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Sample materials:

**Market 360:
Voice of the Customer &
Competitor Assessment**

Case Study: Archimedes Rental Software (ARS): Market 360: Voice of the Customer and Competitor Assessment

Context:

- Archimedes Rental Software is a B2B SaaS business which offers property management software to property owners across the US. In the last year, ARS has seen a growing churn rate, declining profitability, & stagnant market share without a clear cause in sight

- ARS leadership reached out to RWA for support running a market study to better understand their customer's decisions making process & identify gaps & paint points in the current customer experience

- The effort first focused on identifying current strategic and operational customer disconnects by surveying & interviewing several current, churned and competitor customers as well as market experts, current employees, and even competitor leadership

Top illustrative insights:

- **ARS has neglected to properly communicate their product's features & capabilities** to new & current customers

- **ARS performs well on but does not lead the market on any of the 5 top purchase criteria** customers prioritize

- **~75% of complaints** are in the **Trial and Purchase & Onboarding phases**

- **ARS should prioritize the 5 quick big wins & transformative opportunities that improve the trial process (e.g., features, customer support services, etc.)**

Note: Names and details have been changed for client confidentiality

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Before starting a Market 360 project, RWA aligns on key topics & questions to assess with key stakeholders

☐ ARS's interests

Category	Explanation	Sample questions
Customer decision-making process	This in-depth analysis reveals key purchase criteria, potential friction points (e.g., switching costs), and the core drivers of vendor selection	• What are the top five purchase criteria customers use to evaluate a product? • What value proposition are customers looking for? How is it changing?
Current customer experience	A deep-dive into ARS's customer pain points, product gaps, current and future needs, service frustrations, and loyalty and referral drivers	• How do ARS's products compare to its competitors? • How do customers rate ARS's responsiveness to queries, concerns, and issues?
Customer awareness	A deep-dive into customers awareness of the industry, information acquisition method, and industry leader/lagger perceptions	• Which companies in the PMS[1] industry do customers view as leaders? • How do customers first become aware of ARS?
Industry pricing model	An analysis of market price ranges, customer price sensitivity, and unique pricing needs of specialized segments (e.g., enterprise)	• How does ARS's pricing model compare to its competitors? • How do customers view ARS pricing (e.g., favorable, acceptable, negative)?
Market analysis	An analysis of market size, trends, competitive landscape shifts, customer segmentation, parallel markets, and evolving regulatory considerations	• Where can ARS gain market share by capitalizing on market trends? • What are ARS's top opportunities to enter parallel/adjacent markets?

Notes: (1) PMS stands for a Property Management Software

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Based on interviews, ARS was focused on understanding their customer's functional needs & experiential desires

■ Prioritized
■ De-prioritized

Category	Sub-categories	Illustrative questions for prioritized sub-categories
Customer decision-making process	**Purchase criteria**	• Across customers, what are the top key purchasing criteria for choosing a property management software?
	Switching & stickiness	• How do key purchase criteria differ for small vs. large property management customers?
	Value proposition	• What are the most common reasons that prompt property management companies to switch from their existing PMS to a new software?
	Company selection	• What are emerging features or functionalities property managers are increasingly looking for?
	Procurement process	• Where can AMS leverage customer data and usage patterns to identify churn-risk property managers?
Current customer experience	**Retention & loyalty**	• Which factors besides core features keep property managers using a specific PMS? (e.g., exceptional customer support, ongoing product development)
	Customer journey	• At which stages of the customer journey (e.g., Awareness) do property managers experience the most pain points when evaluating/using ARS?
	Customer support	• What kind of ongoing support or resources are most valuable to property managers after they have implemented a new PMS?
	Discovery & marketing	• What strategies can ARS implement to anticipate and address issues for property managers before they arise?
	Product experience	

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RWA collected data from four sectors, speaking with 40+ customers, reviewing 600+ reviews, and 6 years of customer data

