Go-to-Market Series

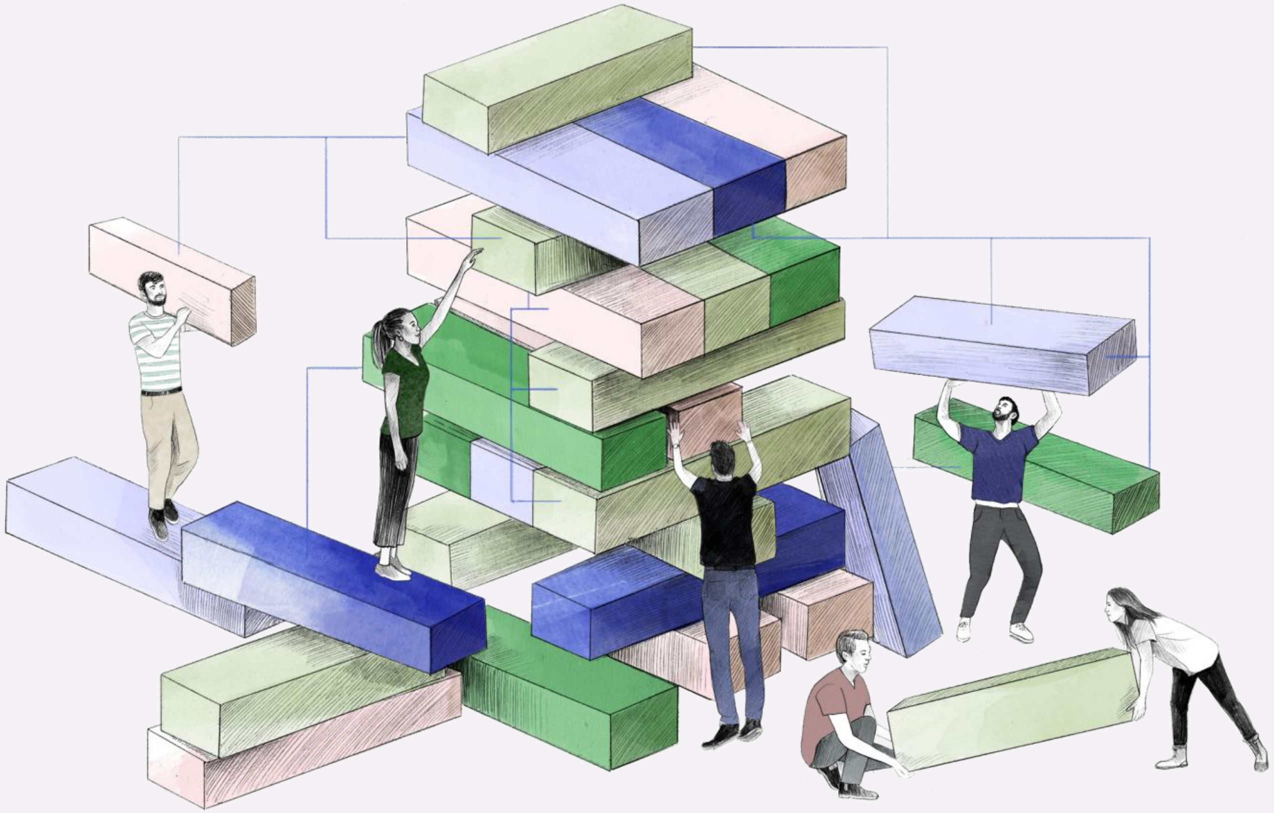
ICONIQ

March 2026

# The State of Go-to-Market in 2026

*Detailed Insights on:*

- *GTM Strategy*
- *GTM Health*
- *Internal AI Implementation in GTM Orgs*



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# Supporting founders through pivotal milestones and various stages of growth

## Executive Hiring

Talent and Leadership Advisory

Guidance to attract and unlock the power of talent through advisory, connections and research

"ICONIQ delivered the best reference check I've ever seen, overnight."

ElevenLabs

**Mati Staniszewski**
Co-founder and CEO

## Product and Go-to-Market Strategy

Technical Advisory and Go-to-Market Boards

Strategic advisory from industry leaders with hands-on experience in technology, digital innovation, go-to-market, and more

"It has been so valuable to lean into ICONIQ's expertise, network, and advice. What you do is a total game changer."

PIGMENT

**Eléonore Crespo**
Co-founder and CEO

## Revenue Acceleration

Portfolio Operations

Digital and Growth Advisory Boards

Strategic and commercial connections across industries to support global expansion goals

"The customer introductions have been incredibly valuable. ICONIQ's relationships are truly deeper."

SIERRA

**Bret Taylor**
Co-founder and CEO

## Category Leadership + Operational Optimization

Analytics and Insights

Data-driven insights to support decision making across business operations and strategy

"Working with ICONIQ has been a dream partnership, they've gone above and beyond at every step."

WRITER

**May Habib**
Co-founder and CEO

# Data Sources

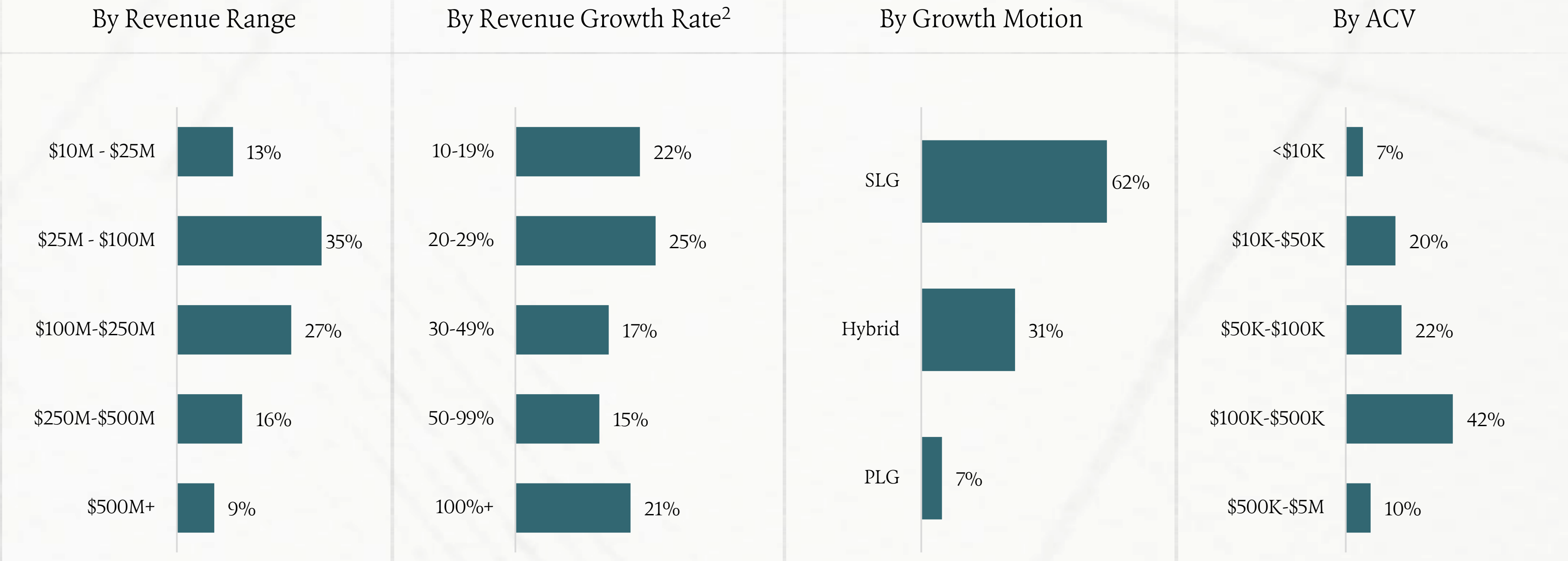
## & Methodology

This study summarizes data from a January 2026 survey of **GTM executives at 150+ B2B SaaS companies**, including Chief Revenue Officers, Heads of Sales, CEOs, and Heads of Revenue Operations.

Where relevant, we compare results to a 2024 and 2025 survey conducted by ICONIQ.

This report also includes quarterly operating and financial data from certain ICONIQ portfolio companies.[1]

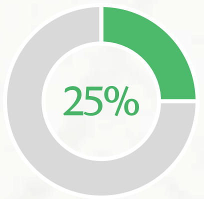
## Firmographics



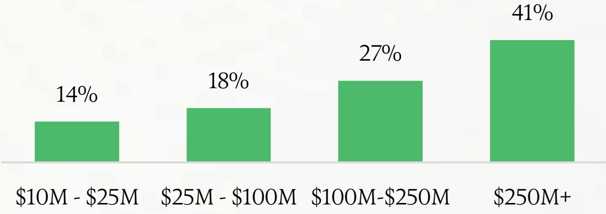

In this report, select companies are referred to as **"High Growth"** companies[3] because they meet the following criteria:

- **Topline Growth**:
  - 200%+ YoY revenue growth if $10M-$25M Revenue
  - 100%+ YoY revenue growth if $25M-$100M Revenue
  - 50%+ YoY revenue growth if $100M-$250M Revenue
  - 30%+ YoY revenue growth if $250M+ Revenue

**High Growth Companies**
% of Respondents




**Revenue Range**
% of Respondents




1 All companies included where data is available
2 YoY Revenue Growth Rate between 2024 and 2025
3 <$10M revenue companies excluded

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# Executive Summary

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GTM organizations are entering 2026 with renewed growth momentum, but the playbook is evolving. Companies are diversifying how they sell, how they price, and how they use AI, while increasingly anchoring performance to net revenue. Despite the recent software sell-off and public market volatility, some of the strongest companies are continuing to pull ahead, taking advantage of this environment to further separate themselves from the pack

## Strategic GTM Shifts

**Companies continue to diversify their GTM strategies by blending top-down and bottom-up motions**, with high-growth companies increasingly leaning into bottom-up as a growth lever alongside upmarket expansion. As a result, revenue mix is becoming more balanced across motions; while direct sales and channel remain dominant, high growth companies expect to gain greater leverage from self-serve relative to peers (~20% vs. ~10% respectively)

Monetization strategies are evolving in parallel, with **hybrid pricing models remaining dominant (~50% of companies have hybrid as their primary model)**. With consumption/usage-based pricing on the rise, Account Executive incentives are expanding beyond Gross New Recurring Revenue, Bookings and Total Contract Value to include Net Revenue and Net Dollar Retention

## GTM Health & Efficiency

Against this backdrop, **top-quartile YoY ARR growth is reaccelerating across most revenue bands.** High-growth companies are fueling this momentum by generating a greater share of pipeline from sales and channel motions (~60-80%) relative to marketing (~15-20%), reinforcing the role of direct, seller-led motions

**Funnel efficiency is improving, with conversion rates ticking up year over year, particularly in free trial / proof-of-concept motions** (~50% conversion vs. 25-35% from SQL/Demo to Closed-Won)

**Sales cycles have shortened by ~6 weeks, however, there is a noticeable shift toward <1-year contracts.** Customers are signing faster, but for shorter durations, reflecting demand for flexibility and optionality in a fast-moving AI market

## AI Use Cases and Impact

Underlying both growth reacceleration and improved GTM efficiency is increased AI adoption

**Companies with stronger AI integration are seeing gains across funnel performance, quota attainment, and GTM operating models.** As compensation shifts toward NRR/NDR, contract durations shorten, and consumption pricing introduces greater revenue variability, operators are increasingly anchoring their GTM organizations to retention, including how they define and measure AI-driven ROI

