Incentive Research Foundation

2025 IRF Top Performer Study

How Leading Companies Leverage Non-Cash Rewards & Recognition Strategies

May 2025

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Research Overview

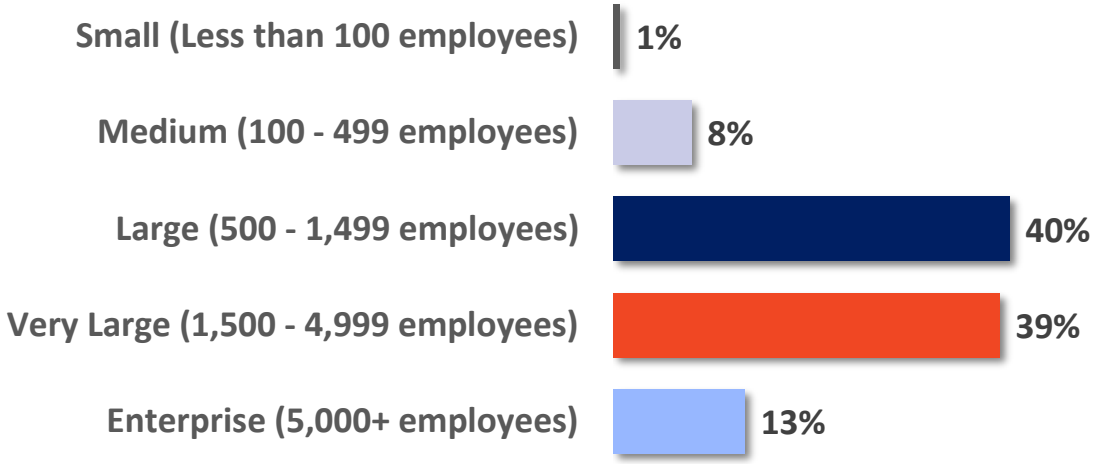
In March 2025, the Incentive Research Foundation conducted an updated iteration of the Top Performers study, most recently conducted in 2020. This research examines the reward and recognition strategies that distinguish top-performing companies from others, providing expert insights and actionable recommendations for structuring effective programs to help organizations emulate the success of high performers.

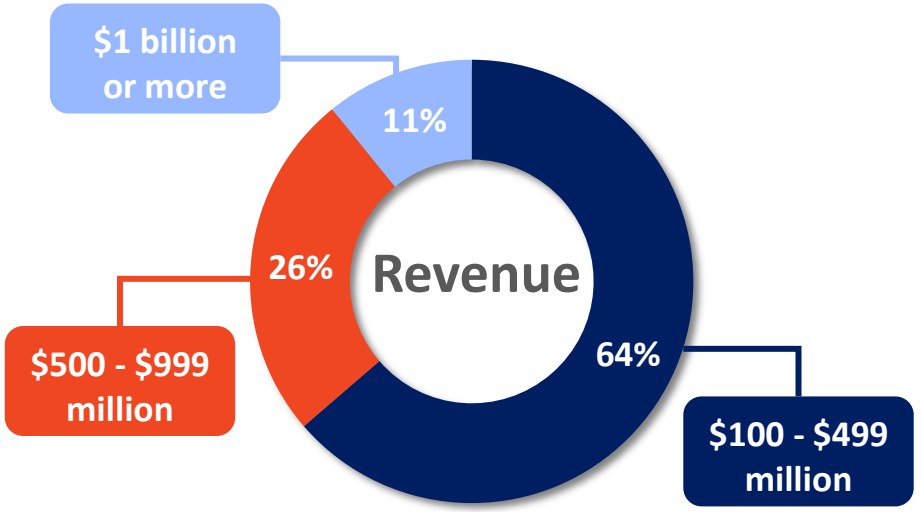
Respondents meet the following criteria:

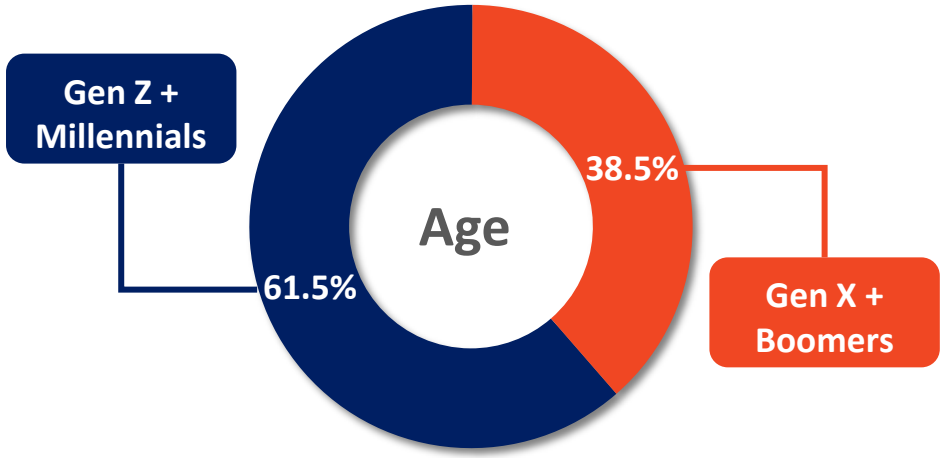
- Employed full-time at a company generating at least $100 million in annual revenue
- Holds influence over or is directly responsible for the development of company's non-cash incentive rewards program(s)
- 23 to 65 years of age

Respondent Profile

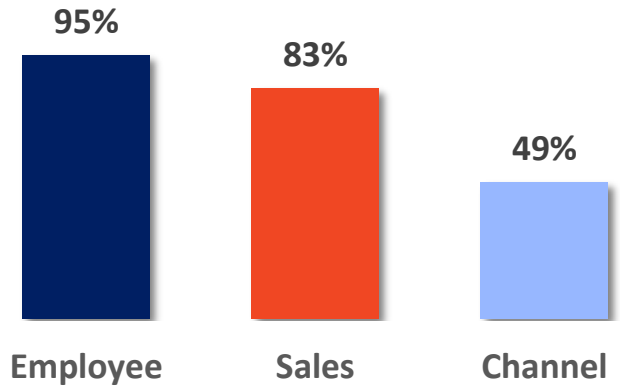
Company Size







Reward Program Types

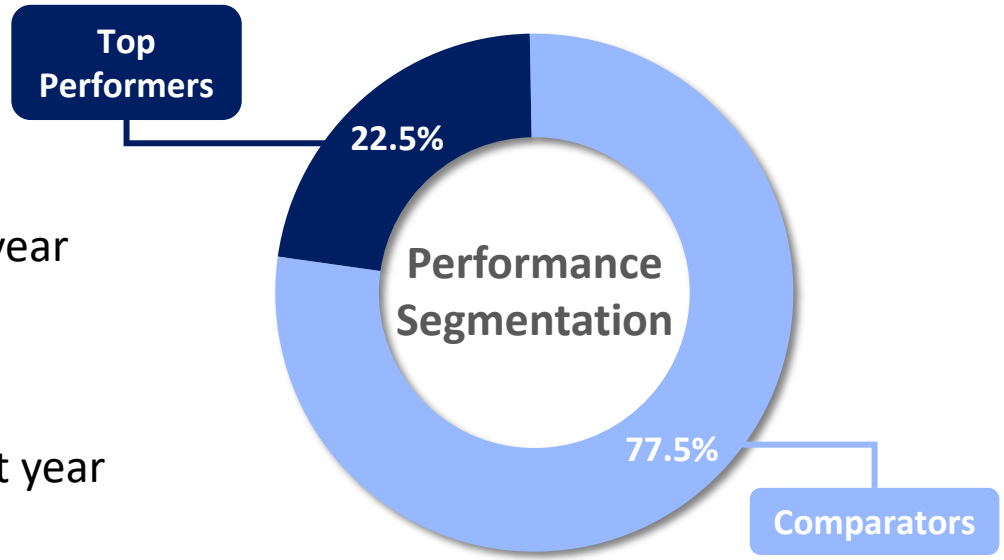


Methodology

To accurately distinguish high-performing organizations, this study uses a set of defined business performance indicators rather than relying on external awards or third-party rankings. Companies are segmented based on their self-reported outcomes across critical growth, retention, and talent metrics.

Top Performers are organizations that:

- Achieved revenue growth over the past year
- Meet or exceed the majority of their performance goals
- Maintained or expanded their total customer base over the past year
- Highly successful in acquiring new customers
- Retain most customers year-over-year
- Maintained or increased their number of employees over the past year
- Consistently attract high-performing professionals
- Hold a strong reputation as an employer of choice for top talent



Organizations that did not meet these thresholds form the Comparator group, providing a basis for analyzing differences in incentive and reward strategies.

Program Design

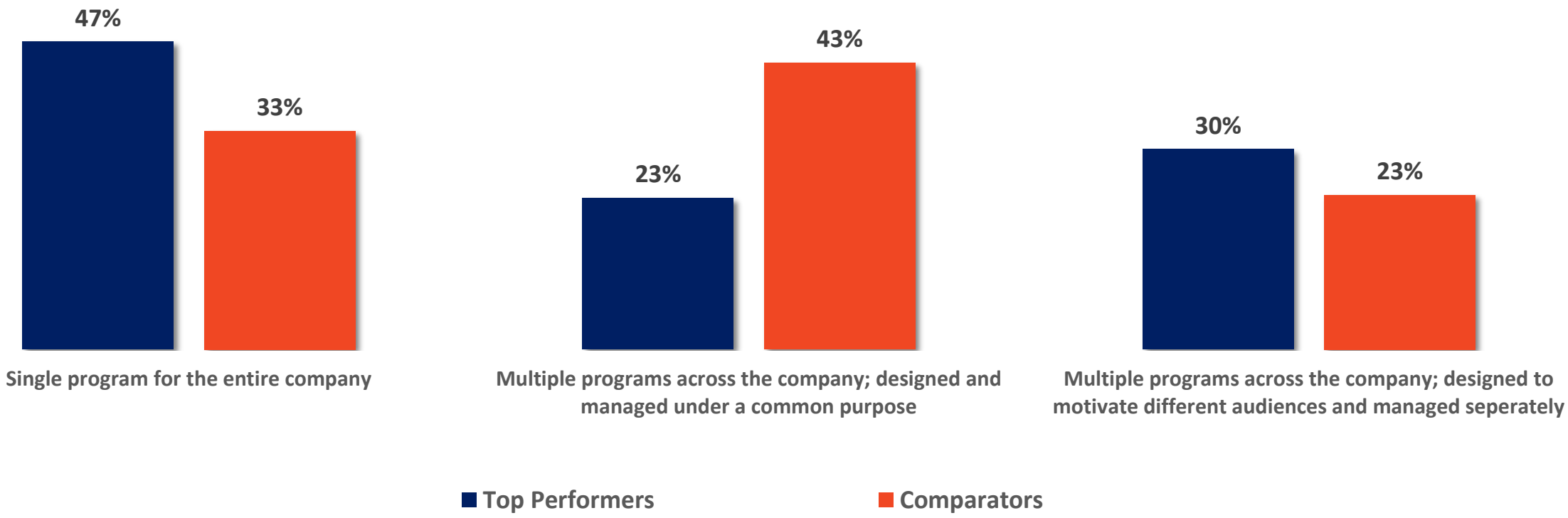
Program Design: Key Findings

- Having a defined strategy for reward and recognition programs is essential to Top Performers.
- Program budgets receive stronger support among Top Performers, with higher satisfaction and funding levels.
- Top Performers emphasize alignment to corporate goals when designing reward and recognition efforts.
- Broader internal support, including cross-functional involvement and executive champions, are more commonly found in Top Performers programs than Comparators.

Program Connectivity

Top Performers more commonly use a single, cohesive program structure.

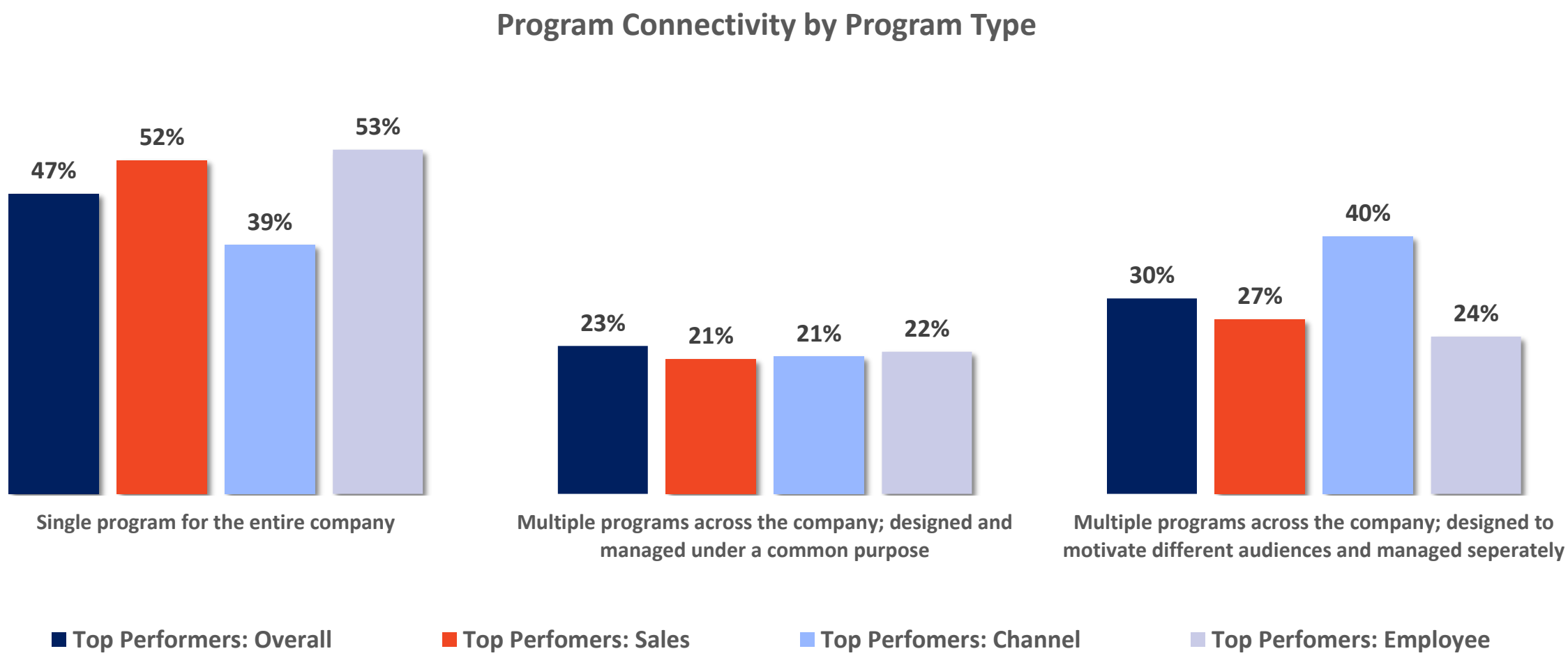
Program Connectivity by Performance Segmentation



Q22: Which of the descriptions below best describes your reward & recognition program(s)?

Program Connectivity

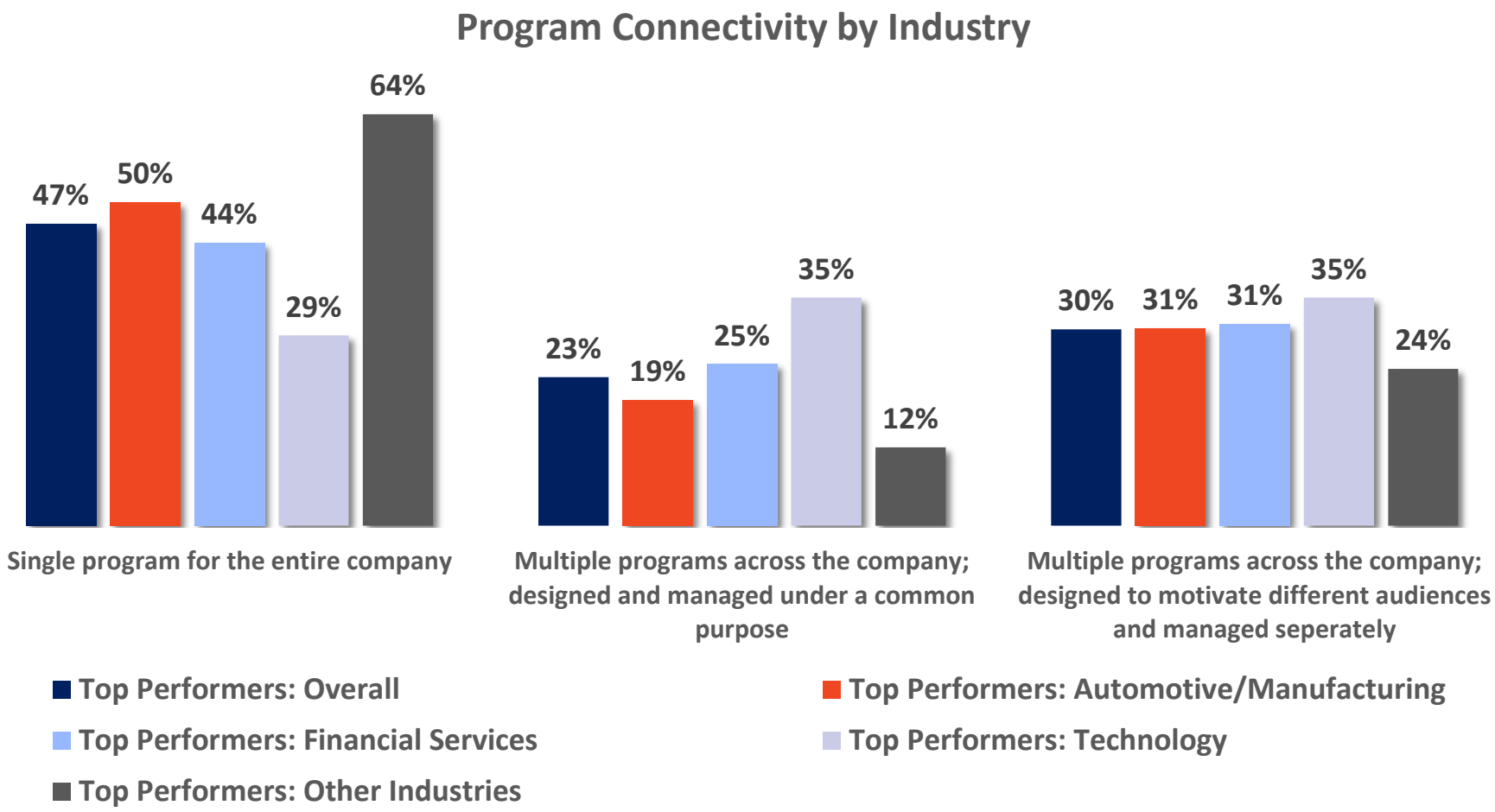
Top performing Channel programs are less likely to follow a unified company-wide structure.



Q22: Which of the descriptions below best describes your reward & recognition program(s)?

Program Connectivity

Top performing Technology companies are less likely to unify recognition programs.



Unified company-wide programs are most common in Other Industries and Automotive/Manufacturing.

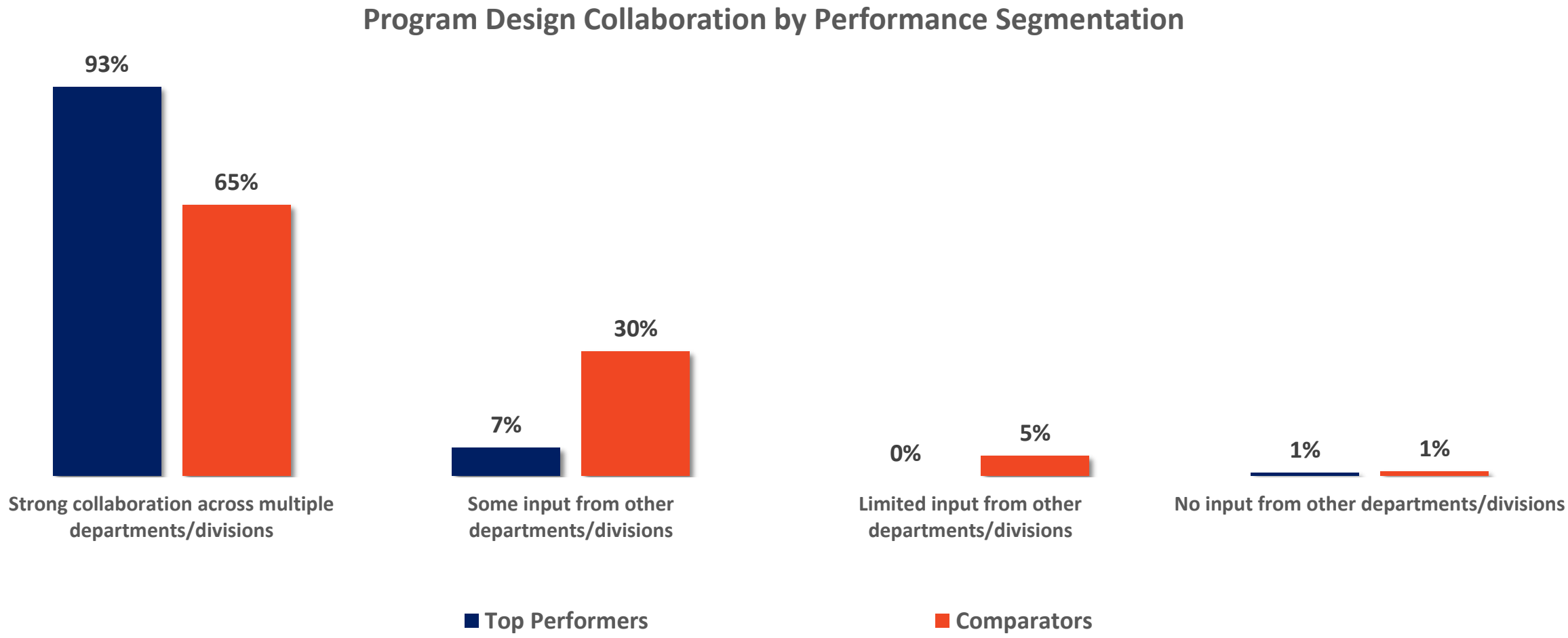
Technology and Financial Services firms more often manage multiple recognition programs, either aligned under a common purpose or segmented entirely.

Technology firms have the lowest adoption of a single, unified program among Top Performers.

Q22: Which of the descriptions below best describes your reward & recognition program(s)?

Program Design Collaboration

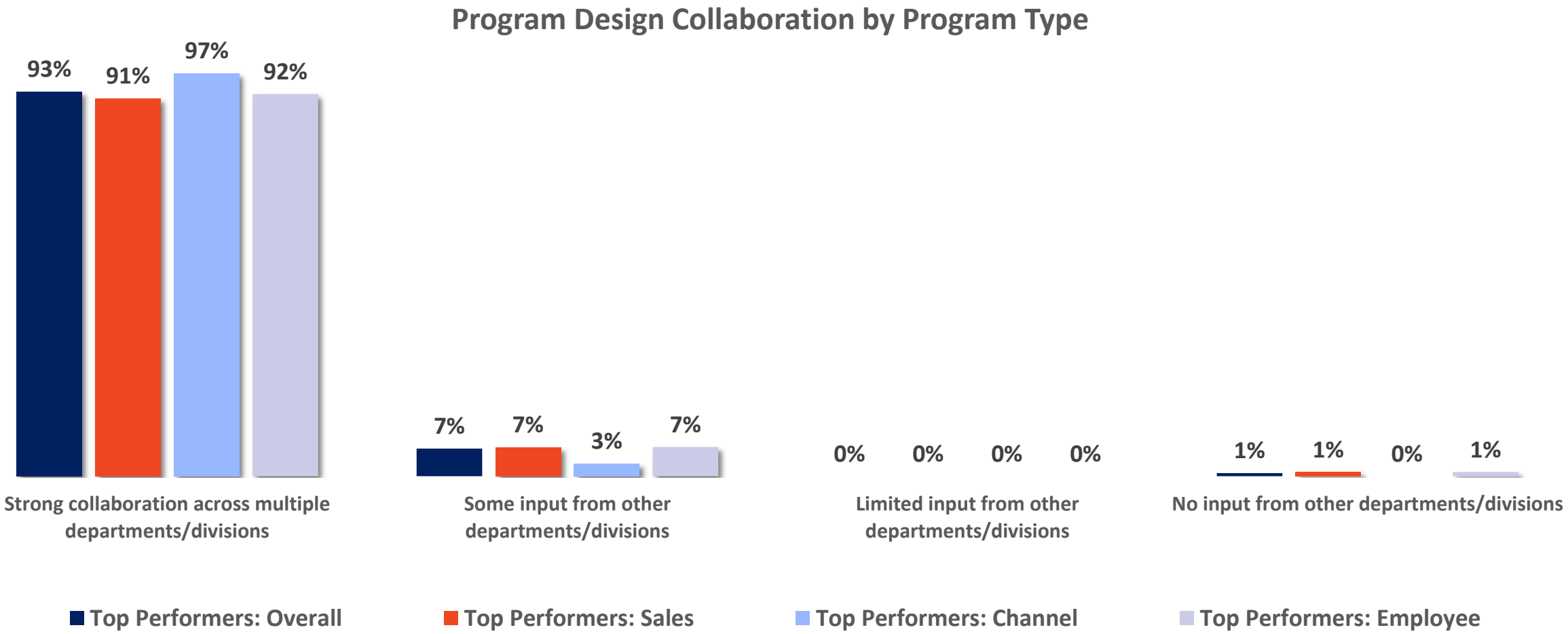
Top performers design reward and recognition programs through strong cross-department collaboration.



Q24: Which of the following best describes your company's collaboration in designing reward and recognition programs?

Program Design Collaboration

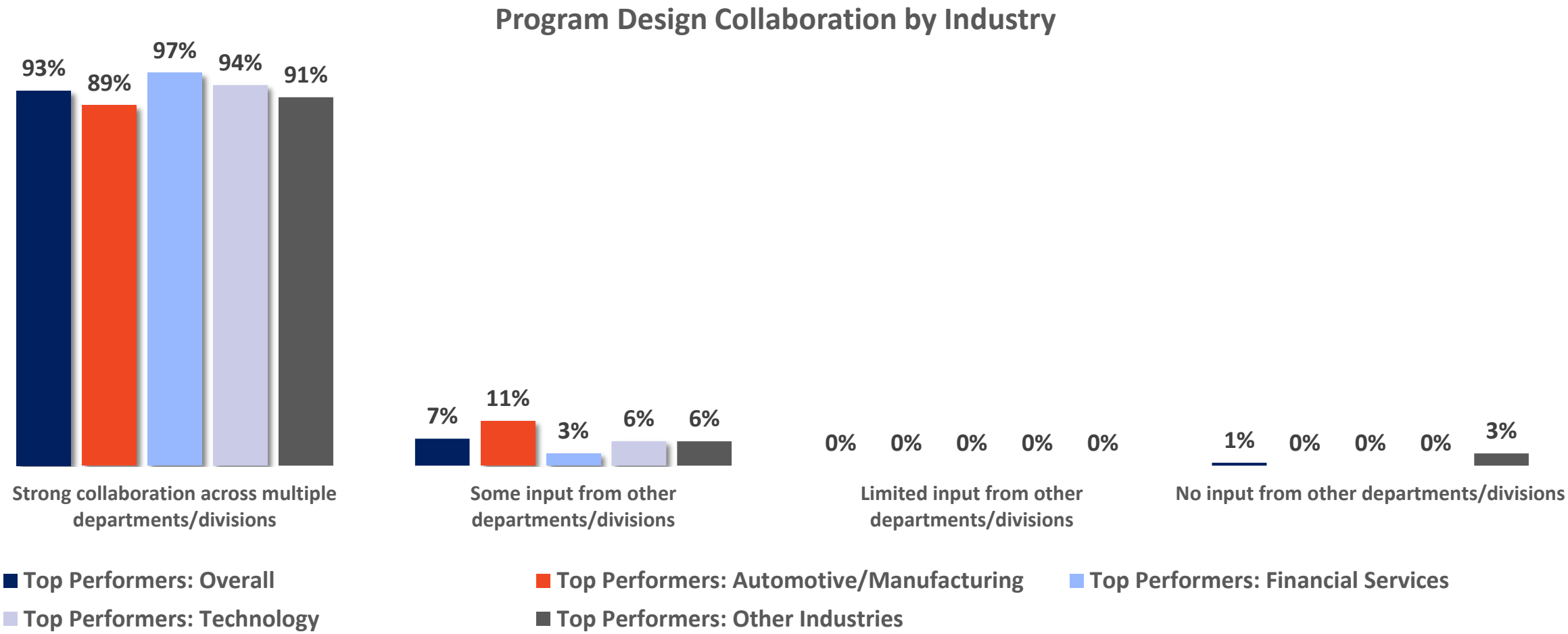
For all program types, strong collaboration is paramount in program design.



Q24: Which of the following best describes your company's collaboration in designing reward and recognition programs?

Program Design Collaboration

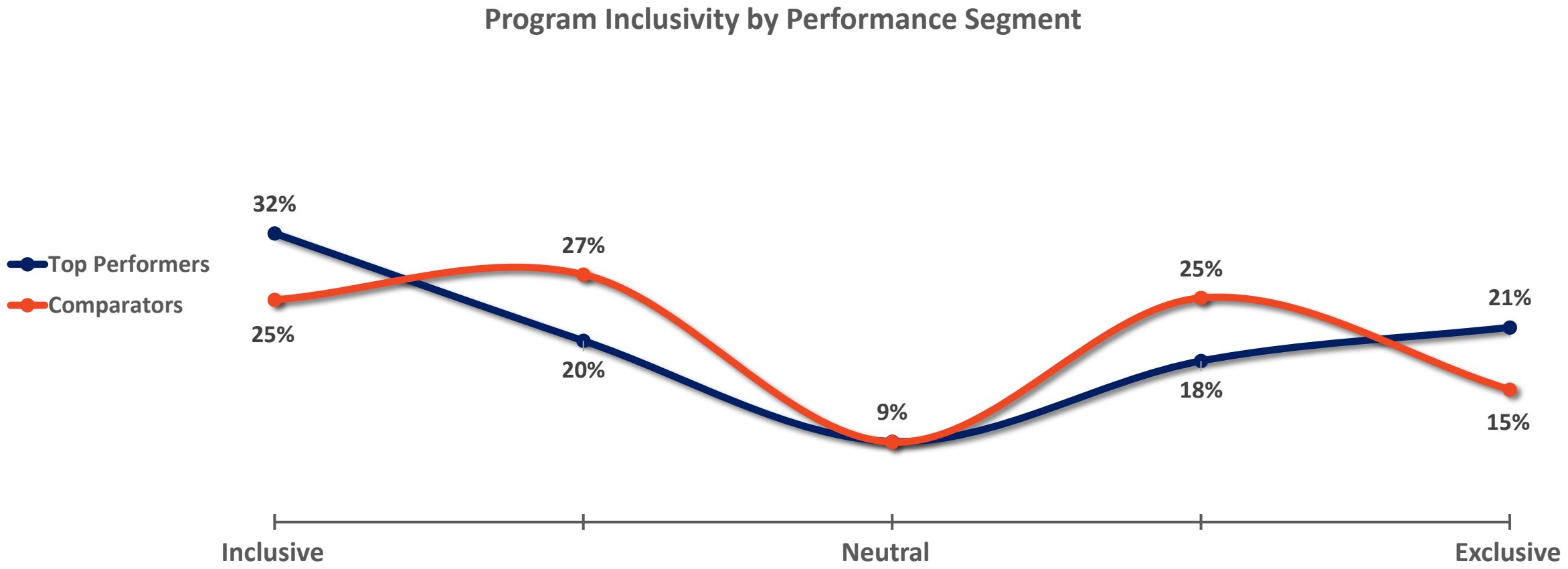
Strong cross-department collaboration is a consistent standard across all industries.



Q24: Which of the following best describes your company's collaboration in designing reward and recognition programs?

Program Inclusivity

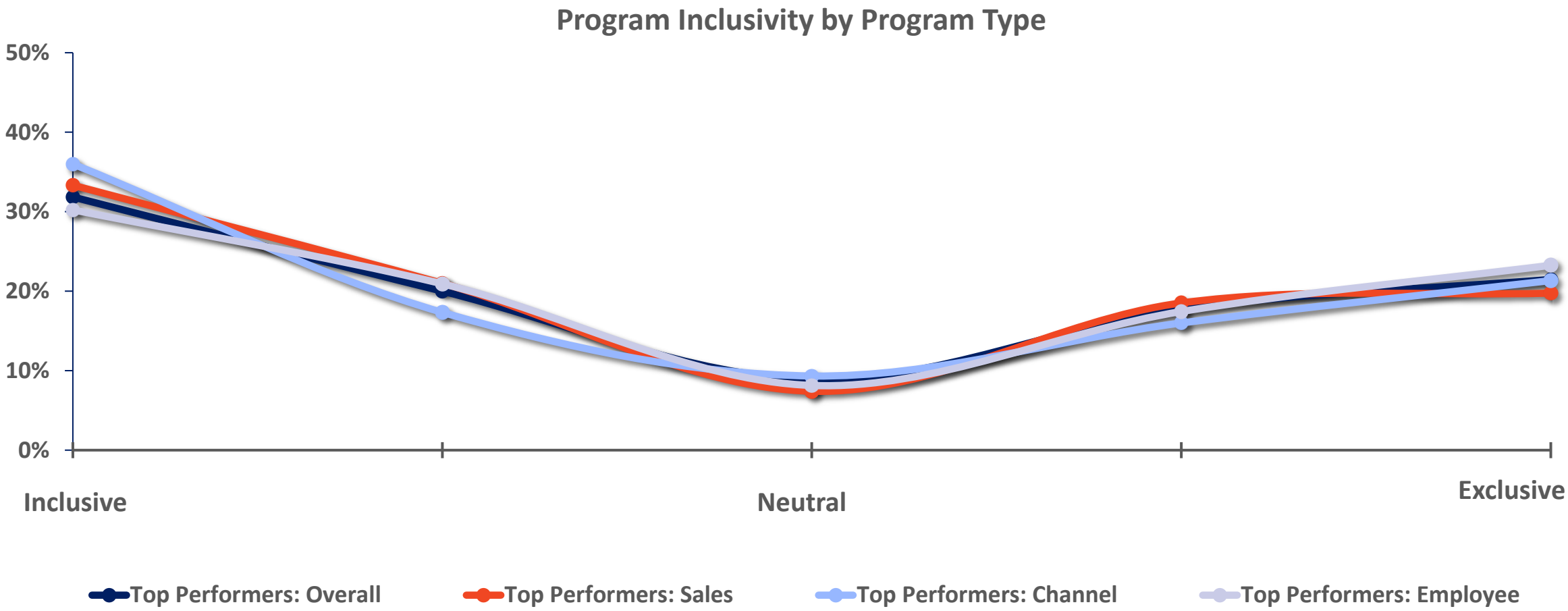
Top Performers are slightly more likely to take a highly inclusive approach to reward design, though both inclusive and exclusive strategies are shown to be effective



Q25: How would you describe your company's approach to designing the rules for reward and recognition programs?

Program Inclusivity

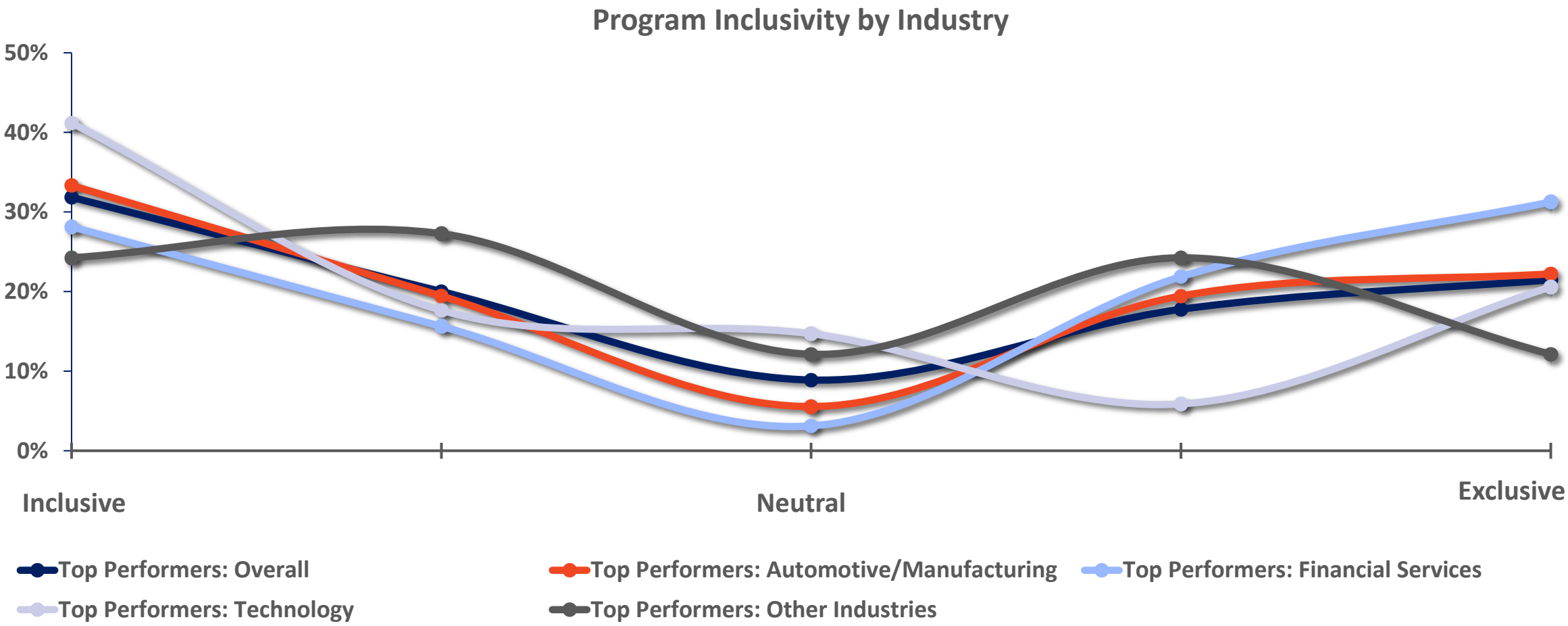
Top Performers take a similar approach to program inclusivity across all program types.



Q25: How would you describe your company's approach to designing the rules for reward and recognition programs?

Program Inclusivity

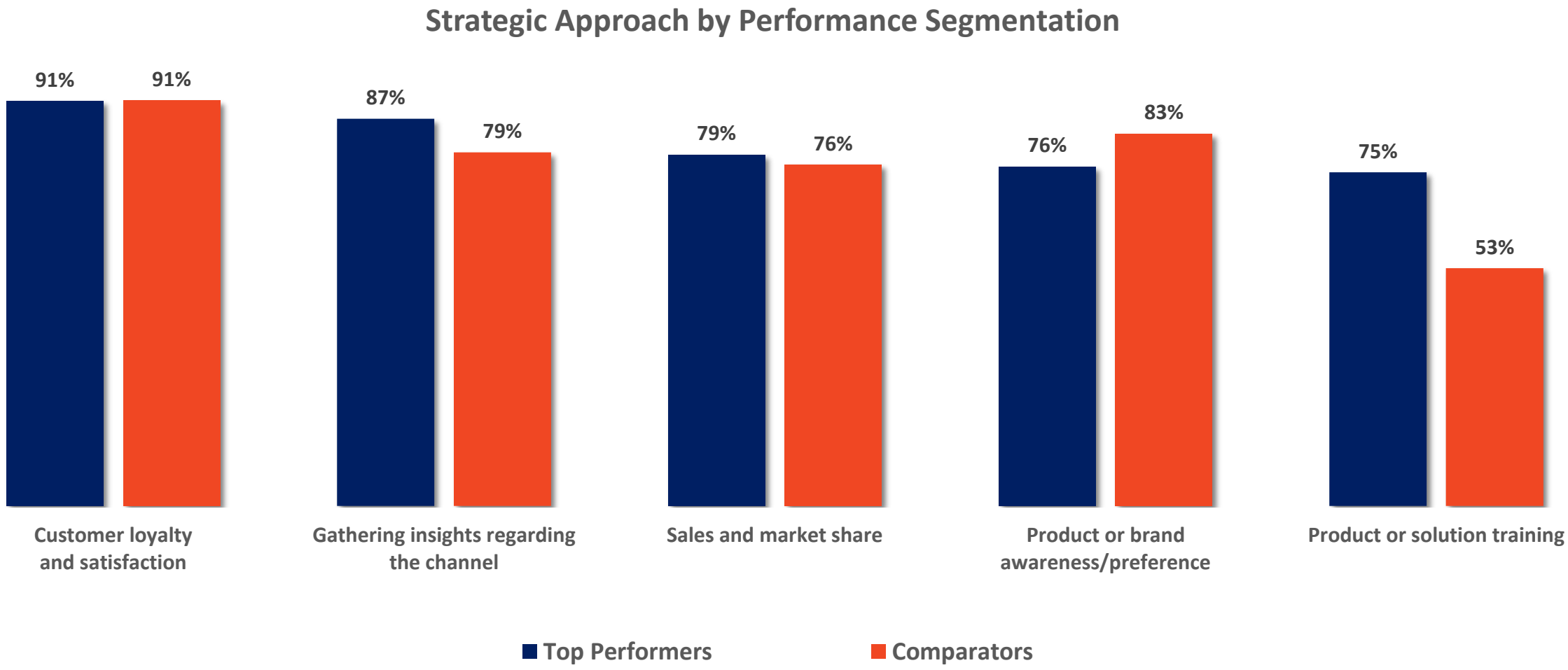
Top Performers in Technology favor inclusive program design, while Financial Services lean more exclusive.



Q25: How would you describe your company's approach to designing the rules for reward and recognition programs?

Channel Program's Strategic Approach

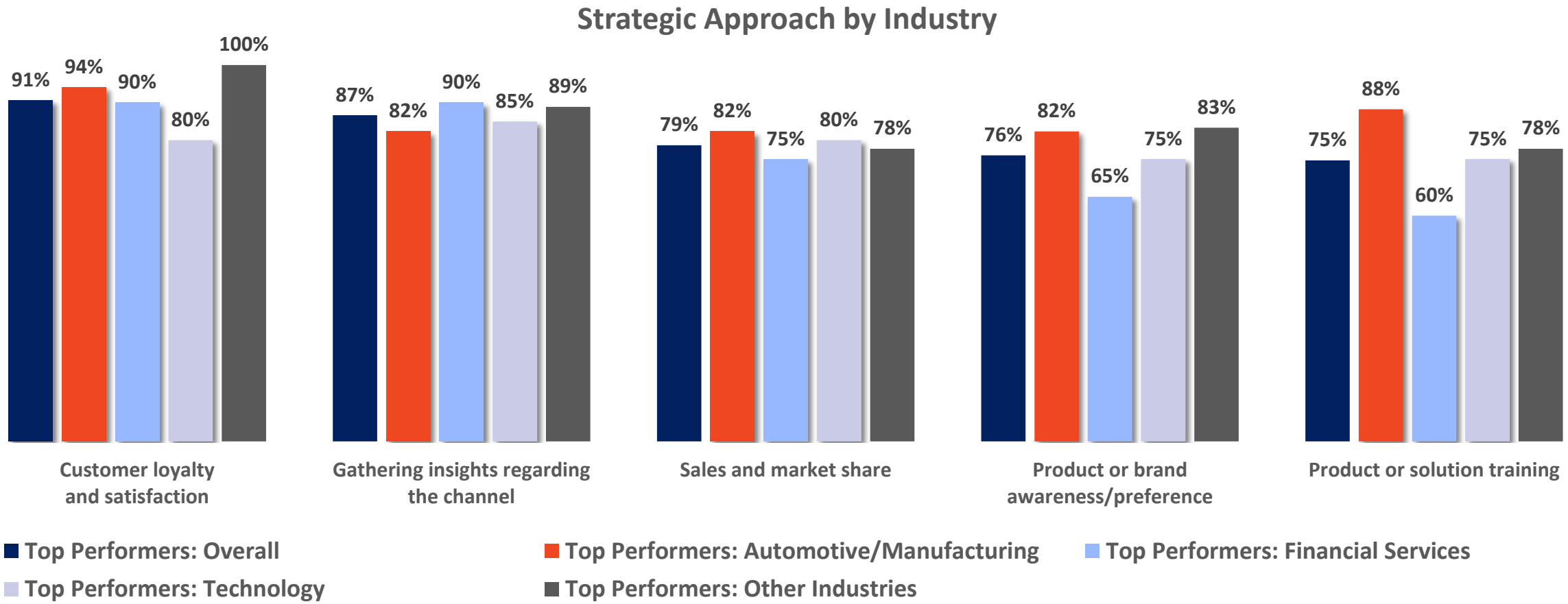
Top Performers place a greater emphasis on product or solution training and gathering insights



Q22_1: [Channel programs only] Which of the following business issues do your company's dealer/partner reward and recognition strategies address?

Channel Program's Strategic Approach

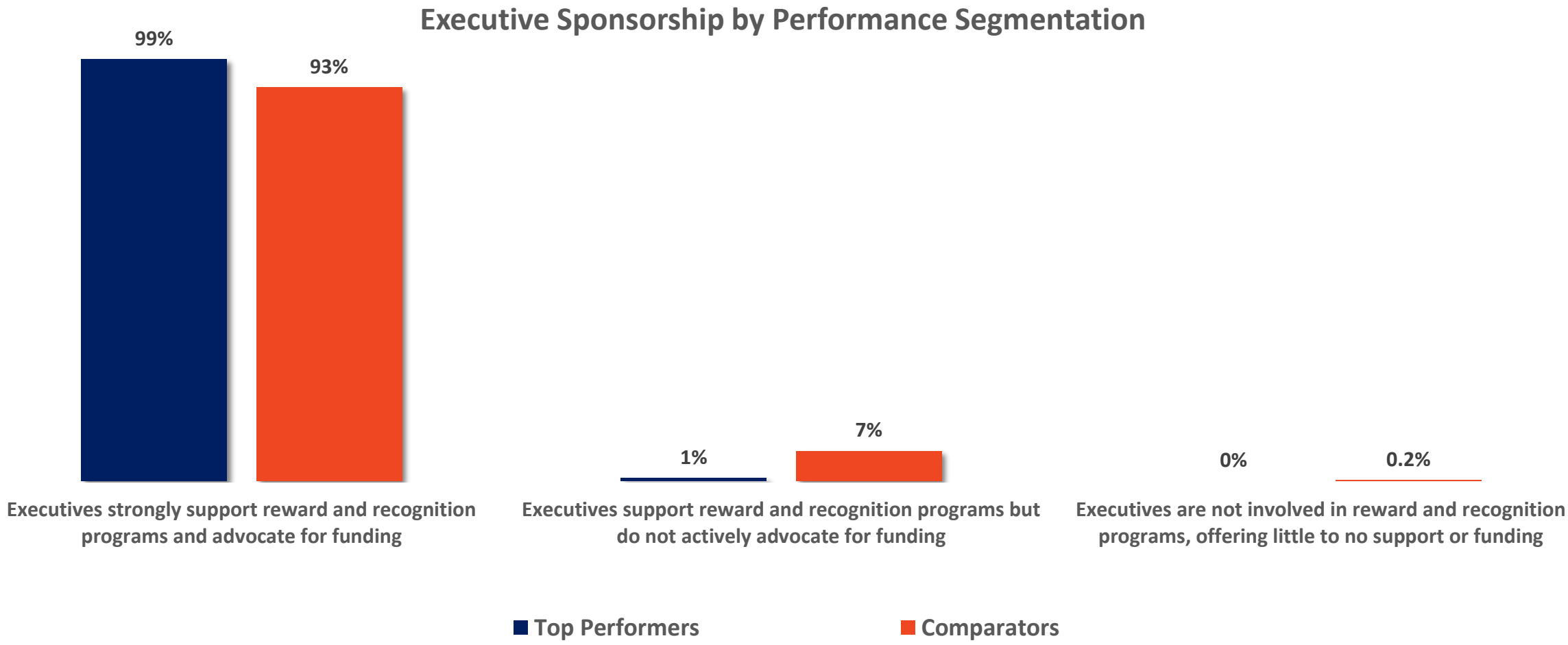
Top performing Automotive/Manufacturing companies emphasize product or solution training, while Financial Services place less focus on training and brand awareness.



Q22_1: [Channel programs only] Which of the following business issues do your company's dealer/partner reward and recognition strategies address?

Executive Sponsorship

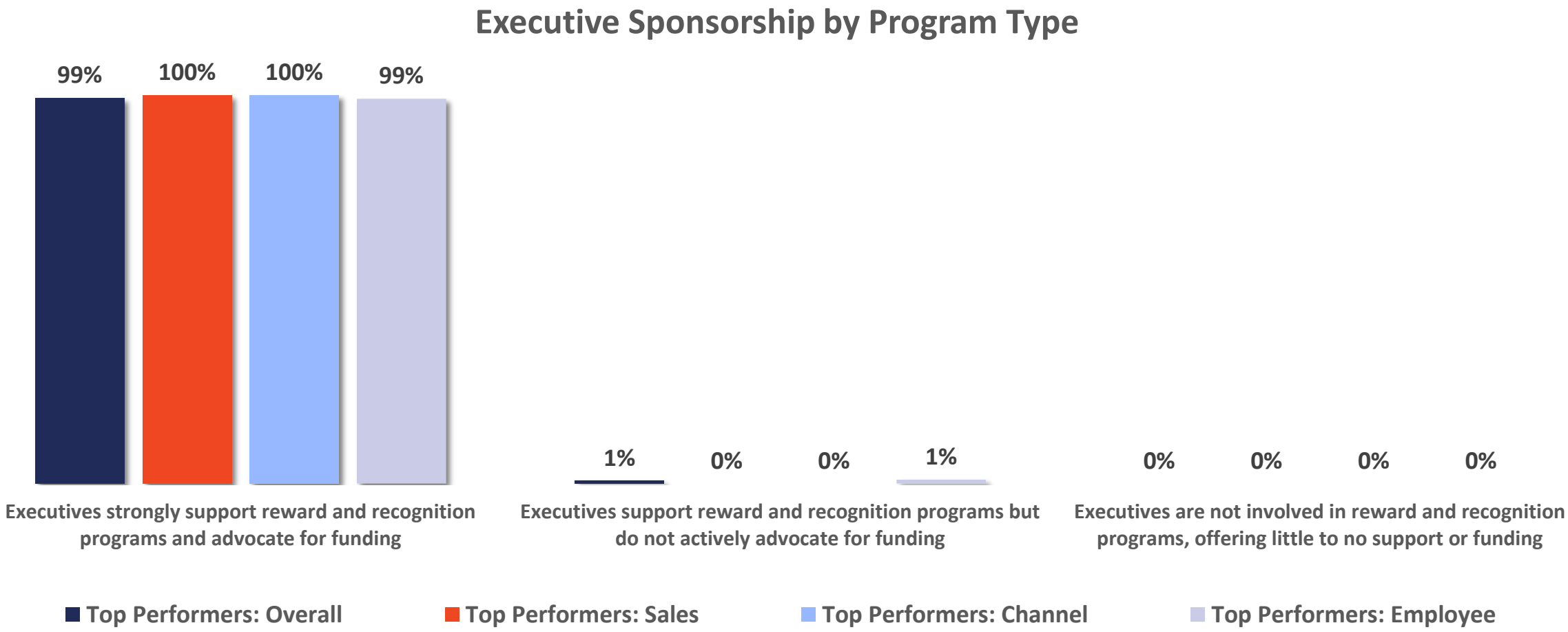
Top Performers benefit from strong executive sponsorship and advocacy for funding



Q23: Which of the following best describes executive sponsorship of reward and recognition programs at your company?

Executive Sponsorship

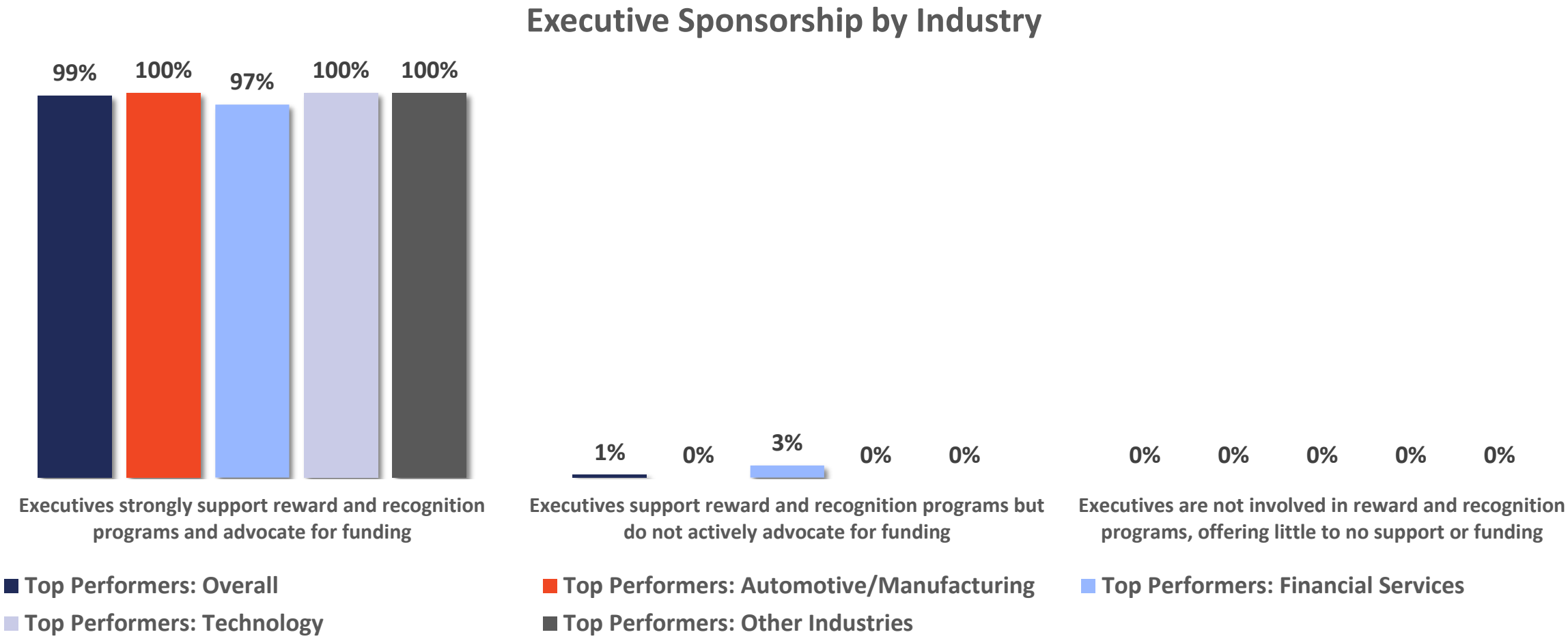
Executive support is very strong for top-performing companies across all program types.



Q23: Which of the following best describes executive sponsorship of reward and recognition programs at your company?

Executive Sponsorship

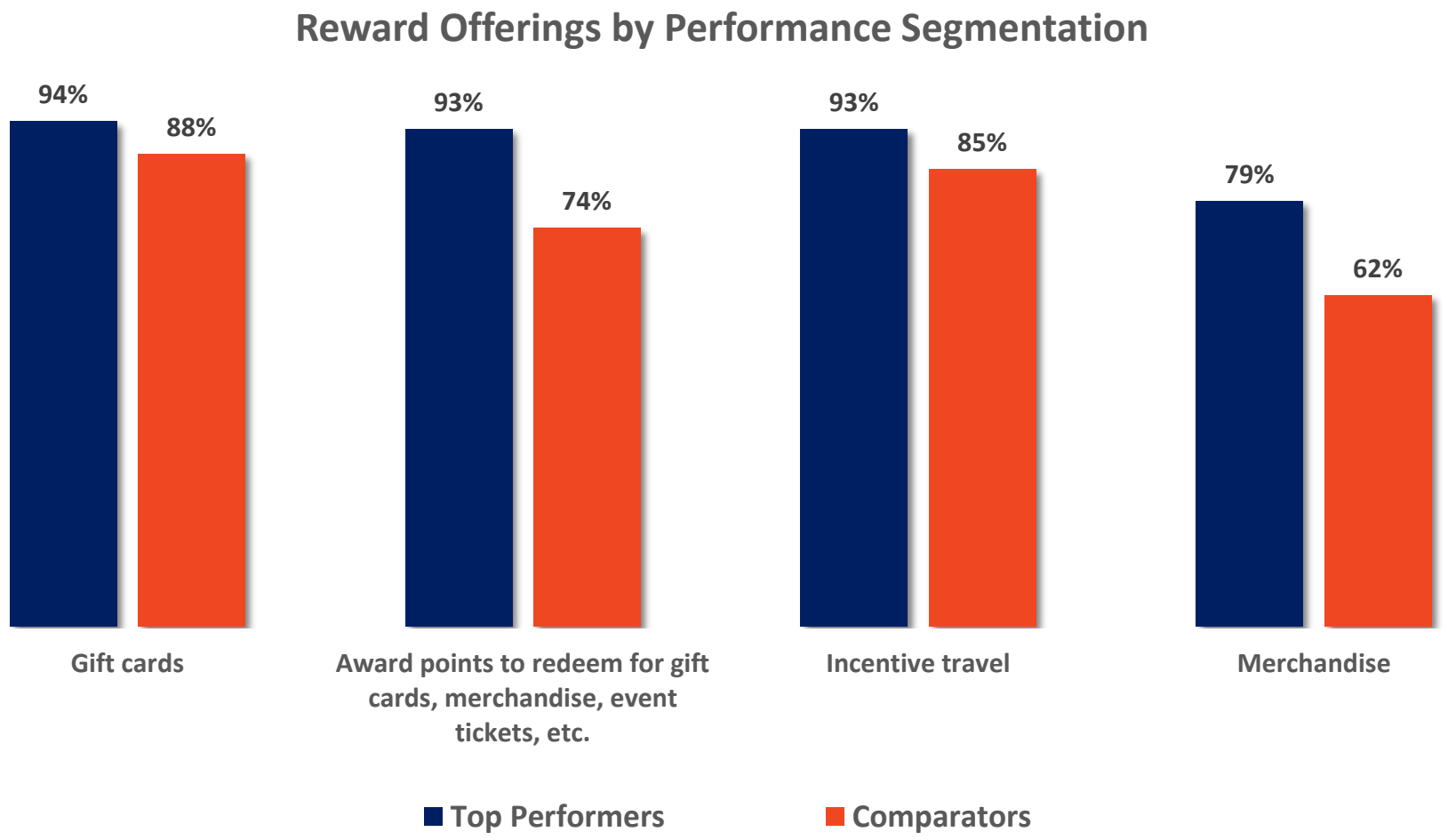
Executive support is very strong for top-performing companies across all industries.



Q23: Which of the following best describes executive sponsorship of reward and recognition programs at your company?

Reward Offerings

Top Performers are more likely to offer diverse and flexible reward options



Gift cards and incentive travel are common reward offerings across all programs, but slightly more frequent among Top Performers.

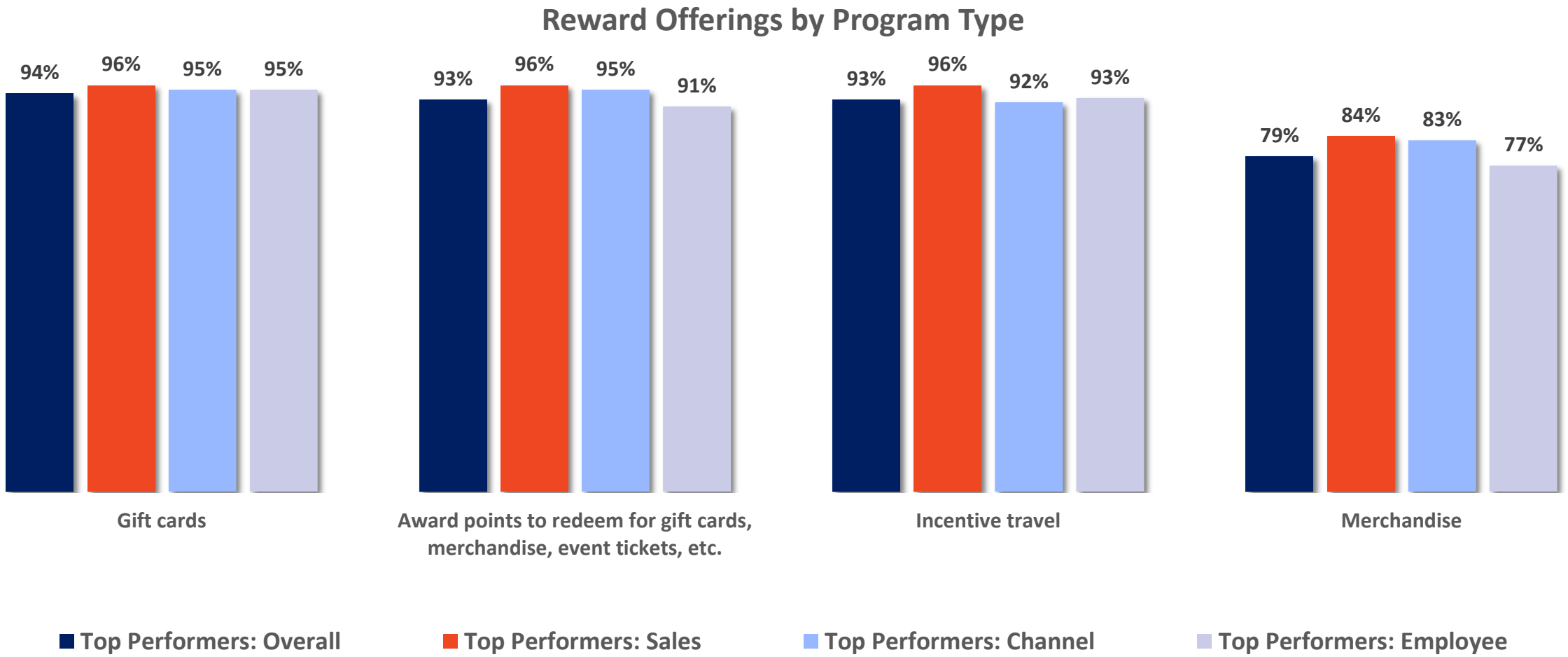
Points-based rewards are significantly more common among Top Performers.

While merchandise offerings are less frequent in Top Performing programs, they still appear more often than in Comparators.

Q26: Which of the following rewards can participants earn in your programs?

Reward Offerings

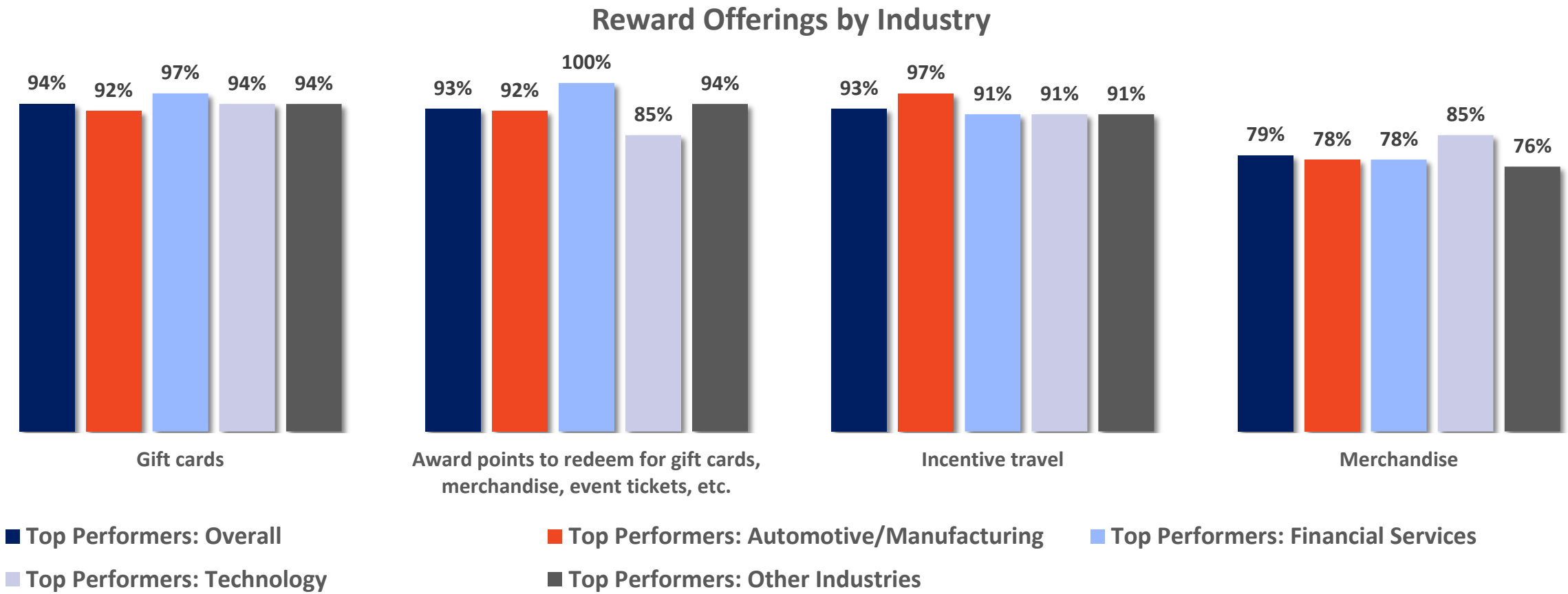
Top-performing companies provide similar rewards across all program types.



Q26: Which of the following rewards can participants earn in your programs?

Reward Offerings

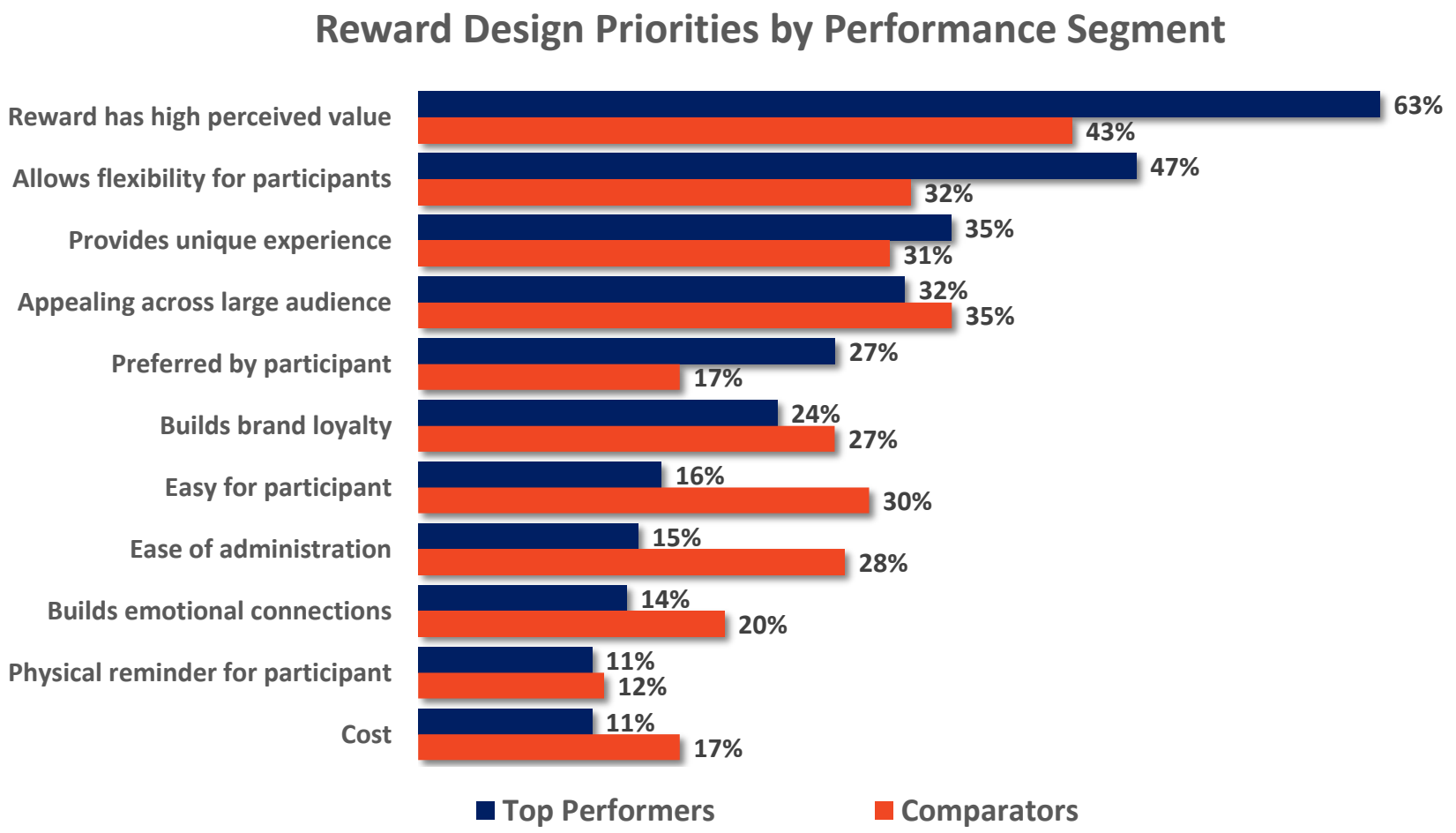
Top performing Financial Services firms always offer award points, while Technology firms include merchandise rewards more frequently than others.



Q26: Which of the following rewards can participants earn in your programs?

