

2019 Artsy Gallery Insights: The State of Digital Marketing and Sales

Insights and findings from 700 galleries around the world informing how digital trends and online behavior will shape the art market in 2019.

A note from Artsy's Senior Director, Gallery Relations

“What can I do to improve my digital strategy?”

This is one of the most frequent questions I hear from galleries, and as the art world transitions online, many gallerists and arts enterprises are still trying to come up with a satisfying answer.

At Artsy, our gallery partners enjoy the privilege of working directly with specialized liaisons and best-in-class technology to build effective digital strategies for their gallery online. This year, we chose to expand these efforts by creating a report based on data collected from galleries around the globe.

700 galleries across more than 60 countries shared their invaluable knowledge and experience of the art market as it exists today. Artsy's 2019 report not only unpacks our findings from analyzing over 17,000

art market data points, it also shares tailored recommendations to support your gallery's goals in the coming year.

I'm thrilled to present the second installment of our report, “2019 Artsy Gallery Insights: The State of Digital Marketing and Sales.” From the behaviors shaping a gallery's success in 2018 to the predictions for the online art market's future, I sincerely hope having this resource at your disposal will support your gallery as it embarks on a journey of expanding the art market and supporting more artists around the world.



Cheers to a productive 2019,
Jessica Backus
Senior Director, Gallery Relations

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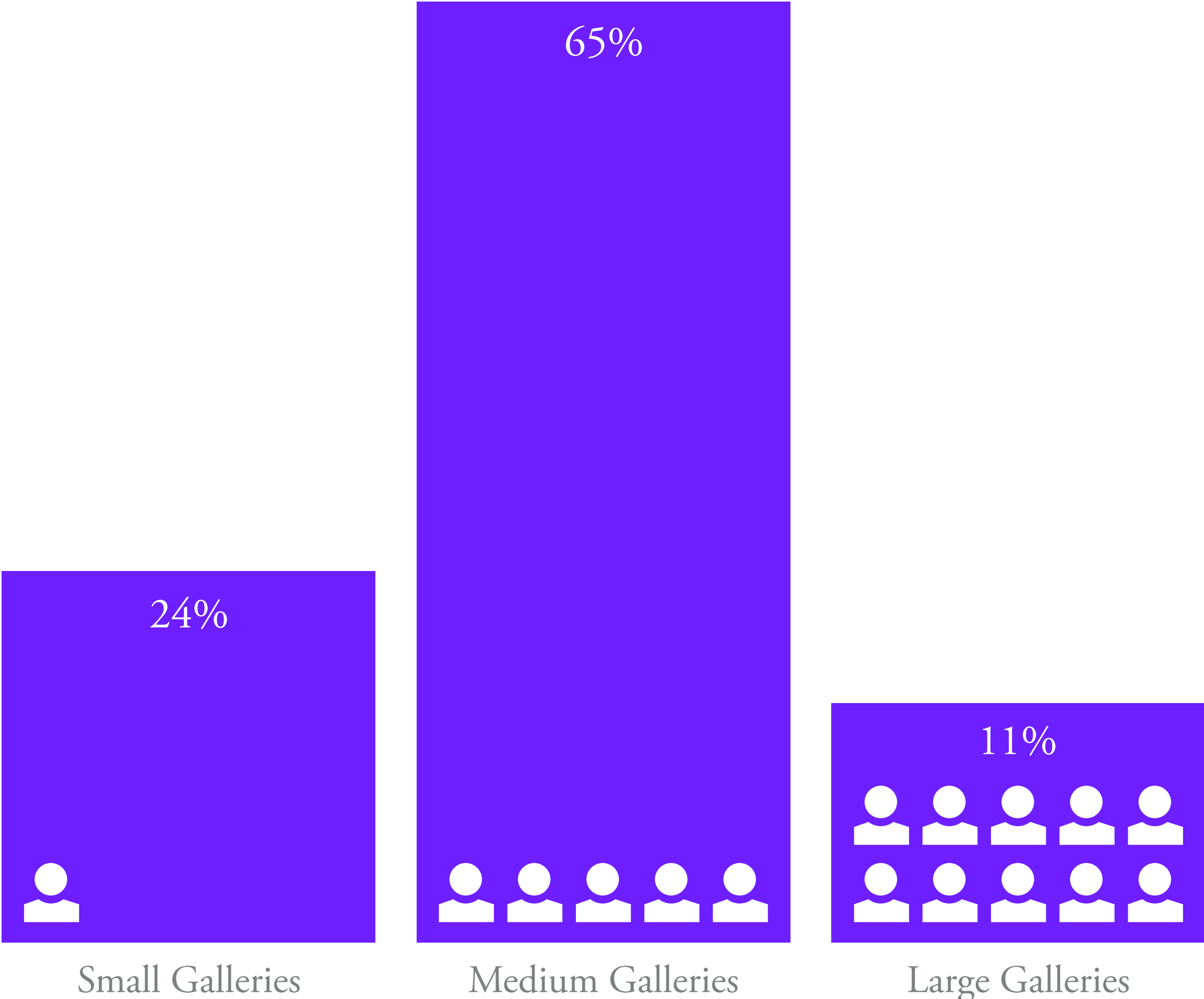
Executive Summary



About This Report

For “2019 Artsy Gallery Insights: The State of Digital Marketing and Sales,” the second installment of our in-depth industry research, Artsy surveyed 700 galleries worldwide to understand the digital trends and behaviors that shaped the art market in 2018, and how those same trends and behaviors will impact the market in the coming year.

This report examines data relative to gallery size in order to identify patterns and behaviors for overall success: Small galleries are run by a single full-time employee; medium galleries employ 2–6 full-time employees; and large galleries employ 7 or more full-time employees.



Key Takeaways

How are galleries staying ahead in these changing times? Here's a brief overview of key findings from our research.

A staggering majority of galleries offer art for sale online – a trend that will continue in 2019.

Almost 90% of galleries said they offered art for sale online in 2018. Of those that didn't offer art for sale online, over 55% are very likely to invest in selling art online in 2019. Across all regions, among different gallery sizes, and regardless of average collector age, galleries agree that selling art online will be important to their success in 2019.

While in-person networking remained the top source of gallery sales in 2018, digital sales channels are becoming an important part of driving revenue for many galleries.

Walk-ins and existing clients continue to make up large sources of sales, but more and more galleries are diversifying their sales channels to include online art platforms, social media, and their own websites.

Thirty percent of galleries surveyed said that online art platforms are

within their top 3 greatest sources of sales, and 82% of galleries ranked a digital marketing channel in their top 3 most-successful marketing activities of 2018.

Galleries know that selling art online will be important to their success in 2019, but few galleries feel confident about their online digital strategy.

Although there is a growing group of galleries finding success and confidence in selling art online, the majority still struggle to define their online digital strategy. More than 80% of galleries surveyed reported that selling art online will be important to their success in 2019, but galleries gave themselves an average of 2.9/5 (a failing 58% grade) when asked how much they agreed with the following statement: *I believe my gallery has a well-defined strategy for managing its online presence.* Galleries will need to focus on how they can integrate digital marketing strategies into their approach to selling art online to start to see the same success that many early adopting galleries have seen.

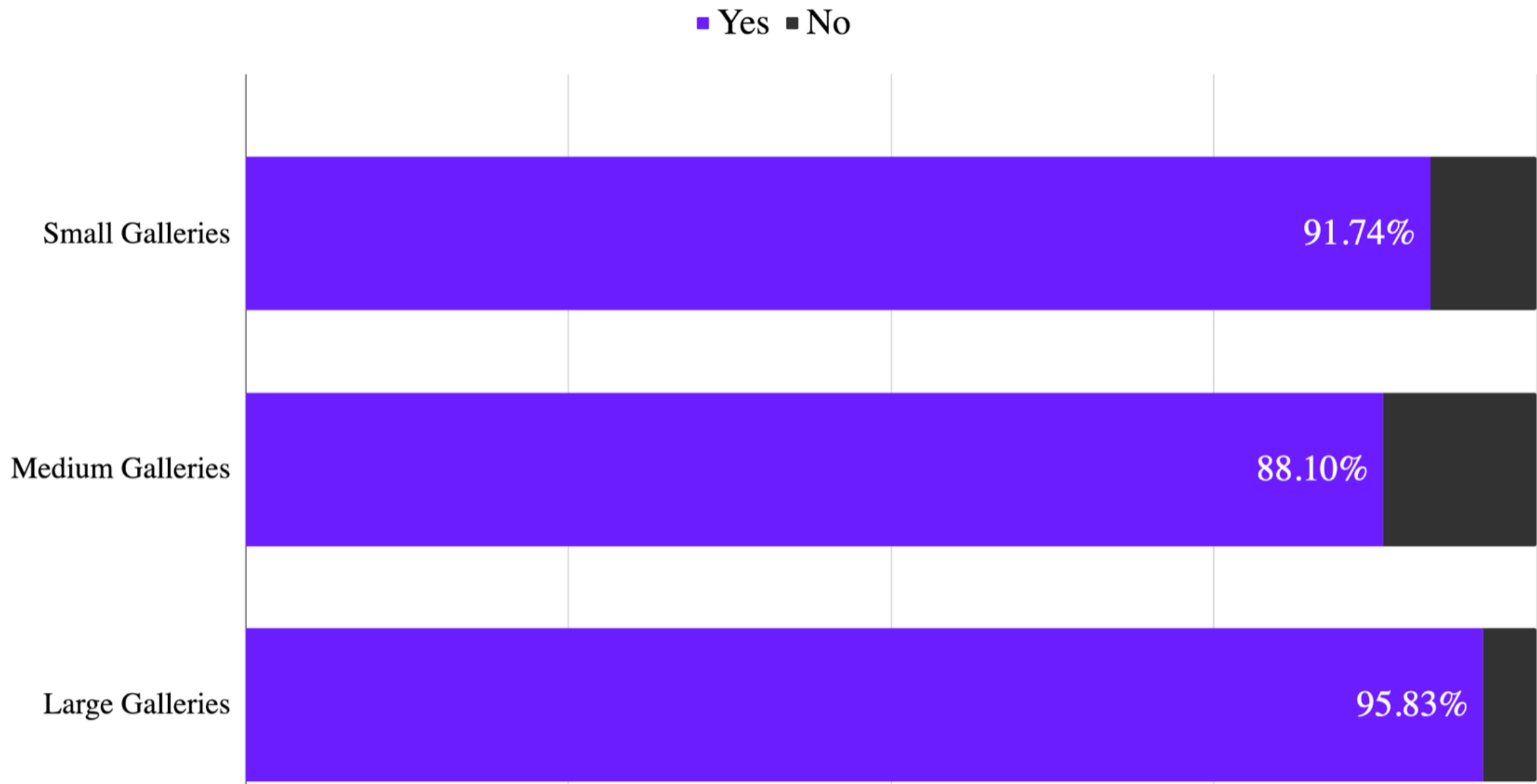
What We Found



Looking Back

Having a strong digital strategy is becoming more important than ever for galleries to make sales and carry out effective marketing campaigns. While 2017 was the year galleries discovered and experimented with digital channels, 2018 was the year that implementing digital marketing and sales efforts became standard practice. An overwhelming majority of galleries stated that they offered art for sale online in 2018.

Q19. In 2018, did you offer works for sale online?



Looking Back

While traditional sources of sales, such as walk-ins and re-engaging existing clients, are still important to galleries, digital sales channels are becoming an important part of driving revenue for many galleries.

Digital sales tactics, such as the use of online art platforms, social media, and gallery websites, have become more common in 2018. In fact, 30% of galleries said that online art platforms are within their top 3 greatest sources of sales.

Top Sources of Sales by Gallery Size

Small Galleries

Rely more heavily on digital as a source of sales when looking at year-on-year comparisons.

