



Global Results

GENERATION

NOW

Survey

World Services Group

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

It has been nearly three years since the Millennial Generation overtook its immediate predecessors—Generation X and the Baby Boomers—to become the generation accounting for the largest share of the U.S. labor force¹. Millennials' presence in the workplace will only grow in the years to come. In fact, by 2025, millennials will account for a full 75 percent of the global workforce².

Which is to say: it might be time to understand them.

World Services Group is in a unique position to deliver insight into the Millennial Generation's attitudes towards work. WSG was founded with an innovative idea: that the traditional law firm network could evolve into something more powerful with the inclusion of accounting and banking professionals. Starting with that insight, WSG has grown into the second-largest network of independent firms, with network activity spanning more than 19,000 professionals across 130 locations around the world. The size of our network, together with its reach across multiple industries and countries, gives WSG and its members access to a large and geographically diverse set of leading millennial professionals.

Purpose of the Generation Now Survey

WSG is committed to examining trends impacting the professional services industry—including the millennials who outnumber any other generational group. Accordingly, and consistent with WSG's innovative spirit, we undertook this study to gain insight into millennials' relationship to their legal career at an independent firm and their perspective on similar clients.

It is a generation that many understand to be different from those that have gone before it. Whether due to millennials' exposure to technology, the rapid pace of change throughout their lifetimes, or other factors, there is widespread agreement that millennials bring a unique approach to their careers. Millennials also inspire any number of strong—perhaps unfair, often preconceived—opinions. We hear, for instance, that they do not work as hard as members of previous generations, that they are committed exclusively to their own personal agendas, and that they lack any sense of loyalty. These generalizations lead to a perception that working with millennial professionals, or retaining them as employees, is a matter of constant struggle. WSG set out to test this perception against reality.

The nature of WSG's membership allowed us to investigate millennial attitudes from two distinct, and equally revealing, perspectives. Our members are professionals who service corporate clients across all industries, which themselves are often considered a part of the Generation Now. Thus, our study provides insight into both:

- **Millennials as Professionals:** Their attitudes toward work, the keys to retaining them, and the unique contributions they make to today's clients. (This study refers to millennial professionals between 25-40 as "Gen Now professionals.").
- **Gen Now Clients:** How corporate clients with substantial business with and for the changing generations, industries and trends relate to service providers, and how to best provide services to them. (This study refers to "Gen Now clients" as clients who typically approach business through disruptive methods and technology).

¹ Source: Pew Research Center (<http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2015/05/11/millennials-surpass-gen-xers-as-the-largest-generation-in-u-s-labor-force/>)

² <http://www.ey.com/Publication/vwLUAssets/EY-global-generations-a-global-study-on-work-life-challenges-across-generations/%24FILE/EY-global-generations-a-global-study-on-work-life-challenges-across-generations.pdf>

THE STUDY

Methodology

The survey was launched through the WSG online platform. It was directed to millennial professionals (those between 25-40) at WSG firms worldwide. Of the more than 3,500 millennial professionals in WSG's global network—spanning over 125 jurisdictions and 115 firms—nearly 1,600 responded to the survey from 73 percent of firms in the network across every region of the world. Participants submitted their responses anonymously.



WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Principal Discoveries

The results of this survey provide insight into the minds of Gen Now professionals and Gen Now clients from around the world. Professional firms are engaged in vigorous competition for the best talent and the best clients. With deeper insight into Gen Now professionals, firm leaders can better understand the workplace environment they need to cultivate, attract, and retain this important demographic. Meanwhile, insights into Gen Now clients should prove valuable in winning their business, and maintaining positive relationships with them over time.

1. Work-Life Integration: Gen Now professionals see their lives as a whole, of which their career is one valuable part. They enjoy working hard and productively, provided that doing so does not interfere with their ability to live a full life, therein striving for work-life integration versus just the balance of the previous generation. Survey responses consistently emphasized the high priority that Gen Now professionals place on achieving the flexibility to control meaningful priorities between their work and professional lives.

2. A Clear Path of Career Advancement: Gen Now professionals value firms that offer a clear path to advancement, with clear benchmarks by which to assess their performance. A clear path to growth allows Gen Now professionals to plan the next steps for a meaningful career, and inspires increased loyalty to their current firm.

3. Regional Differences: Despite the temptation to think of Gen Now professionals as a monolith, the study reveals significant disparities among global regions. While survey findings indicate Gen Now professionals have considerable loyalty to their firms, there is a substantial gap, for instance, between North America, where more than 80 percent of respondents want to build a career at their current firm, and Asia-Pacific, where only 56 percent do.



4. Technology is the Now and Forever: A majority of Gen Now clients are from the technology and communications sector, and have used technology to propel their success. This type of Gen Now client now makes up approximately 25 percent of all clients in the legal field. Being informed, aware, and technologically savvy thus will likely play an important role in client retention.

5. A Strategic Approach: Gen Now clients desire professional service providers that take a strategic, holistic approach to their business endeavors. Perhaps reflecting today's immediate access to information, Gen Now clients expect professional service providers to be fully informed of their business, their region, and the trends impacting their clients. Offering more expansive solutions will increase the potential for repeat clients and referrals.

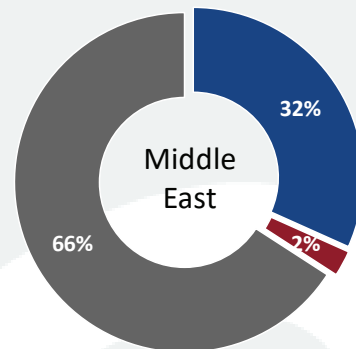
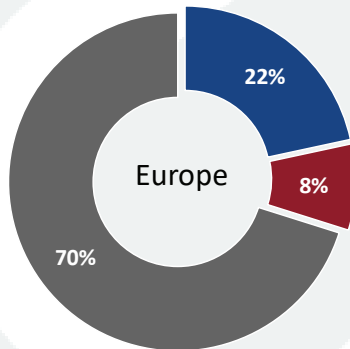
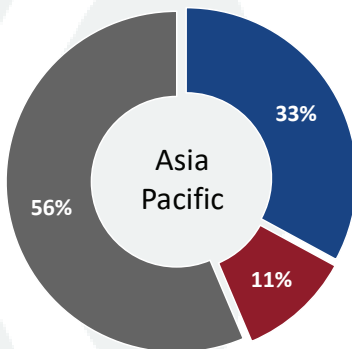
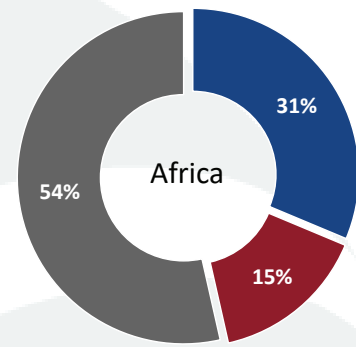
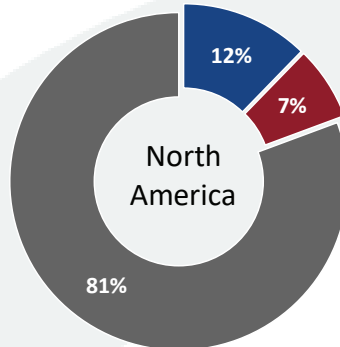
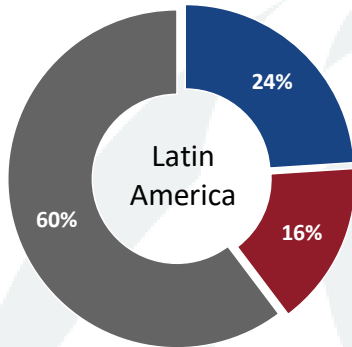


Generation Now Survey Results

The Professional

What career expectation do you have from your firm?

- Advance your career for long-term professional opportunity elsewhere within the industry
- Advance your career for long-term professional opportunity in a different industry
- Build a career at this firm



Analysis:

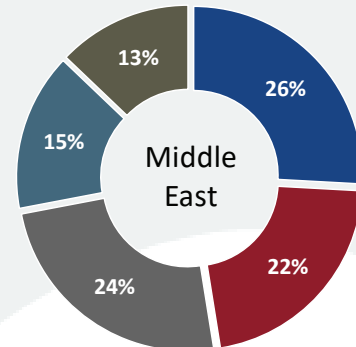
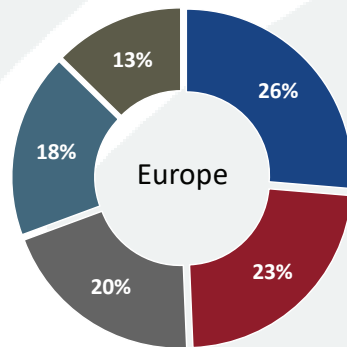
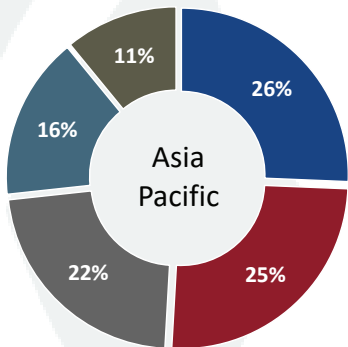
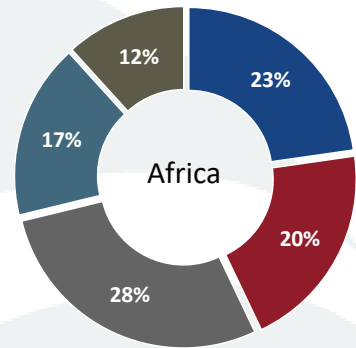
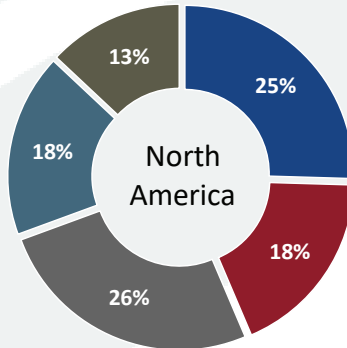
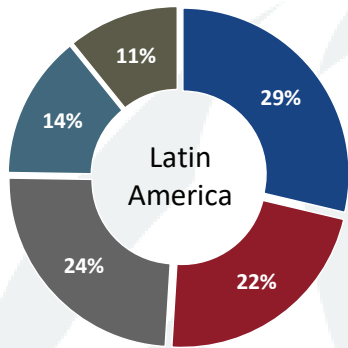
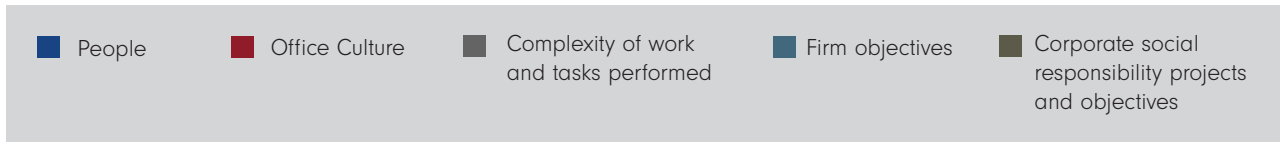
Gen Now professionals are invested in their firms.

