



VOICE OF THE CUSTOMER

Q2 2025



**REPUTATION AND CX ANALYSIS FROM 2.7M DEALERSHIP
GOOGLE REVIEWS IN THE FIRST HALF OF 2025**

THIS REPORT IS BROUGHT TO YOU BY WIDEWAIL

WHY WIDEWAIL IS DIFFERENT

WIDEWAIL IS THE ONLY FIRM THAT CAPTURES AND ANALYZES 100% OF GOOGLE REVIEWS FOR EVERY AUTOMOTIVE DEALER IN THE U.S. EACH MONTH.

IN ADDITION TO READING THIS REPORT, HERE ARE THREE WAYS TO PUT THAT DATA TO WORK:

TRY THE “WARI”

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FREE TOOL: WIDEWAIL AUTOMOTIVE REPUTATION INDEX (WARI)

Access key reputation data for all dealers in the US in Widewail’s free research tool, the WARI, updated monthly to give you a complete look at your competitors.

ADVANCED REPORTING TOOLS FOR CLIENTS

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TRACK TOPICS IN DETAIL IN YOUR REVIEWS

Clients receive access to advanced customer experience topic and sentiment analysis tools—with built-in industry benchmarks for easy comparison.

CUSTOM REPUTATION REPORTS AVAILABLE EXCLUSIVELY TO THE TOP 150 AUTOMOTIVE GROUPS

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UNCOVER THE ELEMENTS OF CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE WHERE YOU ARE AHEAD, AND WHERE YOU ARE BEHIND

Request a custom quarterly reputation and customer experience report, with an included reputation healthscore.

“With Widewail, the “X factor” is the attention to detail across the board.”

George Jones
Digital Marketing Manager, Haselwood Automotive Group

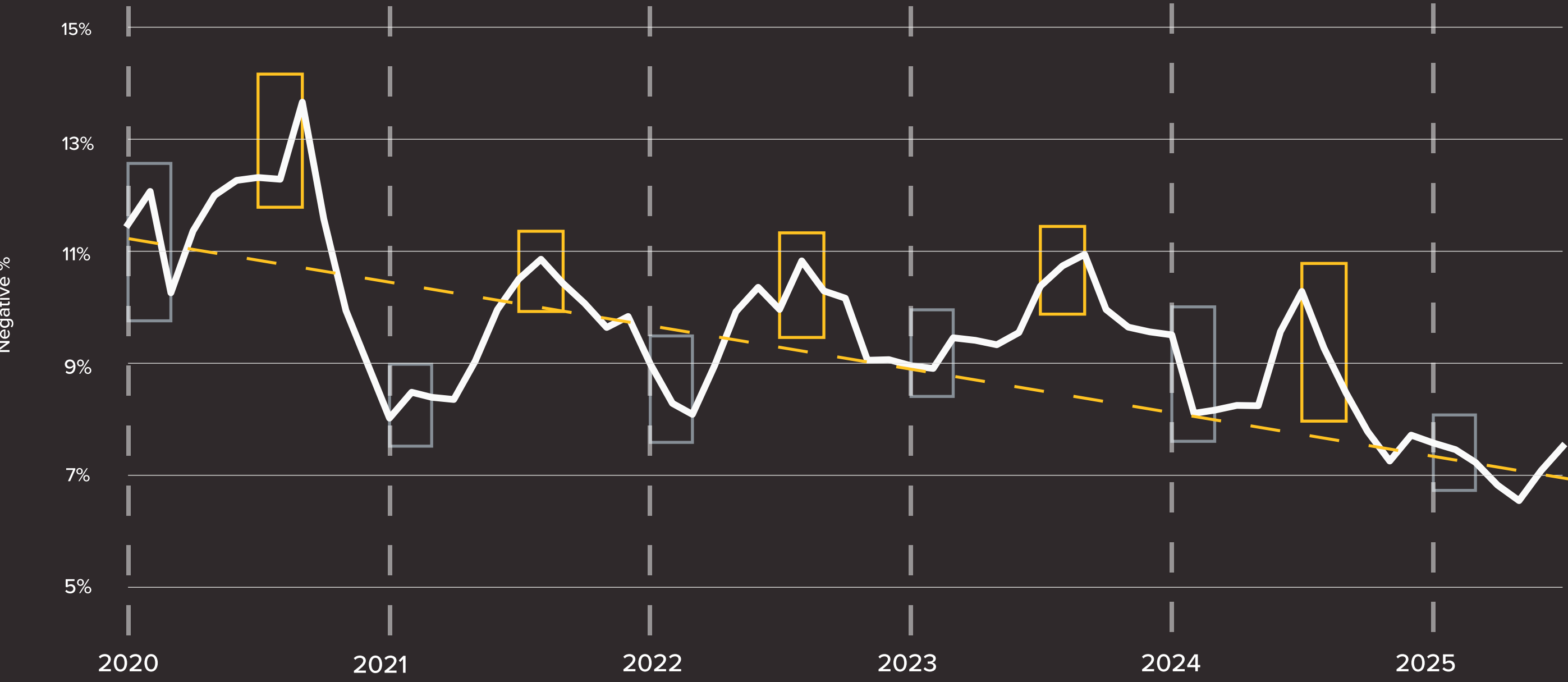
2025 Q2 INDUSTRY BENCHMARKS

AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY		➔	WIDEWAIL CUSTOMERS
12.5 Reviews	Monthly Review Volume		41 Reviews
4.64 Stars	Average Google Rating		4.74 Stars
83%	Response Rate		100%
9%	Percent Negative		6%

OEM REPUTATION RANKINGS, VOICE OF THE CUSTOMER 2025 Q2

OEM	HEALTH SCORE
1. Lexus	96/100
2. Toyota	95/100
3. Subaru	92/100
4. Kia	92/100
5. Nissan	92/100
6. Hyundai	92/100
7. Mercedes-Benz	91/100
8. Audi	90/100
9. Fiat	89/100
10. INFINITI	89/100

5-YEAR NEGATIVITY TREND



WHAT ARE CUSTOMERS SAYING?

THE TOP DRIVER OF POSITIVE REVIEWS IS STAFF

➤ Mentioned in 76.97% of positive reviews overall. Positive staff mentions decreased 2.5% from Q4 to Q1 and have started to rise in Q2, increasing by 1.2%.

THE TOP DRIVER OF NEGATIVE REVIEWS IS COMMUNICATION

➤ Mentioned in 42.12% of negative reviews overall. From Q4 to Q1, negative mentions of communication increased by 0.9%. Mentions continue to increase in Q2, up 1%.

Sales Department:

Positive: Staff mentioned in 81.95% of reviews, +2.70% QoQ
Negative: Communication mentioned in 47.82% of reviews, +0.12% QoQ

Service Department:

Positive: Staff mentioned in 65.19% of reviews, +1.13% QoQ
Negative: Communication mentioned in 47.82% of reviews, +2.70% QoQ

WHAT MATTERS MOST?

Sales

- ▶ Staff
- ▶ Communication
- ▶ Professionalism

Service

- ▶ Communication
- ▶ Maintenance/Repair

INDUSTRY-WIDE TRENDS

WE ARE ON A RECORD-BREAKING PACE. THE MEGA REPUTATION IS HERE.

Q2: The number of dealers generating over 100 Google reviews per month grew 49% over 2024, led by Toyota and Honda dealers. The industry is on track to grow review volume 21% YoY.

5-YEAR TREND: NEGATIVITY SPIKES IN THE SUMMER

Negativity, measured as the percentage of reviews that are 1-3 stars, predictably falls in the winter, growing in summer

TARIFF MENTIONS SPIKE, THEN DROP, BUT REMAIN COMICALLY LOW.

Tariffs were mentioned in 900 reviews in the first half of the year, out of 2.7M. When mentions, consumers often bragged about “beating tariffs.”

EV CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE AS VOLATILE AS THE HEADLINES

Knowledge, helpfulness remain key issues. New in Q2: deals.

WHAT IS IN THIS REPORT?

Each quarter, the Widewail team analyzes millions of reviews using AI technologies to categorize and log what is being said into 27 fundamental topics, whether or not the specific keyword is actually said. Widewail's technology can determine which tags to apply to each review based on contextual details. For Q2 2025, we researched 1.3M Google reviews from ~18,000 U.S.-based new car dealerships.

“

After a high-volume Q2, we continue to be on a record pace, on track for 5.4M reviews in 2025, +21% over 4.2M Google reviews we recorded in 2024. This is a substantial step change for the industry, illustrative of the adoption of reviews by both dealers and customers.

— MATT MURRAY | CEO, WIDEWAIL

Q2 REPUTATION BENCHMARKS WIDEWAIL CLIENTS VS. THE INDUSTRY

2025 Q2 INDUSTRY AVERAGES		➔	2025 Q2 PERFORMANCE FOR WIDEWAIL AUTO CLIENTS
12.5	MONTHLY REVIEW VOLUME		41
4.64	AVERAGE GOOGLE RATING		4.74
9%	NEGATIVE PERCENTAGE		6%
88%	RESPONSE RATE		100%

WHERE TOP-RATED DEALERSHIPS WIN IN Q2

Top dealers have these 5 topics mentioned **often** in positive reviews:

POSITIVE REVIEWS: Q2 2025			
RANK	TOPIC	MENTION %, GROWTH VS. Q1	
1	STAFF	77%	▲ +1.2%
2	HELPFULNESS	22.9%	▲ +0.2%
3	FRIENDLINESS	18.1%	▼ -0.3%
4	KNOWLEDGEABLE	15.5%	▼ -0.6%
5	PROFESSIONALISM	11.8%	▲ +3.2%

Top dealers have these 5 topics mentioned **infrequently** in negative reviews:

NEGATIVE REVIEWS: Q2 2025			
RANK	TOPIC	MENTION %, GROWTH VS. Q1	
1	COMMUNICATION	42.1%	▲ +1%
2	STAFF	38.3%	▲ +3.8%
3	CAR MAINTENANCE	21.7%	▼ -0.2%
4	WAIT TIMES	20.3%	▲ +1.9%
5	MANAGEMENT	19.6%	▼ -5.2%

WHAT'S DRIVING SALES SENTIMENT?

Positive Sales reviews mention:

RANKING	TOPIC	MENTION %	CHANGE FROM Q1
1	Staff	81.95%	+0.12%
2	Helpfulness	26.08%	+1.98%
3	Knowledgeable	20.44%	+0.21%
4	Friendliness	17.76%	+2.28%
5	Professionalism	14.26%	+4.21%

Negative Sales reviews mention:

RANKING	TOPIC	MENTION %	CHANGE FROM Q1
1	Communication	47.82%	+2.70%
2	Staff	43.93%	+1.85%
3	Management	28.43%	+1.06%
4	Price/Cost	19.59%	+1.76%
5	Financing Departments	16.21%	+1.39%

WHAT'S FUELING SERVICE FEEDBACK?

Positive Service reviews mention:

RANKING	TOPIC	MENTION %	CHANGE FROM Q1
1	Staff	65.19%	+1.13%
2	Friendliness	18.59%	+0.96%
3	Helpfulness	17.86%	+2.23%
4	Communication	12.90%	+3.48%
5	Knowledgeable	12.39%	+1.62%

Negative Service reviews mention:

RANKING	TOPIC	MENTION %	CHANGE FROM Q1
1	Communication	47.90%	+1.39%
2	Staff	40.19%	+0.87%
3	Car Maintenance /Repair	22.47%	+1.97%
4	Management	19.98%	+2.64%
5	Wait Times	19.84%	-4.29%

Dive deeper into topic-sentiment analysis with individual scorecard reports for the top 150 auto groups.

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REVIEW VOLUME ON TRACK FOR NEW HIGHS

Car dealership review activity is on pace to hit record highs in 2025. As of Q2, total Google review volume for the year has totalled 2.72M. If this pace continues, the industry will hit 5.4M for the year, a projected increase of 21% over 2024.

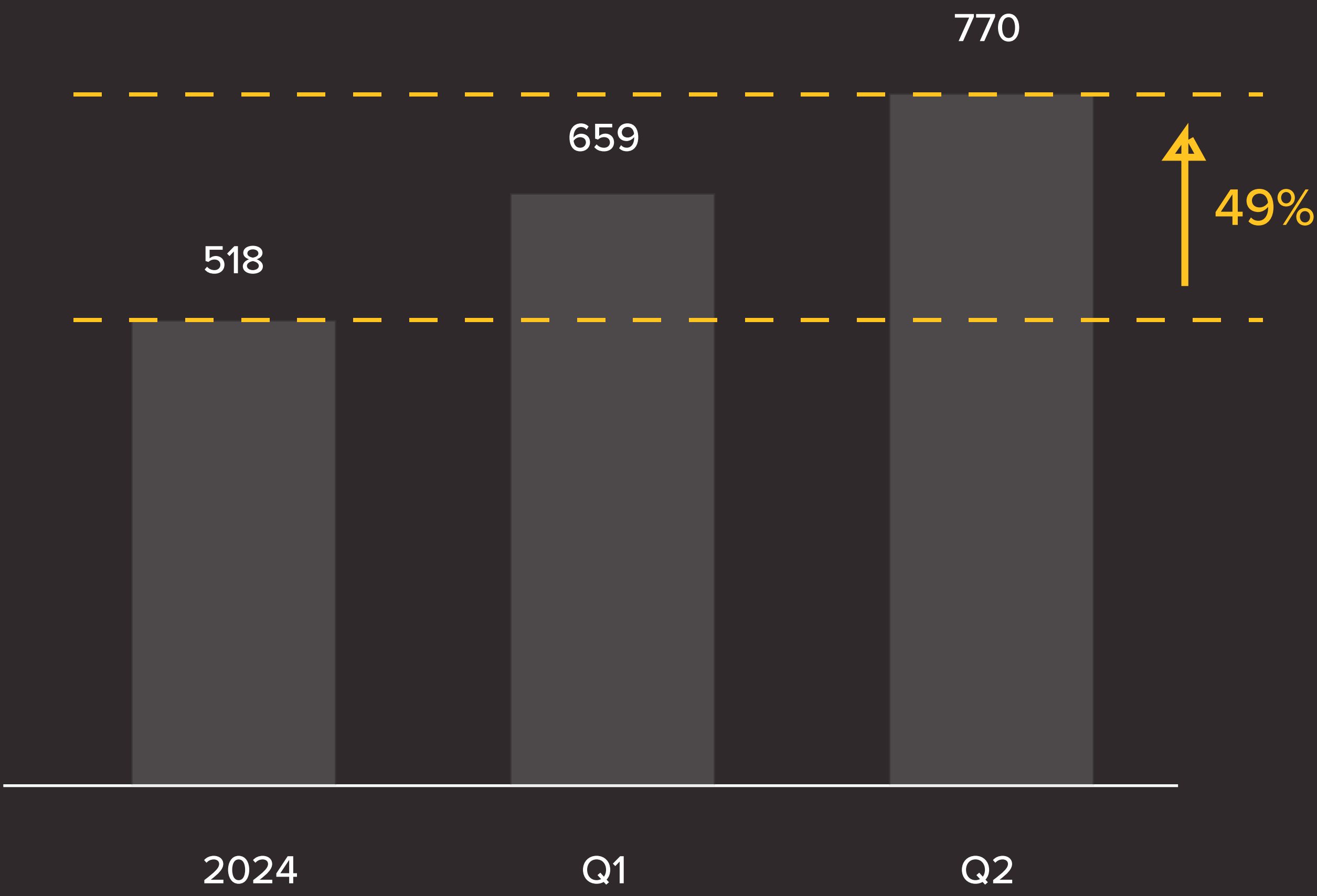
This is a broad phenomenon. We largely attribute this to increasing sales volume, older average vehicle age leading to increased service activity, and a growing percentage of younger, tech-focused consumers. Additionally, dealers are more proactively reaching out to customers to request review content, understanding its impact on reputation and search. One way to understand this heightened focus is to study “the 100+ club.”

THE NUMBER OF DEALERS GENERATING 100+ GOOGLE REVIEWS EACH MONTH ON AVERAGE GROWS 49% IN 2025

There is nothing scientific about the 100+ club. It’s simply a marker we can use to track the top performers within the industry. In Q2, 770 dealerships averaged 100 reviews or more per month, or 4.3% of the industry. While still an elite tier, it’s growing rapidly.

- ▶ The number of dealerships in the 100+ Club has grown 49% year-over-year
- ▶ Growth is expected to continue through the second half of 2025
- ▶ Two OEMs dominate: Toyota and Honda account for nearly half of all 100+ Club dealerships

CHART 1 | COUNT OF DEALERS GENERATING 100+ GOOGLE REVIEWS PER MONTH



Notably, every OEM represented in the club saw growth from Q1 to Q2—except Nissan.

With its lowest profitability in 15 years during H1 2024, that struggle has trickled down to the consumer in both reputation metrics and review momentum.

CHART 2 | PERCENTAGE OF DEALERS GENERATING 100+ REVIEWS/MONTH FROM EACH OEM

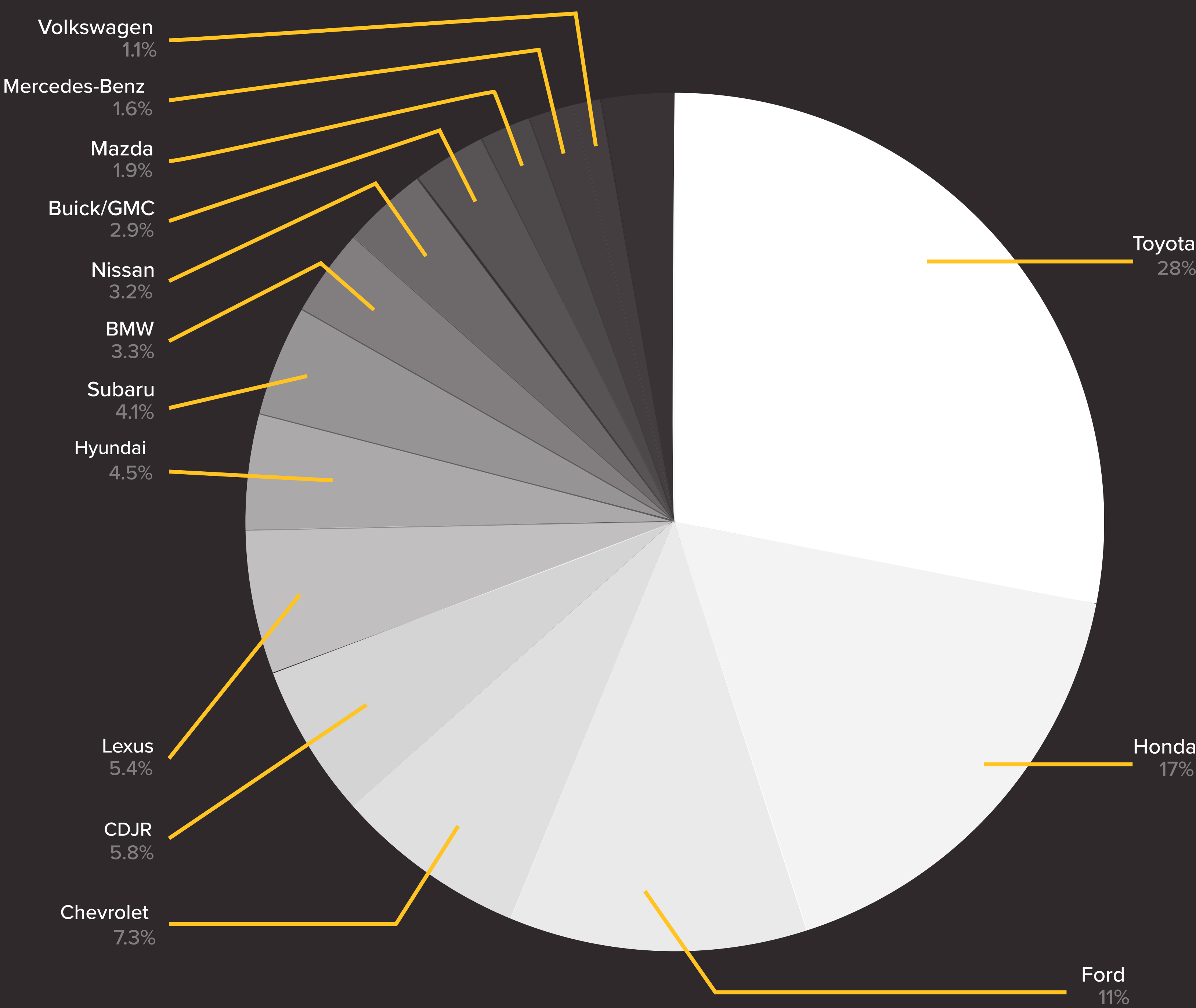


CHART 3 | DEALERSHIP COUNT, 100+ REVIEWS PER MONTH

Brand	Q2	Q1	Growth
Toyota	204	181	12.7%
Honda	124	115	7.8%
Ford	81	79	2.5%
Chevrolet	53	53	0.0%
CDJR	42	36	16.7%
Lexus	39	33	18.2%
Hyundai	33	29	13.8%
Subaru	30	25	20.0%
BMW	24	15	60.0%
Nissan	23	28	-17.9%
Buick/GMC	21	17	23.5%
Mazda	14	11	27.3%
MB	12	7	71.4%
Volkswagen	8	8	0.0%
Audi	7	2	250.0%
Acura	5	5	0.0%
Mitsubishi	3	3	0.0%
Cadillac	3	2	50.0%
Lincoln	2	2	0.0%

REVIEW VOLUME TRENDS

Median monthly review volume is up 17% from Q1 to Q2. Even dealerships below the 100+ threshold are gaining ground, now generating a median of 12.5 reviews per month

Ratings are holding steady at an average of 4.64 stars

Looking ahead: Is this first half performance just pull forward? There's reason to believe sales growth will slow, which could pull the industry back from hitting 5.4M. That said, typically only 45% of reviews originate in the sales department, leaving the majority influencer, service, less affected.

