

CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT AND AI

NEW RESEARCH

Research Created 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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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 = 401 Marketing Decision-Makers

Primary Marketing Channel

B2B (Business-to-Business)	24%
B2C (Business-to-Consumer)	49%
B2B and B2C Equally	27%

Number of Employees

More than 500	18%
50 to 500	25%
Fewer than 50	57%

Primary role in company

Owner / Partner / C-Level	50%
Vice President / Director / Manager	33%
Non-Management Professional	17%

CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT & AI

With effective customer engagement, marketers are able to build brand awareness and trust, increasing sales and improving their bottom line.

But how are marketers using AI to engage with their customers and prospects?

To help answer this question, Ascend2 and our Research Partners fielded the Customer Engagement & AI survey. We thank the 401 marketers who responded to this survey during the month of October 2023.

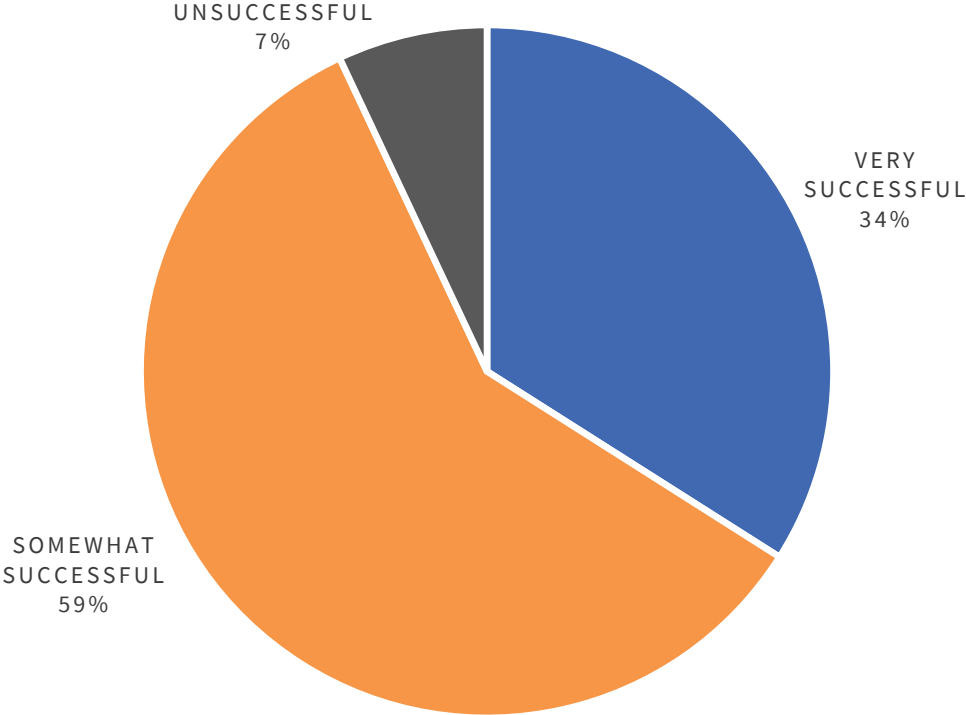
This Survey Summary Report, titled *Customer Engagement & AI*, represents the opinions of all the market segments responding to the survey. Specific market segments from the survey are reported on separately and exclusively by our participating Research Partners.

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.

RATING CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT

Successfully engaging customers is the "holy grail" for all modern marketers. Unfortunately, only 34% of marketing professionals are very successful or best-in-class in customer engagement, indicating room for improvement as marketers evaluate and optimize customer engagement initiatives.

