

2023

State of
Win-Loss
Analysis
Report

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Introduction

It's more critical than ever to understand exactly why you're winning and losing deals.

At least that's what 98% of respondents told us in our 2023 State of Win-Loss Analysis survey.

This report, which is sponsored by Clozd and Pragmatic Institute, is a follow-up to a similar project from 2020. Three years ago, during the early stages of the pandemic, **we reached out to the sales, marketing, product, and executive teams at hundreds of organizations to learn how they approach win-loss analysis**—the practice of reviewing past wins and losses to uncover the trends and insights that can influence future success rates.

Their responses—which centered on their plans, processes, results, and investment (or lack of investment) in obtaining, analyzing, and sharing feedback from their buyers—were enlightening.

So enlightening that we wanted to do it again.

This year, we sent out another detailed survey with the intent to see if there's been a shift in the way people perceive and practice win-loss analysis.

(Spoiler alert: There has.)

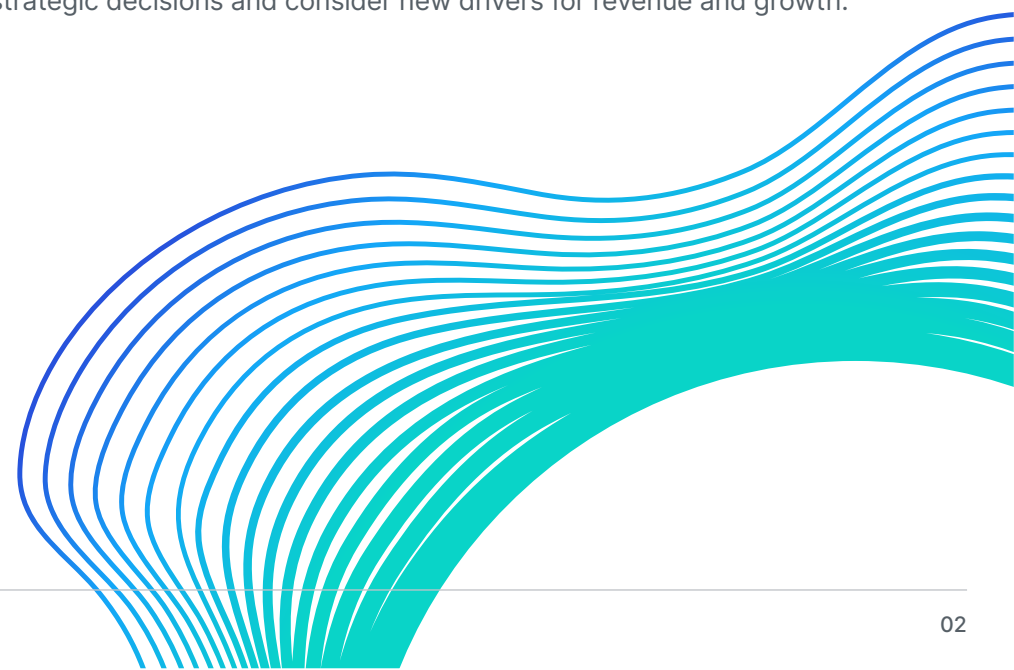
Thanks to in-depth feedback from nearly 700 respondents, **we've found that the value of win-loss analysis continues to grow**—for a number of reasons.

In this report, we'll explore how real companies are seeing real value from win-loss analysis. This includes everything from identifying win-back opportunities and defining ideal customer profiles to significantly improving their sales training and boosting their win rates.

We'll also provide an overview of how different organizations approach win-loss analysis—which departments own it, whether they prefer an in-house program or a third-party vendor, what specific challenges they're facing, how win-loss insights are shared cross-functionally, how the economy is impacting the perceived value of win-loss programs, and much more.

Ultimately, the purpose of this report is to help you understand how companies that take a modern approach to win-loss analysis are experiencing significant improvement to their business outcomes.

We trust that you'll find this to be a valuable resource as you make strategic decisions and consider new drivers for revenue and growth.





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About this study's sponsors

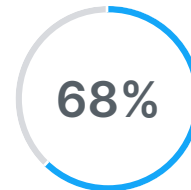
Pragmatic Institute is a world-renowned thought leader and creator of powerful educational experiences for product managers, product marketers, product designers, and data professionals.

Clodz is a leading provider of software and services for win-loss analysis, which helps organizations improve their sales win rates, build better products, strengthen their competitive advantage, and consistently uncover the real reasons they win and lose business.

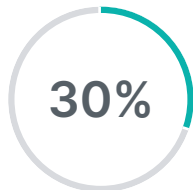
Notable changes since 2020



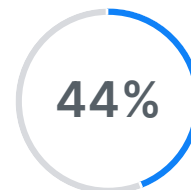
Twice as many companies are reporting a win rate increase of at least 20%—and attributing it to their win-loss efforts.



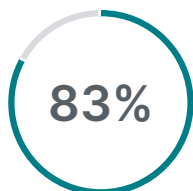
68% of companies that distribute win-loss data to the majority of their employees report an increase in win rate because of win-loss analysis.



