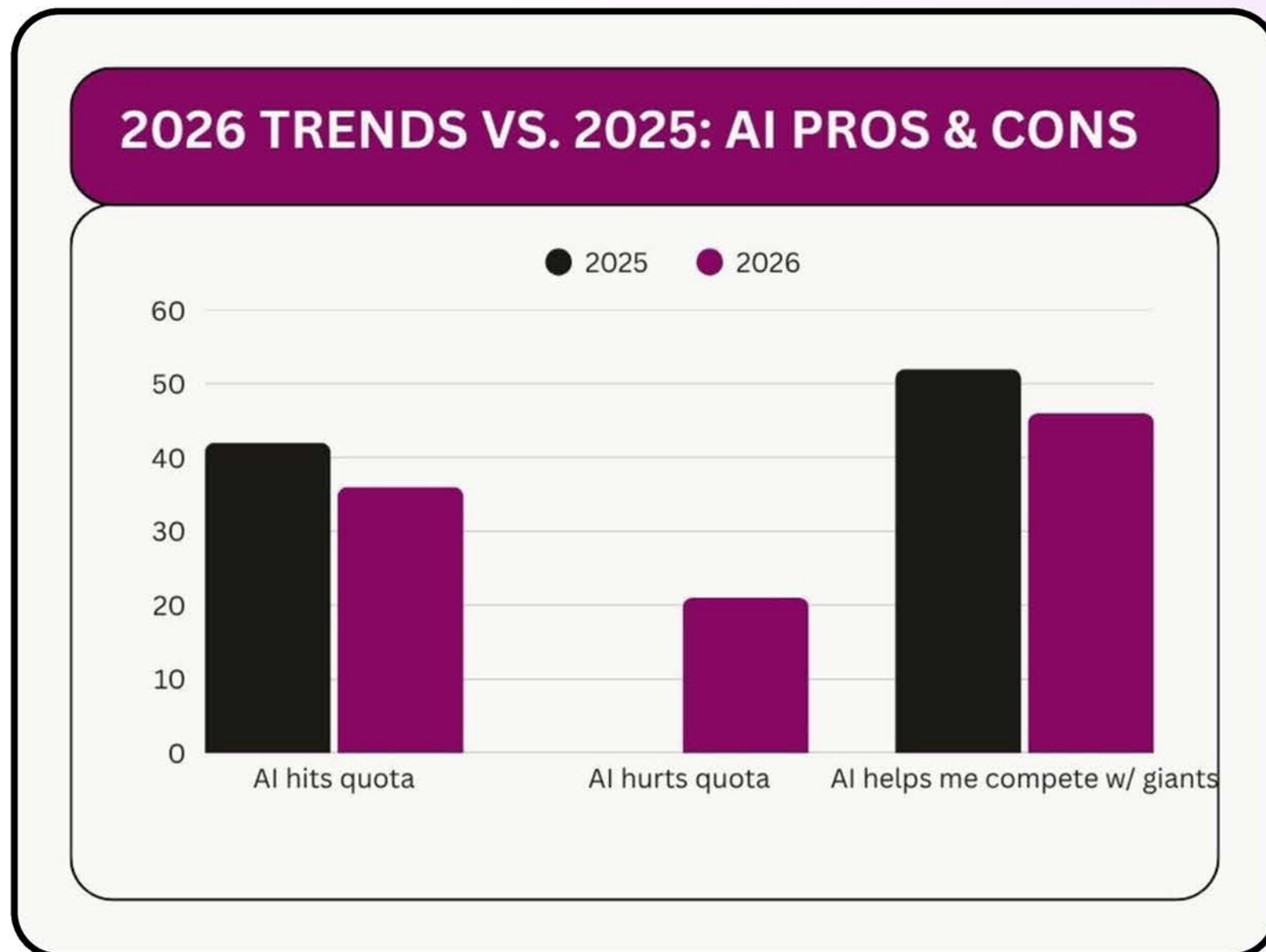
In 2026, 80% of the responses said they currently use **AI tools in their sales workflow**.

In particular, when it comes to the question around specific workflow usage, in 2025 41% said they used **AI effectively to hit quota** versus 2026, where 53% said AI is extensively used in their workflow.

“80% of respondents use AI in their current sales workflow.”



AI Usage Doesn't Automatically Mean Better Performance



No impact: 30% vs. 7%

Hit quota consistently: 42% vs. 36%

Made it harder: 0% vs. 21%

As adoption rises, performance **outcomes remain mixed**. In 2025, 42% said AI helps them achieve quota more consistently, while in 2026, that number dropped to 36%.

Meanwhile, 21% in 2026 said AI has made it **harder to hit quota**, compared with 0 in 2025.

