

Where coworking operators still lose time – and what that means

New operator research from Spacebring with additional market context from the Instant Group.

UK coworking and flex space operators are still losing time to operational friction

This research combines a focused survey of UK operators with broader operator conversations and additional market context from Instant Group.

63%

run their space on
2–3 separate apps

75%

still manually fix billing
at least sometimes

50%

still lack fully self-
serve booking flows

10h

saved each week would
go straight into growth

4,270

UK flexible workspaces in Q1 2026
— a large, crowded market.

WHY THIS MATTERS NOW

Demand is shifting, and operators need better visibility

The UK flex space market is already large and crowded. CoworkingCafe reported 4,270 UK flexible workspaces in Q1 2026.

The Instant Group data shows that while London demand fell 14.3% YoY, growth is appearing in commuter and regional hubs, and 1–2 desk requirements are becoming an even larger share of demand.

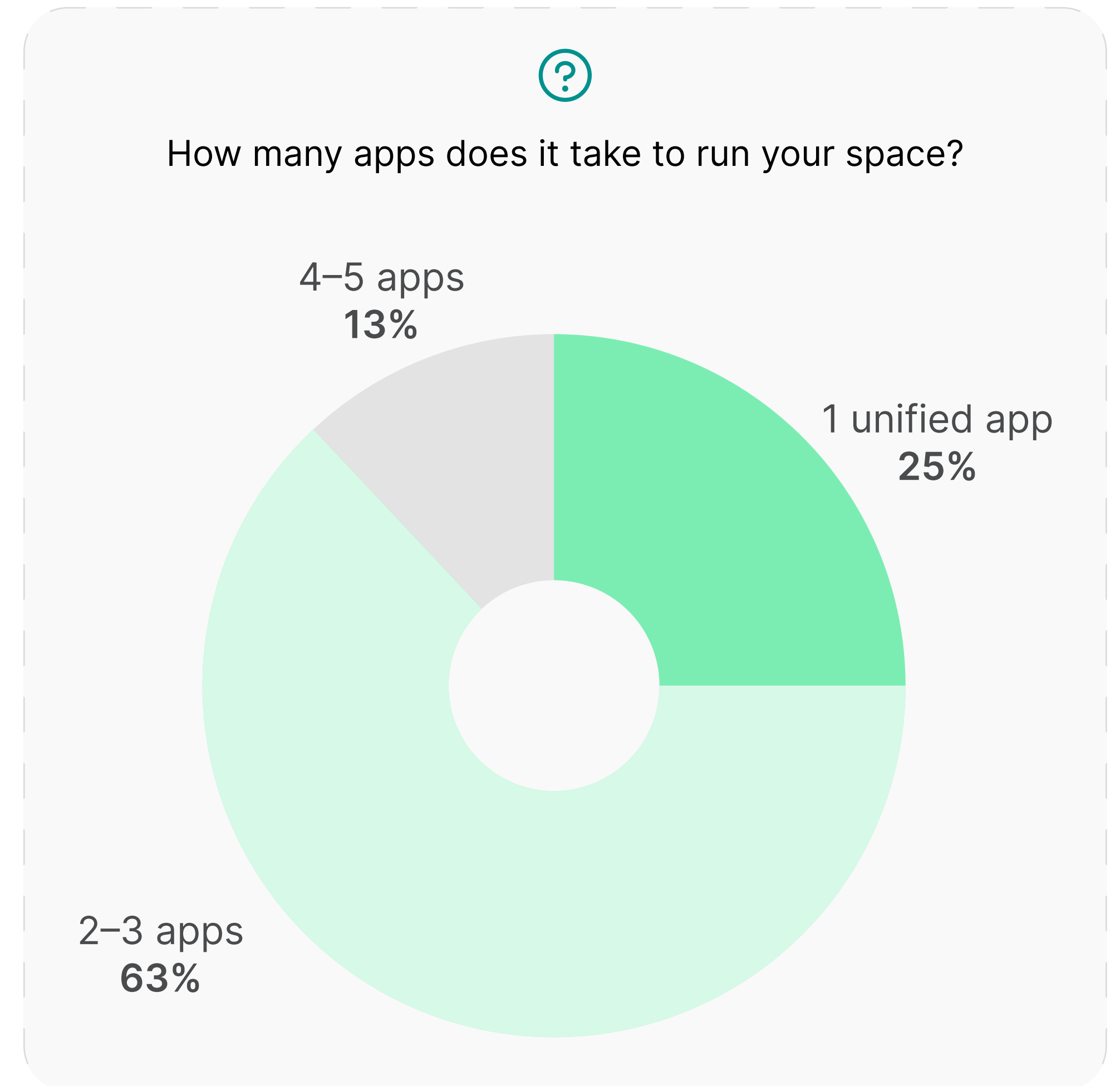
🕒 This is not just a decline story. It is a demand-redistribution story, and operators need clearer operational and market visibility to respond to it.

