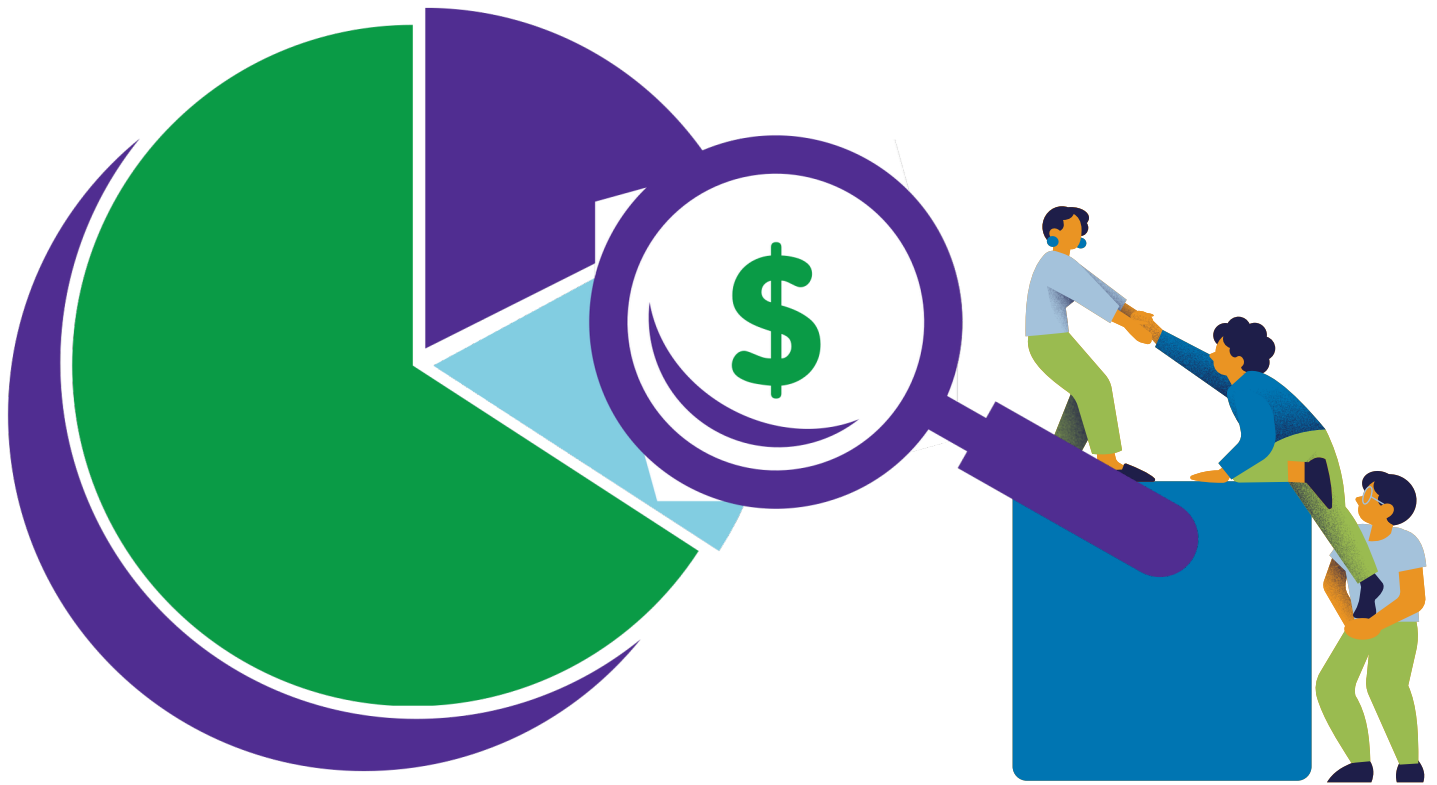


2026 SURVEY RESULTS



COMMISSION AND REBATE BENCHMARK REPORT

With Insights on Improving Commission and Rebate Programs



Motivating and Rewarding Behavior Pays Off



Goals. Commission and Rebate Management programs play a vital role in helping organizations reach revenue goals. Sales agents thrive on compensation plans that reward exceptional efforts, and rebates incentivize customers to buy more.

Complexity. But managing these programs can be complex and fraught with headaches. Outdated manual systems for tracking totals can be tedious, time consuming, and prone to error.

Questions. Lack of real-time visibility also can impede confidence in the system, leaving participants and managers to debate details in endless email loops. Frustration can overshadow the rewards.

Heavy Burden. Program administrators can feel a heavy burden as they must spend several hours every period collecting data, chasing approvals, making calculations, and issuing reports.

Technology Optimizes Efficiency

Automation. Companies can turn to purpose-built solutions to help them manage programs, automate and streamline activities. Incentive management software also offers advanced features, giving sales management strategic tools to employ.

Costs of Doing Nothing. When and how to best leverage available technology becomes the critical question. Floundering with “almost good enough” solutions is risky. Companies must weigh the cost of investment with the cost of mediocre or subpar productivity and unreliable accuracy.

Finding Value. Determining Return on Investment (ROI) requires quantifying the high costs of manual solutions and understanding that saving time also saves money. Productivity optimizes the use of resources. The right software helps save time and money - all while boosting performance of the sales team.

Survey Results Help Companies Understand Potential Benefits

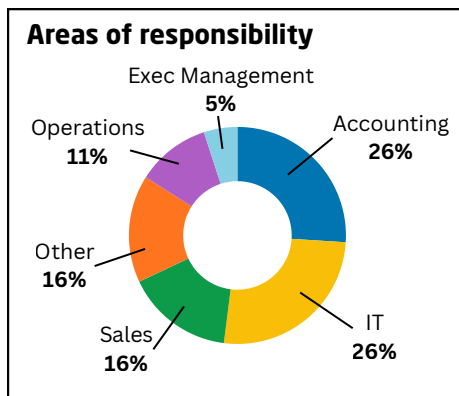
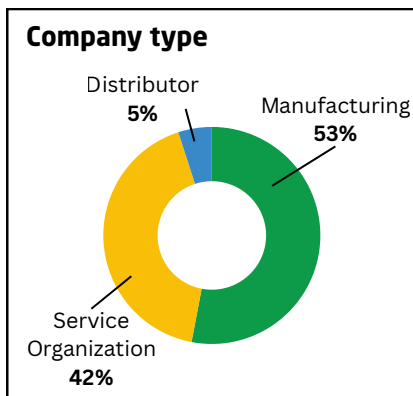
IncentViz, developed by Single Source Systems, conducted the 2026 Benchmark Survey to help companies take an objective look at managing commissions and rebates.

The survey provides a snapshot view of what is working - and isn't working - for a sampling of

companies who care about commissions and rebates. Both challenges and opportunities are defined.

The data can help companies make smart investments in technology, leverage specific capabilities, and reap benefits of improved systems.

Survey Findings: Opportunities Abound

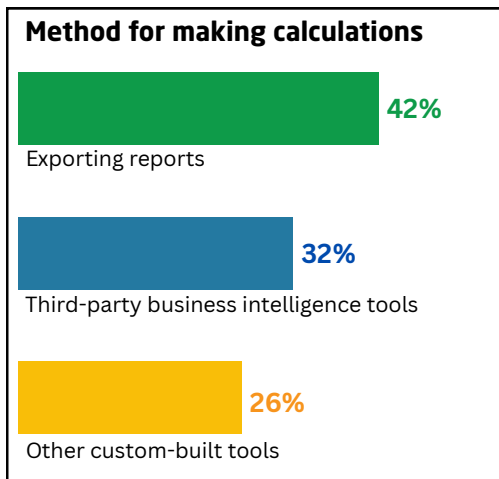


Who took the survey?

A mix of manufacturers, distributors and service providers participated in the survey, with **over half being manufacturers**. The responders held a mix of roles in accounting, IT, sales and operations with **nearly half reporting that they hold accounting roles**.

How are you currently calculating commissions?

The response to this question is very telling, encapsulating fundamental causes of the issues plaguing organizations.



The tools commonly used are notoriously ill-suited for the task, setting up inevitable shortcomings.

The survey shows that 42% are

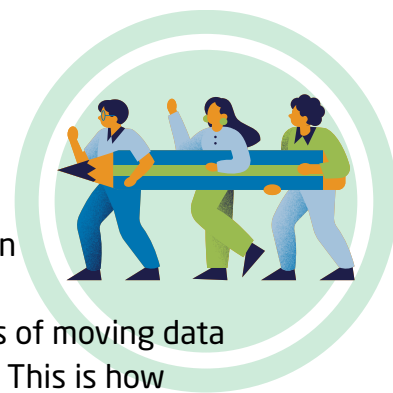
exporting reports from their system then importing them into a worksheet tool, like Excel, to manipulate the data. The process of moving data between solutions opens doors for errors. This is how discrepancies are born. Lack of real-time visibility in the static reports hides errors.

For 32% of respondents, third-party business intelligence

(BI) tools are being used to extract information. Again, this process has flaws. Third-party tools can lack real-time, seamless integration needed to generate complex data analysis. BI logic that differs from the core business system logic will inevitably cause discrepancies. This lack of congruity causes stress points.

Other custom-built tools are used by 26% of respondents,

indicating that over a quarter of the respondents opted for a make-shift solution, a solution possibly built by the in-house IT team, relying on apps cobbled together and expensive to maintain. Lacking specialized commission management features, this type of generic approach is limiting.

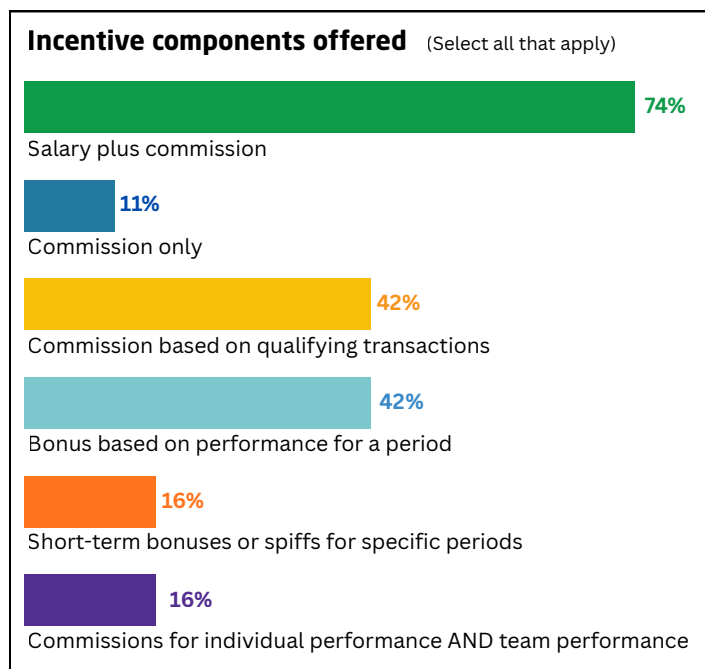


Over-simple Plans May Limit Results

What type of incentive components do you offer sales agents?

This question is another one that points to key issues and missed opportunities. As expected, **most companies (74%) offer a salary plus commission.** But other fundamental compensation components are surprisingly absent from the programs of several respondents. This over-simplification of components can yield lackluster results.

