



**CONCORD MUNICIPAL
LIGHT PLANT**

ELECTRIC | BROADBAND | ENERGY MANAGEMENT

2024 Customer Satisfaction Study



Report of Findings

18 July 2024
Confidential & Proprietary

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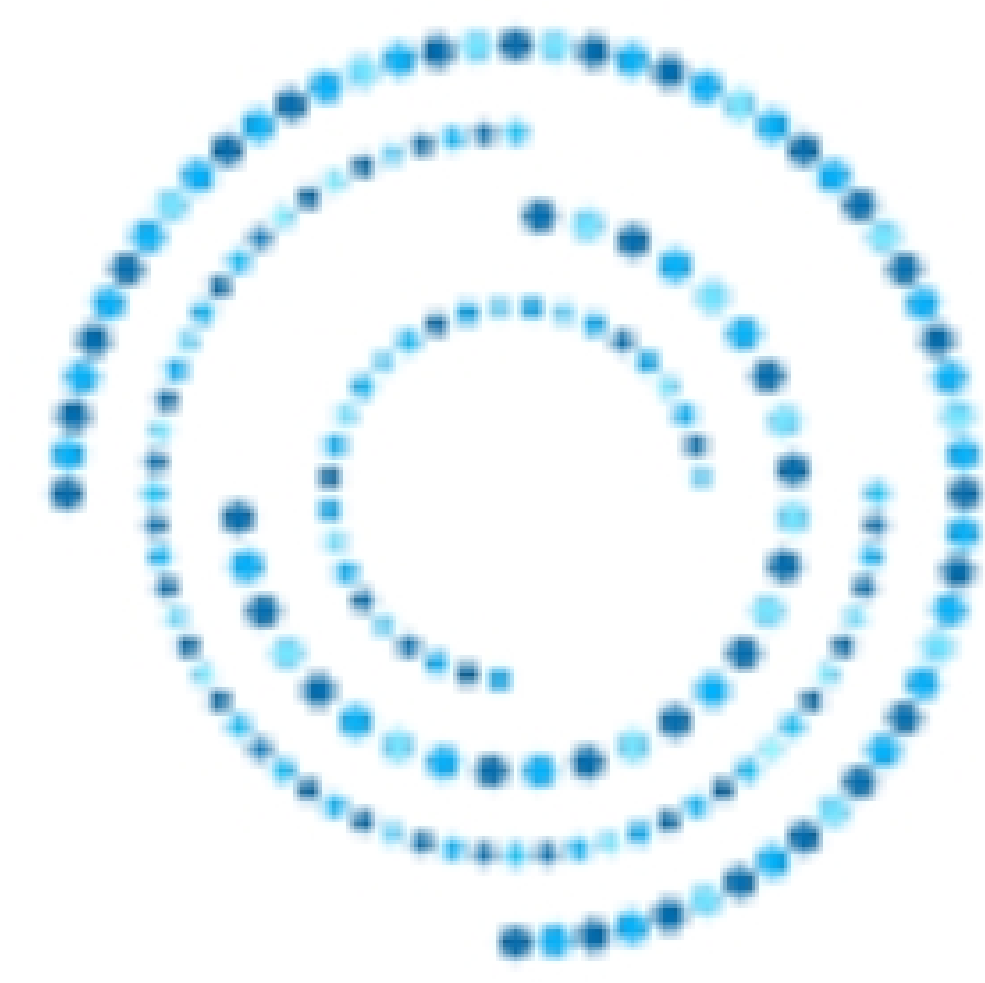
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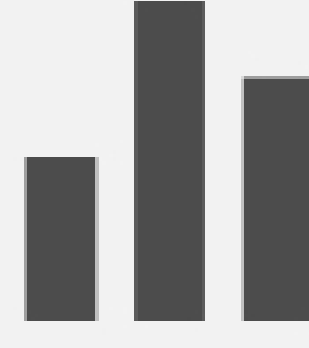
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Harnessing the Power of Data

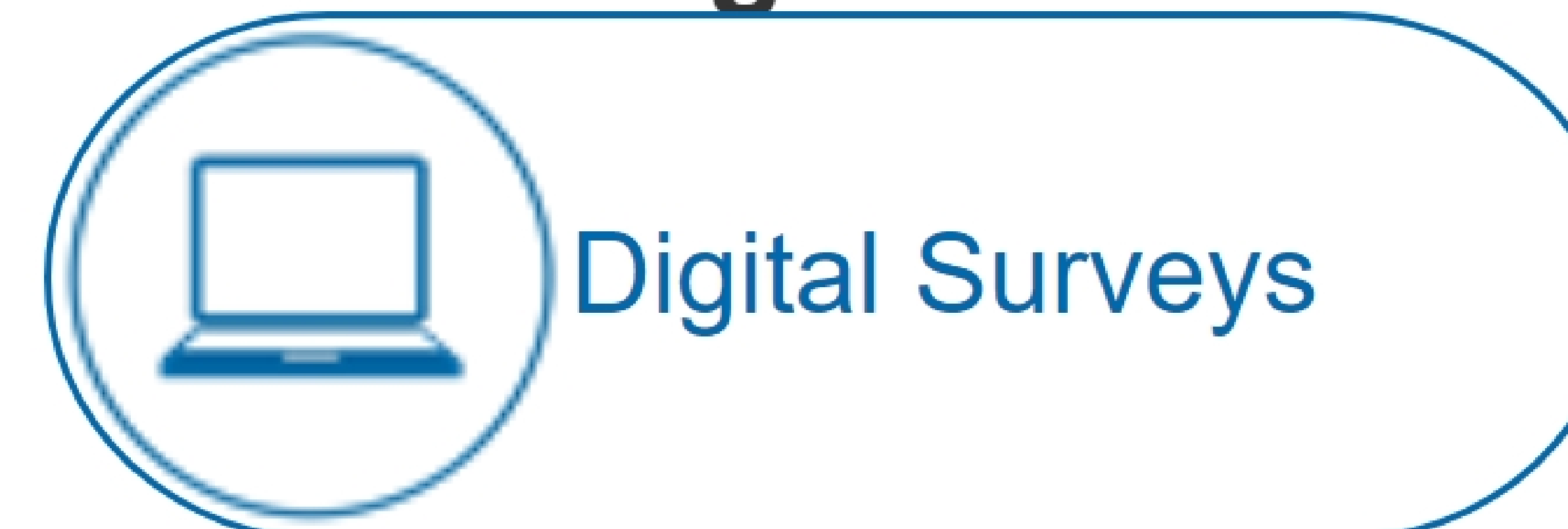
...to help clients achieve organizational goals.

 **Data** supporting strategic decisions to improve products and services. Since 1979, our experience with study and instrument design, data collection, analysis, and formal presentation assists our clients in identifying the “why” and “what’s next.”

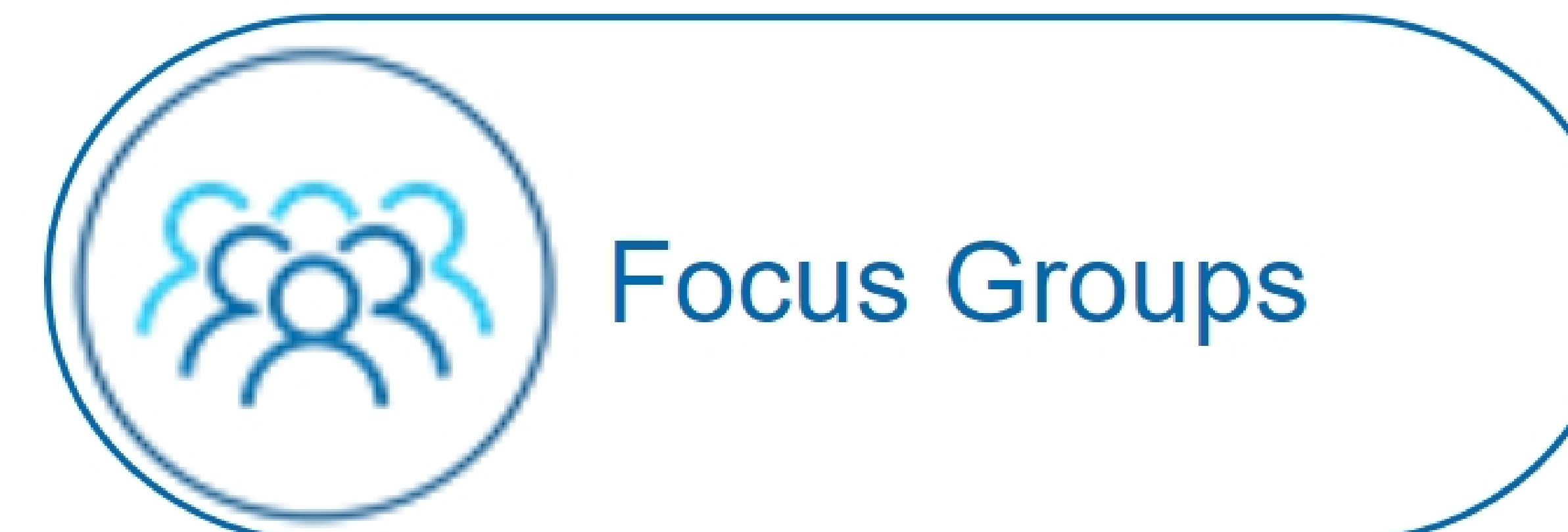
 **Talent** with a knowledge base in a wide range of industries and methodologies ensures a 360° view of the challenges faced and the expertise to address them.

 **Solutions** that are customized to provide a personalized approach to understanding organizational, employee, and customer needs, allowing for more informed decisions.

Methodologies:



Digital Surveys



Focus Groups

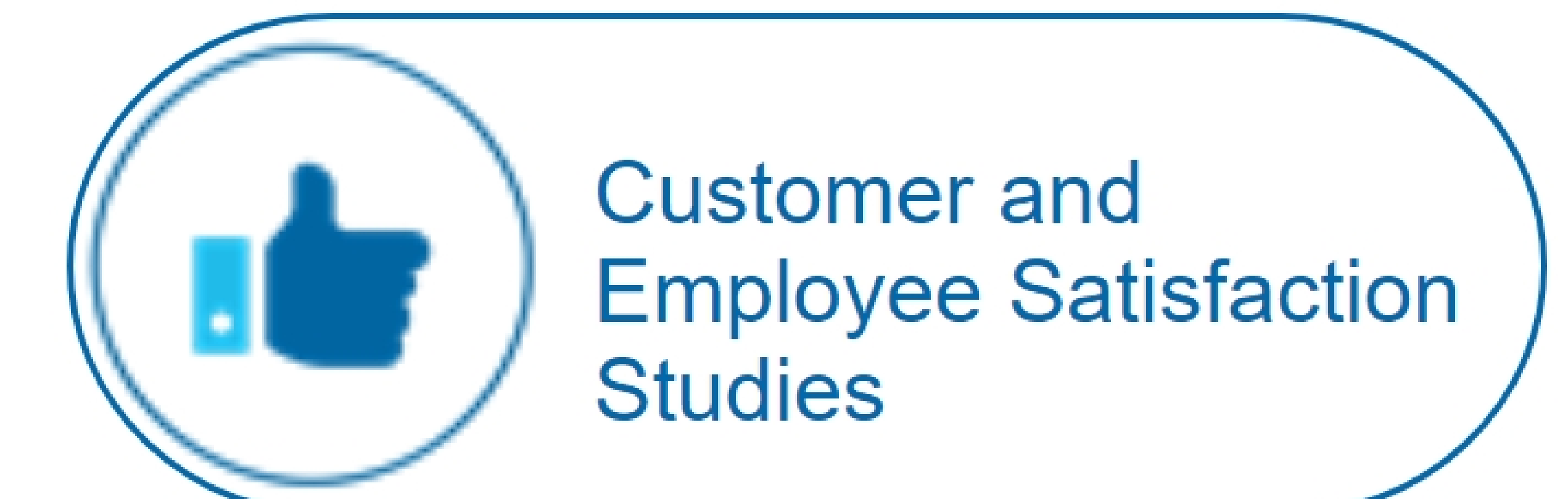


In-Depth Interviews

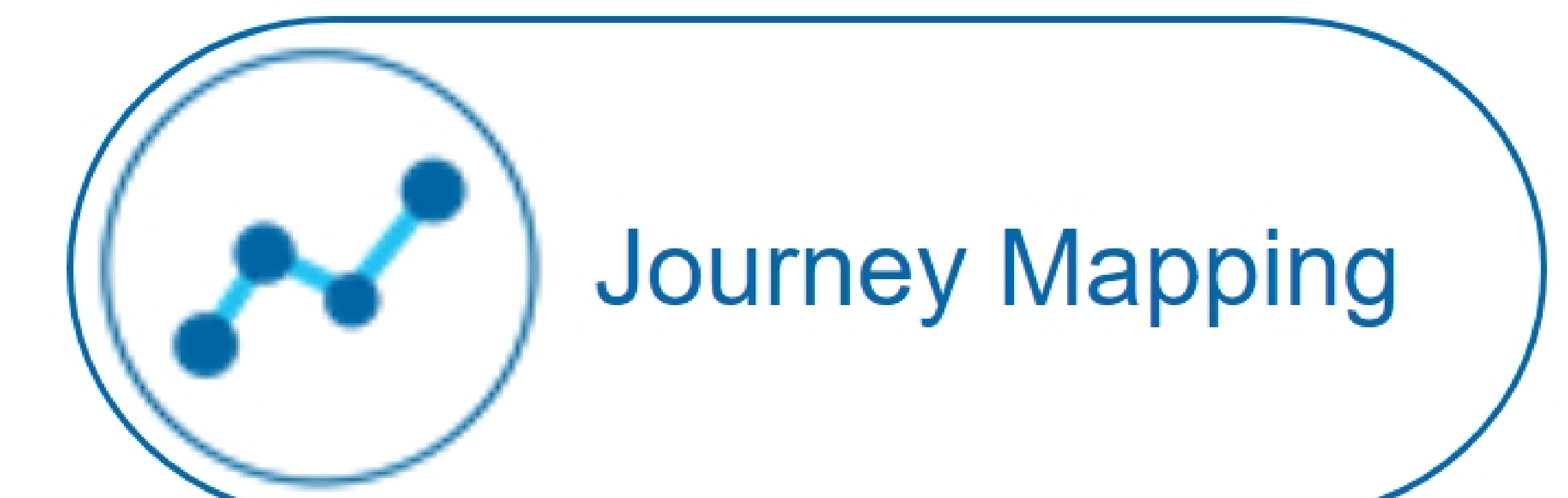
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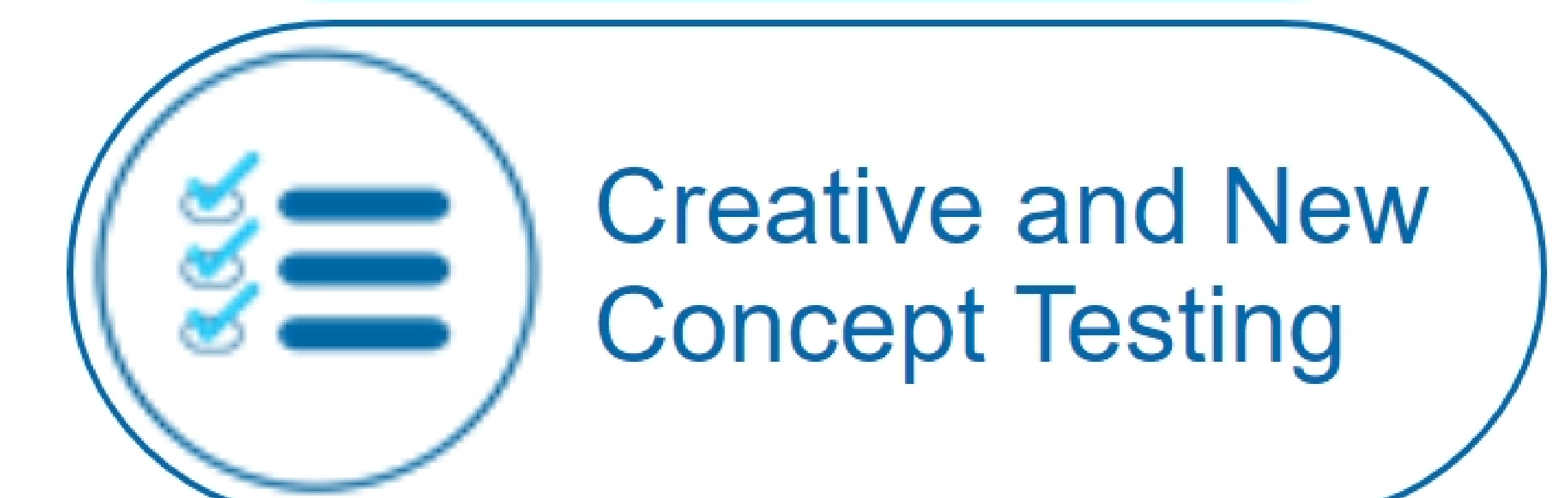
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Project Overview

Research Objectives

- GreatBlue Research was commissioned by Concord Municipal Lighting Plant (hereinafter “CMLP”) to conduct comprehensive research among its residential customers to gain a deeper understanding into their perceptions of the utility and satisfaction with the services provided.
- The primary goals of this research study were to assess the effectiveness of CMLP’s ability to serve its customers, identify areas for improvement, and isolate areas that may increase engagement.
- The outcome of this research will enable CMLP to a) more clearly understand, and ultimately set, customer expectations, b) act on near term opportunities for improvement, and c) create a strategic roadmap to increase customer satisfaction.



