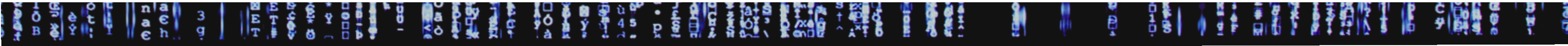
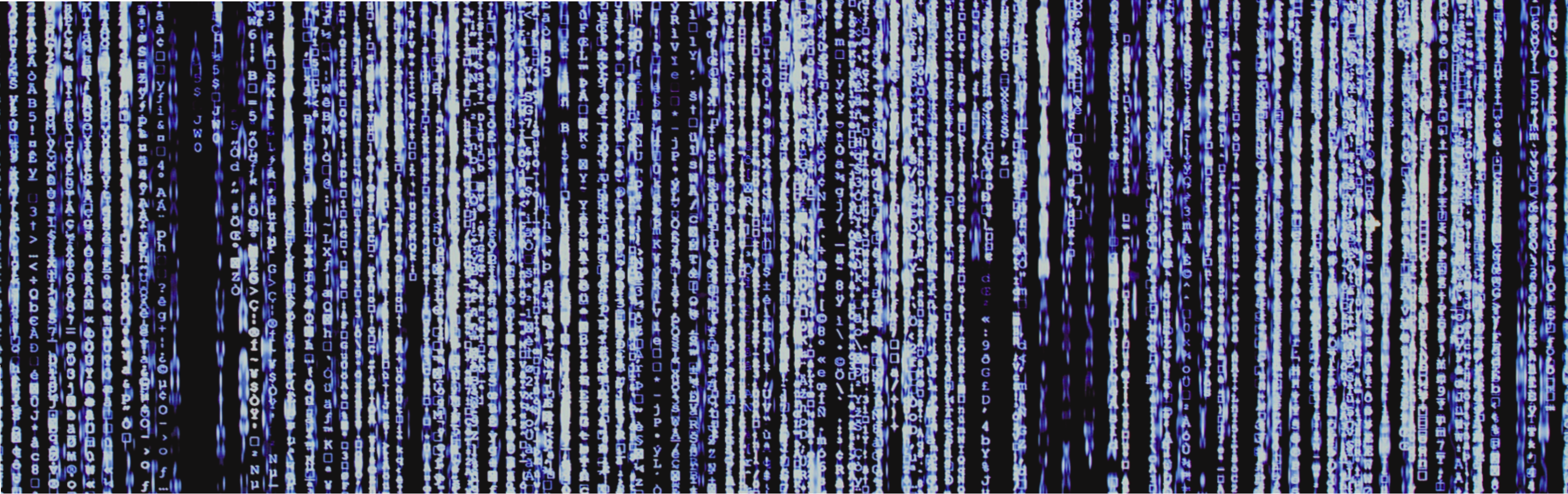




Cybersecurity Awareness Month Benchmark Survey Report by Above Promotions



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In this Report:

About the Cybersecurity Awareness Month (CSAM),
what is in this report, and why you should care.

How we conducted this survey.

What we found.

What we did not cover.

Takeaways

1. Introduction

About the Cybersecurity Awareness Month (CSAM), what is in this report, and why you should care.

The Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) has been running a [Cybersecurity Awareness Month](#) every October for the last 18 years with one goal in mind:

To equip Americans with the resources to be safer and more secure online.

CISA, in partnership with the National Cyber Security Alliance (NCSA), provided the theme for October 2021 as “Do Your Part. #BeCyberSmart.”

They also provided weekly themes and other resources to guide the awareness activities for the month.

Above Promotions surveyed cybersecurity professionals in America to gauge their awareness and participation in the CSAM and their companies’ overall involvement in the fight against cybersecurity breaches.

What we found was both promising and concerning at the same time.

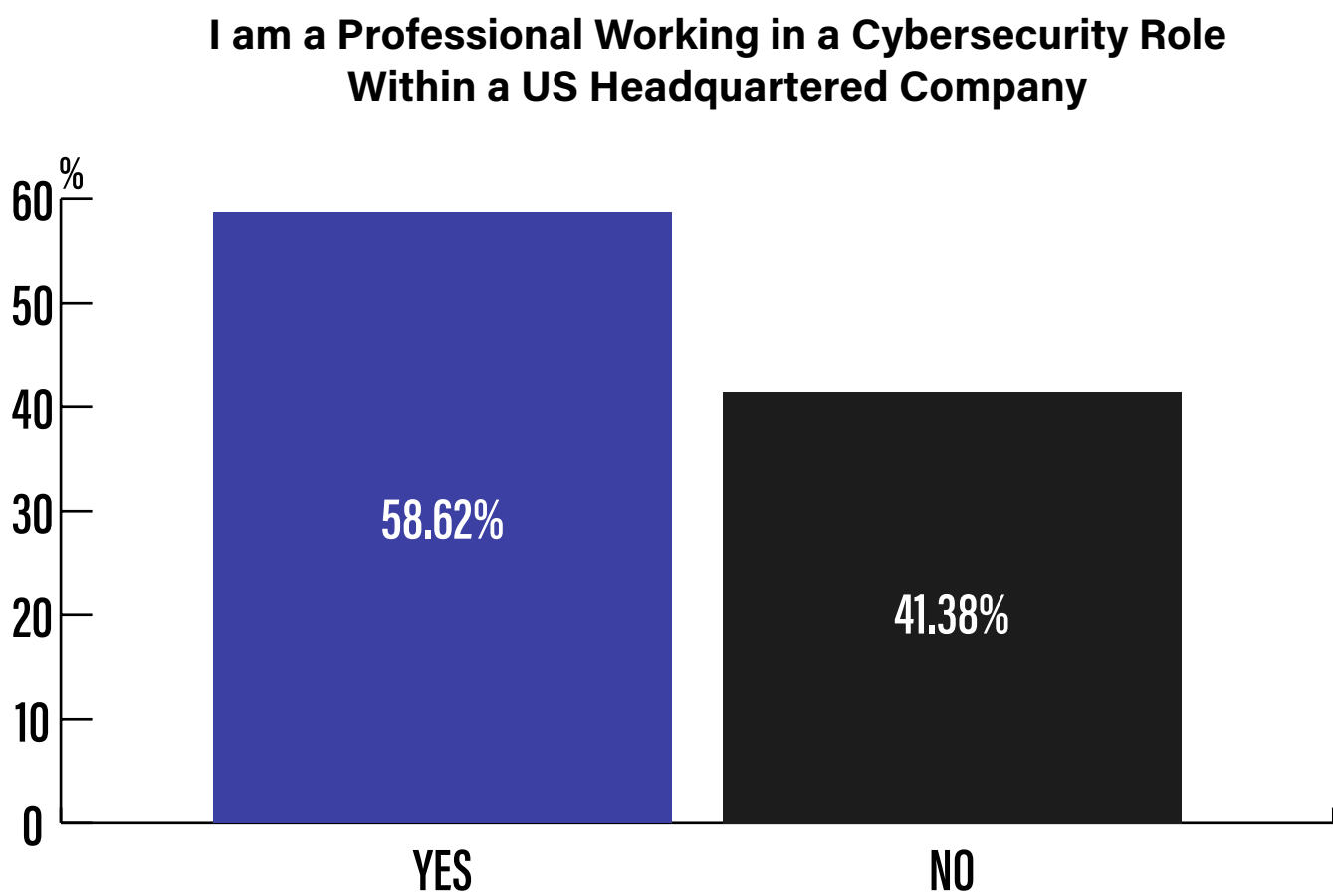
While CISA and companies may consider the outcome of our survey good feedback, it also highlights areas of need and urgent action.