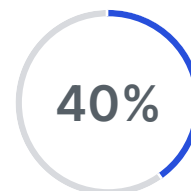
30% more companies are running ongoing, cross-functional win-loss analysis programs instead of project-based or department-specific programs.



Sales and executive teams are increasingly taking ownership of their companies' win-loss analysis programs—sales from 35% to 44%, and executives from 4% to 7%.



83% of companies practice some form of win-loss analysis, up from 79%.



40% of companies indicated that the economic environment has increased the value and importance of win-loss analysis, up from 18% during the COVID-19 pandemic.

VALUE OF WIN-LOSS ANALYSIS

Revenue leaders and executives are taking win-loss analysis more seriously

The primary goal of win-loss analysis is to help companies improve their win rates. And since the original survey in 2020, nearly twice as many companies are attributing a win rate increase of 20%+ to their win-loss efforts.

Revenue leaders continue to put a higher priority on win-loss analysis. This is evident from the fact that win-loss programs are increasingly owned by sales and executive teams—where the insights can have the largest impact on revenue team metrics (revenue growth, win rate, customer acquisition cost, conversion rate, churn rate, sales life cycle, and more).

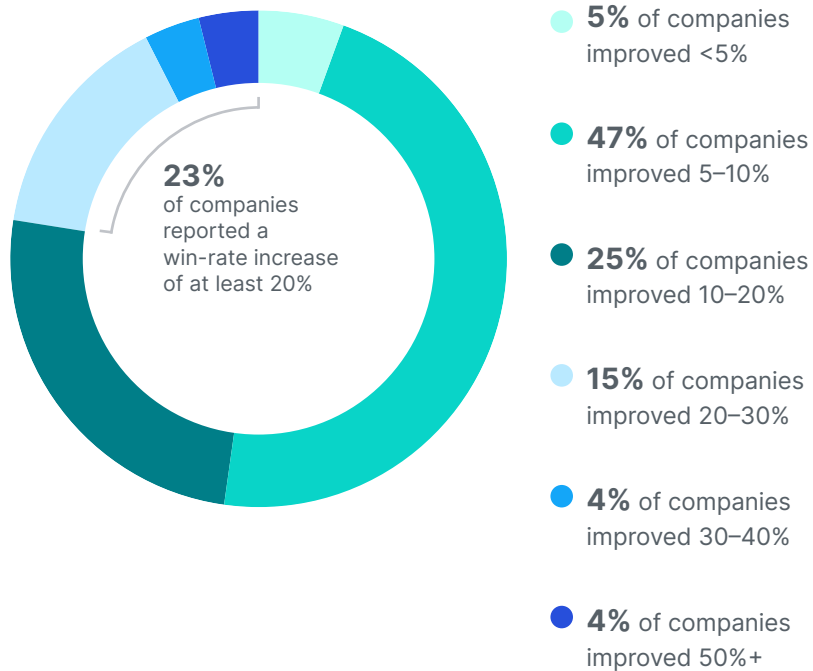
Real value

Clozd research shows that, on average, sales reps ramp **1.28 months faster** when they have access to win-loss insights and trends.

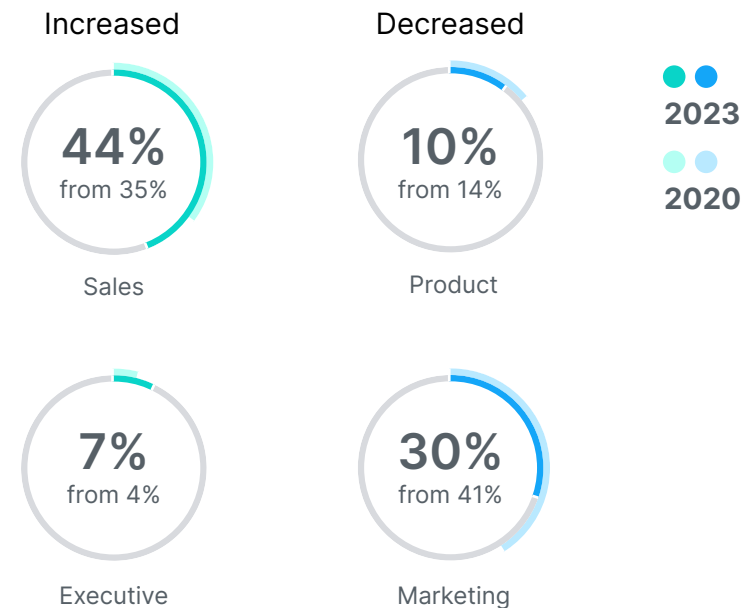
Check out Clozd's UserEvidence report for more win-loss insights.

