



# 2019 Incident Management Trends

## Executive Summary

In March 2019, OnPage conducted an online survey of 108 IT and managed service provider (MSP) professionals to help organizations compare approaches used in incident management.

Eighty seven percent of respondents have their offices in the United States. Another three percent are located in Europe and the remaining respondents are located in Asia or South America/Caribbean Region.

The majority of MSP respondents are most concerned with increasing revenues and improving efficiency. Most are providing advanced security services for their customers. Security breaches and hiring/retaining talent were top of mind for IT respondents. Seventy eight percent of all respondents are planning on hiring employees this year. Eighty six percent of respondents are using ticketing/PSA platforms to track incidents. Another eight percent are using a home-grown solution to manage incidents.

Seventy two percent of respondents are using digital schedulers/calendars included in their ticketing or alerting systems, or are using Outlook calendaring. They are using various and redundant approaches to get notified of incidents and to collaborate on ongoing tickets, including email, phone, apps, SMS, chat/IM and ticketing systems.

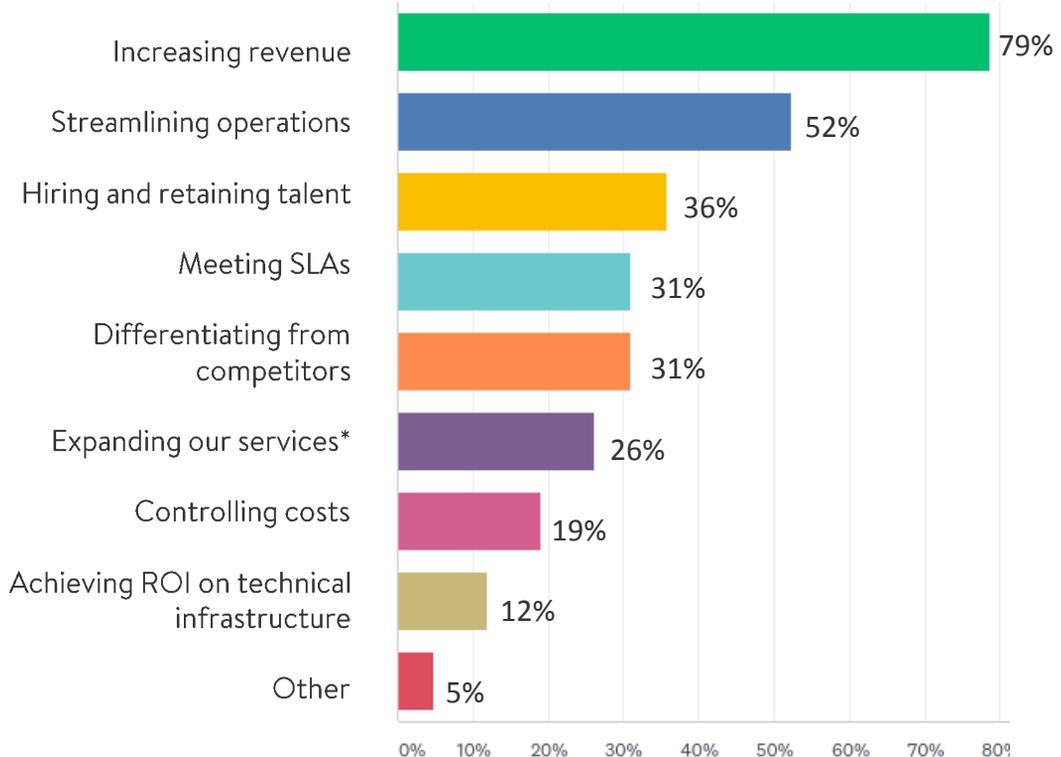
Respondents show a wide distribution in terms of number of critical incidents they experienced in the past twelve months as well as how long it takes them to notify the right person when a critical incident occurred. The majority are using an alerting solution to escalate alerts if there's not an immediate response to an incident notification. Eighty five percent of respondents say they either never miss critical alerts or are only missing them 10 percent of the time. Most respondents say they use reporting tools to measure incident management metrics, but a minority say they always meet desired incident response times.

Following are the detailed findings for each of the survey questions.

# What are the top three concerns or challenges for your MSP business in 2019?

Increasing revenue is the top concern of MSPs, by a large margin (79 percent). Next in importance is the need to streamline operations (52 percent). Hiring and retaining talent, meeting SLAs and differentiating from competitors are also concerns, indicated by 36, 31 and 31 percent of MSPs respectively.

