2026 Hotel Owner Trends Report

WYNDHAM
HOTELS & RESORTS

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La Quinta by Wyndham
Sonoma, California

The Orbit, Trademark Collection by Wyndham
Cleveland, Ohio

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Wyndham's latest *Hotel Owner Trends Report* captures an industry in transition, where AI has rapidly shifted from emerging concept to business imperative. Optimism and ambition remain strong, even as owners navigate ongoing economic and cost pressures At the center of this shift is a renewed focus on execution: hotel owners are no longer just experimenting with AI—they are scaling it in pursuit of real returns.

What's more, growth remains a top priority. Nearly eight in ten owners expect to expand their portfolios over the next five years and are looking to brands as valuable, trusted partners that can help as they seek sustained performance and long-term success.

To better understand the forces shaping the year ahead, Wyndham partnered with Wakefield Research to survey 325 hotel owners and property developers across the U.S., Canada and the Caribbean. Spanning multiple brands, companies and independent owners, the findings reveal a market defined by opportunity—where leaders are embracing innovation, prioritizing growth and turning to brands for guidance in a rapidly evolving landscape.

KEY FINDINGS

Below are the key findings from this year's report, offering insight into how hotel owners and property developers are thinking about AI and other industry trends.

98%
Have already incorporated AI into their business

89%
See brands as beneficial when implementing AI

79%
Plan to expand their portfolios in the next five years

65%
Believe a strong loyalty program is of great importance

73%
Want to do more with AI but are unsure where to start

90%
Are optimistic about the industry in 2026

97%
Are open to joining or switching brands

61%
Are seeing financing is easier to access versus last year

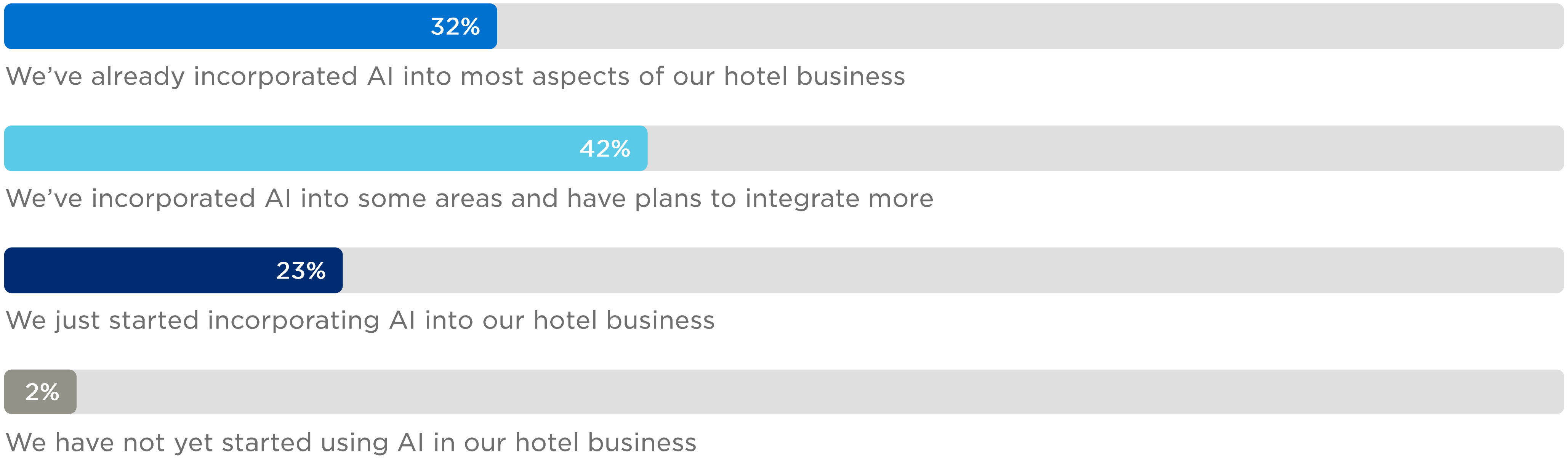
Section 1:
AI Adoption

Artificial intelligence has rapidly shifted from an emerging concept to a business imperative for hoteliers—and now the focus is on scale. Findings show the industry has reached an AI inflection point: hotel owners and developers are embracing AI but are increasingly in need of greater guidance on how to convert early adoption into long-term returns

Microtel by Wyndham
Hot Springs, Arkansas

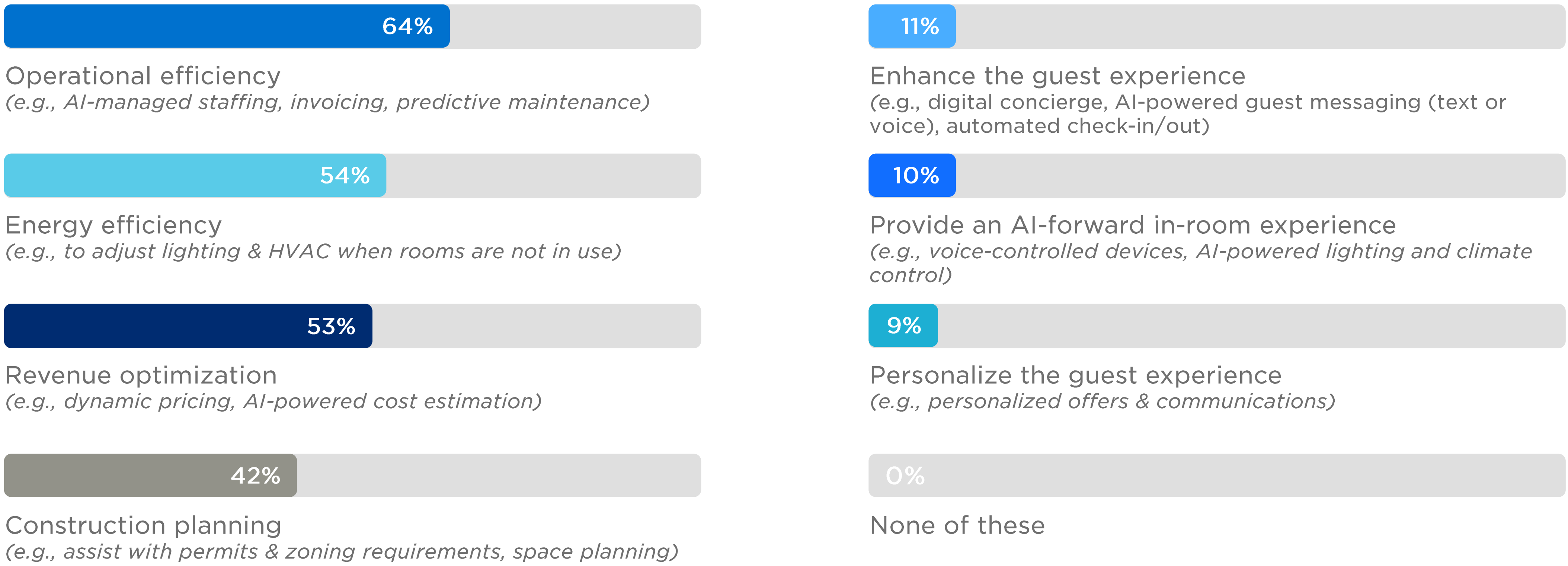
While 98% of hoteliers have already started incorporating AI into their hotel business, less than a third (32%) have incorporated it into most aspects of the business.