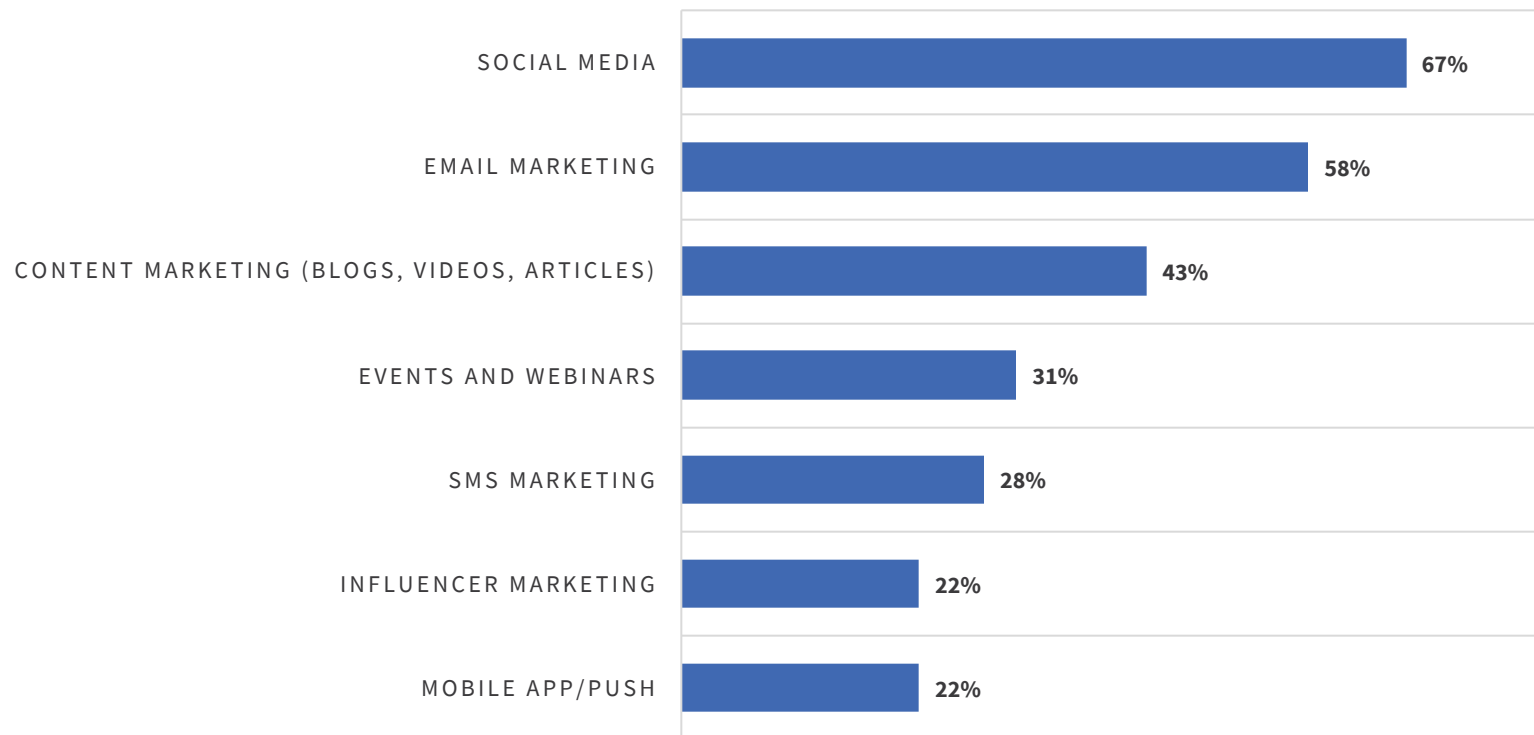
HOW WOULD YOU RATE YOUR OVERALL SUCCESS OF ENGAGING AUDIENCES THROUGH MARKETING EFFORTS?



MOST EFFECTIVE CHANNELS

There are many tools in a marketing professional's toolbox, so finding the most effective tools for engaging with your customers is critical. Social media (67%) and email marketing (58%) are the most effective channels for marketing professionals. Social media offers broad reach and natural engagement, while email marketing provides more control over communication, especially when you have clear opt-in options for subscribers.

