



Use of IPTC Photo Metadata by photo suppliers (companies and photographers) in 2019

The survey results

Conducted and published by IPTC [Photo Metadata Working Group](#)

June 2019



Do we still need photo metadata? Ask the suppliers!

IPTC provides standards for photo metadata since 1995 and raised the question: is there still a need for it?

To find that out IPTC ran a survey among photo suppliers in spring 2019.

CEPIC* strongly supported it in Europe, BVPA* in Germany and DMLA in the USA.

(* CEPIC and BVPA are IPTC members)

135 persons started to fill in, about 100 completed it.

(We did a similar survey in 2010: 80 started it ...)

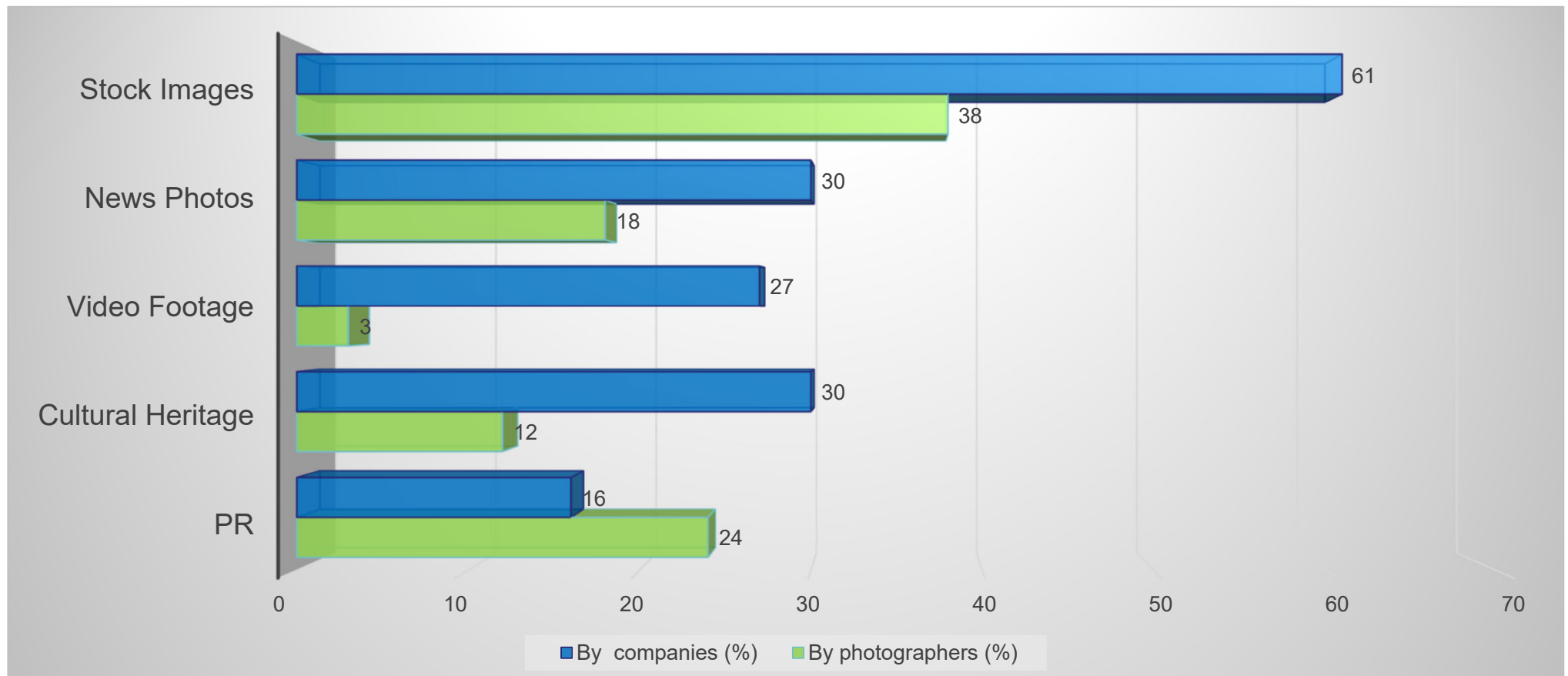
Two types of suppliers participated:

- Companies (55%)
- Individual photographers (45%)

