

The State of Customer Onboarding 2025

THE FIRST 90 DAYS

**Why Customer Onboarding Is the New
Battleground for Customer Retention**

Presented by OnRamp





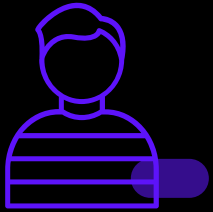
TURNING MOMENTUM INTO **DOLLARS**

Customer onboarding has become one of the most strategic – *and overlooked* – levers for business growth.

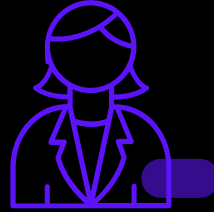
When done right, onboarding sets a powerful pace from day one, creating the kind of momentum that drives faster value realization, better opportunity for upsells and cross-sells, stronger retention, and more scalable success.

This report explores how leading SaaS companies are transforming their customer onboarding – to not just be a handoff between Sales and CS – but as a high-impact moment that shapes long-term growth.

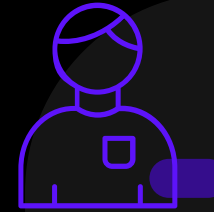
WHO'S GOING TO CARE?



Customer
Success Leaders
& CSMs



Chief Revenue
Officers & Sales
Leaders



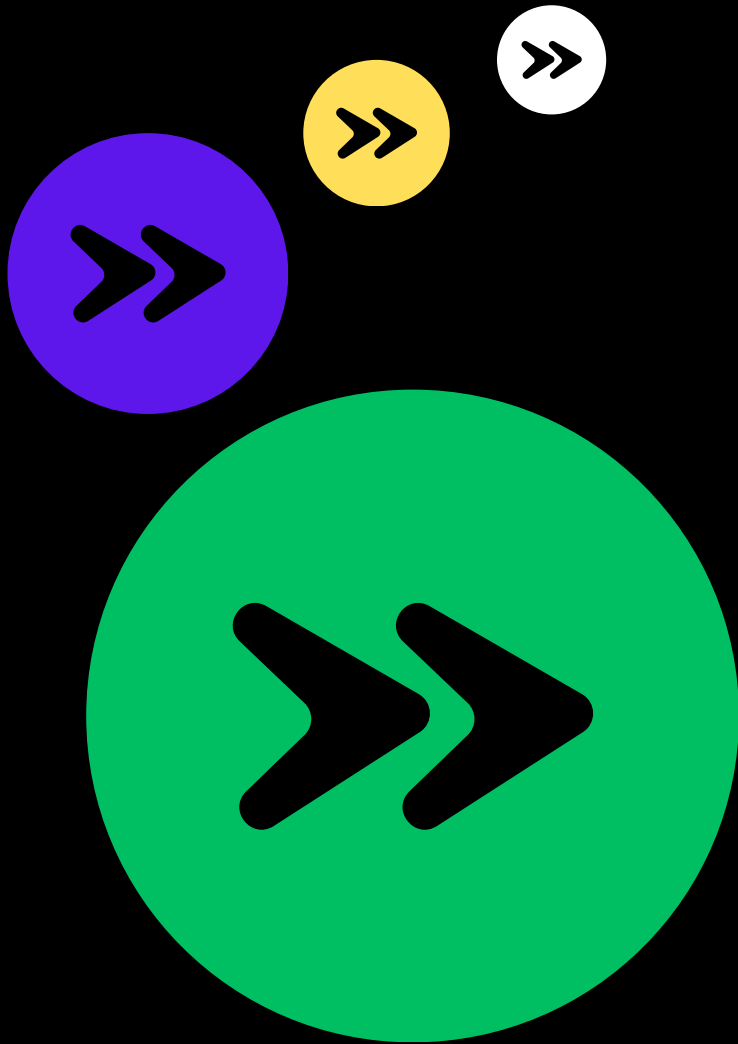
SaaS Product
Managers &
Product Owners



Customer
Experience
Professionals



Growth &
Retention
Strategists

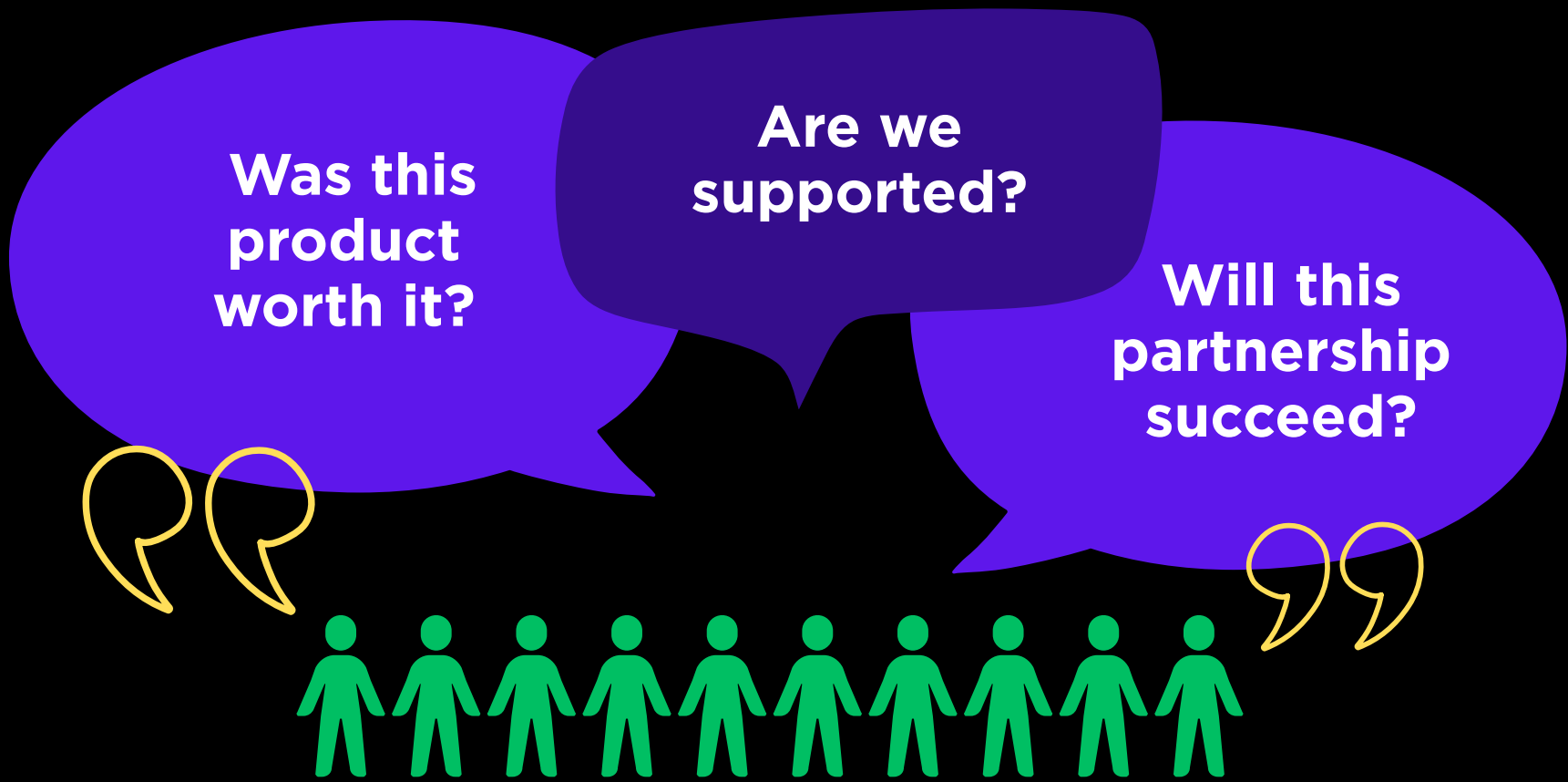


WHAT'S IN THE REPORT

1. Introduction
2. The State of Onboarding
3. Onboarding as a Revenue Strategy
4. Automation, AI, and the Future of CS
5. Best Practices for the First 90 Days
6. Industry Insights: SaaS vs. Services
7. Final Takeaways

INTRODUCTION

Onboarding isn't a step. It's the moment of truth, the ground for near-term expansion business and long-term customer retention. Within the first 90 days, customers are making critical decisions:

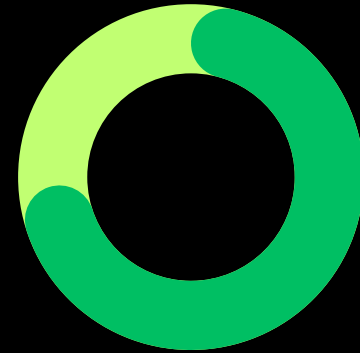


This eBook presents new research from OnRamp and TrendCandy, based on a survey of 161 customer success and onboarding leaders. The findings highlight a strategic shift in how SaaS companies are delivering onboarding, with emphasis on automation, digital customer success, and early value delivery.



