native frame + Reeplayer

Youth & Amateur Sports Report

THE INDUSTRY'S BIGGEST TRENDS IN 2025

CONTENTS

WELCOME

Welcome to the inaugural edition of our Annual Youth & Amateur Sports Technology Report, a joint collaboration between Native Frame and Reeplayer. This comprehensive survey represents our first effort to capture the evolving technology landscape across youth and amateur sports, with a particular focus on livestreaming adoption and implementation.

As technology continues to reshape how sports are played, coached, and experienced, we recognized the need for data-driven insights that specifically address the unique challenges and opportunities within youth and amateur athletics. While professional sports have embraced sophisticated technology solutions, the grassroots level—where millions of young athletes begin their journey—has received far less attention from researchers and industry analysts.

Our primary goal was to understand not just current technology adoption patterns, but also the barriers, motivations, and concerns shaping decision-making among key stakeholders. With livestreaming being Native Frame's core technology, we placed special emphasis on understanding its current implementation, identifying obstacles to wider adoption, and recognizing the features most valued by the community.

The survey results paint an intriguing landscape. While established technologies like team management platforms and messaging systems have achieved mainstream adoption, livestreaming remains in an early growth phase—currently used by less than a quarter of respondents but showing significant potential as awareness grows and technical barriers diminish. Moreover, we discovered that unlike professional sports, youth organizations prioritize family engagement and community building over monetization or strategic advantages when implementing streaming technology.

This report offers a snapshot of the industry's current state, highlighting key challenges and trends. Our aim is to keep a pulse on the evolving world of youth sports technology by conducting this survey annually, tracking how attitudes and adoption patterns shift over time. This longitudinal approach will provide invaluable insights not just for our product development, but for the entire youth sports ecosystem.

The survey findings reveal both challenges and opportunities—from the critical importance of video quality and ease of use to the significant concerns around privacy, accessibility, and maintaining the core developmental values of youth sports. By understanding these dynamics, we can collectively work toward technological solutions that truly enhance the experience for young athletes, coaches, parents, and the broader community.

We hope this becomes a valuable resource as you navigate technology decisions for your teams and leagues.

KEY FINDINGS

1

Technology essentials for youth sports form clear adoption tiers

- Four core technologies show widespread adoption: team management platforms (35%), team websites (33%), team messaging (32%), and social media presence (31%).
- Livestreaming remains in the early adoption phase at just 22%, suggesting significant growth potential as awareness and technical barriers decrease.
- The data reveals a clear hierarchy: essential operational tools (30%+), valuable enhancements (20–27%), and emerging technologies (below 15%).

2

Family engagement drives livestreaming adoption, not monetization

- Enabling parents with schedule conflicts (3.41) and allowing distant relatives to participate (3.54) rank as the top motivations for livestreaming.
- Strategic benefits like recruiting future athletes (4.99) and monetization (5.41) rank lowest in importance, revealing youth sports organizations view streaming primarily as a community service.
- The substantial gap between family engagement and business objectives highlights an opportunity for solutions that emphasize inclusive viewing experiences.

3

Social platforms dominate livestreaming, but quality concerns persist

- Facebook Live (29%) and YouTube Live (27%) account for over half (56%) of all streaming usage, leveraging their free accessibility.
- However, video quality is overwhelmingly the top improvement priority (60%), suggesting free platforms aren't delivering satisfactory viewing experiences.
- Among specialized sports streaming platforms, GameChanger stands out at 9%, while the rest of the market remains highly fragmented.

4

Cost perceptions block wider livestreaming adoption

- Despite free options dominating current usage, cost is cited as the top barrier (50%) preventing non-streamers from adopting livestreaming.
- This disconnect between perceived and actual costs suggests significant educational opportunities.
- Addressing privacy/consent concerns (42%) and technical complexity could convert a substantial portion of the 78% not currently livestreaming.

5

Privacy and online safety lead technology concerns

- Cyberbullying/negative social media interactions (42%) and data sharing/privacy issues (40%) dominate technology concerns.
- Economic inequality and access barriers (32%) rank high, pointing to concerns about technology creating participation divides.
- These concerns highlight that solutions should prioritize safe, inclusive experiences alongside performance benefits.

Methodology

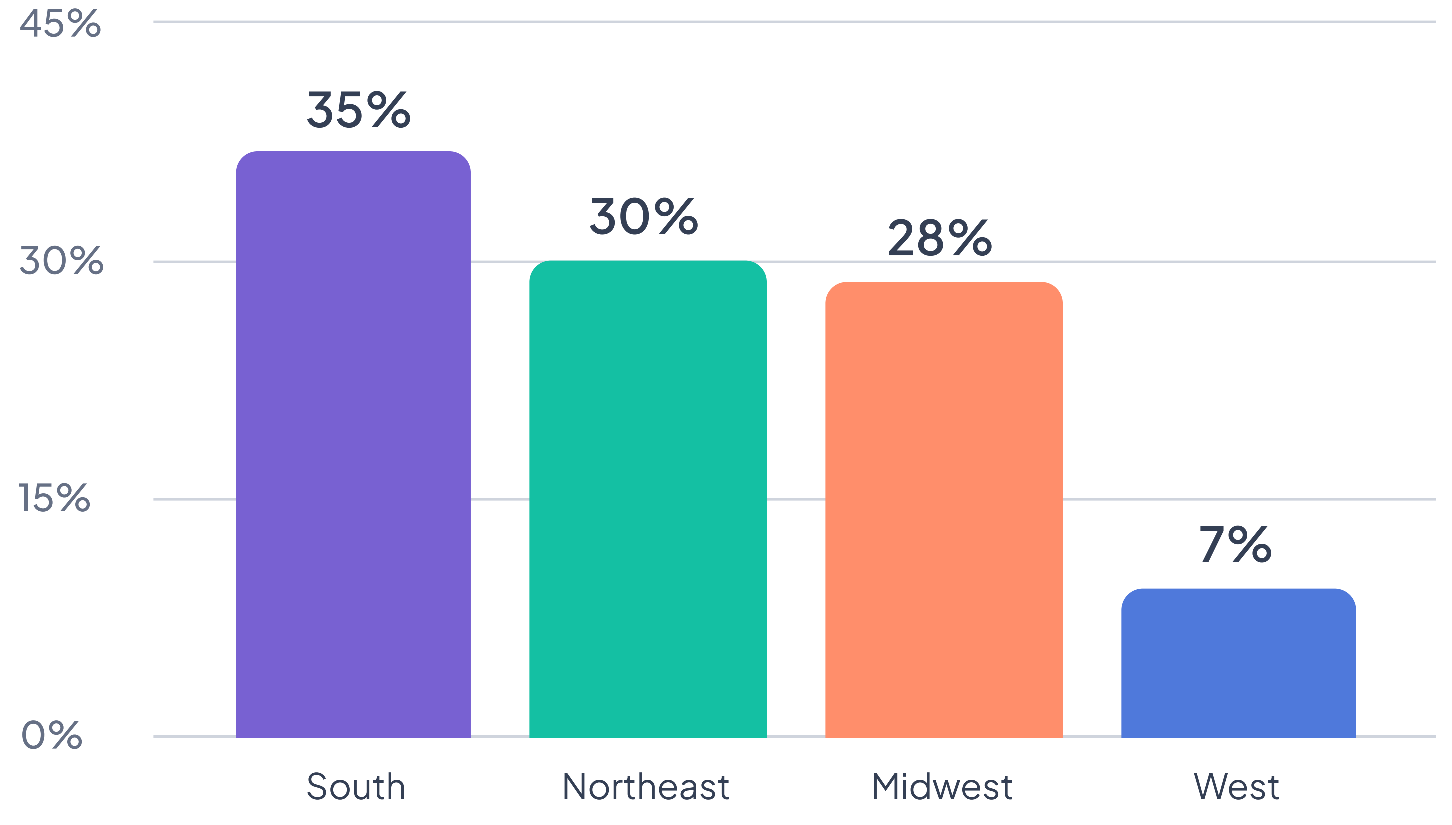
The 2025 Youth & Amateur Sports Report represents our inaugural effort to capture emerging trends in technology adoption across youth and amateur sports. Conducted in May 2025, this comprehensive survey gathered insights from 400 diverse respondents between ages 16–65, providing a representative snapshot of the U.S. youth and amateur sports landscape.

Regional participation shows a balanced geographic distribution, with the South leading at 35% of respondents, followed by the Northeast (30%), Midwest (28%), and West (7%). This distribution allows us to capture regional nuances in technology adoption and sports participation across different areas of the country.

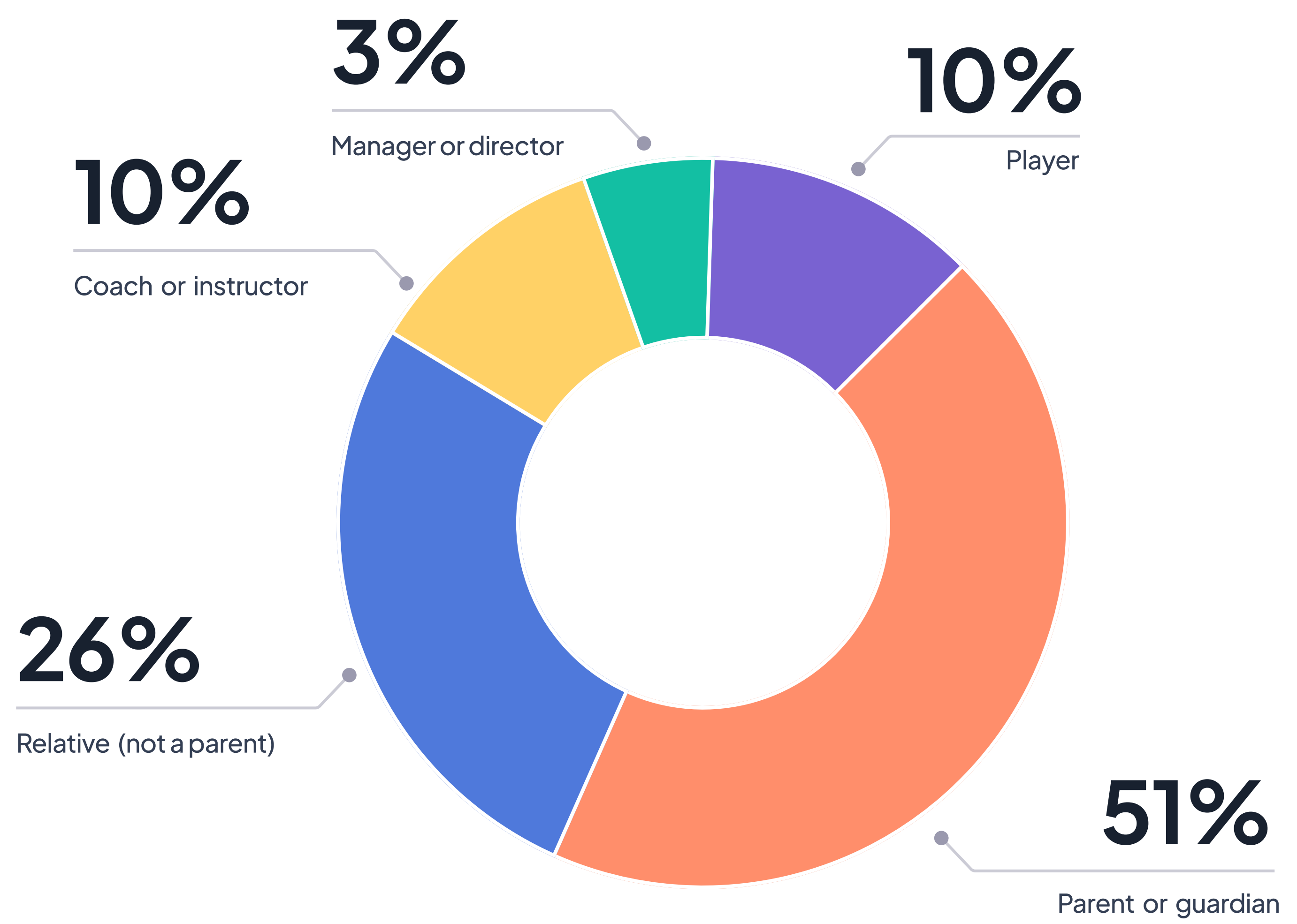
Our survey design primarily utilized multiple-choice and ranking questions to efficiently gather quantifiable data on technology preferences, adoption barriers, and participation trends. For multiple-choice questions allowing several selections, percentages represent the proportion of respondents who selected each option rather than summing to 100%. Ranking questions were structured to identify priority preferences among competing factors, helping illuminate decision-making processes among participants.

The survey was accessible to all qualifying respondents through our Pollfish-powered platform, which may have influenced certain demographic characteristics of our participant pool. This consideration, along with self-selection factors, should be noted when interpreting results. However, the robust sample size and diverse participant profiles provide valuable insights into the evolving youth sports technology ecosystem.