Q: How far along are you in the process of using AI for your hotel business?



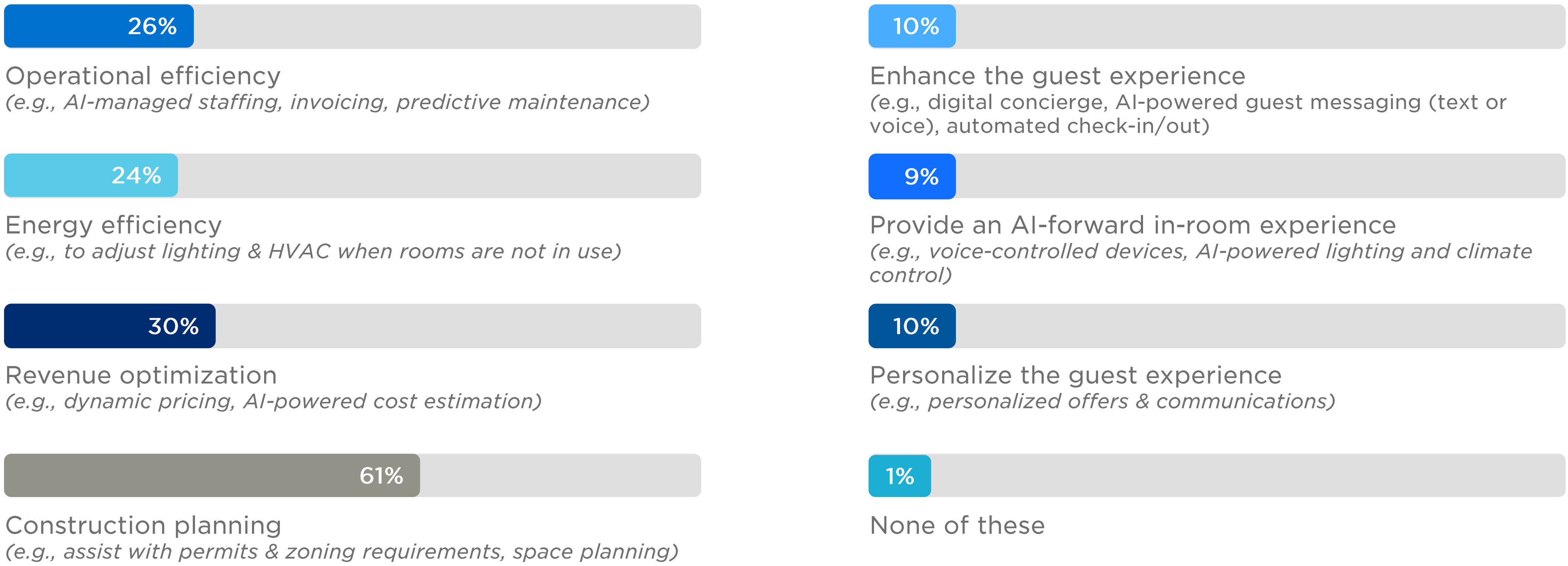
Hoteliers who are using AI in their business most commonly use it for operational efficiency (64%), energy efficiency (54%), and revenue optimization (53%).

Q: In what areas of your hotel business are you currently using AI? Select all that apply.

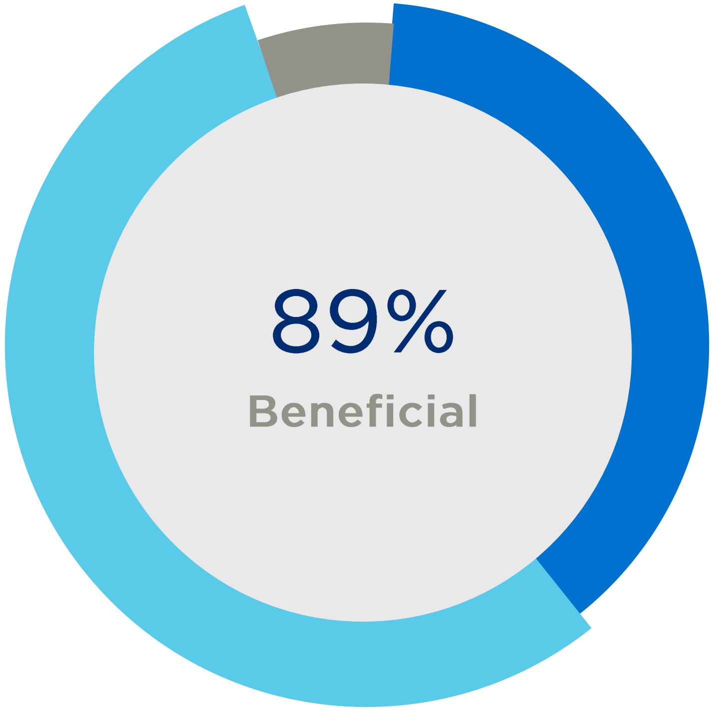


When thinking about areas they are not already using AI, hoteliers are most commonly looking to adopt it for construction planning (61%) in 2026.

Q: In what areas of your hotel business do you expect to being using AI in 2026? Select all that apply.



Most hoteliers (89%) see working with a hotel brand as beneficial when it comes to incorporating AI into their hotel business.



Q: When it comes to incorporating AI into your hotel business, how important is it to be working with a hotel brand?

