

2024 Association Trends Study

# A NEW ERA OF ASSOCIATIONS:

The transformational power of technology





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Surveys conducted by: **Edge Research**

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# Foreword

In the ninth year delivering our Association Trends Research Study, we remain committed to providing our customers and industry peers with valuable insights into the evolving landscape of associations. This year the deep dive explores the transformational power of technology and its role in shaping the future of member engagement and organizational growth. The study's focus is, and has always been, about empowering organizations to expand efficiencies, grow revenue, identify risks, and ultimately enhance their community impact.

This study is designed as a tool to equip associations as both technology and member expectations continue to evolve. As we embark on our next chapter as Momentive Software, formerly Community Brands, we are excited to share these new insights with you.

Our strategic evolution reinforces our commitment to empowering mission-driven organizations worldwide. Since 2017, we have been at the forefront of delivering cloud-based solutions designed to accelerate and amplify the impact of associations, events, and nonprofits. Our comprehensive portfolio of software and services enhances membership management, drives revenue, streamlines operations, and enables organizations of all sizes to achieve more. Momentive Software signifies our ongoing evolution, with a renewed focus on innovation and customer-centric solutions, continuing our commitment to empower organizations like yours and fuel your mission growth.

Momentive Software is the only organization that continually offers a comprehensive analysis of member and organizational perspectives. That bolsters the study's value and specifically highlights opportunities for growth in member acquisition, engagement, and retention. This dual viewpoint also equips associations with a holistic understanding of their challenges and prospects, ensuring they can effectively adapt and thrive.

The inclusion of [Nucleus](#) by Momentive Software—an innovative data analytics solution—in the presentation of the results, adds significant value to our study. Nucleus allows association professionals to identify valuable insights from their data and empower better and faster decisions. By providing user-friendly ways to filter, examine different views, and establish benchmarks, this tool helps associations discover actionable insights to help their organization grow.

Just as our [Event Trends research study earlier this year](#) offered tailored insights for event planners, this association-focused study delivers a thorough examination of current trends and future shifts. We are eager to see how these insights, along with our technology solutions, will empower association professionals to reach new heights and drive their organizations forward.

As always, we invite you to explore the full study and learn how Momentive Software can partner with you in navigating these evolving trends and drive success for your organization.



**Susan Gilmartin**  
Chief Marketing Officer,  
Momentive Software (formerly Community Brands)

INTRODUCTION

# WHY CARE ABOUT THIS STUDY?



For nine years, Momentive Software (formerly Community Brands) has conducted surveys to uncover insights into behaviors and viewpoints of association members and professionals. This study looks at current trends compared with previous studies to shed light on what factors may impact the future of associations.

## What you'll learn



What story **member loyalty trends** are telling about the future of member retention



How to **present opportunities** to close gaps between what members want and what associations are delivering



How **association technology usage** is impacting member sentiments and behaviors



How association professionals can **deliver greater member value** and a better member experience

## Discover how to deliver greater member value



### **Close gaps in member value.**

Organizations undervalue multiple benefits that members value most. Now's the opportunity to provide greater value – especially in the area of career advancement.



### **Look at events as a channel for delivering benefits.**

Organizations continue to focus heavily on events, even though they overestimate their importance as a member benefit. Thinking of events as a means to deliver benefits rather than as standalone benefits, helps to ensure events offer maximum value to members.



### **Keep up with members' tech expectations.**

Members give their organization high ratings when it comes to technology usage, and the correlation between technology usage and member loyalty remains strong. Yet, organizations continue to feel technologically unprepared for the future.



### **Move forward with AI.**

Members are more advanced than professional organizations in their use of AI. To stay relevant and better align with members, organizations must catch up.



### **Rethink the value of technology.**

It can be easy to overlook technology's full potential. Your key technology tools can support everything from member acquisition and retention to boosting engagement and driving revenue.

**A few notes about this study:** Parallel surveys were conducted with members of **professional membership organizations** in the United States and professionals who work at those organizations (referred to in this report as "**Members**" and "**Pros**," respectively). The online surveys took place between June 20, 2024 and July 18, 2024. In this report, "small organizations" refers to organizations with annual revenue of less than \$5 million. "Large organizations" refers to organizations with annual revenue of \$5 million or greater. Note that due to rounding, not all percentage totals in this report equal 100 percent.

# SLICE AND DICE DATA TO GAIN DEEPER INSIGHTS INTO THE 2024 ASSOCIATION TRENDS STUDY

Uncover actionable insights and gain a universal view of data by comparing survey responses to those of your peers. Turn insights into action and achieve success with data-driven decision-making. Nucleus aggregates peer data and displays the results in a dynamic, filterable dashboard.



**105.7%**  
PERCENT OF GOAL



 **Nucleus**

[See how I stack up](#)

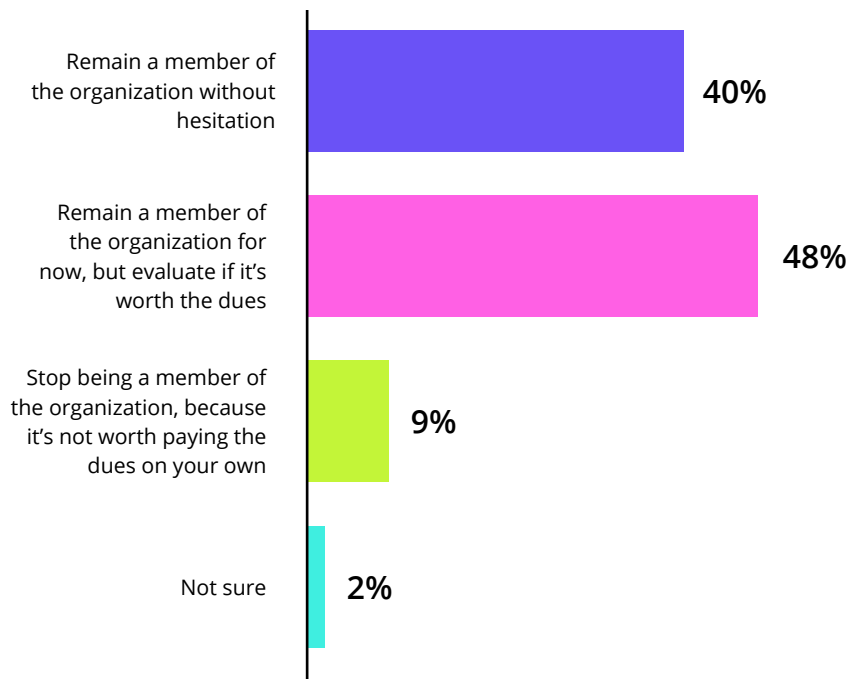
# KEY FINDINGS



# 1 Despite strong Member loyalty and engagement metrics, member lapses are still a risk.

Over the past six years, Member loyalty and engagement metrics have remained strong and steady – with the majority of Members saying they are likely to renew. However, more than half of those whose membership dues are paid by their company say that they would reconsider the value of their membership or leave their organization if they had to pay their own dues.

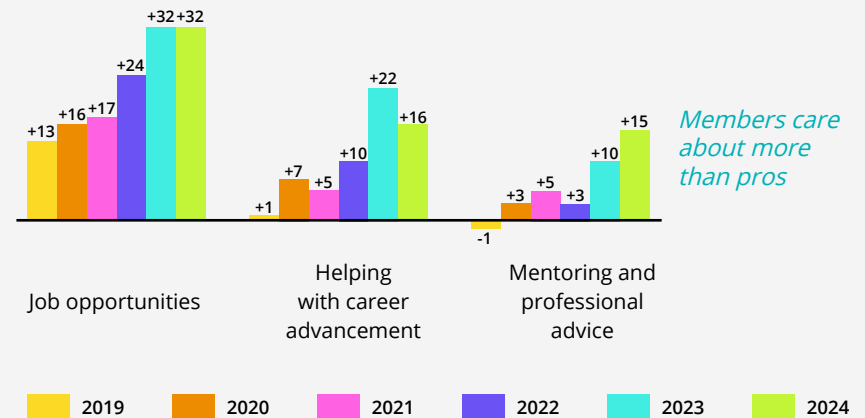
**If members had to pay membership fees on their own**



# 2 Member and Pro viewpoints on member value differ in key areas.

As in past years, Pros undervalue certain top membership benefits. Members place a greater importance on areas including job opportunities, keeping up with the latest industry technology, help with career advancement, professional standards, certifications, and training. Meanwhile, Pros place greater importance than Members in other areas – especially meetings/conferences/tradeshows.

**Important career benefits to Members vs Pros**

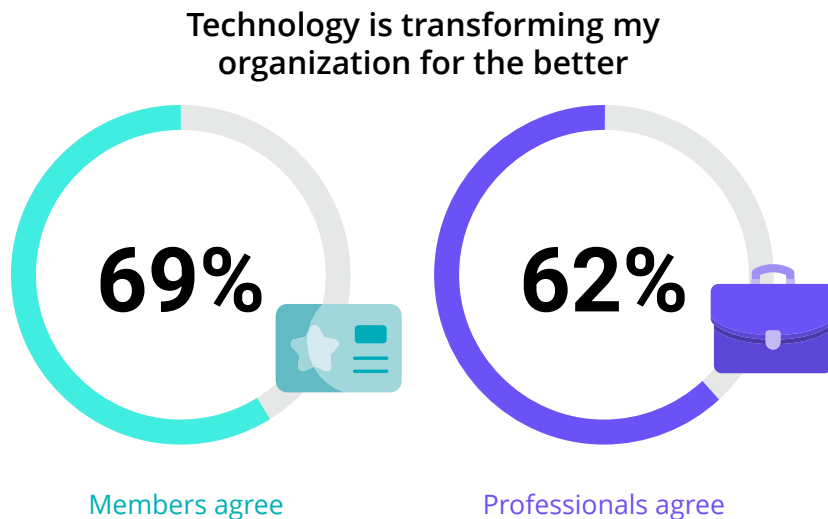




### 3 Members are more optimistic than Pros about technology usage.

Majorities of Members and Pros say that technology is transforming their professional organization for the better. However, Members are much more positive about their organizations' ability to innovate. Majorities of Members see their organization as an early technology adopter, which strongly correlates with member loyalty.

On the other hand, Pros see their organization as average or a laggard, with technology and innovation not being top priorities and few having a digital transformation plan. Some Pros express concerns that if they do not innovate technologically, they will become obsolete.

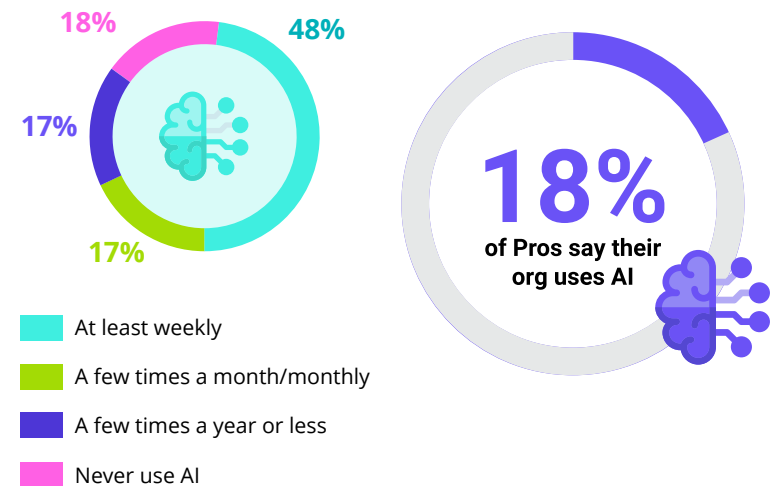


### 4 Members are ahead of associations when it comes to Artificial Intelligence (AI).

AI is an area in which Members seem well ahead of their professional organization. Majorities of Members are using AI in their professional lives at least monthly. Younger Members are using it at least weekly.

At the same time, fewer than 20 percent of Pros say their organization is using AI, with most organizations' boards only at the stages of deliberating it or not discussing it at all. Only 13 percent of Pros report having an AI policy (compared with 33 percent of Members whose companies have one). Both Members and Pros see the benefit of AI in helping with content creation.

**Member AI usage at work**



# MEMBER LOYALTY TRENDS



As in past studies, Members were asked to think about the one professional membership organization most important to them, and then evaluate it on multiple loyalty metrics.

Responses show that loyalty metrics have remained strong and steady since 2019.

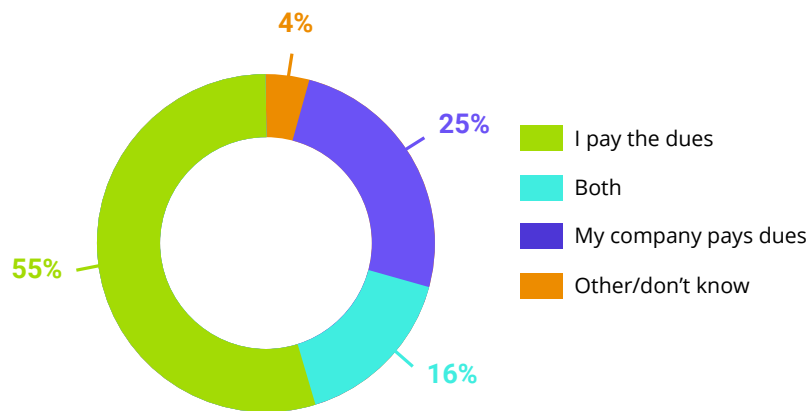


**Figure 1. Questions asked:** Overall, how satisfied are you with your membership in this professional membership organization? | How likely are you to recommend this professional membership organization? Use a 10-point scale where 10 means you are extremely likely to recommend and 0 means you are not at all likely to recommend the organization. | On a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 means extremely connected and 1 means not connected at all, how connected do you feel to this professional membership organization and the work that it does? | How likely are you to renew your membership in this professional membership organization after your current membership expires?

Despite solid loyalty metrics, more than half of Members whose membership dues are paid for by their company today say that they would reassess the value of their membership or leave if they had to pay their own dues.

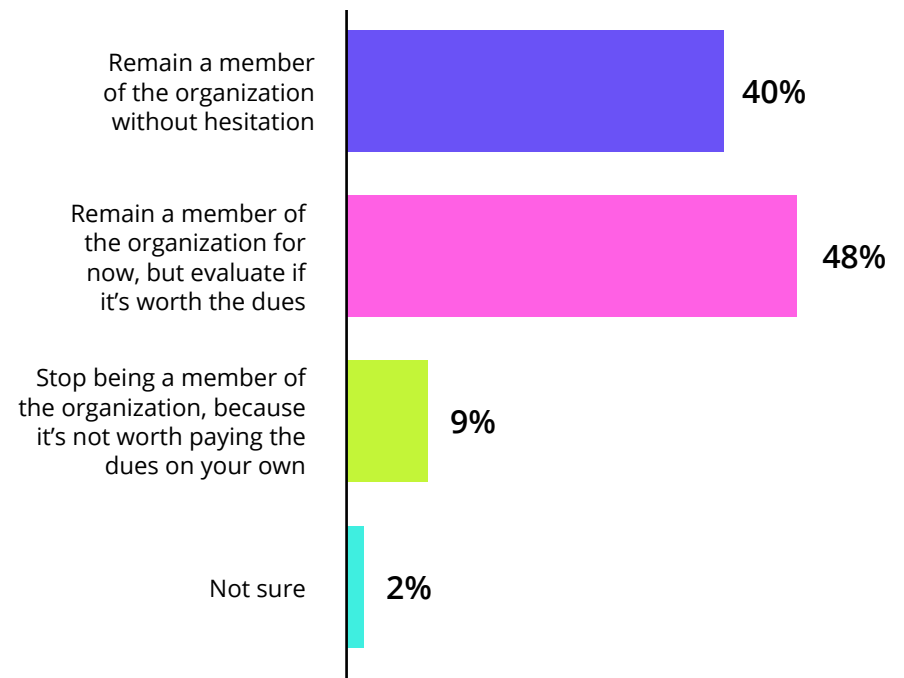
Most Members pay their own dues; however, 25 percent are paid for by the Member's company.

### How are your membership dues paid?



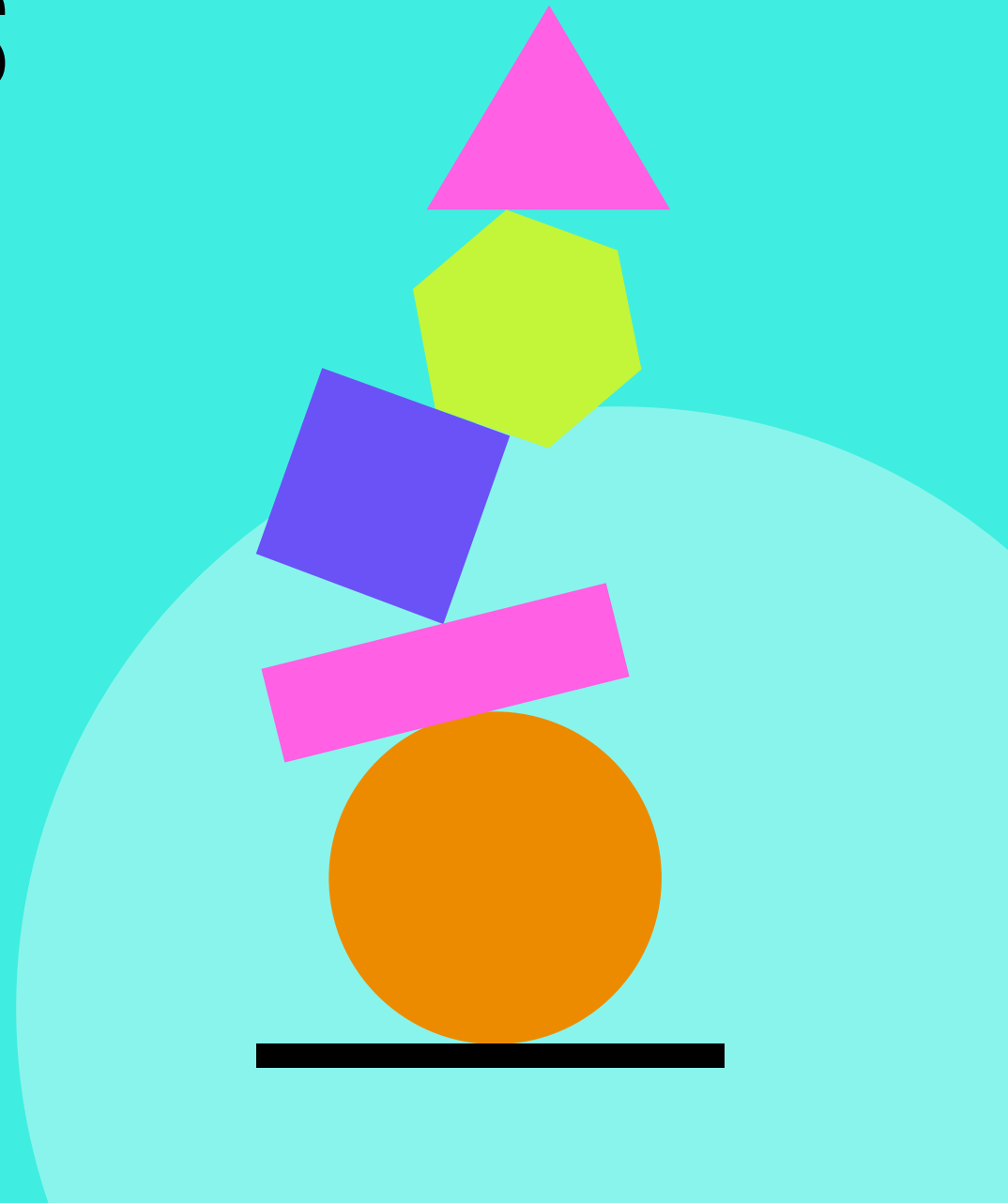
### If your company no longer paid your membership dues and you had to pay on your own...

