

MLS Survey Report 2010



NATIONAL
ASSOCIATION of
REALTORS®

*Center for
REALTOR® Technology*

The NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®, The Voice for Real Estate®, is the world's largest professional association, representing over 1 million members.

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For more information about NAR, visit www.REALTOR.org.

The Center for REALTOR® Technology (CRT) is a department within NAR. It's purpose is to serve the REALTOR® membership as an industry advocate, an implementation consultant, and a technology resource. One of the major surveys carried out by CRT is the *Mutliple Listing Services (MLS) Technology Survey*. It is conducted annually among a random number of MLSs.

This report summarizes national findings collected in December 2010 among MLS staff as listed in NRDS and through the MLS directory. These groups account for 336 usable surveys. At the 95% level of confidence, the margin of error is +/-4.75%. Any exceptions will be called out.

The purpose of this survey is to better understand MLS technology trends & usage. Business practices, public websites, member usage, Real Estate Transaction Standards (RETS), and syndication are key topics of the study.

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Report Highlights

The following are the top five industry issues that were selected as “very important” or “important”:

- MLSs reinventing themselves to continue to meet the evolving needs of the real estate industry
- Improper data use by members
- Improving MLS security
- Risk of the MLS becoming a ‘public utility’
- Making MLS tools available via smartphones & other mobile tools

In the last 12 months survey respondents have been investing in MLS software upgrades, MLS-friendly mobile apps, security, server upgrades, consultants, and/or server maintenance among other things. Not taking into account technology staff that supports the MLS, respondents report spending an average of \$25,981 on these MLS technology initiatives. The ‘mode’ or most common response was \$5,000.

Although there are several ways to enter listings into the MLS system, 71% use a web browser.

73% provide a public website (not IDX/VOW) where consumers may access listings.

Of these, 48% support lead generation. 32% of this group indicates that the leads go to the listing agent while another 25% indicate that both, the listing agent and listing broker, receive the information.

Mediums in which the public website may be advertised include: social media sites (29%); newspaper (24%); and/or real estate magazines (21%).

Report Highlights

Those that do **not** offer a public MLS website selected the following statements to describe their position:

- Public websites should be provided by brokers (51%)
- MLS public websites compete with listing broker or agent websites (32%)
- Public websites are the agent's responsibility (29%)

Those that **offer** a public MLS website selected the following statements to describe their position:

- MLS should provide a public website to display MLS listings (61%)
- MLS public websites are good for MLS and REALTOR® image in the community (58%)
- MLS public websites are a good alternative to REALTOR.com® (30%)

88% indicate that their MLS system has a RETS interface.

Broker IDX/VOW websites (83%) and/or 3rd party vendor services other than IDX/VOW (62%) as business advantages to using RETS.

Those that syndicate (51%) do it in order to get greater exposure for listings. These MLSs perceive syndication as being a member benefit.

Of those that do not syndicate (32%), more than half are not considering syndication at all. A few reasons that discourage syndication include: they do not want to deal with feeds; cost per month to syndicate is high; agents and brokers may already belong to real estate companies that syndicate; and/or MLSs do not want to lose control of data.

Report Highlights

Top five places where listings are sent:

- REALTOR.com® - 95%
- Trulia – 55%
- Local MLS site – 50%
- Zillow – 50%
- Local association – 49%
- Yahoo – 48%

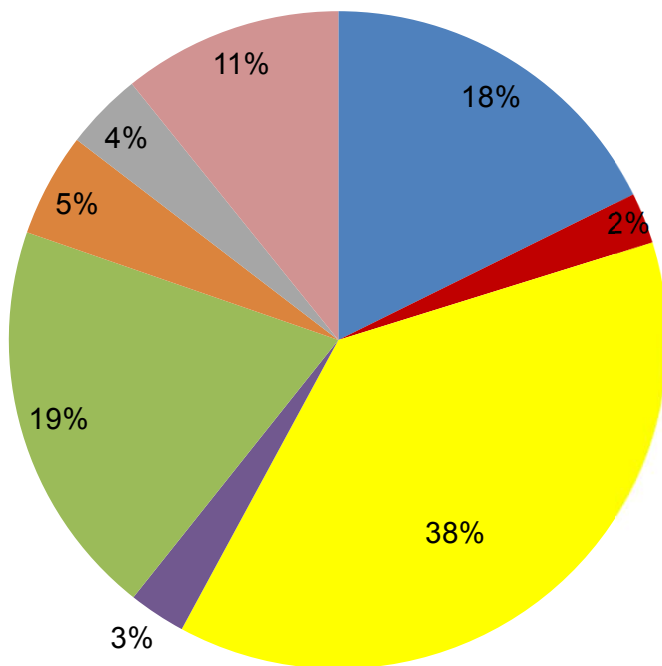
Respondents were asked how the role of the MLS will evolve over the next three years. The most common responses were (in no particular order):

- The MLS will be accessible via mobile tools like the iPad and smartphones.
 - These will be integrated with social media tools for easy access
- The importance of Professionalism within real estate will continue to grow.
- Agent and broker ratings will become commonplace in many MLS templates.
 - Members will have to maintain acceptable ratings otherwise the MLS will reserve the right to terminate that relationship.
- There will be browser neutral MLS tools.
- Some may push the transparency envelope allowing home owners to update data for a finite period of time. The goal will be to have more reliable and accurate data from which the public can benefit.
- 'MLS of choice' is a possibility.

Respondent Profile

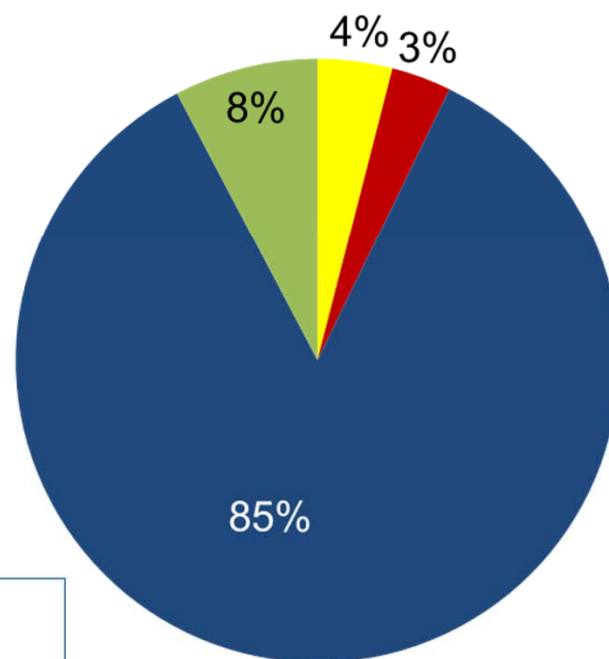
Primary Role of Respondent

- MLS CEO
- MLS Specialist
- Other – MLS Staff
- MLS President
- MLS Director
- Other (please specify)
- MLS Association Executive
- MLS Technology Staff



Describe Your MLS

- Private
- Broker-Owned
- Association-Owned
- Other



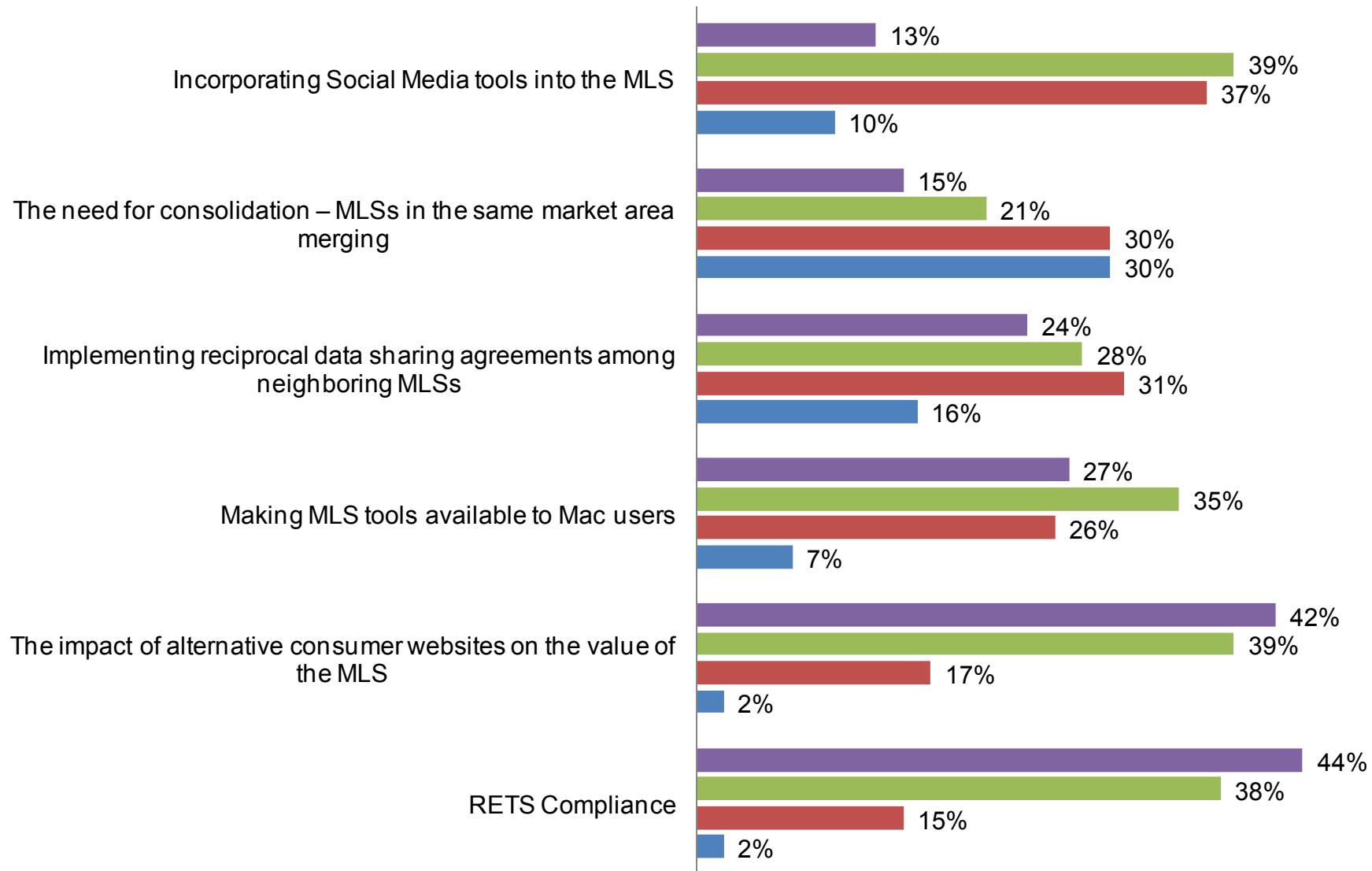
The 8% who selected 'other' describe their MLS as co-owned with another association or as regional.

90% of MLSs participating in this survey were built by an MLS vendor. Another 9% are homegrown.

Respondents were asked how many members (agents, brokers, etc.) are part of their MLS. The average is 2,940 members. However, the 'mode' or most common answer is 600 members.

How important are the following industry issues to your MLS?

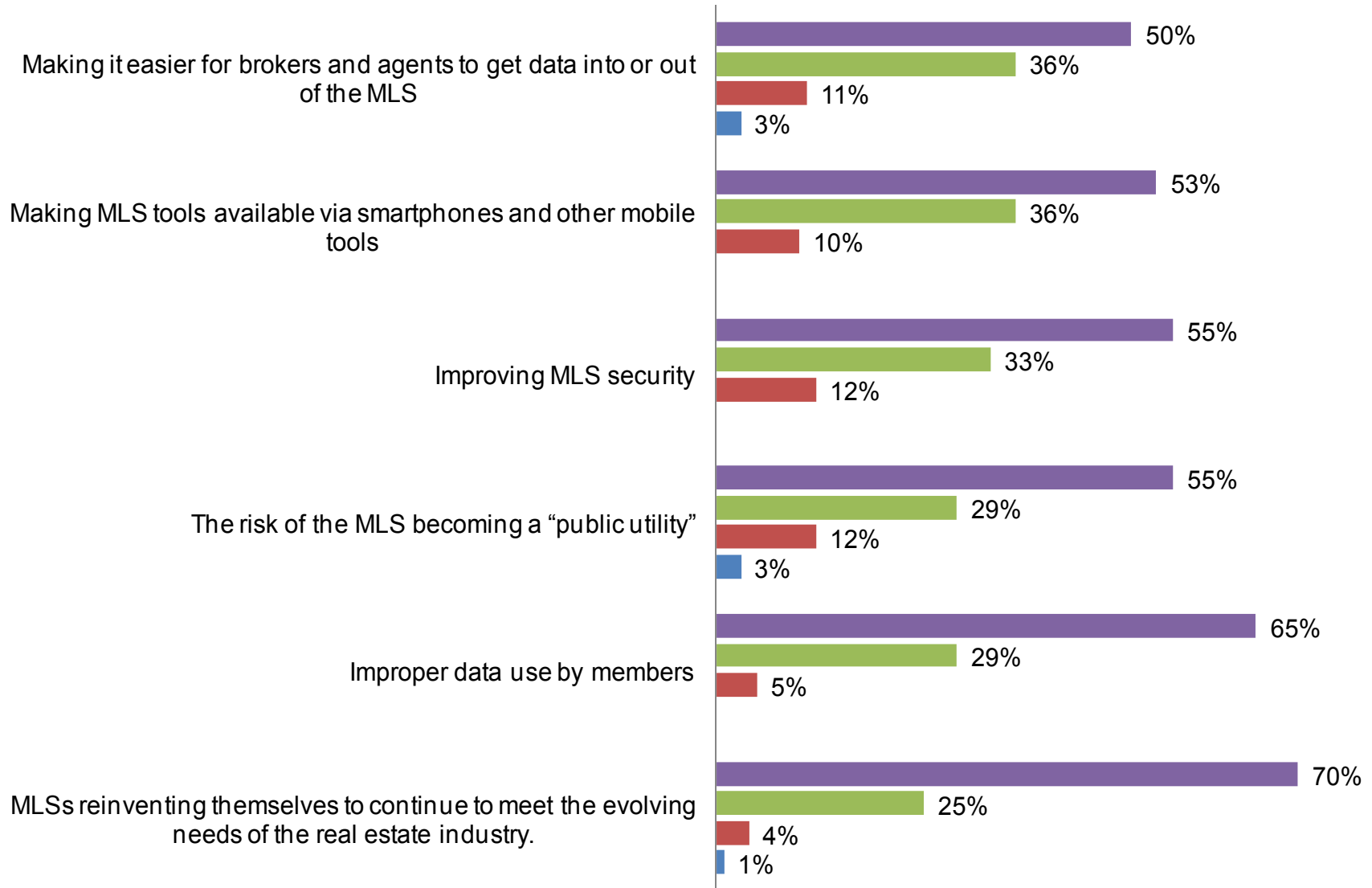
■ Very Important
 ■ Important
 ■ Somewhat Important
 ■ Not at all Important



