



2026 Small Business Happiness Report

Presented by  **vistaprint**





Table of Contents

Introduction	3
At the heart of it	5
Happiness factors	10
A closer look	15
Full speed ahead	26

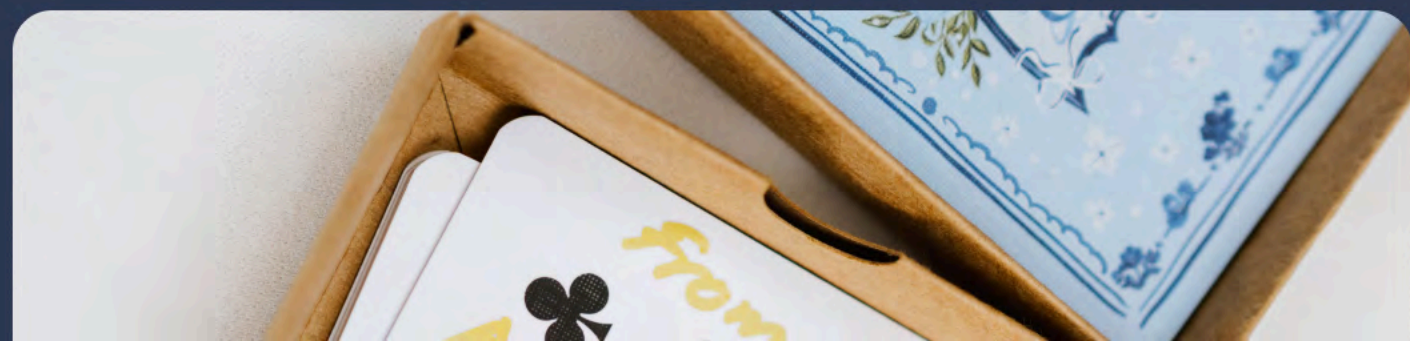


Against a backdrop of economic uncertainty, VistaPrint set out to better understand the current state of small business happiness in Australia.

While 2026 has presented its challenges, the data shows Australian small business owners haven't stopped pursuing their possible.



@graced.goods



“Small business ownership is often associated with pressure and uncertainty, but that only tells part of the story. What we’re seeing is more Australians actively choosing this path because it gives them control, flexibility and a sense of purpose, and the chance to build something of their own.”

Marcus Marchant

CEO of VistaPrint Australia

Let’s dive into what’s making these dream-makers so happy →



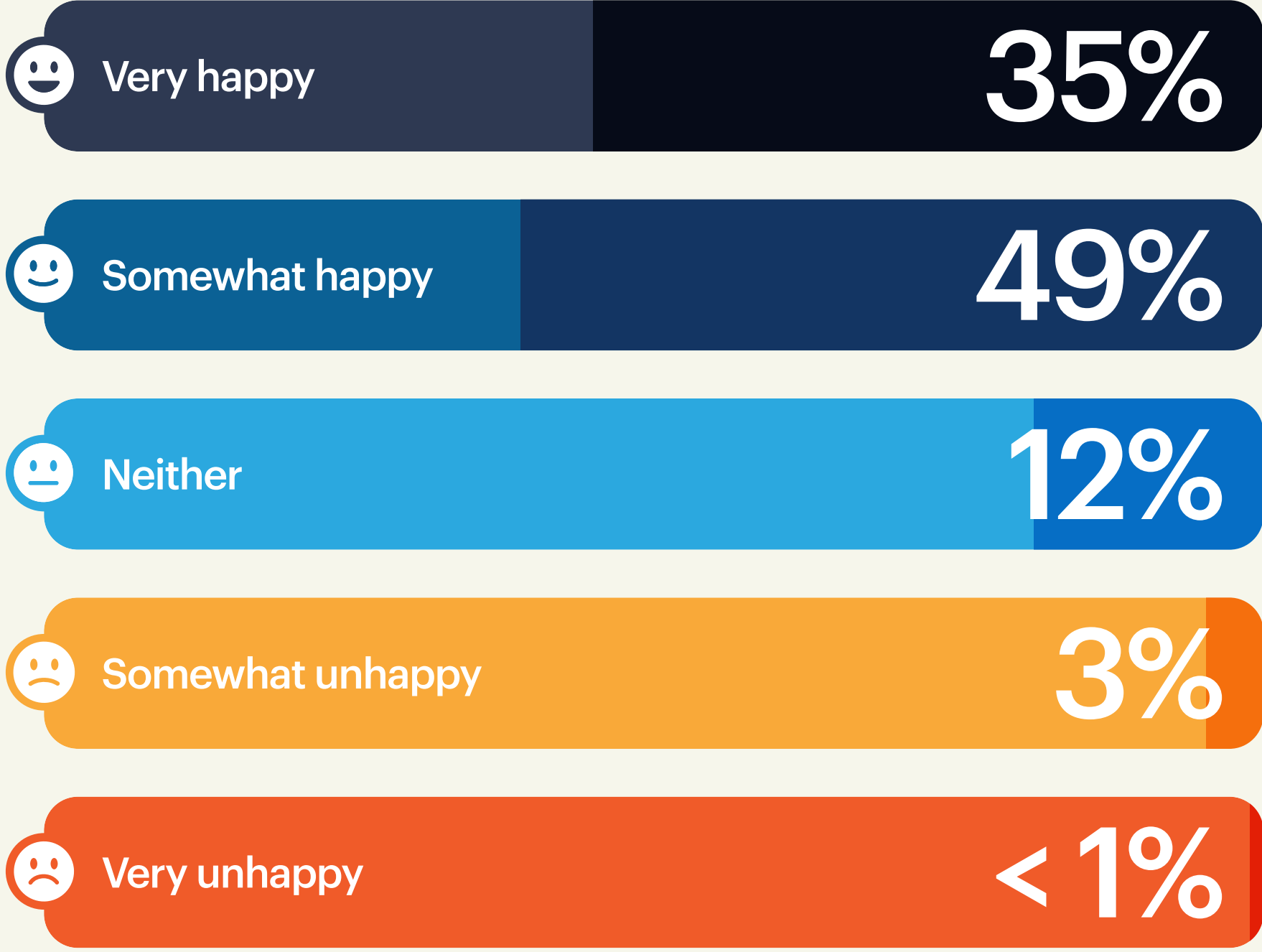
At the heart of it

Data tells a story of joy and fulfilment



Small business happiness today

84% of small business owners say they're happy today.

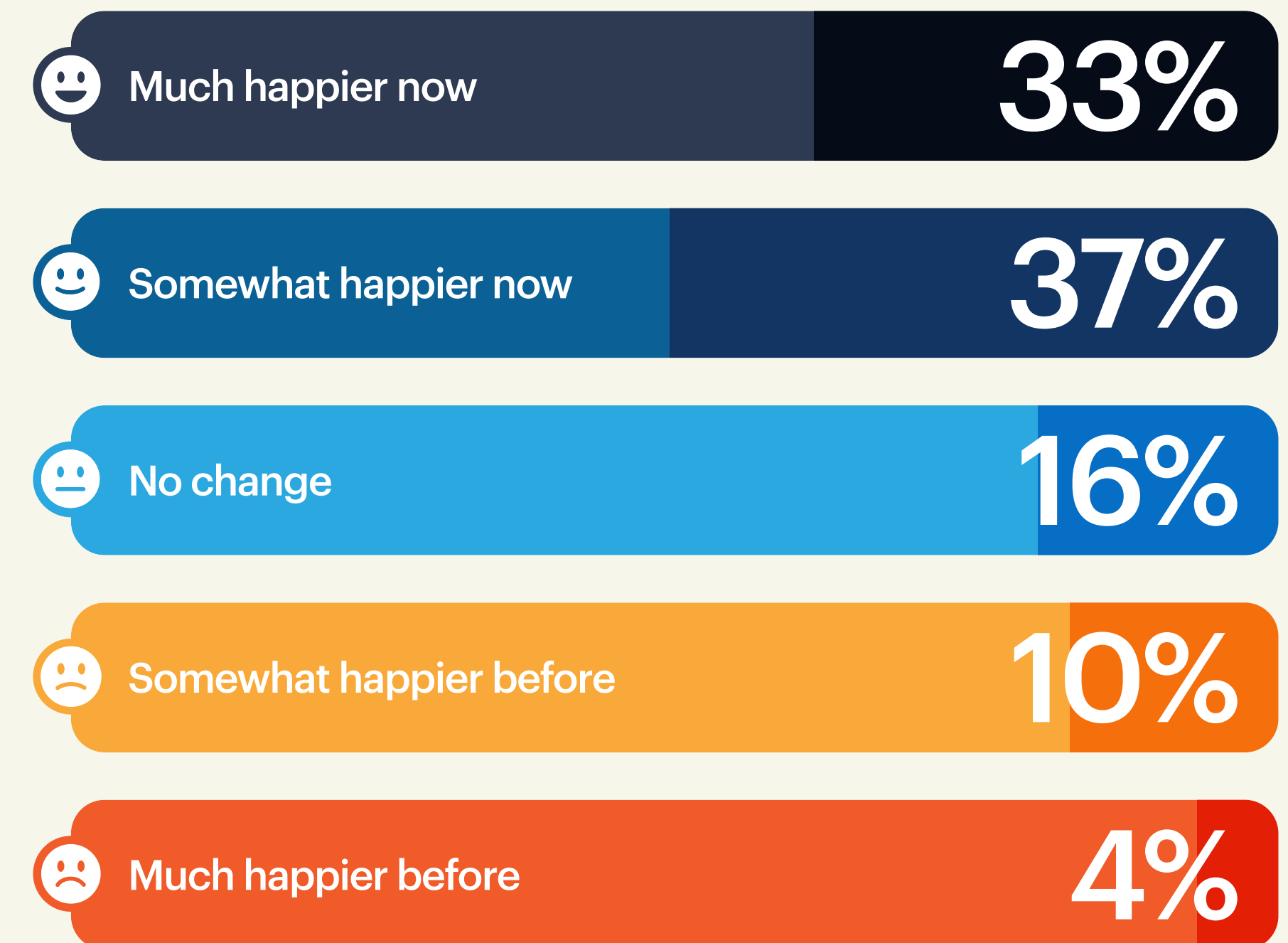


Personal fulfillment > the grind



What tenure has to say about it

70% of small business owners report that their happiness has increased since they first opened their doors.

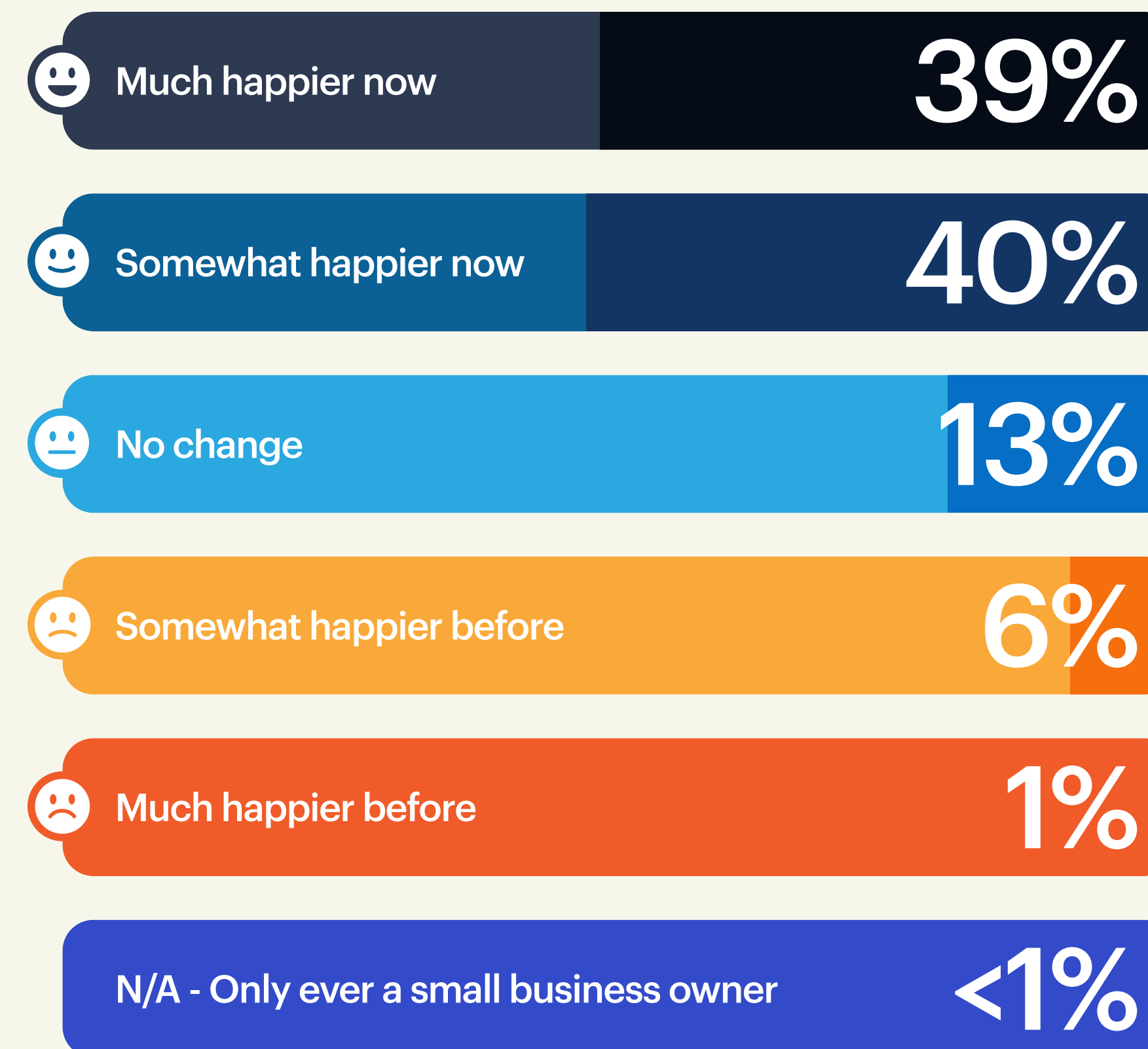


The good feelings strengthen over time



Being your own boss

79% of small business owners report being happier now compared to when they worked for someone else.