(among those whose company pays)



Figures 2 & 3. Questions asked: How are your membership dues paid? | If your company no longer paid your membership dues and you had to pay the dues on your own, would you...

# WHAT MEMBERS VALUE TODAY



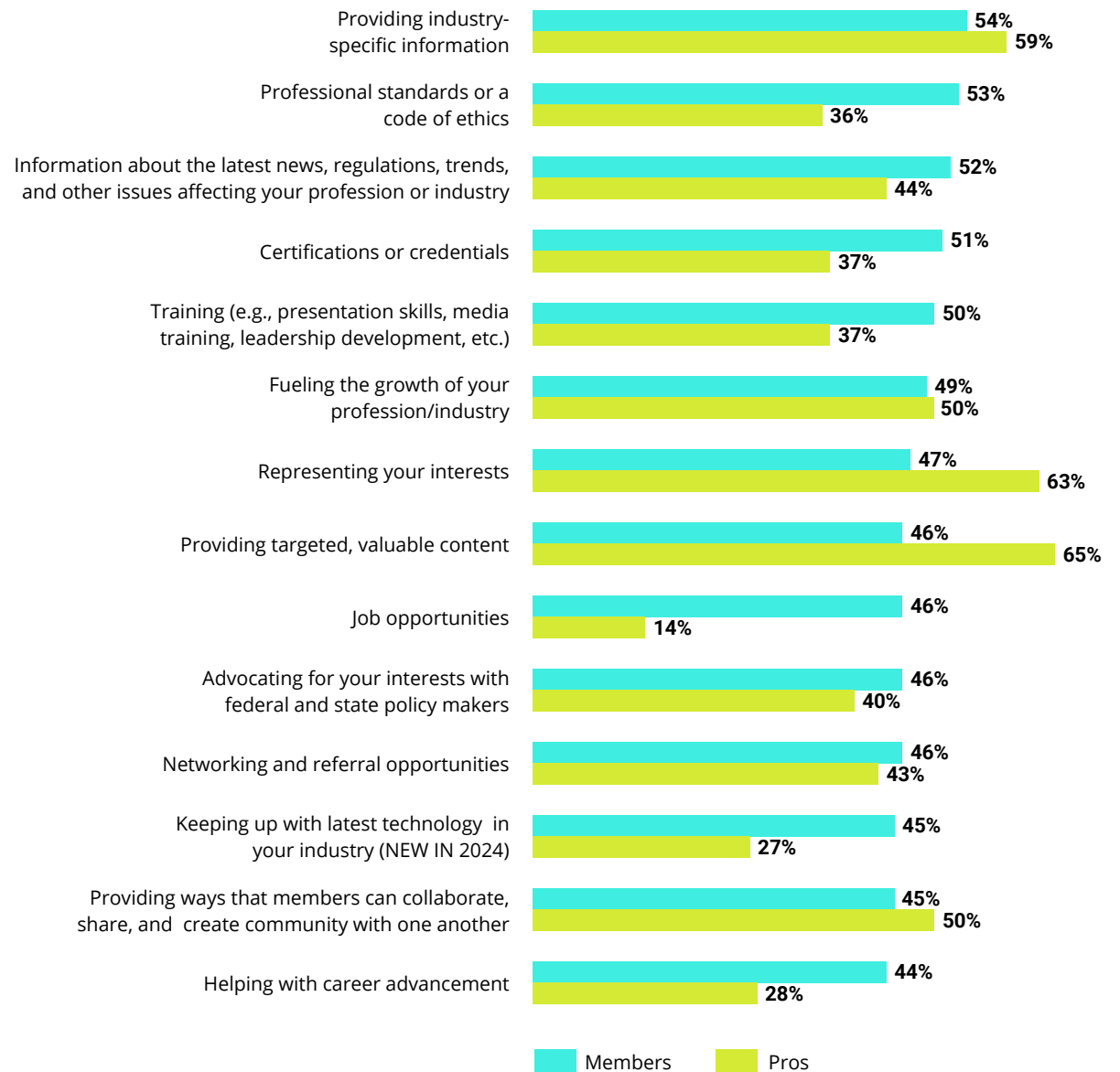
# What members value today

Members were asked to rate the importance of key benefits provided by their organization. This year, information about the latest news and other industry issues as well as targeted, valuable content increased from the 2023 study.

While Pros align with Members in some areas, they greatly underestimate the value of key areas, including job opportunities, keeping up with the latest industry technology, help with career advancement, professional standards, certifications/credentials, and training.

Figure 4. Questions asked: Below is a list of benefits that being a member of a professional membership organization might provide. For each, please indicate how important that benefit is to you. | Below is a list of benefits that a professional membership/trade organization might provide to its members. For each, please indicate how important you feel that benefit is to your organization's members. Would you say it is...

## Top 14 important benefits (Pros' and current Members' viewpoints)



For second tier benefits, Pros greatly overestimate the value of meetings/conferences/tradeshows – a trend that continues from previous studies.

### Tier two benefits (Pros' and current Members' viewpoints)

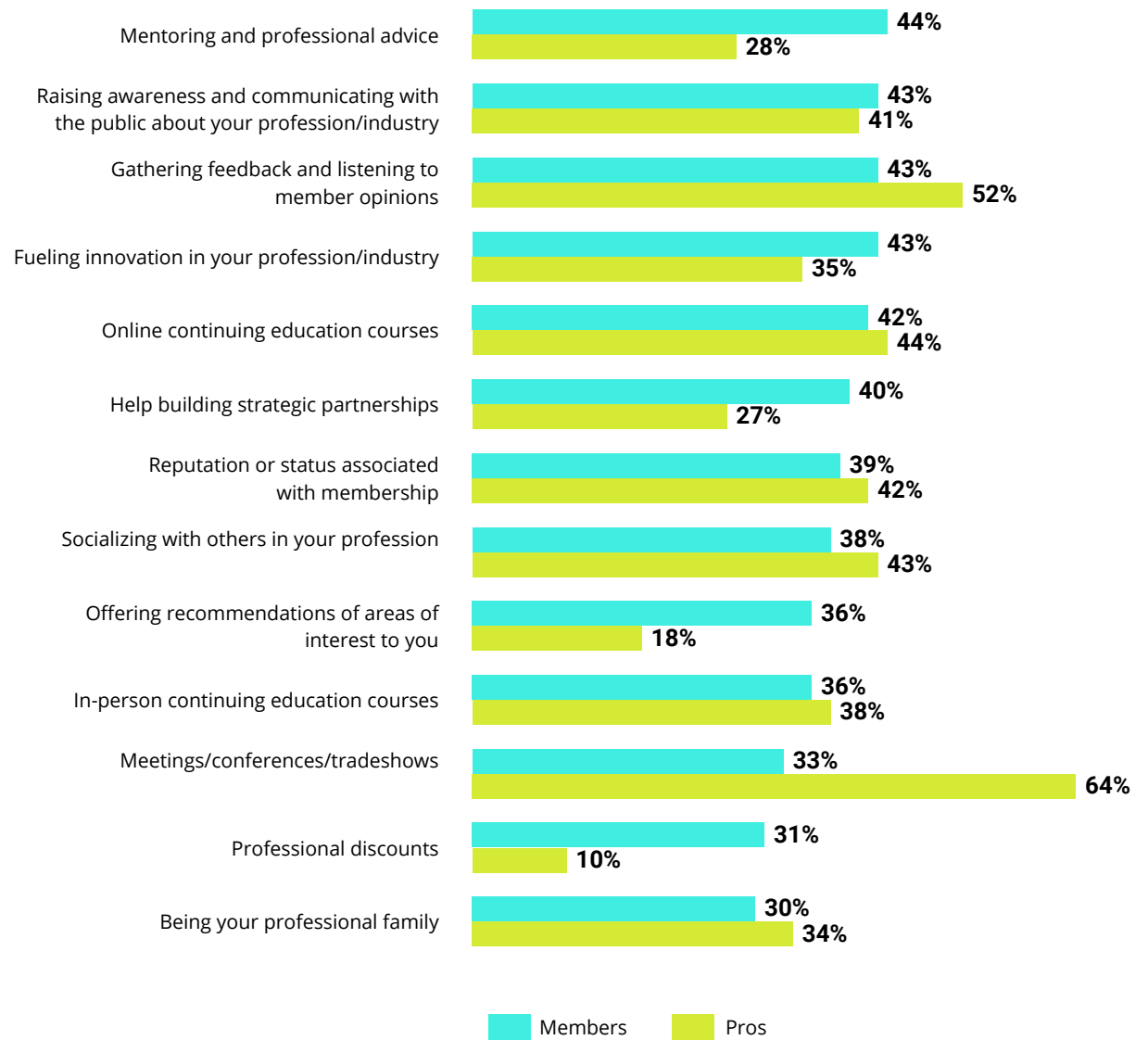
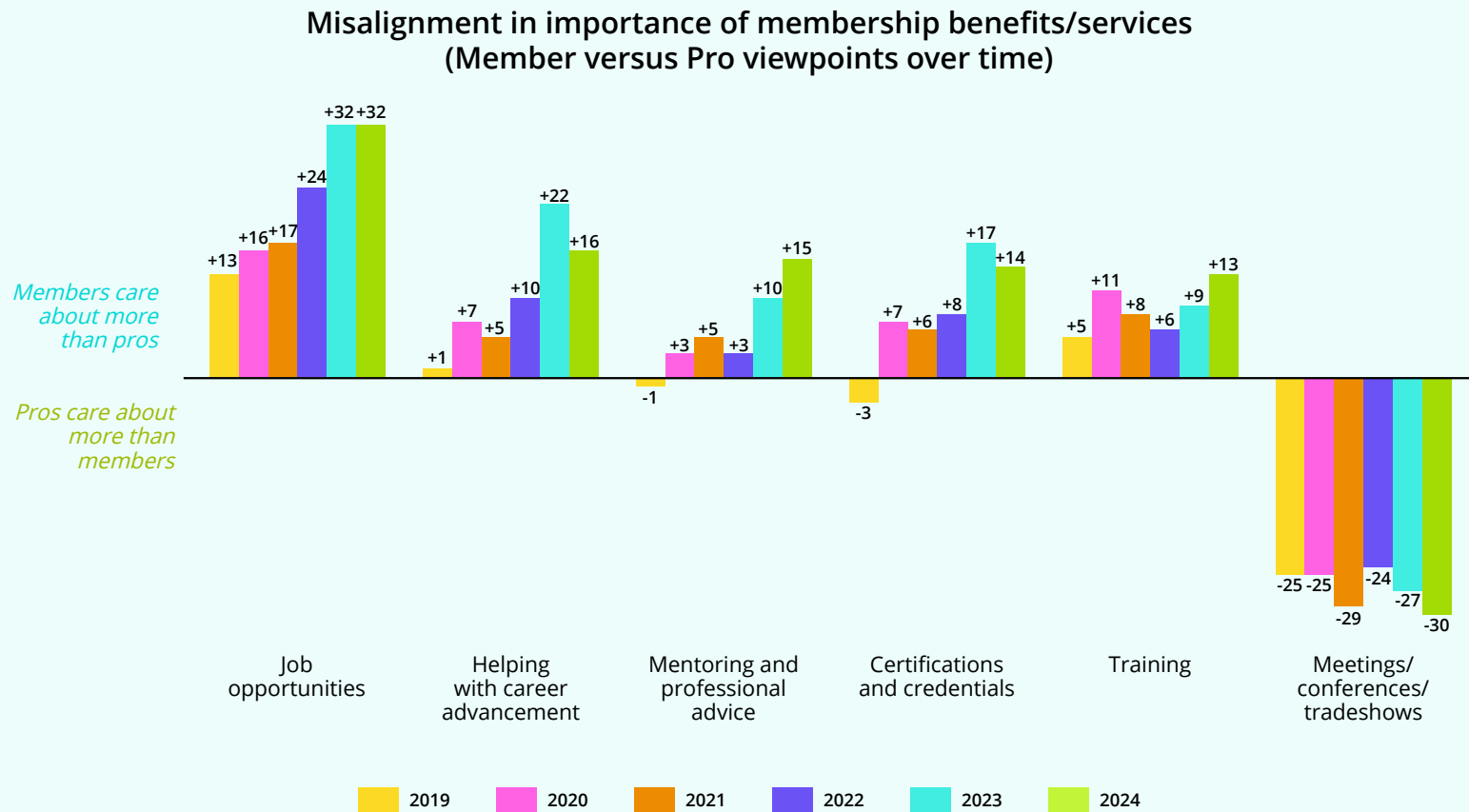


Figure 5. Questions asked: Below is a list of benefits that being a member of a professional membership organization might provide. For each, please indicate how important that benefit is to you. | Below is a list of benefits that a professional membership/trade organization might provide to its members. For each, please indicate how important you feel that benefit is to your organization's members. Would you say it is...

# The misalignment of value placed by Members and Pros in six areas has either persisted or grown over the last six years.

Notably, five of the six areas relate to career development benefits, with the sixth relating to events – suggesting a significant ongoing opportunity to deliver more career-building benefits.



**Figure 6. Questions asked:** Below is a list of benefits that being a member of a professional membership organization might provide. For each, please indicate how important that benefit is to you. | Below is a list of benefits that a professional membership/trade organization might provide to its members. For each, please indicate how important you feel that benefit is to your organization’s members. Would you say it is...



Members were also asked to indicate which benefits are most important when they think about renewing their membership. No one benefit stands out overall.

However, a look at generational differences shows that job opportunities and help with career advancement rank highest for Generation Z, while information about the latest industry news ranks highest for Generation X and Boomers/Matures.

In addition to questions about benefits, Members were asked how effective their organization is in key areas. They give stronger scores on their organization's ability to send them content that is targeted to their interests/needs than on personalizing their membership experience over time.

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### Organization's effectiveness (Member viewpoint)



# PRIORITIES AND OUTLOOKS OF ASSOCIATION PROFESSIONALS

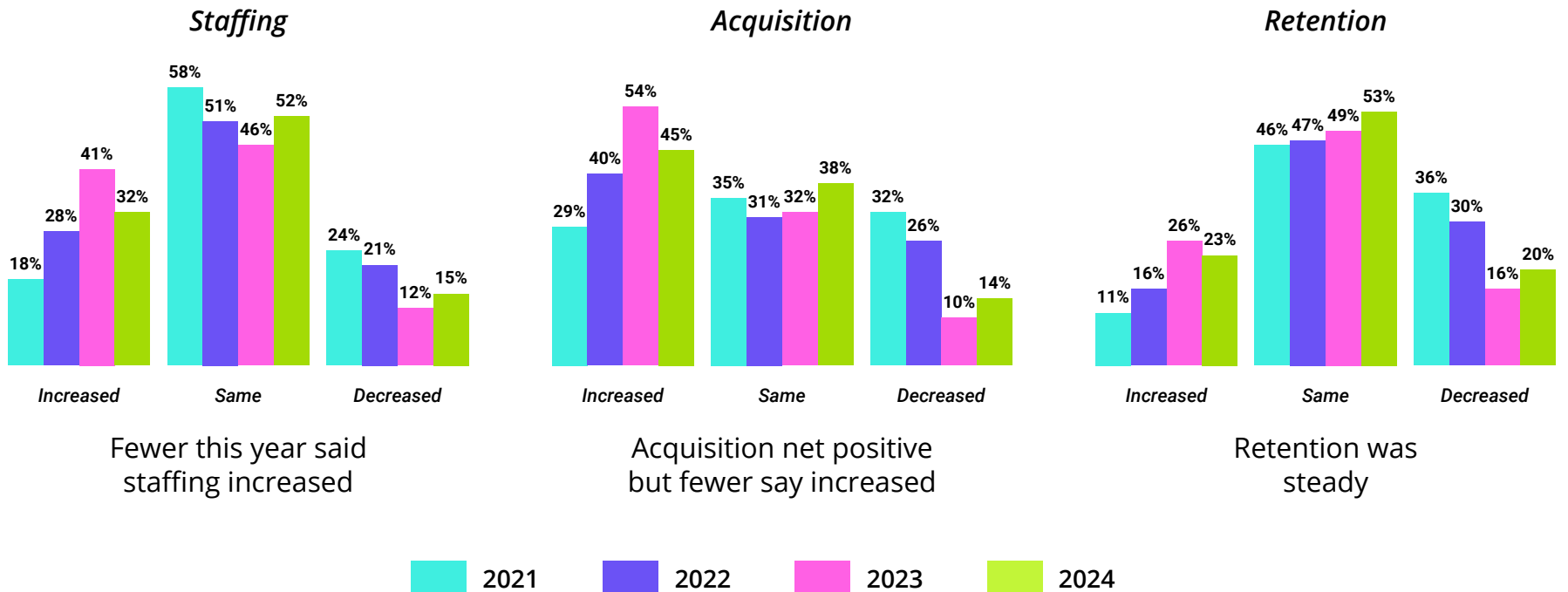


# Pros report slightly less positive numbers than in the 2023 study for staffing levels and member acquisition over the previous 12 months.

