

klue + |scip

The 2021 Competitive Enablement Report

What do stakeholders really think about your competitive programs

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PART

1

Introduction

Klue and SCIP have joined forces to bring together the first ever report on Competitive Enablement.

This report goes beyond the narrow scope of Competitive Intelligence and takes a look at how well every team and department is enabled with actionable insights aligned to a cohesive competitive strategy.



Let's get started



Why we wrote this report

To drive real impact in an interconnected organization, the modern Competitive Intelligence (CI) professional must master skills like stakeholder management, multiple styles of communication, and influencing. Anyone who is content to operate in a vacuum isn't long for this world. We need to establish a feedback loop with stakeholders and have the courage to have "difficult conversations" to surface disconnects before they get out of hand.

In other words, we need to get comfortable with being uncomfortable. Hearing stakeholder feedback can be a humbling and eye-opening experience, however, it gives us a great opportunity to up our games.

And that's why SCIP and Klue have teamed up to produce this report: to provide the Competitive Intelligence community with frank stakeholder feedback to help us better support our business partners.

Our study identifies many disconnects that lurk within organizations, maybe even yours, such as:

- Misalignment between stakeholders and CI on whom CI supports
- CI producing relevant intelligence products that stakeholders can't find
- Ad-hoc and reactive CI in organizations that need well-run, cross-functional CI support

To be successful, however, CI doesn't need to report directly to the CEO, have a VP title, or a \$15,000,000 budget. As our report shows, the most critical step we can take is to be tightly aligned with our key stakeholders on the outcome our work enables (e.g. profitable growth), rather than the output of our efforts (e.g. a competitor profile).

What to do next? Share this report with your stakeholders and invite them for a virtual coffee. Priorities are changing more rapidly than ever, so ask them what's keeping them up at night and how CI can help make them more successful.

In our interconnected world, we win when we help our stakeholders win.



Cam Mackey
Executive Director
@SCIP

If you're tight on time, here are the most important takeaways from our report:

1. **79% of stakeholders conduct their own competitive research outside of the CI function.**

Not all stakeholders are being effectively enabled by competitive insights; they're having to augment the findings from CI or are responsible for CI for their own region or business unit.

2. **The main reason they do so is because intel isn't helpful (18%) or it is hard to access (14%).**

This indicates that there is a disconnect between what consumers of CI want to see and what they receive.

3. **CI professionals and stakeholders aren't aligned on CI's value to the business.**

CI teams rated supporting executive strategy as their most important contribution to the organization, while stakeholders feel that CI should primarily support sales performance.

4. **CI teams have an opportunity to better serve C-level executives by focusing on customer retention.**

C-level executives rank customer retention as the greatest benefit that they expect to see from investment in CI.

5. **Six out of ten "developing" CI functions have little to no CI technology in place.**

This is one of the defining features of "mature" CI functions, who nearly unanimously (96%) have more standardization to their CI process.

6. Mature functions primarily use an ongoing, cross-functional approach (48%) to CI.

Developing functions, on the other hand, feel that their approach is more reactive and unplanned, relying on ad hoc projects (28%) to conduct their CI.

7. Less than 2% of developing functions have full executive buy-in.

Compared to mature functions, who enjoy far greater support (30%) and visibility with decision makers.

8. CI functions in high-growth companies are overwhelmingly supporting sales teams (68%) first, before any other stakeholder.

They're also using revenue-based KPIs to demonstrate ROI of CI activities.

9. The greatest problem stakeholders at high-growth companies face is that their competitive intel is scattered across the organization (19%).

This was noted twice as much as the next biggest problem - intel being shared irregularly (9%).

10. High-growth companies are planning to invest more (84%) in CI in 2021.

Nearly 50% will invest in headcount and technology, however, 22% still don't know where to invest.

Interesting findings

PART

2

Who we talked to

310

Business Stakeholders

225

CI Professionals

18

Sectors

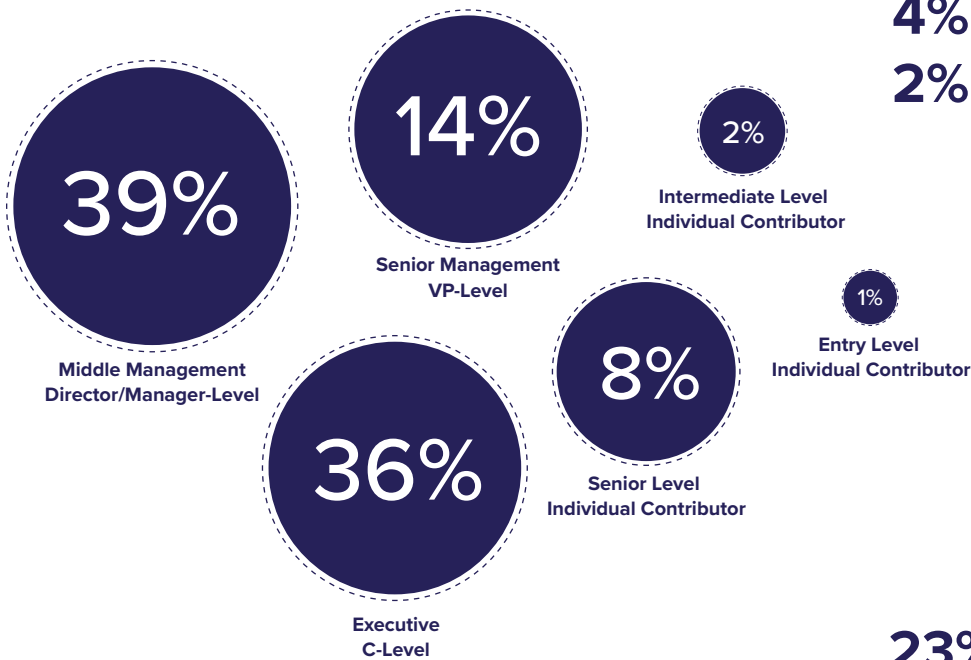
What these respondents looked like



Let's take a deeper look at what these respondents looked like.

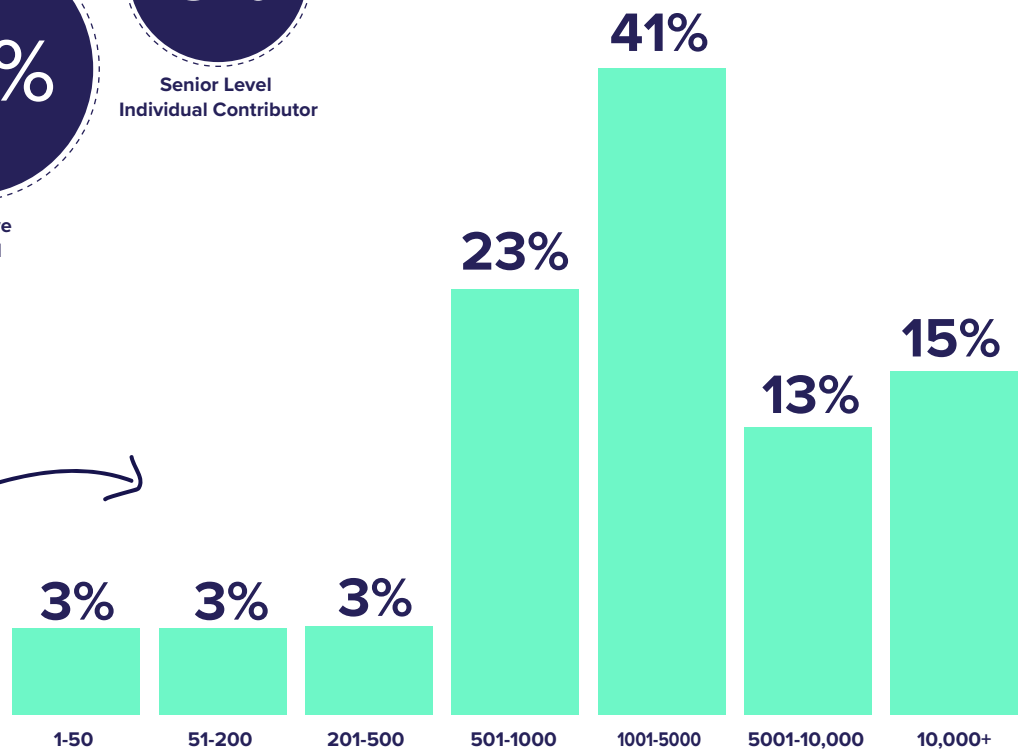
- 17%** Marketing
- 14%** Sales
- 14%** Product Management
- 12%** Customer Success
- 11%** Sales Enablement
- 11%** Competitive Intelligence
- 5%** Corporate Strategy
- 5%** Market Research or Market Insights
- 5%** Product Marketing
- 4%** Business or Corporate Development
- 2%** Other

Departments →



Seniority ←

No. of employees →



INTERVIEW 1



Rob Begg,
VP of Product Marketing
@Salesforce

CI for Product Marketing



As someone in charge of product marketing at a large enterprise company, what's the single biggest competitive intelligence challenge you face?

In the space that I work in, there's thousands of companies. So usually, what happens is that a CI team will be able to commit to do like one or two competitors that are considered to be top competitors. That'll work 50% or 60% of the time. Where you really struggle with coverage is when you're like us, and you sell to everybody. So we have a different set of competitors: in small business, in enterprise, then different competitors in financial services or retail. We even struggle with the coverage piece, and once you have coverage it's then keeping it up-to-date.

How do you combat the difficulties of competitive intel collection?

We get a SWOT team wrapped around a competitor; a couple of sales engineers, a couple of long-term tech veterans like myself, and then two or three people that used to work at the company that we're looking at, and a product marketer to help with tech stack. The PMM will own getting the content together and make sure it's organized, then we'll put it in the repository we use for it.

