Research

Global | Jan 2026

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The state of property management technology, 2026

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Introduction

Property teams: Think back on the last year. Did your job get easier, or did it remain just as fast-paced and complex as ever? Keeping tenants happy, making sure building projects stay on budget, figuring out how to use AI effectively—all during a time of economic uncertainty. Moving into 2026, the work may not be getting simpler but there are some new approaches and strategies that could make a real difference.

This research report from Building Engines is based on a survey of over 350 Commercial Real Estate (CRE) professionals, conducted with the Building Owners and Managers Association (BOMA). The findings reveal the ongoing challenges property professionals face and how new technology and industry changes are reshaping how we address those issues.

Our survey explores several important questions the industry is still trying to answer: How should AI fit into property management, and how can teams use it effectively? Are tenants really as happy as property managers believe? And how do sustainability efforts connect to broader business goals?

The data calls out some intriguing trends around each of these key areas. This report shares where the industry may be going next and offers some advice on what you can do next to be prepared for 2026.

What is your title?

Answered: 395

Title	Responses
Property manager	42.78%
Vendor	17.47%
Other (please specify)	17.47%
Engineer	6.58%
Property owner	4.81%
Operating executive	4.56%
Asset manager	2.78%
Portfolio manager	2.78%
Leasing professional	0.51%
CTO/CIO	0.25%

What is the primary sector you work in?

Answered: 395

Sector	Responses
Commercial office	66.08%
Other (please specify)	12.91%
Industrial/warehouses	10.89%
Retail	5.06%
Healthcare	4.81%
Stadiums/venues	0.25%

AI adoption

How AI supports property management

It's no major surprise that AI is a significant driver of interest for property teams. More than 45% of respondents believe they have a good understanding of how AI can support their property management initiatives, which has more than doubled from last year's survey. And 89% have at least some idea of the impact that AI can make.

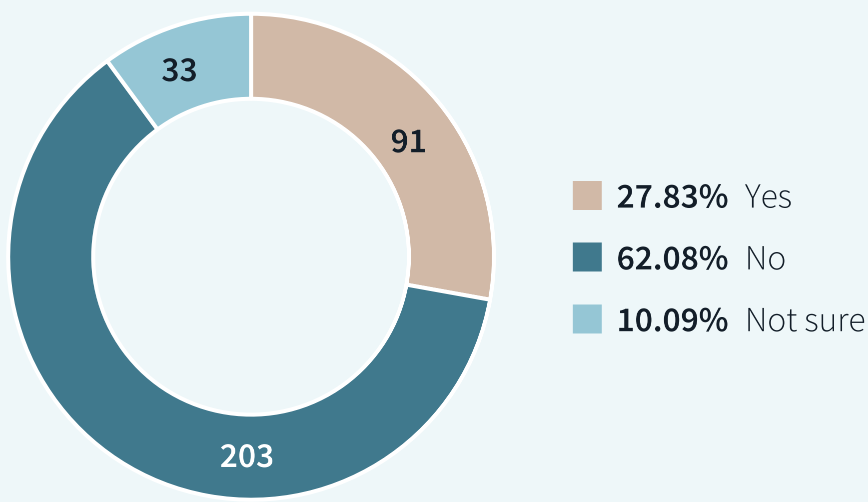
How familiar are you with the ways AI can support property management activities?

Answered: 327

Selection	Responses
I have a good understanding of AI in property management	45.57%
I have heard of AI, but am not sure how it can really help property management	43.43%
I do not know how AI can help in property management	11.01%

But for property managers, the there's still a big gap between wanting to use AI and actually doing it. While 46% plan to invest more in property management software over the next year, only 28% have actually put AI to work in their buildings. In fact, 62% haven't used AI at all and nearly half (49%) don't have any formal AI plans in place.

Have you implemented AI into any part of your building operations?

