



April 2025 Report

# INSTANT PAYMENTS: A STRATEGIC TOOL FOR VENDOR RELATIONSHIPS AND URGENT TRANSACTIONS

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# INSTANT PAYMENTS

A Strategic Tool for Vendor Relationships  
and Urgent Transactions

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■ October 2024  
**How Instant Pay Is Becoming the  
Standard for Ad Hoc Payments**



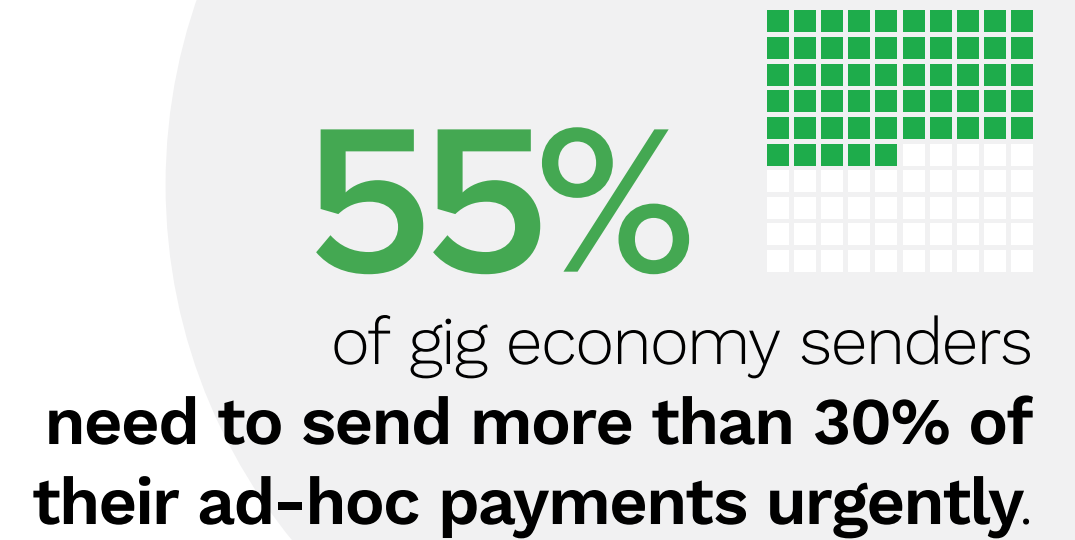
Instant Payments: A Strategic Tool for Vendor Relationships and Urgent Transactions was produced in collaboration with Ingo Payments, and PYMNTS Intelligence is grateful for the company’s support and insight. [PYMNTS Intelligence](#) retains full editorial control over the following findings, methodology and data analysis.

# WHAT'S **AT STAKE**

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With large U.S. enterprises increasingly facing demands to make immediate payments, having the means to disburse funds instantly has become a key strategic priority. The ability to execute nonrecurring, or ad hoc, payments immediately is rapidly evolving into a vital strategic tool, particularly when it comes to nurturing vendor relationships and completing transactions swiftly. Large enterprises routinely make ad hoc payments to small and medium-sized businesses (SMBs) and consumers in the transportation, hospitality, property management and gaming industries, as well as in the gig economy. The urgency driving these payment demands, whether for services rendered or goods delivered, is a catalyst that is fueling a growing preference for instant methods.

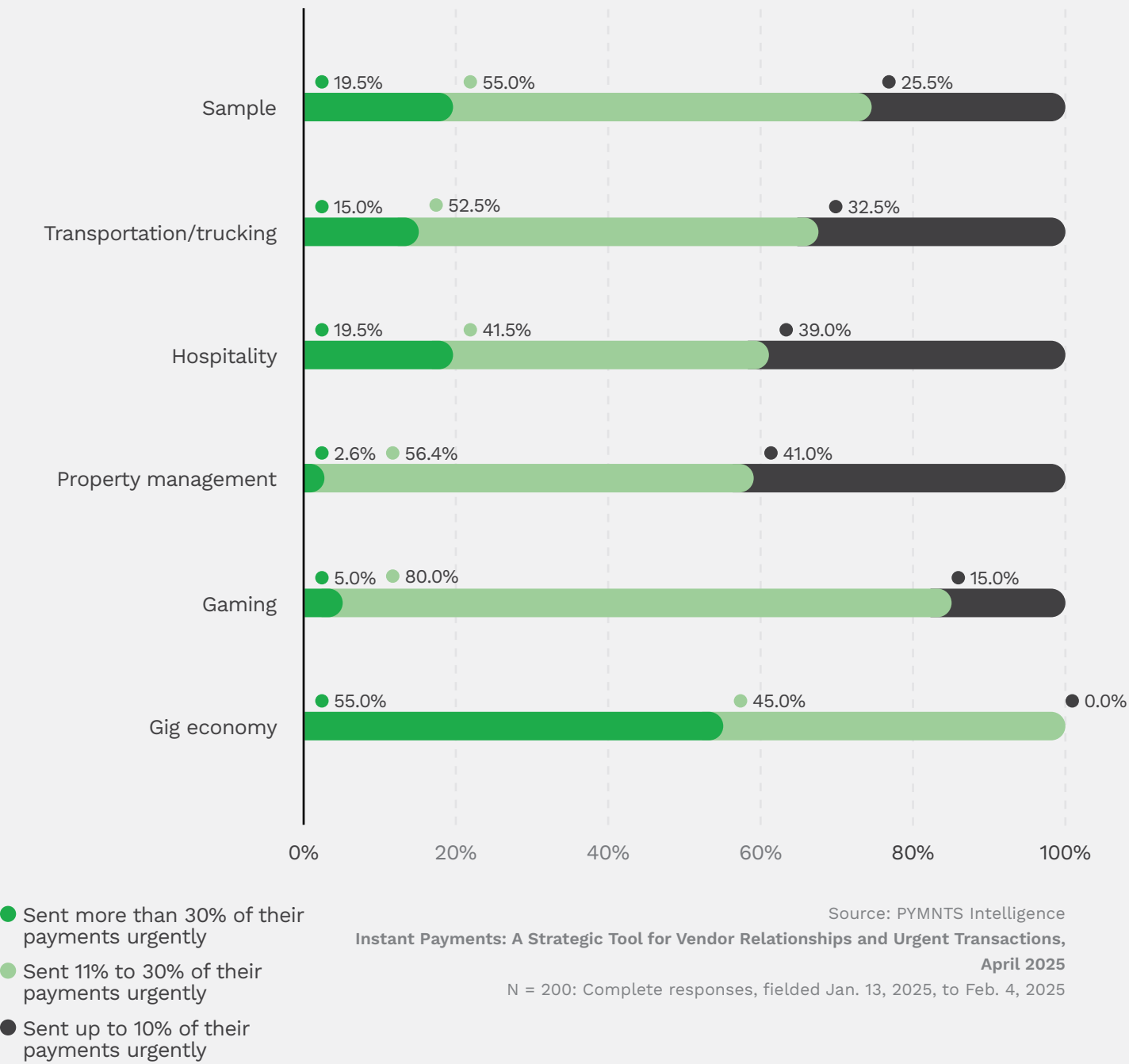
For 20% of all enterprises, a large share of ad hoc payments needs to be sent to the receiver urgently, with that demand especially pronounced in certain industries. For example, a substantial portion of companies operating within the gig economy



