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‘Charting the Future’ – where, how and why the CCO’s role is changing – and what to do about it

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Methodology

The following research is based on interview conducted by Echo Research as follows:

- ❖ Round table discussion with 18 Page members in Chicago during Annual Page Conference, September 2022
- ❖ Individual email feedback and one on one telephone interviews with 35 Page members during October 2022



To whom we spoke :



Name	Company		Name	Company
Madan Bahal	Adfactors PR, India		Andy Pharoah	Mars Inc
Meg Bloomgren	American Petroleum Institute		Pattie Kushner	Formerly Mayo Clinic
Zeynep Özbil	Arcelik, Turkey		Torod Neptune	Medtronic
Maria Luisa Martinez Gistau	Caxiabank , Spain		James O'Rourke	Mendoza College of Business
Joe Carberry	Charles Schwab		Lucy Ryan	NGC
Cheryl Krauss	CHUBB		Lavanya Wadgaonkar	Nissan, Japan
Jennifer Davies	DELL		Paul Abrahams	RELX, UK
Scot Hoffman	Dodge & Cox		Michelle Bauman	Sandoz, Basel
Nigel Glennie	Ecolab		Perry Yeatman	Save the Children, US
Jannik Lindbaek	Equinor, Norway		Chuck Cadena	Spirit AeroSystems
Alex Aiken	Government Communication Service, UK		Aaron Feigin	Sumo Logic
Stacey Tank	Heineken, Netherlands		Chris Talley	Talley Communication Strategy
Paul Dickard	Herc Rentals Inc		Sandy Pound	Thermo Fischer Scientific Inc.
Jane Anderson	IAG, UK		Shona Sabnis	Tyson Foods
Kristi Huller	KKR		Carolyn Wang	Ultragenyx Pharmaceutical Inc.
Michelle Mazur	Formerly LabCorp		Mark Henderson	Wellcome Trust, UK
Tracy Faulkner	Majid Al Futtain, UAE		Marta Newhart	Westinghouse



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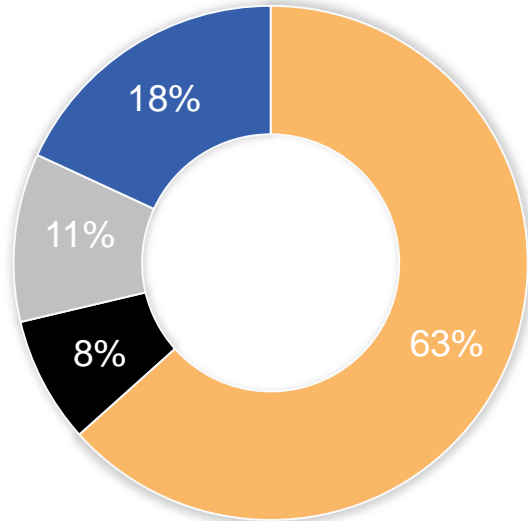
Framing

01

The Role of the Chief Communications officer

WHO DO YOU REPORT TO?

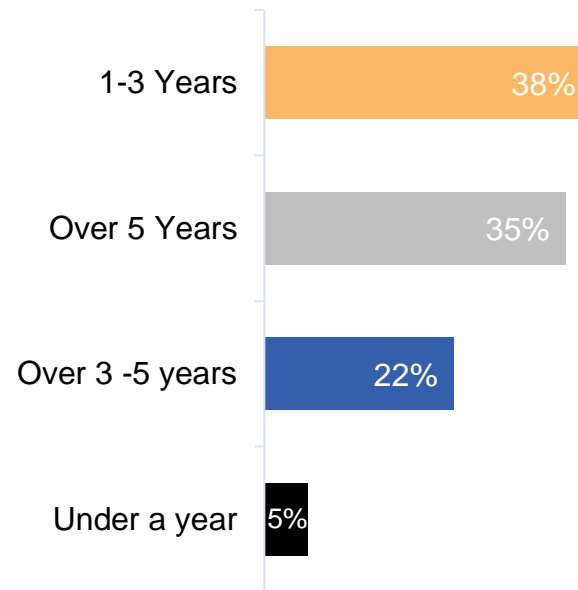
63% of respondents report directly to the CEO



