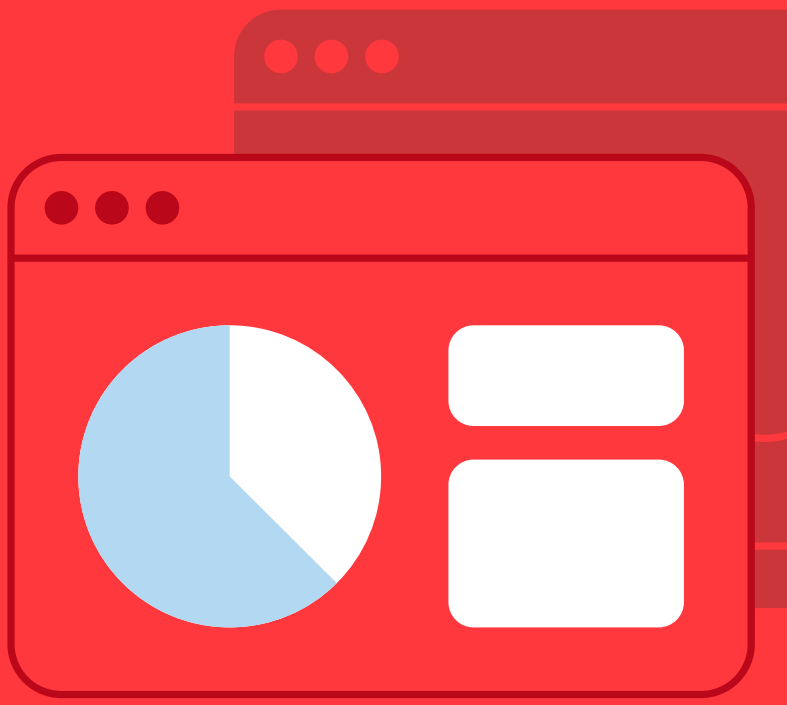
AD Mortgage

Mortgage Professionals Pulse Report & 2026 Outlook

A nationwide snapshot of broker sentiment, performance, challenges & expectations for 2026



NMLS# 958660

68.9%
Say 2025 was better than 2024

7.58/10
Satisfaction score

Client Satisfaction
2025's top success driver

Economic & Market Conditions
Top challenge

Rates
Borrower hesitation driver

84.5 %
Expect loan volume to increase in 2026

Referral Network Growth
Top strategic priority

Refinance
Expected leading borrower group in 2026

As 2025 drew to a close, mortgage professionals were assessing their year—reviewing results, noticing borrower patterns, and thinking about what could define 2026. To gather a clearer picture, we conducted a brief industry pulse survey in late November and early December.

Shared through our partner network and AD Mortgage communication channels, the survey received responses from over 300 professionals nationwide.

They spoke to their performance, the challenges they encountered, and the factors they believe will influence the year ahead.

This report reflects those insights. It does not attempt to predict outcomes or set direction; instead, it offers a grounded look at how practitioners experienced 2025 and how they're approaching 2026.

Positive Trends
- Brokers feel optimistic: 57.6% enter 2026 "Motivated"
- Client satisfaction rises as a performance engine

Persistent Risks
- Rates and economic uncertainty dominate borrower and broker concerns
- Client acquisition still challenging for 31.4%

Opportunities
- Potential refi surge
- Non-QM expansion (30.4%)
- Strong push toward relationship-driven business

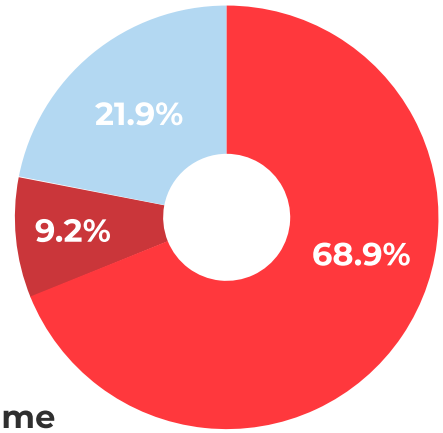
Broker Performance in 2025

Strong satisfaction despite volatility

Brokers reported a **7.58/10 satisfaction score**, with **68.9% saying they performed better in 2025 than in 2024**. Only 9.2% felt their performance declined. This suggests that even in a high-volatility environment, most professionals maintained or improved their business outcomes.

