TECHNOLOGY MARKETING

Benchmarks & Trends Report

2025 edition

The Partner Marketing Group

Welcome to the 11th Annual Technology Marketing Benchmarks & Trends Report

Ready to discover what's new and what's next for marketing in 2025?

The Partner Marketing Group is excited to share the insights, efforts, challenges, and successes of your fellow technology partners, resellers, and ISVs. The report covers everything from budget recommendations to the most effective lead generation tactics to AI best practices and beyond. Whether you're a seasoned marketer or new to the game, there's something for everyone.

The answers to all these questions, and so much more, are included in this report.

Where are marketers spending most of their budget?

Which marketing tactics are working, and which ones are so last year?

Should you be using social media for lead generation?

What's the deal with video?

Many thanks to our survey participants. This report could not have happened without you.

We welcome your questions and feedback at **info@thepartnermarketinggroup.com**.

Sign up to receive helpful technology marketing resources throughout the year, and follow us at the social sites above!

Look for bonus tips, recommendations, and resources from our experienced marketing team throughout the report!

**All percentages were rounded to the nearest whole number, which could result in a chart total above 100%.*
**Some charts may have "other" response totals removed for conciseness, which could result in a chart total below 100%.*

Table of Contents

Click the page number to jump to that page

03 | Budget

09 | Planning & Strategy

17 | Lead Generation

23 | Content

30 | Social Media

35 | Marketing Tools & Tactics

41 | Artificial intelligence (AI)

45 | Survey Demographics

50 | Bringing It All Together

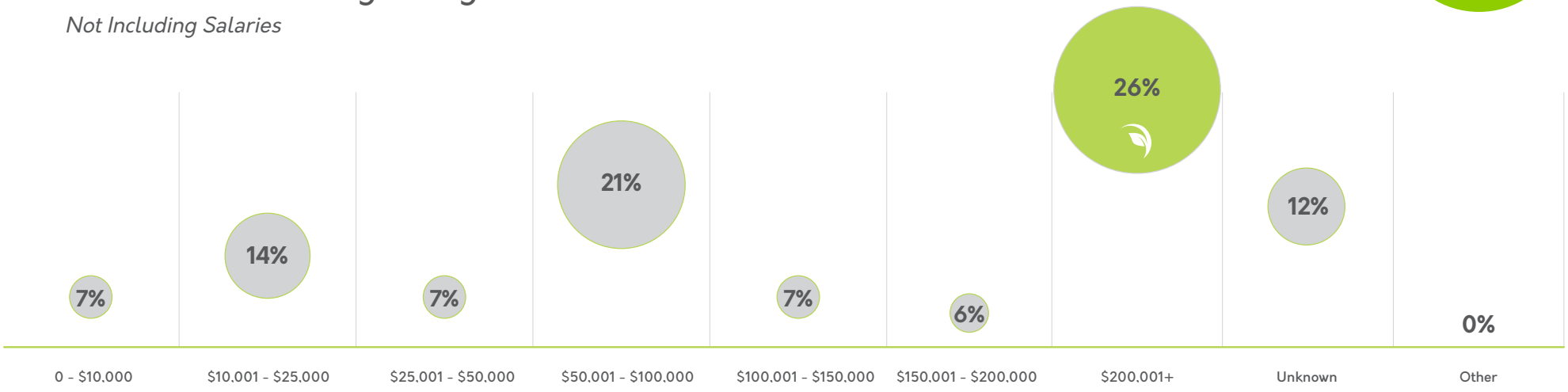
52 | About The Partner Marketing Group

Budget

Budget

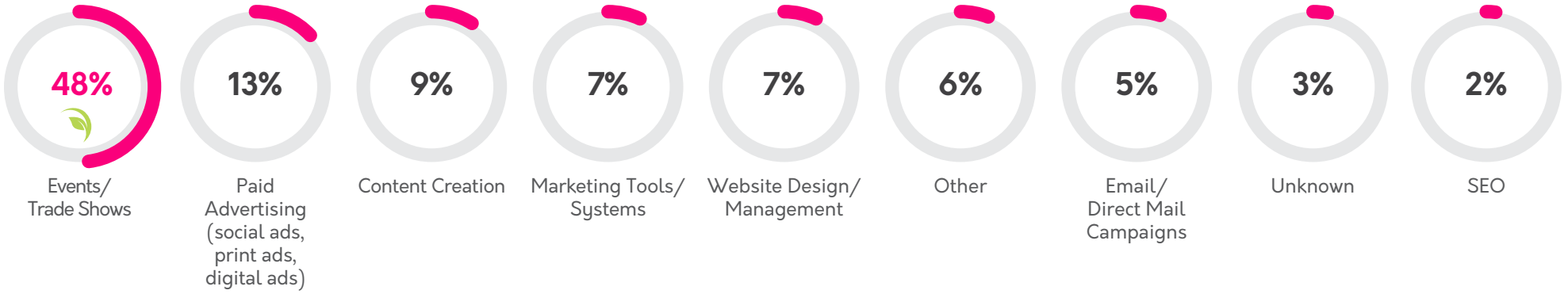
Annual Marketing Budget

Not Including Salaries



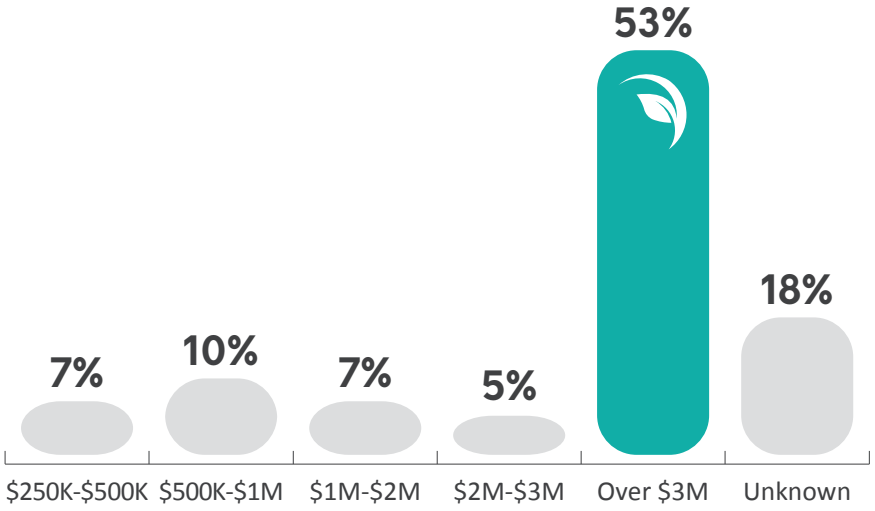
Area Where Respondents Spent MOST of Their Marketing Budget in 2024

Not Including Salaries

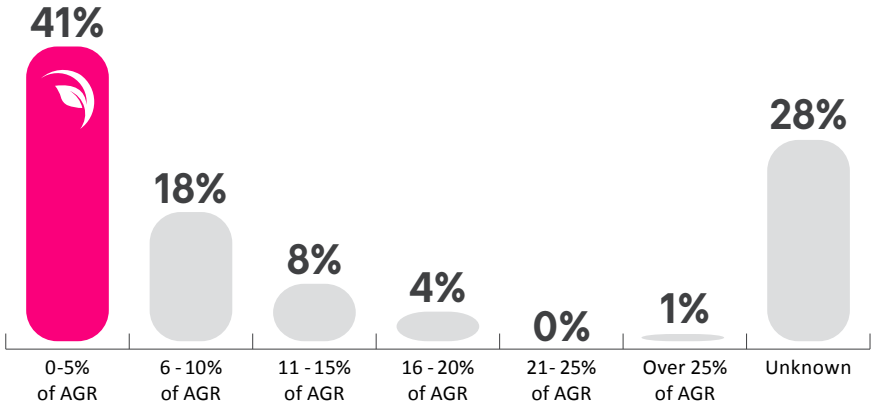


Budget (cont.)

Company's Annual Gross Revenue



Marketing Budget as Percentage of Annual Gross Revenue *Not Including Salaries*

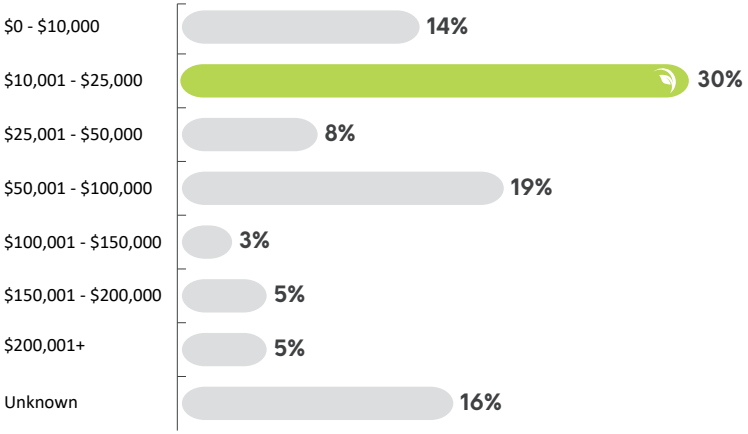


Budget (cont.)

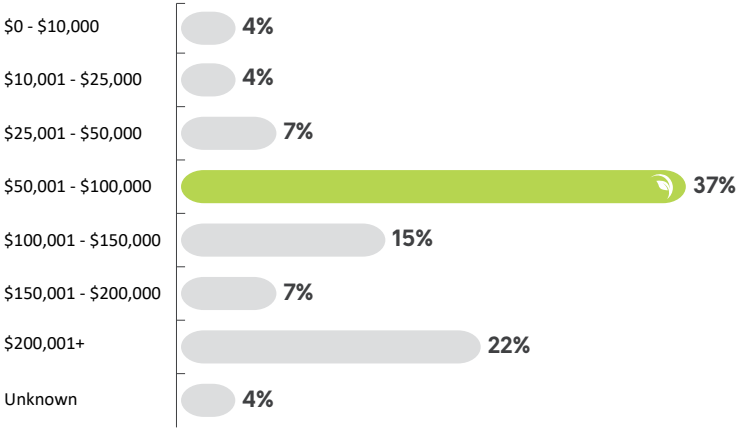
Marketing Budget by Company Size

Not Including Salaries

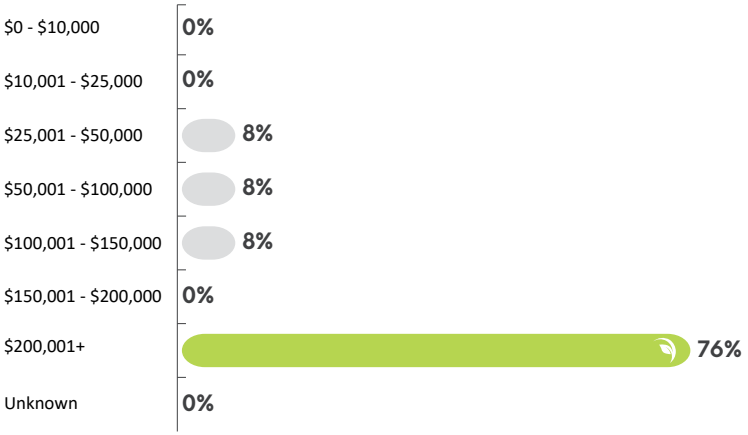
1 to 25 Employees



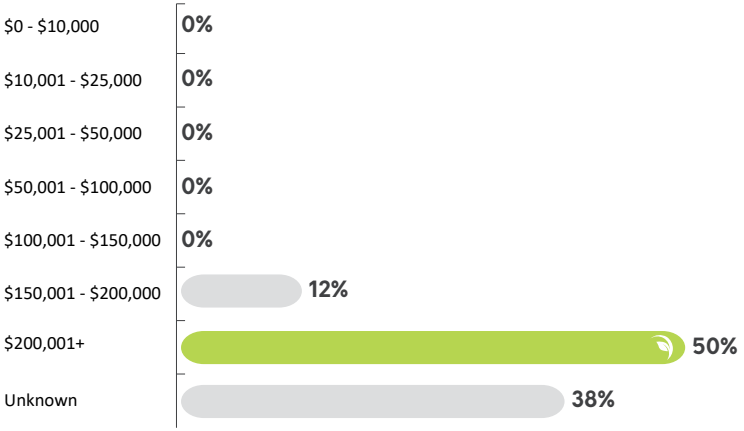
26 to 100 Employees



101 to 249 Employees



250+ Employees

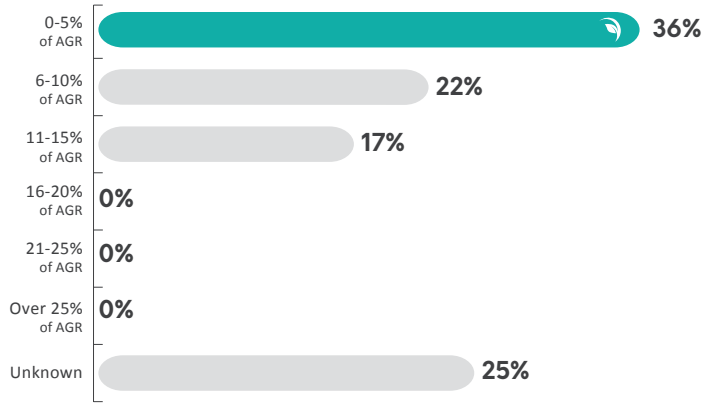


Budget (cont.)

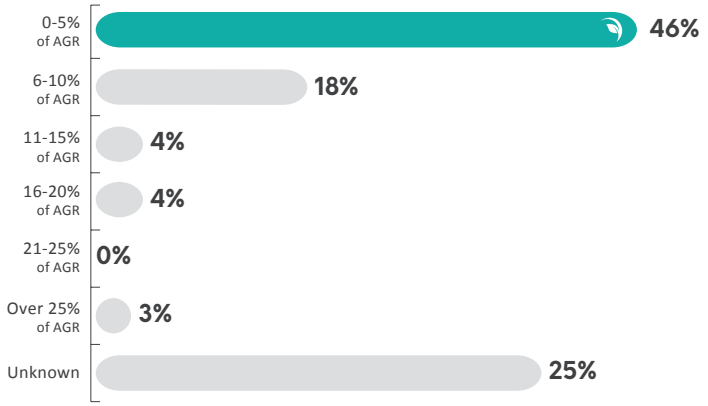
Marketing Budget as Percentage of Annual Gross Revenue by Company Size

Not Including Salaries

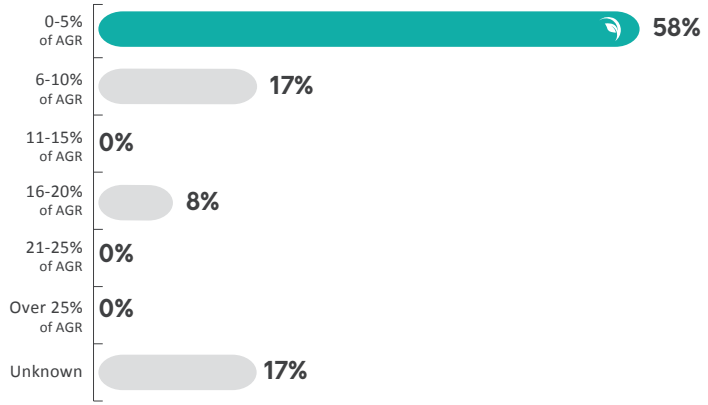
1 to 25 Employees



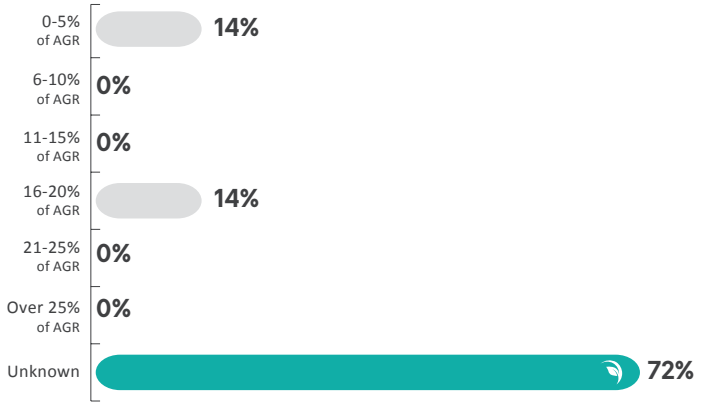
26 to 100 Employees



101 to 249 Employees



250+ Employees



Budget Key Findings

According to budgets, events are here to stay! 48% of survey respondents listed "Events & Tradeshows" as the top area where most of their marketing budget was spent, an increase from 44% the year before.

Another interesting note is that paid advertising has settled into 2nd place, which indicates companies are investing more in digital advertising on social media and search engines (i.e. Google and Bing).

Did you know?

Every year, the MOST SKIPPED and answered UNKNOWN question on our survey is "What is your marketing budget as a percentage of annual gross revenue (AGR)?" If you don't know the answer to this question, use this to start a conversation with your management team. This will show you want marketing to impact the bottom line and potentially help you increase your budget in future years.

THREE KEY THINGS

to keep in mind when determining your marketing budget:

1. **Start with clear goals:**
   Clearly define what you're trying to achieve—lead generation, brand awareness, customer retention, etc.—and allocate your budget accordingly.