Held key conversations

Interviews & surveys

The team interviewed **40+ ARS churned, current, & competitor customers** & ~10 team members including:

- Josh Stone
- Kyle Bovlia
- Samantha Smith
- Beatrice Aguilera
- Troy Barnerd
- Beth Melnyk
- Justin Jones

Team also **surveyed 100+ current customers** on the team's top questions

Data requests

Spent 8+ hours with Wickus Clemens and Li Huang to **understand the available data and analytics** (e.g., CS tickets, product purchases) and made a number of **data requests**

Reviewed key information

Online reviews & industry reports

Reviewed recent industry reports and product rating forums:

- Yellow Bird's 2024 Best PMS Providers
- MarketHawks 2023 Most Innovative Property Management Software Solutions
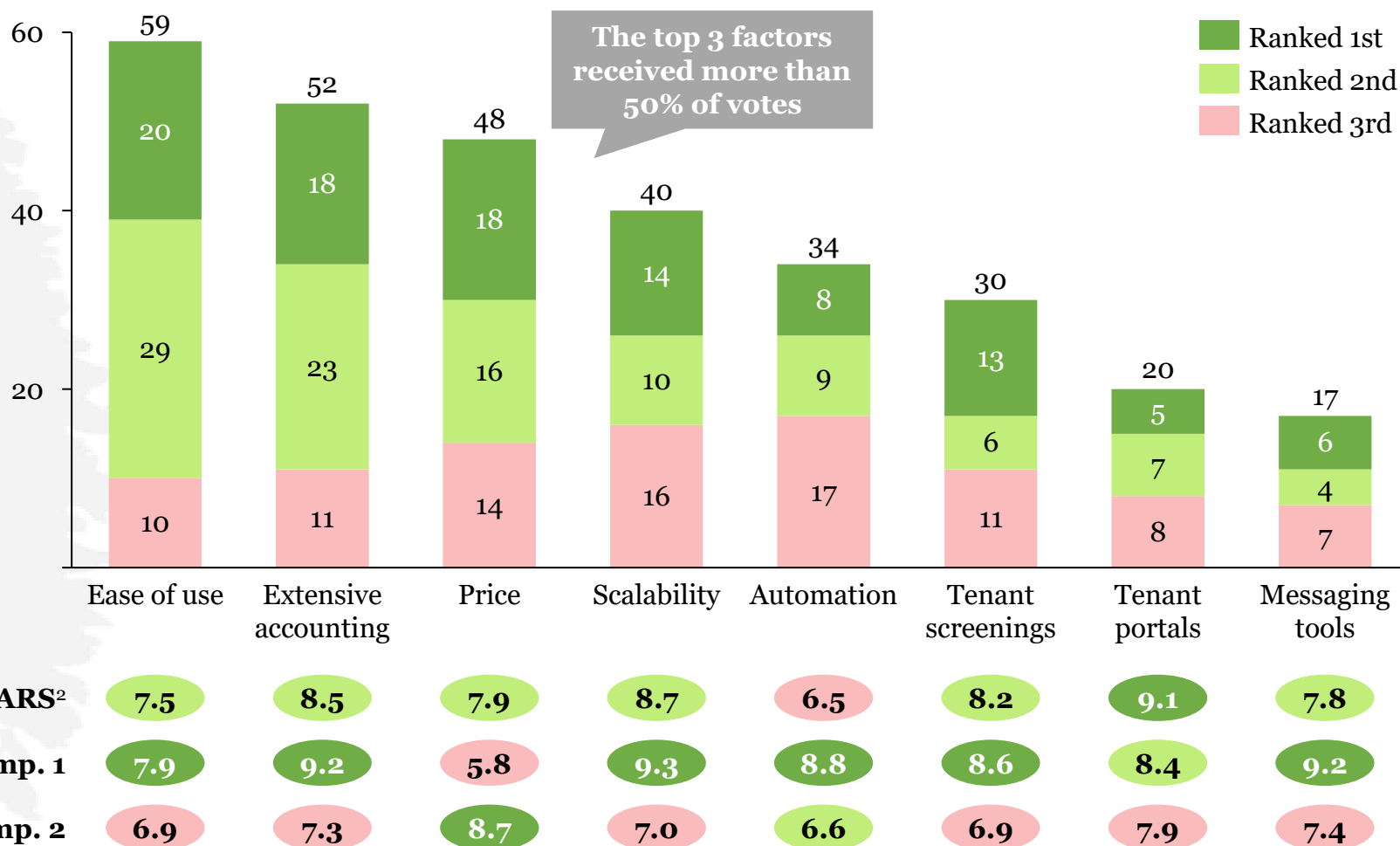- ARS's full set of Google reviews

