

EDA State of the Sector Survey Wholesaler Feedback: Q1 2026 (January 2026)





State of the Sector Survey Wholesaler Feedback: Q1 2026

These are the responses from EDA Wholesaler businesses as part of the Q1 2026 EDA State of the Sector Survey.

The results were presented at the EDA's Talking Shop Live Online, Friday 30 January 2026.

This survey attracted 72 responses, a 28% response rate.

At 1 January 2026 the EDA has 258 wholesaler members, plus the head offices of the 4 buying groups.

There is a separate survey for EDA Manufacturers.

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[Q18: Are your customers asking you for third-party assessments that evaluate the carbon/sustainability/ESG credentials...](#)

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[carbon?](#)

[Q20: Are you aware of manufacturer-produced Environmental Product Declarations \(EPDs\)?](#)

[Q21: Specifically, in the last 12 months have you been asked by a contractor/installer for any product Environmental Product Declarations \(EPDs\)?](#)

[Q22: To those who responded Yes, we asked a further question... was your Manufacturer Supplier able to provide Environmental Product Declarations?](#)

[Q22 – additional briefing note: Life Cycle Assessments, Environmental Product Declarations, and TM65 – what's the difference?](#)

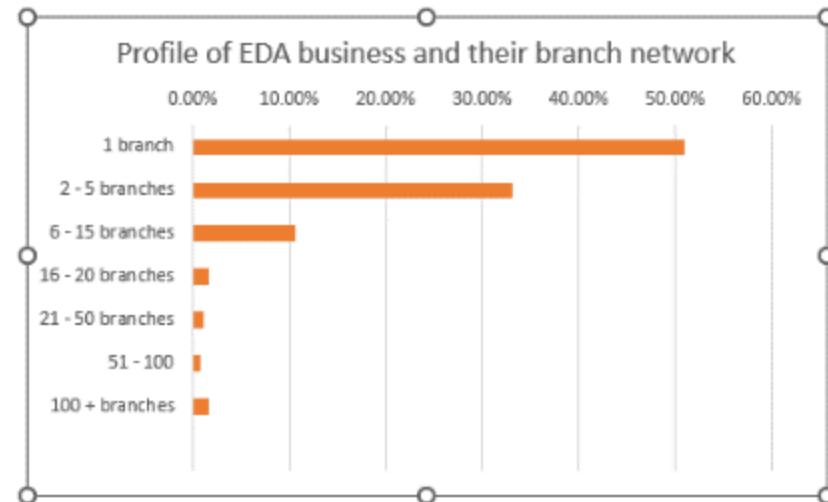
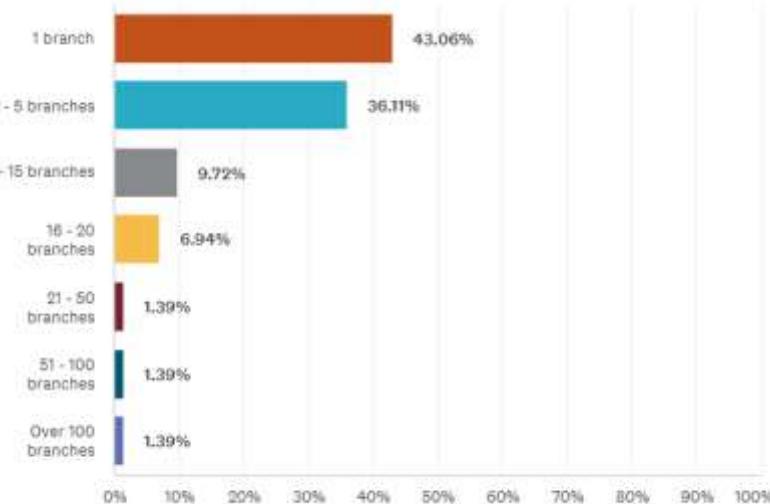
[Q23: Have you actively reduced the number of suppliers you buy from?](#)

[Q24: To those who answered Yes, a further question... are you planning further consolidation in 2026?](#)

[Q25: How do you anticipate sales volumes \(like for like sales\) will change during Q1 2026 and in 2026?](#)



Q1: How many branches do you have?

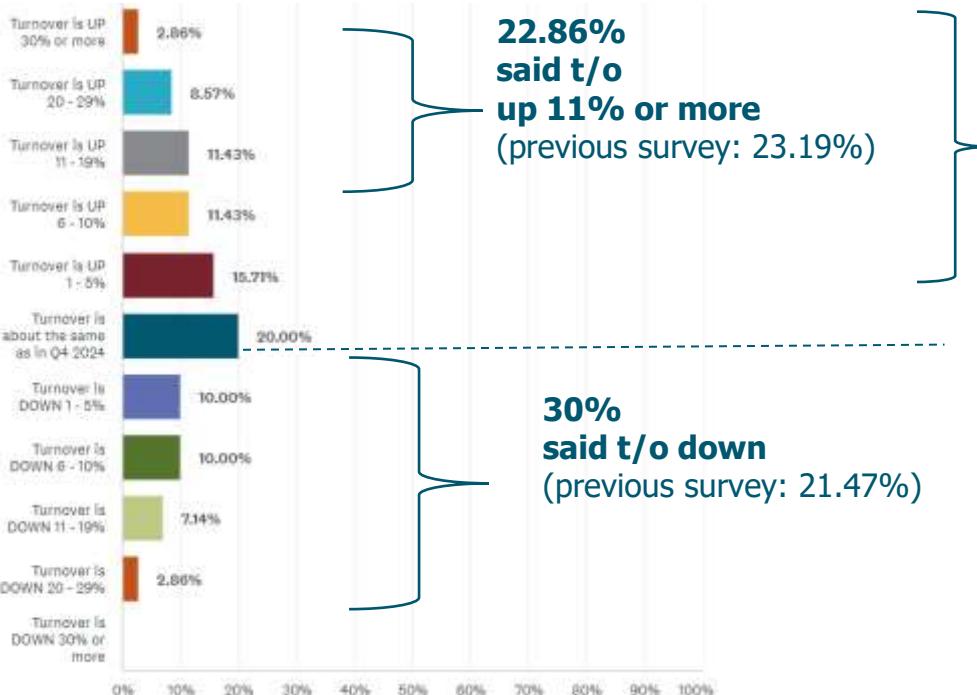


As of 1 January 2026 the EDA has 258 wholesaler members, plus the head offices of the 4 buying groups. Collectively, EDA wholesalers run 1,908 branches across the UK.

State of the Sector Survey: Q1 2026 (published 30 Jan 2026)



Q2: How does turnover in Q4 2025 compare with Q4 2024?



**22.86%
said t/o
up 11% or more**
(previous survey: 23.19%)

**50%
Reporting t/o up**
(previous survey: 60.87%)

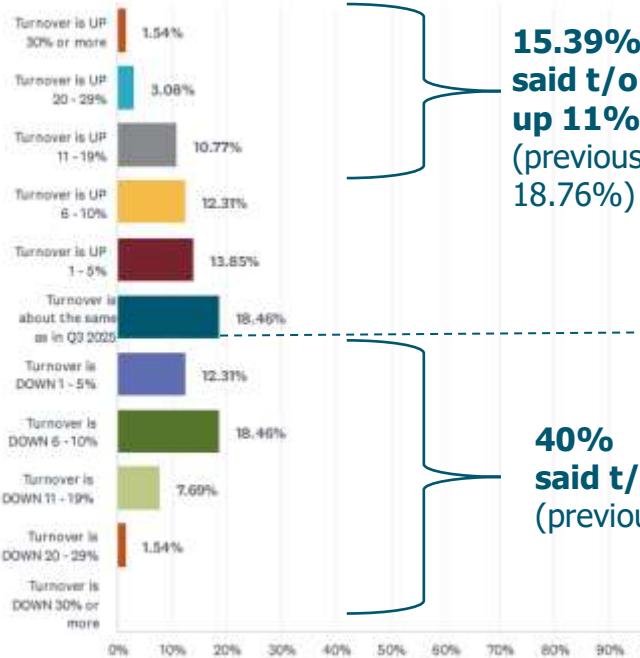
“Q4 figures not finalised at time
of writing so this is an
estimate.”

**30%
said t/o down**
(previous survey: 21.47%)

State of the Sector Survey: Q1 2026 (published 30 Jan 2026)



Q3: How does turnover in Q4 2025 compare with Q3 2025?



