STRATEGIES, TACTICS AND TRENDS

FOR

↓

Customer Experience

Ascend2™
RESEARCH-BASED MARKETING

Research Series Conducted in Partnership with Leading Providers of Marketing Technology and Digital Marketing Agency Services.

Table of Contents

Ascend2
RESEARCH-BASED MARKETING

Methodology

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

This survey was fielded to a panel of marketing influencers and marketing research subscribers.

Survey respondents

Primary Marketing Channel

B2B	40%
B2C	39%
B2B and B2C equally	21%

Number of Employees

More than 500	21%
50 to 500	23%
Fewer than 50	56%

Primary role in company

Owner / Partner / C-Level	43%
Vice President / Director / Manager	34%
Non-Management Professional	23%

Ascend2™

RESEARCH-BASED MARKETING

Customer Experience

Customer Experience is fast becoming a top priority for businesses who recognize that loyalty is now driven by the experience a customer receives during their visit.

But what do marketers need to know about Customer Experience?

To help you answer this question, Ascend2 and our Research Partners fielded the Customer Experience Survey. We thank the 301 marketing influencers who responded to this survey during the week of September 9, 2019.

This Survey Summary Report, titled *Strategies, Tactics and Trends for Customer Experience*, represents the opinions 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.

Ascend2
RESEARCH-BASED MARKETING

Primary Objectives

Providing a positive experience to your customers leads to less churn which typically means more business. That is why nearly eight in ten marketing professionals (79%) report that improving customer retention and satisfaction is a primary objective for a customer experience strategy. Over half (58%) are aiming to increase the overall value and reliability of their brand to customers.

What are the PRIMARY OBJECTIVES for a customer experience strategy?

Objective	Percentage
Improving customer retention/satisfaction	79%
Increasing value/reliability to user	58%
Increasing data-driven personalization	30%
Improving interactive design/ease of use	28%
Increasing use of real-time marketing	17%
Improving self-service preference center	15%
Improving channel flexibility of user	9%

Ascend2
RESEARCH-BASED MARKETING
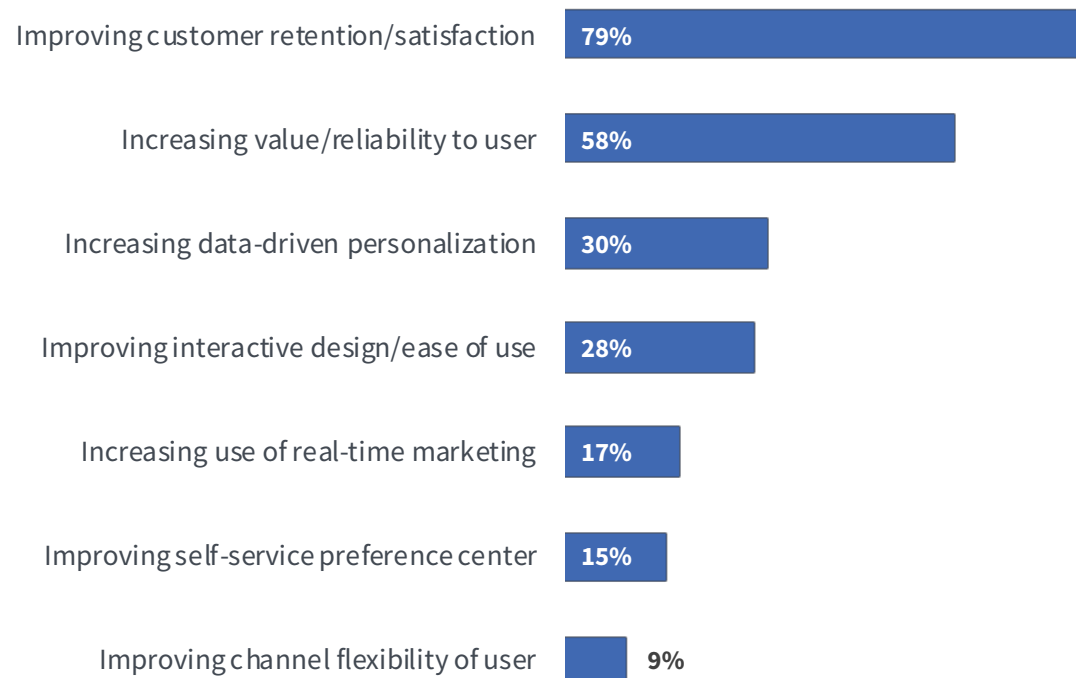
Strategic Success

