



# State of Pool Service 2026: Building a More Profitable, Predictable Business

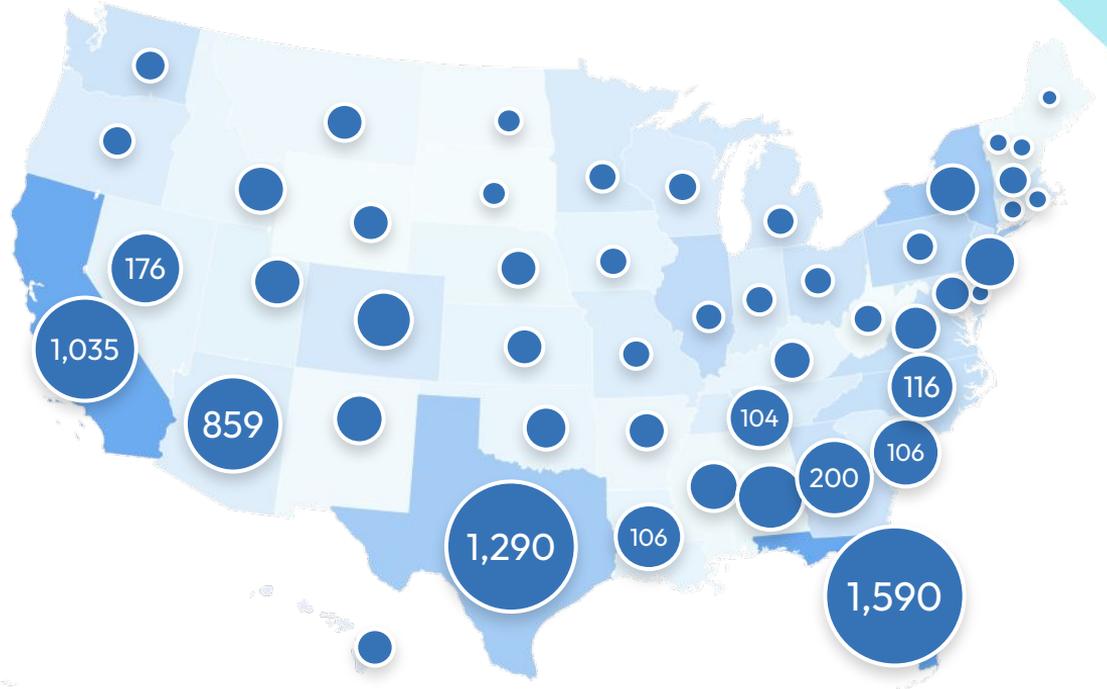
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Featuring Hal Denbar & Megan Kendrick  
February 24, 2026

# About Skimmer

Skimmer is on a mission to modernize the pool and spa service and repair industry through easy-to-use software and best-in-class support.

With **1M+ pools** under management, **35,000+** pool service professionals trust Skimmer to run their business.



# Presenters

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**Niki Acosta**

Director of Industry Relations



**Hal Denbar**

Board Member & Advisor



**Megan Kendrick**

Founder & Editor in Chief



# Agenda

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- About the 2026 Report
- Disciplined Growth
- Operational Consistency
- Technology as a Force Multiplier
- Marketing
- PE & Industry Landscape
- Q&A



# About the 2026 Report

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- Third annual report
- Free industry resource
- Largest pool industry report of its kind
- Challenges, opportunities, & trends
- **1600+** industry respondents
- Data from **1M+** pools under management

