

2025  
**Consumer  
Trends**





# Introduction

Since the launch of our consumer trends report 4 years ago, we’ve seen the effects of a global pandemic, inflation-led economic uncertainty, and the rise of AI!

But as the consumer landscape evolves, one thing remains constant: the importance of forging genuine, lasting connections with customers, whether that be face-to-face, on the phone to an agent, or scrolling through your website. And this year is no different. Our 2025 consumer trends report, with responses from 23,730 consumers across 23 countries/regions, shows how valuable understanding and connecting with customers is to business success.

But it’s not easy. Our findings lay bare the effects of less money in consumers’ pockets, a hyper-competitive landscape, and the continual decline of customer feedback. In summary: loyalty is harder won and more easily lost in 2025, with companies increasingly blind to the causes of customer friction.

Building loyalty starts with building trust. It is foundational to the lasting connections that most successful organizations are built on. To earn this trust, CX leaders will need to develop a deeper understanding of their

consumers, which will allow them to make confident decisions that improve experiences and consistently meet consumer expectations.

In today’s environment, CX is a strategic business asset. We hope this report equips you with the insights and expert advice you need to maximize your program’s impact, no matter where you are in your CX journey.

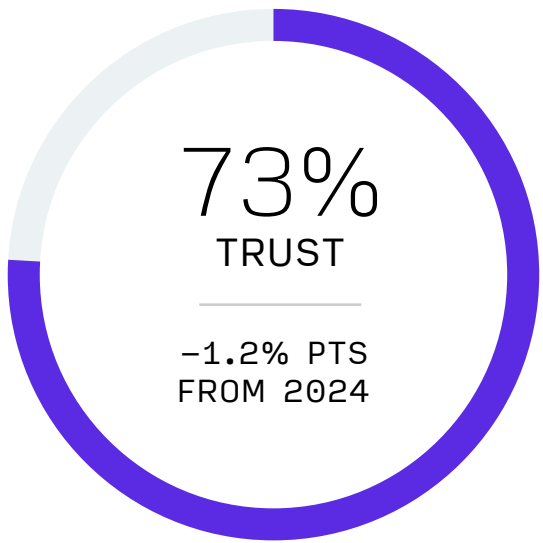
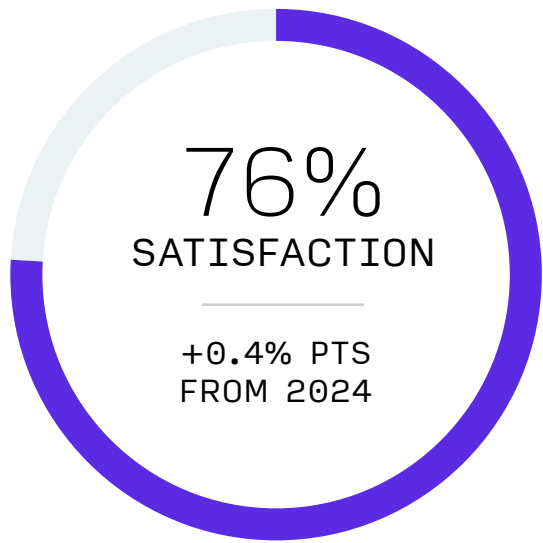


**Isabelle Zdatny**  
*Head of Thought Leadership  
XM Institute, Qualtrics*



LOOKING FOR A REGIONAL BREAK-DOWN OF THE 2025 CONSUMER TRENDS?

AT A GLANCE  
**THE STATE OF CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE**



# Meet the experts



**Moira Dorsey**  
*Head of Qualtrics XM Institute*



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*CX Solutions Expert  
Qualtrics*



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## TREND 1

## Heightened expectations fuel a decline in loyalty

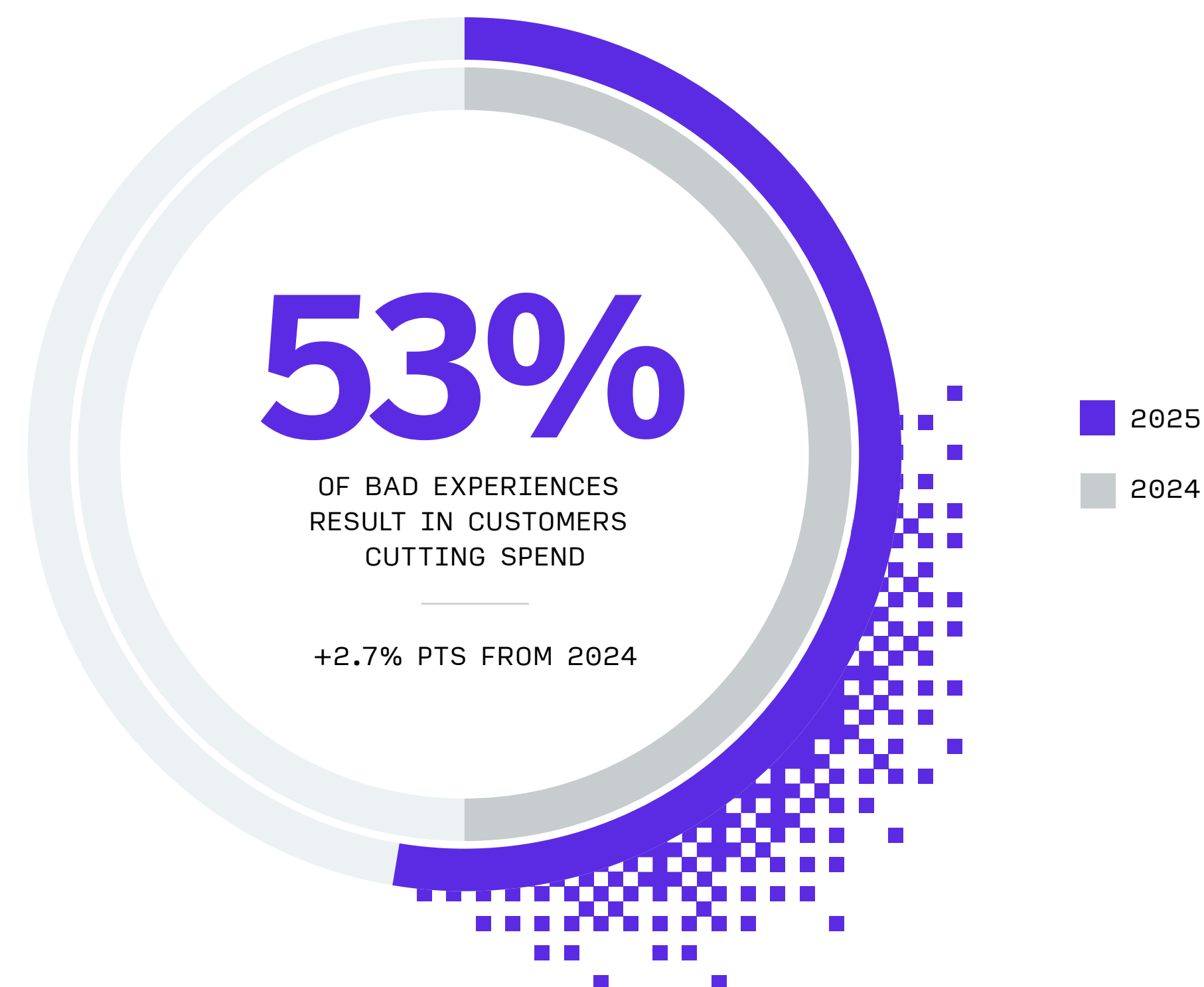
### BUSINESSES WILL SEE HUGE UPSIDE IMPROVING THE EXPERIENCE IN 2025

There's no doubt – it's tough for businesses out there. After 3 years of rising prices, consumers have less disposable income and expect more from those they spend their money with.

Fail to meet those expectations? You'll be punished. Over 1 in 2 bad experiences result in customers cutting their spend (53%).

You likely already know the importance of providing a good experience. In fact, this year consumers recorded fewer bad experiences versus 2024, as businesses raised their game – particularly in industries where spending is more discretionary and consumers can easily switch.