This report makes a case for company-wide participation in cybersecurity awareness for the cybersecurity professional.

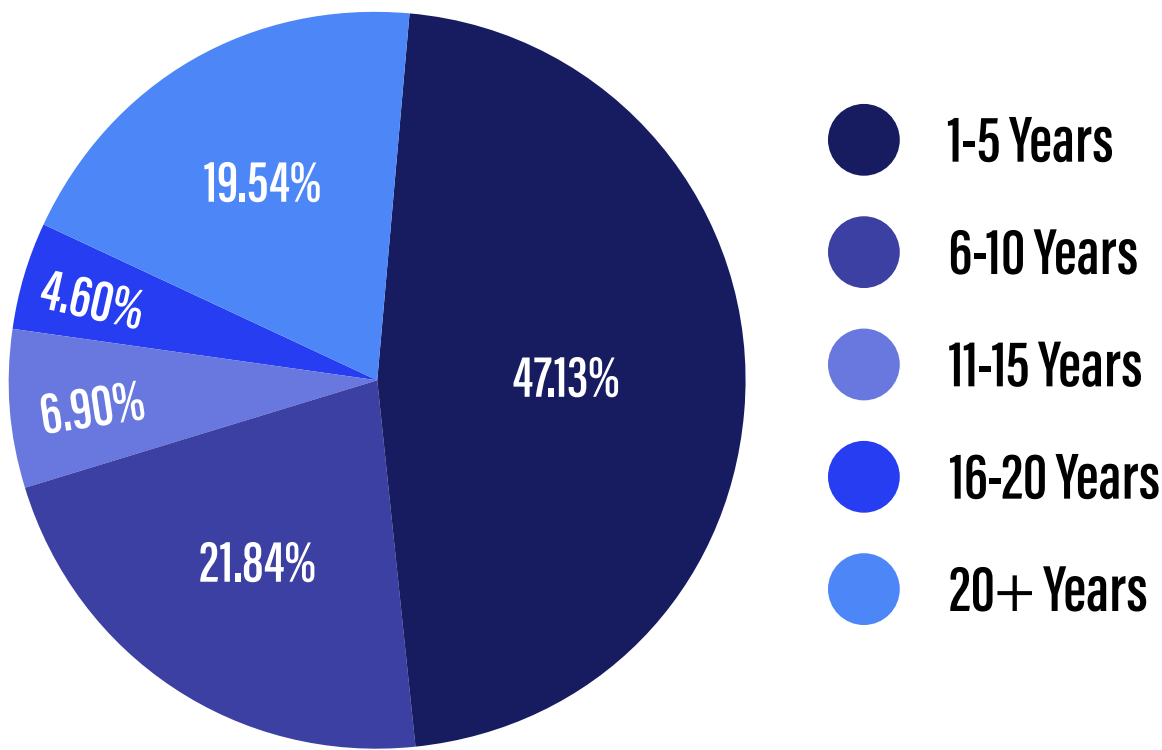
2. Summary of findings

Who took part in this survey?

Above Promotions surveyed cybersecurity professionals in the United States. Some work for U.S. based companies and others for companies headquartered elsewhere.



How many years have you been a cybersecurity professional?



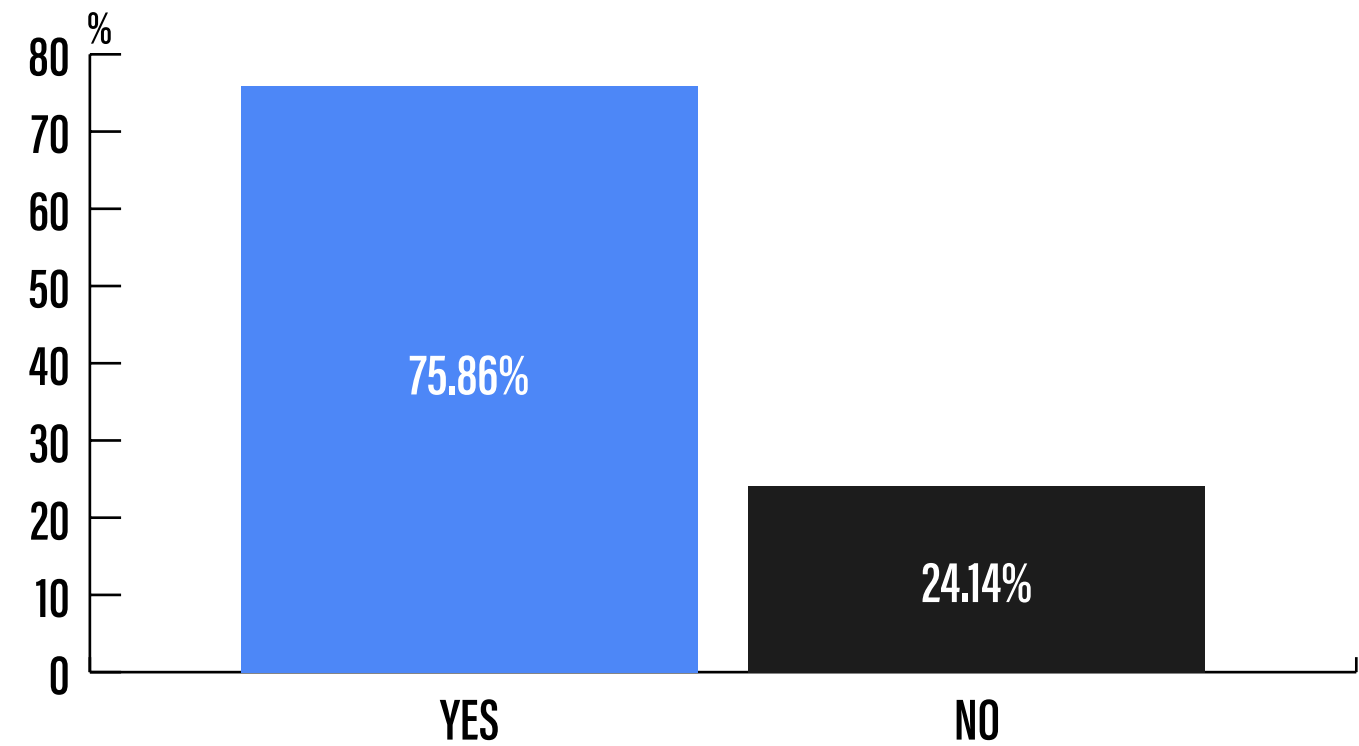
47% have 1-5 years experience, 22% have 6-10 years experience, while 31% have more than ten years experience as cybersecurity professionals. They represent a good mix of experienced and junior cybersecurity professionals.