Market trends

Conducted targeted external research into key areas including:

- PMS market landscape
- Key opportunities (e.g., human capital mgmt., workforce mgmt.)

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Based on customer surveys, RWA outlined customers' top purchase criteria & ARS' performance on each vs. competitors

Customer rankings of purchase criteria for PMS'[1]

The top 3 factors received more than 50% of votes

Legend:
- Ranked 1st (dark green)
- Ranked 2nd (light green)
- Ranked 3rd (pink)

Criteria	Ranked 3rd	Ranked 2nd	Ranked 1st	Total
Ease of use	10	29	20	59
Extensive accounting	11	23	18	52
Price	14	16	18	48
Scalability	16	10	14	40
Automation	17	9	8	34
Tenant screenings	11	6	13	30
Tenant portals	8	7	5	20
Messaging tools	7	4	6	17

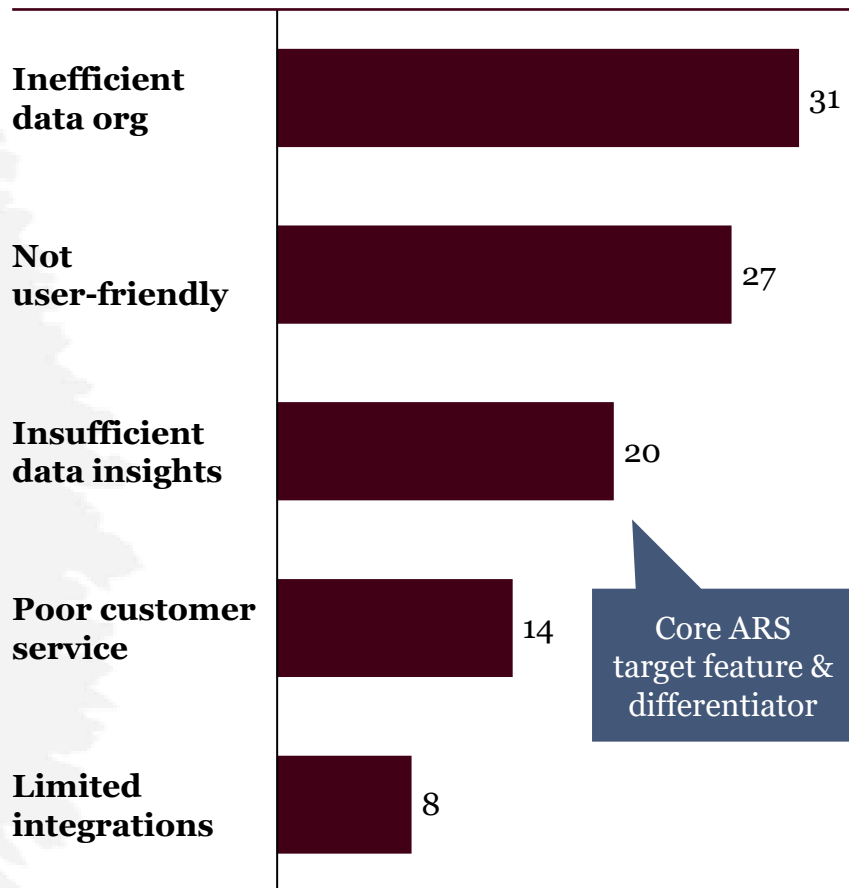|	Ease of use	Extensive accounting	Price	Scalability	Automation	Tenant screenings	Tenant portals	Messaging tools	Avg
ARS[2]	7.5	8.5	7.9	8.7	6.5	8.2	9.1	7.8	8.0
Comp. 1	7.9	9.2	5.8	9.3	8.8	8.6	8.4	9.2	8.4
Comp. 2	6.9	7.3	8.7	7.0	6.6	6.9	7.9	7.4	7.3

