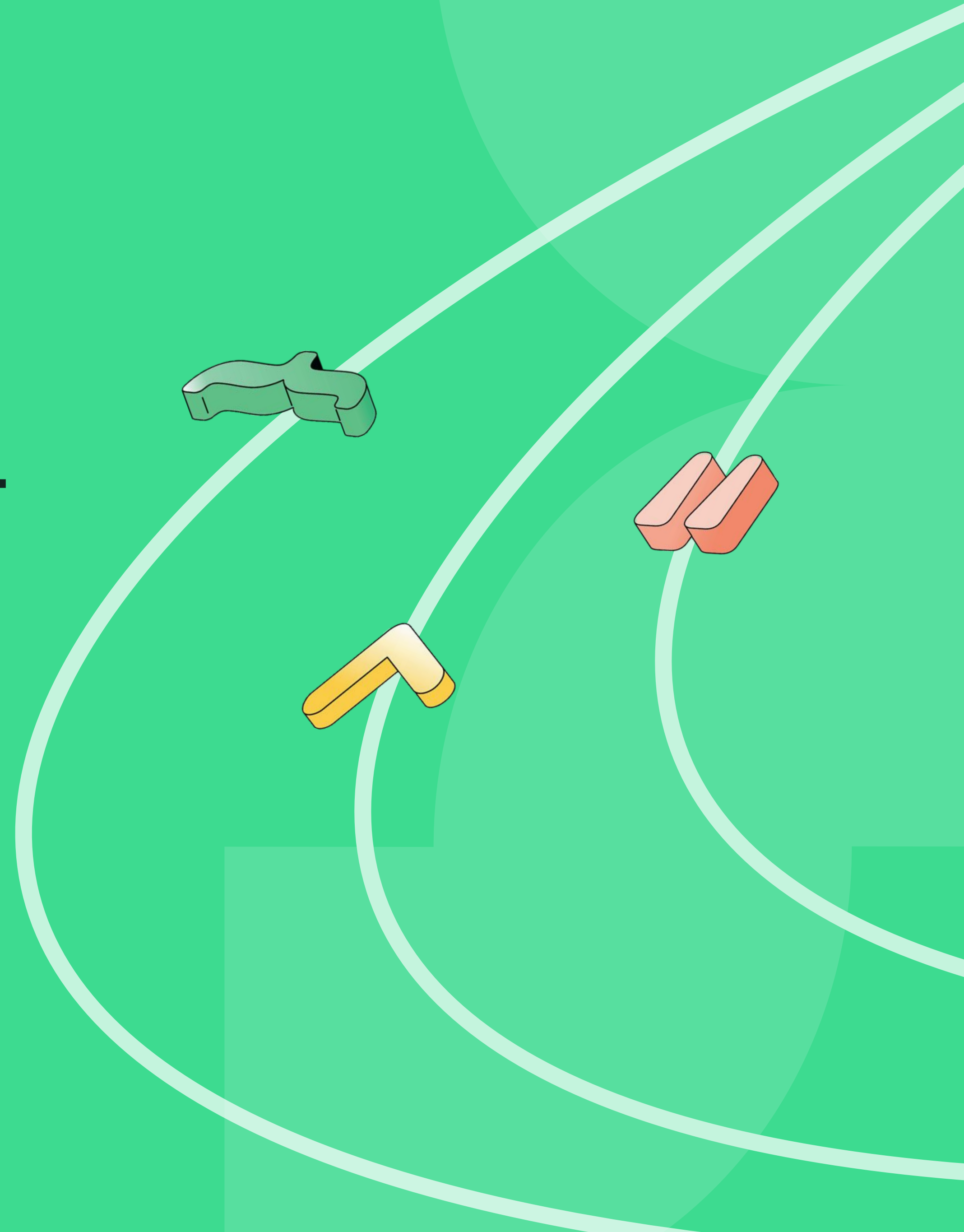


The State of Mobile App Quality 2026:

# How Businesses Are Transforming Their Testing Strategies for the AI Era



## Introduction:

# Understanding the mobile app quality evolution

For many companies, their mobile app is the storefront, the product, the customer experience, and the brand all rolled into one. This means the definition of a high-quality mobile app is one that not only can process transactions and is always available, but one that inspires trust, loyalty, and confidence.

To better understand how today's businesses are evolving their approach to mobile app quality to meet these new expectations, Gatepoint Research surveyed more than 100 engineering and software leaders across financial services, healthcare, technology, manufacturing, and retail. These leaders represent a wide swath of businesses, from Fortune 1000 enterprises to firms with less than \$250 million in revenue.

Despite the increasingly important role mobile apps play for their bottom line, many still struggle to ensure the level of quality their users expect. Meanwhile, testing teams face mounting pressure to balance speed, stability, coverage, costs, and innovation, while the rise of AI may require them to evolve their approach to quality even further.

We now live in a mobile-first world, with more than 7 billion mobile users and 60% of all website traffic coming from mobile devices. Translation: a seamless mobile experience is no longer just expected, but essential. Here's how top leaders are approaching mobile app quality, along with takeaways to help you improve your strategy.

## Who did we survey?

Between June and September 2025, **Gatepoint Research** surveyed 100 engineering and software executives across multiple sectors.

All the respondents hold executive, director, or senior-level positions within their organizations.