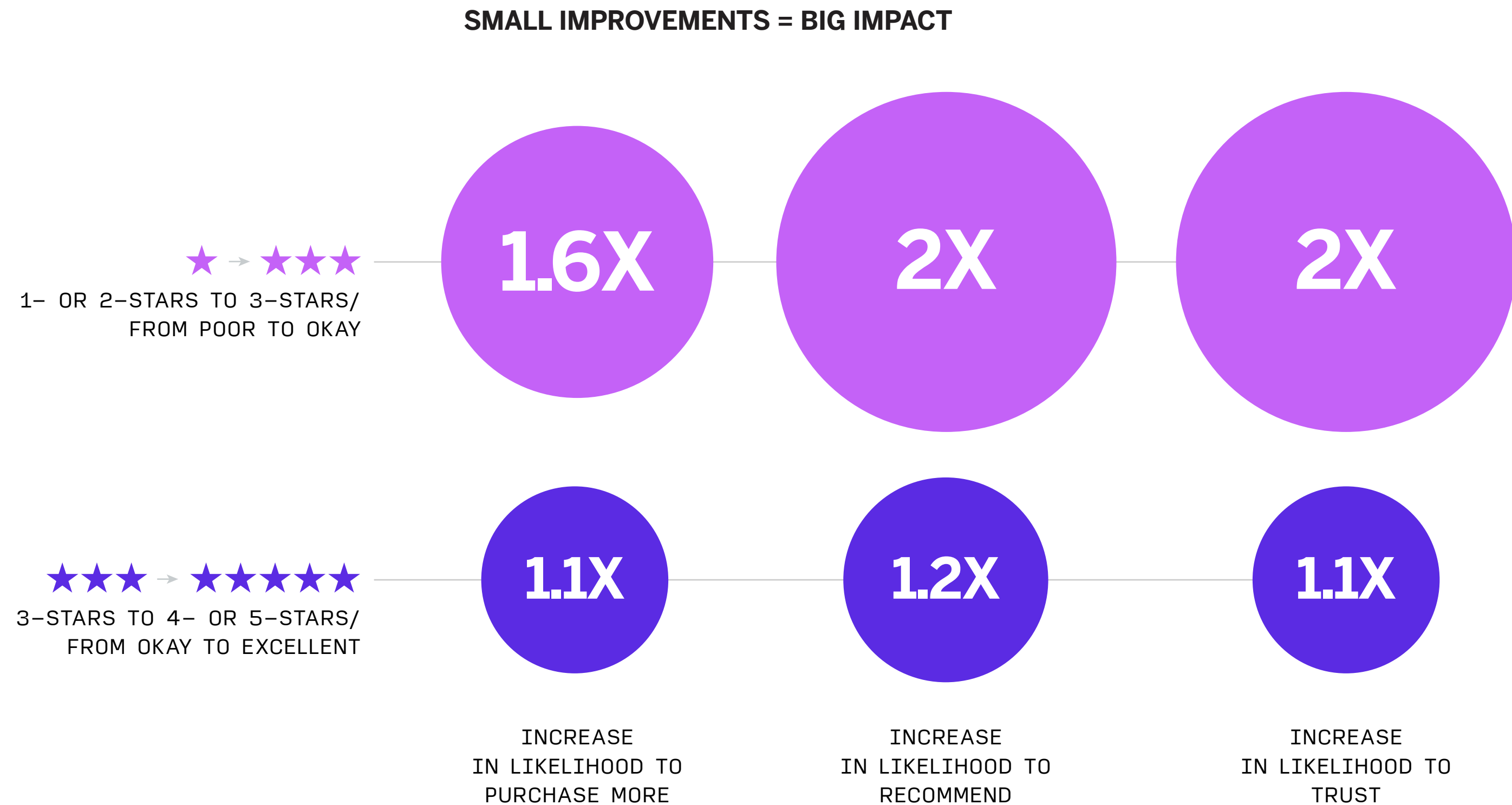
### CONSUMERS WILL WALK AFTER A BAD EXPERIENCE





But what constitutes a “good” or “bad” experience? A big component is how well you deliver on your value proposition and brand vision. Less luxurious brands can fare just as well as the premium competitors; success lies in how well you do what you say you’re going to do.

That doesn’t mean you need to achieve a 5-star experience overnight, however. We found that moving from a 1- or 2-star experience to a 3-star experience results in a 1.6x increase in likelihood to purchase again. That’s almost 15% higher than the bump you get going from 3 to 4 or 5 stars. So it’s certainly beneficial to strive for perfection, but the biggest opportunity comes from just meeting expectations accurately.



## The view on the ground

### ANALYSIS

Because “nice-to-have” industries – like hotels, fast food, and retail – face more severe financial consequences for poor experiences, these brands tend to invest more in CX and deliver fewer negative interactions (9%) compared to “need-to-have” industries like banks, internet providers, and utilities (14%). That’s led to “nice-to-have” brands elevating customer expectations across the board, including for “need-to-have” businesses – who are no longer as immune to the consequences of subpar experiences and will need to improve or face a growing risk of losing customer spend (7%).



**Isabelle Zdatny**  
*Head of Thought Leadership*  
*Qualtrics XM Institute*

### ANALYSIS

While there is huge upside to improving the experience, it is a continuous process. This is because as you raise the bar, consumers get used to it and their expectations shift – falling short of these new expectations will result in consumers looking for that experience elsewhere. Top performing organizations make sure they stay up to date with expectations and recalibrate regularly!



**Leonie Brown**  
*Lead Product Scientist,*  
*Customer Care, Qualtrics*

### ADVICE

If you aren’t seriously engaging in an effort to understand and improve each aspect of the customer experience, you’ll soon find that your customers will be looking for a company that is.



**Brandon Hanson**  
*Contact Center*  
*Practice Leader, Qualtrics*

### ANALYSIS

The continued rise and prominence of ‘digital native’ brands along with accelerating access to AI-based technology is making seamless, personalized experiences more and more a part of consumers day-to-day. This creates an often unrealized expectation that ALL brands can and will act in this way.



**Max Venker**  
*CX Solutions Expert*  
*Qualtrics*



“It’s vital you meet your customers where they are, whether on your digital channels, face-to-face or interacting with your contact center, to understand what’s working, what’s not, and how to fix it.”

qualtrics<sup>XM</sup>

JULIANA HOLTERHAUS  
LEAD PRODUCT SCIENTIST, DIGITAL



## TREND 2

## Consumers are clear – go back to basics

### CLEARLY COMMUNICATE, SET EXPECTATIONS, AND DELIVER IF YOU WANT TO BUILD TRUST

One of the best bets you can make in 2025 is to focus on building trust with your customers. Now, you may have always thought about trust as a component of satisfaction, or not at all.

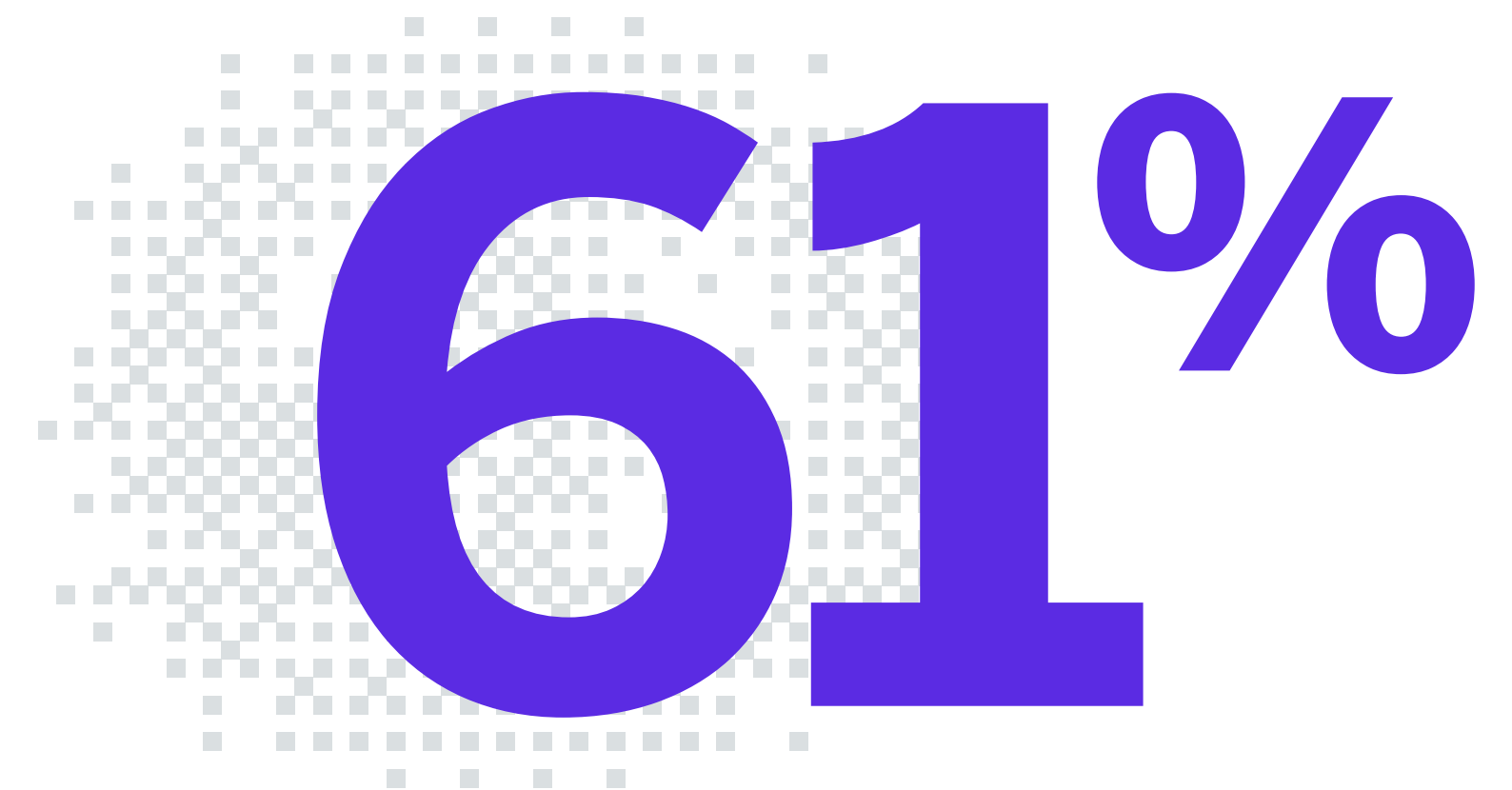
As it turns out, in this year's study, trust matters to consumers, a lot. This serves as a timely reminder to businesses; rather than focus on the next best thing, you need to get the basic elements of an experience right to build rock solid foundations with those you serve.