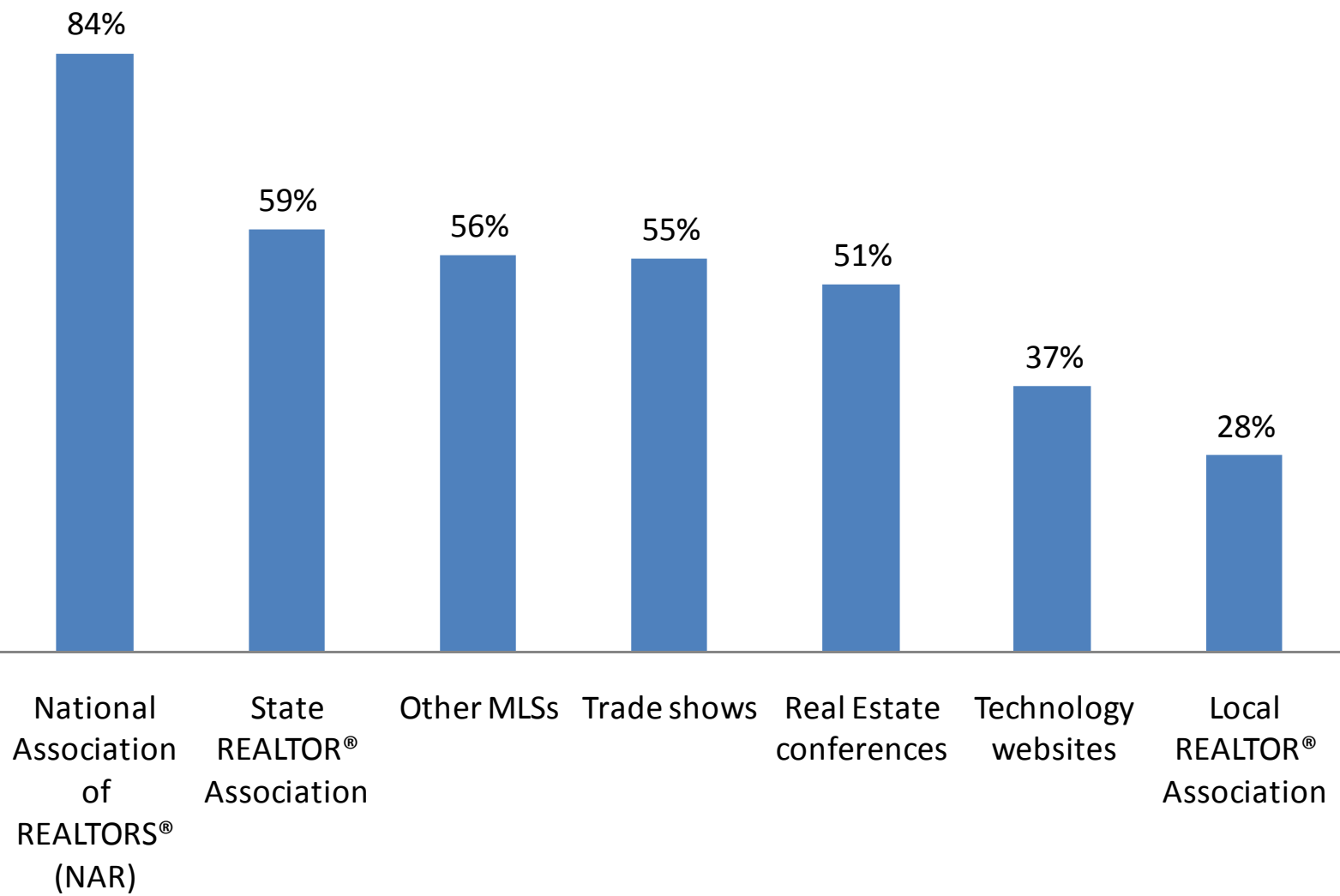
How important are the following industry issues to your MLS?

(Continued from previous page.)

Very Important Important Somewhat Important Not at all Important



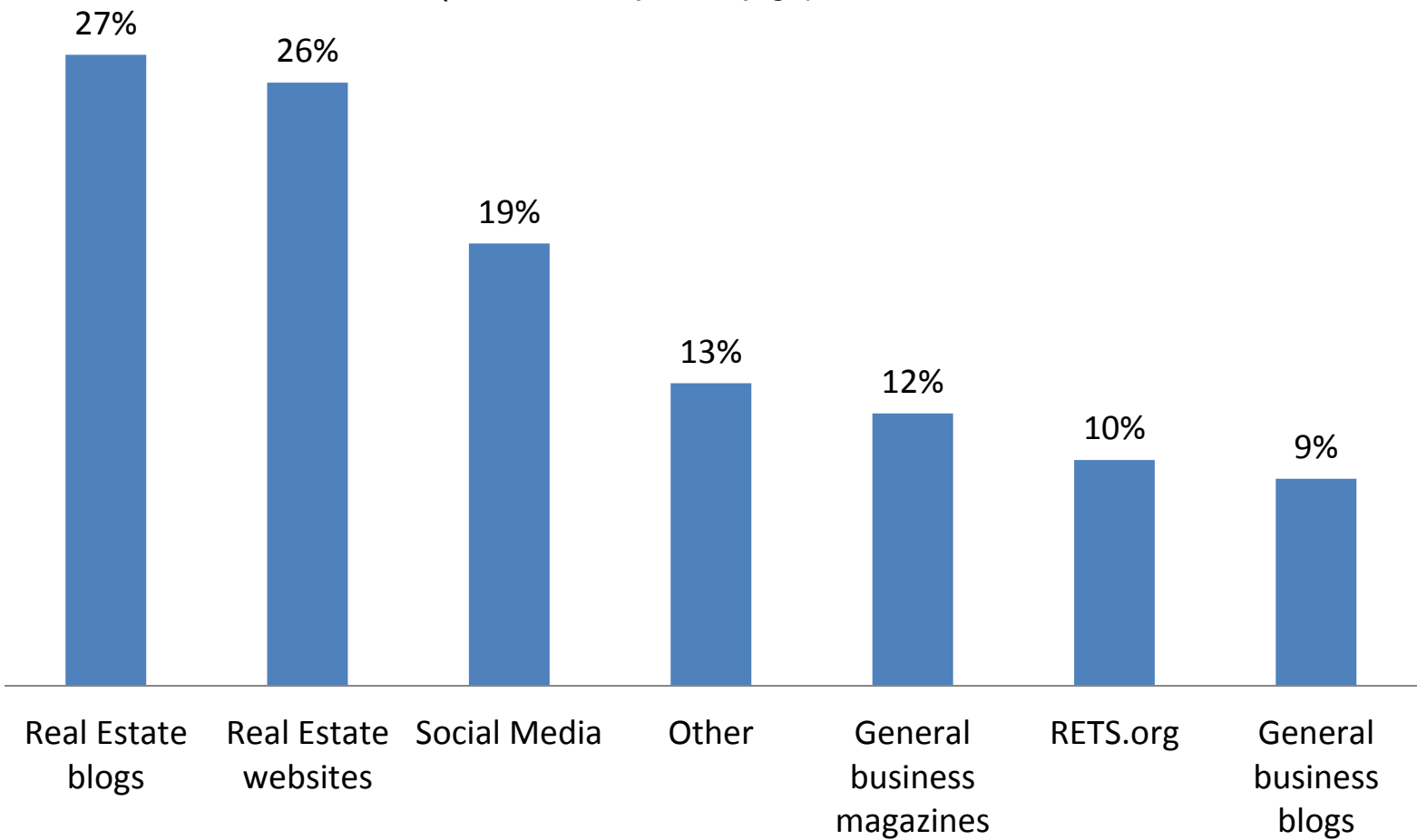
Where do you learn about new technology for your MLS?



Percentages will not add up to 100% as respondents were able to select more than one answer.

Where do you learn about new technology for your MLS?

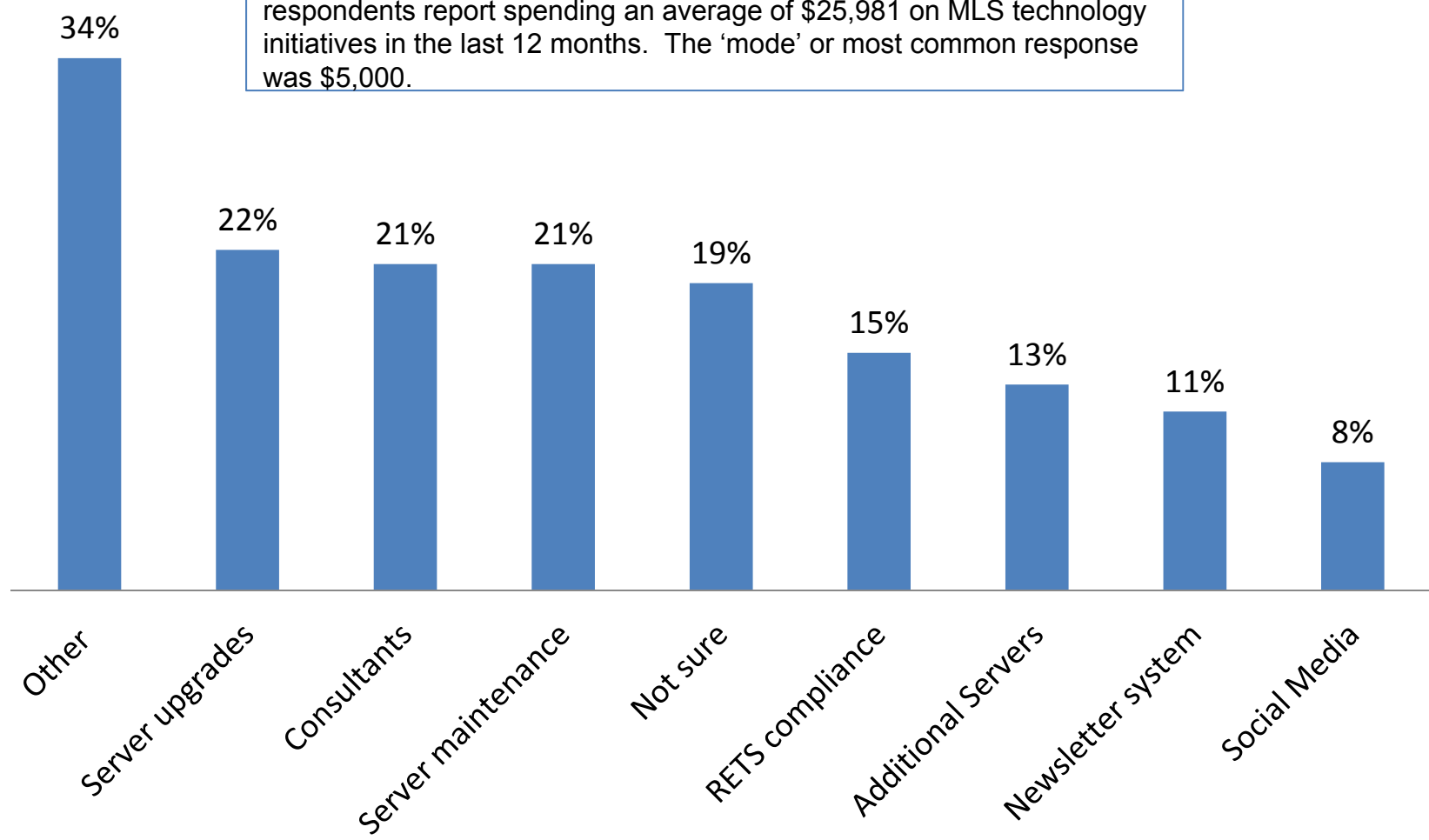
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‘Other’ unaided responses included MLS user groups and MLS vendors.

On what technology resources were these funds spent in the last 12 months?

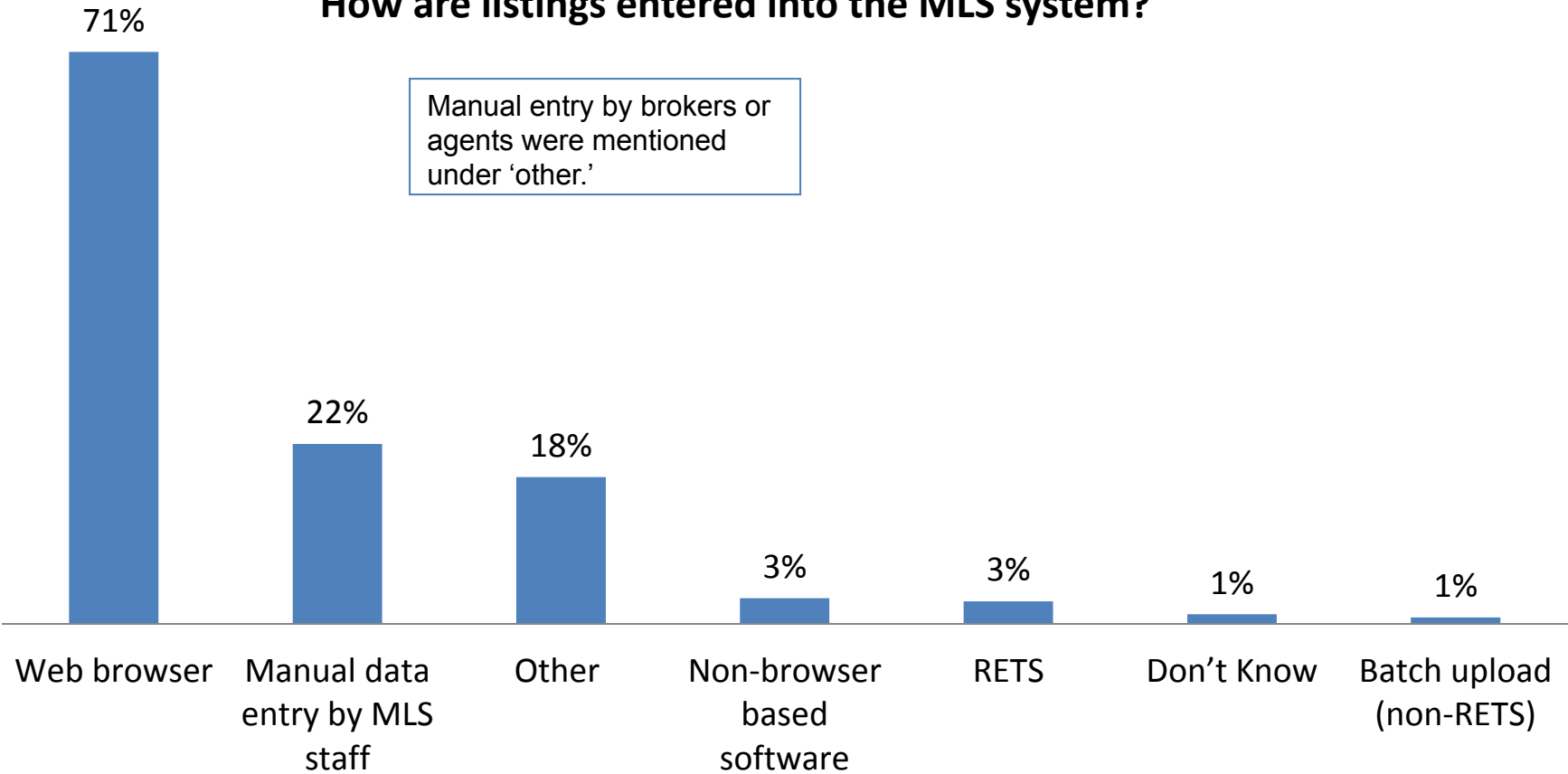
Not taking into account technology staff that support the MLS, respondents report spending an average of \$25,981 on MLS technology initiatives in the last 12 months. The 'mode' or most common response was \$5,000.