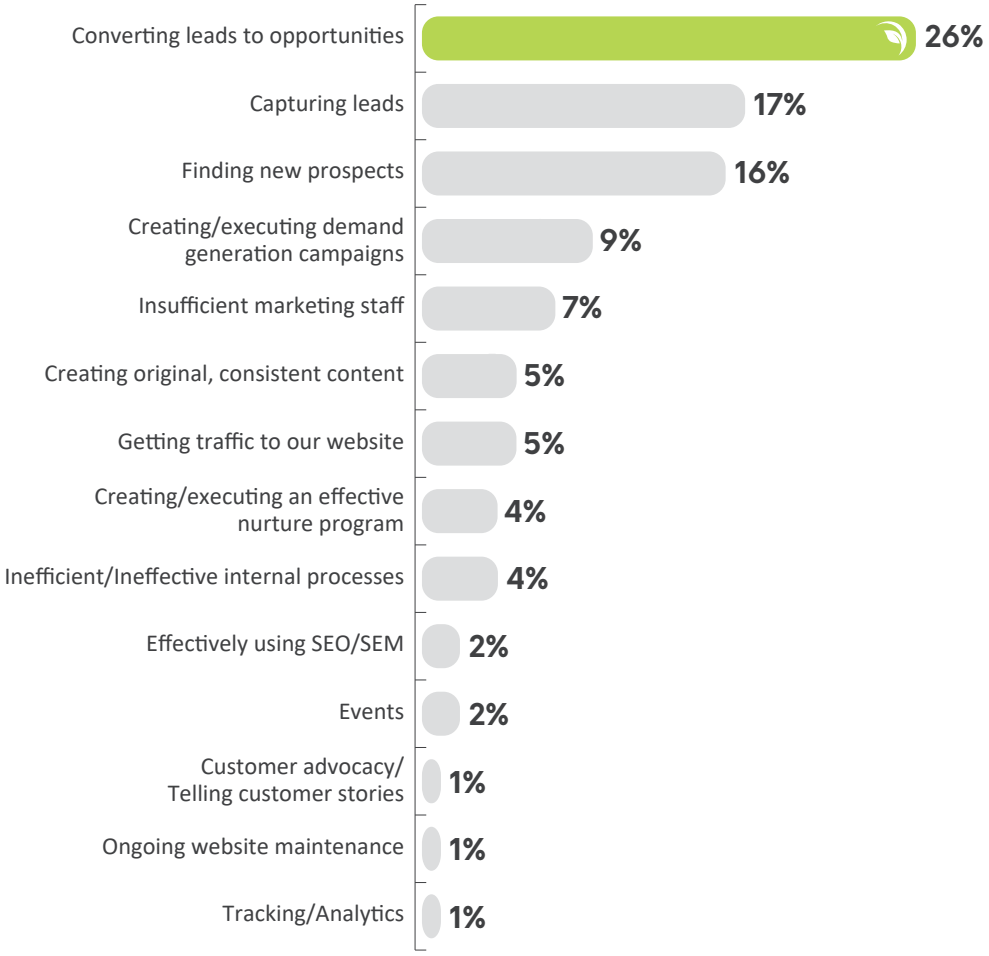
2. **Test and optimize:**
   Marketing strategies should always involve testing to determine the most effective channels and messages. This helps fine-tune the budget.

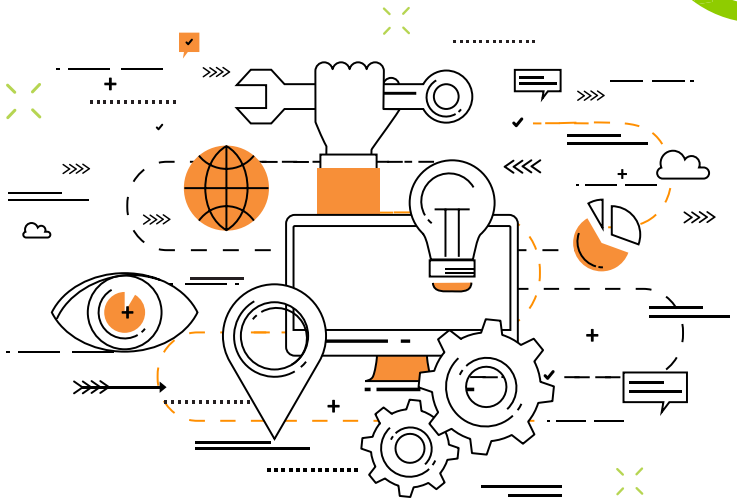
3. **Focus on ROI:**
   Not every campaign is a winner. Tracking the return on investment from every marketing effort is key to maintaining a sustainable budget.

Planning & Strategy

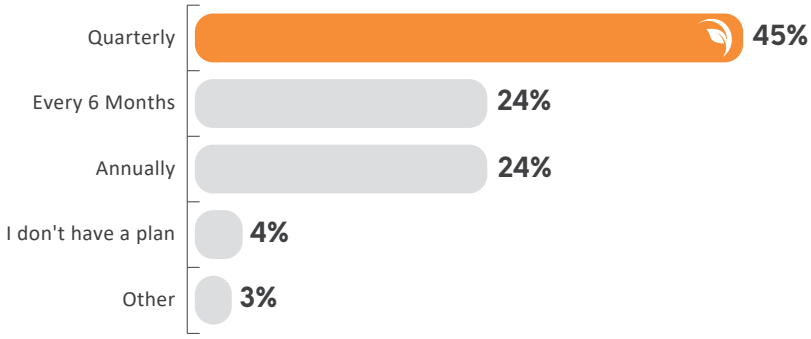
Planning & Strategy

Biggest Marketing Challenge in 2024



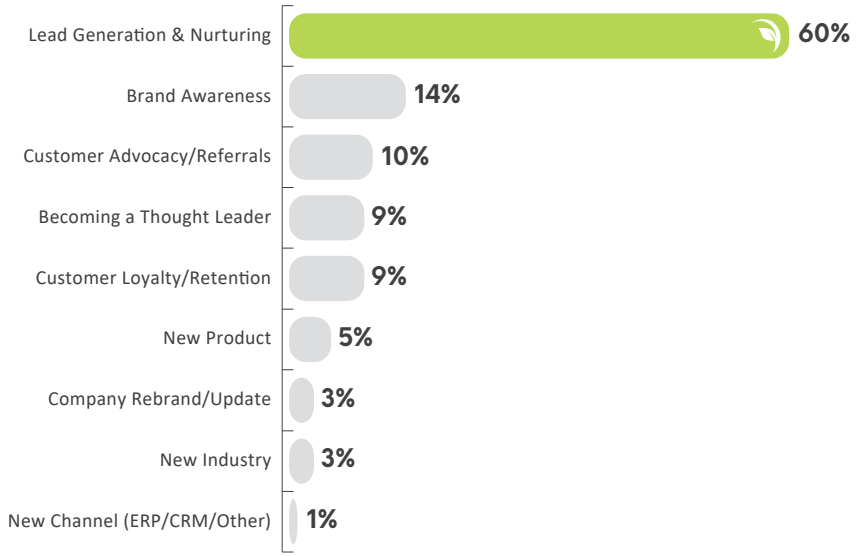


How often do you update your marketing plan?

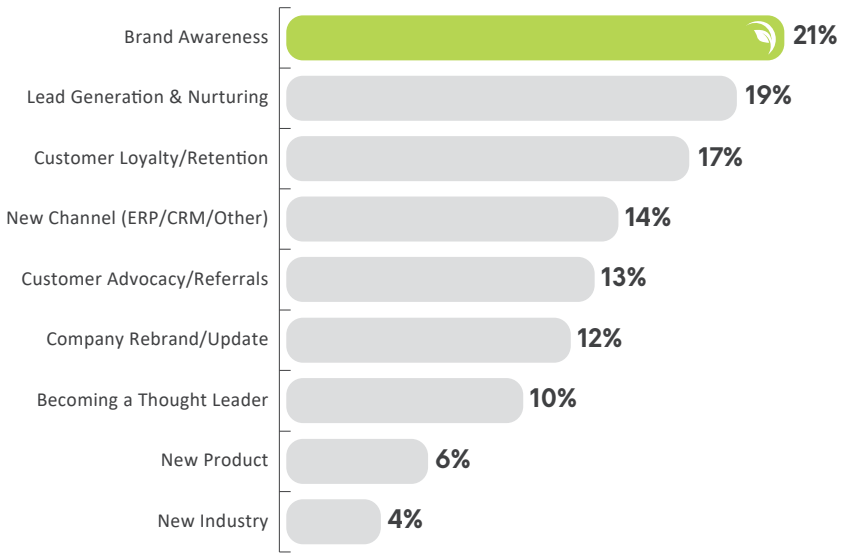


Planning & Strategy (cont.)

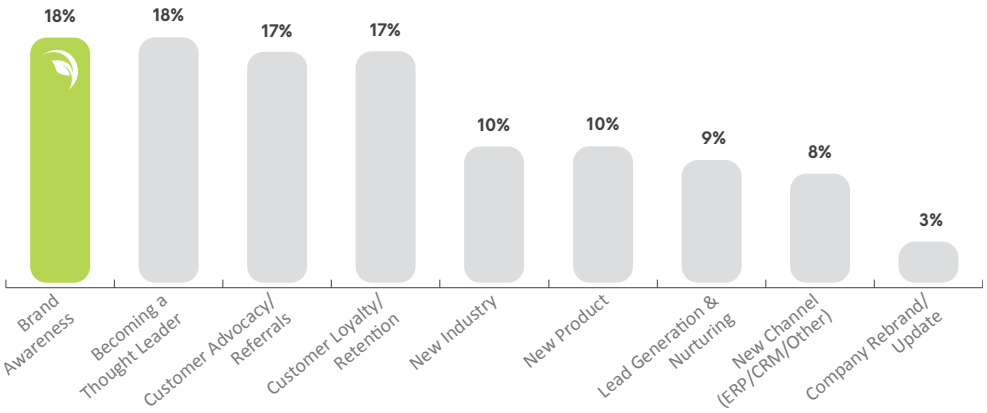
#1 Marketing Objective/Goal for 2025



#2 Marketing Objective/Goal for 2025

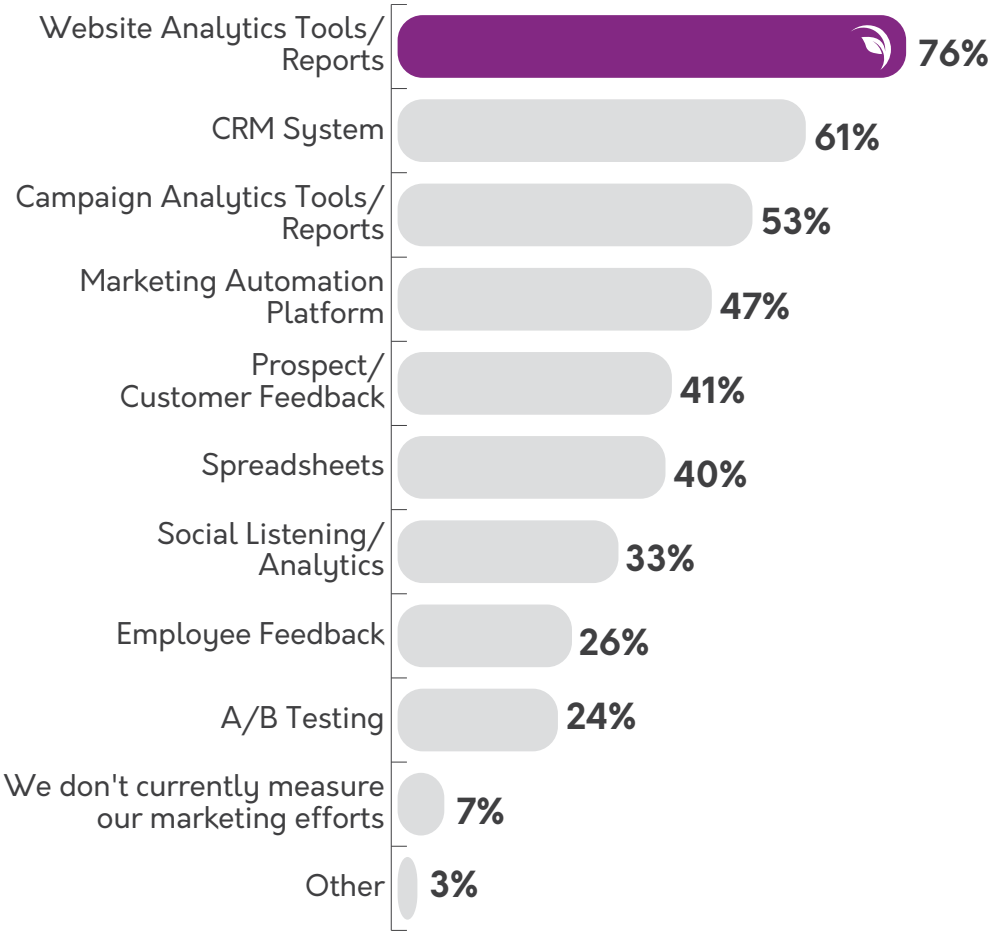


#3 Marketing Objective/Goal for 2025



Planning & Strategy (cont.)

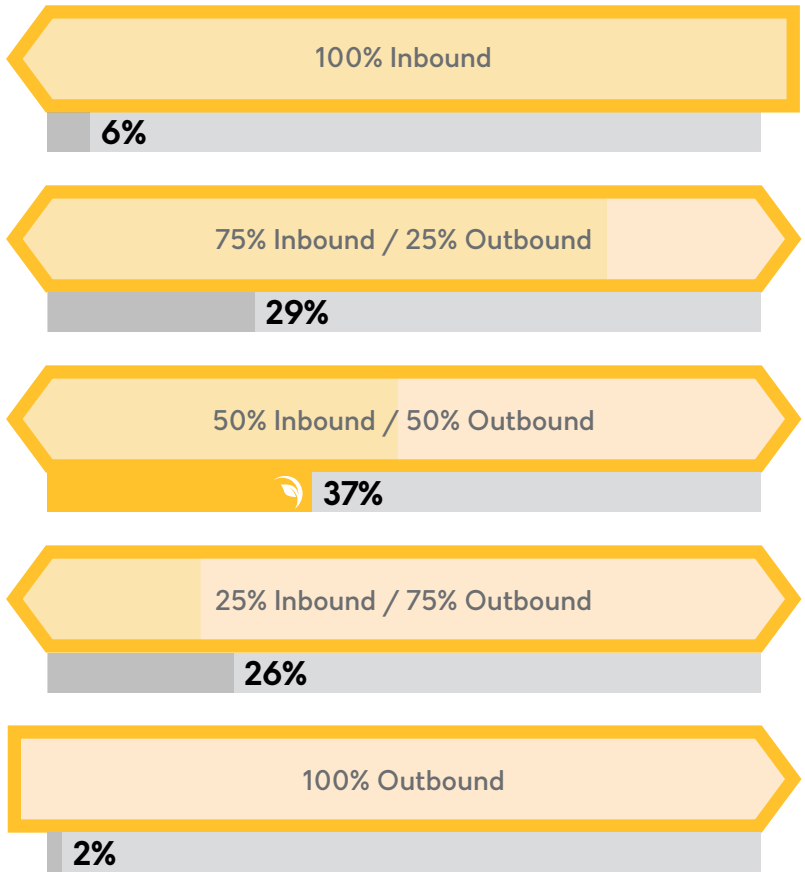
Techniques/Tools Used to Measure Marketing Effectiveness



Percentage of Marketing Inbound vs. Outbound

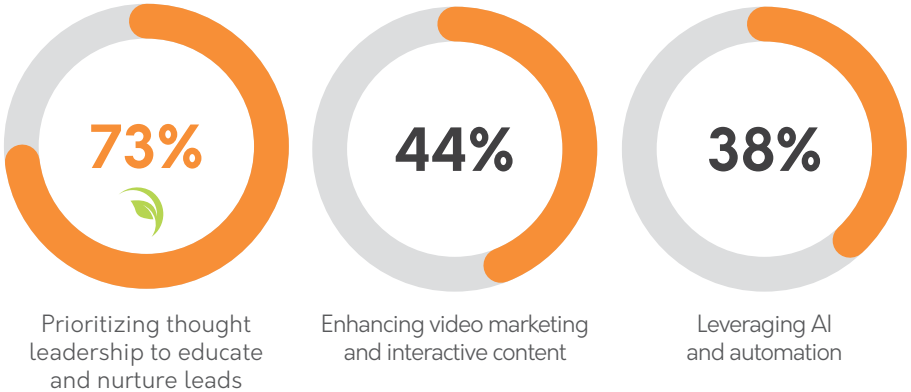
Inbound = SEO, SEM, PPC, Social Media

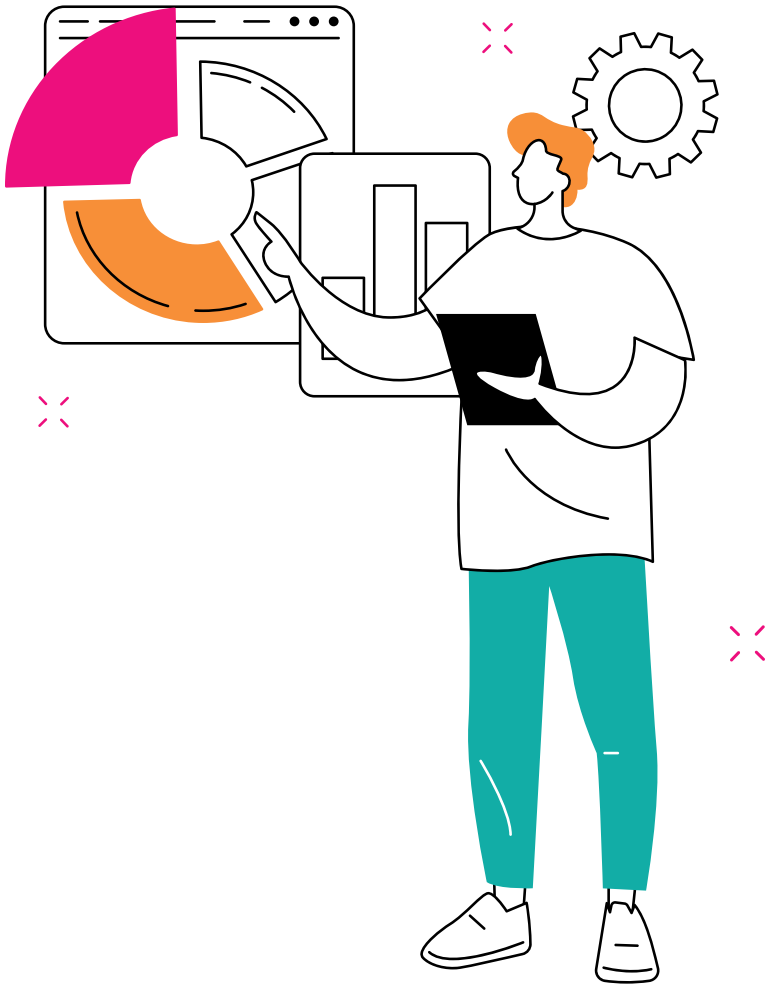
Outbound = Direct Mail, Email, Telemarketing, Events, etc.