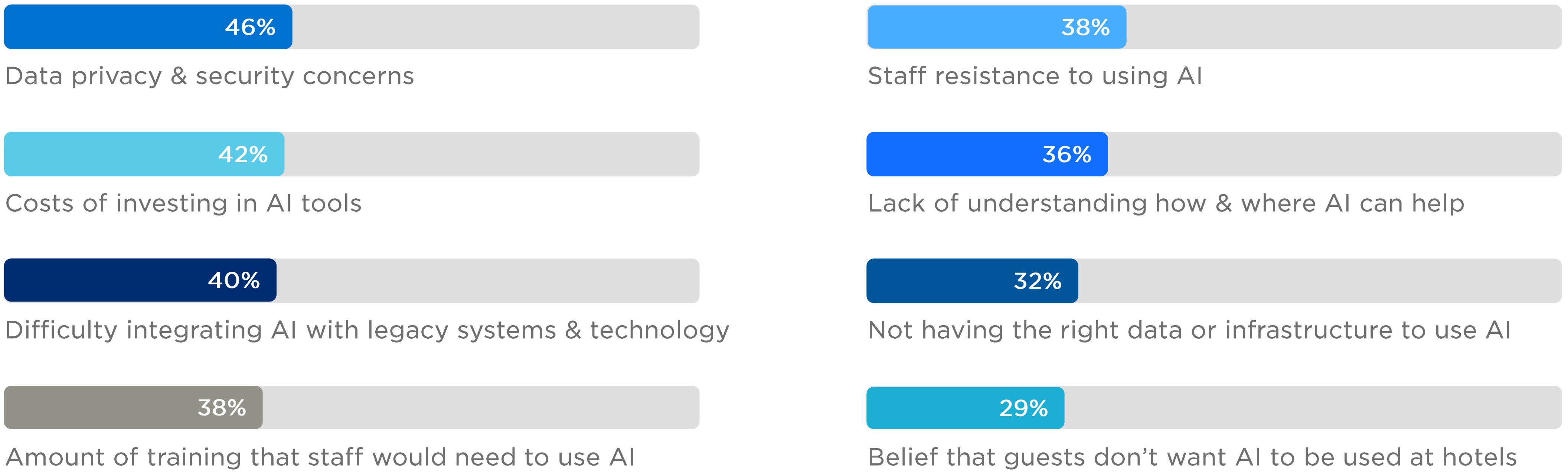
55% Helpful in getting a head start on AI adoption, but not necessary to being successful with AI

34% Essential – they have access to industry experts, pre-vetted technology, and assistance if I need it

11% Challenging – brands limit you to using only the AI technology the brand has okayed

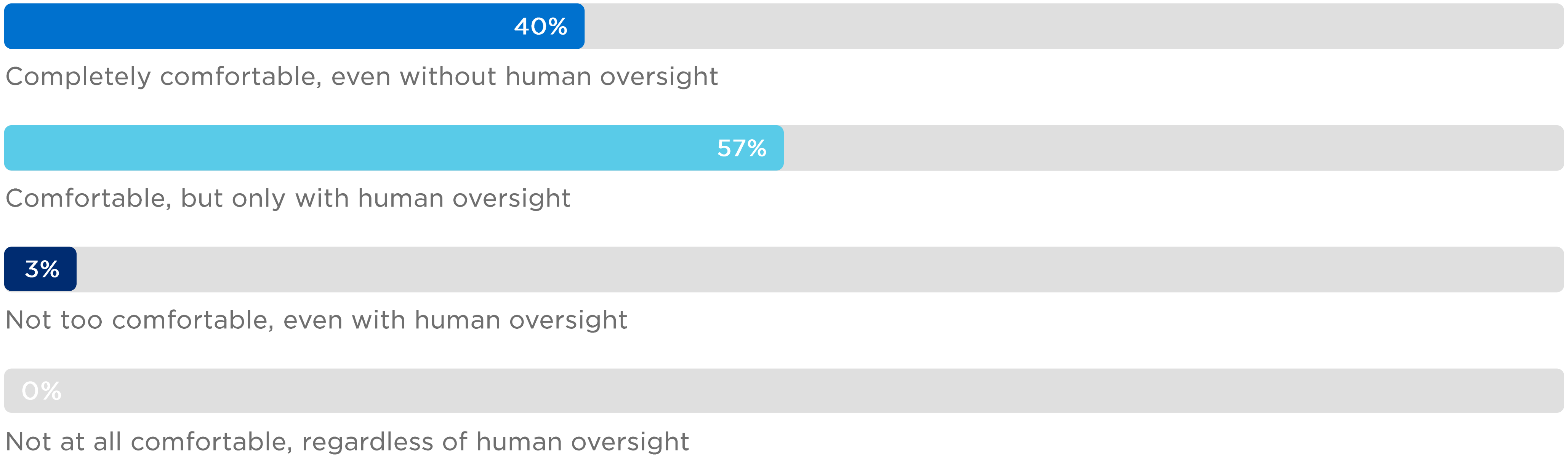
Data privacy & security concerns (46%), costs of investing in AI tools (42%), and difficulty integrating AI with legacy systems & technology (40%) are among the top three factors keeping hotel owners from adopting more AI into their businesses.

Q: What are the biggest factors keeping hotel owners from adopting more AI into their businesses? (Top 3 Ranked Responses)



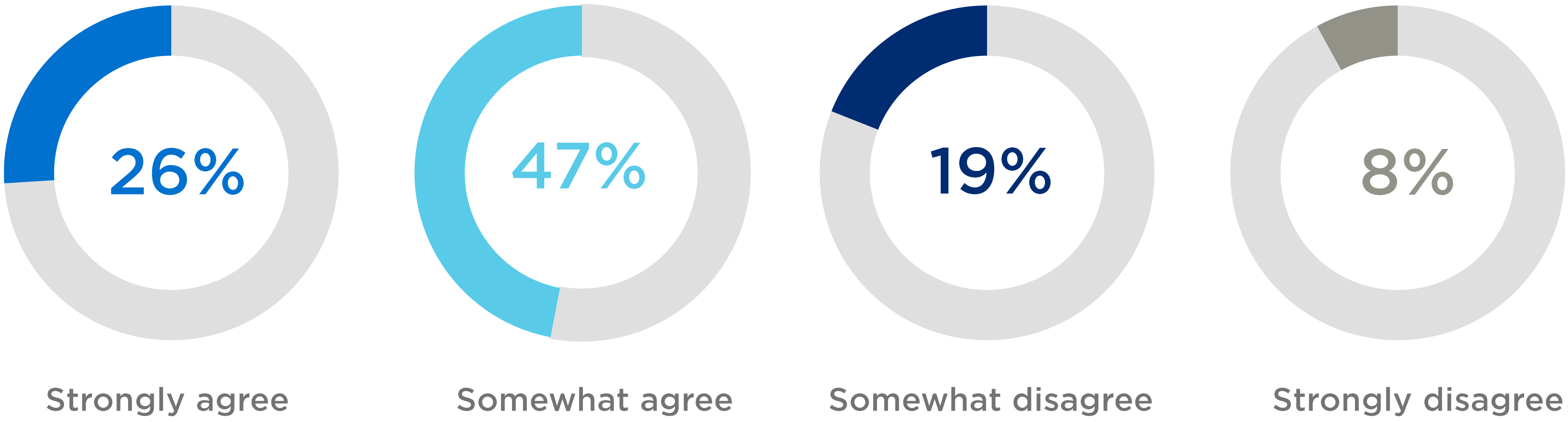
Two in five hoteliers (40%) are comfortable allowing AI to make operations decisions for their hotel business, even without human oversight; another 57% are comfortable with AI making these decisions with human oversight.

