EMAIL MARKETING STRATEGY

Survey Summary Report

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Survey Summary Report

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EMAIL MARKETING STRATEGY SURVEY

Strategically, increasing engagement with prospects and customers is a critical email marketing priority.

But what tactics are marketers using to achieve this goal?

To find out, Ascend2 and our Research Partners fielded the Email Marketing Strategy Survey. We thank the participants of this survey for sharing their valuable insights on this important marketing topic with us, and you.

The data in this edition of the study titled the *Email Marketing Strategy Survey Summary Report* represent the average of all market segments responding to the survey. Specific segments from the survey are reported on separately and exclusively by our participating Research Partners.

This research has been produced for your use. Put it to work in your own marketing strategy. Clip the charts and write about them in your blog or post them on social media. Please share this research credited as published.

Enjoy!

Methodology

Ascend2 benchmarks the performance of popular digital marketing technologies and strategies using a standardized questionnaire and proprietary 3-Minute Survey format.

This survey was fielded to a panel of marketing influencers during the week of August 29, 2016. The 257 respondents are representative of the following:

Number of Employees
More than 500	38%
50 to 500	38%
Fewer than 50	24%

Role in the Company
Owner / Partner / CXO	40%
VP / Director / Manager	50%
Non-Management	10%

Primary Marketing Channel
B2B	51%
B2C	32%
B2B and B2C Equally	17%

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MOST IMPORTANT GOALS

Increasing the engagement rate of email marketing is a top priority for a majority (54%) of marketing influencers. Customer acquisition and retention, which are driven in part by the personalization of email communications, are also top priorities.

What are the MOST IMPORTANT GOALS of an email marketing strategy?

Goal	Percentage
Increasing engagement rate	54%
Increasing customer acquisition	48%
Improving email personalization	43%
Improving customer retention	42%
Increasing brand awareness	38%
Enriching contact data quality	34%
Reducing marketing costs	14%
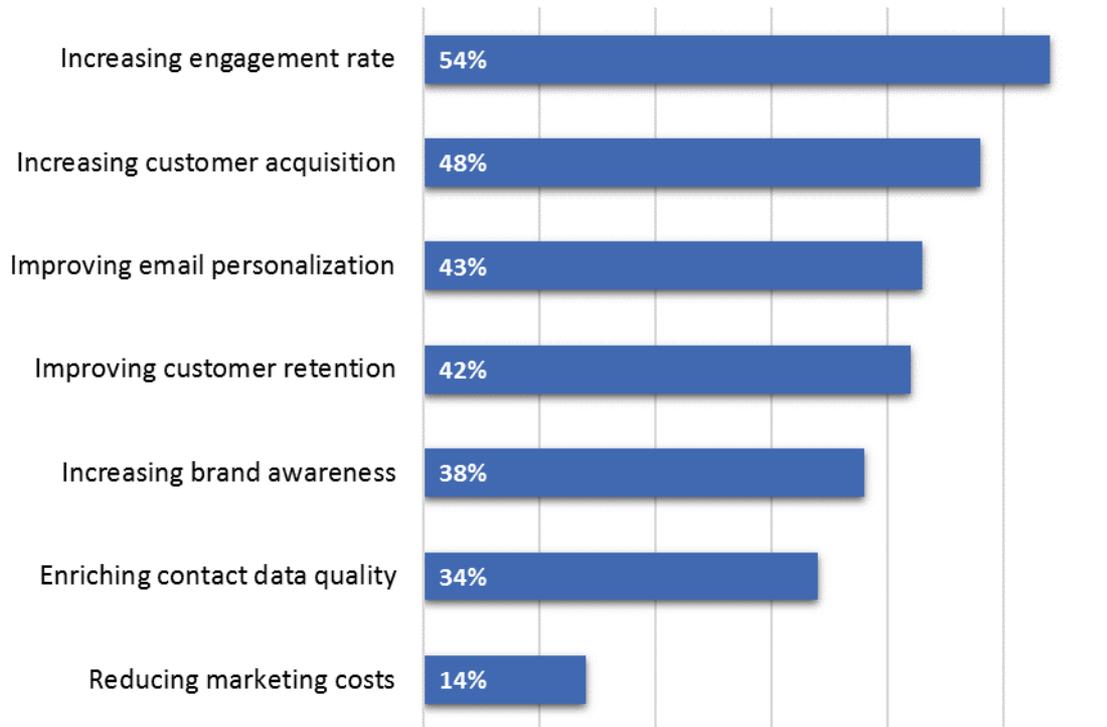
RATING EMAIL MARKETING SUCCESS