While over half (51%) of marketers report that a customer experience strategy is very successful, or best-in-class, at achievinig the primary objectives, nearly all of those surveyed say they see success with a strategy to some extent. This is a promising outlook for investing in improving the customer experience.
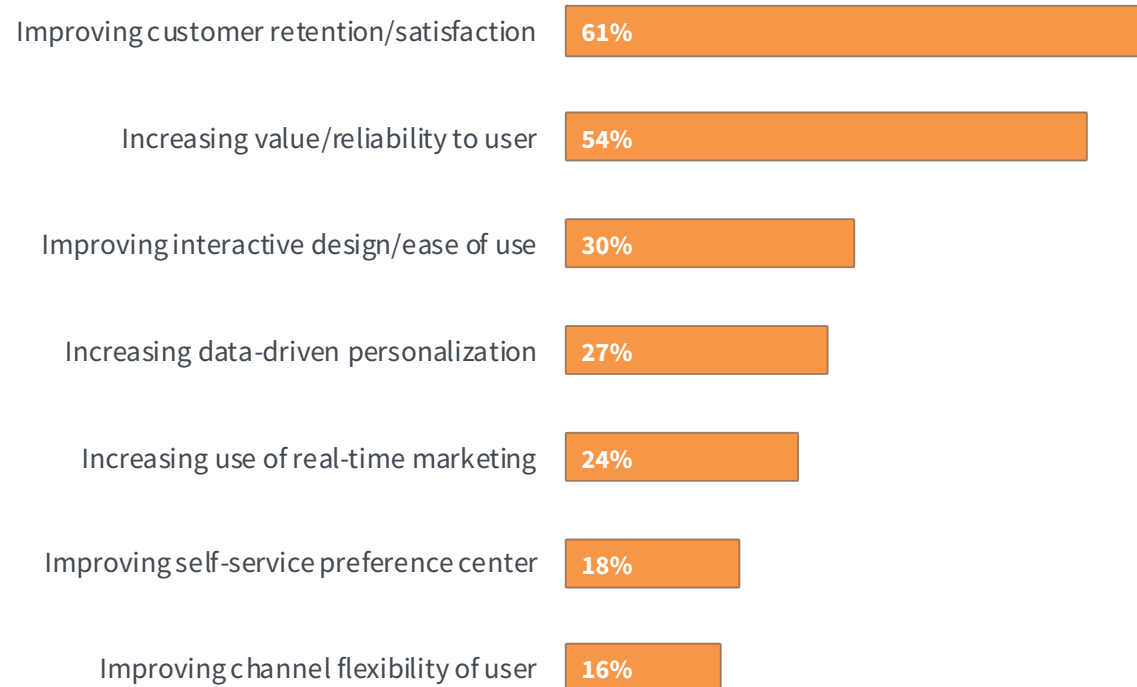
Which best describes the SUCCESS of a customer experience strategy to achieve the primary objectives?