At the heart of building trust is clear, honest, reliable communication. And this is a hugely important factor throughout the customer journey – from your marketing all the way through to customer support. In short: If you talk the talk, make sure you walk the walk too.

Communication is essential to an effective experience. Get it right, you'll improve satisfaction and build trust, paving the way for long-term customer loyalty, increased customer spend, and recommendations. You'll improve your brand perception too, helping you navigate tricky topics like AI and data usage.

But be warned, if you fail to deliver on the expectations that you set, trust breaks down, and consumers will look to meet their needs elsewhere.

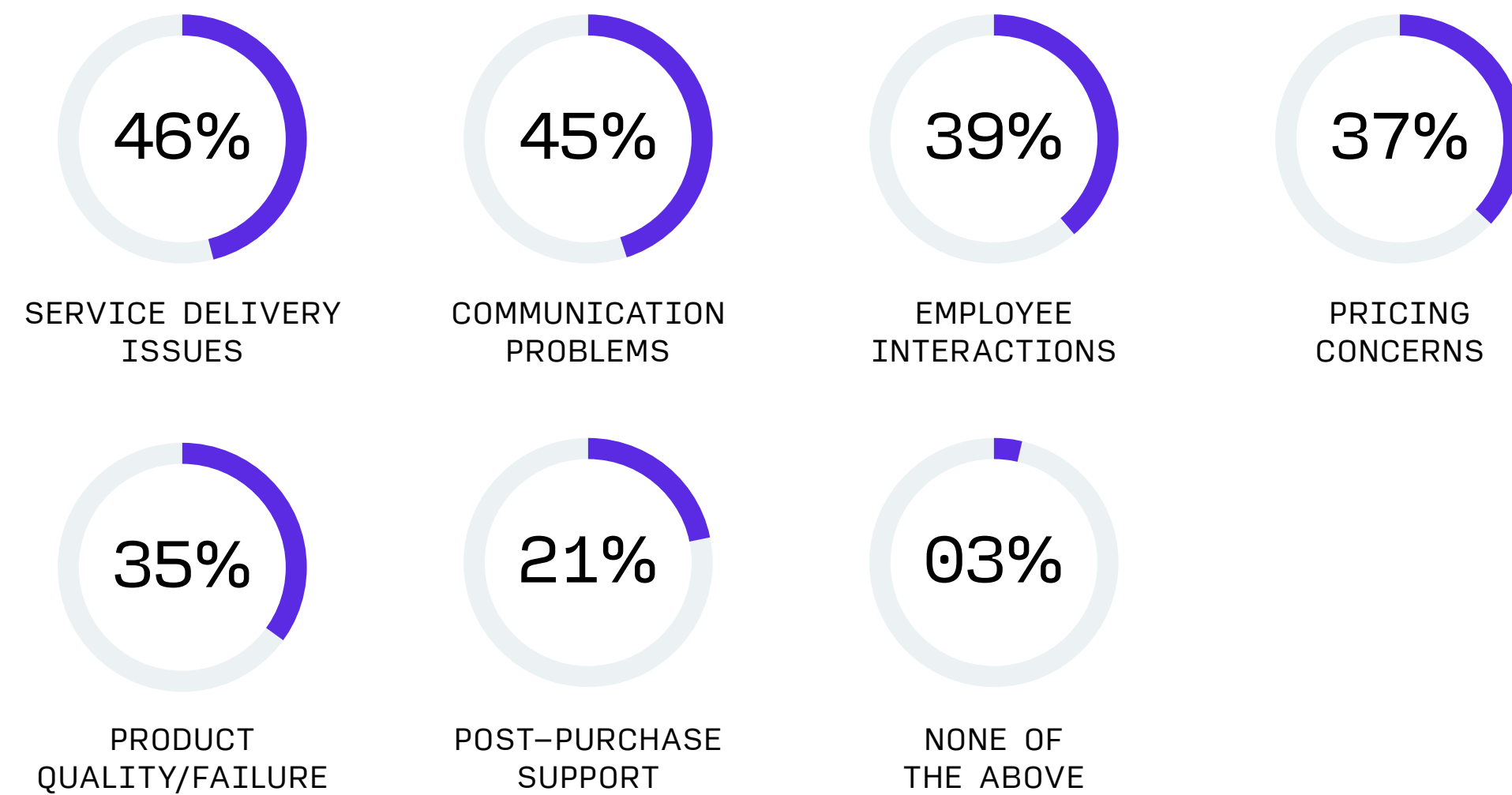
### THE #1 PRIORITY FOR CONSUMERS



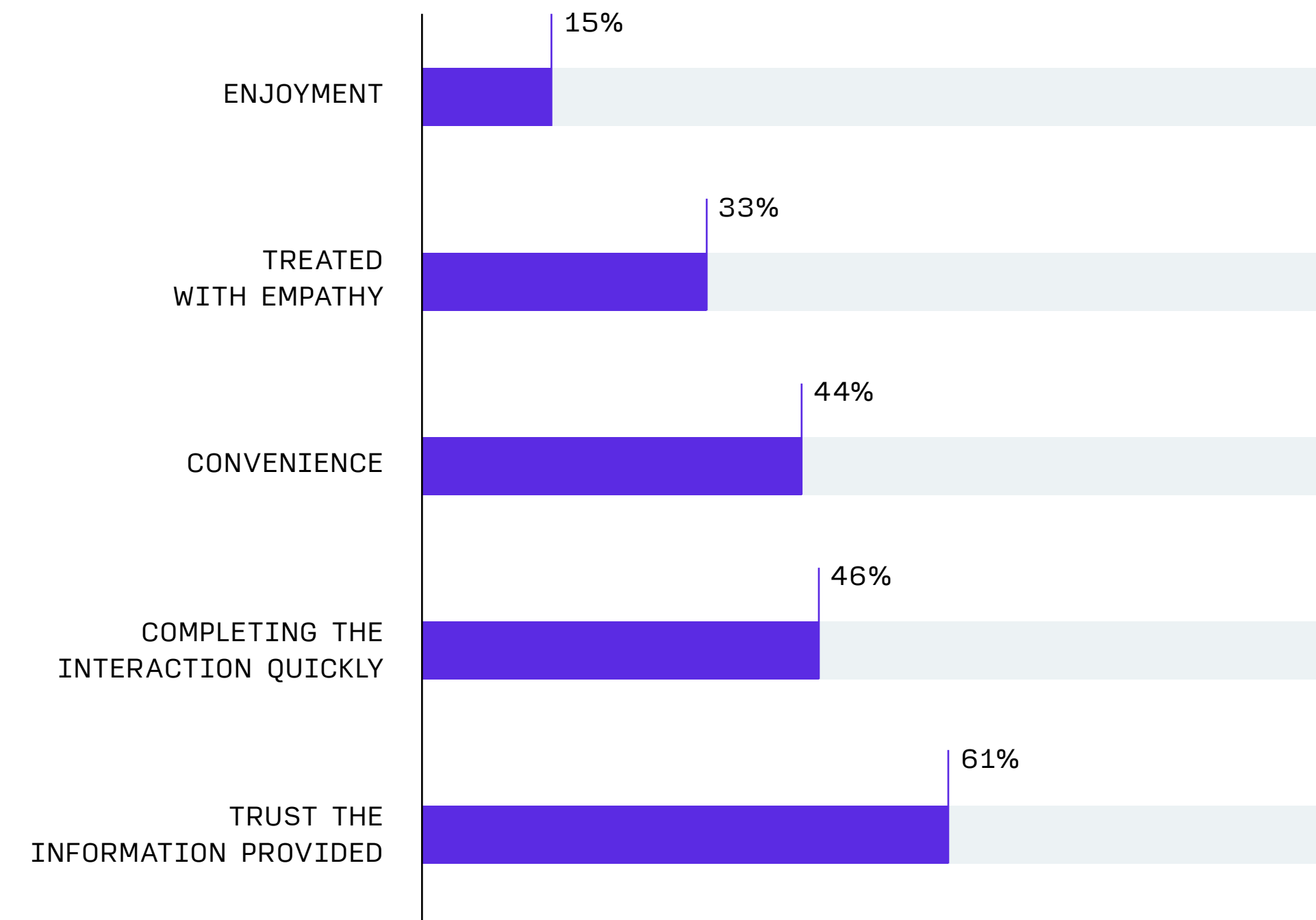
of consumers prioritize trust in the information provided when interacting with companies

But while communication is a big priority for consumers, businesses are failing to meet the mark, with communication issues cited as the #2 reason for bad experiences (and the #1 issue in 7/20 industries), only behind service delivery issues.