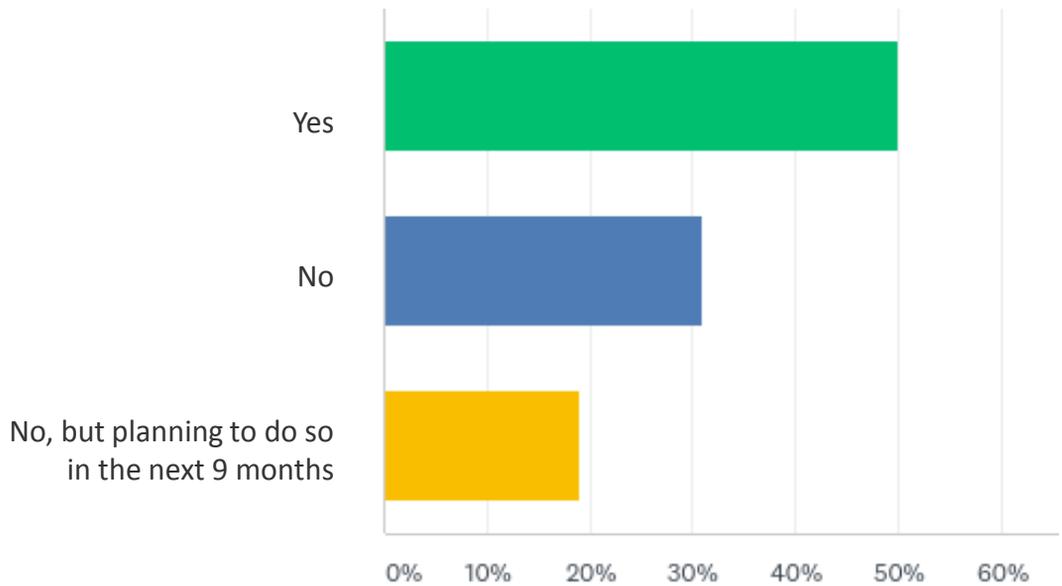
These findings suggest that business concerns, rather than technical issues are top of mind for MSPs. Any incident management technology or processes that MSP management adopts must positively impact business results.



\* Security-as-a-service, hardware-as-a-service, expanding into other locations

## Are you offering MSSP/advanced security services?

Sixty nine percent of MSPs say that they are currently offering security services to their clients (50 percent) or will do so within the next six months (19 percent). This reflects the growing concern around cybersecurity, shared by businesses of all sizes, across industries.



## What are the top three concerns or challenges for the IT team in 2019?

The top concern for IT teams is security (63 percent), followed by hiring and retaining talent (48 percent). IT continues to pursue its goal of having more influence in the organization, with 43 percent of respondents citing this challenge. Thirty five percent of those surveyed are also concerned with staff burnout.

The implications for incident management are to help teams prevent cybersecurity threats, prepare them for security incidents and reduce resolution time in case of a breach. Also, a balanced workload approach to incident management can be used as an incentive for hiring and retaining IT employees, as well as reducing staff burnout.

With incident management as an important element of a security strategy, IT can make their case for influencing strategy within their companies.

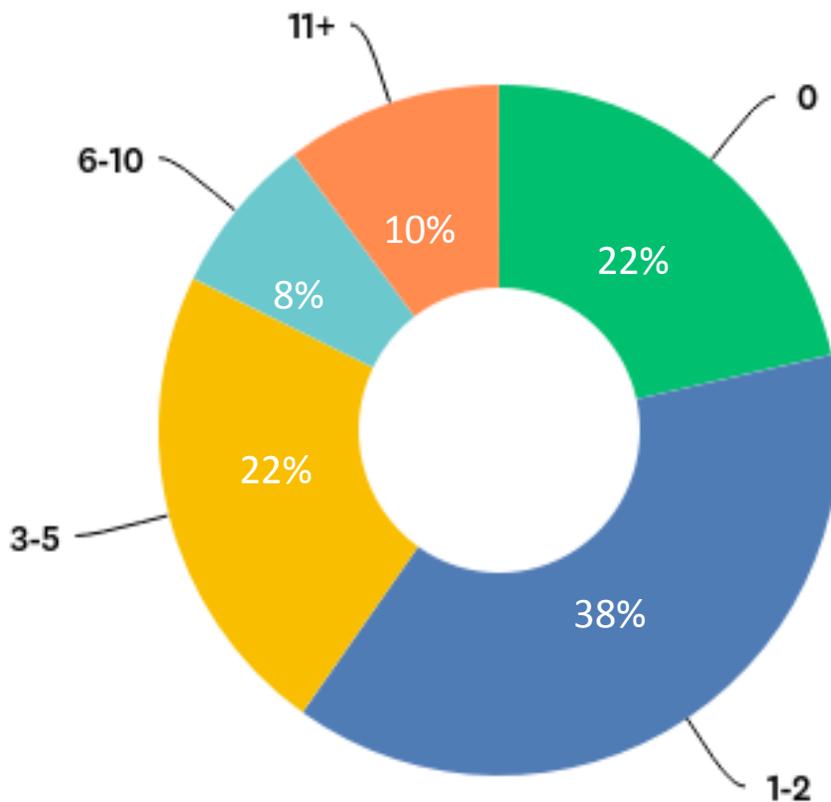


\* Other answers include: “Maintaining pace and stability together”, “Outages”, “Working to meet business demand”, “Legacy modernization”, “Implementing automation”, “Cloud tech integration”, “Cost of maintaining competitiveness in the healthcare space.”

## How many employees is your team planning to hire this year?

Most companies are hiring this year, with 60 percent of respondents planning to add between one and four new members to their teams. Eighteen percent say they are hiring six or more people, and only 22 percent of respondents are not planning to make new hires in 2019.