Unsuccessful, 2%

Somewhat Successful, 47%

Very successful (best-in-class), 51%

Ascend2
RESEARCH-BASED MARKETING
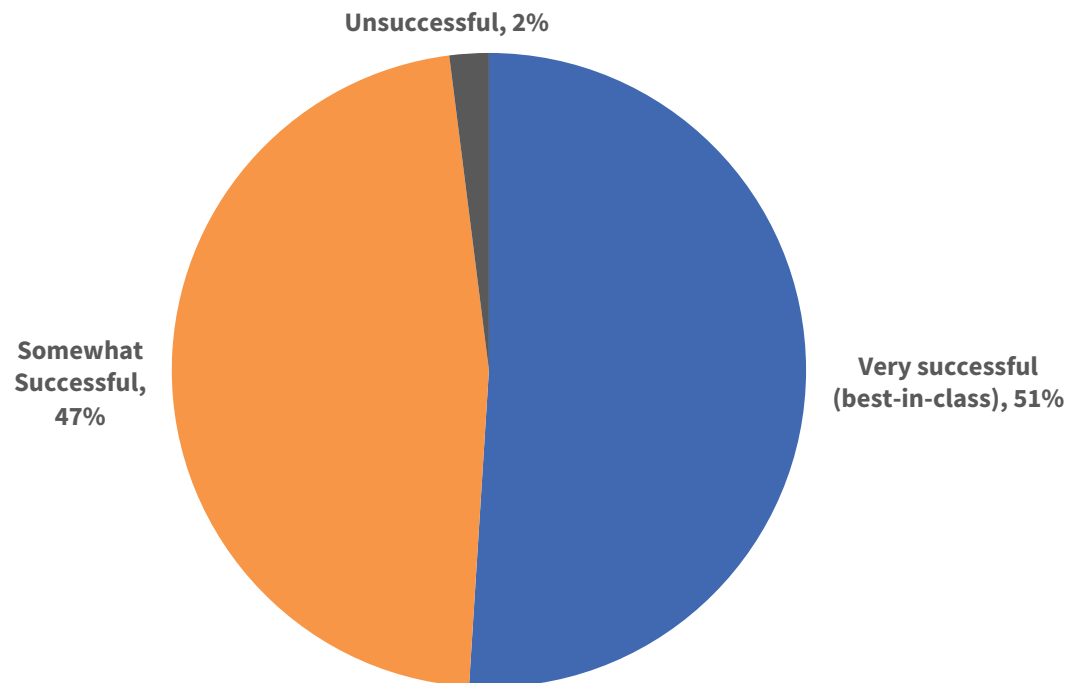
Critical Challenges

Strategically improving the overall experience your customers have while engaging with your brand can be a long process. That is why improving customer retention and satisfaction and increasing value and reliability to a user are the top two critical challenges for a customer experience strategy according to 61% and 54% of marketers, respectively.

What are the most CRITICAL CHALLENGES for a customer experience strategy to achieve?

Improving customer retention/satisfaction	61%
Increasing value/reliability to user	54%
Improving interactive design/ease of use	30%
Increasing data-driven personalization	27%
Increasing use of real-time marketing	24%
Improving self-service preference center	18%
Improving channel flexibility of user	16%

Ascend2™
RESEARCH-BASED MARKETING

Strategies Versus Challenges

Interestingly, marketers report that top objectives for a customer experience strategy are also the most critical challenges to success. While improving customer retention and increasing value are difficult barriers to overcome, they are necessary to include as objectives in a plan to improve the experience of customers.

Comparing primary objectives and critical challenges.

