Evolution of Communications Models

WFA Media Forum Snap Poll | February 2026

About this poll

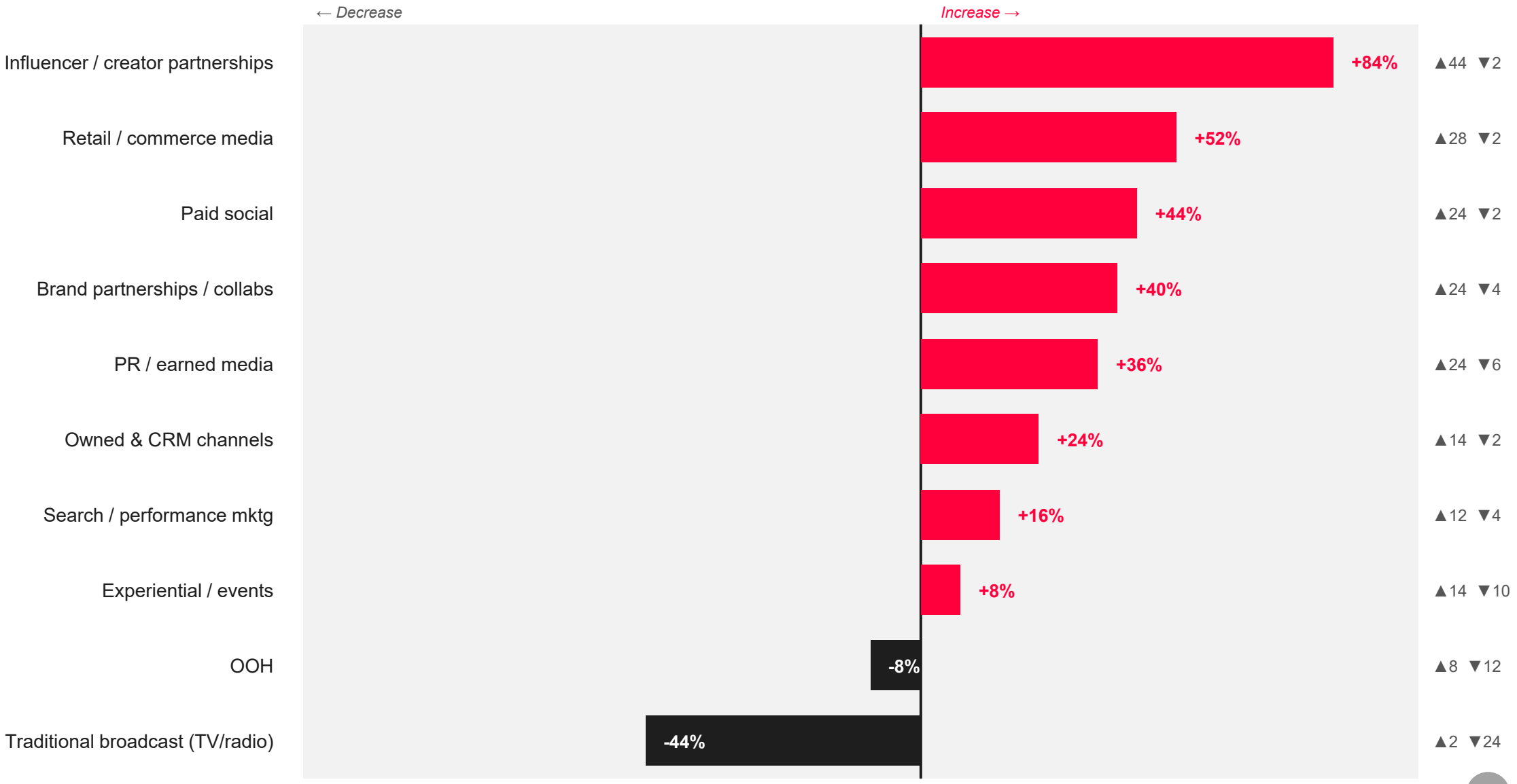
50 senior media and marketing leaders responded to this snap poll in February 2026.

64% operate at global scope; the remainder hold regional, local or hybrid remits.

The survey covered 10 communication channels, the primary drivers of change in communication models, the integration of influencer partnerships into paid media, and how experiential activity is being evaluated.