Action:

Recognize top talent, and outline a clear retention plan for associates.

What do you like most about your job?

(Ranked by importance, 1st - 5th)



Answer Choices	Latin America Ranking Avg.	North America Ranking Avg.	Africa Ranking Avg.	Asia Pacific Ranking Avg.	Europe Ranking Avg.	Middle East Ranking Avg.
People	1st	2nd	2nd	1st	1st	1st
Office culture	3rd	3rd	3rd	2nd	2nd	3rd
Complexity of work and tasks performed	2nd	1st	1st	3rd	3rd	2nd
Firm objectives	4th	4th	4th	4th	4th	4th
Corporate social responsibility projects and objectives	5th	5th	5th	5th	5th	5th

Analysis:

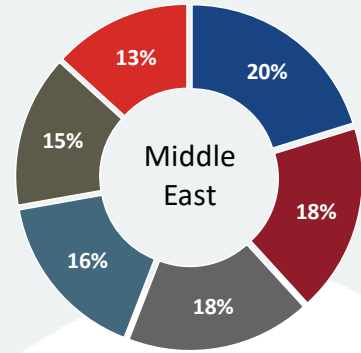
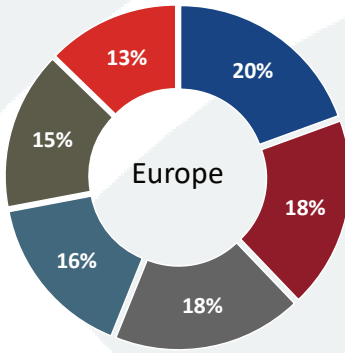
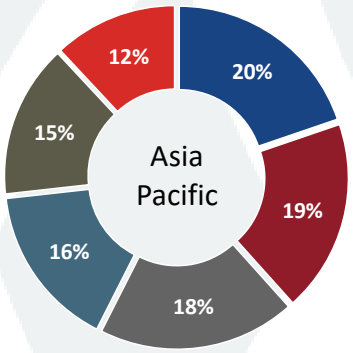
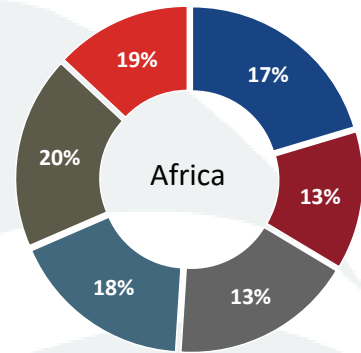
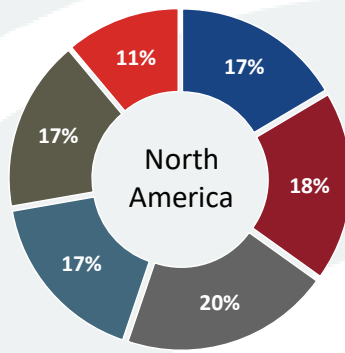
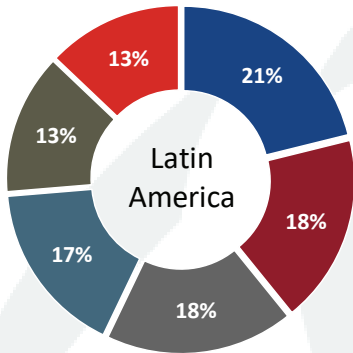
Globally, Gen Now professionals value people, office culture, and complexity of their work over other aspects such as corporate social responsibility projects.

Action:

Ensure a rewarding work environment where meaningful work leads to success.

What do you dislike most about your job?

(Ranked by importance, 1st - 6th)



Answer Choices	Latin America Ranking Avg.	North America Ranking Avg.	Africa Ranking Avg.	Asia Pacific Ranking Avg.	Europe Ranking Avg.	Middle East Ranking Avg.
Expectation of work hours present in office, as opposed to value of work productivity	1st	3rd	4th	1st	1st	1st
Billable hour targets	3rd	2nd	5th	2nd	2nd	2nd
Billable hour structure	2nd	1st	6th	3rd	3rd	3rd
Lack of training with the expectation of responsibility	4th	5th	3rd	4th	4th	4th
Internal firm communication of decisions, expectations, and results	5th	4th	1st	5th	5th	5th
Limited opportunities for professional leadership participation	6th	6th	2nd	6th	6th	6th

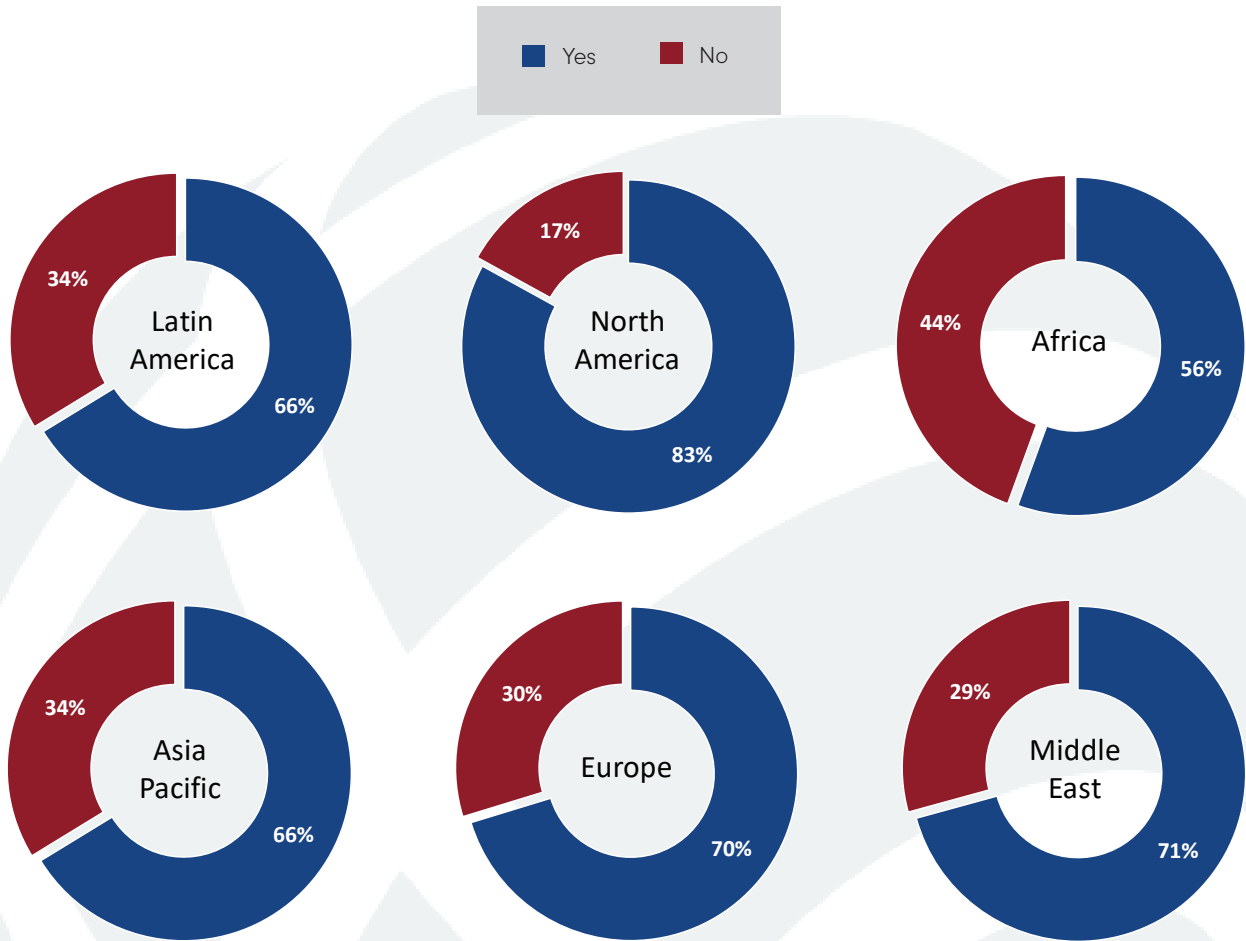
Analysis:

In the majority of regions, Gen Now professionals dislike the billable-hour structure. In Africa, lack of clear internal communication takes precedence over a dislike of doing the work.

Action:

Alternative billing structures will continue to be an important topic to discuss not only for the Gen Now professionals, but for the client as well.

Do you want to become a partner of the firm for which you currently work?