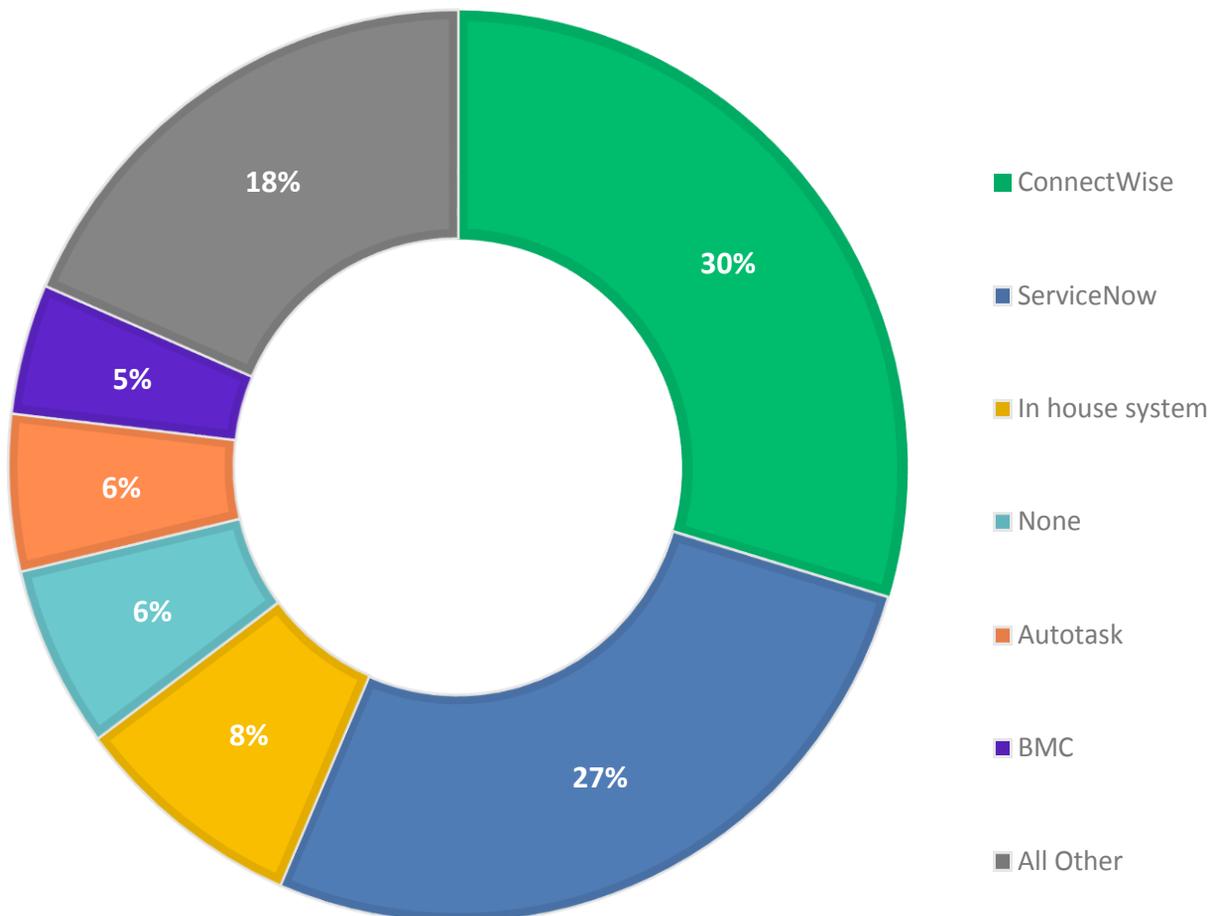
IT and MSP organizations continue to grow, and with a rigorous incident management plan in place, new hires can ramp up faster and better collaborate with team members.



## Which ticketing/PSA platform do you use?

ConnectWise and ServiceNow are the most popular ticketing/PSA platforms, with 57 percent of respondents using one of these two systems (30 percent and 27 percent respectively). Eight percent of respondents use a system built in house and six percent do not use a ticketing/PSA platform.

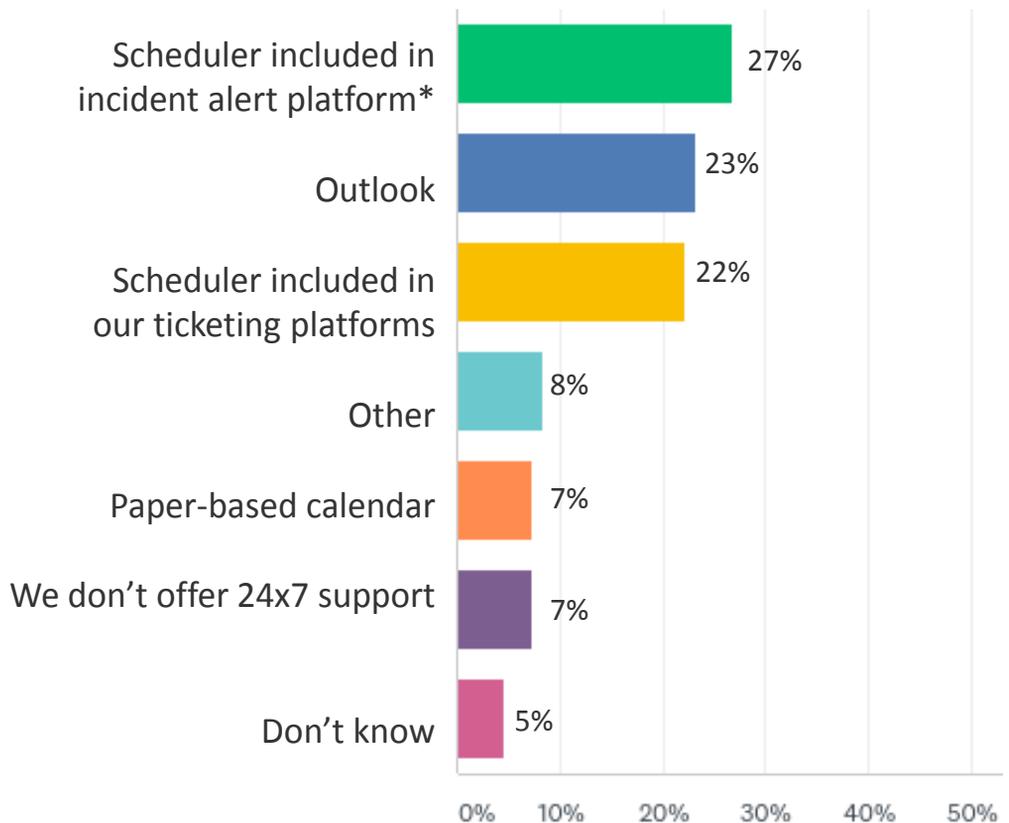
Because of the high level of adoption of ticketing and PSA platforms, standalone incident alert management systems must be able to integrate well with these platforms and have strong APIs to interact with home-grown solutions in order to be used effectively.



