

Demographic Profile – In Summary

- **About three-quarters of the respondents are from law firms. Individual applicants make up only 3% of the total respondent population.**
- **About two-thirds of the respondents often contact the PTO during the year. There was a slight shift from often to occasional contact between 1998 and 1999.**
- **About three-quarters of the respondents are continuous customers and another 8% are frequent customers. There was a slight decrease in the number of continuous customers from 1998 to 1999.**

A Review of Results By:

- **Most and Least Satisfied Questions**
- **Most Dissatisfied Questions**
- **Major Changes from 1998 Data**
- **Questions Grouped into Six Factors**
- **Questions Pertaining to the Overall Trademark Process**
- **Questions Having the Greatest Impact on Overall Satisfaction (Key Drivers)**
- **Demographic Differences**
- **Content Analysis of Open-Ended Comments**

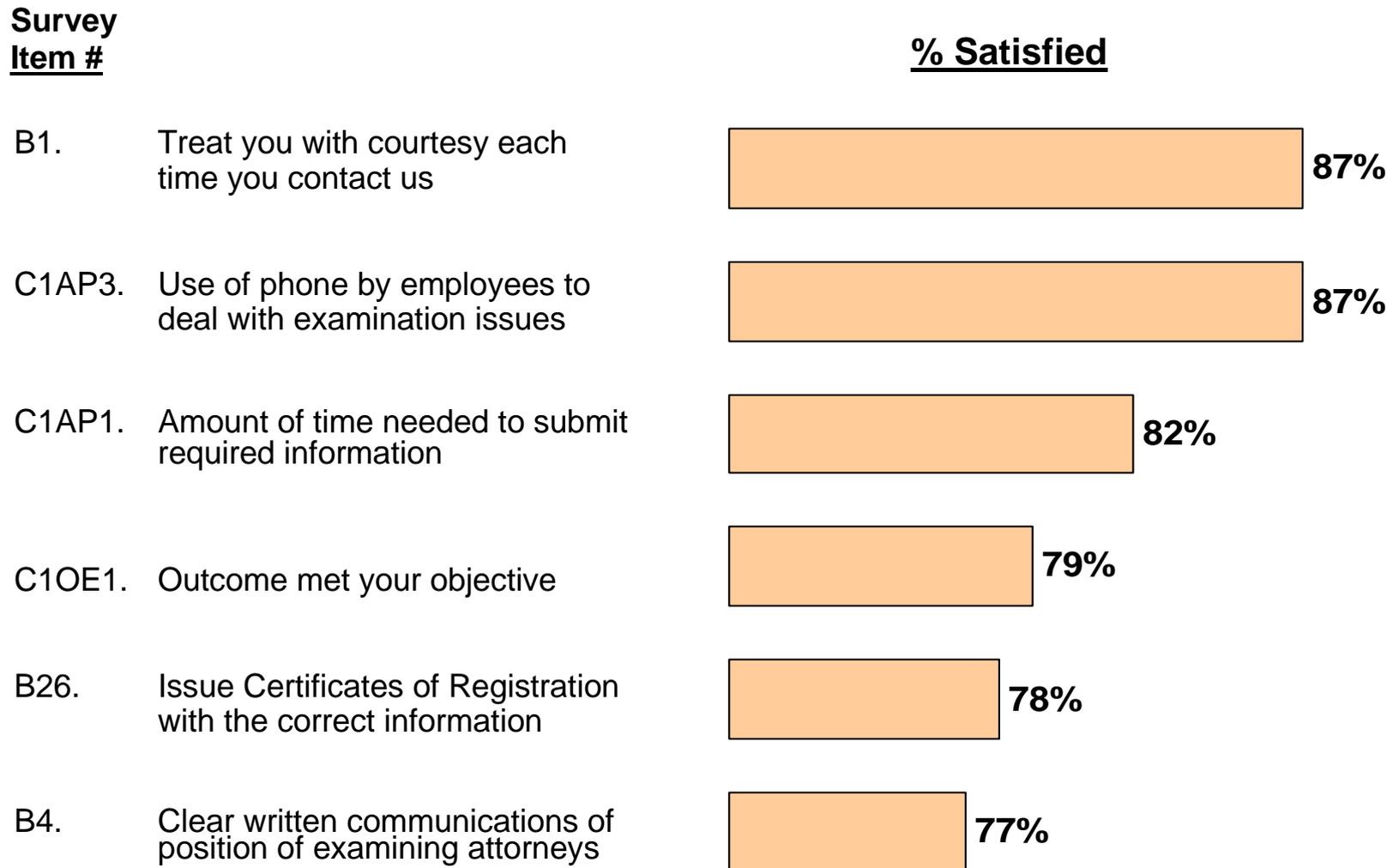


Absolute View of Results

A vertical decorative bar on the left side of the slide, featuring a teal-to-white gradient. It contains several stylized, embossed icons: a lightning bolt, a molecular structure, a gear, a flask, a registered trademark symbol (R), a hand holding a test tube, and another molecular structure.

