

State of the industry report:

CORPORATE LEGAL TEAMS & THIRD-PARTY TRANSLATION



Abstract

2020 was a challenge for most organizations. In-house legal departments were under pressure to quickly reduce spending, leading to a mad scramble to make cuts without sacrificing output. Therefore, it's no surprise that the most frequent question we got from corporate legal teams last year was "how can we save money on translations?"

As one of the largest legal translation companies in the world, we have these conversations every day. We conduct audits, provide recommendations and work with legal teams to reduce their spend. And, through thousands of of these conversations, Morningside has learned that most legal teams don't have a lot of visibility into their use of language services. This, of course, was anecdotal, so we set out to get some hard data about how in-house legal teams are approaching their translation program.



The Audience

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We surveyed 30 in-house legal team members at global organizations, each of whom use language services. We asked them what specific language services they use.

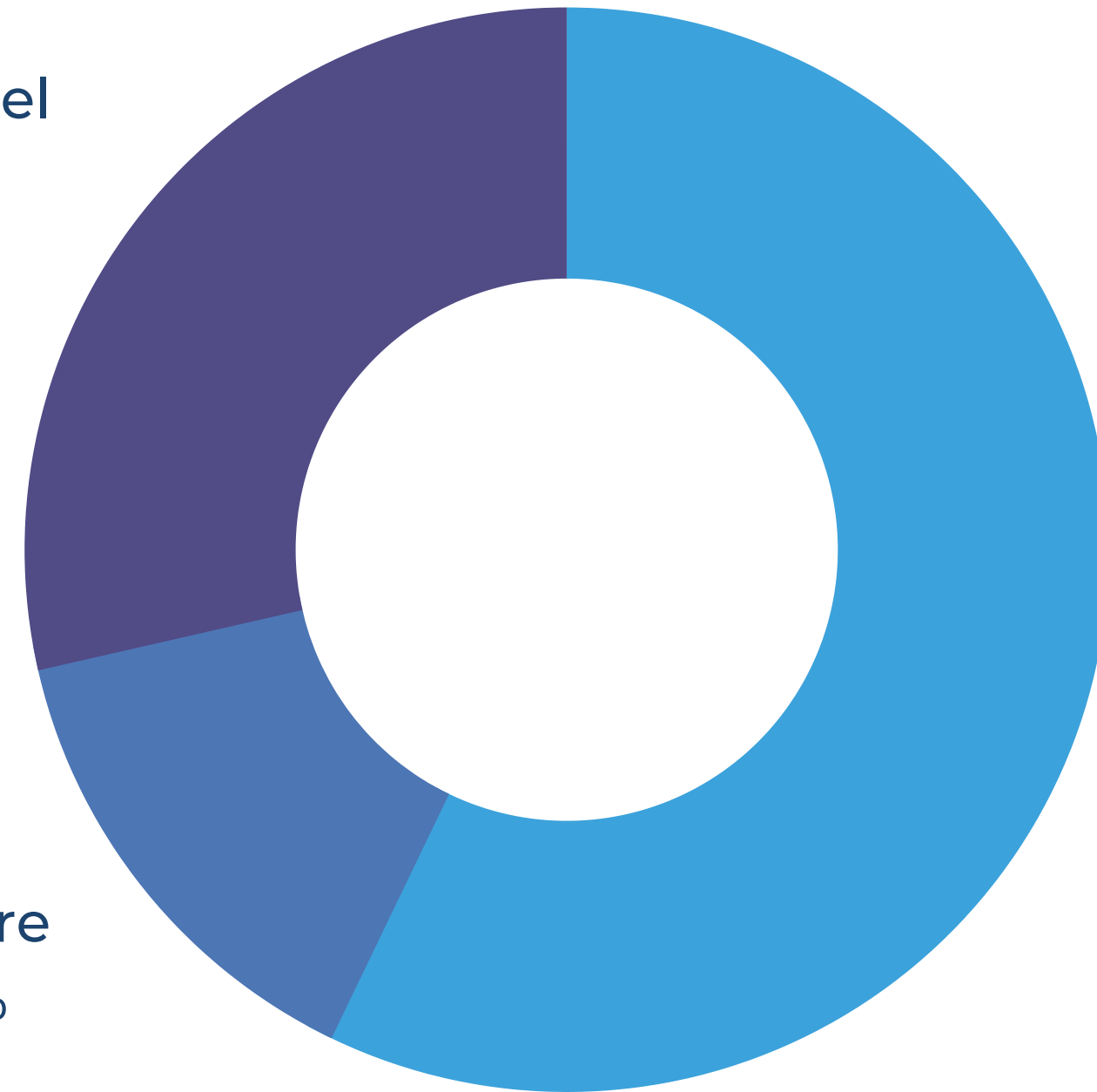
- 6 respondents use translation services for patent litigation
- 12 respondents use translation services for eDiscovery documents
- 14 respondents use translation services for legal transcription
- 16 respondents use legal interpretation services
- 20 respondents use standard document translation services for things like contracts and agreements
- 20 respondents use translation services for multilingual document review



Question 1

How are language services procured by your organization?

via outside counsel
28.6%



in-house
57.1%

not sure
14.3%

About 43% of respondents have no visibility at all into the translation process – meaning that they have no visibility at all into quality or cost.

