

State of Call Center Conversational Analytics Practices in US:

Results of Survey
July 2022



J. Kullmann
COO



A. Shapiro
VP of CCM Practice



R.O. Mueller
Chairman



G.N. Shah
CEO



M. Xiang
Data Scientist

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Summary of Key Insights from the Survey	4
Do you record your call center conversations?	5
Do your agents follow a script?	6
Do you have a score card used to review recorded conversations?	7
If you have a current score card or if you were to build one what is the importance of each element?	8
What do you do with the recordings?	9
What percentage of recorded calls are ever reviewed after the call?	10
Do you transcribe the calls?	11
Do you have automation tools supporting your call center?	12
What is the biggest issue you have with agents	13
What function does your call center perform?	14
Do you provide on-call real-time support/guidance to your agents based on the content of live conversation?	15
If you are using Customer Journey Mapping, how are you using it?	16
Do you use recordings for R&D purposes?	17
Do you track 'Dead Air Time' or silence blocks in your recordings?	18
Concluding Comments	19

Introduction

Macrosoft is a leading provider of professional technical services (design, implementation, tech. support) for Call Center Conversational Analytics technology. We are a leading technology support partner of CallMiner. As noted in recent industry service reports on Conversational Analytics (Gartner and Forrester), CallMiner is a leading software vendor in this native-AI industry. They have one of the most extensive sets of products and tools that allow companies to capture the full value of their customer communications data. Our job in this life cycle is to assist CallMiner customers to implement the various CallMiner modules quickly and efficiently, and then once the system is up and running, we continue to provide ongoing support and enhancements.

As a result of this expertise, **Macrosoft** conducted the second State of Call Center Conversational Analytics Practices in US survey during the first two weeks of April 2022. The survey was conducted using SurveyMonkey with 14 multiple-choice questions.

Requests to complete the survey were distributed to our client contact list of 7188 technology professionals. Additionally, survey requests were published in four select Call Center/Speech Analytics LinkedIn user groups:

LinkedIn - Best Practices in Call Centers Worldwide (23,113 members)

LinkedIn - Speech Analytics (5,679 members)

LinkedIn - Speech Technology (2,644 members)

LinkedIn - Call Center Planet (38,748 members)

A total of 285 individuals from more than 179 identified companies participated in the survey. 82% of the participants completed the entire survey. Based on the diverse group that was requested to complete the survey, the robust responses across multiple companies and industries, and the high full survey completion percentage there is strong reliability in survey results.

Survey results are presented in aggregate form, so no single individual is identifiable. In addition to the direct tabulations and graphs of survey results we also provide our analysis of results, their implications and impact.

We plan to perform an annual survey of the Conversational Analytics industry, although the questions will evolve over time.

Questions about this survey can be directed to **John Kullmann, COO, Macrosoft Inc,**
jkullmann@macrosoftinc.com.

Macrosoft is prepared to provide an expert who can present these results as requested to industry user groups.

Important Definitions:

Throughout this report, we use the term “Conversational Analytics”. This is the broadest category, defined as creating digital data, from human conversation, be it written or spoken, by using Natural Language Processing (NLP) which thereby enables computers to understand what is being said and applying Artificial Intelligence (AI) to extract and organize the information. Within Conversational Analytics you will find both “Speech Analytics” which is “what was said” and “Voice Analytics” which is focused on “how it was said”.

[Back to Index](#)

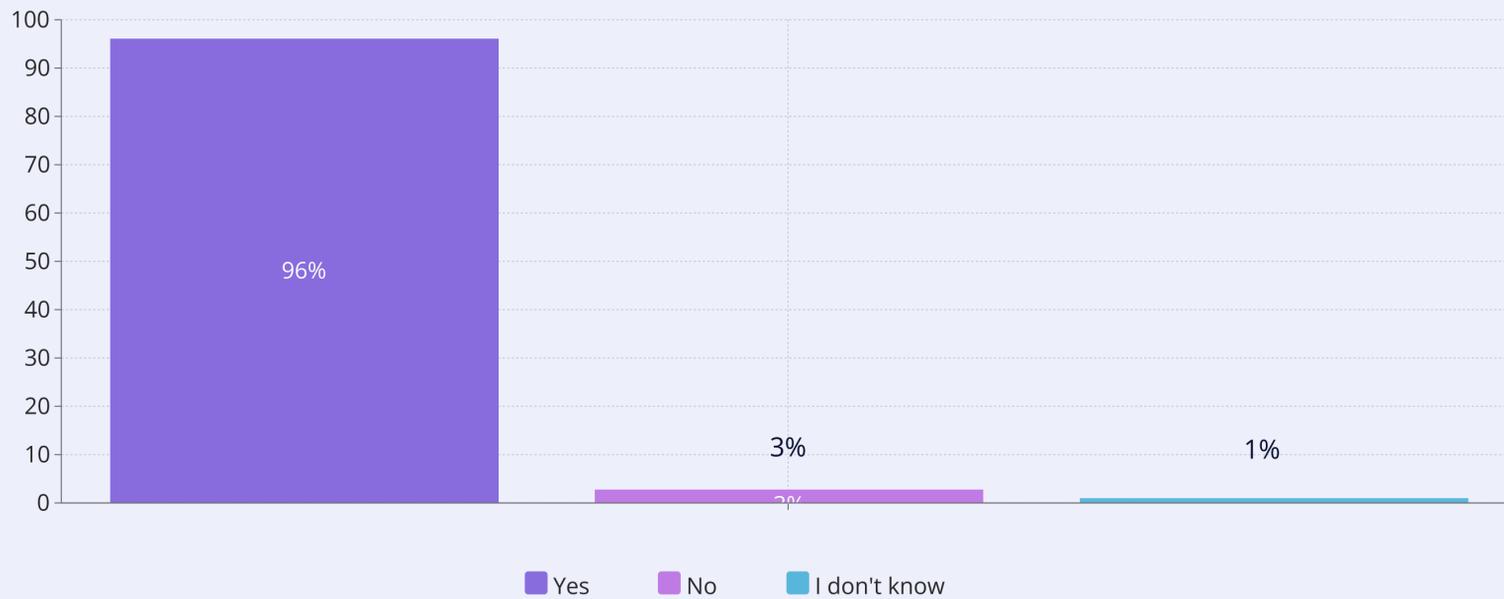
Summary of Key Insights from Survey

- Over half of the Call Centers have their agents fully scripted. Most have at least some scripted elements.
- Compared to last year, more Call Centers try to apply full scripts and complete scorecards to review call recordings.
- “Knowledge”, “Sales effectiveness”, “confirmation” and “Problem resolution” are considered the most important in Call Center scoring metrics.
- The number one use-case for Call Centers is to review call recordings to verify agent compliance.
- About a third of the responders indicates they are reviewing 75% or more call recordings.
- Top three priority issues with agents in Call Centers today are ‘recruiting of new agents’. Followed by Agent Attrition and Customer Satisfaction.
- About half of the Call Centers provide on-call real-time support/guidance to the agents based on the content of live conversation.

In the following sections, we will take a closer look at each survey question and provide detailed analysis and our observations.

[Back to Index](#)

Do you record your call center conversations?



Survey Findings

96% of respondents indicate their Call Centers do record conversations. For all other questions in the survey, we use only 96% of respondents that answered 'yes' to this survey question. We do this to avoid any bias to results and analysis for companies that do not record and thus cannot engage in Conversational Analytics. So, respondents that answered no, I don't know, or blank to this question were excluded from further analysis.