Notes: (1) We asked ~100 customers "Please list the top purchase criteria you use when evaluating a PMS. Then rank them in order of priority" (2) We asked customers "On a 1-10 scale how would you rate [ARS/Comp1/Comp2] PMS on [X] purchase criteria?"

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RWA then followed up with key customers & performed a deep dive to further assess ARS on each purchase criteria

Purchase Criteria	Value Overview	ARS' Performance	
Ease of use	"I can't spend hours figuring out who's late or what my maintenance teams need… I need a **simple solution"**	"I'd say ARS is intuitive and **most of my tenants find it easy to use**… it's easier than our old system but somethings are annoying"	
Extensive accounting features	"Tracking rent, fees, maintenance & everything else in multiple sheets is torture; **it's 20XX, the system should do it for me**"	"All the players do a reasonable job**, but ARS offers a lot of handy templates and customizable dashboards"**	
Price	"Everything's getting more expensive; **I'll pay more, but I need it to be worth it**"	"There's more expensive options that do more, but this **gives me 90% of what I need for 2/3s the price**"	
Scalability	"I'm buying and selling properties every 6-12 months; I need **a system that grows without requiring an overhaul** every time I add a unit"	"It's a good system that **lets us add units or even buildings in bulk**; even the big guys have more steps"	
Automation	"I value my **time and peace of mind more than anything**, so [as a first-time landlord] I really value a system that can handle the day-to-day pretty well on its own"	"**ARS is suitable** for modest properties but needs work for scaled PMs"	

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RWA ran 40+ interviews with various customers to answer ARS' top questions & gather key insights to inform the future state

Answers to the question "What are the top reasons for switching your PMS?"

Illustrative customer quotes

Category	Value
Inefficient data org	31
Not user-friendly	27
Insufficient data insights	20
Poor customer service	14
Limited integrations	8

Core ARS target feature & differentiator

"I had to spend hours updating dozens of things each time a tenant moved in or out. It was exhausting. **Now my system updates everything at once**"

"I've got more than 60 units; I need **to see the big picture across my properties but still have easy access to details** when I need them"

"Is it the ACs? The laundry room? Is it me?... What are the **big trends in my markets? In individual properties?**"

"There's always a problem, it's part of the game. But I've been through 2 PMS in the last five years - and still searching **- because no provider helps me when I need it**"

"**New tools are coming out all the time**; just this month we added electric locks and digital thermostats to 40 units..."