[Get the report](#) →

Win-loss analysis' impact on win rate



Win-loss program ownership



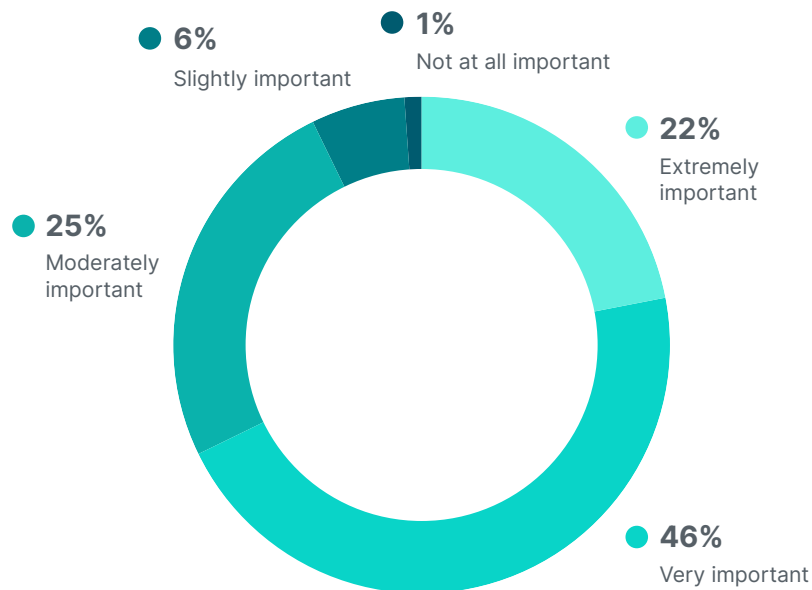
IMPORTANCE OF WIN-LOSS ANALYSIS

A growing number of companies are prioritizing win-loss analysis because it helps them drive revenue

When companies are able to effectively gather, organize, analyze, and distribute qualitative win-loss insights cross-functionally and at scale, they create a cascading series of benefits throughout their organizations. They're able to identify and prioritize critical product gaps. They enhance sales training and messaging. They improve marketing effectiveness, foster strategic alignment, and drive revenue.

It's no wonder that **68% of respondents characterized win-loss analysis as either "very" or "extremely" important** when compared to other initiatives.

Importance of win-loss analysis in relation to other initiatives



Hidden revenue opportunities

Clozd has found that 1 in 10 closed-lost deals has the potential to be won back in the near future. Win-loss interviews help you identify which deals are win-back opportunities and when you should reach out to re-engage the prospect.

“

The sales rep heard a 'no,' but the Clozd interviewer heard 'not now.' And by the time we went over the interview, the 'not now' had become 'now we're actually ready.' So if that [win-loss] interview hadn't happened, we probably would've just put that deal to the side and not pursued it. **Instead, we've got a late-stage \$500,000 opportunity in our hands.**”

Tom Kahl
CRO at Hello Heart

Check out **Clozd's ROI Calculator** to see how much you could increase your revenue through win-loss analysis.

[Check your ROI →](#)

INVESTMENT IN WIN-LOSS ANALYSIS

Once companies try win-loss analysis, nearly all of them plan to maintain or increase that investment

Win-loss analysis is a quickly emerging category that addresses a company's core need to understand the real reasons they win and lose business.

We found that 83% of the companies surveyed currently practice some form of win-loss analysis, up from 79% in 2020. It's also important to note that **of the companies that do practice win-loss analysis, 98% plan to maintain or increase their investment.**

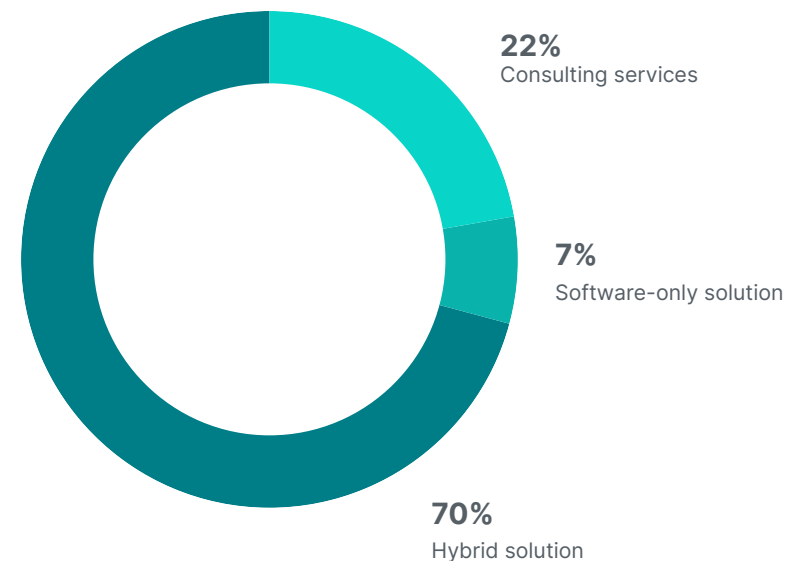
Of the companies that don't currently practice some form of win-loss analysis, 74% report that they'd like to start a win-loss program in the future—with 55% saying they'd like to do that within the next 12 months.

And regarding what those programs would look like, 70% reported that they'd prefer a hybrid solution that combines consulting services with win-loss software. So while the number of companies that rely on software-only solutions has increased, it's clear that most companies find the most value in a combination of expert consulting along with robust win-loss software.

