

answerconnect

The case for keeping it human.

OnePoll Survey | May 2026 | 6000 respondents



In collaboration with OnePoll, a leading market research company, we surveyed 6,000 adults to understand how people feel about AI and automation in customer service.

The results were clear: **people strongly prefer humans.**

Speed and efficiency matter, but it's empathy and real communication that define great service. And when that's missing, trust drops, frustration rises, and customers leave.

Even in a digital-first world, human connection isn't a nice to have - it's essential.

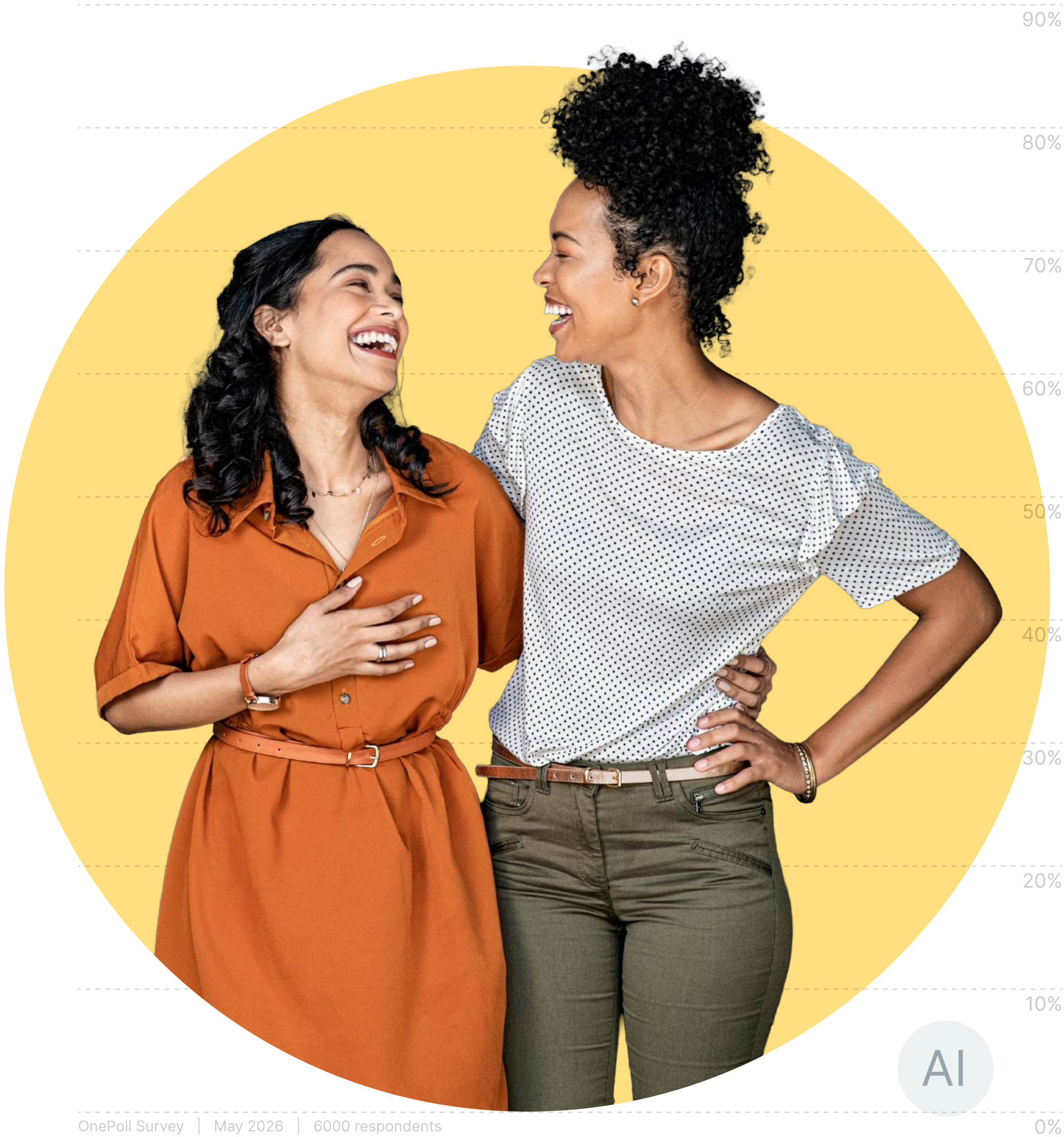
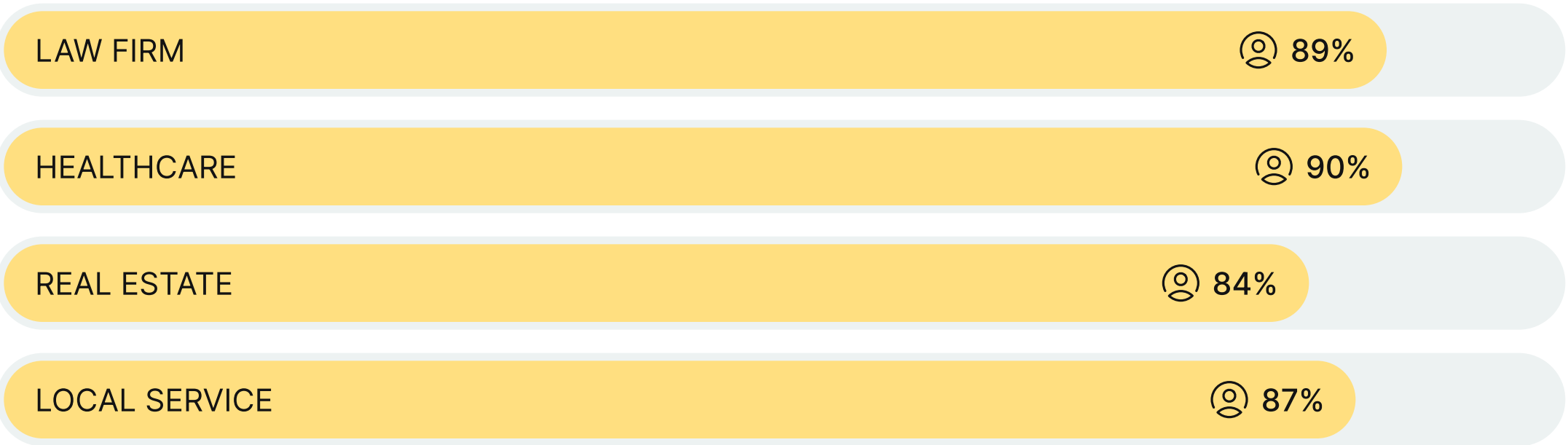