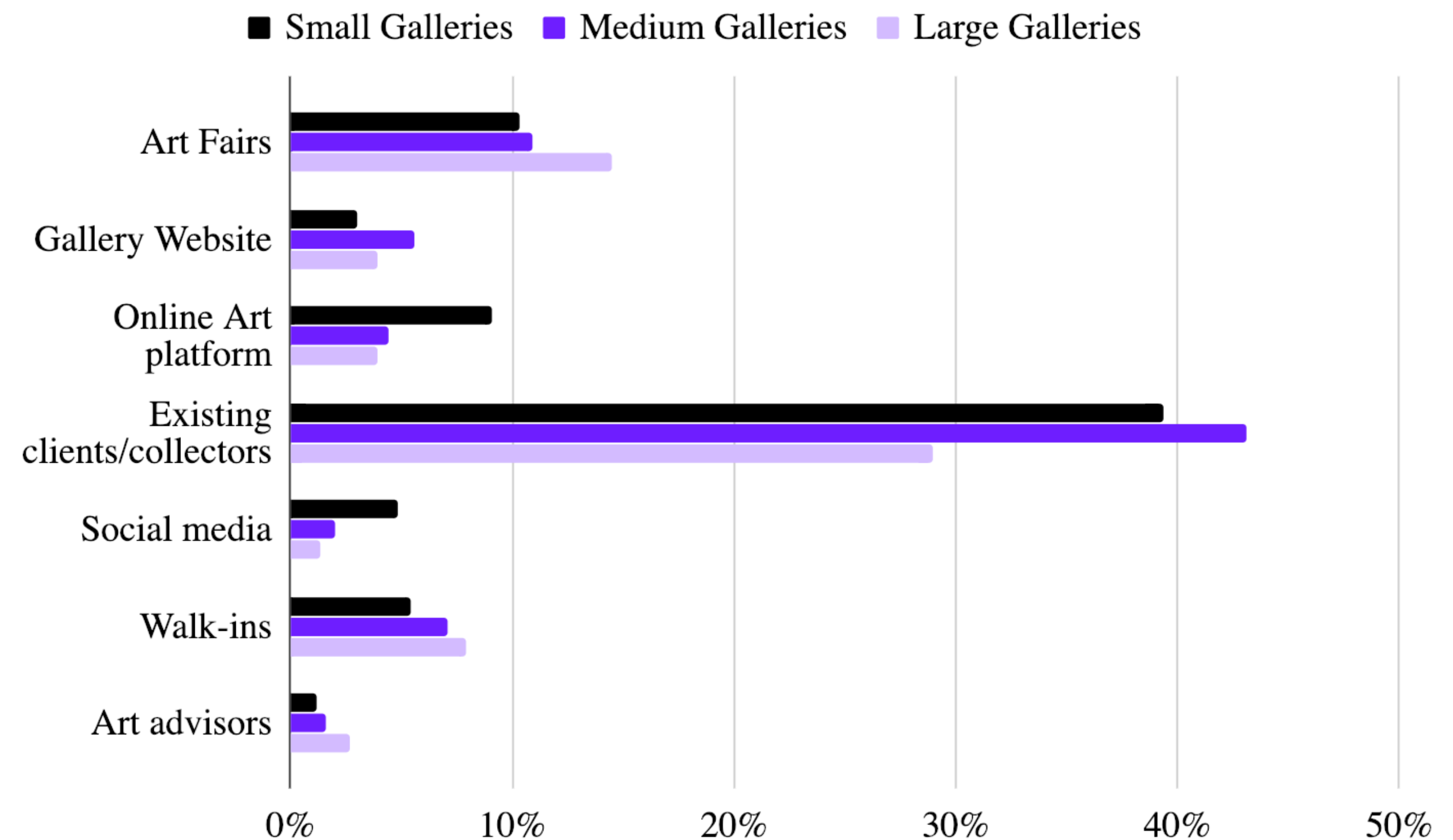
Medium Galleries

Rely on a combination of traditional and digital methods as a source of sales when looking at year-on-year comparisons.

Large Galleries

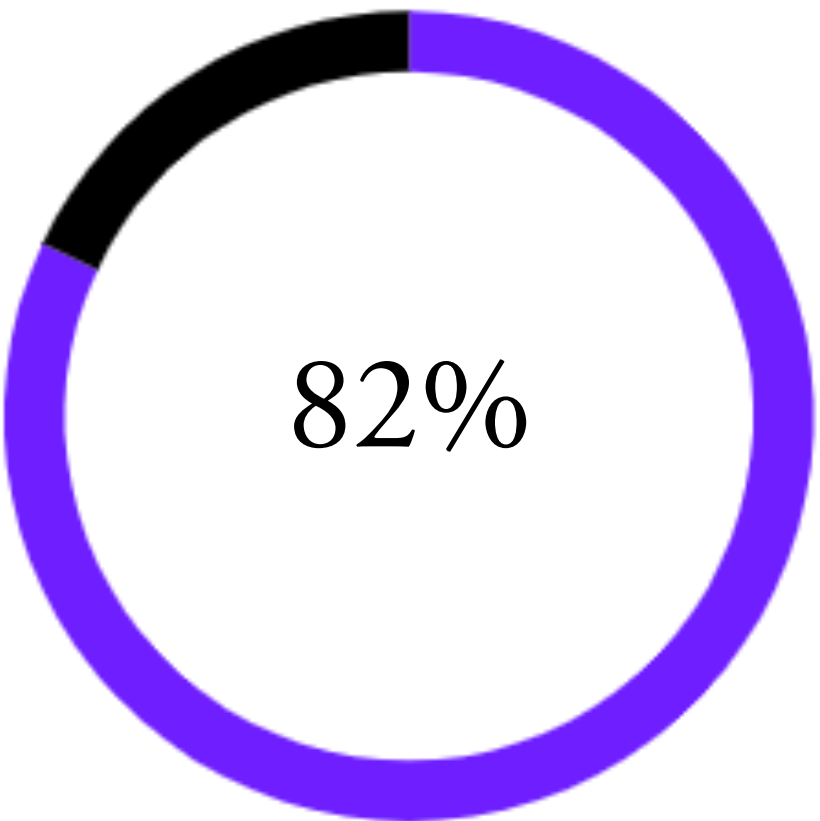
Rely most heavily on traditional methods of sales when looking at year-on-year comparisons.

Q16: In 2018, what was your greatest source of all artwork sales?



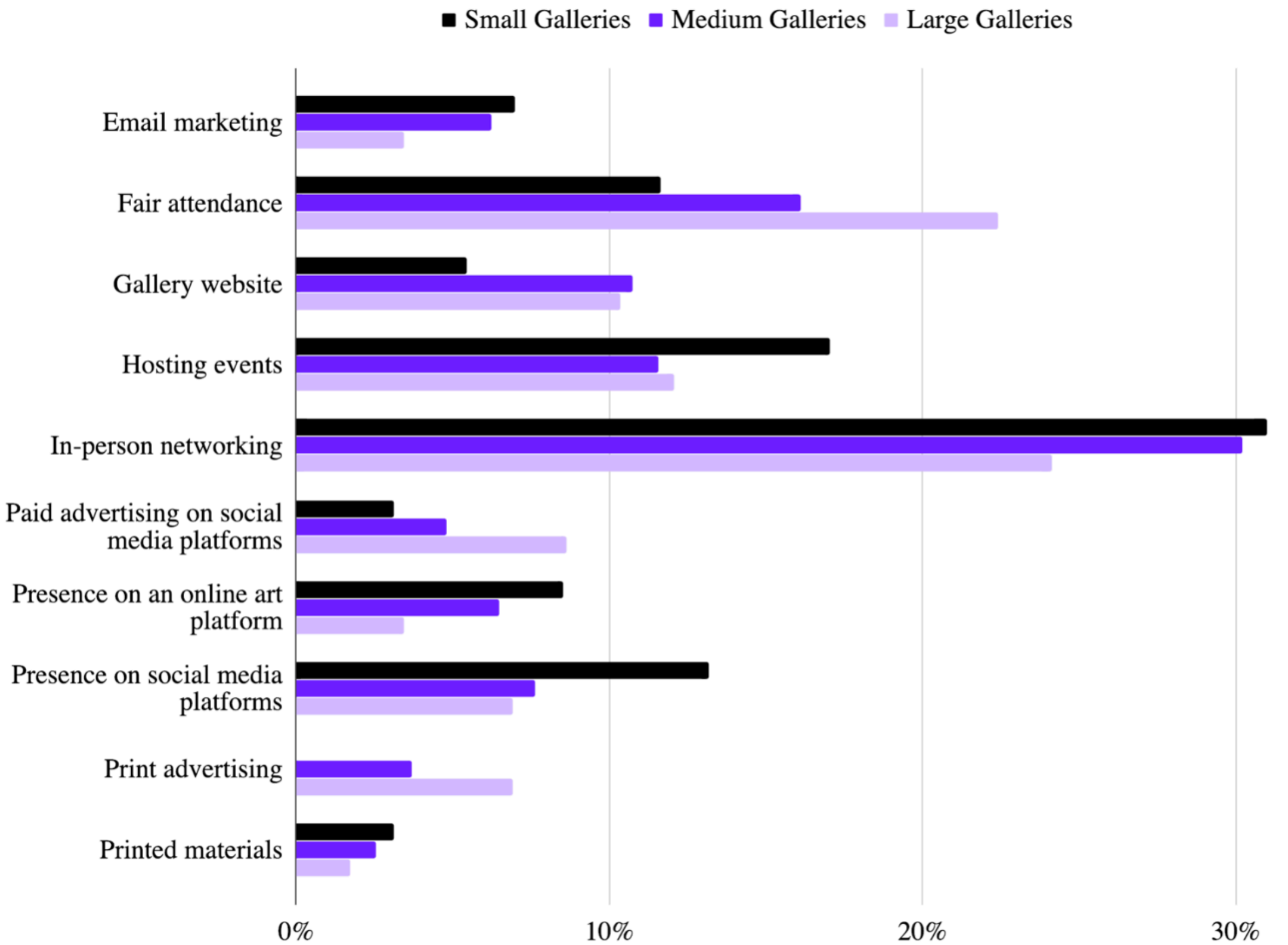
Looking Back

Digital marketing tactics have become standard practice for a majority of galleries. While in-person networking remains the primary marketing activity for most galleries, more and more galleries are finding success with digital efforts.



of galleries ranked a digital marketing channel in their top 3 most-effective marketing activities of 2018

Q11. In 2018, which of the following marketing activities were most effective when promoting your gallery?



Looking Back

Small Galleries



Top Marketing Activities of 2018

1. In-person networking
2. Hosting events/gallery openings
3. Presence on social media platforms

Medium Galleries



Top Marketing Activities of 2018

1. In-person networking
2. Hosting events/gallery openings
3. Gallery website

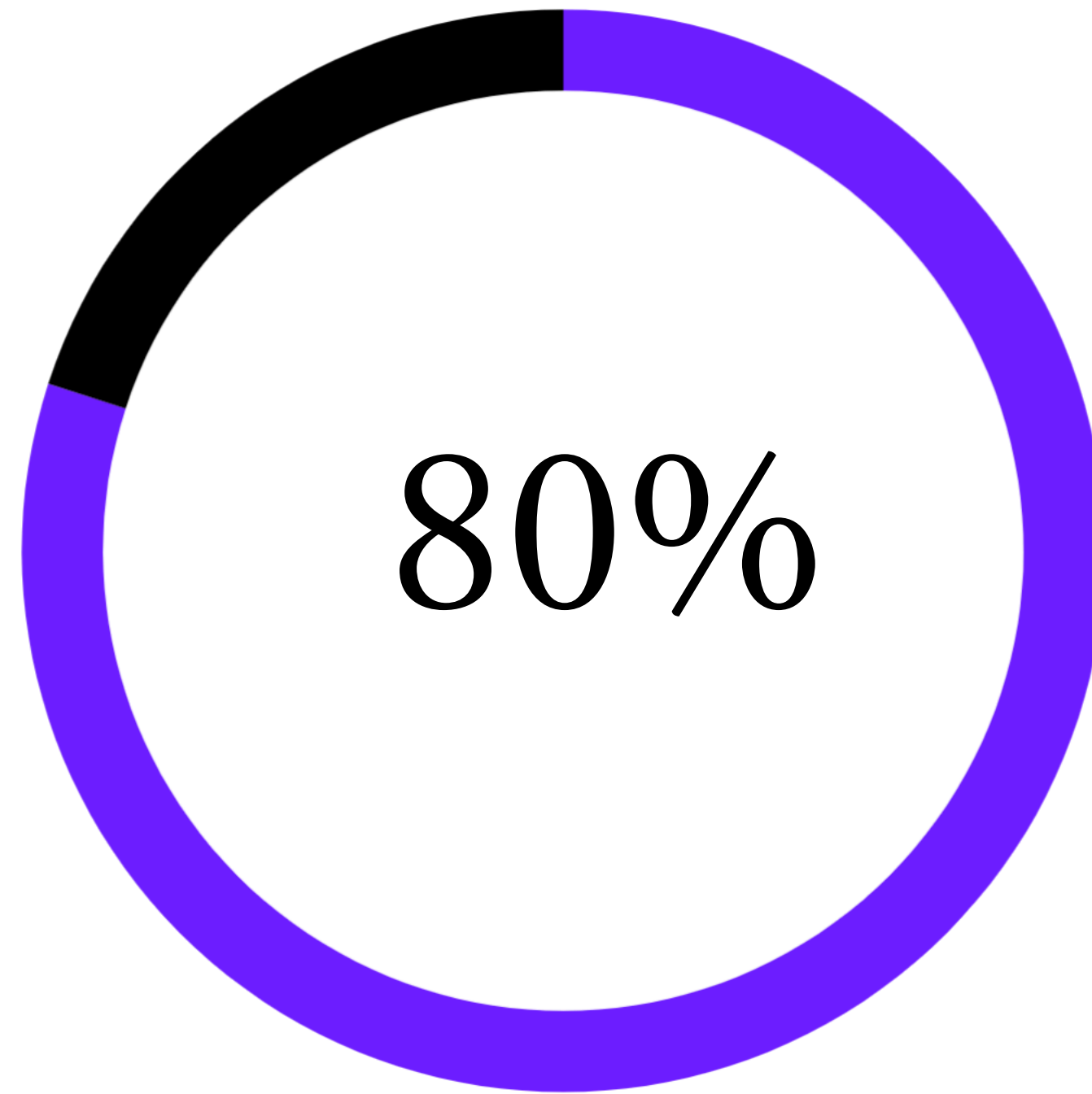
Large Galleries



Top Marketing Activities of 2018

1. In-person networking
2. Hosting events/gallery openings
3. Email marketing

Here and Now



of galleries, regardless of region and size, reported that selling art online will be critical to their success in 2019.

Selling art online is no longer a trend—it's the norm.

“It is amazing how quickly online sales have become such an important aspect to selling art versus relying on foot traffic at the gallery.”

— Director of a U.S.-based gallery

Here and Now

Galleries are diversifying their collector bases by successfully reaching and engaging art collectors across generations. From Millennials to Baby Boomers, here's what you should know.