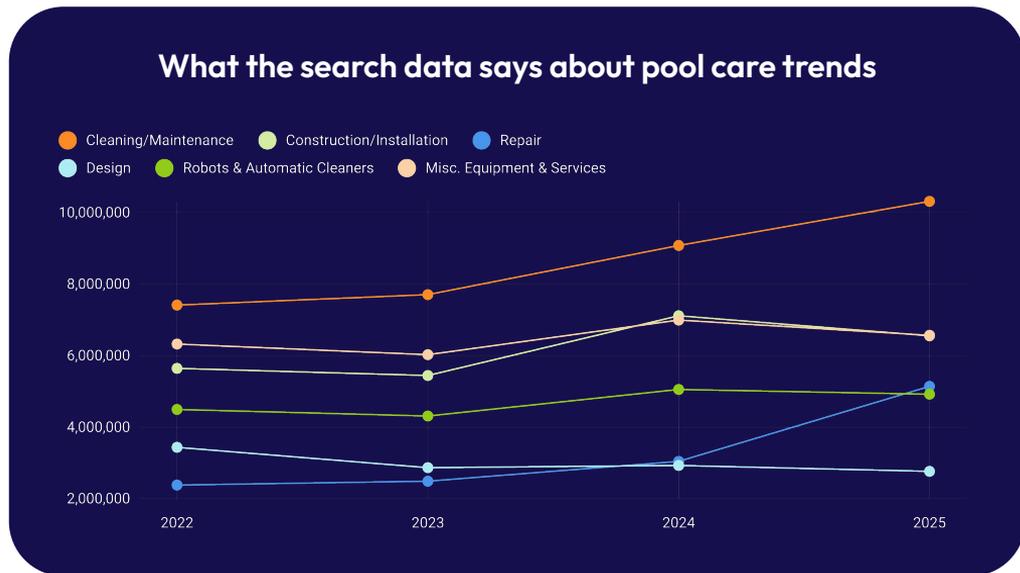
*"This report is fantastic. It rivals the reports we'd pay consultants thousands of dollars for. This is great for our industry."*

*Harold Evans, founder of Orenda*



# By the numbers: The pool service opportunity

- 10.7 million pools the US
- 3.6% increase in service companies from 2019-2024
- 4.7% of homes have in ground pools
- 3.1% of homes have above ground pools
- Pool cleaning is a **\$7.2 billion** market. **\$7.8 billion** by 2029
- Pool construction market estimated at **\$16.5 billion** in 2025



# Report Themes

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## Disciplined Growth

Growing profitably by focusing on margin, pricing, and the right customers — not just more pools.



## Operational Consistency

Delivering reliable, repeatable service quality across every tech, every route, every week.



## Technology as a Force Multiplier

Using tools to reduce admin work, improve communication, and scale without adding chaos.

# Disciplined Growth

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# Revenue Expectations Rising

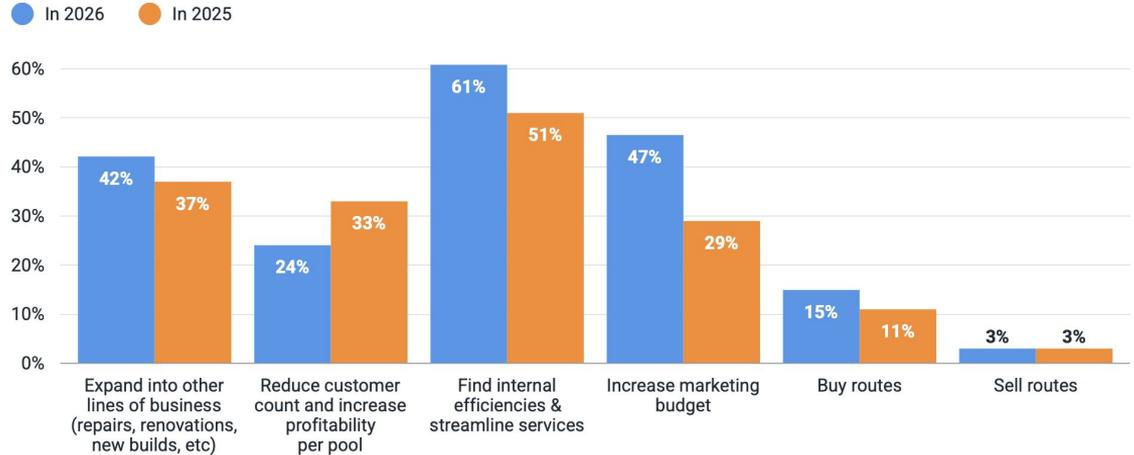
- Optimism is holding firm heading into 2026
- Most owners expect revenue to increase
- The focus now: profitable, sustainable growth