Data Trend

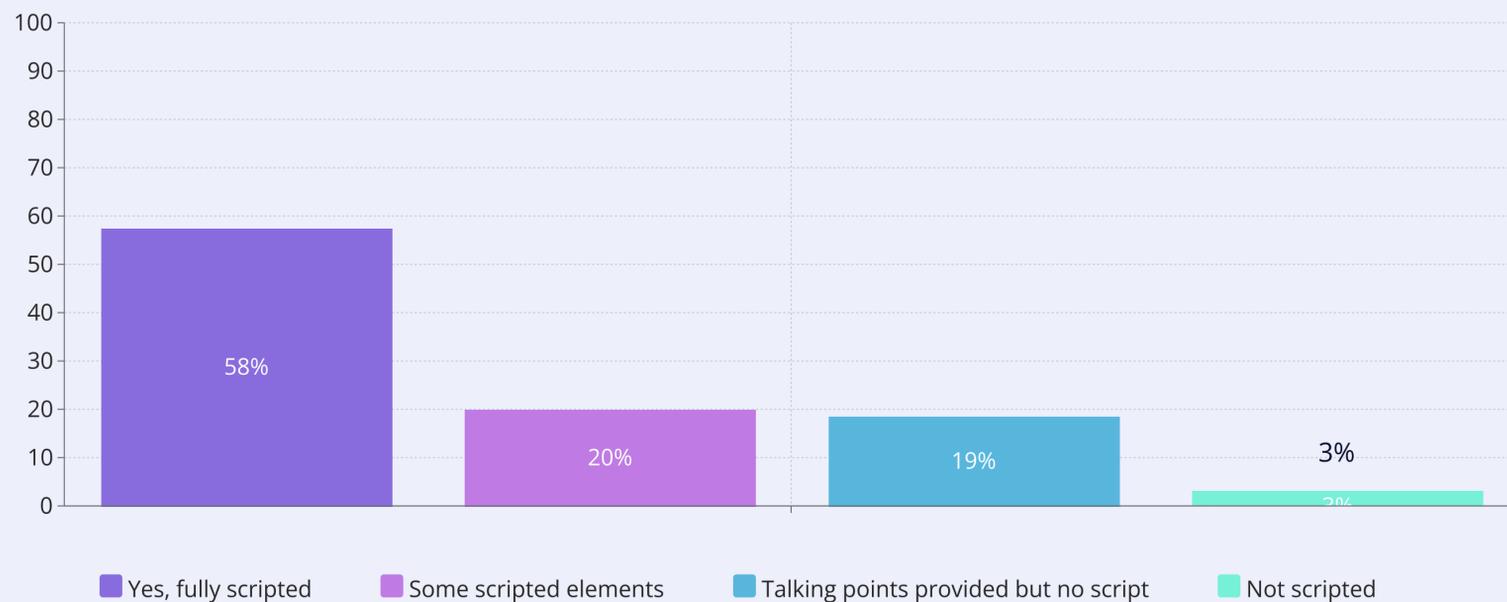
We found 97% respondents indicate "Yes" last year and the percentage stayed at the same level this year.

Analysis

As expected, most respondents record call center conversations just like what we found last year. Having these recordings is of course the gateway for performing speech and then text analytics on conversations, thereby allowing for mining of the full value of this data.

[Back to Index](#)

Do your agents follow a script?



Survey Findings

Respondents were asked if their Call Center agents follow scripts. 58% indicate their agents follow full scripts. 20% agents follow some scripted elements. 19% of respondents indicate their agents have limited talking points but not a script. And 3% engage in completely freeform non-scripted conversations.

Data Trend

The percentage of agents being fully scripted raised from 19% last year to 58% this year. Meanwhile the number of agents having some or full scripted elements are 78%, which is at the same level as last year at 79%.

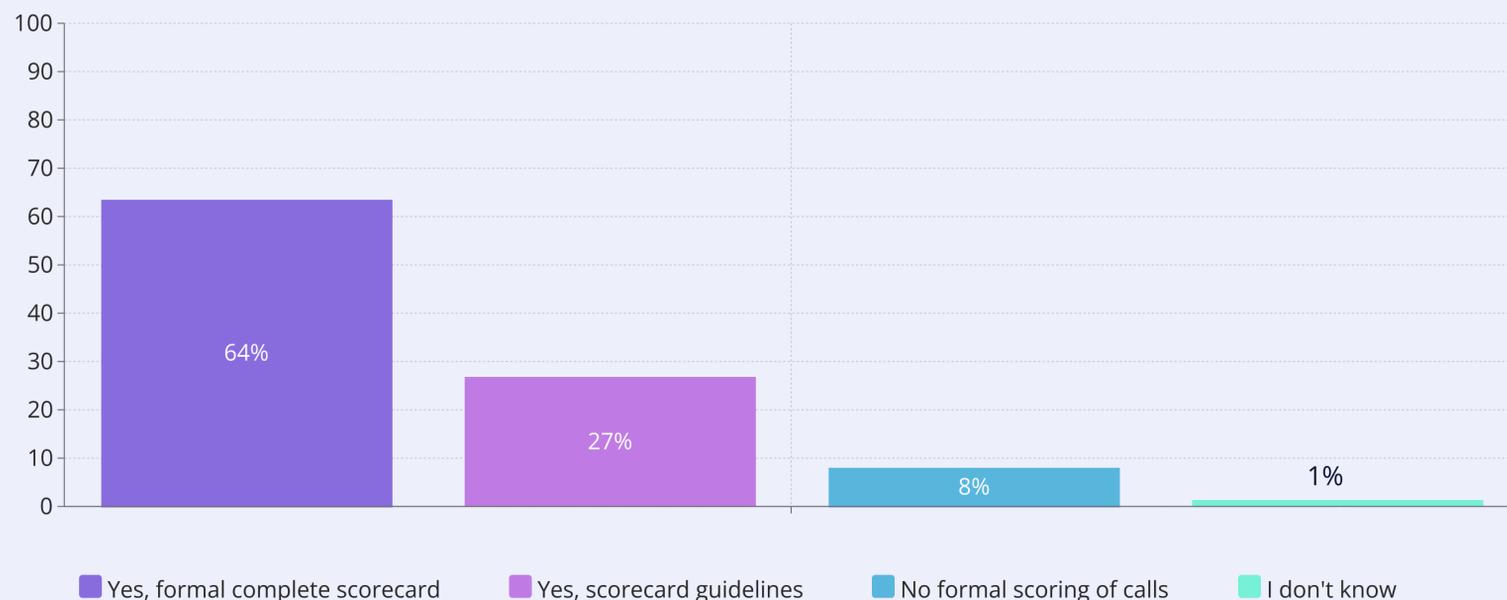
Some text

Analysis

We are surprised and glad that the number of call centers have full script available raise significantly this year. Given the fact that almost 80% of respondents indicate their agents follow scripts, that brings forward the need for Conversational Analytics to monitor and assess the extent agents are following these scripts. In most Call Centers today, quality monitoring of customer conversations to ensure conformance to scripts is done manually and is typically limited to a small subset of customer conversations. With automated Conversational Analytics, quality monitoring can be done to scale on 100% of customer conversations. This can generate one of the highest ROI use cases for Conversational Analytics.

[Back to Index](#)

Do you have a score card used to review recorded conversations?



Survey Findings

64% of respondents indicate their company's Call Center has a formal and complete scorecard used to review and track the quality of agent and customer recorded conversations in relation to the scripts provided. Another 27% indicate their company has scorecard guidelines that provide much the same information but in a more informal way. 8% indicate their Call Centers do not have any defined process for scoring customer calls.

Data Trend

The percentage of call center having complete scorecards raised from 41% last year to 64% this year. Meanwhile the number of agents having either scorecards or just scorecard guidelines increased from 89% to 91%.