Reward Design Priorities: Merchandise or Gift Card Rewards

Top Performers prioritize high perceived value and flexibility when designing merchandise or gift rewards



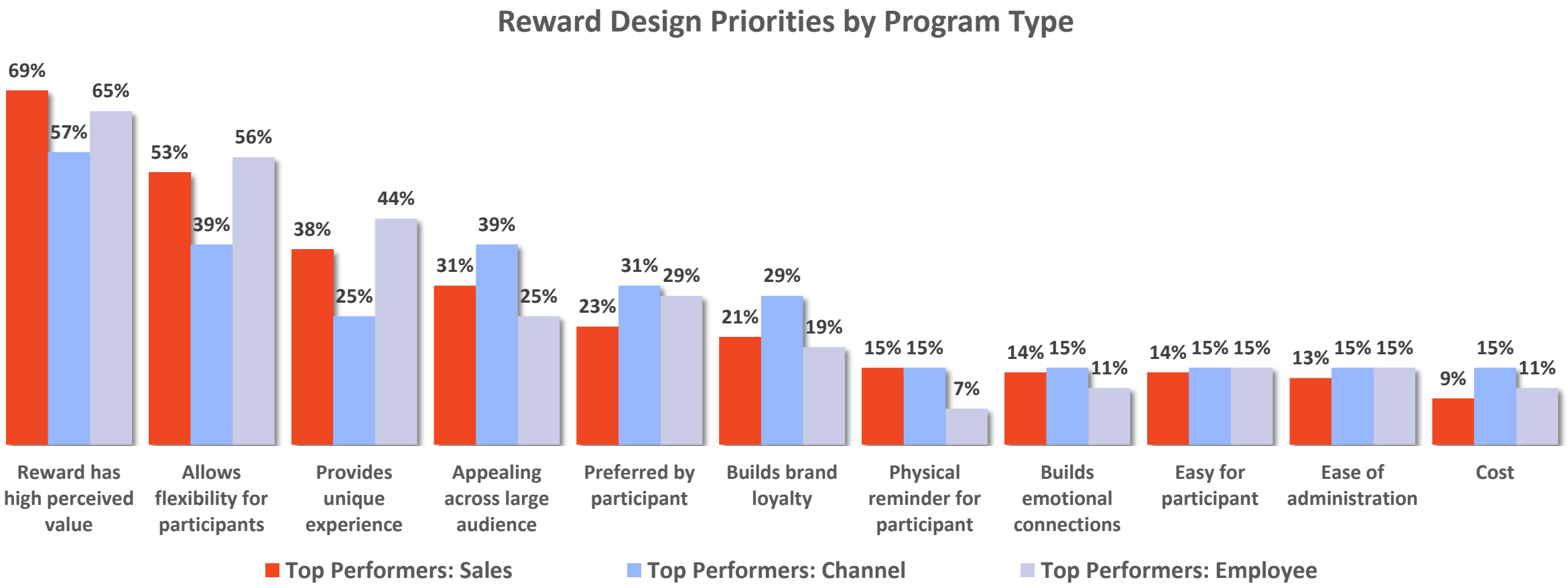
Top Performers place a much higher emphasis on reward value and flexibility compared to Comparators.

Ease for the participant, ease for administration, building emotional connections, and cost are notably less important to Top Performers than to Comparators.

Q27: When selecting merchandise or gift card rewards for your programs, which of the following are most important?

Reward Design Priorities: Merchandise or Gift Card Rewards

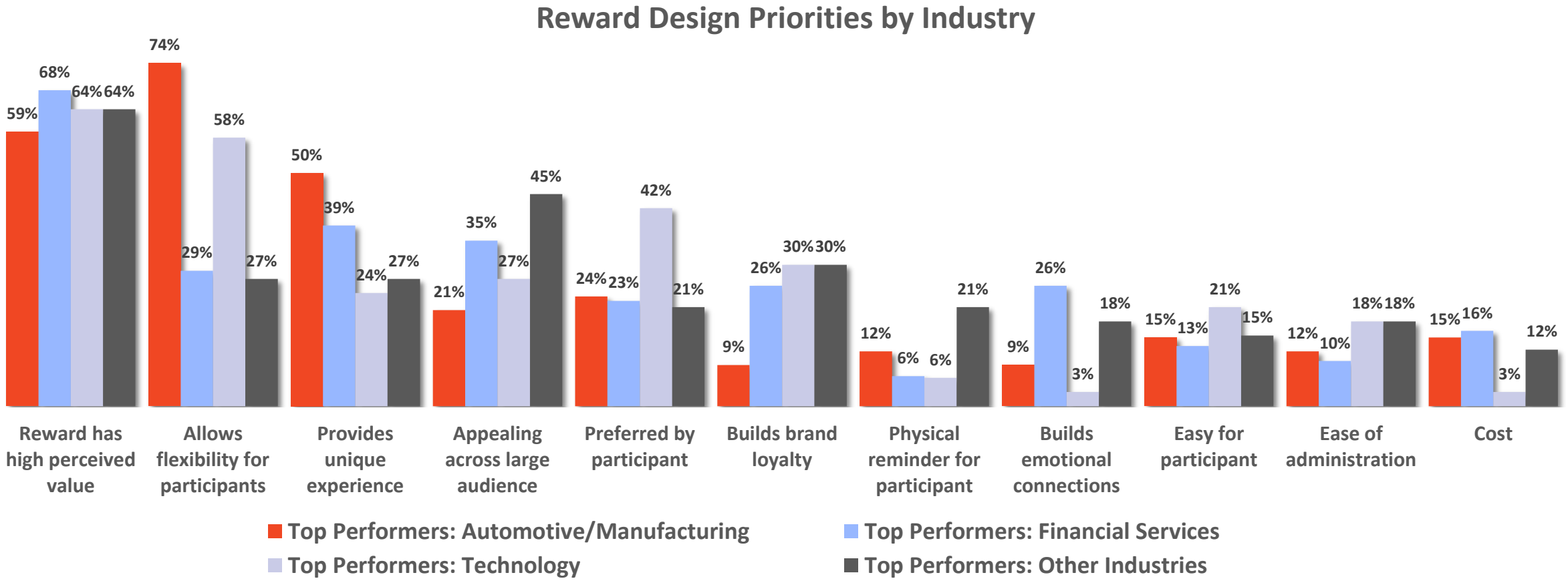
Top performing Sales and Employee programs prioritize perceived value and flexibility in reward selection, while Channel programs also consider appeal to a broad audience and brand loyalty.



Q27: When selecting merchandise or gift card rewards for your programs, which of the following are most important?

Reward Design Priorities: Merchandise or Gift Card Rewards

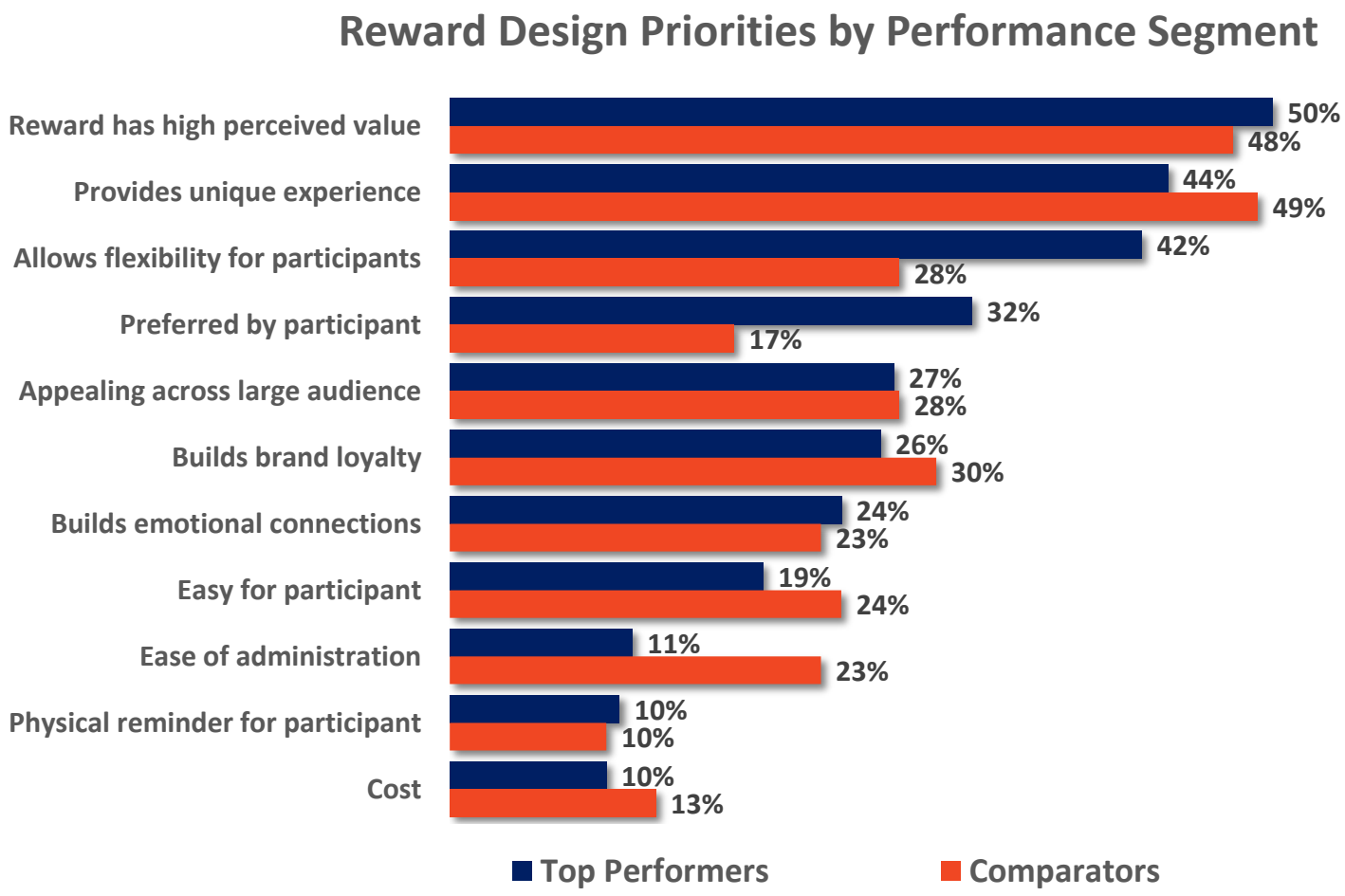
Top performing Automotive/Manufacturing and Technology companies place greater emphasis on flexibility, while Financial Services and Other Industries more often consider broad audience appeal.



Q27: When selecting merchandise or gift card rewards for your programs, which of the following are most important?

Reward Design Priorities: Incentive Travel

Top Performers place more priority on flexibility and participant preferences for incentive travel than Comparators



Both Top Performers and Comparators prioritize reward value and unique experiences, though unique experiences are slightly less important to Top Performers.

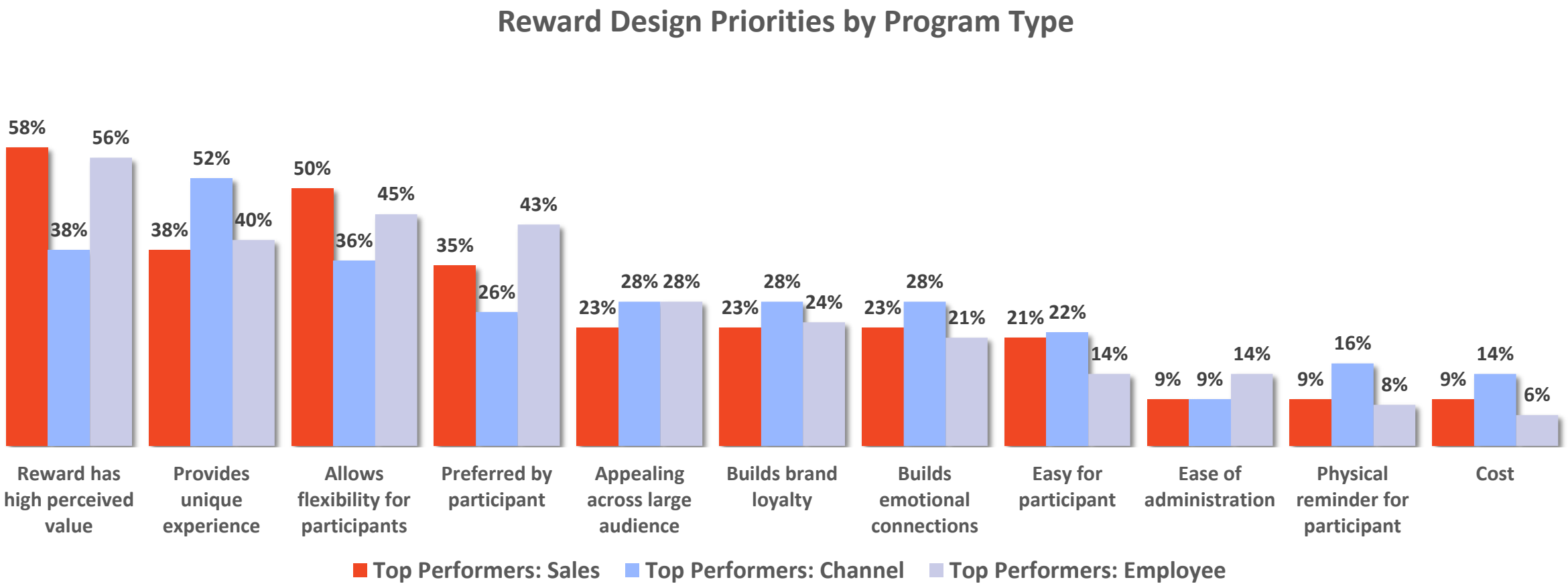
Top Performers place significantly more emphasis on participant preferences and flexibility.

Top Performers place less value on factors such as ease of administration, physical reminders, and cost compared to Comparators.

Q28: When designing incentive travel rewards for your programs, which of the following are the most important

Reward Design Priorities: Incentive Travel

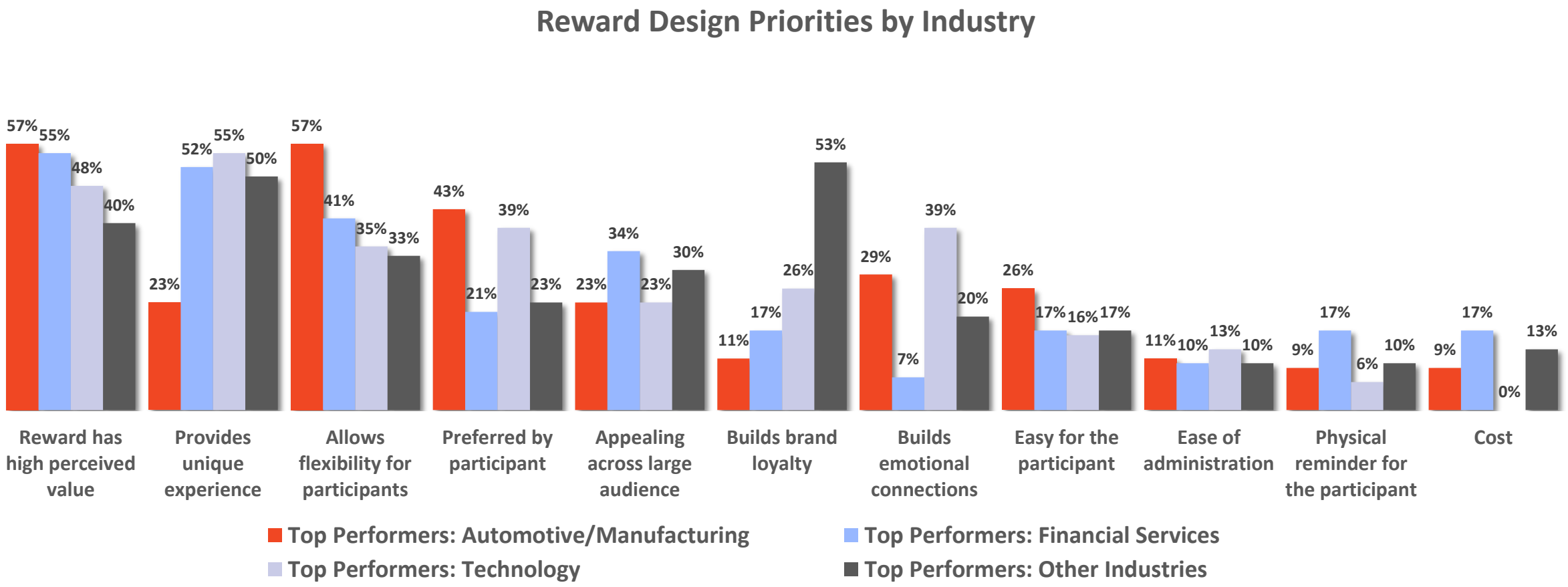
Top performing Sales and Employee programs prioritize value and flexibility, while Channel programs emphasize unique experiences. Employee programs also place greater weight on participant preferences.



Q28: When designing incentive travel rewards for your programs, which of the following are the most important

Reward Design Priorities: Incentive Travel

Top performing Automotive/Manufacturing companies prioritize flexibility and participant preferences over unique experiences, while Technology firms are more likely to consider emotional connections and participant preferences.



Q28: When designing incentive travel rewards for your programs, which of the following are the most important

Program Assessment

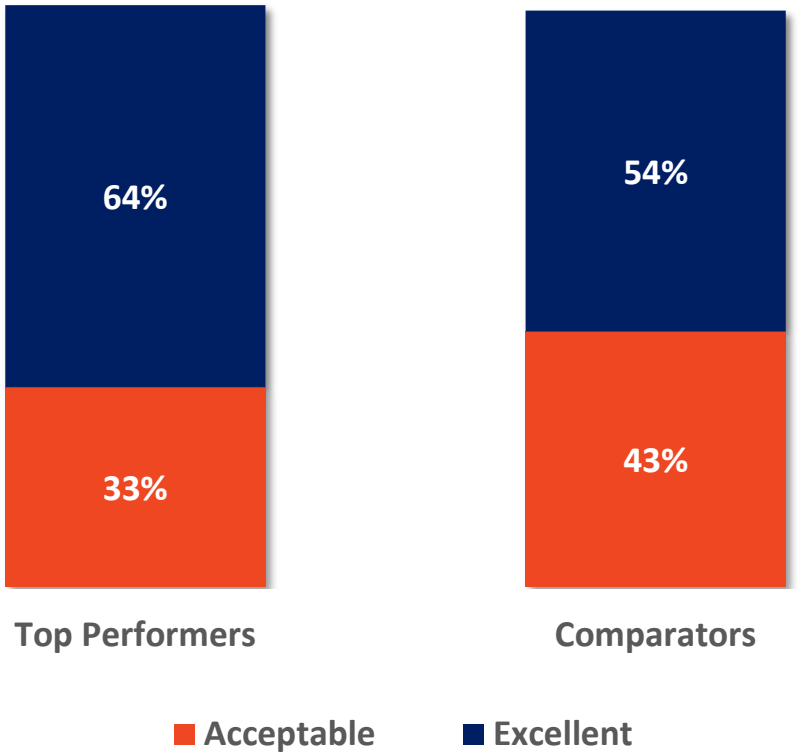
Program Assessment: Key Findings

- Stronger funding, more robust staffing, and exceptional executive support are cornerstones of Top Performer reward and recognition programs.
- Top Performers align programs with company goals and identity, enhancing their ability to influence behavior.
- Impact goes beyond engagement, as Top Performers leverage rewards to drive retention, recruitment, and performance.
- Technology and external expertise are treated as strategic assets, not afterthoughts, in Top Performer programs.

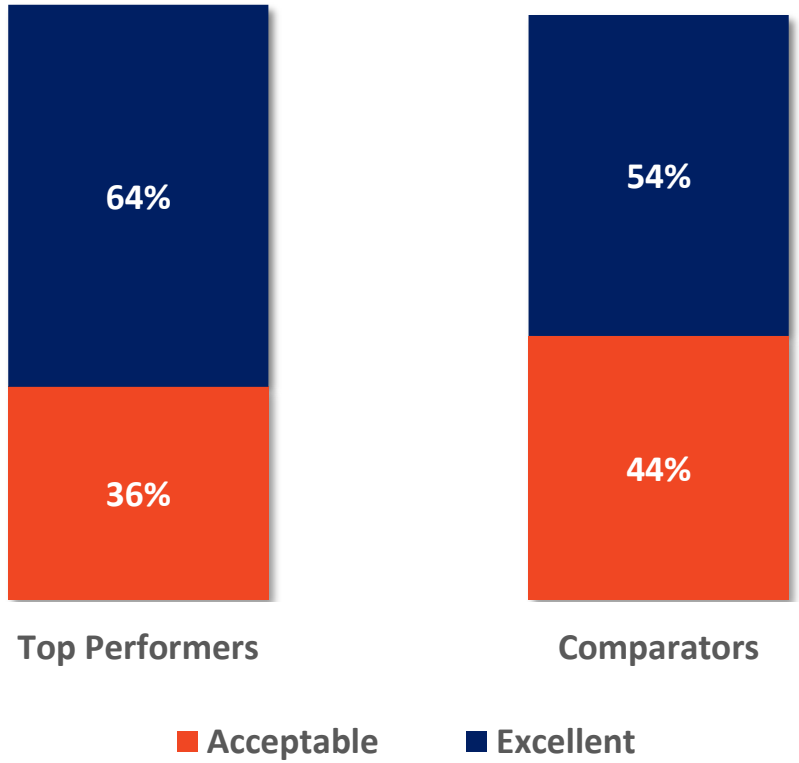
Program Effectiveness

Top Performers have stronger staffing and executive support for reward programs.

Program Effectiveness: Staffing to Support the Reward Program



Program Effectiveness: Executive Support of the Reward Programs



Q29: For each of the following, please rate the effectiveness of your program.

Program Effectiveness

Staffing to support reward programs is particularly strong in top performing Automotive/Manufacturing companies

Q29: For each of the following, please rate the effectiveness of your program.

Program Effectiveness

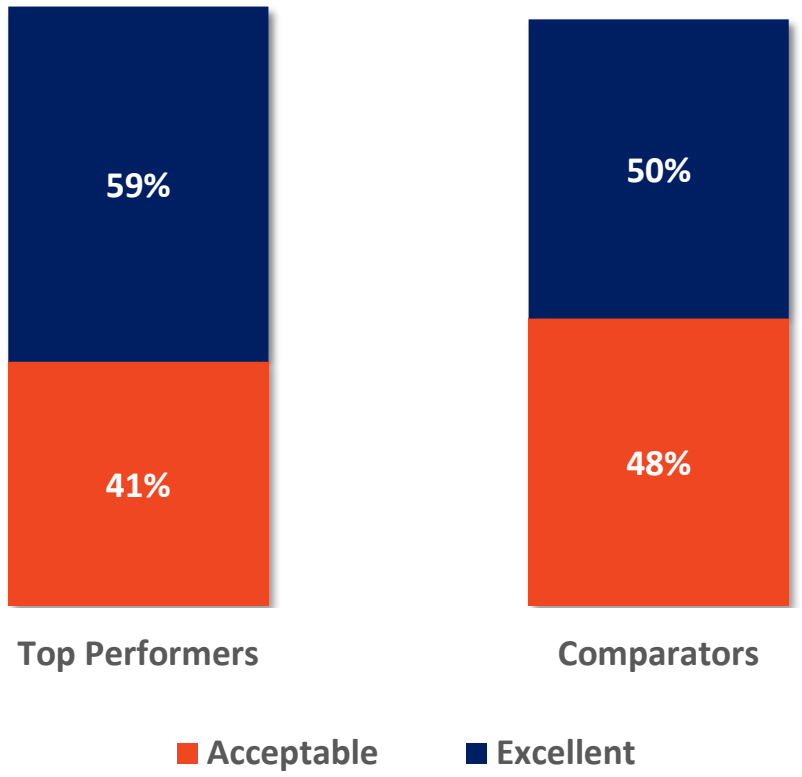
Executive support is strongest in top performing Automotive/Manufacturing and Technology companies.

Q29: For each of the following, please rate the effectiveness of your program.

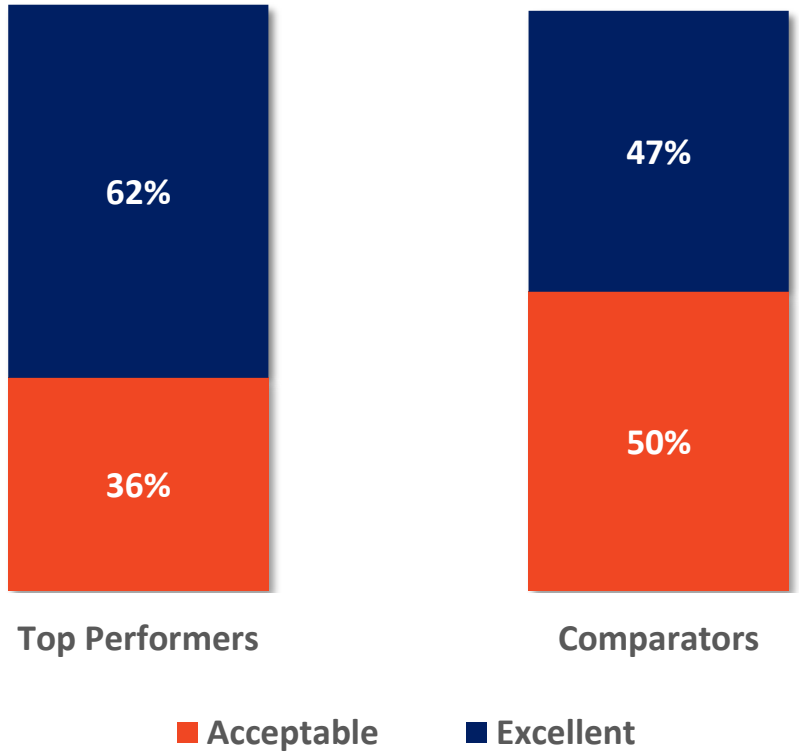
Program Effectiveness

Top Performers report greater satisfaction with both budget and alignment to corporate goals.

Program Effectiveness: Alignment to Corporate Goals



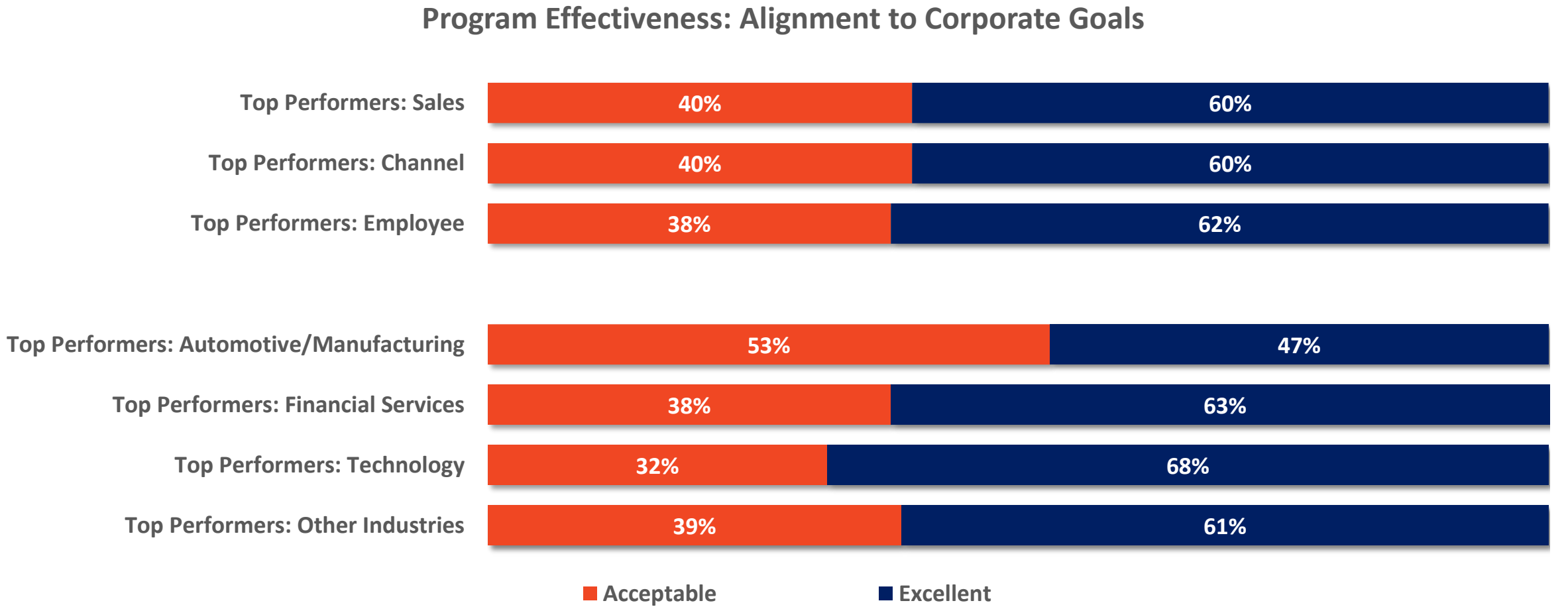
Program Effectiveness: Program Budget



Q29: For each of the following, please rate the effectiveness of your program.

Program Effectiveness

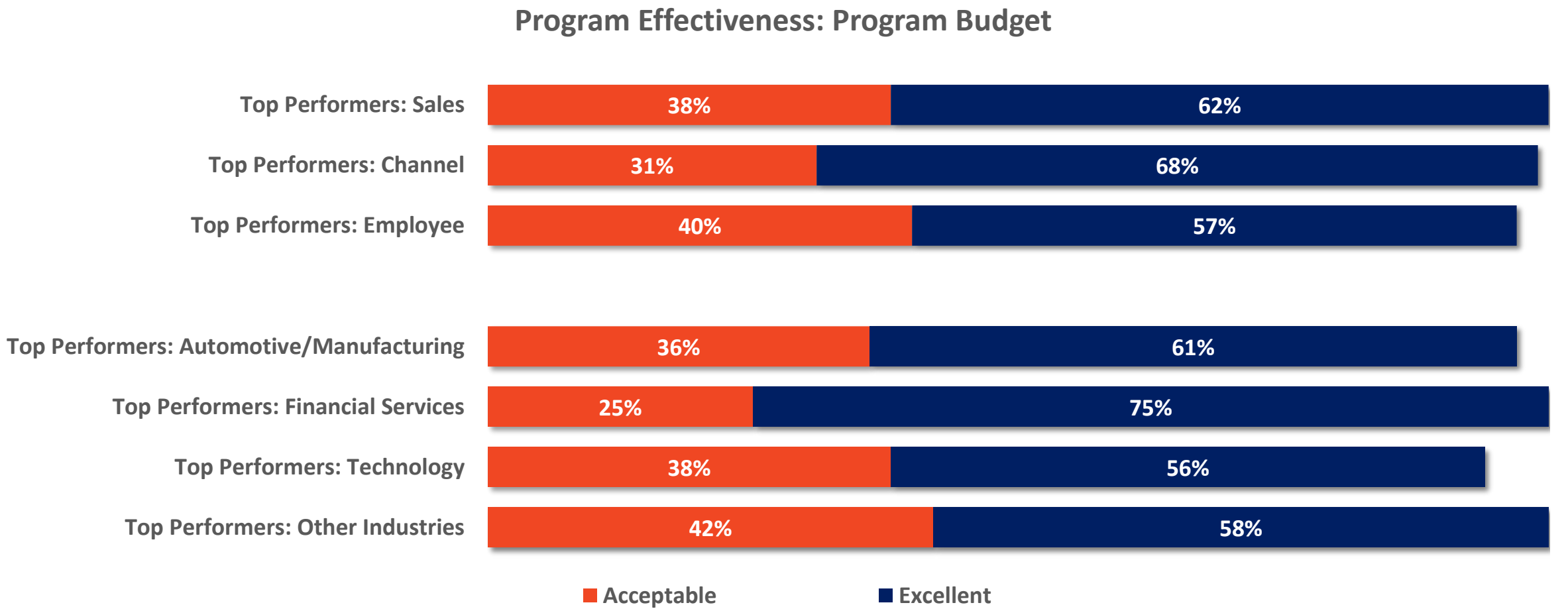
Top-performing companies in Automotive/Manufacturing are less reliant on alignment to strict corporate goals.



Q29: For each of the following, please rate the effectiveness of your program.

Program Effectiveness

Program budget satisfaction is highest among Financial Services Top Performers.

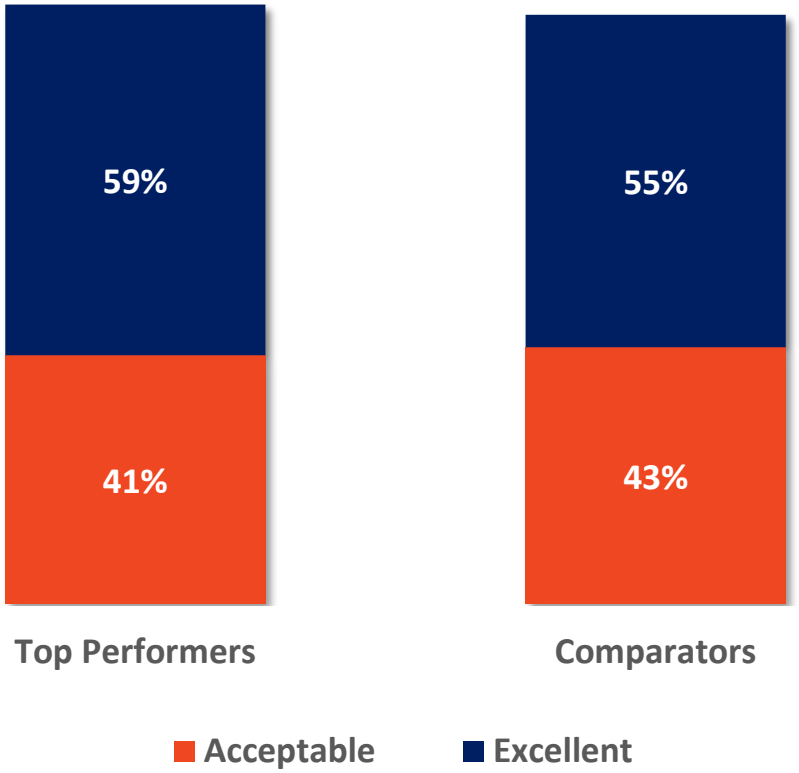


Q29: For each of the following, please rate the effectiveness of your program.

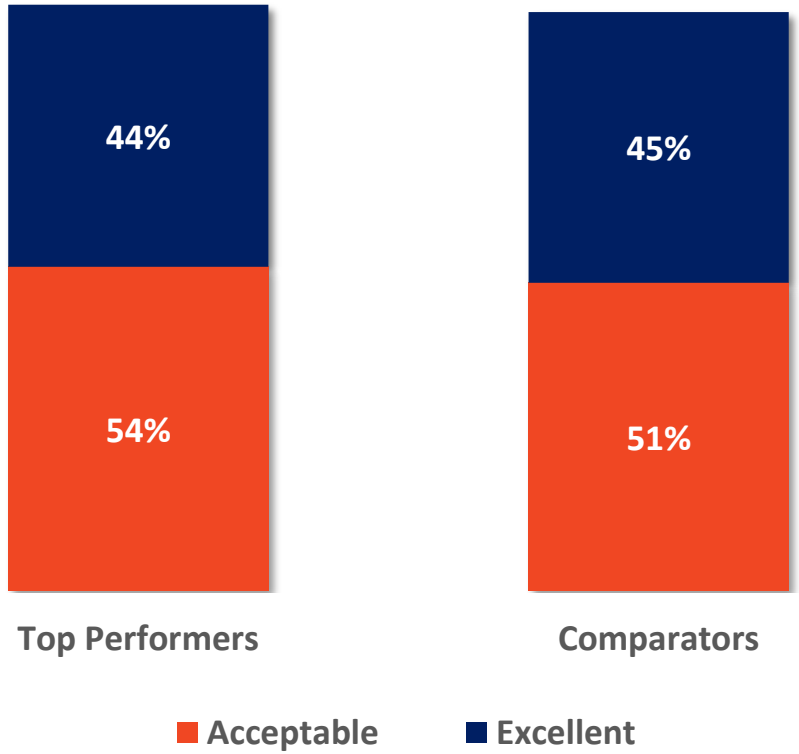
Program Effectiveness

Participation and manager buy-in levels are closely aligned between Top Performers and Comparators.

Program Effectiveness: Participation



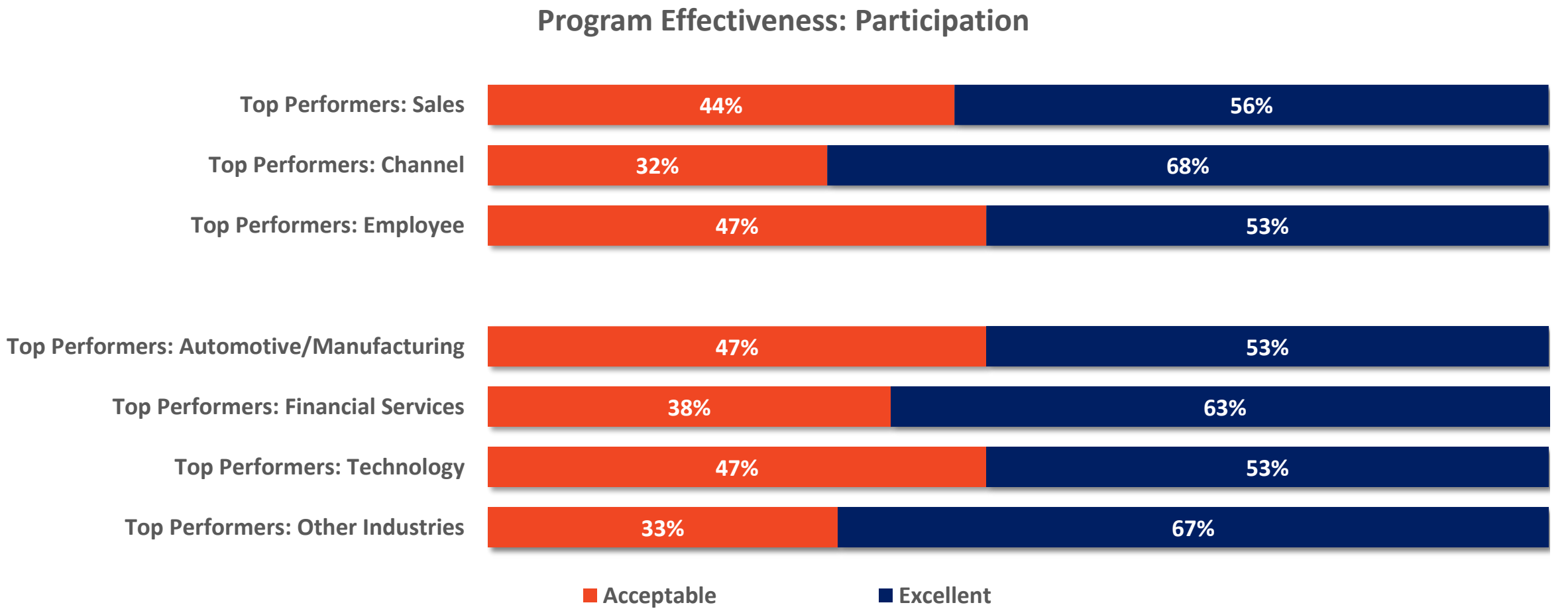
Program Effectiveness: Manager Buy-In



Q29: For each of the following, please rate the effectiveness of your program.

Program Effectiveness

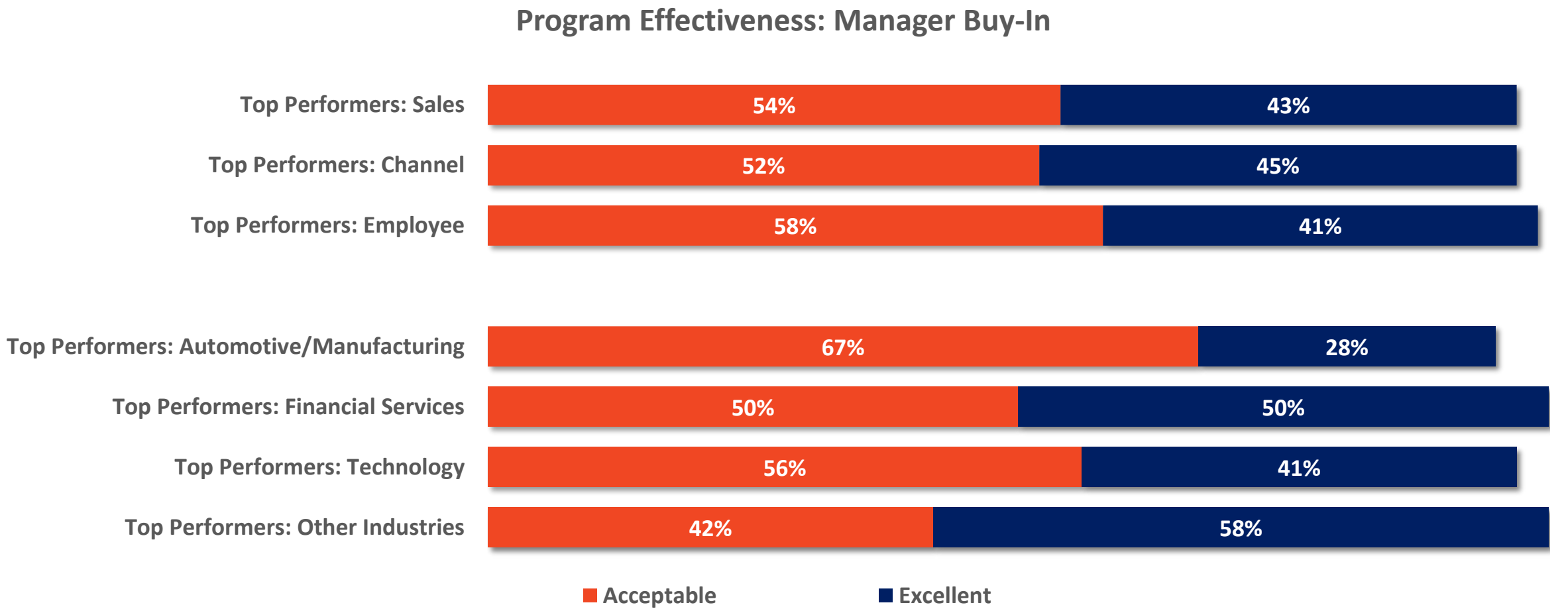
Participation is strongest in top performing Channel programs, Financial Services, and Other Industries.



Q29: For each of the following, please rate the effectiveness of your program.

Program Effectiveness

Manager buy-in is less critical for top performing Automotive/Manufacturing companies.

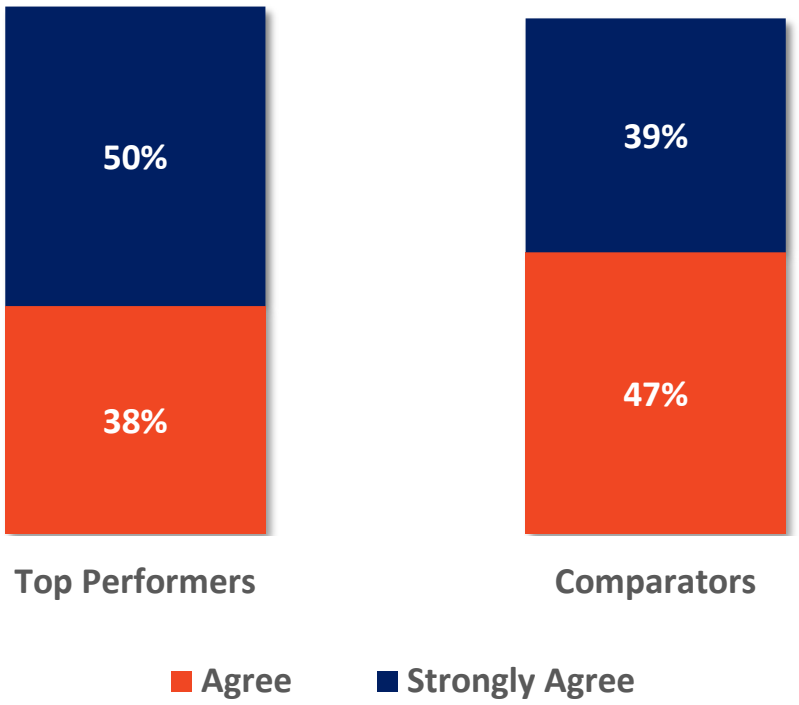


Q29: For each of the following, please rate the effectiveness of your program.

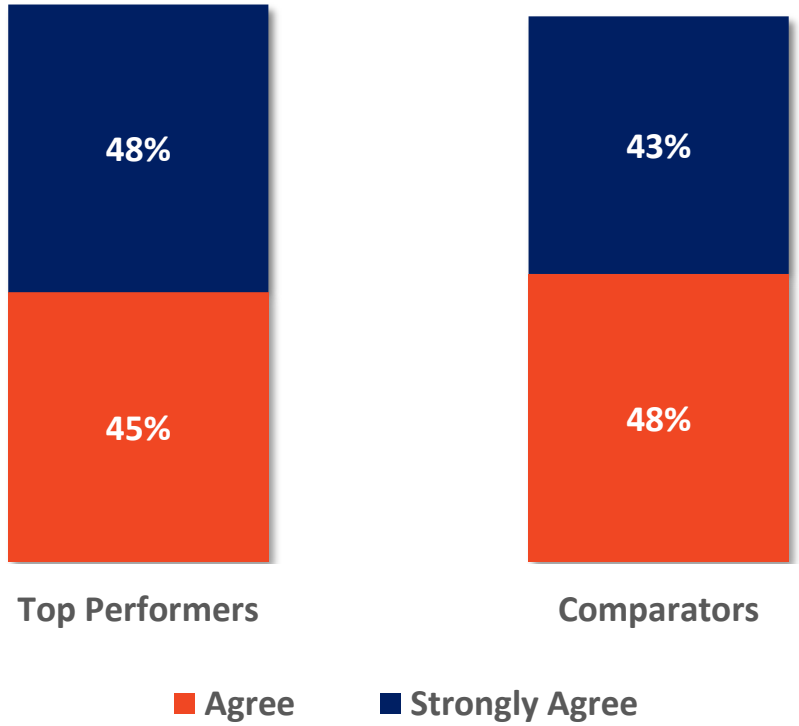
Program Effectiveness

Though engagement is similar, Top Performers are more effective in influencing behavior through rewards programs.

Program Effectiveness: Influence Behavior



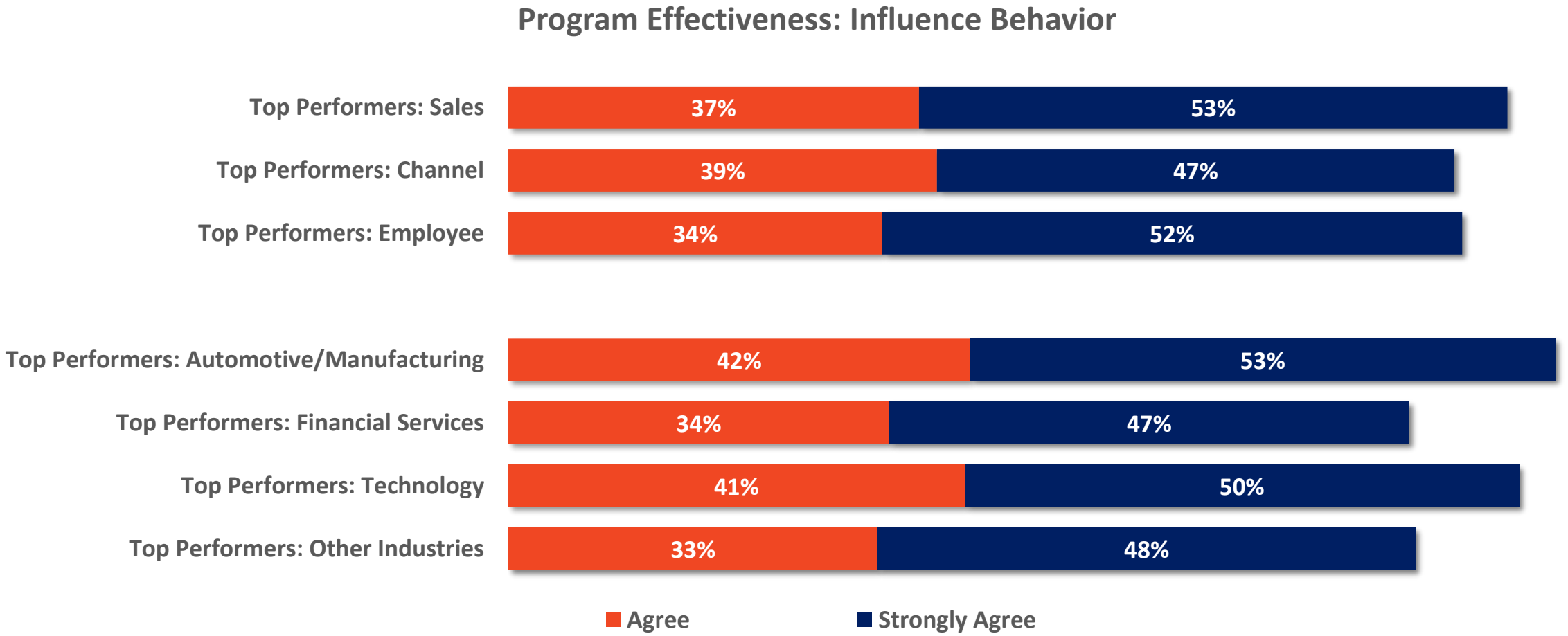
Program Effectiveness: Engagement Tool



Q30: For each of the following, please indicate the degree to which you agree.

Program Effectiveness

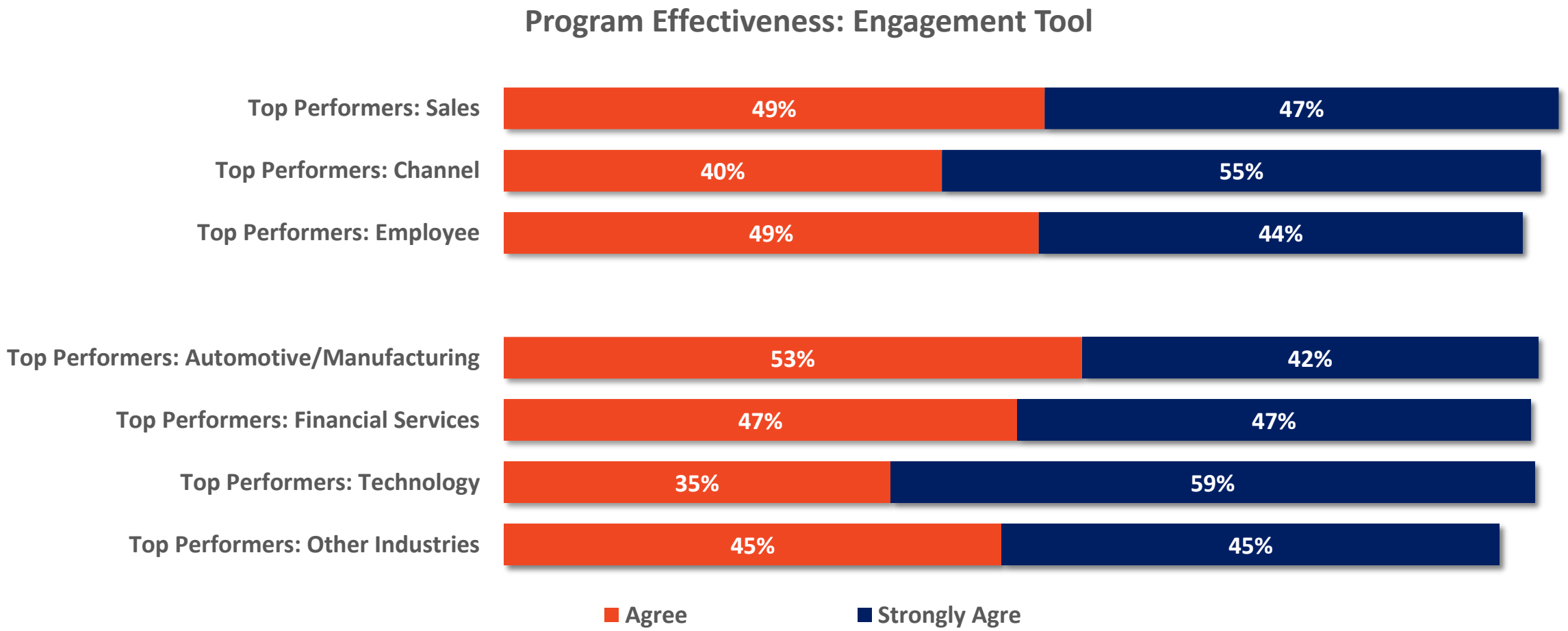
Top Performers in Auto/Manufacturing and Tech are slightly more likely to influence behavior through rewards.



Q30: For each of the following, please indicate the degree to which you agree.

Program Effectiveness

Top performing Technology firms are more successful in using their reward programs as engagement tools.

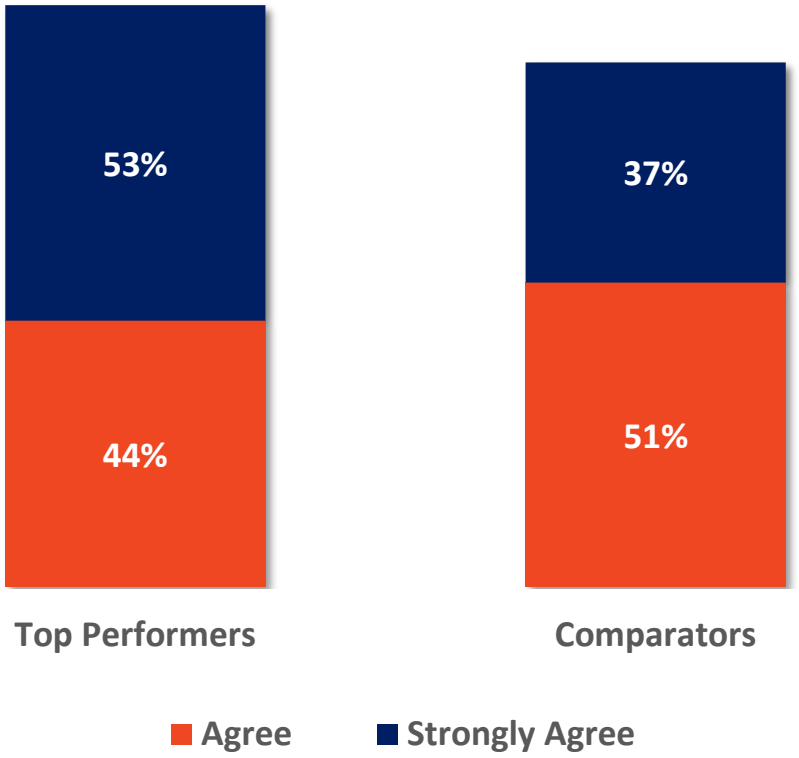


Q30: For each of the following, please indicate the degree to which you agree.

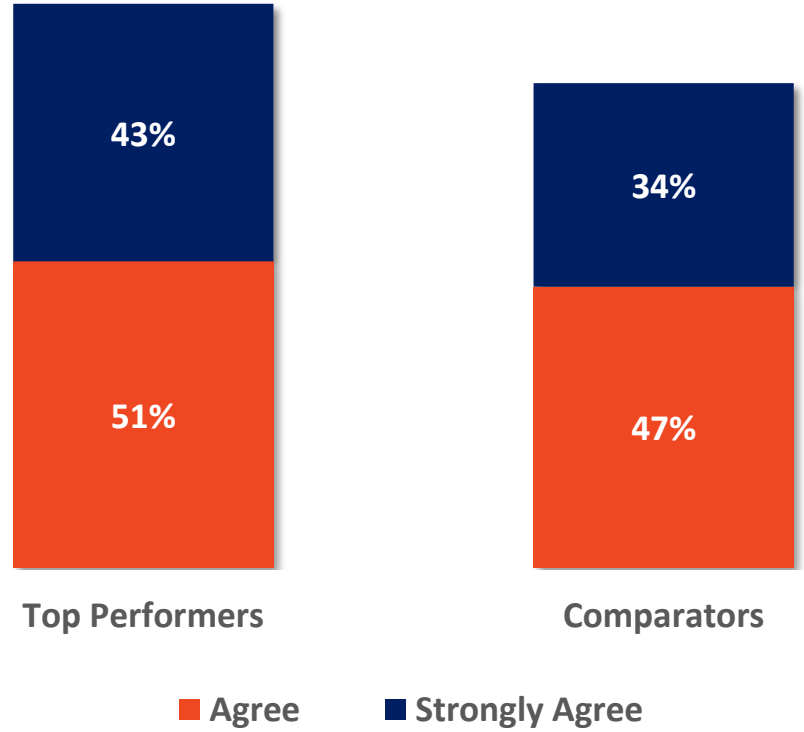
Program Effectiveness

Top Performers are more effective at leveraging reward programs for employee recruitment and retention.

Program Effectiveness: Retention Tool



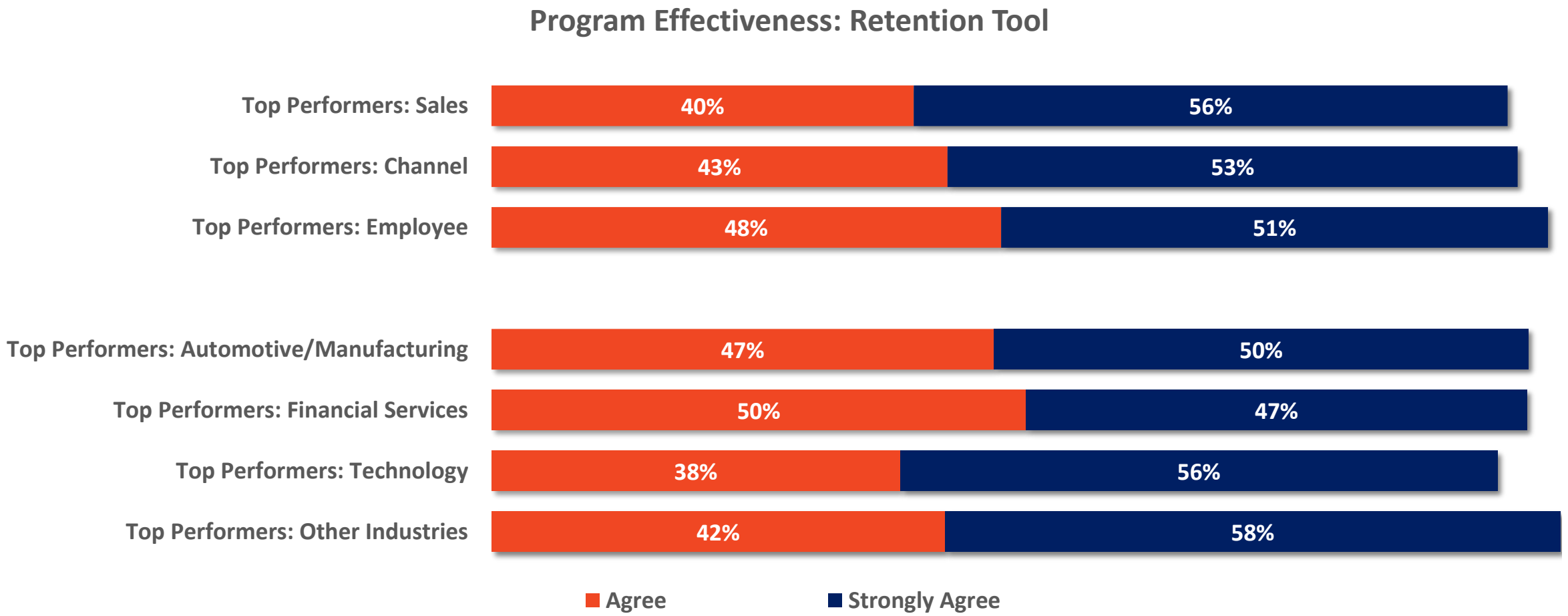
Program Effectiveness: Recruitment Tool



Q30: For each of the following, please indicate the degree to which you agree.

Program Effectiveness

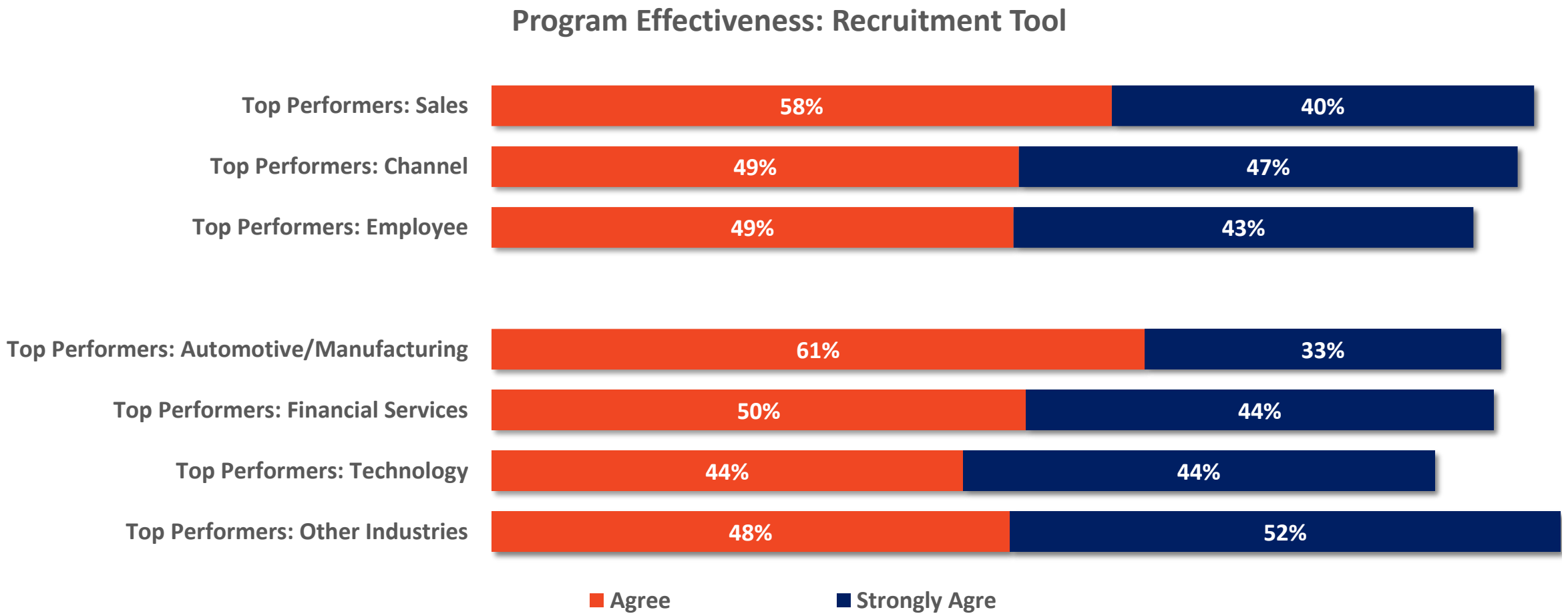
Top Performers in Other Industries are slightly more effective in using reward programs for retention.



Q30: For each of the following, please indicate the degree to which you agree.

Program Effectiveness

Top Performers in Other Industries leverage reward programs more effectively as a recruitment tool.

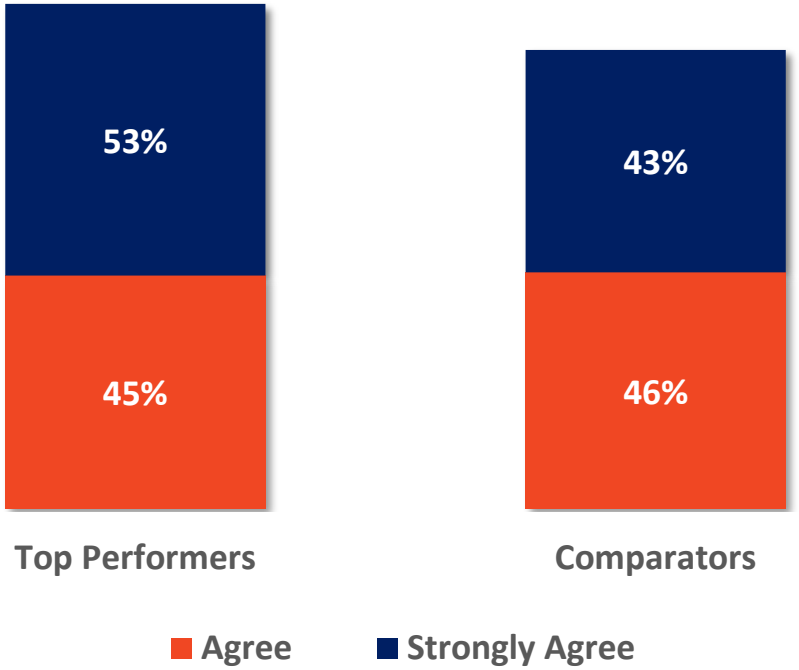


Q30: For each of the following, please indicate the degree to which you agree.

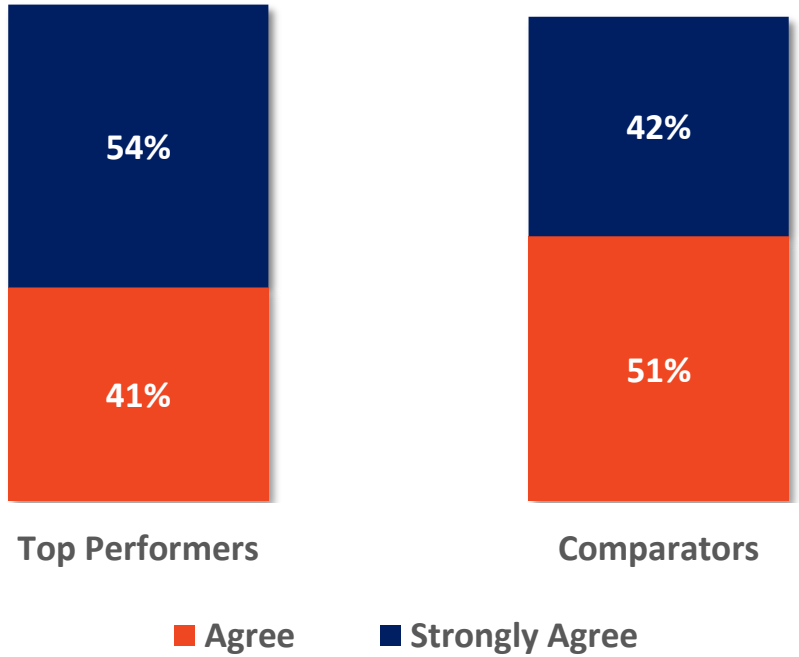
Program Impact

Top Performers more consistently align programs to company identity and receive greater executive support for performance management.

Program Impact: Executives View Rewards & Recognition as Key to Performance Management



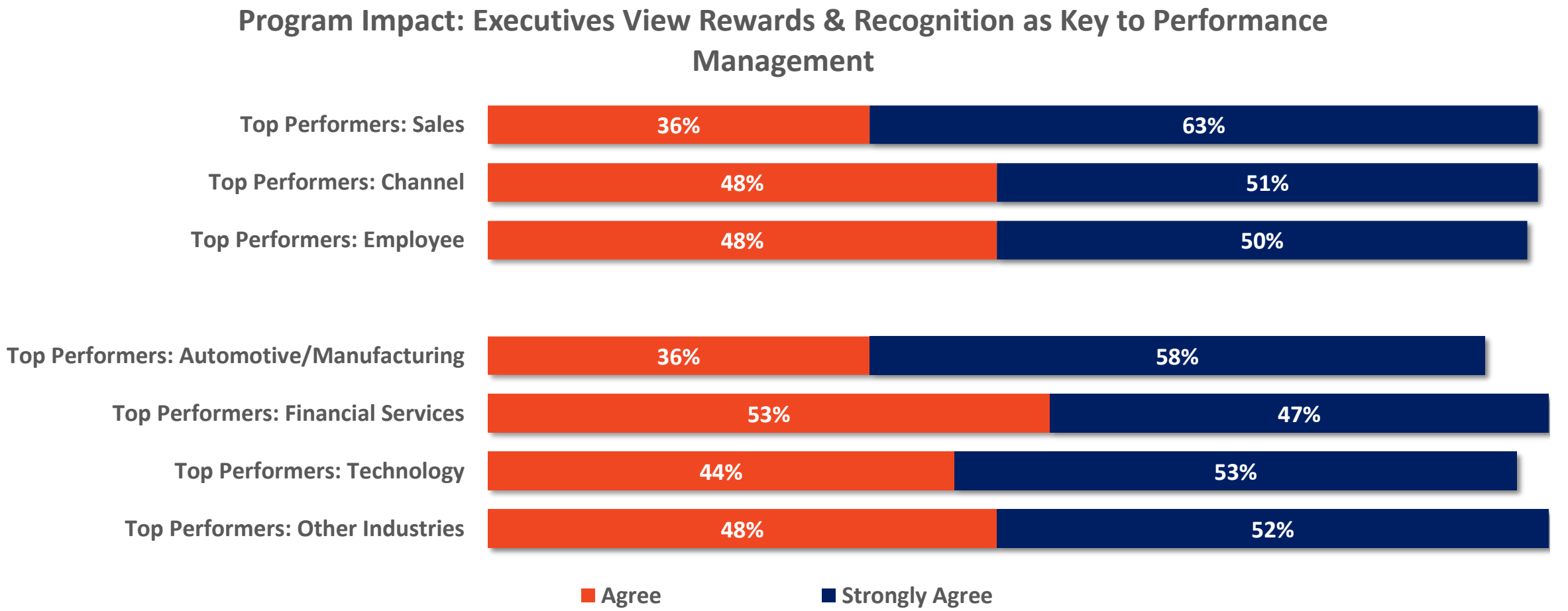
Program Impact: Programs Reflect Company Identity



Q30: For each of the following, please indicate the degree to which you agree.