Less than half (42%) consider qualifying transactions. While this approach may simplify data analysis, it lacks strategic focus. Most companies have a territory, product line, or service that warrants special efforts. Those extra efforts should be compensated as incentive to create focused behavior.



Some companies apply a timeframe for the incentive. But the answers reveal an interesting conundrum. A large portion of companies **(42%) offer a bonus based on a specific time period. But only a small amount (16%) offer short-term spiffs.**

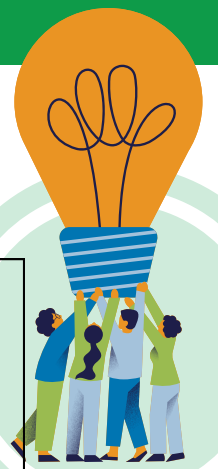
This may point to missed opportunities. Layering limited time programs over the compensation plan can add urgency and focus for product launches or other sales bursts.

Managing spiffs, though, requires extra work, especially if manual processes, spreadsheets, or makeshift, in-house systems are the management tools. Purpose-based software can make the processes easier.

Another surprise is that **only 16% consider team performance as well as the individual's performance** in calculating commissions. This ignores the team dynamics that contribute to successful selling of complex products where multiple people may be involved in account research, product demos, replying to RFPs, or supporting extended sales cycles that can last months.



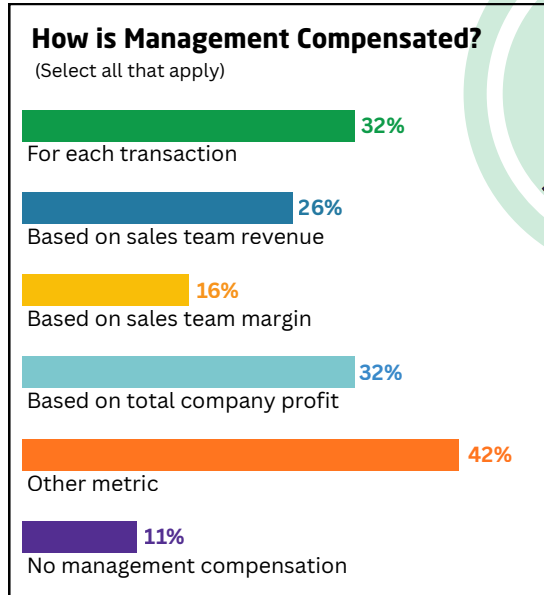
Flexible Solutions Meet Evolving Needs



How are managers or executives compensated?

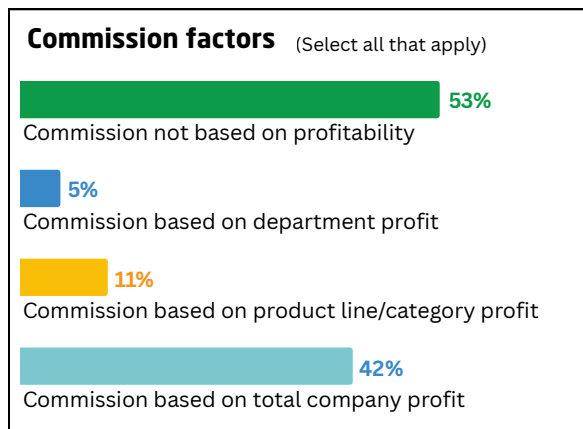
This question points to the lack of industry standardization among ways that managers or executives are compensated. The survey shows several different tactics are used, without one standing out as the definitive approach.

Compensation plans for executives can involve sizable outlays. Getting the totals right is essential for cashflow and harmony among the organization's leaders. This isn't the place to cut corners, settle for compromised data, or put haphazard tactics in place.



Is profitability a factor in commission calculations?

For many companies, leveraging profitability metrics can be a challenge. Some ERP solutions are highly mature with sophisticated BI tools for factoring overhead costs into the bottom line. When the commission solution ties directly to the ERP, such analysis is available. Companies can use this information to reward sales agents who help keep margins high and cost of sales low.



Sales agents can't influence all profitability factors, but the excessive reliance on discounts certainly is within the scope of influence. Discounts erode margins. The more sophisticated the company's commission program is, the more effective the company can be in driving desired behaviors. **Rewarding simple sales volume, without understanding the cost of sales, may be shortsighted.** Without oversight, sales agents may be tempted to rely on deep discounts to inflate sales.

The takeaway, then, is that **companies need highly flexible software solutions that can be tailored to nuances in strategies or evolving maturity.** Solutions should be able to contour to changing operational demands, adapting as needed.

Missing Benefits of Advanced Structures

How are commission payout percentages determined?

The answers to this question also show divergent approaches and that many companies are missing opportunities.

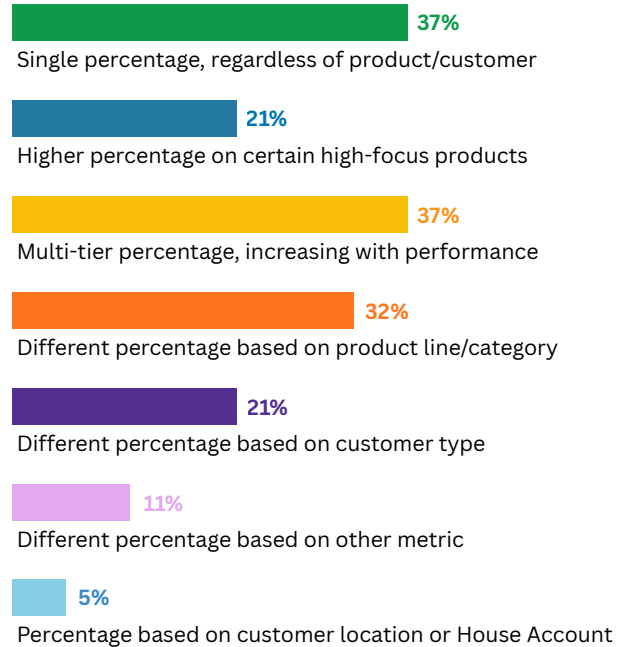
More than a third of respondents use the same commission payout, regardless of product or customer. This overlooks that some sales cycles are more time-consuming or complex than others, equally rewarding the easy sale and the one that was hard-won. This can be frustrating to sales agents and discourage them from pursuing challenging accounts.

Another missed opportunity is the underusage of tier-structured compensation plans. **Only slightly more than one-third (37%) leverage tier programs**, a structure which offers higher commissions once defined thresholds are met.

Tier programs recognize that the initial sales in a compensation program may represent the low-hanging fruit - while some sales cycles may be challenges, taking more time and more effort from the sales person.

A tier strategy, though, can complicate calculations, possibly deterring some companies from leveraging the tactic. But, **with the right software in place, companies can easily apply such strategic options.**

Payout percentage method (Select all that apply)



Processes Impact Commission Timeliness

When is a transaction considered commissionable? And when is the commission released for payment?

These two questions represent issues that are very important to sales teams since they determine when cash will be in hand.

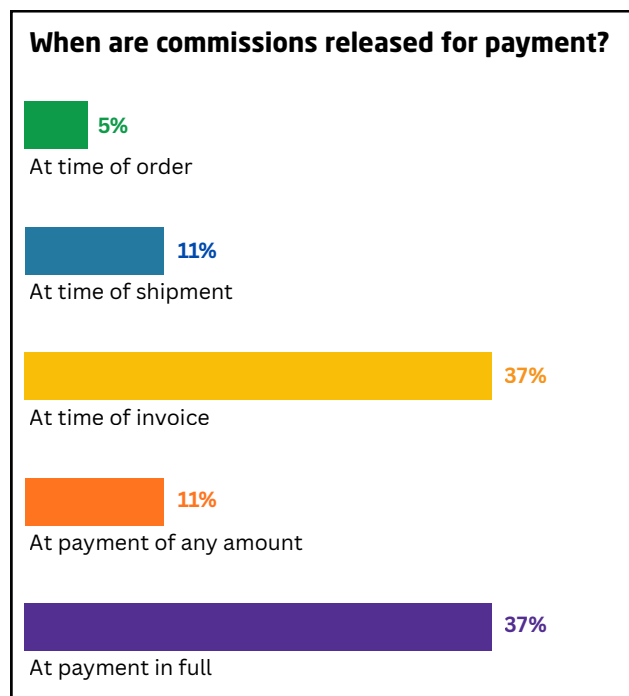
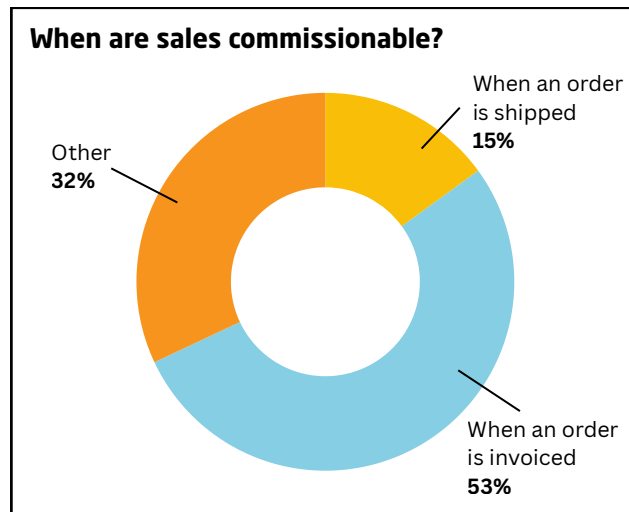
More than half of the companies surveyed (53%) consider a sale commissionable when the invoice is issued to the customer.

While this may seem straightforward, there are many factors which can influence whether that sale successfully completes the order-to-cash cycle, with funds becoming available to spend. Giving a salesperson a commission too early in the process can result in the need to claw back funds, a dreaded step everyone wants to avoid.

This may be why **nearly one-third (32%) say they use “other conditions”** to determine when the sales is commissionable.

Similarly, **37% of companies don't release the payment to the sales agent until the customer pays the entire balance.** This may be the most cautious process, but it can cause an extended delay before sales agents can

spend their paychecks. For companies that sell high-value products with payment terms extended over several months, the sales agents may be waiting a long time for the commission.



Who Bears the Administrative Burden?

Who is responsible for calculating commissions?

The questions about who calculates commissions and how much time it takes are critical to understanding the pains and value propositions behind commission management solutions. **The survey shows that the administrative burden largely (74%) falls to the accounting team.**

What team is responsible for calculations?

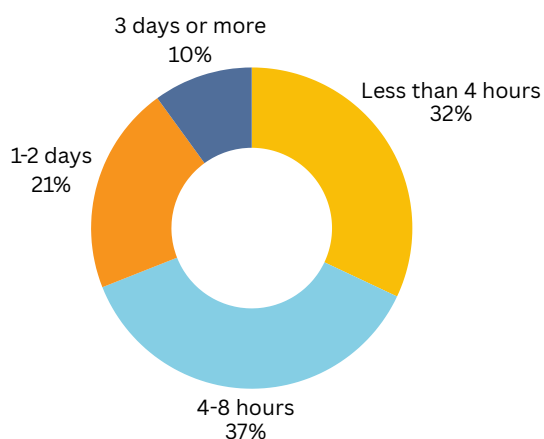


This can be a heavy burden with program administrators spending substantial time tracking down data, calculating commission figures, reviewing the results, obtaining approvals, and fielding questions. If there are discrepancies, the time involved can escalate exponentially.