Implementation of win-loss analysis



Program preferences



ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

Win-loss analysis is even more important during turbulent economic times

Companies everywhere have been put through the wringer over the past few years—first by the COVID-19 pandemic, and more recently by a recession that’s brought lingering uncertainty, budget cuts, and mass layoffs to even the strongest companies.

Now, more than ever, companies must take advantage of every sales opportunity. Win-loss analysis helps them do this by identifying their weaknesses and highlighting ways to magnify their strengths as they seek to build a meaningful competitive advantage.

Nearly 40% of companies indicated that the economic environment has increased the value and importance of win-loss analysis. Comparatively, when asked a similar question during the COVID-19 pandemic, only 18% of companies felt that win-loss had increased in importance. Additionally, 22% fewer companies indicated that the execution of their program is more difficult than during the pandemic.

It’s clear that during this current downturn, companies have turned to win-loss analysis to drive profitability at a much higher rate than they did during the COVID recession.

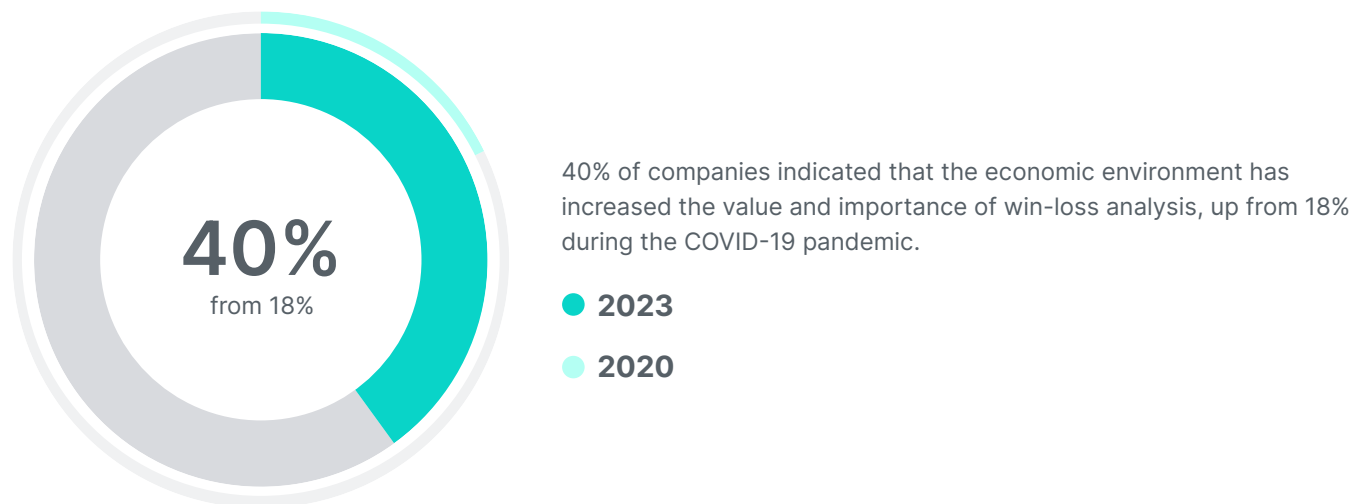
“

Clozd’s ability to quickly show us **trends on why we succeed or fail** is incredibly valuable. This provides us with clear direction on what actions we need to take to increase our business success.”

