

# DIGITAL MARKETING TRENDS

2023

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Research Created for Marketers



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

**Ascend2**<sup>™</sup>  
RESEARCH-BASED MARKETING

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PUT THIS CONTENT  
TO GOOD USE!  
↓

## HOW TO USE THIS REPORT:

**TIP #1: ENGAGE YOUR AUDIENCE** by turning the charts and insights into your own content.

**TIP #2: DISCOVER STRATEGIES, TACTICS AND TRENDS** that are working for fellow marketers.

**TIP #3: IMPROVE YOUR OWN STRATEGY** by using data that is relevant to your business.

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

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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**

N = 358 Marketing Decision-Makers

### **Primary Marketing Channel**

B2B (Business-to-Business)	23%
B2C (Business-to-Consumer)	51%
B2B and B2C Equally	26%

### **Number of Employees**

More than 500	15%
50 to 500	23%
Fewer than 50	62%

### **Primary role in company**

Owner / Partner / C-Level	55%
Vice President / Director / Manager	30%
Non-Management Professional	15%

# DIGITAL MARKETING STRATEGY TRENDS 2023

With emerging, groundbreaking technologies and an unpredictable economic climate, there are many factors that contribute to the ever-changing tide of digital marketing.

## **So how are marketers adjusting their digital strategies for maximum growth now and in the year ahead?**

To help answer this question, Ascend2 and our Research Partners fielded the *Digital Marketing Trends 2023* survey. We thank the 358 marketers who responded to this survey during the week of March 13, 2023.

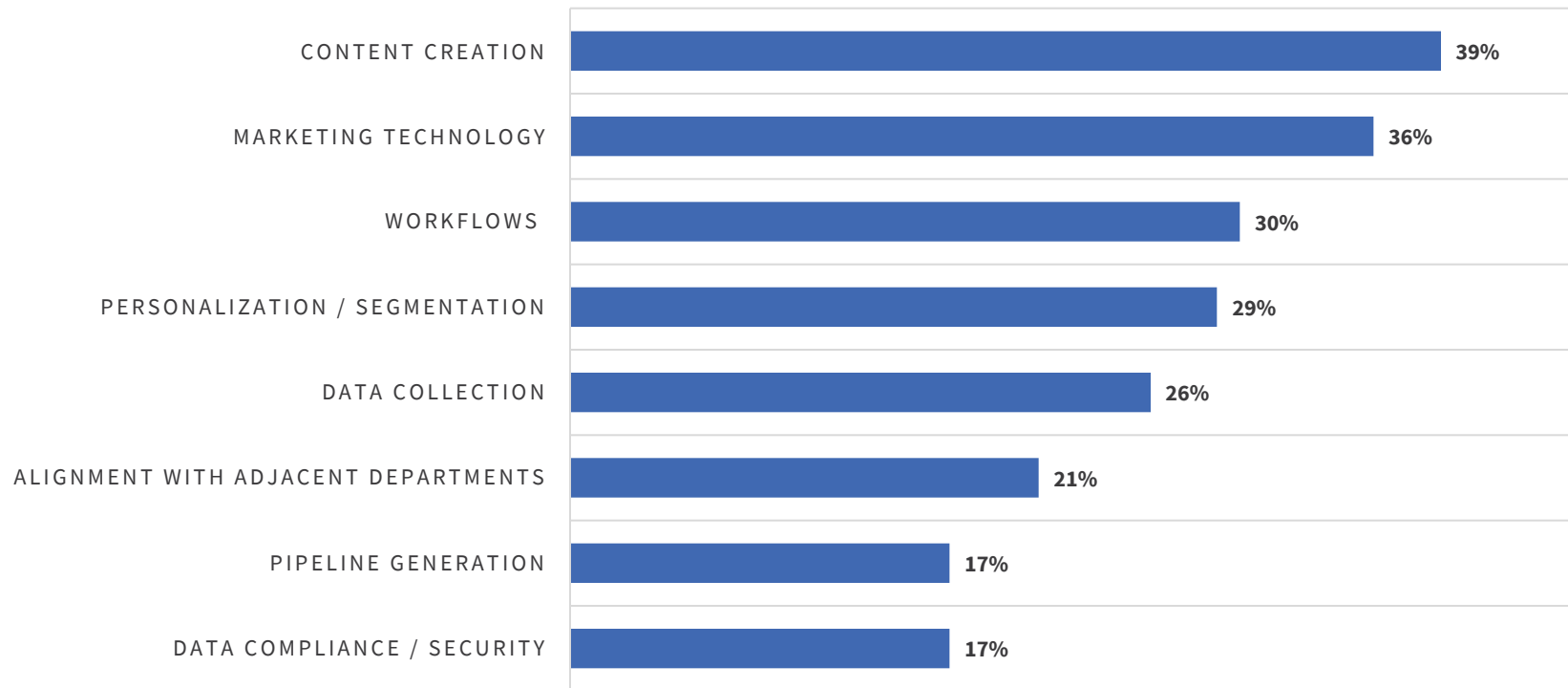
This Survey Summary Report, titled *Digital Marketing Trends 2023*, represents the opinions of all the market segments responding to the survey. Specific market segments from the survey are reported on separately and exclusively by our participating Research Partners.