## Which on-call scheduling system do you use to coordinate 24x7 support?

Twenty seven percent of respondents are using an on-call scheduler that included in an incident alert platform. Twenty three percent are using Outlook calendars and 22 percent rely on the schedulers included in their ticketing platforms.

Most IT and MSPs are benefiting from the use of digital calendars that are easy to share and update, to manage their on-call scheduling process. Only seven percent are using a static, paper-based system. Incident alert management solutions need to include a feature-rich scheduler and also work with other digital scheduling solutions such as Outlook to ensure adoption.

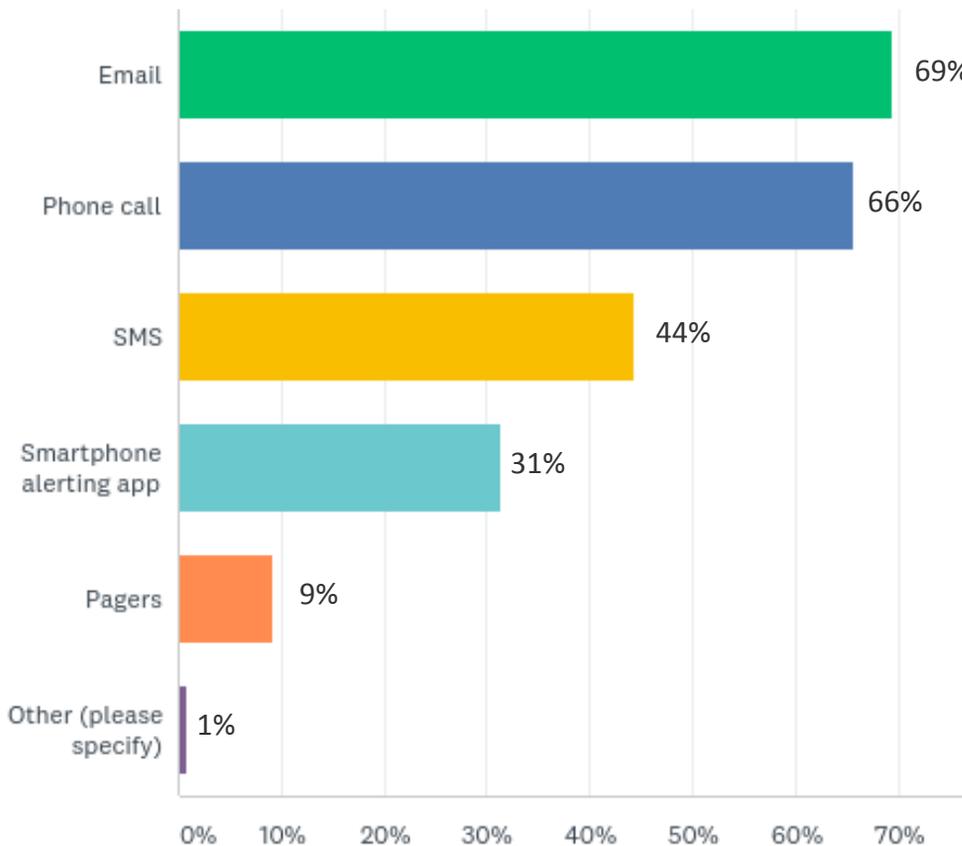


\*Such as OnPage, PagerDuty, OpsGenie, etc.

## How are you notified of critical incidents?

The majority of respondents are using a combination of email (69 percent) and phone calls (66 percent) to notify their teams of critical incidents. Thirty one percent are using a smartphone alerting app for notification.