Analysis:

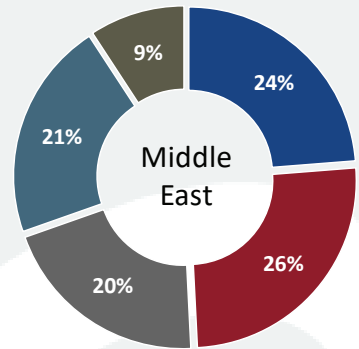
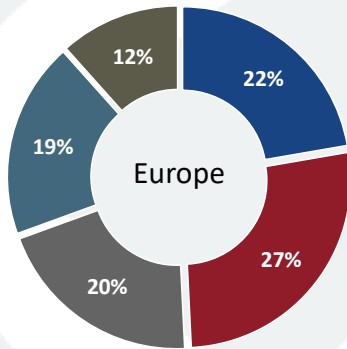
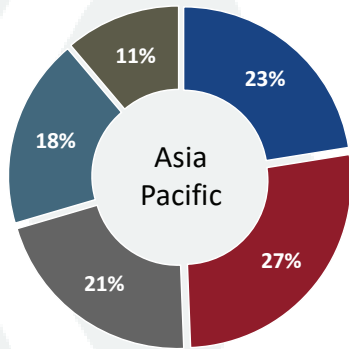
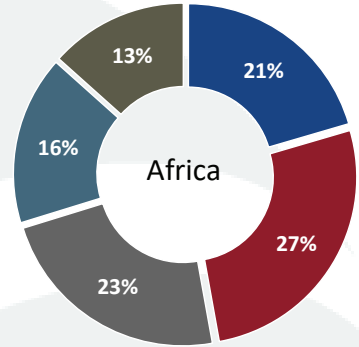
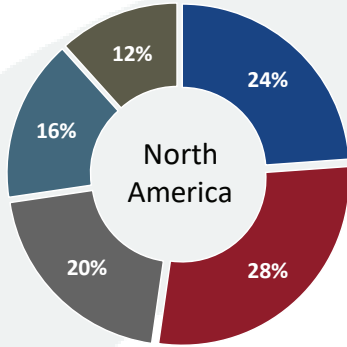
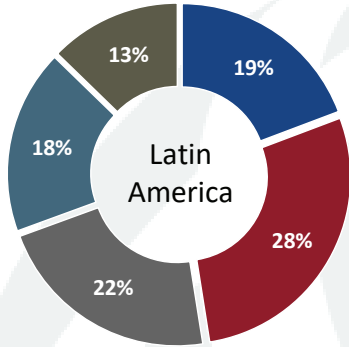
While a majority of Gen Now professionals want to become a partner at their respective firms, a sizeable percentage of professionals across all regions do not - changing traditional definitions of success.

Action:

Communicate a clear path to what it takes to become a partner, but also encourage alternative options for growth and success within the firm.

Rank the priorities for your professional career.

(Ranked by importance, 1st - 5th)



Answer Choices	Latin America Ranking Avg.	North America Ranking Avg.	Africa Ranking Avg.	Asia Pacific Ranking Avg.	Europe Ranking Avg.	Middle East Ranking Avg.
Build wealth	3rd	2nd	3rd	2nd	2nd	2nd
Have a career that offers work-life balance	1st	1st	1st	1st	1st	1st
Professional leadership opportunities	2nd	3rd	2nd	3rd	3rd	3rd
Senior position in a leading firm	4th	4th	4th	4th	4th	4th
Participation in corporate social responsibility	5th	5th	5th	5th	5th	5th

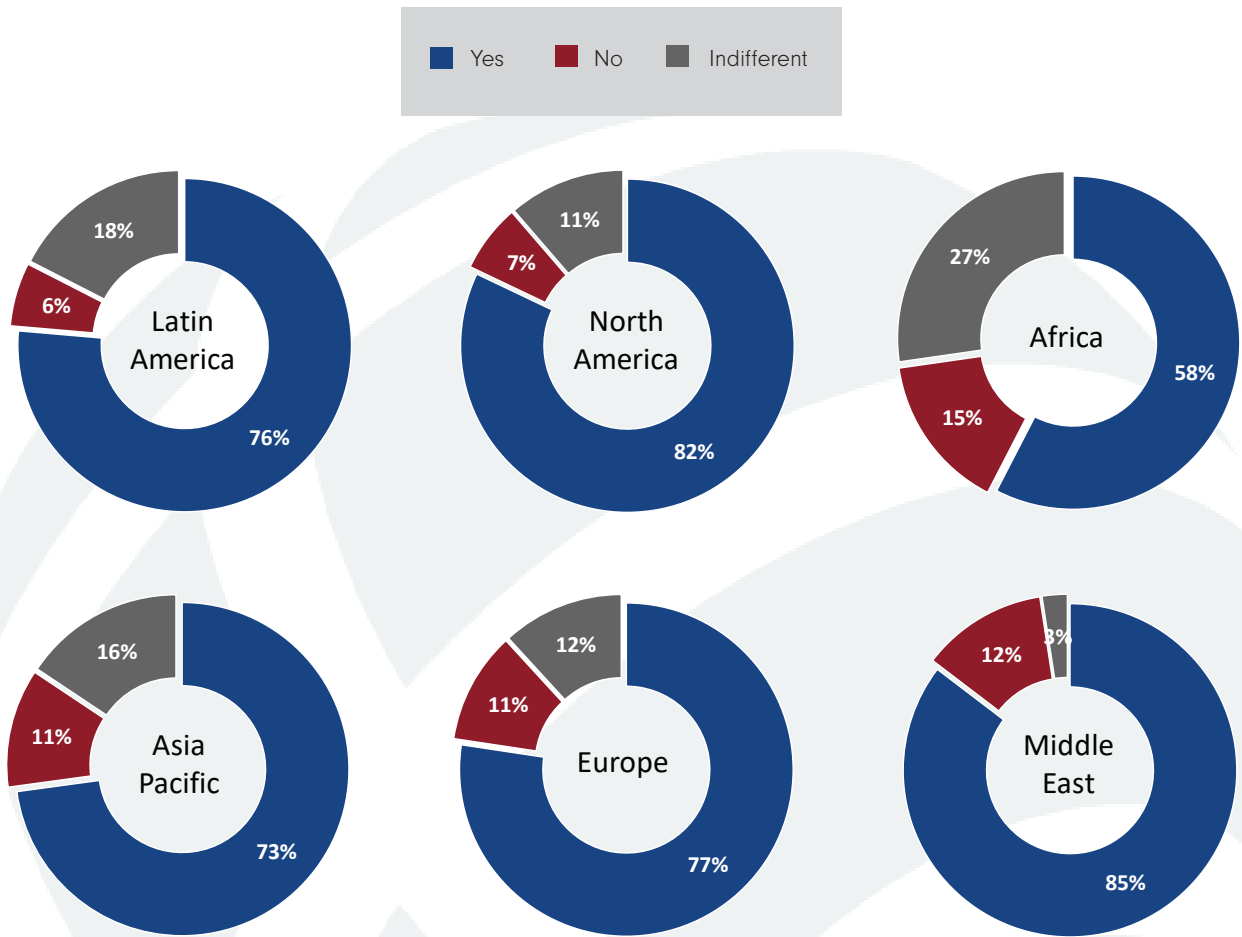
Analysis:

Globally, Gen Now professionals value work-life balance the most while corporate social responsibility is less likely to be an impacting factor for the legal industry.

Action:

Having a flexible and mobile-friendly environment and providing the proper devices with which to achieve productivity is key for Gen Now professionals and their clients.

Are you happy in your job?

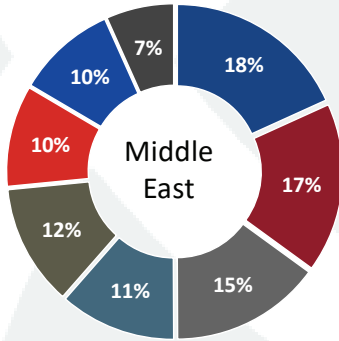
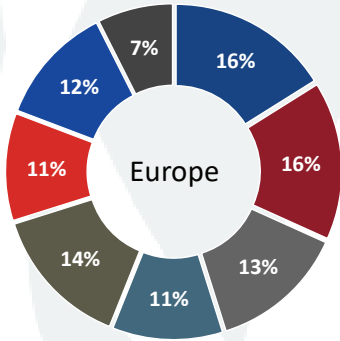
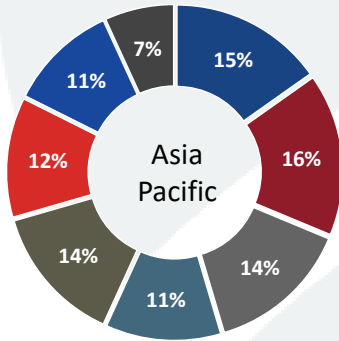
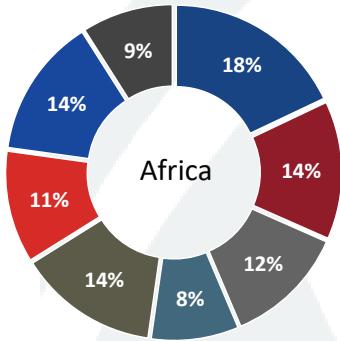
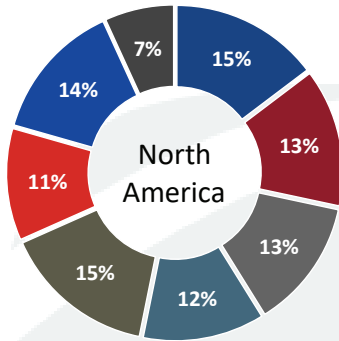
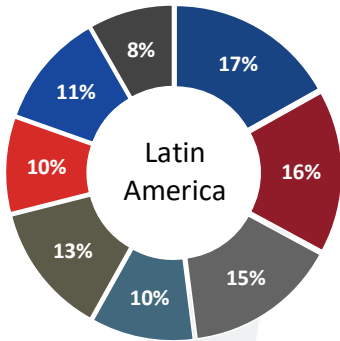


Analysis:

The majority of Gen Now professionals across our network of independent law firms are happy, which is significantly higher than professionals in corporate law firms, with some recent studies of the latter showing only 44 percent of attorneys being happy.

What advances would you like to see implemented or further explored in your firm?