# 2026 Growth Strategies

- **61%** Internal efficiencies
- **47%** Increase marketing
- **42%** Expand services
- **24%** Reduce customer count & increase profitability per pool

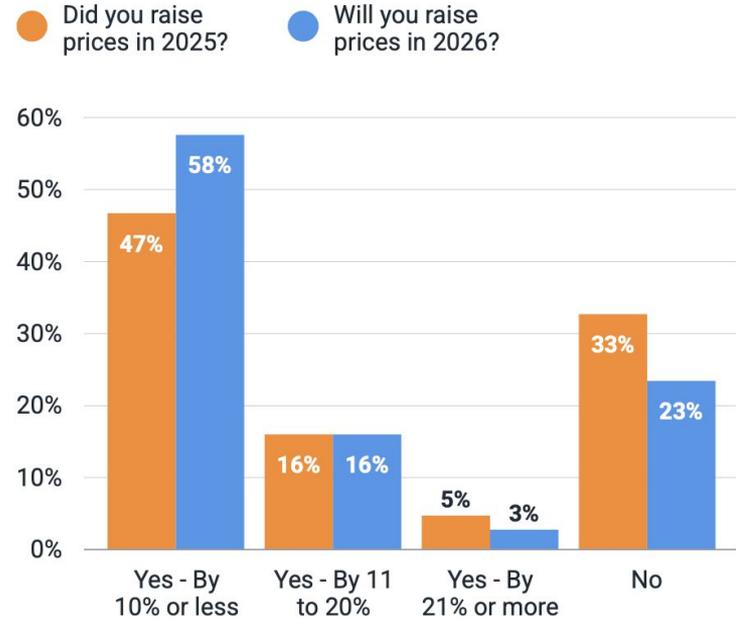
What strategies will you use to achieve your goals?



# Pricing Discipline

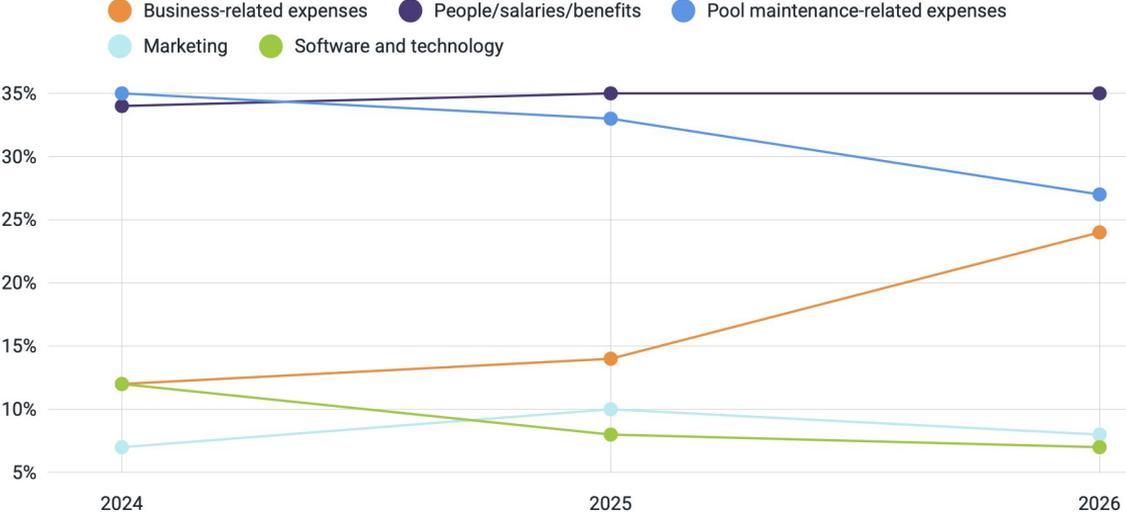
- Underpricing is no longer sustainable in today's cost environment
- Small, disciplined increases compound over time
- Predictable billing models are replacing reactive pricing