Find the results on the next pages →

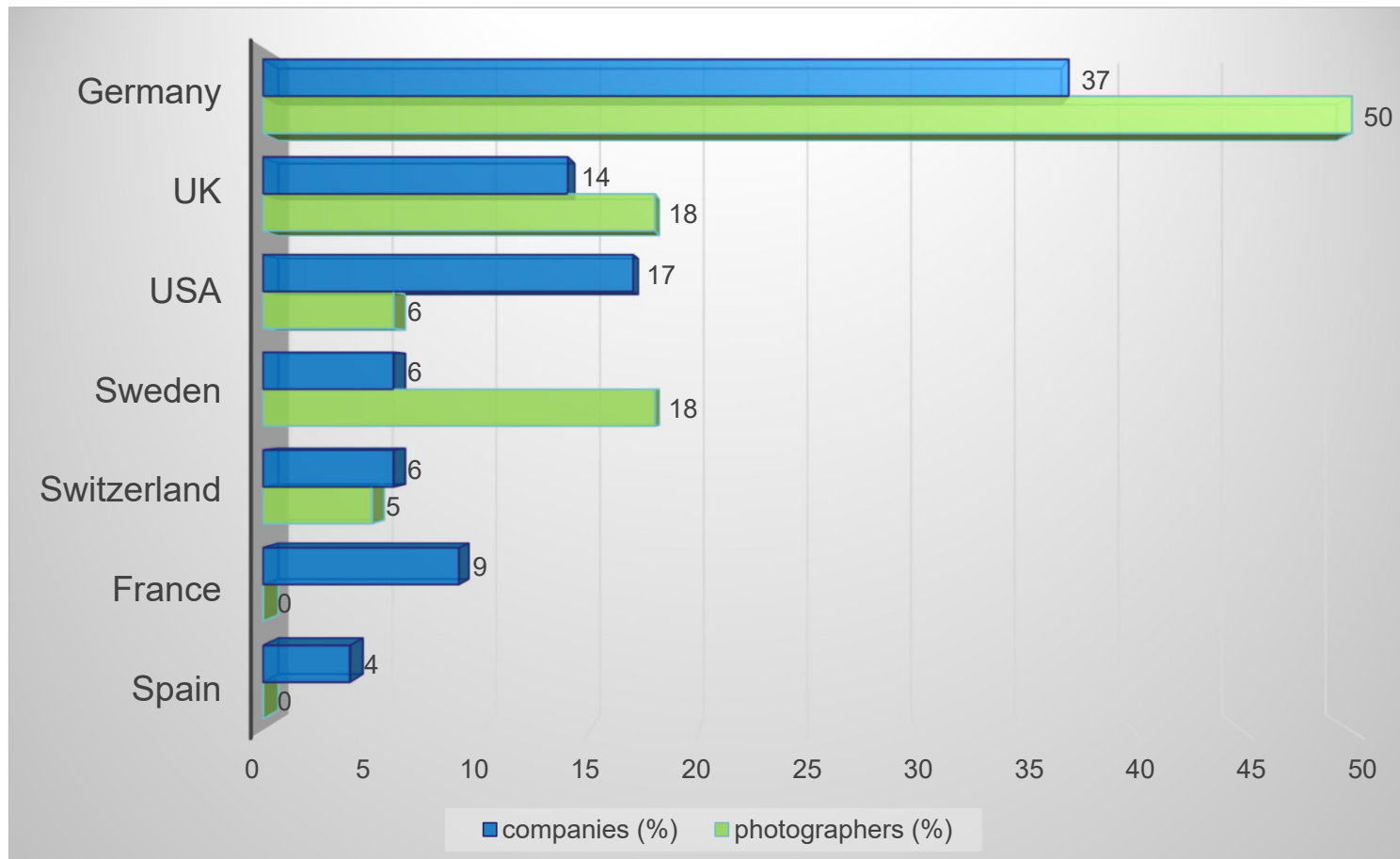


What kinds of images are supplied





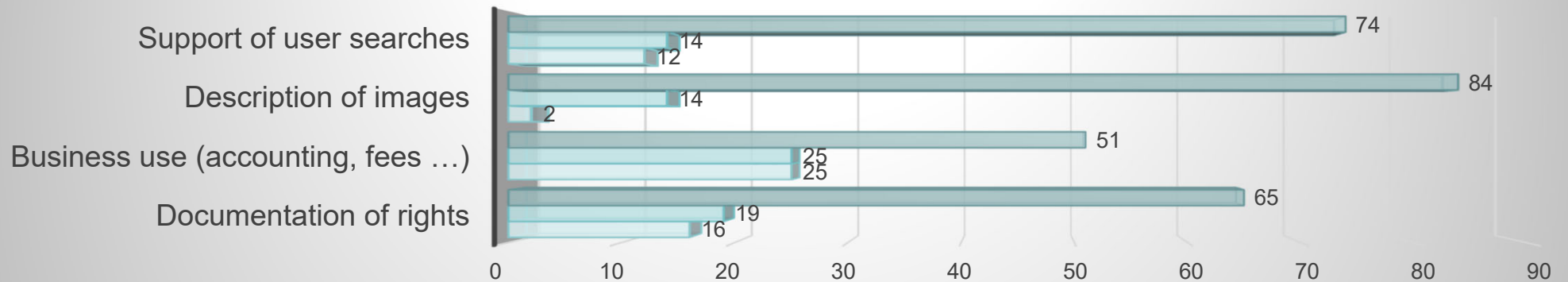
Suppliers submitting a survey are from ...



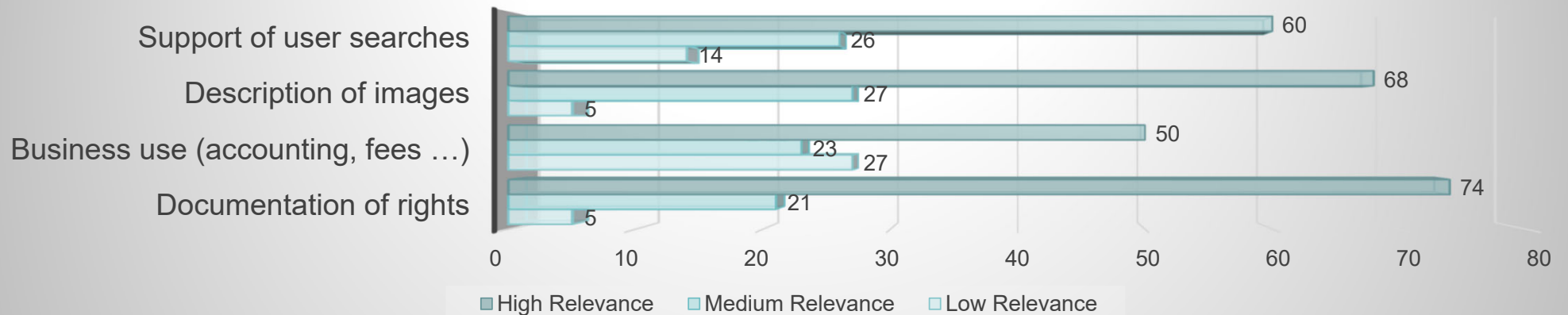


How relevant is IPTC Photo Metadata for ...

... these business purposes in your company: (%)



... these business purposes for you as photographer: (%)





Note on grouping metadata fields

The IPTC Photo Metadata Standard has many fields and they can be split into groups:

- Free text description of the content: Description/caption, Headline, Keywords + categorization terms from CVs ...
- Things shown: locations, persons, companies, events, products, artwork, objects
- Rights data: Creator, Copyright Notice, Credit, Copyright Owner, Web Statement of Rights, ...
- Licensing data: Usage Terms, Image Supplier, Licensor
- Administrative data: Date Created, Instructions, Job ID, Image Registry Entry ...

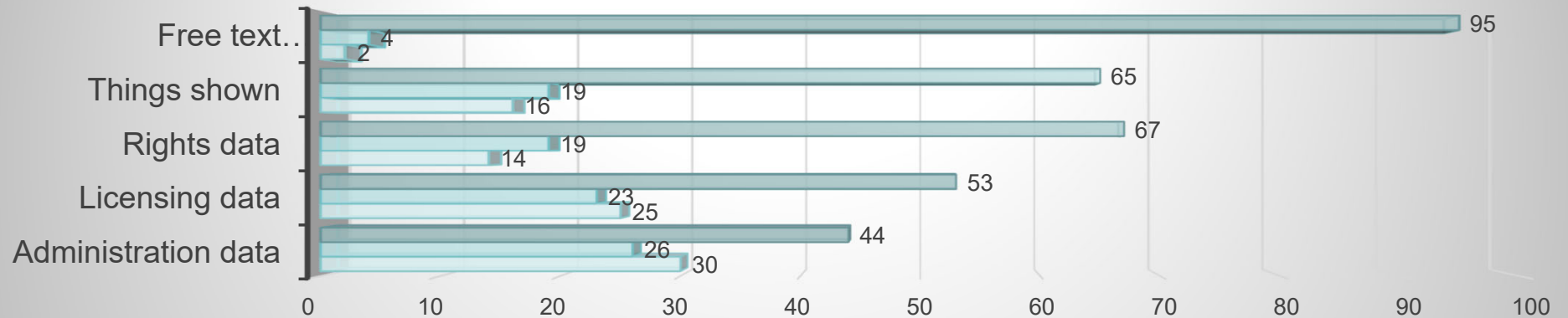
These groups were used for options of survey answers.

Find more about these groups in the [IPTC Photo Metadata User Guide](#)

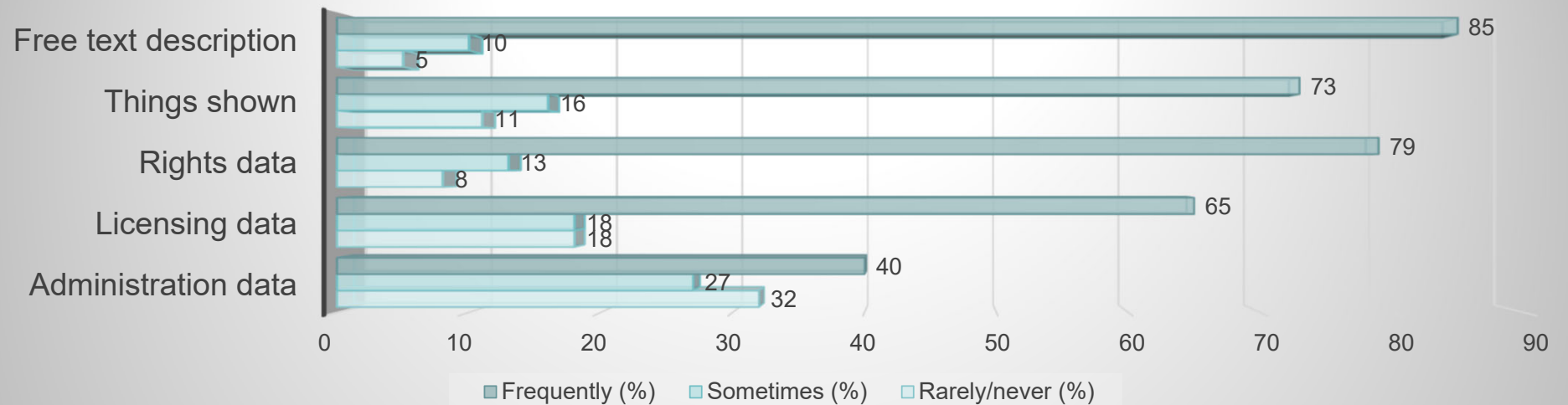


What kinds of fields are used ...

