The background of the slide is a photograph of a large, light-colored rock surface. Two dark, elongated shadows of human figures are cast across the rock, one on the left and one on the right, with their arms raised. The scene is set outdoors with some greenery and a cloudy sky visible at the top.

Media in Experiential Learning

Analysis of Survey Responses

Top Responses
Broken Out by Profession

Nonprofit, Self-employed, Public School,
For Profit, College, Independent School,
and Other Practitioners

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Introduction

When Braman Group International started designing this survey on Media Making in Experiential Education in early January 2015, we knew that one of the perennial challenges for experiential educators was communicating the magic of the learning that takes place “out there” – beyond the classroom, the campus or corporate headquarters.

When Tommy Caldwell and Kevin Jorgesen completed their project on The Dawn Wall, it blew our minds. Not only was it arguably the most difficult ascent in the history of rock climbing, but it was a global media sensation, with interactive graphics tracking the climbers’ progress, Facebook providing peeks into private dialogue, and Anderson Cooper inquiring about mountainside bathroom habits on live television.

Contrast that to Warren Harding’s 1970 first ascent of the same route. Only those who stood at the foot of El Cap could see his progress over 27 consecutive days (while he drilled 300 bolts). The only media was a TV crew awaiting him when he topped out.

When Tap Tapley was building the Marble basecamp for Outward Bound's first U.S. course in 1961, it was the age of celluloid film. Just back from Eskdale, the British Outward Bound School, he was charged with importing a teaching technology that would underpin experiential education for the next 54 years.

Tapley couldn't have guessed that someday all of us would be our own network TV stations. By 2010, FaceTime video chat for the iPhone 4 enabled us to share live motion pictures – anywhere, anytime. Low-cost, low-tech digital tools have democratized both access to compelling stories and the methods of storytelling. Whole communities can now participate in shared experiences and contribute to a shared intelligence.

What are the implications for the field of experiential education? Will our skillfulness with media match our highly evolved methods for reflection on experience? Can we break through norms about the purity of our enterprise the way Caldwell and Jorgesen did? Will we cross an ocean to import a new technology for learning the way Tapley did? To hear your thoughts, we designed this survey as an opinion poll. The pool of respondents comes largely from affiliated associations and professional groups. While this kind of self-selected poll has little scientific validity, the unique comments written by 119 of 288 respondents help to personalize the data and begin a dialogue. We have provided a sample, hoping your comments on them and this report might enliven an ongoing professional conversation.

Thanks to everyone!
With warm wishes,

John Braman johnbraman@gmail.com

Acknowledgements

We are grateful for the assistance of the following people and organizations in providing advice about survey design and in distributing it to their constituencies:

Steve Pace
Prescott College

Julie Carlson
Minnesota State University at
Mankato

Willy Fluharty
Global Education Benchmark Group
(GEBG)

Rich Brame

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National Outdoor Leadership
School (NOLS)

AJ Lindelow and Peter O'Neill

Colorado Outward Bound School
(COBS)

Jerry Isaaks
Plattsburgh State College

Rob Chatfield
Outward Bound International

Ioana Wheeler
National Association for
Independent Schools (NAIS)

Rob Smariga
Association for Experiential
Education (AEE)

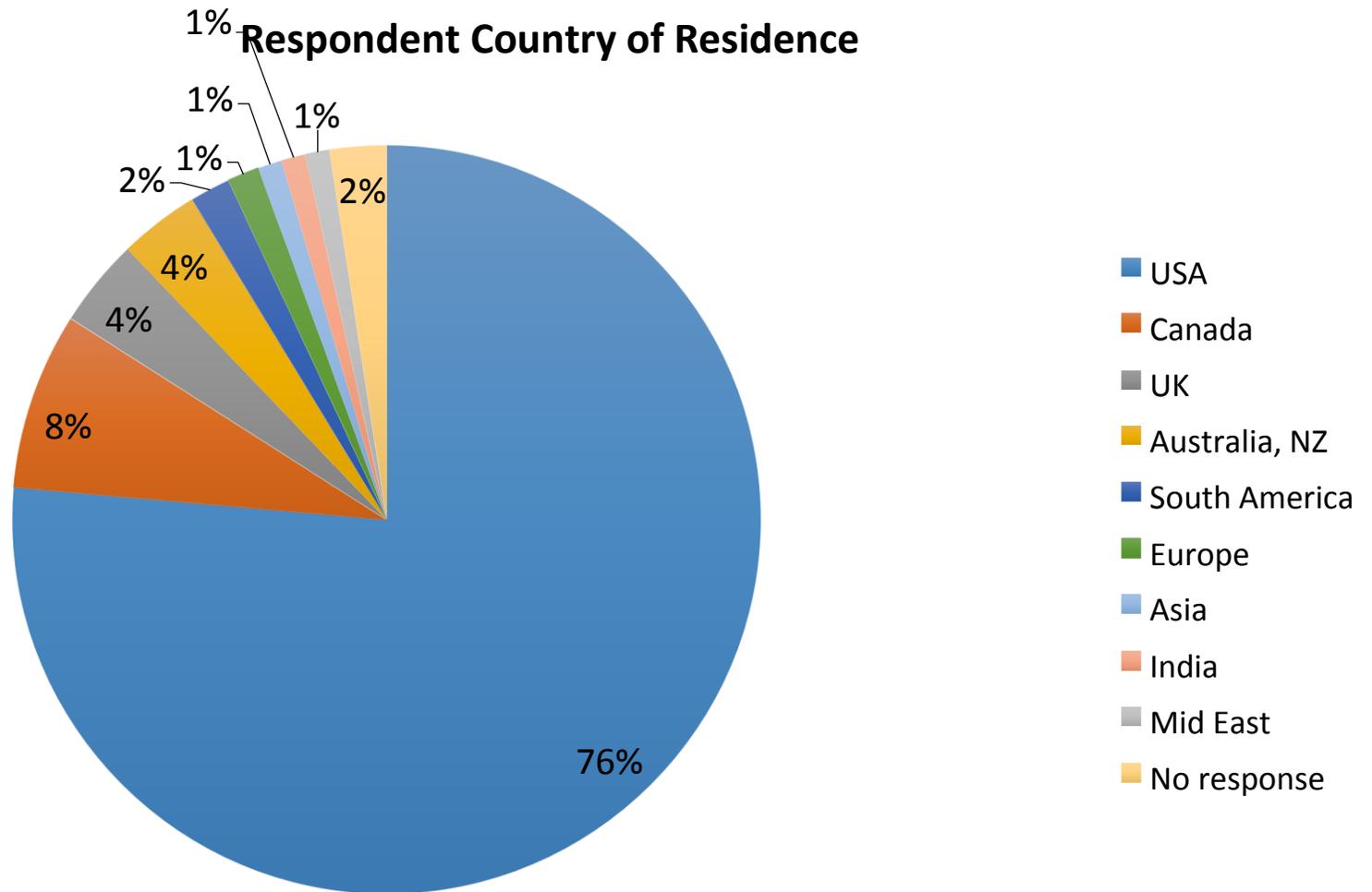
Allyson Brown
The Council of Outdoor Educators of
Ontario (COEO)

Kate Binns, katebinns@gmail.com, gave generously of her time to design the questionnaire, shape the questions, and de-aggregate the data.

Susan Ashford, slash.learm@gmail.com, was a key member of the design team. Her observations and administrative support were indispensable.

A deep bow to Kate and Susan!

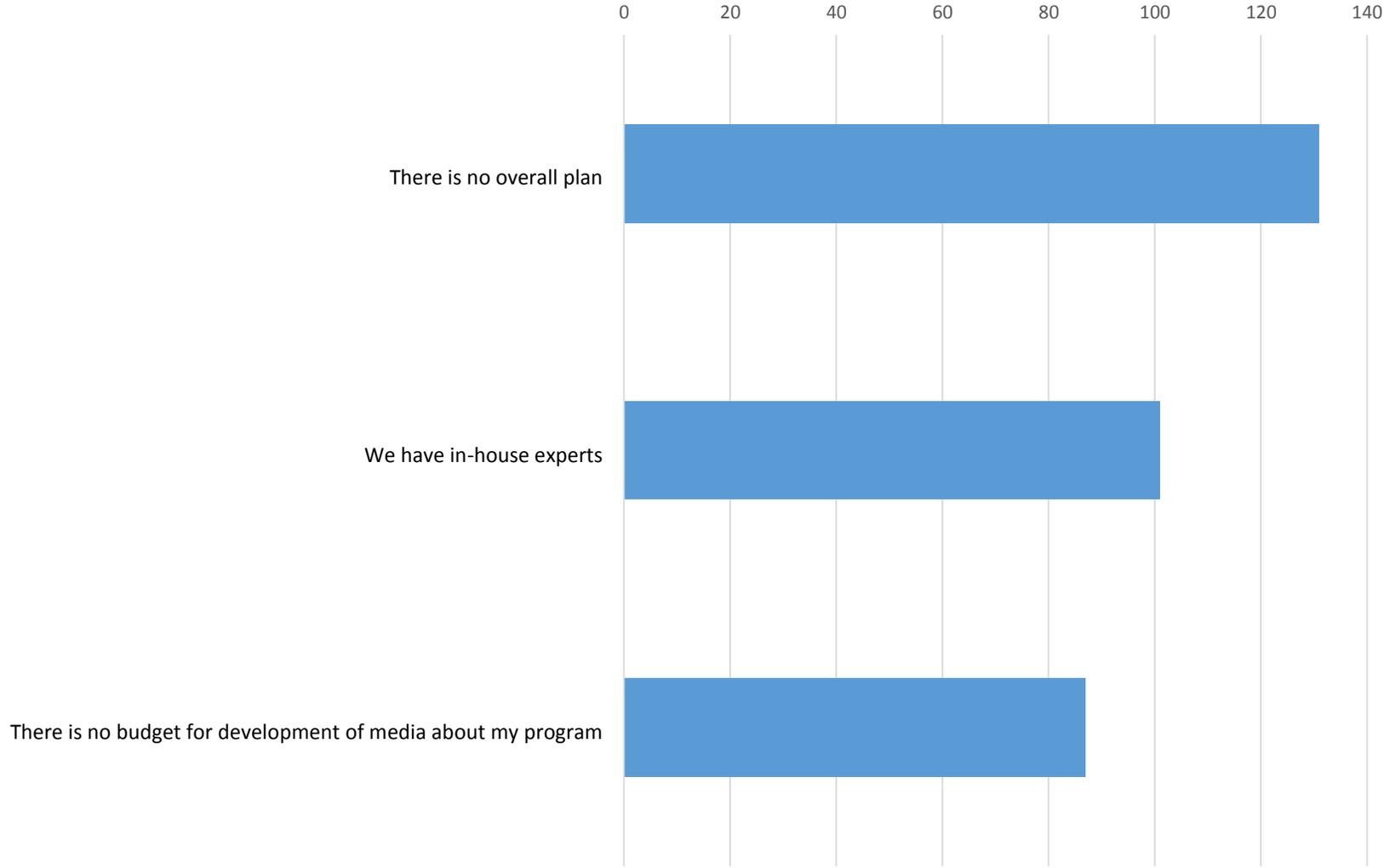
Full Survey Analytics



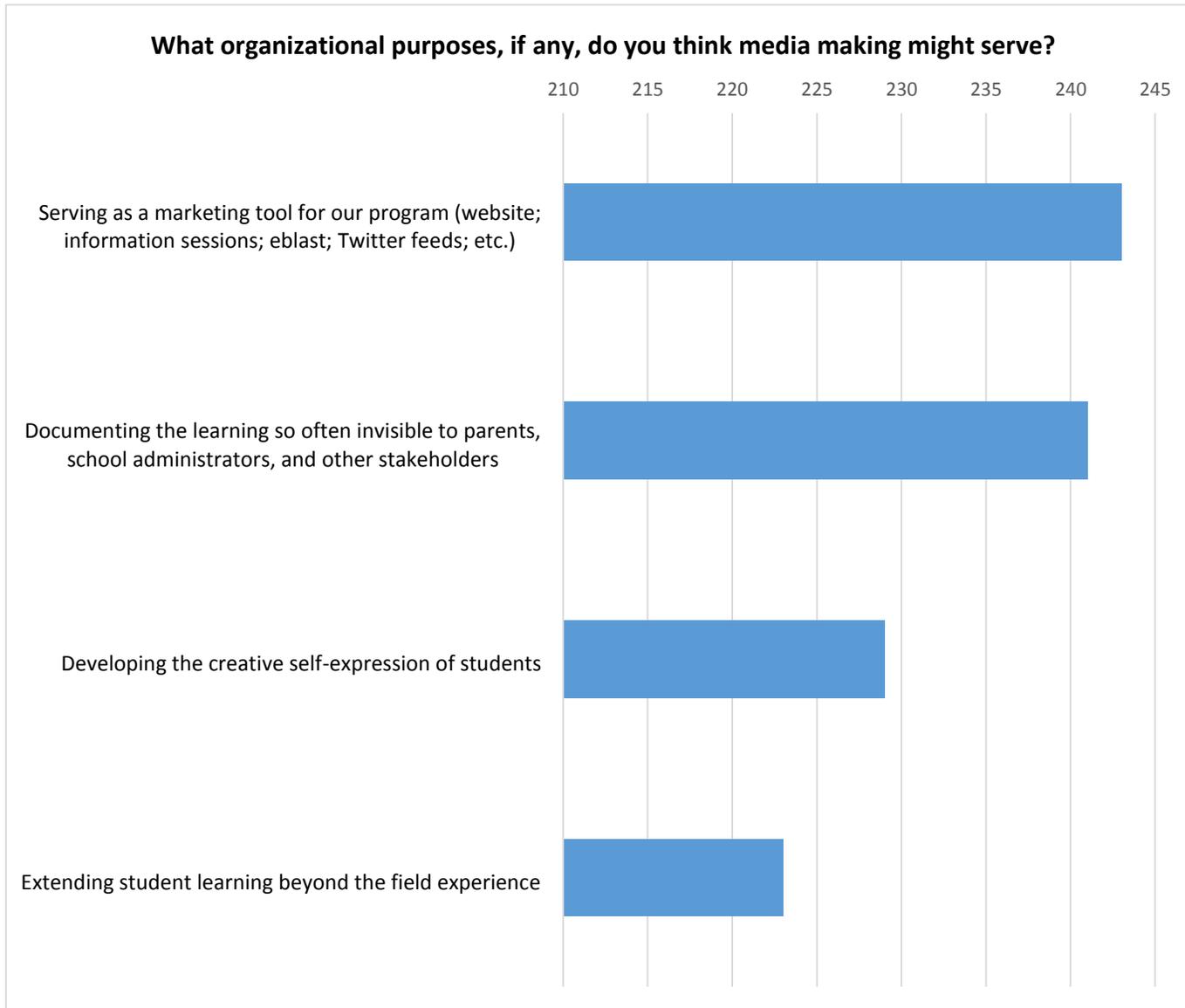
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Top Survey Responses from All Practitioners

How does your organization currently manage the development of media about its programs?



Survey Responses

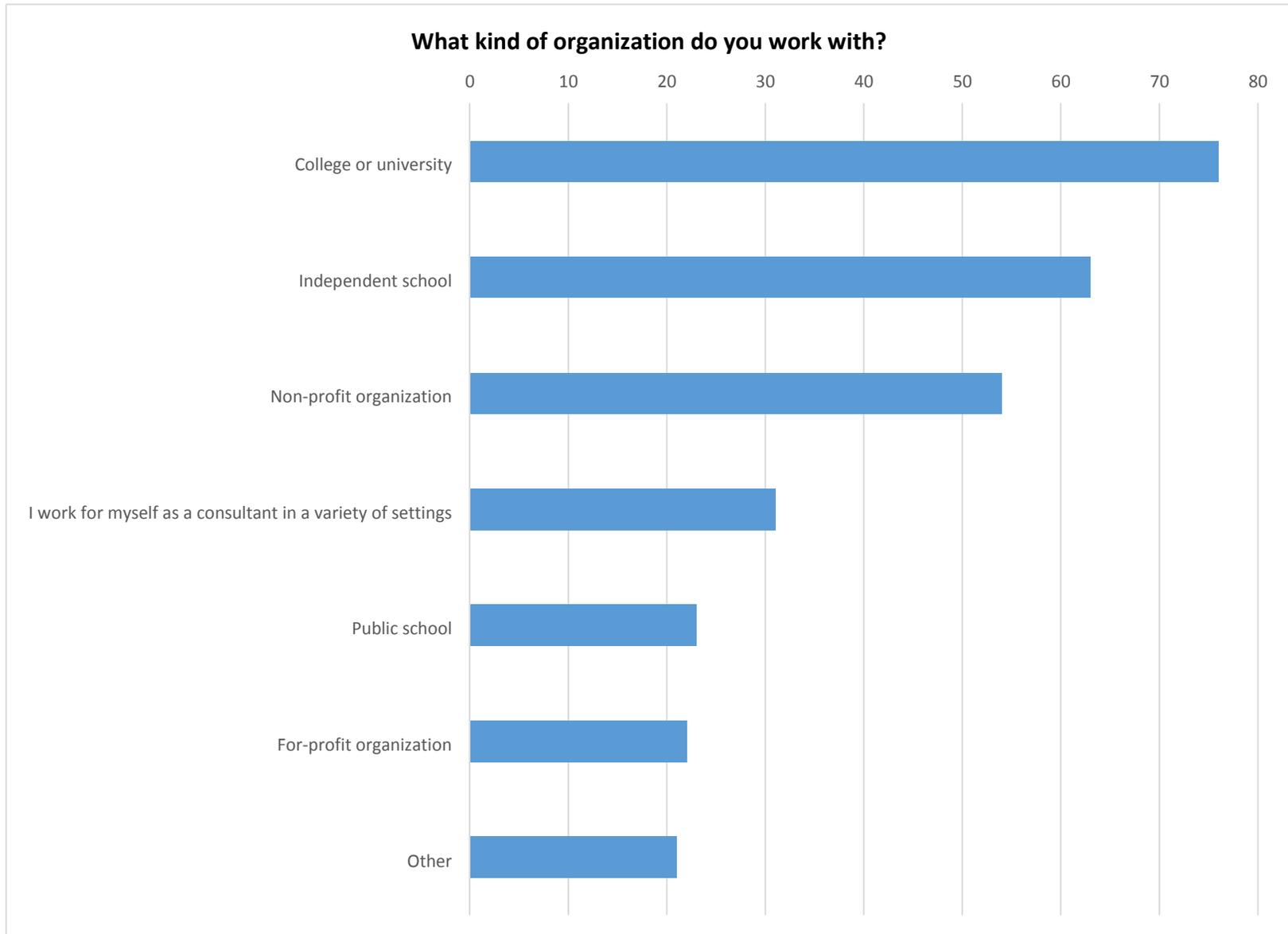


Survey Responses

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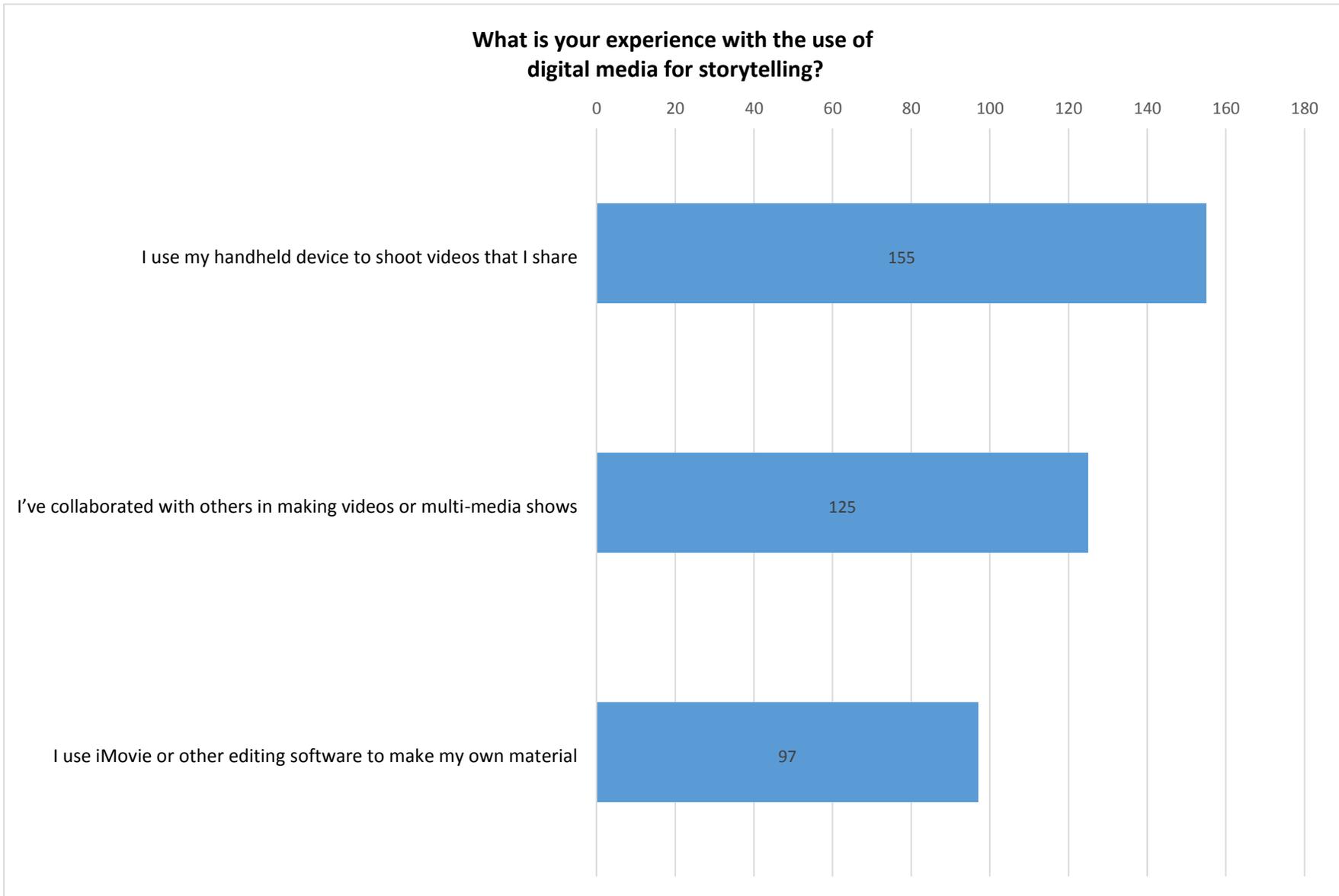


Survey Responses

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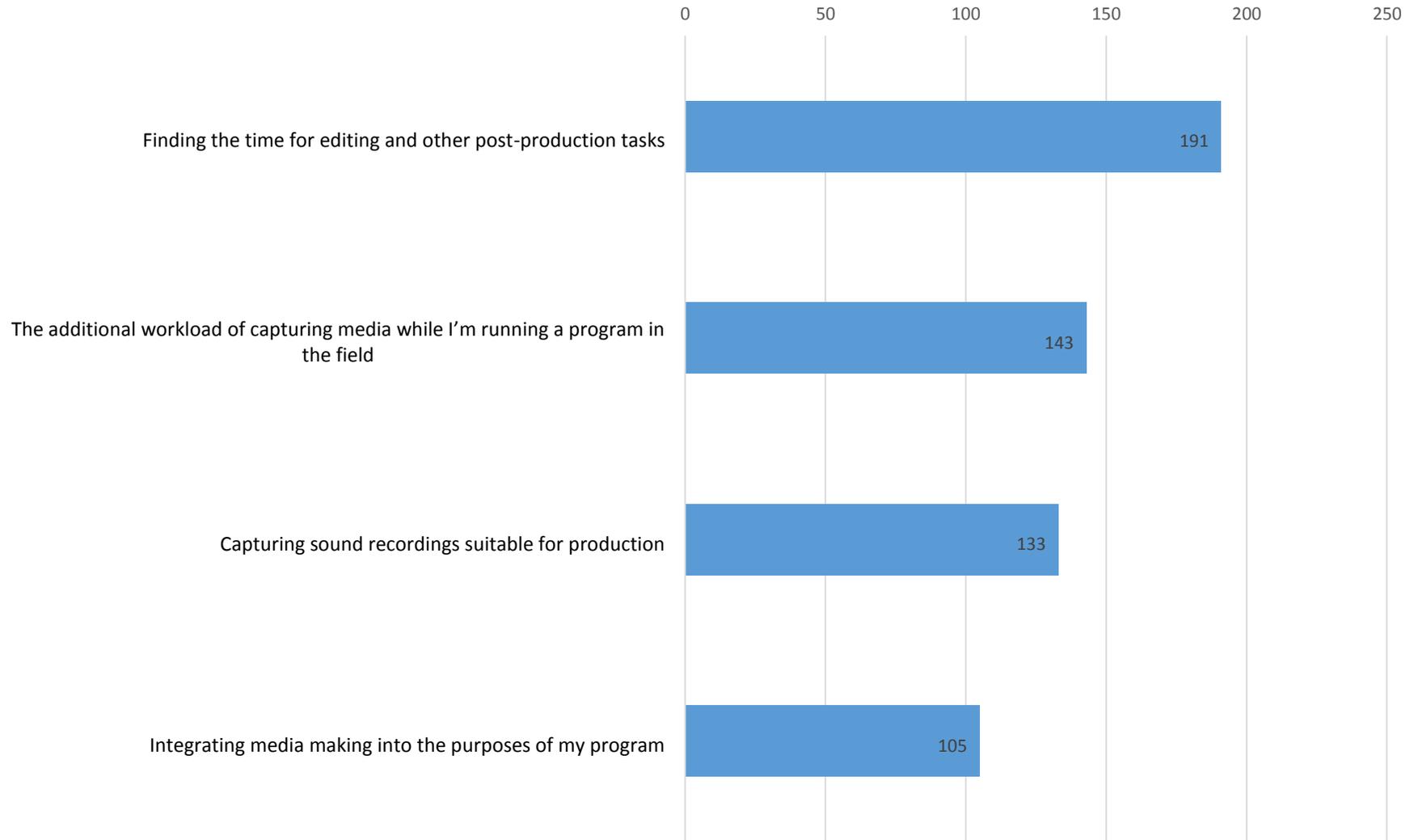
Survey Responses



Survey Responses

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What is the most challenging aspect of media making in your experiential program?

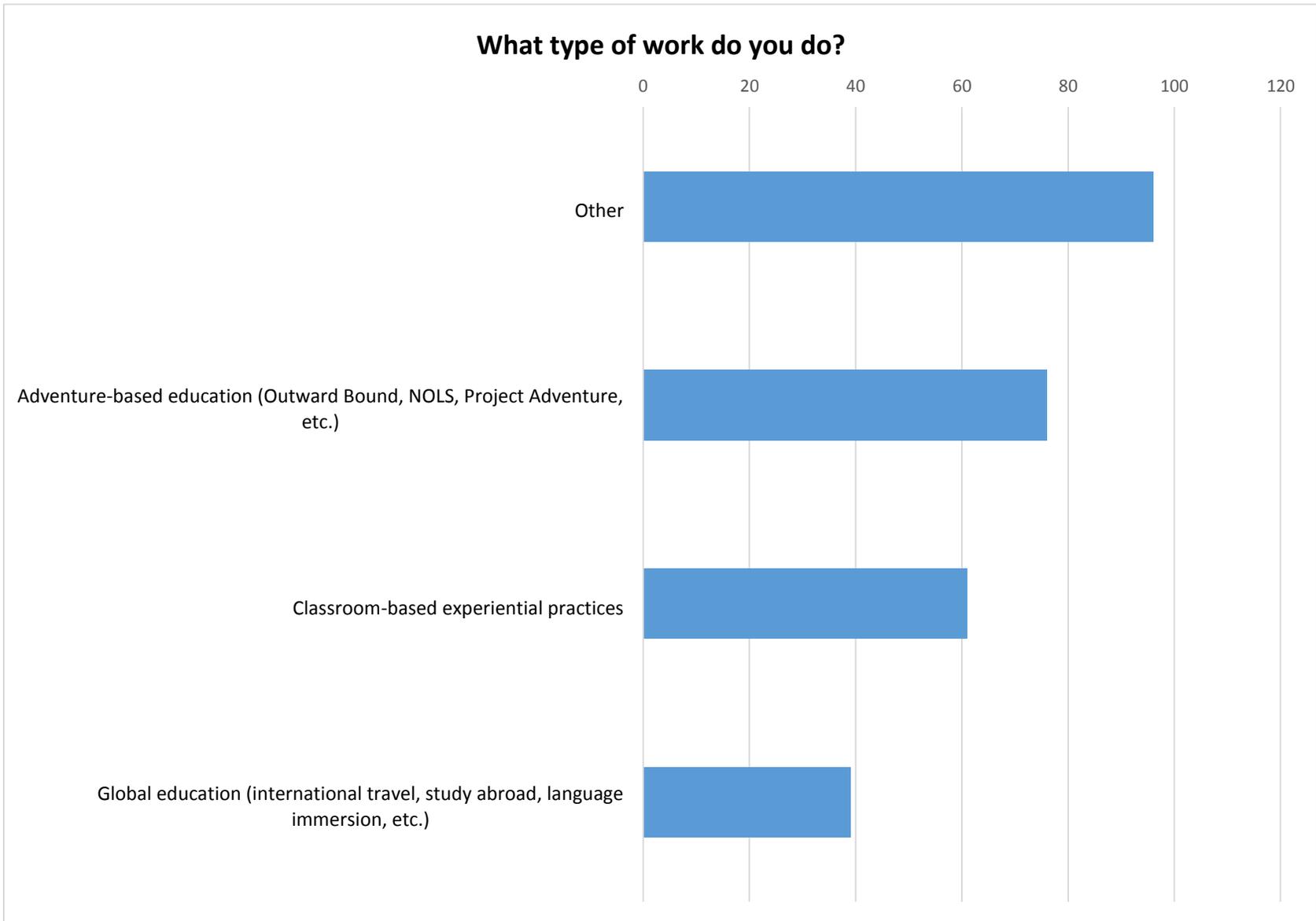


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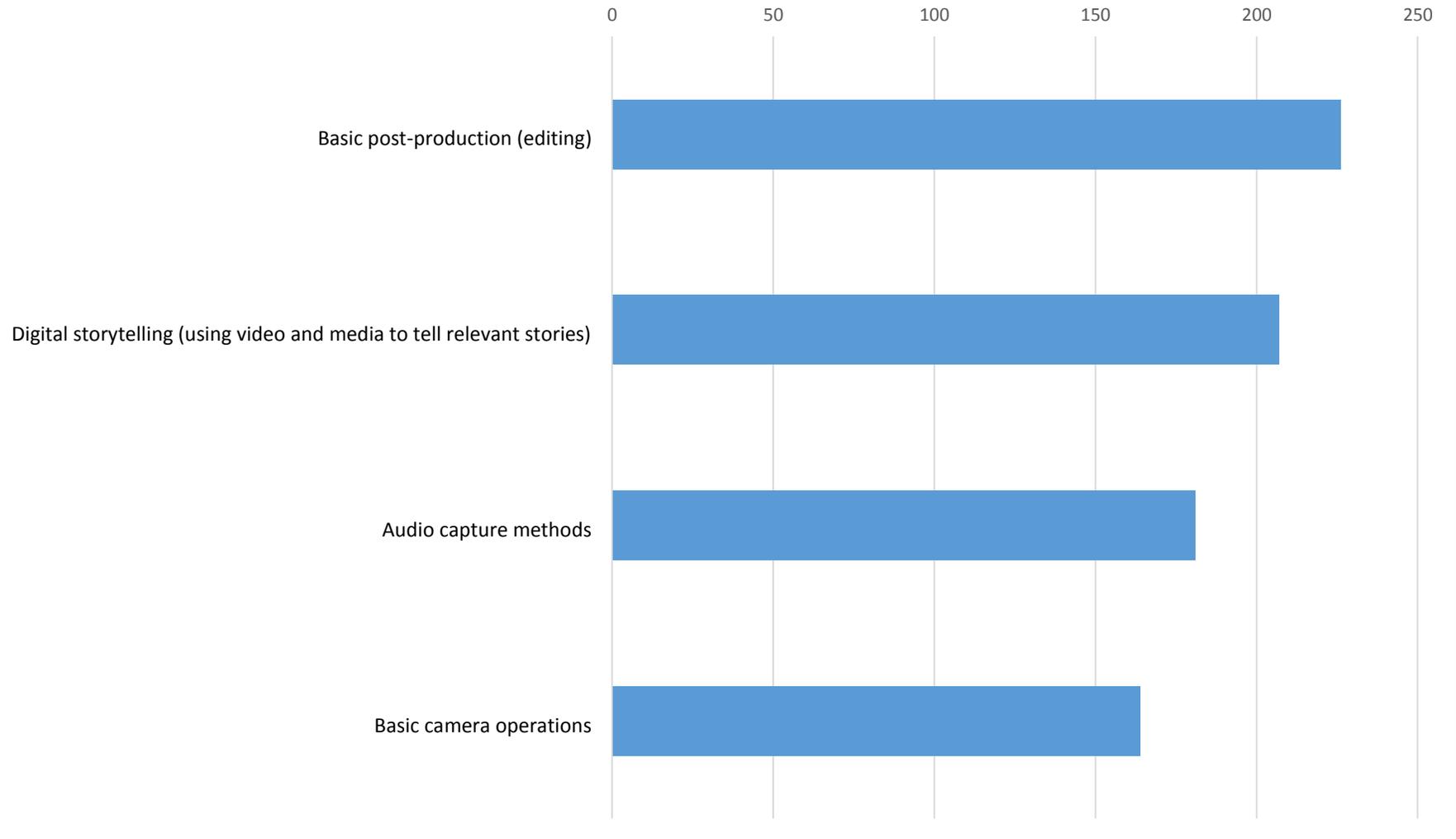
Survey Responses



Survey Responses

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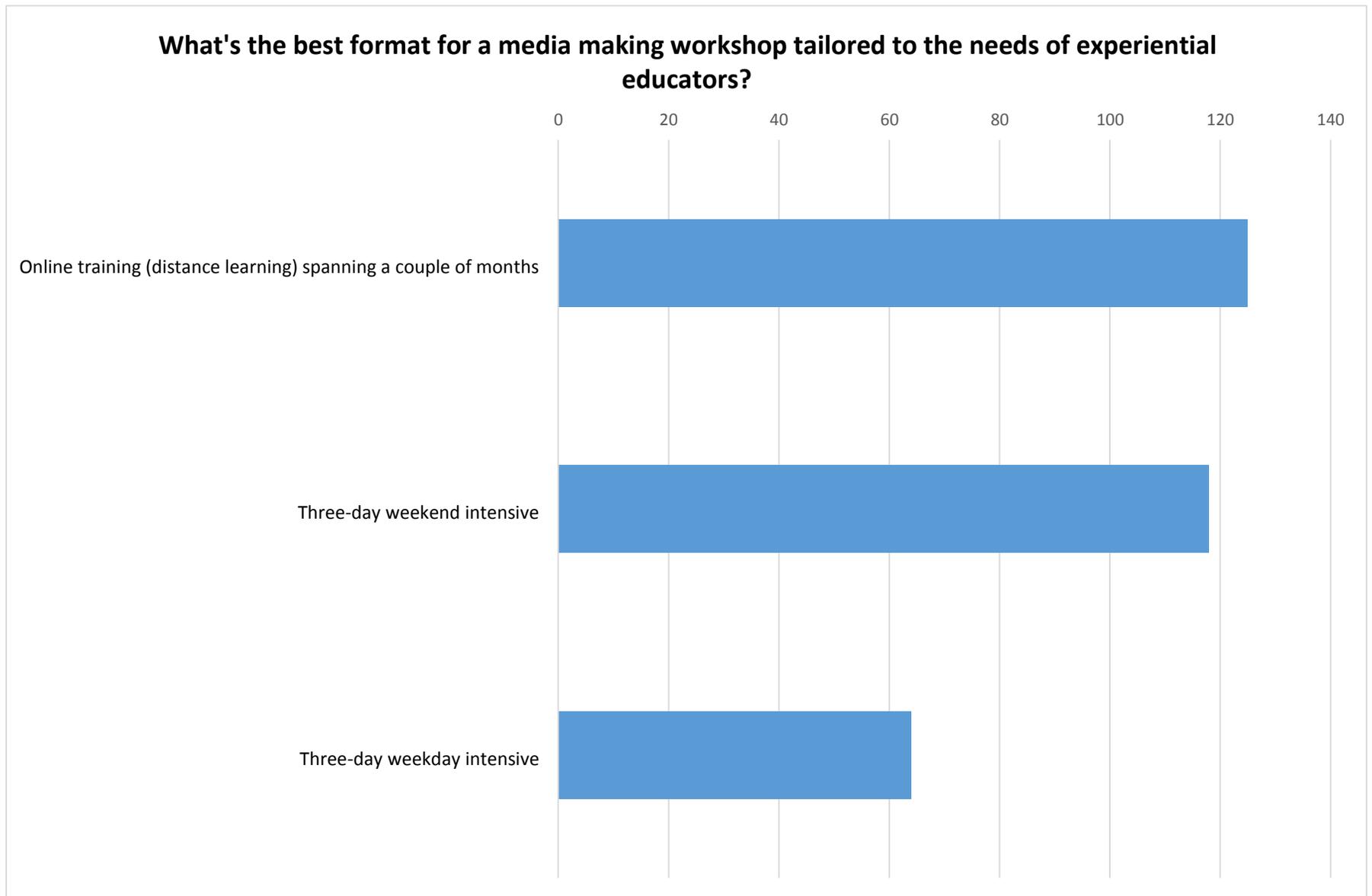


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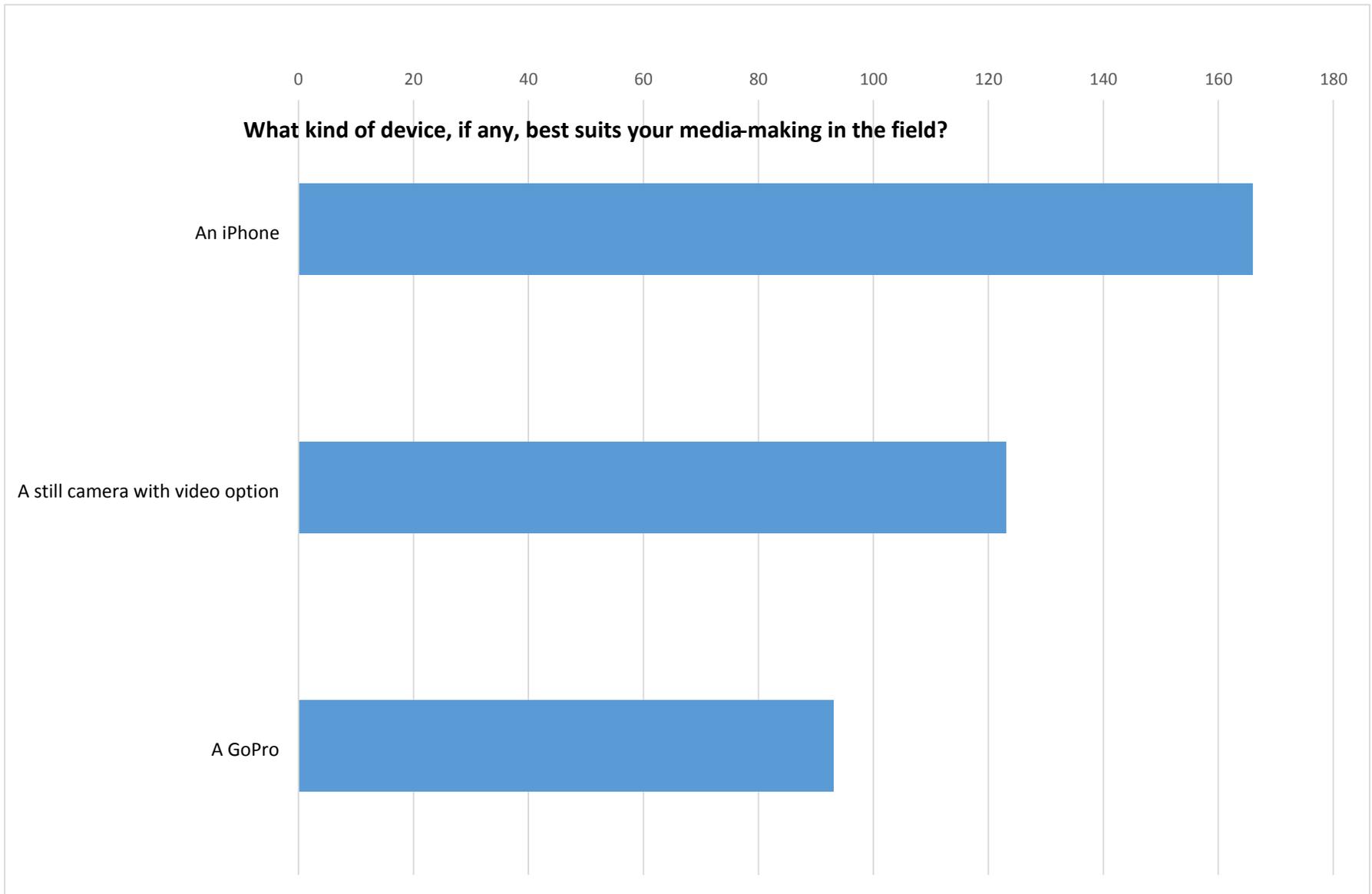
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Survey Responses



Survey Responses

ExEd Media



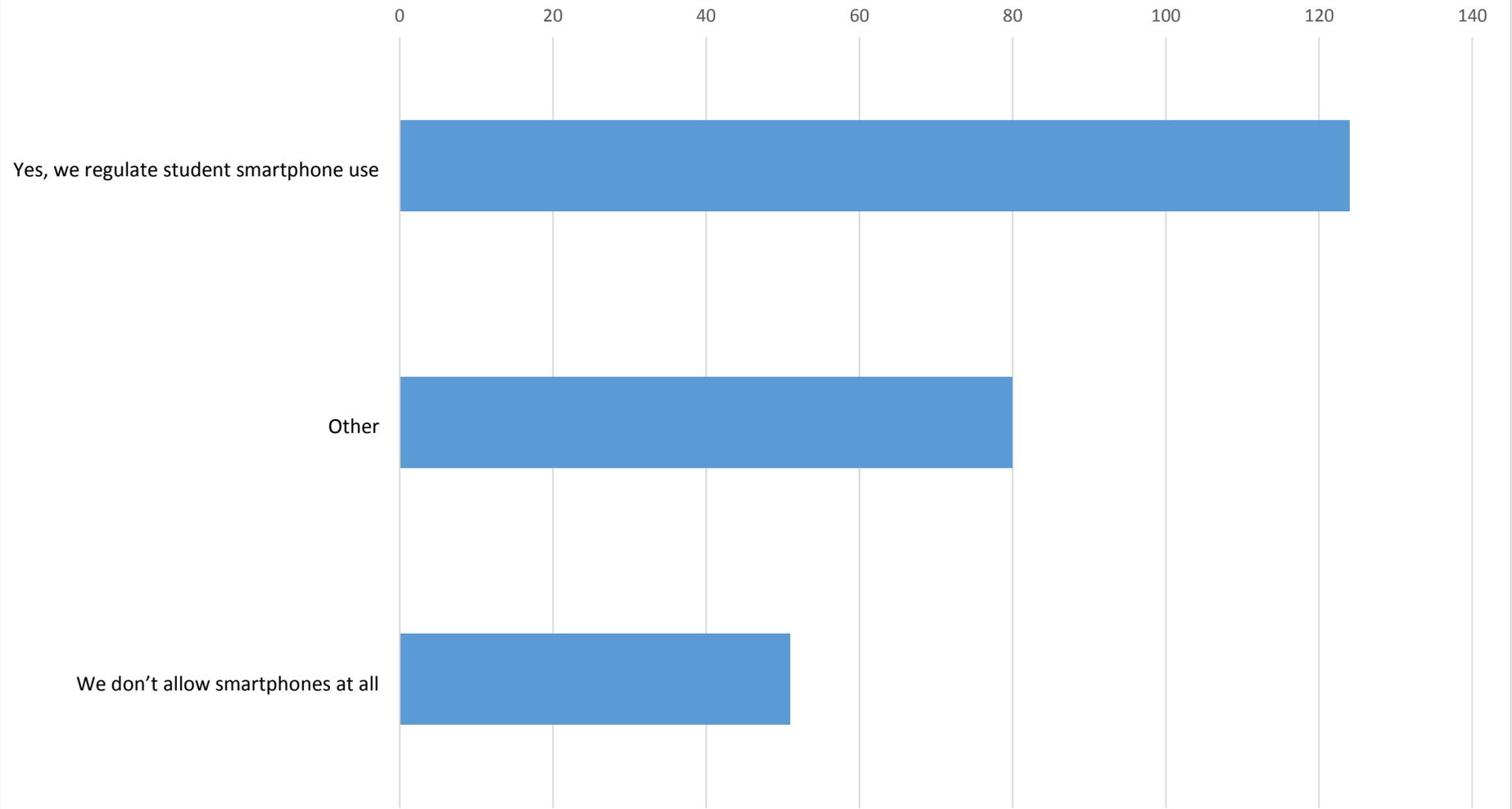
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Survey Responses

