

SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION TACTICS

Survey Summary Report

Ascend2[™]
RESEARCH-BASED MARKETING

Research Series Conducted in
Partnership with Leading Marketing
Technology Companies and Digital
Marketing Agencies



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Methodology

Ascend2 benchmarks the performance of marketing technology, strategies and tactics using a standardized online questionnaire and a proprietary 3-Minute Survey format.

This survey was fielded to a panel of marketing influencers and research subscribers during the week of October 30, 2017.

SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION TACTICS

Search Engine Optimization, or SEO, is the practice of improving how specific web pages rank in a search engine's unpaid results.

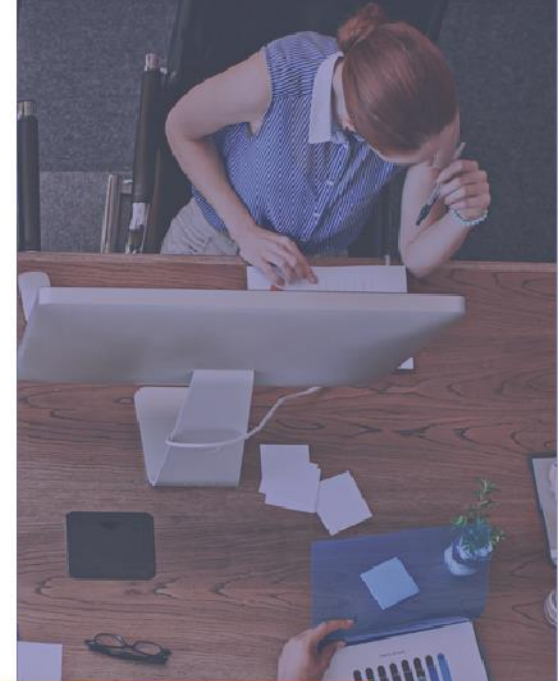
But what tactics are companies using to achieve their important SEO objectives?

To find out, Ascend2 and our Research Partners fielded the Search Engine Optimization Tactics Survey. We thank the marketing influencers responding to this survey for sharing their valuable insights with us, and you.

This Survey Summary Report, titled *Search Engine Optimization Tactics*, represents the average of all the market segments responding to the survey. Specific market 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!



Survey Respondents N=279

Number of Employees

More than 500	38%
50 to 500	33%
Fewer than 50	29%

Role in the Company

Owner / Partner / C-Level	29%
VP / Director / Manager	56%
Non-Management Pro	15%

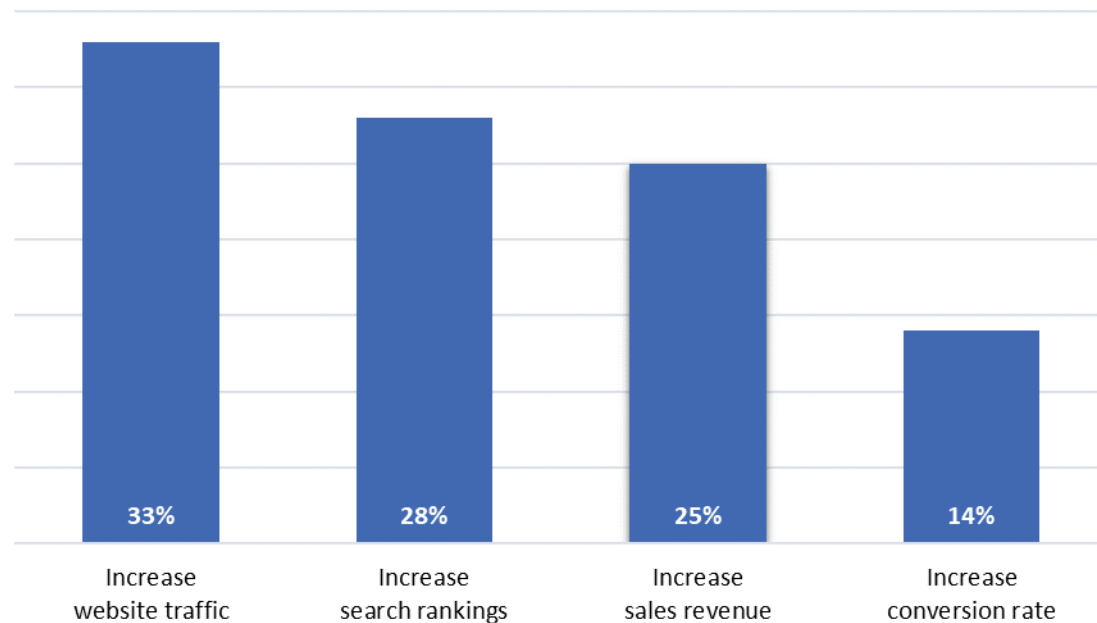
Primary Marketing Channel

B2B Business-to-Business	44%
B2C Business-to-Consumer	31%
B2B and B2C Equally	25%