By companies

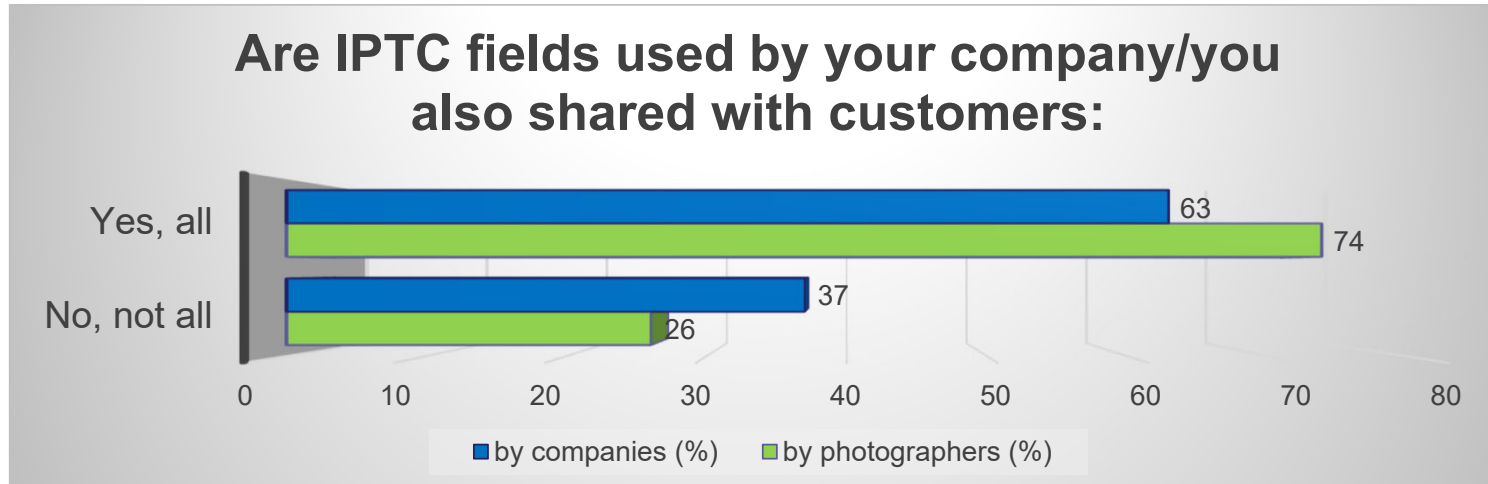


By photographers





Are fields shared with customers?



What is
not shared

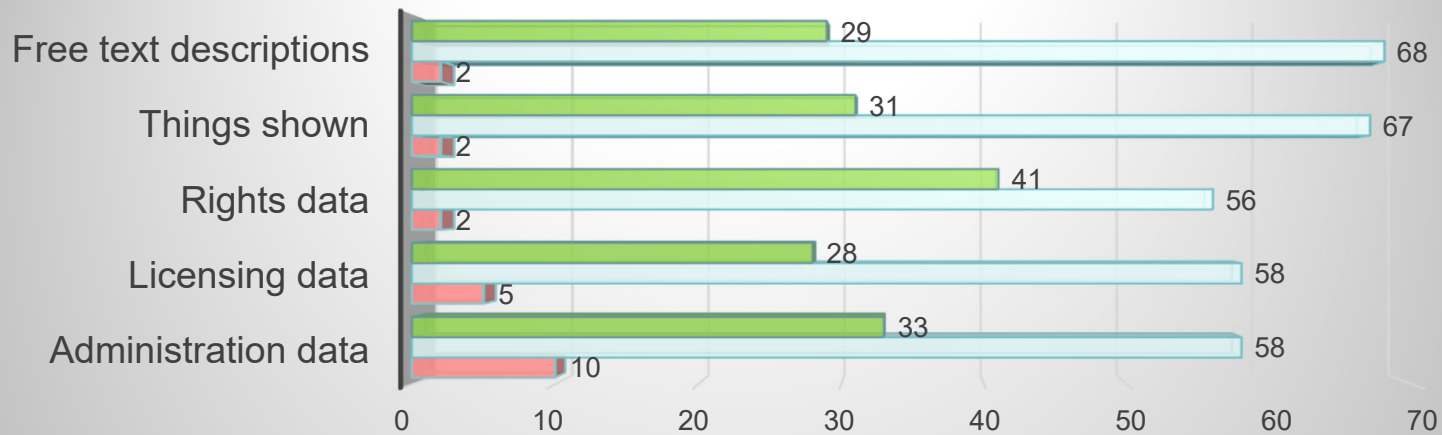
Companies: internal administration (accounting, fees, licensing rule), info about the source

Photographers: internal administration data, GPS data and other technical details, “depending on user requirements”

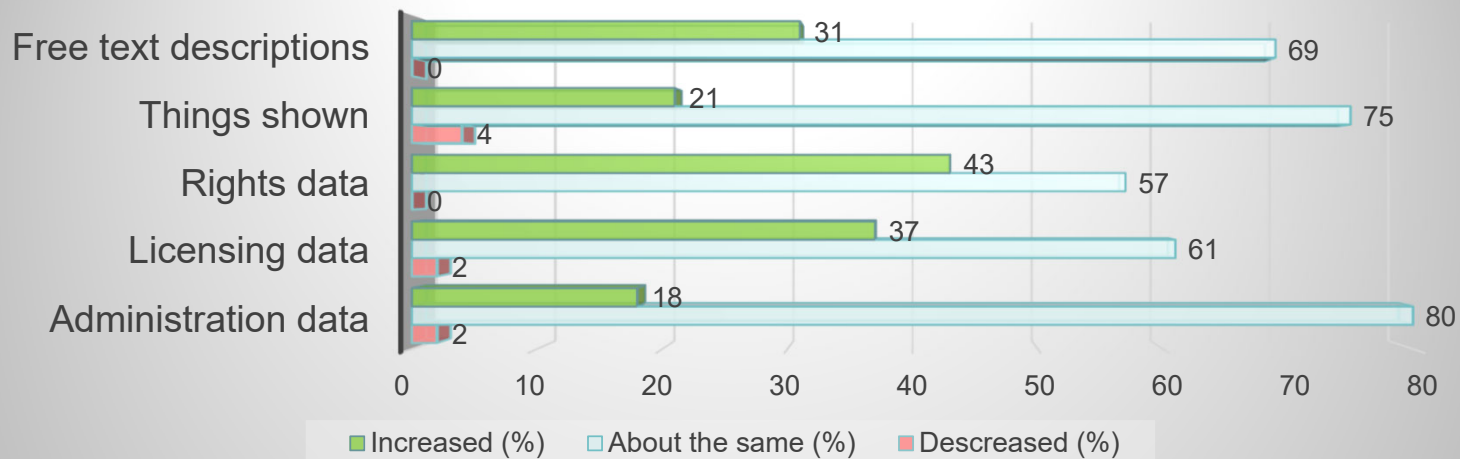


Did the metadata use change in the past years?