Planning & Strategy (cont.)

Which of the following marketing strategies are you prioritizing in 2025?

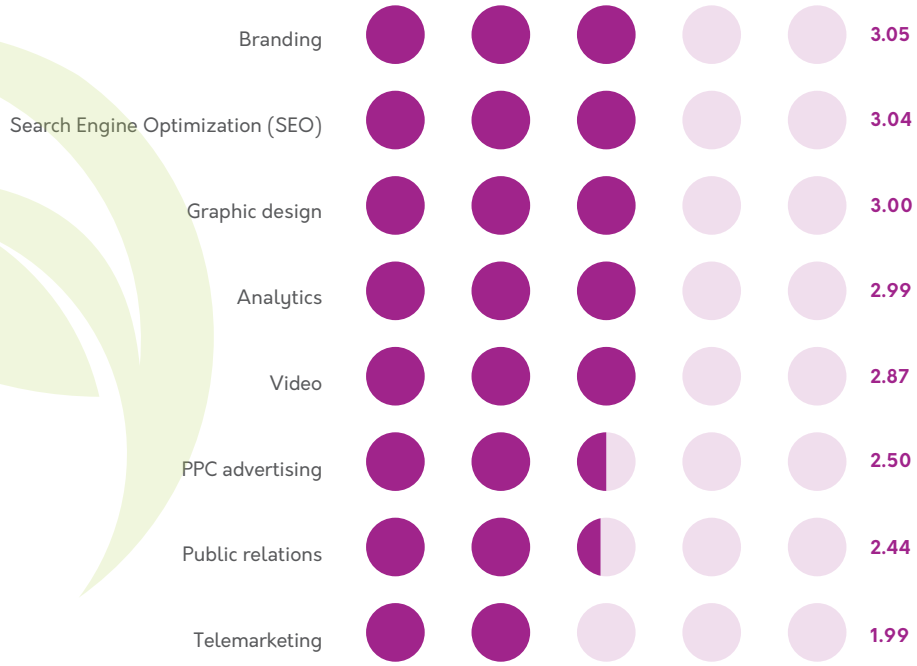




Internal Marketing Resource Expertise

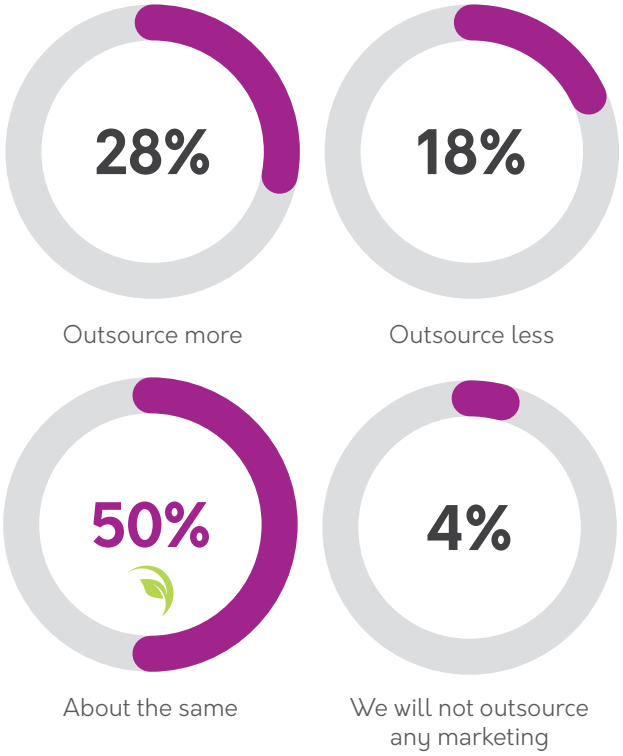
We asked respondents to rate the experience/expertise of their internal marketing teams in the following areas.

1=No experience — 5=Highly experienced

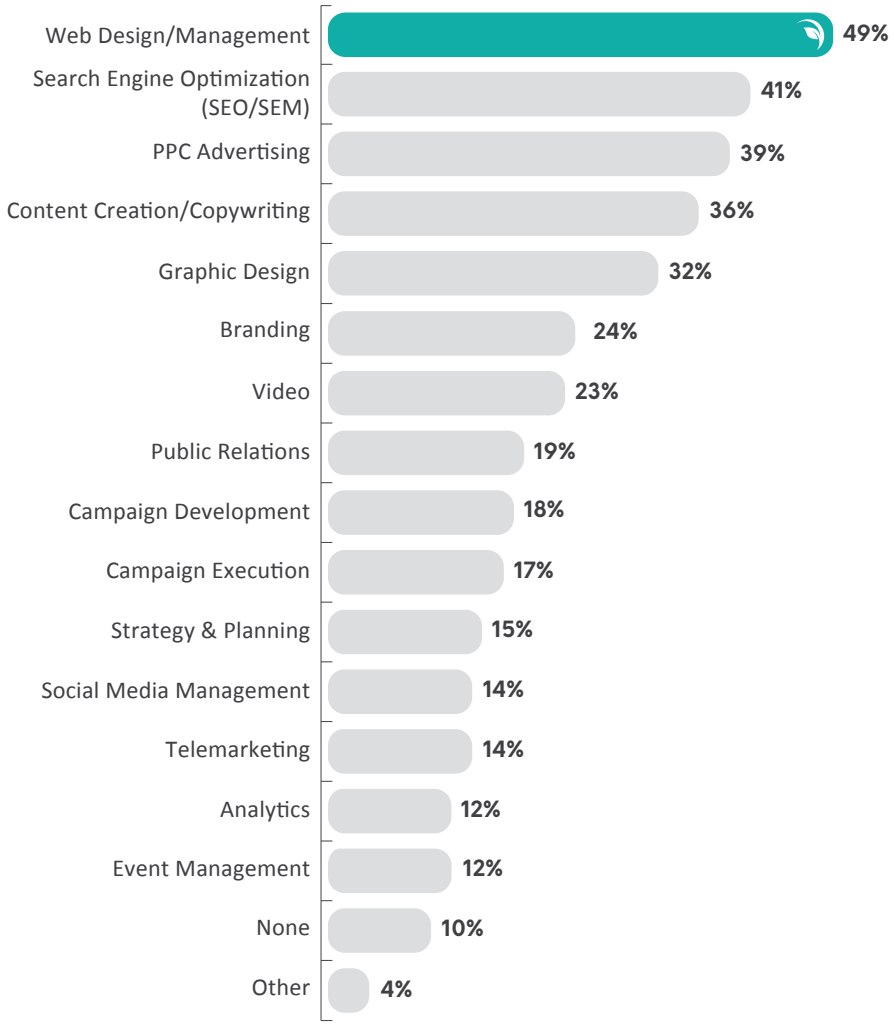


Planning & Strategy (cont.)

How will technology marketers leverage outsourcing in 2025?



Most Common Marketing Areas Outsourced



Planning & Strategy Key Findings

Over the last year or so, we have seen a large shift in marketing strategy. Many marketers are moving away from sales-centric marketing messages and toward thought leadership and education. In fact, when asked which marketing strategies they're prioritizing in 2025, 73% of survey respondents listed thought leadership to educate and nurture their leads.

TOP THREE
Marketing Goals & Objectives for 2025

1. **Lead Generation & Nurturing**
2. **Brand Awareness**
3. **Customer Advocacy & Referrals**

Video is Back (And Better Than Ever)!

44% of marketers plan to enhance their video marketing and interactive content. Video content, especially thought leadership content, has been on the rise. When effectively worked into your marketing strategy, video and interactive content can improve engagement, enhance customer experience, and even lead to better conversion rates.

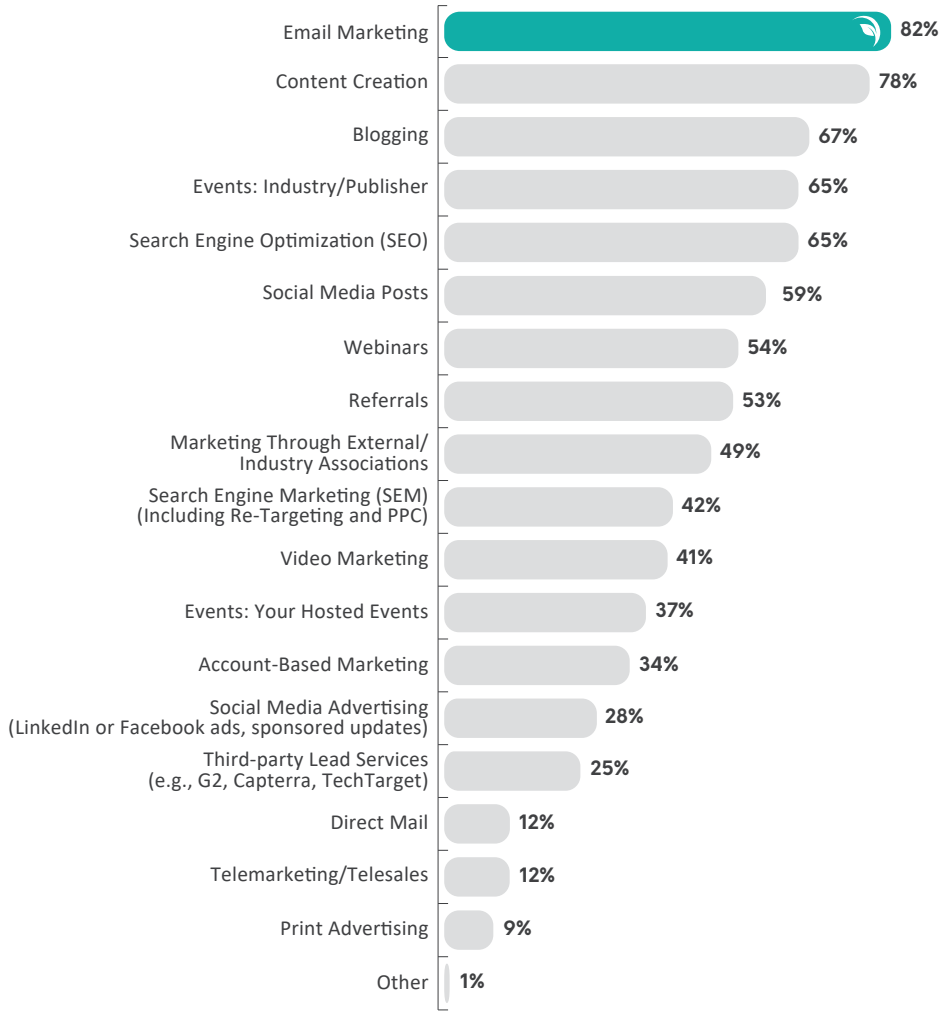
It's No Surprise!

Lead Generation & Nurturing should be every marketer's top goal. It's fuel for business growth and success. The best marketers remember #2 and #3 are just as important objectives because they help support and feed your lead generation efforts.

Lead Generation

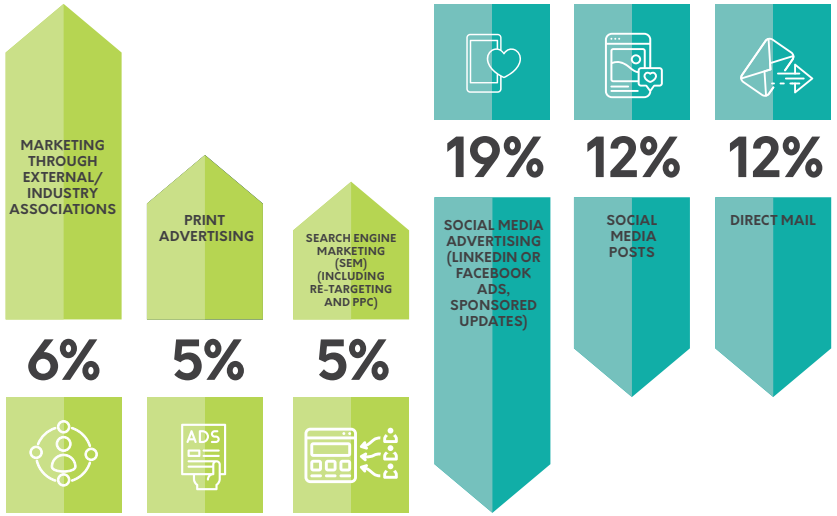
Lead Generation

Most ACTIVELY INVESTED in Lead Generation Tactics in 2024



Email marketing has overtaken content creation to become the #1 most actively invested lead generation tactic!

Biggest Movers in the Last Year



Lead Generation (cont.)

Top 3 Lead Generation Tactic Investments by Company Size

Multiple responses on a line indicate a tie or ties for that place.

1 to 25 Employees

1. Email Marketing
2. Content Creation
3. Blogging, Social Media Posts

26 to 100 Employees

1. Email Marketing
2. Content Creation, Events: Industry/Publisher
3. Blogging, Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

101 to 249 Employees

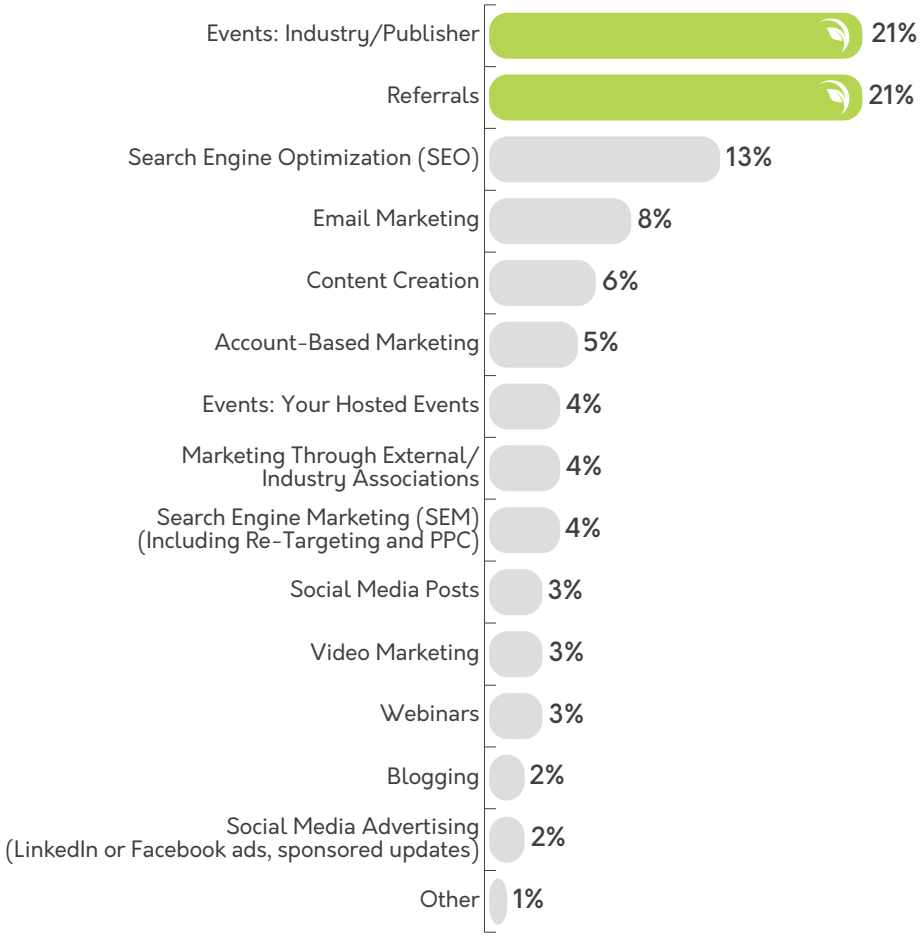
1. Content Creation
2. Events: Industry/Publisher, Search Engine Optimization (SEO), Webinars
3. Marketing Through External/Industry Associations, Video Marketing

250+ Employees

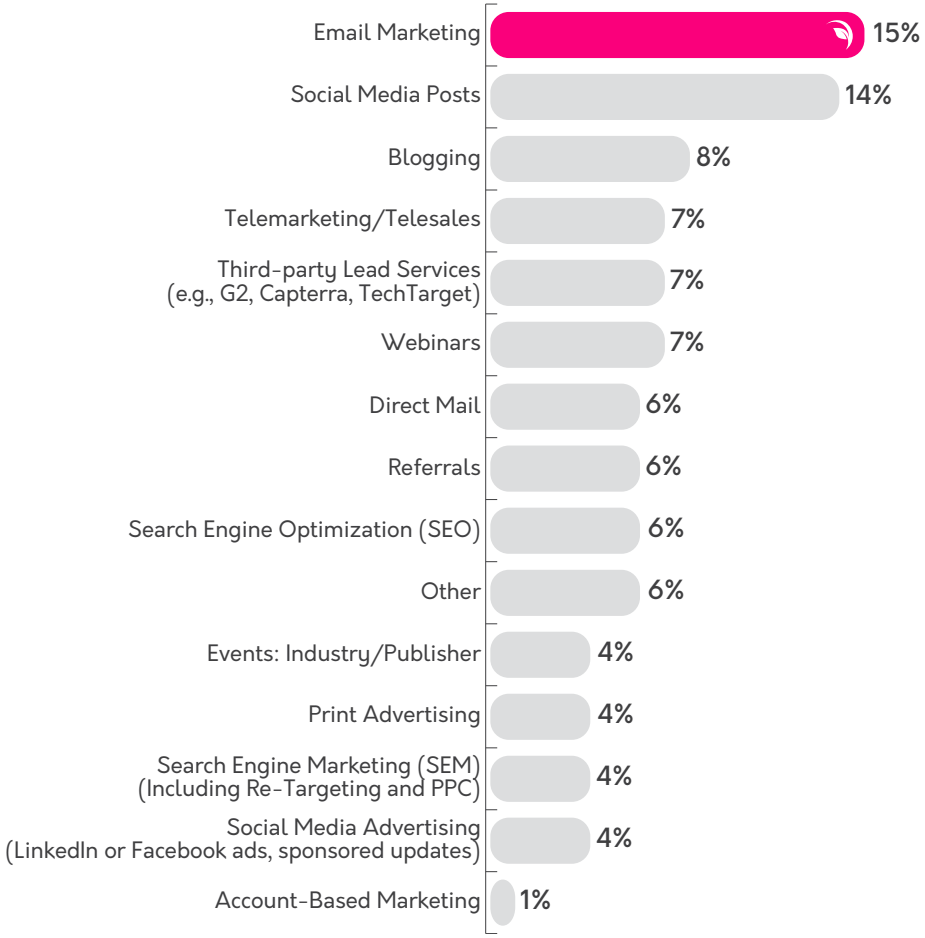
1. Blogging, Content Creation, Email Marketing, Events: Industry/Publisher
2. Social Media Posts
3. Marketing Through External/Industry Associations, Search Engine Marketing (SEM) (Including Re-Targeting and PPC), Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

Lead Generation (cont.)