FINDING #1

Most coworking space operators still use 2–3 apps

Every extra tool adds another handoff, another sync risk, and another place where everyday work gets slower.

💡 Multi-tool setups are still the norm.

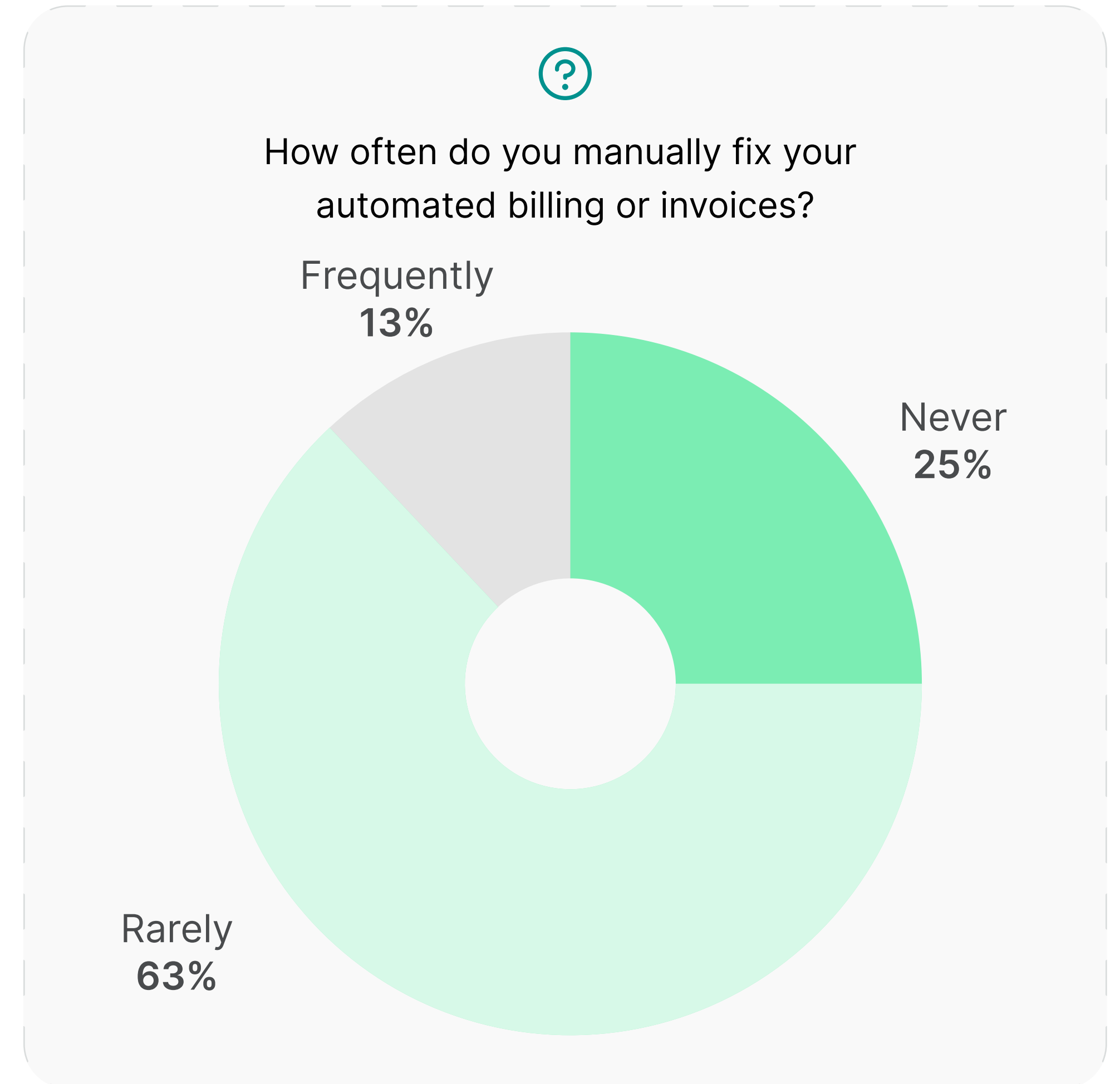


FINDING #2

75% still fix billing manually at least sometimes

If automated billing still needs regular checking and correction, it is not truly hands-off.

💡 Billing still needs human oversight in too many spaces.