MLS software upgrades, mobile apps that interact with MLS data, security analytics and monitoring were mentioned under 'other.'

Business Practices

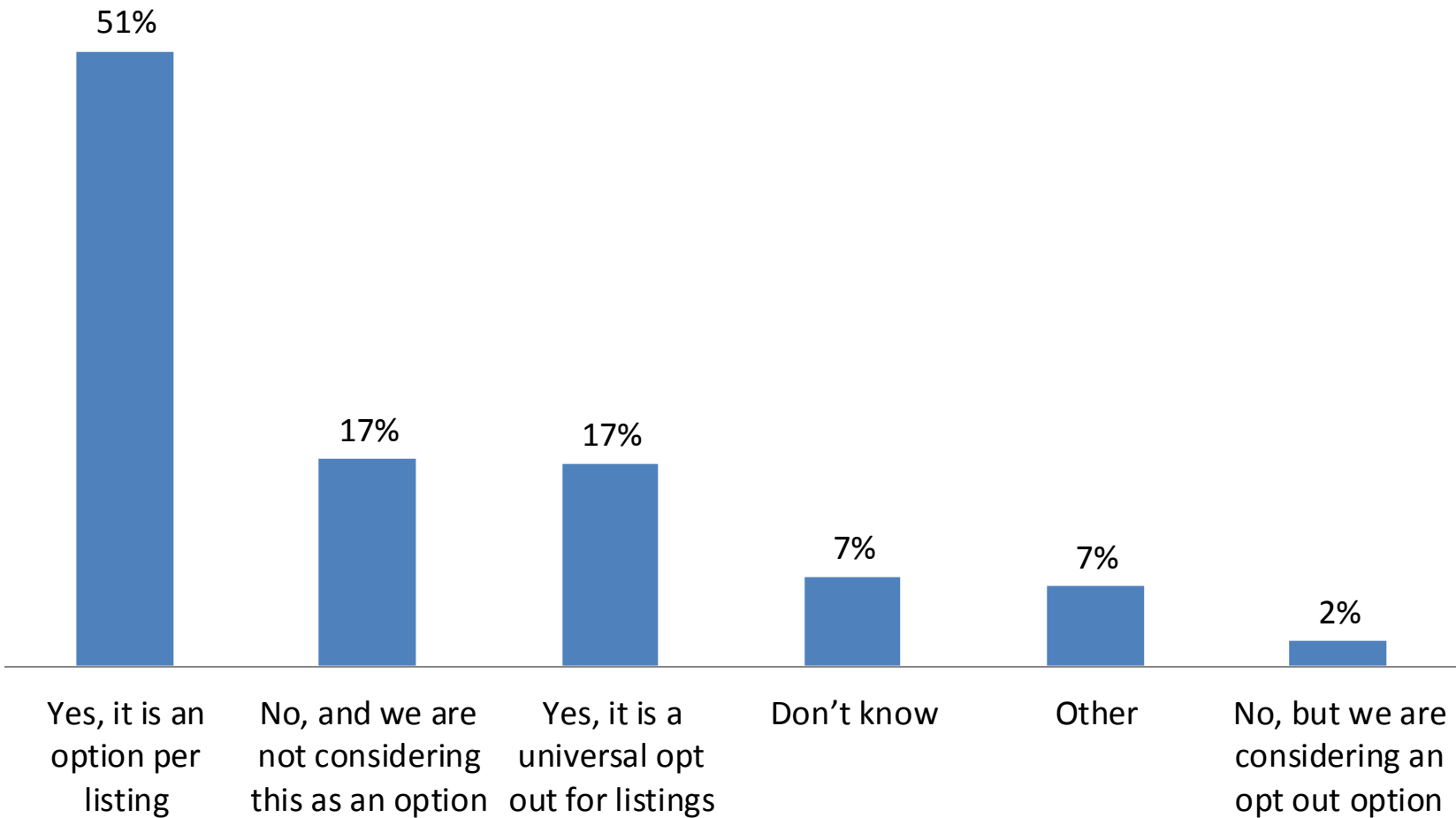
How are listings entered into the MLS system?



Percentages will not add up to 100% as respondents were able to select more than one answer.

Business Practices

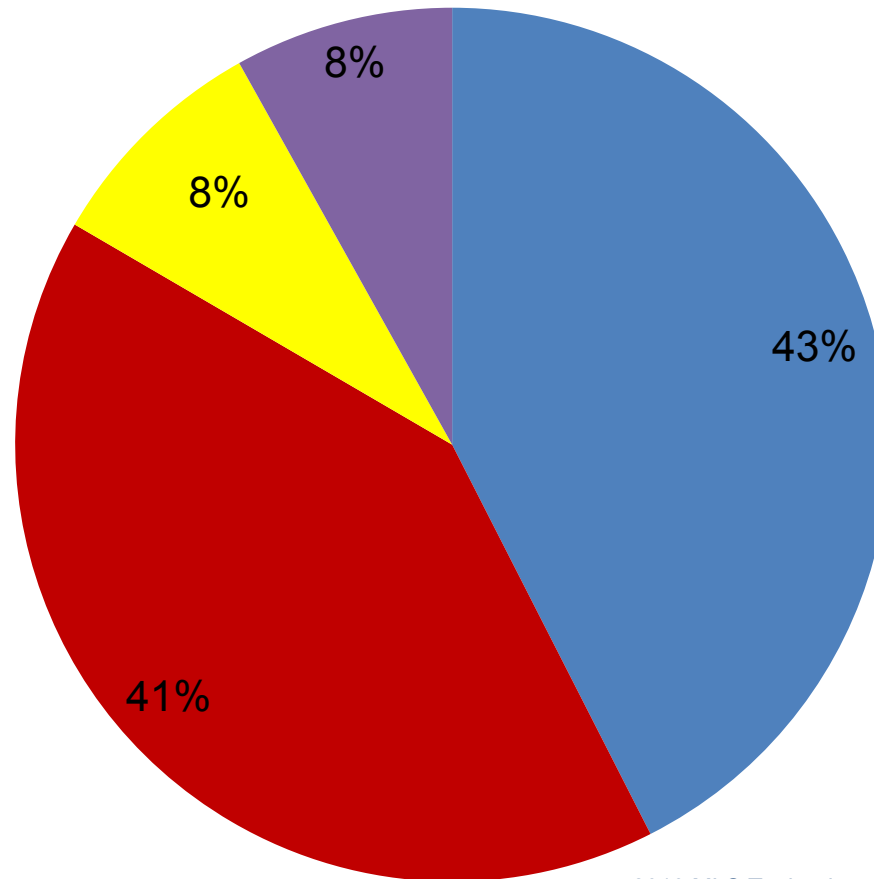
Do you offer your members an opt out of REALTOR.com?



Business Practices

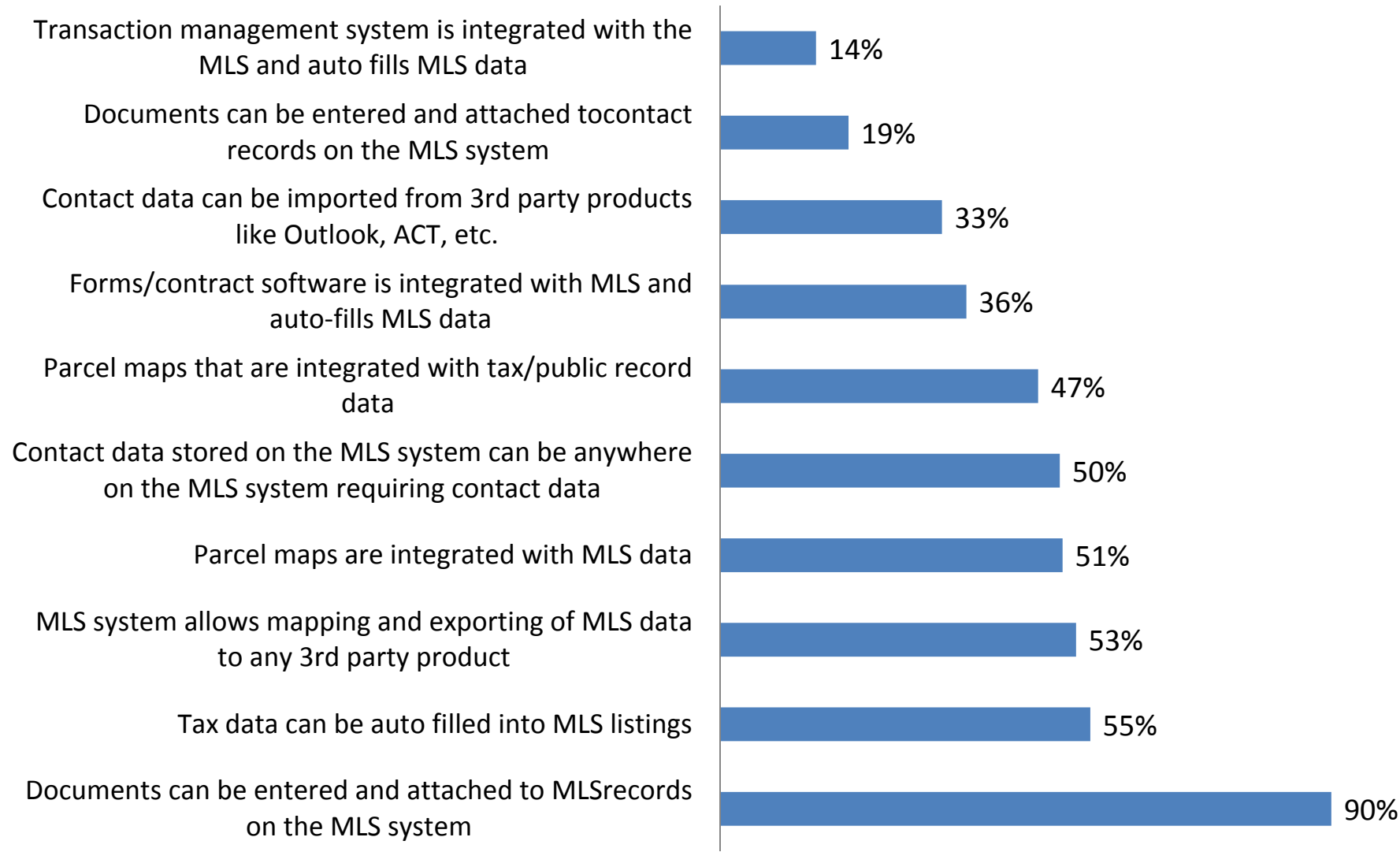
To what degree does listing data go through a quality control process before loading into the MLS system?

- Some amount of quality control before loading
- No quality control before loading
- Intensive quality control before loading
- Not Sure



Business Practices

Where is data integrated on your MLS system?

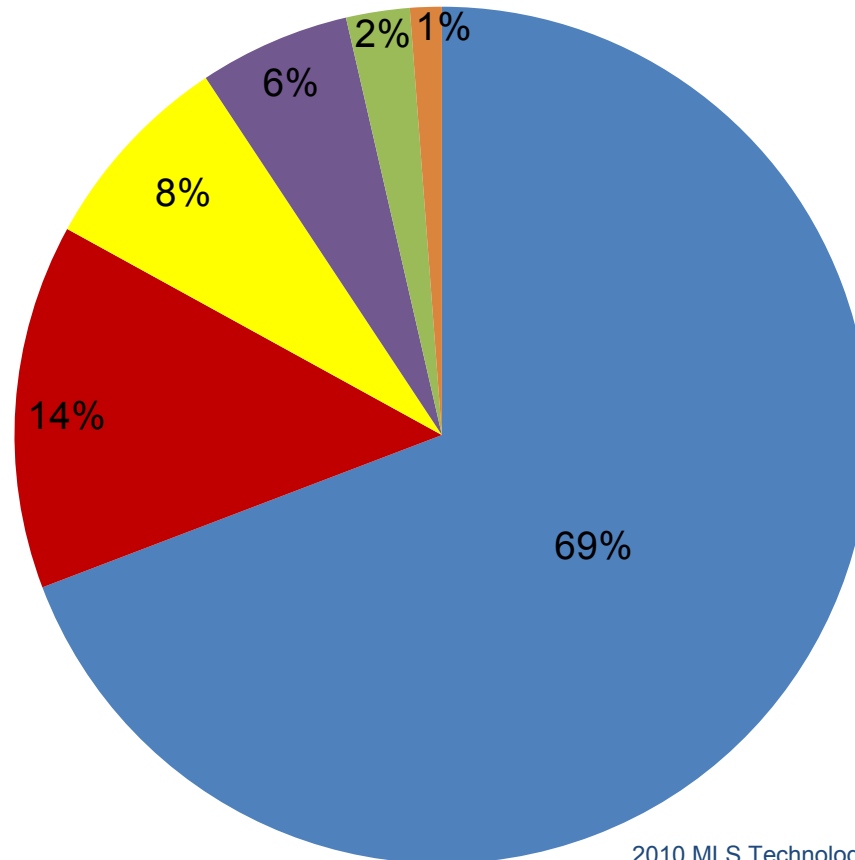


Percentages will not add up to 100% as respondents were able to select more than one answer.

Business Practices

If your MLS is considering consolidation with one or more MLSs, when might it occur?