- CEO
- CMO
- Head of Corporate/Public affairs
- Other C-suite members

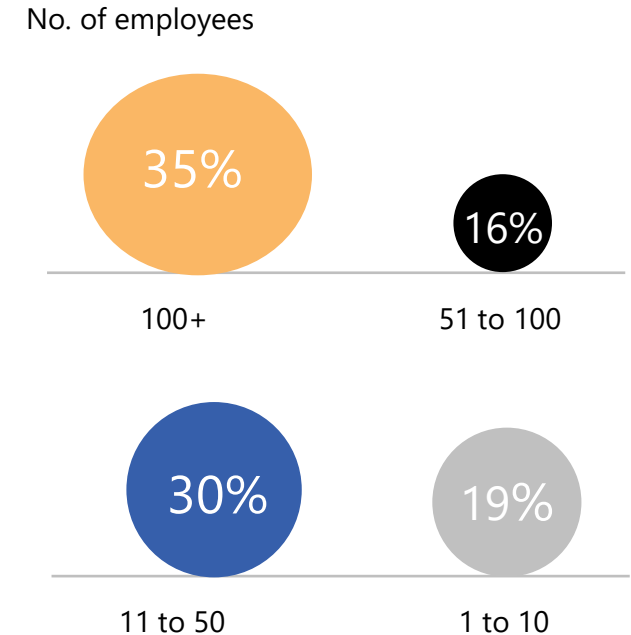
HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN IN YOUR ROLE?

38% of respondents have been in their role for 1-3 years



HOW BIG IS YOUR COMMUNICATIONS TEAM?

35% of respondents work with a communication team of over 100





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Context

02



Majority of respondents work with C-suite peers the same amount as they have previously, while alignment with CMO, HR, CSO and CFO has increased

Chief Communications Officer

Overall C-Suite Team

“There is so much more to it now. And the pressures and expectations from the C-suite, Boardrooms, regulators, et al, are placing **significant new demands on our function.**”

Chief Sustainability Officer

“CEO office management, strategic partnerships (e.g. senior executive liaison to World Economic Forum). CSO and Treasury due to more **green initiatives and targets** as well as governments on joint events / engagements / partnerships due to increased public-private partnering work.”

Human Resources

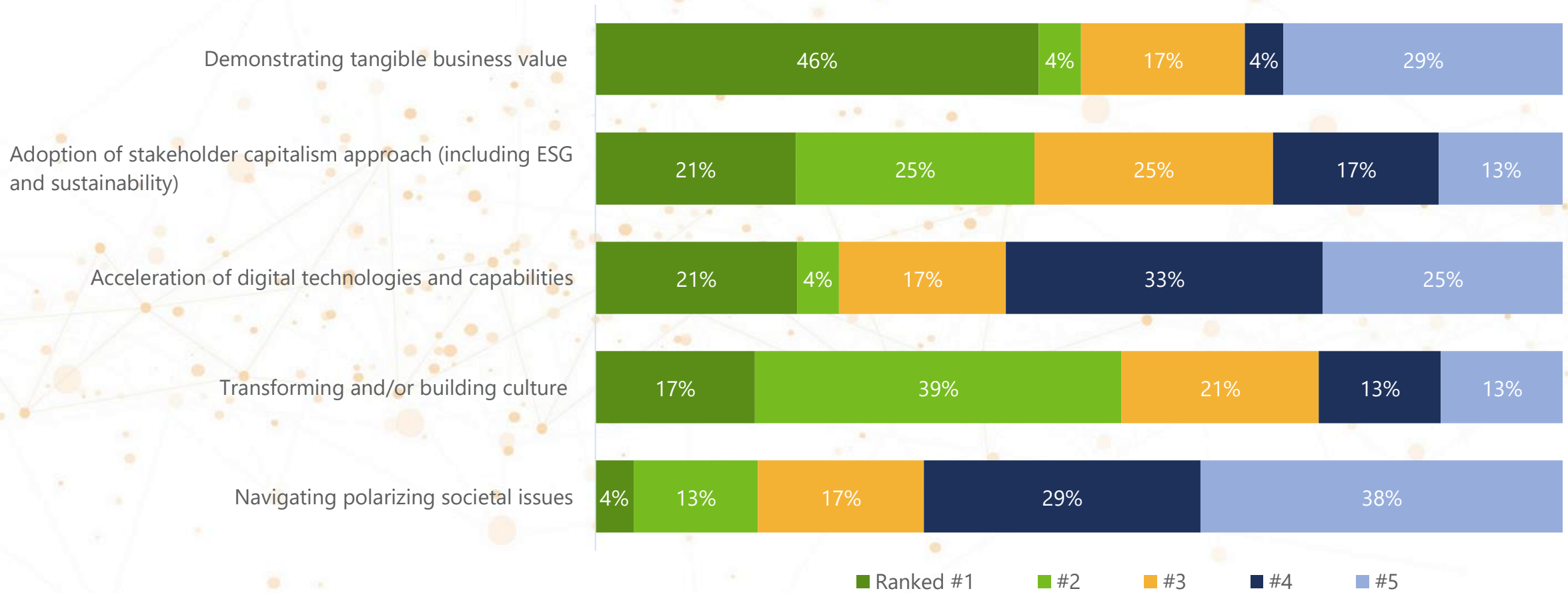
“HR on internal comms and **reputation and therefore recruitment and retention.**
Chief Digital Officer on platforms and products.”