Sales are integral consumers of CI, how do you ensure that they actually use the competitive intel provided?

If you're in sales, relevance is all about application towards specific deal situations. Having a CI session in a bootcamp, even though everybody says they want it, is a complete waste of time. It's just too much... If you hire a new AE and she's learning a new category, barely knows who the personas are, what use cases look like, and you try to put a bunch of competitors in her head. It doesn't work. I think having tools that are readily accessible, easy to digest, really specific, and easily applied to deals, I think that's where you find the highest relevance for competitive intelligence in sales.

What do you think the competitive landscape will look like moving forward?

It's going to get really, really competitive. When there's lots of change, or companies are forced to fold, ten more pop up. It creates a lot more fractures in the marketplace. I think there's going to be a huge demand for competitive intelligence; enterprise software companies are getting challenged more than they ever have. We used to only fight a battle at the top, we only fought battles in one direction which was up. Now we fight battles in two directions, in front of us and behind us.

PART

3

What do stakeholders really think about the CI programs in their organization?

We wanted to learn exactly what stakeholders think about their company's current CI function.

So, we asked if they conduct their own independent competitive research, if so, why, and what benefits they expect CI to bring to the organization.

Here's what we discovered:



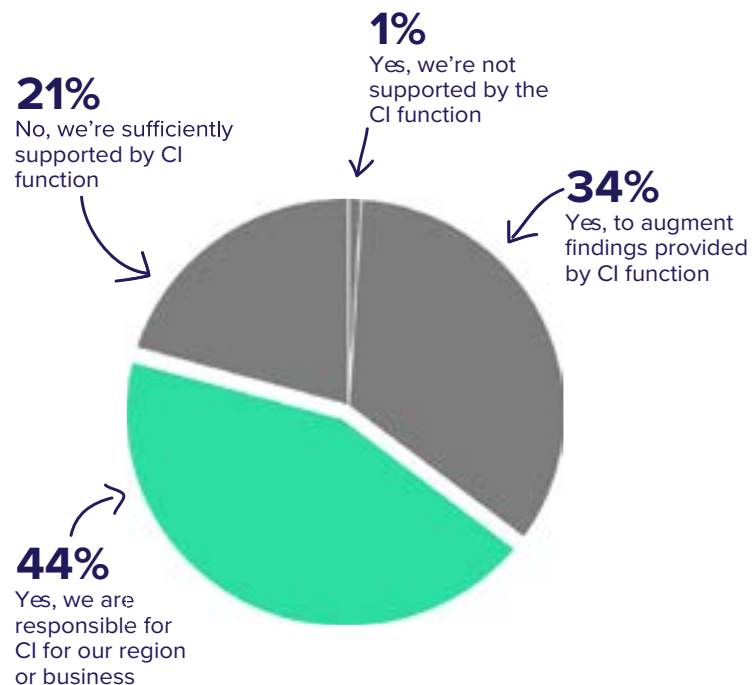
Four out of five stakeholders do their own Competitive Intelligence, even when there's a CI function in their organization.

Despite it being the role of CI to generate competitive intel, 79% of business stakeholders said that they conduct their own competitive research. That means that only **one in every five respondents feel sufficiently supported by CI.**

Why? Primarily to augment findings from the CI function (34%) or because they are responsible for CI for their own region or business unit (44%).

CI teams aren't generating sufficient competitive insights **to enable stakeholders in their jobs.**

Does your team or department do their own competitive intelligence?



Stakeholders are doing their own research because they aren't getting the insights they need. Or if they do, they have trouble finding them.

There were two overarching reasons that stakeholders felt the need to conduct their own independent research. They noted that the intel they received was not helpful (18%) and that current intel was also hard to access (14%). **Ultimately, stakeholders really want correct answers faster to do their jobs more effectively.**

Which of the following would you like to see improved in your company's CI program?

- 18%** Intel not helpful to my role
 - 14%** Intel hard to find (no self-service access or central repository)
 - 14%** Deeper analysis
 - 12%** Faster response to my questions
 - 9%** Doesn't include useful recommendations
 - 7%** Better coverage of secondary and other indirect competition
 - 6%** Regular/better cadence of reporting on the competition
 - 6%** Provide digestible highlights and key takeaways
 - 5%** Include supporting evidence from customers/field
 - 5%** A clear 'owner' for CI
 - 1%** Accept my input to influence CI priorities
- Handwritten note: intel hard to access when needed*

CI teams and their stakeholders disagree on how CI should help the business.

When asked what benefit they expected to see from investing in CI, stakeholders felt that improving sales performance (18%) was most important, yet CI professionals considered supporting executive strategy and alignment (17%) as most important.

The results show a misalignment between stakeholders and CI professionals beyond just the primary benefit they see with CI investment. While stakeholders value customer retention (15%) as the second most important benefit, CI professionals only ranked it as the seventh most important.

What benefits do you expect to see from your company's investment in competitive intelligence?

CI TEAMS

- 17%** Improved executive strategy and/or training
- 16%** Improved sales performance
- 15%** Improved product strategy and/or development
- 13%** Improved content and/or messaging effectiveness
- 11%** Improved sales processes and/or training
- 10%** Improved pricing model and/or terms
- 9%** Improved customer retention
- 7%** Improved brand awareness and/or perception

STAKEHOLDERS

- 18%** Improved sales performance
- 15%** Improved product strategy and/or development
- 14%** Improved customer retention
- 12%** Improved executive strategy and/or training
- 12%** Improved sales processes and/or training
- 10%** Improved content and/or messaging effectiveness
- 11%** Improved pricing model and/or terms
- 8%** Improved brand awareness and/or perception



The C-Level's CI priorities are different from the rest of the organization.

C-level professional response



Similar to CI professionals and all stakeholders, C-level executives valued improving sales performance (15%) greatly. **However, the most important benefit they envisioned was customer retention (16%).** This may come as a surprise considering that customer retention was of very low priority amongst CI professionals.

What benefits do you expect to see from your company's investment in competitive intelligence?

- 16%** Improved customer retention
 - 15%** Improved sales performance
 - 14%** Improved product strategy and/or development
 - 12%** Improved sales processes and/or training
 - 12%** Improved executive strategy and/or alignment
 - 11%** Improved pricing model and/or terms
 - 11%** Improved content and/or messaging effectiveness
 - 9%** Improved brand awareness and/or perception
- They want Retention*
- 

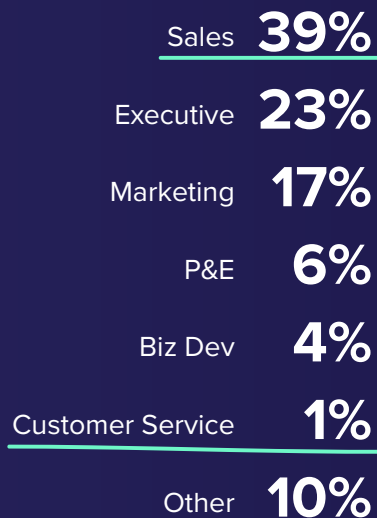
By looking at who CI teams are serving, it becomes clear why customer retention isn't a priority for CI professionals. The first stakeholders that they serve are sales teams (38%), C-level executives (23%), and marketing (17%).

Customer success teams are the least supported (1%) by CI in the organization.

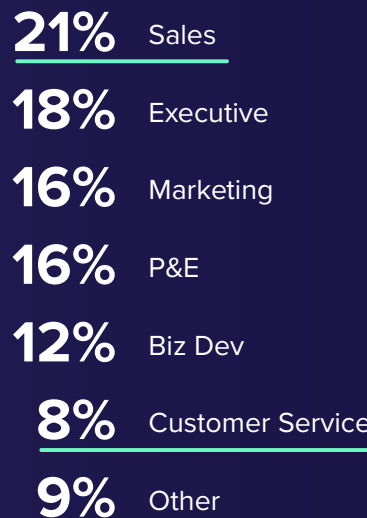
In addition, when asked who are the most important stakeholders for the next 12-24 months, CI professionals maintain that sales (21%), C-level executives (18%), and marketing (16%) remain the most important stakeholders being served, whereas customer success remains low (8%) in the pecking order. Interestingly,

It may be a sign of the 'new normal', but C-level executives are casting greater attention towards customer retention. Based on what stakeholders and C-level executives expect from their CI investment, there is an opportunity for CI professionals to better serve the business by collaborating with customer success teams on improving customer retention.

Which is the first stakeholder group supported by your CI program?



Which stakeholder groups do you perceive will be the most important consumers of CI over the next 12-24 months?



INTERVIEW 2



Ryan Donovan
CTO
@Hootsuite

CI for the C-Suite



Why does CI matter for your role?

From a product planning perspective, you're constantly being asked by your board if they're doing a good job, and how you fare competitively. So you have to know where you stand, and where your plans stand relative to the competition.

Conversely, from a product management perspective, you need to have competitive intelligence to really make sure you're planning and prioritizing the right features. It's fuel to understand how you can differentiate, because if you don't know what your competition's doing, there's no way you can carve out your own differentiation strategy. Thirdly, from a product marketing perspective, you need to know how to price it, package it, position it, and train sellers on it. Then, you need to have the right Q&A and collateral ready. When customers say, "Well, you know, what about X, they're cheaper. Why would you go with the likes of Hootsuite?" you can have an intelligent answer.

Where have you seen teams struggle with CI in your career?

It's a lack of intelligence where I've seen the biggest misses. When a board member knows something that one of your competitors is doing, and you don't, that's the worst possible scenario. Having the data in the first place and being able to get it and coalesce it, that's the biggest

challenge point for any company that's trying to build a competitive intelligence practice.