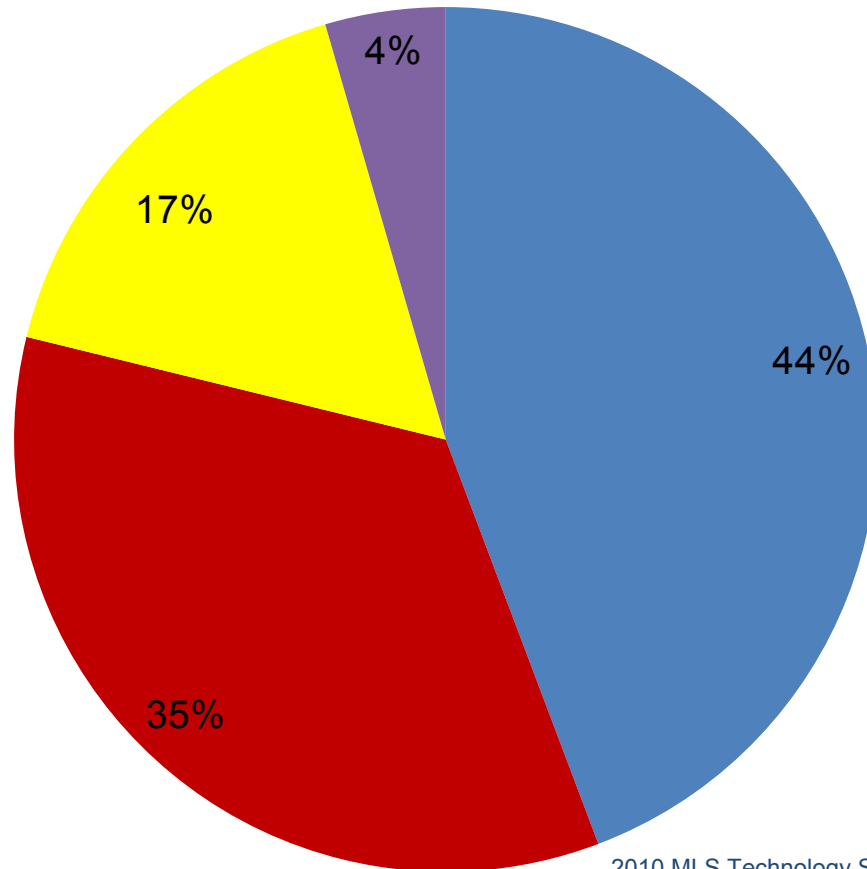
- My MLS is not considering consolidation at this time
- Not sure
- MLS consolidation is in the works but the time frame is not set
- My MLS consolidated with another MLS a while ago
- MLS consolidation is in the works and should occur in the next 6 months
- MLS consolidation is in the works and should occur in the next 7-18 months



Business Practices

Do you have reciprocal data sharing agreements with other MLSs?

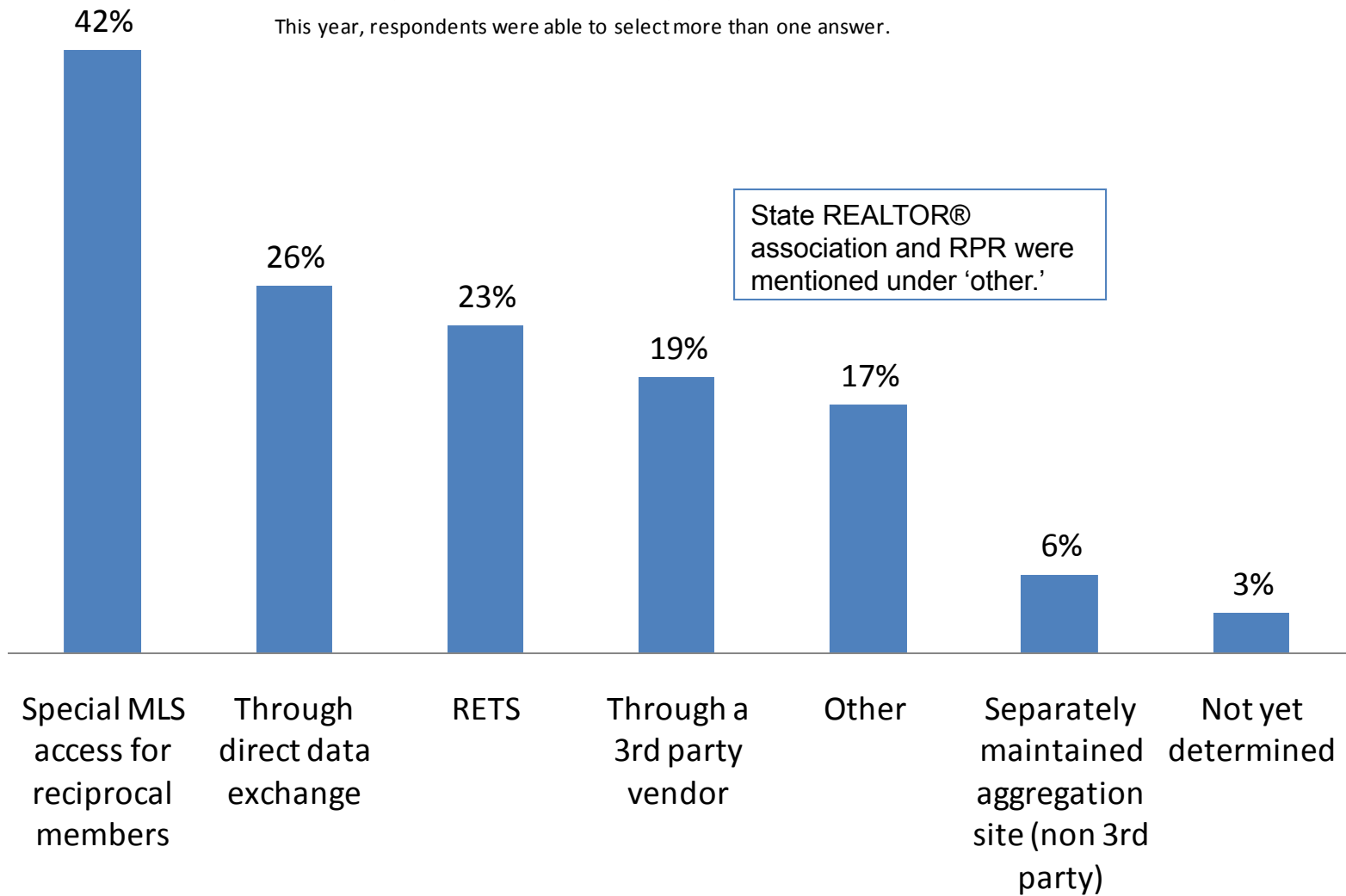
- Yes
- No, and my MLS does not plan on having one soon
- No, but my MLS is considering an agreement for the future
- Not sure



Business Practices

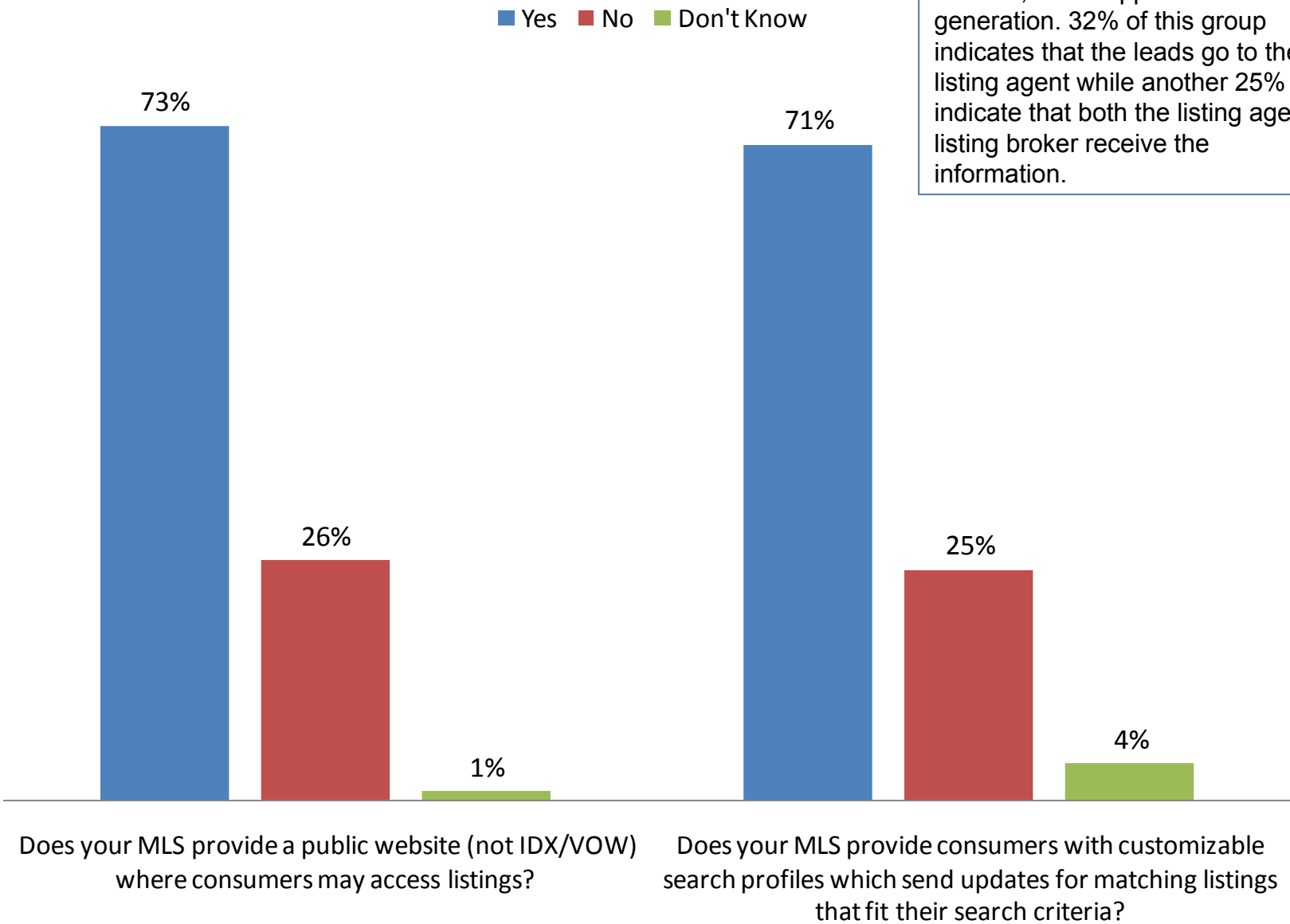
How do you or how will you share data?

This year, respondents were able to select more than one answer.



Percentages will not add up to 100% as respondents were able to select more than one answer.