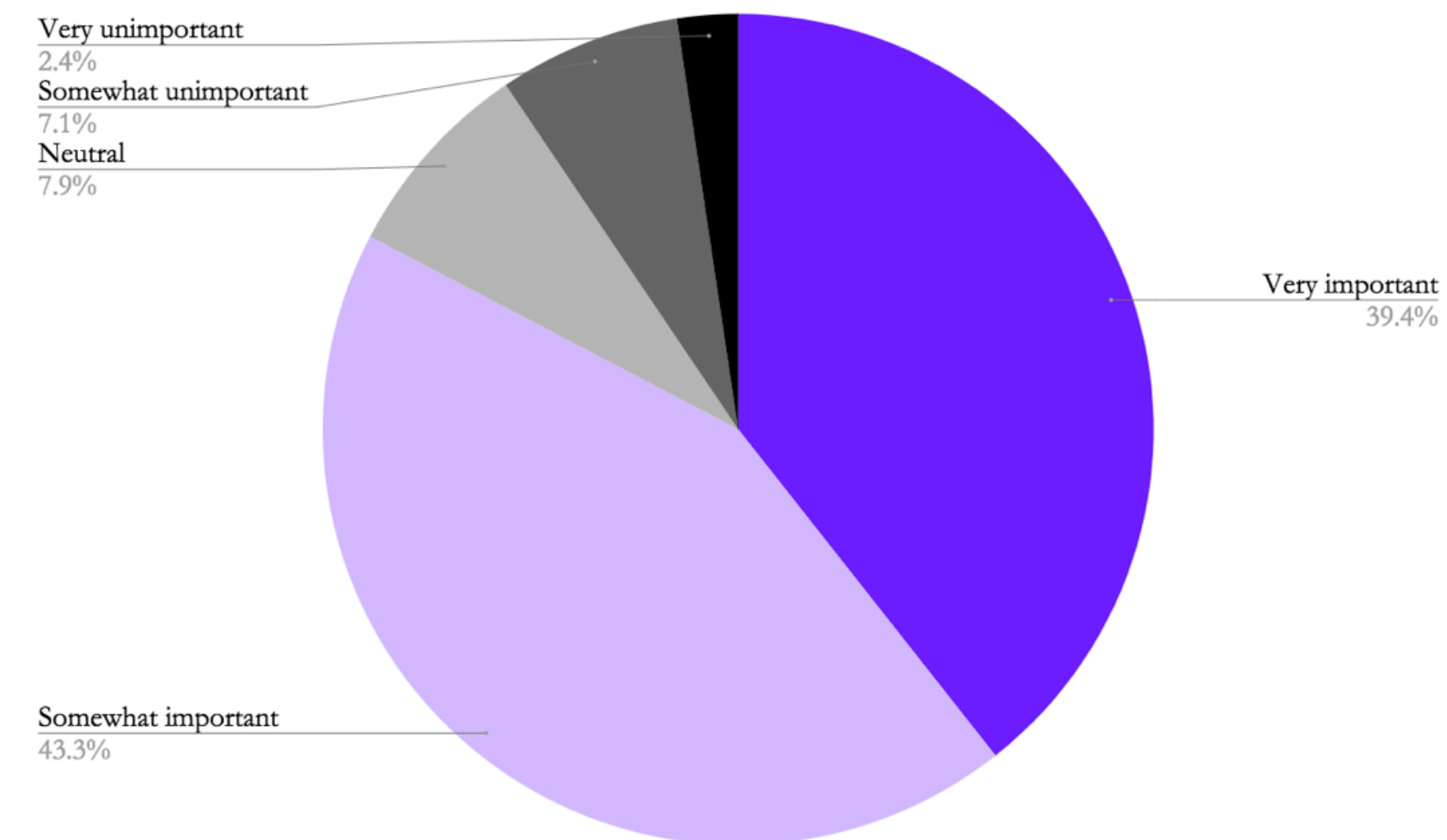
Millennials are repeat buyers—galleries with the youngest collector base cited existing collectors as their most reliable source of sales in 2018. Galleries are using digital marketing tactics to engage with these millennial collectors.

3 Successful Marketing Channels to Engage Millennials

1. Engage existing clients/collectors
2. Social media
3. Gallery website

While digital is strongly associated with Millennial buyers, galleries with older collector networks reported that selling art online would be important to their success in the coming year. 83% of galleries with Baby Boomer collector network reported that selling art online in 2019 would be somewhat or very important to their success.

Q23. How important do you think selling art online will be to your gallery's success in 2019?
Sample: Galleries with a collector base aged 55+



Here and Now

Galleries know that selling art online will be important to their success in 2019, but few galleries feel confident about their online digital strategy.

While building an effective digital strategy continues to be a challenge for many galleries, those who have dedicated time and resources to defining their strategy have seen that work pay off, giving themselves a higher rating in their current approach to selling art online.

Q14: On a scale of 1-5, how much do you agree or disagree with the following statement: "I believe my gallery has a well-defined strategy for managing its online presence" where 1 is strongly disagree and 5 is strongly agree.

Average Response:



Average response for galleries that reported success in their current approach to selling art online:



Here and Now

Galleries are seeing a return on their investments when it comes to digital tools.

The majority of galleries are budgeting \$3,000–\$10,000 for managing their digital presence, and are seeing up to \$20,000 in revenue from online sales alone. For galleries budgeting over \$10,000, the majority reported over \$50,000 in revenue from online sales alone.

Galleries with the highest projected revenue for 2018 (\$250,000+) reported strong results from digital marketing activities in 2018. They also reported that they will be investing in these same marketing activities in the year to come.

Ranked 2018 and 2019 Marketing Channels for Galleries with Highest Projected Revenue

1. Gallery website
2. Email marketing
3. Presence on an online art platform
4. Presence on social media platforms

“In the 18 years we’ve been on the internet, we’ve seen massive fundamental changes to the way it works and the increased confidence in buyers to purchase without consultation. It will no doubt change in many new ways going forward.”

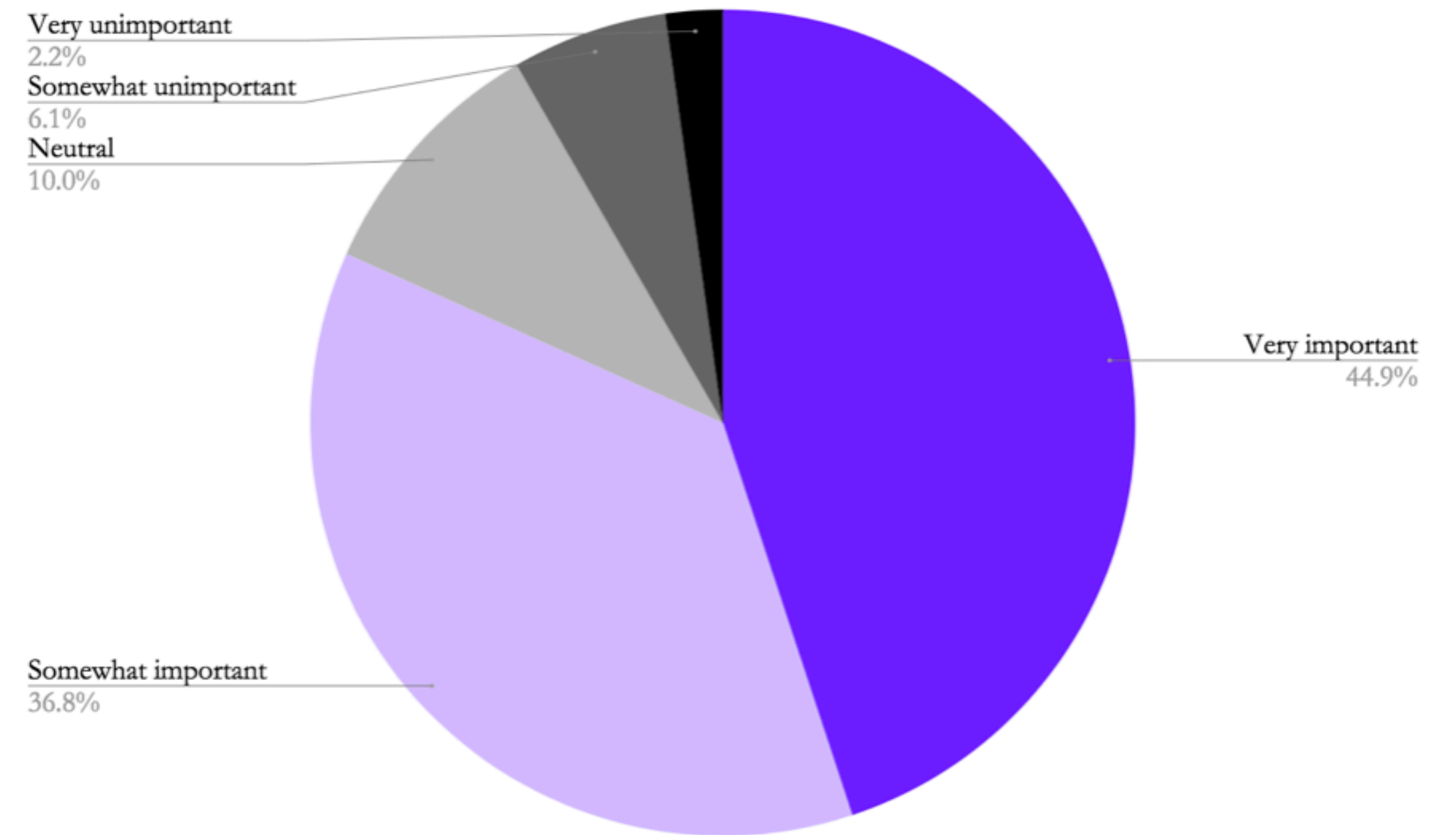
— U.K.-based art dealer

The Year Ahead

The vast majority of gallerists agree that the online art market will play an integral part in their future strategy—82% of galleries surveyed reported that selling art online will be important to their success this year. In 2019, galleries will need to focus on how they can use digital strategies to help them establish their brand online, market their artists and artworks, drive sales online with an elevated customer experience, and build long-term relationships with collectors. Over half of the galleries that did not offer art for sale online in 2018 stated that they will likely be investing in online art platforms to help them sell art online in the coming year.

With the importance of selling art online established, how are galleries planning to support their updated strategies?

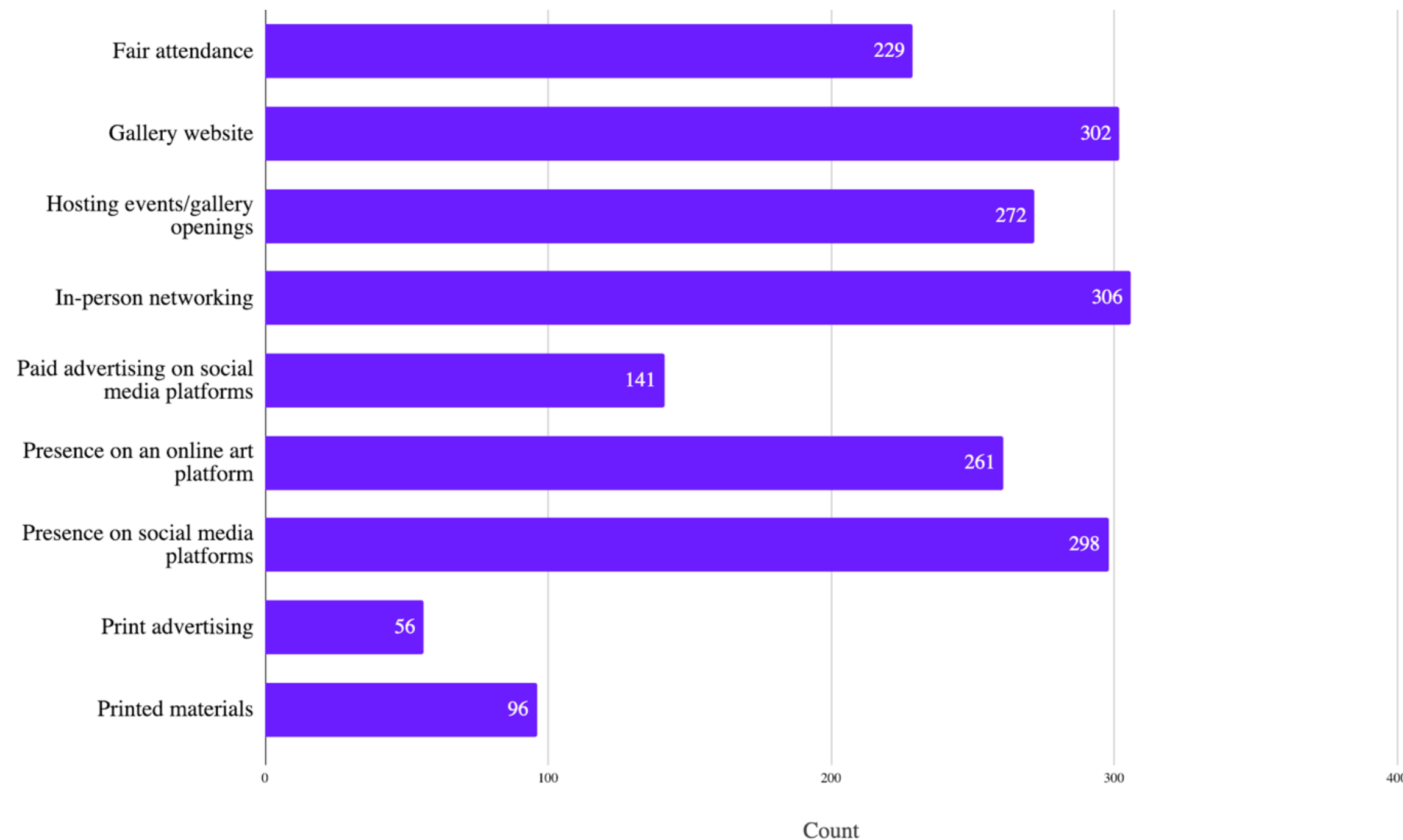
Q23. How important do you think selling art online will be to your gallery's success in 2019?