#### REASONS FOR POOR EXPERIENCES, ACCORDING TO CONSUMERS



#### CONSUMER PRIORITIES WHEN INTERACTING WITH COMPANIES



## The view on the ground

### ANALYSIS

Reliability is a cornerstone of trust. To earn trust, you must demonstrate a pattern of behavior that reduces uncertainty (which humans hate!) and allows customers to confidently anticipate what you'll do in the future. This begins by setting their expectations – through things like brand promises, proactive communications, transparent policies, etc. – and then consistently delivering on those expectations.



**Isabelle Zdatny**  
*Head of Thought Leadership  
Qualtrics XM Institute*

### ADVICE

Clear, reliable communications are the type of experience essentials that are important to consumers. Improving these types of brilliant basics isn't necessarily easy. But focusing on them can keep customer satisfaction and loyalty up, support calls down – two key outcomes for proving the value of a CX program.



**Moira Dorsey**  
*Head of Qualtrics  
XM Institute*


### ANALYSIS

In tough economic times, consumers want to stick with brands they know well and can trust. That means feeling welcomed and having faith that if something goes wrong, the company will care about fixing the issue.



**Leonie Brown**  
*Lead Product Scientist,  
Customer Care, Qualtrics*





“Coming out of the pandemic, Hilton, as well as many others in our industry, saw a decline in some of the core experiences—things like a great night’s sleep or a relaxing shower—that drive a positive overall experience. Last year, we built a program that enables our hotels to collect and act on in-stay feedback so they can get the basics right for every guest before they leave.”



JESSIE HARN  
SR. DIR., HEAD OF ENTERPRISE CUSTOMER INSIGHTS

## TREND 3

## Feedback falls to a new low

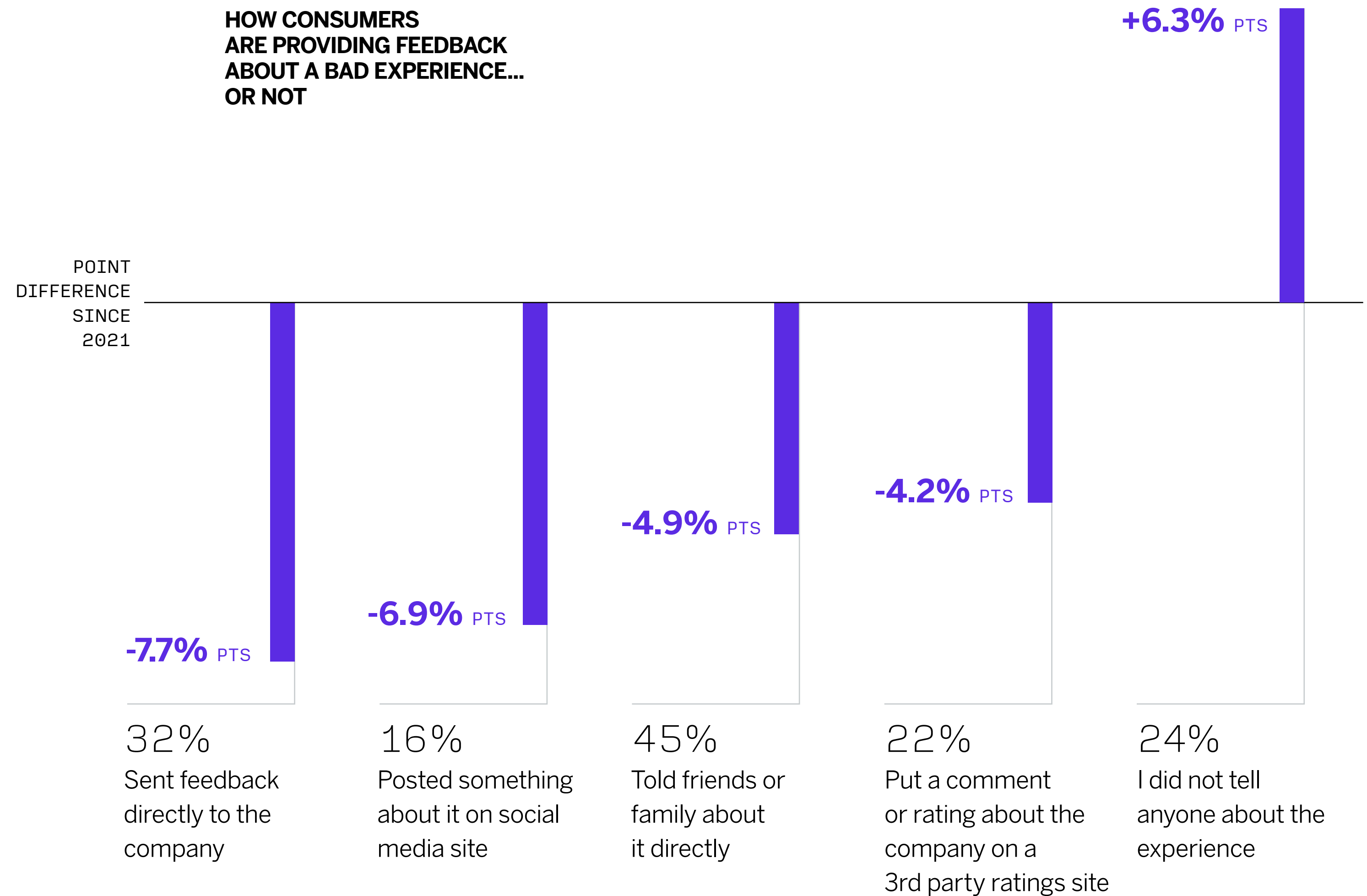
### VOC PROGRAMS MUST EVOLVE TO PROVIDE THE MOST VALUE FOR BUSINESSES

If businesses want a robust understanding of people's experiences to support their decision-making in 2025, they will have to evolve their VoC program as customer feedback falls to a new low.

Since we began this consumer study 4 years ago, customer feedback after a bad experience has dropped 8% pts. Customers are simply not giving feedback like they used to, and so if organizations want to understand how to improve the experiences they deliver, it's no longer enough to rely on surveys — they must diversify their listening program.

Rather than telling a company they've had a bad experience, more and more consumers are saying nothing at all (and going elsewhere).

### HOW CONSUMERS ARE PROVIDING FEEDBACK ABOUT A BAD EXPERIENCE... OR NOT



## The view on the ground

### ANALYSIS

Organizations can no longer rely on a single listening method (surveys), but must maximize the value of each data source available to them, including operational and behavioral data. That means listen everywhere, optimize surveys, and use predictive analytics/modeling.



**Max Venker**

*CX Solutions Expert,  
Qualtrics*

### ADVICE

Learn to listen, even when you aren't asking questions. Pull those reviews, that social data, the calls, the emails. Save the moments of asking questions for when it really does need to be a more structured conversation, and then keep it very short and to-the-point. A company is not expected to fix everything, but to show they are listening and caring about what they hear. It is how the customer feels heard, and they are far more likely to continue providing feedback when they feel like the company listens.



**Elizabeth Erkenbrack**

*RVP XM Strategy  
Qualtrics*

### ADVICE


The more data you can bring in beyond surveys, the better you will be at accurately understanding your customers' behaviors and knowing how to respond to them.



**Brandon Hanson**

*Contact Center  
Practice Leader, Qualtrics*





“Customers are bombarded with feedback requests for every business interaction. It is no wonder so many customers experience survey burnout and decline the opportunity to give feedback. Still, it is a business imperative to listen and act on customer feedback – whether directly through surveys or reviews, or by predicting customer needs through unstructured data and other data sources.”

**servicenow**

JILL HELMLE, PH.D., CCXP  
DIRECTOR, CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE STRATEGY

## TREND 4

## AI hype gives way to skepticism

### COMFORT WILL INCREASE BY HIGHLIGHTING HOW AI HELPS

It feels like you can't go a day without a brand telling you their products and services now use AI — and it's turning consumers off. Over the past 12 months, attitudes towards AI have become much more negative, with comfort using AI down a massive 11% pts and only 1 in 4 trusting organizations to use it responsibly.