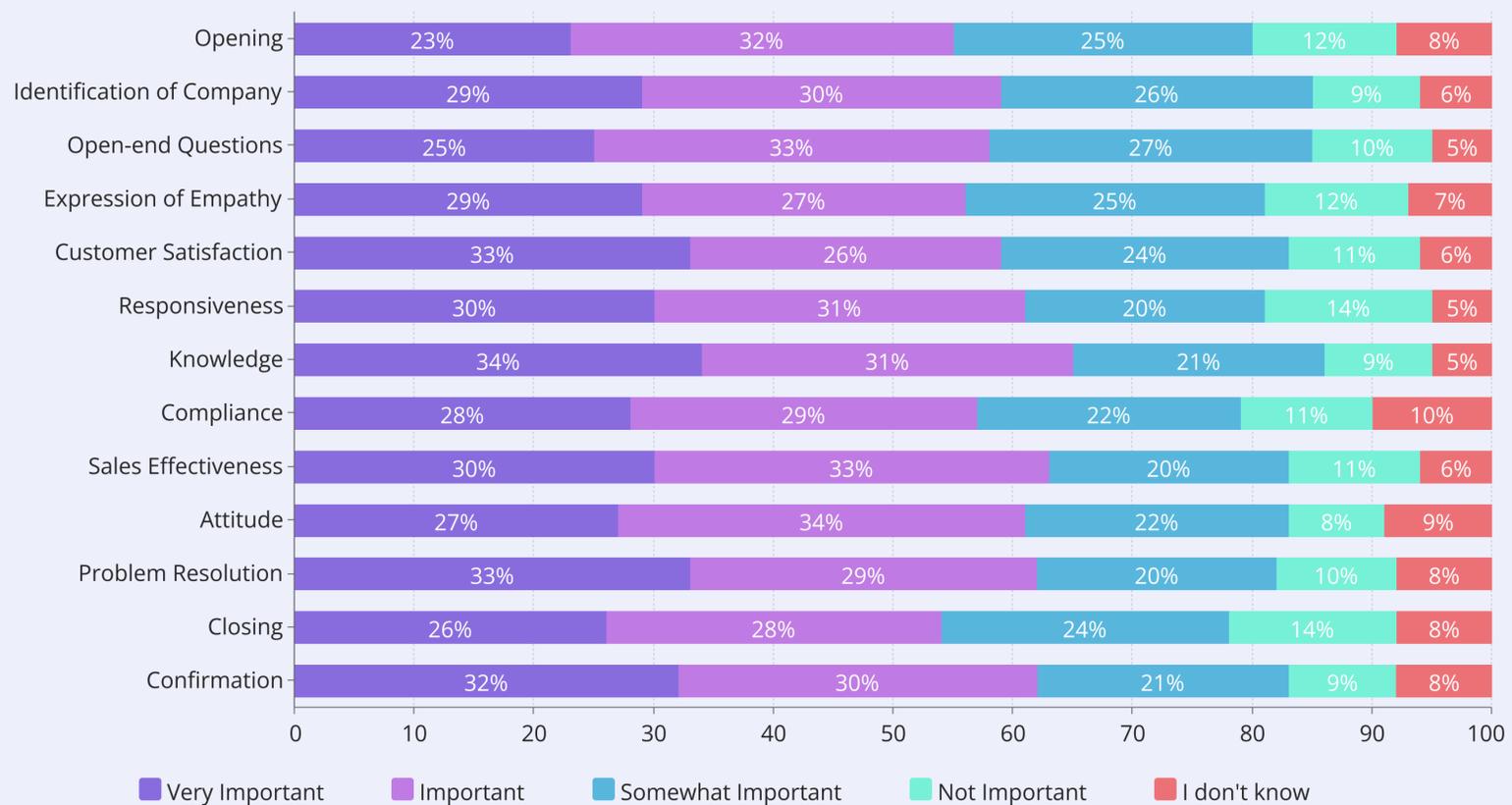
Analysis

The result indicates more call centers apply formal complete scorecards to review their call recordings. This shows a trend that organizations want to apply formal subjective, and complete QA process. Yet in last year's report, we discuss the limitation of the traditional call center QA with manual scorecards. In short, it only applies to a small subset of your calls, and the manual scoring might suffer from inconsistencies.

Utilizing a Conversational Analytics platform allows call coverage to scale to 100% of calls, and perhaps as importantly, the scoring process used in the platform will be applied consistently across all customer calls, eliminating reviewer bias concerns. A scorecard generated from a speech analytics platform will be much more reliable and useful to those involved with quality monitoring issues. Later questions in this survey probe this issue further.

[Back to Index](#)

If you have a current score card or if you were to build one what is the importance of each element?



Survey Findings

There are 13 relevant score elements included in this survey question. Responders could rank the importance of each score element as: very important; important; somewhat important; and not important. We aggregate counts for 'very important' and 'important' we find response rates between 54% and 65% for all elements, Agent Knowledge stands out to be the most important elements in the scorecards.

Data Trend

The percentage of very important and important combined drop from around 66% last year to around 59% this year.

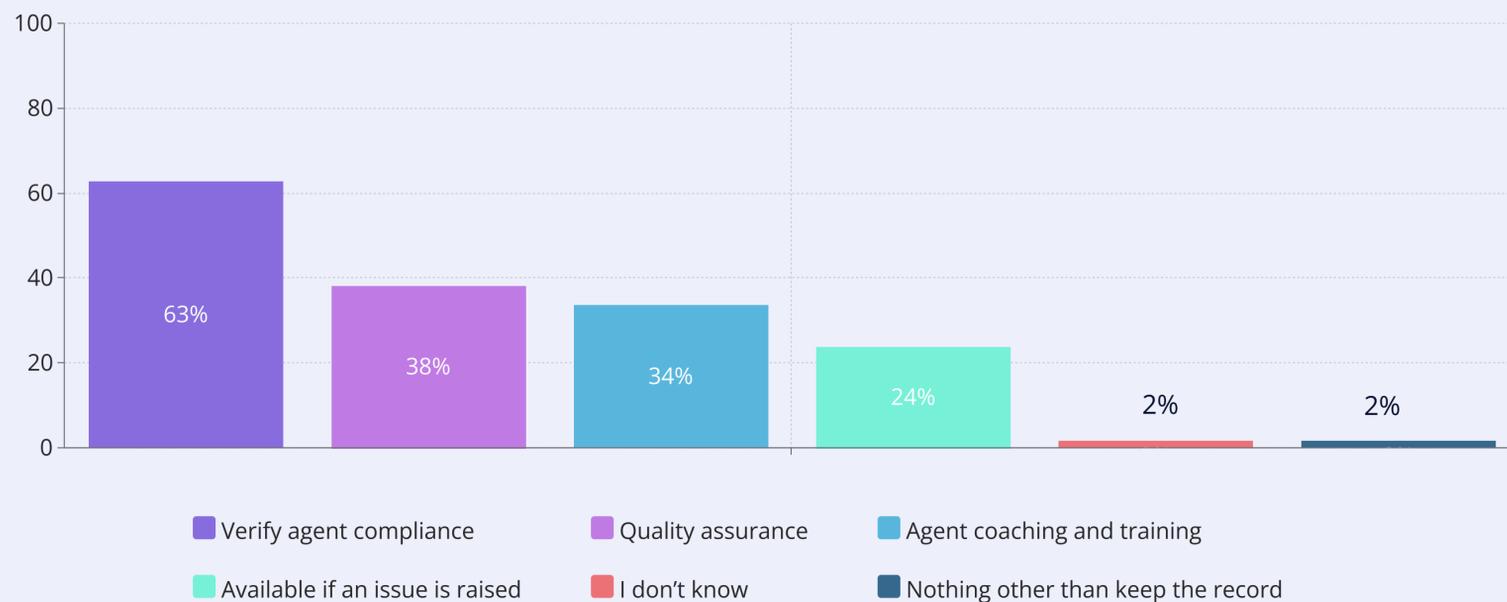
Analysis

The top four choice are "Knowledge", "Sales effectiveness", "confirmation" and "Problem resolution". Combined with our observation last year, we found that call centers values call outcome more than agent soft skills such as politeness, express of empathy or how they open and close

Same as last year, the responders are telling us that all 13 elements are important in scoring the call recordings. Yet fewer people consider these elements as important as it does a year ago. This might indicate new focus in the call center scorecards. We will adjust the elements accordingly in next

[Back to Index](#)

What do you do with the recordings?



Survey Findings

The survey question lists four possible use cases for recording (and storing) customer calls, and a fifth non-descript category. The responders can select all that apply to them. Verify agent compliance and Quality Assurance is the top two usage.

Data Trend

The percentage of QA drops from 58% to 38% this year and verify agent compliance increases from 38% to 63%.