CHART 4 | MEDIAN MONTHLY REVIEW VOLUME PER ROOFTOP

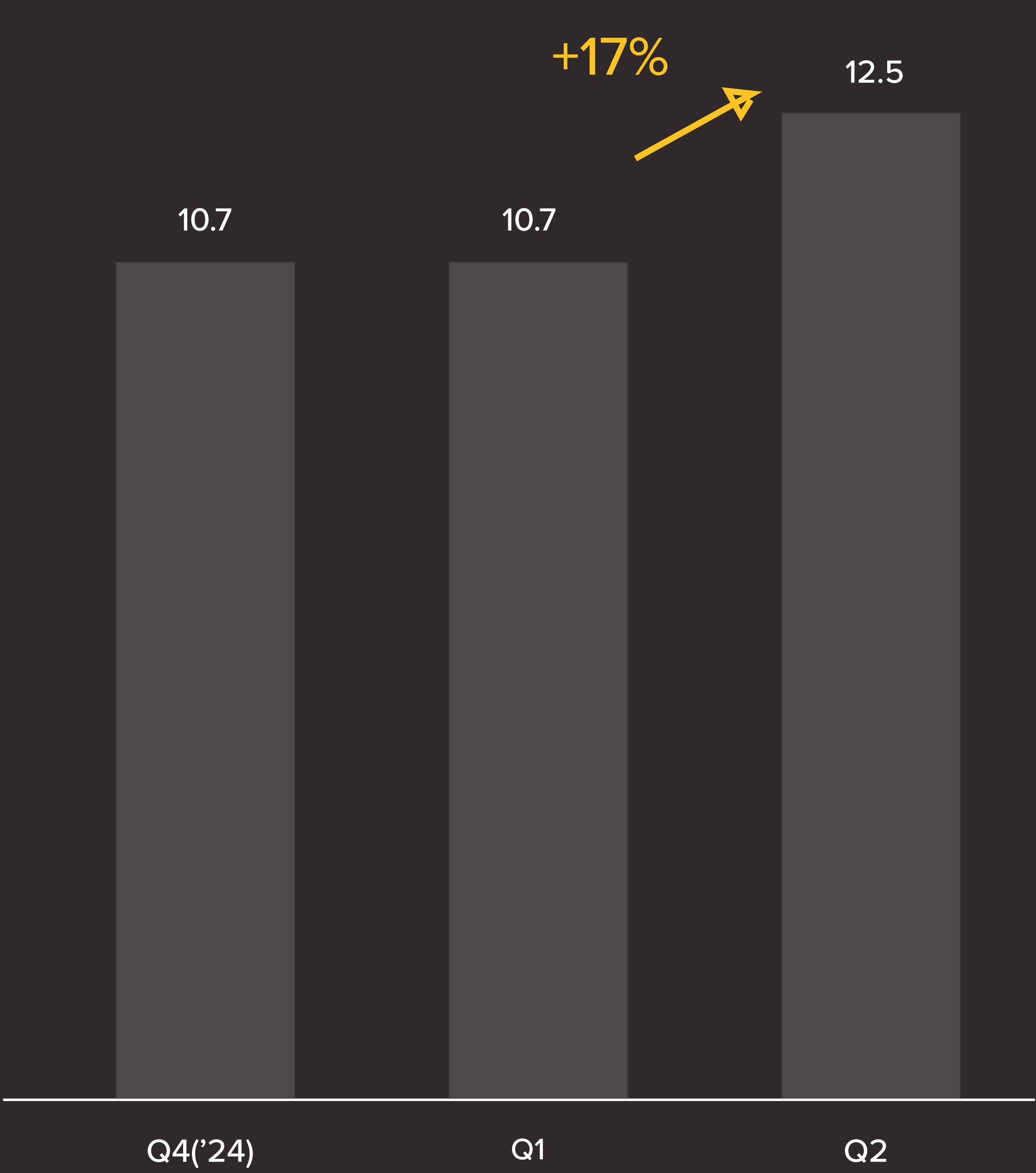


CHART 6 | COUNT OF QUARTERLY REVIEWS, INDUSTRY-WIDE

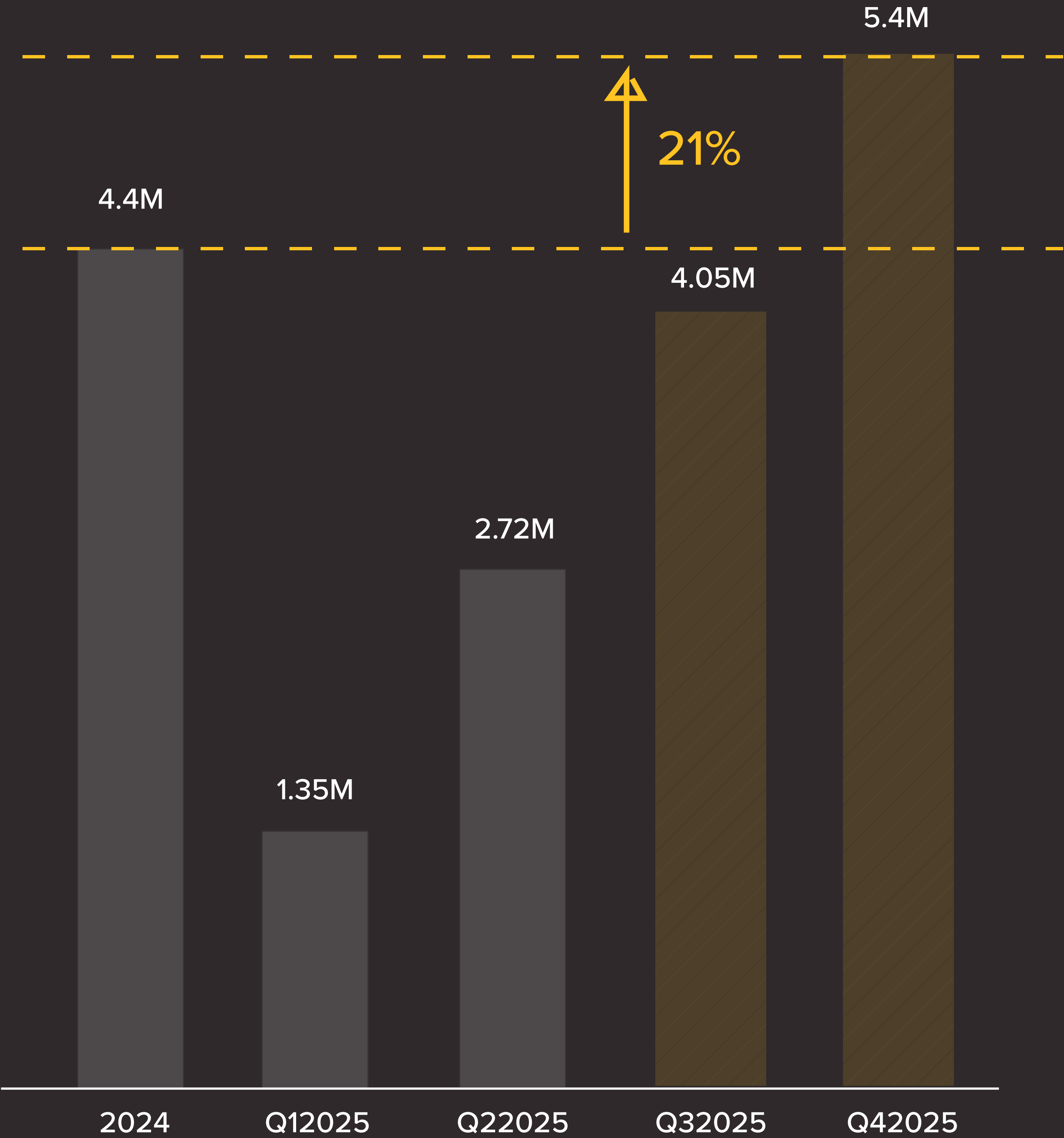


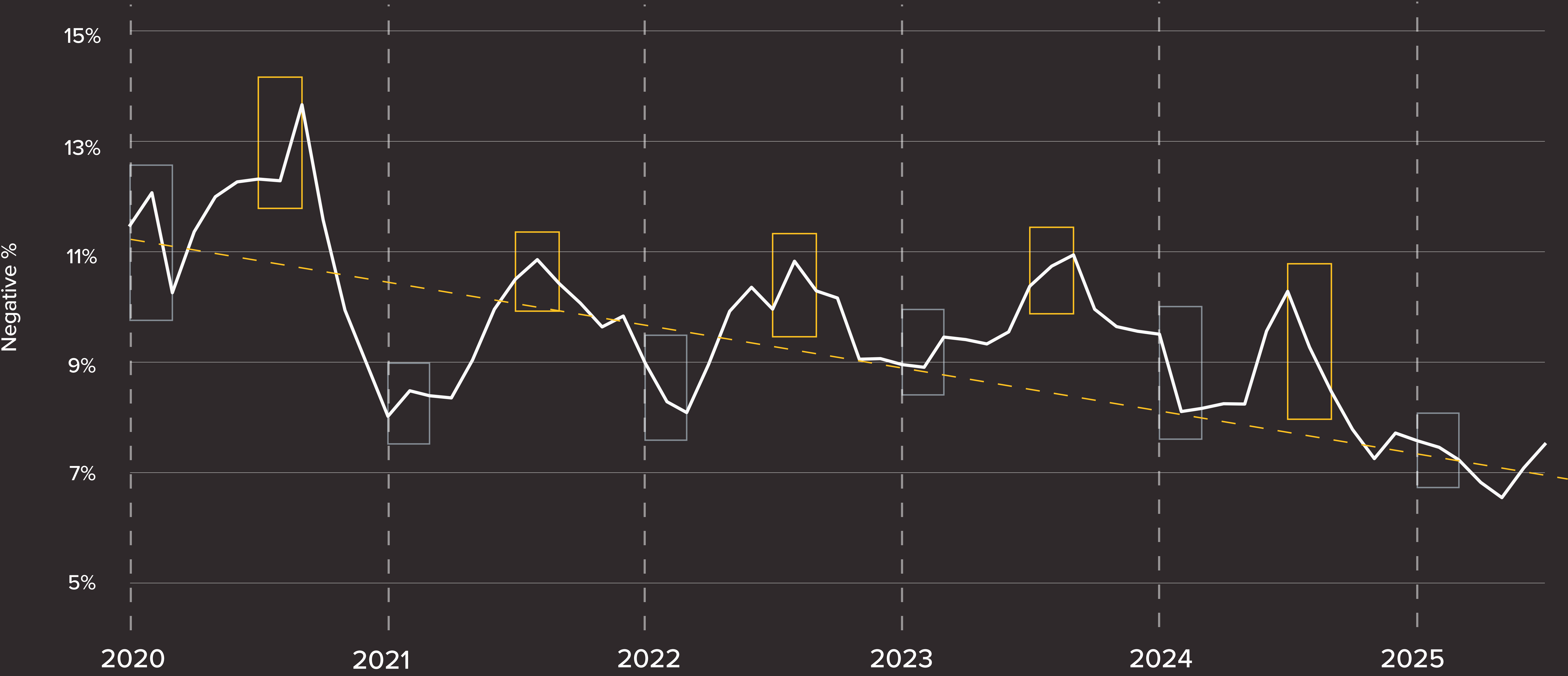
CHART 5 | MEDIAN MONTHLY STAR RATING PER ROOFTOP



Median monthly review volume is up **17%** from Q1 to Q2.

NEGATIVITY SPIKES IN THE SUMMER FOR 5TH CONSECUTIVE YEAR

CHART 7 | NEGATIVE REVIEW TRENDS IN THE AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY



Since 2023, review negativity has followed a clear seasonal pattern:

- ▶ *Lowest in winter*
- ▶ *Highest in summer*

Why? Operational tempo. More customers. More complexity. More vacations. That combination consistently leads to a rise in negative experiences.

That said, it’s not all bad news. Negativity is trending downward in the long term, from 11% in 2020 to ~8% in 2025. With 92% of reviews still receiving 4 or 5 stars, the overall tone remains overwhelmingly positive.

For reference: the negativity rate in residential real estate is 28%. A car dealer is 3 times less likely to get a negative review than a landlord.

“Note the little spike there right at the end of the year. That doesn’t surprise me with holiday travel, right? Thanksgiving, Christmas - people are driving and their cars break. Surprise issues put a lot of stress on customer experience.”

Luke Schnell
Northtown Automotive

TARIFFS FADE, PRICING SENSITIVITY RETURNS IN Q2 REVIEWS

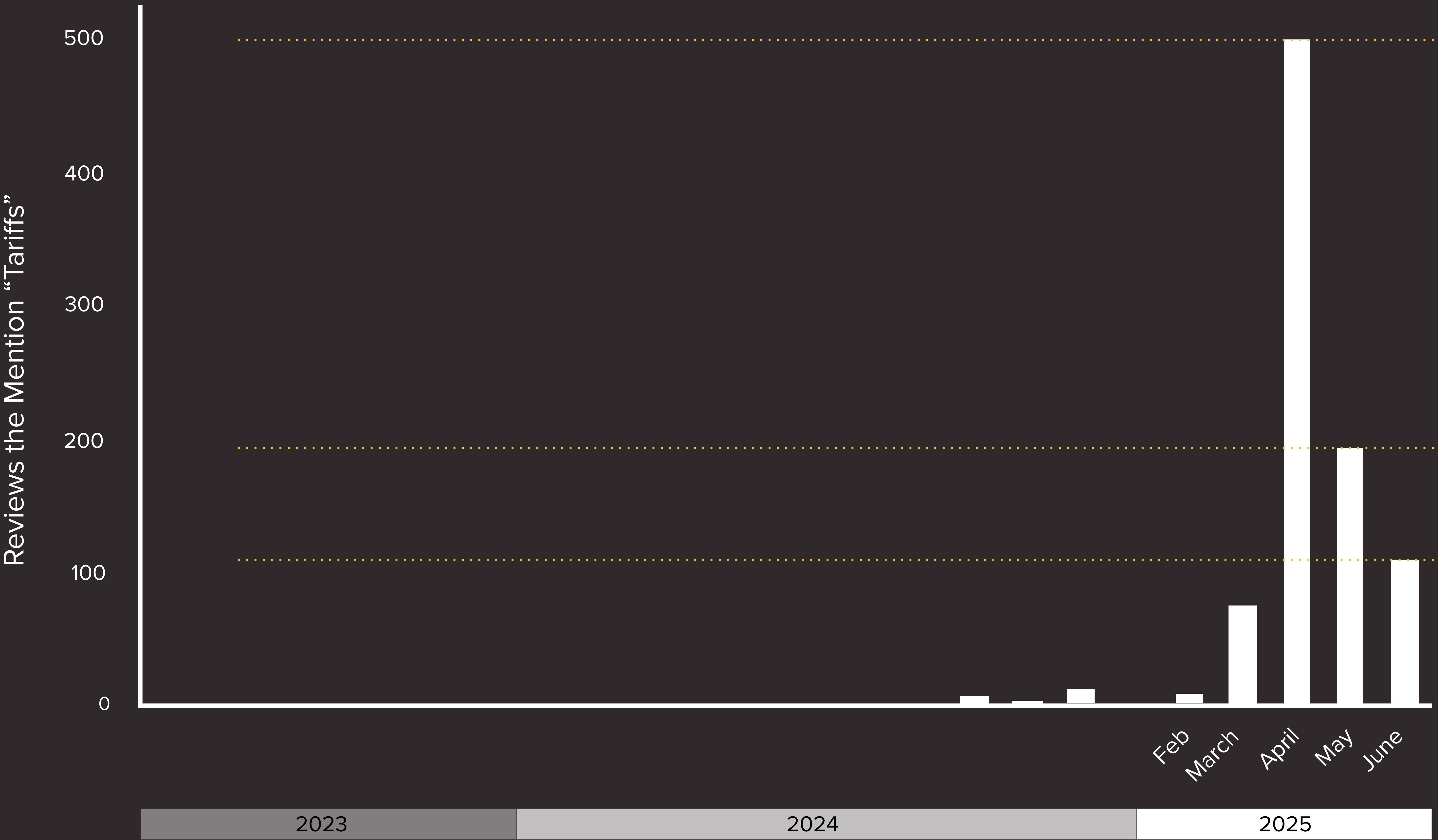
OF THE 2.7M GOOGLE REVIEWS WIDEWAIL STUDIED IN THE FIRST HALF OF 2025, ONLY 900 HAD ANY MENTION OF THE KEYWORD “TARIFFS”. MOST MENTIONS WERE POSITIVE IN NATURE, BUYERS BRAGGING ABOUT “BEATING” THE TARIFFS.

DEALERSHIP CUSTOMERS QUOTES SPECIFIC TO TARIFFS

“We were in a bit of a panic to purchase a new Honda before these ridiculous tariffs take effect.”

“Fully intended to buy new and beat the tariff increases.”

CHART 8 | MENTIONS OF “TARIFFS” IN REVIEWS BY COUNT



Tariffs may be dominating industry headlines, but customer reviews tell a different story.

Out of 2.7 million reviews analyzed in the first half of the year, only 900 mentioned tariffs. Mentions peaked in April (~500) but dropped off quickly—just 200 in May and 100 in June. When tariffs are mentioned at all, it’s typically to boast about avoiding them.

This behavior matches our expectations, as tariff-related pricing impacts have not yet reached the customer. We’re starting to see the automakers absorb the initial tariff impacts, with multiple reported \$1B+ losses in Q2. That will eventually trickle down to the customer, but it will likely take a few quarters.

Bottom line: Tariffs aren’t yet driving online sentiment. If anything, there’s a slight pricing-related halo effect.

That said, keyword searches only offer a narrow view of the impact a topic may have, which is why Widewail’s topic analysis approach does not rely on specific keywords, but associated topics.

We don’t expect customers to commonly mention “tariffs” in reviews, even long term, when they begin to feel a more dramatic impact. We anticipate that the topic of “pricing” will hold the majority of the insights. Let’s go there next.

MULTI-YEAR PRICING TRENDS BEGINNING TO REVERSE

Pricing is quietly shifting. Despite the broader conversation around affordability, mentions of price have declined year-over-year from 2023 to 2024. Deals and incentives have returned to the forefront as the COVID-19 Era fades. The result has been a decline in pricing mentions, which we interpret as fewer transactions being impacted by price over time. We have observed a low-point in May, followed by a 3.5% rise in mentions to finish the quarter, but it's not clear yet if this will sustain.

CHART 9 | MENTIONS OF PRICING IN ALL REVIEWS

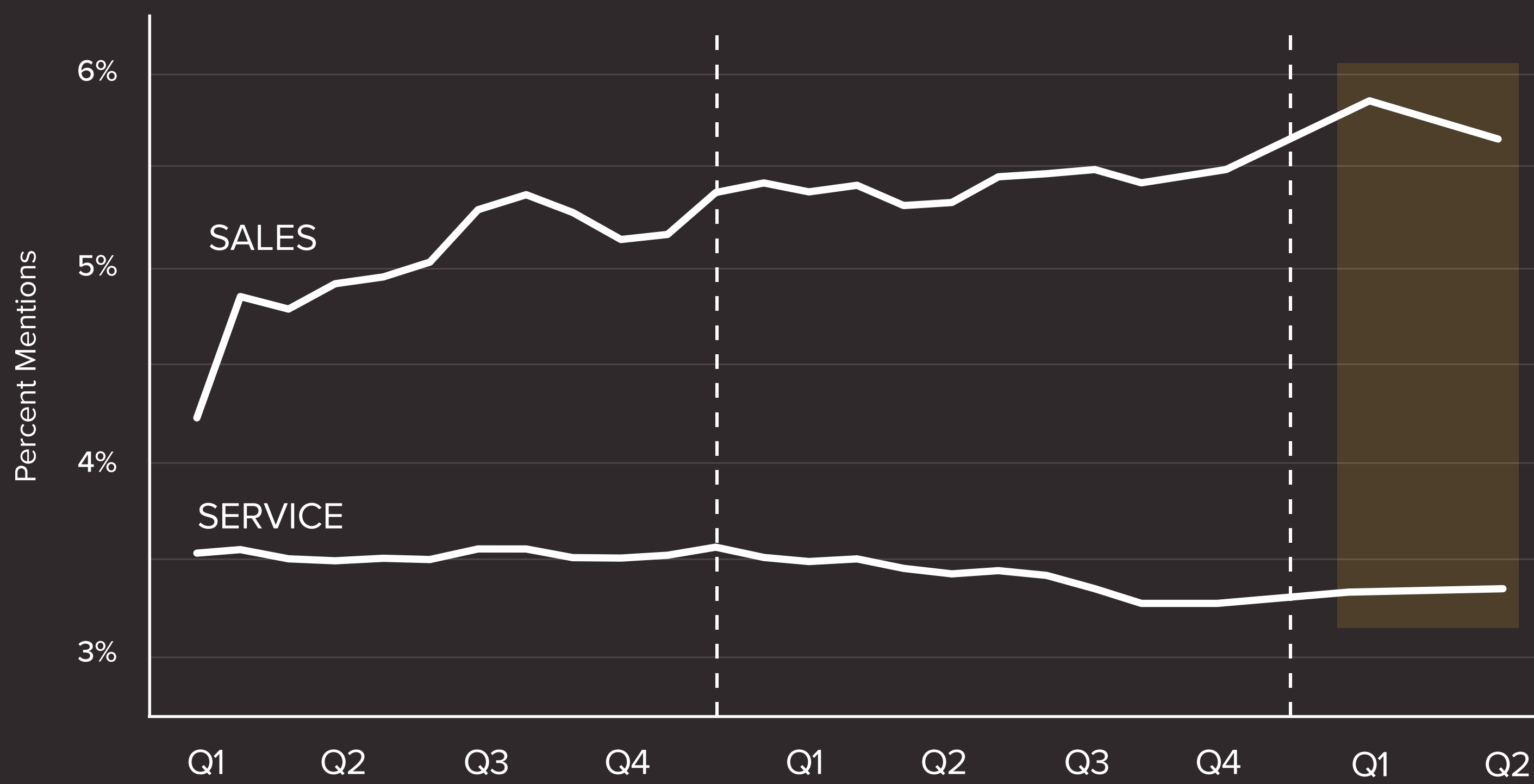


Positive price mentions in Q2:

- ▶ *Trending slightly down in sales (-1.84%)*
- ▶ *Trending slightly up in service (+1.19%)*
- ▶ *There is a noticeable spike in Q1, but momentum appears to be softening*

Pricing positivity in sales has been slowly on the rise for 9 consecutive quarters, the streak ending in Q2 2025. While not yet dramatic, it's a clear reversal. Positivity around service pricing has been remarkably stable, but declining slightly.

