USING INTENT DATA
A RESEARCH-BASED GUIDE FOR MARKETERS
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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.

**Primary Marketing Channel**
- B2B: 29%
- B2C: 40%
- B2B and B2C equally: 31%

**Number of Employees**
- More than 500: 30%
- 50 to 500: 41%
- Fewer than 50: 29%

**Primary role in company**
- Owner / Partner / C-Level: 31%
- Vice President / Director / Manager: 50%
- Non-Management Professional: 19%
Marketers use intent data to gain insight into the potential actions a web user might take based on information about their content consumption and digital behavior.

But how can marketers gain a competitive advantage by integrating intent data into their strategy?

To help answer this question, Ascend2 and our Research Partners fielded the Using Intent Data Survey. We thank the 304 marketers who responded to this survey between the dates of January 19, 2021 and January 26, 2021.

This Survey Summary Report, titled Using Intent Data, 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.

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CURRENT SITUATION

Access to the information that indicates a web user has an intention of making a specific purchase is becoming more wide-spread across industries and marketing channels. Nearly seven-in-ten (69%) marketers report being in the midst of planning and rolling out a strategy to use intent data or already have a strategy in place and measurable.

**WHICH BEST DESCRIBES YOUR CURRENT SITUATION AS IT APPLIES TO USING INTENT DATA?**

- A strategy is in place and measurable: 28%
- Currently rolling out a strategy: 18%
- Planning to create a strategy in the next 12 months: 23%
- Interested but have not started the process: 15%
- Have no plans to use intent data: 16%
**PRIMARY GOALS**

Using intent data enables marketers to not only identify who to target with specific campaigns and when, but also allows marketing teams to better align strategy and goals with their sales and business development counterparts. Over half (52%) of marketers are using intent data to **identify new accounts to target** while 45% report that a primary goal is to **align sales and marketing efforts**.

**WHAT ARE YOUR PRIMARY GOALS FOR USING INTENT DATA?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identify new accounts to target</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Align sales and marketing</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prioritize accounts for prospecting</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tailor messaging based on intent topics</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitor potential customer churn</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales enablement</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optimize lead scoring models</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A 91% majority of marketers are seeing **success to some extent** from the use of intent data. Just over one-quarter (26%) of marketing professionals responding to the survey report that the overall success of their (or their typical client's) use of intent data at achieving the goals set for it is **best-in-class** compared to competitors. Only 9% of marketers are seeing little to no success from an intent strategy.
TOP CHALLENGES

To successfully inform a marketing strategy, it is critical for the data used to be high quality. Half (50%) of marketers, however, find that data quality is a major issue when using intent data to make decisions. Making intent data actionable as well as data security are also top challenges for 40% and 38% of marketing professionals surveyed, respectively.

WHAT ARE THE TOP CHALLENGES FACED WHEN USING INTENT DATA?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenge</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Data Quality</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making Intent Data Actionable</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Security</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aligning Marketing and Sales</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integration into Existing Tech Stack</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Resources</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unifying Data Sources</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Finding the tool that best aligns with the business goals of the brand is crucial to the success of intent data use. When it comes to evaluating an intent data solution or vendor, marketers turn first to **data quality** and then to **ease of implementation** according to 64% and 43% of those surveyed, respectively. Just over one-third (36%) of marketing professionals say that the **source of data** is also important to consider.

**WHAT ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT ATTRIBUTES OF AN INTENT DATA SOLUTION OR VENDOR?**

- **Quality of Data**: 64%
- **Ease of Implementation**: 43%
- **Source of Data**: 36%
- **Integration into Existing Workflows**: 33%
- **Automation/Customization**: 29%
- **Dashboards/Visualization**: 20%
- **Collection Methodology**: 19%
- **Buyer Intent Display/Notification**: 17%
MOST ACTIONABLE USES

What are the most actionable uses of intent data according to marketers? Half (50%) of marketers agree that intent data is best used as a part of an overall strategy for delivering targeted ad content. Brands are also using intent data to deliver a more personalized experience to prospects and customers according nearly half (47%) of marketers responding to the survey.

WHAT ARE THE MOST ACTIONABLE WAYS TO USE INTENT DATA?

- Delivering targeted ad content: 50%
- Personalization: 47%
- Email marketing: 37%
- Crafting messaging/content: 34%
- Account-based initiatives: 28%
- Events/field marketing: 25%
- Informing automation campaigns: 22%
- Creating landing pages: 19%
Six-in-ten (61%) marketing professionals surveyed report that incorporating first-party data (information collected internally from direct interactions with a brand) with third-party data (information collected externally from offsite destinations) is a most common strategic use of intent data. A 92% majority of marketers are collecting intent data internally to some extent.
COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

Businesses of all types now have access to massive amounts of data that can be leveraged in different ways to generate demand. The vast majority (94%) of marketers agree that using data to track buyer intent will give marketing and sales teams a competitive advantage in the year ahead. 38% of marketers strongly agree that intent data can be used to gain a competitive edge.

DO YOU BELIEVE THAT USING INTENT DATA WILL GIVE MARKETING AND SALES TEAMS A COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE IN THE YEAR AHEAD?

- Strongly Agree: 38%
- Agree: 56%
- Disagree: 5%
- Strongly Disagree: 1%
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.

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