*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.*

# AREAS OF FOCUS

Marketers will have a strong focus on optimizing content creation in the year ahead according to 39% of those surveyed. Just over one-third (36%) of marketing professionals will prioritize the optimization of their marketing technology stacks in the coming year while another 30% will be strategizing their workflows and processes.

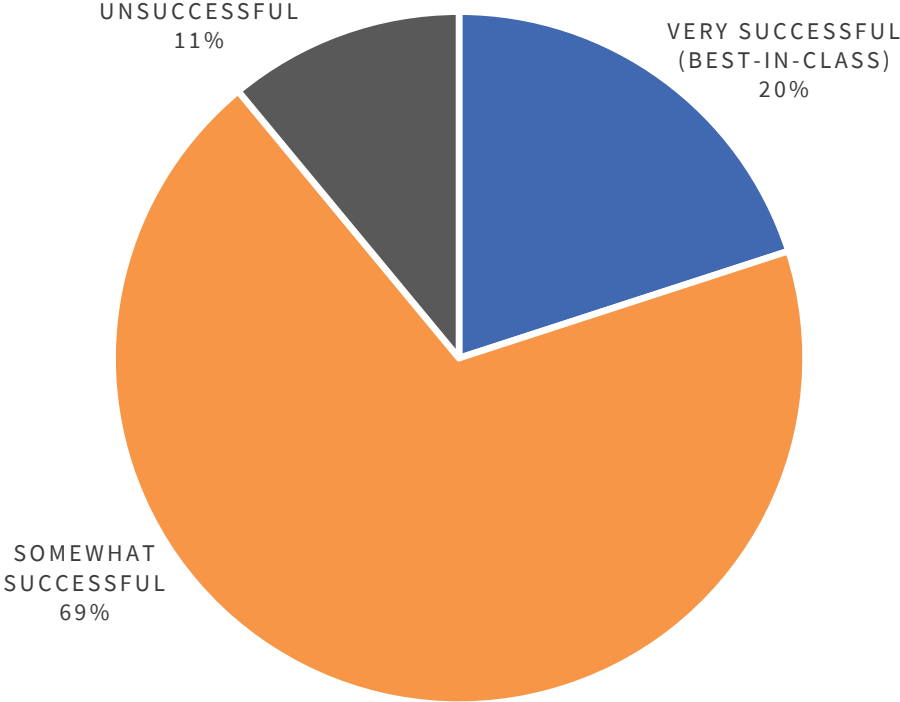
**WHICH AREAS WILL YOU BE MOST FOCUSED ON OPTIMIZING IN THE YEAR AHEAD?**



# GAUGING SUCCESS

One-in-five (20%) marketing professionals surveyed report experiencing great success with their current digital marketing strategies. However, there is room for improvement as 69% of those surveyed report just some success from their marketing initiatives. About one-in-ten (11%) marketers describe their digital strategy as unsuccessful at achieving objectives.