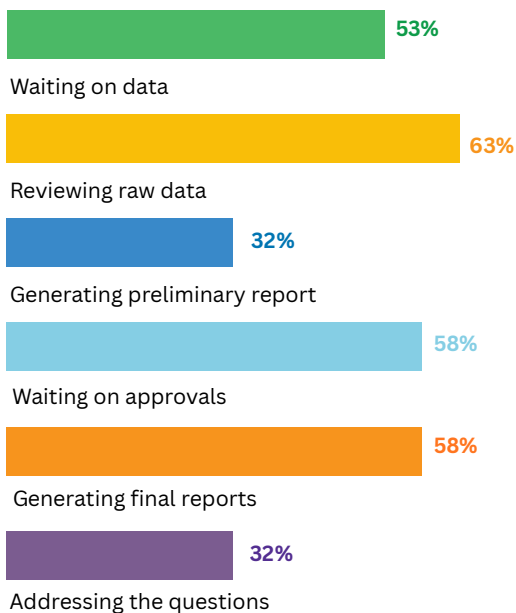
Chasing reasons behind errors can send administrators down countless, winding rabbit holes. Time can vary greatly in the overall preparation process. This unpredictable nature makes resource allocation challenging for managers. Will the team need a day or a week to prepare reports for payroll?

The uncertainty of time obligations contributes to the organization's stress. An organization that is stressed is inefficient, prone to errors, and at risk for high workforce turnover.

Time spent on calculations



Reasons for delays (Select all that apply)



Improved Productivity Boosts ROI

Calculating ROI of software Investment

The heavy time drain for organizations must be considered when evaluating an investment in software. Streamlining processes saves money, helping to speed the Return on Investment (ROI). Managers know time has value and can't be wasted. This applies to program administration as well as the manager's oversight, and the distraction of sales agents who spend time debating commission fairness rather than closing sales.

Inefficiency is costly. Every static report that is printed (becoming instantly outdated), every email trail that copies dozens of people, and every phone call from an irritated salesperson wastes time.

Eliminating those kinks and flaws in the processes boosts productivity, helping to pay for the software investment.

"With the high costs of inefficiency compared to the budget-friendly subscription model, IncentViz customers tell us they achieve ROI within months," says Marty Rhodes, Single Source Product Manager.

With minimal implementation time and training needed, the benefits start pouring in quickly. The boosts in sales performance and relief to the administrative team allow tech-savvy organizations to easily cost-justify the investment.

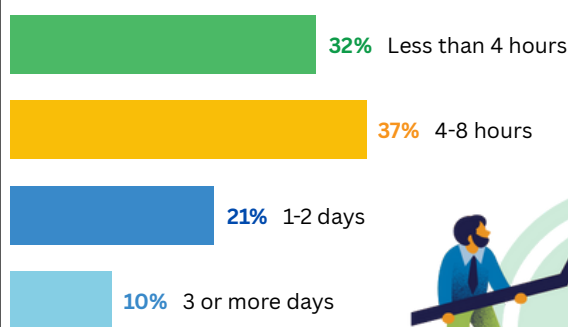
What data is provided to sales agents?

The type of materials provided to sales agents helps to alleviate doubts and provides preemptive answers to common questions. Survey respondents report several positive steps, such as providing sales agents with **details on transactions (58%)** and providing reports on **commissions earned and paid (84%)**.

But only 11% provide sales agents with real-time access to on-demand reports.

Real-time reports help keep sales aware of nearing milestones and quotas as they come within reach, motivating agents to put in extra effort to hit goals.

Time spent calculating commissions



Real-time reporting also helps sales managers. Lags in performance can be spotted early, when there is still time to intervene before the sales period closes. Managers can step up training, provide a mentor, or adjust territories/quotas as needed so that every sales agent is performing at full potential.

Legacy Solutions Often Disappoint

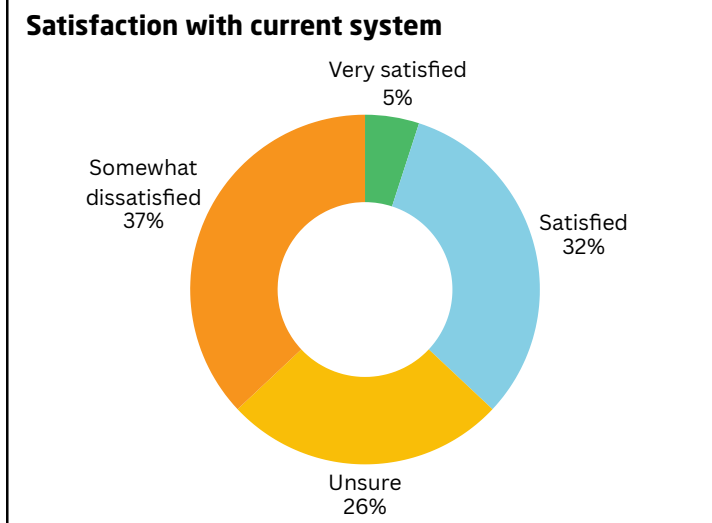
What works well with your current system?

The next questions, call on survey respondents to provide opinions about what is working well with their commission management programs and what hurdles they find most challenging.

What is your current satisfaction level?

Only 5% are very satisfied with their current process and only 32% are satisfied.

That leaves 37% somewhat dissatisfied with an alarming 26% being unsure.



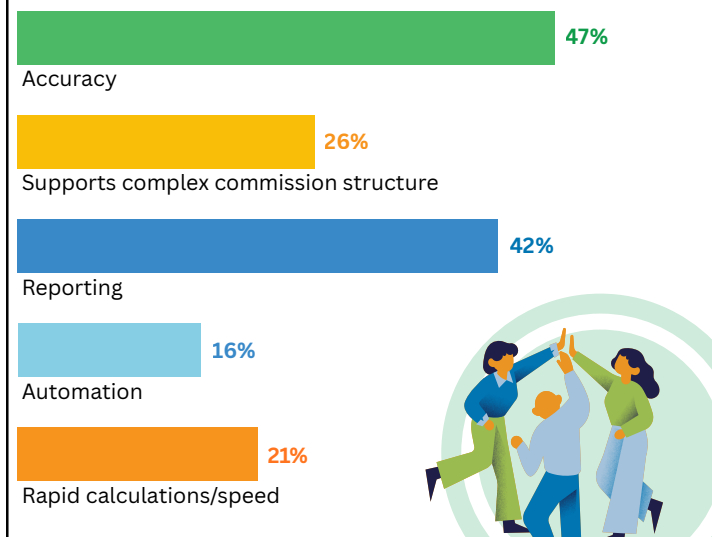
What works well with your current system?

When asked what works well with current systems, respondents noted several positive reactions, including **nearly half (47%) citing accuracy as a positive**. But accuracy is fundamentally critical to a successful commission management program. Every organization should be able to say they are totally and undeniably 100% confident with the accuracy of their programs. Sadly, that isn't the case.

Other criteria received some positive reactions as well, but with relative lackluster endorsements. **Only 26% say their systems support complex structures.** This is hardly a resounding success.

Less than half (42%) feel their system provides sufficient reporting, and only

Positive features of current system (Select all that apply)



21% feel positive about the time commitment required. Perhaps the most disappointing response is that **only 16% noted the ability to make automated calculations.** Automation is critical to efficiency.

Numerous Challenges Impede Success

What are your top challenges?

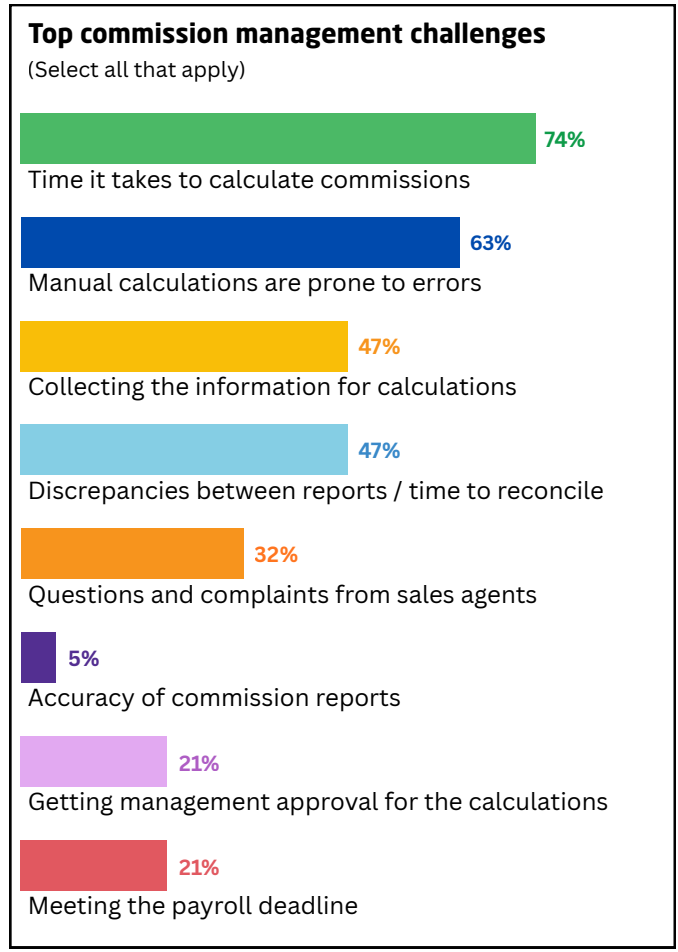
It's not surprising that organizations cited many challenges and the **top issue (74%) is the amount of time** it takes to calculate commissions. **For 63% manual processes** prone to errors was a top concern.

Collecting transactional data and discrepancies between reports were also cited by nearly half (47%).

Questions and complaints from sales agents were also noted by 32%. Obtaining approvals and the ability to meet deadlines were cited by 21%

These challenges are all interrelated. Chasing reports and approvals from sales and reconciling discrepancies caused by accuracy errors all contribute to extra time requirements—and the kind of time commitment that is frustrating. The administrators responsible for the program play a valuable role. They deserve to have workplace tools that respect their time, eliminate frustration, and let them focus on meaningful tasks that provide job fulfillment.

At the same time, sales agents are valuable to the organization's success. These professionals deserve compensation plans that are competitive and fair. Anxiety over perceived errors or delays in payments can quickly permeate a sales organization, undermining teamwork.



Workforce churn - whether in accounting, sales, or management - is very costly to the organization. Retaining experienced employees is critical, especially in manufacturing where workforce shortages are often acute.



Survey Reveals Diverse Priorities



What features are most important for a commission management solution?

When respondents were asked to pick their top features, **63% named automation**, showing a clear understanding among participants that manual processes with questionable accuracy are the enemy.

