

SURVEY REPORT

PEST CONTROL: THE RISK PROCUREMENT KEEPS UNDERRATING

SEPTEMBER 2026



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AND PROCUREMENT MAGAZINE SURVEY 2026

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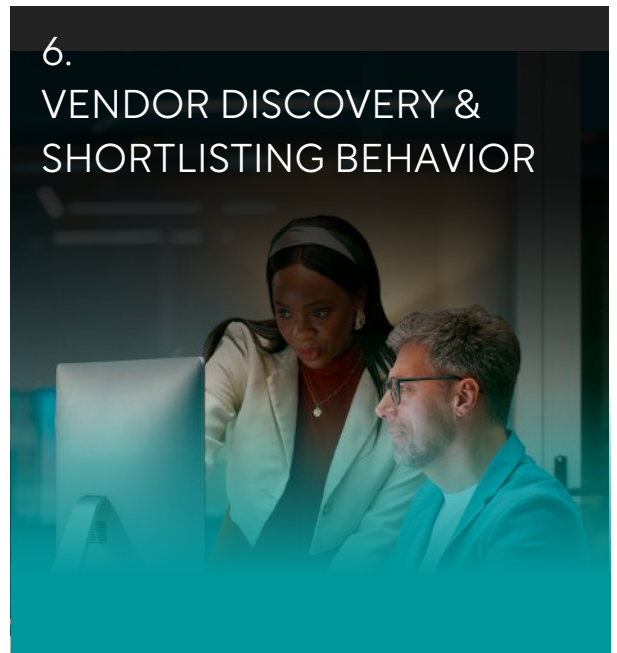
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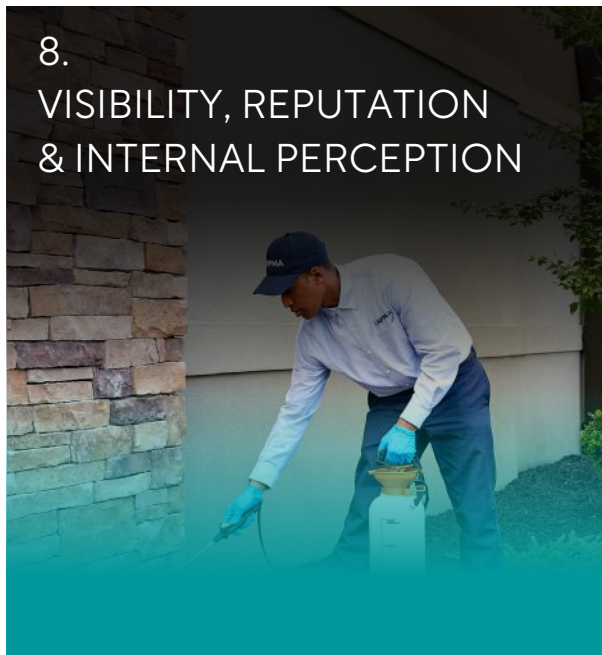
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Aaron McMillan
Senior Editor
Procurement Magazine

EDITORS INTRODUCTION

THE NATIONAL PEST MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION AND PROCUREMENT MAGAZINE SURVEY 2026

PEST CONTROL rarely gets top billing in procurement strategy conversations. It sits below cybersecurity, below supply chain resilience, often below catering and cleaning in the pecking order of facilities spend. Yet a new survey of procurement professionals across manufacturing, retail, food & beverage, healthcare and logistics suggests that ranking doesn't match the risk on the table.

The numbers tell an uncomfortable story. Three in four respondents point to health and safety incidents as the top risk of skipping professional pest control, with regulatory fines, operational disruption and brand damage close behind. Yet only a third say the strategic importance of pest control is fully understood within their organization. The rest describe it as acknowledged but under-prioritized, or treated purely as a compliance cost. Pest control gets treated like a cost until an audit, a complaint or a shutdown forces attention.

That gap between known risk and actual attention is where most procurement categories eventually get caught out, and pest control looks no exception.

What's striking is how many departments now have a hand in the decision. Procurement leads vendor selection in the vast majority of organizations, but facilities management and health & safety are close behind, with operations and sustainability teams increasingly in the room too. That's not necessarily bad news, shared oversight can mean better risk coverage, but it also raises a harder question about ownership: when multiple departments touch a decision, who is actually accountable for the outcome once the contract is signed?

By combining industry expert insight from Dr Jim Fredericks with editorial analysis from myself, drawing from wider procurement and facilities risk trends, this report provides a practical benchmark for organizations looking to modernize their approach to pest control procurement.

NPMA serves as an essential resource for navigating pest control decisions that directly impact operations, compliance and public trust



What this report covers

The research was structured around eight core themes:

GOVERNANCE, OWNERSHIP AND DECISION-MAKING

Who owns pest control internally, and how mature organizations structure accountability across procurement, facilities and health & safety.

STRATEGIC PERCEPTION AND ORGANIZATIONAL VALUE

Whether pest control is understood as a genuine risk safeguard or simply tolerated as a compliance cost.

VENDOR EVALUATION CRITERIA AND PROCUREMENT PRIORITIES

What buyers actually weigh when selecting a partner, and what wins in an RFP.

REVIEW CYCLES, TRIGGERS AND CONTRACT MATURITY

How often contracts are revisited, and what really pushes a re-tender.

MARKET PREFERENCE AND SUPPLIER MODELS

Whether organizations favour national consistency, local responsiveness, or neither.

VENDOR DISCOVERY AND SHORTLISTING BEHAVIOR

How buyers build their shortlist, from referrals to formal RFP processes.

VALUE-ADDED SERVICES AND FUTURE EXPECTATIONS

Where vendors can differentiate as buyers look for partners, not just call-outs.

VISIBILITY, REPUTATION AND INTERNAL PERCEPTION

How pest control is perceived internally and externally, and where it becomes a reputational issue rather than a routine one.

MEET THE EXPERT



Dr. Jim Fredericks
Sr. Vice President,
Public Affairs
NPMA

Dr. Jim Fredericks serves as Senior Vice President of Public Affairs for the National Pest Management Association (NPMA), where he leverages his expertise as a Board Certified Entomologist to educate the public about pest-related health and safety issues. With a Ph.D. in entomology, Dr. Fredericks has become a trusted media spokesperson, regularly featured in outlets including USA Today, TODAY, Martha Stewart, Prevention, and AccuWeather, where he provides expert insights on everything from bed bugs and termites to emerging pest threats and ticks. His work bridges the gap between scientific knowledge and consumer awareness, advocating for professional pest control solutions in both residential and commercial settings.

“When that ownership is fuzzy, pest control drifts into a reactive cycle



ABOUT THE NPMA

The National Pest Management Association (NPMA) is a non-profit trade organization with more than 4,000 member companies from around the world, established in 1933 to support the pest management industry's commitment to the protection of public health, food and property. Headquartered in Fairfax, VA, NPMA serves as the leading authority in the pest management industry by providing continuing education for pest management professionals, public policy advocacy at the federal and state level and timely, research-backed resources for businesses and consumers alike. Its professional staff addresses the technical, governmental, educational and business needs of its members, helping pest management companies operate as knowledgeable, compliant and high-performing service providers.

For commercial facilities, NPMA serves as an essential resource for navigating pest control decisions that directly impact operations, compliance and public trust. The association equips procurement and facilities professionals with access to integrated pest

management (IPM) guidance, regulatory intelligence and sector-specific prevention strategies that support sound, defensible vendor selection. NPMA's robust library of technical resources, pest identification tools and safety standards helps commercial buyers make informed decisions and hold service providers to a higher standard.