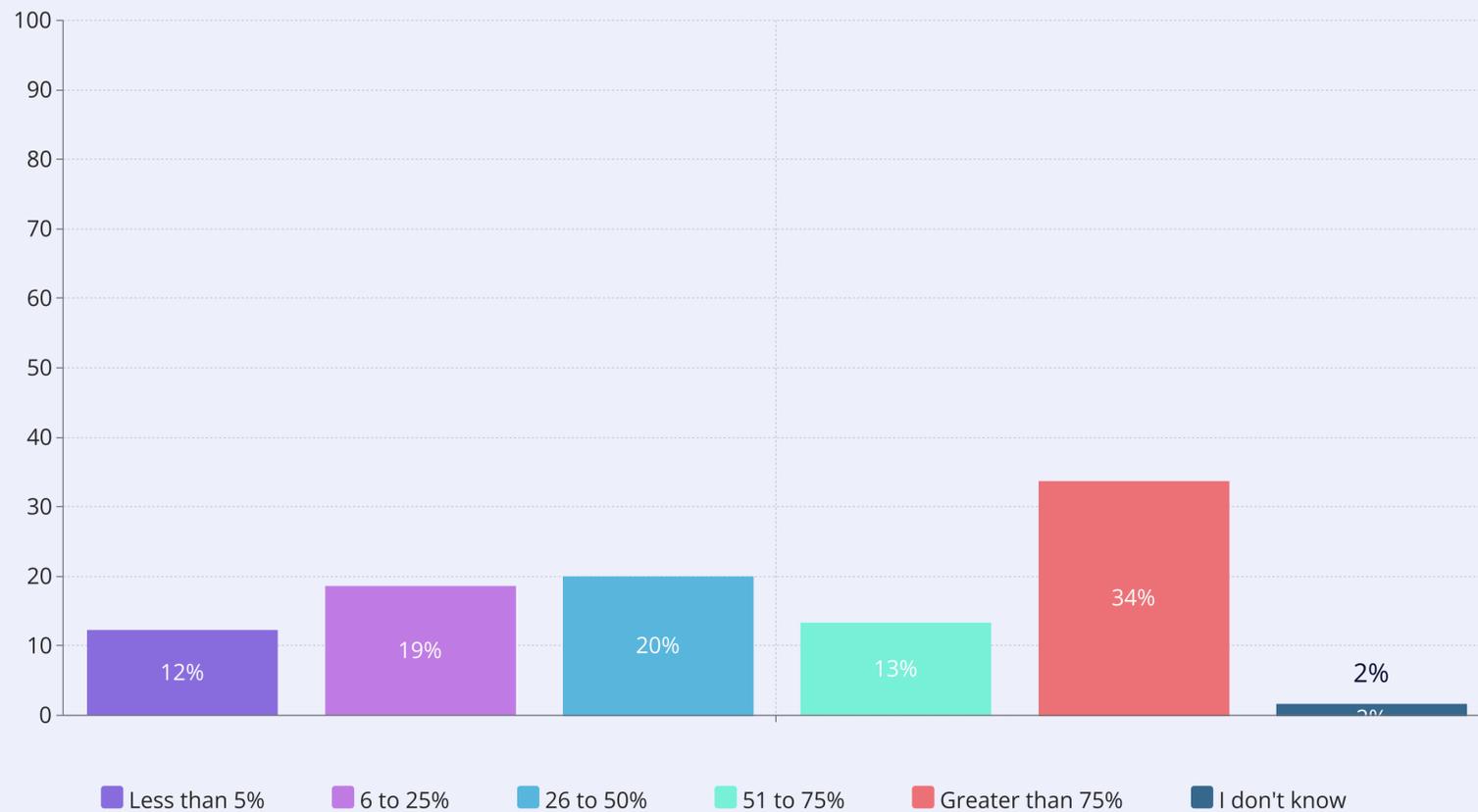
Analysis

For nearly all industries these days, there are significant compliance issues that Call Centers must conform with. Using call recording to verify that compliance is a no-brainer. As expected, we found that this year 63% of respondents do so. Meanwhile we are surprised by the drop of the use cases for QA.

Overall, same as last year, we found relatively low percentages found for all use cases. This suggests though almost all call center record conversations. Many haven't use it to its full potential.

[Back to Index](#)

What percentage of recorded calls are ever reviewed after the call?



Survey Findings

34% responders indicate they are reviewing 75% or more of their call recordings. Only 12% indicates less than 5% of call recordings are being reviewed.

Data Trend

Number of responders that reviews 75% or more call recordings increased from 25% to 34% this year. Those who only review less than 5% of calls also increased from 2% to 12%.

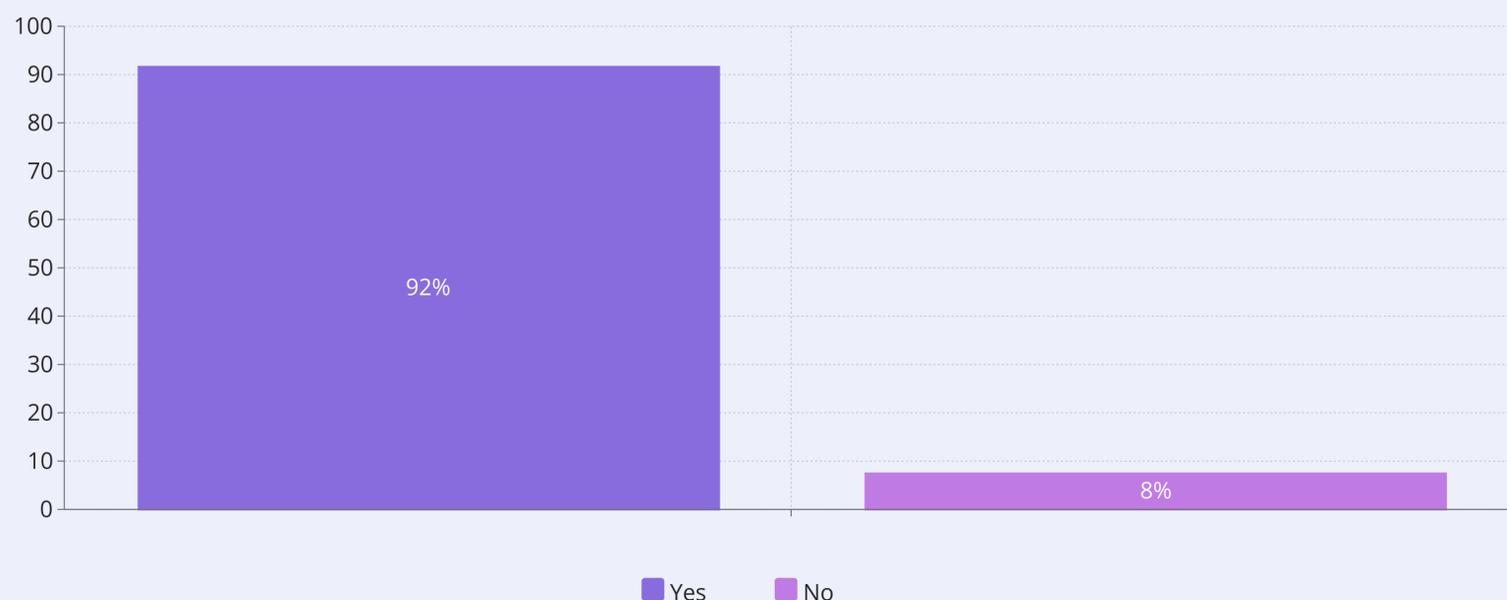
Analysis

Last year we were surprised at the high percentage of the call centers reviewing greater than 75% call recordings. This year the percentage went up to more than a third. This indicates more contact centers are already using some form of automated Conversational Analytics. It would be uneconomic and unrealistic to manually review such a high percentage of calls received. The question then is – what form of automated Conversational Analytics tools and platforms are being used by these Call Centers. We probe this issue in later survey questions.

Conventional wisdom says that if Call Centers do a manual review of call quality, they generally do around 3% of the calls recorded. So, the 12% which reviews less than 5% would fall under this bucket. This number went up this year but is still lower than our expectation.

[Back to Index](#)

Do you transcribe the calls?



Survey Findings

92% of respondents indicate they take the recorded calls one step further by generating text transcriptions of the calls. It is safe to assume that those that do transcriptions store those transcriptions in one or several of the company's customer datastores.

Data Trend

Number of responders that do call transcription went up from 77% to 92% this year.