Chief financial officer & chief marketing officer

Corp reputation is a shareholder objective which I lead together with the CFO – **corporate reputation is one of our 7 shareholder objectives which we remunerate against: 20% is driven by reputation, 20% is driven by green house gas emissions...** Same true with Brand and a lot of conversations with CMOs. We never had a corporate brand before and I led it by saying if we differentiate on brand, we have to differentiate on purpose.”



Demonstrating tangible business value ranked as top strategic importance to function



Q. How would you rank the following items in terms of their strategic importance for your function?
Base: Chief Communications Officers who ranked the following (n=23)
The changing role of the CCO and what to do about it





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Horizon Scanning

03



CCO's concerns range from economic instability, ESG issues and cultivating talent



Economic Instability

*"War and economic stability, **energy prices**, global food supply."*

*"**Inflation**, increased level of volatility, recession, supply disruption, war in Europe."*

*"**Managing budgets** and people in a recession, ability to measure and show commercial impact of communications."*



Political/ESG issues

*"Increasingly **complex political environment** and government intervention."*

*"**Sustainability, ESG & Stakeholder Capitalism**, Energy efficiency, Corporate Culture."*

*"How can you operate in communications and not be **fluent in sustainability**?"*

*"**How do you react in a world where there is outrage all the time?**"*



Employment

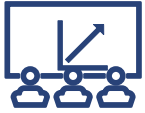
*"**EDI issues**, especially anti-racism and anti-ableism."*

*"Internally, related to talent and **being able to cultivate internal talent in this moment where there is a lot of competition.**"*

*"**We aren't creating leaders at the next level down** from the CCO that will navigate the opportunity for an expanded CCO role and added value."*

Q. What is uppermost among your concerns/issues?
Base: Chief Communications Officers who commented (n=25)

The changing role of the CCO and what to do about it



Increased pressure to act

“Clients are increasingly pushing the industry to practice more of what they espouse and scrutinizing where some fall short and may contradict what they ask of others.”

*“People are going to be **judged on actions not words** – you’ll win by driving to action; No play book rule book for what we are experiencing – it’s all about judgement, about principles, plus better listening.”*



Political/ESG issues

*“I see some challenging times globally and a **shifting geopolitical landscape**; in some ways that creates a more important role for **communicators** in demonstrating the value of industry and businesses for societal good.”*

*“Increased focus on **sustainability and climate change. Geopolitical shifts** – parochial politics Ukraine conflict, ESG blowback – the role of companies / CEOs in public discourse.”*

*“**Constant crisis communications** due to global outlook.”*



Economic Instability

*““**Recession, risk of stagflation, no clear solution on Russia/Ukraine war**, continued volatility, re-localization, accelerating disruption from climate change, new “social contract” expectations from employees.”*



Change role of leadership/employment

*“I believe the **CCO role can play an earlier and pre-emptive part in org structure and design that could prevent some of the big culture issues seen during the pandemic.**”*

*“Increased **pressure on CEOs to be more empathetic in their leadership.**”*



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Metrics and Insights

04





By what measure do you define the success of your function? Has this changed in recent years? If so, how and why?



Success of the
organisation



Brand
Recognition/
Reputation
Surveys



Stakeholder
Engagement



Most common ways to define success is through stakeholder engagement, brand awareness and social media engagement



Success of the organisation

*“I have always placed more **emphasis on the success of the organization**. We are part of larger team working together to generate improvement in KPIs and financial measures. Get the right people with the passion and skills that match up with the larger strategic picture and success should follow.”*

*“**Progress on ESG/sustainability targets**. Focus on ESG related outcomes getting increasingly more attention.”*

*“**Top-line growth, operating profit, sustainability commitment achievements**, commercial freedoms (regulatory), health of culture, investment in next gen talent.”*

Q. By what measure do you define the success of your function? Has this changed in recent years? If so, how and why?

Base: Chief Communications Officers who commented (n=25)

The changing role of the CCO and what to do about it

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Brand recognition/reputation surveys

*“At the function overall, we have clear metrics – **brand reputation, we measure awareness of purpose and people’s involvement in purpose.**”*

*“Externally: traditional and **social media monitoring and measurement.** We also are responsible for the **company’s reputation measurement and tracking.**”*

*“**Reputation tracking, trust measurement and communications business outcomes.** These areas have become increasingly important and communications is now required to address them.”*

Q. By what measure do you define the success of your function? Has this changed in recent years? If so, how and why?

Base: Chief Communications Officers who commented (n=25)

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Stakeholder Engagement

“So many things affect the public mood we moved to define success as our ability to target the right audience, engage them and convert them to seek more information or supportive action. Tailoring content for regular conversations with the right audiences, we now measure our success into how we engage with those different audiences.”