The Year Ahead

Galleries are shifting away from utilizing print materials as marketing collateral. We saw only 4% of surveyed galleries selecting this option when asked which marketing activities they'd be investing in this year.

Q12. In 2019, which of the following marketing activities are you likely to invest more resources in when promoting your gallery?



Design galleries in particular will also be revisiting their digital strategies in the coming year. While presence on social media platforms was reported to be the third-most effective marketing activity of 2018—behind in-person networking and hosting events—design galleries ranked social media as the number-one marketing activity to invest in in 2019.

While in-person networking continues to be an integral aspect of a gallery's marketing strategy, many in-person meetings happen as a result of collectors discovering galleries and artists for the first time online.

“Oftentimes, these initial introductions online lead to an opportunity later on to meet face-to-face. Last time I was in London, I was able to meet with some of our newest collectors through Artsy for the first time. Otherwise, when they happen to be in [our city], they’ll come visit us at the gallery.”

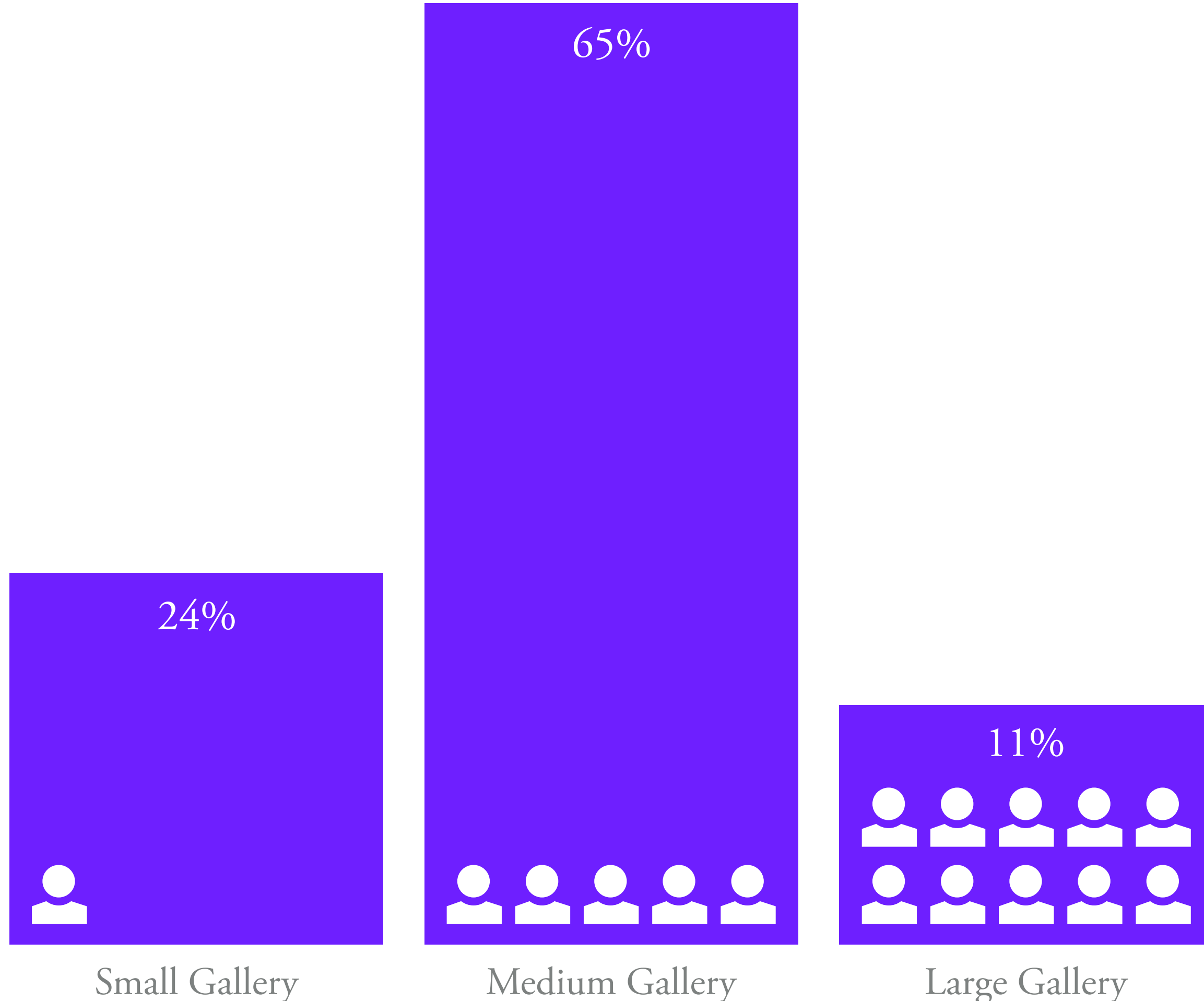
— U.S.-based gallery director

What Your Gallery Can Do Today



What Your Gallery Can Do Today

In this section of the report, find out what your gallery can do now to help navigate the art market's shifting landscape in 2019. As mentioned previously, data was examined relative to gallery size in order to identify patterns and behaviors for overall success: Small galleries are run by a single full-time employee; medium-sized galleries employ 2–6 full-time employees; and large galleries employ 7 or more full-time employees.





What Your Gallery Can Do Today: Small Galleries

When it comes to digital marketing, small galleries are already thinking about their strategy for 2019. Surveyed galleries indicated the following as the key marketing activities they would invest in for 2019: “Presence on social media” and “In-person networking” were the two most-popular responses, with 15% of galleries selecting each of them.

Small galleries need to take advantage of digital tools and tactics to amplify efforts with minimal staff. Here are a few tools to help you get started.

- [The Gallery’s Guide to Online Exclusive Shows](#) explores how this Artsy feature lets you share a collection of curated works online with collectors around the world—without the cost and effort of hosting a physical event.
- Easy to implement and highly personal, email marketing gives your gallery the chance to speak directly with collectors. To learn more, [download comprehensive guide](#).
- With so many features and platforms to choose from, our [social media toolkit](#) will help you determine which tactics will offer the biggest benefits.

“We are able to sell to collectors we may normally miss who are out of [the] state or country when our business is closed for the day. These collectors can now simply click ‘add work to cart,’ pay, and we ship out. We have seen a steady increase in online sales since instituting these ideas to our profit strategies.”

— Director of a small, U.S.-based art gallery



What Your Gallery Can Do Today: Medium Galleries

Here's what we found. Although the majority of galleries, regardless of size, agree that selling art online is important, medium-sized galleries were the most likely to rate selling art online as “very important” to their success in 2019. The majority of medium-sized galleries noted their websites as the most important marketing tool for the coming year.

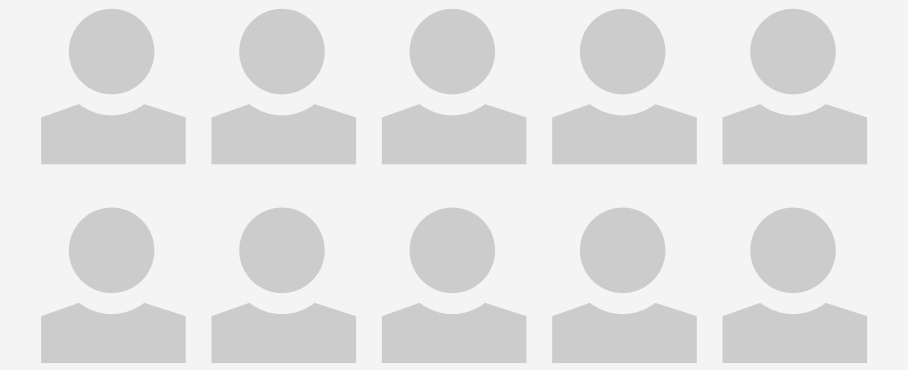
To support medium-sized galleries taking their digital strategies to the next level, we've compiled the following tips and resources.

- Ensure that collectors can find your gallery's website when they're searching for your artists online. Explore “[The Gallery's Guide to SEO.](#)”
- One of the best ways to enrich a website is with stunning visual assets. Make the most of your next art installation with “[The Gallery's Guide to Photography for Online Use.](#)”
- With so many features and platforms to choose from, the “[Social Media Toolkit](#)” covers everything from posting cadences to management tools, and can help you refine your strategy.

“I believe the marketplace is a strong addition to the gallery activities and for us will eventually replace many of the smaller fairs we participate in.”

— Owner of medium-sized, U.K.-based gallery

What Your Gallery Can Do Today: Large Galleries



Large galleries cited in-person networking, a gallery website, and presence on social media as the most important marketing tools for the coming year.

A large gallery staff allows for more ambitious in-person opportunities. With collectors moving online, the opportunity lies in implementing a sophisticated approach that integrates online experiences with offline interaction. Digital marketing efforts in particular can bolster the success of in-person networking. Redirecting your staff's efforts to optimize your gallery's website and develop a social media strategy can help bring more collectors to your in-person events.

Learn how to support your offline efforts with online initiatives.

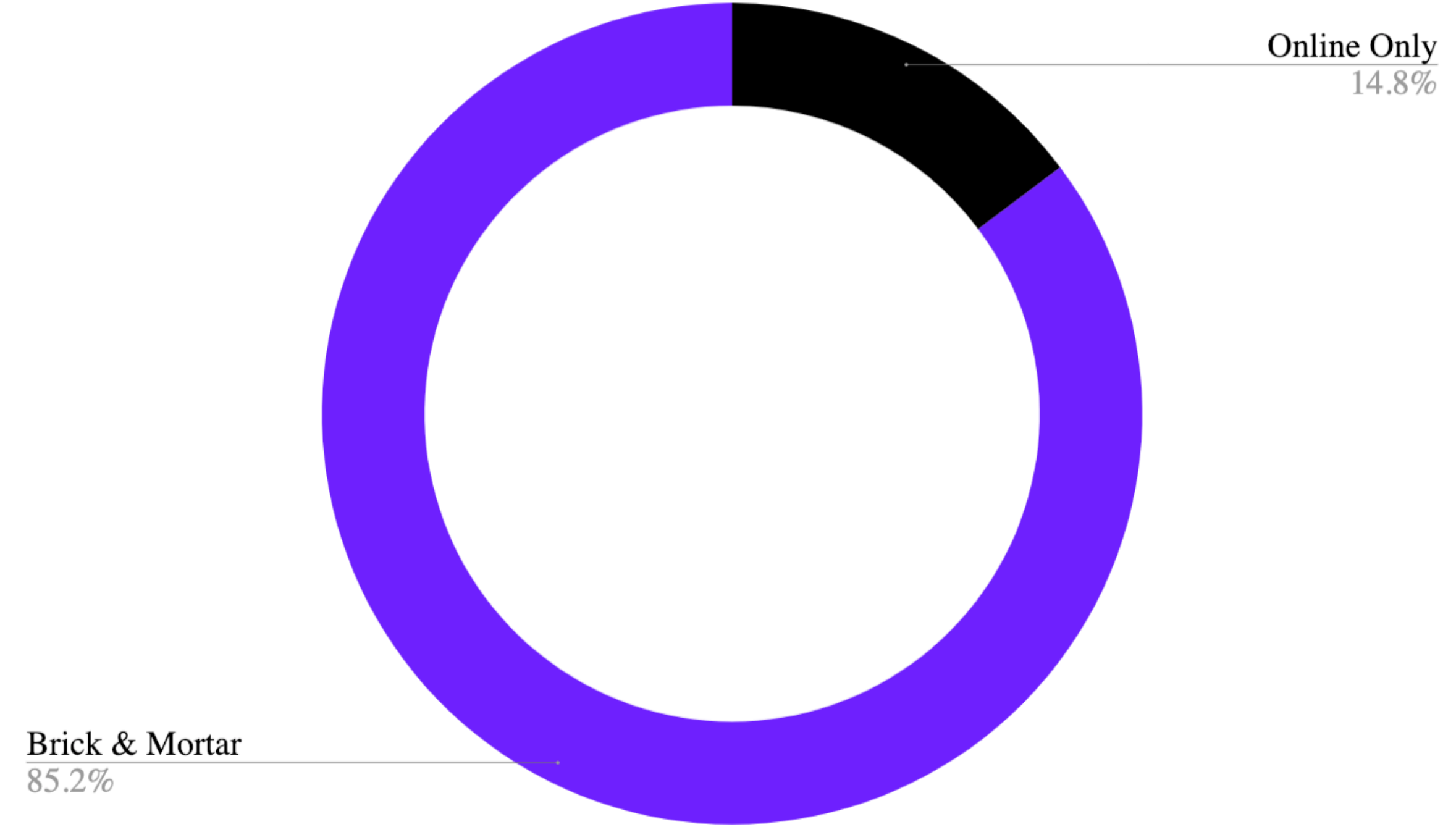
- As the art world transitions online, leveraging collector data is the strategic next step to understanding purchasing trends and behaviors. From the most-frequently searched artists to the top categories on Artsy, learn how to [leverage data to optimize your gallery's strategy](#).
- Social media platforms are powerful and complex tools that are constantly evolving. The "[Social Media Toolkit](#)" will help your team solidify a social media strategy and keep followers engaged.
- Art fairs present the perfect opportunity to network with collectors who might not cross paths with you in your gallery's physical location. Ensure that collectors discover your booth online before the fair—and keep them engaged long after fair season has ended—with "[The Gallery's Guide to Art Fairs](#)."