MOST IMPORTANT SEO OBJECTIVES

A total of 61% of marketing influencers use SEO to increase search rankings and, subsequently, website traffic to draw leads to the top of the marketing funnel. 14% use SEO to increase conversions and 25% to increase revenue, driving leads to the middle and bottom of the marketing funnel respectively.

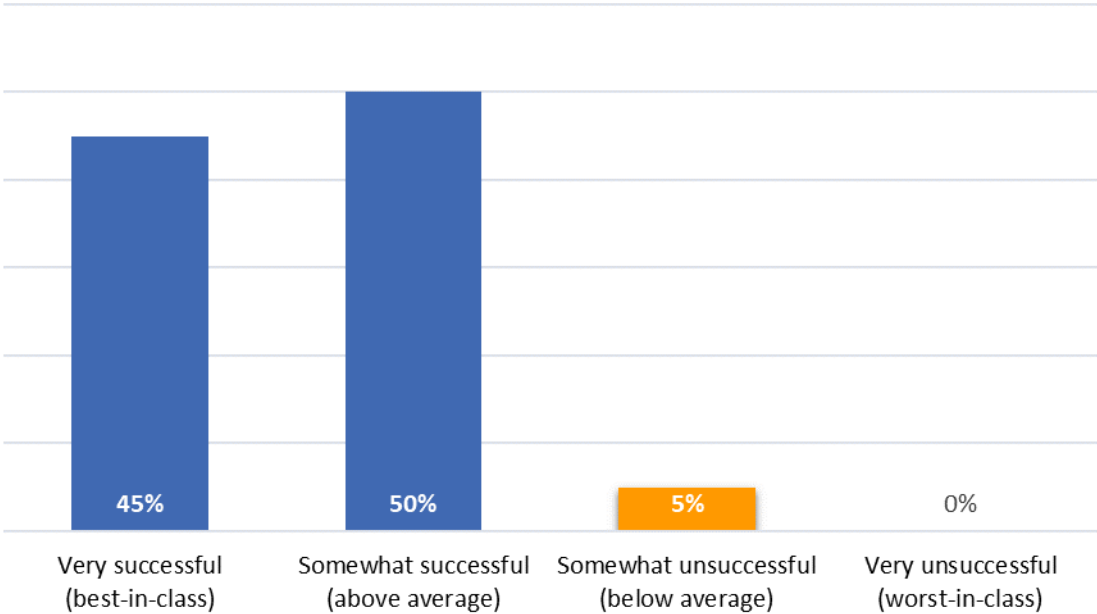
Which is the most important OBJECTIVE for a search engine optimization strategy to achieve?



STRATEGIC SUCCESS

An overwhelming total of 95% of marketing influencers consider a search engine optimization strategy successful to some extent at achieving important objectives, with 45% describing their success as best-in-class.