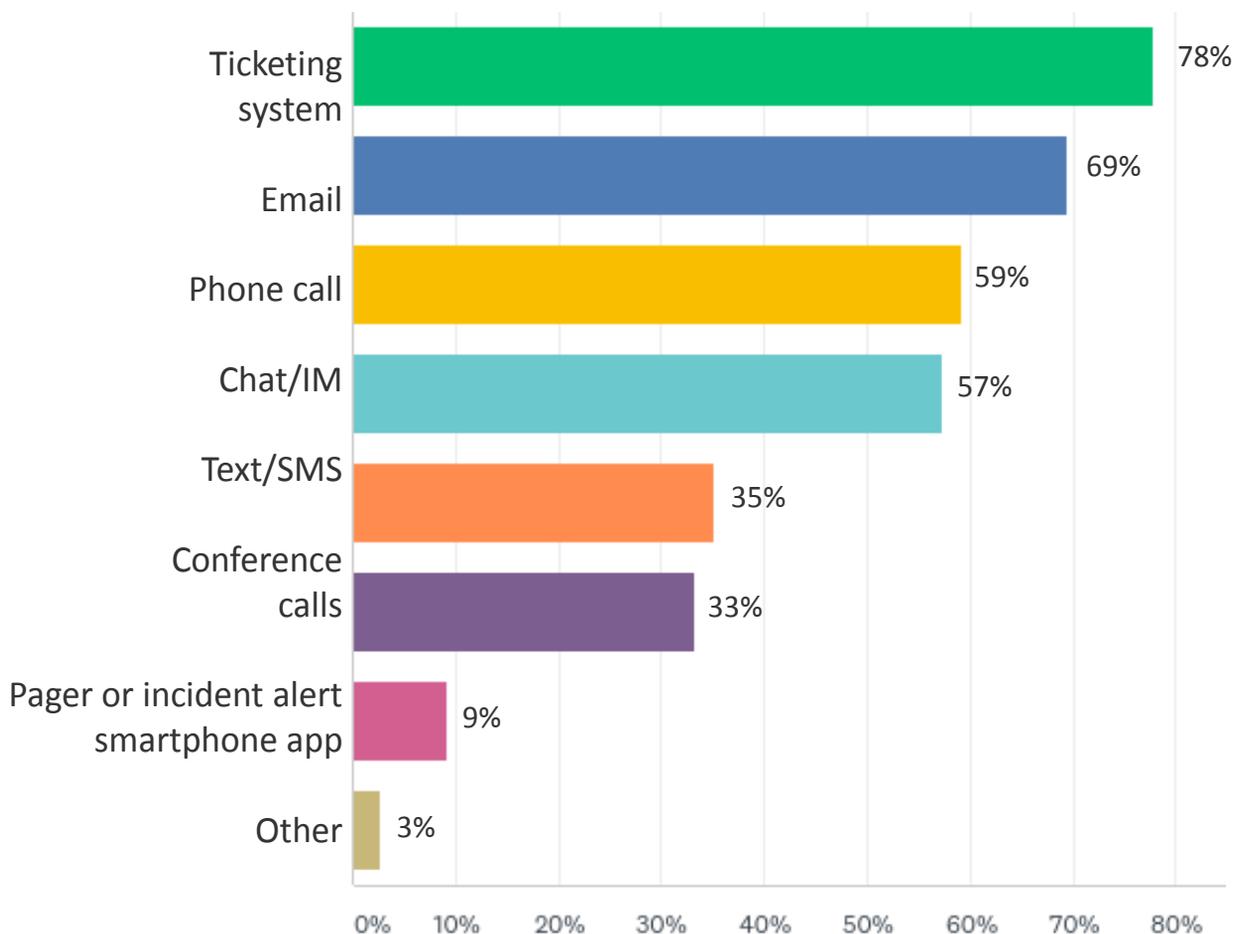
These findings show that teams are using redundant way to get notified of critical incidents. Organizations should review their incident management approaches to makes sure this redundancy is part of a clear, efficient and effective process that reduces time to response rather than adding confusion and delays. They should also make sure that audit trail data is centralized and can automatically take input across the multiple notification methods.



## What communications method(s) does your team use to collaborate on tickets?

Similar to the finding on notifications, respondents are using a variety of systems to collaborate during incident resolution. Seventy eight percent use their ticketing systems but are also very likely to collaborate using email (69 percent), phone calls (59 percent) and chat/IM (57 percent).

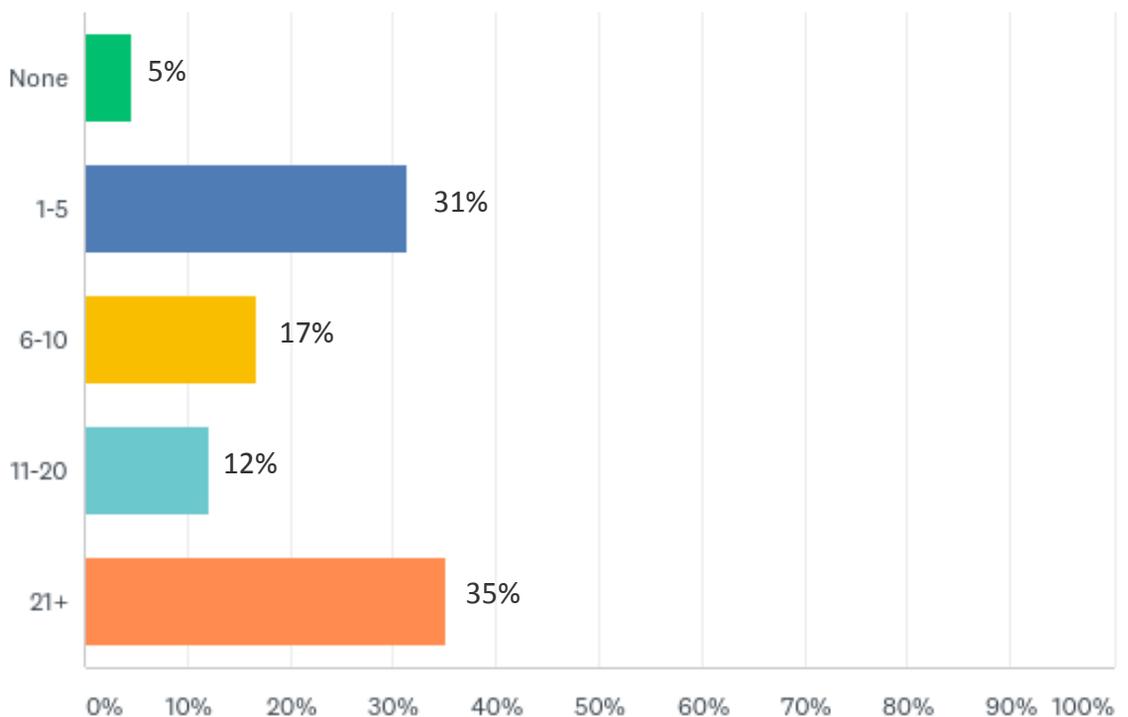
An effective incident management process requires a way to consolidate the messages under one data system in real time, ideally within the ticketing system, for audit trail review and post-mortem reporting.