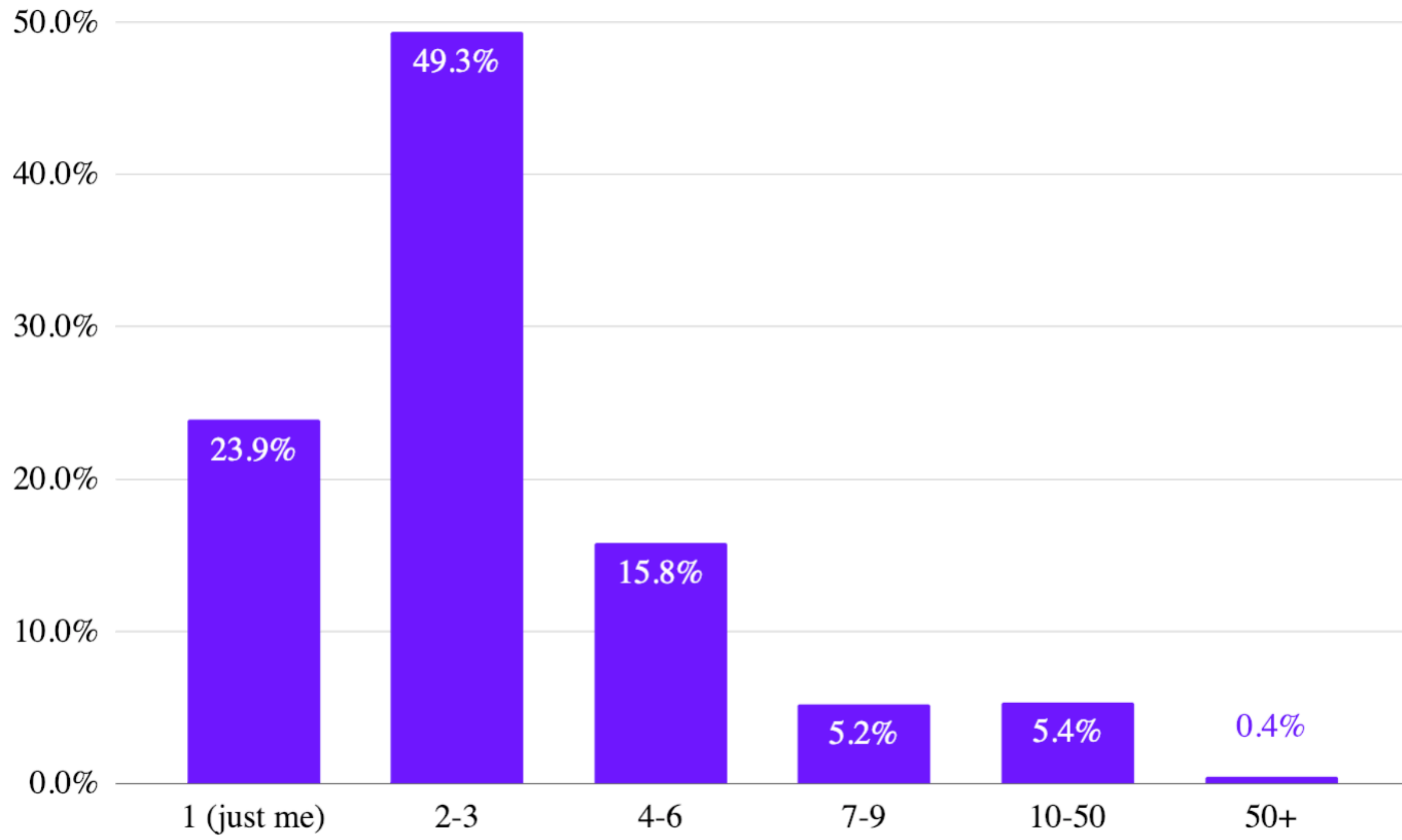
Survey Demographics

Survey Demographics

Survey sample: Online-only and brick & mortar galleries (%):

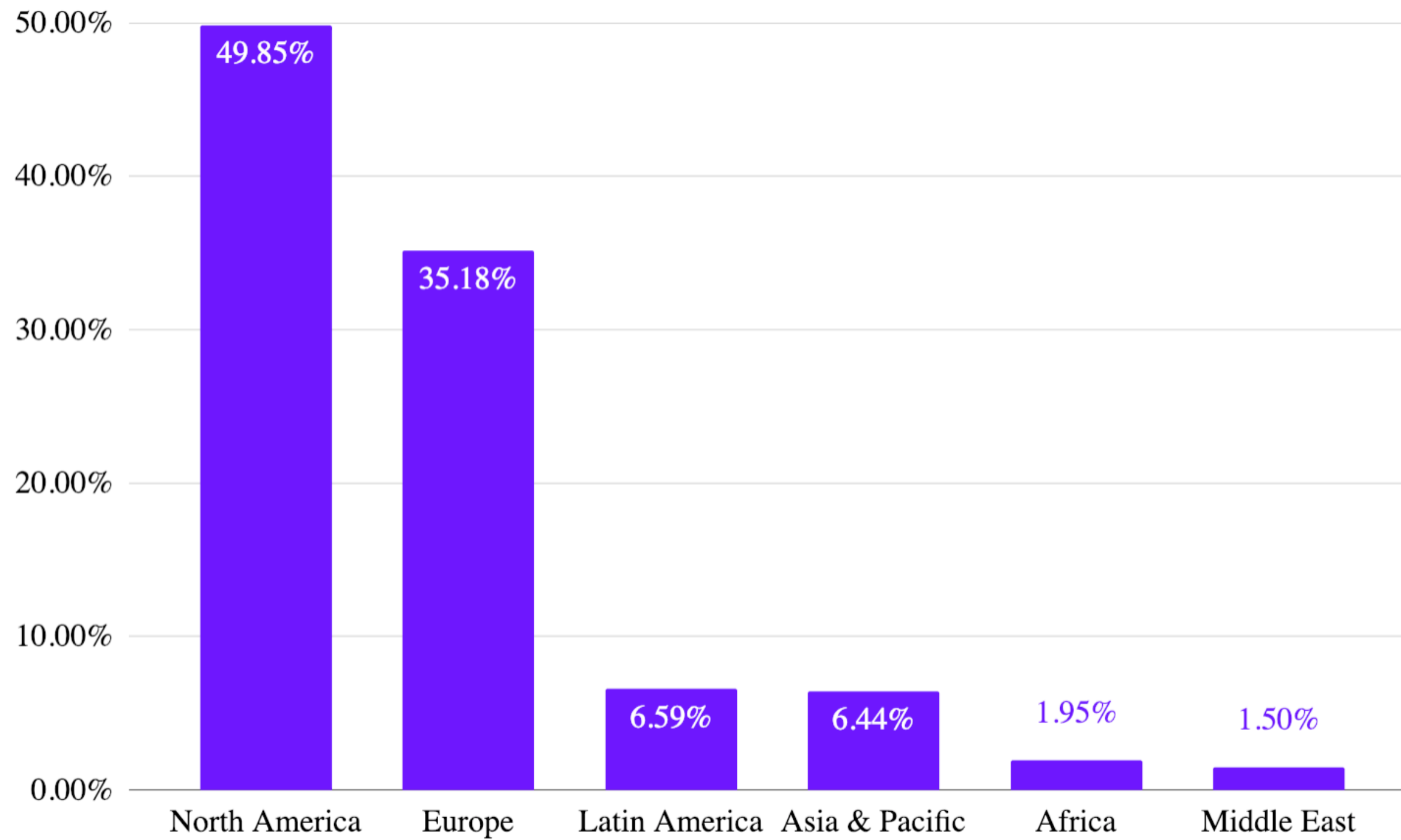


Survey sample: Galleries by total number of employees (%):

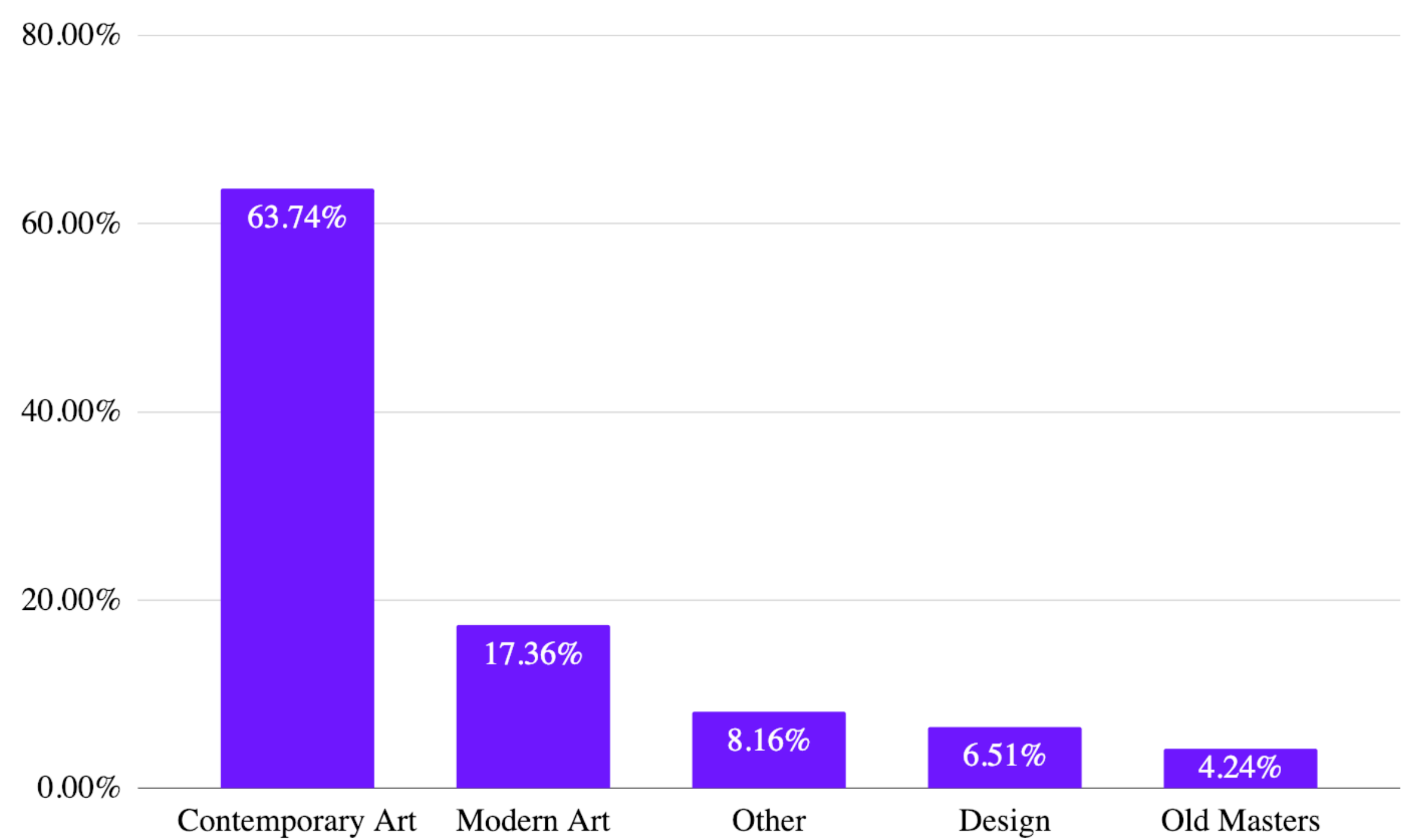


Survey Demographics

Survey sample: galleries by primary location (%)

