



Whitepaper

# The Future of Global Identity Verification

How leading organisations balance  
digital security with user experience

With incidents of identity fraud becoming ever more commonplace, organisations around the world are looking for new ways to verify and authenticate their customers' identities. Identity verification (IDV) and authentication solutions provide this crucial layer of security. With greater insight into how leading organisations deploy these solutions and awareness of the most vulnerable areas of the customer journey, businesses can better protect themselves from increasing risks.

DocuSign, the Intelligent Agreement Management company, and Onfido, an Entrust company, co-created this report to understand the state of identity fraud around the world and the role IDV plays in addressing it. Along with a macro global perspective on where identity fraud occurs in the customer journey and how teams are responding to the growing threat, the research reveals the specific challenges faced by organisations on a regional and industry level.

# Key findings

## 1 Identity fraud incidents are on the rise, costing organisations time, money and employee resources.

A significant portion of organisations surveyed lose over £750,000 each year to direct and/or indirect identity fraud-related costs, and these expenses will likely rise as artificial intelligence (AI) advances. Despite the challenges, some organisations are hesitant to implement identity fraud prevention steps out of fear they would add friction to the customer experience. Sixty-five percent of organisations surveyed in the UK agree that customer experience and identity fraud prevention are competing priorities. However, in practice, many businesses find that they don't have to compromise: globally, businesses that use IDV are twice as satisfied as businesses that do not.

## 2 Identity fraud takes place throughout the customer journey, but it most often occurs when customers log in and authorise a payment.

Along with seeing identity fraud at various stages of the customer journey, businesses see many varieties. The most common forms across industries are identity theft, account creation, digital document forgery and chargeback fraud. The authentication method linked with the most identity fraud is username and password. A deeper dive into organisational behaviour reveals that 60% of organisations in the UK apply different levels of authentication for each customer interaction, based on either their customers' risk profiles or the type of interaction.

## 3 IDV is not only a powerful line of defence for organisations in preventing identity fraud but can also result in a competitive advantage.

IDV users detect identity fraud earlier in the customer journey and more frequently than non-users. As a result, the average organisation using IDV has saved over £6 million in total by preventing identity fraud with an IDV solution. Seventy-four percent of UK organisations that invested significantly more in IDV than their industry peers believe the steps they took to prevent identity fraud had a positive impact on their brand.

## 4 Most organisations see technology as the solution to solving or mitigating customer fraud.

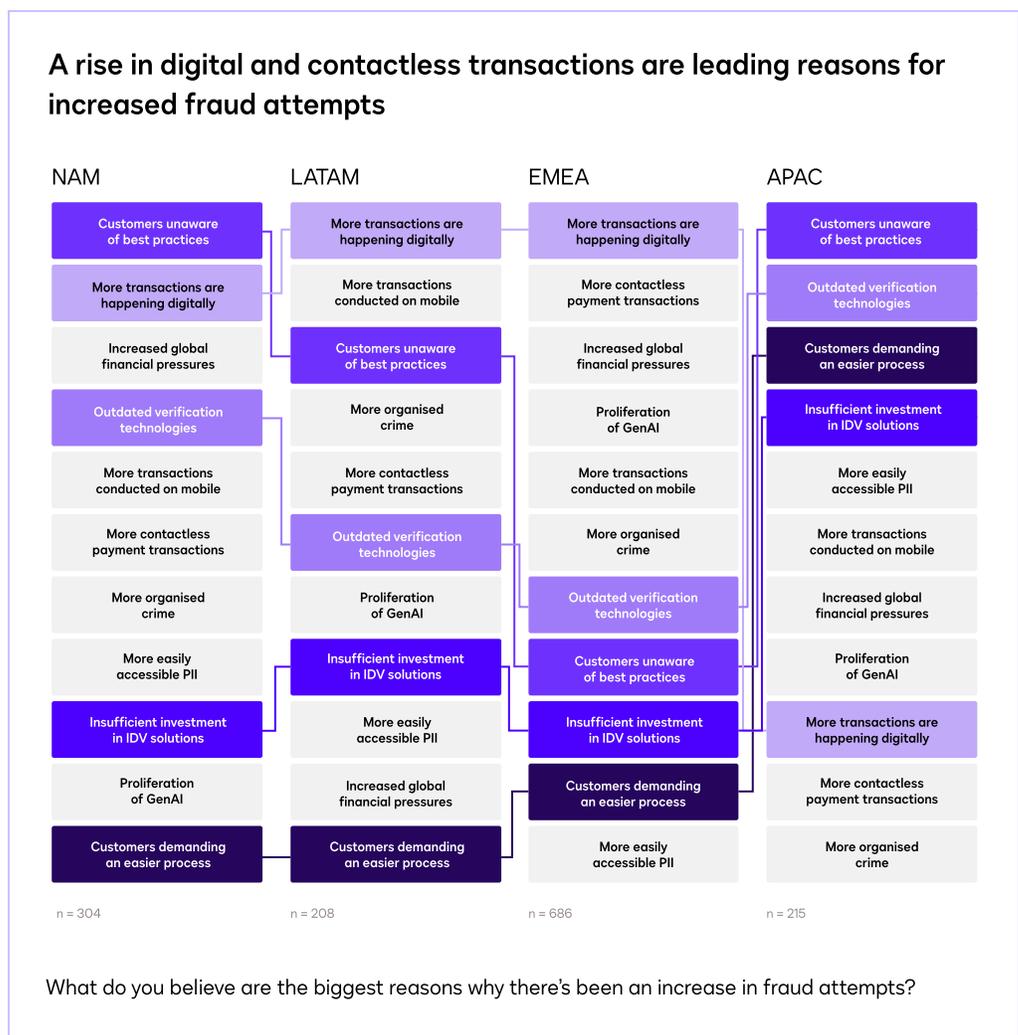
Seventy-two percent of UK-based organisations surveyed believe investing heavily in technology solutions is the best way to mitigate the financial risk of identity fraud, and IDV is one of their top priorities, with 74% of them planning to invest more in IDV in the future.

Calculations were performed in USD and translated to local currency on March 21, 2025 at USD = GBP 0.774855

# Identity fraud is a growing concern, along with high costs and rising customer expectations

Seventy percent of organisations surveyed in the UK agree that identity fraud attempts are on the rise. While the majority of businesses around the globe share this challenge, their beliefs about what's driving this increase differ across industry and region. However, two reasons rose to the top of our research:

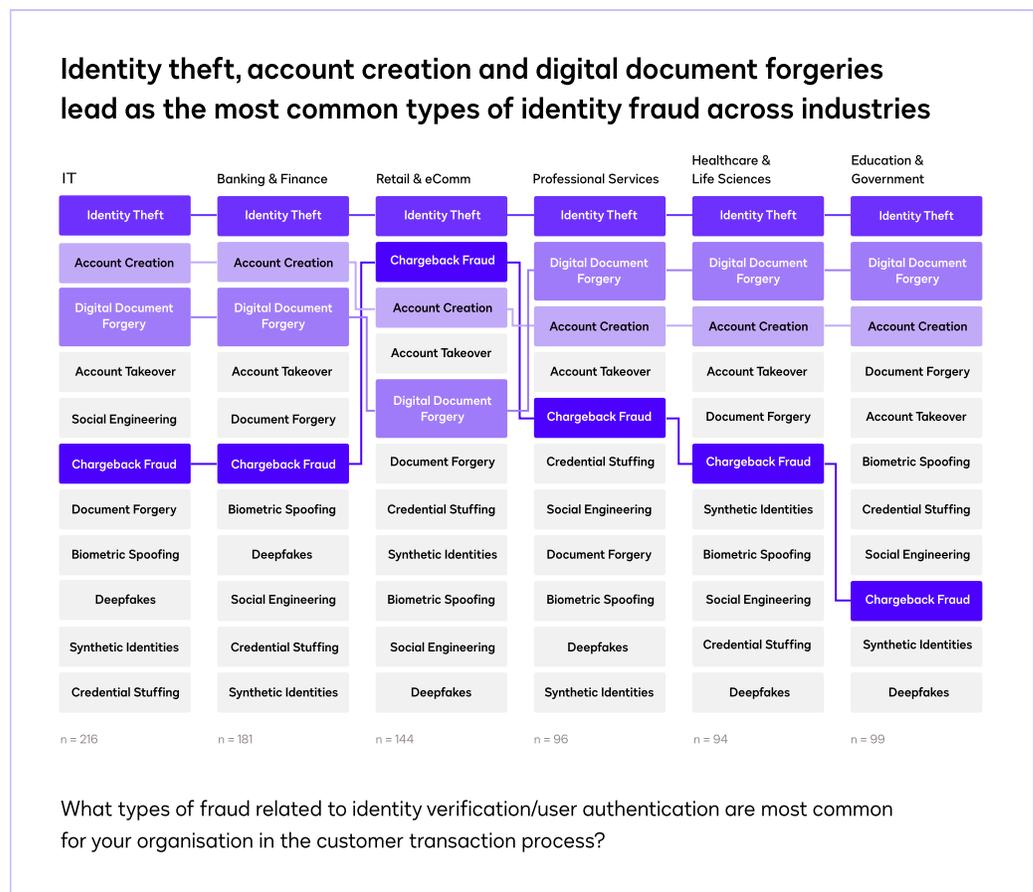
- More digital transactions are taking place today
- More transactions are being made through contactless payment methods



Although few organisations selected AI as a leading driver of fraud in this survey, other research indicates it may heavily contribute to the changing security landscape. Entrust's 2025 Identity Fraud Report found that digital document forgeries, often created with generative AI, **increased by 244% in the past year**. Deepfakes like these forgeries now account for 40% of all biometric fraud. At the same time, many businesses see AI as a critical tool to combat identity fraud: 81% of respondents in the UK believe generative AI will be more effective than their current methods at reducing customer fraud risk.