Email marketing strategies are considered successful to some extent by 83% of marketing influencers. Actually, more than one-third (36%) describe their email marketing strategy as "best-in-class" when compared to competitors.

Which best describes the SUCCESS of your email marketing strategy compared to competitors?

Very successful (best-in-class)	Somewhat successful (above average)	Somewhat unsuccessful (below average)	Very unsuccessful (worst-in-class)
36%	47%	15%	2%
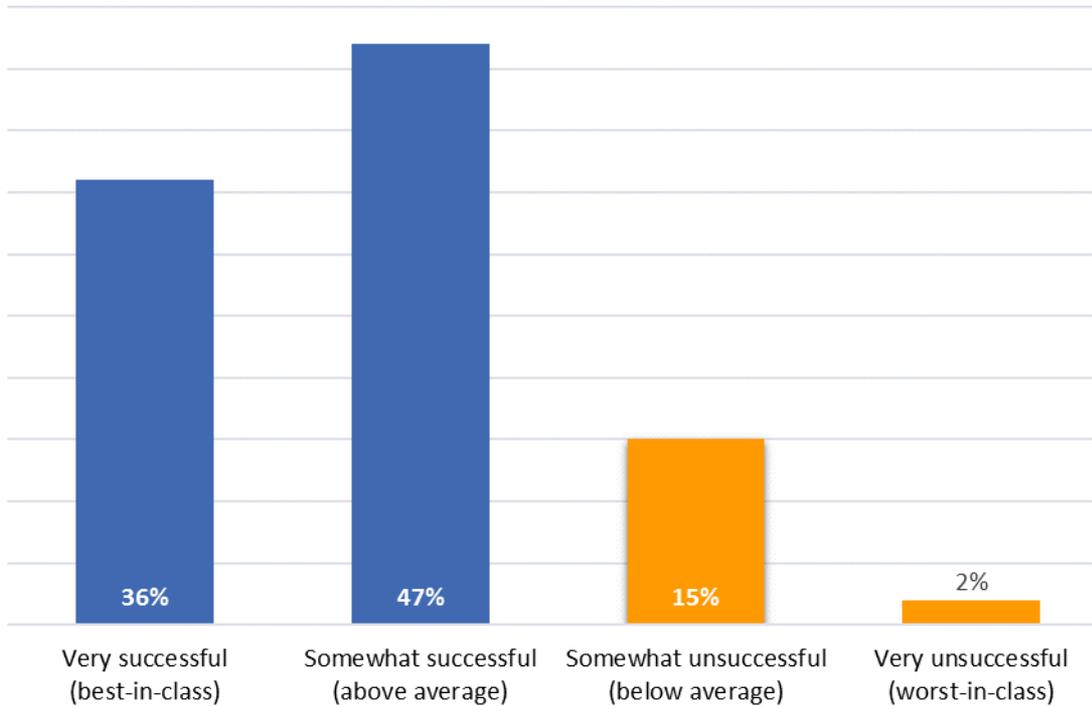
SIGNIFICANT BARRIERS TO SUCCESS

Contact data quality can be a significant barrier to the success of an email marketing strategy. Enriching data quality increases engagement by personalizing the customer experience, but often requires the specialized capabilities of external resources.