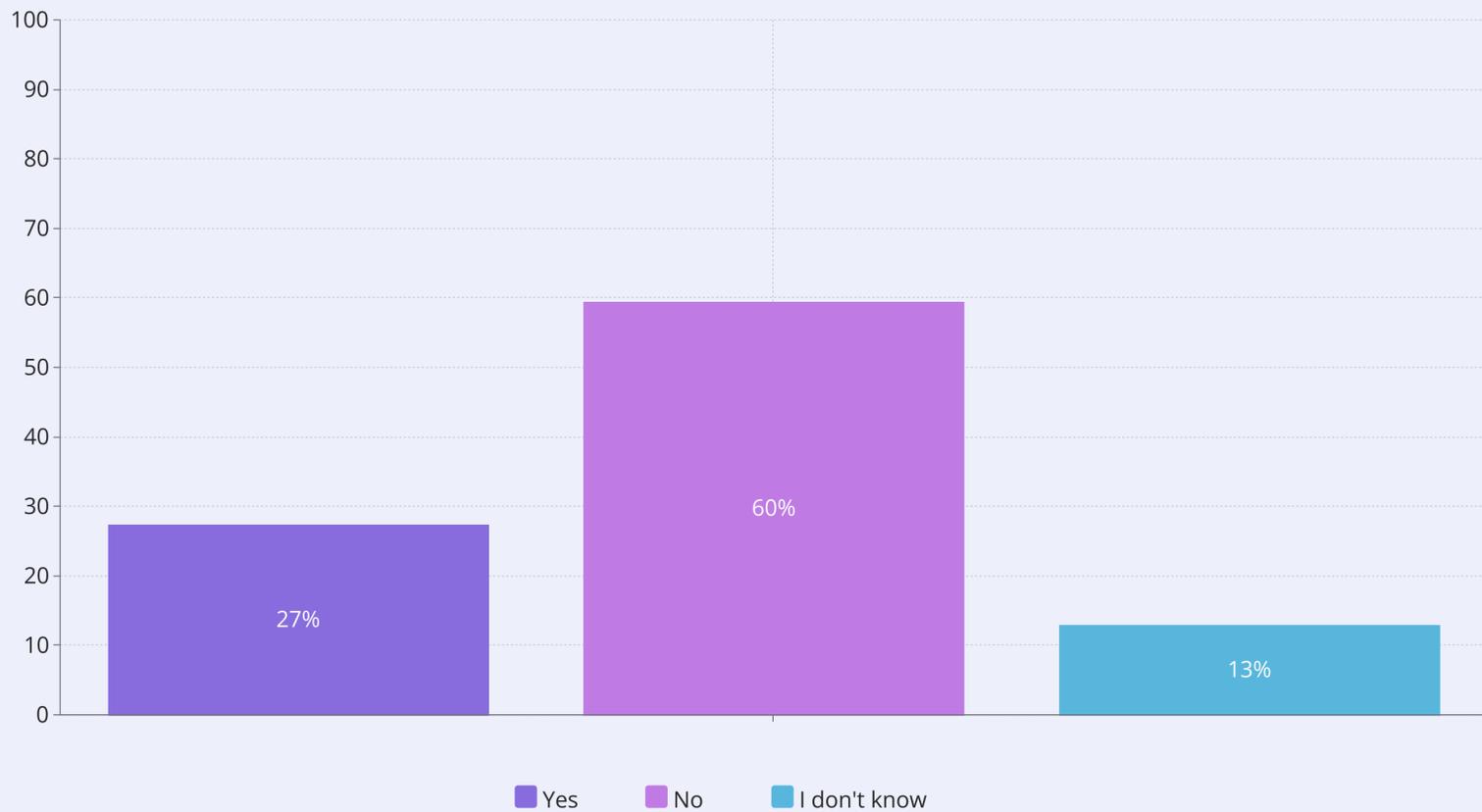
Analysis

The fact that over 92% of respondents' companies do transcriptions is highly useful to these companies for two major reasons. First, having the transcriptions allows for the company to do downstream text mining to dig out relevant information on all aspects of the conversation including major topics discussed; agent adherence to scripts; customer experience; customer effort; agent experience, etc. Having the transcriptions and doing text analysis on those transcriptions immediately opens this source of dark data to providing the company with both quantitative and qualitative customer and agent information.

Second, even without doing text analysis, the fact that the text transcriptions exist allows a company to inspect specific conversations quickly and easily for special or problematic customers to uncover (simply by reading the text) the major issues presented, and to be able to do that back through a long historical period. This is highly valuable for a small number of special cases and can significantly reduce a company's risks and can pinpoint action items that can be done to improve a customer's satisfaction based on a simple reading of the text.

[Back to Index](#)

Do you have automation tools supporting your call center?



Survey Findings

Only 27% of respondents indicate their company's Call Centers have automation tools, while 60% indicate they do not.

Data Trend

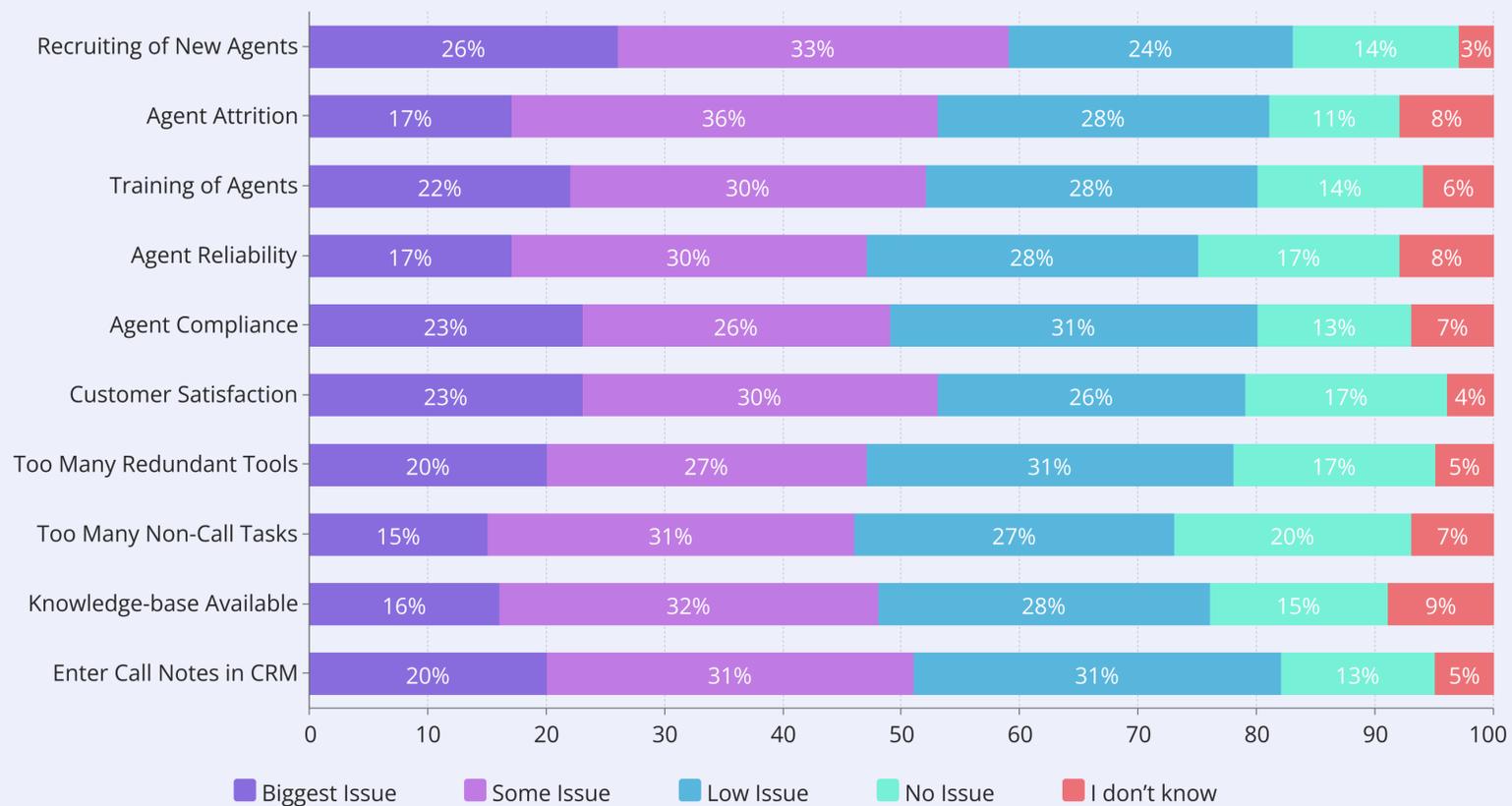
Number of responders that have automation tools support their call center drops from 34% to 27% this year while more responders indicate they don't have automation tools for call center compared to last year.

Analysis

By automation efforts we mean things like the following: chatbots to handle simpler customer requests; AI-enabled IVR systems; real-time detection and alerting of escalating customer conversations; automated workflow systems to improve agent effectiveness. We are surprised to see the usage of such automation tools drops from last year.

[Back to Index](#)

What is the biggest issue you have with Agents ?



