

BUT IS THAT REALLY ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE?

CIOs speak out on the validity of vendor AI claims



When a topic starts trending, like AI, it's natural for marketing and sales people to jump in and highlight how their solution fits into the conversation. But when does this enthusiasm to 'ride the wave' cross the line into unhelpful exaggeration or even what amounts to customer deception? A recent survey of 50 CIOs provided some insights.

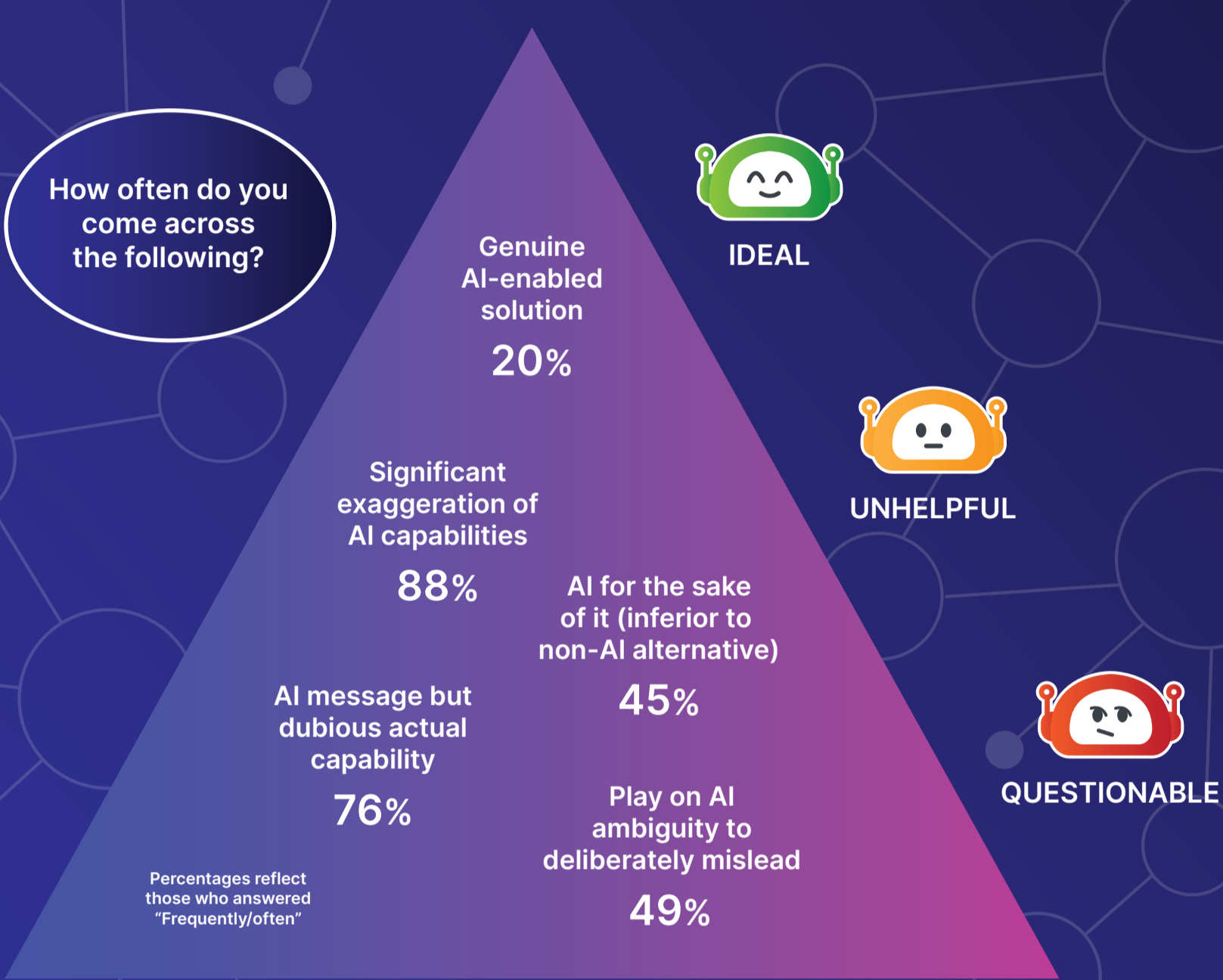
EVERYONE IS PITCHING AI

Or at least that's the way it feels to many CIOs who are being inundated with AI-related claims. On the surface, at least, it looks as if AI is powering the majority of IT solutions now being offered out there.