Q: How comfortable are you with allowing AI to make operations decisions for your hotel business?



Close to three-quarters of hoteliers (73%) want to incorporate more AI into their hotel business but feel overwhelmed and don't know where to start.

Q: How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statement? I want to incorporate more AI into my hotel business but feel overwhelmed and don't know where to start.



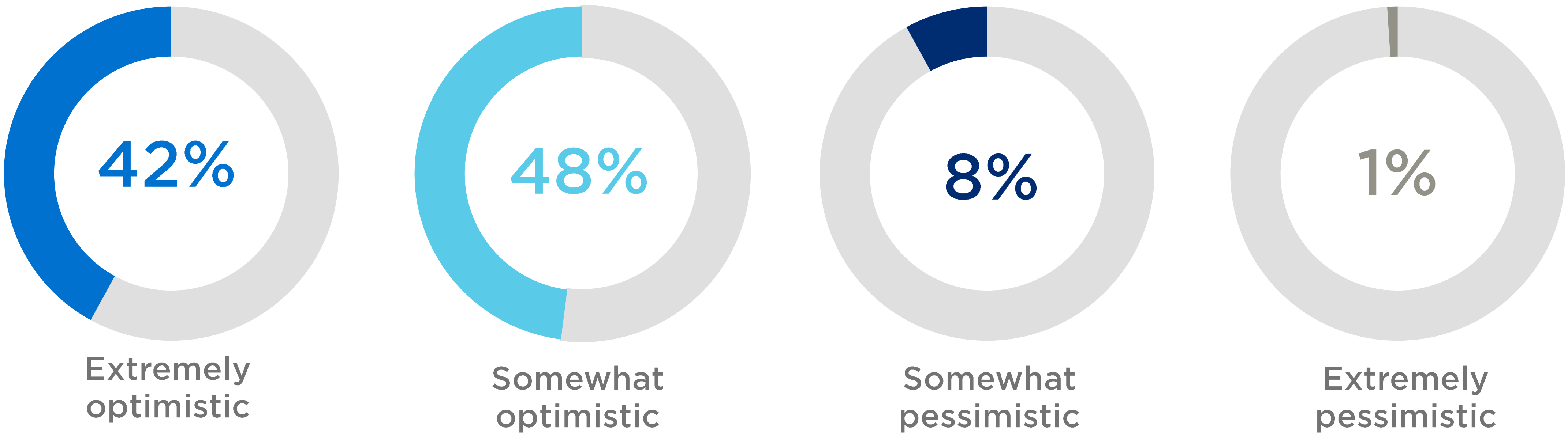
Section 2:
Industry Outlook

Despite ongoing economic shifts and other pressures, hoteliers are entering 2026 with continued confidence in both the short and long-term trajectory of the industry—echoing similar sentiments shared in Wyndham's first Owner Trends Report last year. The vast majority are optimistic about 2026 while even more are optimistic about the next five years.

Days Inn by Wyndham
Fredderick, Maryland

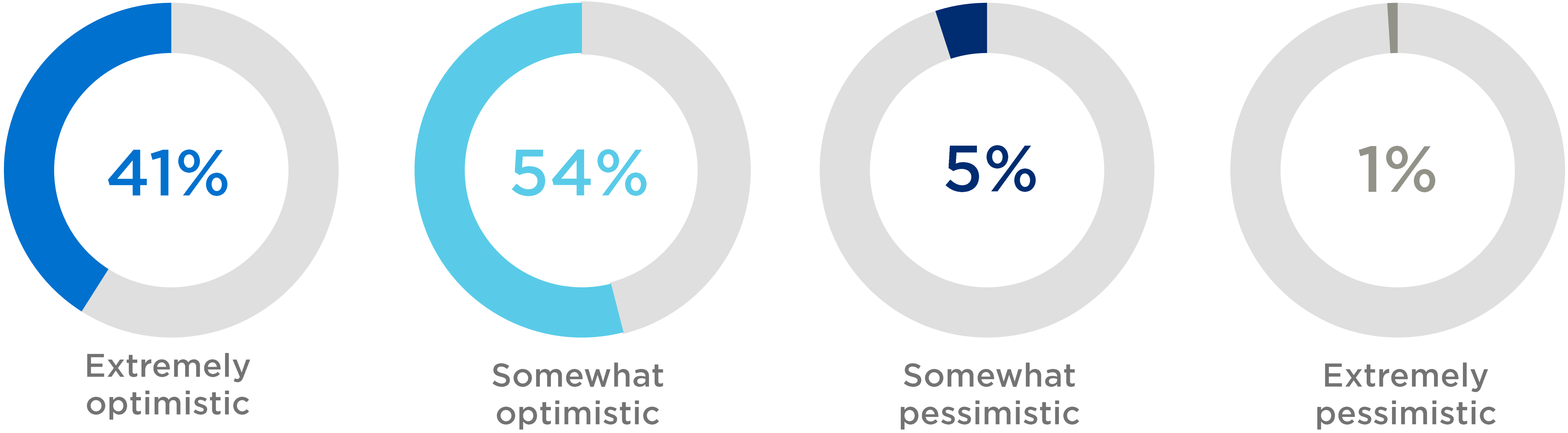
The vast majority of hoteliers (90%) have an optimistic outlook for the hotel industry in 2026.

Q: Which best reflects your outlook for the hotel industry in 2026?