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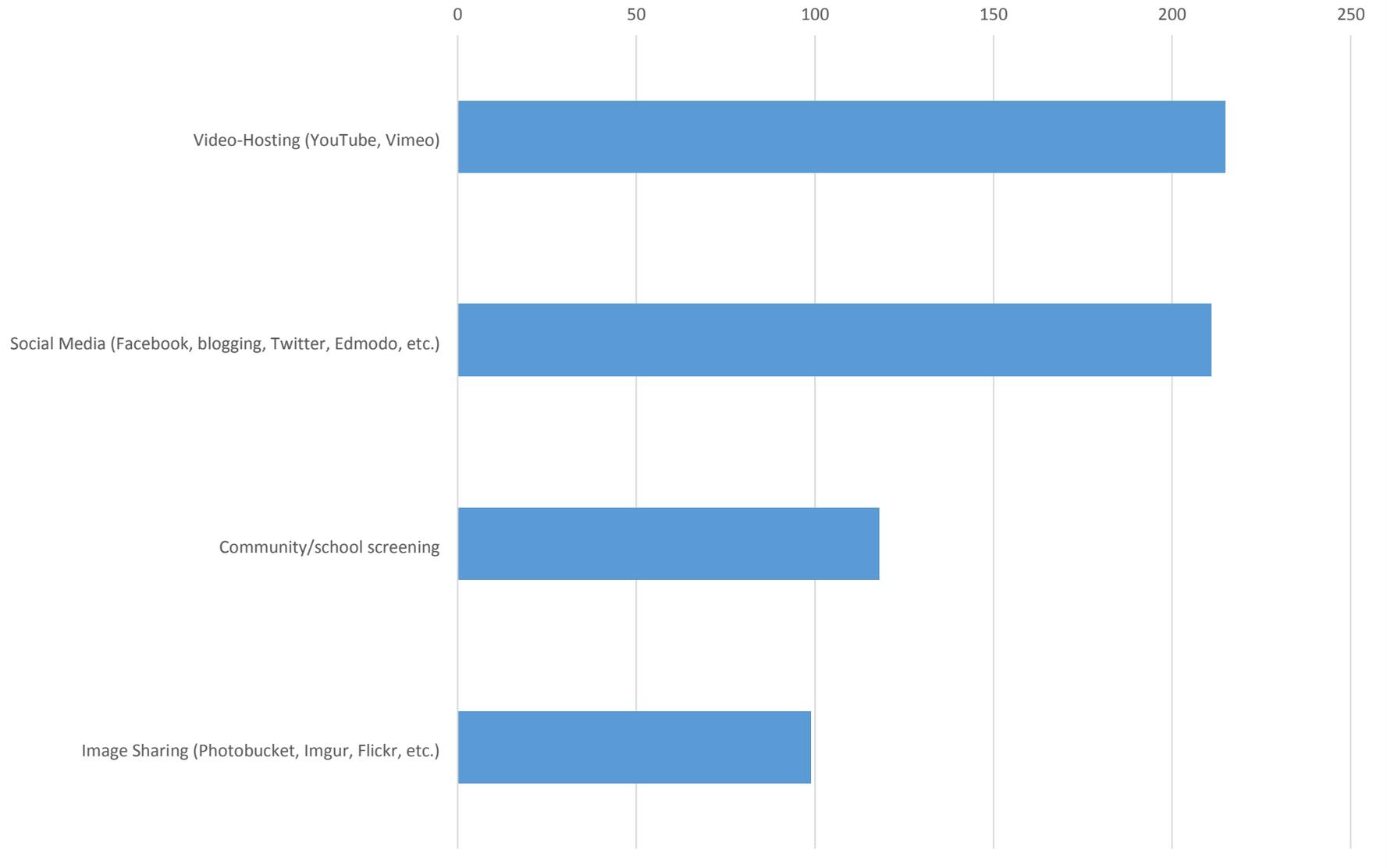
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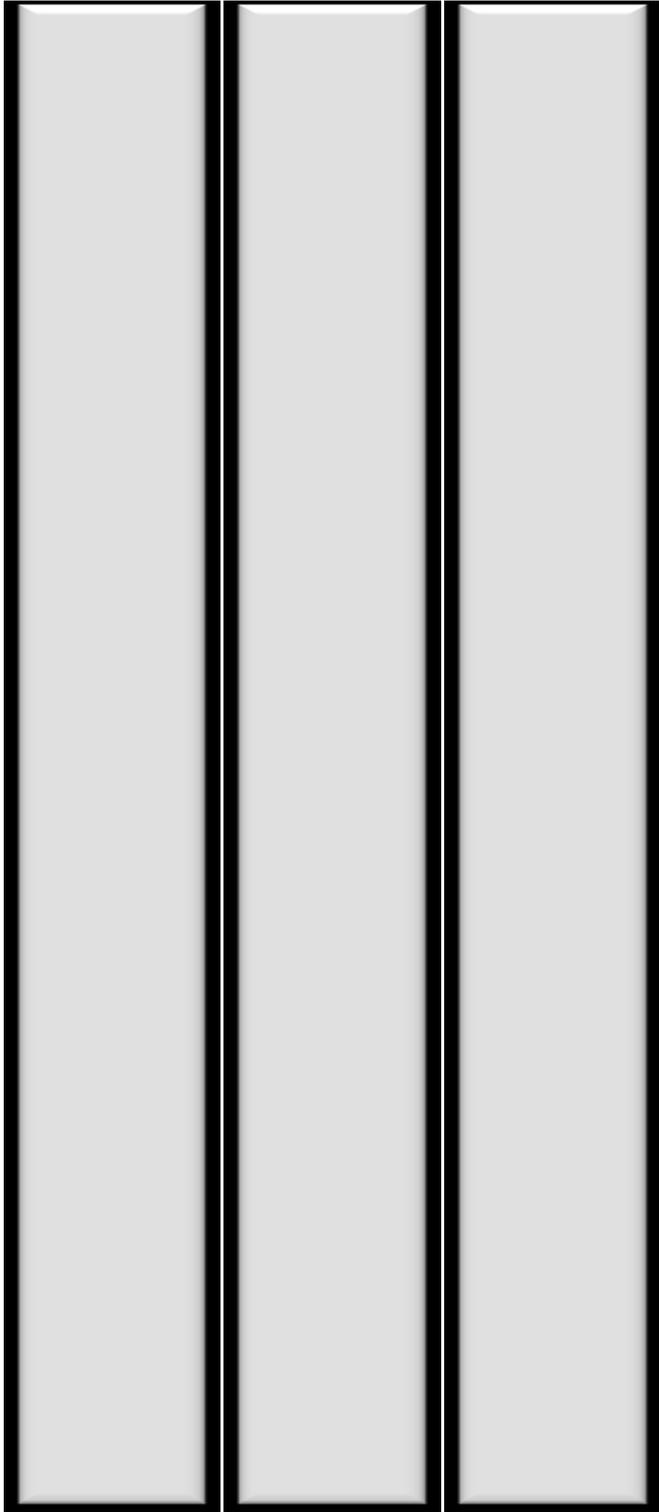
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Survey Responses

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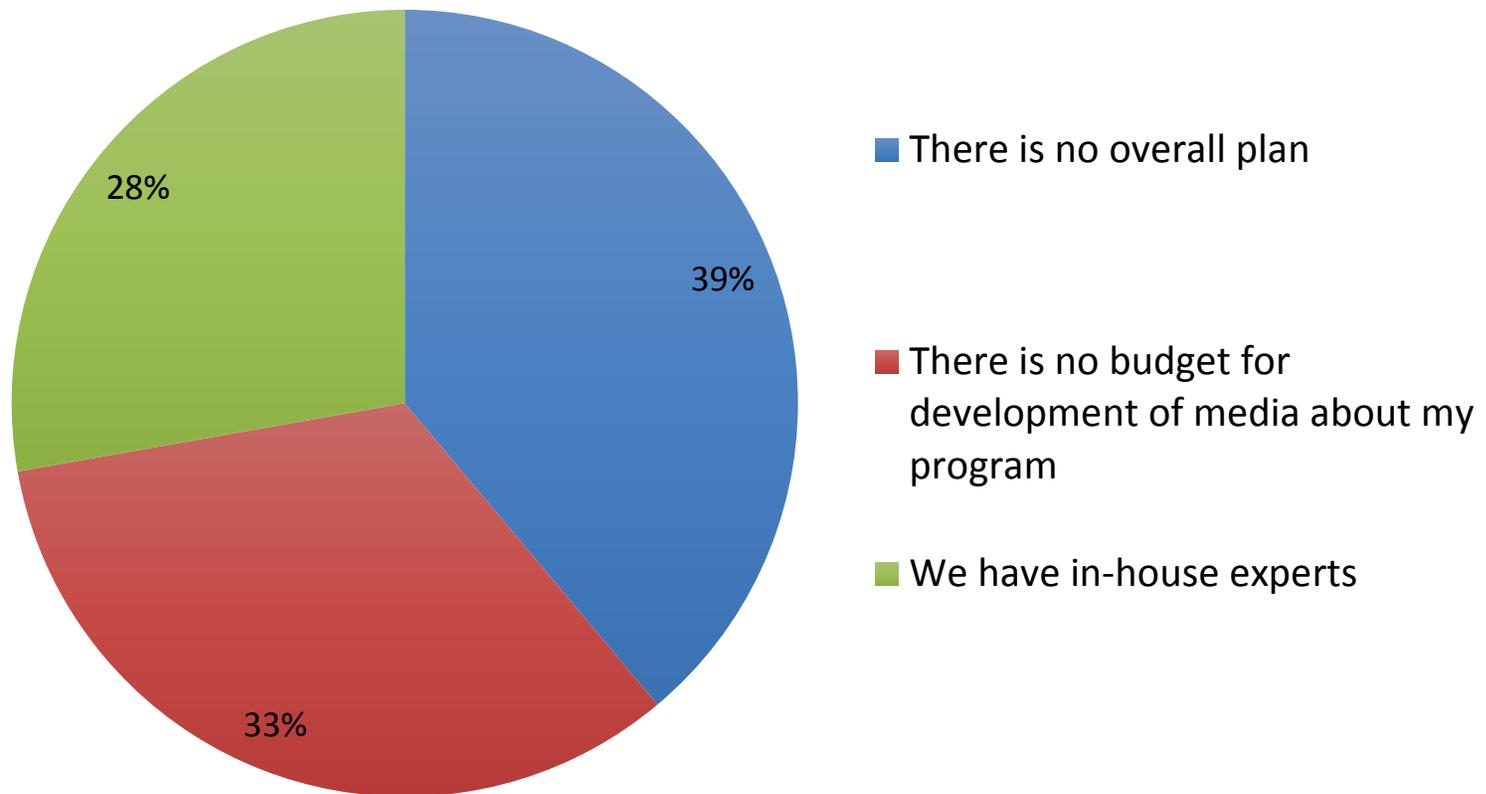
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Top Survey Responses from College Practitioners

Top Survey Responses from 77 College Practitioners

How does your organization currently manage the development of media about its programs?

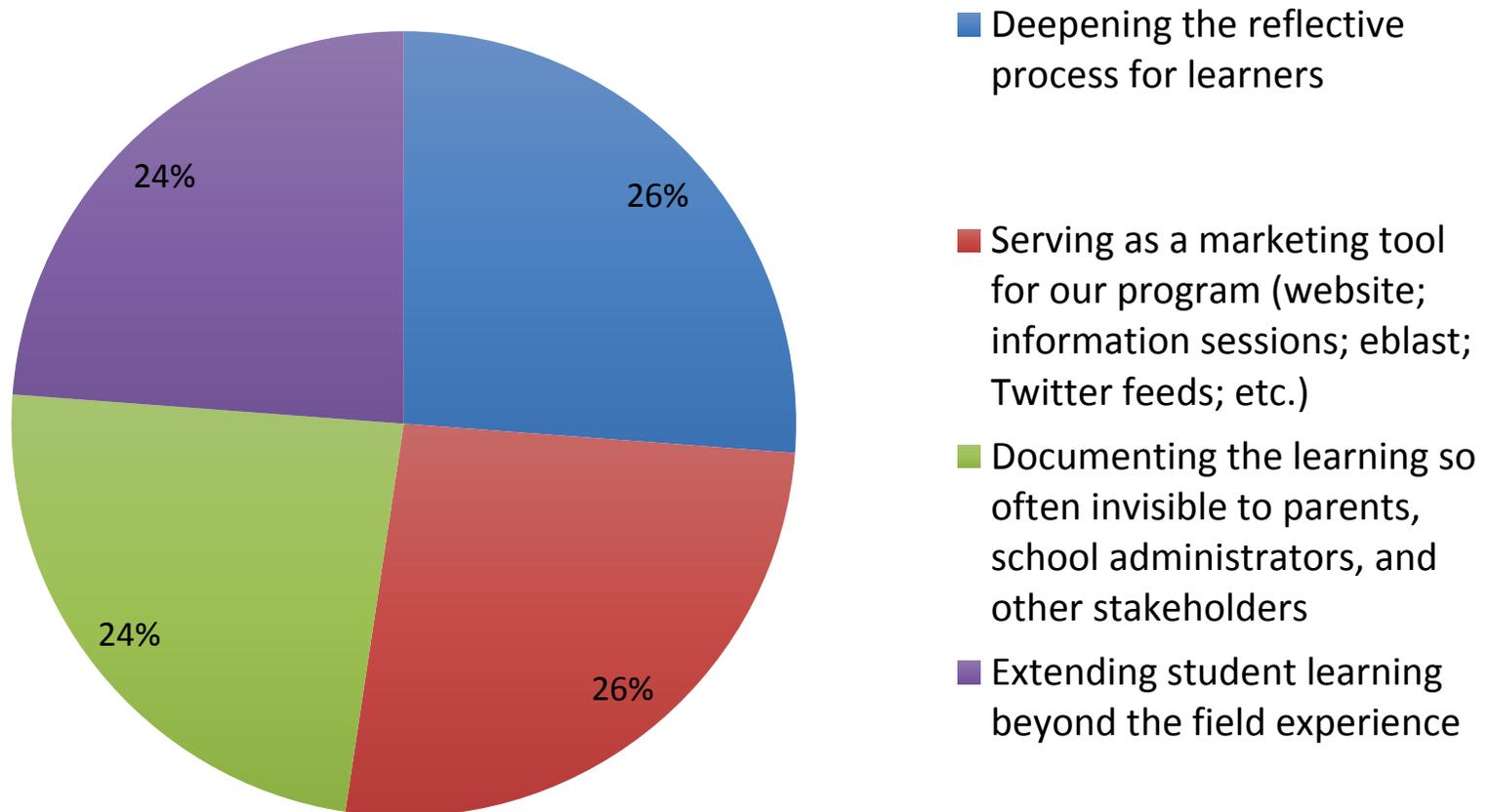


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Top Survey Responses from 77 College Practitioners

What organizational purposes, if any, do you think media making might serve?

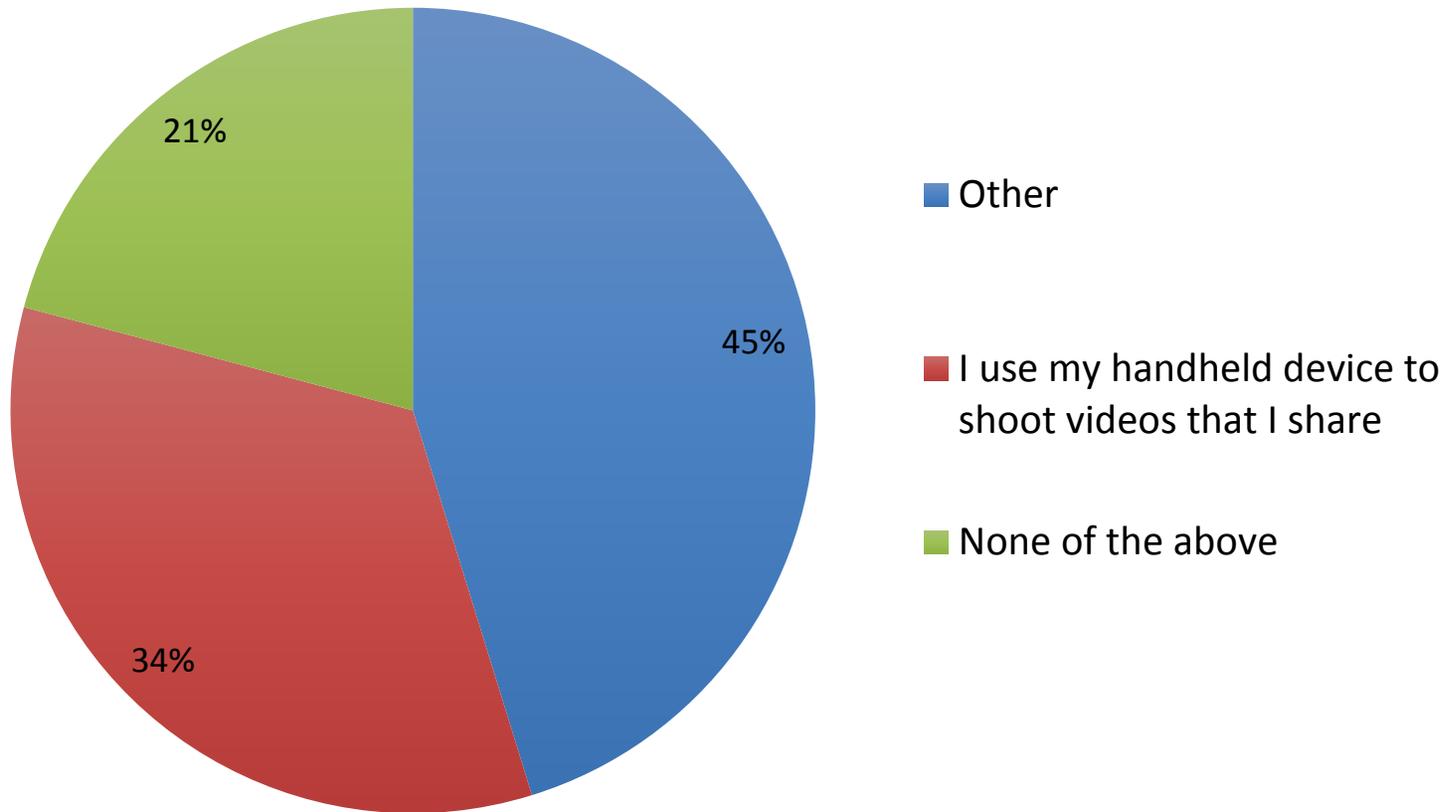


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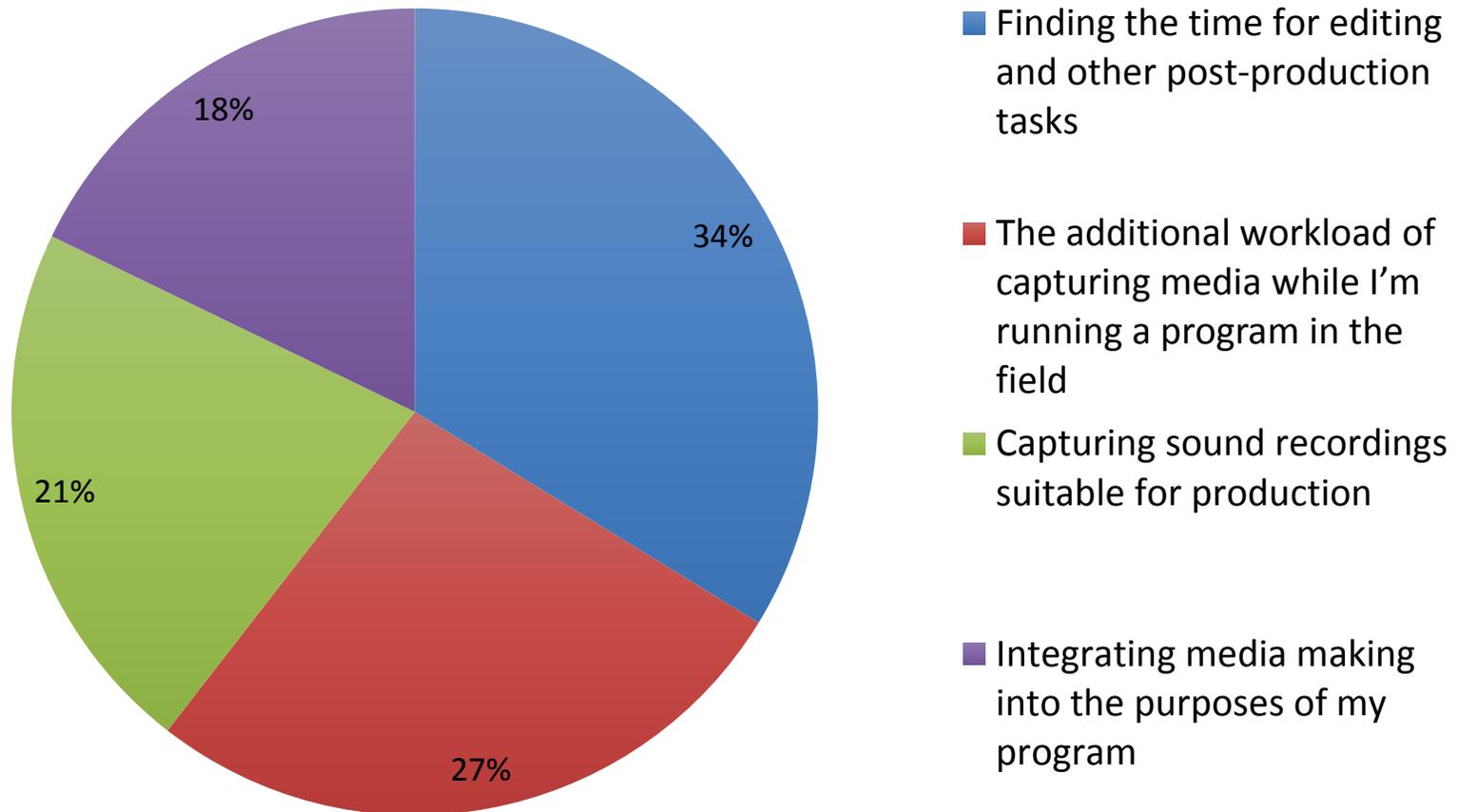


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Top Survey Responses from 77 College Practitioners

What is the most challenging aspect of media making in your experiential program?

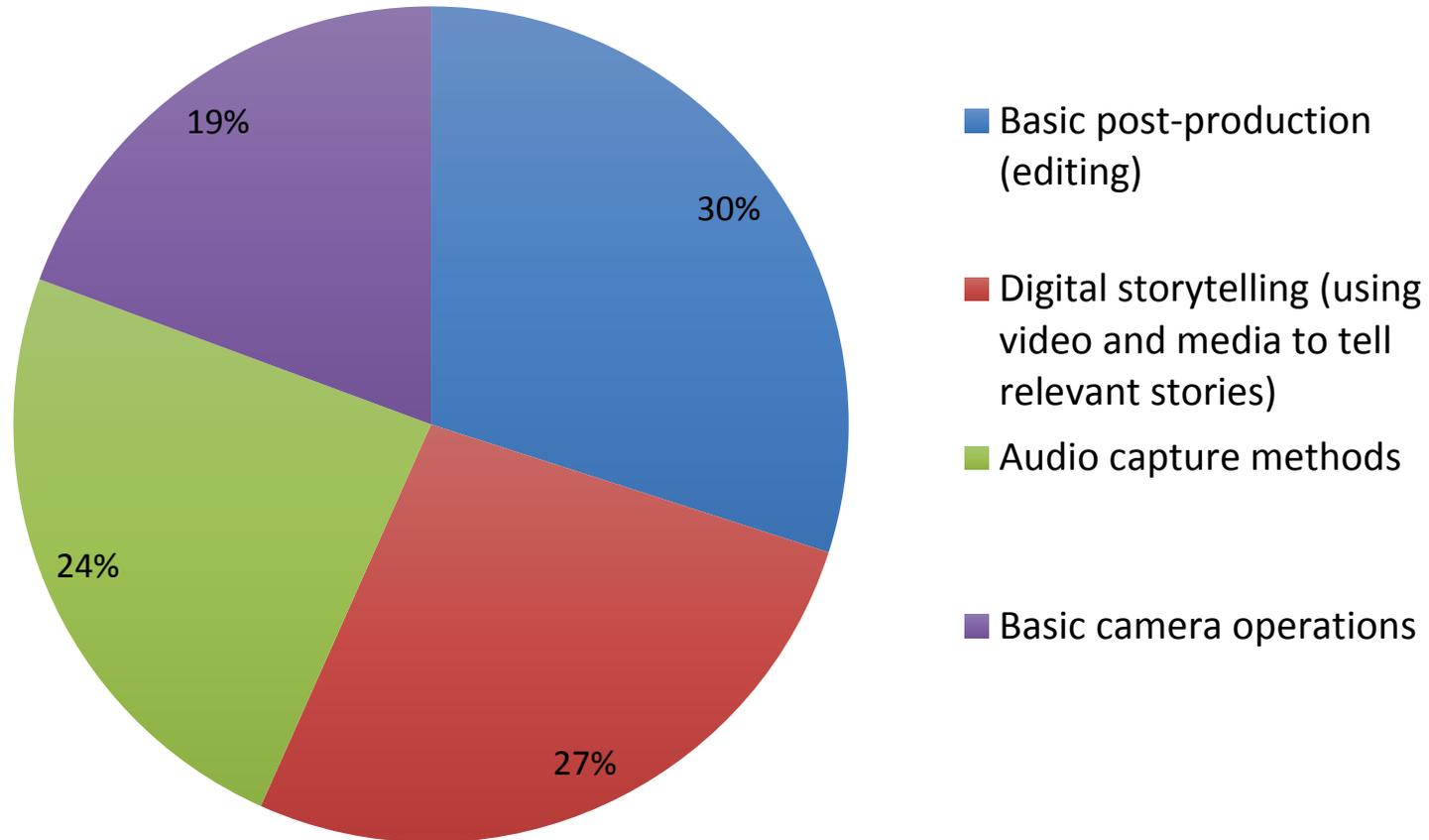


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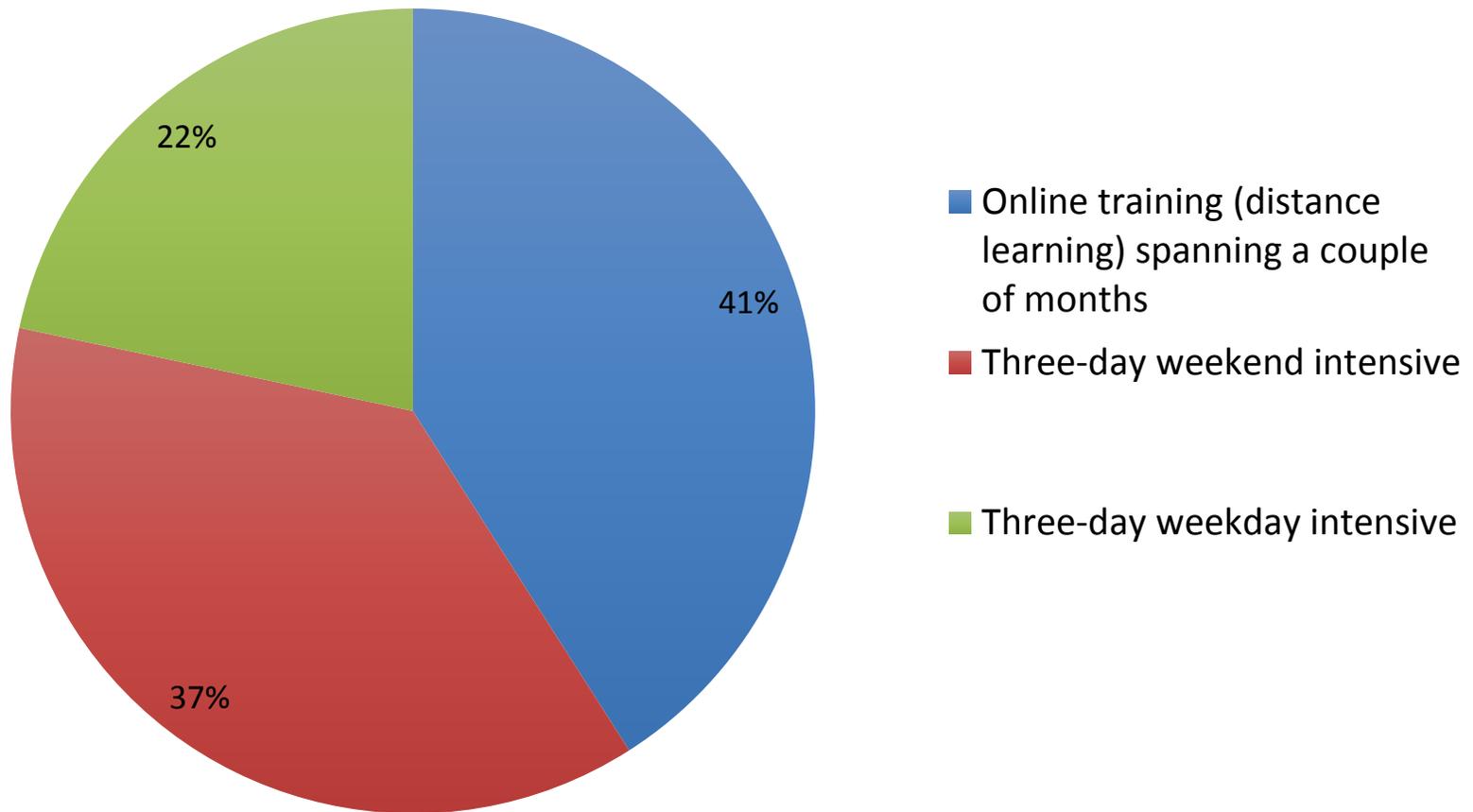


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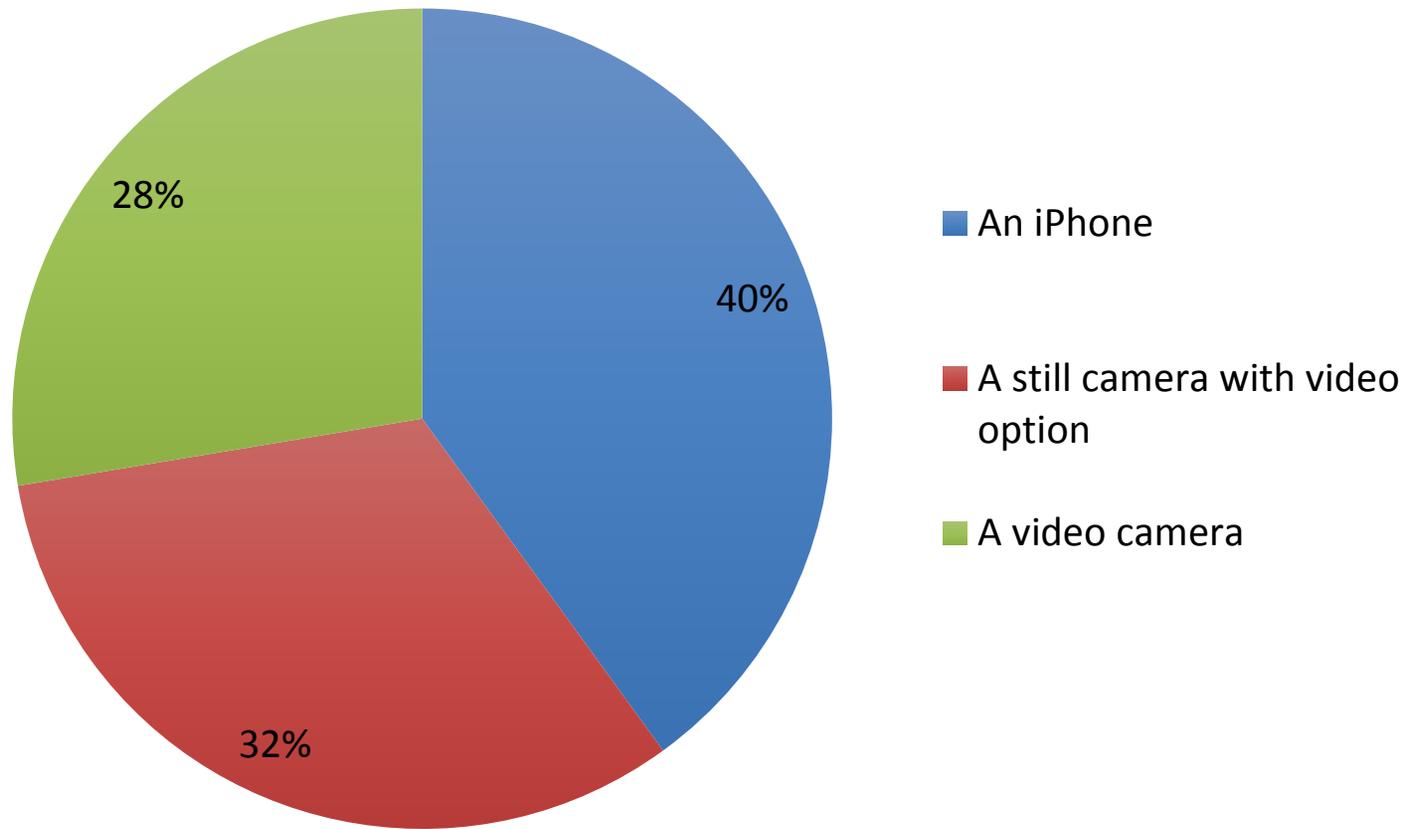


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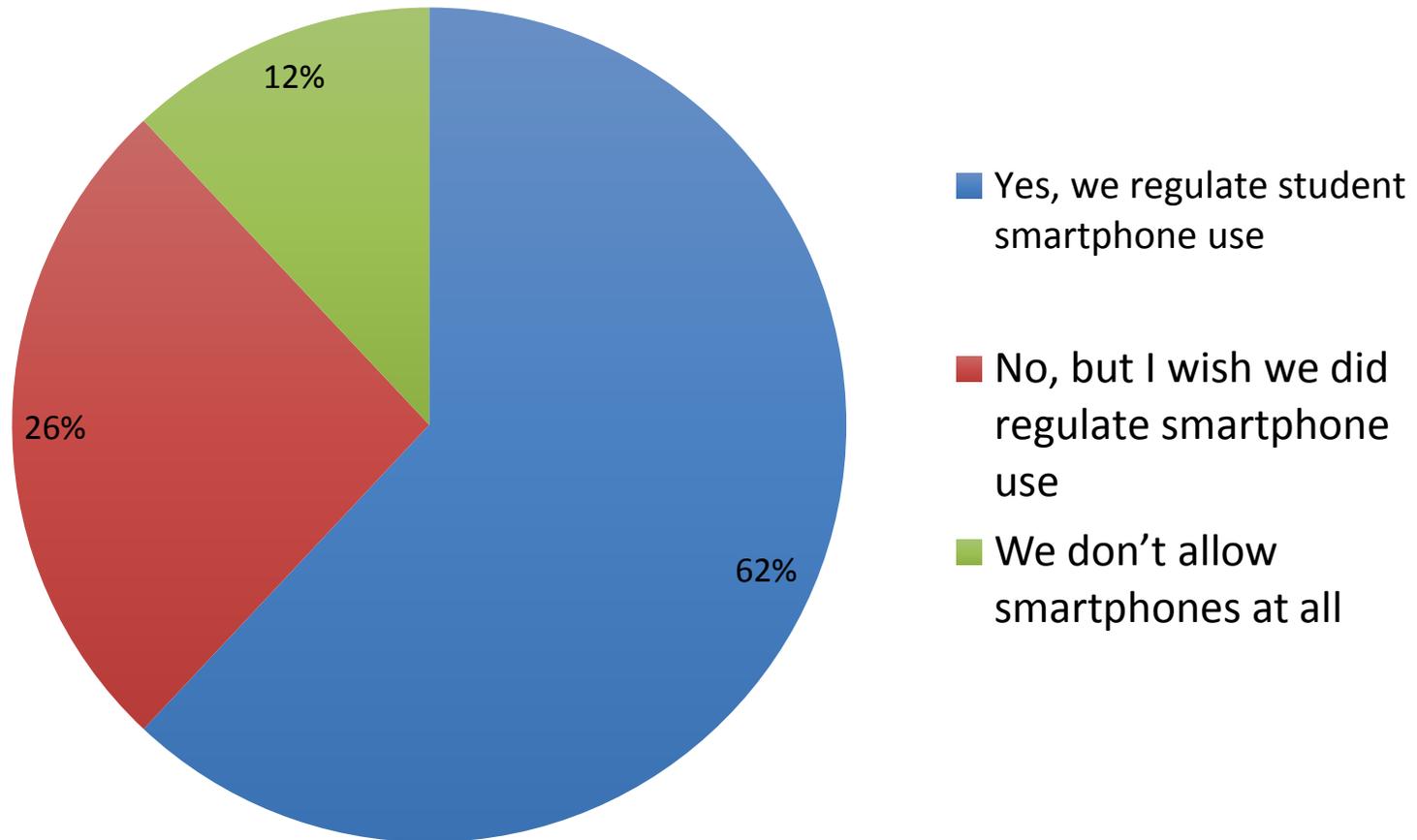


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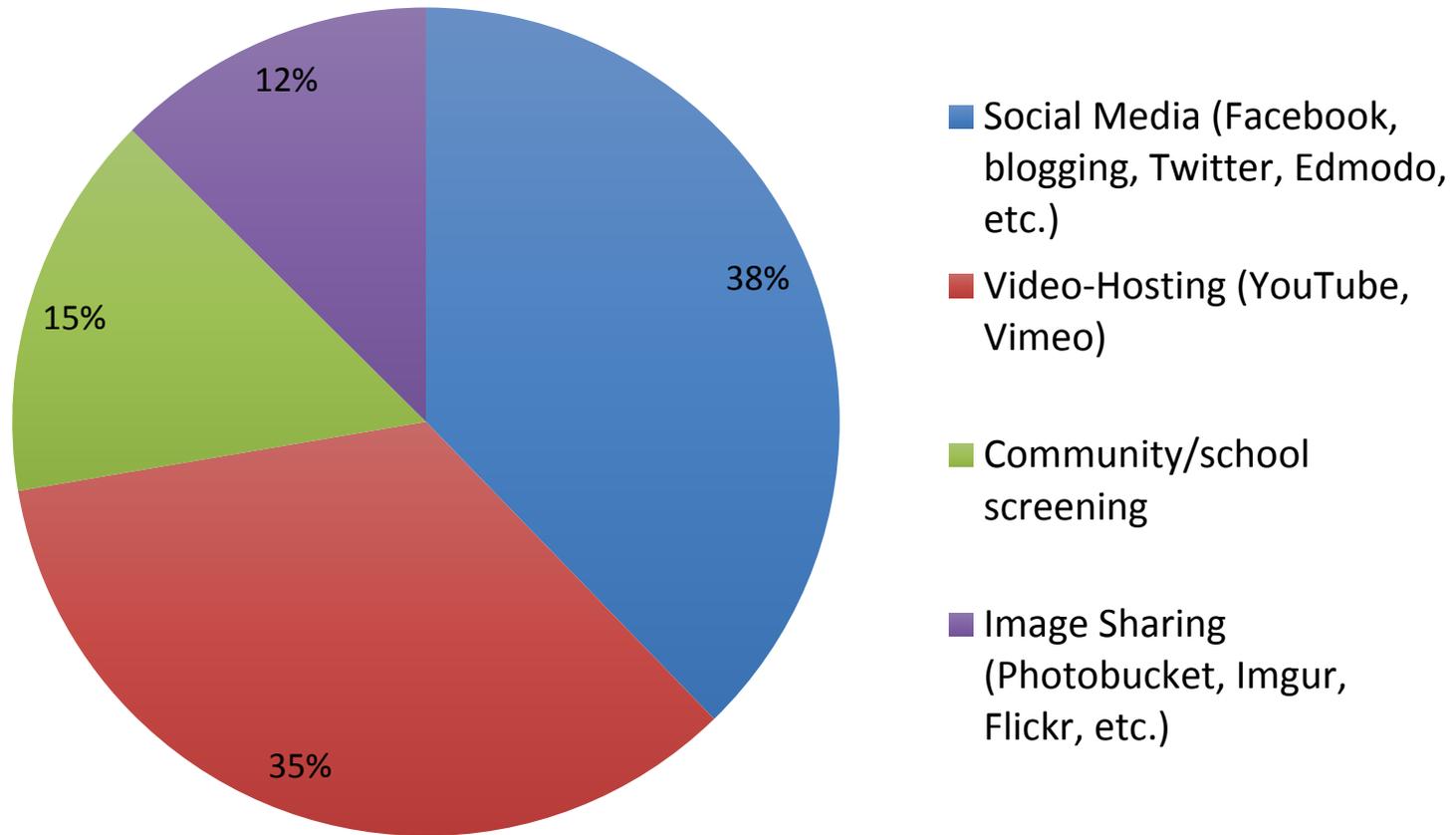


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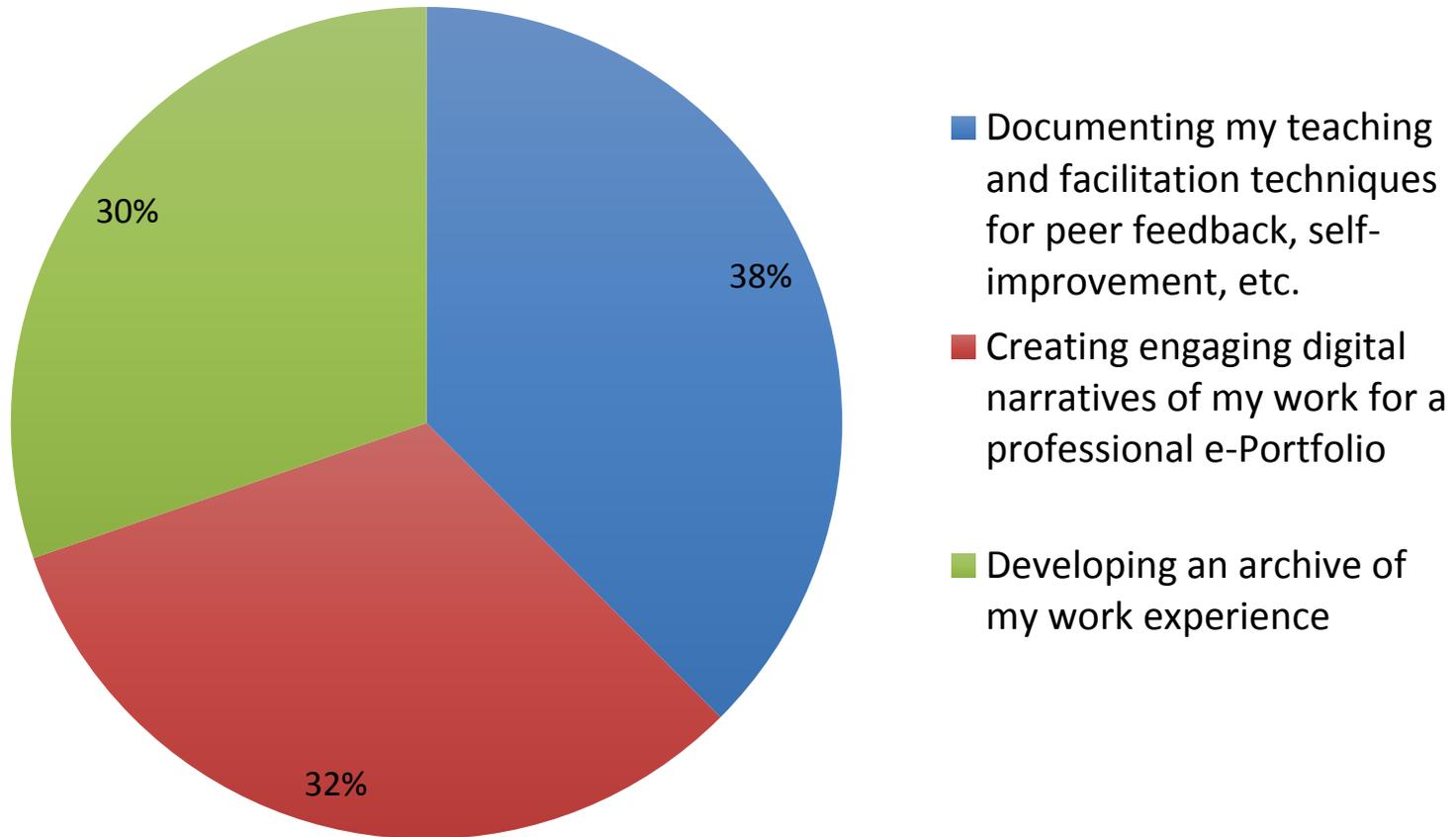


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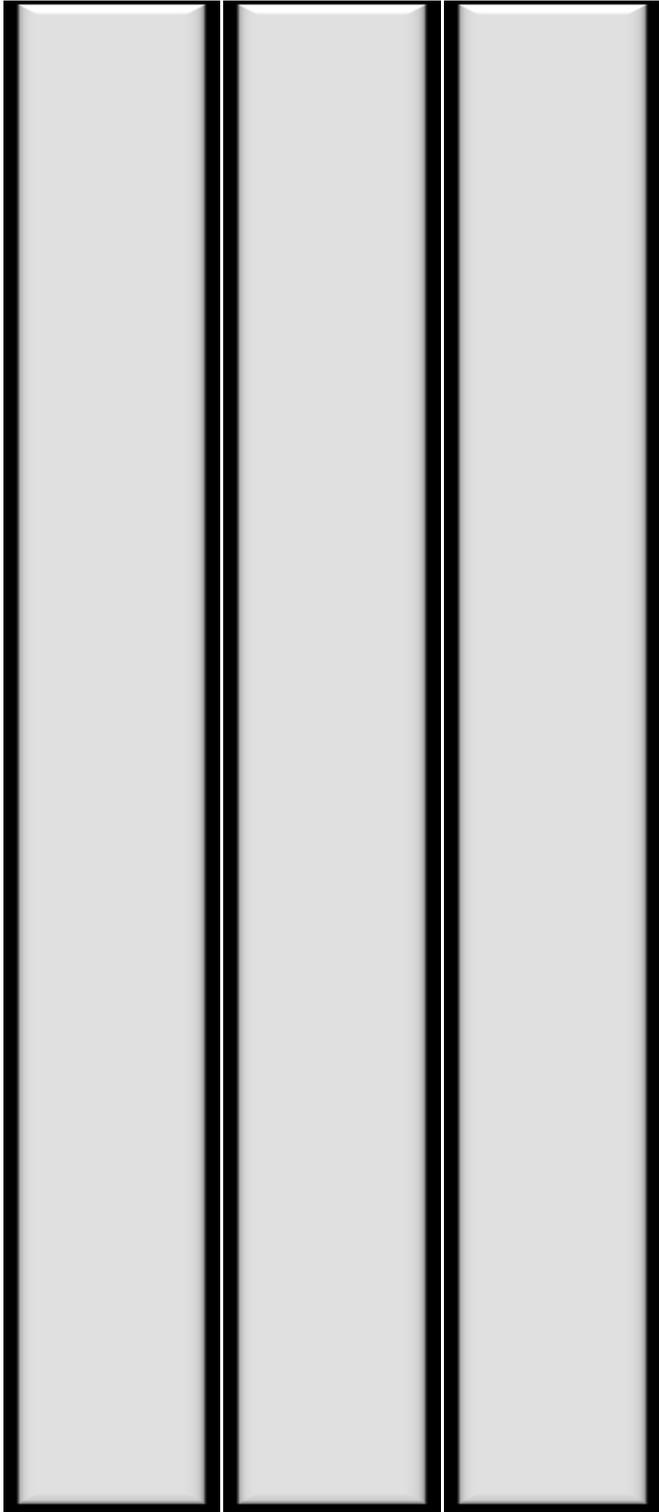
Top Survey Responses from 77 College Practitioners

What personal or professional purposes might digital media serve?