**21%** Vice Presidents

**45%** Directors

**4%** Senior or Dept. Managers

# The mobile app testing landscape

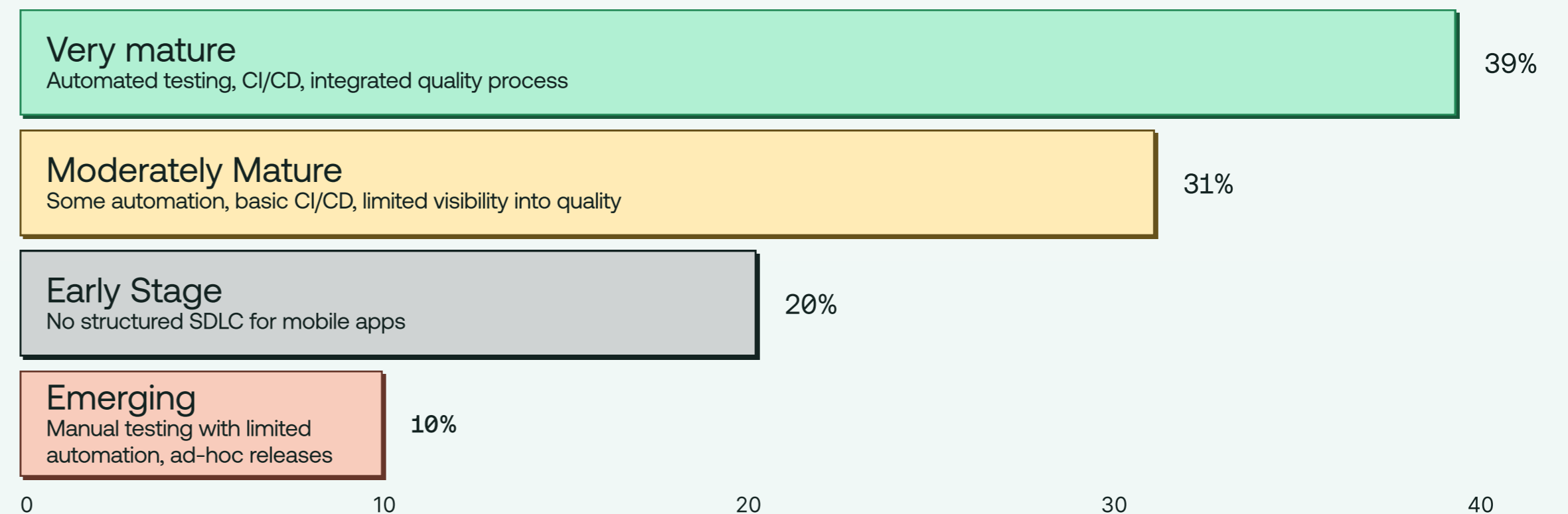
## Mobile SDLC: Making Progress, Room to Grow

Seven out of ten organizations define themselves as having some level of maturity in their mobile application software development lifecycle (SDLC), a clear sign they are leveraging automated testing, continuous integration and delivery, and other agile practices.

However, less than 40% consider themselves very mature, with all the processes and systems required by true continuous quality. For 31%, they are only moderately mature, with basic automation and CI/CD and limited visibility into quality.

That's about the same amount as those still in the early stages of automation or that rely on manual testing, demonstrating that there is still room to grow before continuous quality becomes the norm. To elevate quality, more organizations must elevate their testing practices so that testing data informs every decision from design to production.

How would you describe the maturity of your mobile application software development lifecycle (SDLC)?



# The mobile app testing landscape

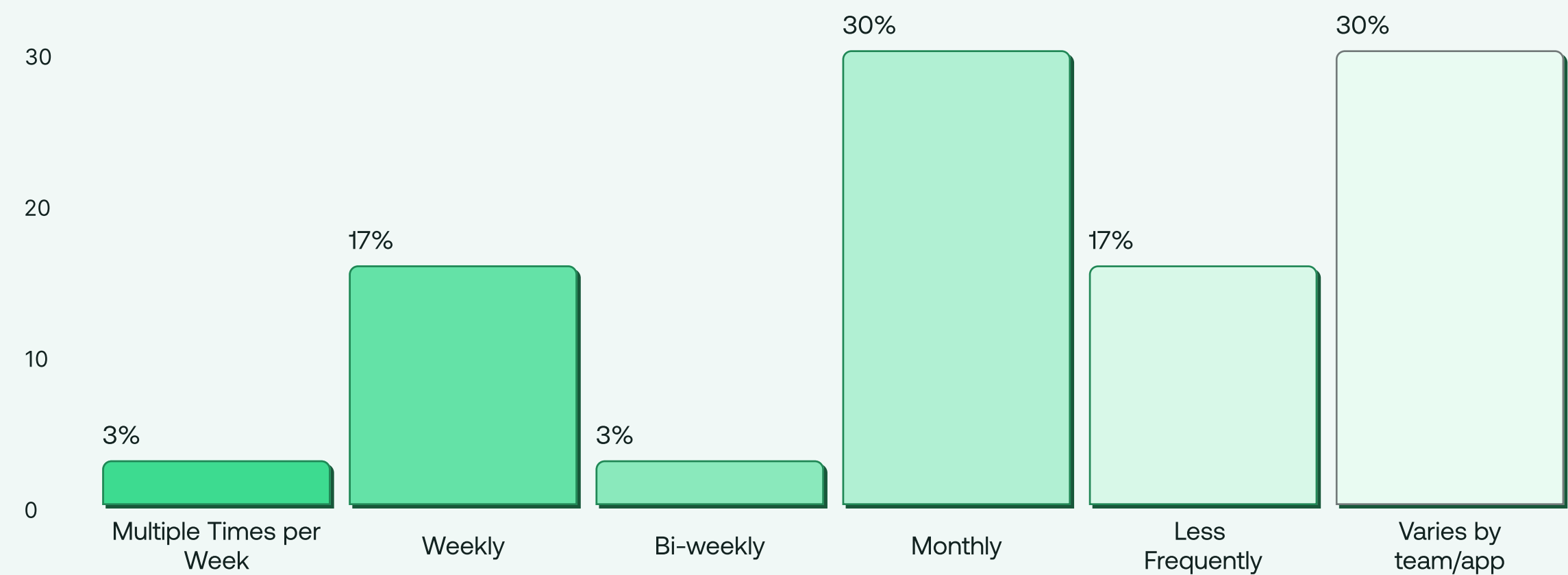
## Release Velocity: Not Fast, Not Furious

While speed is the name of the digital innovation game, few organizations can release mobile updates as quickly as they might like. Only 3% can release updates multiple times a week, while another 17% can release monthly. Meanwhile, nearly half can only manage to release monthly or slower, while 30% require variable schedules depending on the team or app.