report a substantial need to disburse a large share of their ad hoc payments with immediacy. In particular, 55% of large businesses in the gig economy need to disburse 30% or more of their payments urgently. This underscores the critical role of instant payments in sectors where the workforce often relies on rapid compensation for their labor. The motivation to deploy instant payments in such scenarios extends beyond mere operational efficiency; it is deeply rooted in the business need to avert disruptions, guarantee timely service or delivery and, crucially, strengthen and safeguard positive vendor relationships.



**FIGURE 1**  
**Industry urgency to send ad hoc payments**  
How many one-off payments needed to be sent urgently in a typical year



These are some of the findings explored in Instant Payments: A Strategic Tool for Vendor Relationships and Urgent Transactions, a PYMNTS Intelligence and Ingo Payments collaboration. This report is based on a survey of 200 enterprises generating at least \$50 million in annual revenue across the United States conducted between Jan. 13, 2025, and Feb. 4, 2025. It examines those senders' use of instant methods to make ad-hoc disbursements to SMBs and individuals.

The report focuses on the following industry segments: hospitality, gaming, trucking/transportation, gig economy (e.g., freelance workers) and property management.

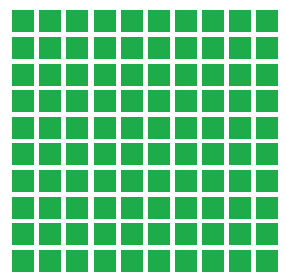
**This is what we learned.**

# KEY FINDINGS

01

## URGENCY-DRIVEN

Businesses with an elevated need to make urgent payments are five times more likely to use instant payments to maintain strong vendor relationships.



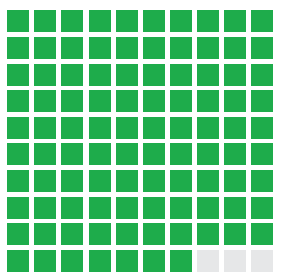
100%

Senders making 30% or more of their ad hoc payments urgently that sent such disbursements to consumers instantly at least once, compared to 20% of those that make very few urgent payments.

02

## NEED FOR SPEED

Gig workers, fuel providers and tip payouts are most likely to be paid urgently.



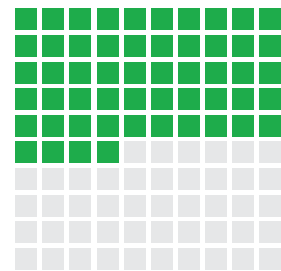
97%

Payments due to gig workers and companies that provide fuel to trucking companies that need to be sent urgently—96% for payments due on tips to hospitality workers.

03

## WILLING TO PAY

**Urgency in sending payments and worries about lack of product delivery drive a willingness to pay higher fees for instant.**



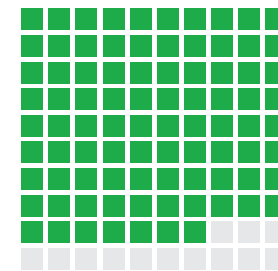
# 54%

Senders with high-urgency payment needs who would pay a higher fee to remit instantly if a vendor refused to deliver before payment is made.

04

## VENDOR RELATIONS

**Enterprise senders with urgent payments needs covered the full fee for instant for 42% of their transactions and were driven mostly by efficiency and vendor retention needs.**



# 87%

Senders with high-urgency payment needs that cite vendor retention as a reason they would pay a higher fee to send a payment instantly.



# THE FULL STORY

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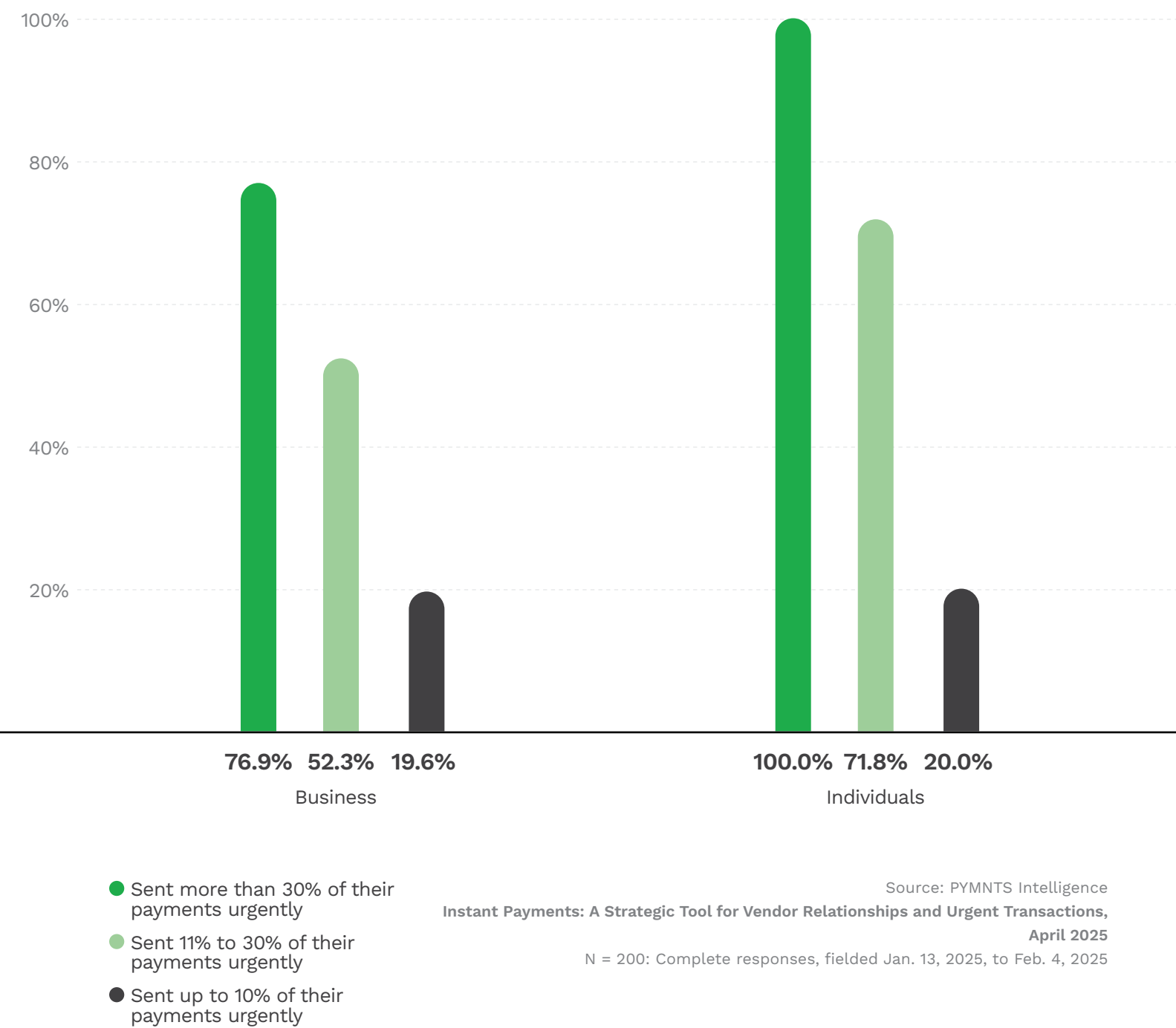
**Enterprise senders believe timely payments to vendors and consumers are the key to strong business relationships, with many willing to pay more to do so.**