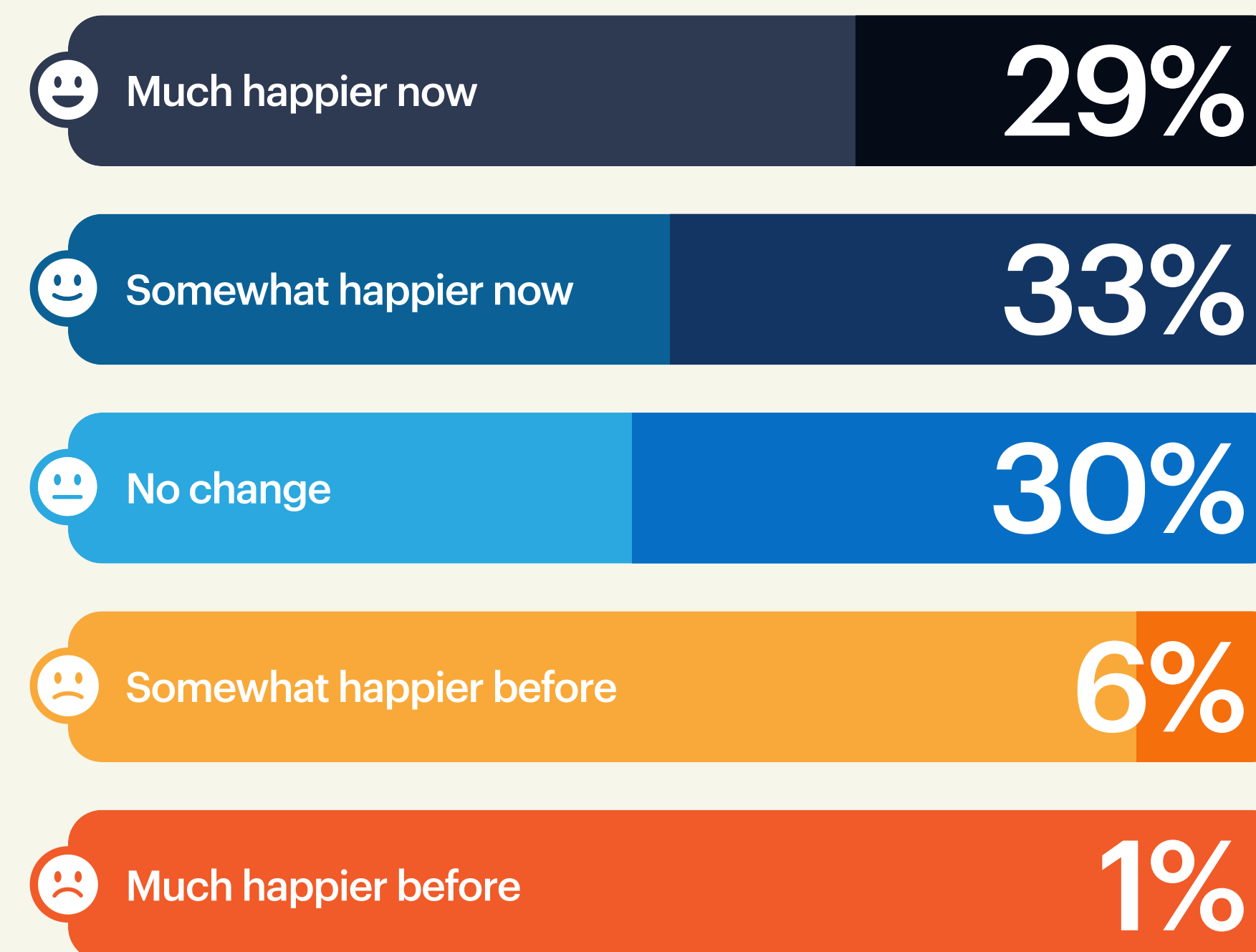


Being your own boss > a traditional paycheck



Happiness this year vs. last

62% of small business owners report being happier than they were last year.



The joys of running a business > a hard economic year



2

Happiness factors

Australian small businesses are defined by resilience, not struggle

So, why's everyone so happy?

For small business owners who are happier today than when they started, the reasons are closer to home than you might expect.



@bendandfly



@heydoodle_



@Griff and Lee



@bendandfly



@wurumay_collective

So, why's everyone so dang happy?

36% of small business owners with improved happiness credit internal, day-to-day factors alone – the choices they make, the work they love, the business they've built with their own hands.



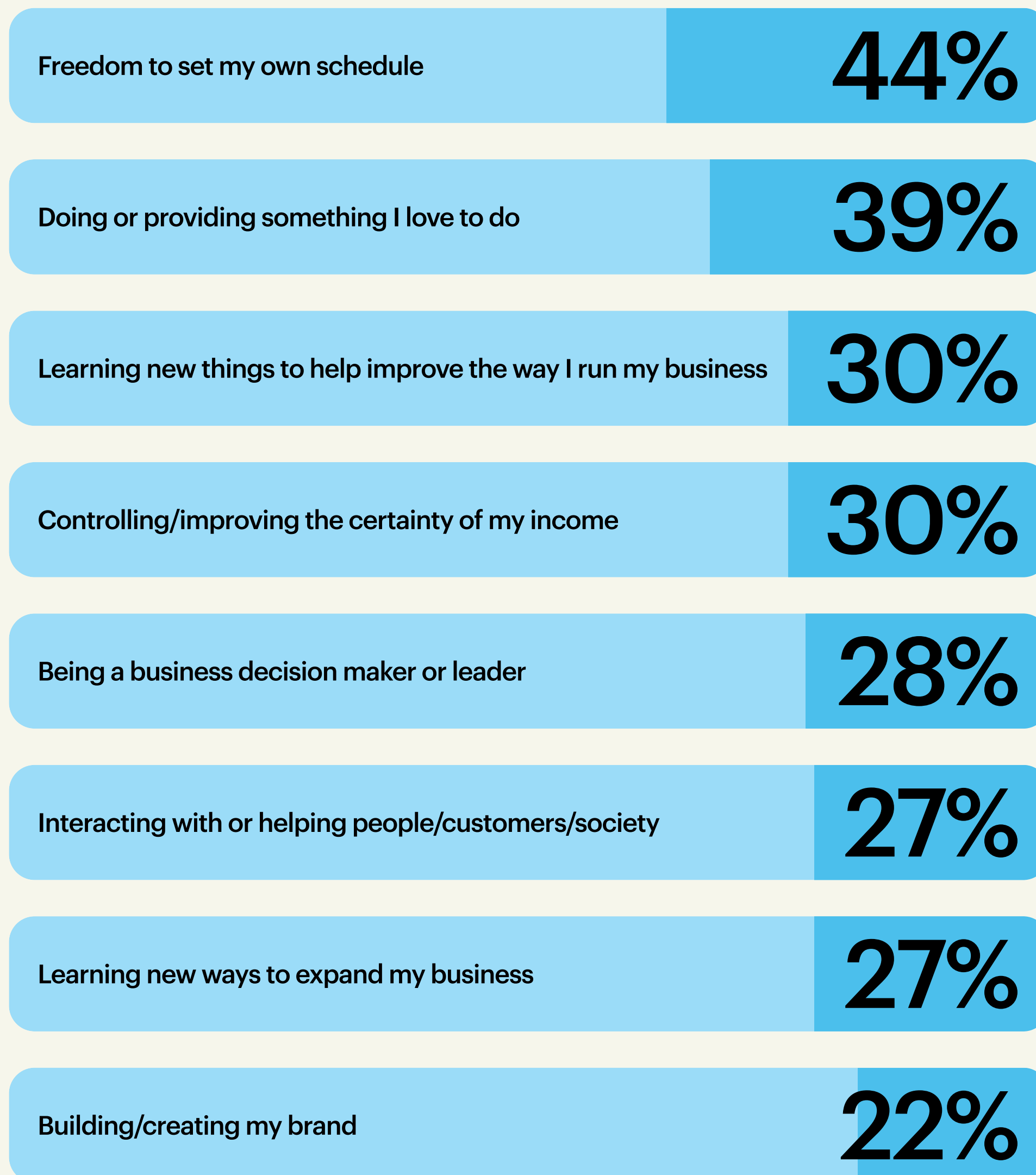
What small biz owners love about small biz owning

The freedom to set their own schedule and the fulfillment of pursuing their passions ranked highest.*



The rewards of entrepreneurship are intensely personal

* Percent ranked as a top three "like."



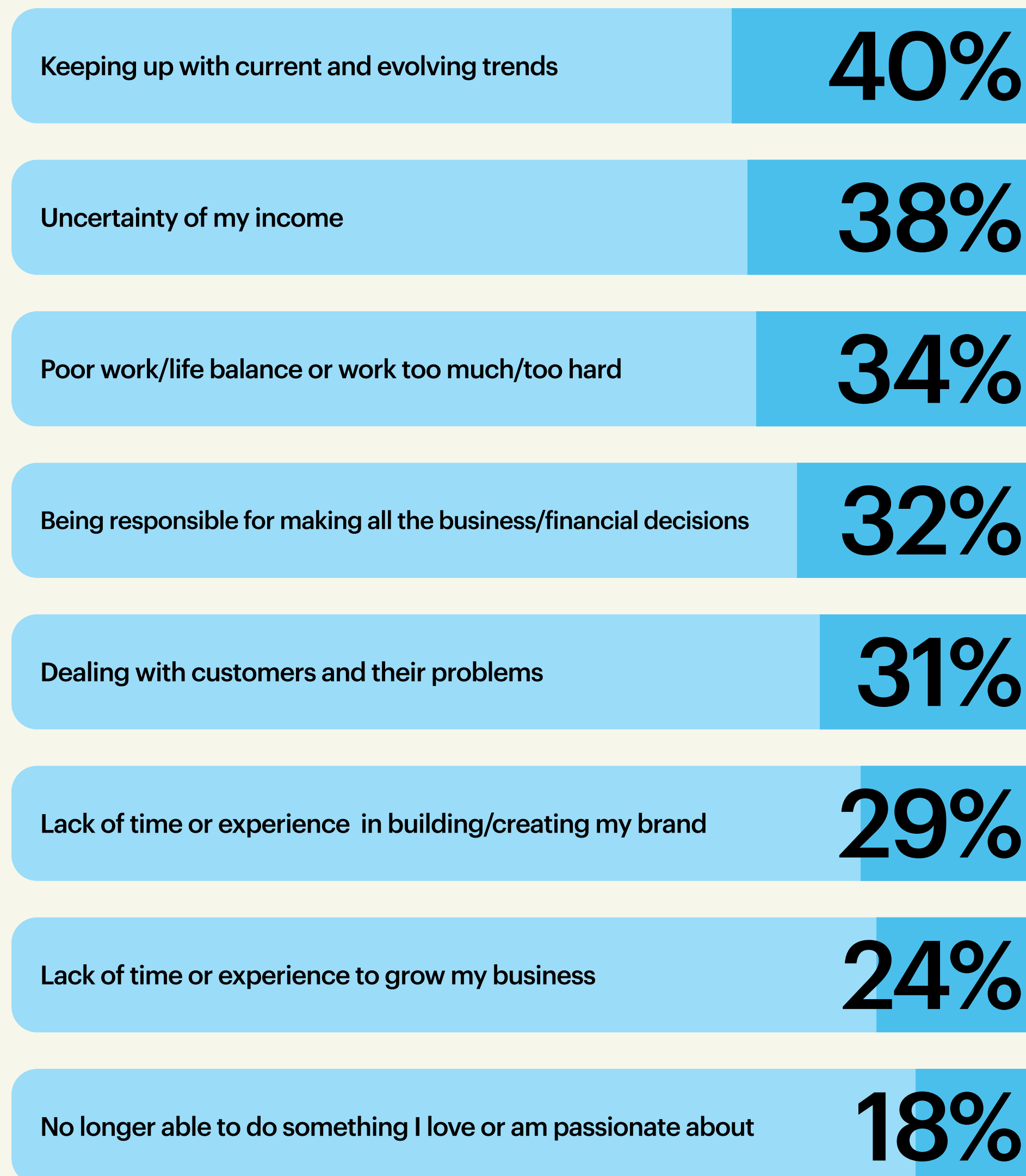
The (very real) challenges

Keeping up with current and evolving trends, income uncertainty and working too much were the most common dislikes.



Small business owners make big sacrifices

* Percent ranked as a top three "dislike."