Survey Findings

We listed 10 commonly discussed issues contact centers face with respect to their agents. As the chart shows the top priority issue is 'recruiting of new agents. Follow by Agent Attrition and Customer Satisfaction.

Data Trend

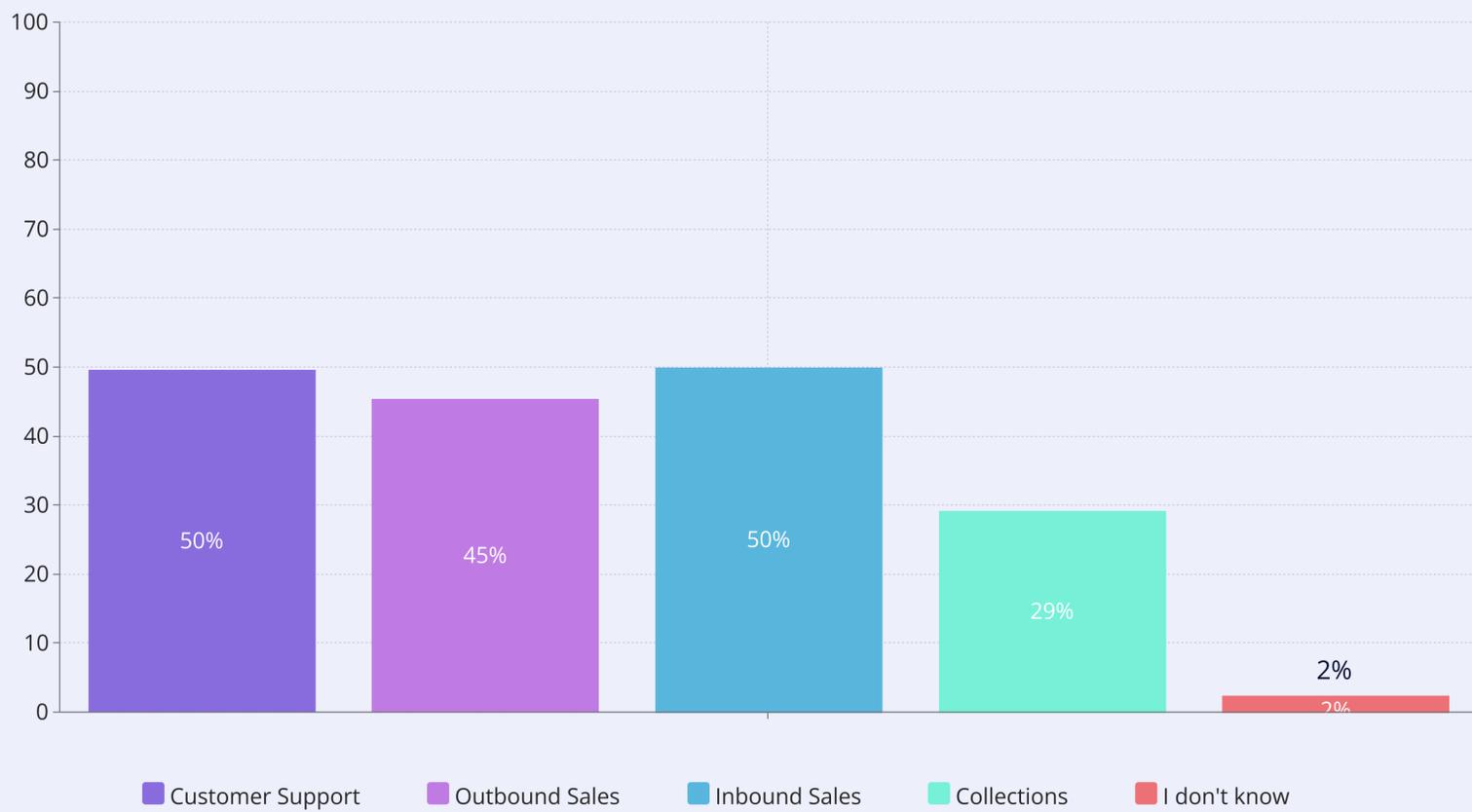
Same as last year, 'recruiting of new agents' remains to be the top issue. While all 10 issues were rated higher importance than last year. Agent Attrition, Agent training and customer satisfaction were rated significantly more important than last year.

Analysis

Aside from customer satisfaction, which is pretty much in line with expectations. Many top selected issues are centered with agent as a key position in Call Center. Agent recruiting, training and attrition are rated very important by many responders. This indicates though the growing technology has helped us greatly when it comes to customer communications. Agents remains to be the center piece of the Call Center operation.

[Back to Index](#)

What function does your call center perform?



Survey Findings

Responders can select all that apply to them. Customer Support and Inbound Sales tied at 50% while Outbound Sales are third function in the list at 45%.

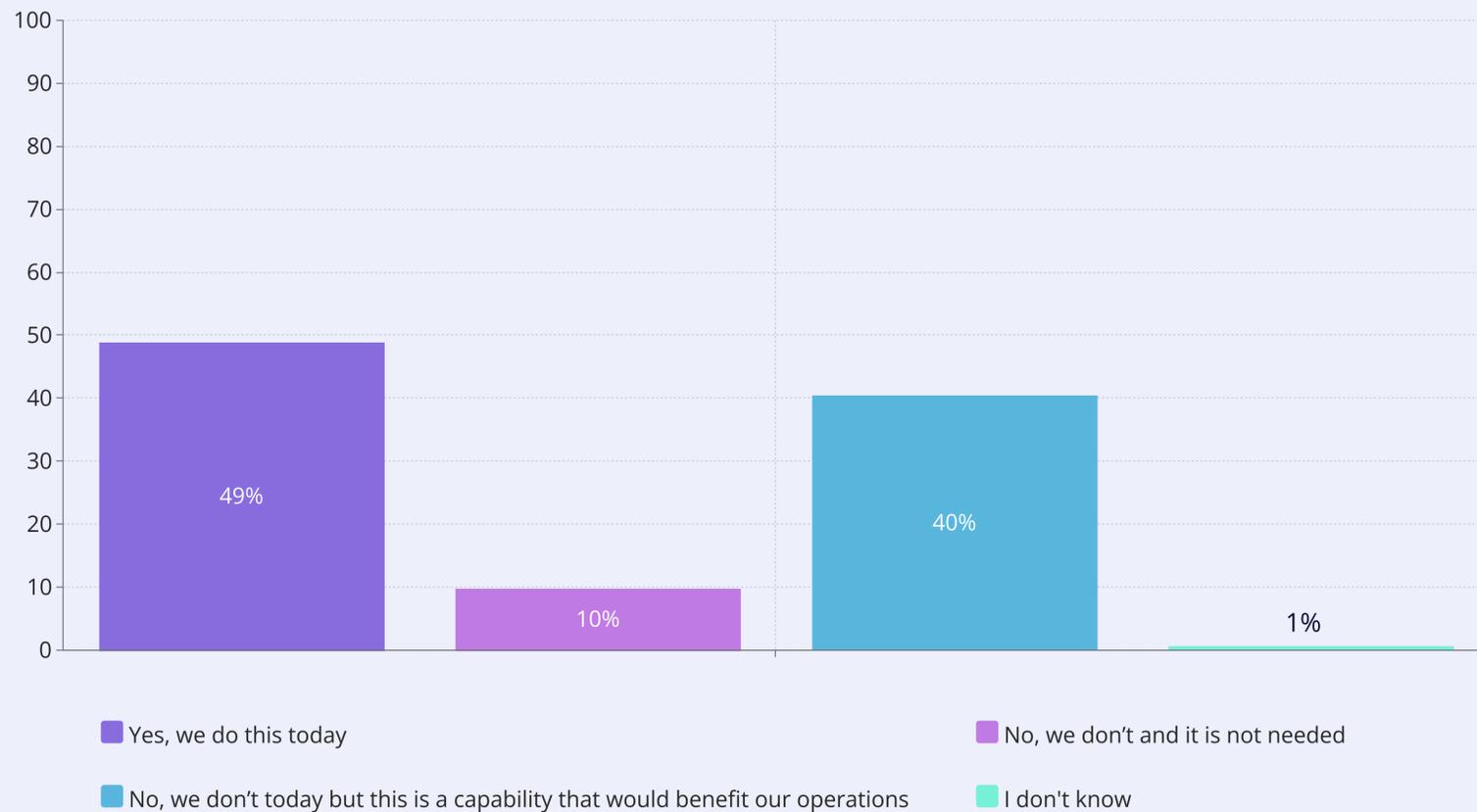
(Data trend not available as this question was not set up as select all that apply last year)

Analysis

The results shows that half of the companies use contact center for customer support. Half for sales. We expect the percentage for customer support to go higher over the years. It's worth mentioning that benefits of Conversational Analytics are qualitatively and quantitatively different across these four Call Center functions.