THE STATE OF CUSTOMER ONBOARDING

**DIGITAL
CUSTOMER
SUCCESS IS
NOW THE
STANDARD**



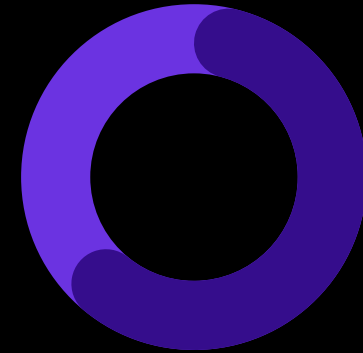
74%

of SaaS companies report adopting digital or pooled CS models to handle onboarding at scale.



These models equip companies to serve more customers with fewer resources while maintaining the quality of experience.

**SPEED TO
VALUE IS A
COMPETITIVE
ADVANTAGE**



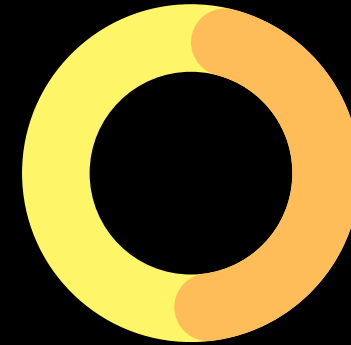
65%

of companies that
implemented digital
onboarding programs
reduced time-to-value by
at least 25%.



Results show that both speed *and* simplicity are key to early customer success.

**HOWEVER,
ONBOARDING
STILL HAS
MAJOR GAPS**



52%

Over half of CS leaders say their onboarding process is more confusing than it should be.



Complexity, unclear communication, and fragmented systems are still holding teams back.

FRICITION IN THE FIRST 90 DAYS IS THE #1 ONBOARDING KILLER

CUSTOMERS ARE FAILING TO LAUNCH BECAUSE OF:

- Lack of visibility into onboarding progress
- Unclear next steps
- Too many logins or platforms
- Overwhelming instructions
- Delays due to manual processes

YOUR INTERNAL TEAMS ARE STRUGGLING WITH:

- Complex product setup
- Lack of personalization
- Poor user communication
- Ineffective onboarding flow
- Limited customer support

48%

of customers abandon onboarding if they don't see value quickly (*leading to failure to launch*)

9x

more problematic when customer lack real-time visibility into progress (*rather than long to-do lists*)

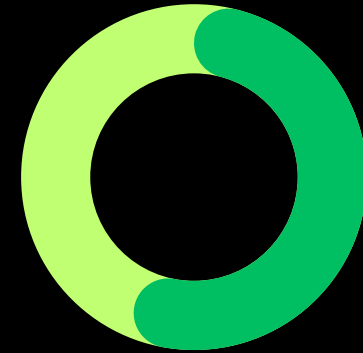
20

days or longer leads to customers losing interest in onboarding (*according to 91% of CS leaders*)



ONBOARDING AS A REVENUE STRATEGY

CUTTING ONBOARDING PROGRAMS LEADS TO CHURN



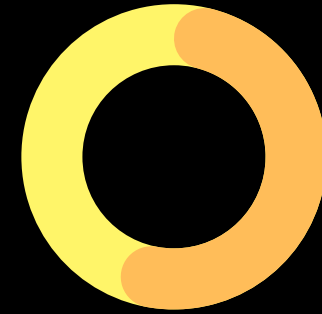
57%

of companies that cut onboarding investment saw increased churn within 6 months.



What seems like a short-term gain becomes a long-term problem if onboarding doesn't deliver.

**ONBOARDING
TEAMS ARE
REPORTING
TO REVENUE
FUNCTIONS**



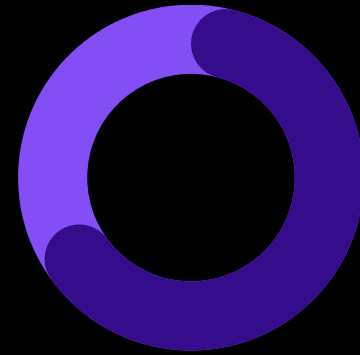
57%

of onboarding teams now
sit under the Chief Revenue
Officer.



This shift reflects onboarding's growing role in driving adoption, retention, and expansion.