People prefer people

85%

would rather **speak to a real person** than AI when contacting a business, up from 83% last year.

When contacting the following types of businesses, would you rather speak to a real person, or AI?

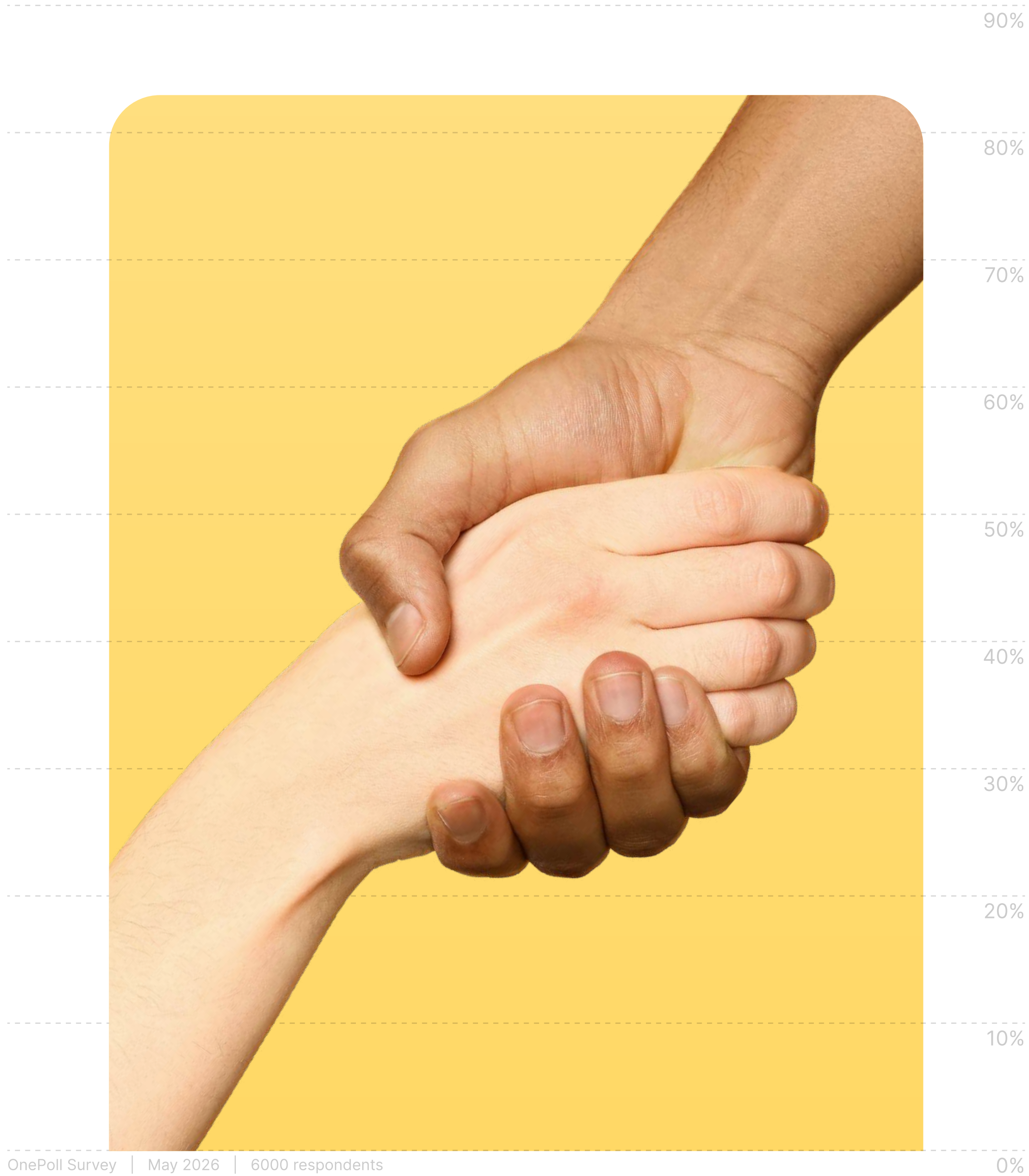


People request people

82%

have requested to **speak to a real person** instead of AI.

Have you ever requested to speak to a real person instead of an AI agent or Chatbot?

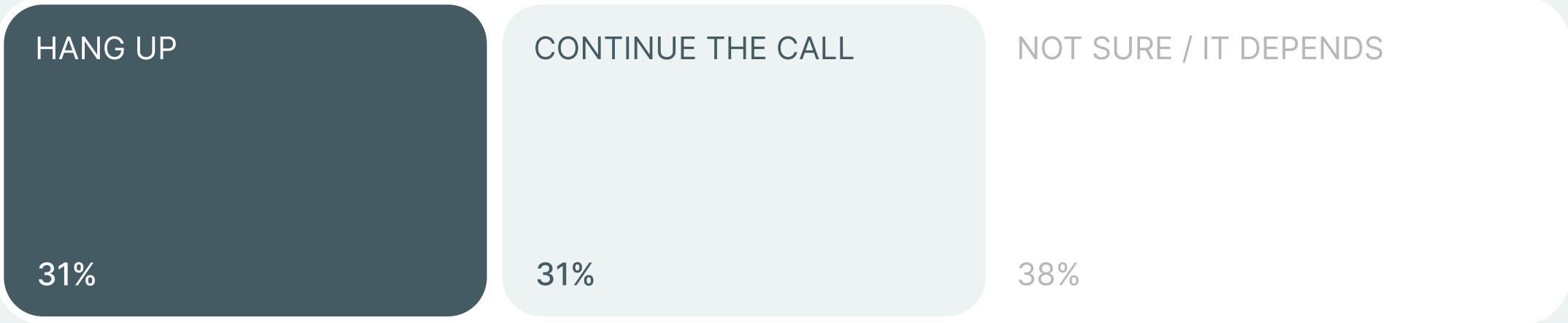


People are driven away by AI

1 in 3

say they'd **hang up if connected to AI**, that's every third lead lost before you even get the chance to know them.

🗨 If you called a business and you were connected to AI, would you continue the call or hang up?