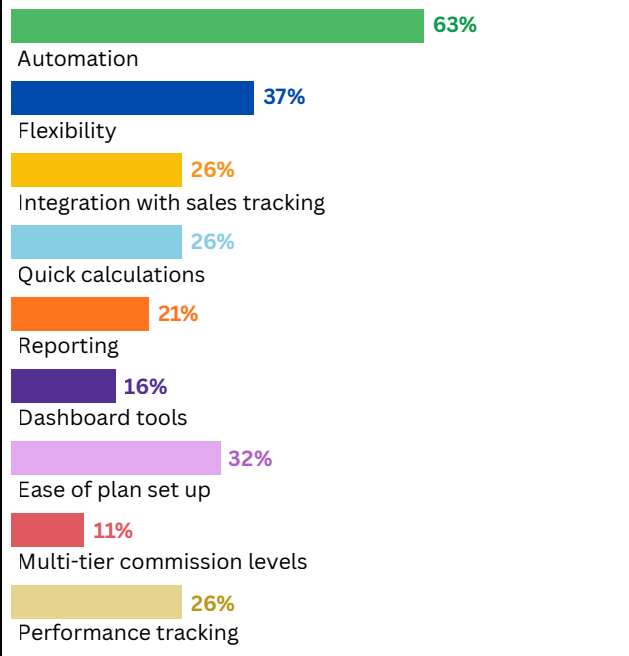
Flexibility was also a popular feature, cited by 37%. Another interesting find is that commission integration with **sales performance tracking was cited by 26%** as an important feature. The ability to integrate and track performance as well as manage the commission totals in one real-time system is actually essential and deserves more recognition.

The significance of integration may have been overlooked by survey participants due to lack of experience with this type of solution. A commission management solution that directly accesses sales data from the ERP solution—without manual imports and exports to third-party spreadsheet solutions—is far more efficient and accurate. Because the data comes directly from the sales transactions, invoices, and accounts receivable, the information used in calculations is always up-to-the-moment accurate.

Integration of the commission management platform with the sales quotas and sales records is a major factor in speeding calculations, eliminating errors, and providing an always-available view into progress toward goals.

Important features for a commission solution

(Select all that apply)



Since the commission data comes directly from sales records, the view helps managers to monitor progress of the team and individuals, including comparison of **sales versus goals**. With manual systems, this information is disjointed, requiring managers to look up sales performance, then look up the assigned quota and compare.

With an integrated view, managers can easily spot if an agent, team, or territory is under-performing. Data can be analyzed, looking at products, time periods, and trends in sales cycles. **Trouble spots can be identified before the entire sales period is completed** or market opportunities are lost to aggressive competitors.

Many overlook potential value of modernizing

Priorities are divided, with many missing the ramifications of frustrated teams

When asked to identify the top operational benefits of a commission management solution, respondents showed divided priorities. **Respondents named time (37%) and accuracy (31%) as the top benefits**, reiterating again the importance of streamlining and automating processes. But only 5% named reducing team frustration as an important feature, showing that administrators may be suffering in silence over the headaches they face. This denial can hide a powder keg of resentment that can explode without warning.

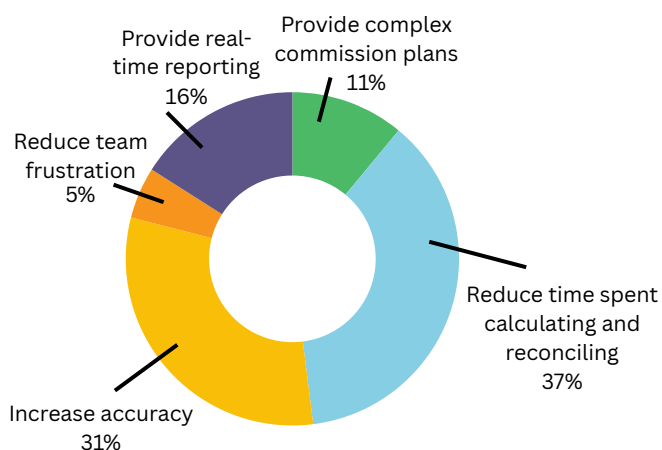
Improving visibility and reporting for the sales team was also cited by 16%.

As explained earlier, this is a disappointing data point, because visibility is actually

extremely important, deserving more attention. One possible reason for the oversight is that the survey responders are predominantly in accounting roles, not sales.

They may be unaware of the hidden impact of poor visibility on the sales team.

What one operational benefit do you feel is most important for a commission management solution?



A modern commission management solution helps companies achieve higher goals

With a modern solution you can set your sights higher. Benefits include:

- Improved accuracy
- Consistent adherence to policy
- Reduced questions and disputes from sales
- One-click automation for calculating commissions
- Multi-tiered sales commissions that reward individuals and teams
- Ability to focus on products or regions and direct sales behavior
- Detailed reporting and analysis for management
- Real-time dashboard for sales agents

Managing Customer and Vendor Rebates

Rebate programs also place a heavy burden on administrators

The benchmark survey also addresses the challenges faced by companies that offer rebates. Like managing commissions, managing rebate programs is time-intensive and tedious.

The use of manual, outdated processes or spreadsheets for analyzing data is inefficient, at best. In the worst case, system flaws can lead to disenchanted customers.

Survey responses indicate administrators can spend a few hours to a few days on the tasks.

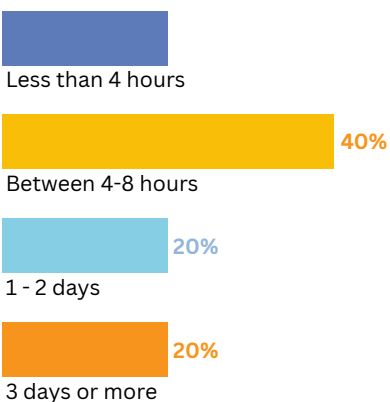
Factors that contribute to the time burden follow the same common issues faced in managing commissions. **Generating reports and waiting for report approval** are the top issues cited by **16% of respondents**.

What works well with your current system?

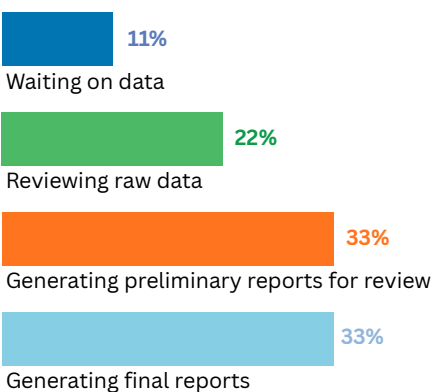
When asked to share positives about their current systems, responders did not seem overly enthusiastic about benefits, with only **5% citing the ability to manage complexity and reporting abilities. Accuracy was the top response, cited by 11%.**

Accuracy is essential to rebate management, though. Of course, errors can cause extra work and delays for the program administrators. But, more importantly, **errors can jeopardize customer relationships**. Customers who doubt the accuracy of their rebates can express their frustration in many ways—including changing buying habits.

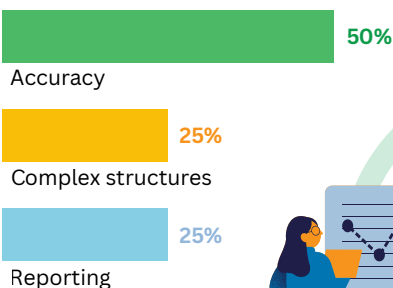
Time required for rebates



Rebate time delay factors



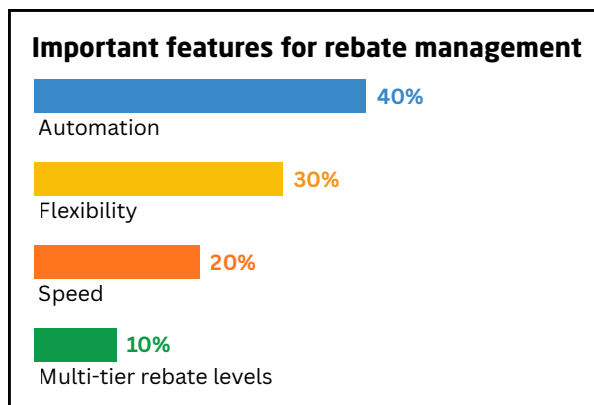
What works well?



Rebate Programs Reward Customer Loyalty

What features are most important for rebate management?

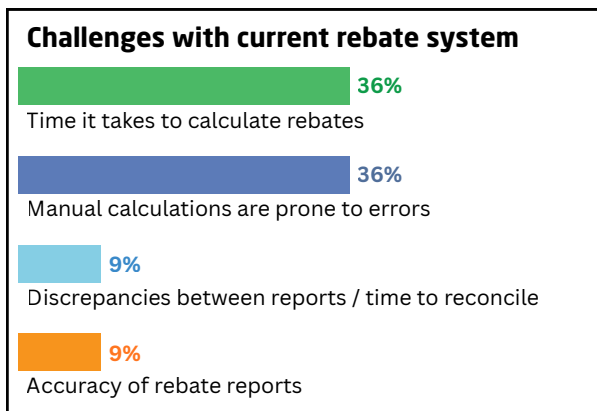
This survey question gave respondents several choices, but only a few were selected by respondents. **Automation (40%) and flexibility (30%) were top choices with speed of calculations (20%) also cited.** Because of the frequent need to track groups and subgroups for payout options, rebate programs can be even more complex to manage than commission programs.



Employing modern solutions with automation and real-time reporting is essential for program success. Simple spreadsheets are ill-suited for the task, are prone to errors, and offer limited abilities to analyze and trends. The unpredictable burden on resources can disrupt the entire accounting team, making quarterly or year-end closing highly stressful.

What are some challenges with your current rebate system?

When asked to name the top challenges they face with their rebate system, survey respondents once again **cited time as the biggest hurdle (36%)** and also cited that manual calculations can cause errors. Few, though, **(only 9%) seemed to be worried about discrepancies or accuracy.** This could indicate trust in their rebate reporting. It could also reveal that putting in the extensive time means they are confident of output.



Accuracy would certainly be important to customers. This is one of the reasons companies need to be confident their rebate calculations are reliable.

Overall, we can look at how satisfied the survey respondents are with their current rebate system and see that 60% of them are unsatisfied. Not a very impressive metric!



SURVEY CONCLUSIONS

Organizations that offer commissions or rebates face distinct operational challenges. Managing such programs is not easy, as the complexity of accessing data and analyzing it can be tedious and frustrating, with numerous issues that can get in the way. Program administrators, usually in the accounting team, are typically expected to endure the ups and downs associated with using outdated technology or solutions that were not designed for commission or rebate management.

This type of disregard for the administrative burden is increasingly being recognized as short-sighted. **Time is money. Employee frustration is a threat to company stability.**

Organizations need highly efficient, accurate, and flexible solutions that will make managing programs easier.



Smart solutions bring value that can be measured in time savings and boosted performance. With the right software in place, organizations can excel.

Software that is purpose-built for commission and rebate management supports foundational elements as well as advanced and strategic applications.