What are the MOST SIGNIFICANT BARRIERS to achieving email marketing success?

Barrier	Percentage
Enriching contact data quality	51%
Increasing engagement rate	43%
Improving email personalization	39%
Increasing customer acquisition	35%
Reducing marketing costs	26%
Increasing brand awareness	24%
Improving customer retention	21%

HOW SALES CYCLE IMPACTS SUCCESS

The email marketing is a valuable channel used in all types of sales scenarios, but essential when it comes to cycles that are long and complex, involving multiple influencers that require personalized nurturing during the purchase decision process.

Which best describes the type of SALES CYCLE your organization most often encounters?

Complex sale and Direct sale equally 20%

Complex sale (long cycle, many influencers) 49%

Direct sale (short cycle, few influencers) 31%

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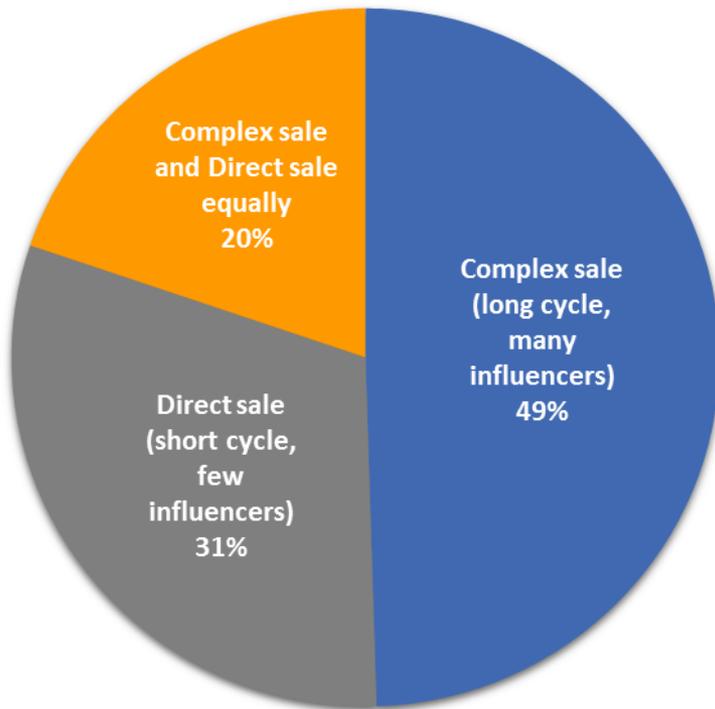
STRATEGIC GOALS VERSUS BARRIERS