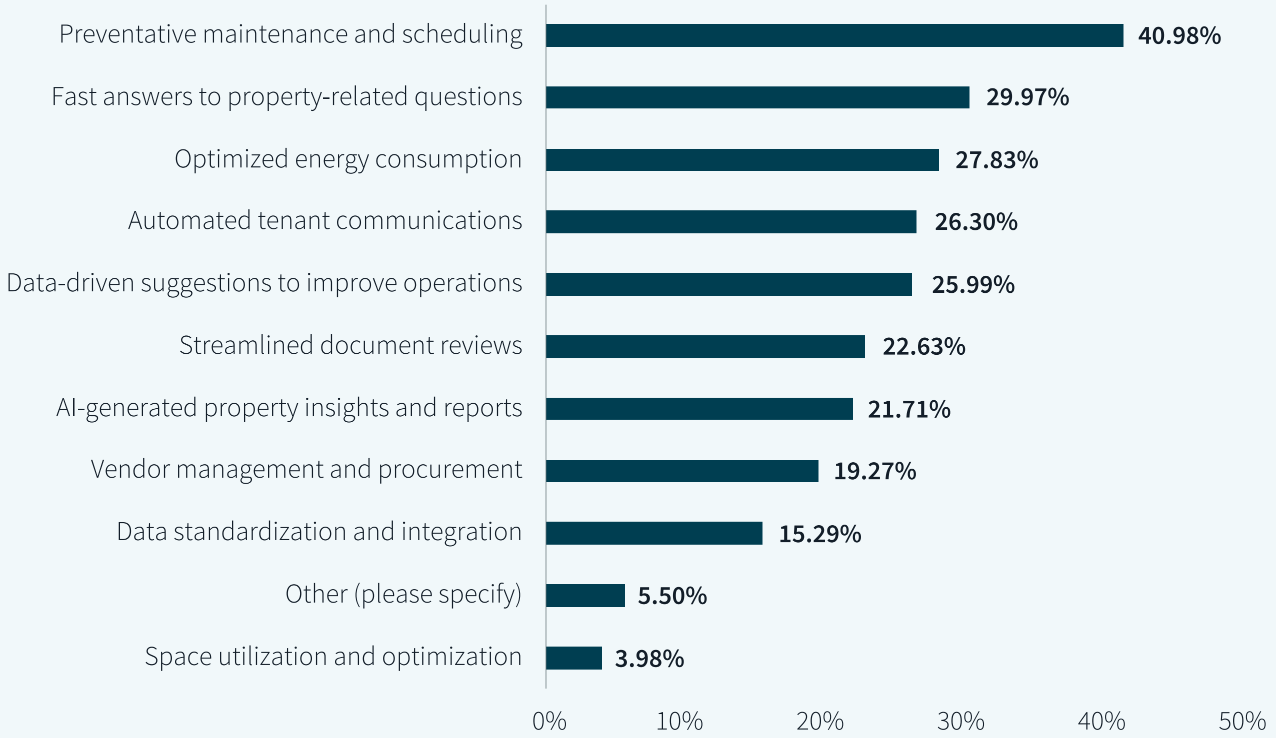


It's not that the commercial real estate industry lacks interest in AI. **JLL's Global Real Estate Technology Survey, 2025** found that 92% of teams have either started testing AI or plan to this year. So while AI is gaining traction across commercial real estate as a whole, property management seems to be lagging behind—which means there's a significant opportunity for teams ready to make the leap.

Most companies are using AI for at least a few things, but they're missing the basics. While everyone's focused on big portfolio moves, the day-to-day operations—like figuring out who's actually using the office or streamlining how building data flows between teams—are still stuck in the Capitalize Stone Age. Property teams could be using AI to fix these everyday headaches, but most haven't figured out how yet.

In which areas of your building operations do you believe AI could have the most significant impact on improving efficiency? Select up to three.

Answered: 327



Clearly defining AI initiatives

Maybe the issue is that AI needs to be more clearly defined.

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> I was surprised that so many respondents say they have a good understanding of AI. I’ve met quite a few people who use ChatGPT or similar tools, but don’t apply it to their day-to-day as property managers.
>
> **Aliza Carpio**
> *Director of Product Management, JLL*

So how do you get property teams actually using AI? Show them exactly how it’ll make their jobs easier. Instead of talking about AI in the abstract, spell out what it means for their daily work. But there’s still a trust problem—most people are skeptical. Only about one in four people really trust AI to get the job done right. Until that changes, adoption will stay slow. “Don’t start with the technology—start with the problem you’re trying to solve,” Carpio said. “Show property managers exactly what AI can do for them in their daily work and they’ll start to see it as a practical tool rather than an abstract concept.”

Focus on the areas where property managers already face the biggest challenges. Most identify preventive maintenance, quick responses to property-related questions and energy optimization as areas where AI could make the biggest difference.

There are already AI tools designed specifically for commercial real estate that address these exact needs. Property managers should look for these purpose-built solutions when they’re ready to incorporate AI into their operations.

Tenant satisfaction

Mixed signals from tenant satisfaction

Happy tenants are essential for maintaining strong building revenue. When spaces stay occupied and tenants choose to renew their leases, properties perform better financially. The data shows encouraging trends—41% of property managers report that tenant satisfaction has improved over the past 12 months, while only 3% have seen satisfaction decline.

How does tenant satisfaction compare to this point 12 months ago, in your estimation?

Answered: 364

Selection	Responses
More satisfied	40.93%
About the same	56.04%
Less satisfied	3.02%

But let's look closer at what's actually happening day-to-day. Despite the positive satisfaction trends, tenant comfort issues still make up 62% of all requests—the same as last year. And when it comes to actually fixing these problems, property teams are still struggling with the same challenge: not having enough staff or resources to handle everything quickly.

