

THE OUTLOOK ON PERFORMANCE MARKETING

A RESEARCH-BASED GUIDE FOR MARKETERS



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

Ascend2[™]
RESEARCH-BASED MARKETING

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➤ **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 professionals and marketing research subscribers.

SURVEY RESPONDENTS

Primary Marketing Channel

B2B	27%
B2C	46%
B2B and B2C equally	27%

Number of Employees

More than 500	18%
50 to 500	22%
Fewer than 50	60%

Primary role in company

Owner / Partner / C-Level	50%
Vice President / Director / Manager	35%
Non-Management Professional	15%

THE OUTLOOK ON PERFORMANCE MARKETING

Though performance marketing can cover a wide array of marketing practices, optimizing a mix of SEO, PPC, and paid search has become a critical part of many marketers' evolving digital strategy.

But how are marketers adjusting their performance marketing strategies to accommodate industry change in the year ahead?

To help answer this question, Ascend2 and our Research Partners fielded The Outlook on Performance Marketing survey. We thank the 283 marketers who responded to this survey between June 21, 2021 and June 28, 2021.

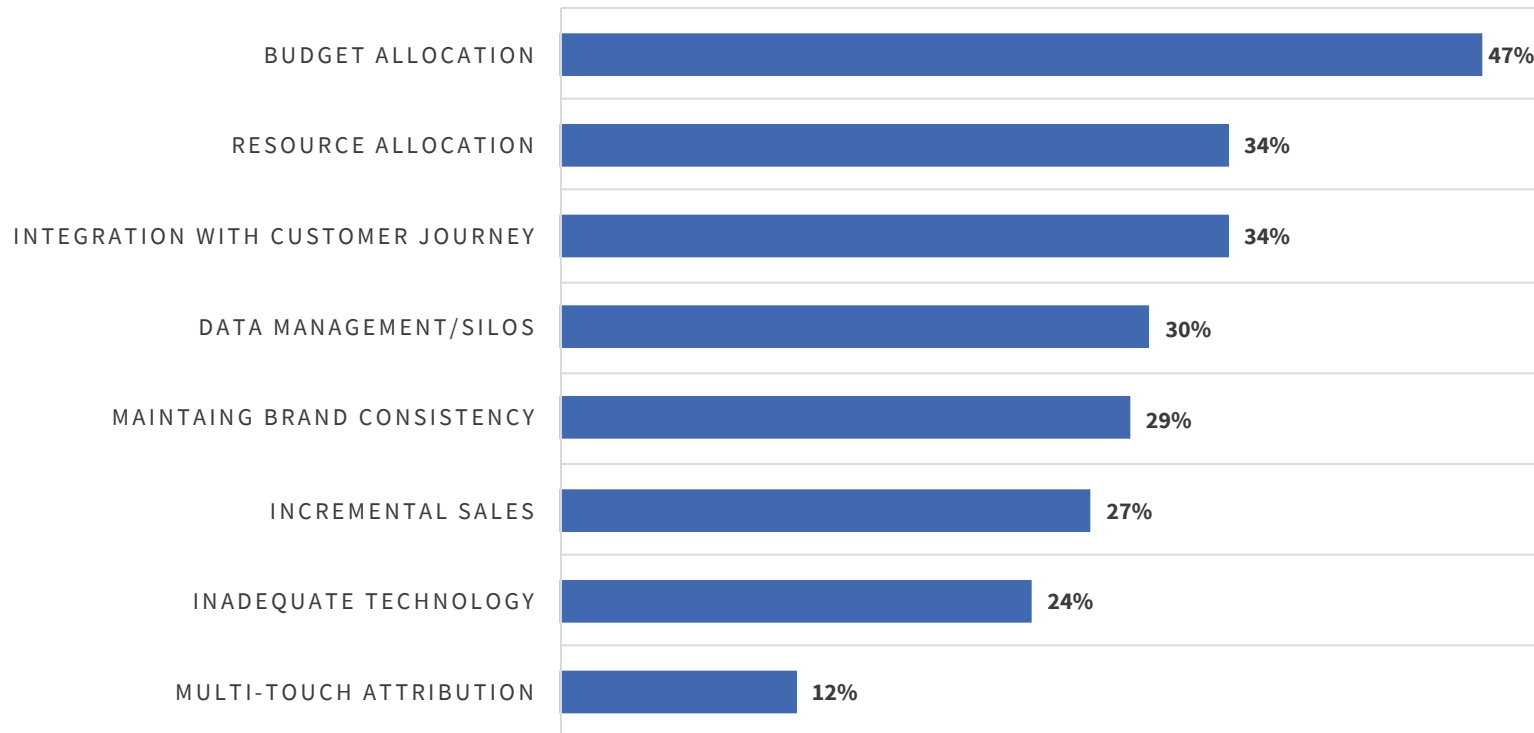
This Survey Summary Report, titled *The Outlook on Performance Marketing*, represents the opinions of all the market segments responding to the survey. Specific market segments from the survey are reported on separately and exclusively by our participating Research Partners.