Most and Least Satisfied Questions

What Respondents Were Most Satisfied With

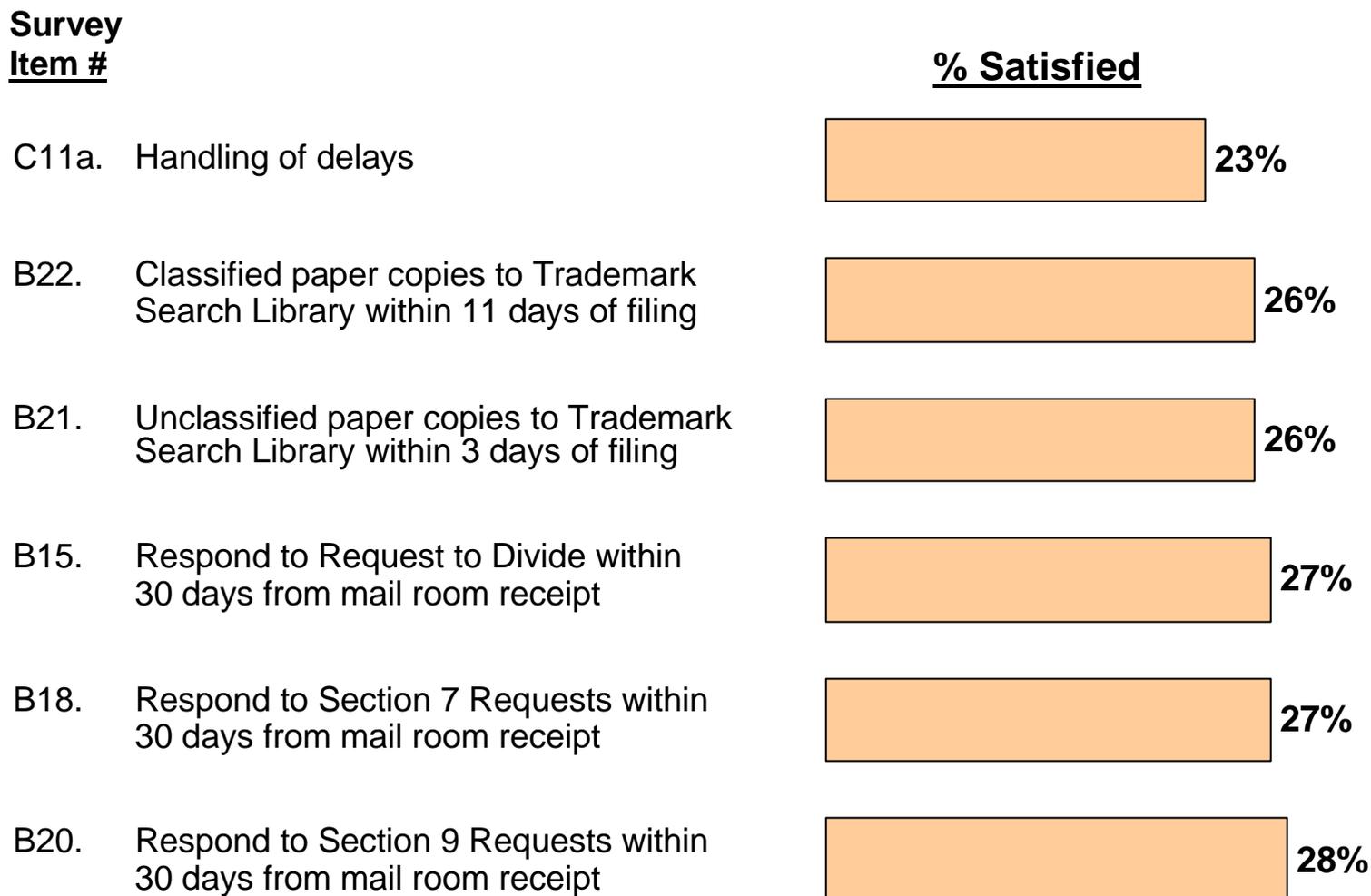


What Respondents Were Most Satisfied With (Cont.)

<u>Survey Item #</u>		<u>% Satisfied</u>
B25.	Issue Official Gazettes with the correct information	 75%
C1AP2.	Handling of issues related to goods/ services during examination process	 75%
B24.	Issue Notices of Allowance with correct information	 75%
C1OE2.	Fairness of examination	 74%

Courtesy, use of phone in dealing with examination issues, and clear written position of examining attorneys had the highest levels of satisfaction.

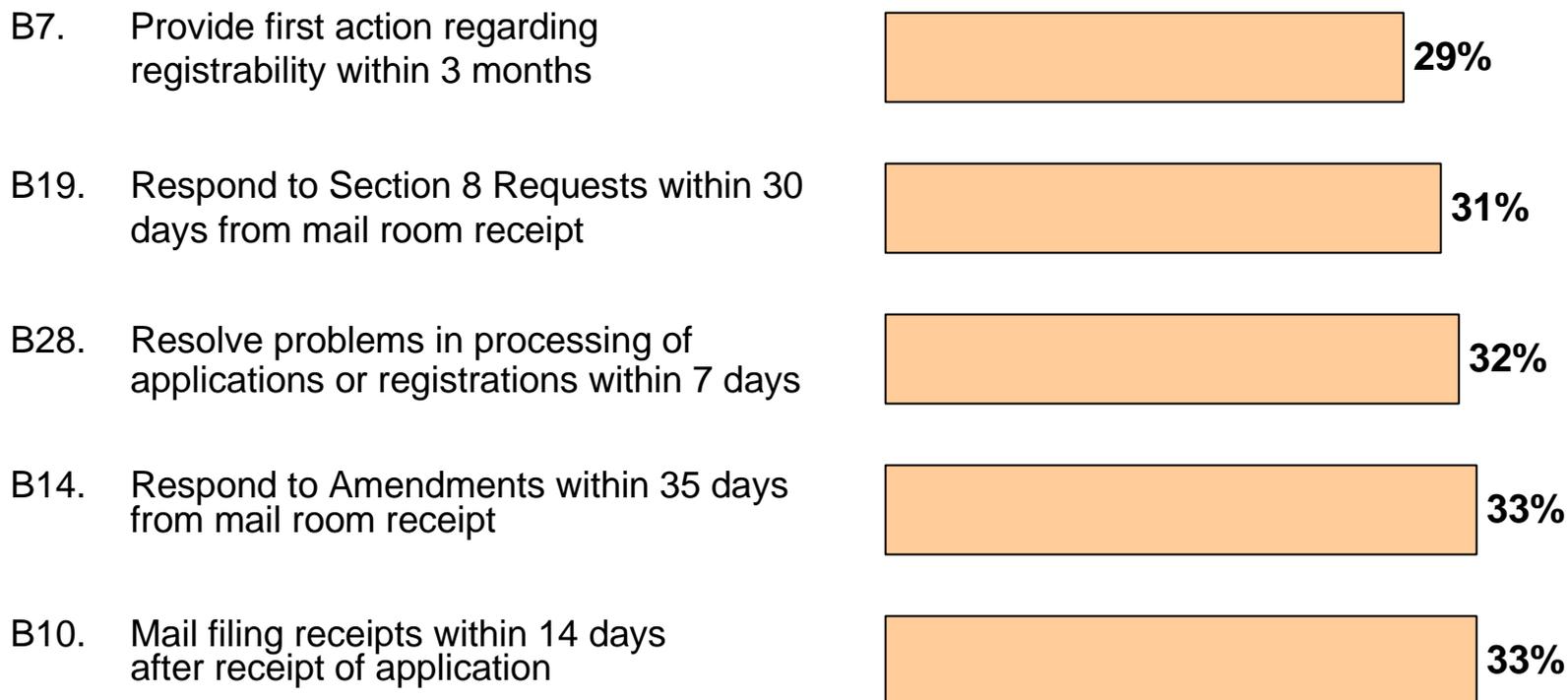
What Respondents Were Least Satisfied With



What Respondents Were Least Satisfied With (Cont.)