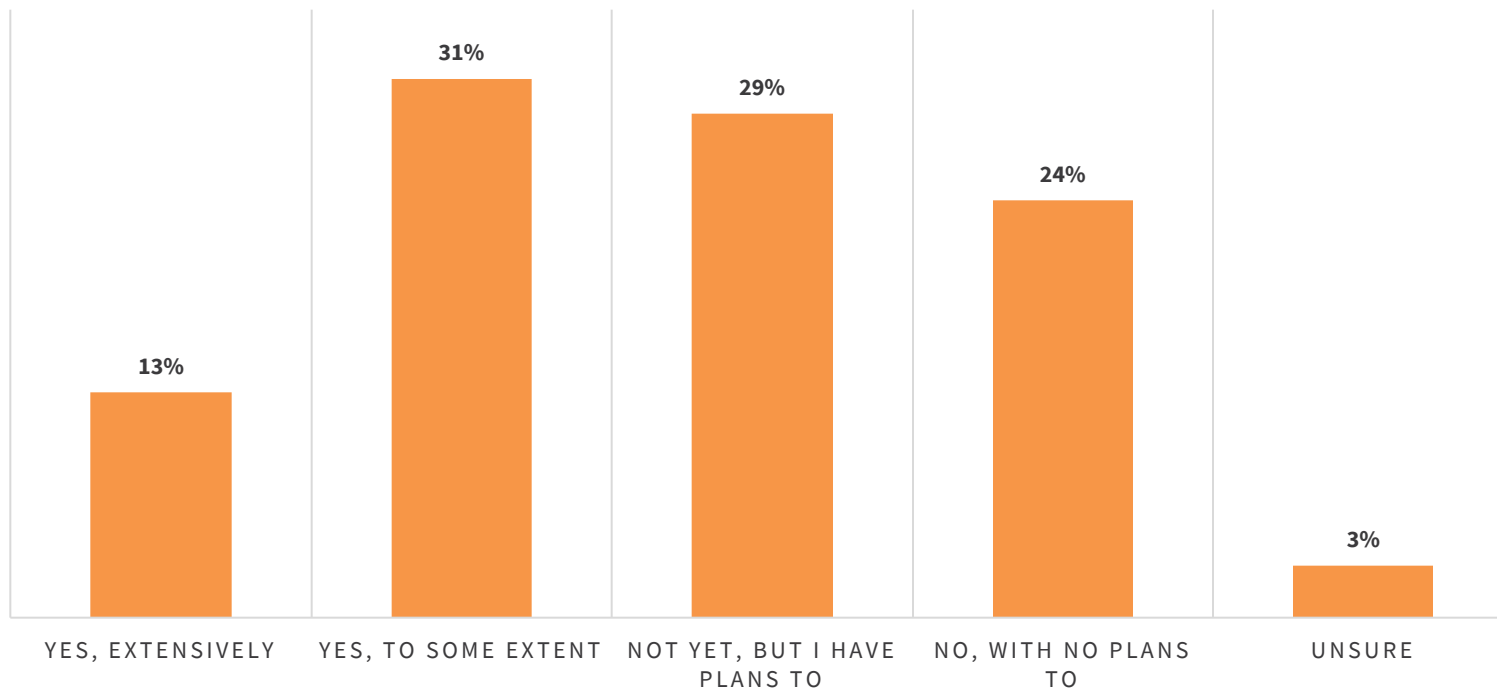
WHICH MARKETING CHANNELS DO YOU FIND MOST EFFECTIVE FOR ENGAGING WITH YOUR CUSTOMERS?



AI USE IS ON THE RISE

With 44% of marketers using AI to some extent (13% extensively) to engage audiences, the future is now to embrace AI. Marketers are quickly realizing the potential of AI, and only 24% of marketers have no plans to use AI. The rapid adoption of AI by marketing highlights the necessity to stay ahead of the curve to remain competitive and efficiently engage with target audiences.