How to use this information - Next steps you can take

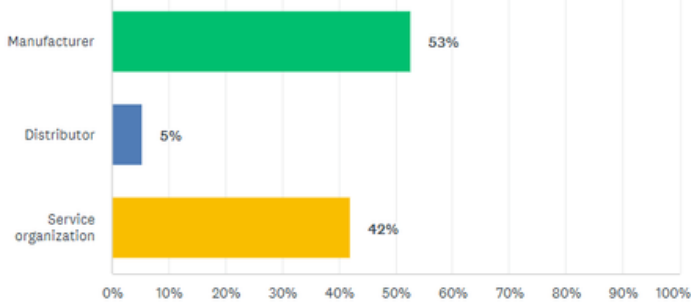
- Perform an audit of your own systems, collecting input from stakeholders, such as the administrators, sales managers, and sales agents. Are the stakeholders satisfied with processes or frustrated?
- Quantify your findings. Translate the time spent managing programs into costs.
- Compare your results to survey respondents. Are you performing up to benchmark standards or falling short?
- Identify the biggest issues that are holding back your team. What are the costs and risks?
- List must-have features and goals for modernizing your processes. Identify modern software capabilities you could leverage.
- View an [overview demo of IncentViz](#) to see how purpose-built software would improve your commission and rebate program.

2026 BENCHMARK SURVEY RESULTS

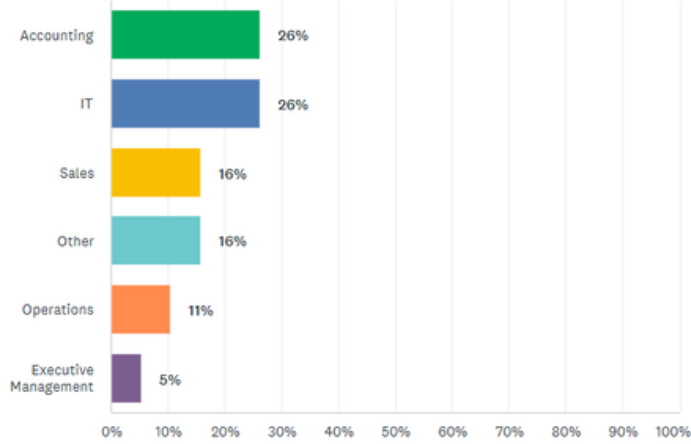
Appendix

Answers to all of the survey questions

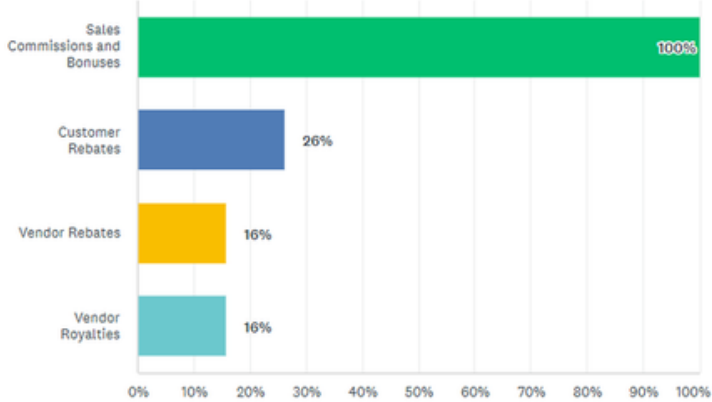
What is your company's business classification?



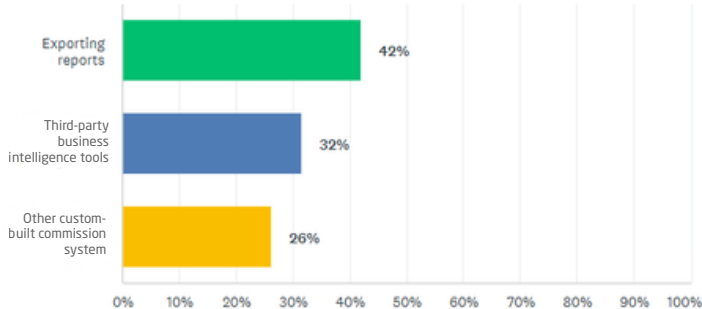
What is your primary area of responsibility?



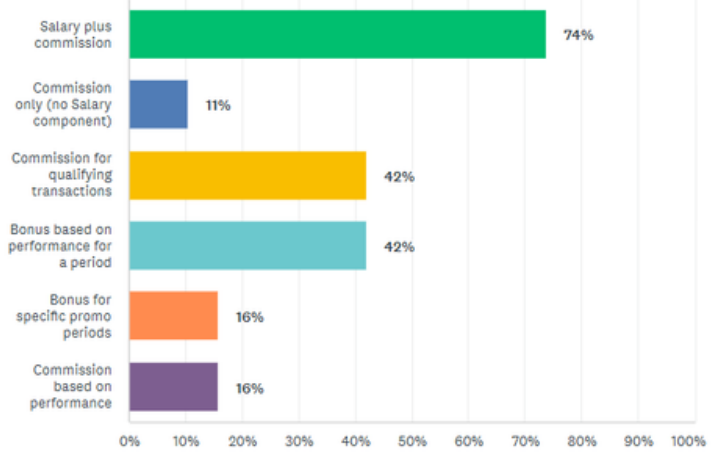
What type of incentive programs does your company offer? (check all that apply)



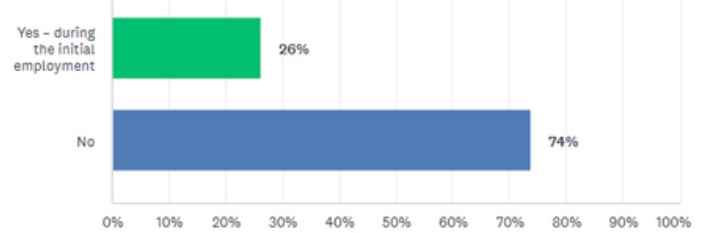
What is your current method of calculating commissions?



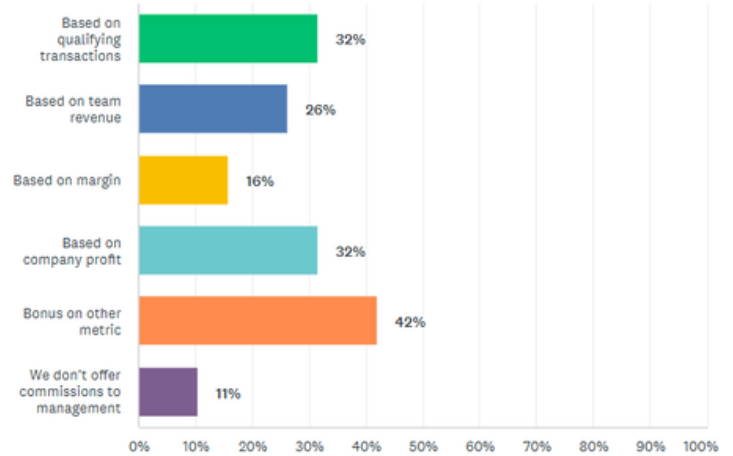
What type of incentive components do you offer sales agents? (Check all that apply)



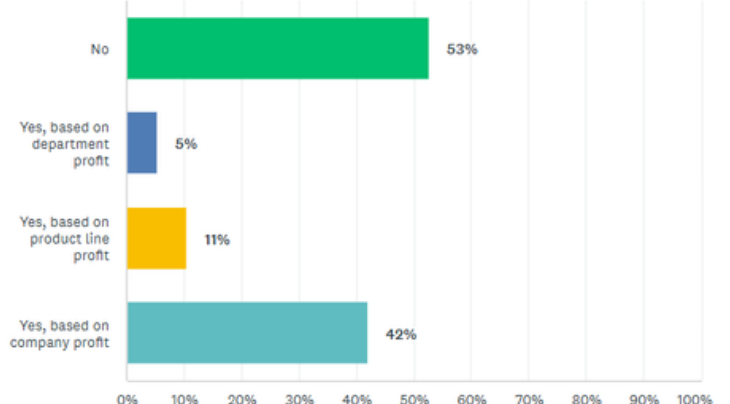
Do you offer Draws (aka. guaranteed payment)?



How do you incentivize managers?

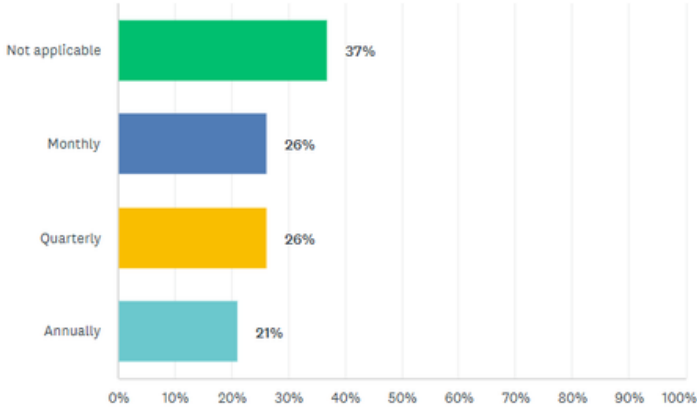


Do you base commissions on profitability? (Check all that apply)

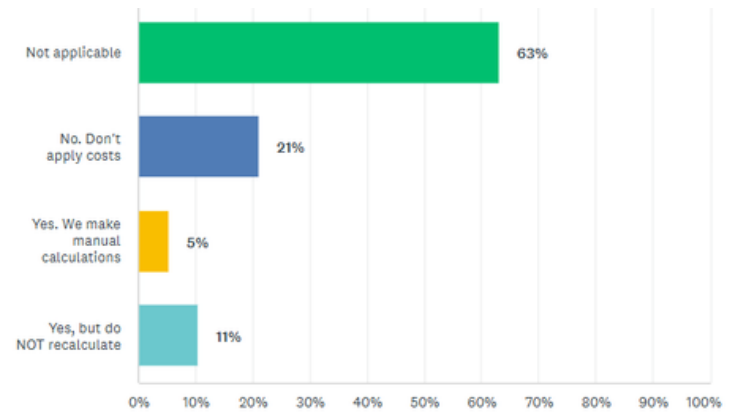


2026 BENCHMARK SURVEY RESULTS

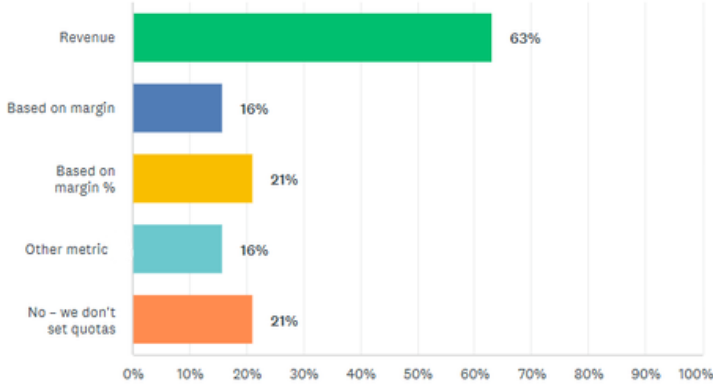
If you calculate commissions on profitability, what period is used?