Analyzing the importance of goals worth achieving in comparison to their significance as barriers to success is critical in the development of a well balanced and effective strategy for email marketing purposes.
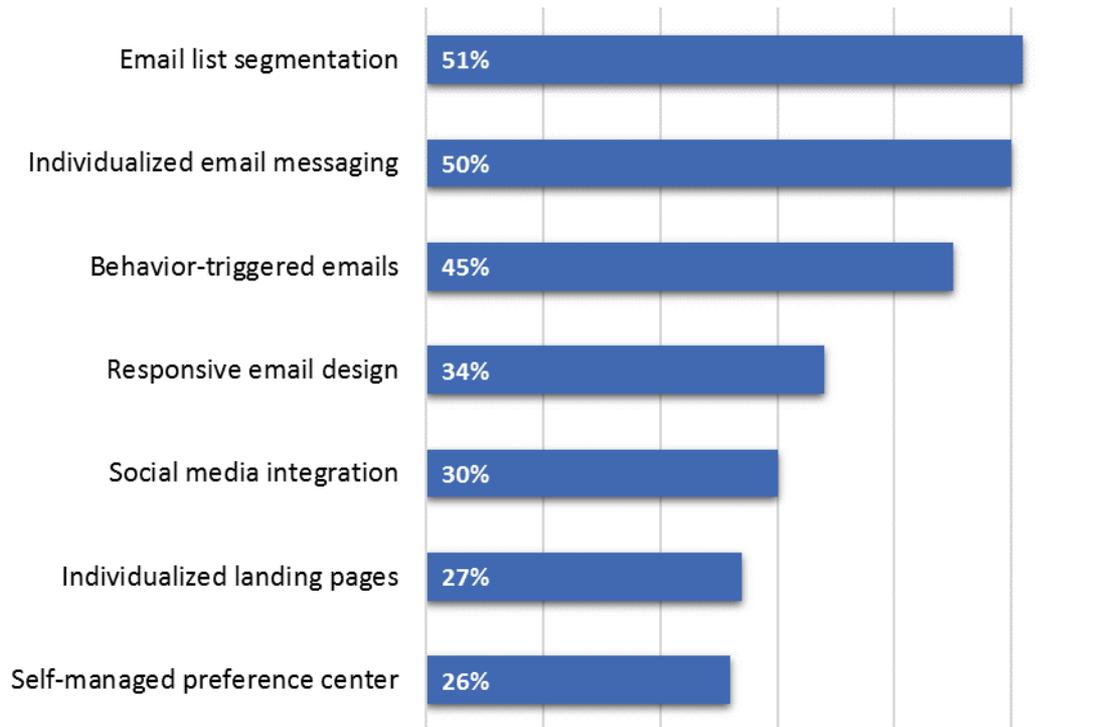
Analyzing goals versus barriers for strategic purposes.

■ Most Important Goals   ■ Most Significant Barriers

Category	Most Important Goals	Most Significant Barriers
Increasing engagement rate	54%	43%
Increasing customer acquisition	48%	35%
Improving email personalization	43%	39%
Improving customer retention	42%	21%
Increasing brand awareness	38%	24%
Enriching contact data quality	34%	51%
Reducing marketing costs	14%	26%

MOST EFFECTIVE TACTICS

The ability to segment email lists and individualize email campaign messaging are the most effective personalization tactics for 51% and 50% of marketing influencers respectively.

What are the MOST EFFECTIVE personalization tactics used for email marketing purposes?

Tactic	Percentage
Email list segmentation	51%
Individualized email messaging	50%
Behavior-triggered emails	45%
Responsive email design	34%
Social media integration	30%
Individualized landing pages	27%
Self-managed preference center	26%

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HOW EFFECTIVENESS IS CHANGING

A total of 88% of marketing influencers agree that email marketing effectiveness is increasing to some extent, with nearly half of those (40%) describing the increase as significant. Only 12% say email marketing effectiveness is decreasing.
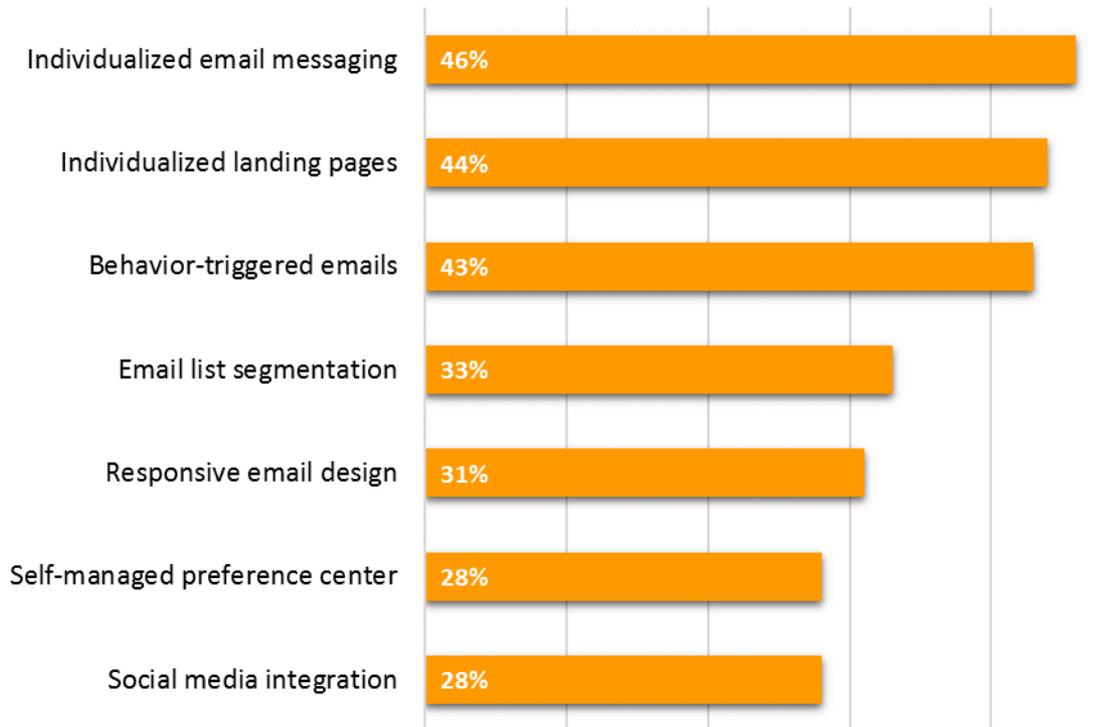
To what extent is email marketing EFFECTIVENESS CHANGING?