This reveals the gap between ambition and execution. Customers now expect fresh features, new capabilities, and constant updates, but organizations often lack the capabilities to keep pace. Manual processes, insufficient test automation, and limited device coverage mean updates take longer and longer to release, frustrating both customers and development teams.

To join the 3% who release updates at a near-daily pace, teams must find ways to shorten their feedback loops without increasing risk or sacrificing quality.

How frequently does your organizations release mobile app updates?



# The mobile app testing landscape

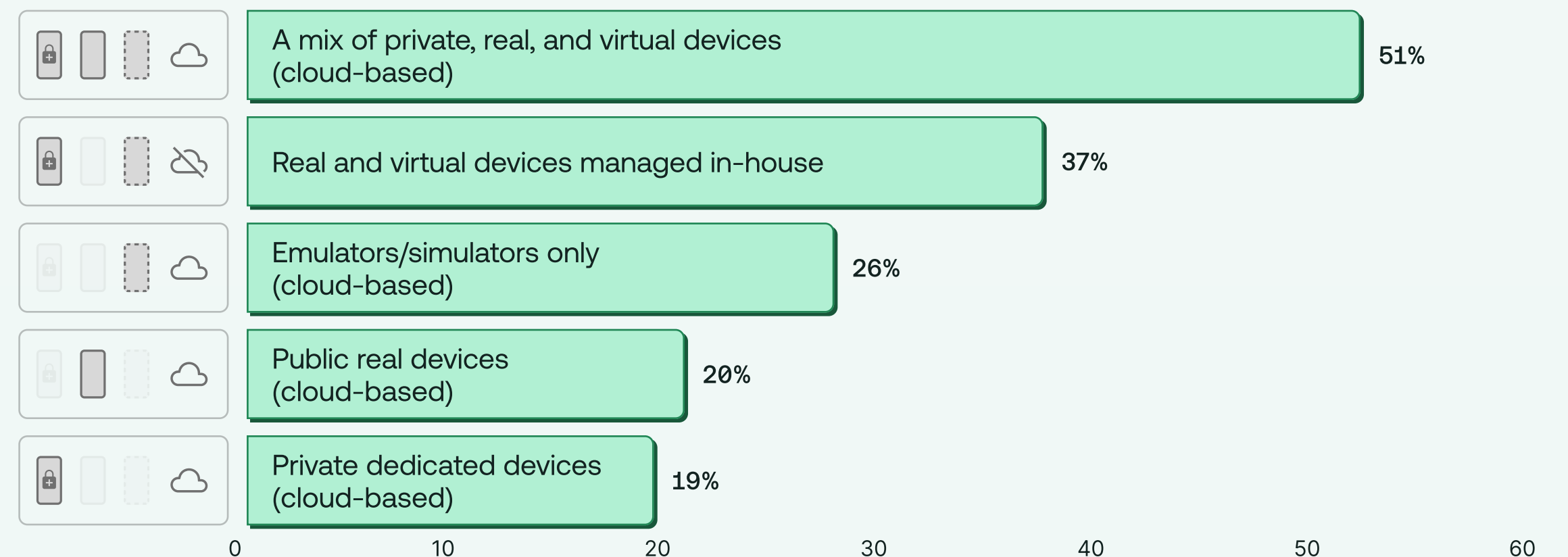
## Device Types: A Little Bit of Everything

What you test on determines what you find, along with what you miss. Luckily, more than half of organizations report using a mix of private, real, and virtual devices. Each device type has a job: virtual devices are perfect for broad coverage, real devices can help uncover hardware-specific issues, and private devices can help meet compliance requirements.

However, a sizable minority still manages their real and virtual devices entirely in-house. Maintaining an internal lab means dealing with the hassle and cost of procurement, maintenance, and keeping devices up to date while trying to replicate the scale and variability of real-world usage and edge cases.

By leveraging cloud-based emulators/simulators and real devices, teams can scale their coverage, reduce costs, and free up time to focus on testing instead of maintaining testing infrastructure.

Which types of devices do your teams test on, and how are they managed?