**Businesses with high-urgency payment needs are five times more likely to use instant payments to maintain strong vendor relationships.**

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Businesses with a high need for urgent ad hoc payments are significantly more inclined to adopt instant payment methods. Data reveals a strong correlation between the proportion of payments a business needs to send urgently and its propensity to use an instant method. Among companies that send at least 30% of their ad hoc payments urgently, 100% have used instant payment methods for consumers at least once within the last 12 months. Meanwhile, 77% of this group also used instant methods to send payments to SMBs. In contrast, only 20% of enterprise senders with fewer urgent payments sent payments to consumers and SMBs instantly at least once in the last 12 months.

**FIGURE 2**  
**Senders who sent ad hoc payments instantly**  
How many senders used instant to make non-recurring payments within the last 12 months?



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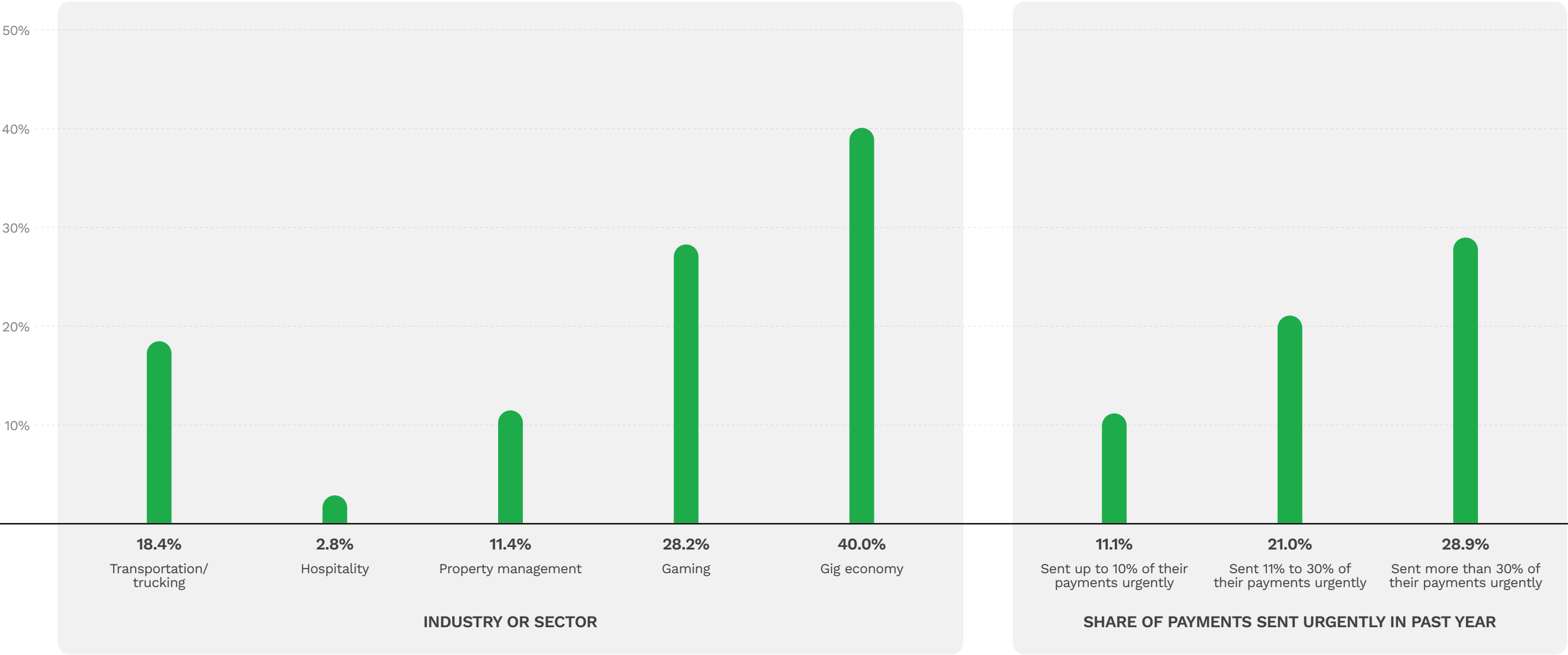
The importance of offering instant payments is particularly recognized in the gig economy and gaming sector.

”

Moreover, enterprise senders with highly urgent payment needs are more than twice as likely to view instant as the key to staying competitive. In fact, 29% of these businesses that send at least 30% of their payments urgently believe that instant payments are very or extremely important to ensuring their payees continue to do business with them, compared to 11% that send up to 10% of their payments urgently. The importance of offering instant payments is particularly recognized in sectors like the gig economy and gaming, where 40% and 28% of senders, respectively, view them as very or extremely important for attracting and retaining payees.