“I’ve always looked at community and stakeholder engagement as the primary measure of success - it’s the data points that have changed.”

*“In more specific terms, **employee and stakeholder engagement**, including support for sales and reputation metrics. The greatest change has been the desire from the communications world to be **more metrics driven** in our reporting.”*

Q. By what measure do you define the success of your function? Has this changed in recent years? If so, how and why?

Base: Chief Communications Officers who commented (n=25)

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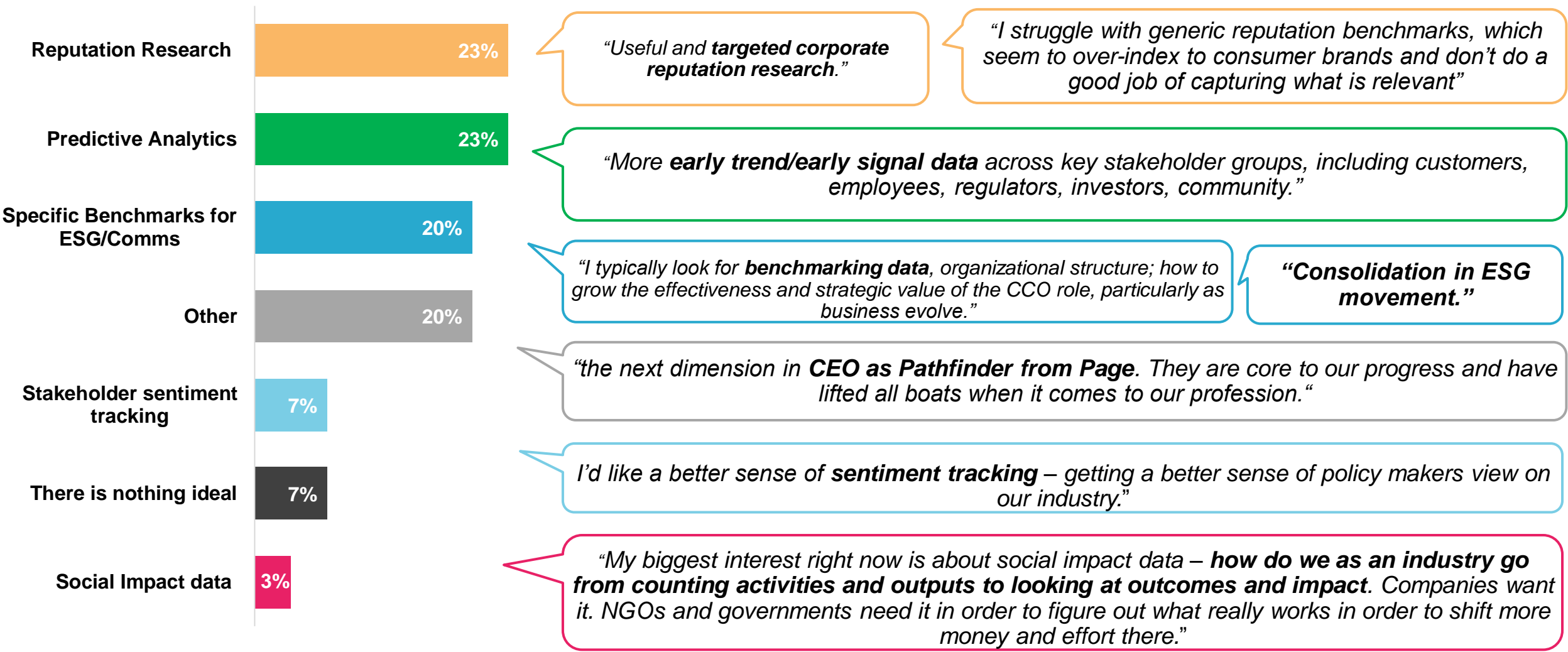
Stakeholder feedback, perception studies, and reputation tracking seen as the most useful research for CCOs



Q. What is the most useful research or data point (whether commissioned by you or colleagues) that supports your efforts?
 Base: Chief Communications Officers who commented (n=32)
 The changing role of the CCO and what to do about it



Looking Ahead: in-depth reputation research and predictive analytics lead most desired insights



Q. In an ideal world, what insights/data/benchmarks would you find most useful going forward?

Base: Chief Communications Officers who commented (n=26)





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Thank You

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