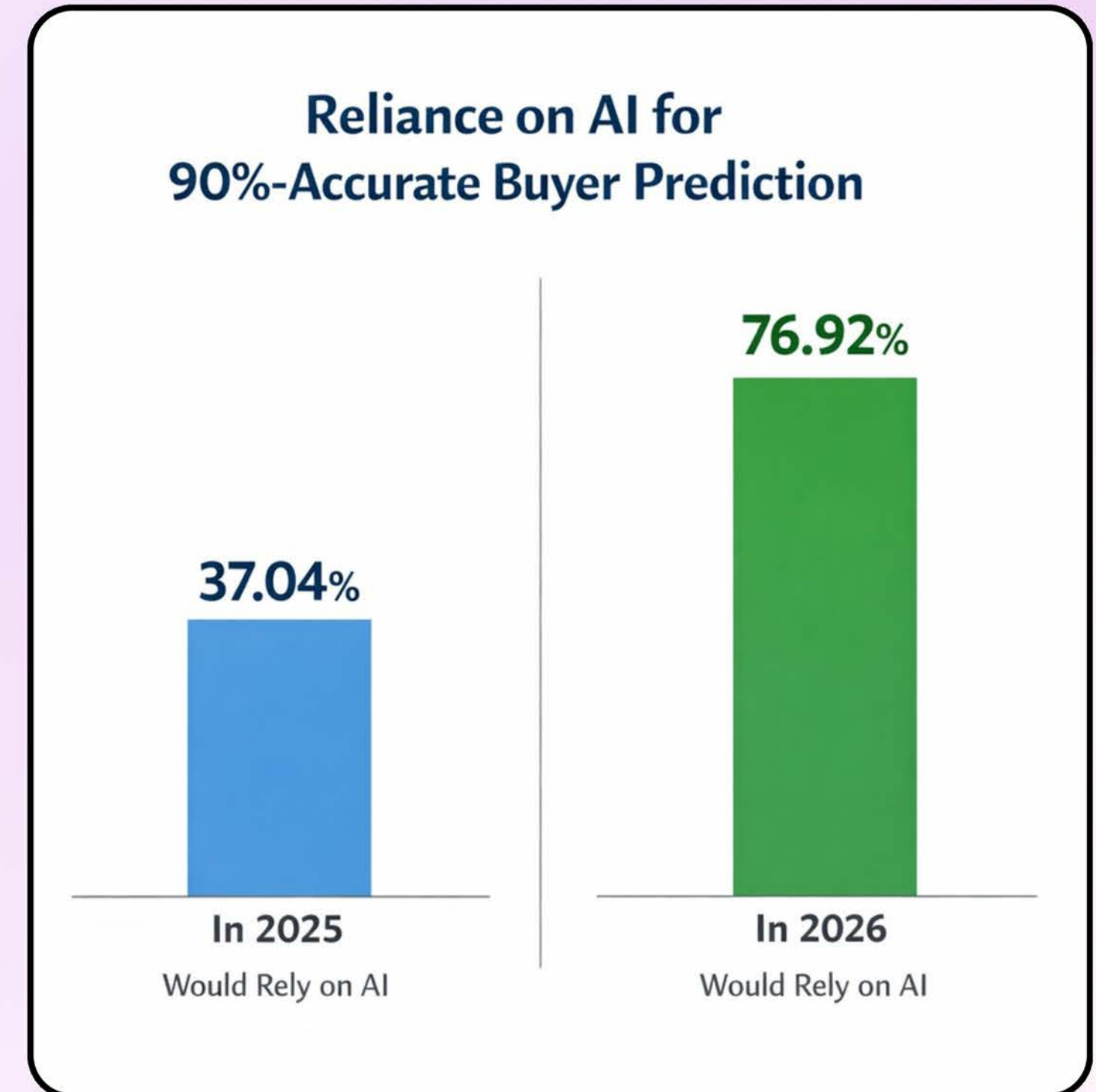
Sales Teams Are More Open to AI-Driven Lead Prioritization

One of the clearest trend shifts from 2025's data report to this year's is **trust in AI for buyer prediction**.

In 2025, 37% said they'd rely on AI if it could predict a **prospect's likelihood to buy** with 90% accuracy. In 2026, that jumped to 77%.

The "sometimes, it depends on the account" response fell from 41% in 2025 to 8% in 2026, suggesting a **major mindset shift toward predictive selling** tools.

"For high-value outreach, human-in-the-loop still wins."



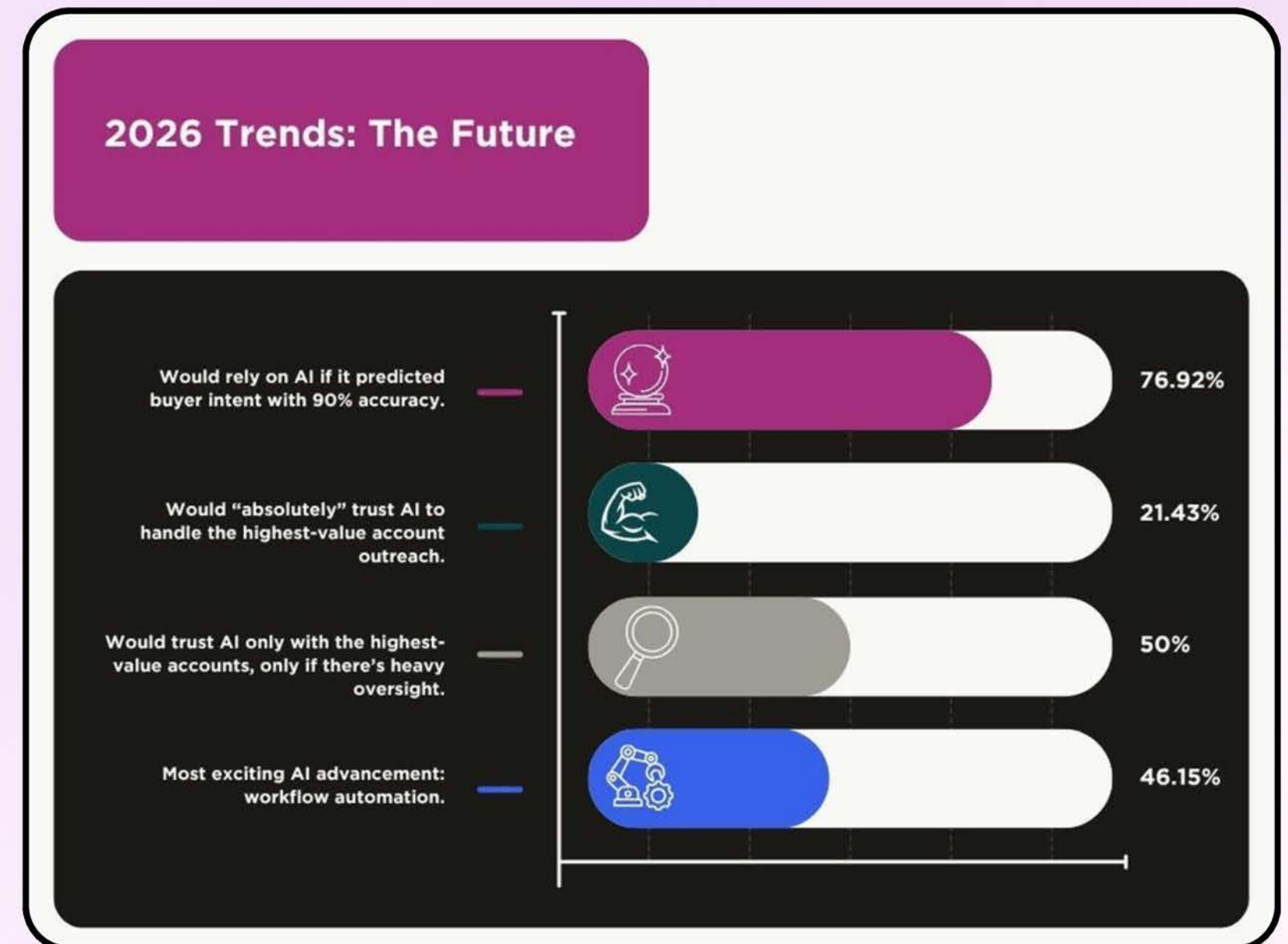
Teams Trust AI for Insight More Than for Relationships