Also, if you show any sign of hesitation, or anything other than authoritative confidence, that's where the credibility starts to erode. It just goes downhill from there because salespeople are immensely talented BS detectors. They'll just laser in on anything that might be seen as a wobble. This is why having solid intelligence matters.

What is one of the biggest CI challenges you faced?

Our challenge has been getting the information in a format that has been useful to sellers. Distributing intel hasn't been the challenge point because we've had Klue. We've now done a much better job with the synthesis and packaging of the information so that it's much easier from a self-service perspective to discern the information. Distributing it has never been a problem, but I did have nightmares about password protected PDFs back in the day!

How did you solve this?

Spending the time to get all of the information on each competitor into a consistent format took a fair investment, but has paid dividends. Now everything is packaged and distributed in a consistent manner, making it easier for folks in the field to consume. Even the most grizzled and cynical representatives feel that the level of service being provided to them is the best ever.

PART

4

Developing vs. Mature CI Functions

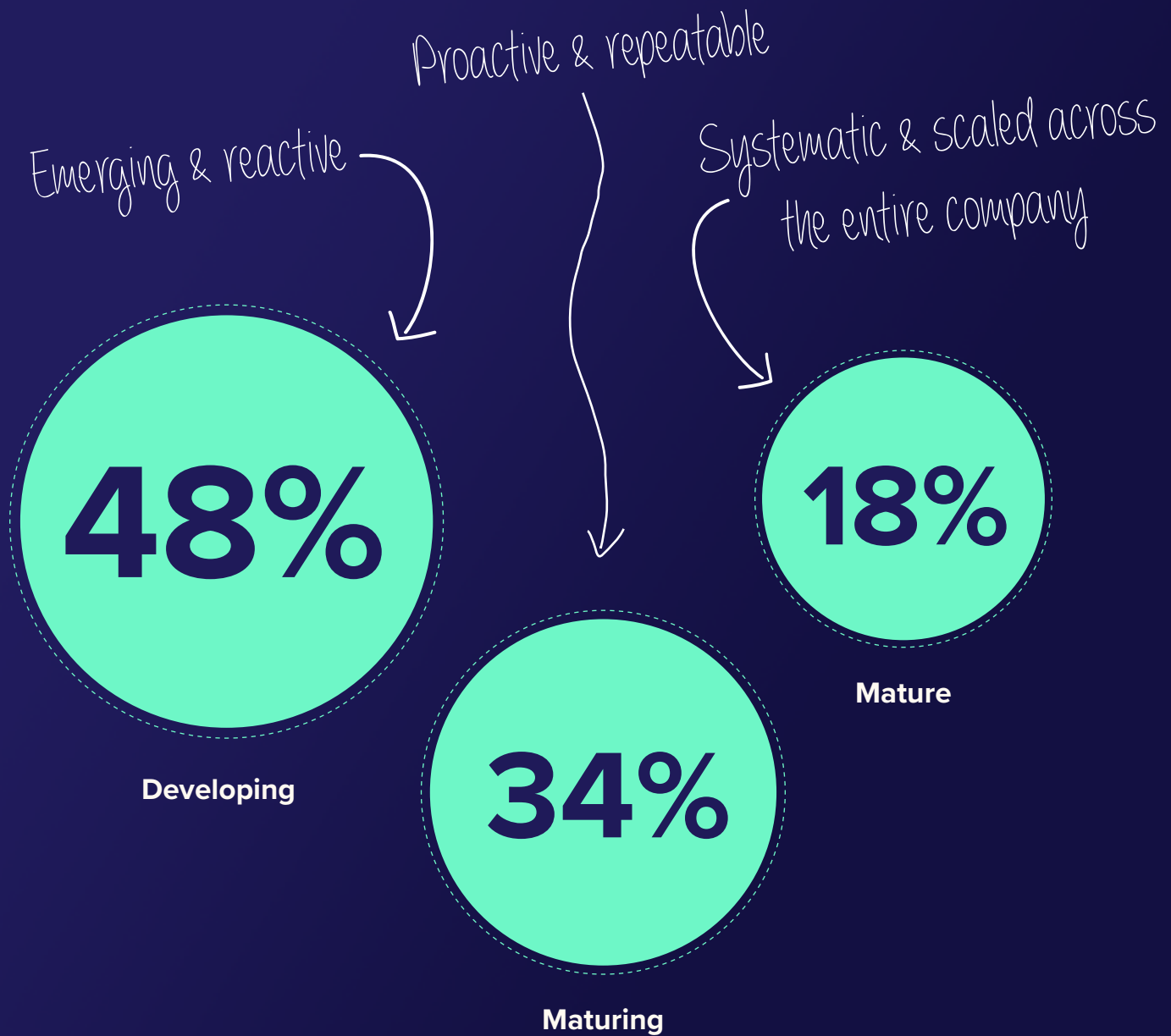
We wanted to compare the defining features of CI functions at different levels of maturity. We asked respondents to identify what stage of maturity their CI function was in.

Here's what we learned



Only 18% of CI functions consider themselves mature, and developing functions want to improve.

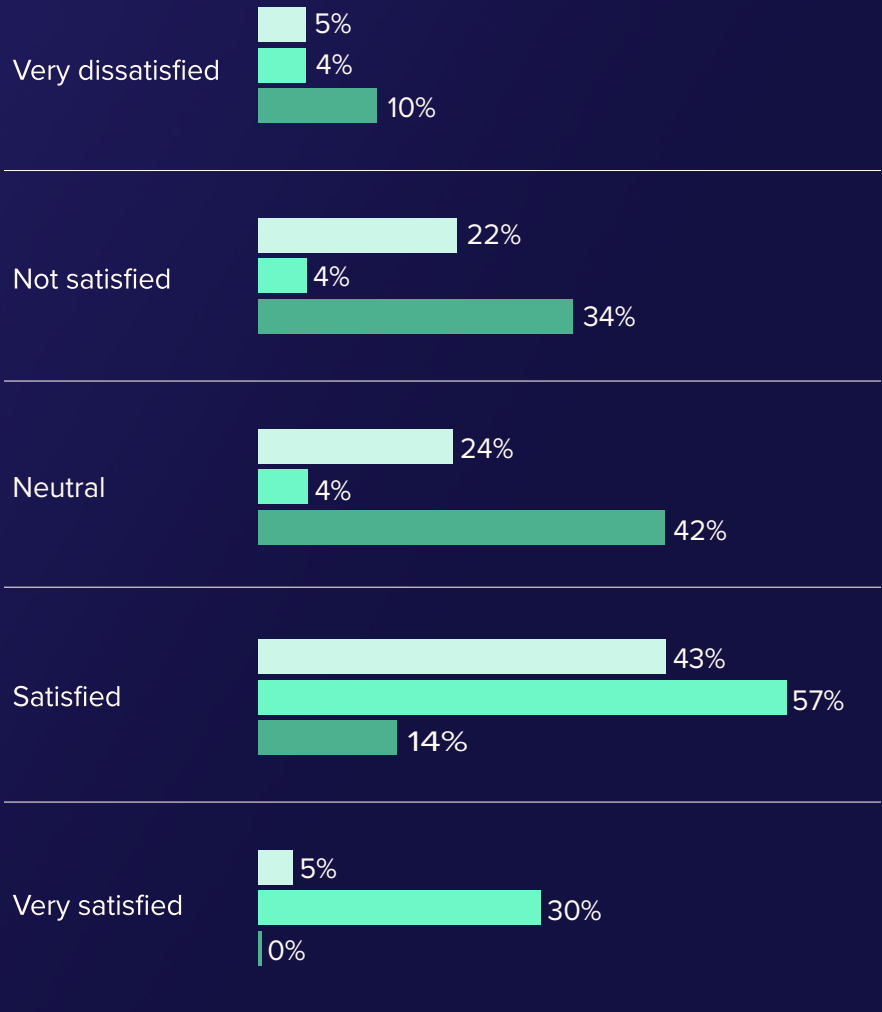
How would you rate the overall maturity of the Competitive Intelligence program in your company?



A vast majority of CI functions are either developing (48%) or maturing (34%). Developing functions are also expressing a desire to improve as only 14% are satisfied with their current maturity level.

How satisfied are you with the overall maturity of the CI program in your company?

- Maturing
- Mature
- Developing

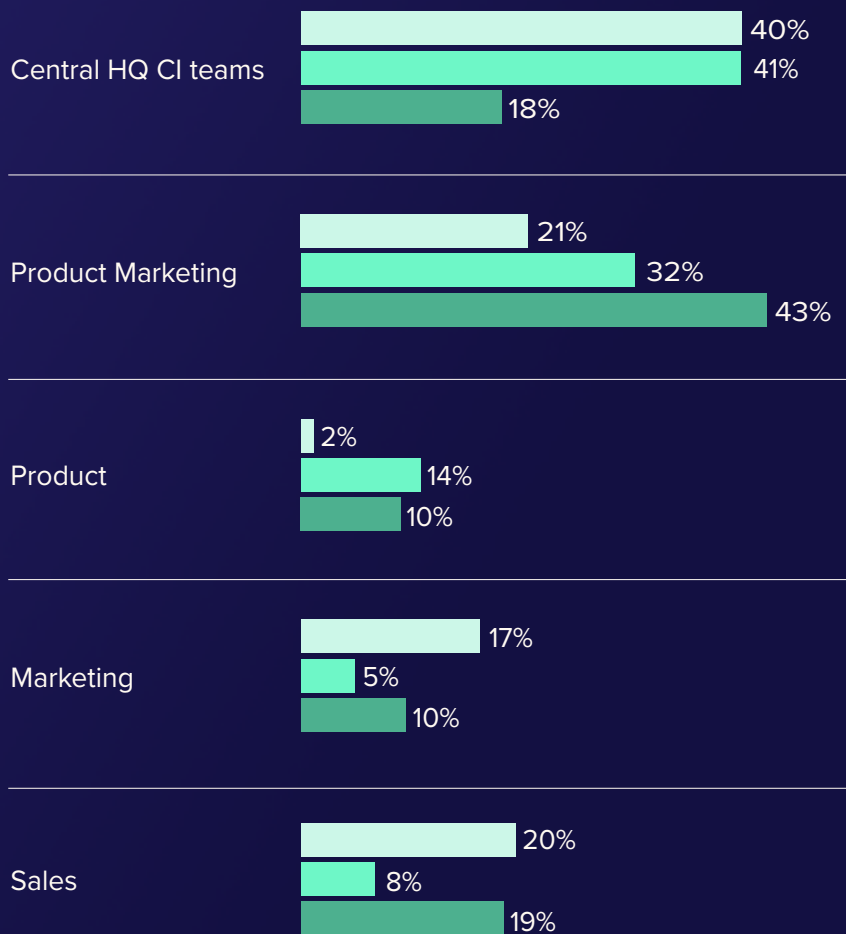


Only 14% satisfaction!



