



2022 Facility Cleaning Management Study

FACILITY CLEANING
DECISIONS™

Results of a study conducted by *Facility Cleaning Decisions* magazine • July 2022



Methodology

This research report provides insights into how facility cleaning managers are strategizing, forecasting and adjusting cleaning practices as they transition to a post-pandemic society.

Sample

The survey audience was drawn from subscribers to *Facility Cleaning Decisions* magazine (facility cleaning managers in nonresidential buildings). The sample consisted of the following organizations: Educational, Government, Commercial Office, Medical/Healthcare, Retail, and Hospitality.

Survey

The survey was sent out via e-mail to 16,500 subscribers on April 19, 2022. Follow-up survey reminders were e-mailed to non-respondents on April 26, April 29, May 3 and May 6. A total of 984 chose to opt-out.

Response

The survey closed for responses on May 11, 2022. A total of 317 questionnaires were returned by the deadline.

Statistical confidence

The overall estimated margin of error for this study is ± 5.48 percent at the 95 percent confidence level.

2022 Facility Cleaning Management Study

By Jackson Silvanik, Managing Editor

In recent years, cleaning departments have faced unprecedented hurdles, relentless challenges and a countless array of scenarios that turned business as usual on its head. At the height of the pandemic, cleaning benefited from a new focus as facilities of all shapes and sizes changed their priorities — emphasizing public health and safety in ways that might have fallen by the wayside in previous years. While recent surveys revealed fascinating trends as new cleaning strategies were deployed, the question remained: would a transition to a more post-pandemic society have much effect on facility cleaning practices?

To that end, the *2022 Facility Cleaning Management Study* promises to provide some new insight into how managers are cautiously entering this new phase of strategizing and forecasting. In a time of transition, what new priorities will be shown to have taken a strong foothold?

Perhaps a lingering effect of the renewed emphasis on keeping things

clean, despite the threat of a longer recession, 90 percent of respondents indicate that their operations are not at risk of downsizing, a more stable number than was reported in 2021. Meanwhile, facility managers have also employed several strategies to keep outsourcing at bay, giving almost equal weight to improving cleaning efficiencies (63 percent), keeping

department costs down (58 percent), increased staff education and training opportunities (52 percent), and finding ways to improve both communication about and proving the effectiveness of their cleaning practices (48 percent).

With departmental integrity in check, this 2022 survey indicates that managers are turning their attention to cleaning priorities, which remain relatively consistent. This indicates that the ways in which the public-at-large has evolved their thinking about cleanliness has had a long-lasting effect on the cleaning strategies of facility managers.

For example, improved hygiene and health saw an uptick of 6 percentage points among respondents, with 56 percent indicating that it's the top priority when they put together a cleaning plan. Preventing cross-contamination holds steady as well, with 49 percent of respondents indicating that it's their biggest priority. Making continued improvements regarding productivity and cleaning times is also still highly valued, though it sits slightly down from 2021 at 38 percent.

As facilities face the unpredictable future of the pandemic and the ever-changing nature of work among large sectors of the workforce, budgetary concerns are certain to remain front-and-center. Undoubtedly the pandemic created opportunities for cleaning departments to work with increased



budgets (emergency funding, relief appropriations, etc.) in order to tackle the unknown and unprecedented situation at hand.

Would these budgets remain in their newly inflated states, or would resources once again be diverted away from cleaning priorities as things attempted to return to a more normal state? Early results indicate that cleaning budgets might be likely to at least linger in their elevated ballpark, with 74 percent of respondents indicating that their budget was safe from reductions, an increase over the 69 percent that indicated as such in 2021.

New this year, respondents were asked about how the pandemic had affected the overall financial setup of their cleaning department. While 35 percent of the respondents indicated that their budgets had initially gone up during the pandemic but were expected to eventually decrease, another 35 percent who saw an increase during COVID-19 predict budgets will remain the same or continue to increase as things progress. Meanwhile, 16 percent indicated that their budgets remained steady during the pandemic, and predict much of the same moving forward. Finally, a fortunate 8 percent of managers believe that their budgets, which remained flat throughout the pandemic, are now expected to rise with the continued prioritization of

public health expectations.

What will prove to be challenging on the budget front is that respondents now believe their spending on staffing will increase considerably in the coming year. This is likely in response to the ongoing difficulties of recruiting reliable workers to fill the vast array of openings across the societal landscape.