# How companies are shifting GTM strategy

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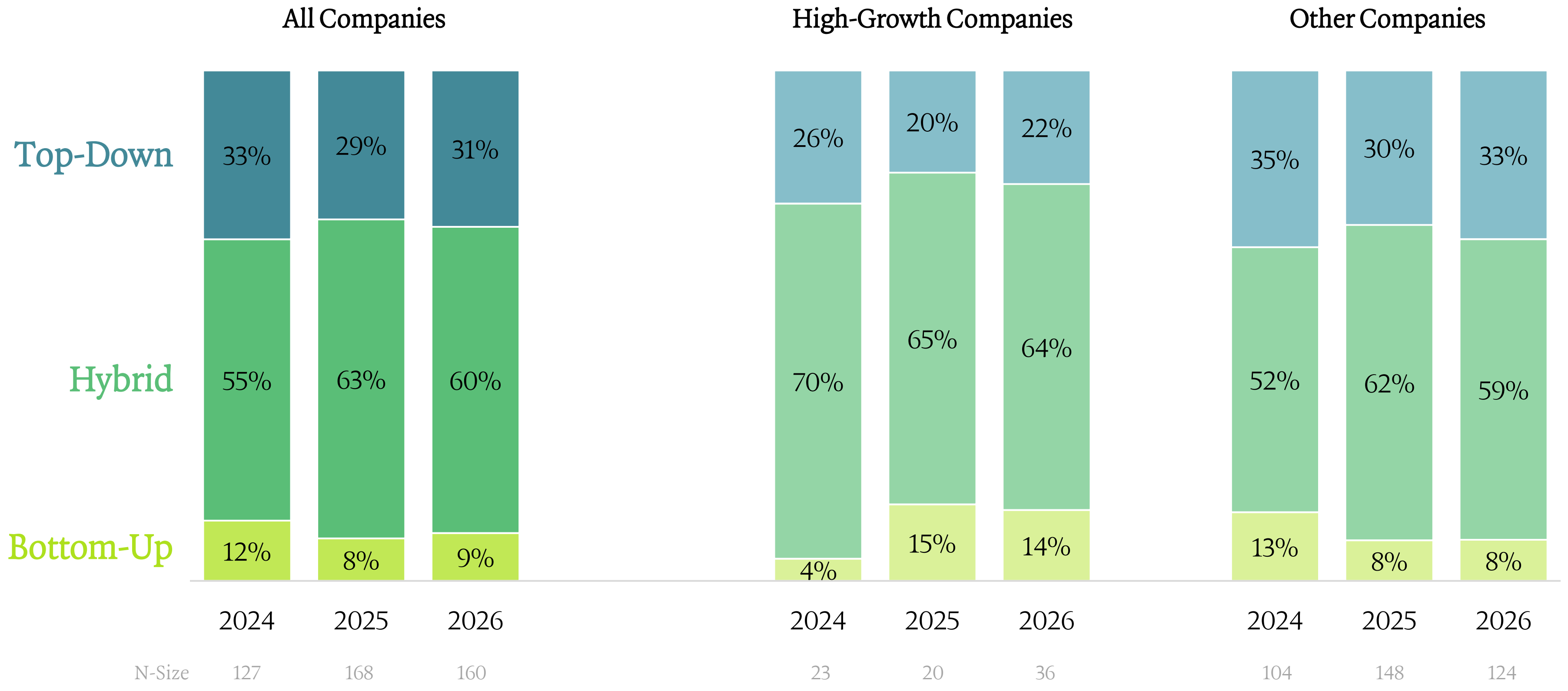
# Companies continue to diversify their GTM strategies by blending top-down and bottom-up motions, with high-growth companies leaning into bottom-up as a key growth lever alongside their upmarket efforts

## Customer Acquisition Method

% of Respondents




Source: ICONIQ proprietary survey of GTM Executives (2024-2026)

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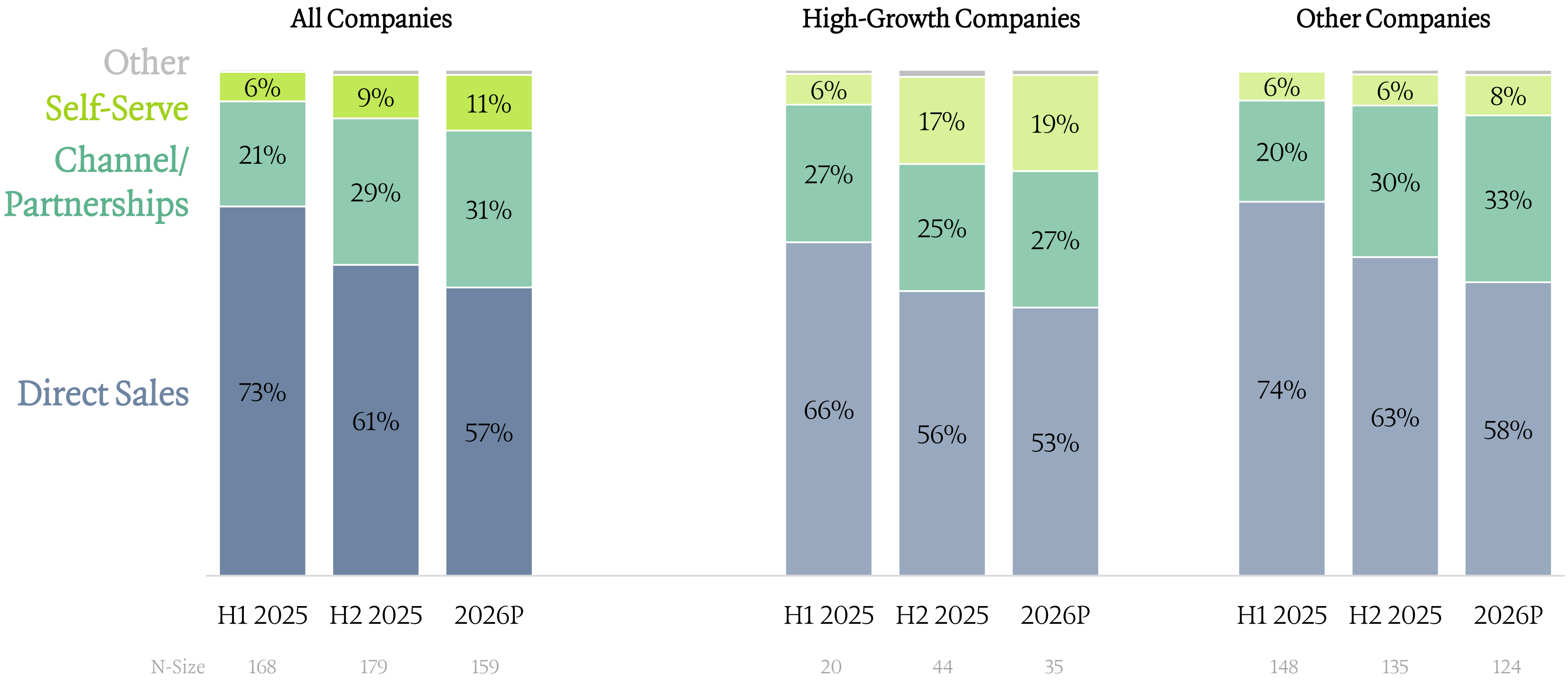
# As a result, high-growth companies are deriving a more balanced revenue mix across motions; while direct sales and channel remain dominant, they expect to gain greater leverage from self-serve relative to peers

## Revenue Split by GTM Motion

Average




"I'm seeing hyper-growth companies (especially AI companies) use self-serve to get access to user-level buyers, then leverage that demand to drive a top-down motion and get in front of the C-suite with a broader solution. It's an incredibly effective wedge.

At the same time, while most companies want to give their employees choice in the tools they use, they're not willing to sign long-term contracts – in an AI world where the best solution can change in a matter of months, they want to keep their options open.

*Chris Degnan, former CRO, Snowflake*

Source: ICONIQ proprietary survey of GTM Executives (2025-2026)

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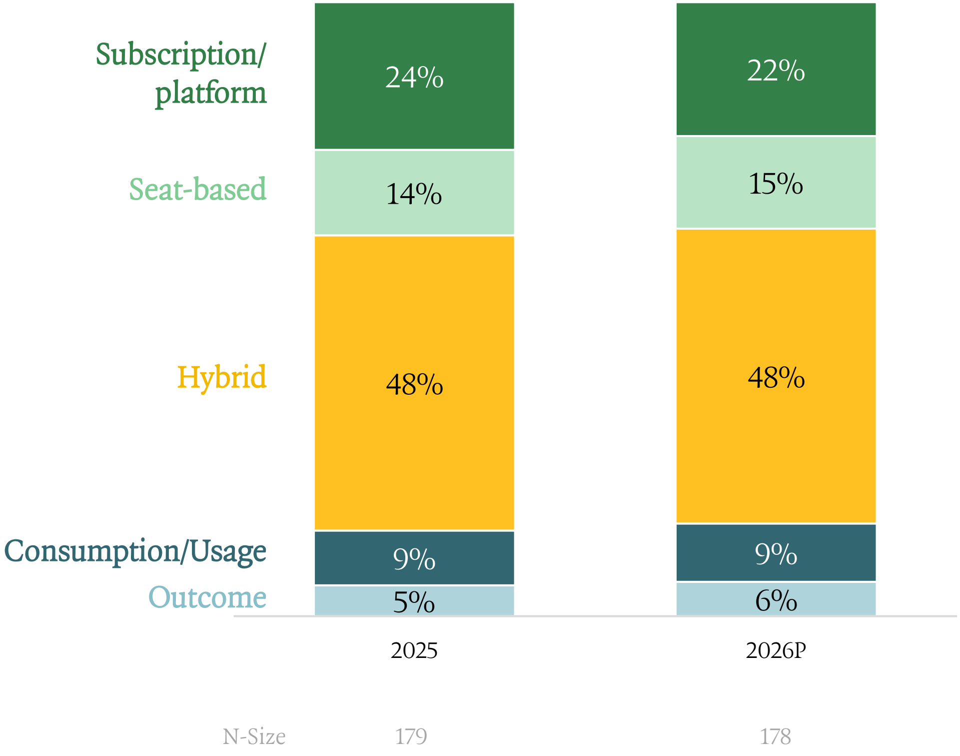
# Companies are also diversifying monetization strategies as hybrid models remain dominant. Consumption/usage- and outcome-based pricing are more common among products powered by proprietary models

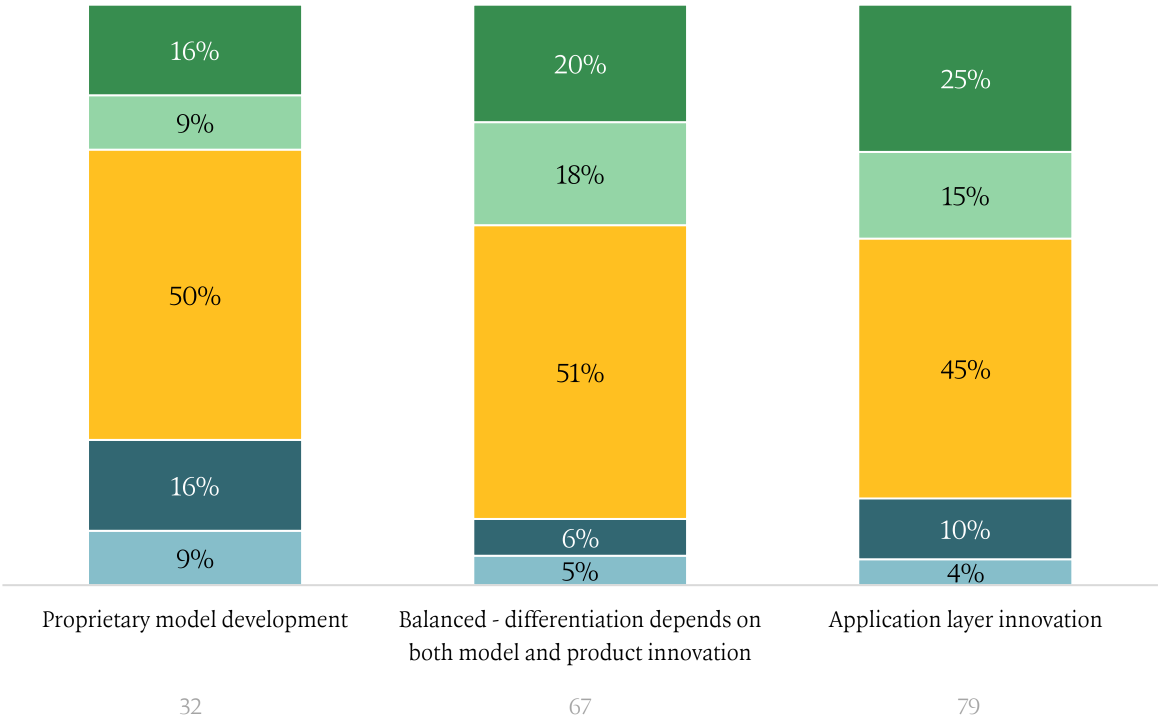
## Primary[1] Pricing Model by Year

Average




## 2026P Pricing Model by Product Technical Differentiation

Average




Source: ICONIQ proprietary survey of GTM Executives (2025-2026)