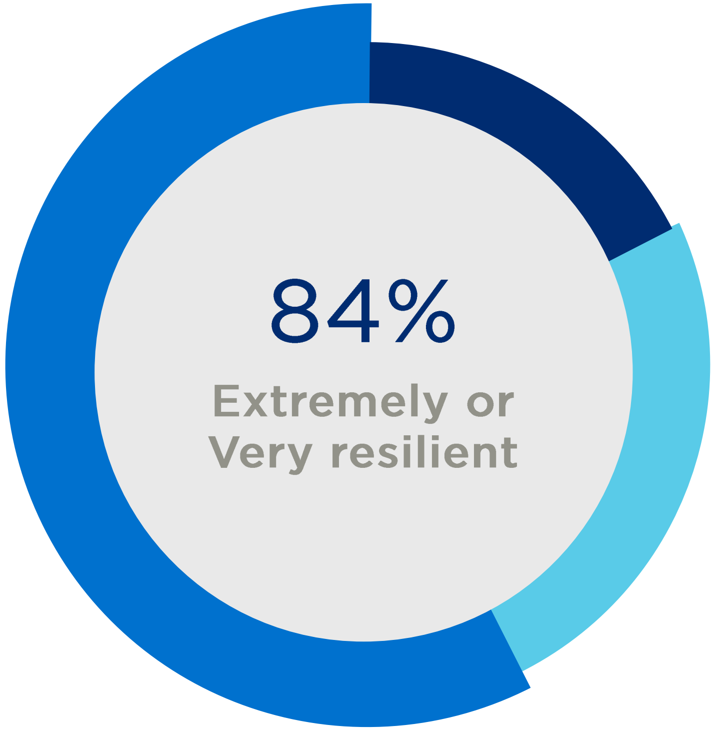


The overwhelming majority of hoteliers (94%) are feeling optimistic about the industry's outlook over the next 5 years.

Q: Which best reflects your outlook for the hotel industry over the next 5 years?



More than three-quarters believe the hotel industry is resilient.

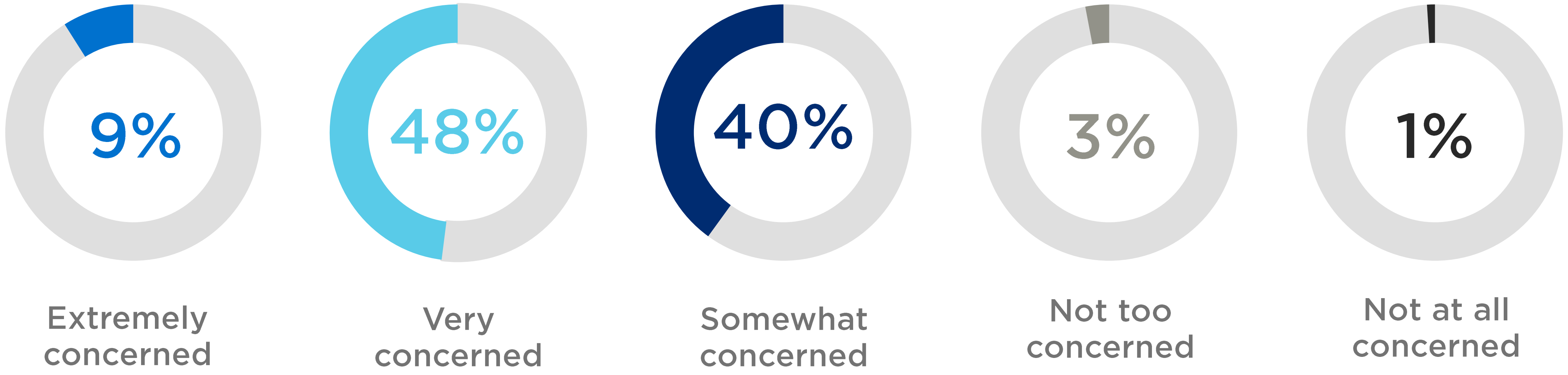


Q: How resilient do you believe the hotel industry is?

26%	Extremely resilient
58%	Very resilient
16%	Somewhat resilient
0%	Not very resilient

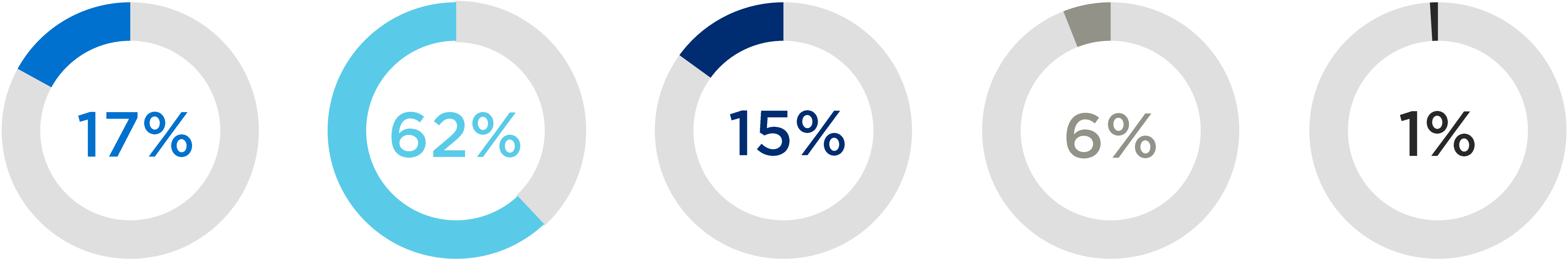
The vast majority of hoteliers (97%) are concerned about the potential impact that economic volatility could have on their hotel business.

Q: How concerned are you about the potential impact that economic volatility could have on your hotel business?



More than three-quarters (79%) are planning to expand their hotel portfolio over the next 5 years, with nearly 1 in 5 (17%) looking to expand substantially.

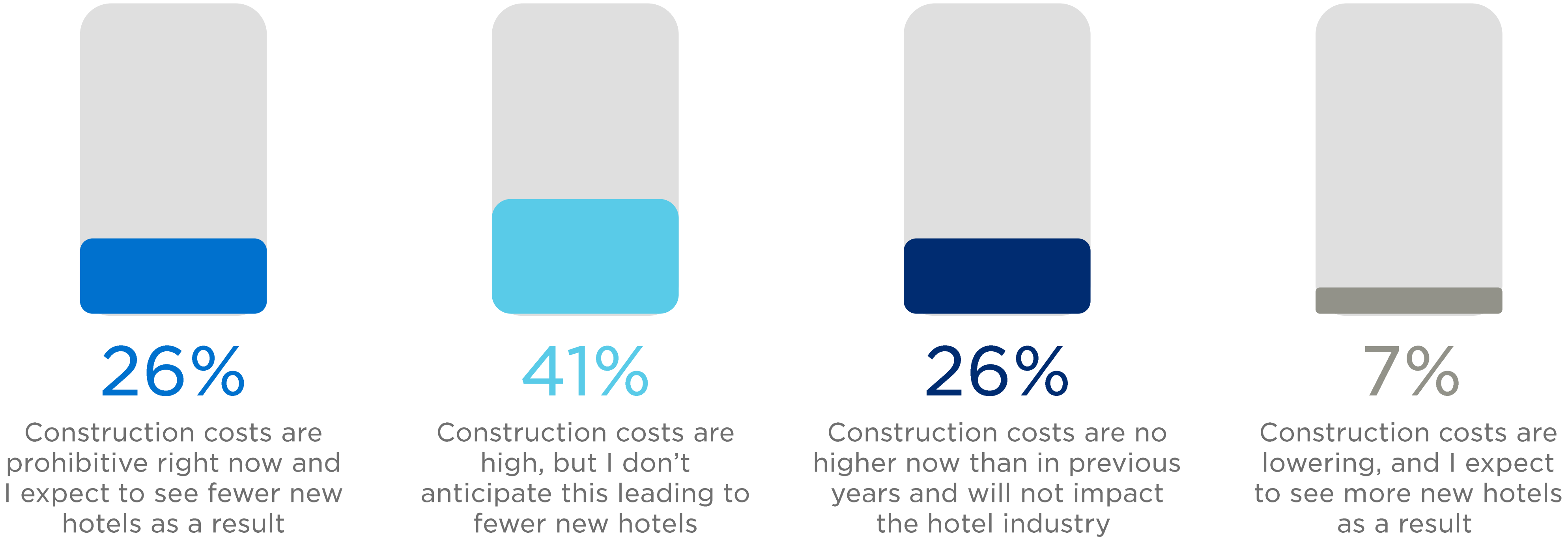
Q: Are you planning to expand or scale back your hotel portfolio over the next 5 years?