Central to NPMA's mission is a commitment to advancing the industry through data and research. NPMA regularly conducts and publishes market research, including surveys of commercial decision-makers across sectors, to develop better tools, communications and resources that address the real-world needs of those who purchase and manage pest control services. This ongoing investment in research ensures that NPMA remains not just a voice for the industry but a trusted partner to the businesses that depend on effective pest management to safeguard their people, products and facilities.

[Click here to learn more](#)

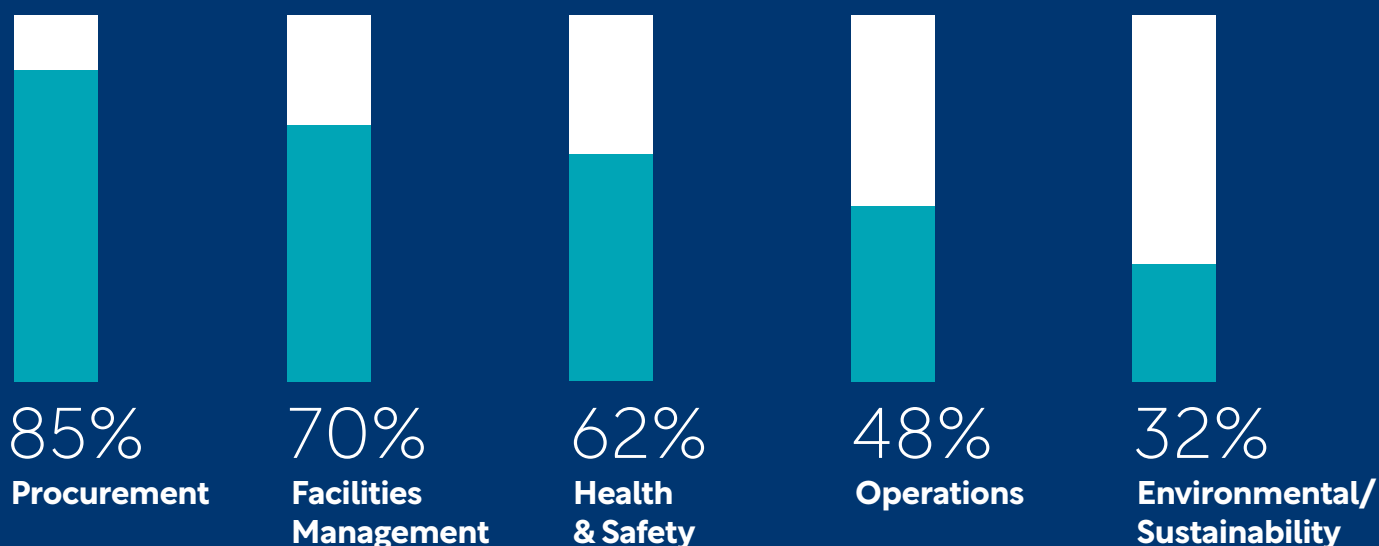


1. Governance, Ownership & Decision-Making

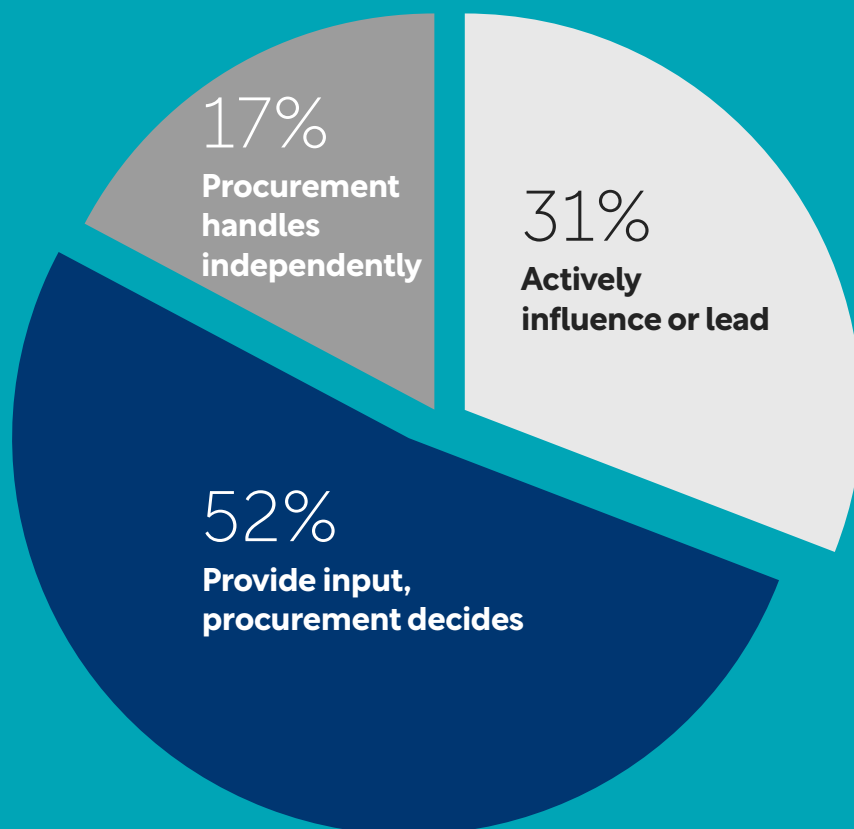
Who owns pest control
and how decisions are made



WHICH DEPARTMENTS ARE TYPICALLY INVOLVED IN THE SELECTION OF PEST CONTROL VENDORS IN YOUR ORGANIZATION?



HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE INVOLVEMENT OF NON-PROCUREMENT DEPARTMENTS IN PEST CONTROL VENDOR SELECTION?



When that ownership is fuzzy, pest control drifts into a reactive cycle



Dr. Jim Fredericks
Sr. Vice President,
Public Affairs
NPMA

Commercial pest control decisions are rarely owned by one person anymore. Procurement is typically involved in vendor selection (85%), but facilities (70%) and health & safety (62%) are deeply engaged too. That mix indicates pest control is increasingly treated as shared risk management, not just a facilities line item. The strongest organizations make ownership clear: one internal leader, often Facilities or EHS, sets program outcomes and holds the vendor accountable, while procurement supports with consistency, pricing discipline and contract structure. When that ownership is fuzzy, pest control drifts into a reactive cycle: the pest control vendor gets called only after there's a sighting, documentation becomes inconsistent and the root causes never get solved.

The more useful question isn't who's in the room, it's who holds the vendor to the outcome once the contract's signed



Aaron McMillan
Senior Editor
Procurement Magazine

The 85/70/62 split across procurement, facilities and health & safety is less a governance model than a governance symptom. Three departments touching the same decision usually means no single owner is accountable when things go wrong, only when they need signing off. For a procurement audience, the more useful question isn't who's in the room, it's who holds the vendor to the outcome once the contract's signed. Until that's named, "shared ownership" is really shared exposure.



2.