What we found:

The survey showed that most cybersecurity professionals, approximately 76%, are aware of the CISA and NCSA-led Cybersecurity Awareness Month.

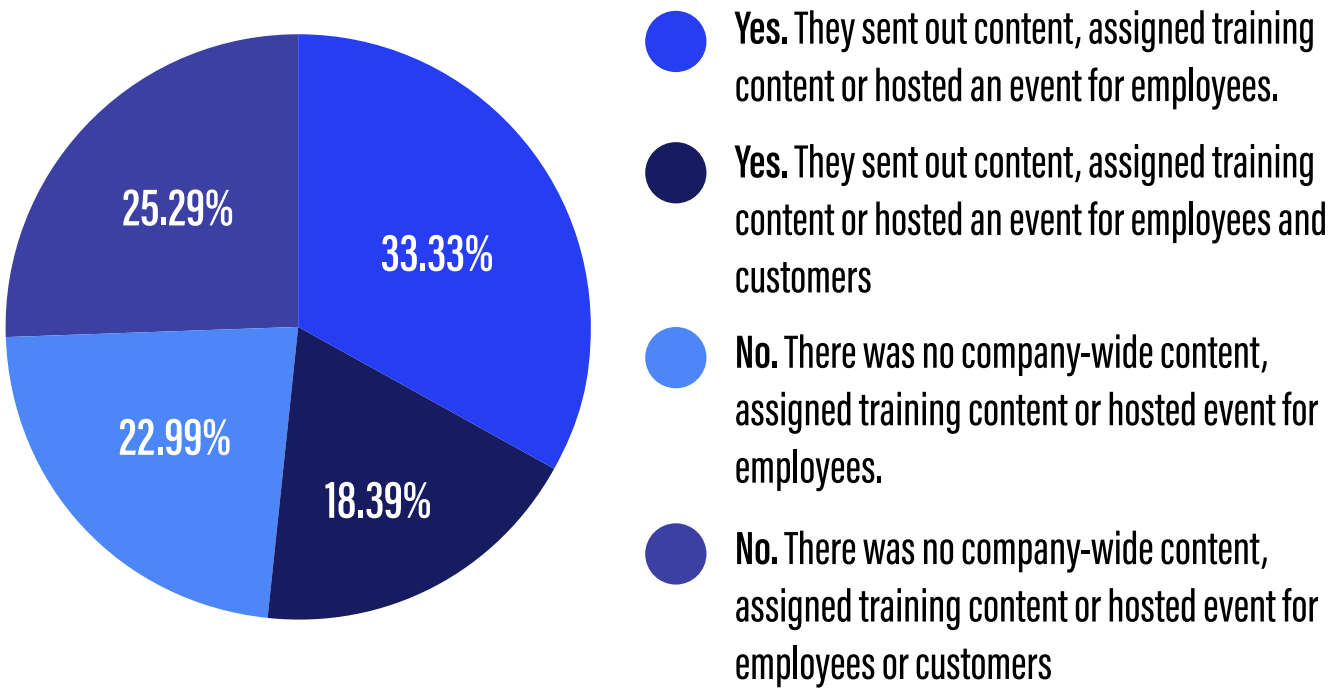
Which is a good thing, except there are still 24% of cybersecurity professionals who do not know about CSAM.

**Knowledge of Cyber Security Awareness Month
Led By CISA and NCSA**



Although participants predominantly (85%) reported that their company's involvement in the fight against cybersecurity incidents is above average, only about 51% in total recognized and marked the CSAM.

**Did your company recognize
Cybersecurity Awareness Month?**



There is a lack of clarity about which department in a company should take ownership of the process. 60% of participants say it is the responsibility of multiple departments, while only 25% think the technology team should lead.

3. Methodology

How did we conducted the survey

We designed and distributed the survey through LinkedIn using a survey tool, YouEngage.

The survey had ten questions, and nine were close-ended questions, while there was only one open-ended question. The open-ended question allowed participants to describe, in their own words, the type of cybersecurity Awareness Month activities they had at their company.

It was an interactive survey, and participation was entirely voluntary with no cohesion or promise of reward.

Participation in the survey required anonymity, and participants could quit during the survey.

Sampling

The survey was sent to a purposive sample of cybersecurity professionals in the United States within our network.

However, there was room for snowballing where participants could share with their cybersecurity colleagues that may be outside our network.

The survey was closed a few weeks after opening, and results tabulated. At the end of the study, One hundred and eleven cybersecurity professionals took the survey.

The survey results were coded, analyzed, and presented using descriptive statistical analysis.