Areas of Investigation in 2024

The CMLP Customer Satisfaction Study leveraged a digital research methodology to address the following areas of investigation:

- Rating CMLP’s organizational characteristics
- Satisfaction with customer service personnel
- Awareness of CMLP's ownership model
- Assessment of the value of CMLP's communication platforms
- Experience with and importance of self-service platforms
- Satisfaction with major storm response and communications
- Awareness and satisfaction with CMLP's symmetrical broadband service
- Demographic profiles of respondents

Research Methodology | Snapshot

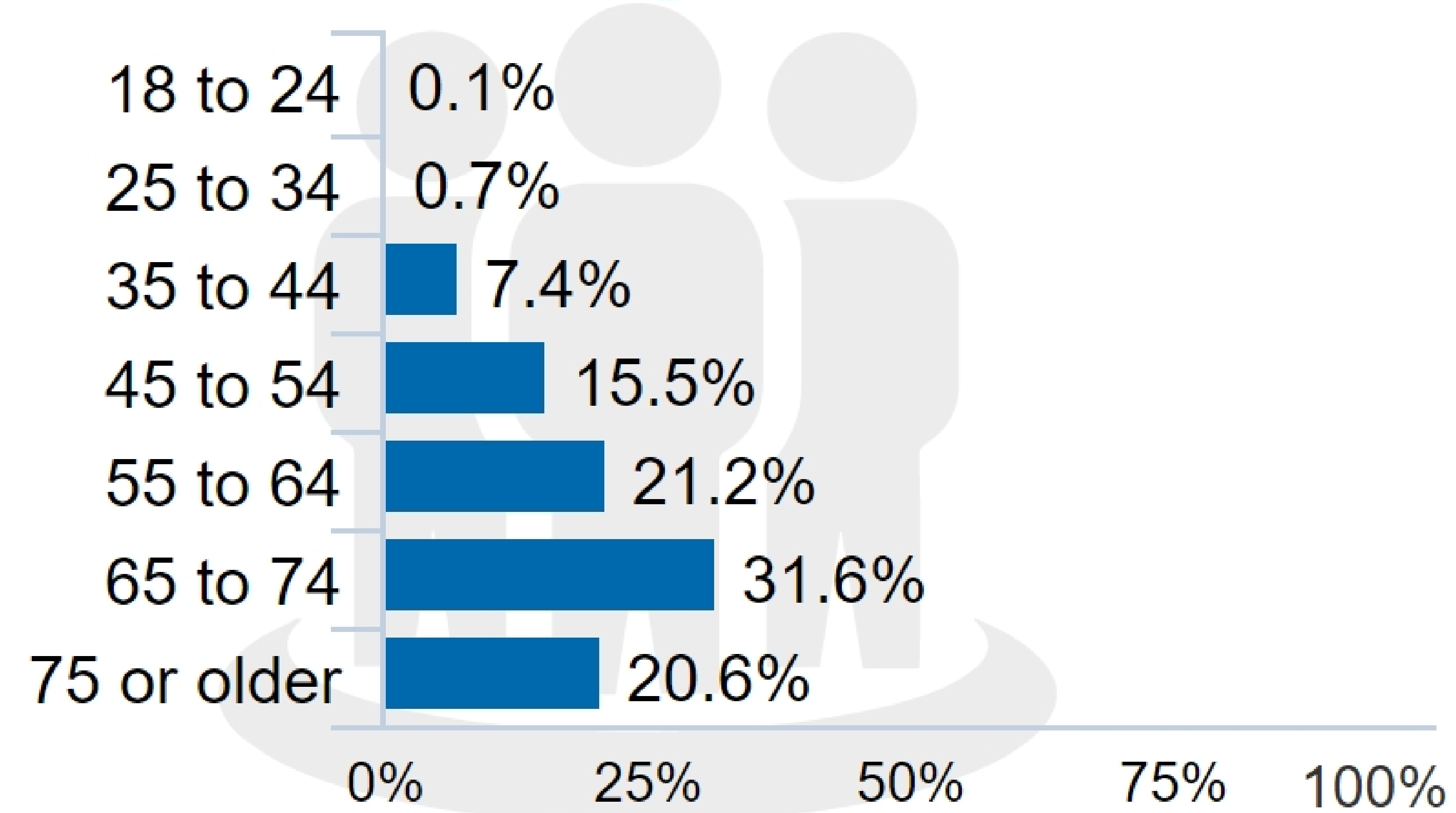
Methodology Digital	No. of Completes 1,039	No. of Questions 50*	Incentive None	Sample Customer List
Target Residential Customers	Quality Assurance Dual-level**	Margin of Error +/- 2.7%	Confidence Level 95%	Research Dates May 2 - June 17, 2024

* This represents the total possible number of questions; not all respondents will answer all questions based on skip patterns and other instrument bias.

** Data quality personnel, in addition to a computer-aided interviewing platform, ensure the integrity of the data is accurate.

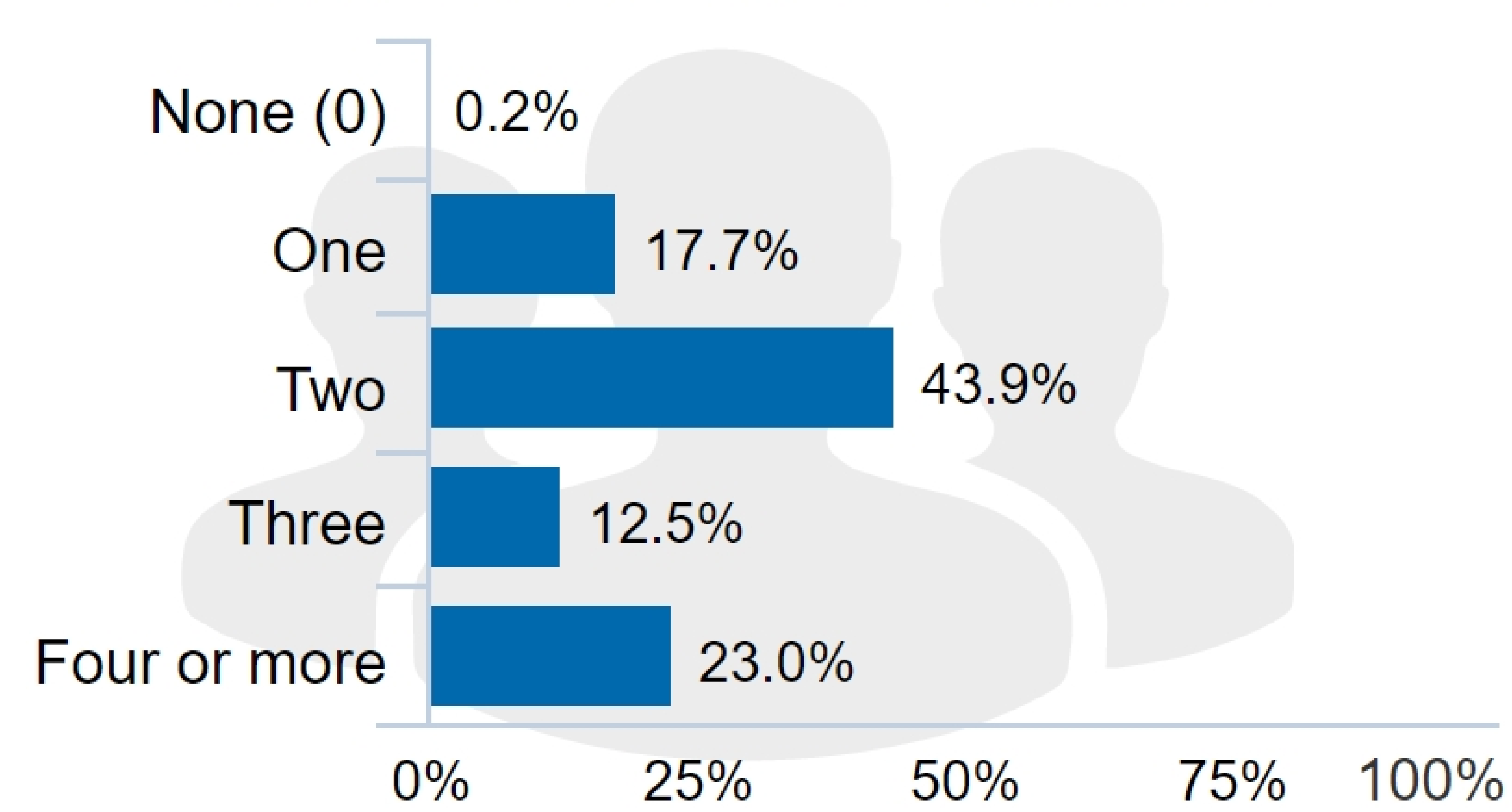
Respondent Snapshot

Age



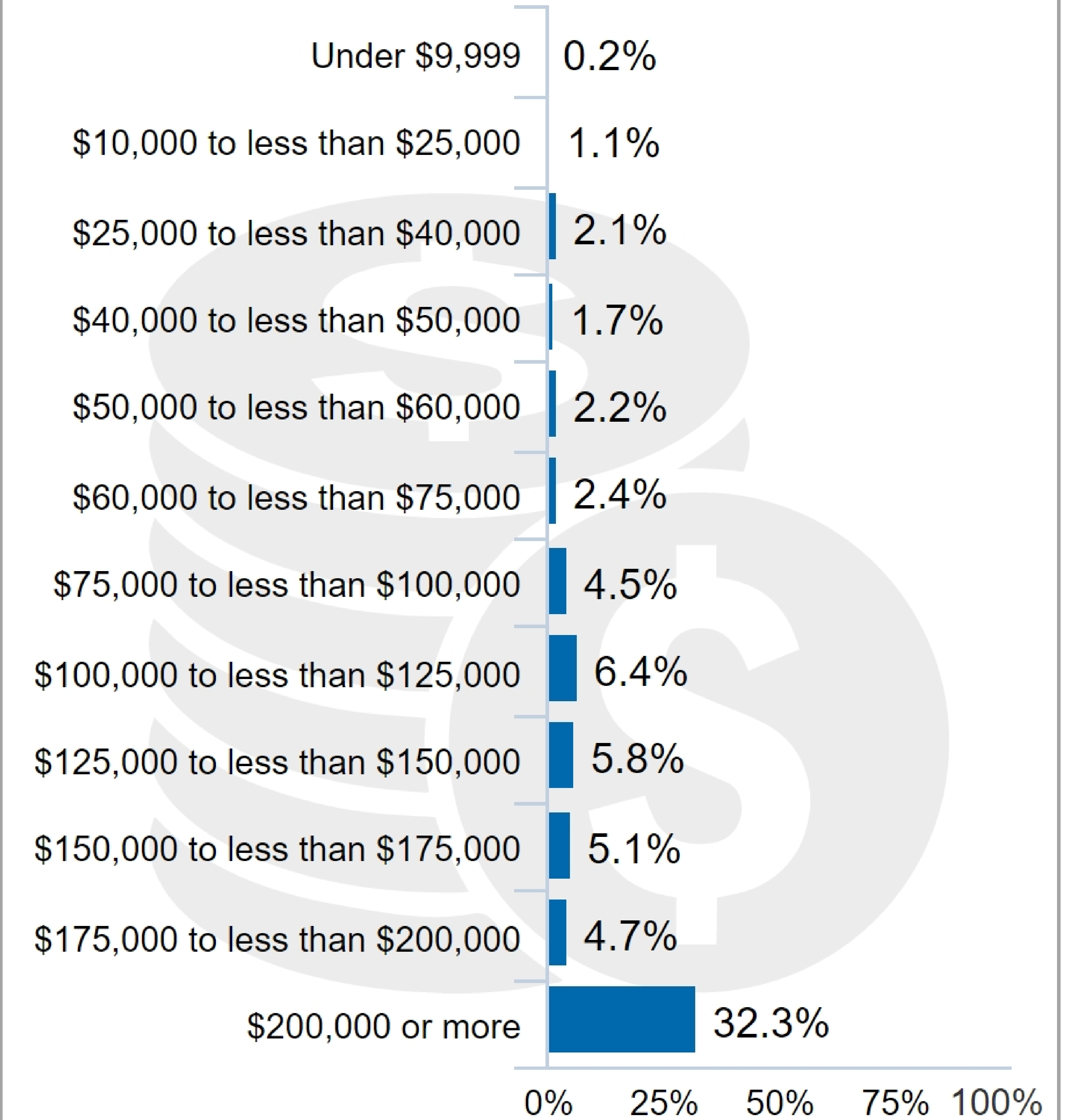
3.0% provided responses of "Prefer not to say / Refused."

Number of HH Residents



2.7% provided responses of "Prefer not to say / Refused."

HH Income



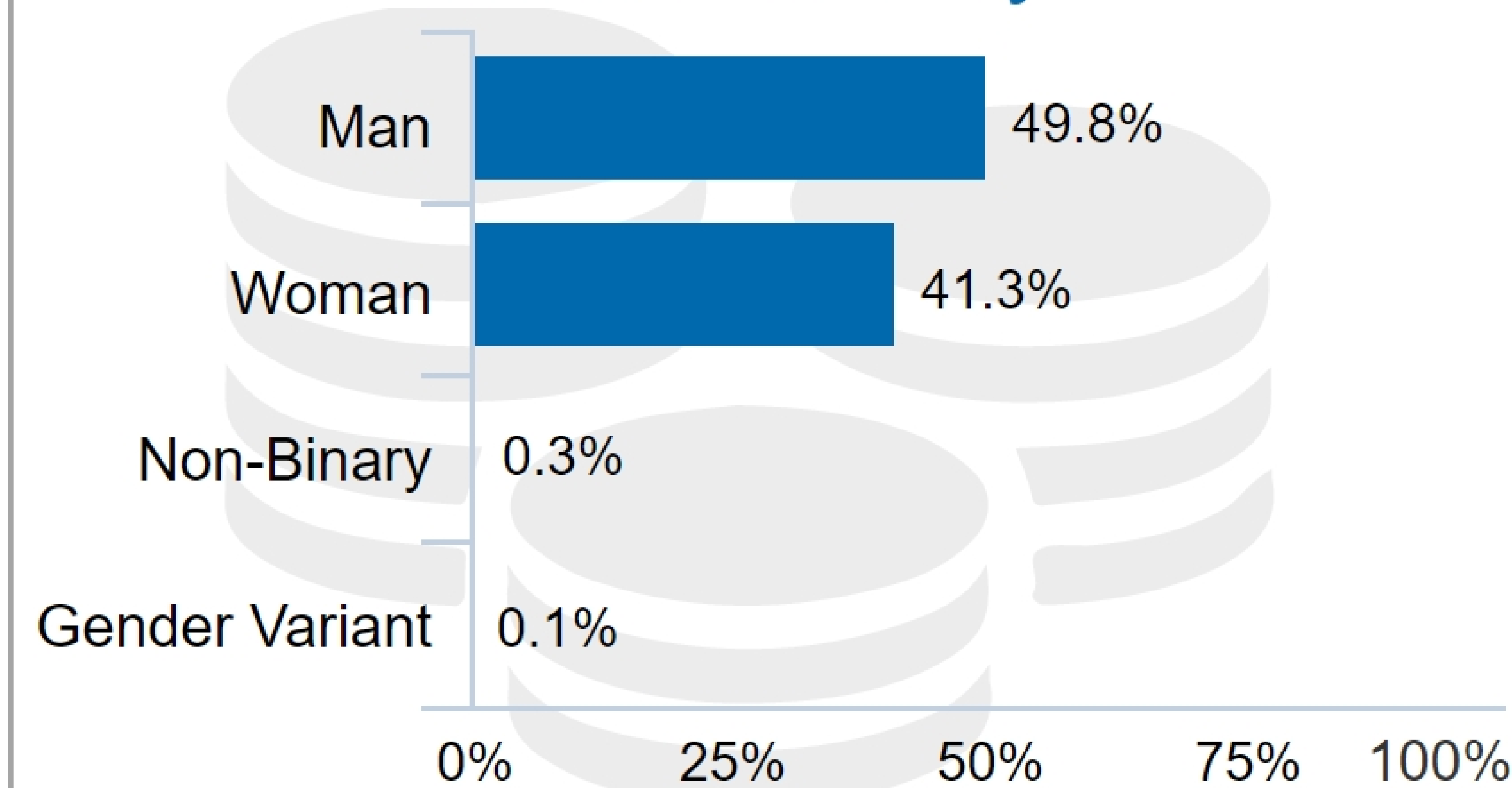
1.3% provided responses of "Don't know / Unsure"
30.1% provided responses of "Prefer not to say / Refused."