Effectiveness is increasing significantly	Effectiveness is increasing marginally	Effectiveness is decreasing marginally	Effectiveness is decreasing significantly
40%	48%	9%	3%
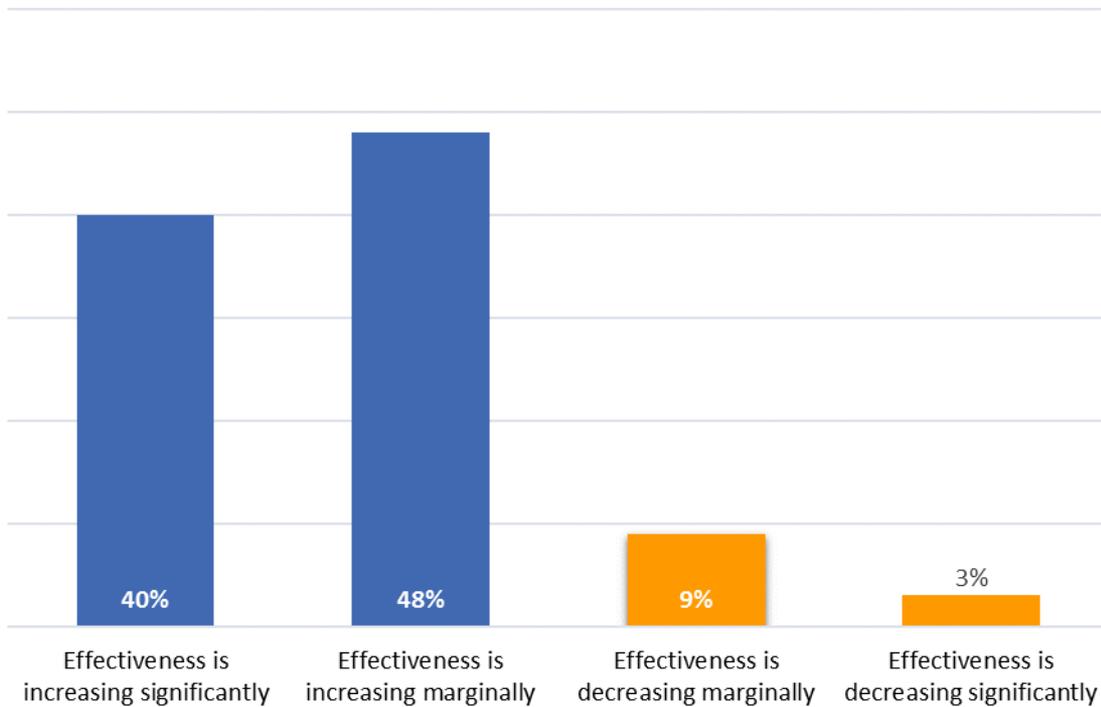
TACTICAL DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY

Individualizing email messaging and landing page content are the most difficult personalization tactics to execute for marketing purposes. To execute successfully, these tactics require quality and complete contact data.
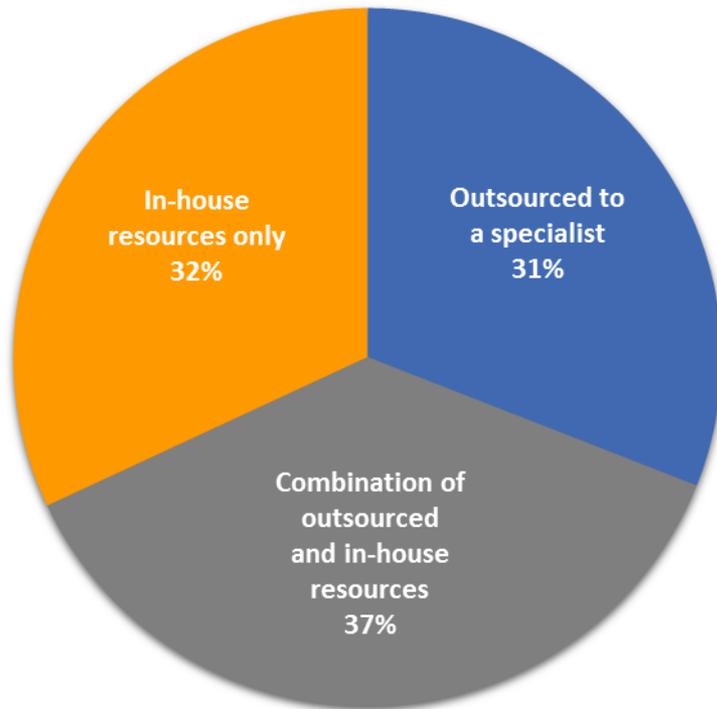
What are the MOST DIFFICULT personalization tactics to execute for email marketing purposes?

Tactic	Percentage
Individualized email messaging	46%
Individualized landing pages	44%
Behavior-triggered emails	43%
Email list segmentation	33%
Responsive email design	31%
Self-managed preference center	28%
Social media integration	28%

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RESOURCES USED TO EXECUTE TACTICS