Program Impact

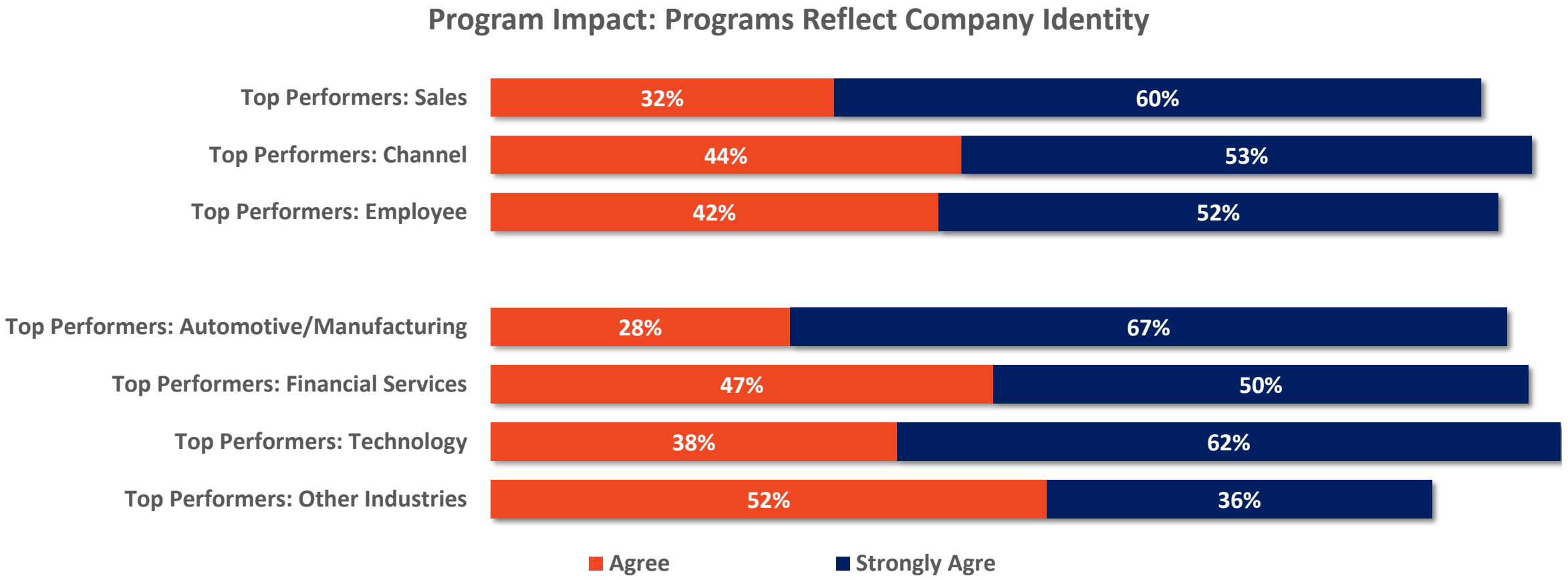
Top Performing Sales programs are most likely to receive executive support.



Q30: For each of the following, please indicate the degree to which you agree.

Program Impact

Top performing Automotive/Manufacturing and Technology companies are most effective in aligning their reward programs to company identity.

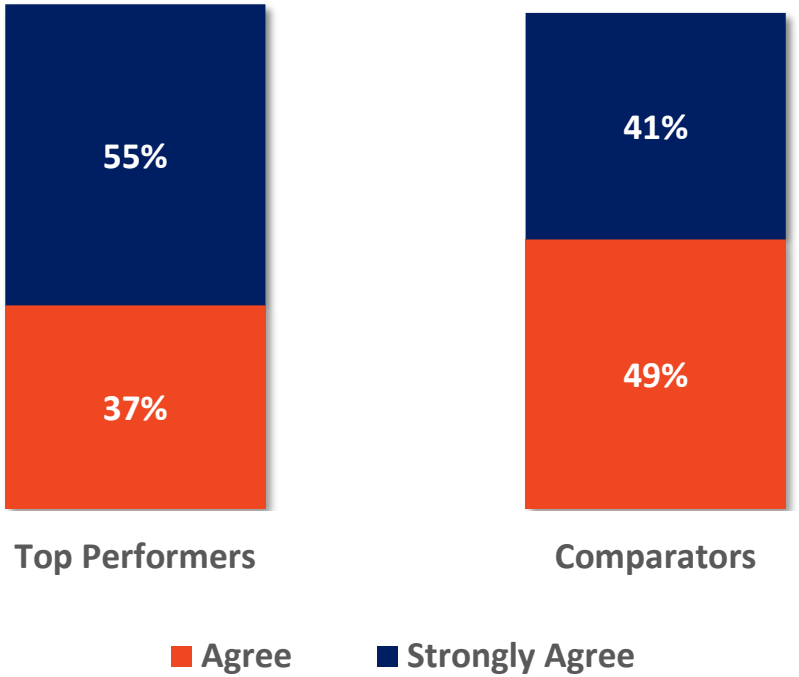


Q30: For each of the following, please indicate the degree to which you agree.

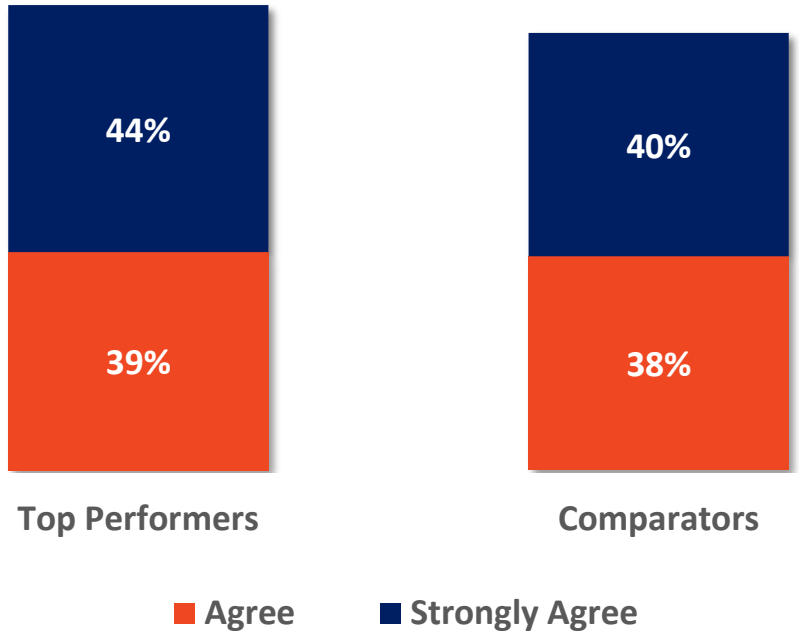
Program Impact

Top Performers are more likely to view reward and recognition programs as an expectation.

Program Impact: Reward and Recognition Programs are Expected in Our Industry



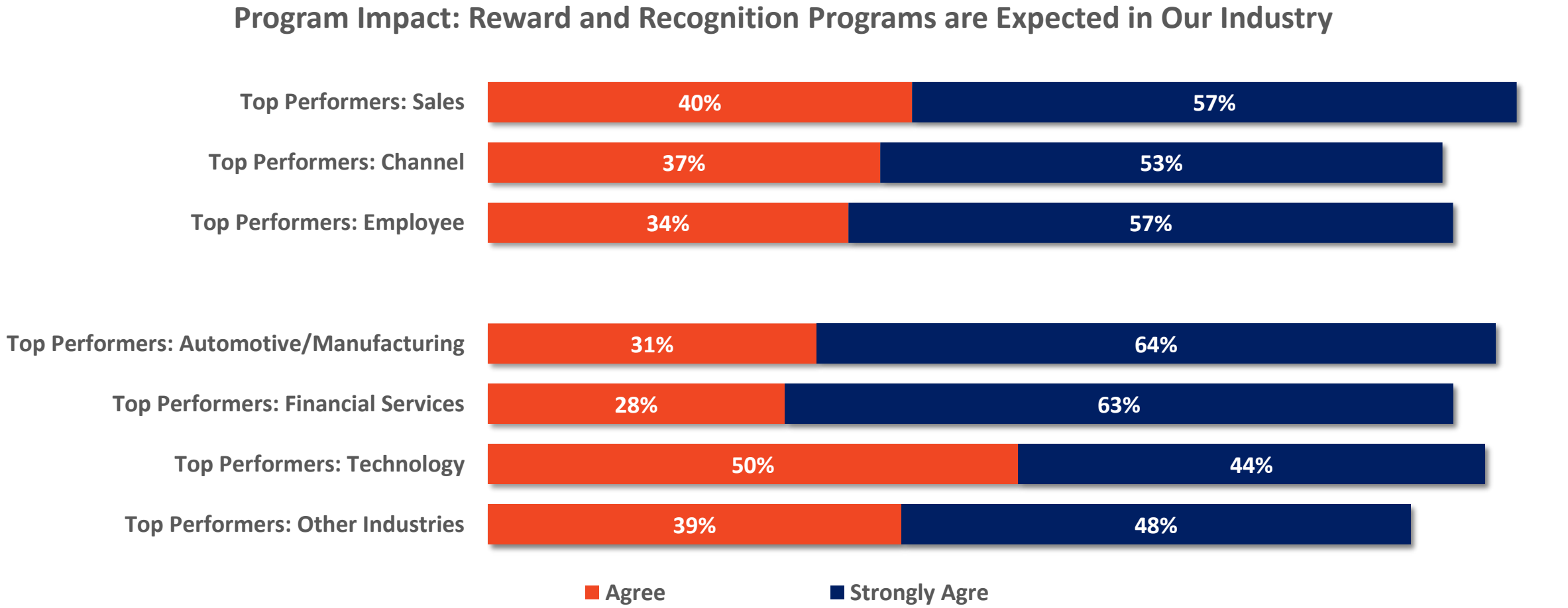
Program Impact: Non-Cash Rewards are More Memorable than Cash



Q30: For each of the following, please indicate the degree to which you agree.

Program Impact

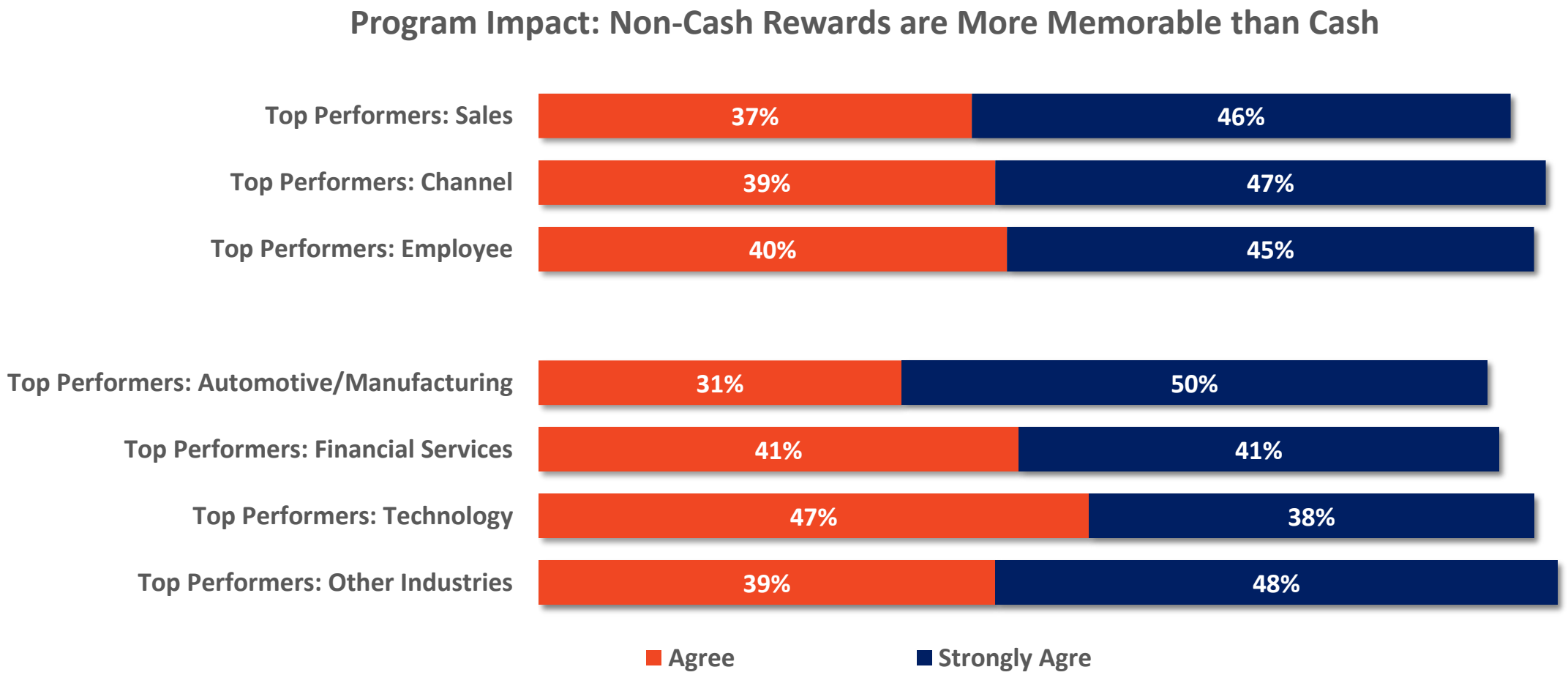
Top Performers in Automotive/Manufacturing and Financial Services view their reward programs as expectations.



Q30: For each of the following, please indicate the degree to which you agree.

Program Impact

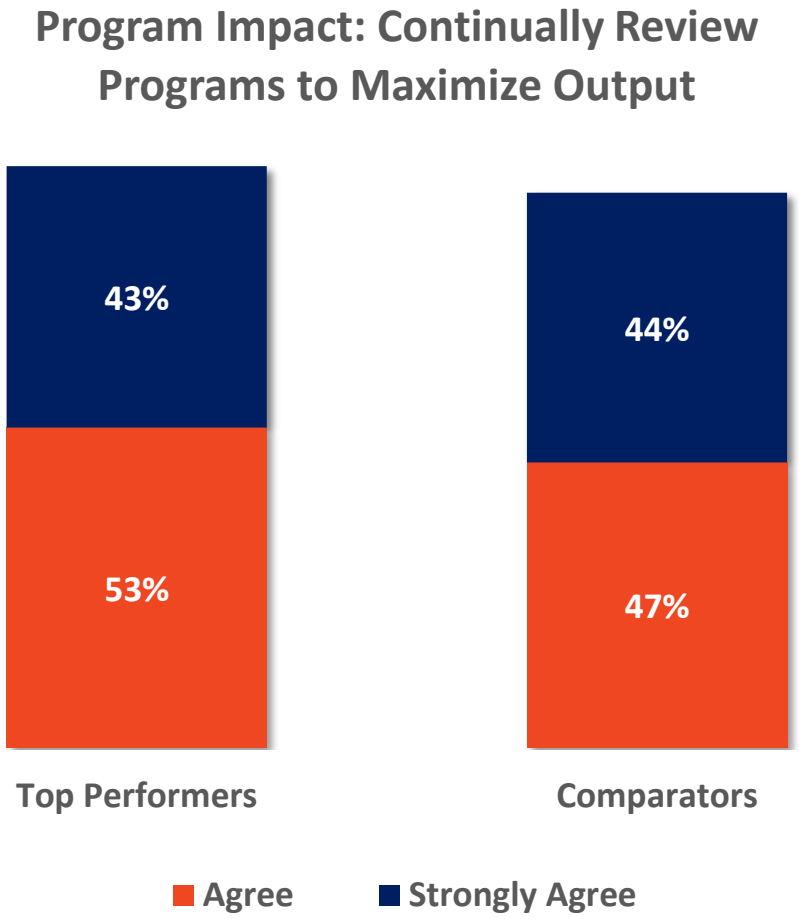
Top Performers find non-cash rewards more memorable than cash.



Q30: For each of the following, please indicate the degree to which you agree.

Program Impact

Top Performers and Comparators conduct program reviews at similar rates.

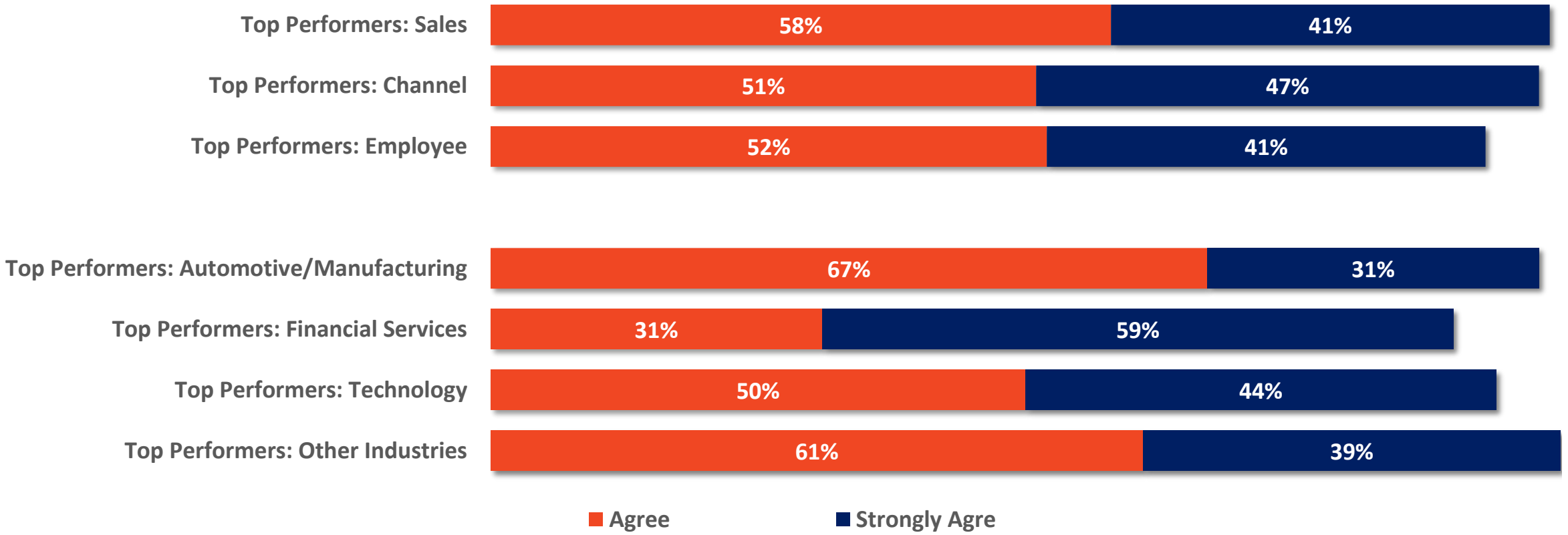


Q30: For each of the following, please indicate the degree to which you agree.

Program Impact

Top Performers in Financial Services are the most likely to strongly agree their programs are reviewed regularly.

Program Impact: Continually Review Programs to Maximize Output

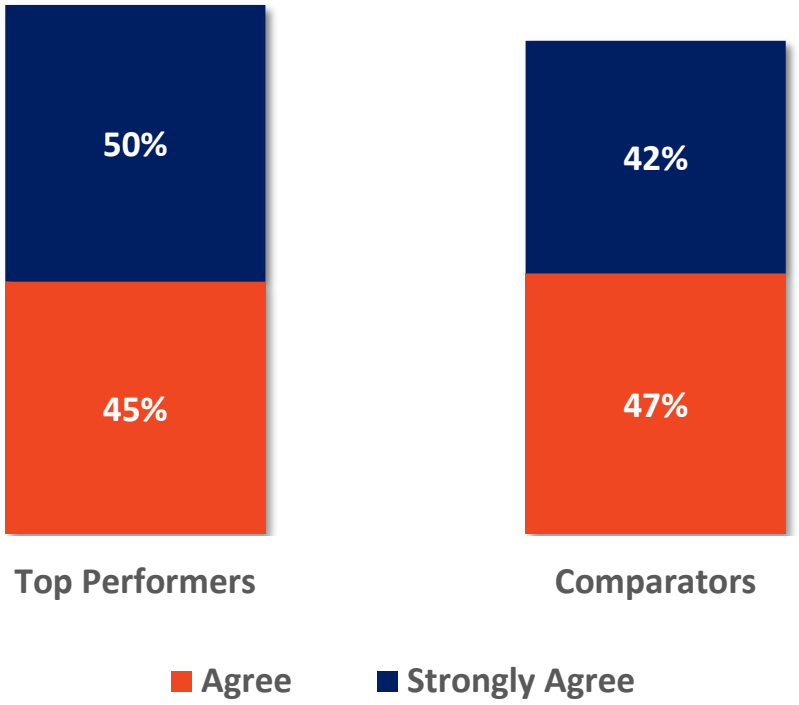


Q30: For each of the following, please indicate the degree to which you agree.

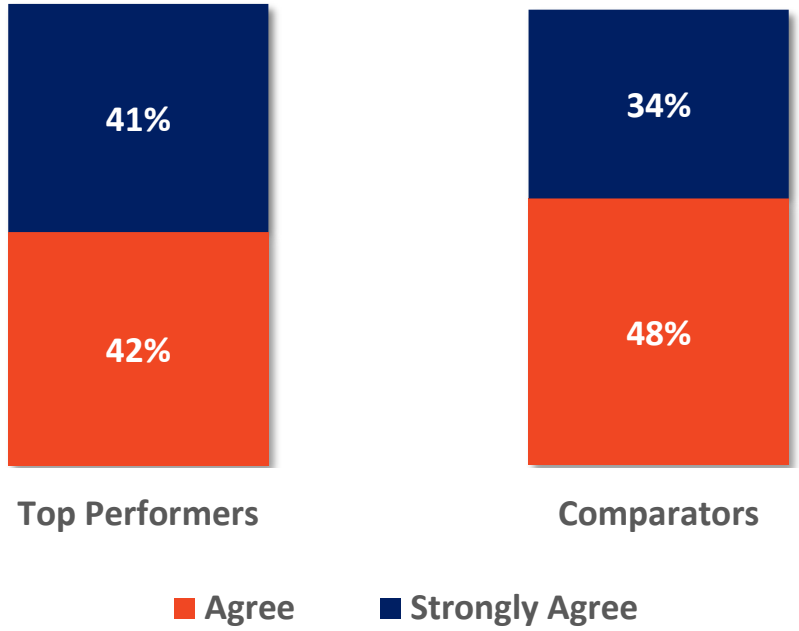
Program Leverage

Top Performers more consistently leverage technology and external expertise than Comparators.

Program Leverage: Leverage Technology Within Program(s)



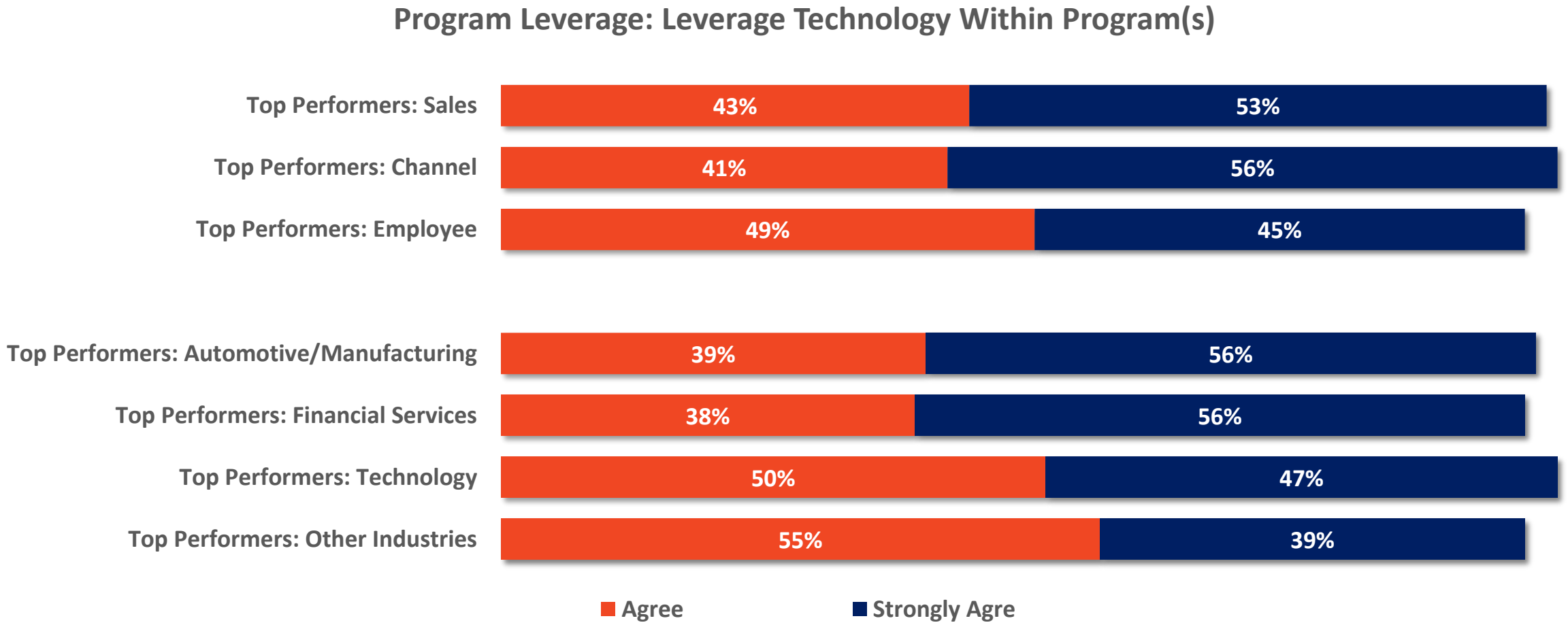
Program Leverage: Look to External Partners for Recognition and Incentive Expertise



Q30: For each of the following, please indicate the degree to which you agree.

Program Leverage

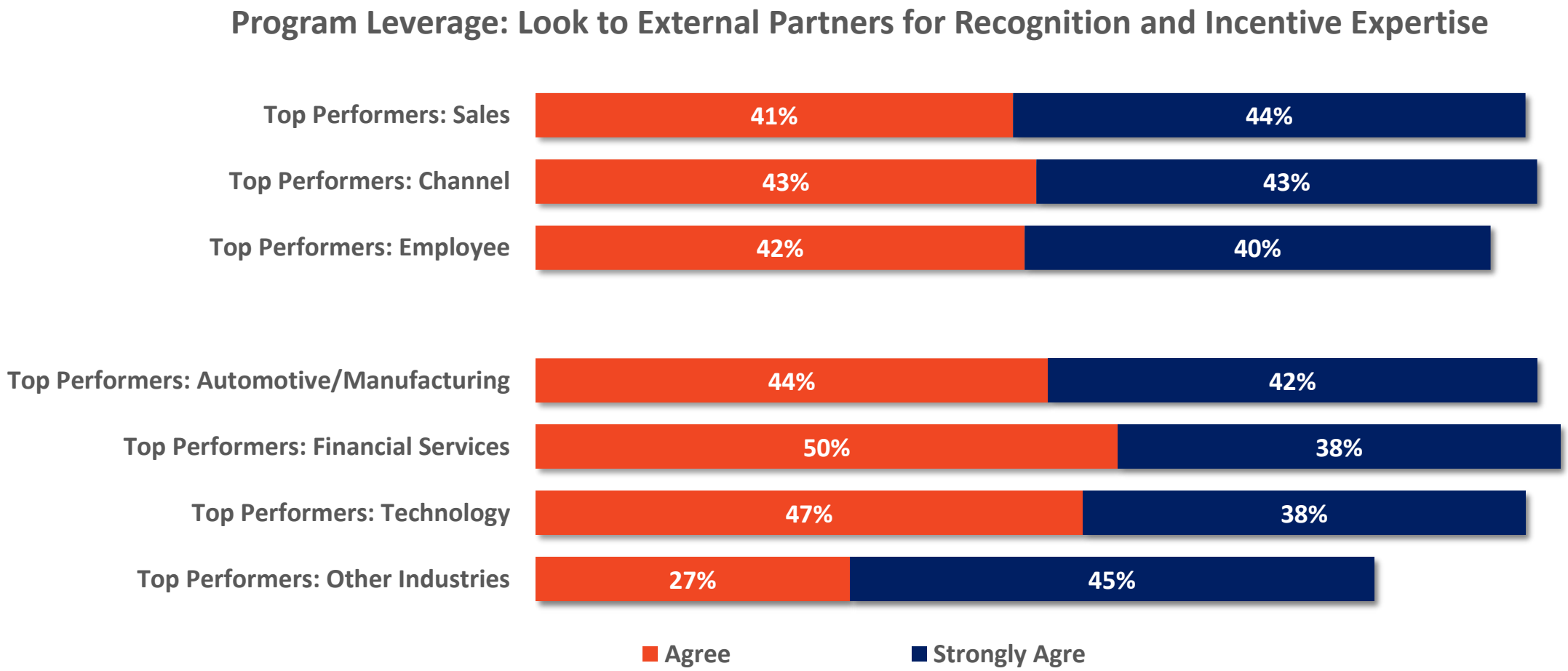
Top Performers in Other Industries are slightly less likely to leverage technology within their programs.



Q30: For each of the following, please indicate the degree to which you agree.

Program Leverage

Top Performers in Other Industries are slightly less likely to seek out external expertise.



Q30: For each of the following, please indicate the degree to which you agree.

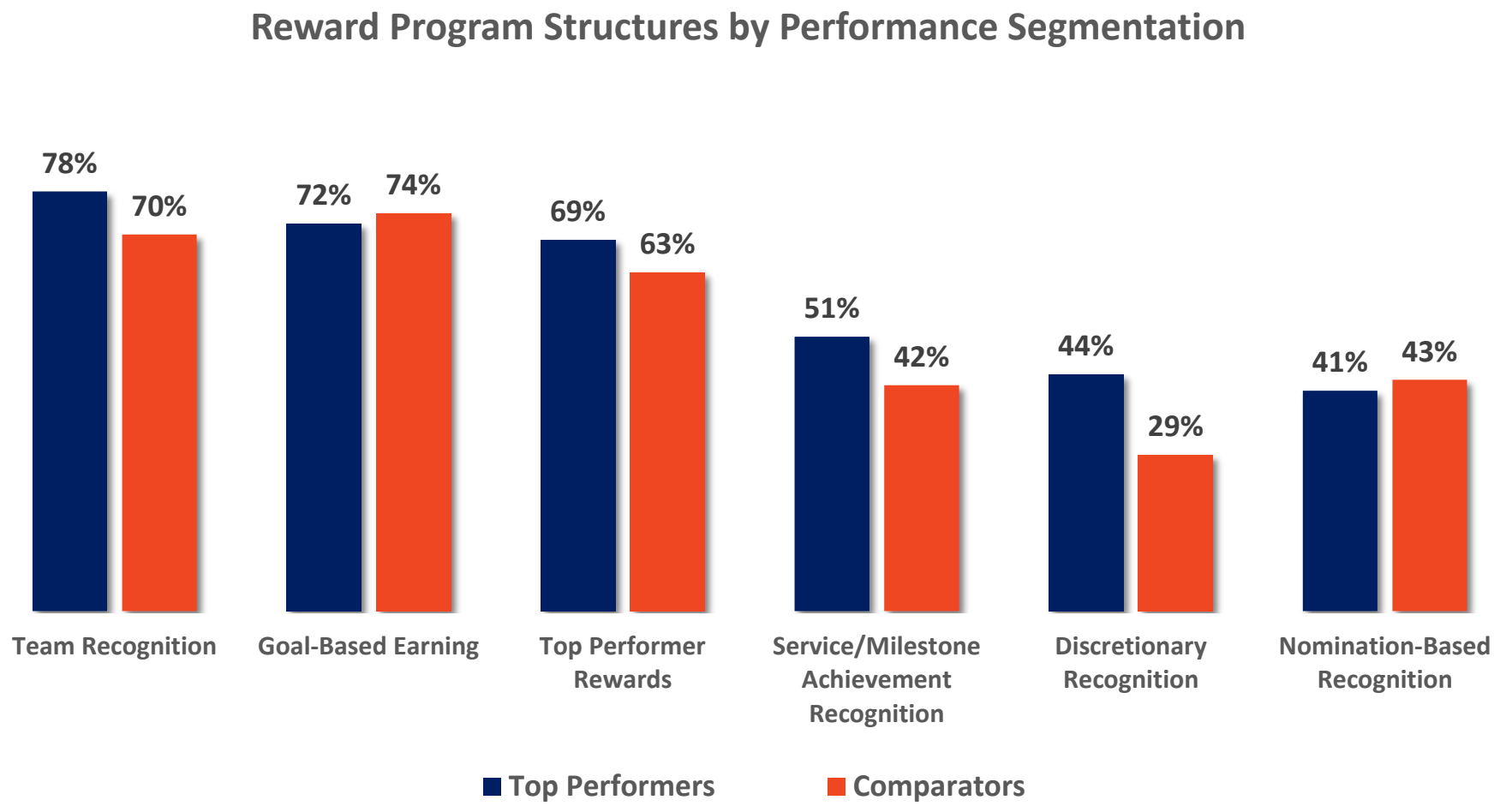
Sales Program: Structure & Design

Structure & Design: Key Findings

- Top-performing companies take a multidimensional approach to sales recognition, prioritizing team recognition, goal-based earning, and Top Performer rewards.
- Top Performers goal structures are commonly designed to reward progress and incremental achievement.
- Favoring a mixed budgeting approach, Top Performers typically allocate just over 15% of salesperson income to reward programs.

Sales: Reward Program Structure

Top Performers employ a wider range of recognition strategies, led by team and performance-based rewards



Team Recognition is most common among Top Performers, exceeding usage in Comparators.

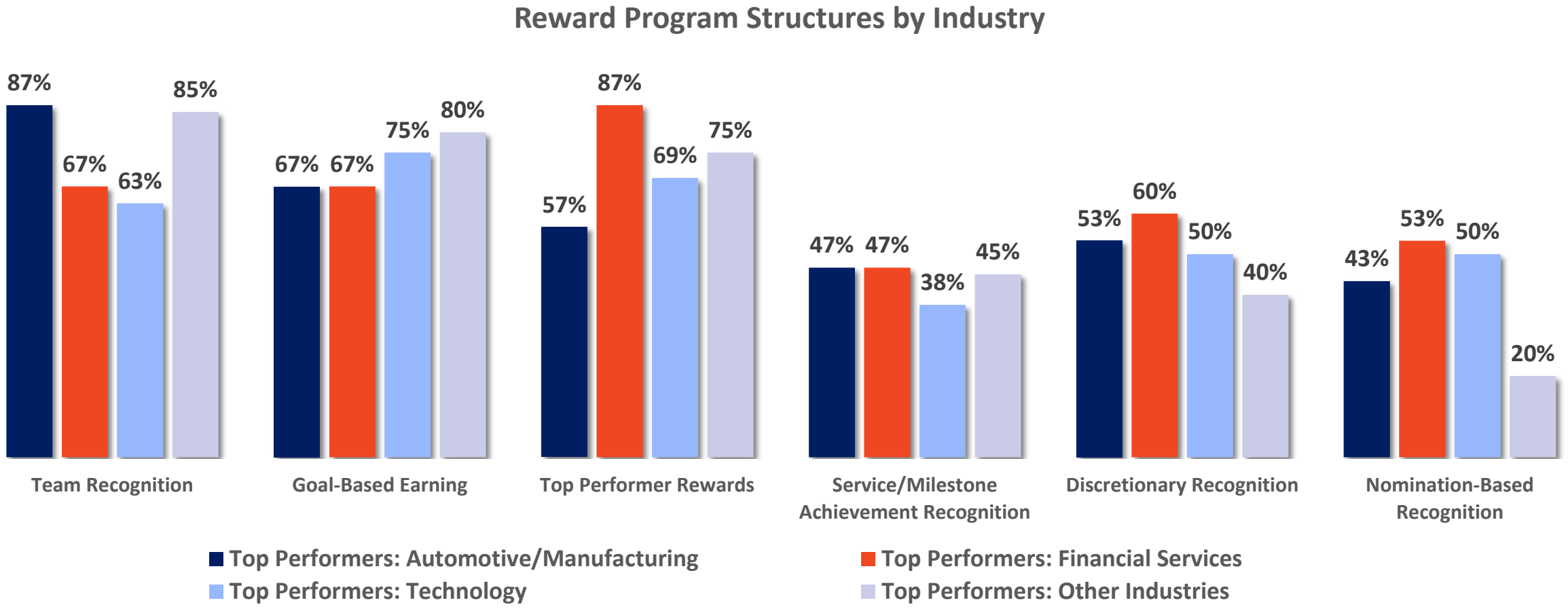
Discretionary and milestone-based recognition and rewards are also more common in Top Performers.

Top-performing companies rely most heavily on Team Recognition, Goal-Based Earning, and Top Performer Awards.

Q31: Which of the following reward and recognition program structures does your organization currently use for sales?

Sales: Reward Program Structure

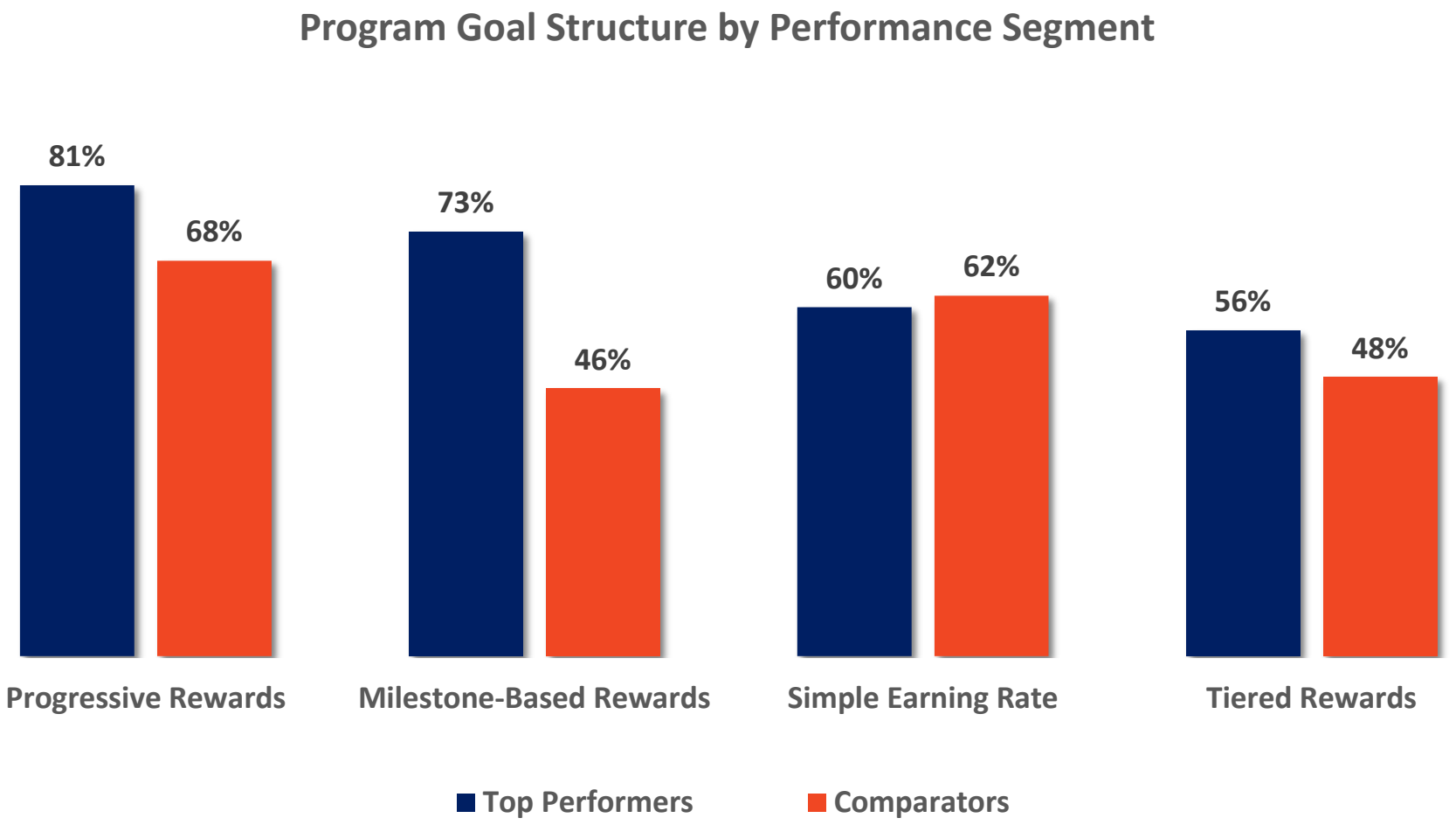
Team Recognition is most emphasized in top performing Automotive/Manufacturing companies, while Top Performer reward drive the Financial Services industry



Q31: Which of the following reward and recognition program structures does your organization currently use for sales?

Sales: Goal Structure

Top Performers are more likely to structure sales rewards around progress and milestones



Progressive Rewards are the most common structure for both groups, but more prevalent among Top Performers.

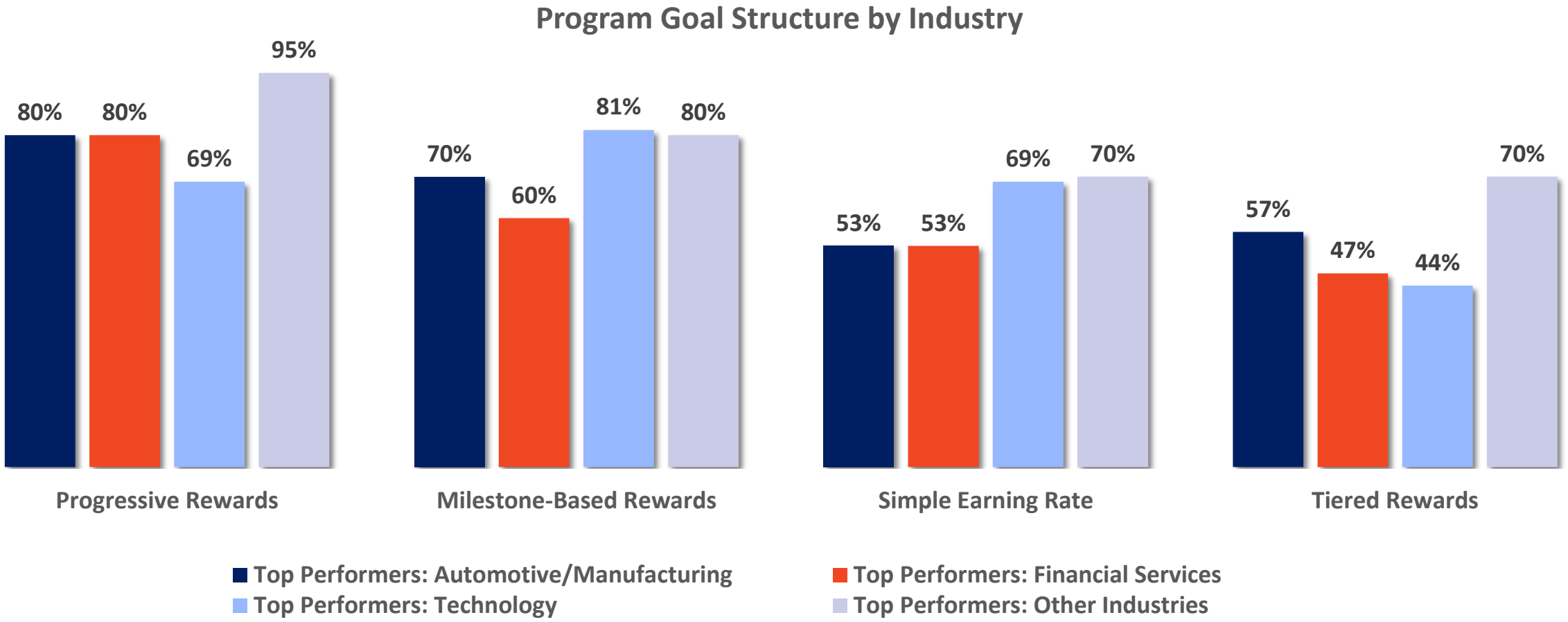
Milestone-Based Rewards are widely used by Top Performers but are significantly less common (and the least used) among Comparators.

Though less commonly used, Tiered Rewards are more frequent by Top Performer programs.

Q32: Which of the following best describes the goal structure for your sales reward and recognition program?

Sales: Goal Structure

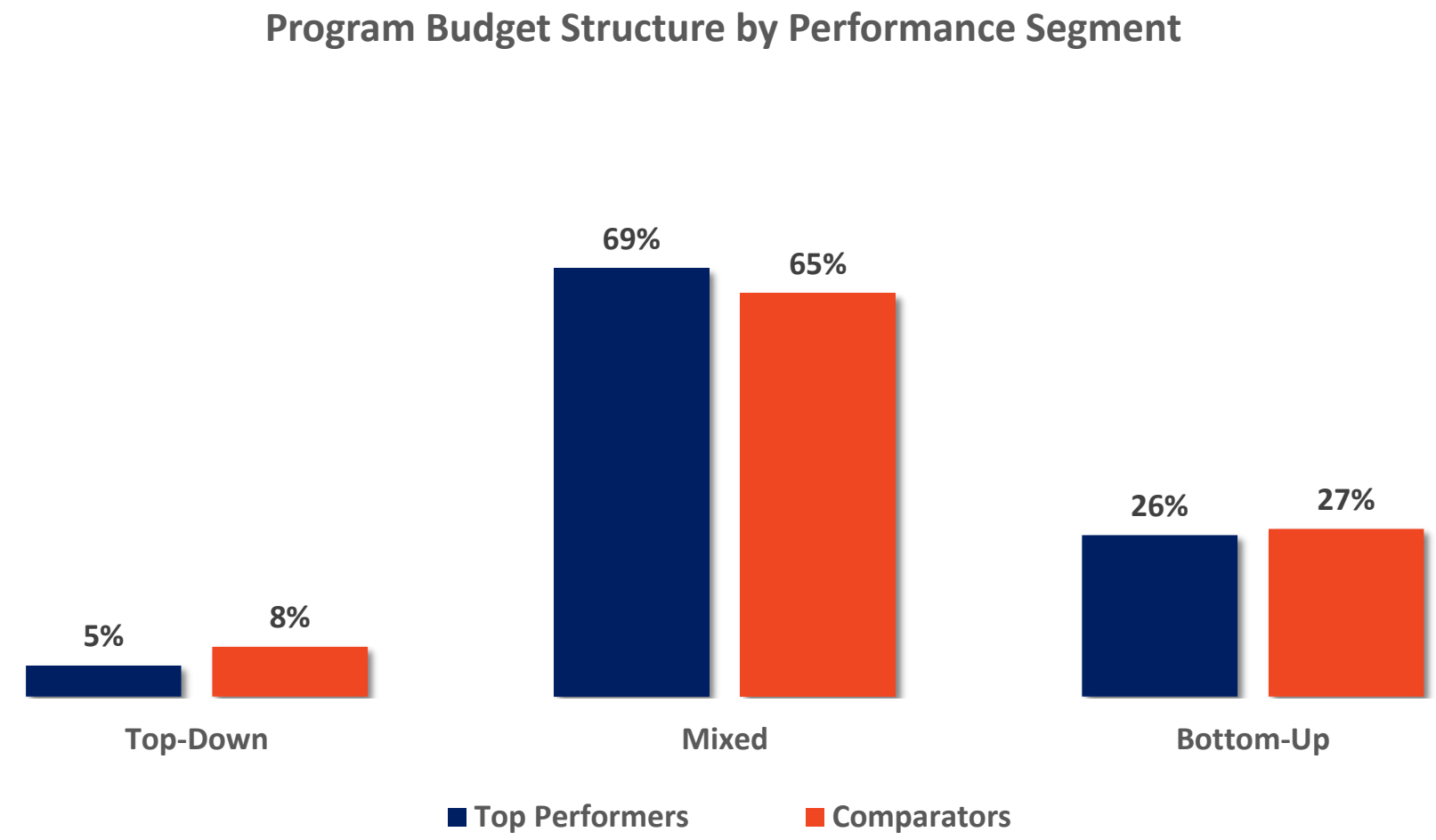
Progressive rewards prevail for Top Performers in Automotive/Manufacturing, Financial Services, and Other Industries, while Technology leaders favor milestone-based models



Q32: Which of the following best describes the goal structure for your sales reward and recognition program?

Sales: Reward Program Budgeting

Top Performers and Comparators take a similar approach to sales incentive budgeting

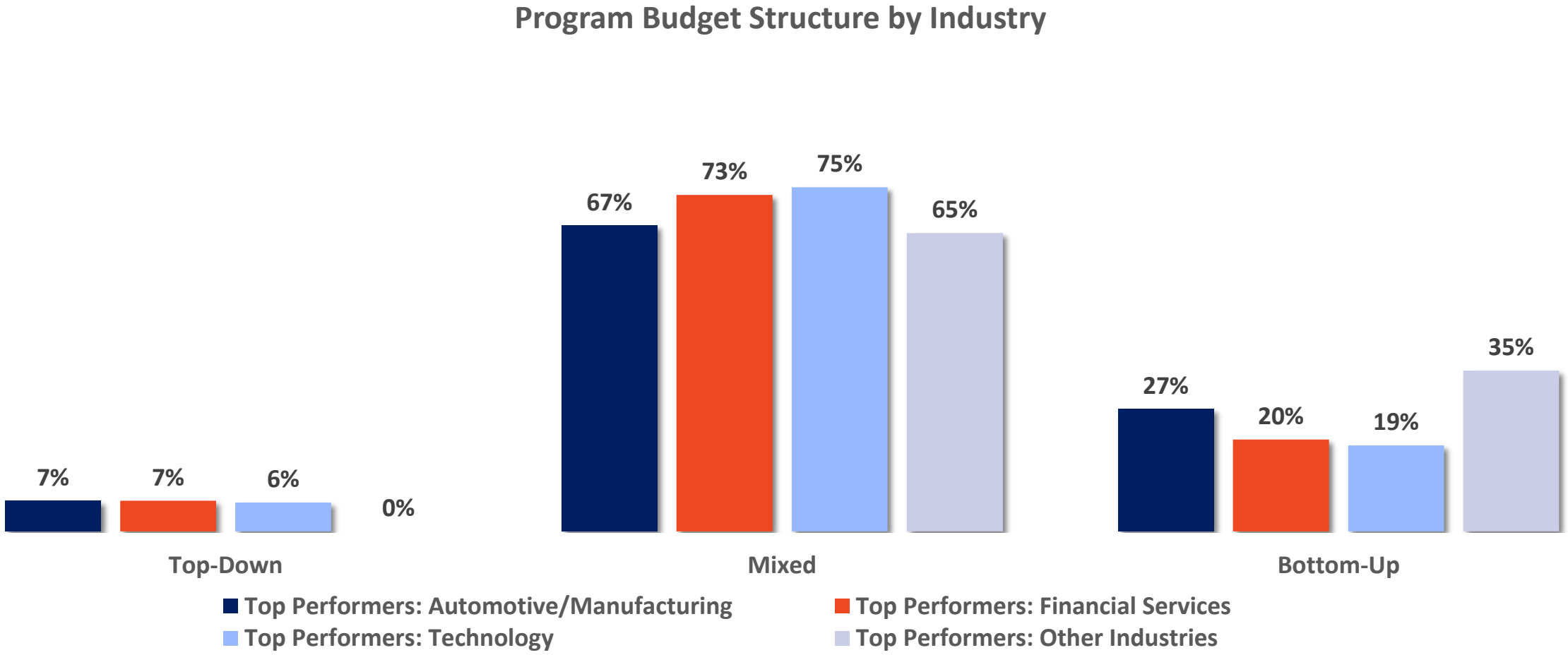


A mixed budgeting approach is most common among both Top Performers and Comparator, with bottom-up and top-down budgeting used sparingly.

Q47: Which of the following best describes your company's approach to budgeting for sales incentive programs?

Sales: Reward Program Budgeting

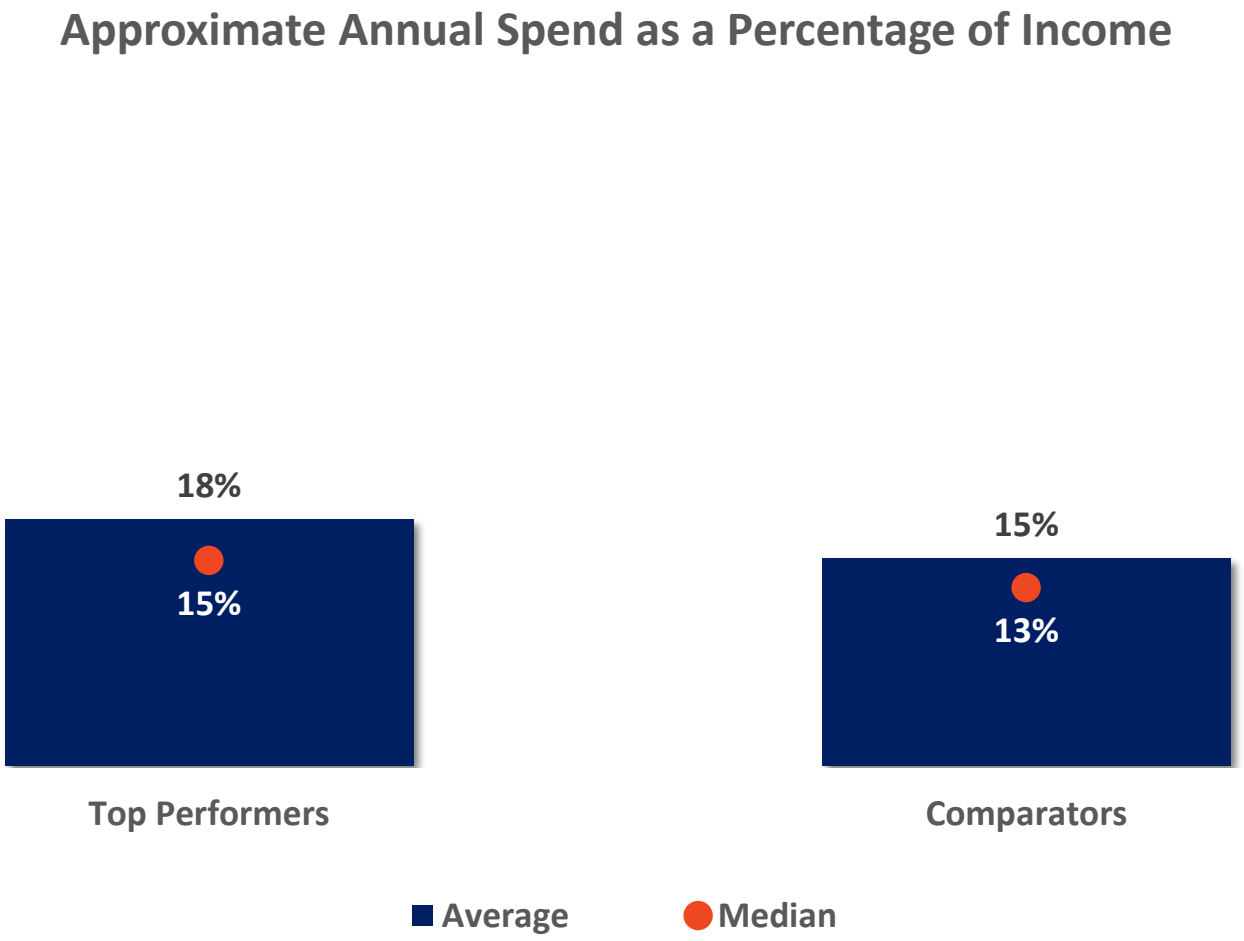
Top-performing companies prefer a mixed budgeting approach across all industries



Q47: Which of the following best describes your company's approach to budgeting for sales incentive programs?

Sales: Program Spending on Non-Cash Rewards & Recognition

Top Performers allocate more budget to non-cash sales rewards



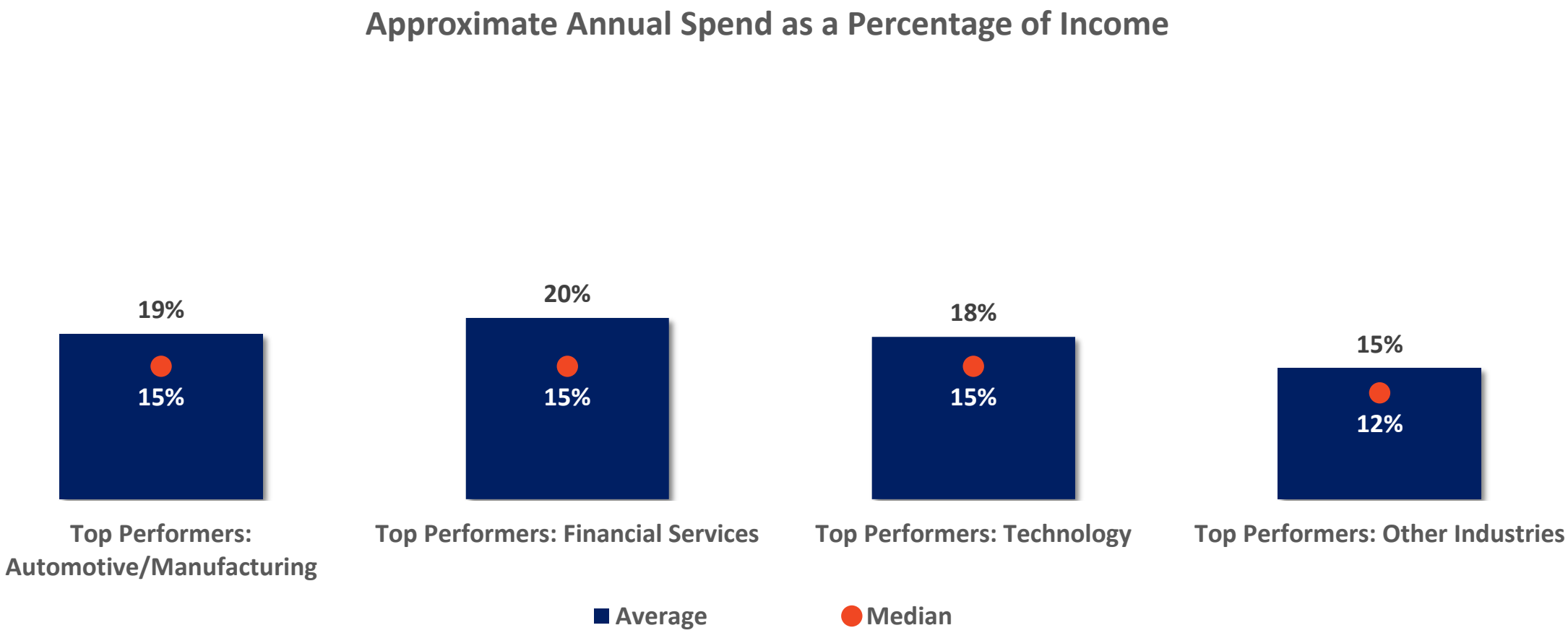
As a percentage of sales income, both average and median spending are slightly higher among Top Performers.

The close alignment between median and average marks suggests consistent budgeting practices across companies.

Q48: As a percentage of their income, what is the approximate annual spend on non-cash rewards and recognition for your salespeople?

Sales: Program Spending on Non-Cash Rewards & Recognition

Top Performers in Auto/Manufacturing, Financial Services, and Technology allocate slightly more towards non-cash rewards than Other Industries



Q48: As a percentage of their income, what is the approximate annual spend on non-cash rewards and recognition for your salespeople?

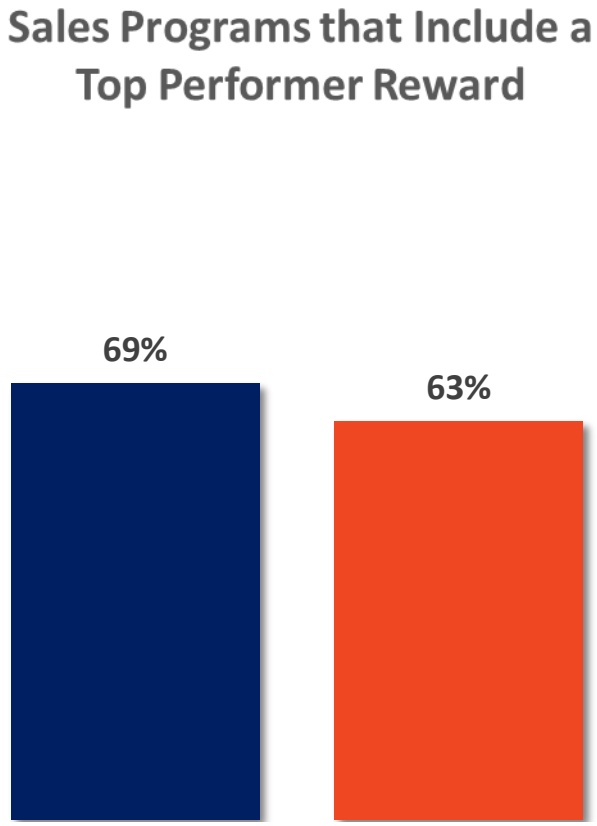
Sales Program:
Top Performer Incentive Trip

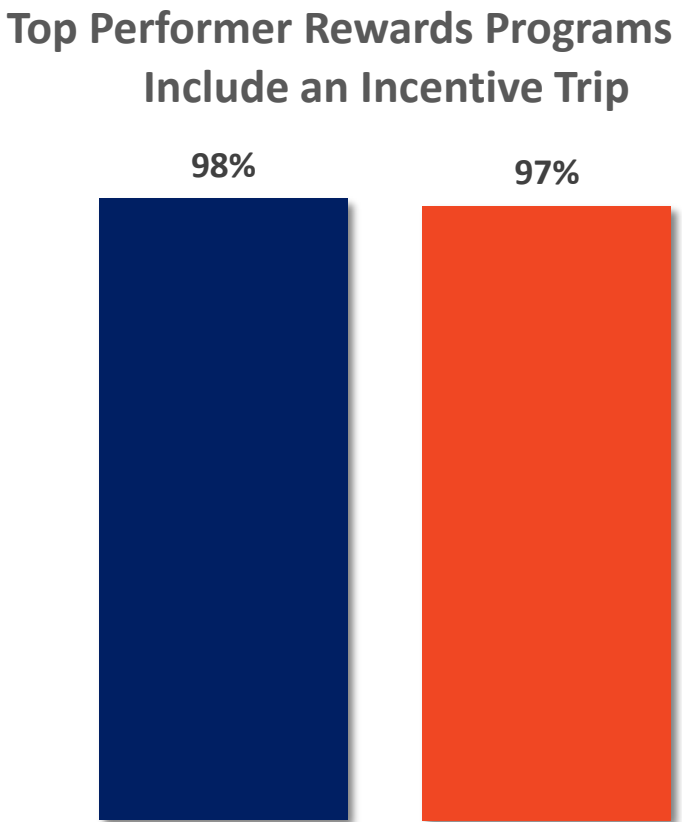
Top Performer Incentive Trip: Key Findings

- While qualification processes vary, Top Performers are more likely to base incentive trip eligibility on predefined performance targets.
- Top Performers rely heavily on a combination of financial, customer relation, and activity metrics to determine trip eligibility.
- Commonly, approximately 15% of the salesforce earns incentive trips at top-performing companies, where the number of winners is more often adjusted based on performance rather than set in advance.
- Easier qualification paths for new salespeople are more common among Top Performers, helping onboard talent more effectively.
- Incentive trips at Top Performing companies carry higher value, especially for top sales achievers.

Sales: Top Performer Incentive Trip Availability

Top Performers and Comparators utilize incentive travel rewards at a similar rate





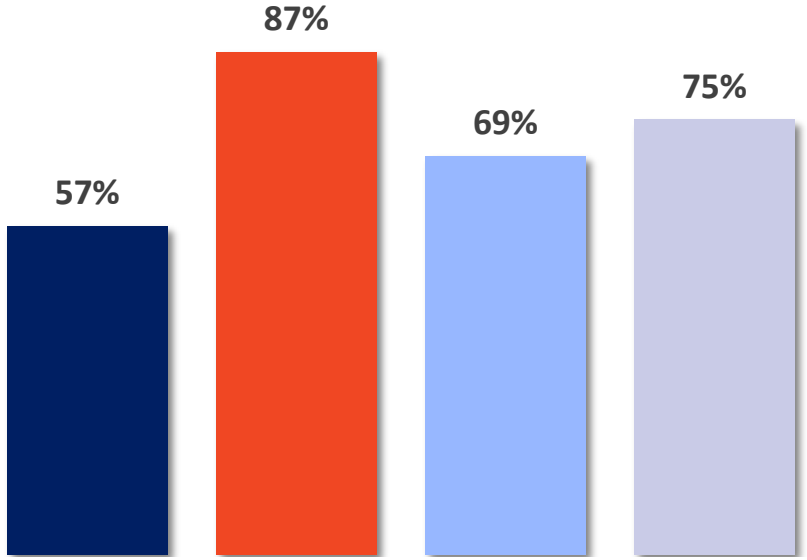
Top Performers Comparators

Q31: Which of the following reward and recognition program structures does your organization currently use for sales?
Q33: Does your sales Top Performer award include an incentive trip?

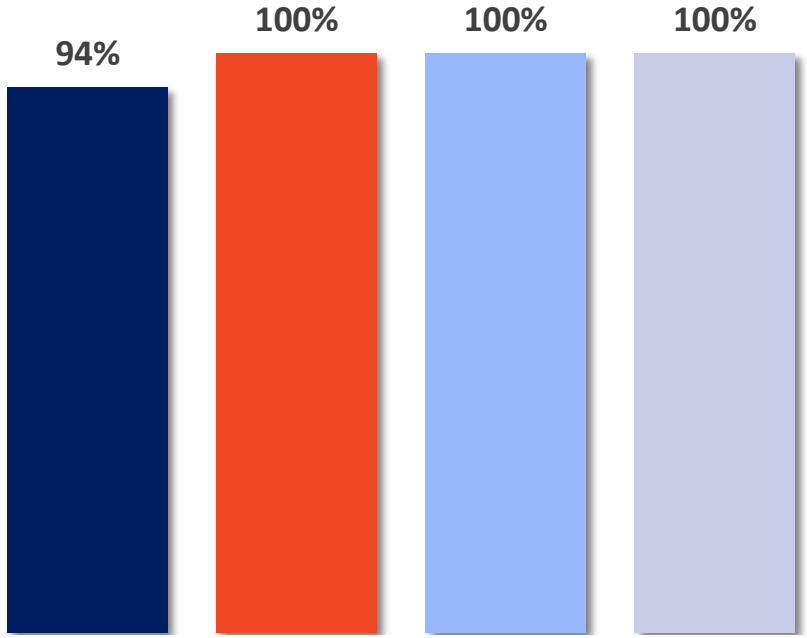
Sales: Top Performer Incentive Trip Availability

Top Performer sales rewards are a staple among top-performing Financial Services companies

Sales Programs that Include a Top Performer Reward



Top Performer Rewards Programs that Include an Incentive Trip



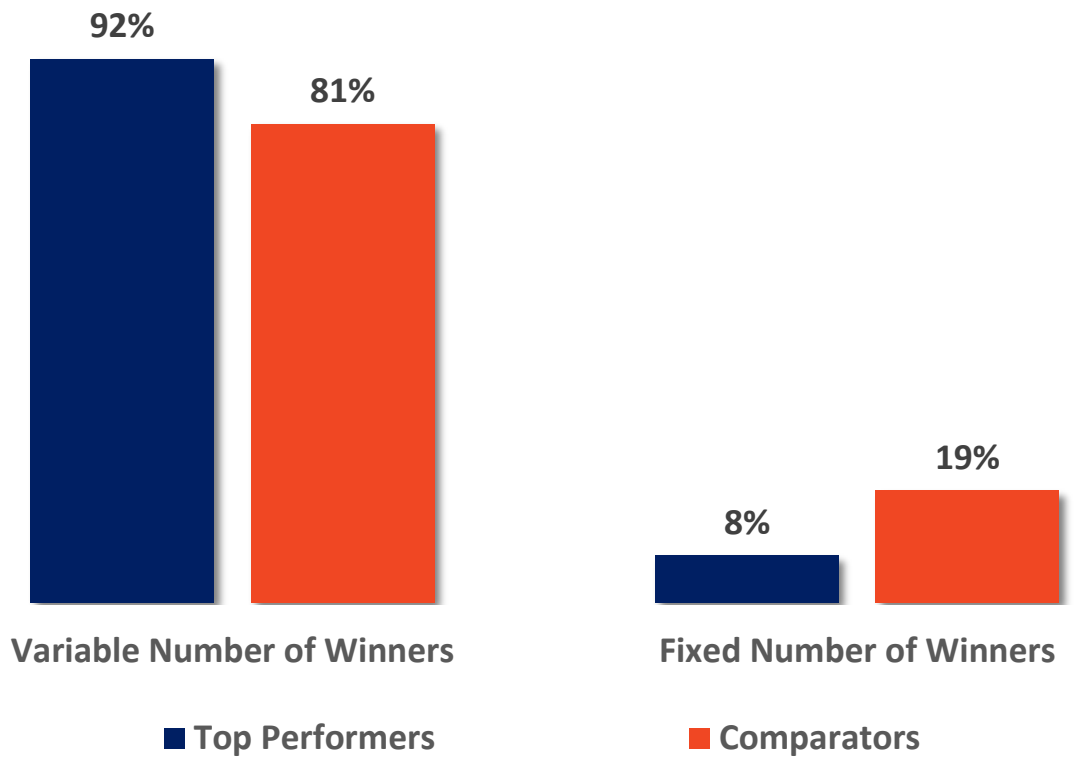
Top Performers: Automotive/Manufacturing
Top Performers: Financial Services
Top Performers: Technology
Top Performers: Other Industries

Q31: Which of the following reward and recognition program structures does your organization currently use for sales?
Q33: Does your sales Top Performer award include an incentive trip?