CHART 10 | MENTIONS OF PRICING IN POSITIVE REVIEWS

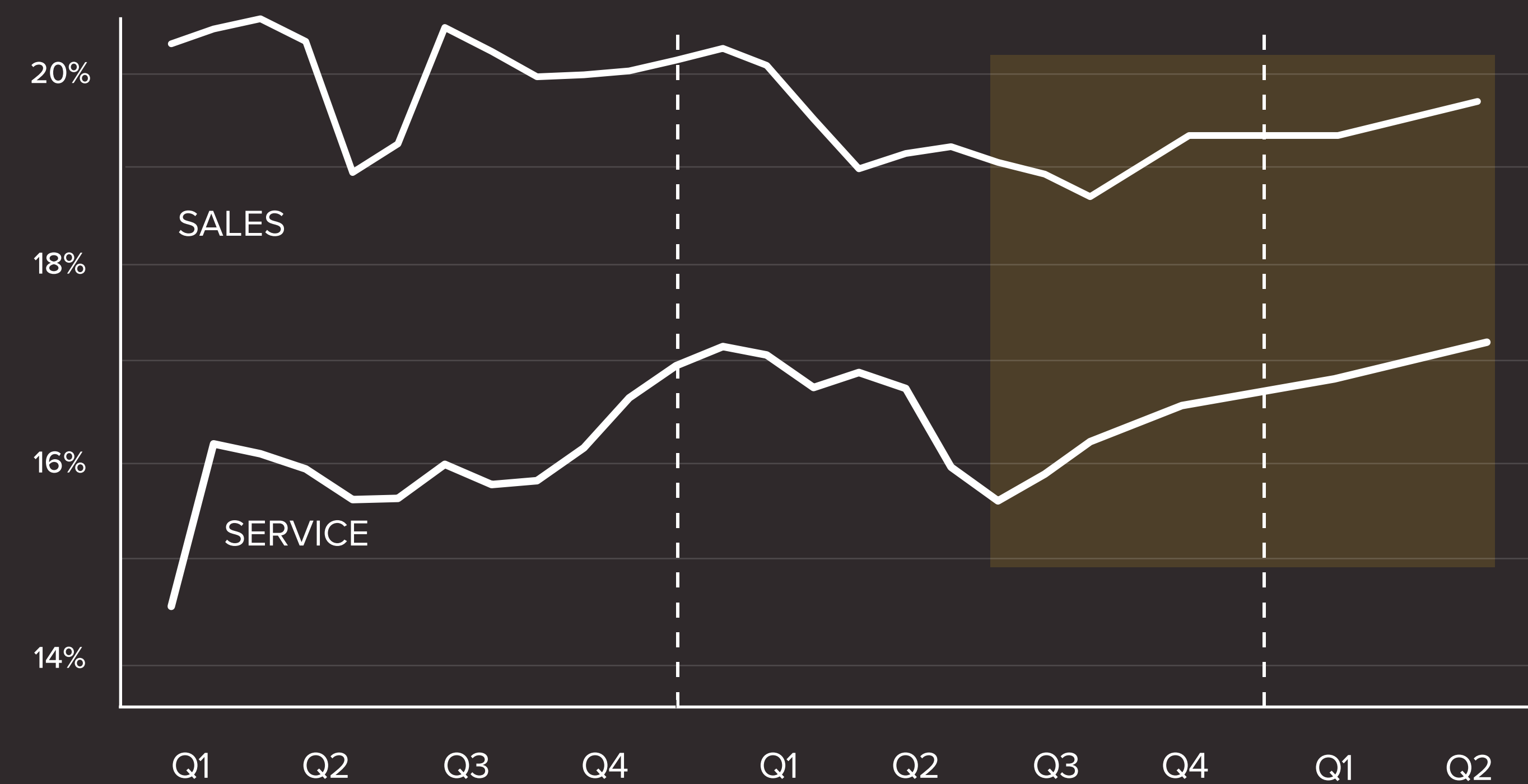


Negative price mentions in Q2:

- ▶ *Climbing quarter-over-quarter in both departments*
- ▶ *Sales (+1.76%)*
- ▶ *Service (+1.72%)*

Mentions of price, which is 4x more common in negative reviews, have been rising for both departments for 3 consecutive quarters. This suggests a growing sensitivity to pricing which may soon be increased by tariffs.

CHART 11 | MENTIONS OF PRICING IN NEGATIVE REVIEWS



Since tariffs shouldn't impact service pricing, the rise in negative sentiment suggests that general price sensitivity is reemerging, particularly on the service side, where customers may be less tolerant of increased costs.

Mentions of price, which is 4x more common in negative reviews, have been rising for 3 consecutive quarters. This suggests a growing sensitivity to pricing which may soon be increased by tariffs.

EV EXPERIENCE NEGATIVITY COMES RIPPING BACK IN Q2

After a brief thaw in Q1, the EV customer-experience gap has swung wide open again. Google reviews from Q2 show EV shoppers are almost twice as likely to complain about staff knowledge and helpfulness as their ICE counterparts, and less likely to present frustration with repair quality or price.

Following an analysis of negative reviews from EV customers that mentioned the topics of Knowledge, Helpfulness, and Deals, we uncovered some of the drivers of EV frustration.

KNOWLEDGE – “STAFF KNOWS LESS THAN THE SHOPPER”

Complaints that had eased to +34% above ICE in Q1, roared back to +82%. This means the EV customer mentions knowledge in negative reviews nearly 2x that of the ICE customer. The pace of new model introduction, technology enhancement, and regulatory volatility appears to be leaving dealerships flat-footed. When an owner says, “I wound up explaining the Super Cruise update to the service advisor,” the credibility penalty is enormous. It’s worth noting that with a high percentage of EV buyers in the U.S. being first-time buyers, roughly 70-90%, these buyers arrive onsite well-read, and as a result, have a higher sensitivity to knowledge gaps. Expectation levels are high.

HELPFULNESS – “NOBODY OWNS MY PROBLEM OR FOLLOWS UP”

For EV customers, negative helpfulness mentions soared from +38% to a staggering +98% in Q2. EV transactions touch more stakeholders - utility companies, charger installers, tax-credit portals, software activation teams, battery-warranty hotlines - so even a minor hand-off failure feels systemic: “Nobody owned my charger install. Three departments blamed each other.” The consequence is an emotional amplification of small process flaws.

DEALS – “THE NUMBER ONLINE EVAPORATES IN-STORE”

What had been a neutral topic in 2024 turned sharply negative (+87%) in Q2. EV buyers, conditioned by startup EV manufacturer’s fixed-price, DTC model, revolt when a \$6k “EV prep fee” or \$5k “market adjustment” materializes at the finance desk: “\$39,995 on the website became \$45k in person —‘batteries are scarce,’ they said.” The perception of bait-and-switch eclipses any incentive goodwill.

CROSS-TOPIC DRIVERS

Expectation gap has reopened. Q1 training sprints masked deeper structural issues; Q2 demand simply exposed them.

Complexity compounds frustration. EV deals involve multiple hand-offs; every weak link multiplies customer anxiety.

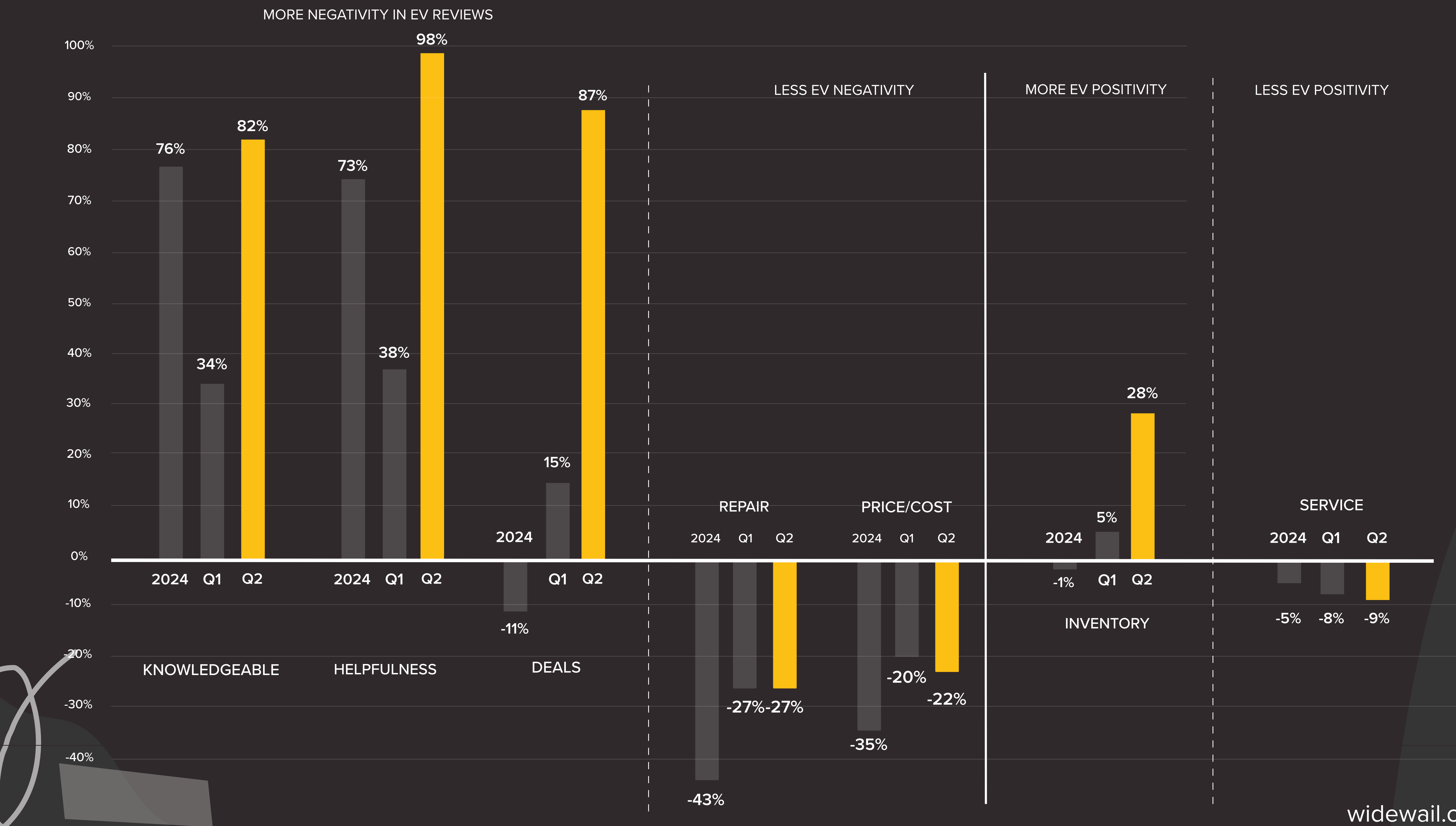
Price transparency is table stakes. Shoppers will happily pay more for clear, final numbers—they have zero patience for opaque fees.

Training & process redesign beat incentives. Not one angry review asked for free charging. They asked for competence, clarity and follow-through.

AHEAD

The EV market is likely to become more turbulent in the second half of the year as in-market buyers rush to claim the expiring EV tax credit, followed by a likely slowdown as the market reorients itself to the post-federal-incentive era. Focusing on process improvements in knowledge, helpfulness, and deals/pricing today will help dealers maintain a strong reputation as we head into 2026.

CHART 12 | MENTIONS OF VARIOUS TOPICS IN BEV VS. ICE REVIEWS



SALES STAFF NEGATIVITY RISING

BIGGEST GAINS Q1>Q2
(BASED ON TOPICS MENTIONED IN 5% OR MORE OF REVIEWS)

Positive:

- Communication: +4.53%
- Professionalism: +4.21%
- Friendliness: +2.28%

Negative:

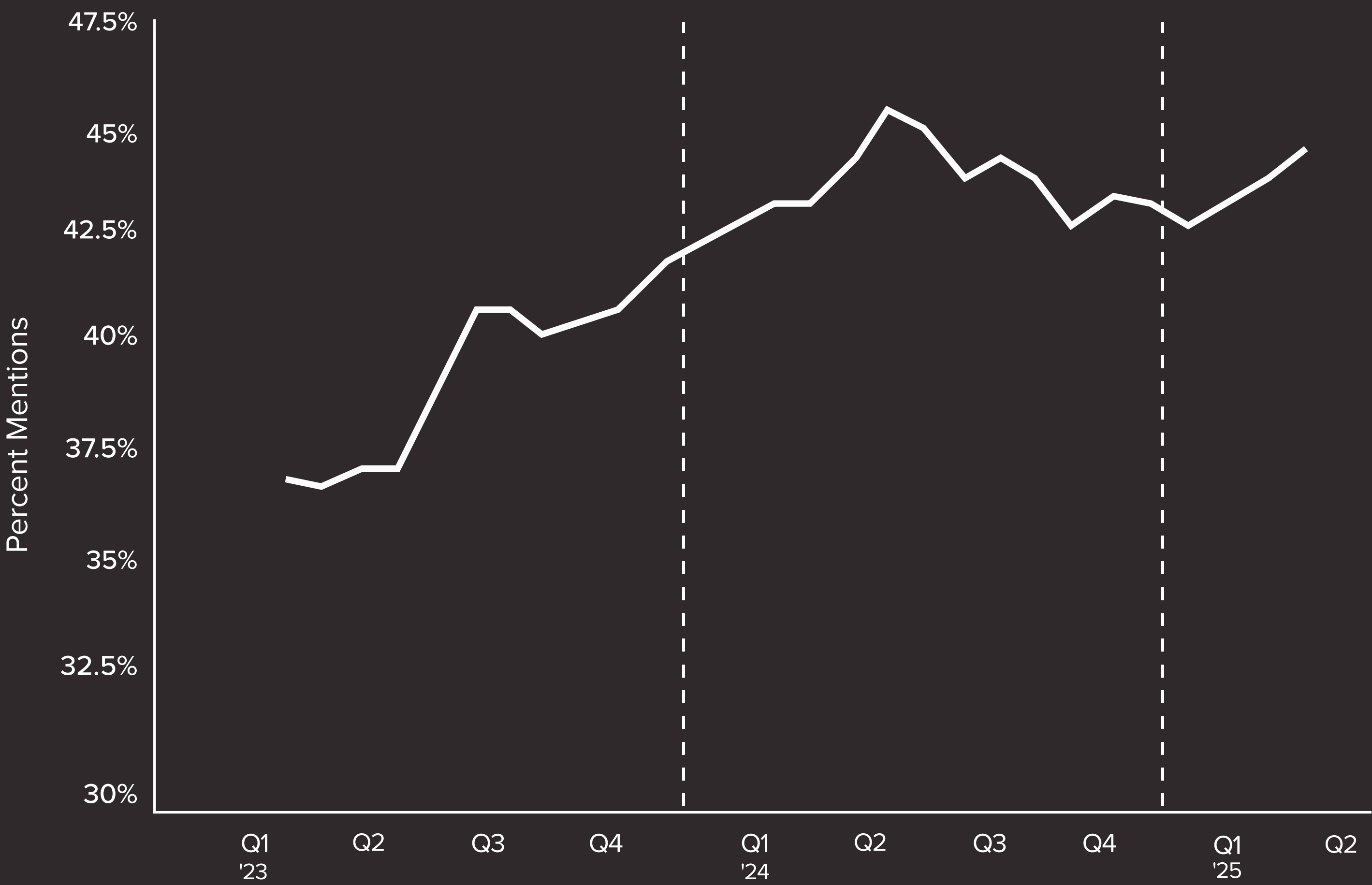
- Honesty: +9.52%
- Trade-in: +2.85%
- Communication: +2.70%

STAFF REMAIN CENTRAL TO THE DEALERSHIP EXPERIENCE,
ESPECIALLY IN SALES.

In Q2, staff were mentioned in 82% of all positive sales reviews, compared to just 65% of positive service reviews.

Staff-related negativity in sales reviews rose 1.85% in Q2. Staff sentiment improved following a negativity peak in May of '24, but has reversed course in Q2 2025, currently quite high. Given that 44% of all negative sales reviews mention staff, even a modest increase is worth paying attention to.

CHART 13 | NEGATIVE MENTIONS OF STAFF IN SALES REVIEWS



That rise isn't isolated. Many staff-related/behavior-focused topics also saw increased negativity in Q2:

- Helpfulness: +14.37% in Q2 (mentioned in 4% of negative sales reviews)
- Honesty: +9.52% (mentioned in 11%)
- Professionalism: +12.5% (mentioned in 4.3%)

Customers are increasingly vocal when staff fail to meet expectations regarding trust, support, and respect.