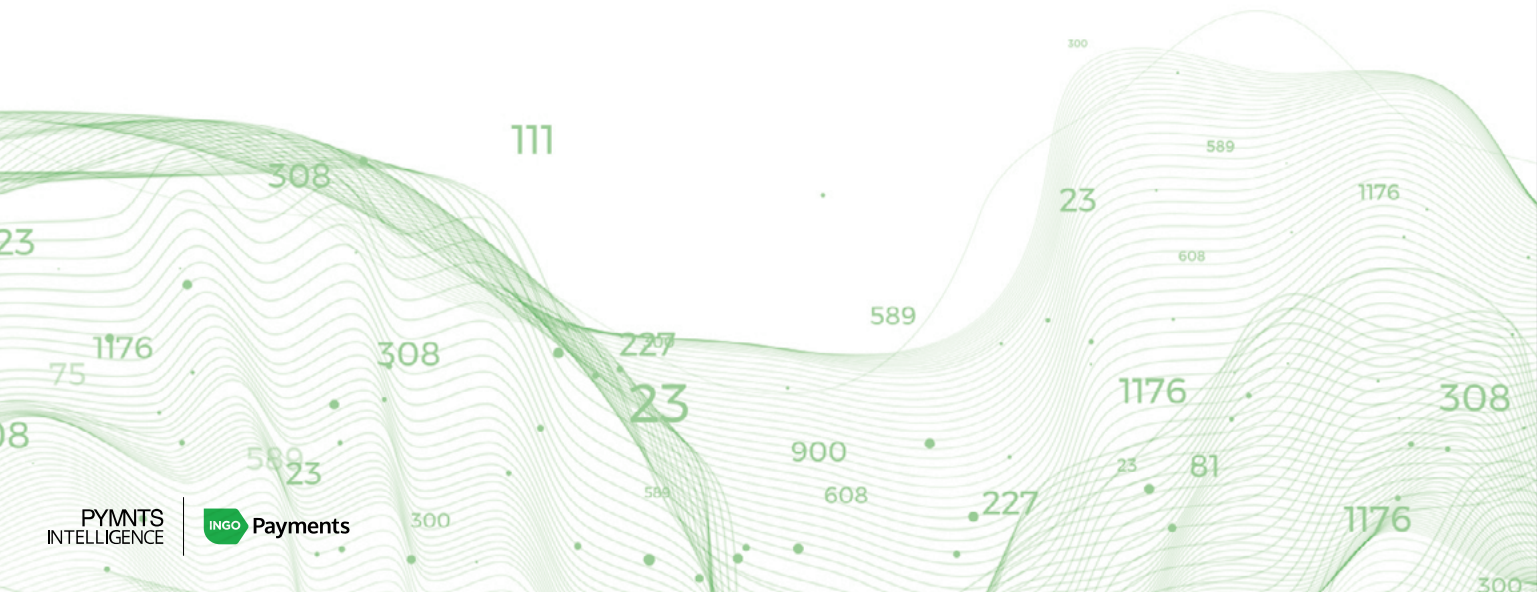


**FIGURE 3**  
**Industry demand for instant**  
Senders whose customers and vendors view instant as a must-have

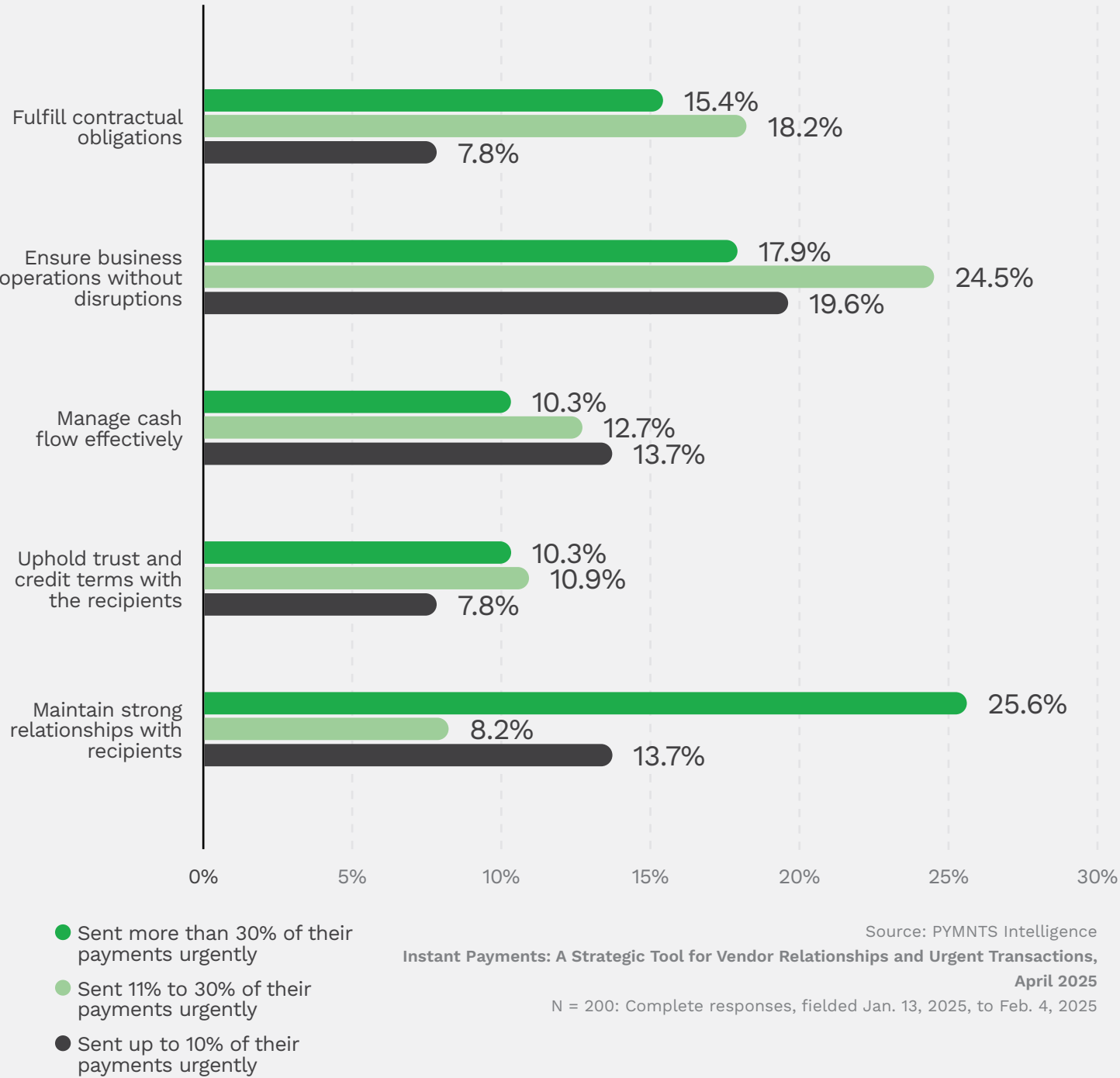


Source: PYMNTS Intelligence  
Instant Payments: A Strategic Tool for Vendor Relationships and Urgent Transactions, April 2025  
N = 200: Complete responses, fielded Jan. 13, 2025, to Feb. 4, 2025

Several factors contribute to the urgency of ad hoc disbursements. The primary driver is typically the need to pay for work already completed or for products and services already delivered. Businesses also prioritize urgent payments to maintain good relationships with their recipients, a reason cited most frequently as the most important (26%) by those with high-urgency needs. For businesses with a moderate level of urgent needs (11%-30%), ensuring the smooth flow of business operations is the most critical factor. Other influential reasons include avoiding late payment penalties, rectifying missed payments, addressing temporary funding shortfalls, capitalizing on discounts, upholding credit terms, managing cash flow effectively, preventing operational disruptions and fulfilling contractual obligations. These findings underscore that the inherent demand for speed in certain payment scenarios is a primary driver of instant payment adoption.