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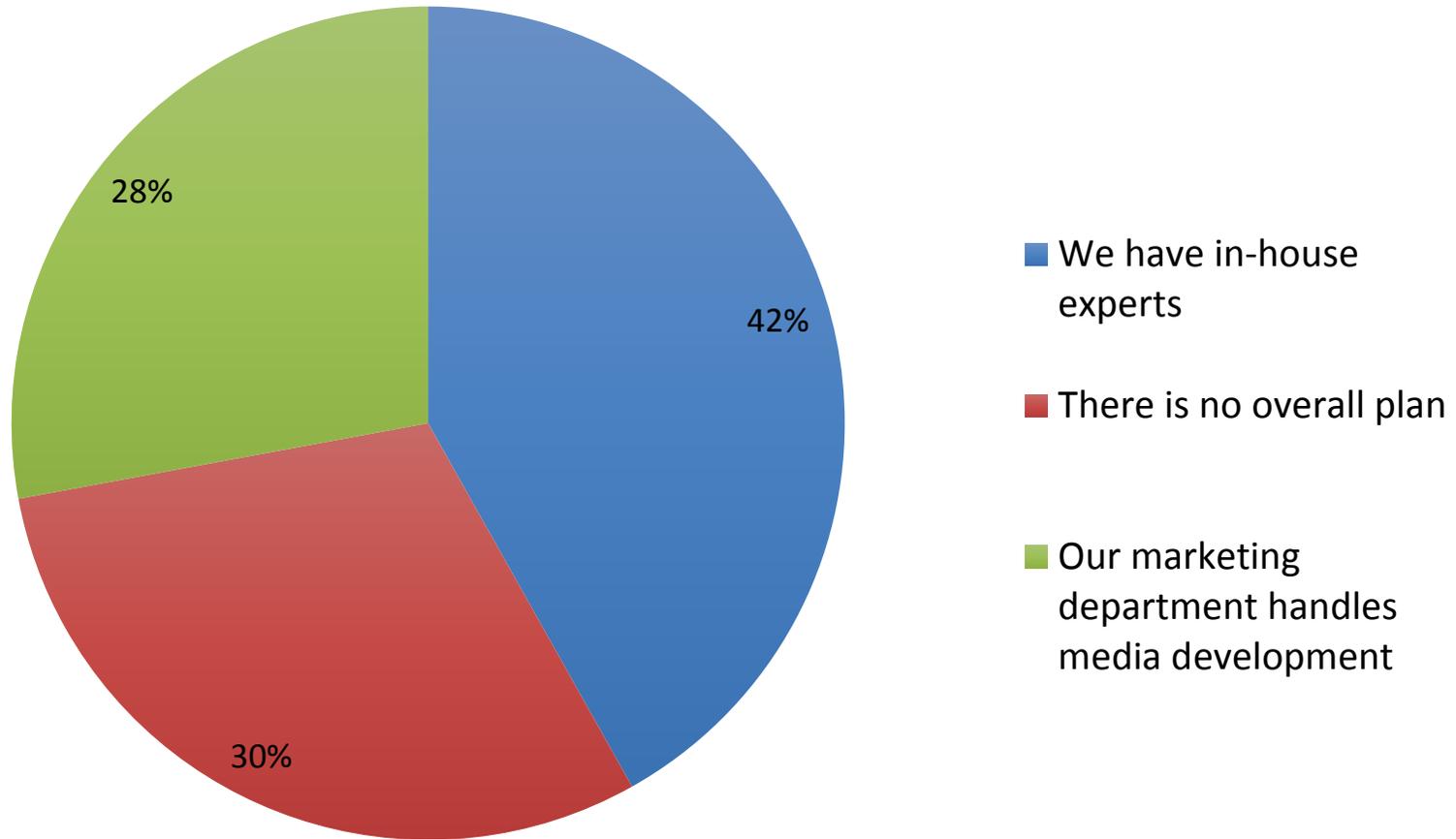
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Top Survey Responses
from
Independent School
Practitioners

Top Survey Responses from 64 Independent School Practitioners

How does your organization currently manage the development of media about its programs?

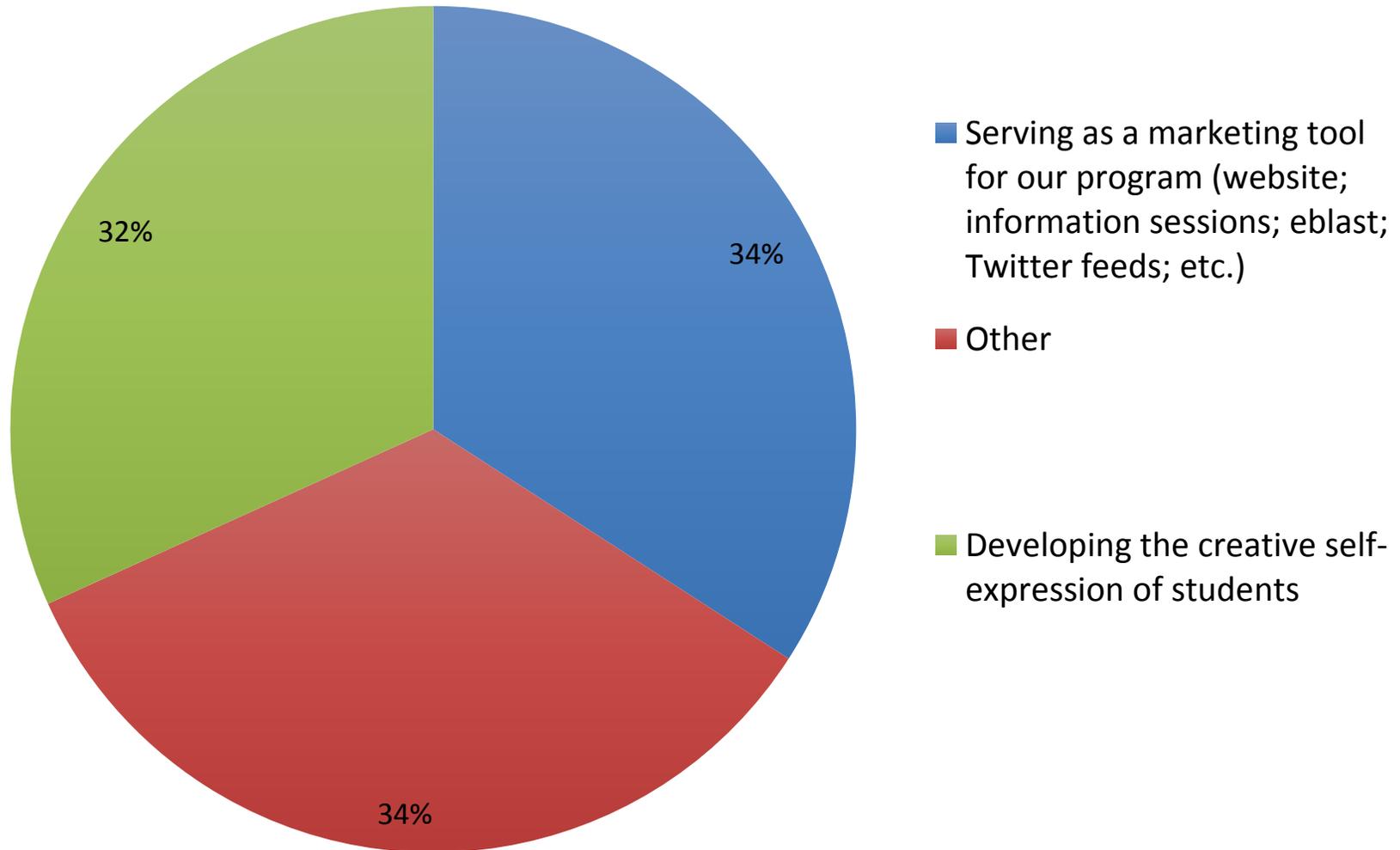


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Top Survey Responses from 64 Independent School Practitioners

What organizational purposes, if any, do you think media making might serve?

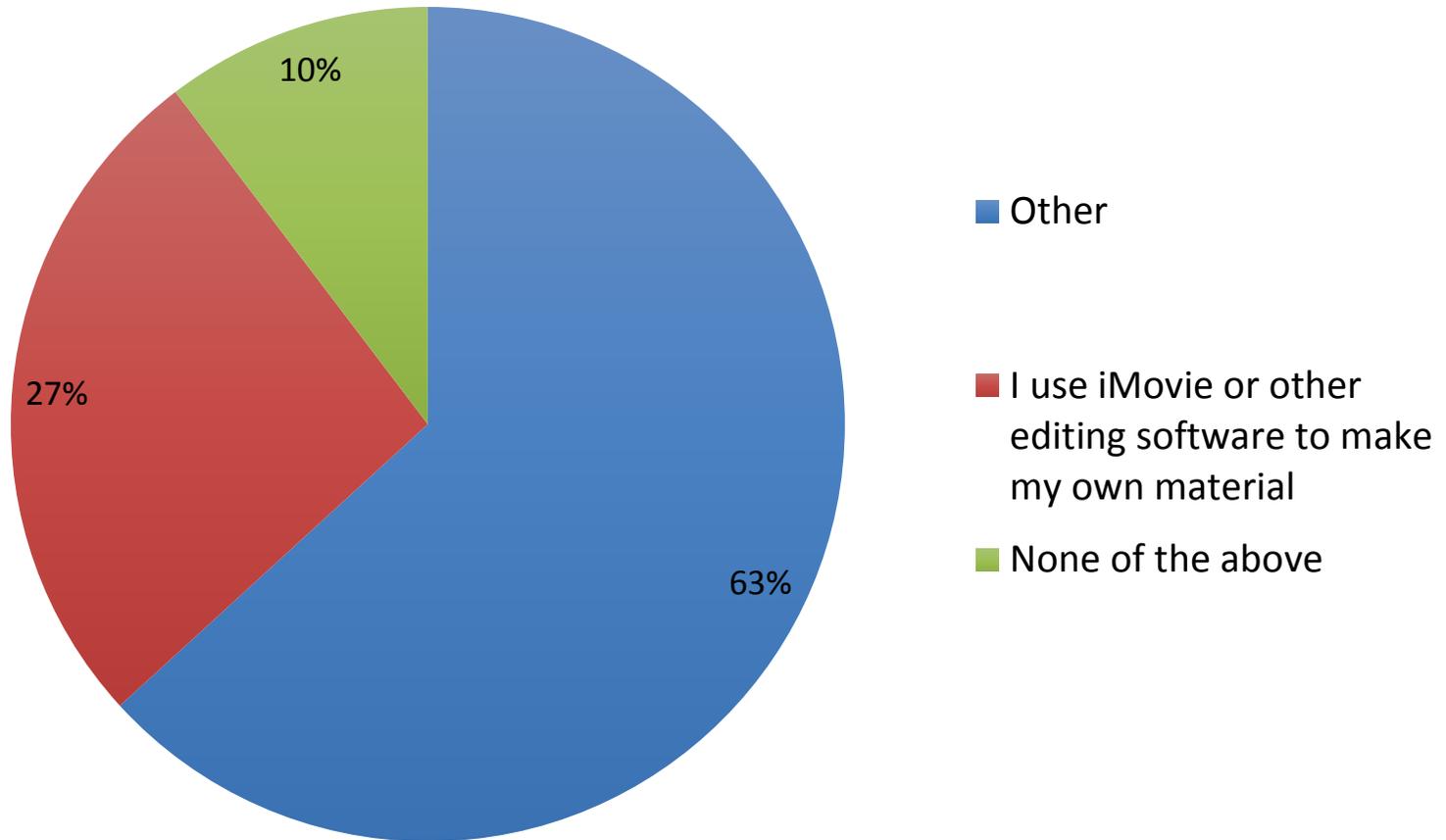


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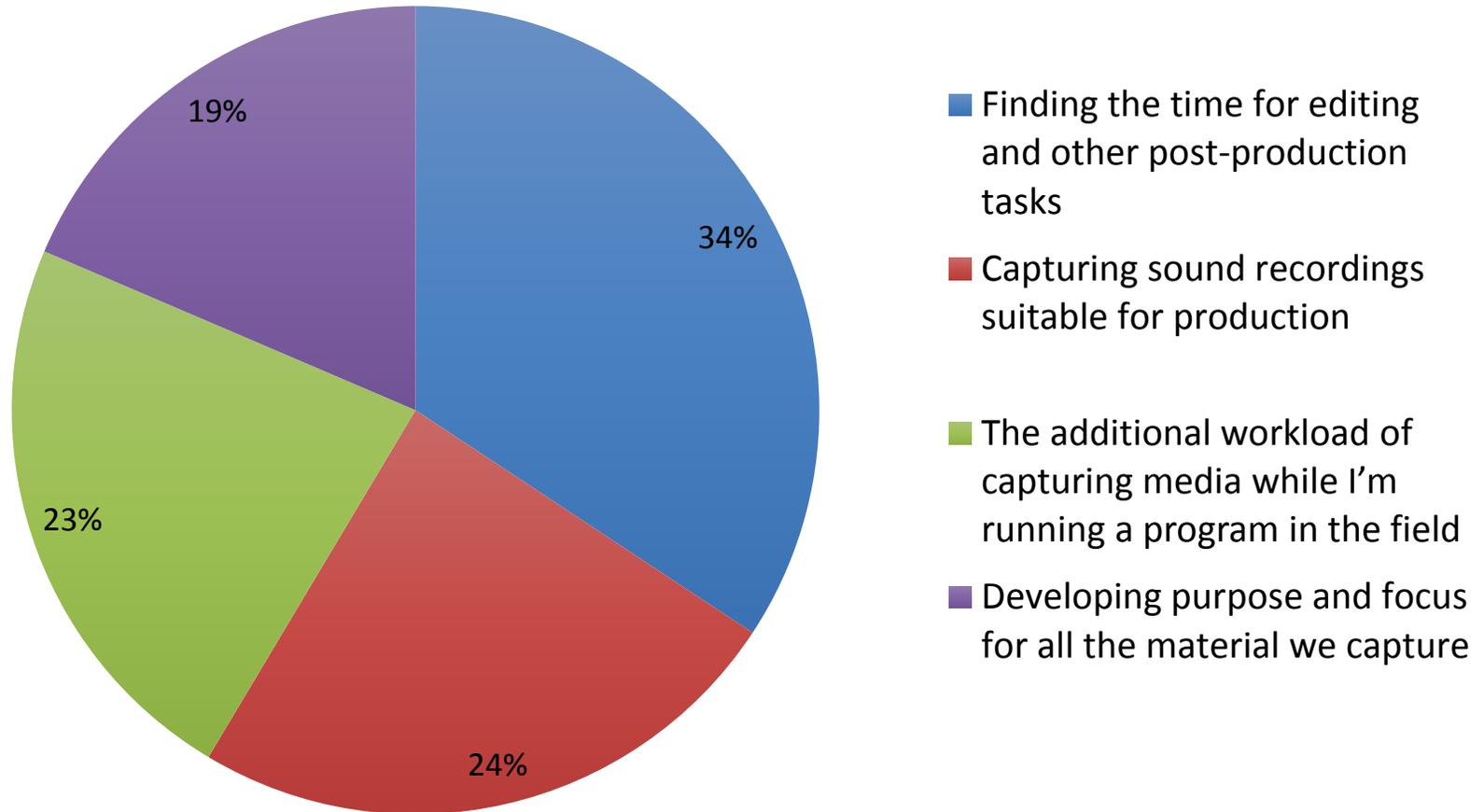


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What is the most challenging aspect of media making in your experiential program?

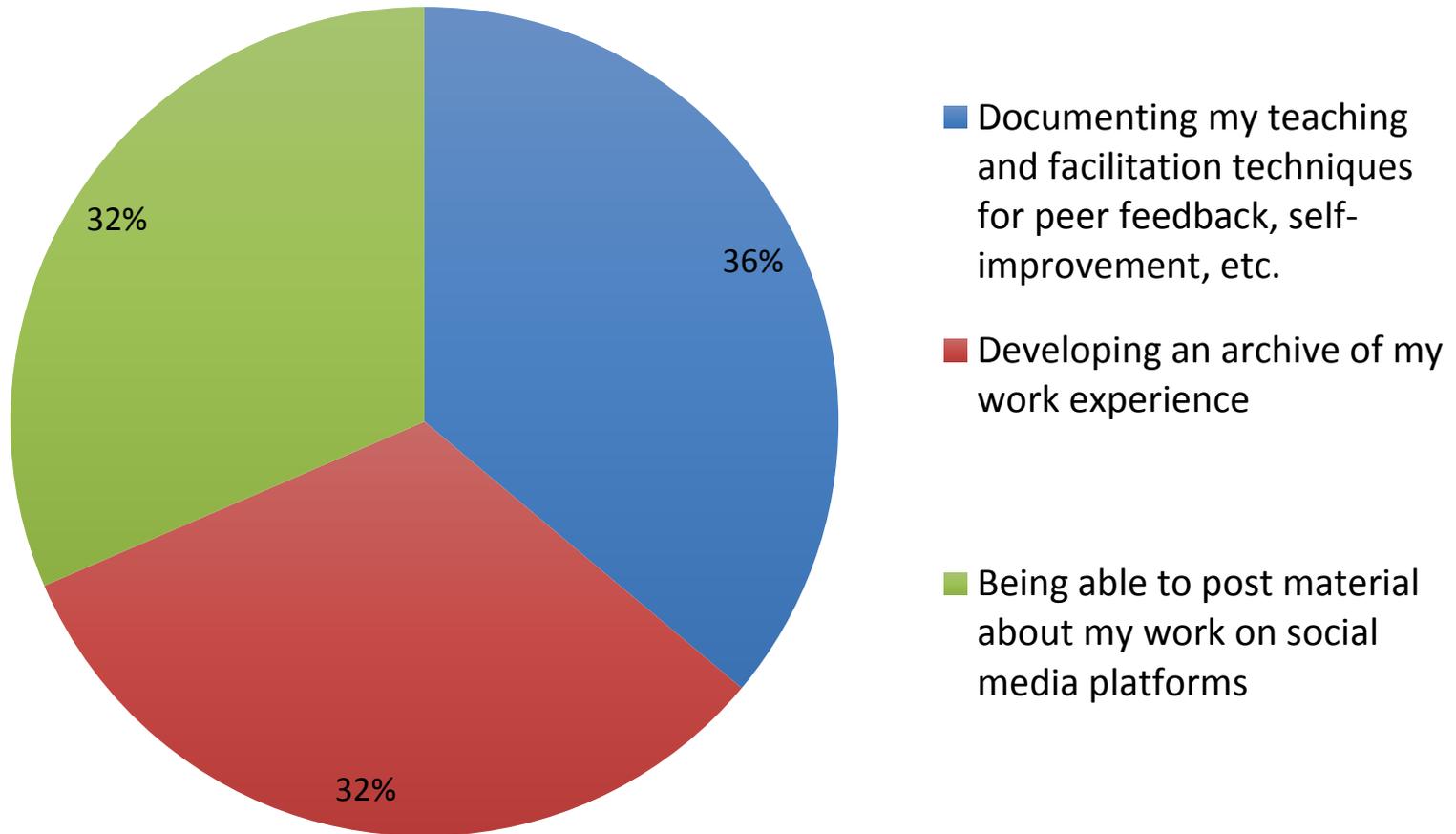


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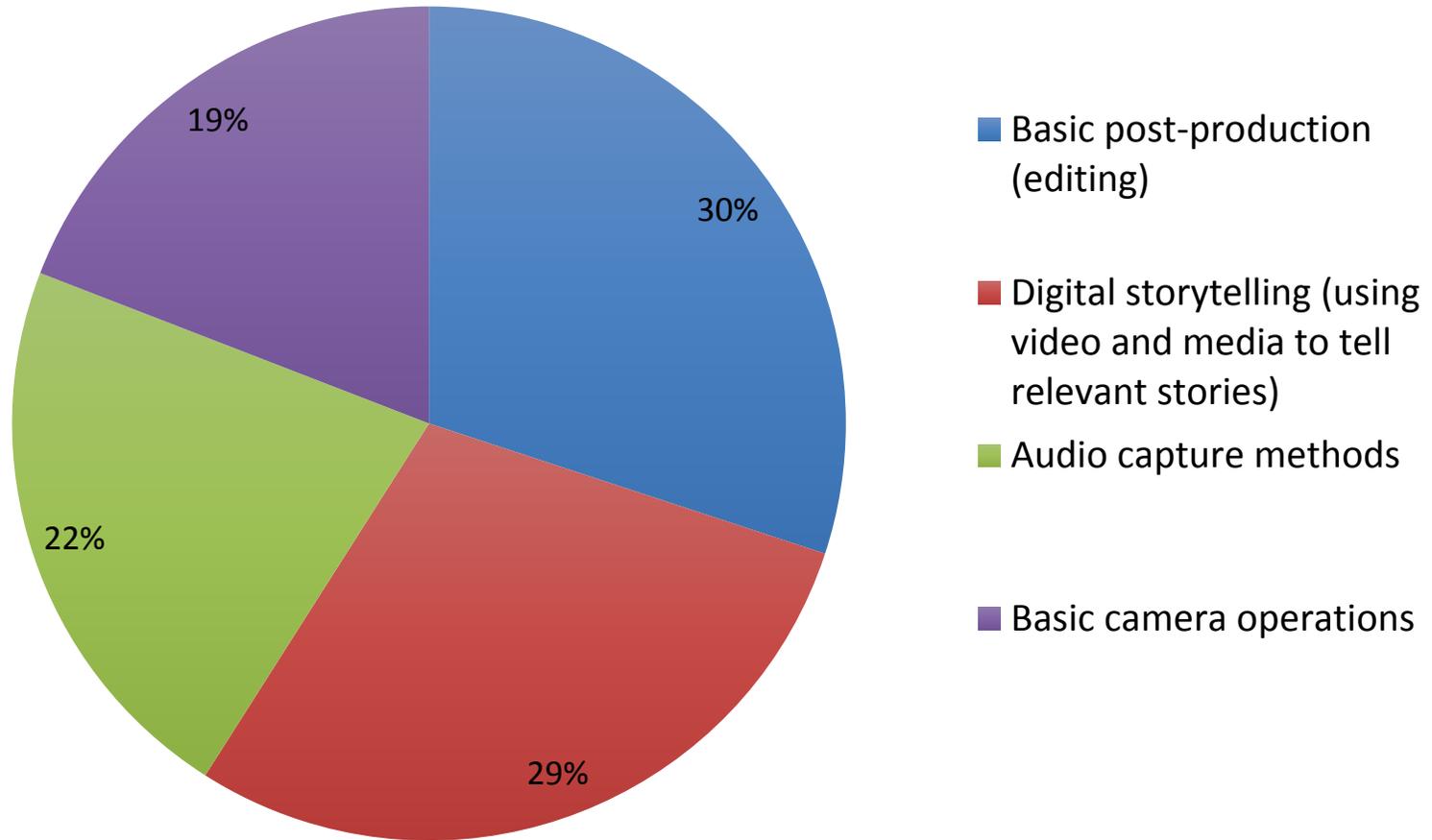


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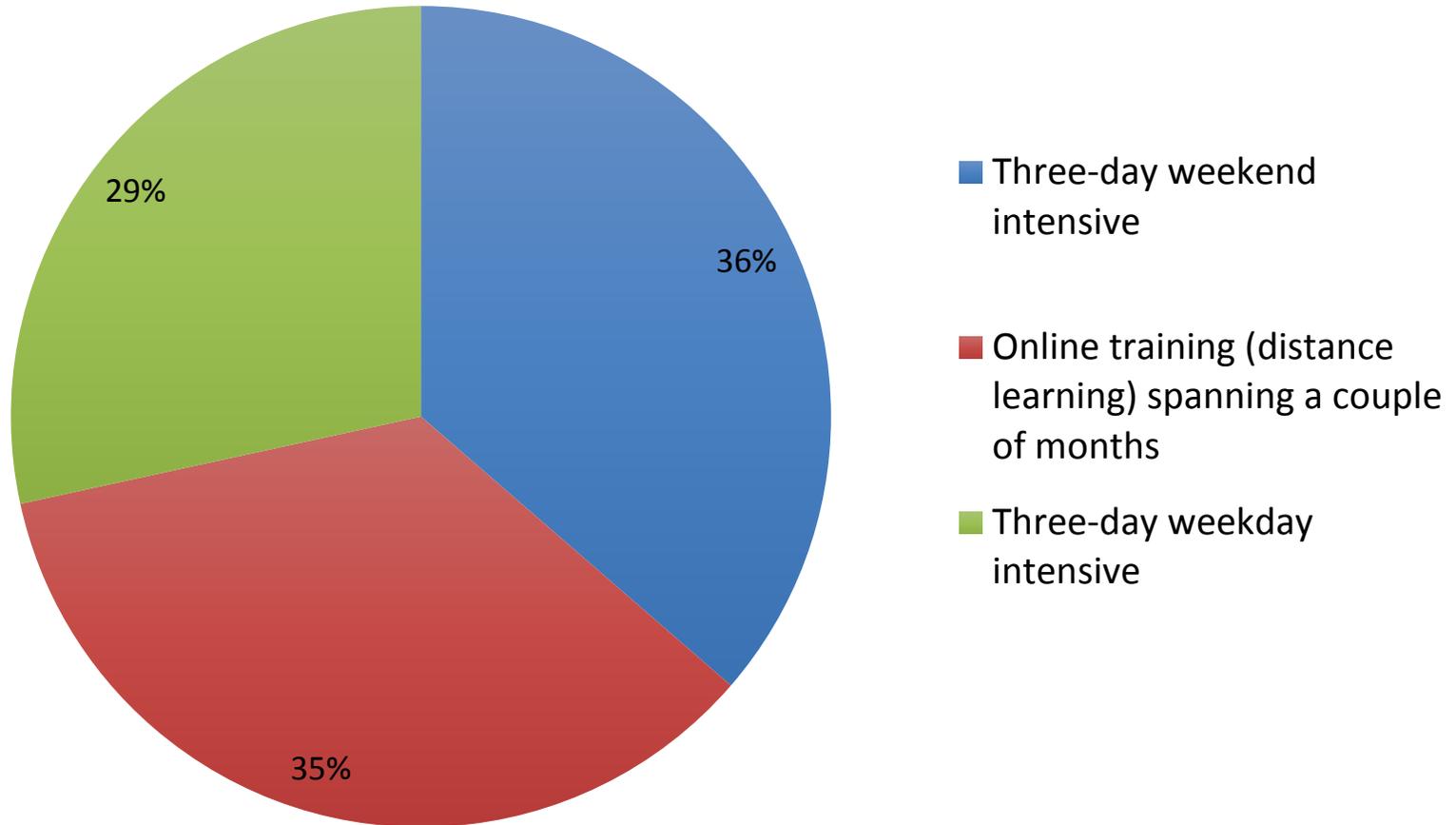


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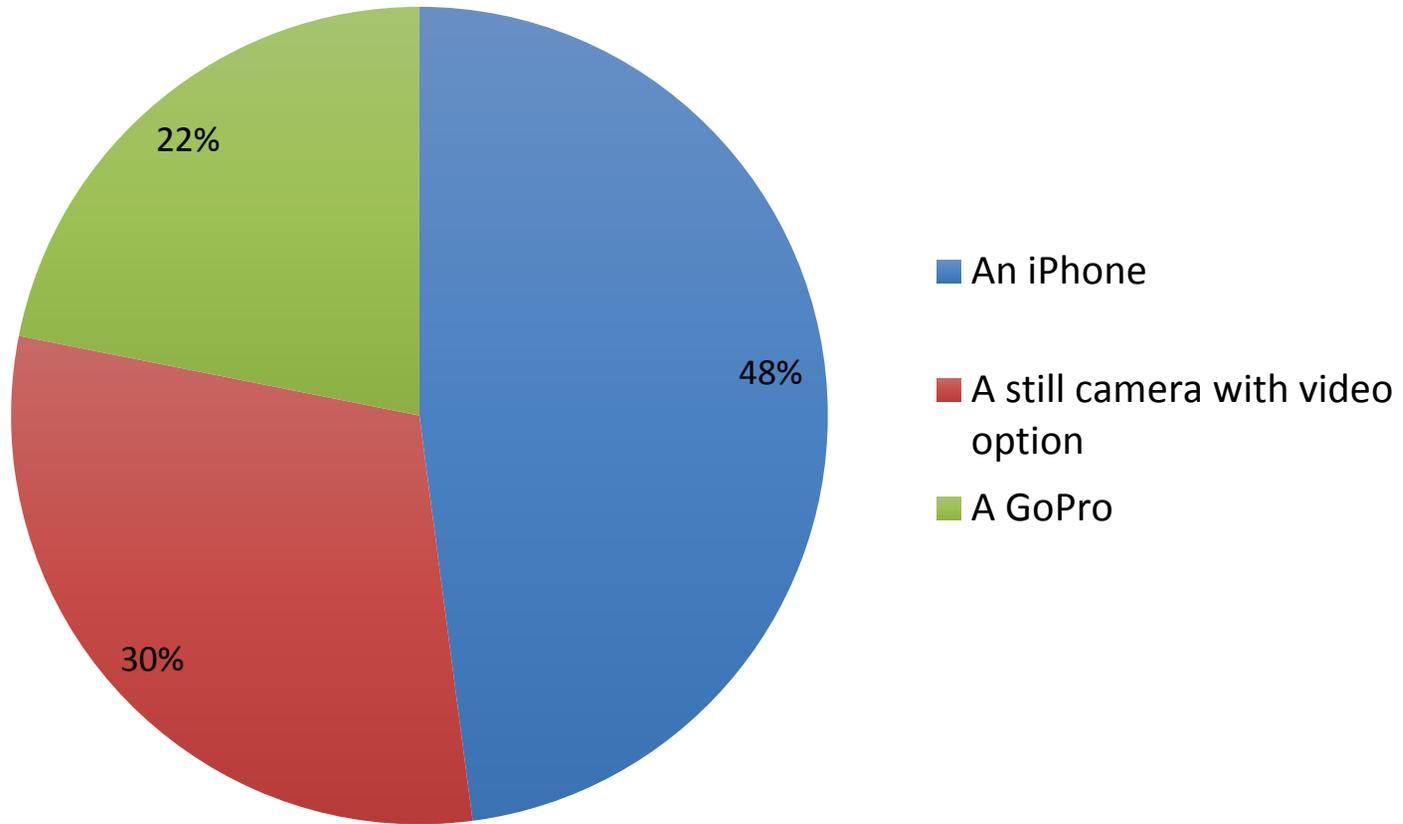


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What kind of device, if any, best suits your media-making in the field?

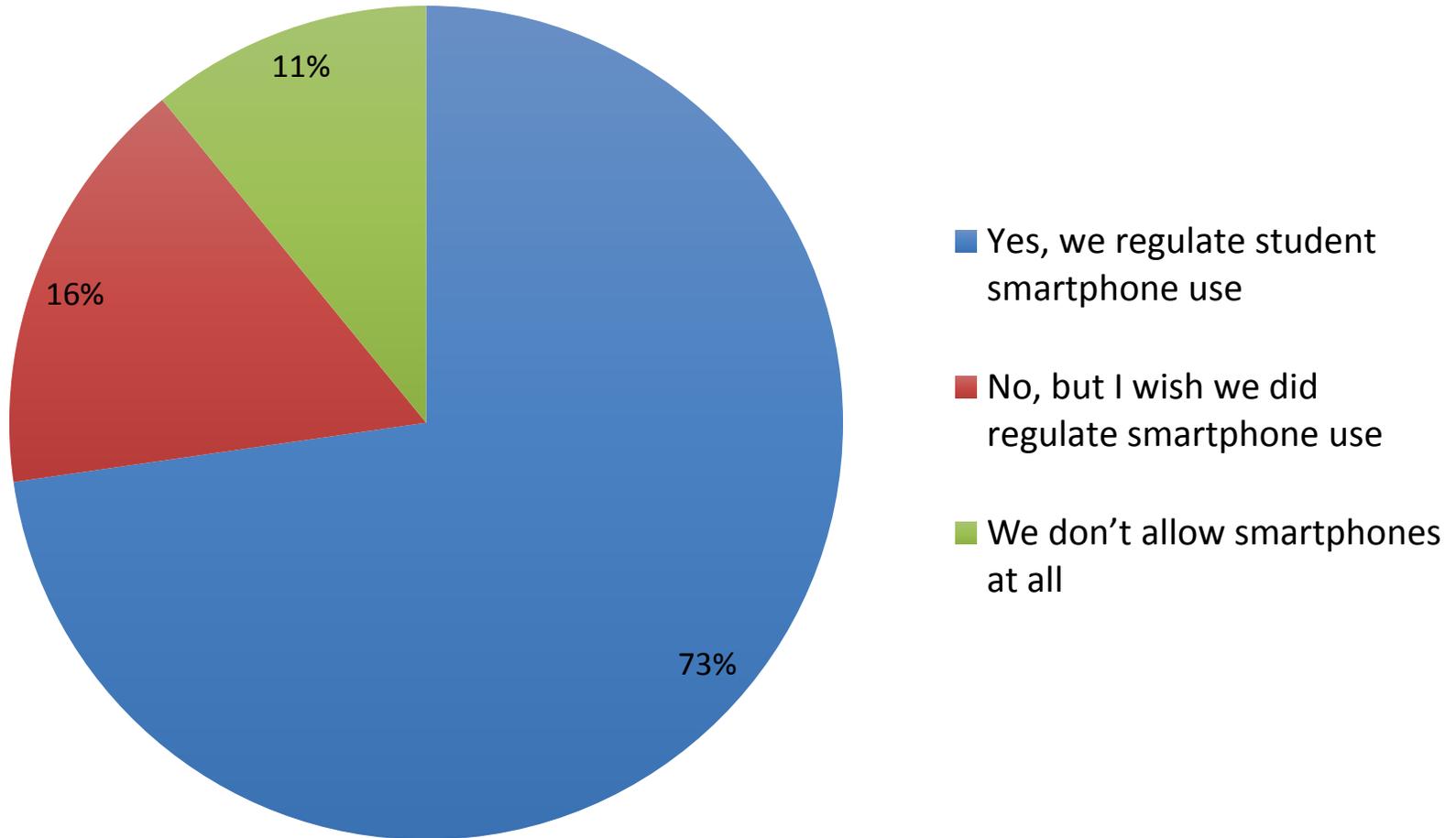


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Top Survey Responses from 64 Independent School Practitioners

Do you have policies about student use of smartphones?