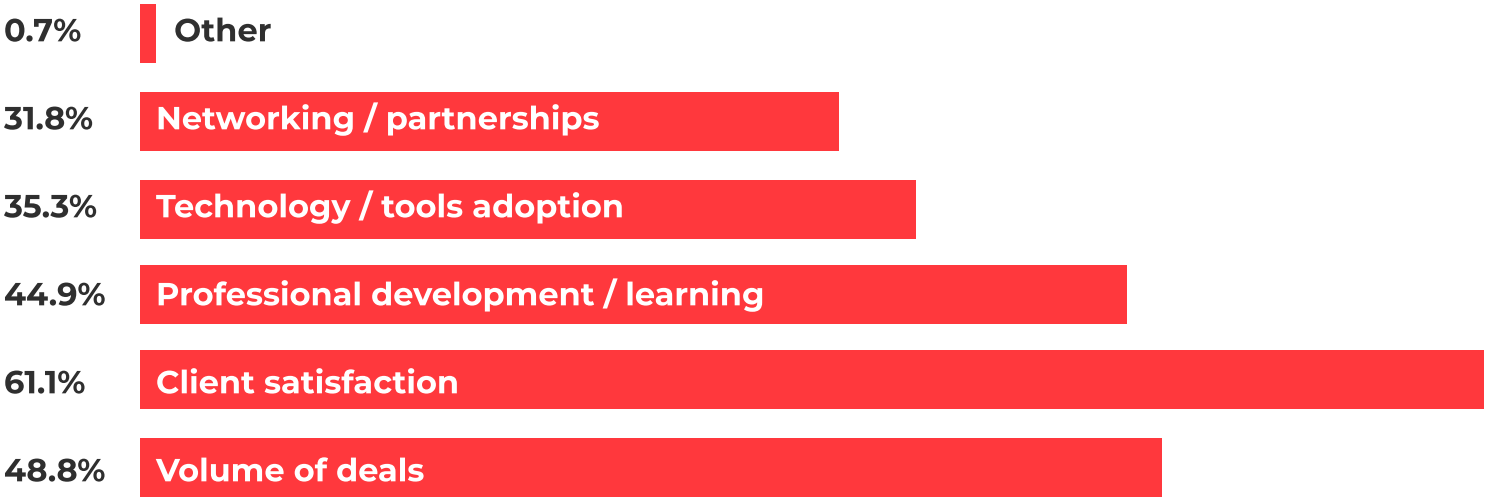
7.58/10
Satisfaction score

Comparison with 2024:



Where Brokers Experienced the Strongest Results

The clearest success area of 2025 was **client satisfaction, highlighted by 61.1%** of respondents. Nearly half (48.8%) also reported stronger deal volume, and a similar share emphasized professional development (44.9%) and technology adoption (35.3%) as key positives. Networking and partnerships (31.8%) rounded out the list, demonstrating that relationship-building and continuous learning were important themes.



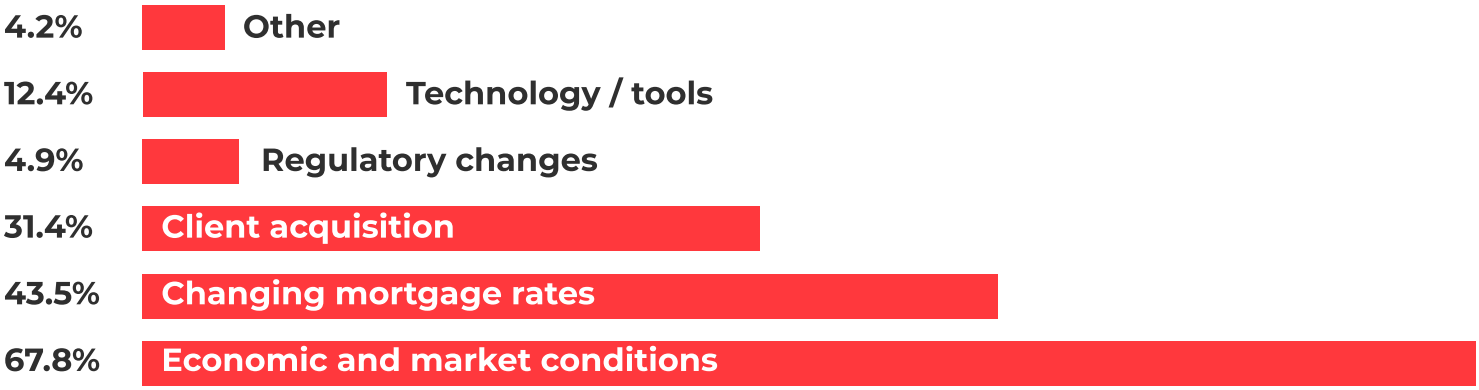
Max Slyusarchuk, CEO at AD Mortgage:

"What we hear from our partners matches this. Many brokers felt that 2025 gave them more control, more efficiency, and better outcomes than the year before."

Market Challenges & Borrower Barriers

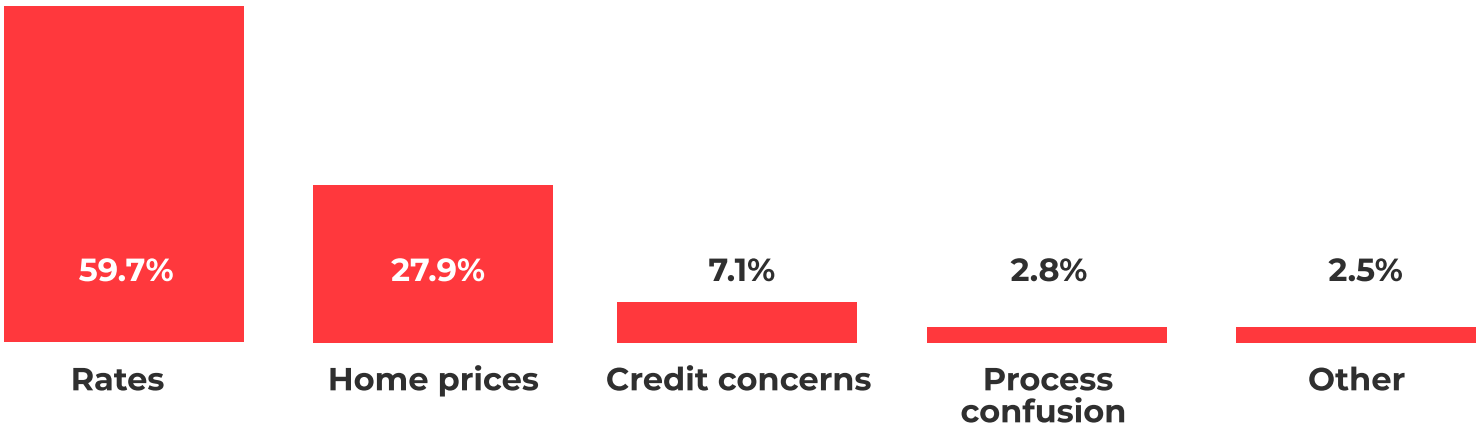
Macro Conditions Overshadowed Internal Challenges

The most significant obstacles for brokers were external: 67.8% cited broad economic and market conditions, while 43.5% pointed to rate volatility. Client acquisition challenges were noted by 31.4%, whereas internal or operational factors – like tools or regulatory shifts – played a far smaller role.



Rate Barrier for Borrowers

Borrower hesitation was driven overwhelmingly by interest rates, and **59.7% selected rates as the main reason** clients didn't move forward. Home prices were the second most cited barrier at 27.9%, while credit concerns made up just 7.1% of responses. Only 2.8% said borrowers struggled with understanding the process.



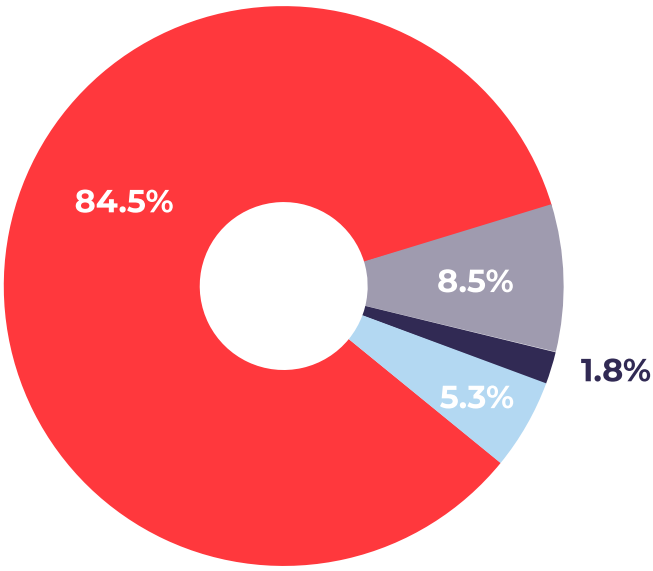
Max Slyusarchuk, CEO at AD Mortgage:

"It's interesting that understanding the process is no longer a big blocker. Borrowers are informed and they just want to pick the right moment. And rates obviously drive that decision."

Outlook for 2026

Clear Expectations for Increased Loan Activity

Looking ahead, brokers overwhelmingly expect growth with **84.5% anticipating higher loan volume in 2026**. Only 1.8% expect business to decline, while 8.5% foresee similar levels of activity. This near-consensus suggests confidence in greater borrower engagement over the coming year.



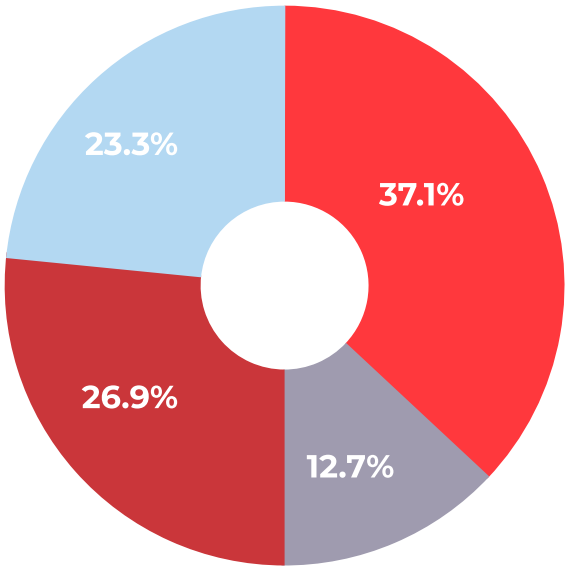
- **Increase**
- **Decrease**
- **Stay about the same**
- **Too early to say**

Which Borrower Groups are Expected to Lead?

Brokers expect **refinance clients to play the biggest role in 2026 (37.1%)**, followed by **first-time buyers (26.9%)** and **Non-QM borrowers (23.3%)**. Investor activity is seen as a smaller but still meaningful segment at 12.7%. This mix points to a diversified borrower landscape with notable strength in refis and Non-QM.

Max Slyusarchuk, CEO at AD Mortgage:

"We keep seeing the same thing on our side. Borrowers want flexibility whether it's better terms or Non-QM options. These numbers honestly reflect what's happening day to day."



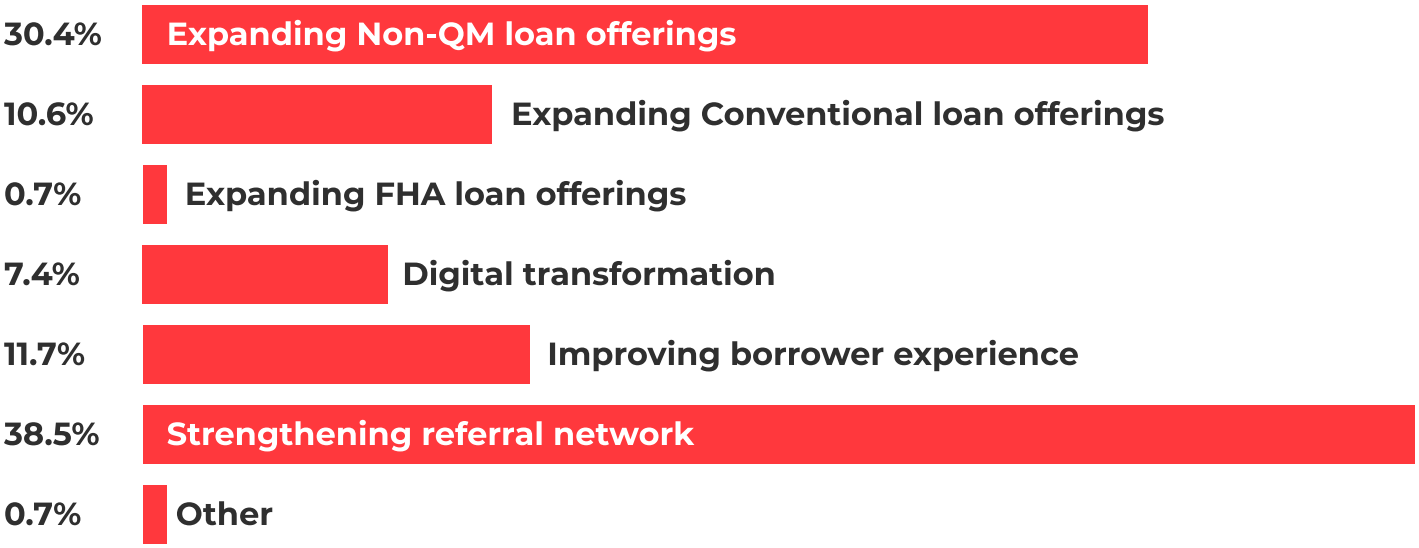
- **Refinance borrowers**
- **Investors**
- **Non-QM borrowers**
- **First-time buyers**