Other than staffing, departmental expenditures seem to be largely in line with 2021 results. What consumers value when purchasing products and equipment coincides with years past: 61 percent suggest that product performance and durability are the most important (versus 67 percent last year); but finding the products that cost the least has ticked upwards noticeably — 9 percent suggesting that it's most important against the previous 4 percent. Meanwhile, despite an uptick in green and sustainability conversation, just 3 percent of respondents consider it among the most important factors when selecting products. If the future is going to look more sustainable, it's clear that the products must become more affordable and effective to capture the attention of purchasers.

As hiring practices have been forced to evolve in a post-pandemic society, efforts to attract and retain workers have been stepped up considerably. While in previous surveys,

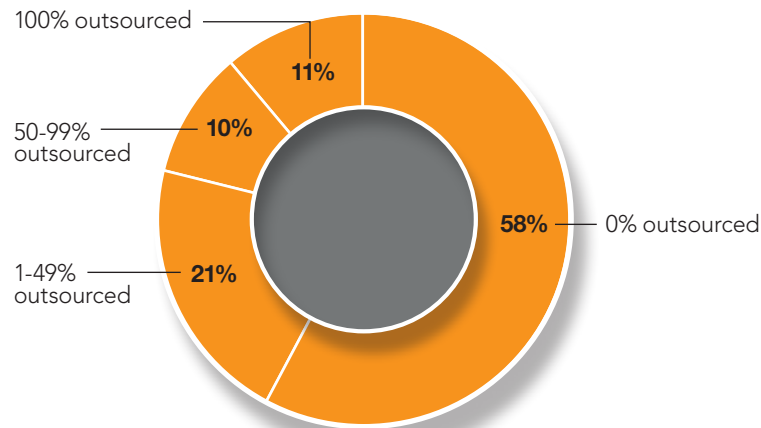
respondents indicated that finding adequate workers was very impactful (48 percent ranked it most important), now almost 60 percent of hiring managers suggest that it's their top priority. Likewise, staff retention came in at 28 percent among top priorities in 2021, and that number has ballooned to 37 percent this year — indicating that finding good workers and keeping them around plays perhaps the biggest role in the successful implementation of strong cleaning operations.

Facilities face numerous challenges aside from just concerns around cleaning budgets, effective products and well-trained staffing — such as adapting to ever-changing work schedules and the new demands of a hybrid workforce. Along with those changes, cleaning managers must also be adaptable, constantly tweaking schedules for the sake of efficiency and cost-effective cleaning practices.

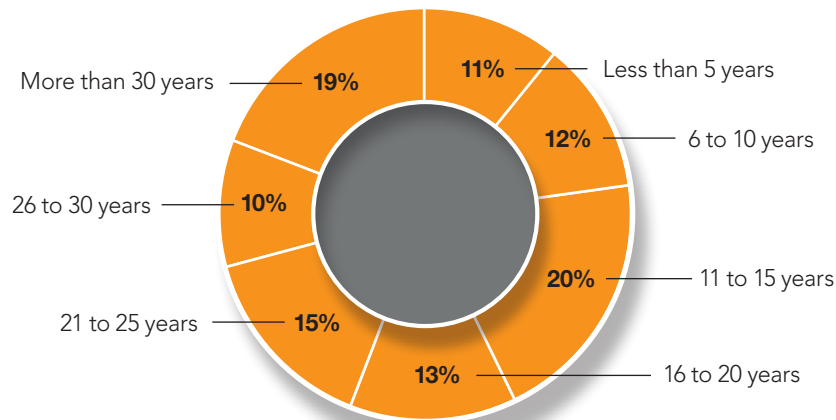
Though the first couple years of COVID-19 threw everything off the rails, the next couple of years may be even rockier when it comes to figuring out the new demands of partially filled facilities and facilities that see more infrequent foot traffic than previous decades. For that reason, this *Facility Cleaning Management Study* may be even more helpful when it comes to identifying trends in years to come. **FCD**