**Survey
Item #**

% Satisfied

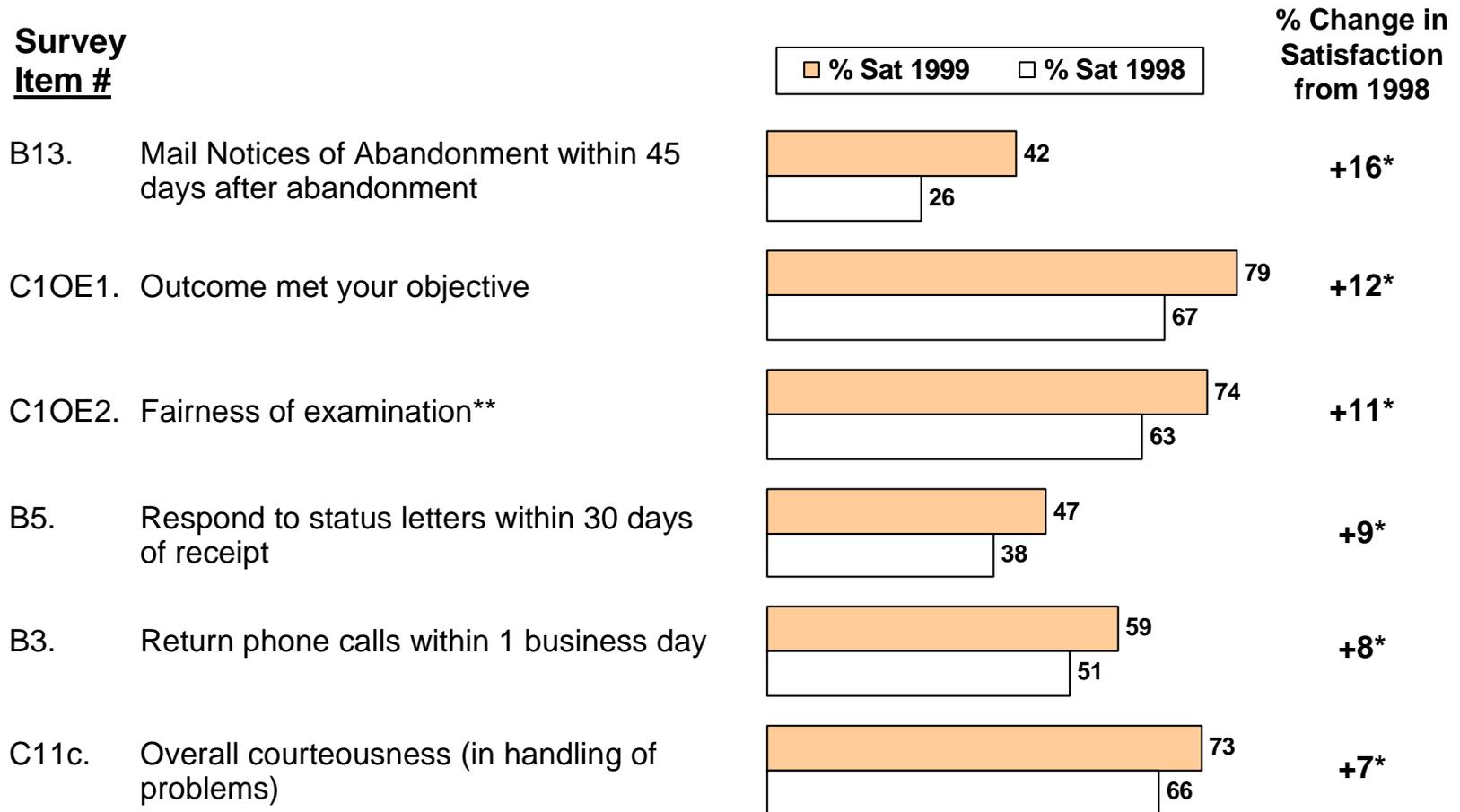


Respondents were least satisfied with PTO meeting several process time standards.



Comparison with 1998 Results

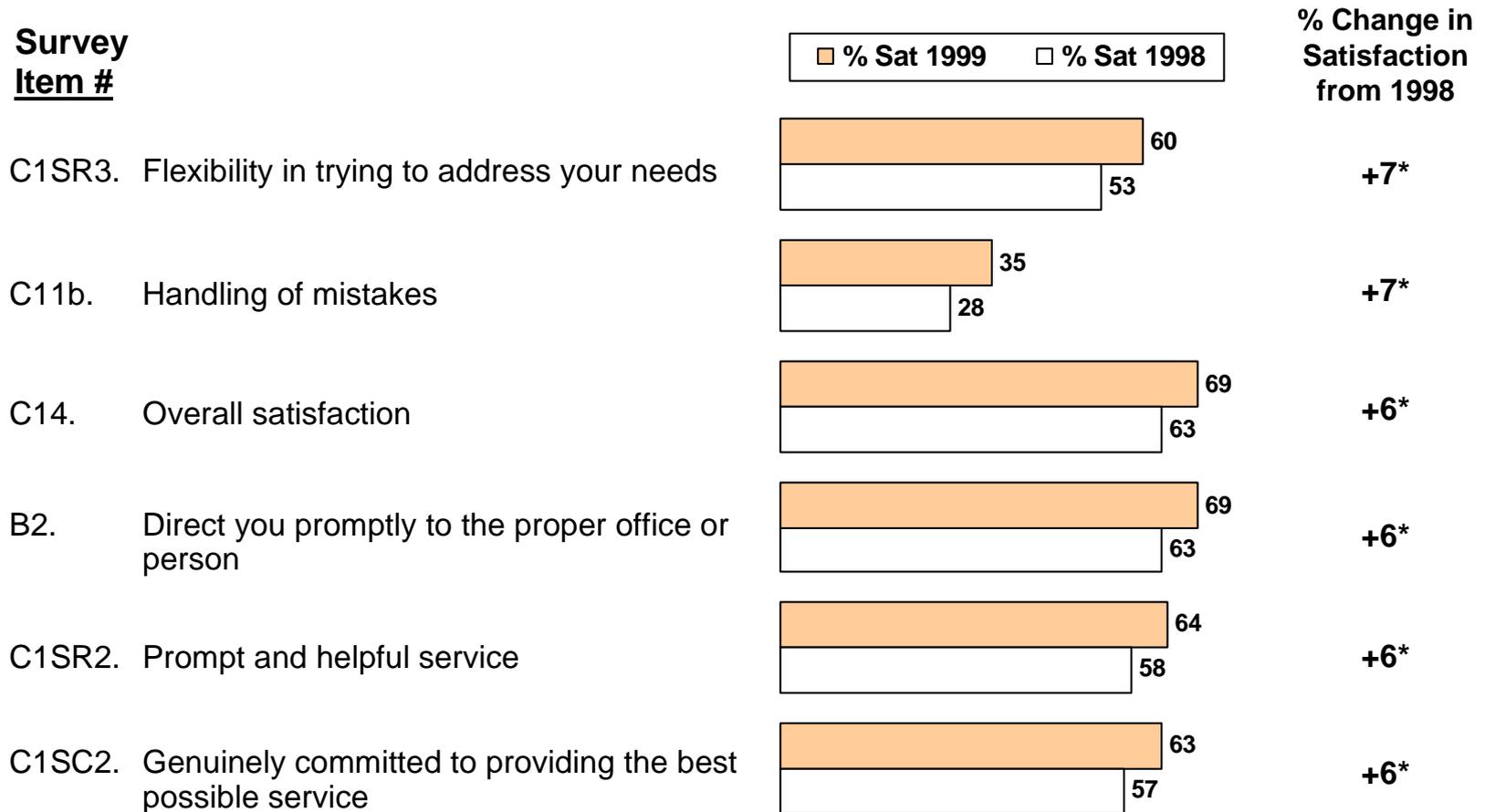
Major Improvements from 1998 (6% or more) Ranked by % Change