■ Primary Objectives   ■ Critical Challenges

Improving customer retention/satisfaction
- 79%
- 61%

Increasing value/reliability to user
- 58%
- 54%

Increasing data-driven personalization
- 30%
- 27%

Improving interactive design/ease of use
- 28%
- 30%

Increasing use of real-time marketing
- 17%
- 24%

Improving self-service preference center
- 15%
- 18%

Improving channel flexibility of user
- 9%
- 16%

Ascend2
RESEARCH-BASED MARKETING

Customer Experience Survey.
Conducted by Ascend2 and Research Partners.
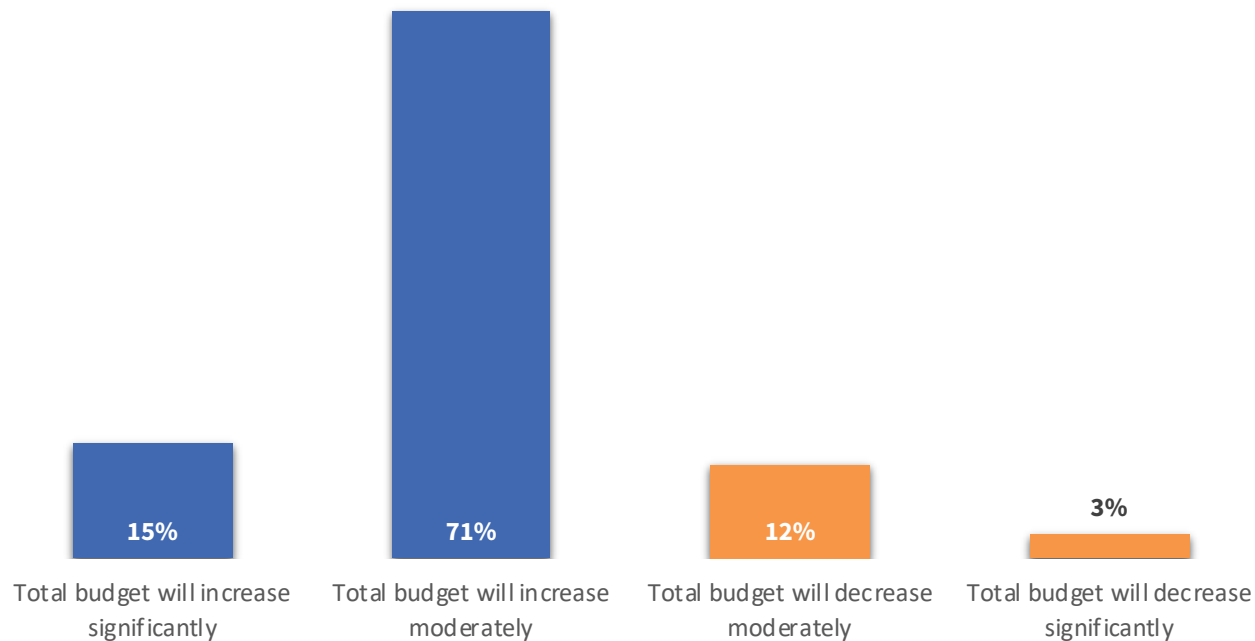Published September, 2019.

Budget Trends

Marketers are seeing value in investing more time, resources and expenses into building and improving their customer experience. About seven in ten (71%) of those surveyed say the total budget dedicated to improvinig customer experience will increase moderately while 15% describe this increase as significant.
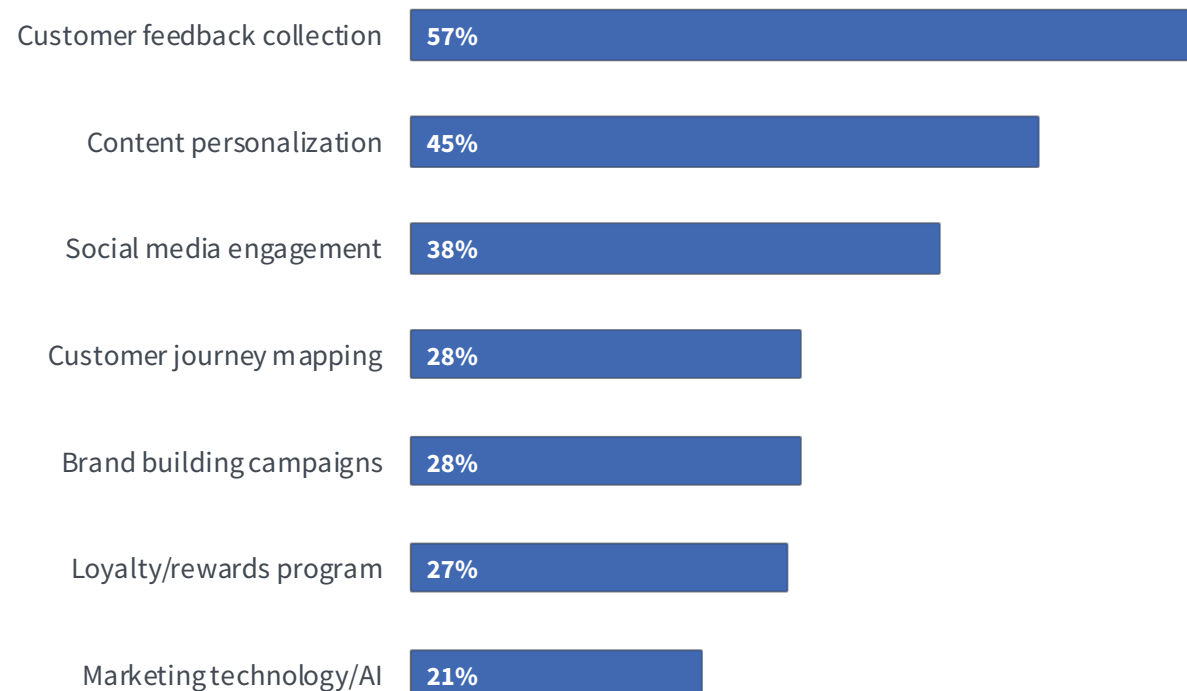
Which best describes how the TOTAL BUDGET (time, resources, expenses) is changing to improve the customer experience?