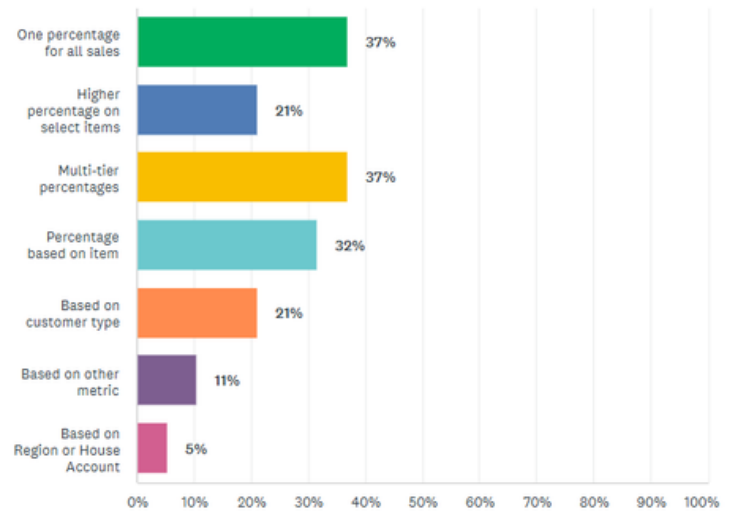
If you calculate commission payments based on Margin or Margin %, is it possible for your company to apply additional costs (i.e. freight, PO price change, etc.) to the order after the commission has been processed, thereby changing the margin/margin % and potentially changing the commission payment calculation?



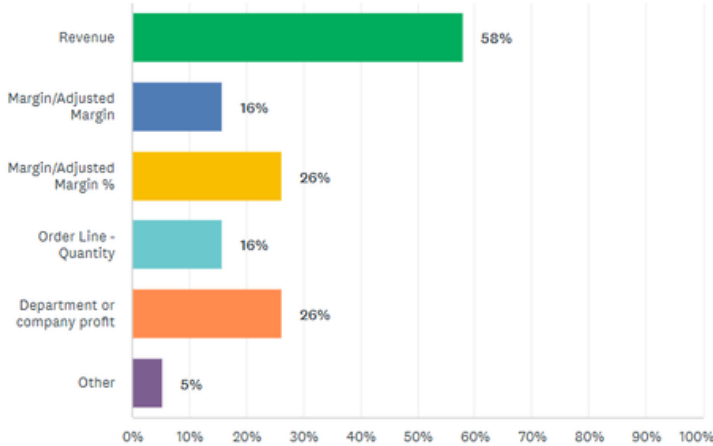
Are sales agents assigned a quota or target? Based on what?



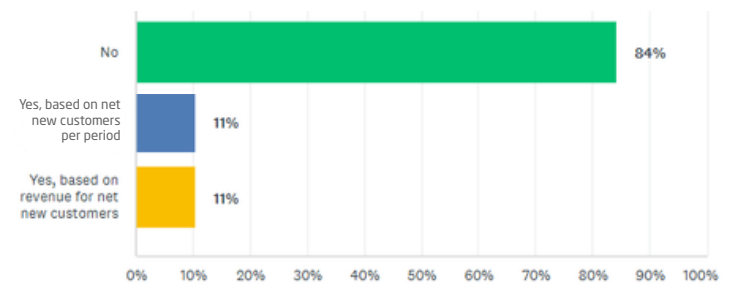
How are commission payout percentages determined? (Check all that apply)



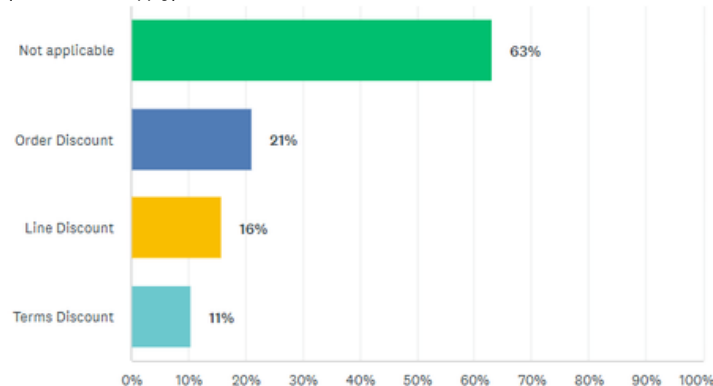
What is your basis for calculating Commissions? (Check all that apply)



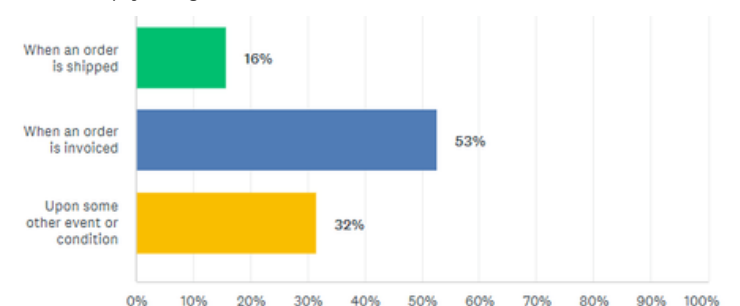
Is there a component in your commission program that focuses on Customer or Territory development? (Check all that apply)



If your company calculates commission payments based on Margin or Margin %, do you include Discounts & Allowances as part of the cost, which reduces the overall margin? (Check all that apply)

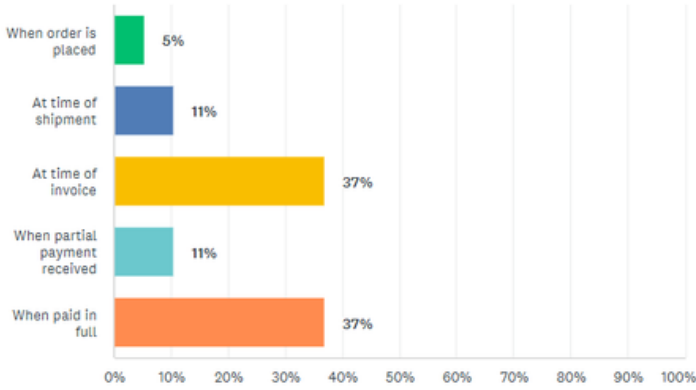


At what moment in time is a transaction considered to be commissionable and the commission payment generated?

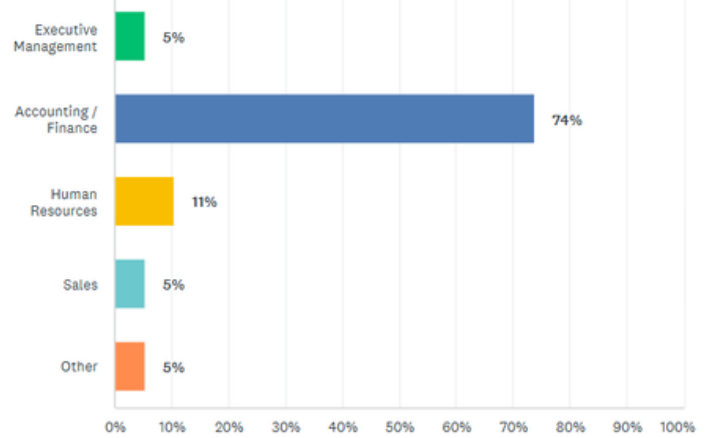


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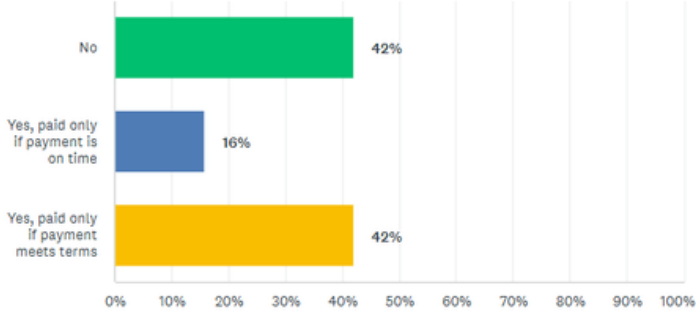
At what moment in the process is the commission released for payment to the receiving party?



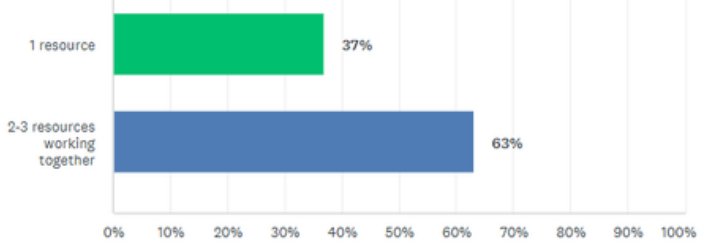
What department in your organization is primarily responsible for calculating and processing commission payments?



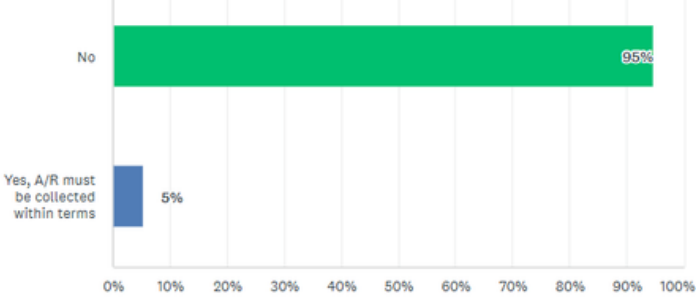
Do other conditions determine the timing of the commission payout?



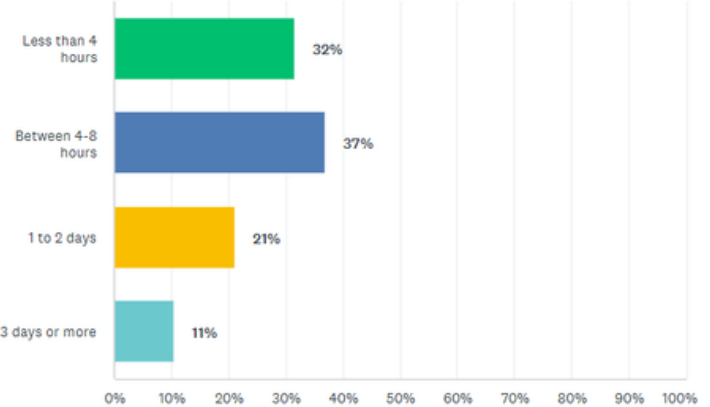
How many people (from any/all departments) are involved in calculating and managing commissions?



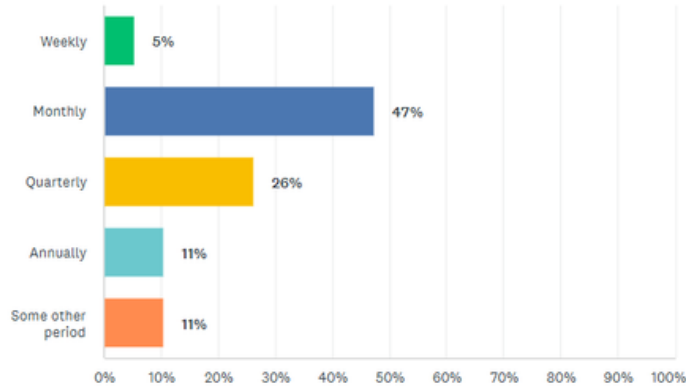
Is there a component in your commission program that involves the sales agent in the collection process?