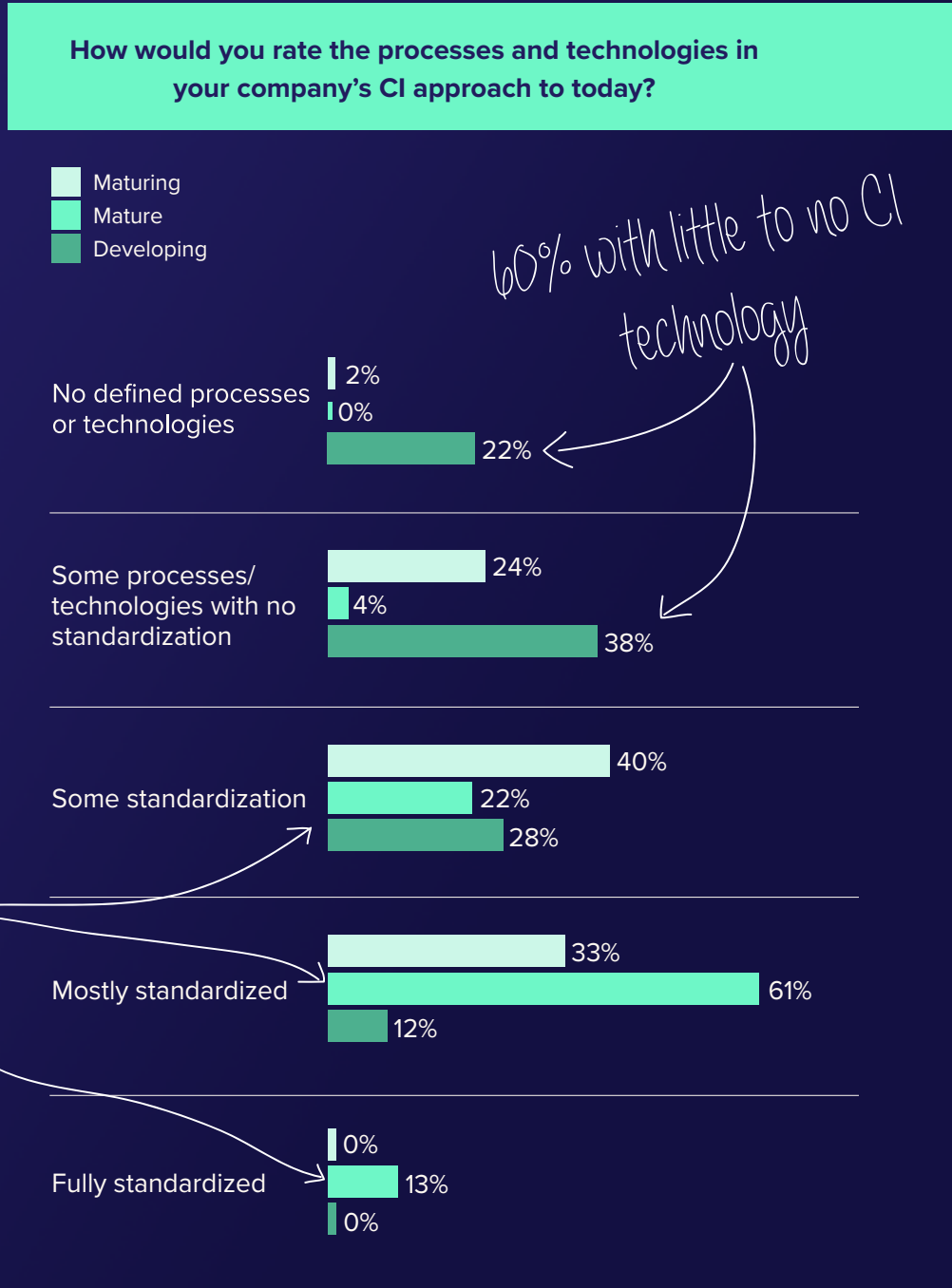
The primary responsibility for the approach to CI within developing functions is falling heavily on product marketers (43%). Meanwhile, mature (41%) and maturing (41%) functions have central CI teams that are primarily responsible for the CI approach.

Which department or team has primary responsibility for the current competitive intelligence approach?



Six out of ten developing functions have little to no CI technology in place

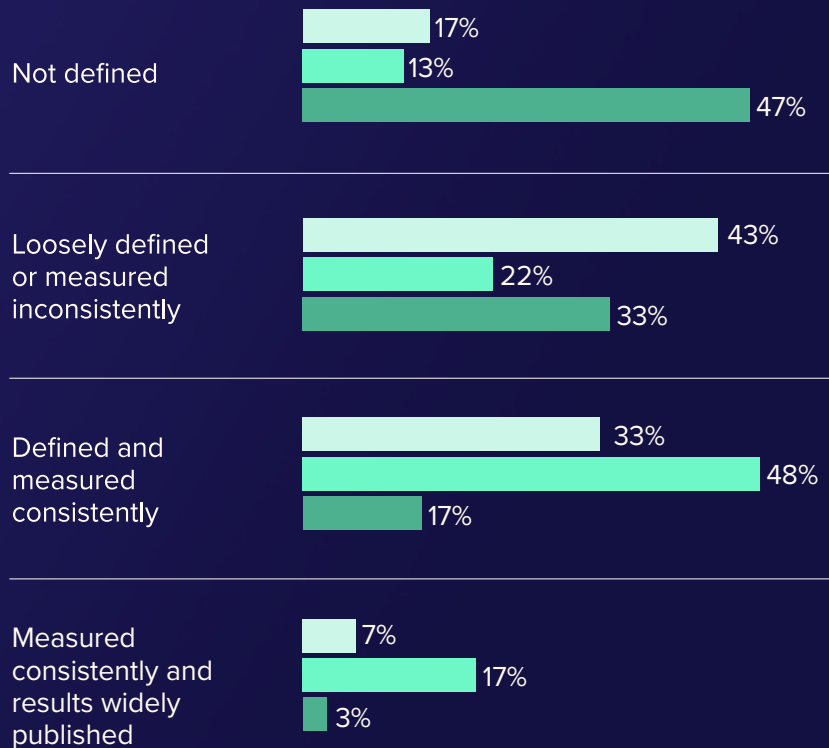
One of the most defining differences between mature and developing functions is that mature functions near unanimously (96%) possess CI technology and some standardized processes, while 60% of developing functions have little to no technology nor a standardized process.



Developing functions are not establishing meaningful KPIs to measure their effectiveness and impact to the business

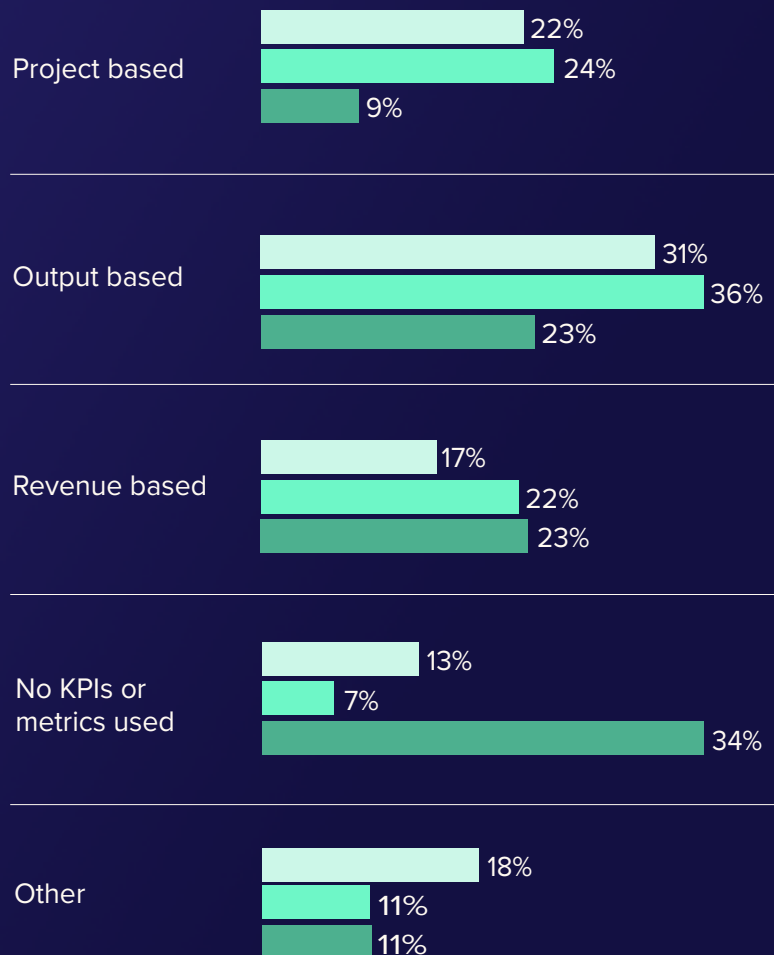
Mature functions are using reporting metrics and KPIs that are clearly defined, measured consistently, and are widely published. In contrast, 47% of developing functions have no defined KPIs. **The absence of coherent reporting metrics makes it difficult to measure the CI function's impact on the business.**

How would you rate the reporting metrics and KPIs in your company's CI approach today?