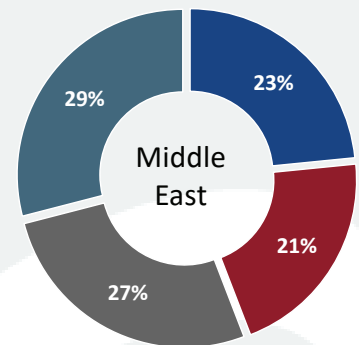
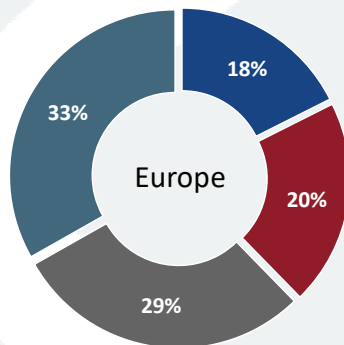
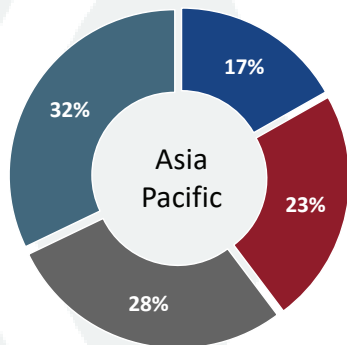
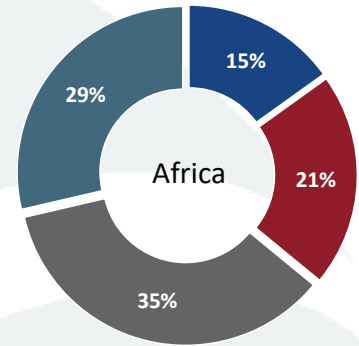
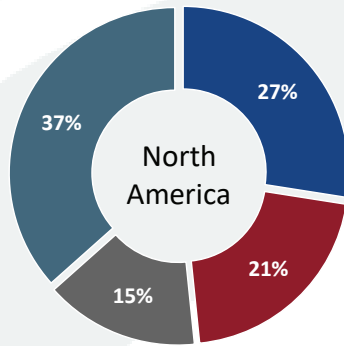
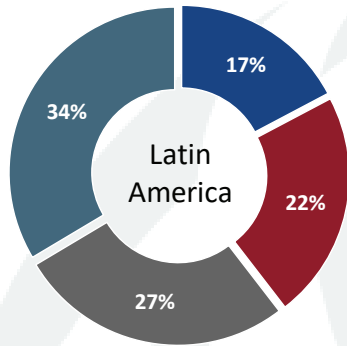
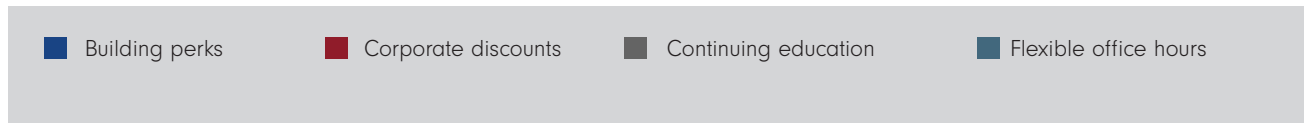
(Ranked by importance, 1st - 8th)



Answer Choices	Latin America Ranking Avg.	North America Ranking Avg.	Africa Ranking Avg.	Asia Pacific Ranking Avg.	Europe Ranking Avg.	Middle East Ranking Avg.
A clear path of career development - mentor program	1st	1st	1st	1st	1st	1st
Flextime considerations	3rd	4th	2nd	2nd	2nd	2nd
Home office considerations	2nd	5th	3rd	3rd	3rd	3rd
Zero jerk policy (i.e. zero tolerance for unpleasant people)	4th	6th	8th	5th	4th	4th
Increased collaboration among team members and throughout all levels of the firm	5th	2nd	5th	4th	5th	5th
Increased use of technology within the firm	6th	7th	6th	6th	7th	6th
A more inclusive participation of younger professionals in firm involvement	7th	3rd	4th	7th	6th	7th
Intentional focus on corporate social responsibility inclusive of community service, pro bono, and socially responsible clients	8th	8th	7th	8th	8th	8th

Rank the fringe benefits that you would consider an added value to employment at your firm.

(Ranked by importance, 1st - 4th)



Answer Choices	Latin America Ranking Avg.	North America Ranking Avg.	Africa Ranking Avg.	Asia Pacific Ranking Avg.	Europe Ranking Avg.	Middle East Ranking Avg.
Building perks (e.g. paid parking, corporate dining)	4th	2nd	4th	4th	4th	3rd
Corporate discounts (e.g. gym memberships, mobile phone, wireless)	3rd	3rd	3rd	3rd	3rd	4th
Continuing education (e.g. specialized programs, exchange programs, masters programs)	2nd	4th	1st	2nd	2nd	2nd
Flexible office hours	1st	1st	2nd	1st	1st	1st

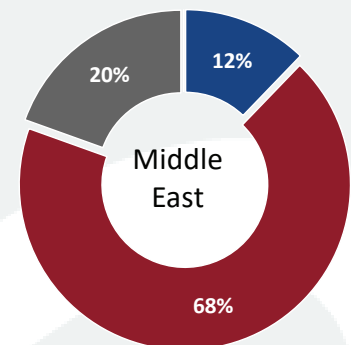
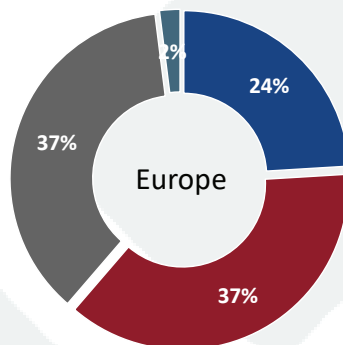
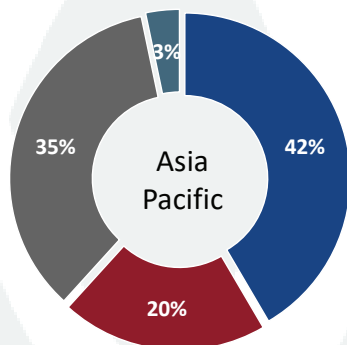
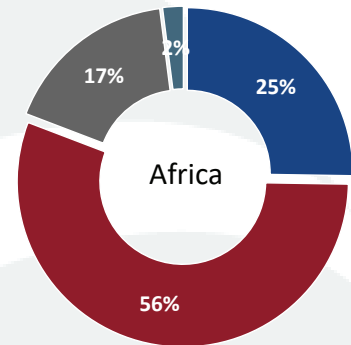
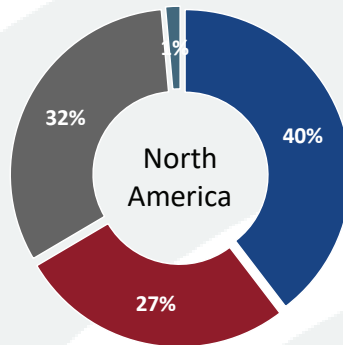
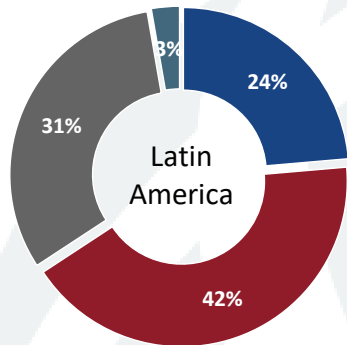
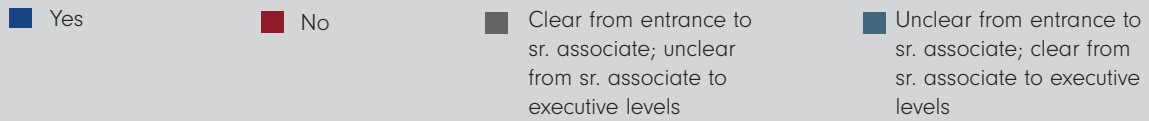
Analysis:

Flexible work hours are the most preferred benefit, showing once again the importance of work-life balance.

Action:

Having a flexible and mobile-friendly environment and providing the proper devices with which to achieve productivity is key for Gen Now professionals and their clients.

Is the promotion structure in the firm clear?



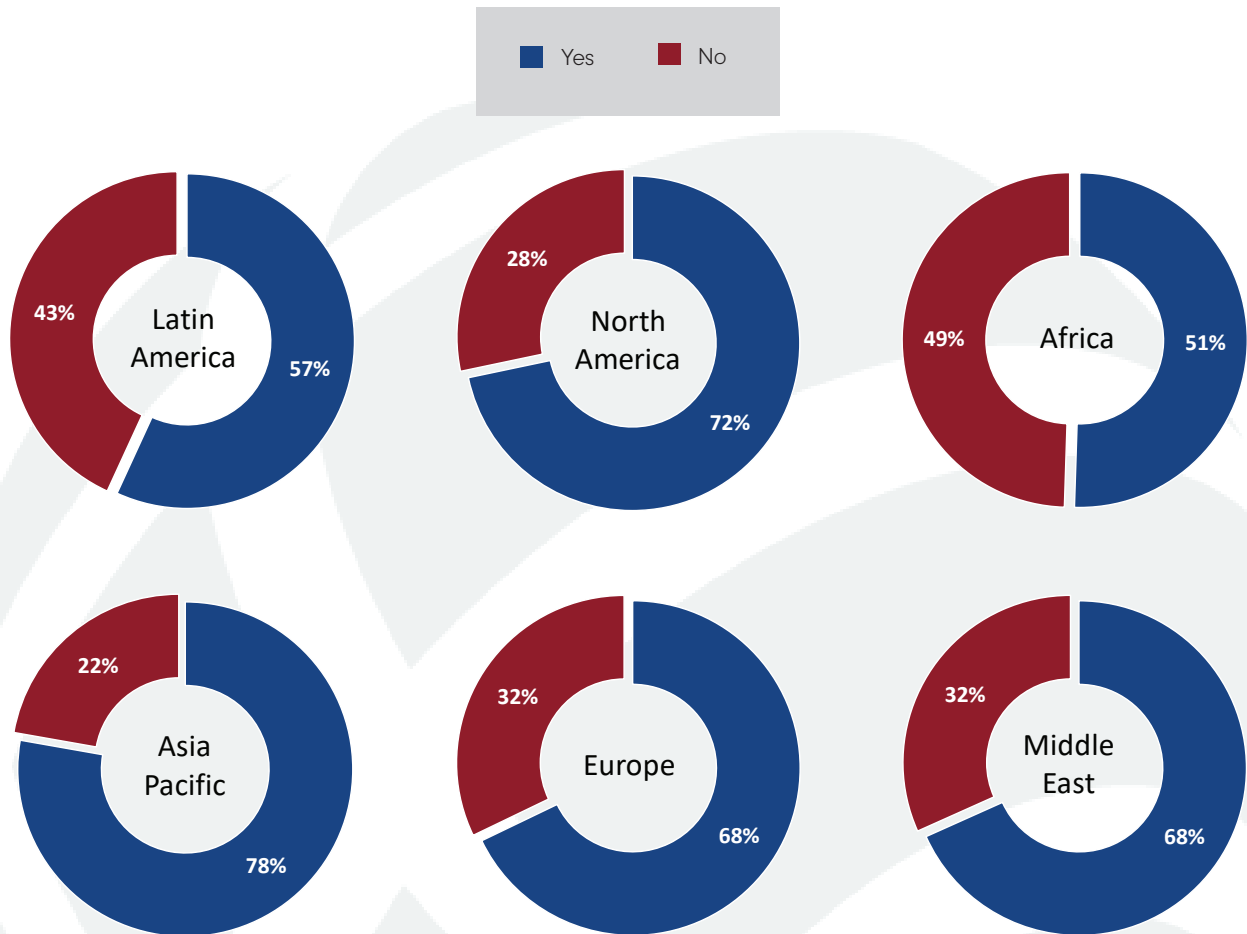
Analysis:

A significant portion of professionals across all regions do not find the promotion structure in their firm to be clear.