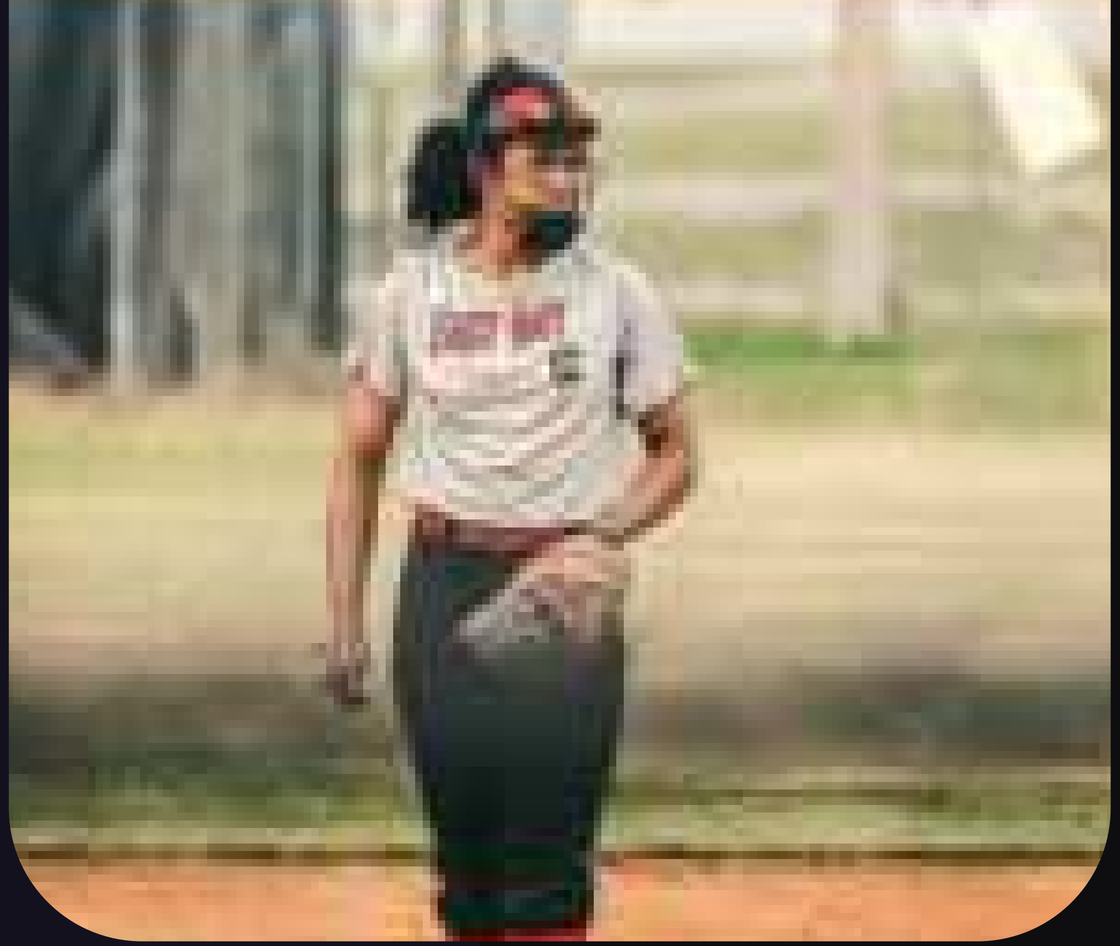
REGIONAL PARTICIPATION



CURRENT ROLE WITH AMATEUR SPORTS LEAGUE



The State of Youth & Amateur Sports



87%

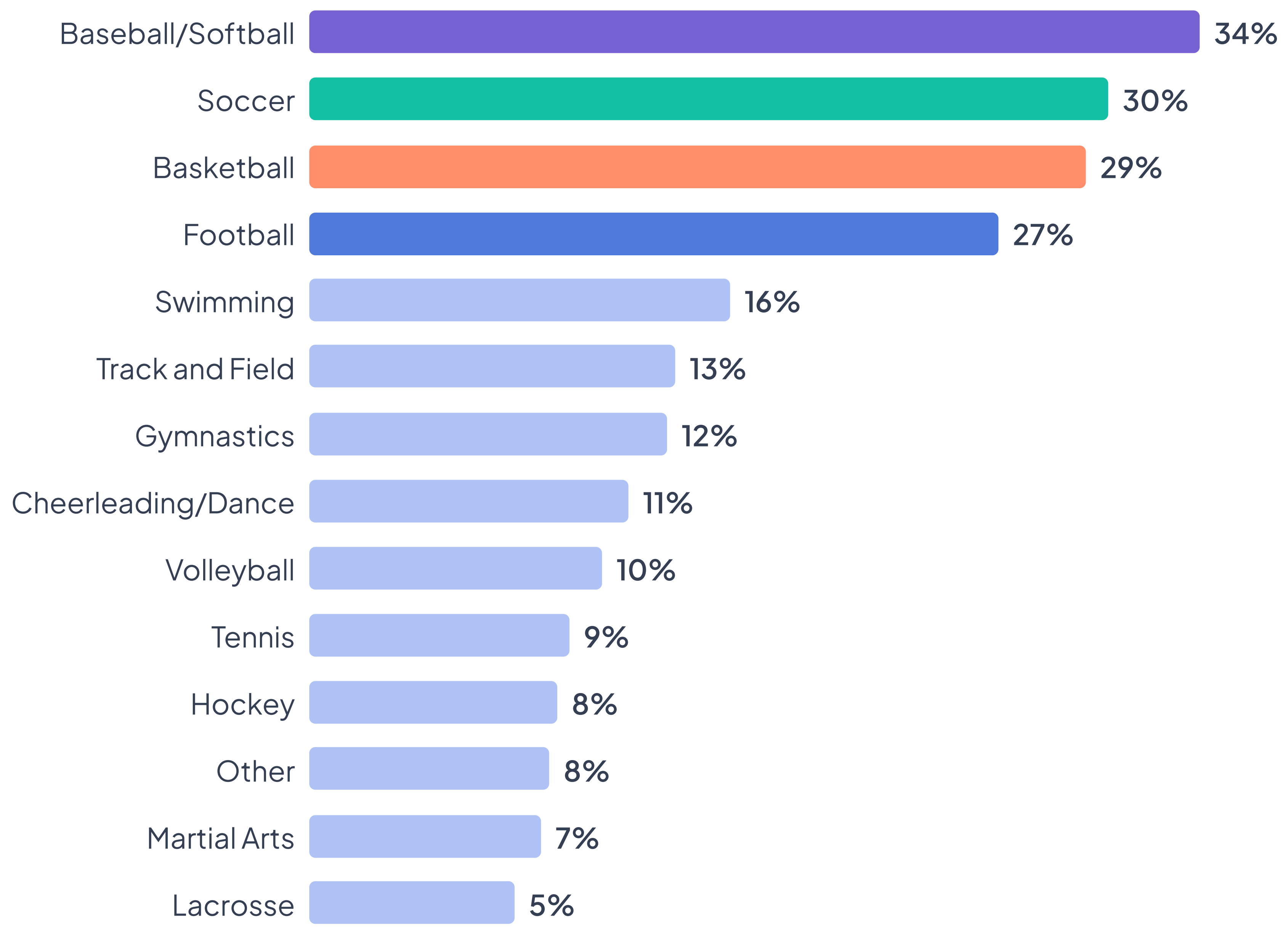
of respondents work with youth in the 8–17 age bracket

Which sport(s) are you currently involved with?

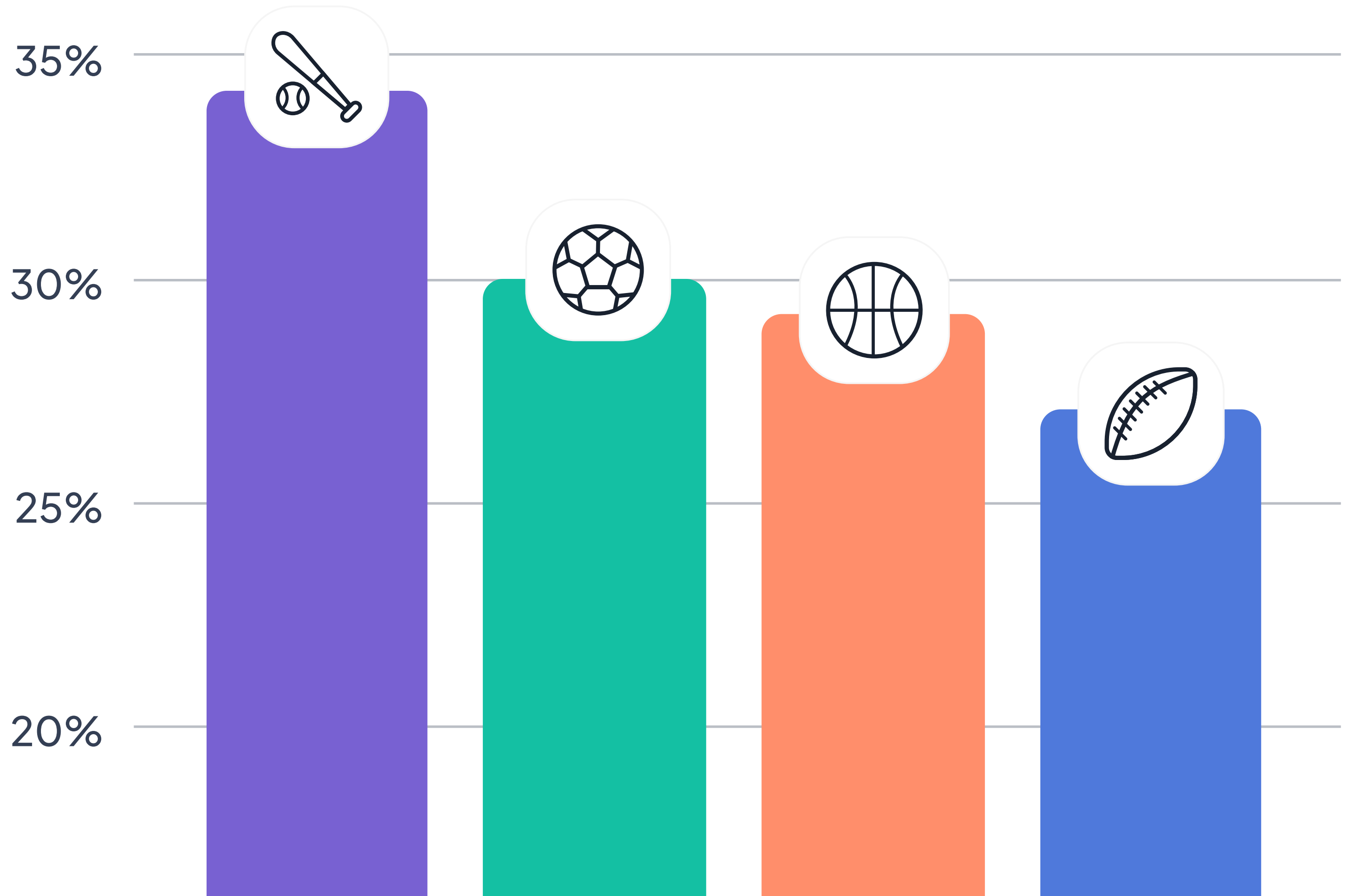
Team sports dominate the landscape, with the "big four" youth sports capturing the highest participation rates. Baseball/softball leads at approximately 34%, followed closely by soccer (30%), basketball (29%), and football (27%). This top-tier clustering reflects the continued stronghold these traditional team sports maintain in the youth and amateur athletics ecosystem.

Baseball/softball's top position is particularly interesting when compared to recent Sports & Fitness Industry Association (SFIA) data, which has shown soccer and basketball typically leading youth participation nationally. This may indicate our survey captured more representation from baseball/softball communities or reflects regional variations in our respondent pool.

Soccer maintains strong representation at 30%, aligning with its continued growth in U.S. sports over the past decade. This mirrors national trends showing soccer's resilience as one of the most accessible team sports with relatively low equipment costs and broadly available programs.



“Big four” capture highest participation rates



Which sport(s) are you currently involved with?

Emerging or niche sports like lacrosse (5%) and martial arts (7%) show smaller but distinct participation segments, reflecting their growing but still limited national footprint. These percentages are actually slightly higher than national averages, suggesting our respondent base may include early adopters of these growing sports.

When compared to recent U.S. youth sports participation studies from organizations like the Aspen Institute and SFIA, our distribution generally reflects national patterns with some variations. The higher representation of baseball/softball and traditional team sports suggests our respondent pool may include more established sports organizations with longer histories of technological adoption, potentially influencing the technology usage patterns observed elsewhere in our survey.