**15.39%
said t/o
up 11% or more**
(previous survey:
18.76%)

41.55% reporting t/o up
(previous survey: 67%)

“Estimated”

“December effect”

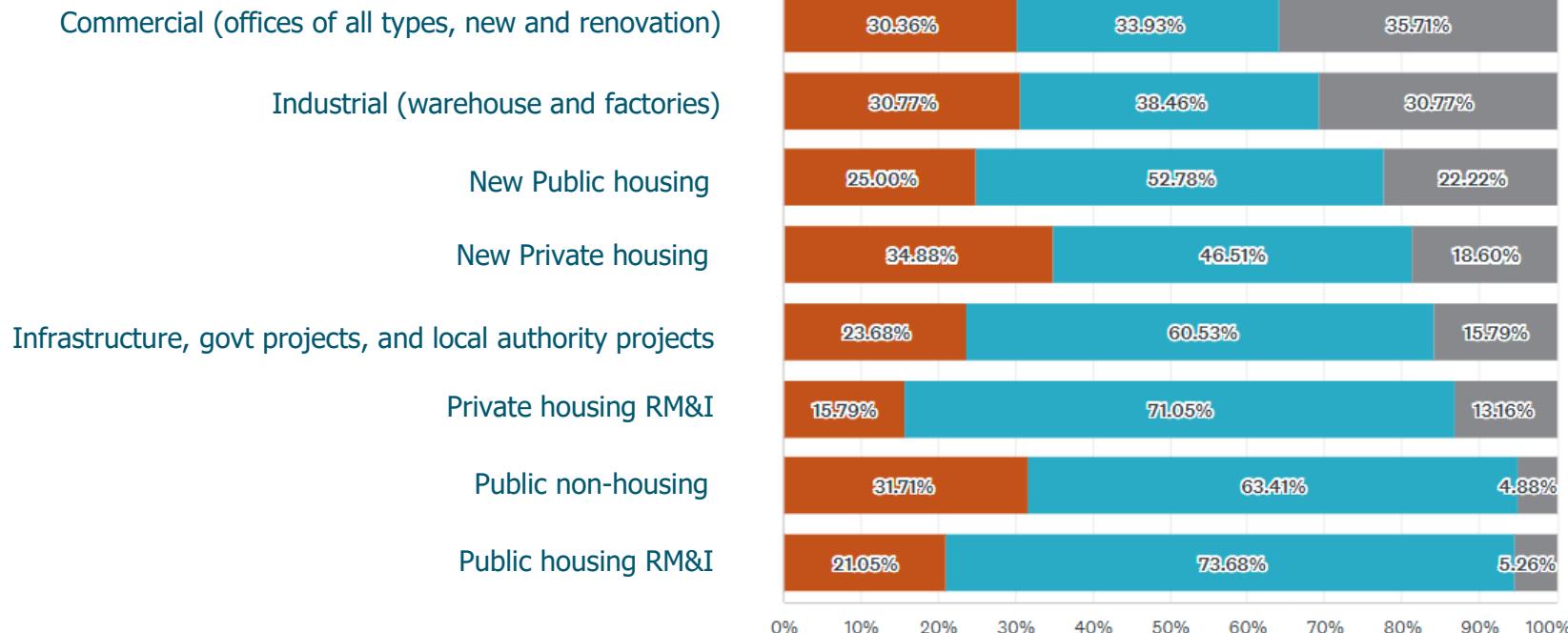
**40%
said t/o down**
(previous survey: 20.32%)

State of the Sector Survey: Q1 2026 (published 30 Jan 2026)



Q4. Have you experienced a change in turnover in Q4 2025 compared to Q3 2025 for the following sectors? Ranked by growth (grey band) – arrows indicate comparison with previous survey

Decline No change Growth



State of the Sector Survey: Q1 2026 (published 30 Jan 2026)



Q4: Comments on particular areas of growth

“PV, EV & Renewables”

“Renewables continues to grow even in winter months
year on year”

“Renewables products”

“Hospitality – our core focus”

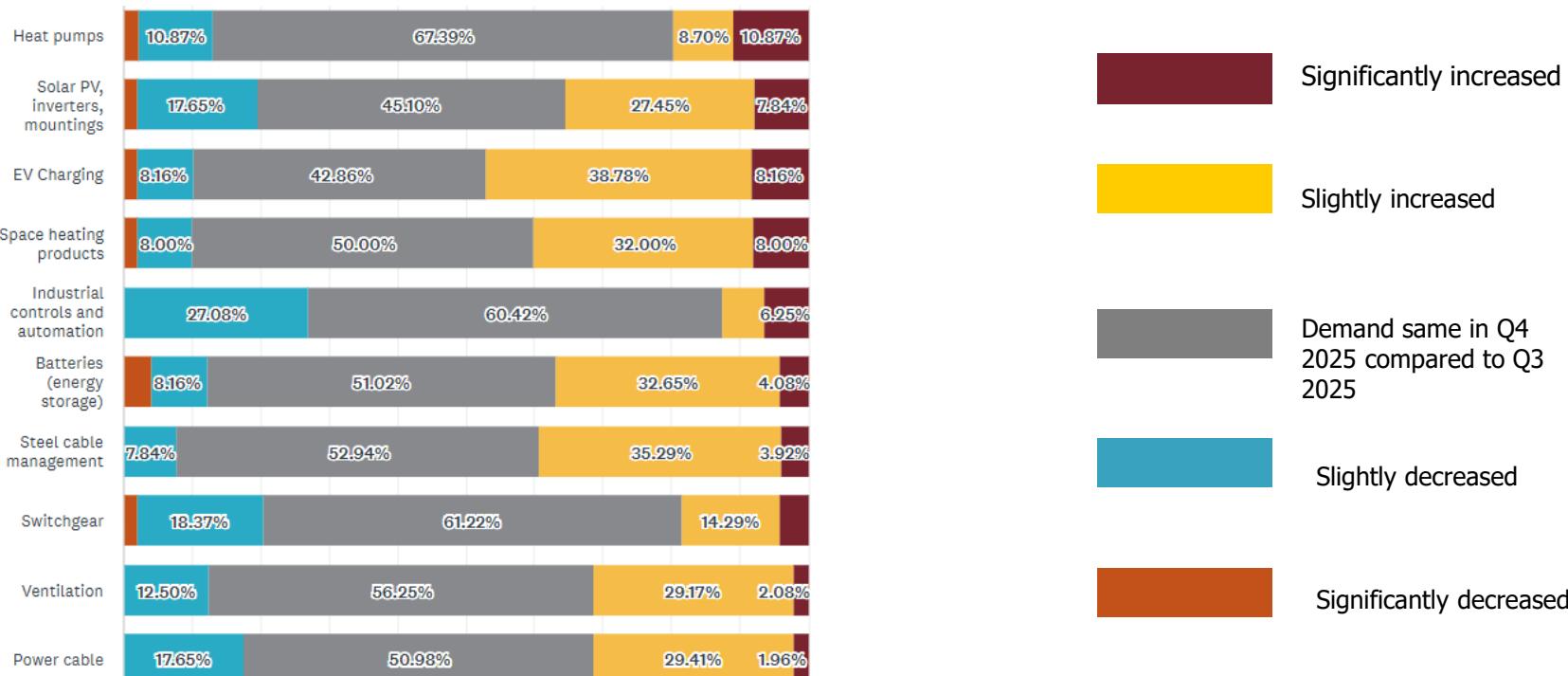
“Battery storage”

“Data centres, oil and gas projects, and defence”

State of the Sector Survey: Q1 2026 (published 30 Jan 2026)



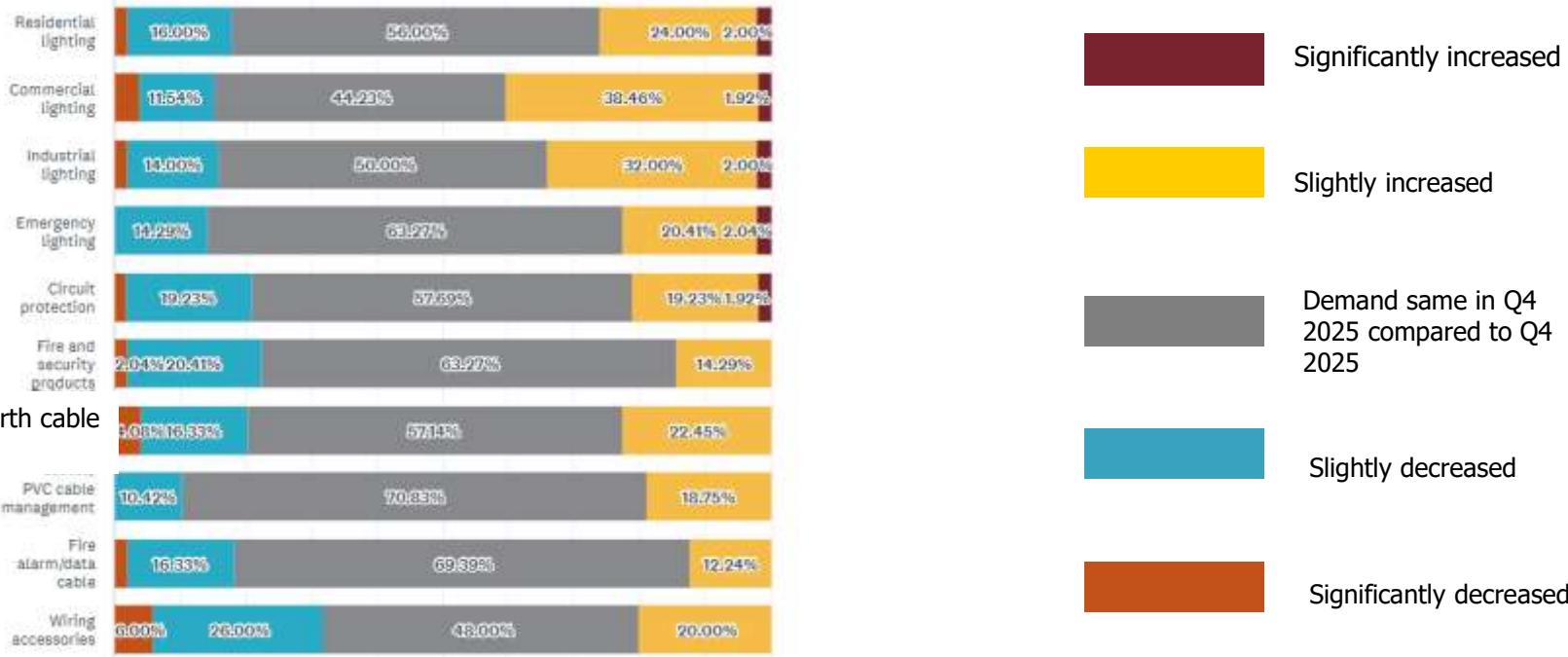
Q5: Has there been any change in demand for the following products in Q4 2025 compared to Q3 2025? Ranked by 'Significantly Increased'. Page 1 of 4