15%	71%	12%	3%
Total budget will increase significantly	Total budget will increase moderately	Total budget will decrease moderately	Total budget will decrease significantly

Ascend2
RESEARCH-BASED MARKETING

Customer Experience Survey.
Conducted by Ascend2 and Research Partners.
Published September, 2019.

Most Effective Tactics for Improvement

In order to better the overall experience a customer has with a brand, businesses have to listen. According to 57% of marketing professionals surveyed, customer feedback collection is a most effective tactic used for improving customer experience. Content personalization is an important and effective tactic for almost half (45%) of marketers.
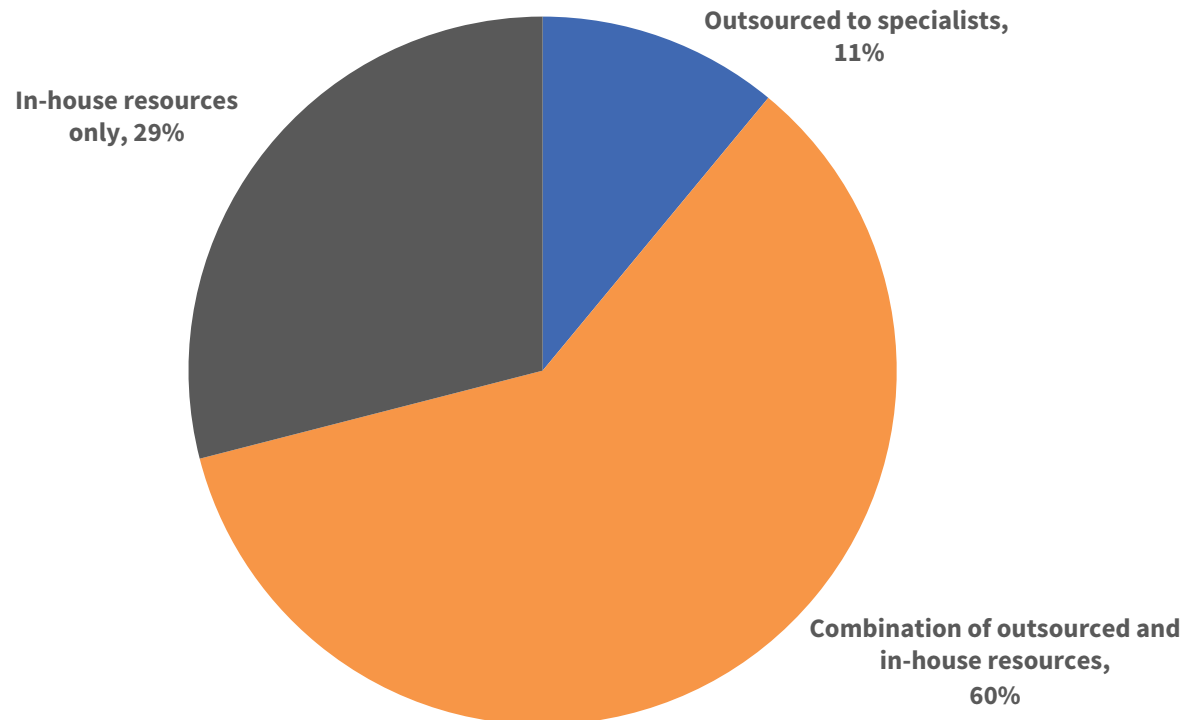
What are the most effective TACTICS USED for improving the customer experience?

Tactic	Percentage
Customer feedback collection	57%
Content personalization	45%
Social media engagement	38%
Customer journey mapping	28%
Brand building campaigns	28%
Loyalty/rewards program	27%
Marketing technology/AI	21%

Ascend2
RESEARCH-BASED MARKETING

Customer Experience Survey.
Conducted by Ascend2 and Research Partners.
Published September, 2019.

