

Do you listen to your customers / clients?

Results of the Survey

Jenny Wilding

5th October 2010

**Helping you
listen to your
customers**

Research Plus+

Overview

- Background to the survey and how we did it.
- Who took part in the survey.
- How many listen to their customers
 - How they do it
 - Impact on their business.
- How many do not listen to their customers
 - Why they don't it
 - What would motivate them to do it.
- Their views on using professional help.
- Conclusions and options.

Background to the Survey

- Research Plus+ carries out customer satisfaction and staff surveys.
- We help businesses carry out customer surveys:
 - advise and assist them to do it themselves
 - carry it out independently for them.
- October 4th to 10th is Customer Service week.
- Stresses the importance of looking after your customers and understanding their needs.
- The survey was a way for us to find out more about our potential customers and their needs.

How we did the Survey

- Online survey from early August to mid September.
- Publicised through:
 - emails
 - social media (LinkedIn, Twitter, facebook)
 - websites
 - networking events and groups
 - local newspaper.
- Also on-line discussions about customer service on local LinkedIn discussion groups.

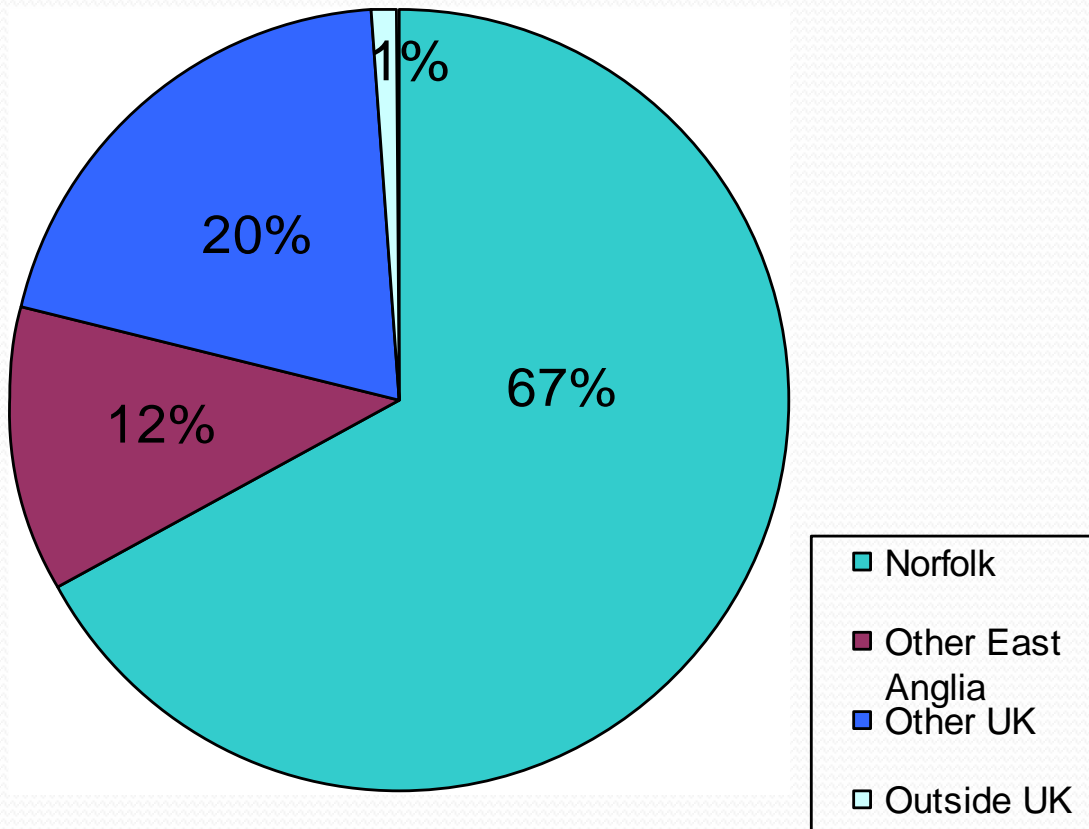
Who took part in the Survey?

- A total of 167 responses.
- Many small businesses, including sole traders and partnerships (44%).
- A third were limited companies (35%).
- Some public companies (3%), including some multinational ones.
- A few statutory agencies and charities (3% each).
- Franchises and network marketing (5% together).
- Social enterprises and not for profit organisations (5% together).