They are also slightly less optimistic about member acquisition over the next 12 months.

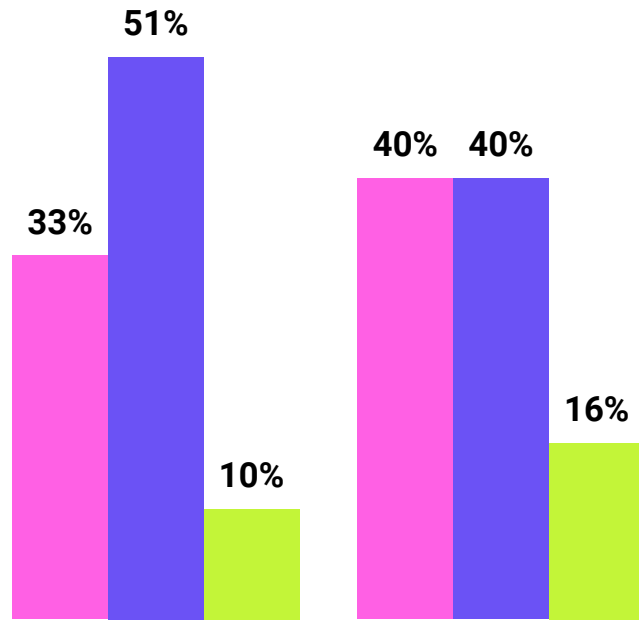
While revenue remained steady for the past 12 months, Pros are mixed between growth and stability when it comes to revenue for the next 12 months. Compared to the 2023 study, fewer Pros report increased non-dues and event revenue for the last 12 months and fewer anticipate increased non-dues and event revenue for the next 12 months.

## Pros' sentiments about last year and the future



## Revenue + Services

◀◀ Last 12 months

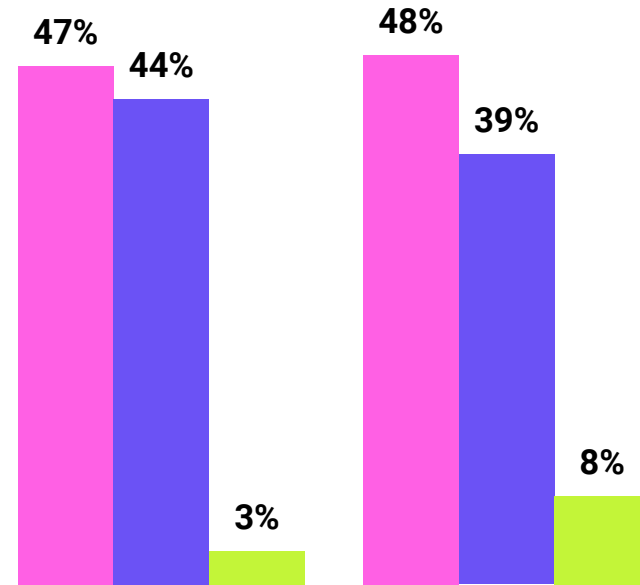


Non-dues revenue

Events revenue

*Net positive, but more said held steady*

Next 12 months ▶▶



Non-dues revenue

Events revenue

*Anticipate a mixture of growth and stability*

■ Increase   
 ■ Same   
 ■ Decrease

Figures 8 & 9. Questions asked: Over the last 12 months, has your organization increased, remained the same, or decreased in terms of: | And in the next 12 months, do you think each of the following will increase, remain the same, or decrease?

# Excitement versus concern

While Pros are somewhat less optimistic about the future than they were in the 2023 study, they express a mix of excitement and concern.



## Most excited about over next 12 months

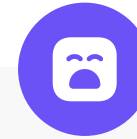
- ✓ Advancements in technology, including AI, automation, and new digital tools, to enhance member experiences and organizational efficiency
- ✓ Growth and expansion, whether it's in membership, event attendance, or new initiatives
- ✓ New programs and initiatives, such as awards programs, emerging leader programs, and professional development resources. This also encompasses new member benefits and creating engaging programming
- ✓ Strategic planning and leadership changes, including restructuring and re-evaluating organizational strategies to better meet goals
- ✓ Improved member engagement and experience, including CRM systems, personalized experiences, and innovative engagement tools

Increased emphasis on member retention and creating value for all members

Revitalizing and revamping our professional development courses

New strategic plan and results from investment in marketing technology

Efforts to ensure that younger members know what we offer to them



## Biggest fears about next 12 months

- ✓ Failure to innovate, culturally, technologically, just maintaining the status quo
- ✓ Decreasing membership and revenue, including losing members to competitors, decreasing engagement and non-dues revenue
- ✓ Budget constraints and economic challenges, including budget cuts, rising costs, and economic uncertainty affecting their ability to fund initiatives, and maintain operations
- ✓ Staffing and resource issues, including staff shortages, high turnover, recruiting difficulty, and being overworked
- ✓ Leadership and organizational change, including anxiety about how these changes might affect decision-making and strategic direction
- ✓ External instability, including economic downturns, political instability/ election, and unforeseen events (like pandemics or natural disasters) that can impact operations and member engagement

Being overworked and not having the resources to properly support the strategic plan

The organization will not change with the times and will become obsolete

Economic uncertainty

There may be organizational changes

This year, Pros list putting on successful events, conferences, and/or tradeshows as their top priority – with increasing membership and improving membership retention as a close second and third.

Pros place less emphasis this year on key areas that impact member engagement and the member experience, including upgrading and/or integrating new technology and driving innovation. Integrating Artificial Intelligence into processes lands at the bottom of the list.

As in last year's study, investing in technology and driving innovation continue to be higher priorities for large organizations than for small organizations.



### Importance of each to the organization (top priority / important)

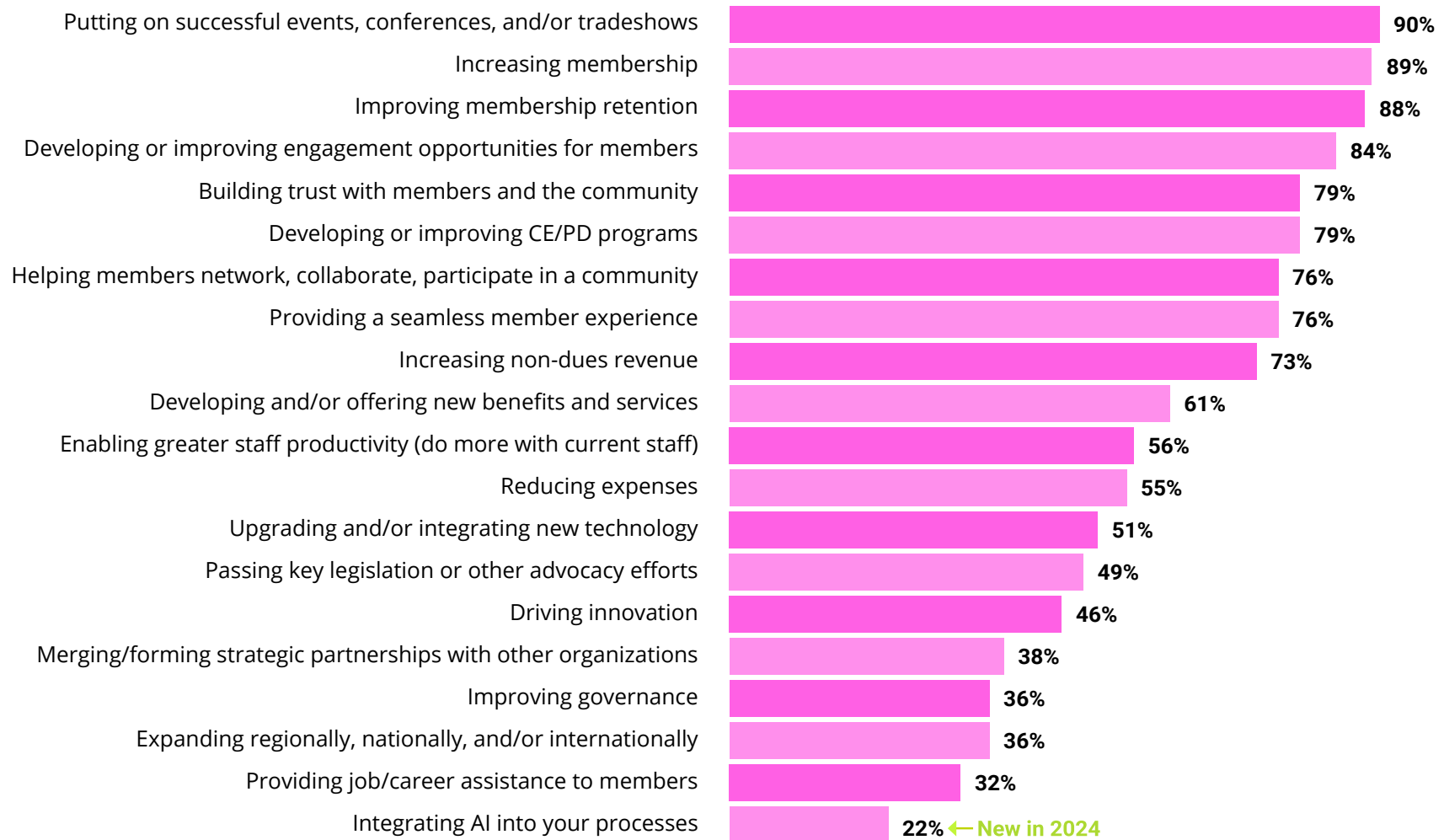
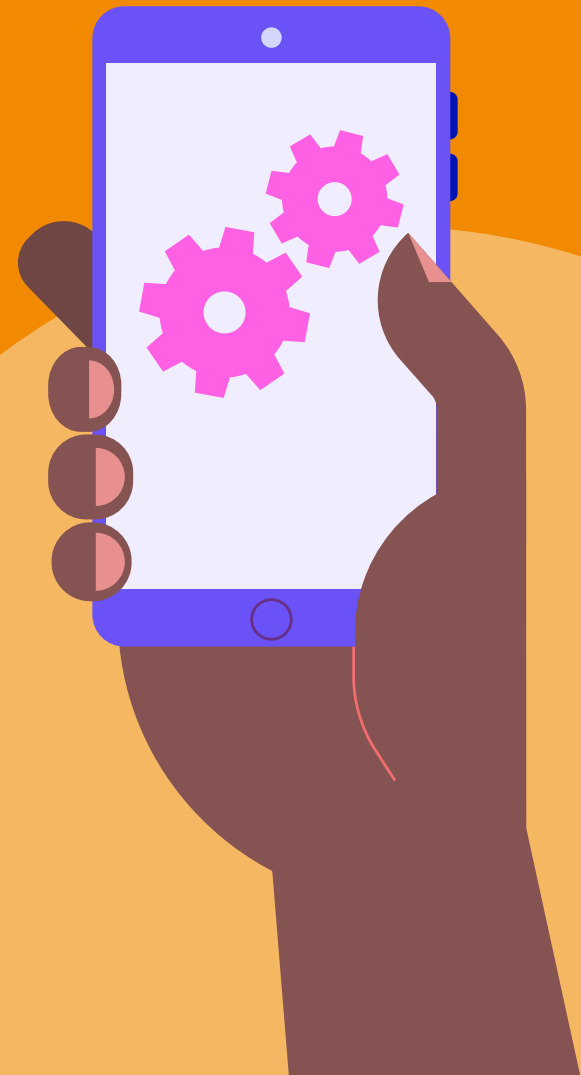


Figure 10. Question asked: How important are each of the following for your organization over the next year?

# ASSOCIATION TECHNOLOGY AND ITS IMPACT ON MEMBERS





# In general, Members continue to see technology as a positive force.

73 percent say that technology has transformed their life for the better.

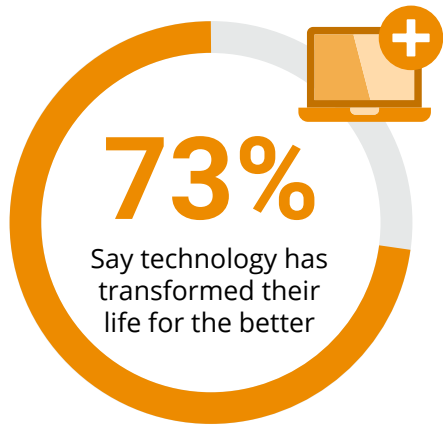


Figure 11. Question asked: Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.

When it comes to using technology, however, personal technology adoption is mixed. 61 percent consider themselves ahead of the curve or early adopters, and 39 percent consider themselves average or laggards.

## Personal technology adoption (Members)

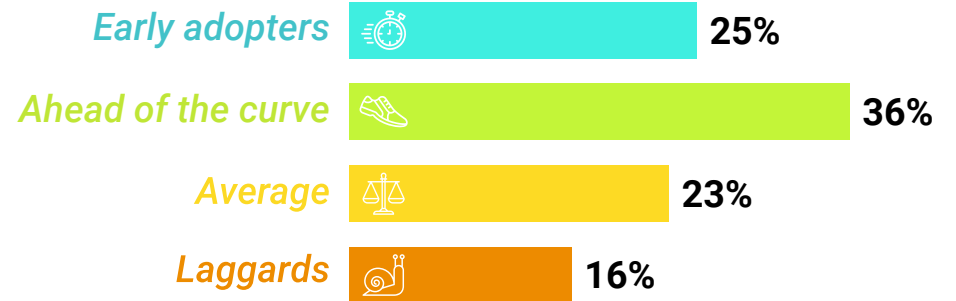


Figure 12. Question asked: Thinking about the adoption of new technologies, which of the following statements best describes YOU personally?

A look at technology related to their professional membership organization shows that both Members and Pros agree that technology is transforming their organization for the better.

However, they differ when it comes to their organization's ability to facilitate technology usage. Members are more positive and satisfied when it comes to their organization's use of technology than Pros.

Further, Pros from smaller organizations are less likely than those from larger organizations to agree that technology is transforming their organization for the better, and more likely to agree that not keeping up with the pace of technology is holding their organization back.

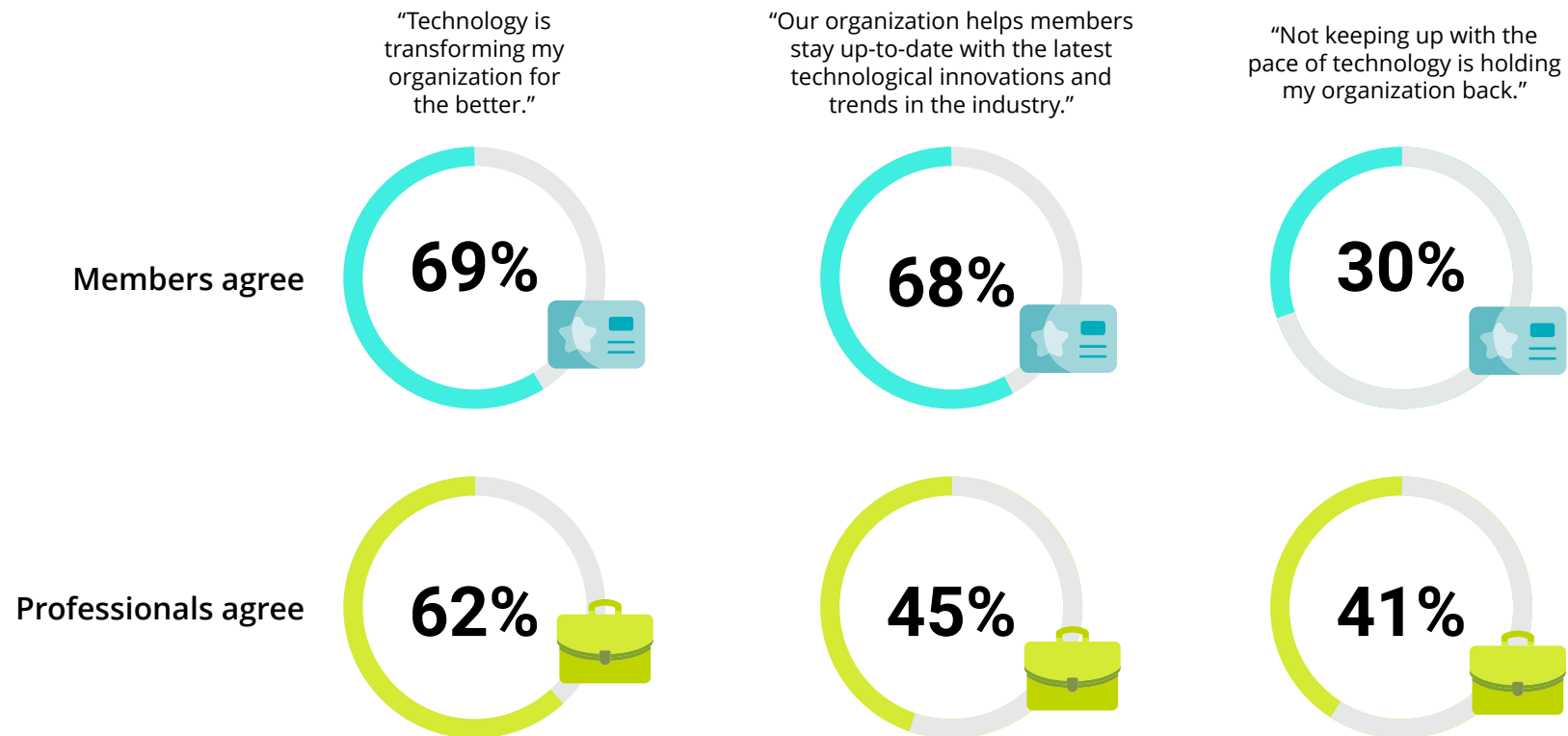


Figure 13. Question asked: How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

Members' perceptions of their organizations' technology adoption have held steady since 2022, with 56 percent of Members viewing their organization as ahead of the curve or as very early adopters of technology.