1) Primary defined as deriving ≥70% of revenue from a pricing model

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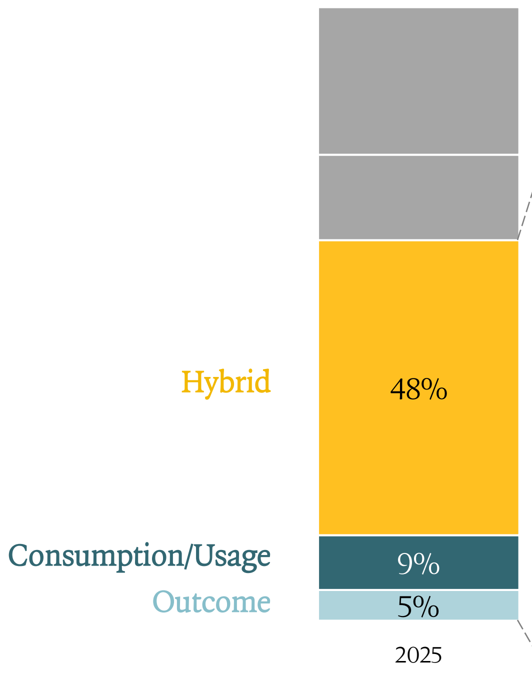
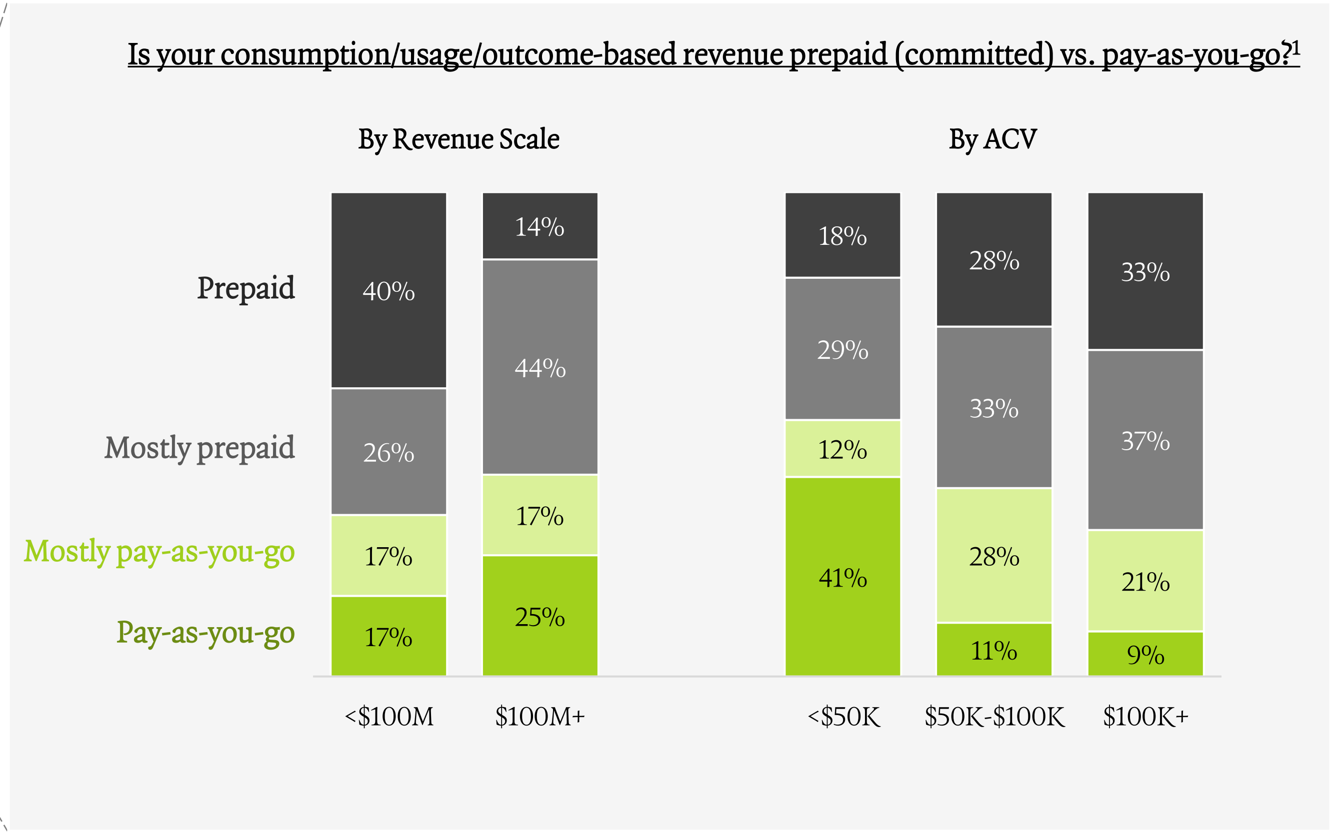
# While consumption/usage- and outcome-based models typically include some form of upfront commitment, 'pay-as-you-go' structures become more prevalent as GTM engines mature and revenue predictability improves

## Prepaid (committed) vs. Pay-as-you-go

% of Respondents




"

From the buyer perspective, larger organizations have more sophisticated buying processes, higher risk tolerance, and can stomach the occasional failed deployment. Smaller organizations can't... their usage is more variable, they're more sensitive to getting locked in, and many are tech companies themselves who know that today's best tool might be obsolete in 6-12 months.

On the vendor side, pay-as-you-go takes real operational maturity to pull off – you need the billing infrastructure, usage instrumentation, and forecasting discipline to make it work. Earlier-stage companies are still building all of that.

*Dennis Lyandres, former CRO, Procore*

Source: ICONIQ proprietary survey of GTM Executives (2025-2026)

1) The left pricing bar chart reflects the same set of companies as the breakout charts on the right, which detail the distribution of companies with prepaid vs. pay-as-you-go models

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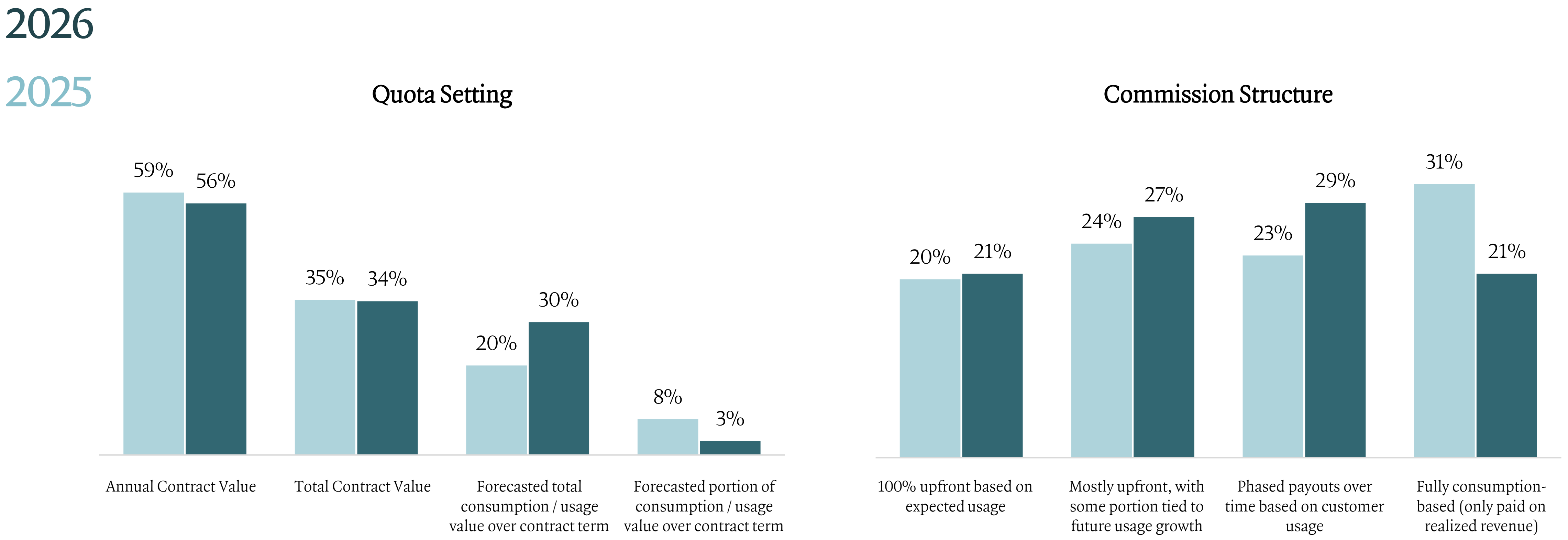
# In cases without upfront commitments, companies are increasingly using forecasted total consumption to set Account Executive quotas and structuring commissions to balance pay predictability with actual customer usage

## How do you set quotas and pay commissions for AEs under a consumption/usage or outcome-based model?

% of Respondents




Source: ICONIQ proprietary survey of GTM Executives (2025-2026). 2025 N-Size = 75, 2026 N-Size = 64

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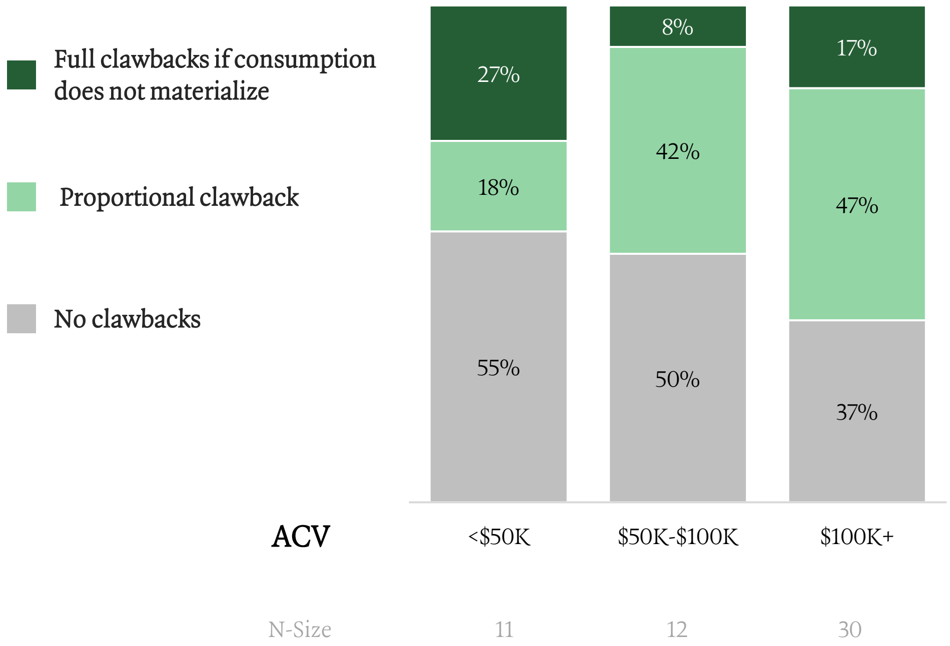
# However, if consumption does not materialize, many companies implement some form of clawback. For $50K+ ACVs, this typically occurs 3-6 months after deal closure

## Account Executive Clawbacks

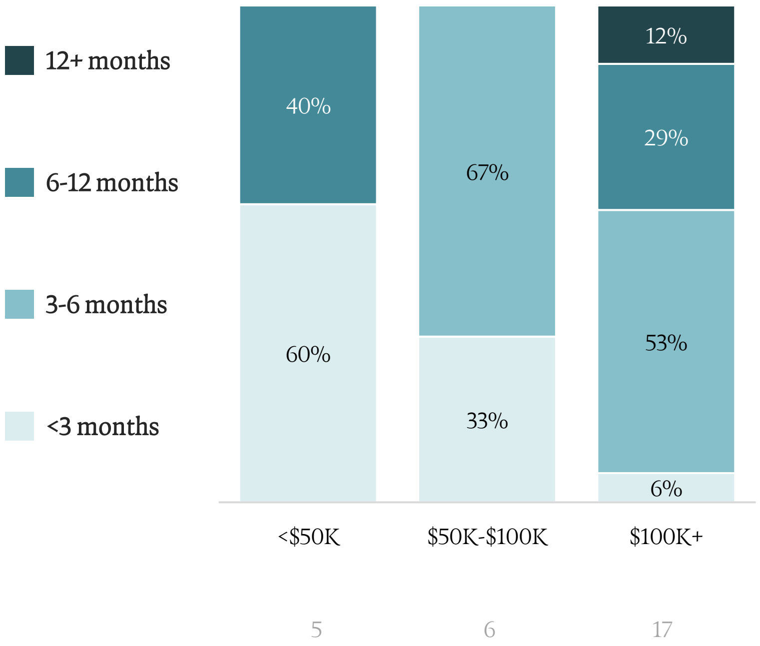
% of Respondents, By ACV

### Do you use commission clawbacks for consumption/usage- or outcome-based deals?




### When are clawbacks typically applied?

*Clawback timing refers to how long after commission payout a deal can be reversed or reclaimed if the customer does not meet required conditions*