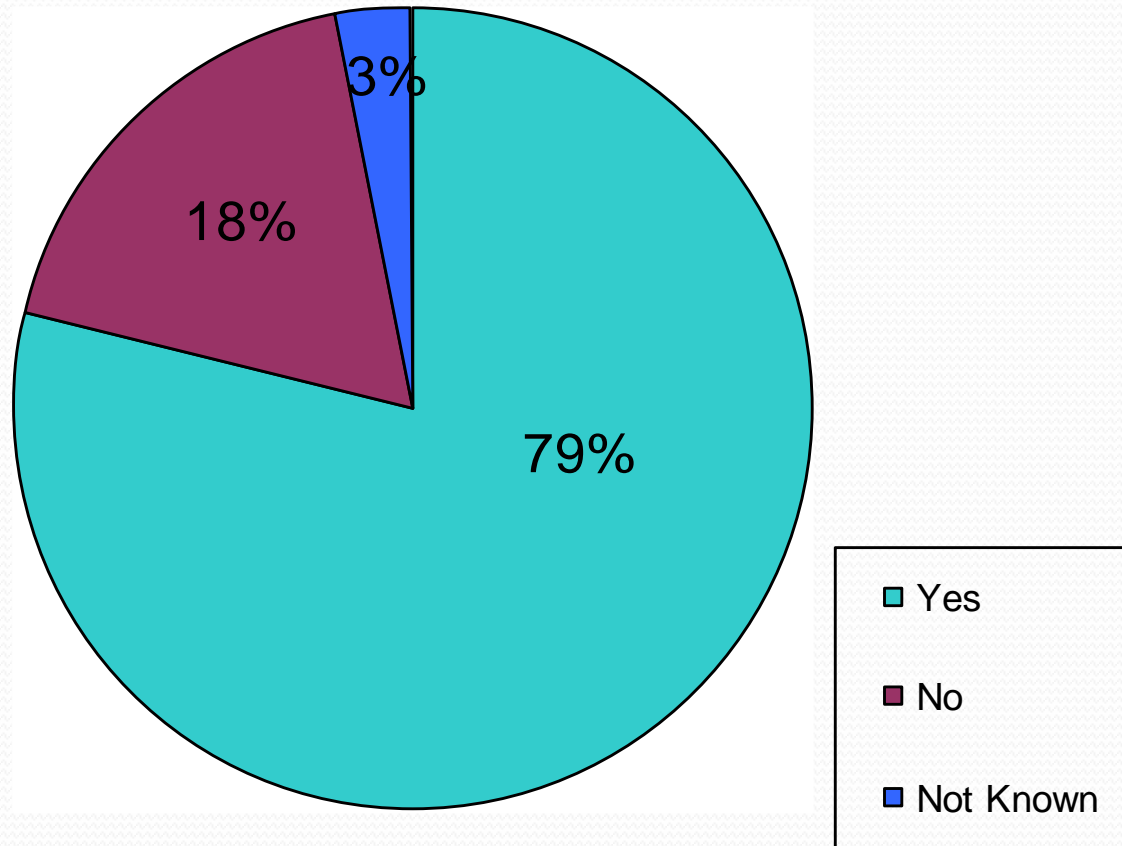
Who took part in the Survey?

- 52% had only one or two employees / owners.
- Nationally 75% of businesses are sole traders or partnerships with no employees
- Mix of new and more established businesses.
- Wide range of products and services.
- Both business to business (B2B) and business to customer (B2C).

Where are they based?



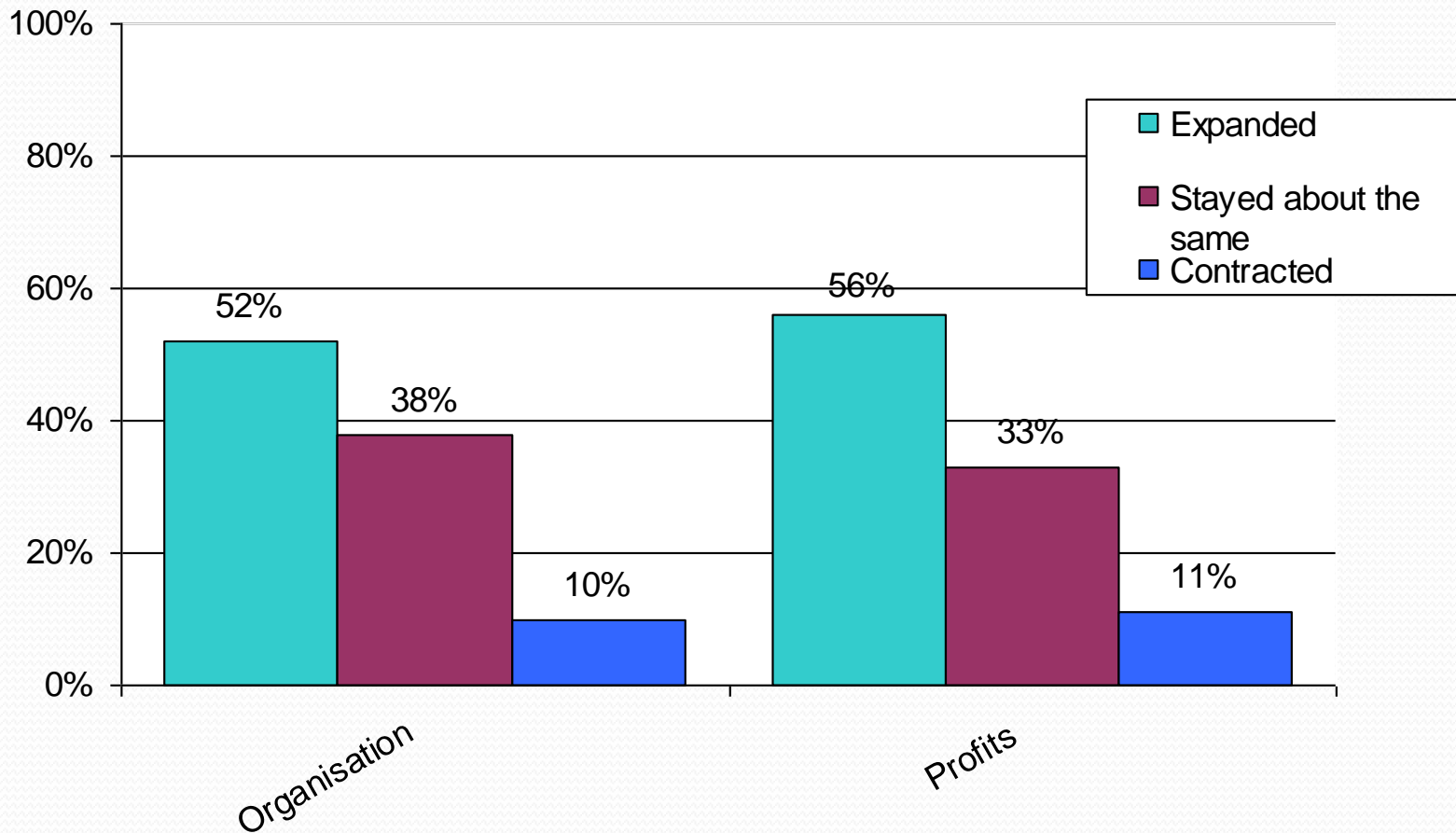
Do they have clients in Norfolk?