**FIGURE 4**  
**Why ad hoc payments need to be sent urgently**  
The top reasons senders cite for needing to send non-recurring payments urgently



Source: PYMNTS Intelligence  
Instant Payments: A Strategic Tool for Vendor Relationships and Urgent Transactions,  
April 2025  
N = 200: Complete responses, fielded Jan. 13, 2025, to Feb. 4, 2025

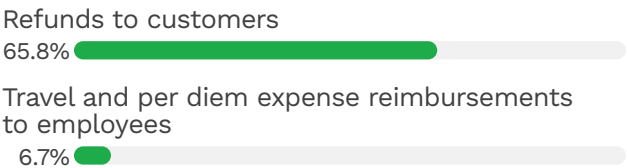
# Payments to gig workers, fuel providers and tipped employees are the most likely to be paid urgently.

Gig economy workers rely on immediate payments to sustain their work and financial stability, making instant disbursements an essential feature for them. In fact, 90% of senders operating in the gig economy prefer instant payments, with 28% specifically favoring push-to-debit transactions. The data also shows that 97% of payments sent to gig workers were deemed urgent, aligning with the industry’s desire for rapid financial transactions. Providers of fuel to trucking companies, along with hospitality service workers receiving tips, also ranked high in urgency, with 97% and 95% of their respective payments requiring immediate disbursement. In contrast, only 39% of payments to property owners and 66% of customer refunds were deemed urgent by senders. The willingness of gig economy senders to embrace instant payments, including push-to-debit functionalities, reflects the critical role these methods play in meeting the expectations of their workforce and ensuring operational efficiency in a dynamic environment.

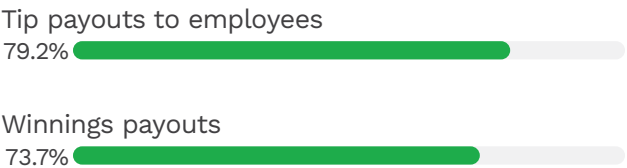
FIGURE 5

**Make it fast**  
Senders who say that ad hoc payments need to be sent urgently

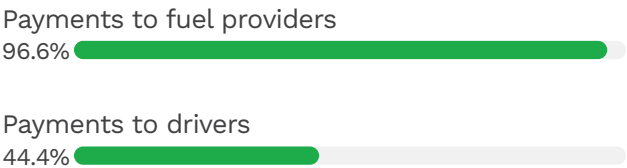
ALL INDUSTRIES



GAMING



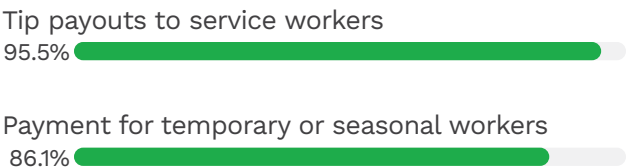
LOGISTICS TRANSPORT TRUCKING



PROPERTY MANAGMENT



HOSPITALITY



GIG WORKERS



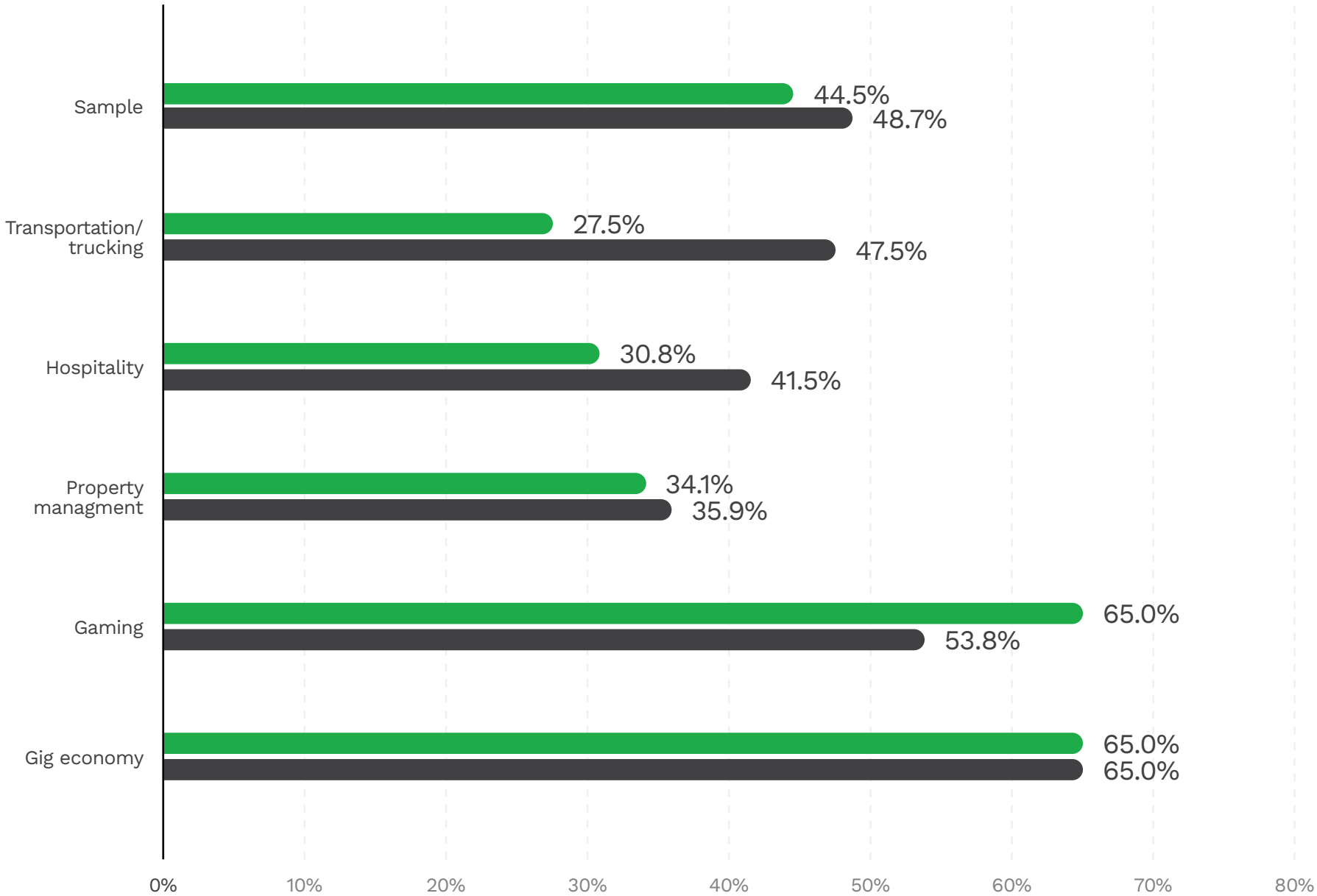
Source: PYMNTS Intelligence  
Instant Payments: A Strategic Tool for Vendor Relationships and Urgent Transactions, April 2025  
N = 200: Complete responses, fielded Jan. 13, 2025, to Feb. 4, 2025