Rent or Own

90.5% / **9.2%**
Own / Rent

0.3% provided responses of "Don't know / Unsure."

Gender Identity



8.6% provided responses of "Prefer not to say / Refused."

Guide to Footnotes

General

n=362

The lowercase "n" is used to indicate the base size, or the amount of respondents who answered a particular question.

NP+S

The NP+S (net positive score) is a score based on a question asking respondents to describe their relationship with their utility. The score is an aggregation of the following responses: "an advocate of my utility," "a loyal customer," and "a satisfied customer."

Scale Questions

"Aggregate of ratings 7-10 shown"

This phrase indicates positive ratings from questions that use a 10-point scale. The positive ratings are defined as a rating of 7 through 10.

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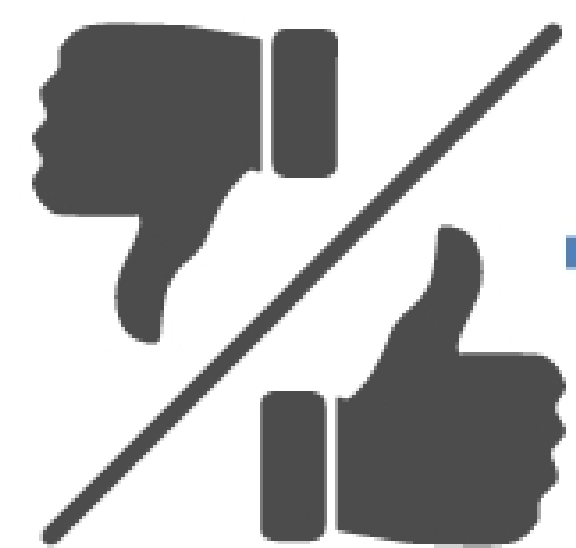
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Key Study Findings



Ratings

- CMLP saw an average positive rating of 90.7% on a series of organizational characteristics, this was driven by positive ratings for “reliable service” (97.4%), “honesty/integrity” (96.0%), and “overall satisfaction with CMLP” (94.7%).
- A strong majority of customers (91.4%) who had a recent interaction with CMLP were satisfied with their contact experience.
- 75.6% of customers who recently interacted with CMLP indicated CMLP typically resolves issues on the first point of contact.
- In 2024, CMLP received an NP+S of 95.5%.
 - Among those, 21.9% of customers identified as “advocates of CMLP.”
- 87.2% of customers reported their expectations regarding their interactions with CMLP are met all (42.9%) or most of the time (44.3%).



Renewables/Green Energy

- A majority of customers (88.4%) agree that CMLP effectively balances environmental stewardship with fiscal responsibility.
- Over two-thirds of customers (69.6%) believe the actions they take at home to conserve energy have an impact on CMLP’s ability to achieve the statewide goal of achieving net zero greenhouse gas emissions
- 59.2% of customers expressed a great deal of trust in CMLP’s ability to make decisions related to how the energy portfolio is created and maintained.
- Over two-thirds of customers (68.3%) indicated they would be willing to “reduce or pause electric usage” on short notice when it is coincident peak demand time.



Communication

- Communication methods that customers indicated provide the most value were “e-mail” (86.6%) and the “CMLP website” (77.6%).
- Over two-thirds of customers indicated the most important pieces of information to receive from CMLP are “outages and restoration updates” and “rate information.”
- Nearly three-quarters of customers (71.8%) indicated they prefer to look for information about CMLP on the “website.”

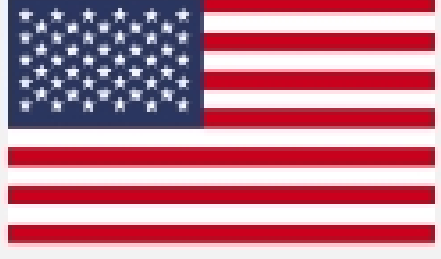
Digital Self-Service

- 54.4% of customers currently use CMLP’s digital self-service platforms for “bill payment.”
- Nearly eight out of ten respondents (79.3%) find self-service platforms to be important.
- 80.1% of customers provided positive ratings for CMLP’s digital self-service options “delivering and communicating about available programs and services.”

Satisfaction | Organizational Characteristics

CMLP maintained a high level of customer satisfaction, with 5 out of 7 organizational characteristics receiving a positive rating of 90% or higher.

Customers provided the highest positive ratings for CMLP's "reliable service," "honesty/integrity," and their "overall satisfaction" with CMLP.

	CMLP	MEAM	
Customer interactions and communication	91.8%	93.2%	65.3%
Helping customers reduce their carbon emissions	86.9%	81.1%	-
Honesty / Integrity	96.0%	94.2%	59.7%
Reliable service	97.4%	96.9%	72.7%
Rates	76.4%	88.0%	60.9%
Community Service	91.6%	82.7%	59.3%
Overall Satisfaction with CMLP	94.7%	94.2%	68.0%
Average	90.7%	90.0%	64.3%

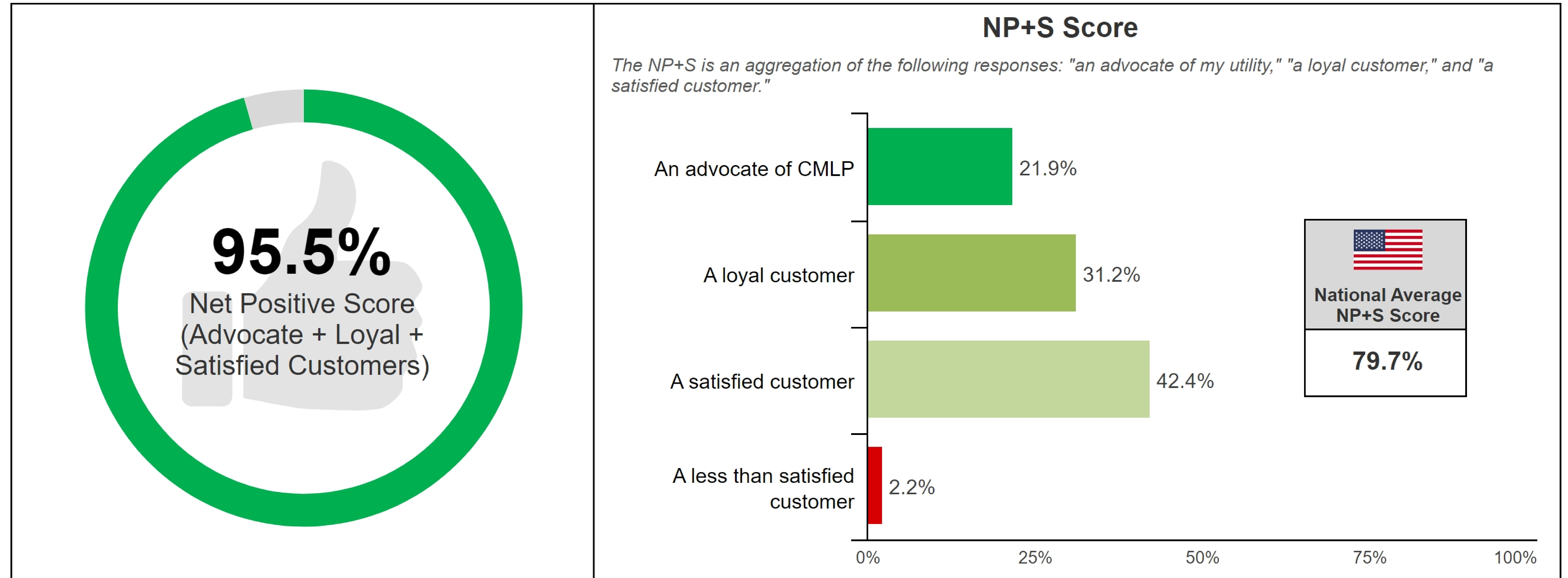
Aggregate of ratings 7-10 shown w/o "don't know" responses

n=1,039

Q1-7: Now, please read the following list of different organizational characteristics. For each characteristic, please rate Concord Municipal Lighting Plant using a scale of one (1) to ten (10) where one is very poor and ten is very good.

Satisfaction | NP+S Score

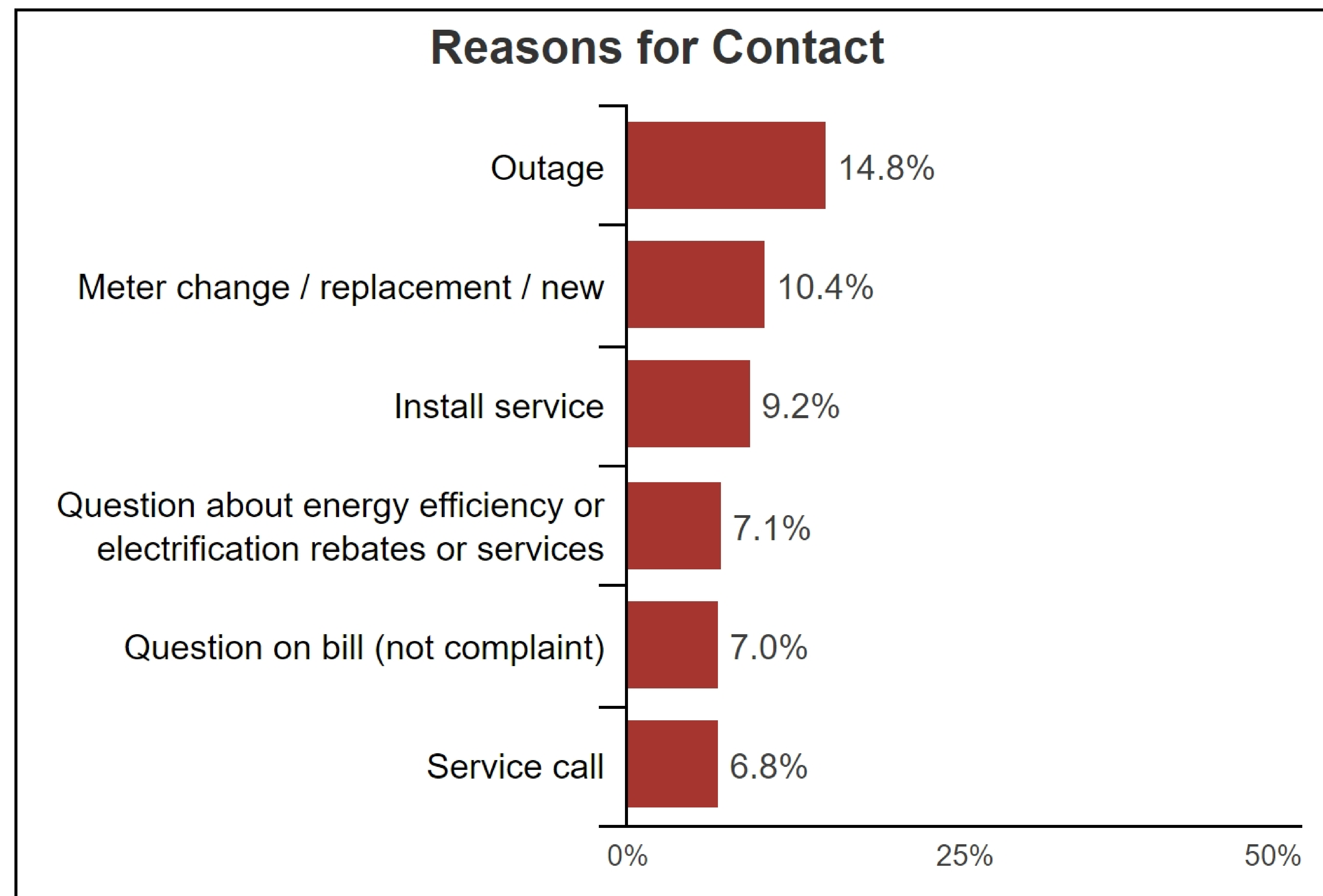
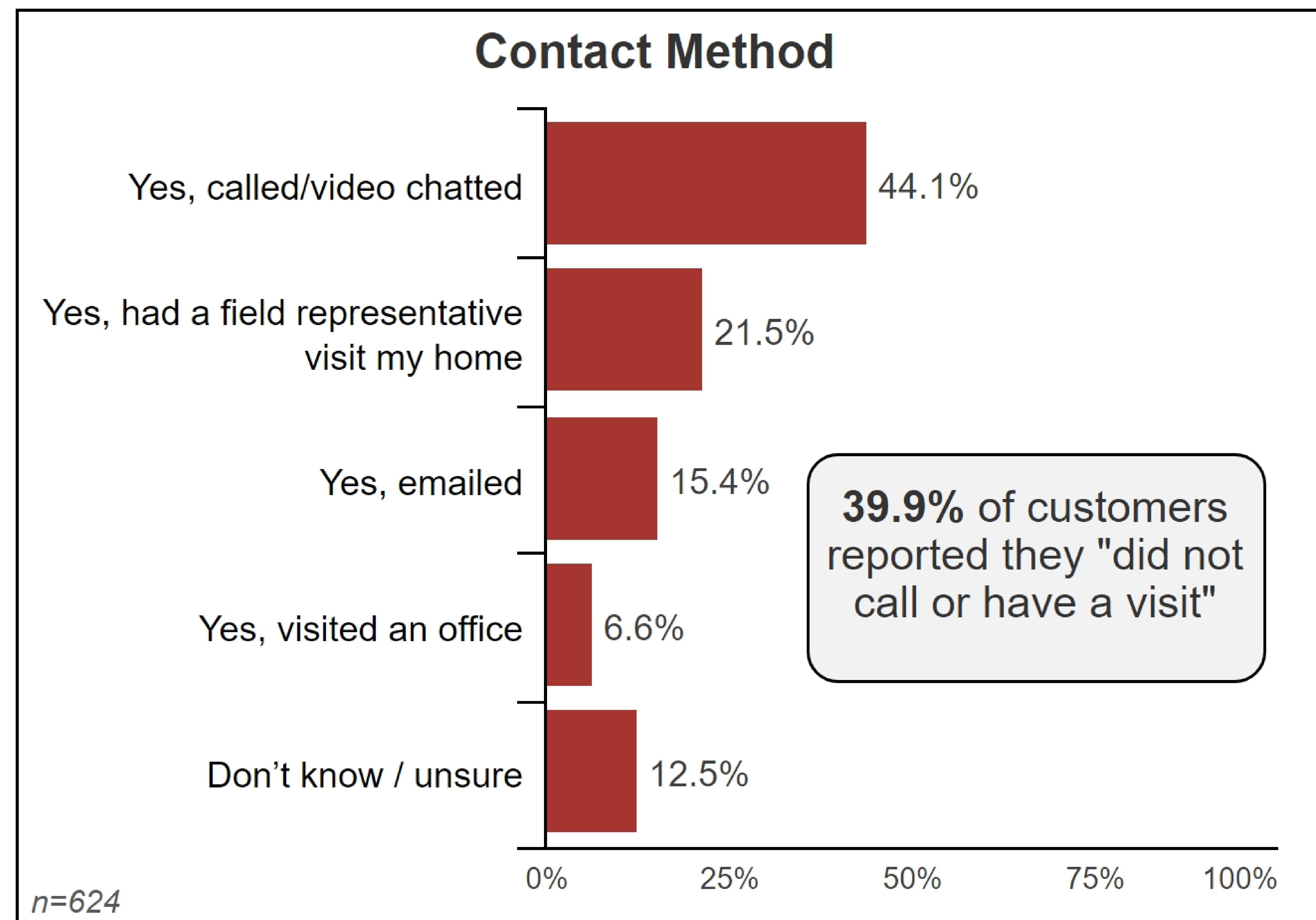
CMLP received a net positive score of 95.6%, which was 15.8 percentage points higher than the national average. Of note, over one-half of customers (53.1%) identified as either an advocate or loyal customer of CMLP.



n=1,039
Q18: Which of the following would best describe your relationship with CMLP? Would you say... ("Don't know / Unsure" responses not shown)

Experience | Contact Method & Reason

Of those who have had a recent interaction with CMLP, over two-fifths contacted CMLP over the phone/video chat, followed by 21.5% who had a field representative visit their home. Of those respondents who had contact with a CMLP customer service employee, the primary reasons for contacting CMLP were for an "outage" or to change, replace, or install a new meter.