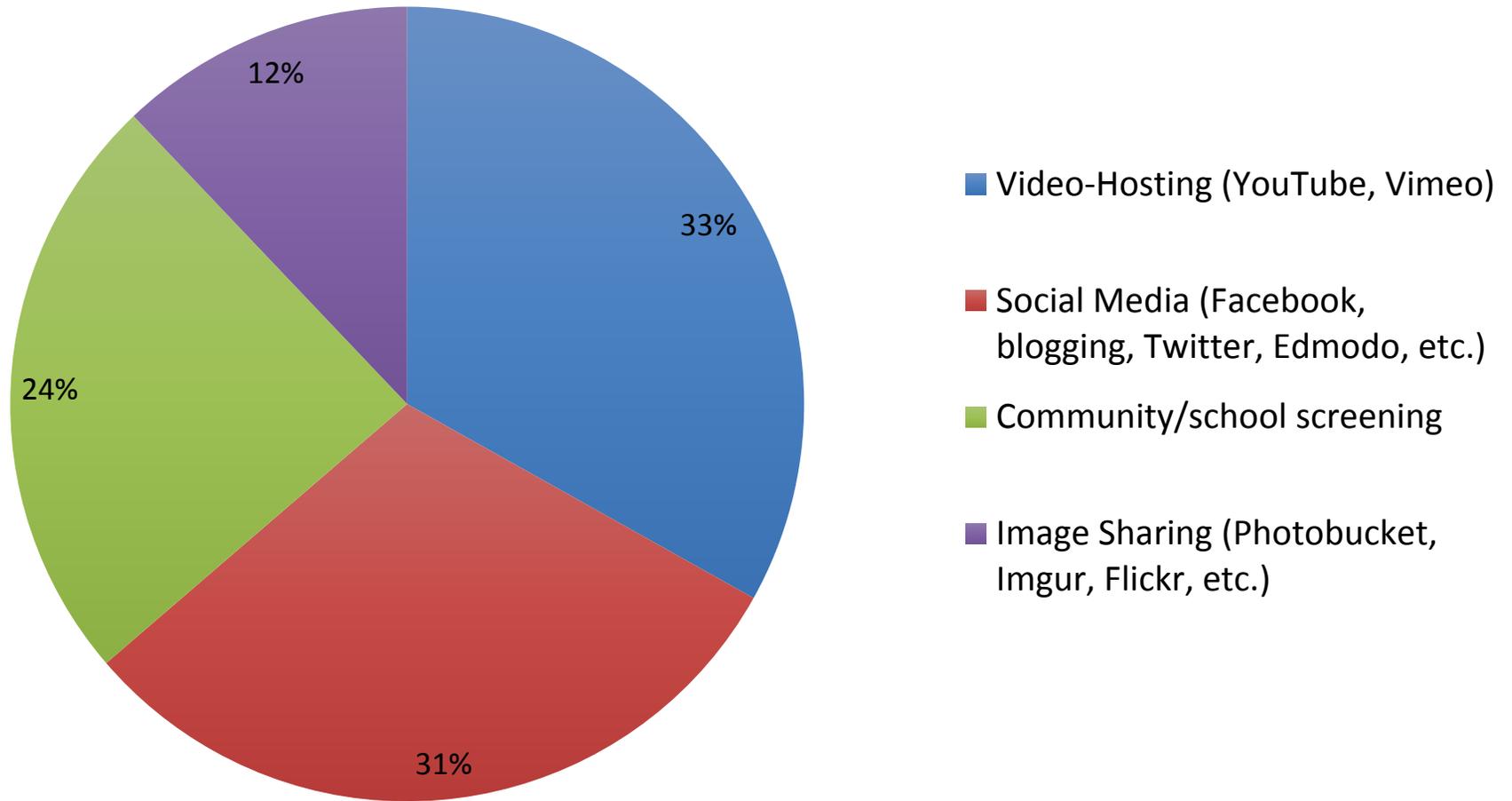


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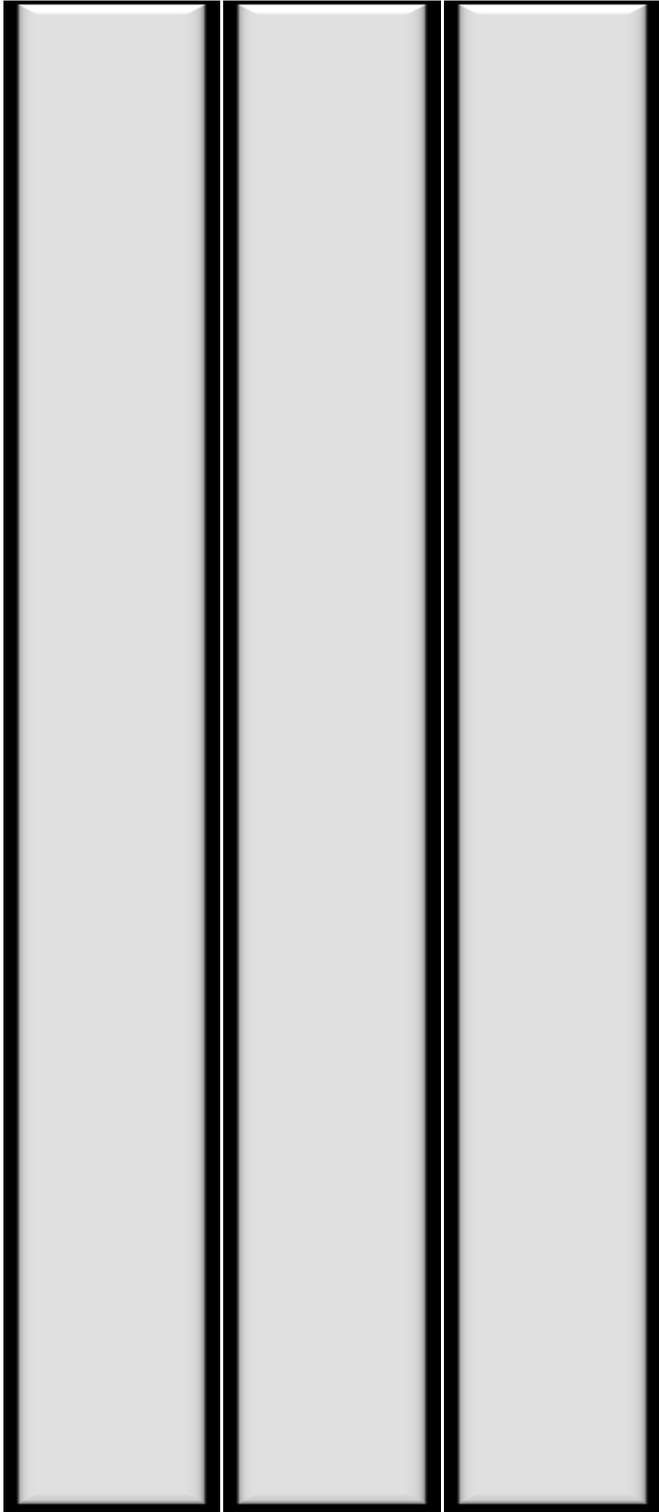
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What platforms might you or your students use to display the media from your programs?



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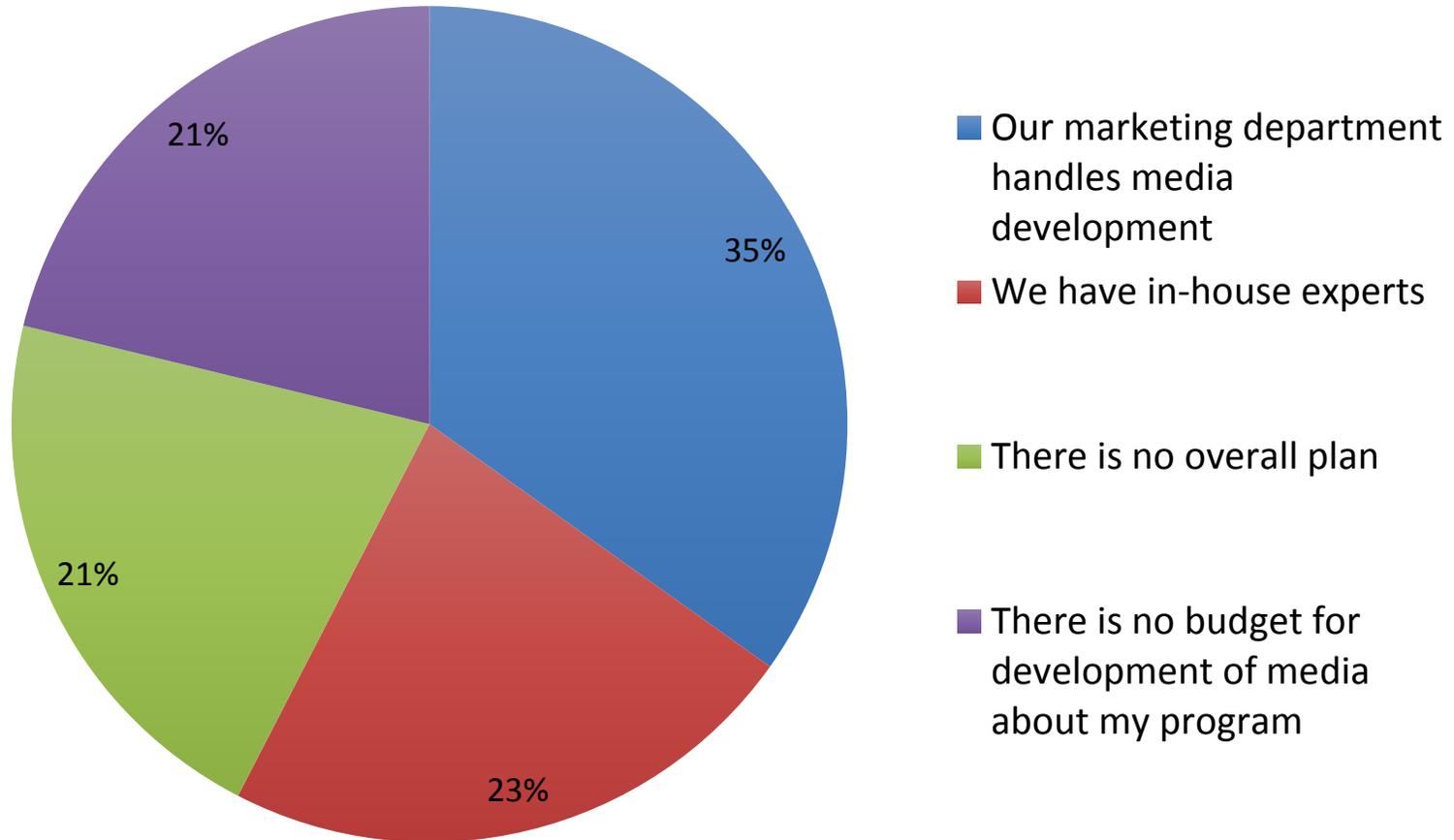
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Top Survey Responses from Nonprofit Practitioners

Top Survey Responses from 56 Nonprofit Practitioners

How does your organization currently manage the development of media about its programs?

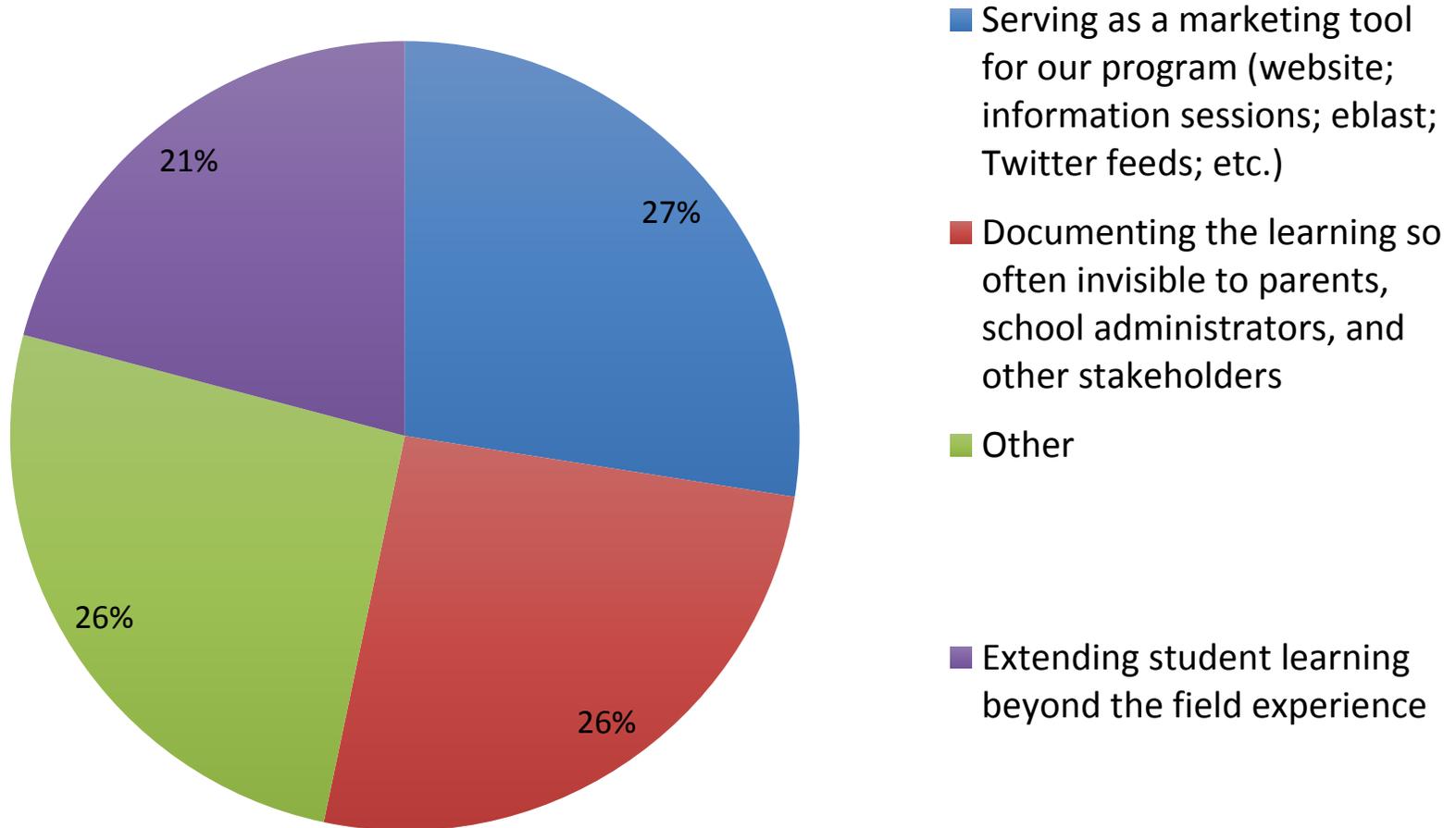


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Top Survey Responses from 56 Nonprofit Practitioners

What organizational purposes, if any, do you think media making might serve?

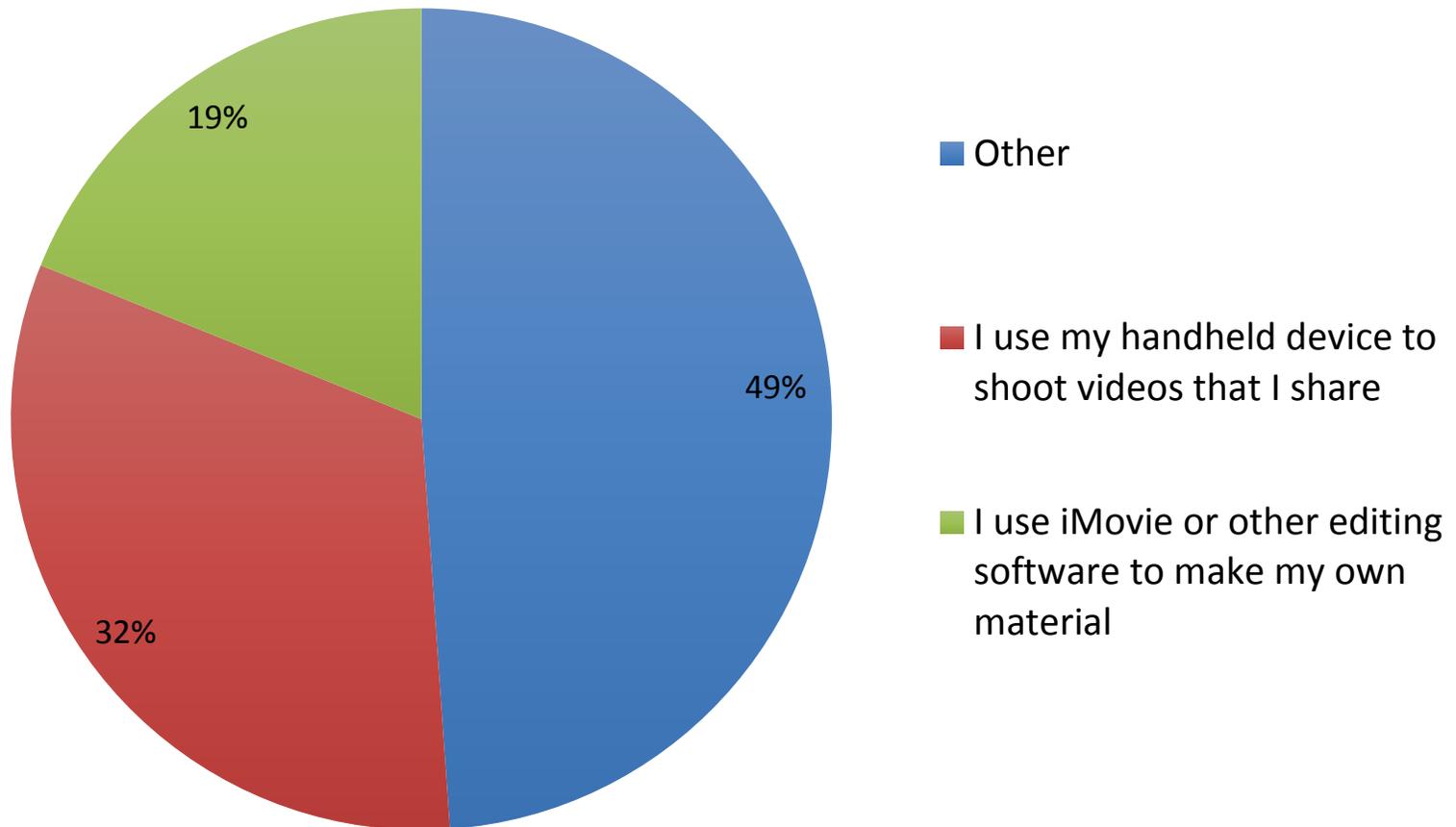


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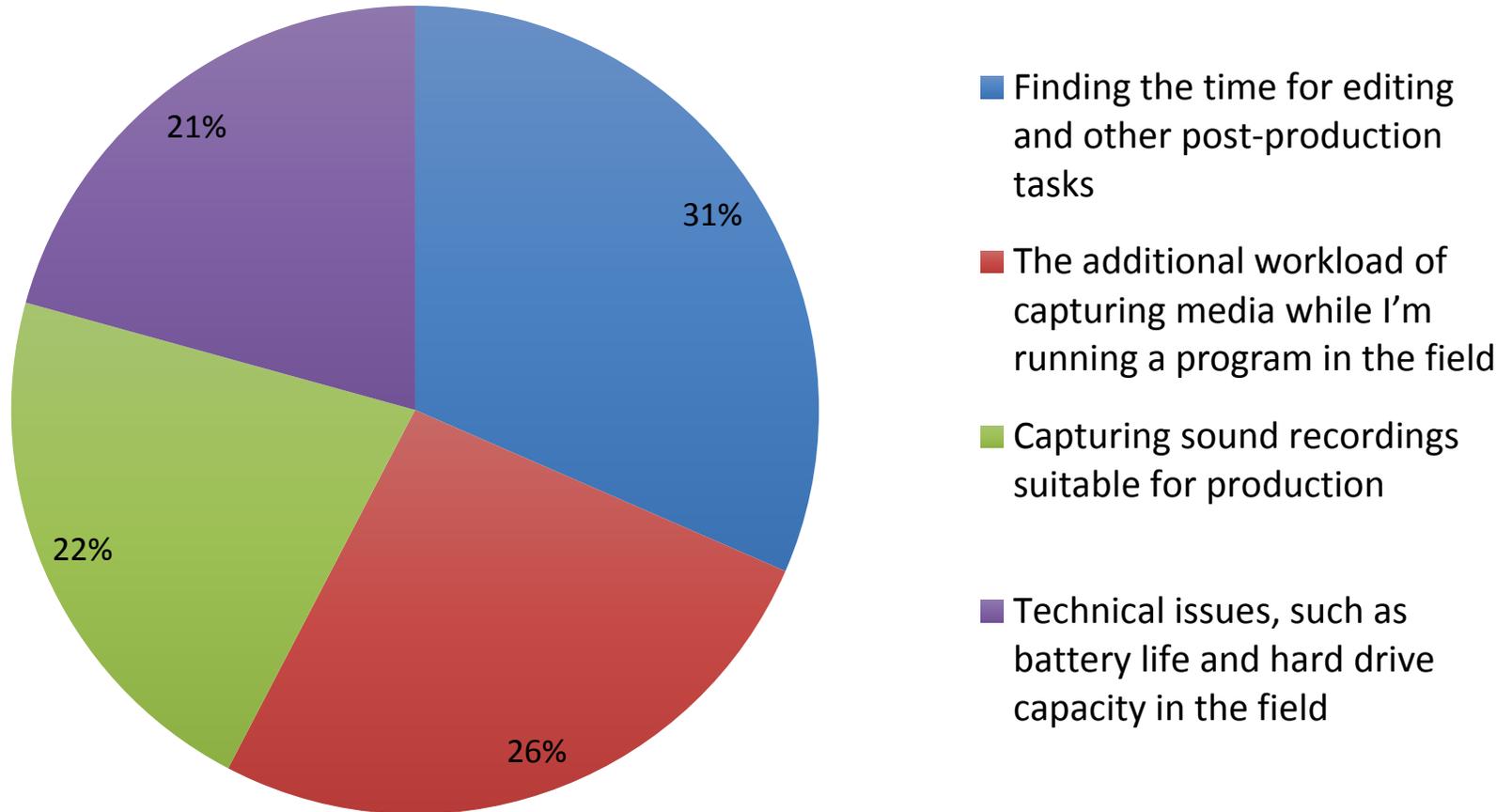


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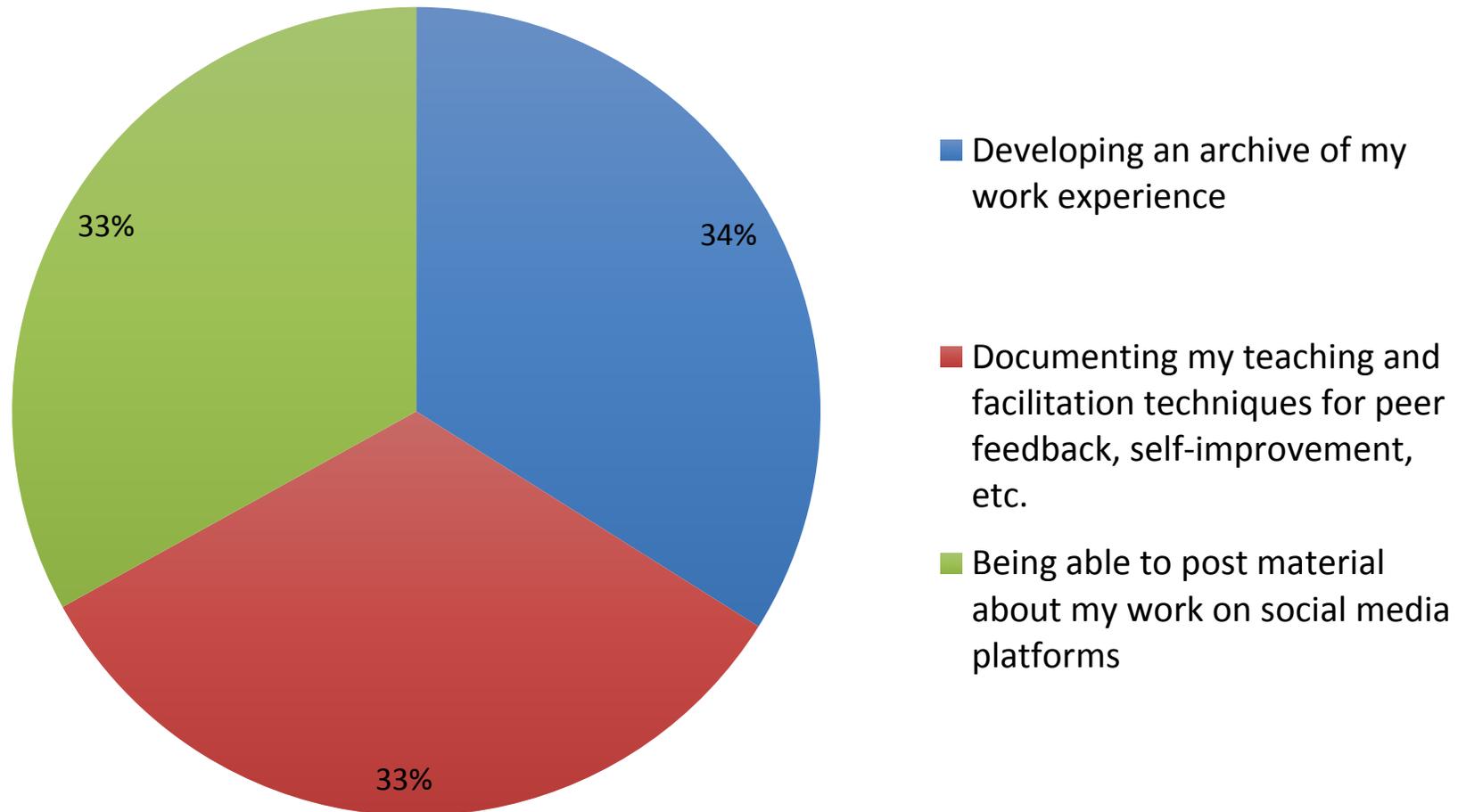


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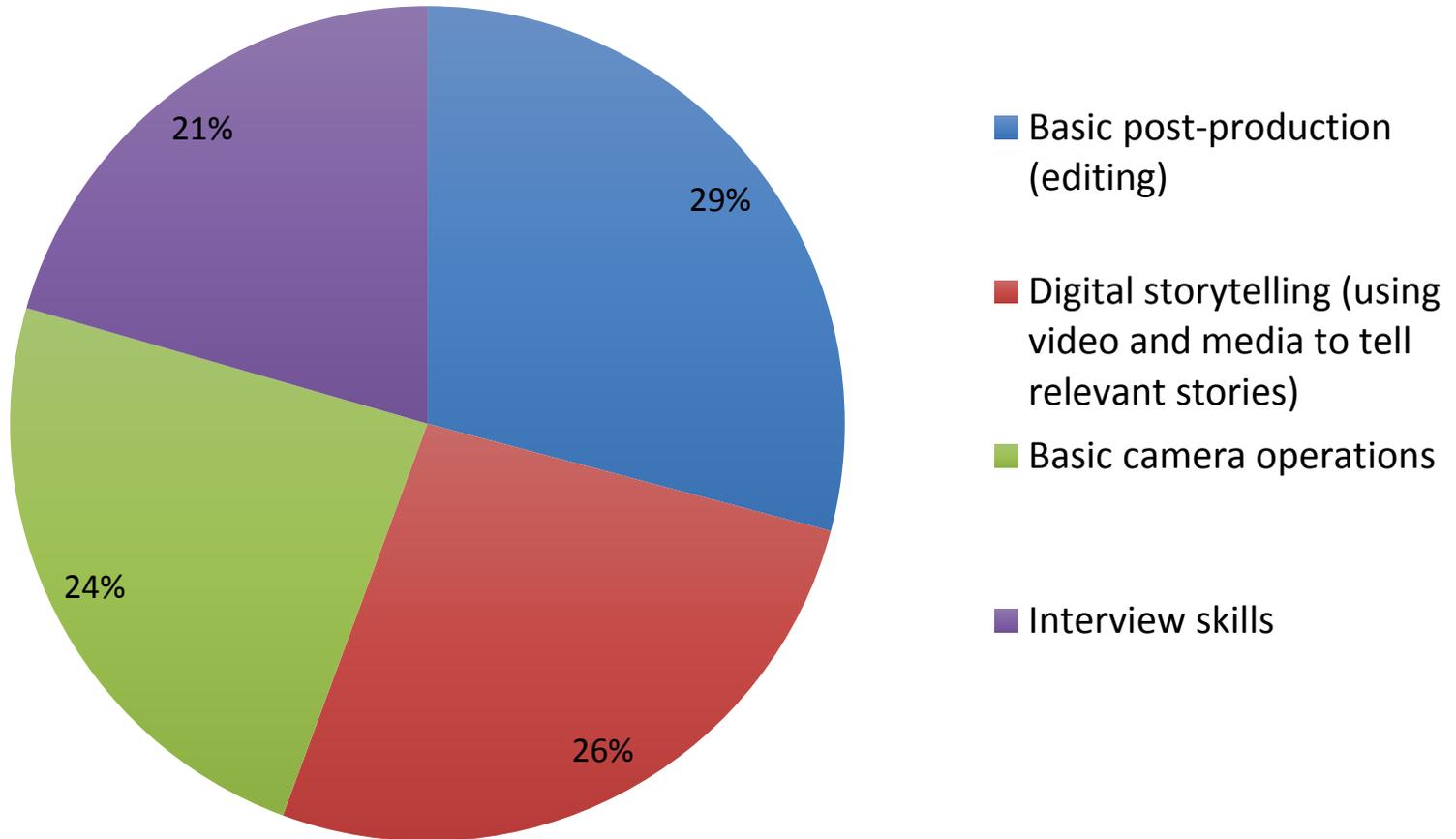


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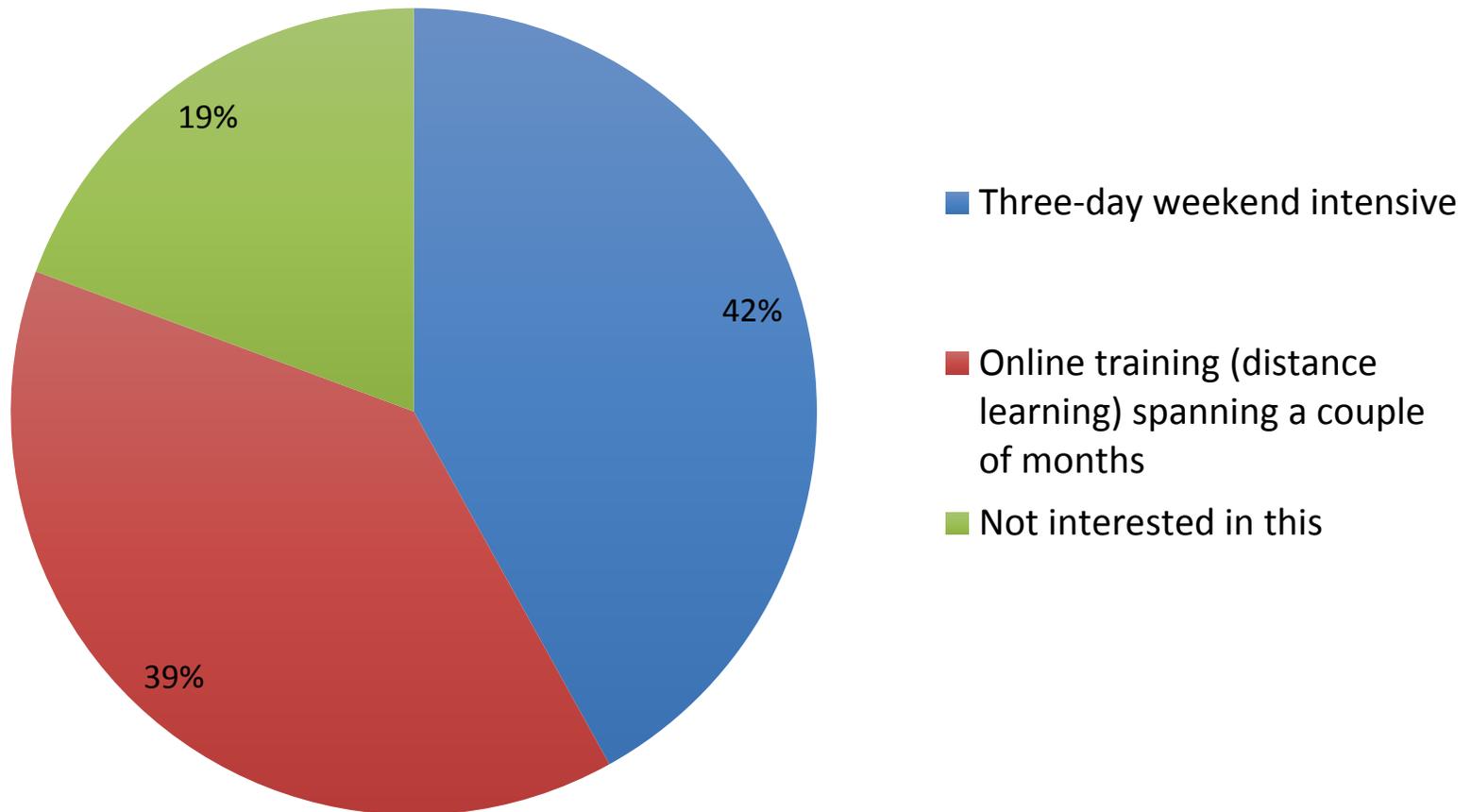


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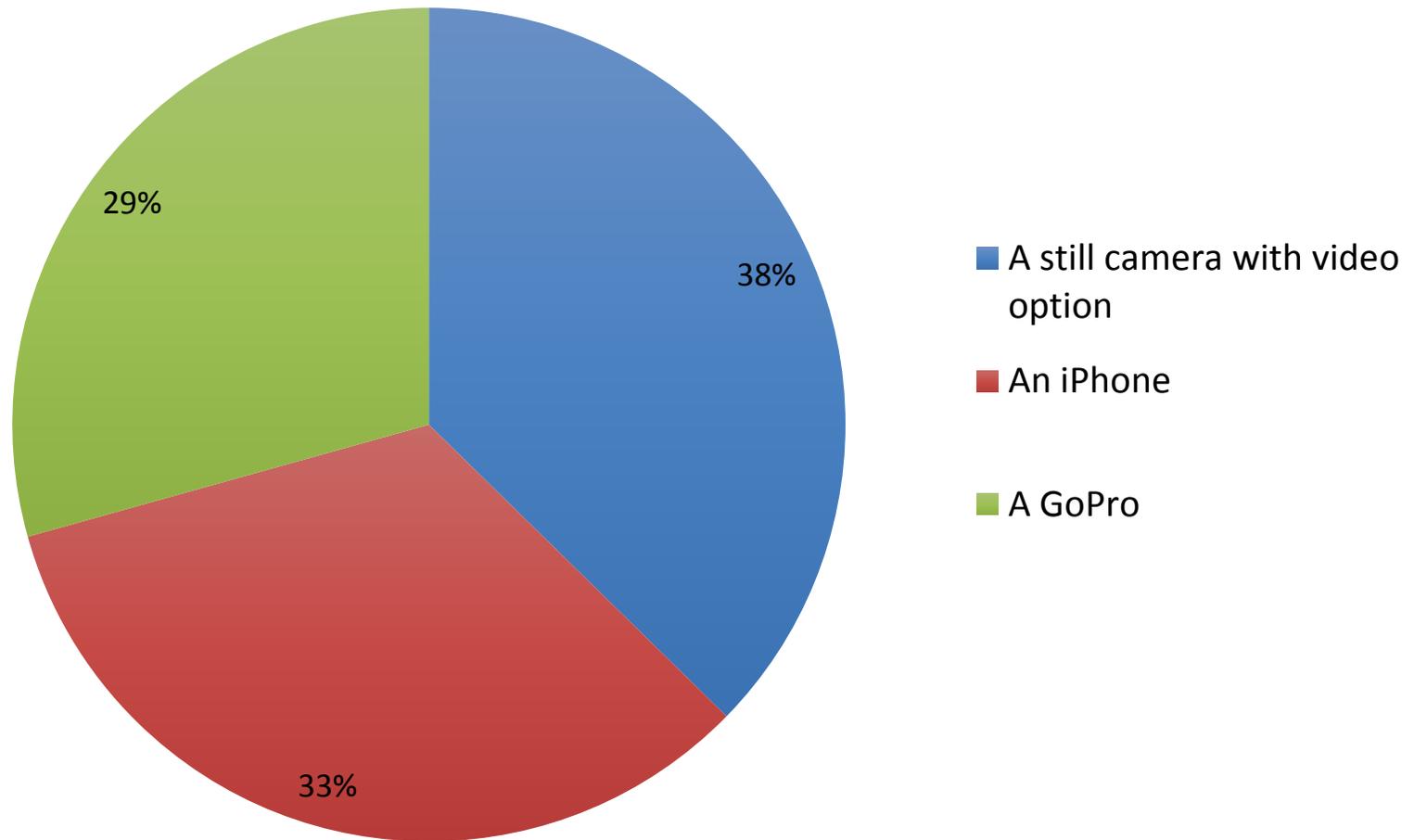


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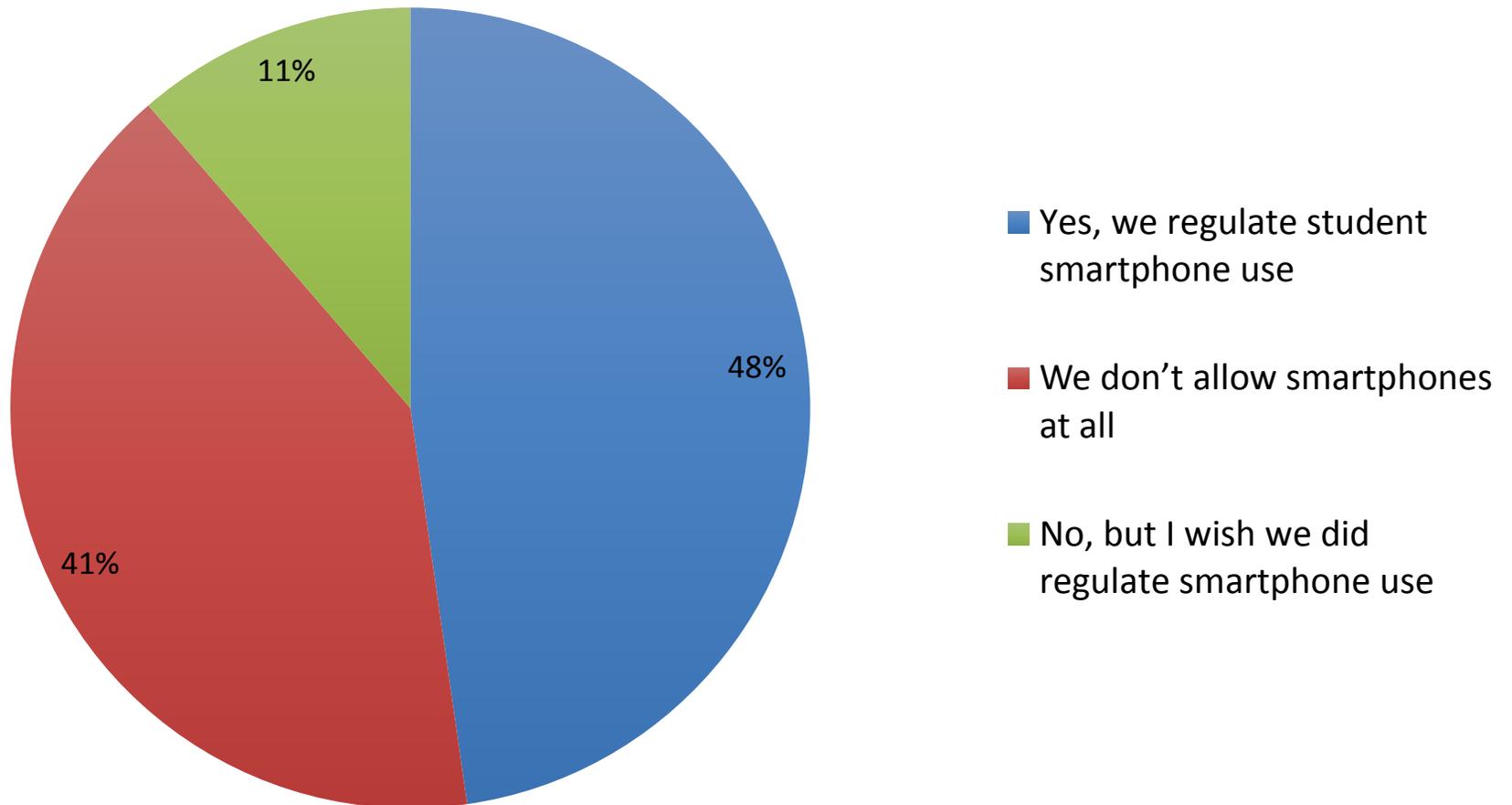


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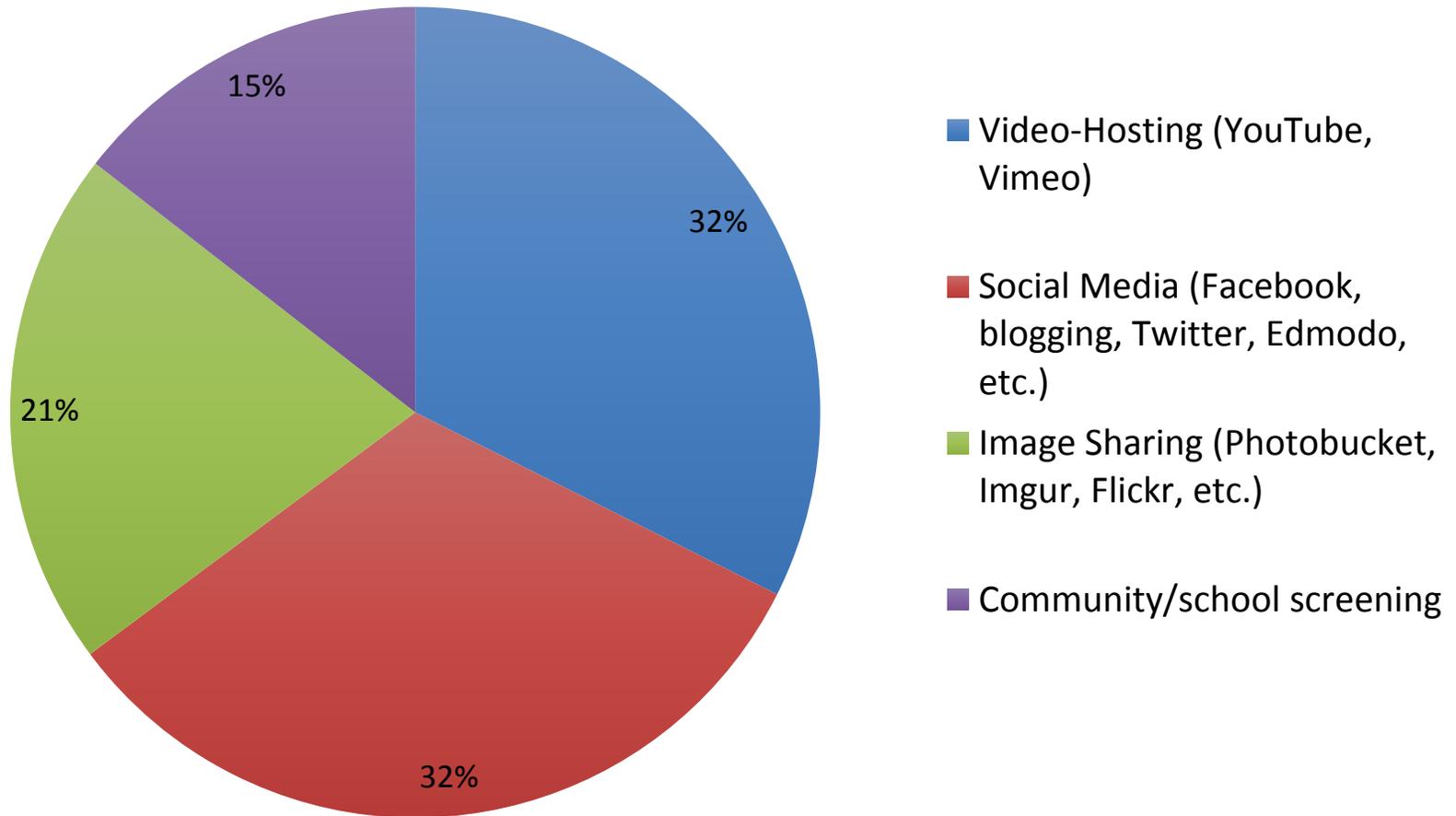


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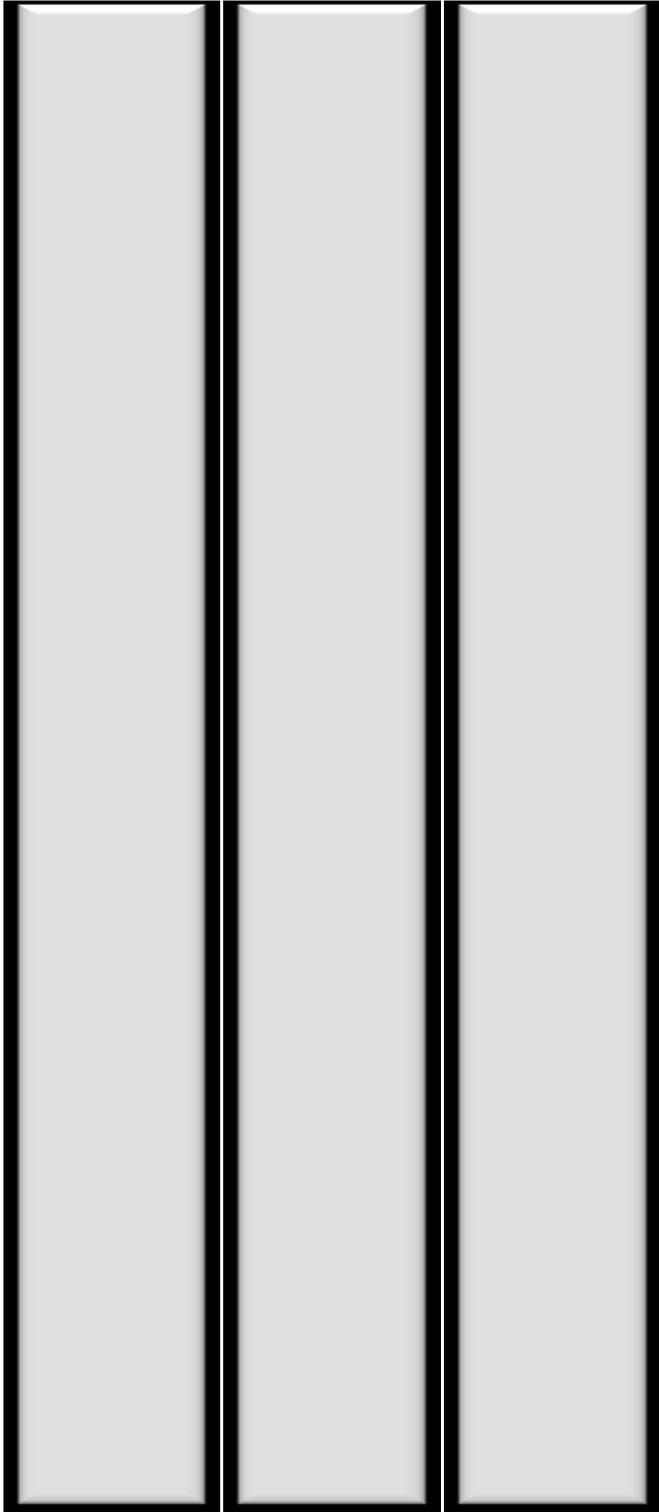
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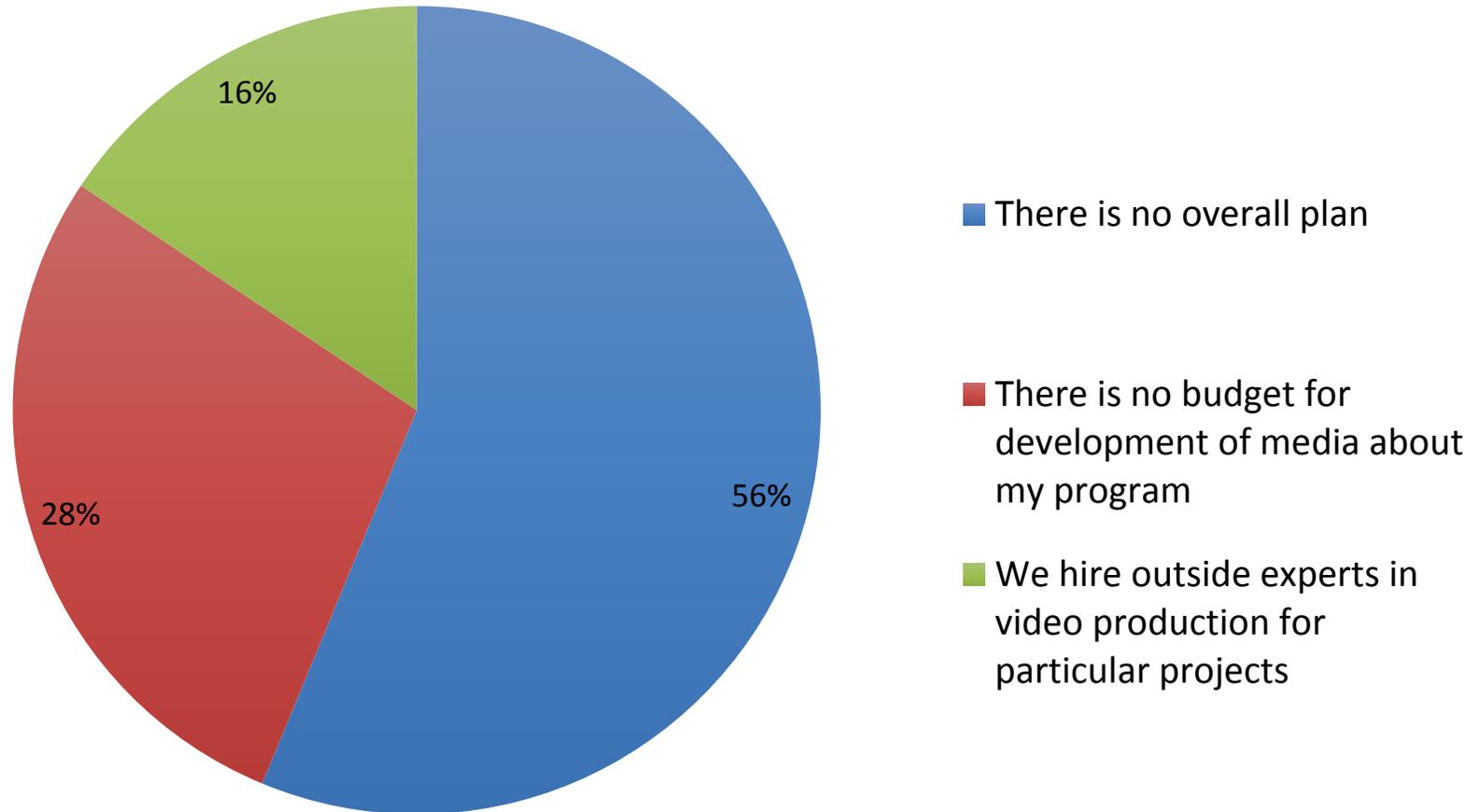
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Top Survey Responses from Self Employed Practitioners

Top Survey Responses from 42 Self Employed Practitioners

How does your organization currently manage the development of media about its programs?