James Erickson

Market Intelligence Manager at AppFolio

Increasing economic importance of win-loss analysis



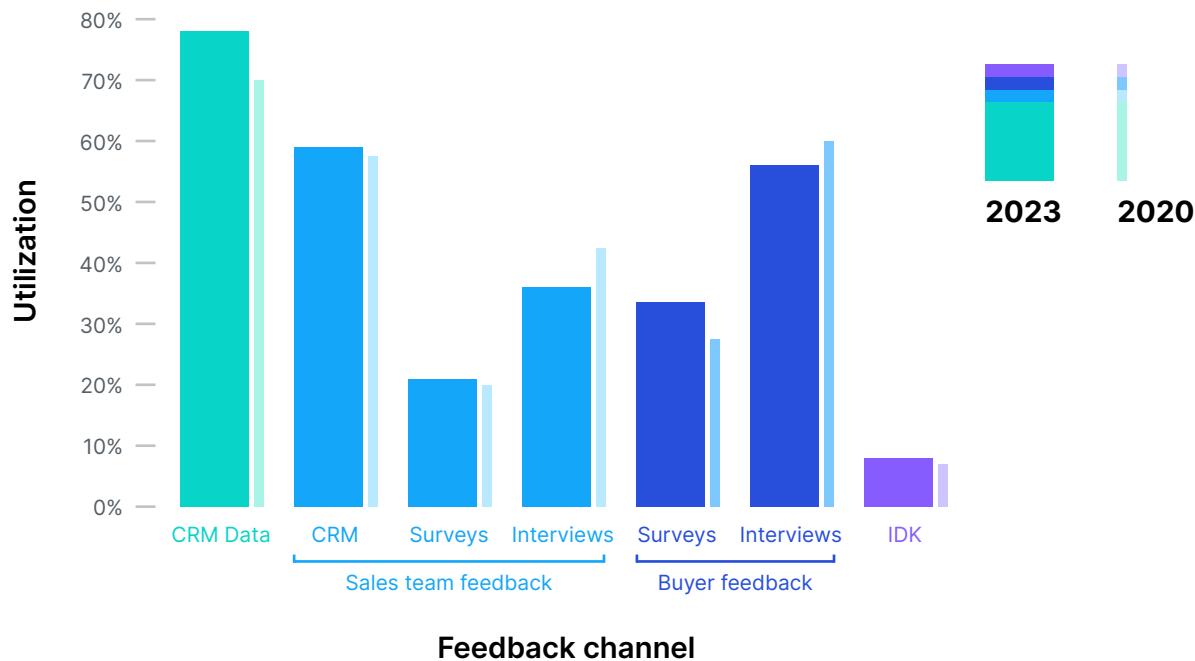
FEEDBACK CHANNELS

Advances in win-loss technology have made buyer data more accessible and affordable than ever

Companies rely on several different data sources when conducting win-loss analysis, with the most popular source (channel) being their CRM opportunity data. Beyond that, the channels used vary widely by company.

Although more companies are conducting win-loss analysis—and 75% of those companies are using at least three different feedback channels, up from 60% in 2020—it's likely that their resources are more constrained than in 2020, and they don't have the time or money to collect direct feedback from their buyers via interviews.

Feedback channels used for win-loss analysis



Sales coaching

Win-loss data is the ideal complement to call recording software or coaching program. Call recordings tell you what happens when a rep is in the room. Win-loss interviews tell you what happened when your reps were not in the room.



Every professional sports team reviews their footage to understand where they need to improve. **Winning deals is our sport, and [win-loss analysis] is our video review.** Everybody needs to be making every effort to get clients sharing feedback with this program."

Ravi Kumaraswami

President of Worldwide Field Operations at Riskified

Learn how win-loss analysis is like game tape for sales professionals.

[Read more →](#)

WIN-LOSS INTERVIEWS

CRM data remains a convenient source of surface-level insights

Historically, interviews have proven to be the most valuable way to collect unbiased buyer feedback. Compared to 2020, however, fewer companies are conducting buyer interviews and are instead relying on CRM data and surveys with their buyers and sales reps.

This aligns with a traditional strategy of leaning heavily on CRM data and internal sales rep feedback for performing win-loss analysis. While this data is easier to obtain than direct buyer feedback, it's also far less accurate.

Clzod analyzed thousands of buyer interviews and found that, when compared with actual buyer feedback, the closed-lost reason listed in the CRM is wrong 85% of the time. Additionally, the wrong competitor is tagged 65% of the time. By relying primarily on CRM data, most companies are missing vital insights into why they're actually losing deals.

Now more affordable and scalable than ever, win-loss interviews provide more detailed and accurate feedback about the strengths and weaknesses of your sales process, products, marketing messaging, and more.

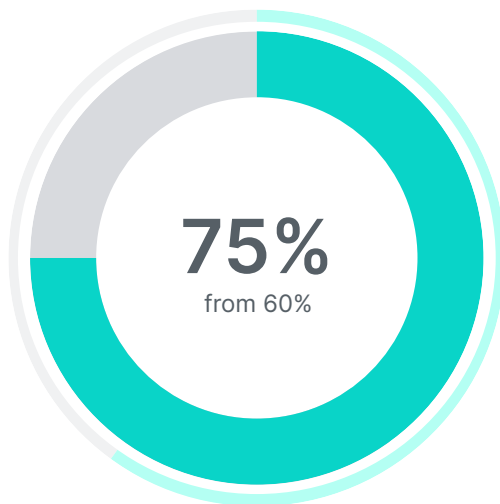
Your ~~CRM~~ BUYER is the source of truth

How much do you REALLY trust your CRM data?

We analyzed the CRM data of thousands of deals and compared it to what buyers actually said. The results were shocking. Click below to learn more about our key findings.

[Get the report](#) →

Multi-channel approach to win-loss analysis



75% of companies that perform win-loss analysis report using at least three different channels, up from 60% in 2020.

- 2023
- 2020

APPROACH TO WIN-LOSS ANALYSIS

More companies are creating cross-functional win-loss analysis programs—and that's a great thing