16%
Swimming

13%
Track & Field

12%
Gymnastics

Individual sports show moderate but significant adoption

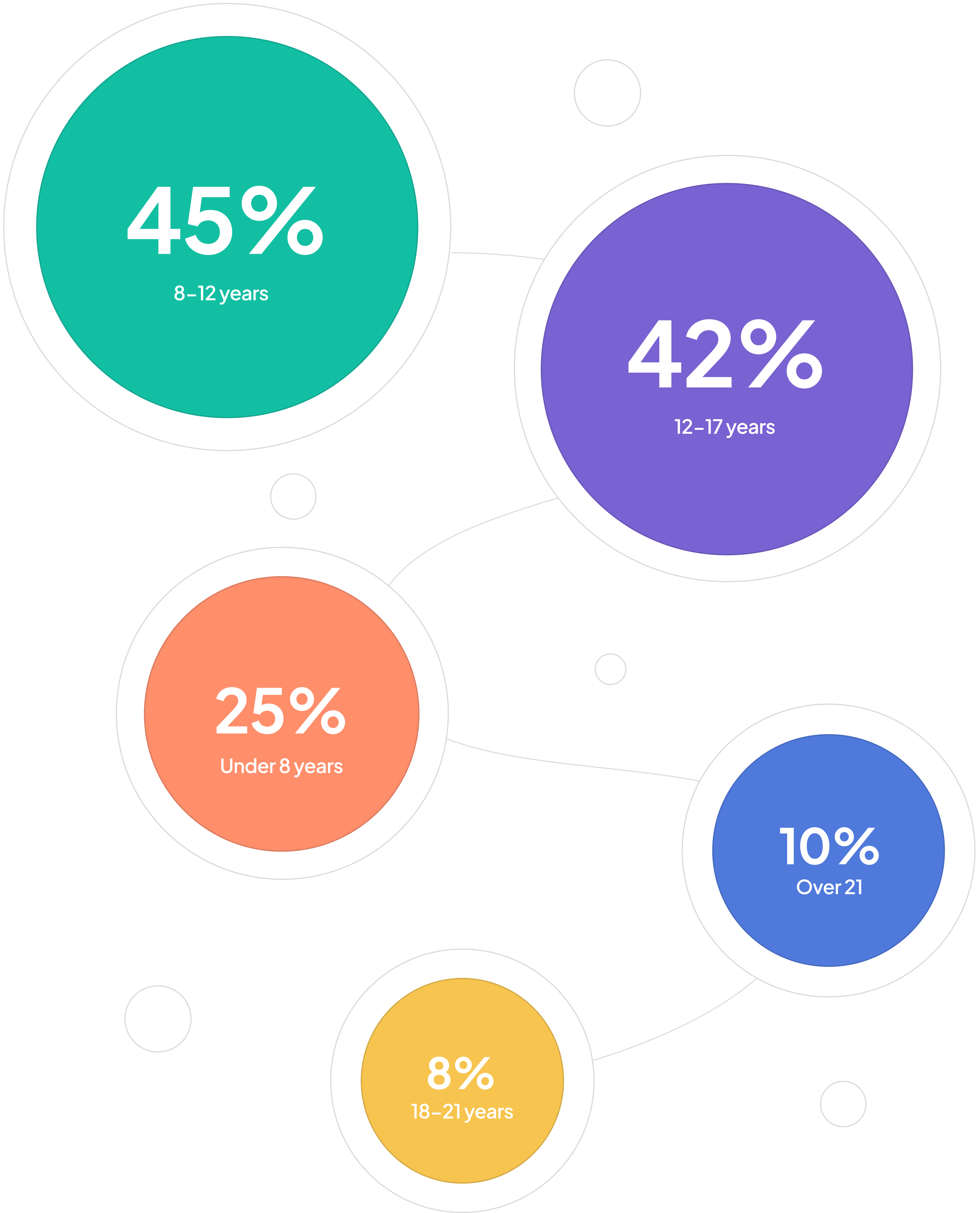
These figures align with national data showing steady participation in these activities, which often serve as complementary sports to team-based athletics.

What age group(s) do you work with, or participate in?

School-age youth dominate participation, with the 8–12 year (45%) and 13–17 year (42%) age brackets showing nearly identical representation. This strong concentration aligns with national participation statistics from the Aspen Institute's State of Play 2023 report, which identified these middle school and high school years as peak periods for organized sports participation.

Elementary-age participation shows moderate representation at approximately 25% for the under 8 years category. Compared to older youth, this lower percentage mirrors national trends where structured sports participation traditionally increases as children enter school systems with more organized athletic programs.

Post-high school participation drops significantly, with 18–21 years (8%) and over 21 (10%) showing much lower representation. This sharp decline reflects the well-documented "cliff effect" in sports participation after high school graduation, identified by the NCAA and SFIA, where there is a dramatic decrease after secondary education in organized athletic involvement.



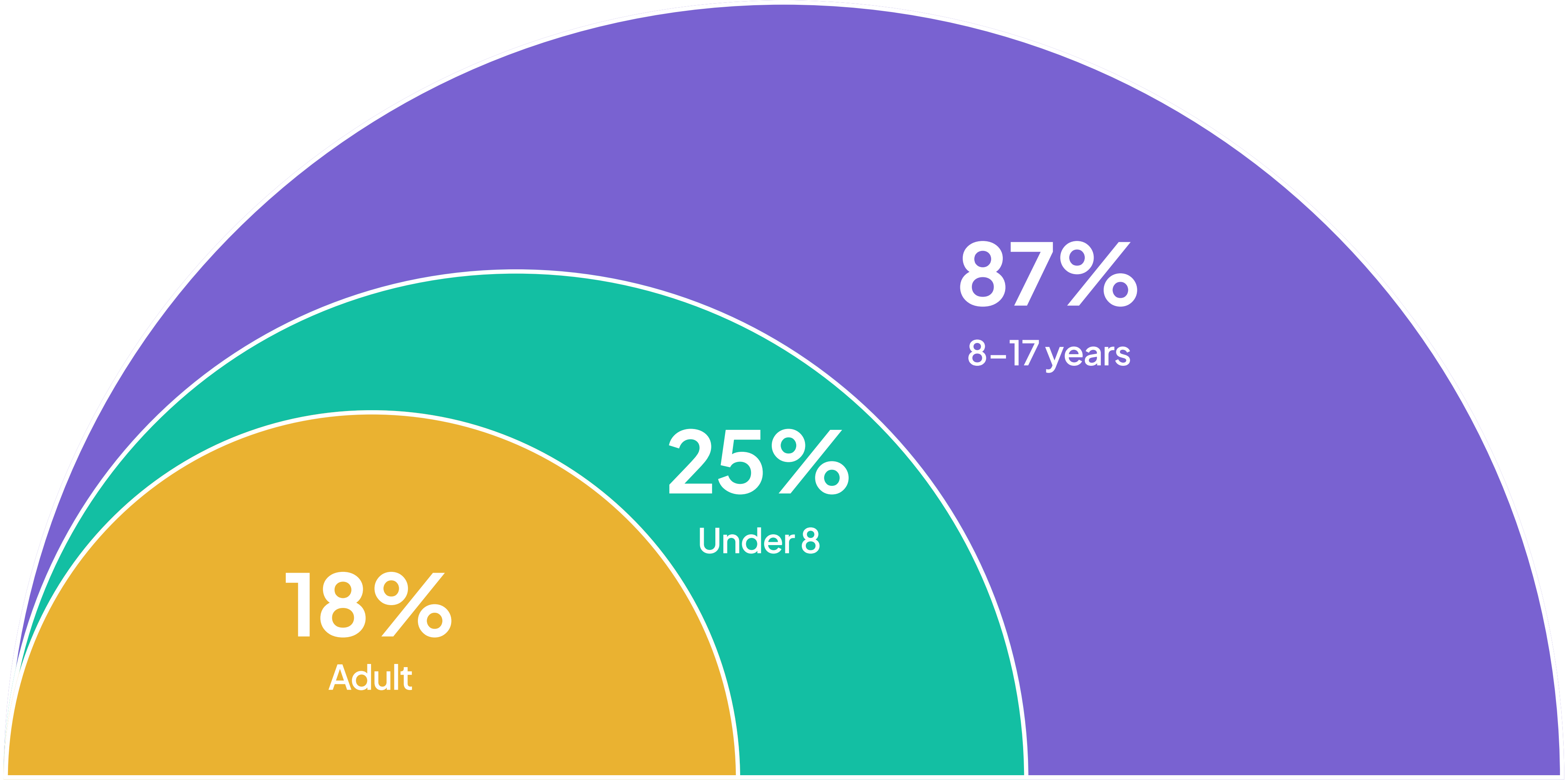
What age group(s) do you work with, or participate in?

The age distribution hierarchy (8–17 years > under 8 > adult) aligns closely with national sports participation patterns, validating our sample as representative of broader youth sports demographics. This age distribution directly impacts adoption patterns and technology needs.

The concentration in school-age brackets (8–17 years) represents a critical target demographic for sports technology vendors—these age groups typically have more complex competition structures, increased parent engagement, and greater performance tracking needs compared to younger participants. The relatively low adult representation also suggests that technology solutions designed primarily for collegiate and professional audiences may need significant adaptation to effectively serve the youth-dominated sports market.

The multi-selection nature of responses also indicates that many organizations and individuals work across multiple age groups, highlighting the need for flexible technology solutions that can serve various developmental stages and competition levels.

The age distribution results align closely with national participation patterns



The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) data similarly shows highest participation in middle and high school years, with participation numbers that dwarf both younger children and post-secondary athletics.

How would you describe your program's competitive level?

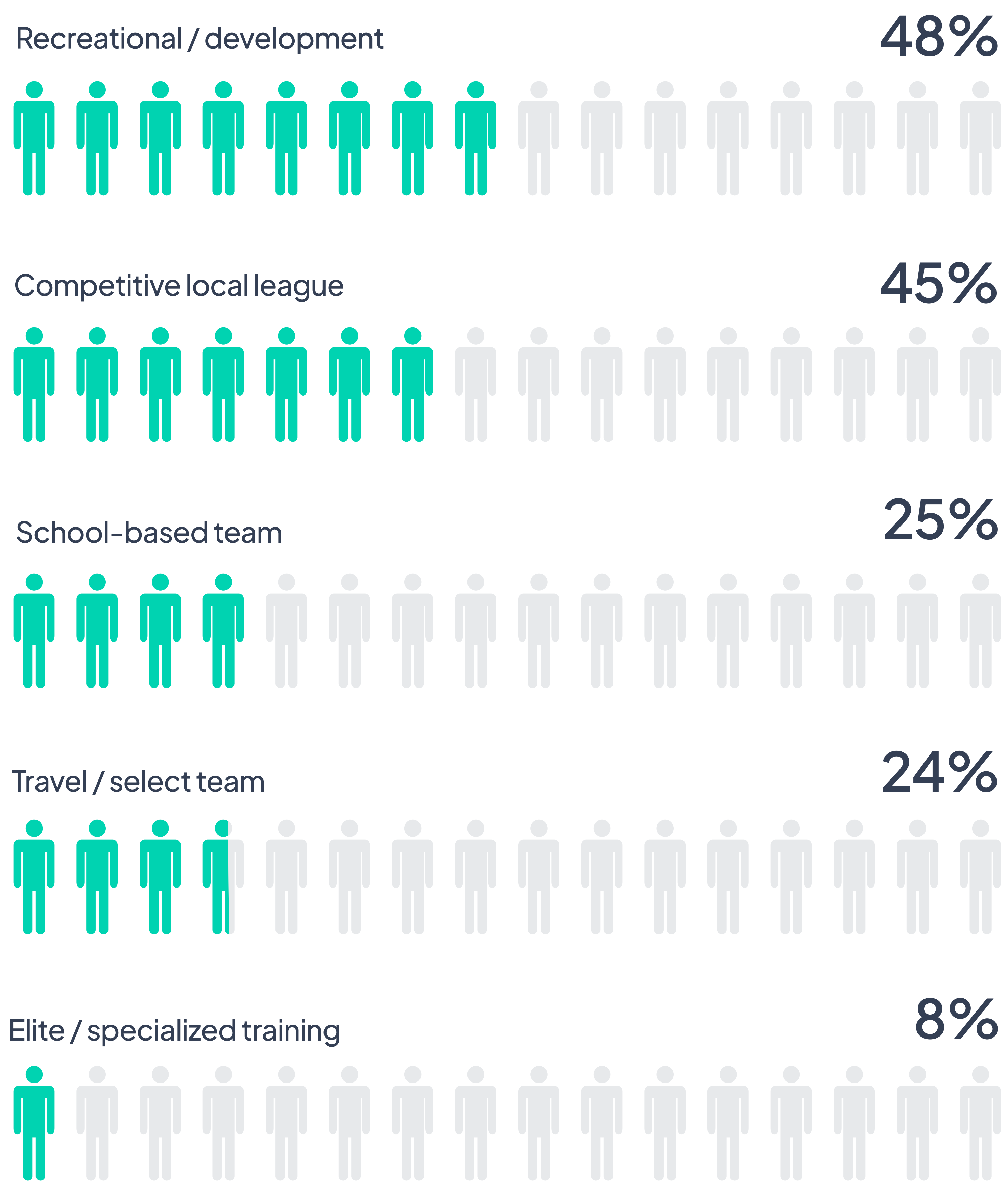
Recreational/developmental programs lead the landscape at approximately 48%, indicating that nearly half of all respondents are involved with organizations focused on fundamental skill development and broad participation rather than elite competition. This aligns with data from the Aspen Institute's State of Play reports, which consistently show that developmental programs form the foundation of the youth sports pyramid.

Competitive local leagues show strong representation at approximately 45%, demonstrating that organized competition remains a central component of youth sports despite growing concerns about early specialization and over-competition. This substantial representation matches participation data from the National Council of Youth Sports (NCYS), which estimates that approximately 45–60% of youth athletes participate in structured local competitive environments.

45%

Competitive local leagues

Organized competition remains a central component of youth sports



How would you describe your program's competitive level?

School-based and travel teams occupy the middle tier, with school teams at roughly 25% and travel/select programs at 24%.

25%
School-based programs

24%
Travel / select programs

This distribution reflects the national trend where school-sponsored athletics serve as a significant but not dominant pathway, while travel programs continue to gain market share. The similar percentages for these categories suggest they often operate in parallel rather than as alternatives.

Elite/specialized training shows limited but notable presence at approximately 8%, representing the pinnacle of the competitive pyramid. This smaller percentage accurately reflects the selective nature of high-performance programs and aligns with national statistics on elite youth participation from organizations like US Youth Soccer and USA Baseball, which typically report 5–10% of youth athletes competing at elite levels.

8%
Elite / specialized training
This accurately reflects the selective nature of high-performance programs

The multi-selection pattern in responses reveals significant overlap between competitive levels, suggesting that many organizations offer multiple competitive tiers or that respondents are involved with multiple types of programs. This hybridization trend has been documented by the Sports & Fitness Industry Association (SFIA), showing increasing fluidity between recreational and competitive programs rather than strict separation.