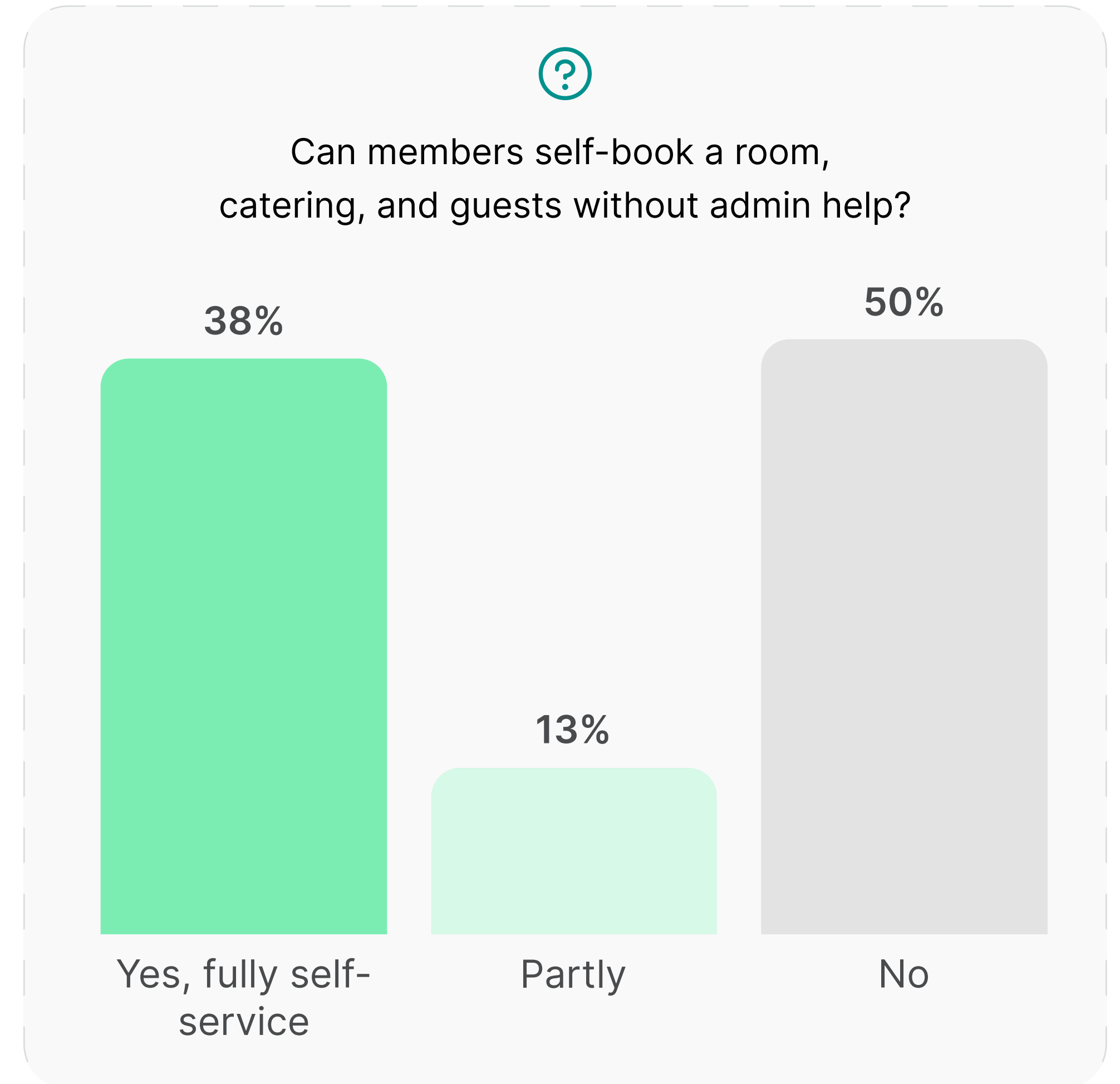


FINDING #3

Half of coworking space operators still lack full self-service

When bookings and extras are not truly self-serve, growth creates more admin instead of less.

💡 Too many simple member actions still depend on staff.



FINDING #4

Most operators still need spreadsheets to see what performs best

Too many operators still have to do manual work just to answer a basic business question.

 71% lack instant resource-level visibility.



FINDING #5

If operators got 10 hours back each week, they would spend it on growth

Operators do not want efficiency for its own sake. They want more time for work that grows the business.

 Time saved would go straight into growth-focused work.



If you saved 10 hours a week with tech, what would your team do instead?



50%

Events and networking



50%

Sales and marketing

UK flex space market context

London demand

-14.3%

2,834 → 2,428

UK pricing

-19.9%

£496.79 → £397.88

1-2 desk share

+3.1%

63.8% → 66.9%

🎯 The market is becoming more selective, more distributed, and more operationally demanding.

While demand in London dipped 14.3% year-over-year in Q1 2026, the wider market story is one of redistribution rather than simple decline. Occupiers are becoming more selective, favouring smaller, distributed workspace footprints across commuter towns and regional growth hubs.

Growth pockets outside London

| | |
|---------------|----------------|
| Reading | +3.2% |
| High Wycombe | +29.8% |
| St Albans | +15.6% |
| Marlow | +26.9% |
| Chatham | +377.8% |
| Middlesbrough | +344.4% |



The biggest opportunity may not be adding more tools. It may be removing friction.

WHAT TO DO NEXT

What operators should do next

1. Audit where staff still step in manually
2. Identify booking flows that still depend on admin help
3. Review how many tools sit inside one member journey
4. Check how long it takes to answer simple profitability questions
5. Measure success in time saved and friction removed