At companies



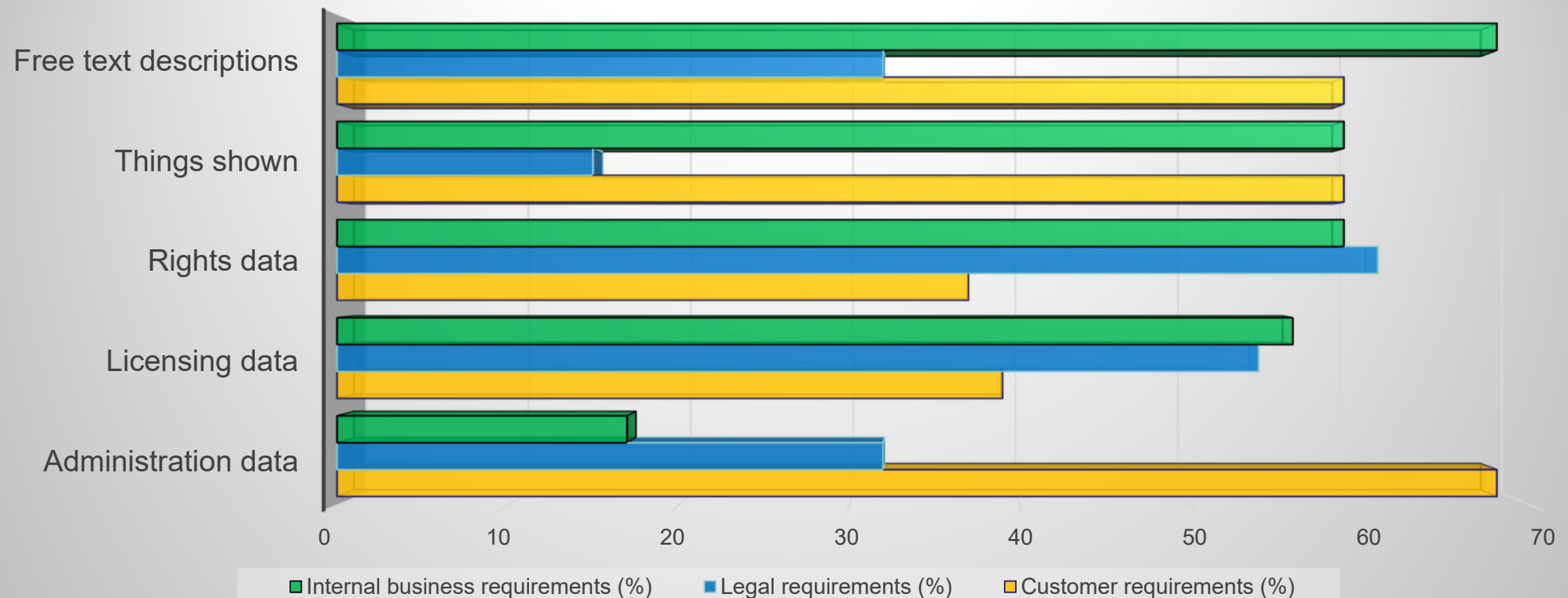
At photographers





What drives decisions to use ...

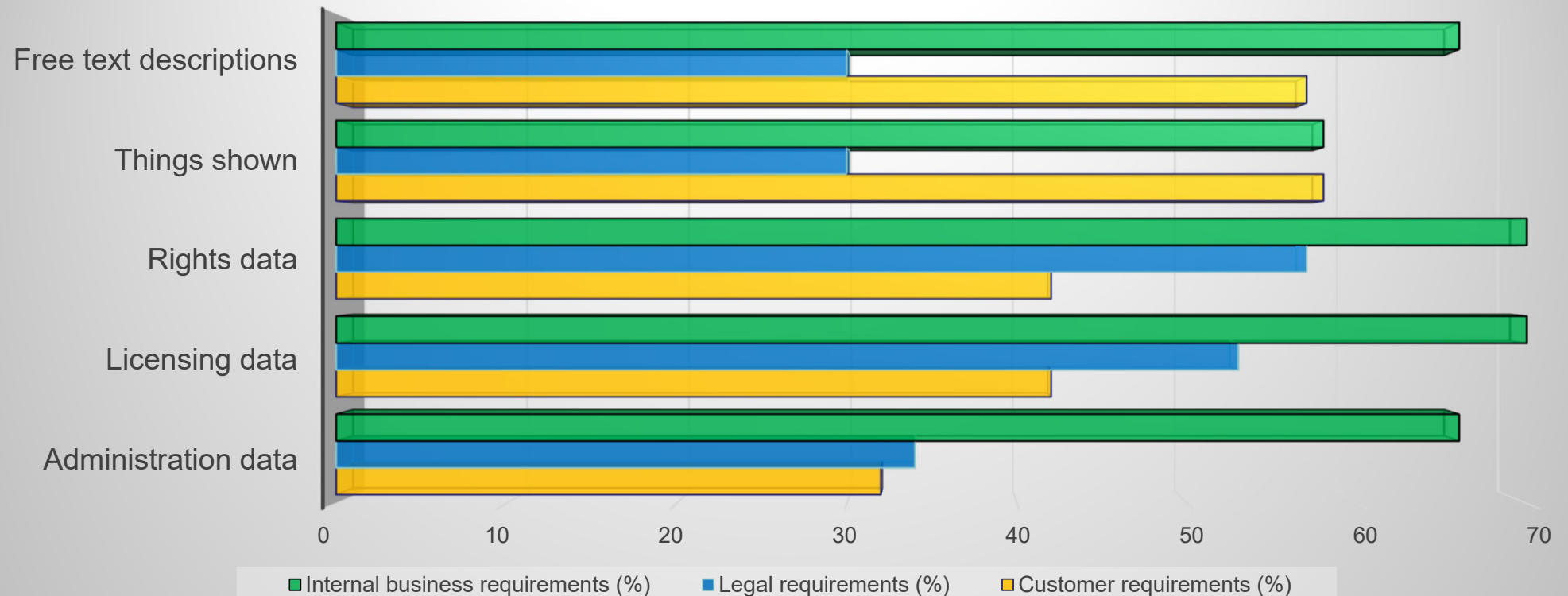
... at companies





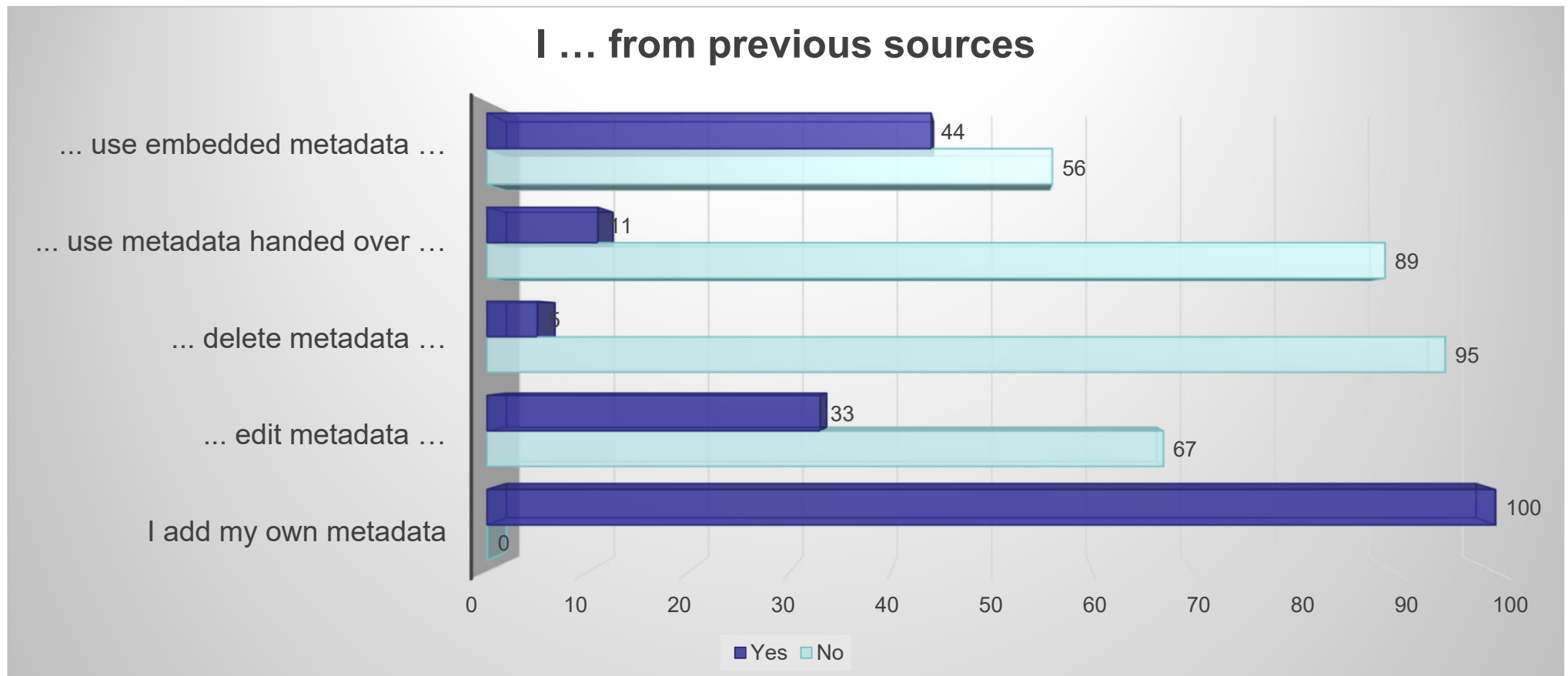
What drives decisions ...