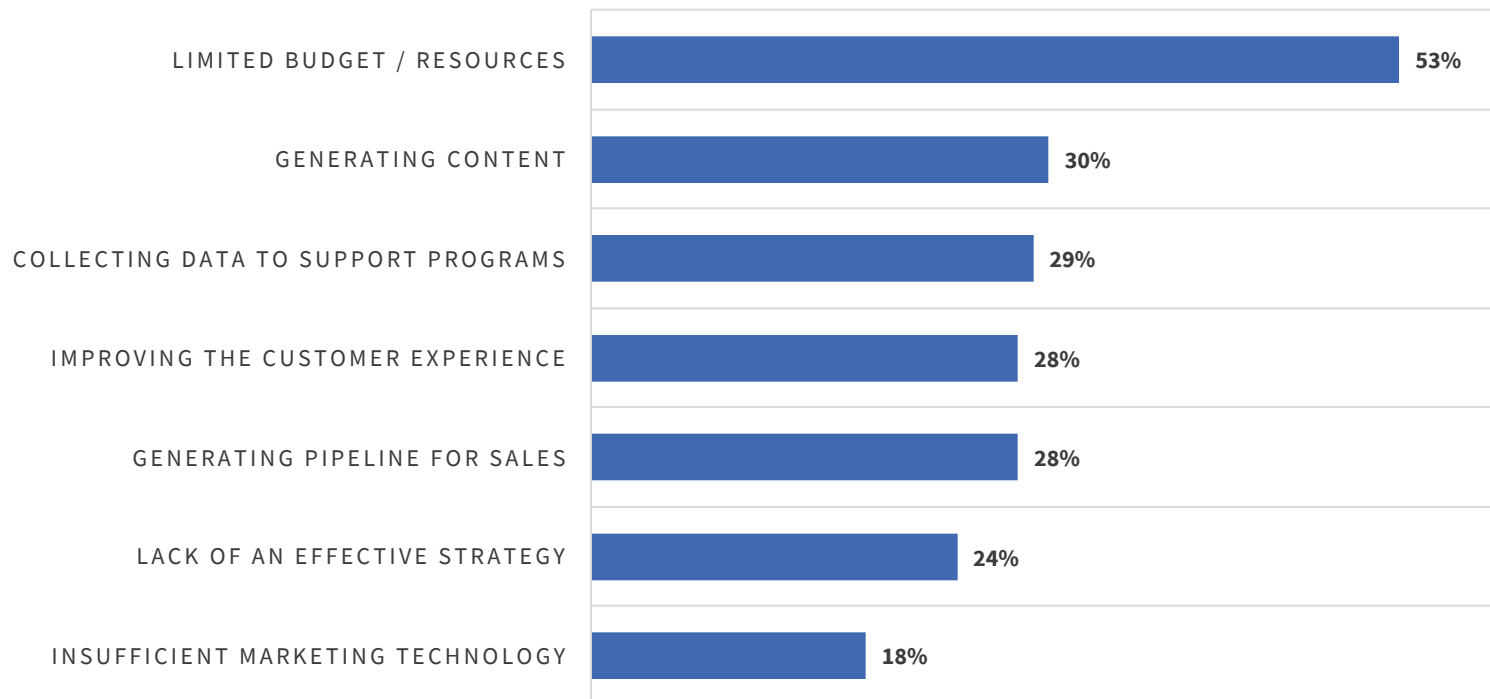
**RATE THE SUCCESS OF YOUR OVERALL DIGITAL MARKETING STRATEGY IN ACHIEVING THE OBJECTIVES SET FOR IT.**



# STRATEGIC CHALLENGES

Over half (53%) of marketing professionals say that they are challenged by limited budget and resources as they work to meet strategic goals. Generating content and collecting data to support programs are also among the top challenges for marketers according to 30% and 29% of those surveyed, respectively. Technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI) could contribute to content generation in the future.

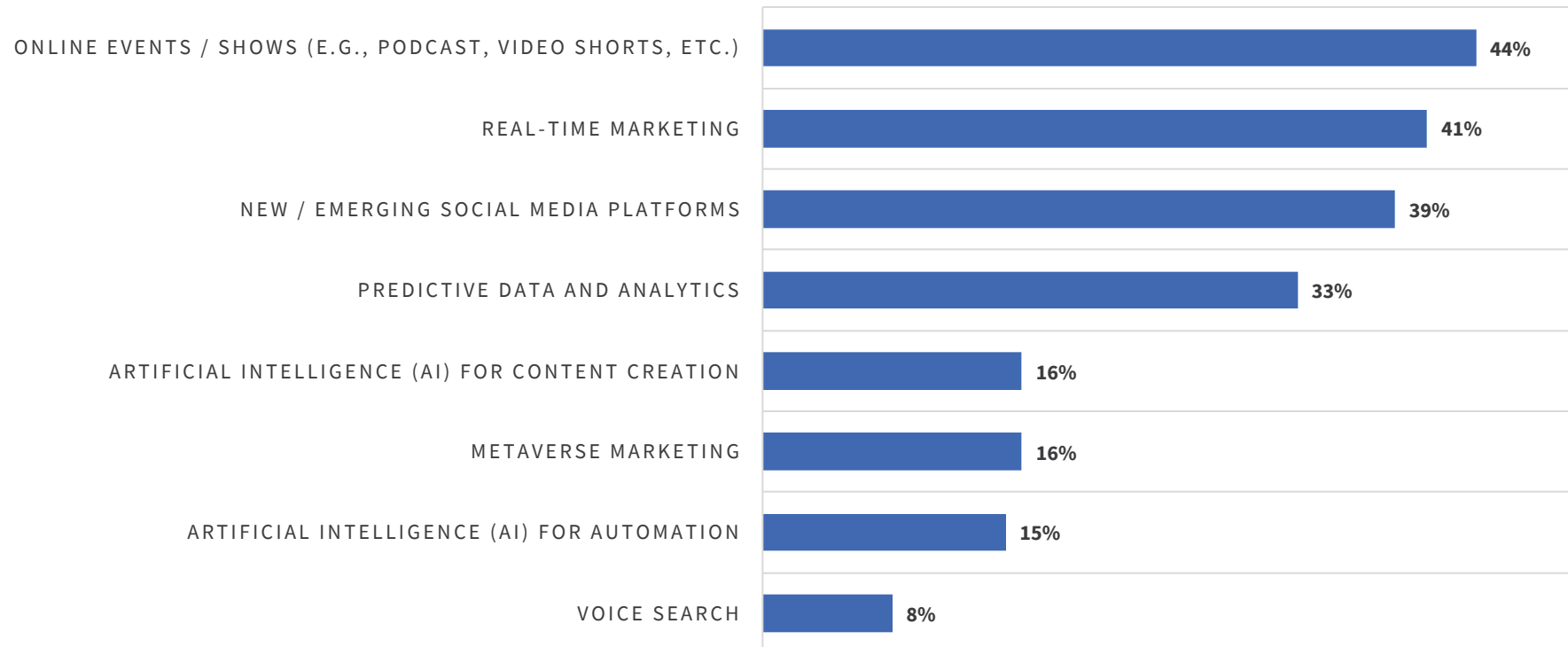
## WHAT ARE THE MOST SIGNIFICANT CHALLENGES OF MEETING THE GOALS OF YOUR DIGITAL MARKETING STRATEGY?