There are also patterns in the varieties of identity fraud organisations observed. For UK industries, identity theft was the most commonly reported identity fraud, followed by account creation fraud and digital document forgeries. When surveying identity fraud by industry globally, retail and e-commerce are the only ones with another type of fraud in their top three: chargeback fraud (when customers intentionally dispute a charge to receive a refund while keeping the product or service). This is due to the role of consumer purchases in this industry.

These findings show that most identity fraud occurs at critical identity moments when customers actively engage with a business, whether creating an account for the first time, resetting their password or entering payment information. To protect these critical moments in the customer journey, businesses need to offer ways to safely open accounts and continually verify users' identities throughout the customer lifecycle.



## Regional findings

### Percentage of organisations with direct identity fraud costs over £750,000

Countries with highest percentage

**58%** Germany

**65%** Australia

Countries with lowest percentage

**30%** United Kingdom

**29%** Brazil



### Percentage of organisations with indirect identity fraud costs over £750,000

Countries with highest percentage

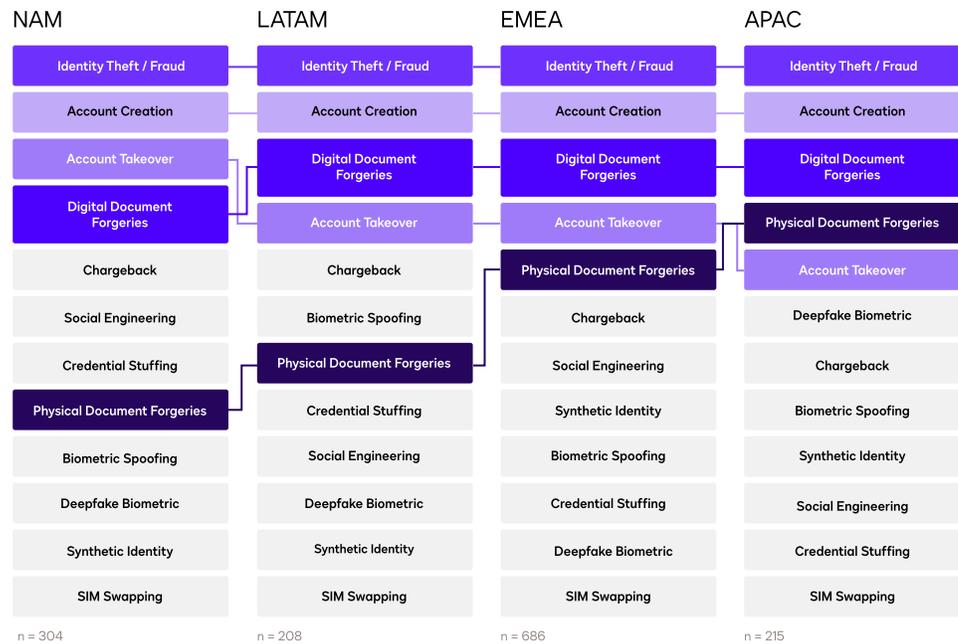
**24%** Brazil

**29%** Australia

Countries with lowest percentage

**6%** Mexico

### Identity theft, account creation and digital document forgeries lead as the most common types of identity fraud across regions



What types of fraud related to identity verification/user authentication are most common for your organisation in the customer transaction process? Please click to rank up to three that happen regularly, starting with the most frequent.

## Industry findings

The banking and finance industries reported the highest direct identity fraud costs (51% reported annual direct costs of over £750,000).

The professional services industry reported the highest indirect identity fraud costs (20% reported annual indirect costs of over £750,000).

# Identity fraud costs organisations an average of £5.27 million per year

Many organisations believe the costs associated with identity fraud are simply the price of doing business, but that price is rising each day. Organisations regularly face expenses in the high six figures due to the direct costs of chargebacks, refunds and other financial losses and the indirect costs associated with dedicating valuable employee resources to identify and remedy fraudulent transactions and address brand and reputational damage. Our research revealed that, in the UK:

30%

of organisations have an annual direct identity fraud cost of over £750,000.

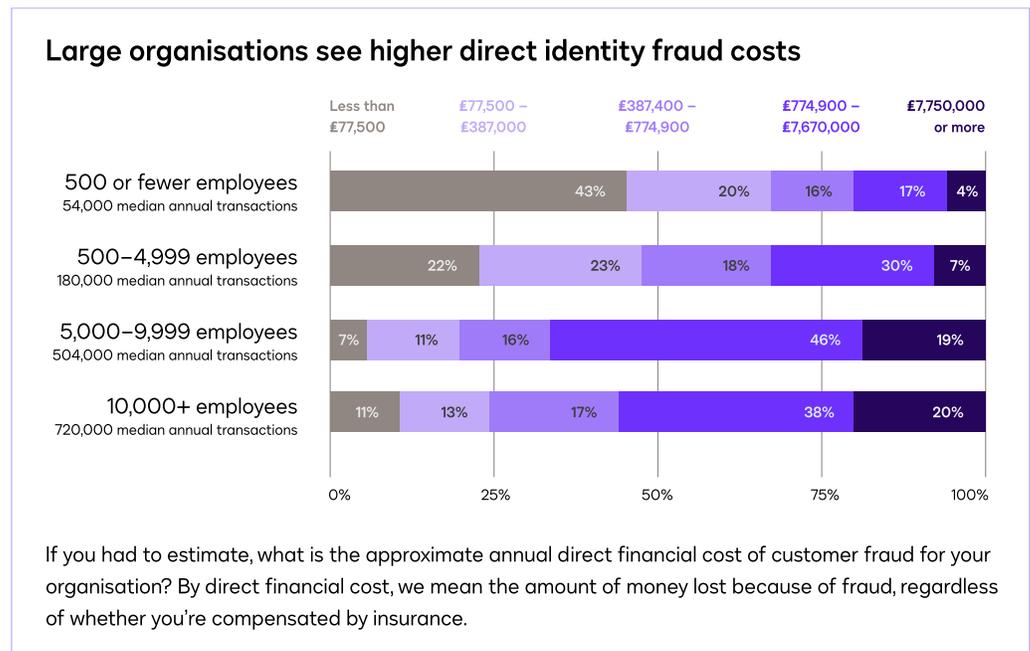
49%

of organisations have an annual indirect identity fraud cost of over £750,000.

**Larger organisations – which handle more customers, data and revenue – see even higher costs. Some organisations with over 5,000 employees:**

- Have an annual direct identity fraud cost of £9.7 million, on average.
- 28% have an annual indirect identity fraud cost of over £750,000.

And the costs grow by multiples as the size of organisations increases. **Of the organisations with over 10,000 employees, 20% have annual direct and/or indirect identity fraud costs in excess of £35 million.**



At the industry level, banking and finance face the highest direct costs of identity fraud. This is because fraudsters create fake accounts at the customer onboarding stage, which enables them to access monetary services or gain access to legitimate accounts during a later stage of the customer lifecycle and drain them of funds. In both scenarios, the targeted business loses money directly or has to pay back the genuine customer.

The professional services industry sees the highest indirect costs of identity fraud. Identity fraud is more likely to affect these businesses' brand reputations and customer trust, which drives away future revenue and results in significant indirect costs.

65%

of organisations surveyed believe customer experience and identity fraud prevention are competing priorities.

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50%

of organisations surveyed prioritise customer experience over fraud prevention.

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63%

of organisations surveyed are concerned they will frustrate customers and increase abandonment rates if they increase identity fraud prevention.

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## Regional findings

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EMEA has less difficulty balancing cybersecurity/fraud prevention and customer experience compared to other regions, with

47%

saying it is easy to find a balance.

## Customers increasingly expect frictionless experiences

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78% of organisations surveyed in the UK agree that customer experience is very important to their success.