... at photographers



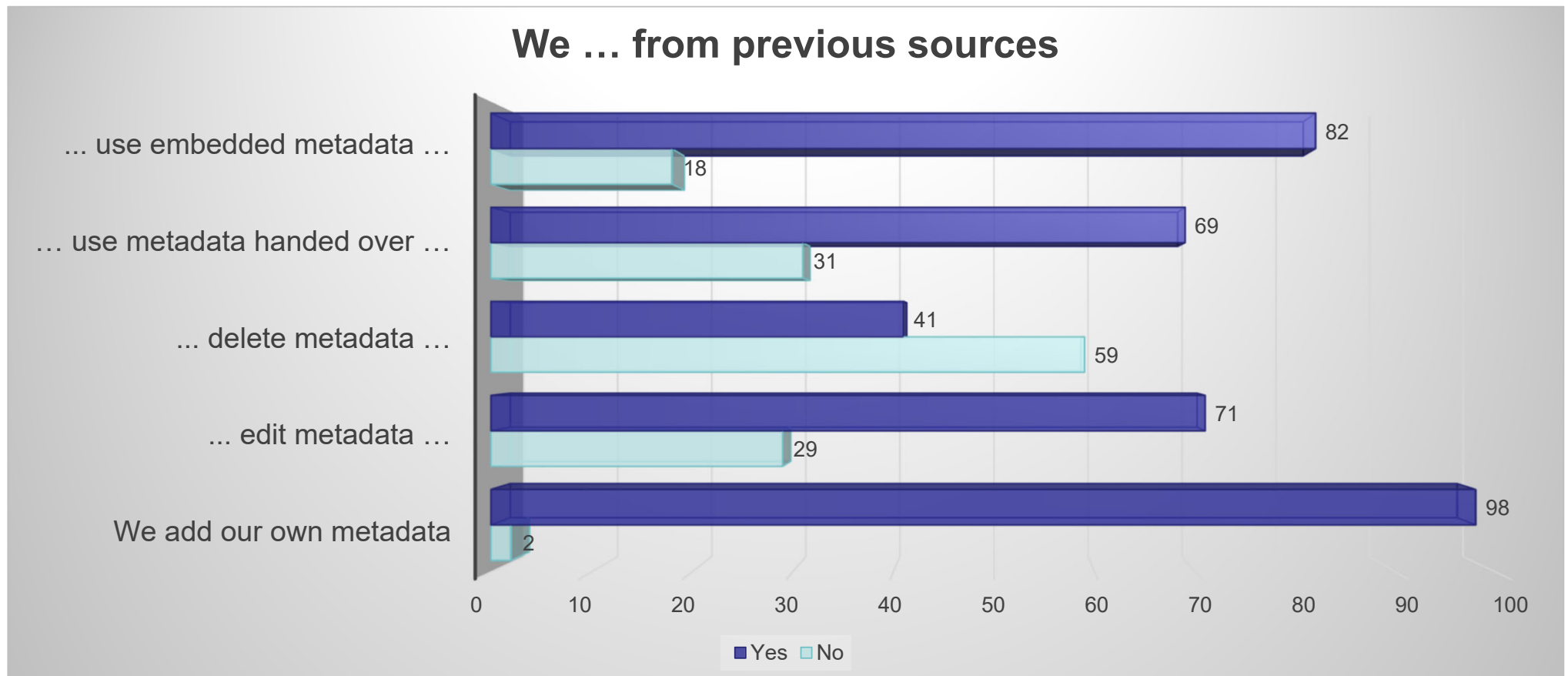


How **photographers** deal with metadata





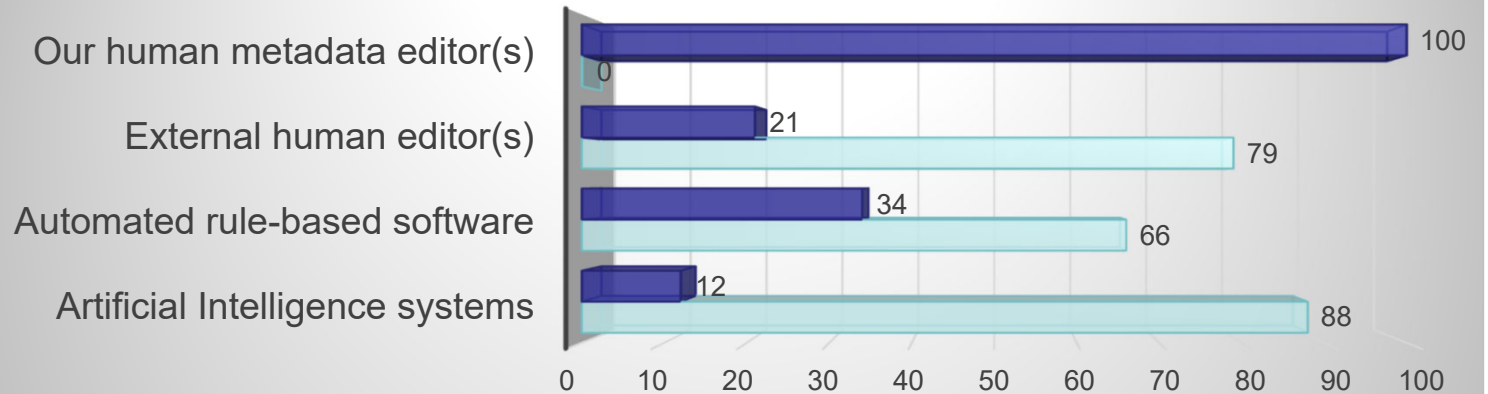
How **companies** deal with metadata



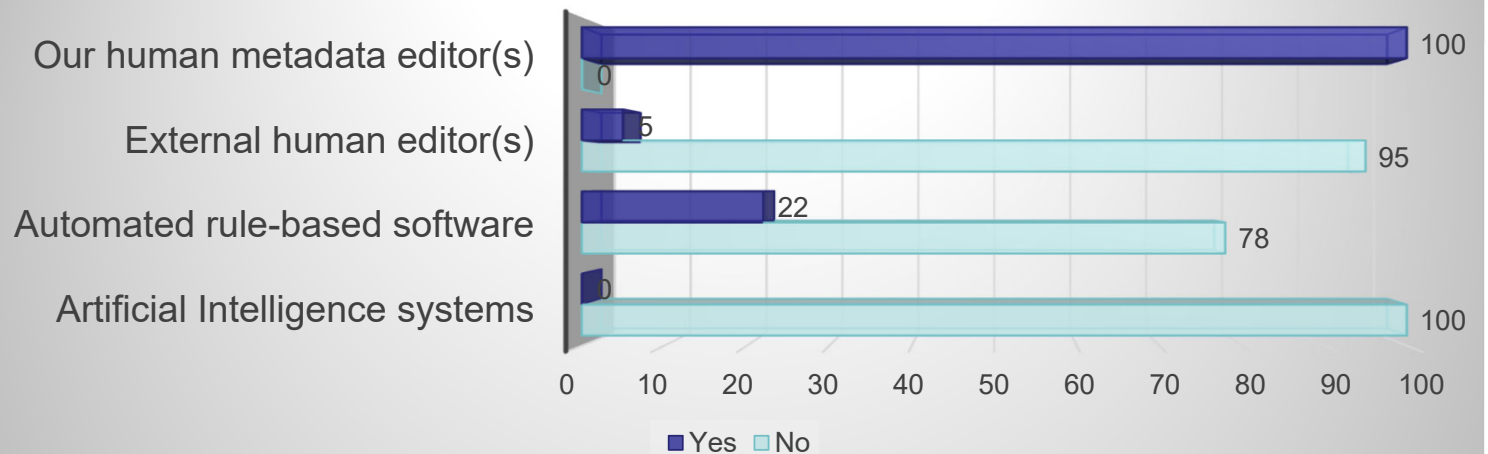


Who takes care of metadata at ...