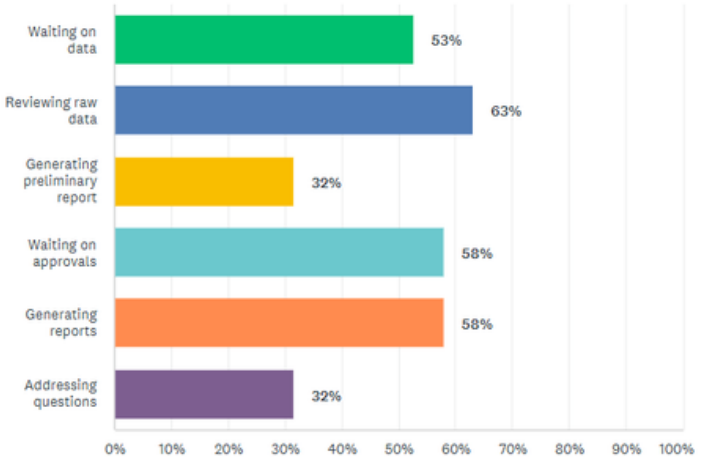
How much "total" time is spent reviewing and calculating (full-time equivalent) commissions each pay period?



What is the frequency of commission payments?

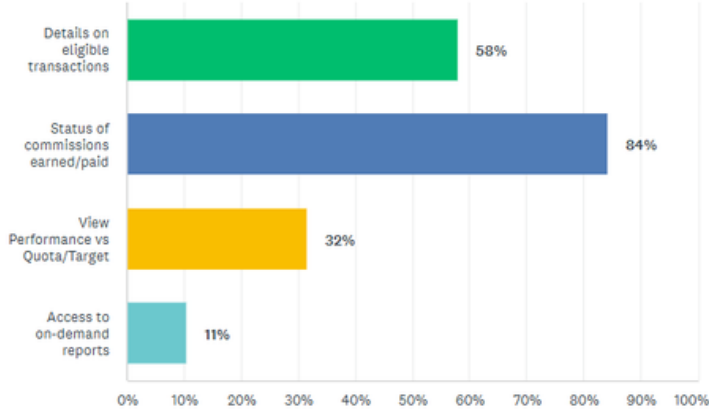


What factors contribute to delays? (Check all that apply)

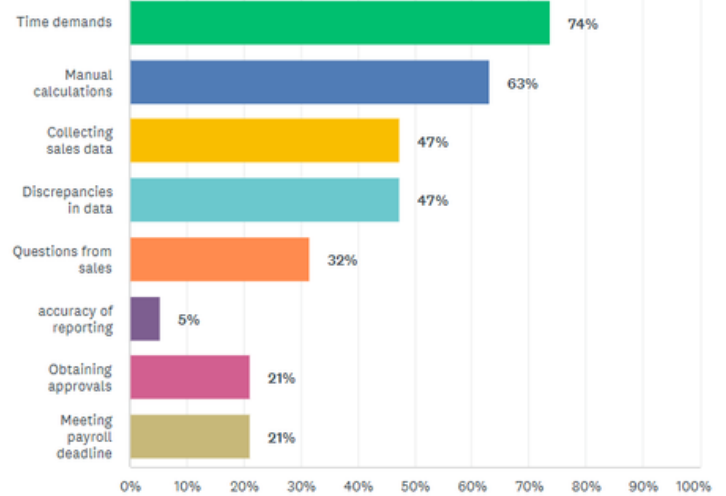


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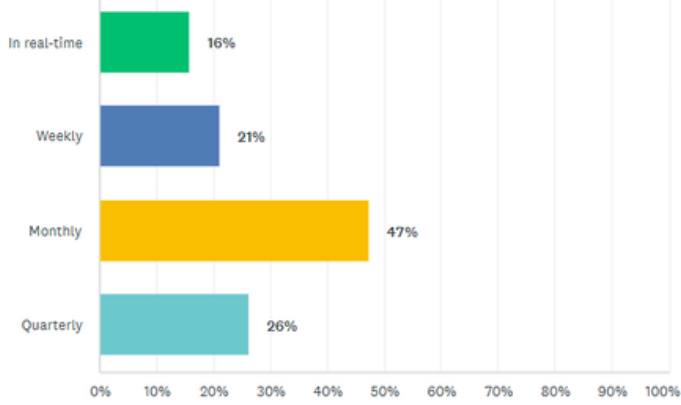
Do you provide sales agents... (Check all that apply)



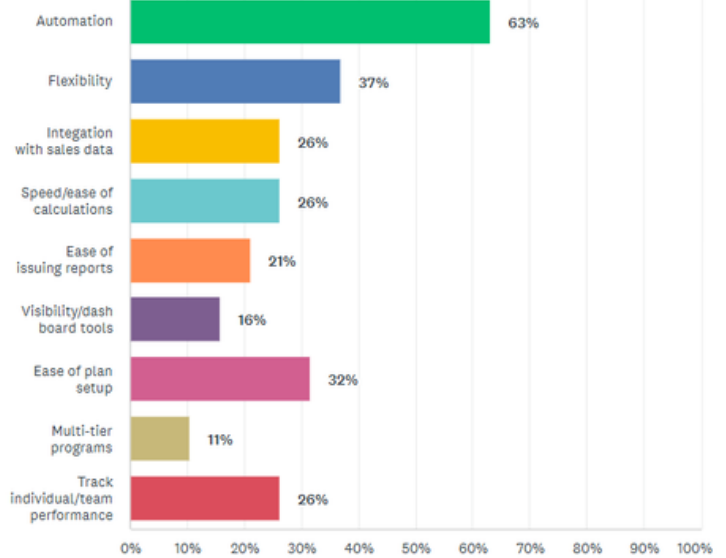
What are your top three commission management challenges? (Check all that apply)



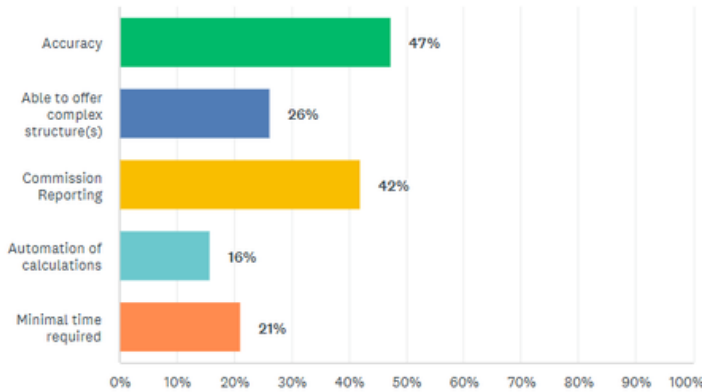
Do you provide sales agents commission reports... (Check all that apply)



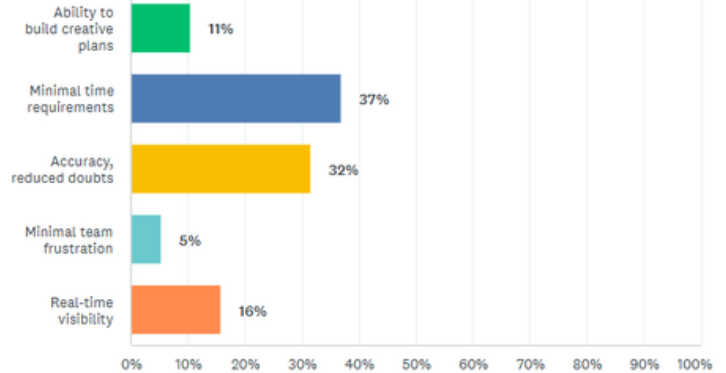
What top three features do you feel are most important in a commission management system? (Check all that apply)



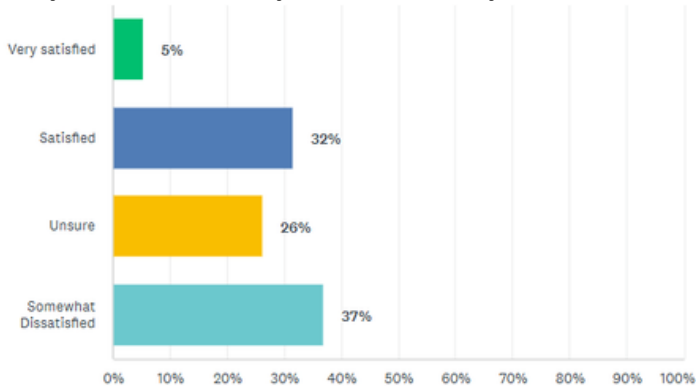
What works well with your current commission system or method? (Check all that apply)



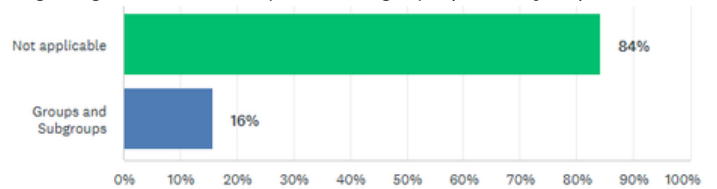
What one benefit is most important?



What is your satisfaction level with your current commission system or method?

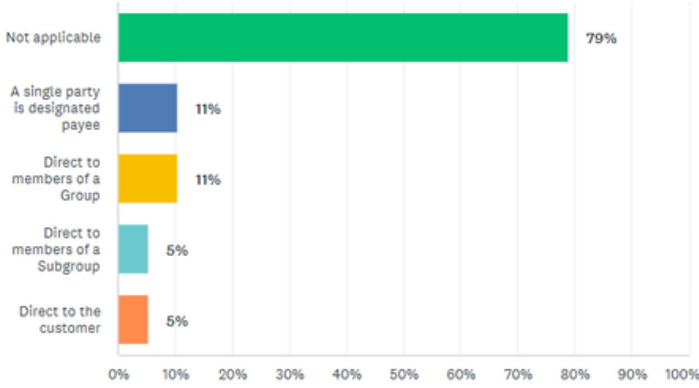


If your organization offers a Customer Rebate Program, does it include categorizing customers into Groups and/or Subgroups? (Check only one)

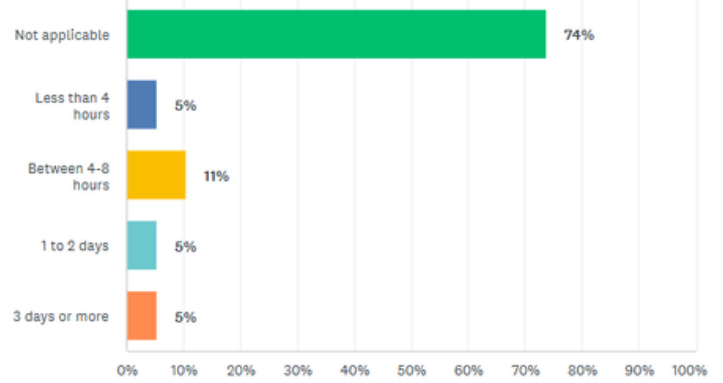


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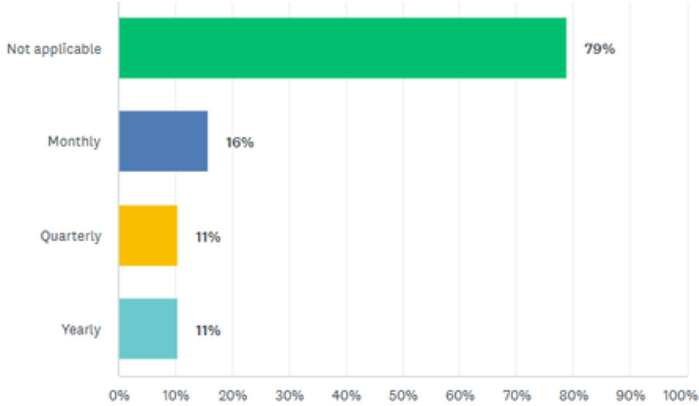
If you offer a Rebate Program, when making rebate payments, who receives the payment? (Check all that apply)



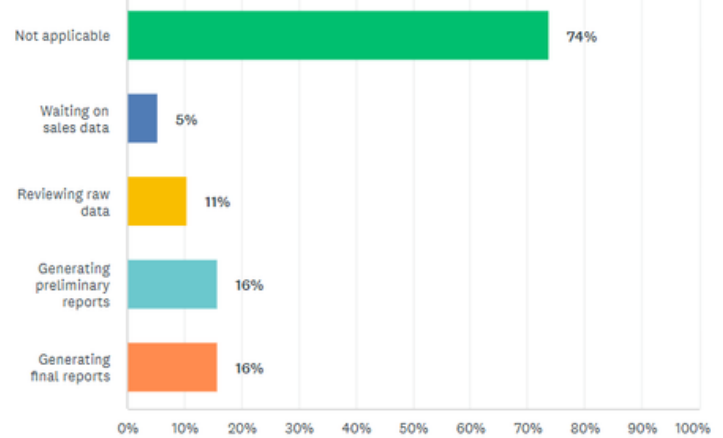
How much "total" time is spent reviewing and calculating (full-time equivalent) rebates each pay period?