# INTRODUCING NEW TACTICS

44% of marketers report that they will be adding online events or shows such as podcasts and video shorts to their marketing mix in the year ahead. Other trends that will be added or increased in marketing strategies include real-time marketing and new social media platforms according to 41% and 39% of those surveyed, respectively.

## WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING TRENDS WILL YOU BE ADDING/INCREASING WITHIN YOUR MARKETING MIX IN THE YEAR AHEAD?

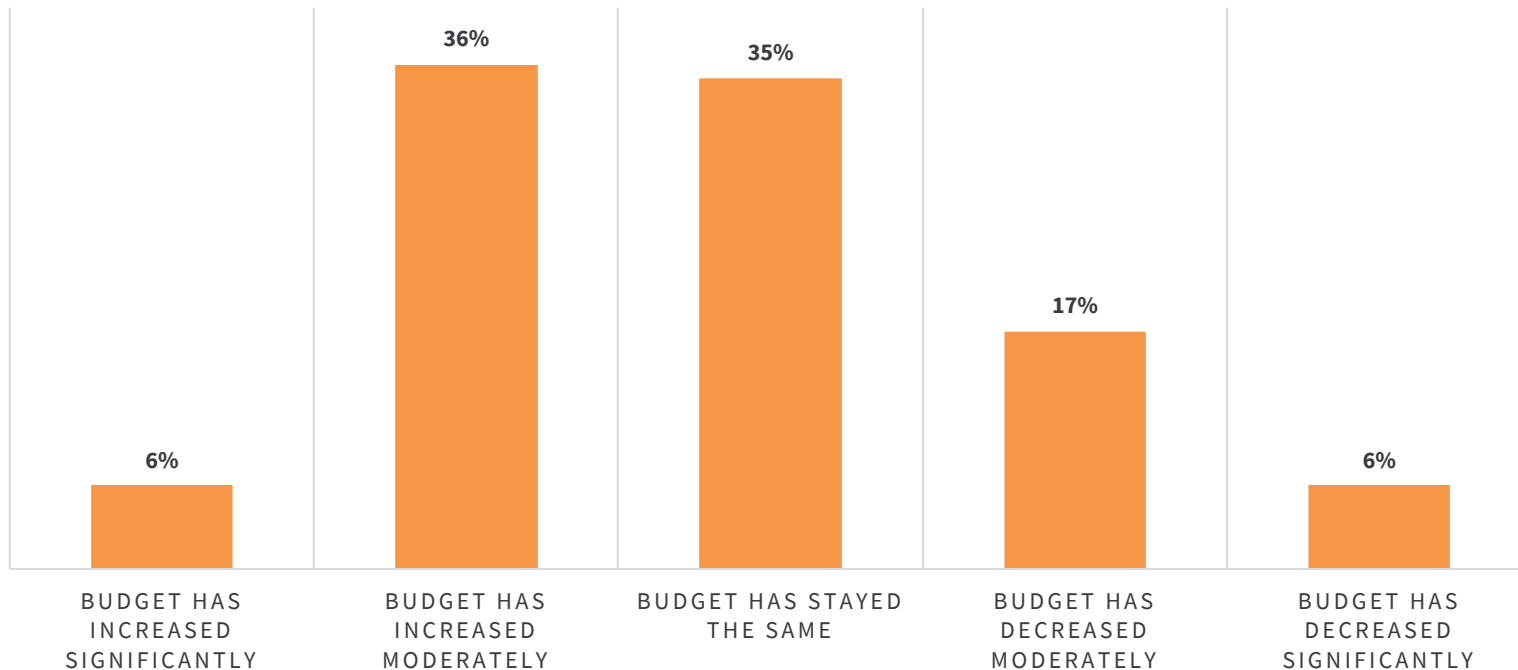




# CHANGES IN BUDGET

42% of marketers report an increase in budget allocated to improve marketing performance in the year ahead. Over one-third (35%) have marketing