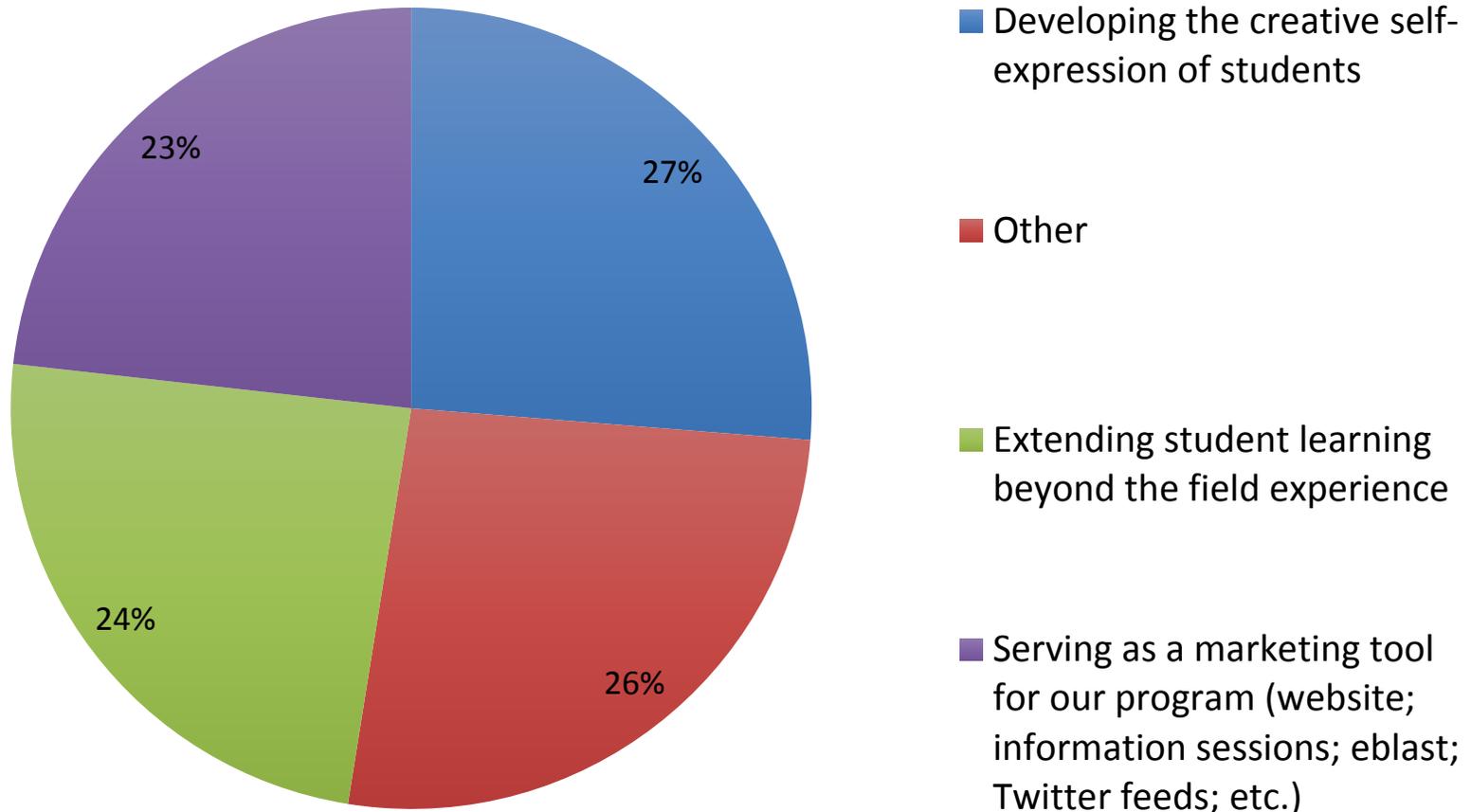


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Top Survey Responses from 42 Self Employed Practitioners

What organizational purposes, if any, do you think media making might serve?

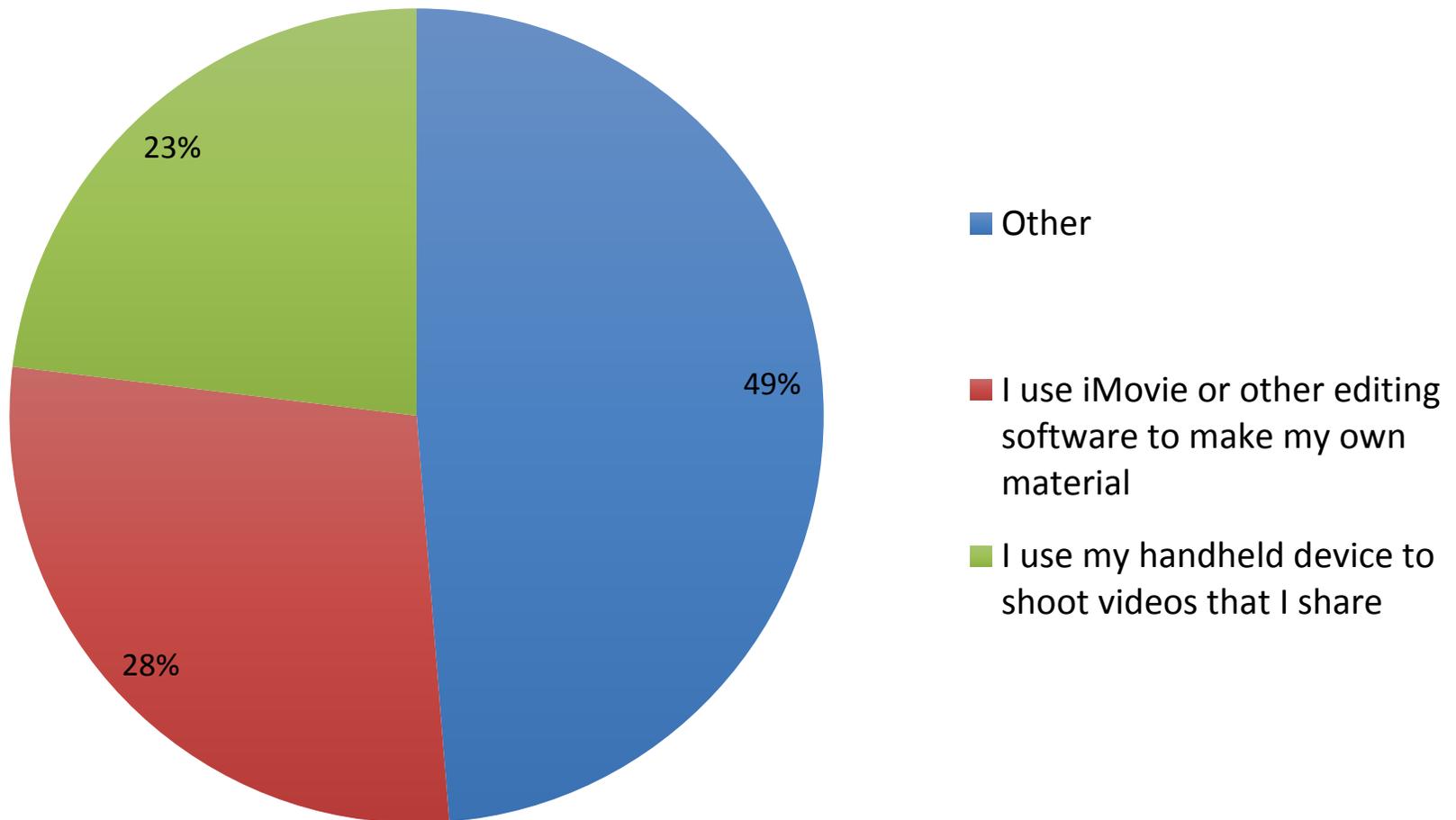


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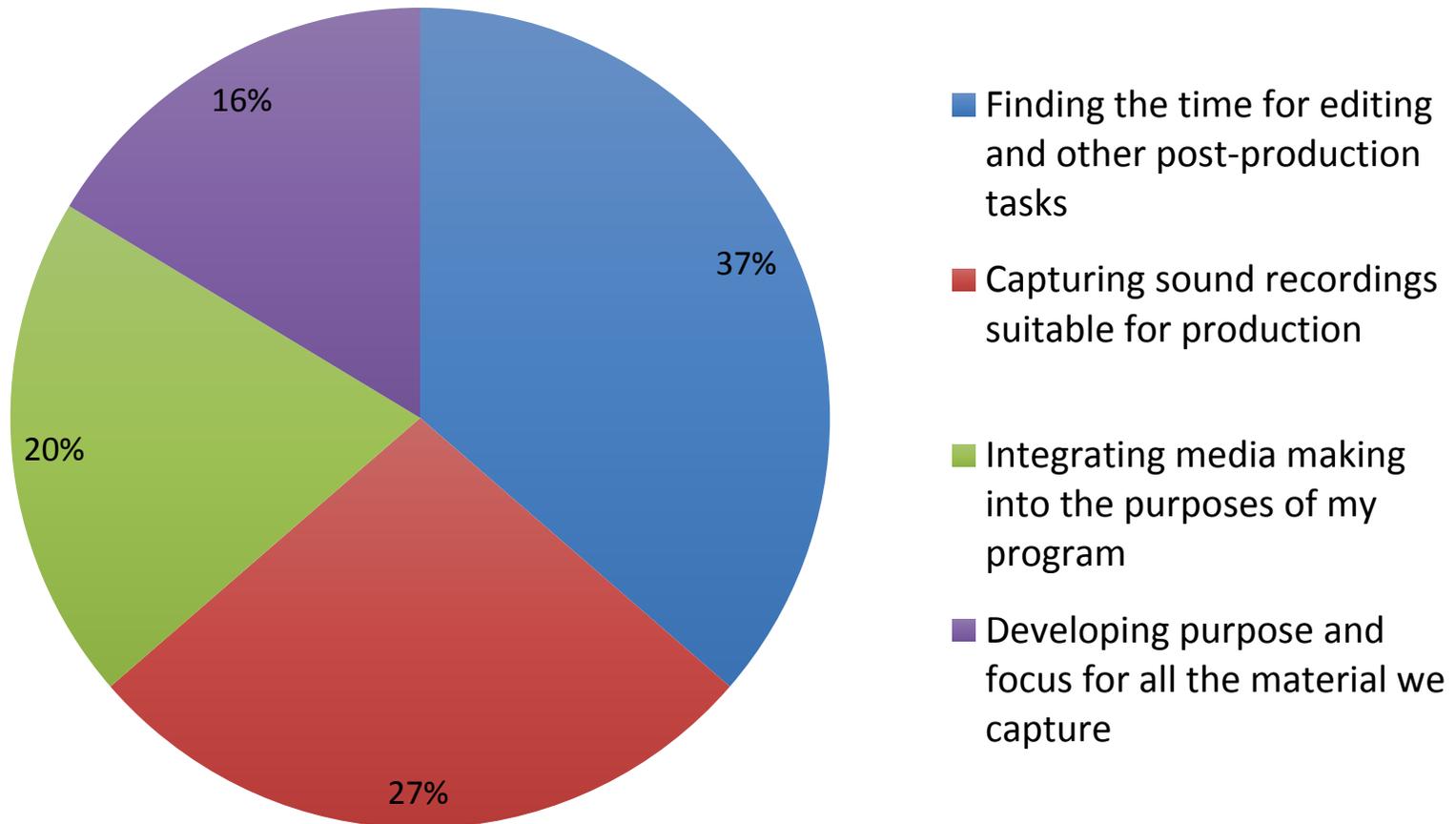


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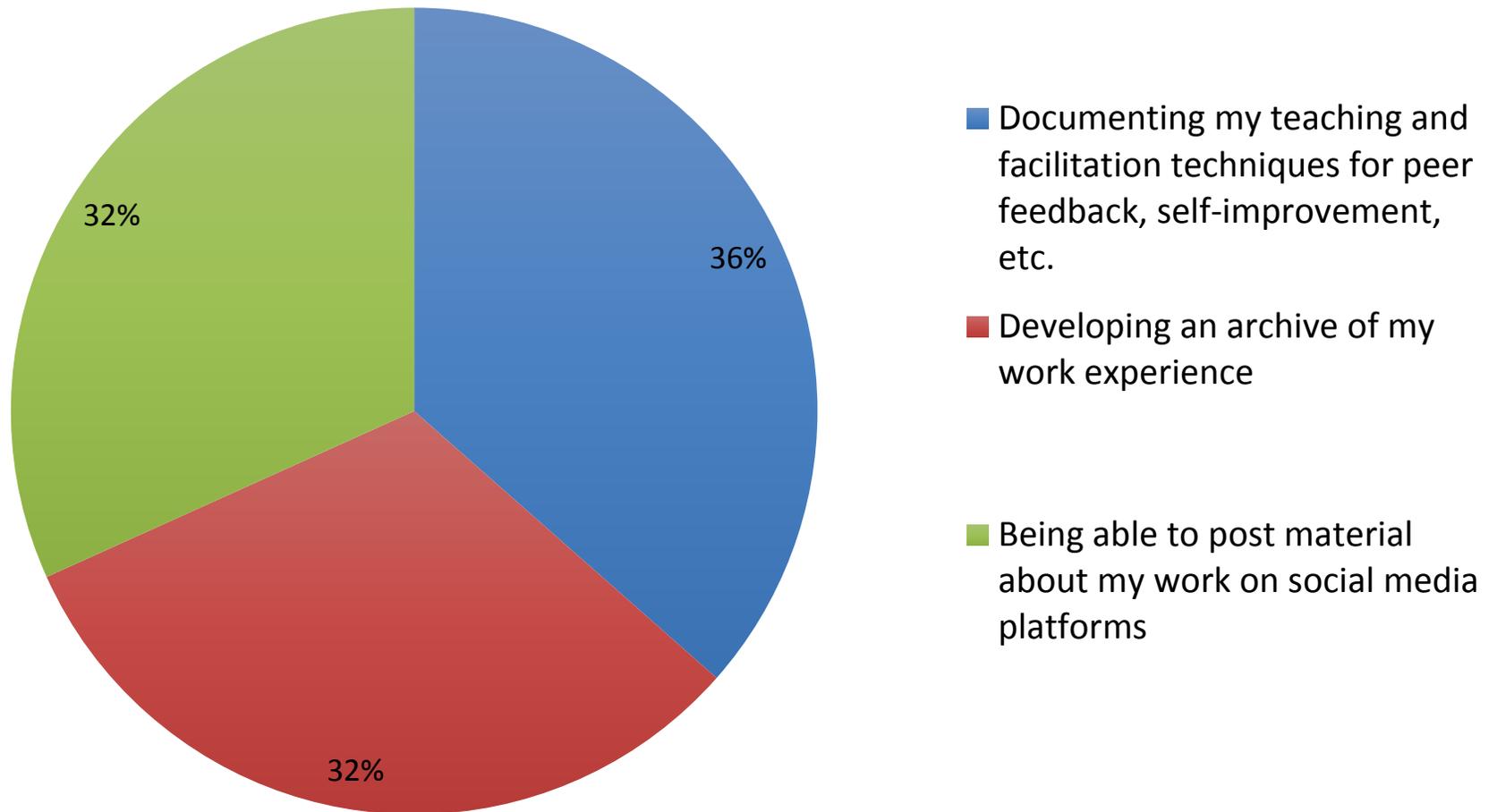


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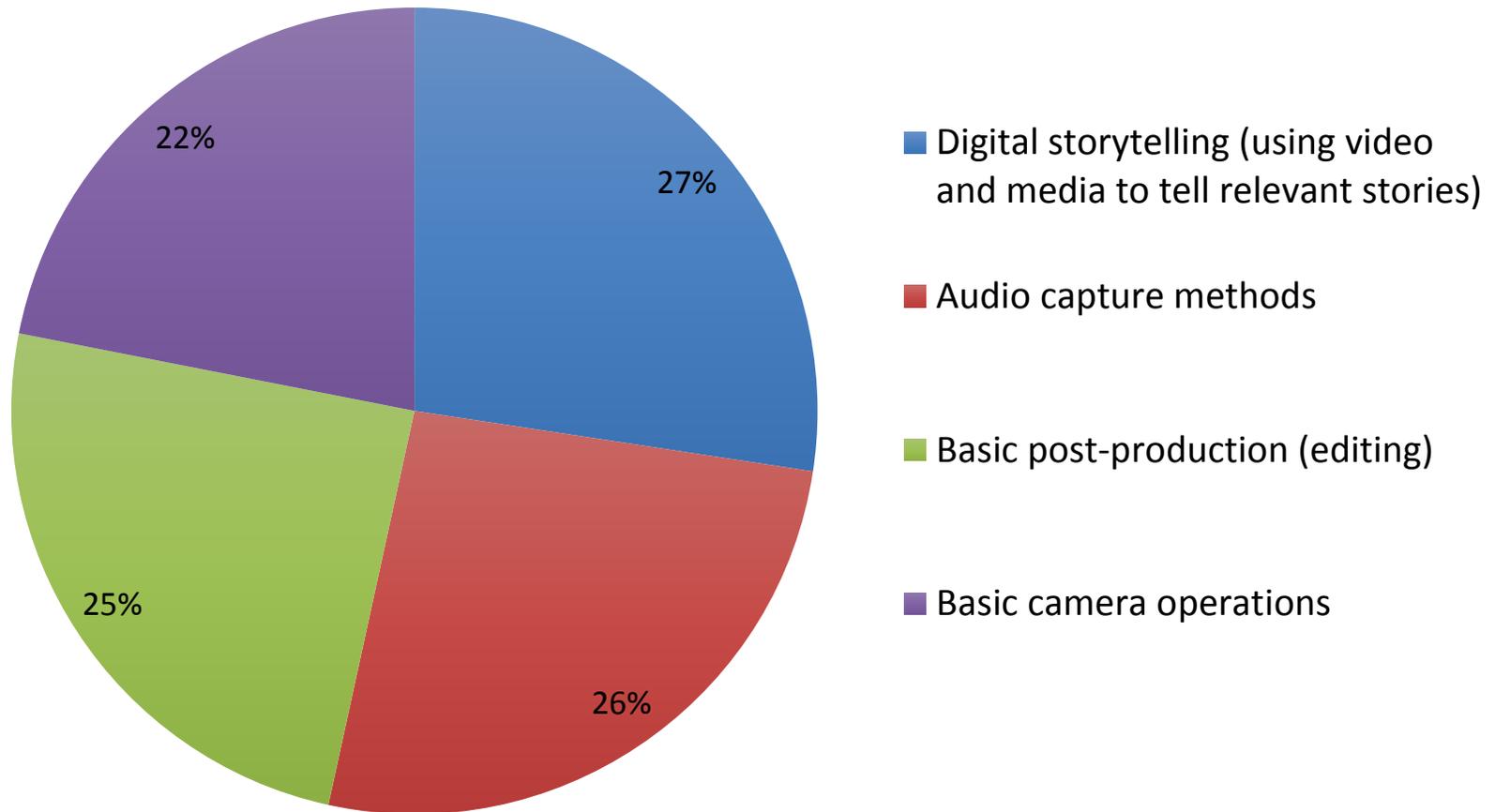


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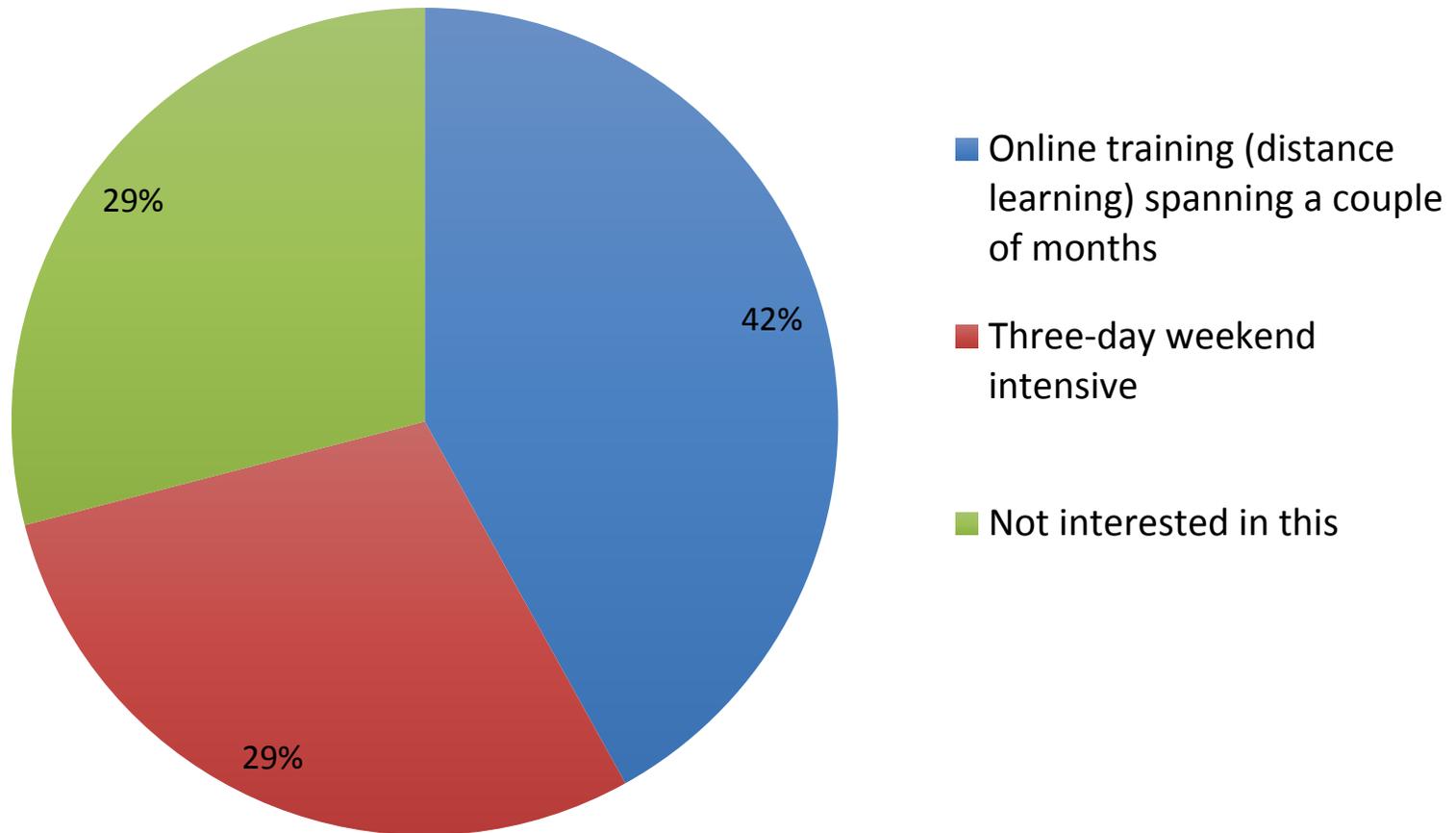


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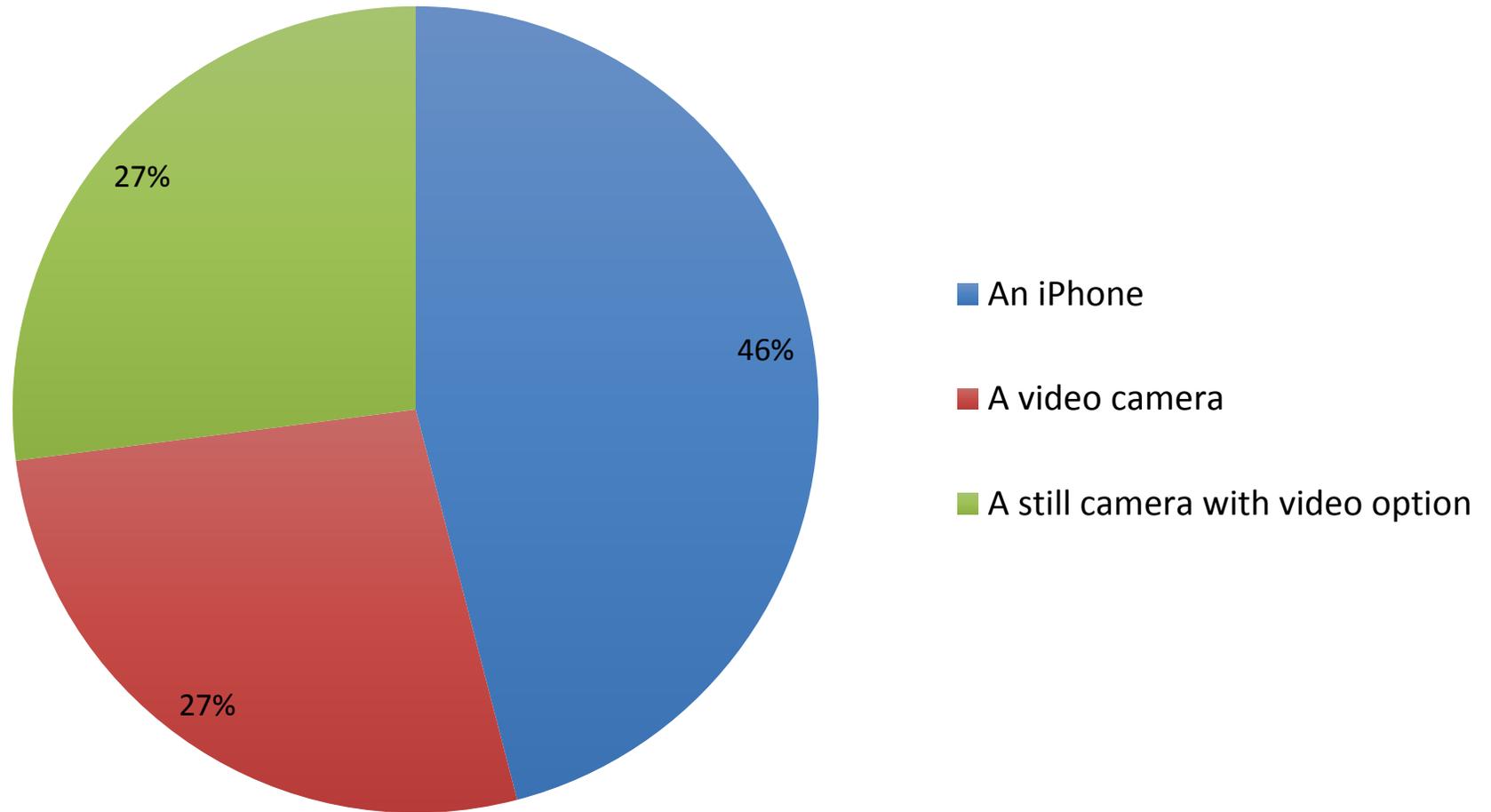


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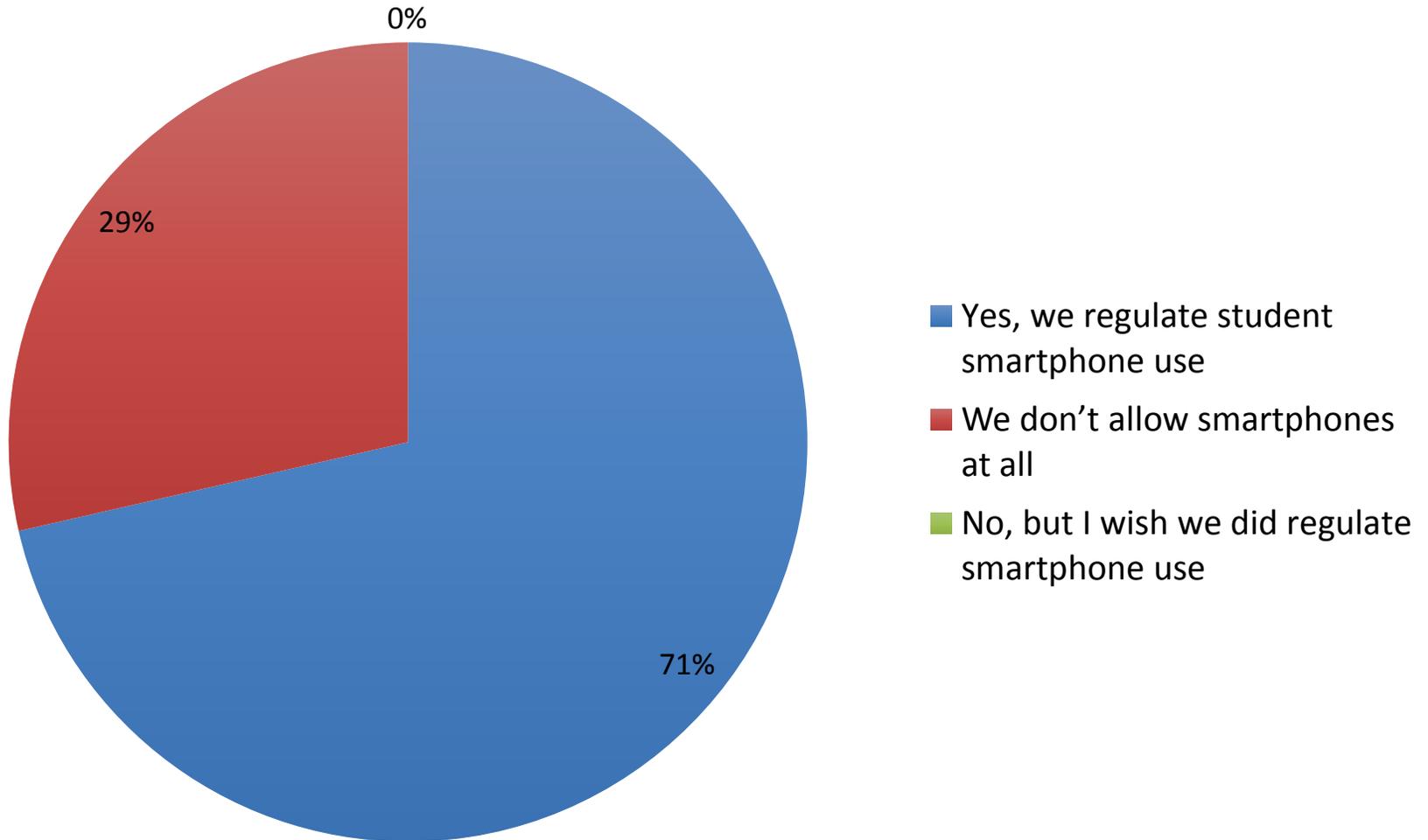


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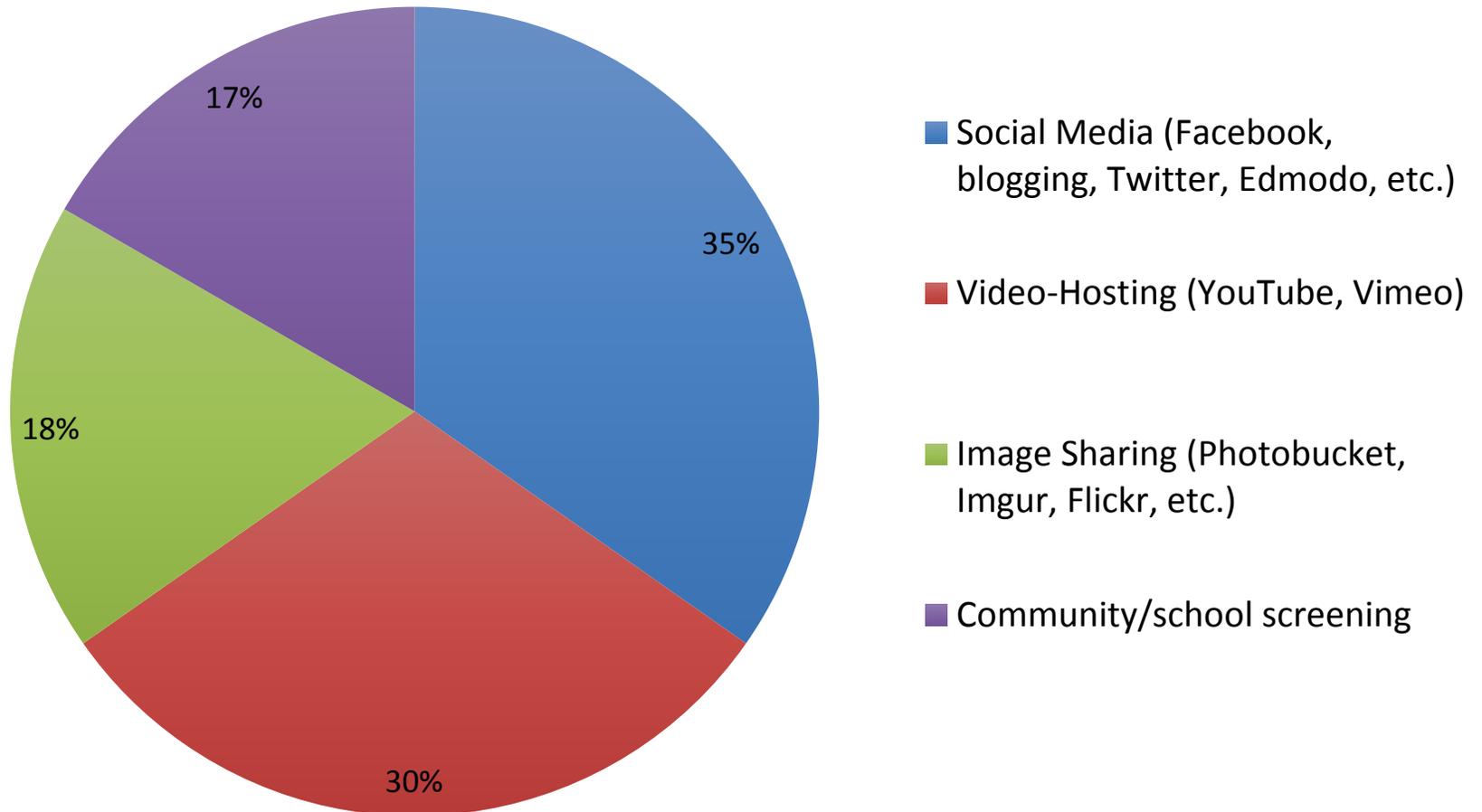


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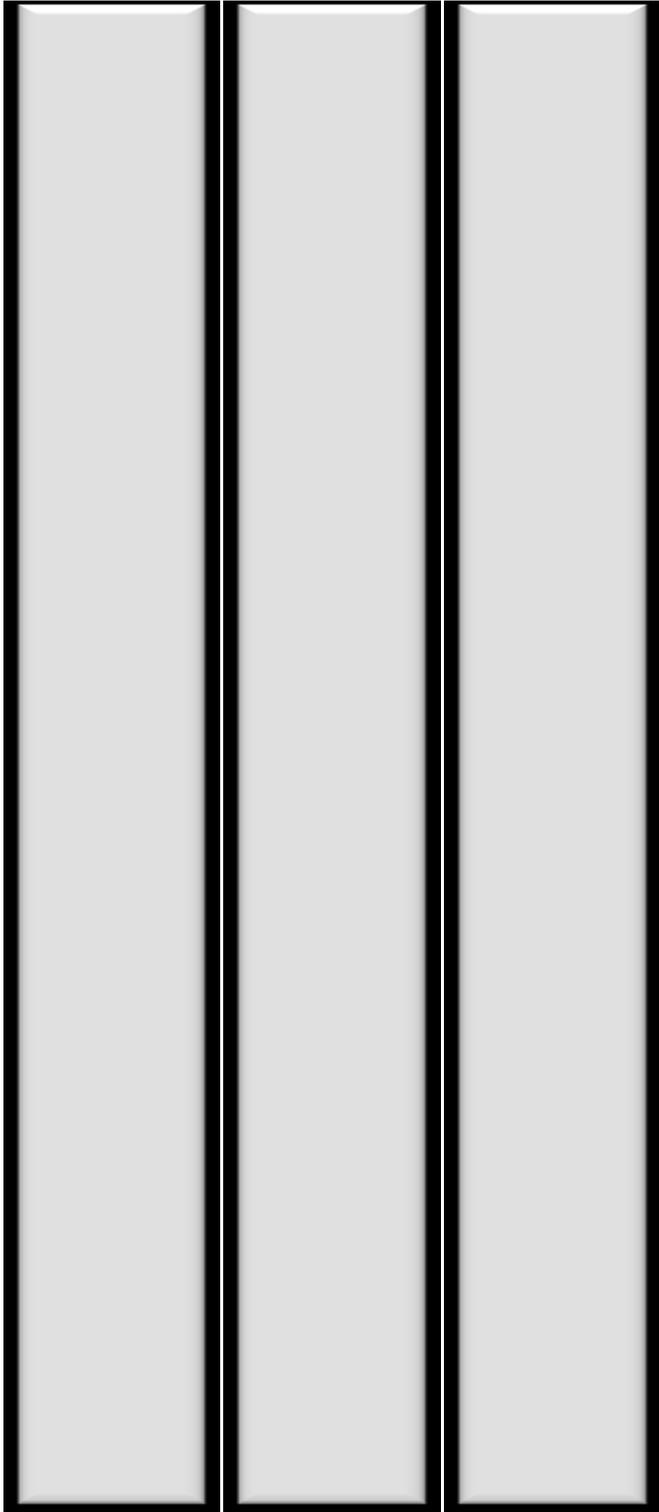
Top Survey Responses from 42 Self Employed Practitioners

What platforms might you or your students use to display the media from your programs?