Resource Allocation

Customer experience tends to impact many facets of a business. Improving the customer experience takes a strategic combination of both in-house personnel and outsourced professionals according to 60% of marketers surveyed. About one in ten (11%) prefer to outsource the strategy completely while 29% prefer to keep it an in-house operation.
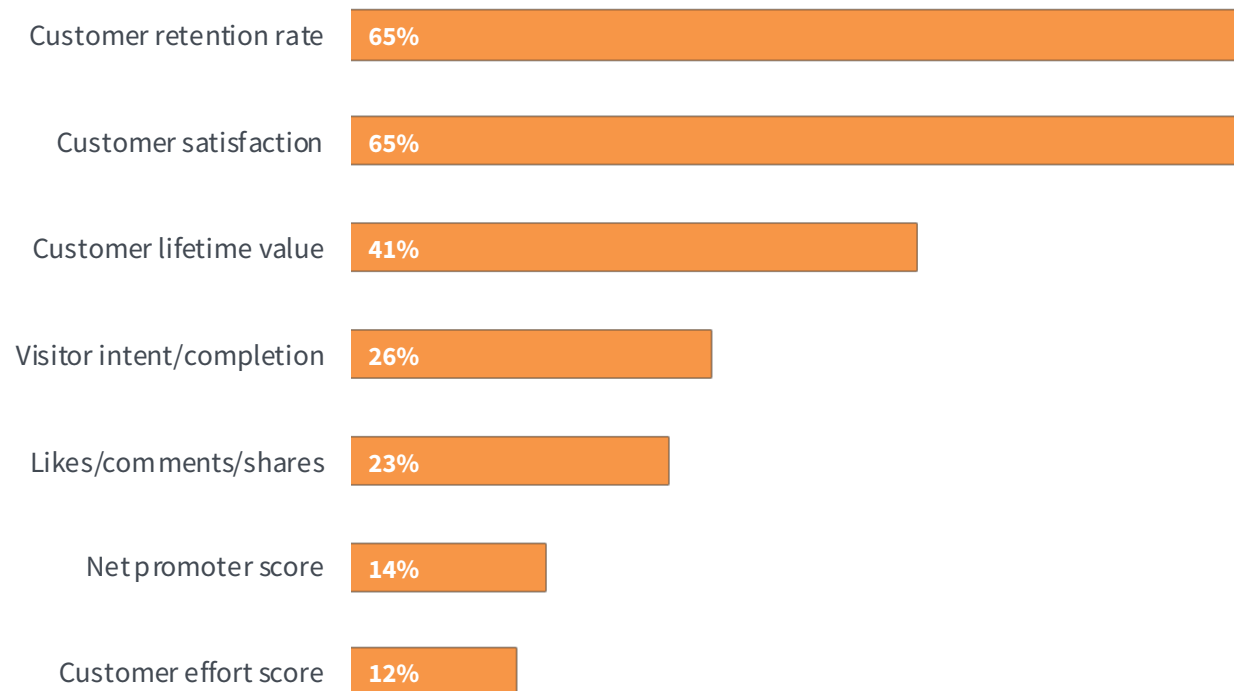
Which best describes the most effective RESOURCES USED to improve the customer experience?

Outsourced to specialists, 11%

In-house resources only, 29%

Combination of outsourced and in-house resources, 60%

Customer Experience Survey.
Conducted by Ascend2 and Research Partners.
Published September, 2019.

Ascend2
RESEARCH-BASED MARKETING

Metrics Used to Measure Success

As budgets dedicated to customer experience rise, metrics for measuring improvements become more important. Measuring customer retention and customer satisfaction are considered most effective metrics for about two-thirds (65%) of marketing professionals. Customer lifetime value is also an effective metric for 41% of those surveyed.

What are the most effective METRICS USED to measure customer experience improvements?

Metric	Percentage
Customer retention rate	65%
Customer satisfaction	65%
Customer lifetime value	41%
Visitor intent/completion	26%
Likes/comments/shares	23%
Net promoter score	14%
Customer effort score	12%

Ascend2
RESEARCH-BASED MARKETING

Customer Experience Survey.
Conducted by Ascend2 and Research Partners.
Published September, 2019.

Measurement Frequency

In order to properly determine the success of an online customer experience strategy, nearly half (47%) of marketing professionals report that metrics are continuously measured. Only 12% report rarely or never measuring customer experience improvements, while 41% measure these metrics occasionally.