Source: ICONIQ proprietary survey of GTM Executives (2026)

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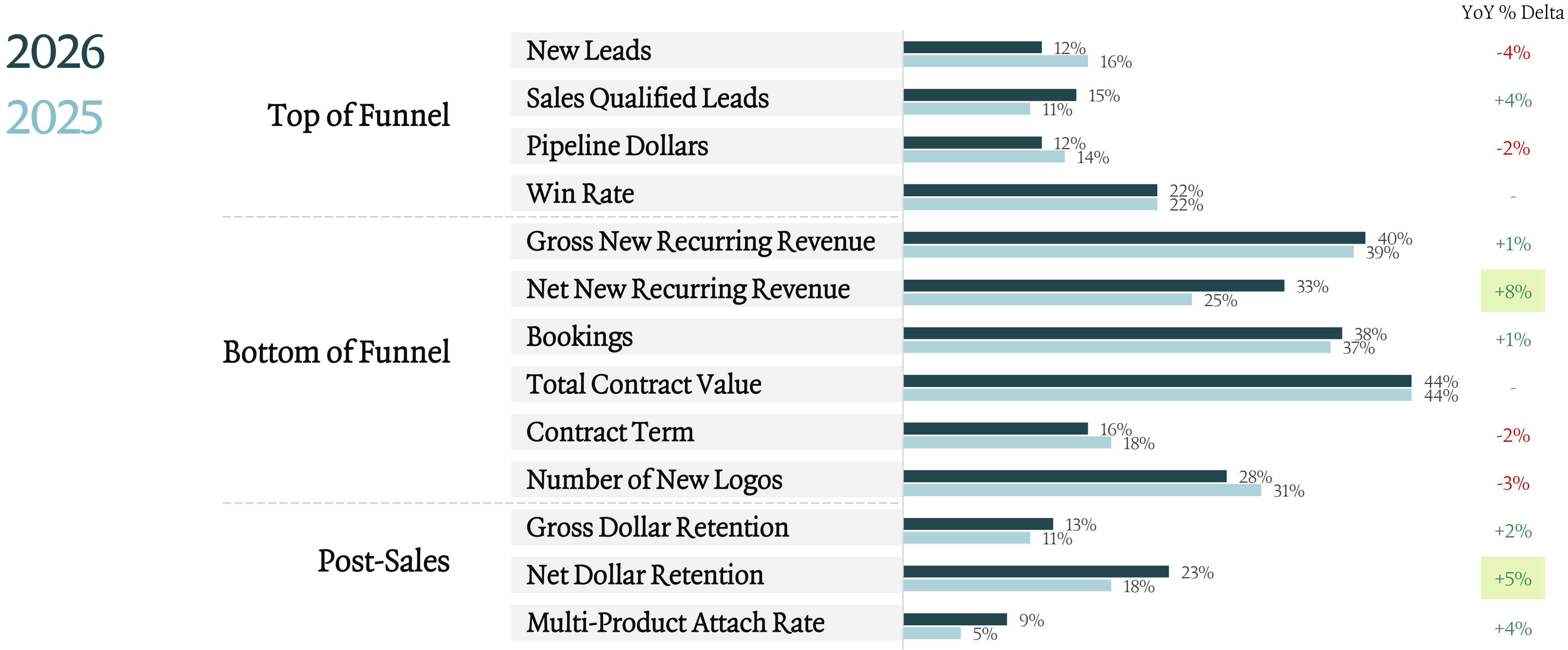
# As pricing shifts toward hybrid and consumption/usage models, Account Executives are increasingly being tied to Net New Recurring Revenue and Net Dollar Retention to help reinforce sustainable revenue expansion over time

## Which of the following metrics are tied to Account Executive variable (performance-based) compensation?

% of Respondents




Source: ICONIQ proprietary survey of GTM Executives (2025-2026). 2025 N-Size = 142, 2026 N-Size = 144

# GTM Health and Efficiency

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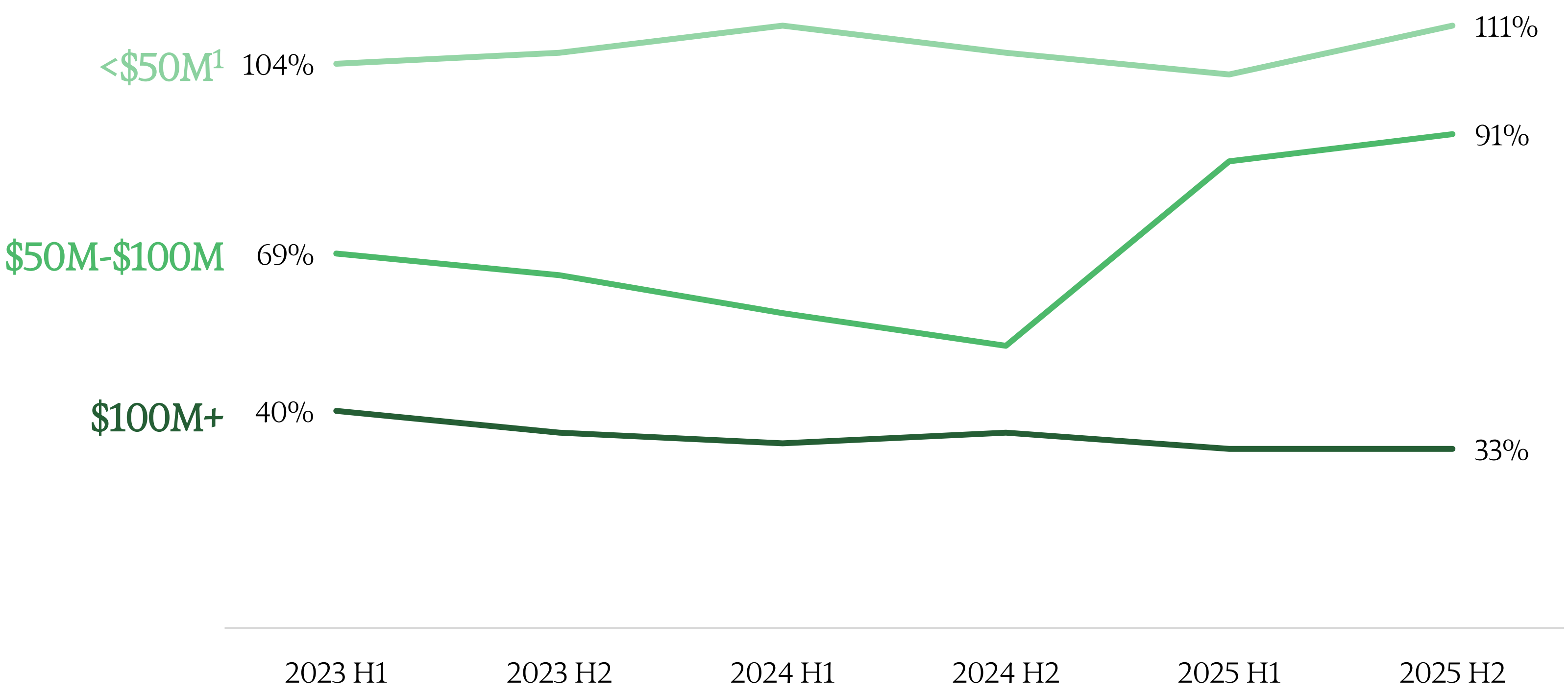
# In aggregate, top quartile YoY ARR growth experienced reacceleration across most revenue scales in 2025

## YoY ARR Growth

Top Quartile by Revenue Range and Half Year




The **recent SaaS sell-off driven by fears that AI agents will displace traditional software has erased significant market value**, but history suggests this reaction is more a reset than a reckoning.

**Every major platform shift has triggered volatility before expanding the total value of the ecosystem**, and AI appears to follow that pattern.

In this environment, **we expect top-quartile growth companies who fully adopt AI both internally and externally to emerge stronger from the reset**, continuing to separate from themselves from the pack.

Read more about this in our blog:
A Coming Age of Reason: Evolutionary Innovation and the New Layers of Agentic Software

Source: Based on quarterly financial and operating data from a select dataset of public SaaS companies and our private venture and growth portfolio companies from 2013 – Q4 2025, where data is available
1 Companies <$10M ARR excluded

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# This reacceleration is supported in part by strong net dollar retention, which remains in the ~110-120% range and underscores the durability of post-sales expansion efforts

## Net Dollar Retention

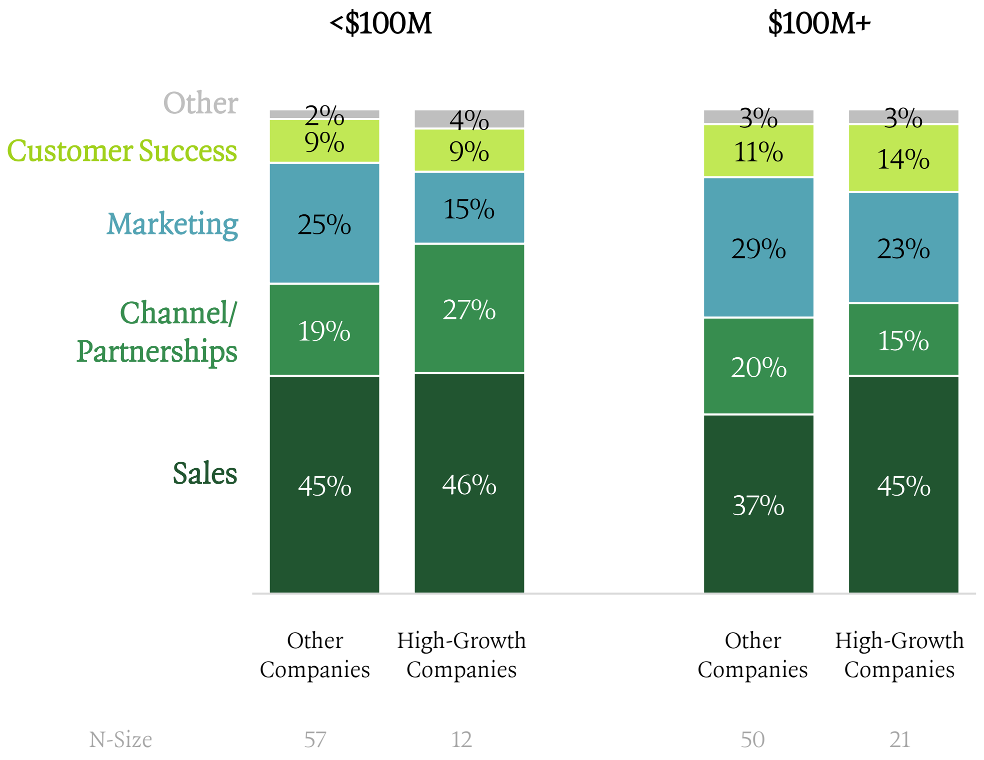
Top Quartile by Revenue Range and Half Year


Source: Based on quarterly financial and operating data from a select dataset of public SaaS companies and our private venture and growth portfolio companies from 2013 – Q4 2025, where data is available