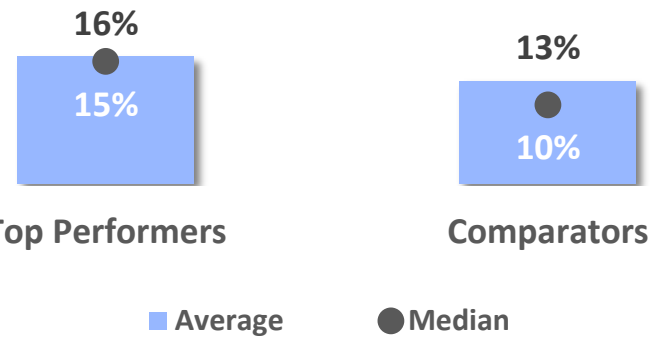
Sales: Top Performer Incentive Trip Availability

Top-performing companies are more likely to vary the number of incentive trip winners based on performance

Incentive Trip Winners by Performance Segment



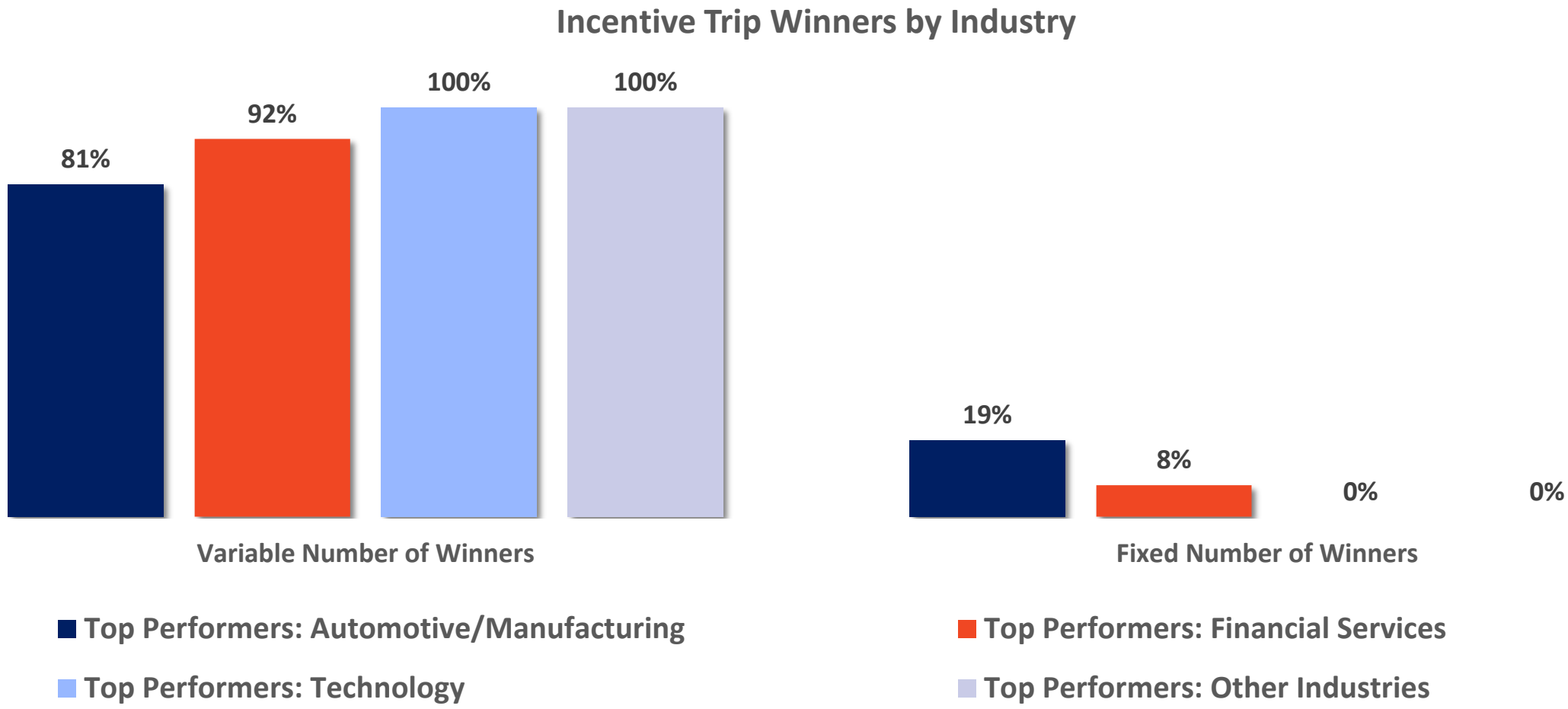
Percentage of Sales Representatives Selected for an Incentive Tip



Q34: Is the number of Top Performer trip winners set in advance, or does it vary based on the performance of the salesforce?
Q42: Approximately what percentage of your sales representatives are selected for the Top Performer incentive trip?

Sales: Top Performer Incentive Trip Availability

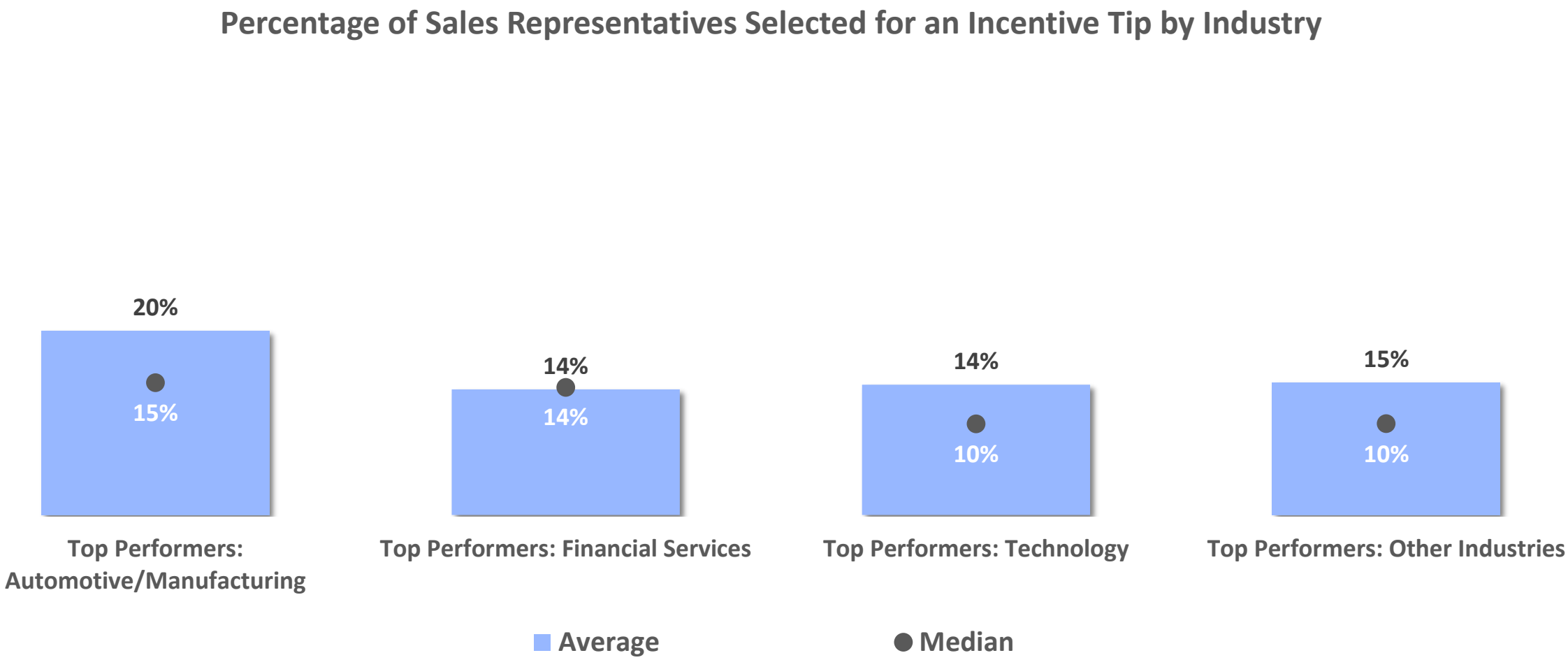
Automotive/Manufacturing Top Performers are slightly less likely to vary trip winners by performance



Q34: Is the number of Top Performer trip winners set in advance, or does it vary based on the performance of the salesforce?

Sales: Top Performer Incentive Trip Availability

Top performing Automotive/Manufacturing companies select the highest percentage of sales reps for incentive trips

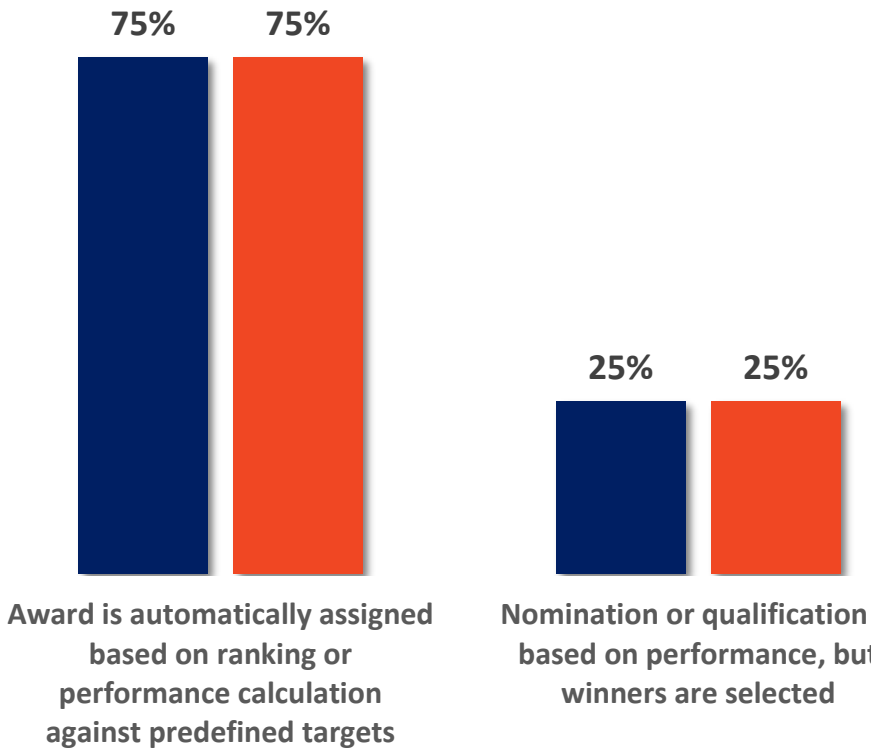


Q42: Approximately what percentage of your sales representatives are selected for the Top Performer incentive trip?

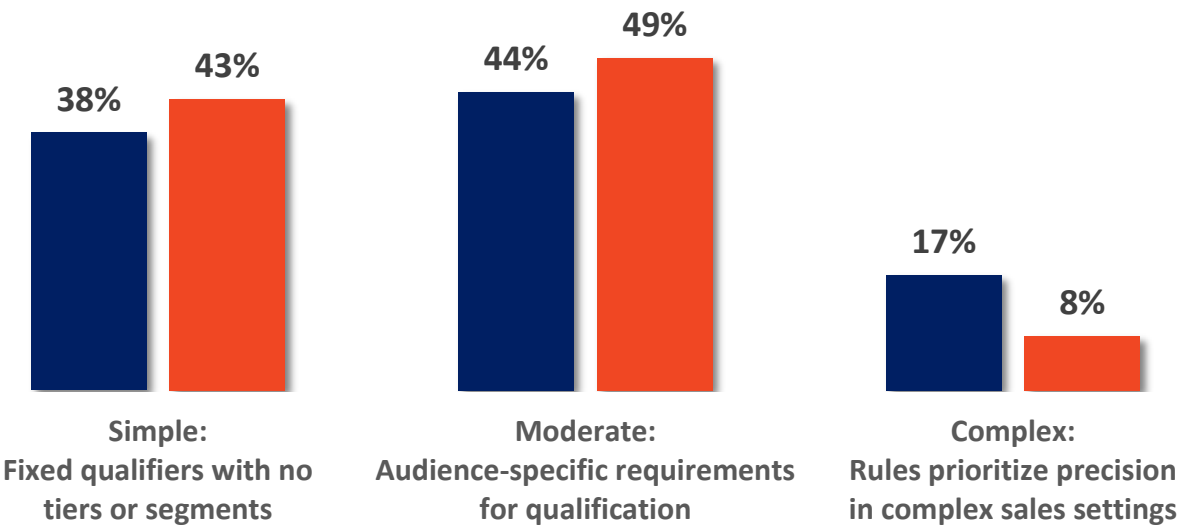
Sales: Top Performer Incentive Trip Qualification Process

Top Performers are more likely to use complex criteria, though simple and moderate processes are preferred

Incentive Trip Selection by Performance Segment



Incentive Trip Qualification Process by Performance Segment

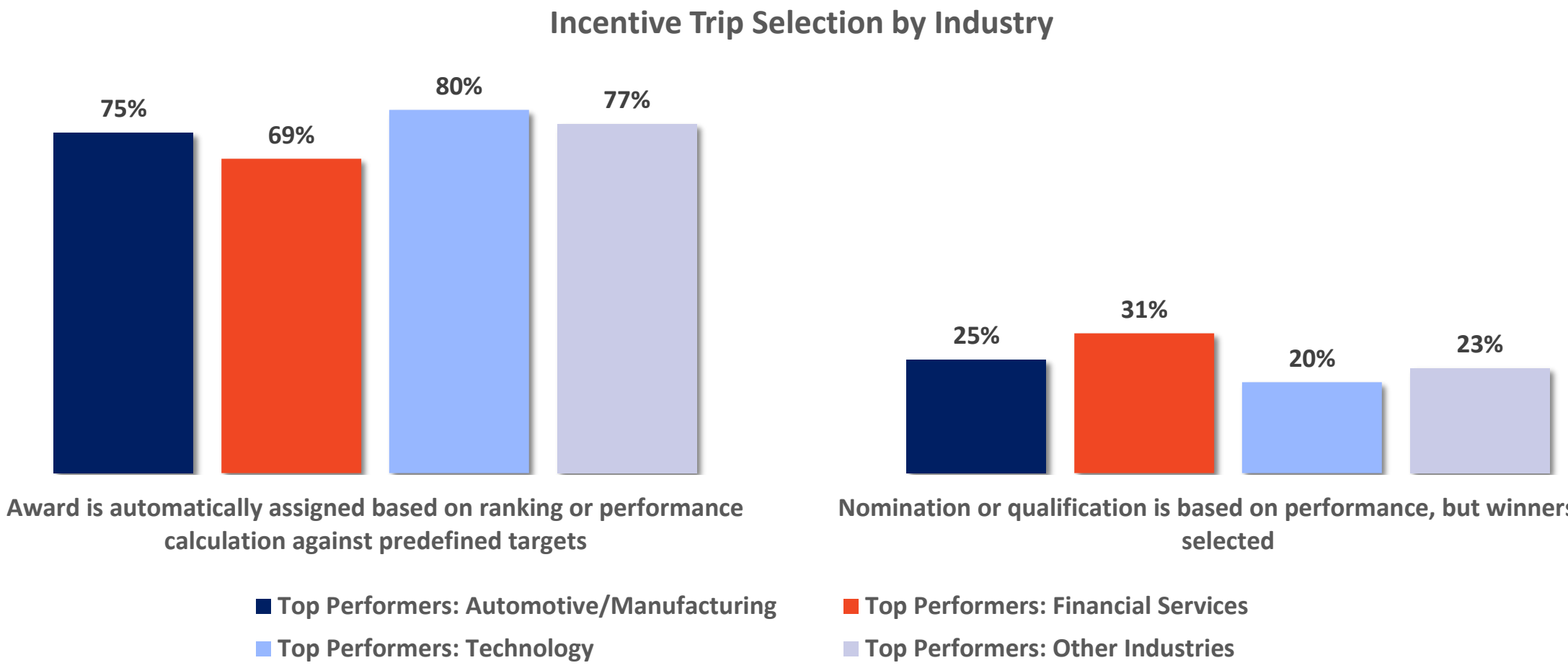


Top Performers Comparators

Q35: Which of the below best describes the qualification process for the sales Top Performer incentive trip?
Q36: Which of the following best describes your qualification criteria for the sales Top Performer incentive trip?

Sales: Top Performer Incentive Trip Qualification Process

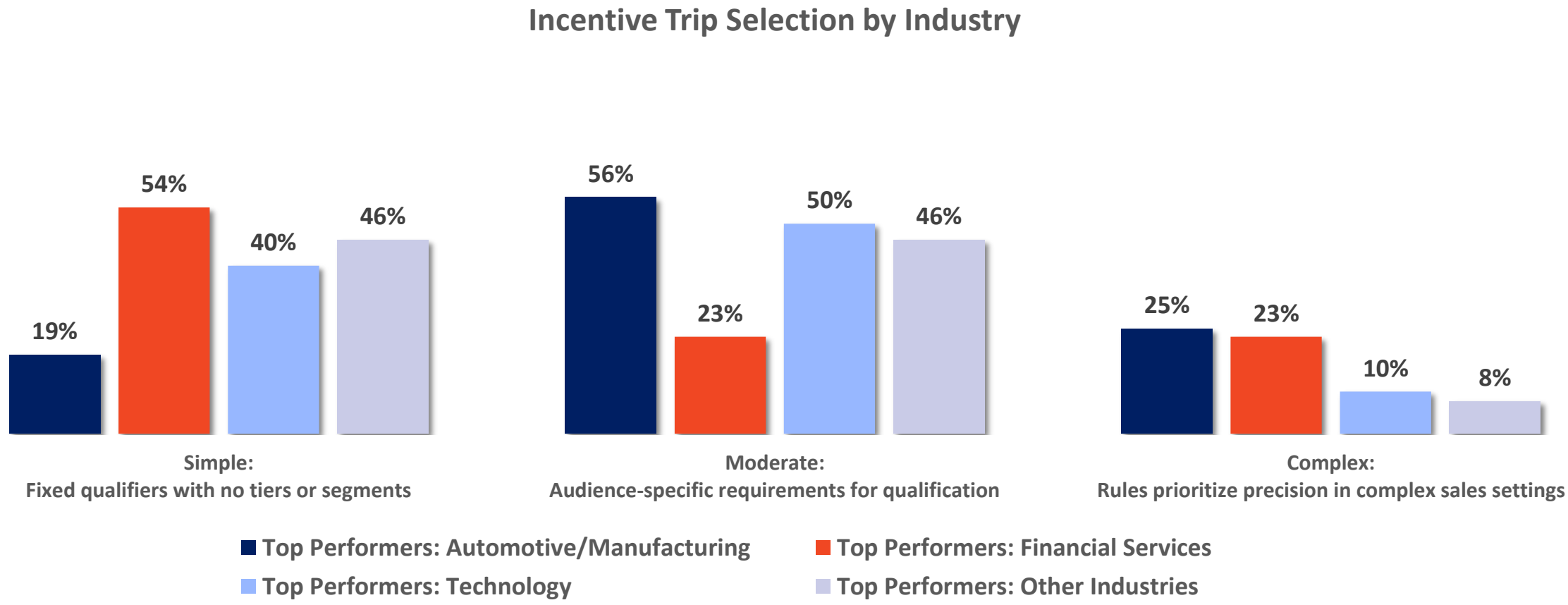
Top performing Financial Services firms are slightly more inclined to use nomination-based trip qualification



Q35: Which of the below best describes the qualification process for the sales Top Performer incentive trip?

Sales: Top Performer Incentive Trip Qualification Process

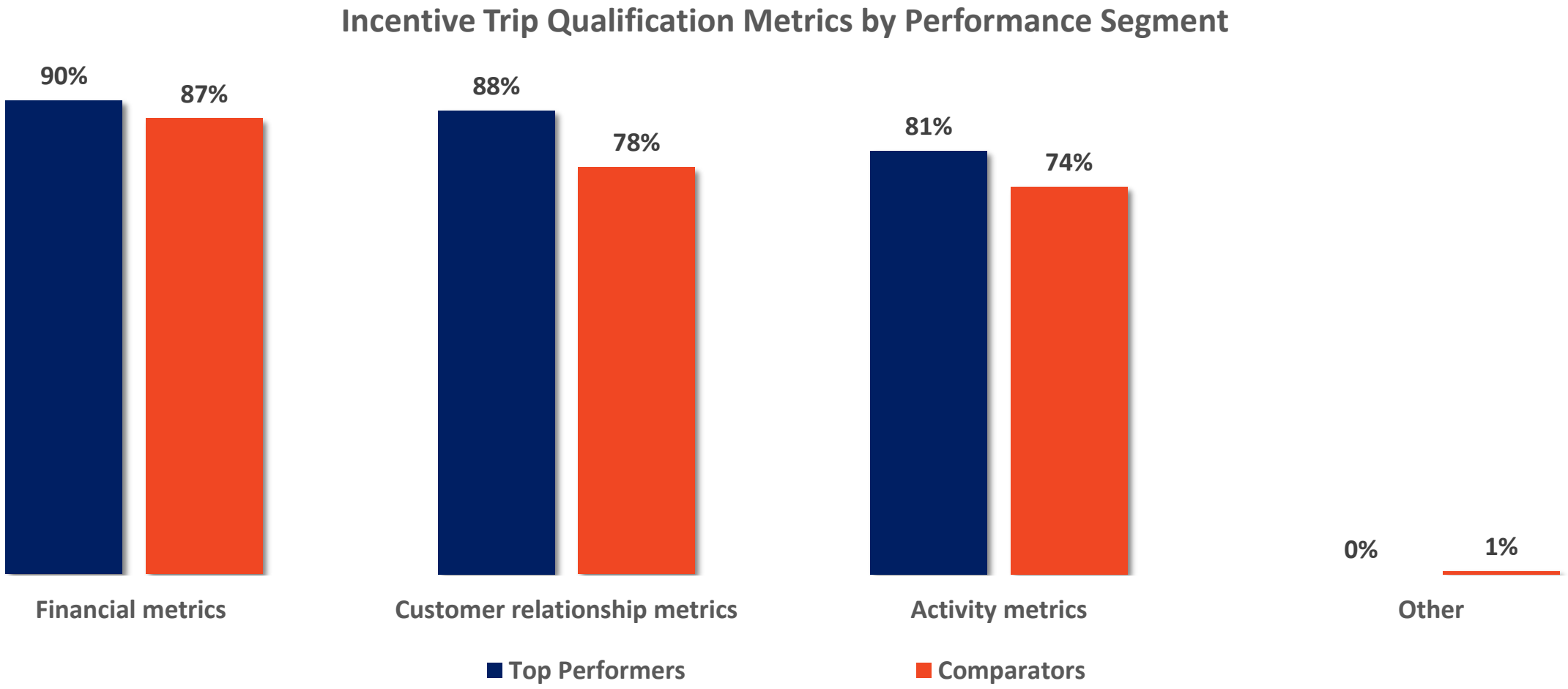
Top performing Automotive/Manufacturing companies favor moderate or complex qualification criteria, while Financial Services lean toward a simplified approach



Q36: Which of the following best describes your qualification criteria for the sales Top Performer incentive trip?

Sales: Top Performer Incentive Trip Qualification Metrics

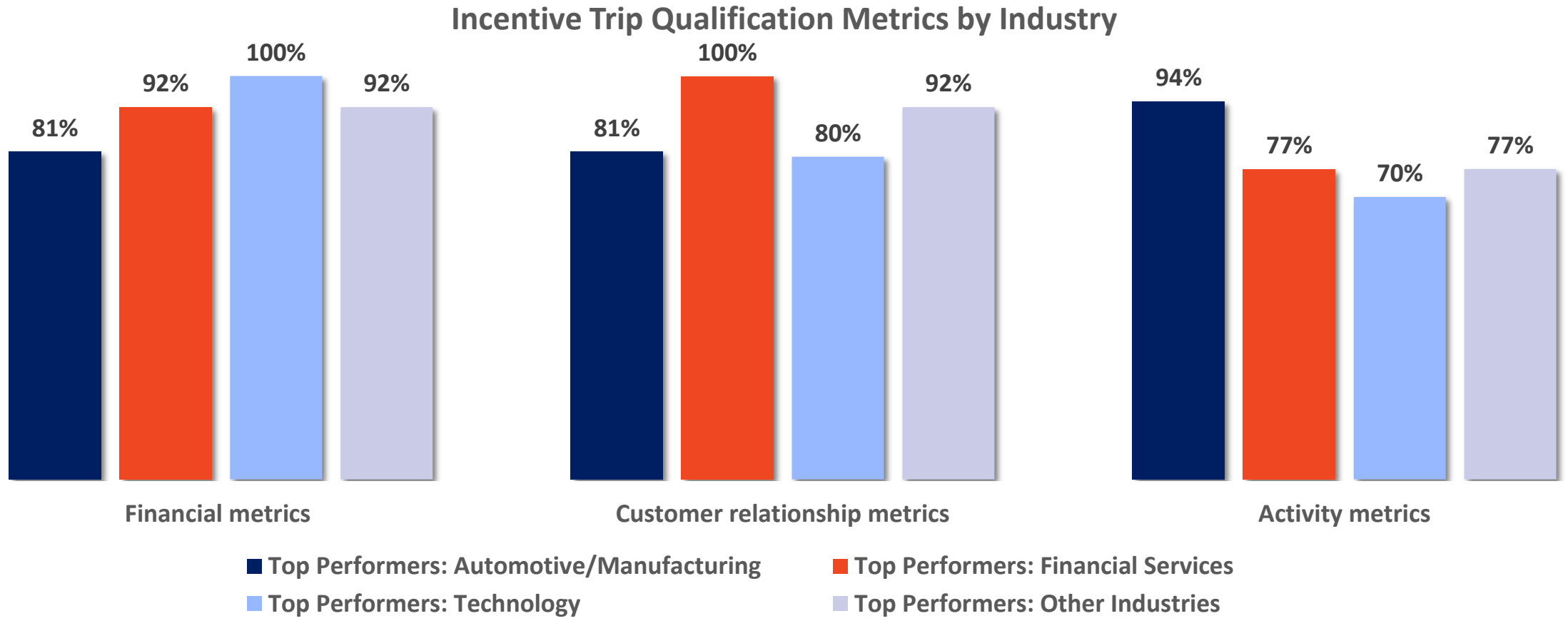
Top Performers rely more heavily on customer relationship and activity metrics for incentive trip qualification



Q37: Which of the following best describes the metrics used to qualify salespeople for the Top Performer incentive trip?

Sales: Top Performer Incentive Trip Qualification Metrics

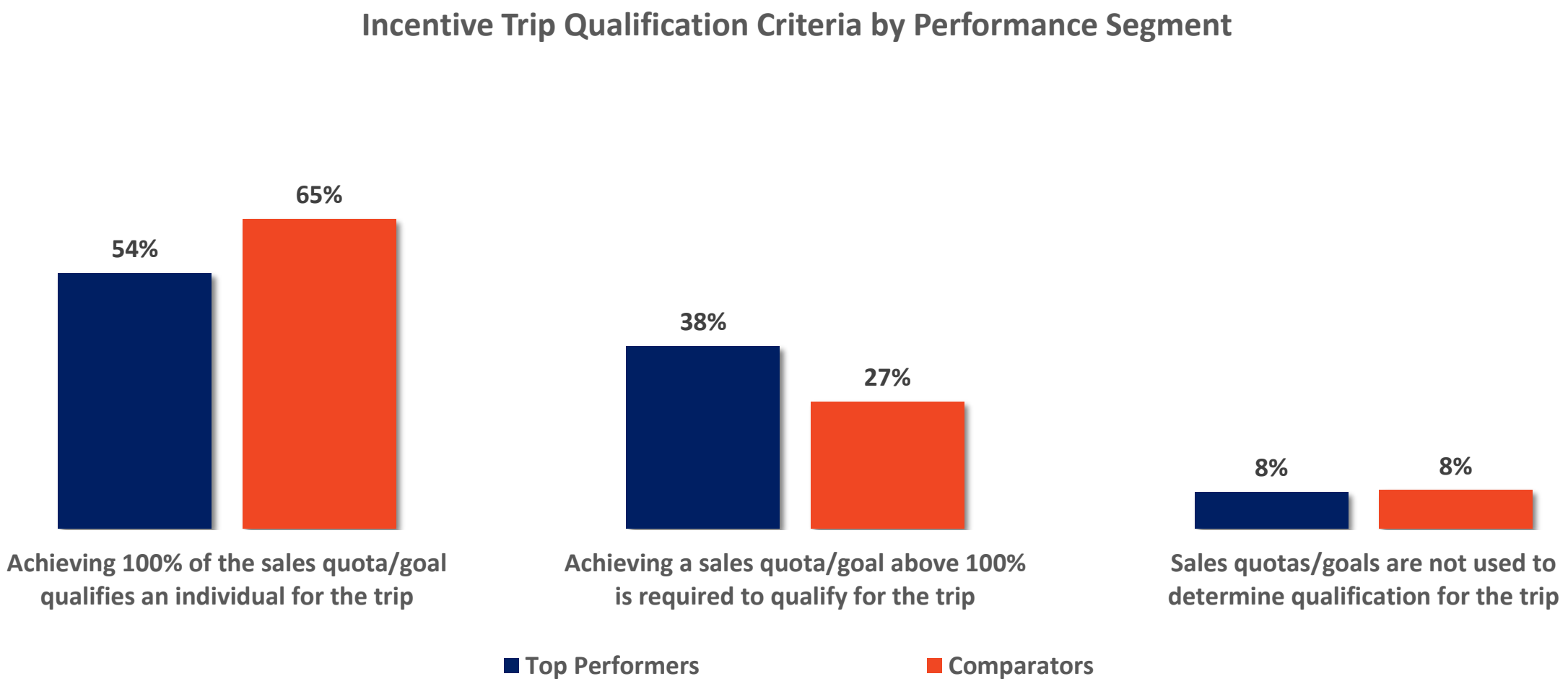
Top-performing companies in Financial Services and Other Industries place greater emphasis on customer relationship metrics, while Automotive/Manufacturing companies are more apt to include activity metrics



Q37: Which of the following best describes the metrics used to qualify salespeople for the Top Performer incentive trip?

Sales: Top Performer Incentive Trip Qualification Criteria

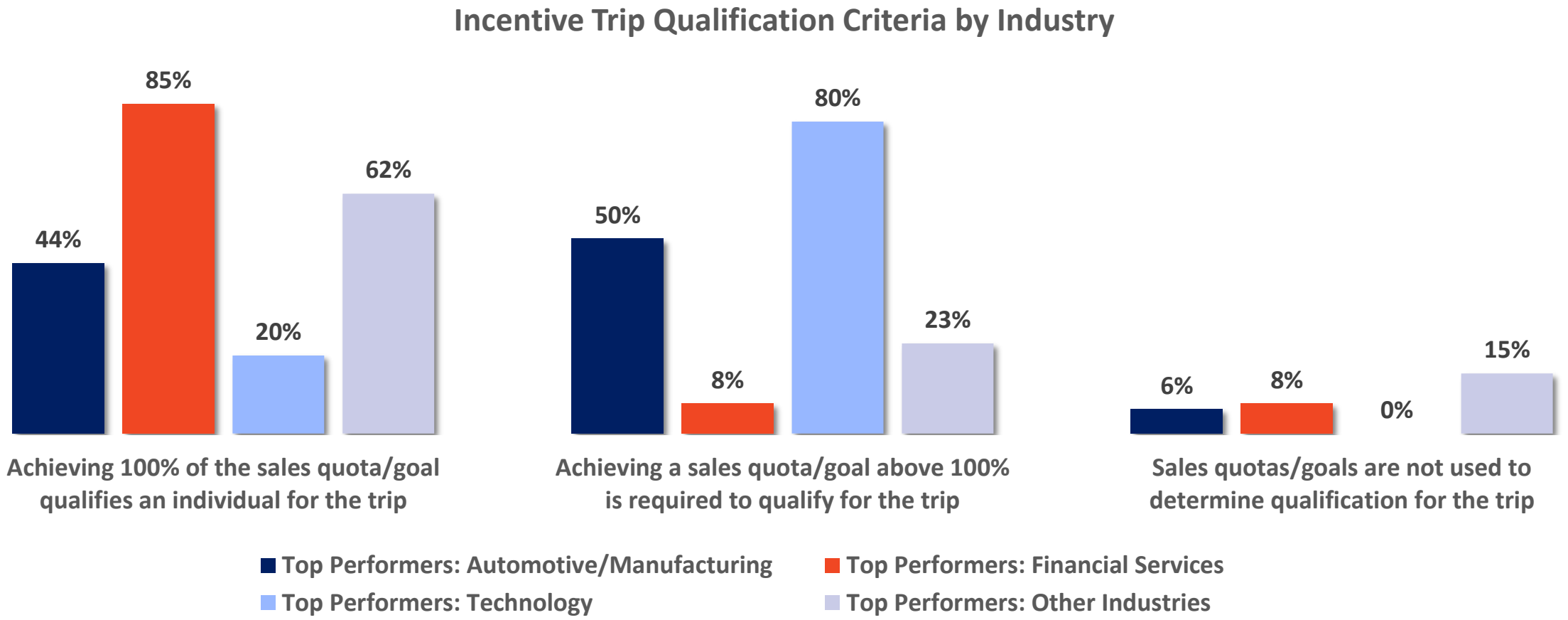
Top Performers are more likely to require exceeding sales targets to qualify for an incentive trip



Q39: How do sales quotas/goals factor into qualification for the Top Performer incentive trip?

Sales: Top Performer Incentive Trip Qualification Criteria

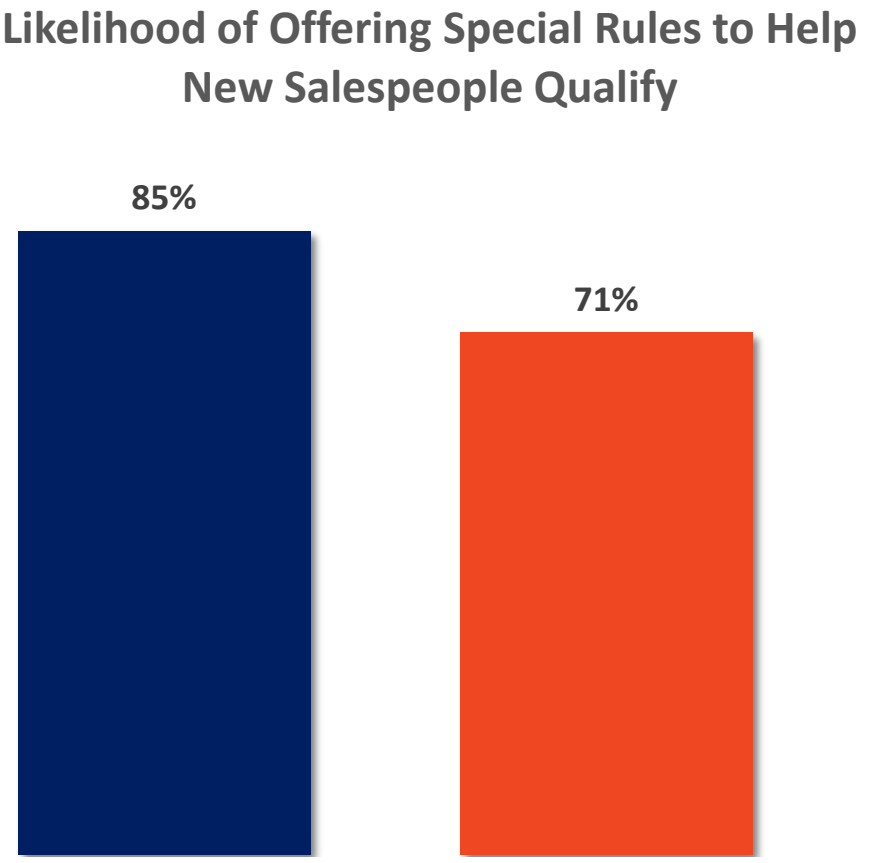
Top Performers in Technology require surpassing quotas to qualify for incentive trips, while Financial Services and Other Industries qualify at 100% achievement

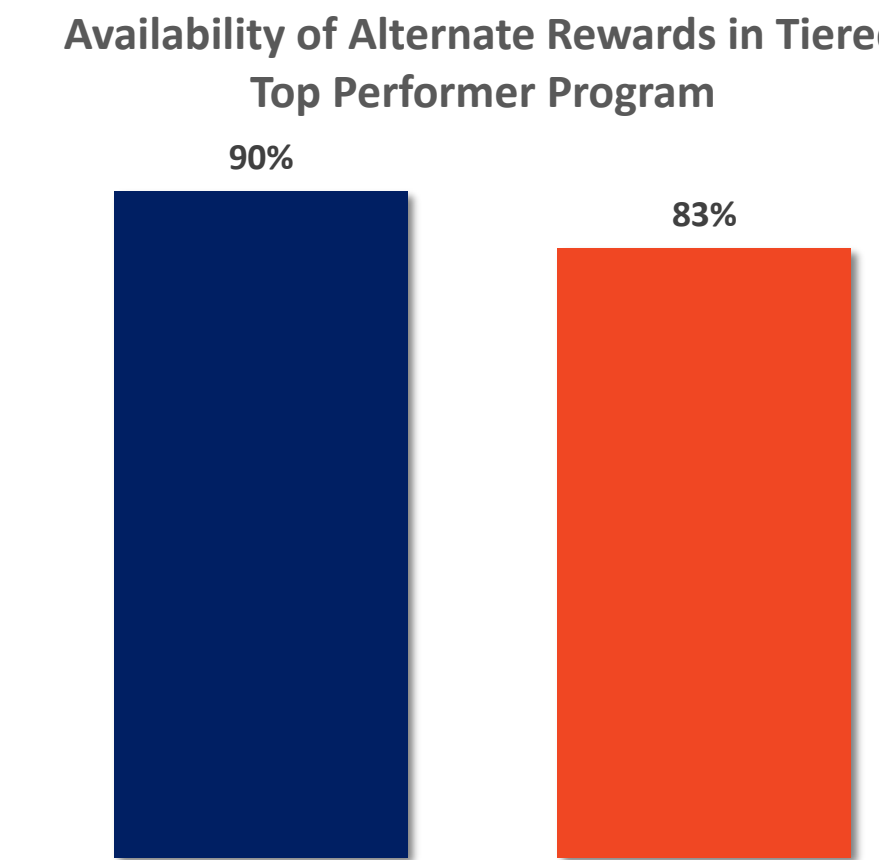


Q39: How do sales quotas/goals factor into qualification for the Top Performer incentive trip?

Sales: Top Performer Special Circumstances

Top-performing companies are more likely to offer easier qualification paths for new salespeople



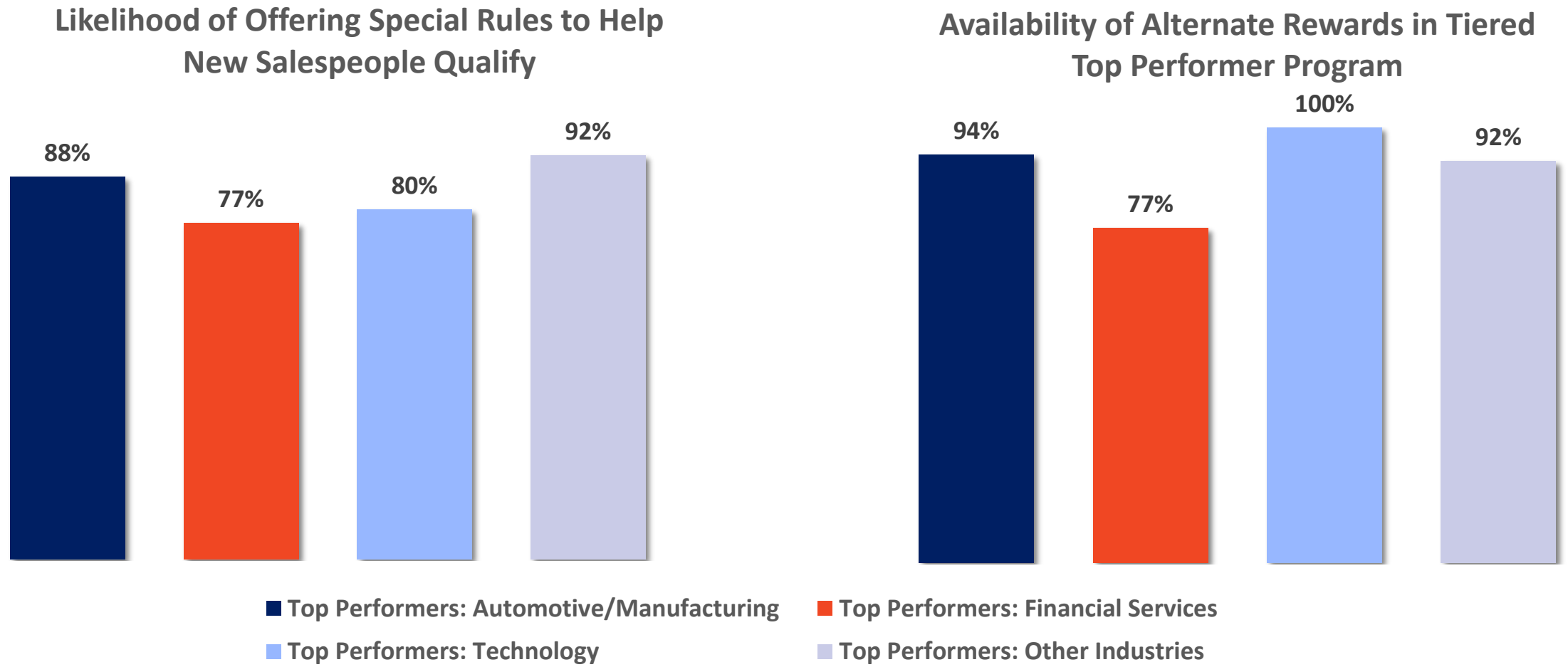


Top Performers Comparators

Q40: Do you have special rules for new salespeople that give them a better chance to qualify for the Top Performer incentive trip?
Q41: Is your Top Performer award program tiered, allowing salespeople who don't qualify for the trip to earn other rewards, such as award points, gift cards, merchandise, or a lower-level trip?

Sales: Top Performer Special Circumstances

Top Performers in Financial Services are less likely to provide a tiered rewards approach



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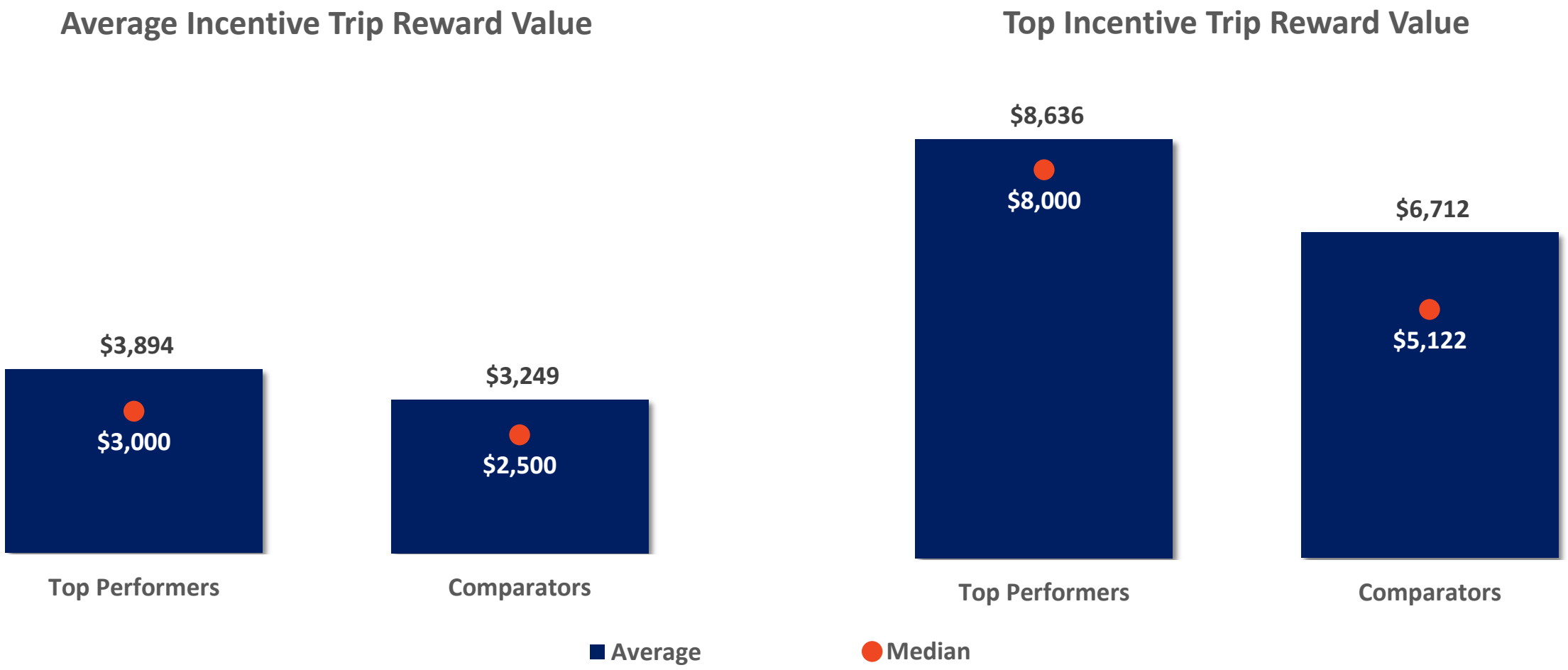
Sales: Program Spending on Incentive Travel

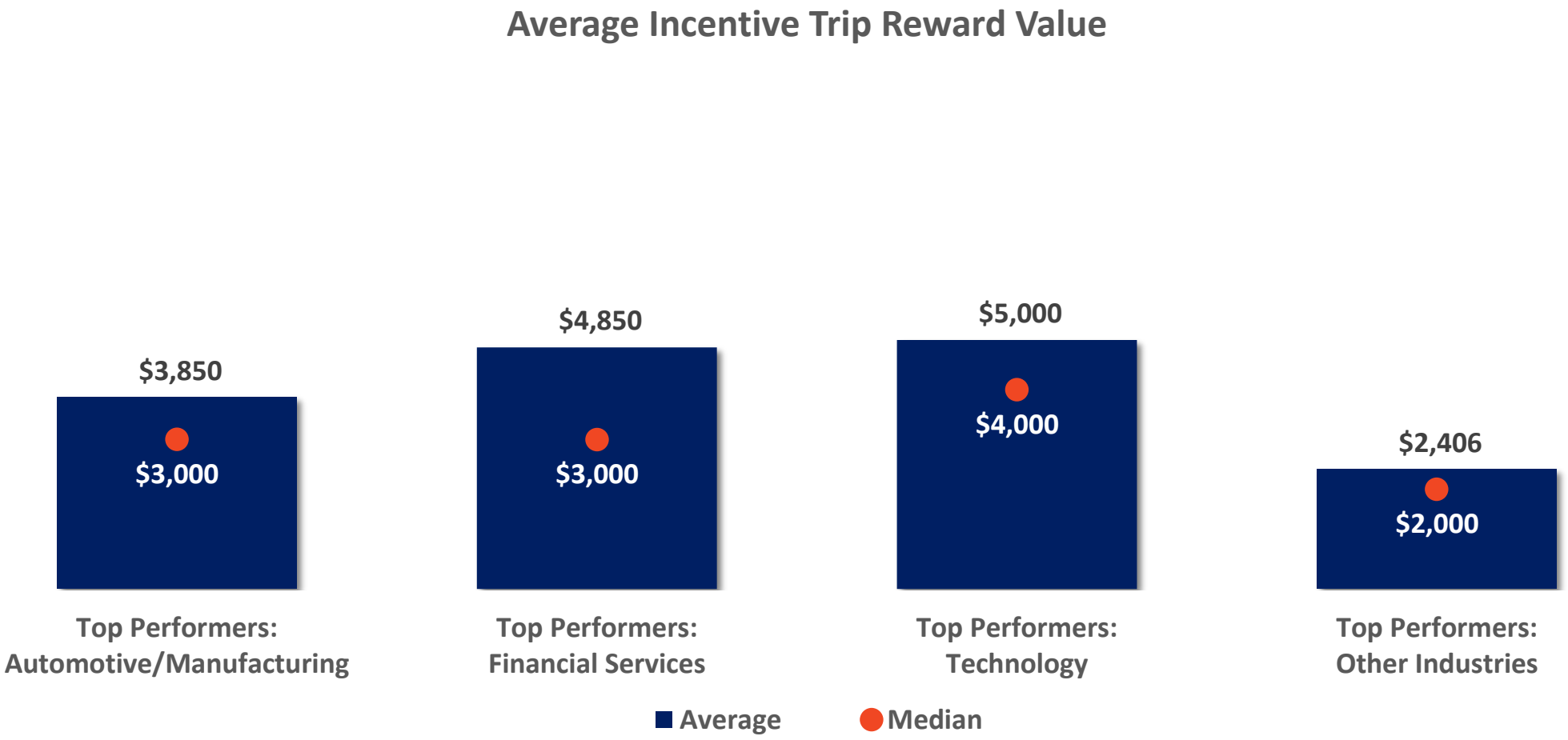
Top-performing companies offer higher incentive trip values, primarily for top performing sales representatives



Q50: What are the average and top reward values for incentive trips in your sales rewards program?

Sales: Program Spending on Incentive Travel

On average, top performing Technology firms offer higher-value incentive trips



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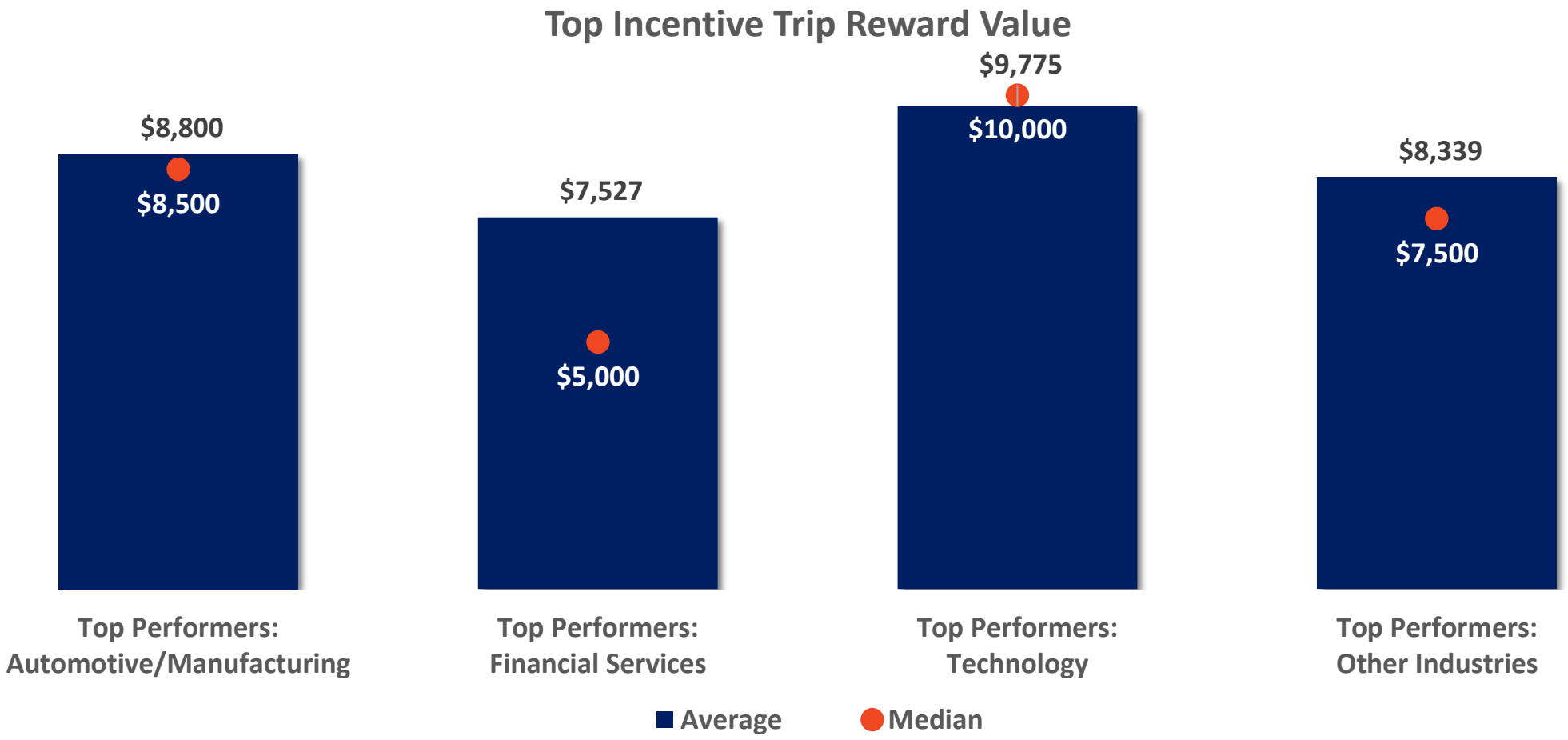


Q50: What are the average and top reward values for incentive trips in your sales rewards program?

Sales Program:
Award Points, Gift Cards & Merchandise

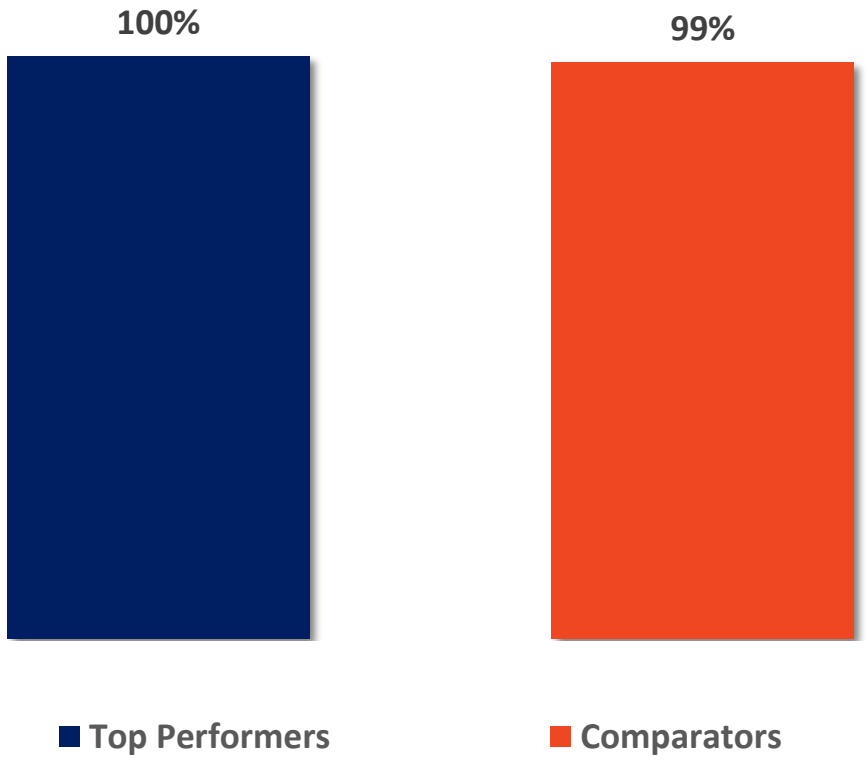
Award Points, Gift Cards & Merchandise: Key Findings

- Customer relation, financial, and activity metrics are all common metrics for determine sales eligibility for award points, gift cards, and merchandise.
- Top Performers are more likely to offer flexible paths to earning non-travel rewards, with less reliance on strict performance thresholds.
- Special features such as “Fast Start” opportunities and the ability to earn unlimited rewards are more common in Top Performers than Comparators.
- Top Performers invest more in non-travel rewards, offering higher-value award points, gift cards, and merchandise, particularly for top sales achievers.

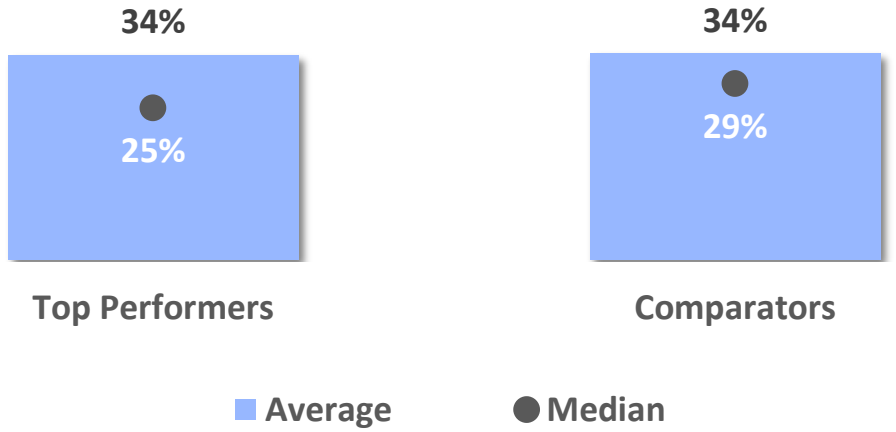
Sales: Award Points, Merchandise, or Gift Card Availability

Top Performers and Comparators award non-travel rewards at similar rates

Frequency of Award Points, Merchandize or Gift Card Use in Sales Rewards Programs



Percentage of Sales Representatives Earning Award Points, Merchandise, or Gift Cards

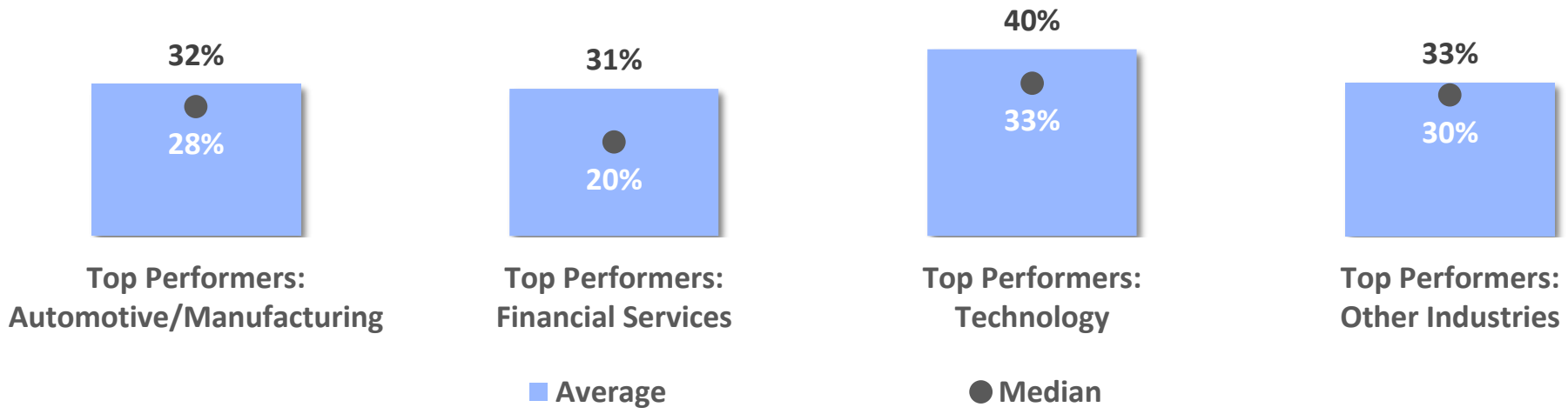


Q26: Which of the following rewards can participants earn in your programs?
Q43: Regarding rewards other than incentive travel, what percent of your salesforce do you expect to earn award points, merchandise, or gift cards in 2025?

Sales: Award Points, Merchandise, or Gift Card Availability

Top performing Technology firms reward a slightly higher share of their salesforce with non-travel incentives

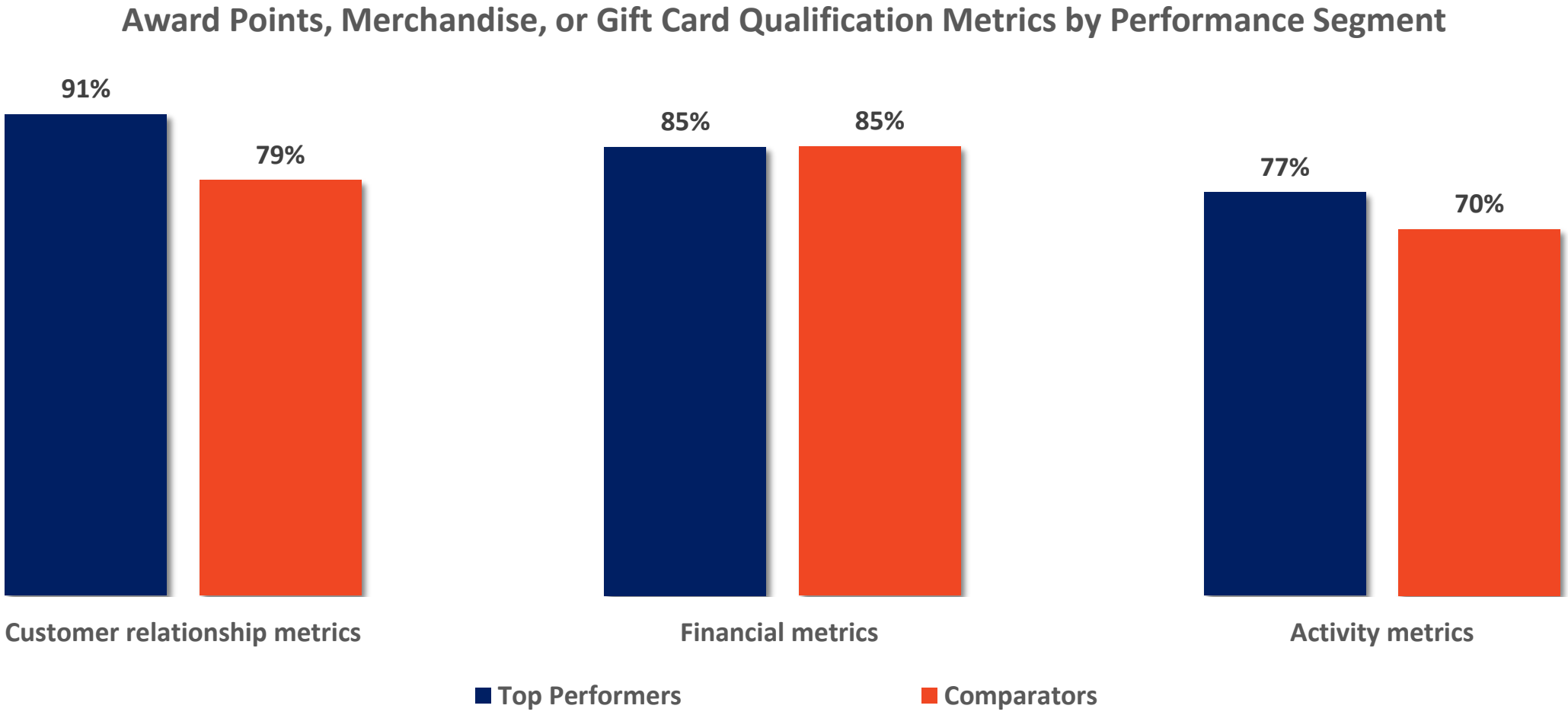
Percentage of Sales Representatives Earning Award Points, Merchandise, or Gift Cards



Q43: Regarding rewards other than incentive travel, what percent of your salesforce do you expect to earn award points, merchandise, or gift cards in 2025?

Sales: Points, Merchandise, or Gift Card Qualification Metrics

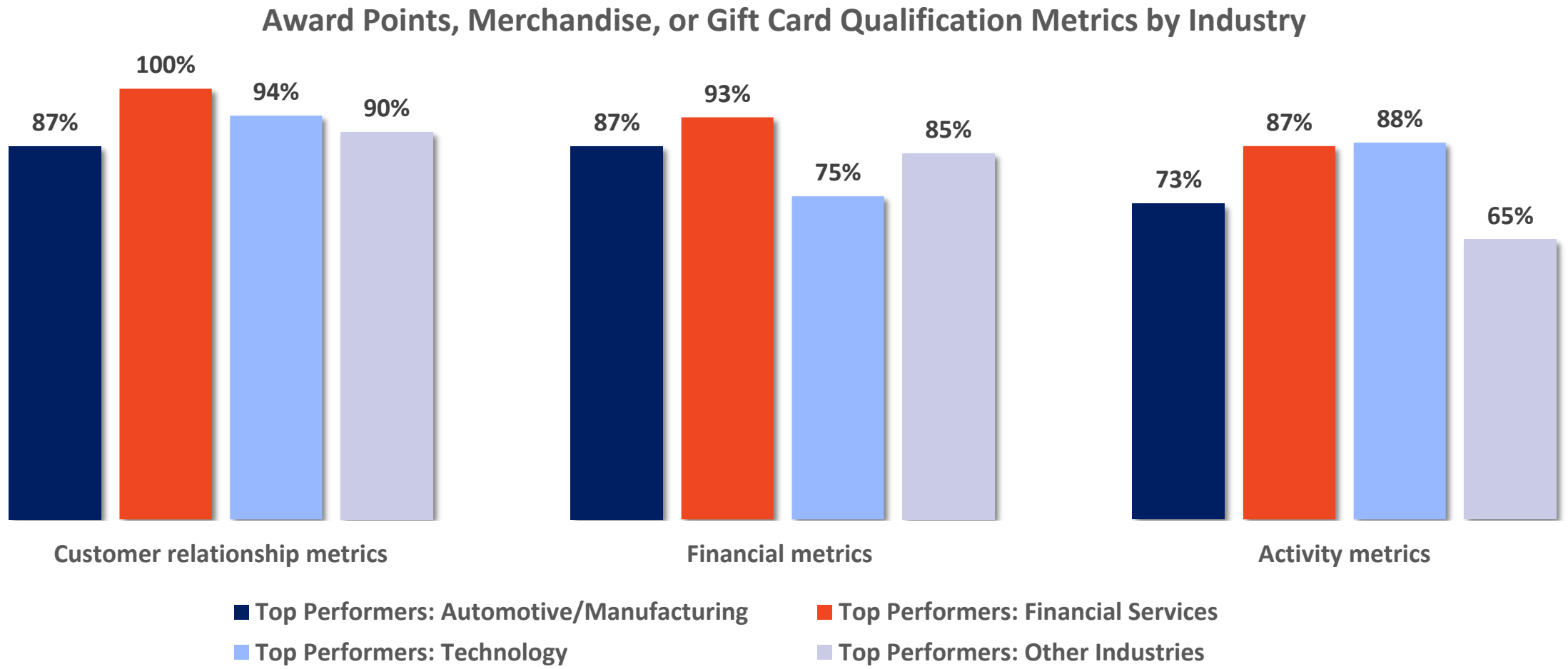
Top Performers are more likely to tie non-travel rewards to customer relationship metrics



Q38: Which of the following best describes the metrics on which salespeople can earn award points, gift cards, or merchandise?

Sales: Points, Merchandise, or Gift Card Qualification Metrics

Top-performing companies in Financial Services and Technology place greater emphasis on activity metrics

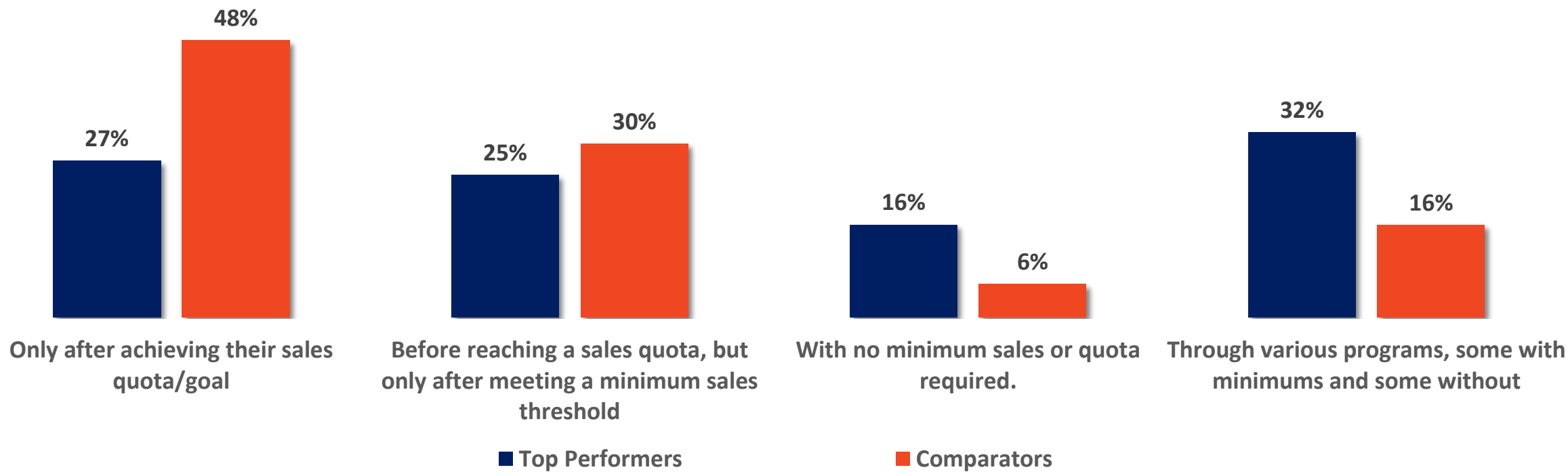


Q38: Which of the following best describes the metrics on which salespeople can earn award points, gift cards, or merchandise?