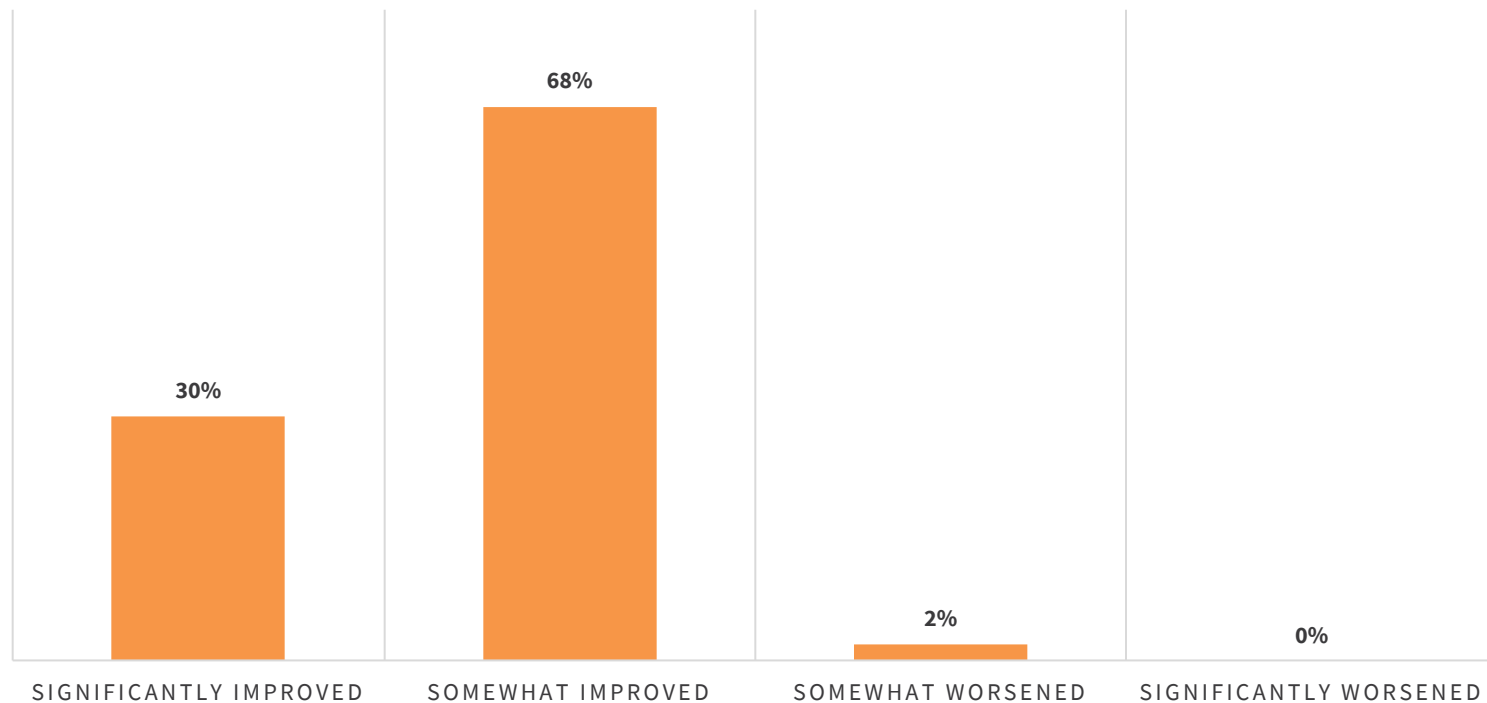
ARE YOU CURRENTLY UTILIZING AI TECHNOLOGIES THAT ASSIST WITH ENGAGING AND MARKETING TO YOUR AUDIENCES?



THE IMPACT OF AI IS UNDENIABLE

The key to success is understanding the customer. The more we know about our customers, the better we can understand their needs and engage with them. 98% of marketers saying that AI positively impacts their ability to understand customer preferences and behavior. The overwhelming evidence supporting AI's role in enhancing companies' understanding of customer preferences and behavior leaves those who remain skeptical at risk of becoming obsolete in an era where data-driven insights reign supreme.