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.

TOP CHALLENGES

Performance marketing can be a highly effective way for marketers to reach targeted audiences and pay for actual results achieved, but according to nearly half (47%) of marketers, **budget allocation** is still a top challenge when executing a strategy. **Allocating enough resources** to execute as well as **integrating performance campaigns into the customer journey** also top the list for over one-third (34%) of marketers.

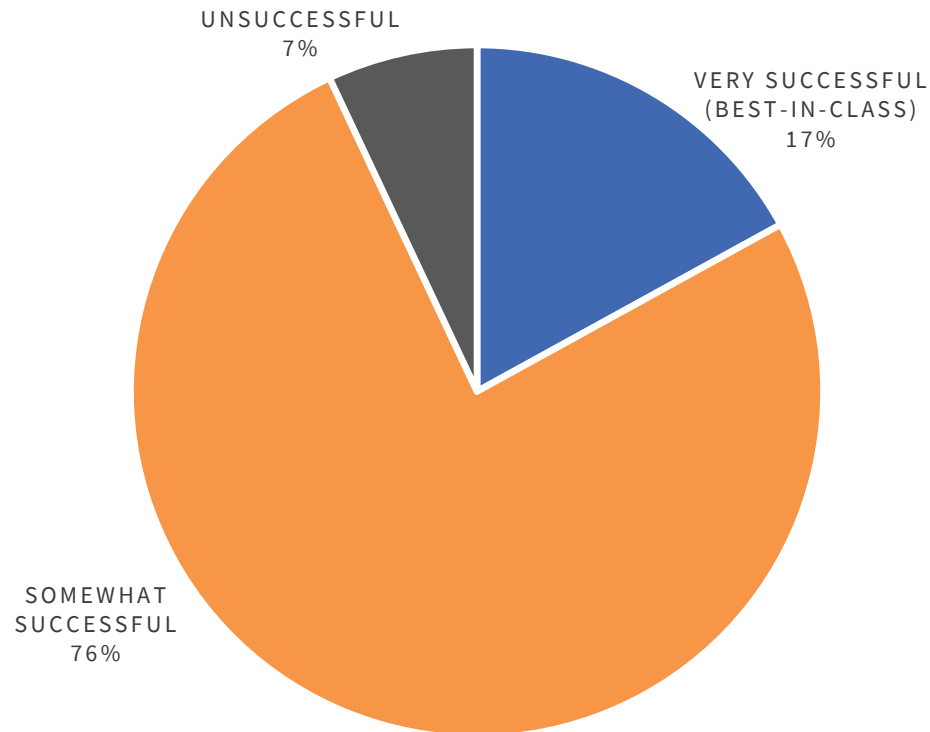
WHAT ARE THE TOP CHALLENGES ASSOCIATED WITH EXECUTING A PERFORMANCE MARKETING STRATEGY?



STRATEGIC SUCCESS

How effective are performance-based initiatives at achieving strategic goals? 93% of all marketing professionals surveyed report that their performance marketing strategy has resulted in at least **some success**. Only 17% of those surveyed, however, would rate their success as “**best-in-class**” compared to competitors, signaling that there is room for improvement amongst a majority of marketers.