How frequently are METRICS MEASURED to determine the success of an online customer experience strategy?

Metrics are rarely or never measured, 12%

Metrics are continuously measured, 47%

Metrics are occasionally measured, 41%

Ascend2
RESEARCH-BASED MARKETING
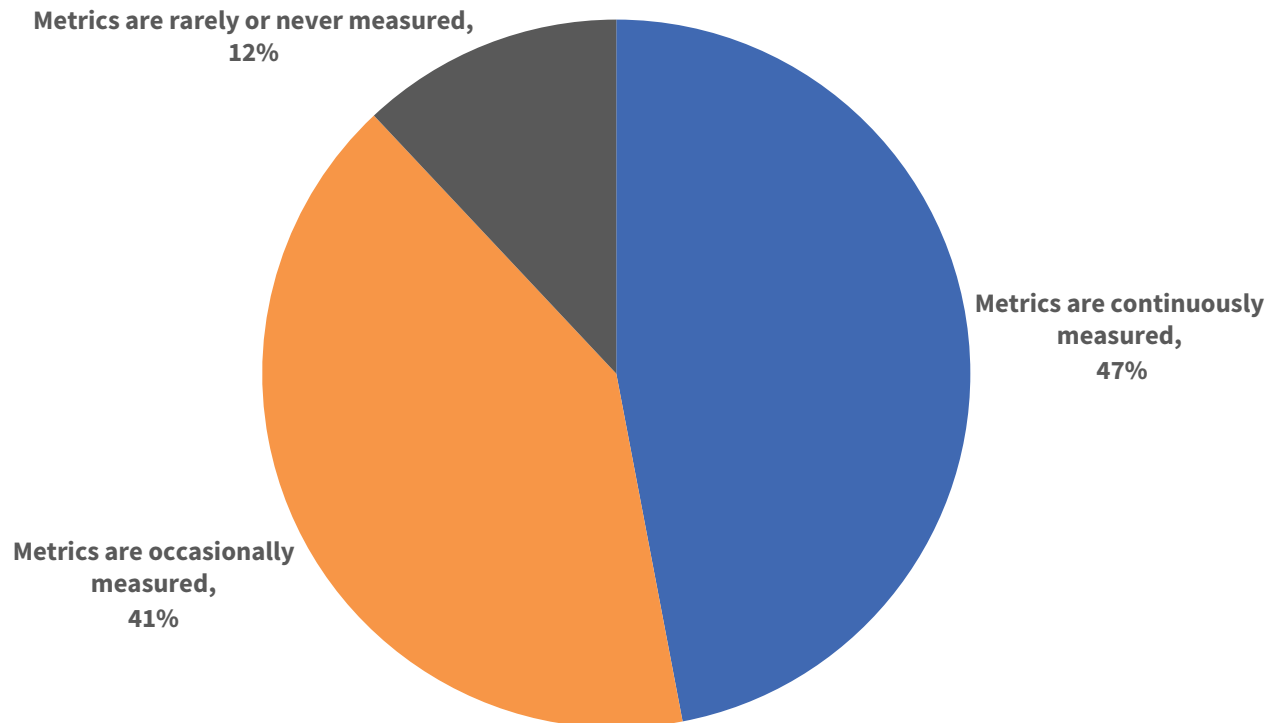
RESEARCH-BASED MARKETING FOR MARKETING TECHNOLOGY COMPANIES

Receive a *Research-Based Content Blueprint* that provides proven strategies on how to demonstrate thought-leadership, engage prospects, acquire new customers, and generate media coverage.

Research studies by BuzzSumo, MarketingProfs, and eMarketer finds that original research is the #1 type of content to engage prospects and convert leads to sales. Find out how you can add research to your marketing mix.

PUT THIS CONTENT TO GOOD USE!

This Survey Summary Report is part of a series conducted in partnership with our participating Research Partners.

You may adapt, copy, distribute and transmit this work. However, you must attribute the work as produced by Ascend2 and its Research Partners, but not in any way that suggests that they endorse you or your use of the work.

When you share this content, please provide a link back to ascend2.com.

Ascend2
RESEARCH-BASED MARKETING