CHART 14 | NEGATIVE MENTIONS OF
HELPFULNESS IN SALES REVIEWS

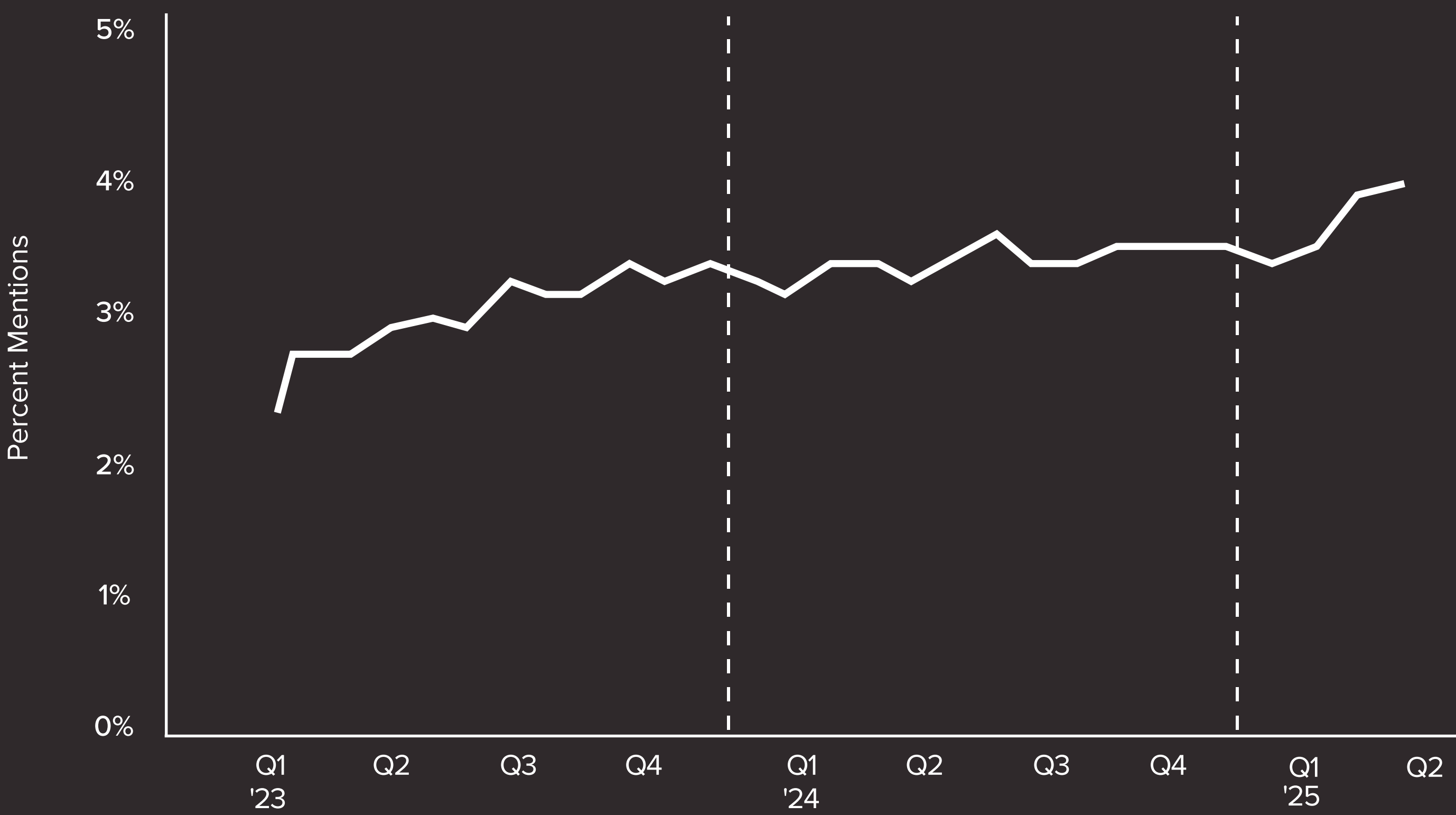


CHART 15 | NEGATIVE MENTIONS OF
HONESTY IN SALES REVIEWS

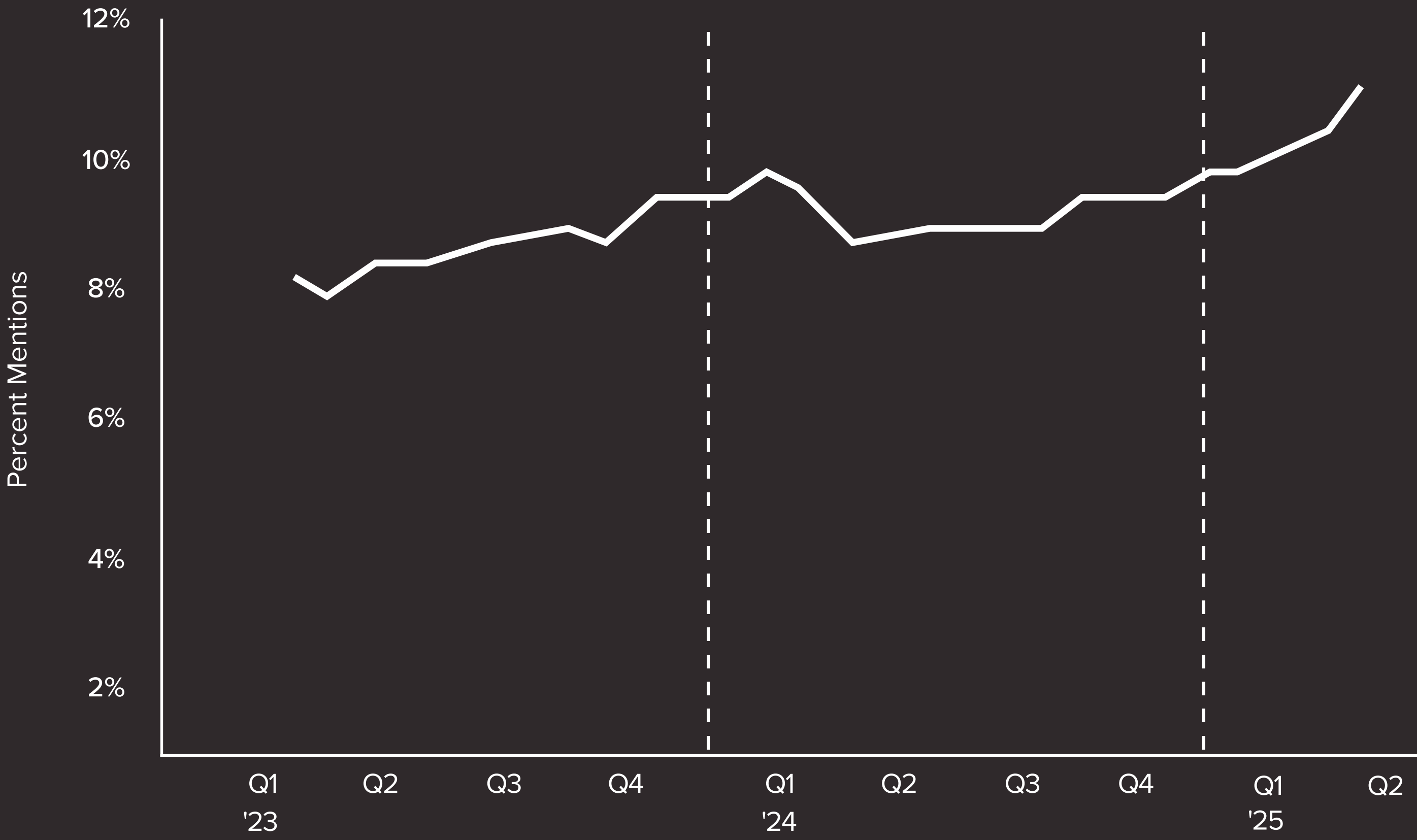
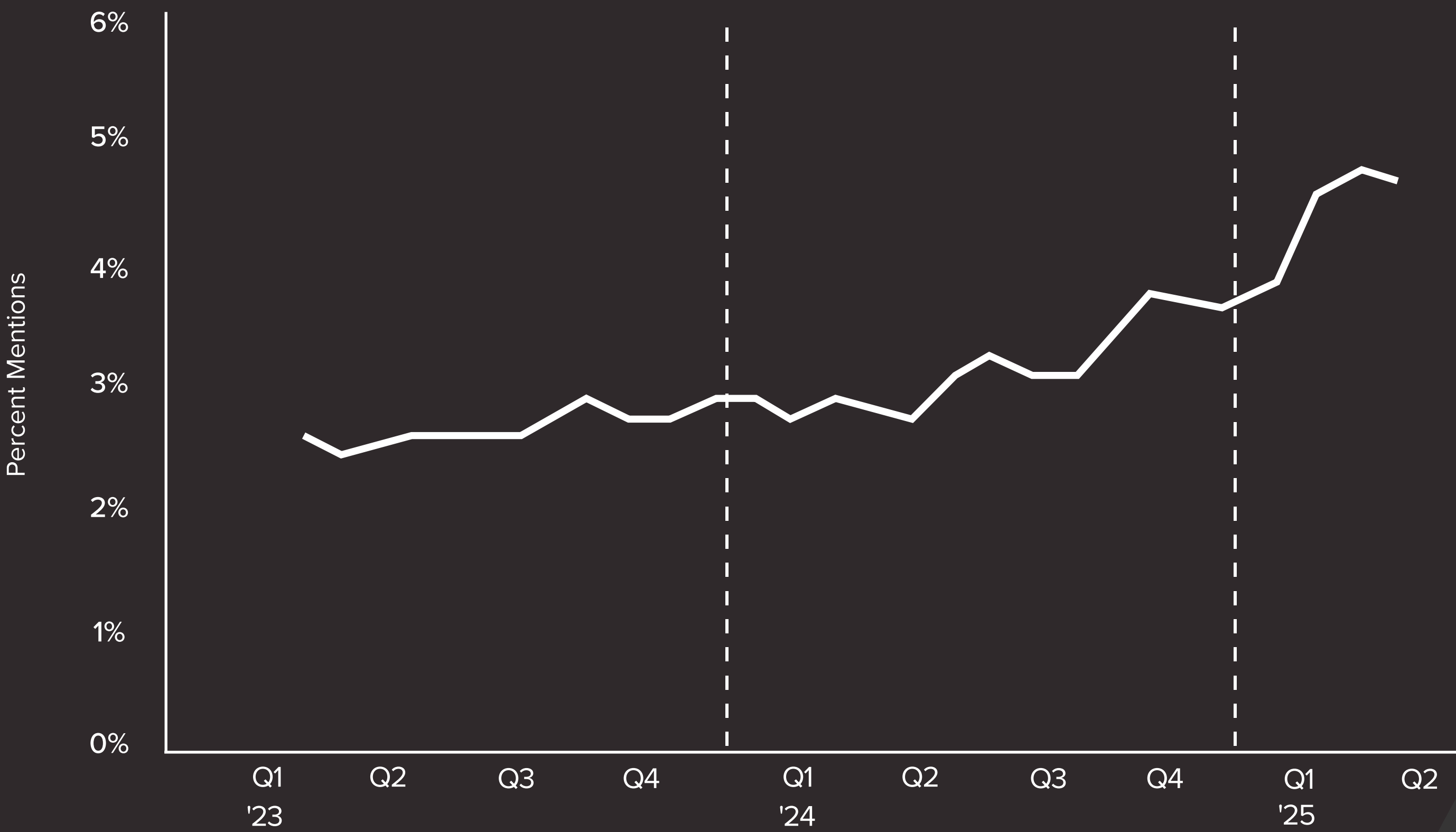


CHART 16 | NEGATIVE MENTIONS OF
PROFESSIONALISM IN SALES REVIEWS



COMMS NOW EQUALLY PROBLEMATIC IN SALES

COMMUNICATION WAS PRIMARILY A SERVICE PROBLEM. NOW IT'S EQUALLY PROBLEMATIC IN BOTH DEPARTMENTS

From January 2023 to June 2025, negative mentions of communication have steadily increased in sales reviews.

In Q1 2025, communication already topped the list, appearing in 46.7% of negative sales reviews. In Q2, that number jumped 2.7 points to 47.9%, nearly 1 in 2.

We've long associated communication breakdowns with Service, but the data says otherwise: Sales is now just as affected.

When nearly half of negative reviews point to poor communication, it's no longer a side issue, it's the core problem.

CHART 17 | NEGATIVE MENTIONS OF COMMUNICATION IN SALES REVIEWS

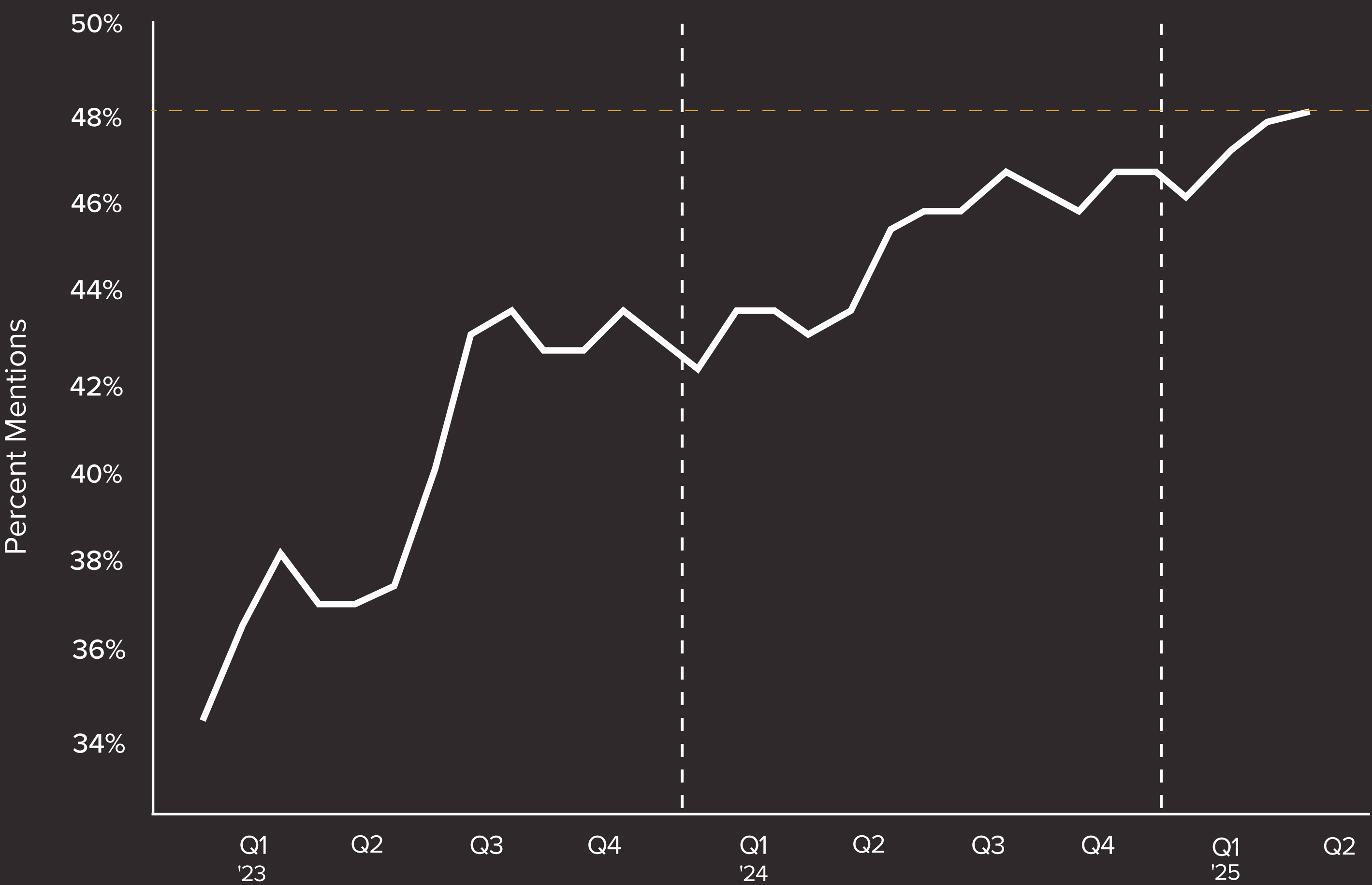
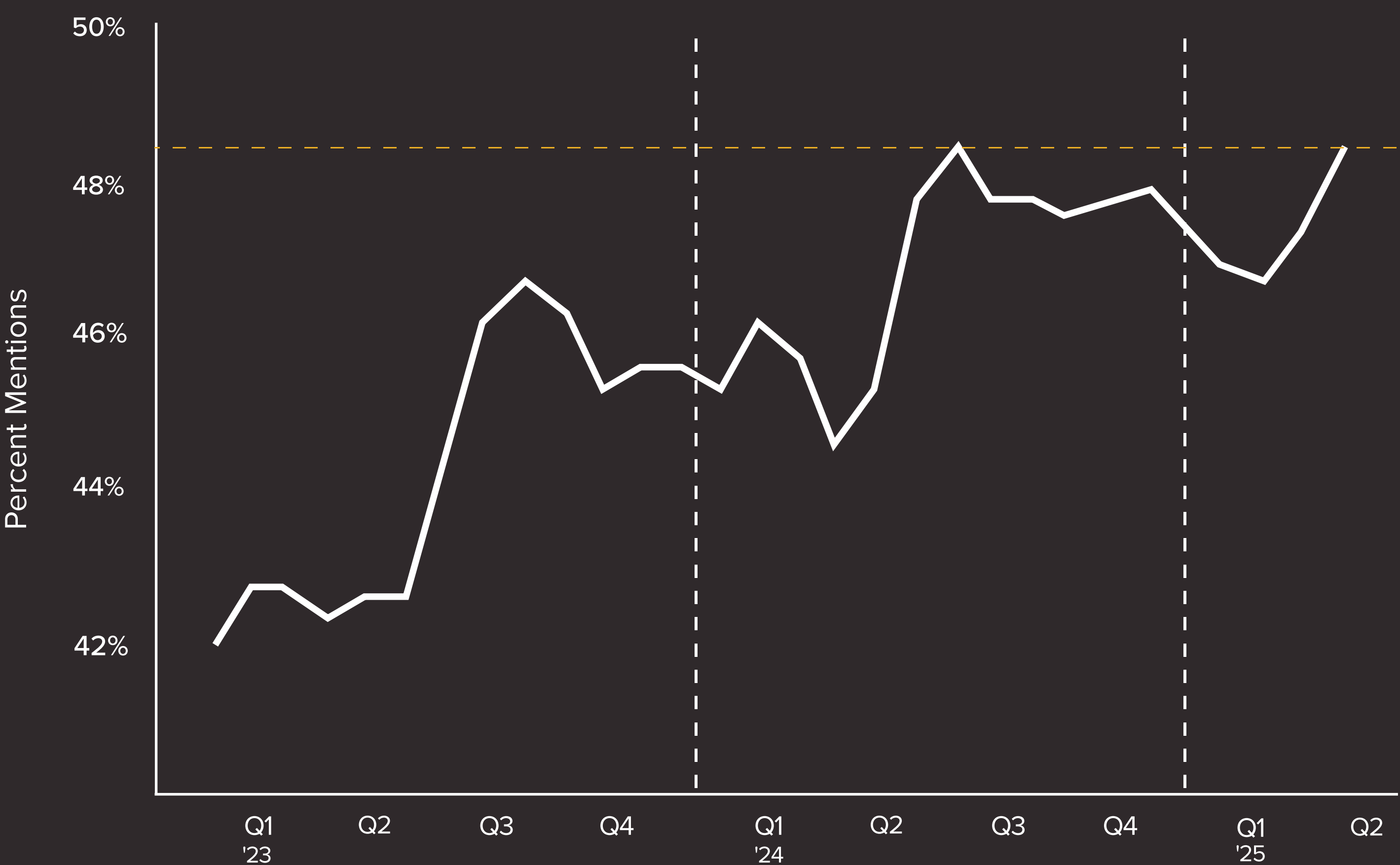


CHART 18 | NEGATIVE MENTIONS OF COMMUNICATION IN SERVICE REVIEWS



PROFESSIONALISM IS MORE IMPORTANT NOW THAN IT WAS TWO YEARS AGO

Mentions of professionalism are on the rise, particularly in positive sales reviews, which have jumped notably since fall 2024.

In Q2, professionalism was mentioned in:

- ▶ 14.3% of positive sales reviews, up 4.21% in Q2
- ▶ 10.29% of positive service reviews, up 4.05% in Q2

WHY THE DIFFERENCE?

Sales interactions require more interpersonal time. Customers spend more time with sales reps, giving them more opportunities to observe how they're treated and to comment on it.

WHY IS PROFESSIONALISM BEING TALKED ABOUT MORE NOW?

We're seeing a shift in what customers value. Notice how the topic mentions are growing in all segments. Sensitivity related to professionalism in all areas of the dealership is increasing. When dealers get it right, they are rewarded, and the opposite remains true when they get it wrong.

POSITIVE MENTIONS OF PROFESSIONALISM IN Q2:

Increasing in both sales and service YoY

CHART 19 | POSITIVE MENTIONS OF PROFESSIONALISM IN SALES REVIEWS

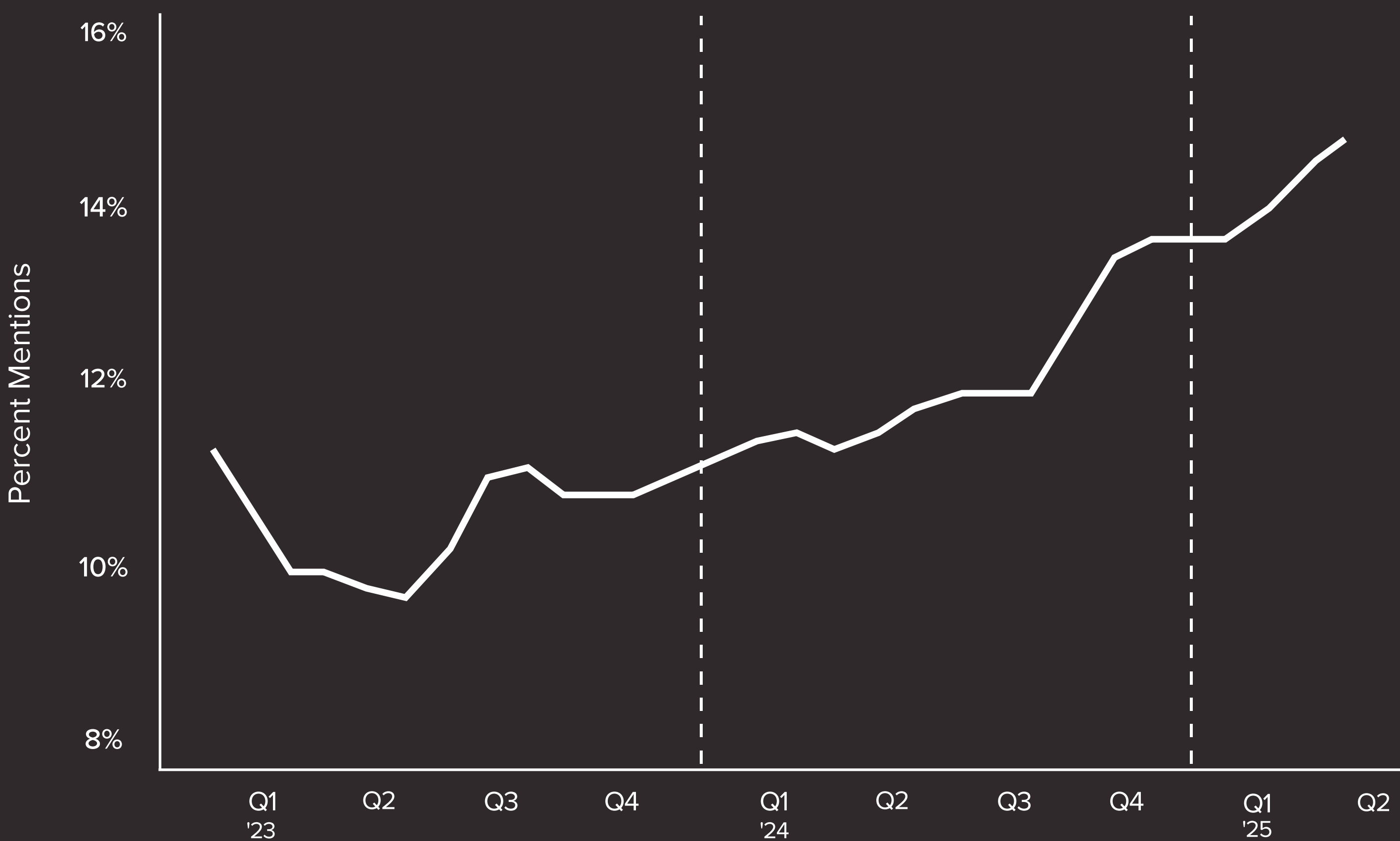
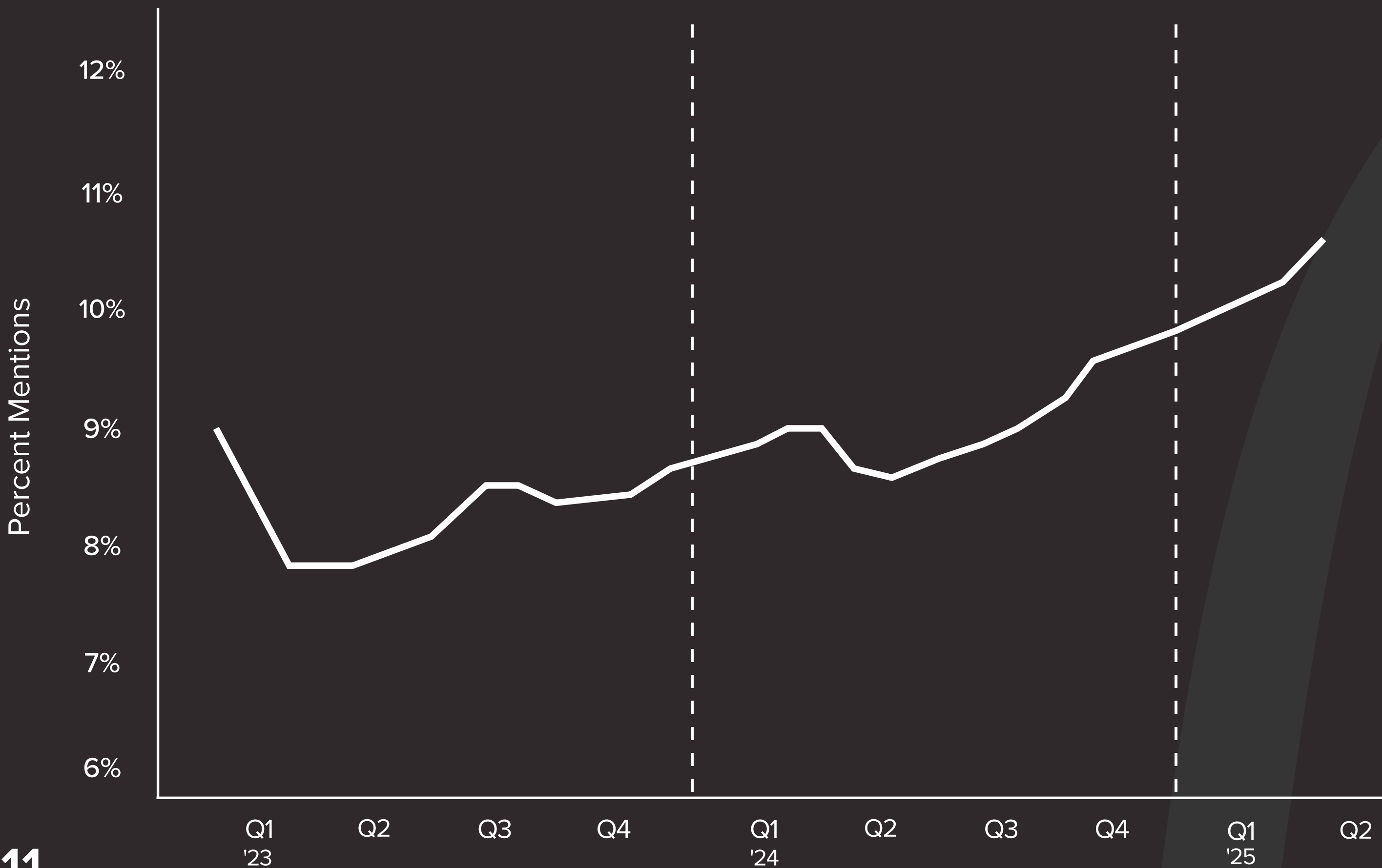