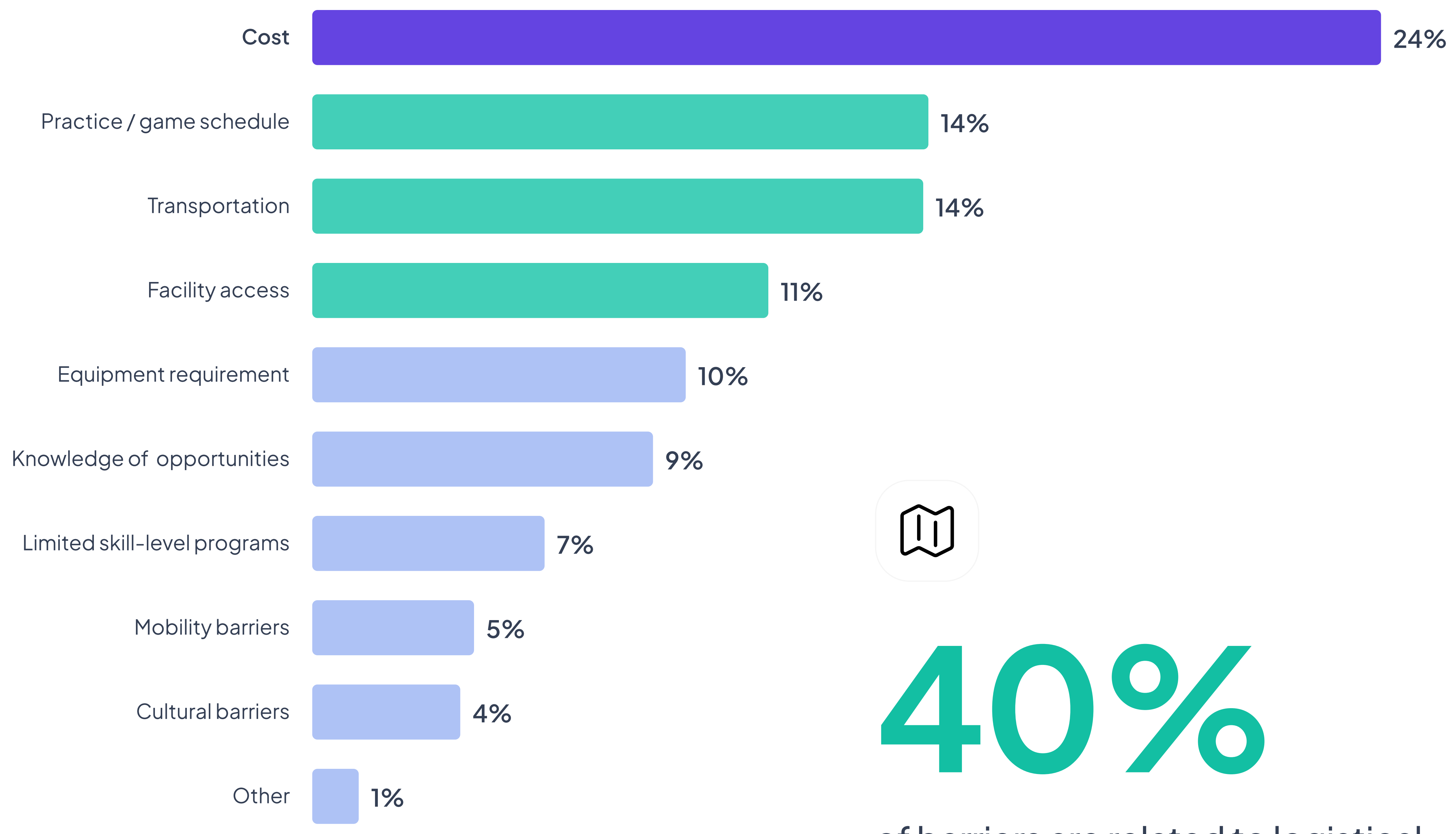
This competitive level distribution has critical implications for technology needs. The strong representation of recreational/developmental programs (48%) suggests technologies must be accessible and user-friendly for volunteer-led organizations, while still offering enough sophisticated features to serve the substantial competitive local league segment (45%). The similar representation across competitive tiers indicates technology solutions need considerable flexibility to address varying levels of competition intensity, coaching expertise, and participant commitment.

What barriers to sports participation have you identified in your community?

Cost dominates participation barriers at 24%, reinforcing the well-documented financial hurdles facing families in youth sports. The prominence of cost as the leading barrier suggests that despite various initiatives to increase accessibility, financial constraints remain the primary obstacle to participation.

Logistical challenges form a substantial cluster of barriers, with practice/game scheduling (14%), transportation (14%), and facility access (11%) collectively accounting for nearly 40% of identified obstacles. This trio of infrastructure-related barriers mirrors findings from the RAND Corporation's 2019 study on youth sports access, which similarly identified these practical challenges as critical deterrents, particularly in underserved communities.

These findings are particularly relevant when considering technology adoption in youth sports. Technology solutions that can reduce administrative costs, optimize facility utilization, simplify scheduling, or enhance information sharing could potentially address multiple barriers simultaneously, potentially explaining the high adoption rates of team management platforms and communication tools observed elsewhere in our survey.



40%

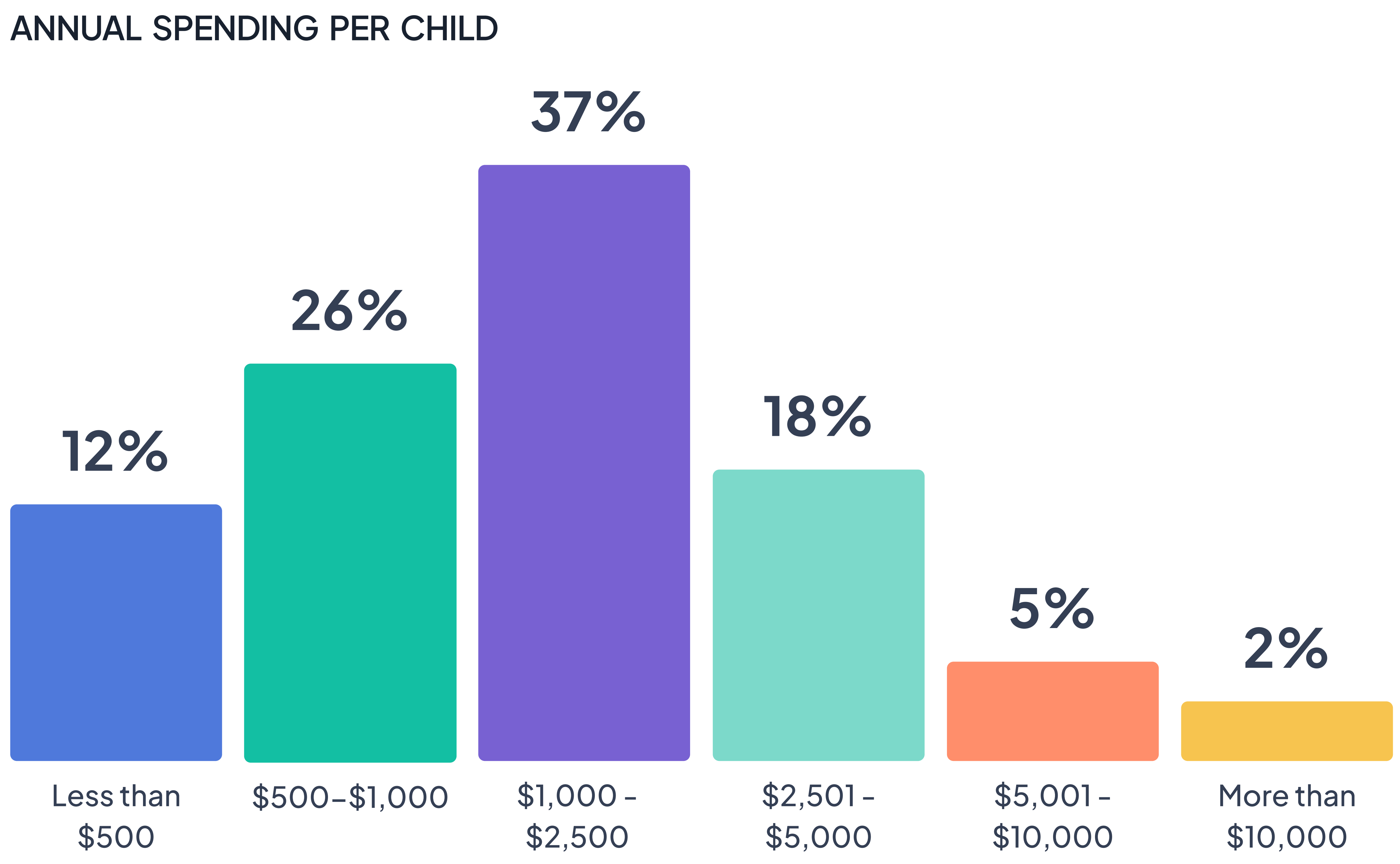
of barriers are related to logistical challenges (scheduling, transportation & facility access)

Approximately how much does your family spend annually on youth sports per child?

Moderate spending prevails the landscape, with the middle categories of $500–$1,000 (26%) and $1,000–$2,500 (37%) representing nearly two thirds of all respondents. This concentration suggests that most families are operating within a modest budget range rather than at the extremes.

High investment participants represent a significant minority, with 18% spending $2,501–$5,000 and 5% spending $5,001–$10,000 annually per child. These categories largely reflect the growing "travel team" and specialized training economy. According to the Project Play initiative, the youth sports industry has grown to over $19 billion annually, driven substantially by these higher spending segments focused on elite development.

The extreme spending category (>$10,000) represents just 2% of respondents. This is consistent with TD Ameritrade's survey finding that approximately 2–3% of families spend over $10,000 annually on youth sports. This small but notable segment often includes athletes in equipment-intensive sports, specialized training programs, or elite travel competitions.

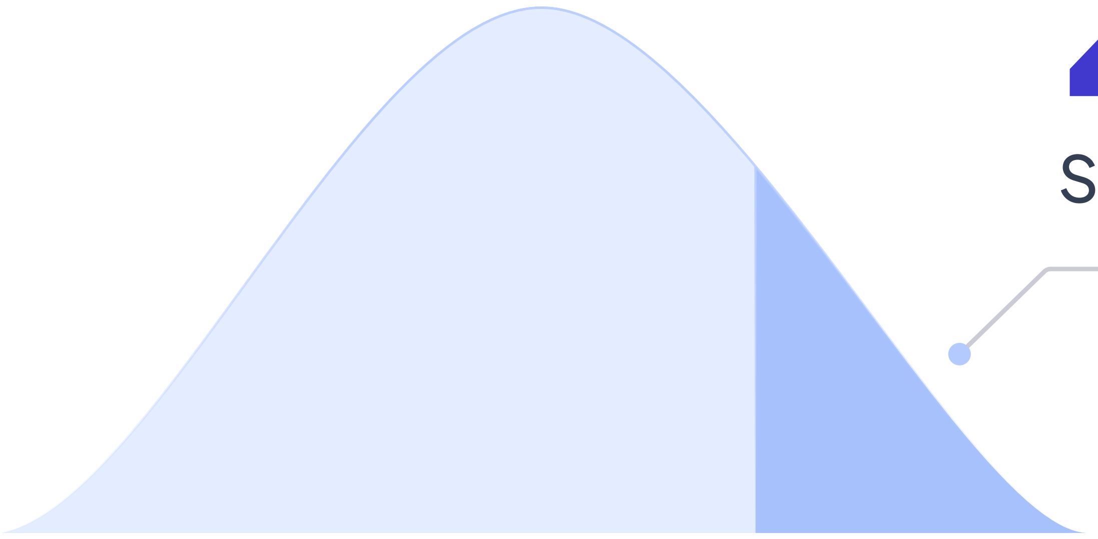


Approximately how much does your family spend annually on youth sports per child?

Budget conscious participation remains within reach, with 12% of respondents spending less than $500 annually. This percentage is somewhat lower than estimates from the Sports & Fitness Industry Association (SFIA), which suggests approximately 15–20% of youth sports participants operate in this lower spending tier. This may indicate that our survey captured slightly more committed participants.

These spending patterns have important implications for technology adoption in youth sports. Specifically, the concentration in moderate spending categories ($500–$2,500) suggests most families have some discretionary budget but may be price sensitive and selective when it comes to technology solutions.

75% **Spending falls below $2,500**
Technology must prove its worth against tight family sports budgets



25%
Spend over $2,500

The smaller but significant higher-spending segments (collectively 25% spending over $2,500) likely represent early adopters with greater willingness to invest in advanced technology solutions like specialized video analysis, performance tracking, or premium livestreaming services.

When viewed alongside our earlier finding that cost is the leading barrier to sports participation (24%), these spending figures highlight the financial balancing act facing youth sports organizations. Technology solutions must deliver clear value to justify additional costs within already substantial family sports budgets, particularly for the 75% spending under $2,500 annually.

What are your biggest pain points in managing a sports organization?