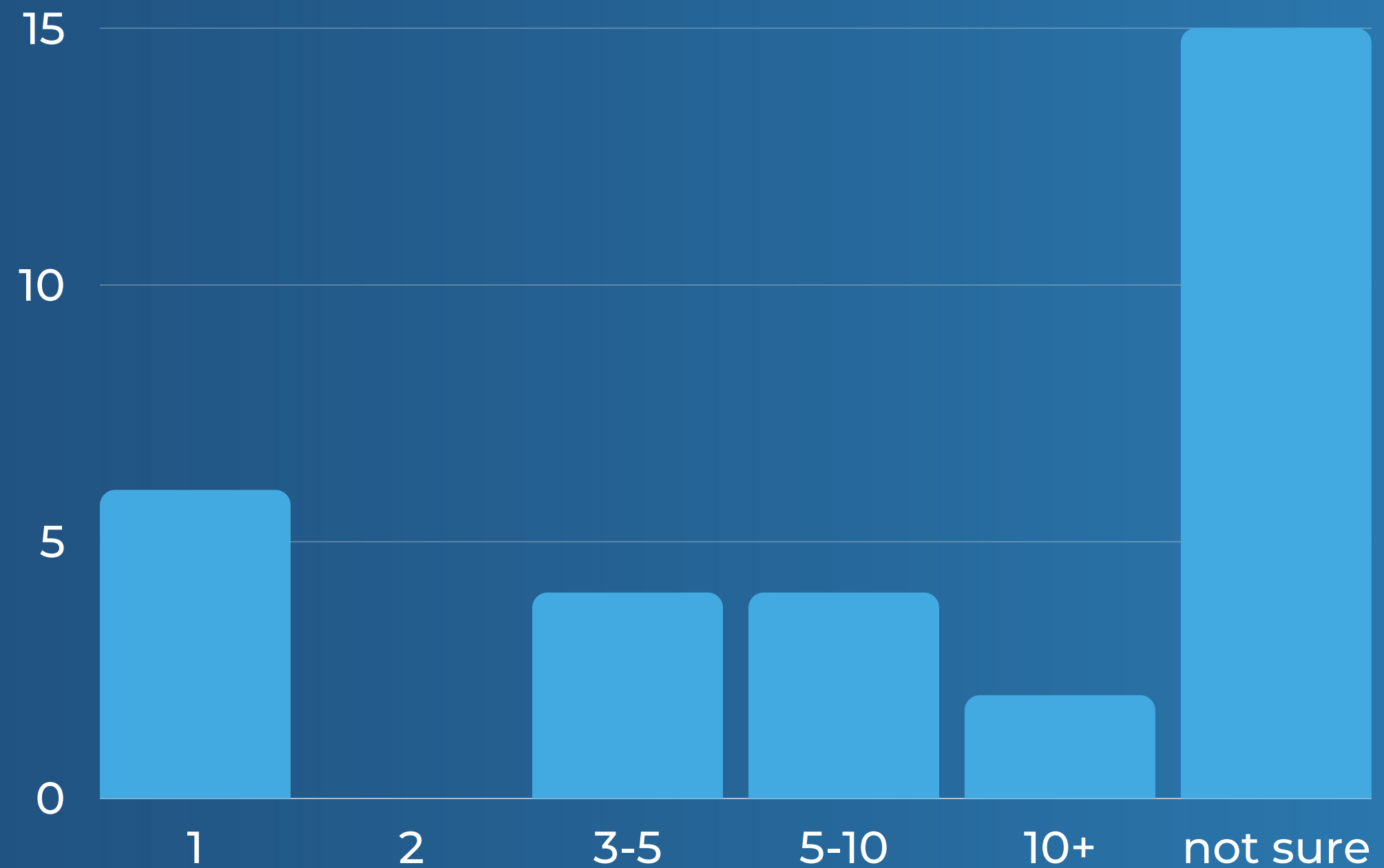


Question 2

How many language service providers do you work with?

The vast majority of respondents were unsure how many vendors they were currently using for translation or interpretation requests.

*None of the respondents who outsourced language services to outside counsel knew how many providers their outside counsel were using.



Question 3

Is there a centralized process to procure translations or is it done on an ad hoc basis?