Sales: Points, Merchandise, or Gift Card Qualification Criteria

Top Performers offer more flexible paths to earning non-travel rewards

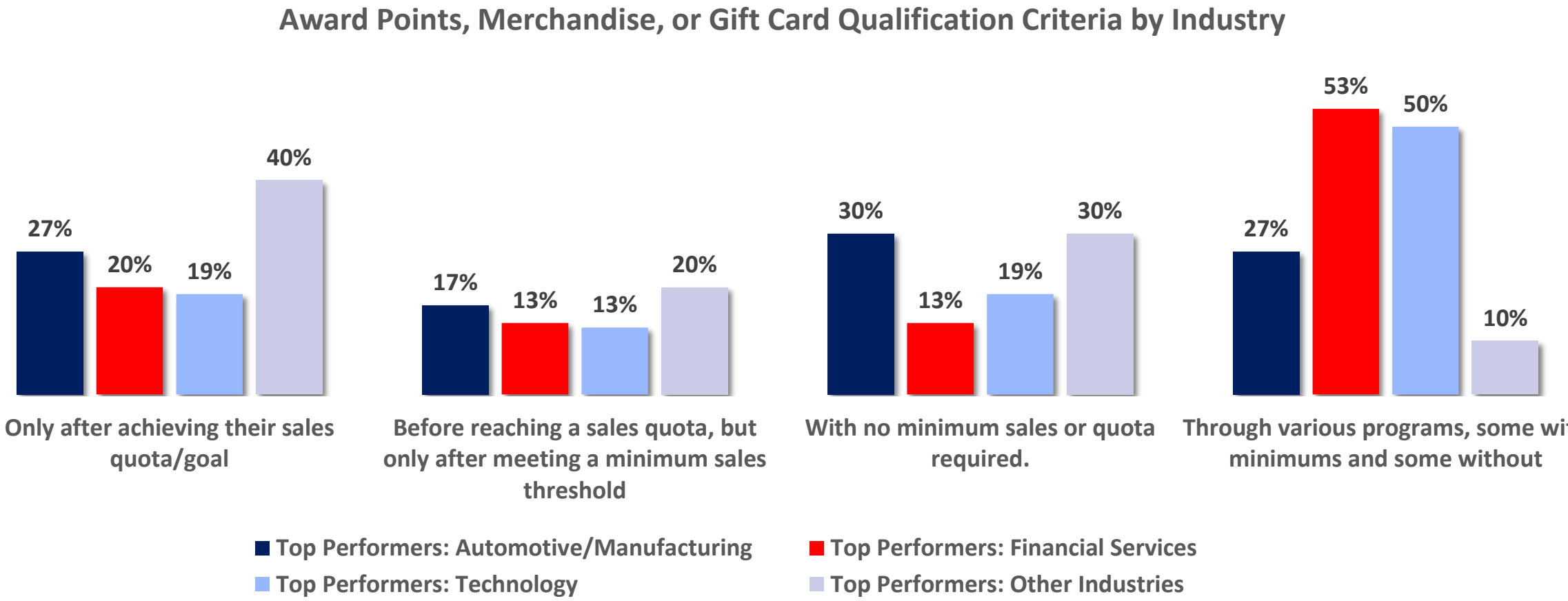
Award Points, Merchandise, or Gift Card Qualification Criteria by Performance Segment



Q44: Regarding award points, gift cards, and merchandise, which of the following best describes how salespeople earn rewards?

Sales: Points, Merchandise, or Gift Card Qualification Criteria

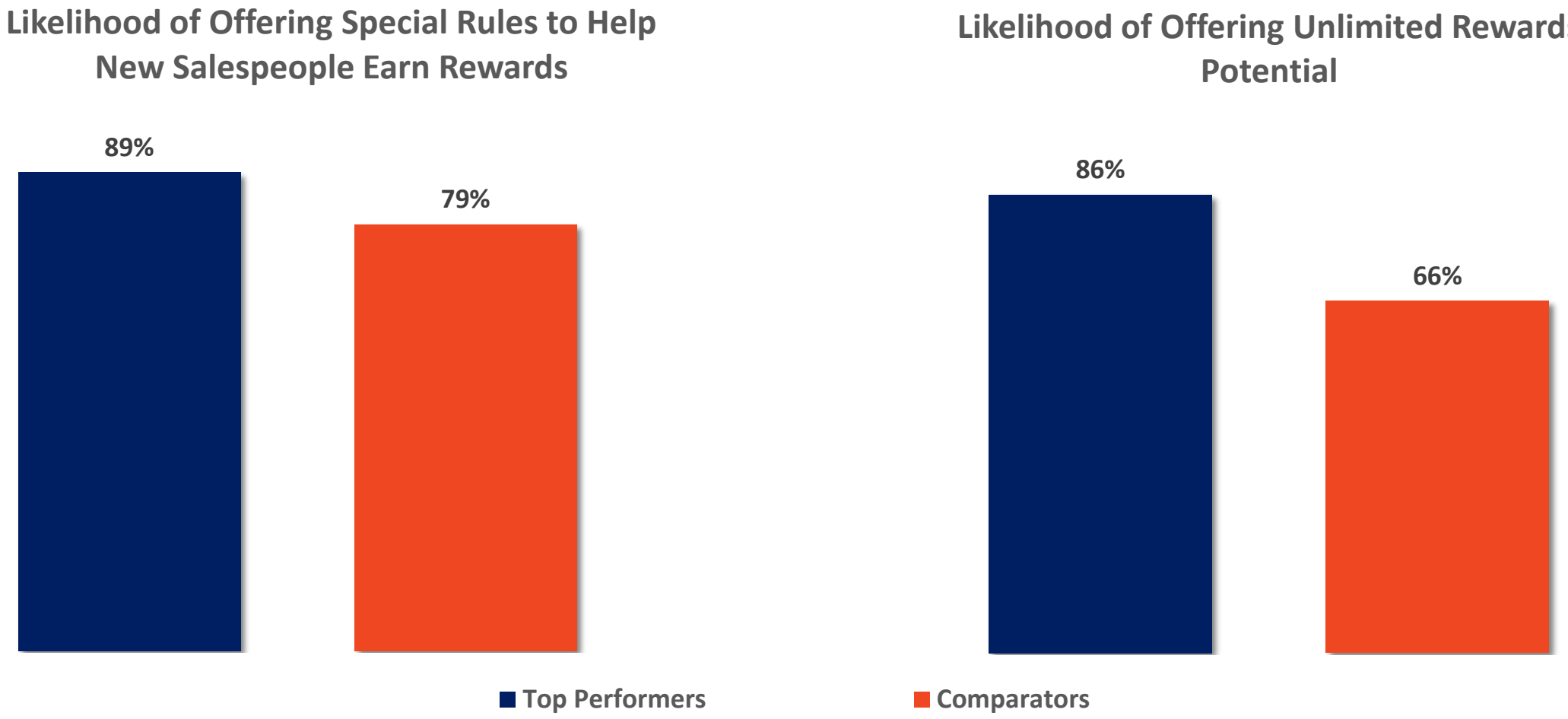
Financial Services and Technology Top Performers favor mixed paths to non-travel rewards, while Other Industries most often require meeting sales quotas



Q44: Regarding award points, gift cards, and merchandise, which of the following best describes how salespeople earn rewards?

Sales: Points, Merchandise, or Gift Card Special Circumstances

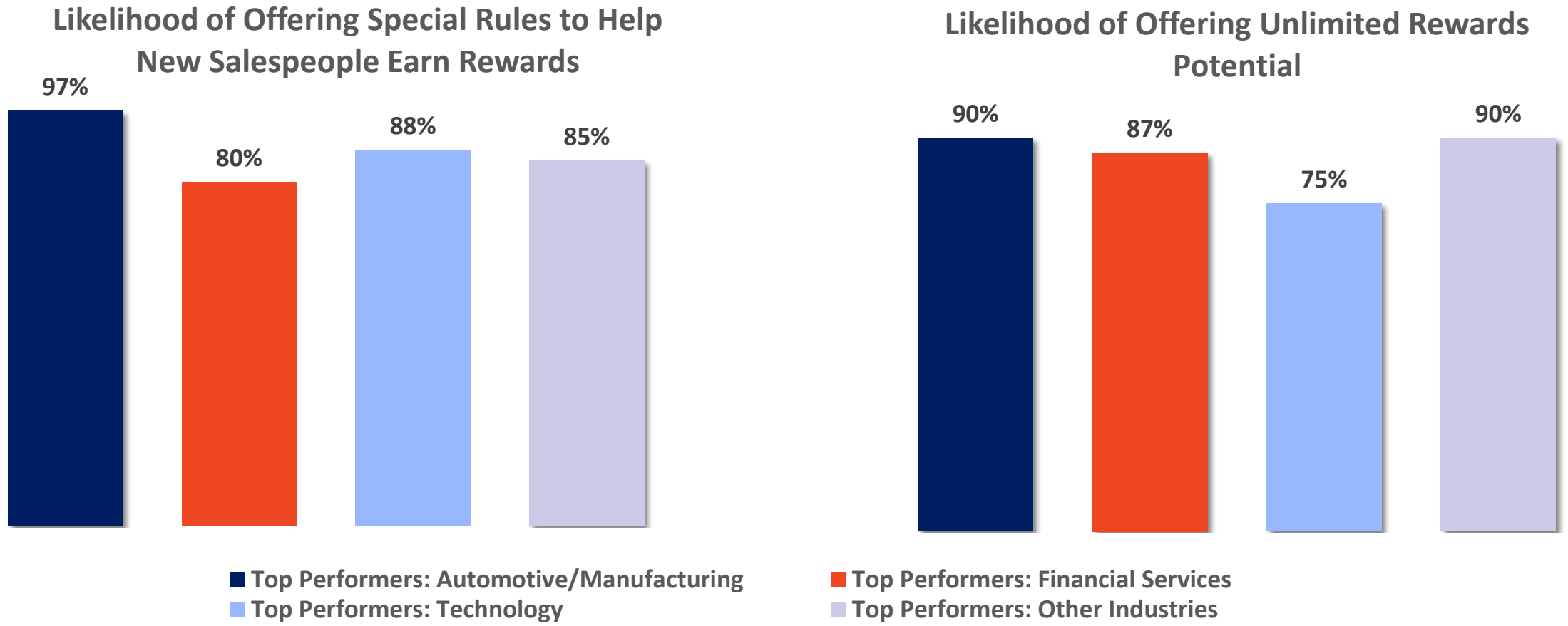
Top Performers are more likely to offer early and unlimited reward opportunities



Q45: Does your sales incentive program include a 'Fast Start' feature to help new salespeople earn award points, gift cards, and merchandise rewards quickly?
Q46: Do you offer non-cash sales incentive programs without a 'top-stop,' allowing salespeople to earn unlimited rewards based on sales volume?

Sales: Points, Merchandise, or Gift Card Special Circumstances

Top performing Automotive/Manufacturing companies are slightly more likely to offer special rules to help sales people, while Technology companies are slightly less likely to prioritize unlimited earning



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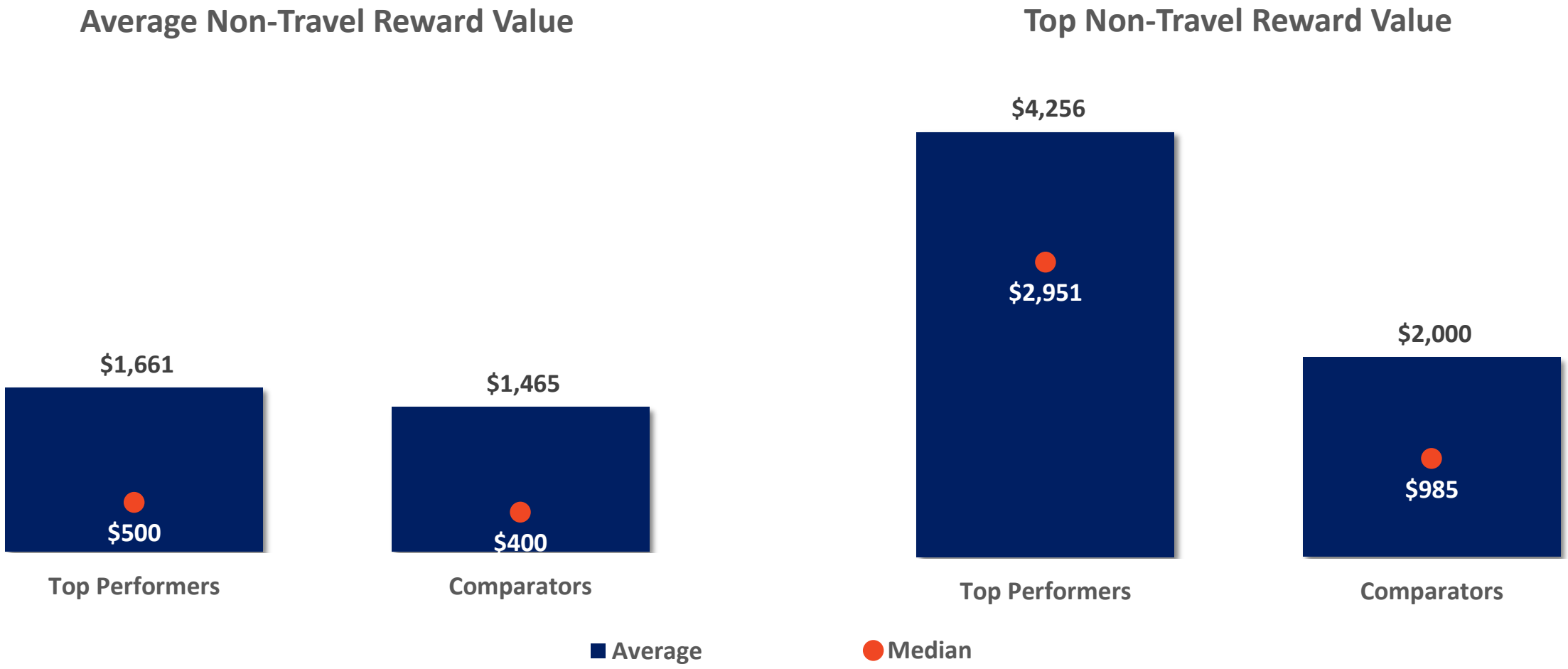
Q46: Do you offer non-cash sales incentive programs without a 'top-stop,' allowing salespeople to earn unlimited rewards based on sales volume?

Sales: Program Spending on Points, Merchandise, or Gift Card

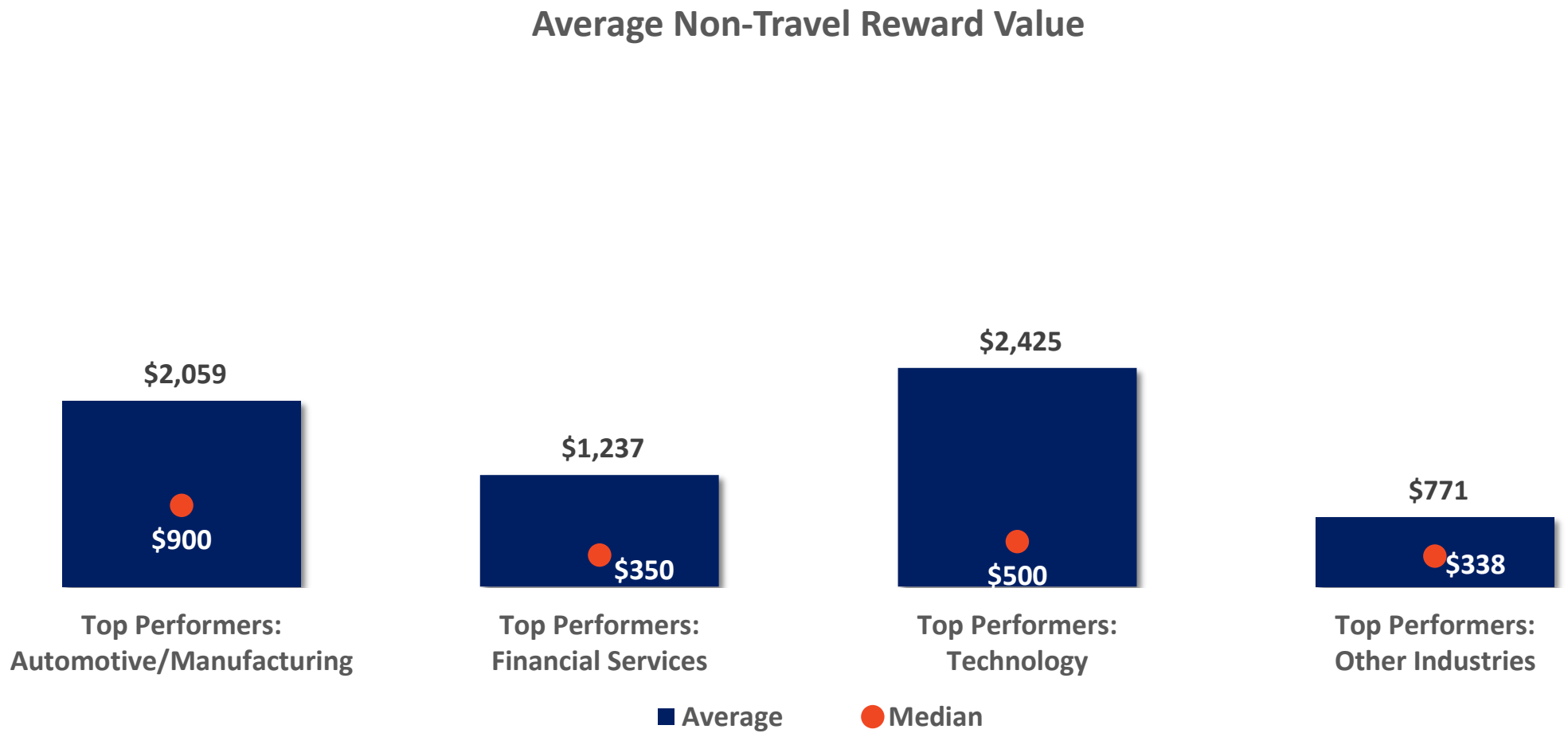
Top-performing companies offer higher non-travel reward values, especially for top performing sales representatives



Q49: What are the average and top reward values for award points, gift cards, and merchandise in your sales rewards program?

Sales: Program Spending on Points, Merchandise, or Gift Card

On average, Top performing Automotive/Manufacturing and Technology offer more substantial non-travel rewards



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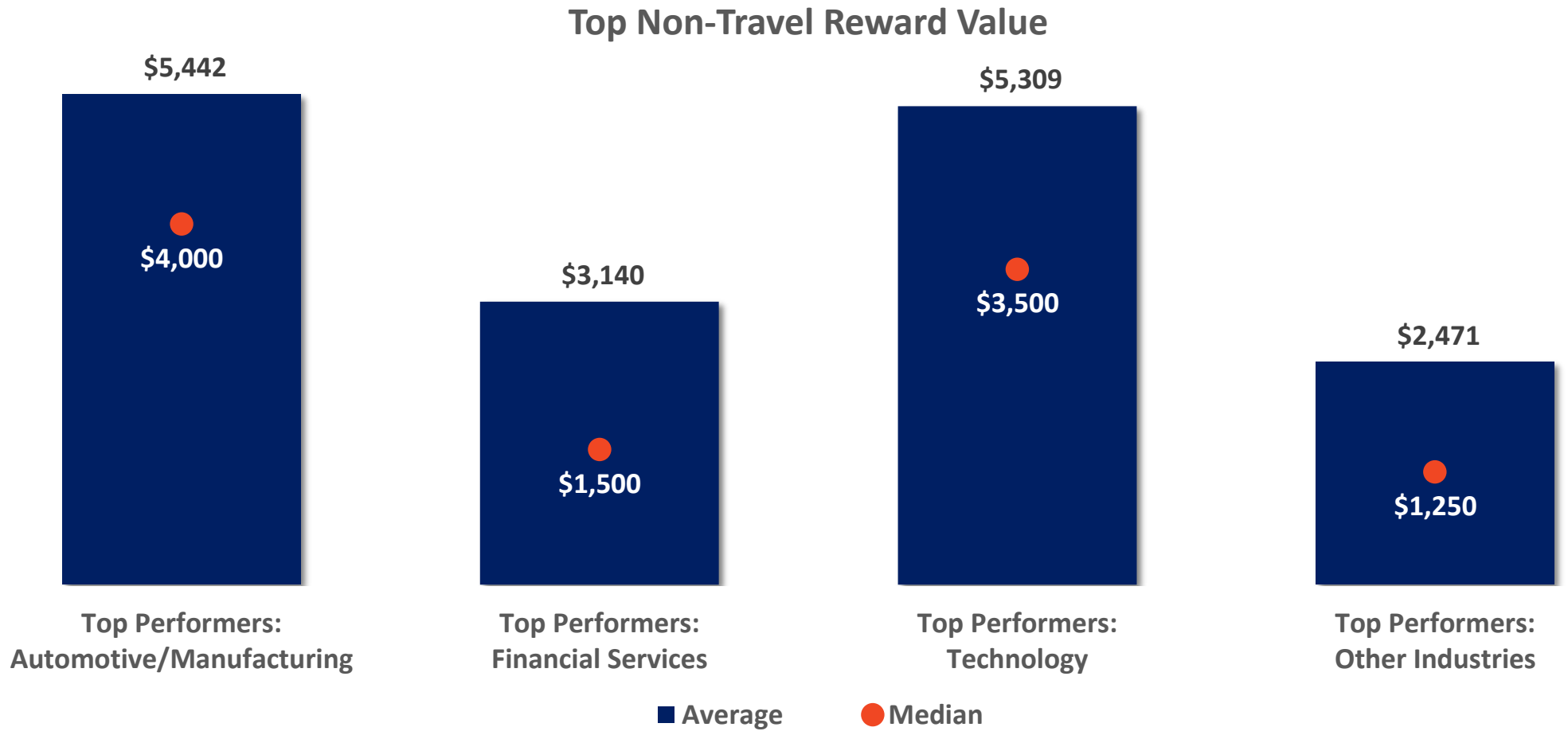


Q49: What are the average and top reward values for award points, gift cards, and merchandise in your sales rewards program?

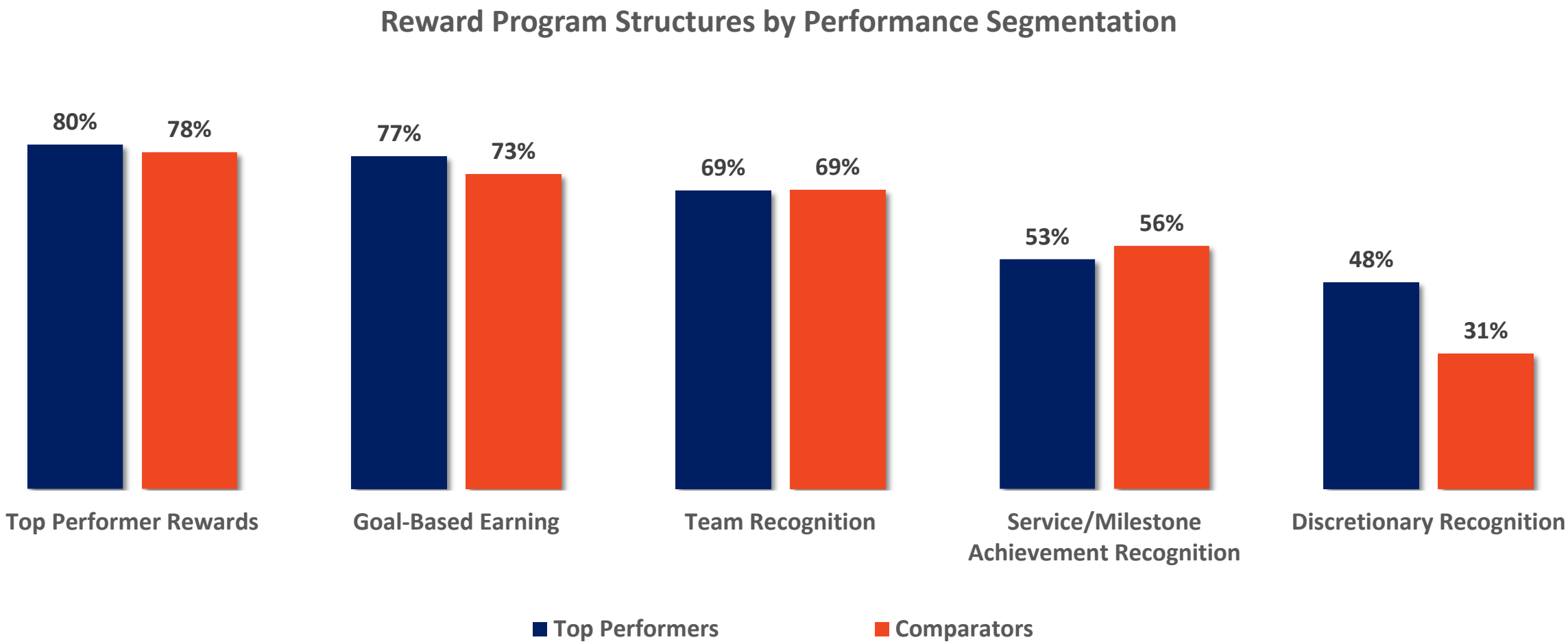
Channel Program: Structure & Design

Structure & Design: Key Findings

- Top-performing companies take a multidimensional approach to channel rewards and recognition, emphasizing Top Performer rewards, goal-based earning, and team recognition.
- Top Performers are more likely to implement a wide variety of goal structures, suggesting that diverse strategies can be effective when executed intentionally.
- Favoring a mixed budgeting approach, Top Performers typically allocate just over 15% of channel partner income to reward programs, slightly more than Comparators.

Channel: Reward Program Structure

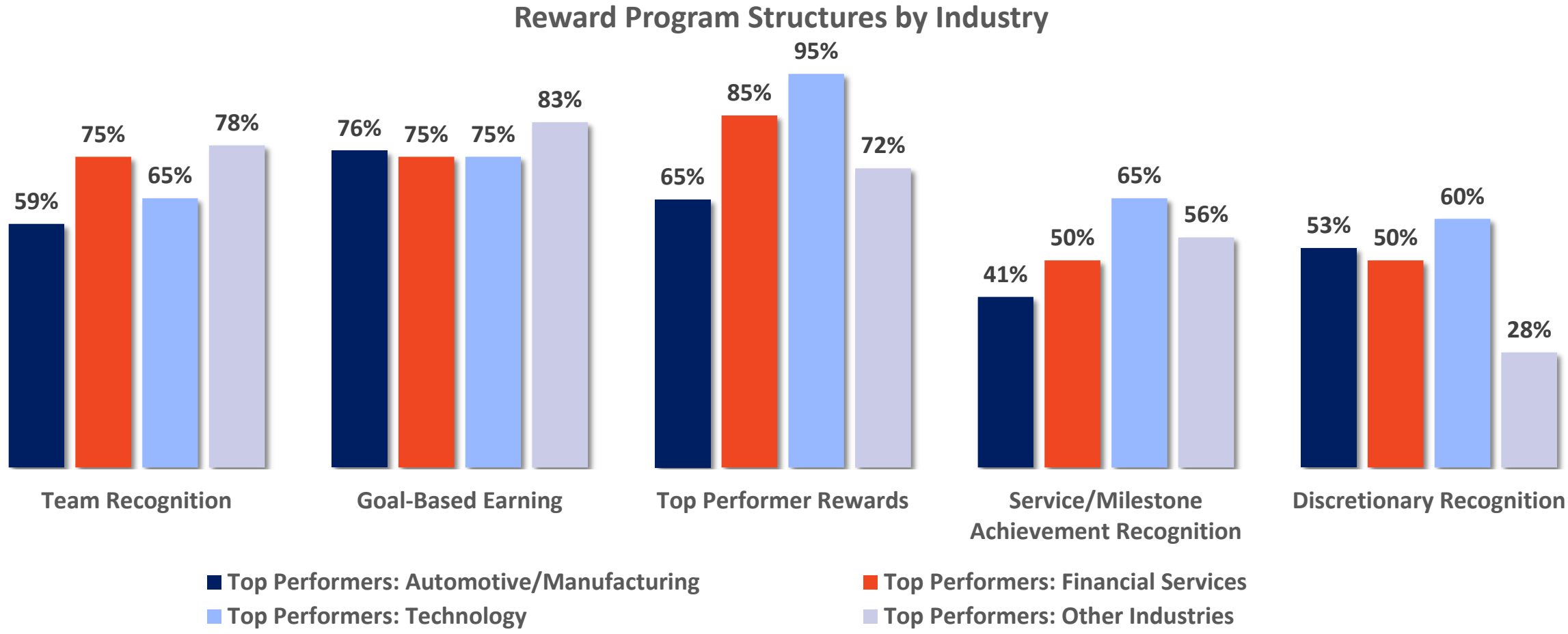
Discretionary Recognition is more common among Top Performers than Comparators.



Q51: Which of the following reward and recognition program structures does your organization currently use for channel partners?

Channel: Reward Program Structure

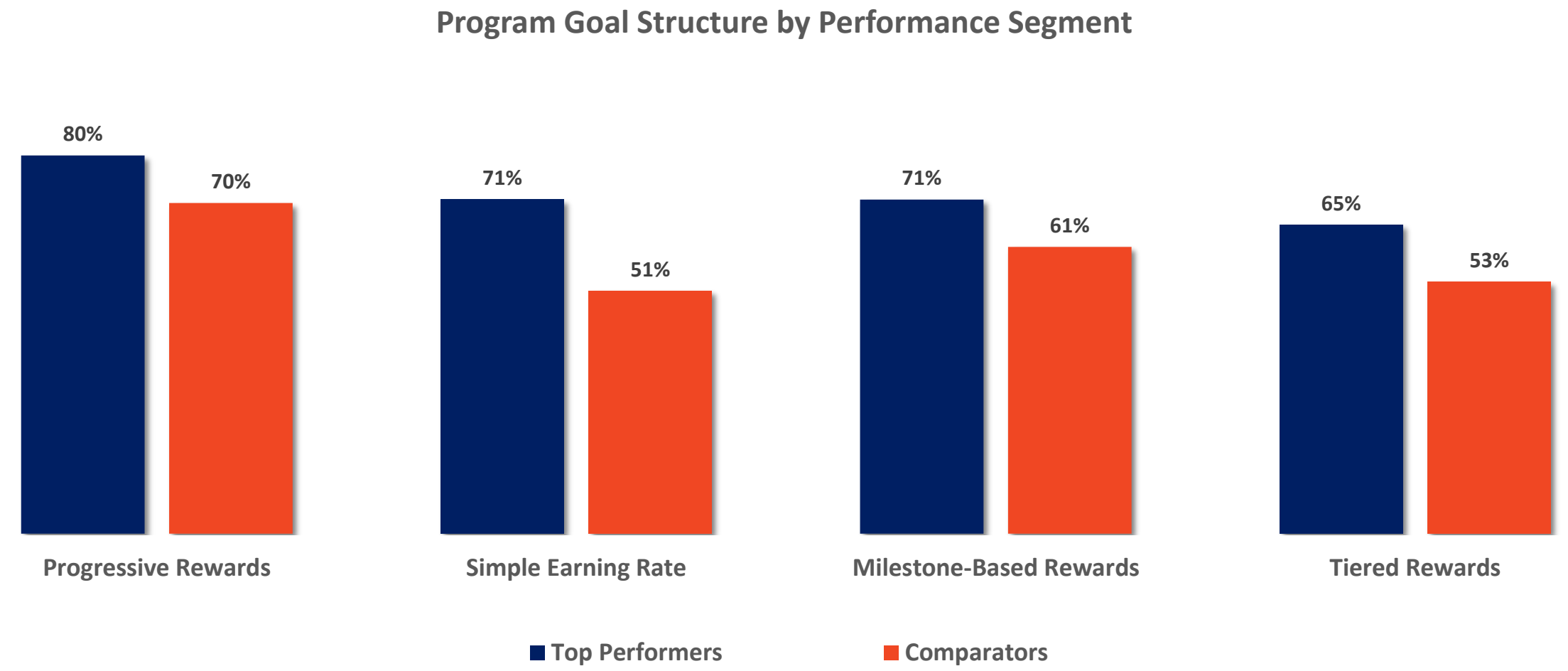
Top Performers in Financial Services and Technology are more likely to use Top Performer Rewards.



Q51: Which of the following reward and recognition program structures does your organization currently use for channel partners?

Channel: Goal Structure

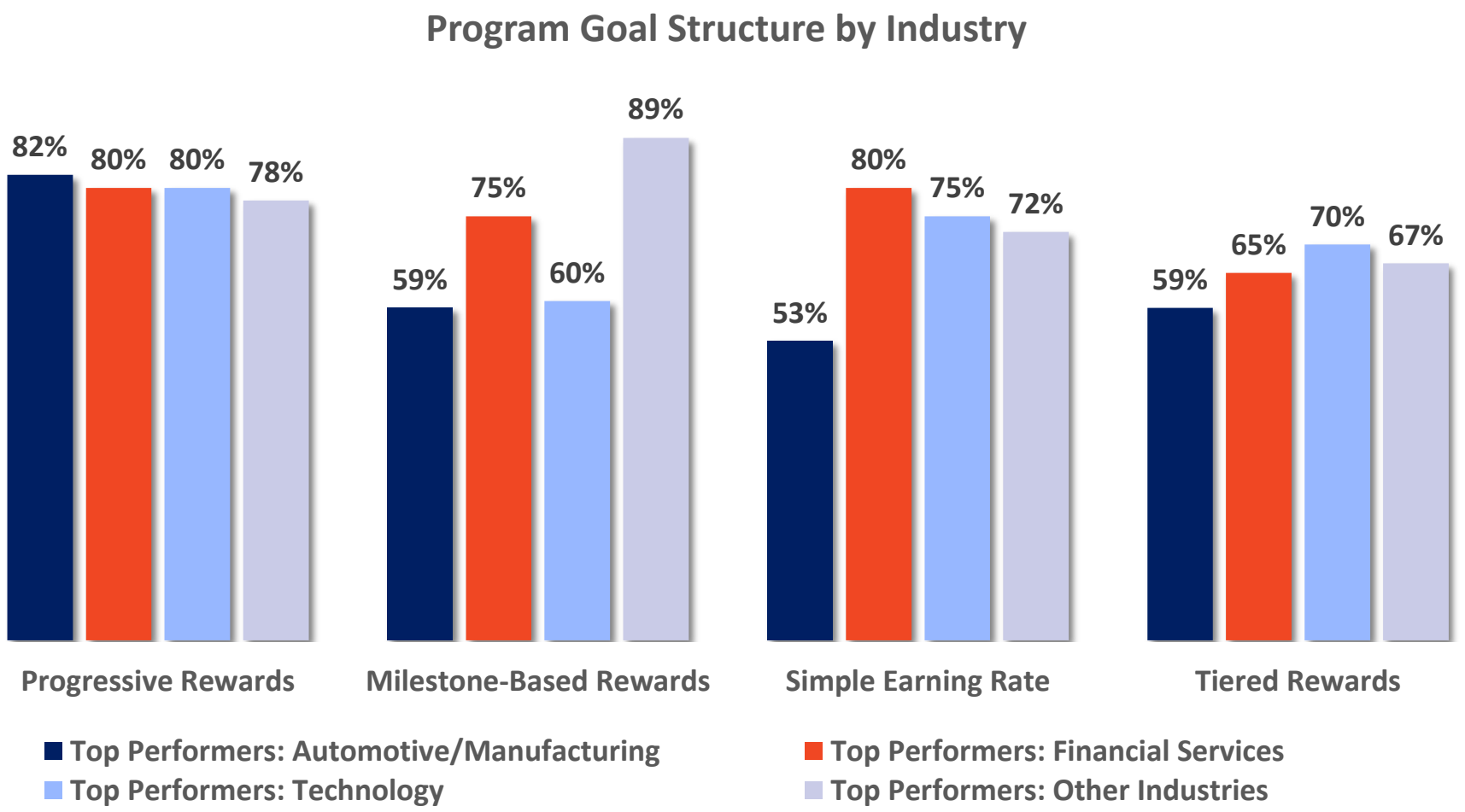
Top Performers use a more diverse goal structure, lead by Progressive Rewards.



Q52: Which of the following best describes the goal structure for your channel reward and recognition program?

Channel: Goal Structure

Top Performers in Automotive/Manufacturing tend to have a less diverse reward structure.



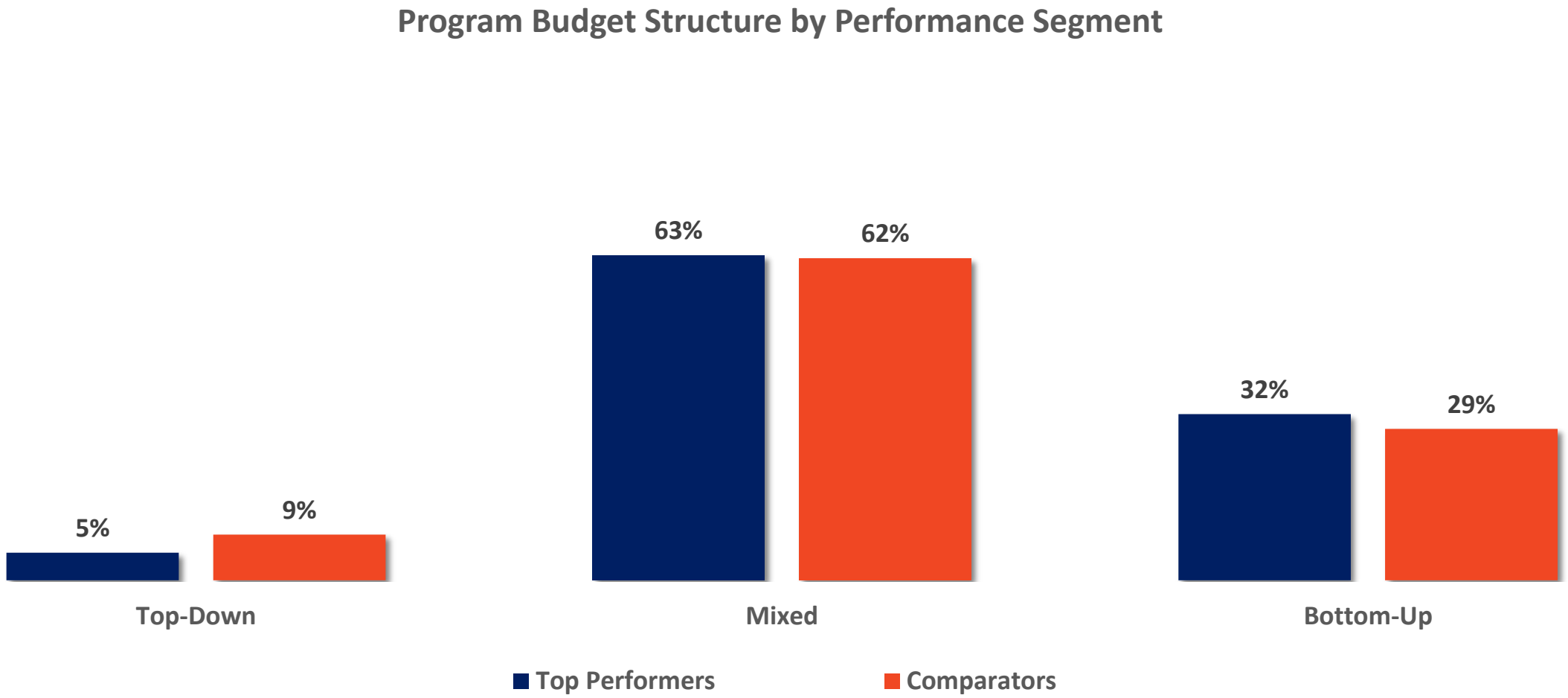
Top Performers in Financial Services and Other Industries are most likely to employ Milestone-Based Rewards.

Top Performers in Automotive/Manufacturing show notably lower adoption of Milestone-Based Rewards, Simple Earning Rates, and Tiered Rewards.

Q52: Which of the following best describes the goal structure for your channel reward and recognition program?

Channel: Reward Program Budgeting

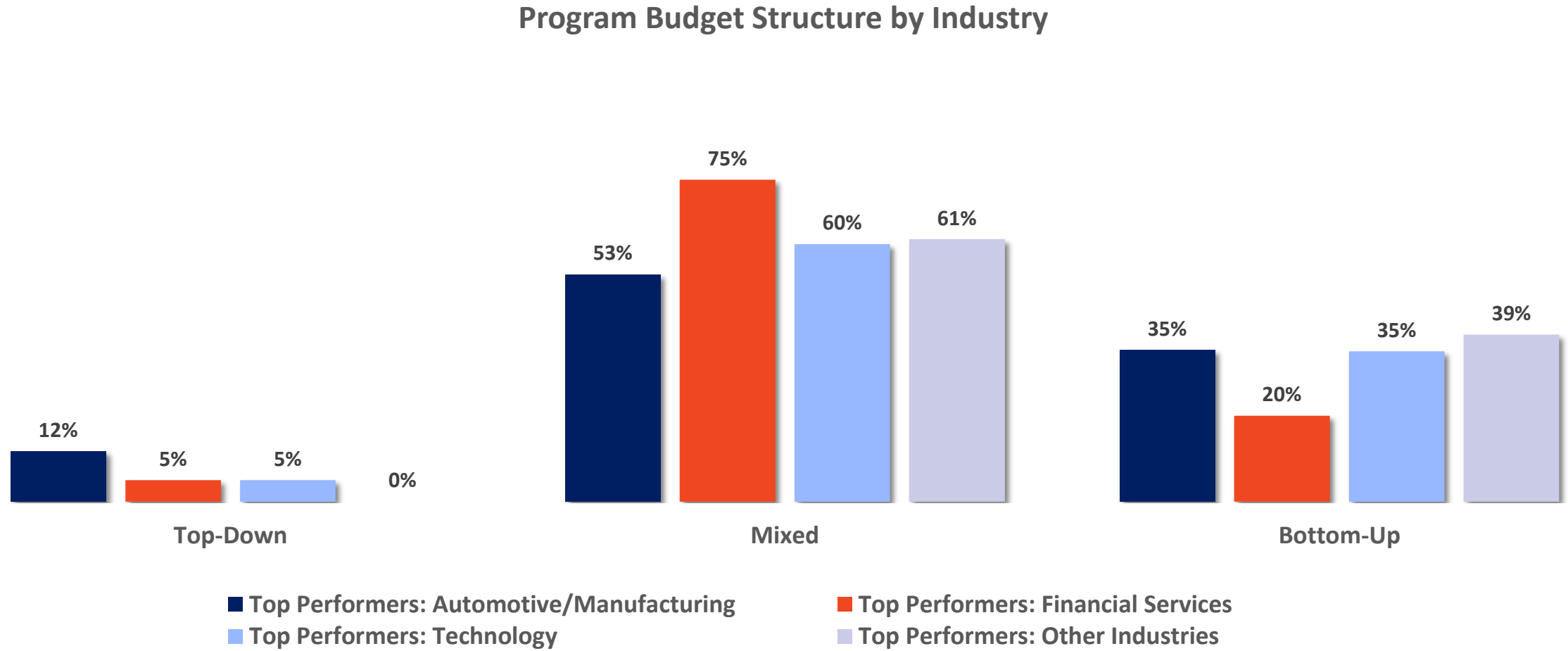
A mixed budgeting approach is most common among both Top Performers and Comparator.



Q67: Which of the following best describes your company's approach to budgeting for channel incentive programs?

Channel: Reward Program Budgeting

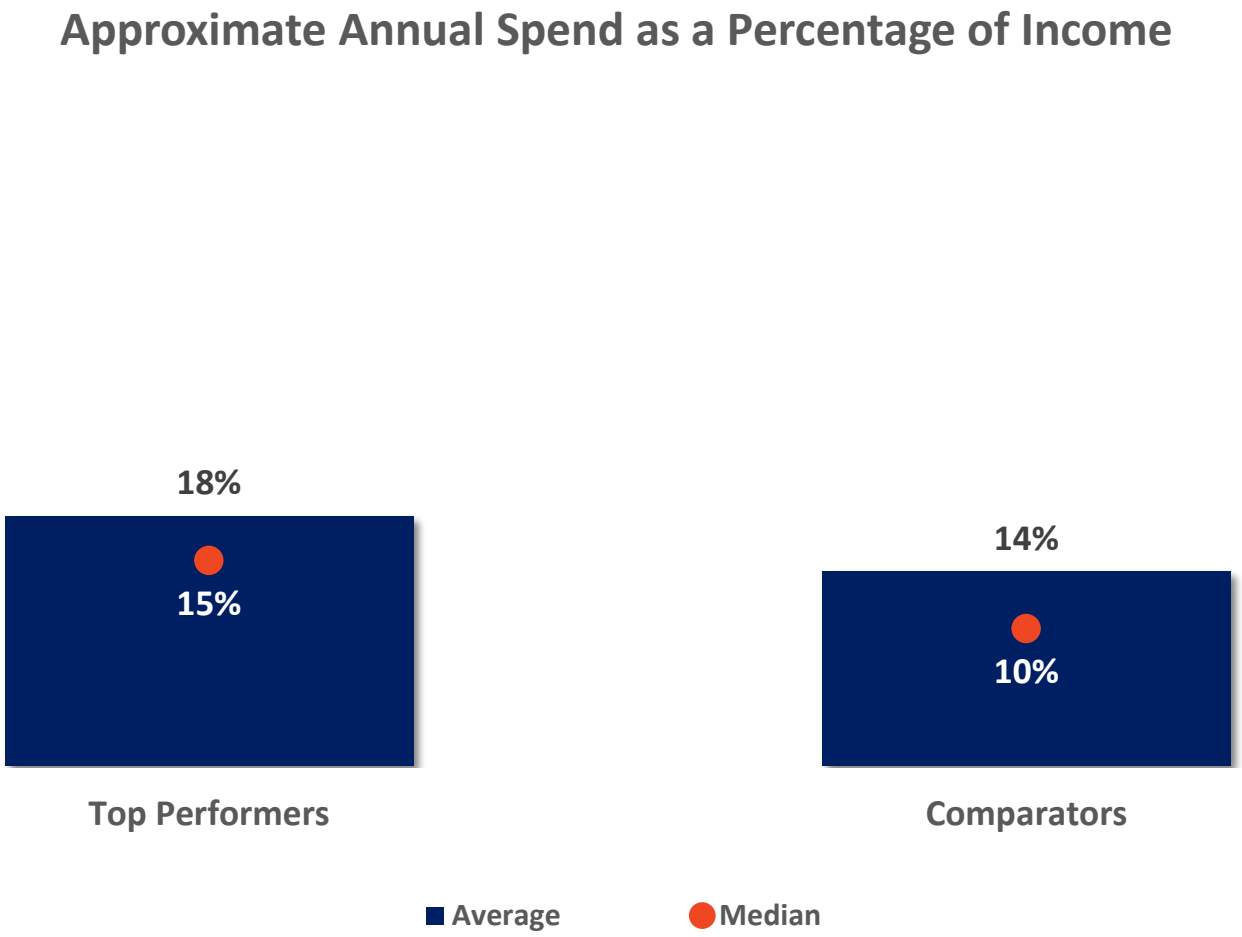
Top Performers in Financial Services are most likely to employ a mixed budgeting approach.



Q67: Which of the following best describes your company's approach to budgeting for channel incentive programs?

Channel: Program Spending on Non-Cash Rewards & Recognition

Top Performers allocate slightly more budget to non-cash sales rewards.



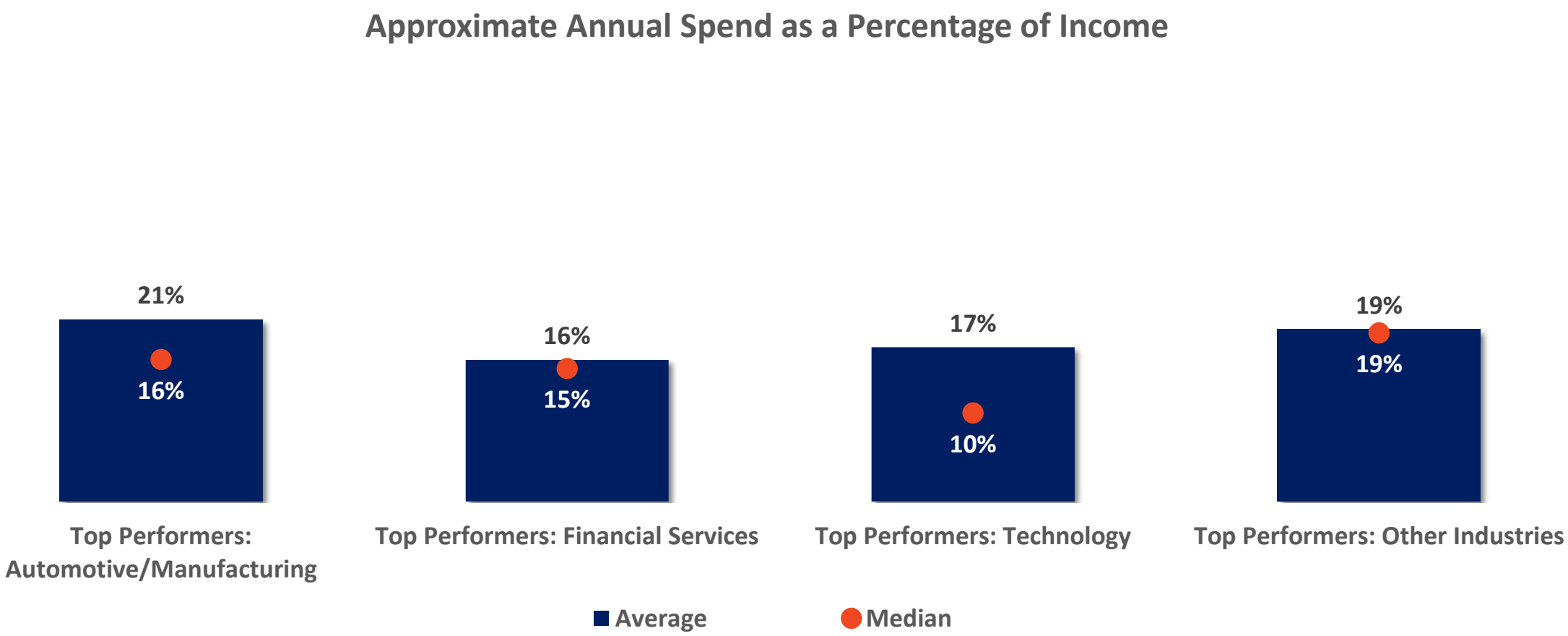
As a percentage of sales income, both average and median spending are slightly higher among Top Performers.

The close alignment between median and average marks suggests consistent budgeting practices across companies.

Q68: As a percentage of their income, what is the approximate annual spend on non-cash rewards and recognition for your channel partners?

Channel: Program Spending on Non-Cash Rewards & Recognition

Channel reward spending is highest among Automotive/Manufacturing Top Performers, followed closely by those in Other Industries. Technology firms show the greatest variance in budgeting practices.



Q68: As a percentage of their income, what is the approximate annual spend on non-cash rewards and recognition for your channel partners?

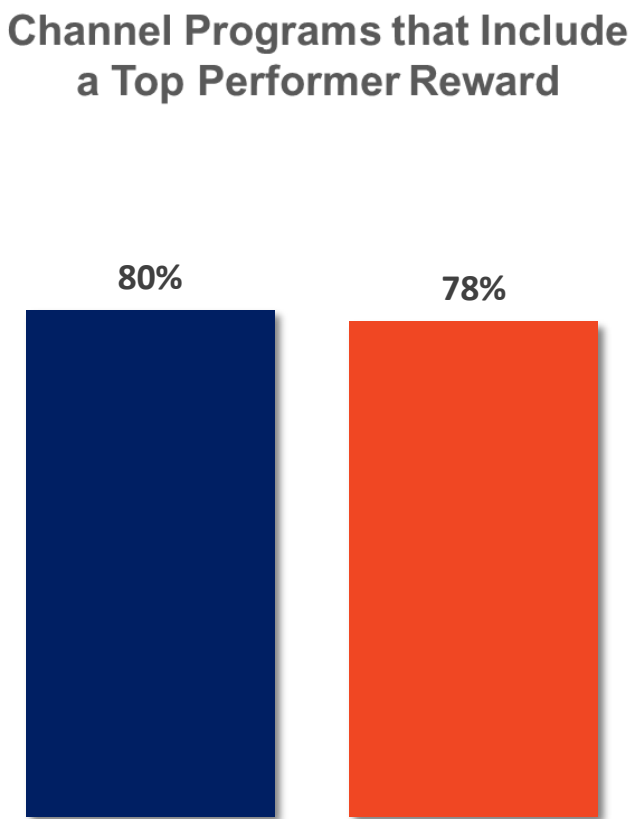
Channel Program:
Top Performer Incentive Trip

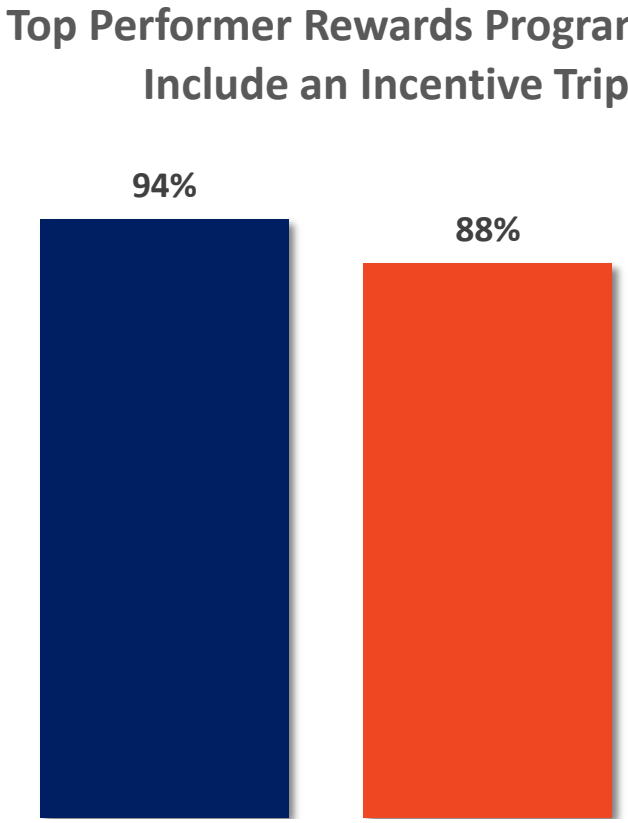
Top Performer Incentive Trip: Key Findings

- Top-performing companies generally offer a Top Performer incentive trip reward.
- Top Performers favor a simple or moderate approach to qualifying individuals for the incentive trip, primarily basing qualification on predefined targets.
- Financial, customer relation, and activity metrics are cornerstones of determining legibility in Top Performers programs.
- Top Performers favor a variable approach to the number of winners, selecting about 15% of their channel partners as trip recipients.
- Easier qualification paths for new channel partners are more common among Top Performers, supporting effective onboarding.
- While incentive trip rewards from Top Performers are slightly higher in value than those from Comparators, the gap is smaller than in program types.

Channel: Top Performer Incentive Trip Availability

Top-performing companies are slightly more likely to utilize incentive trips as a reward.





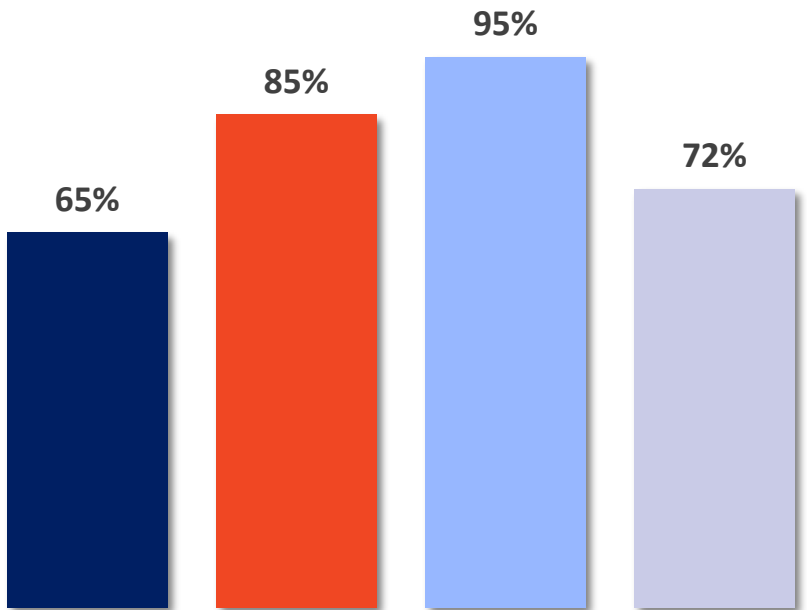
Top Performers Comparators

Q51: Which of the following reward and recognition program structures does your organization currently use for channel partners?
Q53: Does your channel partner Top Performer award include an incentive trip?

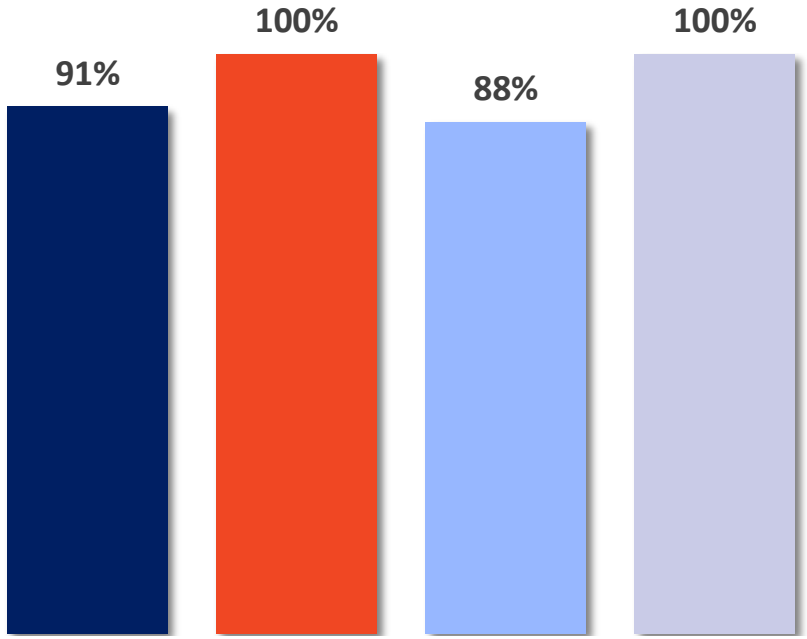
Channel: Top Performer Incentive Trip Availability

Top performing Financial Services and Technology firms are most likely to include a Top Performer reward program.

Channel Programs that Include a Top Performer Reward



Top Performer Rewards Programs that Include an Incentive Trip



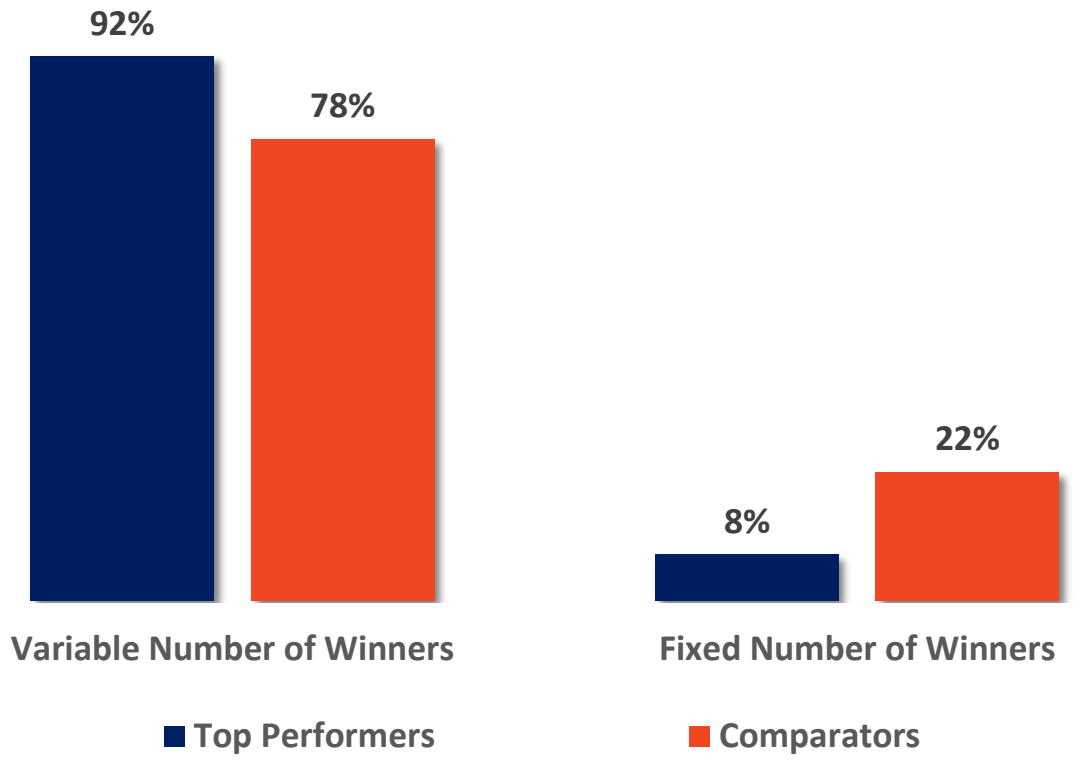
- Top Performers: Automotive/Manufacturing
- Top Performers: Financial Services
- Top Performers: Technology
- Top Performers: Other Industries

Q51: Which of the following reward and recognition program structures does your organization currently use for channel partners?
Q53: Does your channel partner Top Performer award include an incentive trip?

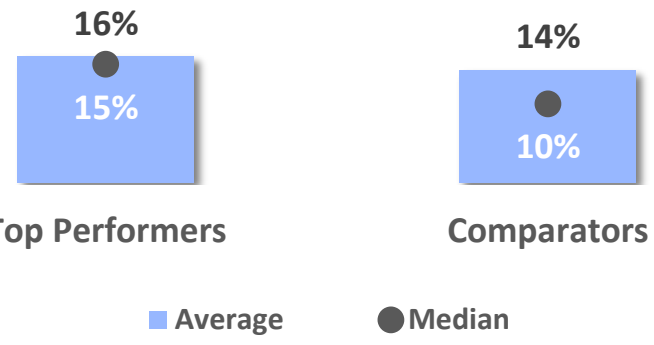
Channel: Top Performer Incentive Trip Availability

Top-performing companies are more likely to vary the number of incentive trip winners based on performance.

Incentive Trip Winners by Performance Segment



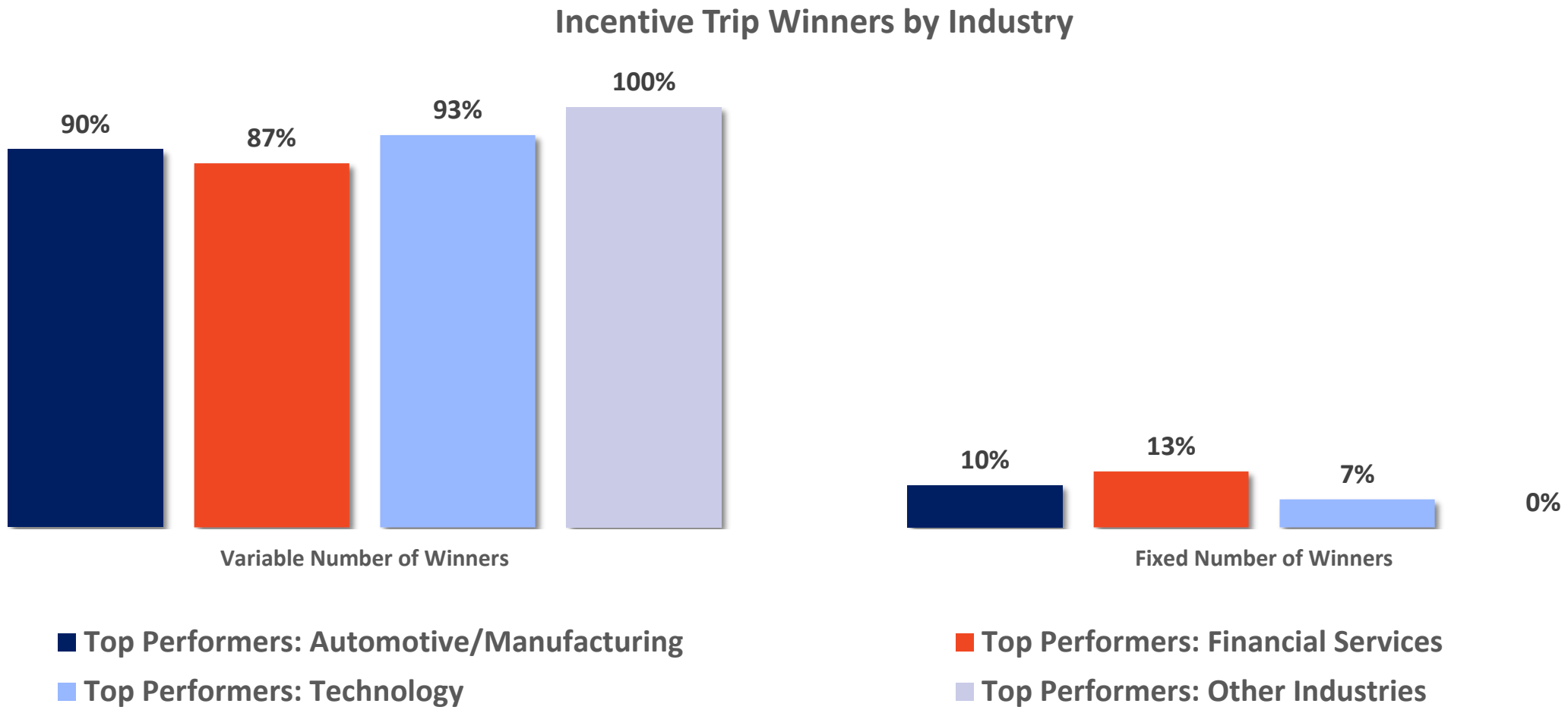
Percentage of Channel Partners Selected for an Incentive Tip



Q54: Is the number of Top Performer trip winners set in advance, or does it vary based on the performance of channel partners?
Q62: Approximately what percentage of your channel partner representatives are selected for the Top Performer incentive trip?

Channel: Top Performer Incentive Trip Availability

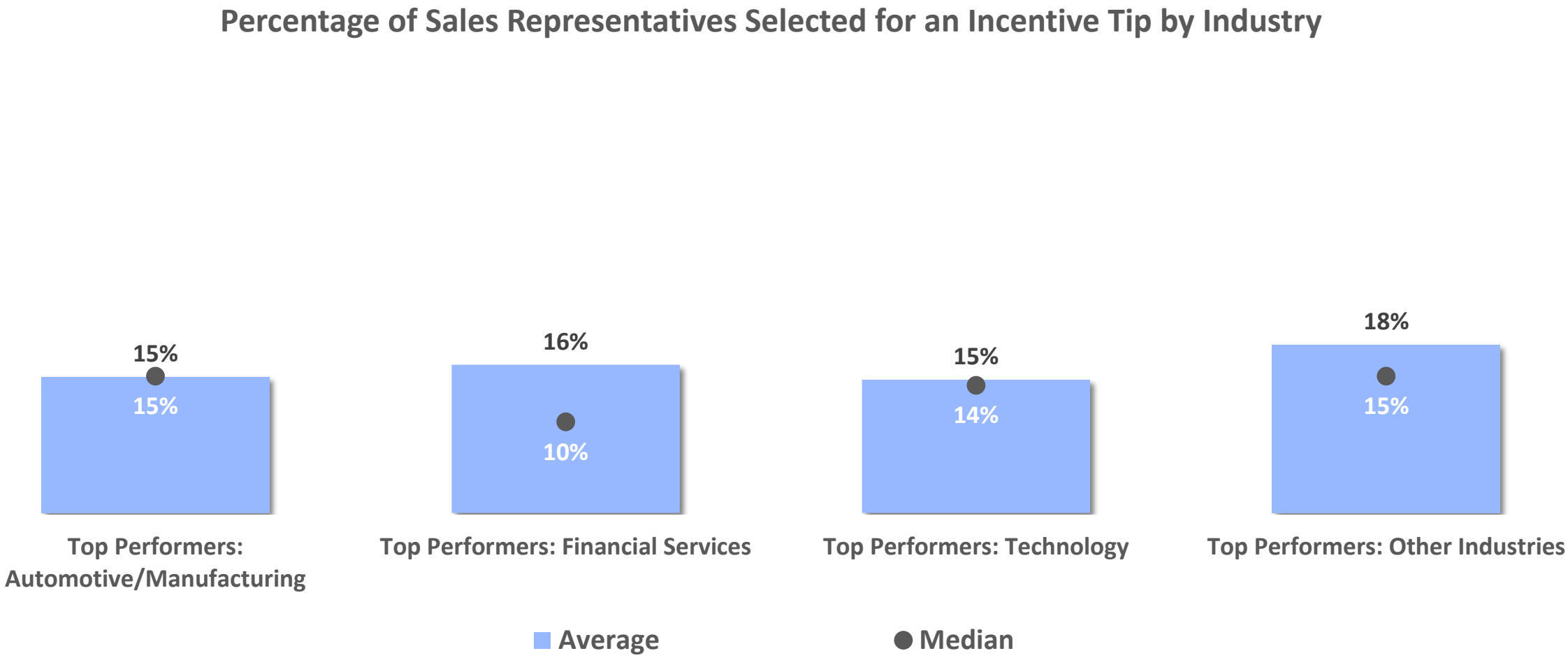
Most Top Performers set a variable number of channel trip winners, with universal adoption in Other Industries.