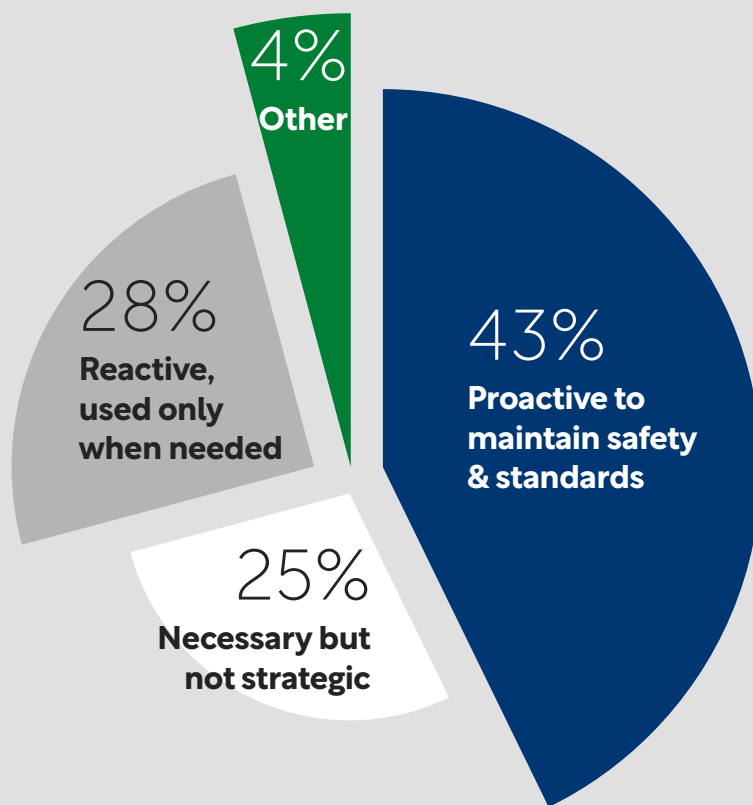
Strategic Perception & Organizational V

Is pest control seen as a cost,
a compliance necessity or a
strategic safeguard?

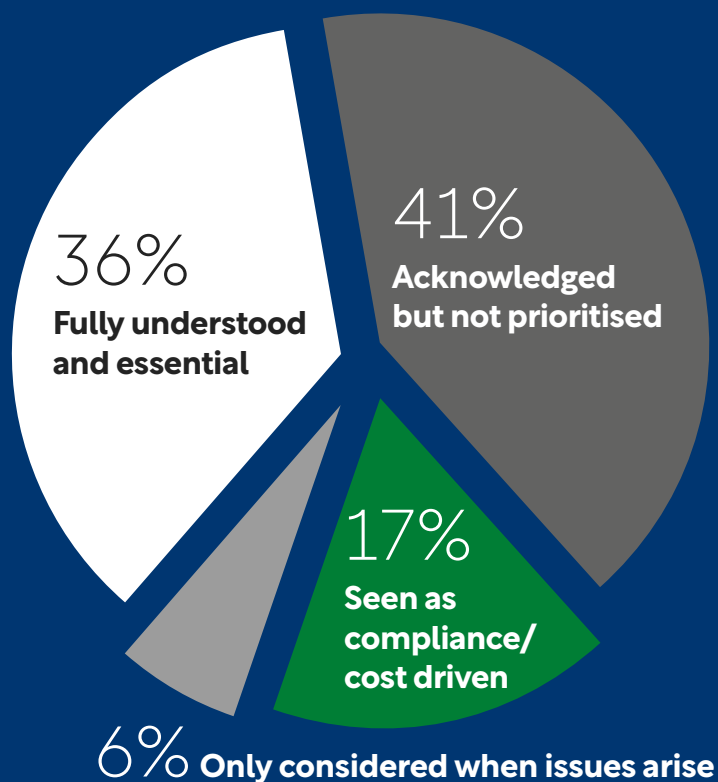


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HOW DO YOU PERCEIVE THE ROLE OF PEST CONTROL SERVICES IN YOUR ORGANIZATION?



IN YOUR VIEW, HOW WELL UNDERSTOOD IS THE STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF PEST CONTROL (E.G. BRAND RISK, HEALTH, OPERATIONS)?

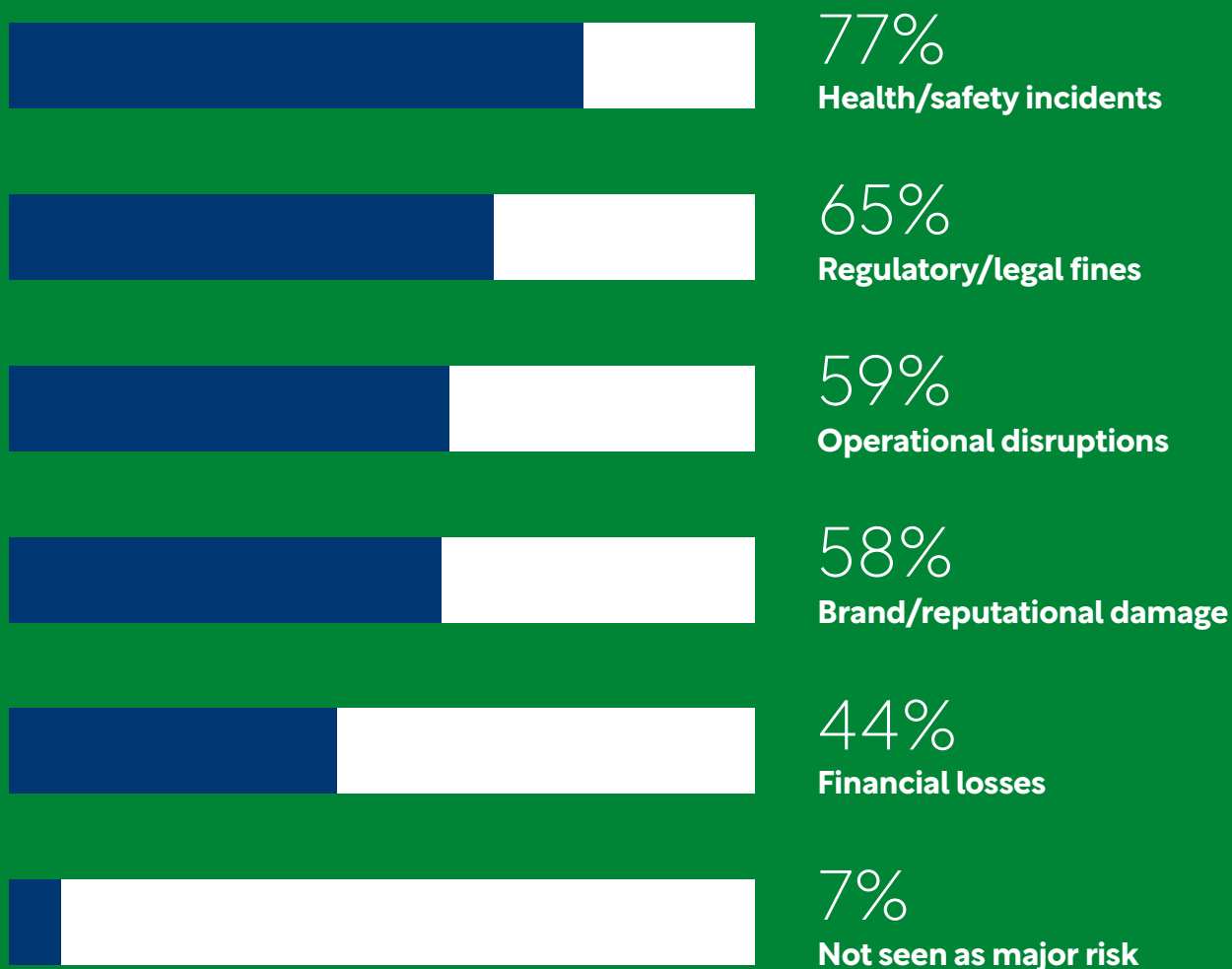




Pest control gets
treated like a cost
until an audit,
a complaint,
or a shutdown
forces attention

Dr. Jim Fredericks
Sr. Vice President, Public Affairs
NPMA

WHAT ARE THE PERCEIVED RISKS OF NOT USING PROFESSIONAL PEST CONTROL SERVICES?