budgets that will remain unchanged in the coming year. Interestingly, more marketers report an increase in pressure to improve marketing efforts than those who report budget increases as demonstrated on the page that follows.

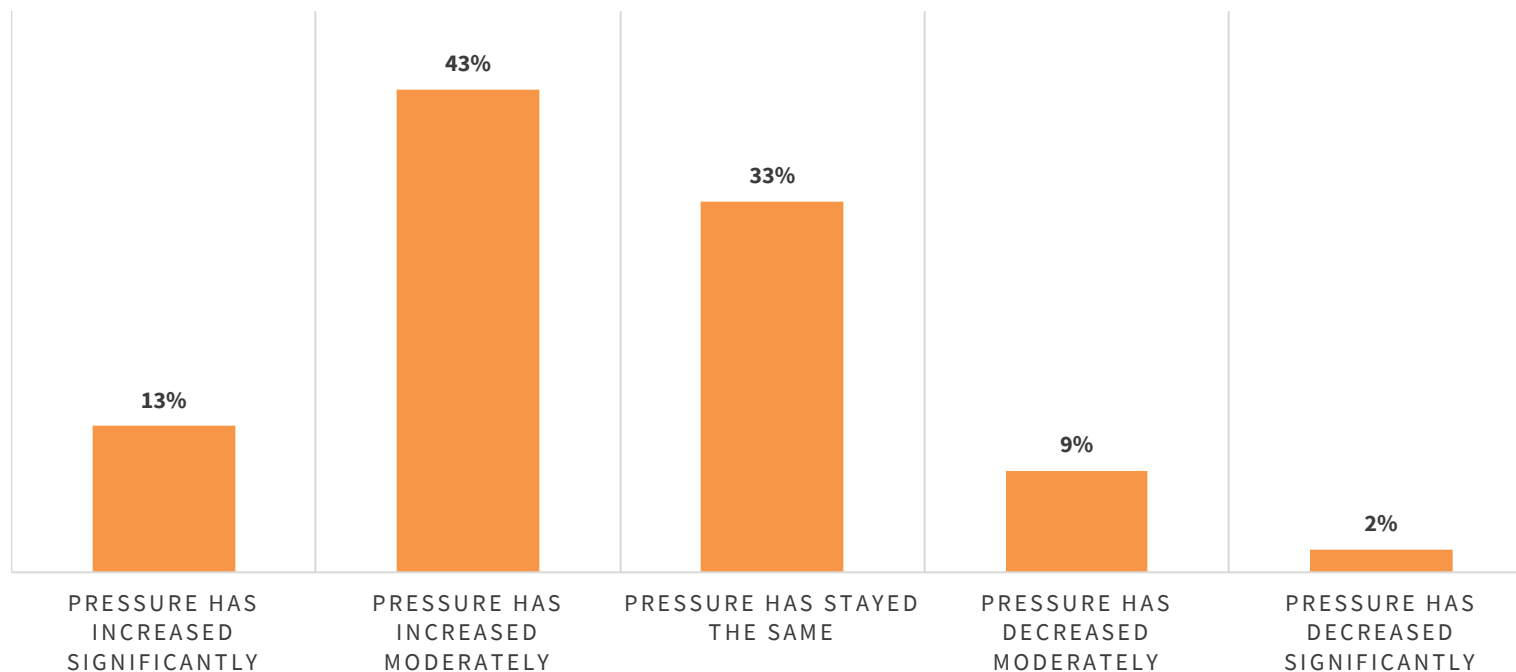
**WHICH BEST DESCRIBES THE CHANGE IN BUDGET TO IMPROVE MARKETING PERFORMANCE IN THE YEAR AHEAD?**



# CHANGES IN PRESSURE

Over half (56%) of marketing professionals say that pressure to improve marketing performance will increase in the year ahead to some extent. Only about one-in-ten (11%) of those surveyed report a decrease in pressure with another 33% saying they have not felt a change in pressure to optimize their marketing efforts.