FIGURE 6

How particular industries send payments

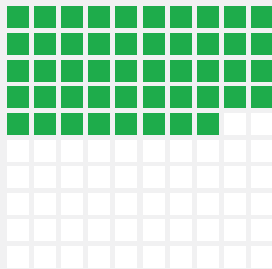
Senders that sent instant ad hoc payments to businesses in the last 12 months

● January 2024  
● January 2025



Source: PYMNTS Intelligence  
Instant Payments: A Strategic Tool for Vendor Relationships and Urgent Transactions, April 2025  
N varies based on date surveyed; N = 200: Complete responses, fielded Jan. 13, 2025, to Feb. 4, 2025

48%



of **transportation and trucking businesses used instant to send ad hoc payments** to their vendors and suppliers in the past year.

Meanwhile, the transportation and hospitality industries are ramping up their use of instant to pay their suppliers. Some 48% of transportation and trucking businesses used instant to send ad hoc payments to their vendors and suppliers in the past year, up from 28% in 2024. Hospitality is also returning to higher rates of instant payments to businesses after a drop in 2024. In January 2025, 42% of hospitality industry respondents reported sending instantly to businesses, compared to 31% a year ago. These findings suggest that these industries have high urgent payment needs and increasingly turn to instant methods to strengthen their vendor relationships.

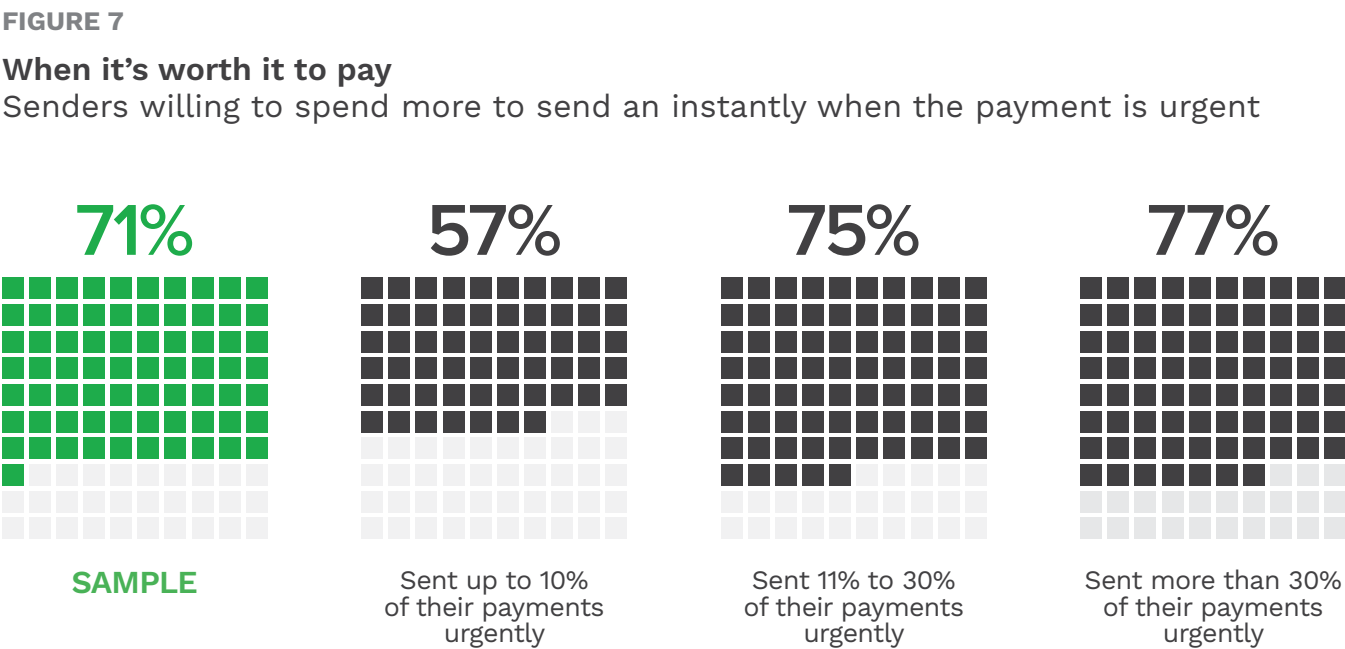


# Urgency in sending payments and worries about lack of product delivery drive a willingness to pay higher fees for instant.

PYMNTS Intelligence research finds that enterprise senders are most likely to pay for instant when making urgent payments to their vendors. In fact, 79% of large businesses in the high-urgency group paid fees to send instantly to other businesses. Those with medium-urgent payment needs were equally likely to pay to send instantly to businesses. The cost was similar across both urgency groups, at just under \$2 per transaction on average.

Urgency also drives enterprise senders’ willingness to pay a premium to deliver a payment instantly. On average, 71% of senders would pay a higher fee to receive instantly if the payment was

urgent. This drops to 57% among those who rarely have urgent payment needs and rises to 77% among those who have more than 30% of payments sent urgently in a typical year. These findings suggest that the need for speed outweighs costs for a substantial portion of businesses, particularly when urgency is a recurring factor in their payment operations.



Source: PYMNTS Intelligence  
Instant Payments: A Strategic Tool for Vendor Relationships and Urgent Transactions, April 2025  
N = 200: Complete responses, fielded Jan. 13, 2025, to Feb. 4, 2025

Concerns about refusal of service if a payment has not been made further increase the share of senders with urgent payment needs who are willing to pay a premium for speed and certainty. Specifically, 54% of senders with high payment urgency needs (those sending more than 30% of their ad hoc payments urgently) say they would be willing to pay even more to send a payment instantly if a vendor refused to deliver goods or services before

payment was received. This willingness underscores the strategic importance of instant disbursements in business continuity. Companies are prioritizing speed and reliability in transactions, recognizing that delayed payments can result in disrupted supply chains, missed business opportunities and weakened vendor trust.