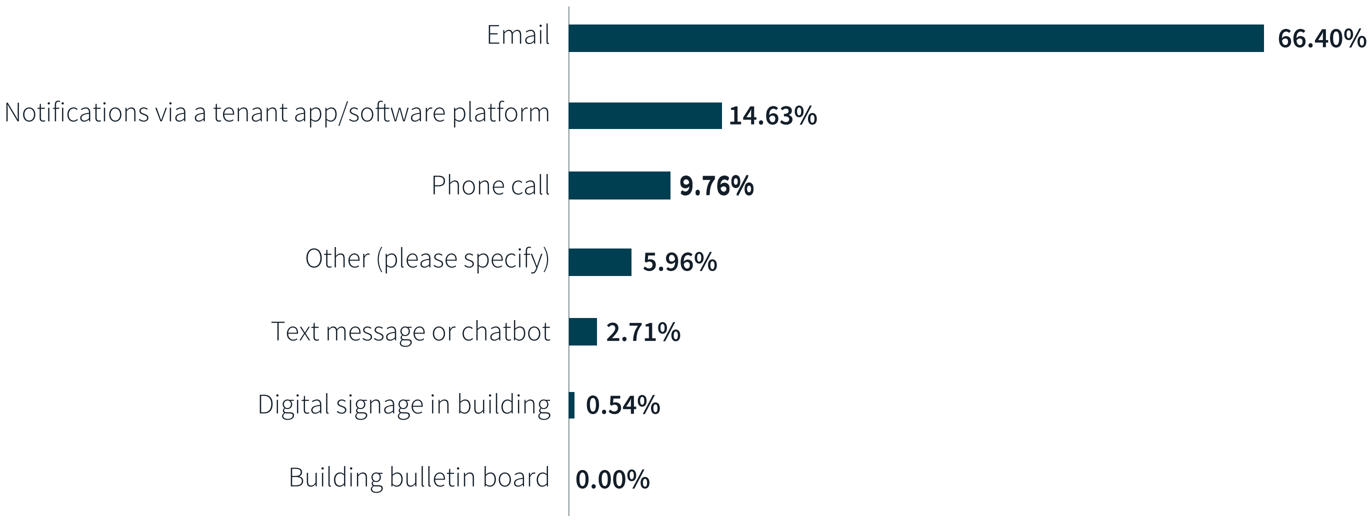
What's particularly telling is how much time property teams spend just talking to tenants about their issues. More than half spend over five hours each week going back and forth with tenants about requests. That's a significant amount of time that could potentially be used more efficiently.

Effective communications

“When most of that communication happens through email instead of a system designed for tenant management, property teams spend way too much time tracking down information,” Carpio said. “Property managers end up digging through their inbox to find details before a client meeting or when they need to pull together reports. It’s not an efficient way to work”.

What is your most effective method for communicating with tenants?

Answered: 369



Others across the industry are seeing similar trends. The **2025 Kingsley Index** report found that tenants are more satisfied when they have strong interactions with property managers – which can be hard over email.

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> Tenants tend to be more satisfied overall when the management team and building maintenance responds within 24 hours of the initial request. With the need to devote so much time to reactive communication and follow up, it’s no wonder that communication takes up so much of the workweek.
>
> **Katie Jeffirs**
>
> *Senior Survey Insights Manager, Grace Hill Kingsley Surveys*

With most property teams seeing their portfolios either grow (49%) or stay the same (40%), these challenges aren't getting any easier.

Perhaps the issue may be in the information that property managers can gather, along with the experiences they're equipped to deliver.

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> Property managers are mostly communicating with their main tenant contacts, and those people may be satisfied. What's missing is, how do the rest of the employees feel?
>
> **Tyler Kethcart**
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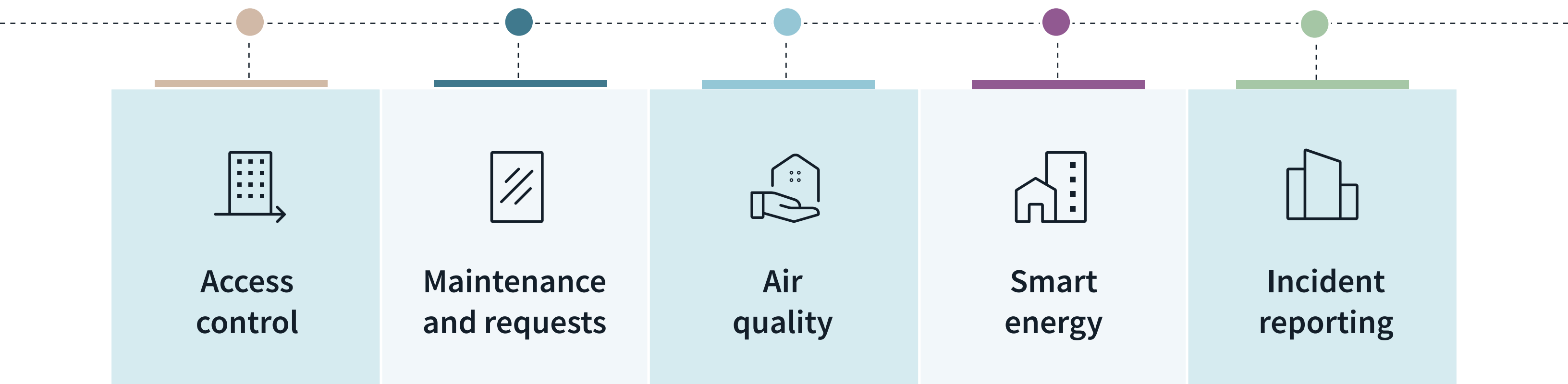
> *Executive Vice President and Head of Experience Management, JLL*