**THEREFORE,
SPECIALIZATION
IS REPLACING
GENERALISTS**

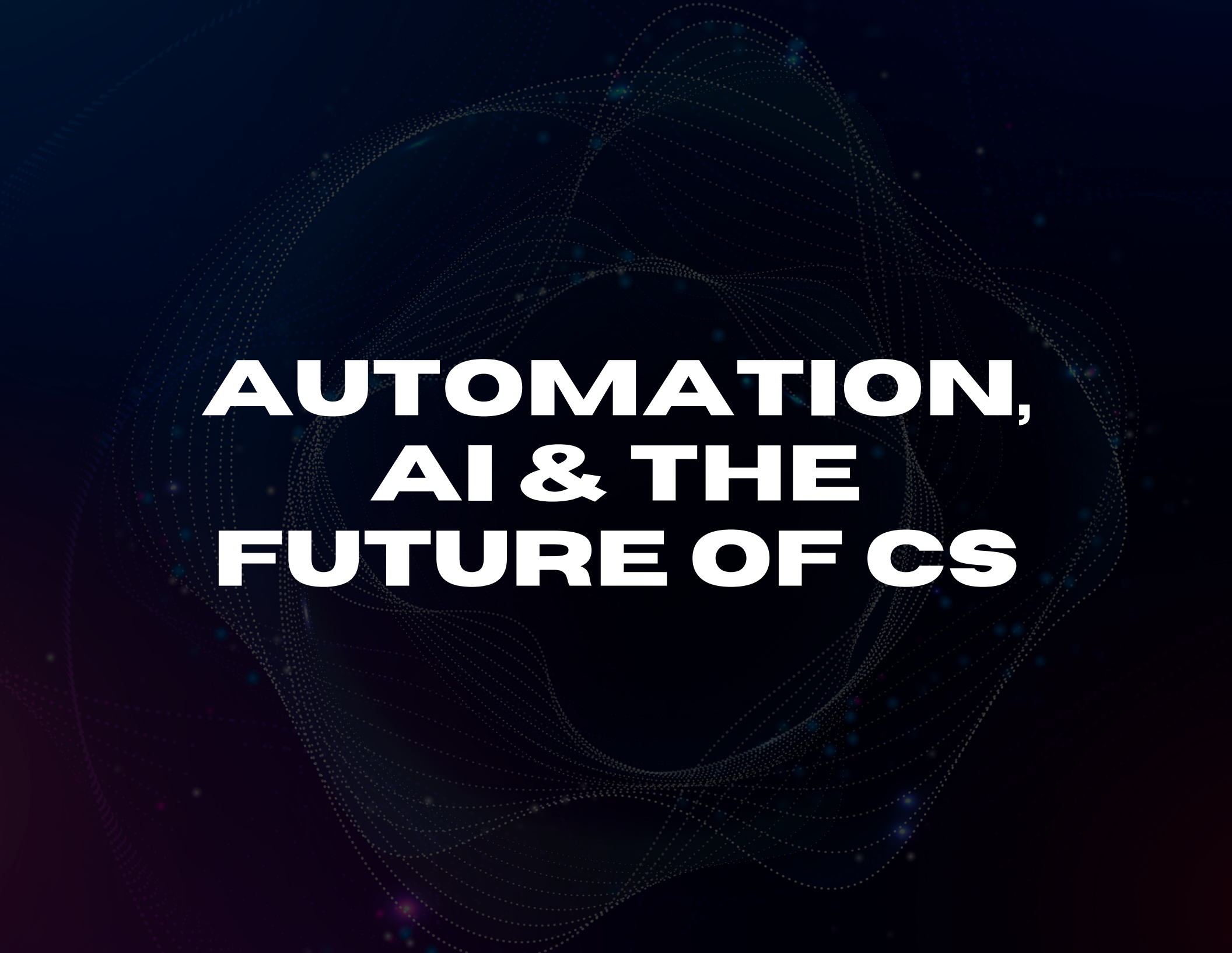


69%

of companies are moving to
dedicated onboarding
teams.



Businesses are shifting away from the one-size-fits-all model in customer success to better facilitate short-term and long-term revenue realization.



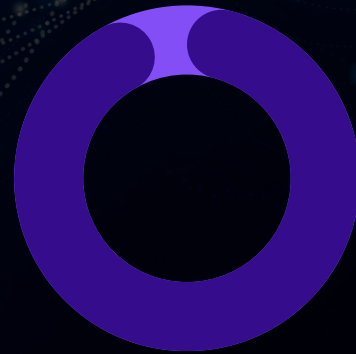
**AUTOMATION,
AI & THE
FUTURE OF CS**

TECHNOLOGY HELPS DELIVER VALUE FASTER...



26%

of SaaS companies are making serious investments in onboarding automation.



96%

of companies using real-time progress tracking report increased customer engagement.