Businesses are under pressure to deliver easy, convenient and competitive digital experiences while also keeping customer information secure. For instance, many customers expect personalised experiences, mobile-friendly transactions and pre-populated forms with information they've already provided, but they also assume their data will remain safe throughout these interactions. Many organisations in the UK struggle to balance these aims.

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However, approaches to balancing identity fraud prevention and customer experience vary across regions, industries and generations. Of all our survey respondents worldwide, the IT, banking and finance industries are more likely to put customers through intense authentication measures to protect confidential data and high-value transactions, even when the measures create more friction.

Millennial and Gen Z decision-makers, who are more accustomed to digital identity verification checks, expect exceptional user experiences and security during digital transactions – and are driving tech innovation as a result.

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Overall, businesses that use IDV are 2x more satisfied than businesses that do not use IDV and tend to find their fraud prevention methods significantly more effective.

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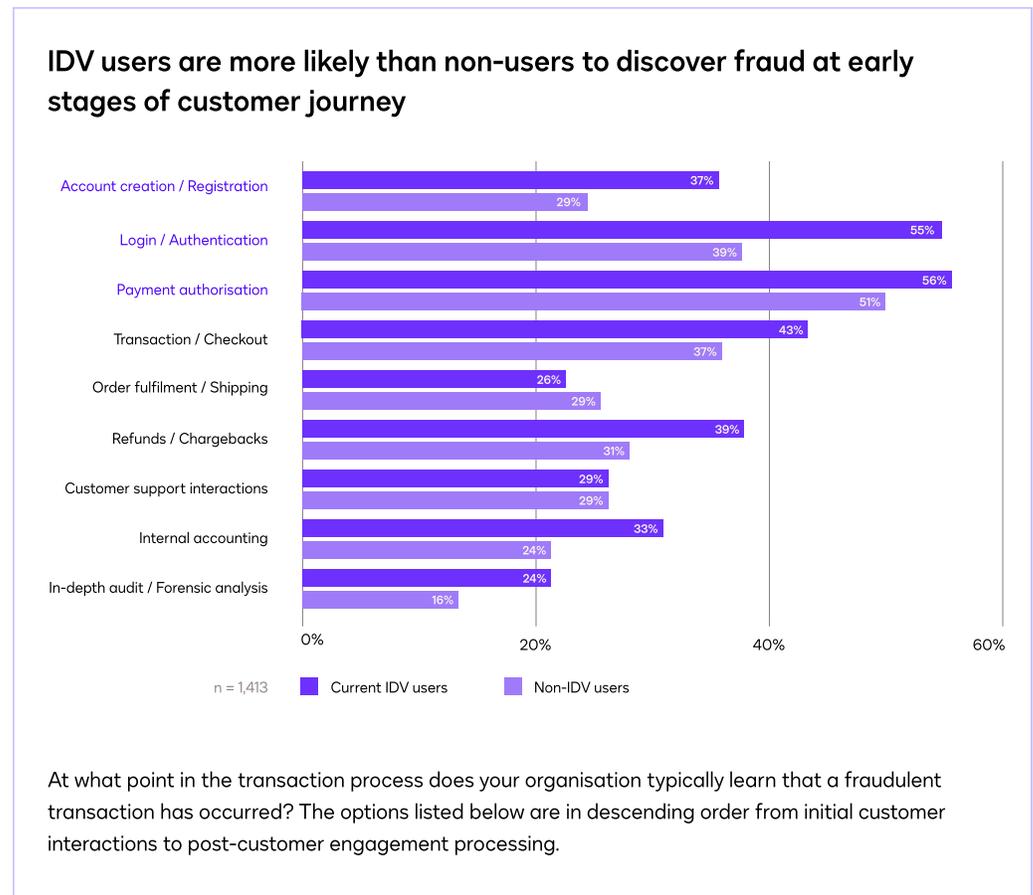
## Key takeaway

Managing increasing identity fraud attempts while delivering a frictionless experience is a growing challenge, but IDV helps organisations reduce identity fraud while delivering greater organisational satisfaction. Businesses that use outdated or insufficient technologies to mitigate the risk of identity fraud will struggle to defend against complex identity fraud techniques or keep pace with new threats.

# Identity fraud occurs throughout the customer journey

Identity fraud occurs throughout the customer journey, but organisations **most often detect it at the early stages of login and payment authorisation.**

**Organisations that use IDV are even more likely to learn about identity fraud attempts early during transactions, improving their chances of preventing or mitigating damage.**



When asked which authentication tools are associated with the most identity fraud, businesses selected **username and password authentication as the weakest method.** This could be because usernames and passwords are easily compromised, prone to data breaches and lack multi-factor authentication. In 2024, stolen credentials like usernames and passwords were the most common source of data breach incidents.<sup>1</sup>

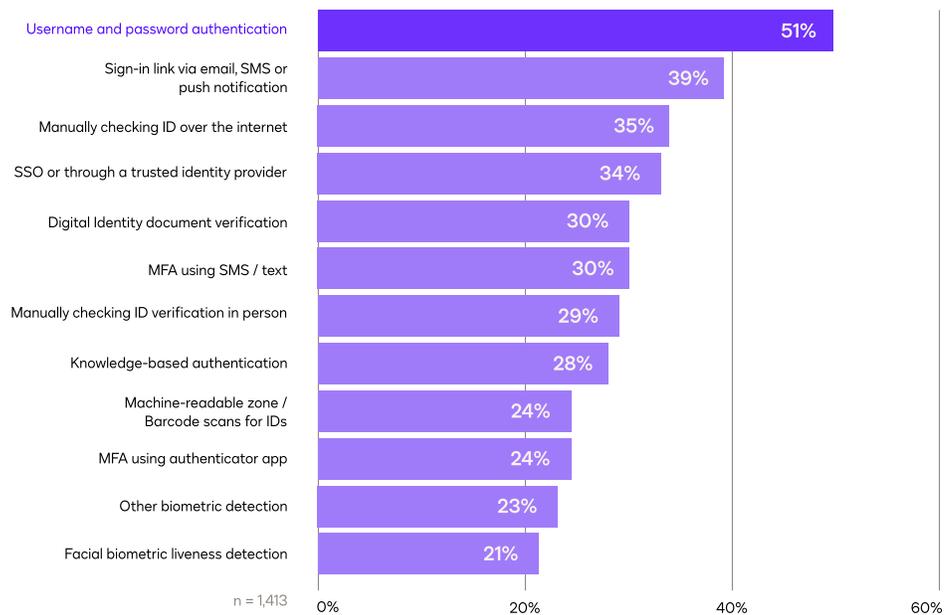
<sup>1</sup> "2024 Data Breach Investigations Report," Verizon Business.



Of all our respondents, organisations that use IDV catch identity fraud attempts in **20%** more stages of the customer journey on average than non-users.

### Identity fraud occurs most when username and password alone is the authentication method

Identity fraud is more common with this technique

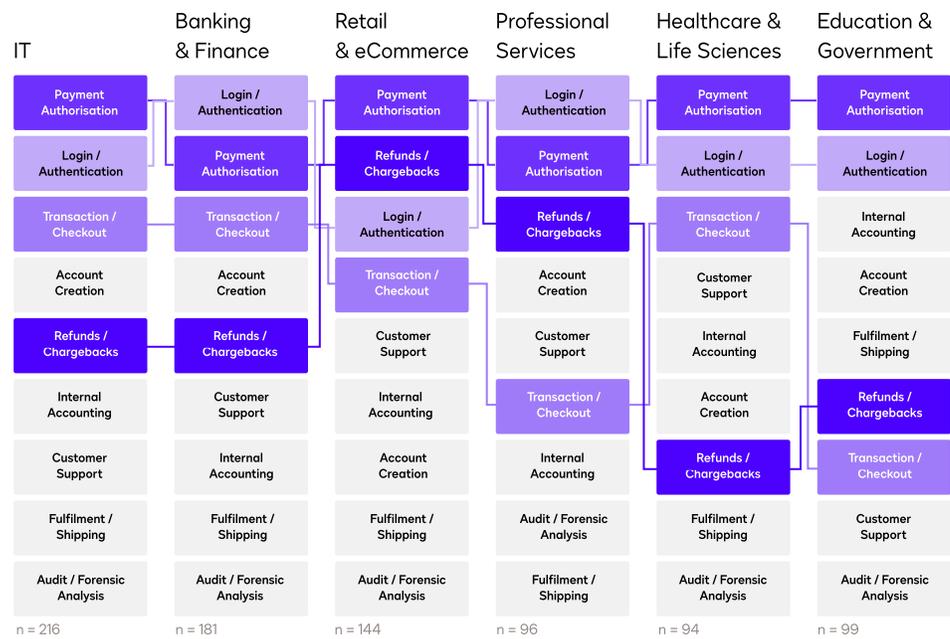


For each of the types of user authentication, please indicate how often you see fraud compared to other authentication types.

The survey also revealed that the more digital transactions an organisation handles, the greater the likelihood of them encountering fraud across a variety of authentication methods.