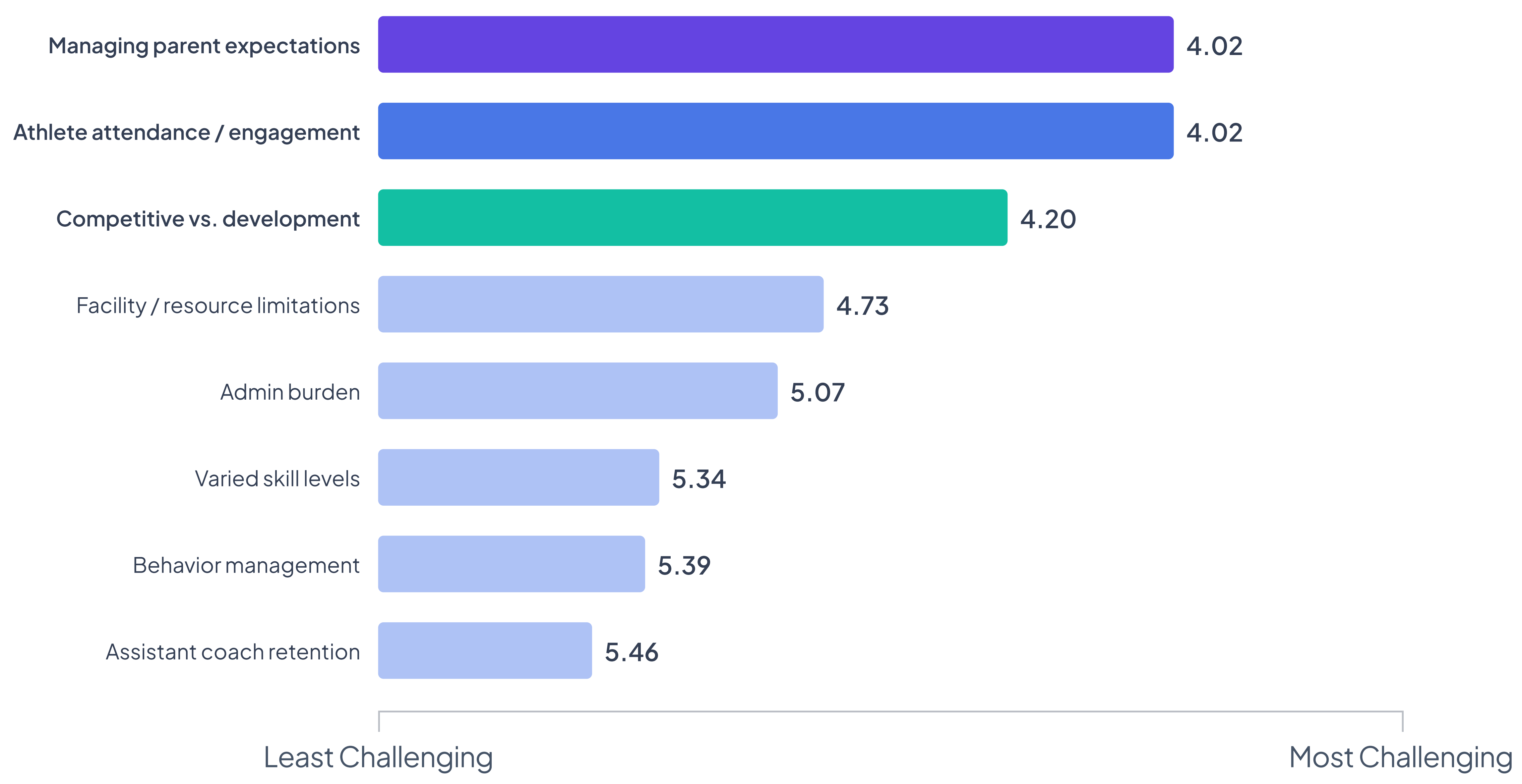
These rankings reflect a hierarchy of organizational needs, indicating that there is an opportunity for sports technology to incorporate features for fundraising, sponsorship, and monetization. Technologies that concentrate exclusively on administration but overlook core pain points risk losing ground to more holistic solutions.

What are the biggest challenges you face as a coach?

When comparing coaching challenges to those of organized leagues and teams, a compelling contrast emerges. While leagues prioritize financial and operational sustainability, coaches focus primarily on relationship management and developmental balance. This distinction highlights the unique perspective coaches bring to sports administration and suggests that technology solutions should take different user personas and roles into account.

COACHING CHALLENGES

Rated on a scale of 1–10 (lower score = more challenging)



Technology Impact & Outlook

41%

find technical difficulties and glitches during use as their primary frustration

Which of the following technologies is your team and/or league currently using?

The distribution forms roughly three tiers: core technologies (30%+), valuable but optional technologies (20–27%), and emerging/specialized technologies (below 15%). The drop-off between the top four technologies and remaining options suggests that these four constitute the "essential" digital toolkit for youth and amateur sports teams.

Livestreaming is still in the early adoption phase for youth and amateur sports. The usage rate may reflect practical barriers such as technical complexity, bandwidth limitations, volunteer availability, equipment costs, or privacy concerns specific to youth sports.

With less than a quarter of teams embracing this technology, there remains substantial room for growth:

Livestreaming growth

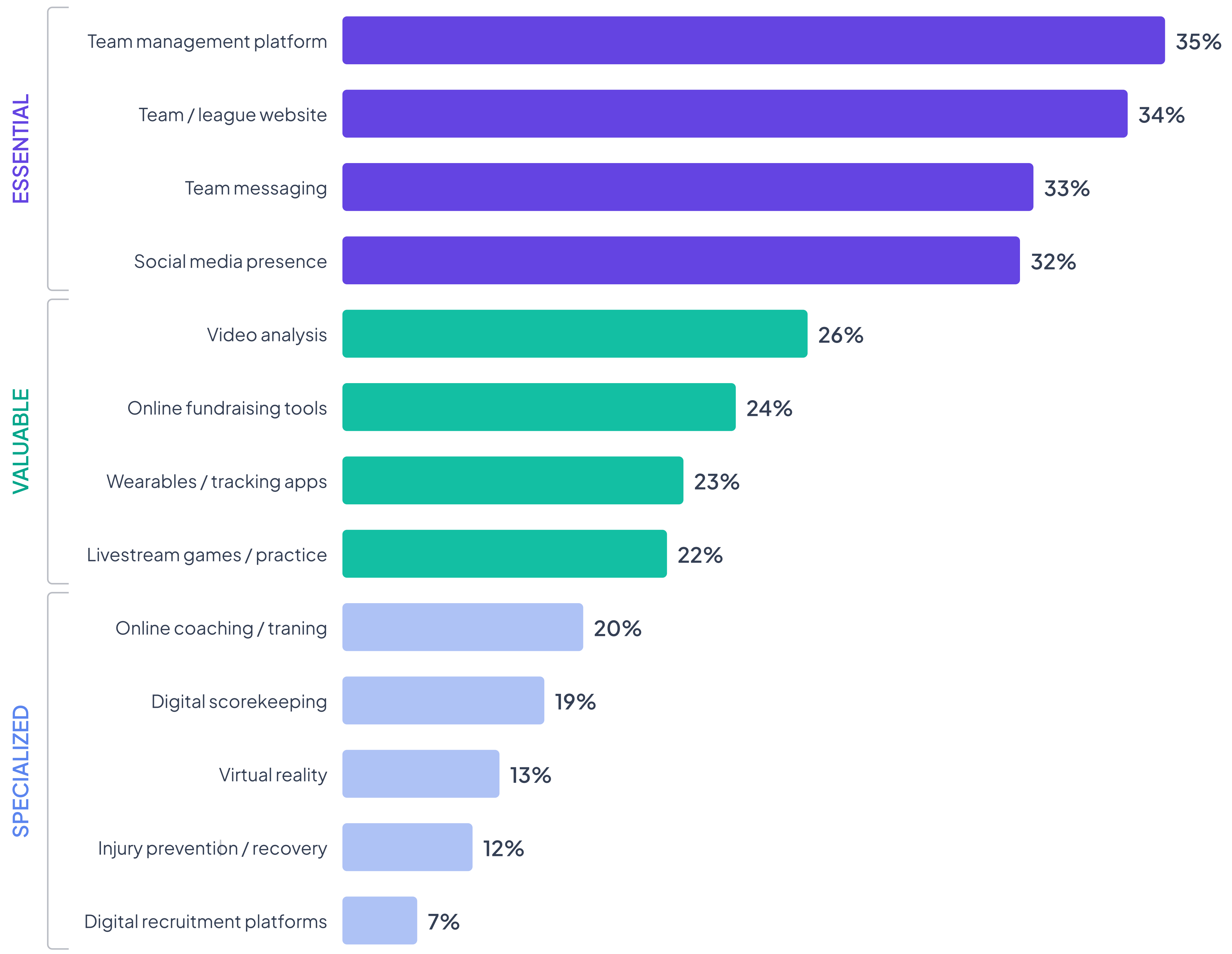
The livestreaming format itself is experiencing explosive growth across all content categories, with sports being one of the strongest sectors.

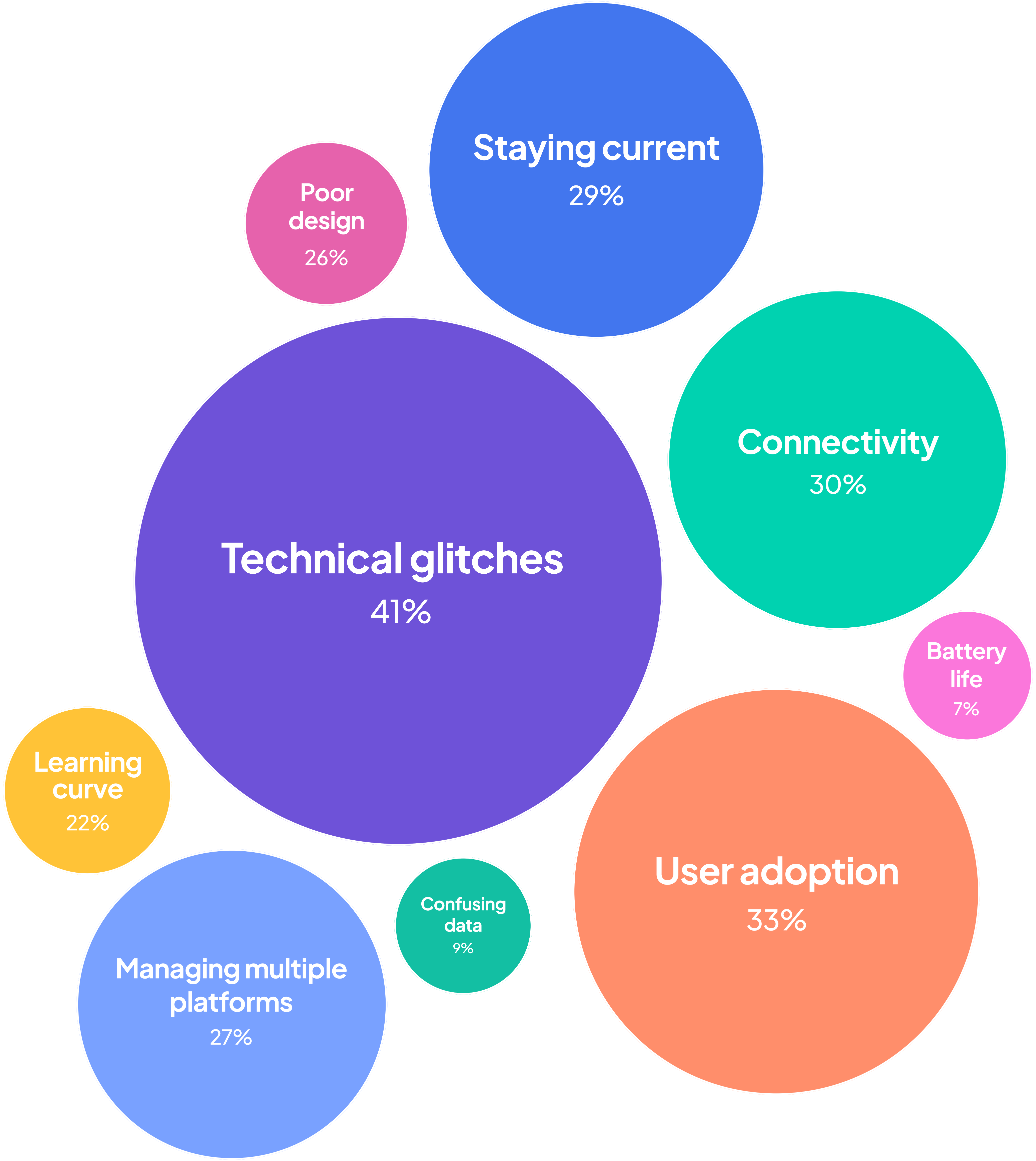
Lower adoption barriers

As more teams demonstrate successful deployment, adoption obstacles (technical concerns, resource limitations) will diminish.

Increasing viewer demand

Parental and family demand for remote viewing options will likely grow as awareness of these capabilities increases.