Even though trust in predictive AI is on the rise, sales teams **remain cautious** about handing over high-value customer interactions to bots and agents.

In 2026, 21% said absolutely, but 50.00% still preferred **heavy oversight** and 29% said they wouldn't want AI handling high-value accounts.

Salespeople are just as cautious with using AI for personalization. In 2025, 51% said AI-driven personalization had sometimes **felt too impersonal or robotic** to buyers; in 2026, that number remained high at 50%.

“Nearly half of 2026 respondents say AI helps smaller teams compete with larger ones.”



AI Is Becoming a Multiplier for Lean Sales Teams

Nearly half or more of respondents in 2025 and 2026 said **AI helps smaller sales teams compete** with larger ones: 52% in 2025 and 46% in 2026.

This makes AI more than a convenience.

For SMBs and lean teams, it's a way to **scale output**, improve focus, and **create more pipeline** without increasing headcount.

"Nearly half of 2026 respondents say AI helps smaller teams compete with larger ones."



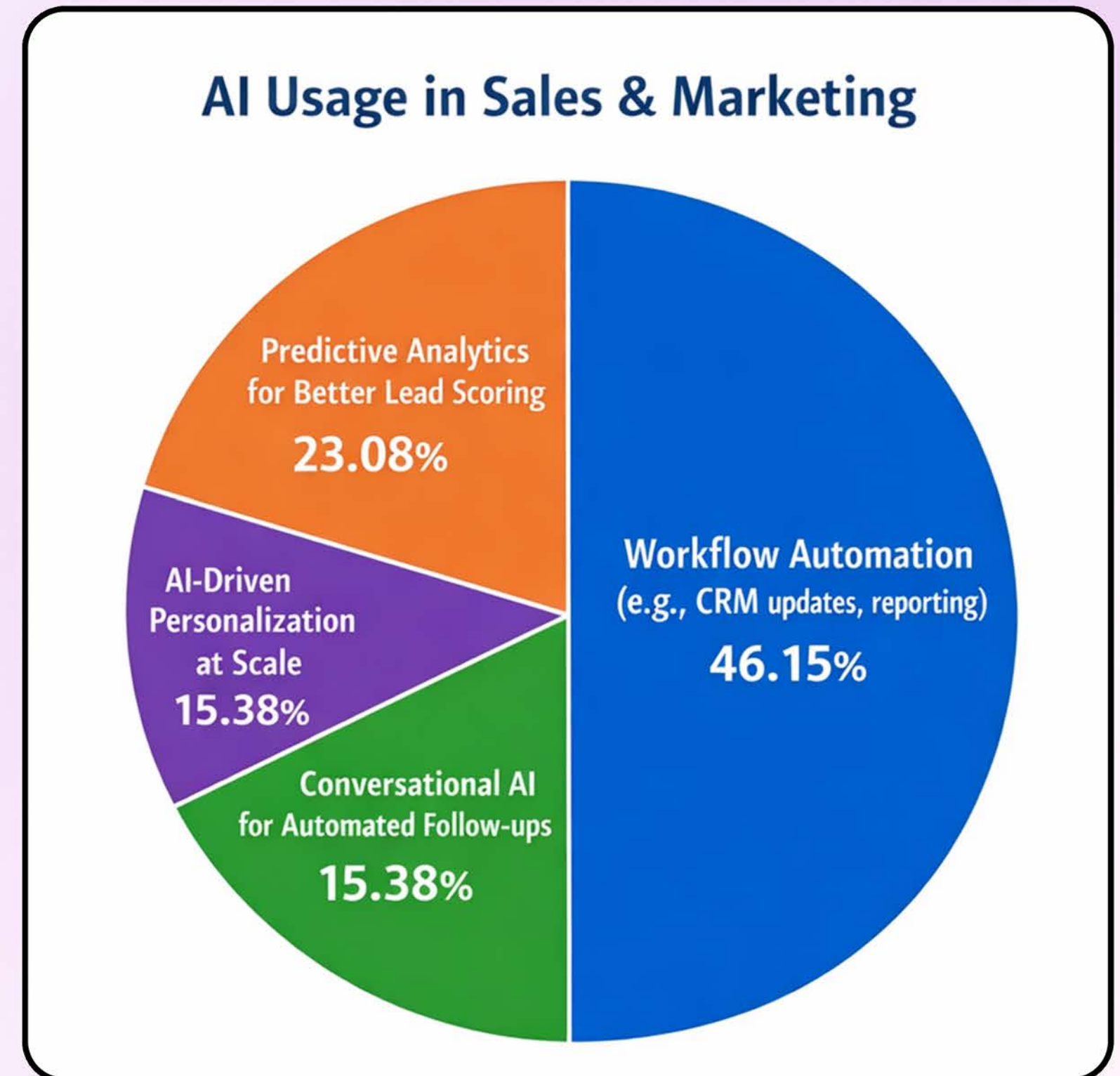
The AI Conversation Is Shifting from Content to Efficiency

Sales teams aren't just looking for AI-generated copy anymore.