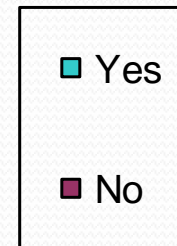
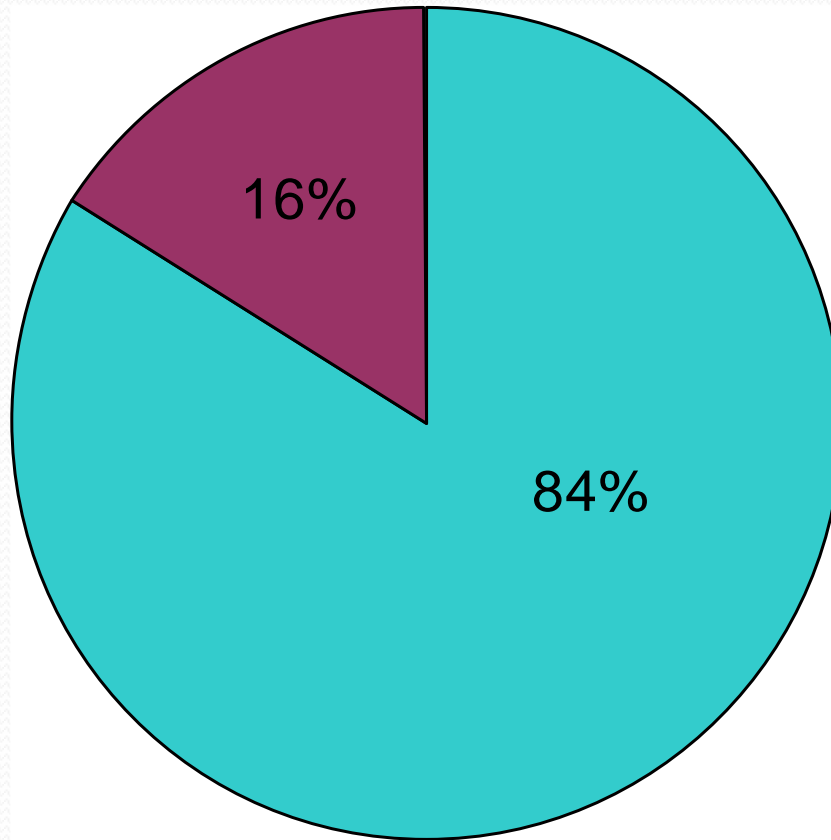



**Here is some good news on
how businesses have been
doing over the last 12
months:**

Expanded or contracted in last twelve months



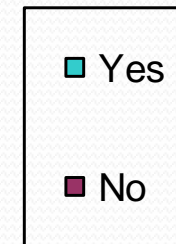
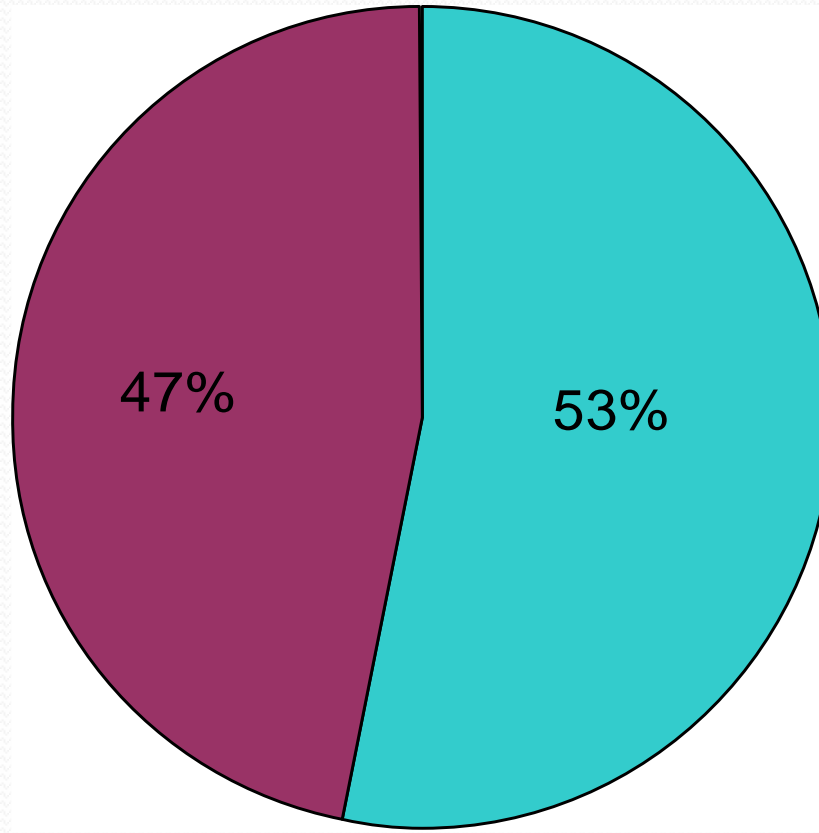
Taken any action to find out their customers' views?