MANAGEMENT PRIORITIES

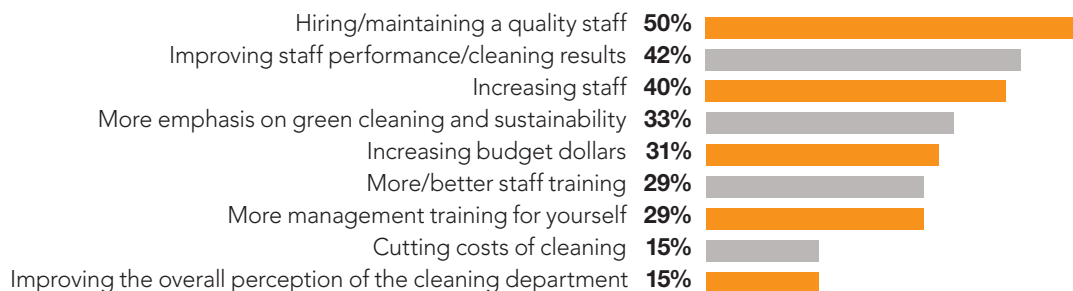
What percentage of your cleaning operations are outsourced?



How many years of experience do you have in facilities/cleaning management?



What management priorities do you plan to emphasize in the next 12 months?



MANAGEMENT PRIORITIES

Facility cleaning managers oversee an average of 19 buildings

Custodial teams are responsible for an average of 1,117,362 square feet of cleanable space

The average department consists of 40 frontline cleaning workers

Do you have a succession plan/program in place for your eventual replacement and/or that of a manager on your staff?

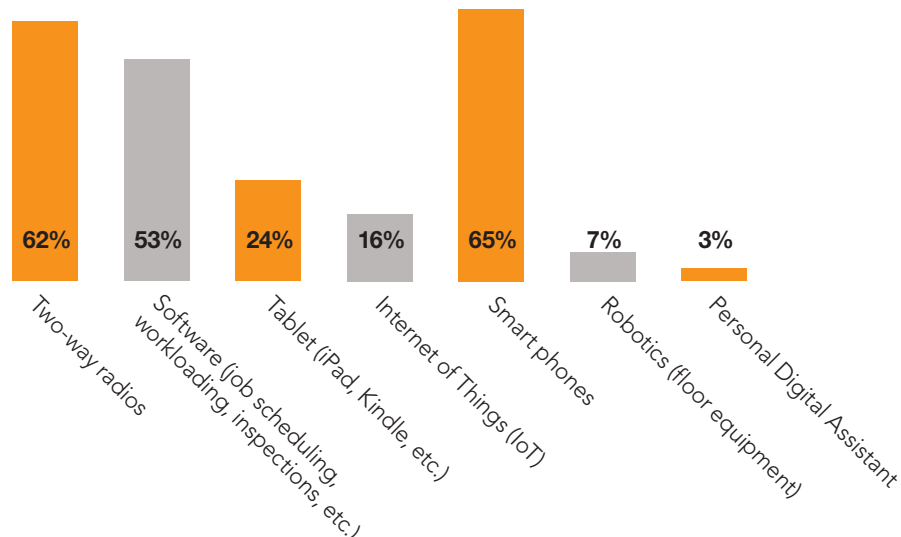


Yes 40%



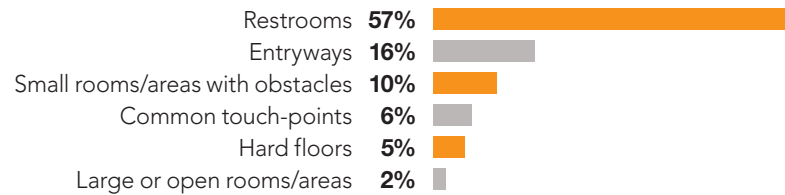
No 60%

What type of technology is used within the cleaning department?



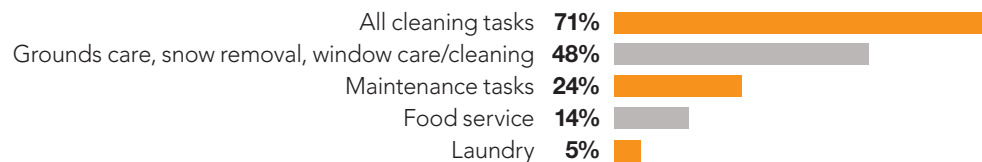
MANAGEMENT PRIORITIES

What areas within the facility are the most challenging to keep clean?