### CONSUMER COMFORT AROUND USING AI HAS DROPPED

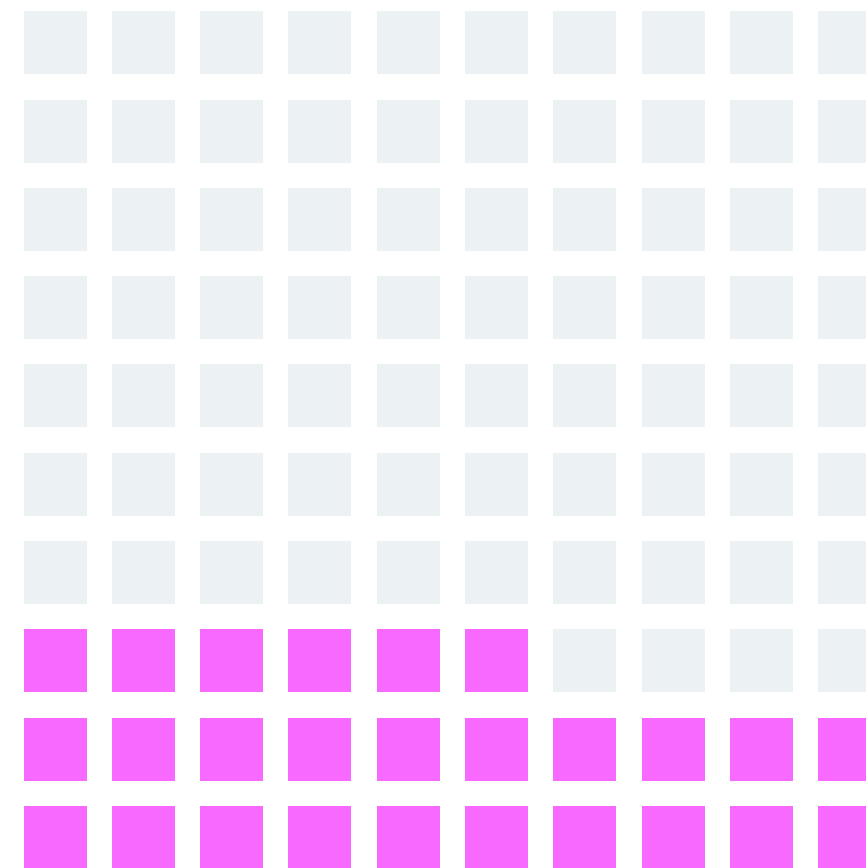


This is at least partly due to concerns about AI replacing a human to connect to, a concern that has risen year-over-year and is now shared by 1 in 2 people.

If businesses can show consumers the value of this technology, they should see an increase in trust and adoption. Because while the notion of AI still has consumers uneasy, openness increases when they can see how it will help them achieve their specific goals.

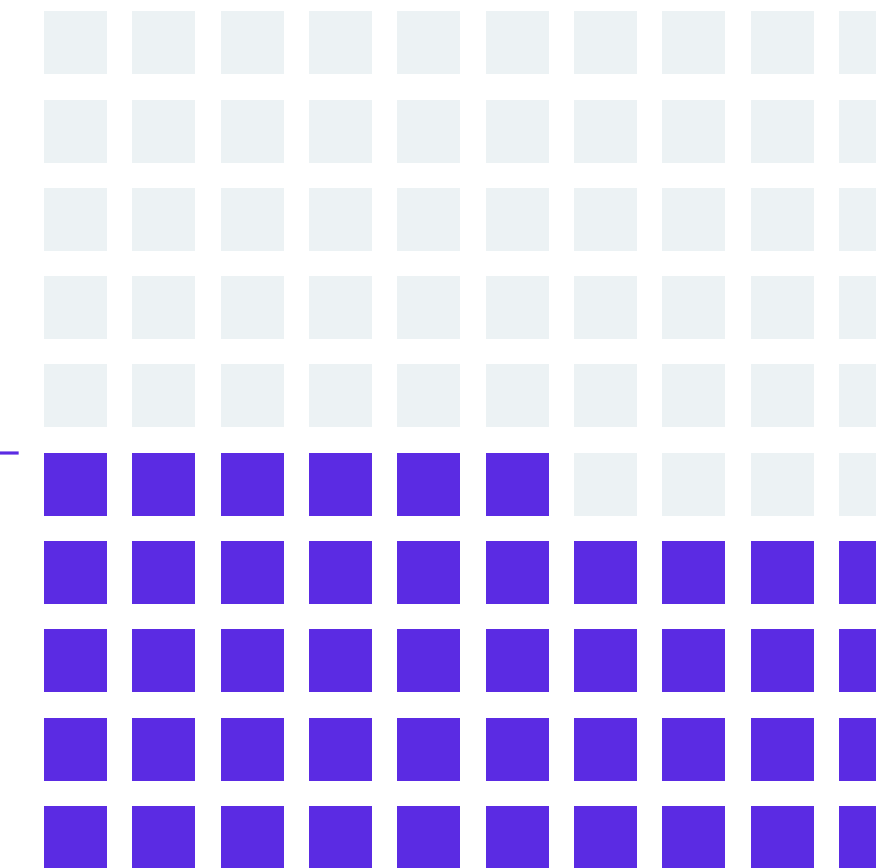
So rather than focusing on telling consumers about the technology itself, keep it simple and focus on the benefit it will bring them. Maybe it can help customers find the photo you took 5 years ago, find a product on the website with a single prompt, or enable consumers to speak to an agent faster when there's an issue. Our data shows that focusing on the outcome will be a far more effective way to build trust and comfort with AI.

#### CONSUMER SENTIMENT TOWARDS AI IMPROVES WITH CONCRETE EXAMPLES



**26%** TRUST ORGANIZATIONS  
GENERALLY TO  
USE AI RESPONSIBLY

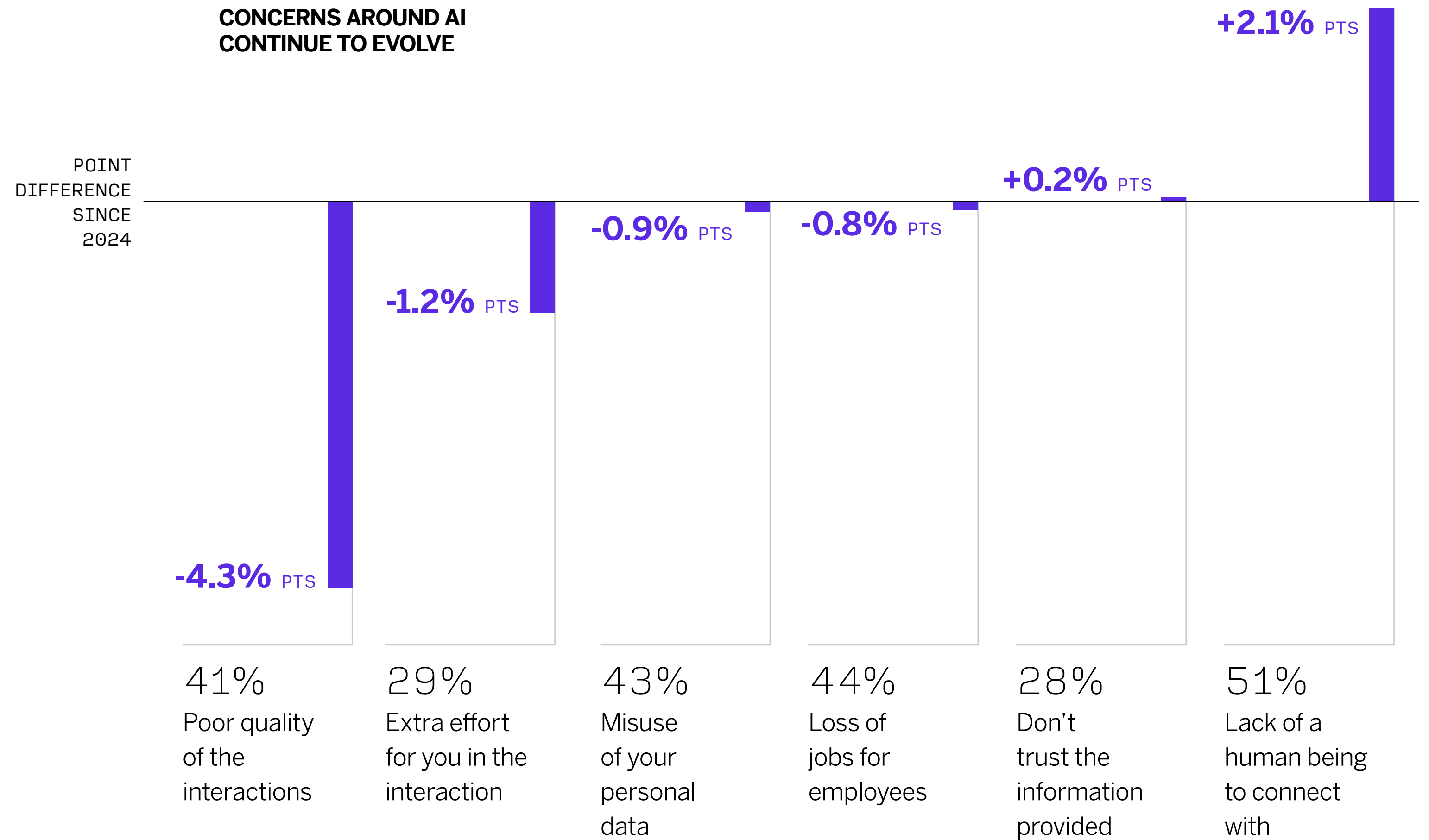
**+20**  
%-PT DIFFERENCE



**46%** COMFORT IN AI TO  
COMPLETE SPECIFIC GOALS



Which is important because once people use AI, they become much more likely to feel comfortable using it again to complete common activities (1.7x), freeing up your teams to work on higher-stakes issues as more interactions become automated.



