REVENUE ATTRIBUTION OUTLOOK

STRATEGIES, TACTICS & TRENDS

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

**Survey Respondents**

**Primary Marketing Channel**

- B2B: 32%
- B2C: 41%
- B2B and B2C equally: 27%

**Number of Employees**

- More than 500: 40%
- 50 to 500: 22%
- Fewer than 50: 38%

**Primary role in company**

- Owner / Partner / C-Level: 40%
- Vice President / Director / Manager: 47%
- Non-Management Professional: 13%
Revenue Attribution Outlook

As customer journeys evolve into multi-channel, multi-message experiences, new trends are emerging to allow marketers to measure and prove the impact of the experiences they are delivering.

But what are the strategies and tactics driving effective revenue attribution?

To help answer this question, Ascend2 and our Research Partners fielded the Revenue Attribution Outlook Survey. We thank the 272 marketers who responded to this survey during the week of October 11, 2020.

This Survey Summary Report, titled Revenue Attribution Outlook, 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.
Current Situation

Marketers strive to drive demand with the ultimate goal of generating revenue, but how many marketers have implemented a strategy to match marketing efforts to profit? Nearly half (46%) of marketers are operating with an implemented revenue attribution strategy. Another 41% report that they are either in the planning stages or currently rolling out a strategy for marketing attribution.

Which best describes your CURRENT SITUATION as it applies to revenue attribution?

- **44%**: A strategy is in place and measurable
- **17%**: Currently rolling out a strategy
- **25%**: Planning for a strategy in the future
- **14%**: No plans for a strategy in the future
Top Strategic Benefits

Once in place, marketers realize a wide range of benefits from attributing revenue to marketing. 59% of those surveyed say that having a revenue attribution strategy in place allows them to make better marketing decisions. Other top benefits include better alignment of marketing and sales (43%) and an increase in campaign effectiveness (37%).

What are the TOP BENEFITS of implementing a revenue attribution strategy?

- **Ability to make better decisions**: 59%
- **Marketing and sales alignment**: 43%
- **Increased campaign effectiveness**: 37%
- **Increased channel effectiveness**: 32%
- **Increased marketing budget**: 30%
- **Attribution of ROI to marketing**: 29%
- **Executive buy-in/support**: 22%
Strategic Success

Nearly all marketers surveyed report seeing success to some extent from revenue attribution. 42% of marketing professionals describe an attribution strategy as very successful, or best-in-class, compared to competitors at achieving objectives set for it. Another 55% report some success, leaving a mere 3% of marketers who say that revenue attribution is not an effective strategy.

How do you rate the SUCCESS of a revenue attribution strategy at achieving important objectives?

- Very successful (best-in-class): 42%
- Somewhat successful: 55%
- Unsuccessful: 3%
Barriers to Success

Data quality issues top of the list of barriers to the success for 42% of those surveyed. With so many channels, touchpoints, and stages of a buyer’s journey, 40% of marketers are also challenged by analyzing marketing impact at each buyer stage. Over one-third of marketers (36%) report facing inadequate budget and staff to effectively execute marketing attribution.

What are the greatest BARRIERS TO SUCCESS for revenue attribution?

- Data quality: 42%
- Analyzing marketing impact at each buyer stage: 40%
- Obtaining budget and staff: 36%
- Applying attribution technology: 31%
- Defining an attribution strategy: 30%
- Buy-in across organization: 26%
- Data silos (consolidating data sources): 26%
- Analyzing campaigns by channel: 23%
By nature, much of marketing is arduous to measure. Nearly half (47%) of marketers agree that **social media channels** are the most difficult to analyze and attribute revenue to. **Content marketing** and **display advertising** are also considered to be particularly challenging to evaluate according to 40% and 38% of marketing professionals, respectively.

Which digital channels are most DIFFICULT TO ANALYZE for attributing marketing results to sales revenue?

- **Social media marketing**: 47%
- **Content marketing**: 40%
- **Display advertising**: 38%
- **Video marketing**: 35%
- **Email marketing**: 33%
- **Paid search**: 25%
- **SEO**: 21%
Sales and Marketing Friction

When executed successfully, revenue attribution identifies which marketing tactics and channels are most effectively contributing to sales. With more aligned goals and the ability to identify what a customer interacts with along their journey, over three-quarters of marketers report revenue attribution positively affects their relationship with sales teams.

An effective revenue attribution program helps to eliminate friction between SALES AND MARKETING teams.

Strongly agree: 34%
Agree: 45%
Neutral: 19%
Disagree: 2%
Strongly disagree: 0%

Revenue Attribution Outlook Survey
Conducted by Ascend2 and Research Partners
Published November, 2020
Budget Trends

Dedicated budget for revenue attribution efforts are trending up according to 59% of marketers. One-quarter of those surveyed report that budgets will be increasing significantly while another 34% say budgets will be increasing moderately. Only one-in-ten marketers report a marketing attribution budget decrease in the year ahead.

How is the DEDICATED BUDGET for revenue attribution changing in the year ahead?
Revenue Attribution Outlook Survey
Conducted by Ascend2 and Research Partners
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Resource Allocation

Revenue attribution is best left at least partially outsourced to experts according to 70% of marketers. 63% of marketing professionals say that a **strategic combination of in-house professionals and outsourced expertise** is the most effective use of resources. Nearly one-third of marketers prefer to keep their revenue attribution strategy **in-house**.

Which best describes the most effective RESOURCES USED to execute a revenue attribution strategy?

- **Outsourced to an expert**: 7%
- **In-house resources only**: 30%
- **Combination of in-house and outsourced resources**: 63%
Cross-Department Involvement

Marketing teams and sales teams are the most critical contributors to the strategic process of attributing revenue according to 62% and 47% of marketers, respectively. 39% of marketing professionals surveyed report that the executive team also plays an important role in executing a revenue attribution strategy.

Which departments have CRITICAL INVOLVEMENT in executing a revenue attribution strategy?

- Marketing: 62%
- Sales: 47%
- Executive/Board of Directors: 39%
- IT: 36%
- Finance: 36%
- Customer service: 33%
- Operations: 32%
- Product: 29%
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