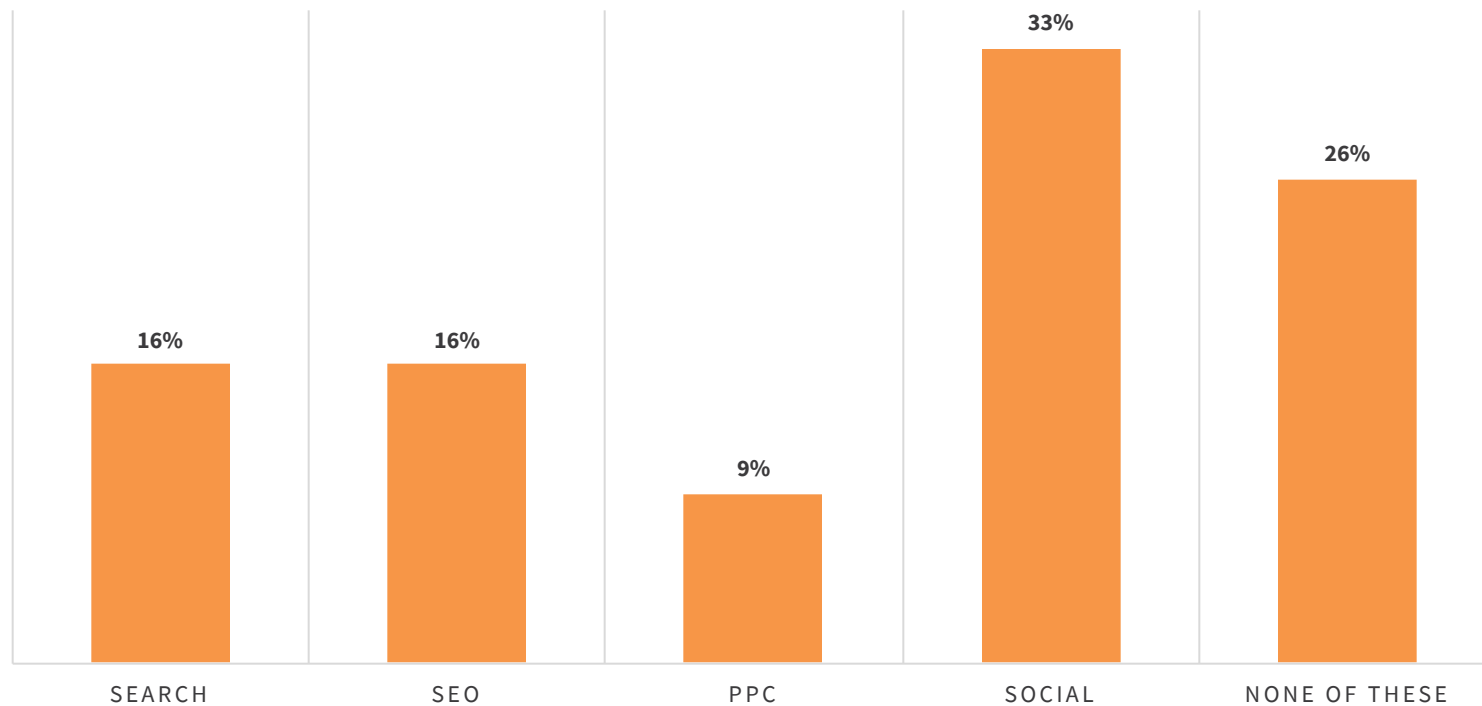
WHICH BEST DESCRIBES THE SUCCESS OF YOUR (OR YOUR TYPICAL CLIENT’S) PERFORMANCE MARKETING STRATEGY AT ACHIEVING GOALS SET FOR IT?