* Percent change from 1998 to 1999 is statistically significant.

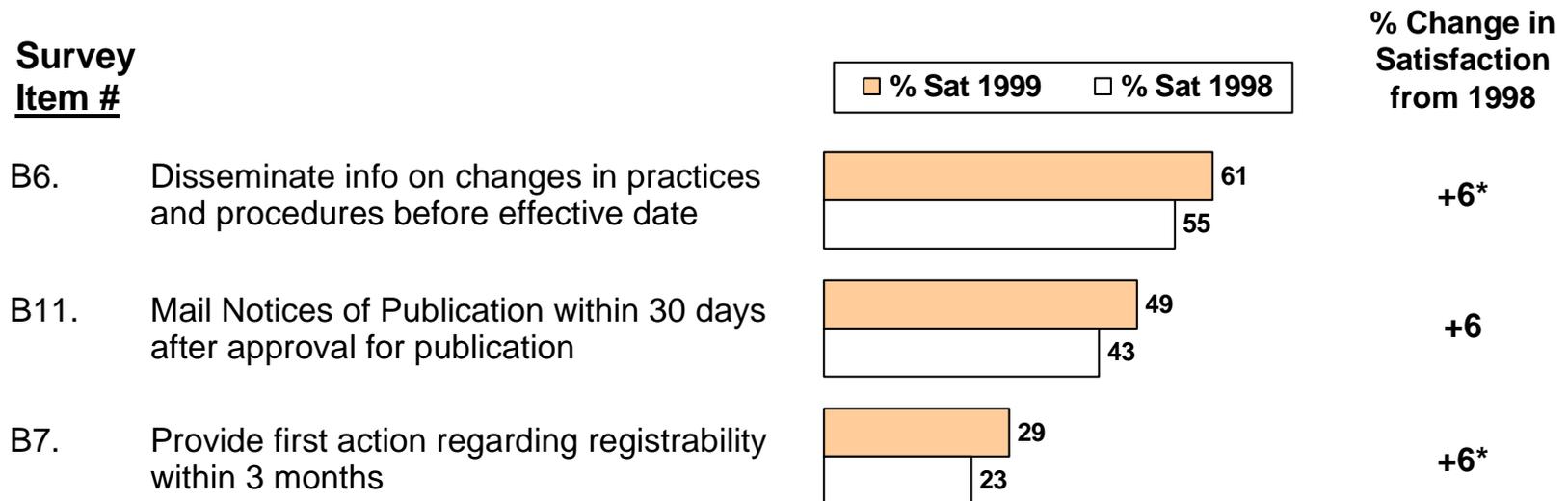
** 1998 question used the term "decision" instead of "examination."

Major Improvements from 1998 (6% or more) Ranked by % Change (Cont.)



* Percent change from 1998 to 1999 is statistically significant.

Major Improvements from 1998 (6% or more) Ranked by % Change (Cont.)