They increasingly want AI to **remove operational friction**. Sales automation and workflow optimization is the key to improving production without losing impact.

Only 10% in 2025 said workflow automation was the AI advancement they were most excited about. In 2026, the focus on **sales automation jumped to 46%**.

"Workflow automation became a breakout priority in 2026."



BARRIERS ARE CHANGING

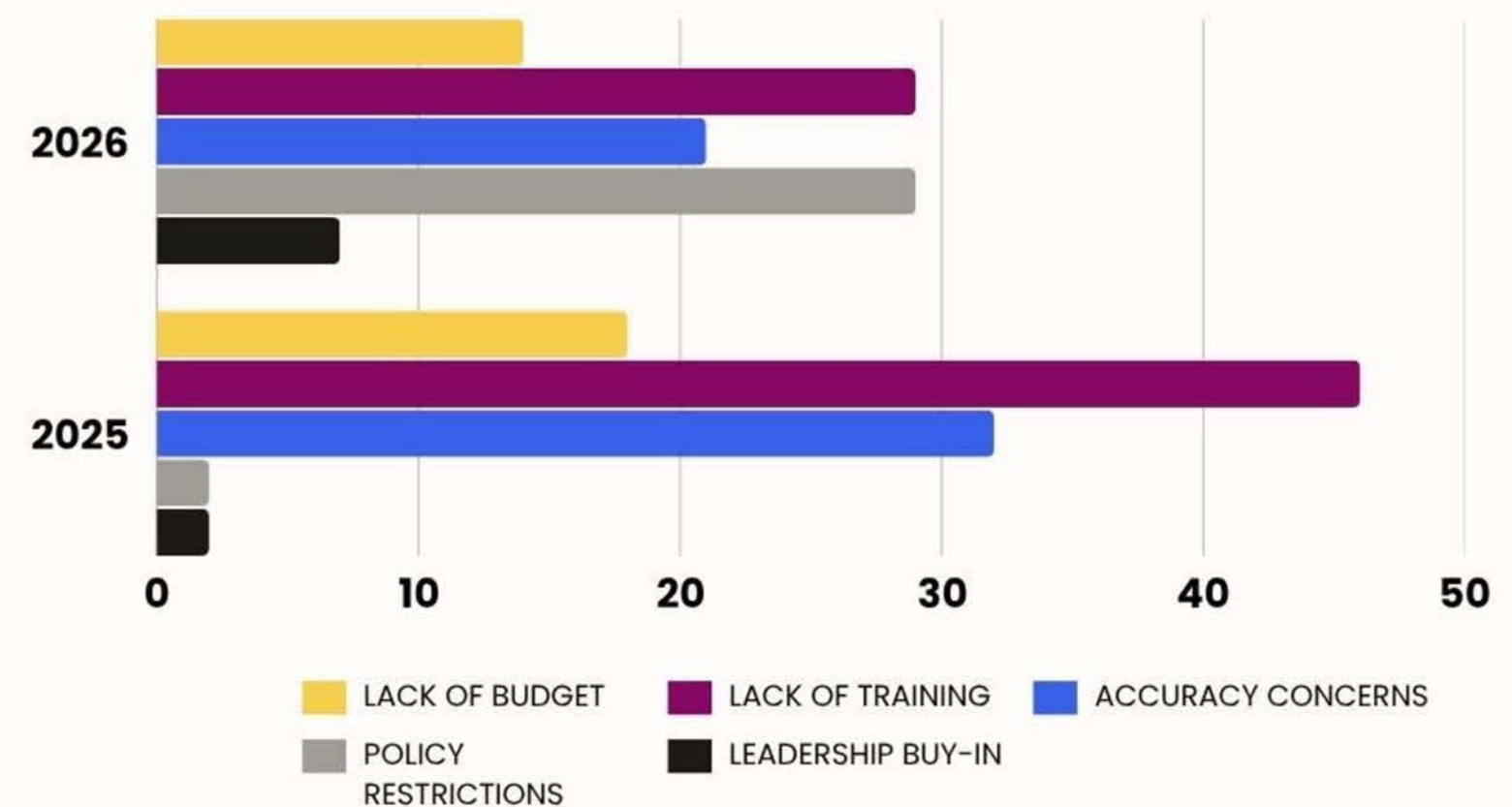
The New Barrier Isn't Just Training — It's Policy, Accuracy, and Execution

In 2025, the biggest barrier to AI adoption was **lack of knowledge/training** for 46% of survey respondents, followed by concerns about accuracy at 32%.

For 2026, 29% of respondents identified lack of knowledge/training and company policy restrictions as equal blockers to AI adoption, while **accuracy concerns remained meaningful** for 21% of those surveyed.

"The challenge is no longer just learning AI — it's deploying it responsibly."