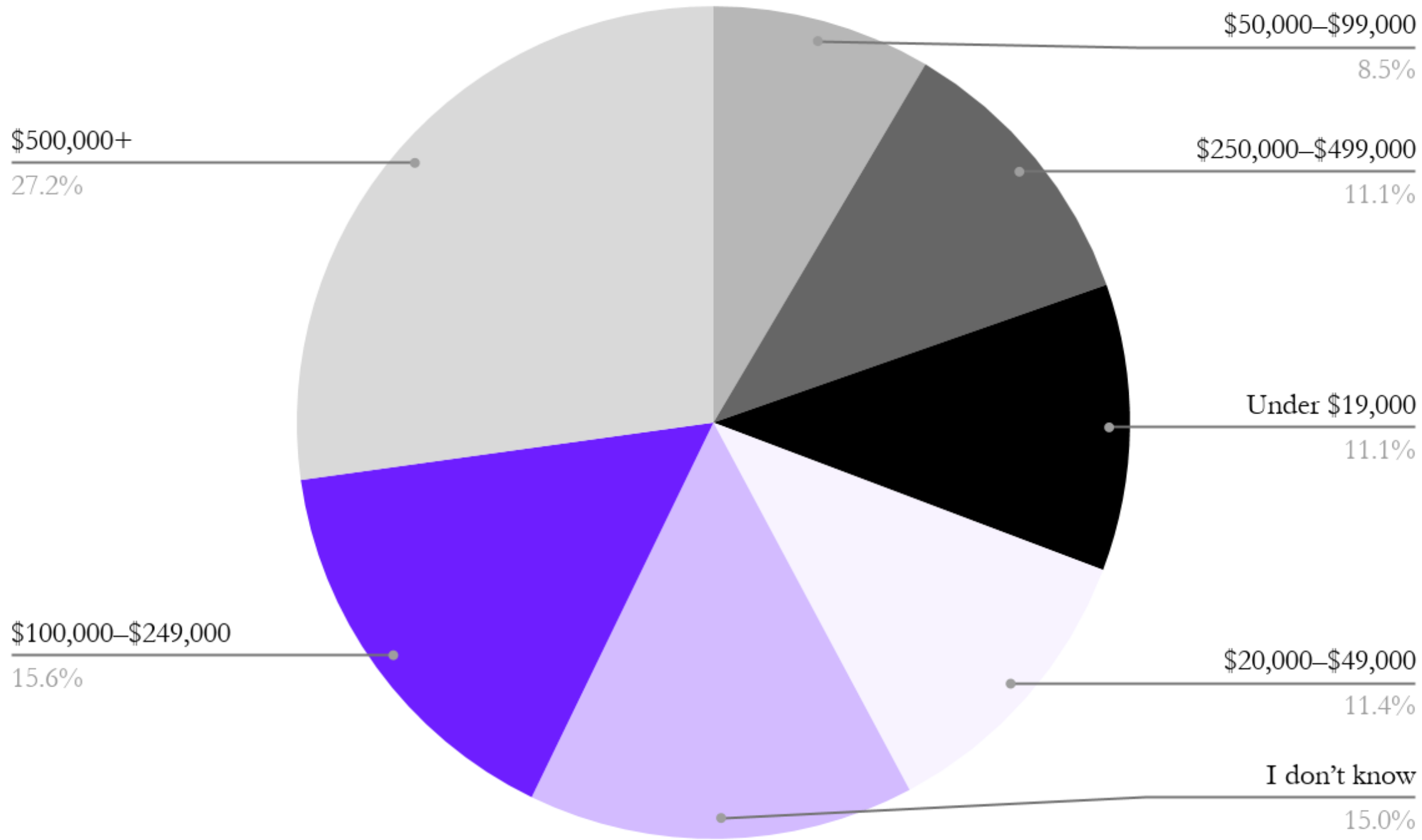


Survey sample: number of galleries selling the following types of artwork:

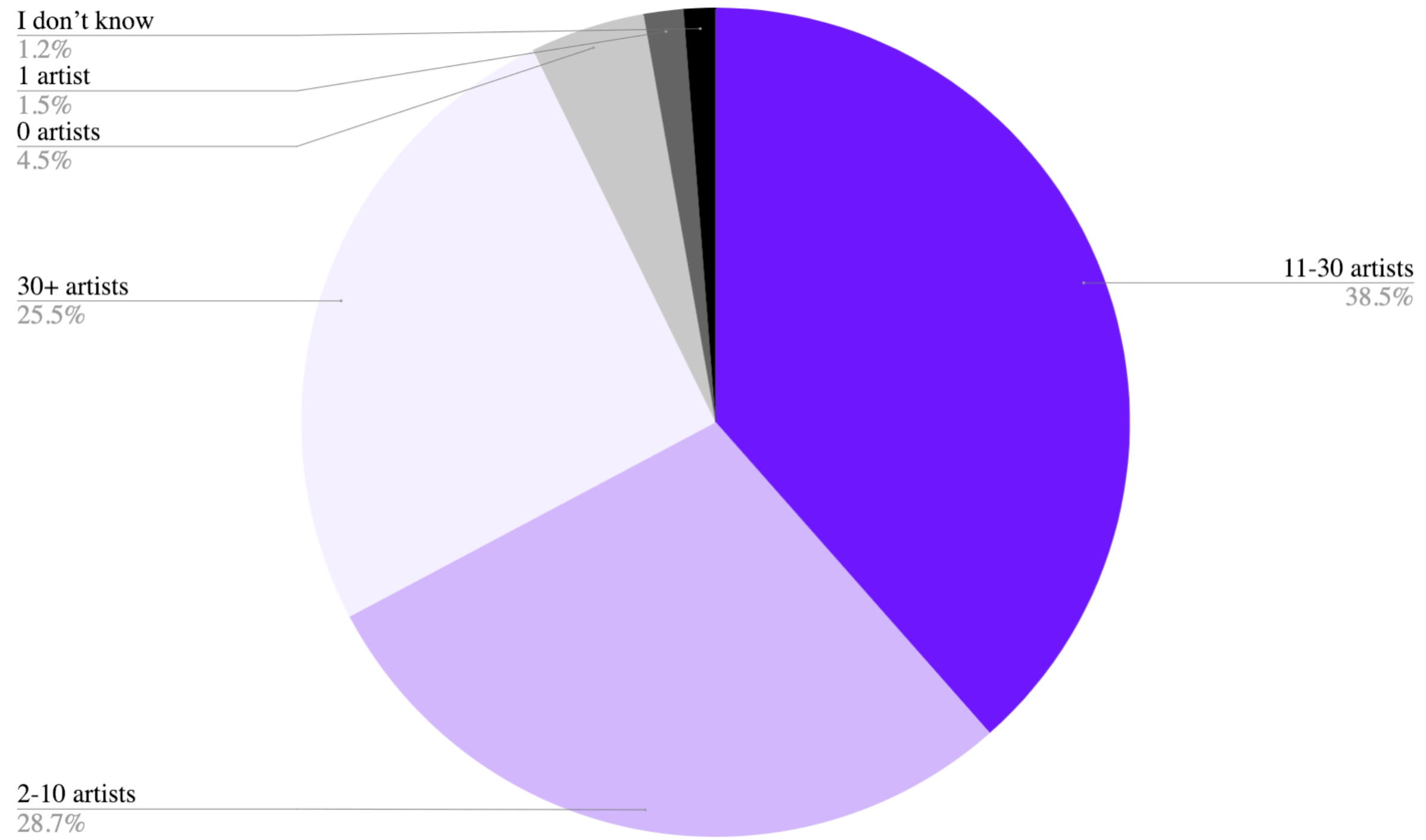


Survey Demographics

What is your estimated gross revenue for 2018?

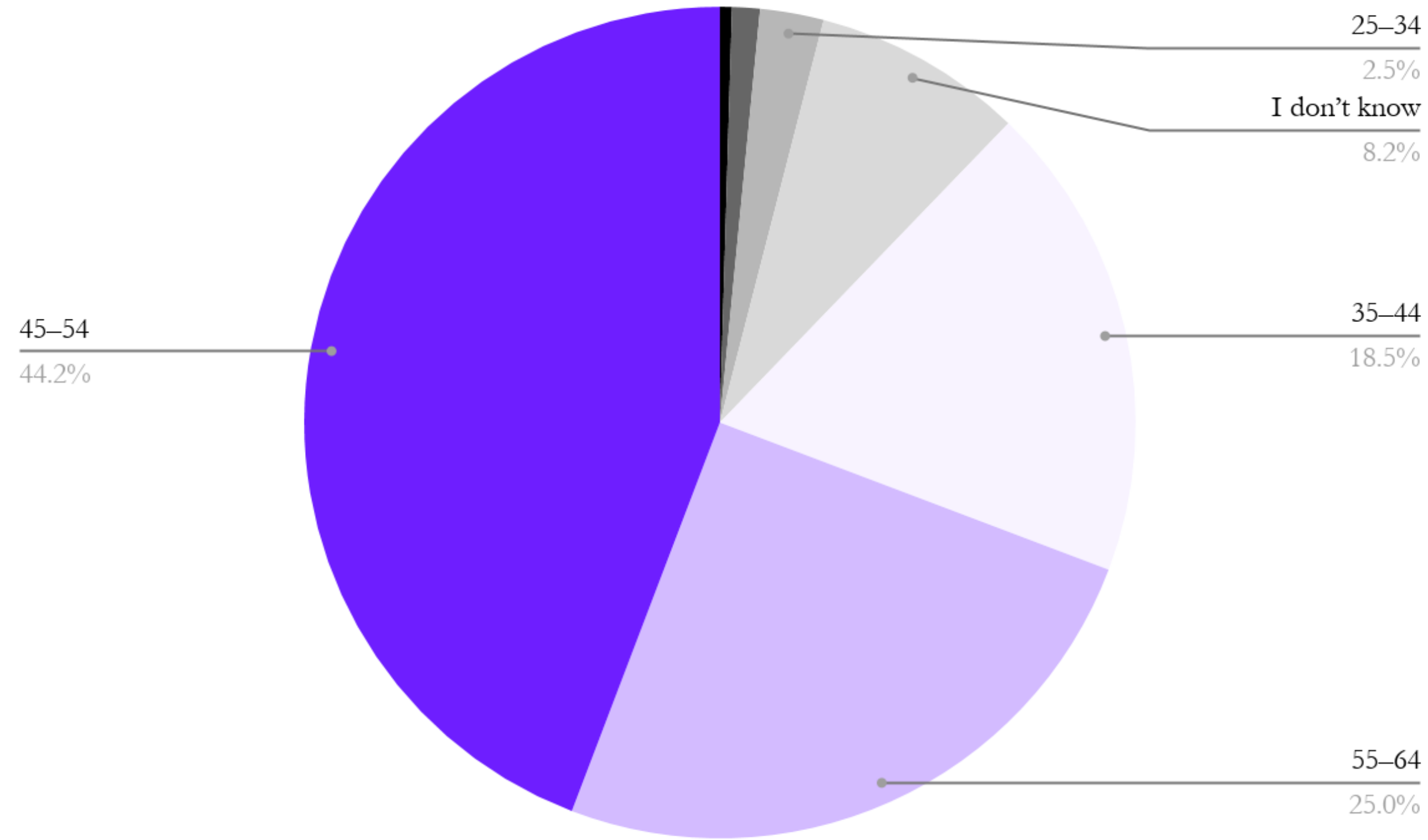


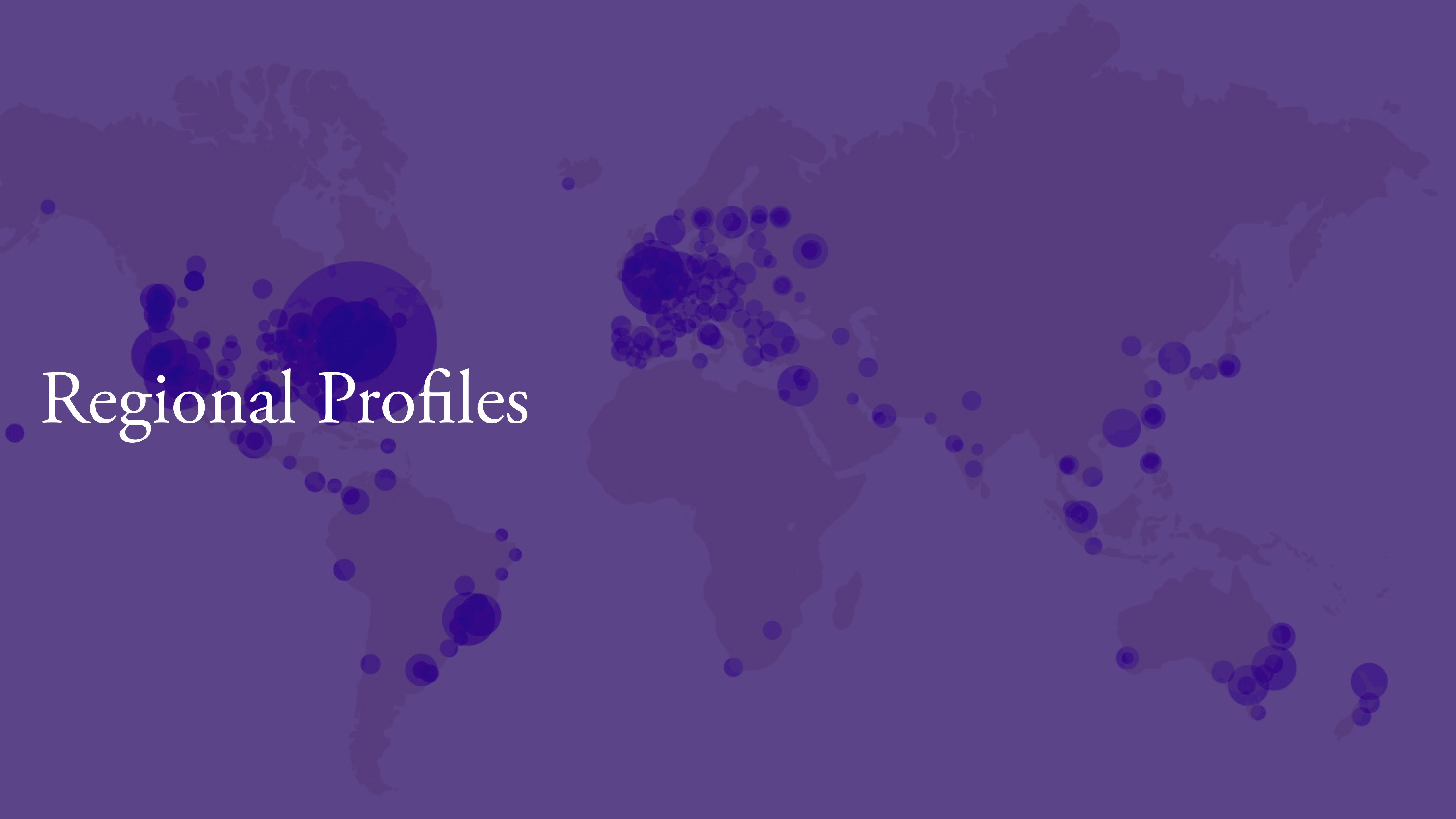
How many artists does your gallery represent?



Survey Demographics

What is the average age of your collector network?