KEY TAKEAWAY

Pest control gets treated like a cost until an audit, a complaint or a shutdown forces attention. Mature organizations flip that approach.

“It’s more cost effective and safer to prevent an incident than to react to one



Dr. Jim Fredericks
Sr. Vice President, Public
Affairs
NPMA

What stands out in this survey is the gap between risk reality and day-to-day priority. Only 36% say pest control’s strategic importance is fully understood and essential, while 41% say it’s acknowledged but not prioritized. Yet respondents clearly recognize what’s at stake: 77% point to health and safety incidents, 65% to regulatory/legal fines, and 59% to operational disruption as risks of not using professional pest control. That disconnect is where organizations get exposed. Pest control gets treated like a cost until an audit, a complaint, or a shutdown forces attention. Mature organizations flip that approach: they invest in prevention, documentation and corrective actions because it’s more cost effective and safer to prevent an incident than to react to one.

“Pest control’s problem isn’t visibility, it’s sequencing: it gets funded after the fact, not ahead of it



Aaron McMillan
Senior Editor
Procurement Magazine

The gap Fredericks flags – 77% naming health and safety risk, only 36% saying the strategic case is fully understood – is the classic procurement blind spot: risk is well documented on paper, poorly priced in practice. It’s the same pattern seen in cybersecurity and supply chain resilience spend, where budget follows incidents rather than probability. Pest control’s problem isn’t visibility, it’s sequencing: it gets funded after the fact, not ahead of it.



3. Vendor Evaluation Criteria & Procurement Priorities

What really matters when
selecting a pest control partner



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WHEN EVALUATING PEST CONTROL VENDORS, WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING ARE MOST IMPORTANT TO YOUR PROCUREMENT TEAM??

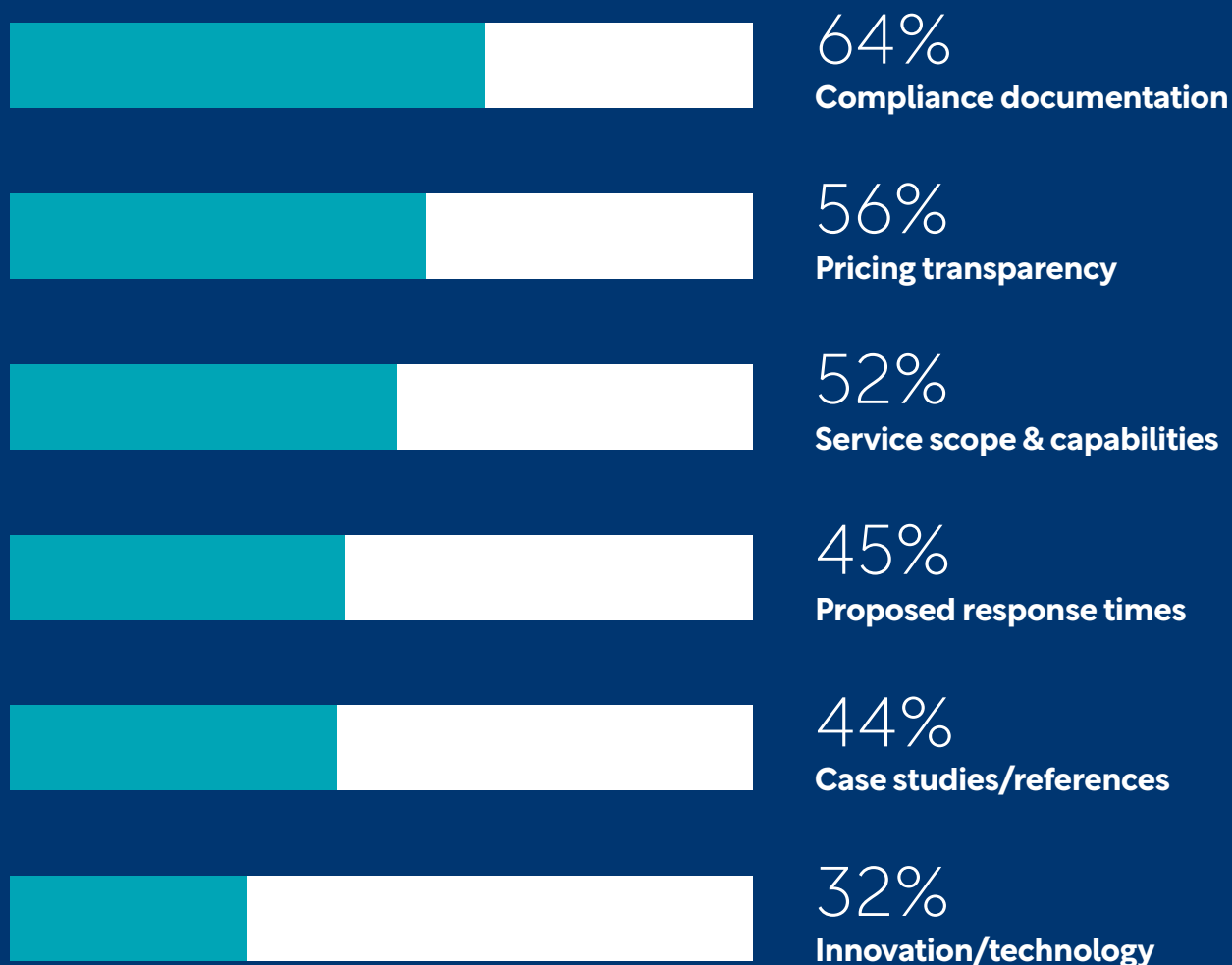




“Businesses aren’t just buying pest control, they’re buying confidence that the program will hold up under pressure

Dr. Jim Fredericks
Sr. Vice President, Public Affairs
NPMA

WHAT ARE THE MOST CRITICAL ELEMENTS IN A PEST CONTROL VENDOR'S RFP SUBMISSION?



KEY TAKEAWAY

Vendors that win consistently are the ones who spell out response commitments, show sample reporting, and make pricing easy to understand

RFP submissions need to be audit-ready and easy to defend internally



Dr. Jim Fredericks
Sr. Vice President,
Public Affairs
NPMA

The results show buyers are looking for proof, not promises. Procurement teams rank compliance and certifications (68%) and a proven track record (61%) above cost (56%), with response time and availability (49%) also near the top. In other words, businesses aren't just buying pest control, they're buying confidence that the program will hold up under pressure. That's why RFP submissions need to be audit-ready and easy to defend internally: compliance documentation (64%), pricing transparency (56%), and service scope and capabilities (52%) lead the list, followed by response times (45%) and references (44%). Vendors that win consistently are the ones who spell out response commitments, show sample reporting and make pricing easy to understand so the decision makers can justify the decision to safety, operations, and procurement in the same breath.