## The view on the ground

### ADVICE

Use AI with customers when you can explain how and why you're doing so and what they can do to switch that to a human. Build a relationship of trust, transparency, and choice with your customers, rather than trying to impose a set of tools on them.



**Brandon Hanson**  
*Contact Center  
Practice Leader, Qualtrics*

### ADVICE

Helping your human employees do a better job by reducing their admin workload, helping them find better answers and write great responses, is where AI can deliver excellent results. However, over-rotating on using AI to try and deflect customers to self-service drives down trust. Customers will interact with AI, but the data trends show they have low trust and low patience with it, so if something goes wrong, it's vital for organizations to offer human connection as soon as possible.



**Leonie Brown**  
*Lead Product Scientist  
Customer Care, Qualtrics*

### EXAMPLE

Apple's communication strategy around the launch of Apple Intelligence is a great illustration of how brands should position AI. Instead of touting AI for the sake of AI – which consumers find gimmicky – Apple focuses on how the technology helps users achieve their goals, while prioritizing user privacy, one of Apple's core values.




**Isabelle Zdatny**  
*Head of Thought Leadership  
Qualtrics XM Institute*

### ADVICE

My advice would be Einstein's: If you can't explain it simply, you don't understand it well enough. Companies need to understand their AI strategy and utilization so thoroughly they can explain it in their customers' terms.



**Elizabeth Erkenbrack**  
*RVP XM Strategy  
Qualtrics*



“You’ve got to start with the human  
experience & work backwards to the  
technology - not the other way round.”



CIRQUE DU SOLEIL

MANDIA MOÏSE  
CRM & CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE MANAGER  
SPEAKING AT X4 SALT LAKE CITY, 2024



## TREND 5

## Today's consumers want privacy and personalization

### PERSONALIZING THE EXPERIENCE REMAINS VITAL – BUT IT CAN'T BE HEAVY-HANDED

When it comes to improving the experience at scale, customer feedback – direct, indirect, behavioral, operational – is worth its weight in gold. The more you know about customer preferences and habits, the better informed your decisions will be to improve the experience and the likelier you become to foster the kind of long-term loyalty that's so hard to come by.

And most consumers welcome the outcome – 64% of consumers prefer to buy from companies that tailor their experiences to their wants and needs.

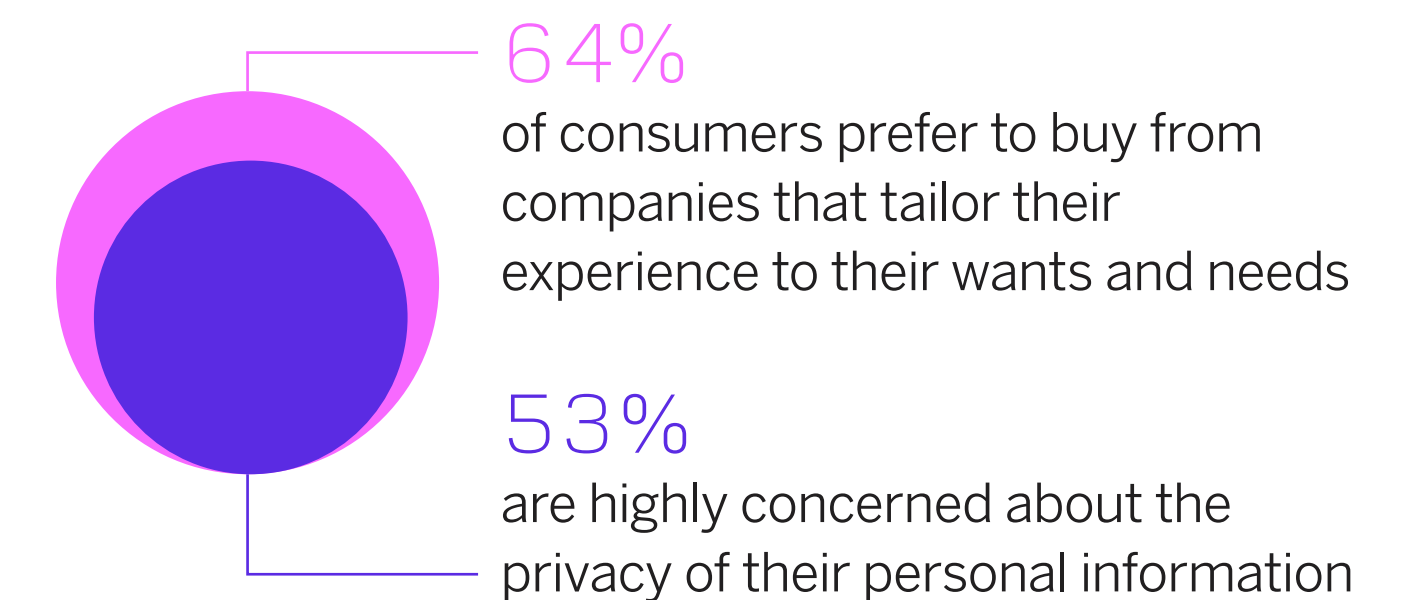
The catch is, when it comes to choosing between personalization and privacy, the answer isn't black and white.

Because while customers want personalization, few feel comfortable with organizations using the types of data they'd need to do so, which puts businesses in a tricky spot.

Consumers want personalization, but they also want privacy, so businesses must find a way to personalize experiences without coming across as heavy-handed. Failure to do so may result in consumers withholding their personal information, making it hard for businesses to see the full picture and make effective decisions.

Similarly to AI, we found that trust in an organization had a big influence on how comfortable consumers feel about it capturing personal information to improve the experience.

### PERSONALIZATION IS A DIFFERENTIATOR, BUT TREAD CAREFULLY



Consumer trust in an organization significantly impacts their comfort level with sharing their data. We found an +11% pt increase in comfort levels among consumers who trust the organization compared to those who don't.

## The view on the ground

### ANALYSIS

Our findings show regulation can really help to provide consumers with the balance they want between personalization and privacy. We found that privacy concerns are lowest in EMEA, where consumers are protected by the GDPR and AI act.



**Leonie Brown**

*Lead Product Scientist  
Customer Care, Qualtrics*

### ADVICE

To navigate this delicate balance, brands must prioritize transparency and control. Consumers are more likely to share their data when they understand why it's needed and have the power to choose how it's used. Zero-party data, which customers voluntarily provide — such as by answering preference questions during onboarding — is a powerful way to gather the information needed for personalization while reassuring customers they retain agency over their data.



**Isabelle Zdatny**

*Head of Thought Leadership  
Qualtrics XM Institute*


### ADVICE

Consumers are protective of their personal data - while they enjoy personalization where it offers them convenience, there is also the 'uncanny valley' where they feel creeped out by a company seemingly holding too much data on them. In many instances it might be better to provide the benefit of personalization (accurate segmentation, enhanced service responses) without making the personalization itself too explicit.



**Leonie Brown**

*Lead Product Scientist  
Customer Care, Qualtrics*



“When balancing competing requirements of personalization, privacy concerns, and the cost of serving, the goal is to find the sweet spot with your customers not for them. Co-create experiences centered around the moments that matter to build human connection and identify when self-service is preferable. Test prototypes with different customer segments and personas and pilot with a diverse audience to avoid unintended “creep” factors. Engage with your data security team early and often!”



MARY CATHERINE PLUNKETT  
VICE PRESIDENT, CUSTOMER SUCCESS DESIGN  
CUSTOMER SUCCESS ORGANIZATION (CSO)

10. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 2000; 283: 2689-2693.

10. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 2000; 284: 2689-2694.