**FIGURE 8**  
**Timing of demand for instant**  
When senders are willing to pay more for instant

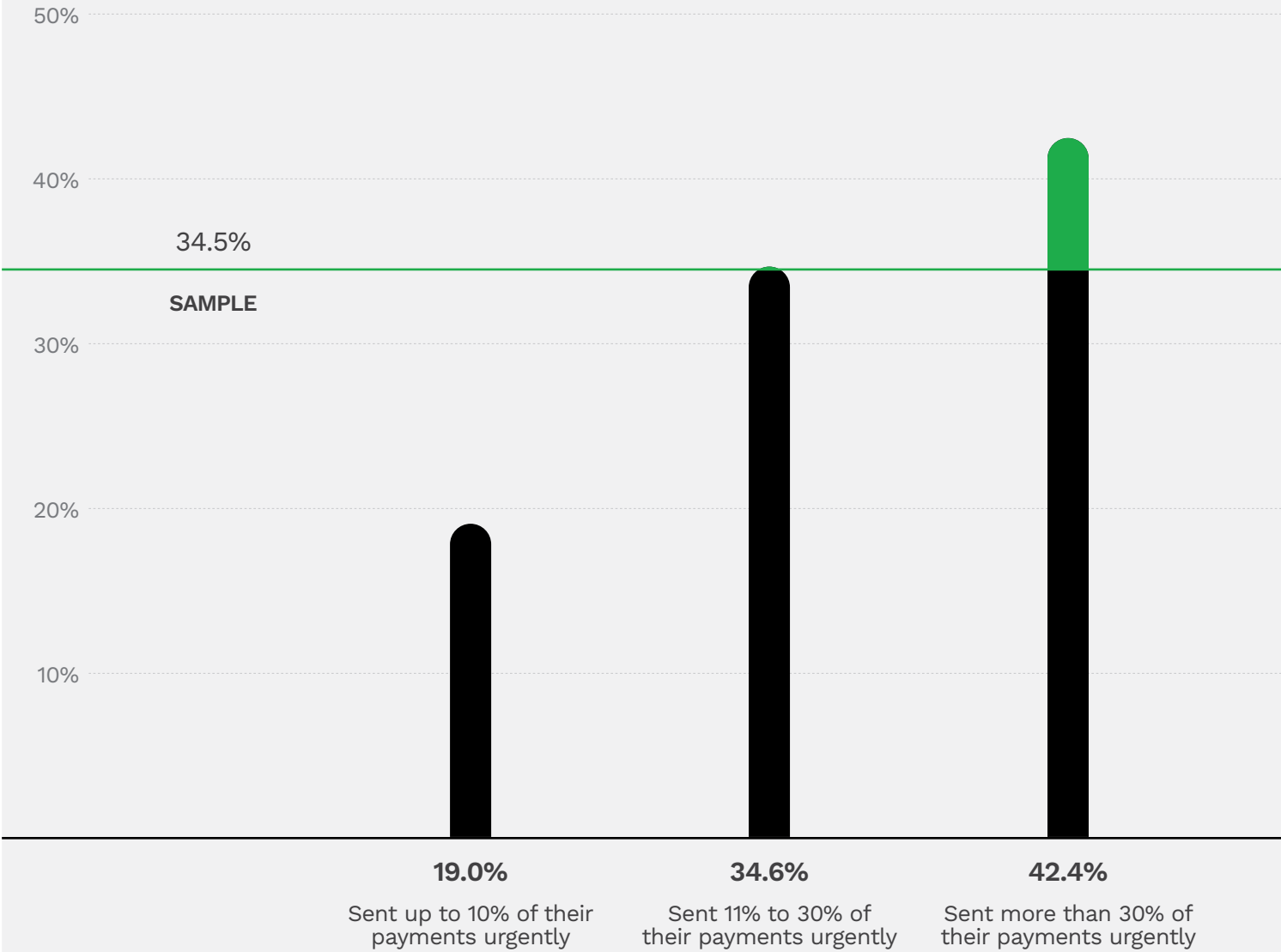
	SAMPLE	Sent up to 10% of their payments urgently	Sent 11% to 30% of their payments urgently	Sent more than 30% of their payments urgently
At the end of the work week	17.5%	5.9%	17.3%	33.3%
At the end of the month	16.0%	3.9%	19.1%	23.1%
At the end of the fiscal quarter	18.5%	3.9%	21.8%	28.2%
At the end of the fiscal year	18.5%	2.0%	22.7%	28.2%
During our company's "busy" season	29.5%	21.6%	33.6%	28.2%
After an employee requests the ad hoc payment be made	34.5%	33.3%	34.5%	35.9%
After a vendor requests payment	37.0%	29.4%	38.2%	43.6%
When a vendor refuses to provide goods or services until the payment is made	43.5%	31.4%	45.5%	53.8%

Source: PYMNTS Intelligence  
Instant Payments: A Strategic Tool for Vendor Relationships and Urgent Transactions, April 2025  
N = 200: Complete responses, fielded Jan. 13, 2025, to Feb. 4, 2025

# Enterprise senders with urgent payments needs covered the full fee for instant for 42% of their transactions, driven mostly by the need for efficiency and vendor retention.

Beyond necessity, offering instant payment options creates value for senders in the form of increased operational efficiency and heightened vendor engagement. In fact, many enterprise senders are willing to shoulder the full fee when they pay their vendors via instant methods. Our data shows that in the last year, businesses with high payment urgency needs paid the full fee to send instantly for twice the number of transactions compared to senders with few such needs. While 42% of those sending more than 30% of their payments urgently in the past year paid the full fee, only 19% of those sending up to 10% of their payments urgently did so. That businesses with high payment urgency needs are so willing to pay the full fee highlights the strategic importance of instant payments to business continuity.

**FIGURE 9**  
**Paying up**  
Share of instant transactions where senders paid the full fee, by share of payments sent urgently within past year