Activity Strategic Priorities Shaping 2026

The top strategic focus areas for brokers next year will be:

1. **Strengthening referral networks – 38.5%**
2. **Expanding Non-QM offerings – 30.4%**
3. Improving borrower experience – 11.7%

These priorities reflect a shift toward relationship-driven growth and greater product flexibility. Brokers appear to be aligning their strategies around efforts that directly influence client trust and conversion. Here's a closer look at what brokers told us they'll be prioritizing in 2026.



Max Slyusarchuk, CEO at AD Mortgage:

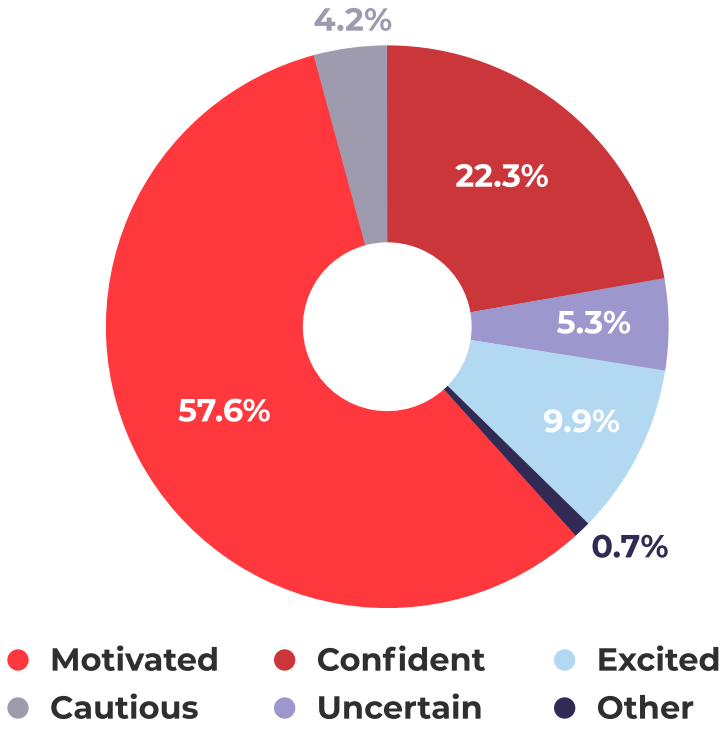
"No surprise here. We see it constantly at our Power Up events when mortgage professionals connect and build trust, their business grows. The survey just backs that up."

2026 Mindset: Overwhelmingly Positive

Nearly 90% of brokers described their 2026 mindset as:

- **Motivated (57.6%)**
- **Confident (22.3%)**
- **Excited (9.9%)**

Only a small share selected cautious (4.2%) or uncertain (5.3%). This indicates that brokers are approaching 2026 with an optimistic, proactive, and opportunity-focused outlook.



Summary: Looking into 2026

Prep for more deals | Strengthen your referral base | Lean into Non-QM | Reconnect with past clients for refis | Guide first-time buyers clearly