4. Results

What we found

Survey Completion rate:

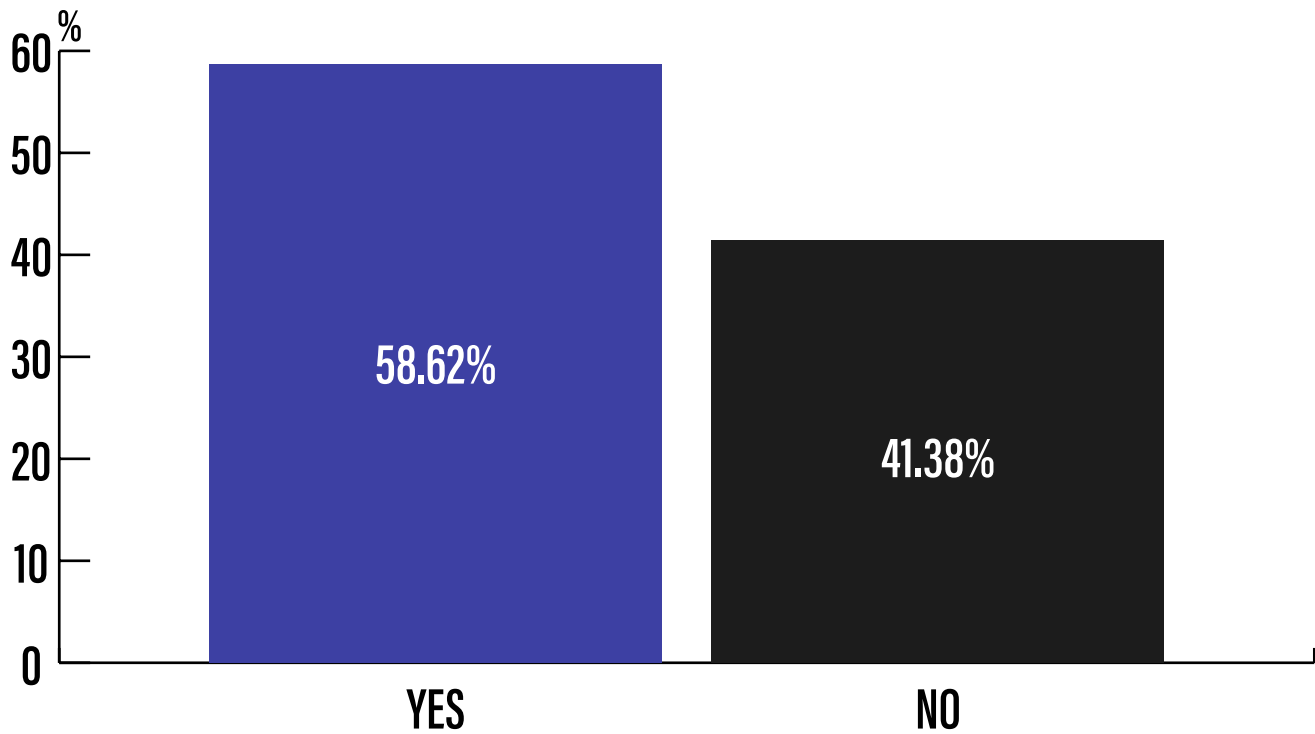
One hundred and eleven (111) cybersecurity professionals started the survey, but only eighty-seven (78.4%) of them completed all questions in the study.

The survey recorded a 78.4% completion rate.

Meet the participants:

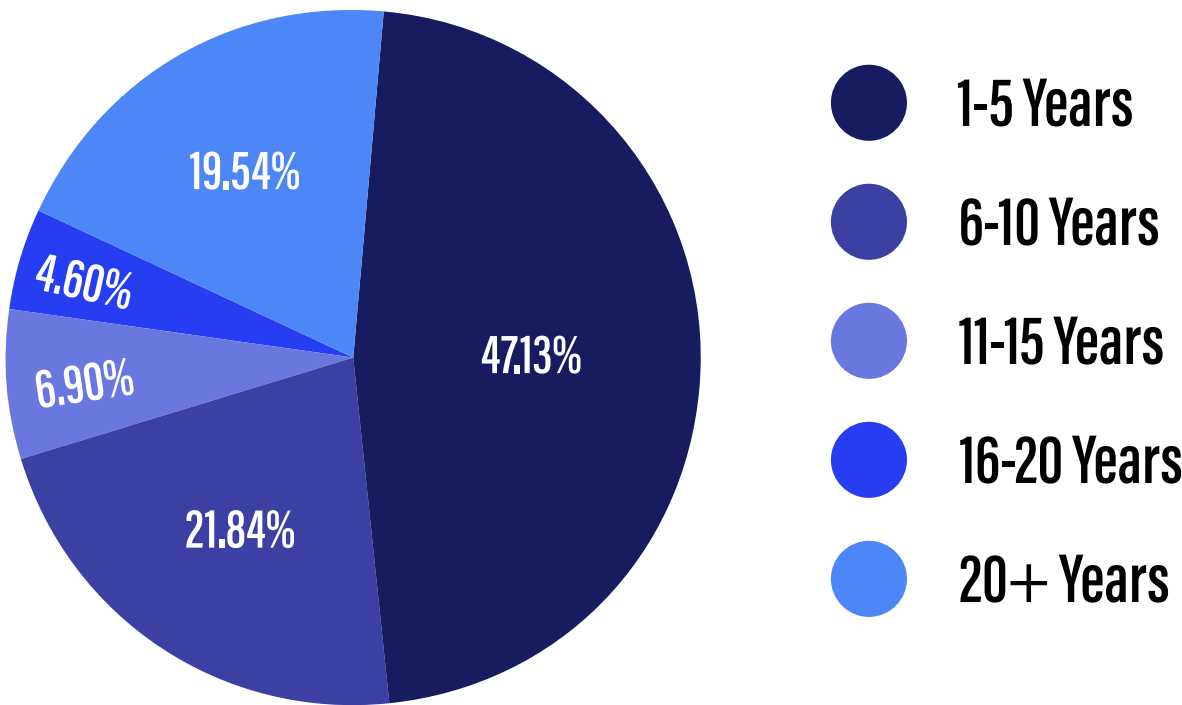
Approximately 59% of the participants are cybersecurity professionals working in a U.S headquartered company, while 41% are not.

I am a Professional Working in a Cybersecurity Role Within a US Headquartered Company



Of the 87 cybersecurity professionals that completed the survey, 47% have 1-5 years experience, 22% have 6-10 years experience, while a total of 31% have more than 10 years experience as cybersecurity professionals.