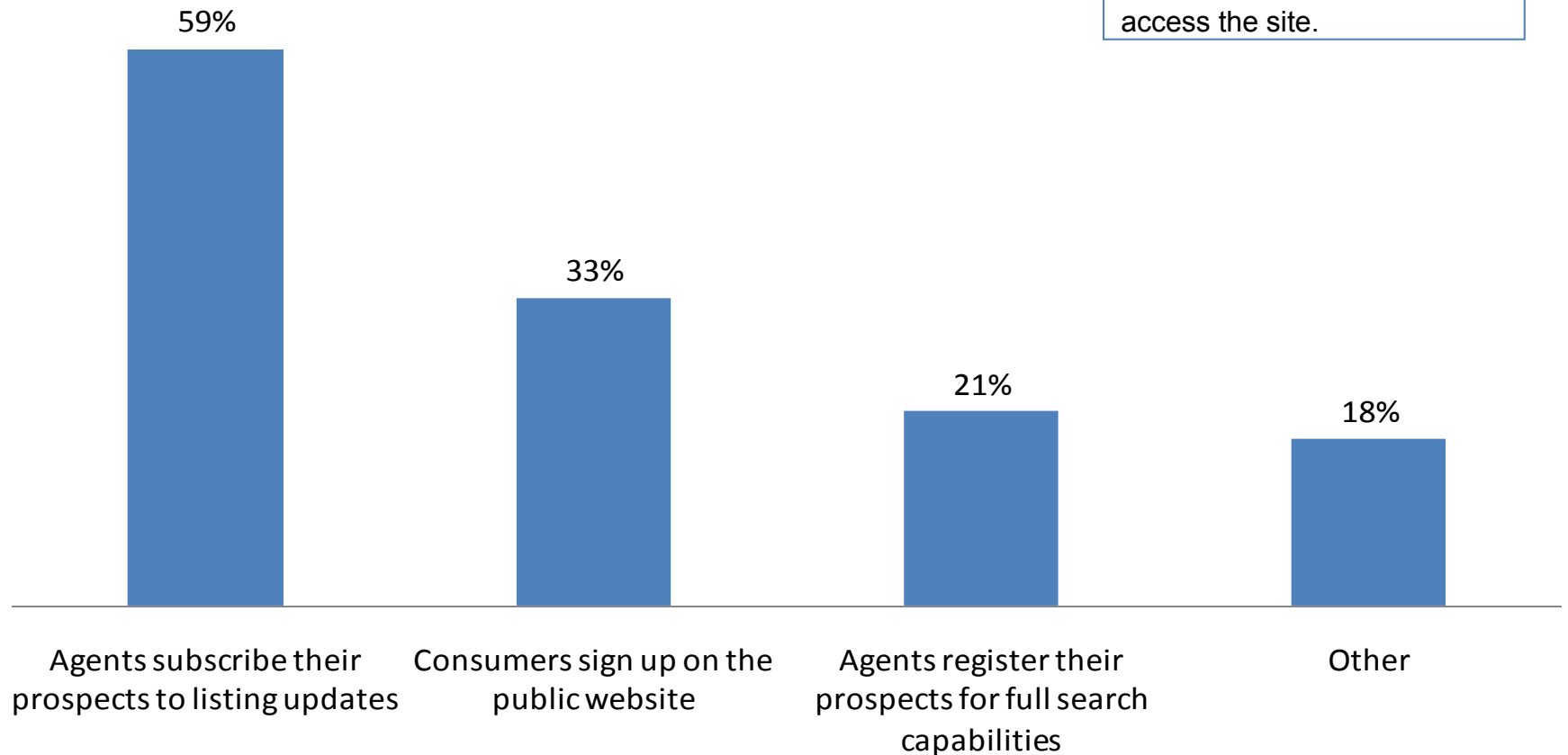
Public Websites



Public Websites

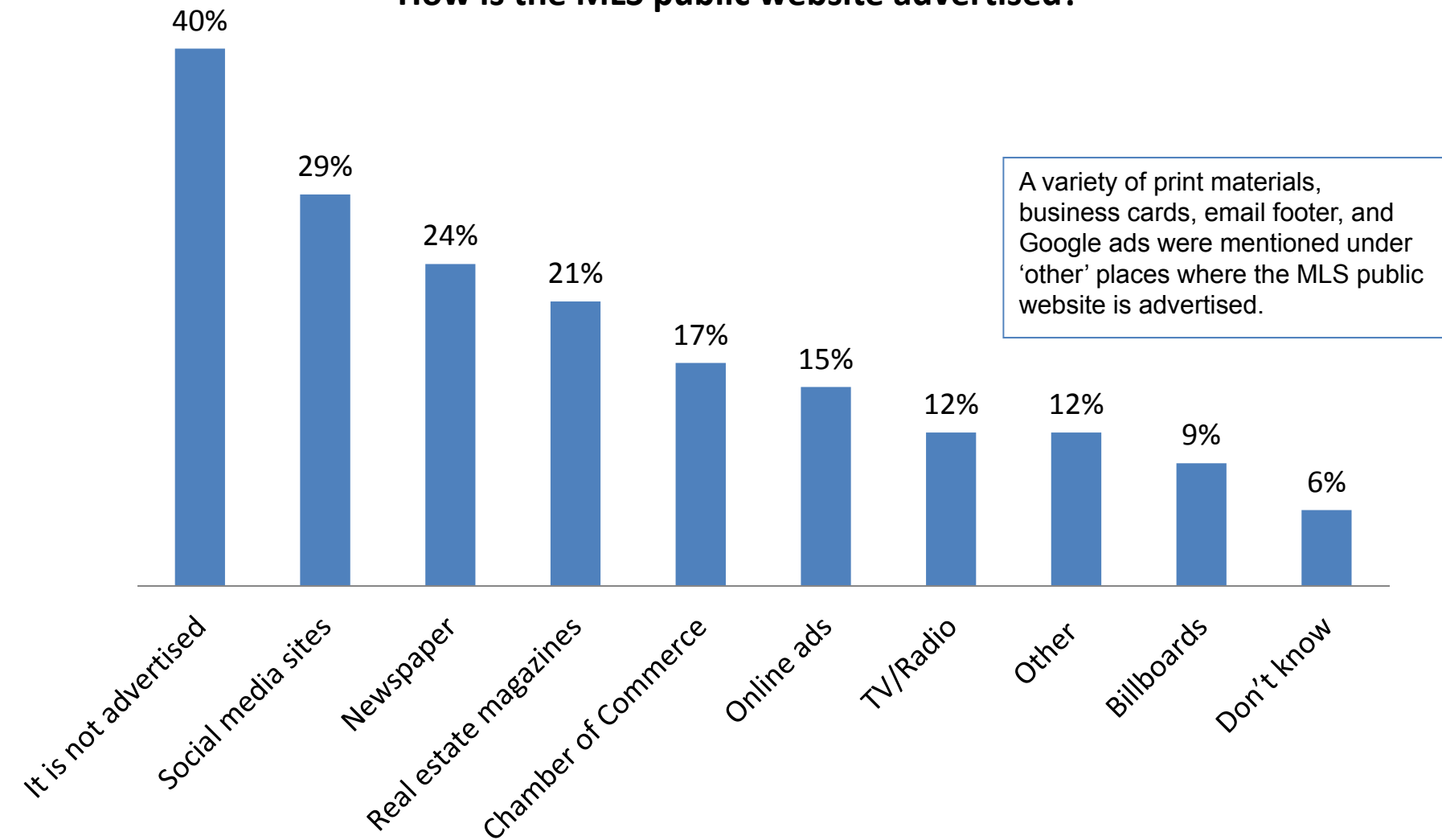
How do consumers get access to search profiles on your MLS site?

Under 'other' a few indicate that a broker's office gives clients information on how to access the site.



Public Websites

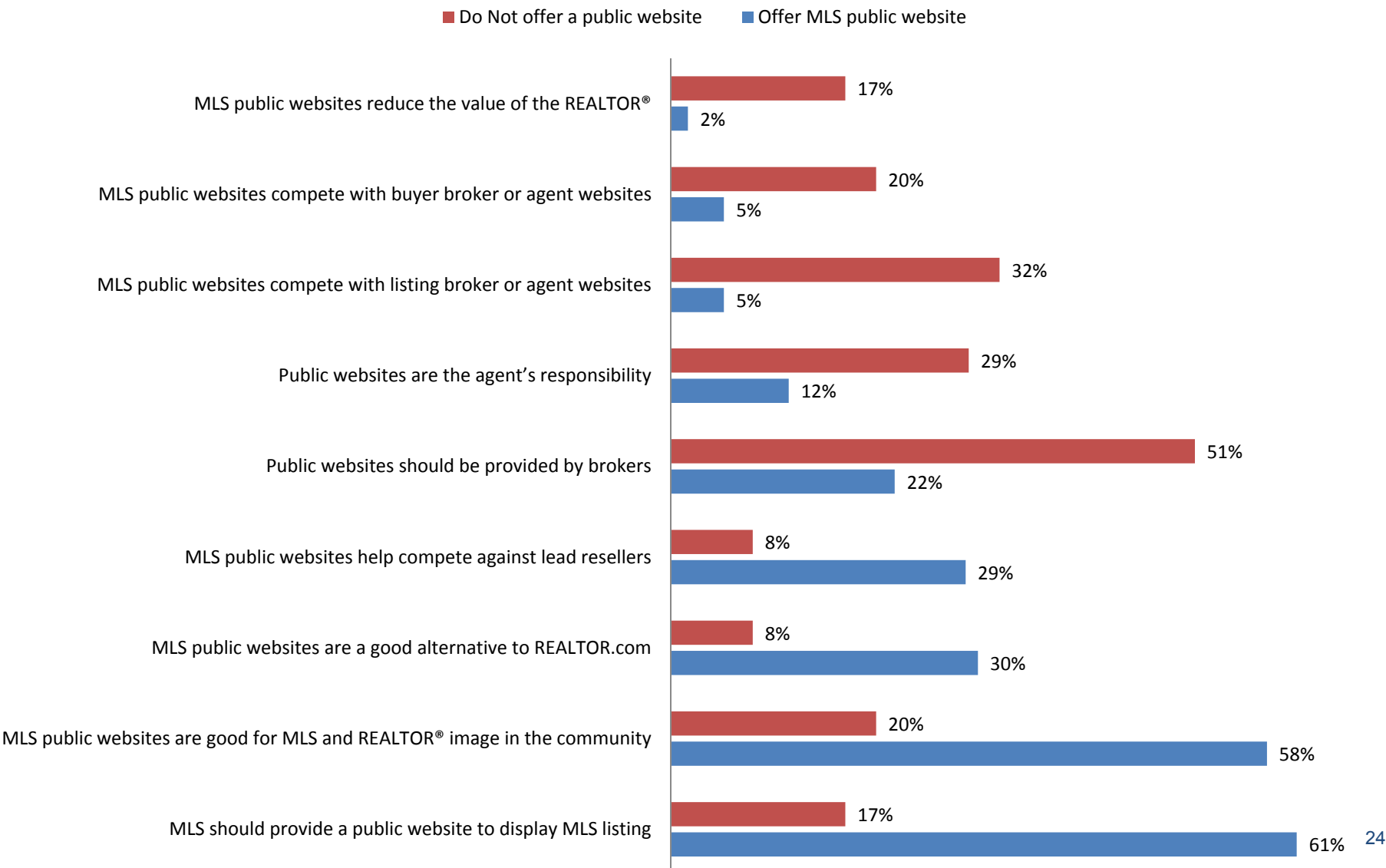
How is the MLS public website advertised?



Percentages will not add up to 100% as respondents were able to select more than one answer.

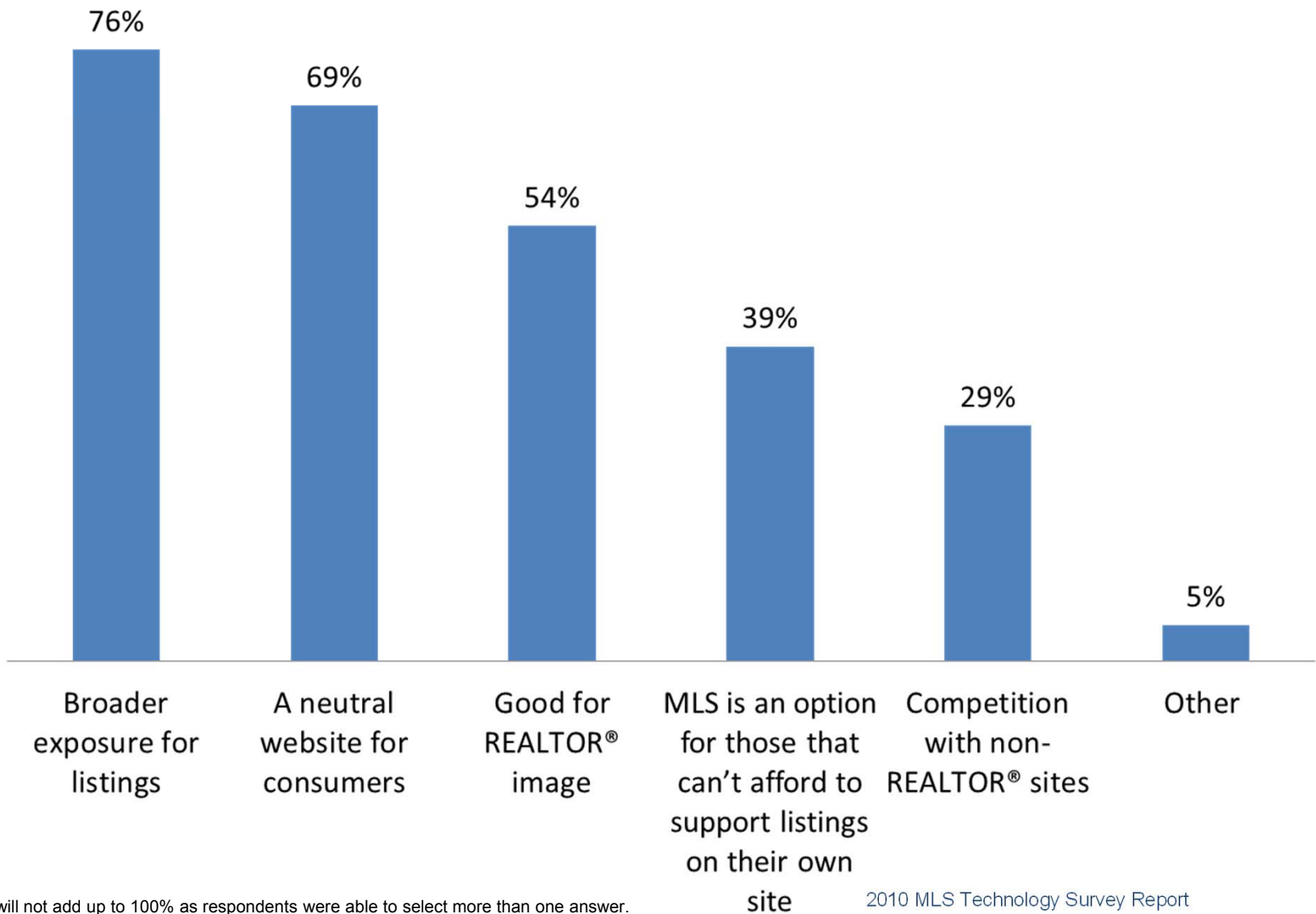
Public Websites

Which of the following describe your position regarding MLS public websites?



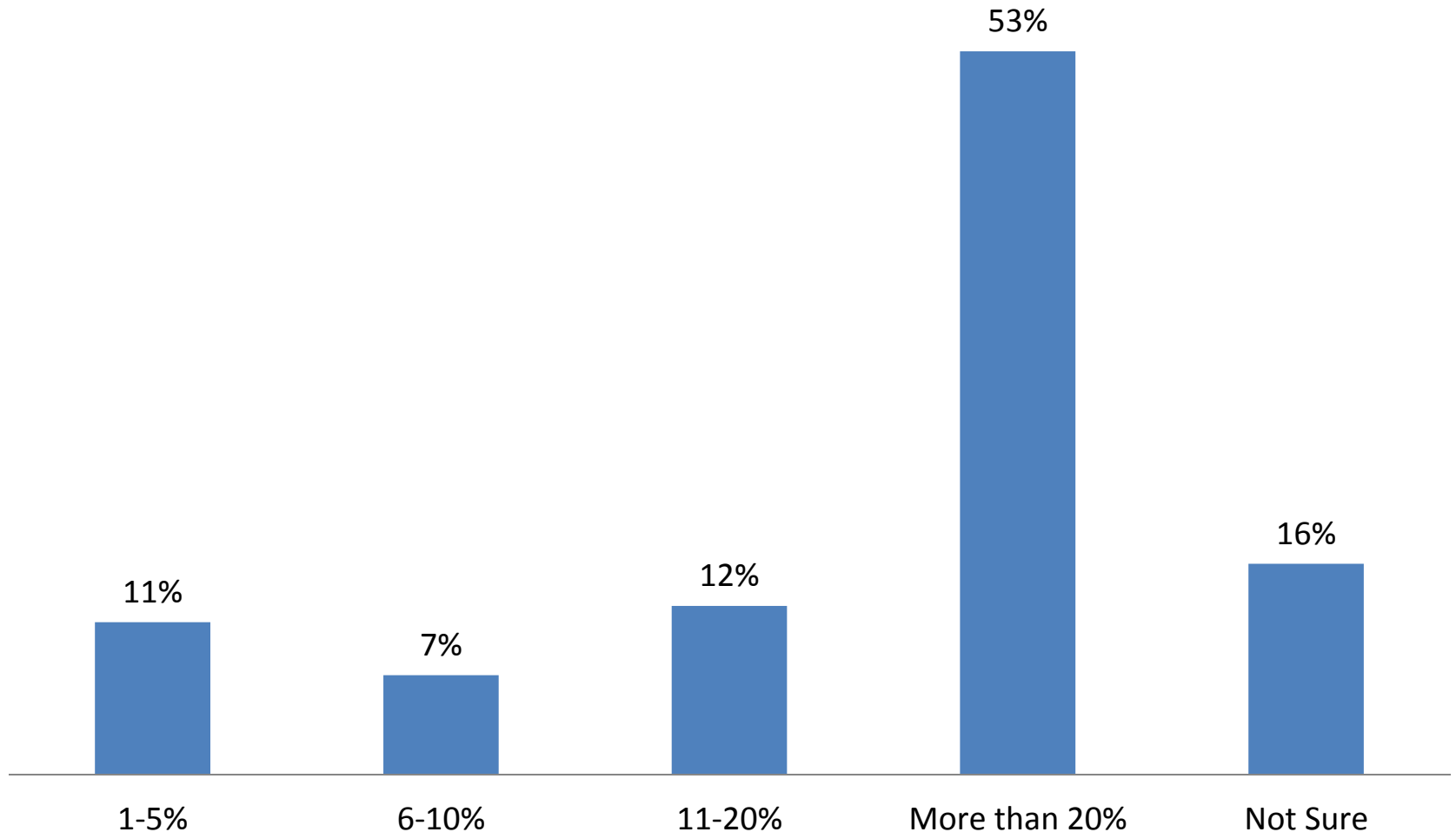
Public Websites

What benefits result from an MLS-supplied public web site?