### Payment authorisation and login are the most common stages at which to discover fraud across industries

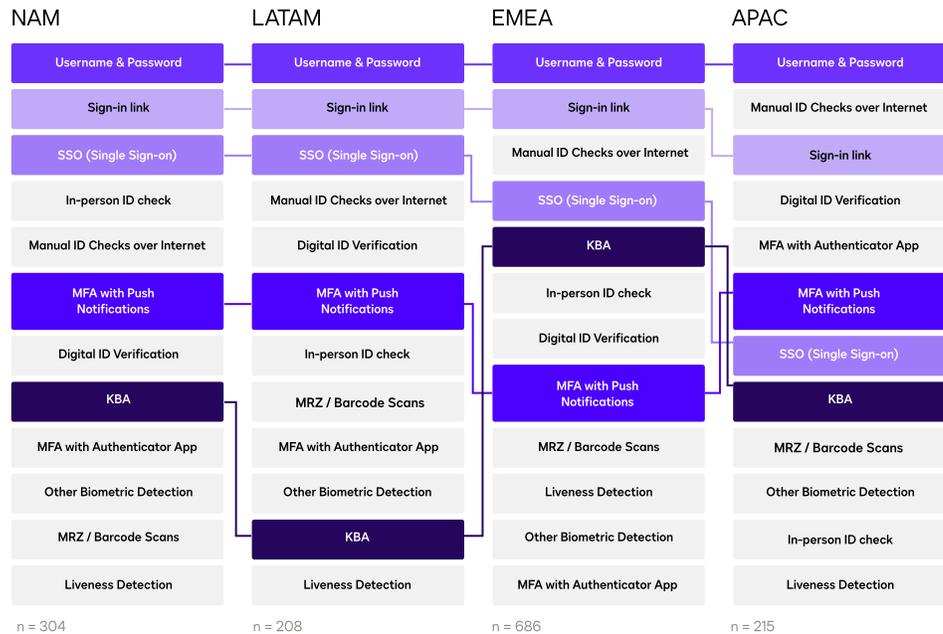


At what points in the transaction process does your organisation discover that a fraudulent transaction has occurred?

## Generational findings

Among IT and business decision-makers, millennial and Gen Z leaders are more likely to use IDV than baby boomers or Gen X. They are also more likely to rate their organisation as 'very good' in their anti-fraud approach.

### Username and password is the authentication method associated with the most fraud across regions



Fraud is much more common than average with this technique.

### Key takeaway

Username and password is the most vulnerable authentication method, but even MFA isn't sufficient to protect against increasingly complicated identity fraud attempts. Advanced forms of IDV, like biometric authentication and document verification, are essential to stay ahead of fraudsters.

# Significant investment in IDV has real results

54% of UK organisations have saved more than

**£750,000**

by preventing fraud with an IDV solution.

The data show that IDV is a worthwhile investment. By implementing an IDV solution, 52% of **all** businesses in the countries we surveyed saved over £750,000 in total.

But deploying an IDV solution is only the first step. Businesses that see the greatest results place intense focus on their security by investing significantly more than their peers in IDV. Additionally, businesses that invest more make their organisation a less attractive target to fraudsters, creating a competitive advantage.

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## Globally, organisations that report investing significantly more than their peers in IDV:

### Save more

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**1.5x**

more likely to have saved over £750,000 in total than those who invested somewhat more than their peers.

**2.2x**

more likely to have saved over £750,000 in total than those who invested the same or less than their peers.

### Lower the amount of identity fraud

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**1.7x**

more likely to have successfully reduced a significant amount of identity fraud.

### Continue to invest in IDV

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**2.8x**

more likely to plan to invest more in IDV.

### Have greater internal and customer satisfaction

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**4x**

more likely to be very satisfied with the IDV solutions they use.

**1.6x**

more likely to have had a positive impact on their brand.

### Are more competitive

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**2.7x**

more likely to believe they have a competitive advantage.

**The data implies that customers place more trust in businesses that go above and beyond to protect their personal data.**

77%

of organisations that invested significantly more in identity verification technologies than their peers have

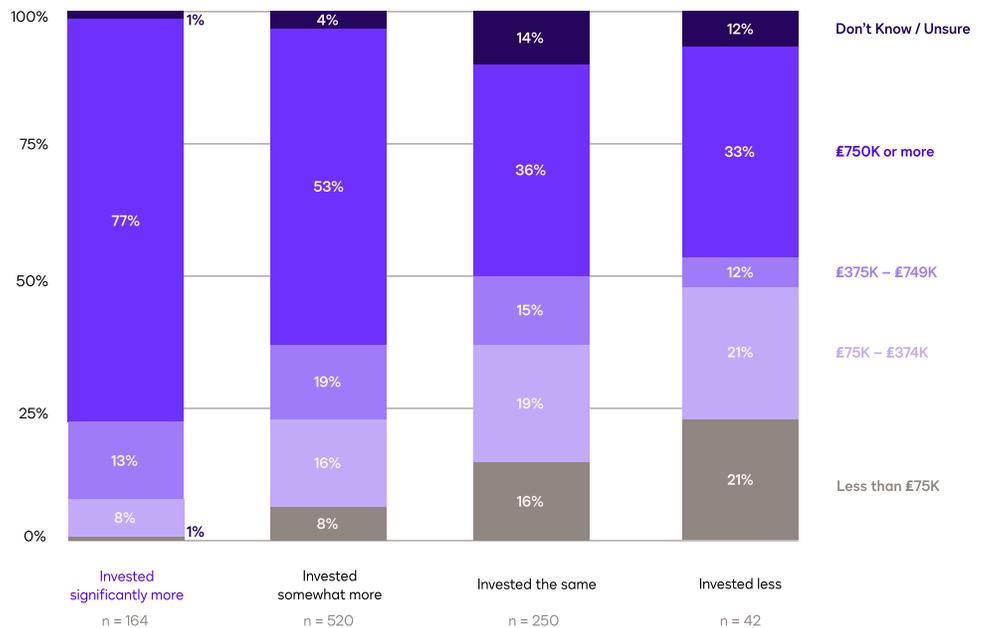
saved over £750,000

in total, compared to 36% that invested the same as their peers.



### Organisations that invested significantly more than peers in IDV were more likely to save a total of £750,000 or more

Money saved with current IDV solutions



If you had to estimate, approximately how much money has your organisation saved by preventing customer fraud by using your current ID verification/user authentication solutions?

# Large organisations invest more in IDV and realise disproportionately greater return on investment (ROI)

For businesses experiencing a considerable amount of identity fraud, investing in IDV leads to increased ROI. The data show that large organisations, which see higher identity fraud costs, tend to invest significantly more in IDV solutions than their peers and also reap disproportionately greater ROI as a result.

**78%**

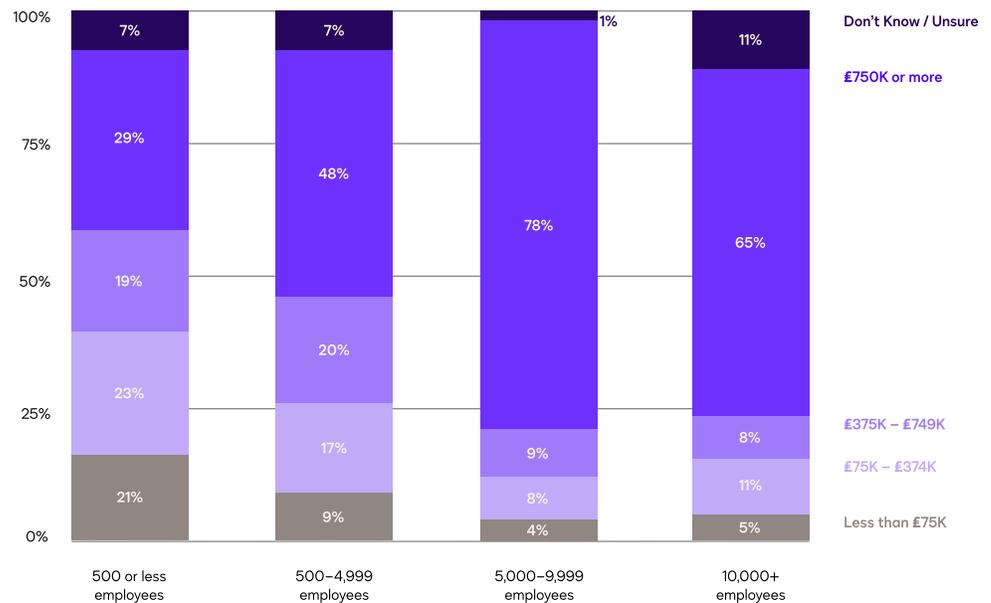
of organisations with 5,000–9,999 employees saved a total of £750,000 or more with IDV.