BUDGET ALLOCATION

Where are marketers planning to allocate most of their performance marketing budget in the year ahead? One-third (33%) of marketing professionals reported that **social media** spend will be their largest allocation. For just over one-quarter (26%) of those surveyed, Search Engine Optimization (SEO), search, social, and Pay-Per-Click (PPC) campaigns will not be the main focus for budget allocation in the year

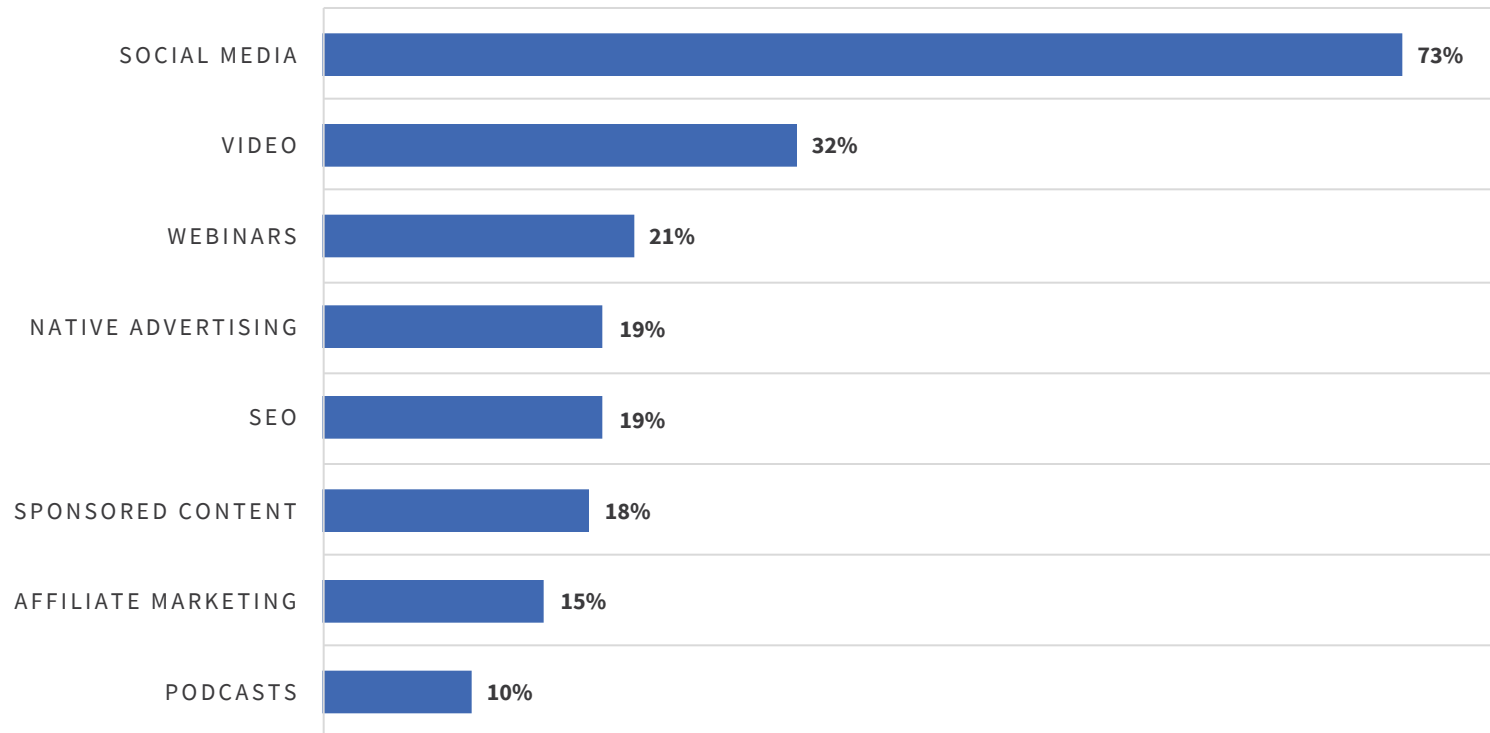
TO WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING AREAS ARE YOU ALLOCATING THE MOST BUDGET IN THE YEAR AHEAD?



CONTENT CREATION

Creating targeted and compelling content is critical to the success of a performance marketing strategy. Nearly three-quarters (73%) of marketers surveyed report that they will be focused on creating content to be used on **social media** channels first and foremost in the coming year. About one-third (32%) say that **video** will top their content output channels over the next 12 months.