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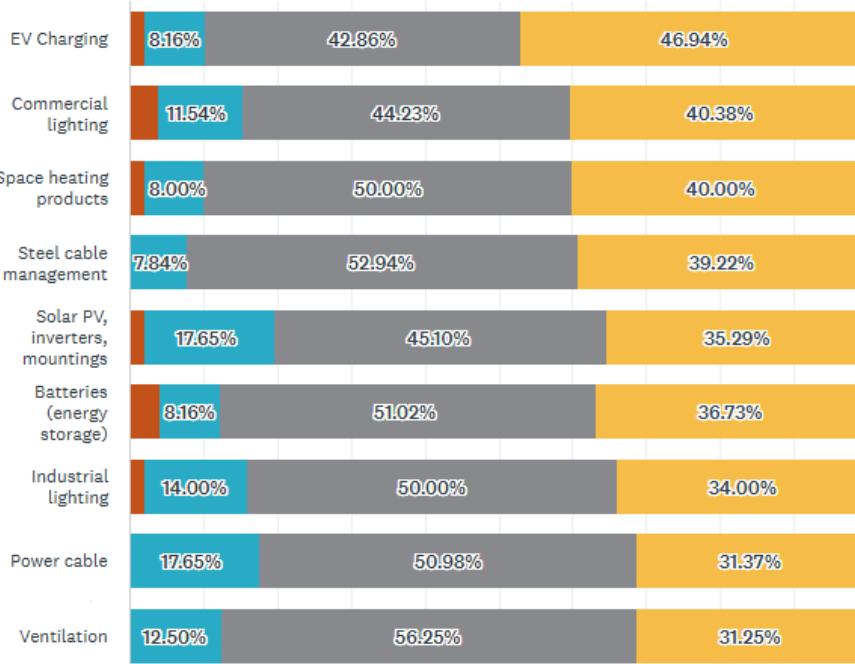
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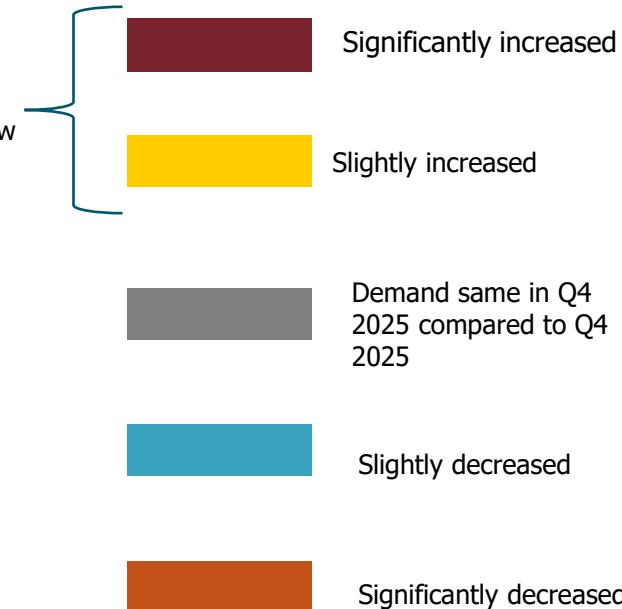
State of the Sector Survey: Q1 2026 (published 30 Jan 2026)



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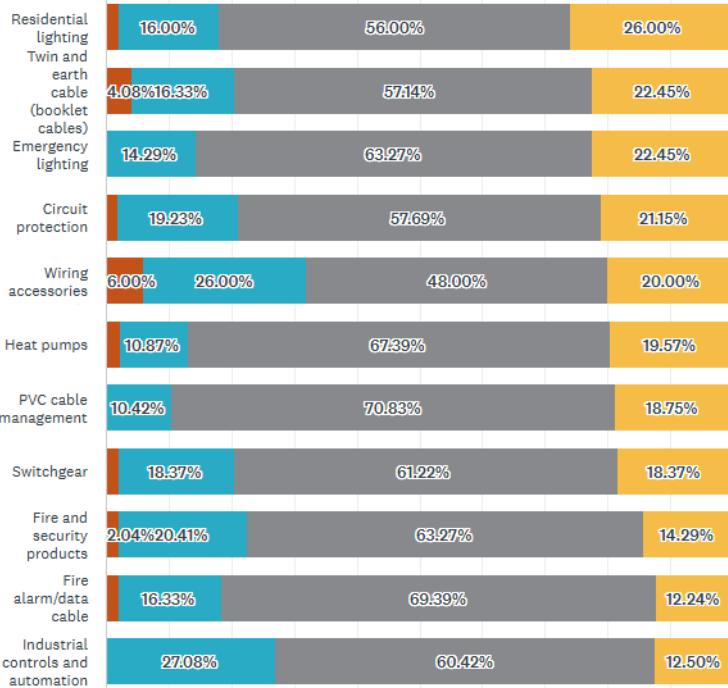
Note: Here we merged 'Slightly increased' and 'Significantly increased' to show a general growth profile.



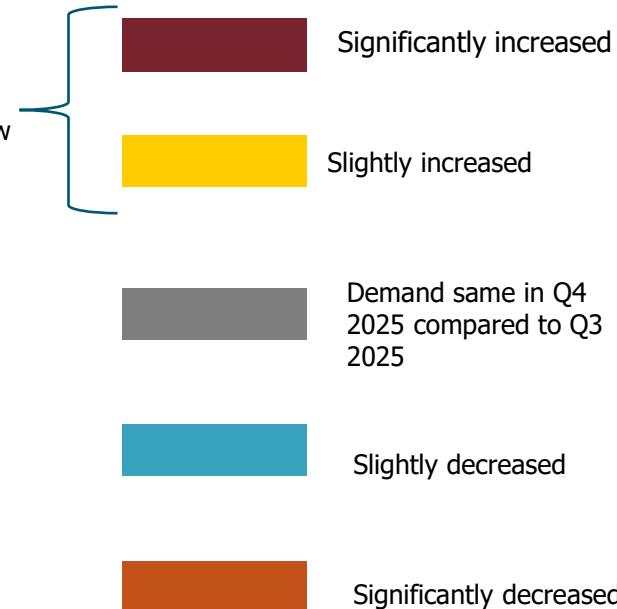
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Q5: Has there been any change in demand for the following products in Q4 2025 compared to Q3 2025? Merging 'Significantly increased' and 'Slightly increased'. Page 4 of 4.



Note: Here we merged 'Slightly increased' and 'Significantly increased' to show a general growth profile.



State of the Sector Survey: Q1 2026 (published 30 Jan 2026)



Q6: What do you see as the biggest opportunities for the electrical wholesale sector?

Sectors	Product areas Renewables is dominant theme	Guiding principles
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New schools and housing • Office refurbishments • Data Centres and Small modular reactors + Solar • For us I think moving into more commercial and industrial products • Growth in renewable demand • Delayed projects coming back on line • Nothing new, you just have to look for them • New technologies and new products related to it. • Ai and Data Centres 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Battery storage and heat pumps • Battery storage • Data centres & renewables • Digitalisation, Renewables, • Electric heating / renewables • EV charging • EV, battery storage (<i>multiple mentions</i>) • e commerce • New Builds & Solar • Renewables (<i>multiple mentions</i>) • Renewables and industrial • Renewable Energy - Smart lighting • Stock • Smart Technology • LED Lighting and renewables • Solar PV • Solar PV, battery storage (more commercial battery storage now), heat pumps, EV charging and ventilation • Ventilation 	<p>Improving service levels in a sector where levels are otherwise declining.</p> <p>Maximise personal relationships and reliable service offering to combat on-line.</p> <p>Strengthened relationships with Suppliers and relevance in Supply Chain.</p> <p>Organic growth through pro-activity, close customer engagement and maintenance of high service levels.</p> <p>“Not a good time the internet is selling to many products at cost, living off rebates.”</p>

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Q7: What do you see as the biggest threats or challenges for the electrical wholesale sector? Page 1 of 2

Margin Erosion & Price Pressure

- Margin decreases, Cash Flow
- Prices and Margin
- Decline in Margin, Increased competition
- Erosion on margin due to aggressive pricing on the internet
- Margin erosion
- Margin erosion from on line traders
- Significant cost increases versus declining margins
- Inflation pressures and margin squeeze. The way the market is consolidating and creating large players who are trying to dominate suppliers at the detriment to smaller businesses.