Price increases in 2025 vs 2026



# Budget Shifts

- Owners are reallocating dollars toward operational efficiency
- Software and tools are moving from “optional” to essential
- Cost discipline and smarter allocation are becoming competitive advantages



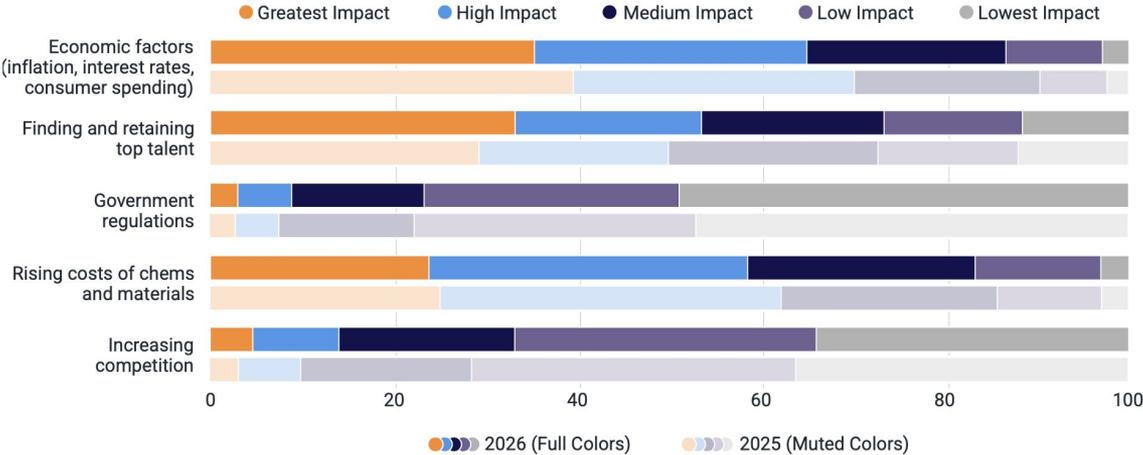
# Operational Consistency

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# Biggest Challenges in 2026

- **Economic uncertainty** remains the #1 pressure shaping business decisions
- **Labor and staffing challenges** continue to limit growth and consistency
- **Rising chemical and material costs** are still squeezing margins and pricing models

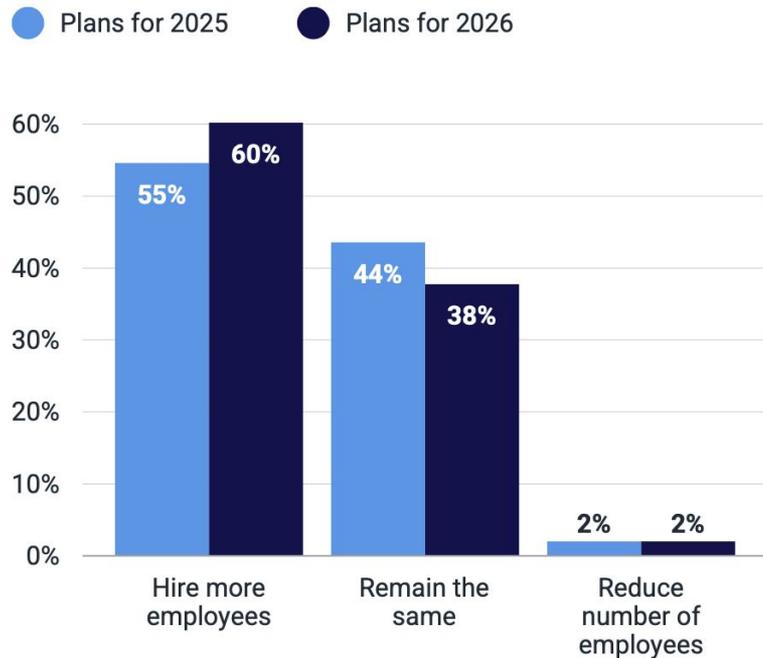
Which factors will have the greatest impact on your business?