CENTRALIZED PROCESS



AD HOC BASIS



NOT SURE



Almost none of the respondents to our survey were aware of a centralized process used by their team to procure language services.

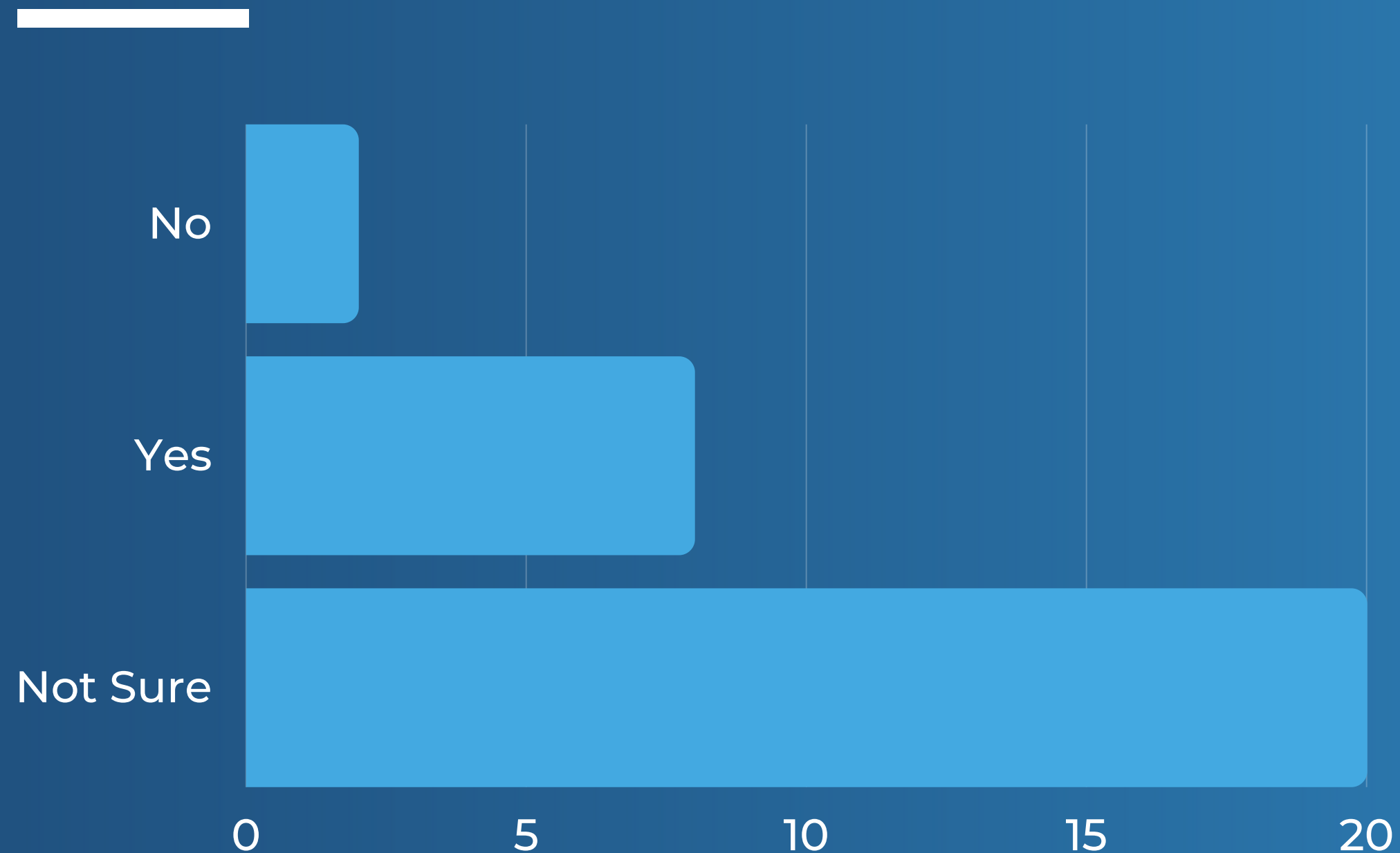


*Translation Memory (TM) is a tool that stores sentences or segments of text that have been translated before, so that they don't need to be translated again. TM dramatically improves the quality, speed, consistency and efficiency of every translation task – and helps lower cost.

Only a handful of respondents knew if they were taking advantage of it.

Question 4

Do your language service providers leverage translation memory?