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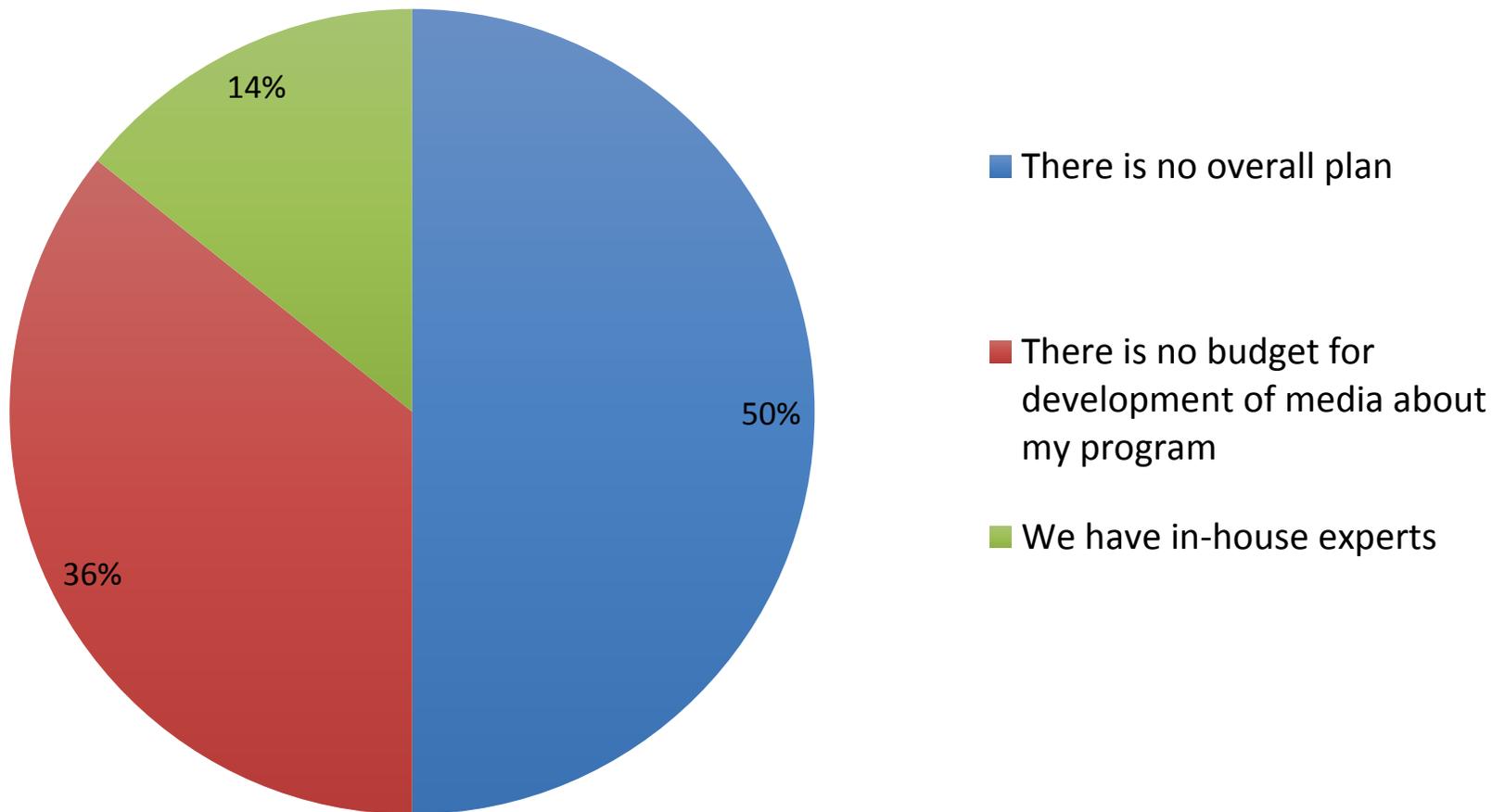
<http://www.exedmedia.com>



Top Survey Responses from Public School Practitioners

Top Survey Responses from 24 Public School Practitioners

How does your organization currently manage the development of media about its programs?

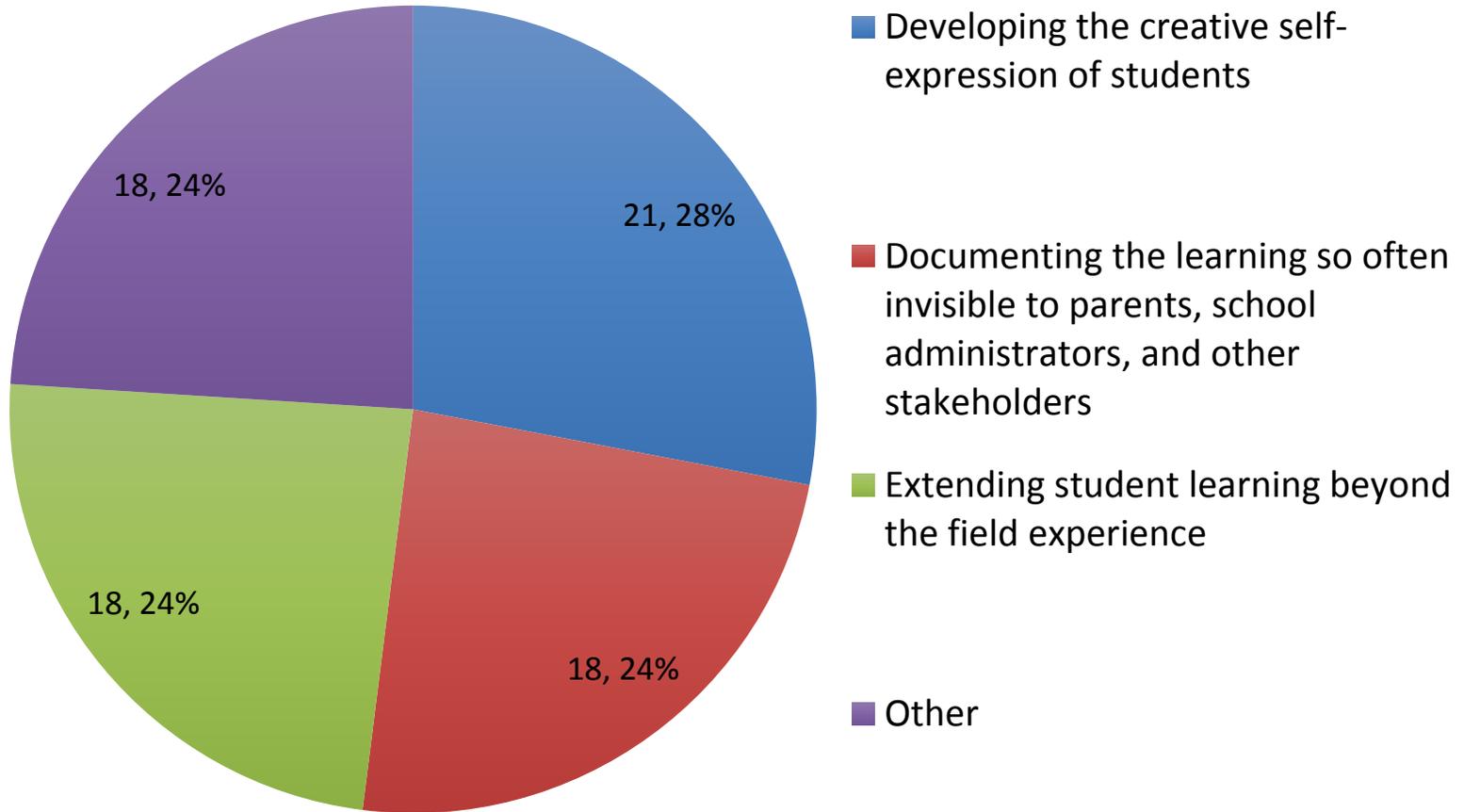


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Top Survey Responses from 24 Public School Practitioners

What organizational purposes, if any, do you think media making might serve?

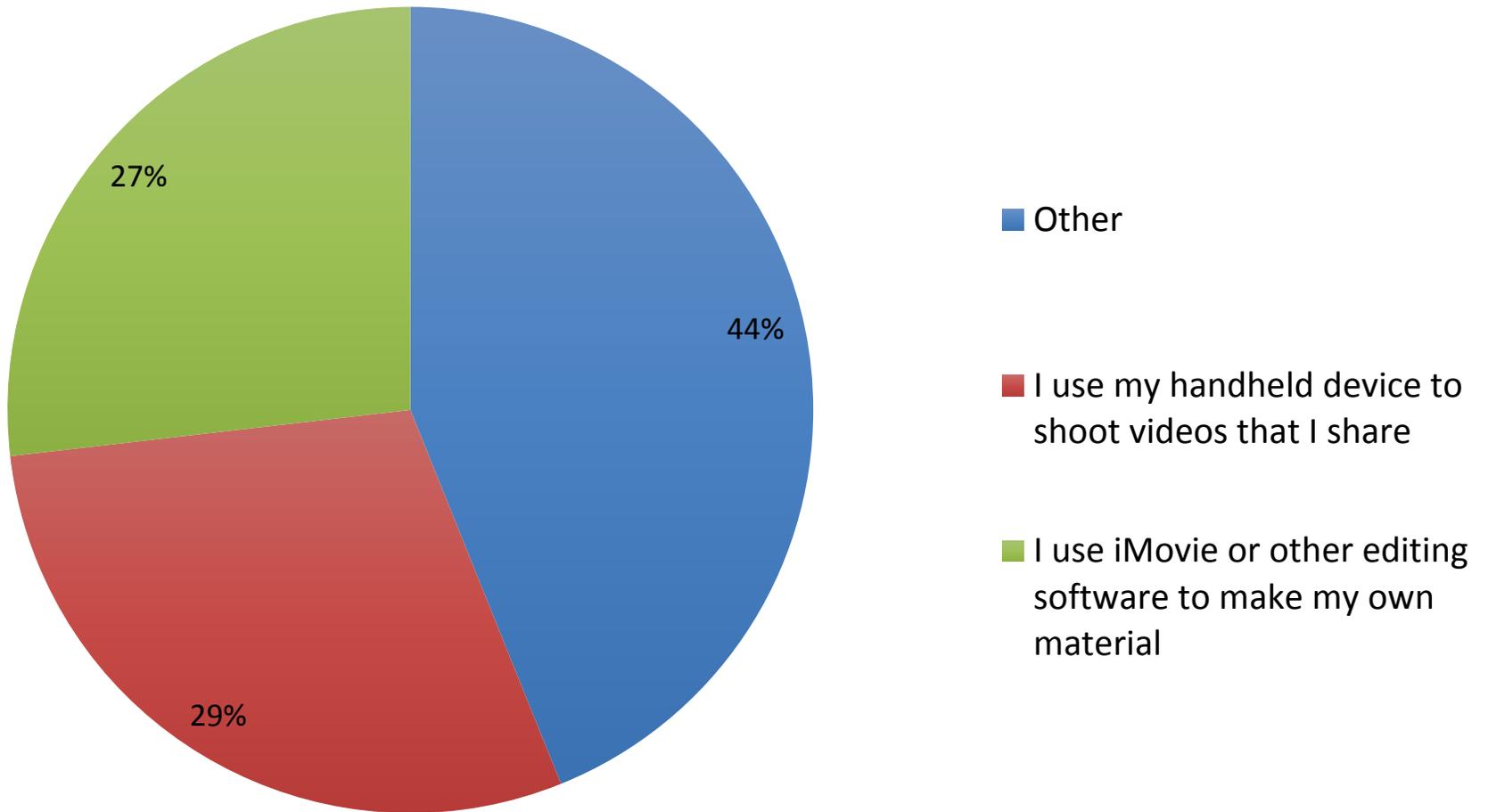


ExEd Media

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Top Survey Responses from 24 Public School Practitioners

What is your experience with the use of digital media for storytelling?

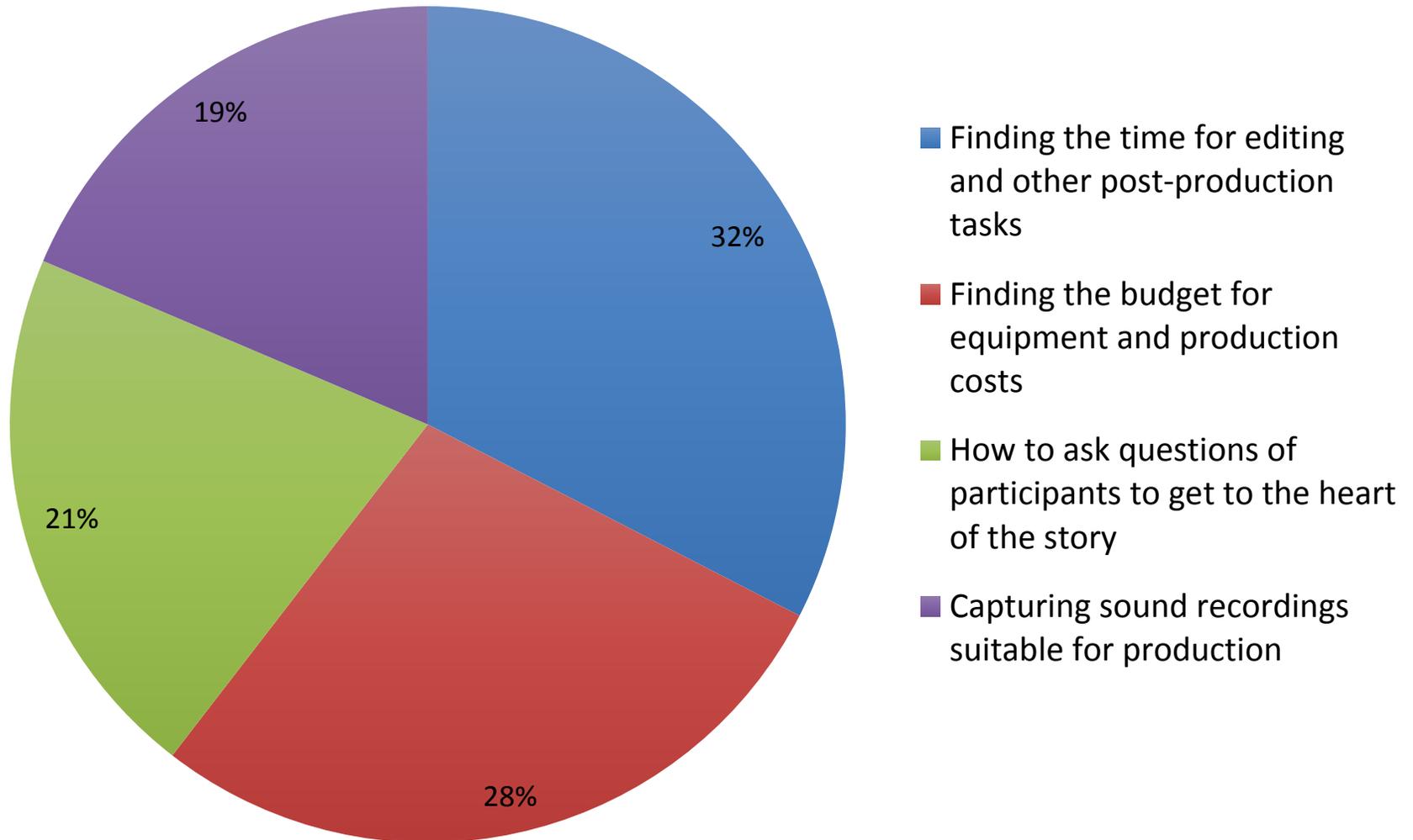


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Top Survey Responses from 24 Public School Practitioners

What is the most challenging aspect of media making in your experiential program?

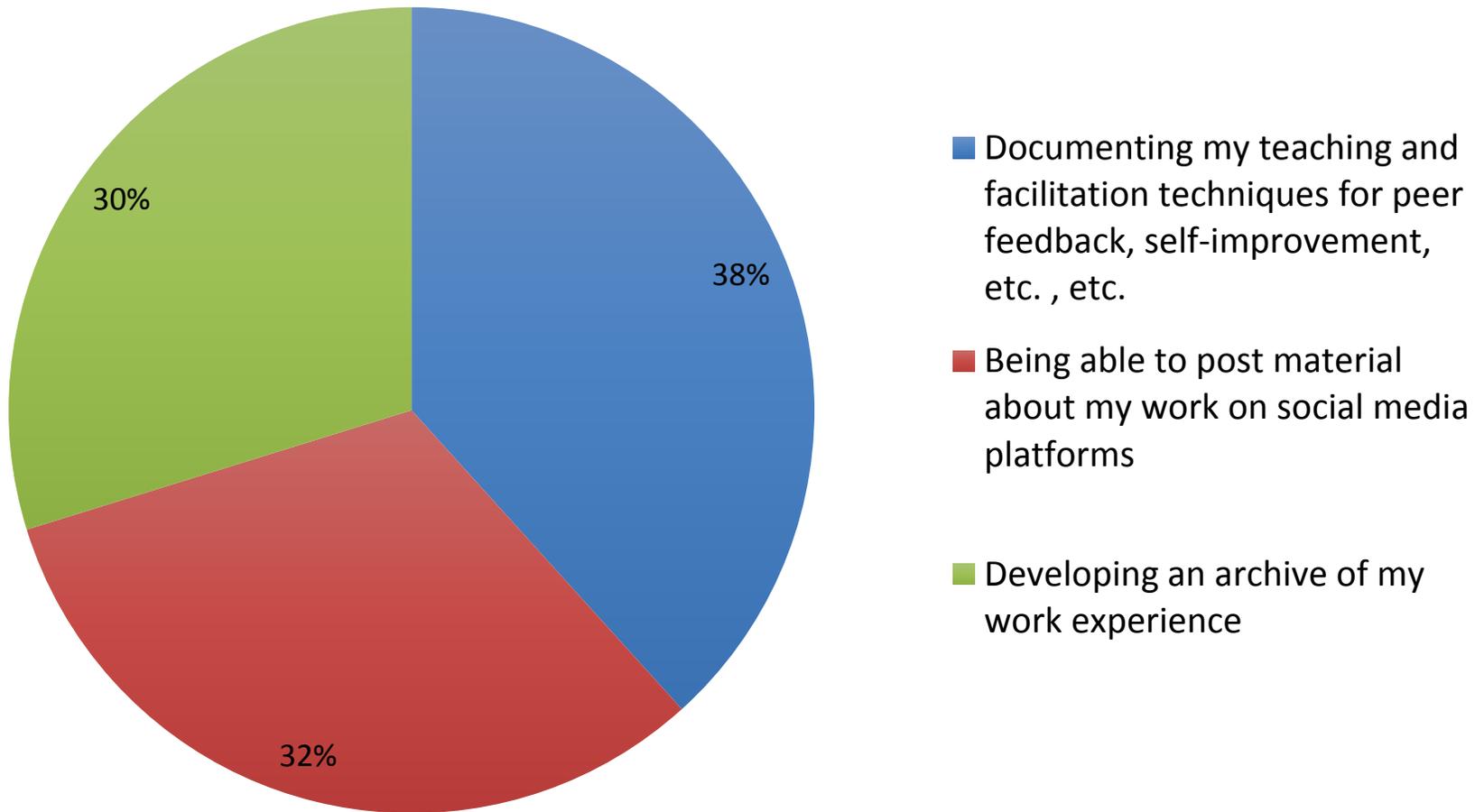


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Top Survey Responses from 24 Public School Practitioners

What personal or professional purposes might digital media serve?

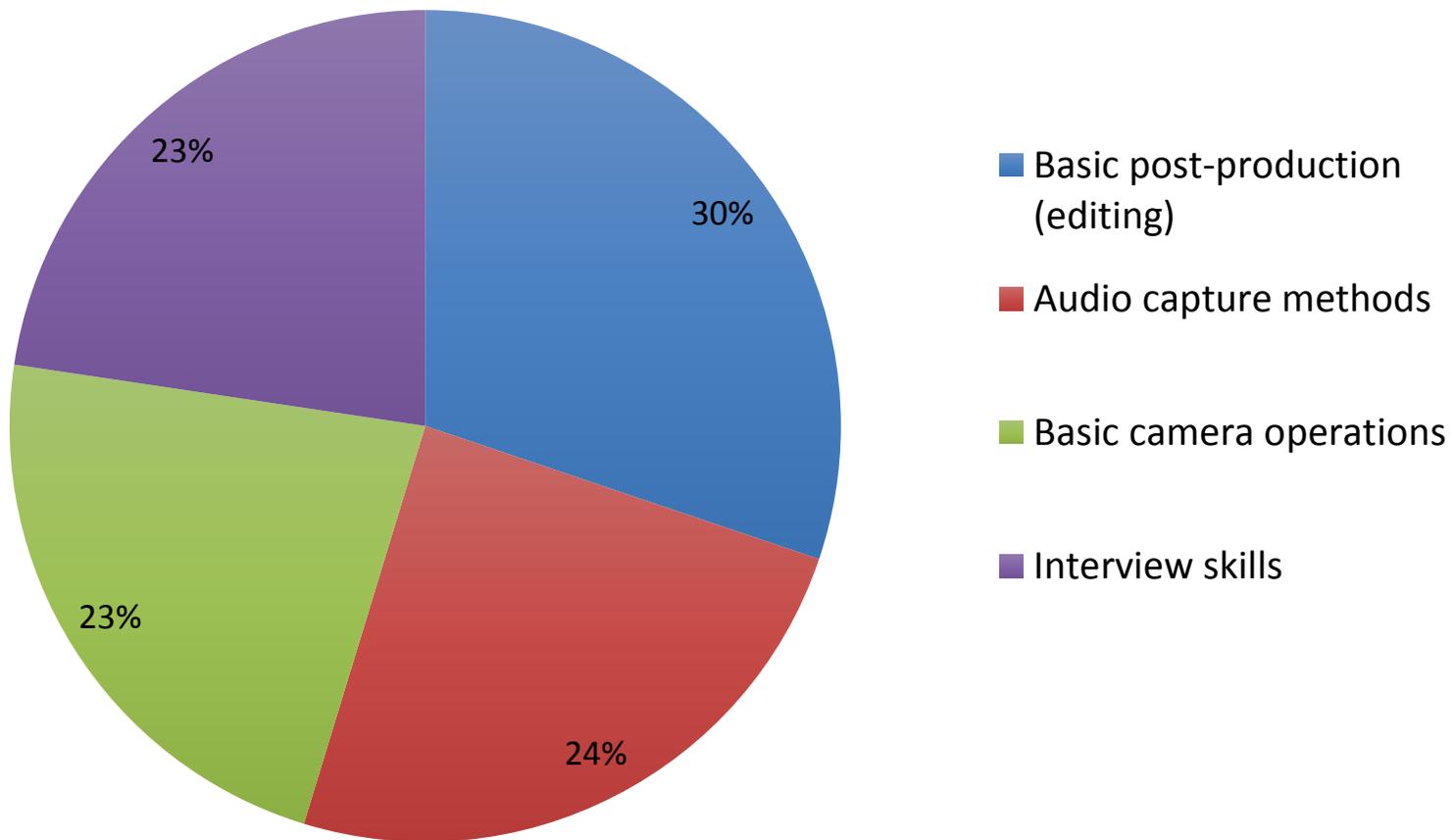


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Top Survey Responses from 24 Public School Practitioners

If you wanted to incorporate media making into your program, which skills do you think you or your staff might need?

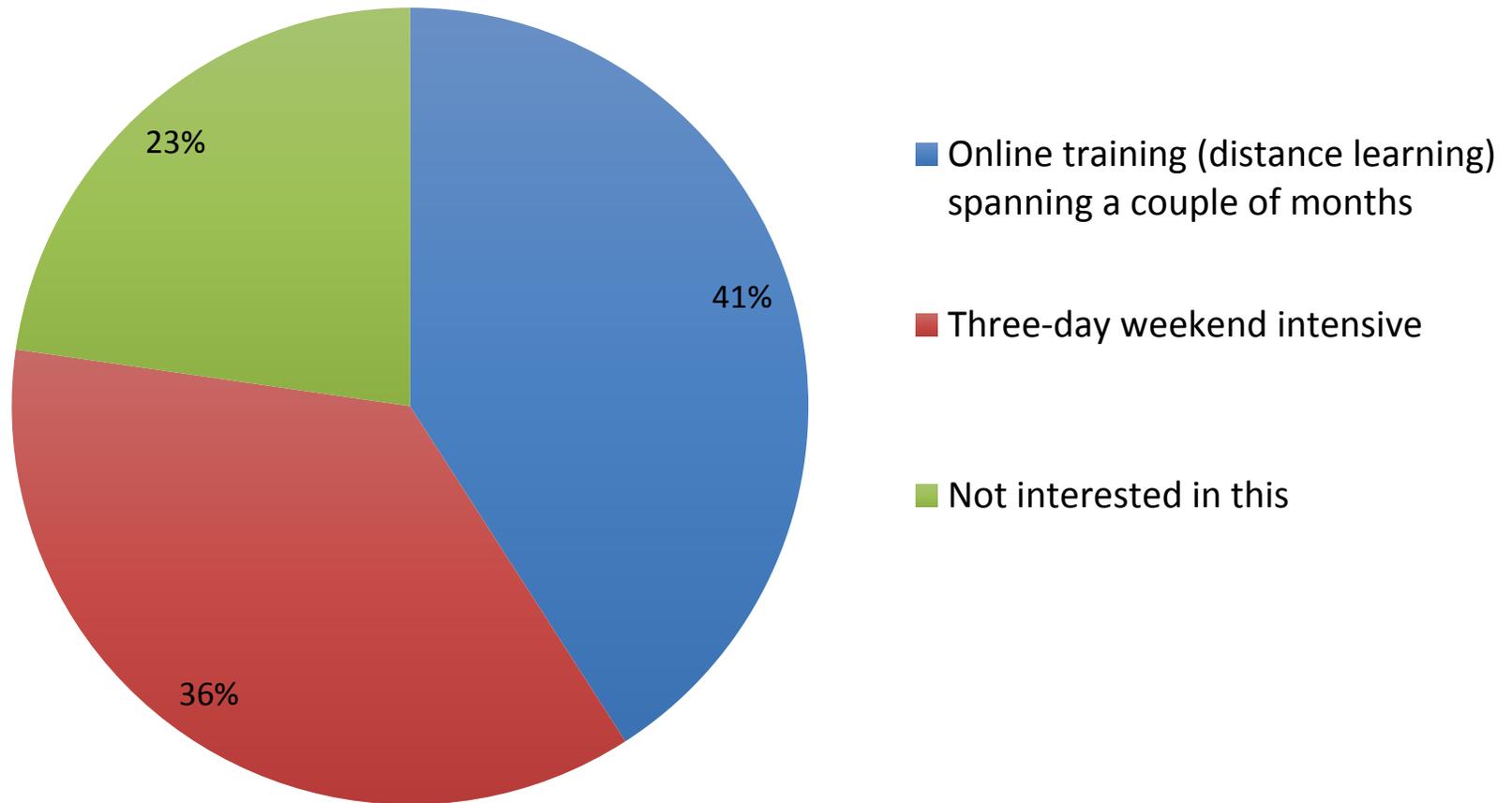


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Top Survey Responses from 24 Public School Practitioners

What's the best format for a media making workshop tailored to the needs of experiential educators?

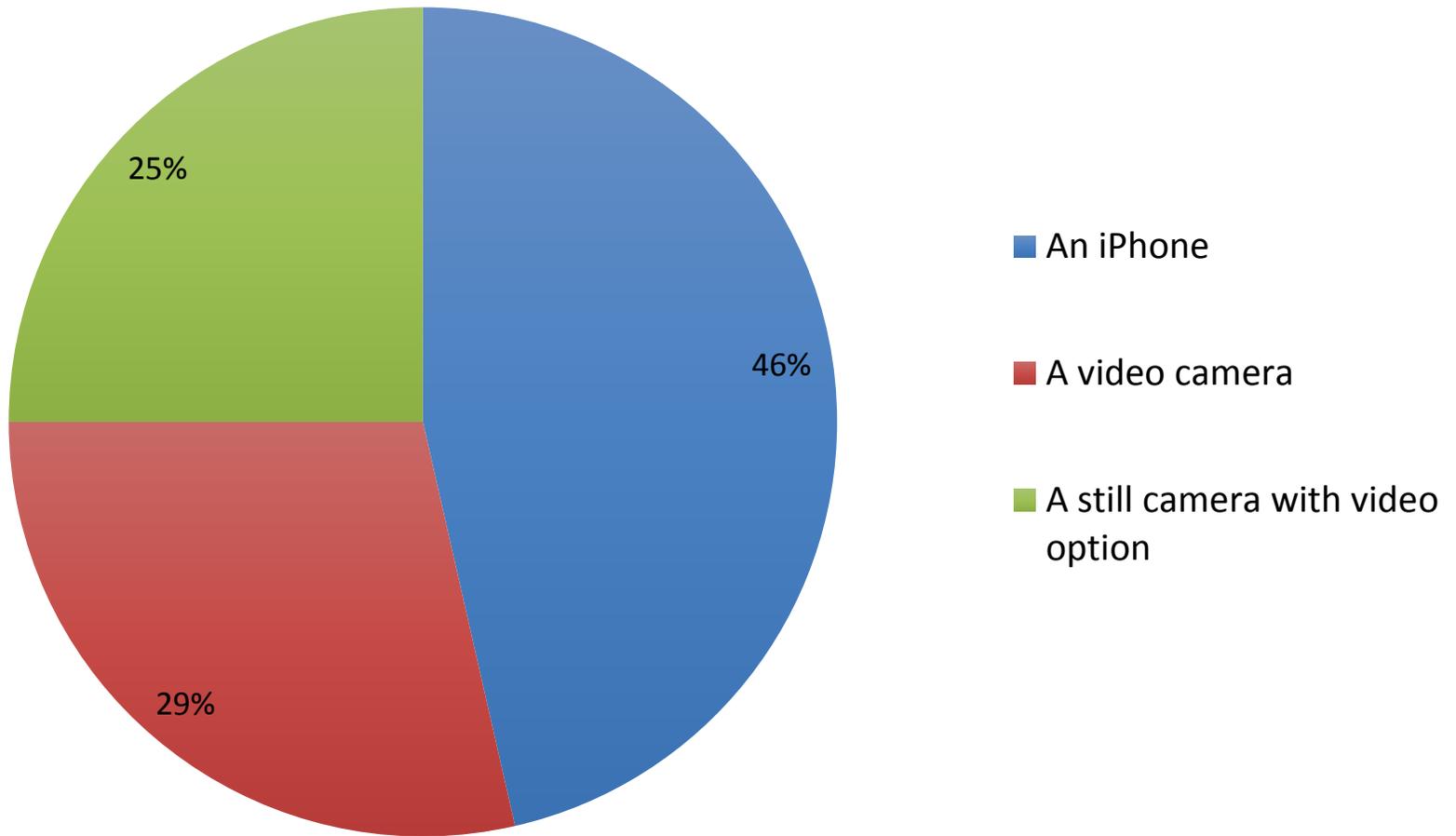


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Top Survey Responses from 24 Public School Practitioners

What kind of device, if any, best suits your media-making in the field?

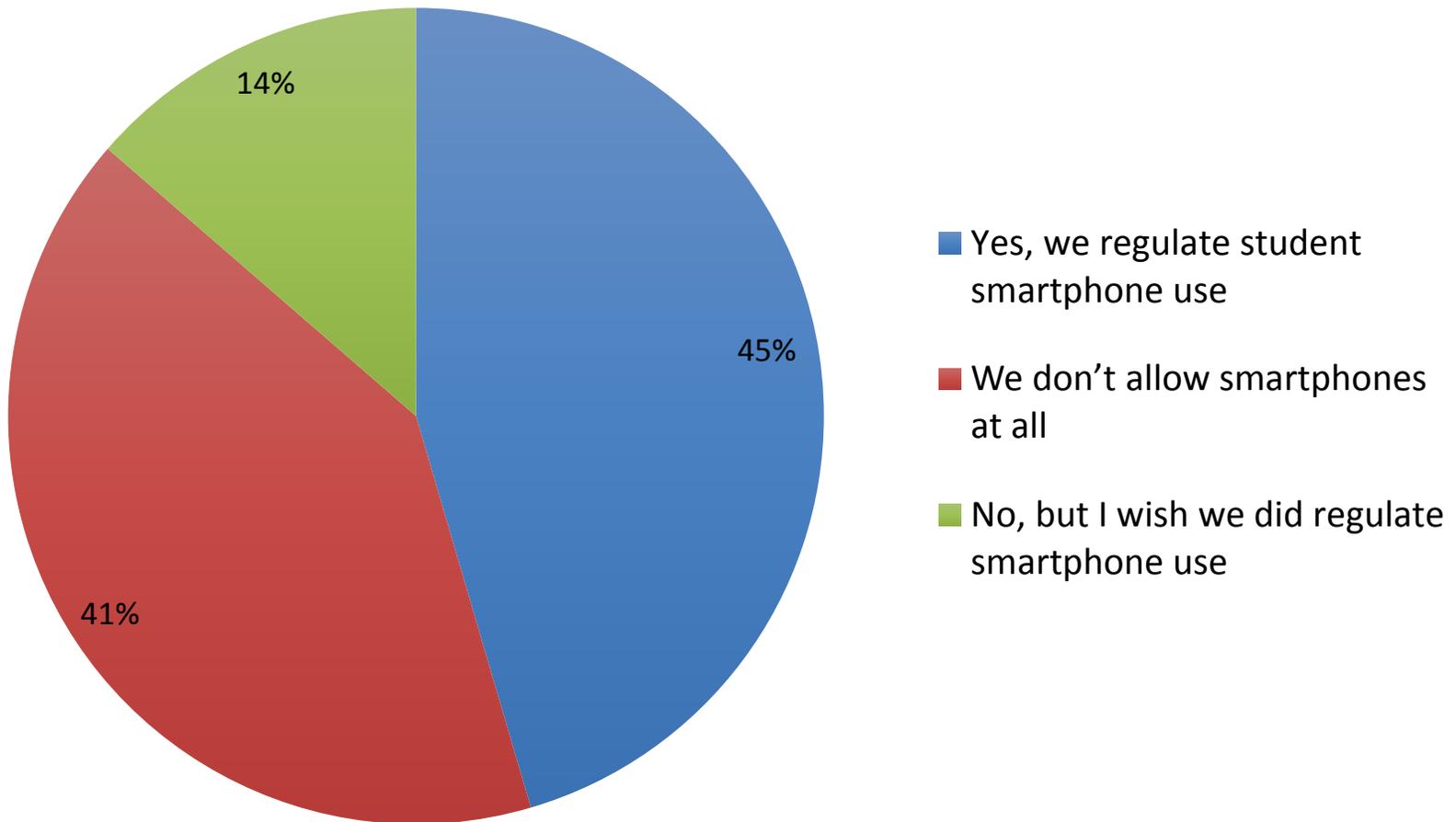


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Top Survey Responses from 24 Public School Practitioners

Do you have policies about student use of smartphones?

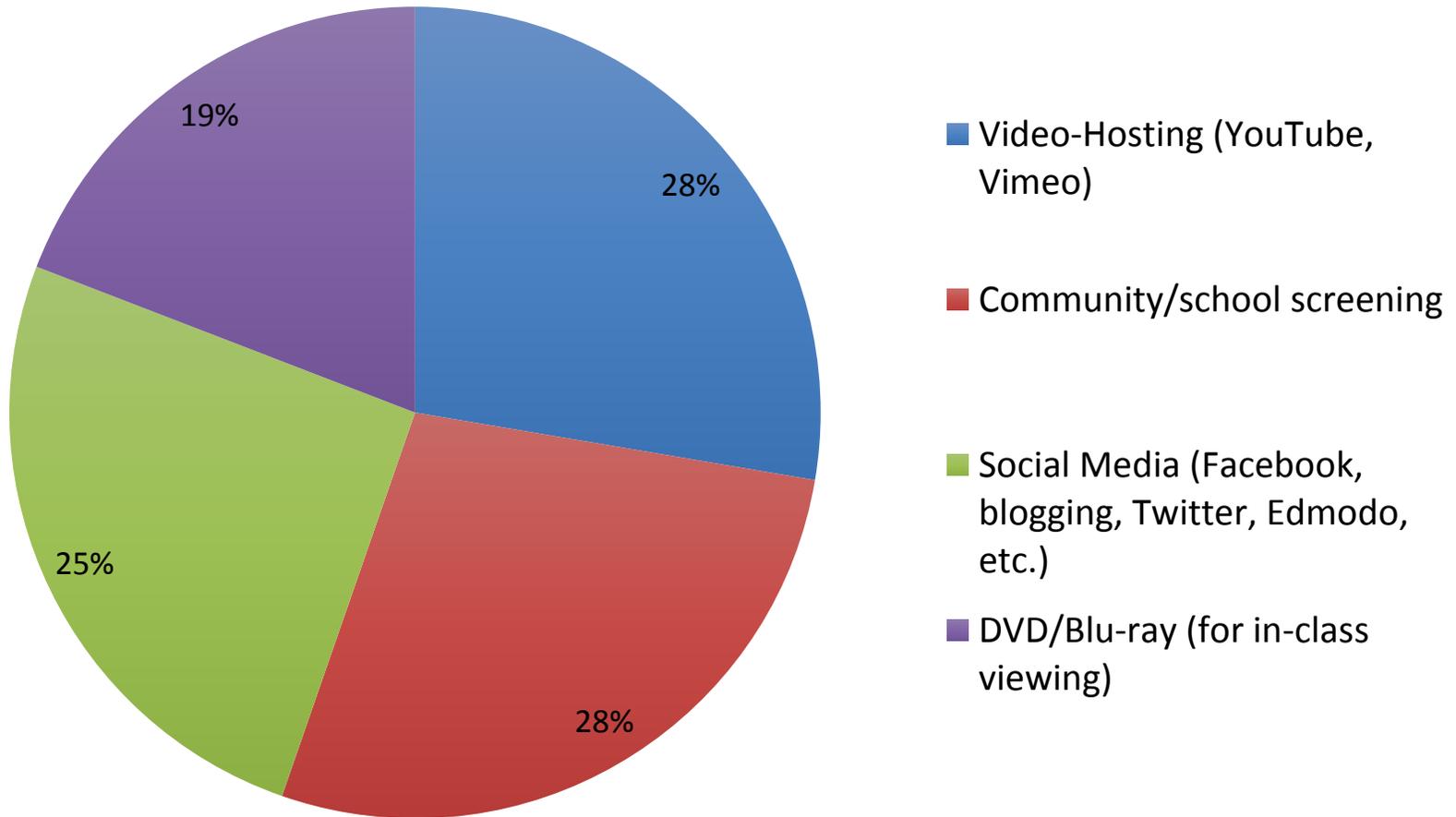


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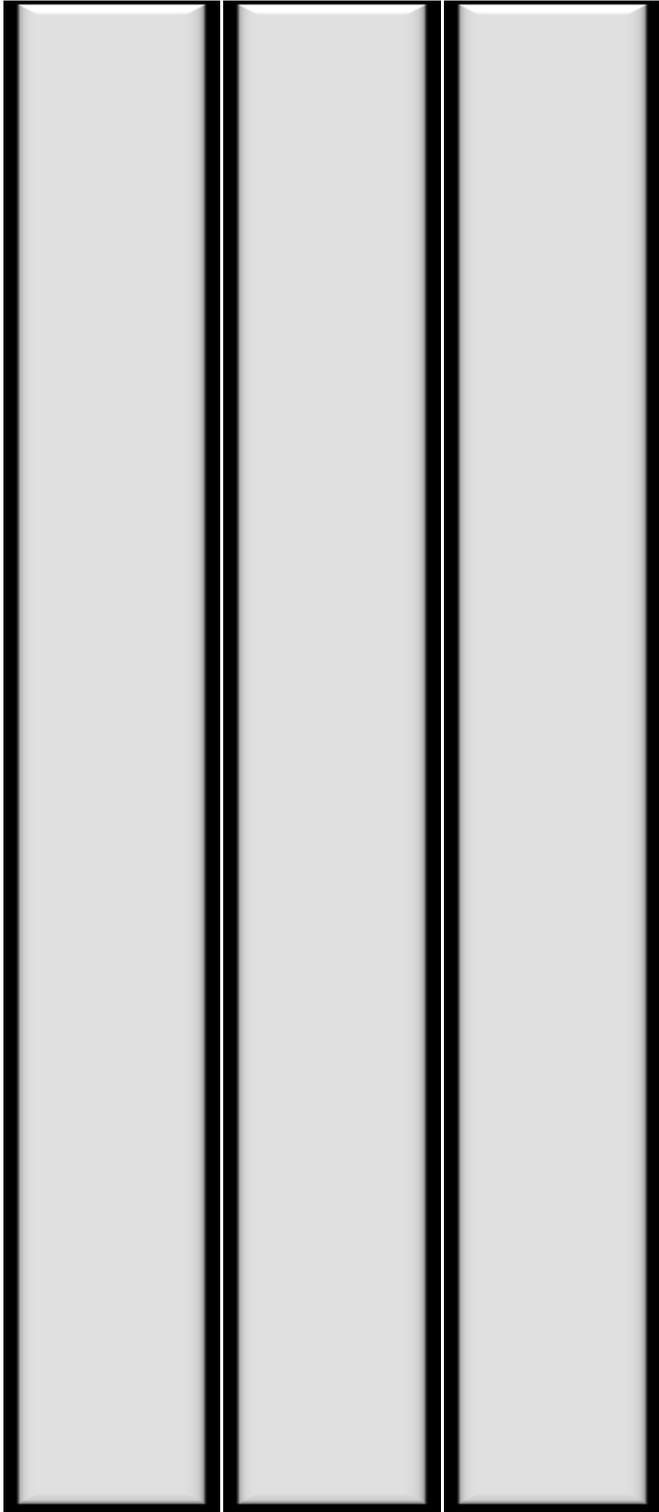
Top Survey Responses from 24 Public School Practitioners

What platforms might you or your students use to display the media from your programs?



ExEd Media

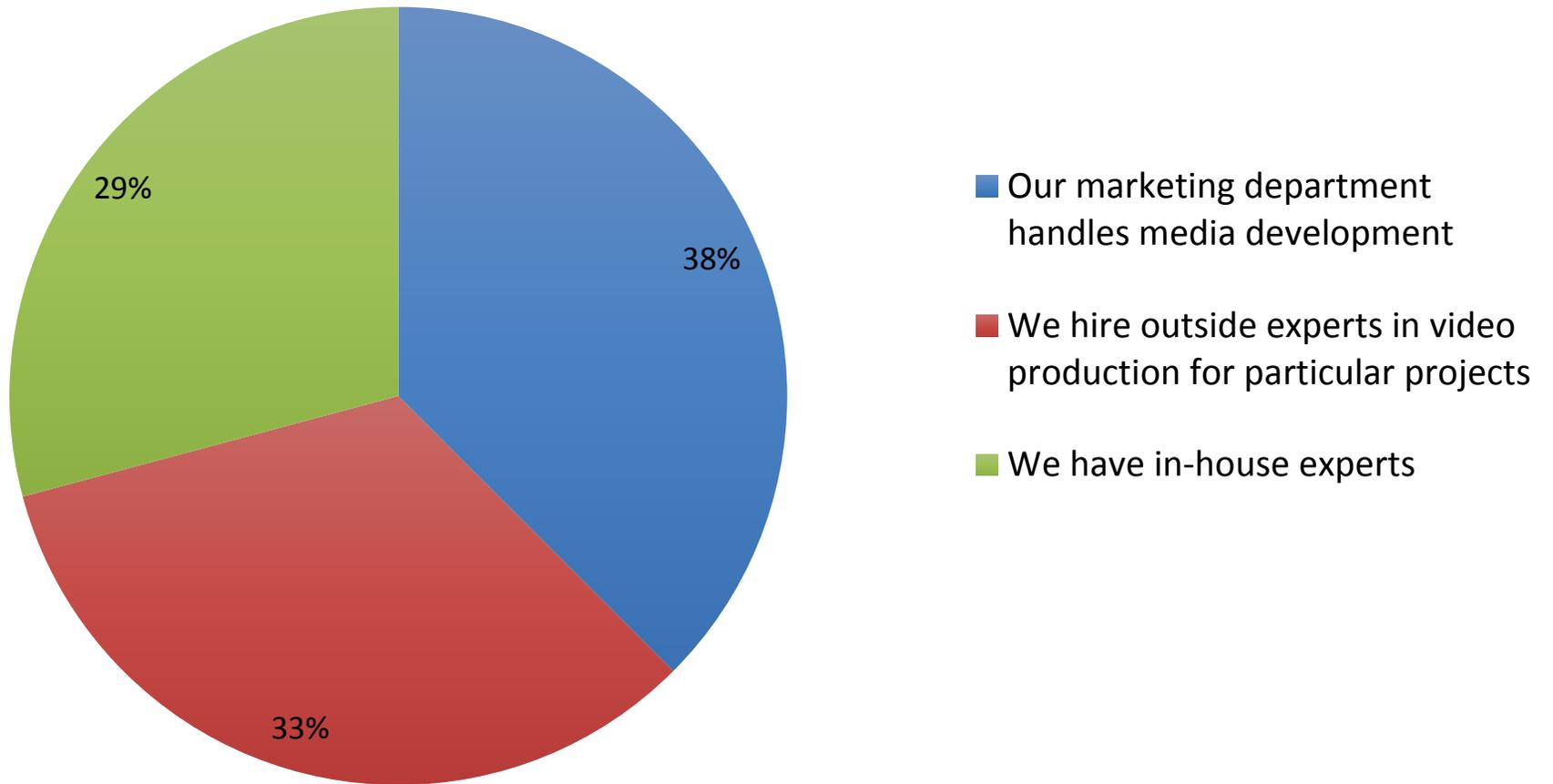
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Top Survey Responses from For Profit Practitioners

Top Survey Responses from 22 For Profit Practitioners

How does your organization currently manage the development of media about its programs?