# The mobile app testing landscape

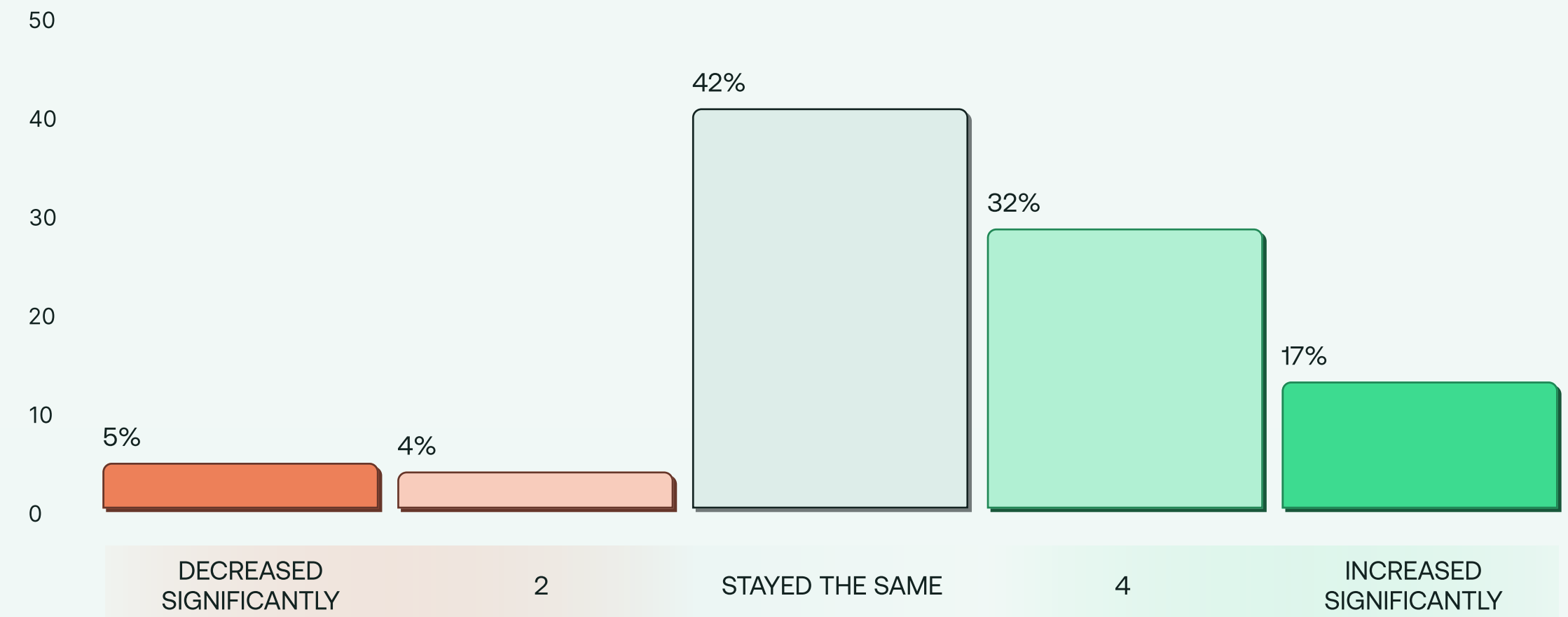
## Revenue Momentum: Full Speed Ahead

Mobile app quality doesn't just appear in app store reviews, but on the bottom line. Most organizations report that their mobile app revenue has either held steady or grown in the past two years. As mobile app quality becomes a priority, it's rewarded by customers continuing to spend their time and money with apps.

Teams that prioritize quality will see technical results like fewer bugs along with business results like higher conversion rates, less churn, and a higher customer lifetime value. The more organizations treat continuous quality as a revenue driver instead of a cost center, the more likely their apps will continue to contribute significantly to their revenue numbers.

How has your organization's mobile app revenue changed in the last two years?

Rate 1 to 5:  
1 = decreased significantly  
3 = stayed the same  
5 = increased significantly



The automation challenge:

# What is holding mobile app teams back?

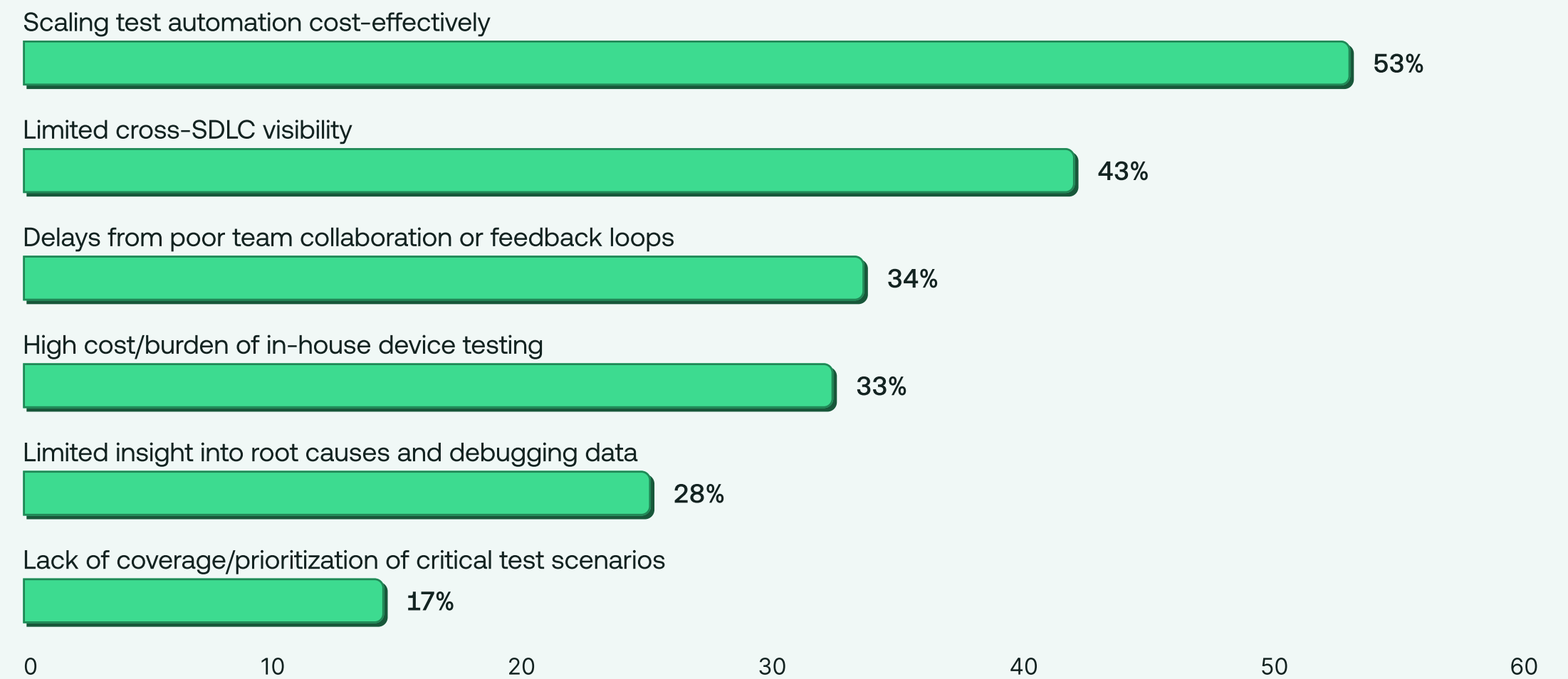
## Top Challenges: Scaling Automation Without Scaling Costs