**65%**

of organisations with over 10,000 employees saved a total of £750,000 or more with IDV.

## Large organisations save more with IDV solutions

Money saved amongst current IDV users

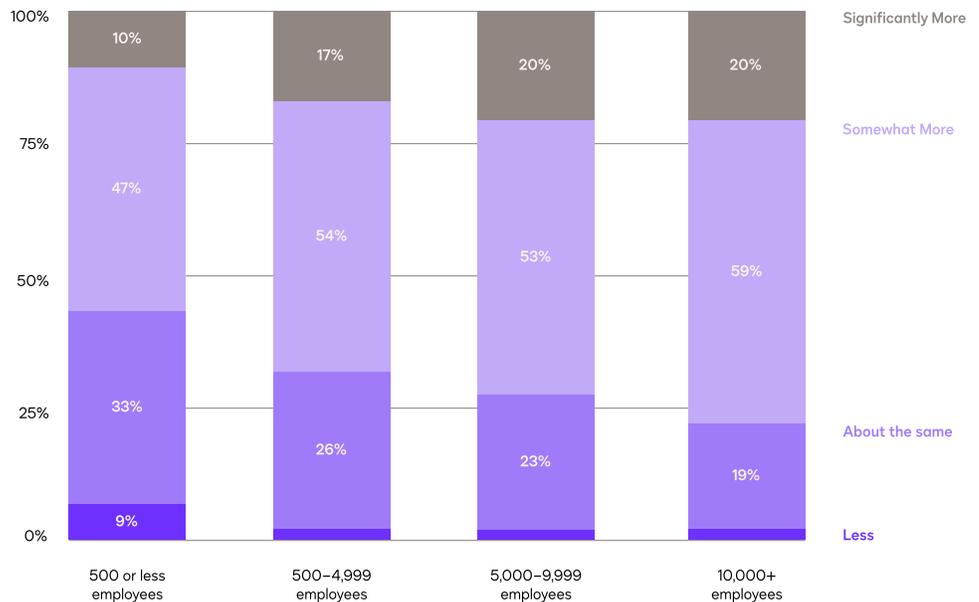


If you had to estimate, approximately how much money has your organisation saved by preventing customer fraud by using your current ID verification or user authentication solutions?



## Large organisations invest significantly more than their industry peers in IDV

IDV investment compared to industry peers



Which of the following best describes your organisation's current investment in ID verification or user authentication solutions / methods?

### Key takeaway

Organisations that significantly invest in IDV see a range of benefits, including greater savings, fewer identity fraud incidents, better brand perception, improved customer experiences and a competitive advantage over peers.

# Leading organisations turn towards technology to address fraud

There's a divide in how confident businesses are in their ability to manage identity fraud. Sixty percent of those in the UK think they can mitigate fraud but never completely solve it, while 33% believe they can completely solve it with the right technology. Worldwide, large organisations with over 10,000 employees tend to fall into the mitigation camp.

While perceptions differ about the issue itself, most organisations are in agreement regarding a solution:

72%

agree that the best way to mitigate the financial risk of identity fraud is by heavily investing in technology (UK).

This 72% investment in technology overshadows other approaches, such as investing in staff and talent (16%) and investing in business crime insurance to offset fraud costs (12%), which are reactive options that seek to repair damage rather than proactively defend their organisations from threats.

## Generational findings

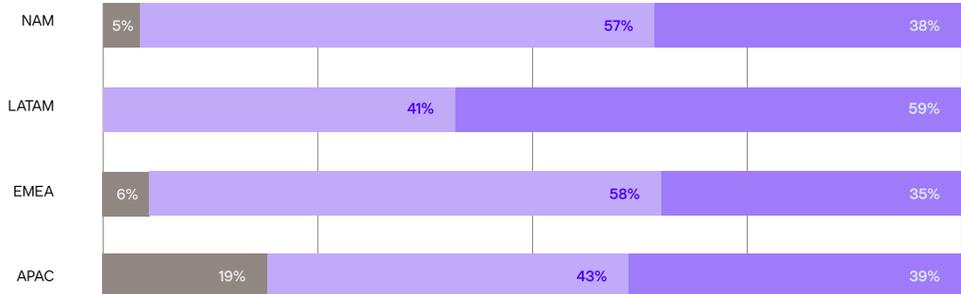
Organisational leaders who are millennials and Gen Z are more likely than baby boomers or Gen X to believe fraud can be completely solved with the right technology.

### EMEA organisations strongly believe that customer fraud can be mitigated but never completely solved

Customer fraud is a problem that we are trying to keep up with but feel helpless to truly solve

Customer fraud is a problem that we can mitigate somewhat, but never completely solve

Customer fraud is a problem that we can completely solve with the right technology



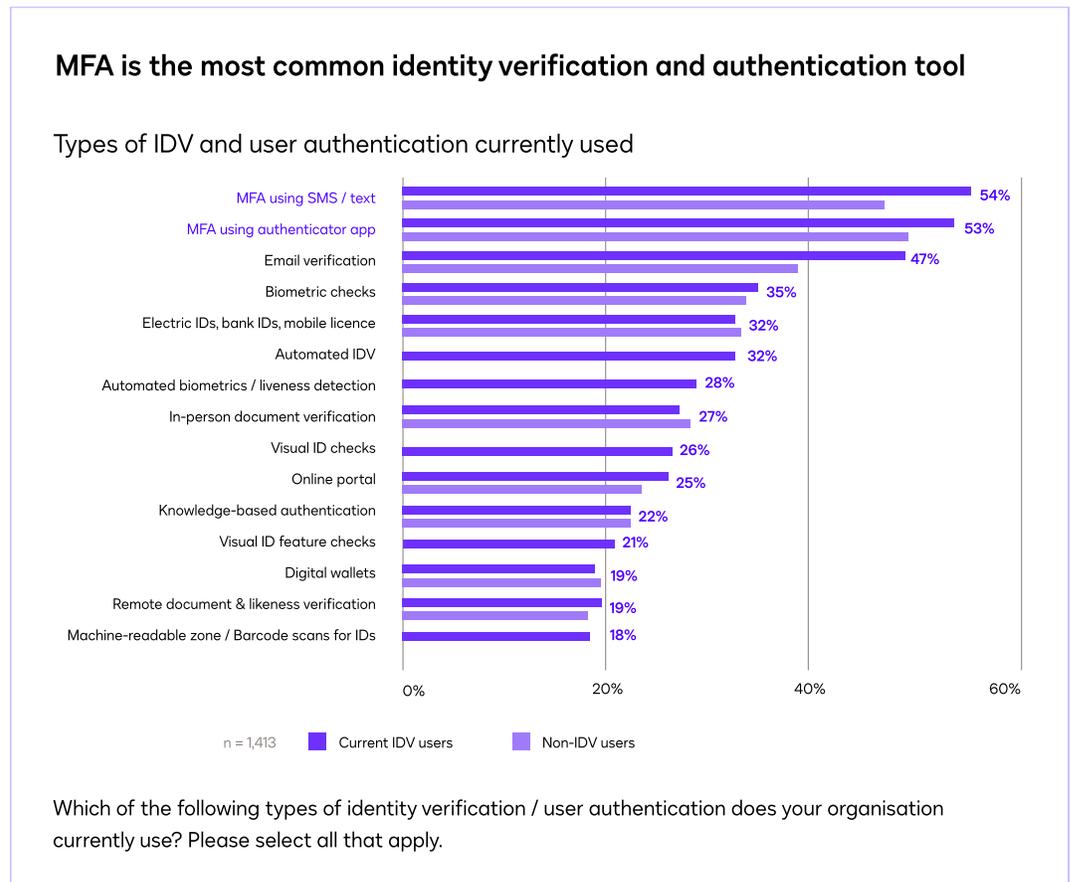
Which of the following statements would you agree with more?