CHART 20 | POSITIVE MENTIONS OF PROFESSIONALISM IN SERVICE REVIEWS

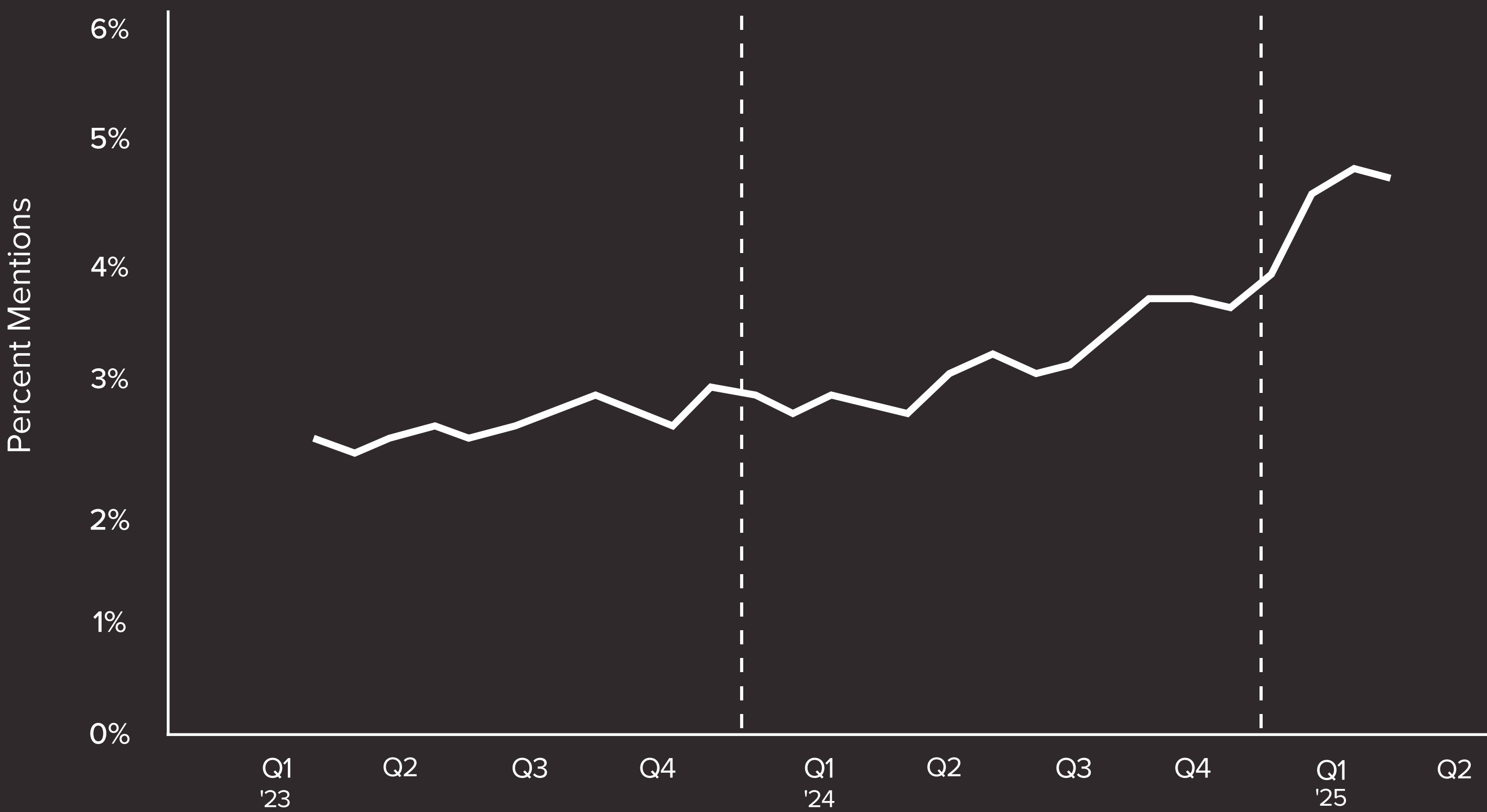


PROFESSIONALISM GROWING IN IMPORTANCE

NEGATIVE MENTIONS OF PROFESSIONALISM IN Q2:

Trending upward quarter-over-quarter in both departments

CHART 21 | NEGATIVE MENTIONS OF PROFESSIONALISM IN SALES REVIEWS

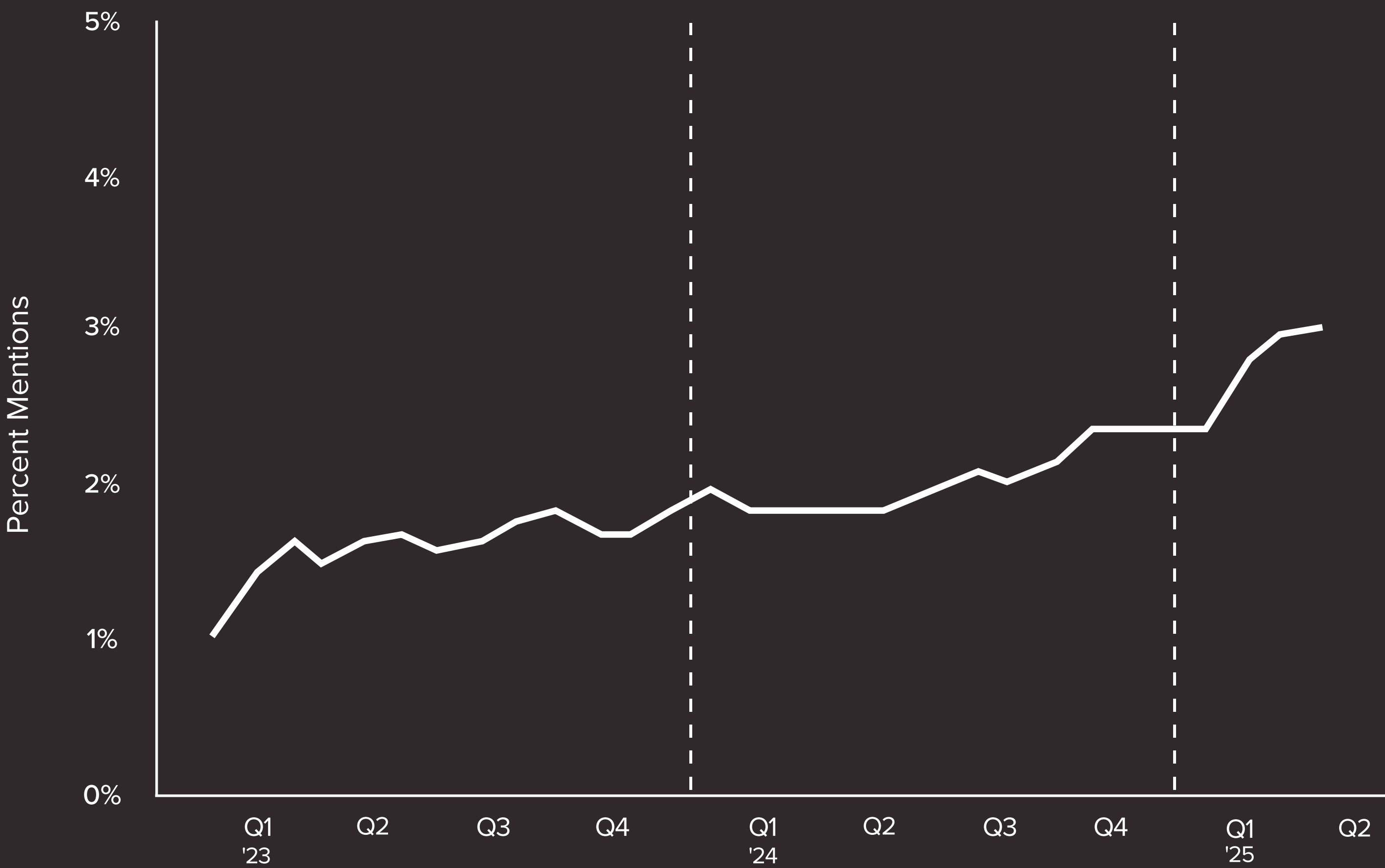


This long-term jump—not just recent year-to-year changes—is what shapes how buyers feel walking in today. Add the current market pressures like the end of EV tax credits, looming tariffs, and a rapid rise in EV adoption, and you get a perfect storm of uncertainty and higher stakes.

While the real cost of ownership hasn’t shifted dramatically, the emotional climate has. Buyers are on edge—navigating uncertainty, policy changes, and high-dollar decisions. That emotional weight changes the expectations around every interaction.

In that context, professionalism becomes the difference-maker. Customers want to feel respected, heard, informed, and confident in their purchase decisions. In other words, professionalism is how dealerships earn trust when the environment is noisy.

CHART 22 | NEGATIVE MENTIONS OF PROFESSIONALISM IN SERVICE REVIEWS



SO WHY ARE PROFESSIONALISM EXPECTATIONS CLIMBING?

The average car on the road is 13 years old. That means a lot of buyers haven’t shopped for a new vehicle since around 2012, when the average new car price first passed \$25,000.

Put another way: many customers are coming back to dealerships to find that prices have roughly doubled since their last purchase. [\[SOURCE\]](#)

Mentions of professionalism continue to climb in negative reviews for both departments. Professionalism cements itself as the difference-maker in the car buying experience.

KEY SERVICE MEASURES IMPROVE IN Q2

**BIGGEST GAINS Q1>Q2
(BASED ON TOPICS MENTIONED IN 5% OR MORE OF REVIEWS)**

Positive:

- ▶ *Management*: +4.29%
- ▶ *Professionalism* +4.05%
- ▶ *Car maintenance/repair*: +3.75%

Negative:

- ▶ *Damage done to vehicle*: +11.82%
- ▶ *Honesty*: +11.03%
- ▶ *Management*: +2.64%

KEY SERVICE OPERATIONS TRENDING RIGHT DIRECTION

Q2 saw meaningful improvement in operational and professional aspects of the service experience:

- ▶ *Positive mentions of Maintenance*: +3.8% from Q1
- ▶ *Positive mentions of Professionalism*: +4.05% from Q1
- ▶ *Negative mentions of Wait time*: -4.29% from Q1

Each of these shifts highlights areas dealerships can directly influence—team conduct, repair quality, and workflow efficiency. The data suggests that many service departments are focusing on execution, and it’s paying off. Improvements like smarter appointment scheduling, proactive updates, clearer timelines, or even a simple text when service is complete are making a difference.

CHART 23 | POSITIVE MENTIONS OF PROFESSIONALISM IN SERVICE REVIEWS

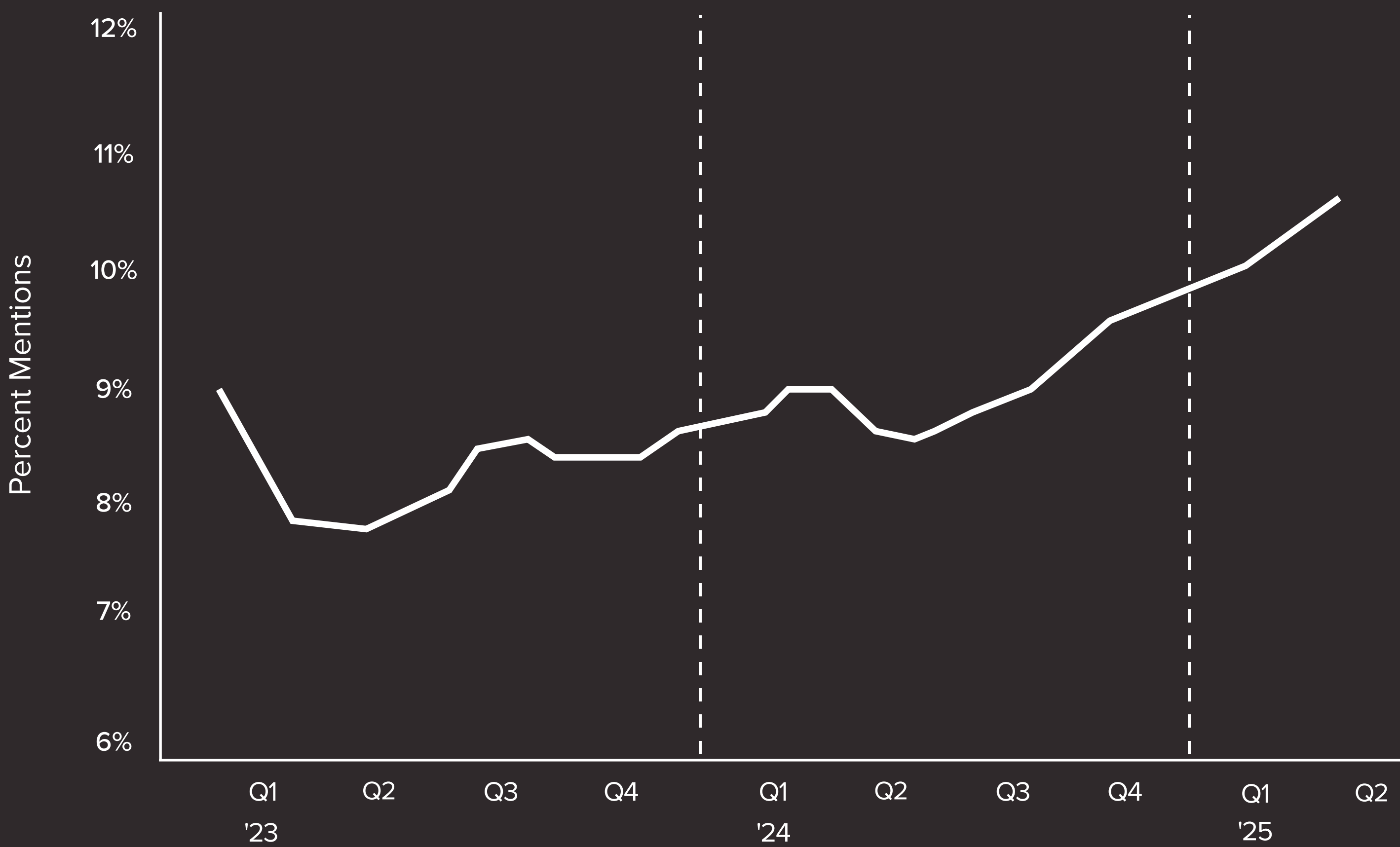


CHART 24 | NEGATIVE MENTIONS OF WAIT TIME IN SERVICE REVIEWS

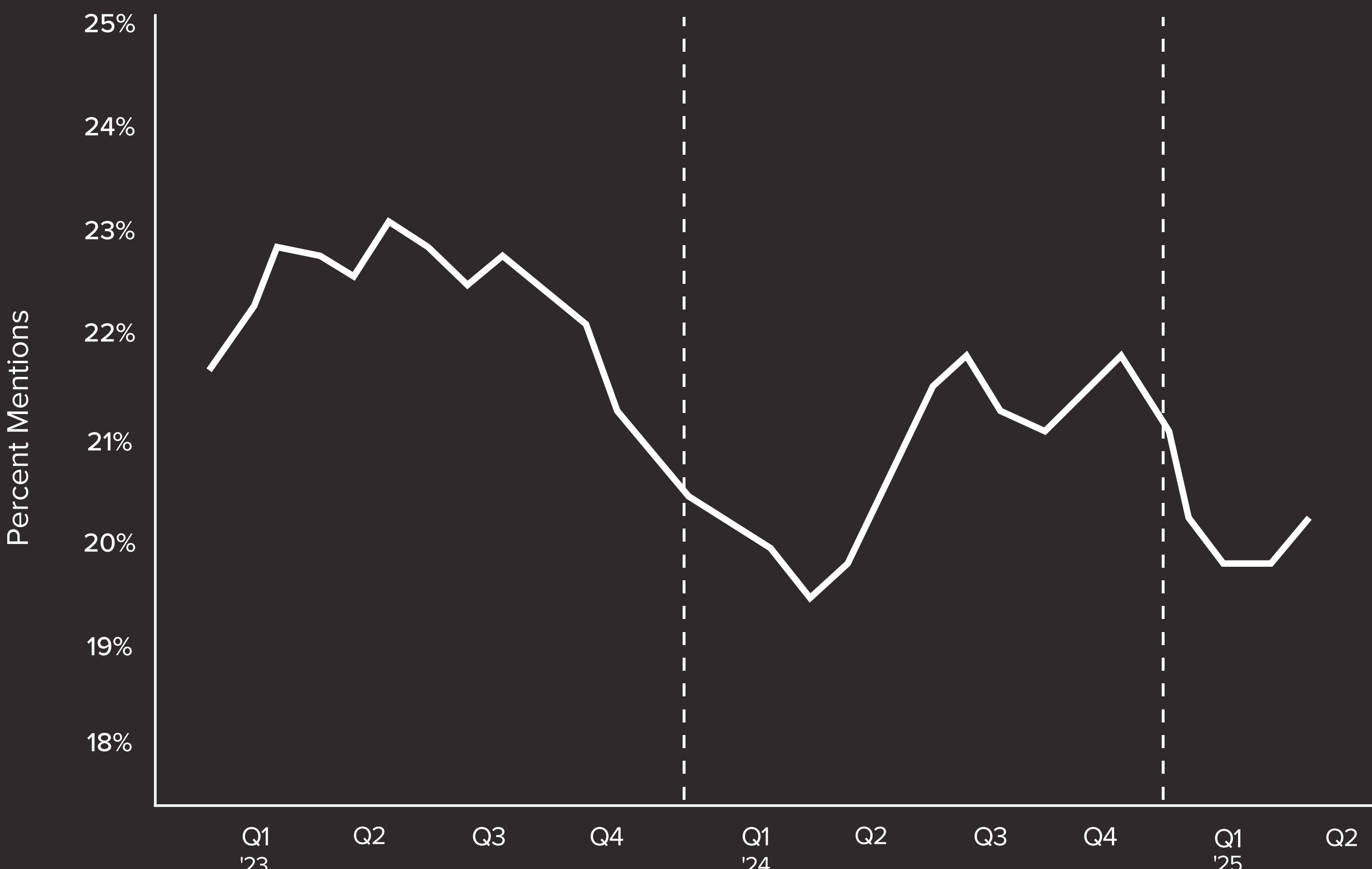
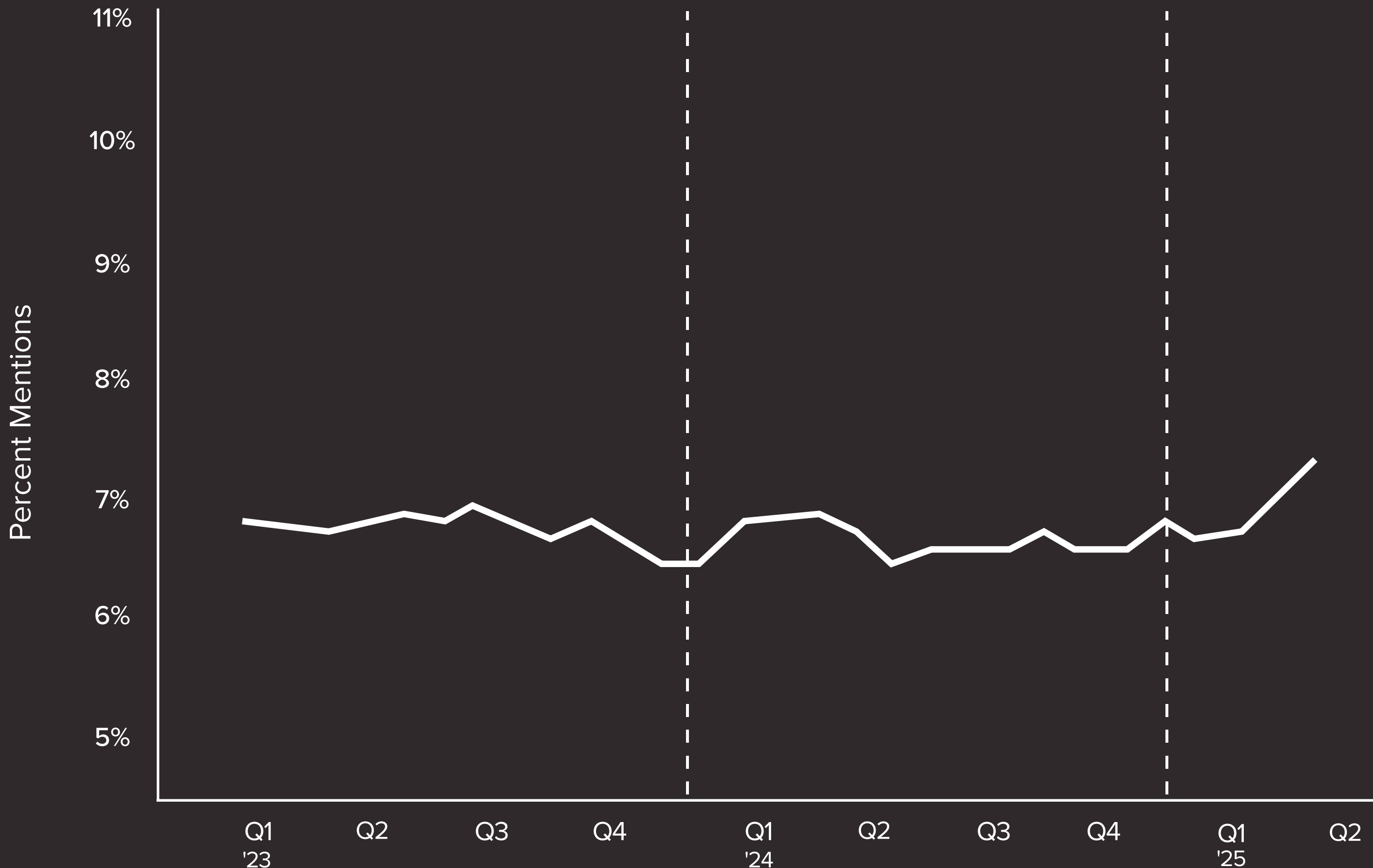


CHART 25 | POSITIVE MENTIONS OF MAINTENANCE/REPAIR IN SERVICE REVIEWS



Each of these shifts highlights areas dealerships can directly influence—team conduct, repair quality, and workflow efficiency.