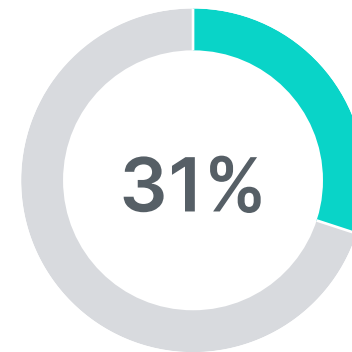
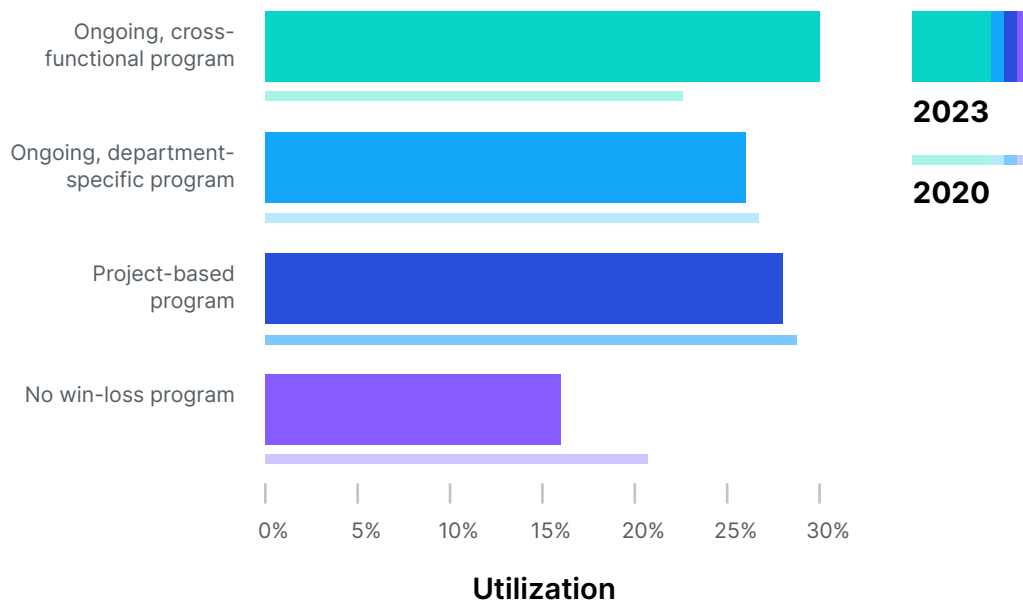
Based on our survey, the level of program adoption and maturity vary dramatically across organizations. In some cases, companies have ongoing, cross-functional programs. In others, they're doing nothing.

The percentage of companies that don't utilize any type of win-loss analysis program, however, has decreased significantly—from 21% to 16%.

Additionally, since 2020 we've seen a 31% increase of companies that are running ongoing, cross-functional programs (as opposed to department-specific programs).

Setting up an impactful win-loss program—one that creates a consistent flow of actionable insights—is an intentional process that requires collaboration and dedicated resources. Companies that see the best results typically involve cross-functional teams throughout the entire process.

Evolving approaches to win-loss analysis



Since 2020, 31% more companies are running ongoing, cross-functional programs.

SHARING WIN-LOSS INSIGHTS

Democratized win-loss programs perform better

The survey results show that **companies who share win-loss insights more broadly attribute increasingly higher win rates to their win-loss analysis programs.**

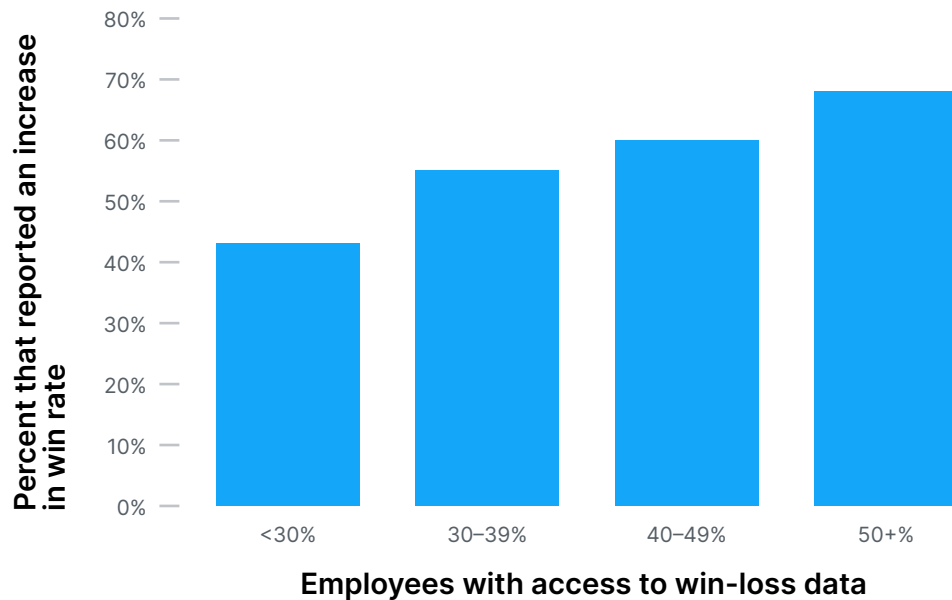
In short, a more democratized program is a better program.

Obtaining useful buyer feedback is hard work—and that’s just the first step. Once companies have acquired those insights, they must effectively organize, analyze, and share them in a way that will actually drive meaningful change within their organizations.