# The most popular IDV tool is multi-factor authentication

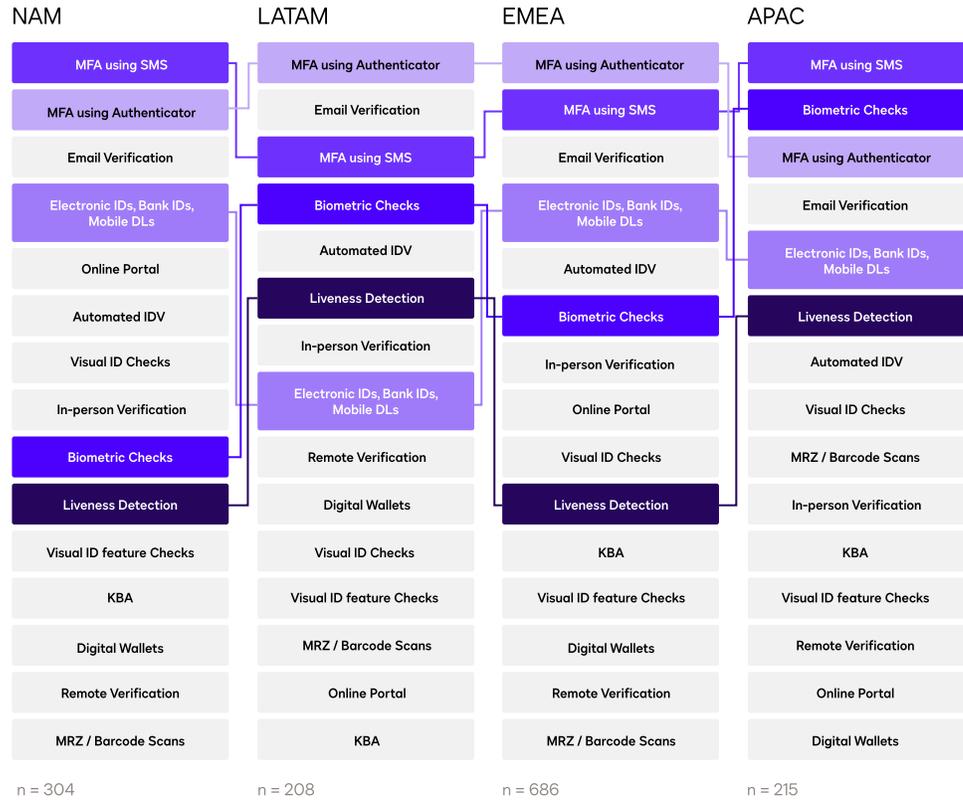
Organisations use IDV tools at a number of different touchpoints in the customer journey, but the most common stage is at username and password authentication, i.e. the stage where organisations report the greatest amount of fraud.

**Multi-factor authentication (MFA) is the most common tool used by organisations to verify and authenticate identities, whether through SMS and text or with an authentication app.**

MFA's popularity is justified: it is one of the oldest methods of digital identification, and customers are accustomed to it, reducing friction for users while providing an essential layer of security.



## MFA with an authenticator is more commonly used in EMEA, while liveness detection is used less



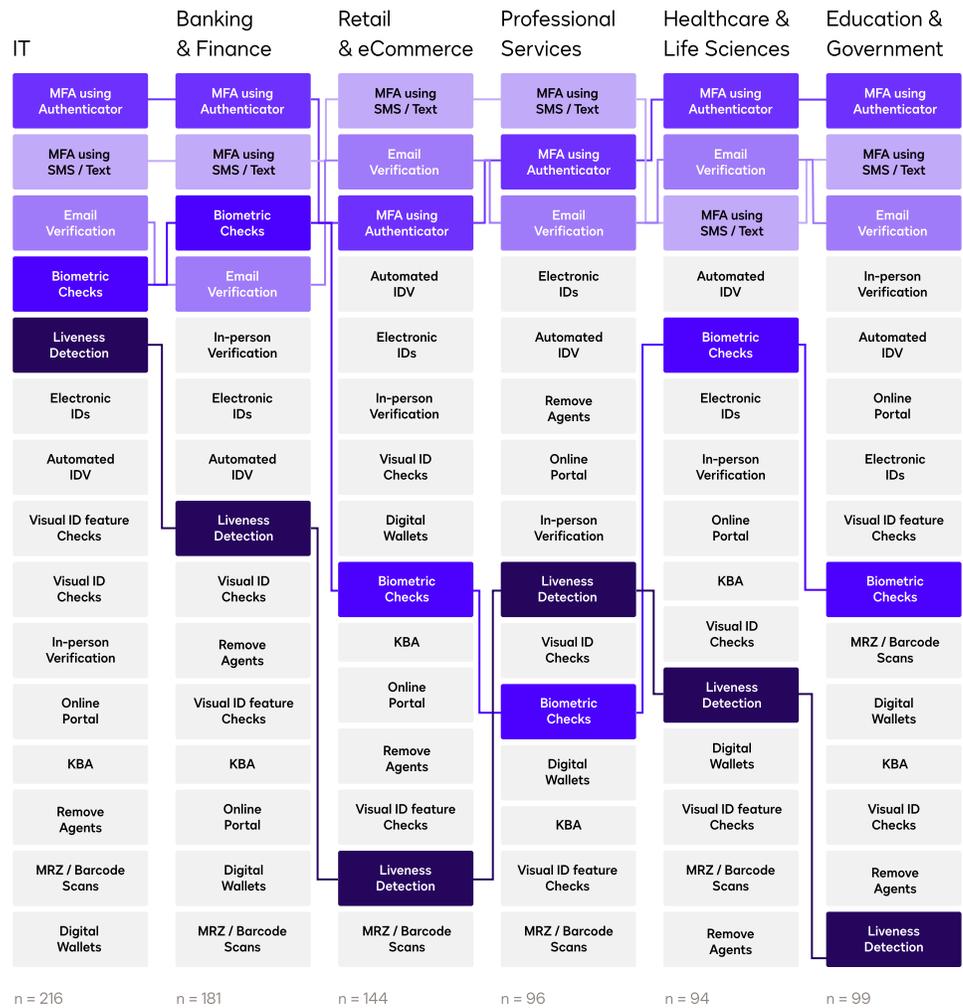
Which of the following types of identity verification / user authentication does your organisation currently use?

Organisations in the UK and Germany embrace biometric tools at a higher rate than France.

## Generational findings

Organisational leaders who are millennials or Gen Z believe biometrics are an important part of online authentication. According to **research from IDEX Biometrics**, 47% of this demographic used biometric security methods in the past month. Out of that group, 52% prefer biometric authentication to other methods.

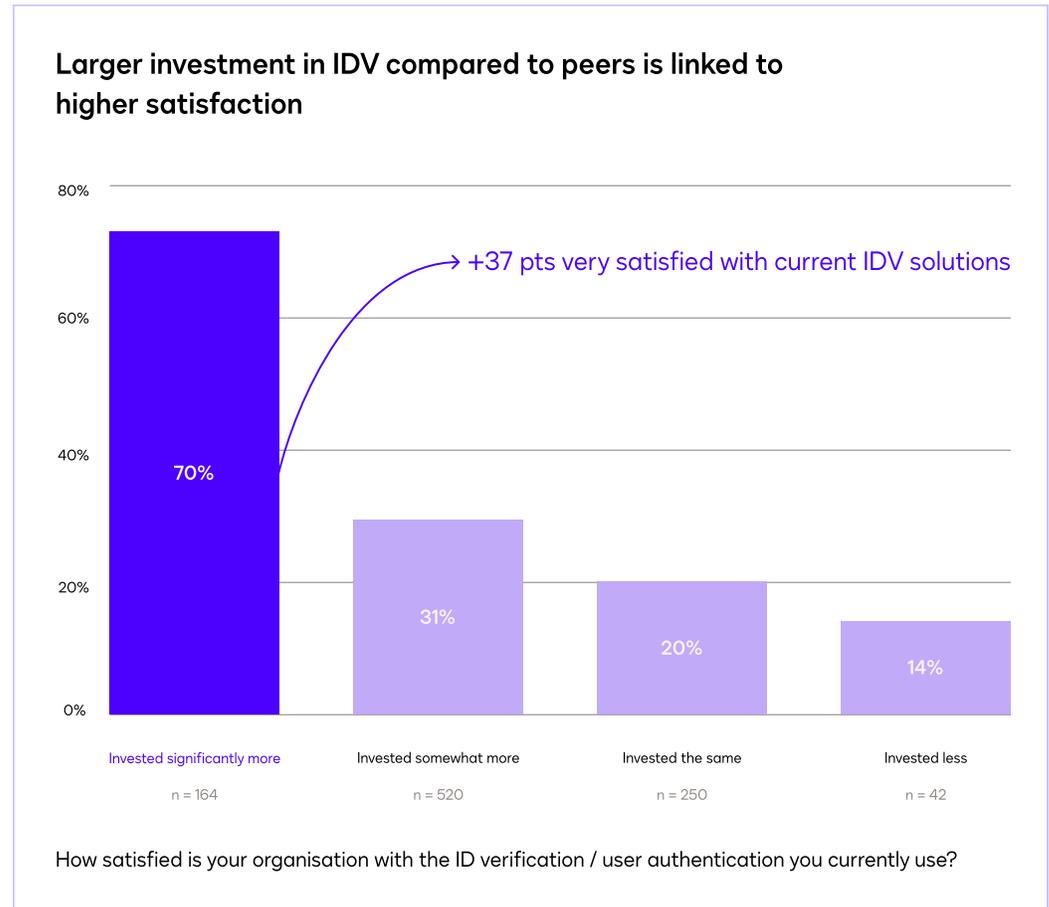
### Banking & finance and IT are the most likely industries to use biometric checks



Which of the following types of identity verification / user authentication does your organisation currently use?