3

A closer look

Breaking it down by who, what and where

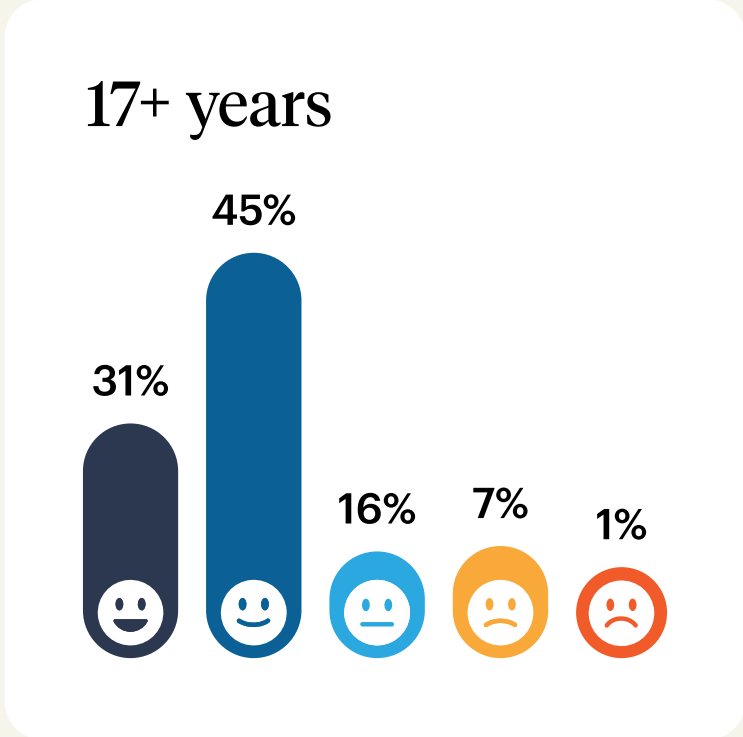
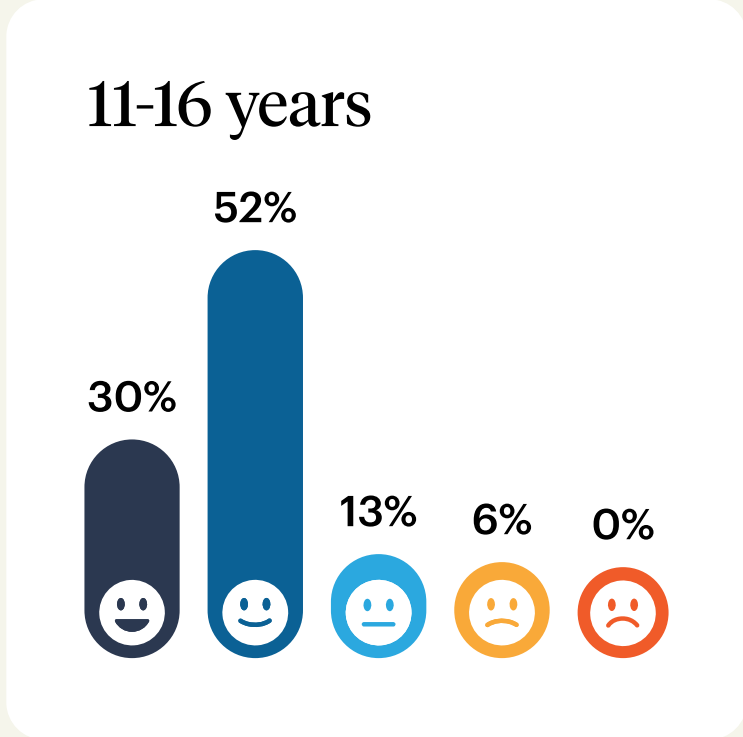
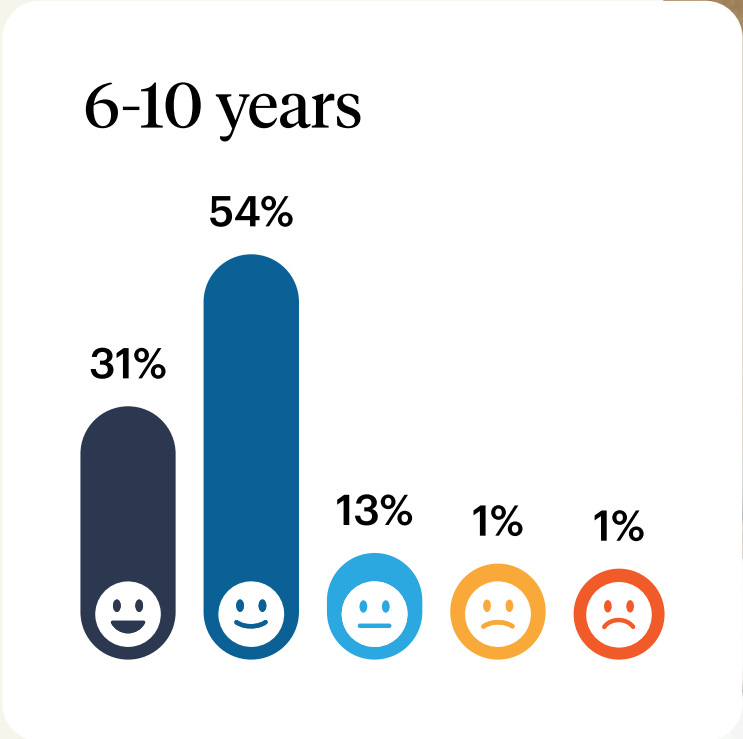
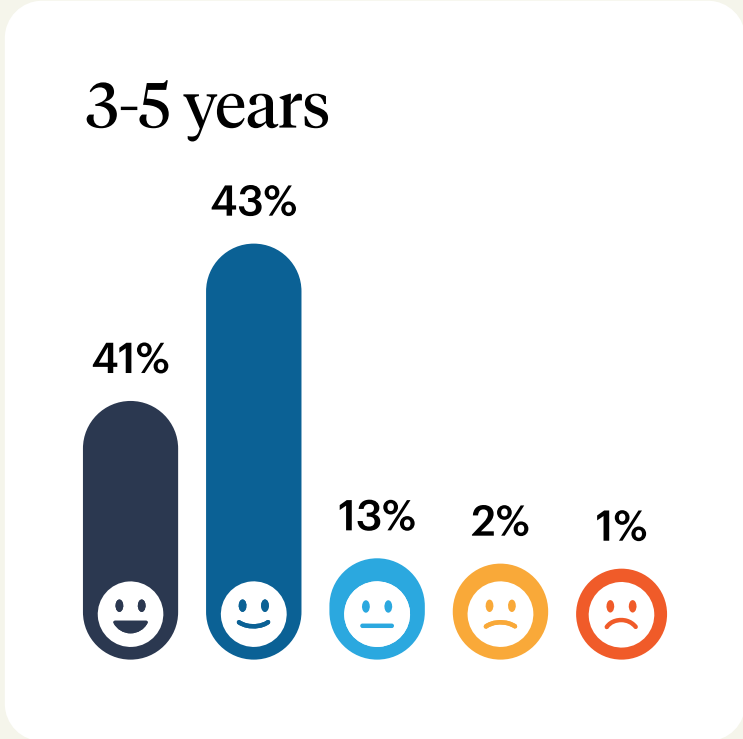
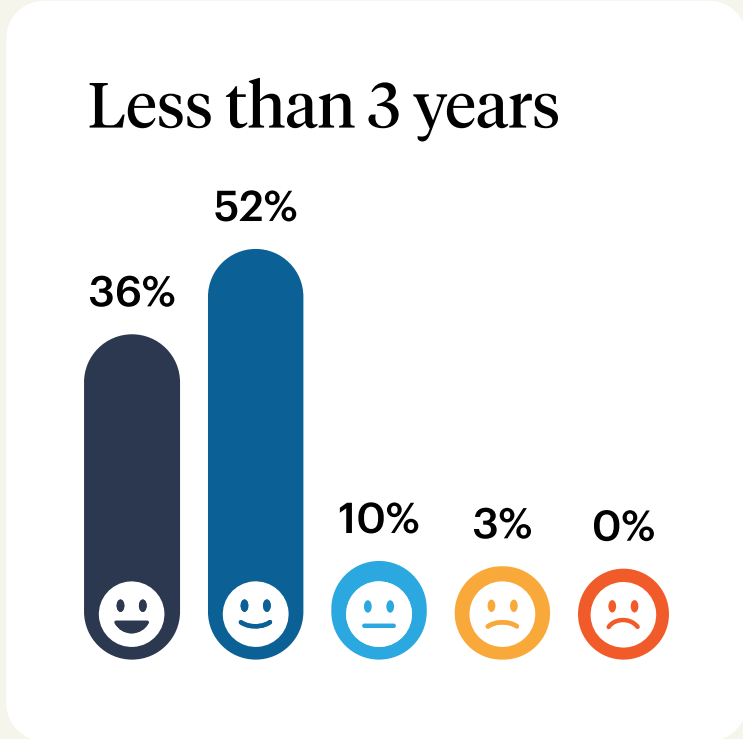


Happiness by tenure

For Australian small business owners, happiness peaks to **88%** when in business less than 3 years and remains steady over time.