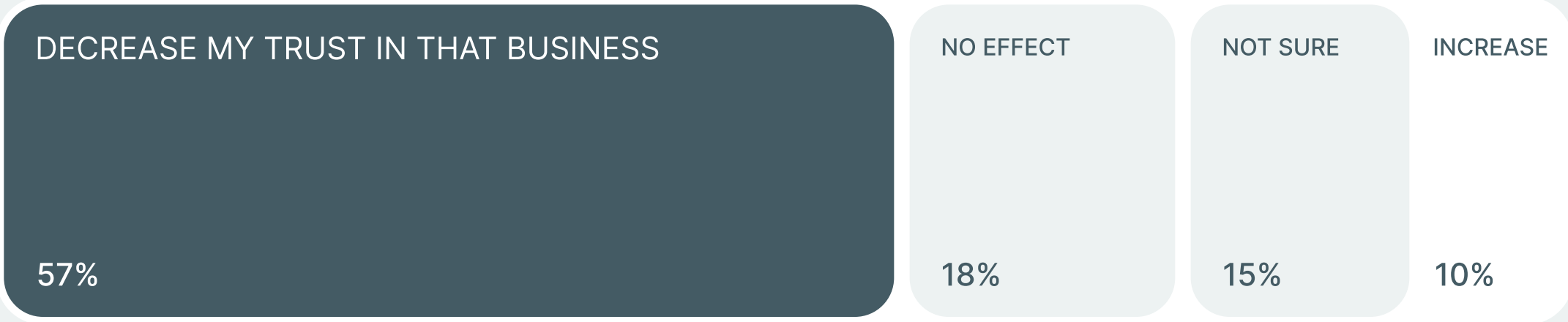


People don't trust AI

57%

say they **would trust a business less** if it predominantly uses AI for customer service.

If a business predominantly uses AI for its customer service interactions, how would this impact your trust in that business?

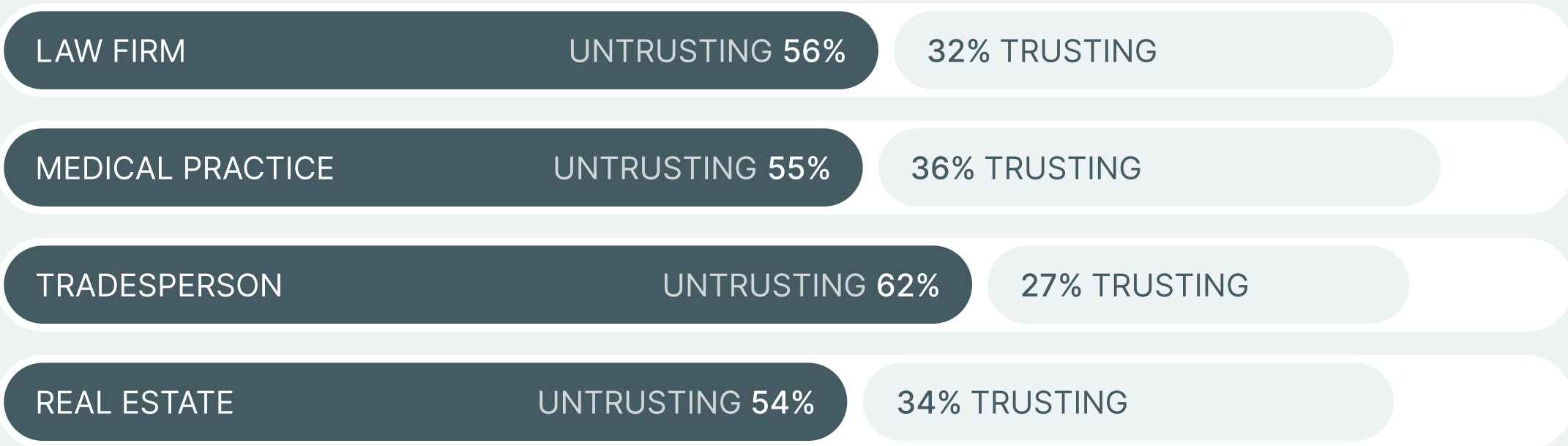


People don't trust AI actions

71%

say resolution matters most during a customer service interaction.