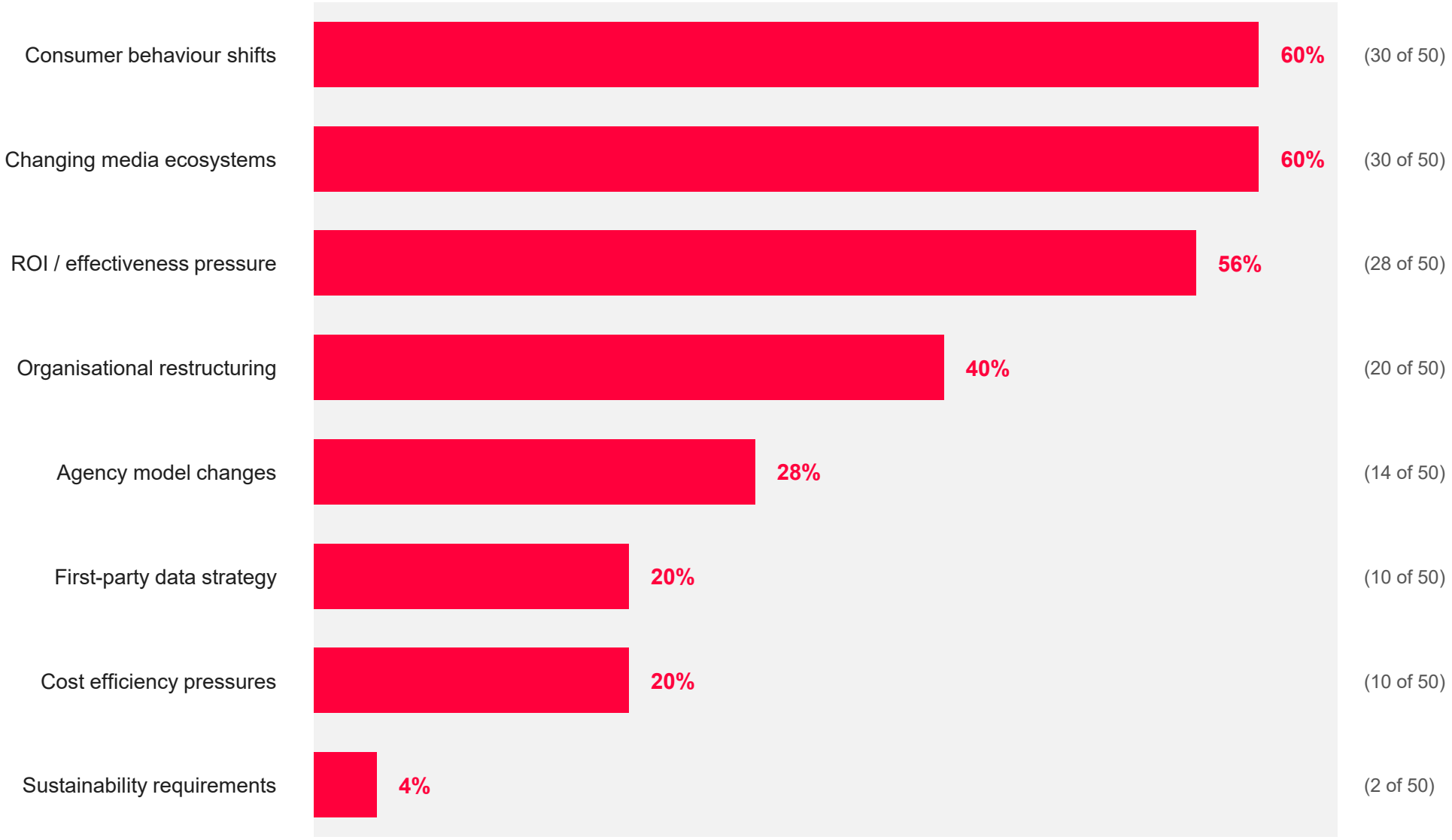
Findings are indicative and should be treated as directional rather than statistically definitive. All data is anonymised and aggregated across the forum.

Which channels are rising or falling in strategic importance?