TOP BARRIERS TO AI ADOPTION

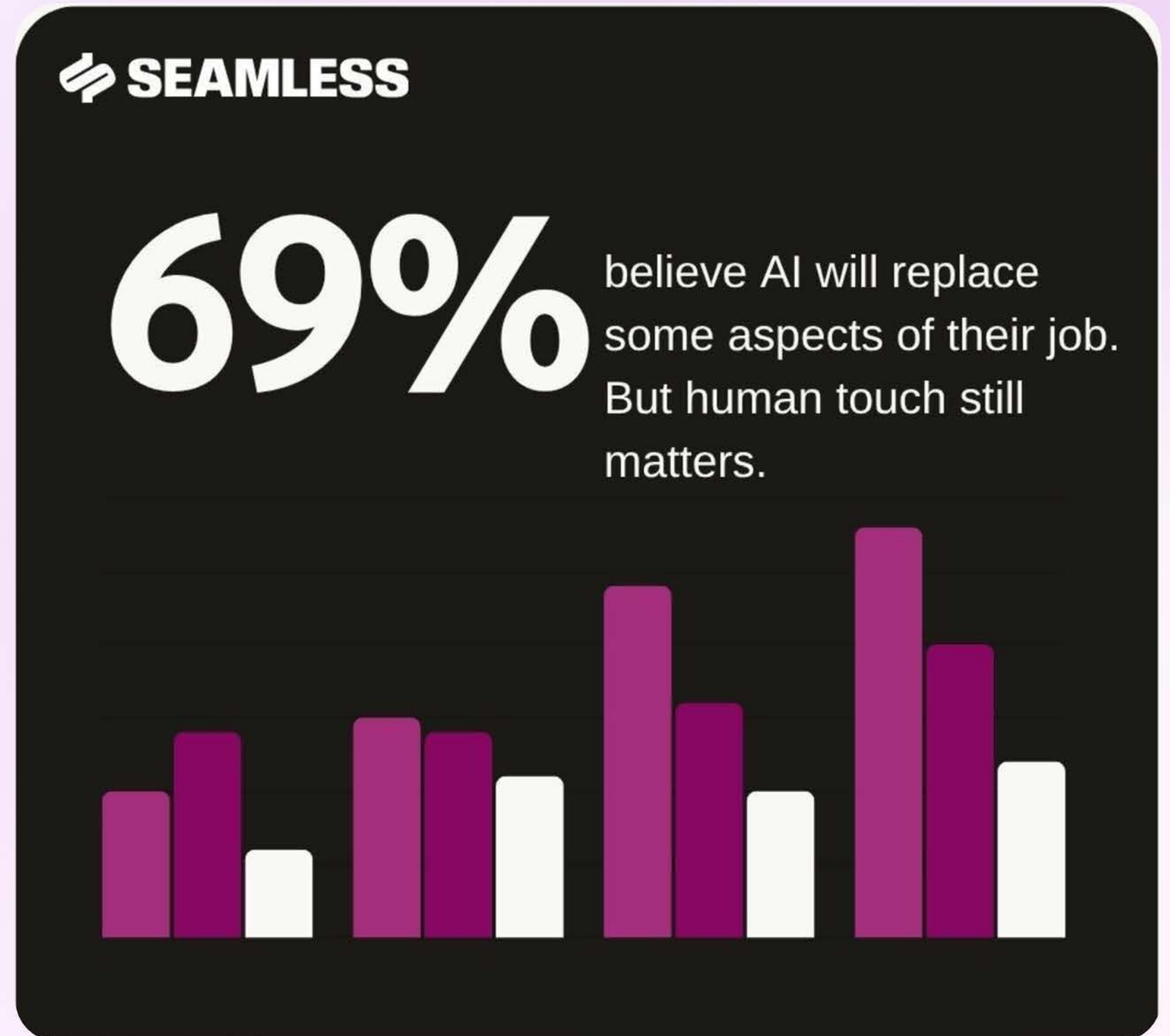


What Sales Leaders Should Do Next

All the data we gathered in the 2026 Sales in AI Report point to a simple but **important takeaway**.

If you're looking to get ahead of AI: the teams that win won't just use more AI, they'll use it to **improve lead quality, sharpen prospecting, and improve workflow automation**.

"The teams that move first on smarter prospecting will be better positioned to win pipeline."



