THE OUTLOOK ON MARKETING TECHNOLOGY
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: 26%
- B2C: 43%
- B2B and B2C equally: 31%

**Number of Employees**
- More than 500: 31%
- 50 to 500: 45%
- Fewer than 50: 24%

**Primary role in company**
- Owner / Partner / C-Level: 27%
- Vice President / Director / Manager: 54%
- Non-Management Professional: 19%
THE OUTLOOK ON MARKETING TECHNOLOGY

Marketers are tasked with accommodating the rapidly changing priorities of their organizations and customers through marketing technologies and solutions.

But what will this evolving landscape of marketing technology look like in the year ahead?

To help answer this question, Ascend2 and our Research Partners fielded The Outlook on Marketing Technology survey. We thank the 302 marketers who responded to this survey between November 15, 2021 and November 22, 2021.

This Survey Summary Report, titled The Outlook on Marketing Technology, 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.

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Marketing technology is helping marketers achieve their strategic goals but there is room for improvement in the majority of tech stacks. While 22% of marketers describe the success of their martech stack as "best-in-class" compared to their competitors, nearly three-quarters (72%) of those surveyed report just some success from their technology.
IMPORTANT GOALS IN THE YEAR AHEAD

Marketers are tasked with efficiently delivering meaningful customer experiences that promote engagement and loyalty. In the coming year, marketers are seeking to drive better customer experiences (54%) and increased engagement (47%) through their marketing technology, while 45% report that improving efficiency will be a top priority.

WHAT ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT GOALS WHEN IMPLEMENTING OR OPTIMIZING MARKETING TECHNOLOGY IN THE YEAR AHEAD?

- Improving customer experience: 54%
- Increasing engagement: 47%
- Improving efficiency: 45%
- Improving data quality: 28%
- Improving conversion rates: 27%
- Aligning efforts of marketing and sales: 27%
- Creating a comprehensive view of the customer: 17%
- Improving attribution: 12%
- Implementing AI: 9%
UPDATING TECHNOLOGY

In order to meet or exceed their strategic goals, nearly two-thirds (62%) of marketers report that they will have to update some or all components of their marketing technology stack in the year ahead. The rapidly changing landscape of consumer tastes and organizational needs makes it critical for marketers to continuously evaluate and optimize existing solutions.

IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE YOUR STRATEGIC GOALS, DO YOU feel that you will need to update any or all component(s) of your marketing technology stack in the year ahead?

- YES: 62%
- NO: 14%
- UNSURE: 24%
Nearly one-quarter of marketing professionals report that more than 20% of their overall marketing budget will be dedicated to martech platforms, training and/or management in the year ahead. Half of those surveyed report martech budget allocations between 10% and 20% of their marketing budgets and for about one-quarter of marketers, less than 10% will go to their technology solutions.

**Approximately how much of your overall marketing budget will be allocated to marketing technology (platform/training/management) in the year ahead?**

- **Less than 10%**: 26%
- **Between 10% and 20%**: 50%
- **Between 20% and 40%**: 22%
- **More than 40%**: 2%
In the past years, marketing teams have worked to reduce data silos and improve efficiencies. Often this means consolidating technology solutions and running lean tech stacks. Nearly one-quarter (24%) of those surveyed report that their current martech stack consists of **two or fewer tools**. A 56% majority say that **three to five tools** make up their suite of marketing technology solutions and tools.

### How Many Tools Does Your Marketing Technology Stack Currently Consist Of?

- **2 or less**: 24%
- **3 to 5**: 56%
- **6 to 9**: 15%
- **10 or more**: 5%
**CURRENT FUNCTIONS OF THE TECH STACK**

What types of functionality do current marketing technology stacks include? Customer-centric solutions to execute external campaigns such as email and social media tools are present for nearly two-thirds (64%) of marketers and 54% of marketers, respectively. But many highly-represented tools focus on improving organizational efficiencies such as communication solutions (62%), collaboration or meeting technology (50%) and project management or workflow tools (41%).

### Which of the Following Functions Does Your Marketing Technology Stack Currently Include?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Email Marketing</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Media</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration/Meetings</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Management/Workflow</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer Relationship Management</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analytics and Visualization</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content Management System</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landing Page Creation</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEO</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virtual Events/Webinars</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing Automation</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEM (Paid Ads)</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conversational Marketing/Chat</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content Creation</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecommerce Marketing</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital Asset Management</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Account-Based Marketing</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
THE USE OF AI

Artificial Intelligence (AI) can be used to analyze and act on data collected throughout the marketing technology stack. Where are the most popular areas that AI will be used in the year ahead? 45% of marketing professionals will be using AI in their email marketing, and over one-third (34%) will be using it to improve their analytics and reporting. One in five marketers will not be utilizing AI in the year ahead.

IN WHICH AREAS WILL ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) BE UTILIZED IN THE YEAR AHEAD?

- Email: 45%
- Analytics/Reporting: 34%
- Live Chat: 27%
- Automation: 27%
- Content Creation: 23%
- Real-Time Personalization: 21%
- Media Buying: 19%
- SEO/Website: 19%
- Influencer Marketing: 17%
- PPC: 8%
- None: 20%
THE COLLECTION OF FIRST-PARTY DATA

With data privacy regulations evolving and the deprecation of third-party cookies on the horizon, marketers are faced with finding alternative avenues to discovering more about their customers. Nine out of ten (90%) marketing professionals surveyed agree that the collection, analysis and use of first-party data will be critical to the success of their marketing strategies in the year ahead.

THE COLLECTION, ANALYSIS AND USE OF FIRST-PARTY DATA WILL BE CRITICAL TO THE SUCCESS OF MY ORGANIZATION'S MARKETING STRATEGY IN THE YEAR AHEAD.
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