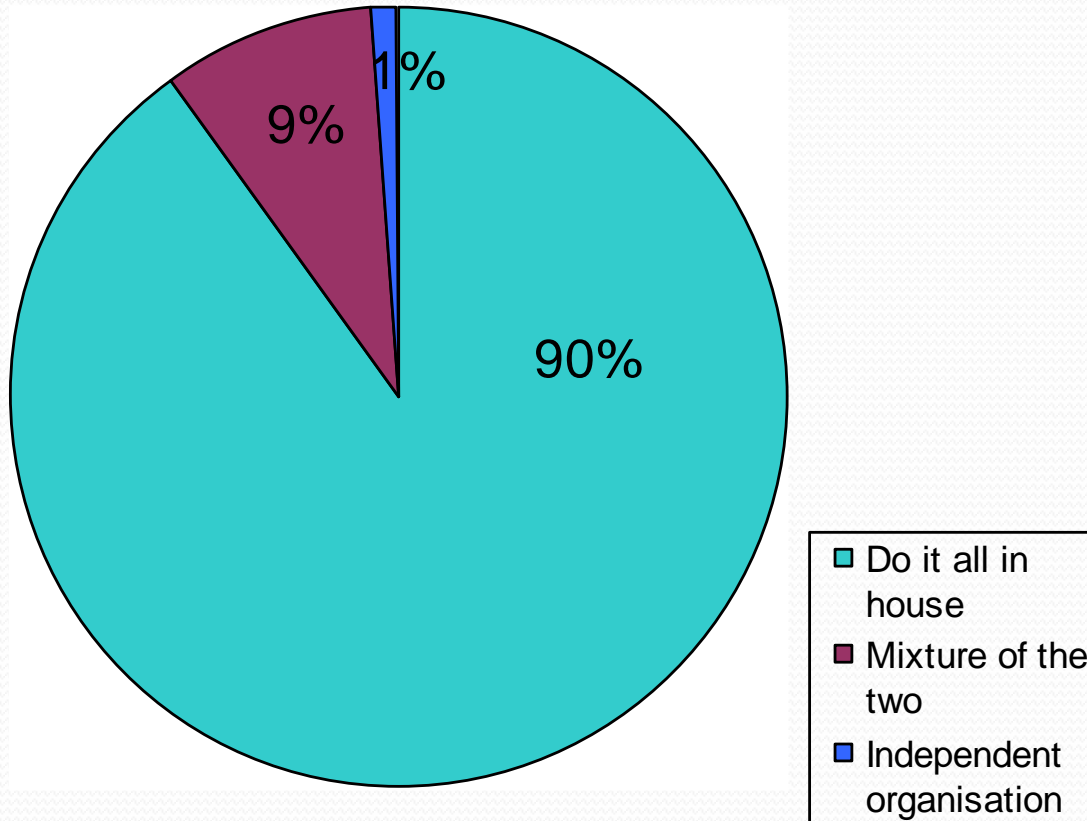


The following nine slides provide the results for the 84% (141) businesses that had taken action to find out their customers views.

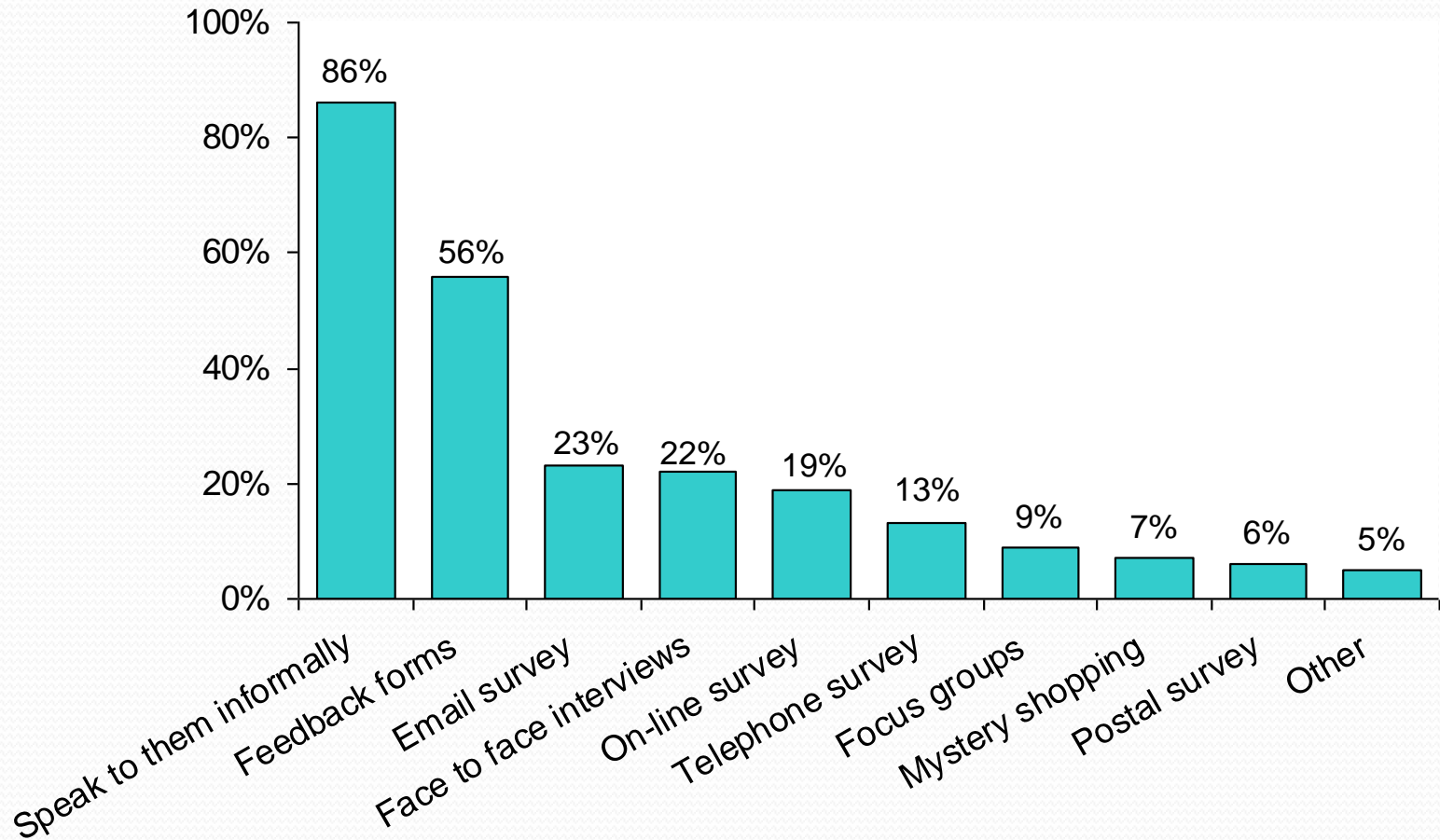
Have a formal system to find out their customers' views