Q54: Is the number of Top Performer trip winners set in advance, or does it vary based on the performance of channel partners?

Channel: Top Performer Incentive Trip Availability

Selection rates for Top Performer trips are consistent across industries, with Other Industries slightly more inclusive.

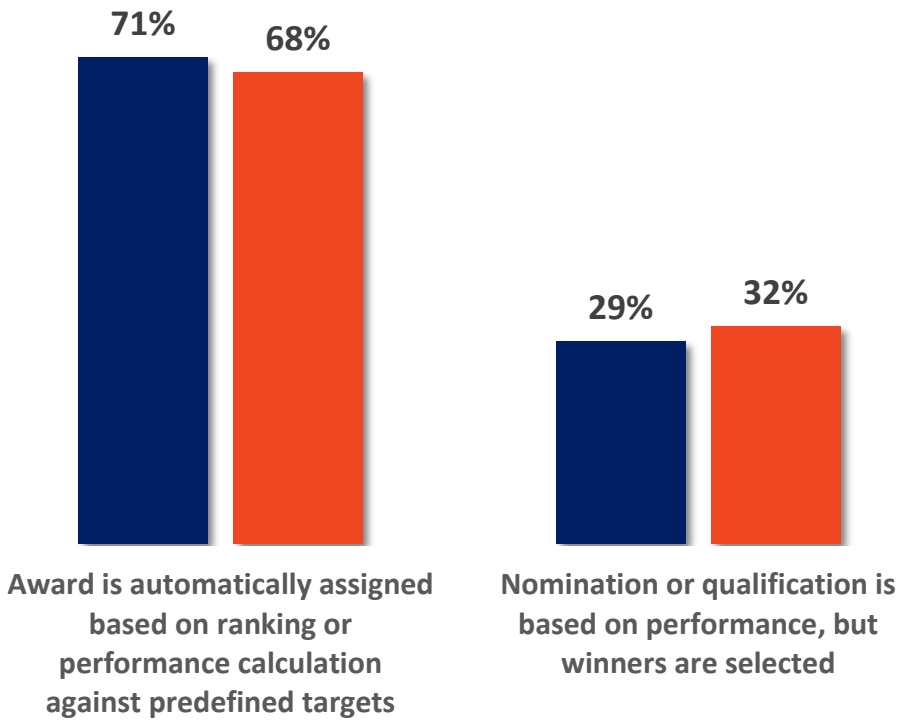


Q62: Approximately what percentage of your channel partner representatives are selected for the Top Performer incentive trip?

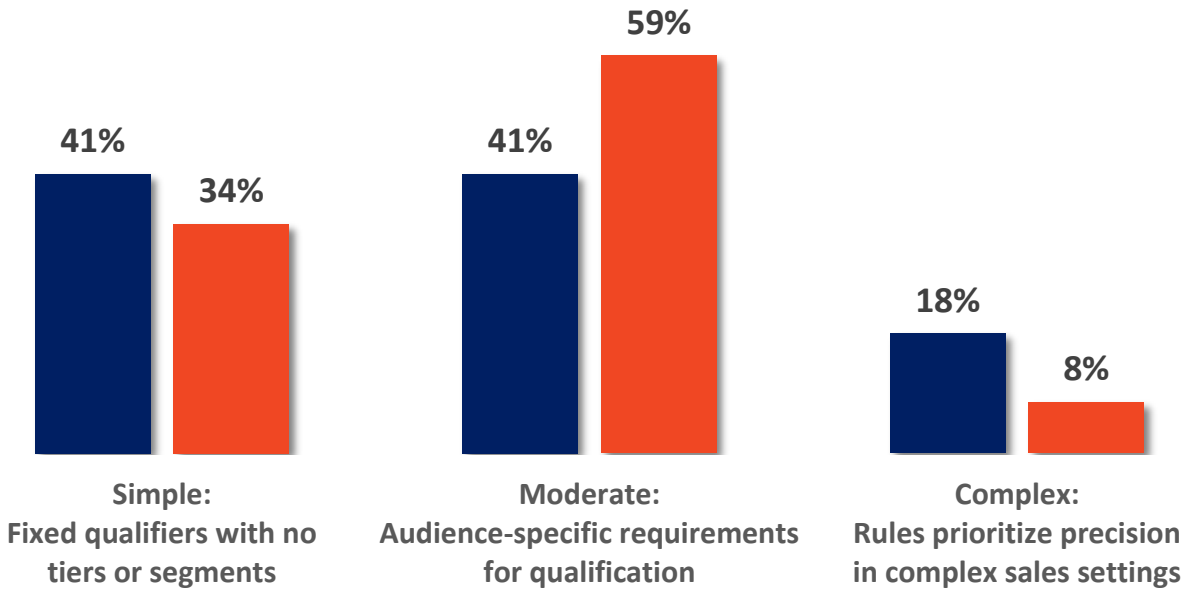
Channel: Top Performer Incentive Trip Qualification Process

Top Performers strike a balance between simplicity and precision in trip qualification criteria.

Incentive Trip Selection by Performance Segment



Incentive Trip Qualification Process by Performance Segment

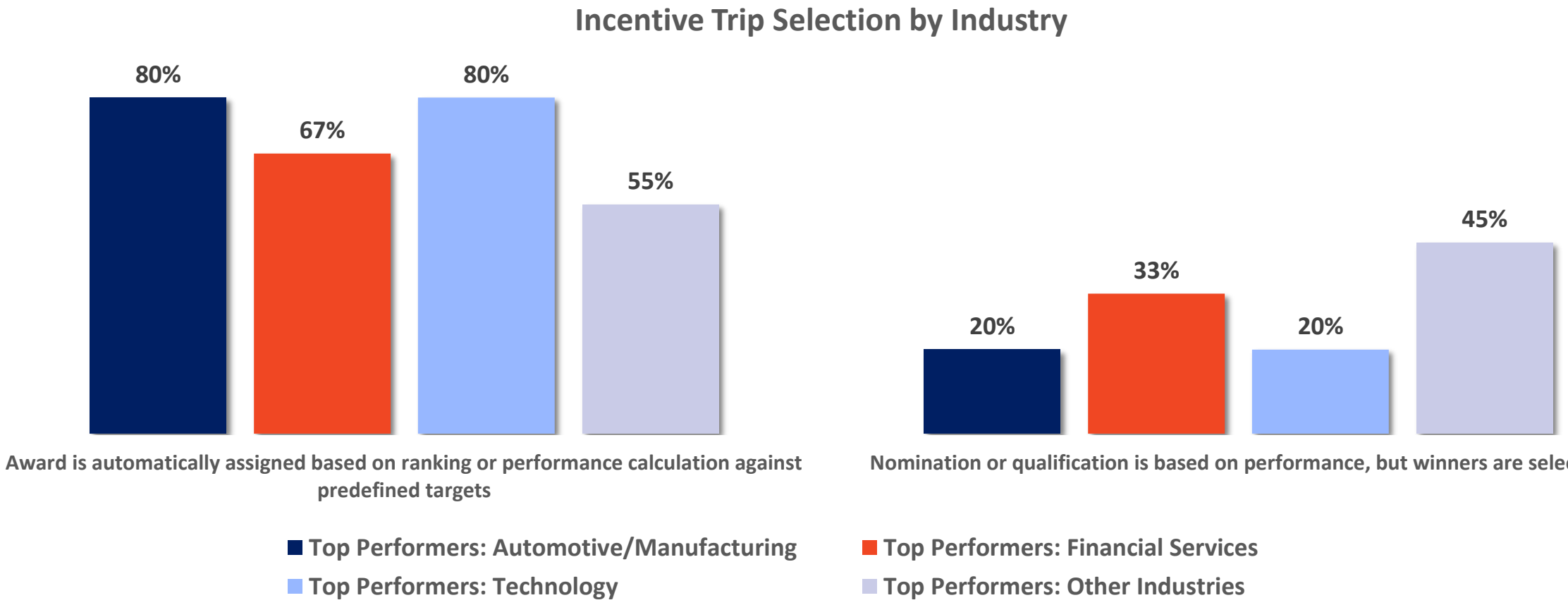


Top Performers Comparators

Q55: Which of the below best describes the qualification process for the channel partner Top Performer incentive trip?
Q56: Which of the following best describes your qualification criteria for the channel partner Top Performer incentive trip?

Channel: Top Performer Incentive Trip Qualification Process

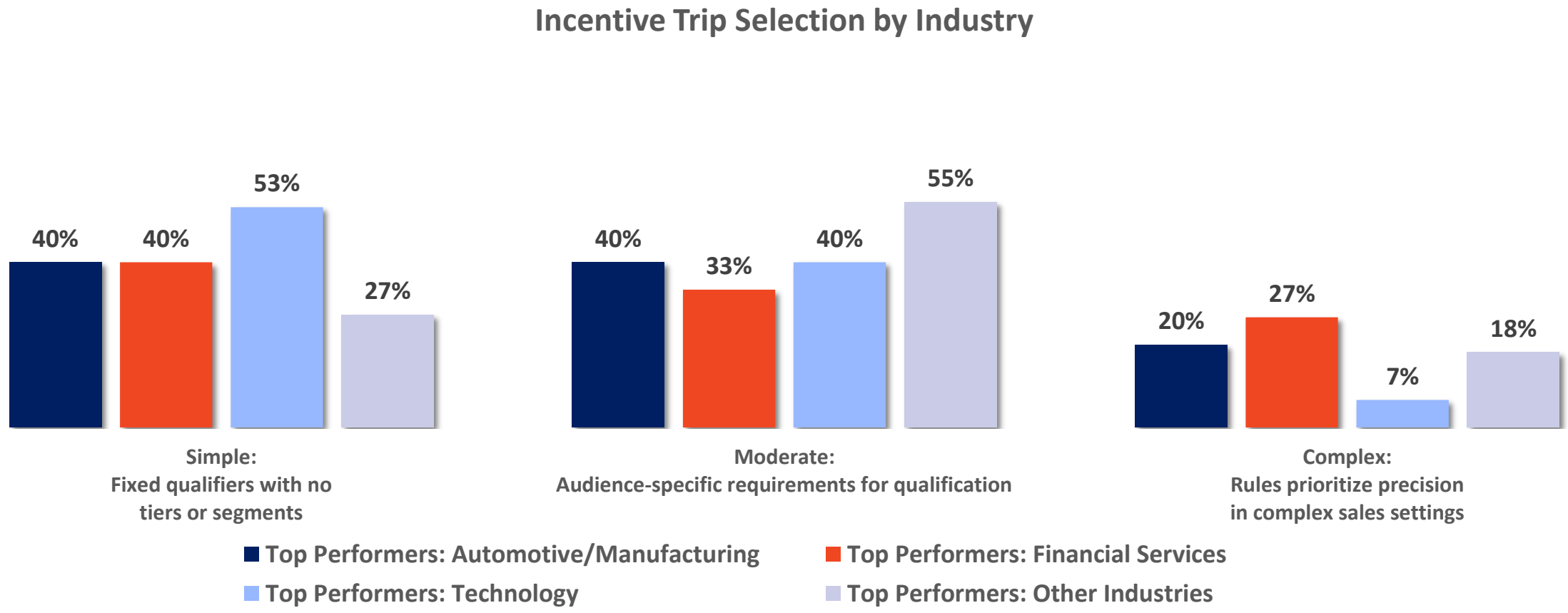
Top Performers in Automotive, Technology, and Financial Services favor automated qualification, while Other Industries rely more on selection.



Q55: Which of the below best describes the qualification process for the channel partner Top Performer incentive trip?

Channel: Top Performer Incentive Trip Qualification Process

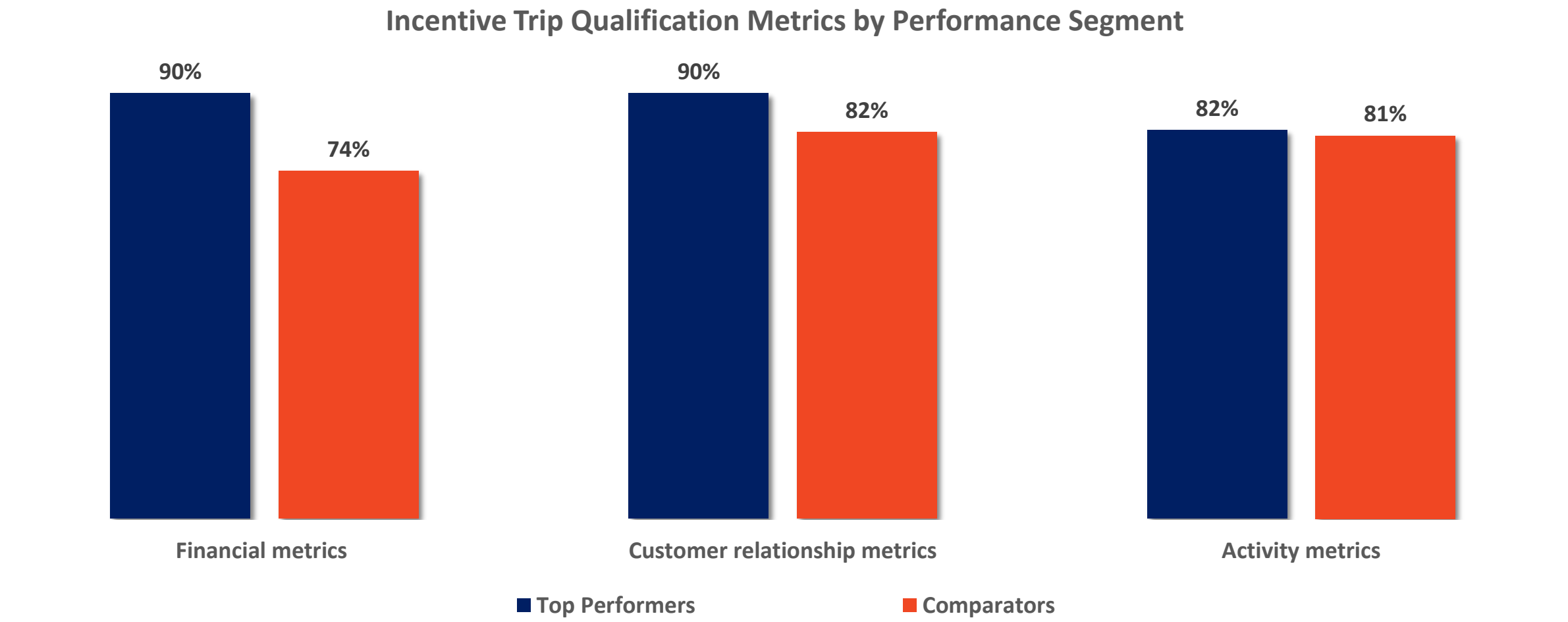
Top Performers in Technology favor simple qualification criteria, while Other Industries lean toward more tailored, moderate approaches.



Q56: Which of the following best describes your qualification criteria for the channel partner Top Performer incentive trip?

Channel: Top Performer Incentive Trip Qualification Metrics

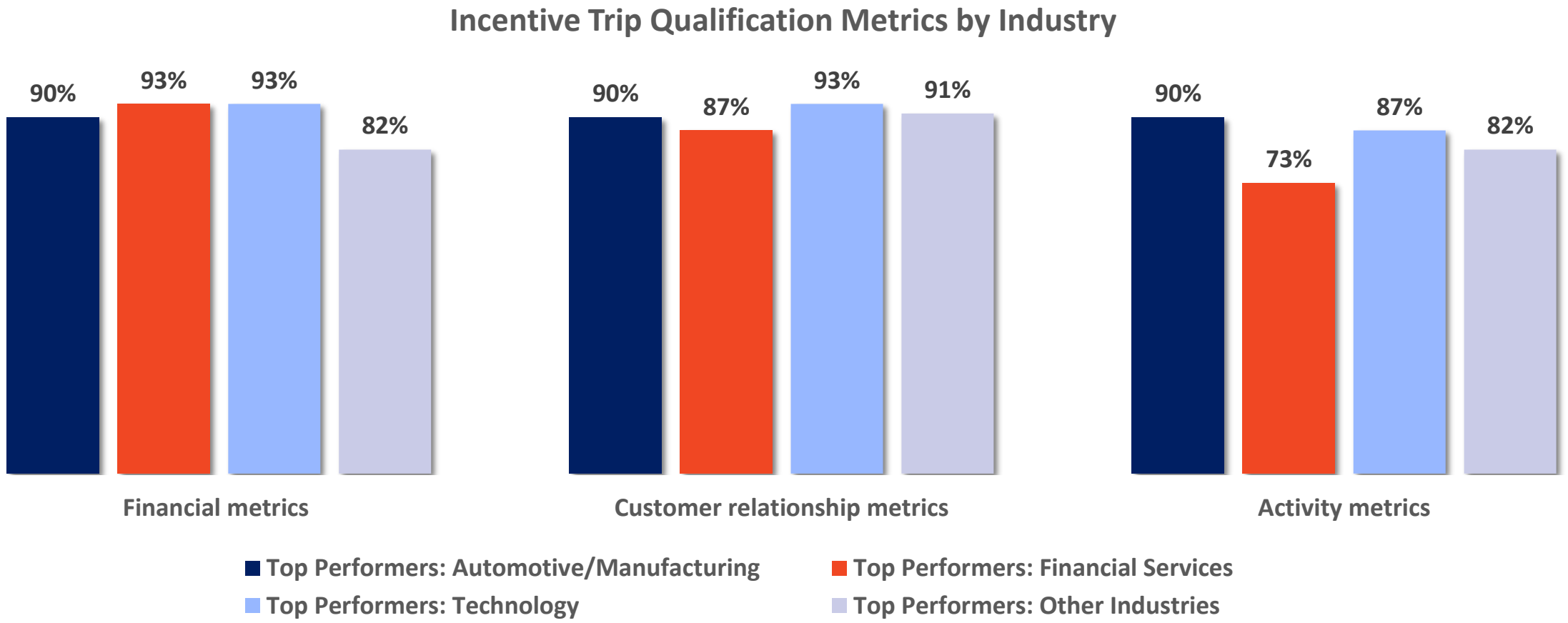
Top Performers rely more heavily on financial metrics and customer relationship for incentive trip qualification.



Q57: Which of the following best describes the metrics used to qualify channel partners for the Top Performer incentive trip?

Channel: Top Performer Incentive Trip Qualification Metrics

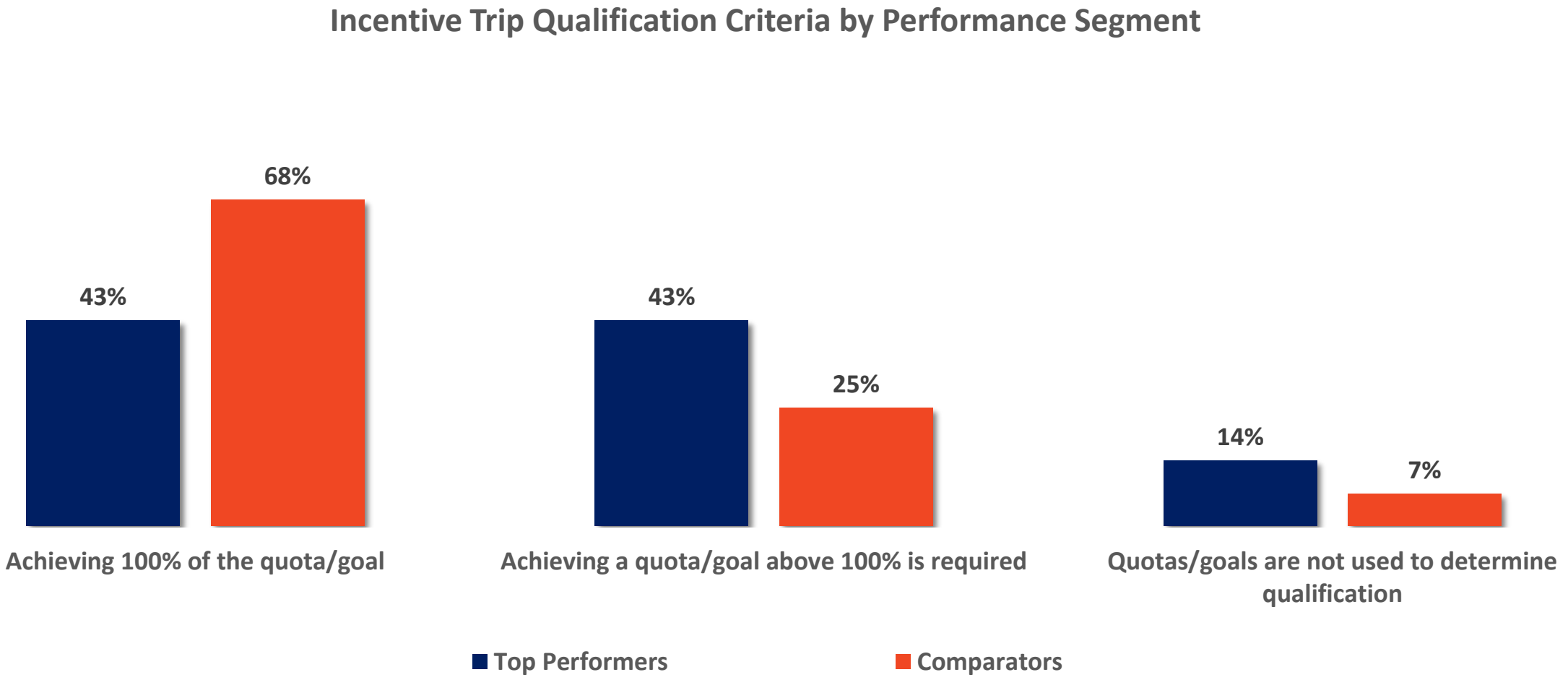
Top-performing companies in Financial Services are slightly less likely to emphasize activity metrics to incentive trip qualification.



Q57: Which of the following best describes the metrics used to qualify channel partners for the Top Performer incentive trip?

Channel: Top Performer Incentive Trip Qualification Criteria

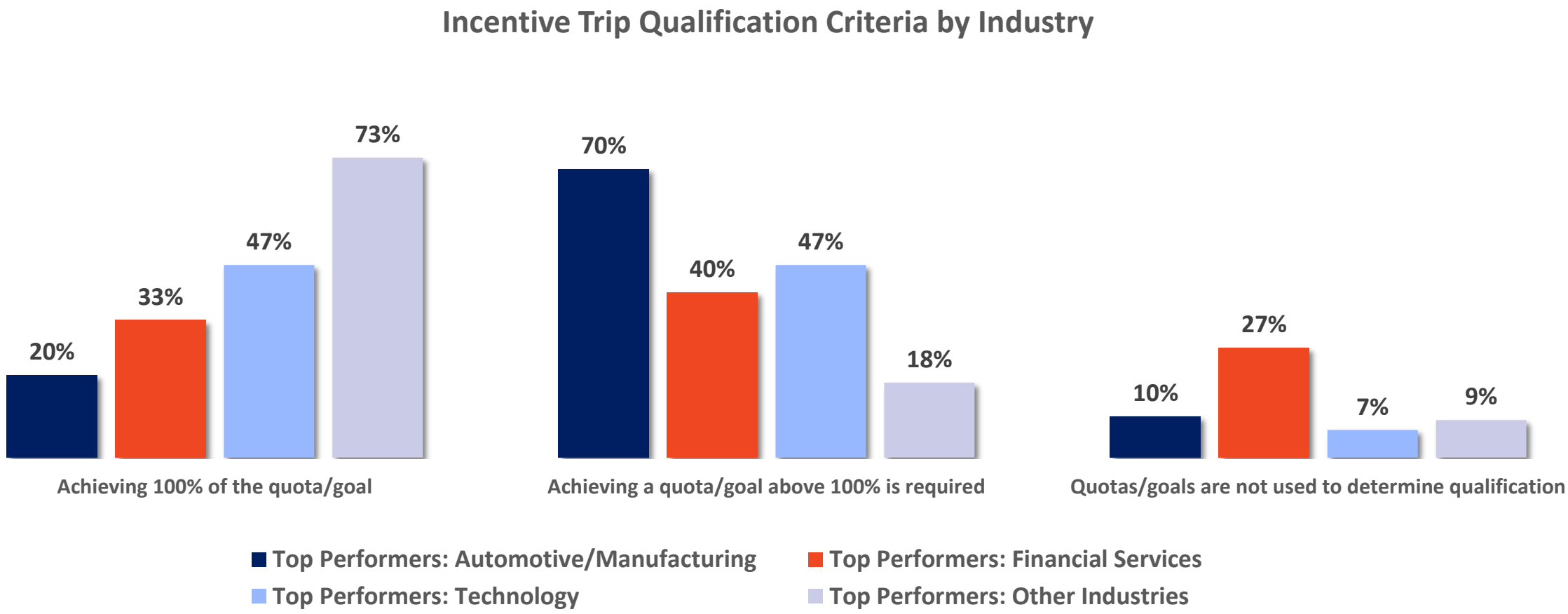
Top Performers are more likely to require targets to qualify for an incentive trip.



Q59: How do channel quotas/goals factor into qualification for the Top Performer incentive trip?

Channel: Top Performer Incentive Trip Qualification Criteria

Top Performers in Automotive/Manufacturing and Financial Services are more likely to require exceeding quotas for qualification, while Other Industries favor 100% goal achievement.

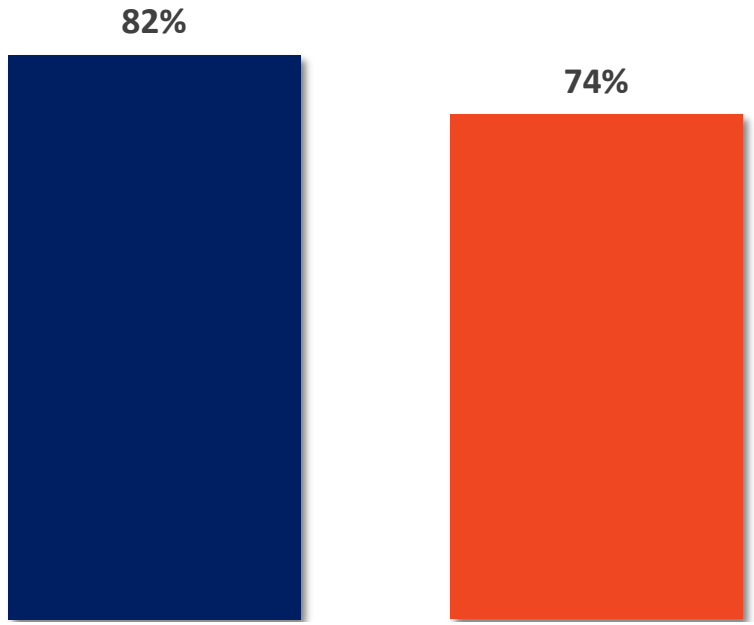


Q59: How do channel quotas/goals factor into qualification for the Top Performer incentive trip?

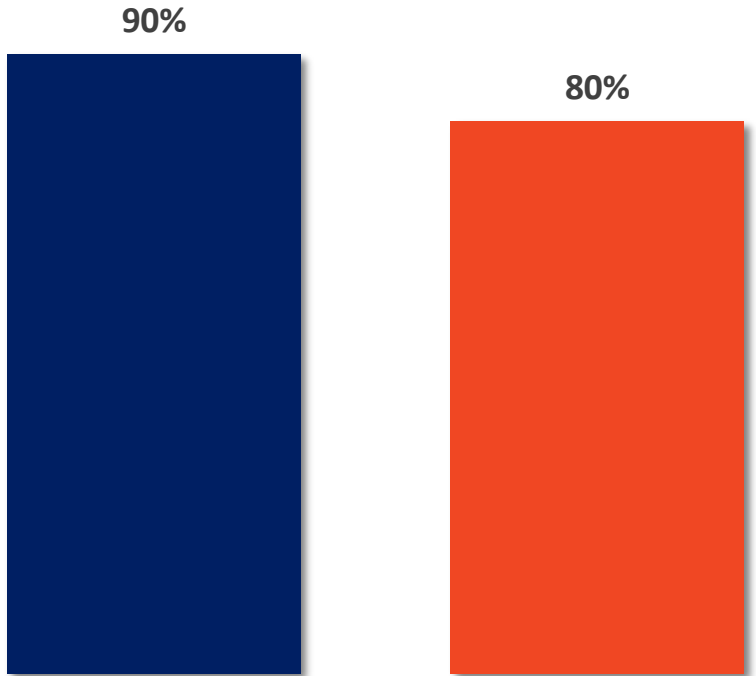
Channel: Top Performer Special Circumstances

Top-performing companies are more likely to offer easier qualification paths for new channel partners and an alternate reward structure.

Likelihood of Offering Special Rules to Help New Channel Partners Qualify



Availability of Alternate Rewards in Tiered Top Performer Program



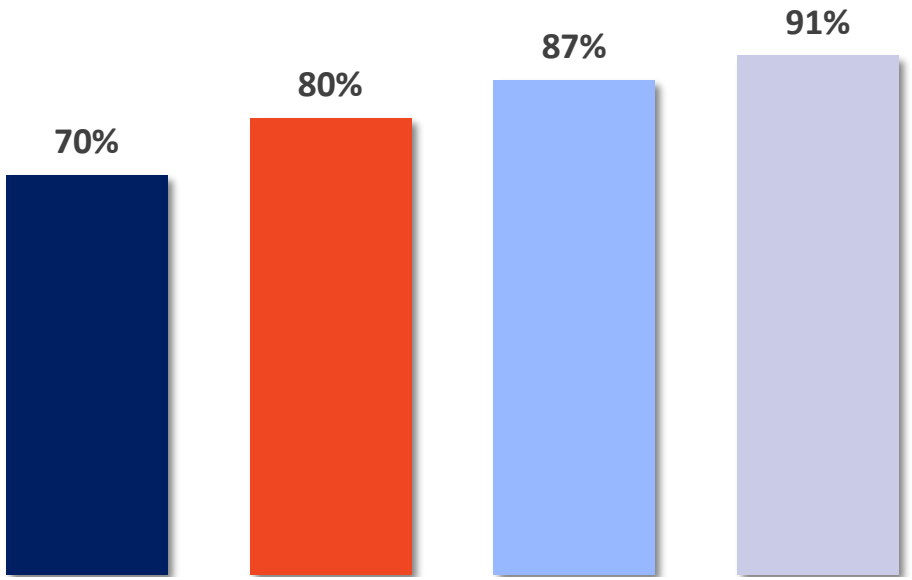
Top Performers Comparators

Q60: Do you have special rules for new channel partners that give them a better chance to qualify for the Top Performer incentive trip?
Q61: Is your Top Performer award program tiered, allowing channel partners who don't qualify for the trip to earn other rewards, such as award points, gift cards, merchandise, or a lower-level trip?

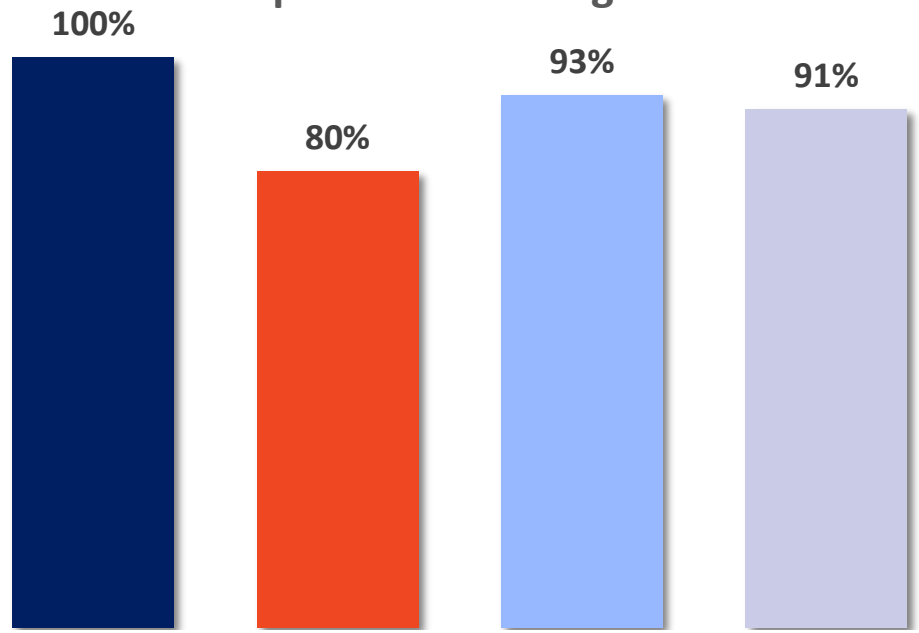
Channel: Top Performer Special Circumstances

Top Performers in Automotive/Manufacturing are less likely to provide easier qualification for new salespeople, while Financial Services firms are less likely to offer alternate reward structures.

Likelihood of Offering Special Rules to Help New Channel Partners Qualify



Availability of Alternate Rewards in Tiered Top Performer Program

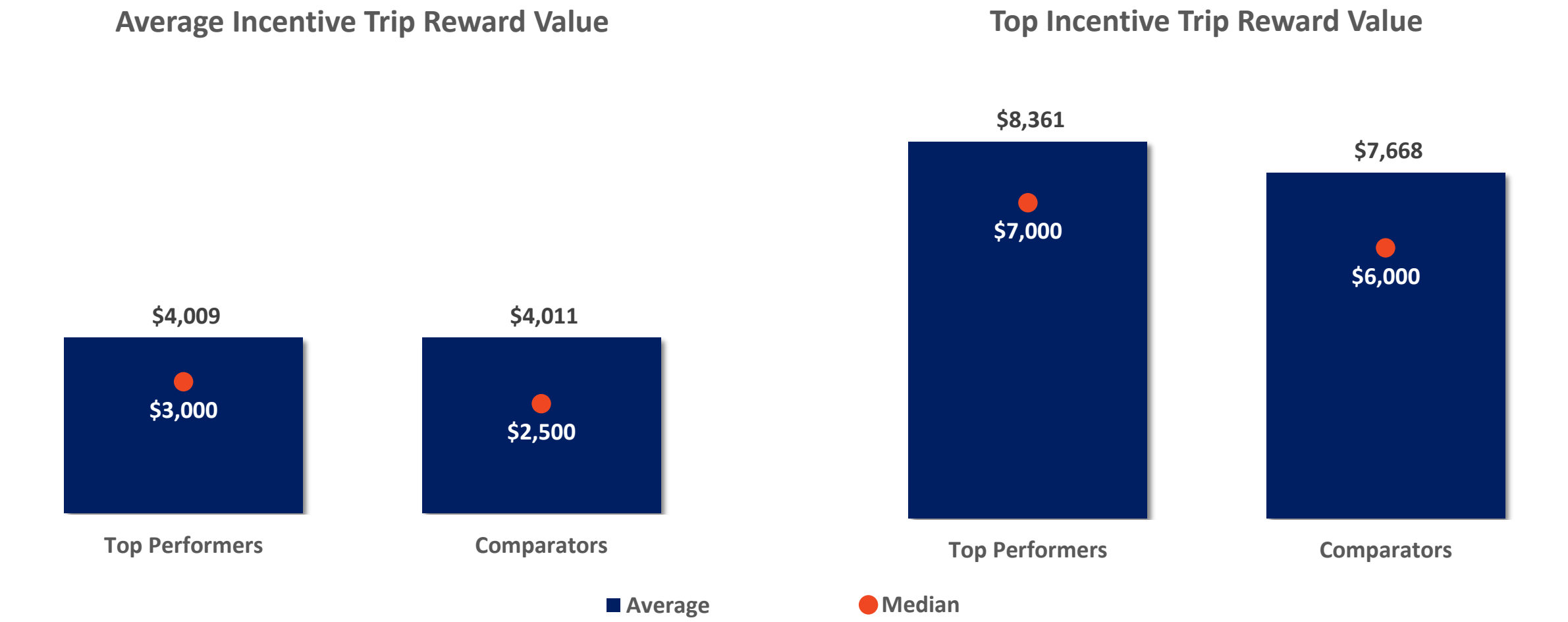


Top Performers: Automotive/Manufacturing
Top Performers: Financial Services
Top Performers: Technology
Top Performers: Other Industries

Q60: Do you have special rules for new channel partners that give them a better chance to qualify for the Top Performer incentive trip?
Q61: Is your Top Performer award program tiered, allowing channel partners who don't qualify for the trip to earn other rewards, such as award points, gift cards, merchandise, or a lower-level trip?

Channel: Program Spending on Incentive Travel

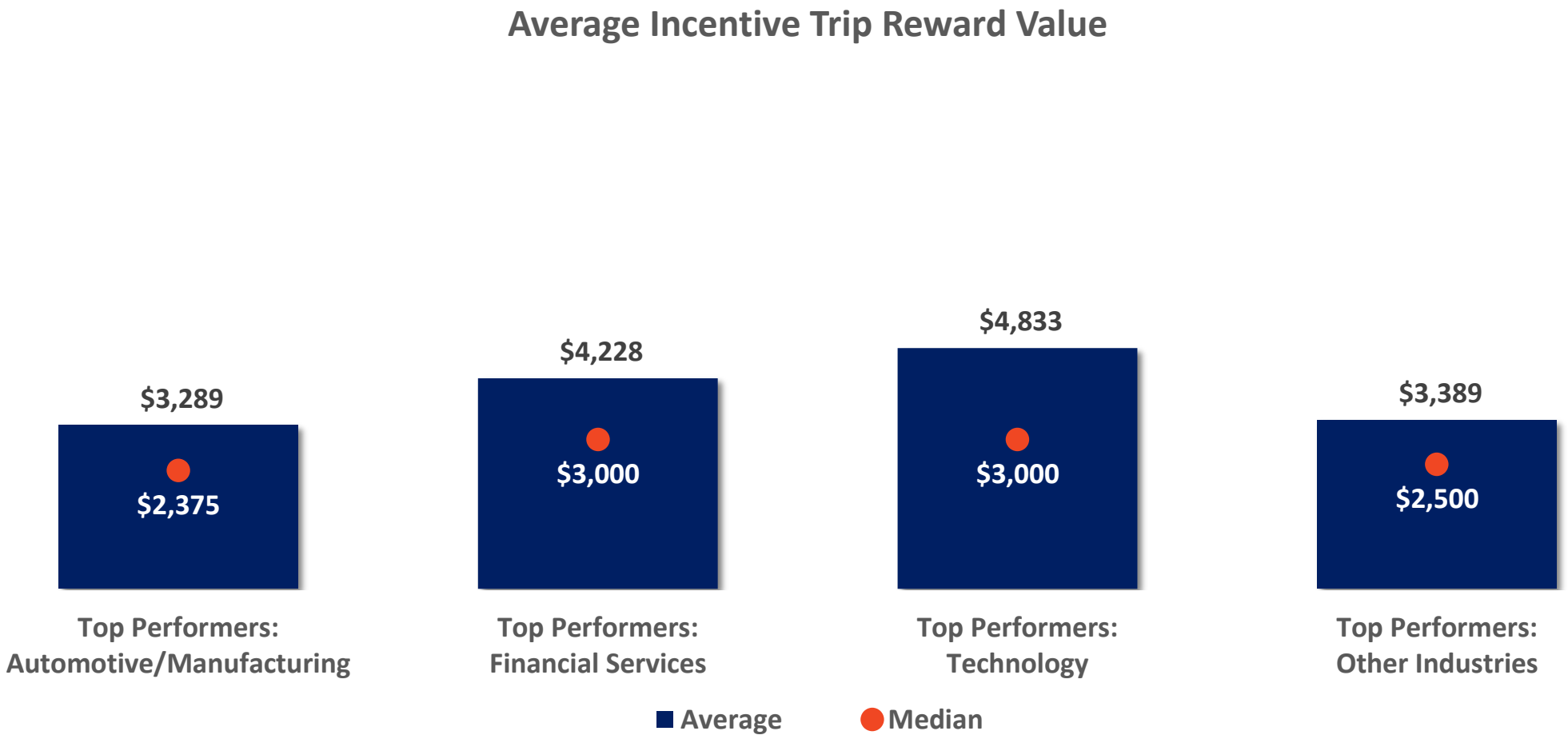
Top Performers and Comparators offer similar reward values for incentive travel.



Q70: What are the average and top reward values for incentive trips in your channel rewards program?

Channel: Program Spending on Incentive Travel

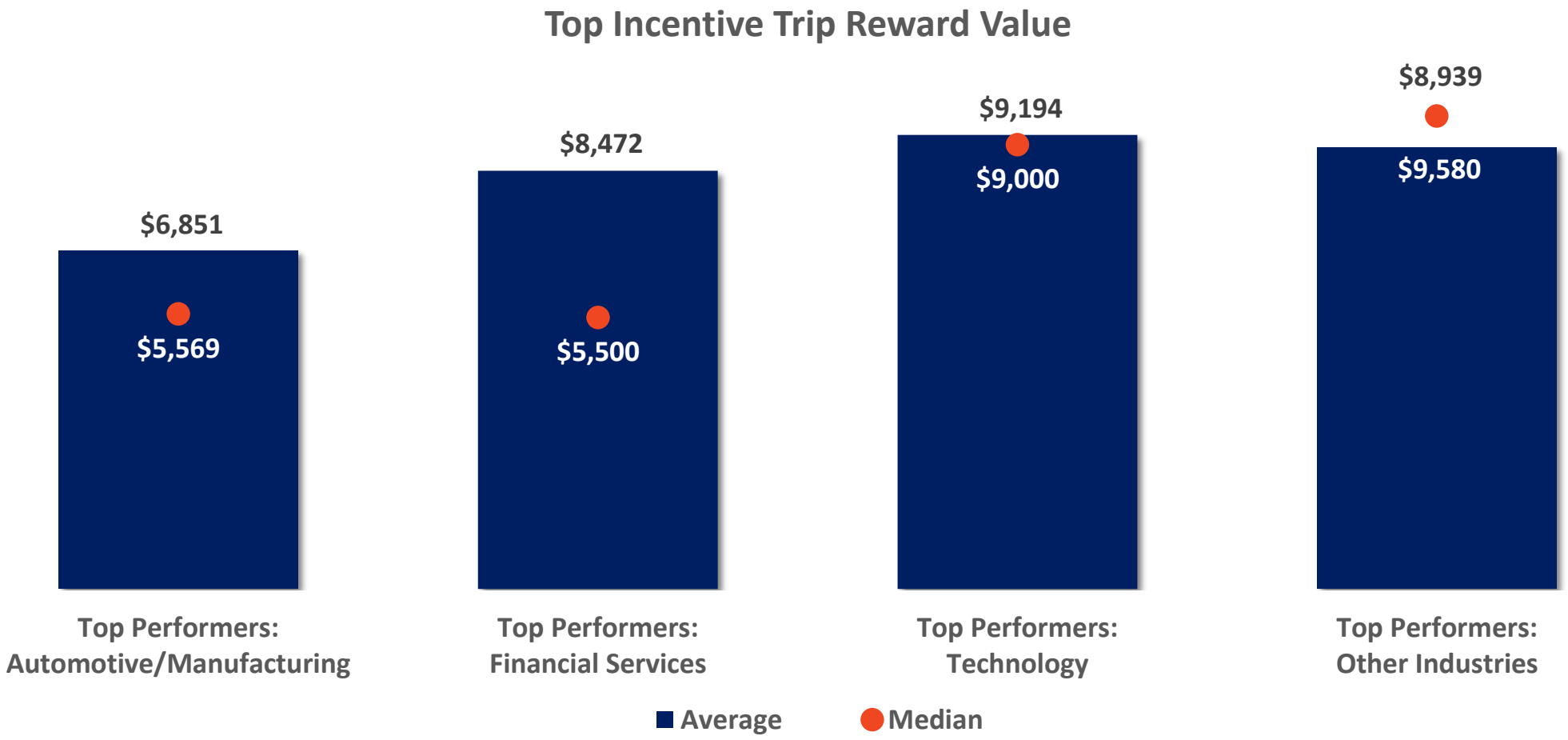
Top Performers in Technology and Financial Services offer the highest average incentive trip values.



Q70: What are the average and top reward values for incentive trips in your channel rewards program?

Channel: Program Spending on Incentive Travel

Top performers in the Automotive/Manufacturing provide lower valued trips than others.



Q70: What are the average and top reward values for incentive trips in your channel rewards program?

Channel Program:
Award Points, Gift Cards & Merchandise

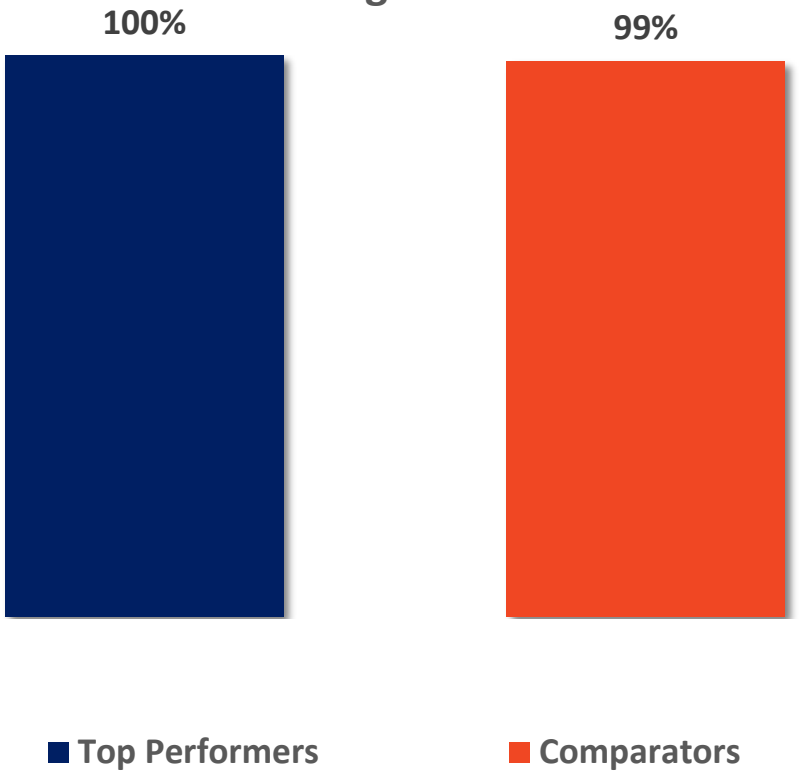
Award Points, Gift Cards & Merchandise: Key Findings

- All Top Performers include award points, gift cards, or merchandise in their programs, typically rewarding around 30% of channel partners.
- Customer relation metrics are the primary basis for non-travel reward eligibility, with financial and activity metrics also commonly used.
- A variety of earning strategies reflects the adaptability of Top Performers in aligning rewards with different performance goals.
- Unlimited earning potential is more commonly offered by Top Performers than by Comparators.
- Top-performing companies prioritize investment in non-travel reward value, especially for top-achieving channel partners.

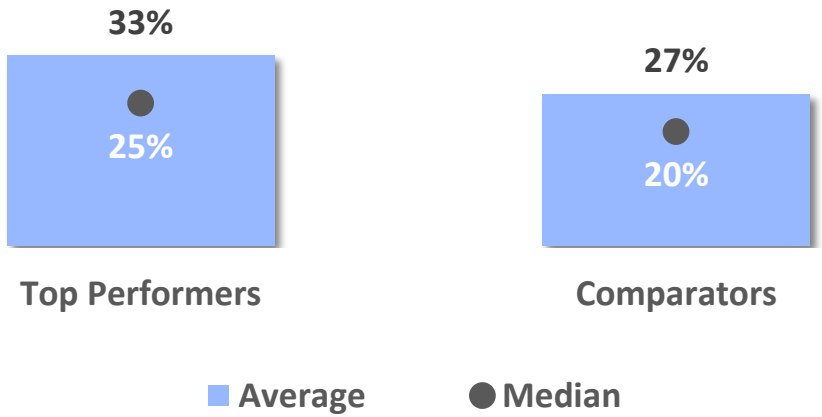
Channel: Award Points, Merchandise, or Gift Card Availability

Top Performers and Comparators award non-travel rewards at similar rates.

Frequency of Award Points, Merchandize or Gift Card Use in Channel Reward Programs



Percentage of Channel Partners Earning Award Points, Merchandise, or Gift Cards

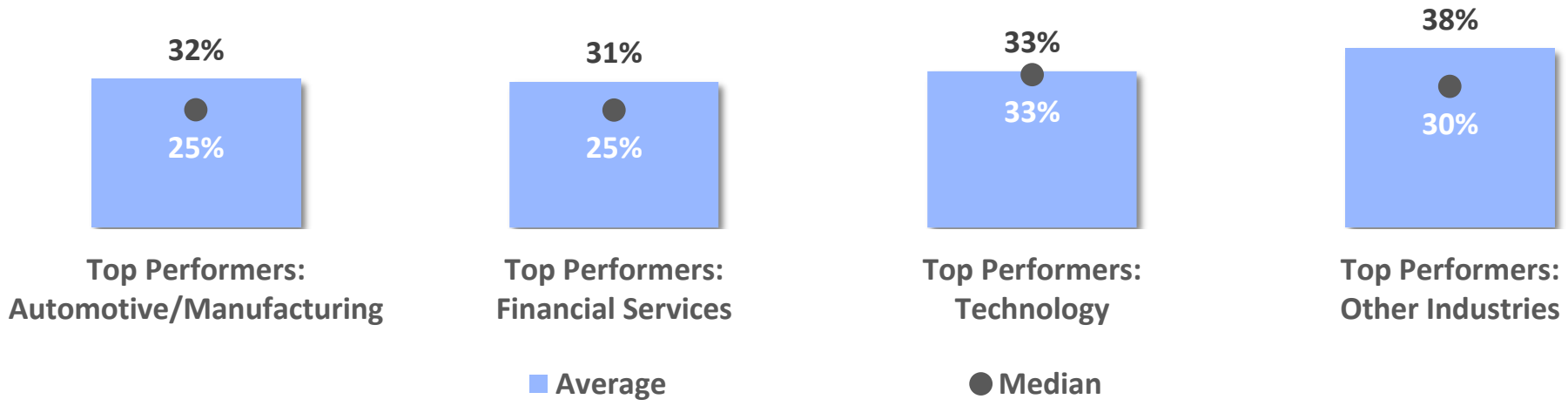


Q26: Which of the following rewards can participants earn in your programs?
Q63: Regarding rewards other than incentive travel, what percent of your channel partners do you expect to earn award points, merchandise, or gift cards in 2025?

Channel: Award Points, Merchandise, or Gift Card Availability

Top Performers in Other Industries reward a slightly higher share of channel partners with non-travel incentives.

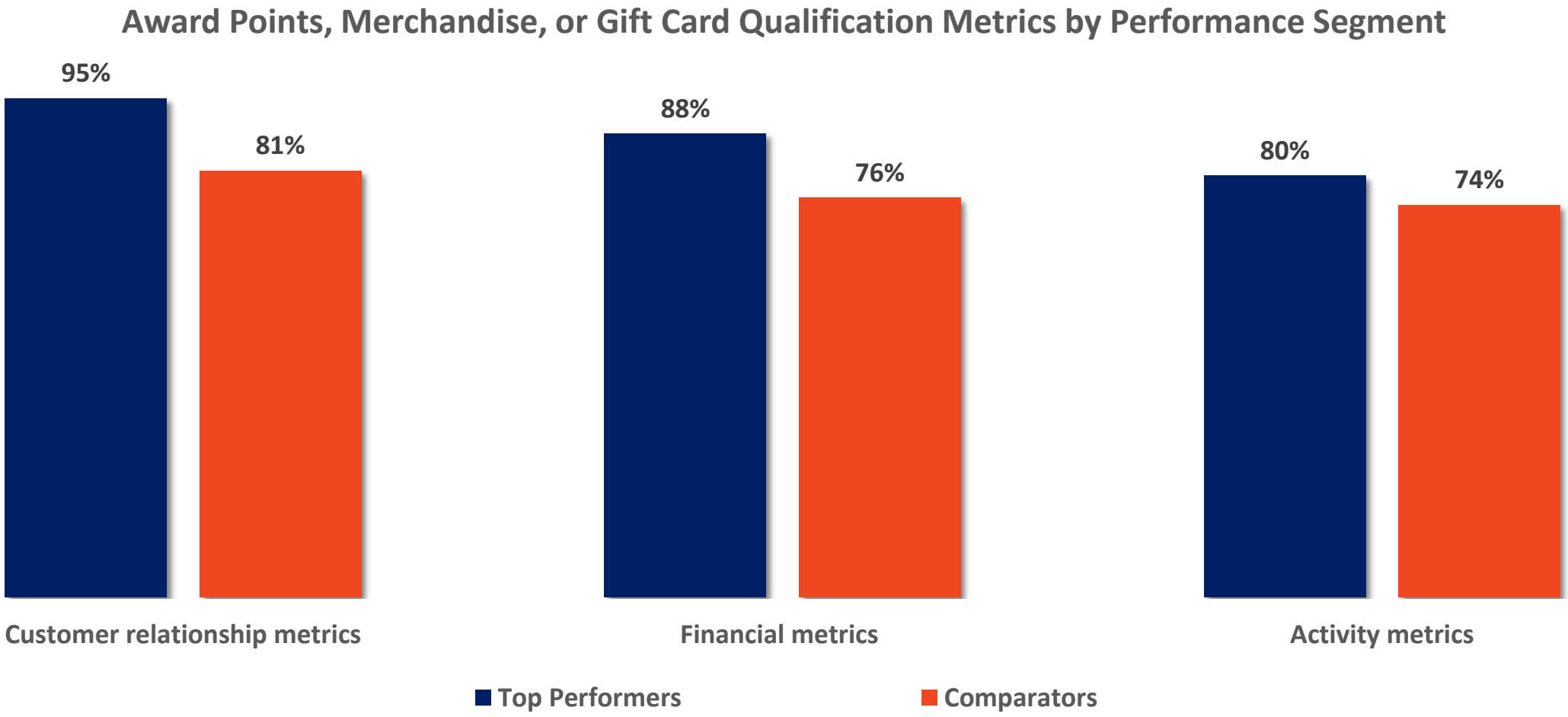
Percentage of Sales Representatives Earning Award Points, Merchandise, or Gift Cards



Q63: Regarding rewards other than incentive travel, what percent of your channel partners do you expect to earn award points, merchandise, or gift cards in 2025?

Channel: Points, Merchandise, or Gift Card Qualification Metrics

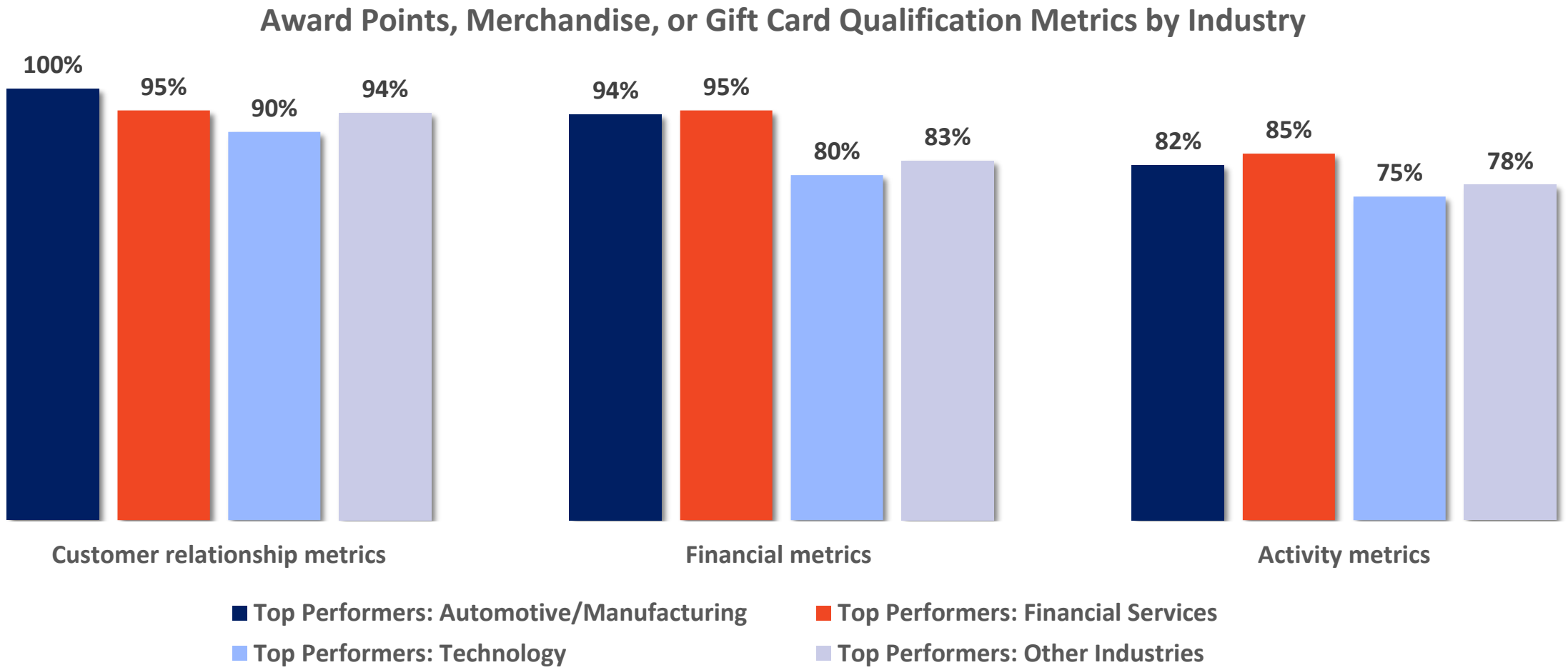
Top Performers prioritize customer relationship metrics for award points, with additional focus on financial metrics.



Q58: Which of the following best describes the metrics on which channel partners can earn award points, gift cards, or merchandise?

Channel: Points, Merchandise, or Gift Card Qualification Metrics

Top Performers in Automotive/Manufacturing and Financial Services place greater emphasis on financial metrics.

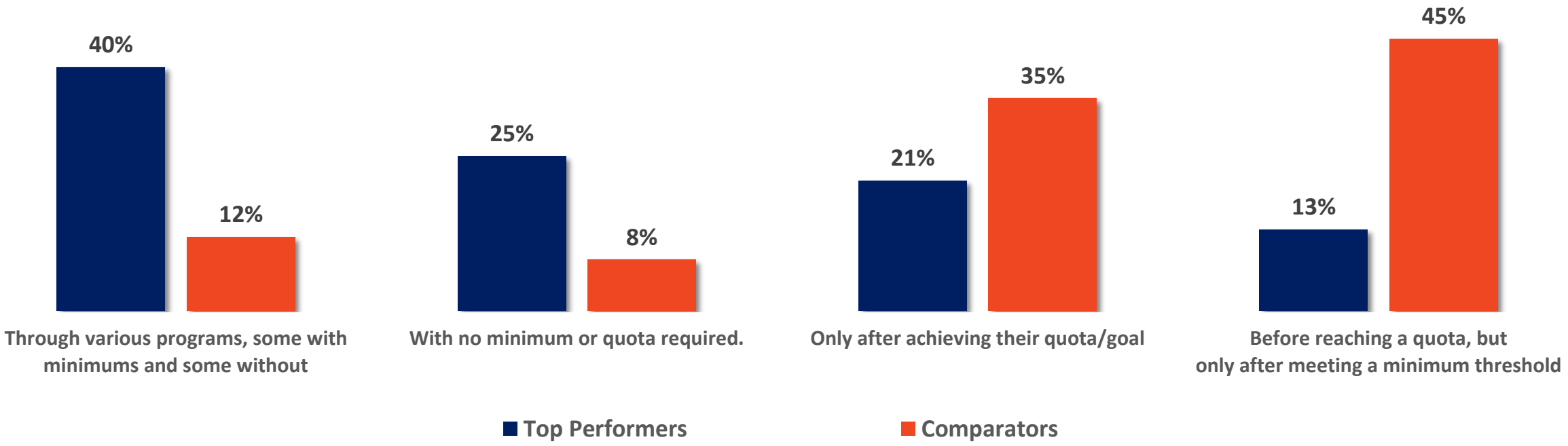


Q58: Which of the following best describes the metrics on which channel partners can earn award points, gift cards, or merchandise?

Channel: Points, Merchandise, or Gift Card Qualification Criteria

Top Performers offer more flexibility in earning rewards, with various programs and fewer requiring strict quotas.

Award Points, Merchandise, or Gift Card Qualification Criteria by Performance Segment

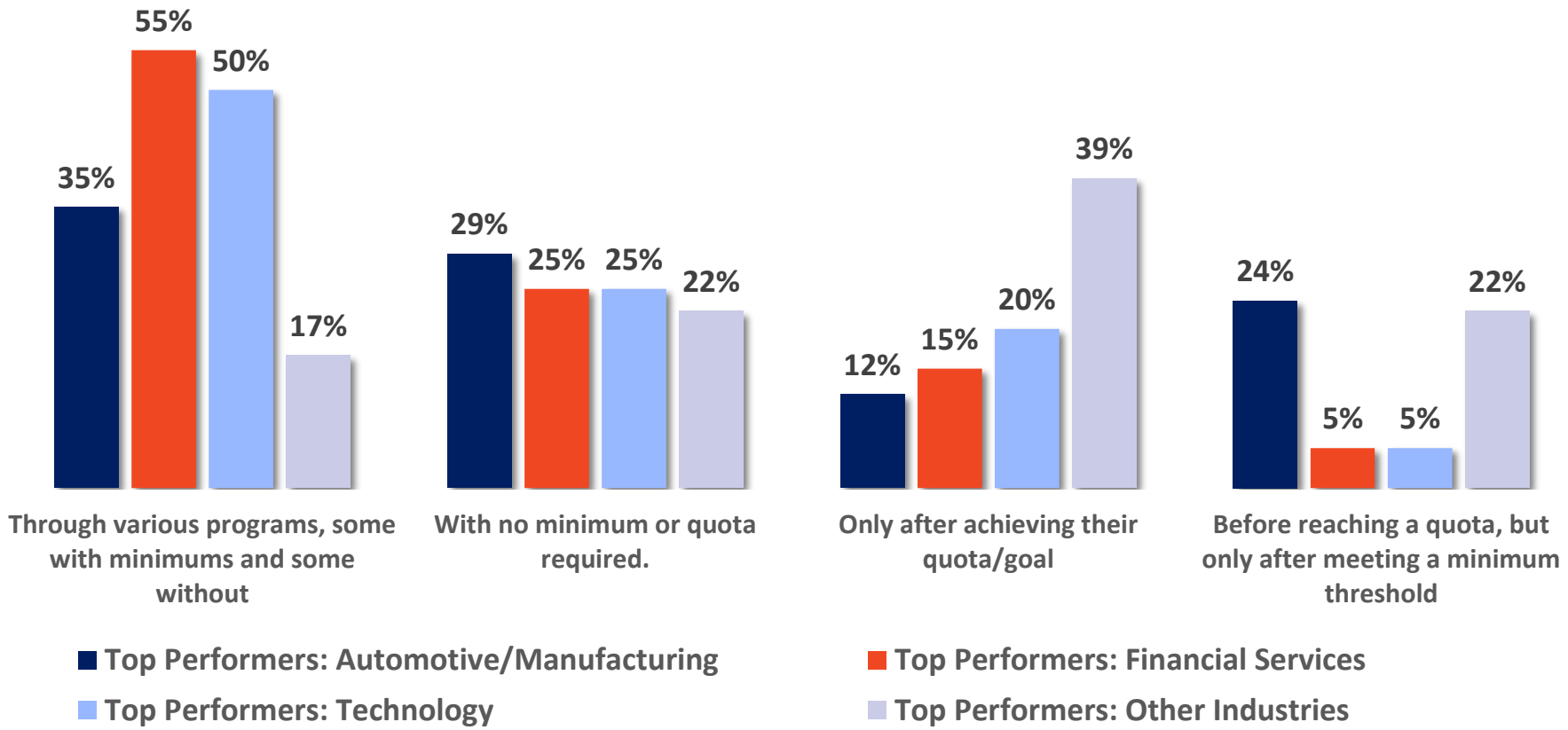


Q64: Regarding award points, gift cards, and merchandise, which of the following best describes how channel partners earn rewards?

Channel: Points, Merchandise, or Gift Card Qualification Criteria

Top Performers in Financial Services and Automotive/Manufacturing offer more flexible reward structures.

Award Points, Merchandise, or Gift Card Qualification Criteria by Industry



Financial Services and Automotive/Manufacturing offer the most flexibility, with a mix of reward programs that may or may not require minimums.

Other Industries are more likely to require a minimum sales threshold or quota before earning rewards.

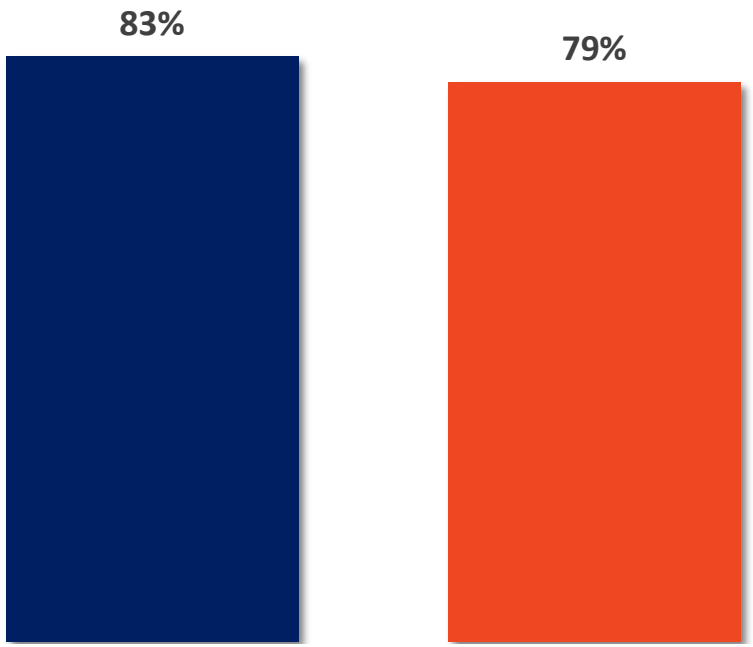
Technology firms have a balanced approach, with a significant portion offering rewards before quotas are achieved, but with minimal minimum thresholds.

Q64: Regarding award points, gift cards, and merchandise, which of the following best describes how channel partners earn rewards?

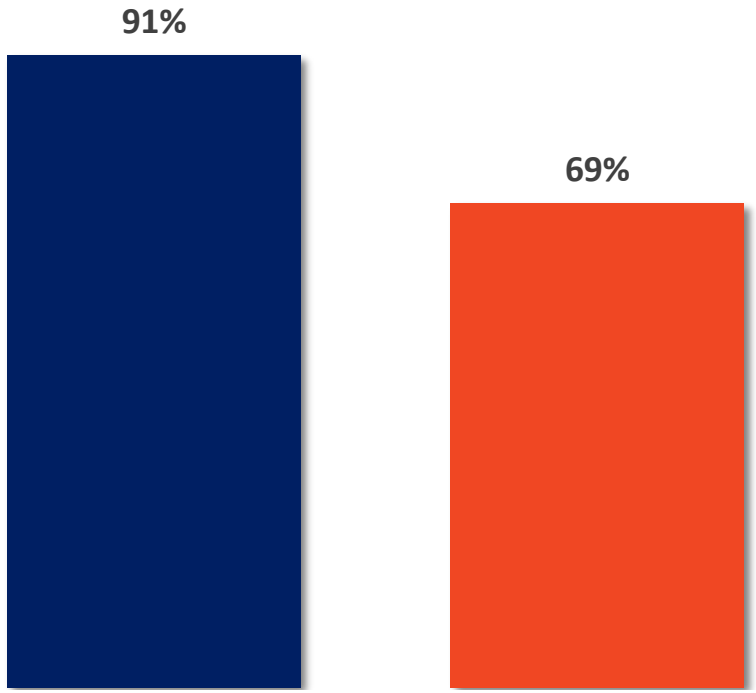
Channel: Points, Merchandise, or Gift Card Special Circumstances

Top Performers are more likely to offer early and unlimited reward opportunities.

Likelihood of Offering Special Rules to Help New Channel Partners Earn Rewards



Likelihood of Offering Unlimited Rewards Potential



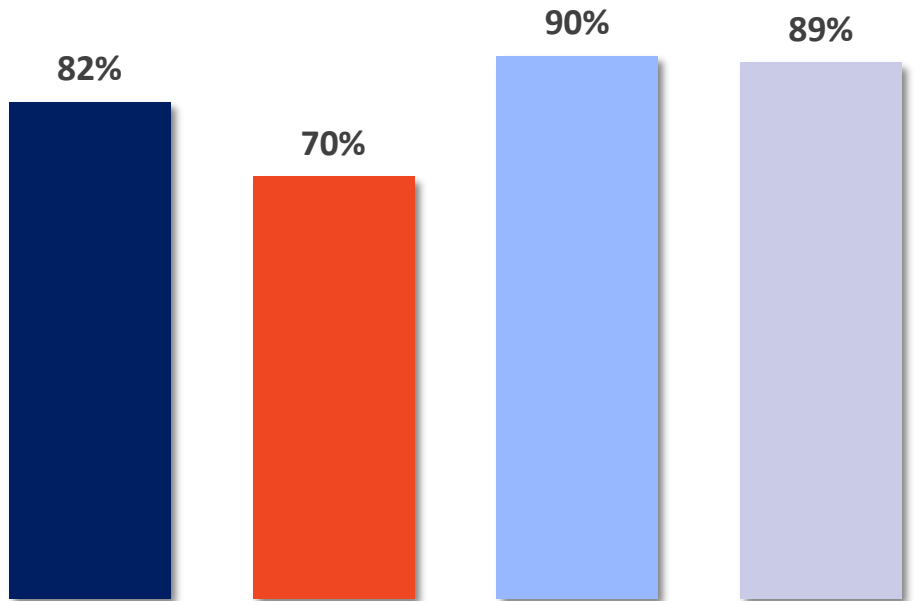
Top Performers Comparators

Q65: Does your channel incentive program include a 'Fast Start' feature to help new salespeople earn award points, gift cards, and merchandise rewards quickly?
Q66: Do you offer non-cash channel incentive programs without a 'top-stop,' allowing salespeople to earn unlimited rewards based on sales volume?