Teams know that automation is essential for speed and consistency, but many still struggle to scale it without introducing new costs or inefficiencies.

When asked about their top challenges in mobile testing and development, more than half cited scaling test automation cost-effectively, while a third pointed to the high costs and burden of in-house device testing. Other top challenges include a lack of coverage and prioritization for critical test scenarios, as well as limited insight into root causes and debugging data.

Scaling automation successfully requires smarter orchestration. By consolidating test management, execution, and analytics within a unified platform, organizations can achieve the scale and efficiency they need to make continuous quality pay for itself.

What are your top challenges in mobile development and testing today?



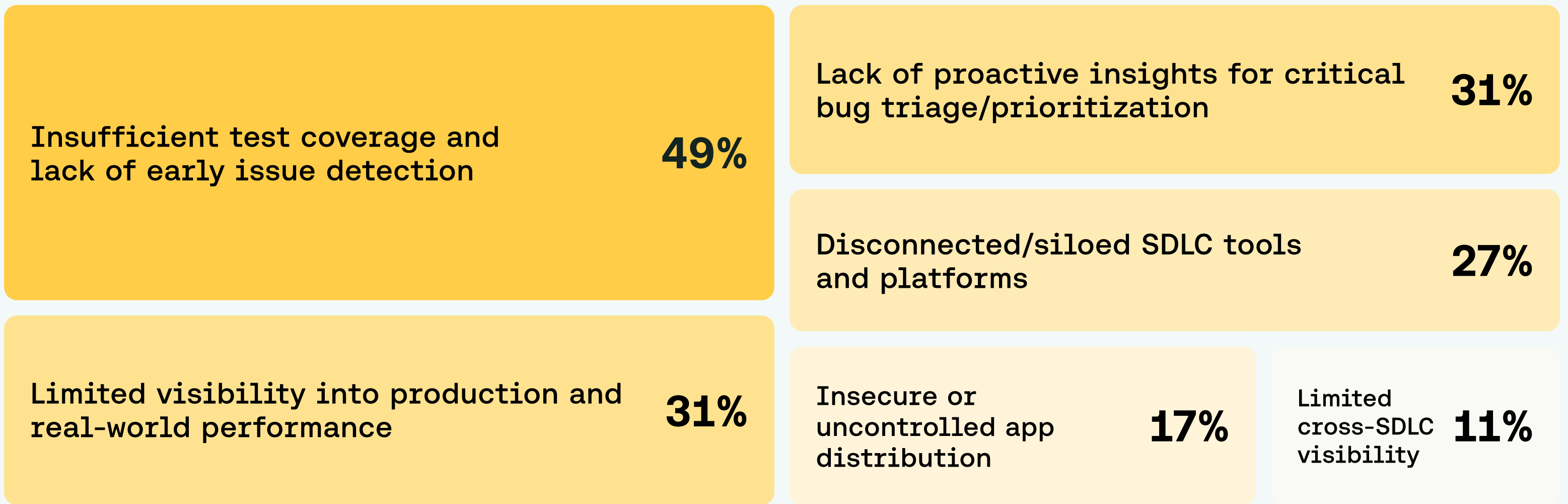
The automation challenge:

# What is holding mobile app teams back?

## The Barriers Preventing Continuous Quality

**What's the holdup?** Nearly half say they don't have sufficient test coverage to catch issues early enough in the SDLC, while almost a third have limited visibility into production and real-world performance or lack the insights required to triage and prioritize critical bugs proactively.

What prevents you from achieving continuous quality of mobile applications?



**This shows that automation by itself doesn't guarantee insight.**

Rather than measuring success by the sheer volume of tests run, organizations should focus on quality metrics like the number of bugs prevented or issues detected. Prioritizing tests that protect the critical user flows like checkout and payments can help improve test effectiveness and release stability while driving improvements in customer satisfaction scores.