Do it themselves or use an independent organisation



Methods used to find out their customers' views

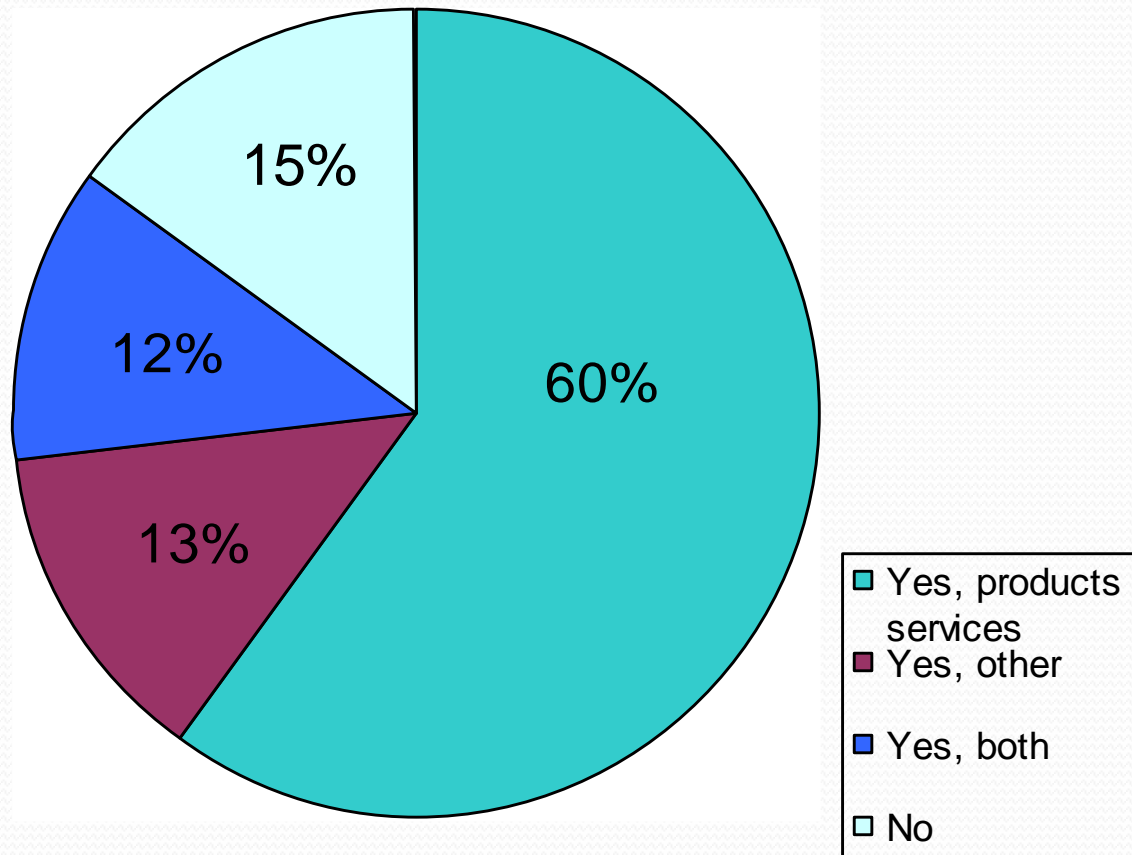


Other methods used

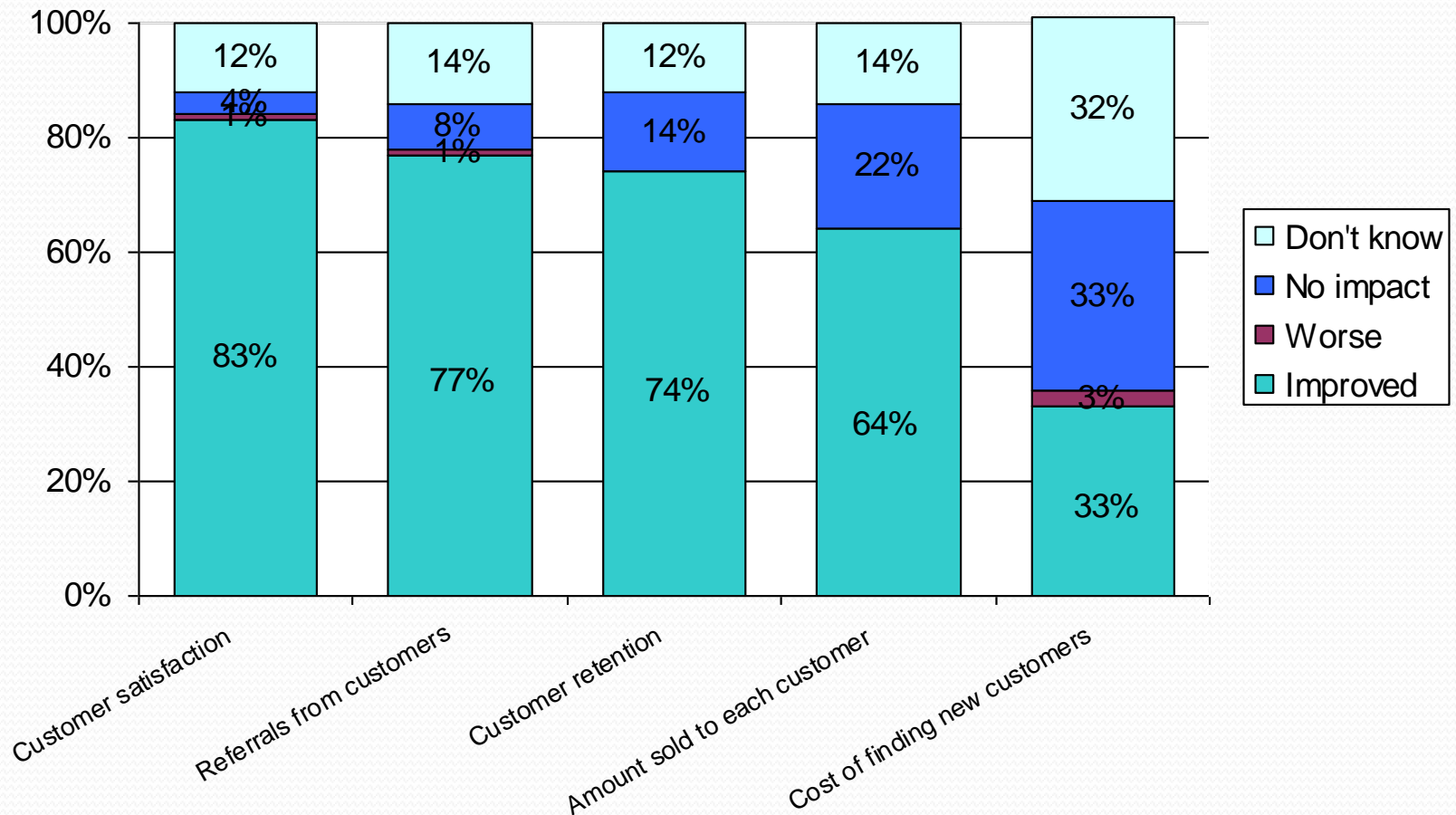


- Handwritten notes on dispatch orders.
- Email conversations.
- Testimonials and reviews on independent websites.