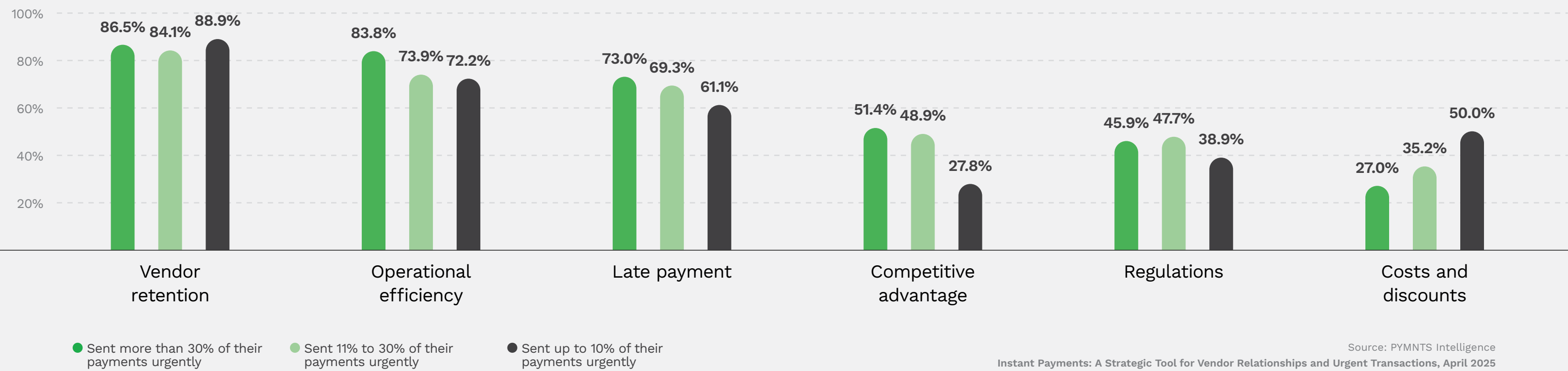


Source: PYMNTS Intelligence  
Instant Payments: A Strategic Tool for Vendor Relationships and Urgent Transactions, April 2025  
N = 147: Senders that have paid fees for at least one instant payment, fielded Jan. 13, 2025, to Feb. 4, 2025

Vendor retention, along with operational efficiency, both drive enterprise senders to cover the full cost of instant ad hoc payments. Moreover, these two are key reasons across all urgency groups. While 8 in 10 of senders who have paid a full fee for at least one payment cite vendor retention as a reason to cover

the full cost of an instant payment, a similar share cites operational efficiency. These findings indicate that enterprise senders not only prioritize speed and reliability, but also are willing to pay for those attributes to engage and retain the vendors they depend on.

**FIGURE 10**  
**Why senders pay for instant**  
What paying a full fee for sending instantly buys



Source: PYMNTS Intelligence  
Instant Payments: A Strategic Tool for Vendor Relationships and Urgent Transactions, April 2025  
N = 143: Senders that have paid the full fee for at least one instant payment, fielded Jan. 13, 2025, to Feb. 4, 2025



# DATA FOCUS

**Enterprises increasingly recognize the benefits of using instant methods to send ad hoc payments.**

## Half of all enterprise senders plan to use instant for all payments except payroll by 2028.

By 2028, instant payments are expected to be a standard feature in all business-to-business and business-to-consumer transactions. Data shows that 49% of senders intend to use instant payments for all non-payroll purchases by 2028. Among businesses with high urgent payment needs, more than six in 10 plan to implement instant payments as a default option for all non-payroll transactions. In contrast, 61% of businesses with minimal urgent payment needs currently have no plans for instant payment innovations.

Growing interest in using instant payment methods for all non-payroll purchases is also evident among enterprise senders across industries. At 59%, property management businesses are the most likely to plan to use instant for all payments except payroll by 2028, followed by gig economy and gaming companies, at 50% and 48%, respectively. Even among companies in the transportation and hospitality industries, at least 4 in 10 senders plan to use instant for all non-payroll payments by 2028. These findings indicate a growing recognition across industries of the benefits associated with instant payments, further solidifying their importance in modern financial management.

Yet instant payments innovation does not end there. Over the next three years, enterprise senders facing more urgent payments, especially senders in the gig economy, plan to issue virtual cards to receivers. While 52% of senders with a high share of payments that need to be sent urgently plan to offer

virtual cards, the number rises to 55% among senders in the gig economy. That these high-volume senders cite issuing virtual cards to receivers in their future innovation plans indicates the growing importance of having a in-network connection for processing disbursements.

**FIGURE 11**  
**The future of instant**  
Senders citing the instant payment innovations they plan to improve or incorporate by 2028

		Using instant payments for all non-payroll payables	Issuing virtual cards to receivers	Third-party integration that enables us to offer multiple instant payment methods	None
INDUSTRY	Transportation/trucking	45.0%	22.5%	15.0%	30.0%
	Hospitality	41.5%	29.3%	26.8%	24.4%
	Property management	59.0%	10.3%	15.4%	23.1%
	Gaming	47.5%	27.5%	25.0%	20.0%
	Gig economy	50.0%	55.0%	32.5%	5.0%
URGENCY PERSONA	Up to 10%	19.6%	11.8%	15.7%	60.8%
	11% - 30%	57.3%	29.1%	24.5%	8.2%
	More that 30%	61.5%	51.3%	28.2%	2.6%

Source: PYMNTS Intelligence  
Instant Payments: A Strategic Tool for Vendor Relationships and Urgent Transactions, April 2025  
N = 200: Complete responses, fielded Jan. 13, 2025, to Feb. 4, 2025



# ACTIONABLE INSIGHTS



## 01

The need for large businesses to send ad hoc payments instantly when they are owed urgently is linked to nurturing strong vendor relationships and ensuring prompt delivery of goods or services. This suggests that companies with high urgent payment needs should prioritize instant payment adoption to prevent service disruptions, maintain operational stability and build vendor trust.



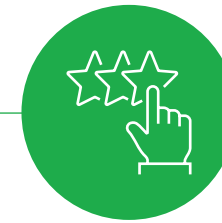
## 02

Gig economy workers rely on immediate payments to sustain their work and financial stability. Thus, companies reliant on gig workers should integrate push-to-debit and other instant payment options to improve worker engagement. Using instant not only improves worker retention but also ensures seamless financial transactions that bolster gig workforce stability.



## 03

Evaluating the cost-benefit ratio of instant payments is essential for sustainable financial planning. While transaction fees may be an added expense, the advantages of uninterrupted operations, vendor satisfaction and improved cash flow management outweigh the costs in many cases. This requires that enterprise senders adopt strategic decision-making to optimize their payment processes.



## 04

Enterprise senders that frequently encounter urgent payment needs see instant payments as a critical tool for maintaining strong customer relationships. The cost of paying higher fees for instant transactions is often viewed as an investment in operational efficiency and vendor loyalty. By securing on-time deliveries and minimizing service interruptions, companies enhance their competitive standing in industries where payment speed is critical.





April 2025 Report

# INSTANT PAYMENTS: A STRATEGIC TOOL FOR VENDOR RELATIONSHIPS AND URGENT TRANSACTIONS

## METHODOLOGY

**I**nstant Payments: A Strategic Tool for Vendor Relationships and Urgent Transactions, a PYMNTS Intelligence and Ingo Payments collaboration, is based on a survey of 200 enterprise senders generating at least \$50 million in annual revenue in the United States and was conducted between Jan. 13, 2025, and Feb. 4, 2025. It examines these issuers' use of instant payments to make ad-hoc payment to small and medium-sized businesses (SMBs) and individuals. The report focuses on the following industries and sectors: hospitality, gaming, trucking/transportation, gig economy (e.g., freelance workers) and property management.

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# ABOUT

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