... companies →

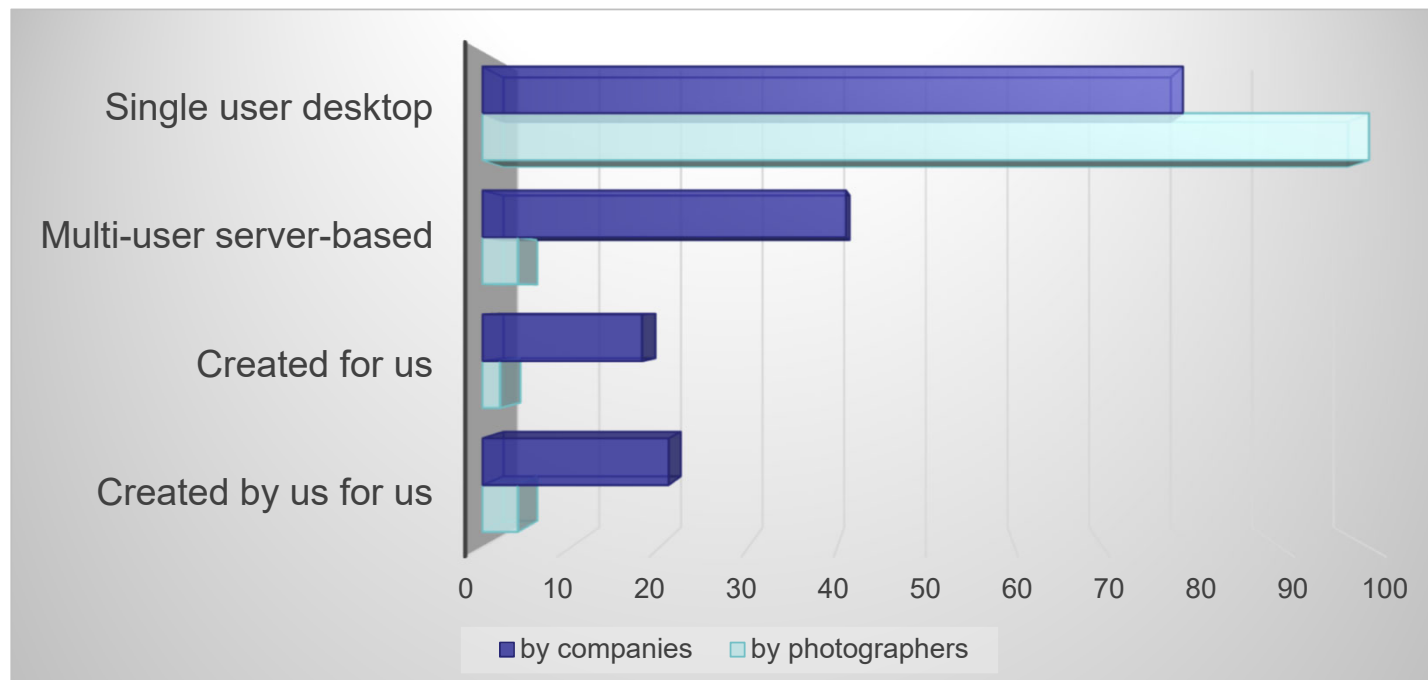


... photographers →





What software is used by suppliers

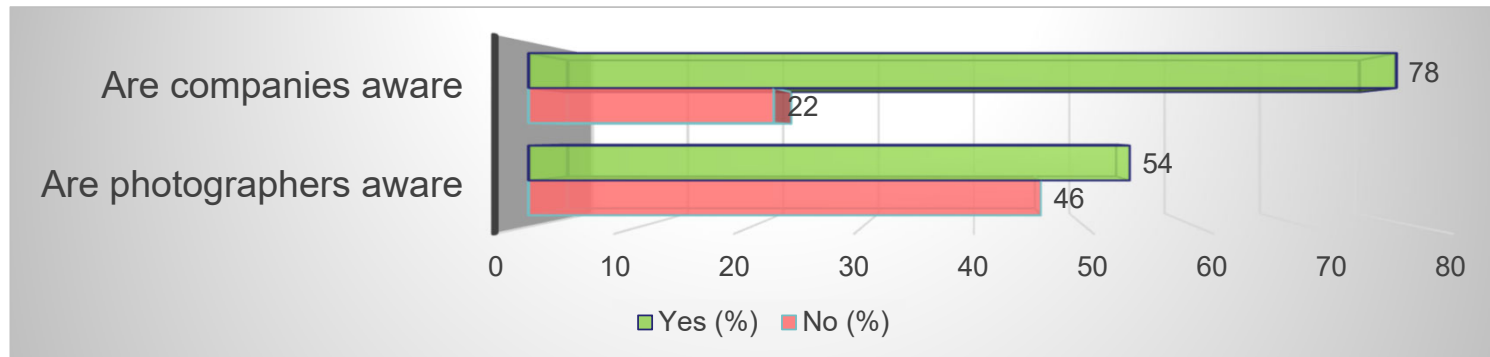


Preferred software

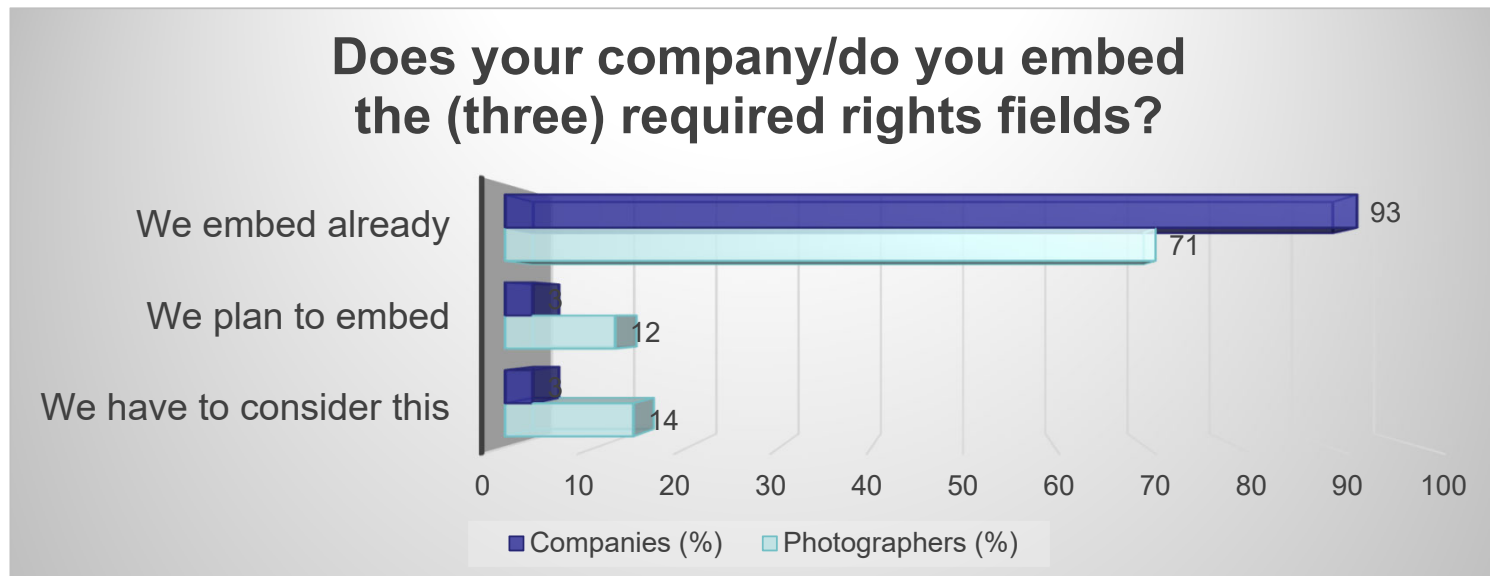
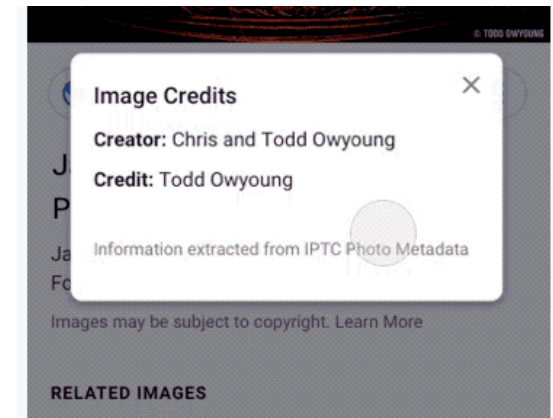
- Adobe Lightroom
- Adobe Photoshop
- Photo Mechanic
- Fotostation
- Adobe Bridge
- Capture One