It's tough out here!

Online and E-commerce

- Online sellers diminishing the traditional benefits of local wholesalers in terms of service and wholesale product holdings.
- On line and the sheds, also Screwfix type suppliers
- Online pricing and retailers like Screwfix taking market share
- Internet
- Online price erosion
- Online business, direct delivery from distributors/manufacturers
- Online
- Online stores and trade supermarkets
- INTERNET SALES
- e commerce
- online retail and cheap imports
- Online pricing and Screwfix - Toolstation etc
- on line sales
- online retailers working on rebate alone
- Low overhead ecommerce sellers, as well as manufacturers and national wholesalers branching into this under separate branding.
- On-Line business destroying margin, a race to the bottom!

Suppliers going direct to contractors



Q7: What do you see as the biggest threats or challenges for the electrical wholesale sector? Page 2 of 2

Financial pressures

- Costs
- Significant cost increases versus declining margins
- Increased operational costs
- Getting paid
- Economic growth/outlook Consumer confidence
- bad debts, others willing to work on too little or no margin on tenders
- Contractor insolvency
- Cashflow and people going bust
- Increased operational costs and general market margin erosion from competitor pricing activities

Government

- Continued reduction on public spending (schools) together with continued economy uncertainty
- AI and the government
- CURRENT GOVERNMENT OVER TAXING SMALL BUSINESS

Talent, Skills, and Operating Costs

- Retaining staff
- Increases in operating costs, i.e. wages and National Insurance, energy, rates, vehicles - all largely due to Labour Government.
- new employee employment regulations minimum wage extra government taxes

New competition

- Wholesalers in other industries e.g. Plumbing venturing in to renewables sales (solar, batteries and heat pumps), online marketplace seeming to always be a race to the bottom, attracting good young talent to the industry, limited ERP system and needing to prepare staff for a new ERP system
- Growing competition from all angles.

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Q8: Your Operational Challenges: please tell us which 5 operational challenges are your most pressing at this time?

	January 2025	April 2025	July 2025	October 2025	January 2026
1	Inflation in business overheads and passing these on to customers	Inflation in business overheads and passing these on to customers + Upward pressure on all wages driven by the increases in National Living Wage and National Minimum Wage on my overall wage bill	Online prices making margins tight	Increasing business overheads	Increasing business overheads
2	Online prices making margins tight	Online prices making margins tight	Inflation in business overheads and passing these on to customers	Delays to project starts	Downturn in market demand
3	Upward pressure on all wages driven by the increases in National Living Wage and National Minimum Wage on my overall wage bill	Difficulties attracting and recruiting staff	Upward pressure on all wages driven by the increases in National Living Wage and National Minimum Wage on my overall wage bill	Downturn in market demand	Delays to project starts + A slowdown in my traditional market segments
4			A slowdown in the start of projects	Cash flow related issues	Difficulties attracting, recruiting or retaining staff
5			Product price increases and passing these on to customers	Difficulties attracting, recruiting or retaining staff	New competitors entering the market



Q8: Comments on operational challenges

“Good staff being approached and poached by other wholesalers, a real dirty tactic but a result of skilled labour or people wanting employment at all.”

“Product purchase volumes from manufacturers.”

“Suppliers not having stock.”



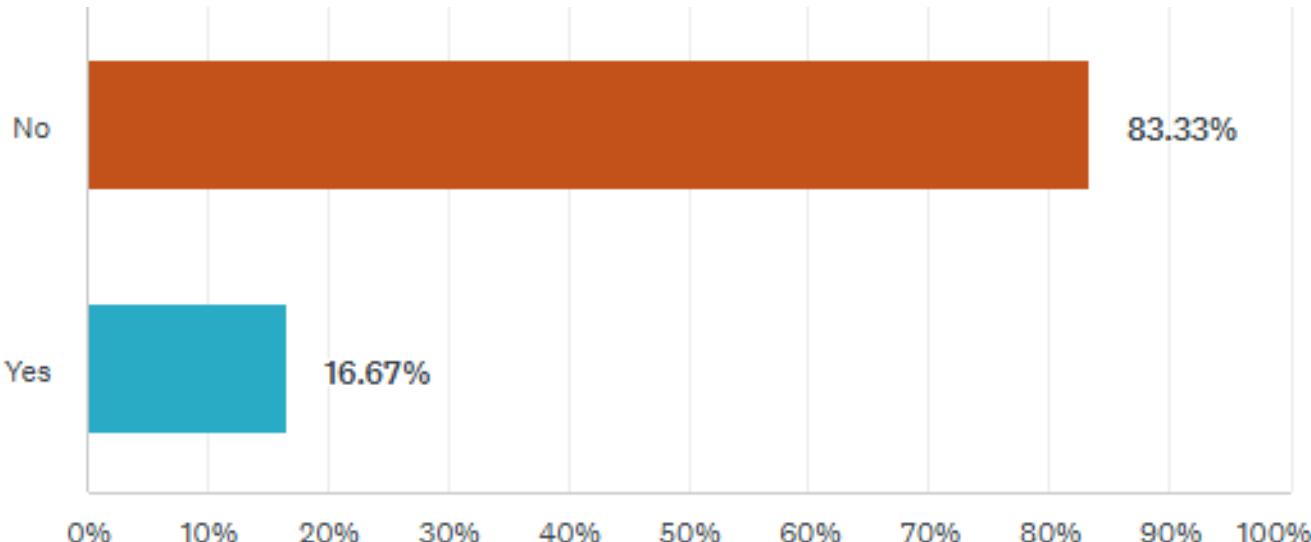
Q9: How does your business handle Cash-back Business Credit Cards? Eg. Capitalontap



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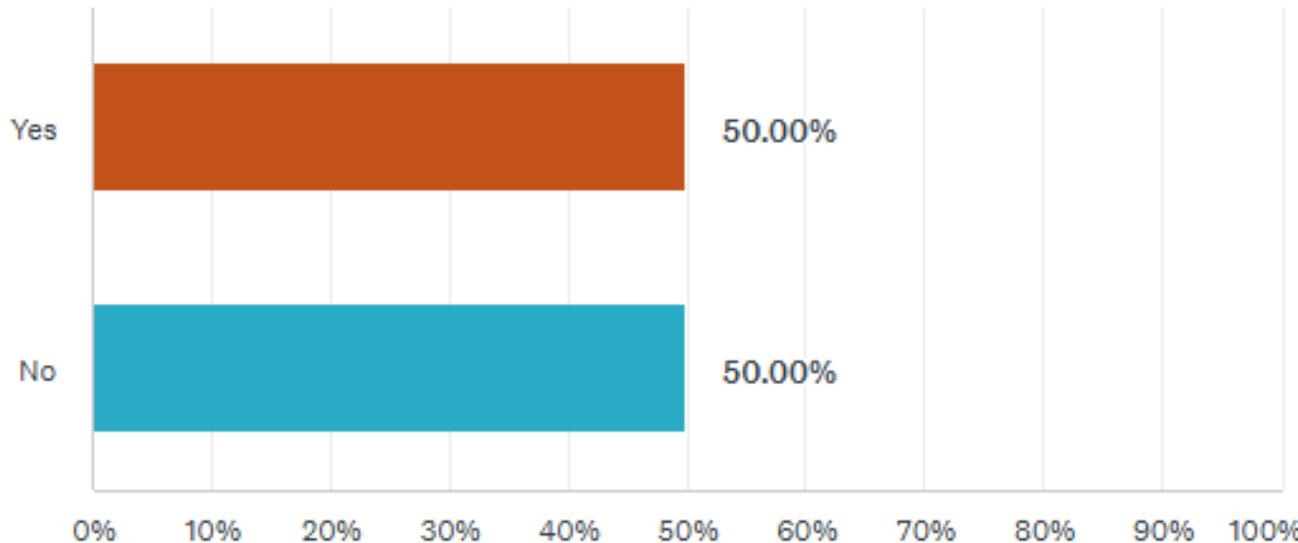
Q10: Do you use Cash-back Business Credit Cards to settle payments to your suppliers?



To those who responded "Yes", a further question was asked.