Happiness by Tenure



Very happy
 Somewhat happy
 Neither
 Somewhat unhappy
 Very unhappy



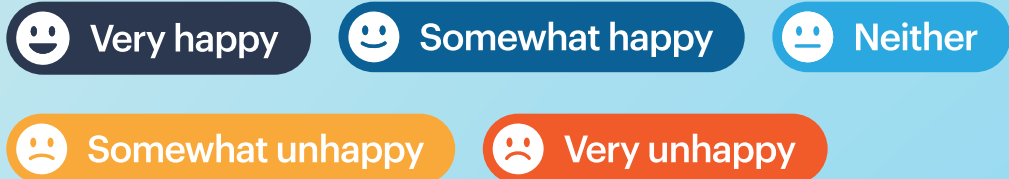
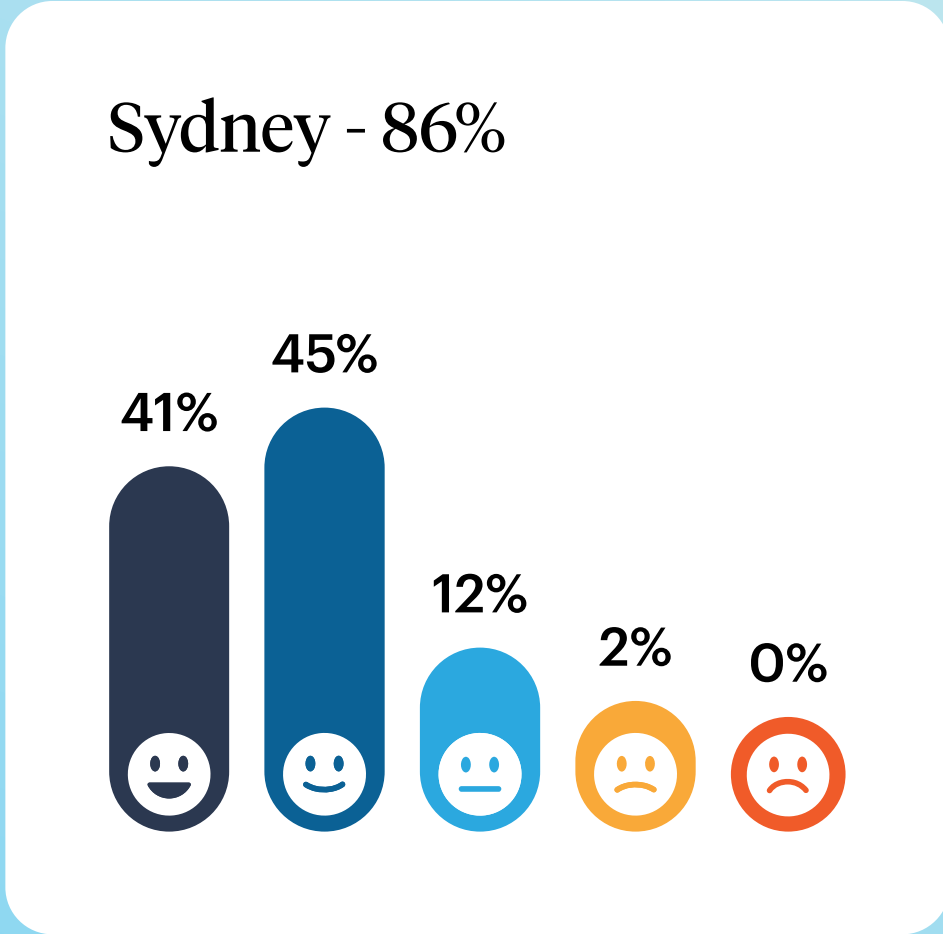
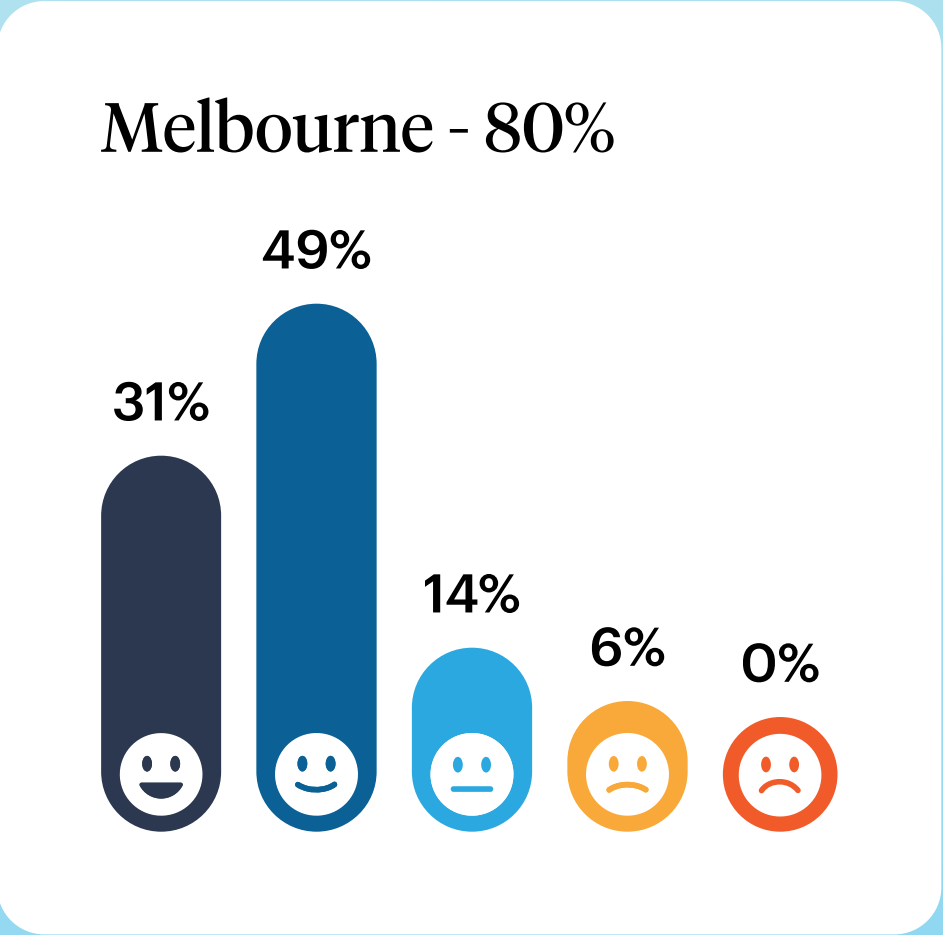
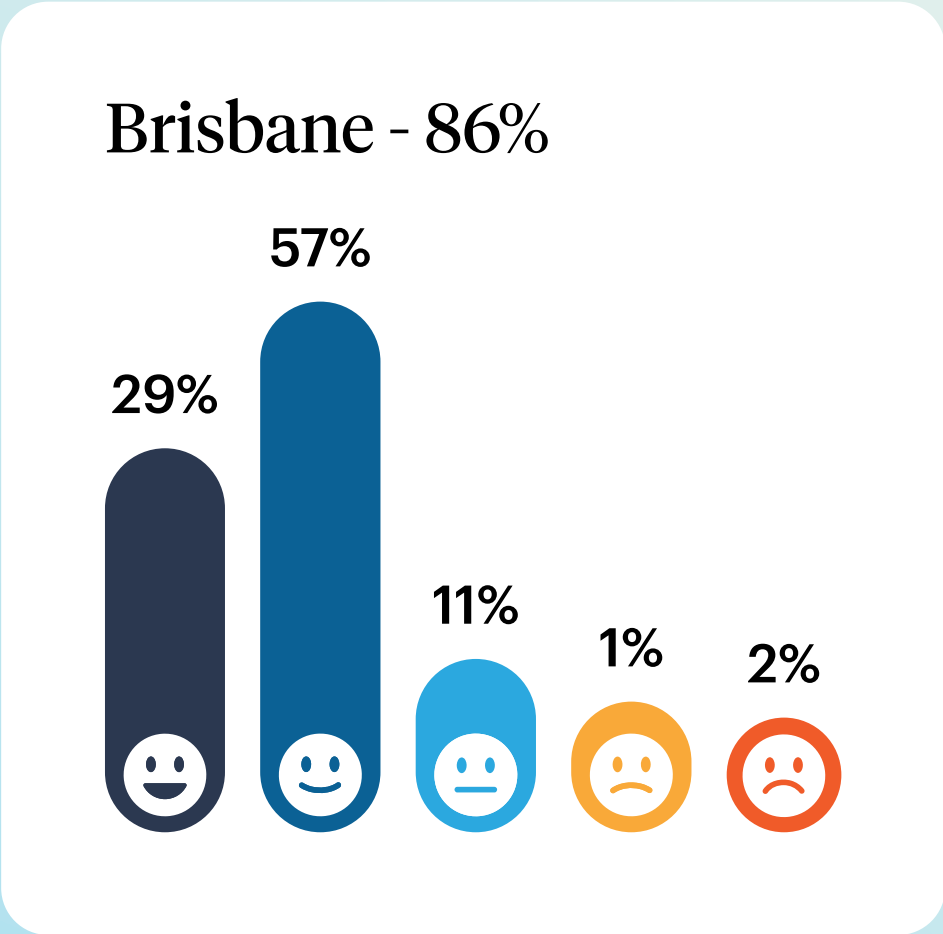
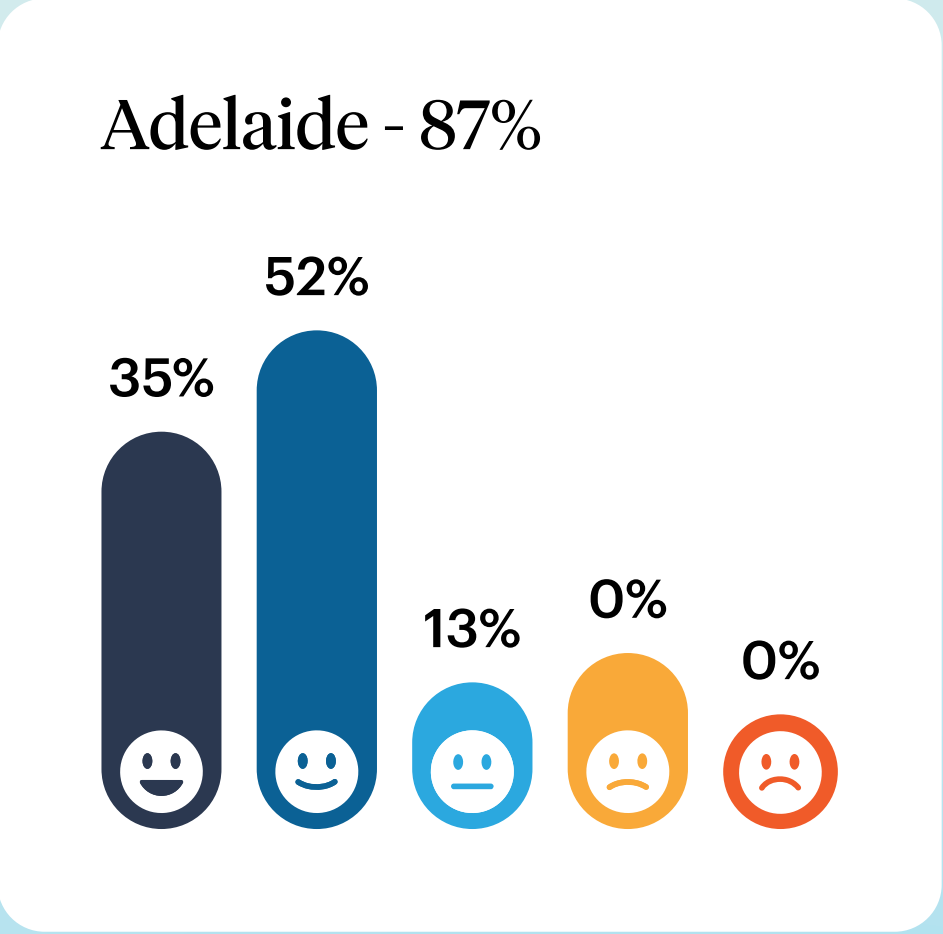
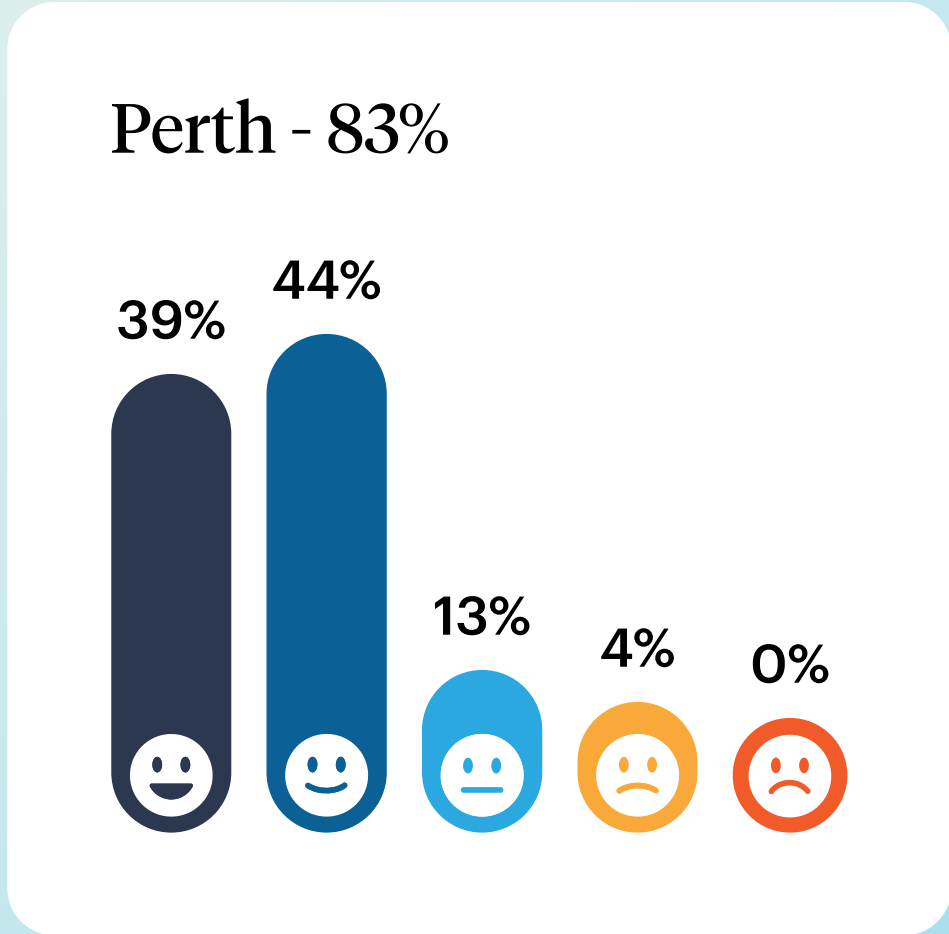


Happiness by region

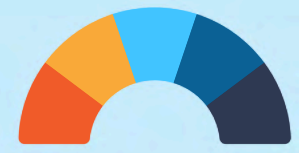
Small business happiness remains high across Australia, with Adelaide reporting the highest levels of happiness (**87%**), closely followed by Sydney and Brisbane (**both 86%**).