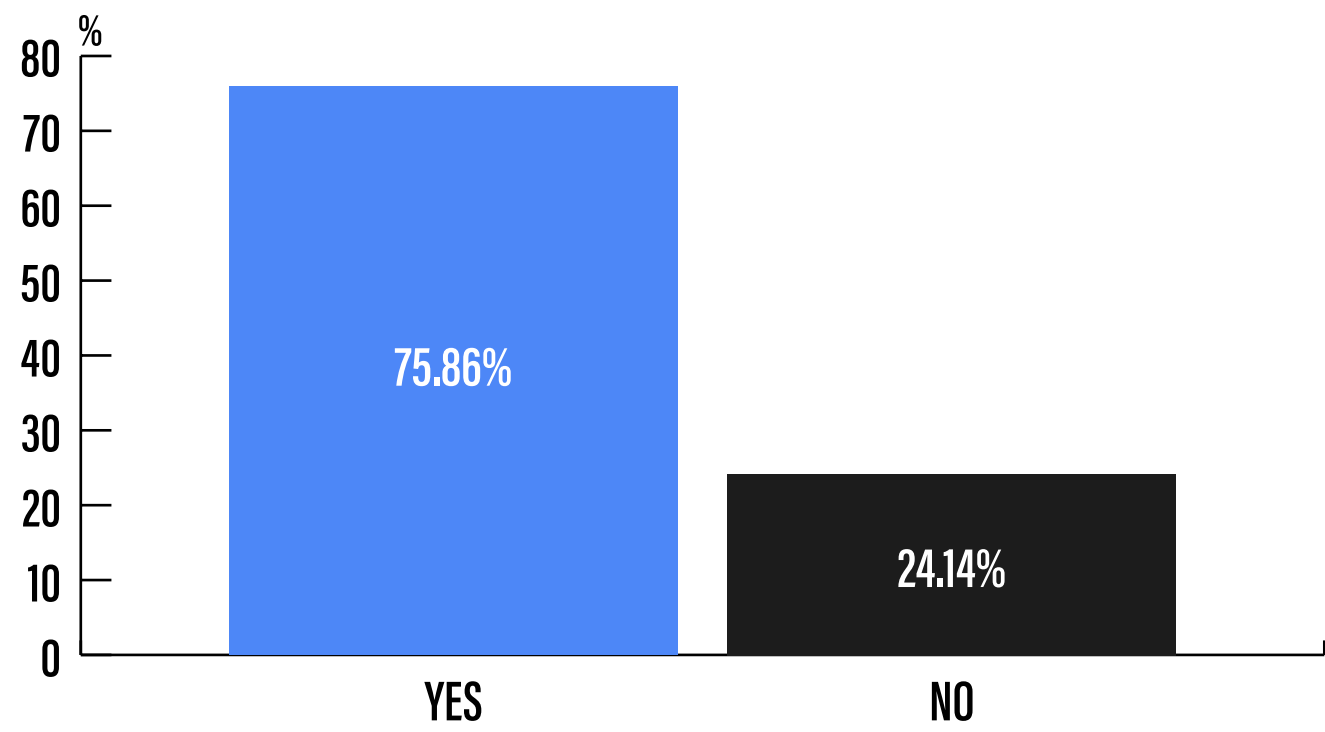
How many years have you been a cybersecurity professional?



Awareness And Recognition of Cybersecurity Awareness Month (CSAM)

The result showed that 76% of cybersecurity professionals surveyed are aware of the Cybersecurity Awareness Month (CSAM) led by the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) and the National Cybersecurity Alliance (NCSA).

Knowledge of Cyber Security Awareness Month Led by CISA and NCSA

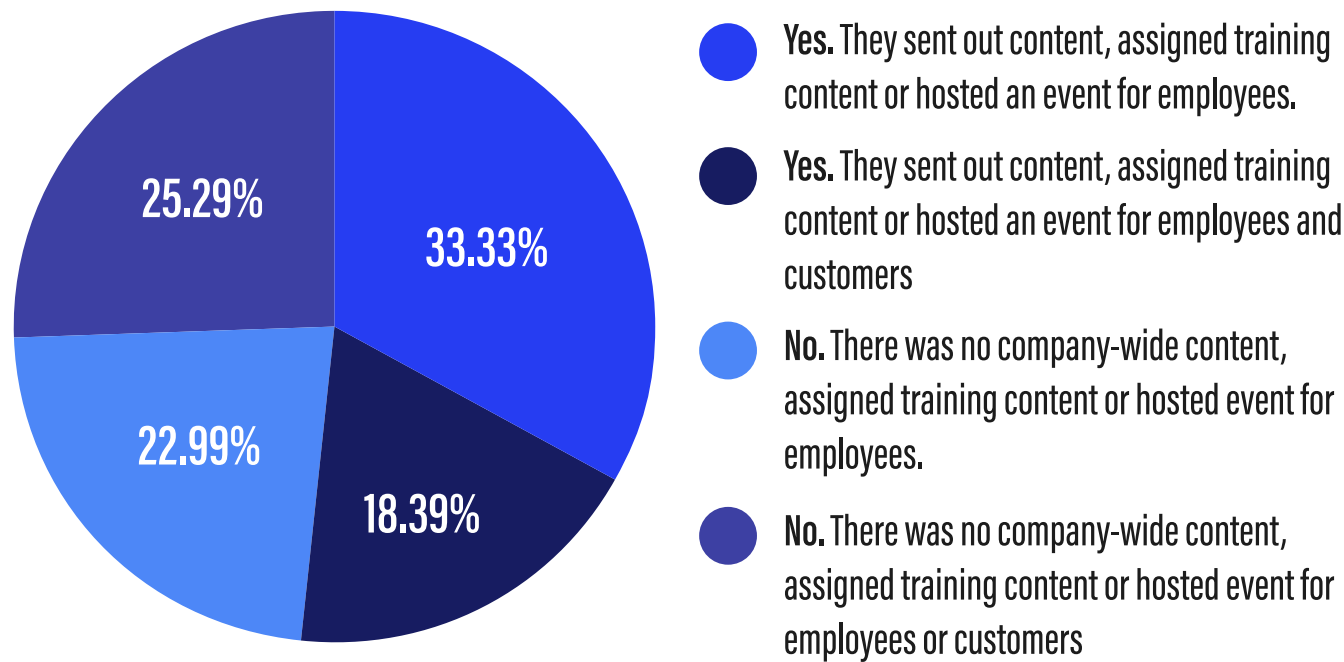


However, while cybersecurity professionals show personal awareness in the CSAM, only 51.7% of companies recognized the event by sending out content, assigning training content, or hosting an event for employees and or customers.

On the other hand, 48.3% of companies did not host any formal event or assign training content to commemorate the CSAM.

33.3% of companies that recognized the CSAM focused on employee enlightenment while only 18.4% of the companies considered customers a vital part of the cybersecurity war.