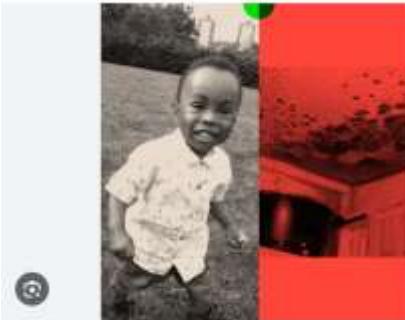
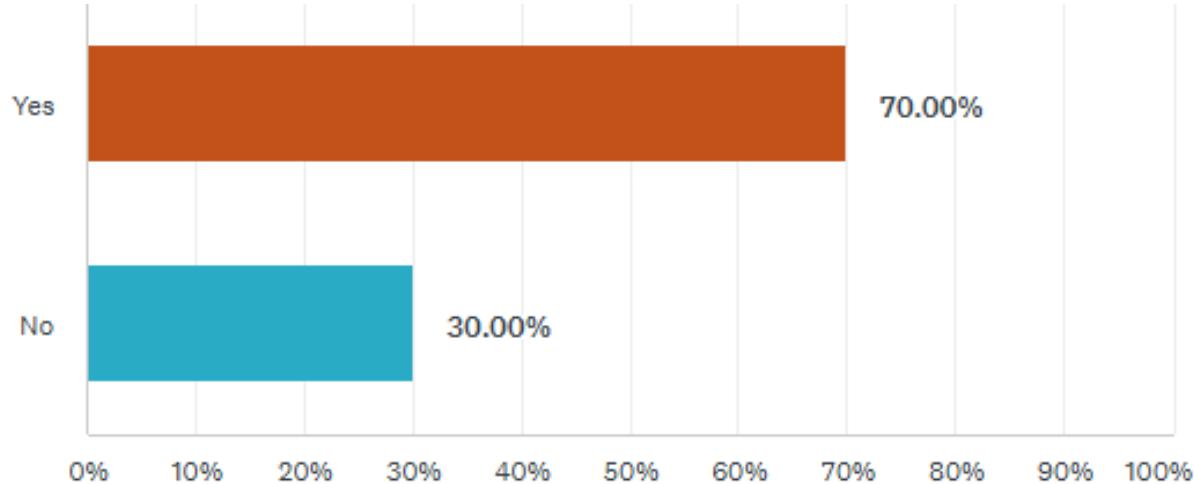
Q11: As you answered Yes to the previous question, in your view is payment via this type of card becoming more accepted by your suppliers?



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Q12: Are you Aware of Awabb's Law and the implications for landlords?



Awaab's Law: Why so many UK homes still have a mould problem - BBC News

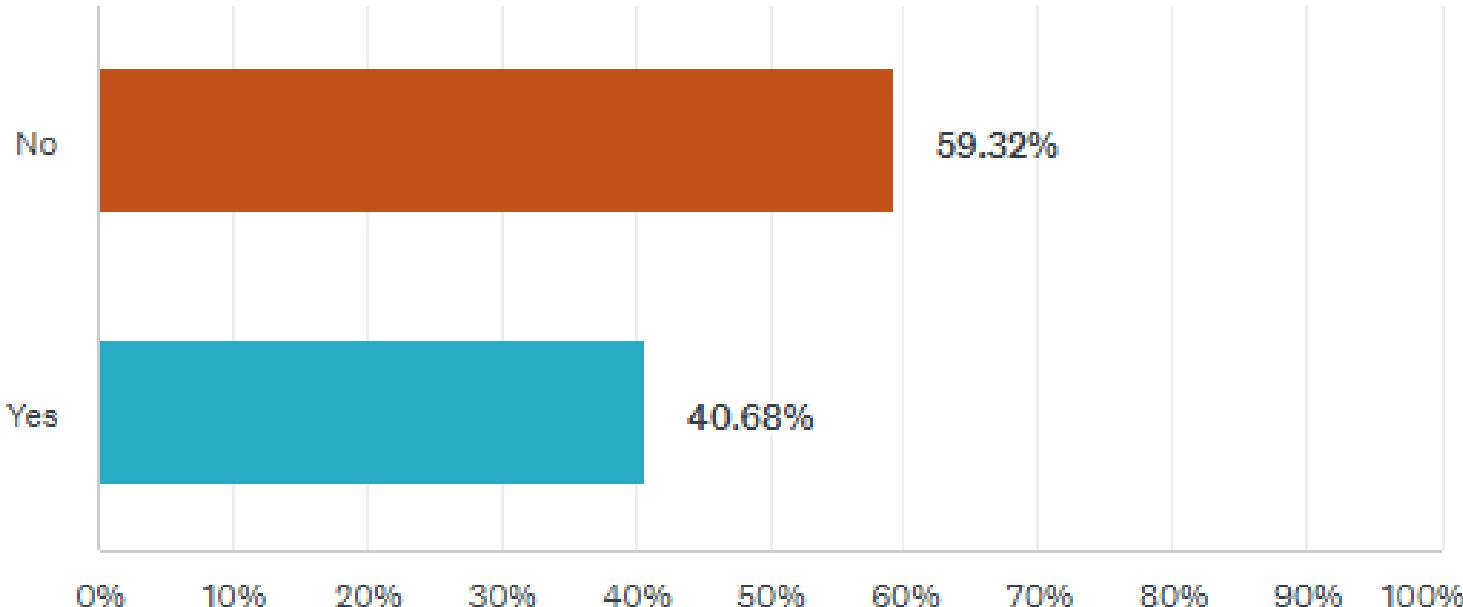
Visit >

Awaab Ishak, 2 years old boy from Rochdale, died from a respiratory condition caused by exposure to mould in 2020.

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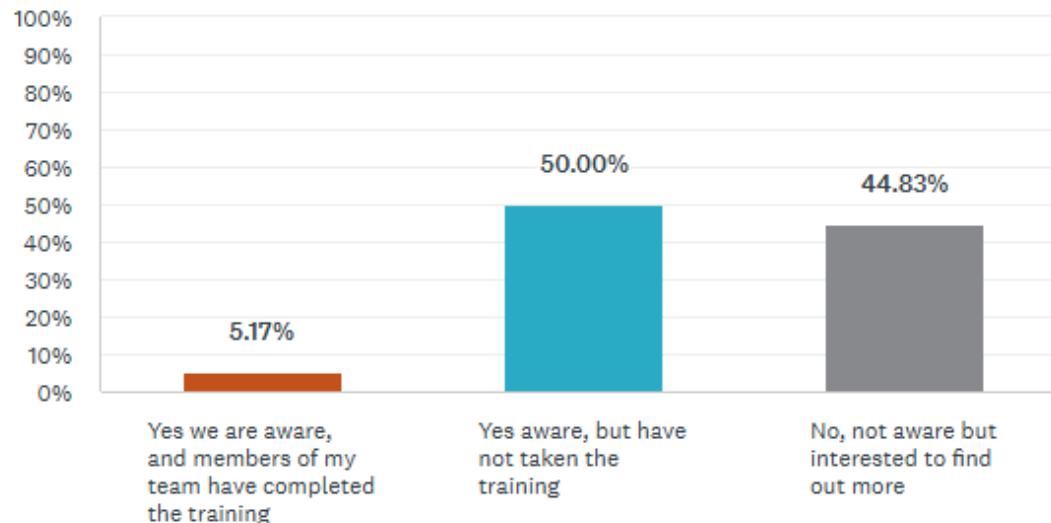


Q13: As a result of this change in legislation, have you seen any change in demand for air quality monitoring products?





Q14: Are you aware of the short training course on Awabb's Law which is available in The EDA Academy, our online learning hub?



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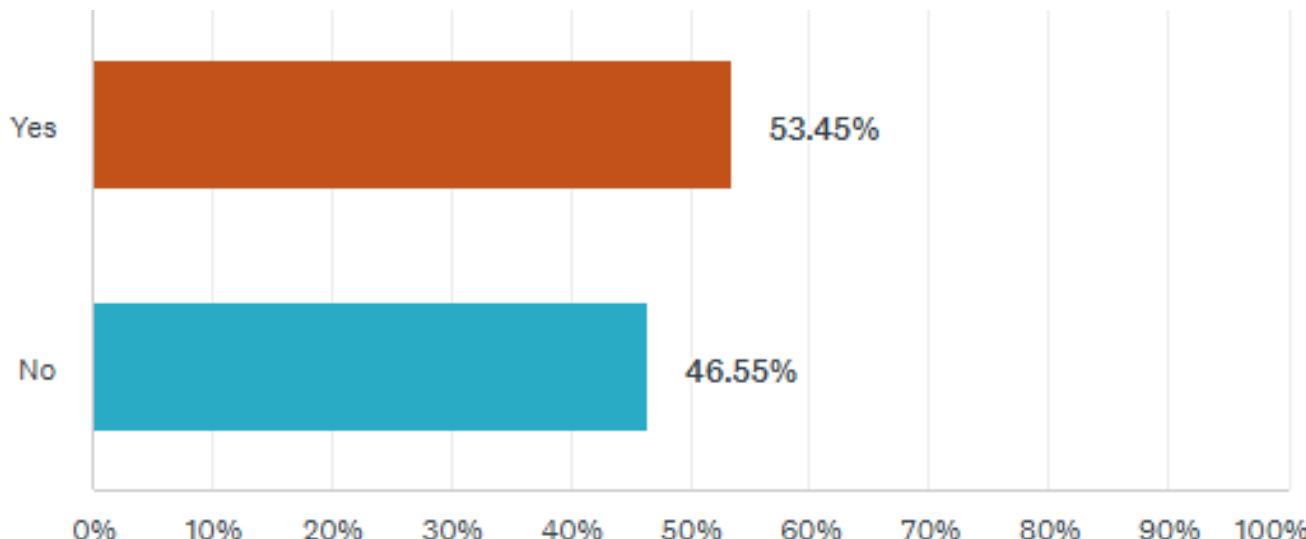


Scan QR code for FREE access to The EDA Academy – the training hub for the electrotechnical sector.