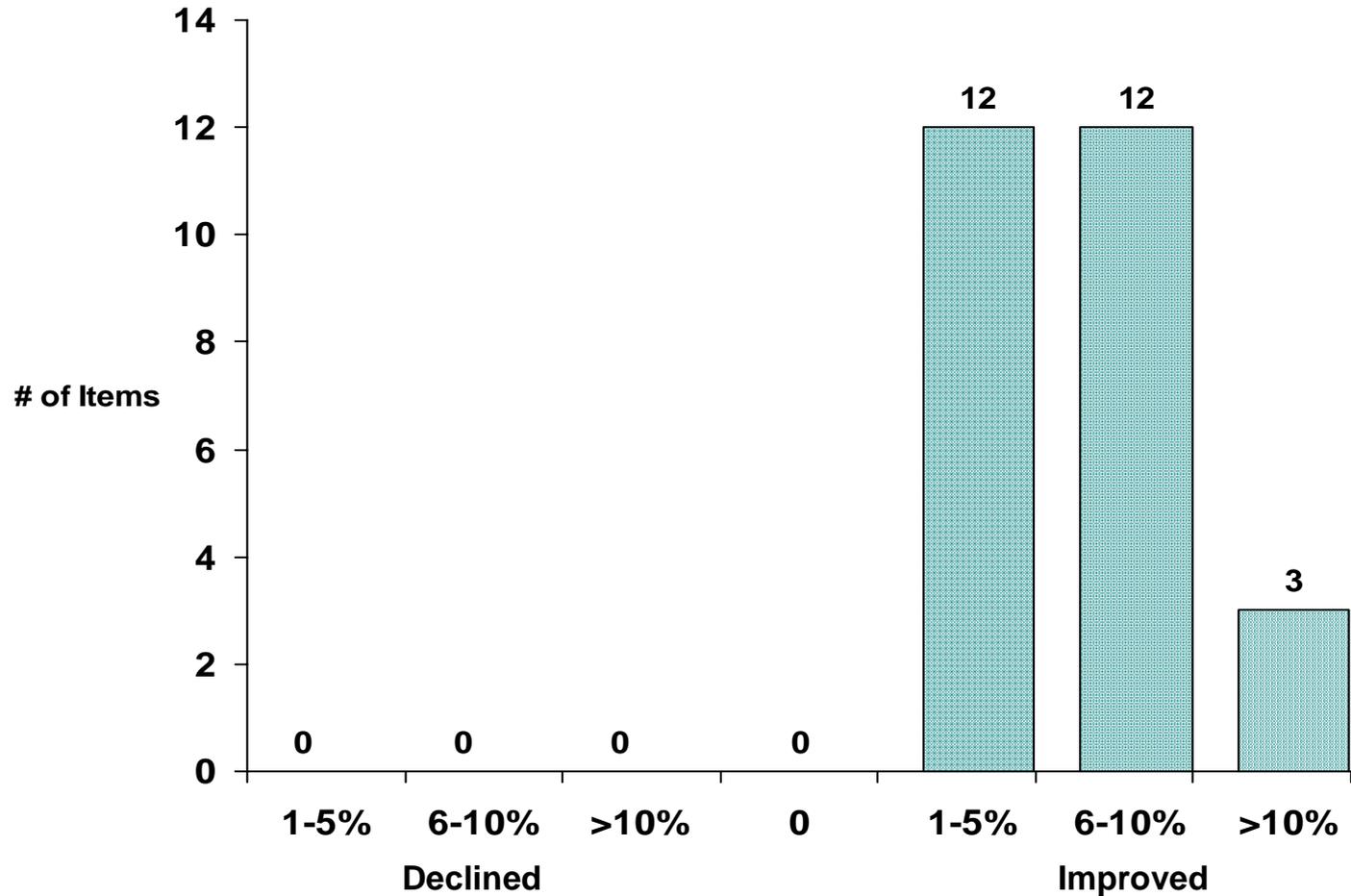


* Percent change from 1998 to 1999 is statistically significant.

The timely mailing of abandonment notices, fairness of the examination process, and the timely response to status letters and phone calls had the largest increases in satisfaction from 1998.

Trends 1998 to 1999

(27 comparable items - differences in % satisfied)

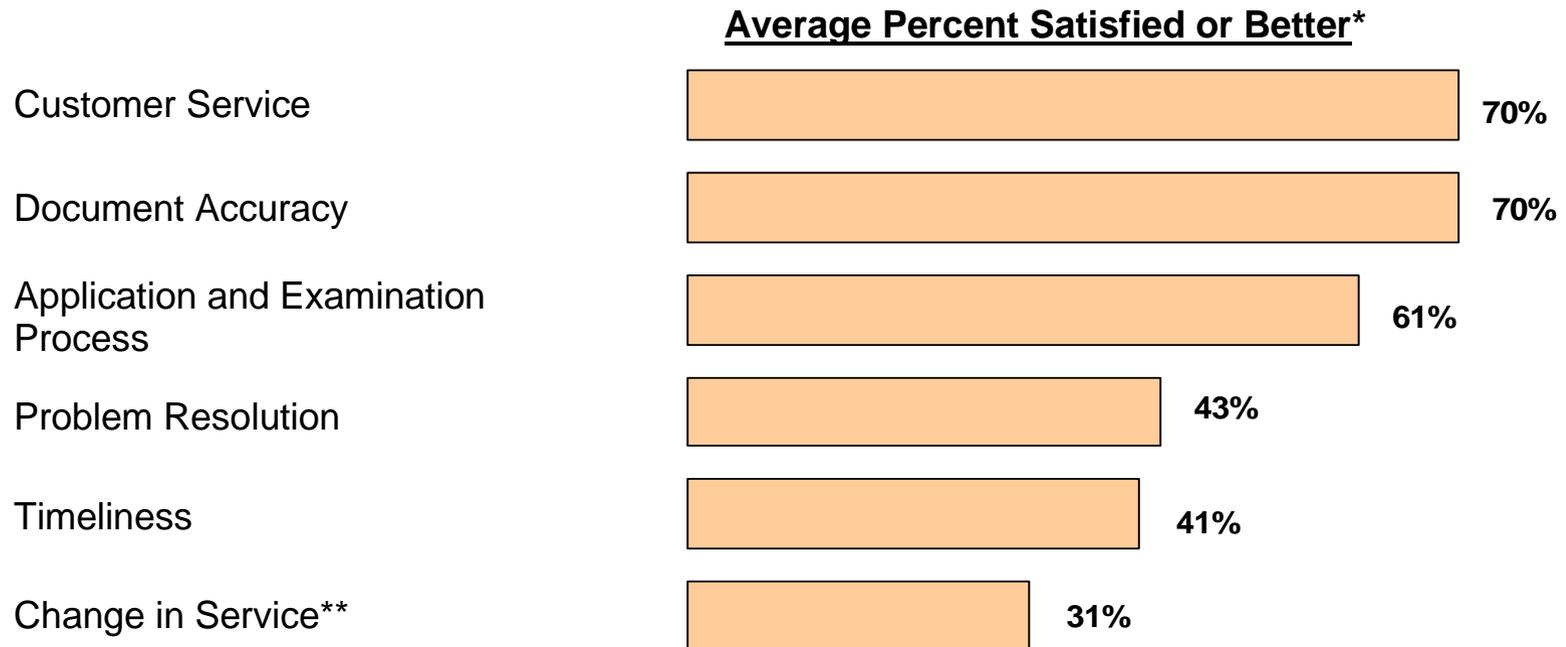


All comparable items improved from 1998. 15 of the 27 comparable items improved by 6% or more.

The Six Factors

- **Application and Examination Process**
- **Customer Service**
- **Timeliness**
- **Problem Resolution**
- **Document Accuracy**
- **Change in Service**

How Well Did Trademark Do On Each Factor?



* For each respondent, average percent satisfied is calculated by summing the number of items for which a person responded 4 (satisfied) or 5 (very satisfied) then dividing by the total number of items answered and multiplying by 100. For the change in service factor, a 4 or 5 indicated a response of better or much better, respectively.

** Average percent better.

The Document Accuracy and Customer Service factors are the most positive and the Problem Resolution and Timeliness factors are the least positive in terms of satisfaction. The Change in Service factor averages 31% “better.”

A vertical decorative bar on the left side of the slide, featuring a teal-to-white gradient. It contains several embossed scientific icons: a lightning bolt, a stylized atom, a gear, a flask, a hand holding a test tube, a registered trademark symbol (R), a hand holding a test tube, a stylized atom, and a lightning bolt.

Analyzing Consistency in the Examination Process

Consistency of the Examination

Since only 50% are satisfied with examination consistency (C1AP7) and there were numerous write-in comments about the lack of consistency by examining attorneys in the examination process, data was analyzed to determine if satisfaction with refusals is impacting perceptions about consistency and to determine the impact of consistency on adequacy of the explanation/reason for the office action and overall satisfaction.