The capabilities tenants need

So, what can property managers do? **JLL Research** named five different ‘must-have’ technologies for landlords:



Making sure you have these capabilities available is a great first step towards keeping your tenants truly satisfied.

Another way to keep tenants happy is to invest in better tools for managing their experience.
About one-third of property managers say improving tenant experience technology is a top priority for their buildings. These tools can move much of the back-and-forth communication out of email, which should help bridge the gap between how satisfied property managers think their tenants are and how satisfied they actually are.

“We found that nearly all tenants want some kind of proactive communication from management, with a majority wanting either monthly or quarterly outreach,” said Jeffirs of their data in the Kingsley Index. “So even if the tenant isn’t requesting some kind of follow up from the building team, proactive communication cannot be neglected.”

One often overlooked feature is tracking how employees actually feel about their workspace. “You need to give people ways to share feedback,” Kethcart said. “You need to understand how everyone in the building feels, not just the decision-makers you normally talk to. This means getting beyond just the office manager’s perspective to hear from all the people who work there every day.” Tools that capture this broader view of employee experience can help ensure tenants really are as satisfied as property managers believe.

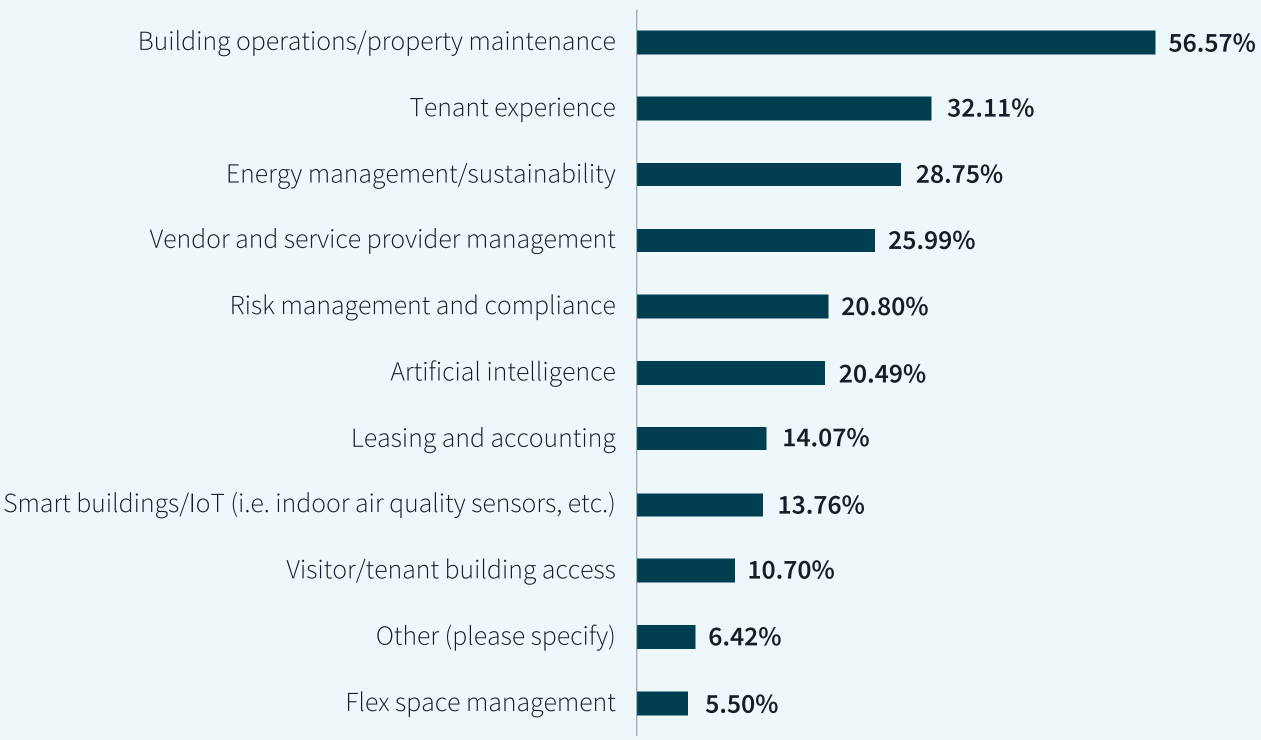
Sustainability

Sustainability tech capabilities

Even as regulations and sustainability requirements keep evolving, it remains a key focus for property teams. Nearly three in 10 property managers rank energy management and sustainability as a top priority when investing in new technology.