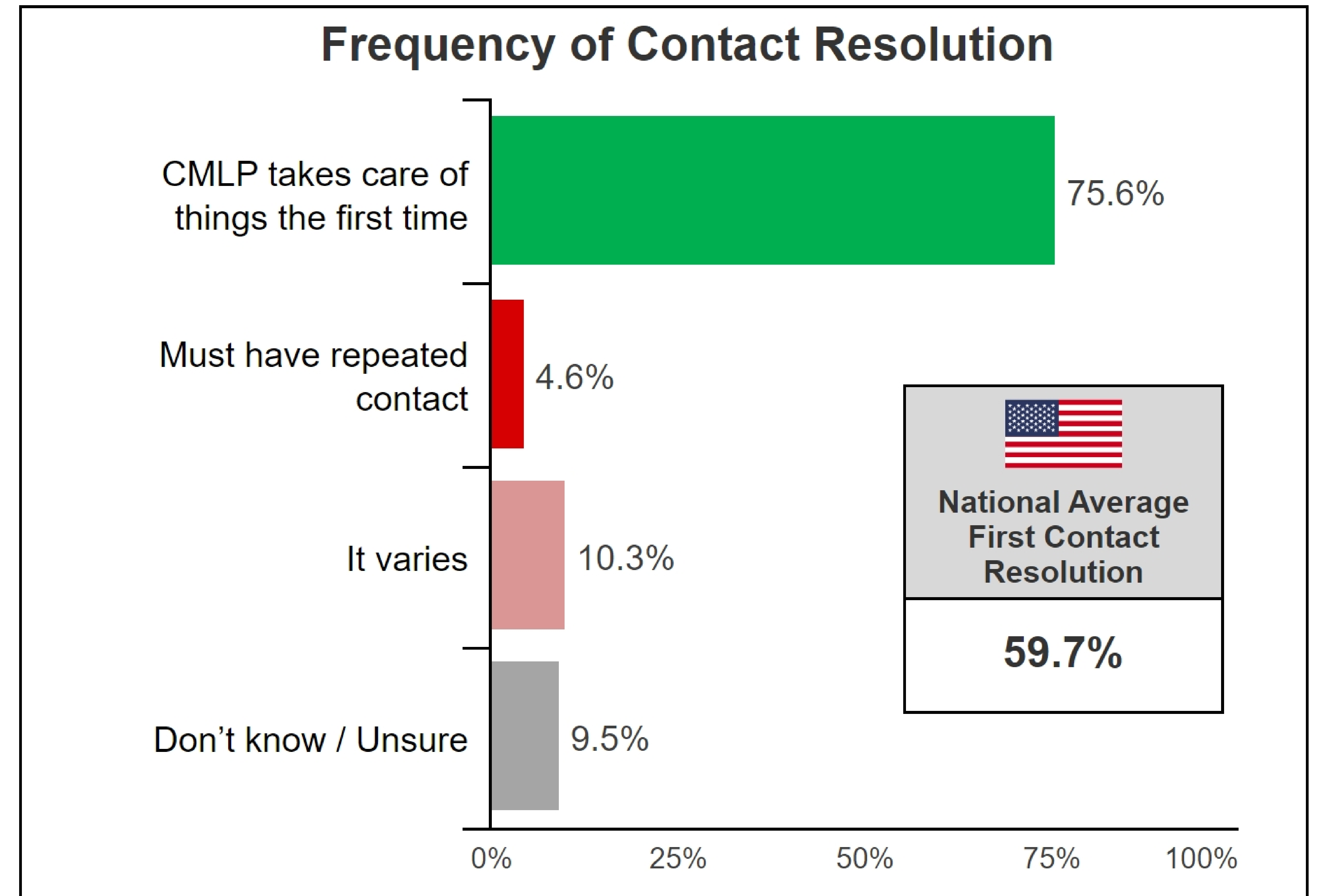
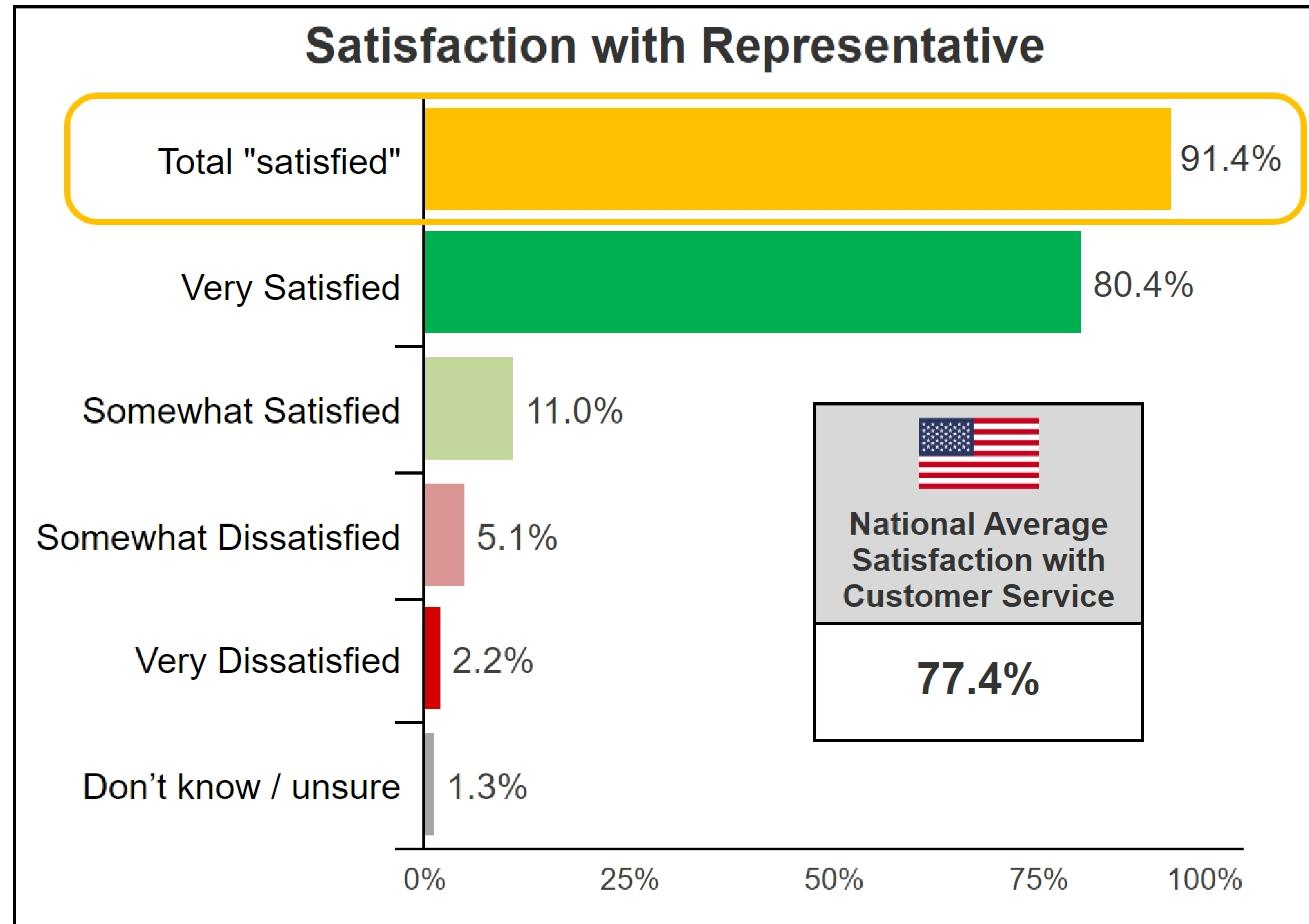


Q9: How would you describe your most recent interaction with CMLP? Would you say that you called/video chatted CMLP, emailed, visited a CMLP office, or had a field representative visit your home? (n=1,039)

Q12: Please indicate the purpose of the call or visit. (n=546)

Satisfaction | Contact Resolution

Of those respondents who had contact with a CMLP customer service employee recently, over 90% reported being either very or somewhat satisfied with the way the employee handled the call or visit. Further, three-quarters of respondents reported that CMLP takes care of things the first time they contact the utility, which is 15.9 percentage points higher than the national average.



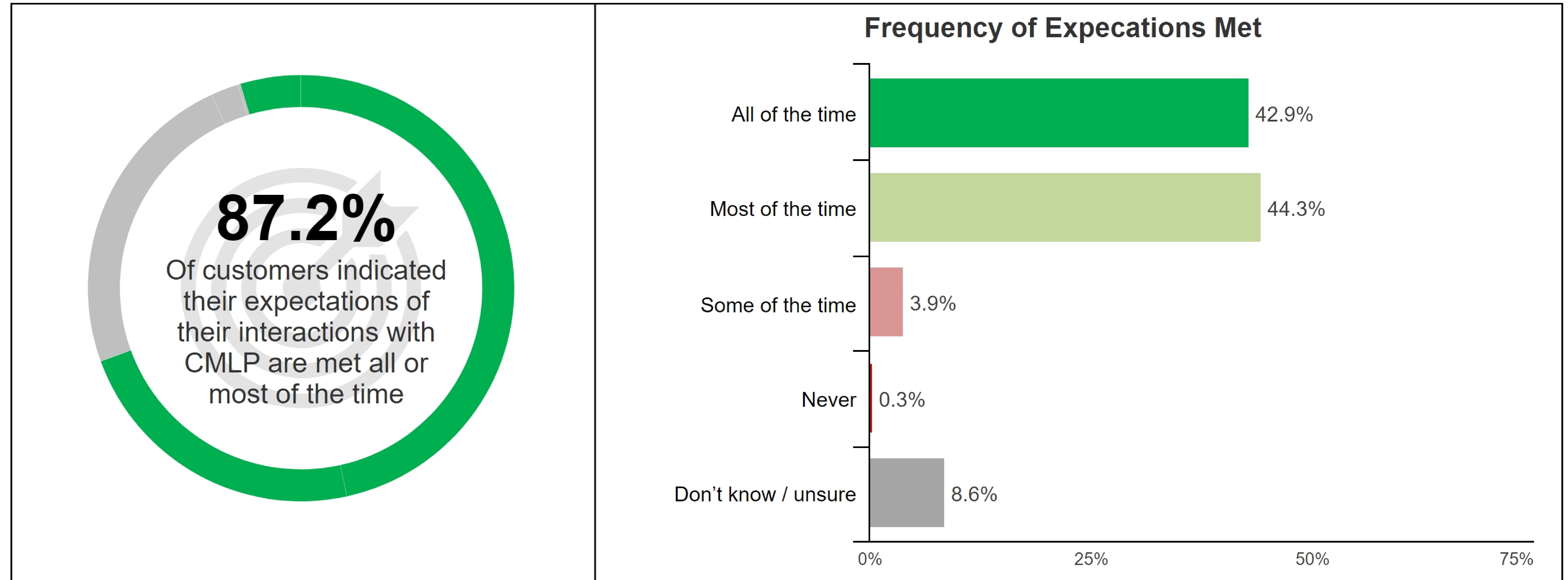
n=546

Q10: Overall, how satisfied were you with the way the CMLP customer service employee handled the call or visit? Would you say you were...

Q13: Generally, when you contact CMLP, are things taken care of to your satisfaction the first time, or must you have repeated contact with them?