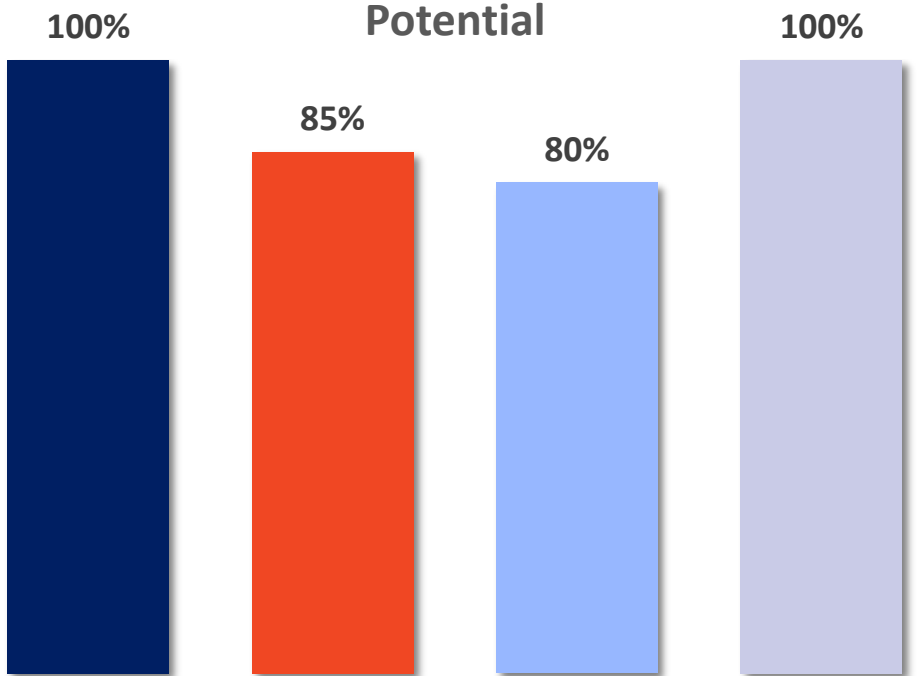
Channel: Points, Merchandise, or Gift Card Special Circumstances

Top-performing companies in Automotive/Manufacturing and Other Industries are more likely to offer unlimited rewards, while Financial Services firms are less likely to provide a "Fast Start" feature for new channel partners.

Likelihood of Offering Special Rules to Help New Channel Partners Earn Rewards



Likelihood of Offering Unlimited Rewards Potential

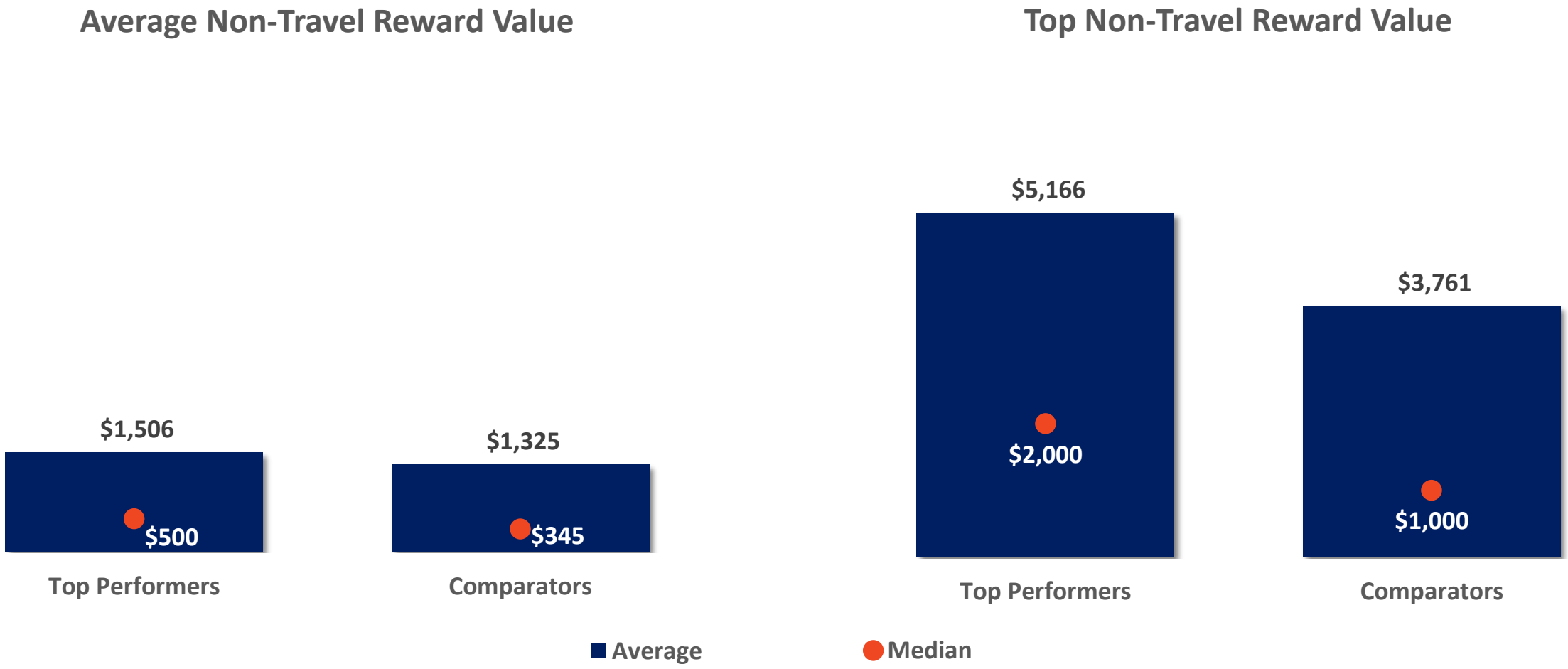


Top Performers: Automotive/Manufacturing
Top Performers: Financial Services
Top Performers: Technology
Top Performers: Other Industries

Q65: Does your channel incentive program include a 'Fast Start' feature to help new salespeople earn award points, gift cards, and merchandise rewards quickly?
Q66: Do you offer non-cash channel incentive programs without a 'top-stop,' allowing salespeople to earn unlimited rewards based on sales volume?

Channel: Program Spending on Points, Merchandise, or Gift Card

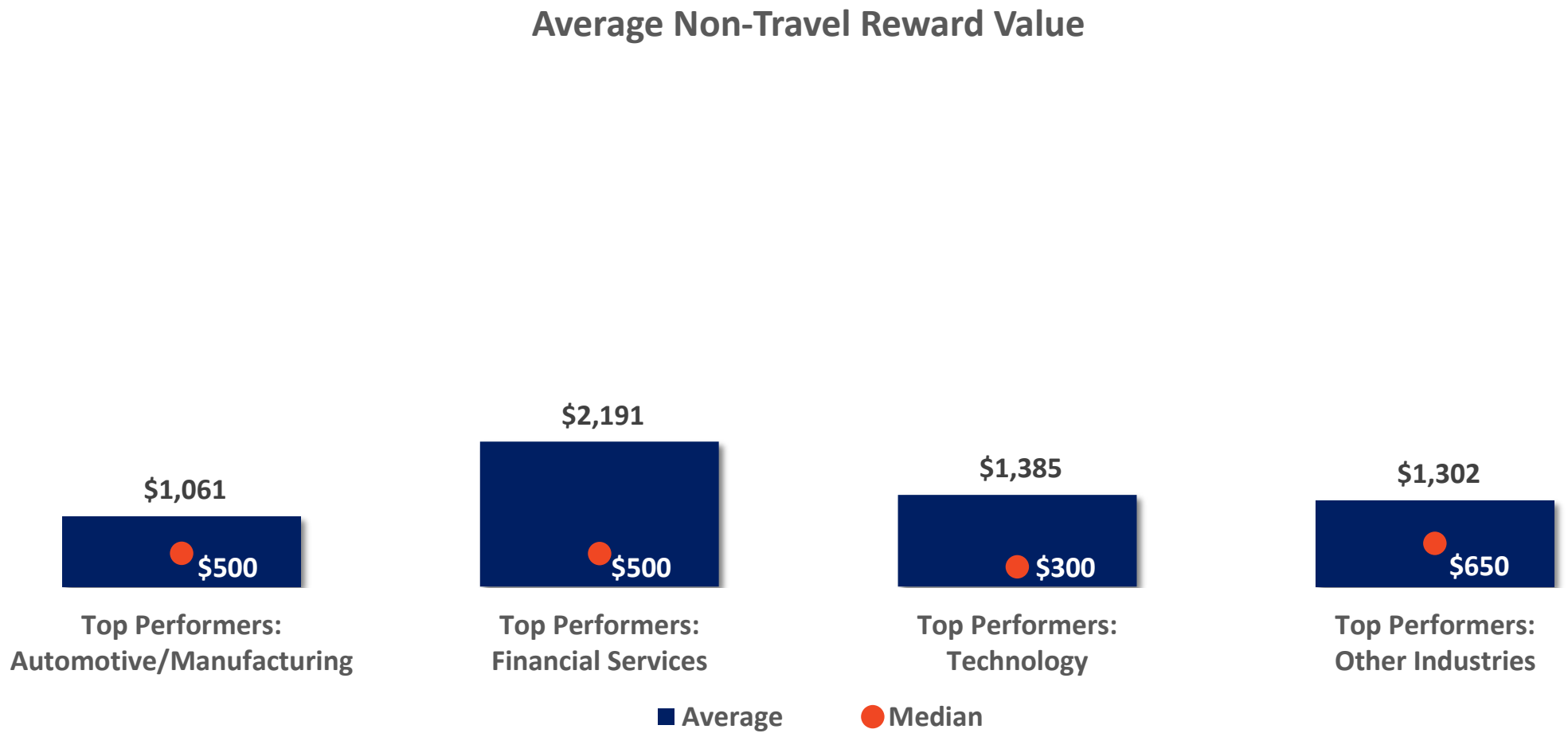
Top-performing companies offer higher non-travel reward values to top performing channel partners.



Q69: What are the average and top reward values for award points, gift cards, and merchandise in your channel rewards program?

Channel: Program Spending on Points, Merchandise, or Gift Card

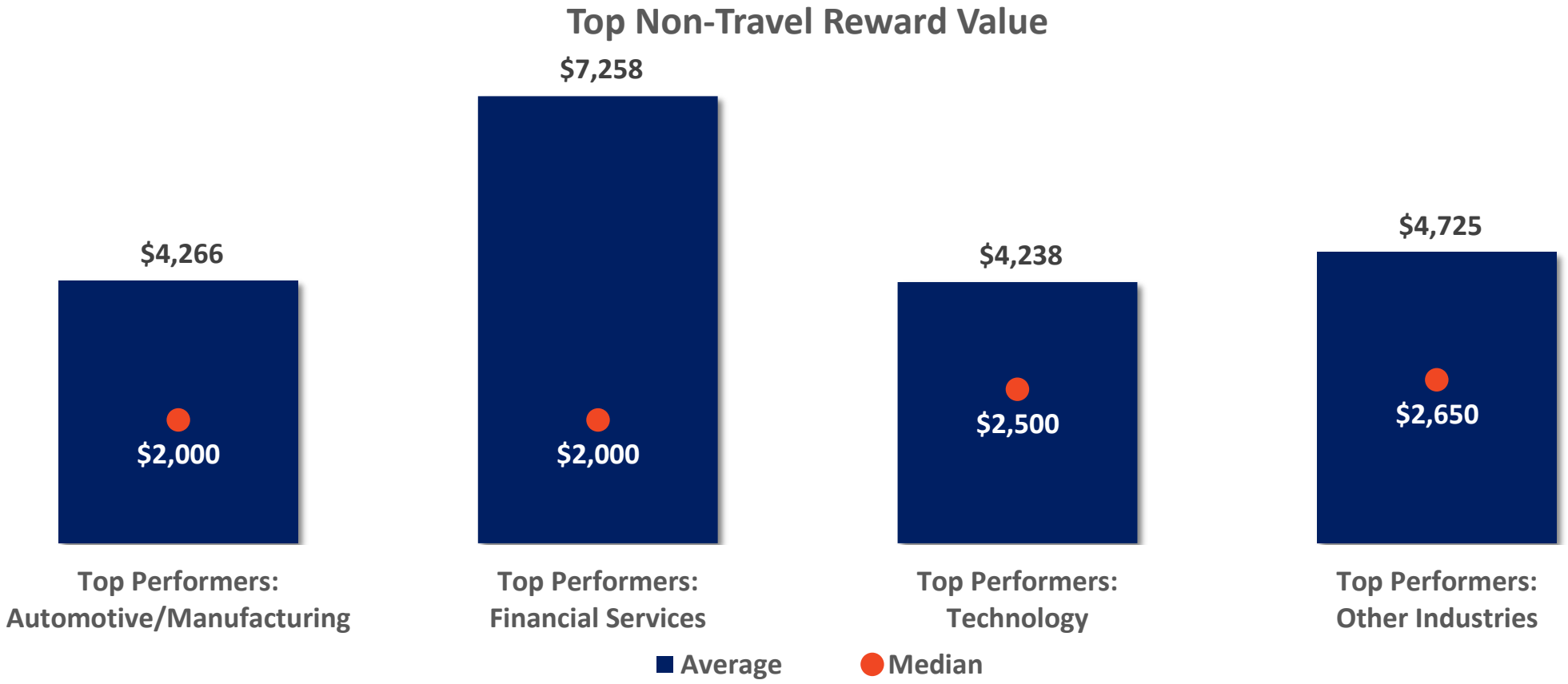
On average, top performing Financial Services firms offer more substantial non-travel awards.



Q69: What are the average and top reward values for award points, gift cards, and merchandise in your channel rewards program?

Channel: Program Spending on Points, Merchandise, or Gift Card

Top performing Financial Services companies offer the highest average non-travel reward values for their top performing channel partners.



Q69: What are the average and top reward values for award points, gift cards, and merchandise in your channel rewards program?

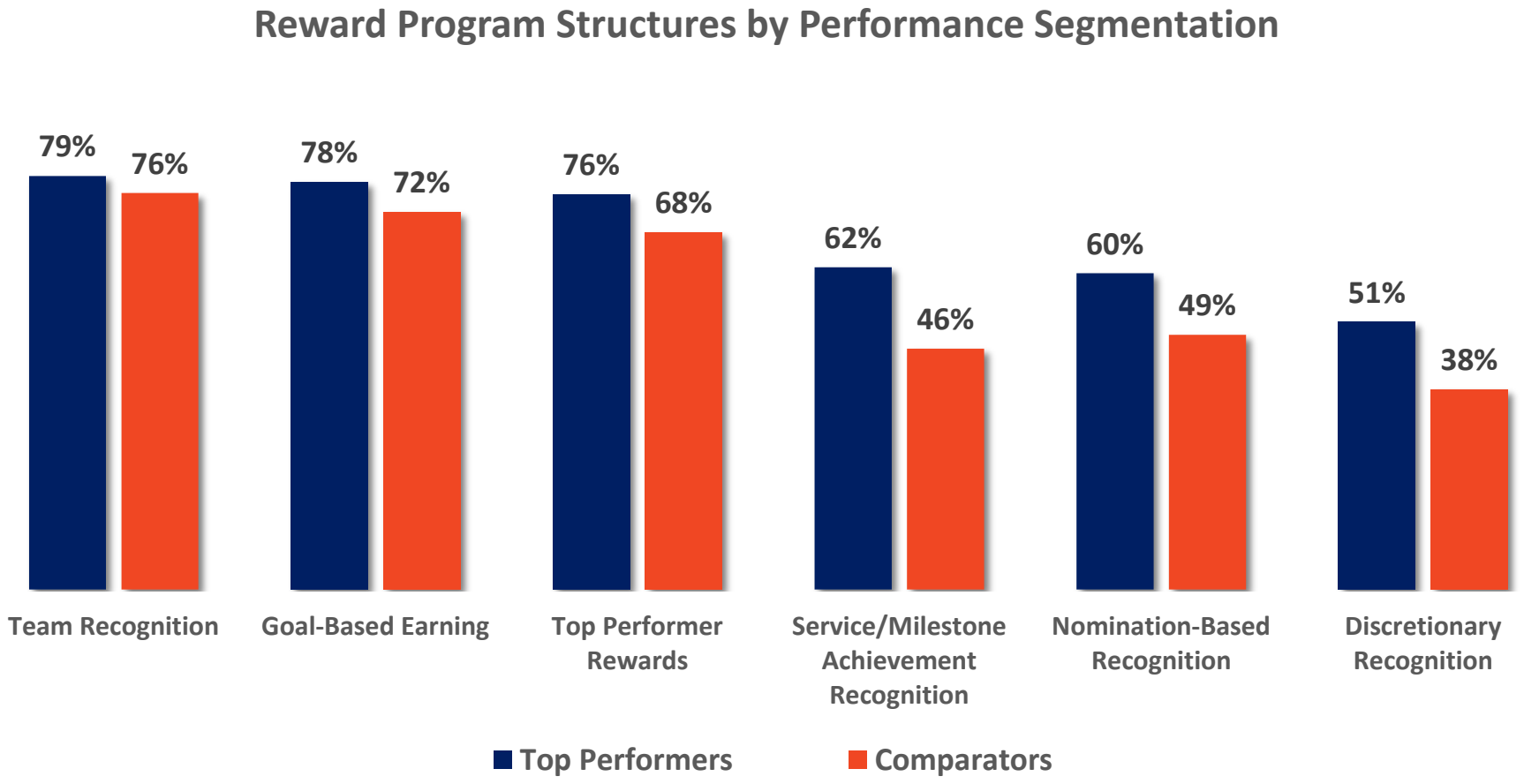
Employee Program: Structure & Design

Structure & Design: Key Findings

- While team recognition, goal-based earning, and Top Performer rewards are most common, top-performing companies leverage a variety of program structures to incentive employees.
- Top Performers are more likely to provide greater variation in reward goal structures than Comparators.
- Favoring a mixed-budgeting approach, Top Performers typically recognize around 15% of employees with non-cash rewards.

Employee: Reward Program Structure

Top Performers utilize a broader range of reward and recognition program structures, with a focus on team, goal-based earning and top performer rewards.

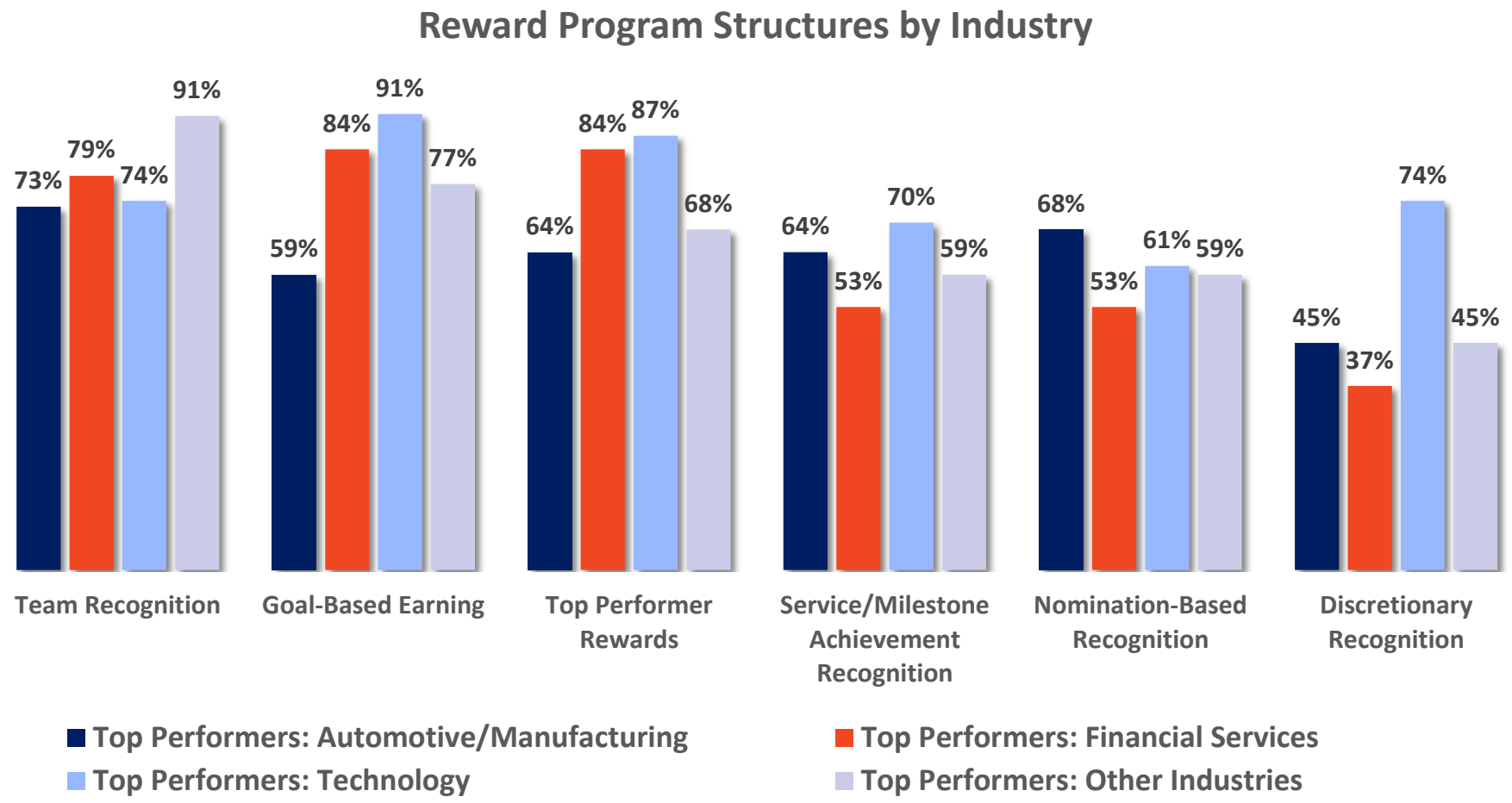


Top Performers place a stronger emphasis on service/milestone achievement, nomination-based, and discretionary recognition, acknowledging long-term contributions more frequently.

Q71: Which of the following reward and recognition program structures does your organization currently use for employees?

Employee: Reward Program Structure

Top Performers in Technology employ a broader range of recognition structures.



Financial Services and Technology Top Performers have a stronger focus on Goal-Based Earning and Top Performer Rewards, with Technology emphasizing Discretionary Recognition.

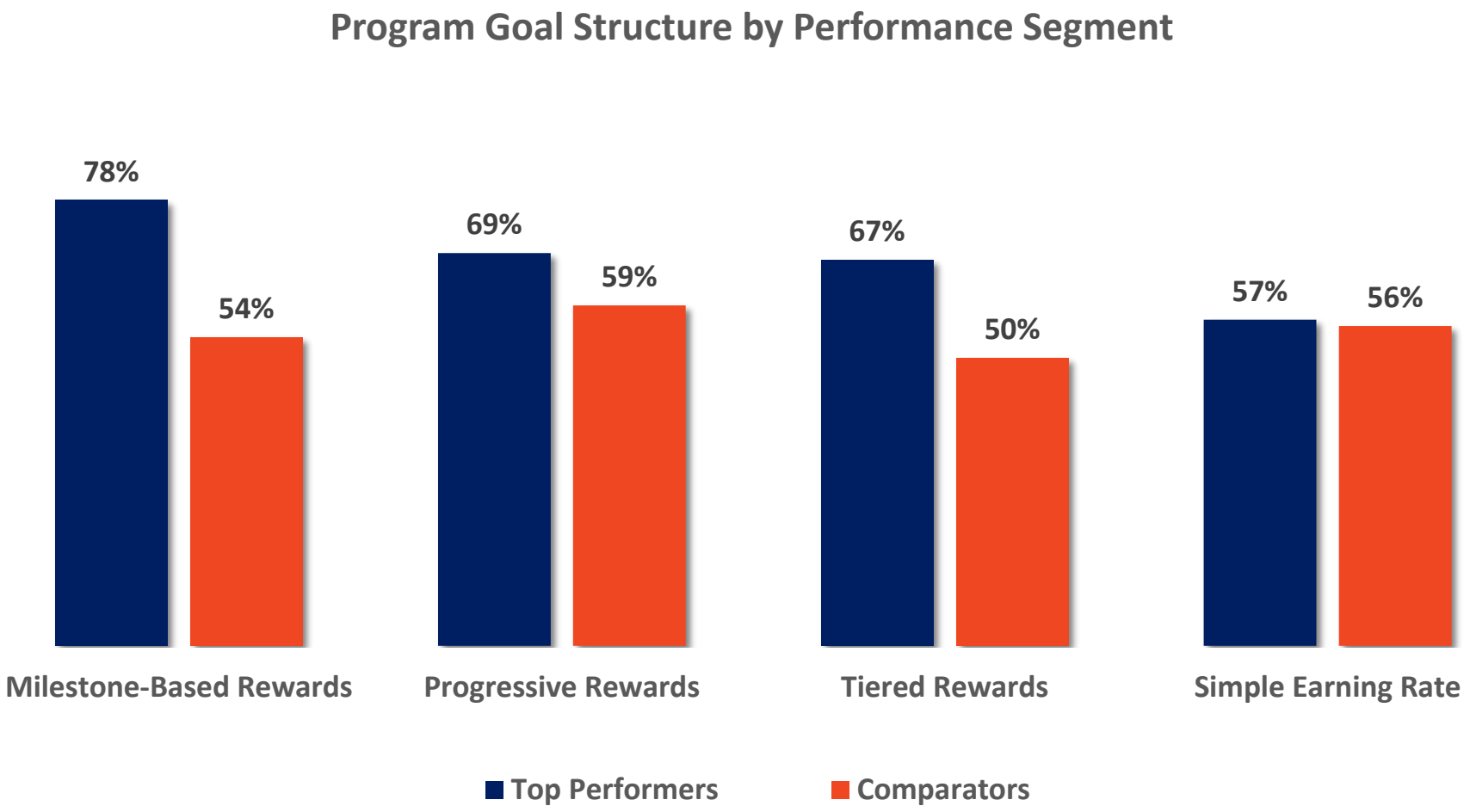
Top Performers in Other Industries rely more on Team Recognition, but are less likely to use Goal-Based Earning or Top Performer Rewards compared to other sectors.

Automotive/Manufacturing Top Performers have a more moderate approach to various recognition structures, with significant adoption of Team Recognition and Nomination-Based Recognition.

Q71: Which of the following reward and recognition program structures does your organization currently use for employees?

Employee: Goal Structure

Top Performers employ more variance in the reward structure for employees.



Milestone-Based Rewards are significantly more common among Top Performers, indicating a focus on rewarding achievements at key points in time.

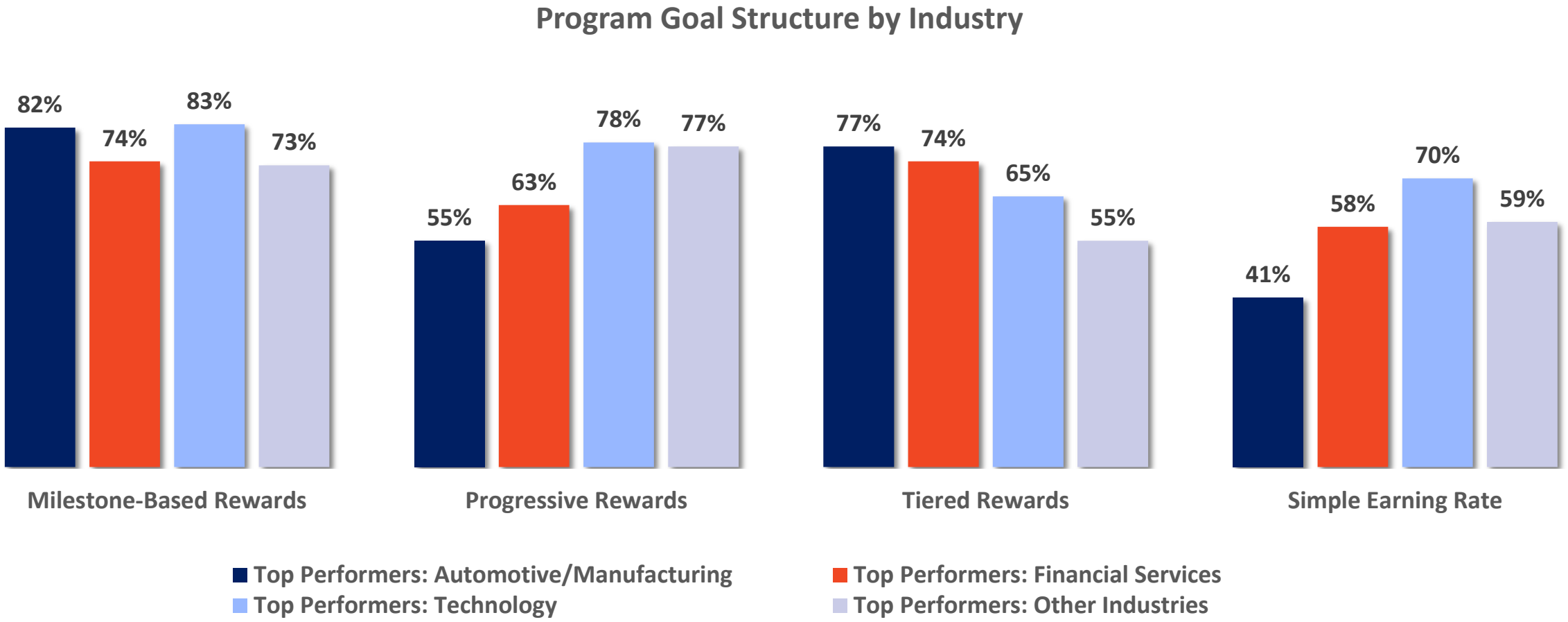
Progressive and Tiered Rewards are favored by Top Performers, suggesting they place emphasis on rewarding sustained performance and progression.

Simple Earning Rates are similarly adopted by both groups, showing that clear, straightforward earning models remain effective across the board.

Q72: Which of the following best describes the goal structure for your employee reward and recognition program?

Employee: Goal Structure

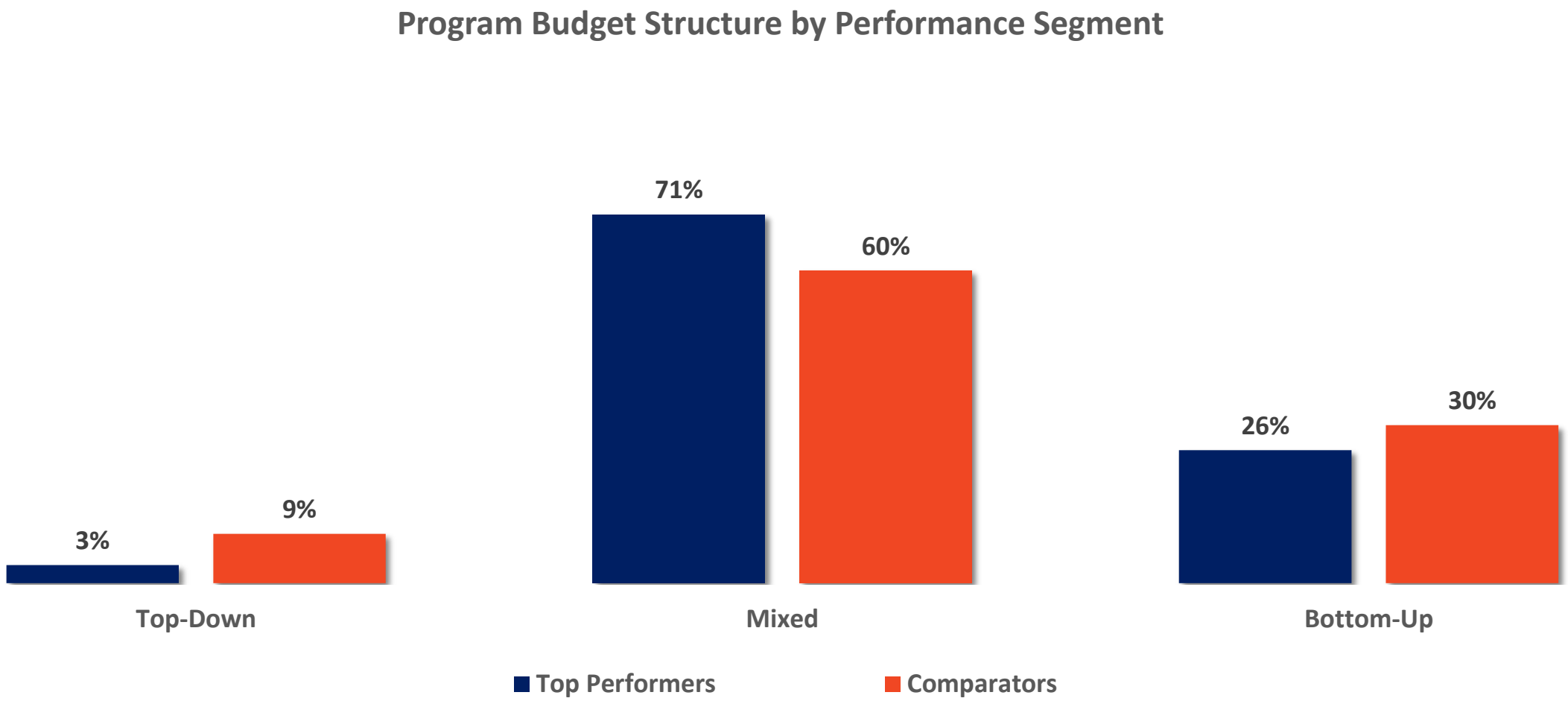
Top Performers in Technology and Other Industries are more likely to use progressive rewards, while those in Automotive/Manufacturing and Financial Services favor a tiered structure.



Q72: Which of the following best describes the goal structure for your employee reward and recognition program?

Employee: Reward Program Budgeting

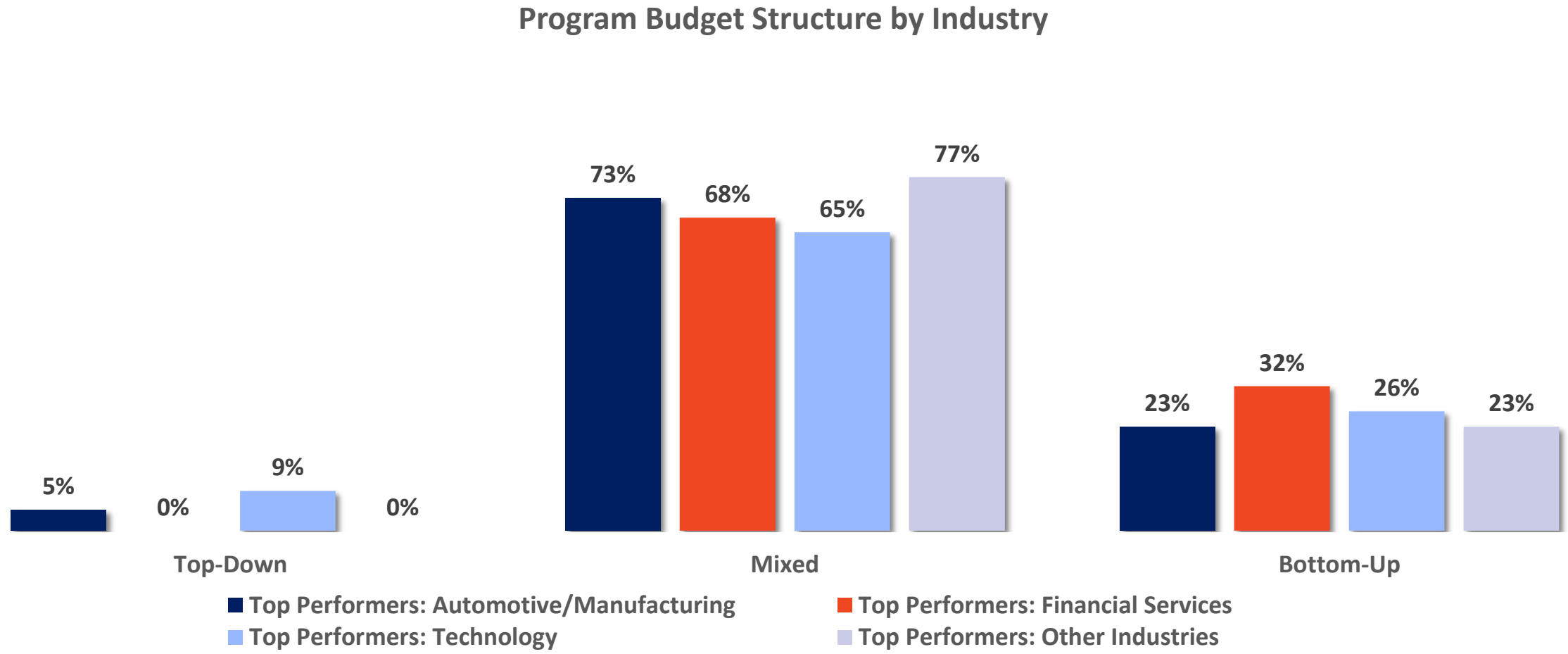
Top Performers are more likely to use a mixed approach to budgeting for employee incentive programs.



Q85: Which of the following best describes your company's approach to budgeting for employee incentive programs?

Employee: Reward Program Budgeting

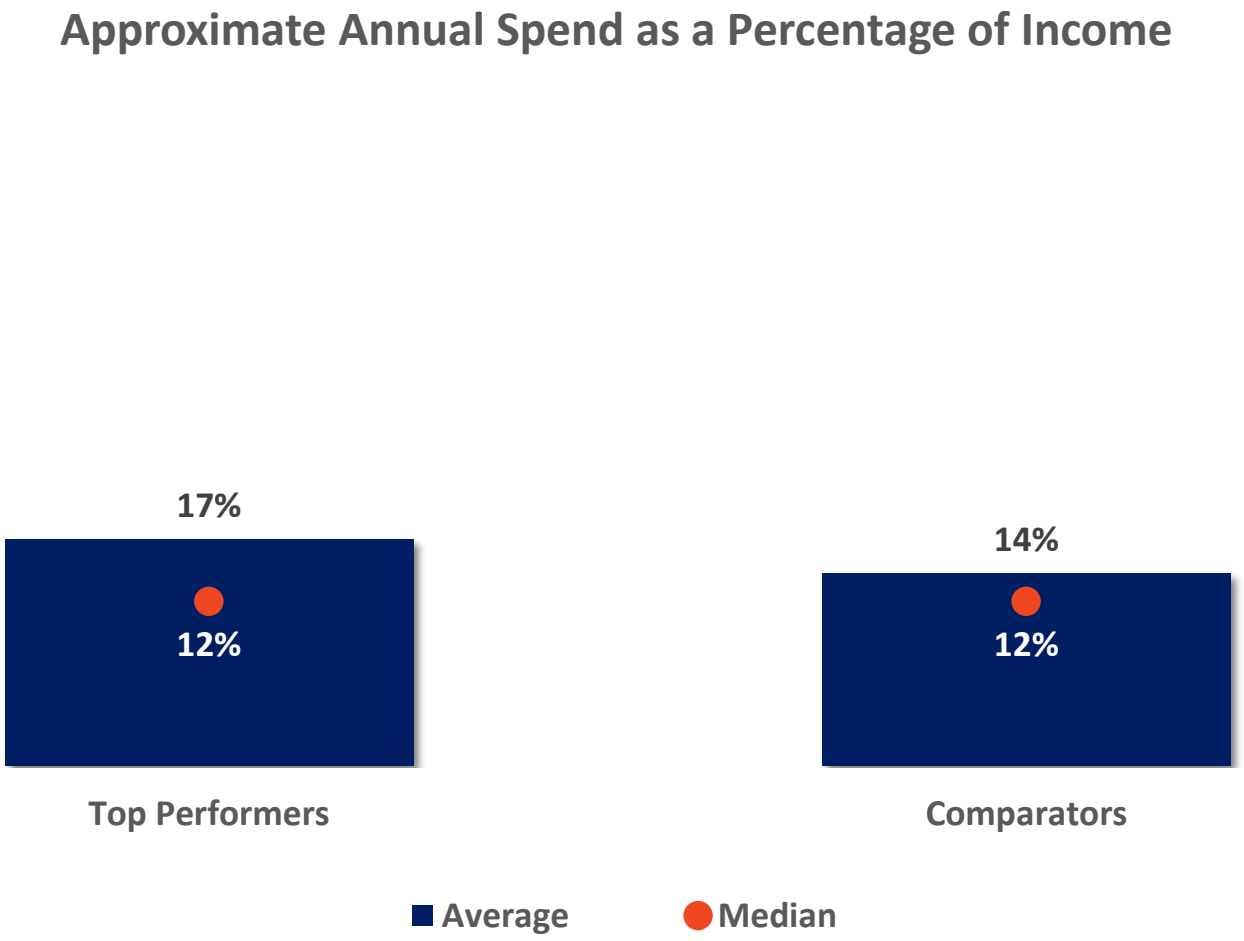
Top-performing companies prefer a mixed budgeting approach across all industries



Q85: Which of the following best describes your company's approach to budgeting for employee incentive programs?

Employee: Program Spending on Non-Cash Rewards & Recognition

Top Performers allocate a higher percentage of income to non-cash rewards and recognition.

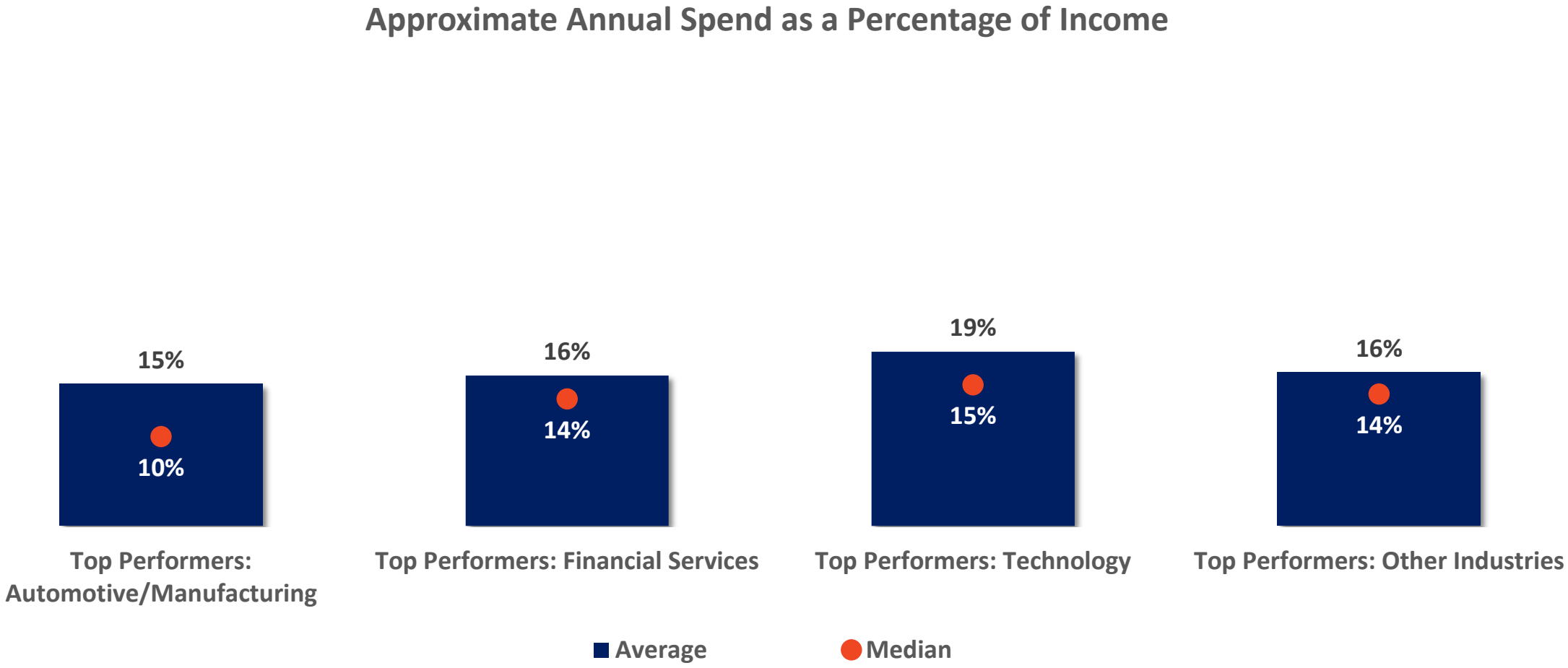


The wider gap between average and median for Top Performers indicates more variability in spending ratios.

Q86: As a percentage of their income, what is the approximate annual spend on non-cash rewards and recognition for your employees?

Employee: Program Spending on Non-Cash Rewards & Recognition

Top Performers in Technology allocate slightly more towards non-cash rewards than Other Industries.



Q86: As a percentage of their income, what is the approximate annual spend on non-cash rewards and recognition for your employees?

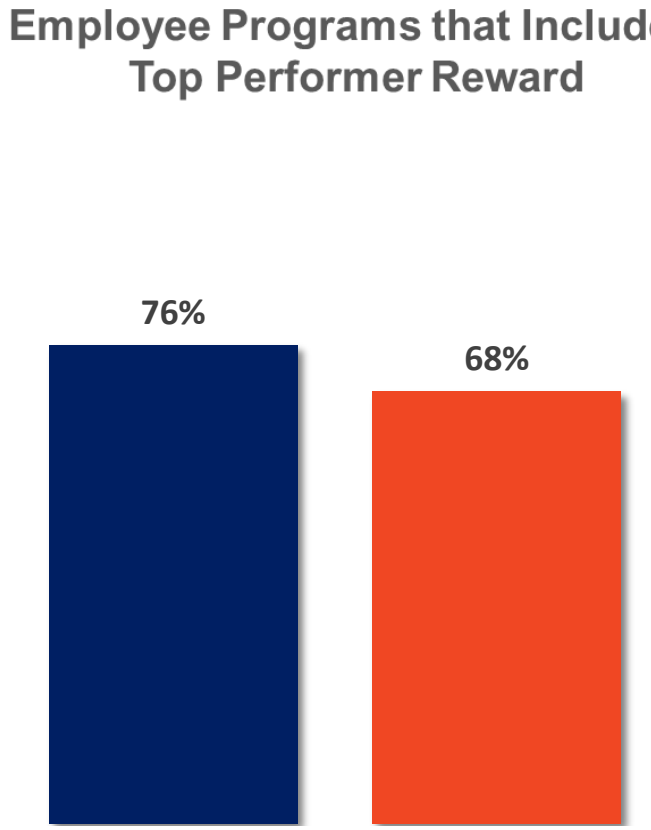
Employee Program:
Top Performer Incentive Trip

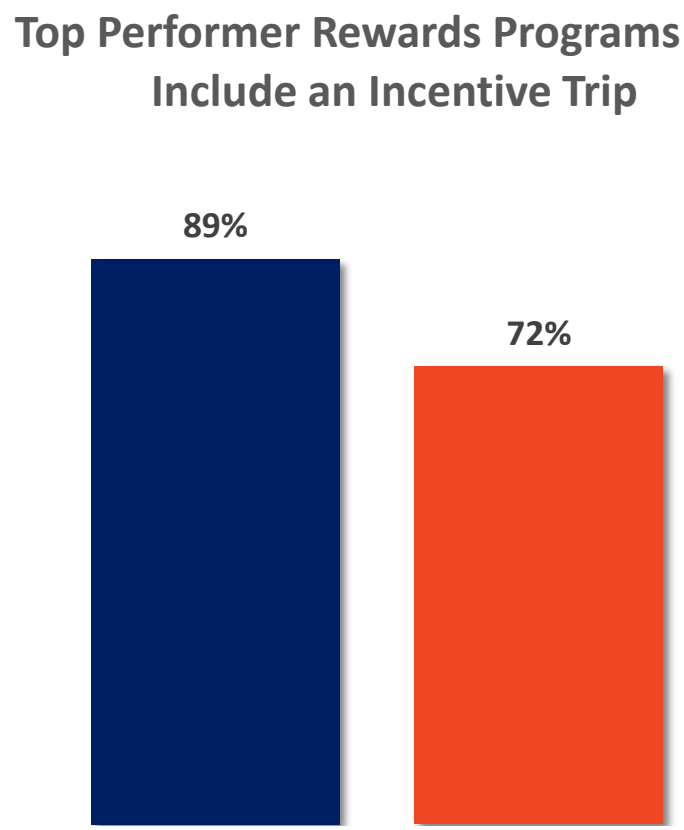
Top Performer Incentive Trip: Key Findings

- Top-performing companies are more likely to offer incentive trip rewards than Comparators.
- Generally favoring a variable number of winners based on the performance of employees, Top Performers select a little over 10% of employees for their incentive trip reward.
- Top Performers favor a simple or moderate approach to qualification criteria, commonly requiring 100% of a quota or goal to be met for qualification.
- Customer relation and financial metrics are cornerstones of incentive trip qualification for Top Performers, with some emphasis on activity metrics.
- Compared to Comparators, Top Performers allocate significantly greater investment toward the value of employee incentive travel.
- Employee travel rewards are typically lower in value than Sales or Channel, with Top Performers often using local travel to create meaningful experiences for more participants at lower cost.

Employee: Top Performer Incentive Trip Availability

Top-performing companies are more likely to include Top Performer Rewards, particularly with incentive travel.



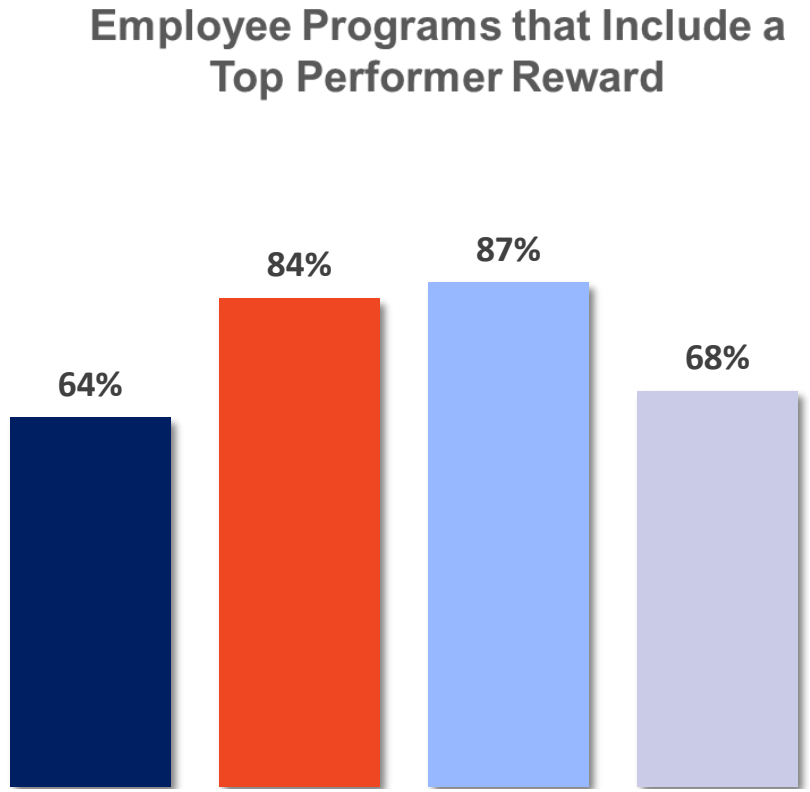


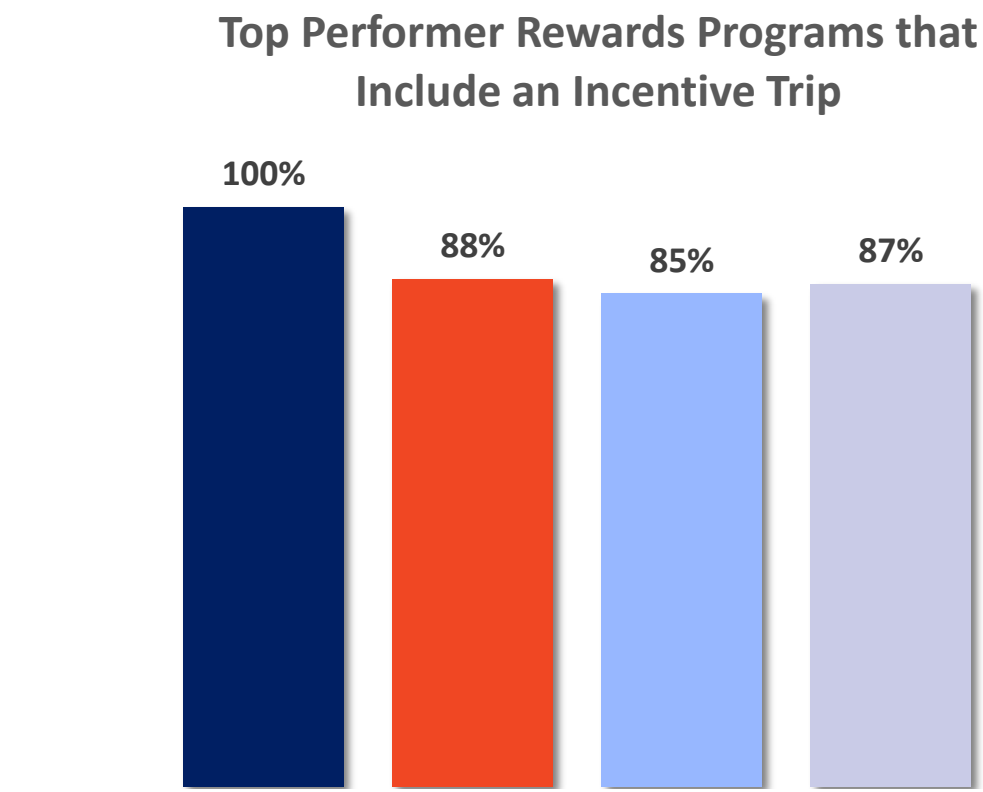
Top Performers Comparators

Q71: Which of the following reward and recognition program structures does your organization currently use for employees?
Q73: Does your employee Top Performer award include a group incentive trip?

Employee: Top Performer Incentive Trip Availability

Top performing Financial Services and Technology firms prioritize Top Performer rewards.





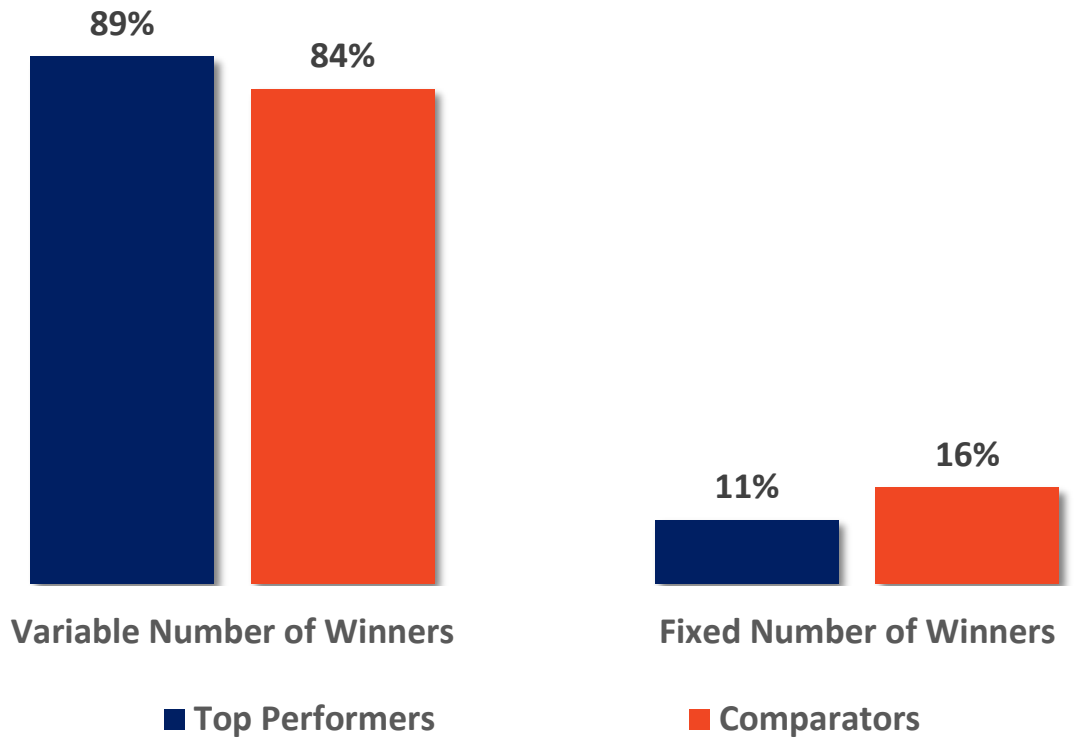
Top Performers: Automotive/Manufacturing
Top Performers: Financial Services
Top Performers: Technology
Top Performers: Other Industries

Q71: Which of the following reward and recognition program structures does your organization currently use for employees?
Q73: Does your employee Top Performer award include a group incentive trip?

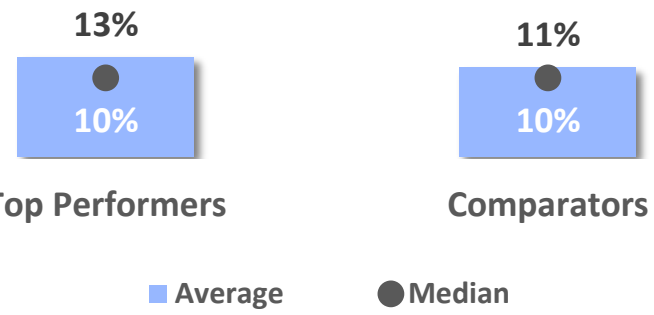
Employee: Top Performer Incentive Trip Availability

Top Performers and Comparators reward incentive trips to employees at comparable rates.

Incentive Trip Winners by Performance Segment



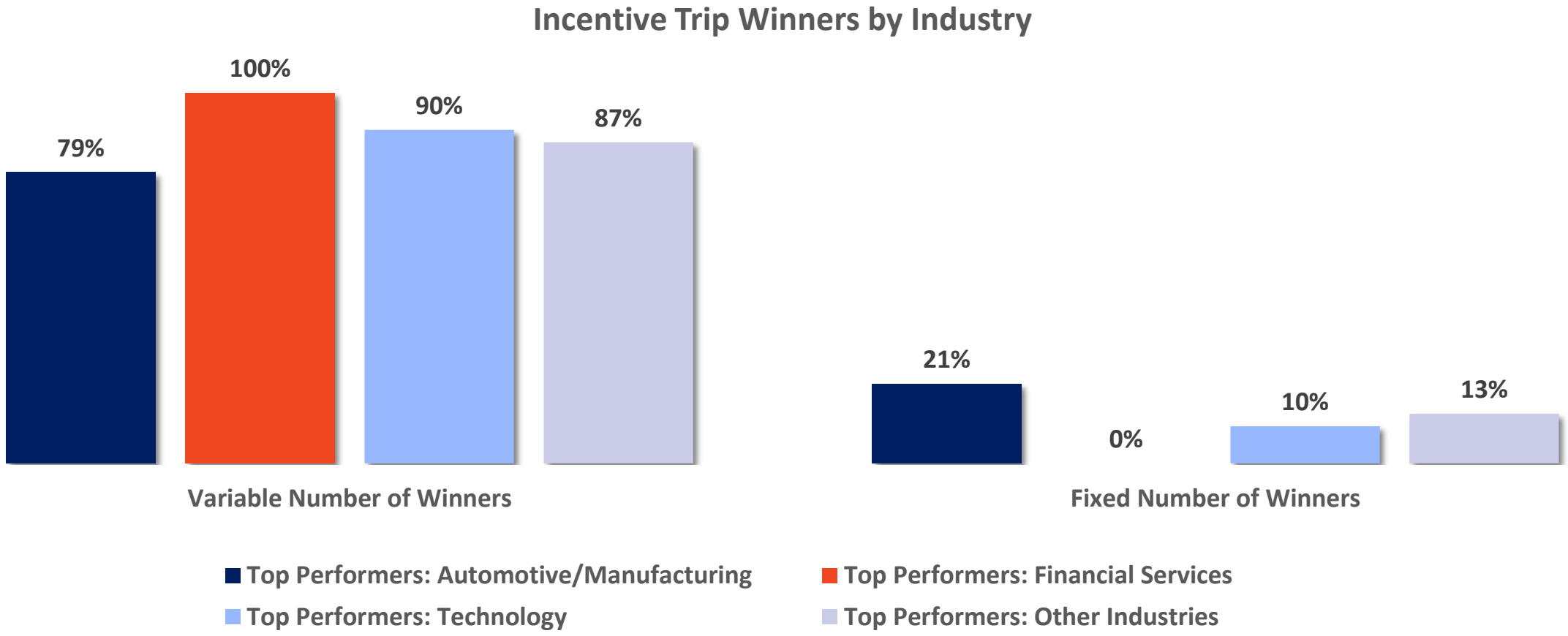
Percentage of Employees Selected for an Incentive Tip



Q74: Is the number of Top Performer trip winners set in advance, or does it vary based on the performance of employees?
Q82: Approximately what percentage of your employees are selected for the Top Performer incentive trip?

Employee: Top Performer Incentive Trip Availability

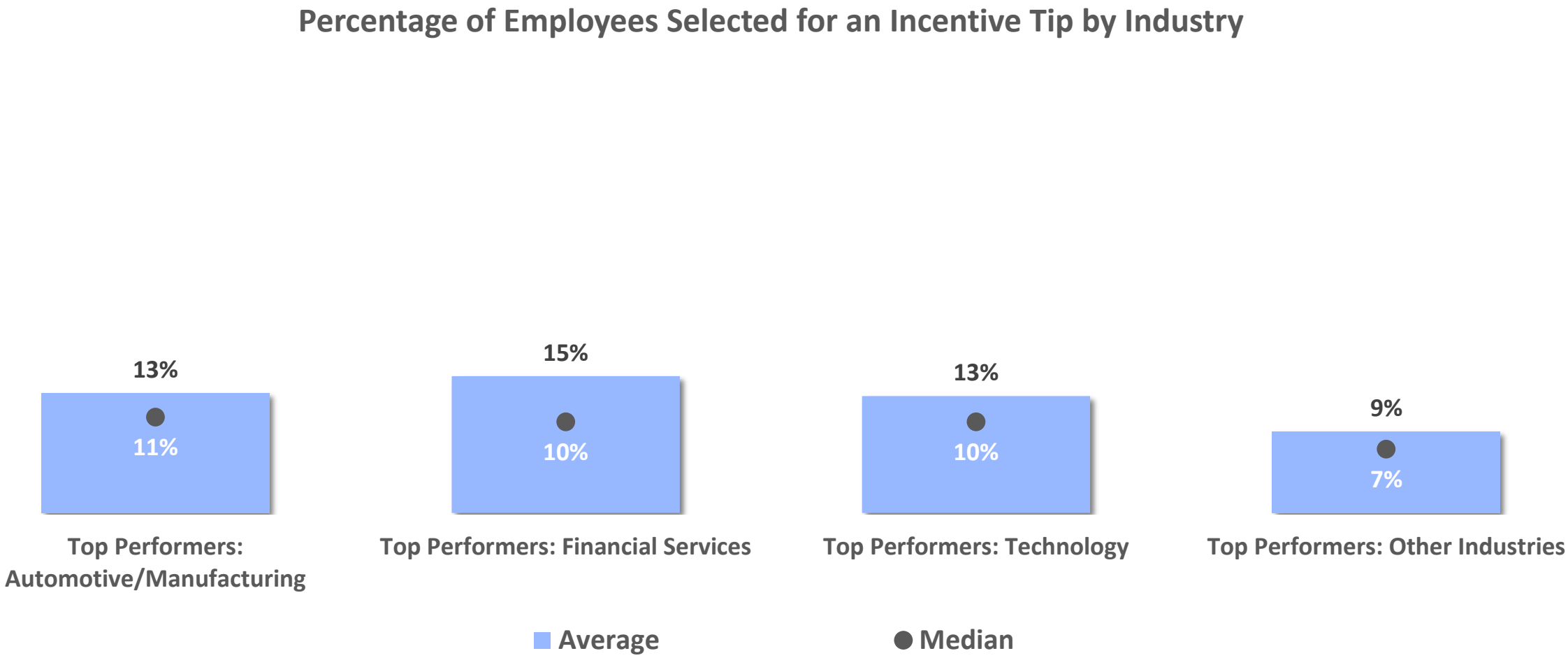
Most Top Performers use a variable qualification model for incentive trips, especially in Financial Services and Technology.



Q74: Is the number of Top Performer trip winners set in advance, or does it vary based on the performance of channel partners?

Employee: Top Performer Incentive Trip Availability

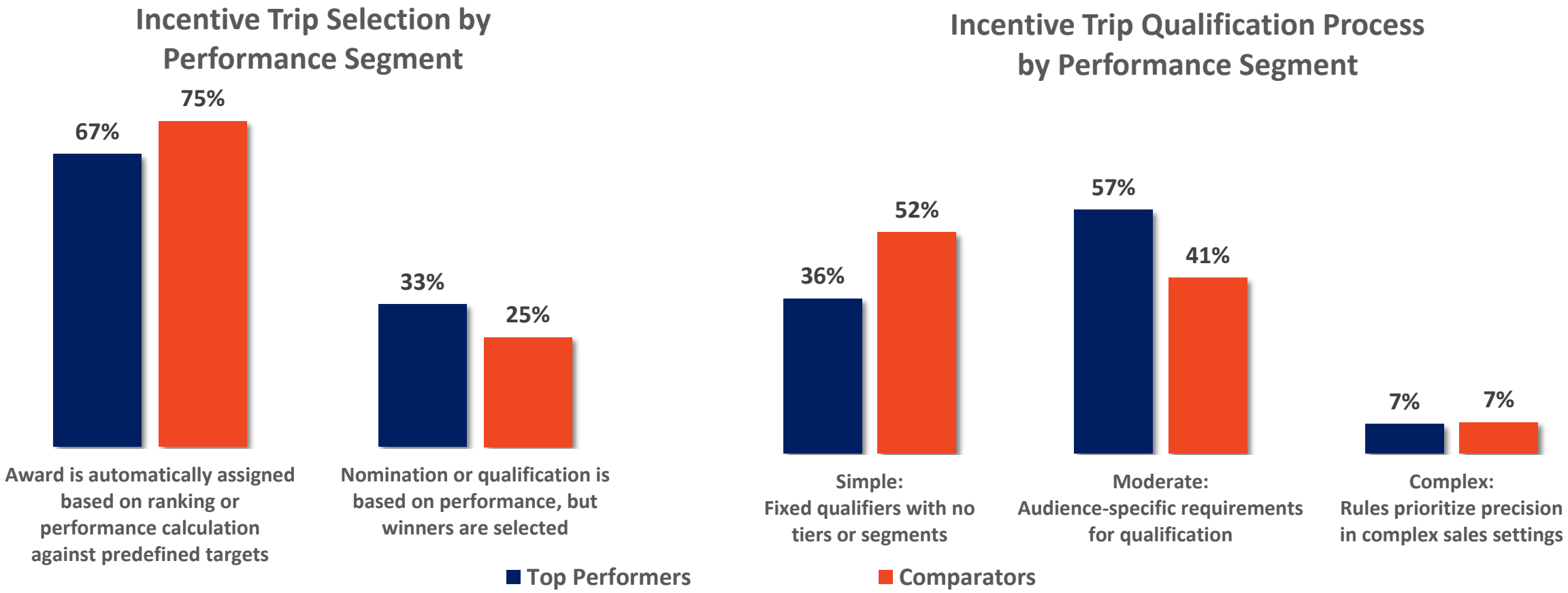
Top Performers in most industries select a similar share of employees for incentive trips.



Q82: Approximately what percentage of your employees are selected for the Top Performer incentive trip?