When contacting the following businesses/people, how much would you trust an automated AI service to take the correct action and relay accurate information?

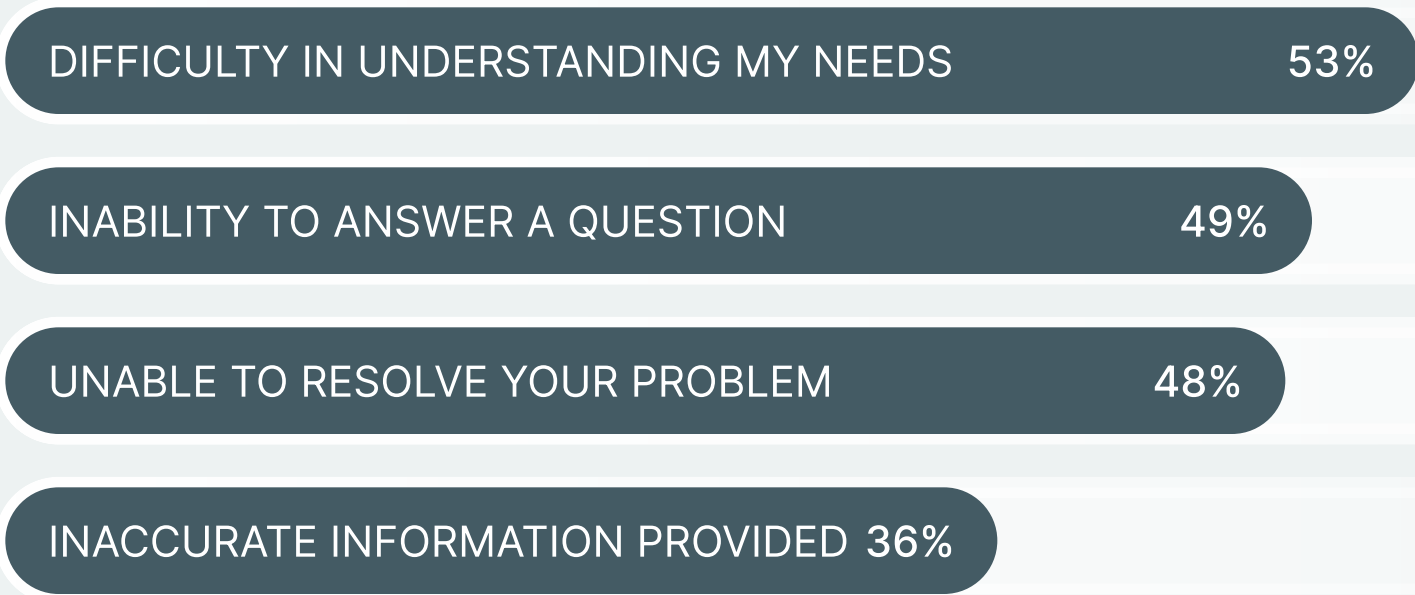


People are frustrated with AI

59%

find AI agents frustrating when calling customer service, compared to just 11% for humans agents.

What, if any, frustrates you when speaking to an AI agent?



People have issues with AI

What issues have you experienced when interacting with an AI customer service tool?
Select all that apply

The responses were too generic or not helpful

45%

The responses were irrelevant or misunderstood my question

41%

I had to repeat information I had already given

41%

The AI struggled to understand what I was saying

41%

The interaction felt cold or impersonal

24%

There were delays or awkward pauses in the responses

19%

If a business used AI instead of a human to answer calls, how would it affect your likelihood to become a customer?

LESS LIKELY

55%

17% MORE LIKELY



People choose people

79%

are more likely to chose a business where a human receptionist greets and answers their call.