Satisfaction | Communication Expectations Met

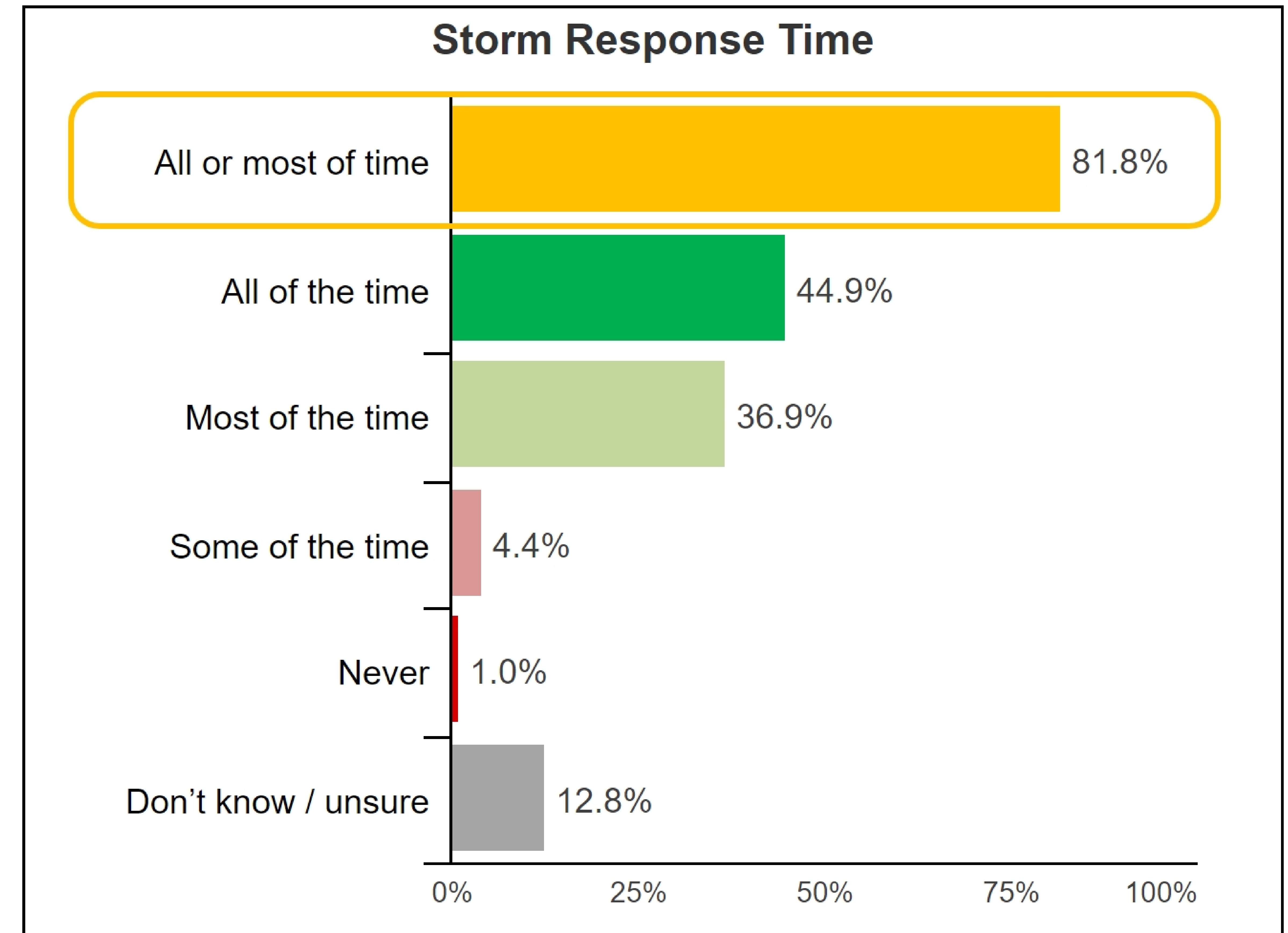
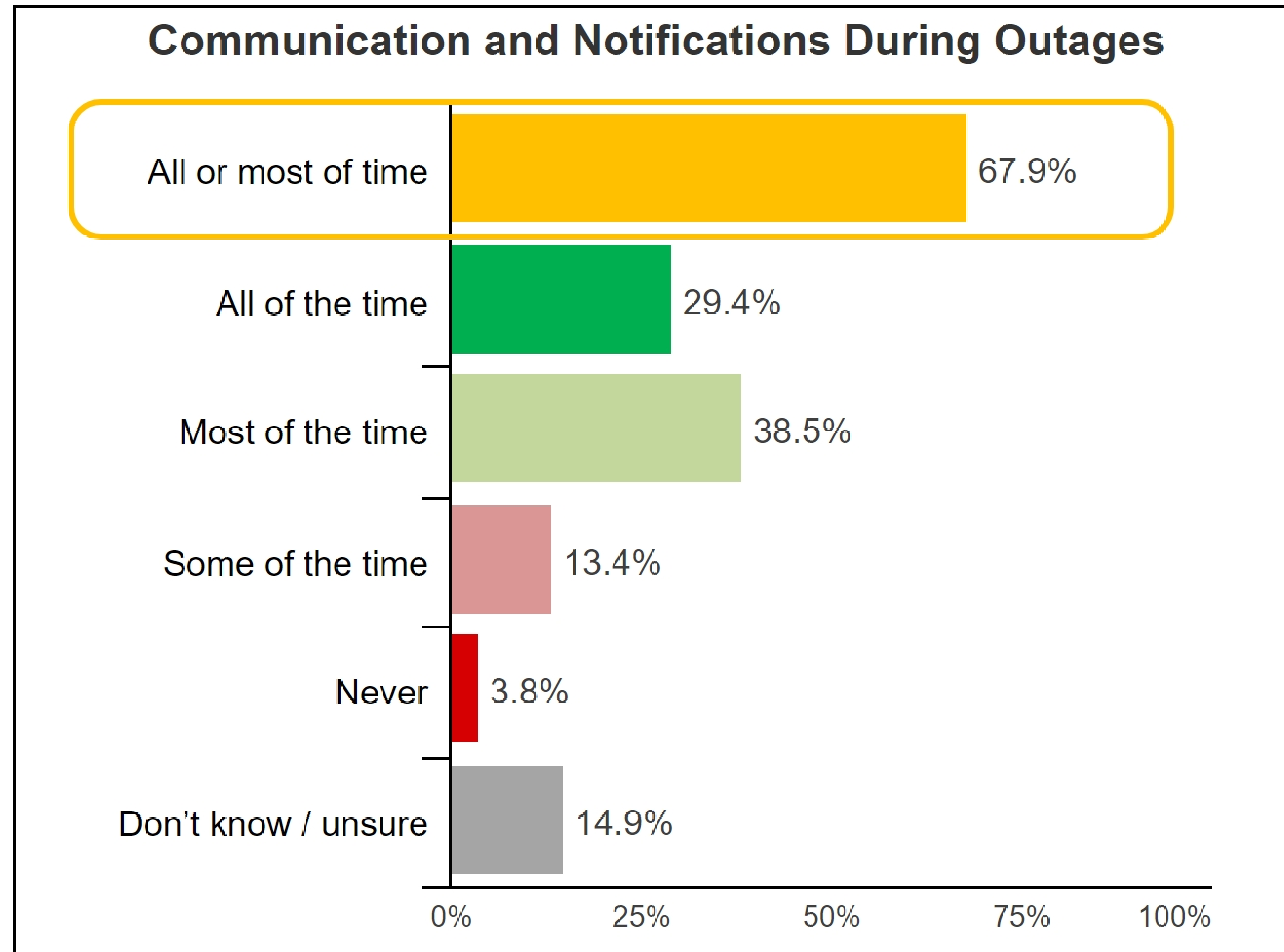
A majority of customers indicated that CMLP meets their expectations with respect to interactions with the utility all or most of the time, with less than 5% of customers reporting that their expectations were met "some of the time" or "never."



n=1,039
Q36: When thinking of your interactions with CMLP (not pertaining to rates or reliability), how often would you say CMLP meets your expectations?

Satisfaction | Outage and Major Storms

Two-thirds of customers reported that CMLP meets their expectations all or most of the time regarding communication provided during outages. Further, eight out of ten customers reported their expectations are met "all" or "most of the time" when it comes to CMLP's storm response time.



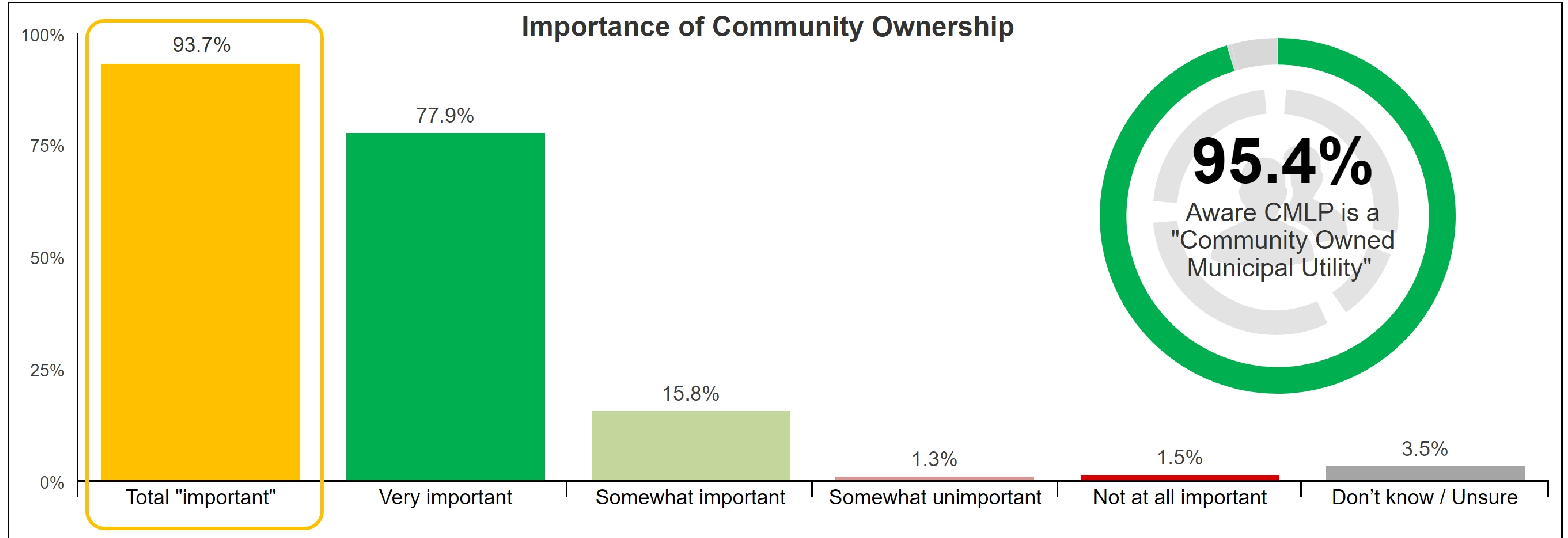
n=1,039

Q37: How often does CMLP meet your expectations regarding its communication and notifications provided during an outage?

Q38: How well does CMLP's storm response time meet your expectations?

Awareness | Community Ownership

A majority of CMLP customers reported being aware that CMLP is a "city-owned municipal utility." When asked how important it is for CMLP to maintain local control of their municipal utility, over 90% reported it is either "very" or "somewhat important," with over three-quarters of customers stating it is "very important."

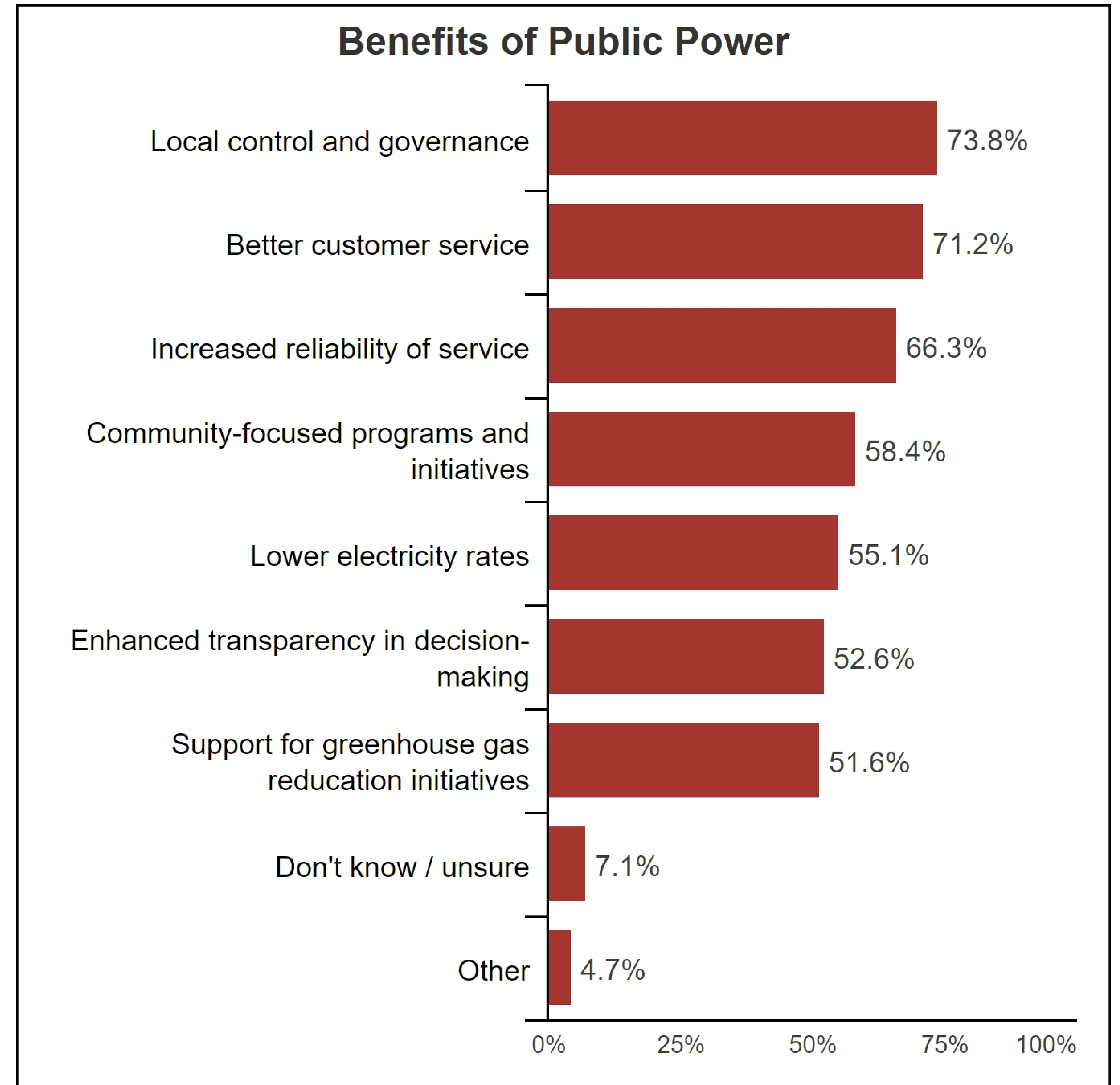


n=1,039
Q15: Would you say that your own electric service is provided by a "Community Owned Municipal Utility" or a "Privately Owned Investor Company?"
Q16: CMLP is a "Community Owned Municipal Utility." How important to you is it to maintain local control of your municipal utility?

Experience | Perceived Benefits of Public Power

More than two-thirds of customers reported "local control and governance," "better customer service," and "increased reliability of service" are the primary benefits they associate with a public power utility.

It is worth noting that nearly three-fifths of customers believe that "community-focused programs and initiatives" are also a benefit of a public power utility.

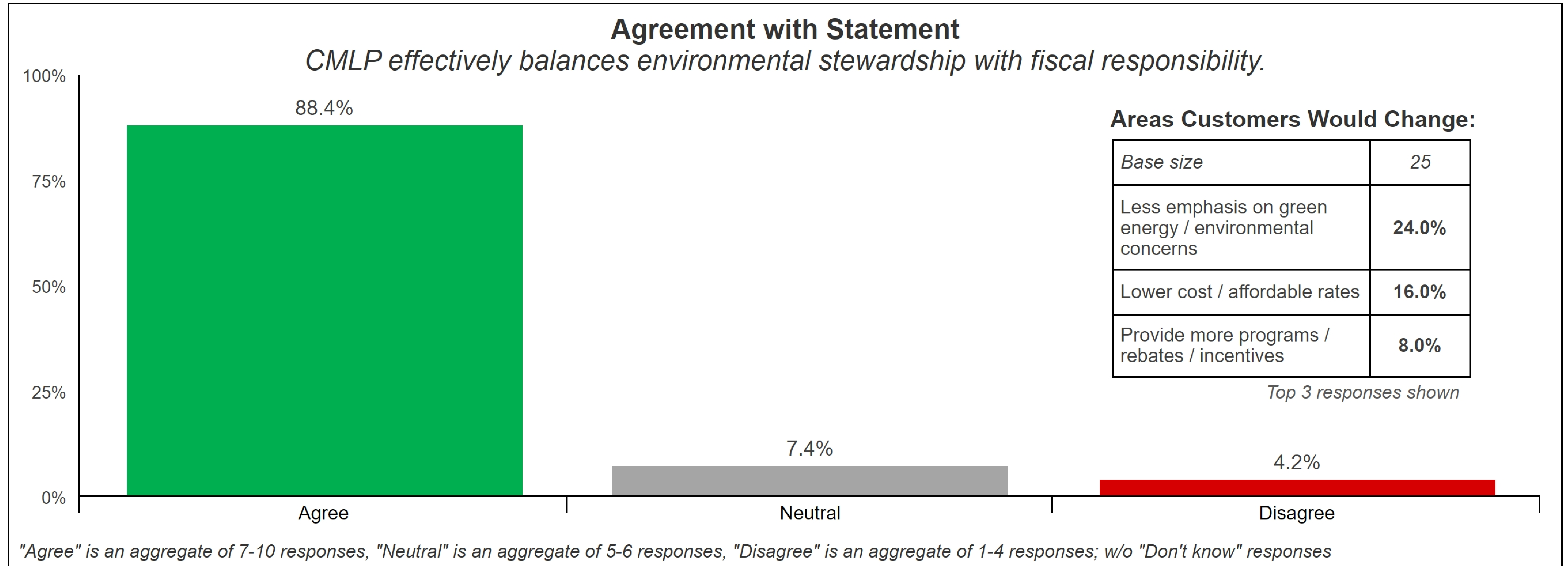


n=1,039

Q17: Please indicate the perceived benefits you associate with a public power utility. (Select all that apply)

Awareness | Environmental & Fiscal Responsibility

A vast majority of customers agree that "CMLP effectively balances environmental stewardship with fiscal responsibility," while only 11.6% were either neutral or disagreed with this statement.



n=767



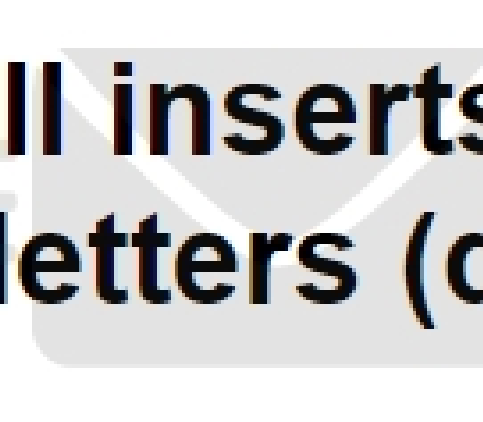




Q19: Now please read a statement common to municipally owned utilities. Please use a scale of one (1) to ten (10) where one means you strongly disagree and ten means you strongly agree; CMLP effectively balances environmental stewardship with fiscal responsibility.