[Back to Index](#)

Do you provide on-call real-time support/guidance to your agents based on the content of live conversation?



Survey Findings

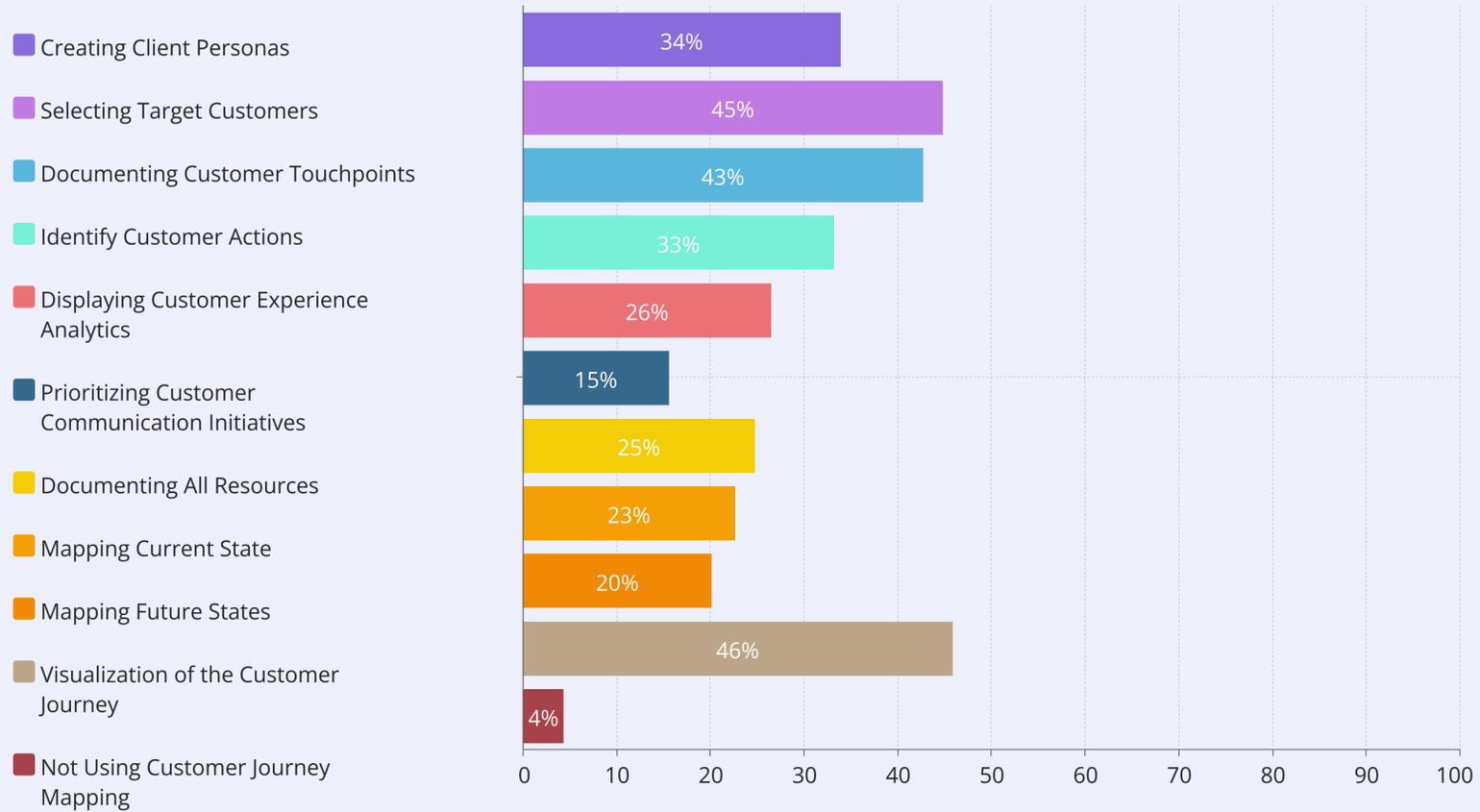
49% of responders indicate that they have real time support and 40% says no but it would be beneficial.

Analysis

As conversational analytics solution evolves over the coming years. Real time support/guidance driven by AI becomes reality in the past few years. Our results show almost half of the Call Center have real time support/guidance in place. Next year we would dive deeper into this question to see if such support is a manual effort from traditional knowledge base or driven by AI based Conversational Analytics tools.

[Back to Index](#)

If you are using Customer Journey Mapping, how are you using it?



Survey Findings

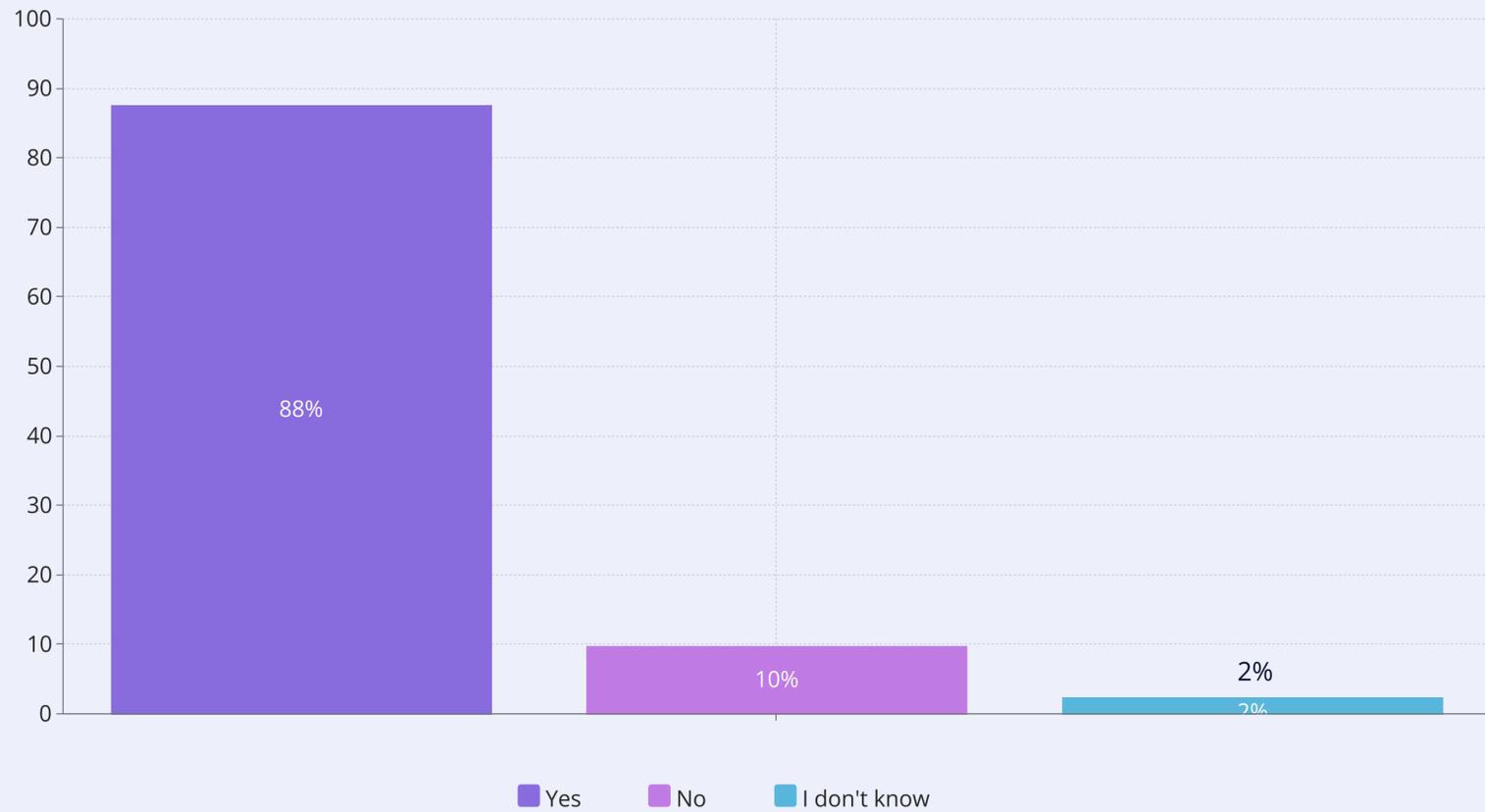
Visualization is the top use case for customer journey mapping at 46%. Follow by Select Target Customers at 45% and Document Customer Touchpoints at 42%.