# Hiring & Staffing Trends

- Most operators plan to hire in 2026 — growth requires team expansion
- The shift toward W-2 employees continues as owners prioritize control and consistency
- Recruiting is only half the battle — training and retention drive long-term success

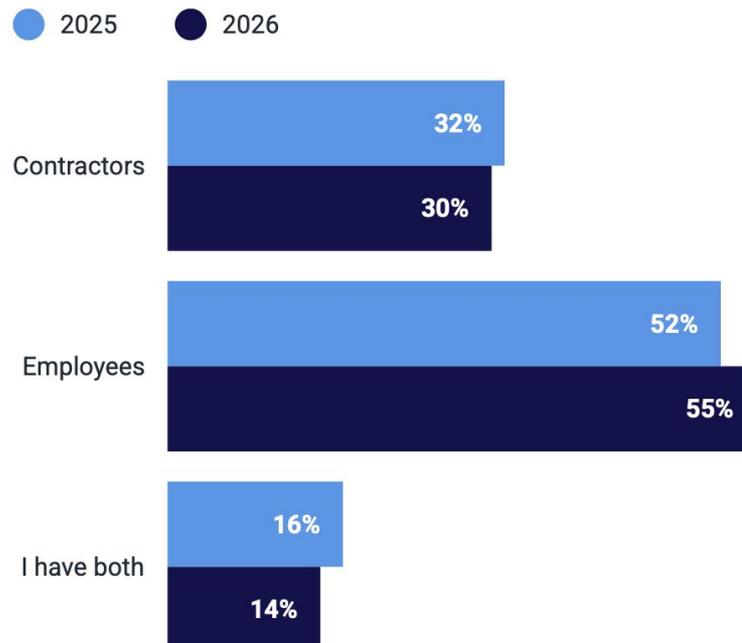
Plans for 2025 vs 2026



# Employment Model Shift

- The industry continues moving toward W-2 employment over contractor models
- Greater control and consistency are driving staffing structure decisions
- A stable employment model supports better training, quality control, and retention

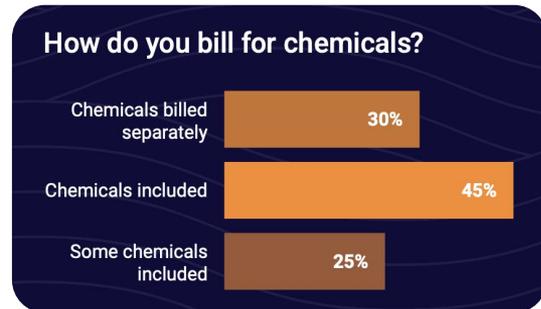
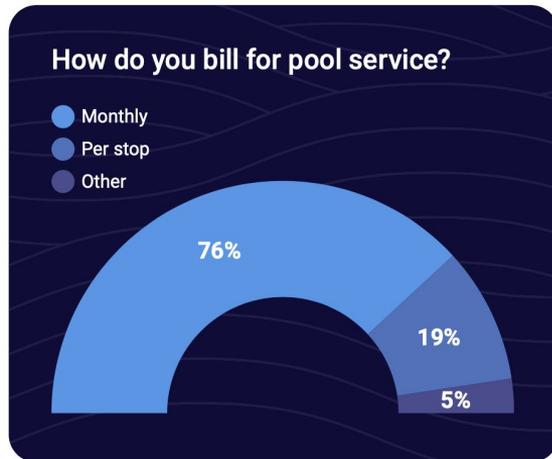
Are your techs contractors or employees?