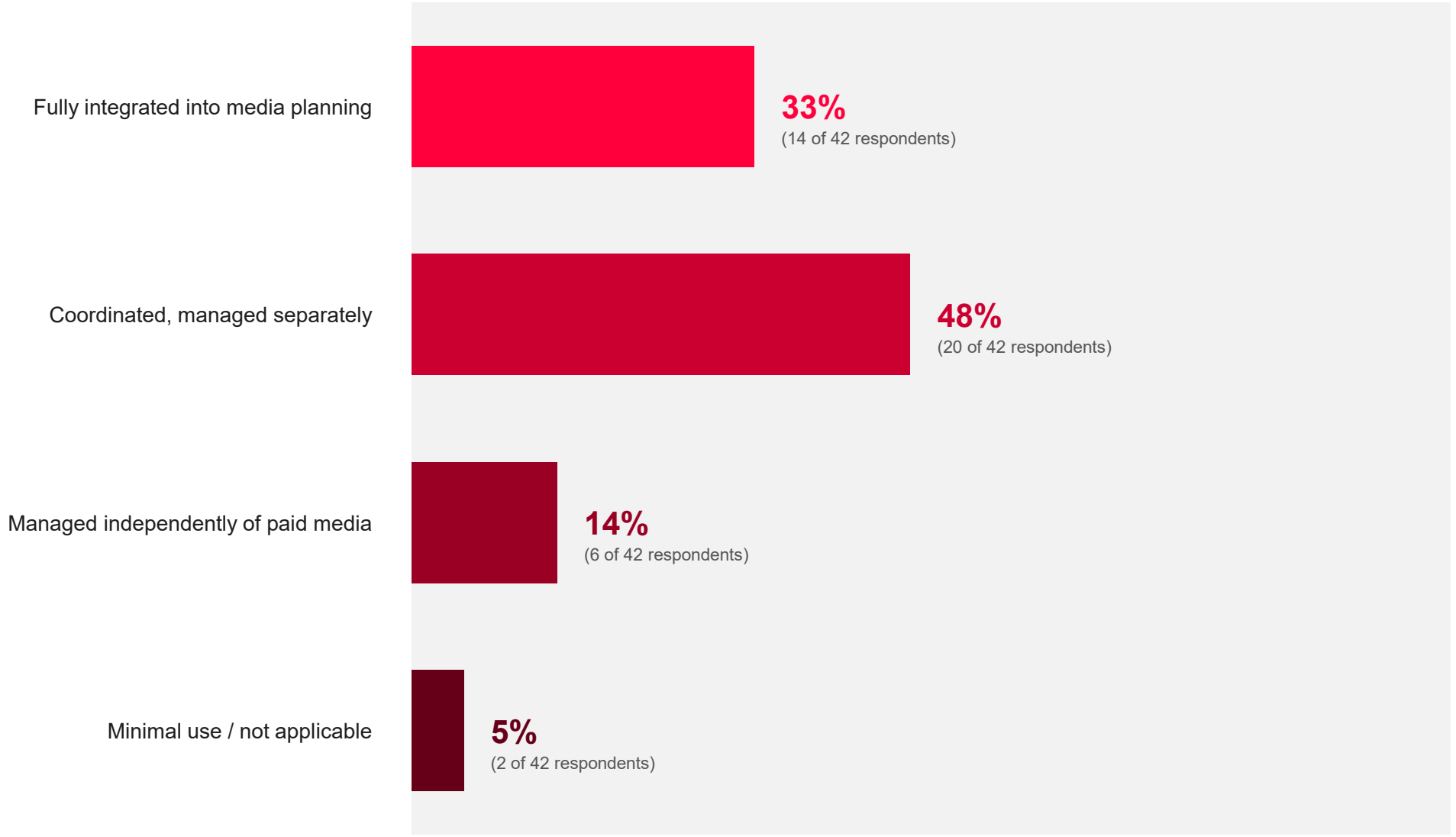
Net score = % reporting increase minus % reporting decrease. Base: n=45. ▲▼ = raw increase/decrease counts.

What is driving change in your communication model?