Buyers aren't just stating priorities, they're testing them on paper



Aaron McMillan
Senior Editor
Procurement Magazine

Compliance and track record beating cost outright (68% and 61% versus 56%) is a useful data point to put in front of finance stakeholders who assume pest control is a commodity spend. It isn't behaving like one. What's notable is how closely the RFP criteria mirror the evaluation criteria, buyers aren't just stating priorities, they're testing them on paper. That consistency is rarer in facilities categories than people assume.

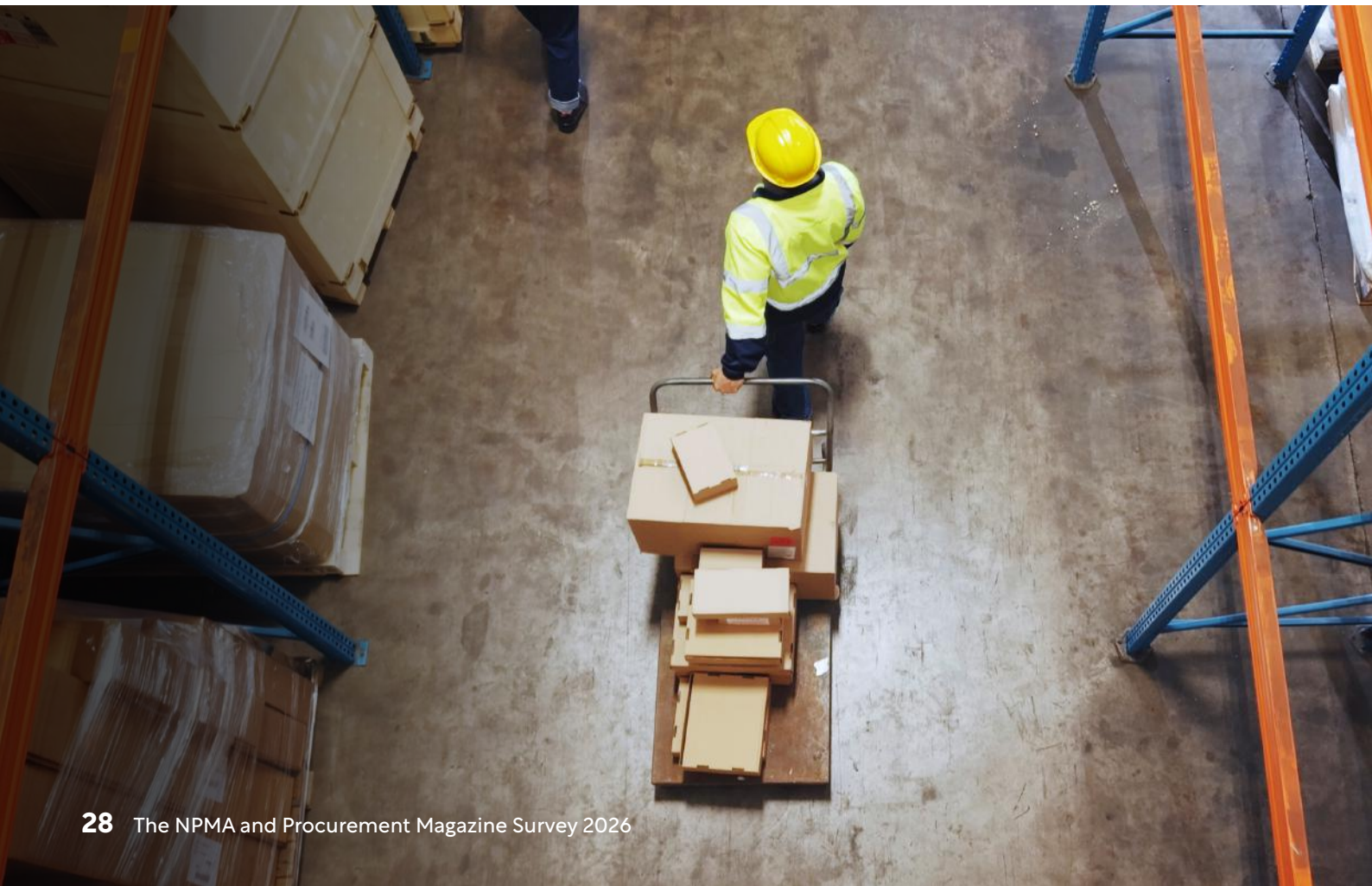
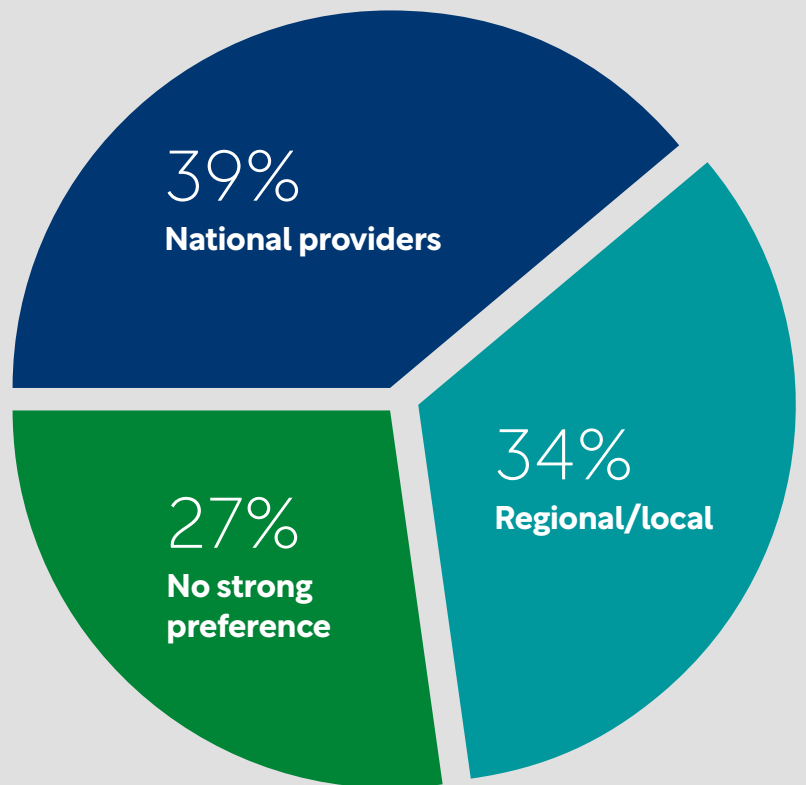


4. Market Preference & Supplier Models

National scale vs local expertise



DOES YOUR TEAM
PREFER WORKING
WITH NATIONAL
PROVIDERS OR
REGIONAL/LOCAL
PEST CONTROL
COMPANIES?





Dr. Jim Fredericks
Sr. Vice President,
Public Affairs
NPMA

Buyers are weighing consistency against responsiveness

The market isn't leaning hard in one direction – 39% prefer national providers, 34% prefer regional/local, and 27% have no strong preference. That tells me buyers are weighing consistency against responsiveness, and many are open to either model if execution is strong. National providers tend to win when they can show standardization across sites, while local providers win when they prove speed, stability of the service team and strong relationships. The deciding factor is rarely the logo or brand recognition; it's whether the vendor can deliver reliable outcomes and clear documentation, week after week.



Aaron McMillan
Senior Editor
Procurement Magazine

“No strong preference” isn't indecision, it's a signal that vendor performance is doing more work in the decision than vendor type

A near-even three-way split (39/34/27) tells you this category hasn't consolidated around a dominant model, which is unusual this far into a service's maturity curve. Worth noting for readers benchmarking their own sourcing strategy: “no strong preference” at 27% isn't indecision, it's a signal that vendor performance is doing more work in the decision than vendor type.