		<u>% Satisfied</u>	
		C1AP7. Consistency of examination performed by examining attorney	
C1AP5. Appropriateness of refusals made under 15 USC § 1052(d) – Likelihood of Confusion	Satisfied	75%	
	Dissatisfied	23%	
C1AP6. Appropriateness of refusals made under 15 USC § 1052(e) – Merely Descriptive, Surname Geographic	Satisfied	77%	
	Dissatisfied	22%	

Satisfaction/dissatisfaction with the appropriateness of refusals substantially impacts perceptions about consistency in the examination process. For example, of those satisfied with the appropriateness of refusals under 1052(d), 75% are satisfied with consistency. When dissatisfied, only 23% are satisfied with consistency.

Consistency of the Examination (Cont.)

C1AP7 Consistency of examination performed by examining attorney	<u>% Satisfied</u>	
	C1AP8 Adequacy of explanation or reason for office action	C14 Overall satisfaction
Satisfied	94%	87%
Neutral	49%	71%
Dissatisfied	28%	35%

Perceptions about the consistency of the examination have a substantial impact on satisfaction with the adequacy of the explanation/reasons for the office action and on overall satisfaction. For example, of those that are satisfied with consistency, 94% are satisfied with the adequacy of explanation. When dissatisfied with consistency, only 28% are satisfied with the adequacy of explanation.



Change in Service

Change in Service Ranked by % Satisfied

Survey Item #	% Worse	% Same	% Better	% Change Better from 1998
C13e. Staff responsiveness compared to previous filings	8	53	39	+10*
C13b. Timeliness compared to previous filings	16	47	37	+15*
C13a. Overall service compared to previous filings	8	59	33	+5
C13d. Staff competence compared to previous filings	13	56	31	+6*
C13f. First Office Action pendency compared to previous filings	21	51	28	**
C13g. Problem resolution compared to previous filings	8	68	24	**
C13c. Outcome of the process compared to previous filings	7	70	23	+11*

* Percent change from 1998 to 1999 is statistically significant.

** New question in 1999.

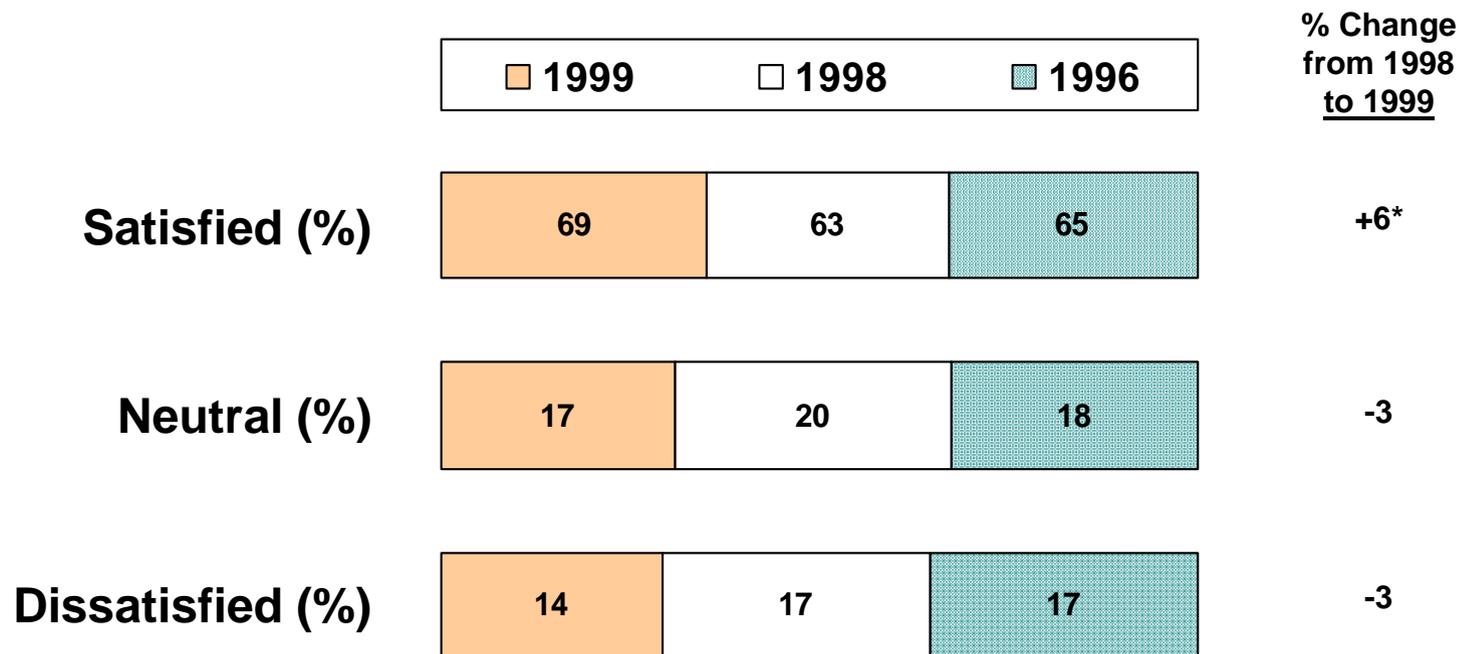
Over one-third of respondents believe timeliness and staff responsiveness have improved compared to previous filings. Results show substantial improvement in timeliness, outcome, and staff responsiveness compared to 1998 levels.



*Questions Pertaining to the
Overall Trademark Process
(Overall Questions)*

Overall Question - Overall Satisfaction

C14. Considering all of your experiences with the PTO trademark process, how satisfied are you OVERALL?

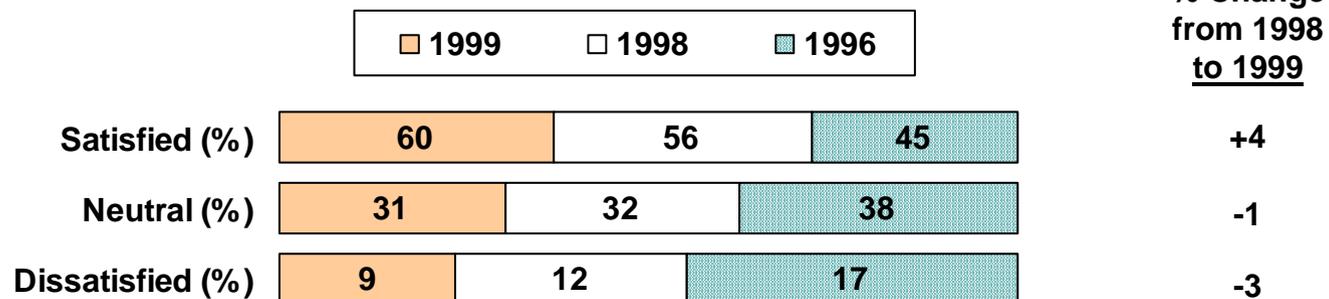


* Percent change from 1998 to 1999 is statistically significant.