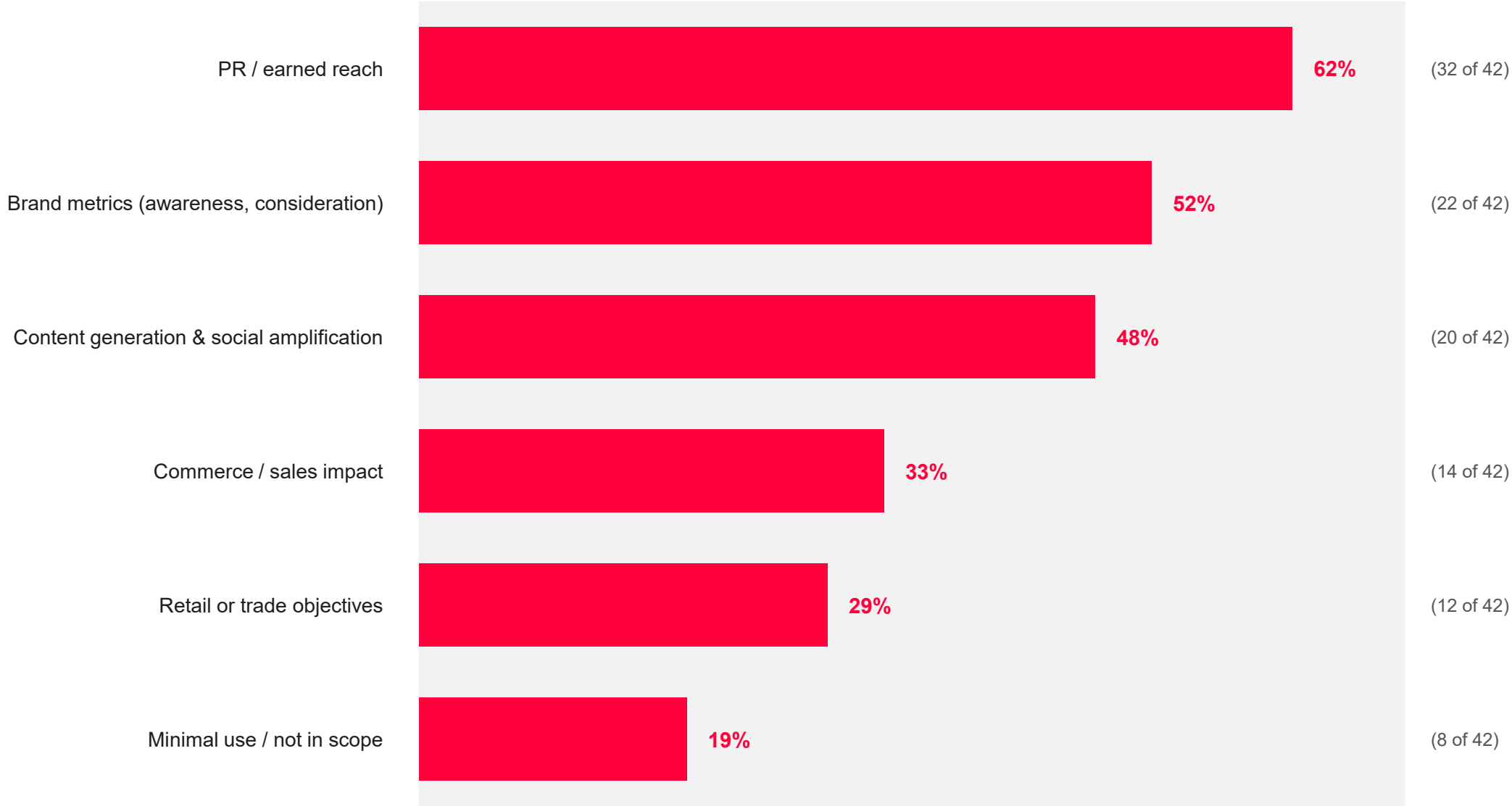
% of respondents citing each driver (multiple selections permitted). Base: n=50.

How integrated are influencer partnerships into paid media planning?



Base: n=42 respondents using influencer activity (8 respondents selected minimal use / not applicable).

How is experiential / events activity primarily evaluated?



% of active respondents. Multiple selections permitted. Base: n=42 (8 respondents minimal use or not in scope).

Three things to consider resulting from this snap poll

1. Creator partnerships are the fastest-growing channel, yet most are managing separately from paid media.

   Who owns influencer in your organisation, and is that the right home for it? Is it sitting in social, PR, or a standalone team — and what would it take to bring it into paid planning and measurement properly?

2. Traditional media channels in structural decline

   Where is budget going, and is the reallocation intentional or just reactive? The data shows retail media and influencer growing fast — but is your organisation consciously redirecting broadcast investment into those channels with a clear rationale, or has it drifted there by default?

3. Earned reach and brand metrics dominate how events are evaluated, but commerce impact is cited by only a third of respondents.

   Which budget is your experiential activity being funded from? If you want to scale it, you may need to build a business case, and that requires a deliberate decision about who owns the evaluation framework.