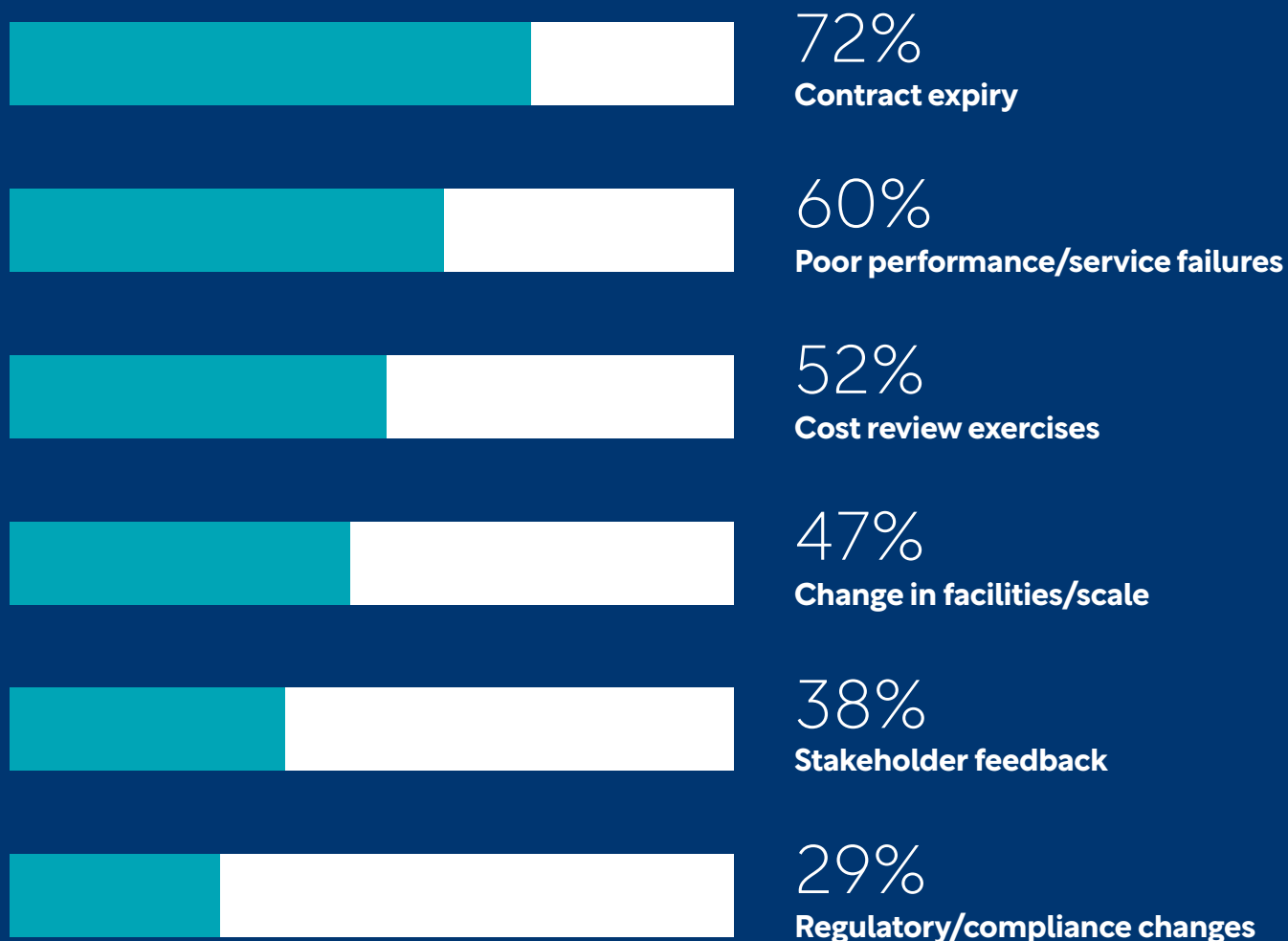


5. Review Cycles, Triggers & Contract Maturity

How often pest control decisions are revisited – and why



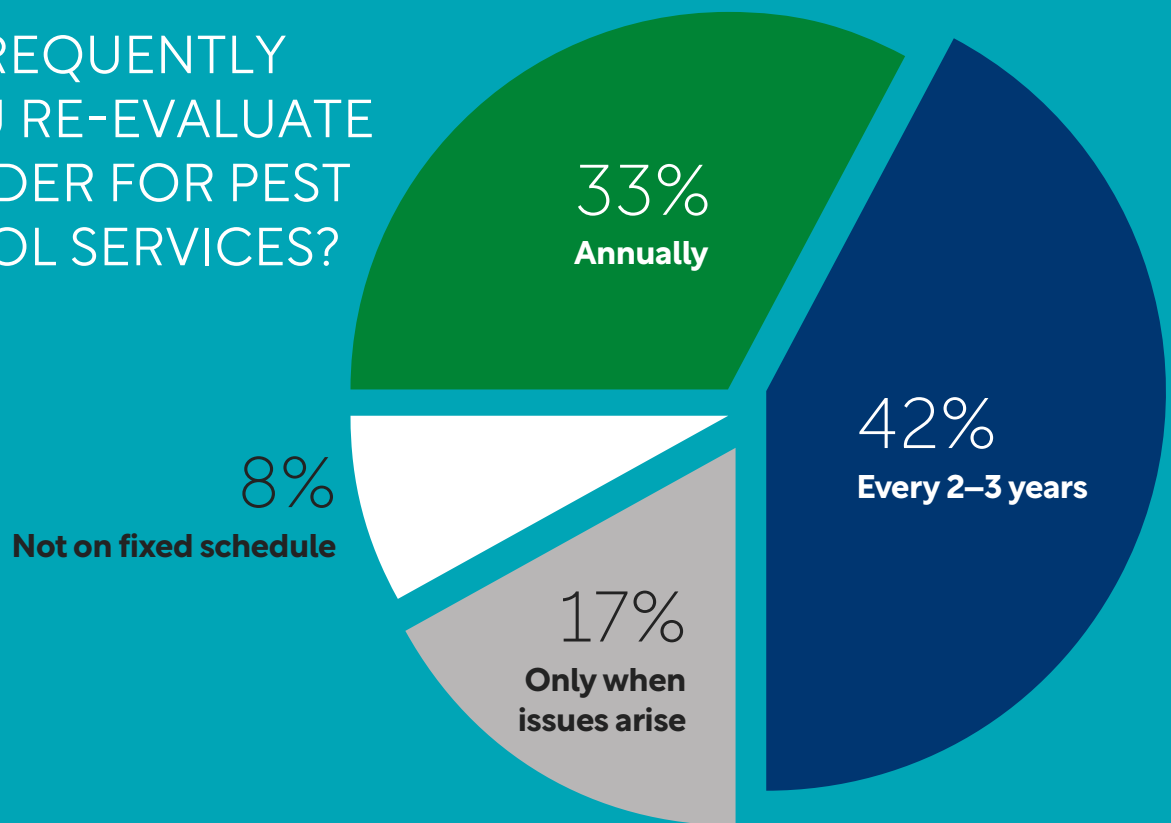
WHAT TYPICALLY PROMPTS A RE-EVALUATION OR REVIEW OF PEST CONTROL VENDORS?



KEY TAKEAWAY

You don't lose accounts only at renewal time; you lose them when service slips and the customer starts building a case to shop around

HOW FREQUENTLY DO YOU RE-EVALUATE OR TENDER FOR PEST CONTROL SERVICES?