If enhancing your tech stack, which of the following areas will you prioritize? (Select up to three)

Answered: 327

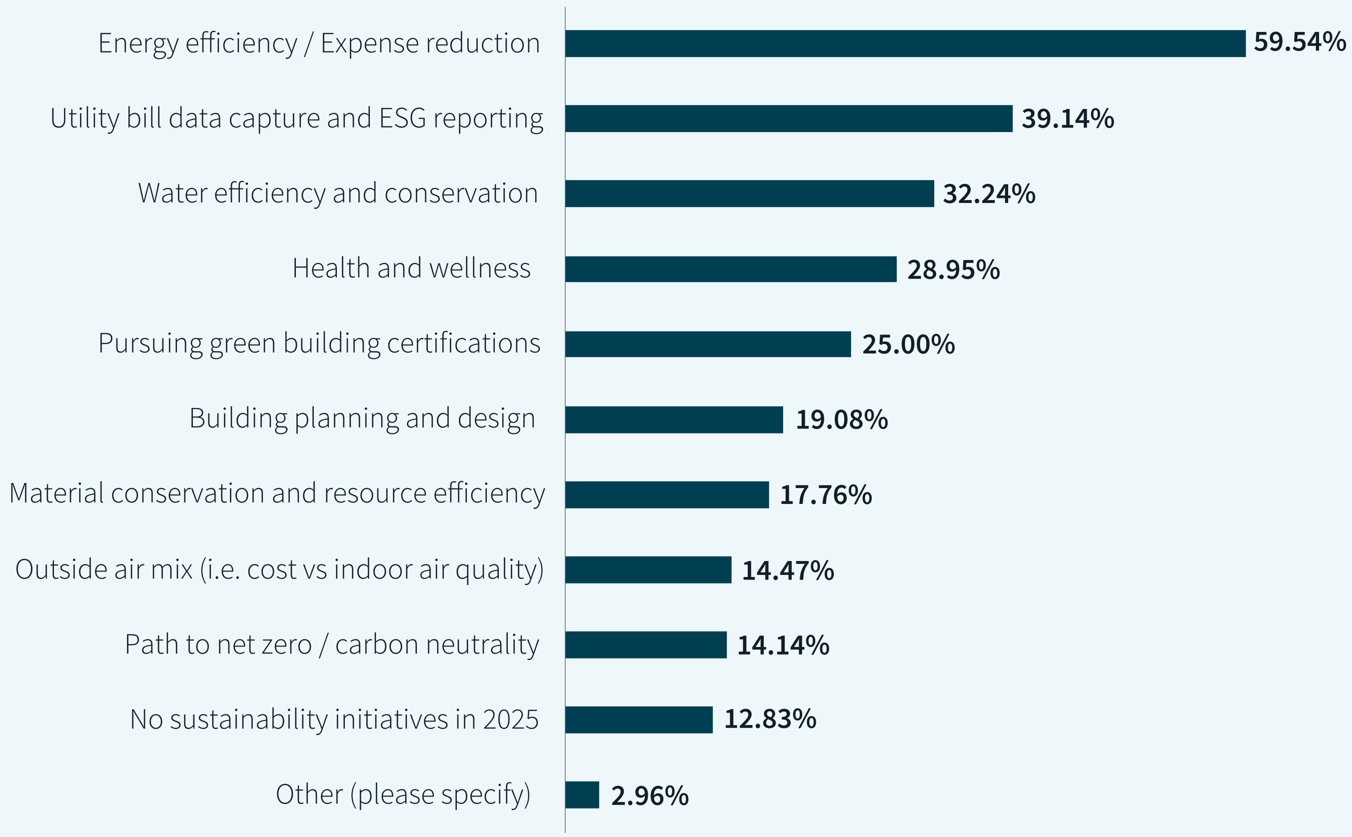


Sustainability as a business priority

Looking at specific priorities, energy efficiency tops the list. Reducing energy use and cutting costs leads sustainability efforts for 2026, with about 60% of property managers focusing here. Close behind is capturing utility data and preparing sustainability reports, which 39% prioritize. When it comes to what property managers actually monitor, 71% actively track energy consumption and 60% track water usage.