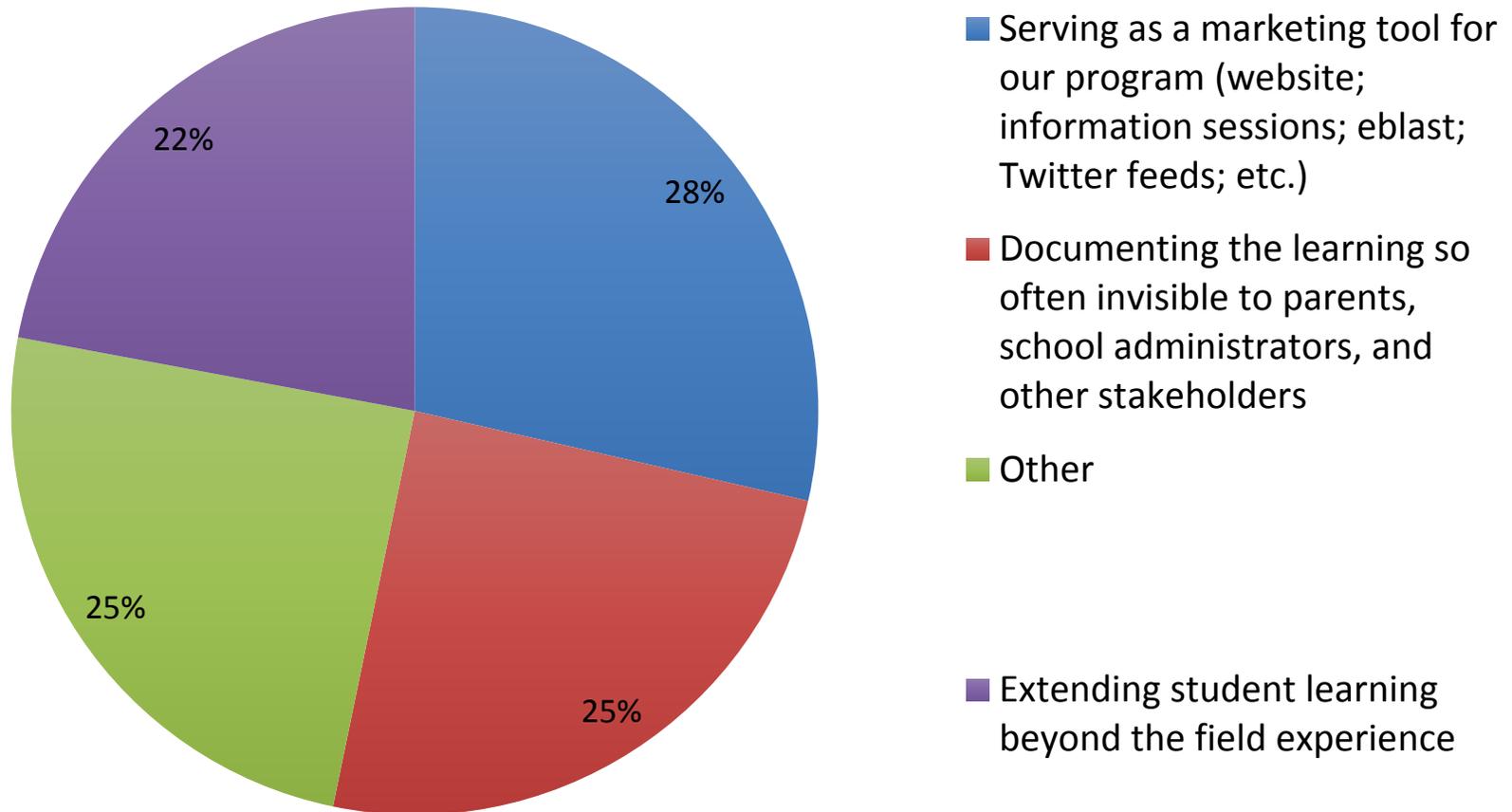


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Top Survey Responses from 22 For Profit Practitioners

What organizational purposes, if any, do you think media making might serve?

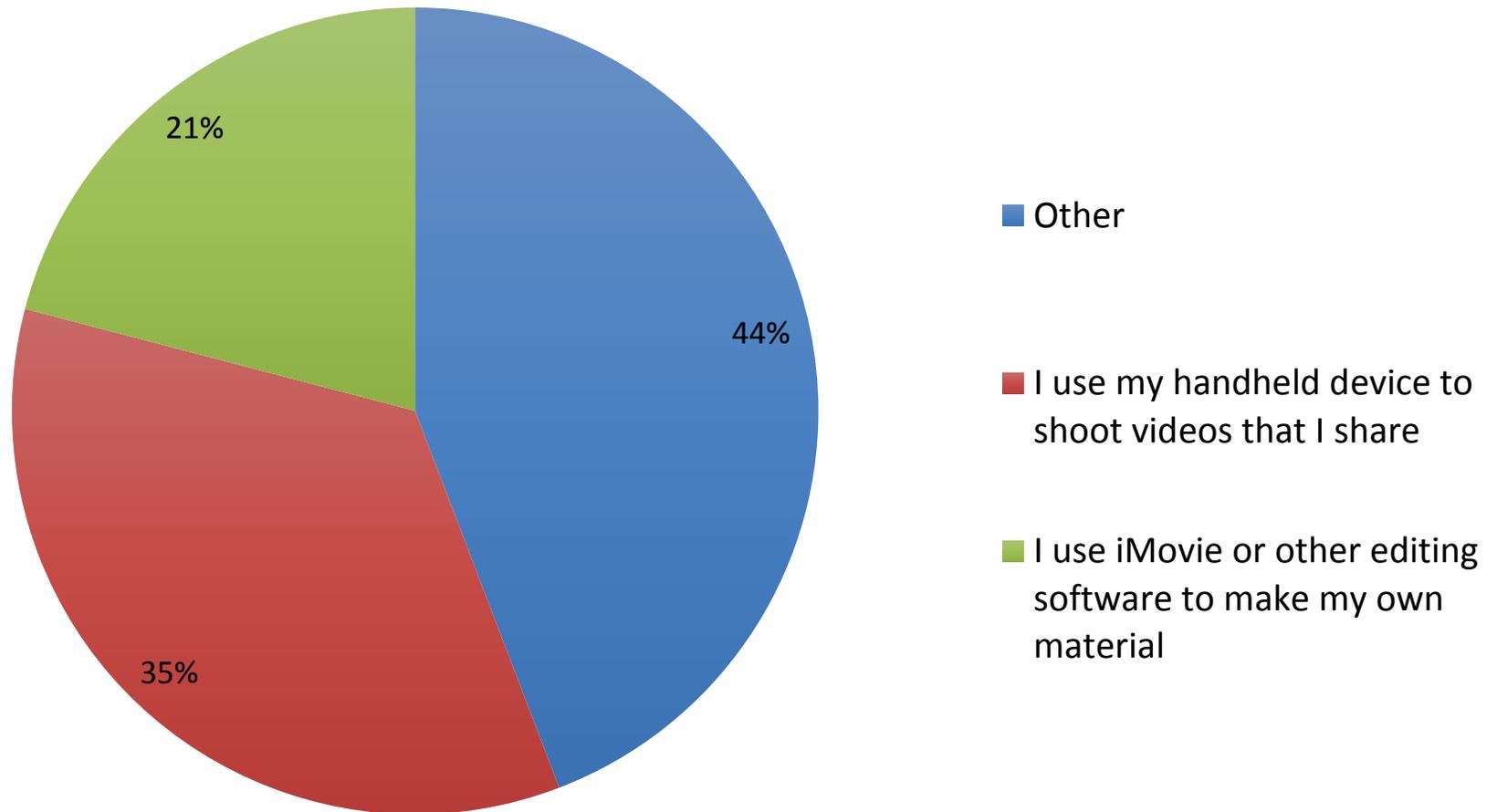


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Top Survey Responses from 22 For Profit Practitioners

What is your experience with the use of digital media for storytelling?

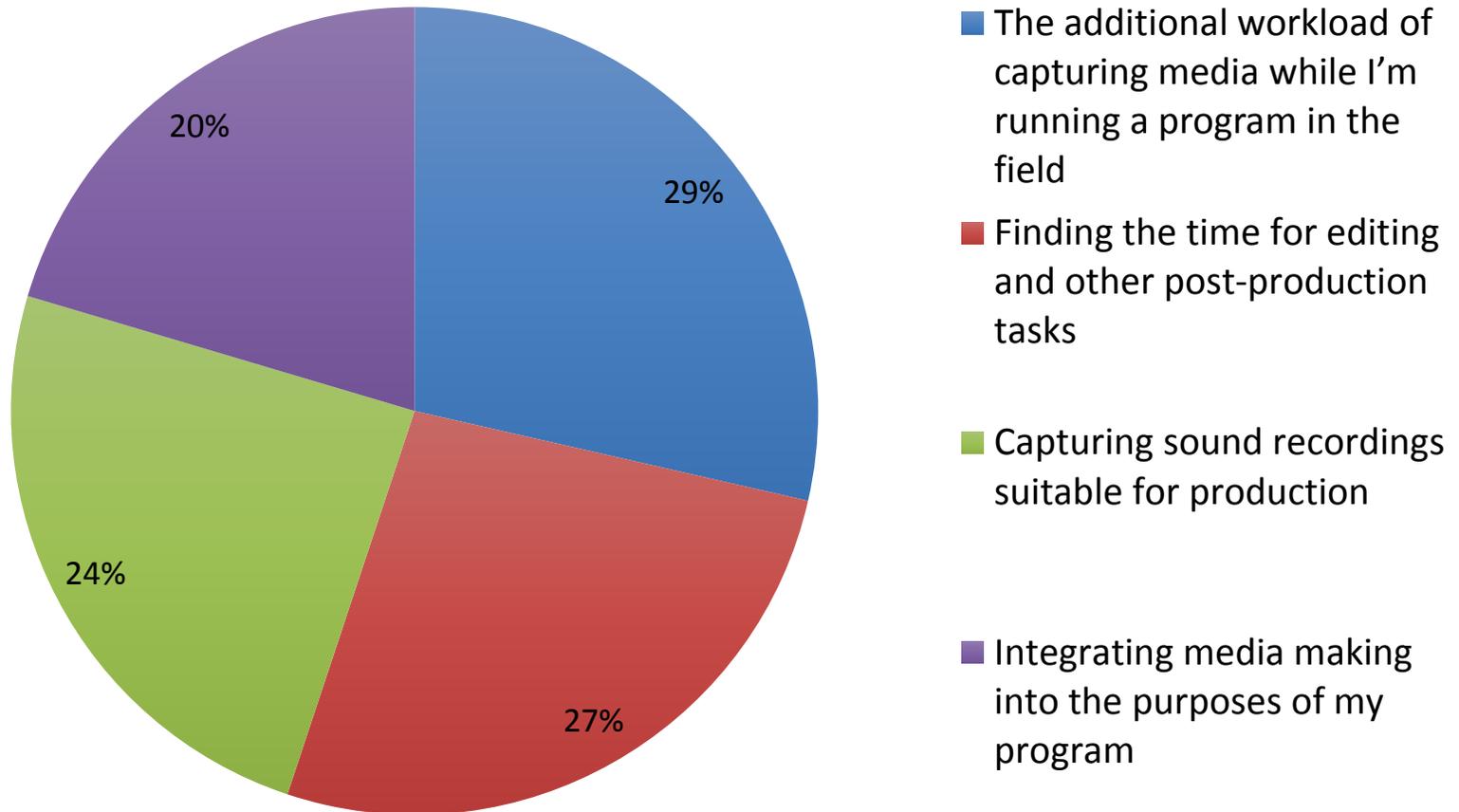


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Top Survey Responses from 22 For Profit Practitioners

What is the most challenging aspect of media making in your experiential program?

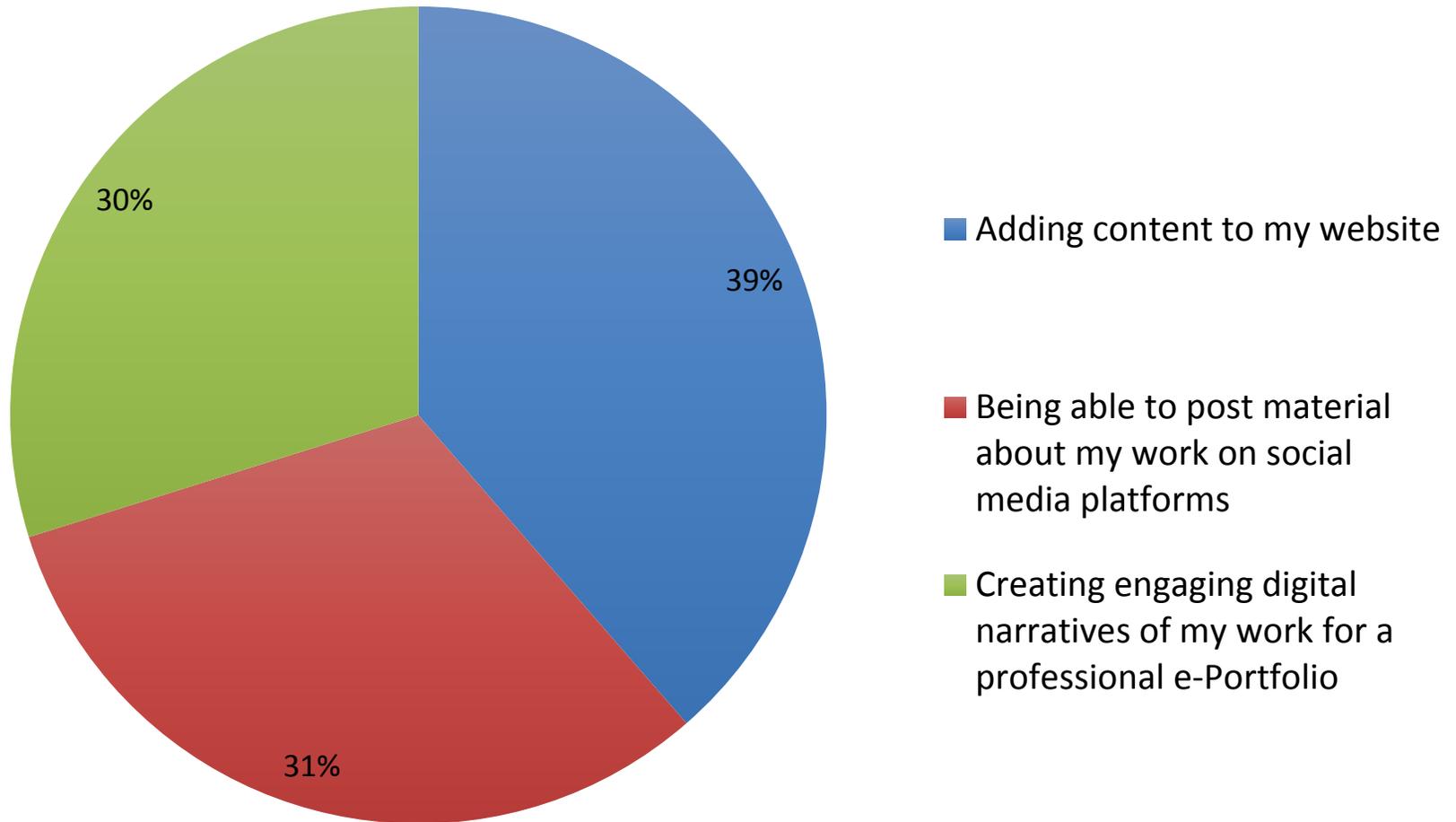


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Top Survey Responses from 22 For Profit Practitioners

What personal or professional purposes might digital media serve?

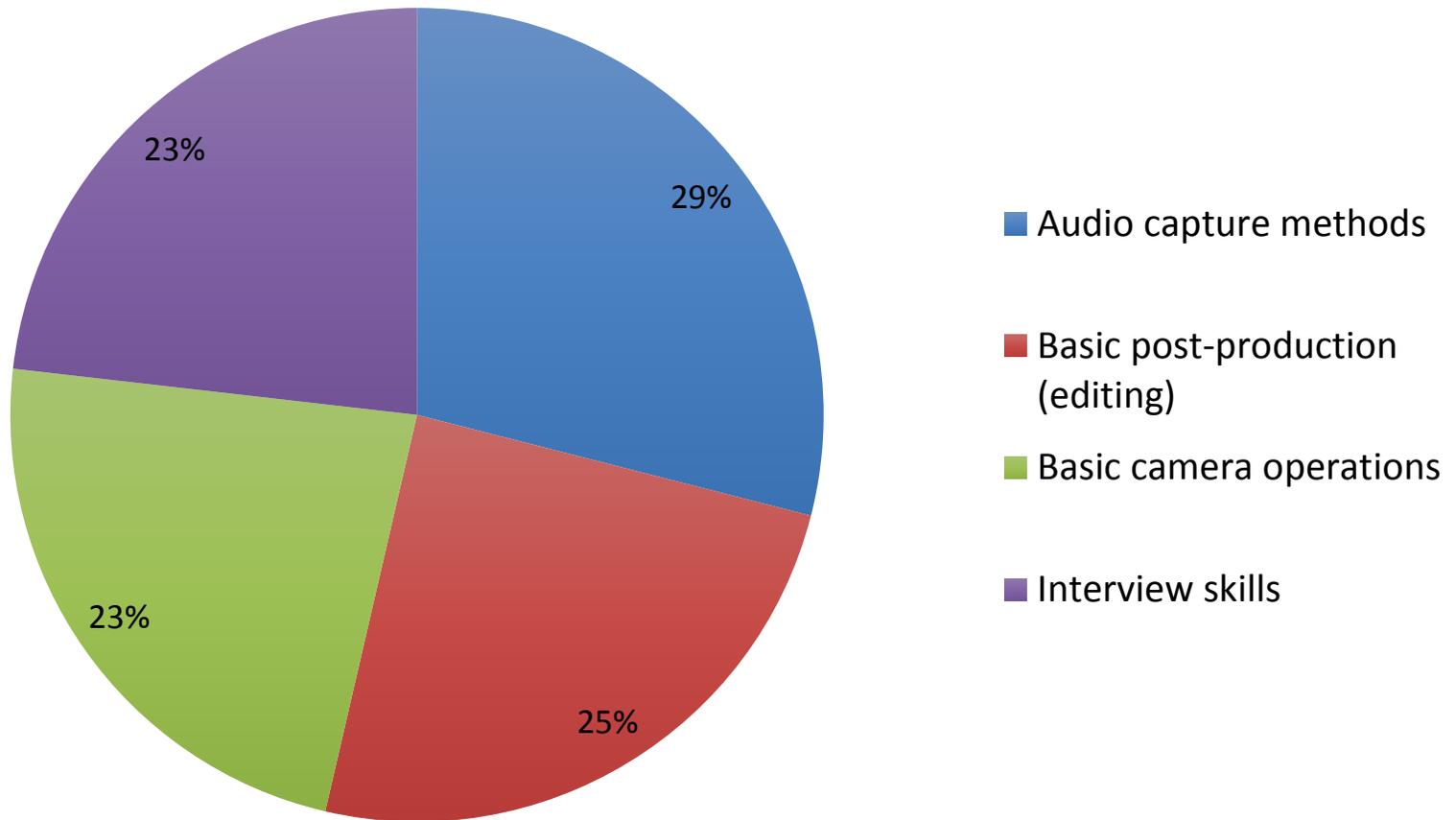


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If you wanted to incorporate media making into your program, which skills do you think you or your staff might need?

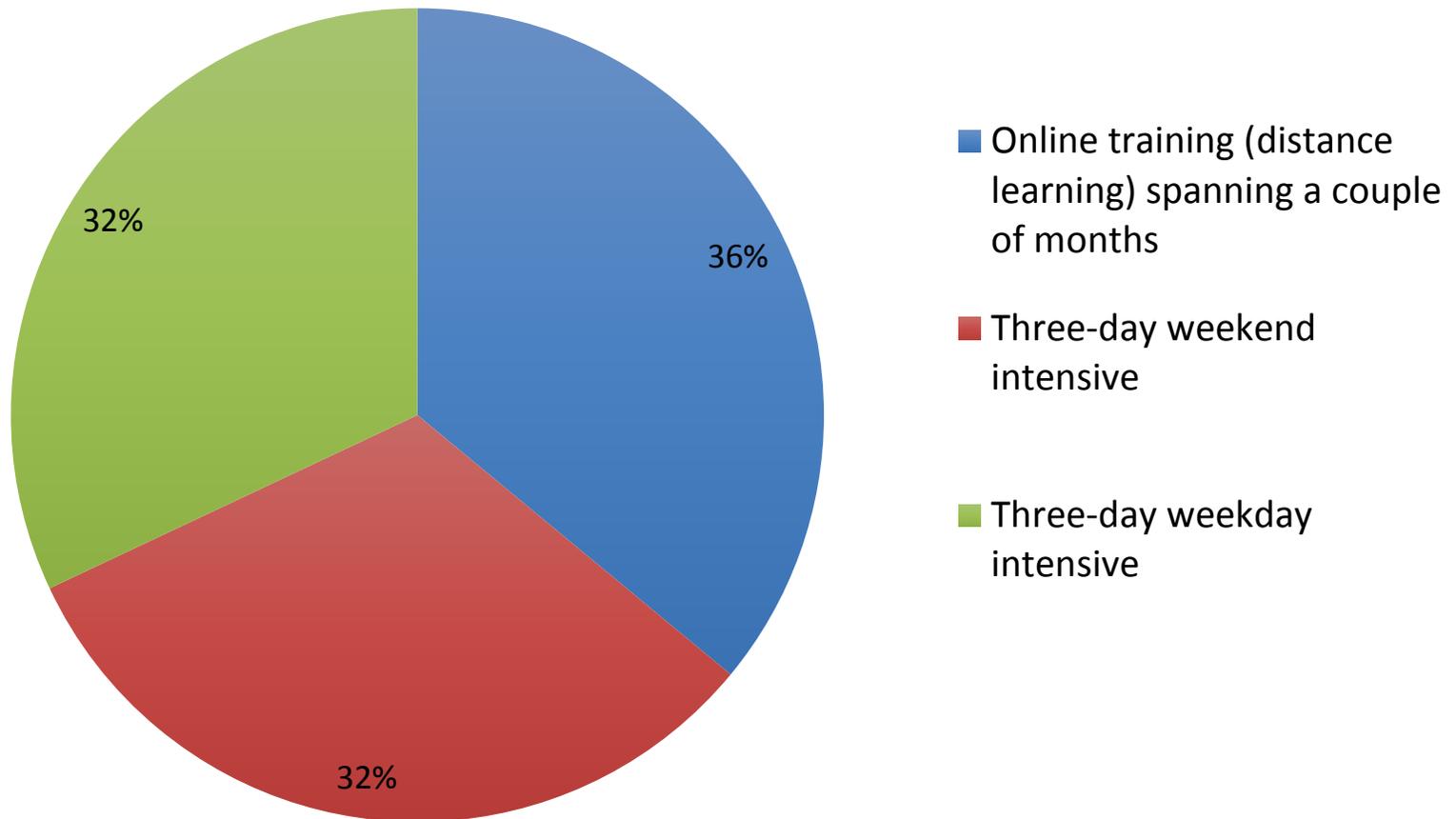


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Top Survey Responses from 22 For Profit Practitioners

What's the best format for a media making workshop tailored to the needs of experiential educators?

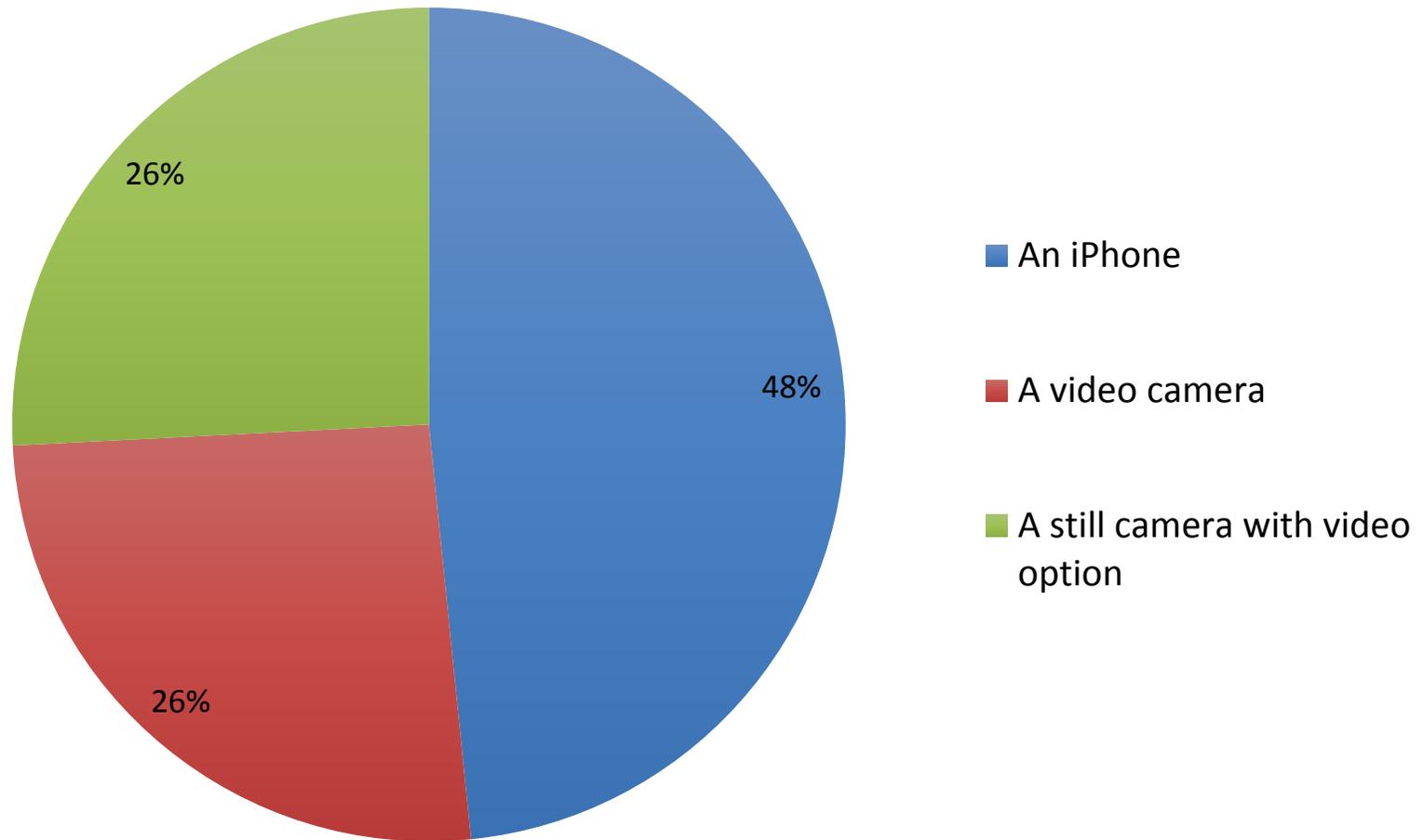


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Top Survey Responses from 22 For Profit Practitioners

What kind of device, if any, best suits your media-making in the field?

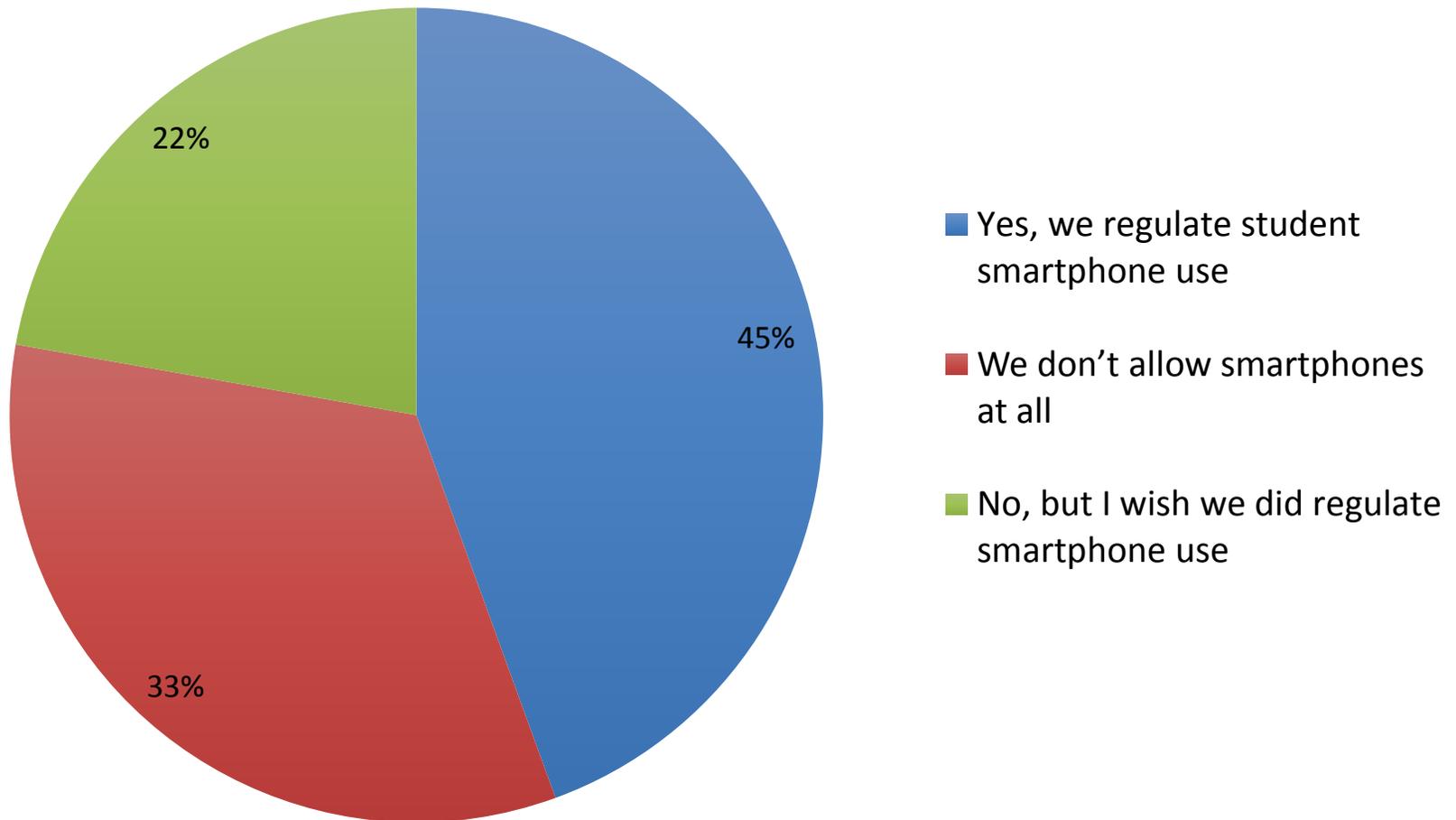


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Top Survey Responses from 22 For Profit Practitioners

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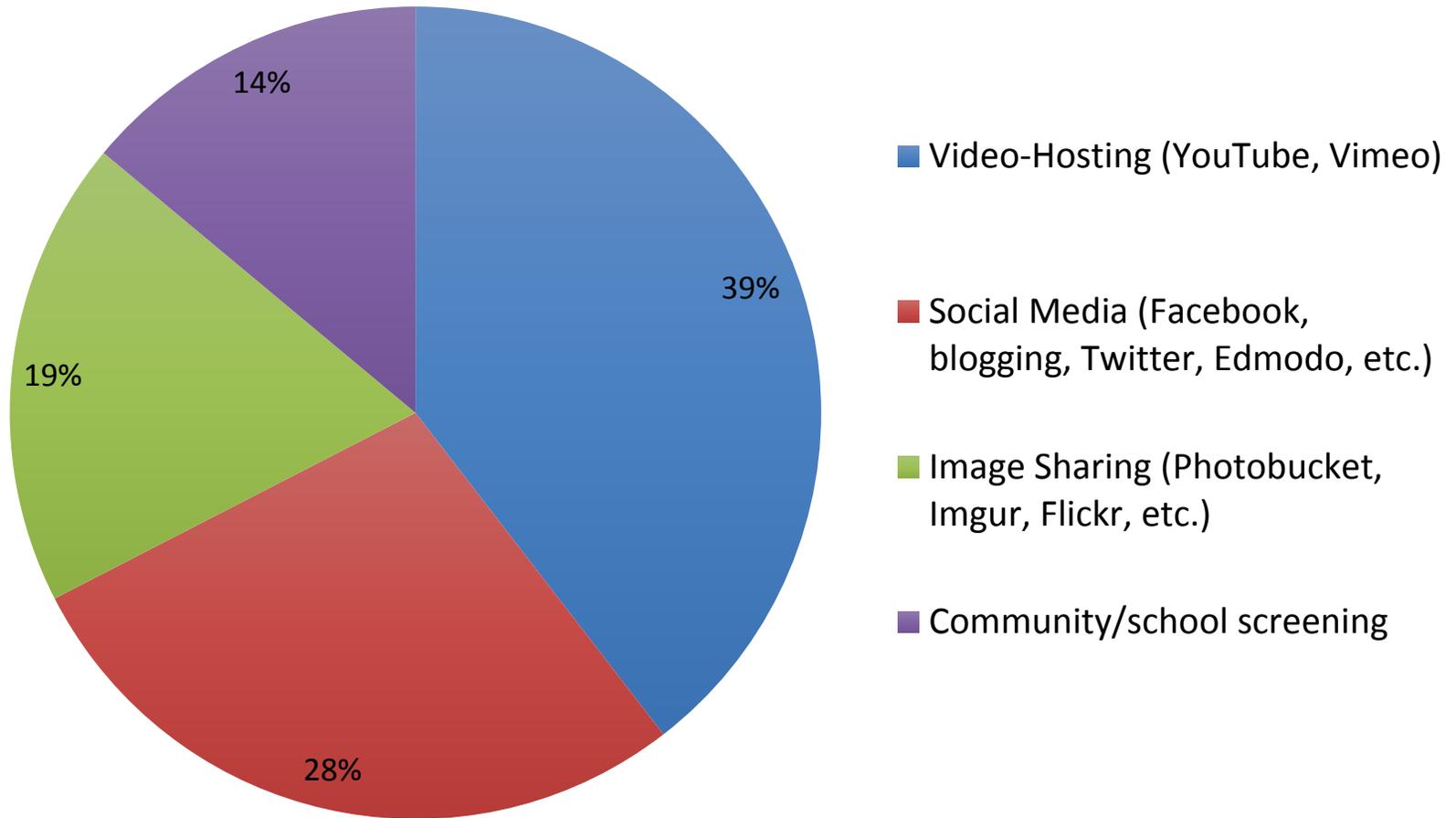


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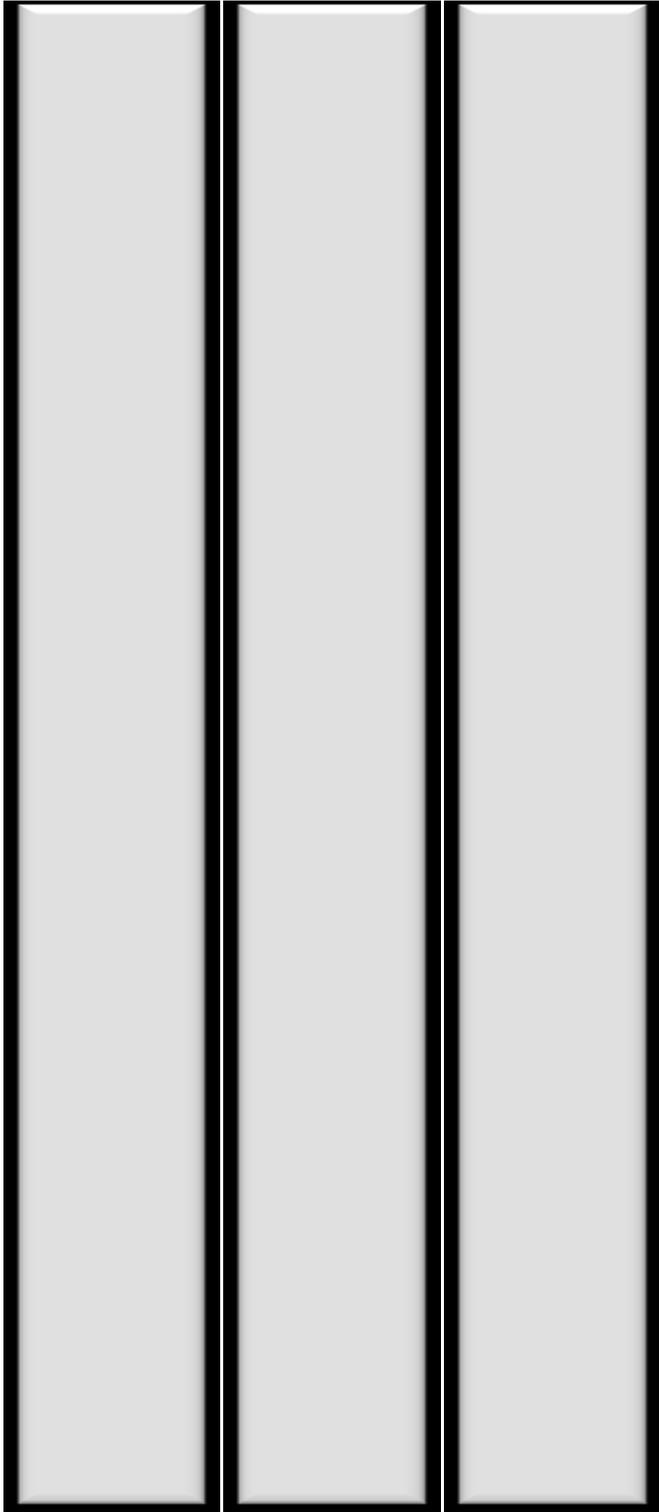
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ExEd Media

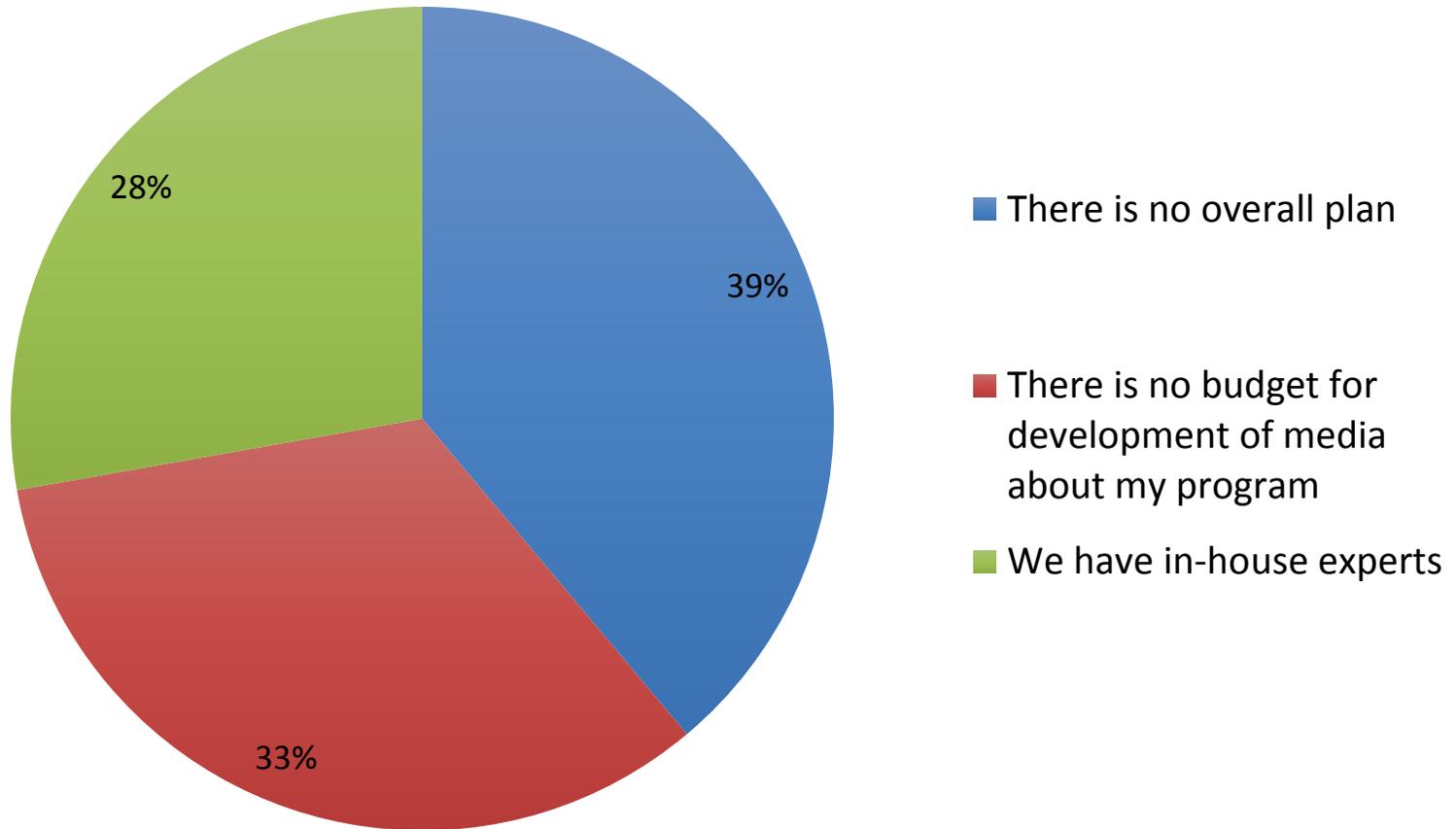
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Top Survey Responses from Other Practitioners

Top Survey Responses from 15 Other Practitioners

How does your organization currently manage the development of media about its programs?