Happiness by Region



Eye Care and Fashionable Eye Wear

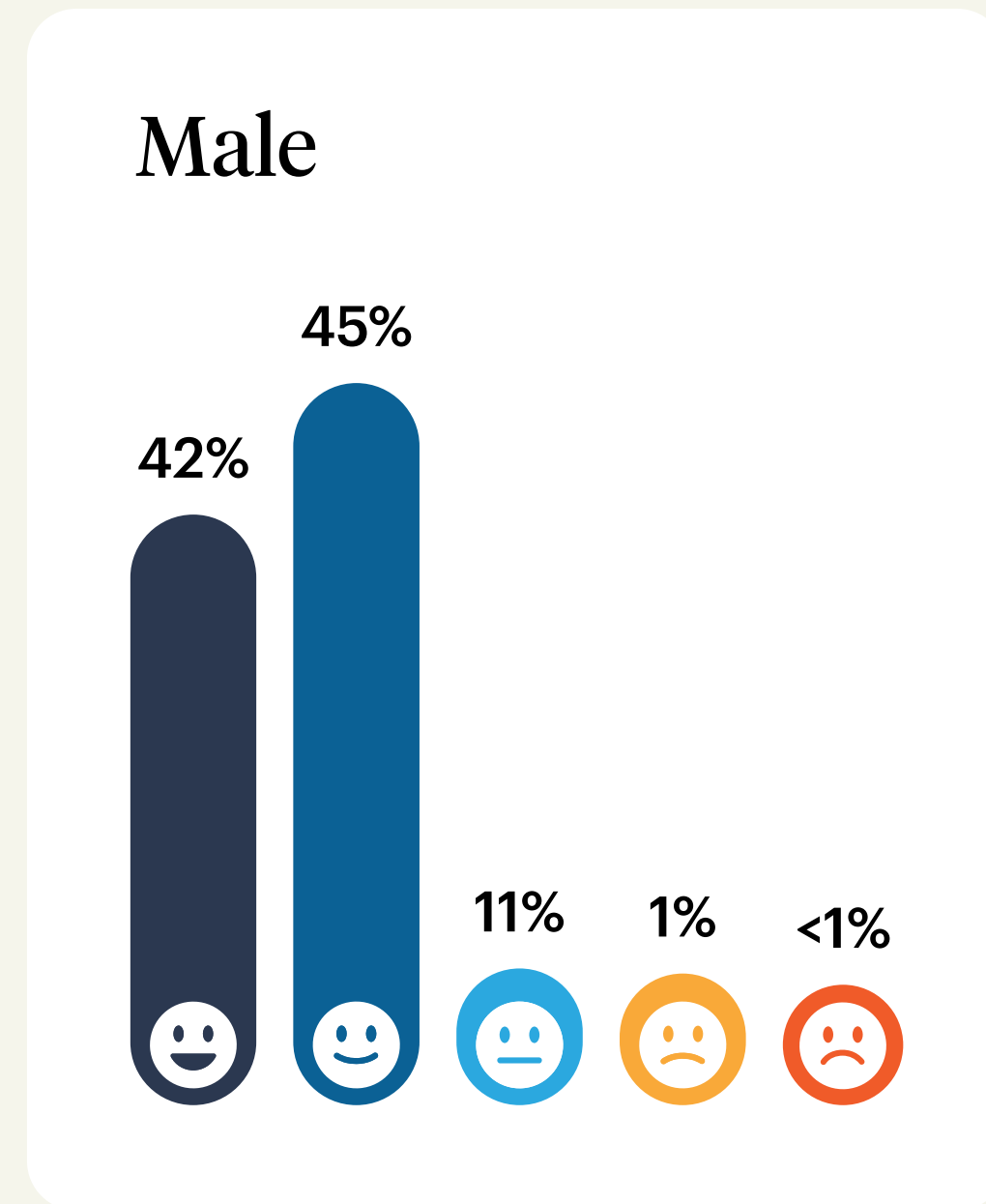
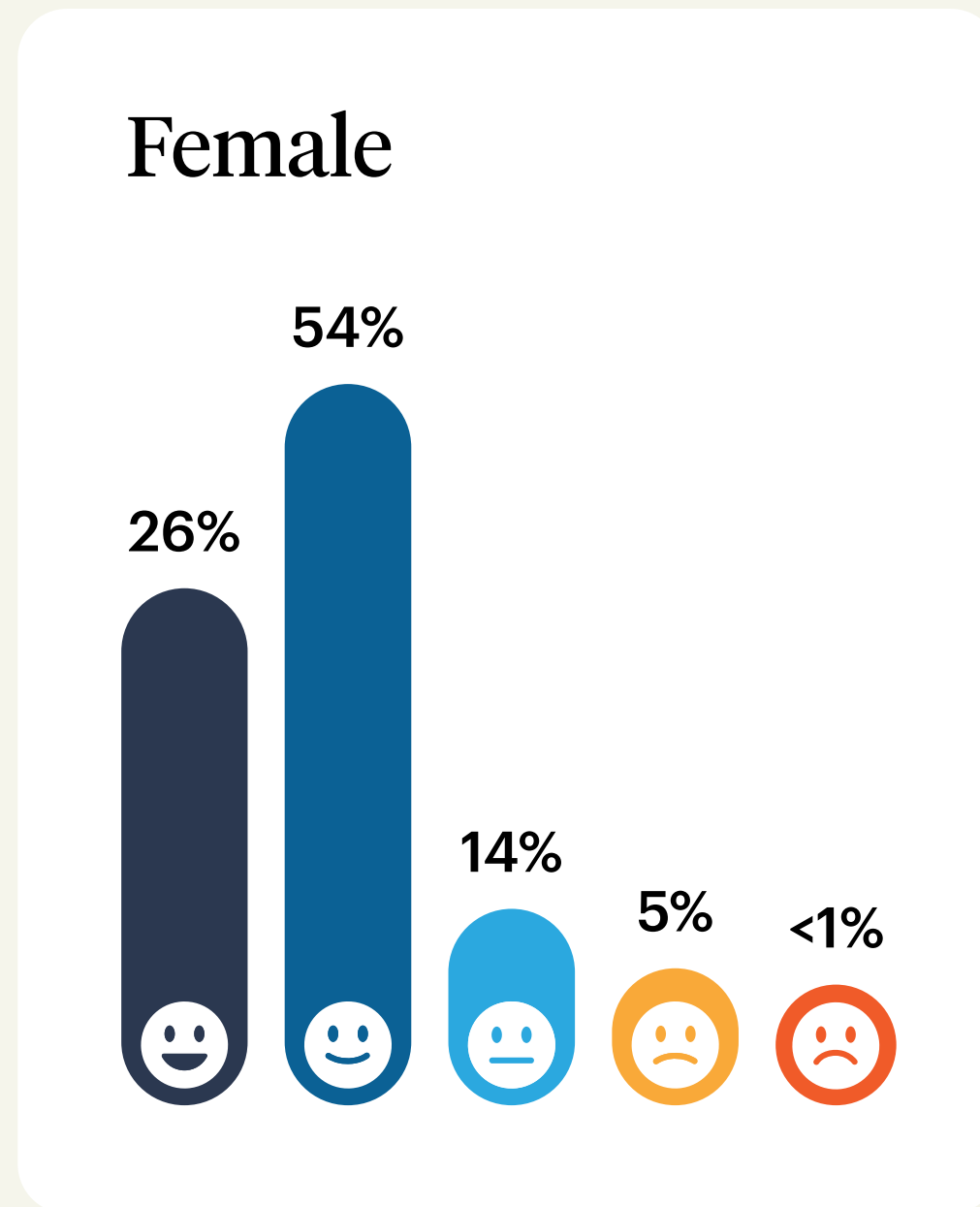


Happiness by gender

The overwhelming majority of both male (**87%**) and female (**80%**) business owners report being happy. AKA, the joys of running a business transcend gender.

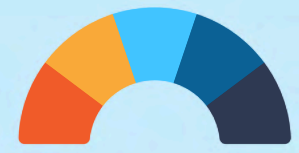


Happiness by Gender



Very happy Somewhat happy Neither Somewhat unhappy Very unhappy



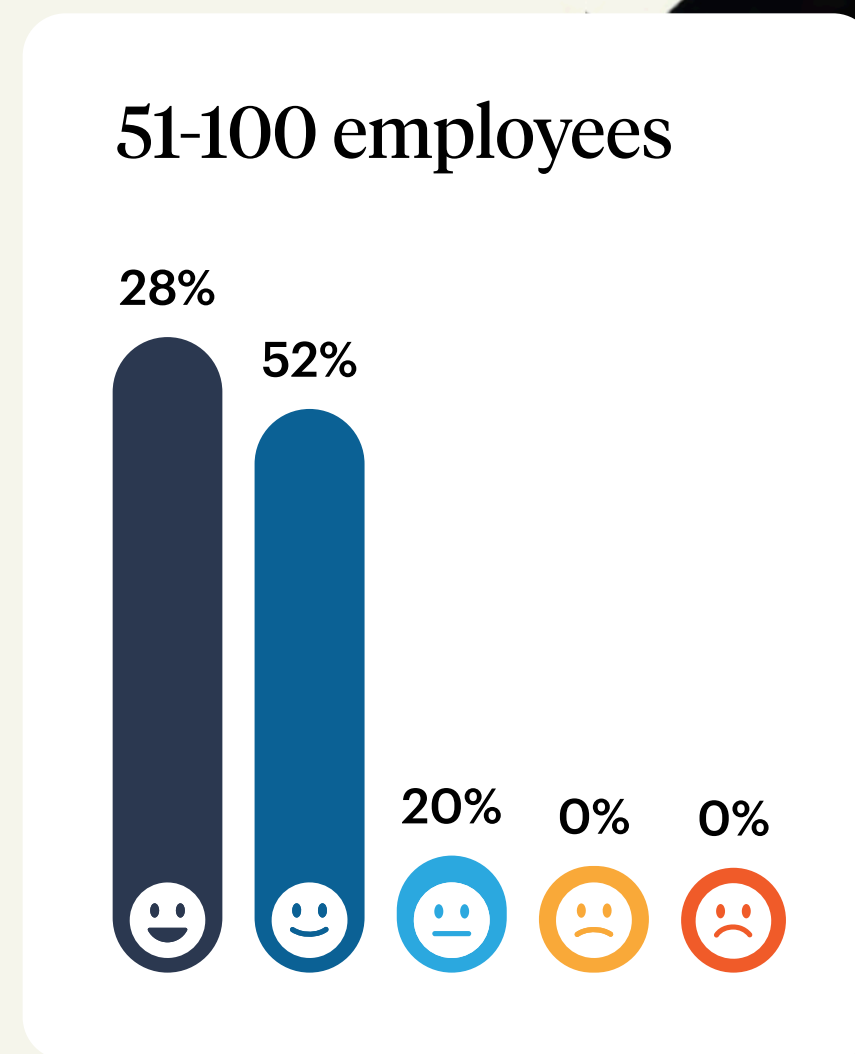
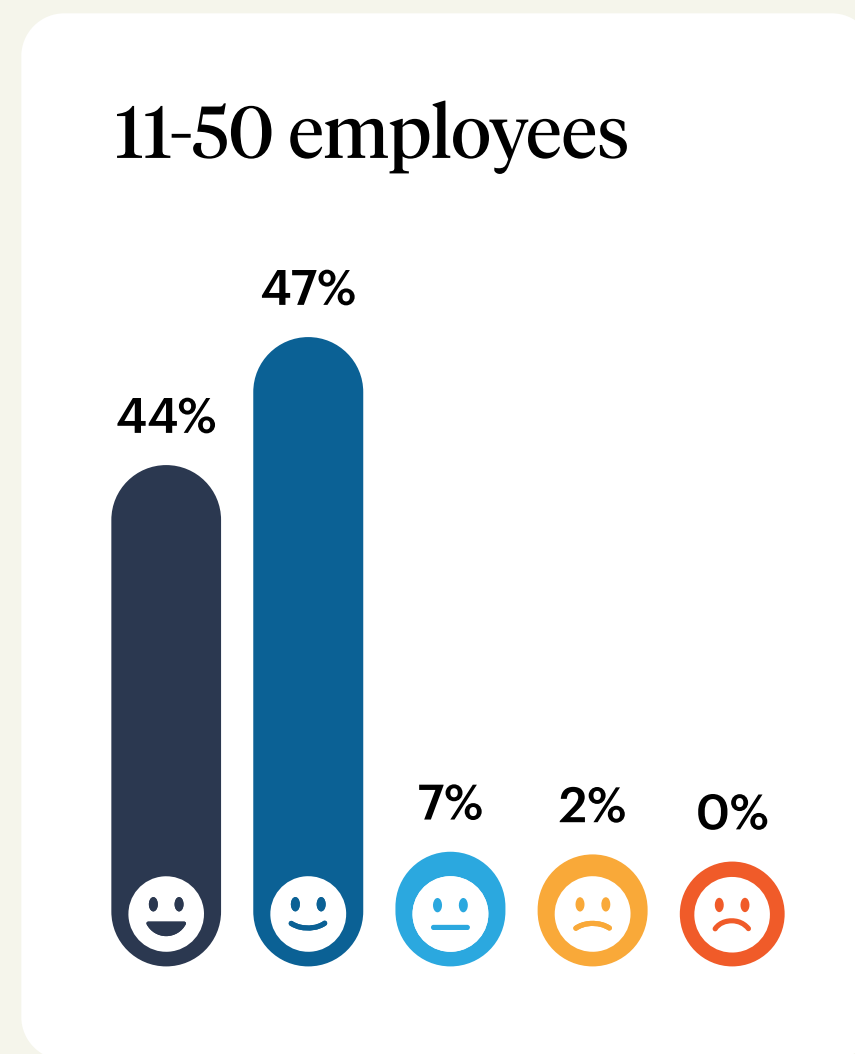
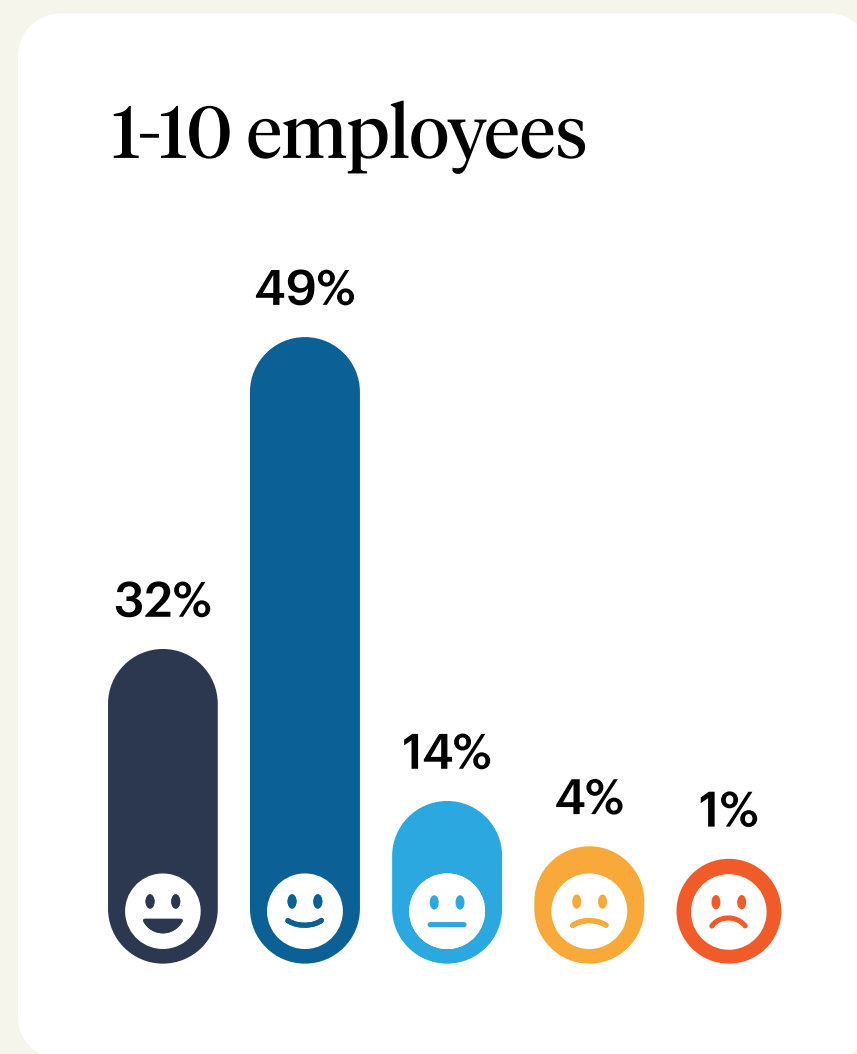