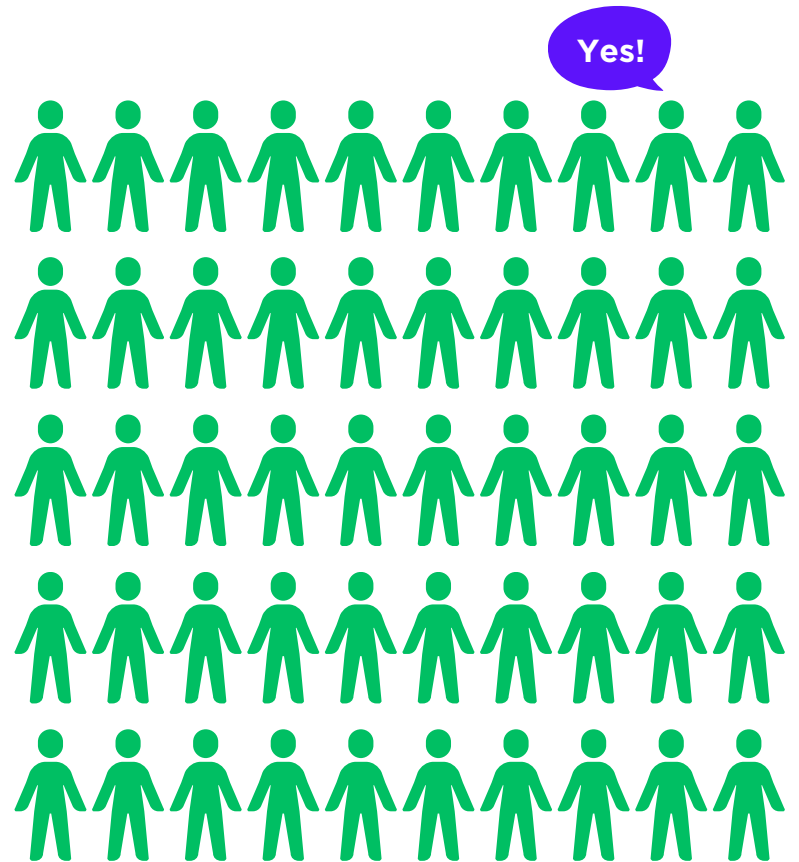
70%

of CS leaders expect AI will handle at least half of onboarding tasks by 2027.

...AND VISUAL ONBOARDING LEADS TO FASTER ADOPTION.

100%

of customers prefer video walkthroughs and interactive content over dense PDFs.



MAKE YOUR FIRST 90 DAYS COUNT



Offer better visibility into where customers are in the onboarding process.



Use a mix of channels: in-app guidance, videos, checklists, and webinars.



Track short-term onboarding metrics - alongside long-term retention and NPS.



Replace long-form, written content with short, engaging formats.

KEY TAKEAWAY

Automate repetitive touchpoints, but maintain human connection when needed for your most effective onboarding.

ONBOARDING SHOULD REFLECT CUSTOMER EXPECTATIONS

(NOT JUST INTERNAL TEAM STRUCTURES)



SaaS companies prioritize:

- Creating onboarding content
- Collecting user feedback
- Driving adoption

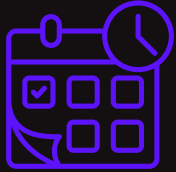
Business services organizations prioritize:

- Providing support
- Ensuring product usage
- Delivering early training

Both should:

- Create a world-class customer experience
- Deliver desired outcomes fast
- Reduce friction for easier value realization
- Scale with internal and customer teams

FINAL TAKEAWAYS



The first 90 days are the **most critical period in a customer's lifecycle.**



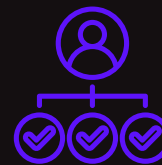
Friction, complexity, and confusion lead to **delayed adoption and early churn.**



Companies that treat onboarding as a revenue strategy, not just a task, are **growing faster and retaining better.**



Digital CS, automation, and AI are **redefining what good onboarding looks like.**



Customers want visibility, speed, and personalization; **give them all three.**

ABOUT ONRAMP

OnRamp is the platform built specifically for the needs of customer onboarding – at scale. We help mid-to-large companies accelerate time-to-value, increase retention, and streamline onboarding processes with transparency, automation, and personalization.

Ready to improve your onboarding outcomes?

Visit onramp.us to see how OnRamp is helping businesses and teams win in the first 90 days in the battleground for retention and revenue.



ABOUT THE SURVEY

This research was conducted by TrendCandy on behalf of OnRamp.
Participants: 161 senior CS and onboarding leaders
Industry: Primarily SaaS
Margin of error: +/- 7% at a 95% confidence level
Conducted in Q125