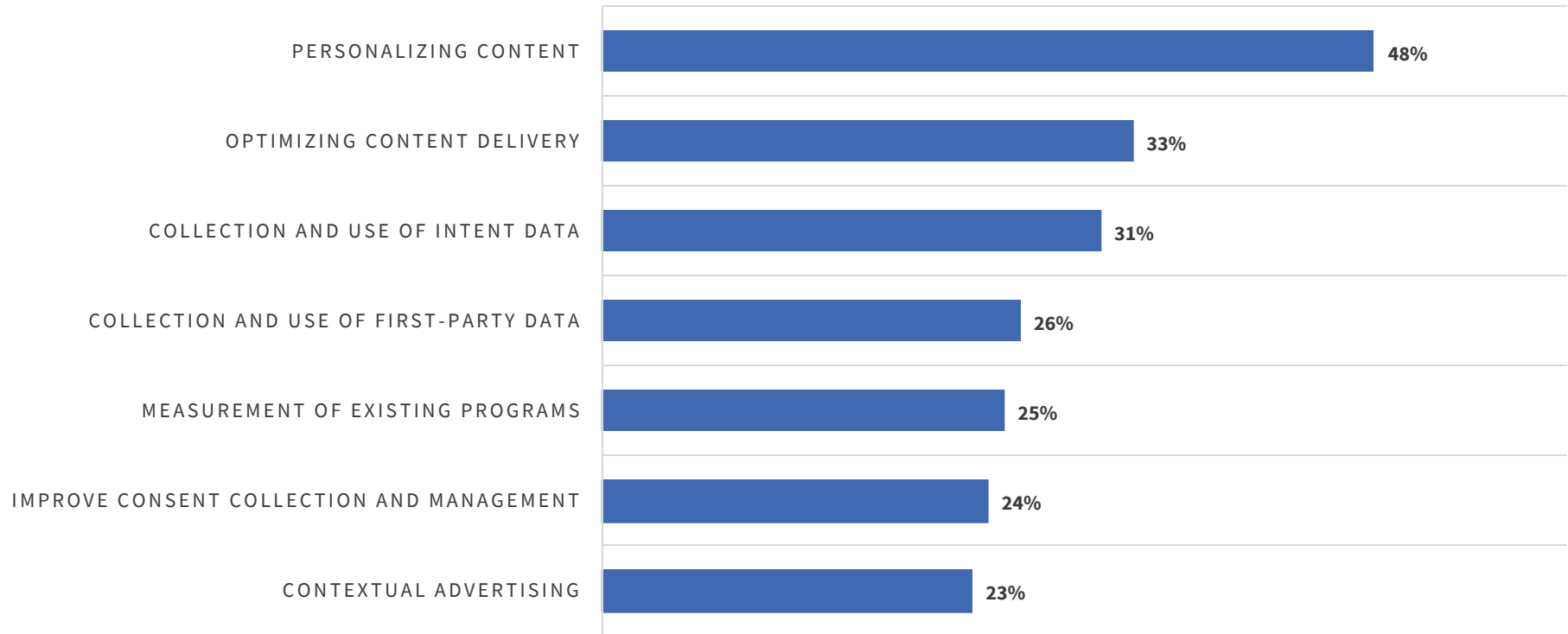
WHICH CHANNELS WILL YOU BE CREATING THE MOST CONTENT FOR IN THE YEAR AHEAD?



THIRD-PARTY COOKIES

A major shift in the performance industry is the impending deprecation of third-party cookies, so how do marketers plan to adjust their strategy to accommodate? **Personalizing content** and **optimizing content delivery** both top the list of ways marketers plan to mitigate this change according to 48% and 33% of those surveyed, respectively. **Intent data** will also play an important role for 31% of marketers.