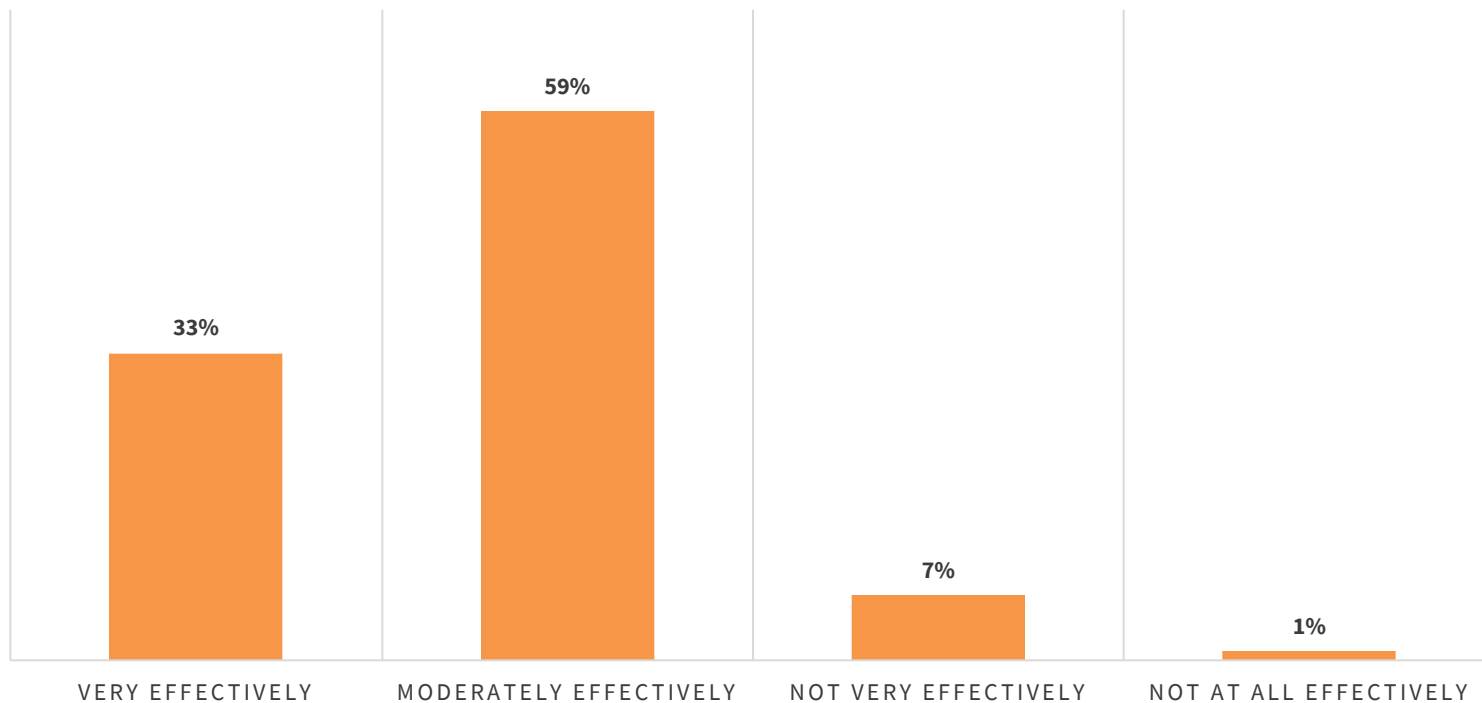
HOW HAS USING AI IMPACTED YOUR COMPANY'S ABILITY TO UNDERSTAND CUSTOMER PREFERENCES AND BEHAVIOR?



AI AND PERSONALIZED CONTENT

92% of marketing professionals using AI are successful in using AI to deliver personalized content and recommendations to customers, with 33% finding it very effective. AI and personalized content are a perfect fit, like a hand in a glove. This dynamic duo is because of AI's ability to leverage data-driven insights to deliver tailored experiences, ensuring that each individual's unique preferences and needs are met precisely, ultimately driving engagement and satisfaction.