When it comes to sustainability, what will your team prioritize in 2026?

Answered: 304



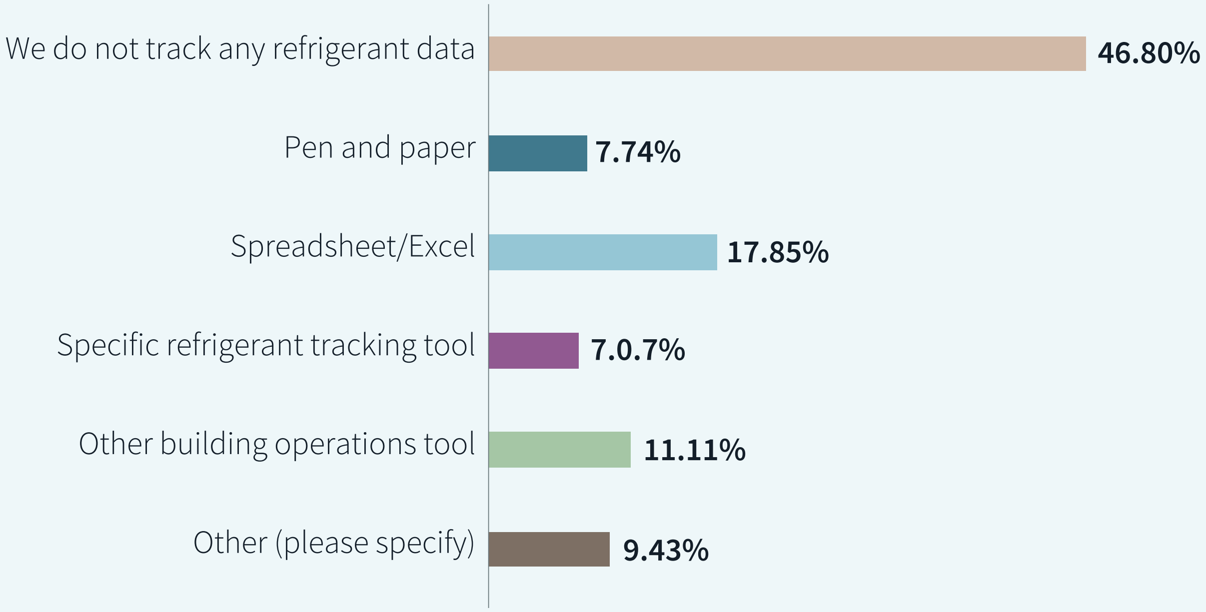
Our research sees similar trends, with 41% of survey participants calling energy efficiency a high priority and 81% considering it at least somewhat important. What do these goals have in common? The fact that they are tied to business outcomes, not just sustainability goals. Being efficient with resources, from energy to water and waste disposal, is the main way that property teams are thinking about green goals.

Property managers also want better software to help manage energy use. When asked where improved data and reporting would make the biggest difference in their building operations, energy maintenance and efficiency ranked second. Real estate teams can keep tracking the data that makes their buildings run more efficiently—and connecting that work to environmental goals creates additional value.

Tracking refrigerant data is an area where many property managers could improve, especially given their focus on environmental goals and changing regulations in 2026. Nearly half don't track refrigerant data at all, which represents a significant gap in getting a complete picture of their building's environmental impact.

How do you track your refrigerant data?

Answered: 297



Industry spotlights

Retail

Eighty property managers in our survey work with retail properties in some way. Their top concerns are maintaining common areas like shared mall spaces, followed by ensuring they have the right mix of tenants.