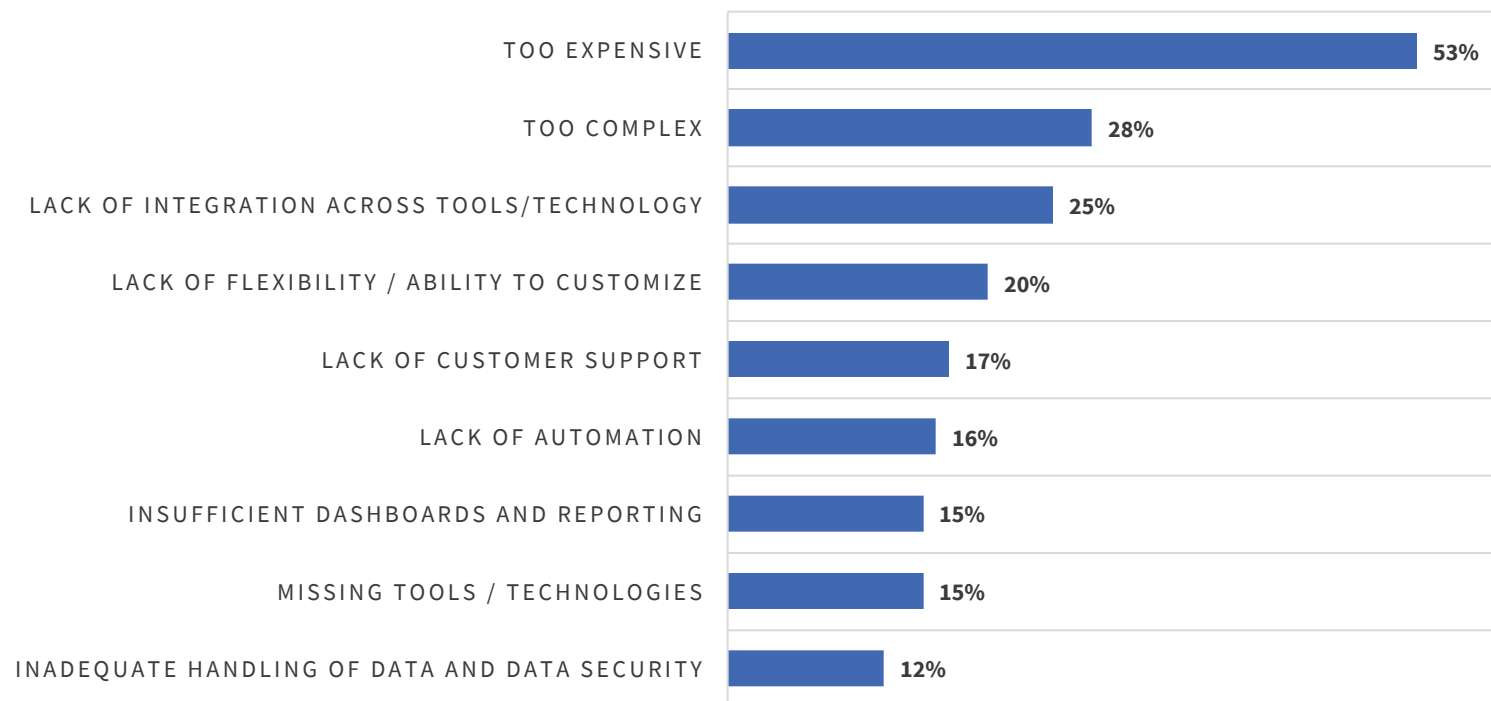
## WHICH BEST DESCRIBES THE CHANGE IN PRESSURE TO IMPROVE MARKETING PERFORMANCE IN THE YEAR AHEAD?



# TOP COMPLAINTS WITH MARTECH

By far, the most commonly reported complaint about current marketing technology stacks is the overall cost associated with them. Over one-quarter (28%) of marketers say that their martech stacks are too complex. Lack of integration across tools and technology, which could contribute to tech stack complexity is also a top complaint for 25% of marketers.