Action:

Consider implementing mentoring, documentation, or other methods to clarify expectations and professional development for growth within the firm.

Do you consider that your firm has an ongoing strategy to evaluate and adapt to changing professionals and industry needs?



Analysis:

Approximately one-third of Gen Now professionals do not feel that their firm has an ongoing strategy to adapt to changing professionals and industry needs.

Action:

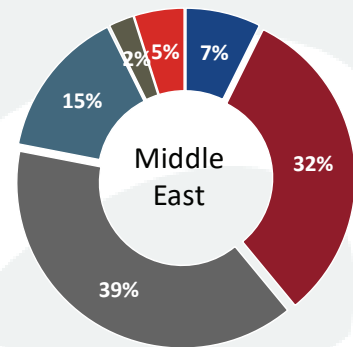
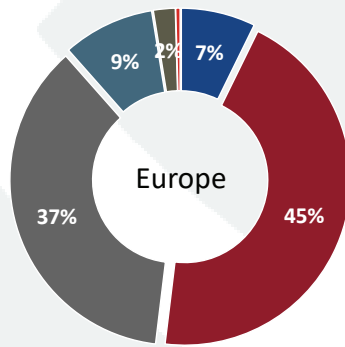
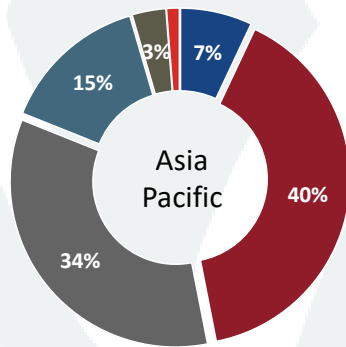
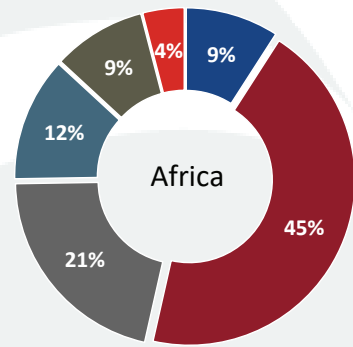
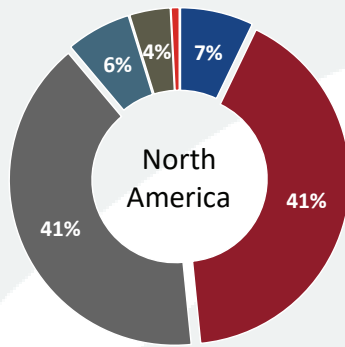
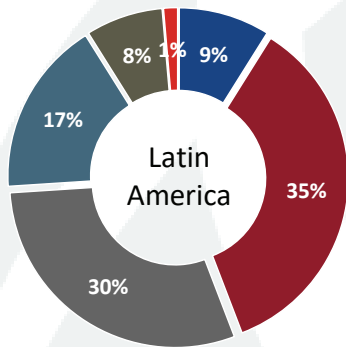
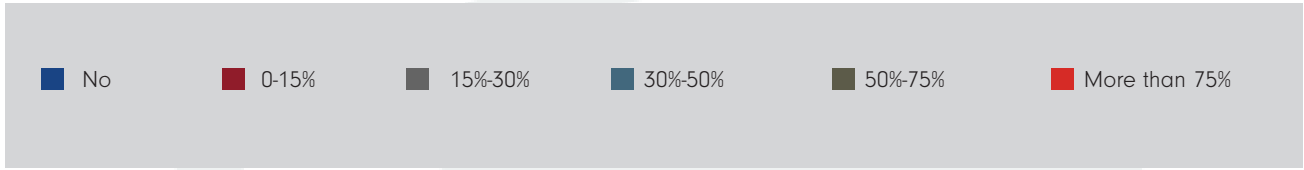
Implement and communicate ongoing firm adjustments, and consider significant trends affecting major changes in adaptation for incoming professionals.



Generation Now Survey Results

The Client

Does your firm have clients, either business owners or main contacts within the client's company, that would be considered Generation Now clients? If so, what percentage?



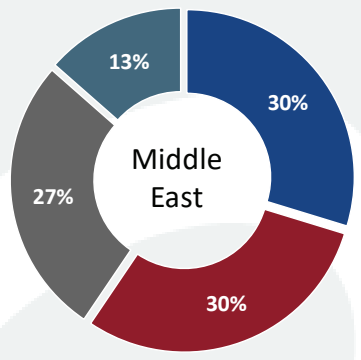
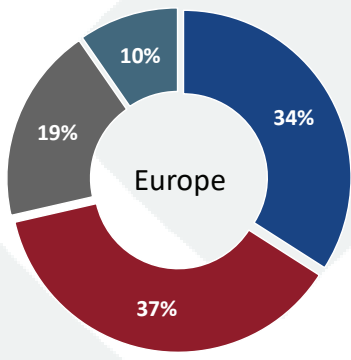
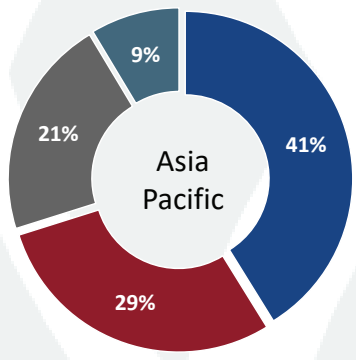
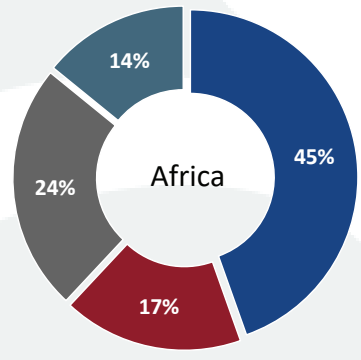
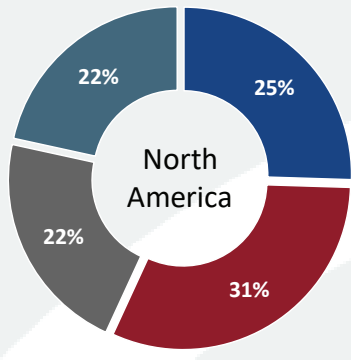
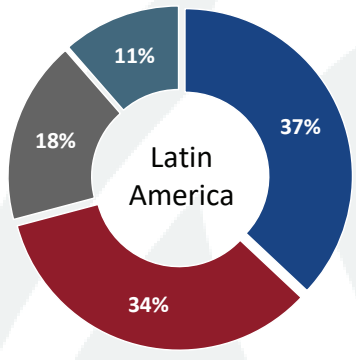
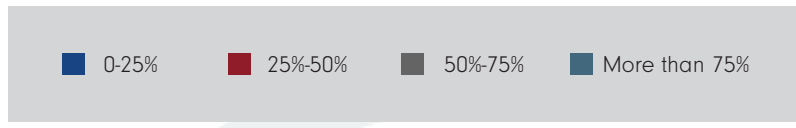
Analysis:

The number of Gen Now clients is increasing, with approximately 25 percent of clients now being classified as Gen Now clients.

Action:

Consider significant trends affecting major changes in adaptation for Gen Now clients and communicate this with the clients.

Of your firm's Generation Now clients, what percentage are repeat clients?