TOP SALES TOOLS

G2 Rankings for Sales Intelligence

2nd of 350
in **Sales Intelligence**

G2 Rank

01  ZoomInfo S...

02  **Seamless.AI**

03  Apollo.io

04  LinkedIn Sal...

05  Cognism

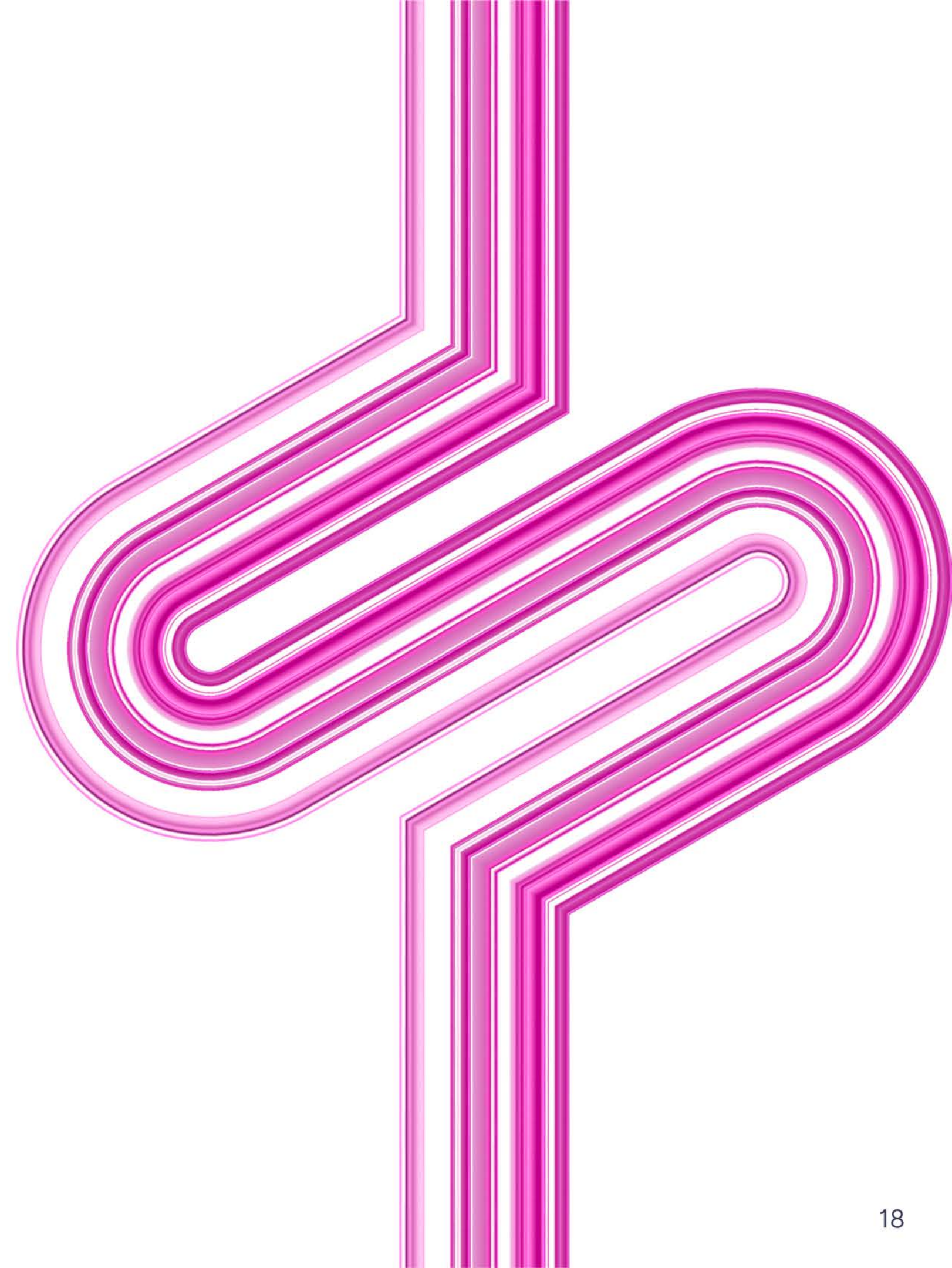


Data Deep Dive

Show me the data.

We've compiled some of the most helpful and meaningful insights to share as a bonus to everyone who downloaded this full report.

Be sure to like and share this report and mark your calendar next year to participate.





2025 vs. 2026 Highlight Comparison

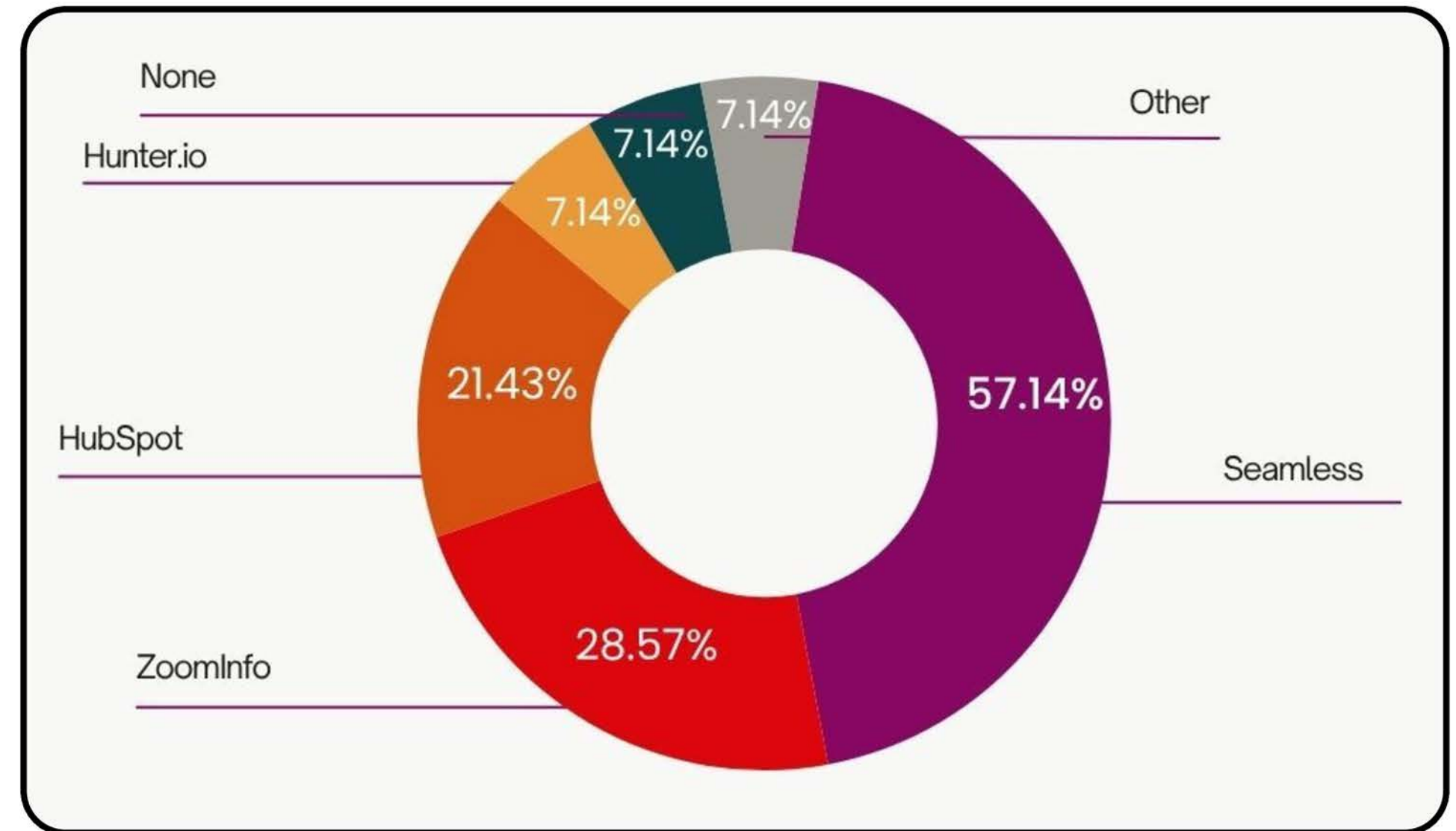
Metric	2025 Report	2026 Report	YoY Read	Marketing Takeaway
Finding quality leads is a top quota challenge	61.04%	53.33%	Still the #1 pain point	Lead generation remains the strongest acquisition message.
Personalizing outreach at scale is a top challenge	40.26%	26.67%	Down, but still meaningful	AI can be framed as helping teams personalize faster, not just automate.
Prospecting is a top AI use case	65.22%	57.14%	Still the top use case	Sales teams already associate AI with prospecting value.
Crafting outreach messages is a top AI use case	41.30%	50.00%	Increased	Messaging around faster outreach creation is getting stronger.
Data enrichment is a top AI use case	23.91%	35.71%	Increased	Better data quality and list building are becoming more marketable benefits.
AI helps me hit quota more consistently	41.67%	35.71%	Slightly lower	AI still supports revenue outcomes, but buyers may want proof, not hype.
AI has made it harder to hit quota	0.00%	21.43%	Increased concern	Messaging should stress simplicity, accuracy, and practical workflow fit.
Would rely on AI if it predicted buyer intent with 90% accuracy	37.04%	76.92%	Major increase	Strong angle for lead scoring, prioritization, and smarter prospecting.
Would trust AI to handle highest-value account outreach “absolutely”	14.04%	21.43%	Slight increase	Teams want AI assistance, but still prefer oversight for important accounts.
Would trust AI only with heavy oversight for highest-value accounts	66.67%	50.00%	Down	Trust is improving, but “human-in-the-loop” remains a compelling message.
Say AI helps smaller teams compete with larger ones	51.85%	46.15%	Still strong	Great angle for SMBs and lean sales teams.
Most exciting AI advancement: workflow automation	9.80%	46.15%	Sharp increase	Automation is becoming a much stronger hook for campaign messaging.
Top barrier: lack of knowledge/training	46.43%	28.57%	Lower	The market may be moving beyond awareness toward execution.
Top barrier: company policy restrictions	1.79%	28.57%	Much higher	Security, compliance, and approved-use messaging matter more now.