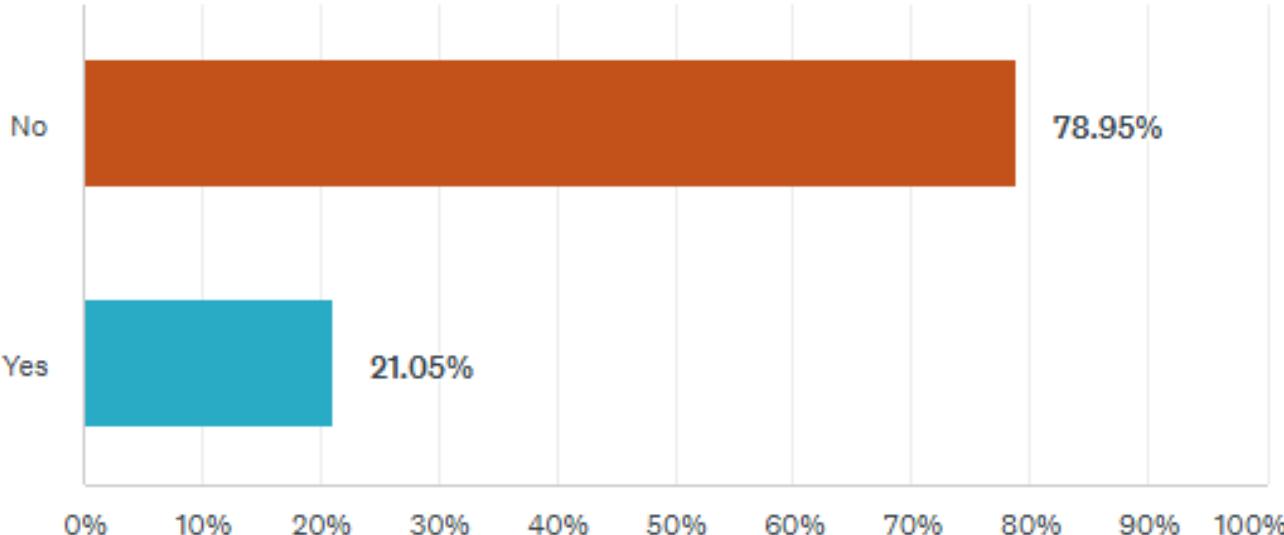
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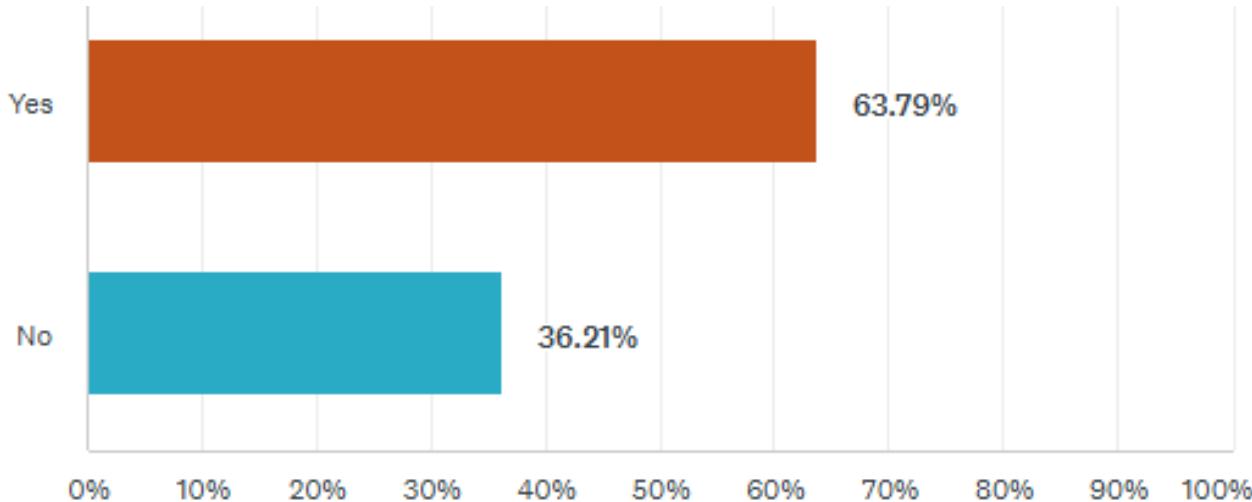
Q16: Are your installer/contractor customers asking you for Photometric Performance Verification documents?



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Q17: Do you feel that you need training on this topic from the lighting industry?



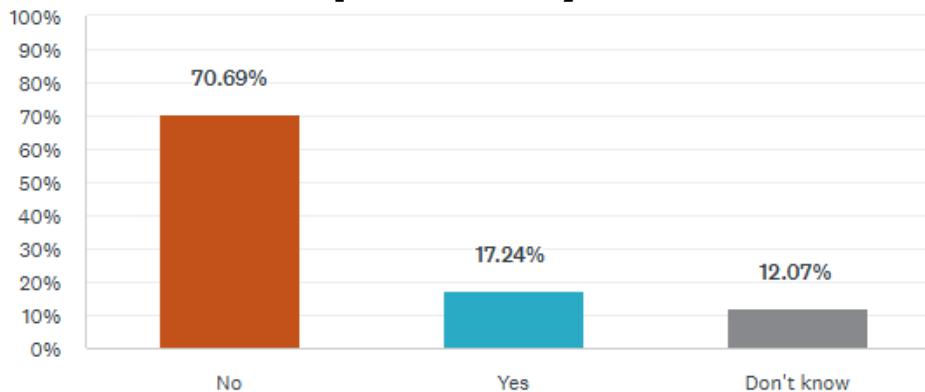
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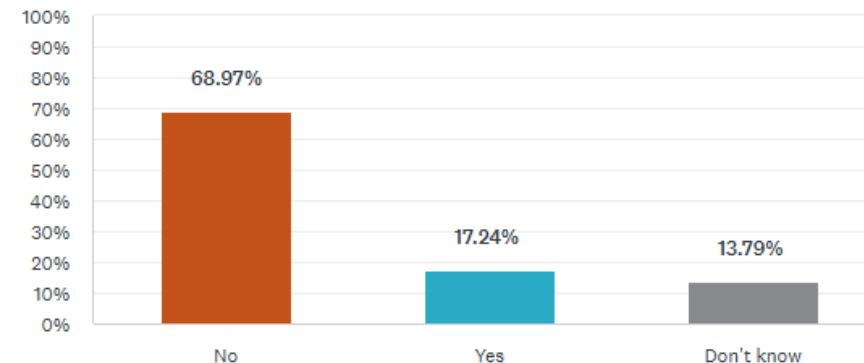


Q18: Are your customers asking you for third-party assessments that evaluate the carbon/sustainability/ESG credentials...

... of the products you sell?



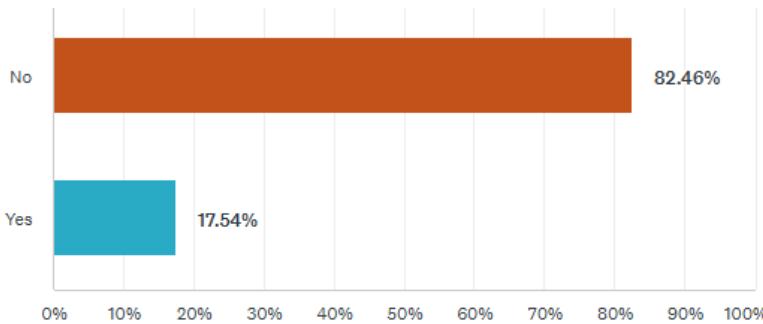
... of your business?