Dr. Jim Fredericks
Sr. Vice President,
Public Affairs
NPMA

The survey shows pest control decisions are revisited on a predictable schedule for many organizations. 42% re-evaluate every 2–3 years and 33% do so annually. However, the triggers reveal where programs break down. Contract expiry (72%) is the biggest driver, but poor performance (60%) and cost reviews (52%) are right behind it. That's a clear warning to

service providers: you don't lose accounts only at renewal time; you lose them when service slips and the customer starts building a case to shop around. Strong providers treat account management like ongoing renewal work: they document performance, run periodic reviews and address root causes before the customer feels forced to re-tender.



6. Vendor Discovery & Shortlisting Behaviour

How organisations enter the market



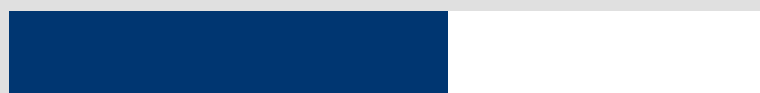
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HOW DO YOU TYPICALLY FIND OR SHORTLIST PEST CONTROL VENDORS?



62%

Industry recommendations/referrals



58%

Online research



51%

Past relationships



49%

Formal RFP process



46%

Facilities/operations input

KEY TAKEAWAY

If your website can't quickly show certifications, vertical experience, response standards and reporting quality, you'll get filtered out before you ever get a chance to compete

“This information tells pest management firms exactly what to invest in



Dr. Jim Fredericks
Sr. Vice President,
Public Affairs
NPMA

Commercial buyers are building shortlists through both trust and search. Industry recommendations and referrals (62%) still matter most, but online research (58%) is nearly as important, and formal RFP processes (49%) remain a major path to selection. That combination tells pest management firms exactly what to invest in: you need the reputation that earns referrals, but you also need a digital presence and proposal materials that prove you're credible. If your website can't quickly show certifications, vertical experience, response standards, and reporting quality, you'll get filtered out before you ever get a chance to compete.

“Reputation has to travel by word of mouth and hold up under a five-minute website audit



Aaron McMillan
Senior Editor
Procurement Magazine

Referrals still edging out online research (62% versus 58%) is a reminder that pest control remains a trust-led category even as digital discovery closes the gap. For vendors, that's a two-front requirement: reputation has to travel by word of mouth and hold up under a five-minute website audit. Buyers doing both in parallel is a maturity signal worth flagging to readers.



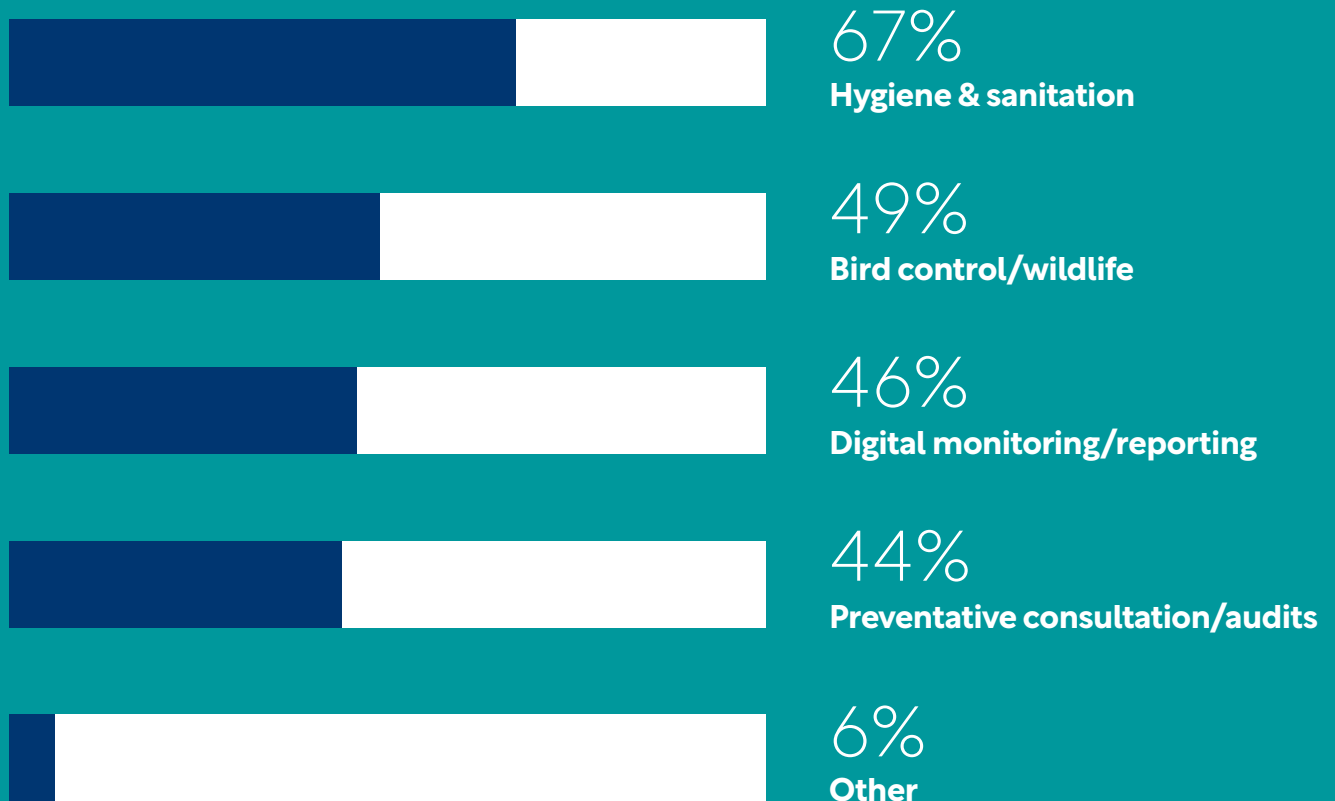
7.

Value-Added Services & Future Expectations

Beyond pest control:
what buyers want next



BEYOND CORE PEST CONTROL, WHICH ADDITIONAL SERVICES WOULD ADD VALUE IN A VENDOR OFFERING?



KEY TAKEAWAY

Customers want pest control vendors to help prevent problems upstream – with reporting useful enough that it helps the customer manage risk, not just file paperwork

Firms can stand out by packaging additional services into clear program tiers



Dr. Jim Fredericks
Sr. Vice President,
Public Affairs
NPMA

The value-add services buyers want most point to a bigger shift in expectations. Hygiene and sanitation support (67%) leads the list, followed by bird control/wildlife (49%), digital monitoring/reporting (46%), and preventative consultation/audits (44%). That's a signal that customers want pest control vendors to help prevent problems upstream through sanitation alignment, exclusion recommendations and early detection, rather than just respond after pests are already inside. In a crowded marketplace, firms can stand out by packaging these services into clear program tiers and making reporting useful enough that it helps the customer manage risk, not just file paperwork.

CPOs want fewer, broader vendor relationships, not more narrow ones



Aaron McMillan
Senior Editor
Procurement Magazine

Hygiene and sanitation leading demand at 67% shows buyers are pulling pest control into a wider facilities risk conversation rather than keeping it siloed. It's consistent with a theme running through several other surveys we've covered this year: procurement wants fewer, broader vendor relationships, not more narrow ones. Bundled service tiers aren't a nice-to-have here, they're becoming the expectation.