Q20: (If ratings of 01, 02 or 03 are recorded for question 19 ask:) Please indicate what you would change:

Communication | Valuable Channels

When rating the value of communication methods provided by CMLP, over three-quarters of customers indicated "email" and the "CMLP website" are valuable communication channels currently provided by the utility.

Additionally, over three-fifths of customers rated the utility's "bill inserts + Newsletters (digital)" and "text messages" as a valuable communication method. Of note, 21.5% of customers were unsure of the value of CMLP's social media platforms, and 15.7% were unsure of the value of the utility's text messages, suggesting lower usage of both platforms.

	Valuable	Very valuable	Somewhat valuable	Not very valuable	Not at all valuable
 E-mail	86.6%	50.9%	35.7%	3.8%	2.6%
 CMLP website	77.6%	38.2%	39.4%	7.2%	3.9%
 Bill inserts + Newsletters (digital)	62.9%	24.4%	38.5%	14.1%	11.7%
 Text messages	60.9%	30.2%	30.7%	9.9%	13.5%
 Direct mail	56.8%	22.3%	34.5%	17.1%	16.7%
 Bill inserts + Newsletters (printed)	55.4%	21.4%	34.0%	16.2%	19.0%
 Social media (Facebook/X (formerly Twitter))	20.6%	6.9%	13.7%	16.3%	41.7%

n=1,039

Q28: Now, please rate the value of the following communication methods provided by CMLP; for each of the following please indicate if you believe this method is very valuable, somewhat valuable, not very valuable, or not at all valuable.

"Don't know / Unsure" responses not shown

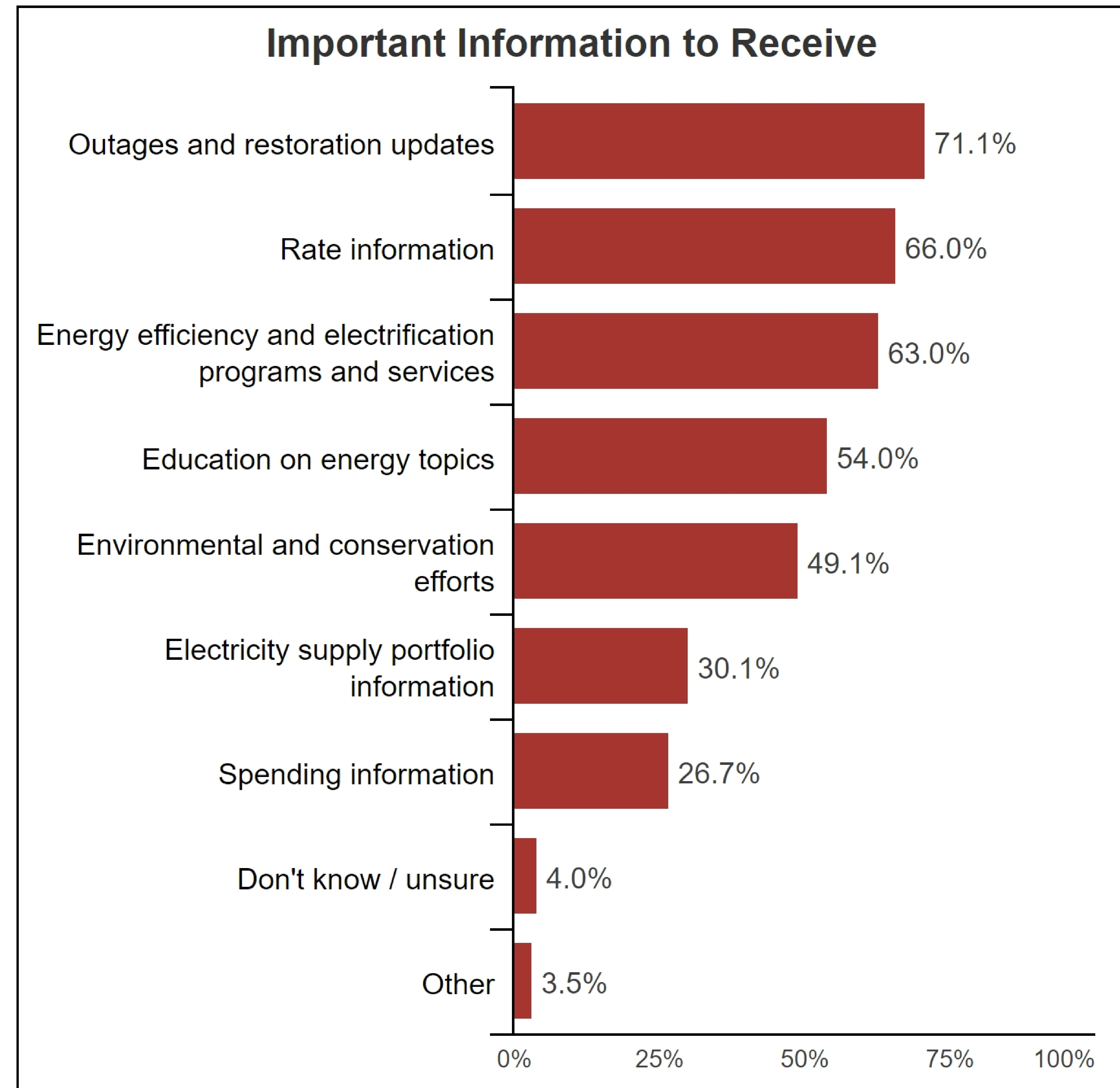
Communication | Preferred Information

Over seven-out-of-ten customers indicated that receiving updates about outages and restoration is the most important type of information they want to receive regularly from CMLP.

Additionally, over half of customers mentioned that information about rates, energy efficiency, and electrification programs and services, as well as education on energy topics are also important to them.

n=1,039

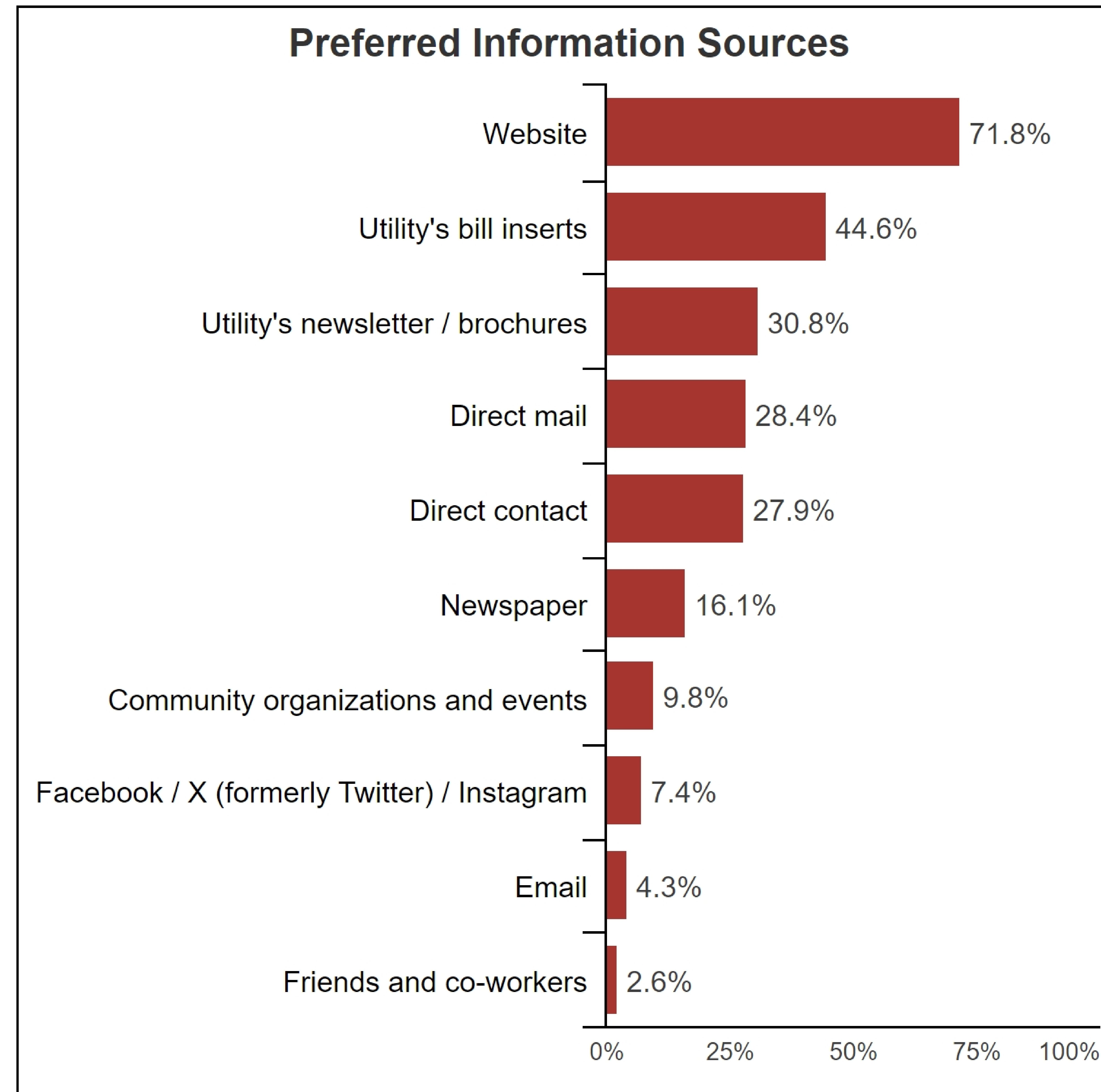
Q21: Please indicate which of the following are the most important pieces of information to regularly receive from CMLP? (Select all that apply)



Communication | Preferred Information Source

Nearly three-quarters of customers indicated that they prefer to look for information about CMLP on the utility's website.

Additionally, nearly one-half of customers prefer to look for information on the "utility's bill inserts" followed by the "utility's newsletter/brochures."



n=1,039

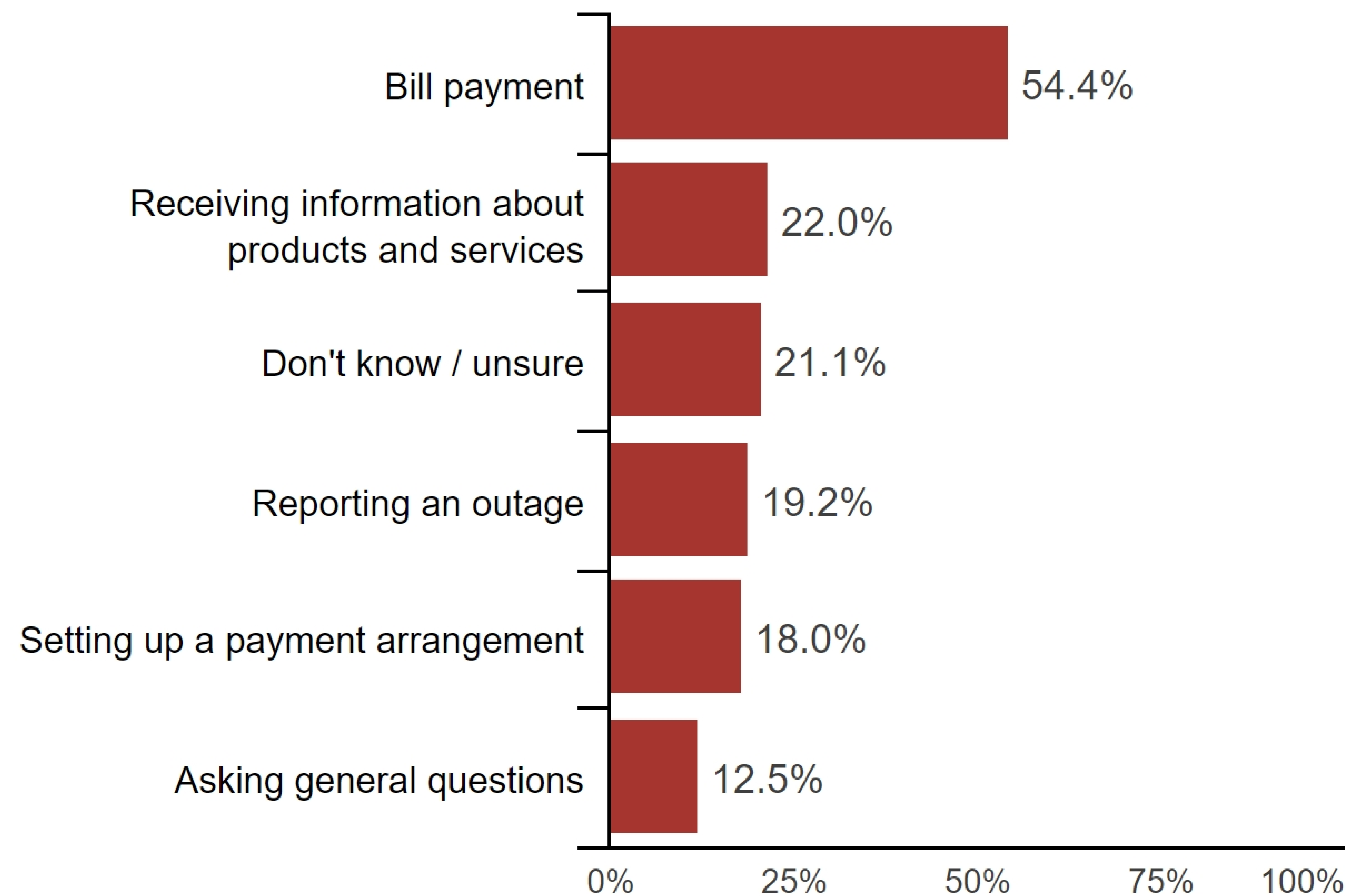
Q29: And, please indicate where you would prefer to look for information about CMLP? (Select all that apply)

Top 10 responses shown

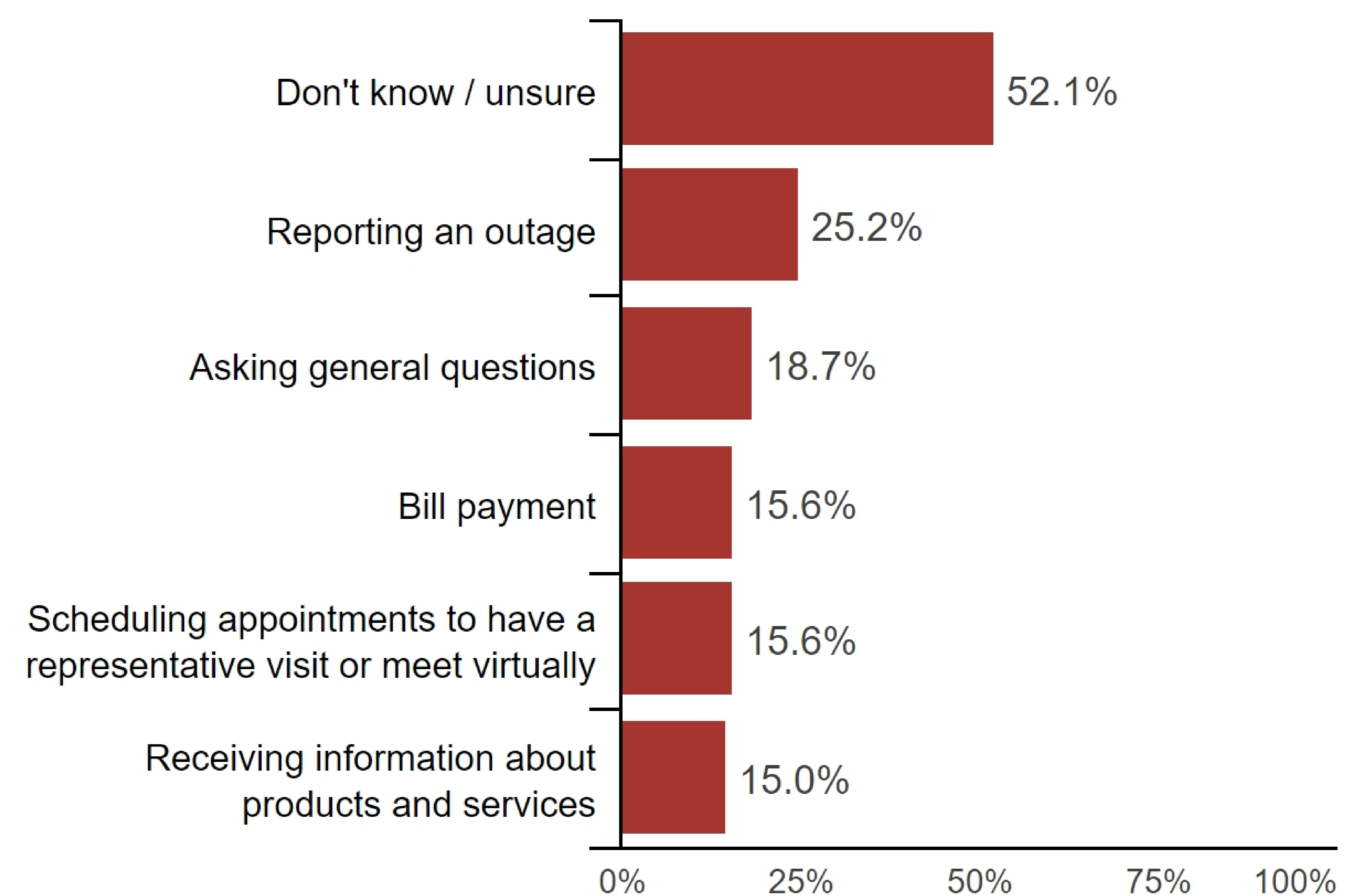
Self-Service | Experience

Over one-half of customers reported they currently pay their bill through CMLP's digital or other self-service platforms. When asked what tasks they would like to complete through these platforms, over one-half were unsure, however, one-quarter of customers mentioned they would like to have the option to report a power outage through self-service platforms, and nearly one-fifth would like to ask general questions through this platform.