# Revenue Structure is Getting Smarter

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- Monthly billing continues to anchor predictable, recurring revenue
- Chemical pricing is shifting toward clearer, margin-protecting models
- Deposit requirements reinforce professionalism and cash flow discipline



# Technology as a Force Multiplier

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# Software Stack

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- Consolidating tools minimizes inefficiencies and duplicate data entry
- Integrated systems improve reporting, billing accuracy, and team accountability
- A connected tech stack reduces manual work and improves visibility across the business

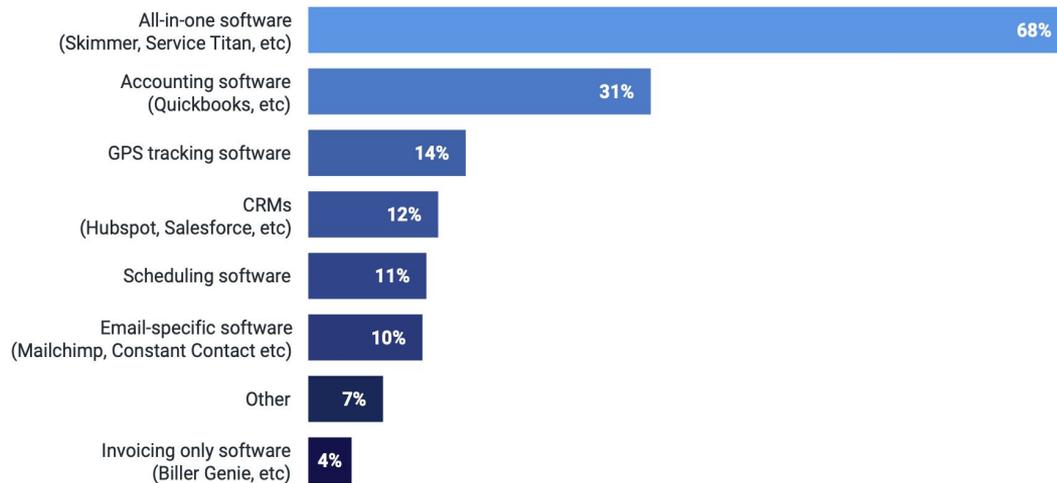
## Most popular software by type, according to 2026 survey respondents:

1. Accounting software *(eg, QuickBooks)*
2. All-in-one software *(Skimmer, Service Titan, etc)*
3. GPS tracking
4. Google Suite
5. Scheduling software
6. No software
7. Email-specific software *(Mailchimp, Constant Contact, etc)*
8. CRMs *(eg, Hubspot, Salesforce, etc)*
9. Invoicing only software *(Biller Genie, etc)*

# What Owners Plan to Buy

- Many operators are actively investing in technology heading into 2026
- All-in-one platforms are the top priority as businesses seek simplicity and efficiency
- Software purchases are increasingly focused on supporting growth, consistency, and customer experience

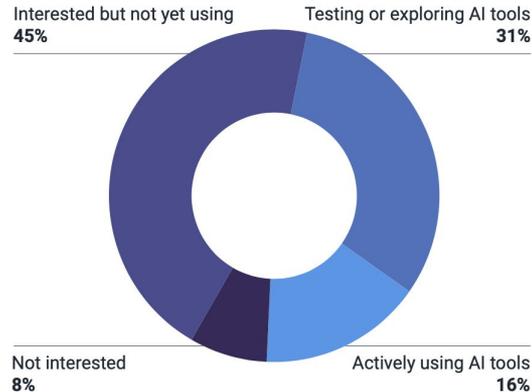
## What kind of software do you plan to purchase?



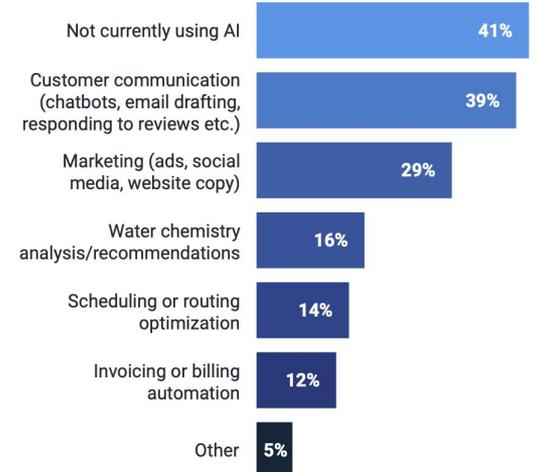
# AI Adoption

- Interest in AI is high, but most operators are still experimenting
- Early use is focused on communication and admin – not core service decisions
- Reliability and trust remain the biggest barriers to broader adoption