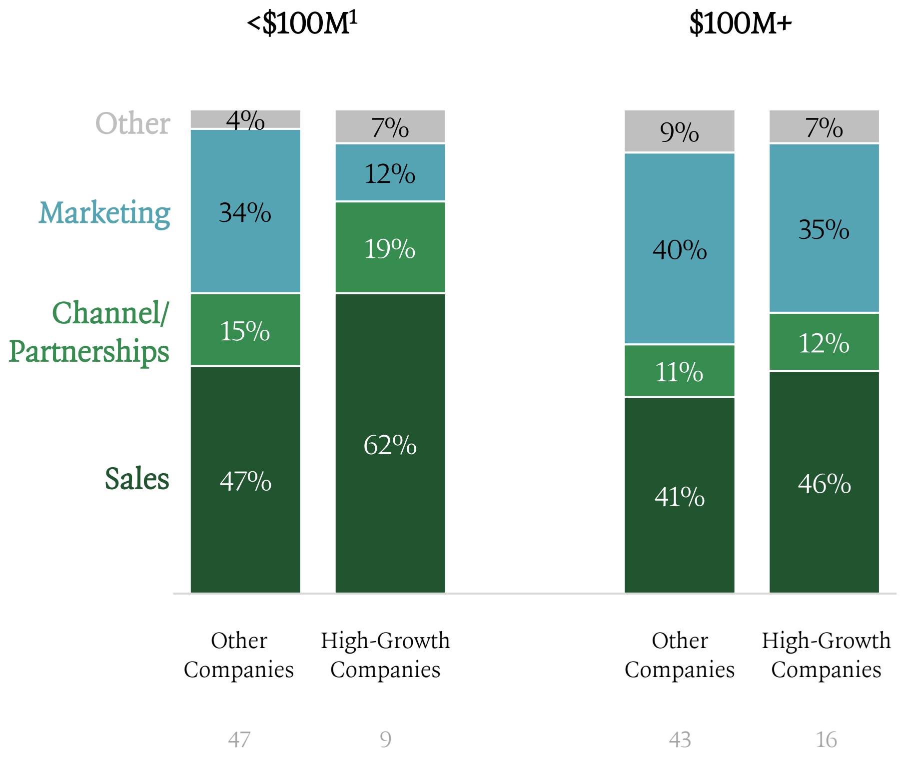
1 Companies <$10M ARR excluded

# To fuel this momentum, high-growth companies report deriving a greater share of pipeline from sales and channel motions vs. marketing, emphasizing the importance of more direct, seller-led motions

## Total Pipeline Distribution
Average




## New Logo Pipeline Distribution
Average




Source: ICONIQ proprietary survey of GTM Executives (2026)

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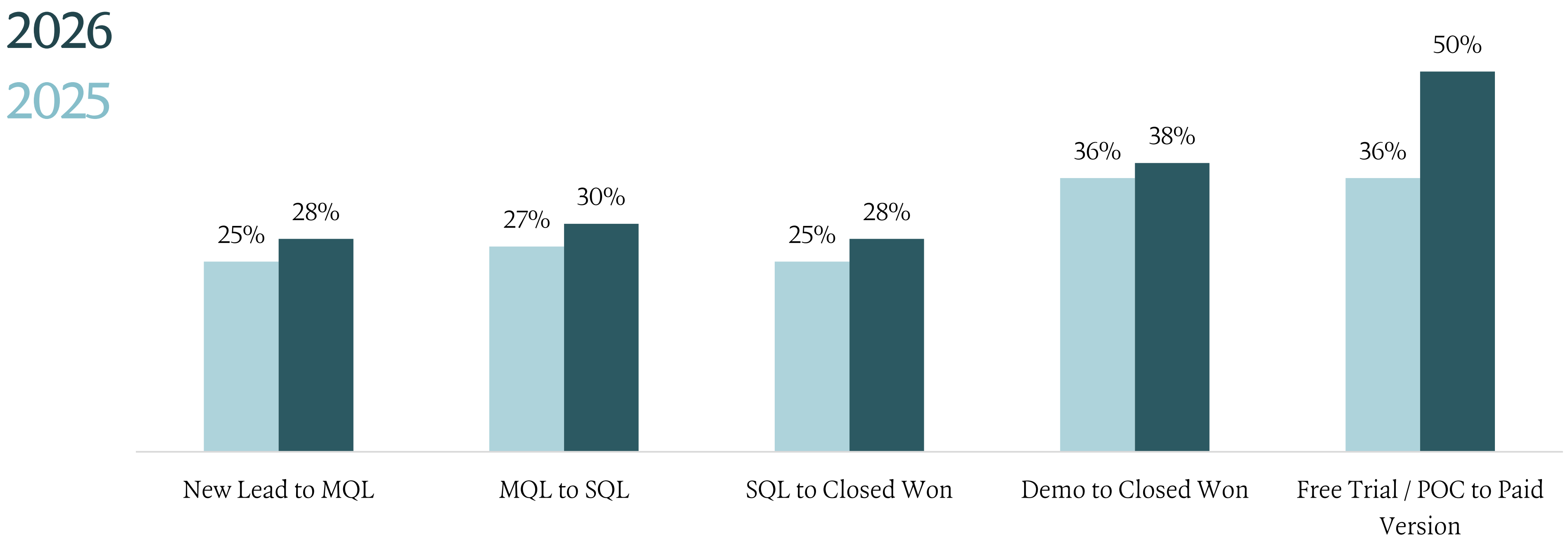
# Pipeline is moving through the funnel more efficiently with conversion rates slightly up YoY, particularly in free trial / proof-of-concept motions, which are proving to be critical levers for new logo acquisition

## Sales Funnel Conversion Rates

Average




| | New Lead to MQL | MQL to SQL | SQL to Closed Won | Demo to Closed Won | Free Trial / POC to Paid Version |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| YoY % Delta | +3% | +3% | +3% | +2% | +14% |

Placeholder for commentary from Legora

Source: ICONIQ proprietary survey of GTM Executives (2025-2026). 2025 N-Size = 167, 2026 N-Size = 147

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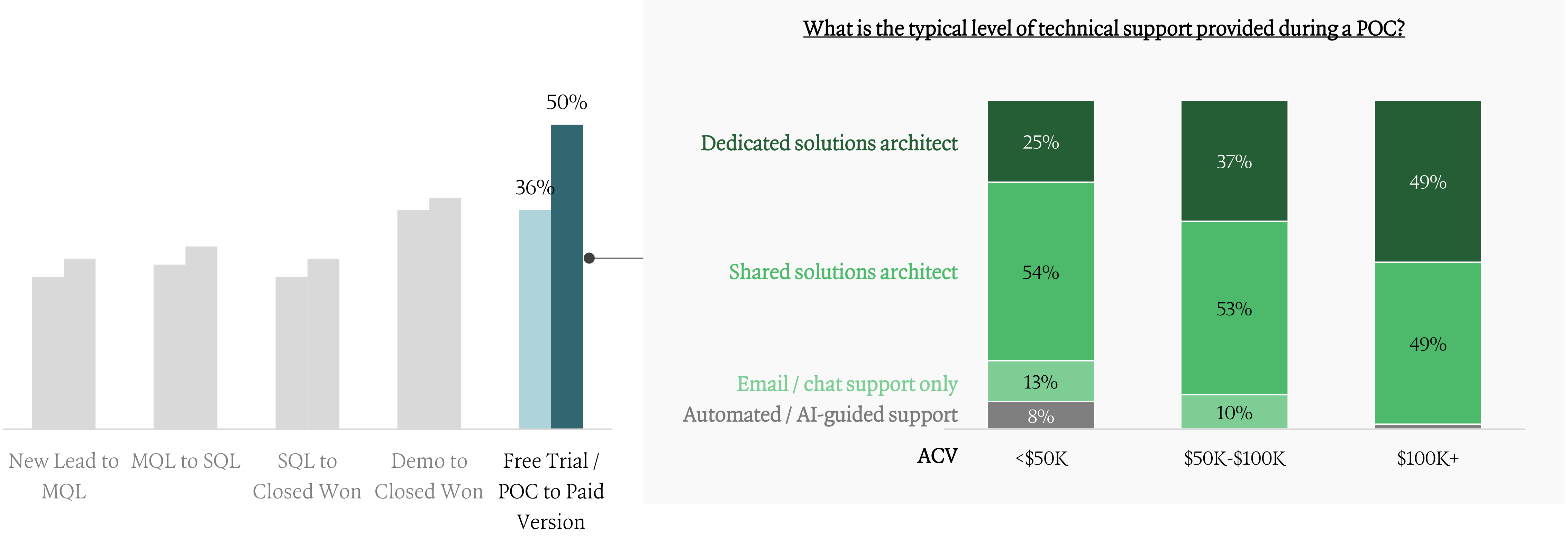
# Companies offer varying levels of support for proof-of-concepts depending on ACV, with larger contracts typically receiving more tailored, 1:1 support from solutions architects

## Operationalizing Proof of Concepts

% of Respondents

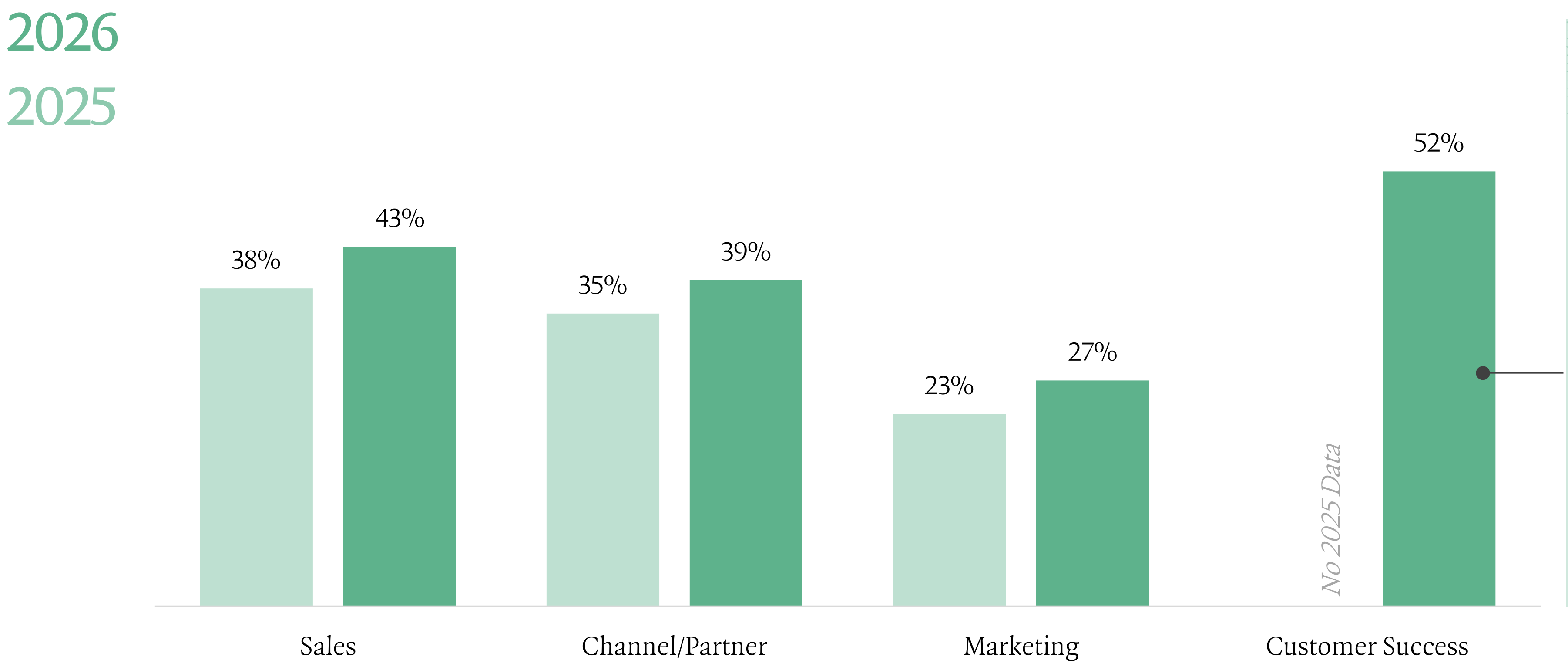



Source: ICONIQ proprietary survey of GTM Executives (2025-2026)

# As a result of a healthier sales funnel, win rates are also improving. CS-sourced opportunities generate the highest win rates, reflecting the advantage of selling into established relationships where ROI has been demonstrated to the customer

## Win Rates[1] by Opportunity Source

Average




In a recent ICONIQ-hosted GTM roundtable, **operators attributed stronger post-sale conversion to clear NRR ownership, formal CSQL programs, and more disciplined use of product telemetry** to surface expansion and risk signals.

Teams that aligned incentives around net retention reported measurable improvements in both churn and downsell, driving stronger conversion within the install base.