Top 15 MOST EFFECTIVE Lead Generation Tactics in 2024

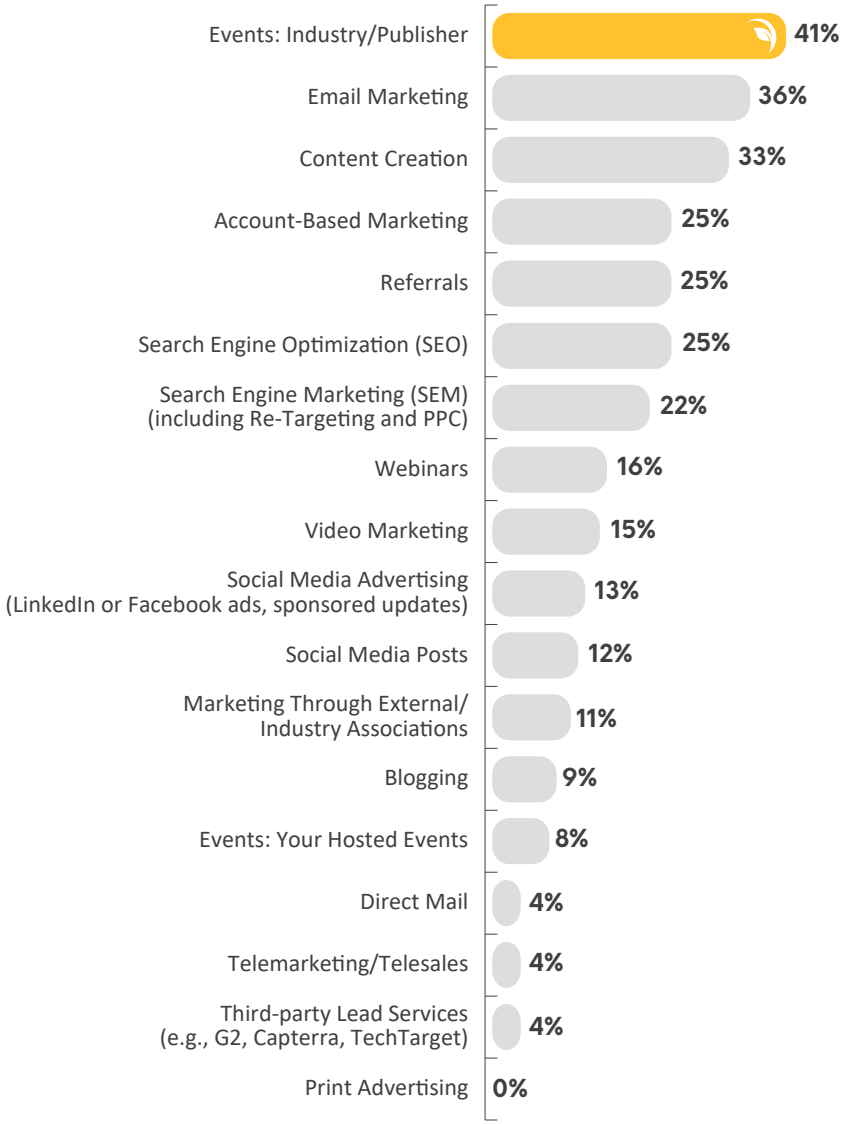


Top 15 LEAST EFFECTIVE Lead Generation Tactics in 2024



Lead Generation (cont.)

PRIORITIES for Lead Generation in 2025



INDUSTRY/PUBLISHER EVENTS

lead this year with a 6% increase.

Other priority shifts:

9% ▲ **Referrals**

10% ▼ **Content Creation**

7% ▲ **Email Marketing**

8% ▼ **Account-Based Marketing**

Lead Generation Key Findings

#1

MOST EFFECTIVE
LEAD GENERATION TACTICS OF 2024 WERE
Events and Referrals
IT'S A TIE!

41%

of marketers are prioritizing events in 2025.

THAT'S A 6% JUMP FROM 2024.

For more than five years, lead generation has been the #1 priority for software and technology marketers. This means that a company's lead generation tactics are key to the continued success of its marketing campaigns. As we see in the most and least effective lead generation tactics, there is a little bit of overlap in what works and what doesn't.

For example, events and referrals tied for the #1 most effective tactic, but they are both listed in the top 10 least effective. Why?

The answer is easy: every company is different! With different company sizes, marketing resources, budget, and more, what works for one company may not be the best fit for another. And that's okay! What's important is doing what's best for your solution(s) and your company.

So, What's The Deal with Email?

One of the biggest things that stood out to us this year was email marketing overtaking content creation as the #1 most actively invested in lead generation tactic – meaning marketers are putting a considerable amount of time and dollars into email campaigns. But here's the thing: email marketing also came in as the #1 least effective lead generation tactic.

This tells us that marketers may be investing in email marketing for reasons beyond simple lead generation. Even though it's not the best lead generator (by a long shot!), email marketing is a necessity for continued brand awareness, nurturing, and customer communication.

2025 Action Item

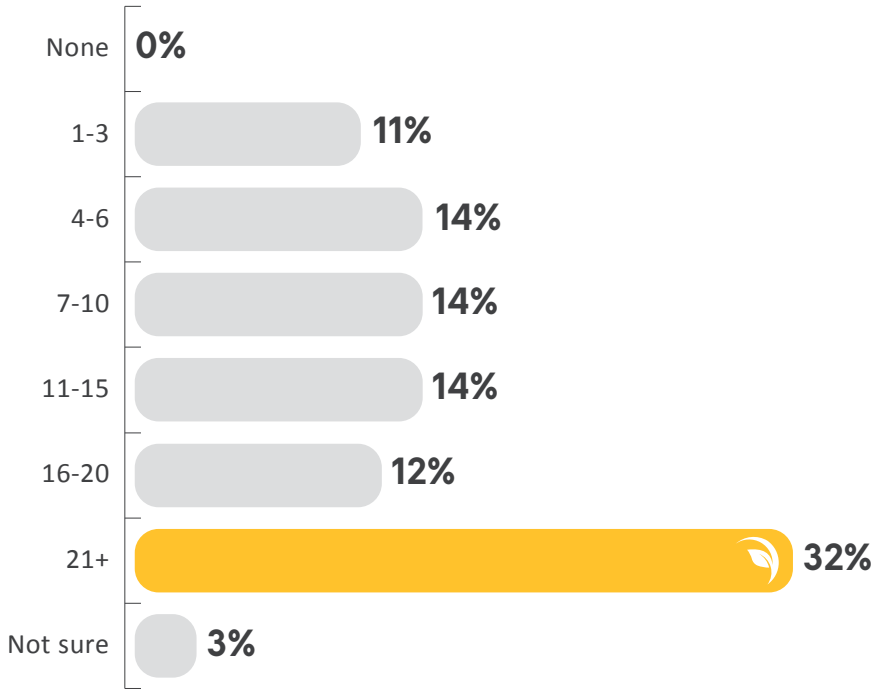
Take time this year to segment and categorize your email list. The more targeted your audience, the more beneficial email marketing will become as a lead generation tactic.

Content

Content

Number of ORIGINAL Pieces of Content Created Annually

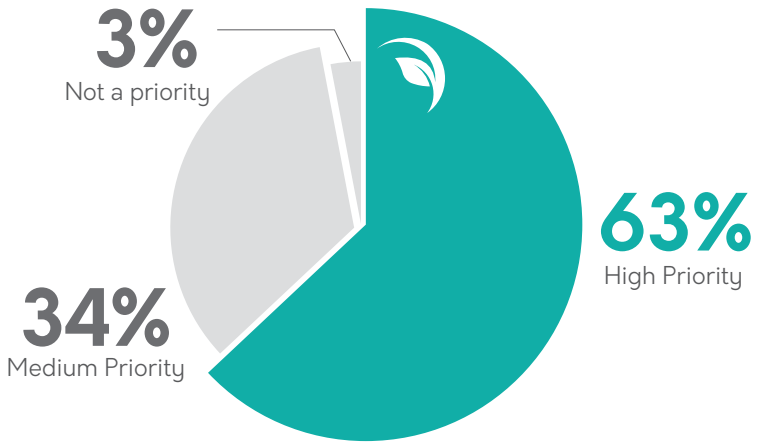
Not Including Blogs



CONTENT IS KING

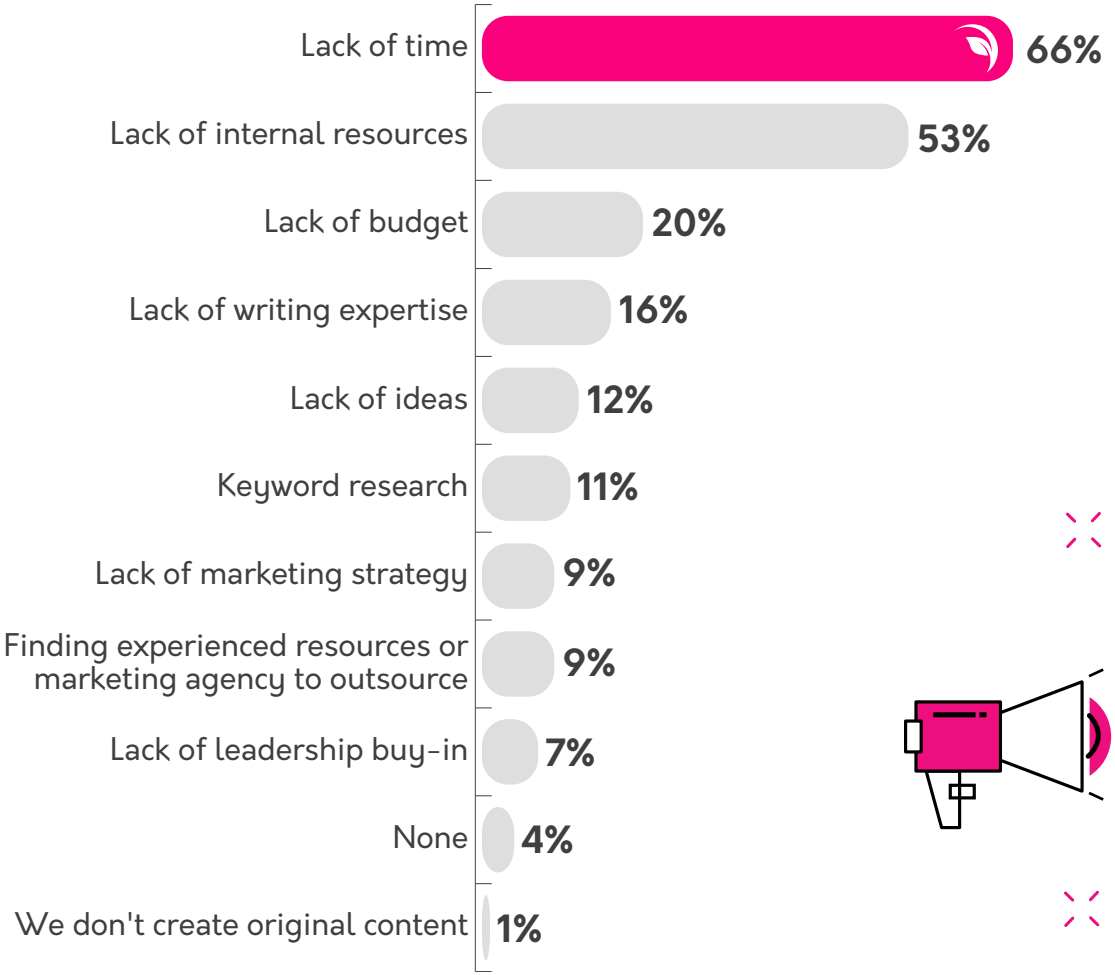
97% OF MARKETERS PRIORITIZE CONTENT CREATION IN THEIR OVERALL MARKETING STRATEGY.

Importance of Content in a Company's Overall Marketing Strategy



Content (cont.)

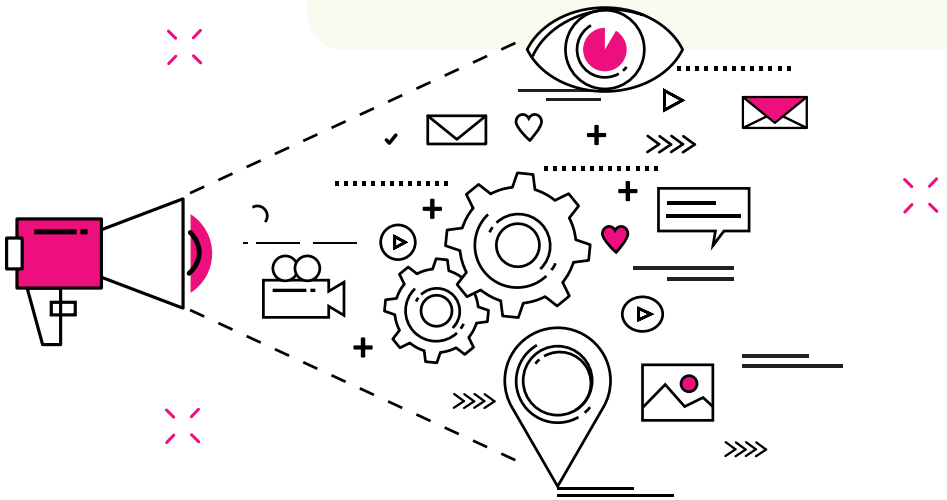
Biggest Challenges to Creating Original Content



WHY IS CONTENT SO IMPORTANT?

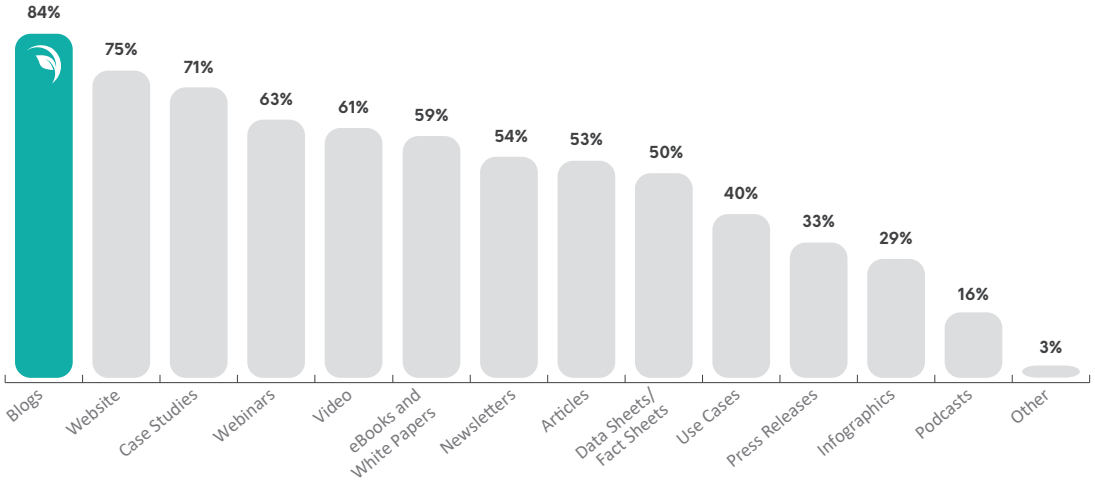
1. Builds Brand Awareness
2. Establishes Authority & Thought Leadership
3. Engages & Educates Audience
4. Drives Conversions

And many more reasons!