## How many critical incident alerts has your team experienced in the past 12 months?

Respondents had varied experiences in terms of the number of critical incidents reported over the past twelve months. Thirty one percent experienced 1-5 incidents, and 35 percent reported more than 21 incidents.

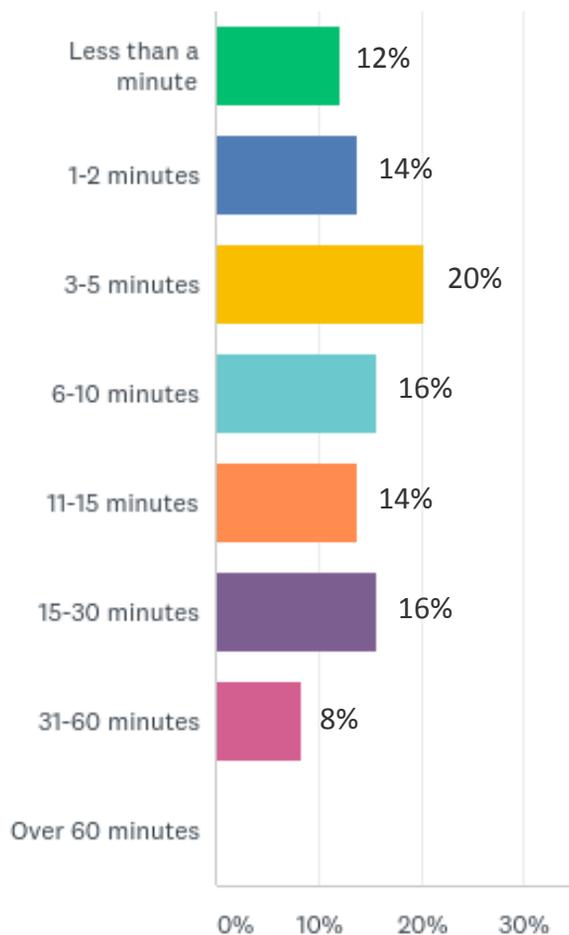
Teams experiencing more than 21 incidents per month have the greatest need for an effective incident management process, including alerting, clear on-call and escalation policies and detailed audit trail reporting.



## When a critical incident occurs, how long does it take to notify the right person who can manage the situation?

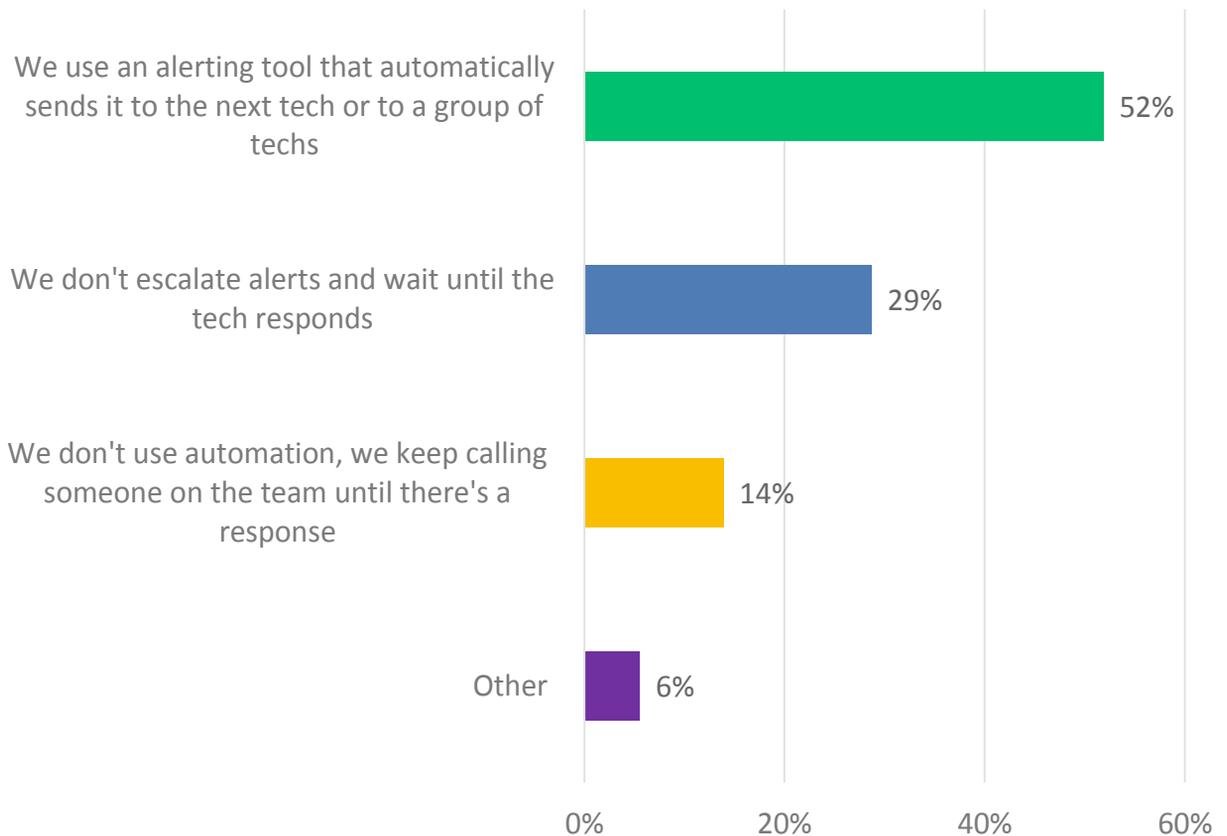
Respondents also had a wide distribution of experiences in the length of time it takes to notify the right person when a critical incident occurs. The most popular answer was 3-5 minutes (20 percent response rate). Only 12 percent achieved notification in less than a minute. Twenty four percent report 15 – 60 minute delays.