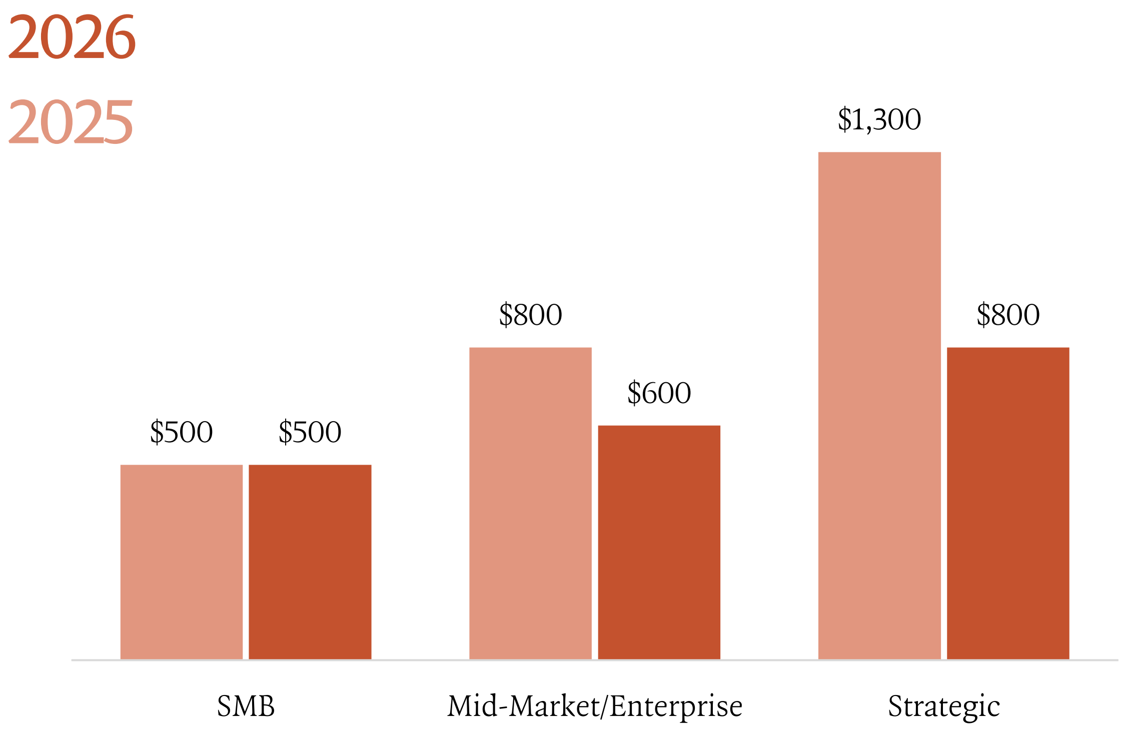
Source: ICONIQ proprietary survey of GTM Executives (2025-2026). 2025 N-Size = 165, 2026 N-Size = 145

1) Win rate = (# closed-won / # of closed-won + lost)*100

# In parallel with a healthier funnel, companies are becoming more efficient in acquiring new logos, contributing to modest declines in both cost per lead and cost per opportunity

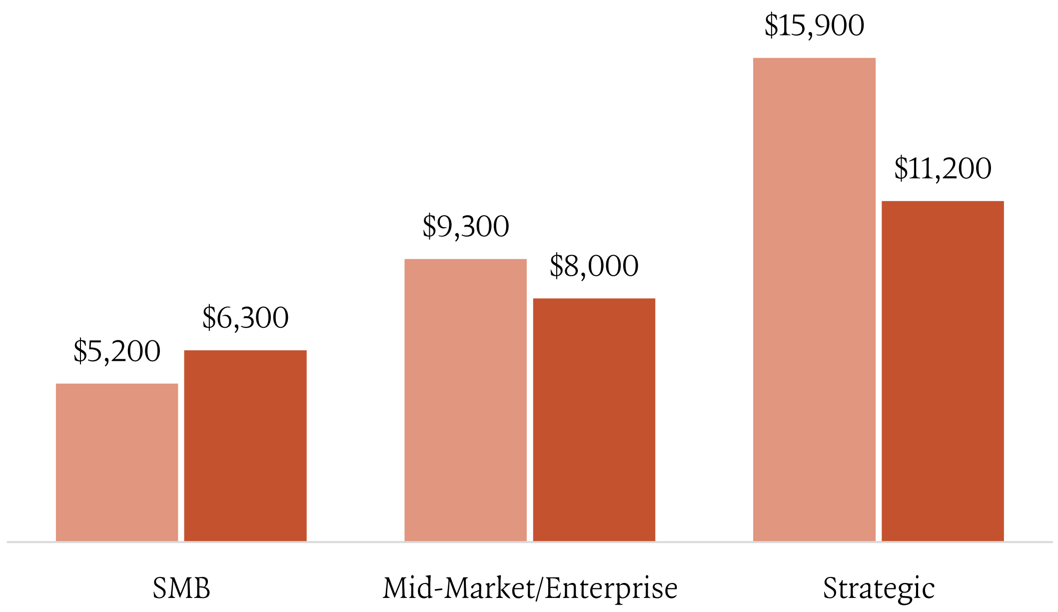
## Cost per Lead by Primary Customer Segment

Average




## Cost per Opportunity by Primary Customer Segment

Average

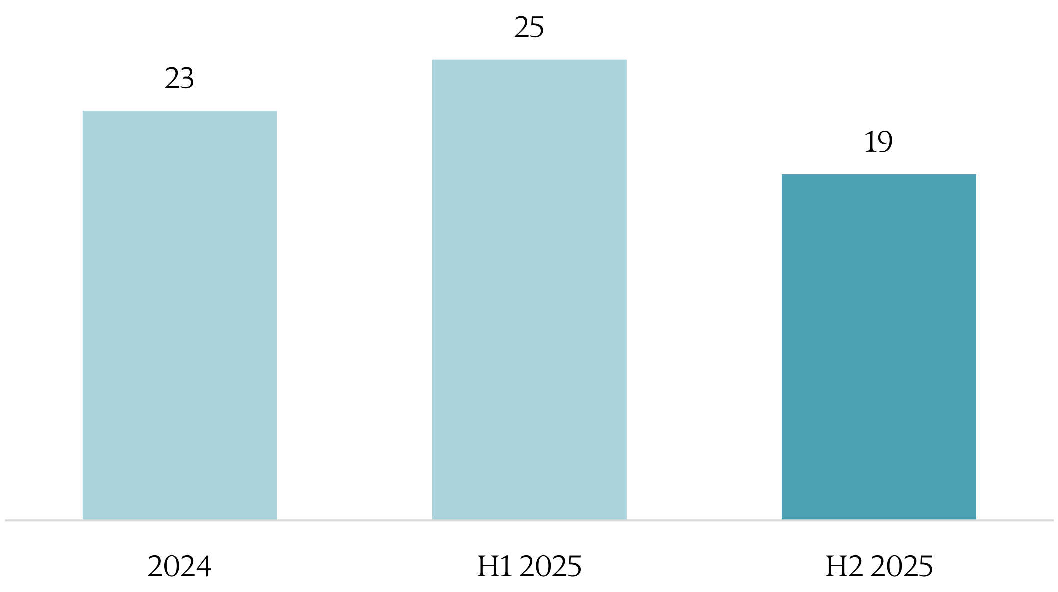



Source: ICONIQ proprietary survey of GTM Executives (2025-2026). 2025 N-Size = 141, 2026 N-Size = 143

# This improved efficiency is also reflected in cycle times, with average sales cycles shortening by ~6 weeks in 2025

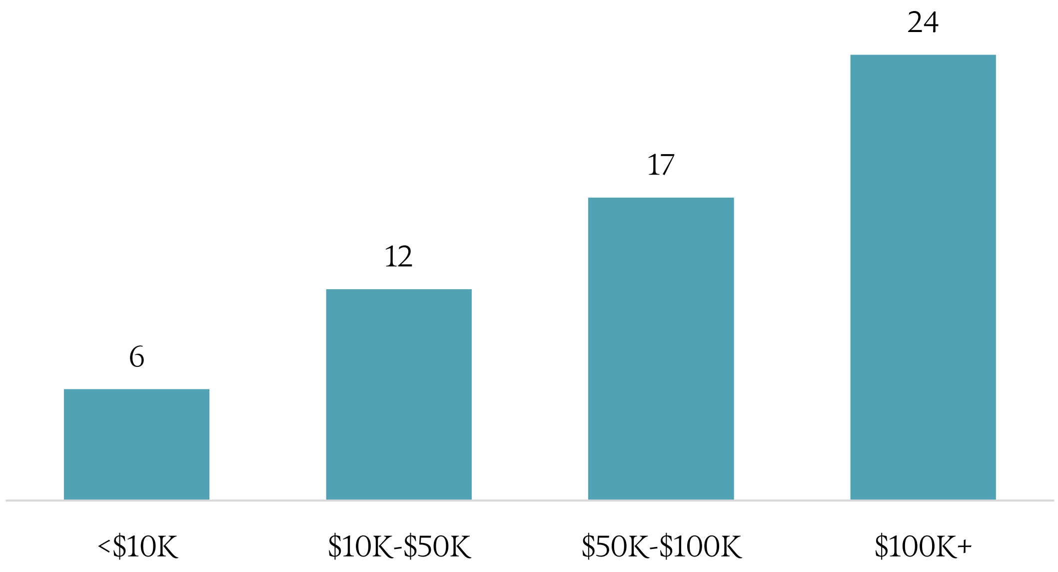
## Sales Cycles by Year (in weeks)

Average




## Sales Cycles by ACV (in weeks)

Average




| | 2024 | H1 2025 | H2 2025 | <$10K | $10K-$50K | $50K-$100K | $100K+ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| N-Size | 118 | 167 | 157 | 9 | 30 | 35 | 83 |

Source: ICONIQ proprietary survey of GTM Executives (2023-2026)

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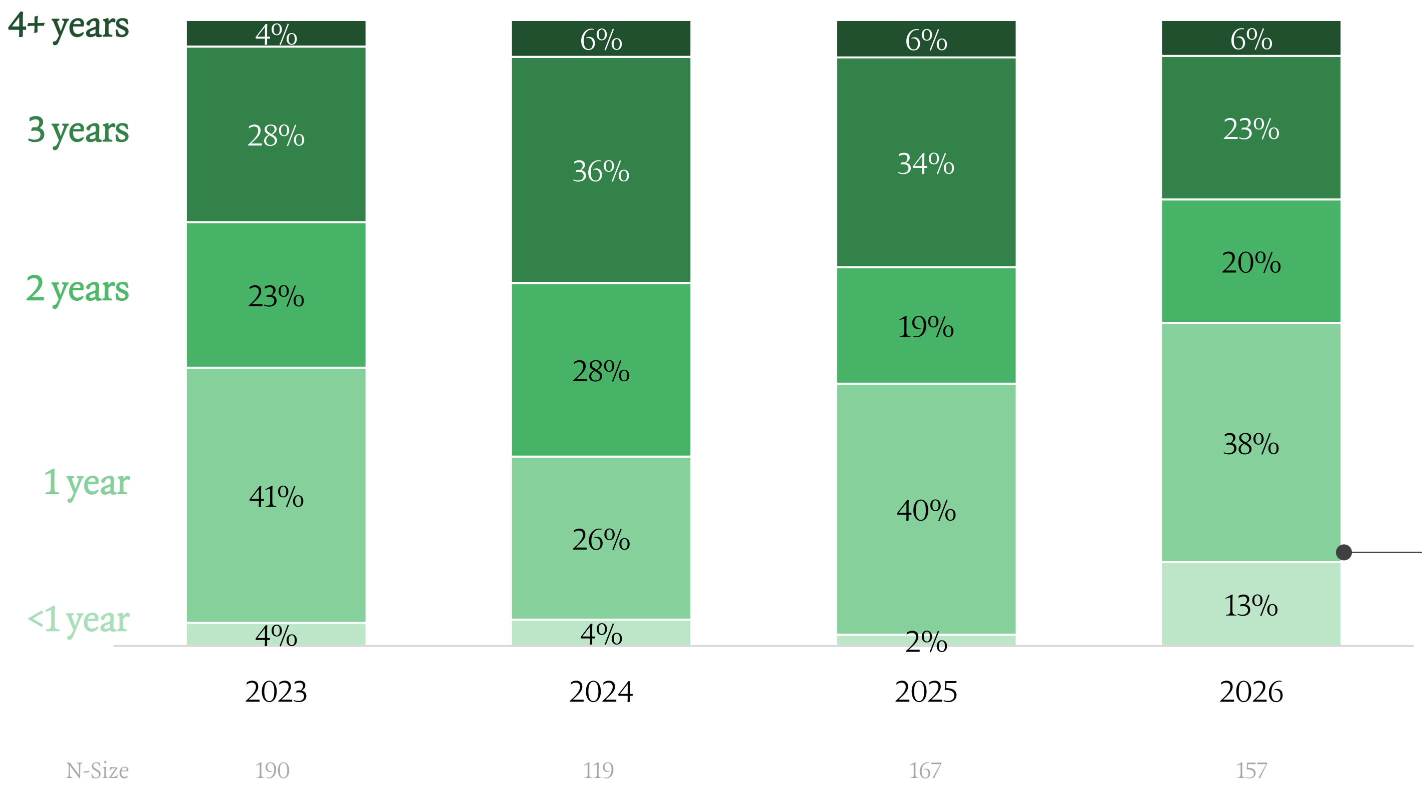
# While sales cycles have shortened, there is a noticeable shift toward <1-year contracts. Customers are signing faster, but for shorter durations, reflecting demand for flexibility and optionality in a fast-moving AI market

## Contract Length for New Logo Subscriptions

Average, By Year




**From the Buyer Perspective**

AI buying cycles are more crowded and competitive, with many vendors prioritizing logo acquisition over contract length – this is driving greater use of discounts or pilot structures to land accounts.