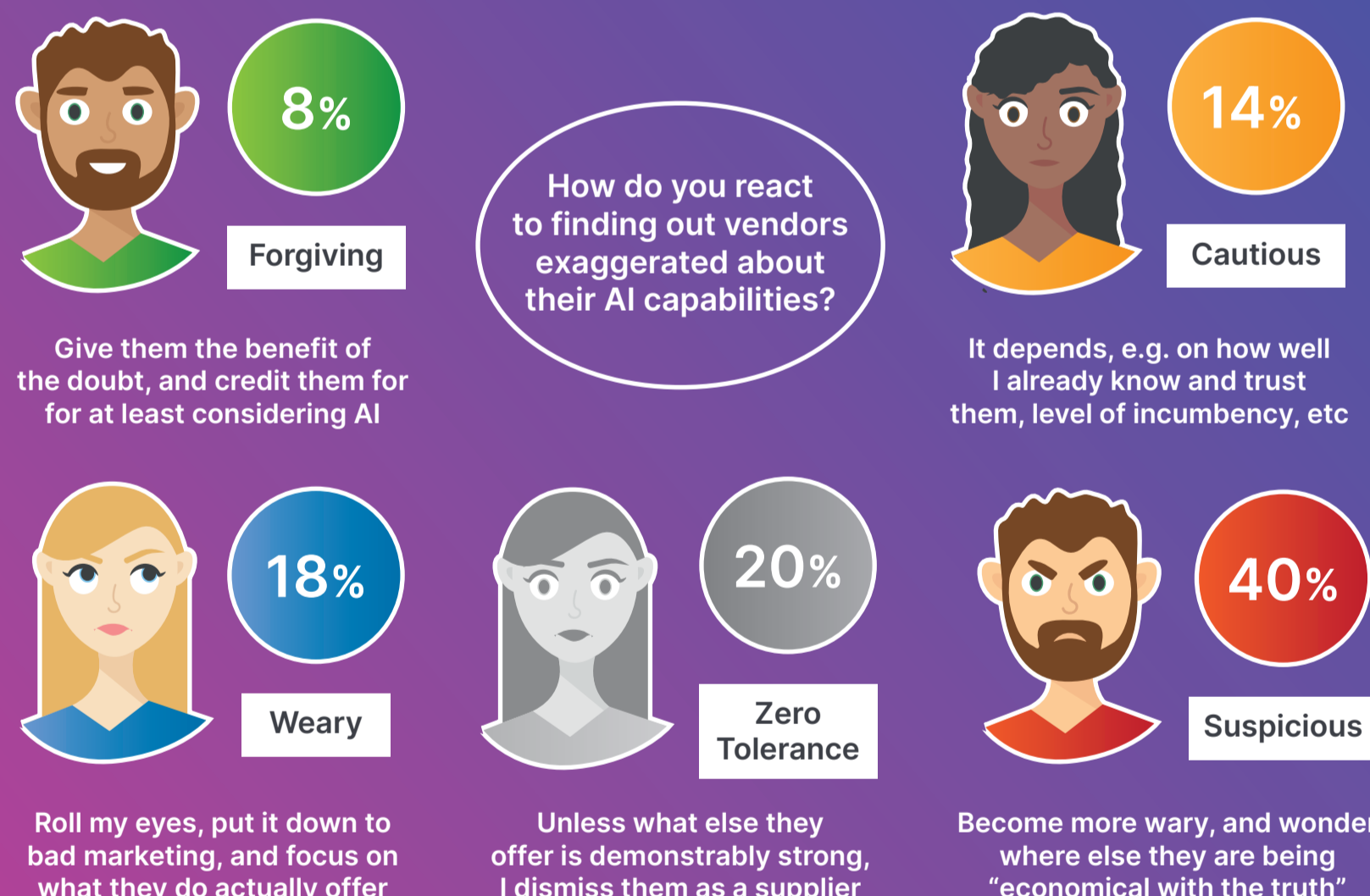
EXAGGERATIONS AND MISTRUTHS

Despite the widespread messaging around AI, CIOs encounter genuinely AI-enabled solutions relatively rarely. It's far more common to hear exaggerated or dubious claims, and while part of this will be down to over-enthusiasm on the part of some marketers, CIOs suspect that others set out to deliberately mislead.



CIOs' REACTION: BEYOND THE USUAL WEARINESS

Before we ran the survey, we suspected that most CIOs would simply 'roll their eyes' and move on when presented with questionable claims; over-positioning by some IT vendors is, after all, nothing new. The sheer amount of 'AI washing' that exists, however, seems to be provoking more of a negative response.



GREATER SCRUTINY OF CLAIMS

Anecdotally, we are hearing that many CIOs are sense-checking vendors' AI related claims sooner rather than later to avoid wasting time when proving options and ideas that ultimately fail to live up to expectations. Even when the AI component of a solution looks genuine, with so much new AI capability appearing, CIOs are still wary and understandably want to verify the enterprise readiness of what's on offer.

BASIC AI DUE DILIGENCE

Criteria Considered	High emphasis	Some emphasis	Look at when relevant
Potential security and/or compliance risks	61%	25%	10%
How much it has been proven in the real world	59%	27%	12%
How easy it is to validate the solution in context	51%	35%	10%
What it offers over non-AI based alternatives	45%	29%	14%
How the AI piece works, at least at a high level	43%	33%	20%
Potential user/operator trust/acceptance issues	31%	47%	16%
Potential biases as a result of how the AI is trained	27%	49%	20%

CONCLUSION

Whether AI qualifies as a proverbial bandwagon is for you to decide. Either way, with so many vendors feeling compelled to message around AI, even if their actual capabilities fall short, the sheer amount of noise we are currently experiencing is a challenge for both buyers and sellers. With this in mind, vendors who sell and market openly and honestly are - as always - likely to win favour with IT decision-makers. And as a final thought to leave you with, as one CIO said to us recently: "Just because it's AI, doesn't make it good!"