## 2025 consumer trends by region

While exploring these global consumer trends, you may have wondered about regional differences. Do these trends hold true everywhere?

Even though this data spans 20 industries and 23 countries/regions, our analysis revealed remarkable consistency across markets. While some nuances exist – which we have highlighted below – none of these differences are stark enough to merit different strategies for different regions.

For a deeper dive into this consumer data, stay tuned for upcoming [XM Institute](#) reports with detailed industry and country breakdowns.

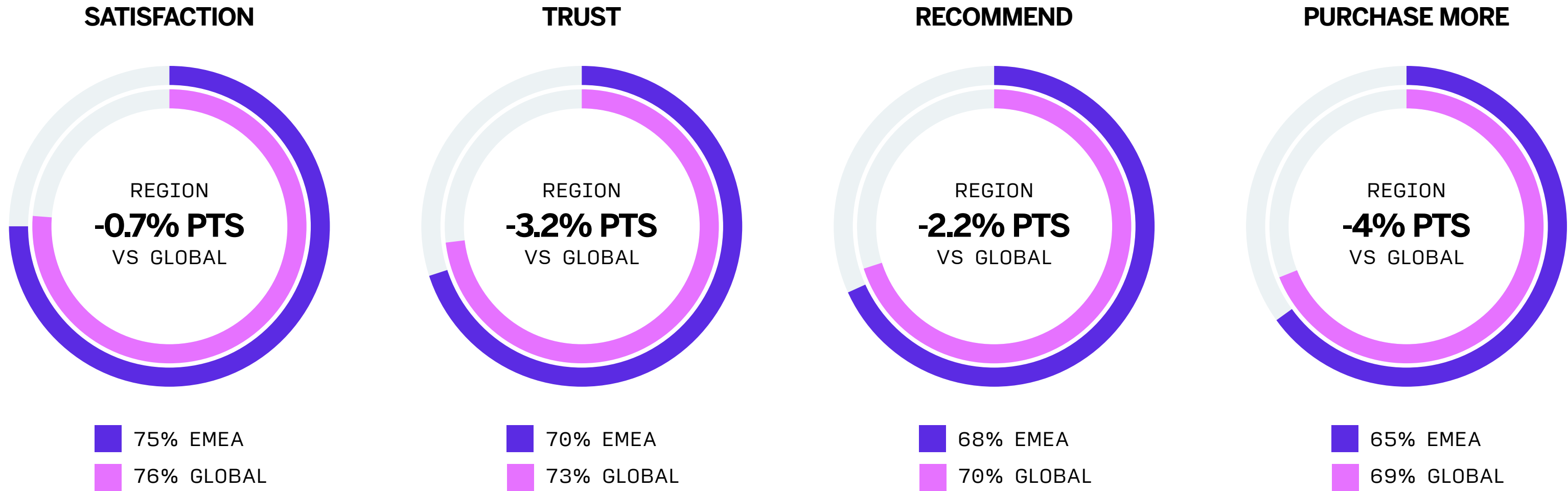




EMEA

While satisfaction in EMEA closely matches global averages, these consumers are less likely to demonstrate the three loyalty behaviors, particularly likelihood to purchase more, where they fall -4.0 %pts below the average.

Perhaps the most notable finding here is that, while EMEA consumers show the lowest levels of trust in organizations to use their personal information responsibly (28%), they are also the least concerned about privacy (42%) and misuse of personal information (39%). This is likely due to the strong data protection afforded by regulations like GDPR and the AI Act, which give consumers more control over their data and hold organizations accountable for responsible data handling and AI development.



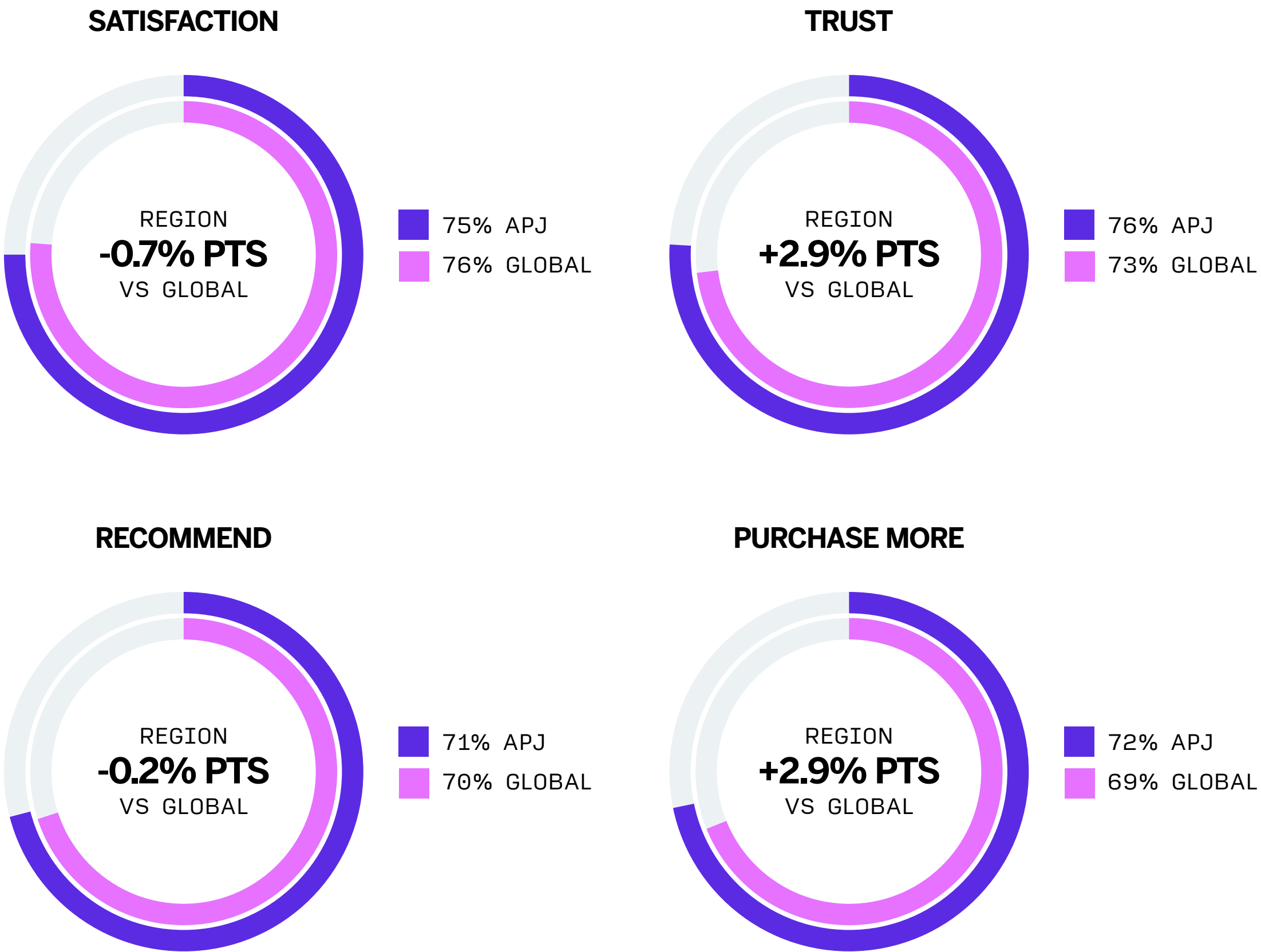
APJ

Consumers in APJ have a more optimistic outlook on their experiences. While their satisfaction and recommend scores are in line with other regions, both their trust and purchase more metrics are almost 3%pts higher than the global average.

This optimistic attitude also extends to AI. Consumers in APJ feel the most comfortable using AI to complete common activities, exceeding the global average by +9%pts. This isn't too surprising given their high rate of AI adoption, with over two-thirds saying they've used it at least once. In fact, we found that APJ consumers with prior AI experience are 1.6x more likely to feel comfortable using AI for those common tasks compared to those who haven't. Their comfort with AI is further shown by the fact that, when asked about their concerns with AI, consumers in this market were the most likely to select none of the above.

However, you'll still need to make clear you're using their personal data responsibly – 60% have high concerns about the privacy of their data.

Perhaps some of this openness to AI stems from dissatisfaction with human employees. We found that when experiences go poorly for APJ consumers, they are more likely to cite employee interactions than consumers in any other region (+8%pts higher than global average).