When looking for a business, if you contacted three with similar reviews, which of the following would make you most likely to choose that business? *Select one*



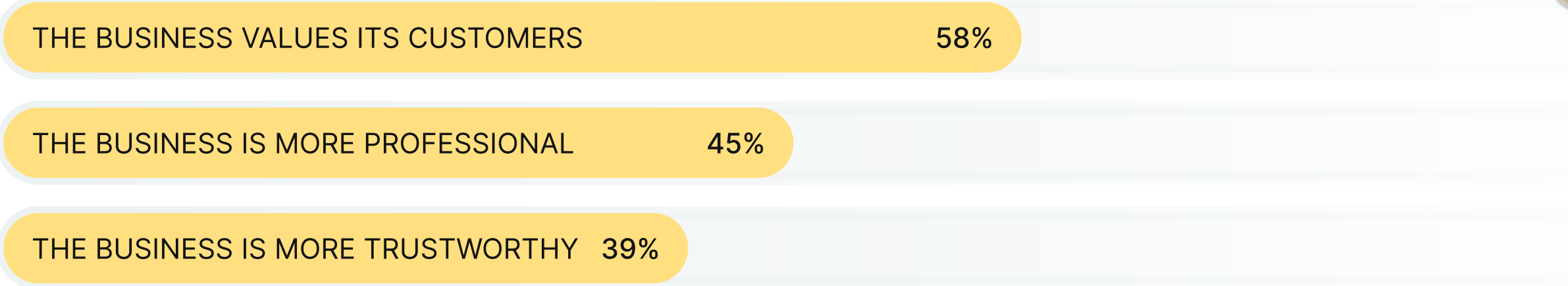
AI

People value people

58%

feel valued as a customer when there's a **real human receptionist** on the other side.

When you call a business for the first time, what does having a real human answer the phone signal to you?

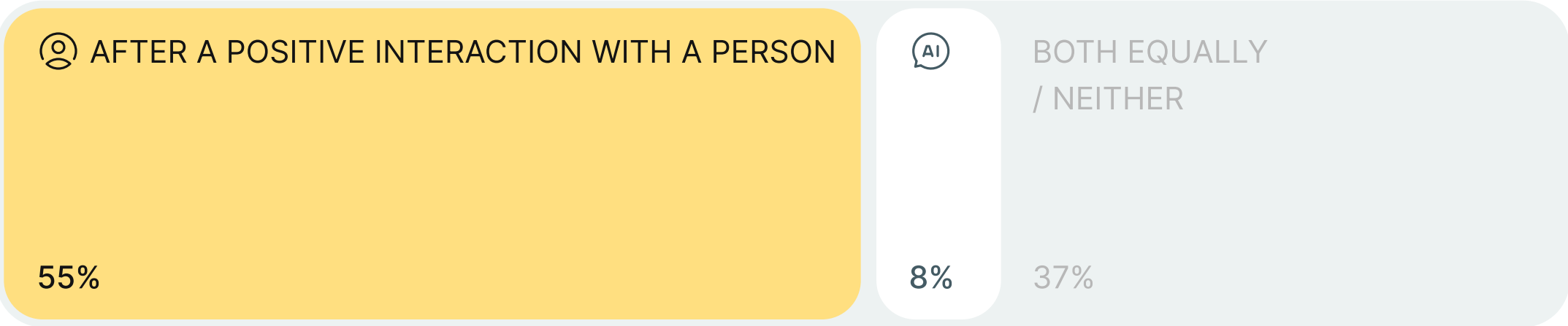


People build loyalty

73%

would be more loyal to a company employing people for all service interactions.

In which of these scenarios are you most likely to leave a review of a business?



“As machines get better at being machines, humans have to get better at being more human.”

— Andrew J. Scott
Professor of Economics
London Business School



“If you don't have a live person answering the phone on behalf of your brand, you're missing out on a lot of opportunities, customers, and expanding the reach of your brand.”

Kelli Schroder
Threshold Brands

“ Our customers don't even realize AnswerConnect is an outside service. They think it's part of the Pool Scouts team. Having real people answer the calls makes them feel valued from the first hello.”

Clarence Herry
Pool Scouts of Southern MD
& Annapolis

“ AnswerConnect helps take a lot of stress off. We know our phones will always be answered 24/7. Having a live person answer has been very impactful to our business.”

McBride Dutton
Superior Fence & Rail
of Northwest Georgia

“ AnswerConnect manages our after-hours calls. It's been a game changer. Having a live person available, 24/7, following clear instructions, has brought an incredible sense of reliability and professionalism to our operations.”

HGSCP
Transition House

“ Account changes are simple, listening to calls is a breeze, and reaching a real human for issues or changes is so much easier than many of the similar vendors in this field.”

Whitley Bilek
Service Team Of Professionals



answerconnect

Real humans. Real growth.

Find out how **real people** can drive
real results for your business

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