## What describes your current stance on AI in your business?



## In what areas are you using AI today?



# Marketing

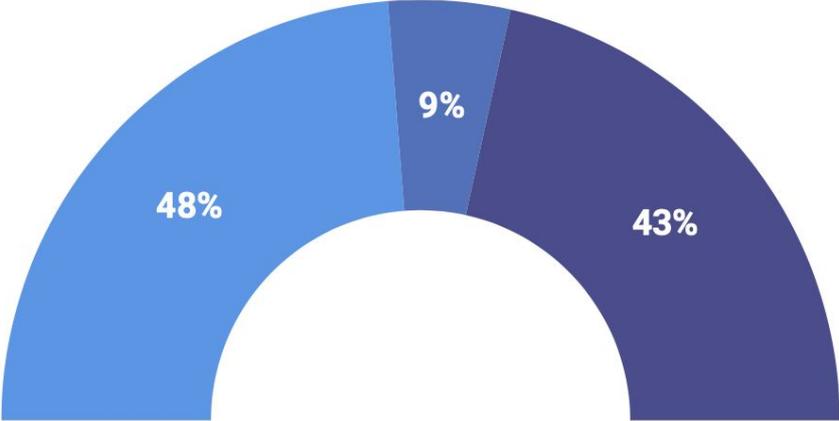
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# Marketing Spend Plans

- Nearly half of operators plan to increase marketing spend
- Investment is measured and targeted – not aggressive or speculative
- Quality leads and measurable return matter more than volume

In 2026, do you plan to:

- Spend more on marketing
- Spend less on marketing
- Spend the same on marketing



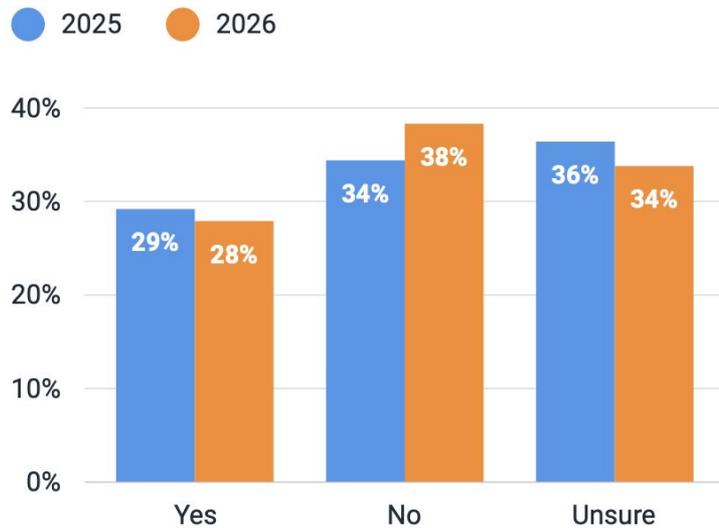
# PE & Industry Landscape

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# What Consolidation Really Means for Operators

- Consolidation is reshaping the competitive bar – professionalism and consistency are now expected
- Whether you plan to sell or not, building a “buyer-ready” business improves profitability and control
- The strongest operators focus on fundamentals: clean financials, repeatable processes, route density, and leadership depth

If you were approached to sell your company to a private equity firm, would you consider it?



# What success looks like in 2026

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- **Disciplined** in pricing
- **Selective** in hiring
- **Systematic** in marketing
- **Consistent** in service delivery
- **Digitally mature** in their operations
- **Prepared, not apprehensive**, about consolidation or regulation

“The industry is **stabilizing and maturing**. Demand is steady. Customer expectations are rising. Tools are improving.”

# Q&A

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Director of Industry Relations



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**Thank You!**

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