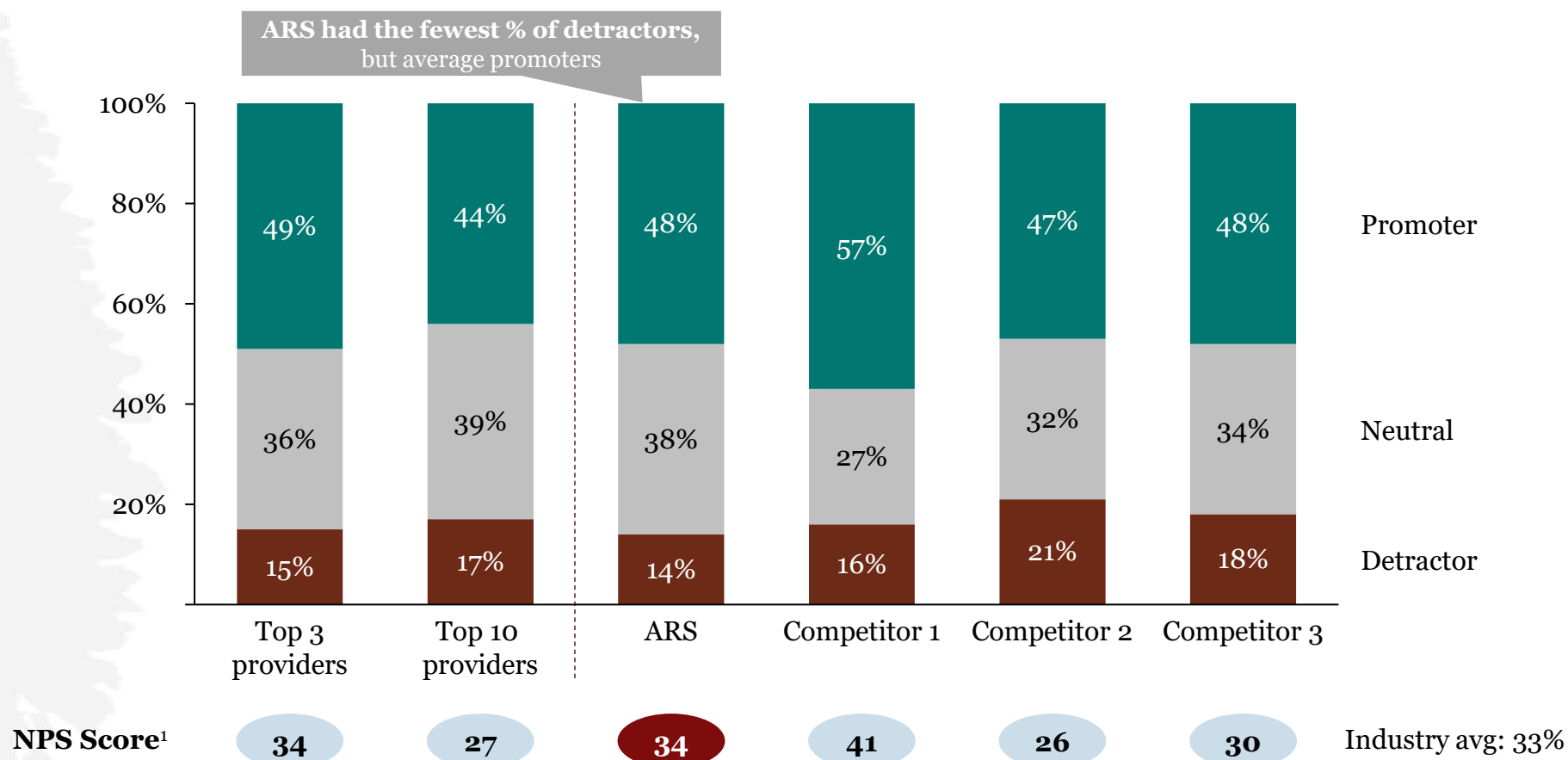Notes: (1) We asked customers "What are your top reasons for switching your property management software?"

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RWA assessed ARS' Net Promoter Score (NPS) and compared it with their top competitors

Avg. customer response to "How likely are you to recommend that a property manager use this PMS?"