Are suppliers aware of Google's Image Credits

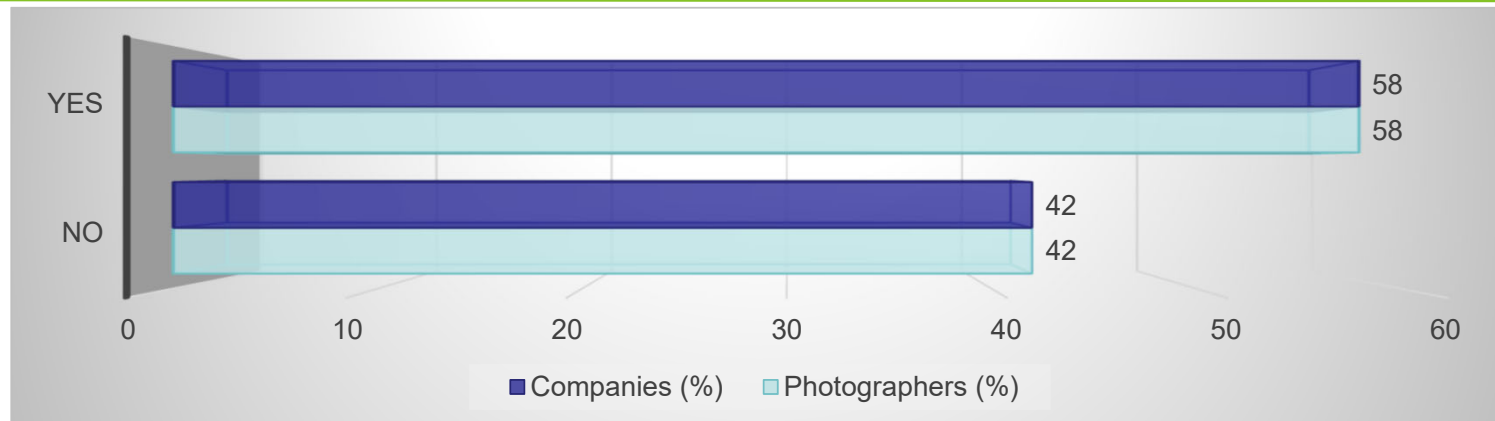


Example:





Do you want to see more embedded fields?



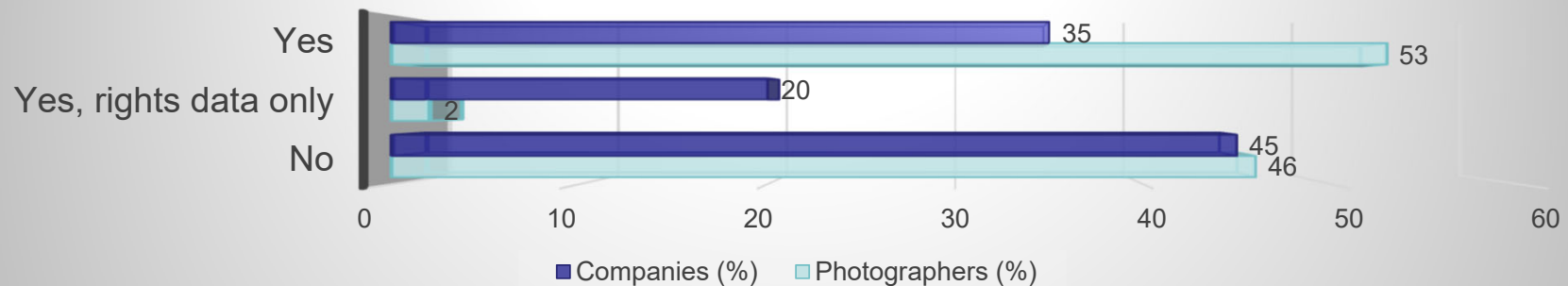
What else: (was an open ended question, ranking by counting occurrences)

1. Caption/description / Headline
2. Shown locations
3. Shown persons
4. Usage terms/licence

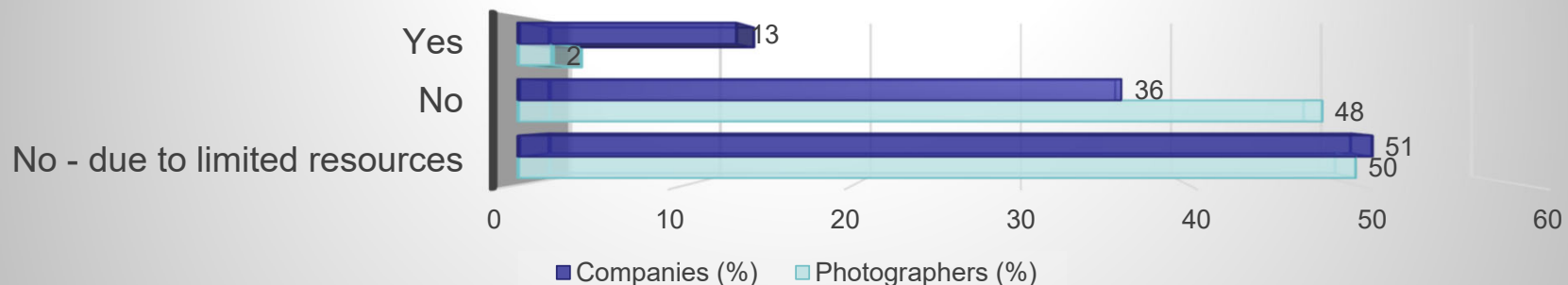


Are suppliers strict on persistence of metadata

Do your licences prohibit customers to remove metadata?

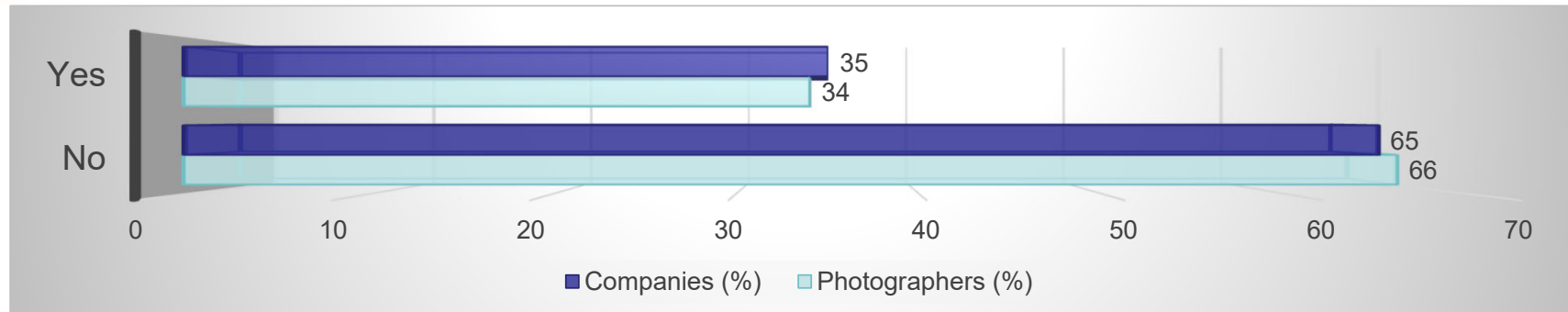


If you prohibit: do you check if your customers obey ?