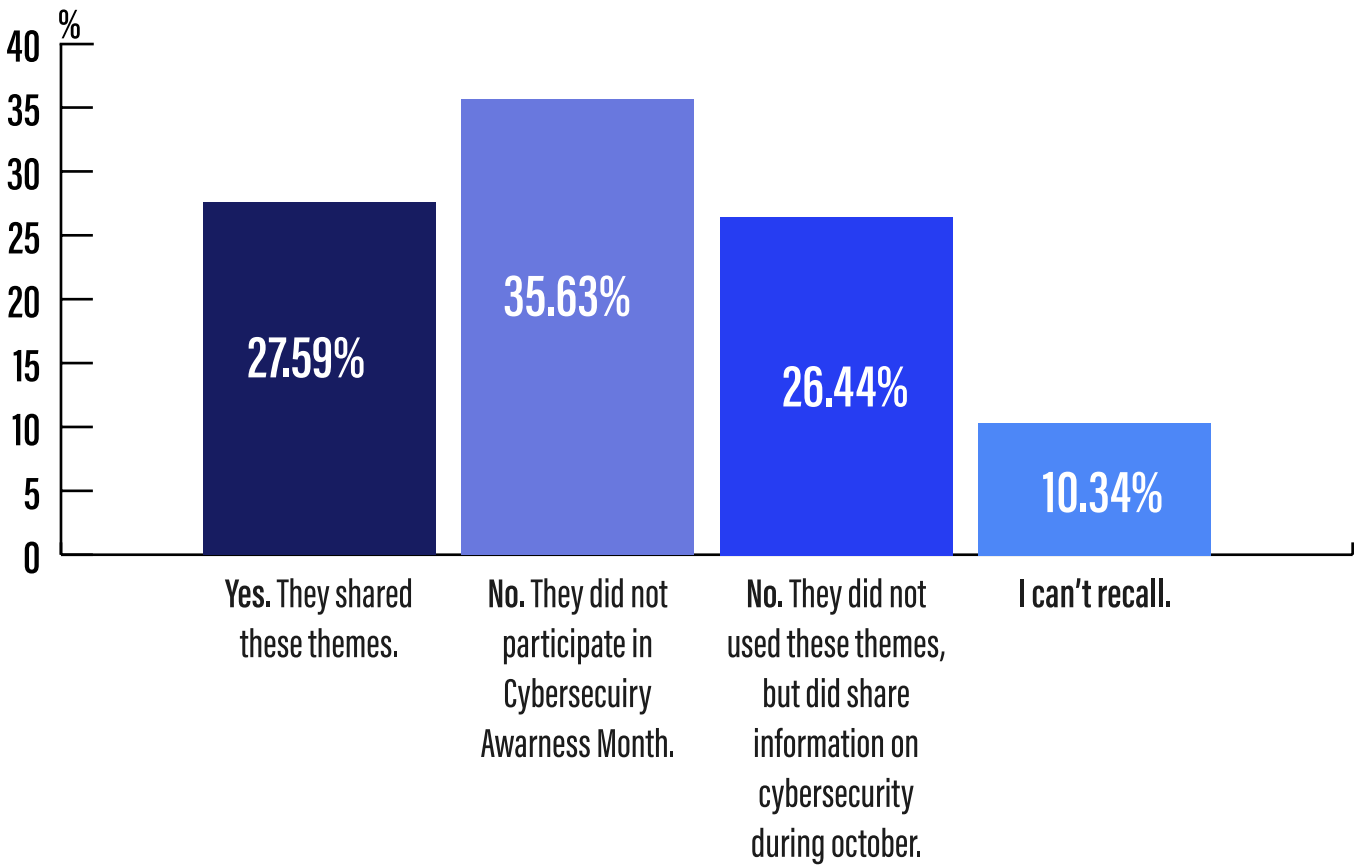
Did your company recognize Cybersecurity Awareness Month?



We dug deeper to know if companies focus on the official weekly themes of CSAM.

27.6% of companies did focus on the themes, while 26.4% did not but shared information on cybersecurity in October 2021. 35.6% of the companies surveyed did not participate in the CSAM.

Did your Company focus on the official weekly themes of Cybersecurity Awareness Month?



Types of activities companies engaged in during CSAM

In what appeared as a twist of findings, most respondents say that their companies did not have any specific activities during October to support cybersecurity awareness. When asked the question below, many replied “none,” “none that I am aware of,” “unsure,” and other ways of saying no activity was done.

However, those who had activities said they were involved in campaigns, training, or events such as lunch and learn, games and challenges, phishing exercises, webinars, signage, and more.

See the top responses below:

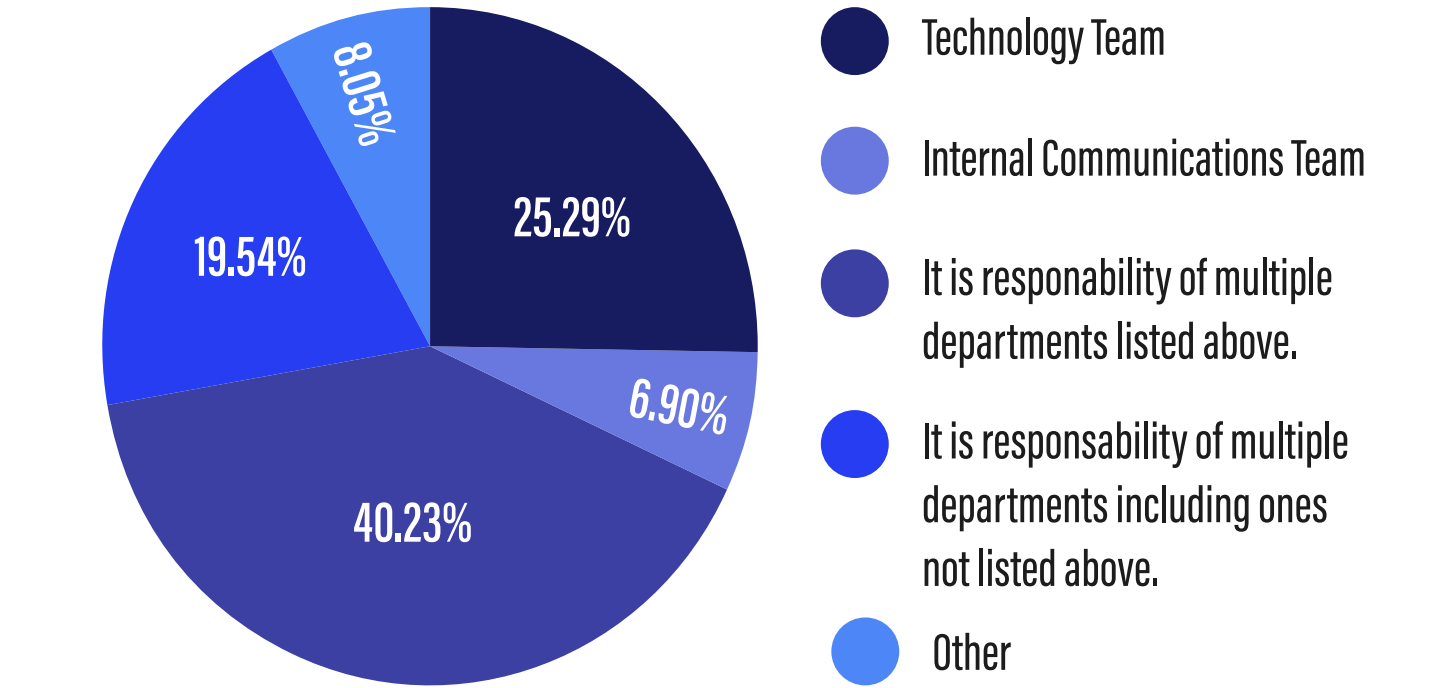
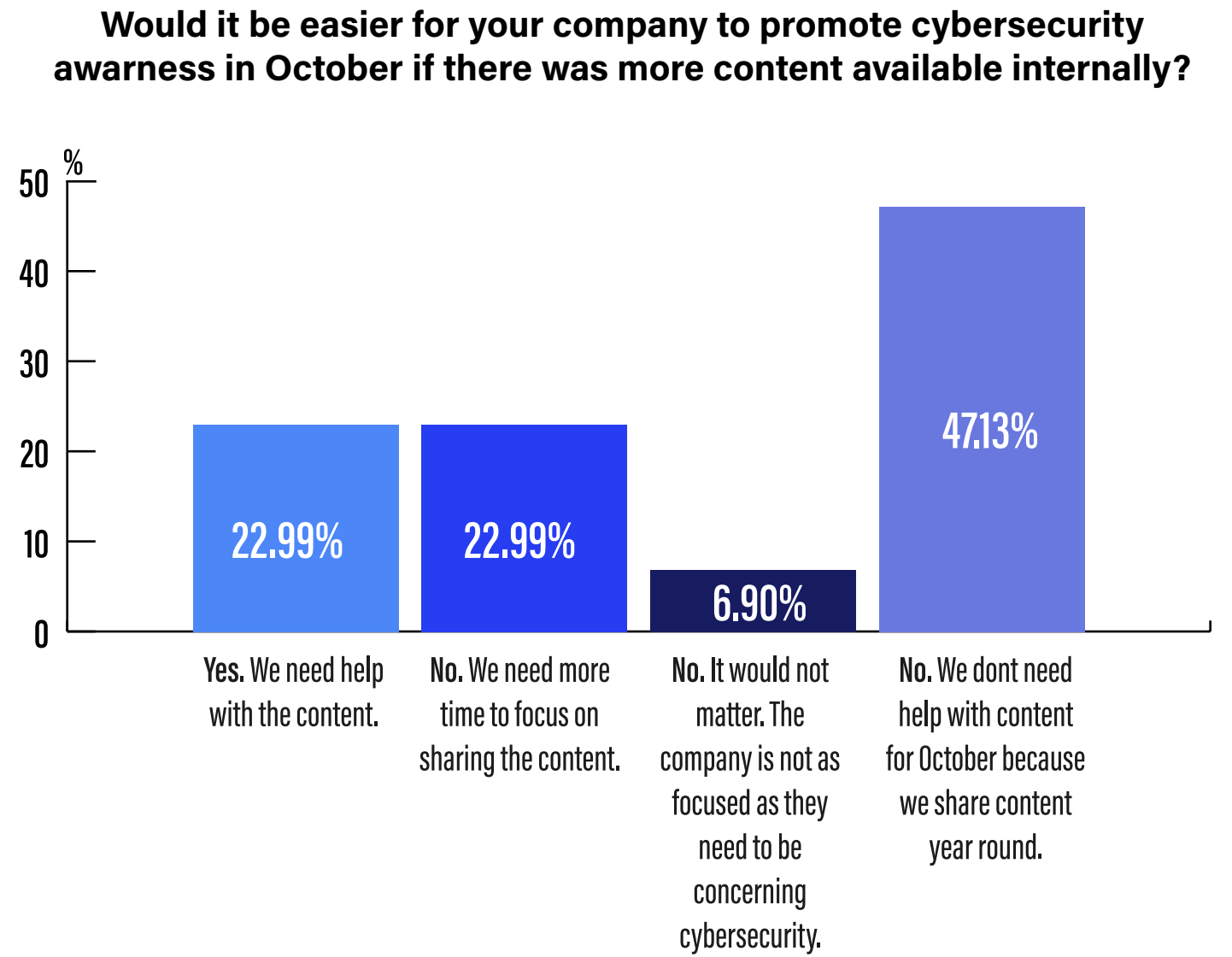
Are there any specific activities your company did during October to support cybersecurity awareness?

- Training, videos, communications, activities.
- Hosted lunch and learns.
- Training and self-development.
- Games, contests, news snippets.
- Challenge games, top score win a prize
- We work with some customers to promote our cybersecurity products, but it is very limited.
- We have a consistent posture of security and cybersecurity awareness with our customers and internal helps.
- Primarily weekly email campaign based on themes from CISA. Modified those with relevant content specific to our company
- A marketing campaign, daily social media posts, free cyber awareness course.
- Yes, they conducted mandatory training and sent phishing e-mail to test awareness and create alerts.
- Phishing email tests for staff.

Would More Content Make a Difference?

No—and most respondents seem to think so as 47% say they share content all year-round. 23% of participants believe more content will help, and another 23% say they need more time to share existing content.

7% of participants do not think more content can make any difference as their companies aren’t as focused as they need to be about cybersecurity.



Cybersecurity awareness creation, which department should take the lead?

A significant part of activities for the CSA month is the distribution of content internally and externally.