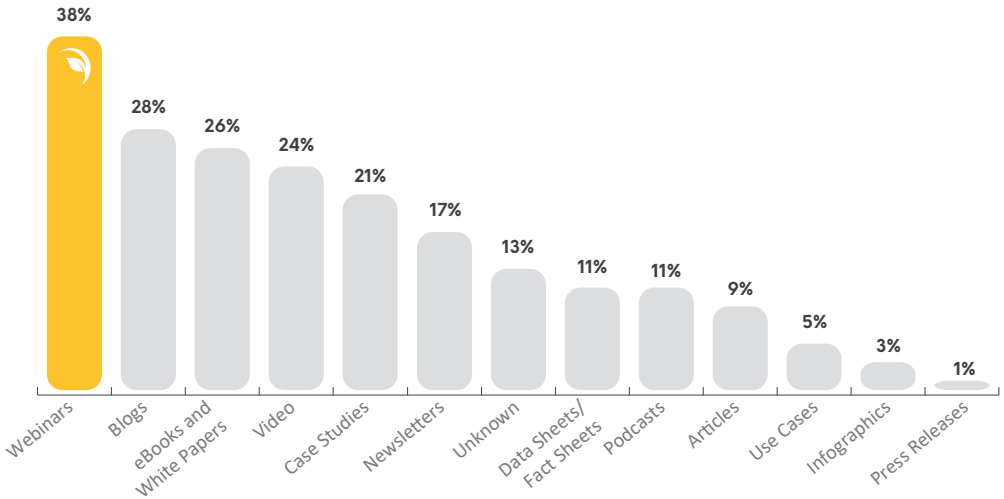


Content (cont.)

Types of Content Actively Used in 2024



Types of Content Producing the Best Results for Technology Marketers

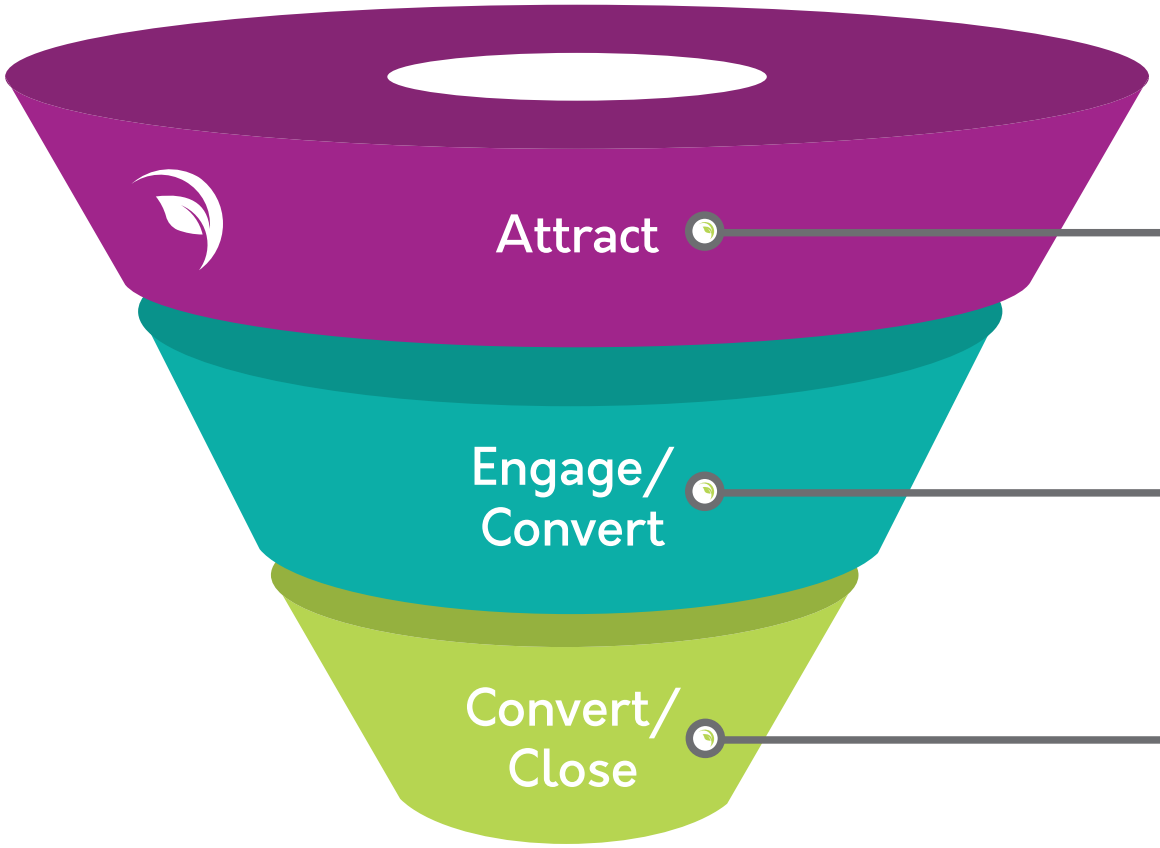


WHERE DOES THE CONTENT GO?

68% OF MARKETERS PRIORITIZE CONTENT THAT ATTRACTS LEADS/ PROSPECTS.

Content (cont.)

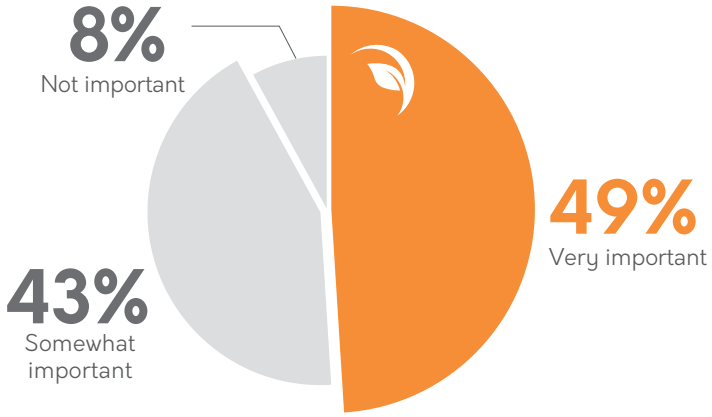
- Which stages of the sales funnel are your top priorities for content creation in 2025?



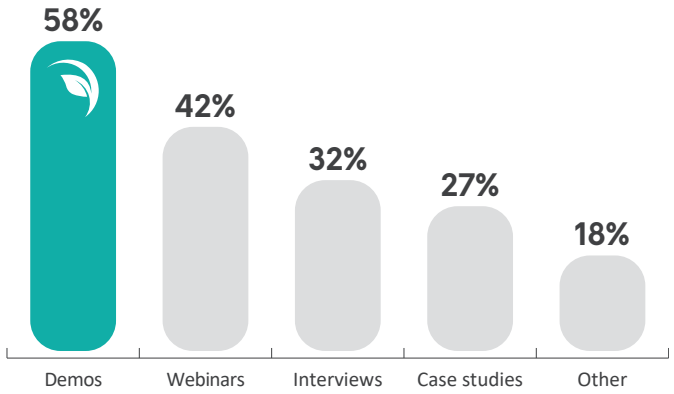
	High Priority	Medium Priority	Low Priority
Attract	68%	17%	14%
Engage/ Convert	40%	47%	12%
Convert/ Close	29%	30%	40%

Content (cont.)

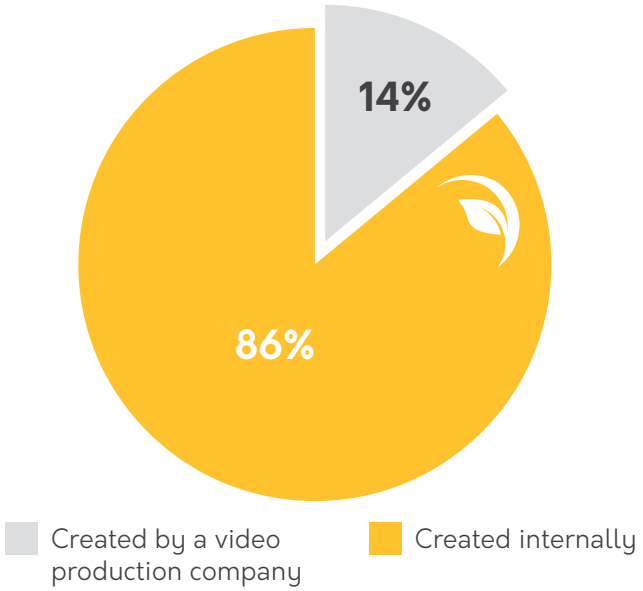
Importance of Video Within Your Content Strategy



Most Effective Video Content



How do you have your videos created most often?



Content Key Findings

As it turns out, there just aren't enough hours in the day! While 63% of marketers stated content creation as a "high priority" in their overall marketing strategy, the biggest challenge to creating original content remains a lack of time. We get it; as marketers, we wear many hats. The second biggest challenge is lack of internal resources. These two challenges alone can be hard to overcome, and for many marketers, working with what we have has to be good enough.

This is why we always recommend repurposing content where you can. Cut snippets of your webinars and turn them into short-form videos or social posts. Make that case study a blog, a LinkedIn article, and use it in an email. Post your monthly newsletter in multiple places. Make your assets work for you, especially when you're limited by time and resources.

What type of content produced the best results in 2024?

WEBINARS!

Let's Talk About Video (Again!)

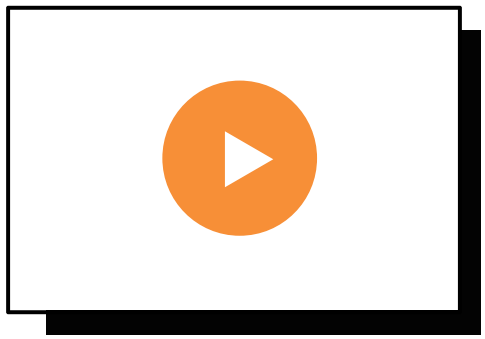
Remember when we said video is back and better than ever? Despite seeing a dip in video in 2023, 2024 seems to have brought back video content in full force! Could this correlate with new kinds of content, such as thought leadership?

49%

of marketers listed video as "very important" within their marketing strategy

THE 2 MOST EFFECTIVE TYPES OF VIDEO CONTENT ARE

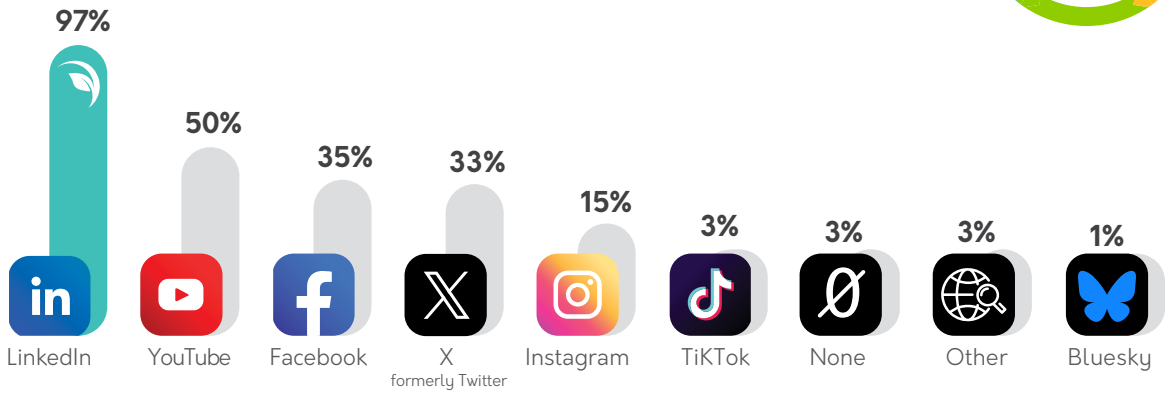
Short Demos and Webinars



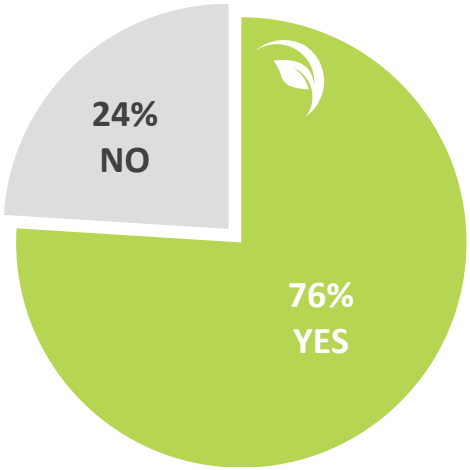
Social Media

Social Media

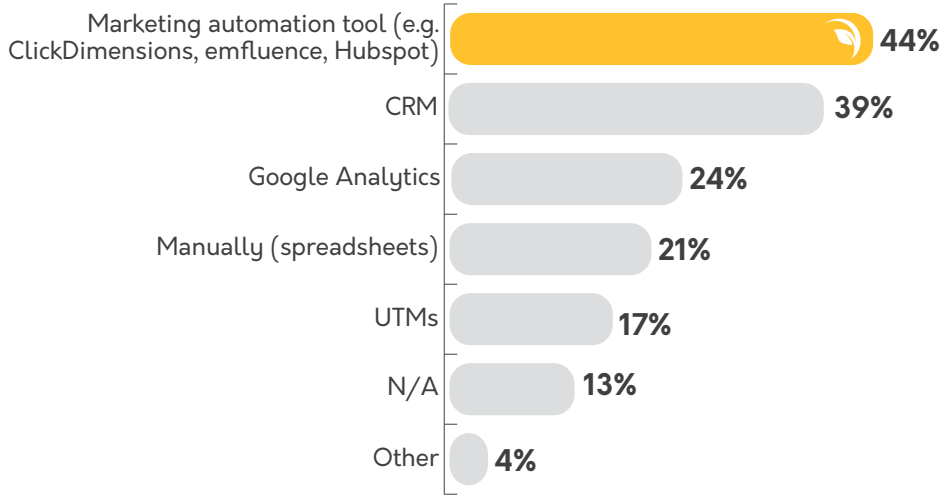
Most Active Social Networks



Are you able to track leads from social media?



How are you tracking social media leads?

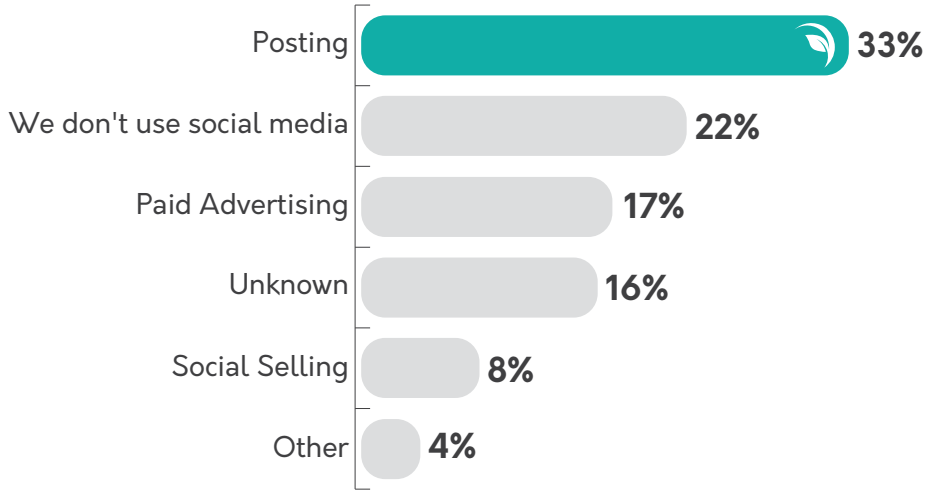


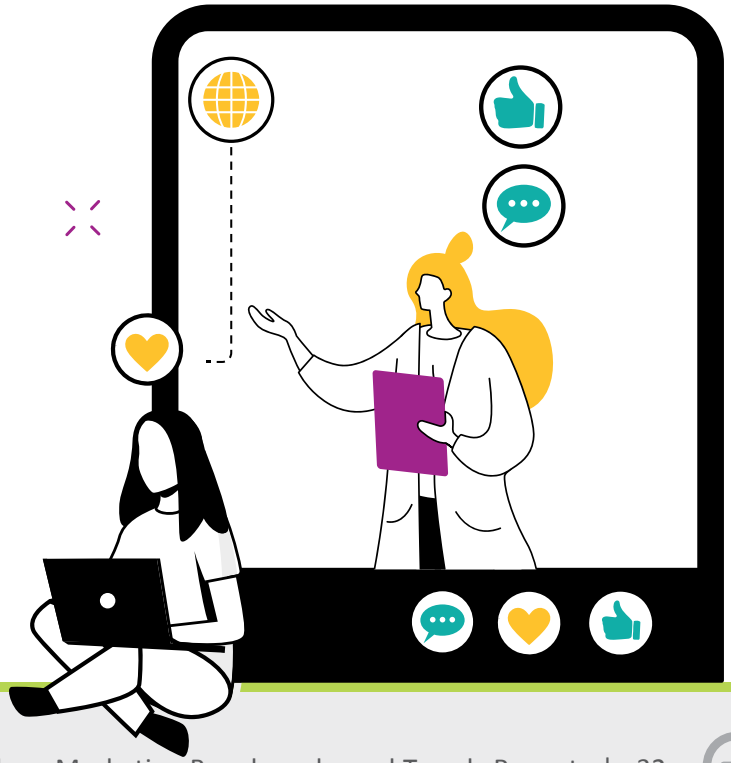
Social Media (cont.)