Those that consider their organization as average or laggard have remained flat since 2017.

### Members' perceptions of their organization's technology adoption

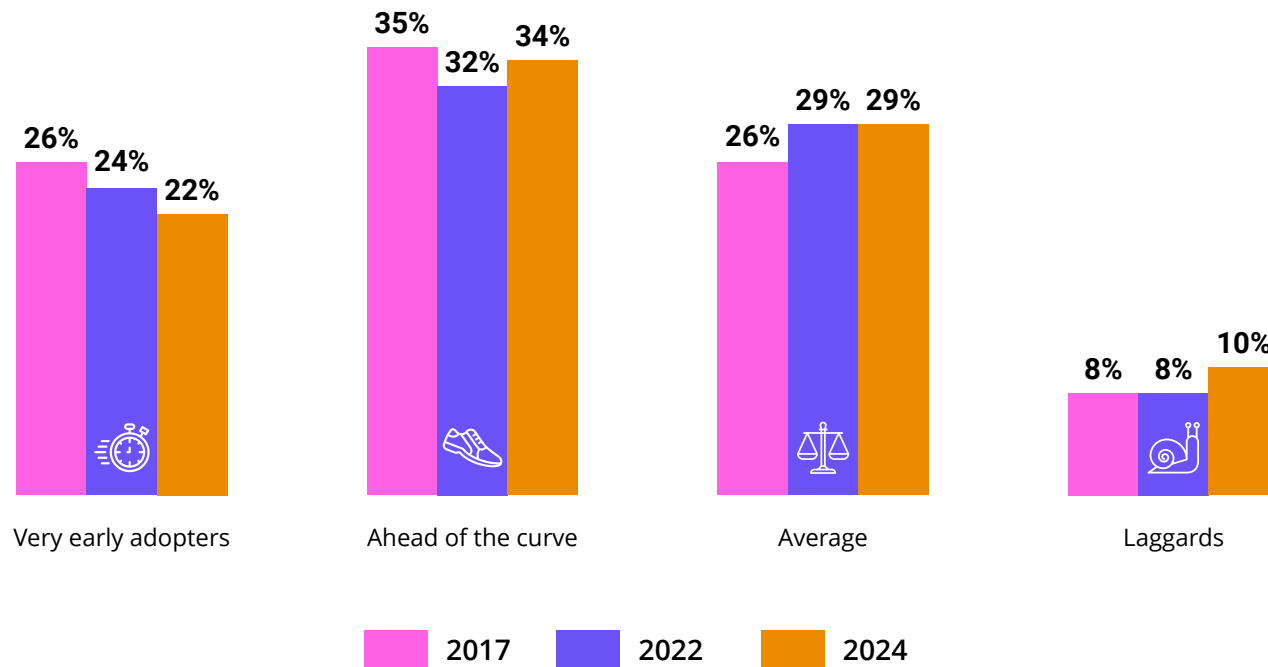


Figure 14. Question asked: Now thinking about YOUR PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP ORGANIZATION, how would you describe its adoption of new technologies?

# As in studies from previous years, there continues to be a strong correlation between technology and Member loyalty.

Members who view their professional organization as an early adopter of technology are more satisfied and connected with the organization. They are also more likely to promote the organization. Members that view their professional organization as a laggard are significantly less likely to be satisfied, feel a connection to the organization, and promote the organization.

## Member loyalty and Members' perceptions of their organization's technology adoption

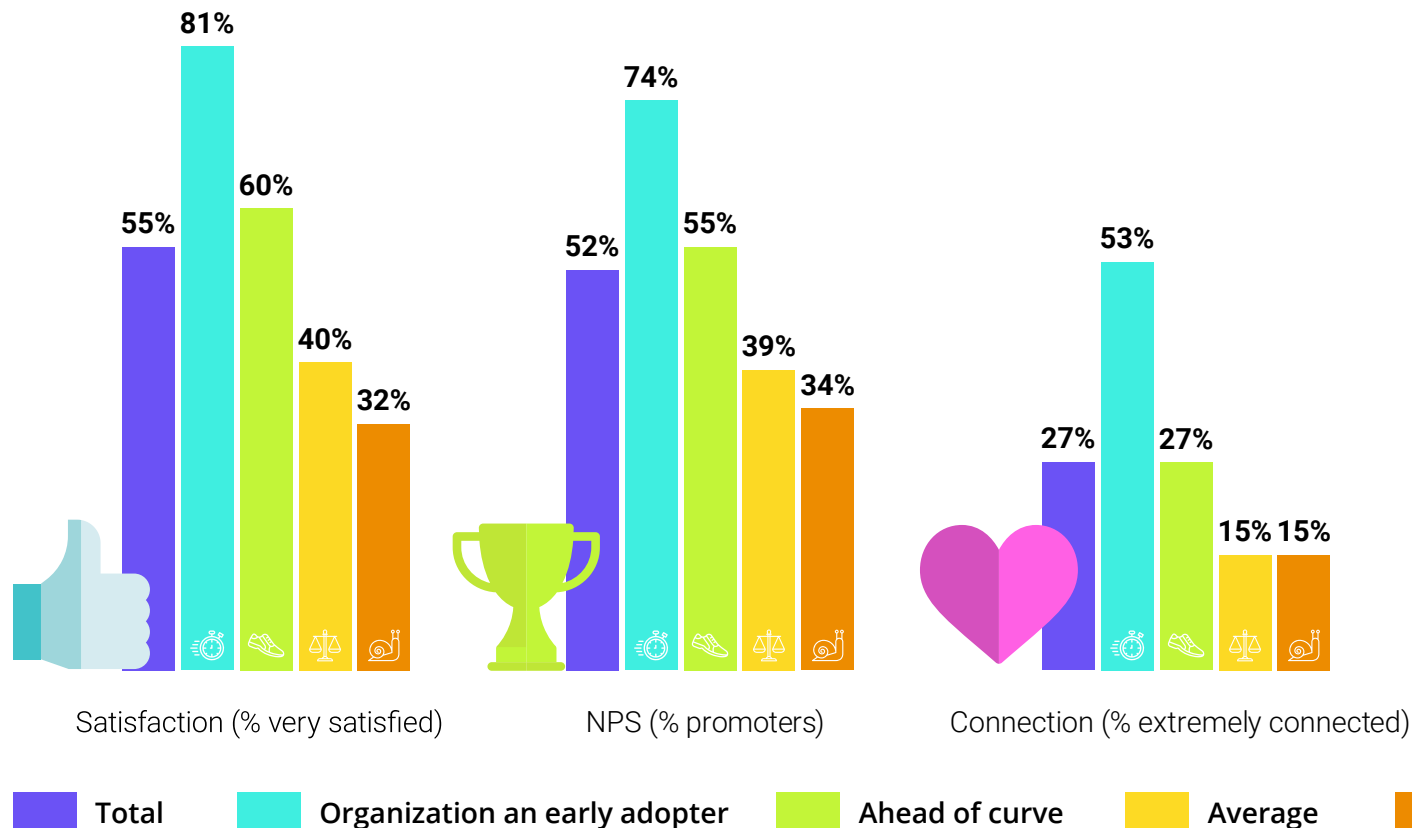
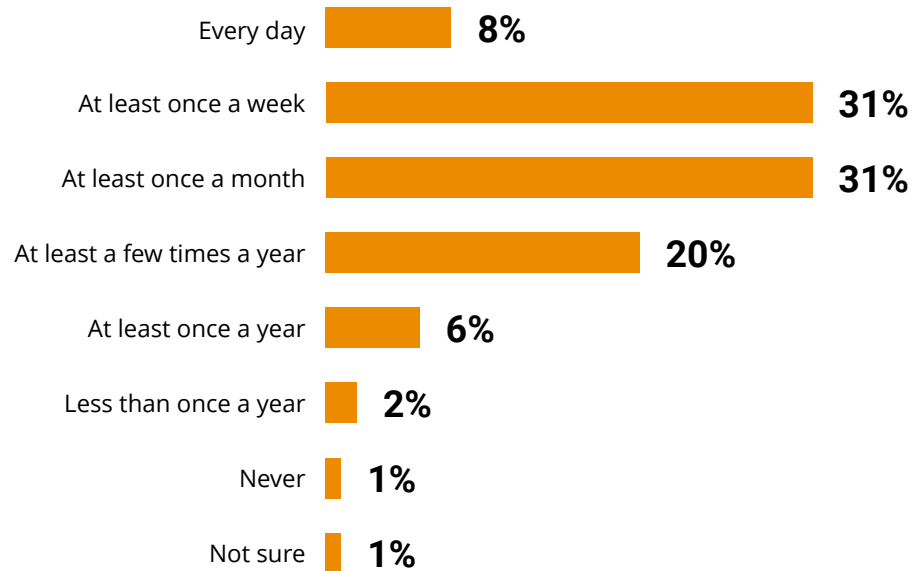


Figure 15. Questions asked: Overall, how satisfied are you with your membership in this professional membership organization? | How likely are you to recommend this professional membership organization? Use a 10-point scale where 10 means you are extremely likely to recommend and 0 means you are not at all likely to recommend the organization. | On a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 means extremely connected and 1 means not connected at all, how connected do you feel to this professional membership organization and the work that it does?

# Similarly, there continues to be a link between technology adoption and member engagement.

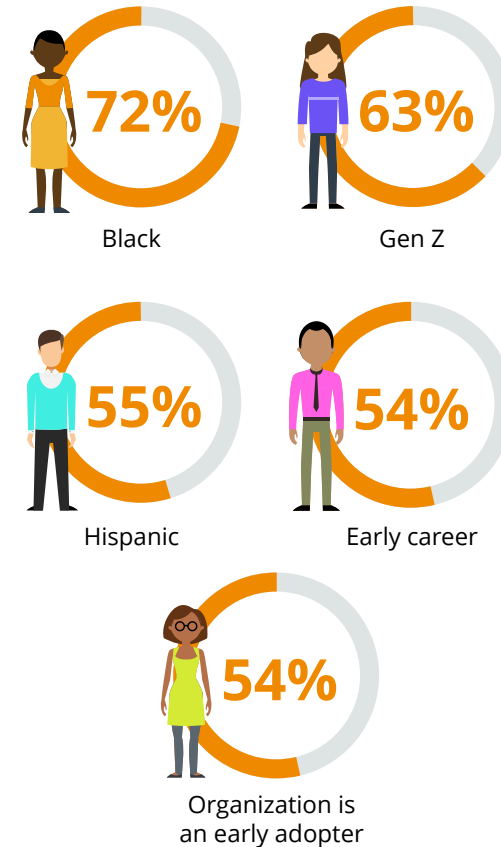
Thirty-nine percent of Members say they engage with their organization every day or at least once per week.

## Members' engagement frequency with their professional organization



Figures 16 & 17. Questions asked: How often do you engage with your professional membership organization/s?

Among the Members who are most likely to engage once per week or more are those that consider their organization an early adopter of technology and Generation Z.




As with the 2023 study, Members continue to report that email and online community are the top ways they engage with their organization. Email has remained the top way to engage with their organization since 2017.

This year, however, Members report engaging more via texting and mobile app than they did in 2023.

A look at generational differences shows that Millennials and Generation Z engage more than other generations in all channels, except email, where Generation X engages more.

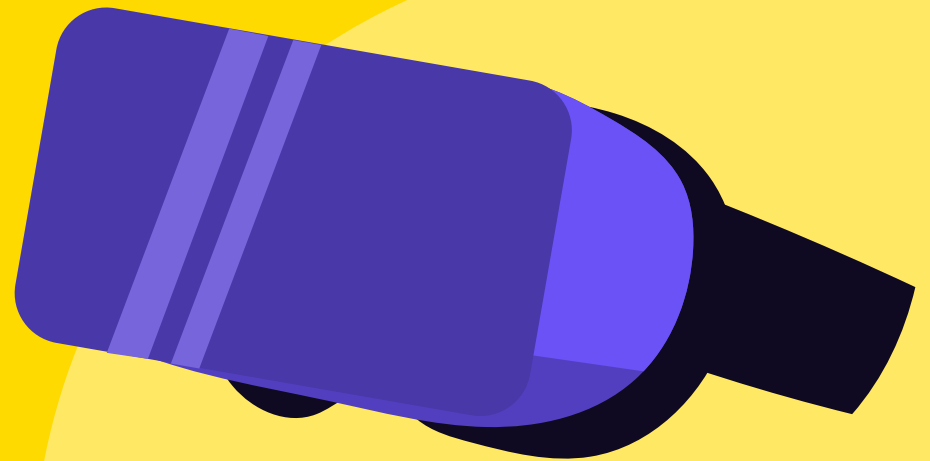
### Member engagement channels used (Member viewpoint)



	2024	Gen Y/Z	Gen X	Boomers/ Matures
Email	65%	61%	70%	67%
Organization's online community	40%	40%	39%	39%
Facebook	33%	38%	31%	27%
LinkedIn	30%	31%	30%	28%
SMS/texting	28%	33%	26%	23%
Mobile app	23%	25%	24%	17%
Instagram	17%	28%	12%	5%
YouTube	15%	21%	14%	5%
X	12%	16%	11%	5%
TikTok	8%	14%	6%	0%
Snapchat	6%	9%	4%	1%
Reddit	6%	8%	5%	1%
Pinterest	4%	6%	3%	2%
Vimeo	2%	3%	3%	1%

Figure 18. Question asked: In which of the following ways do you engage with your professional membership organization today? Select all that apply.

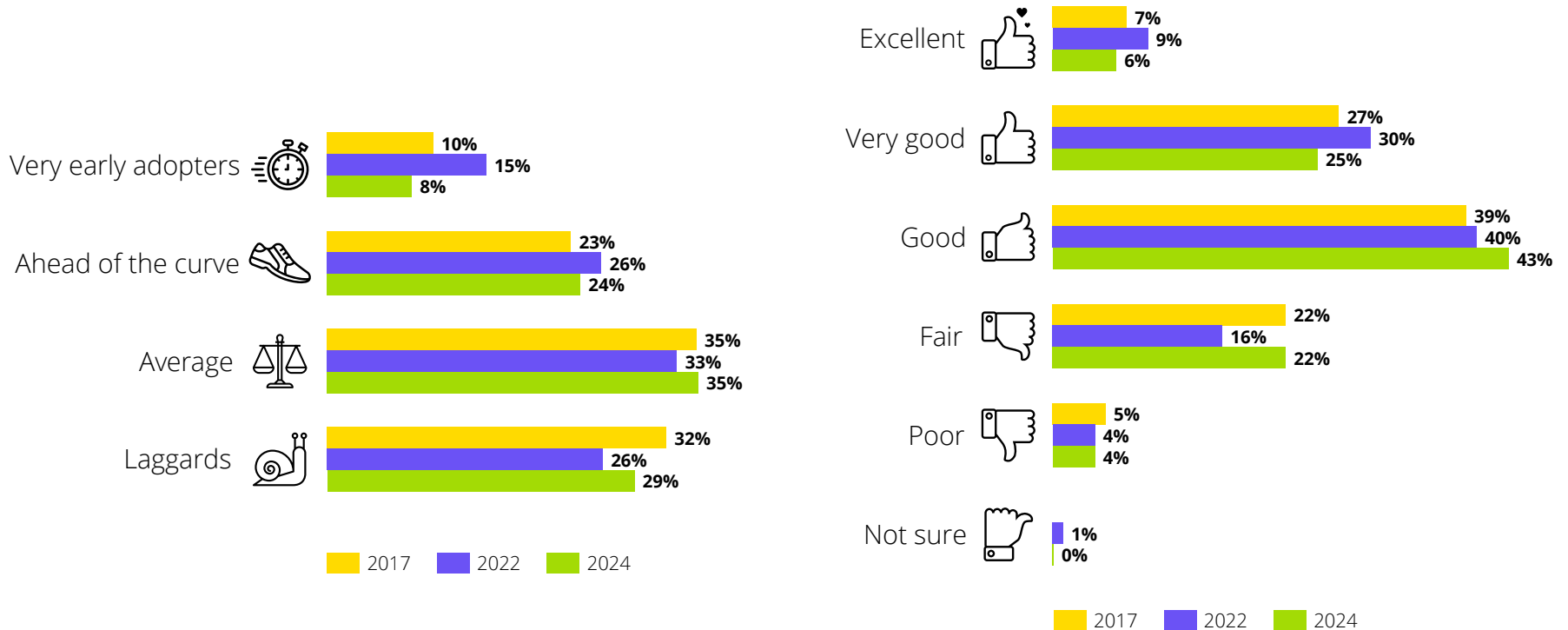
# **ASSOCIATION PROFESSIONAL'S VIEWS ON TECHNOLOGY**



# In contrast with Members, majorities of Pros see their organization as technologically average or laggards, with fewer considering themselves early adopters than in 2022.

Only a third of Pros rate their organization's use of technology as very good or excellent, down significantly from 2022. These findings have continued consistently since 2017.

## Technology adoption and usage by organization (Pro viewpoint)



Figures 19 & 20. Question asked: Thinking about the professional membership/trade organization where you work, how would you describe its adoption of new technologies? | How would you rate your professional membership/trade organization's overall use of technology?



Pros' views about their organization's technology preparedness also remain lackluster, with fewer Pros feeling very prepared versus two years ago.