> ARS had the fewest % of detractors, but average promoters

	Top 3 providers	Top 10 providers	ARS	Competitor 1	Competitor 2	Competitor 3
Promoter	49%	44%	48%	57%	47%	48%
Neutral	36%	39%	38%	27%	32%	34%
Detractor	15%	17%	14%	16%	21%	18%
NPS Score[1]	34	27	**34**	41	26	30

Industry avg: 33%

Notes: (1) Net promoter score (NPS) asks customers to rate their experience on a 1-10 scale. Customers that rate 9-10 are "promoters" (representing the customers most likely to promote/refer the company), 7-8 are "neutral" (representing customers that are satisfied but not overly likely to promote the company), and 0-6 are "detractors" (representing unhappy customer most likely to speak against the company). An NPS score is calculated by subtracting the % of promoters from detractors (NPS score = % promoters − % detractors).

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RWA then drilled down to better understand ARS' specific strengths & weaknesses among property managers & tenants

Where they praise ARS

Property Managers

+ *Accounting insights*

+ *Tenet screening*

+ *Portfolio dashboards*

"**[ARS] clearly shows how much I'm losing** from vacancies and even offers recommendations on offers I can make to maintain my quarterly goal"

"The portfolio dashboard is the best thing I've seen in this space in years**. To see performance and flags across tenants, buildings, and regions is extremely valuable**"

Tenants

+ *Tenant portals*

+ *Payment*

"I like the calendar with the month's maintenance and construction, **it's easy to swap and update roommates… it has been a good experience**"

"**Auto pay and confirmation notifications have made life better**. I also really like the **group chats** where people can ask about the heat not working, etc."

Where they criticize ARS

Property Managers

- *Automation*

- *Integrations*

- *Ease of use*

"I need more than rent collection; I see other systems that automatically send greetings, put in pre-emptive maintenance requests, **analyze power usage… the system must do more**"

"It's good. It's jut not great. **The dashboards only let you modify a sliver of the variables**; I can't download reports as a document…"
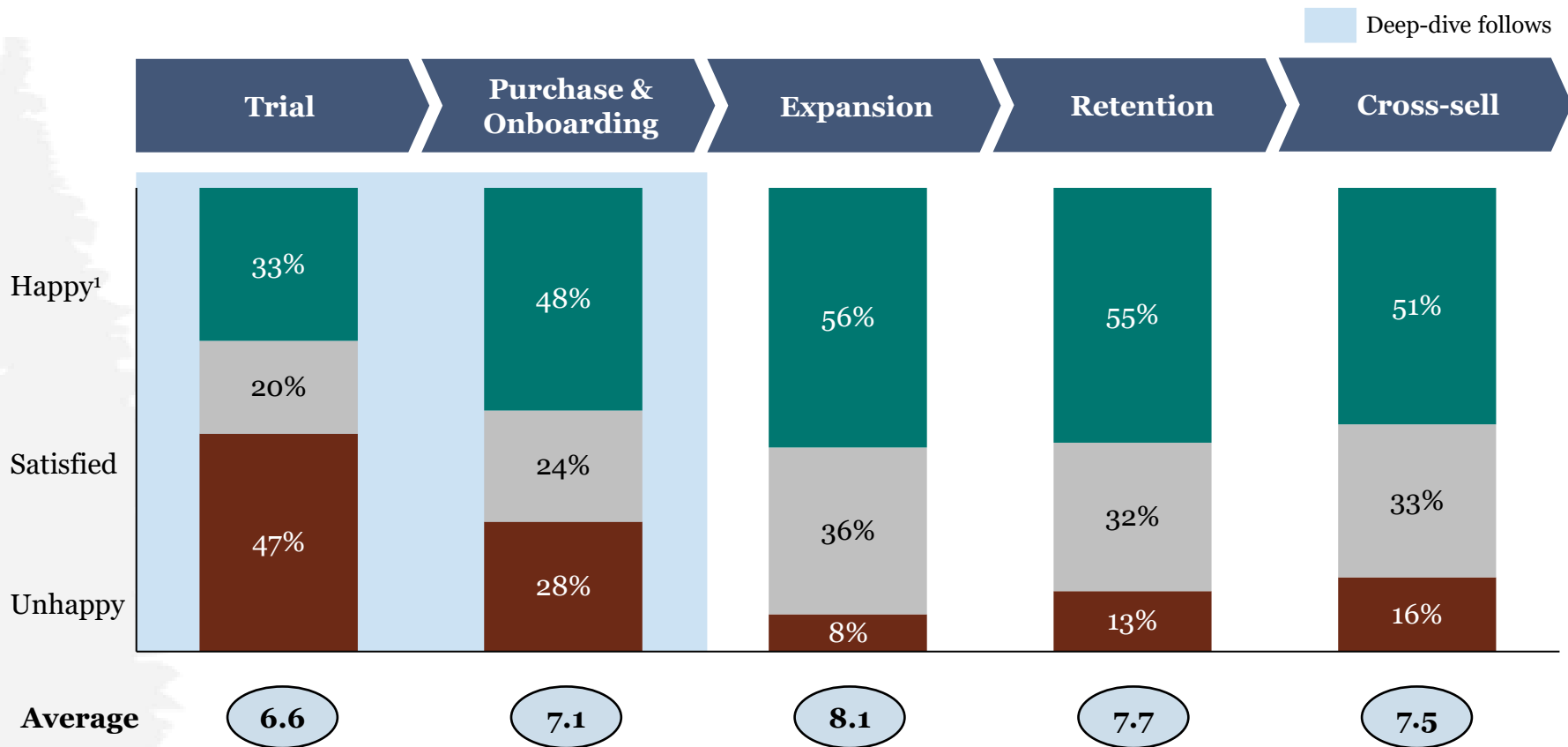
Tenants