Tasks Currently Completed Through Self-Service Platforms



Desired Tasks Through Self-Service Platforms



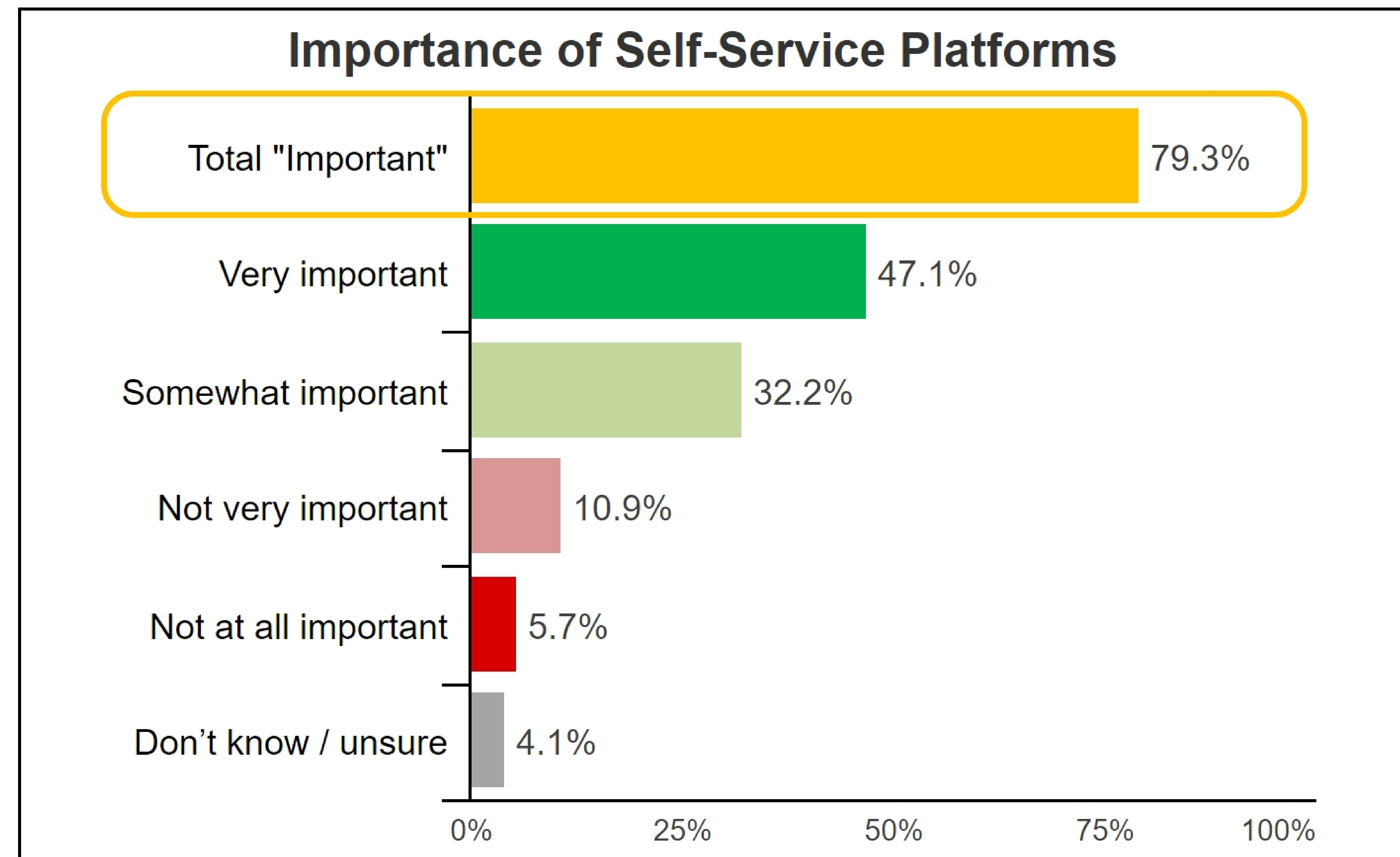
n=1,039

Q34: Which of the following tasks do you currently complete through CMLP's digital or other self-service platforms? (Select all that apply)

Q35: Which of the following tasks would you like to complete through CMLP's digital or other self-service platforms, but are not currently able to? (Select all that apply)

Self-Service | Importance

Nearly eight out of ten customers reported self-service platforms are either very or somewhat important to them. The majority of customers provided positive ratings for CMLP's performance in "delivering and communicating about available programs and services" through self-service platforms, while a similar frequency gave positive ratings for the "ease of understanding content on the website / app" and the "ease of navigating the website / app."



Characteristic	Count	Percentage
Delivering and communicating about available programs and services	783	80.1%
Ease of understanding content on the website / app	693	78.1%
Ease of navigating the website / app	669	75.9%

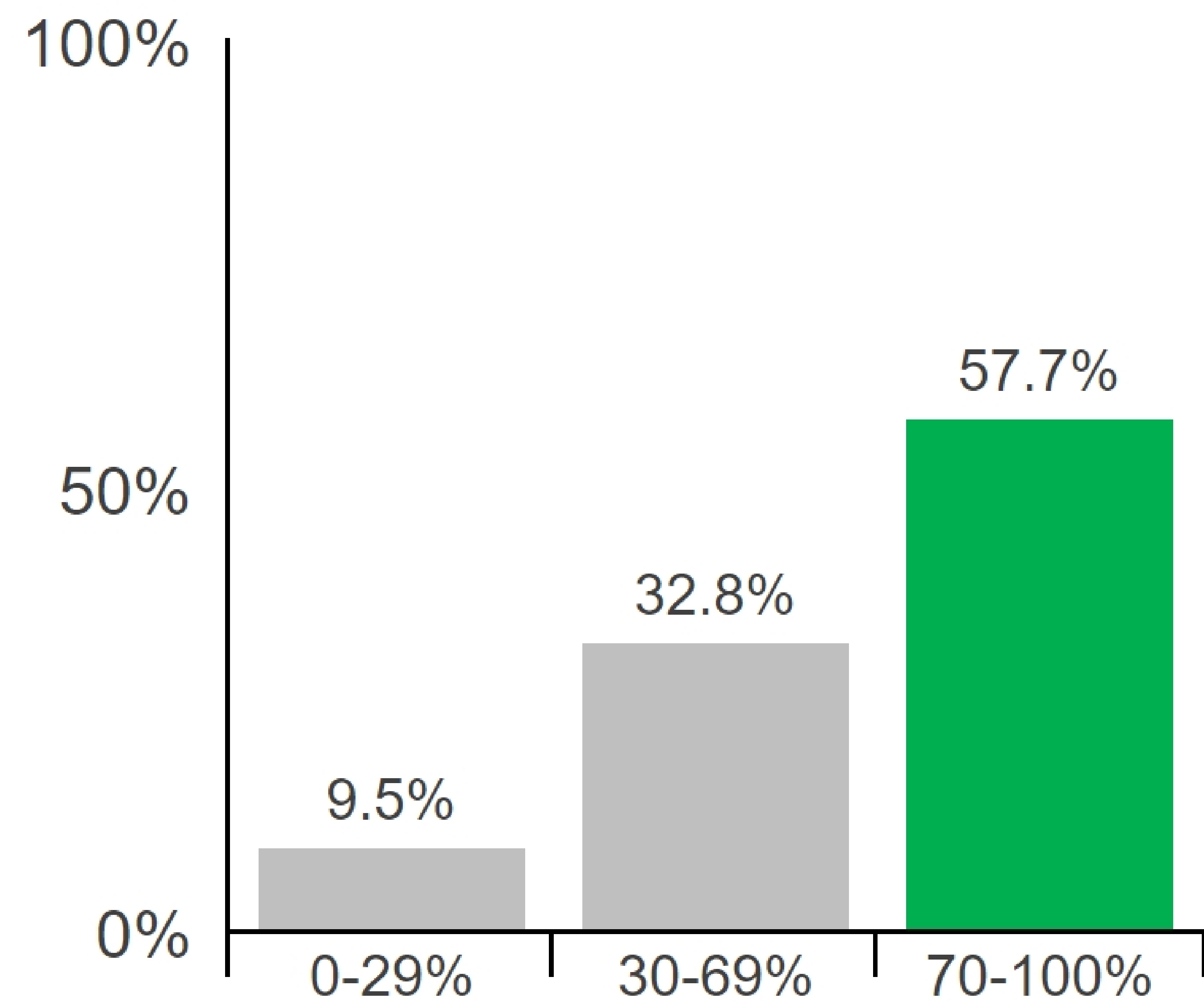
Aggregate of ratings 7-10 w/o "don't know" responses

n=1,039
 Q30: How important are digital and other self-service platforms (website, e-mail, text, chat feature, online customer portal, payment kiosk or other digital platforms) that give you the ability to have general needs and questions taken care of without the need to speak to a live representative?
 Q31-33: How well would you say CMLP is currently performing in the following areas pertaining to its self-service digital options? Please rate CMLP's performance on a scale of one to ten where one (1) is "very poor" and ten (10) is "very good."

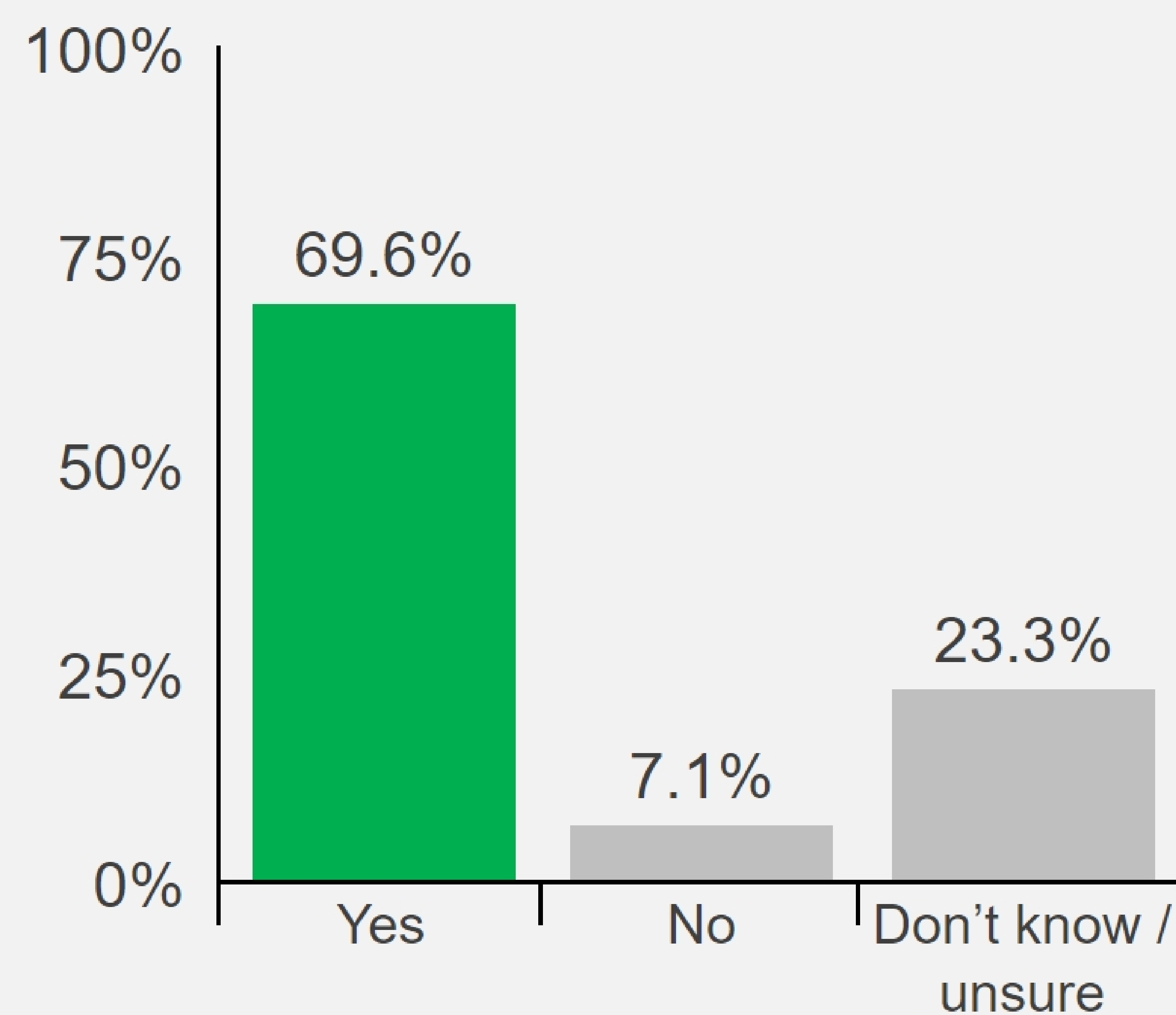
Renewables | Awareness and Perceptions

Nearly three-fifths of customers believe that 70-100% of CMLP's power supply comes from non-carbon-emitting sources. Over two-thirds of customers agree that the actions they take at home to conserve energy have an impact on CMLP's ability to achieve Net Zero emissions, while nearly three-fifths of customers reported CMLP empowers them to conserve energy at home to help the utility achieve Net Zero greenhouse gas emissions.