# The future of mobile app quality

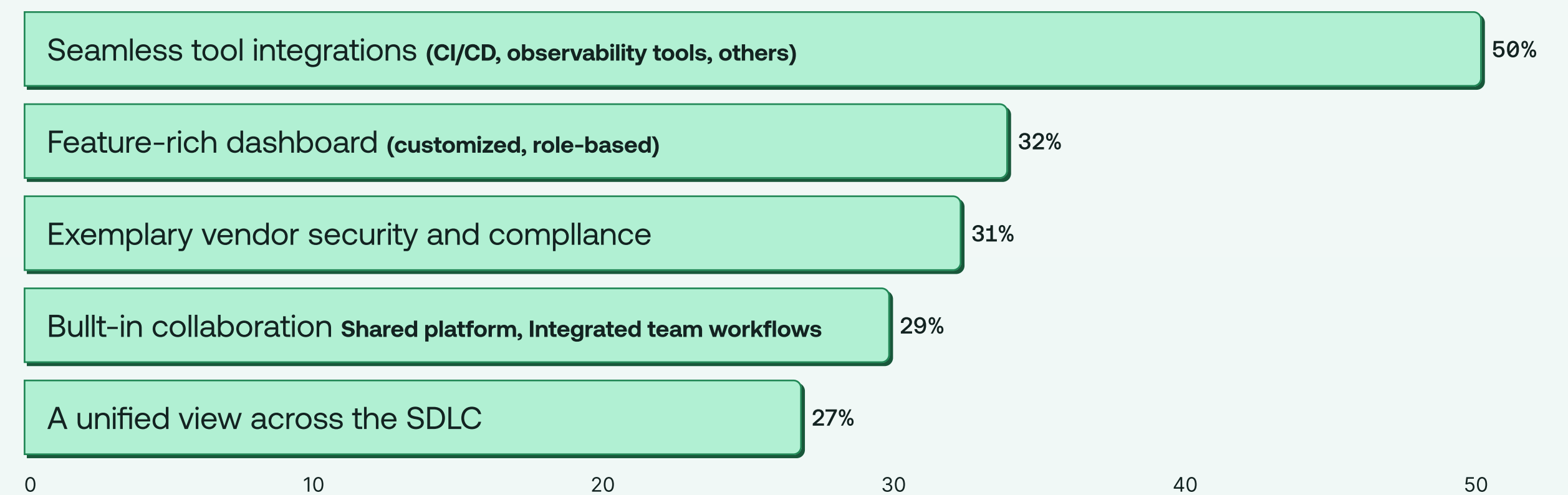
## The Top Mobile Quality Platform Requirements

When asked about their top priority for a mobile quality platform, more than half of the respondents demanded seamless tool integrations.

This is because teams that have to juggle multiple disconnected tools often spend more time troubleshooting integrations, manually collecting data, and analytically comparing apples to oranges than they do on improving quality. Without a seamless connection to CI/CD pipelines, observability, and analytics, even using best-in-class point solutions can still make it difficult to deliver continuous quality.

To achieve a seamless integration, look for platforms that unify test orchestration, analytics, and collaboration in one dashboard. This enables real-time alignment across engineering, QA, and other teams for continuous collaboration on which continuous quality depends.

What do you absolutely need in a mobile quality platform?



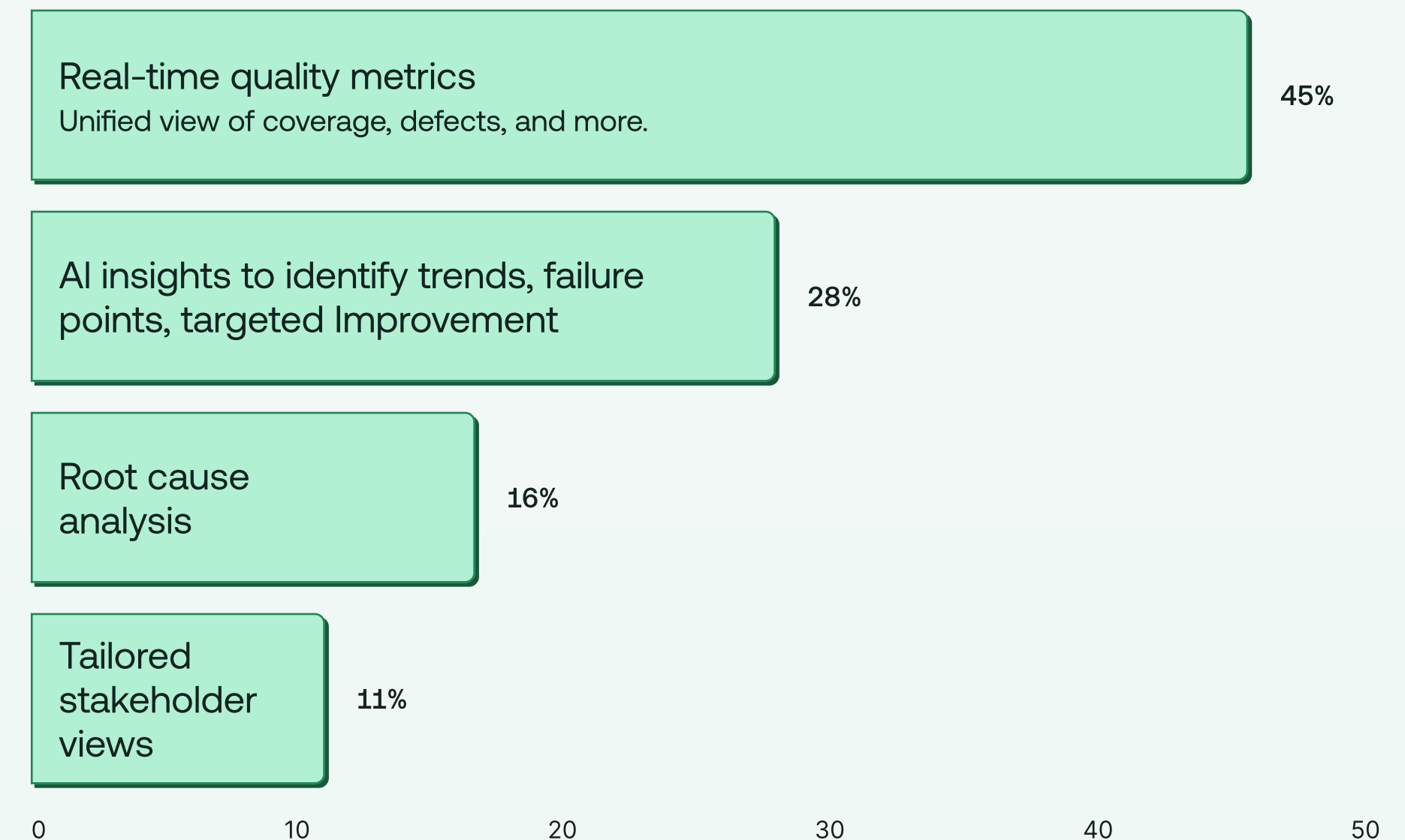
# The future of mobile app quality

## Real-Time Monitoring: When Metrics Matter Most

While analytics can deliver deeper insights than ever, these metrics can only enable continuous quality if they're accessible in time to take action. That's why nearly half of respondents say the most important thing they look for in a mobile app quality dashboard is real-time metrics that provide a unified view of coverage, defects, and more.