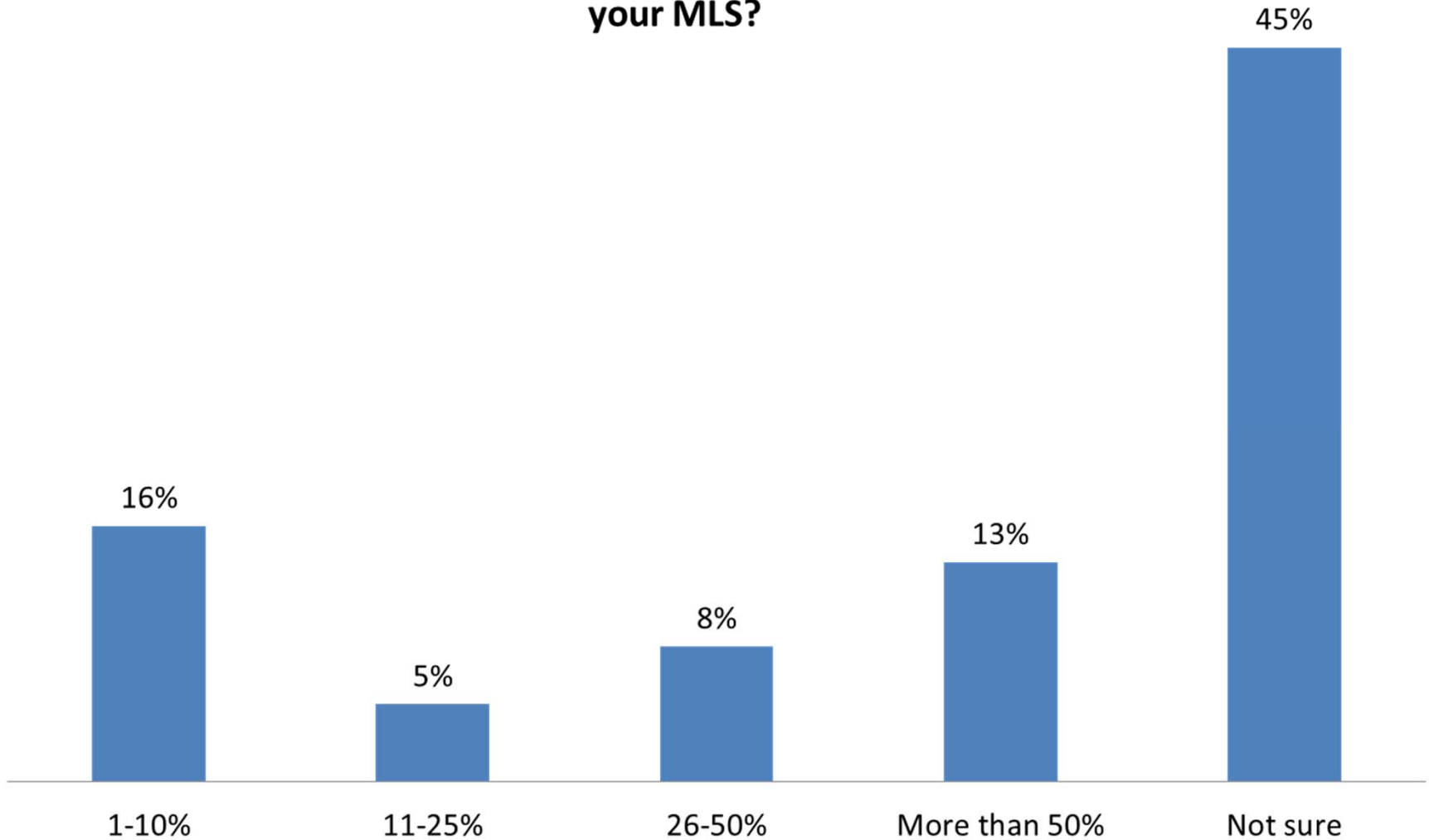
Member Usage (VOW/IDX)

What percentage of your members presently operate an IDX/VOW site(s)?



Member Usage (VOW/IDX)

What percentage of your members download historical sales data from your MLS?



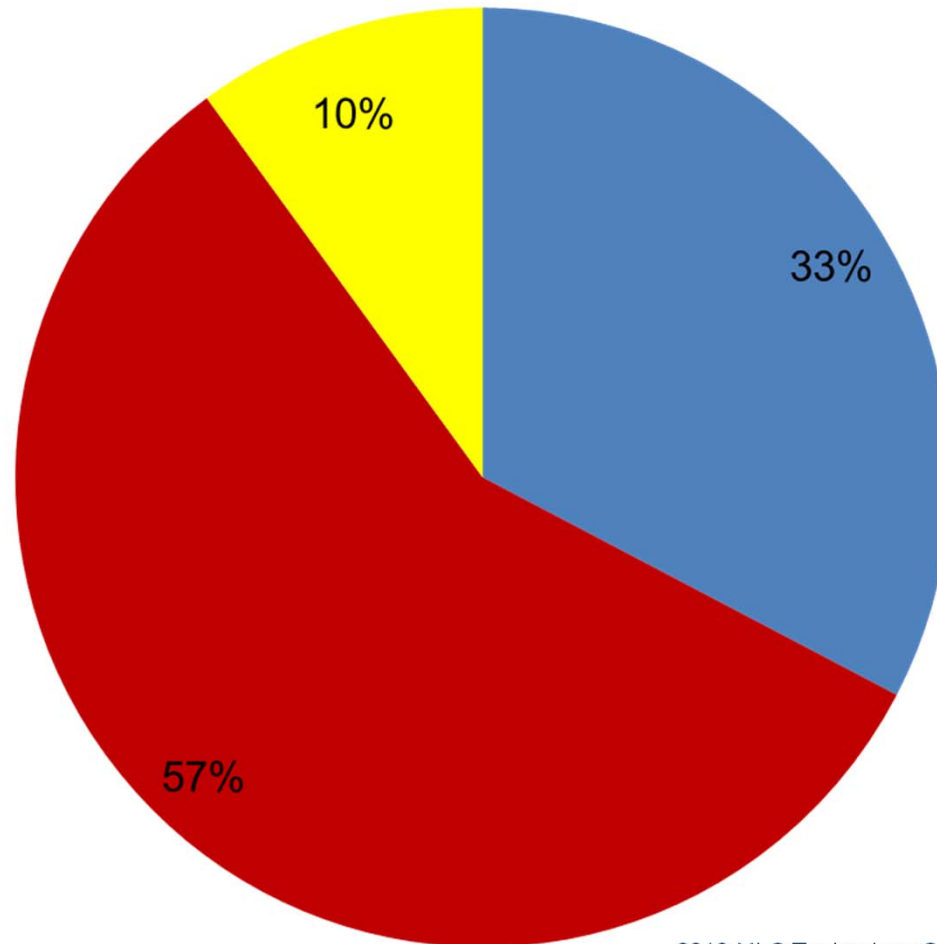
Member Usage (VOW/IDX)

Would your MLS be willing to accept a new listing feed directly from a broker's system?

■ Yes

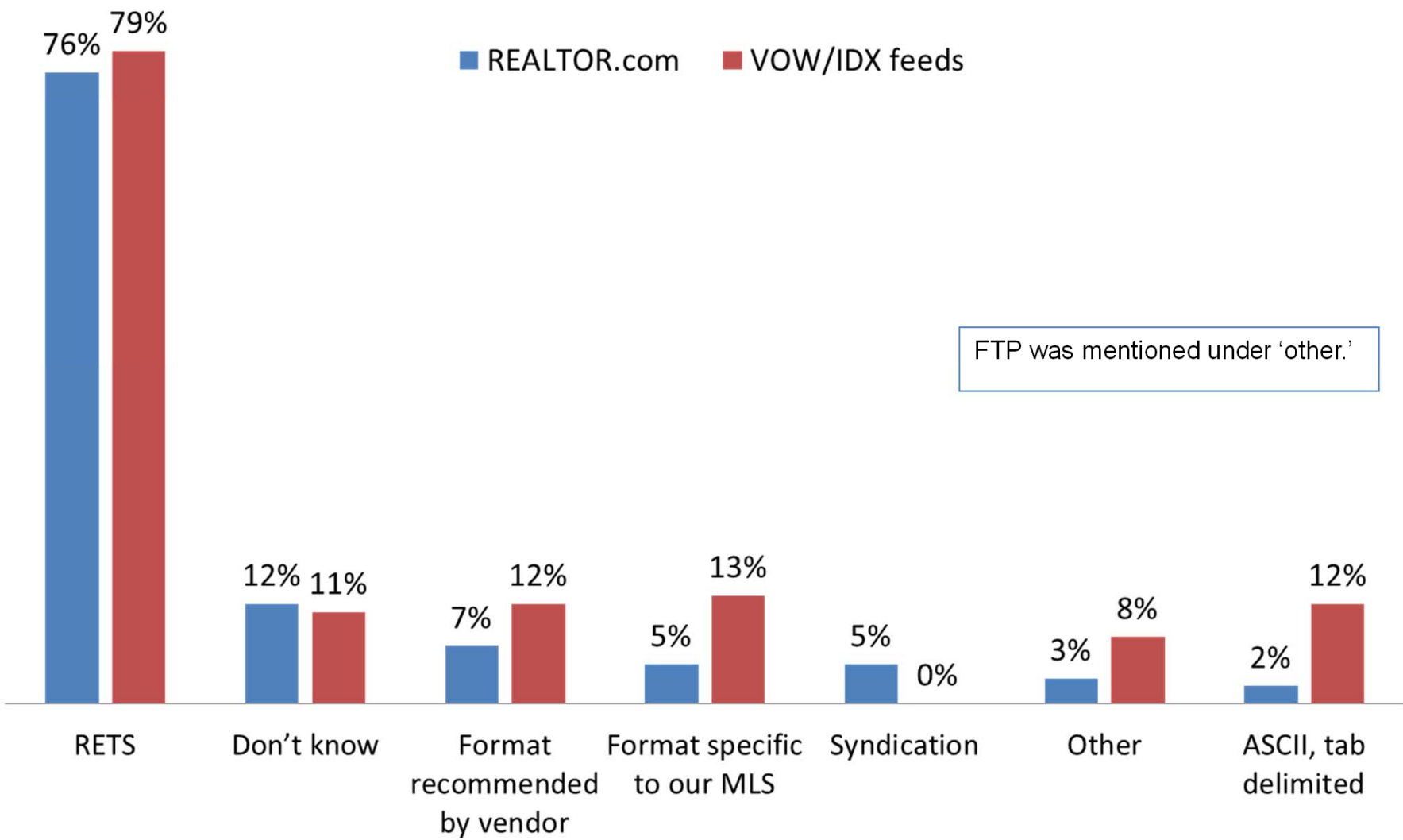
■ No

■ Already do



Member Usage (VOW/IDX)

In what format do you make data available to...



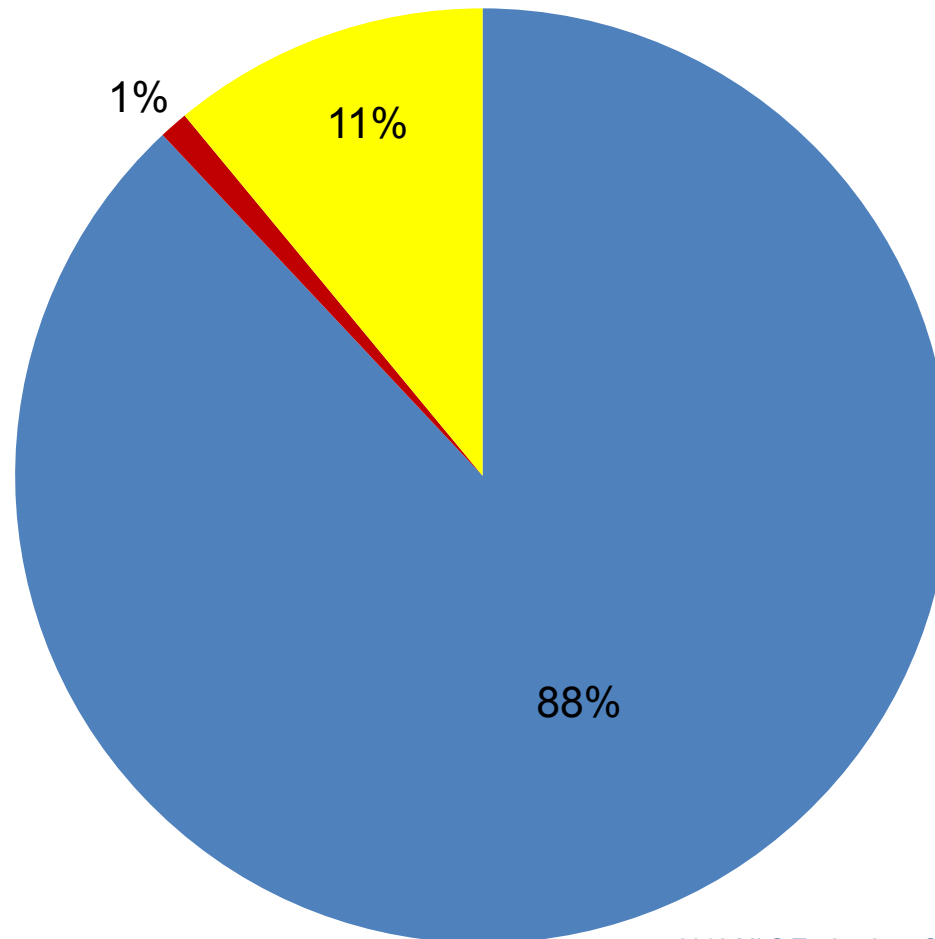
RETS

Does your MLS system have a RETS interface?