Employee: Top Performer Incentive Trip Qualification Process

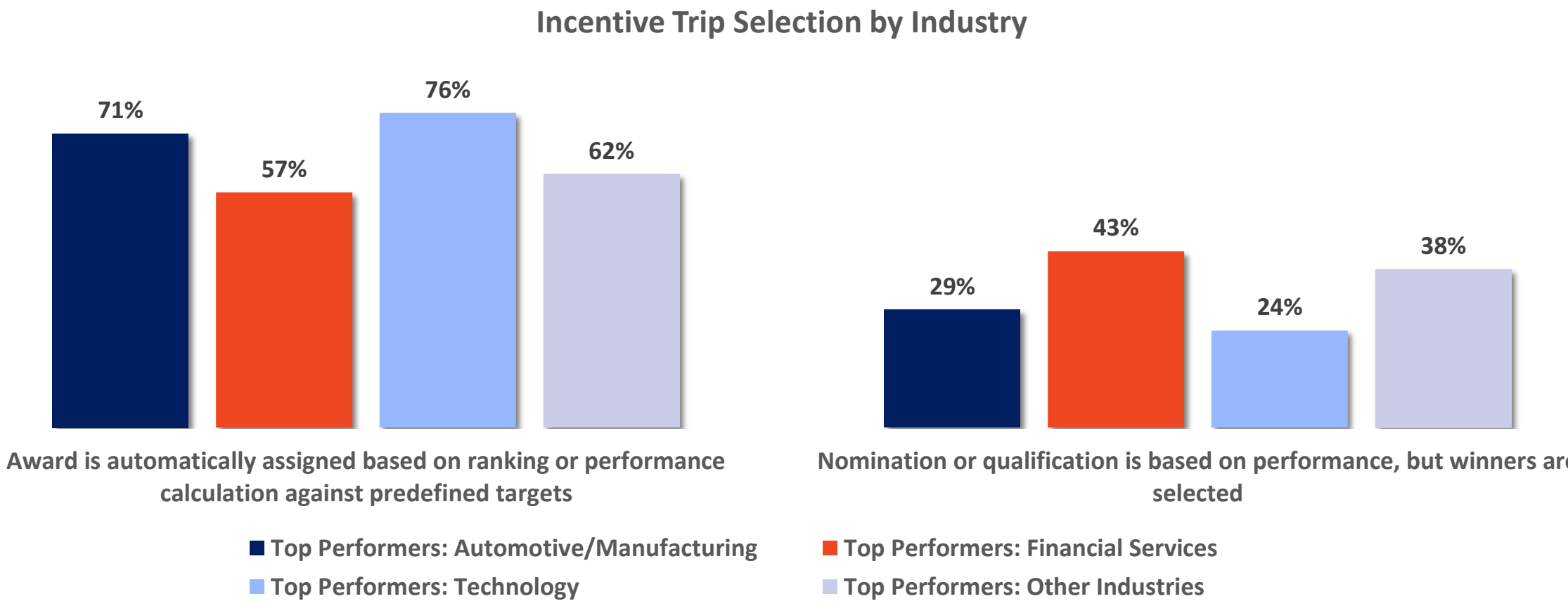
Top Performers are more likely to tailor their qualification criteria, while Comparators rely more on simple, automatic thresholds.



Q75: Which of the below best describes the qualification process for the employee Top Performer incentive trip?
Q76: Which of the following best describes your qualification criteria for the employee Top Performer incentive trip?

Employee: Top Performer Incentive Trip Qualification Process

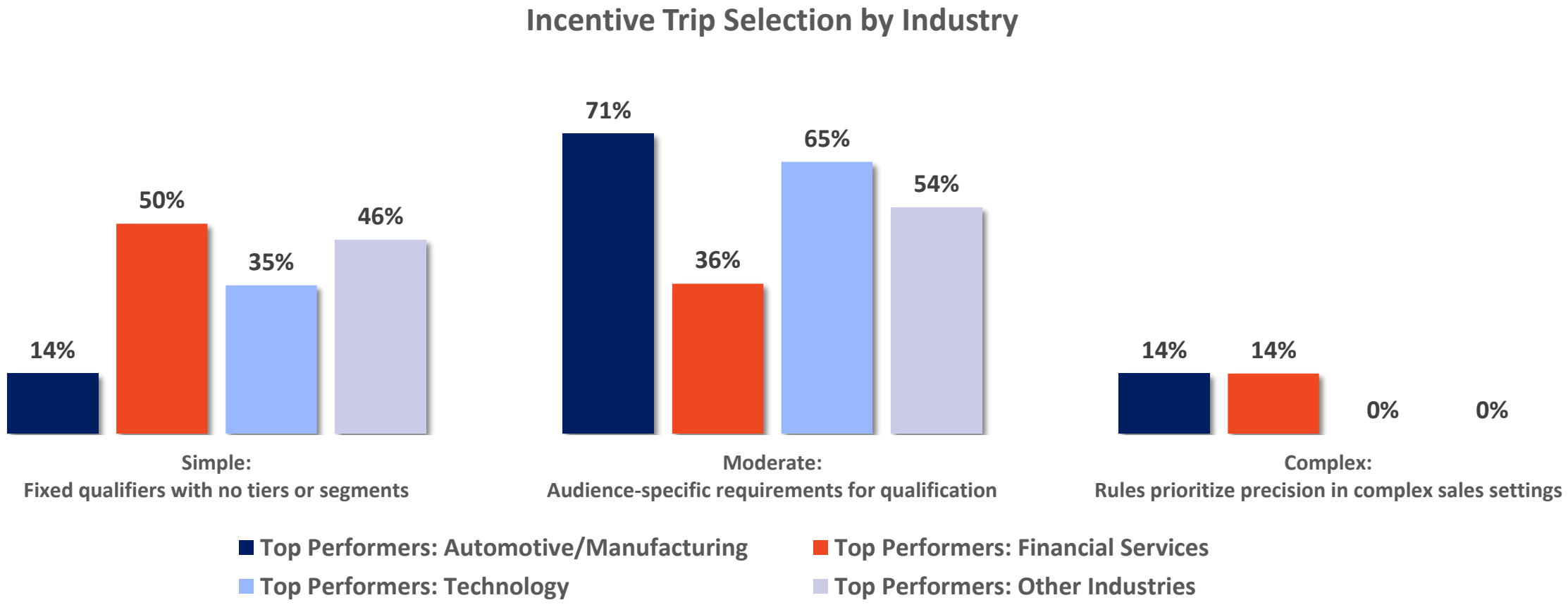
Top Performers in Technology and Automotive/Manufacturing favor automatic qualification, while Financial Services and Other Industries lean more on selection processes.



Q75: Which of the below best describes the qualification process for the employee Top Performer incentive trip?

Employee: Top Performer Incentive Trip Qualification Process

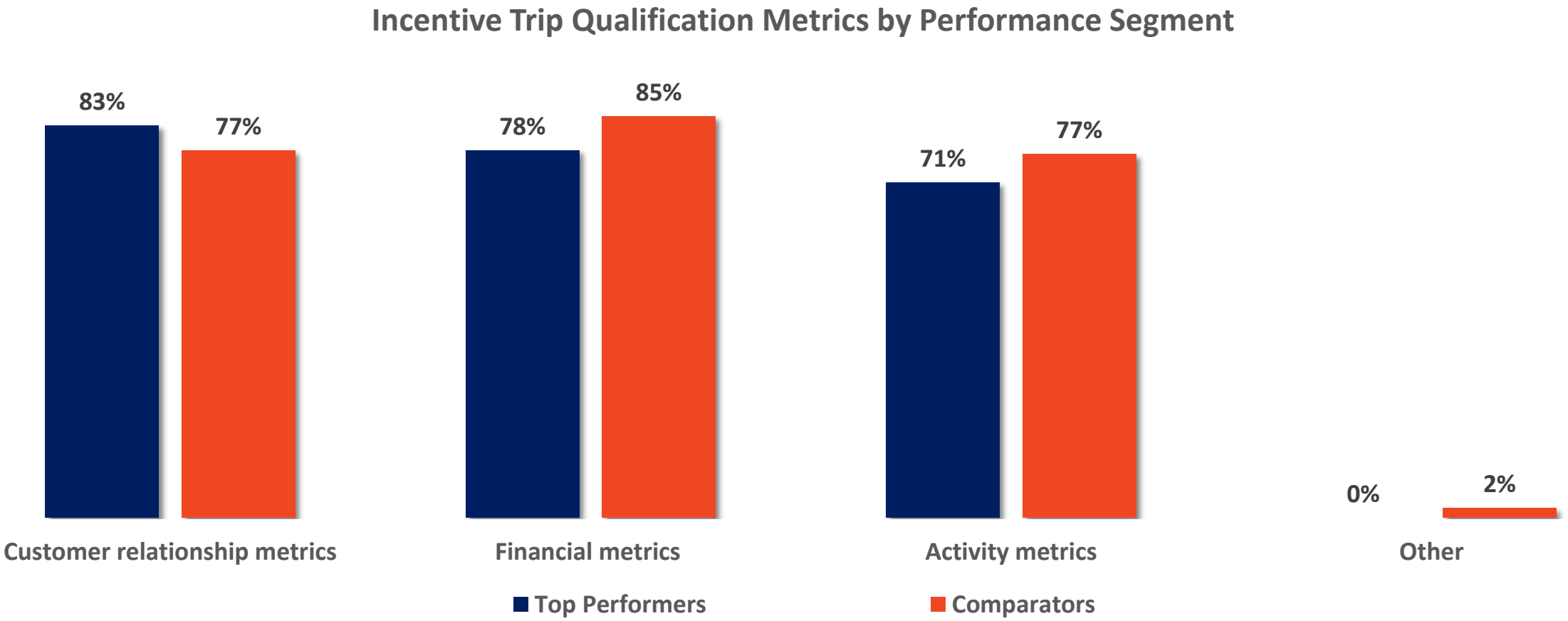
Top Performers in Automotive/Manufacturing and Technology favor more tailored qualification rules, while Financial Services and Other Industries rely more on simple thresholds.



Q76: Which of the following best describes your qualification criteria for the employee Top Performer incentive trip?

Employee: Top Performer Incentive Trip Qualification Metrics

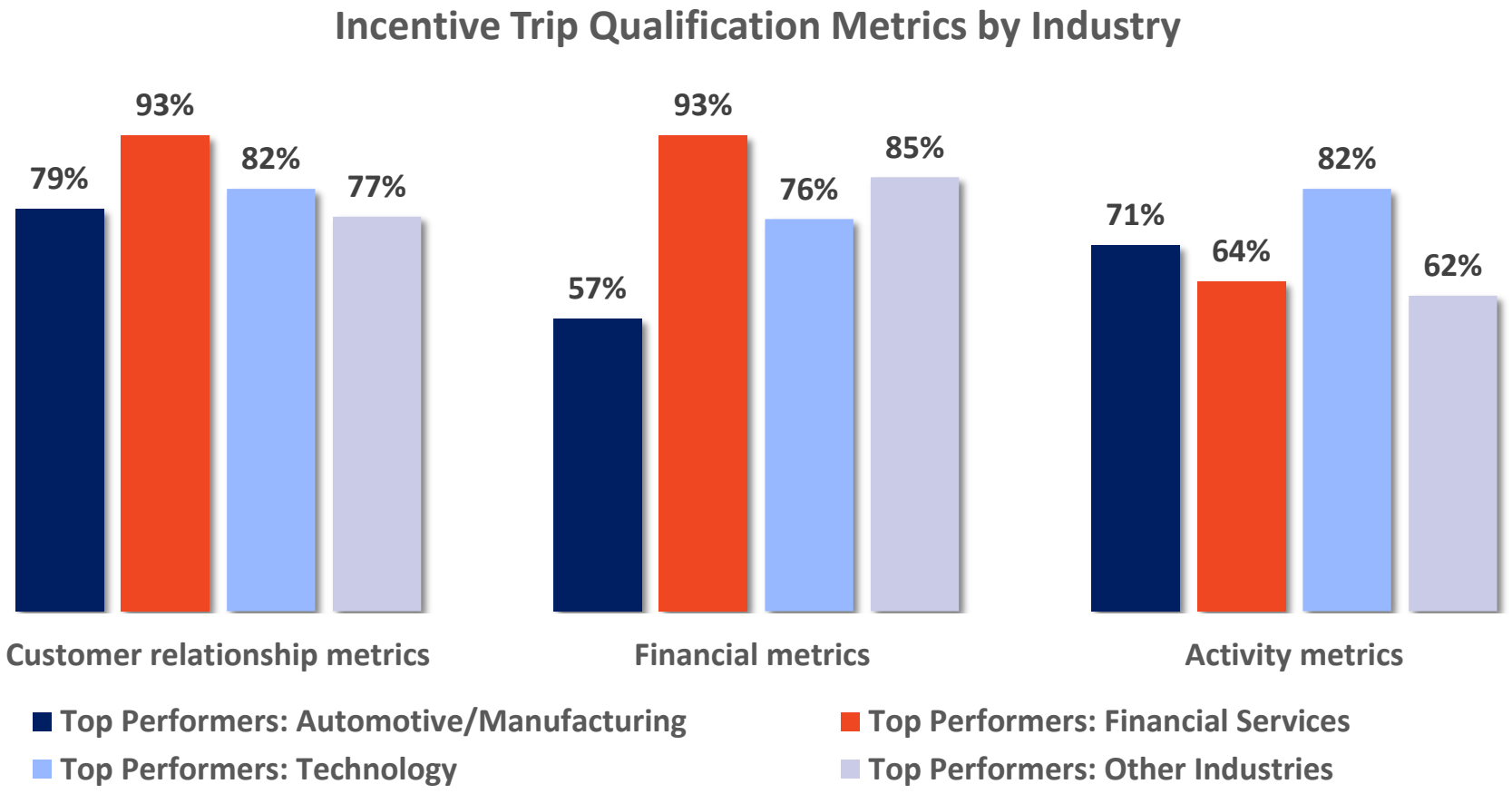
Top Performers and Comparators use similar qualification metrics, with a focus on customer relationship, financial performance, and activity metrics.



Q77: Which of the following best describes the metrics used to qualify employees for the Top Performer incentive trip?

Employee: Top Performer Incentive Trip Qualification Metrics

Top Performers across industries focus on customer relationship metrics, with varying emphasis on financial and activity metrics.



Customer relationship metrics are universally important, with Financial Services placing the highest emphasis.

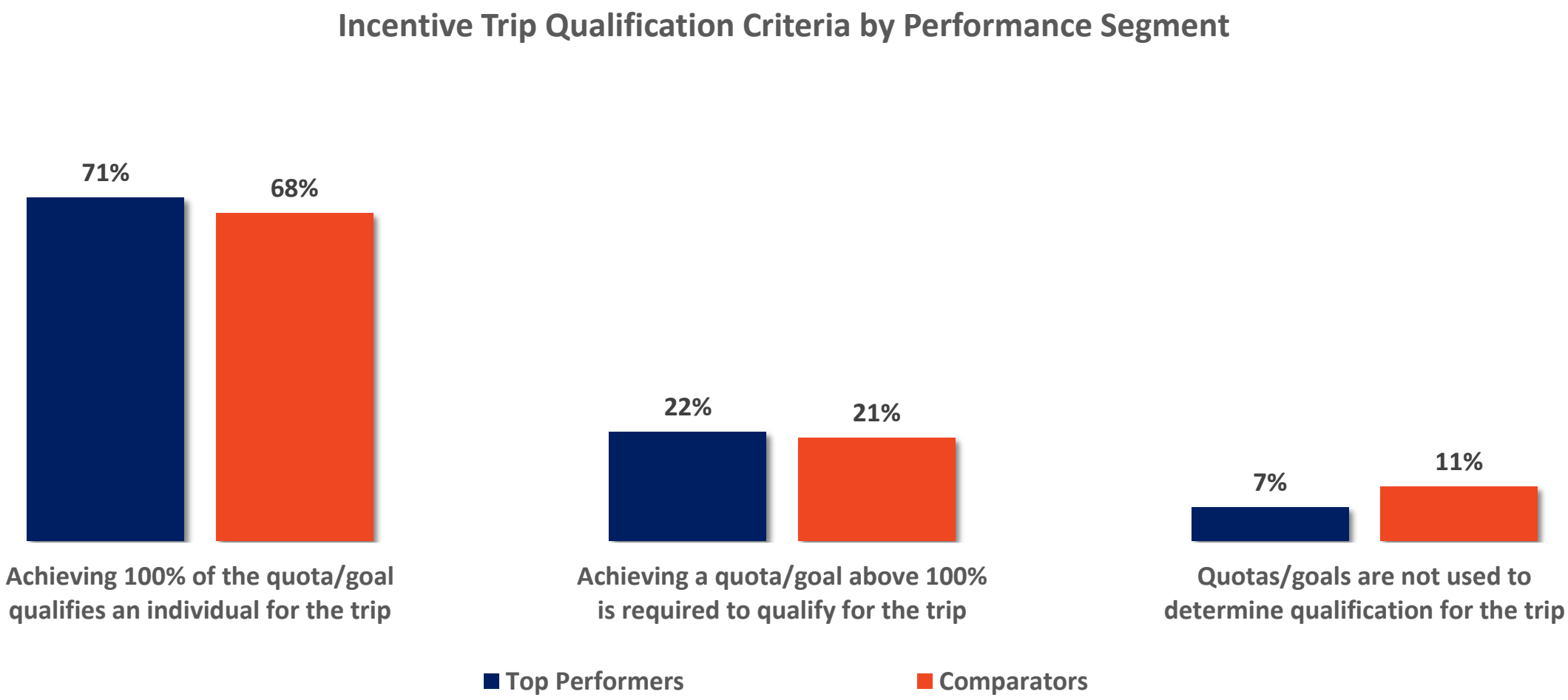
Financial metrics are more prominent in Financial Services and Other Industries.

Activity metrics are most strongly prioritized by Technology firms, showing a more performance-driven qualification approach.

Q77: Which of the following best describes the metrics used to qualify employees for the Top Performer incentive trip?

Employee: Top Performer Incentive Trip Qualification Criteria

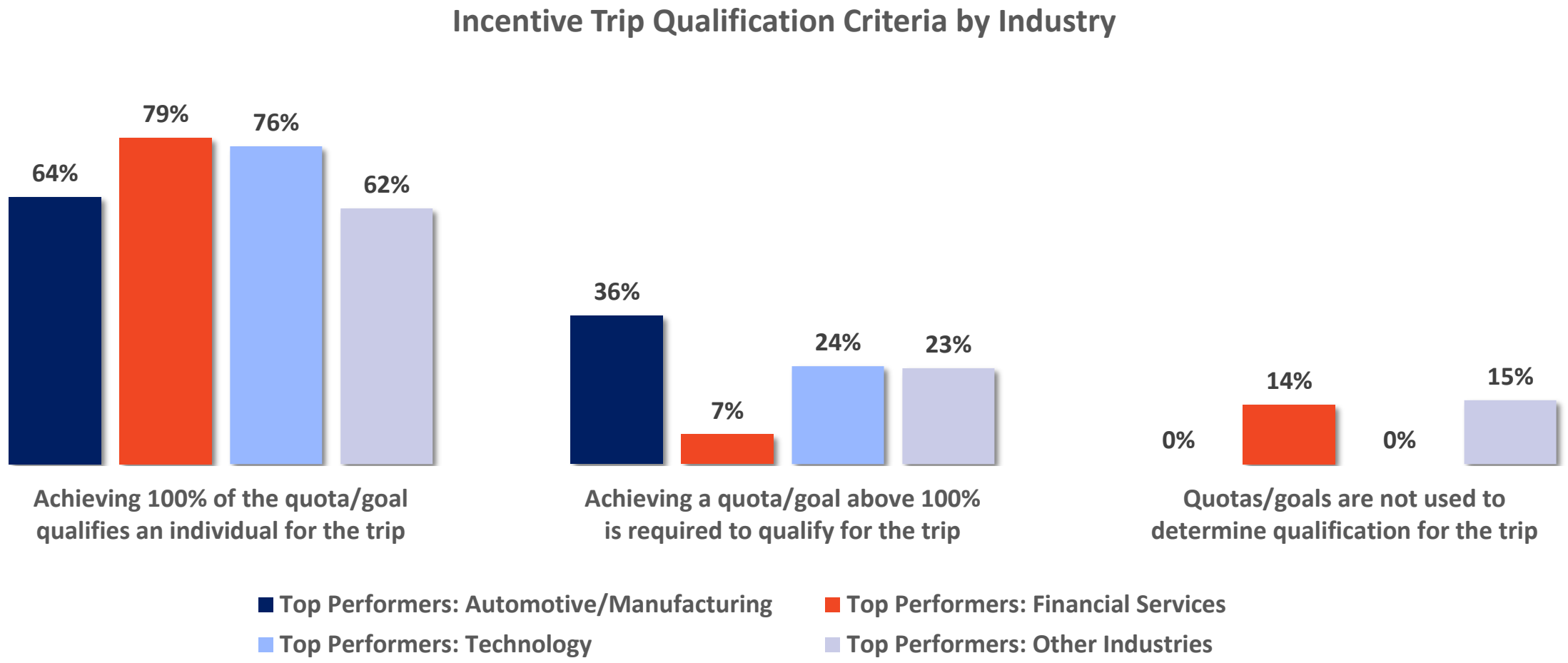
Top Performers and Comparators rely on similar qualification criteria for incentive trips.



Q79: How do employee quotas/goals factor into qualification for the Top Performer incentive trip?

Employee: Top Performer Incentive Trip Qualification Criteria

Top Performers in Financial Services are less likely to require exceeding quotas for incentive trip qualification.

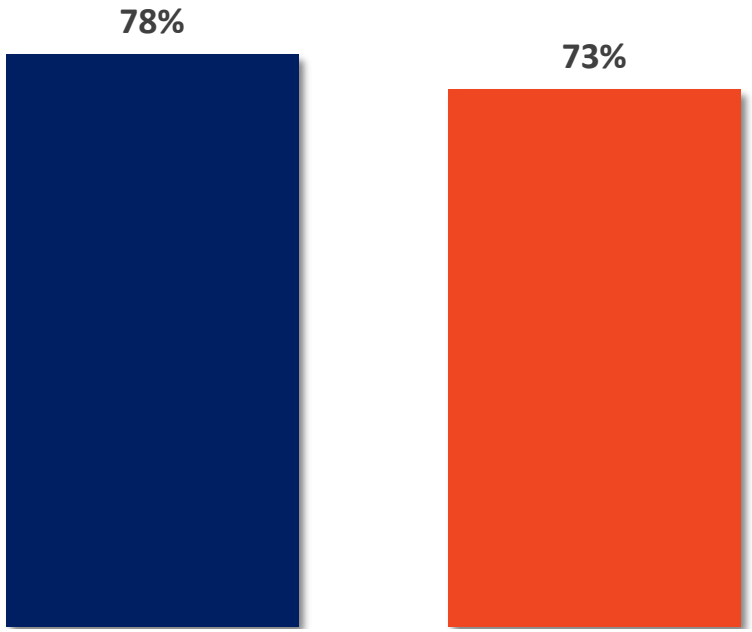


Q79: How do employee quotas/goals factor into qualification for the Top Performer incentive trip?

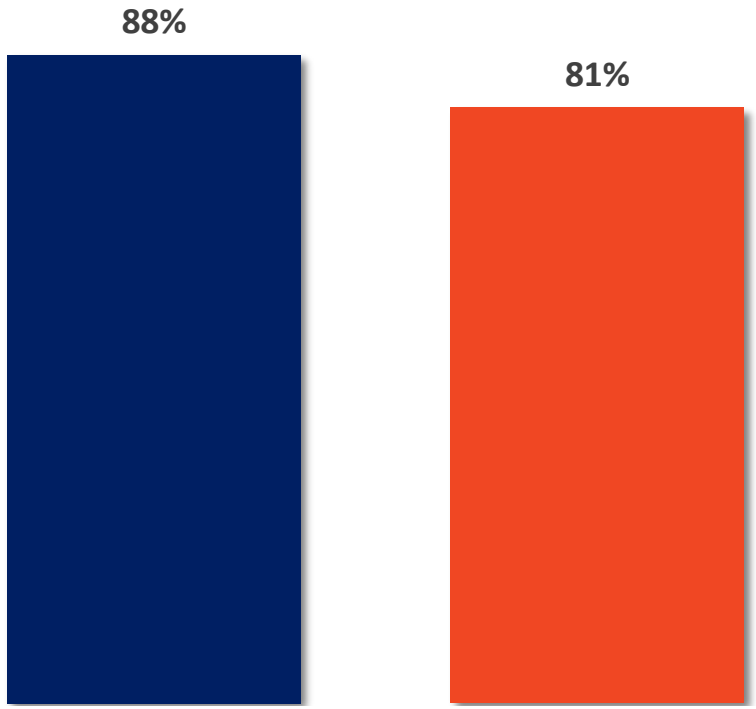
Employee: Top Performer Special Circumstances

Top Performers are slightly more likely to offer alternate rewards in their Top Performer programs.

Likelihood of Offering Special Rules to Help New Employees Qualify



Availability of Alternate Rewards in Tiered Top Performer Program



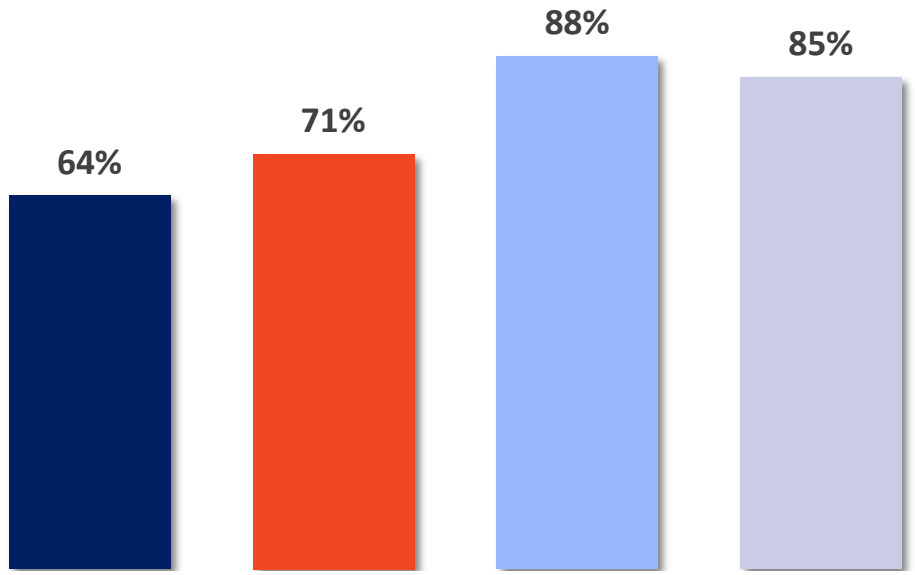
Top Performers Comparators

Q80: Do you have special rules for new employees that give them a better chance to qualify for the Top Performer incentive trip?
Q81: Is your Top Performer award program tiered, allowing employees who don't qualify for the trip to earn other rewards, such as award points, gift cards, merchandise, or a lower-level trip?

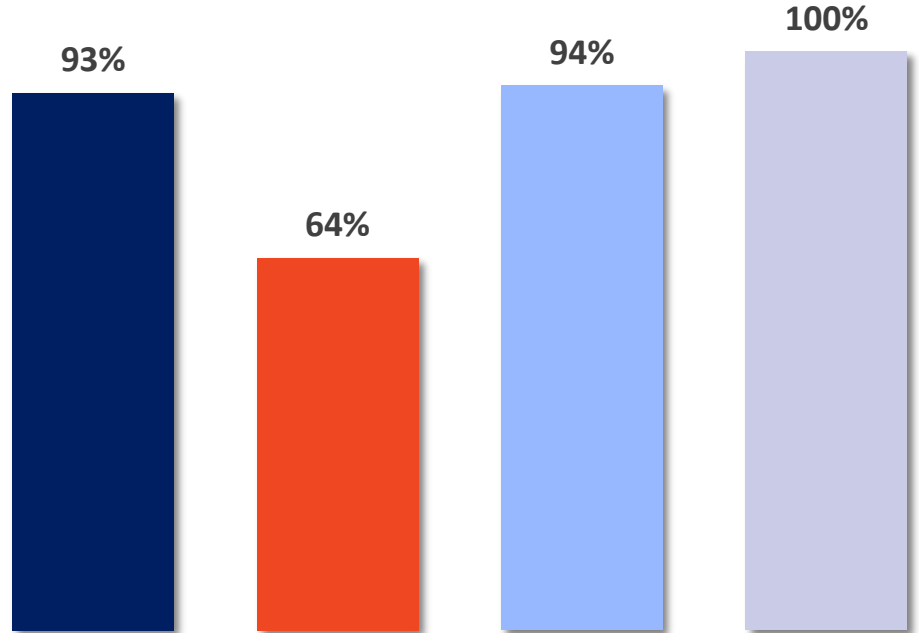
Employee: Top Performer Special Circumstances

Top Performers in Technology and Other Industries are more likely to offer advantages for new employees and tiered reward options.

Likelihood of Offering Special Rules to Help New Salespeople Qualify



Availability of Alternate Rewards in Tiered Top Performer Program

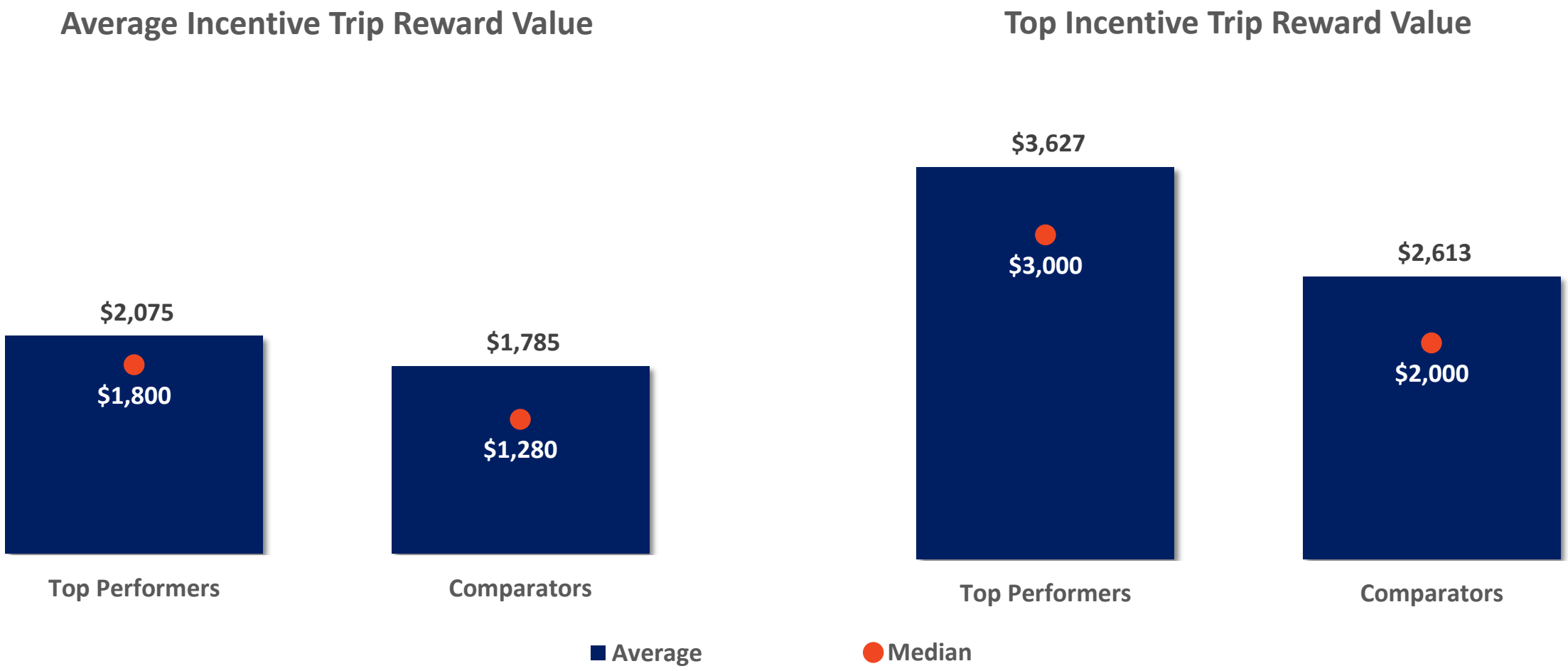


Top Performers: Automotive/Manufacturing
Top Performers: Financial Services
Top Performers: Technology
Top Performers: Other Industries

Q80: Do you have special rules for new employees that give them a better chance to qualify for the Top Performer incentive trip?
Q81: Is your Top Performer award program tiered, allowing employees who don't qualify for the trip to earn other rewards, such as award points, gift cards, merchandise, or a lower-level trip?

Employee: Program Spending on Incentive Travel

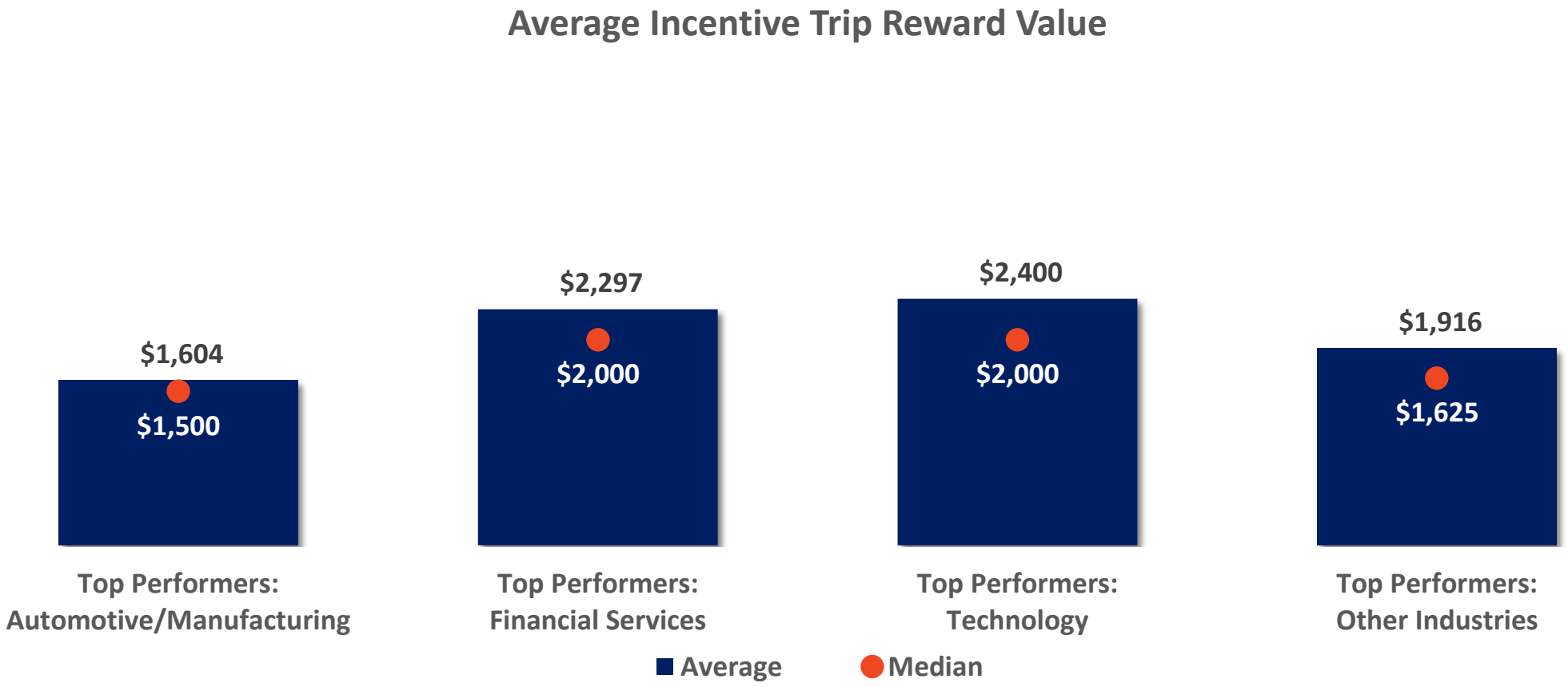
Top Performers offer higher average and top reward values for employee incentive trips.



Q88: What are the average and top reward values for incentive trips in your employee rewards program?

Employee: Program Spending on Incentive Travel

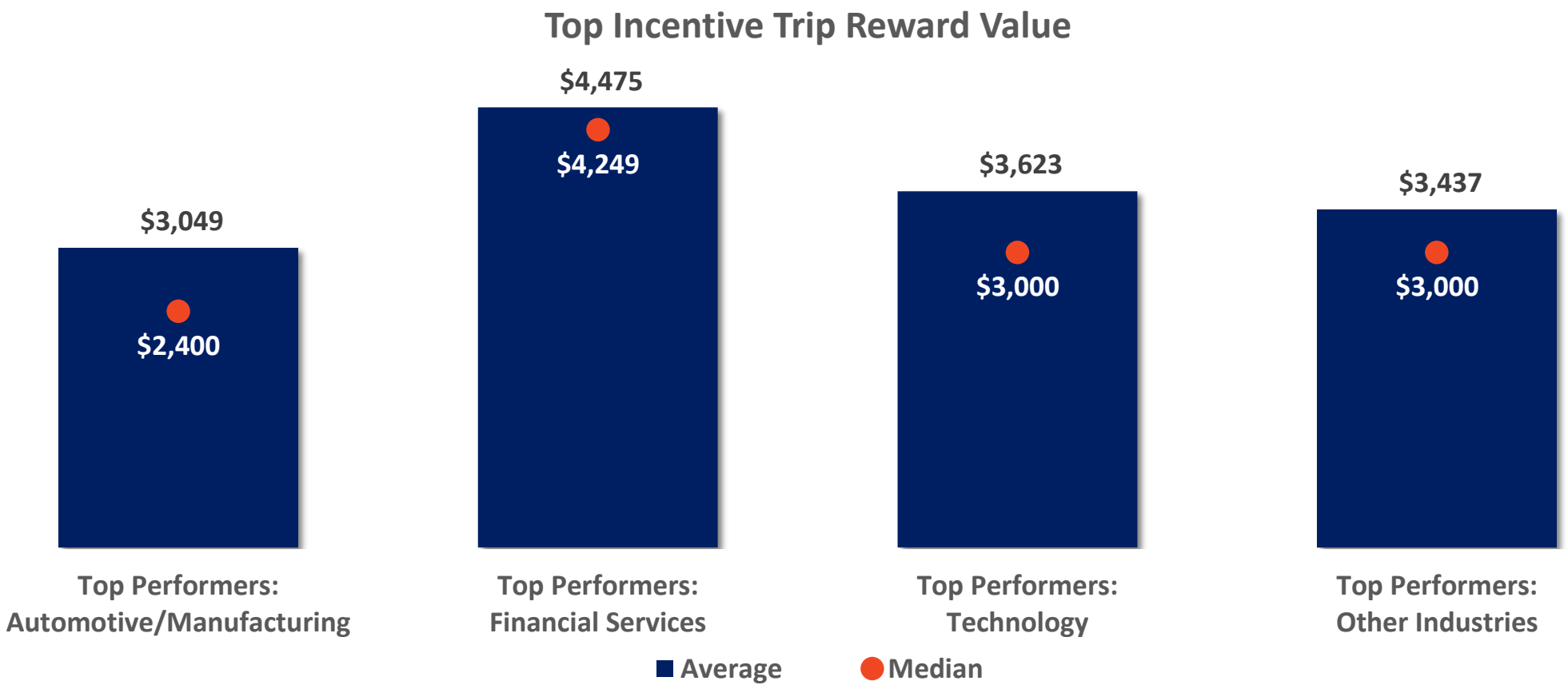
Top Performers in Technology offer the highest average reward values for incentive trips, while Automotive/Manufacturing provides the lowest.



Q88: What are the average and top reward values for incentive trips in your employee rewards program?

Employee: Program Spending on Incentive Travel

Top Performers in Financial Services also offer the highest top reward values for incentive trips, while Automotive/Manufacturing provides the lowest.



Q88: What are the average and top reward values for incentive trips in your employee rewards program?

Employee Program:
Award Points, Gift Cards & Merchandise

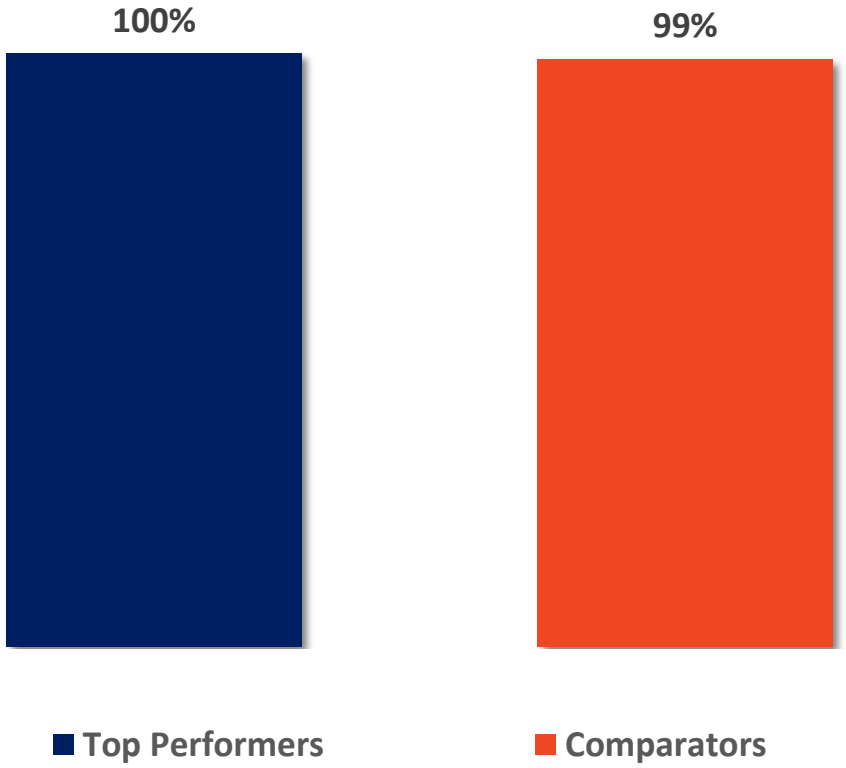
Award Points, Gift Cards & Merchandise: Key Findings

- Top Performers consistently use award points, merchandise, or gift cards in their employee reward programs, typically recognizing about 30% of employees.
- Customer relation metrics are the primary basis for non-travel rewards within top-performing companies, with strong consideration given to activity and financial metrics.
- A wide range of earning methods for employees of Top Performers suggests that success depends more on thoughtful implementation than on a single strategy.
- While the investment is not as high as in sales or channel programs, Top Performers outspend Comparators on employee non-travel rewards.

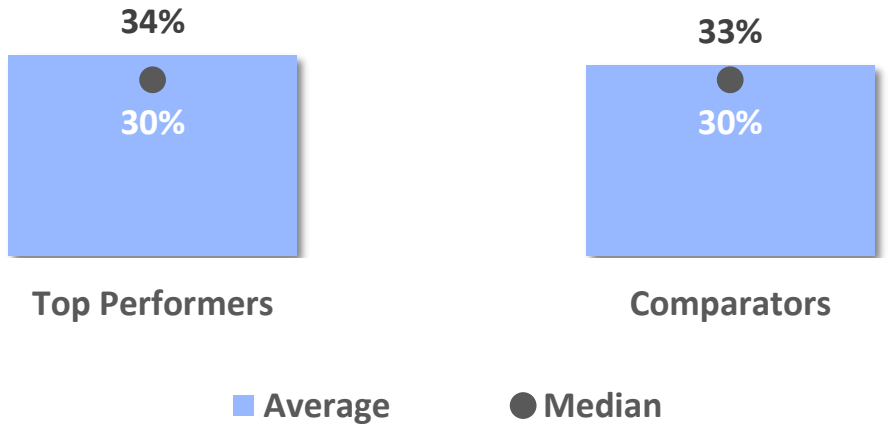
Employee: Award Points, Merchandise, or Gift Card Availability

Top Performer and Comparators provide non-travel rewards at similar rates.

Frequency of Award Points, Merchandise or Gift Card Use in Employee Rewards Programs



Percentage of Employees Earning Award Points, Merchandise, or Gift Cards

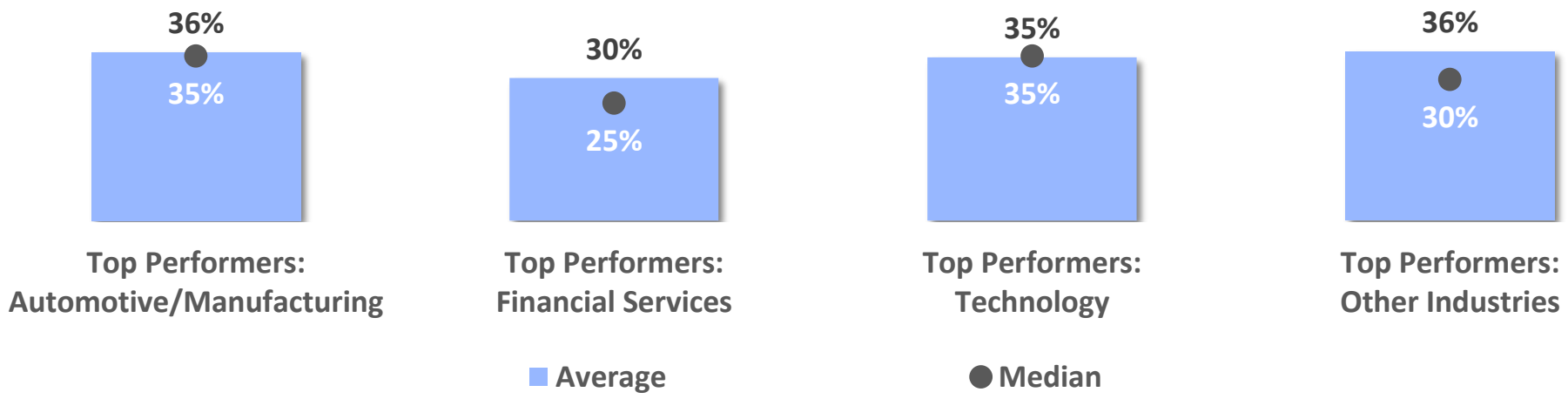


Q26: Which of the following rewards can participants earn in your programs?
Q83: Regarding rewards other than incentive travel, what percent of your employees do you expect to earn award points, merchandise, or gift cards in 2025?

Employee: Award Points, Merchandise, or Gift Card Availability

Top Performers in Financial Services distribute non-travel rewards at slightly lower frequency.

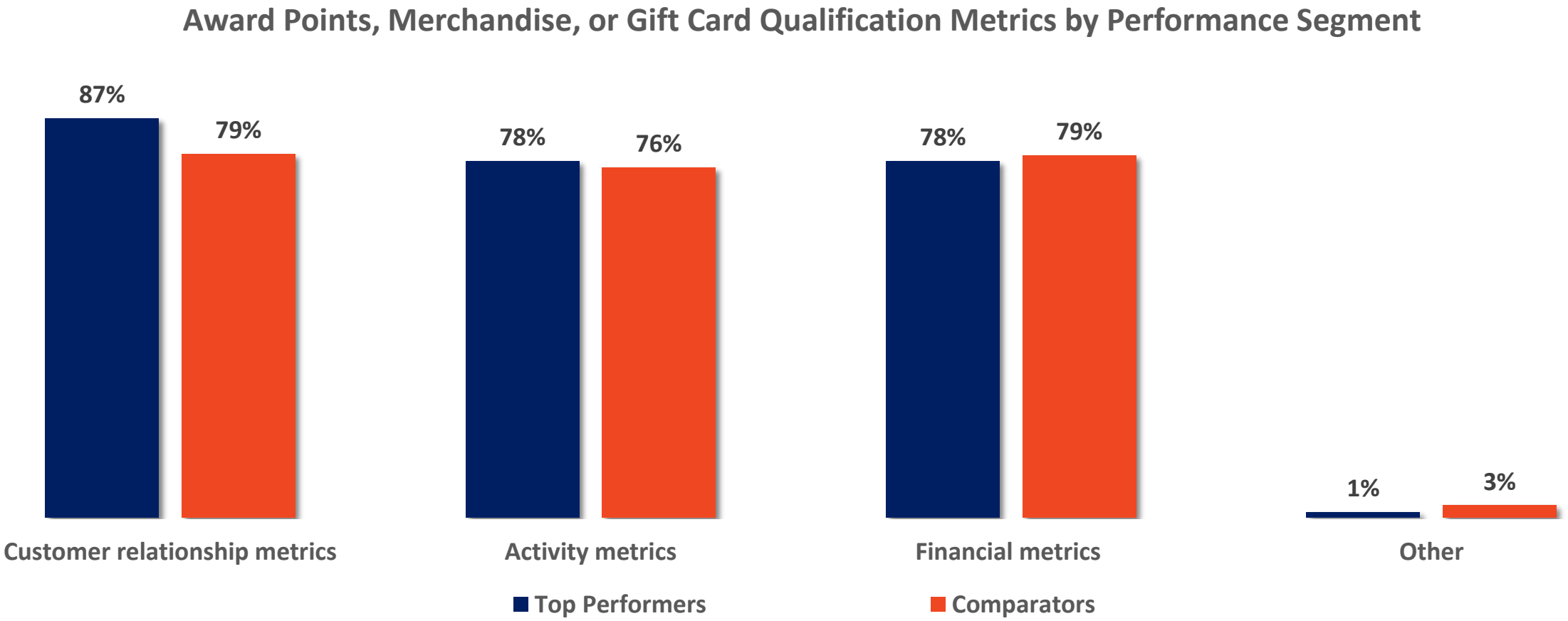
Percentage of Sales Representatives Earning Award Points, Merchandise, or Gift Cards



Q83: Regarding rewards other than incentive travel, what percent of your employees do you expect to earn award points, merchandise, or gift cards in 2025?

Employee: Points, Merchandise, or Gift Card Qualification Metrics

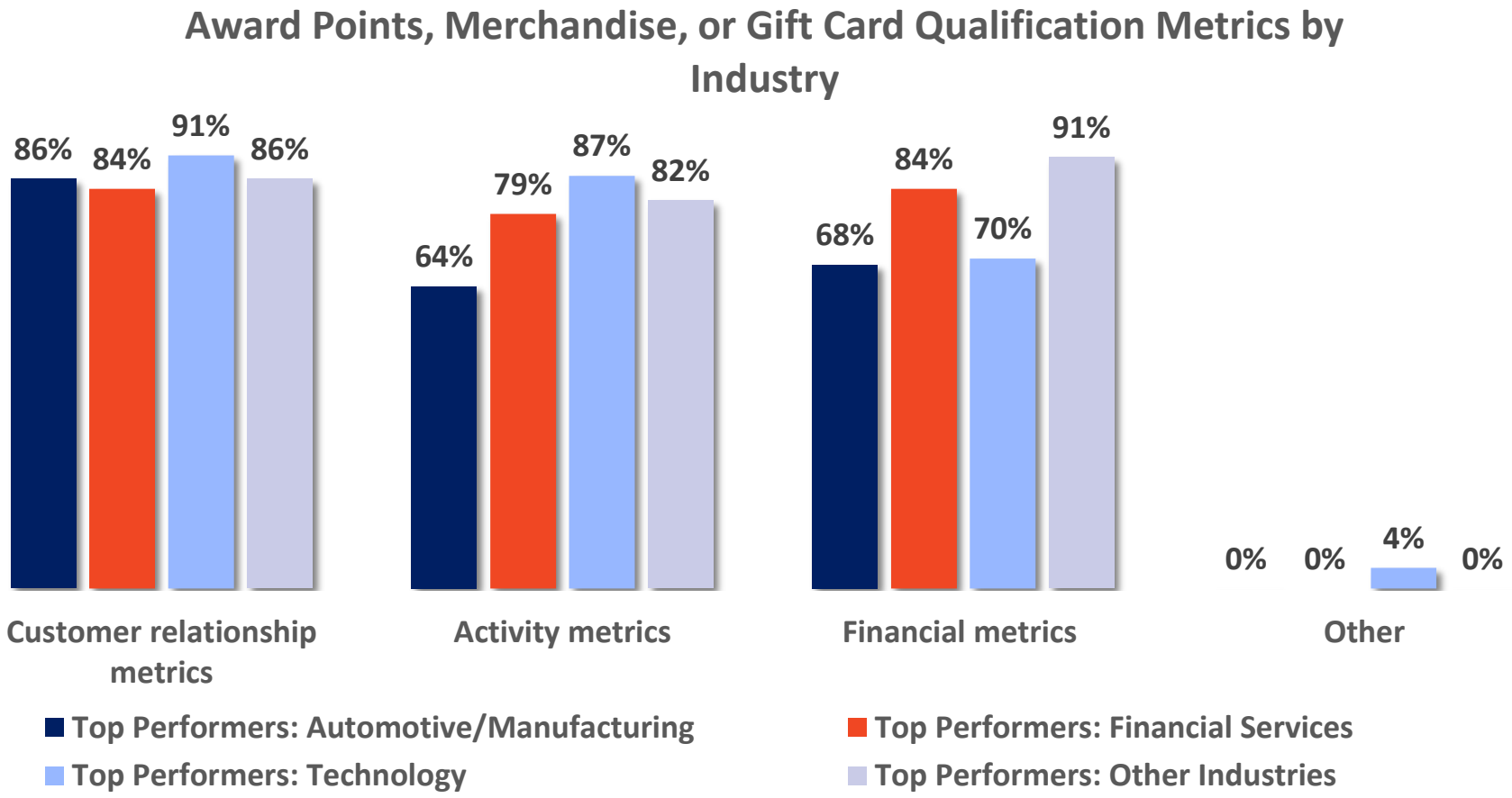
Top Performers focus on similar metrics for reward qualification as Comparators, with slightly more emphasis on customer relationships.



Q78: Which of the following best describes the metrics on which employees can earn award points, gift cards, or merchandise?

Employee: Points, Merchandise, or Gift Card Qualification Metrics

Top Performers broadly prioritize customer relationships and activity metrics, with varying focus on financial metrics across industries.



Customer relationship metrics are universally important, with Financial Services placing the highest emphasis.

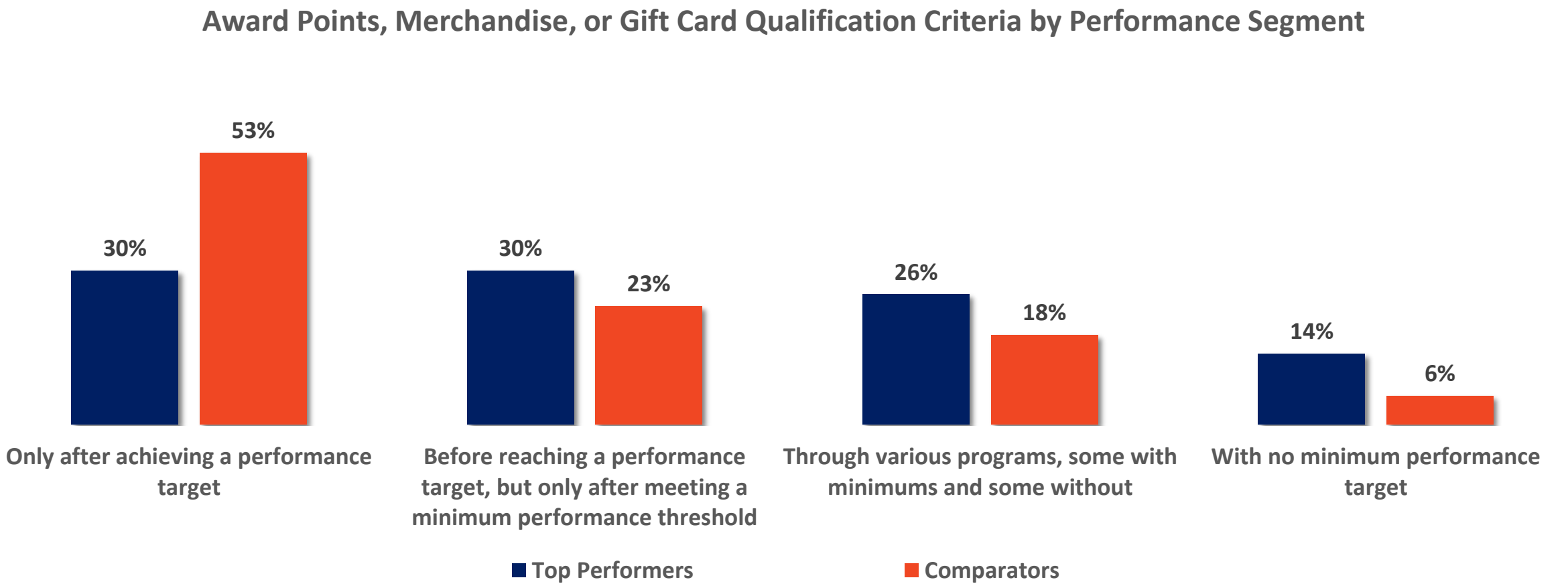
Financial metrics are more prominent in Financial Services and Other Industries.

Activity metrics are used less frequently with Automotive/Manufacturing Top Performers.

Q78: Which of the following best describes the metrics on which employees can earn award points, gift cards, or merchandise?

Employee: Points, Merchandise, or Gift Card Qualification Criteria

Top Performers are more flexible in rewarding employees before reaching performance targets, compared to Comparators who rely more on performance thresholds.

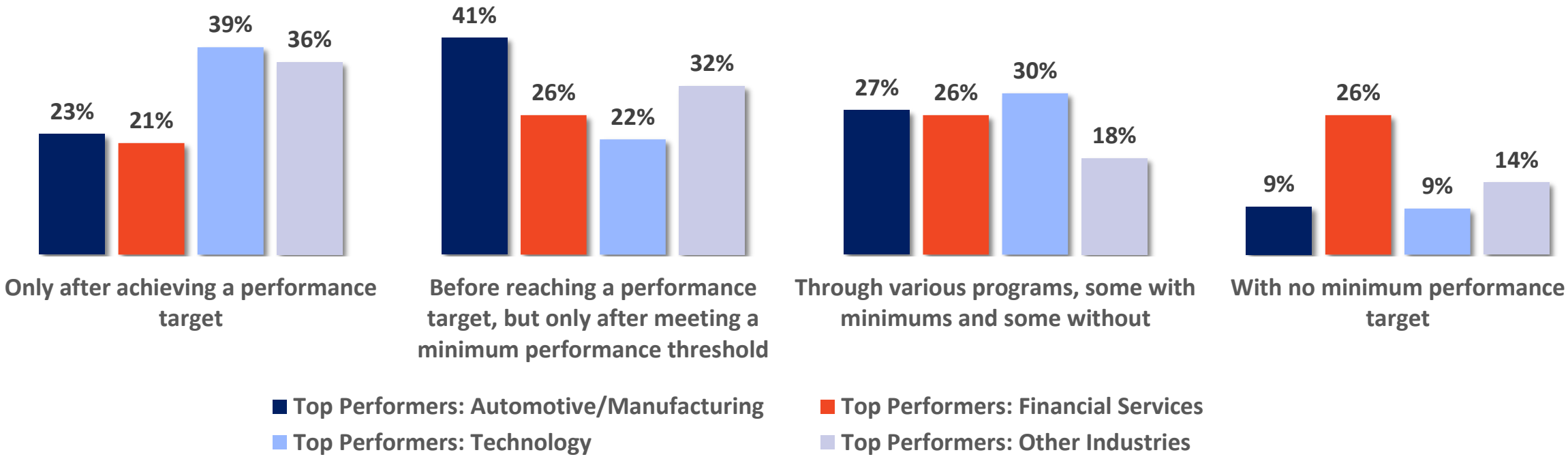


Q84: Regarding award points, gift cards, and merchandise, which of the following best describes how employees earn rewards?

Employee: Points, Merchandise, or Gift Card Qualification Criteria

Top Performers in Automotive/Manufacturing and Technology use performance thresholds more frequently, while Financial Services and Other Industries offer a wider range of reward structures.

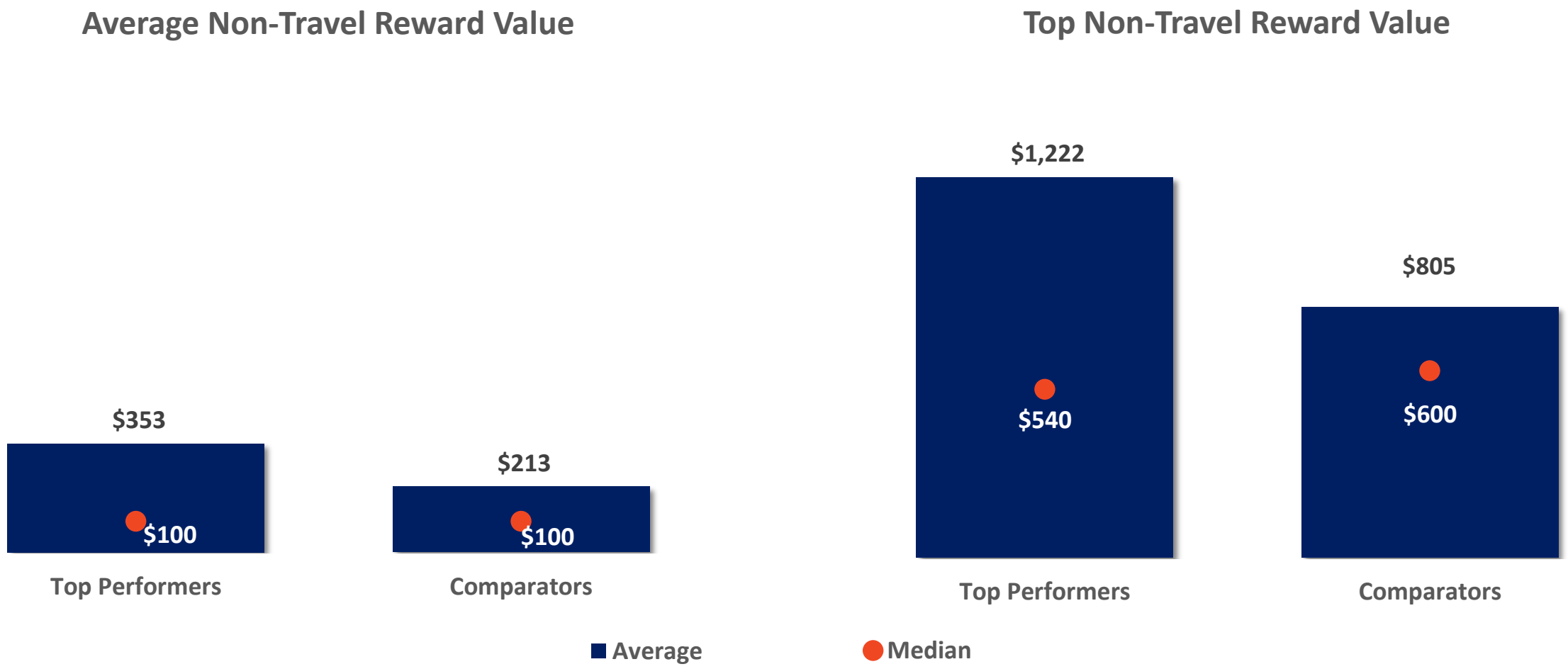
Award Points, Merchandise, or Gift Card Qualification Criteria by Industry



Q84: Regarding award points, gift cards, and merchandise, which of the following best describes how employees earn rewards?

Employee: Program Spending on Points, Merchandise, or Gift Card

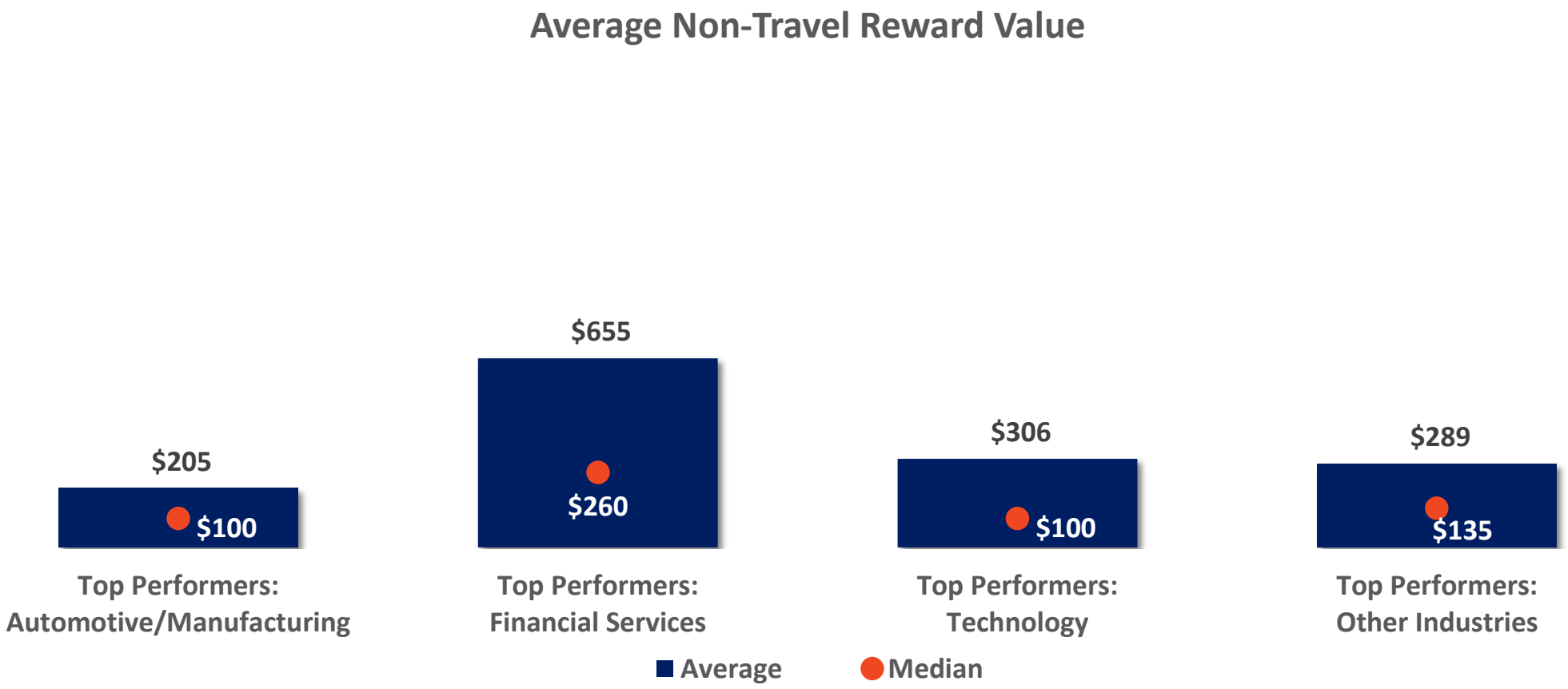
Top Performers offer higher non-travel reward value, particularly for top performing employees.



Q87: What are the average and top reward values for award points, gift cards, and merchandise in your employee rewards program?

Employee: Program Spending on Points, Merchandise, or Gift Card

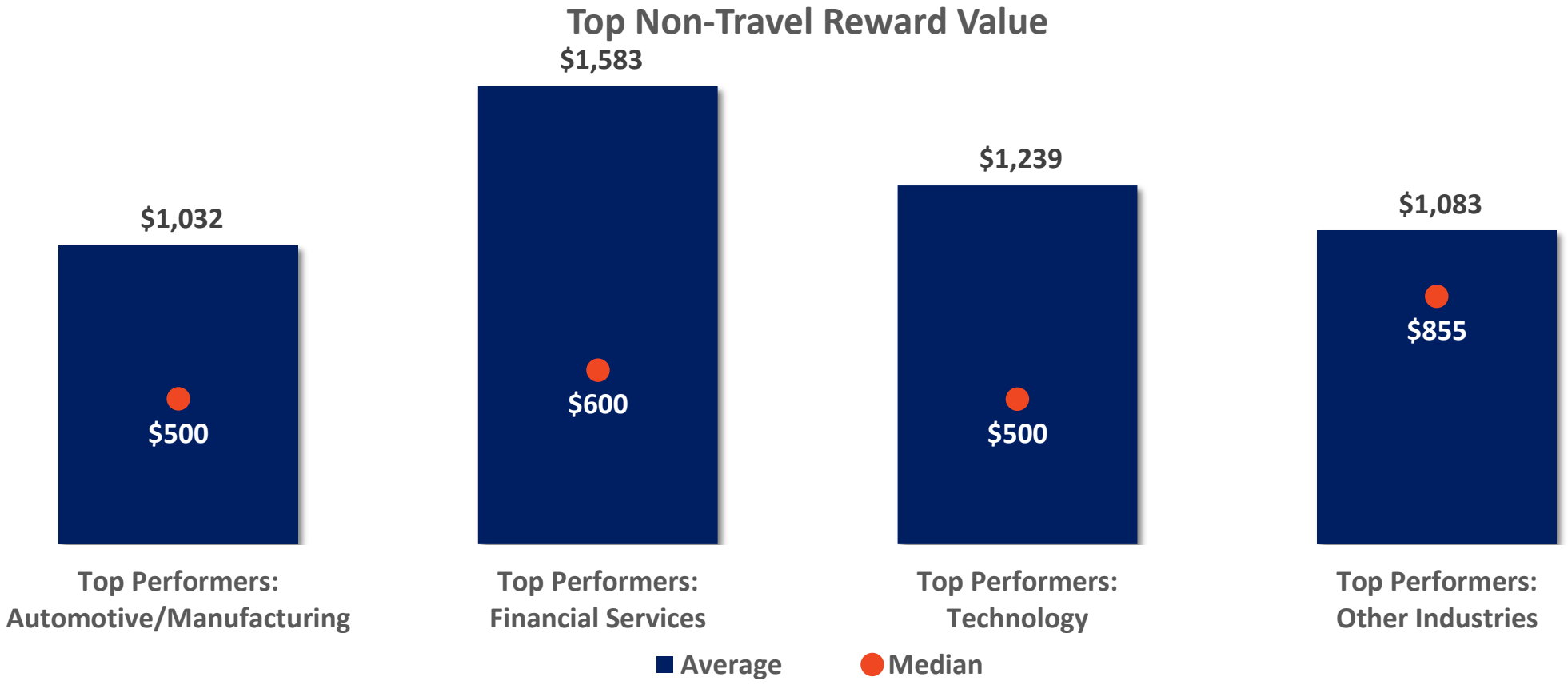
Top Performers in Financial Services offer the highest average non-travel reward value, with Automotive/Manufacturing offering lower than others.



Q87: What are the average and top reward values for award points, gift cards, and merchandise in your employee rewards program?

Employee: Program Spending on Points, Merchandise, or Gift Card

Top Performers in Financial Services provide the most generous top non-travel reward values, while Automotive/Manufacturing offers the least.



Q87: What are the average and top reward values for award points, gift cards, and merchandise in your employee rewards program?