Rather than focusing on after-the-fact reports, teams need continuous information so they can proactively identify and fix issues in the moment. This often allows them to change just a few lines of code in the moment, rather than spend days at the last minute making massive changes to the code base that's been built on top of the bug.

What is the most important capability you need to drive continuous improvement in mobile app quality?



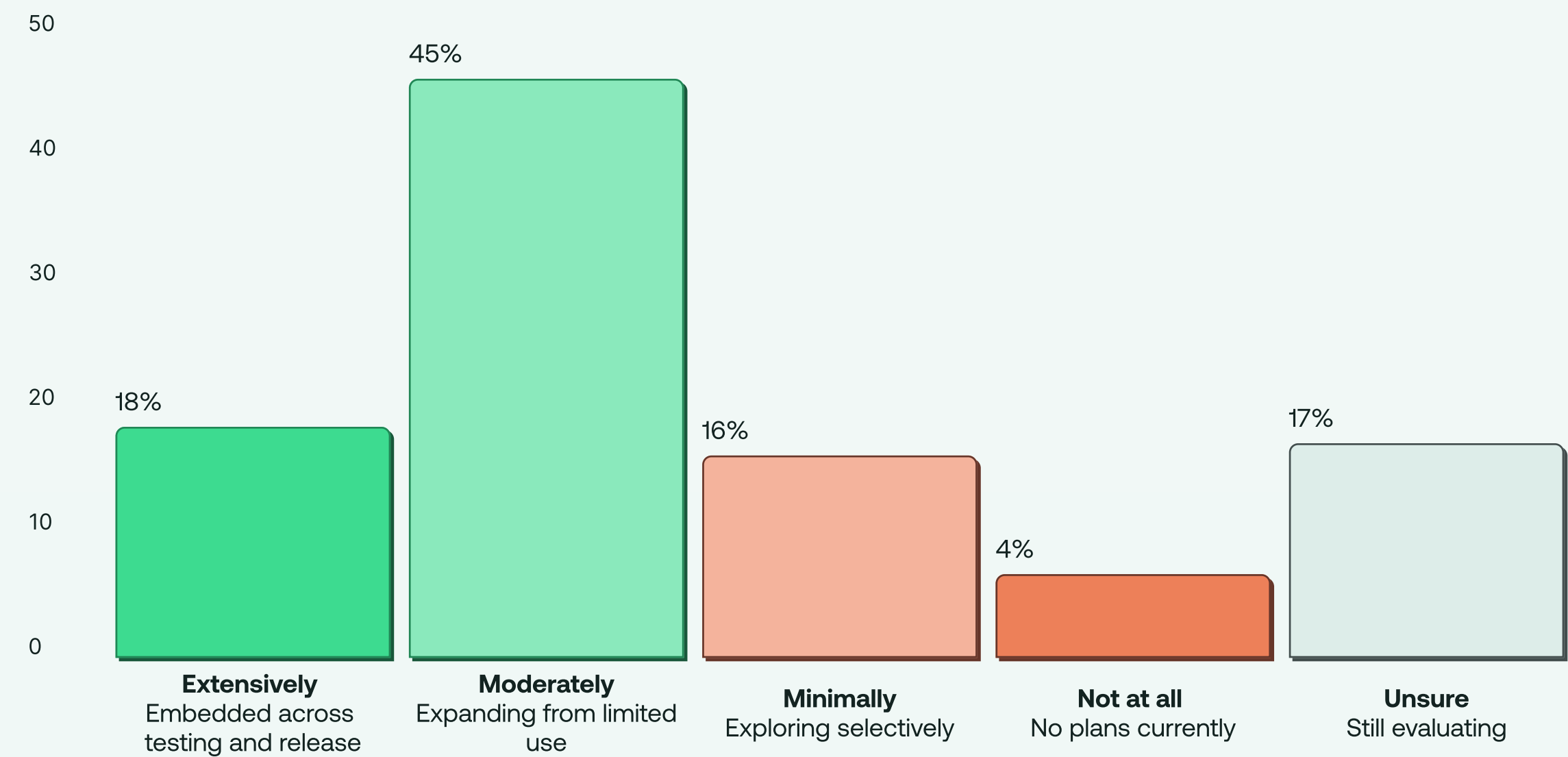
# The future of mobile app quality

## Nearly a third of respondents say they also want AI insights.

When asked further about their approach to AI, more than 6 in 10 plan to use AI extensively or moderately as part of their mobile quality strategy, with only 4% saying they have no plans to use AI for testing.