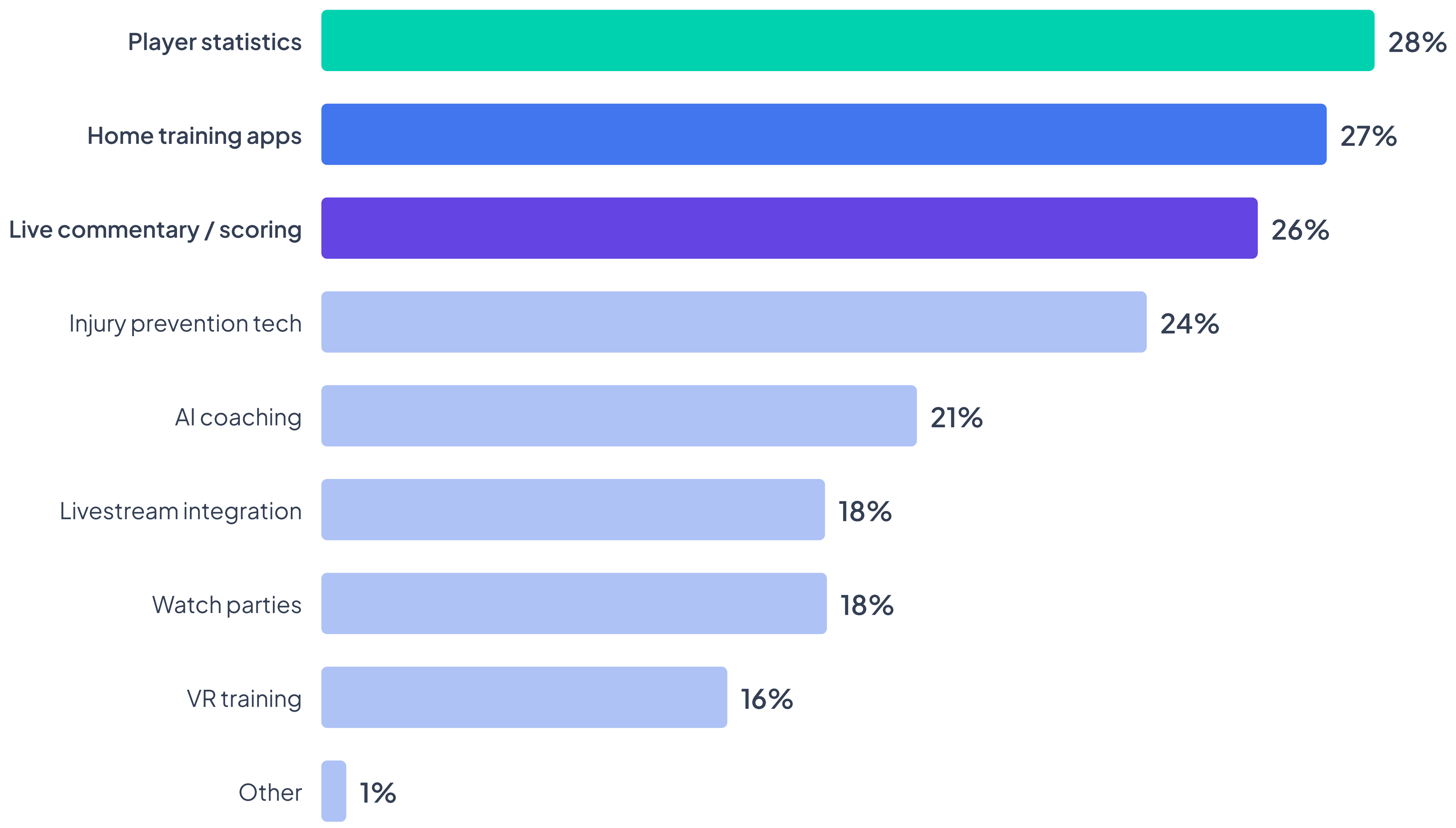


Which aspects of your current technology solutions cause the most frustration?

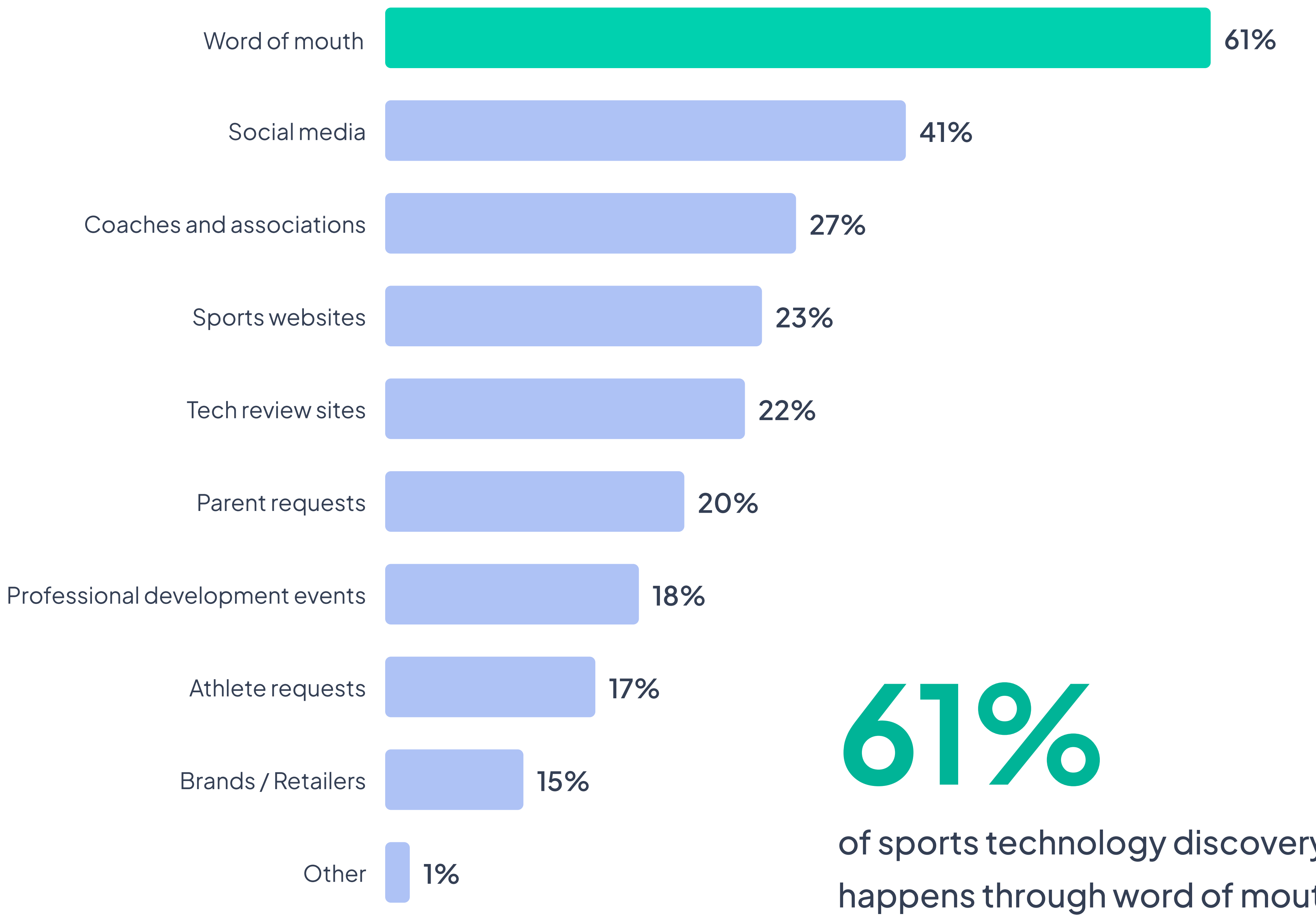
Technical difficulties and glitches during use (41%) stands out as the primary frustration, indicating that reliability is the most critical factor for technology adoption in youth sports settings.

Which of these technology enabled experiences are you most excited about as it applies to your team/league?

User enthusiasm clusters around performance enhancement tools. Professional-style statistics/analytics (28%), interactive training apps (27%), and live commentary/scorekeeping (26%) represent the top three desired technologies, all sharing a common focus on improving athletic performance and skills development.



How do you learn about new sports technologies?



61%

of sports technology discovery happens through word of mouth

What concerns, if any, do you have about technology in youth/amateur sports?

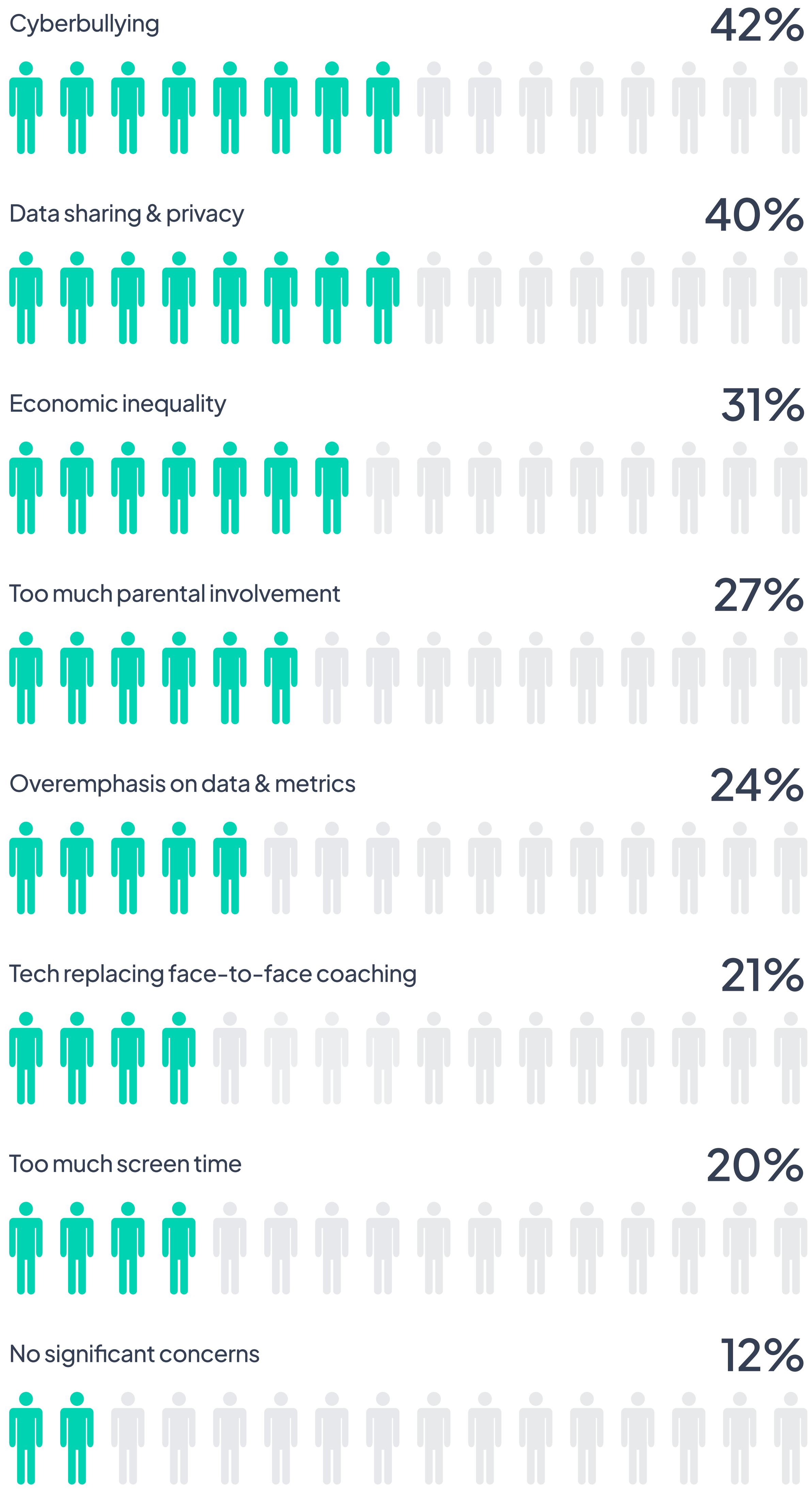
Stakeholders in youth and amateur sports are not opposed to technology itself, but rather have specific concerns about how it might be implemented and its potential secondary effects.

Online safety and privacy dominate concerns - The top two concerns, cyberbullying/negative social media interactions (42%) and data sharing/privacy issues (40%), relate to digital safety and security. This indicates that stakeholders are highly aware of potential online risks when technology intersects with youth sports.

Equity issues rank as a substantial concern - Economic inequality and access barriers (31%) rank third, highlighting awareness that technological adoption may create or deepen divides between those who can and cannot afford such resources.

Overparenting enabled by technology is a notable worry - The concern about parents becoming too involved through constant digital connection (27%) suggests respondents recognize that technology might disrupt healthy boundaries in youth sports participation.

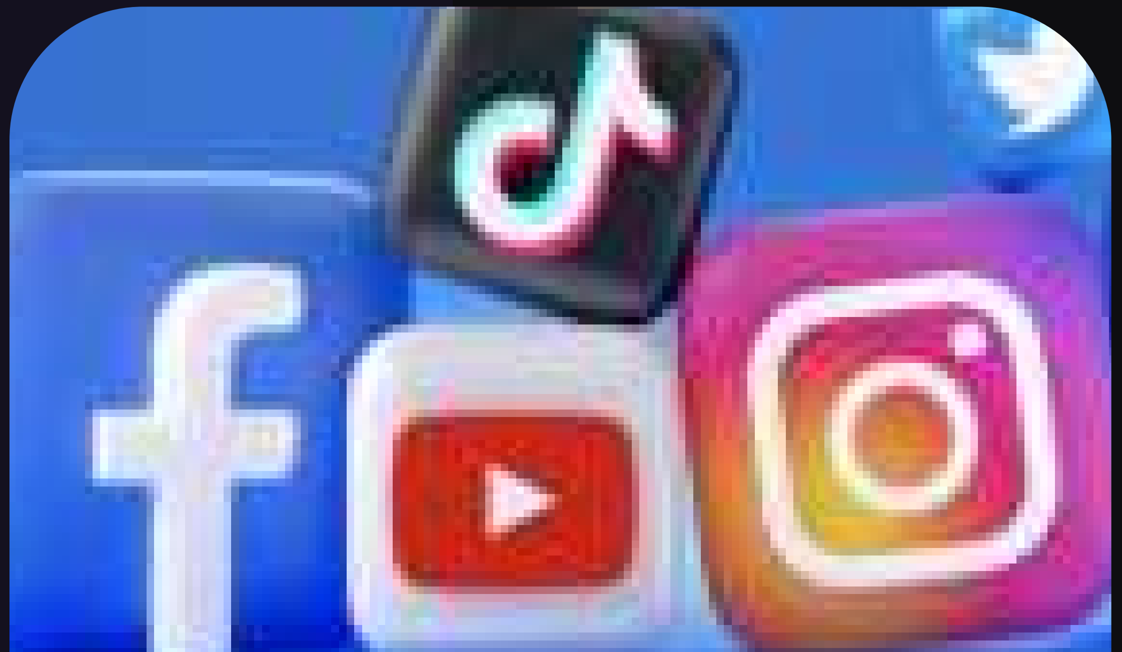
Preservation of sport values matters - Concerns about overemphasis on data/metrics rather than enjoyment (24%) and technology replacing face-to-face coaching/interaction (21%) reflect a desire to maintain the fundamental human and developmental aspects of youth sports.