A well-planned incident alert management process along with the right technology can drastically reduce the time it takes to get a critical notification to the appropriate tech. As a goal, it should take less than five minutes to contact the right tech to resolve critical incidents, no matter the day or time of day.



## How do you escalate alerts if there is no immediate response from the tech that's alerted?

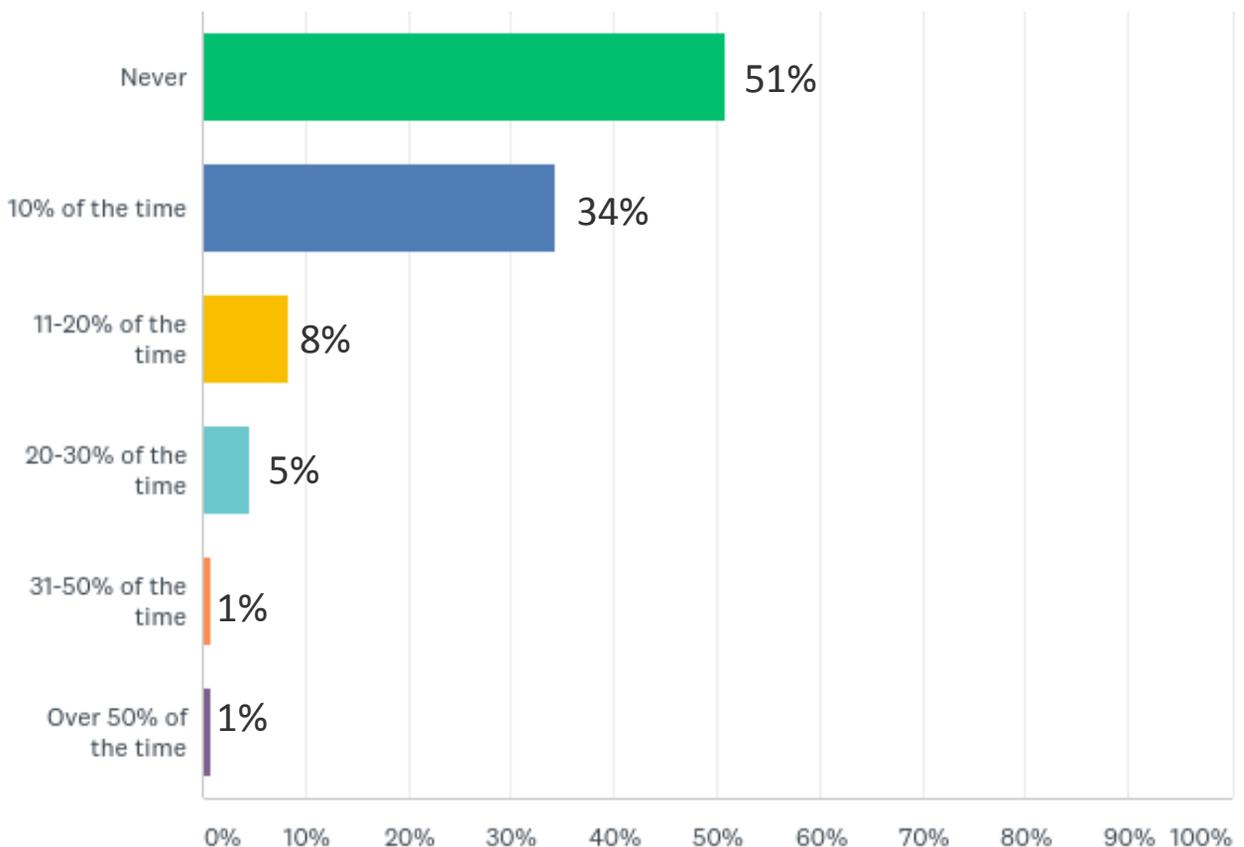
Fifty two percent of respondents have a way to automatically escalate an alert if there's no response. The remaining respondents are either not escalating alerts or doing so with a "manual" process.



## How often does your team miss critical alerts?

Forty nine percent of respondents are still missing critical alerts. Fifteen percent say that they are missing critical alerts more than 10 percent of the time.