■ Yes

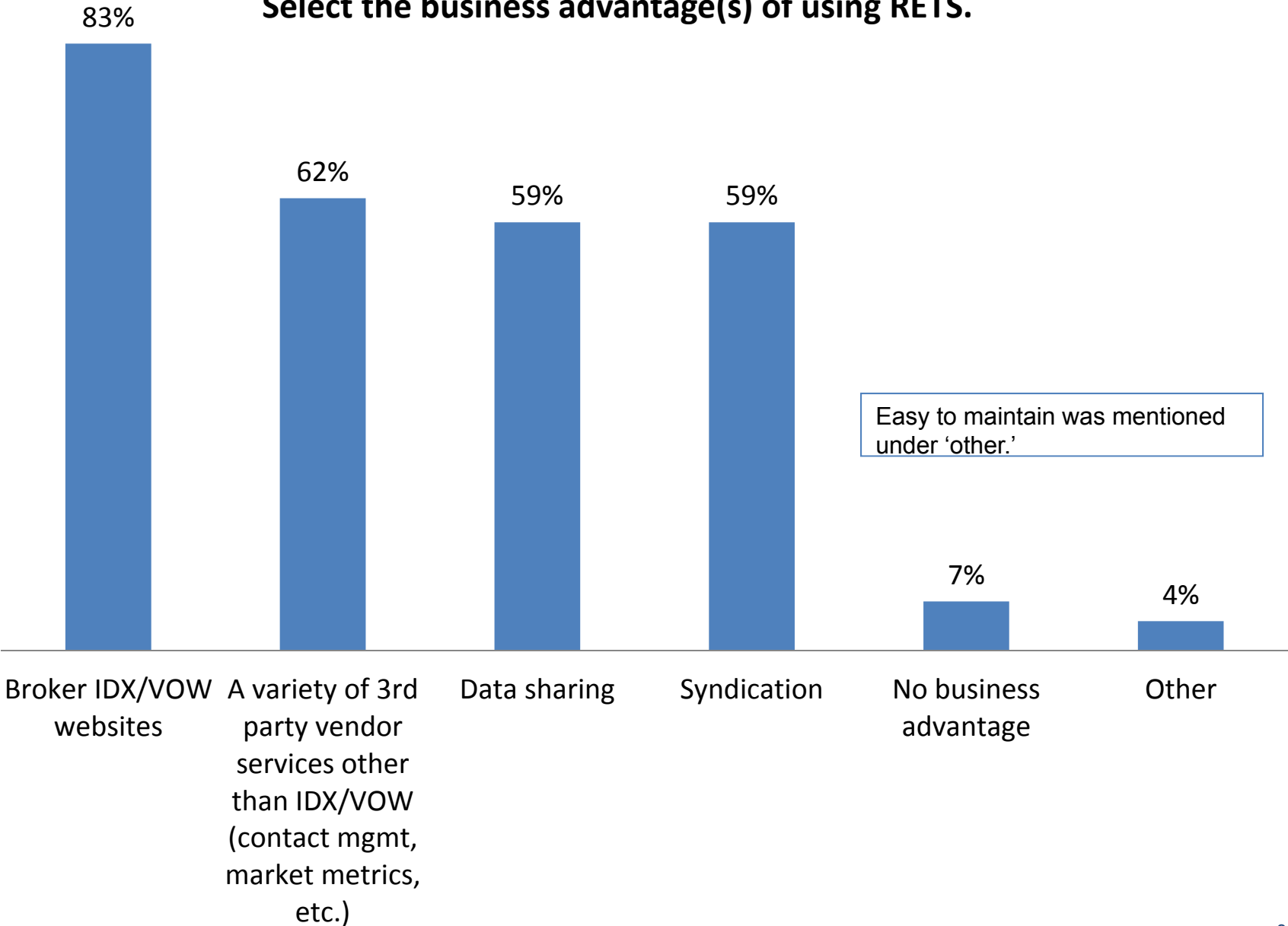
■ No

■ Not sure



RETS

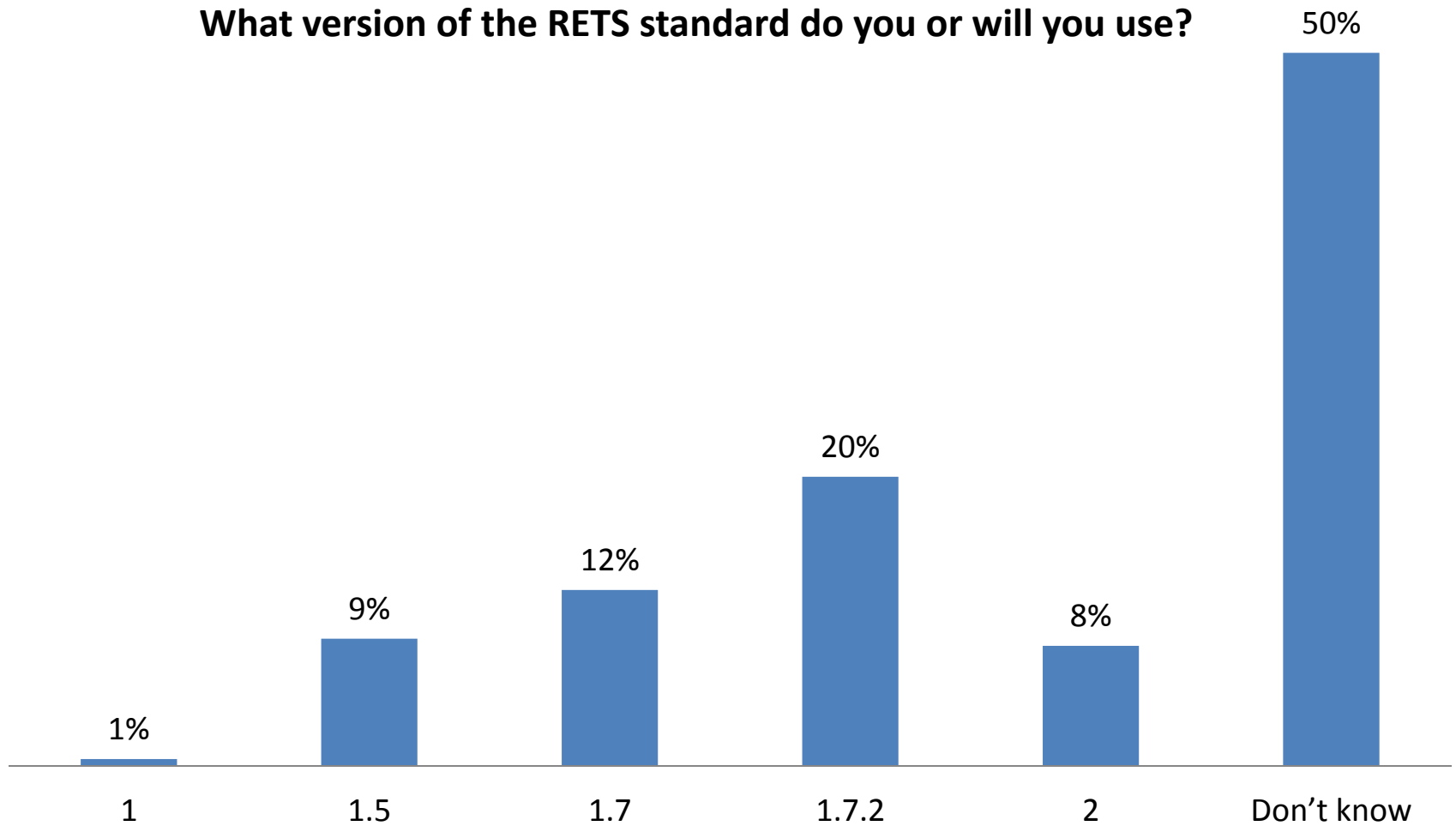
Select the business advantage(s) of using RETS.



Percentages will not add up to 100% as respondents were able to select more than one answer.

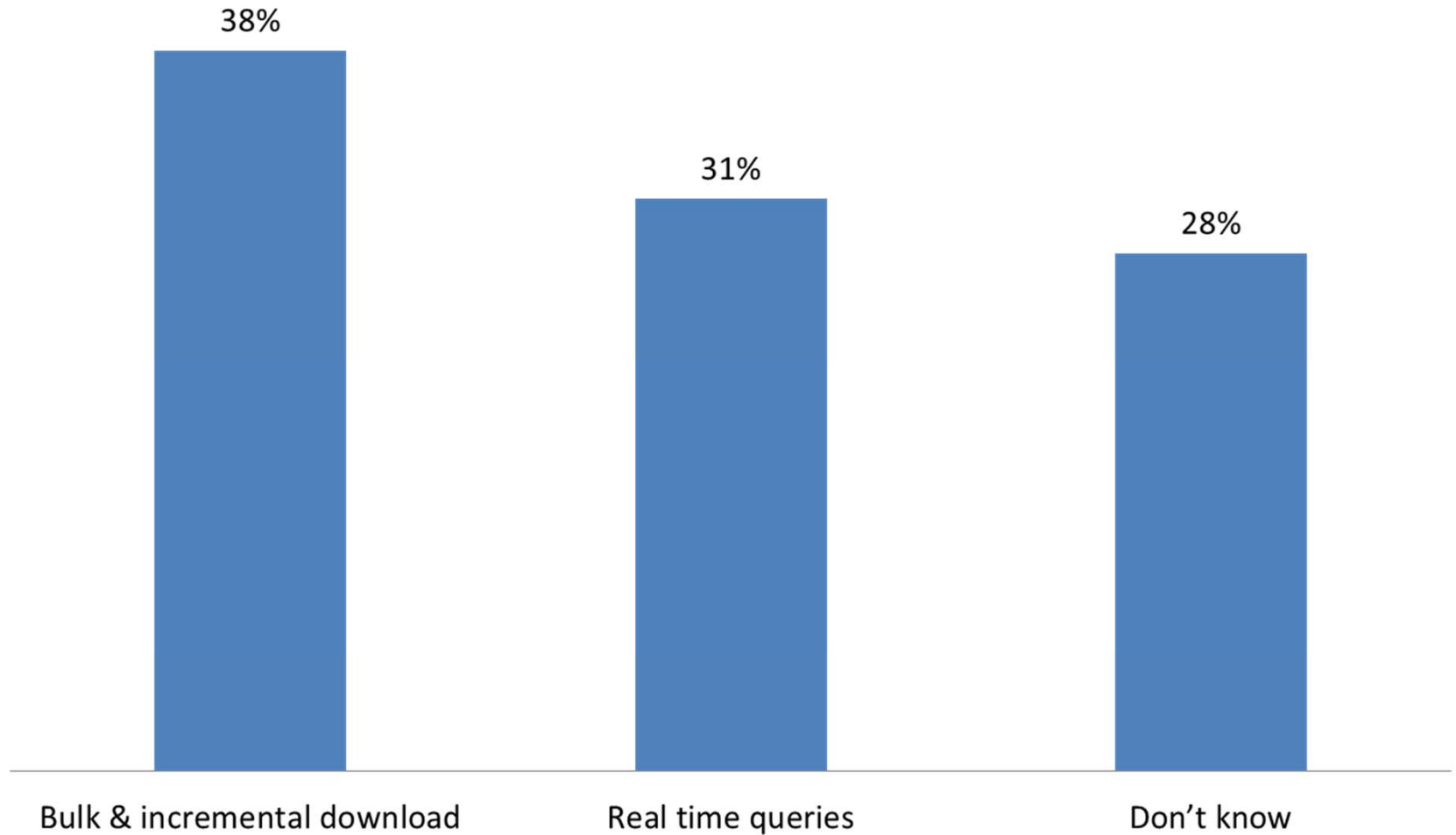
RETS

What version of the RETS standard do you or will you use?



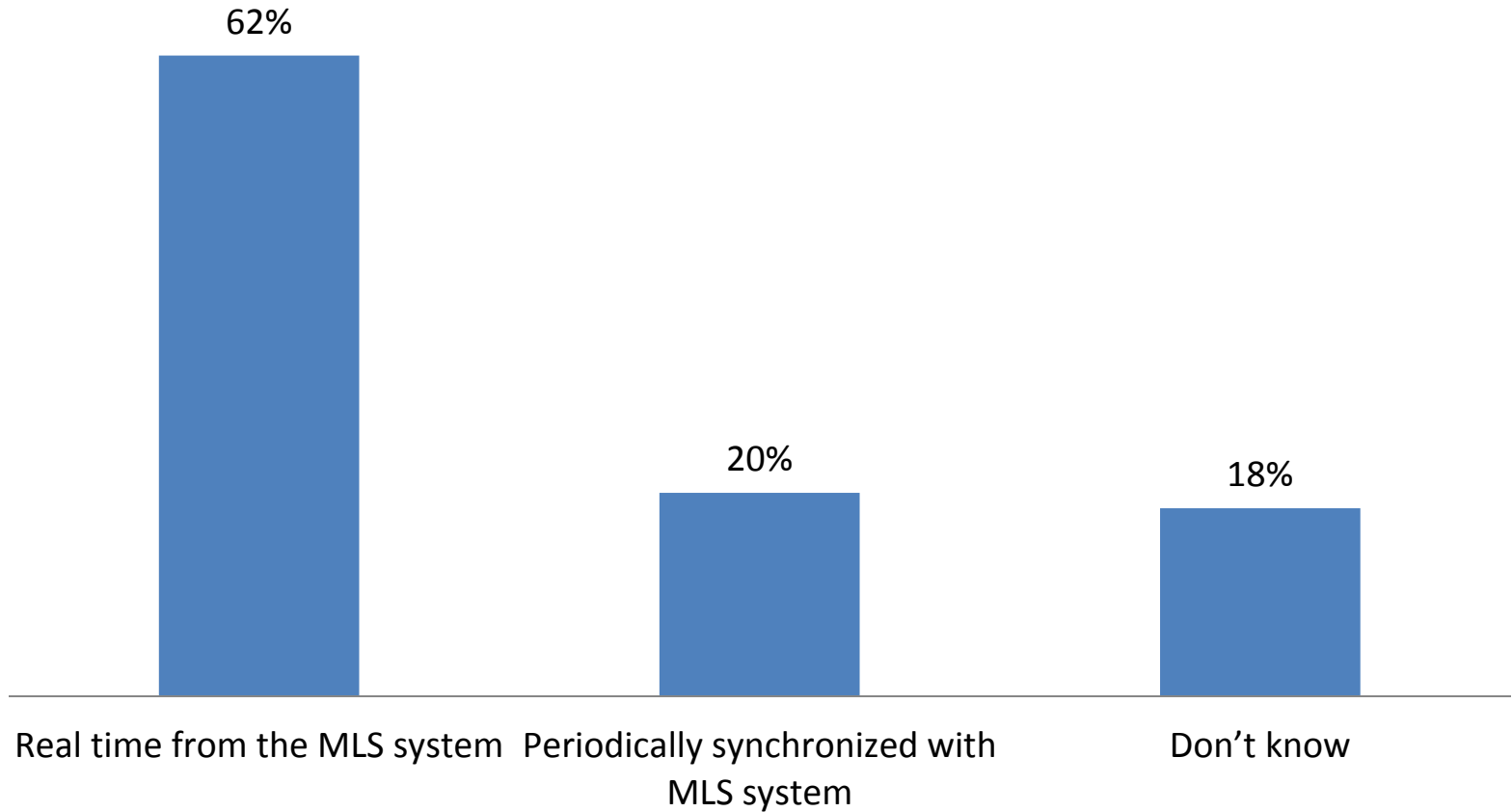
RETS

How is RETS primarily used or how will it be used?