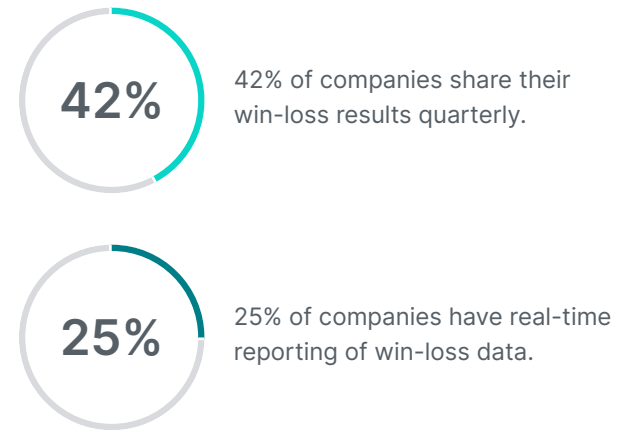
In relation to sharing win-loss insights, use of digital documents, spreadsheets, and CRMs has gone down. Instead, companies are more frequently using business intelligence tools or dedicated win-loss software to view and share the results of their win-loss analysis.

We found, however, that **only 25% of companies have real-time reporting of win-loss data, while 42% of companies share their win-loss results quarterly** (instead of more frequently). This means that the majority of win-loss practitioners aren’t distributing key information to their employees on a frequent basis.

Win-loss analysis' impact on win rates



Limited distribution



PROGRAM ROI

Companies that partner with third-party vendors to perform buyer interviews report higher ROI

Based on the survey results, it's clear that many companies are realizing the value of partnering with professional win-loss analysis providers.

While only 36% of companies contract with third-party vendors to operate their win-loss programs, **those companies are more than twice as likely to be satisfied** with their investment in win-loss analysis.

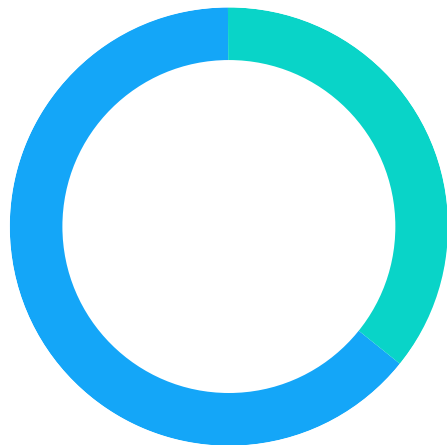
Internal win-loss programs are nearly twice as prevalent, but those programs require a heavy lift from individuals and teams that often don't specialize in (or have the time to solely focus on) conducting win-loss analysis. The result is a high level of dissatisfaction—only 28% of those companies report that they're at least somewhat satisfied with their win-loss program.

In stark contrast, 62% of those that do use a third party indicate that they're somewhat or very satisfied—an increase of 121%.

Additionally, **companies that partner with a third party are 36% more likely to see a significant return on their investment in win-loss analysis.**

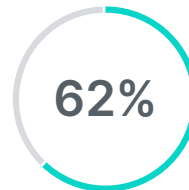
For those companies who run their own internal programs, the natural next step is to look for a third-party solution.

Use of third-party vendors

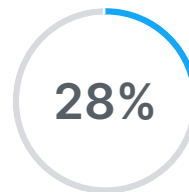


● **36%** use a third party

● **64%** do not use a third party



62% of companies that use a third party are at least somewhat or very satisfied (**121% higher than companies that run their own programs**).



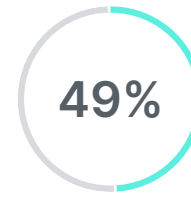
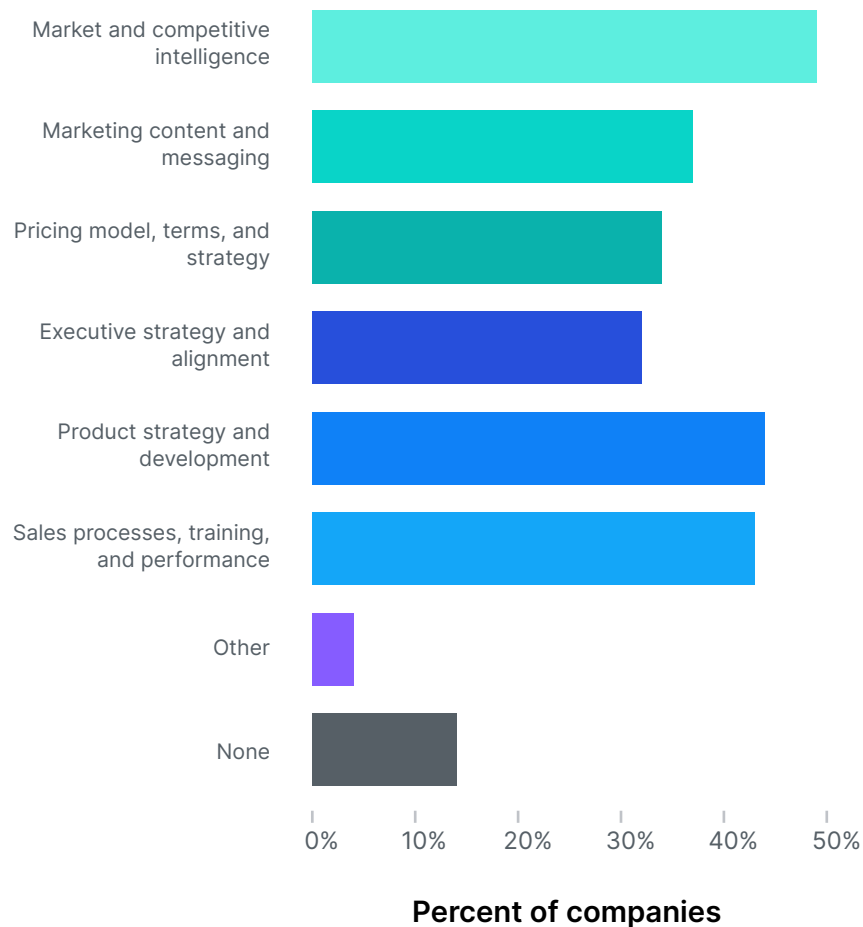
28% of companies that do not use a third party are at least somewhat satisfied with their win-loss program.