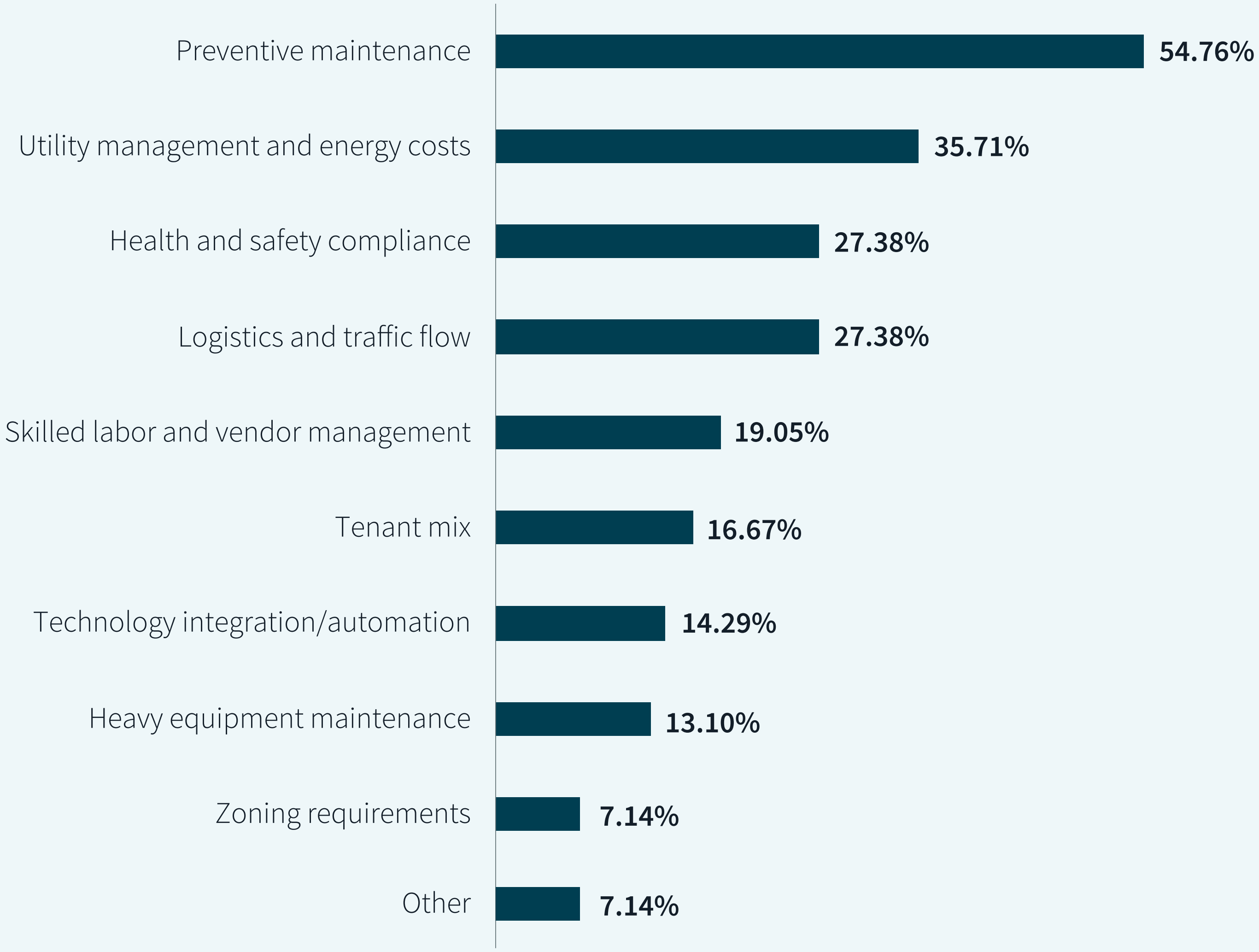
These priorities show up in what they actually track. More than half monitor common area maintenance, while 43% track lease renewal rates. Common areas really are crucial for retail success—well-maintained spaces attract tenants and keep shoppers coming, which helps tenants stay happy and profitable. Unfortunately, retail property managers don't think their current software tools are up to the job. Only 44% feel confident that available software meets their needs well. Given how important common area maintenance is to their success, tools that can help manage capital projects and track maintenance requests could be valuable investments for streamlining these critical processes.

Industrial

Eighty-four property managers in our survey work with industrial properties in some capacity. For this group, preventive maintenance is by far their highest priority. Utility and energy costs follow as the next most important concerns.

Which of the following challenges are most significant in managing industrial properties? (Select up to three)

Answered: 84   Skipped: 0

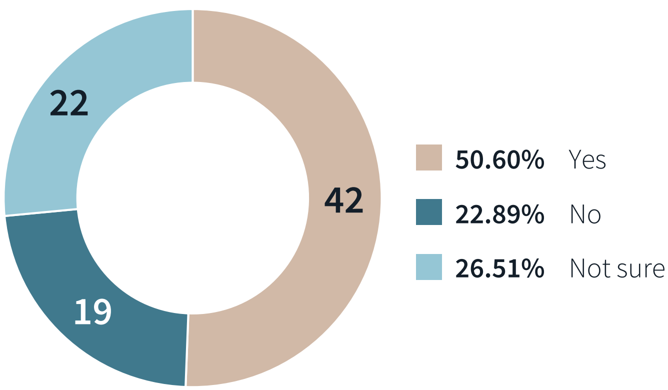


When it comes to tracking performance, industrial property managers focus most on filling their space—occupancy rate is their top metric, followed by maintenance response time and lease renewals. This suggests industrial property managers are laser-focused on delivering a strong tenant experience to keep businesses in their properties.

Like their retail counterparts, industrial property managers aren't thrilled with their current software options. Only half feel their needs are met by today's tools, leaving significant room for improvement.

Do you feel that software tools adequately fit the specific needs of industrial properties?

Answered: 83



Finding software that includes features specifically designed industrial properties—like preventive maintenance scheduling, property inspections, capital project management, and work order management—could make a real difference in keeping industrial tenants satisfied.