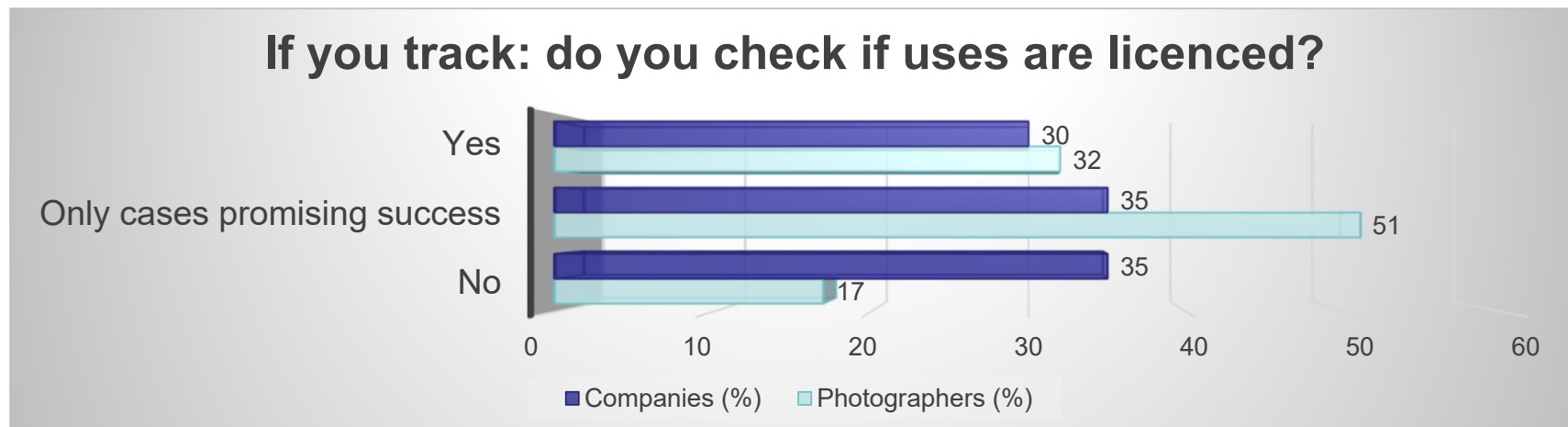




Do suppliers track the use of their images



If Yes: “We are tracking for” finding unlicensed images (90%!), kind of use, count use of images





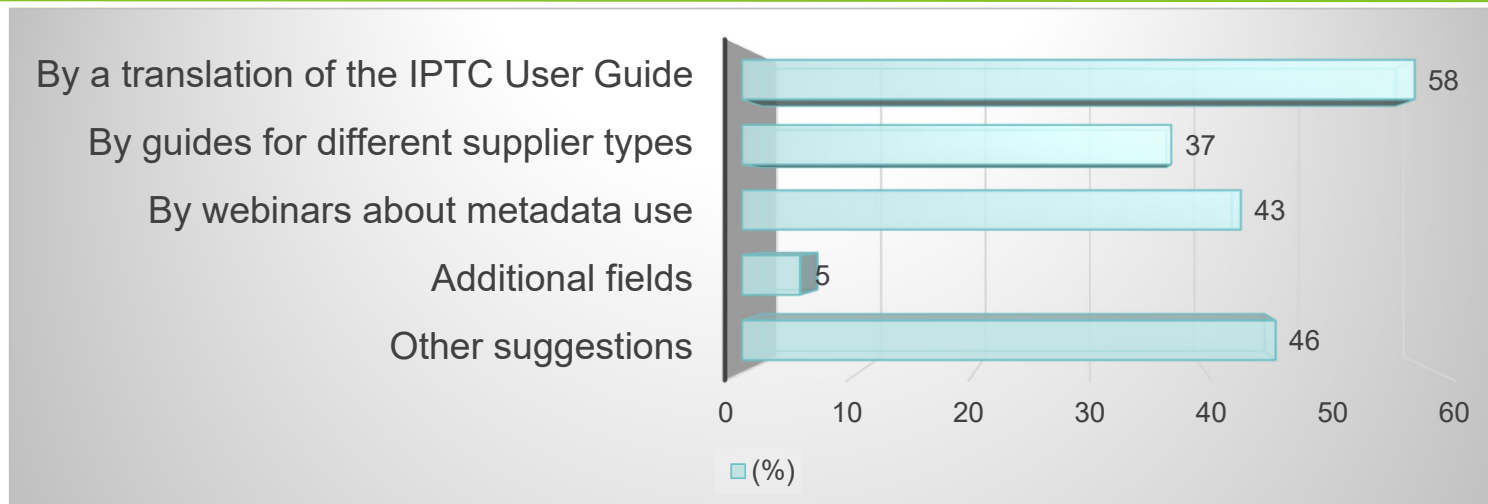
Does your company need more metadata fields

This was an open ended question:

- 60% said explicitly No
- Suggested additional metadata fields covered:
 - More details of existing fields, like more about shown models or fields with prices for licensing
 - The need to secure embedded values against being changed or removed by others.



How could IPTC help suppliers



Other suggestions:

- How-to videos – also for amateur photographers
- “Copyright education” webinar/video ... showing a proper use of rights metadata
- Translations: into German and French
- Open source software supporting the use of IPTC Photo Metadata
- Prevent stripping out metadata by technical means



IPTC response (presented on 6 June)

Translations:

- IPTC will take this seriously, first steps in French, German and Spanish

Webinars:

- IPTC will consider this – webinars also need a good educational layout this make take some time

Additional fields:

- IPTC sees no wider need for a specific field.

What IPTC can't do:

- Stopping the removal of embedded metadata at a technical level
→ metadata are in a wrapper defined by the technical standard of the image file format (JPEG, DNG, PNG, ...). Such standards could try to stop removing such wrappers – but technical knowledge tells: this is very hard.



Dear supplier companies and photographers having filled in
our survey,
thank you for sharing your use of IPTC Photo Metadata



Background: what exactly is IPTC Photo Metadata

IPTC Photo Metadata (PMD) ...

- ... is a set of fields bound to an image (file):
 - primarily by embedding
 - can be used with a DAM/MAM system
 - can be used for inline HTML metadata (keyword “schema.org”)
- ... fields focus on **describing the content** of the image, setting **rights data** and providing **administrative data** – NO technical data (covered by Exif)

IPTC Photo Metadata exist ...

- Since 1995 as set of fields of Adobe Photoshop, then of other image software
- Since 2005 as [Photo Metadata Standard](#) defining the best use of each field
- Since 2008 with an extended set of fields based on user requirements

For embedding the data into image files the technical formats IPTC IIM and ISO XMP are used.



Who takes care of IPTC Photo Metadata

IPTC's **Photo Metadata Working Group**

- **Objectives:**

- * The goal of this WG is to act as a special interest group regarding all photo metadata issues of the IPTC.

... a group of persons nominated by IPTC members – current regulars are



Sarah Saunders, CEPIC



David Ricks, PLUS



Karl Csoknyay, Keystone-SDA



Brendan Quinn, IPTC MD



Michael Steidl, IPTC (Lead)



Annette Feldman, AP



Linda Burman, LB Assoc