Question 5

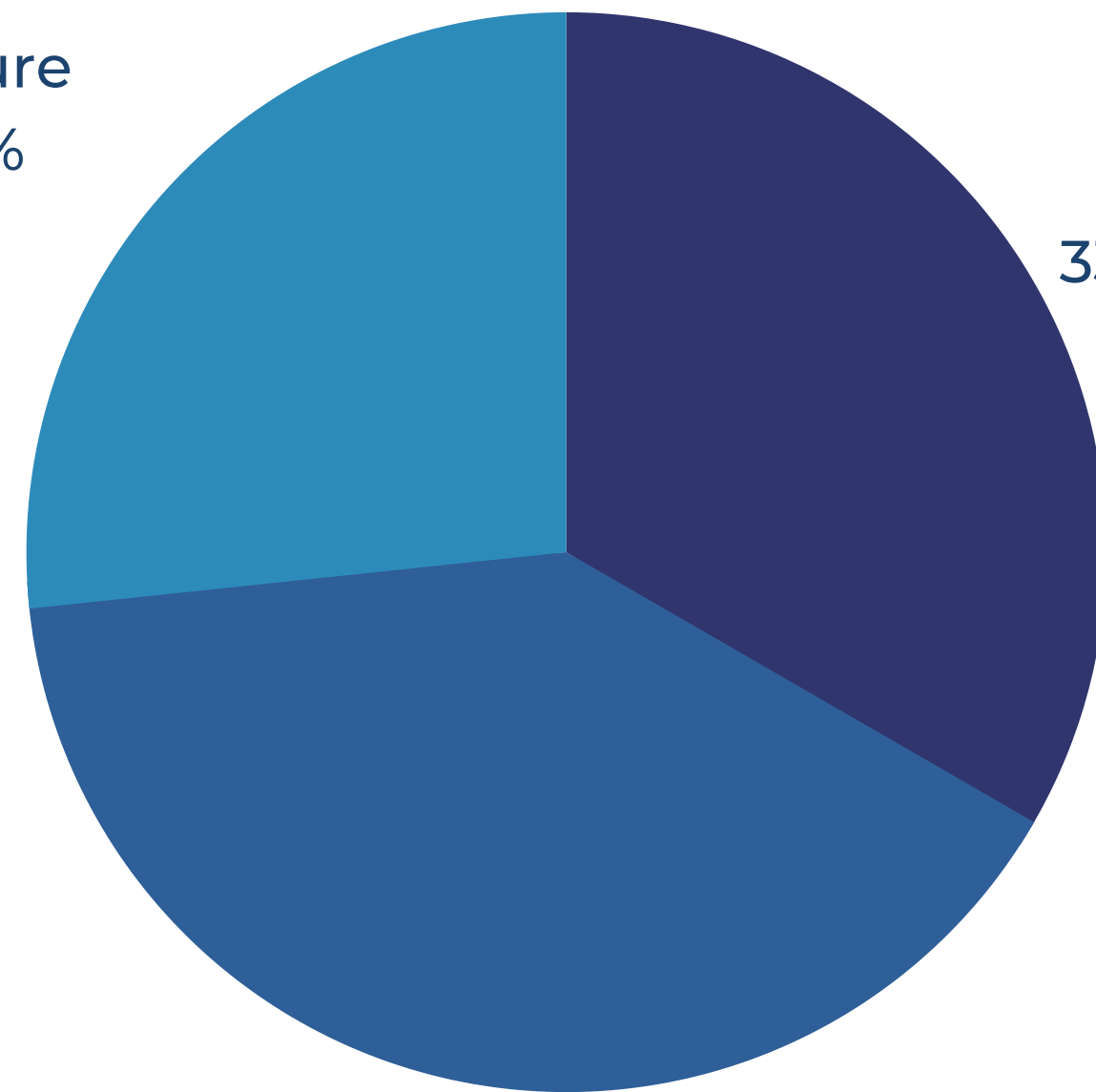
Do you leverage volume for discounts on language services?



60% of respondents said they didn't know, or that they weren't taking advantage of their purchasing power for language services.



Not Sure
26.7%



No
33.3%

Yes
40%



Conclusion

The biggest takeaway, as we suspected, is that many in-house legal teams that rely on language services have little to no visibility into a process that can drastically affect cost and quality. In-house counsel, legal operations teams and legal support staff are typically stretched thin as it is and don't have the time for a deep dive on language services. But with more legal teams being asked to do more with less, this is an area with significant opportunity for cost savings.

Take, for example, the case of the in-house legal team that Morningside recently helped to consolidate their outside counsel language service spend. During an audit, we found that, through outside counsel, they were using 72 different language service providers. 72! That meant no meaningful opportunity for them to leverage volume discounts or translation memory savings – and there was a serious lack of consistency in translation quality. By simply directing their outside counsel to consolidate their language service providers, the team was able to standardize their process, leverage their purchasing power and leverage translation memory for a reduced cost, all while increasing their quality.

Key takeaway: It's critical for legal teams to understand their translation process in order to maximize their budget and quality output. In the end, it can pay enormous dividends.



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