Was social media effective for lead generation in 2024?

Yes	No	Unknown	We don't use social media
29%	45%	15%	11%

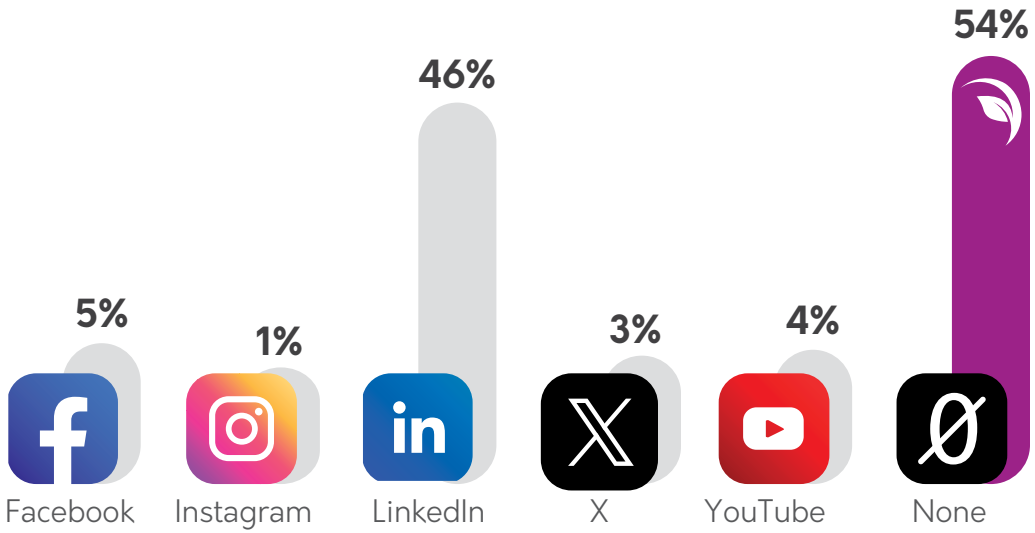
Most Valuable Leads from Social Media

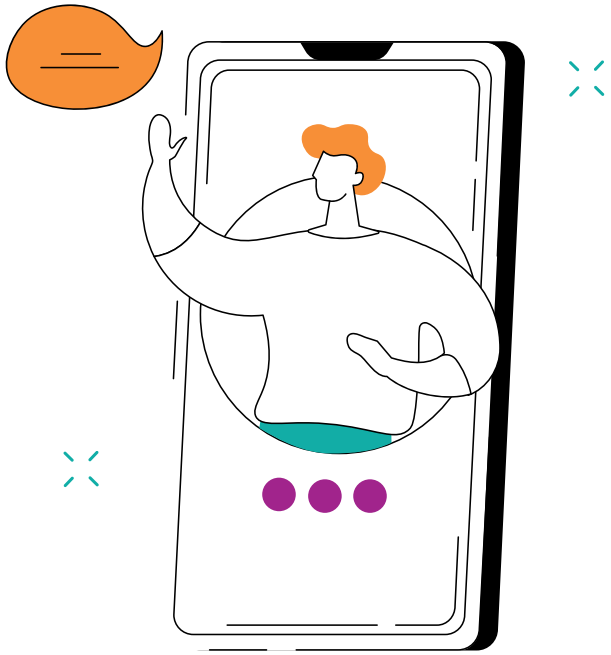




Social Media (cont.)

Top Social Media Platforms Used for Paid Advertising





MONTHLY Spend on Paid Advertising per Social Platform

	Under $500	$500-$1,000	$1,001 - $3,000	$3,001-$5,000	Over $5,000	None
Facebook	1%	6%	1%	0%	0%	78%
Instagram	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	81%
LinkedIn	18%	13%	12%	3%	3%	49%
X	1%	3%	0%	0%	0%	79%
YouTube	4%	1%	1%	0%	0%	78%
Other	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	68%

Social Media Key Findings

As expected, LinkedIn and YouTube remain the respective #1 and #2 most active social media networks in channel marketing.

97% of respondents are active on LinkedIn

46% of respondents use LinkedIn for paid advertising

Should You Be Using Social Media for Lead Generation?

This year, social media has seen a drastic drop in effectiveness when it comes to lead generation. In fact, it remained #2 for least effective lead generation tactics. And, while 76% of survey respondents stated they have the ability to track leads from social media through marketing automation tools, Google Analytics, or otherwise, 45% say it is not effective as a form of lead generation. This could be because other marketing tactics simply generate more leads, but we hear that organic leads from social media are, more often than not, junk.

We've said it before, but this could be a sign that social media should serve a different purpose within your marketing strategy, such as thought leadership or brand awareness. We encourage you to take a more holistic approach with your social media this year. To be effective on social media, you'll need a plan that includes engagement and growth tactics, paid and organic posts, and a high-value content strategy.

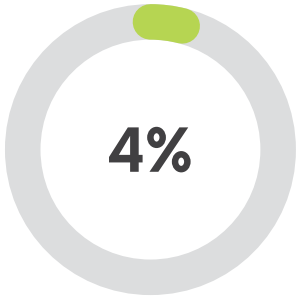
2025 Action Item

Get your teams involved in social media! Ask them to comment, share, and like your company posts, but also notify them if you see someone else's post so they can add great feedback to it. In the end, it helps your entire organization to get involved.

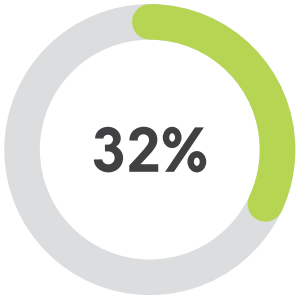
Marketing Tools & Tactics

Marketing Tools & Tactics (SEO/SEM)

Do you have a SEO/SEM strategy in place?

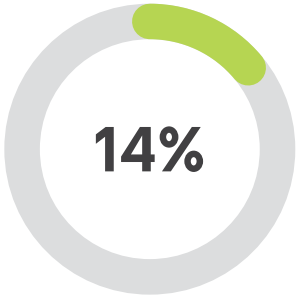


Yes,
paid strategy only

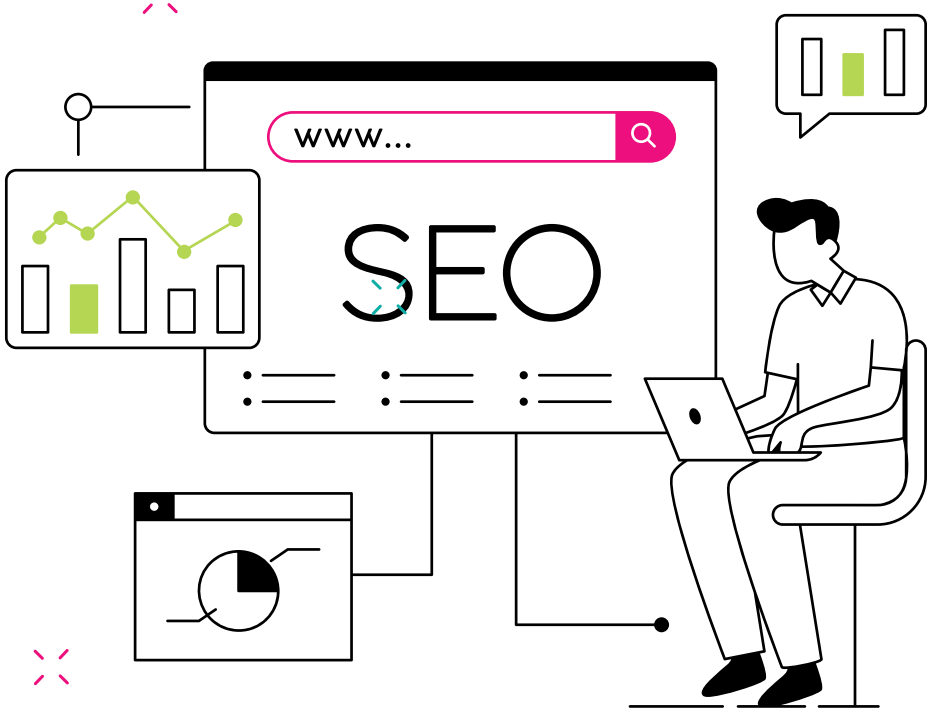


Yes,
organic strategy only

Yes, both paid and
organic strategies

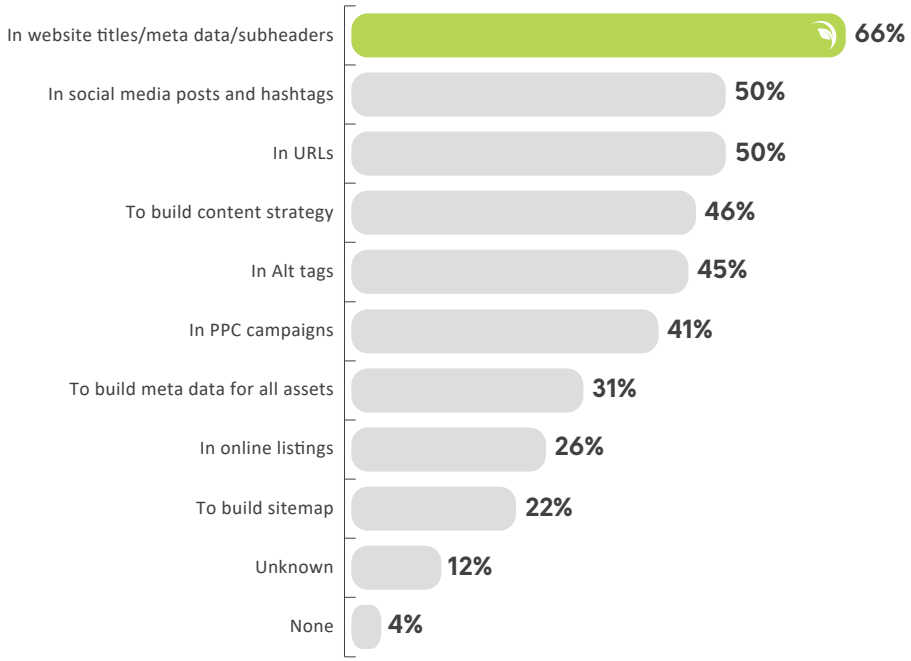


No SEO/SEM strategy
in place

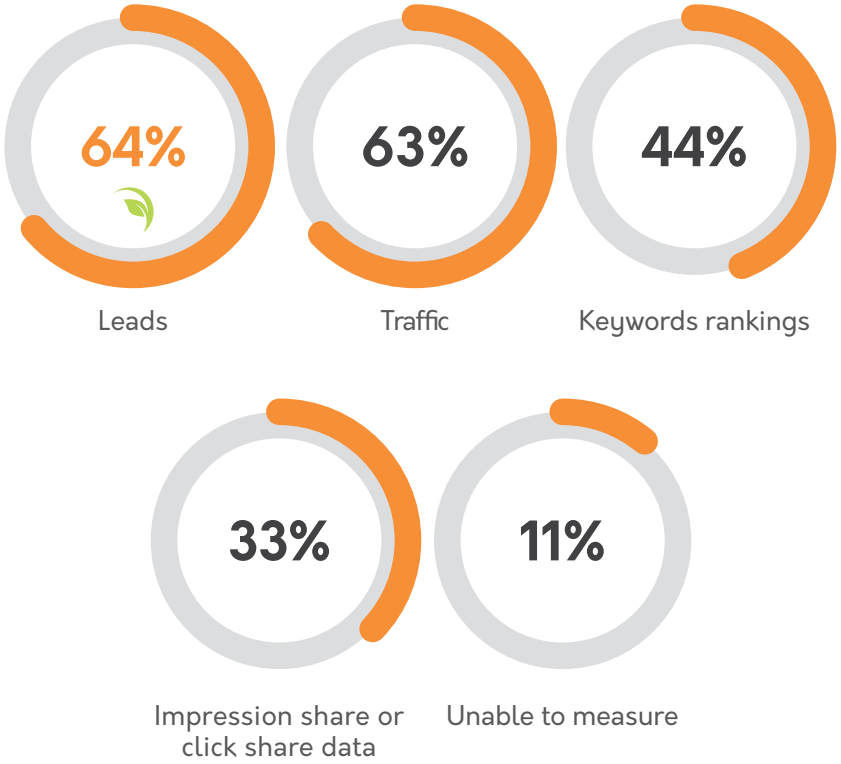


Marketing Tools & Tactics (SEO/SEM)

Top Ways Technology Marketers Are Using Keywords

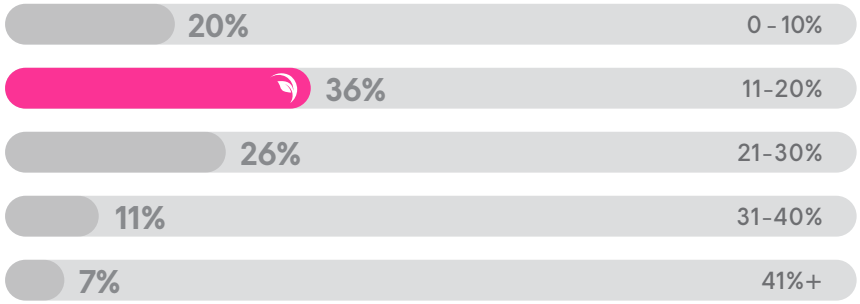


How Success of SEO/SEM Efforts Are Measured

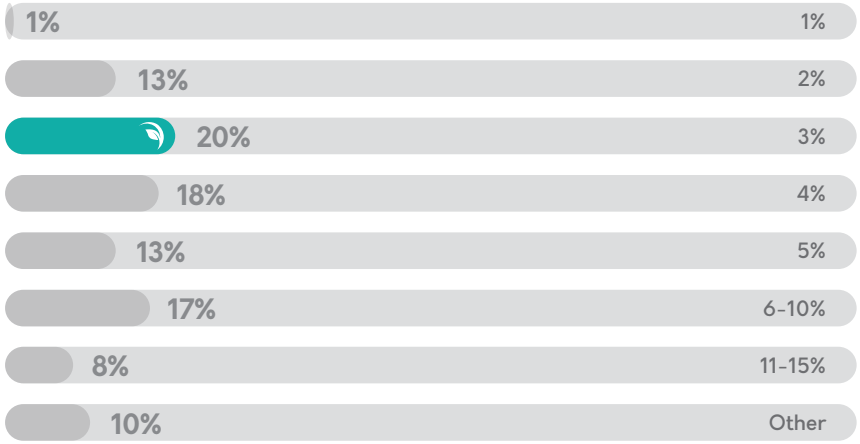


Marketing Tools & Tactics (Automation)

What is your average open rate for email?



What is your average click through rate for email?

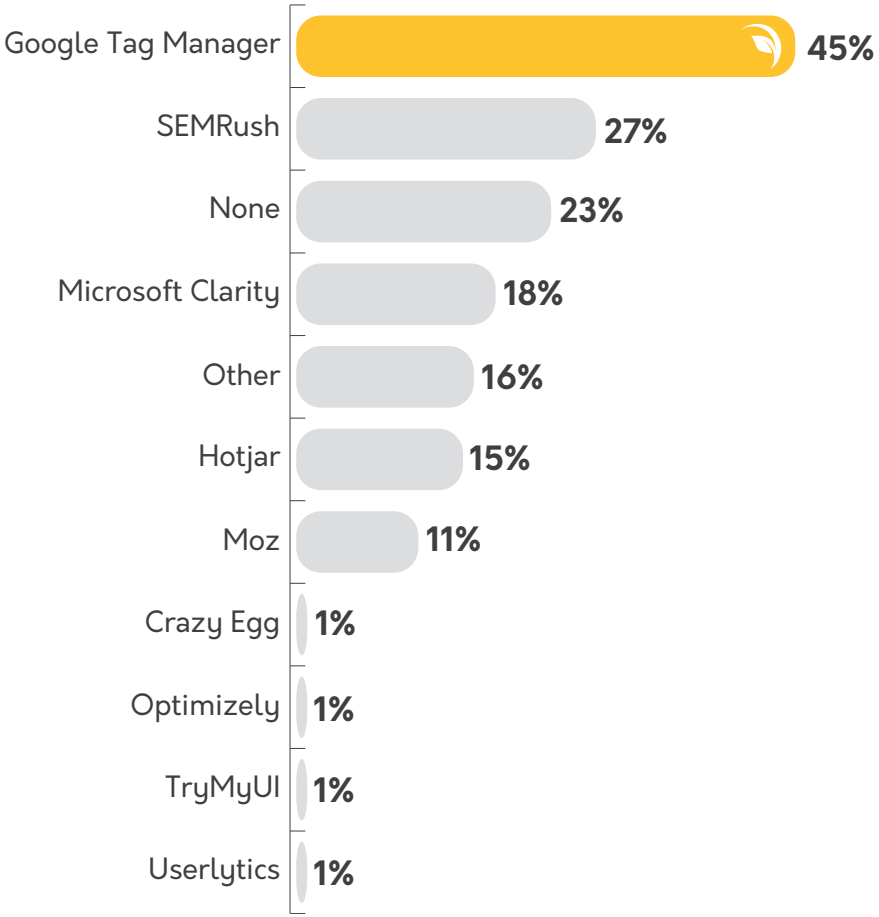


Marketing Automation Systems Used

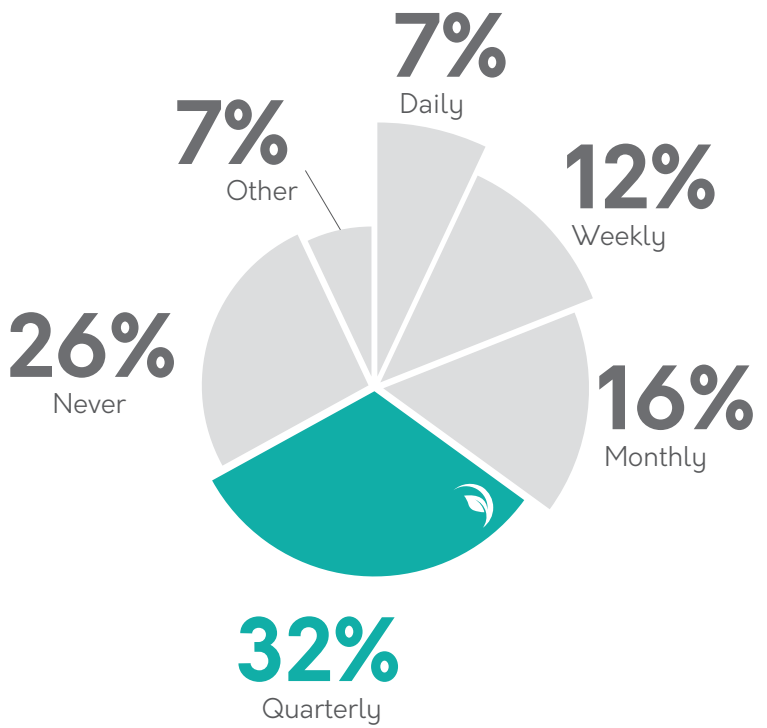
1.	HubSpot	37%
2.	None	18%
3.	Other	15%
4.	Customer Insights (formerly Dynamics 365 Marketing)	8%
5.	ClickDimensions	7%
6.	Netsuite	4%
7.	Marketo	3%
8.	Zift	3%
9.	Zoho	3%
10.	emfluence	1%
11.	Pardot	1%

Marketing Tools & Tactics (Website)

Tools Actively Used to Gather Website Data



How often do you check the site speed of your website?