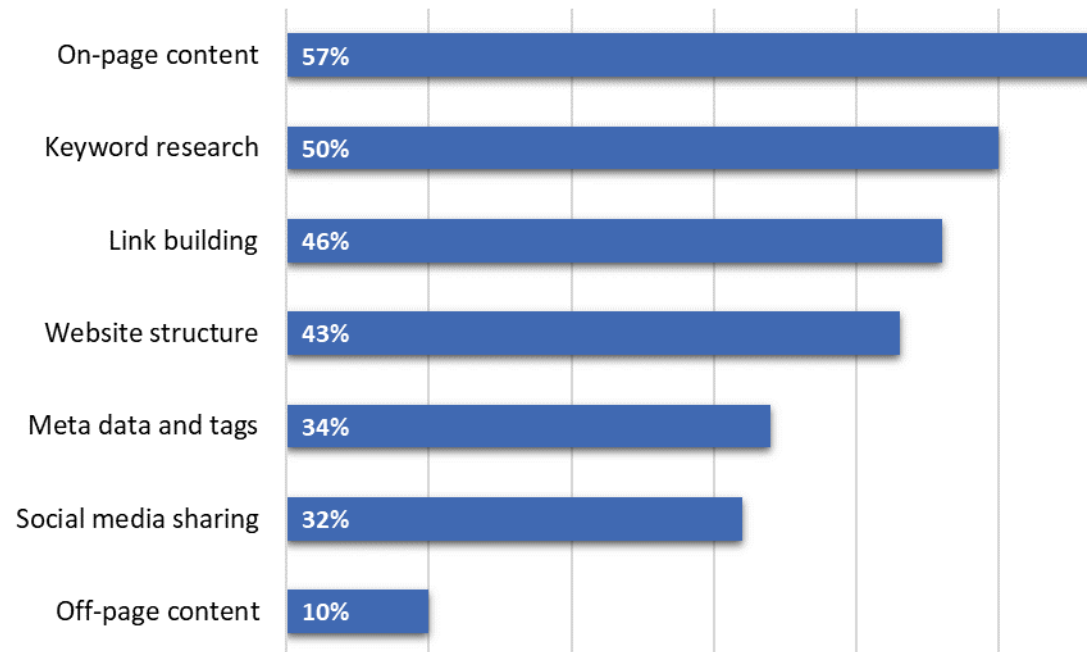
How SUCCESSFUL is a search engine optimization strategy at achieving important objectives?



MOST EFFECTIVE SEO TACTICS

There are many tactics used to effectively achieve important SEO objectives. For a 57% majority of marketing influencers, on-page content development is effective. Keyword research, link building and website structure are also effective tactics for 50%, 46% and 43% of marketing influencers respectively.

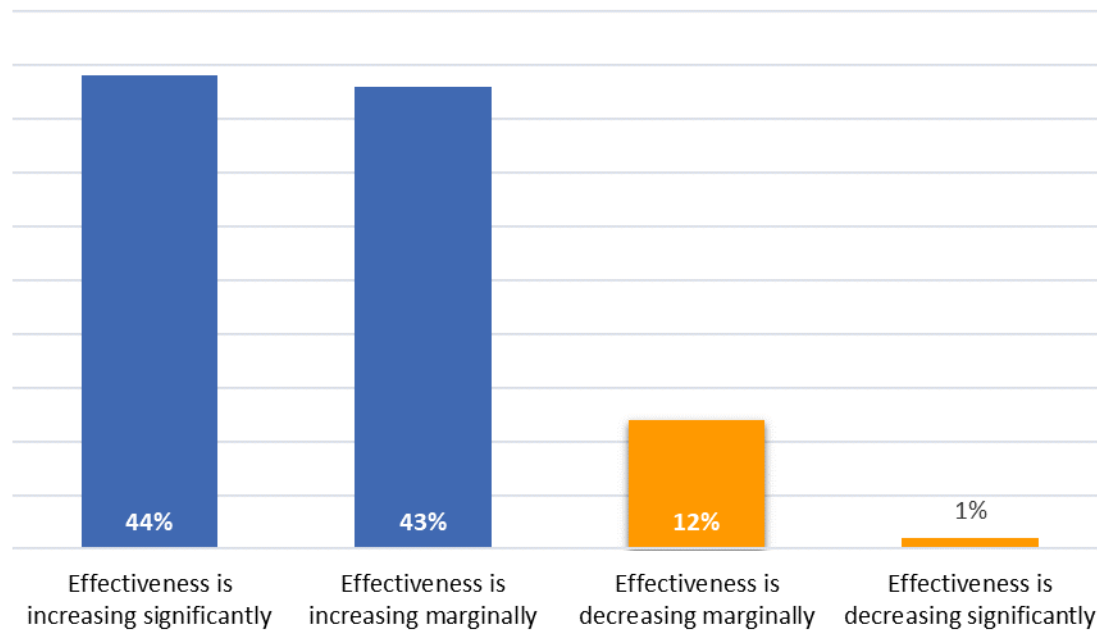
What are the most EFFECTIVE SEO tactics used to achieve important objectives?



HOW EFFECTIVENESS IS CHANGING

The trend in SEO effectiveness is very promising for a total of 87% of marketing influencers, about half of whom (44%) describe the increase in effectiveness as significant. On the other hand, SEO effectiveness is decreasing to some extent for a total of 13% of marketing influencers.