We assumed that more mature functions would have better ability to measure revenue-based metrics. Surprisingly, developing through to mature functions are using a similar blend of project-, output-, and revenue-based metrics -- that is, **when** they have KPIs or metrics in place.

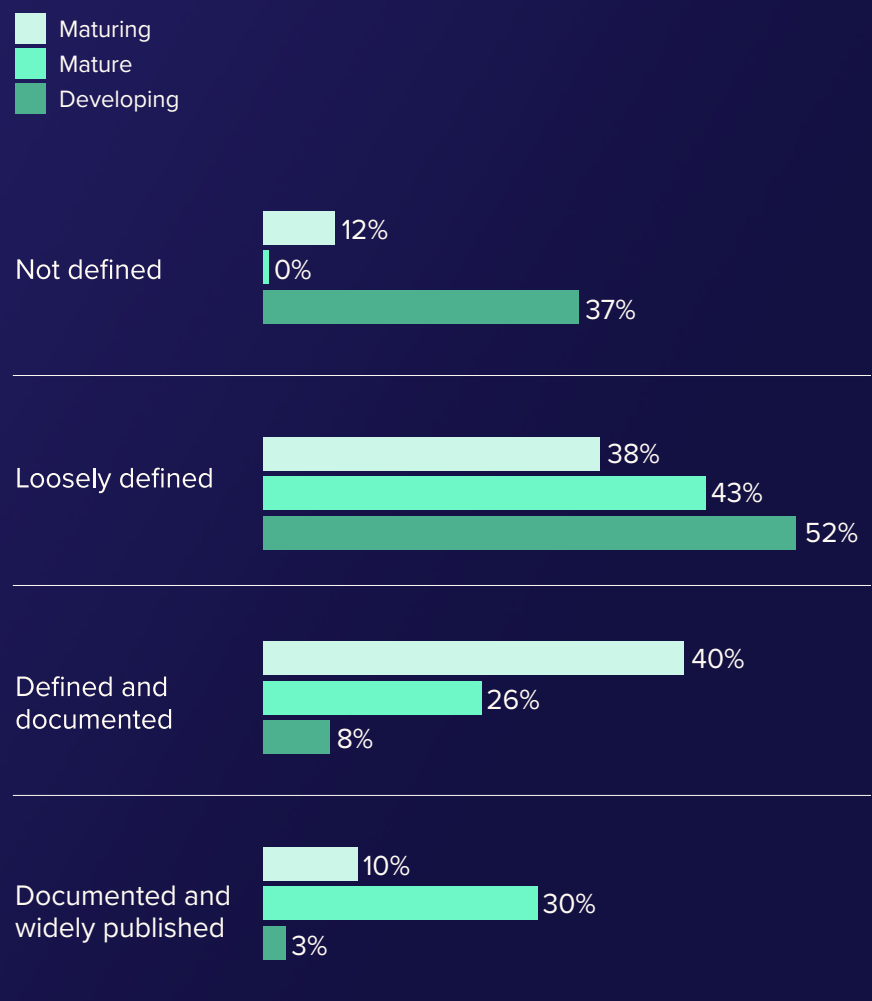
What metrics and KPIs are in use to report on the CI program's overall effectiveness and/or impact on the business?



Mature functions have a clearly defined competitive intelligence roadmap and use an ongoing cross-functional approach to CI, while developing functions are reactive and use ad hoc projects

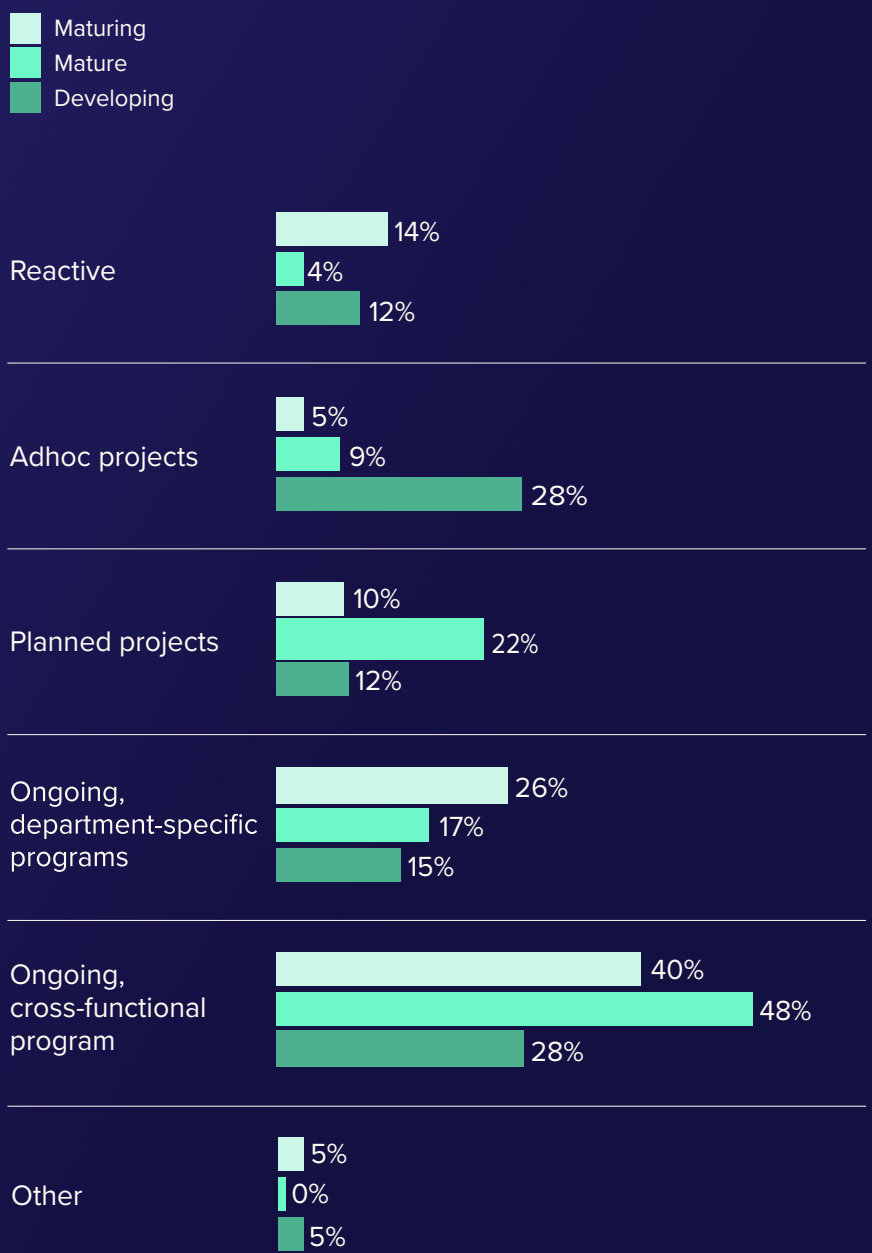
Not only do CI functions need clearly defined KPIs to measure their performance, they also need an established roadmap that outlines their approach. Developing functions are not defining their roadmap (37%) compared to mature functions that are defining, documenting, and widely publishing a roadmap that dictates their CI approach.

How would you rate the competitive intelligence roadmap in your company's CI approach today?



Perhaps because there is a more clearly defined roadmap, mature functions primarily use an ongoing, cross-functional program (48%) to take on CI. On the other hand, developing functions see themselves as more reactive (12%) and are far more frequently using ad hoc projects (28%) to run their CI approach.

Which of the following best describes your organization's current approach to competitive intelligence?



INTERVIEW 3



Jeremy Goldstein
Solutions Engineer
@Slack

CI for Solutions Teams



Why does CI matter to solutions engineers?

We're on the forefront of differentiating against competitors through solutioning to prospects and customers. We are literally trying to demonstrate the differences of our technology and how they fit into a customer's use cases, not only by helping them understand why we can solve their problems, but why we can solve them in a unique way compared to competitors. So, competitive intelligence is important because it's part of more or less every conversation that we're in when winning customers, and when defending ourselves against competitor threats.

When is CI most needed?

Competitive intelligence typically comes up in first conversations and then towards the end of a solution-win portion of the sales cycle. In first conversations it's 'how are you different from your competitors? Where do you fit?', so you have to nail competitive differentiation out of the gates. When I present a solution, I usually focus on how we solve problems. Maybe I'll have a little bit of competitive nuggets, but I don't obsess over it. Then towards the end we have to reaffirm how we're different when we're getting buy-in from the rest of the organization, or in an executive summary.

What are the ways CI is best applied to enable your sales team?

A lot of product marketers or CI teams do relatively well is that they provide a good general narrative and general counter positioning against a competitor. But they can't account for all these different sales situations. What I've seen some teams do well is to think of competitive intelligence as a team sport. It's fostering a whole team approach of bringing up those unique situations that are happening and empower sales teams, to then empower other sales teams and the product marketer serves as a facilitator.