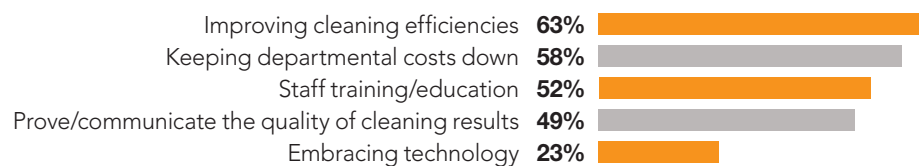


90% of cleaning executives
feel safe from any outsourcing threat

In what areas has your department been threatened by outsourcing?



How have you kept the threat of outsourcing at bay?

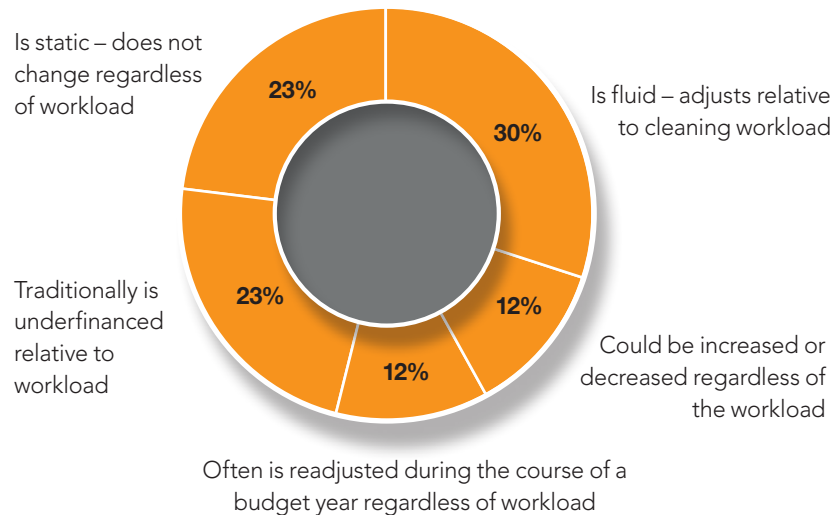


What are the most important cleaning priorities within your facility?



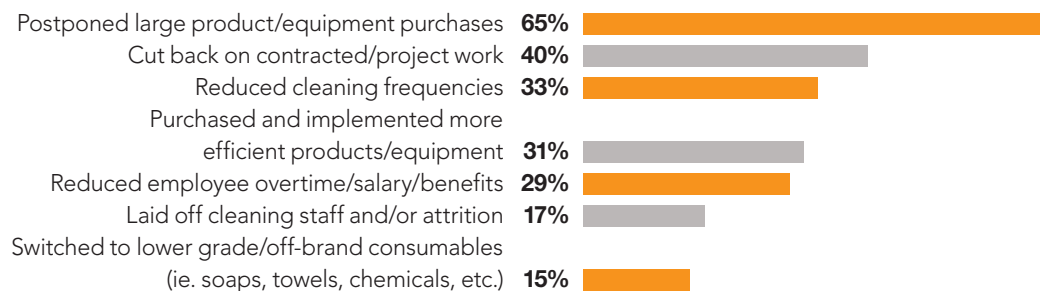
DEPARTMENTAL BUDGETS

Which statement best describes your operations budget?



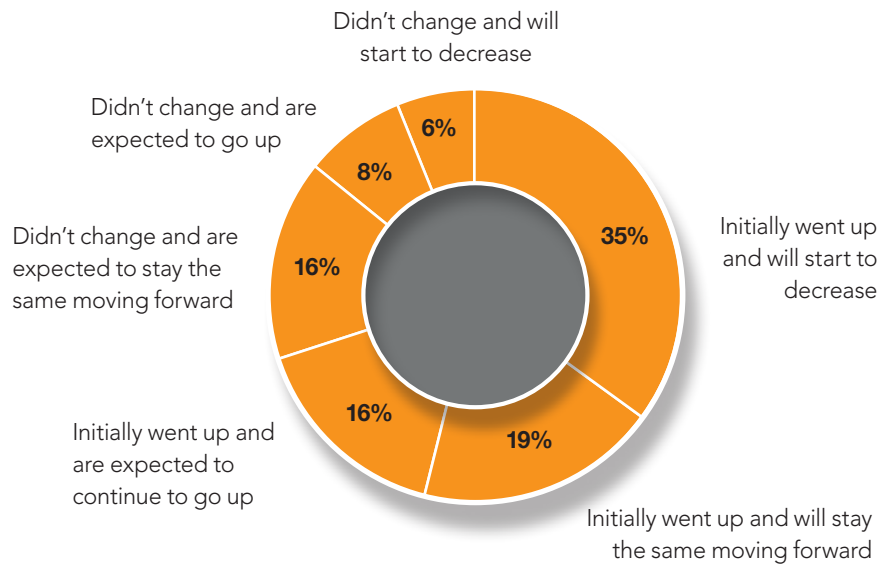
74% of departments were protected
from budget cuts in the last 12 months