How technologically prepared Pros feel for the future

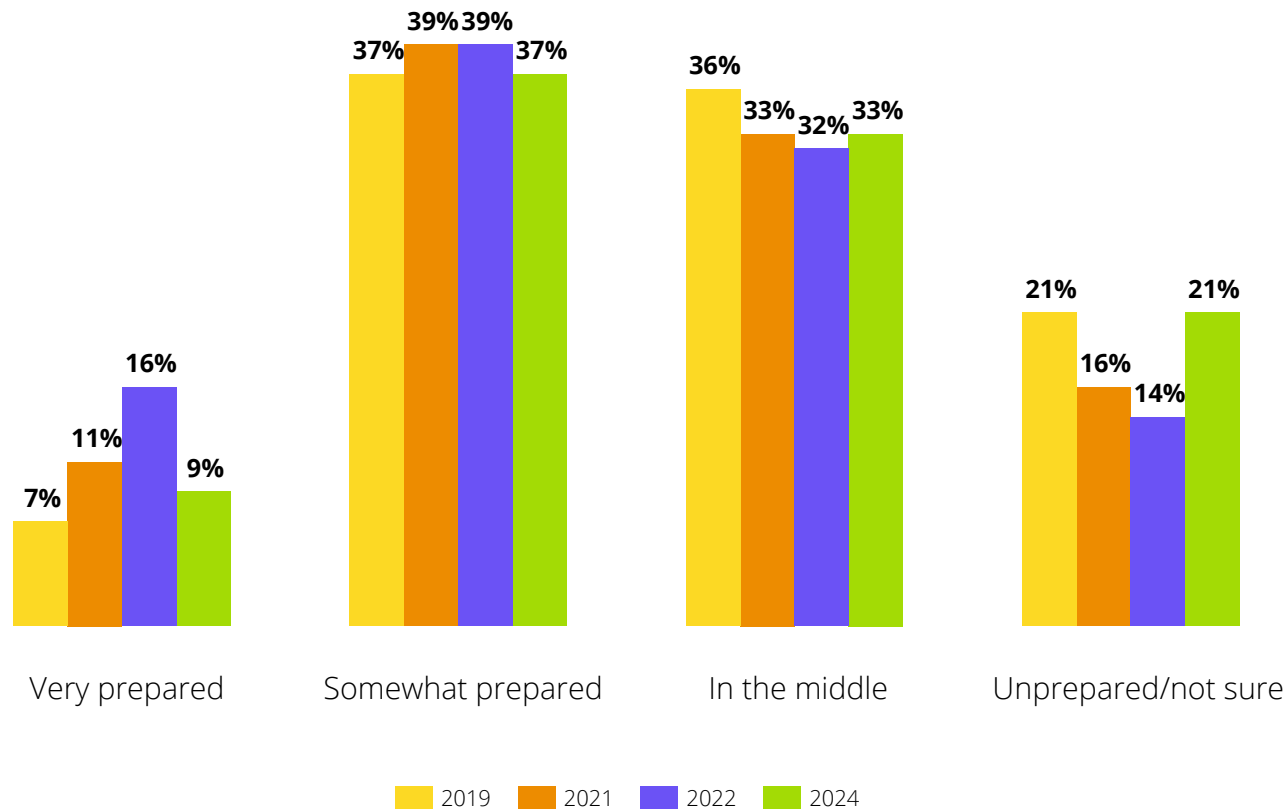


Figure 21. Question asked: When it comes to technology, how prepared do you feel your organization is for the future?

Few Pros say their organization has a digital council, formal digital transformation plan (down from 2022), nor an AI policy. In these areas, large organizations are more technologically prepared than smaller ones. In contrast, 33 percent of Members say the company they work for has an AI policy.

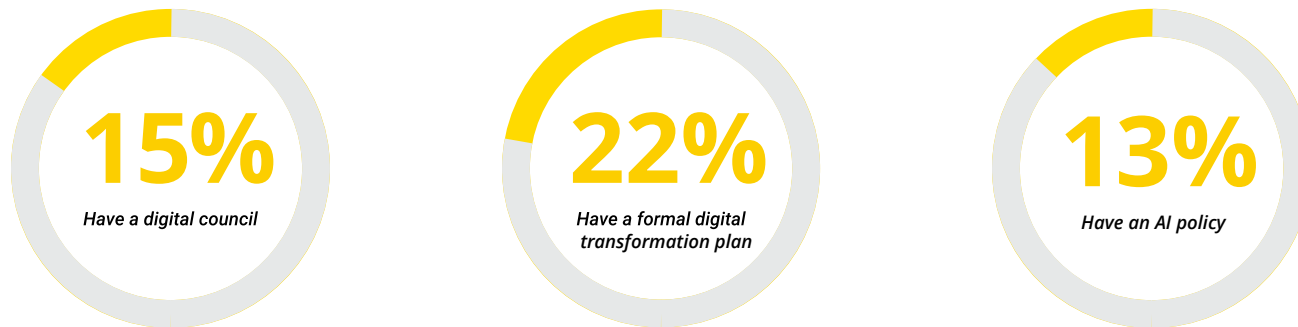


Figure 22. Questions asked: Some organizations have a digital council, which is typically a group of people within your organization or industry created to connect, collaborate, learn, and share methods to accelerate digital transformation designed to elevate the member experience.



When making technology purchases, Pros say their top priorities are enhancing the member experience, improving business process efficiency, and attracting new members. Improving business process efficiency is a higher priority for large organizations, while attracting new members is more important to small organizations.

### Business priorities for technology purchases

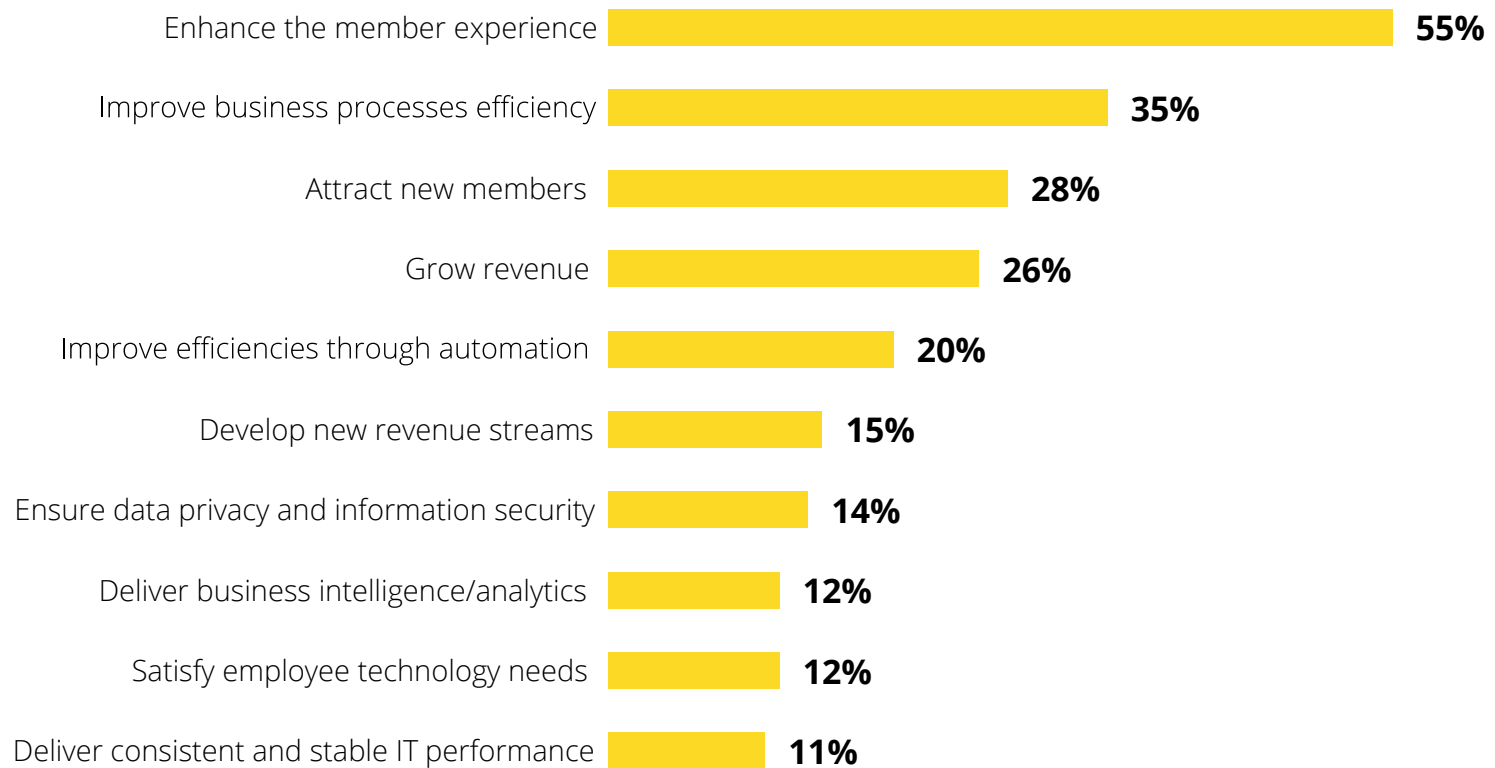


Figure 23. Question asked: What are the MOST IMPORTANT business objectives that your leadership is looking for IT to address? Please select up to three.

Pros report that their organization’s greatest technology challenge is providing modern and user-friendly tools to members, followed by sharing data across systems and implementing new technology.

A look at Pros’ responses by organization size shows that small organizations struggle more with implementing new technology while large organizations are challenged more with sharing data across systems and maintaining custom software tools and integrations.

### Greatest technology challenges

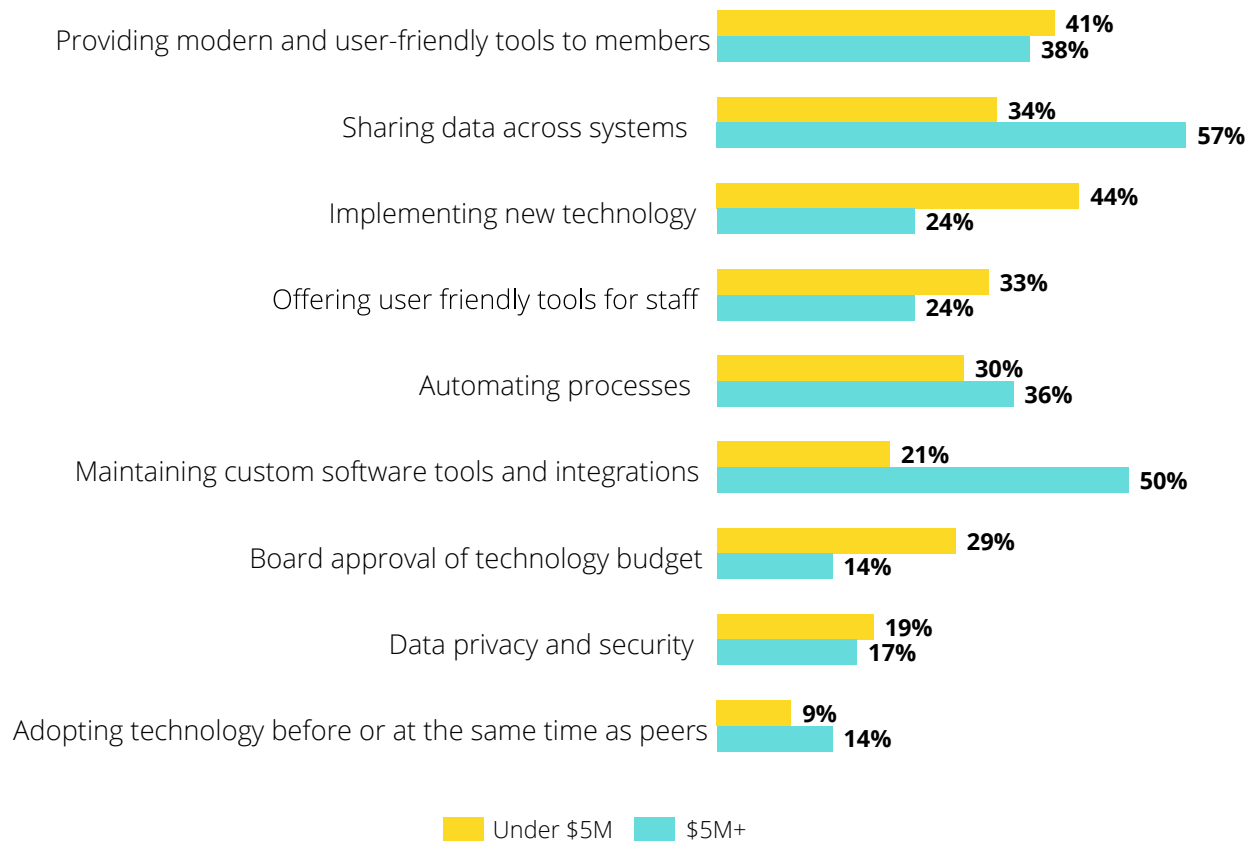
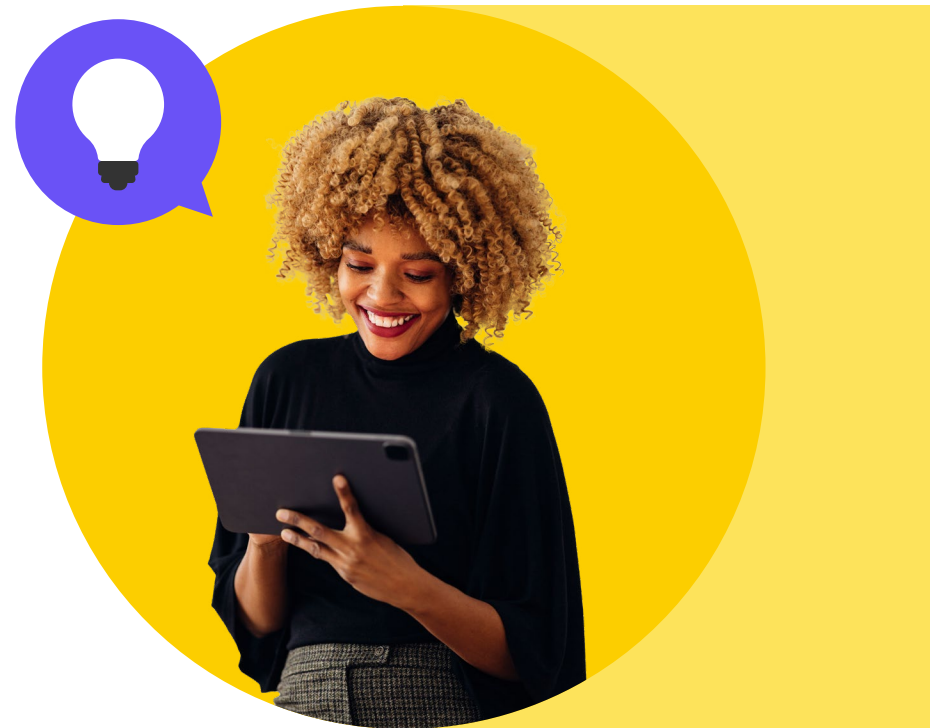


Figure 24. Question asked: Which of the following best represents the greatest technology challenges for your organization? Please select up to three.

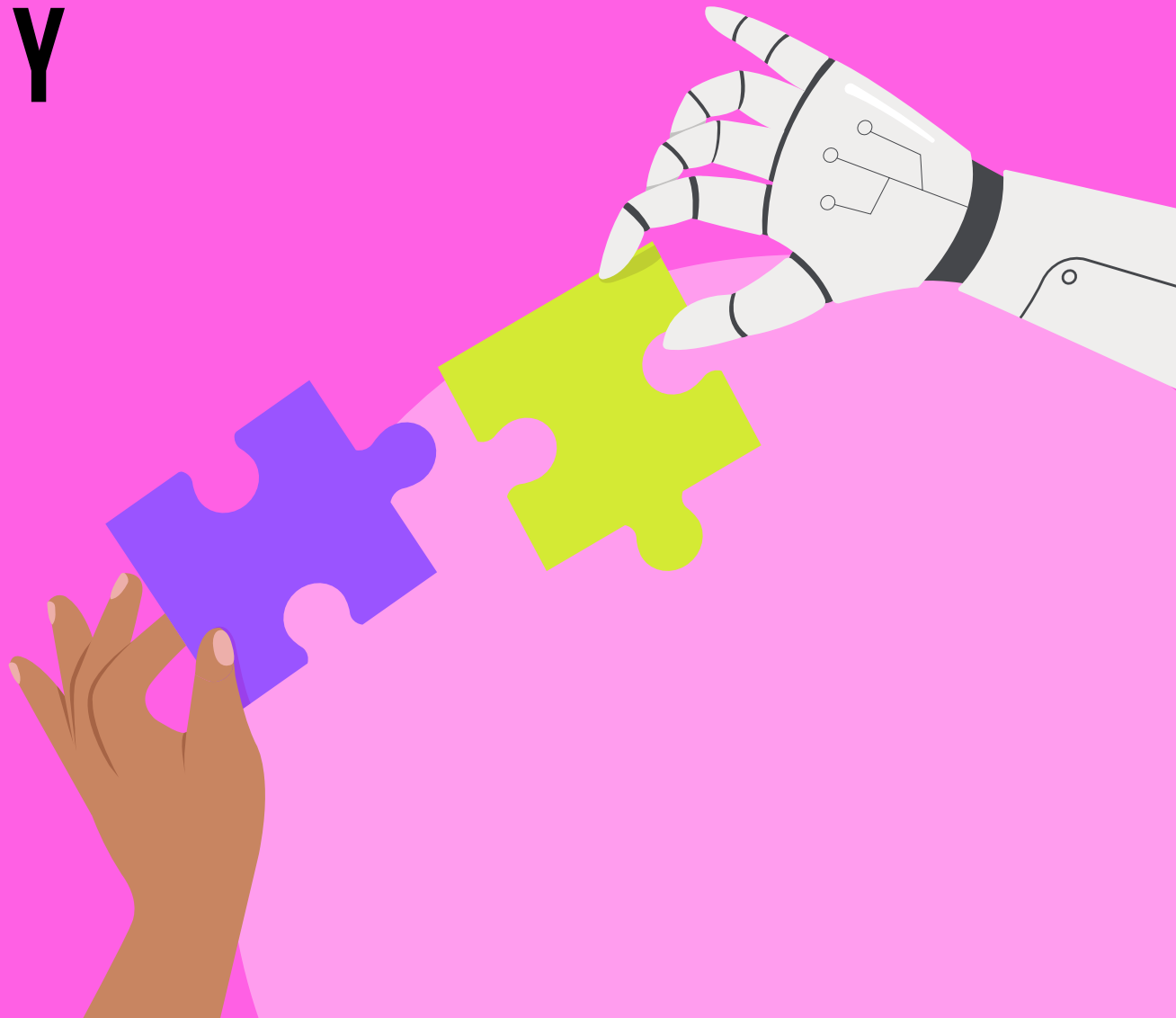
Some Members and Pros provided suggestions for technology improvements for their organization.