Marketing Tools & Tactics Key Findings

If we were to guess, every marketer has a list of go-to tools that they swear make their daily work lives better — from project management software to social media schedulers to analytics platforms and creative design tools. The list is endless. While we asked specifically about marketing automation and website tools in our survey, here are a few other tools marketers listed as some of their favorites:

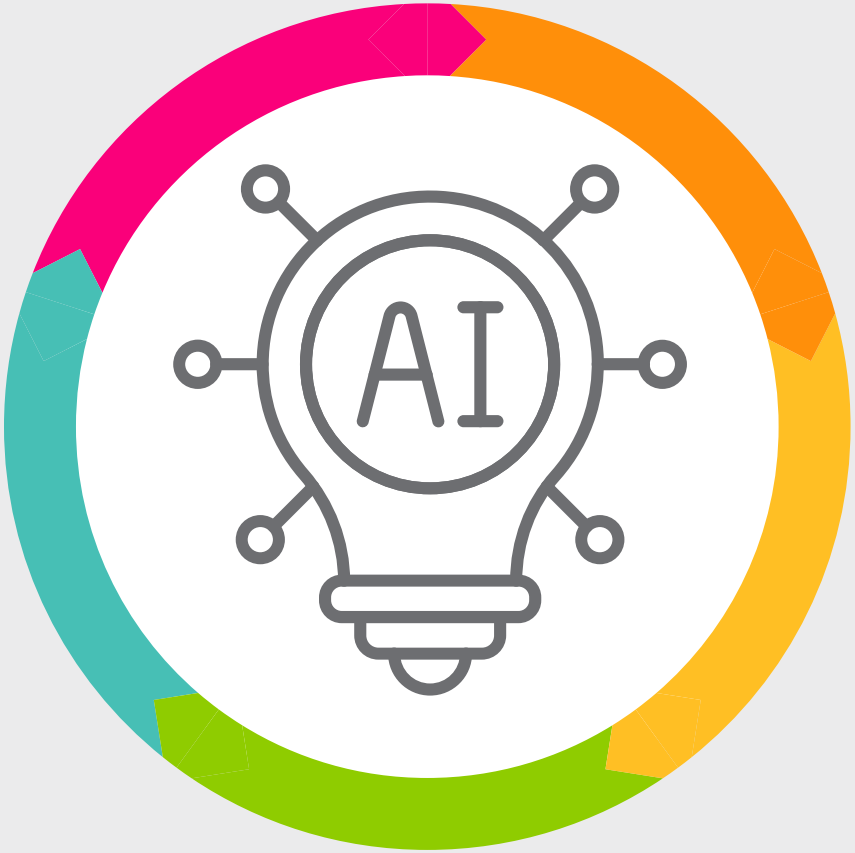
- Grammarly
- Canva
- Monday.com
- Unbounce
- Yoast SEO
- ZoomInfo
- Adobe

Three Cheers for SEO/SEM!

According to survey respondents, 50% of marketers have both paid and organic SEO/SEM strategies in place. This is a considerable jump from 31% in 2023. Don't mind us happy dancing over here! Using proven SEO/SEM techniques is so important for increasing your website rankings and driving more organic traffic to your site.

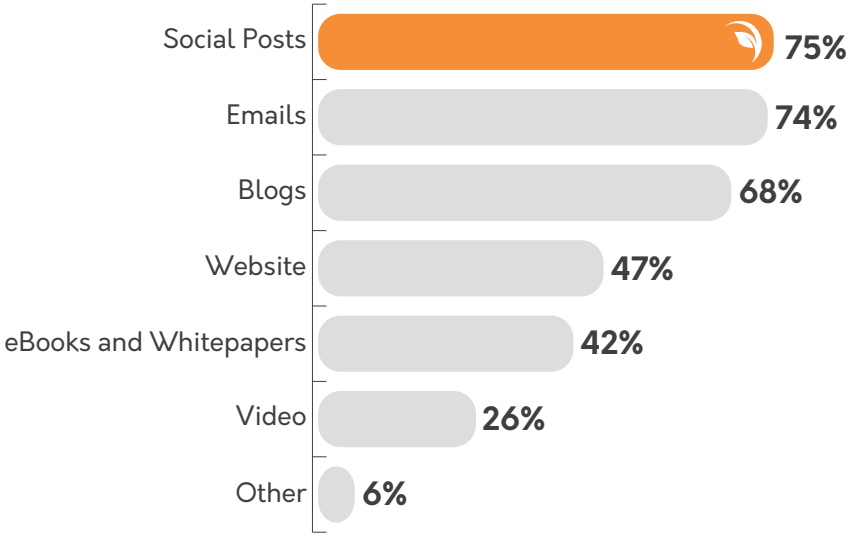
As an honorable mention, only 14% of survey takers stated having NO SEO/SEM strategy in place, which fell from 31% in 2023. We believe every company should utilize both paid and organic strategies, so here's hoping for even more SEO/SEM in 2025!

Artificial Intelligence (AI)



Artificial Intelligence (AI)

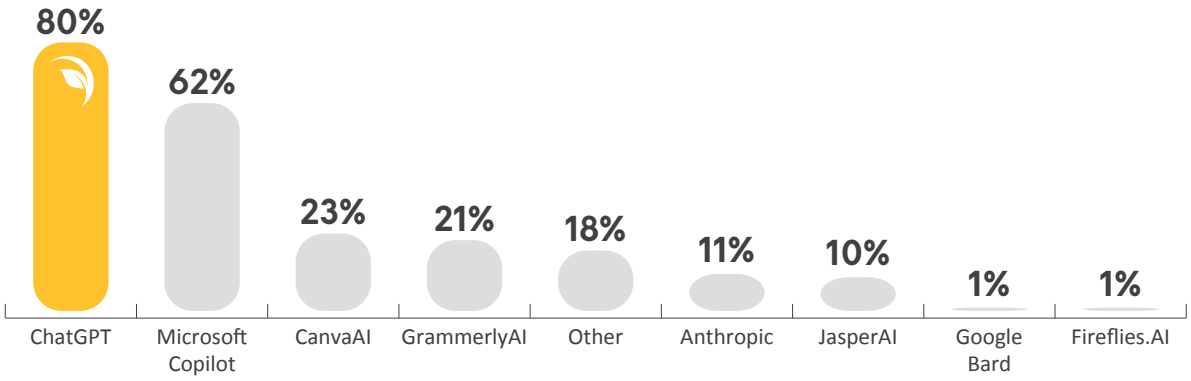
Where AI is being used within marketing content?



Words of Advice

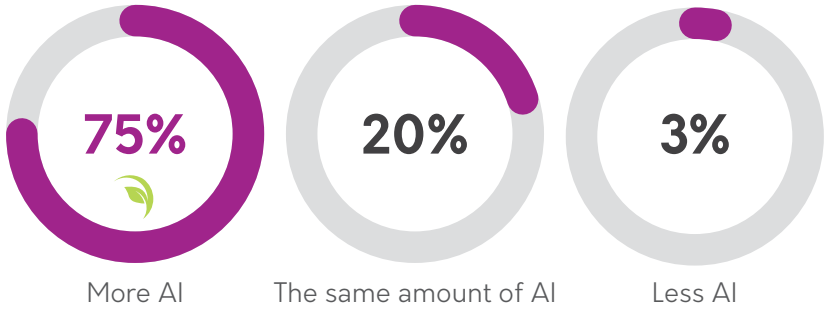
While it may seem ideal to have AI generate all your content, don't forget to look over it with a human eye! These days, AI-generated content is easily identifiable (even by Google!), and people are still seeking genuine human interaction.

AI Tools Used

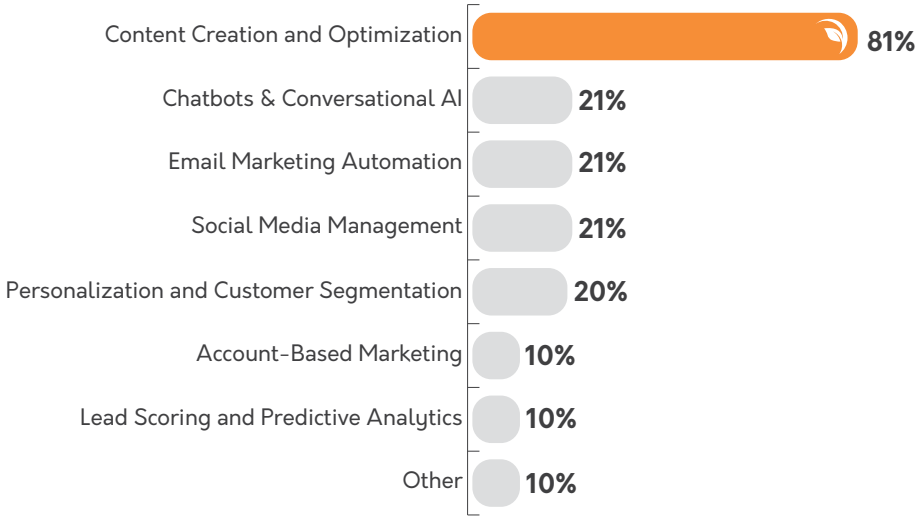


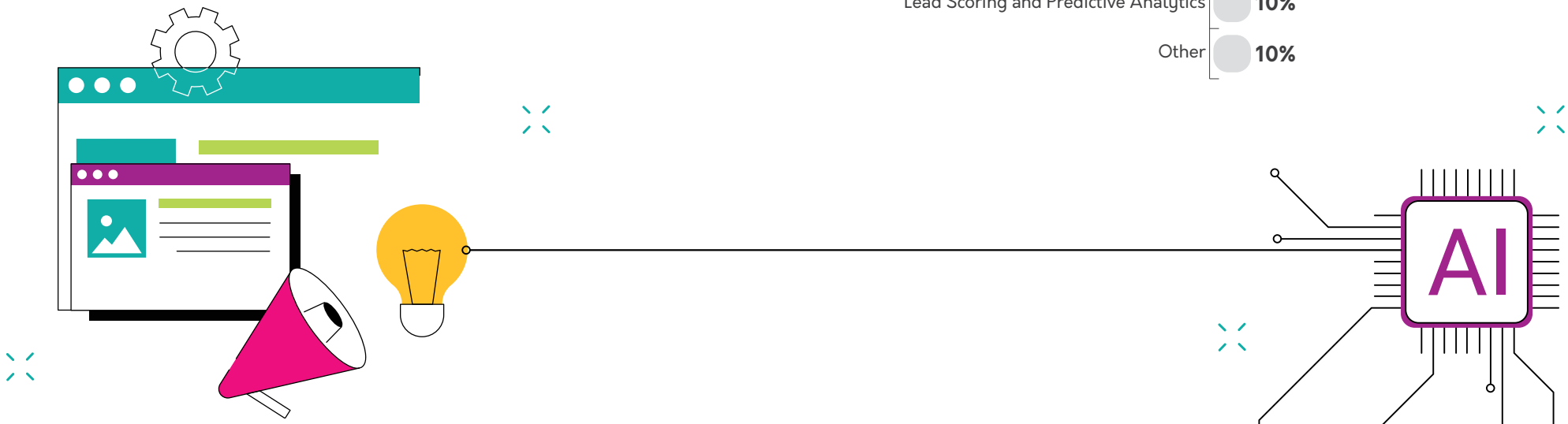
Artificial Intelligence (AI) (cont.)

Do you plan to use more or less AI in 2025?



Where AI is being used within your marketing strategy?





Artificial Intelligence (AI) Key Findings

As we look into 2025 and beyond, AI continues to be a hot topic on everyone's mind. From content creation and optimization to predictive analytics to social media marketing and beyond, AI is about more than just generating blog posts and can be a powerful tool for marketers who know how to use it (or are open to learning!).

81% of channel marketers are using AI for content creation and optimization

According to the survey, here are the top 3 AI tools technology marketers are using:

- ChatGPT (Content Creation, SEO & Keyword Research, Brainstorming)
- Microsoft Copilot (Content Creation, Data Analysis & Reporting, Meeting Notes & Collaboration)
- CanvaAI (Design Creation, Content Personalization, Video Creation & Editing)

These are just a few of the things made possible or simplified with the use of these AI tools. Of course, there are so many more.

However, a word of caution. AI is not a replacement for humans, and it is not perfect. Using AI in all of your copy, especially on your website, could affect your Google ranking. Additionally, AI copy is becoming more easily identifiable (repetitive words, grammar marks, and emojis). AI data isn't error-proof, either, and can sometimes skew stats. Overall, while AI is a powerful and valuable tool for marketers, it's important to keep your company's brand and humanity. Think of it as your assistant, not the boss.

75% of marketers plan to use MORE AI in 2025

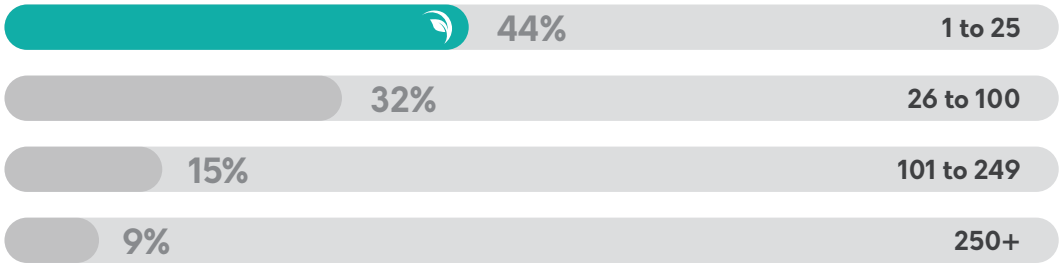
2025 Action Item

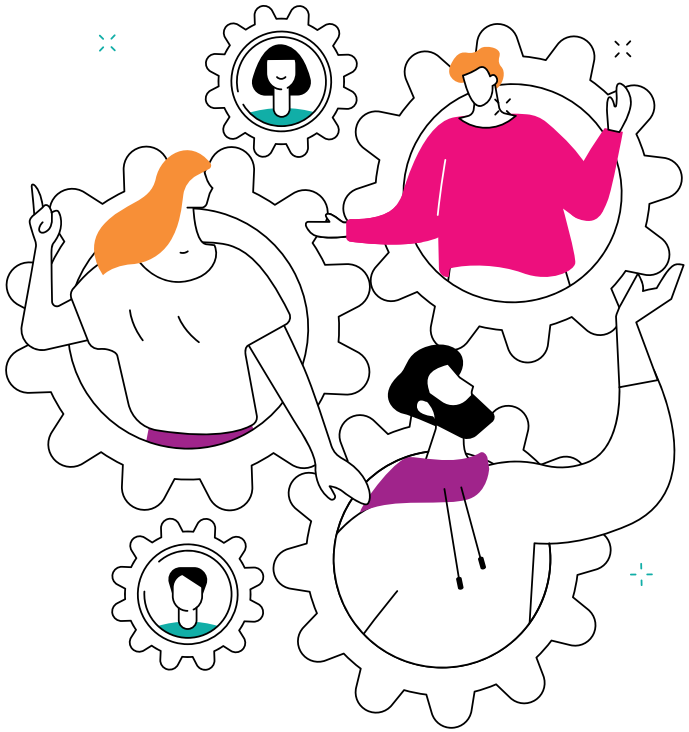
75% of marketers listed using AI for social media for social post creation. Did you know you can also use AI tools (such as Hootsuite, Buffer, Later, etc.) to automate social media scheduling, engagement, and monitoring? AI tools can analyze the best times to post, the kind of content that performs the best, and even automate replies or interactions.