COMMS NEGATIVITY UP SLIGHTLY IN Q2

COMMUNICATION PROBLEMS PERSIST

In Q2, 47.9% of all negative service reviews mentioned communication issues, a slight uptick from Q1 (+1.39%), but a consistent and dominant pain point.

Over the past 2 years, we’re noticing clear step changes in communication negativity, each high-activity summer season growing on the last. Unfortunately, we are not seeing negativity decline much in the winter months. It persists, and we are on track to cross 50% mention volume this summer.

CHART 26 | NEGATIVE MENTIONS OF COMMUNICATION IN SERVICE REVIEWS

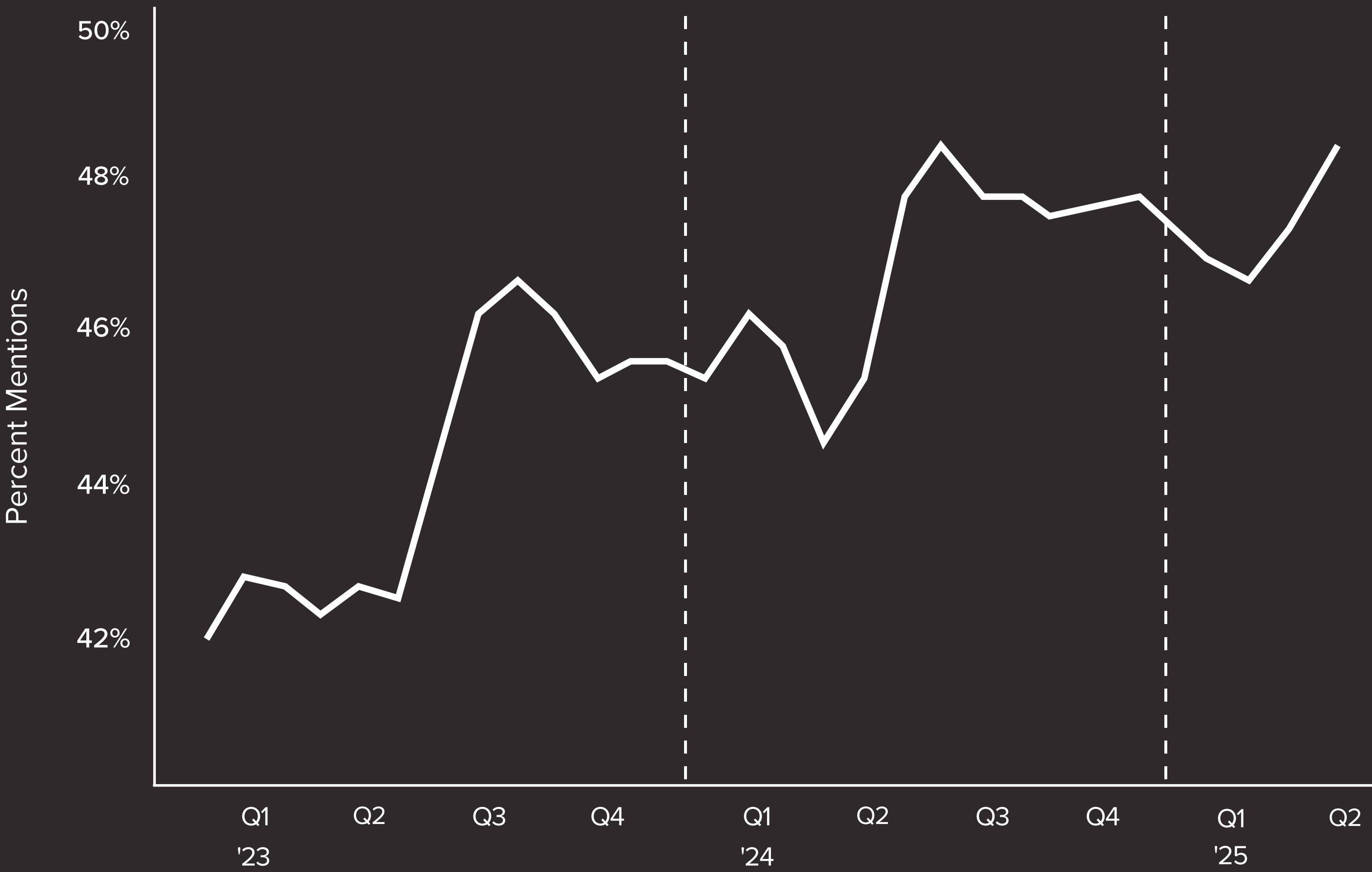
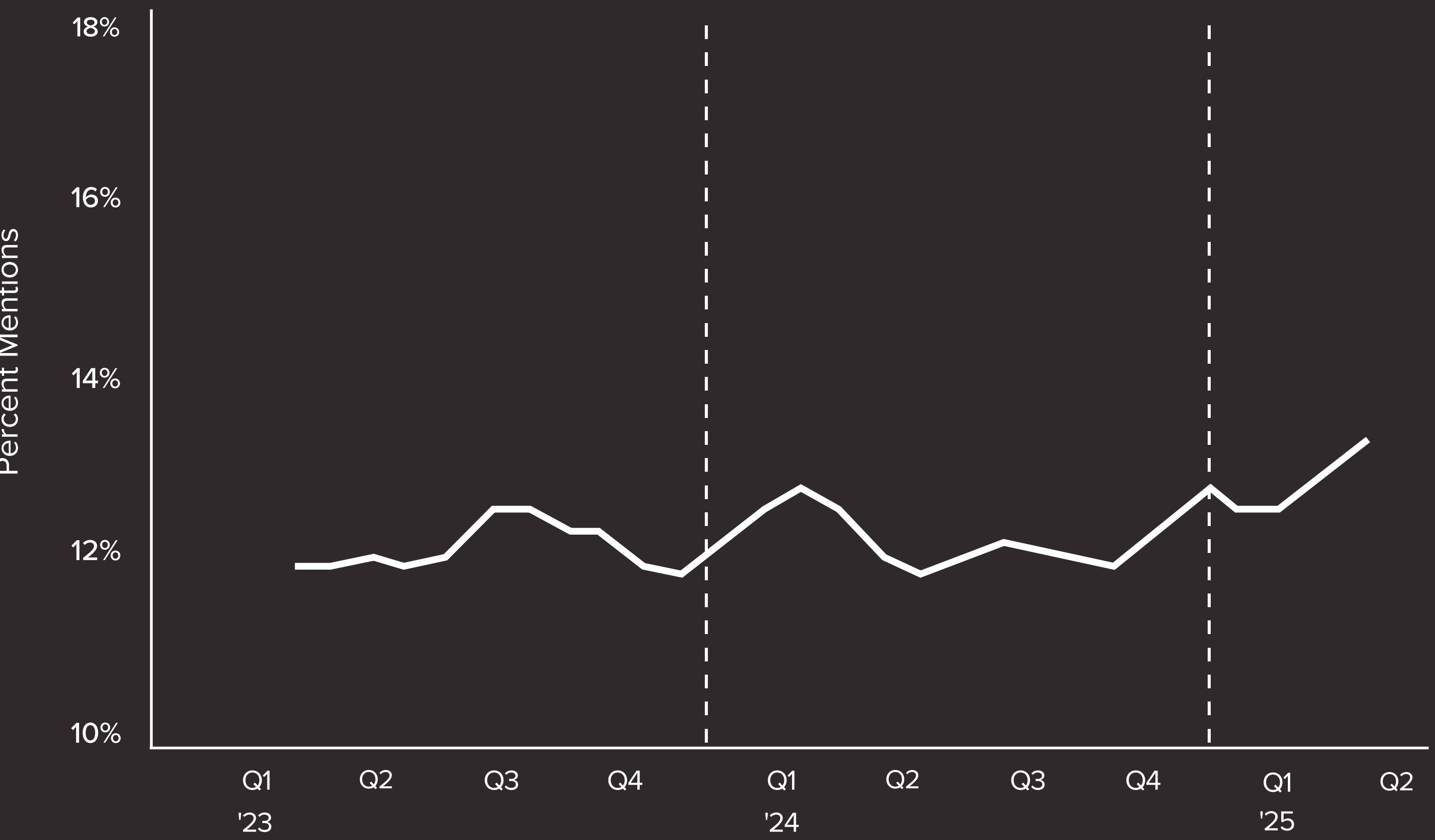


CHART 27 | POSITIVE MENTIONS OF COMMUNICATION IN SERVICE REVIEWS



THIS ISN'T JUST ABOUT PEOPLE. IT'S ABOUT PROCESS.

Unlike sales, where staff dominate the experience, service reviews are often less personal and more operational.

Staff are mentioned in 65.2% of positive service reviews compared to 82% in positive sales reviews in Q2

That difference matters. In service, communication breakdowns aren’t always about attitude or tone; they’re about logistics:

- ▶ “When will my car be ready?”
- ▶ “Do I need a loaner?”
- ▶ “Why did this cost more than I expected?”

These are the friction points. And even when the repair work is excellent, these unanswered questions can erode trust.

CHART 28 | POSITIVE MENTIONS OF STAFF IN SALES REVIEWS

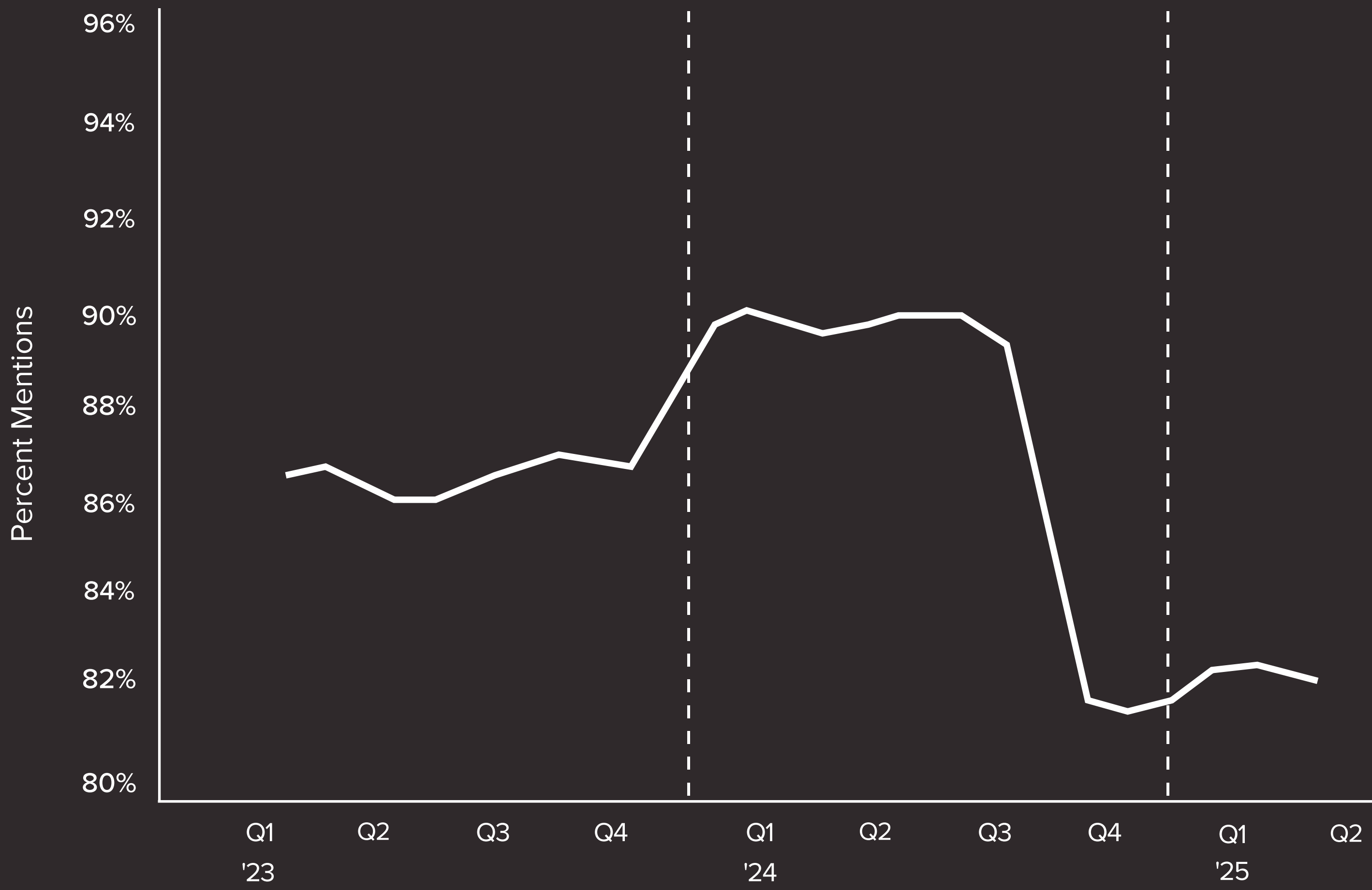
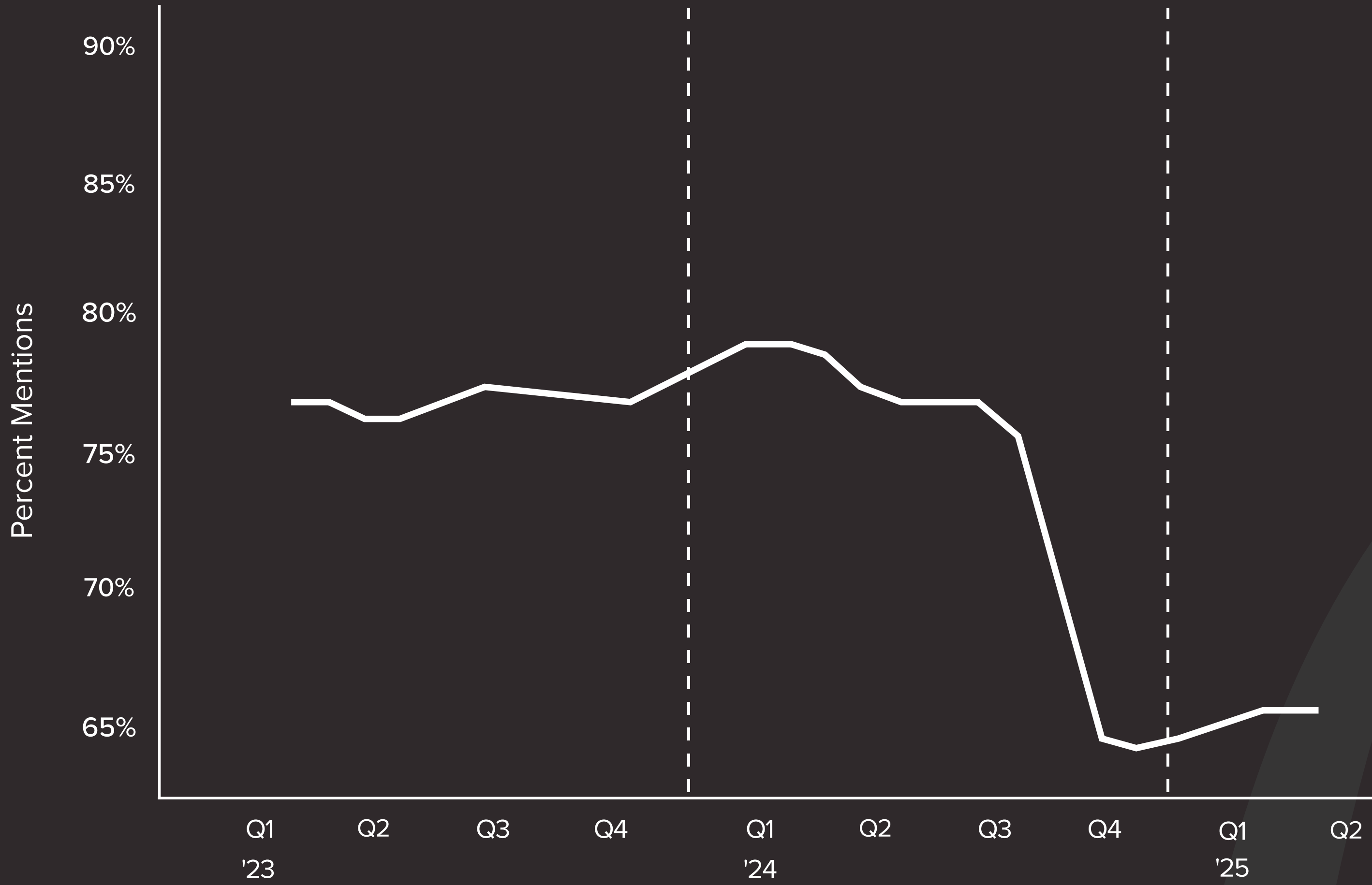


CHART 29 | POSITIVE MENTIONS OF STAFF IN SERVICE REVIEWS



SPIKES IN DAMAGE, HONESTY, AND PRICE

TRUST FRACTURES ARE EMERGING

Several trust-related pain points spiked in Q2:

- ▶ *Damage done to vehicle: +11.82%*
- ▶ *Honesty: +11.03%*
- ▶ *Price/cost: +1.72% (mentioned in 17% of negative Q2 reviews)*

These aren't isolated frustrations. They point to a growing trust gap that often starts with inconsistent or unclear communication.

Even small cracks in communication, like a missed status update or surprise charge, can lead to broader concerns about honesty, care, and competence.