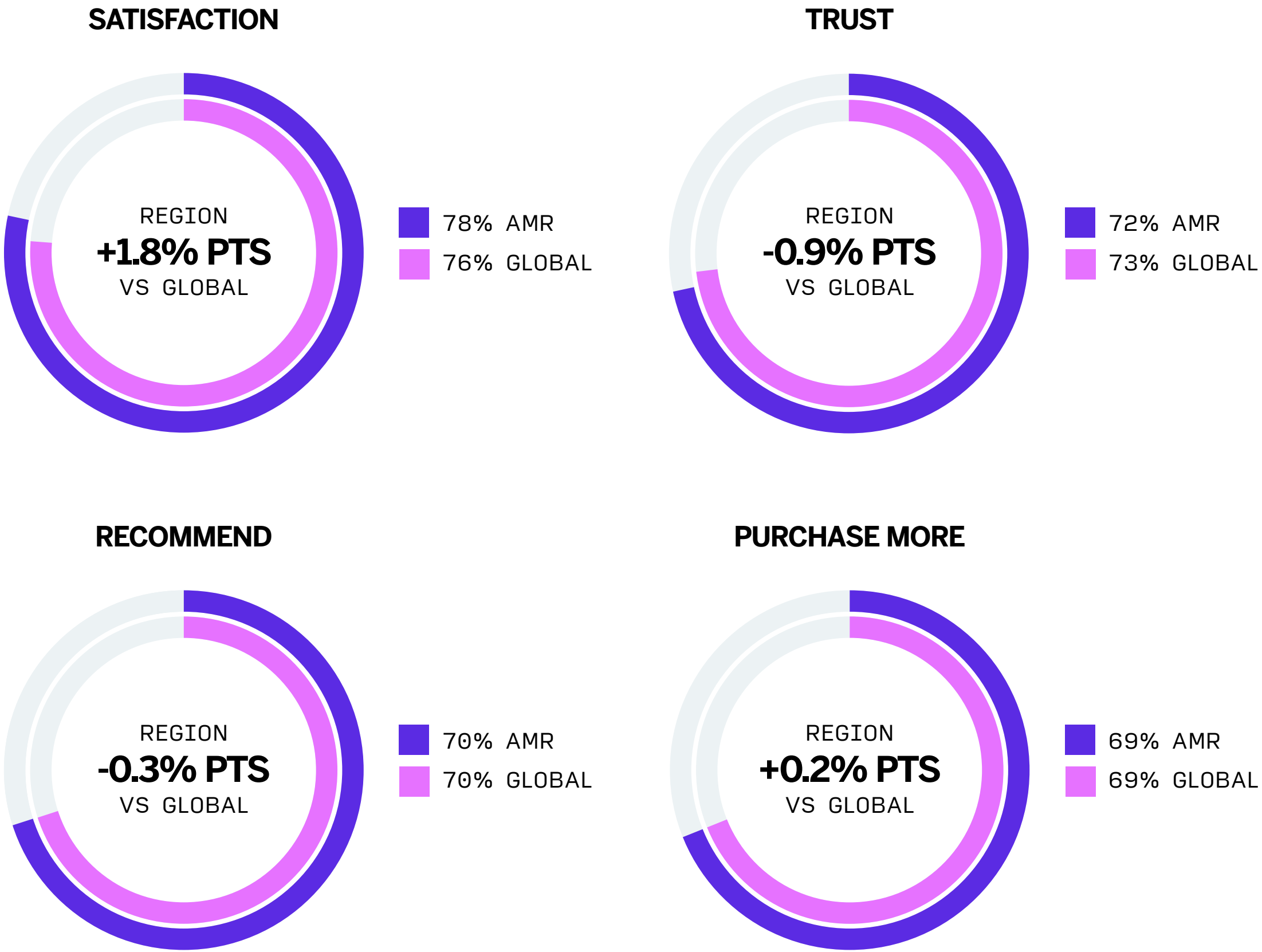


NORTH AMERICA

Consumers in North America generally align with global benchmarks. Besides a slight overperformance in satisfaction (+1.8%pts above the global average), there are no significant deviations in the other key CX metrics.

When it comes to AI, however, there is a clear need for improvement. Along with EMEA, consumers in North America are least likely to trust organizations to use AI responsibly (just 20%). Compared to the global average, these consumers are also less likely to have used AI before. Organizations still have significant work ahead of them to earn consumer trust around AI and encourage greater adoption for everyday tasks.

This hesitancy around AI may stem from a lack of trust in the information the AI provides. North American consumers express significantly higher concerns about the trustworthiness of the information generated by AI compared to other regions (+11%pts higher than the global average). They are also more concerned about the potential for poor interaction quality with AI, with 47% reporting concern (+6%pts higher than the global average).





LATIN AMERICA

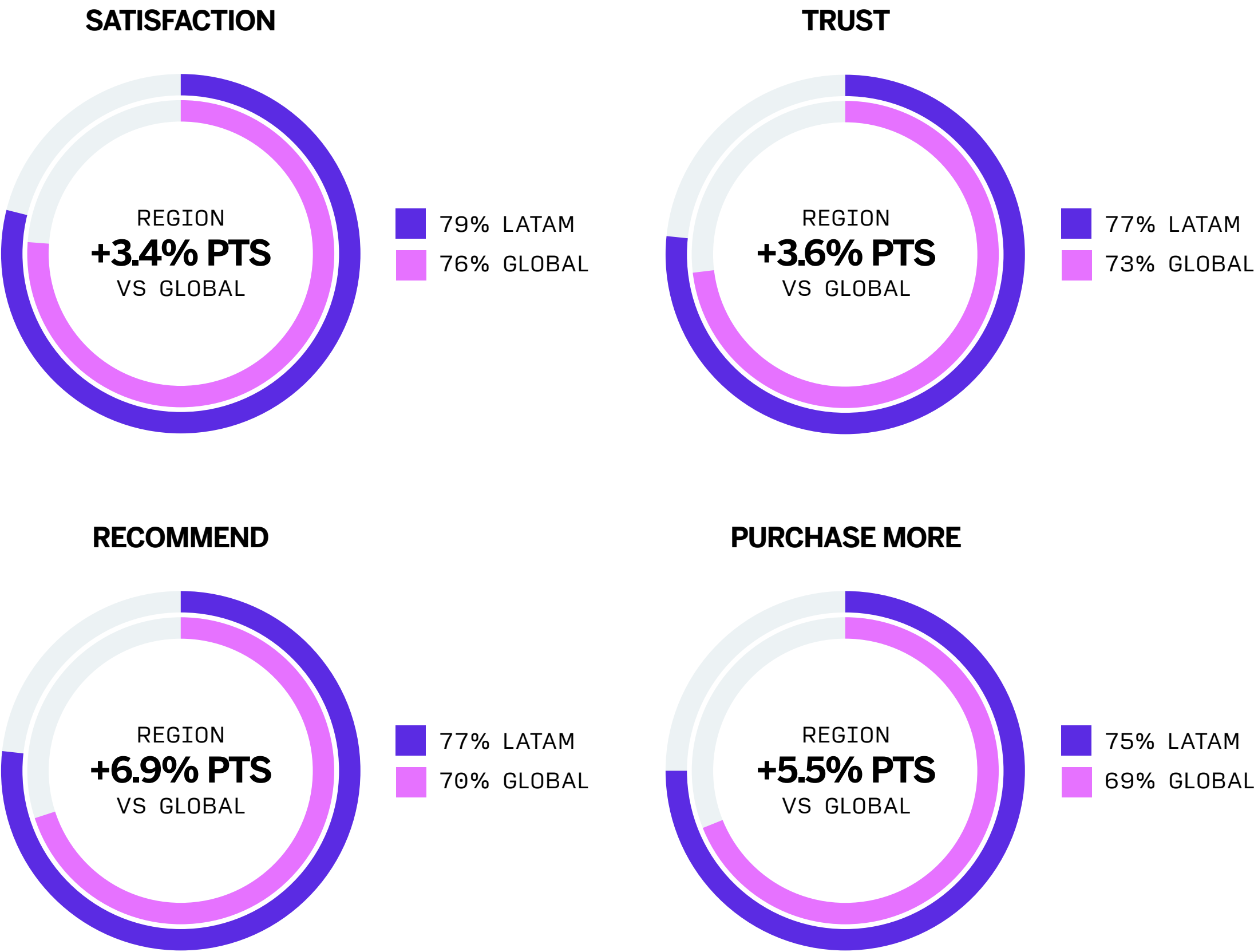
Consumers in Latin America have the most positive outlook in 2025, with all CX metrics well above the global average.

This positive sentiment extends to AI, with 74% of consumers already having used it. Notably, these consumers express the lowest levels of concern regarding AI, particularly around extra effort required (21% concerned), poor interaction quality (35% concerned), and lack of a human being to connect with (43% concerned).

This optimism, however, doesn't give businesses carte blanche to do what they wish with their data. 71% of consumers express high concerns around the privacy of their personal information – the highest percentage across all regions. This is particularly noteworthy given they also have the strongest desire for personalization, with 73% saying they'd prefer it (+9%pts above the global average). To successfully balance personalization

and privacy, businesses will need to demonstrate transparency and responsible data practices to earn consumer trust.

Latin American consumers demonstrate the strongest preference for empathy during their interactions, with 47% prioritizing it – +14%pts higher than the global average.



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