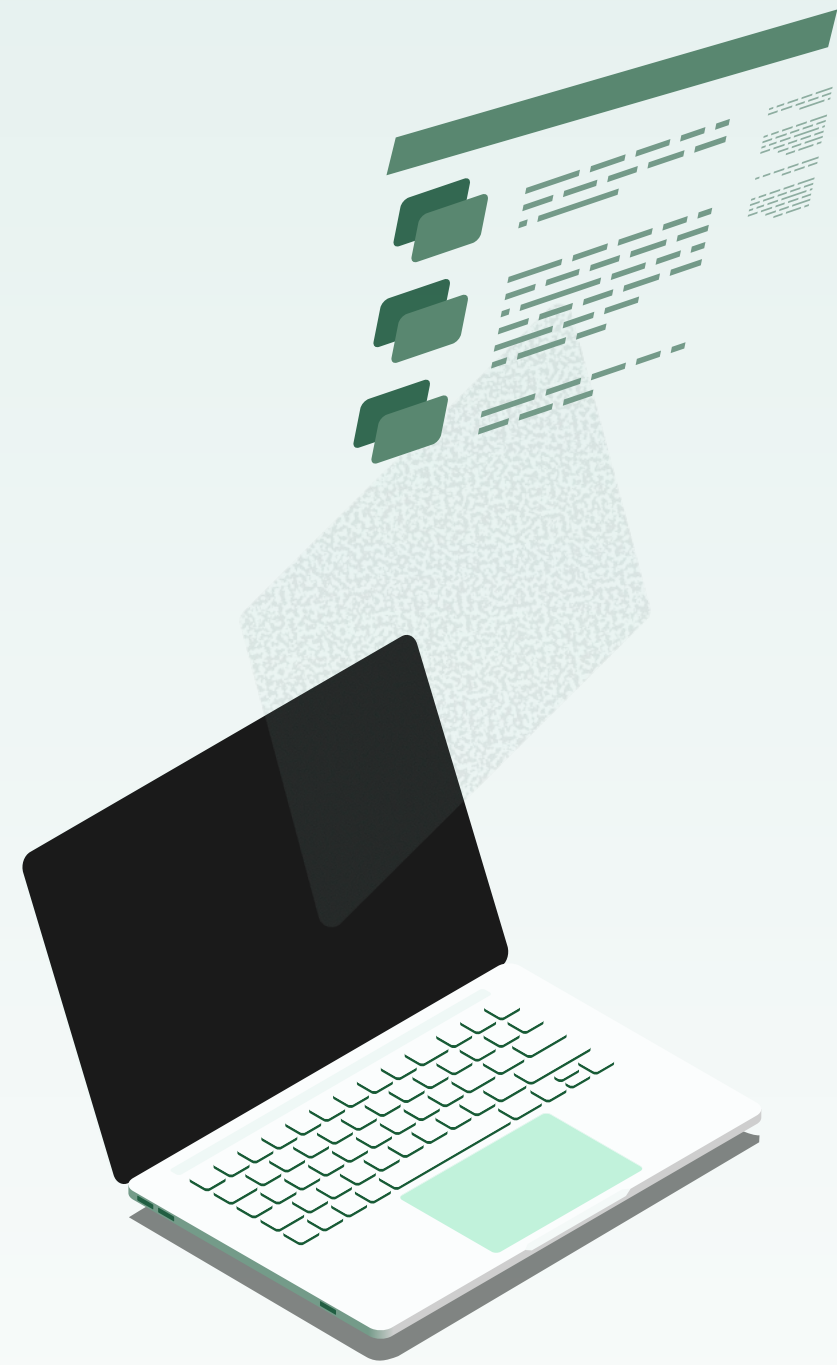
This demonstrates that organizations are moving beyond AI experiences and are now focused on real-world applications to identify failure patterns, predict defects, and automatically generate tests or repairs. With AI, organizations won't just automate faster, but smarter, turning every release into a feedback loop that improves speed and stability.

To what degree do you plan to use AI in your mobile quality strategy?



The bottom line:

## The testing landscape is in transition



While many organizations have made significant progress in automating their mobile app testing, just as many still have a long way to go before achieving the visibility, integration, and intelligence required to meet their continuous quality goals.

### **For technology leaders, the path forward isn't just about adding new tools.**

It's about leveraging a connected ecosystem that makes quality a cohesive, comprehensive, and collaborative activity. By prioritizing a platform that integrates continuous quality across the entire development lifecycle, from pre-production to production, organizations can streamline workflows and deliver a unified approach to mobile app quality.

### **Transformation also requires a new mindset, not just a new platform.**

Quality must be treated as a critical metric across the entire business that connects engineering performance with customer satisfaction and revenue. This means replacing isolated, backward-looking testing processes with real-time visibility into quality across the SDLC so teams can identify and resolve issues faster.

### **While automation will play a role, it must be applied strategically.**

Rather than using automation to increase test volume, organizations should focus on the right tests that protect the most valuable user journeys. Automation can become a coverage multiplier by leveraging cloud-based testing infrastructure and unified analysis while significantly reducing costs.

### **AI will accelerate the evolution of automation, but with a caveat.**

Many organizations are already embedding or expanding their use of AI to predict failures, identify trends, and automate repetitive tasks. But don't think this means you can automate humans out of the mobile app quality process. The most successful organizations will be those that leverage AI to enhance their human teams, not replace them so that people can build faster and more confidently.

# Conclusion

## Achieving continuous quality is about evolution, not endpoints.

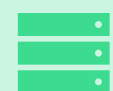
Your focus should be on improving your ability to provide actionable insights into the app's quality in testing and production so your teams can proactively identify and resolve issues no matter where they occur in the app lifecycle. Aligning people, processes, and technology around continuous improvement is the key to enabling seamless collaboration for a fast, efficient release process. The result is continuous quality throughout the SDLC that significantly accelerates the delivery of high-quality mobile apps.

### About Sauce Labs

Sauce Labs offers a platform for continuous quality that supports software teams across the entire software development lifecycle. The unified platform enables continuous quality using AI-driven analytics to identify key quality signals from development through production. With deep roots in the Selenium and Appium open-source communities, and best-of-breed infrastructure for automated and manual testing of web and mobile applications, Sauce Labs helps teams test across thousands of different devices, browsers, and operating systems at any scale.

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