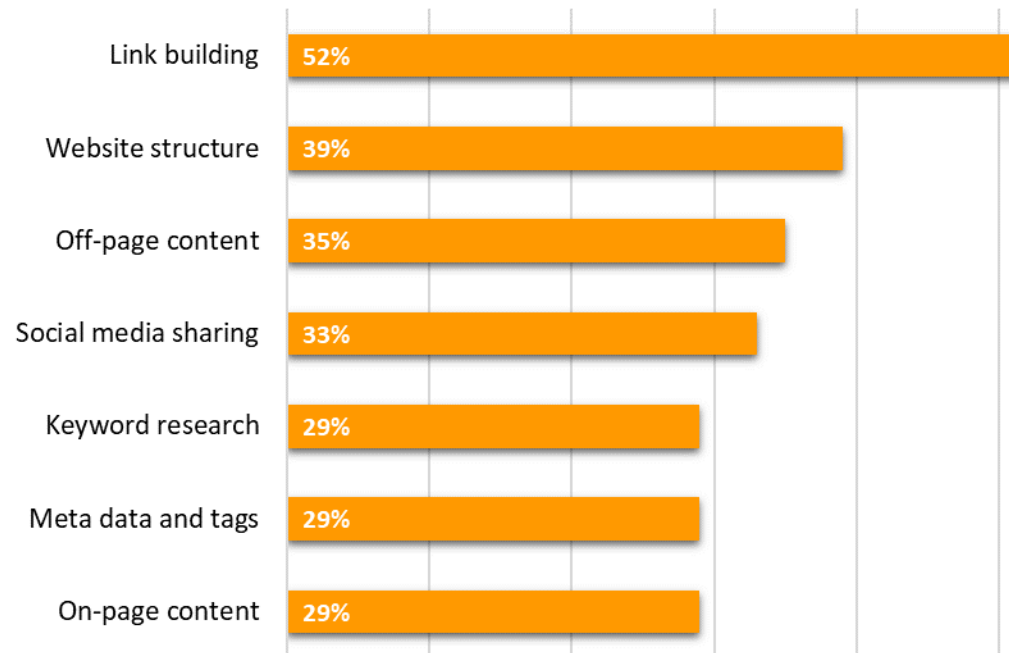
To what extent is the effectiveness of SEO tactics CHANGING?



MOST DIFFICULT SEO TACTICS

Link building is considered a most difficult tactic to implement by a 52% majority of marketing influencers. The tactical degree of difficulty is a primary factor in determining the implementation resources to use.

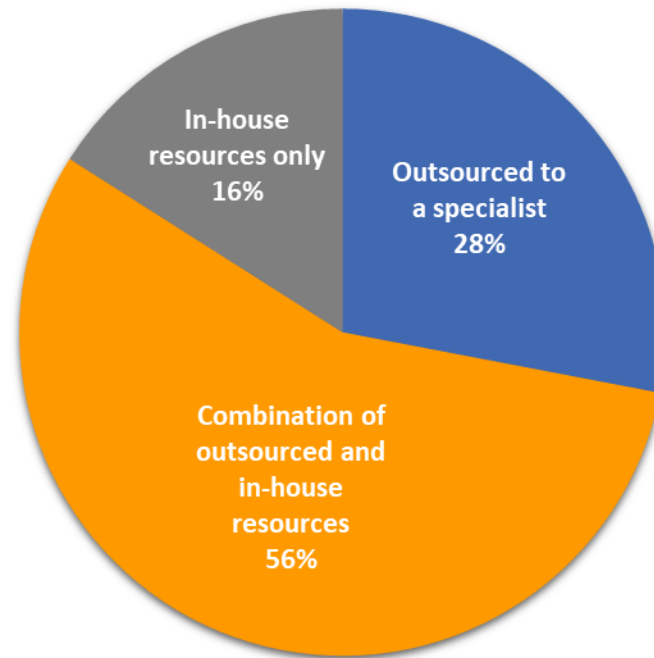
What are the most DIFFICULT SEO tactics to implement?



SEO IMPLEMENTATION RESOURCES USED

The implementation of some SEO tactics, such as link building, may require skills and capabilities not always available in-house. That is why 84% of marketing influencers in total say they outsource all or part of the implementation of SEO tactics to specialists.