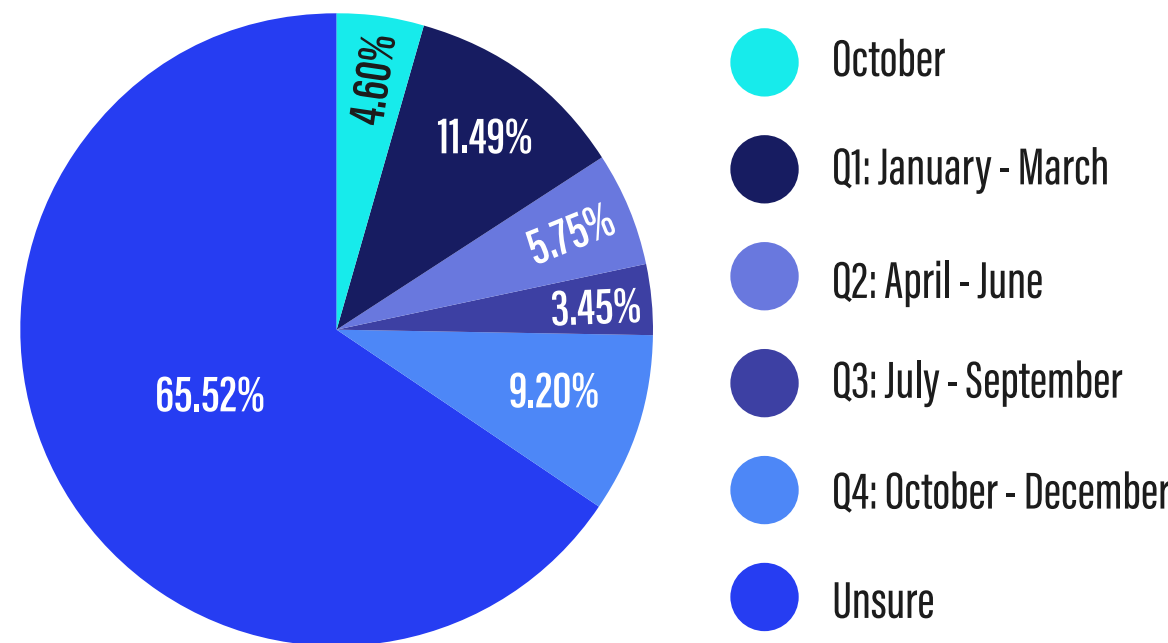
Seeing that 23% of participants say they need more time to distribute content. The question, therefore, is which department should take the lead?

25% of participants think it’s the job of the technology team, while a cumulative majority (60%) consider it the responsibility of multiple departments.

Does CSAM impact companies' cybersecurity incidence plans or preparations?

Interestingly, 66% of survey participants say they are unsure if their companies update their preparation plan or conduct exercises for potential cybersecurity incidents during CSAM or another quarter.

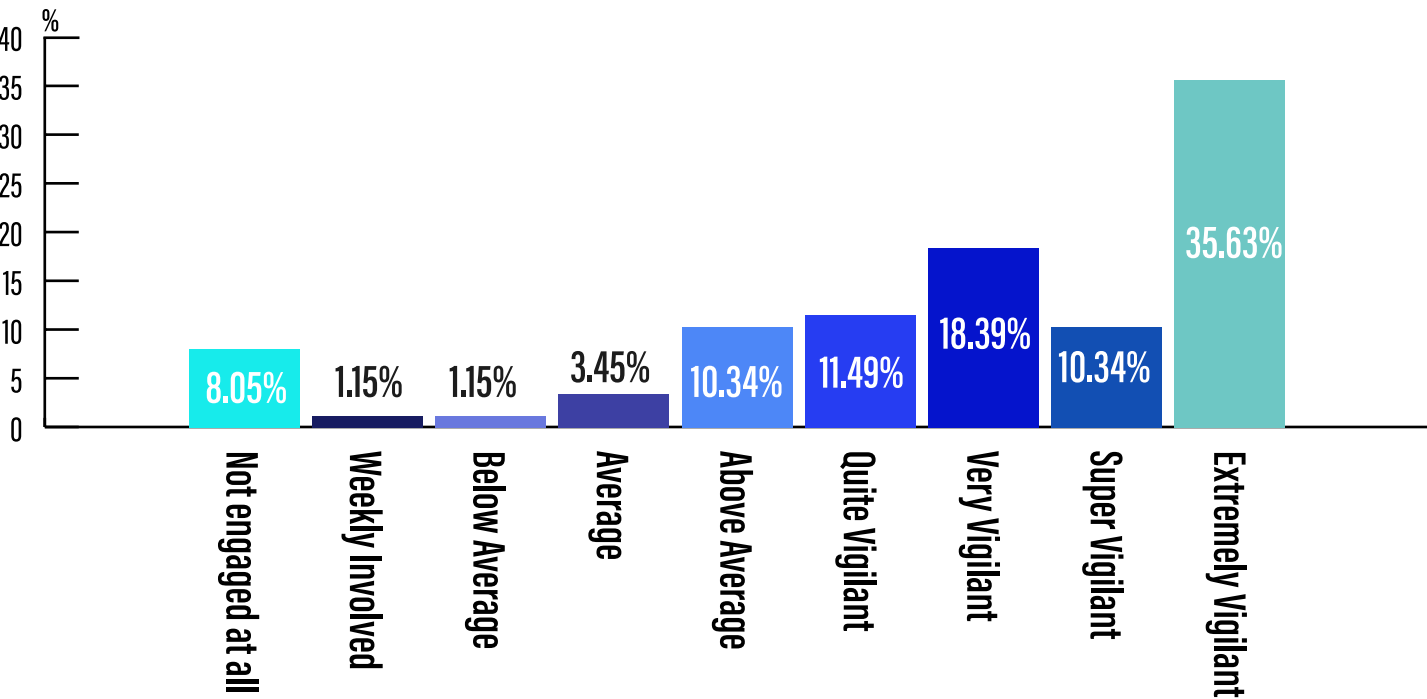
Does your company update its preparation plan or conduct exercises for potential cybersecurity incidents during cybersecurity awarness month or another quarter?



Vigilance and Involvement in the fight against cybersecurity incidents

Overall, the survey showed that a majority of companies, cumulatively 90% are in some way vigilant and involved in the fight against cybersecurity incidents.

On a scale of 1 to 10, please rate how involved your overall company is in the fight against cybersecurity incidents.



5. Limitations

what we did not cover

The scope of this survey limits the extent one can generalize the findings in this study. Larger sample size could potentially provide more insight.

However, although we surveyed cybersecurity professionals, expanding the sample to include other technology professionals and leaders of other departments will present a clearer picture of how a company views and participates in the CSAM.

It will provide clarity on companies' measures to fight cybersecurity incidents across the entire organization.

Expanded studies in these areas should bolster the findings of this current study.



6. Conclusion

Key Takeaways

If Cybersecurity Awareness Month was a measure of companies' seriousness towards the fight against cybersecurity incidents, there's still a lot of work to do.

While CISA provides guides and different types of cybersecurity content, some companies are yet to take full advantage.

Cybersecurity is everyone's responsibility, and awareness is a critical part. Leaving awareness to any internal department on top of all they have to do, is often counterproductive.

Companies will benefit from routine cybersecurity training, contests, games, and drills conducted by external consultants to hold everyone accountable.

Cybersecurity Awareness Month will be the perfect time to assess your company's readiness against cybersecurity threats.

If you will like to learn more about Above Promotions and how we can help drive cybersecurity awareness among your internal team and your customers, contact us.