What adjustments did you make in your program to comply with the lower budget?

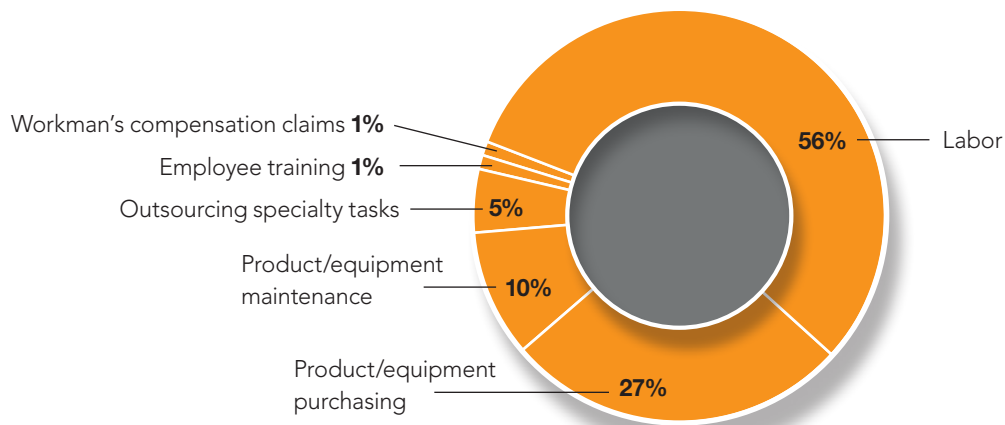


DEPARTMENTAL BUDGETS

In response to the coronavirus pandemic, how did budgets change?



Where do you spend most of your budget dollars?



DEPARTMENTAL BUDGETS

With respect to your department, do you expect the following to increase, decrease or stay the same in the next 12 months?

Staffing levels

▲ 33% ▼ 8% **SAME** 58% **NA** 1%

Departmental budgets

▲ 24% ▼ 17% **SAME** 58% **NA** 1%

Sustainable initiatives

▲ 18% ▼ 2% **SAME** 66% **NA** 14%

Training opportunities

▲ 37% ▼ 6% **SAME** 52% **NA** 5%

Product purchasing

(chemicals, hand tools, soaps, etc.)

▲ 24% ▼ 8% **SAME** 68% **NA** 0%

Equipment purchasing

(floor/carpet machines, vacuums, etc.)