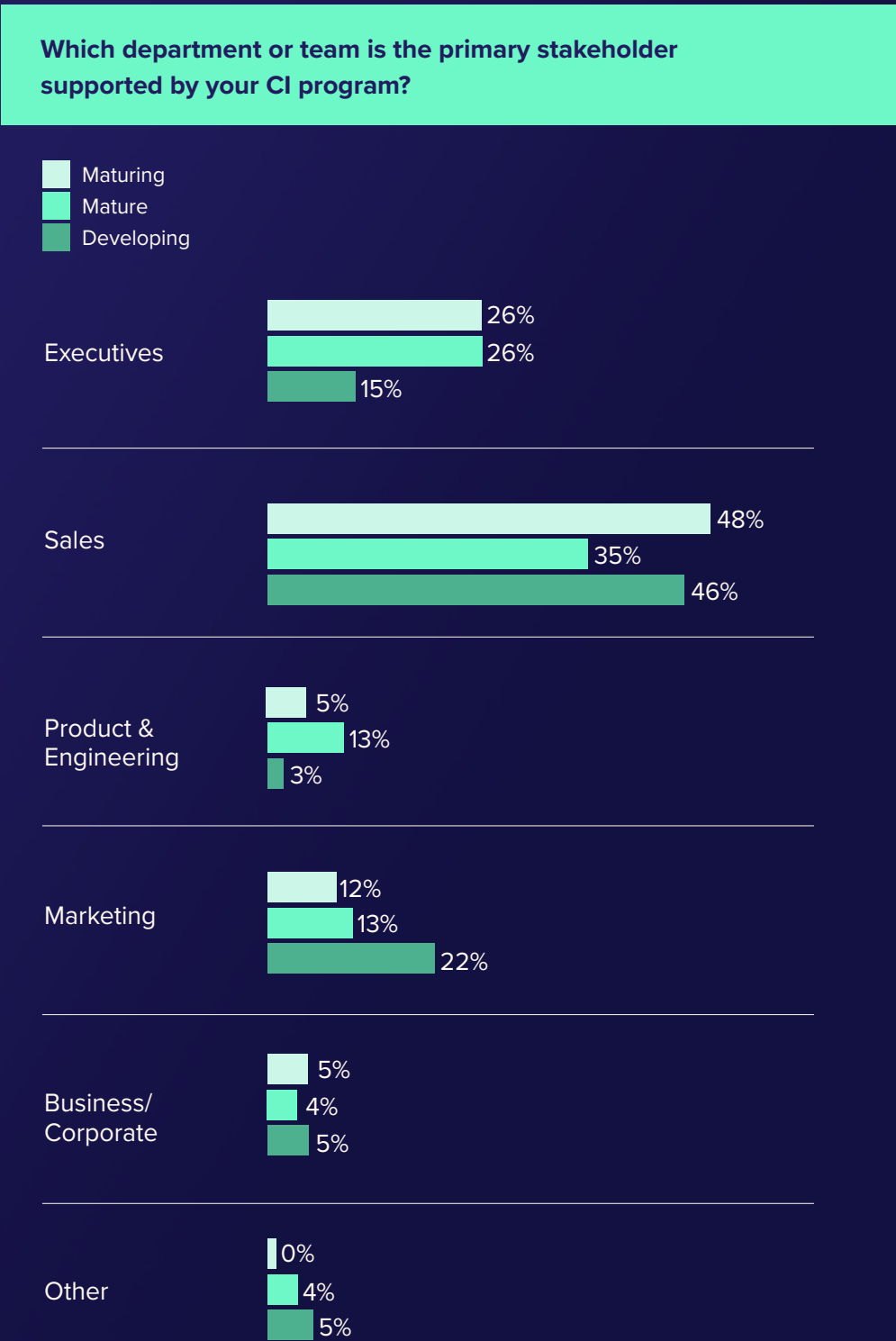
Our product marketing team does a good job and of knowing 'here's our bandwidth, we don't have time to look at XYZ in this amount of detail, so let's spread that responsibility and create a committee of sorts'.

Does CI need to stick with salespeople?

It's really hard, because competitive intelligence can update itself so quickly. And as a salesperson, your biggest fear is if you say something incorrect about a competitor, and a client knows you're incorrect, you've lost all credibility. I don't think you need to worry about things sticking, because salespeople aren't going to remember it. What you do need to drive home is that a salesperson knows when a certain thing comes up, where to go to get the information that they need. So good CI teams know the situations a salesperson is going to face and builds enablement workflows to match those situations.

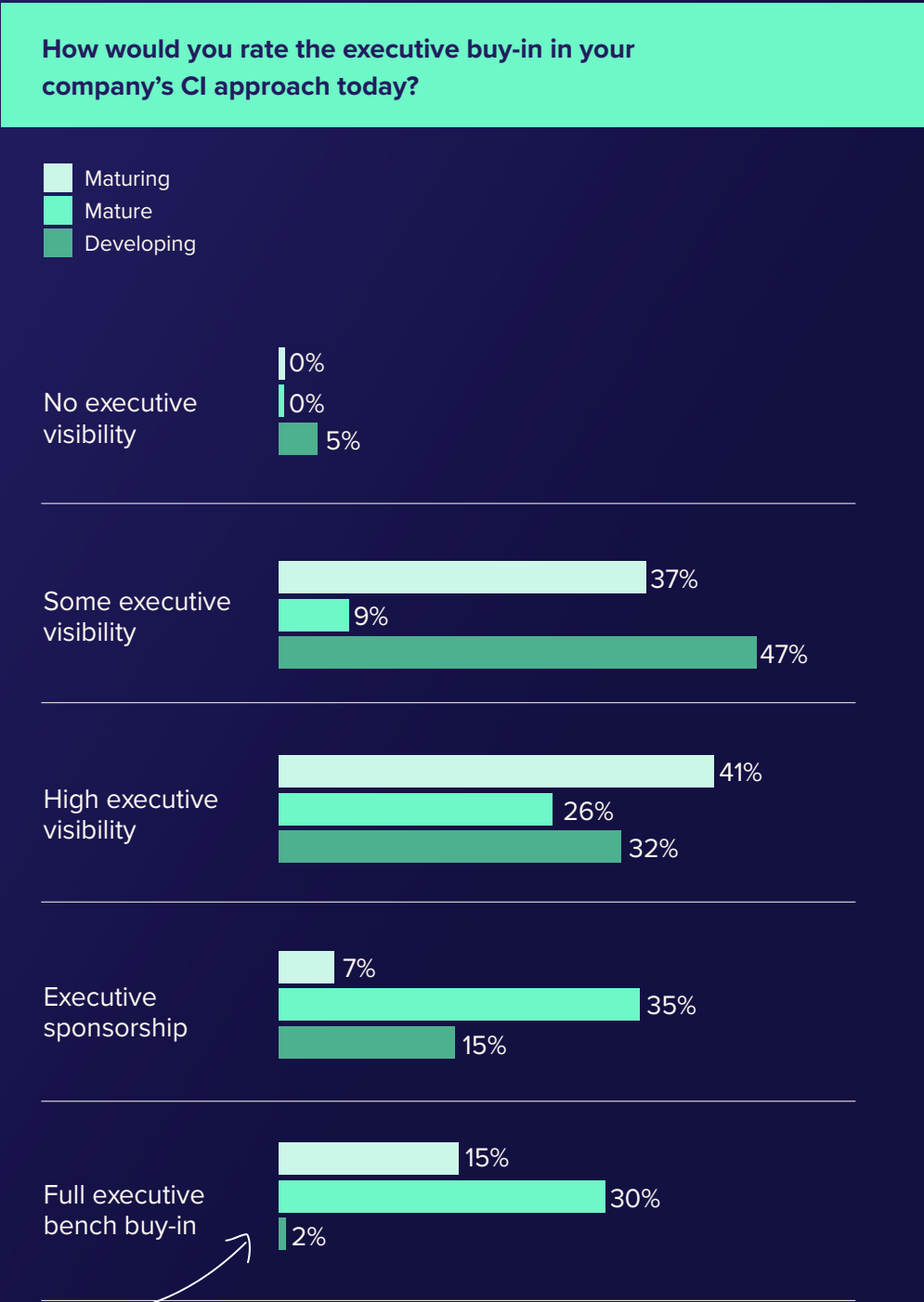
Mature functions serve the C-Level more... and are more supported by the C-Level

When asked what teams they first supported, unsurprisingly all CI functions responded that they initially support the sales team within their organization. However, mature (26%) and maturing (26%) functions are aligned on C-level executives being the next most common stakeholders that are supported first, whereas developing functions are more likely to support marketing (22%).



As a result of mature functions choosing to support sales or C-level executives, they are getting the visibility they need to grow their team, budget, and influence. Mature functions are getting either full executive buy-in (30%) or executive sponsorship (35%) in their CI approach, while only 2% of developing functions feel that they are getting full executive buy-in. **Developing functions are neither serving, nor are being supported, by key decision makers.**

Only 2% executive buy-in



Every CI function’s visibility and importance has risen due to COVID, however mature functions are experiencing less difficulties executing in the ‘new normal’

By and large, CI functions reported that the impact of COVID-19 has increased the visibility and importance of CI to their organization, regardless of maturity level. Given the adverse effects of the global pandemic that has overhauled how businesses operate, there is a consensus that CI is now a crucial element in helping organizations navigate the ‘new normal’.

However, mature CI functions were experiencing the least amount of difficulties executing under the new circumstances.

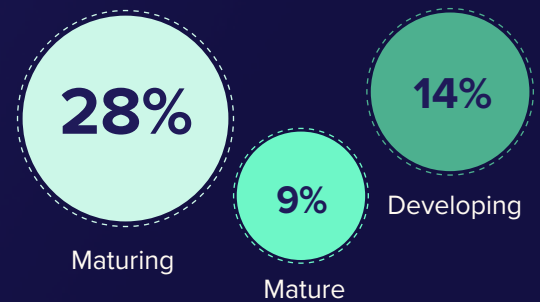
How has COVID-19 impacted your competitive intelligence program?