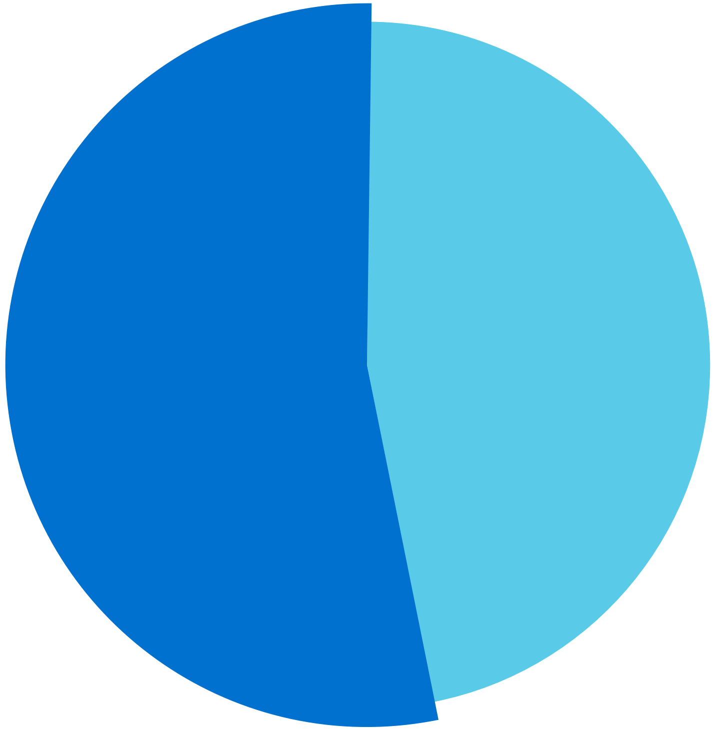
Expand substantially | Expand somewhat | Keep it about the same | Scale back somewhat | Scale back substantially

Two-thirds of hoteliers (67%) believe construction costs are high right now, though just 26% believe this will lead to fewer new hotels in 2026.

Q: Which best captures your view of how the current state of construction costs will impact the hotel industry in 2026?



Hoteliers are near evenly split on the appeal of adding new construction hotels (52%) versus converting or revitalizing existing hotels (48%) to their portfolio in 2026.



Q: Which is more appealing for adding to your portfolio in 2026?

52% New construction hotels

48% Converting/revitalizing existing hotels

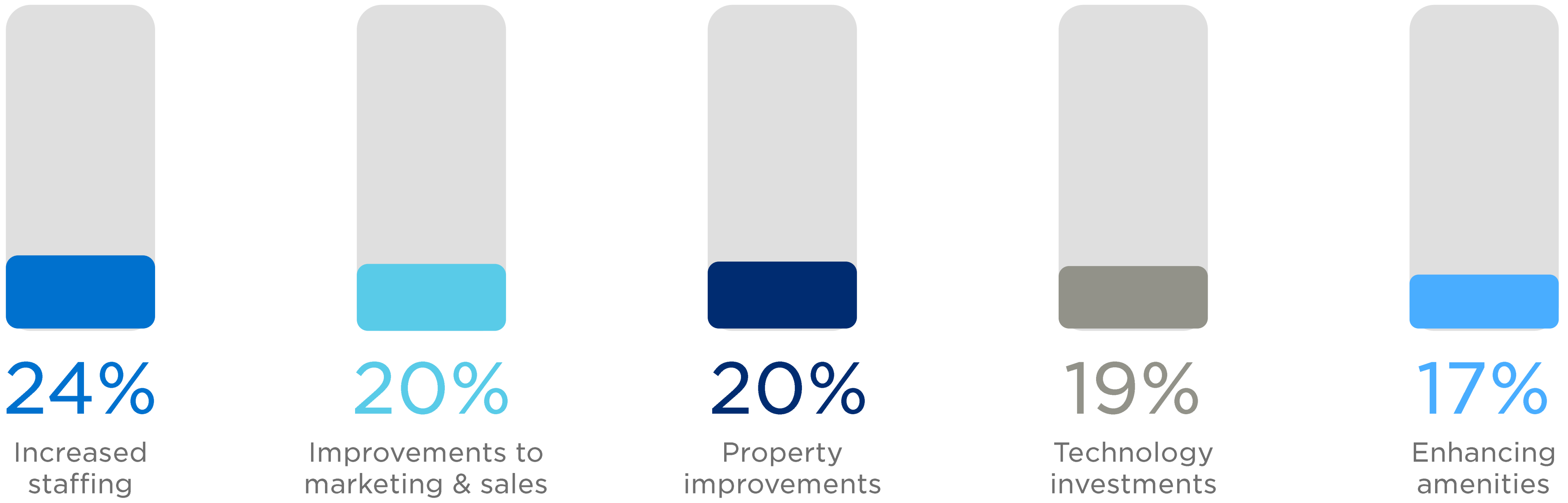
Section 3:
Priorities and Challenges

As hoteliers look ahead, they are focused on strengthening their operations while continuing to invest for growth. Their priorities reflect a need to enhance performance across people, property and technology, even as they navigate persistent pressures tied to costs, competition and broader market conditions.