Analysis

Last year we found 85% of responders indicates they are using Customer Journey Mapping. This year we provide a list of 10 use cases. As expected, visualization comes out to be the top use case. Many companies use it for select target customers and document customer touchpoints. It's wise to make your Conversational Analytics tools a part of the customer journey to increase Call Center efficiency and customer satisfactions.

[Back to Index](#)

Do you use recordings for R&D purposes?



Survey Findings

88% of respondents indicate their companies use the customer conversation recordings to derive R&D findings. That is, companies are using these customer conversations to identify ways to make their product or service better, more efficient, and user friendly, to add new features and functionality to the product or service, etc.

Data Trend

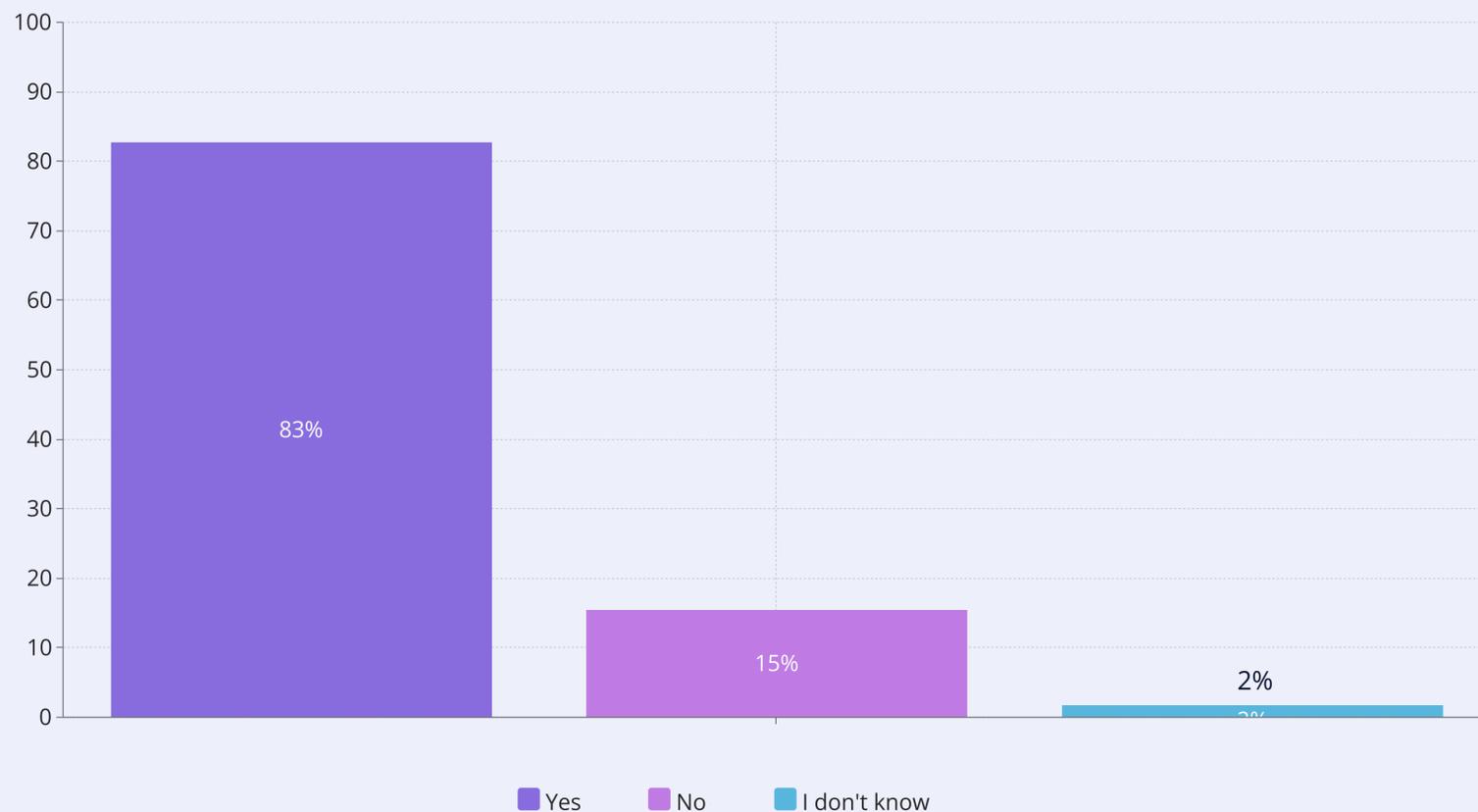
Last year 60% of respondents said yes for using recordings for R&D purpose. The number went up this year.

Analysis

We are glad to see that most companies are utilizing their call recordings to derive R&D findings. In our view, call recordings have more analytic values than after call surveys. We strongly encourage the 10% who do not do so to participate in Conversational Analytics and find more hidden insights from your call recordings.

[Back to Index](#)

Do you track 'Dead Air Time' or silence blocks in your recordings?



Survey Findings

83% of respondents indicate their Call Centers do track silence periods, and 15% said they do not. The definition of 'silence period' in a customer call can mean several different things as we indicate in the analysis section below. In the survey we did not describe the exact meaning of the silence period, we wanted respondents to report 'yes' or 'no' based on the conception of 'silence period' they held.

Data Trends

Percentage of respondents tracking silence increased from 43% last year to 83%, which is almost doubled.

Analysis

In Speech Analysis, 'silence period' can mean any of the following:

1. Total time in a call where there is no conversation where the time is aggregated across all silence blocks;
2. The longest individual silence block;
3. Total silence period minus any time an agent takes to look up information in other corporate systems;
4. Total silence period during the call plus any time the customer in a queue prior to the conversation.

We are glad to see that the number of companies tracking silence is almost doubled this year. Measuring silence periods for 100% of calls is one important capability provided by automated Conversational Analytics platforms. Monitoring silence periods manually is infeasible except for a very low percentage of calls received. Generally, this is one of the low-hanging fruits of Conversational Analytics, with a high ROI that can often justify the investment in Speech Analysis all on its own.

[Back to Index](#)

Concluding Comments

This concludes our summary of results from the **2022 Survey of Conversational Analytics Industry Best Practices in the US**, conducted during the last two weeks of April 2022.

This year's finding further solidified our conclusions identified a year ago. Our observations show an industry further along the digital transformation path that we would have expected before analyzing these results. Most respondents indicate their Call Centers already do have automation tools, do transcriptions, do have customer journey mapping, do R&D with recordings, do review a high percentage of the calls received and do track silence in calls. There are other such factors that indicate an industry well on its way to an automated digital future. All participants to the survey will receive this paper and will be able to compare their views versus their peers in the industry.

All readers will be able to see the wide diversity of responses to fundamental questions affecting and driving the Conversational Analytics industry in the US.

As noted, we plan to conduct this survey on an annual basis, which will bring a lot of new contexts to the responses as we see how the survey responses evolve over time.

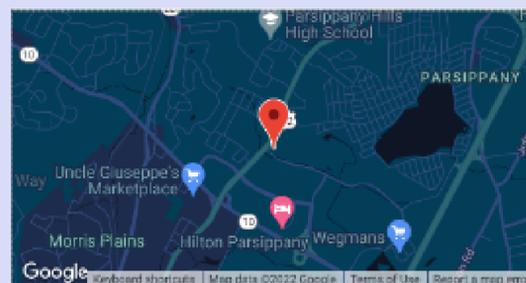
Contact Us



J. Rafanelli
(973) 223 - 9717
jrafanelli@macrosoftinc.com



MACROSOFT INC
2 Sylvan Way, Parsippany, NJ 07054
www.macrosoftinc.com



<https://www.facebook.com/Macrosoftinc>



https://twitter.com/macrosoft_inc



<https://www.linkedin.com/company/macrosoft>

[Back to Index](#)