Popular AI Sales Tools

- Seamless = 57%
- Zoominfo = 29%
- Hubspot = 21%
- Hunter = 7%
- Others = 7%

Users were allowed to select multiple choices. Overall, most users surveyed preferred Seamless AI sales tool to the other popular options.



Top Go-To AI Tools

- ChatGpt = 86%
- Gemini = 29%
- Claude = 21%
- Canva = 21%
- CoPilot = 14%
- Perplexity = 14%
- Notion = 14%

Users were allowed to select multiple choices. Overall, most users prefer ChatGpt or use it on a regular basis more often than any other AI tool.



Lead Outreach Per Day

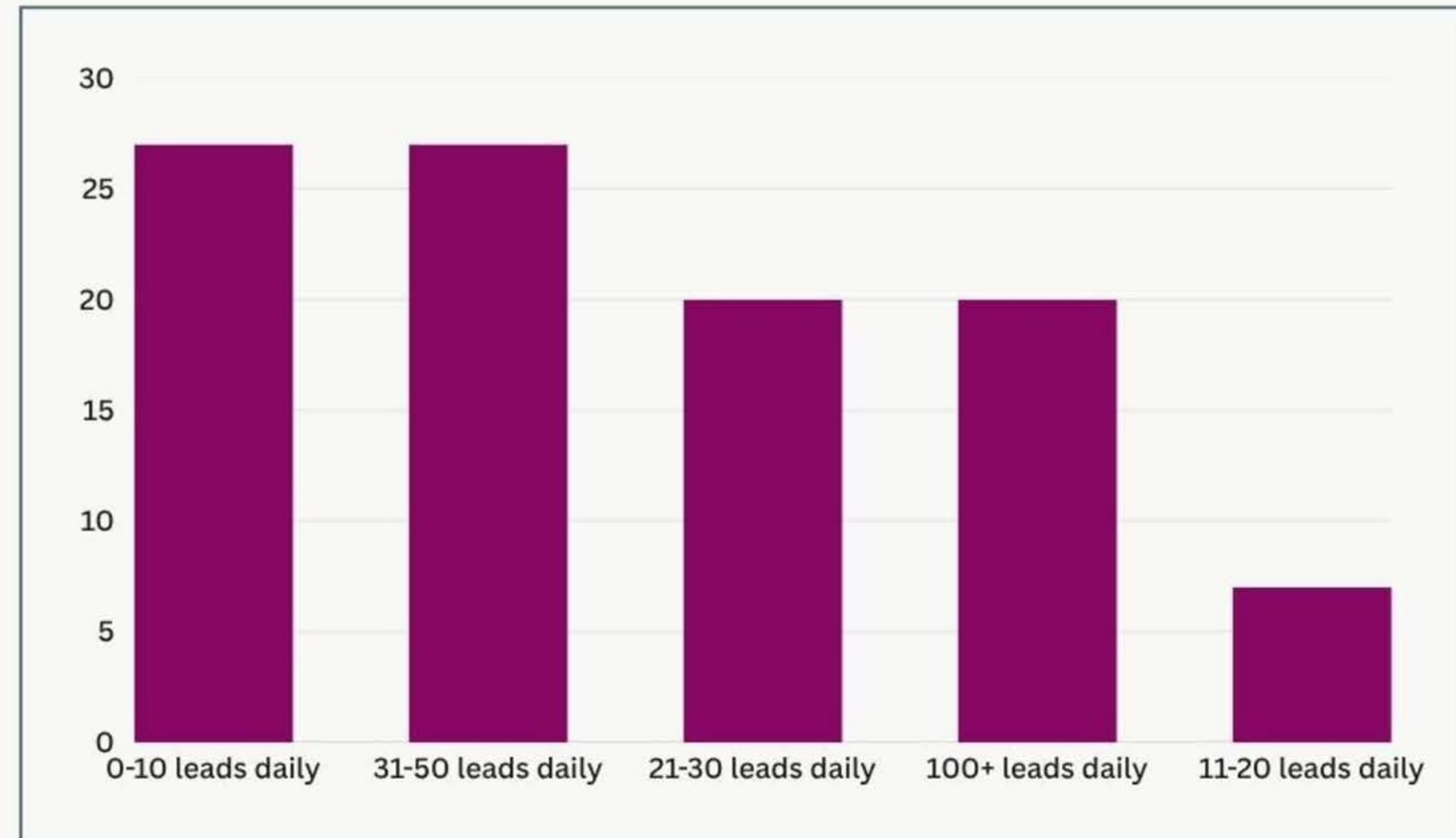
- 0-10 Leads = 27%
- 31-50 Leads = 27%
- 21-30 Leads = 20%
- 11-20 Leads = 7%
- Over 50 Leads = 0%