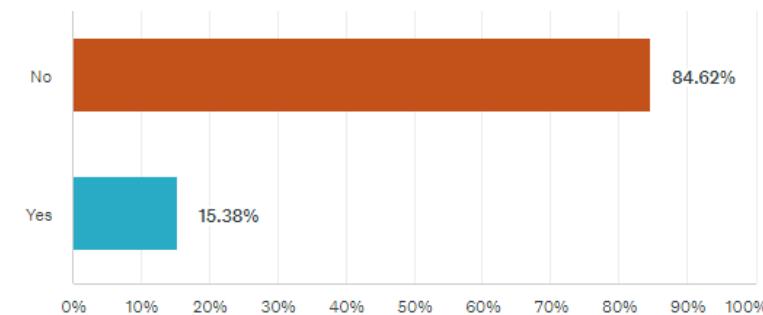
Note: same questions asked in Q3 2024 and there has been little or no shift in response levels.



Q19: Are you aware of TM65 and its role in quantifying product embodied carbon?



Q1 2026

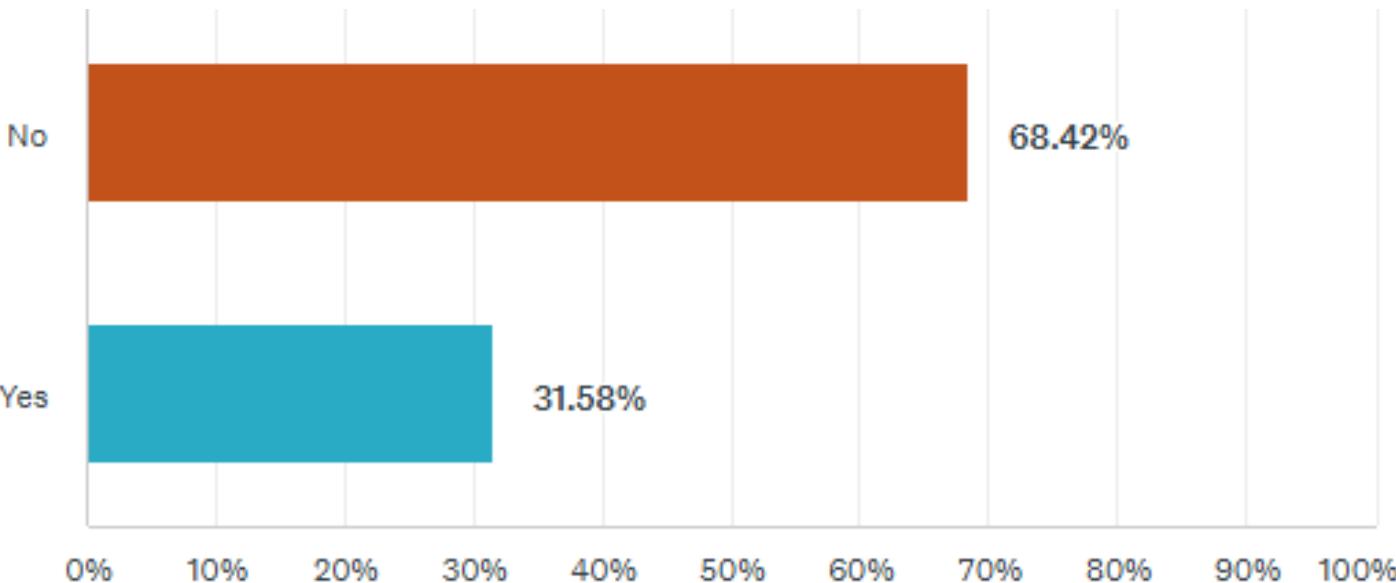


Same question asked in Q3 2024

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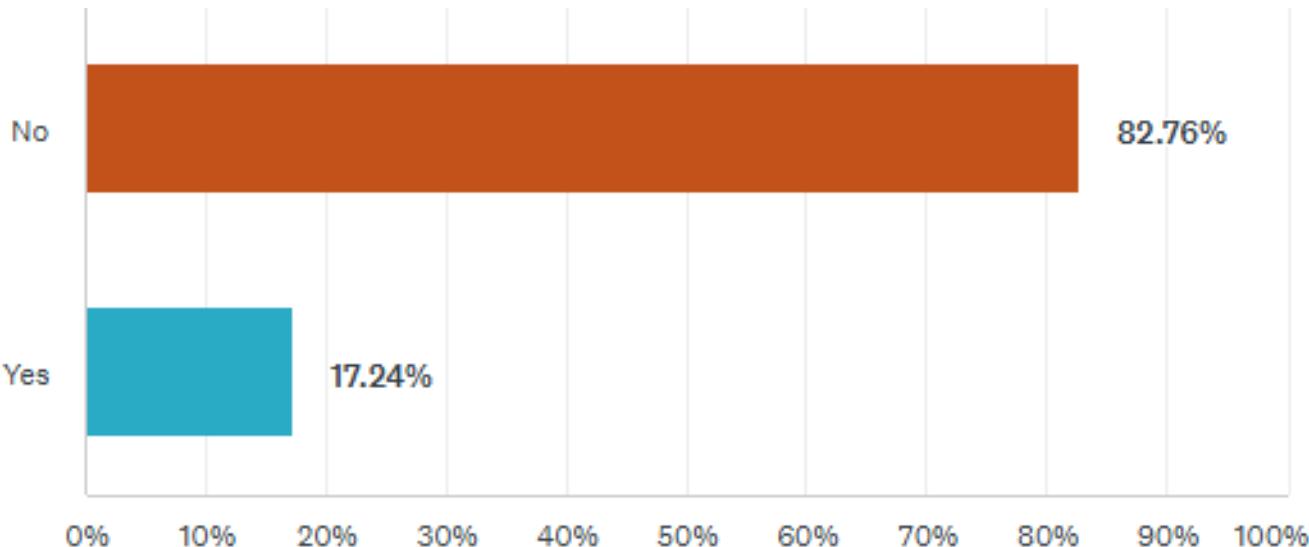
Q20: Are you aware of manufacturer-produced Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs)?



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Q21: Specifically, in the last 12 months have you been asked by a contractor/installer for any product Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs)?

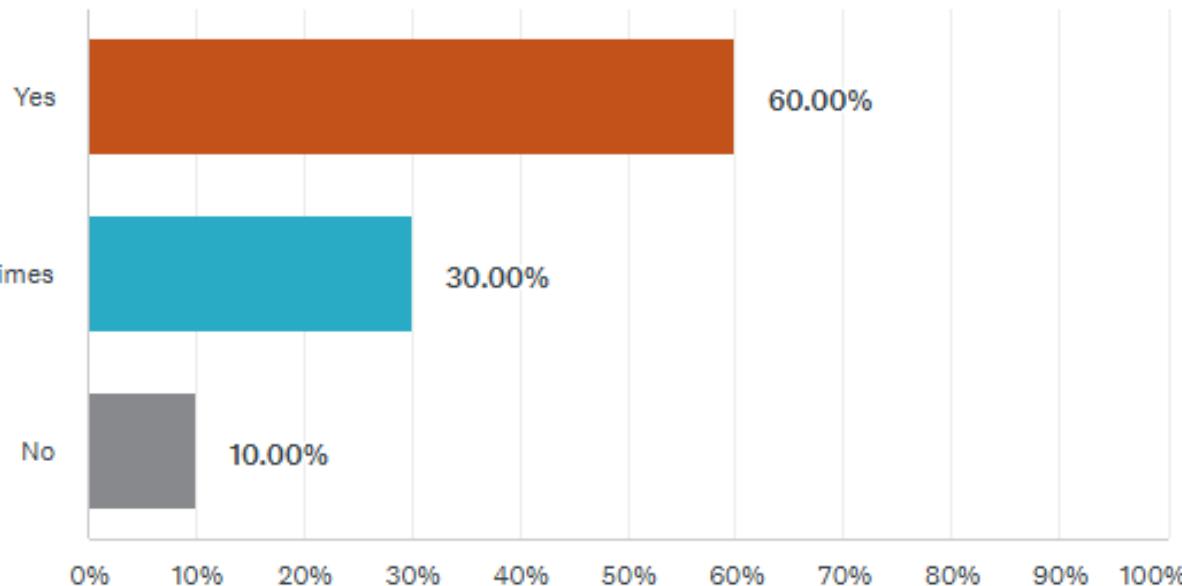


To those
who
responded
'Yes', a
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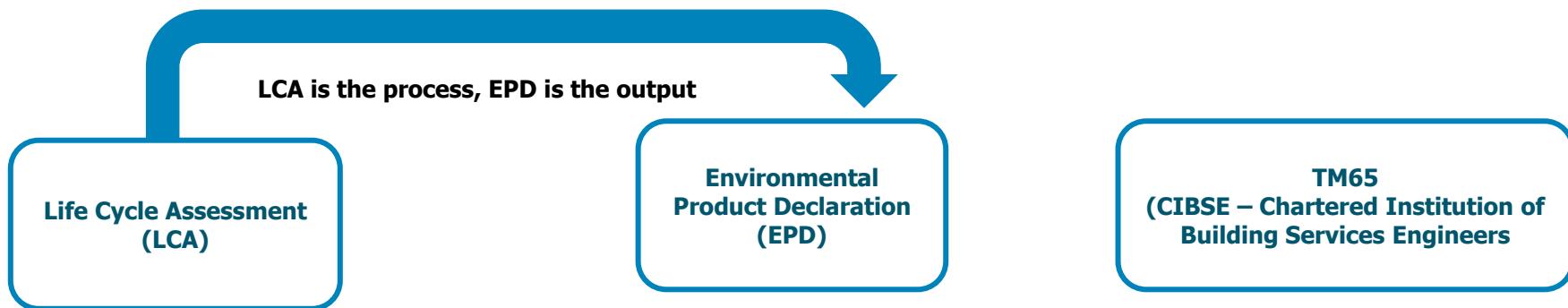
Q22: To those who responded Yes, we asked a further question... was your Manufacturer Supplier able to provide Environmental Product Declarations?