Livestreaming Landscape

60%

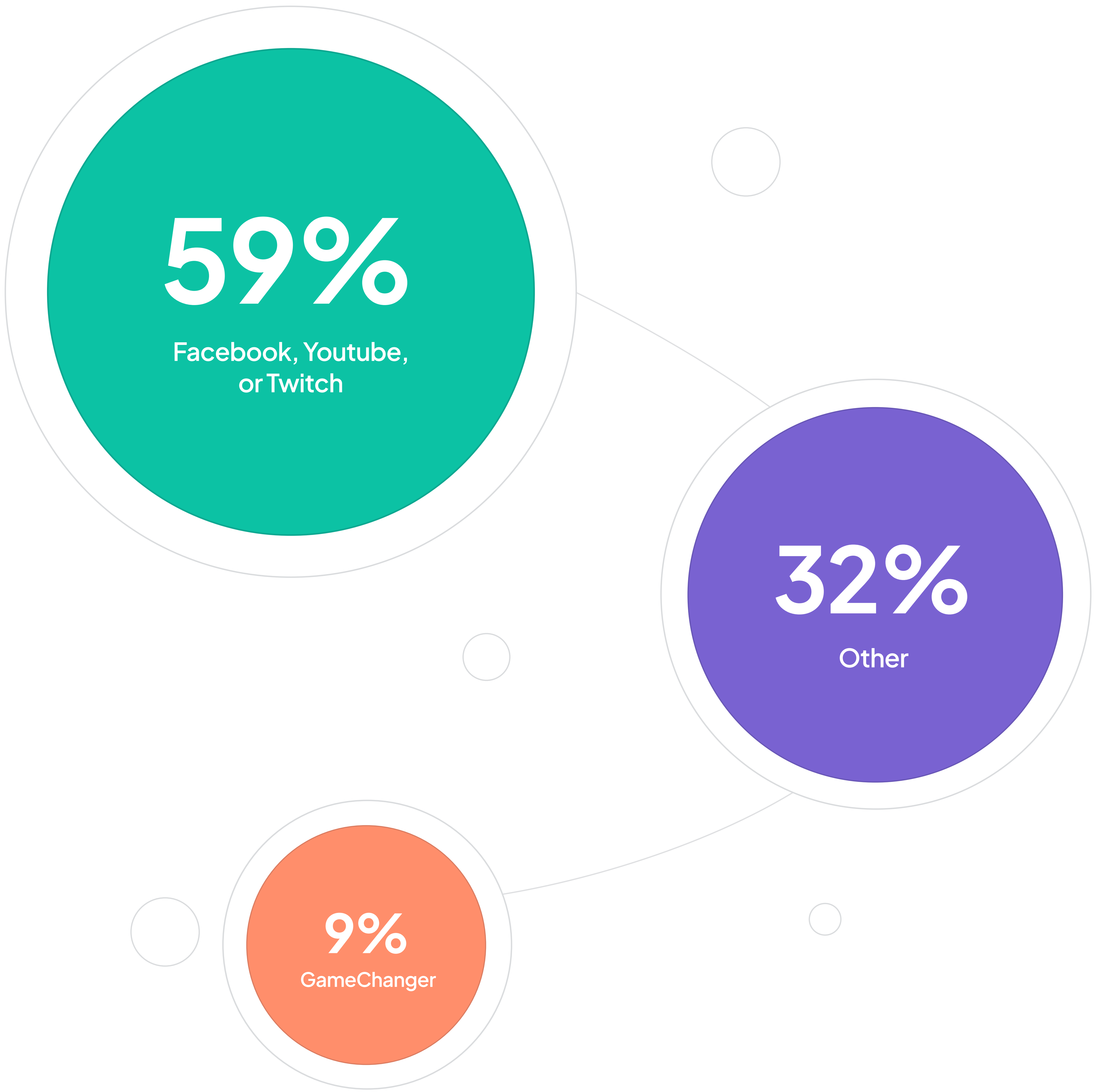
consider video quality as the top area needing improvement



What does your team/league primarily use to livestream?

For those who do livestream, social media platforms dominate the livestreaming landscape, with Facebook Live (29%) YouTube Live (27%), and Twitch (3%) accounting for almost 60% of all streaming. These platforms are free to use, making them accessible options for teams with limited budgets.

While specialized and white label streaming solutions are also utilized, their adoption is highly fragmented across the market. Within this category, GameChanger stands out as the clear frontrunner at 9%. Other specialized sports streaming platforms (Sideline, Hudl, YouthStream, YouthSportsPlus, BallerTV, BoxCast, Pixellot, Veo) did not exceed 3% on their own, and collectively account for about 32% of the market.



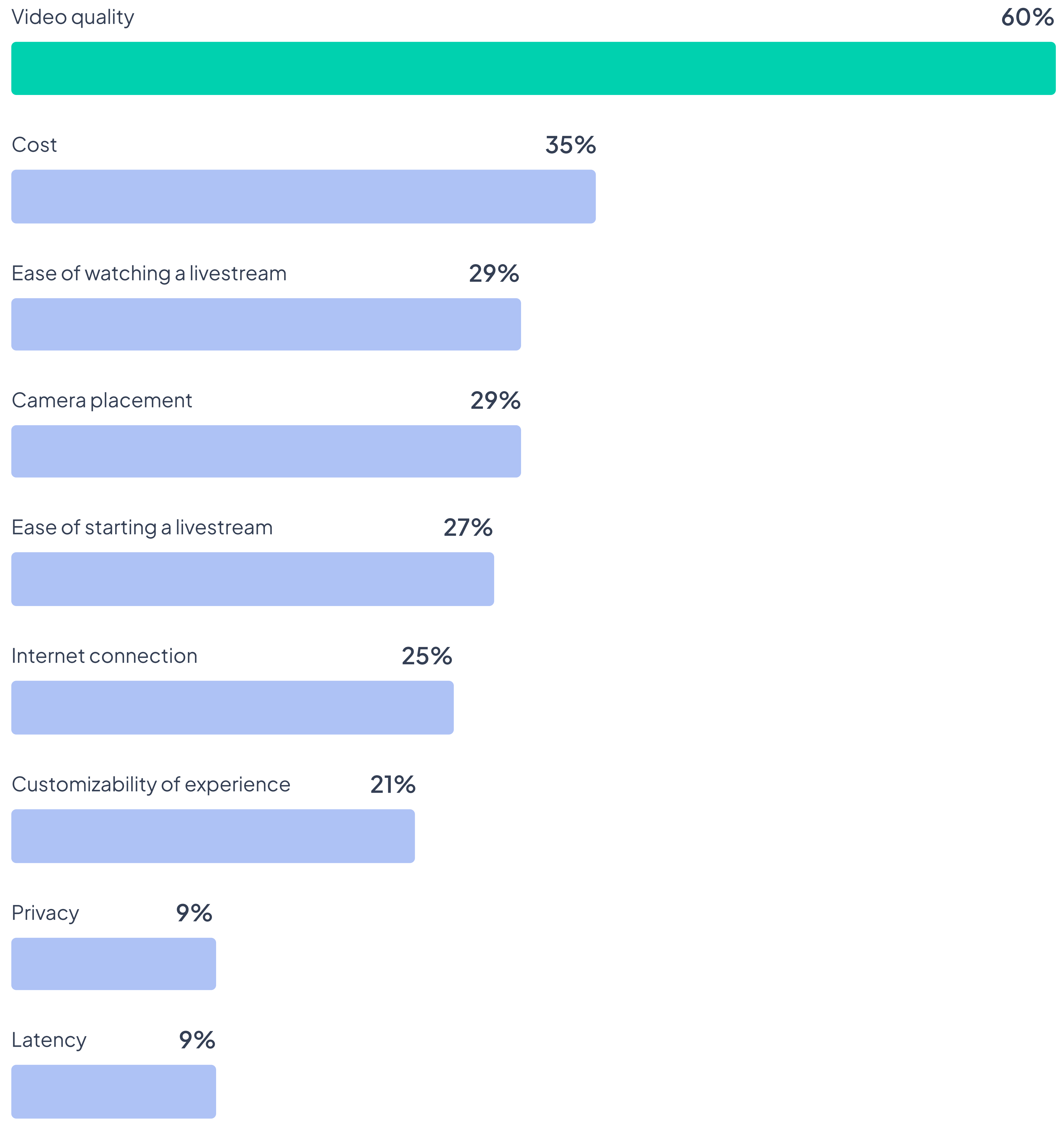
What are the top areas of improvement for your current livestreaming solution?

Most categories received substantial response percentages, indicating that users have multiple pain points with their current solutions, not just isolated issues.

Video quality is overwhelmingly the top concern, with 60% of respondents identifying it as an area needing improvement. This widespread dissatisfaction points to gaps in current offerings, particularly the free social media platforms that dominate usage,

Cost is the second highest concern at 34%, indicating that while many teams use free platforms, there may be associated costs (equipment, premium features, etc.) that teams find burdensome.

Overall, teams are willing to use accessible platforms like Facebook Live and YouTube, but are experiencing quality trade-offs and usability challenges that leave them unsatisfied. The emphasis on video quality shows that while free solutions are widely used, there's a clear desire for better viewing experiences.



60%

Video Quality Gap

Teams often sacrifice quality when using free streaming platforms, creating an opportunity for specialized solutions

What specific features would make livestreaming more useful to you?

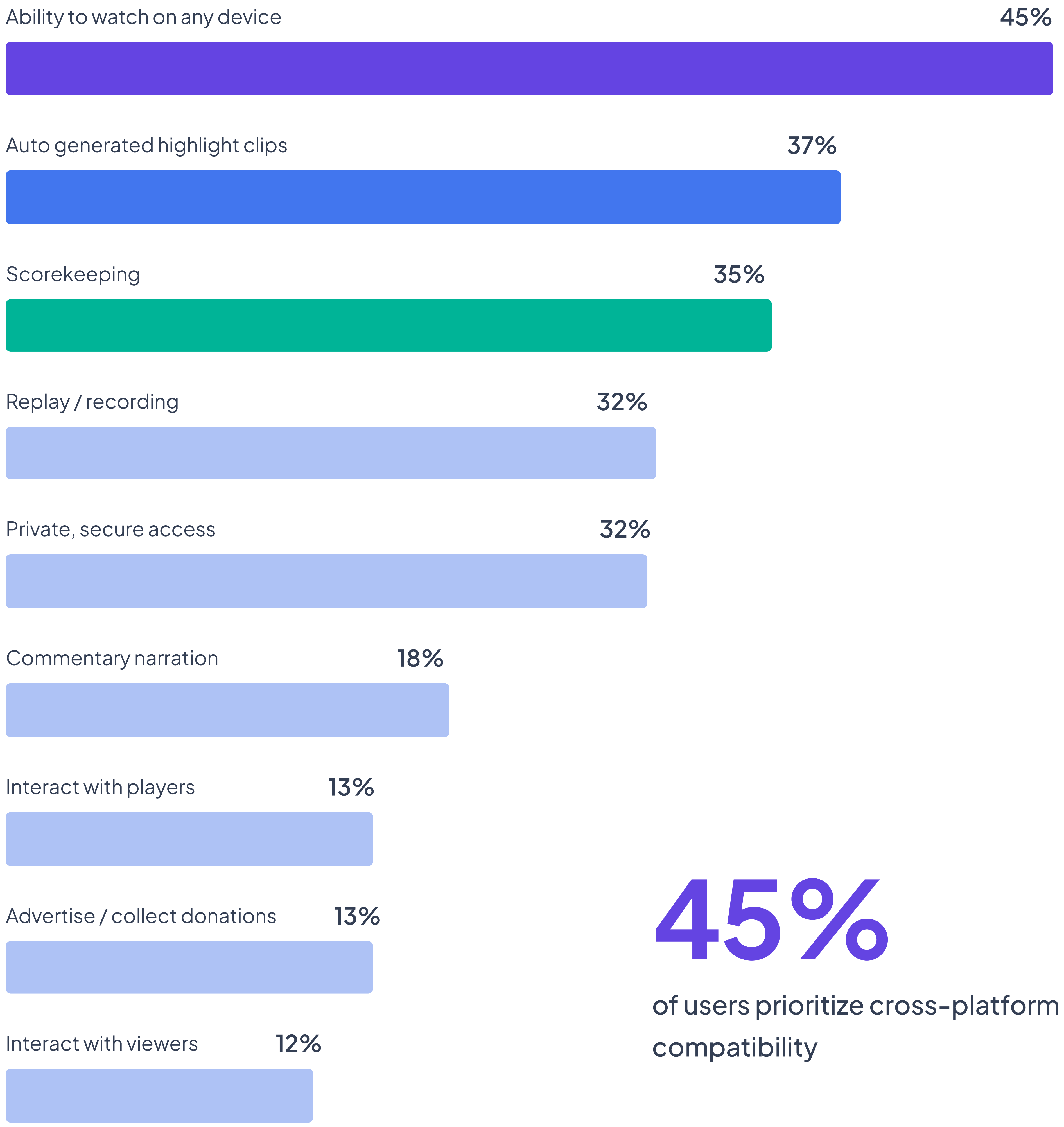
Device flexibility is paramount - The ability to watch on any device (phone, tablet, computer, TV) is overwhelmingly the most desired feature at approximately 45%, suggesting cross-platform compatibility is essential for users.