▲ 27% ▼ 14% **SAME** 58% **NA** 1%

Total square footage cleaned

▲ 28% ▼ 2% **SAME** 70% **NA** 0%

Green cleaning/sustainable product usage

▲ 22% ▼ 4% **SAME** 64% **NA** 10%

Threat of outsourcing your cleaning department

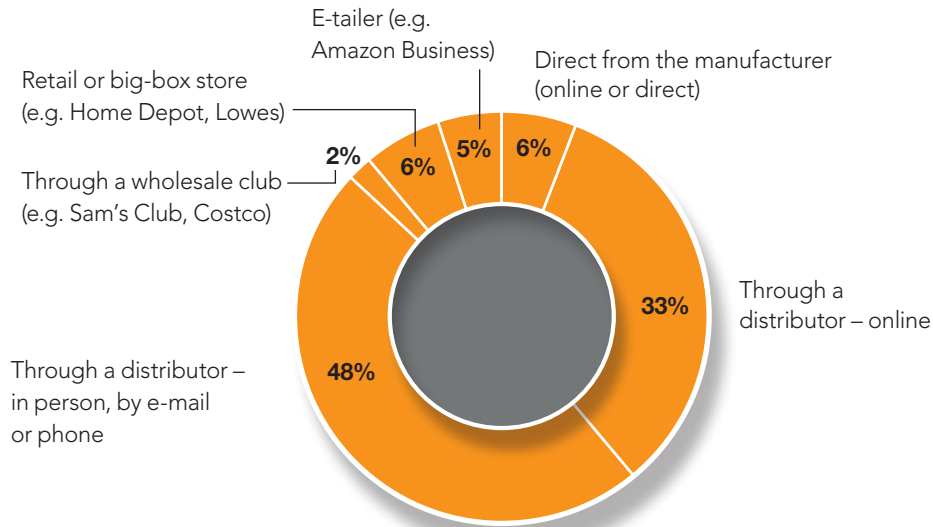
▲ 7% ▼ 7% **SAME** 38% **NA** 48%

Travel to industry events/conferences

▲ 12% ▼ 9% **SAME** 49% **NA** 30%

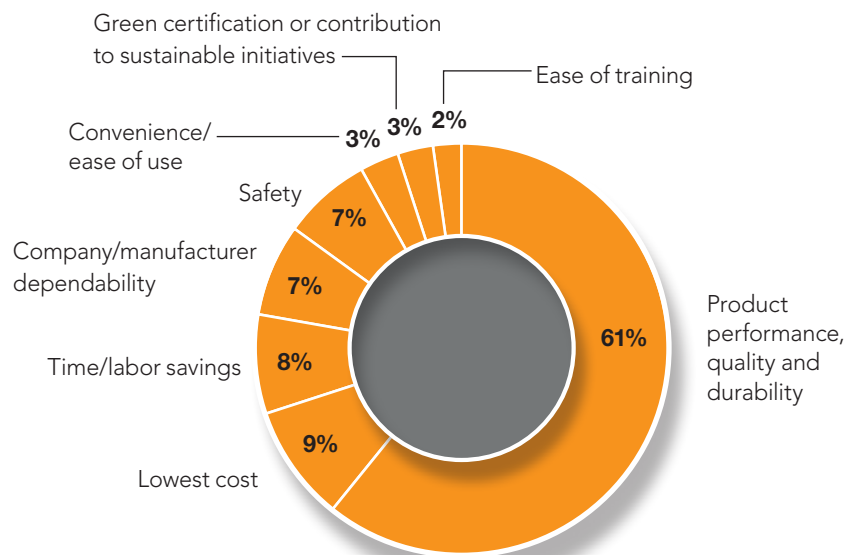
PURCHASING PRIORITIES

What percentage of your cleaning products and equipment are purchased through the following sources?



93% of *Facility Cleaning Decisions* readers are involved in recommending, specifying and/or purchasing cleaning supplies and equipment used in their facility

What is most important to you when purchasing products/equipment?