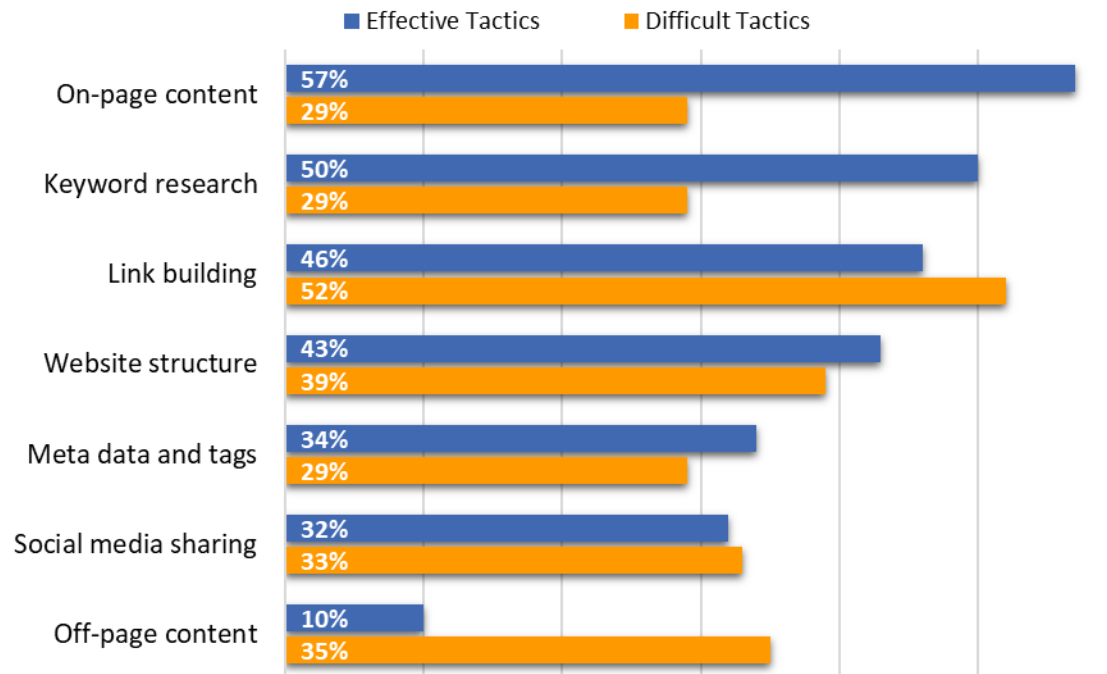
Which best describes the RESOURCES used to implement SEO tactics?



COMPARING EFFECTIVENESS AND DIFFICULTY

Tactics that are much more effective than difficult to implement (on-page content and keyword research, for example), are more likely to be part of a successful SEO strategy and less likely to require outsourcing to a specialist.

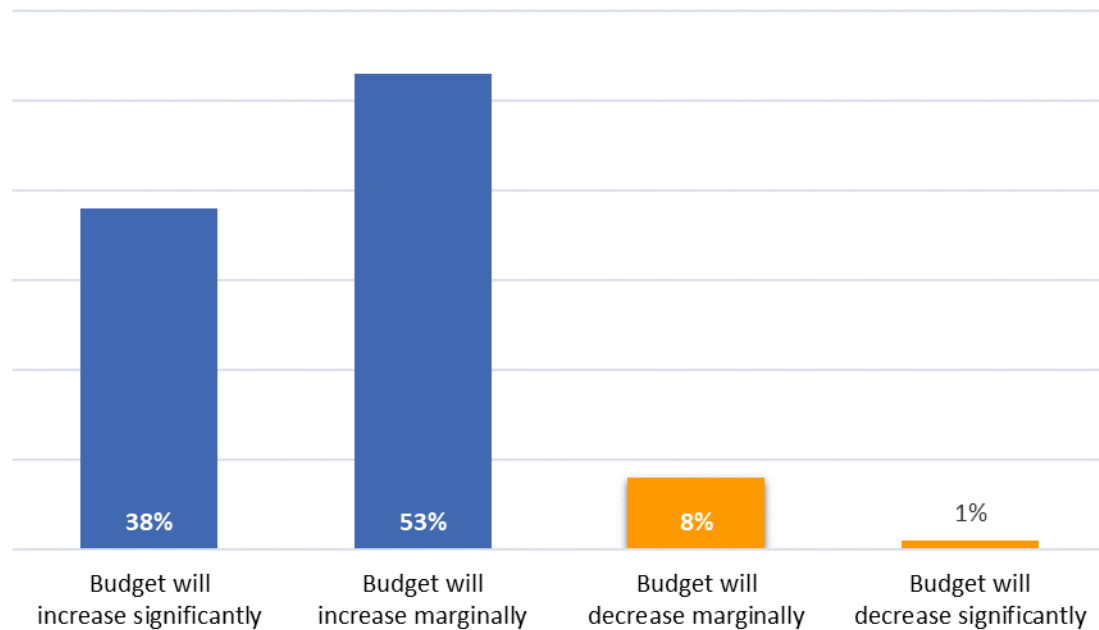
Analysis of tactical effectiveness versus difficulty.