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Q22 – additional briefing note: Life Cycle Assessments, Environmental Product Declarations, and TM65 – what's the difference?



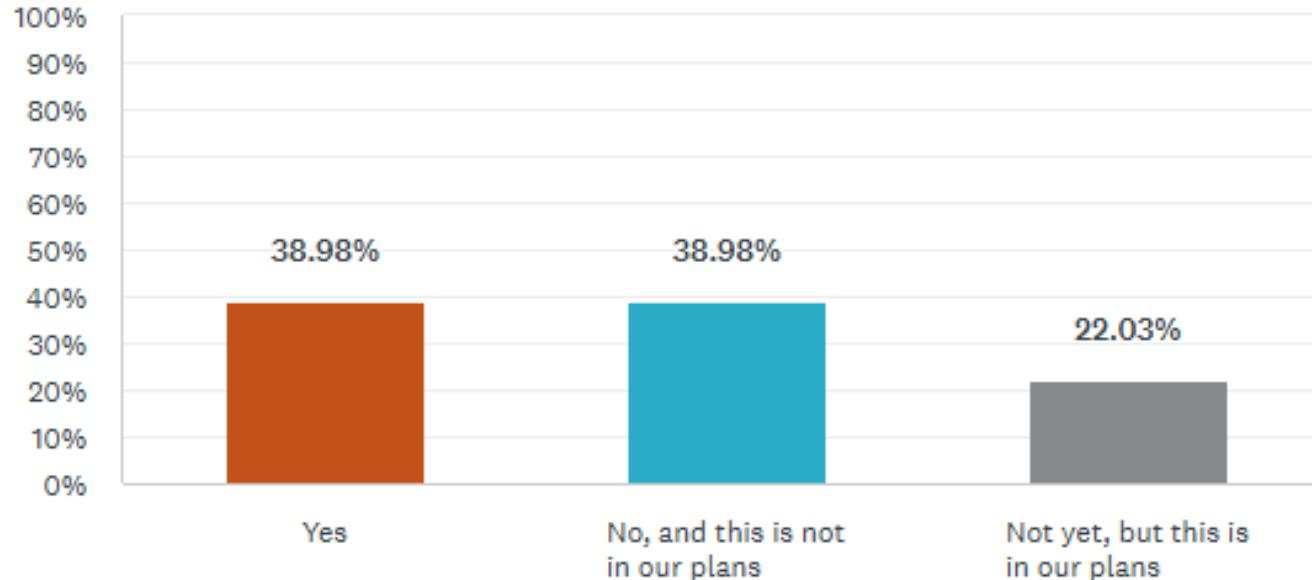
A comprehensive, in-depth scientific analysis of a product's environmental impact across its entire life cycle. It covers **multiple indicators** like **water use, pollution, and resource depletion, not just carbon**.

A standardised, third-party verified document that summarizes LCA results for public or business use. It follows strict [ISO 14025](#) and EN 15804 standards to allow for fair comparisons between similar products.

A calculation methodology specifically for building services (MEP – Mechanical, Electrical, Plumbing) products. It provides a "middle-ground" estimate for **embodied carbon only** and is intended to be used only when a full EPD is not available.



Q23: Have you actively reduced the number of suppliers you buy from?

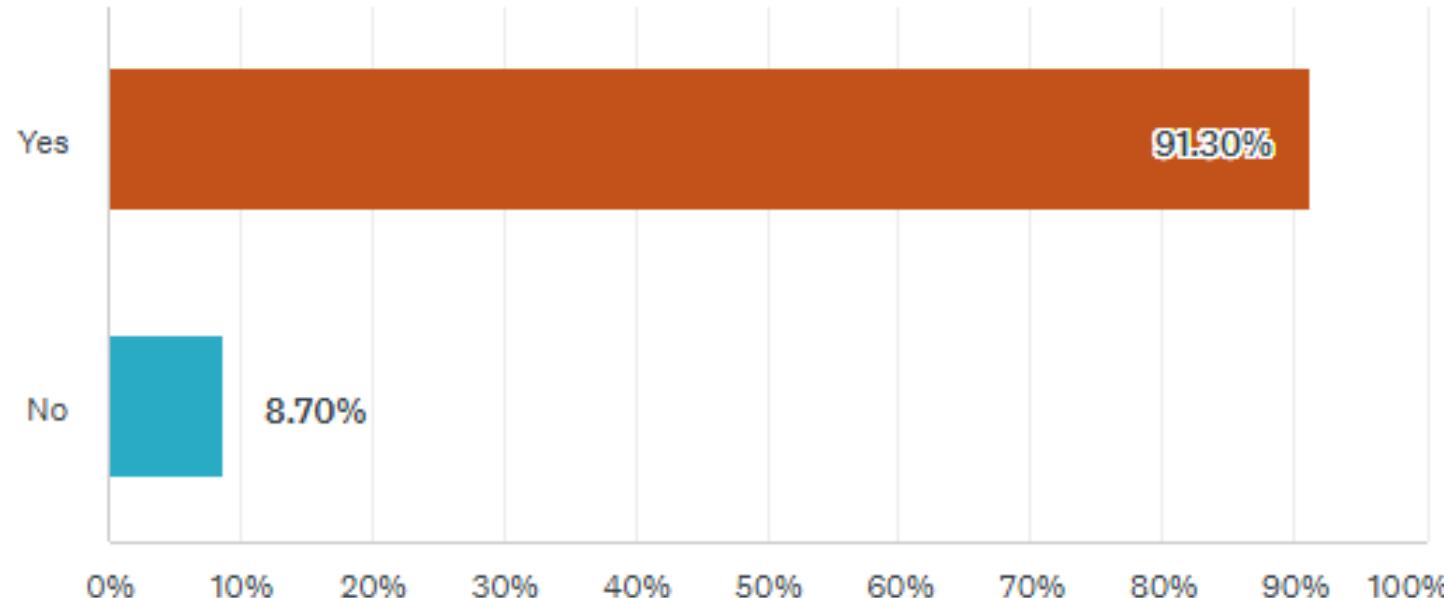


To those who responded 'Yes', a further question was asked

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Q24: To those who answered Yes, a further question... are you planning further consolidation in 2026?

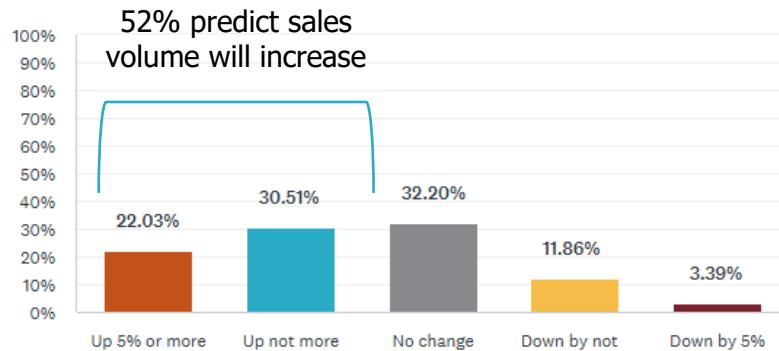


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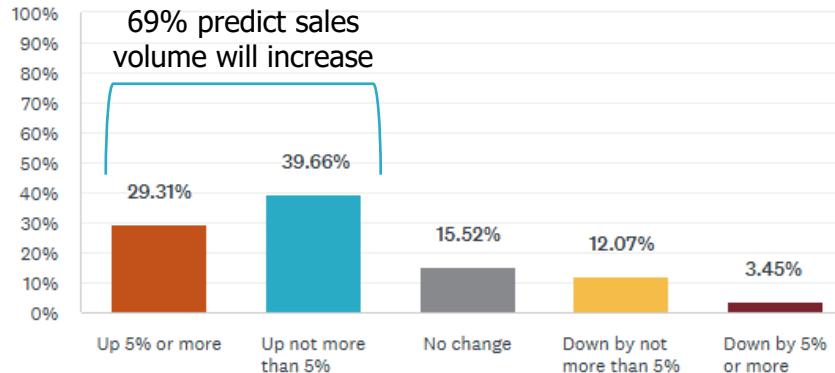


Q25: How do you anticipate sales volumes (like for like sales) will change during Q1 2026 and in 2026?

During Q1 2026



During 2026



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