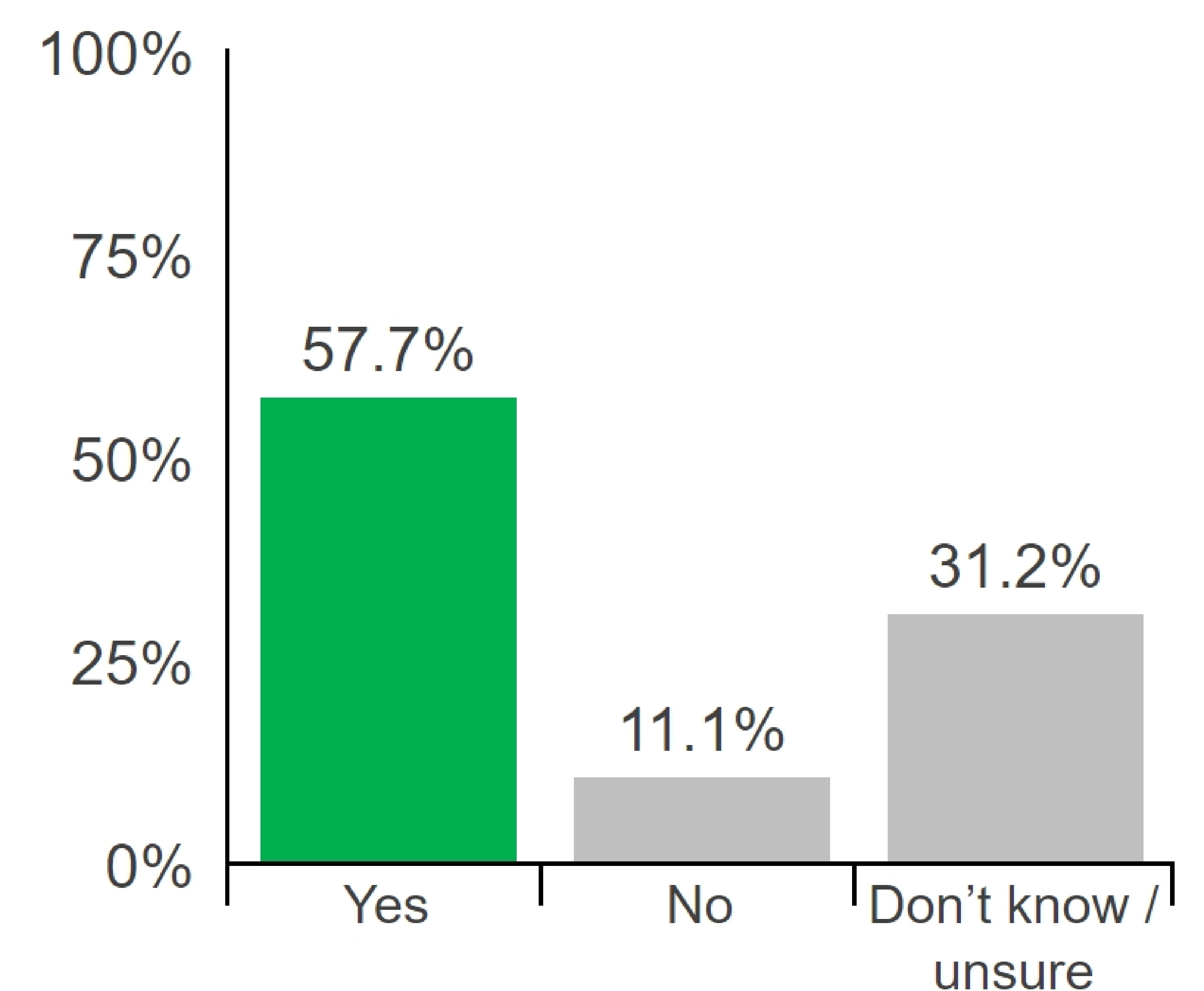
Q According to a 2019 study, Massachusetts municipal utilities receive more than 75% of their power from non-carbon-emitting sources. Do you know what % of CMLP's power supply comes from non-carbon-emitting sources?



Q Do you feel the actions you take at home to conserve energy and electrify your energy uses have an impact on CMLP's ability to achieve the statewide goal for achieving Net Zero greenhouse gas emissions?



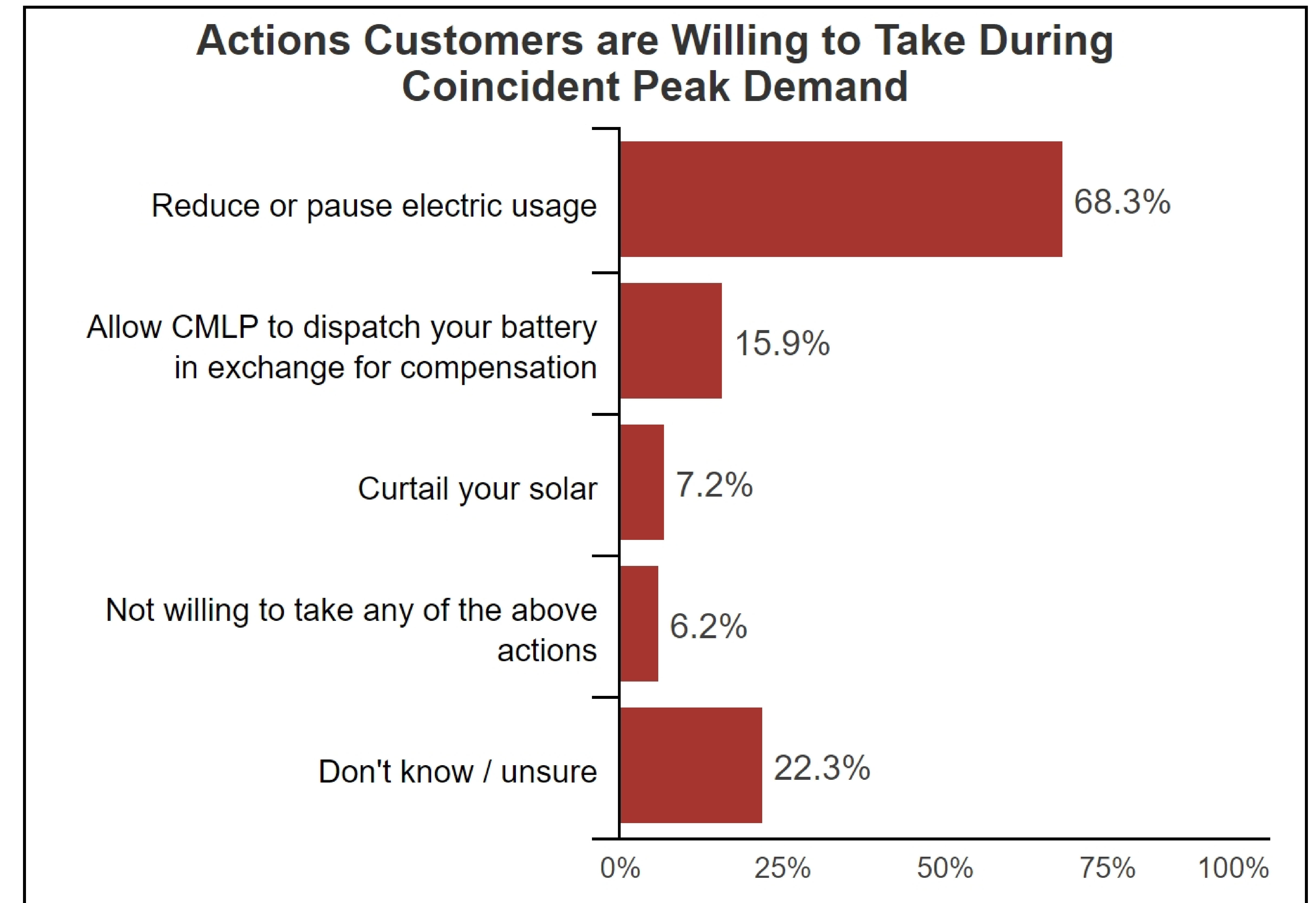
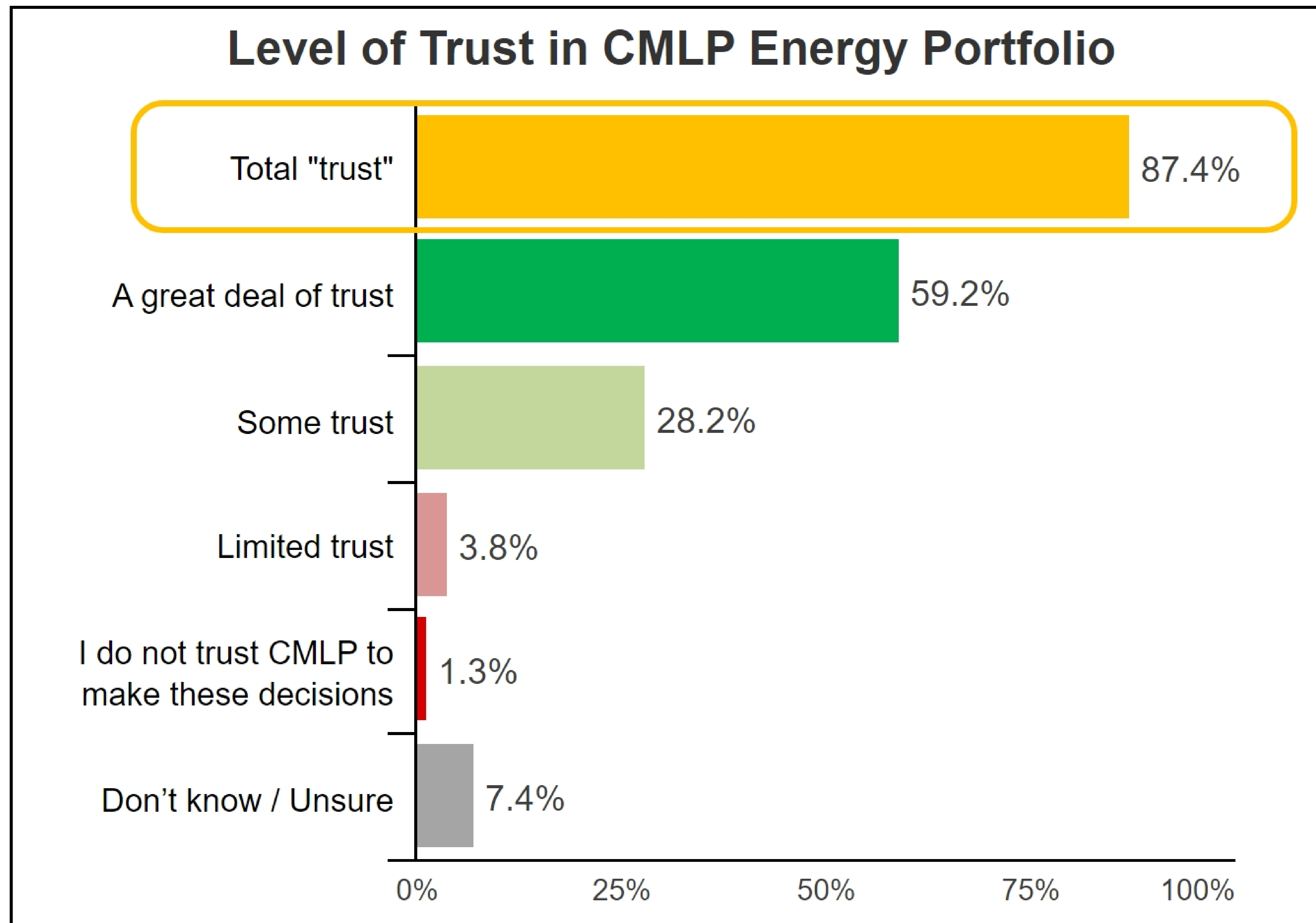
Q Does CMLP empower you to conserve energy at home in an effort to assist the utility in achieving its goals for Net Zero greenhouse gas emissions?



n=1,039

Energy Efficiency | Trust in Energy Portfolio

Nearly three-fifths of customers reported having a "great deal of trust" in CMLP's ability to make decisions related to the way the energy portfolio is created and maintained. When asked about coincident peak demand and their willingness to make adjustments during this time, over two-thirds of customers indicated they would be willing to "reduce or pause electric usage."



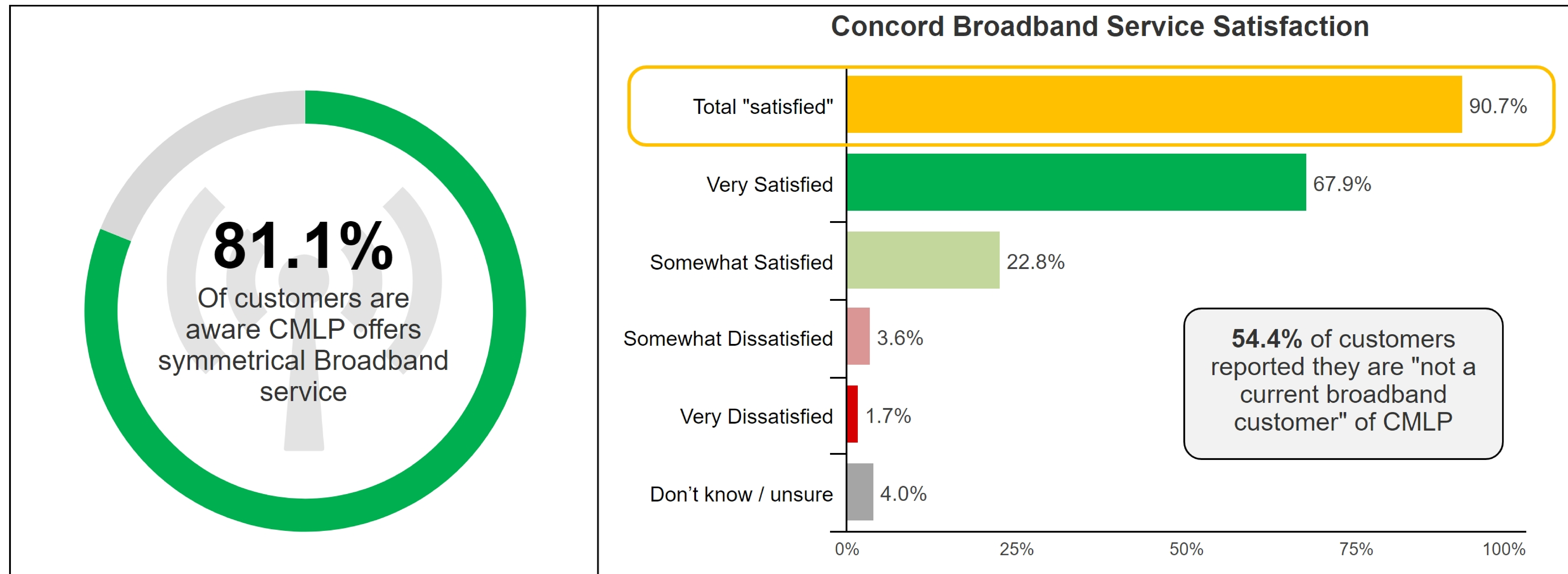
n=1,039

Q42: How much do you trust CMLP to make decisions related to how the energy portfolio is created and maintained (types of energy, infrastructure, and costs)?

Q43: If you received a message from CMLP on short notice that it is a coincident peak demand time, would you be willing to: (Select all that apply)

Broadband | Awareness & Satisfaction

Over four-fifths of customers reported being aware CMLP offers symmetrical broadband service. Of those who are currently a CMLP broadband customer, nine out of ten reported being either very or somewhat satisfied with this service. Of note, one-half of customers reported they are not current broadband customers.



n=1,039

Q44: Are you aware that CMLP offers symmetrical Broadband service?

Q45: If you are a current Concord Broadband customer, how satisfied are you with the service?

Not including "Not a current broadband customer" responses

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Considerations



Outage Communication and Self-Service Reporting

Customers have expressed a clear desire for more timely communication during outages, with nearly three-quarters (71.1%) indicating receiving updates about outages and restoration is the most important type of information they want regularly from CMLP. Enhancing the timeliness and accuracy of these communications will help keep customers informed and reduce frustration during power interruptions. Additionally, a portion of customers (25.2%) mentioned they would like to have the option to report a power outage through self-service platforms, reflecting a growing preference for digital solutions. By integrating and/or improving outage reporting capabilities into self-service platforms, which 79.3% of customers find important, CMLP can enable customers to report issues quickly and efficiently. This will help streamline the process of addressing outages, helping to maintain overall customer satisfaction and reliability.



Broadband Study Opportunity

Eight-out-of-ten customers reported being aware of CMLP's symmetrical broadband service, however, over half of customers reported not being a current broadband customer. Understanding the reasons behind this lack of participation, whether due to awareness, perceptions of service quality, or other factors, could provide valuable insights for improving and expanding CMLP's broadband offerings. Conducting a focused study on non-users of broadband could help identify potential barriers and opportunities for increasing broadband adoption.

Net Zero Goal Awareness

Despite the positive reception of CMLP's environmental initiatives, some customers remain uninformed about specific actions and efforts to achieve the Net Zero greenhouse gas emissions goal. To bridge this gap, CMLP can enhance its communication strategy by regularly updating customers on net zero goals through preferred channels such as email and the CMLP website. Providing information about ongoing milestones, and practical steps customers can take to contribute will not only increase awareness, but help to build a sense of community involvement in sustainability efforts.



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WHAT'S NEXT.



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