### Member suggestions

- ✓ AI use to better personalize the member experience
- ✓ Better social media use/ presence
- ✓ More ways to connect with other members
- ✓ Additional feedback opportunities
- ✓ Greater online access to resources like continuing education, information, and member services



# ASSOCIATIONS' TECHNOLOGY USAGE



## The adoption of technology/ solutions used by Pros has continued to rise since 2019.

More Pros report using several key tools than they were using just two years ago, with association management software (AMS) or customer relationship management (CRM), events related tools, job boards, and mobile applications all seeing increases in usage.

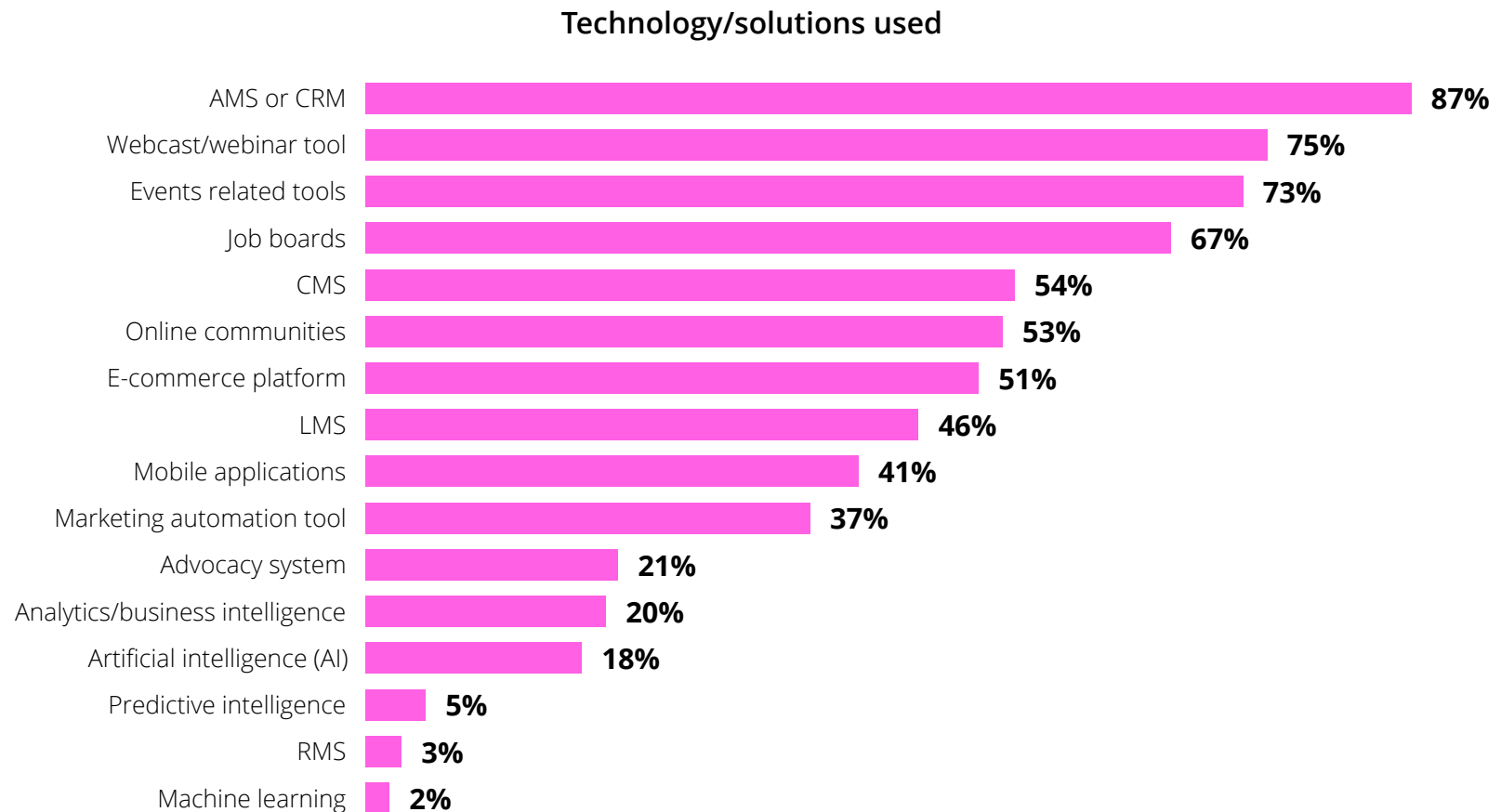
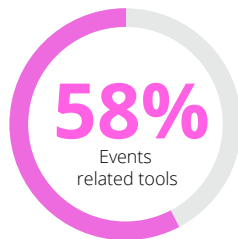


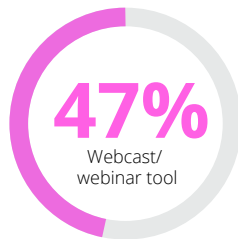
Figure 25. Question asked: Which of the following technologies/solutions does your organization use? Select all that apply.

Among the tools used, Pros see events related tools as most helpful with driving revenue, AMS/CRM tools as most helpful with driving member acquisition/retention, and webcast/webinar tools and online communities as most helpful with driving member engagement.

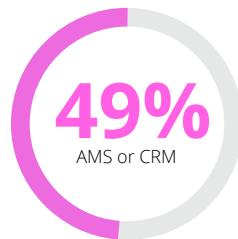
### How technology helps the organization



*Drive revenue*

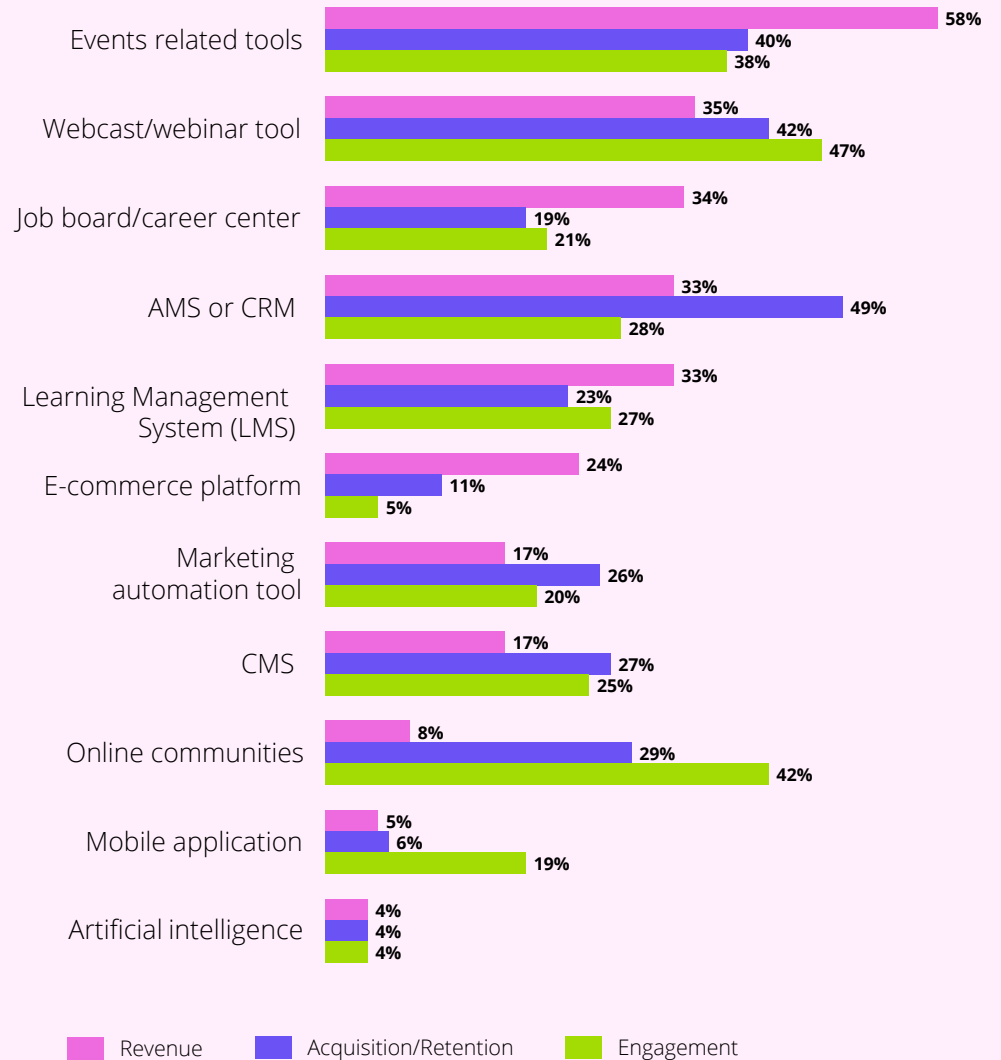


*Increase member engagement*



*Acquire/retain members*

### How technology helps the organization



Figures 26 & 27. Questions asked: You said you are using the following technologies. Which, if any, do you feel helps drive revenue? Select all that apply. | And do any of these technologies help you acquire and/or retain members? Select all that apply. | And do any of these technologies help increase member engagement? Select all that apply.



Looking at Member and Pro viewpoints on how well their organization uses technology shows that Pros are less likely than Members to rate most specific technology uses as excellent or very good. Members give their organization higher marks than Pros when it comes to earning certifications or credentials and raising awareness and communicating with the public about the profession/industry. Conversely, Pros rate their organization higher than members in security of transactions.

### Excellent/very good use of technology (rank ordered by Member viewpoints)

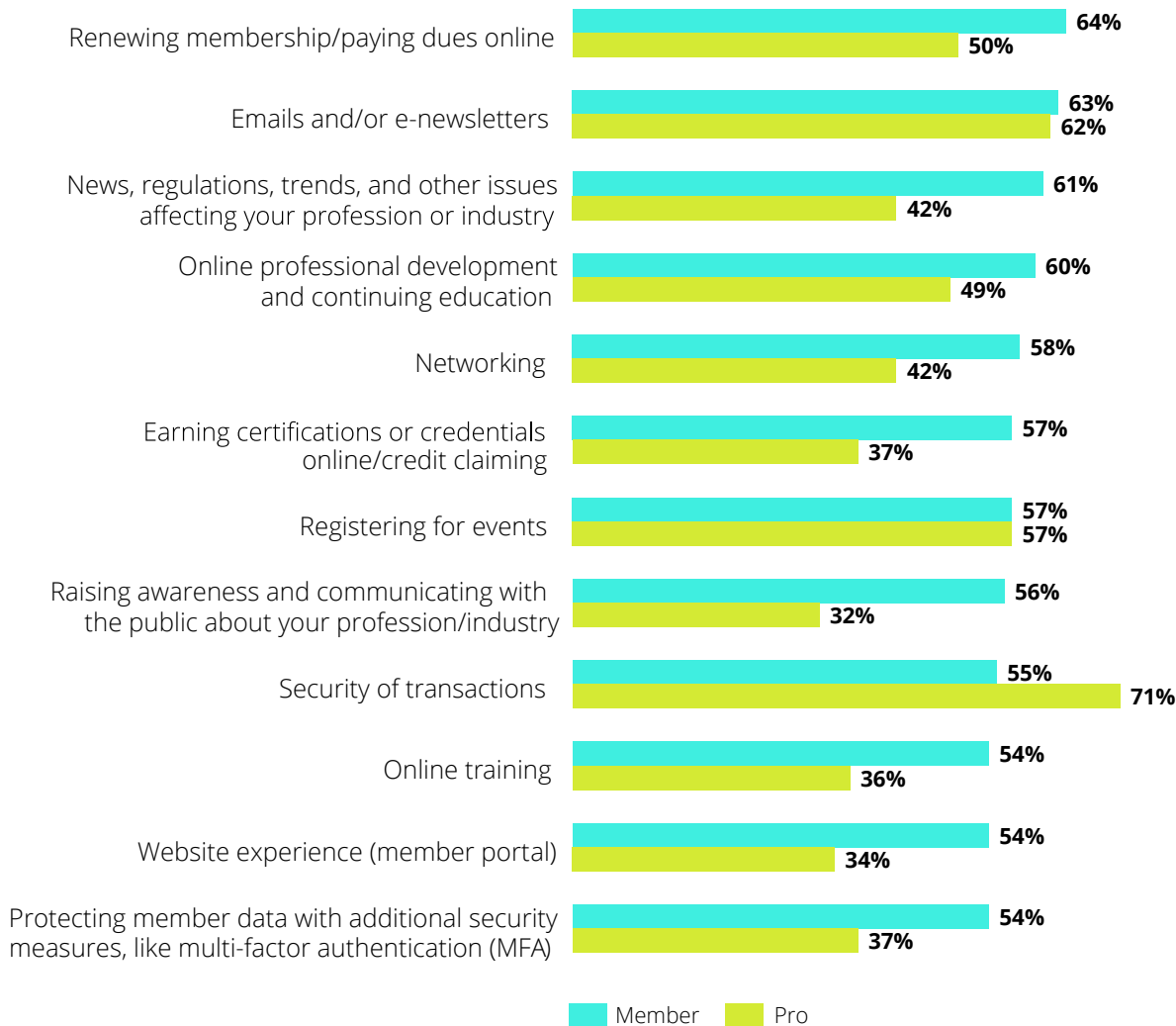


Figure 28. Questions asked: Here are some specific ways that professional membership organizations might use technology to connect and provide benefits and services to members. How would you rate your organization on each? | Here are some specific ways that professional membership/trade organizations might use technology to connect and provide benefits and services to members. How would you rate your organization on each?

In the second tier of ratings, Pros rate their organization higher than Members only in the area of in-person conference check-in and badging. They give their organization lower scores than Members in multiple areas, including volunteer opportunities, mobile app, AI, and chatbots.