- Texting: example of a fast food restaurant using it for instant customer feedback.

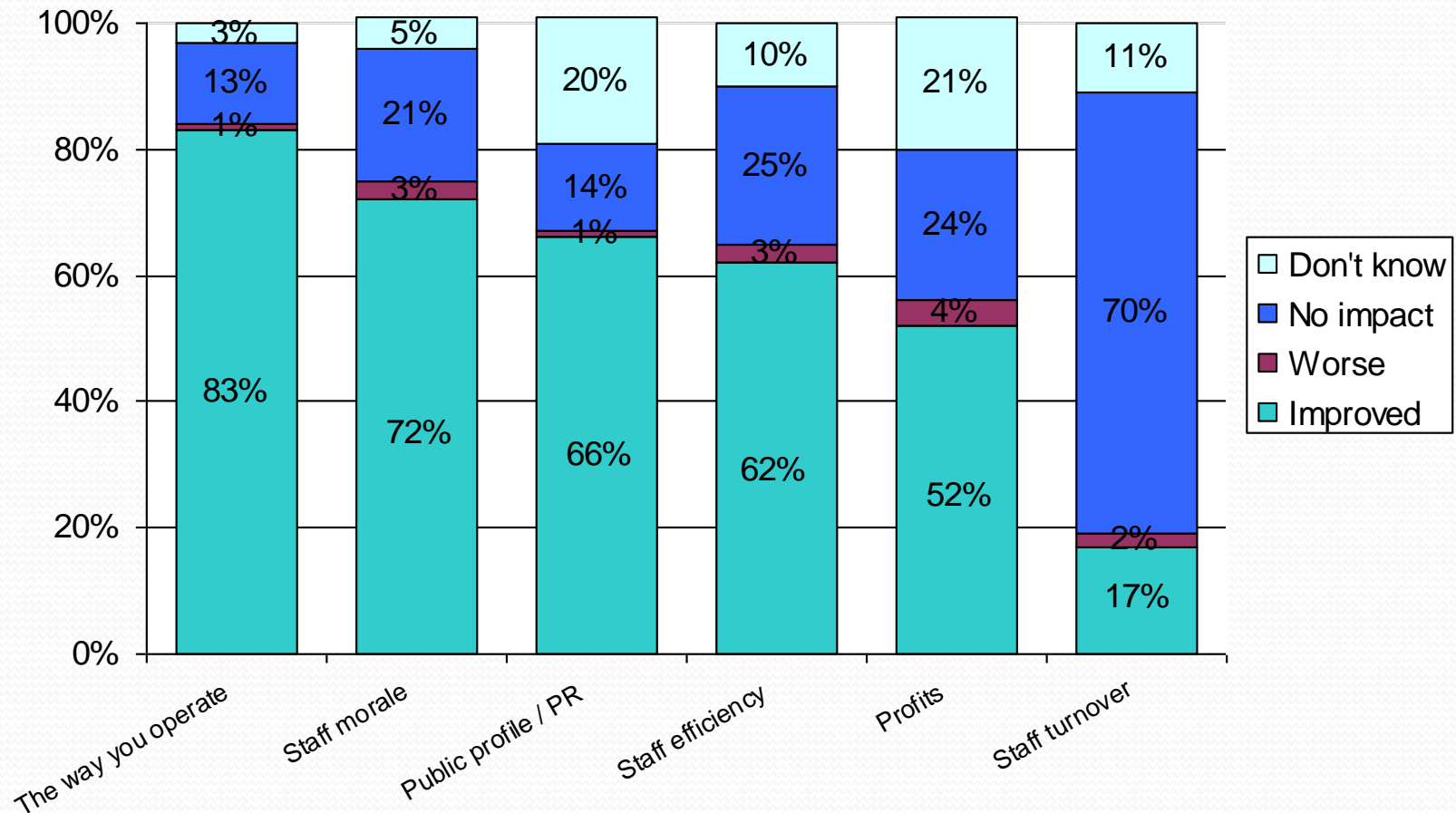
Made any changes as a result of listening?




Impact of listening on their customers



Impact of listening on other areas






The previous slide showed that 52% of businesses, that had taken any action as a result of listening to their customers, reported increased profits.