Regional Profiles

Africa



Countries with the most survey respondents

South Africa, Kenya, Zimbabwe

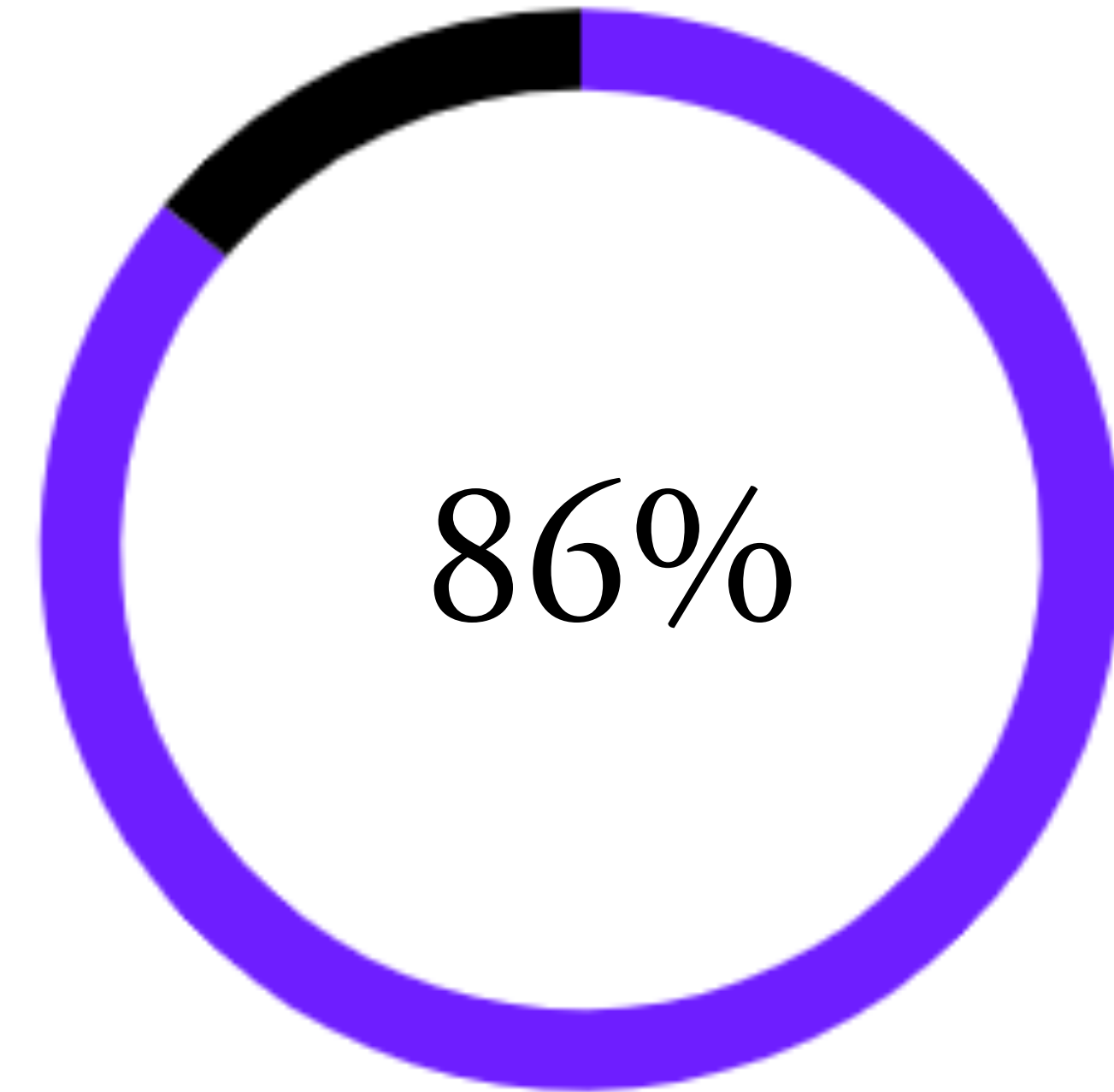
Most effective marketing activity in 2018

Email

Most likely to invest in this marketing activity over other marketing activities in 2019

Presence on social media platforms (video, posts, photographs, etc.)

Existing clients were the greatest source of artwork sales for African galleries in 2018.



of galleries in this region offered art for sale online in 2018

Asia & Pacific

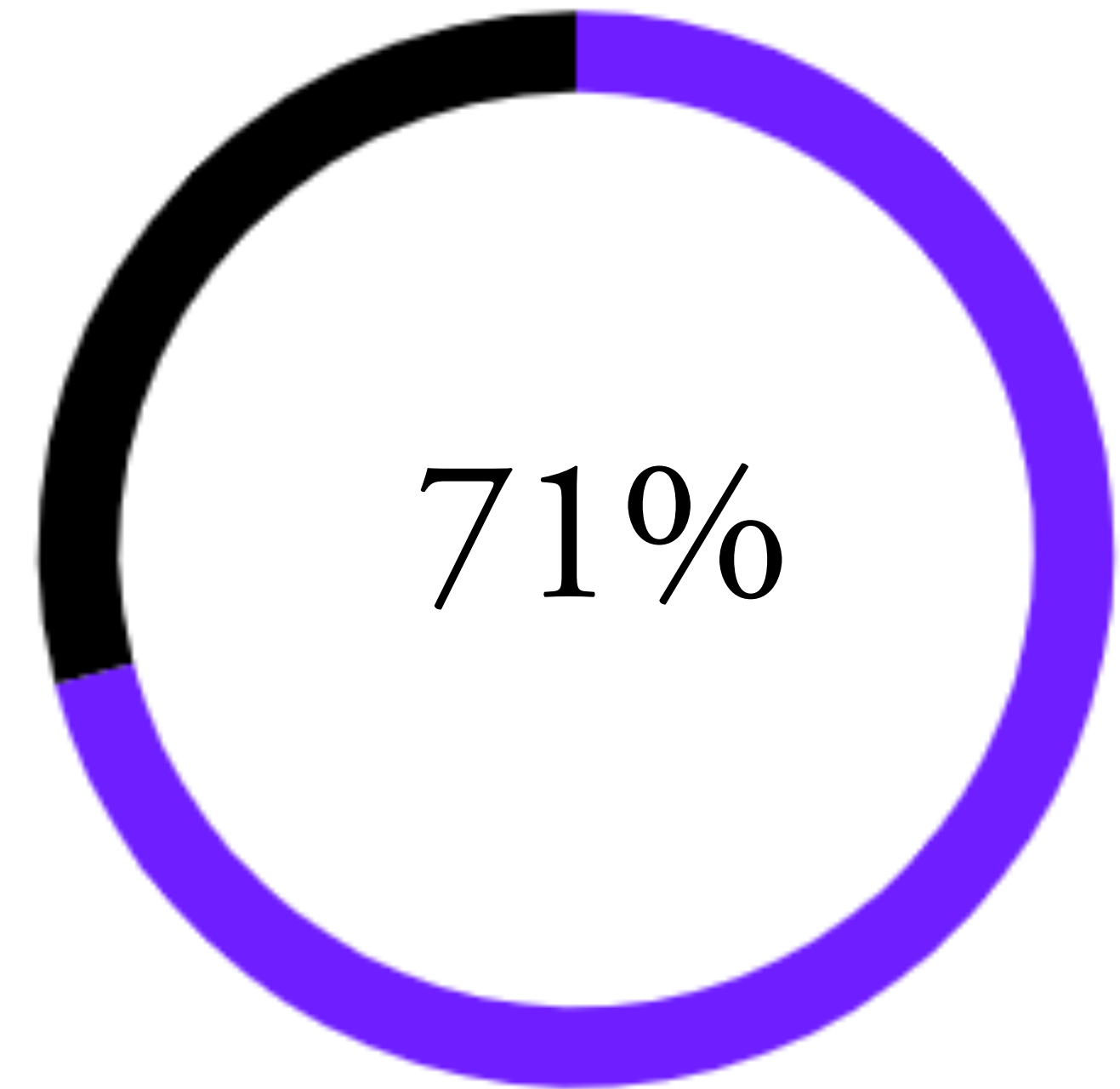
Locations with the most survey respondents
Australia, Hong Kong, Singapore

Most effective marketing activity in 2018
Gallery website

Most likely to invest in this marketing activity over other marketing activities in 2019
Presence on social media platforms (video, posts, photographs, etc.)

Compared to other regions, galleries in Asia and the Pacific are the most likely to invest in technologies that will help them sell art online in 2019 (37% reported “very likely”).

“Artsy has done a great job of adapting new technology coupled with a strong client support team. One without the other would not work.”
—Gallery Director of a China-based contemporary art gallery



of galleries in this region offered art for sale online in 2018

Europe

Countries with the most survey respondents

United Kingdom, France, Germany

Most effective marketing activity in 2018

In-person networking

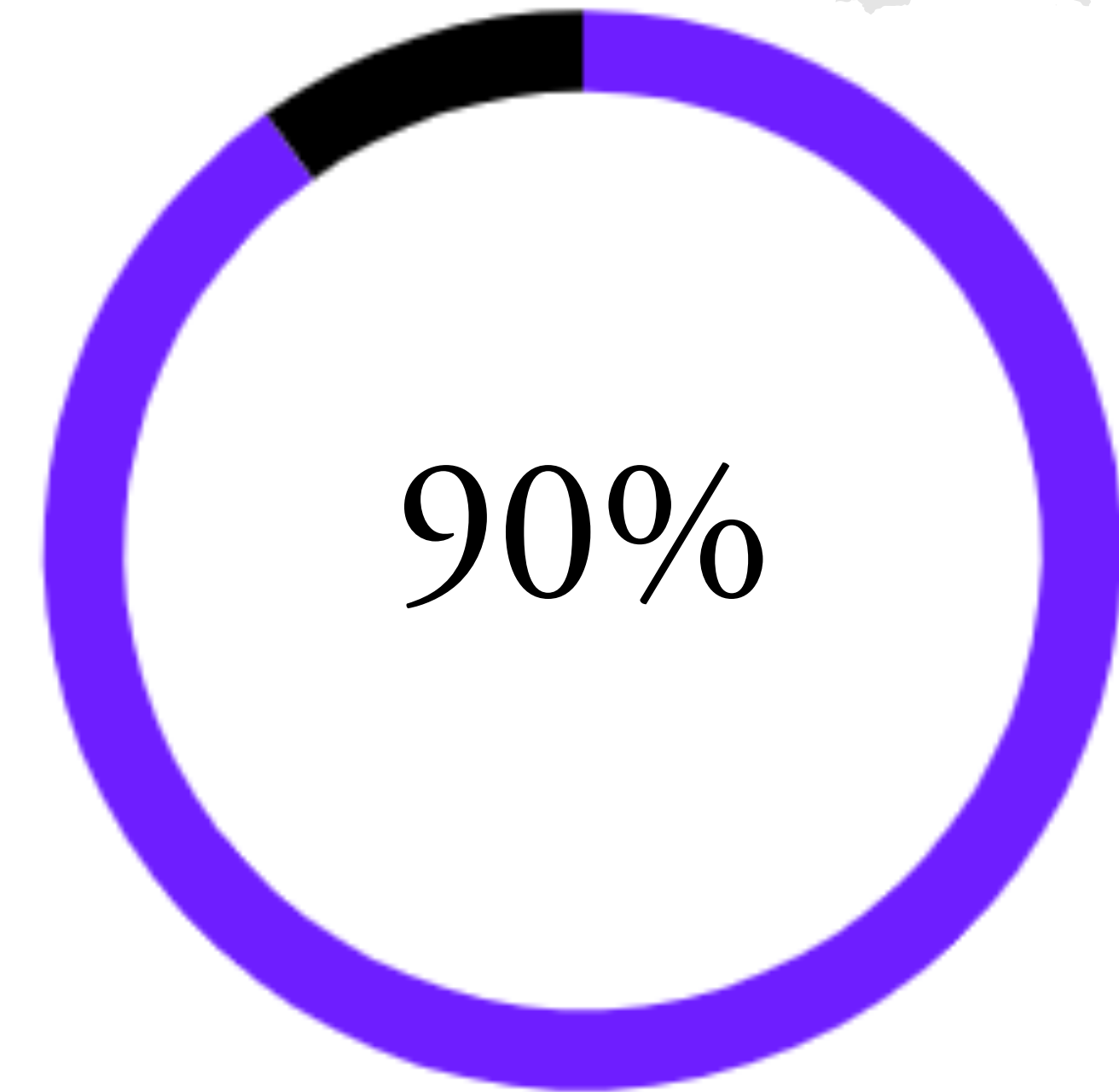
Most likely to invest in this marketing activity over other marketing activities in 2019

In-person networking

Europe has the highest percentage of online-only galleries — 33%, which is double the overall average of 15%.

“In the 18 years we’ve been on the internet, we’ve seen massive fundamental changes to the way it works and the increased confidence in buyers to purchase without consultation. It will no doubt change in many new ways going forward.”