Happiness by employee size

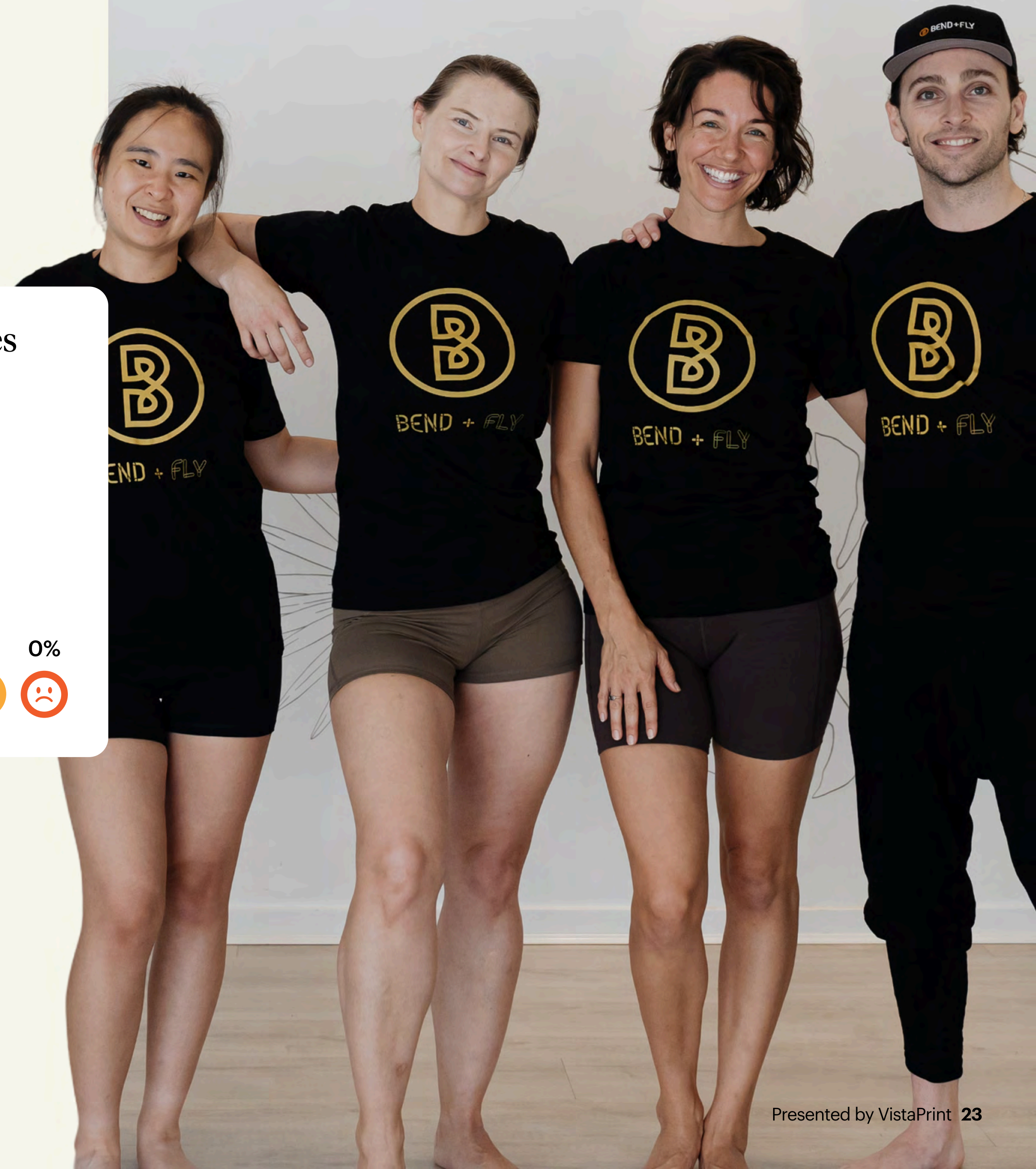
Small business happiness has a sweet spot, with happiness peaking at **91%** among business owners managing teams of 11-50 employees.



Happiness by Employee Size



Very happy Somewhat happy Neither Somewhat unhappy Very unhappy



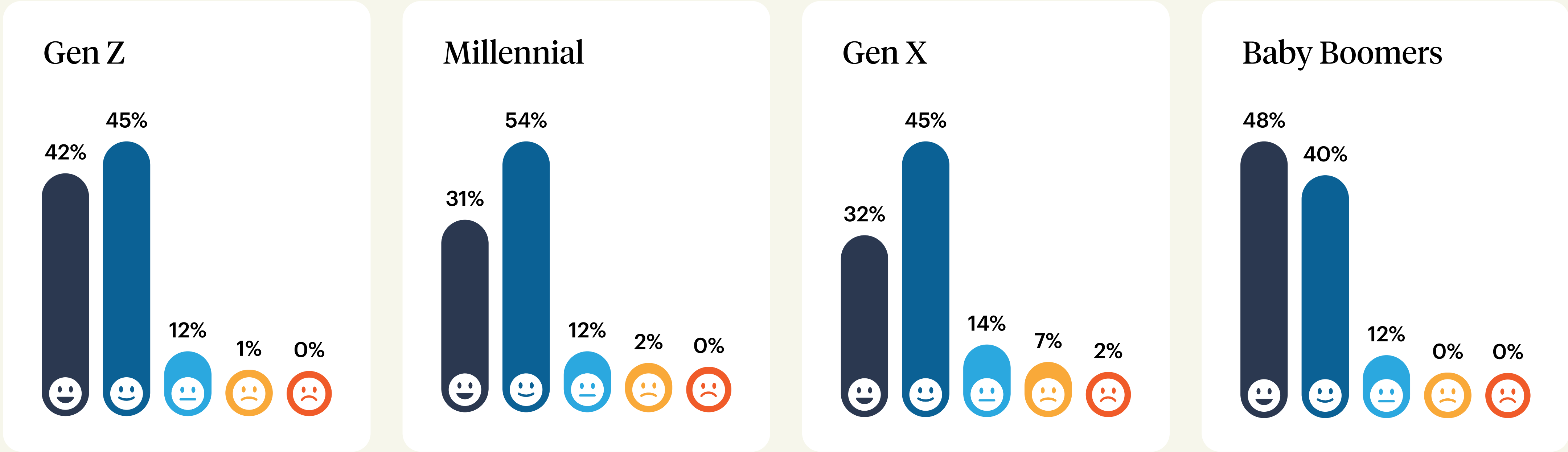


Happiness by generation

Small business ownership brings strong fulfillment across every generation, with Baby Boomers and Gen Z reporting the highest happiness levels.



Happiness by Generation



Very happy Somewhat happy Neither Somewhat unhappy Very unhappy

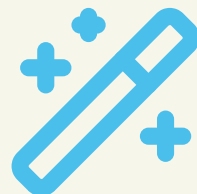


@squirtzplumbing

4

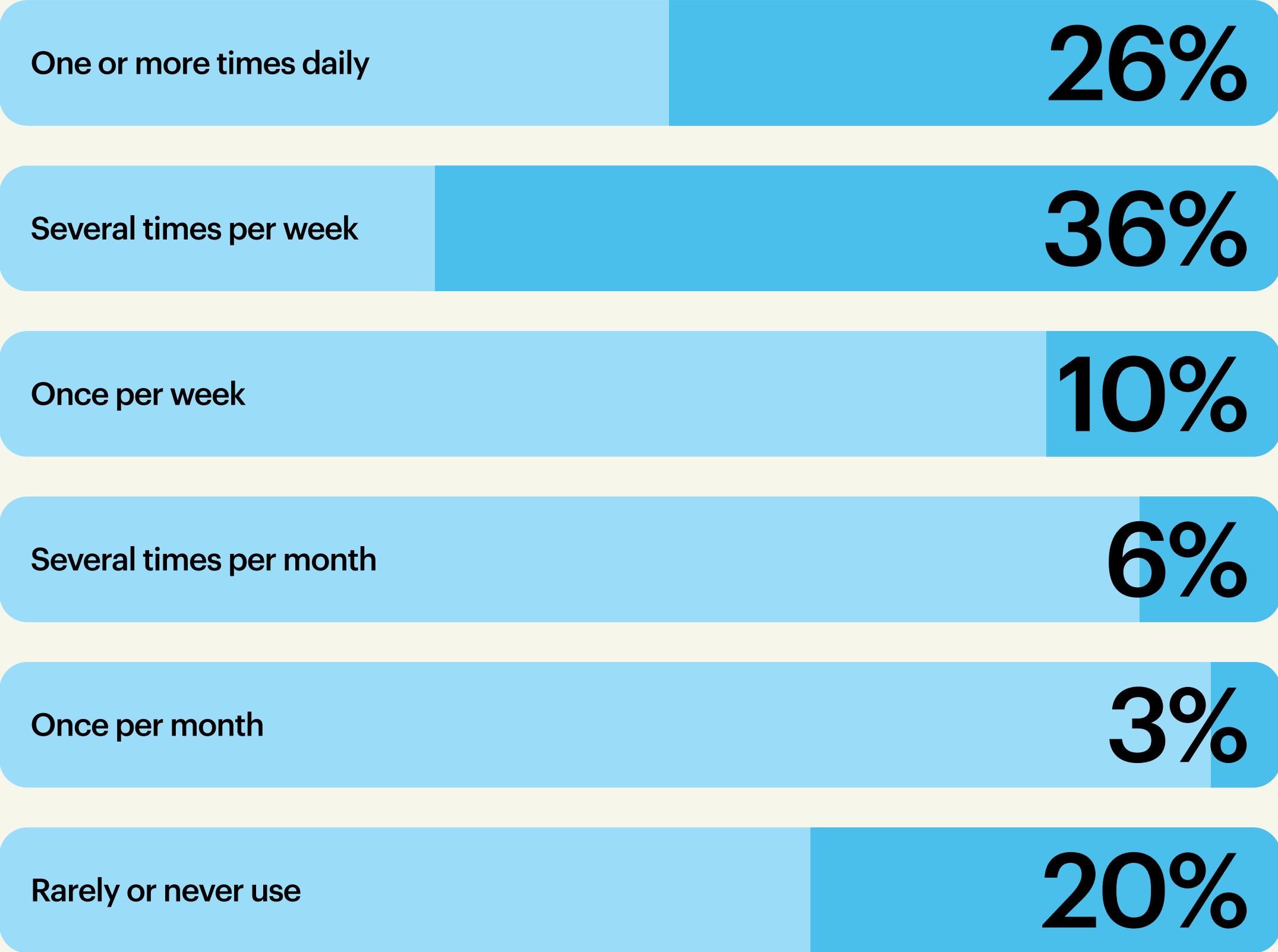
Full speed ahead

How Australian small businesses are taking 2026 in stride



Are small business owners using AI?

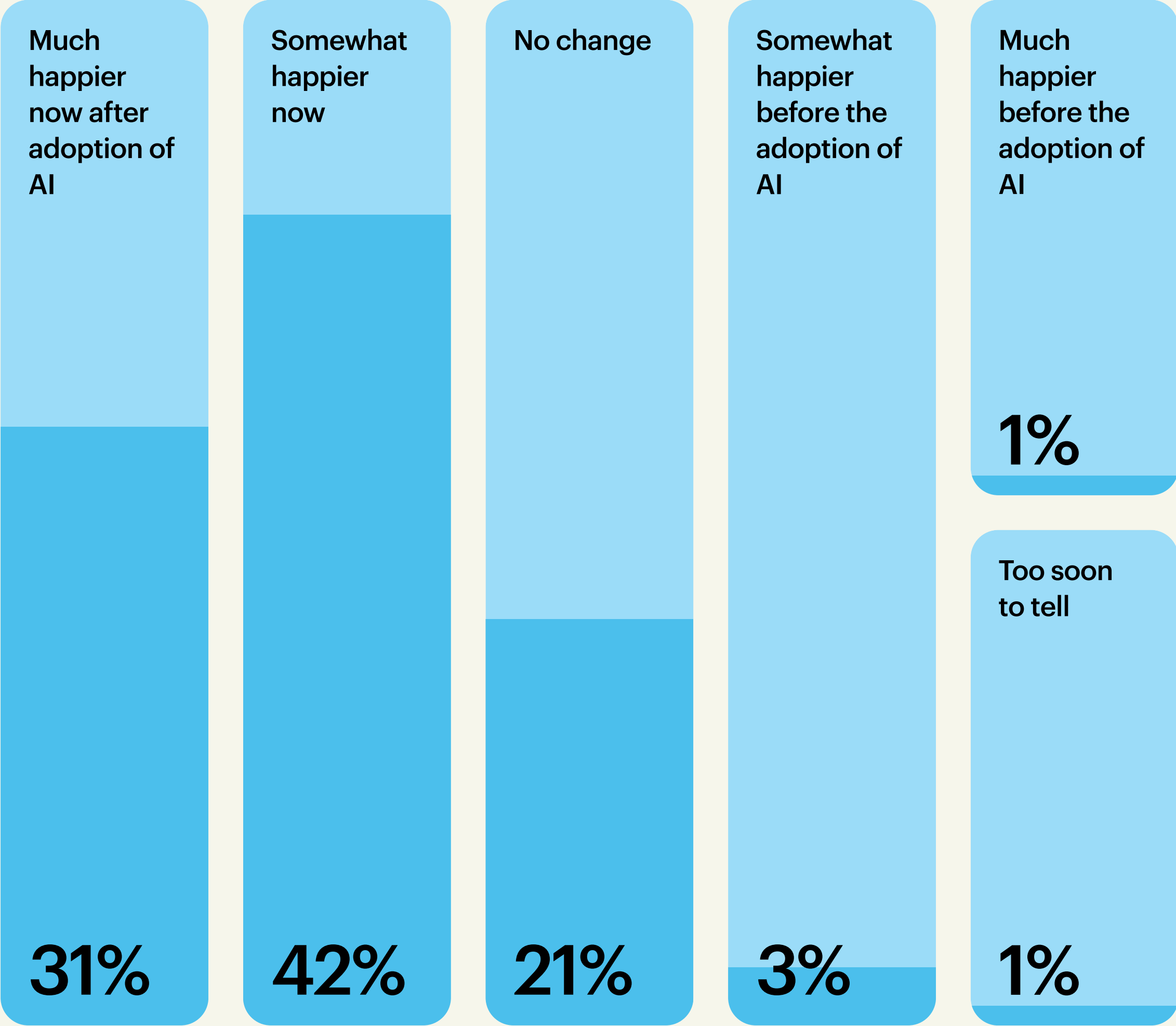
80% of small business owners are using AI on a monthly basis.