Survey Demographics

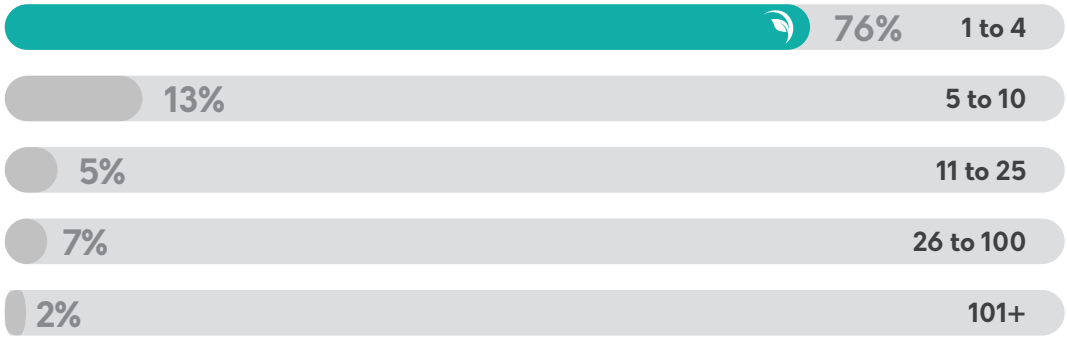
Survey Demographics

Number of Employees Worldwide



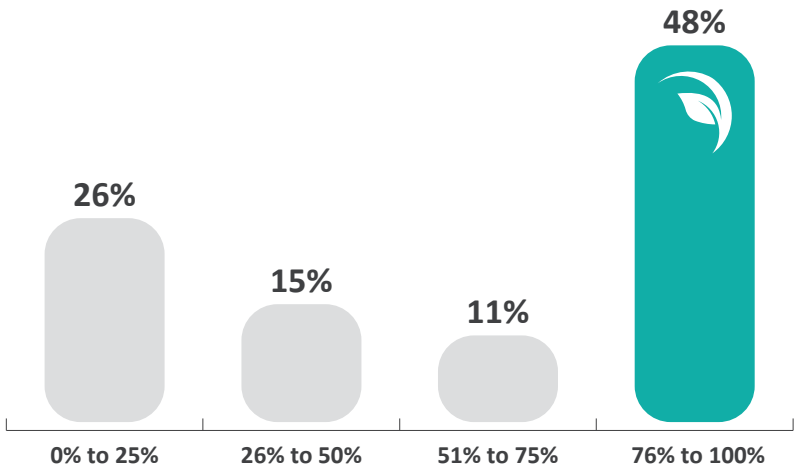


Number of People on Marketing Team

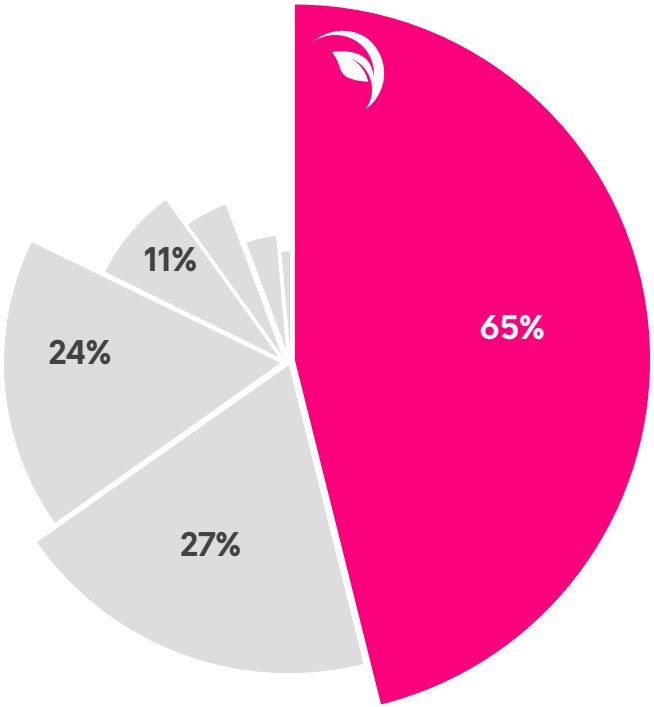


Survey Demographics (cont.)

What percentage of your role is spent on marketing?



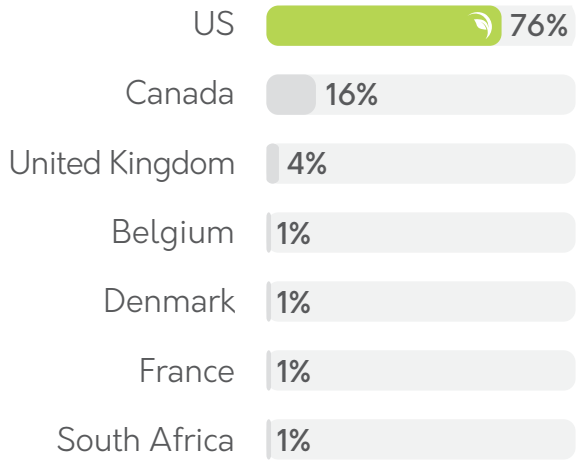
Roles of Survey Respondents

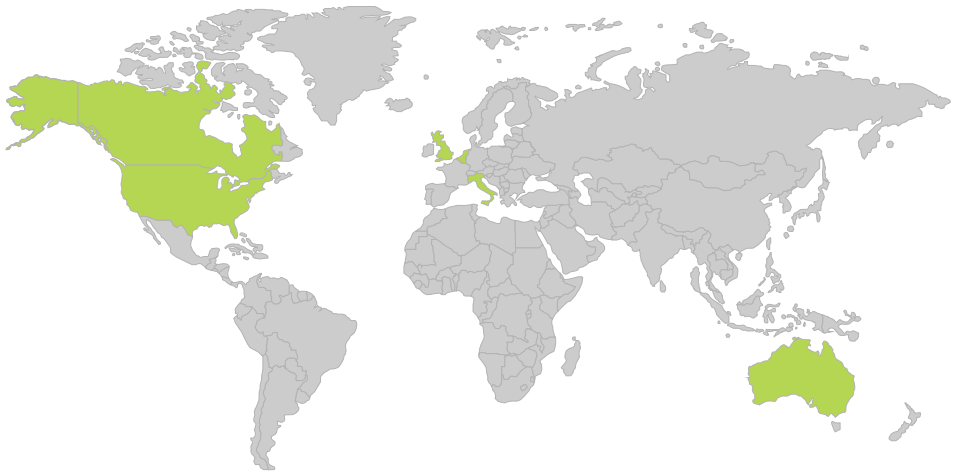


65%	Marketing	27%	Executive / Manager	24%	Business Owner	11%	Sales
6%	Project Manager	6%	Other	2%	Technical		

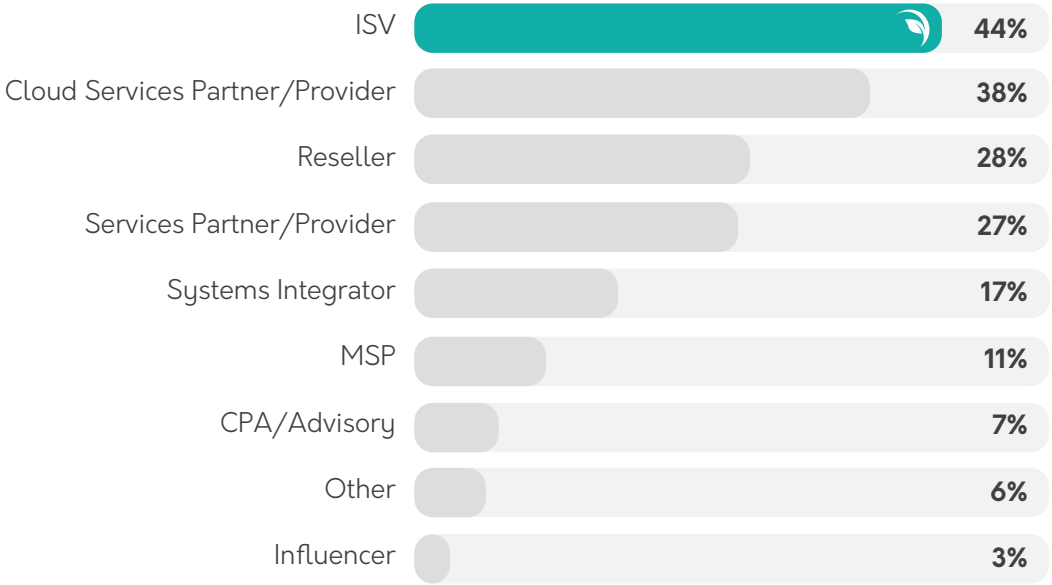
Survey Demographics (cont.)

Respondent Countries



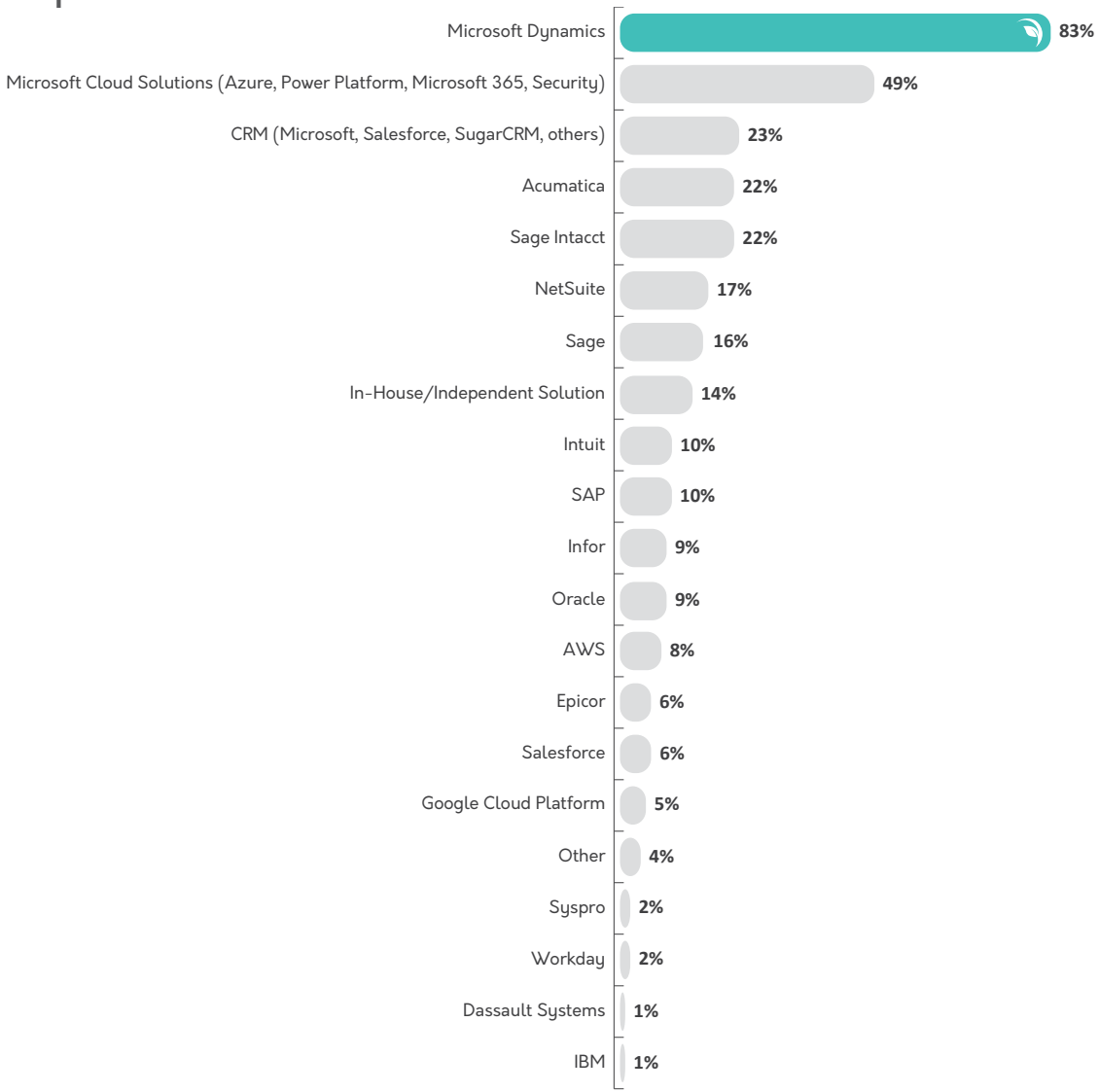


Type of Firm *Multiple Selections Allowed*



Survey Demographics (cont.)

Solutions Represented



Bringing It All Together: A Look Into 2025

In case you need a refresher, here's what we learned.

1. **Events & Tradeshows Remain A Priority**
48% of marketers are investing heavily in events and tradeshows, proving that in-person and virtual events are key for lead generation, networking, and thought leadership.

2. **Strategies Are Shifting to Include Thought Leadership**
In 2025, 73% of marketers will prioritize thought leadership to nurture leads, reflecting the shift of the independent B2B buyer and the need for more educational content.

3. **Video Is (Dare We Say It?) King**
Video is returning as an essential part of marketing strategy for improving engagement and conversion rates, with 44% of respondents planning to improve their video strategy.

4. **AI is Here to Stay**
81% of marketers are already using AI for content creation and optimization, and 75% plan to increase their AI usage in 2025. AI tools are revolutionizing content creation, reporting, and design.

Best Practices for 2025

The "same old, same old" marketing strategies aren't working anymore, and many marketers are shifting their plans to reach their audience to stay competitive. Based on what we learned through survey responses, here are a few things we recommend looking into for 2025 and beyond. Pretty cool, right?

- Where it makes sense, prioritize in-person and virtual events to increase visibility (especially within industries), build relationships, and generate qualified leads. Be sure to have a documented marketing plan in place for before, during and after the event to optimize your investment!
- Avoid hard-selling and focus on offering valuable insights and positioning yourself and your company as thought leaders and industry experts.
- Use video and interactive content to enhance engagement.
- Maximize the value of your content by reusing it across multiple formats.
- Make use of AI-powered tools to streamline content creation, design, and social media marketing. But don't forget to stay involved in your content and always double-check AI content.
- Referrals continue to be top for generating leads, but little is invested into them. It is time to get a program in place. Not sure where to start? Let us know, we can help.

We wish you the best of luck with your marketing campaigns in 2025!

Do you have any thoughts on changes and trends we may see with technology marketing in 2025?

While AI is king and so very helpful, I think there will be increased scrutiny on content developed by AI that doesn't have a personal touch.

Cutting through the noise/being seen — inboxes are saturated and social is flooded with ads. I was talking to a colleague and she said we need to go back to basics — relationships and being out and about with our prospects.

In 2025, the technology marketing landscape is poised for significant changes and trends, driven by emerging technologies, shifting consumer behaviors, and evolving business priorities, including the increased focus on AI-driven personalization, rise of immersive technologies, growing importance of sustainability and social responsibility, and more.

I think that video content (short videos) will continue to grow. With the influence of TikTok and Instagram Reels, this type of content is being consumed more and more.

I think we will see more AI as a "built-in" option in many of the tools we currently use.

Incorporating more AI and ABM strategies in the new year.

I can see more use cases for AI-based marketing tools especially in regards to outbound email campaigns and automations with a range off industry lists.

The rise of AI-driven search engines and conversational AI will reshape SEO, requiring brands to create more natural, conversational content.

With more AI in use for content creation, we will see less originality and opinion-based content.

The use of AI Agents automatically running some areas of marketing and the business at large.

Shift away from in-person events.

From a Gen Z SDR perspective, putting AI where it makes sense seems to be the emerging trend. It isn't very good at creative tasks and even if we use an AI tool to assist in content creation we always check it with AI detection tools.

I think we'll see a trend away from AI as the market is saturated with posts, blogs, and videos that seem less human. If may bring about a kind of renaissance of original creation and differentiate talent from quantity. Generalists will be in more demand as opposed to 3rd party hires.

Businesses will rely more on AI to craft hyper-personalized content, optimize targeting, and automate customer interactions. However, buyers are increasingly skeptical of traditional sales pitches, making thought leadership and real-world expertise more critical than ever.

AI is useful, but not perfect. You have to watch carefully because it will often miss the point and change your words or meaning.

I believe that we will see a shift in the buying process to be more of a "start online – complete with a person (maybe)" as opposed to "start with a person and finish with a person". This makes use of ratings and review sites, SEO and sign-up experience for users highly important.

User generated content will reign over all in social media for brands.

Personalization with lead generation and account based marketing.

Shift away from live events and focus more on digital. Trying to improve SEO as AI takes over search and yields results based on existing web content.

About The Partner Marketing Group

Your Software & Technology Channel Marketing Experts

The software and technology marketing landscape is fast-paced and ever-changing. Successfully keeping up with trends and creating effective marketing strategies for your company is critical to your brand success and sales strategies. Our annual Technology Marketing Benchmarks & Trends Report was created as a resource for channel marketers to learn how to achieve better results from their marketing experts and see how their plans stack up against their peers.

Since 2008, The Partner Marketing Group has provided custom-tailored services to help software and technology marketers. With years of blended experience in innovative marketing and technology expertise, The Partner Marketing Group is a trusted partner who understands your industry and works as an extension of your team. Our solutions and services have been designed around the top needs of the marketers we serve, and we offer creativity and experience to build, execute, or create anything for any company's specific needs.

Thank you to every person who took the time to complete our survey. Your feedback and insights are invaluable in creating this report year after year, and it's because of you that we can continue to bring focused benchmarks and strategic insights for technology marketers.

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