Individualizing campaigns for personalization is difficult to execute. The greater the degree of difficulty, the more likely a company is to outsource. That's why 68% of companies execute all or part of their email marketing techniques using specialized external resources.
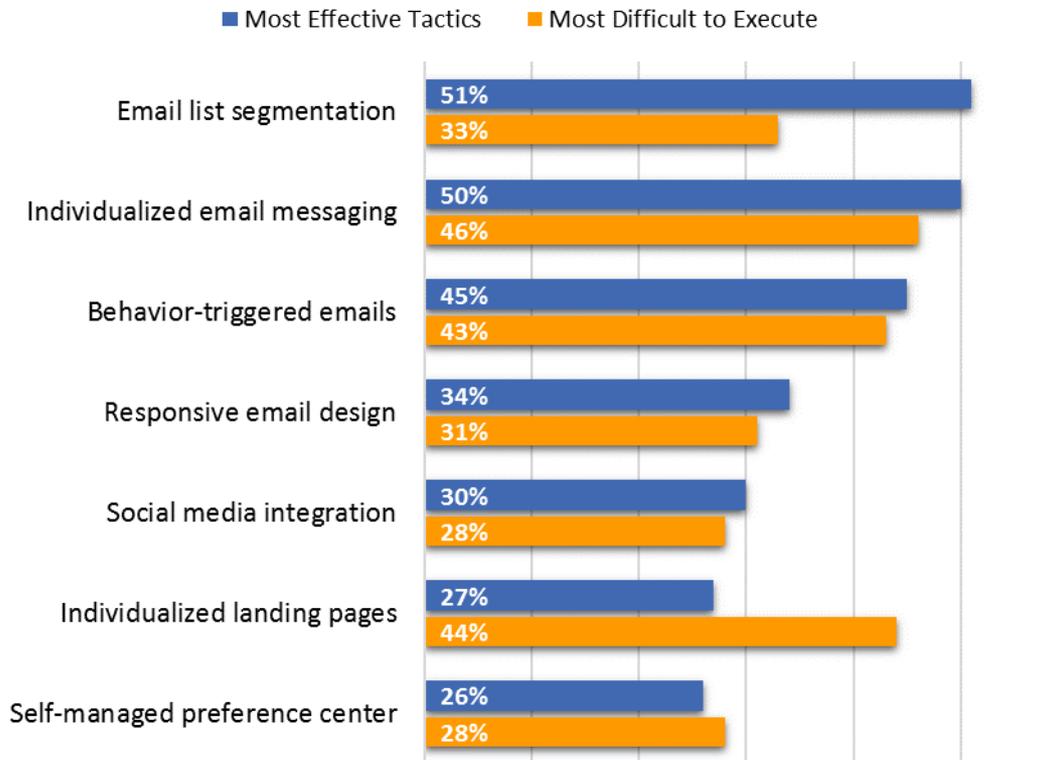
Which best describes the RESOURCES USED to execute email marketing techniques?

In-house resources only
32%

Outsourced to a specialist
31%

Combination of outsourced and in-house resources
37%

EFFECTIVENESS VERSUS DIFFICULTY

Tactics that are much more effective than difficult to execute – such as email list segmentation – are less likely to be outsourced. Conversely, tactics more difficult than effective – such as individualized landing pages – are often outsourced.

Analyzing effectiveness versus difficulty for tactical purposes.

■ Most Effective Tactics   ■ Most Difficult to Execute

Tactic	Most Effective Tactics	Most Difficult to Execute
Email list segmentation	51%	33%
Individualized email messaging	50%	46%
Behavior-triggered emails	45%	43%
Responsive email design	34%	31%
Social media integration	30%	28%
Individualized landing pages	27%	44%
Self-managed preference center	26%	28%

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RESEARCH-BASED DEMAND GENERATION

Research Partner Programs rapidly deliver research-based content and a guaranteed number of leads in two simple steps:

1. Choose marketing topics of interest to your target market.

2. Choose an exclusive data segment for each marketing topic.
   - Successful Strategy Benchmarks
   - Leadership Benchmarks
   - B2B Benchmarks
   - B2C Benchmarks
   - Enterprise Benchmarks
   - SMB Benchmarks
   - Agency Benchmarks
   - Complex Sale Benchmarks
   - And more!

As a marketing software or data company, or digital marketing agency, your prospective customers are marketing influencers with an interest in the facts about improving marketing performance; and facts are what our research provides.

According to a CMO Council study, research is the most influential type of content marketers use. Research-Based Demand Generation is a process we developed to generate leads using research content of interest to your target customers, and nurture those leads to marketing-qualified status in the name of your brand.

Our unique process enables us to provide the quick-win turnkey programs and longer term demand generation needed to achieve your goals.

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ABOUT ASCEND2

Research-Based Demand Generation for Marketing Solution Providers

Marketing software and data companies, and digital marketing agencies, partner with Ascend2 to reliably generate demand and supplement marketing content for their firms. Our Research Partner Programs are transparent – focusing entirely on your brand and the interests of your market.

Below are just a few of the leading marketing solution providers that Partner with us for research-based demand generation.

Learn more about us at Ascend2.com

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