At the same time, the shift toward consumption and credit-based pricing creates more ROI ambiguity and forecasting uncertainty, making buyers hesitant to lock into multi-year terms, especially as model costs decline.

Source: ICONIQ proprietary survey of GTM Executives (2023-2026)

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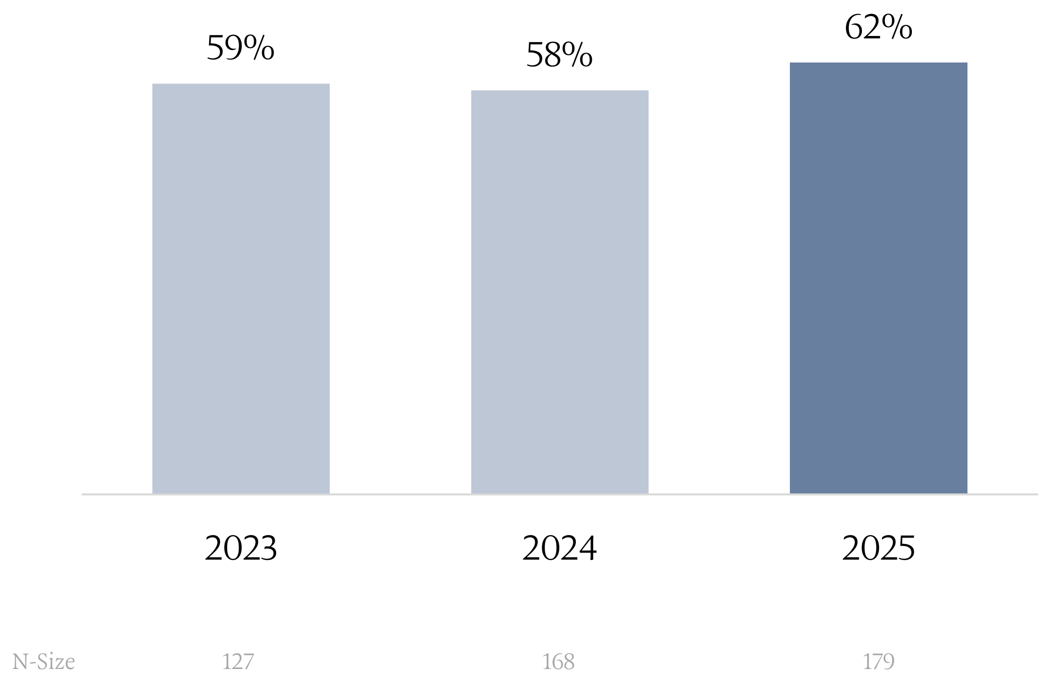
# The average percentage of ramped AEs hitting quota has ticked up to 62% in 2025, however, this is against slightly shorter deals

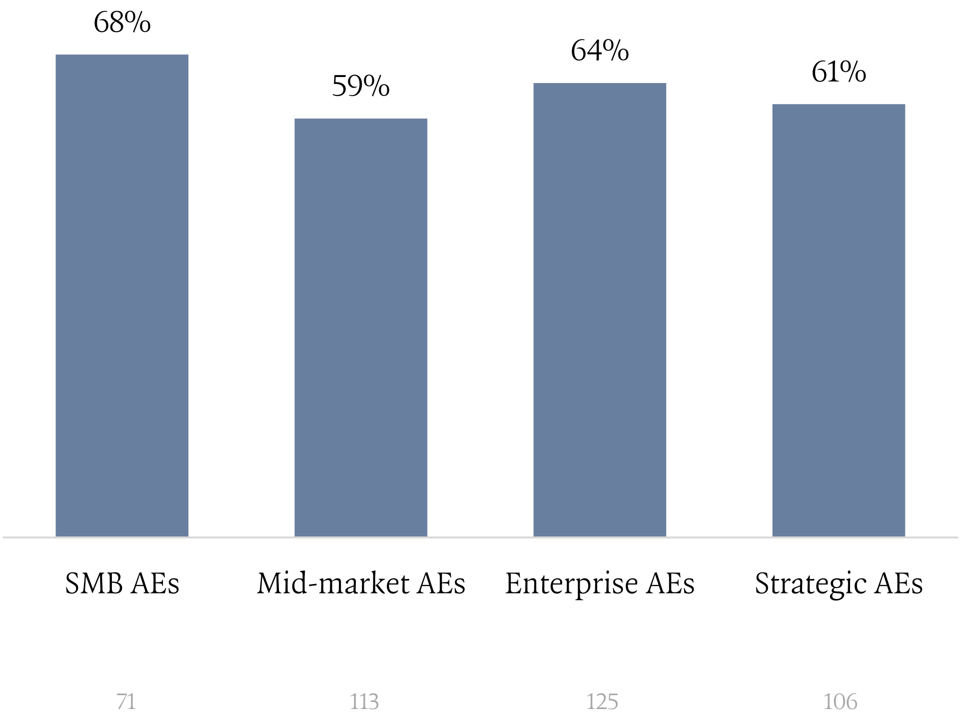
## % of ramped AEs that achieved quota by Year

Average




## % of ramped AEs that achieved quota by AE Segment

Average




Source: ICONIQ proprietary survey of GTM Executives (2023-2026)

# Go-To-Market AI Use Cases and Impact

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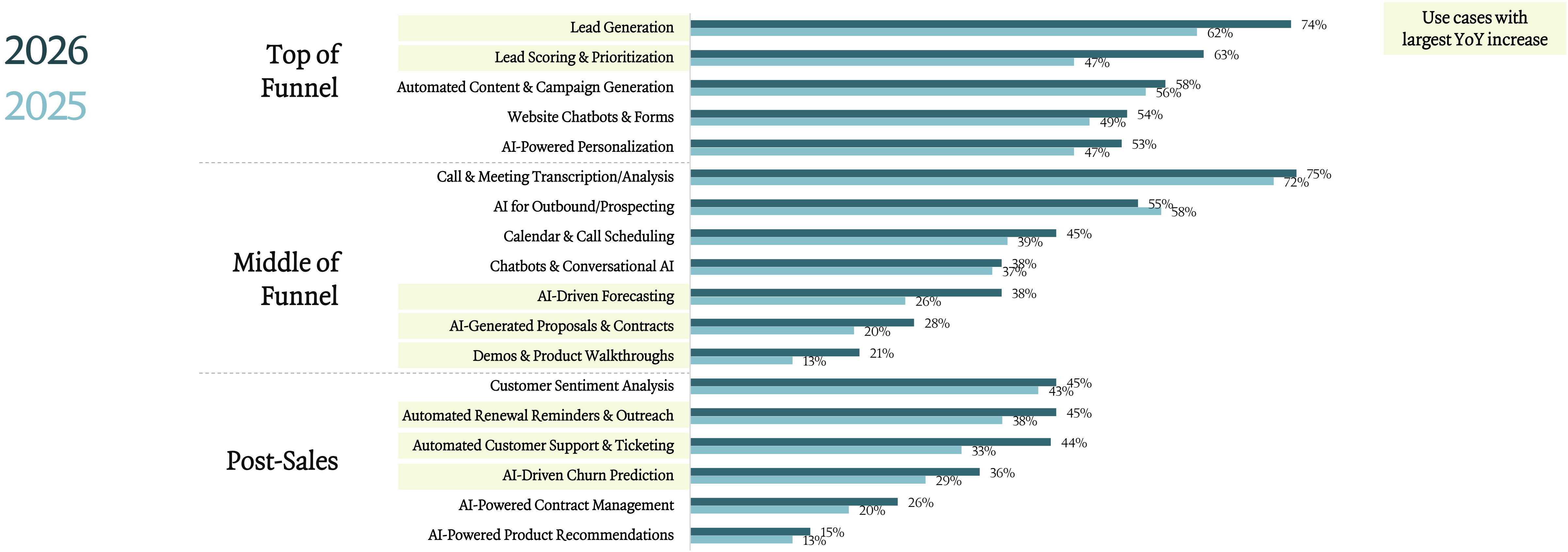
# While top-of-funnel use cases remain the most widely adopted across the GTM organization, there are meaningful gains in middle of funnel (AI-driven forecasting) and post-sales (customer support/ticketing)

## Top AI Use Cases in GTM

% of Respondents




Source: ICONIQ proprietary survey of GTM Executives (2025-2026). 2025 N-Size = 159, 2026 N-Size = 149

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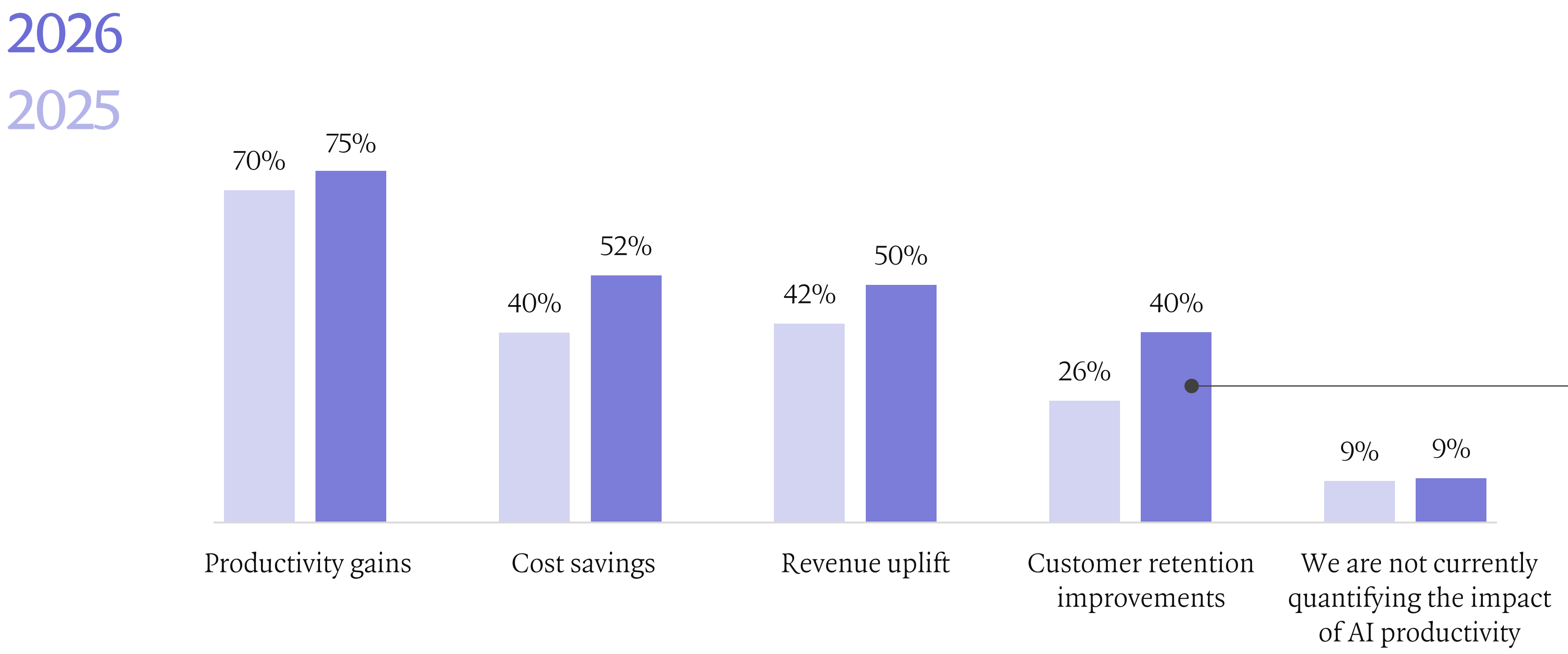
# As internal AI adoption matures, companies are measuring business impact and ROI across multiple dimensions. While productivity gains remain the most common, customer retention metrics are increasingly common as well

## How are you measuring the impact of AI within the GTM organization?

% of Respondents




**Companies are increasingly anchoring their entire GTM model to retention**

As AE compensation shifts toward NRR/NDR, contract terms shorten, and consumption pricing introduces more revenue variability, operators are increasingly tying their GTM orgs to retention - including how they measure AI impact.