**Tier two: excellent/very good use of technology (rank ordered by Member viewpoints)**

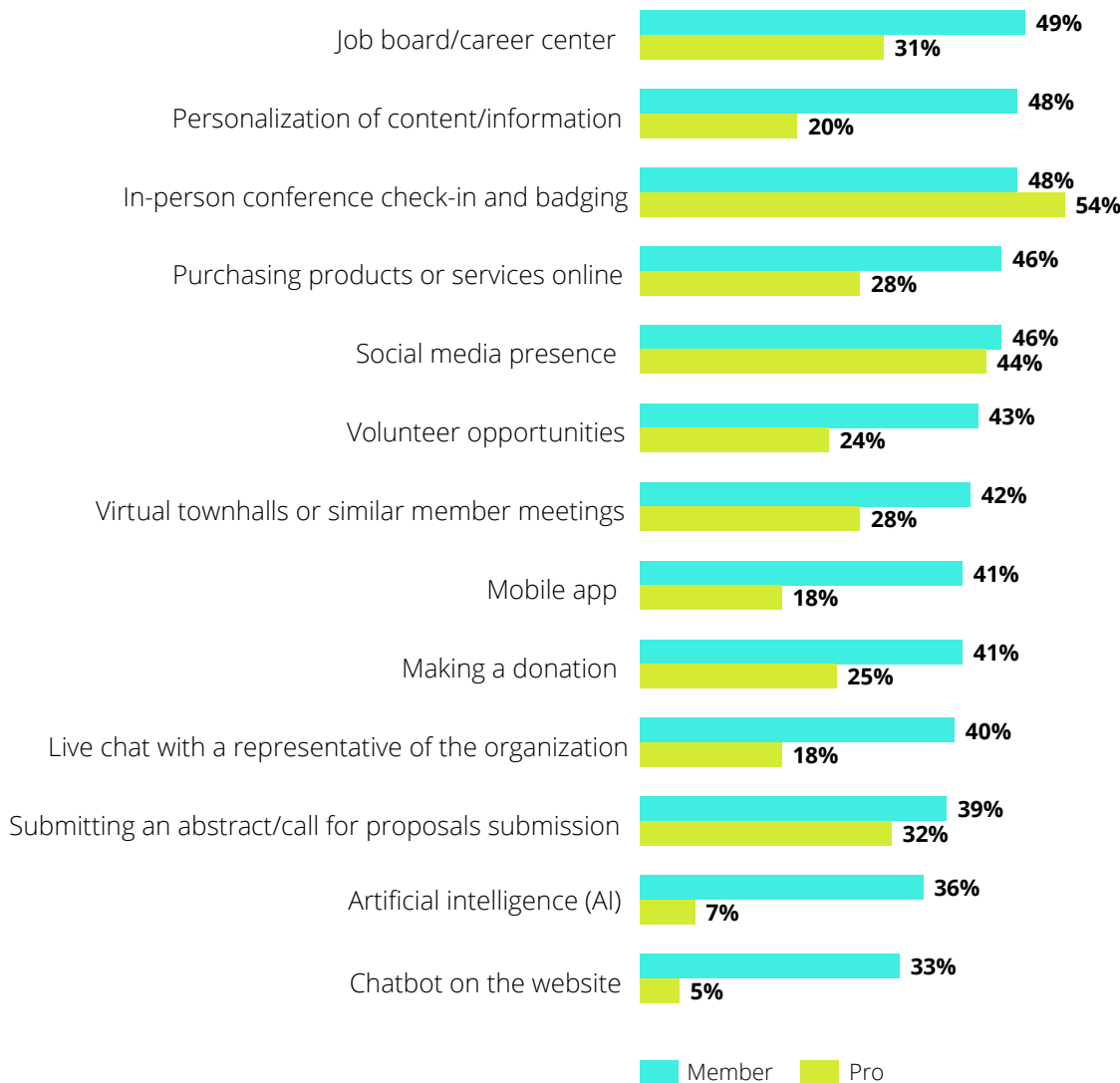
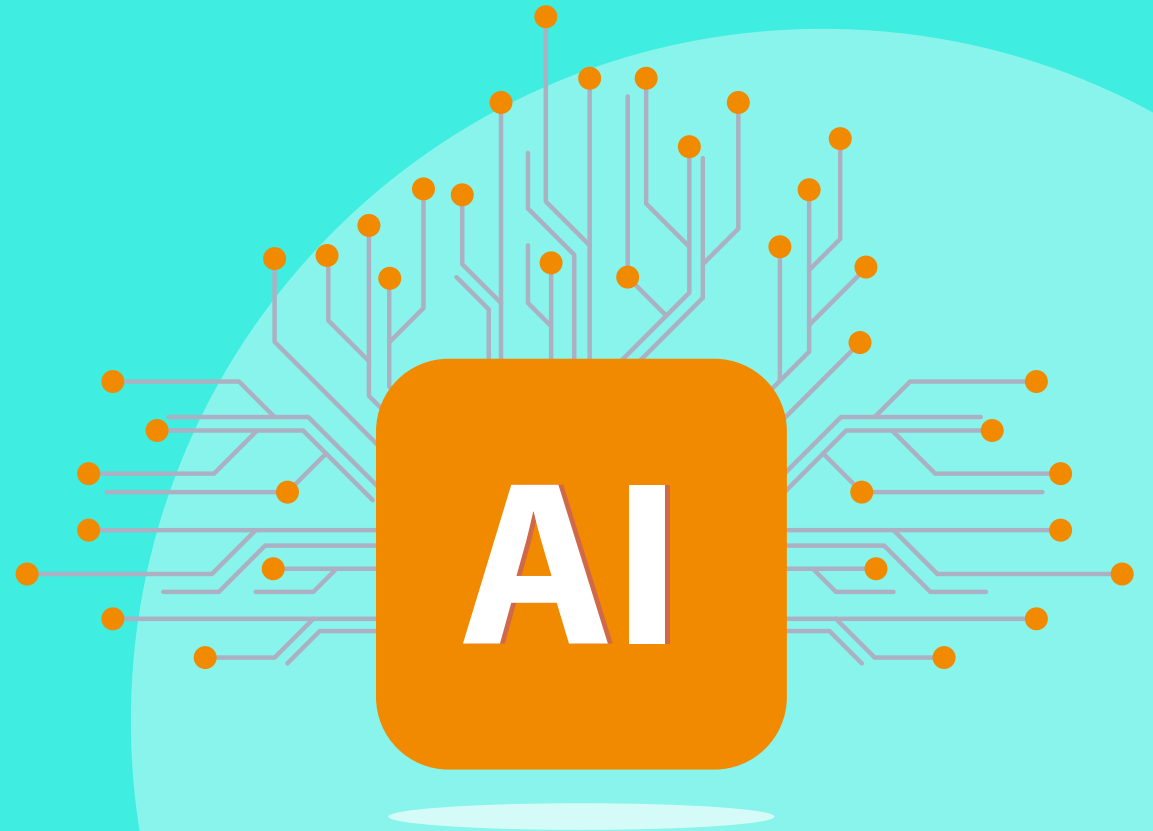


Figure 29. Questions asked: Here are some specific ways that professional membership organizations might use technology to connect and provide benefits and services to members. How would you rate your organization on each? | Here are some specific ways that professional membership/trade organizations might use technology to connect and provide benefits and services to members. How would you rate your organization on each?

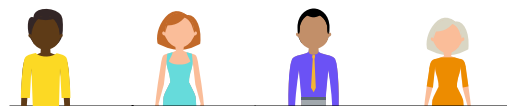
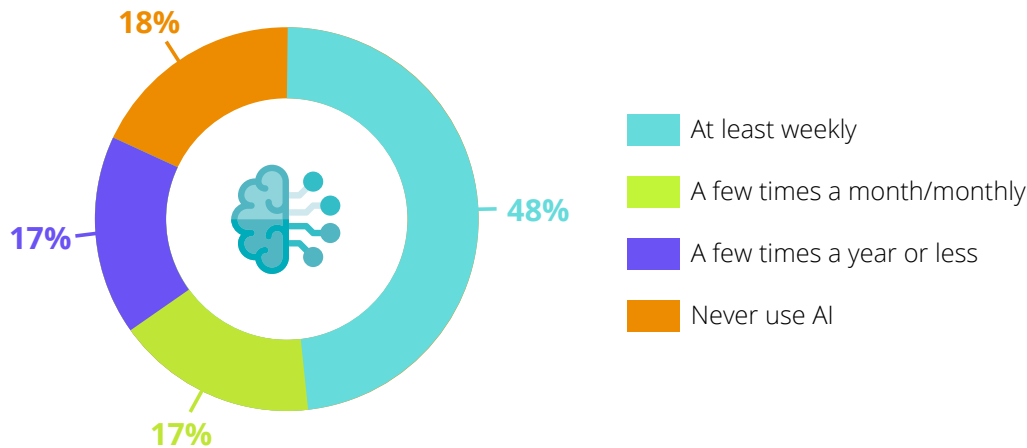
# SPOTLIGHT ON AI



This year's study took a closer look at the growing area of Artificial intelligence. Most Members say they are using AI at work at least a few times each month, with 48 percent reporting that they use AI at least weekly.

Generation Z is most likely to use AI at least weekly, while more Boomers/Matures use AI a few times per year or less.

### AI usage at work (Member viewpoints)



	Gen Z	Millennials	Gen X	Boomers/ Matures
At least weekly or more	65%	57%	49%	28%
A few times a month/monthly	15%	19%	18%	12%
A few times a year or less	19%	24%	34%	59%

Figures 30 & 31. Question asked: How often, if at all, are you using artificial intelligence (AI) at work?

Most Members (54 percent) agree or strongly agree that AI is changing the way their company operates. Nearly half of Members (48 percent) agree or strongly agree that AI is helping them be smarter and more efficient in their work.

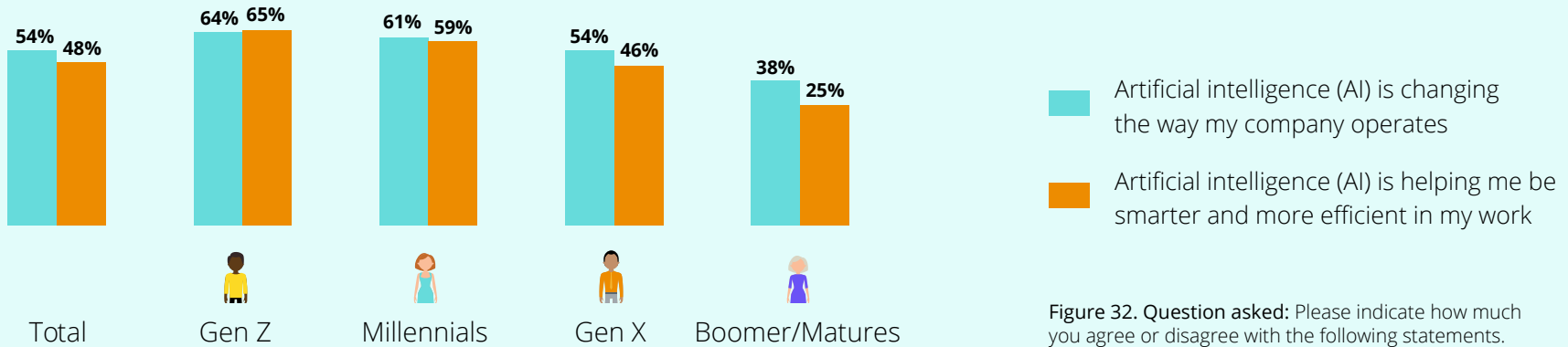


Figure 32. Question asked: Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.

In contrast, few Pros say their organization is using AI. Of those that use AI, 42 percent say their organization will spend more on AI in the next year.

### Organization's use of AI (Pro viewpoint)

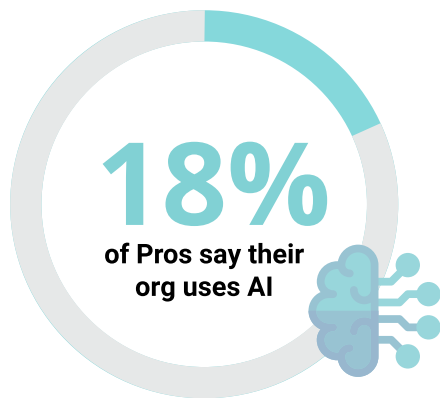


Figure 33. Question asked: Which of the following technologies/solutions does your organization use? Select all that apply.

Pros' responses also indicate that organizations' boards may be hesitant on how to move forward with AI. Sixty-four percent of boards have not discussed AI or are still determining their organization's use of AI.

### Board's position on organization's use of AI (Pro viewpoint)

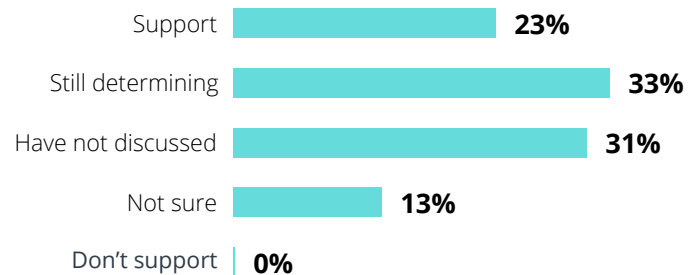
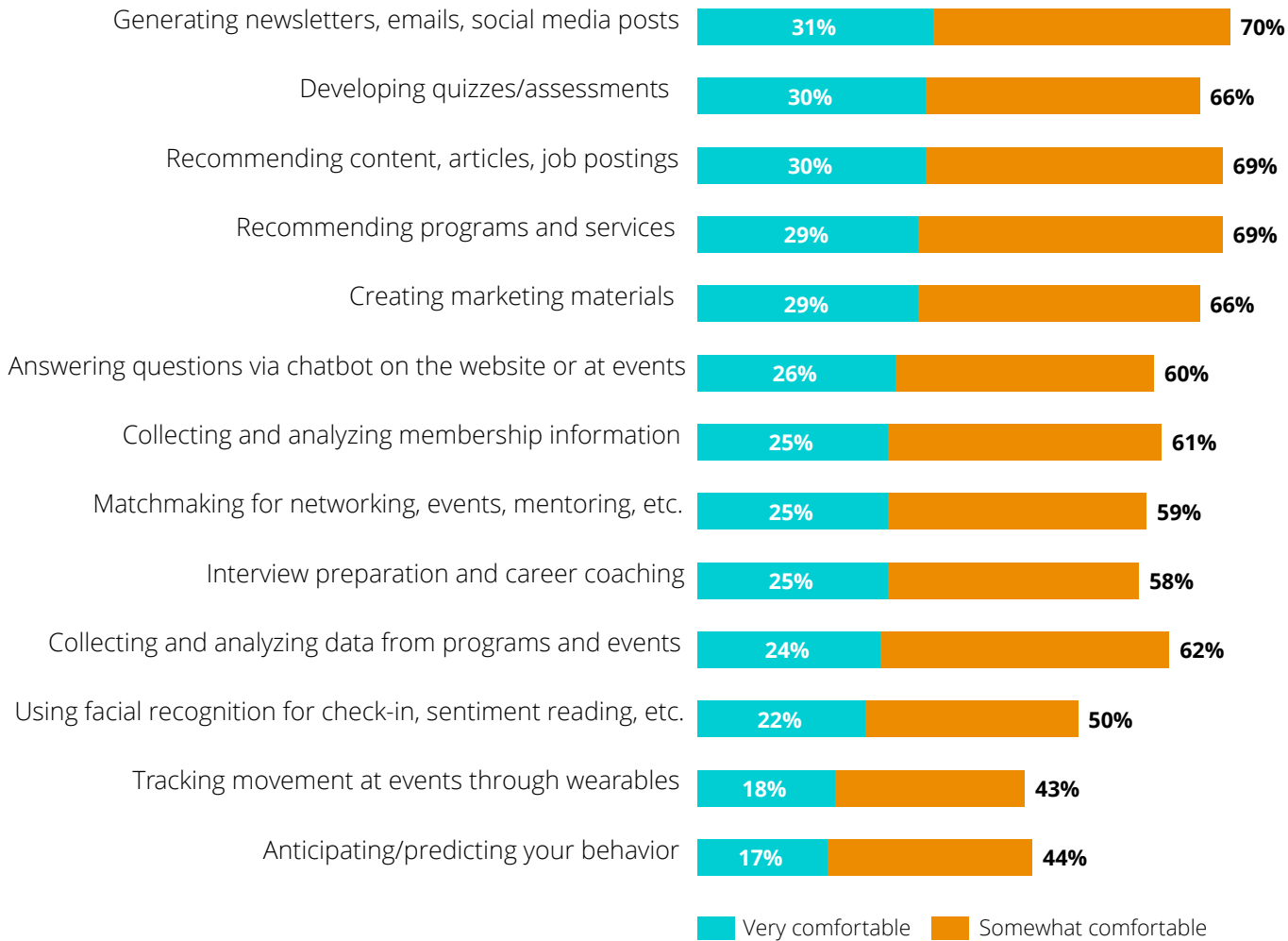


Figure 34. Question asked: Which of the following best describes your board's position on the use of artificial intelligence (AI) by your organization?





Members say they are most comfortable with their professional organization using AI for content creation, including newsletters and emails, quizzes/assessments, and recommendations. Although they are least comfortable with their organization using AI for activities that track and/or analyze their behavior, they are comfortable with the outcomes of tracking and/or analyzing their behavior.

### Member comfort level with their organization's use of AI



Generation Z is the most comfortable with their professional organization using AI to recommend programs and services and collecting and analyzing data from programs and events. Millennials are the most comfortable with using AI for developing quizzes and assessments and recommending programs and services. Gen Z and Boomers are the most comfortable with generating content such as newsletters, emails, social media posts, articles, etc.

### Member comfort level with their organization’s use of AI by generation

	 Gen Z	 Millennials	 Gen X	 Boomers/ Matures
Generating newsletters, emails, social media posts	37%	34%	30%	26%
Developing quizzes/assessments	36%	37%	26%	23%
Recommending content, articles, job postings	33%	34%	30%	22%
Recommending programs and services	39%	36%	28%	18%
Creating marketing materials	37%	35%	27%	21%
Answering questions via chatbot on the website or at events	37%	33%	25%	11%
Collecting and analyzing membership information	29%	32%	22%	18%
Matchmaking for networking, events, mentoring, etc.	32%	32%	24%	14%
Interview preparation and career coaching	36%	29%	24%	14%
Collecting and analyzing data from programs and events	38%	28%	22%	13%
Using facial recognition for check-in, sentiment reading, etc.	31%	29%	19%	11%
Tracking movement at events through wearables	29%	23%	17%	6%
Anticipating/predicting your behavior	34%	22%	15%	7%

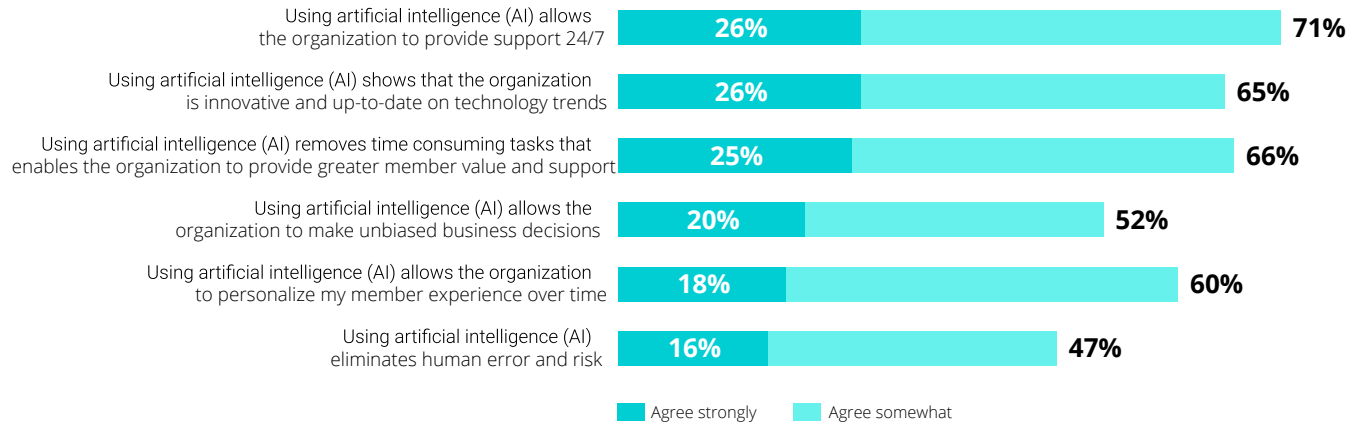


Figures 35 and 36. Question asked: There are many different ways that organizations can use artificial intelligence (AI). How comfortable do you feel with your professional membership organization using AI in the following ways?