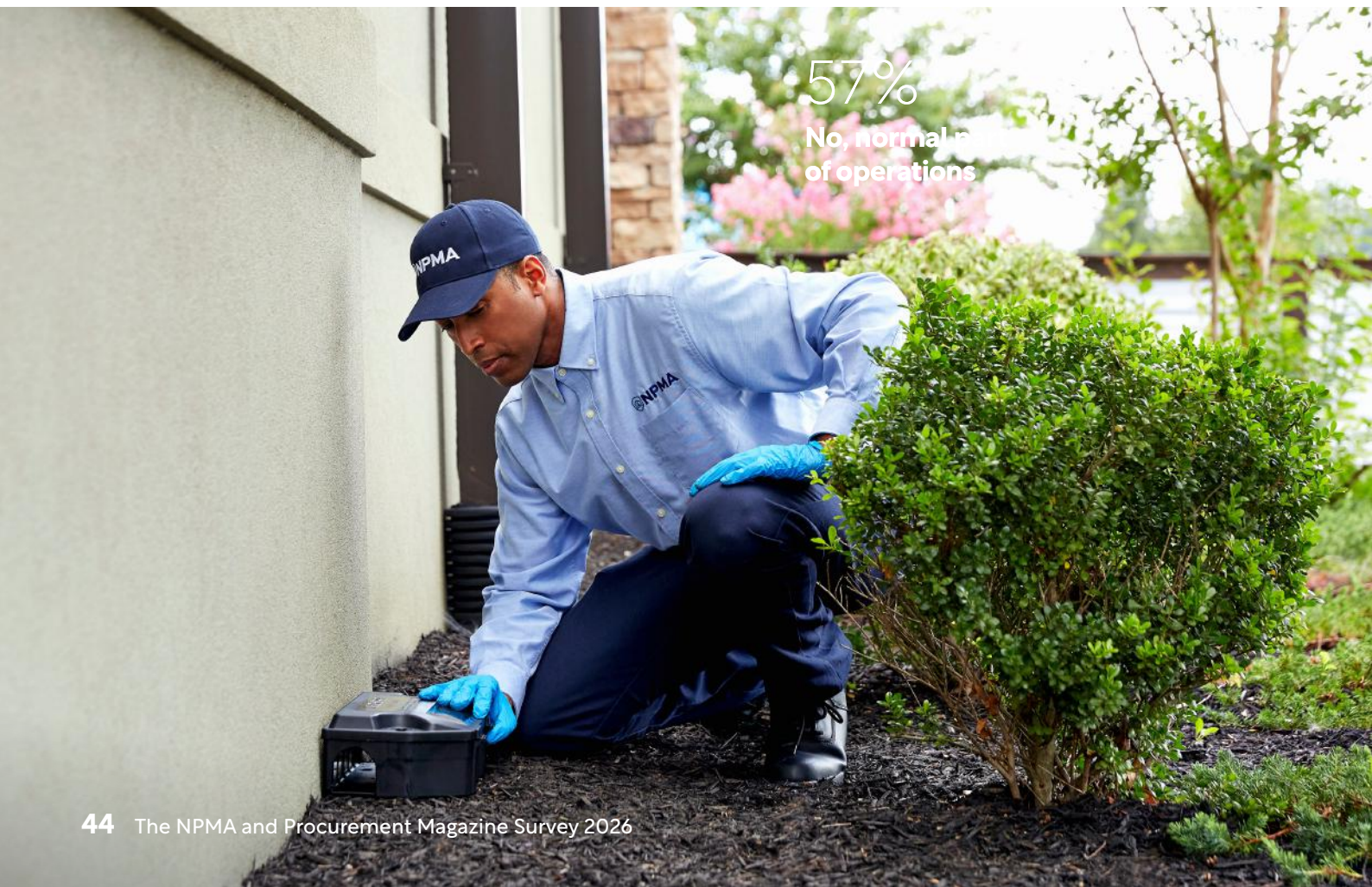
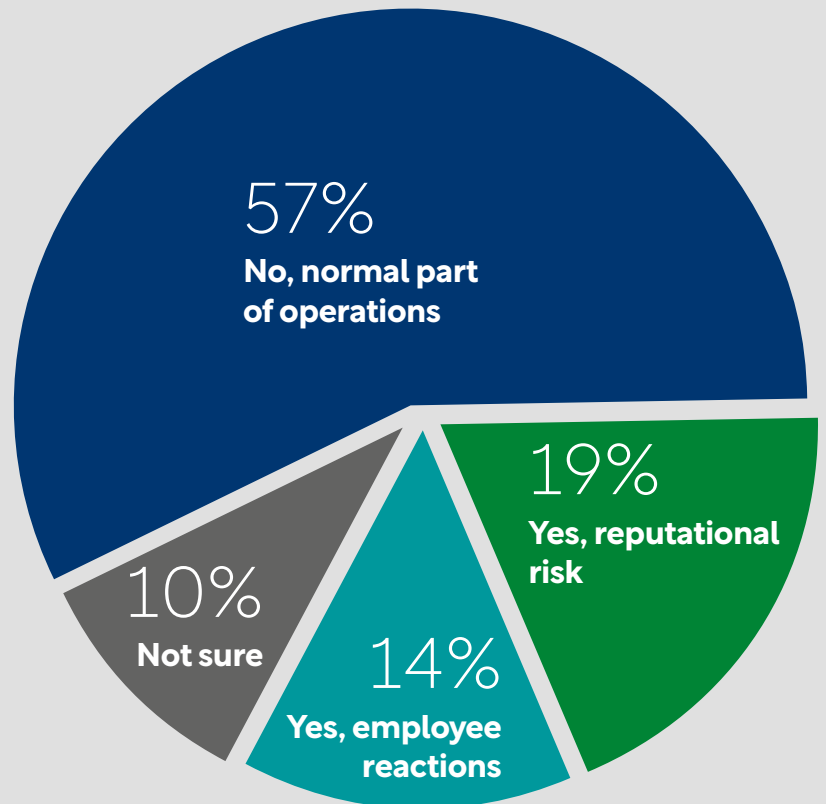
8. Visibility, Reputation & Internal Perception

Managing optics, not just outcomes



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ARE THERE ANY CONCERNS ABOUT HOW THE PUBLIC OR INTERNAL TEAMS MIGHT PERCEIVE THE PRESENCE OR VISIBILITY OF PEST CONTROL SERVICES ON-SITE?



This is important to understand, especially in customer-facing settings where optics matter



Dr. Jim Fredericks
Sr. Vice President,
Public Affairs
NPMA

Most respondents say pest control is simply a normal part of operations (57%), but it would be a mistake to ignore the rest: 19% are concerned about reputational risk and 14% worry about employee reactions. That's especially true in customer-facing settings where optics matter. The right approach is balance: discretion where needed, but never secrecy. Professional pest management should look planned and controlled: clear communication, clean and professional onsite conduct and reporting that explains what's being done and why. When stakeholders understand the program, the presence of pest control becomes reassuring rather than alarming.

The 19% citing reputational risk shouldn't be filed away as a minority concern



Aaron McMillan
Senior Editor
Procurement Magazine

The headline number is reassuring, 57% call it a normal part of operations, but the 19% citing reputational risk shouldn't be filed away as a minority concern. In customer-facing sectors like retail and food & beverage, that's a live commercial issue, not a footnote. Worth pulling out as a sector-specific angle if this runs as a feature rather than a straight results piece.