CHART 30 | NEGATIVE MENTIONS OF DAMAGE IN SERVICE REVIEWS

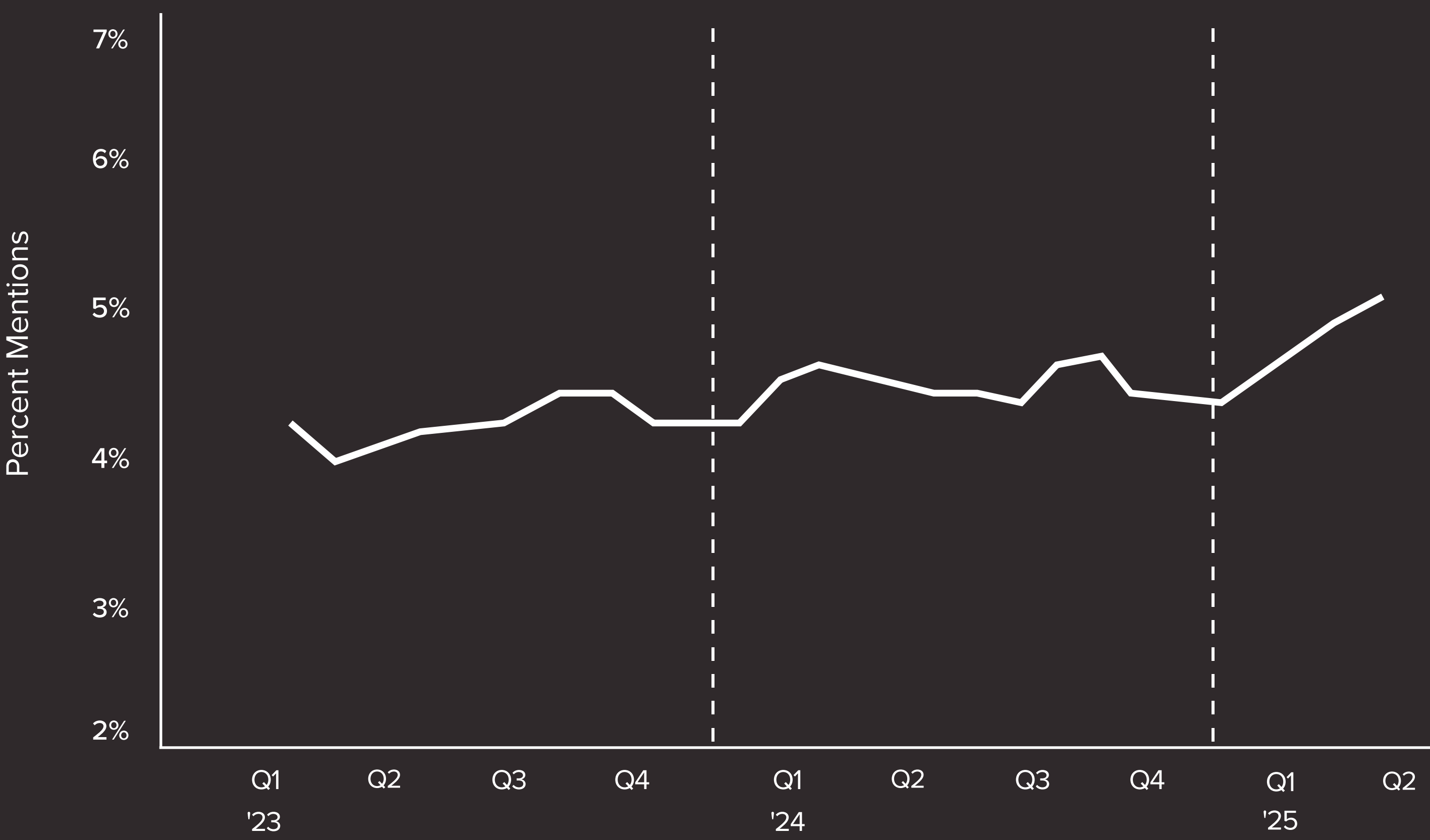


CHART 31 | NEGATIVE MENTIONS OF HONESTY IN SERVICE REVIEWS

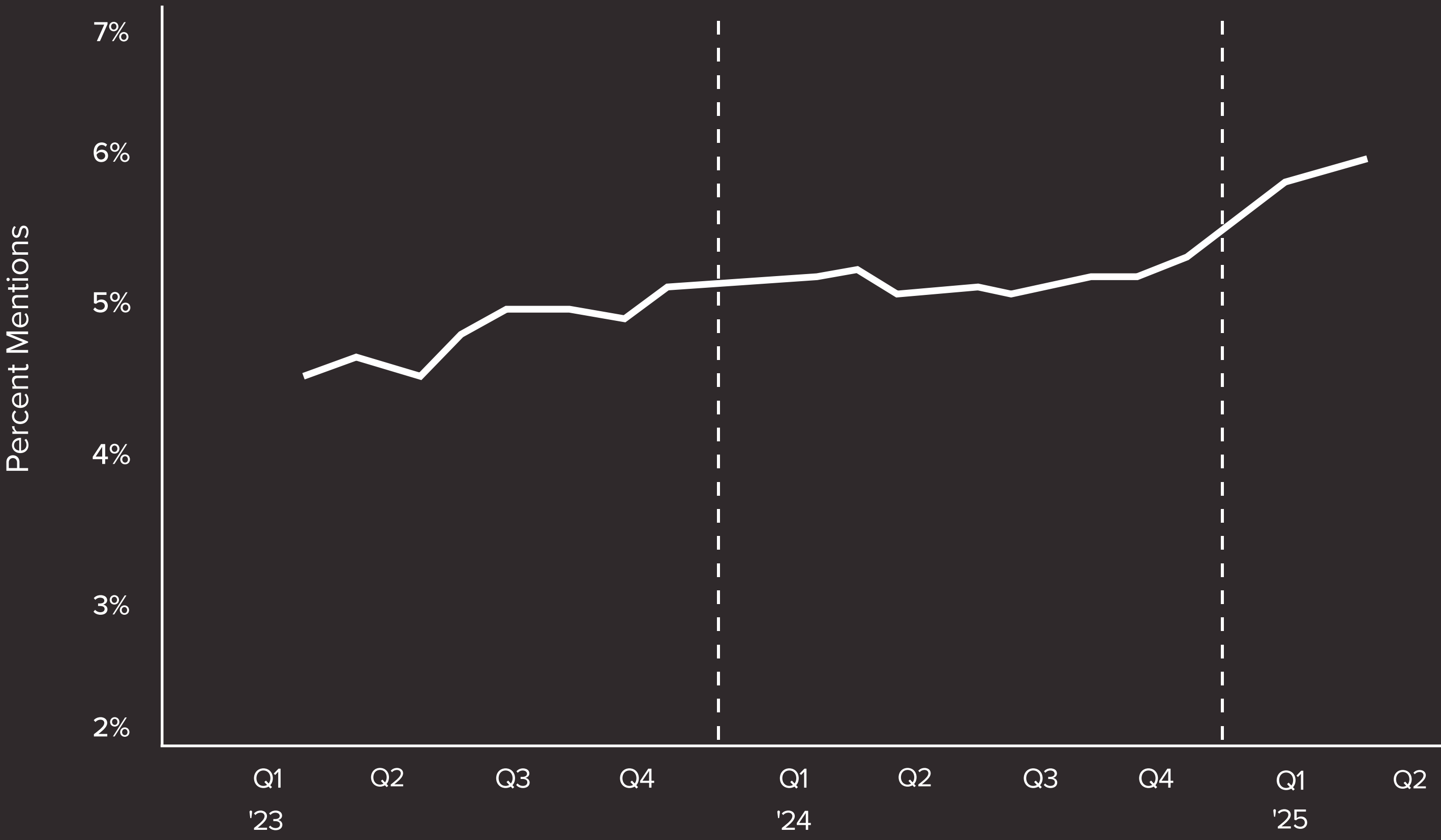
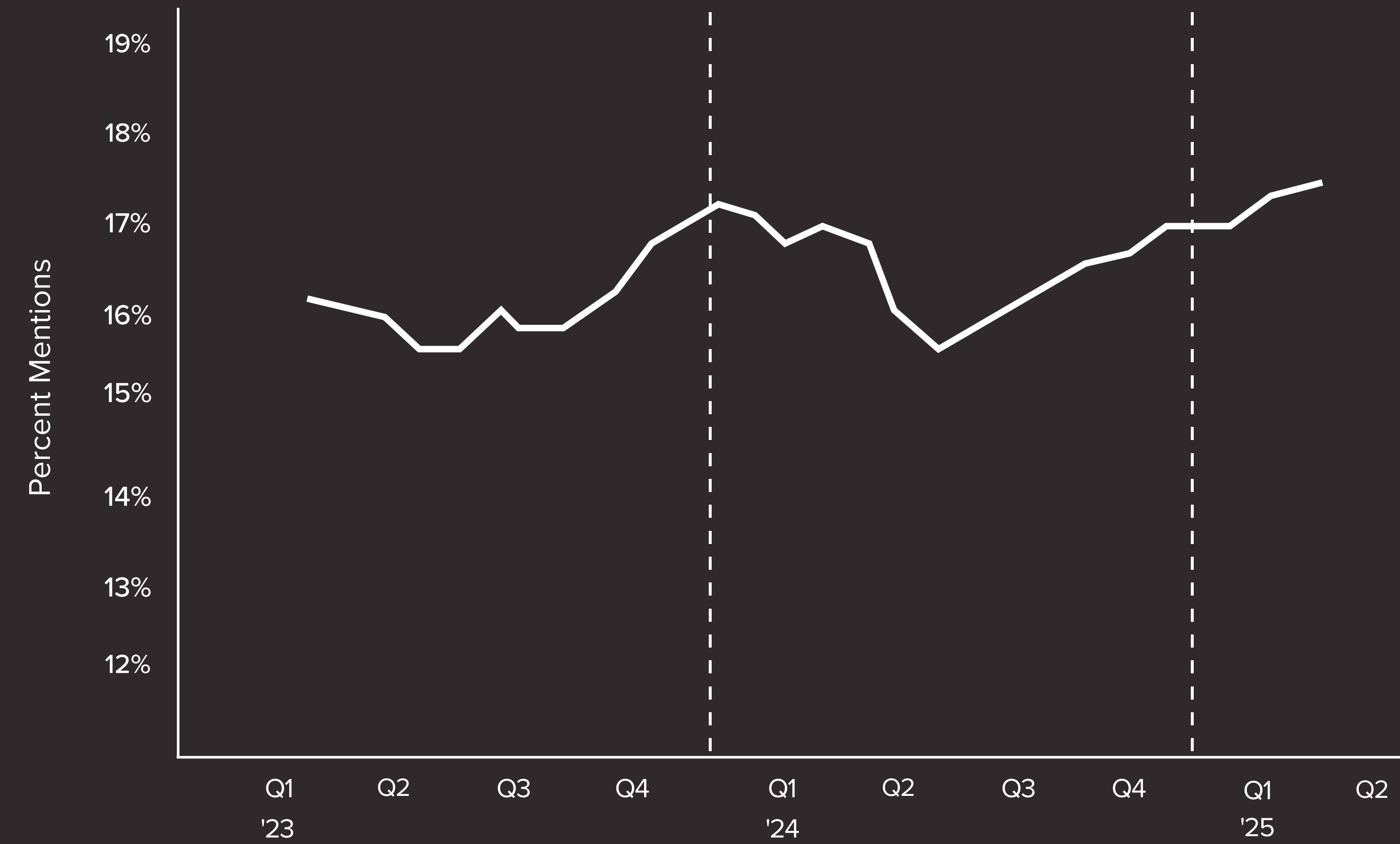


CHART 32 | NEGATIVE MENTIONS OF PRICE IN SERVICE REVIEWS

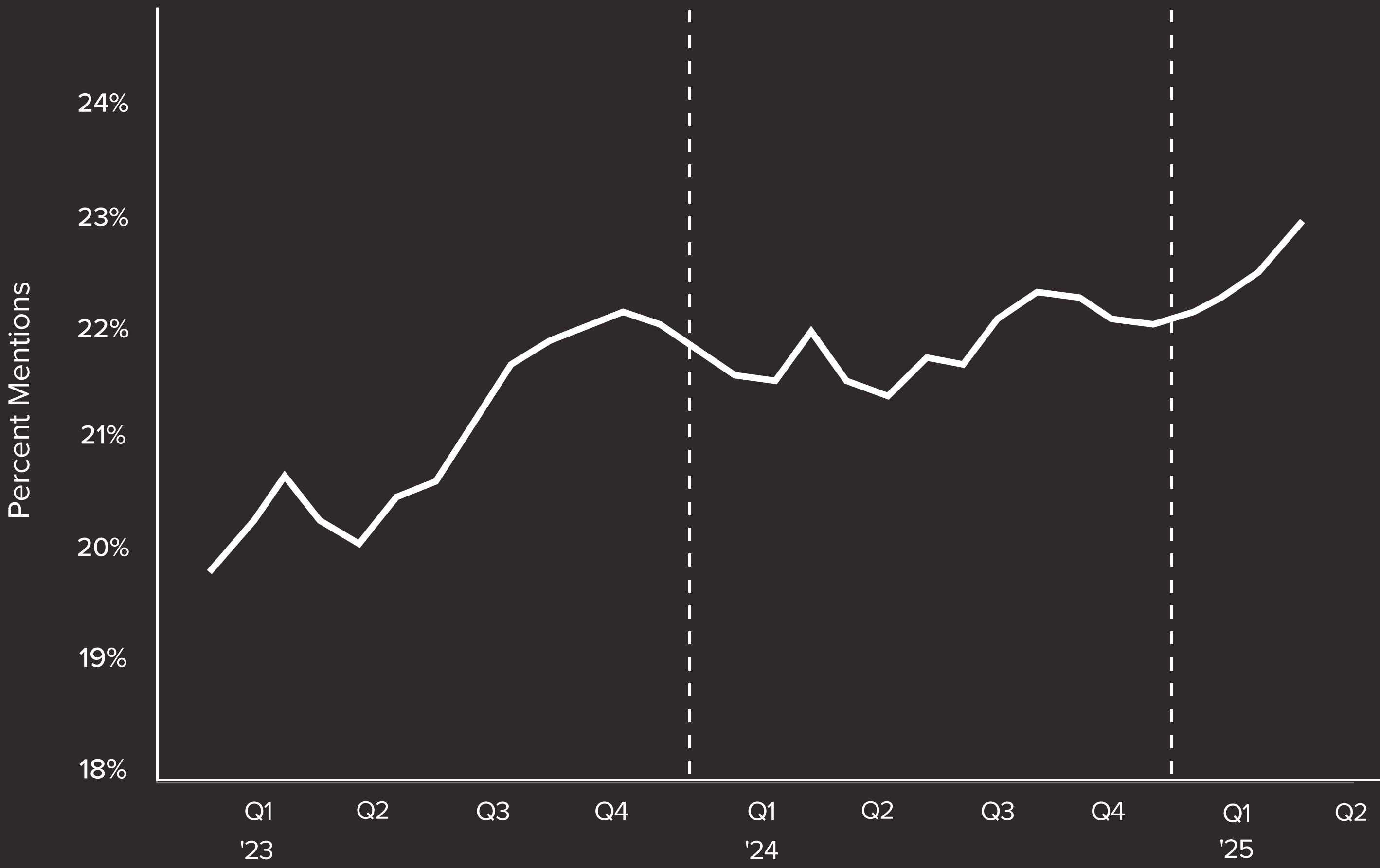


GROWING FRUSTRATION WITH REPAIRS

While operational markers, such as wait time and professionalism, improved in Q2, repair-related complaints are trending in the opposite direction.

In Q2, 22.5% of negative service reviews mentioned maintenance or repairs—up 2% from Q1. That means nearly 1 in 4 service-related complaints focused on core repair issues. It's the highest level of repair-related negativity we've seen since early 2023.

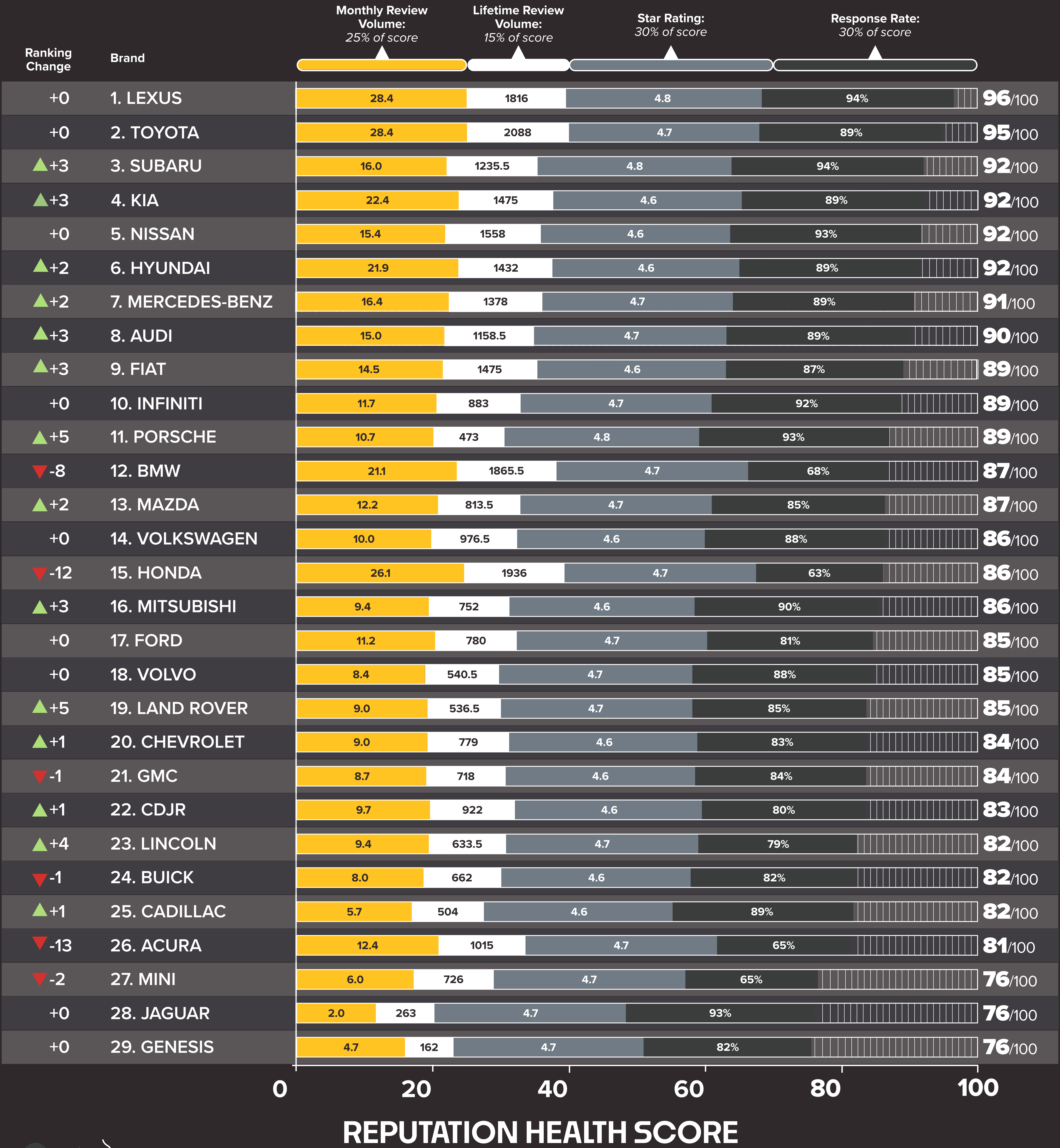
CHART 33 | NEGATIVE MENTIONS OF MAINTENANCE/REPAIR IN SERVICE REVIEWS



The frustration isn't just about the need for a repair. It's often about repeat visits, unresolved issues, or misaligned expectations about what work would be performed. This signals a growing disconnect between customer expectations and the outcome of their visit.

Q2 2025

2025 Q2 OEM
REPUTATION RANKINGS



MISSTEP FROM HONDA, BMW, AND ACURA

REPUTATION SLIPS FOR HONDA, BMW, AND ACURA IN Q2

Between Q1 and Q2, all three brands took a noticeable hit in Widewail's reputation rankings:

- ▶ *Honda dropped from #3 to #15*
- ▶ *BMW fell from #4 to #12*
- ▶ *Acura slipped from #13 to #26*

Meanwhile, the industry as a whole saw much smaller shifts. These are not broad market declines; they're brand-specific.

On the surface, core metrics appeared to be fine. BMW and Acura even saw modest increases in review volume (from 19.5 to 21.1/month and 10.9 to 12.4/month), and average star ratings held steady. But reputation is about more than volume and stars; it's about how brands show up in the customer conversation.

- ▶ *And in Q2, these brands got noticeably quieter.*

DECLINE IN RESPONSIVENESS

Review response rates dropped sharply across all three brands:

- ▶ *Honda: 90% → 63%*
- ▶ *BMW: 92% → 68%*
- ▶ *Acura: 88% → 65%*

That's a steep drop in engagement. A quarter of reviewers are now being ignored. Not only is that out of step with past performance, it's increasingly out of step with the rest of the industry.

A KEY DETAIL ON OUR DATA COLLECTION

We collect industry data monthly, meaning that if a review is responded to a month or more after it was posted, the dealer will receive no credit for the response in Widewail's reporting. We believe timeliness is key, with the average response time for Widewail clients typically around two business hours. It's noteworthy that we have not changed our approach to reporting; these brands have changed their process. All three were top performers in 2024. Generally speaking, the average dealership customer primarily focuses on reviews left within the last month. Recency matters, and for the consumer, it answers the question: Is this business still good? As a result, we do believe it's fair to say Honda, BMW, and Acura are not engaging with a material percentage of their customers, and as a result, have fallen in our reputation rankings.

STAFF + HONESTY COMPLAINTS SURGE ABOVE INDUSTRY LEVELS

Customers are experiencing friction in person, only to be met with silence online. The result? A reputational double hit.

THE PATTERN IS CLEAR

As import brands, Honda, Acura, and BMW are facing strong headwinds. Unfortunately, but understandably, the distractions of 2025 have seeped into daily processes. The back half of this year will show if this is a temporary setback or if 2025 has generated a lasting impact.