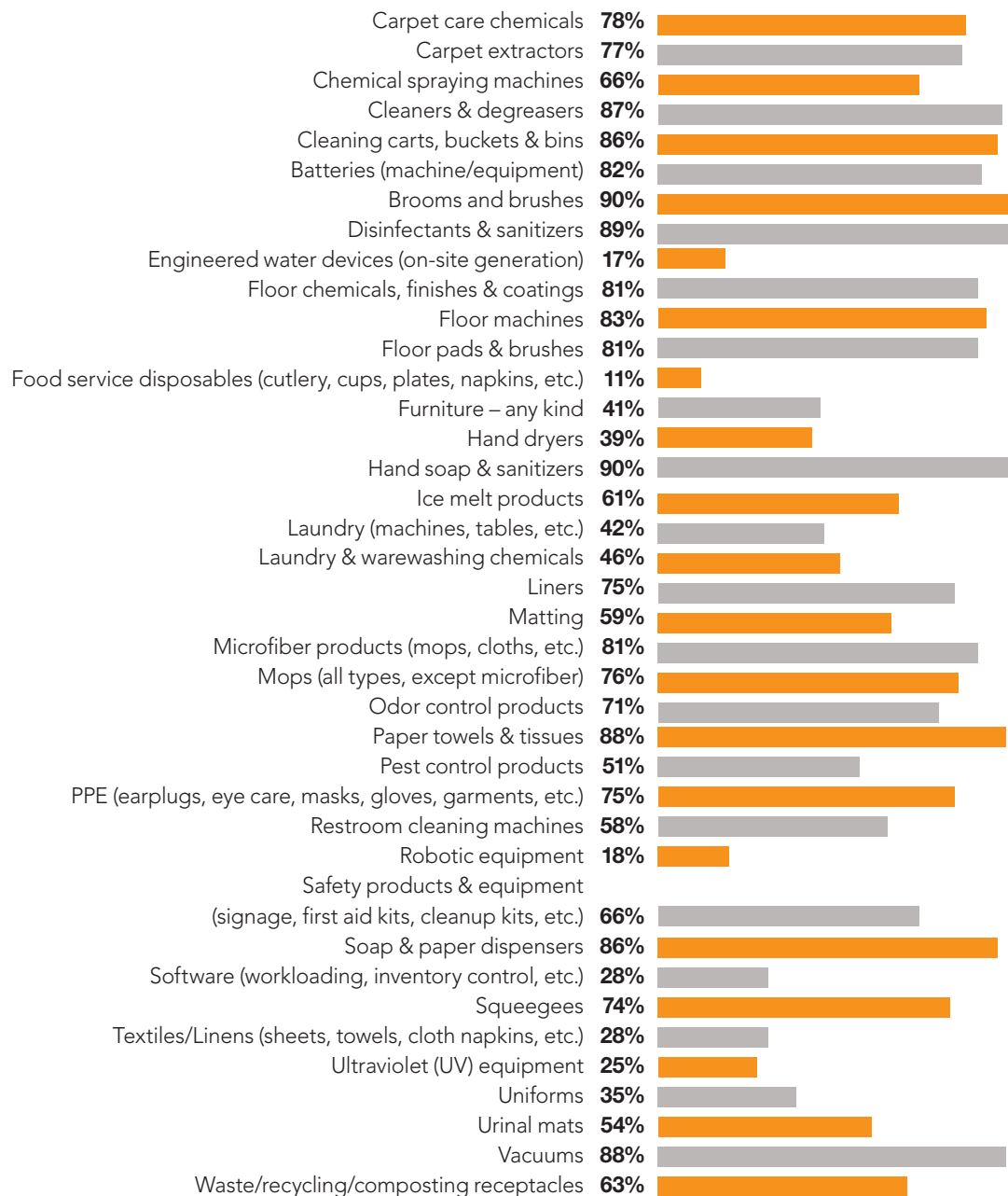


PURCHASING PRIORITIES

What priorities are most important when considering new products for purchase?

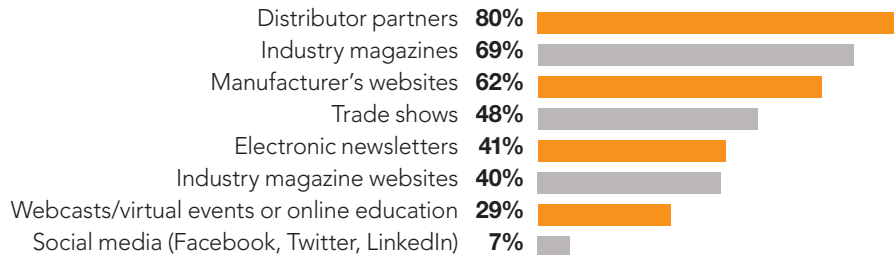


Which of the following products are you responsible for recommending, specifying or purchasing?



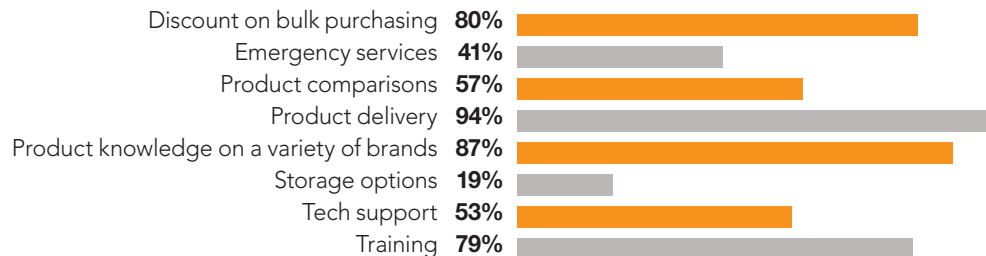
PURCHASING PRIORITIES

What sources do you use to learn about products for potential purchase?