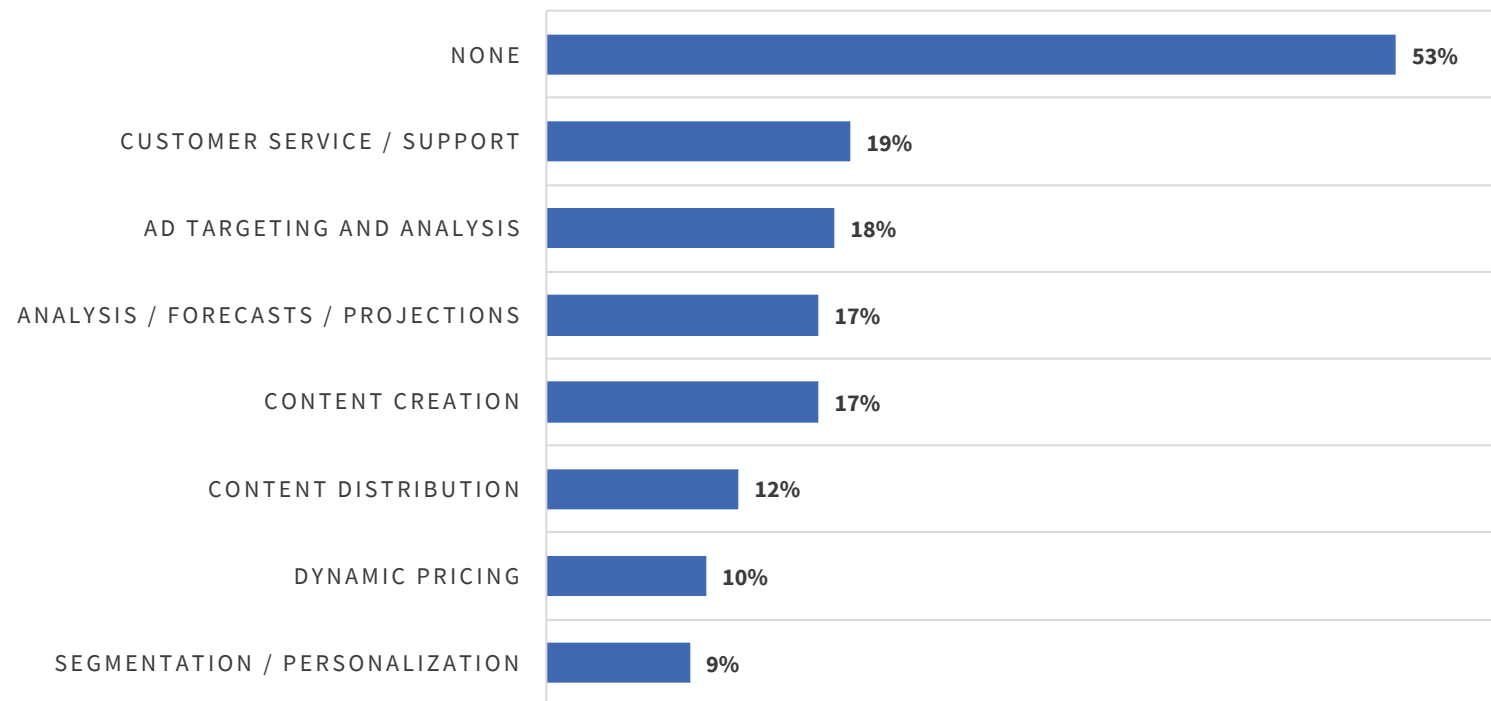
## WHAT ARE YOUR TOP COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE TECHNOLOGY CURRENTLY USED TO EXECUTE YOUR DIGITAL MARKETING STRATEGY?



# THE USE OF AI

Over half (53%) of marketers say they do not use Artificial Intelligence (AI) for areas including customer service, ad targeting, analysis, and content creation. Less than one-in-five marketers are using AI in their customer service and support (19%), ad targeting and analysis (18%), analysis or forecasting (17%), and content creation (17%).