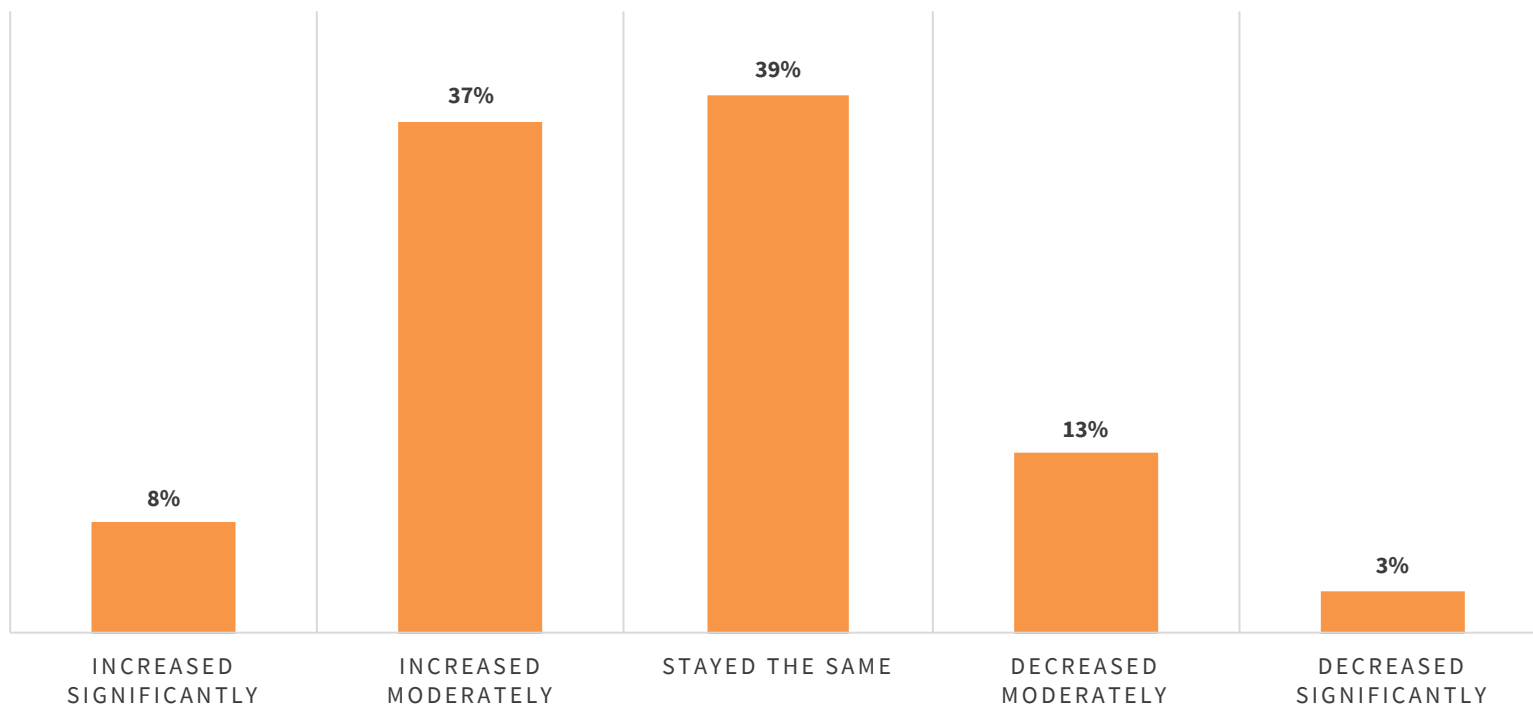
WHAT ARE THE MOST ESSENTIAL AREAS TO IMPROVE TO MITIGATE THE IMPACT OF THE DEPRECATION OF THIRD-PARTY COOKIES?



CONVERSION RATE OPTIMIZATION

Conversion Rate Optimization (CRO) programs bring order to the efforts that aim to increase the number of visitors to a website who complete a pre-determined action. While 45% of marketers report an **increase to some extent in the overall effectiveness** of their CRO programs, only 8% would describe this increase as significant. 39% said that their CRO program **effectiveness has remained unchanged** in the past year.