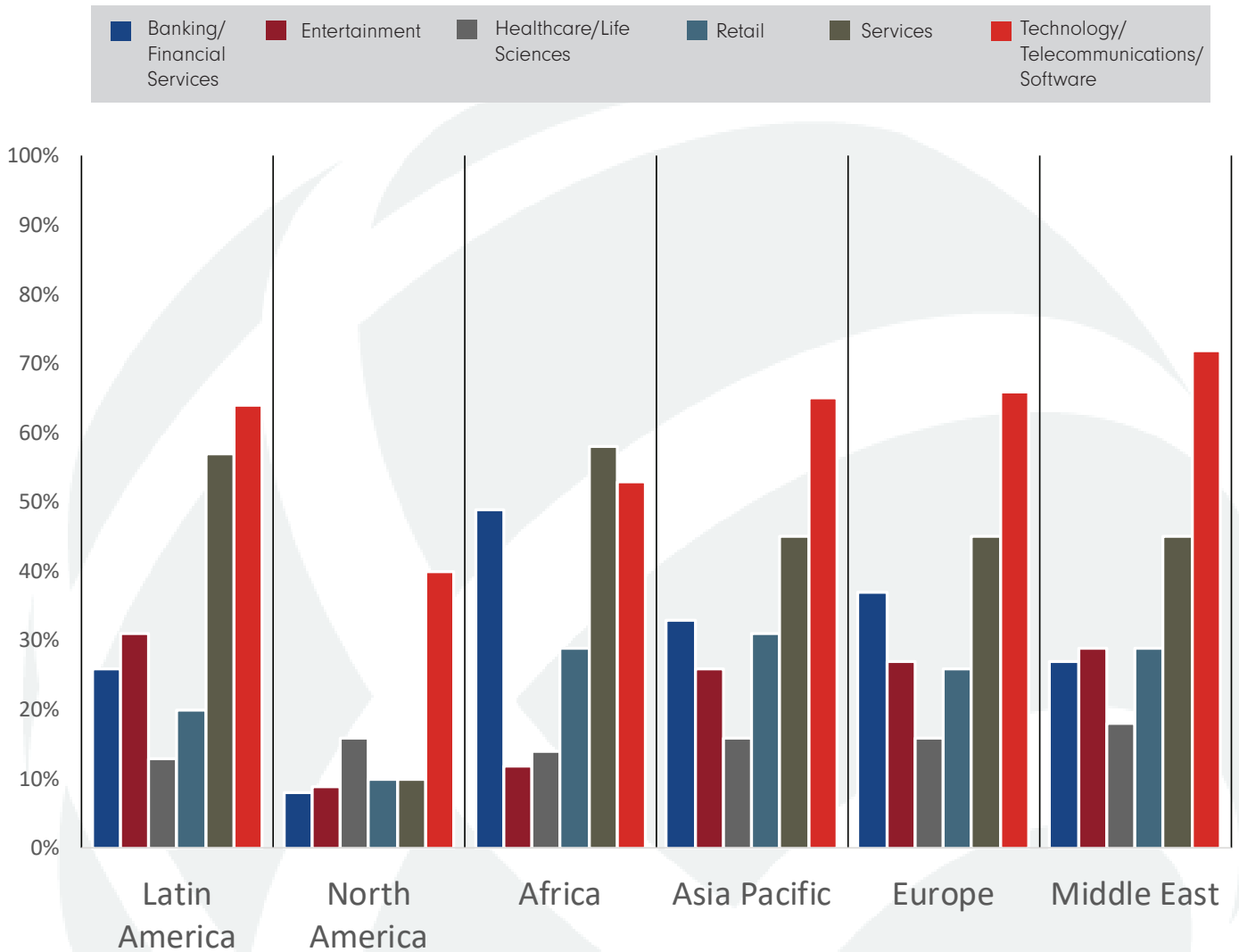
Analysis:

Approximately 25 percent of Gen Now clients are repeat clients.

Action:

Gen Now repeat work is significant enough to implement a communications strategy to show, tell, and adapt to Gen Now expectations.

In what industry are your firm's Generation Now clients?



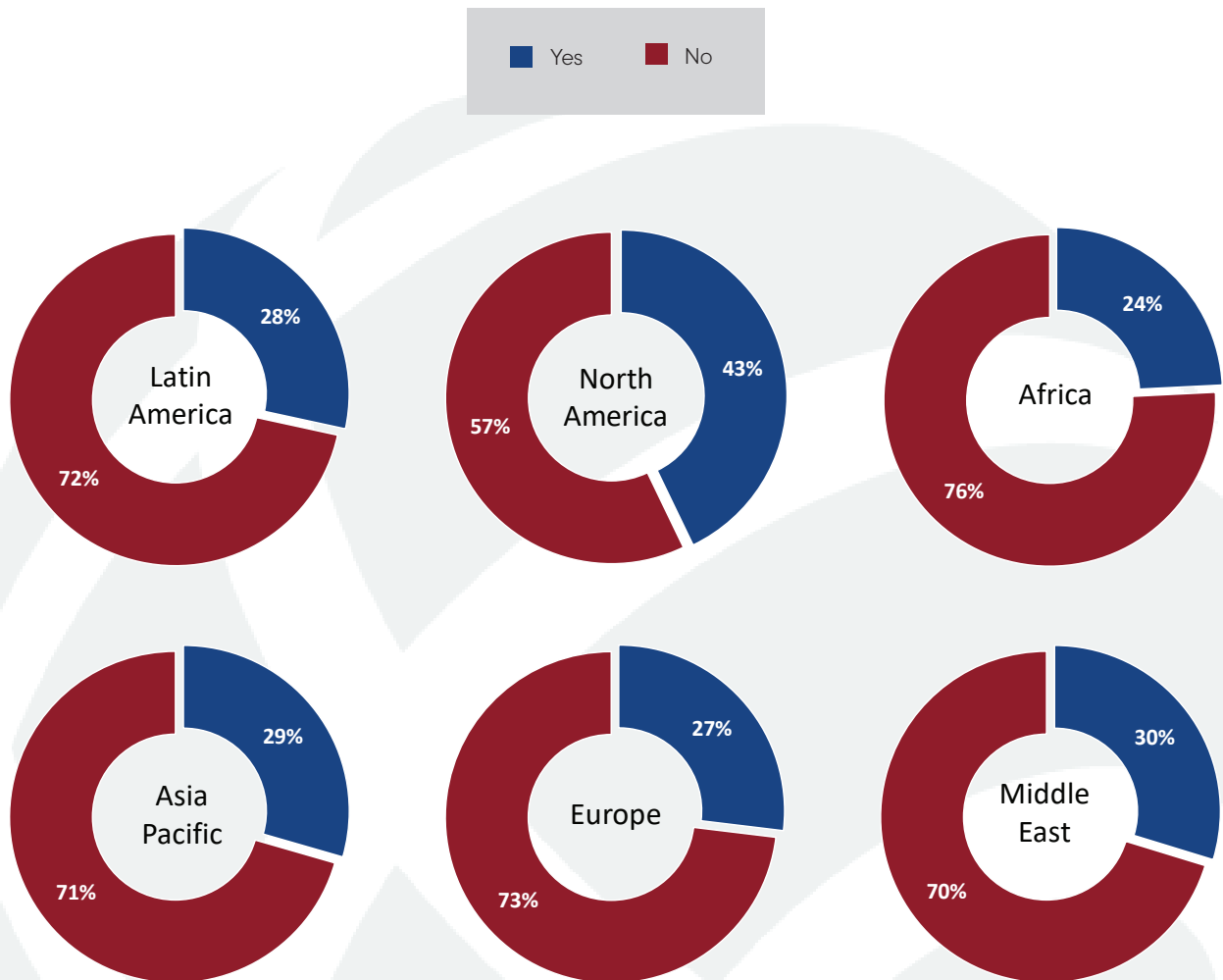
Analysis:

The majority of Gen Now clients are from the technology industry or are very impacted by advances in technology.

Action:

Firms should develop expertise in the technology within their clients' industries and monitor potential changes and trends on an ongoing basis.

Does your firm have a clear strategy regarding engagement, retention, and/or provision of services to Generation Now clients?



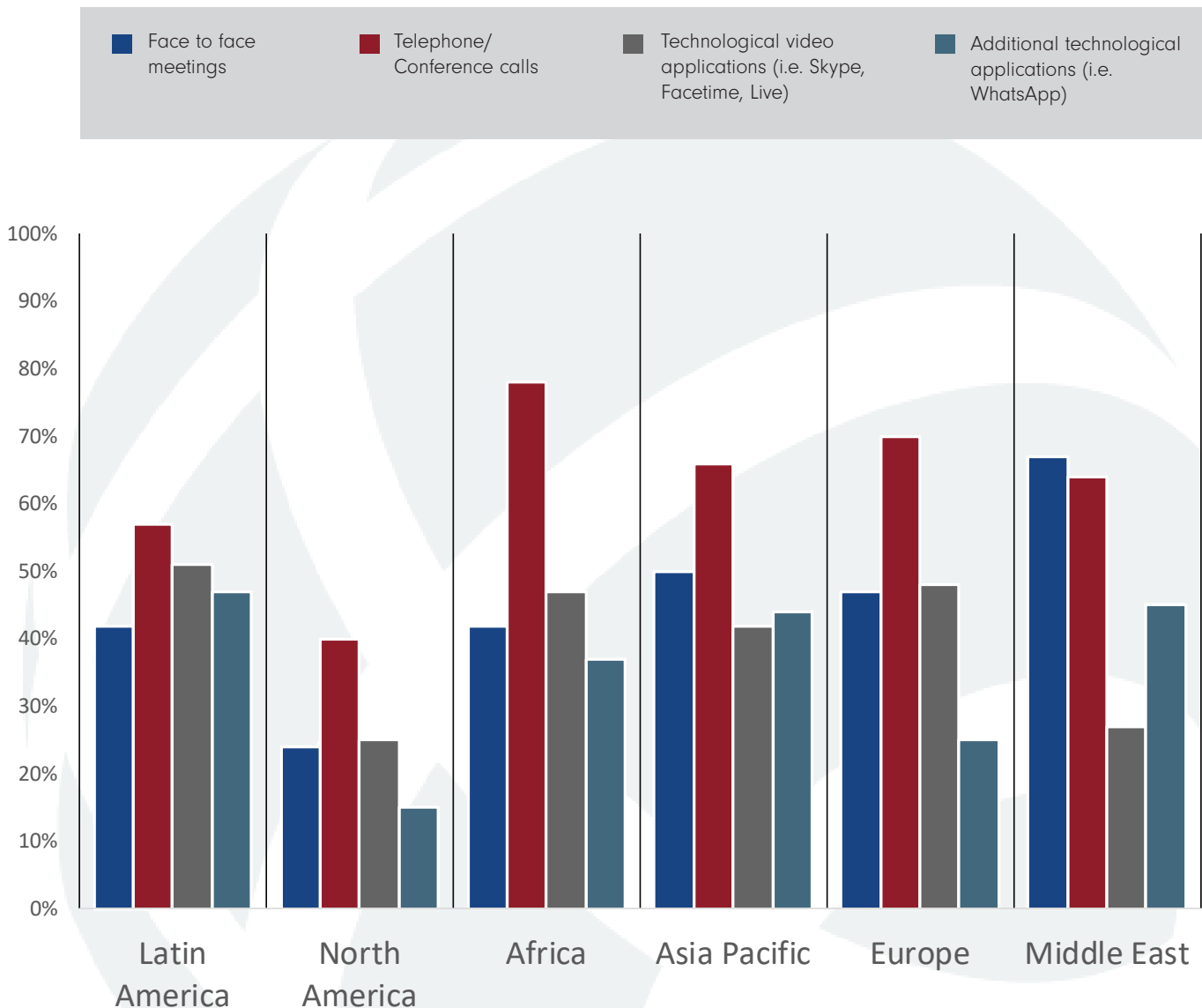
Analysis:

An overwhelming majority of Gen Now professionals across all regions do not believe that their firm has a clear strategy for engagement and retention of Gen Now clients.