CHART 34 | NEGATIVE STAFF | OEM V. INDUSTRY

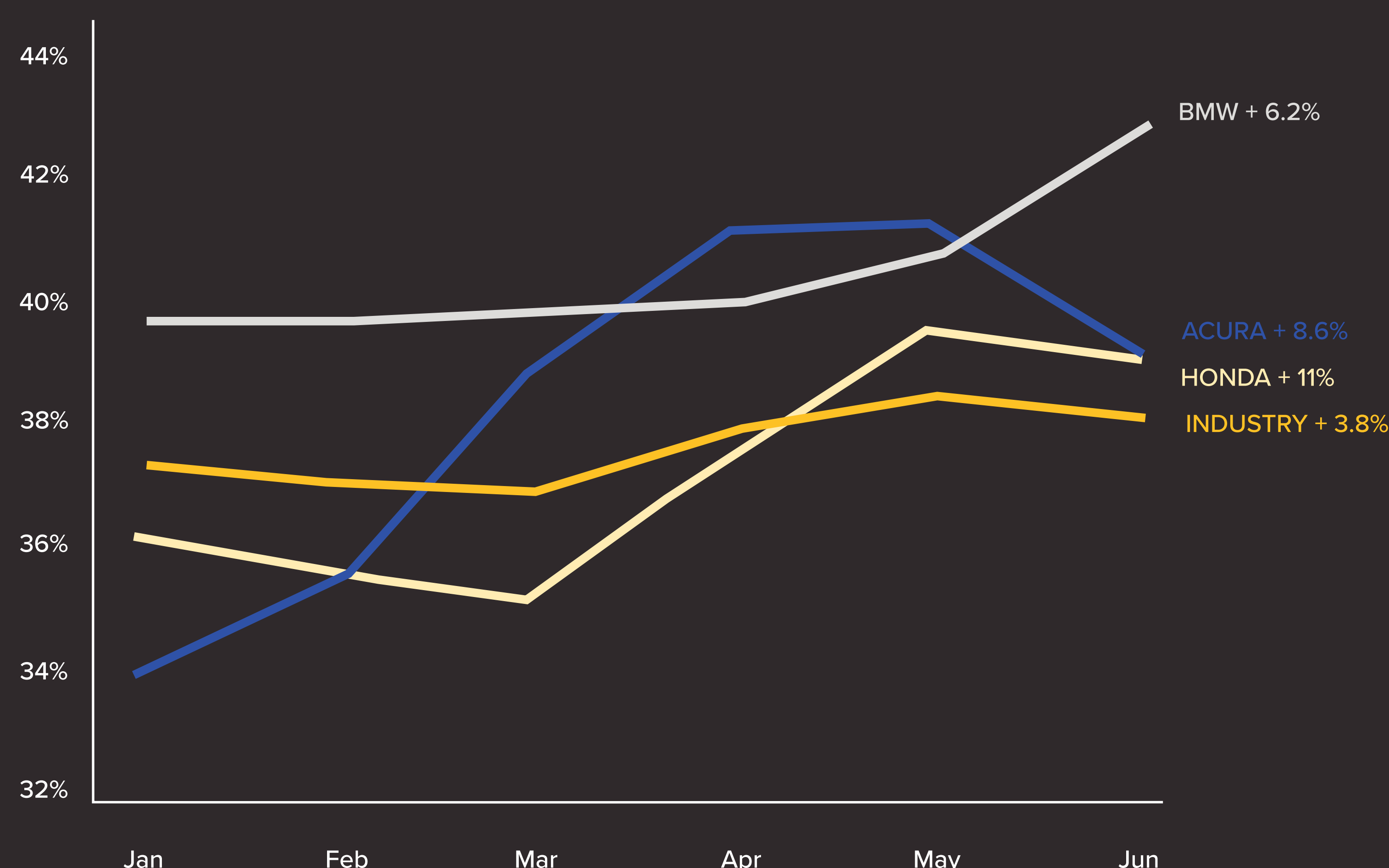


CHART 35 | NEGATIVE PRICE | OEM V. INDUSTRY

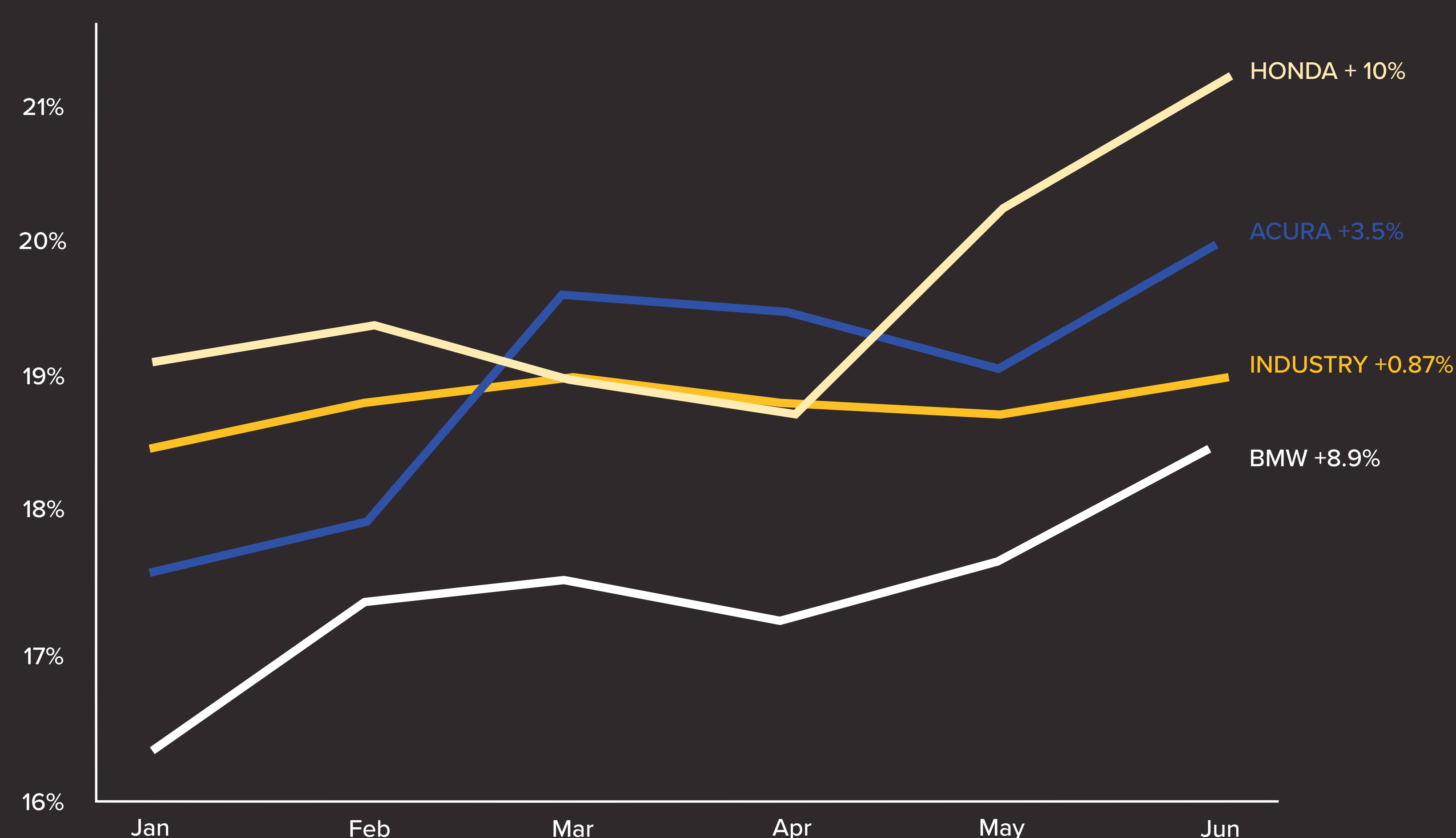
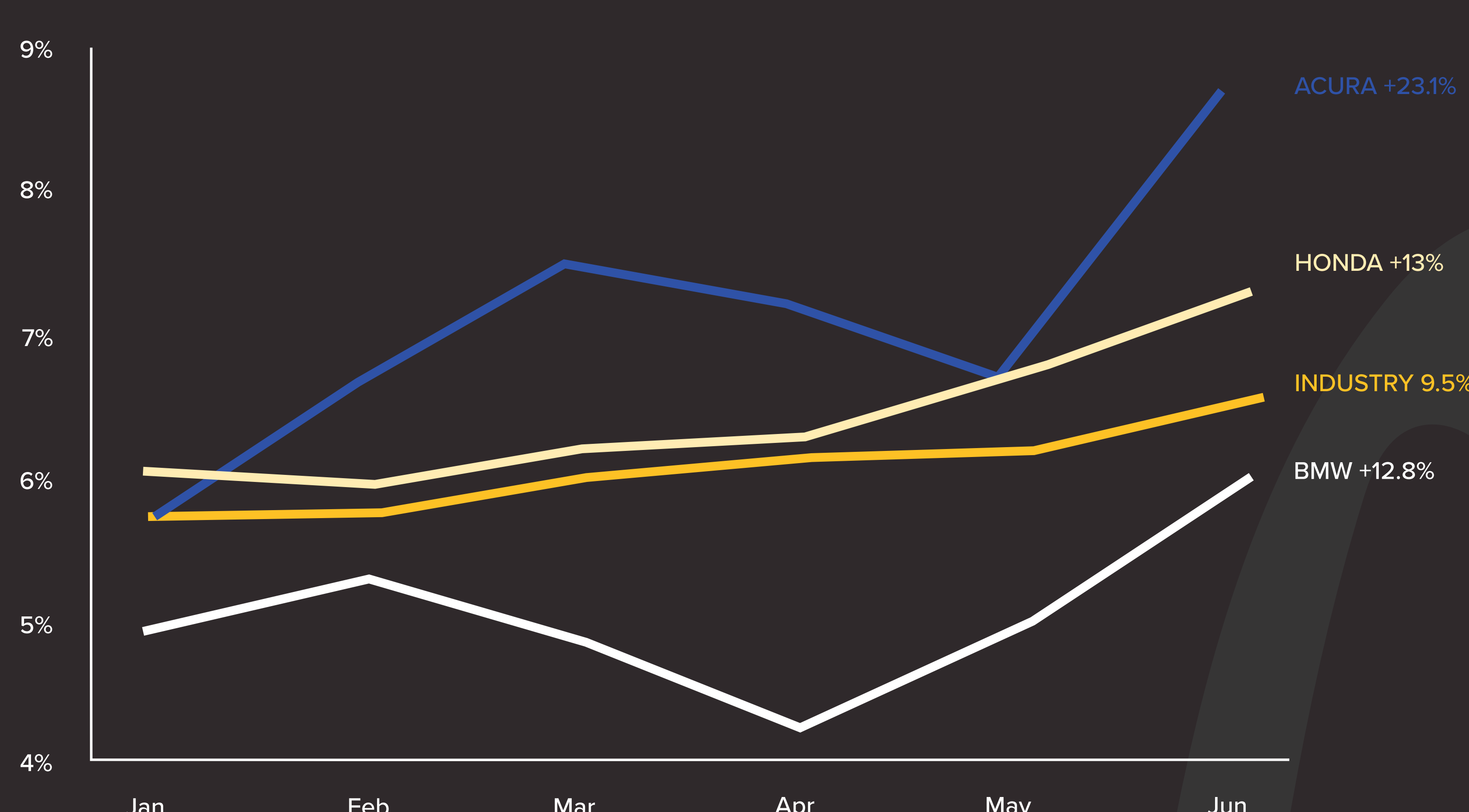


CHART 36 | NEGATIVE HONESTY | OEM V. INDUSTRY



CHEVY FALLS IN RANKINGS DESPITE SALES

FORD GAINS 8 SPOTS, CHEVROLET FALLS FOUR DESPITE STRONG SALES. WHY?

Ford complaints center on broken processes—missed calls, long parts backorders, and unexpected line items that appear on the invoice at the last minute. Nearly half of the negative Ford reviews cite some flavor of “nobody called me back” or “truck sat for weeks,” and a quarter mention parts delays or price surprises. In contrast, Chevrolet owners focus far more on people than process: attitude at the sales desk, feeling pressured, or service advisors who “spoke down” to them. Here, interpersonal friction outweighs logistics.

This procedural vs. people split may explain why Ford’s overall reputation has proven more resilient. In Widewail’s Q1 2025 OEM ranking, Ford leapt eight places to 17th while Chevy slipped to 21st. In Q2, Ford held at #17 with an 85% health score, and Chevy clawed back to #20 at 84%—still trailing but closing the gap.

Sales volume tells a complementary story. Through the first half of 2025, General Motors sold 1.44 million light vehicles in the U.S., up 12 % year-over-year and good for 17.7 % market share, while Ford delivered 1.11 million units, up 6.9 % and holding 13.7 % share [Source: Cox Automotive Inc.]. GM’s bigger footprint means its reputational swings affect more buyers, but Ford’s step-change in communication breakdowns, visible across dealers, could hamper retention even with rising sales.

What stands out is the leverage point: if Ford dealers tighten follow-up workflows and parts ETA transparency, they trim half of their negativity. For Chevy stores, coaching front-line staff on tone and setting expectations may yield greater perception gains than process fixes alone. Either way, the distinct thematic fingerprints suggest tailored interventions rather than one-size-fits-all programs.

In Widewail’s Q1 2025 OEM ranking, Ford leapt eight places to 17th while Chevy slipped to 21st. In Q2, Ford held at #17 with an 85% health score, and Chevy clawed back to #20 at 84%.

	FORD (NEGATIVE SUBSET)	CHEVY (ALL NEGATIVE)
Core Pain-Points	Follow-through lapses (no callbacks, unanswered voicemails, “they kept my truck for weeks and never updated me”), parts/back-order headaches, bill shock once work is done.	Classic service complaints (poor diagnostics, work not fixed), staff attitude (“rude,” “condescending”) and high-pressure sales desk tactics (bait & switch, hidden add-ons).
Process Vs. People	Complaints skew procedural (systems, scheduling, communication chains, parts logistics).	Heavier on interpersonal friction—sales reps, service writers, managers.
Transactional Phases	Big spike once the vehicle is already in-house (service lane, parts counter).	More evenly split between purchase journey (sales floor) and ownership support (service).
Money Conversations	Price transparency a sore spot for both, but Ford owners mention surprise fees or upsells more often.	
Wait & Downtime	Long waits dominate Ford gripes, often tied to parts shortages. Chevy owners talk about wait-time, but secondary to treatment by staff.	
Warranty/ Goodwill	Ford owners cite warranty denials or unclear coverage more than Chevy owners—could hint at perception of stricter policies or communication gaps.	

AUTOMOTIVE REPUTATION INDEX

POWERED BY widewail™

Get Your Dealership’s Reputation Data Instantly (and Free) from the Widewail Automotive Reputation Index (WARI)

The most complete view of dealership reputation performance in the U.S.

Widewail’s Automotive Reputation Index (WARI) tracks reputation metrics for over 18,000 dealerships across the country, updated monthly. It includes review volume, star rating, response rates, and negative review percentages—all sortable by OEM, location, and time.

Whether you’re benchmarking your own store or scanning your competitors, the WARI puts powerful consumer insights at your fingertips.

Ways to Use this Data:

- 1

Local Market Rankings

Map the competitive landscape in any US city, state or region.
- 2

OEM Reputation

See reputation benchmarks filtered by brands.
- 3

Ultimate Benchmarking

Filter columns and set benchmarks by reputation data, firmographic data or brand.
- 4






Up-To-Date Consumer Insights

What car buyers want, gathered from the latest review data.

Find Your Dealership

www.widewail.com/wari



 Hide fields	 Filter	 Group	 Sort		...				
<input type="checkbox"/>	Name	Lifetime Volume	Percent of Negative Reviews	Response Rate	Brand	City	State	Region	
1	Longo Toyota	14777.0	6%	8%	TOYOTA	EL MONTE	CA	West	
2	Hendrick Toyota Apex	9406.0	4%	28%	TOYOTA	APEX	NC	South	
3	Autonation Toyota Winter ...	14748.0	9%	16%	TOYOTA	WINTER PARK	FL	South	
4	Bomnin Chevrolet Dadela...	16192.0	4%	11%	CHEVROLET	MIAMI	FL	South	
5	Arlington Toyota	17735.0	6%	10%	TOYOTA	JACKSONVILLE	FL	South	
6	Courtesy Chevrolet Cafe	8034.0	5%	21%	CHEVROLET	PHOENIX	AZ	West	
7	Longo Lexus	7084.0	3%	7%	LEXUS	EL MONTE	CA	West	
8	Rick Hendrick Toyota San...	7778.0	2%	21%	TOYOTA	ATLANTA	GA	South	
9	Bomnin Chevrolet West K...	13637.0	4%	13%	CHEVROLET	MIAMI	FL	South	
10	Alm Kia South	6616.0	5%	22%	KIA	UNION CITY	GA	South	

See Your Custom Q2 Reputation Report, Health Score, and Ranking

Widewail has reputation scorecards on hand for all top 150 auto groups in the US. If you are not on the list but would like to see a report for your group, you can request that we generate one.

Each group's report includes:

- **Reputation Health Score**

A single metric for your group's overall reputation health, and a breakdown of the major components that contribute to that score.

- **Reputation Benchmarks**

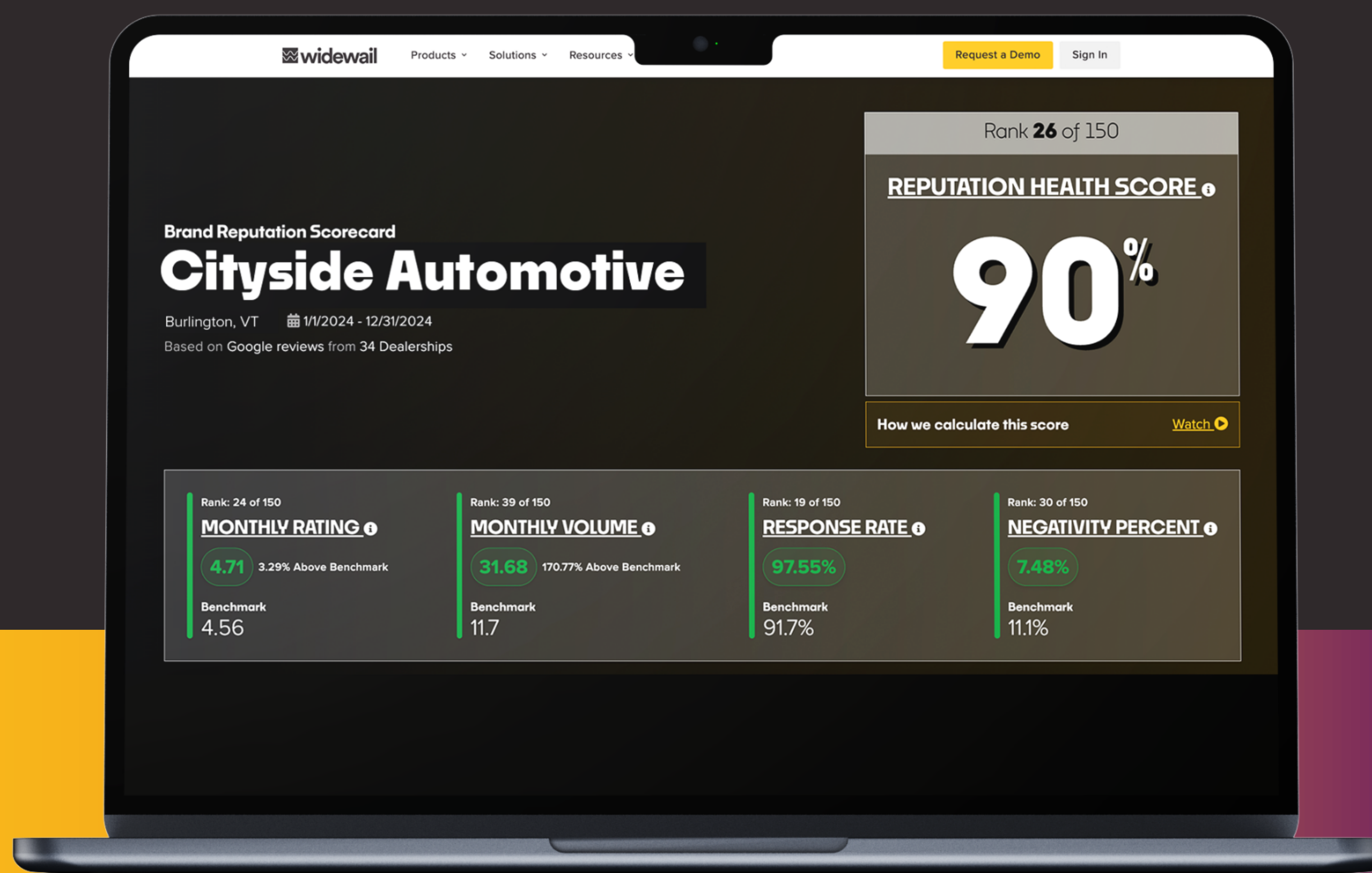
See how your performance compares to national averages.

- **Topic & Sentiment Analysis**

Learn what customers praise and complain about across your stores. We've topic-tagged all of your Google reviews from Q2 using Widewail's Voice of the Customer AI technology.

- **Rankings vs. Top 150 Groups**

Determine your ranking among major US dealership groups for key reputation metrics, including review volume, rating, response rate, and negativity.



Get Your Free Report

widewail.com/top-150-scorecard

"The reporting, the rich content Widewail creates - it's all valuable. As a marketer, I've taken their data and used it. We even replicated one of their studies because it was so useful."

George Jones
Digital Marketing Manager, Haselwood Automotive Group



What Widewail Customers Are Saying

Based on 1.4 million reviews, the data in this report offers the most complete picture of reputation performance in the industry in Q2. Here's how leading dealer groups are using Widewail to turn those insights into smarter decisions—and stronger outcomes.

Select Clients:



"At a dealership, there are so many items that have to be executed on a daily basis. With every customer that comes in, there are ten steps to one task and a mountain of paperwork for another. There are so many items to execute in reality. If we didn't have Widewail, asking for reviews just wouldn't get done."

Colby Joyner
Cavender Auto Group



→ Earned **9,800** new reviews with Widewail



→ **75% reduction** in negative review sentiment

"The benefits of both products were undeniable—right out of the gate. If I could do anything differently, I wouldn't have waited to approve Invite until after I'd seen Engage in action. Not only did our monthly review numbers shoot up, but it was also hard to believe how well the text messages converted."

General Manager
Lexus

"Since starting with Widewail, our dealerships have been consistently called out by manufacturers for having great reviews and responses. Signing up for Widewail was one of the best decisions I've made since I've been here."

Topher Liddle
Sloane Automotive Group



→ **4.7 average star rating** across all locations



→ **Rooftops average 41 reviews per month**, nearly four times the industry average of 11.7

"It's great for us to have one vendor. The value Widewail adds through their simple process and real human responses—something not every vendor offers—has made a big difference for us."

Jennifer Martel
McGovern Auto Group



More than Reviews. Widewail Unlocks the Full Potential of Customer Feedback.

Widewail handles the follow-up, responds to reviews on your behalf, and turns all that customer feedback into insights your leaders can actually use. So your reputation improves (and your team gets better) without you doing all the work.

Enterprise Partnerships:



Reputation, A Better Way

What Widewail Replaces... and What You Get Instead

Asking customers for reviews	Instead of Staff solicitations and QR codes.	Widewail gives you... Automated review requests via the right channel and right time that convert exceptionally well.
Writing review responses	Instead of Customer service manager chasing people down over days and weeks.	Widewail gives you... Thoughtful human-authored responses under 24 hours. Back-and-forth with frontline teams happens within the Widewail app.
Analyzing review trends	Instead of Reading reviews manually and guessing.	Widewail gives you... AI-powered insights that identify trends interviews and detail operational issues so you can fix problems.
Sending follow-up surveys for deeper insights	Instead of Surveys with low response rates.	Widewail gives you... High-response surveys that provide detailed insights and are coordinated with review requests, so you don't over survey.
Manage listings	Instead of Randomly discovering business listing errors and updating details manually.	Widewail gives you... One-click updates for thousands of listings across 75+ platforms from a single dashboard.

Integrations

Powering Automation:





GET REPUTATION AND CX REPORTING SPECIFIC TO YOUR DEALERSHIP

YOU'VE SEEN WHAT'S POSSIBLE AT AN INDUSTRY LEVEL. NOW, IT'S YOUR TURN.

In Widewail, clients can track customer sentiment in reviews and identify trends that help dealers prioritize what to improve next. Widewail helps dealers power their feedback engine, growing their visibility in local search, while also using the voice of the customer to inform and improve operations.

Get Started with a Demo

widewail.com/connect