ECHO Suites by Wyndham
Spartanburg, South Carolina

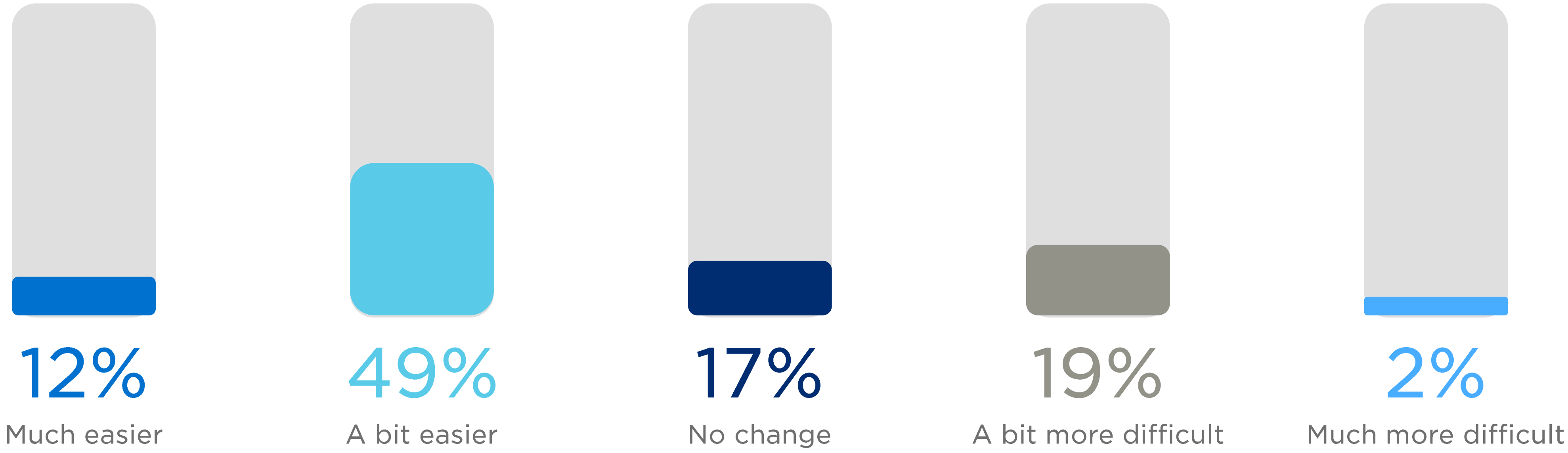
Nearly a quarter of hoteliers (24%) will be prioritizing increased staffing for their capital investments in 2026, while others will make the greatest investments in improvements to marketing and sales (20%), property improvements (20%), or technology investments (19%), followed by enhancing amenities (17%).

Q: Where will you be looking to invest the greatest amount of capital in 2026? (Top Ranked Responses)



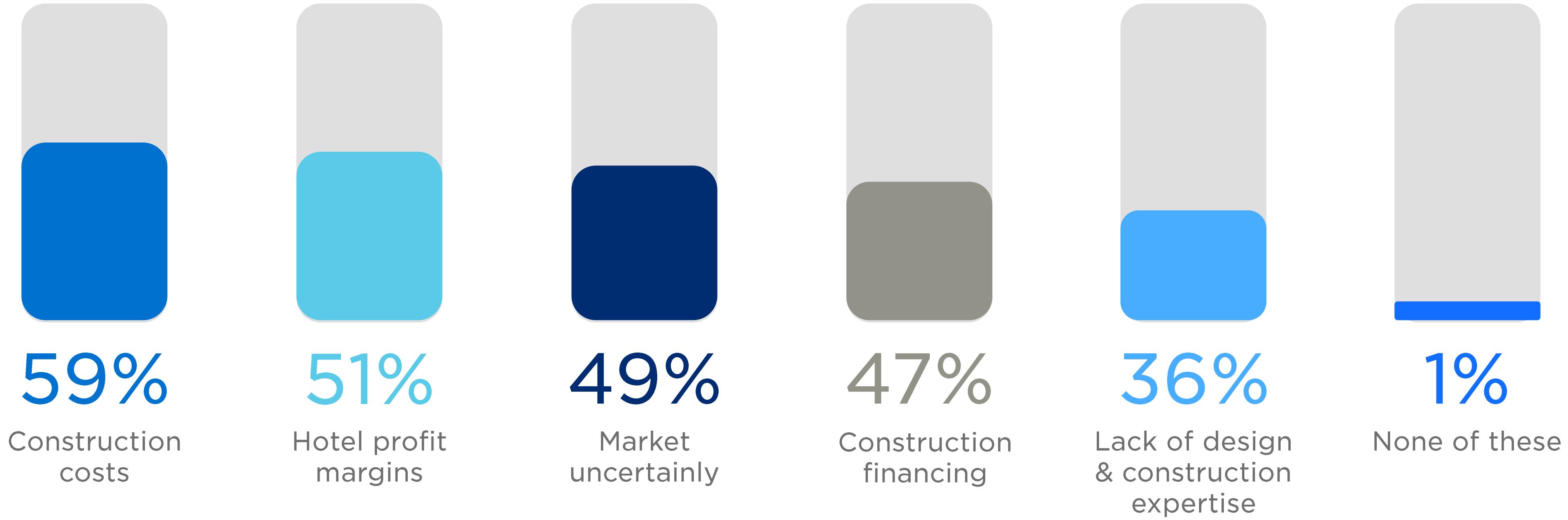
While the majority of hoteliers (61%) believe financing is easier to access today than it was a year ago, another 22% feel it is more difficult.

Q: Is financing easier or more difficult to access today than it was a year ago?



Construction costs (59%) are the most common challenge hoteliers face in hotel design and construction, though the majority of hoteliers cite hotel profit margins as well (51%).

Q: What are the biggest challenges you face in terms of hotel design and construction? Select all that apply.