ADDITIONAL BENEFITS

Companies are experiencing a variety of beneficial outcomes thanks to win-loss analysis

Besides an increase in win rate, companies identified several additional areas that saw improvement because of their win-loss analysis programs.

Additional benefits of win-loss analysis



Market and competitive intelligence

“

I manage a team, and at my level the most helpful thing is understanding where we're strong and where we're weak against various competitors. Knowing exactly how buyers are thinking and what they're looking for helps us know how to position and run effective sales cycles. **I read them diligently because of how they help inform my strategy across the team.**”

Abraham Darais

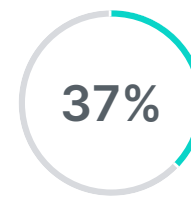
Sales Manager at Qualtrics

“

I benefit by finding similar companies in industries I'm selling **to develop an idea of what my buyer cares about.**”

Derek Droeger

Senior Account Executive at Qualtrics



Marketing content and messaging

“

Since we win a high % of opportunities, **we get great quotes to use in marketing resources.**”

Eric White

Co-founder at Ponder



32%

Executive strategy and alignment

“

We redefined our ideal customer profile. **The newly defined ICP buckets made clear which types of customer/teams we could close and who we could retain**, and we went all-in on sales efforts (messaging, positioning, targeting, etc.) to focus on our ICP 1 and ICP 2 customers, and we qualified out ALL ICP 3 and ICP 4 customers. ... The initial implementation and roll-out was not only well-received by the market (prospects found our transparency and openness around who we're a great fit for to be a breath of fresh air), **but it also improved our close rate significantly and improved the production of every account executive** simply by being able to better guide them to know where to focus their time and efforts.”

TJ Ruff

Vice President of Sales at ClientSuccess, Inc.



34%

Pricing model, terms, and strategy

“

We received feedback that our implementation practices were not very appealing to prospects, in regards to both price and the delivery model. **This encouraged us to take action toward changing the way we deliver professional services.**”

Jaedyn Guthrie

Product Marketing Manager at Acquia

“

It helps individual account execs learn and iterate in future deals. It also helps create pricing models better suited for different industries.”

Penny Moran

Product Marketing Manager at Zuora



43%

Sales processes, training, and performance

“

It helps the sales rep understand **if they've done everything they could do to win the deal** and where the company/rep fell short.”

Shane von Schlemp

Enterprise Account Executive at OpenSesame

“

It's helped us to narrow down the most critical differentiators in the sales experience or product itself that are ultimately determining prospect/client final decisions. And then we can adapt our strategies or prioritize our operational improvements around that.”

Sam Howard

Market & Competitive Intelligence Manager at MX



44%

Product strategy and development

“

If you look at our product roadmap, **huge swaths of it have been dictated by the information we claim from reading [win-loss] reports** and looking at the themes and customer pain points.”

Rebecca Yang

Vice President of Engineering at Clearbit

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Looking forward to 2024

Win-loss programs are more valuable than ever, and there are several things savvy companies can do to get the most out of their investment in win-loss analysis:

- ✓ Make sure you're democratizing your program by sharing your win-loss insights with as many people as possible. This creates cross-functional alignment and develops a culture centered around the voice of the customer.

The results from this survey are clear—**companies that distribute win-loss insights more broadly also report higher improvement to their win rates** thanks to their win-loss analysis programs.

- ✓ Using **multiple feedback channels**—and prioritizing buyer interviews, which deliver the most impactful feedback—is one of the best ways to optimize your win-loss efforts.

- ✓ Partner with a third party to maximize your ROI. Remember that more than twice as many companies who work with a third party report being satisfied with their win-loss results compared to those who run their own programs. Additionally, **companies that partner with a third party are also 36% more likely to see a significant return on their investment in win-loss analysis.**





It's also clear that most companies (70%) find the greatest value in a combination of expert consulting and robust win-loss software.

If you're ready to take your win-loss analysis program to the next level, check out the resources in the Clozd Win-Loss Toolkit.

[Get the toolkit →](#)



You'll receive ...

-  Definitive Guide to Win-Loss Analysis
-  ROI Calculator
-  Demo Video
-  Free Interview