AI is a happiness booster

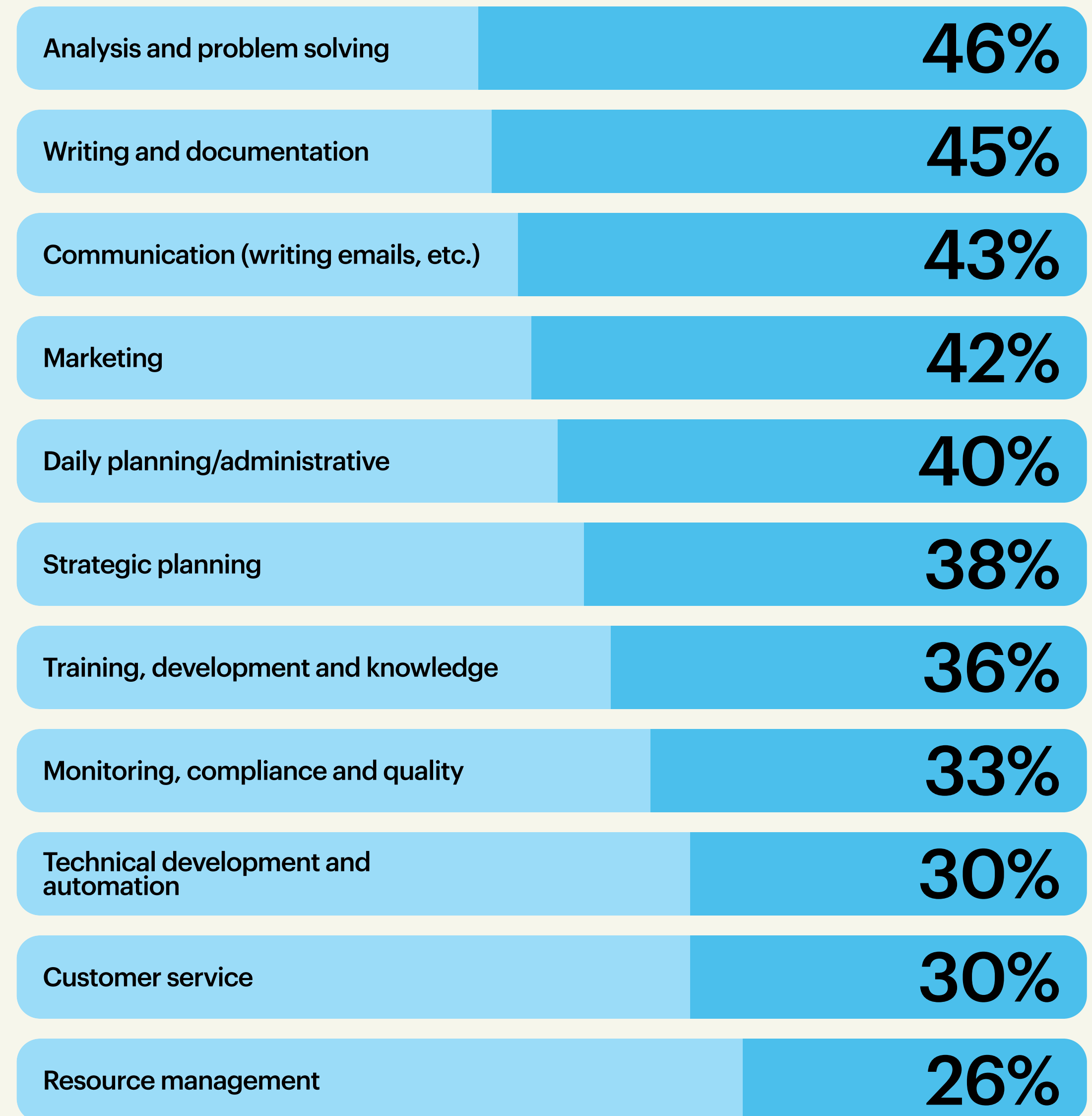
A majority of small business owners say AI is actively making them happier.





How AI is used as a small biz sidekick

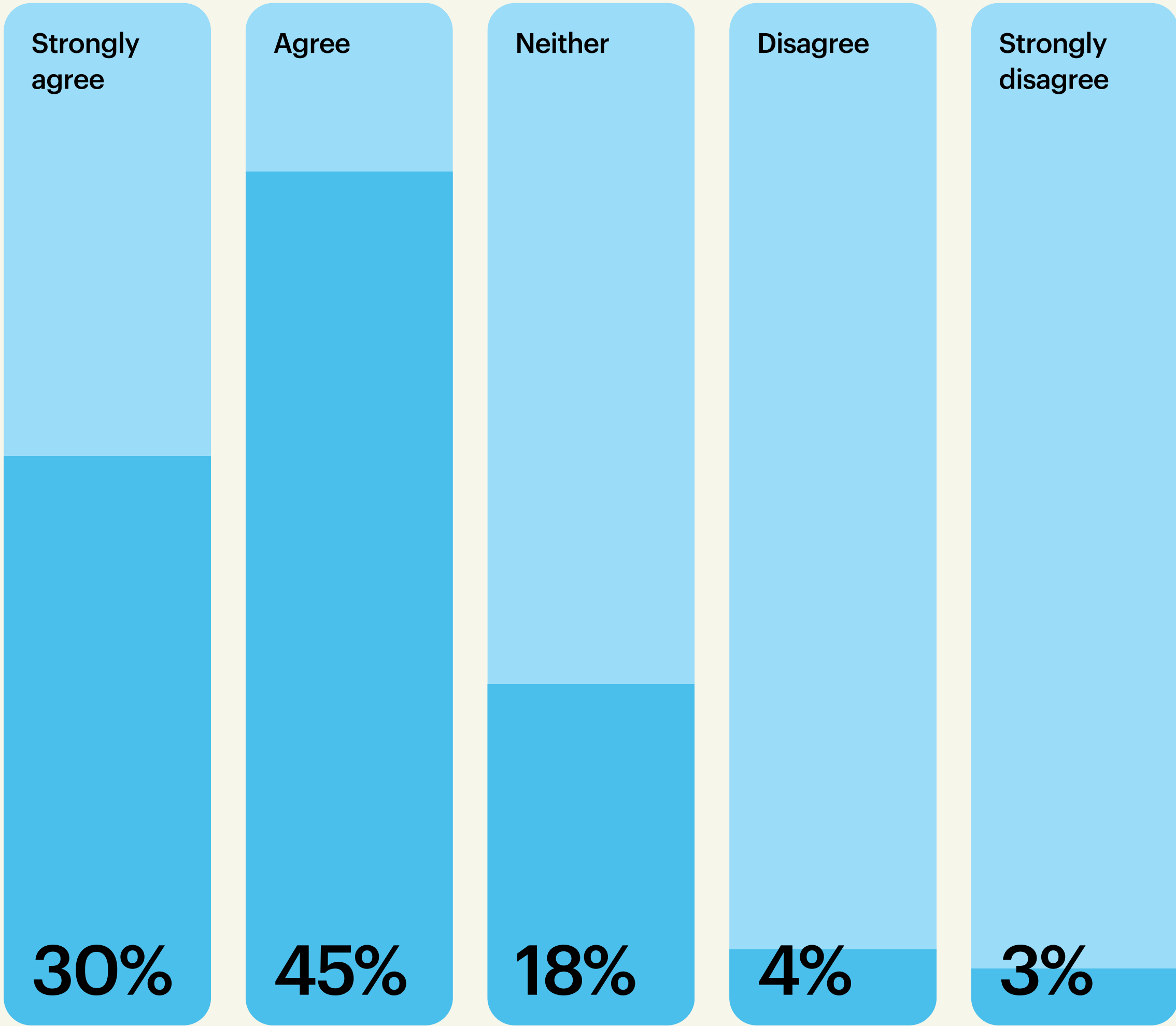
Australian small business owners show versatility of AI use. This includes analysis/problem solving, writing/documentation, communication and marketing, freeing up time and protecting their autonomy.





Eyes on the future

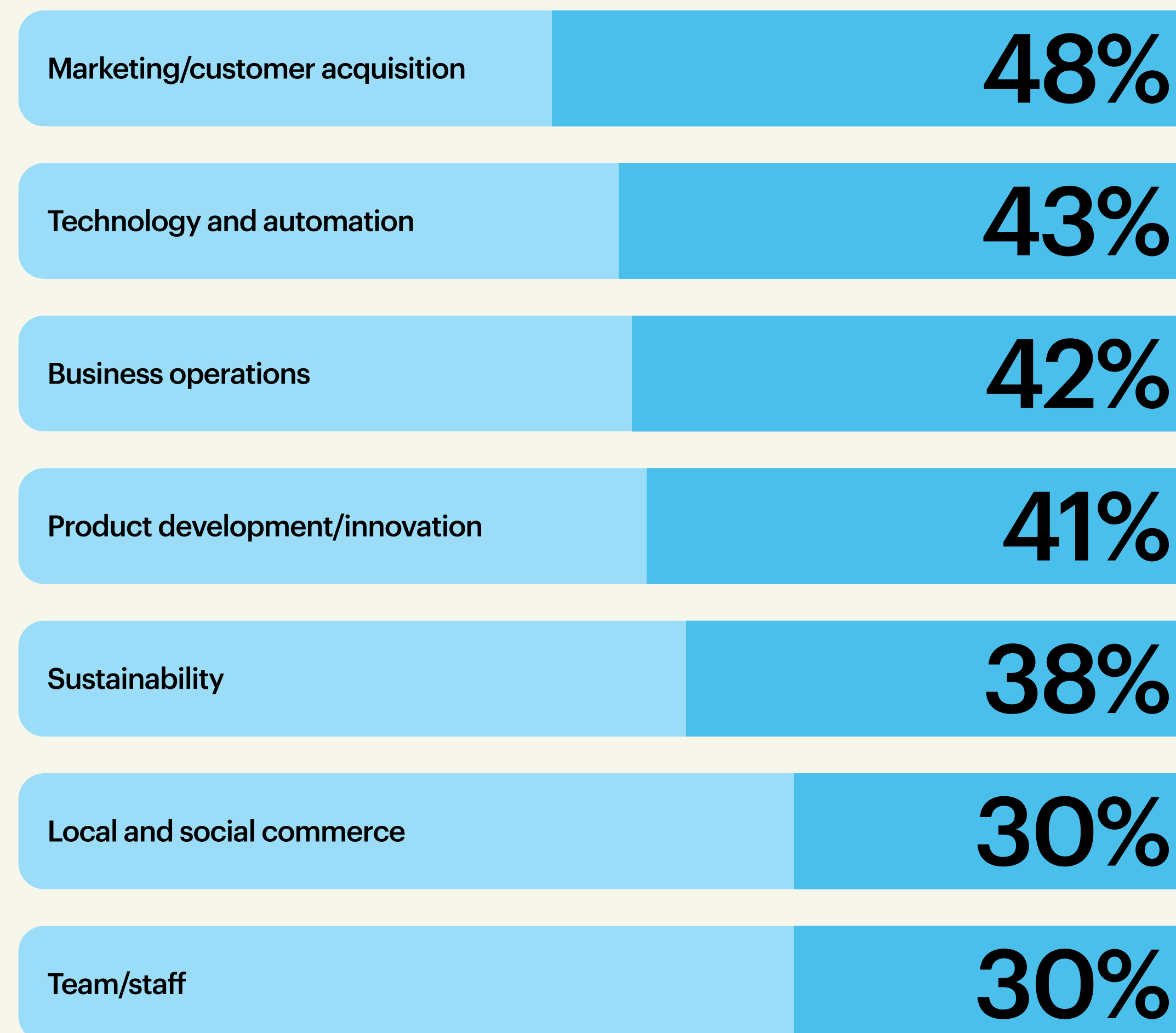
75% of SBOs either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement: I am confident in my ability to grow or expand in the next 12 months.





Where are small businesses putting their money?