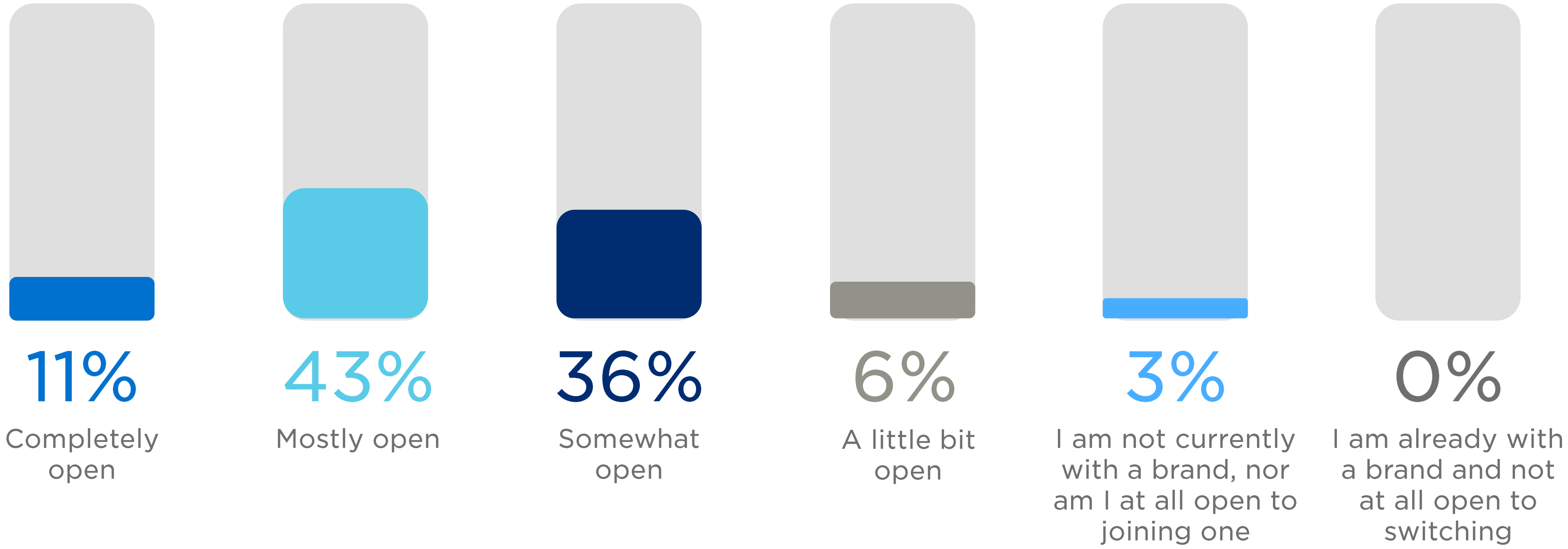
Top obstacles this year are predicted to be high operating costs (37%), talent shortages or skill gaps (35%), and rising competition (34%).

Q: What are the top three obstacles facing your hotel business this year? (Top 3 Ranked Responses)

- 37% High operating costs
- 35% Talent shortages or skill gaps
- 34% Rising competition
- 33% Cybersecurity threats
- 32% Supply chain issues
- 30% Increasing guest expectations
- 28% Expectations for tech amenities
- 27% Lowering guest demand
- 23% Government regulations
- 22% Holding rate

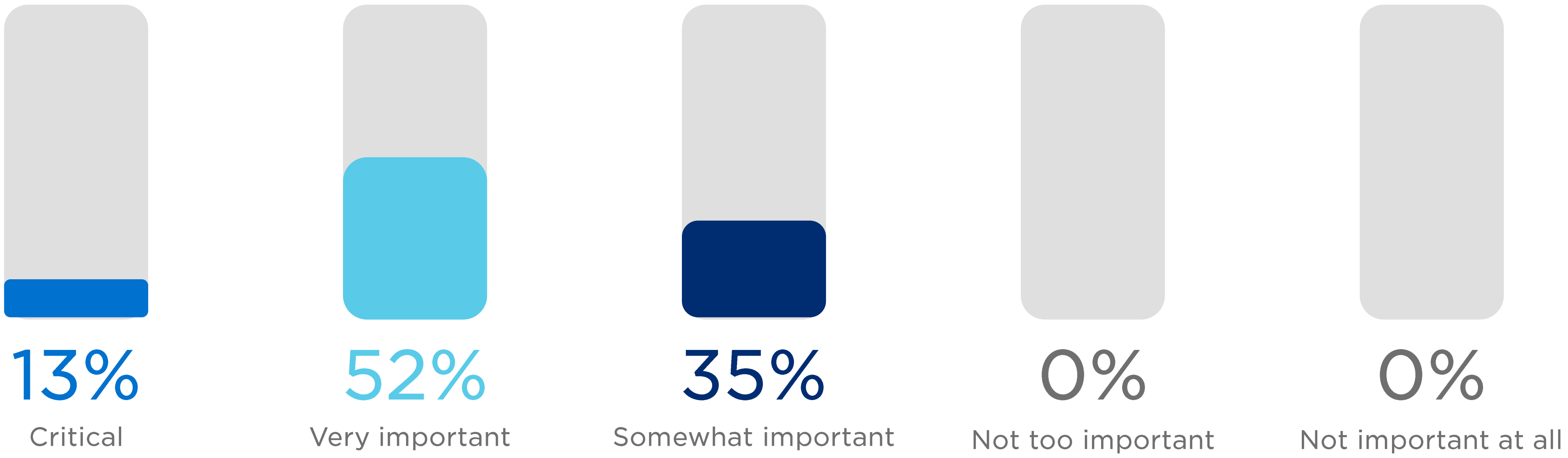
Nearly all hoteliers (97%) are open to joining a hotel brand or switching brands, with more than half (54%) mostly or completely open to this.

Q: How open are you to joining a hotel brand if the right opportunity presents itself? If you are already with a brand, please respond based on your openness to switching brands.



For nearly two-thirds of hoteliers (65%), having a strong loyalty program is of great importance to the livelihood of a hotel's success.

Q: In today's operating environment, how important is a strong loyalty program to the livelihood of a hotel's success?



Conclusion

The hospitality industry is entering a new chapter—one defined by smarter operations, more connected guest experiences and owners who expect their brands to deliver not just ideas, but outcomes. This year's findings make one thing clear: hotel owners are optimistic about the future, focused on growth and increasingly committed to using technology as a competitive advantage. But they are also looking for partners who can help them navigate complexity, respond to rapid change and convert innovation into performance.

Wyndham's OwnerFirst™ approach, backed by The Wyndham Advantage, is built for this moment. Through continued investment, deep partnerships and owner-focused innovation—from AI-powered guest engagement to expanded distribution and marketing reach—we're equipping franchisees with the tools, scale and support top help them win today and build stronger businesses for the future.

Wyndham Grand Rio Mar
Rio Grande, Puerto Rico

Survey Methodology

Managed by Wakefield Research, the Wyndham Survey was conducted among 325 Hotel Owners & Hotel Property Developers across multiple brands and companies, non-exclusive to Wyndham, with minimum seniority of VP+, in the United States, Canada, and the Caribbean, between November 24th and December 4th, 2025, using an email invitation and an online survey. Results of any sample are subject to sampling variation. The magnitude of the variation is measurable and is affected by the number of interviews and the level of the percentages expressing the results.

For the interviews conducted in this particular study, the chances are 95 in 100 that a survey result does not vary, plus or minus, by more than 6.2 percentage points for the total data, 6.9 percentage for the U.S., 9.8 for Canada, and 19.6 percentage points for the Caribbean, from the result that would be obtained if interviews had been conducted with all persons in the universe represented by the sample.

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