THE SEO BUDGET IN THE YEAR AHEAD

The trend is to increase the search engine optimization budget in the year ahead for a total of 91% of marketing influencers, with 38% describing the increase as significant. A very promising outlook for this proven marketing initiative.

To what extent will the SEO BUDGET change in the year ahead?

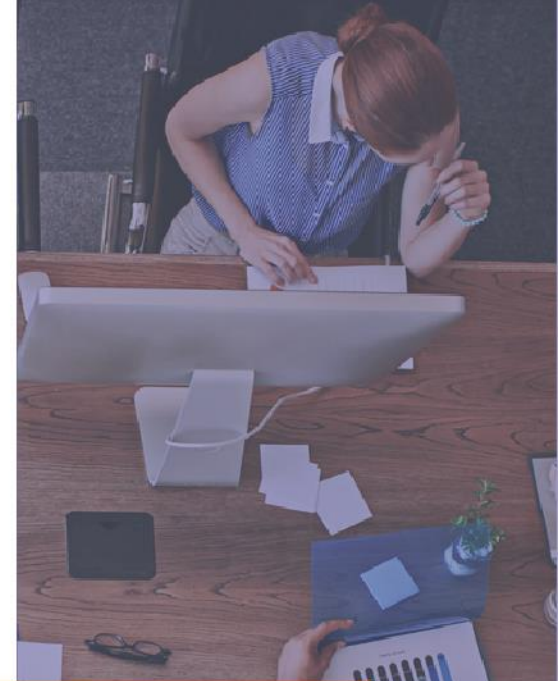


Ascend2

Research-Based Marketing for Marketing Solution Providers

Marketing technology companies and digital marketing agencies partner with Ascend2 to reliably generate demand and supplement marketing content for their own business development efforts. Below are just a few of the leading marketing solution providers that Partner with us on research-based marketing programs.

Learn more about us at Ascend2.com



As a marketing technology company or digital marketing agency, your prospective customers are marketing influencers with an interest in the facts about improving marketing performance.

Research-Based Marketing is a process we developed to generate leads using factual content of interest to your target customers, and nurture those leads to marketing-qualified status in the name of your brand.

Research Partner Programs

Research Partner Programs rapidly deliver factual content of interest to marketers and a guaranteed number of leads to marketing solution providers, in two simple steps:

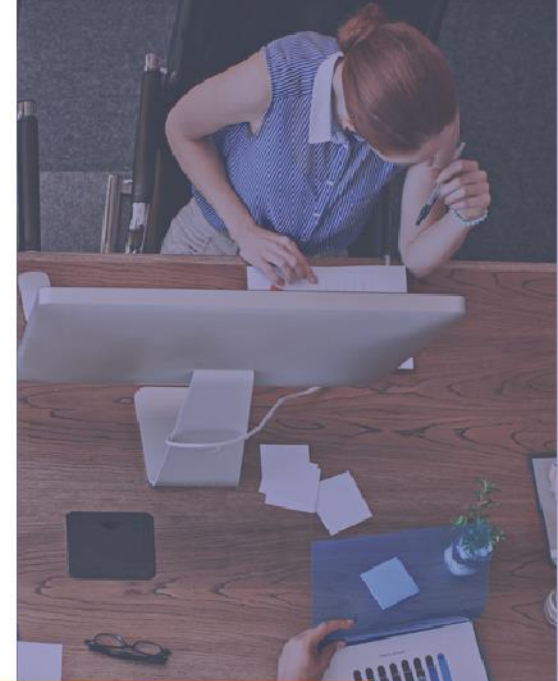
1. Choose marketing topics of interest to your audience.

- A new marketing topic is surveyed every month

2. Choose an exclusive data segment for each topic.

- Successful Strategy Benchmarks
- Leadership Benchmarks
- B2B Benchmarks
- B2C Benchmarks
- Enterprise Benchmarks
- SMB Benchmarks
- Agency Benchmarks
- And more!

Learn more about Ascend2 Research-Based Marketing by calling 800-762-1595 extension 703 or visit Ascend2.com.



This Survey Summary Report is part of a monthly research series conducted in partnership with marketing solution providers.

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