- Maturing
- Mature
- Developing

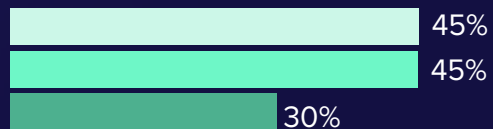
It has made the execution of the program easier



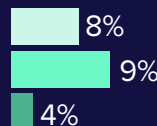
It has made the execution more difficult



It has increased the visibility and importance of competitive intelligence to our organization



It has reduced the value and importance of competitive intelligence in our organization



INTERVIEW 4



Anita Janjua,
Former Director, Marketing Channels
@Moz

CI for Marketing

A handwritten note in white ink that says "CI for Marketing". A white arrow points from the note down and to the left, towards the section header "The biggest challenge you faced with CI?".

Why is CI important for marketing?

You need to understand who you're competing against both from a branding perspective, and messaging perspective as you're putting together content. If you don't know what's going on in the market, you're just operating in a silo, and you're not actually speaking to that prospect, to that potential customer or client in a way that's going to resonate with them.

What aspect of your job function did you rely on CI the most?

When creating go-to-market plans, and messaging against it, we always wanted to know what else was out there. That way we knew how to, or how not to, position our product. We'd come up with the messaging first, and use competitive intel to lean into certain areas more.

Another big way that marketing used competitive intel would be on the events side. Looking to see what competitors are going to certain events and sponsoring events, but also which ones are they running, who's going to those events, and who's speaking at them.

The biggest challenge you faced with CI?

Our challenge was that the intel was in the minds of a lot of people. A team specifically responsible for it would've been great. With some of our competitors things changed frequently, we had competitors that were releasing features very regularly. So you might think that you're on top of what their features are, or what their messaging is, but their content team is operating five times as fast as ours.

Having somewhere information is consolidated, that you can quickly go to ensure that you have up-to-date intel on things like a competitor's feature specs or their core messaging. It's so important to have this, and we didn't really have a central place, we had a confluence of documents.

PART

5

How do companies at different stages of growth build their CI functions?

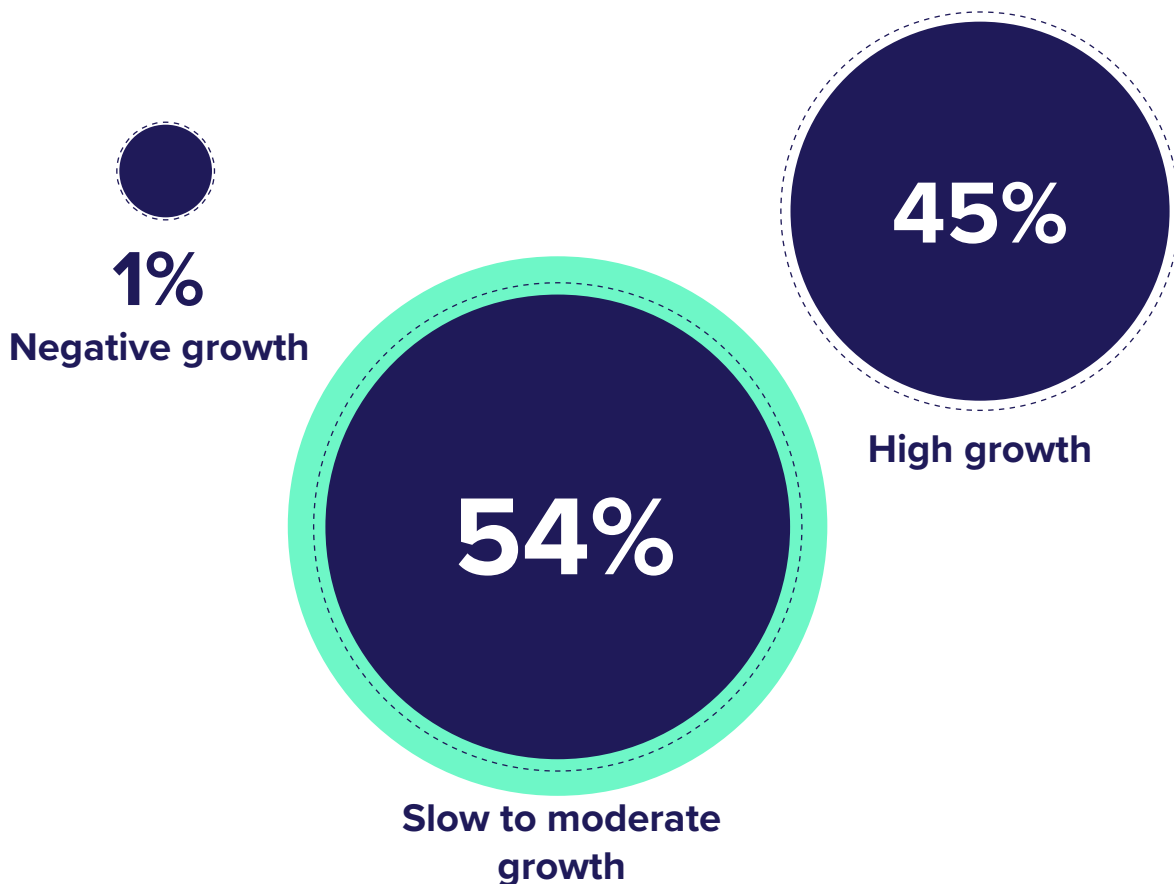
We wanted to look at how companies at different stages of growth approach their CI function. Respondents were nearly evenly split in identifying their company as either high-growth or moderate-growth.

Here's what we found



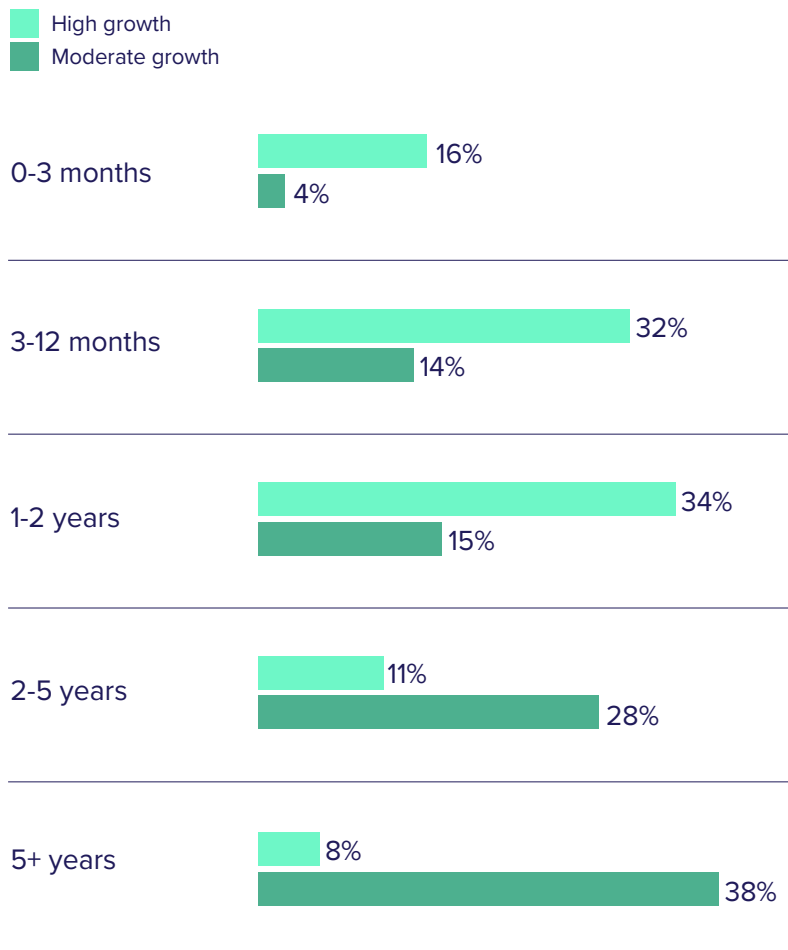
Nearly half of respondents identify themselves as high-growth companies. These growing companies possess “newer” CI functions

How would you describe your company's approximate annual growth over the past 3 years?



As expected, those who identified themselves as high-growth companies possess far newer CI functions than the rest of respondents. A vast majority of high-growth companies (82%) run a CI function that is less than two years old, whereas two out of three moderate-growth companies (67%) have a CI function that has been in place for longer than two years.

How long has your current program been in place?



All companies view CI as important, high-growth companies see it as business critical

When asked how important they felt CI is at their company, stakeholders and CI professionals at all companies rate CI as very important, however far more high-growth companies see it as business critical.

This is understandable -- many high-growth companies operate in hyper-competitive markets with a broad set of competition from emerging startups to established companies vying for market dominance.

How would you rate the importance of CI at your company?