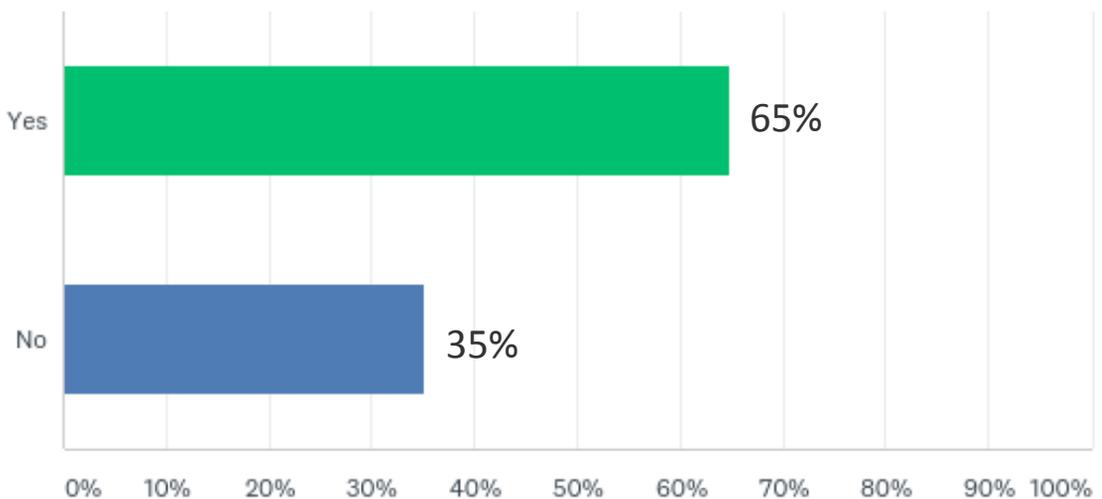
Missing even one critical alert can mean millions of dollars in revenue and/or productivity. Organizations should aim to reduce critical alerts to zero. With today's advances in incident alert management and the right processes, this is a very achievable goal that can translate into a competitive advantage.



## Does your team use reporting tools to keep track of and report on metrics such as the number of alerts, time until alert is responded to or time until the incident is resolved?

Sixty five percent of respondents are using reporting tools for incident management. This lets IT and MSP teams review their performance and determine areas of improvement in terms of process, technology and skills.

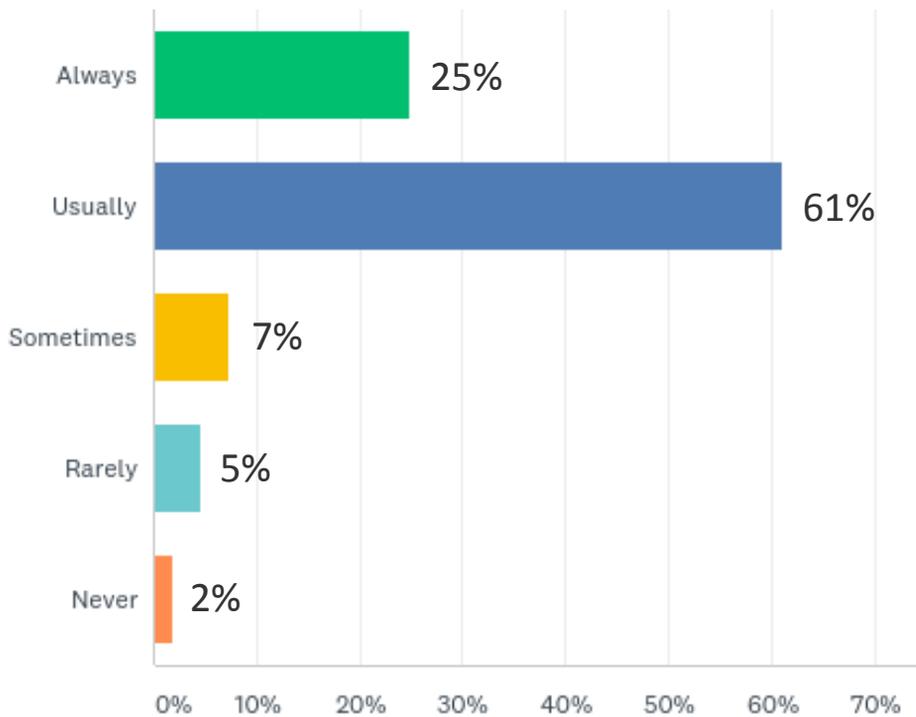
In this survey, organizations that report never having missed critical alerts are more likely to use reporting tools than respondents who say they have missed critical alerts. This suggests that a focus on quantifiable goals for incident management results in better processes and performance. Teams that have not yet adopted incident management reporting are at a disadvantage and should make it a priority to measure performance and conduct post-mortem meetings after each incident.



# How often does your team meet desired incident response times?

75 percent of respondents say they don't always meet desired incident response times, although a majority (61 percent) say they usually do.

Among our respondents, there's room for improvement in time to response. To make sure teams never miss response goals, managers should review and improve their approaches to incident management.



## About OnPage

OnPage's award-winning incident alert management system for IT and managed service provider (MSP) professionals provides the industry's only ALERT-UNTIL-READ notification capabilities. Built around the incident resolution lifecycle, OnPage helps teams reduce downtime and costs while improving coordination and performance.

OnPage's escalation, redundancy and scheduling features ensure that a critical message is never missed. Infinitely more reliable and secure than emails, text messages and phone calls, OnPage provides instant visibility and feedback on alerts. As part of IT service management, the solution tracks alert delivery, ticket status and responses, delivering complete audit trail reporting during and after each incident. The OnPage platform includes seamless integration with mission-critical systems, including ServiceNow and other leading platforms, to help deliver optimum service levels and get the most value from IT investments, making sure that sensors, monitoring systems and people have a reliable way to escalate critical alerts to the right person immediately.

IT and MSP organizations trust OnPage's incident alert management system to help them reduce downtime, meet SLA commitments and keep teams motivated and performing at a high level.

For more information, visit [www.onpage.com](http://www.onpage.com), contact the company at [marketing@onpagecorp.com](mailto:marketing@onpagecorp.com) or at (781) 916-0040.

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