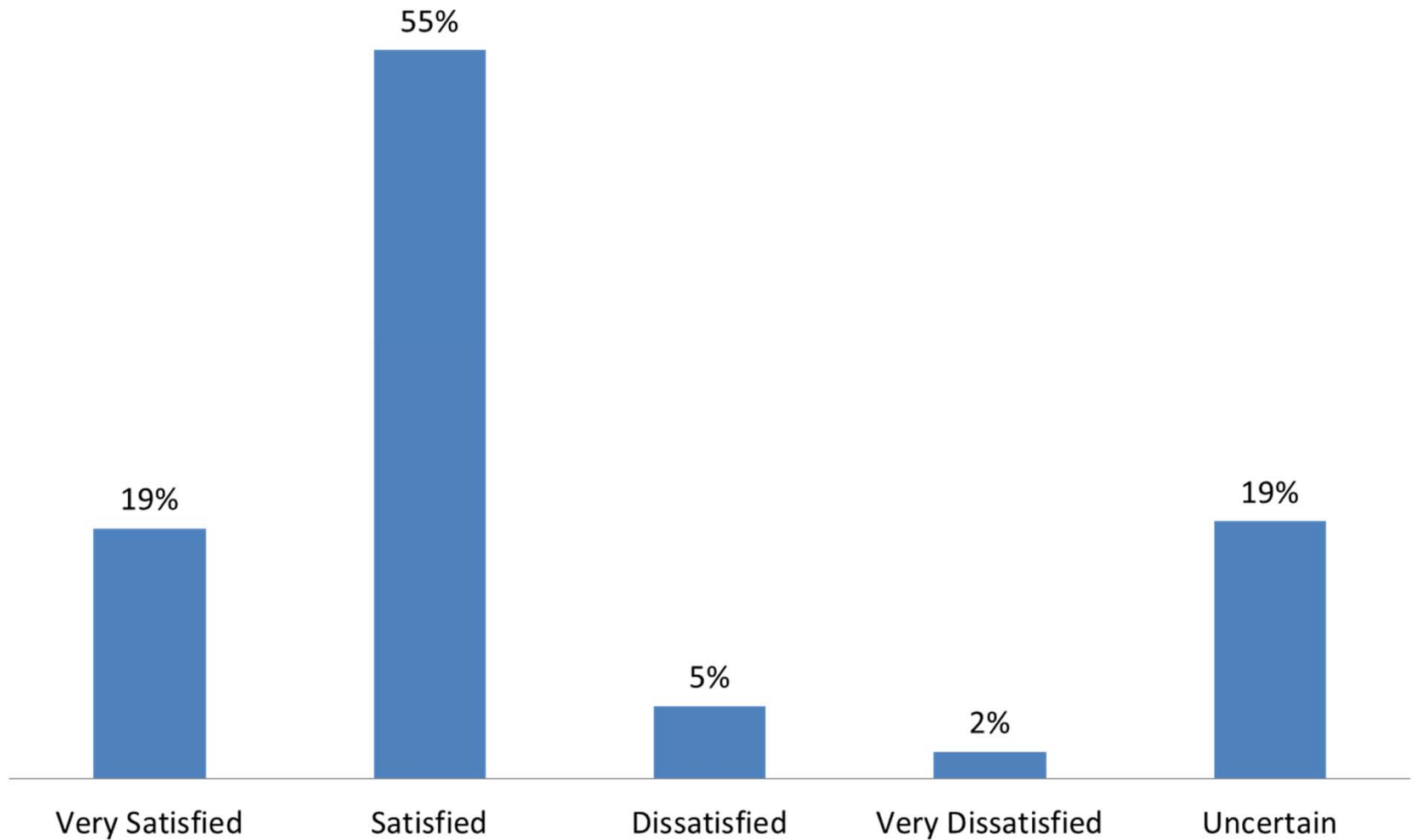
RETS

Is or will the data provided by RETS be:



RETS

How satisfied are you with the RETS stand



Syndication

Do you syndicate on behalf of members?

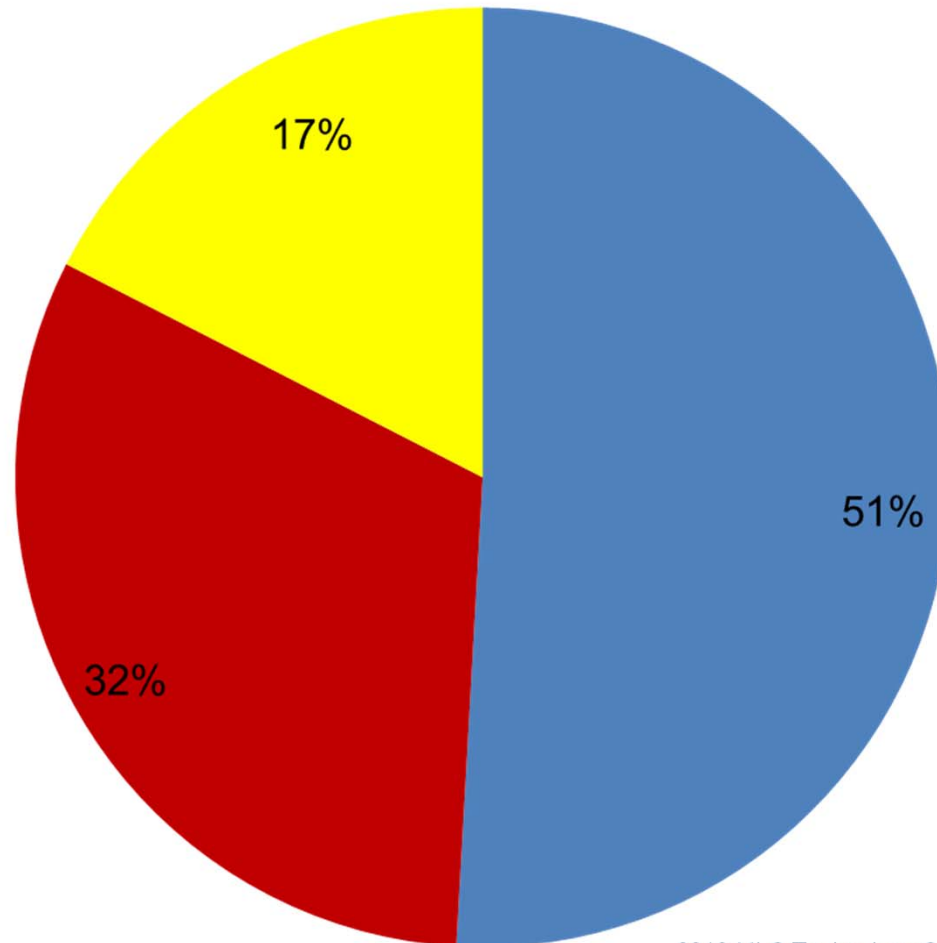
■ Yes

■ No

■ Don't Know

Those that syndicate do it in order to get greater exposure for listings. These MLSs perceive syndication as being a member benefit.

Of those that do not syndicate, more than half are not considering syndication at all. A few reasons that discourage syndication include: they do not want to deal with feeds; cost per month to syndicate is high; agents and brokers may already belong to real estate companies that syndicate; and/or MLSs do not want to lose control of data.

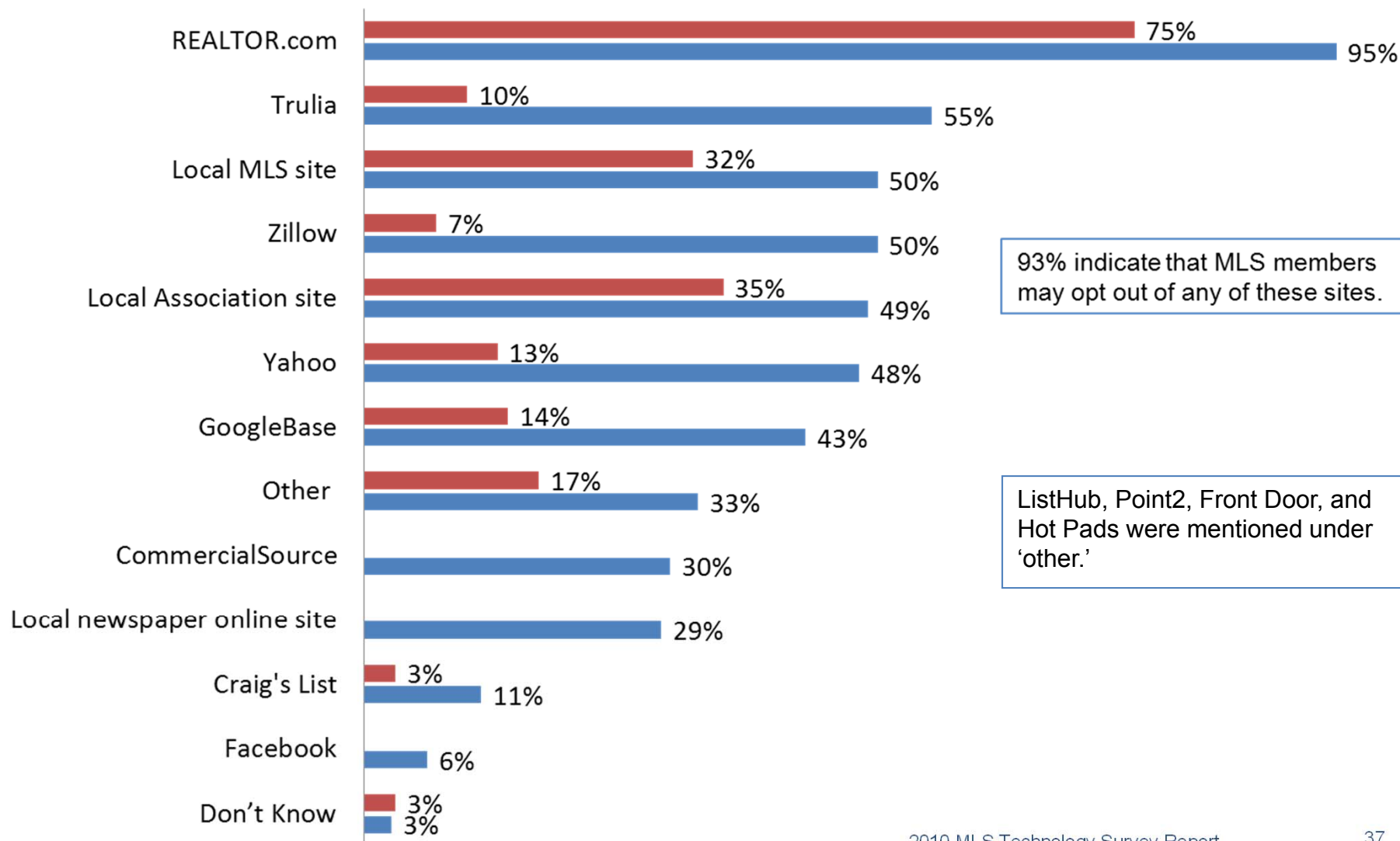


Syndication

Where is the MLS placing listings?

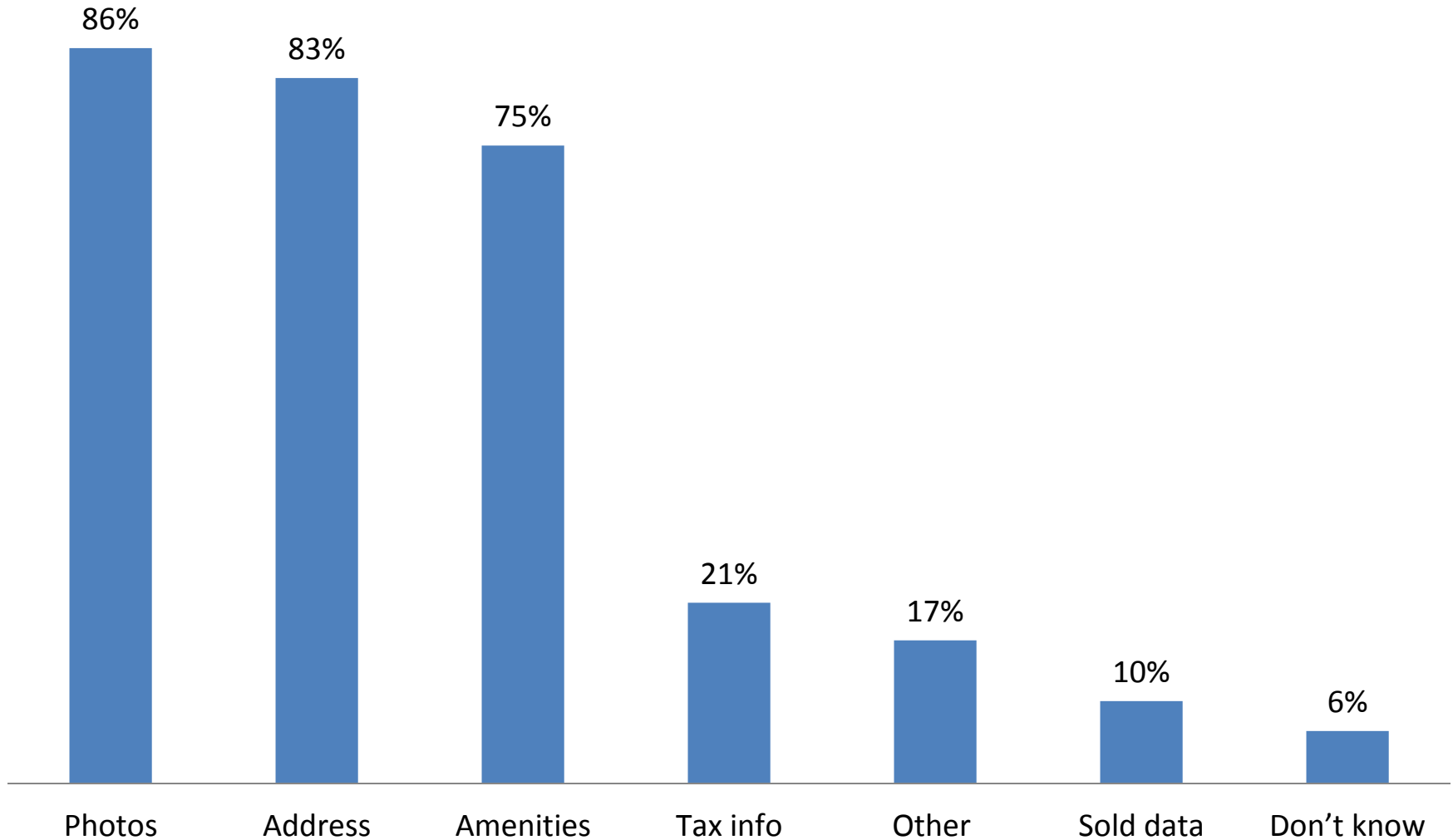
Comparison chart of the following years

■ 2007 ■ 2010



Syndication

What does your MLS include in listings sent to third parties?



Percentages will not add up to 100% as respondents were able to select more than one answer.

Future of the MLS

Respondents were asked how the role of the MLS will evolve over the next three years.

The most common responses are noted below.

These responses are not statistically significant.

- The MLS will be accessible via mobile tools like the iPad and smartphones.
 - These will be integrated with social media tools for easy access
- The importance of Professionalism within real estate will continue to grow.
- Agent and broker ratings will become commonplace in many MLS templates.
 - Members will have to maintain acceptable ratings otherwise the MLS will reserve the right to terminate that relationship.
- There will be browser neutral MLS tools.
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- 'MLS of choice' is a possibility.



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Several technology resources and applications, specific to real estate brokers, agents, & associations, are provided by CRT at no cost. To learn more about CRT and the many technology resources available through CRT, visit www.REALTOR.org/CRT.