Action:

Consider significant trends affecting major changes for Gen Now clients and communicate this with the clients and the professionals on an ongoing basis.

In your opinion, how do Generation Now clients prefer to communicate with your firm and its members?



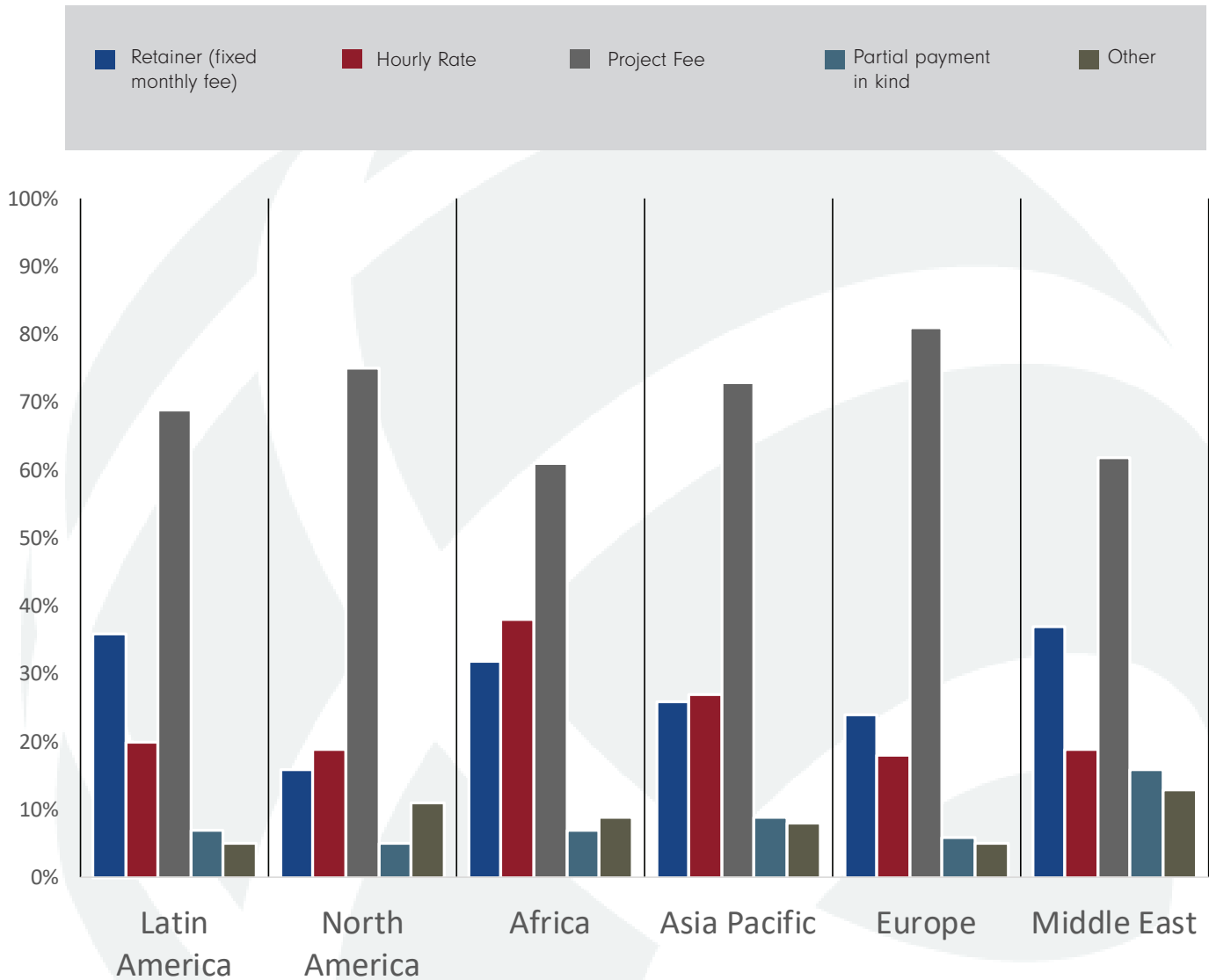
Analysis:

In the majority of regions, with the exception of the Middle East, Gen Now clients prefer their method of communication to be via telephone/conference calls.

Action:

Implement multiple touchpoints for communication with clients, offer devices and software to facilitate the clients' needs, and monitor technology changes for communication.

How do you think Generation Now clients prefer to be charged for your firm's services?



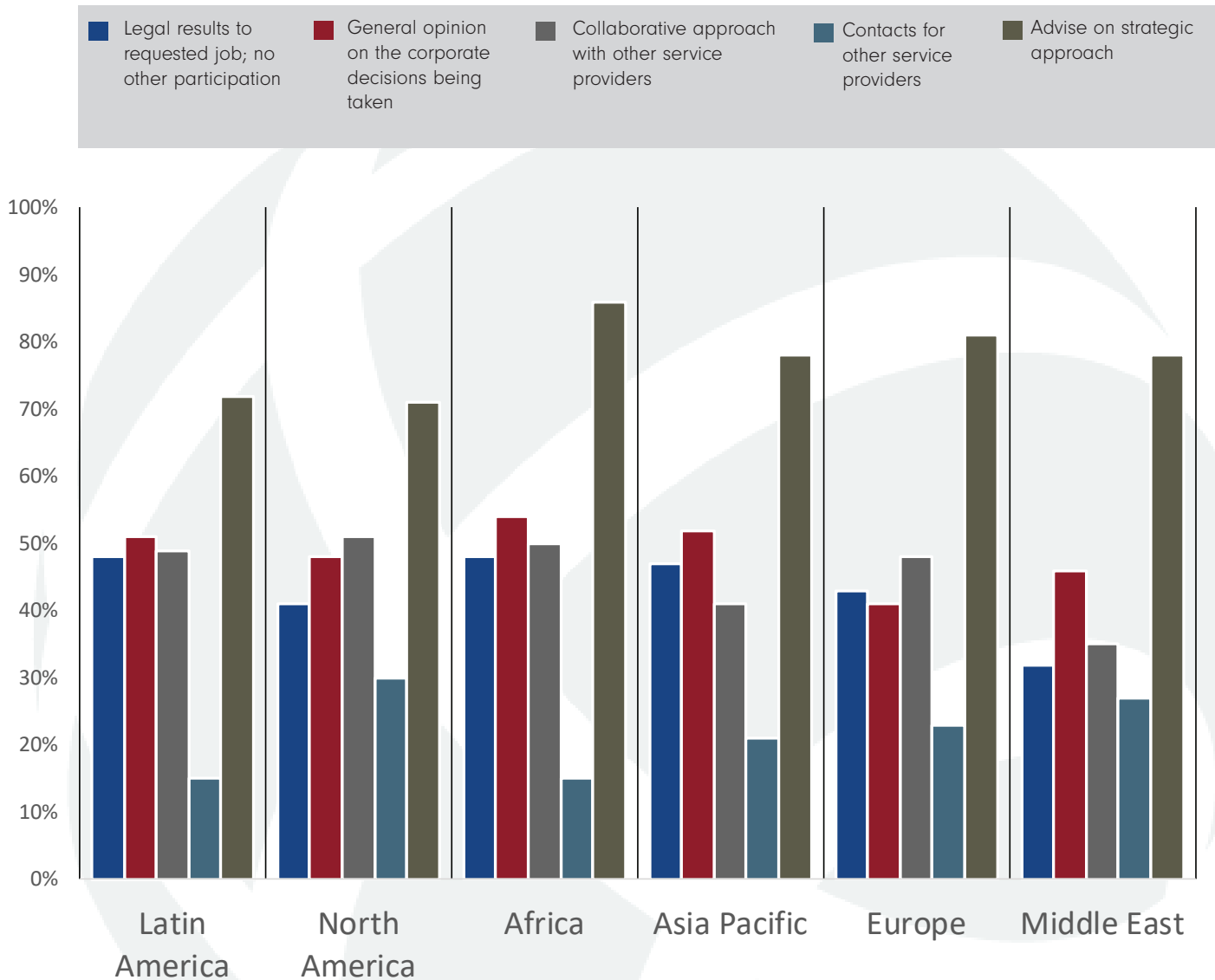
Analysis:

An overwhelming majority of Gen Now clients seem to prefer being charged on a per-project basis.

Action:

Consider software to assist in offering alternative billing structure options including billing on a per-project basis to increase client satisfaction and retention.

What do you think Generation Now clients expect with regard to the services your firm provides?