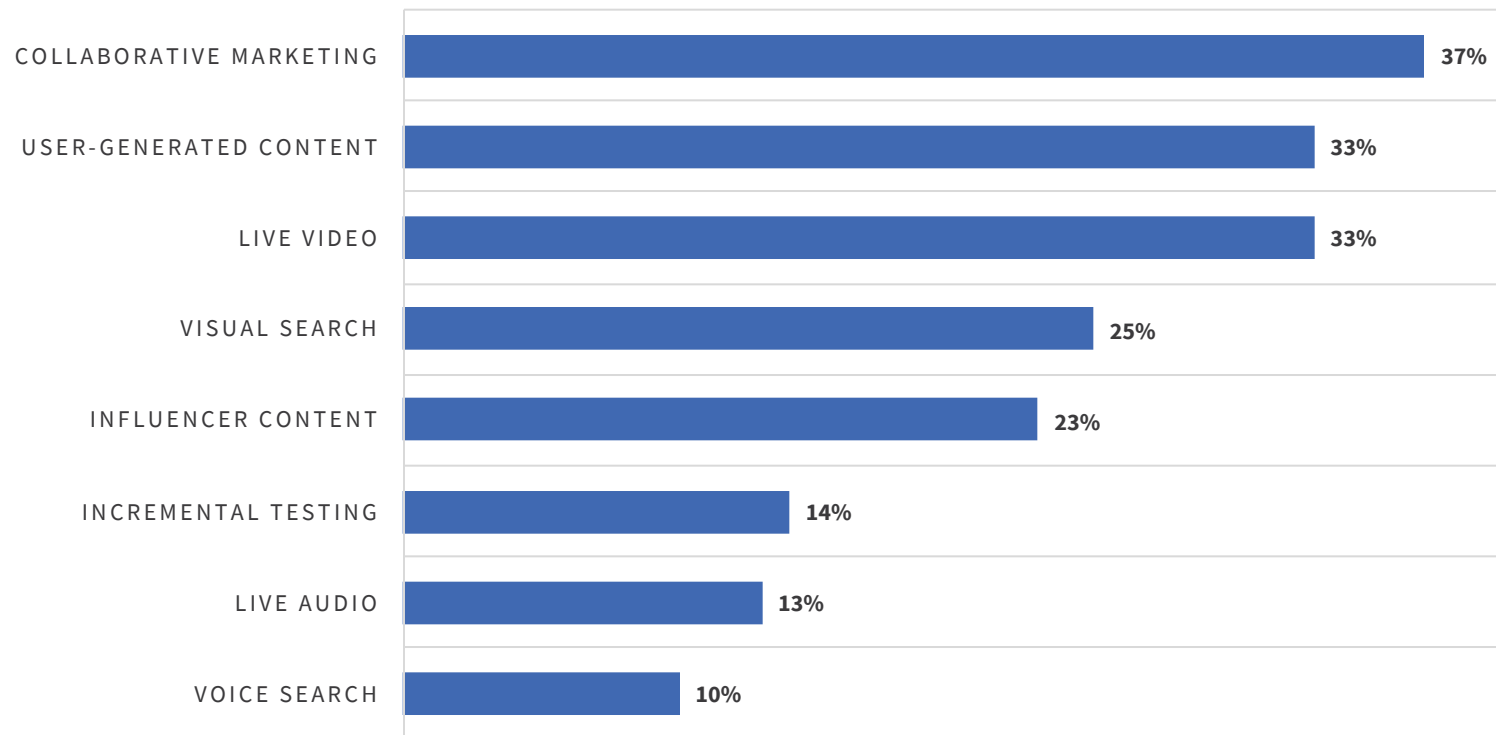
HOW HAVE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF YOUR CONVERSION RATE OPTIMIZATION PROGRAMS CHANGED IN THE PAST YEAR?



EMERGING TRENDS

Marketers across different brands are coming together to create mutually beneficial relationships through **collaborative marketing** campaigns according to 37% of those surveyed. Another emerging trend that will be more of a focus in the year ahead is **user-generated content** for one-third of marketers while the use of **live video** will continue to grow for another 33% of those surveyed.