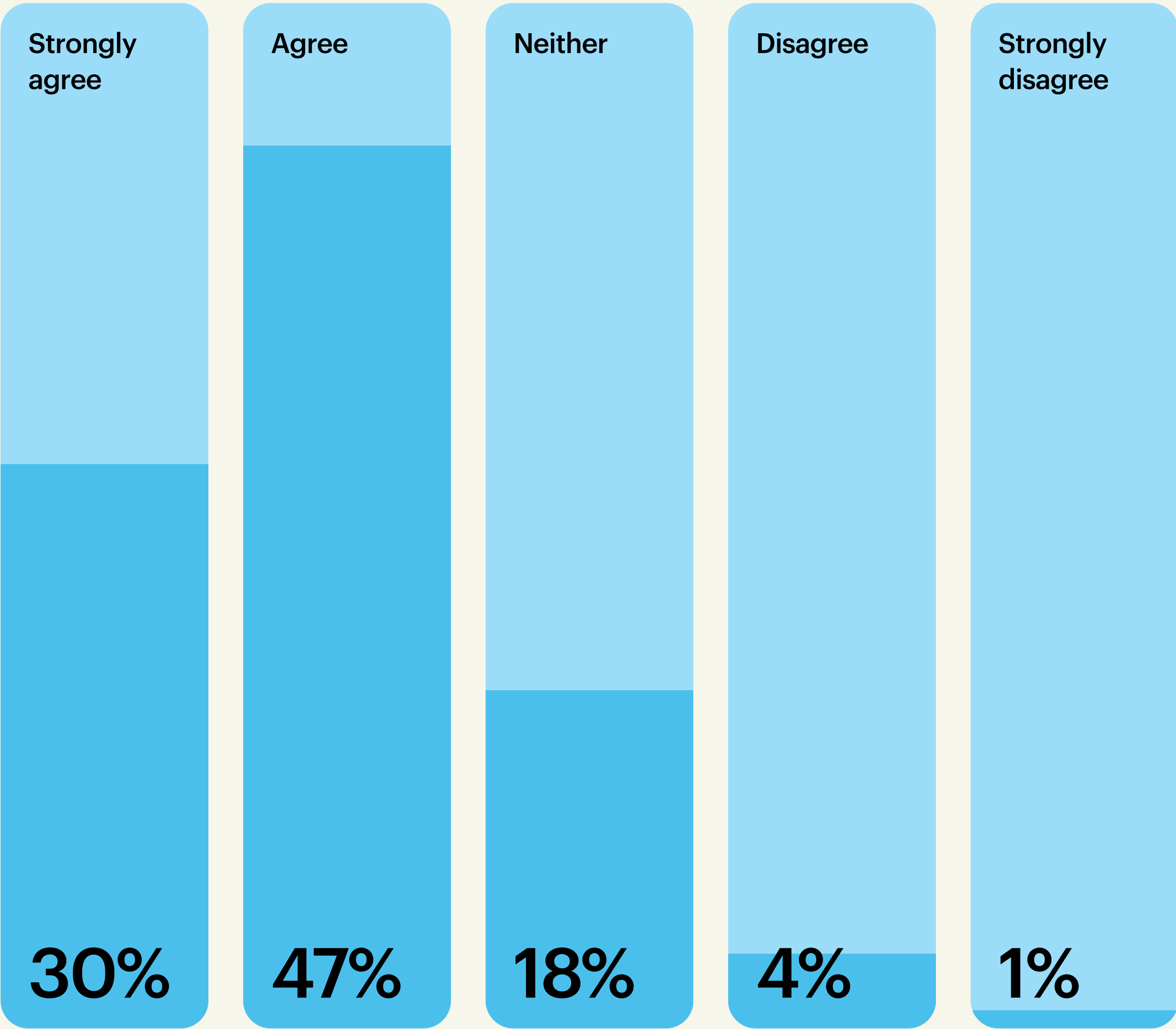
Small business owners are prioritizing marketing and customer acquisition over the next 12 months.





Is marketing doing its job?

77% of small business owners agree that their marketing connects with customers and reflects the core values of their community.



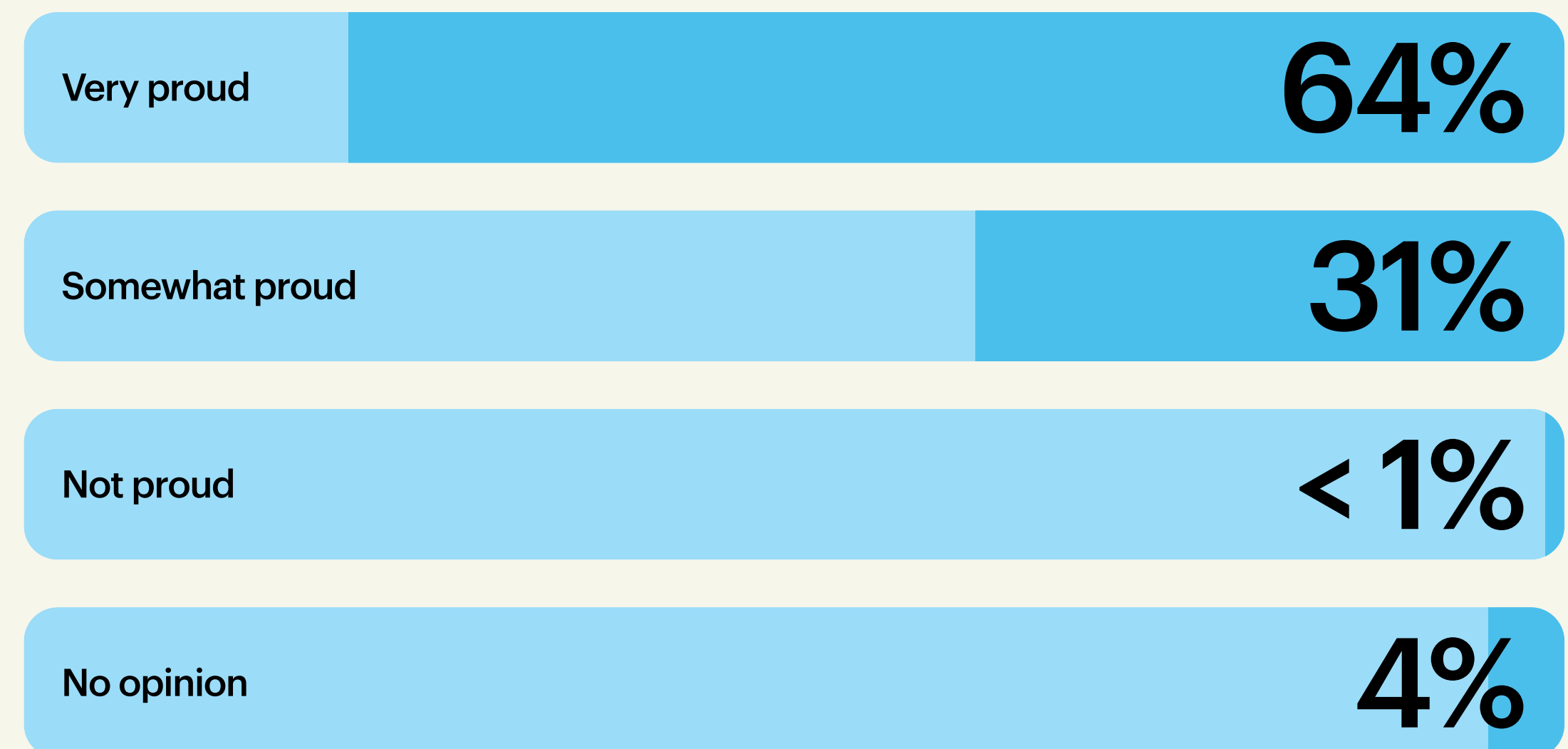


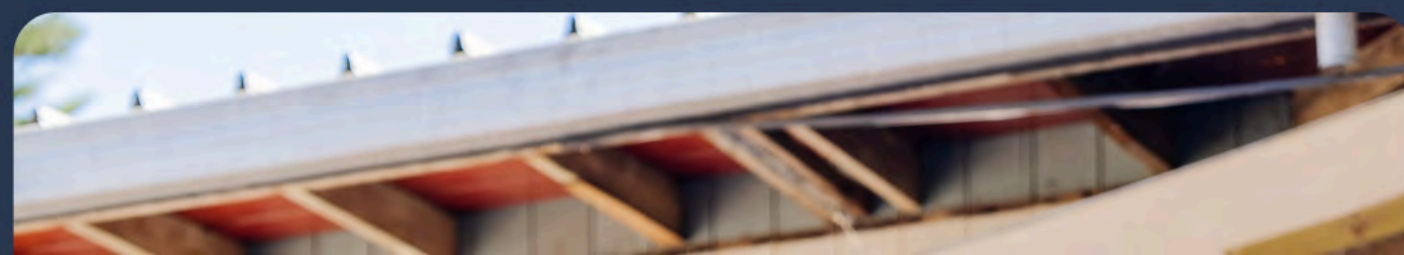
Proudly Australian

For Australian small business owners, happiness is tied not just to autonomy and growth, but also to pride in building something local.



95% of Australian small business owners are proud to be Australian owned and operated.

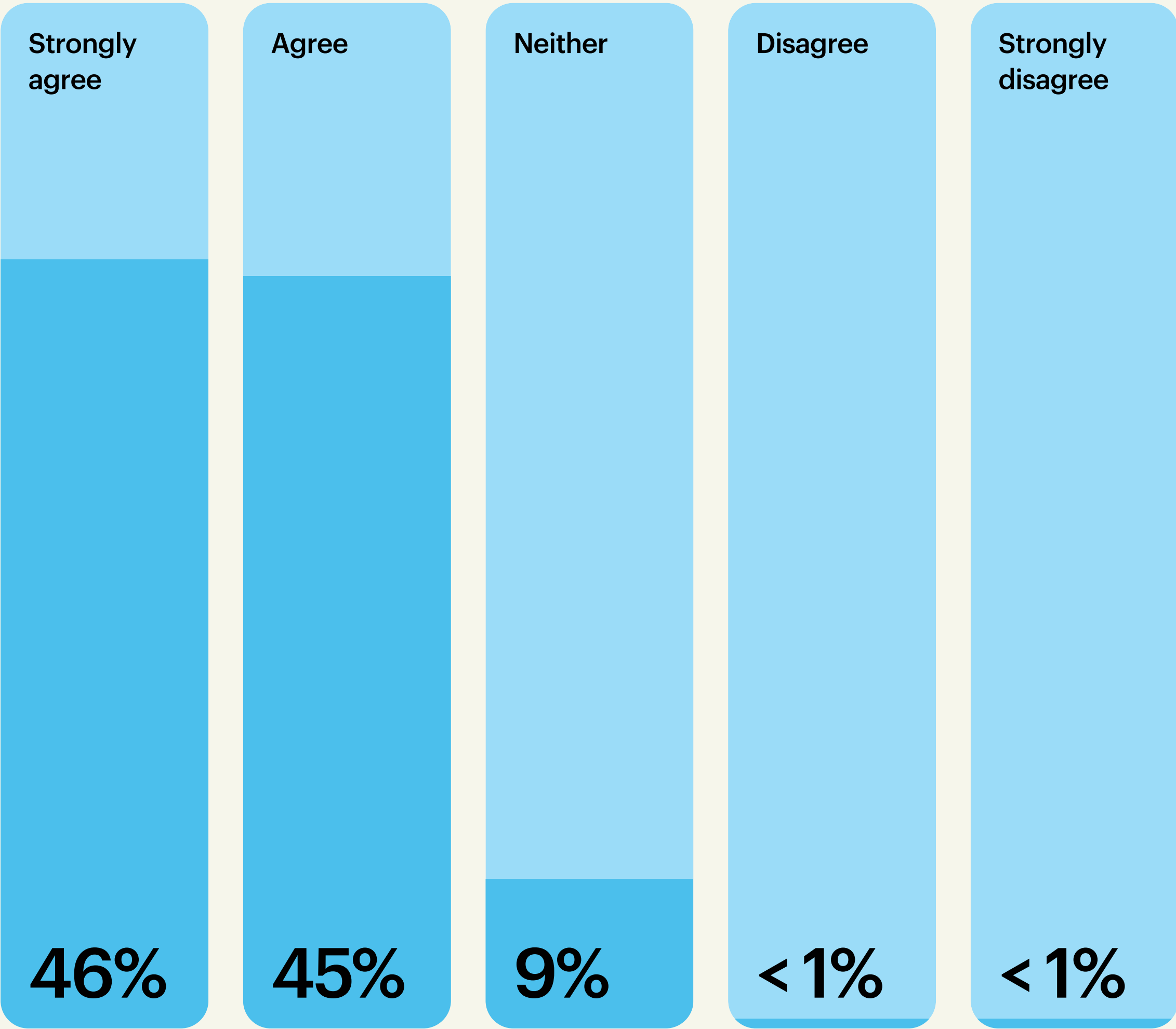






Always learning

Australian small business owners are embracing continuous learning, with **91%** agreeing that learning new skills contributes to their happiness and confidence.



Small business owners are happy

Not in spite of the hard parts, but right alongside them. They value freedom over security, fulfilment over ease and they're more optimistic than the headlines suggest. That's worth knowing as we celebrate small businesses everywhere.

VistaPrint.
Print Your Possible.



About the Research

VistaPrint commissioned YouGov to conduct a research study of 611 small business owners aged 21 to 64 and with 100 employees or less, located in Australia. The data was collected between Feb. 5 - Mar. 3, 2026 and has a margin of error of $\pm 4.0\%$ at the 95% level of confidence.

About VistaPrint

VistaPrint is the print and design partner to millions of small businesses around the world. We help small business owners bring their ideas to life through custom print products, easy-to-use digital tools and expert design support. VistaPrint is a Cimpres company (Nasdaq: CMPR).



 **vistaprint**

Print *your* **Possible**