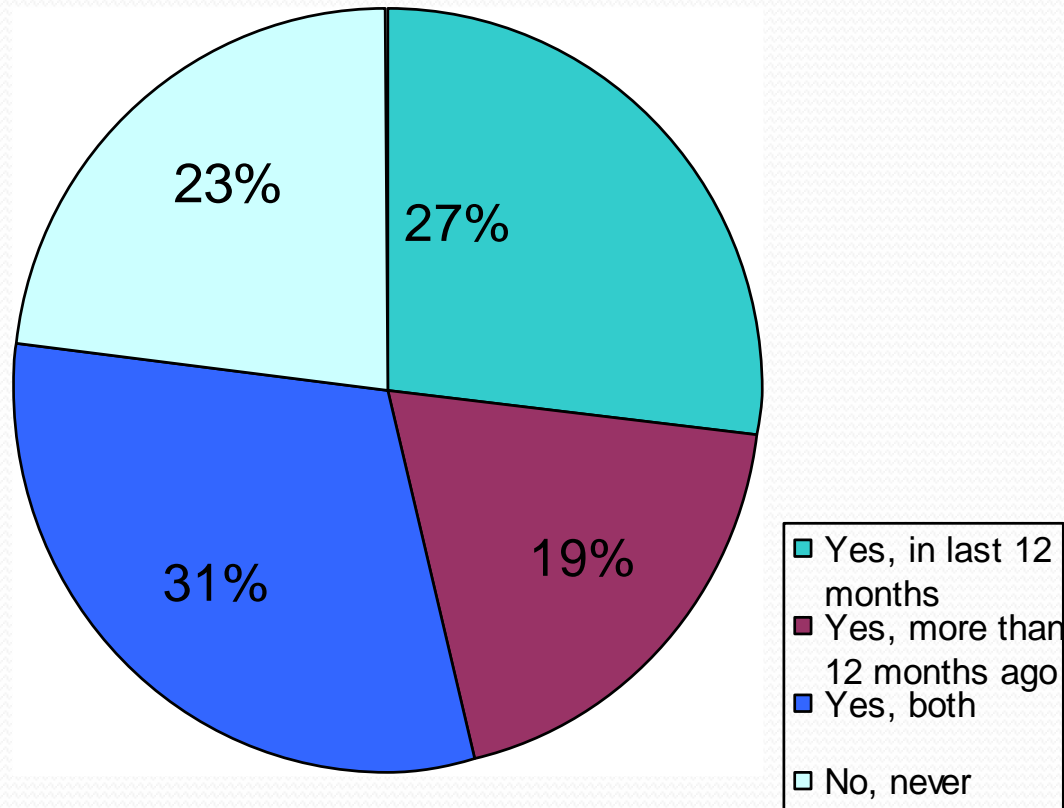
Summary: businesses that do listen to their customers

- Just over half the businesses have a formal system for listening to their customers.
- Most do it themselves, only 10% use a professional organisation to help them.
- They use a wide variety of methods.
- 85% made changes after listening to their customers
 - impact on various aspects of customer service
 - impact on other aspects of their business.
- Just over half reported improved profits.