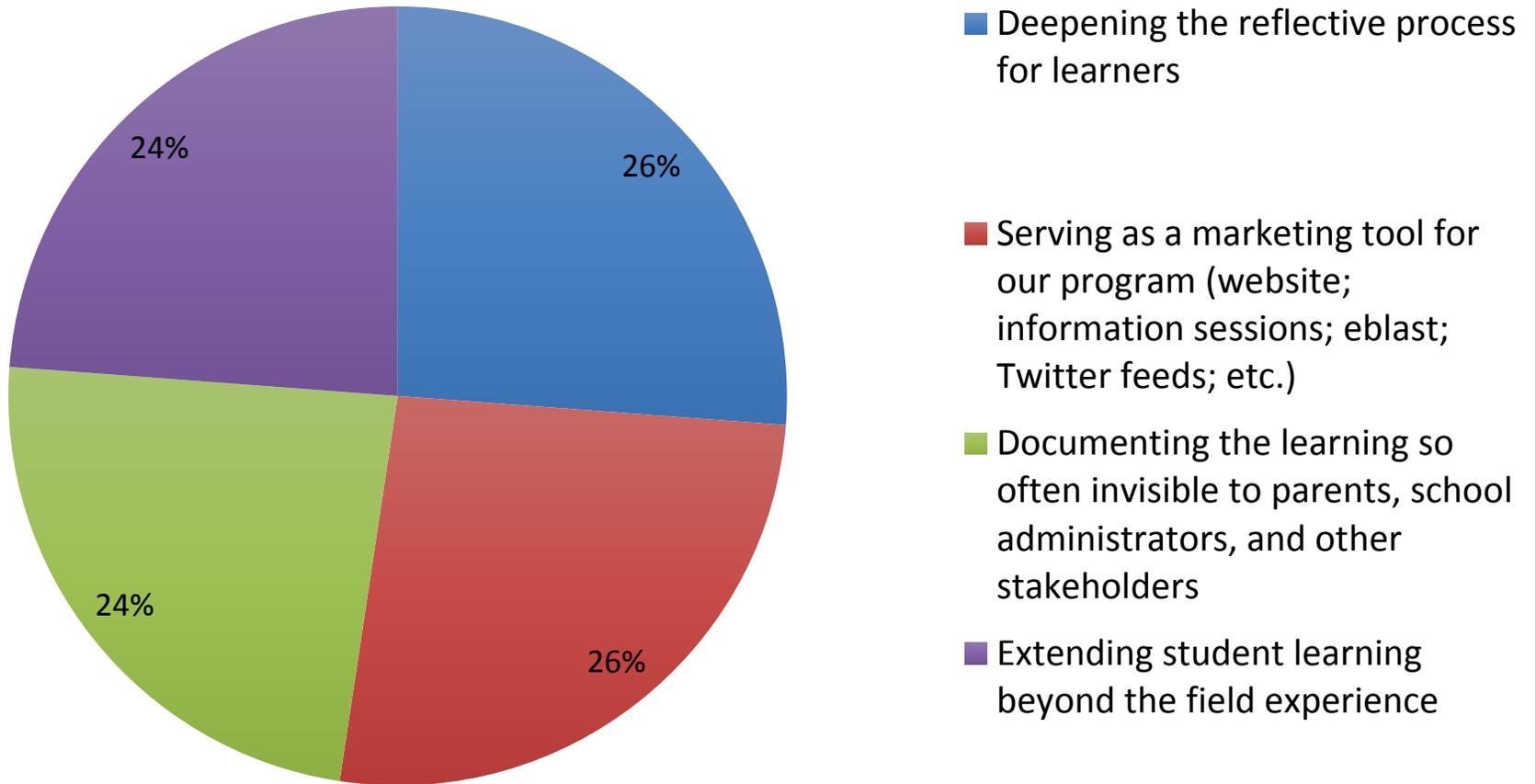


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Top Survey Responses from 15 Other Practitioners

What organizational purposes, if any, do you think media making might serve?

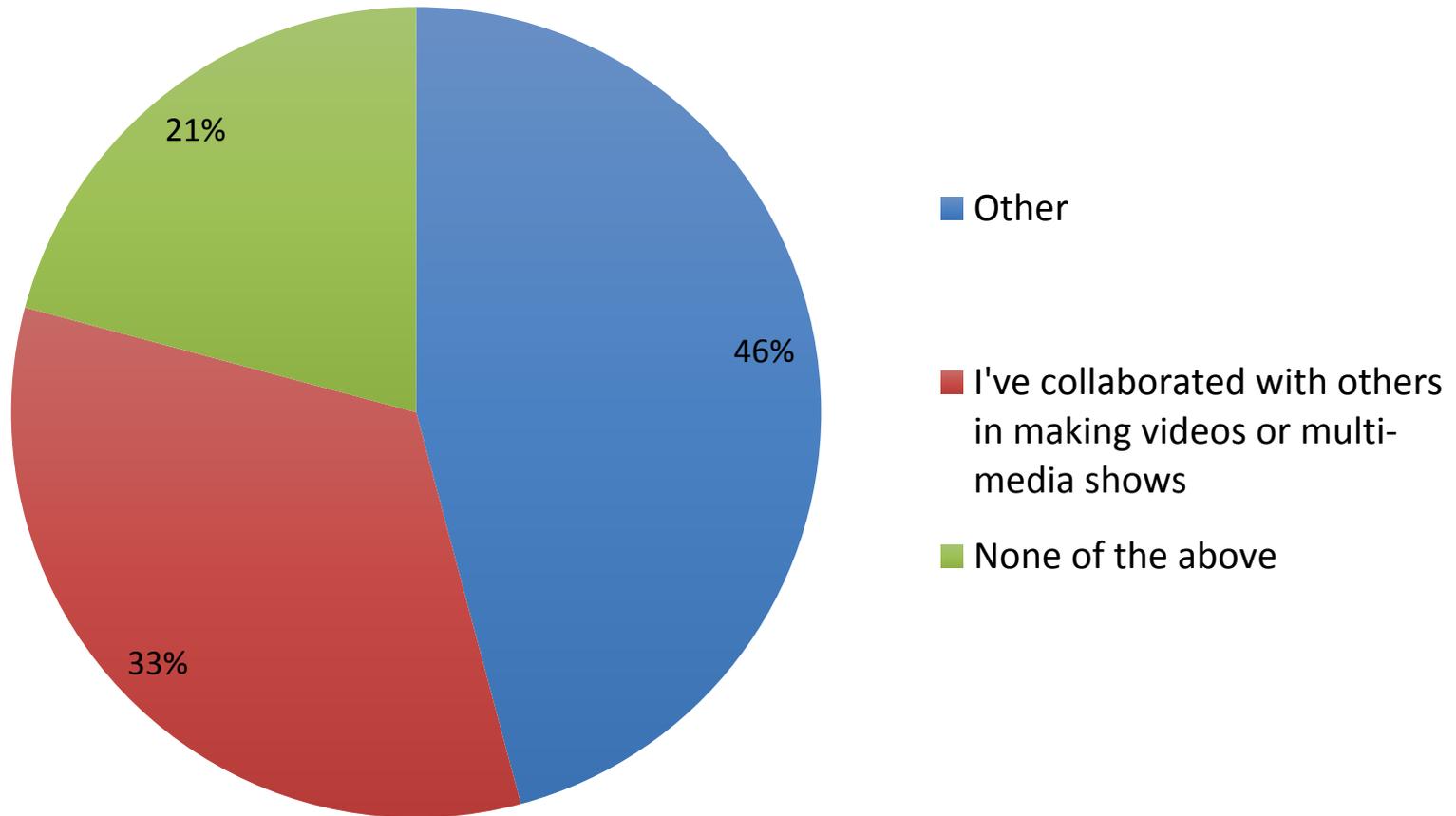


ExEd Media

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Top Survey Responses from 15 Other Practitioners

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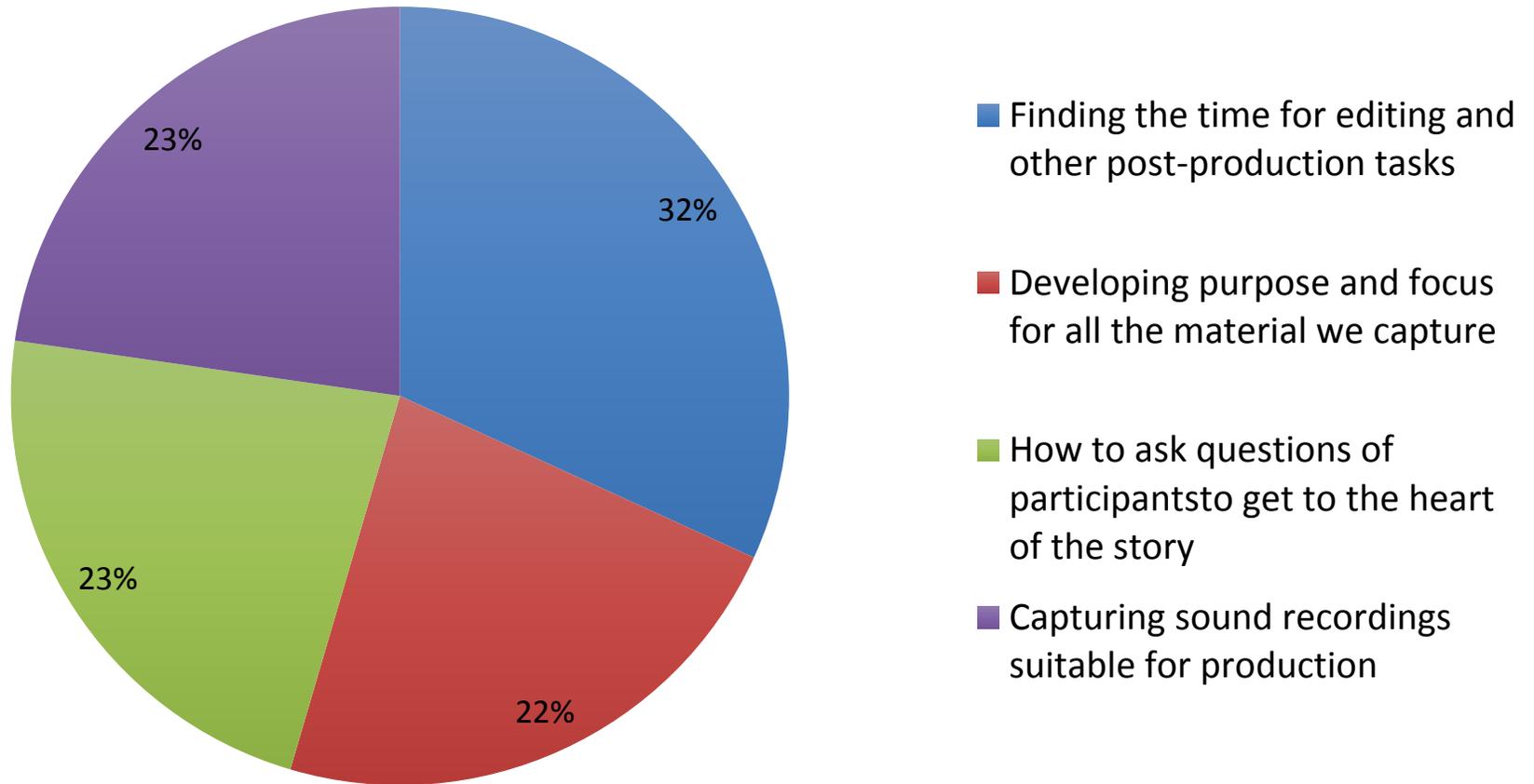


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Top Survey Responses from 15 Other Practitioners

What is the most challenging aspect of media making in your experiential program?

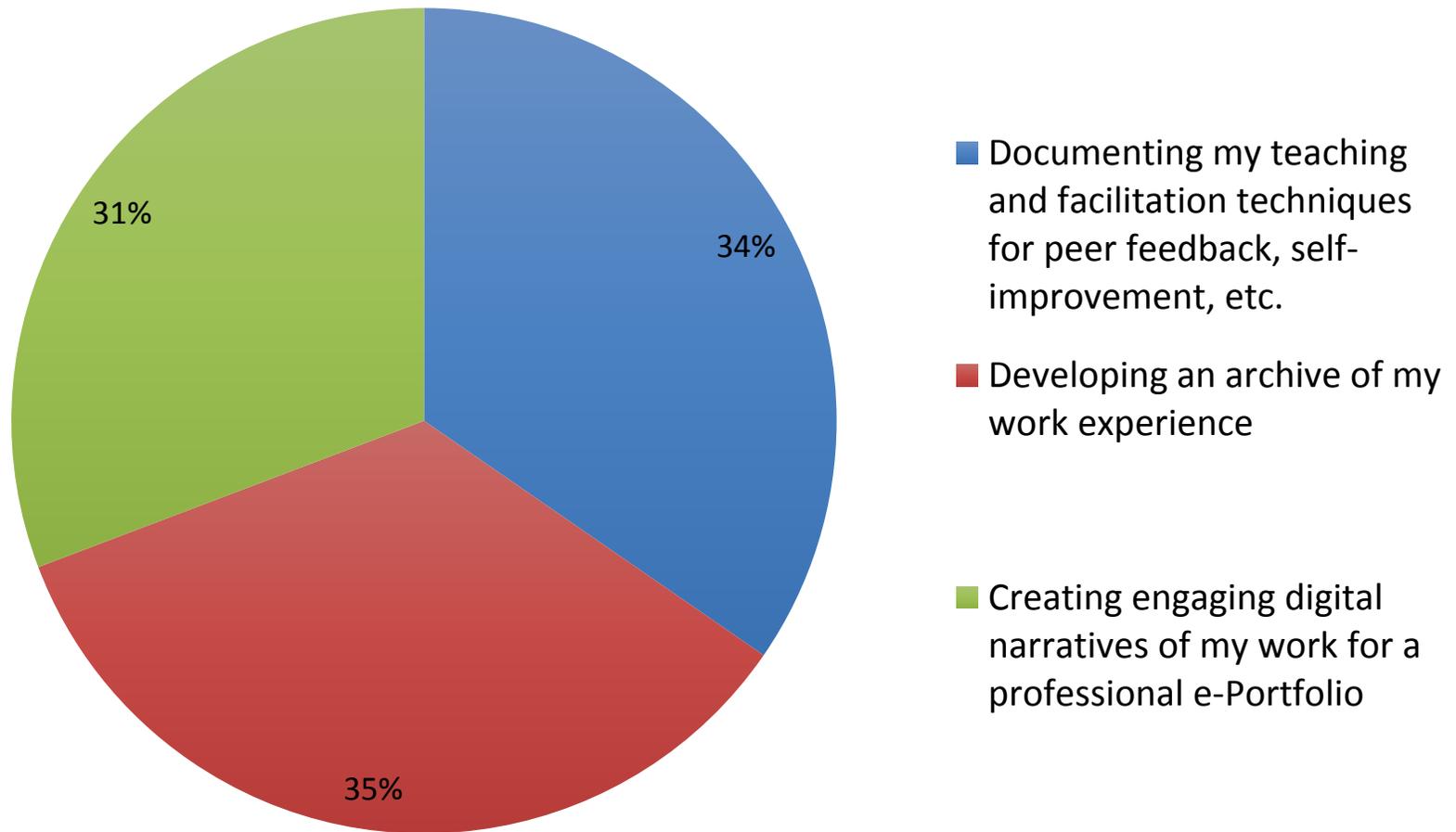


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Top Survey Responses from 15 Other Practitioners

What personal or professional purposes might digital media serve?

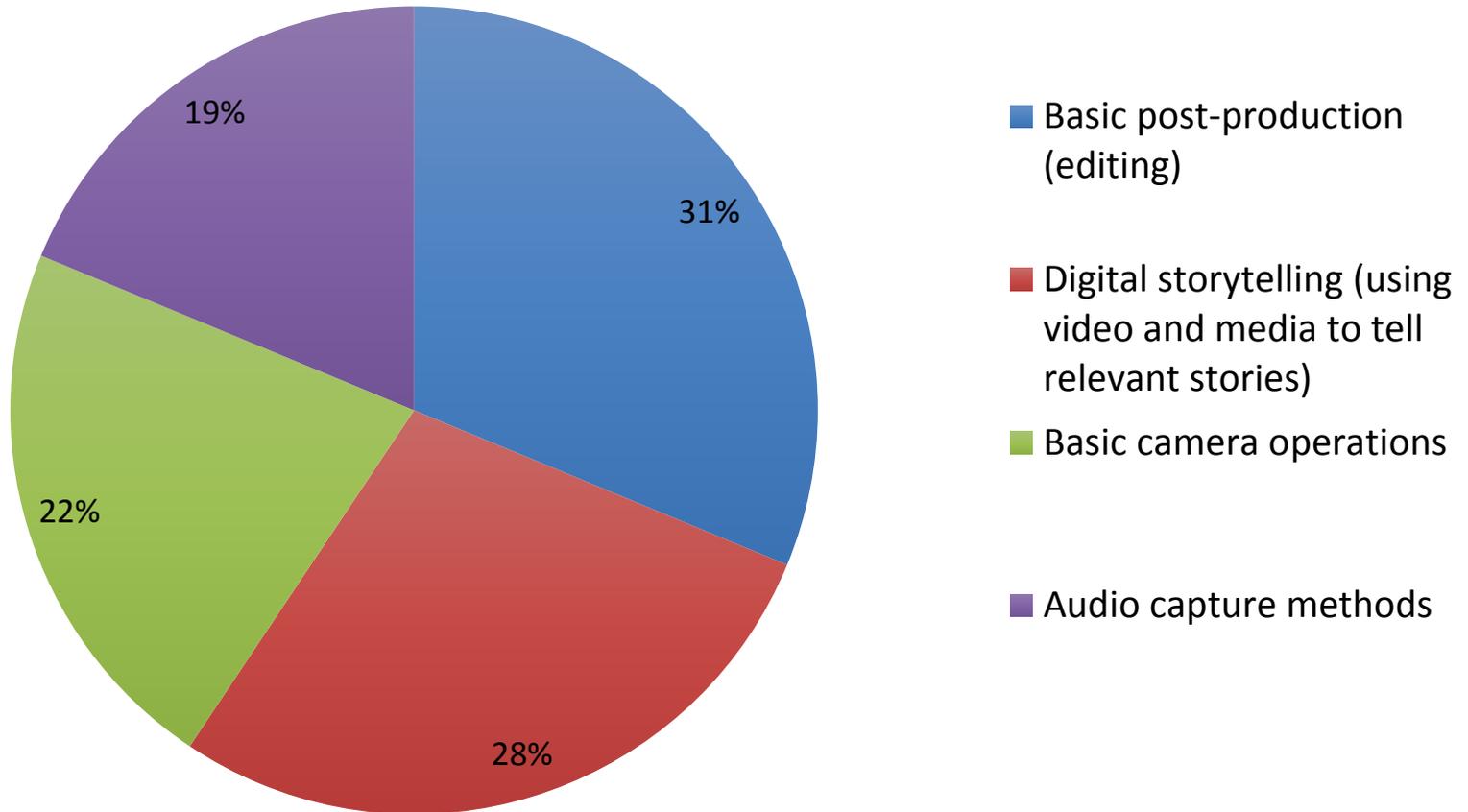


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**If you wanted to incorporate media making into your program,
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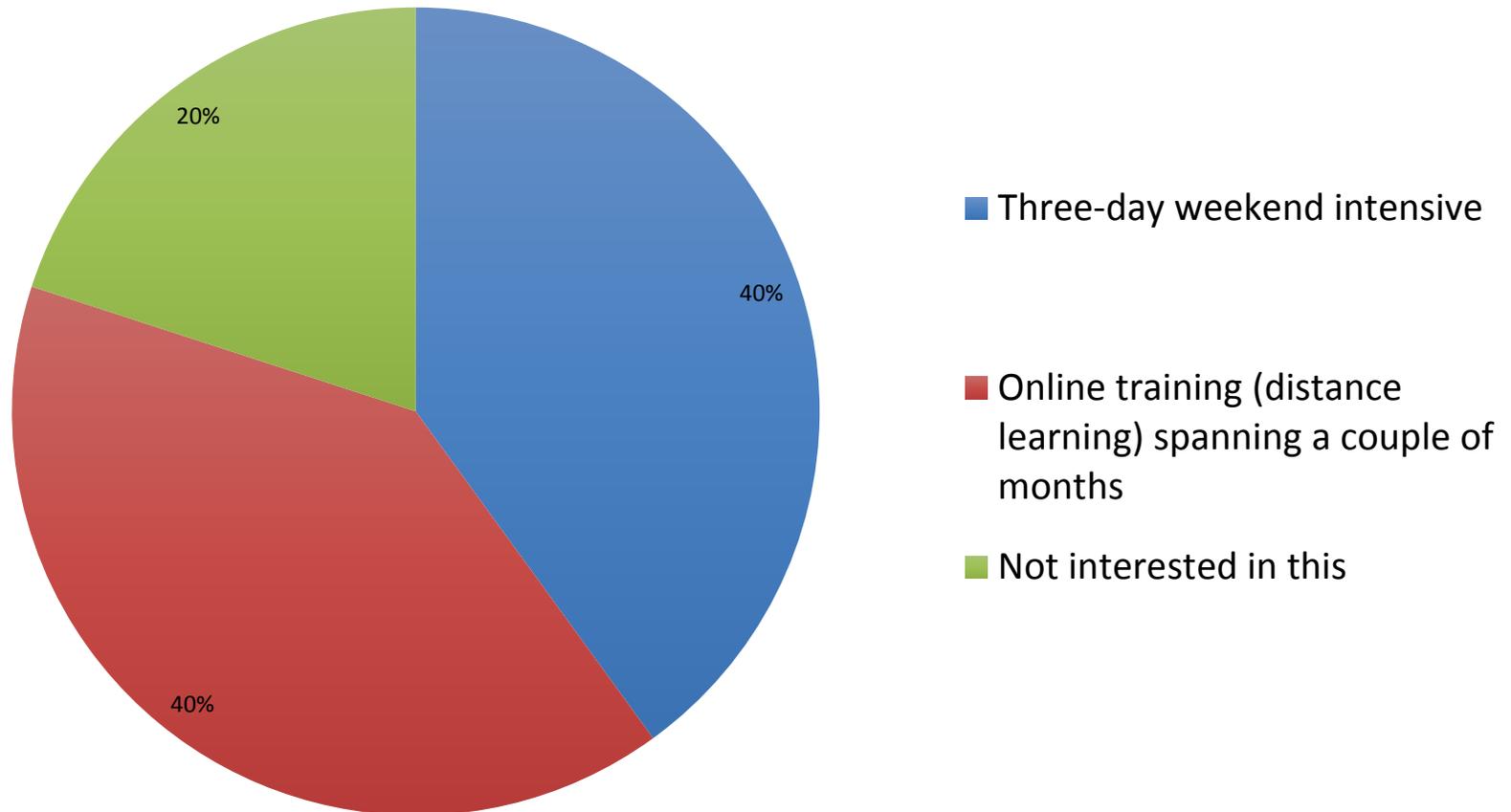


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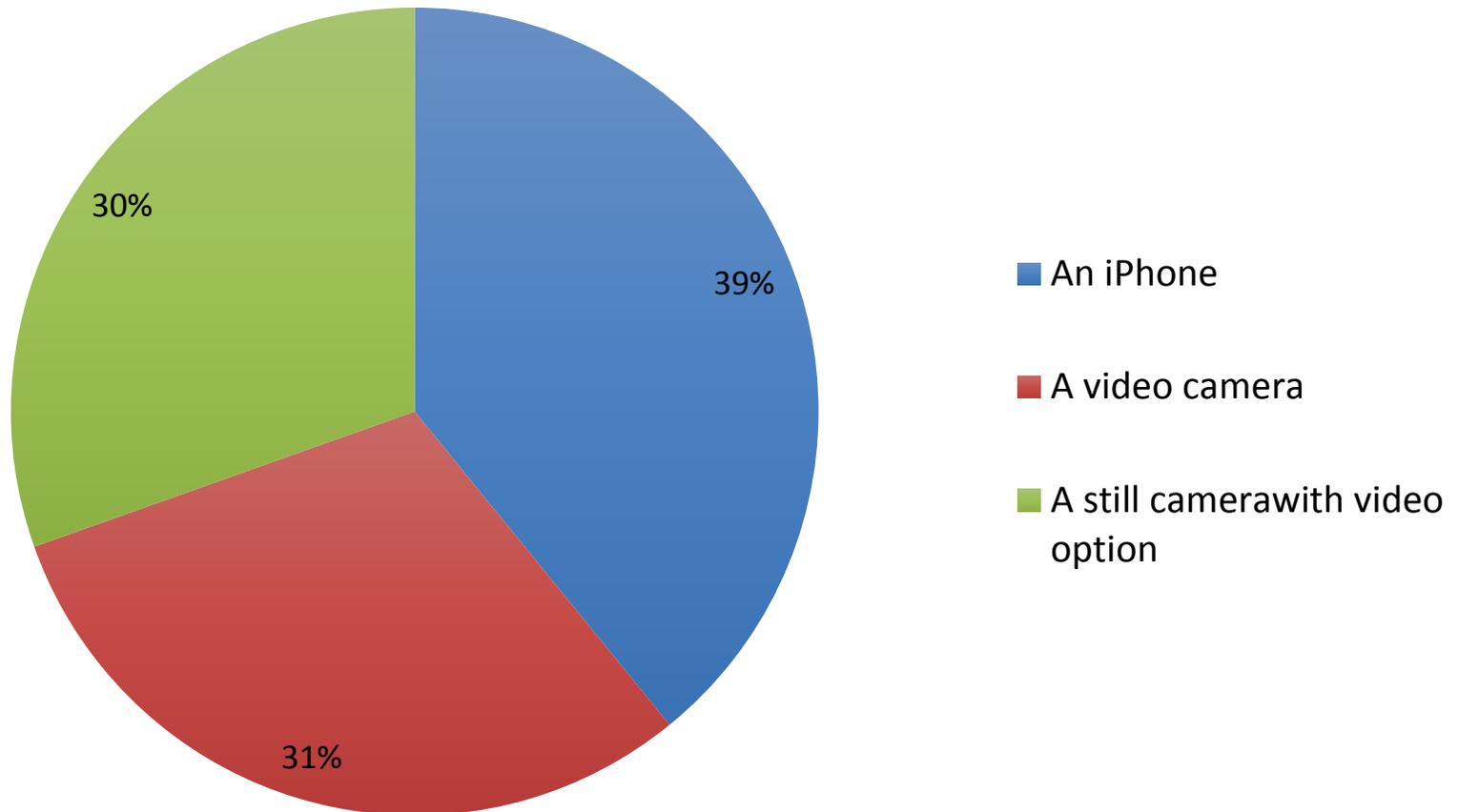


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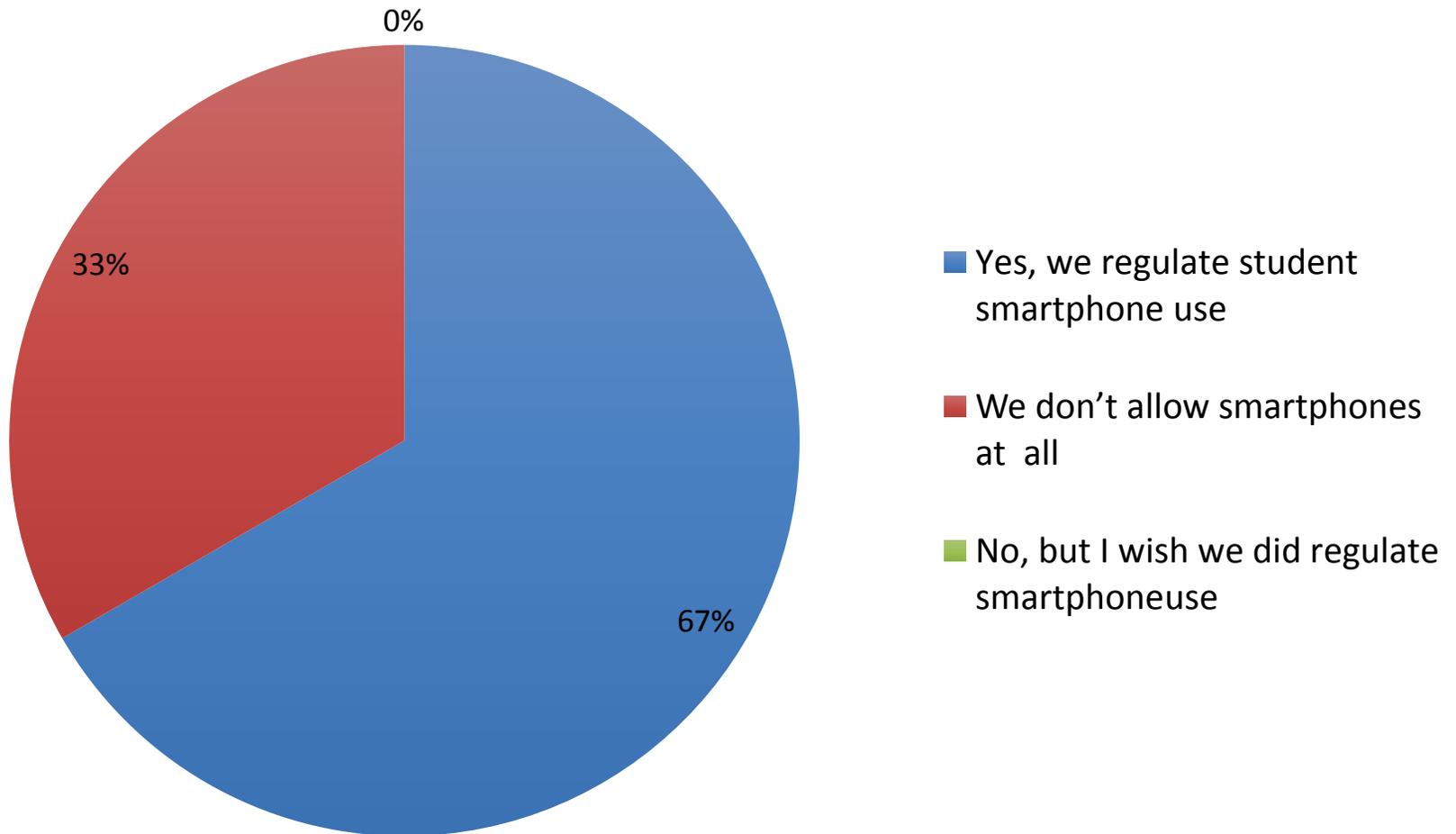


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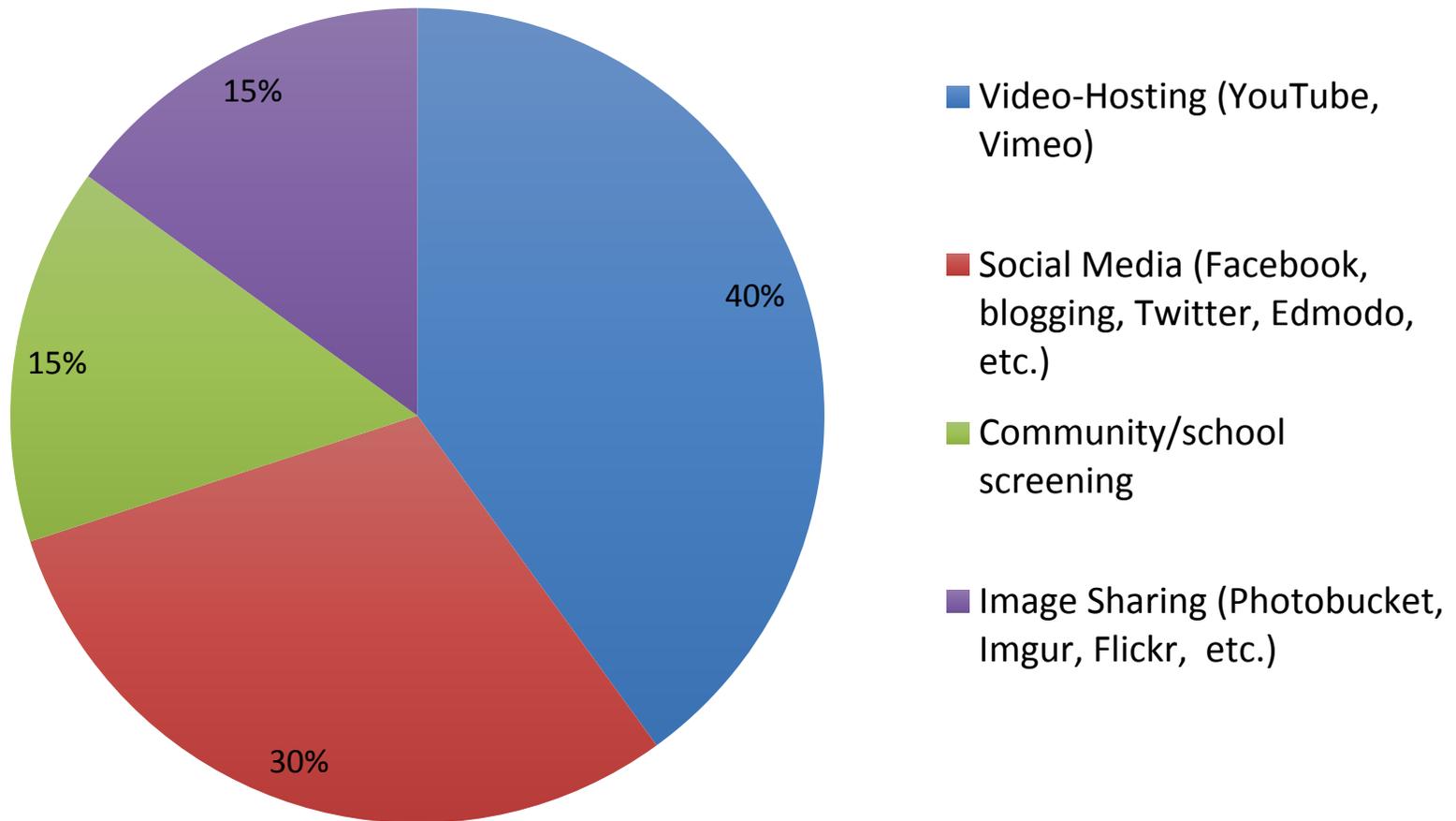


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Top Survey Responses from 15 Other Practitioners

What platforms might you or your students use to display the media from your programs?



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Note: comments are unedited and excerpted as they appeared.

This survey has got me thinking about it in different ways. So, thanks!

Time in the day

Biggest challenge is post-production. Finding the time and energy to do this.

streamlining collection so we don't end up with a ton of material no one wants to go through to find the gems,
storage of video material
hard to shoot video and run a program

Impacting course quality is the spotlight issue. Instructors cannot be expected to gather video assets while their number-one priority is course delivery, and sending a crew out with a course has impacts ranging from permit numbers to safety, as well as diluting the course experience for the students by turning it into a reality show. Careful planning required.

Adding technology into such a sacred experience can be challenging. Not to mention teaching instructors how to do it on top of the skills and management of student they already need to possess. Being outdoors does not always provide the optimal spot for interviews either.

All the issues mentioned above can be relevant to media making. My main priority at the moment is trying to harness the creating and sharing of narratives that our students already engage in. Our programmatic interests are varied, but as a degree program in higher education our core focus is on student learning. Our focus on student learning, combined with the current and growing culture of creating and sharing narratives with media making (primarily online) means that we have the opportunity to engage students in thinking more critically about both the narrative and the media. I see this an excellent opportunity to create rich learning environments where we connect with our students on an issue that they are passionate about. The challenges such as privacy rights, budget, land agency permits, or safety issues, are obstacles to overcome, but not reason enough to stop pursuing media making education with our students.

Our biggest challenge is launching the program itself.

Finding courage to film what I want.

I want the students to focus on their experience not creating a video. Often my experiences are so short that there doesn't seem to be time for both.

We would need an outside person to really be able to capture the experience without taking the time and energy of an instructor, but this outside person might distract from what we are trying to accomplish.

Getting students to switch off from that system of capturing information.

The biggest challenge is making the story real and relevant. Technology is great, but its surface level and superficial, people aren't involved in the co-creation process, instead the story is force fed down the audiences throat. What if there were no audience? what if the story was a step by step exploration that included the audience and didn't distance them. Technology distances people from their internal reality, that's the problem

Are they objects that we harness pedagogically in an educational setting that is black and white (as your survey suggests to me) or are they an extension of our lives and ourselves - a socio-material configuration. For the latter the pedagogical questions are very enriching and these are serious barriers to how they are used in our institution. One example of such as barrier is that our institution sees all learners using technologies as homogenous...

There can be lots of issues, but I find most issues are raised more out of fear of the process and not understanding it rather than out of a legitimate concern. A bit of creativity goes a long way. I tend to take a two step approach with implementation of new activities: a) Educate - get people using the technology, but let them play with it so they understand it and are not afraid of it b) Creativity - help them think how they can use the technology for both my needs as well as that of the people they are working with. Can we get great impact stories while incorporating new technology in our programming? How? Ethical issues involving whether media making distracts from "real time" connections and depth of inter/ intrapersonal development as well as taking away from bonding with the natural world. I don't know. Also protecting emotional safety of releasing footage of students who may be filmed in vulnerable states.

Privacy rights are definitely an issue, and perhaps more for the folks students engage with. We've used community media waivers to address this challenge. I think the only challenge is simply the over-saturation of media making devices in events. In the effort to create the best story, students may take too many pictures or have too many photographers, which creates a different "feel" for the event/experience. Is it an event that we are documenting to illustrate what happened, or are we holding the event to document it?

Our basic issues come down to time and staffing. Right now we have so many different aspects of our program that adding media to it seems a bit overwhelming. We want the kids to come to our program and disengage in technology to a degree, so we haven't had a huge focus on incorporating media making. If we had a current staff member very interested and experienced in it I bet we would be more willing to incorporate it into our overall programming.

Mostly budget and capable media makers. I shoot all the footage but also instruct in the field. That makes it difficult to be great at either one.

Budget and time, teaching students how to do this effectively

I find that I get focused on the moment and forget to record the activity

interesting questions but ones I haven't fully engaged and thus have inadequate responses to

A major challenge for us, and others in the field of the outdoors (broadly all outdoor education related fields) perhaps, is how are we to understand - and thus work with/harness, these technologies. Are they objects that we harness pedagogically in an educational setting that is black and white (as your survey suggests to me) or are they an extension of our lives and ourselves - a socio-material configuration. For the latter the pedagogical questions are very enriching and these are serious barriers to how they are used in our institution. One example of such as barrier is that our institution sees all learners using technologies as homogenous...

In a media-saturated society, people are already too self-conscious as it is. I am extremely hesitant to further this by bringing sharable video into the reality of life in the wilderness. Our courses serve as a much-needed respite from this phenomenon, and turning them into "reality" shows undermines that purpose.

This year, I'm giving students the option of recording their field reflections and work with their horses on video to better capture the experiential dimensions of the work. I will pair people up in a way that hopefully one (or both) of the two is tech savvy. I'll have more input after the course ends in May.

We use media throughout our program, in academics as well as in the field. While on journeys/trips, which for us is +/-25 days each year, students are NOT allowed to bring 'phones', iphone, android, etc., unless they are part of the filming team. We document/film/audio every journey that we do, and we've been doing that for nearly 35 years. As technology has developed, it's been a huge plus for the program on many levels. Our Santa Barbara Middle School TeenPress program is a powerful means of learning. check it out on our school website.

Our legal department is populated by paranoiacs; our students are dolts; our parents see exploitation behind every bush. That about sums it up. Welcome to public education, where creatively engaging students requires a huge budget, better-paid teachers who have time and curious students. None of these are apparent now, in the near future or even the distant future. Public education is a nihilist movement.

Actually, I have no challenges related to media, because other than my computer, my cell phone is the acme of my techno-media arsenal

Archival of materials collected in a searchable database

Working on boats is not conducive to these things.

We are increasingly using media making as part of our advocacy and organizing work. When we can't take leaders to meet with elected representatives, it is wonderful to have a media presentation. We helped snag over a million dollars for renovation of housing for extremely challenging tenants by having them tell their own human story.

We have been encouraging digital media use for several years now and most of the resistance comes surprisingly from our students. The investment of time involved in media making is significant, and not always worth it. I am concerned that the emphasis on digital media (gadgets are seductive, after all) production obscures the importance of other mediums of expression and communication, such as conversation, public speaking, and the basis of all learning - reflection.

We use digital video media for technical skills feedback and analysis, but need to extend the budget to much more technical equipment specialised for this purpose. We also use digital media for promotional material, which requires professional expertise and is highly expensive. In both of these instances, investment in hardware, software, and staff and student development and training would allow greater autonomy.

Cultural sensitivity in indigenous communities Challenge/Opportunity: Setting up a system where students aren't overusing the media. For my trip, I would like to designate a student-journalist for each day. His/her responsibilities are to capture the experience. Guidelines will be helpful (what to shoot, cultural expectations around media, examples of quality work, privacy rights, etc.)

All the issues mentioned above can be relevant to media making. My main priority at the moment is trying to harness the creating and sharing of narratives that our students already engage in. Our programmatic interests are varied, but as a degree program in higher education our core focus is on student learning. Our focus on student learning, combined with the current and growing culture of creating and sharing narratives with media making (primarily online) means that we have the opportunity to engage students in thinking more critically about both the narrative and the media. I see this an excellent opportunity to create rich learning environments where we connect with our students on an issue that they are passionate about. The challenges such as privacy rights, budget, land agency permits, or safety issues, are obstacles to overcome, but not reason enough to stop pursuing media making education with our students.

Copyright is always an issue in music.

Storage of video files!

Editing help!!

We work with many populations that have very strict regulations on video, film and photos. We attempt to be really careful and clear about what can be used, and how. But it is difficult to convey the seriousness of personal privacy, human dignity, and liability to students who are attempting to capture a moment that seems important to them. We have a lot of basic technical challenges with having high quality media products and low budgets.

For us, it is just coming up with a plan of how best to use digital media. We take pictures sometimes, video sometimes. It is just whether or not the facilitator thinks about doing it. Most of them have smartphones, so they have the tools necessary to do it. We haven't really done any editing except for one video a student made as a marketing tool and really minimal editing we did for training videos. We have not even contemplated how to use digital media for processing or storytelling for our participants. We don't have the resources to supply people with video cameras for this purpose, but we could. We just haven't asked. It would be nice to see how others are incorporating it...it would give us some ideas and a starting point.

Negotiation of camera use is a wonderful opportunity for discussion and decision-making that is likely to tie in with most typical course objectives. The result is (or should be) that participants become wiser and smarter about all the issues and opportunities. Opportunities included scope for taking in more, and scope for supporting learning transfer as the images are shared more widely (plus all the items you have listed in your questions). The issues are never peripheral and are almost always dead central - so they can be planned for and fully integrated into course processes.

Twitter just launched VIDEO tweeting. NO IDEA how to do twitter but video appeals to me more than text tweeting and short video tweets seem very do-able. There are privacy issues, cultural issues in my community (lots I am not sure we can or should publicize). ALSO NEED help understanding copyright issues if we work ON a mural, can we photograph it and publicize it, put it on a tshirt, etc...whole area of photography in public. ALSO, at a core level, it is difficult to have the same intimacy and engagement behind a camera and worried about how it distracts a participant...wondering how to manage that and if it is better to bring an external media person, intern, or student that has been trained and is part of our support in the program....not sure....I would like to train a handful of local youth to try this and learn media making so we can pilot the process of local youth accompanying visiting youth during experiential learning programs