Users were only allowed to choose one option. There was a clear cutoff in terms of volume with no responses going over 50 per day.

Most were between 0-30 leads per day.



DAILY OUTREACH VOLUME

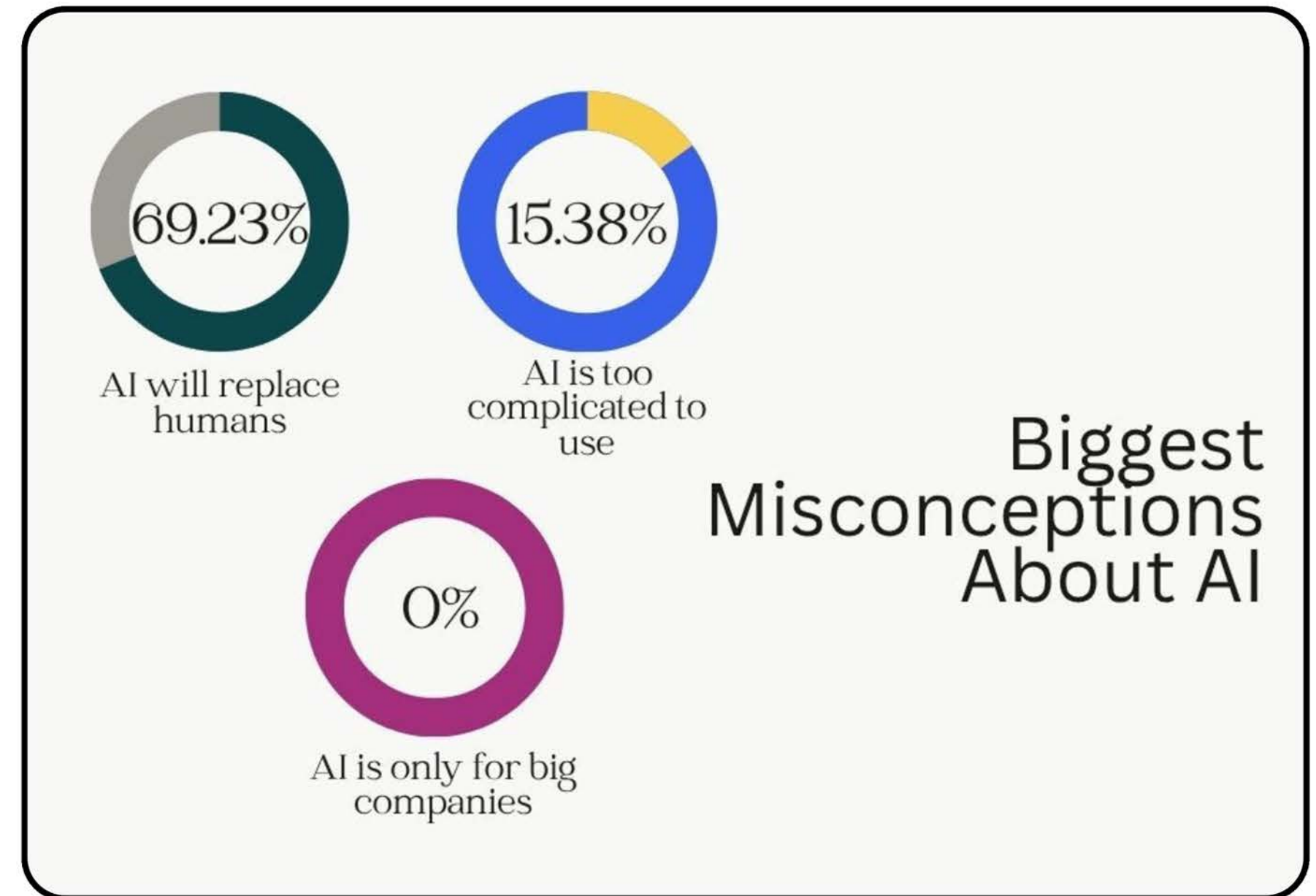


Biggest Misconception

- AI will replace humans = 69%
- AI is too complicated = 15%
- AI is only for big tech = 0%
- Other = 15%

Users were only allowed to choose one option. There was a clear misconception is that AI will replace humans.

Most believe that AI will help people be more efficient but worry about their job or role.



Top Predictions

01

AI will shift from “helpful tool” to “default workflow layer” in sales

02

Reps will rely more on AI for research, prioritization, & qualification

03

AI-driven personalization will be standard, but human editing remains essential

04

High-stakes selling will stay human-led, even as AI takes more of the workload

05

Biggest competitive edge comes from training & governance, not just tools

CONTACT US TO SCHEDULE A DEMO TODAY



Learn how Seamless can enrich your data with accurate contact info and boost your results with every outreach channel.

GET STARTED →