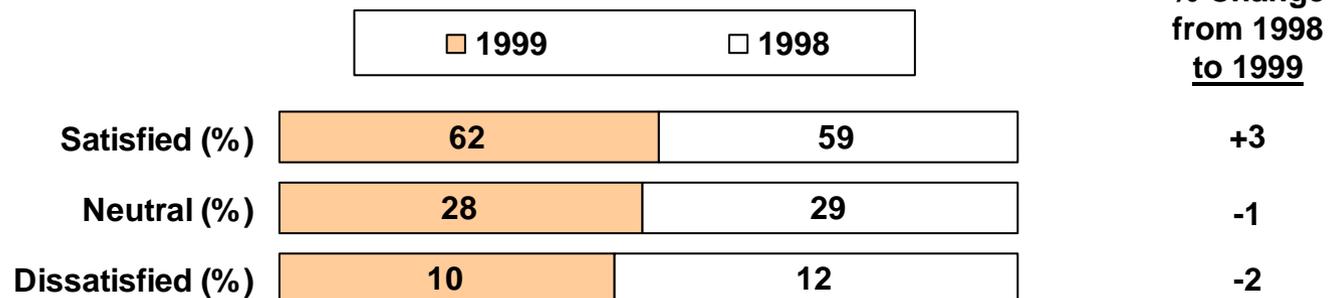
Overall satisfaction increased significantly (6%) and dissatisfaction declined by 3% compared to 1998.

Overall Questions - Price and Value

C1P1. PTO fees for trademark applications*



C1P2. Good value for PTO fees paid for application*



**This question was not asked in 1996.

* In 1999, the term “fees” was used instead of “costs.”

There was a slight increase in satisfaction with fees and value for the fees paid compared to 1998 levels.



Key Drivers:

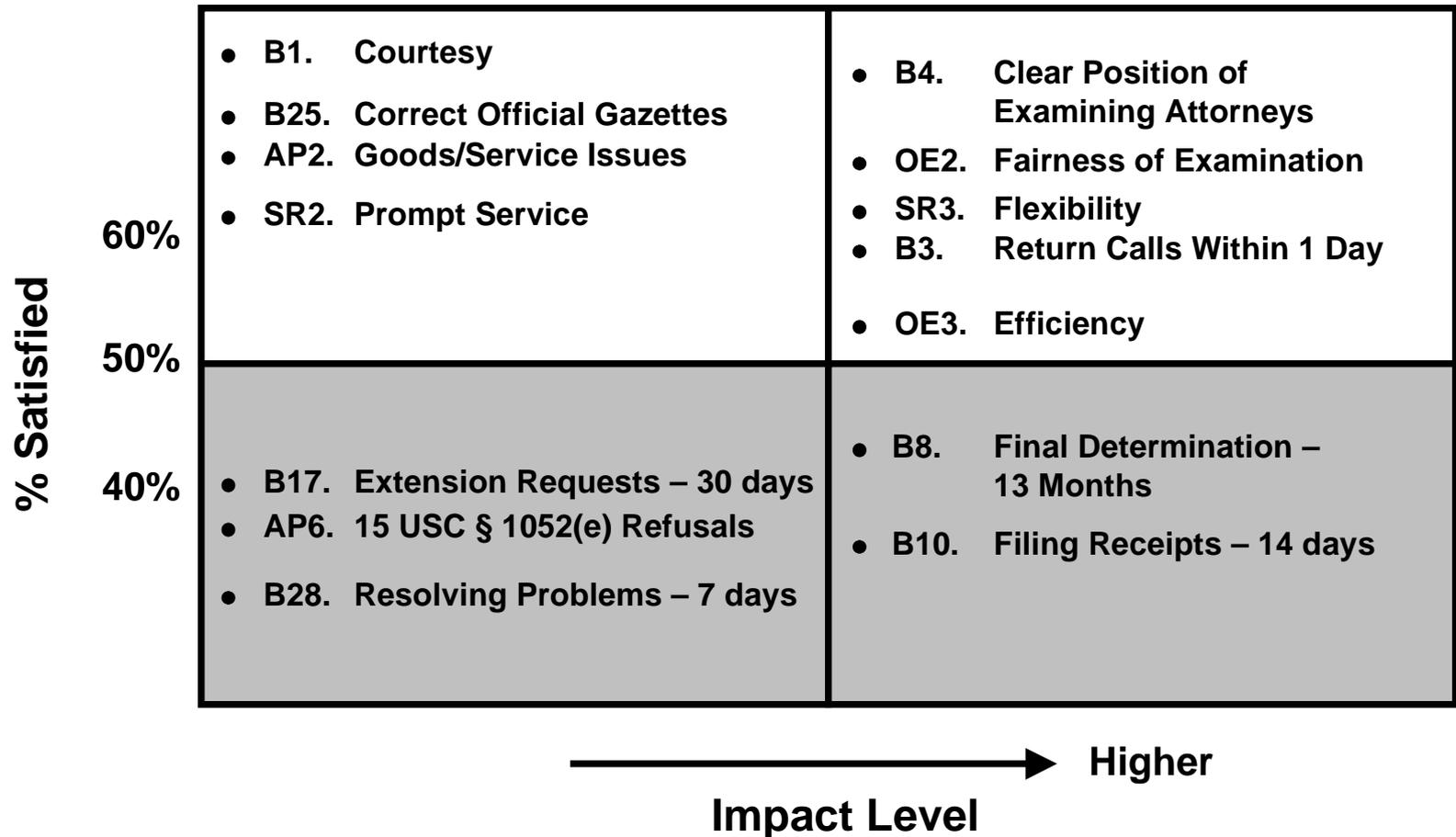
*Questions That Have the
Greatest Impact on Overall
Satisfaction*

***Key Drivers of Overall Satisfaction –
Separately by Service Standards and Trademark Process
(Ranked by Level of Impact)***