- *Integrations*

- *Real time maintenance*

"I wish I could control the thermostat and smart tools, but as of now **it's a sperate app and login**"

"**Estimated maintenance arrival times are usually hours off**; they should have real-time estimates"

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RWA found that ARS delivers a positive experience across stages (avg ~7.4) with early stages showing opp for improvement

Deep-dive follows

Trial	Purchase & Onboarding	Expansion	Retention	Cross-sell

	Trial	Purchase & Onboarding	Expansion	Retention	Cross-sell
Happy[1]	33%	48%	56%	55%	51%
Satisfied	20%	24%	36%	32%	33%
Unhappy	47%	28%	8%	13%	16%

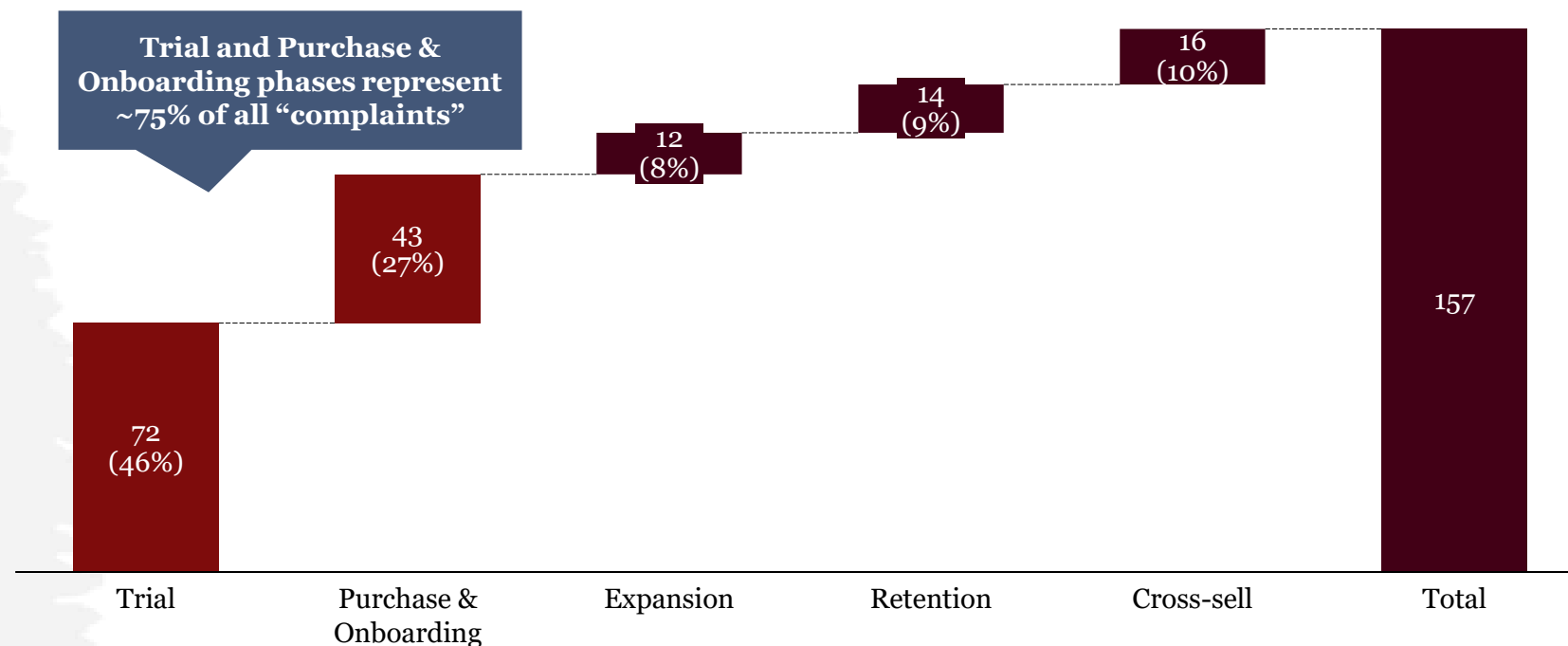| Average	6.6	7.1	8.1	7.7	7.5

Key Insights

Trial is ARS's worst performing stage with lost-prospects noting limited trial features, pricing (e.g., hidden fees) & difficulties setting up the system

ARS performs best in Expansion & Retention, with current customers liking the upgrades, mgmt. dashboards, & unit scaling tools

Notes: (1) Customers were asked to rate their experience with ARS for each customer journey stage. Customer that rate 8-10 are "Happy" customers, 7-8 are "Satisfied" customers, and 0-7 are "Unhappy" customers

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Most "Unhappy" customers were in the Trial and Purchase & Onboarding phases about trial features, integrations, and costs

Number of "Unhappy" customers per customer journey stage over the last 3 months