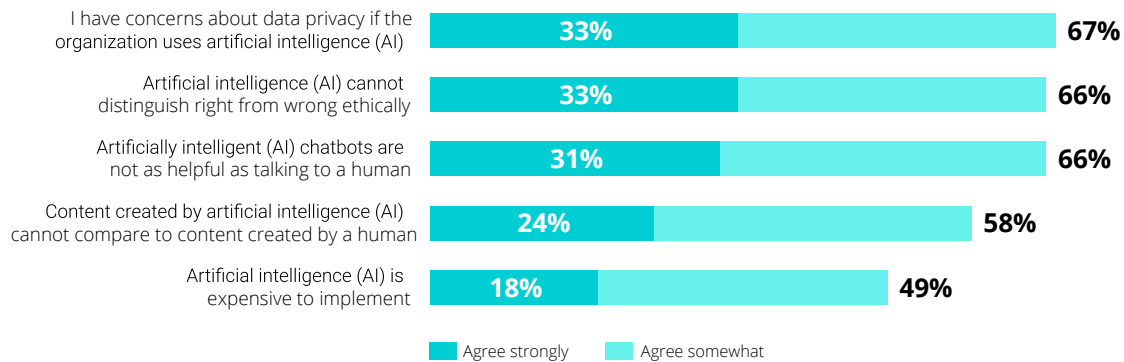
Members' responses show that they see both the positives and negatives of AI usage, with their biggest concerns around privacy and ethics.

## Member viewpoints on positives and negatives of AI usage

### Reasons why people support professional membership organizations using AI



### Reasons why people oppose professional membership organizations using AI

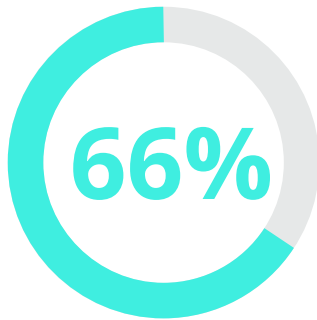


**Figure 37. Question asked:** Here are some reasons why people might SUPPORT professional membership organizations using artificial intelligence (AI). Please indicate if you agree or disagree with each. Q36e: Here are some reasons why people might OPPOSE professional membership organizations using artificial intelligence (AI). Please indicate if you agree or disagree with each.



Most members agree that using technology makes them concerned about privacy and data security. However, most also agree that they are comfortable with technology collecting data on them if it is for their benefit.

### Member views about privacy and data security

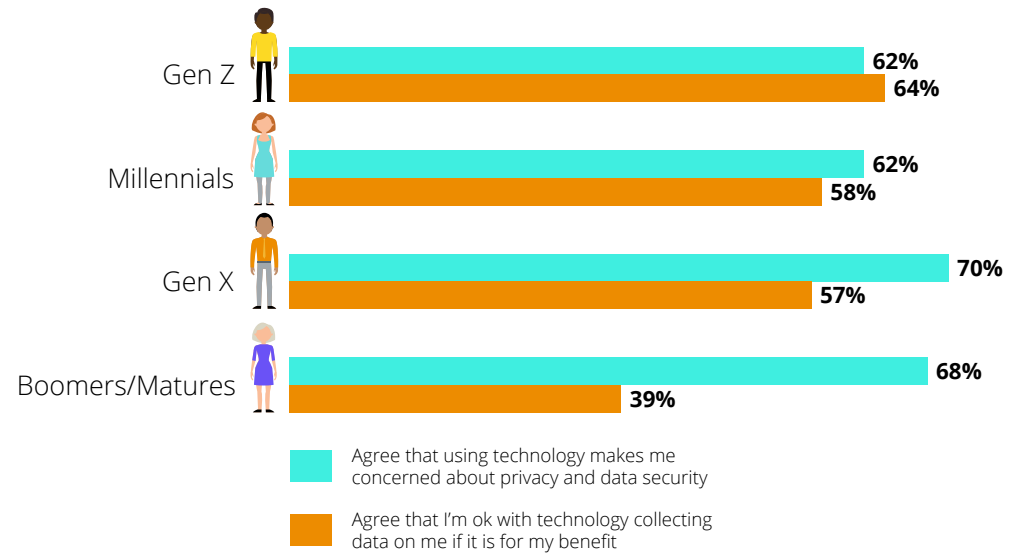


*agree that "using technology makes me concerned about privacy and data security"*



*agree that "I'm OK with technology collecting data on me if it is for my benefit"*

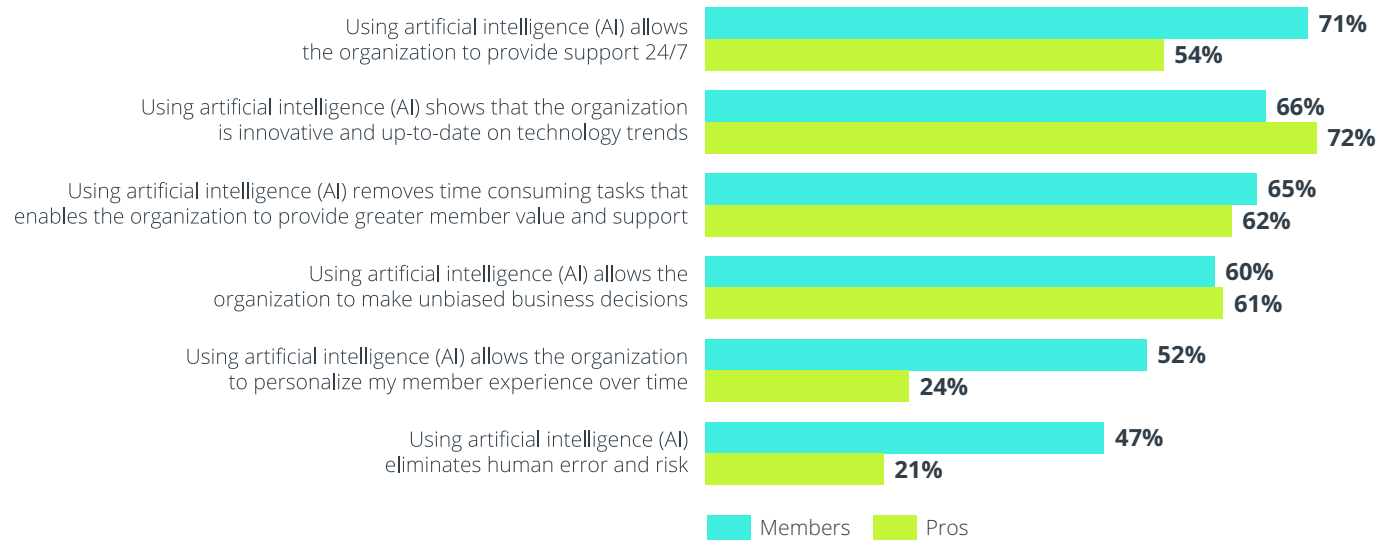
Figures 38 & 39. Question asked: Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.



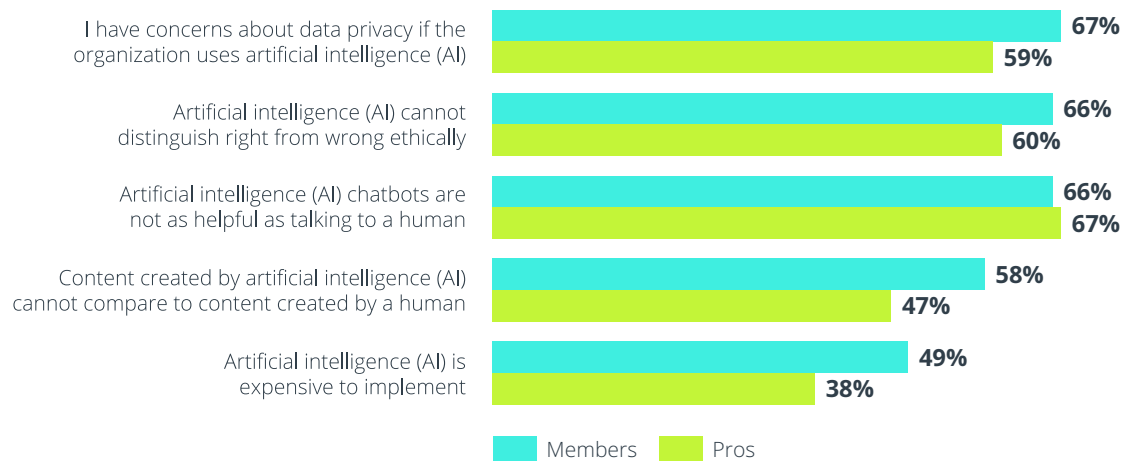
Pros' responses indicate that they see the benefit of AI in terms of time savings. They are slightly less concerned than Members about data privacy.

### Member and Pro viewpoints on positives and negatives of AI usage

Reasons why people **support** professional membership organizations using AI

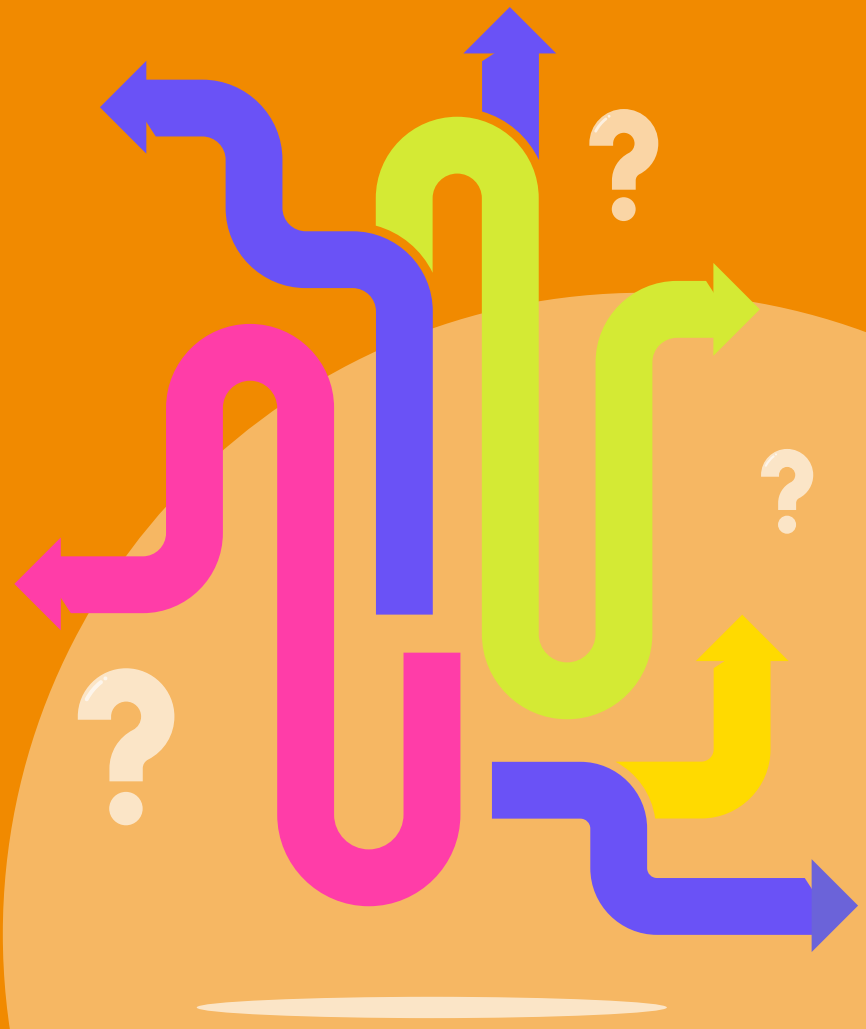


Reasons why people **oppose** professional membership organizations using AI



**Figure 40.** Question asked: Here are some reasons why people might **OPPOSE** professional membership organizations using artificial intelligence (AI). Please indicate if you agree or disagree with each. Here are some reasons why people might **SUPPORT** professional membership organizations using artificial intelligence (AI). Please indicate if you agree or disagree with each.

# WHERE TO GO FROM HERE



# The findings in this study make it clear that organizations must continue to demonstrate member value and put modern technology to work to keep member loyalty and retention going strong.

Here are five ways to use the data and findings from this study to provide greater member value and keep members around longer:

## 1 Close the gaps in member value

This study's findings show that it's not a given that members will continue to renew – especially if their companies stop paying their membership dues. So, be sure to review your organization's value proposition to ensure it is still relevant to today's members and shares a clear vision of how membership will improve a members' career and life.

Also, take time to close the gaps in individual member benefits. This study points to multiple areas in which organizations continue to undervalue some of the benefits that are most important to members, suggesting a big opportunity to provide greater value – particularly when it comes to career advancement. For example:

- Use comprehensive job board software to create an online career center that gives members the resources they need to grow professionally, including industry-specific career advice, online career coaching, career insights, city-specific data, an online career planning tool, and a mentor board.
- Offer more professional education opportunities throughout the year. Using a modern learning management system (LMS) can help you to deliver year-round high-quality online educational experiences.

- Use your association management software (AMS) to make it easier for you and your members to track certifications and credentials so that your members always know their status.

Providing your members with more of the career-building resources they seek will demonstrate greater member value, leading to greater member engagement and loyalty.



## 2 Think of your events as a channel, not a benefit

As with previous studies, this study's findings suggest that organizations are heavily focused on events, while they greatly overestimate the importance of events as a member benefit. To ensure your events deliver maximum value to members, try thinking of your events differently. Consider them as a channel for delivering many of the benefits your association's members want. For example:

- Add career events, such as career fairs and live résumé reviews, to your next conference.
- Offer training courses at your events, including sessions that provide industry credentials or credits as well as trainings.
- Repurpose in-person sessions by offering them as online learning opportunities for members who want to revisit content or who could not make it to your onsite event.
- Use modern technology to make the entire event – from start to finish – as smooth as possible for attendees.
- Ask your members what would make your events more valuable to them, and then incorporate as much of their feedback as possible.



Curious how your team can leverage technology for enhanced attendee experiences and value?

Find out how 500+ event professionals are using the latest event tech.

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## 3 Keep up with members' tech expectations

In this study, Members give their professional organization higher technology ratings than Pros do. Plus, Members who view their organization as an early adopter of technology continue to be more loyal. Meanwhile, organizations continue to feel technically unprepared for the future and lack some of the foundational elements of a strong technology strategy – including a digital transformation plan.

So, make sure your organization stays relevant by keeping up with members' tech expectations. Start by building a digital council, or a team within your organization that can connect, collaborate, learn, and share methods to accelerate digital transformation, which in turn will elevate the member experience. Next, work with this team to create a formal digital transformation plan that will take your organization into the future. This plan should map out how your organization will incorporate modern tools, such as an AMS system, an LMS system, and event management tools, to help you manage member data more efficiently, streamline work, and provide a modern digital member experience.

## 4 Move forward with AI

Members are ahead of their professional organization when it comes to AI. They're adopting AI in their work more than Pros. And despite concerns about data privacy, Members see value in their professional organization using technology to create and recommend content for them.

AI (and your members) will not wait for your association to catch up. So, get started now by incorporating AI into your technology plan. You don't have to tackle AI all at once, but you should take a strategic approach to AI adoption. Start by:

- Documenting some of the ways AI can help your organization be more efficient and focused on strategic priorities, such as:
  - More quickly generate content, such as email communications and social media posts
  - Send recommended content, job postings, programs, and services to members
  - Employ chatbots to deliver customer service to members 24/7
- Starting discussions about AI with your board and consider creating an AI task force to think through how your organization will approach AI. If you're already discussing AI with your board, consider accelerating the conversation so you can start adopting AI sooner rather than later.
- Developing an AI policy that is consistent with your organization's security, privacy, and technology policies. Consider also including acceptable uses of AI, approved AI tools, and more.

## 5 Rethink what technology can do for your association

Pros in this study view tools as serving a single purpose. For example: events related tools in terms of how they drive revenue, AMS or CRM systems as helping with member acquisition/retention, and webcast/webinar tools and online communities as tools to drive member engagement. But these types of tools can do so much more.

To ensure you're getting the most out of your systems, make a list of the key technologies your association uses or plans to use. Next, consider how each tool can help with everything from attracting, engaging, and retaining members to generating revenue. For example, a mobile event app can engage event attendees before, during, and after the event – helping you connect with members and prospective members and improve member loyalty. Another example: In addition to supporting your member recruitment and retention efforts, your AMS can help you gather information about members and use it to deliver content specific to their interests – helping you to drive greater member engagement.

The possibilities for your organization's use of technology are vast. Make sure you're using them to the fullest to stay relevant and deliver maximum value to your members.



# Simplify your process. Amplify your impact.

Experience the transformative power of connected technology from a leading partner. Momentive Software (formerly Community Brands) is dedicated to helping associations utilize data in a more effective way, enhance member experiences, and discover new revenue streams.



Prioritize your staff and members with intelligent member management.



Move members forward with educational opportunities for professional development.



Become the ultimate career growth destination for members.



Create more engagement with end-to-end event management solutions.



Make smarter, faster decisions based on real-time data insights.



Member Management



Career Centers



Learning Management



Data & Analytics



Event Management





# PUT THE INSIGHTS FROM THIS STUDY INTO PRACTICE.

Learn how Momentive Software can help your association grow and thrive.

Let's chat

**Research methodology** Commissioned by Momentive Software, formerly Community Brands, Edge Research conducted an online survey of 1,005 U.S. Members who self-reported they are 18 years old or older and are currently a member of a professional membership organization. Survey respondents were recruited through an online non-probability sample, meaning findings are not projectable to the larger population of members. The term "Members" refers specifically to those who were surveyed. Quotas were set so the survey is representative of key demographics. A parallel online survey was conducted among 211 professionals who work in these types of organizations. Survey respondents were recruited using Momentive Software lists and online panel providers, which, too, is a nonprobability sample. The terms "Professionals" or "Pros" refers specifically to those who were surveyed. The surveys were in the field during June and July of 2024.



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## About Momentive Software, formerly Community Brands

Momentive Software (formerly Community Brands) amplifies the impact of over 30,000 purpose-driven organizations in over 30 countries. Mission-driven organizations and associations rely on the company's cloud-based software and services to solve their most critical challenges: engage the people they serve, simplify operations, and grow revenue. Built with reliability at the core and strategically focused on events, careers, fundraising, financials, and operations, our solutions suite is bound by a common purpose to serve the organizations that make our communities a better place to live.

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