In practical terms: AI is no longer assessed only on productivity or cost savings, but on its ability to strengthen the post-sales engine and sustain recurring revenue.

Source: ICONIQ proprietary survey of GTM Executives (2025-2026). 2025 N-Size = 159, 2026 N-Size = 149

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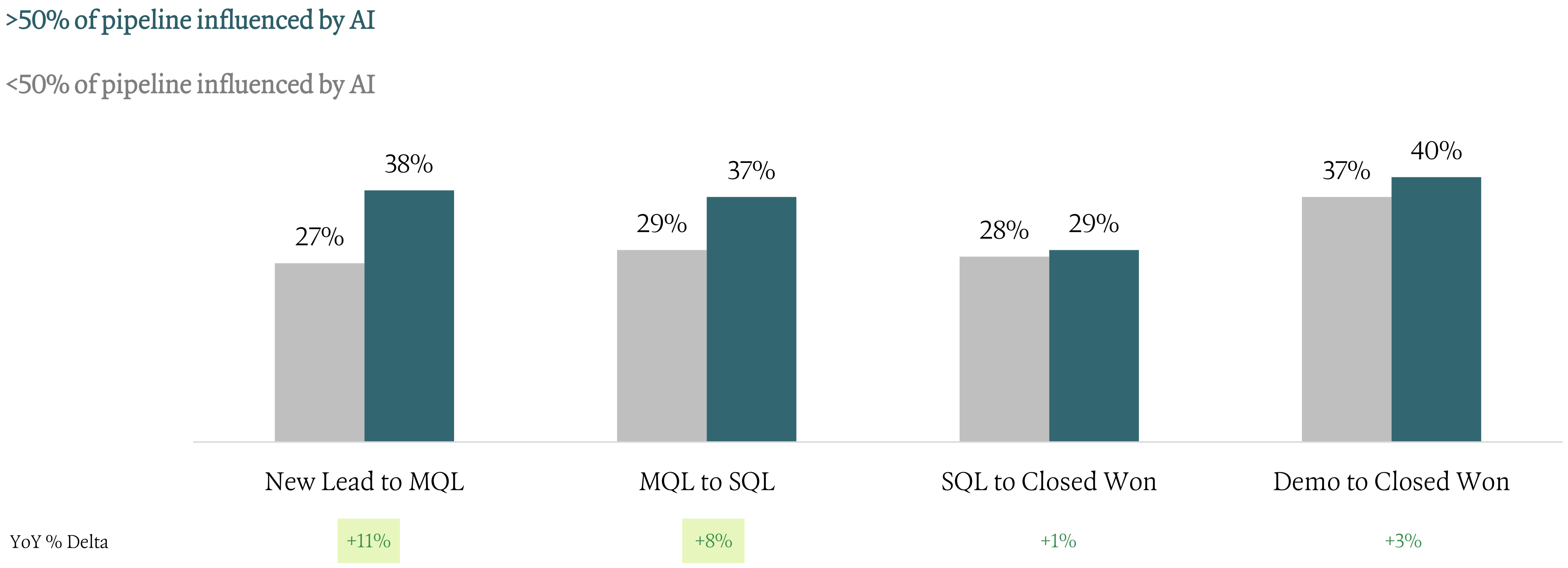
# AI-driven pipeline generation is driving meaningful gains at the top of the funnel, providing AEs with more, better-qualified opportunities, but currently does not materially change outcomes once deals are in an active cycle

## Sales Funnel Conversion Rates by Degree of AI-Influence

Average




Source: ICONIQ proprietary survey of GTM Executives (2026)

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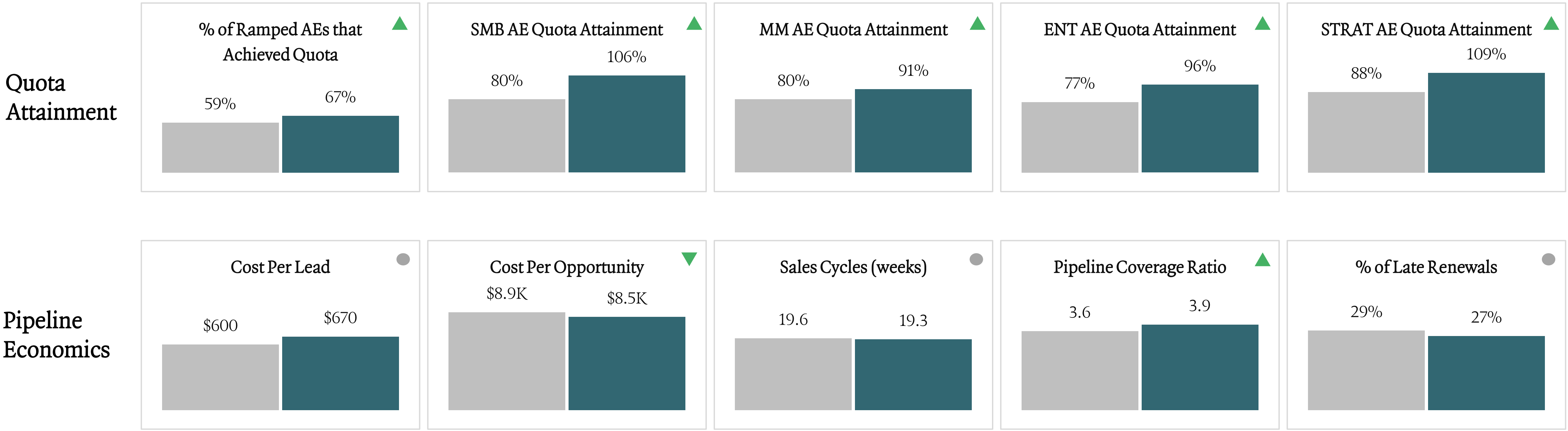
# ROI from higher AI adopters is evident, with Account Executive attainment higher across all segments compared to peers with lower adoption

## Sales Productivity Scorecard by Internal AI Adoption Level

Average

**High AI Adopters**
AI fully embedded into GTM processes

**Medium/Low AI Adopters**
AI not fully embedded into GTM processes



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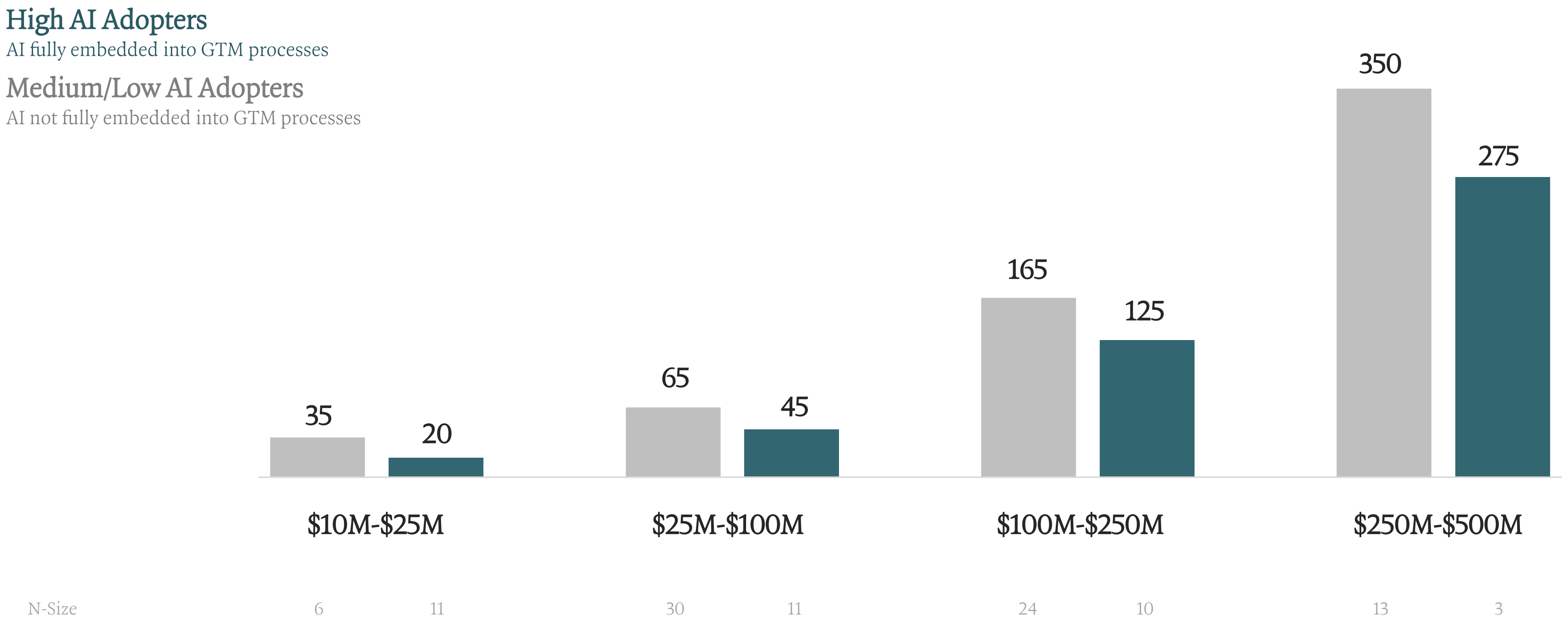
# In addition to stronger sales efficiency, companies with high AI adoption are starting to see meaningful leverage, indicated by leaner teams

## 2025: Total GTM FTEs[1] by Internal AI Adoption Level

Average, By Revenue Range




Source: ICONIQ proprietary survey of GTM Executives (2026)

1) GTM Teams include: Sales, Post-Sales, Marketing, Revenue Operations; Services and Support teams are excluded

# A global portfolio of category-defining businesses

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1Password | acuityMD | adyen | Age of Learning | airbnb | Airtable | ajaib | Alibaba | alteryx | Altruist | ANTHROPIC | APPRENTICE | APTTUS | articulate | aurora |
| AUTOMATTIC | AXONIUS | bambooHR | Benchling | BetterUp | bill.com | BLACKLINE | Braintrust | braze | Calendly | Campaign Monitor | Canva | CaptivateIQ | causaly | chime |
| CLARA | coast | Collibra | conexiom | coupa | CROWDSTRIKE | cyberGRX | dbt | DX | databricks | DATADOG | dataiku | DeepL | DevotedHealth | dexcare |
| dialpad ai | DocuSign | DRATA | IIElevenLabs | enfusion | EPIC GAMES | EvolutionIQ | ezcater | FTX | fastly | fetch REWARDS | Figma | Fireblocks | Fivetran | Flipkart |
| FloQast | FREEWILL | Gem | GitLab | glean | gofundme | GoodRx | GreenSky | Groww | Guild | HashiCorp | headspin | HEPTAGON | highradius | HIGHSPOT |
| hightouch | Hippo | HONEST | houzz | iex | invision | incidentIQ | INTERCOM | komodo | Lead Bank | LEGORA | loom | Lucid | MARQETA | miro |
| MC MONTE CARLO | monzo | motorway | Moveworks | Nayya | netskope | NEVIS | ninjaOne | notable | Notion | omni | OpenEvidence | orca security | ŌURA | outtake |
| panther | people.ai | Pepper | PIGMENT | Pinecone | PLURALSIGHT | Pontera | Primer | PROCORE | QGenda | Quince | rain | ramp | recharge | RED VENTURES |
| Reify HEALTH | Relativity | Re/prise | Restaurant365 | Rillet | Robinhood | SANITY | sendbird | ServiceTitan | shopmonkey | side | SIERRA | skuid | SMARTLING | snowflake |
| SPOTNANA | sprinklr | SQUIRE | STATSIG | Swap | TENCENT MUSIC ENTERTAINMENT | Tennr | TinyFish | TRUCKSTOP | turbonomic | twin health | Twistlock | Uber | unifyapps | Unit21 |
| UNITE US | VIC.AI | virtru | WARBY PARKER | wayfair | Wealthsimple | Wolt | WRITER | zinier | zoom | | | | | |

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