# Businesses that invest more in IDV report higher satisfaction with IDV tools

While MFA is the most common tool, higher investment organisations differentiate themselves by pursuing additional measures. For example, high investors are more likely to deploy sophisticated tools like biometric checks and visual ID features at the sign-in point. This additional effort is linked to greater customer satisfaction with IDV solutions.

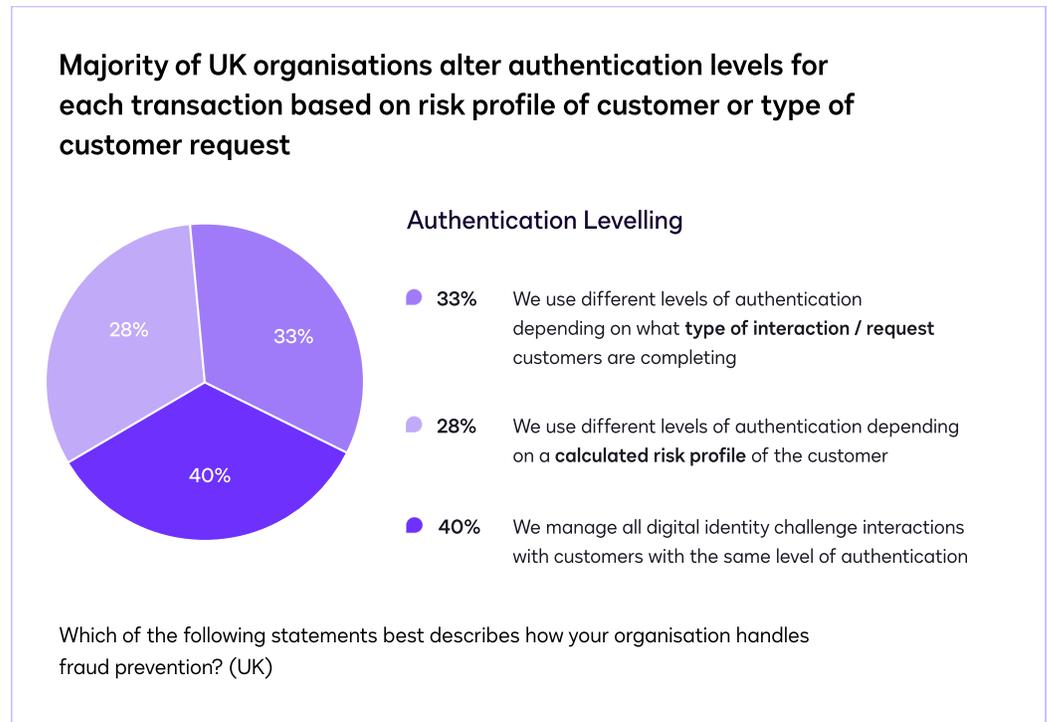


78%

of organisations in the UK are willing to put customers through intense levels of authentication, even if they add friction.

## Organisations use a variety of methods to determine the appropriate level of authentication for each customer

More than two in three organisations surveyed worldwide currently use authentication levelling in their security processes. In other words, an organisation may implement additional means of authentication for customers who are deemed high risk due to factors like their IP address, distance from sender, or country. They may also implement additional measures for specific types of customer interactions, like opening a new account or accessing finances.



Organisations use a range of criteria to determine the appropriate level of authentication for each customer interaction, and 69% in the UK say choosing the appropriate level is difficult. Businesses most often refer to internal policies and customer risk profiles, but they view **transaction value and cost-benefit analysis as the most important criteria** for assessing risk.

69%

say finding the appropriate level is difficult (UK).

## Regional findings

Customer risk profiles are the most popular method for determining authentication levels in the UK (47%), while the projected value of the transaction is the most popular choice in Germany.

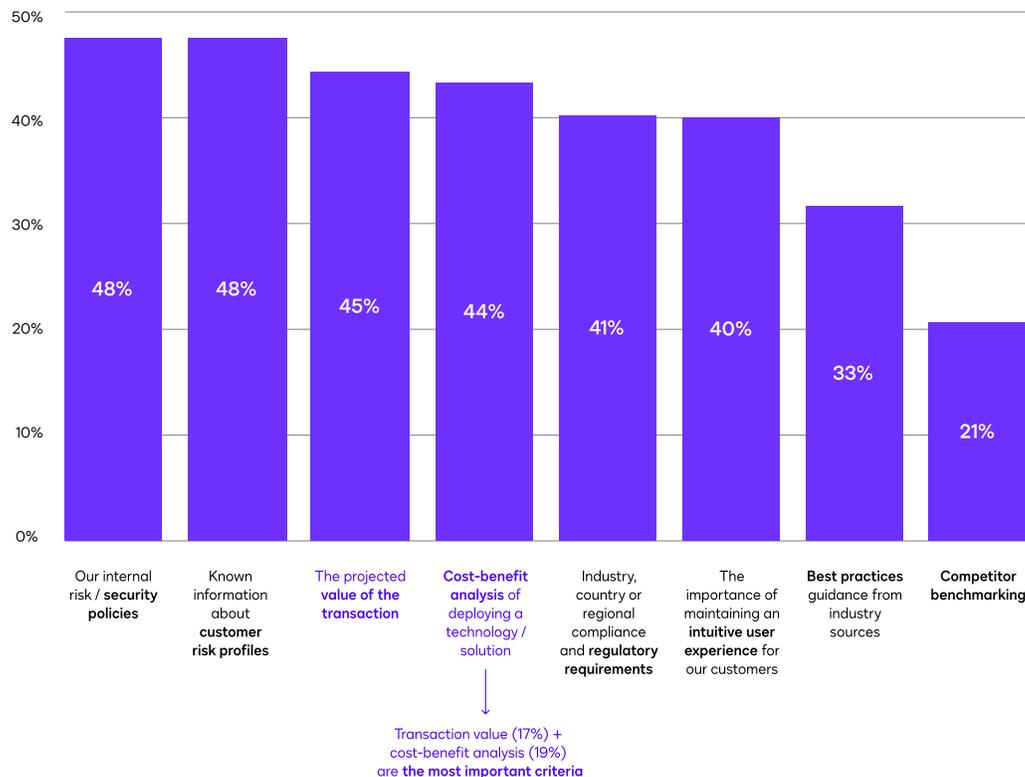
## Industry findings

Globally, regulatory requirements are the most popular method for determining authentication levels in the healthcare industry (29%). They are also more commonly used in real estate (25%) and banking and finance (20%) than in other industries.

### Internal policies and customer risk profiles are the most common methods for determining authentication level

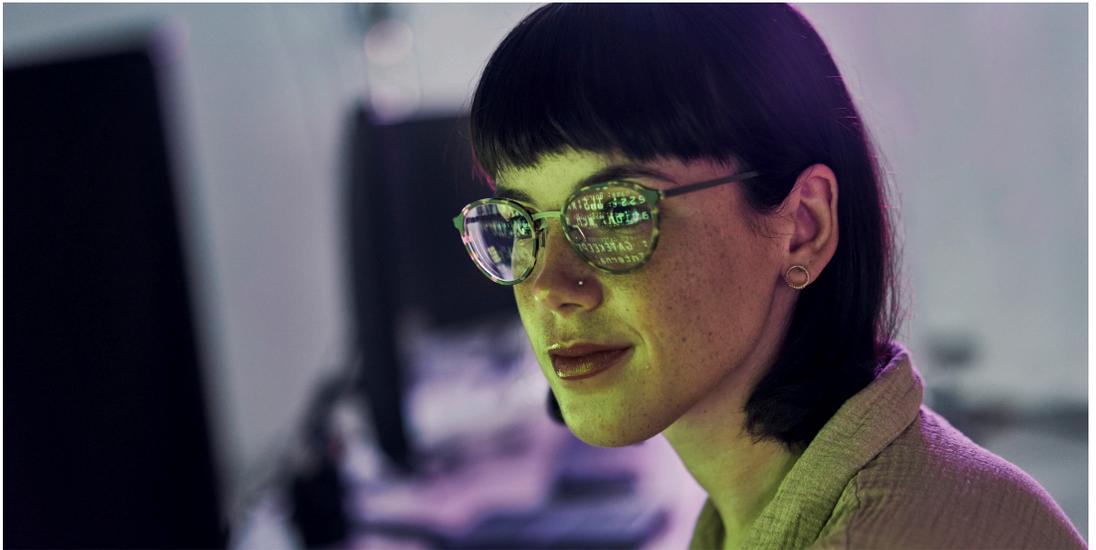
How do you decide the appropriate level?