<u>Service Standards</u>	<u>% Satisfied</u>	<u>Trademark Process</u>	<u>% Satisfied</u>
B3. Return phone calls within 1 business day	59%	C1OE2. Fairness of examination	74%
B8. Provide final determination regarding registrability within 13 months	42%	C1OE3. Efficiency of examination process	54%
B4. Clear written communications of position of examining attorneys	77%	C1SR3. Flexibility in trying to address your needs	60%
B10. Mail filing receipts within 14 days after receipt of application	33%	C1AP2. Handling of issues related to goods/ services during examination process	75%
B1. Treat you with courtesy each time you contact us	87%	C1SR2. Prompt and helpful service	64%
B25. Issue Official Gazettes with the correct information	75%	C1AP6. Appropriateness of refusals made under 15 USC § 1052(e) – Merely Descriptive, Surname, Geographic	39%
B28. Resolve any problems in processing of applications or registrations w/in 7 days	32%		
B17. Respond to Extension Requests within 30 days from mail room receipt	40%		

Timeliness of the process, specific aspects of customer service, and examination quality represent the priority areas.

Key Drivers – Separately for Service Standards and Patent Process Items Impact Level vs. % Satisfied



Priorities are providing a final determination within 13 months, mailing filing receipts within 14 days, responding to Extension Requests within 30 days, appropriateness of refusals under USC § 1052(e), and resolving problems within 7 days.



Electronic Filing

Electronic Filing

Given that the option of filing electronically has been in existence for over a year, specific questions about it were included on this year's survey

C2. Have you filed electronically?

Yes	6%
No	94%

For those that filed electronically:

C3. What method did you use to file electronically?

e-TEAS	67%
PrinTEASE	24%
Both	9%

**C4. How did you learn about electronic filing capabilities?
(open-ended item)**

- **Most respondents appear to have heard about electronic filing either through INTA or on the PTO website**

Electronic Filing (Cont.)

C5. How satisfied are you with the following?

	<u>Dissatisfied</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Satisfied</u>
a. Ease of access to the electronic filing system	10%	10%	80%
b. Ease of use of the on-line form	20%	0%	80%
c. Clarity of instructions for filing electronically	11%	5%	84%
d. Ease of payment for electronically filed applications	10%	0%	90%
e. Ability to receive answers to questions about electronic filing	19%	12%	69%

C6. Did the availability of electronic filing influence your decision to file an application?

Yes	20%
No	80%

The Impact of Electronic Filing

Given that only 6% of the respondents filed electronically, no concrete conclusions can be drawn from such a small sample. With that caution, the following comparisons were made between those that filed electronically and those that did not.

	<u>% Satisfied</u>	<u>% Satisfied</u>	<u>% Satisfied</u>
	B7. Provide first action within <u>3 months</u>	B23. Issue filing receipts with the correct <u>information</u>	C14. Overall <u>satisfaction</u>
C2. File electronically?			
Yes = 6% (n=23)	24%	69%	78%

No = 94% (n=397)	29%	49%	68%

Overview of Open-Ended Comments

- **This year 3% more respondents wrote comments compared to last year (69% vs. 66%).**
- **Unusually high number of comments and phone calls received from respondents**
- **Those who responded were very interested in being heard and expressing their opinions**
- **Findings support quantitative results**



Conclusions

Conclusions

- **Overall, the results show that the Trademark Office is providing service to its customers in a helpful, professional, and friendly manner. Customer Service is the most positive factor, followed by Document Accuracy**
- **Overall satisfaction is just below 70% and it improved by 6% over the 1998 level**
- **All comparable items improved in satisfaction over 1998 levels. In fact, 15 of the 27 comparable items improved by more than 5%. Noteworthy improvements include:**
 - ◆ **Key aspects of customer service (genuinely committed to providing the best possible service, returning telephone calls, directing customers promptly to proper office or person, and providing prompt and helpful service)**
 - ◆ **Fairness of examination**
 - ◆ **Timeliness in responding to status letters, Notices of Abandonment, and Notices of Publication.**

Conclusions (Cont.)

- **In comparing the most recent filing to previous filings, over 35% of the respondents believe that overall service and staff responsiveness are better now**
- **However, there are three areas that still require focused attention if overall satisfaction is to continue to improve to over the 70% level:**
 - ◆ **Overall timeliness and meeting certain key time standards established by the Trademark Office**
 - ◆ **Prompt response to reported problems, especially on lost or misplaced materials and PTO-generated mistakes**
 - ◆ **Dealing with perceptions of inconsistent rejection decisions**



Recommendations

Recommendations – The Vital Few

- **Review the time standards where 30% or more of the respondents are dissatisfied with the performance of the Trademark Office in meeting the standards. Develop an operational improvement plan for either meeting the standards or establishing more realistic expectation goals:**
 - ◆ **First office actions**
 - ◆ **Filing receipts**
 - ◆ **Statements of Use**
 - ◆ **Extension Requests**
 - ◆ **Section 8 Requests**
- **Review quality control procedures for 1052(d) and 1052(e) refusals and identify improvement opportunities for assuring consistency in the application of the standards. Given that less than 50% are satisfied with consistency and the appropriateness of refusals, there appears to be opportunities for improvement. For example, have the Office of Trademark Quality Review identify recurring problems and issues and recommend appropriate corrective actions.**

Recommendations – The Vital Few (Cont.)

- **Continue to work on establishing a problem management system that categorizes problems, assigns responsibility for all reported problems, documents them, establishes resolution goals, and organizes a close-out process. Emphasis should be placed on the timeliness of resolution, given that only 32% believe their problems are resolved quickly and only 32% believe the 7 day resolution standard is being met.**
- **Implement a quality control process for the accuracy of all filing receipts. Establish quality goals, communicate the goals to the public, and track along with the 14 day timeliness goal.**
- **Establish appropriate timeframe estimates for First Office Actions and send this estimate along with the filing receipts**
- **Improve the document control system for storing, transferring and tracking materials. Explore the use of the Trademark Assistance Center as a focal point for tracking down lost or misplaced materials.**

Recommendations – The Vital Few (Cont.)

- **Continue to stress returning phone calls within one business day. This recommendation is based on the write-in comments, the fact that one-quarter of respondents are dissatisfied with return calls, and it being a key driver. In addition, check on the magnitude of difficulty in reaching the Trademark Assistance Center and make changes as necessary to assure ease of access.**
- **Given that only 6% of the respondents are using electronic filing, provide appropriate incentives to expand its use. One example is to provide electronic filers with faster service. In addition, given the complaints about document accuracy, publicize the advantages of electronic filing in terms of data entry accuracy.**