Looking ahead at technology's role in CRE

This report shows that technology has become essential to property management—but where we go from here is our choice. Property teams can shape the future of our industry by:

Turning AI's promise into practical tools that actually solve daily problems	Making sure that tenants get the experience they expect from their buildings	Using sustainability tracking as a way to save resources and cut costs

Success in commercial real estate will come from building on proven strategies while embracing technology that makes the work easier and more effective. As these trends continue to change, property management must change with then.

Request a demo of Prism

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Glossary

AI for property management

AI that leverages machine learning and data analytics to optimize building operations, enhance tenant experiences, and improve asset performance across commercial portfolios.

Learn more: *Prism AI*; *5 quick questions: Prism AI – purpose built for commercial real estate* ; *Four reasons why commercial AI isn't up to the task for commercial real estate*

Amenities

Features or services provided to enhance the appeal, value, and functionality of a property for tenants and visitors.

Learn more: *The commercial real estate amenities evolution | Building Engines*

Building equipment

Essential systems and machinery that support a property's operations, including HVAC, elevators, electrical systems, and security infrastructure.

Learn more: *How to extend equipment lifespan in CRE properties*

Capital Expenditure (CapEx)

Significant investments in property improvements or acquisitions that are expected to increase the asset's value or extend its useful life.

Learn more: *CRE Pulse webinar: making CapEx projects count; 5 tips for property managers to make CapEx projects a breeze*

CRE property management

Overseeing, maintaining, and optimizing commercial real estate assets to maximize their value and performance for owners while ensuring tenant satisfaction and regulatory compliance.

Learn more: *CRE Pulse webinar: making CapEx projects count; 5 tips for property managers to make CapEx projects a breeze*

Cybersecurity

Protecting digital assets, systems, and sensitive information from unauthorized access to ensure the integrity and safety of property operations and data.

Learn more: *7 challenges for CRE cybersecurity – and how to solve them*

Glossary

Industrial properties

Properties designed for manufacturing, production, storage, distribution, and research and development activities, including warehouses, factories, and logistics facilities.

Learn more: *Metrics that matter for industrial commercial real estate*

Insurance compliance

Ensuring that properties maintain adequate and appropriate insurance coverage as required by regulations, lenders, and risk management strategies.

Learn more: *10 common insurance compliance mistakes*

Property technology (Proptech)

Digital innovations and technological advancements used to transform and optimize various processes, services, and experiences within the real estate industry.

Learn more: *Top challenges of sprawling commercial real estate – and how to solve them*

Retail properties

Commercial properties designed for consumer-facing businesses, including shopping centers, malls, and standalone stores.

Learn more: *Metrics that matter for retail property management*

Risk management

The process of identifying, assessing, and mitigating potential threats to property value and operations through strategic planning and proactive measures.

Learn more: *3 ways proptech reduces risk in managing NNN properties*

Space management

Strategically planning, allocating, and optimizing the use of available areas within a property to maximize efficiency and functionality

Learn more: *Space management practices and trends in CRE*

Glossary

Sustainable property management

An approach that prioritizes environmentally sustainable practices in the operation, maintenance, and improvement of commercial real estate to reduce environmental impact and enhance resource efficiency.

Learn more: *Sustainable property management: five tips for a greener portfolio*

Tenant experience

The overall satisfaction, comfort, and engagement of occupants with the property, its amenities, and its services.

Learn more: *The definitive guide to tenant communications*

Vendor management

The strategic coordination and oversight of external service providers to ensure efficient, cost-effective, and high-quality property maintenance and operations.

Learn more: *Webinar: mastering vendor management for CRE properties*

Tenant compliance

Ensuring that tenants adhere to lease agreements, property rules, regulations, and legal requirements throughout their occupancy.

Learn more: *A guide to ensuring tenant compliance*

Tenant relationship management

Strategically nurturing and maintaining positive interactions between property managers and tenants to enhance satisfaction, retention, and the overall success of commercial properties.

Learn more: *How CRE property teams can improve tenant relationship* buildingengines.com

Building Engines, a JLL company, improves operations and performance across the world's most successful Commercial Real Estate (CRE) portfolios. Our customers increase building efficiency, deliver the best tenant experience, and tap into transformative insights with Prism – the industry's most innovative and powerful property management platform.

Founded in 2000, Building Engines is committed to helping CRE companies solve long-standing operational problems. Our market-leading solutions support today's properties in a variety of key areas, including work order management, equipment maintenance, risk mitigation, tenant experience, and vendor lifecycle management. Put simply, it's our mission to create exceptional experiences for everyone in every building.

Today, more than 1,000 customers—including Beacon Capital Partners, Brixmor, and SL Green—rely on Building Engines to manage critical operational needs across more than five billion square feet and 55,000 properties worldwide.

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