—U.K.-based dealer of contemporary and modern art



of galleries in this region offered art for sale online in 2018

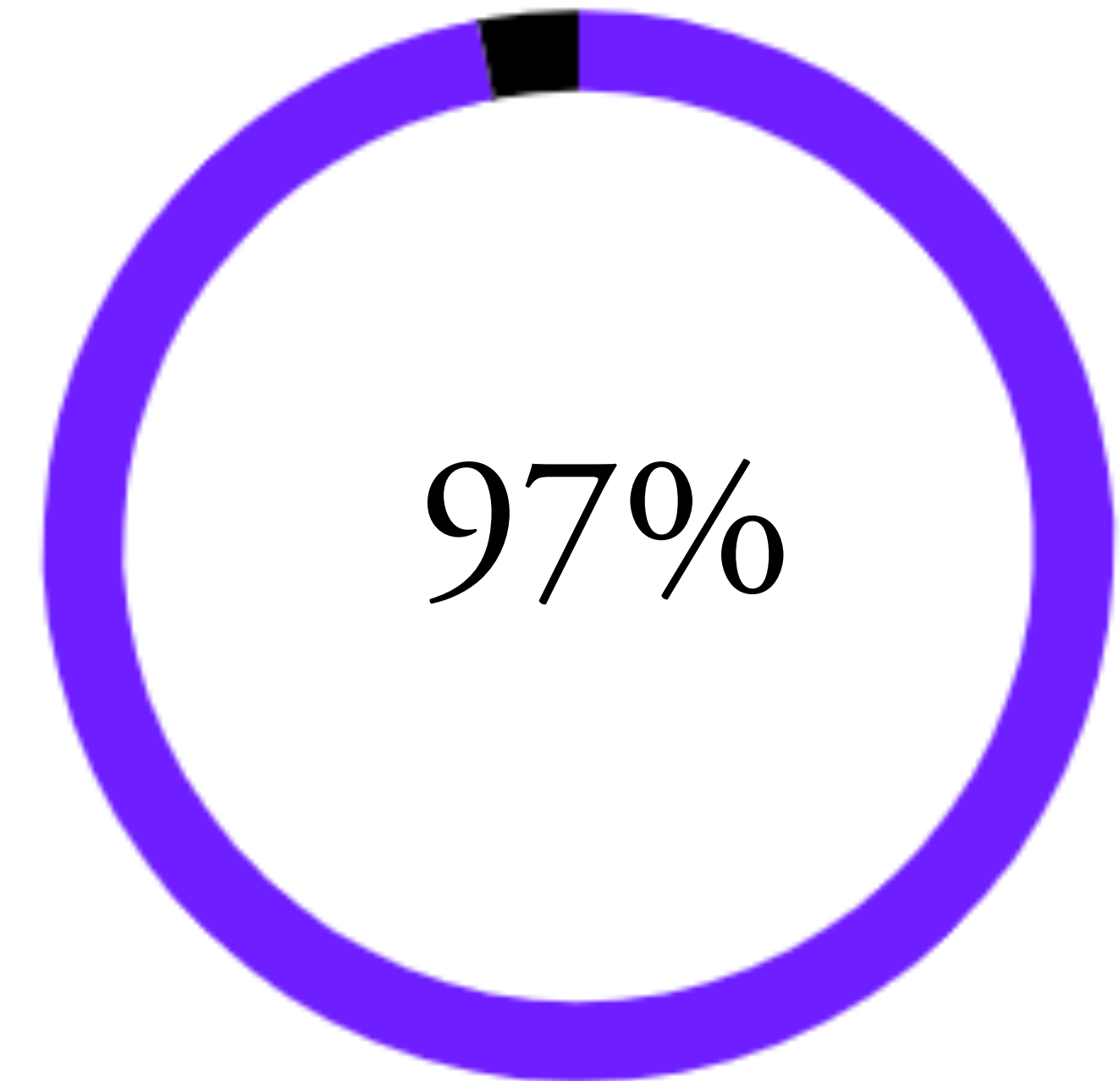
Latin America

Countries with the most survey respondents
Brazil, Mexico, Argentina

Most effective marketing activity in 2018
In-person networking

Most likely to invest in this marketing activity over other marketing activities in 2019
Presence on an online art platform

Latin American galleries have the youngest collector base — 32% of galleries reported the average age of their collector base was between 35 and 44 years old.



of galleries in this region offered art for sale online in 2018

Middle East



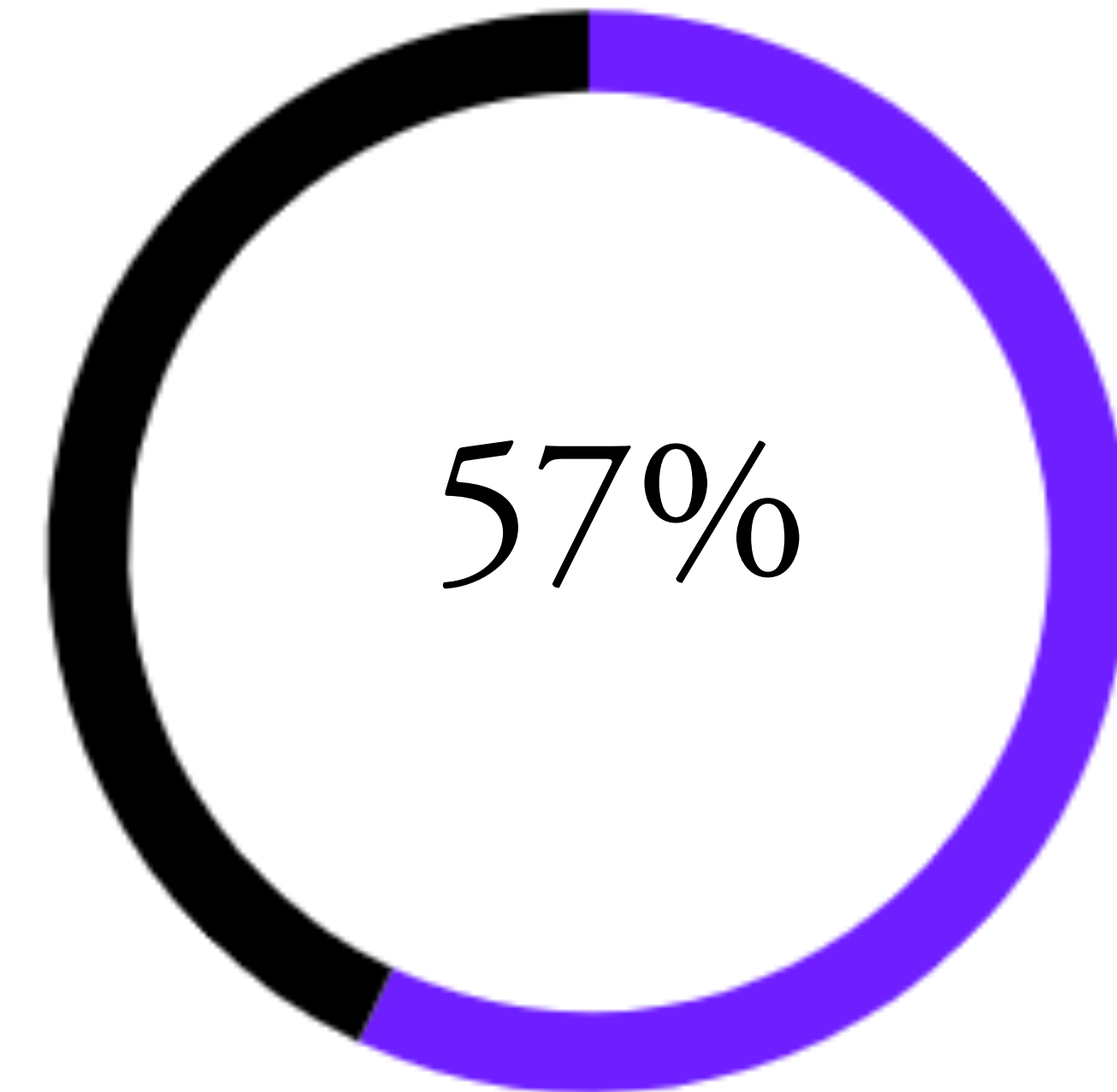
Countries with the most survey respondents
Israel, Turkey, United Arab Emirates

Most effective marketing activity in 2018
Email

Most likely to invest in this marketing activity over others in 2019
Presence on social media platforms (video, posts, photographs, etc.)

Most likely to invest in this marketing activity over other marketing activities in 2019: Presence on social media platforms (video, posts, photographs, etc.)

The majority of galleries in the Middle East reported that the average age of their collector network is 45–54 years old.



of galleries in this region offered art for sale online in 2018

United States & Canada



Most effective marketing activity in 2018

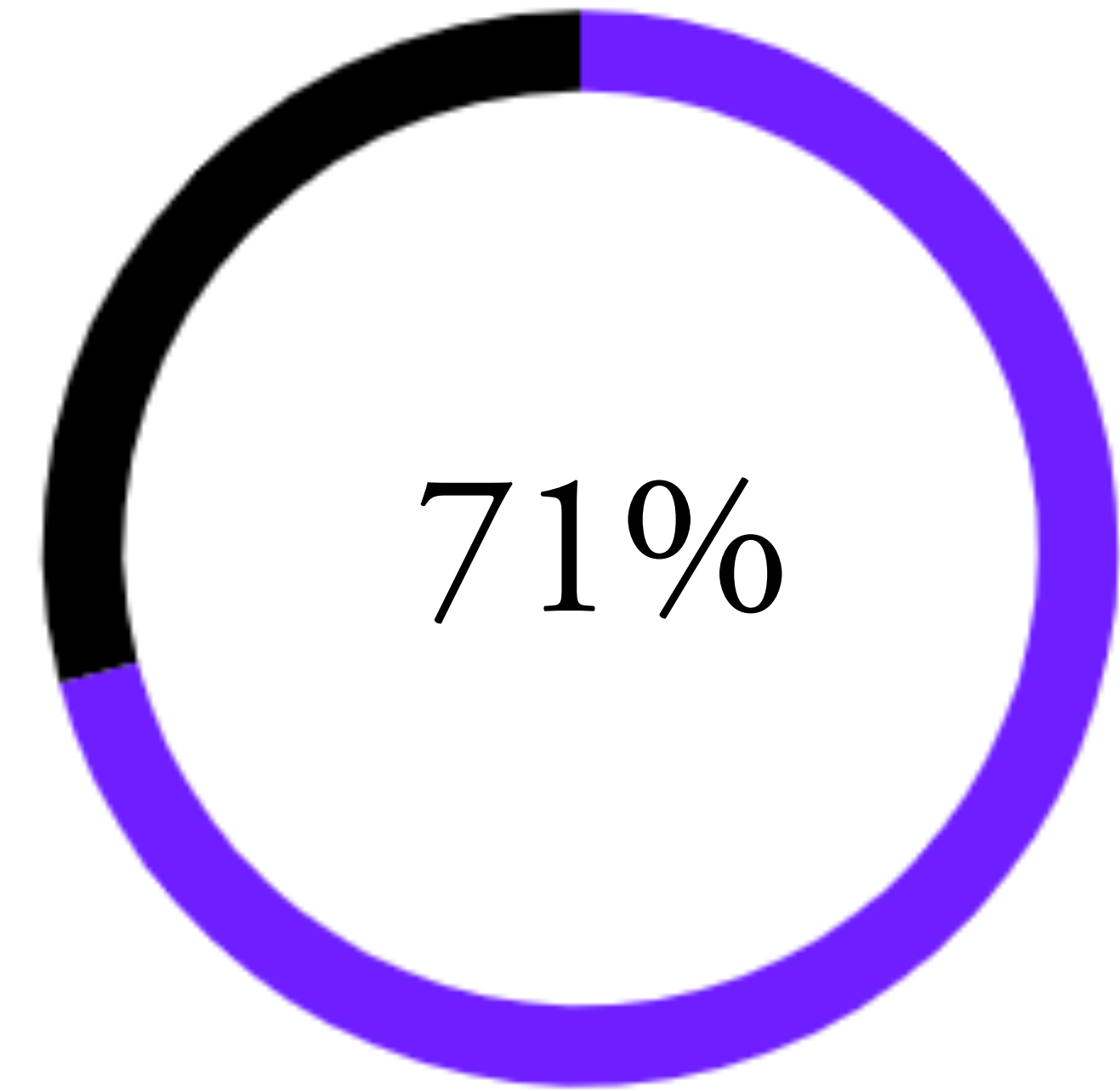
In-person networking

Most likely to invest in this marketing activity over other marketing activities in 2019

In-person networking

Compared to other regions, galleries in the U.S. and Canada reported that selling art online would be the most important to their success in 2019, with over half of galleries reporting that selling art online was “very important.”

“The online market is vital to find new collectors, websites are significant but are slowly becoming more of an aesthetic feature to a gallery’s brand. Platforms like this give galleries the opportunity to separate from that aesthetic feature, and focus on sales.” — Associate Director a US-based contemporary art gallery



of galleries in this region offered art for sale online in 2018

Methodology

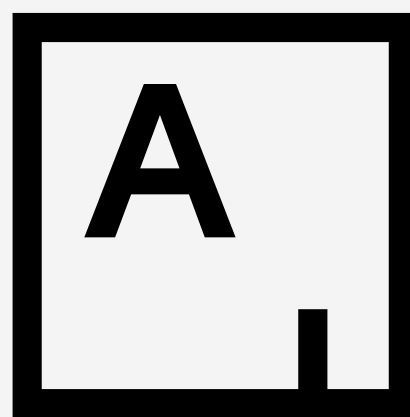


Methodology

Artsy partnered with senior survey consultant and market researcher Dan Miranda to conduct this survey. In order to qualify for the survey, respondents could not be part-time employees or interns. Participants cited the following job titles:

- Art Dealer
- Associate Director
- Curator
- Director of Marketing
- Director of Sales
- Gallery Assistant
- Gallery Director
- Gallery Manager
- Gallery Owner

Conducted in October 2018, this survey generated responses from full-time gallery professionals (not limited to Artsy partners). After control measures to ensure accuracy and quality of the survey response data, 700 respondents were included in the final sample.



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