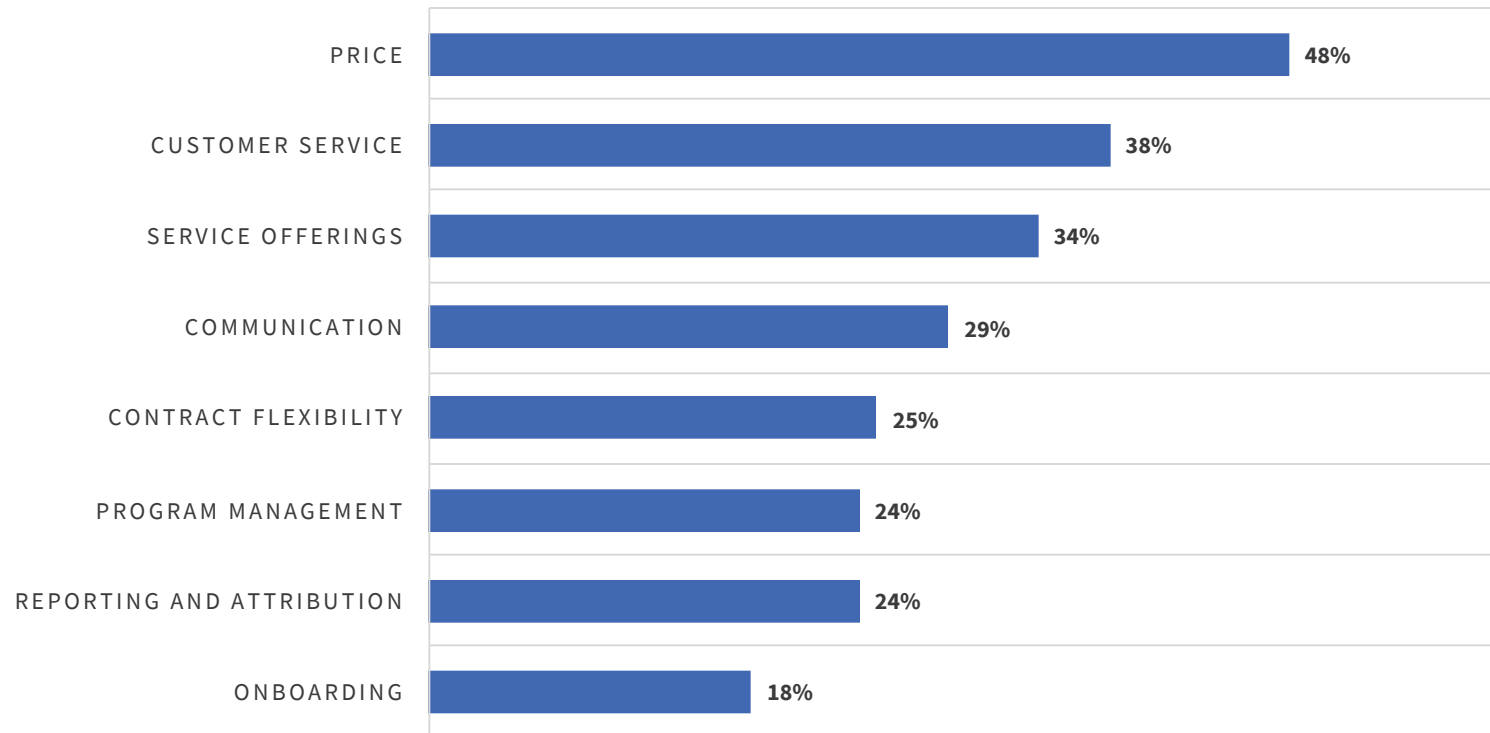
WHICH EMERGING TRENDS WILL YOU BE ALLOCATING THE MOST RESOURCES TO IN THE YEAR AHEAD?



AGENCY IMPROVEMENTS

Performance marketing agencies are often relied on by organizations that do not have the internal bandwidth to execute the often time-consuming performance-based strategy. From the marketer's perspective, in which areas can agencies most improve? **Price, customer service, and service offerings** top this list for 48%, 38%, and 34% of marketing professionals surveyed, respectively.

IN WHICH AREAS DO PERFORMANCE MARKETING AGENCIES NEED THE MOST IMPROVEMENT?





PERSONALIZED B2B RESEARCH TO GROW YOUR BUSINESS

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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