Enhanced viewing features are highly valued - Automatically generated highlight clips ranks second at around 37%, indicating users want more than just raw footage but also curated, convenient content.

Sports-specific functionality matters - The ability to add scorekeeping and statistics (approximately 35%) and on-demand replay/recording capabilities (around 32%) reveals that users want livestreaming solutions tailored specifically for sports.

Security concerns are significant - Private, secure access features are important to approximately 32% of respondents, suggesting that open platforms like Facebook Live and YouTube may not fully address these concerns.

Looking beyond the current livestreaming landscape, our survey revealed a significant untapped potential in the market. Approximately 78% of respondents indicated they are not currently livestreaming their games or events at all. Understanding this majority segment is crucial for identifying barriers to adoption and potential growth opportunities. When we asked these non-streamers about their key concerns and what might motivate them to begin livestreaming, their responses painted a clear picture of the obstacles preventing wider implementation.

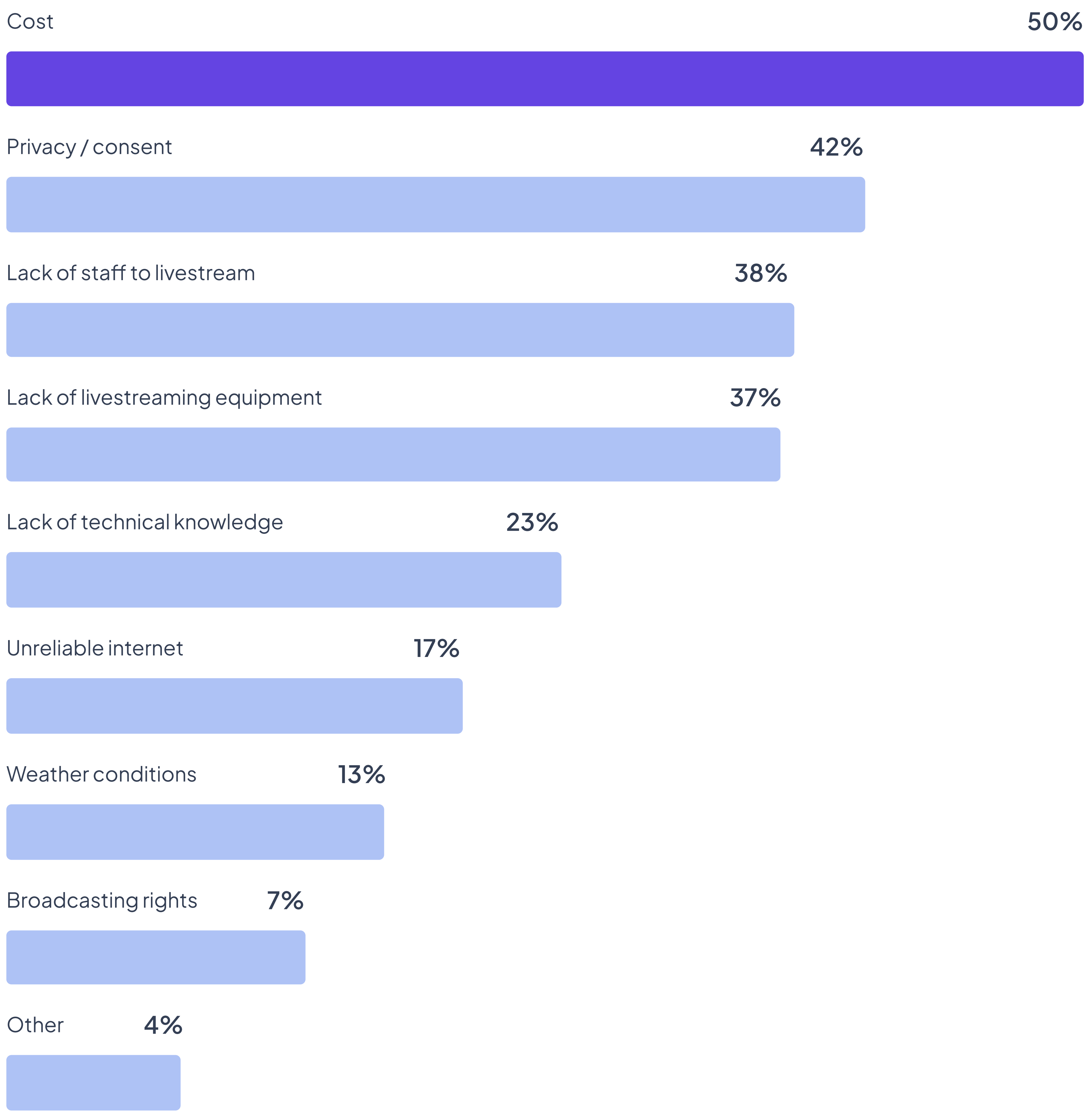


45%

of users prioritize cross-platform compatibility

What are the top 3 reasons why your team/league has not adopted livestreaming?

The high ranking of cost as the primary barrier strongly suggests a lack of awareness about free livestreaming solutions. Given that most current streamers are utilizing free-to-use platforms like Facebook Live and YouTube, there appears to be a disconnect between the perceived and actual financial investment required. This misperception, combined with legitimate concerns about human resources and equipment, indicates that educational outreach about simple, low-cost streaming options could potentially convert a significant portion of non-streamers. Additionally, turnkey solutions that address both privacy management and technical simplicity could effectively target multiple top barriers simultaneously.



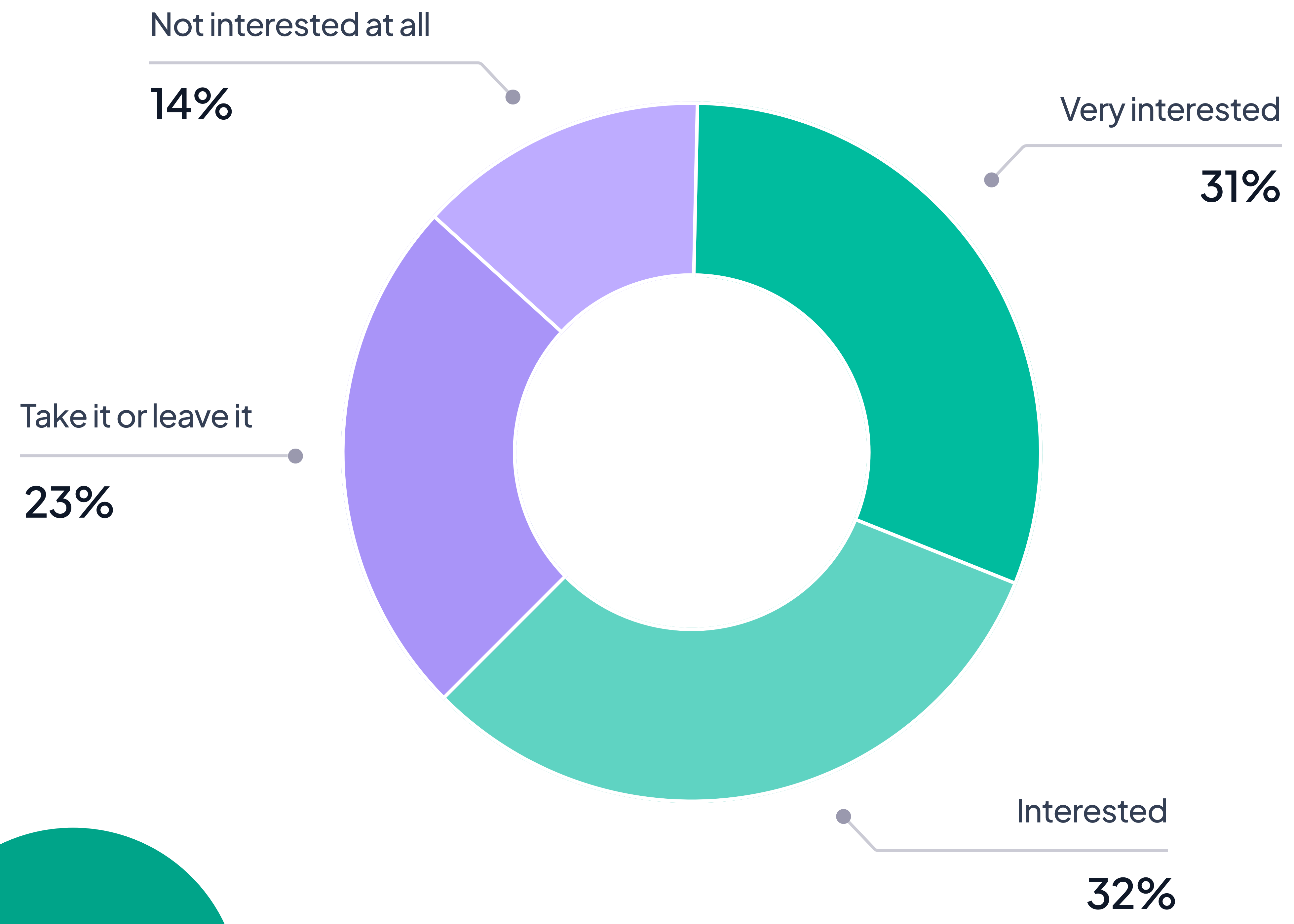
50%

of users view costs as the primary barrier

How interested are you in livestreaming for your team/league?

Strong interest dominates the landscape, with 62.9% of non-streaming respondents expressing either "Very interested" (31.3%) or "Interested" (31.6%) levels of enthusiasm for livestreaming adoption. This substantial positive interest suggests that while 78% of organizations aren't currently livestreaming, the majority would consider implementing the technology under the right conditions. High interest among non-livestreaming organizations, coupled with current implementation barriers, signals significant untapped market potential..

The widespread interest becomes even more significant when considered against the main adoption barriers we identified: cost concerns (50.32%), privacy issues (42.26%), and technical complexity. Together, these findings indicate a major market gap. Nearly two-thirds of non-streaming organizations have positive interest levels, but require solutions that address practical implementation barriers rather than fundamental skepticism about livestreaming technology.



63% are interested or very interested in livestreaming

How would you rank the following reasons for your team/league to livestream?

The responses naturally cluster into three tiers: family engagement (3.41–3.54), community growth (4.11–4.69), and strategic/monetization benefits (4.99–5.41). These findings paint a picture of youth and amateur sports organizations that view livestreaming primarily as a service to their immediate community.

Family-focused benefits dominate the priority list - Enabling parents with schedule conflicts (3.41) and allowing grandparents and distant relatives to participate (3.54) are overwhelmingly the top priorities. This suggests that livestreaming is primarily valued as a solution to include family members who would otherwise miss out.

Community engagement is a secondary but significant priority - The middle tier of priorities focuses on broader community connections: increasing team/community engagement (4.11) and growing the fan base (4.6). These social benefits bridge the gap between family inclusion and financial considerations.

REASONS FOR LIVESTREAMING

Rated on a scale of 1–10 (lower score = higher priority)

Based on the findings in this report, our team is inspired to to make a meaningful impact in the youth and amateur sports technology landscape. The primary barriers preventing wider adoption—cost perceptions, privacy concerns, and video quality issues—are precisely the problems our platform was designed to solve:

Cost: Flexible architecture enables intelligent scaling and adjusts resources based on demand, avoiding over provisioning costs. Additionally, Native Frame unlocks new monetization channels through customizable experiences, white-label solutions that can be resold to clients, and integrations that enable subscription tiers, pay-per-view events, and premium feature offerings.

Privacy: Platform authentication provides a multi-layered digital security system that verifies each person's identity before allowing stream access.We handle the complex security work behind the scenes, including generating short-lived, encrypted tokens and providing access control so you can manage who can view content and when.

Video quality: Our next-gen transcoding delivers the highest possible video quality video to each viewer while adapting dynamically to changing network conditions. The process uses efficient modern codecs, applies real-time quality enhancements, and leverages hardware acceleration.

Built directly into Reeplayer's autonomous cameras, livestreaming is a seamless experience, with no extra setup or third-party tools required. Designed for both organizers and families, simple controls and private access makes it easy for anyone to get started, regardless of their technical background.

Native Frame and Reeplayer help teams do more than just capture the game. We create moments that bring people together. Whether it's grandparents watching from afar or teammates rewatching highlights, our solution makes it easy to connect, support, and grow community around youth sports.

Livestreaming is the heartbeat of modern sports, connecting fans, fostering community, and opening doors for athletes. However, adoption has been hindered by cost, complexity, and inconsistent experiences. Native Frame and Reeplayer eliminate these obstacles with a turnkey solution that any organization can use with confidence, allowing them to focus entirely on developing young athletes and building stronger communities.

To learn more about how we can address your specific livestreaming needs and explore which approach works best for your organization, contact us at sales@nativeframe.com.

native frame + Reeplayer