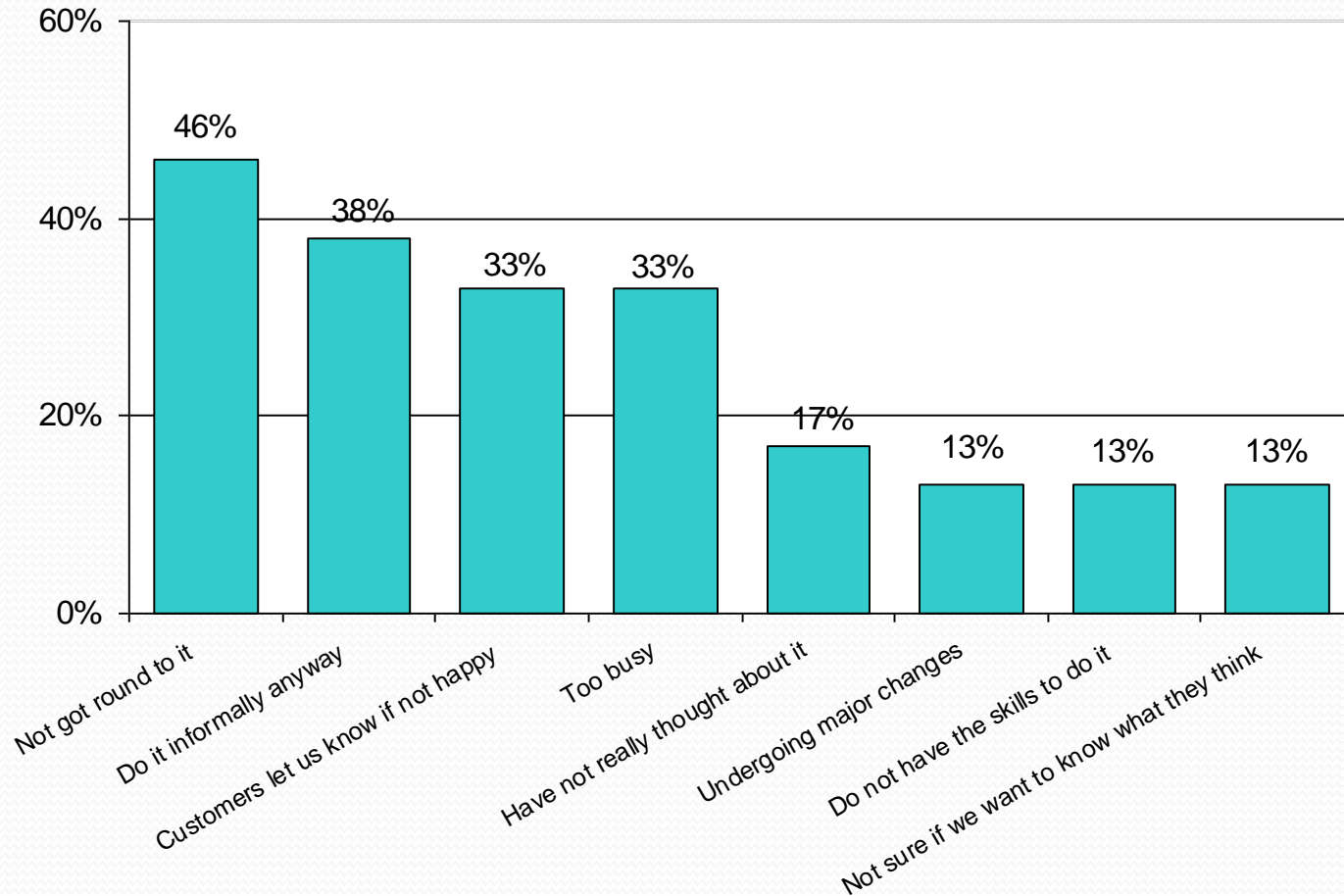


The following four slides provide the results for the 16% (26) of businesses that had not taken action to find out their customers views over the past 12 months.

Ever considered listening to their customers



Reasons for not listening to their customers



What would motivate them to listen to their customers

18 responses, here are sample of them:

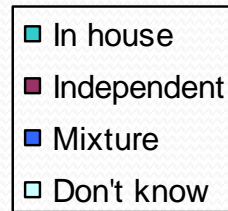
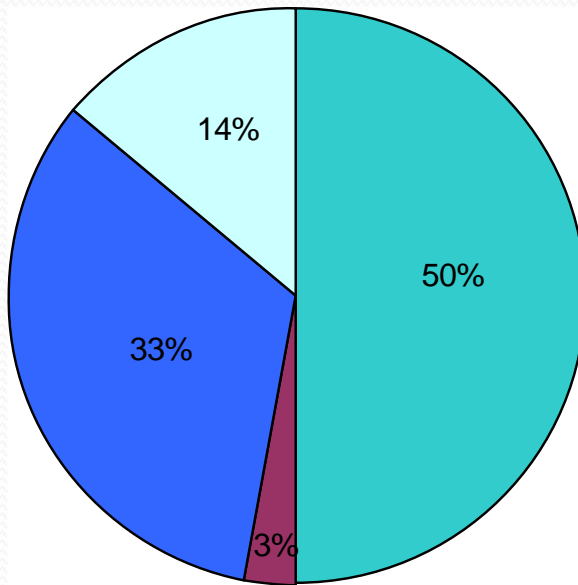
- *“Raising sales.”*
- *“To enable us to get more customers.”*
- *“To gain a better understanding of their requirements.”*
- *“If clients asked for it.”*
- *“Absolutely no clients!”*

What would motivate them to listen to their customers

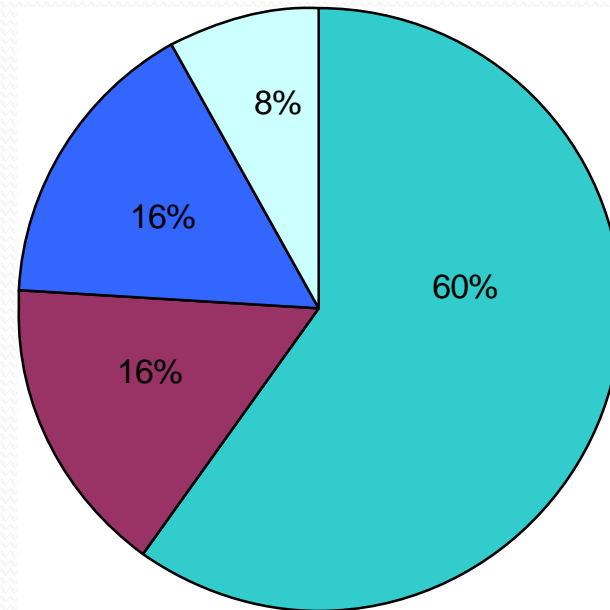
- *“If I sensed that they were not happy or were holding back on further work.”*
- *“Having time to create a questionnaire.”*
- *“We just need to find the time to sit down and work on this, no other reason, our customers comments are important to us. But currently we only hear if they REALLY like something or make a complaint.”*

All: Best way to find out your customers' views

Listened to their customers



Not listened to their customers



Benefits of Listening

- We compared those who had and had not listened to their customers in the past 12 months.
- The indications are that those who listened to their customers in the past 12 months were more likely to have expanded their business and increased their profits.
- However due to the small numbers the differences they do not reach the statistically significant level.

Conclusions

- Most companies are listening to their customers.
- Use a wide range of methods to do this.
- Listening to their customers has a positive impact on their customer service and other aspects of their business.
- Other businesses provided lots of reasons for not listening to their customers.
- Most are not currently using a professional research company to assist them, but a third think this is the best way to find out.

Listening options

- Four levels of listening:
 - Maintain records on your customers.
 - Re-active listening: wait until customers complain before you listen.
 - Partially pro-active: provide opportunities for customers to provide feedback if they wish (feedback forms available etc).
 - Fully pro-active: actively seek customers' views on a regular basis. Using systems that are suitable to your business and convenient for your customers.
- Use the information to make changes to improve your business and profits.

A final thought

“How can you fully understand what your clients want, and be certain you are delivering the correct service if you don't listen to them? It is vital to ensure you offer the correct service at the time, and remember that nothing ever stays the same. What might be right now, won't necessarily be right in one year's time.”

Research Plus+

Research Plus+

Helping you
listen to your
customers

- Jenny Wilding and Mark Barton
- Independent agency
- Locally based
- We can help you listen to your customers
- info@research-plus.co.uk
- www.research-plus.co.uk