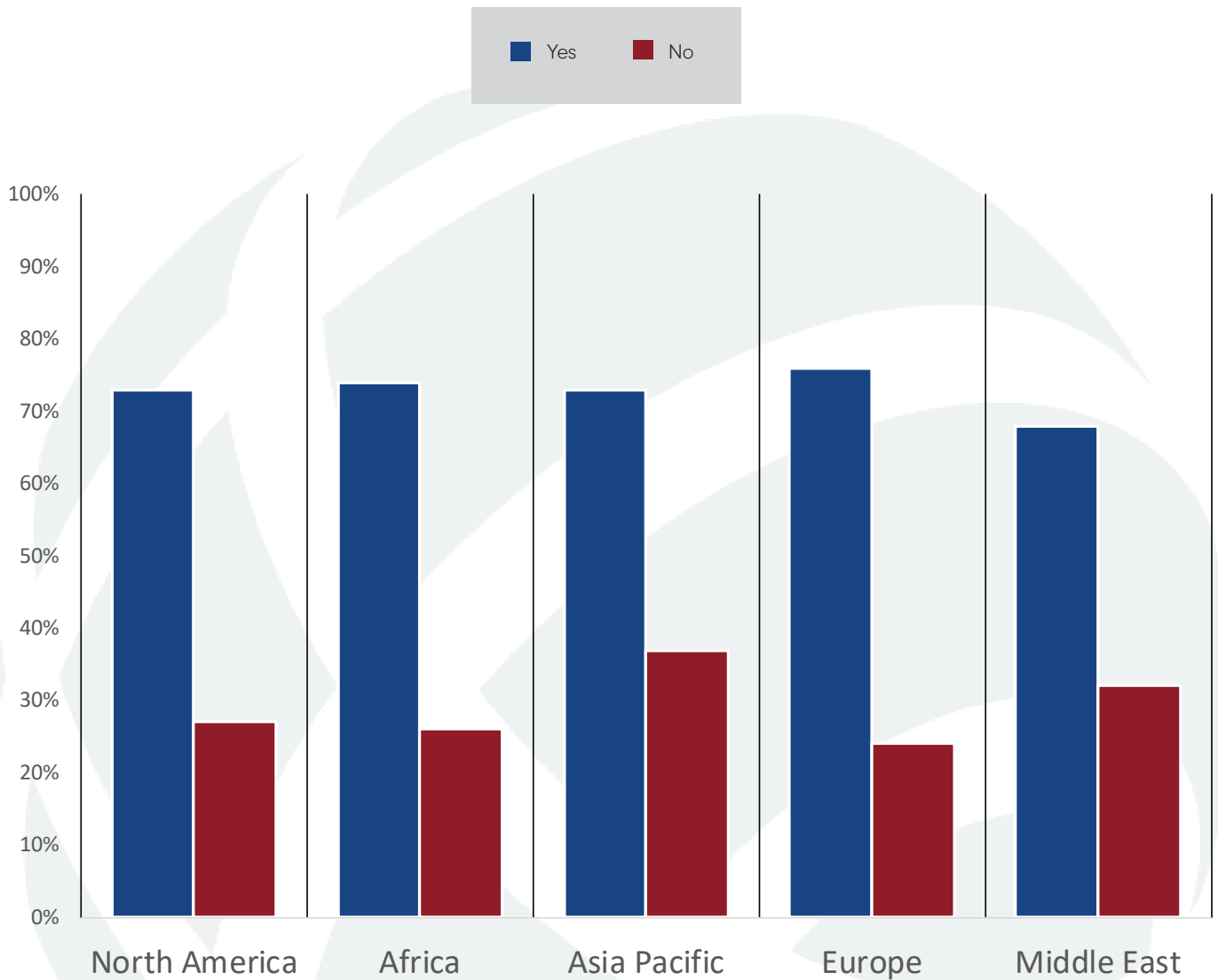
Analysis:

Gen Now clients by and large do not want templated response results. Clients want a more expansive approach significant to their business objectives.

Action:

Implement a more proactive approach inclusive of current business happenings and objectives when developing client results.

Do you think there are key differences between Generation Now clients and traditional clients?



* Latin America Region Survey Omitted

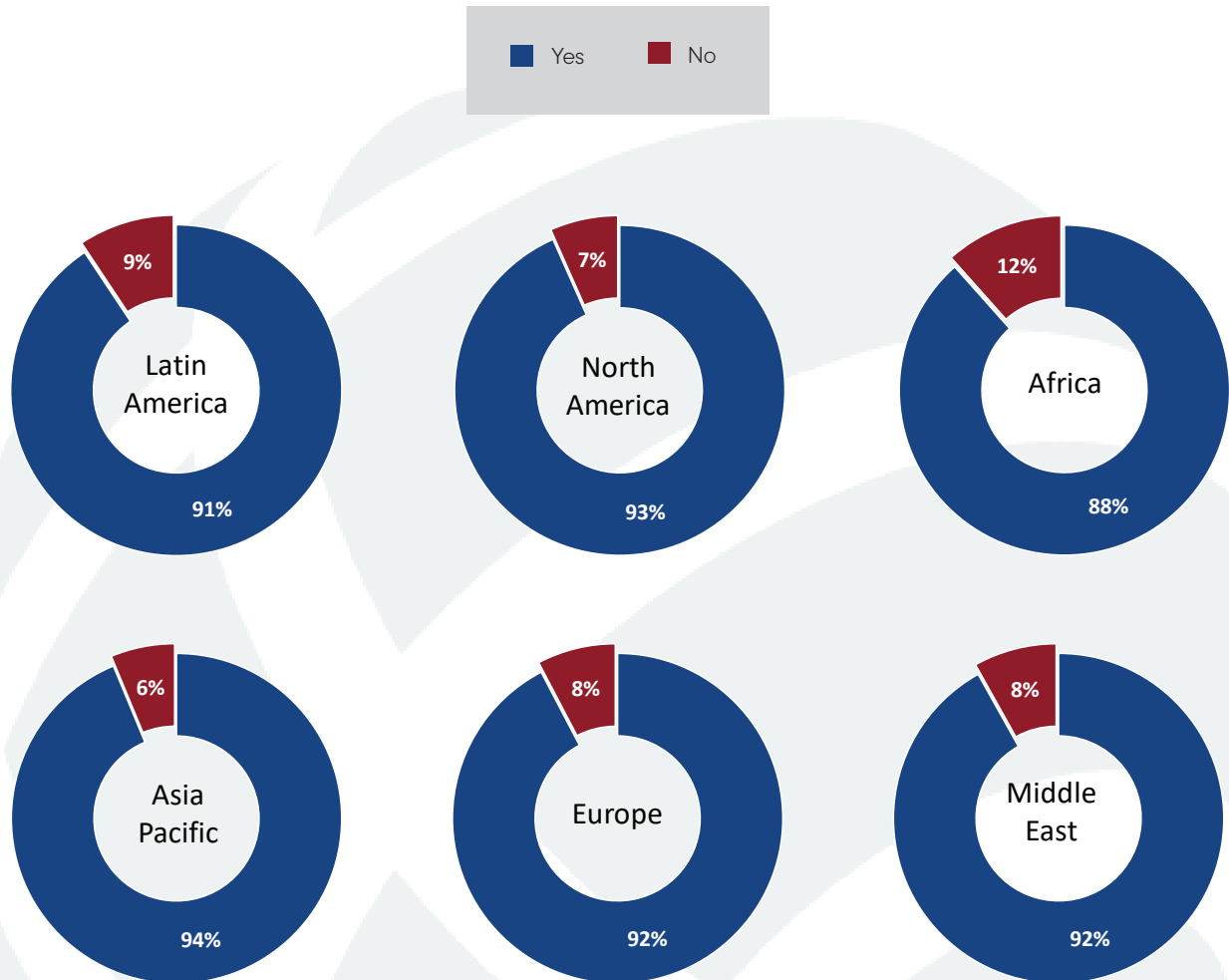
Analysis:

Approximately 75 percent of Gen Now professionals believe that there are key differences between Gen Now clients and traditional clients.

Action:

Consider identifying the key differences between Gen Now clients and traditional clients and devise a strategy to retain and adjust for both.

If you were a client, would you hire your current firm for your business?



Analysis:

More than 90 percent of Gen Now professionals would hire their current firm for their business. This shows a great belief in the quality of work that Gen Now professionals attach to their respective firms.

WHAT NEXT?

Hearing The Gen Now Call

Gen Now professionals are in high demand, and employers that understand their approach to their careers and lives will have a considerable advantage in attracting and retaining the best talent of the generation. In this study, Gen Now respondents sounded consistent themes about their job priorities. Chief among those themes was an intense concern for work-life integration, characterized by a preference for employers that value productivity over office “face time.” Another prominent theme sounded in survey responses was a desire for clarity in the path of career advancement.

The survey also revealed that Gen Now clients, a vital and growing segment of business for professional service providers, have some significantly different needs and wants than traditional clients. Gen Now clients are centered in particular industry sectors—with technology significantly overrepresented—and are looking to build strategic partnerships with the law firms they hire.

Identifying the needs of Gen Now professionals and clients and implementing a proactive approach to satisfying those needs will give law firms a boost in cultivating a thriving client base and retaining the highest-quality talent.

What Your Firm Can Implement

Mentorship Program: Pairing Gen Now professionals with career mentors can provide greater work satisfaction while identifying and nurturing the best professionals for the future of the firm. Mentors can deliver on many desires shared by Gen Now professionals—perhaps most importantly, by helping them identify and pursue well-defined career-advancement path—and keep the most promising individuals dedicated to the firm.

Work-Life Integration: Gen Now professionals place great importance on work-life integration. They prefer to be evaluated on their productivity as opposed to time spent in the office, and freely express a desire to balance their work with an equal commitment to family, friends, and other personal activities. Tech devices and tools can give professionals the necessary flexibility to remain productive while also pursuing outside interests. Firms will also benefit by clearly communicating their expectations for productivity and growth within the firm.



Identifying the Needs of Gen Now Clients: Gen Now clients have different needs than the traditional client. Based on survey findings, firms should look to develop expansive strategies to service Gen Now clients, offering the most comprehensive array of professional services. Such an arrangement would satisfy Gen Now clients’ desire for their partners to provide highly strategic services mindful of their business as a whole. Wherever possible, firms

should also offer alternative billing structures, a clear preference of Gen Now clients over the traditional billable hour.

Focus on Strategic Partnerships: Gen Now clients do not want professional advice in a vacuum; they prefer it, instead, to be offered as part of a comprehensive strategic business vision. This attitude suggests that Gen Now clients value professional firms that color outside the lines and proactively flag issues—or even better, offer solutions—in areas outside the immediate scope of their work. Securing any business from a Gen Now client, then, may be very valuable; by focusing on the client’s whole business, savvy firms may quickly become trusted partners asked to act on their strategic advice for business lines or territories that they had not previously touched.

ABOUT WORLD SERVICES GROUP

World Services Group was created in 2002 and is a global membership network whose members are among the leading independent firms. Formed upon a unique approach to legal networks, WSG developed the idea that the premier independent law firm needed a more expansive and efficient global approach within the industry. The integration of knowledge, expertise, and client service providers from the investment banking and accounting professions creates better opportunities for providers and clients alike. Additionally, through innovative access and technology, WSG offers members and clients immediate access to prospects, information, and leading experts with a known record of superior, quality service.

WSG has been built on the expertise and experience of the over 19,000 professionals at its more than 130 member firms. WSG's global representation includes more than 145 jurisdictions and operations throughout the United States and Canada.

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