Trial and Purchase & Onboarding phases represent ~75% of all "complaints"

72 (46%) — Trial
43 (27%) — Purchase & Onboarding
12 (8%) — Expansion
14 (9%) — Retention
16 (10%) — Cross-sell
157 — Total

Most common complaints

Trial:	Purchase & Onboarding:	Expansion:	Retention:	Cross-sell:
• Unclear trial features • Hidden fees	• Confusing onboarding • High cost	• Integration issues • Challenging identifying the best plan	• Limited resources to educate users on how to use the platform	• Integration between products • Low quality product recommendations

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RWA supported the leadership team in synthesizing the top actionable opportunities & identifying owners for each

■ Top priority
■ Standard priority
■ Ongoing

Quick Big Wins	Responsible	Accountable	Transformative Oppts.	Responsible	Accountable
Identify & target 10 largest current customers	• Josh / RWA	• Anna	**Restructure customer funnel phase teams**	• Jonah	• Glen
Build out customer success stories	• Katie	• Sheila	**Build 2030 technology roadmap**	• Deepak	• Deepak
Build out automation current state assessment	• Jeff	• Anna	**Build & implement a referral system**	• Manuel	• Matt
Update customer education resources	• Josh	• Sheila	**Begin running annual <conference>**	• Manuel	• Matt
Finalize updated customer interface	• Albert	• Ted	**Replace <database> with <alternative>**	• Albert	• Albert