Most used methods for determining authentication level



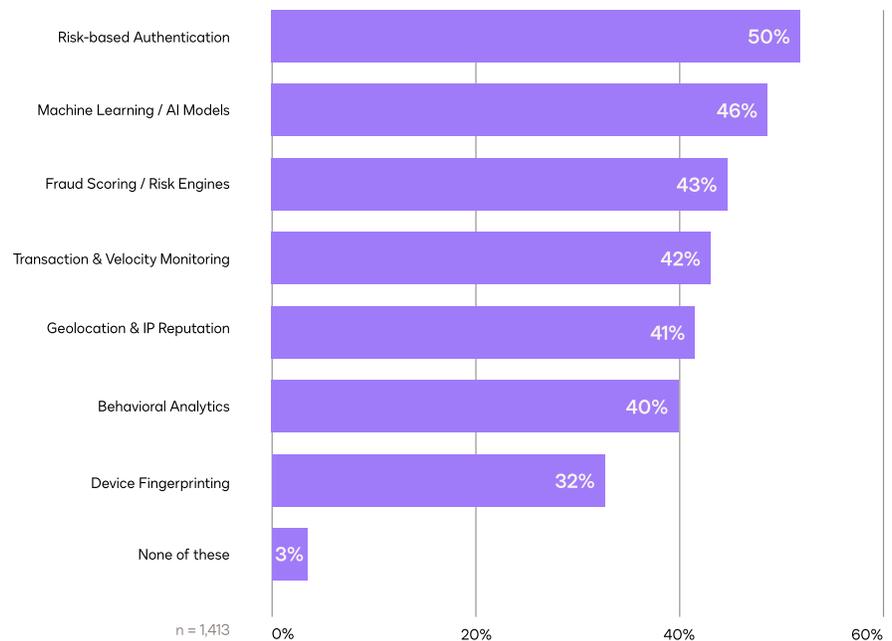
When determining what level of authentication to require of a user in a particular interaction, what is this decision based on?

In addition to following a variety of methods to assess customer risk, organisations use a range of tools. The most popular in the UK are risk-based authentication tools, which automatically adjust the required level of identity verification for each interaction based on a customer's assessed risk. A high-risk customer, for example, might trigger a biometric check, while a low-risk customer may only have to complete MFA.



## Risk-based authentication is the most popular tool for assessing customer risk

Tools for assessing authentication risk



Which of the following does your organisation use when assessing the risk associated with a particular interaction?

74%

of organisations in the UK plan to invest more in IDV solutions in the future.



## Organisations plan to continually invest in IDV

As the identity fraud landscape evolves and organisations continue to monitor strategies and tools for assessing risk and preventing fraud, no matter the size, region or industry, they remain steadfast on one belief: technology is the key to addressing this growing problem.

Decision-makers are particularly interested in the role biometrics and generative AI will play in combatting fraud. Compared to their current methods of authenticating and verifying users:

80%

of UK respondents believe biometric authentication will be more effective at reducing the risk of customer fraud.

81%

of UK respondents believe generative AI will be more effective at reducing the risk of customer fraud.

79%

of UK respondents believe risk-based assessment will be more effective at reducing the risk of customer fraud.

Among these three solutions, generative AI is considered the most appealing for customers, but many respondents are still wary of pushback. While 46% of organisations agree that their customers will be frustrated or upset if they adopt generative AI as part of their IDV process, 53% believe they will see a significant increase in fraud unless they do adopt it.

# Conclusion

Organisations around the world face a new risk landscape. The rise of generative AI and widespread adoption of digital transactions, coupled with lack of customer awareness of best security practices, have created a perfect storm for identity fraud. As the threat of fraud grows, the world's leading businesses are investing in cutting-edge tools like **identity verification** for protection.

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Our survey led to one finding above all else:  
**Technology is the key** to catching identity fraud throughout the customer journey while also reducing unnecessary spending.

With IDV, businesses can build powerful defences to safeguard their reputations and bottom lines. Even in tight business environments, investing in IDV brings long-term benefits of risk reduction and strong ROI. Customers, in turn, gain peace of mind knowing their personal information is secure while still enjoying a seamless digital experience.

The costs of identity fraud will only rise as AI advances. For organisations seeking to protect their customers, defend their reputations and appeal to young generations more accustomed to engaging with digital identity verification tools, taking a proactive stance and investing in anti-fraud technology has never been more important.

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## Key recommendations

### **Re-evaluate your anti-fraud defences.**

There's a reason why 77% of organisations in the UK evaluate new solutions at least once a year: **Fraudsters** are constantly learning and adopting new techniques. Businesses need to update their defences accordingly. The easiest way to do so is to continuously seek out and work with vendors who regularly refine their own tools in defence against the latest tactics and challenges.

### **Invest in AI-powered technology.**

According to the majority of decision-makers surveyed, the best way to mitigate the financial risk of identity fraud is investing heavily in technology. Rather than **spending** valuable resources on reactive measures, such as insurance, or more time hiring more talent, investing in AI-powered IDV solutions gives businesses the best advantage in fighting identity fraud, especially sophisticated threats like generative AI.

## **Identify the most vulnerable stages of your customer lifecycle.**

Account creation, login and payment authorisation are the steps of the customer journey most affected by identity fraud, according to our survey. These can be worthwhile areas to focus your initial efforts, but we recommend working with a qualified team to map out your own customers' journey and identify where your business faces the most risk.

## **Move past the false 'fraud protection vs user experience' dichotomy.**

The most savvy respondents in our survey noted that better fraud measures do not require compromising on user experience. On the contrary, IDV can complement the customer experience and enhance brand reputation. To provide the best IDV experience and ensure smooth implementation, encourage collaboration among your risk, product and growth teams and prioritise user-friendly products equipped with automation..

## **Calculate the ROI of your anti-fraud investments.**

Organisations that invested significantly more than their peers in IDV tended to save more than those that invested the same amount as their peers. To set yourself up for similar ROI, assess a few factors when researching new technology, including your expected decrease in fraud cost, headcount savings through automation, lower customer acquisition costs and revenue gains from new customers.

## **Embrace the expectations of young consumers.**

Millennial and Gen Z decision-makers at organisations are more likely to see the value of IDV tools in improving brand perception and security. There's a similar parallel with their customers: millennial and Gen Z consumers prefer innovative technologies like biometric authentication to other methods. Businesses can rest assured that adopting advanced technology will earn them the respect of young customers and employees, setting their organisations up for success now and into the future.

Learn more about [DocuSign Identify](#) and [Entrust](#).

# Appendix: Methodology

The Future of Global Identity Verification report is based on data collected during a quantitative, global online survey that ran from 6 November 2024 to 4 December 2024. During the data collection process, our research team<sup>2</sup> engaged with business and IT decision-makers across industries and regions. The decision-makers surveyed in this report work at organisations with anywhere from 150 to 10,000+ employees and share the challenge of verifying their customers' identities.

<b>Total</b>		<b>N=1,413</b>	
<b>Audience</b>		<b>Industry (Definition in Notes)</b>	
Current IDV Users	N=976	Priority	N=862
User Auth / Digital Users but no IDV	N=309	Second Priority	N=342
Manual Auth / No IDV Users	N=128	Non-priority	N=208
<b>Market*</b>		<b>Org. Size</b>	
United States & Canada NAM	N=304	150-499	N=254
United Kingdom EMEA	N=227	500-999	N=266
Germany EMEA	N=233	1,000-2,499	N=274
France EMEA	N=226	2,500-4,999	N=204
Mexico LATAM	N=104	5,000-9,999	N=213
Brazil LATAM	N=104	10,000+	N=202
Australia APAC	N=102	<b>Current IDV Solutions</b>	
Japan APAC	N=113	Docusign	N=395

\*Each market was fielded in their primary language

### Industries surveyed

Banking	Pharmaceuticals
Professional services	Retail & eCommerce
Education	Construction & engineering
Financial services	Manufacturing
Healthcare	Real estate
Insurance	Telecommunications
IT services	Energy & utilities
Life sciences	

### Roles surveyed

IT operations / IT department	Fraud analysis
IT security	Human resources
Purchasing and supply chain management	Customer service
Operations	Legal
Customer experience	Sales
Product management	
Risk management / compliance	

<sup>2</sup> Docusign and Entrust commissioned TL;DR Insights, a market research company, to conduct the survey.



## About Docusign and Entrust

Docusign brings agreements to life. Nearly 1.7 million customers and more than a billion people in over 180 countries use Docusign solutions to accelerate the process of doing business and simplify people's lives. With intelligent agreement management, Docusign unleashes business-critical data that is trapped inside of documents. Until now, these were disconnected from business systems of record, costing businesses time, money and opportunity. Using the Docusign Intelligent Agreement Management platform, companies can create, commit and manage agreements with solutions created by the No. 1 company in e-signature and contract lifecycle management (CLM). For more information visit <http://www.docusign.com>.

Entrust is an innovative leader in identity-centric security solutions, providing an integrated platform of scalable, AI-enabled security offerings. We enable organisations to safeguard their operations, evolve without compromise, and protect their interactions in an interconnected world – so they can transform their businesses with confidence. Entrust supports customers in over 150 countries and works with a global partner network. We are trusted by the world's most trusted organisations.

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