■ High growth
■ Moderate growth

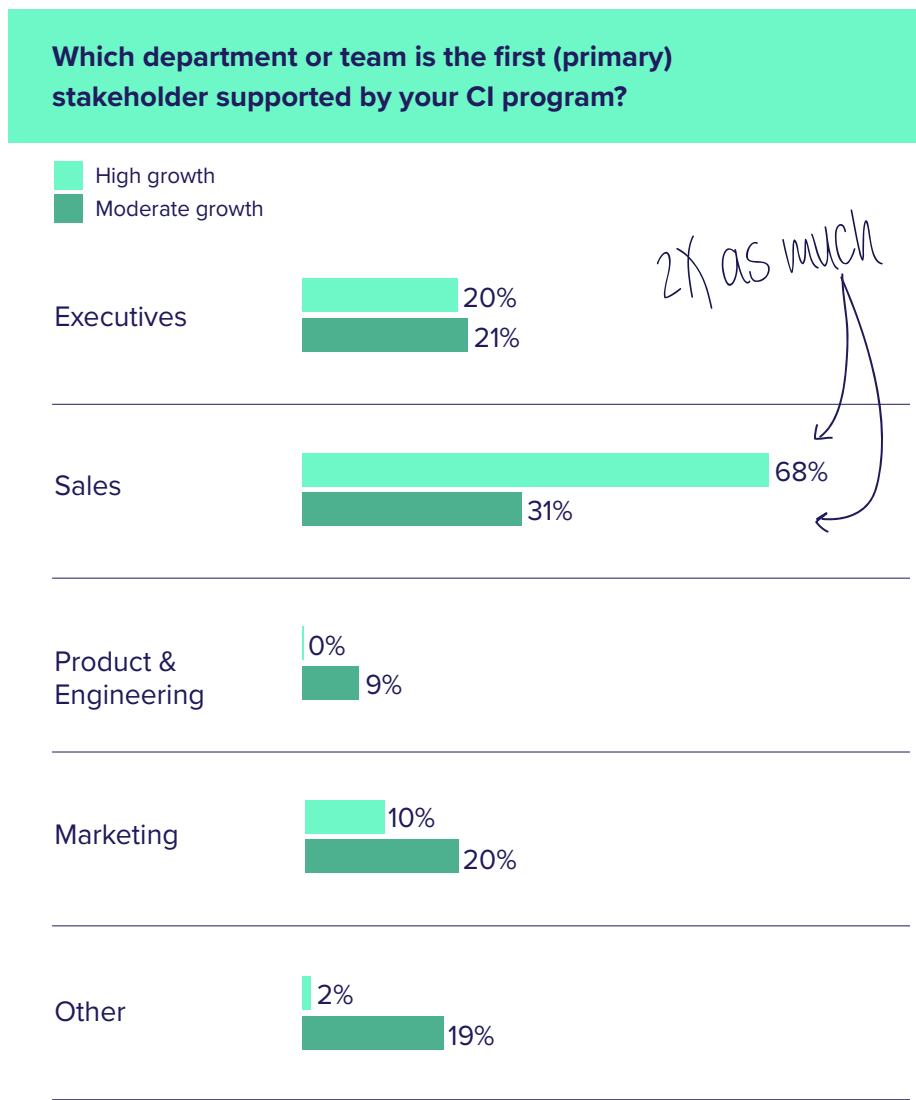
Business-critical 22%
8%

Very important 70%
71%

Important 8%
21%

High-growth companies are overwhelmingly supporting sales teams...

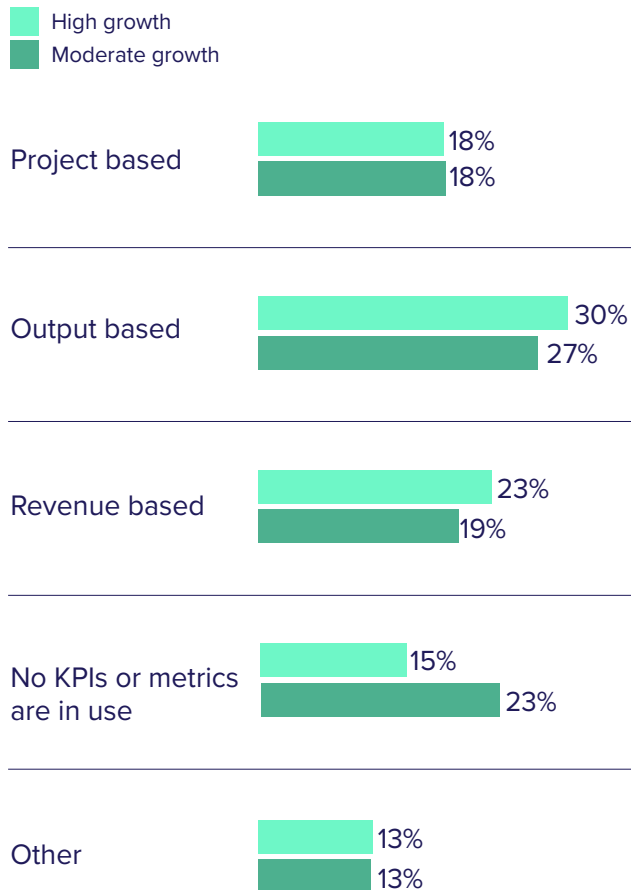
It comes as no surprise that CI functions at both high-growth and moderate-growth companies primarily support sales teams. However, high-growth companies are overwhelmingly serving sales (68%) compared to moderate-growth companies (31%). A strong alignment with sales is critical for newer functions as they are an influential stakeholder group in the organization. However, far more moderate-growth companies chose to support marketing.



...and are using revenue-based KPIs to measure their CI function

In addition, high-growth companies are more likely to use revenue-based KPIs to measure the impact of their CI function. Sales teams and CI professionals in these high-growth companies are tied at the hip.

What metrics and KPIs are in use to report on the CI programs overall effectiveness and/or impact on the business?



Stakeholders at high-growth companies want easier access to competitive intelligence

Top 10 problems stakeholders face

We thought that the biggest issue faced with high-growth companies would be no clear ownership of CI given the rapid growth of departments and teams. We were wrong.

Instead, stakeholders from high-growth companies most commonly pointed towards CI being scattered across the organizations (19%) as the biggest problem they face.

Despite stakeholders viewing CI as a critical part of their business, they struggle to access the competitive intelligence they need. This is a significant issue for salespeople who are in competitive deals and need to quickly use insights against a competitor.

Which of the following would you like to see improved in your company's CI program?

■ High growth

CI is scattered in different systems and docs	19%
Intelligence received lacks context to our business	9%
Intel is shared sporadically and irregularly	9%
There's no clear owner for CI	9%
Intel received is not relevant to my role or department	9%
Intel is too generic and high-level	6%
Intelligence reports contain too much information	6%
No access to the competitive intelligence conducted	6%
Intel is disconnected from customer reality	6%
The insights I care about is not available or prioritized	6%

High-growth companies are planning to invest in CI, but many aren't sure where to invest

The vast majority of high-growth companies plan to invest in CI (84%) in the next 12-24 months, and three out of ten respondents are aiming to significantly increase their spend and effort.

What are the future plans (next 12-24 months) regarding competitive intelligence?

High growth

Significantly increase spend and effort on CI 31%

Moderately increase 53%

Moderately reduce 0%

Significantly reduce 0%

No change 11%

Don't Know 6%

1 in 5 companies don't know where to invest



Although high-growth respondents note that they're going to spend on technology (25%), increasing headcount (22%), and skill development (17%), there is a significant amount (22%) that don't know where their investment will go - yet.

By understanding the teams that the CI function serves and the problems that they currently face, high-growth companies may get a clearer idea as to where they can best invest to strengthen their CI function.

Of this, which of the following is expected to see the biggest change in CI investments?

■ High growth

Headcount 22%

Skills development 17%

Technologies 25%

Outsourced services 11%

No change projected 3%

Don't Know 22%

Other 0%

INTERVIEW 4



Jenna Dorman,
VP Strategic Accounts
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CI for Sales



What are some of the challenges salespeople face with competitive intelligence in their company?

The thing that I always question is ‘how current is this?’. I’ve found things in competitive intelligence newsletters that went out to a team and questioned how accurate it was. Another challenge is ensuring that salespeople are consuming information. Ensuring that not only does that repository exist, but you’re getting hit with constant reminders to use it.

As well, people share a lot of information through our competitive Slack channel, so being able to tie that into the system so that it is easier to access all competitive information in one place. I think that is really important too, because part of the problem you’re solving is having insights live in many different places. It’s a challenge in many organizations where a lot of information lives in silos.

How do you train your team to beat competitors?

I’m a big believer in learning by doing. People have to start getting in the field and getting their bruises. This is where those battlecards are helpful. I was working with a rep and we’re doing her discovery prep together, making sure she’s prepared to go in and plant those leading questions or trap-setting questions with the prospect to lead back to our solution.

A new rep coming in and just reviewing all the battlecards on all of the competitors is just overload. They’re more effective in the field and in the moment as we are going through deal-cycles and thinking through what different competitors might come up. I’ll be at the

table looking for keywords or red flags that indicate a competitor is involved, but it’s helpful for them to pull up battlecards early in the deal-cycle and prepare.

Where do you think competitive intelligence can improve?

I think your competitive intelligence system has to continually evolve. There’s always going to be that basic information as you see a competitor more frequently in the field and grow your learnings on that competitor, how do you capture that information and make it more rich?

Oftentimes the information that is presented is the bare minimum and there isn’t the area to add the stories from the field. Hearing that win-loss story, or the reps anecdotal experience of fighting that competitor, or having access to the key assets that helped them win a deal. Those things shouldn’t all live in different places, it creates a black market of content.

What are the most valuable competitive insights?

By far the most useful tool is win-loss reviews. Understanding what is happening real-time in the field. What are people saying? Why do we lose? What are our customers saying? Salespeople would say that’s probably the most valuable information they could be getting.

If you can figure out a way to systematize it better and ensure that it’s happening on as many deals as possible, that’s a huge area of focus for a lot of organizations, but it falls flat if there isn’t a process attached to it.

Thank you

A massive thank you to everyone who helped make this report happen, including the industry leaders who offered their time and knowledge to speak with us and the 500+ survey respondents who are responsible for the insights we uncovered.

Lastly, thanks to SCIP for partnering with us and helping oversee, promote, and encourage this buzzing community of CI professionals and product marketers to participate in this research. It's truly exciting to connect with a community who are as passionate as us about the competitive space, and we cannot wait to see how this competitive enablement landscape grows in the future.



Vincent Lo, VP of Product Marketing @Klue

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