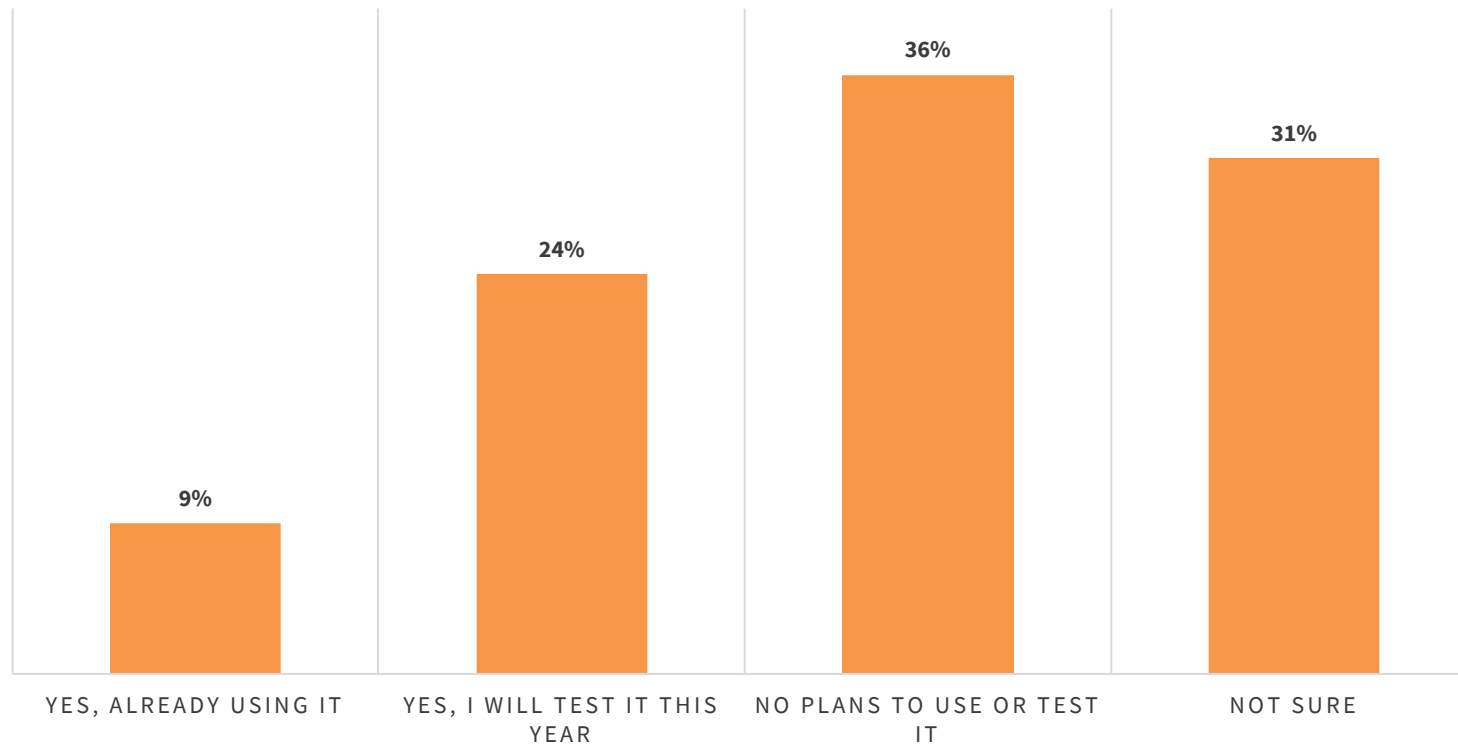
## IN WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING AREAS ARE YOU USING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)?



# THE USE OF CHATGPT

At the end of 2022, the AI chatbot, ChatGPT was launched. Only 9% of marketing professionals surveyed are currently utilizing ChatGPT in their marketing strategies, but it is gaining traction with another 24% who say they will be testing it this year. Over one-third (36%) say they have no plans to use or test ChatGPT in the coming year.

## WILL YOU USE CHATGPT IN THE COMING YEAR?



# CUSTOMIZED B2B RESEARCH

*delivered to you with a plan to use it.*

We find the right audience, ask the right questions, and gather insightful data to create useful and affordable research that will help you generate demand and increase engagement.

Join the industry powerhouses that use Ascend2 to create compelling research content that speaks to their audience.

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## Don't just take it from us...

Here's what some of our customers have to say.

"I highly recommend Ascend2 for any research projects in the B2B marketing space. Coming from a heavy academic-research background myself, I'm quite demanding when it comes to fielding and analyzing market surveys. Intentsify had very specific goals in mind to support multiple use cases with original research. Todd and Jenna of Ascend2 had the requisite knowledge, skills, and resources to achieve our weighty objectives. **Further, the program was affordable (even for an early-stage startup), and the results to date are already surpassing our ROI goals.**"

*-David Crane, VP Marketing, Intentsify*

"Ascend2 was a pleasure to work with and helped us to **design a thoughtful survey that uncovered truly actionable and noteworthy findings**. They work smart and fast and even helped to promote and place the research results at launch. Ascend2 is at the top of our list for future projects."

*-Nick Olsson, CEO, Olsson Communications*

"Good news to report back to you – we are seeing a lot of success with the leads we have gotten, not only from you but from the report in general (website, our emails, ads, etc.). **My CEO is super pleased.**"

*-Emily Wingrove, Director of Marketing, Synthio*

"On a hunch that original, empirical research could boost engagement with my audience, I contracted Ascend2 and Todd Lebo to provide a study on the most effective tactics being employed by B2B marketers. The research was delivered on time in an easily workable format, and any minor corrections were handled with rapid turnaround and excellent customer service. In the end, the research deliverable ended up influencing hundreds of thousands of dollars in closed-won business, **achieving an 85x ROI on the purchase price of the research**. I am extremely impressed with Ascend2 and will use them again any time I require original research on industry influencers for my marketing campaigns."

*-Jonathan Greene, Director of Marketing, LeadCrunch*

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