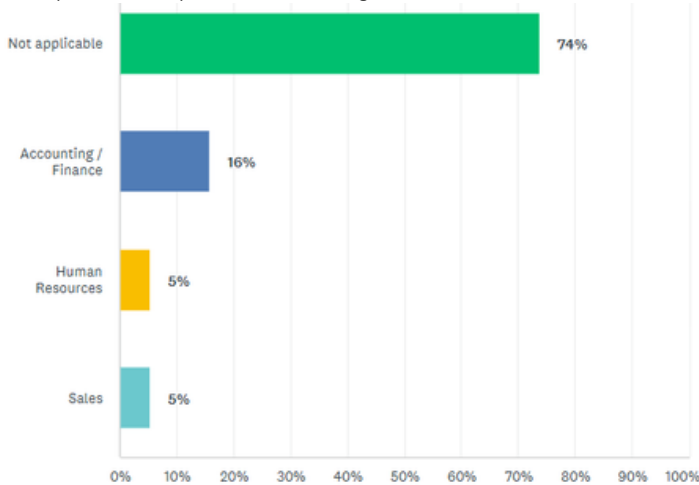
What is the frequency of Rebate Payments? (Check all that apply)



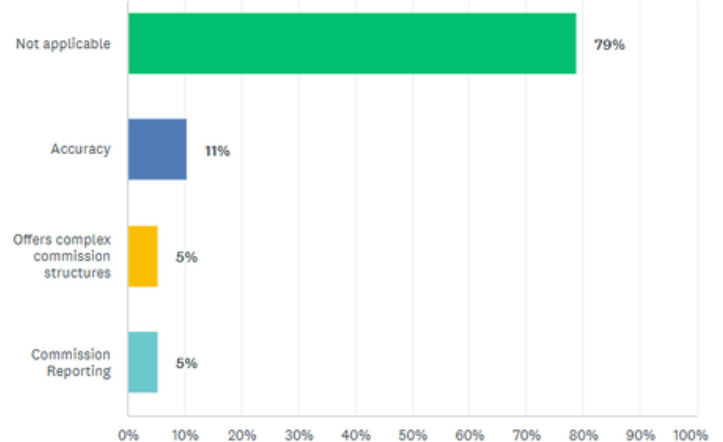
What factors contribute to delays in preparing rebate reports?



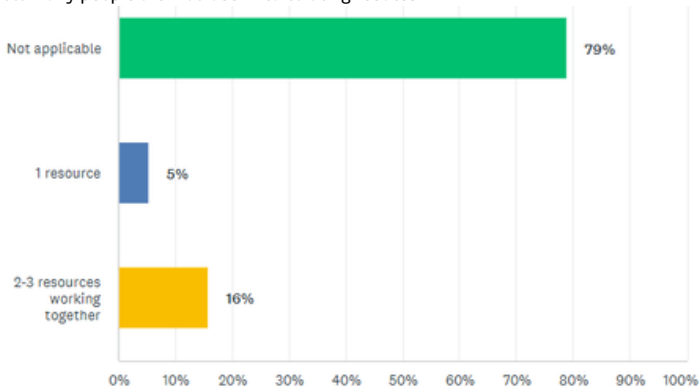
What department is responsible for calculating rebates?



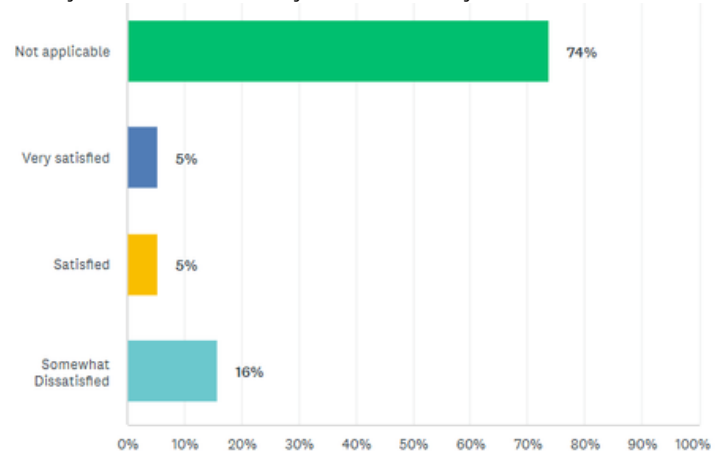
What works well with your current rebate system or method? (Check all that apply)



How many people are involved in calculating rebates?

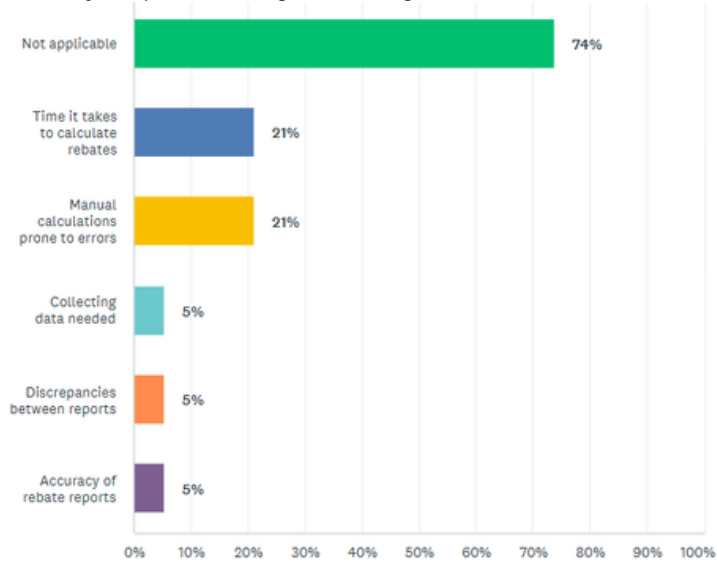


What is your satisfaction level with your current rebate system or method?

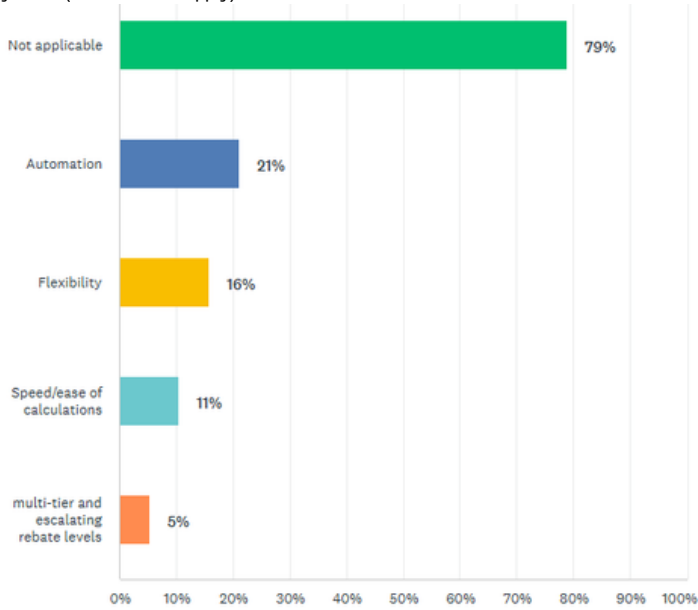


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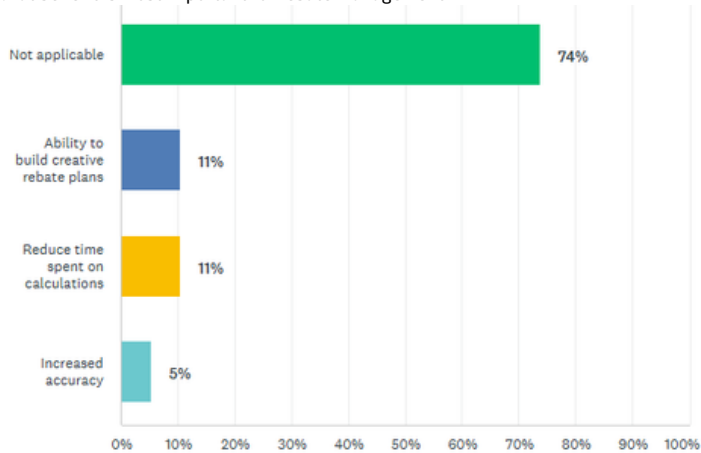
What are your top 3 rebate management challenges?



What top three features do you feel are most important in a rebate management system? (Check all that apply)



What benefit is most important for rebate management?



2026 BENCHMARK SURVEY RESULTS

IncentViz helps organizations improve commission and rebate management

IncentViz, from Single Source Systems, is a highly reliable solution that is flexible and easy to use. It integrates with Infor CloudSuite Industrial, CloudSuite Distribution, Infor Service Management, and Infor VISUAL so that the sales, service, and contract data is directly accessed from related transactions. Reporting is accurate and reflects real-time data. IncentViz will help your organizations streamline, automate, and up-level your entire commission and rebate management programs

ACCOUNTING

Streamline tedious calculations

- One-click calculations
- Real-time calculations
- Automated commission reports

MANAGERS

Strategically plan multi-tier programs

- Calculation logic
- Real-time analysis
- Focus on key products and services

SALES

Provide sales reps easy access to status

- Tailored goals
- Dashboard displays
- See earnings due/paid



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Solutions | Insights | Services



About us

For over 40 years Single Source Systems has been helping companies enhance their operations through technology and proven business insights. We are a long-time Infor Channel Partner, thoroughly familiar with the architecture of their solutions for smooth integration of IncentViz to key Infor solutions (CloudSuite Industrial, CloudSuite Distribution, Infor VISUAL, and Infor Service Management.)