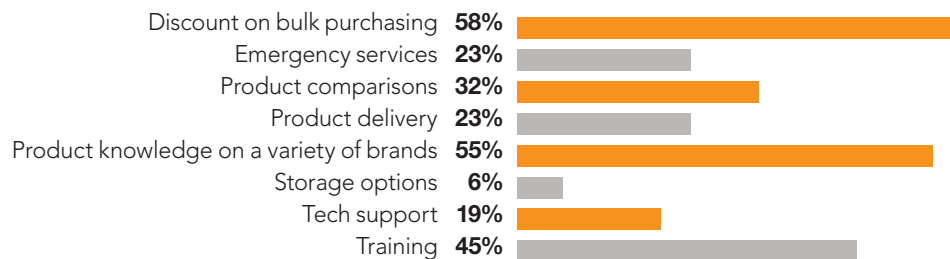


78% of managers receive value-added services
from their distributor partner

What services do you receive from your distributor?



What value-added services would you like to get from your distributor?



PURCHASING PRIORITIES

What information do you receive from your distributor, manufacturer, retailer/big-box store or the internet?

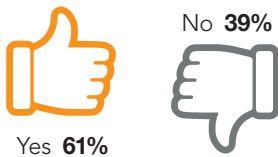
	Distributor	Manufacturer	Retailer/ Big-box Store	Internet
Best price comparisons and/or product discount	70%	10%	8%	48%
Best value-added services when purchasing	75%	14%	3%	22%
Safety Data Sheets (SDS)	58%	37%	3%	41%
Product availability after-hours or in case of emergencies	76%	7%	16%	19%
Product training	81%	29%	1%	25%
Product certifications and updates	70%	39%	1%	22%

STAFFING CHALLENGES

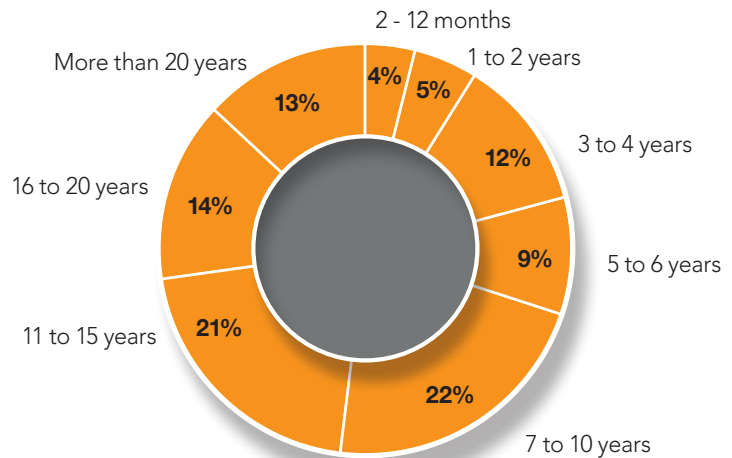
Which employee issues have the biggest impact on your cleaning department?



Do you support employee certification/accreditation or offer advancement opportunities to your cleaning employees?



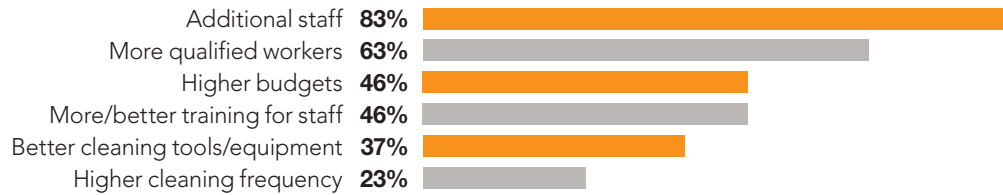
On average, how long does the typical janitor stay with your company?



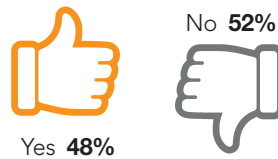
77% of managers believe their department is adequately staffed to complete the cleaning needs within the facility

STAFFING CHALLENGES

What additions to your department would help guarantee the facility is properly cleaned?



Do you plan to add staff to the department in the next 12 months?



What is the reason for needing additional staff?