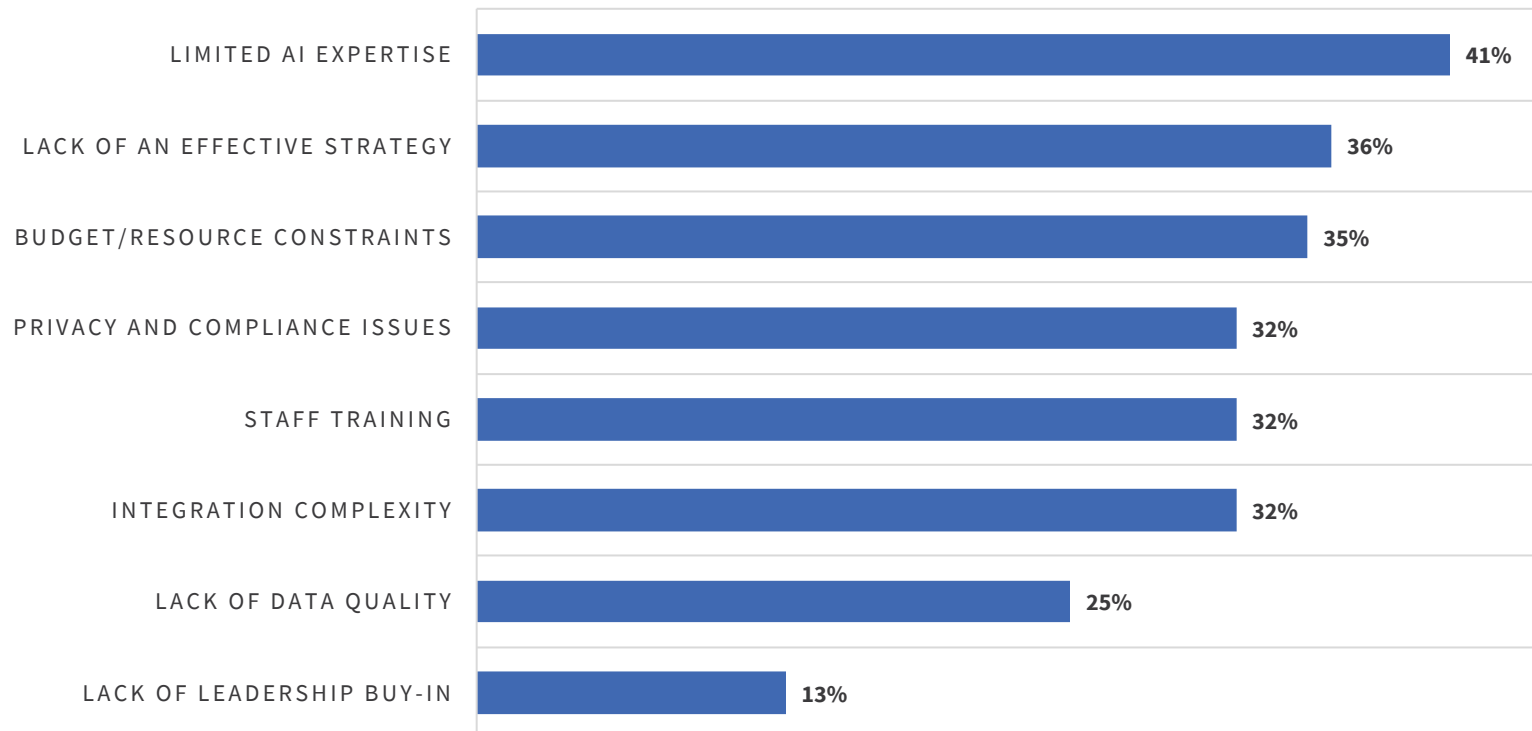
TO WHAT EXTENT HAS AI HELPED YOUR MARKETING DEPARTMENT DELIVER PERSONALIZED CONTENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO CUSTOMERS?



TOP CHALLENGES

Any new technology or tactic is challenging at the adoption stage because of limited experience. AI is no different, with 41% listing limited experience as the number one challenge, followed by lack of an effective strategy (36%) and budget/resource constraints. We expect the top challenges to shift as AI matures and is more widely adopted.

WHAT ARE THE TOP CHALLENGES YOU HAVE ENCOUNTERED IN IMPLEMENTING AI FOR CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT IN YOUR MARKETING DEPARTMENT?

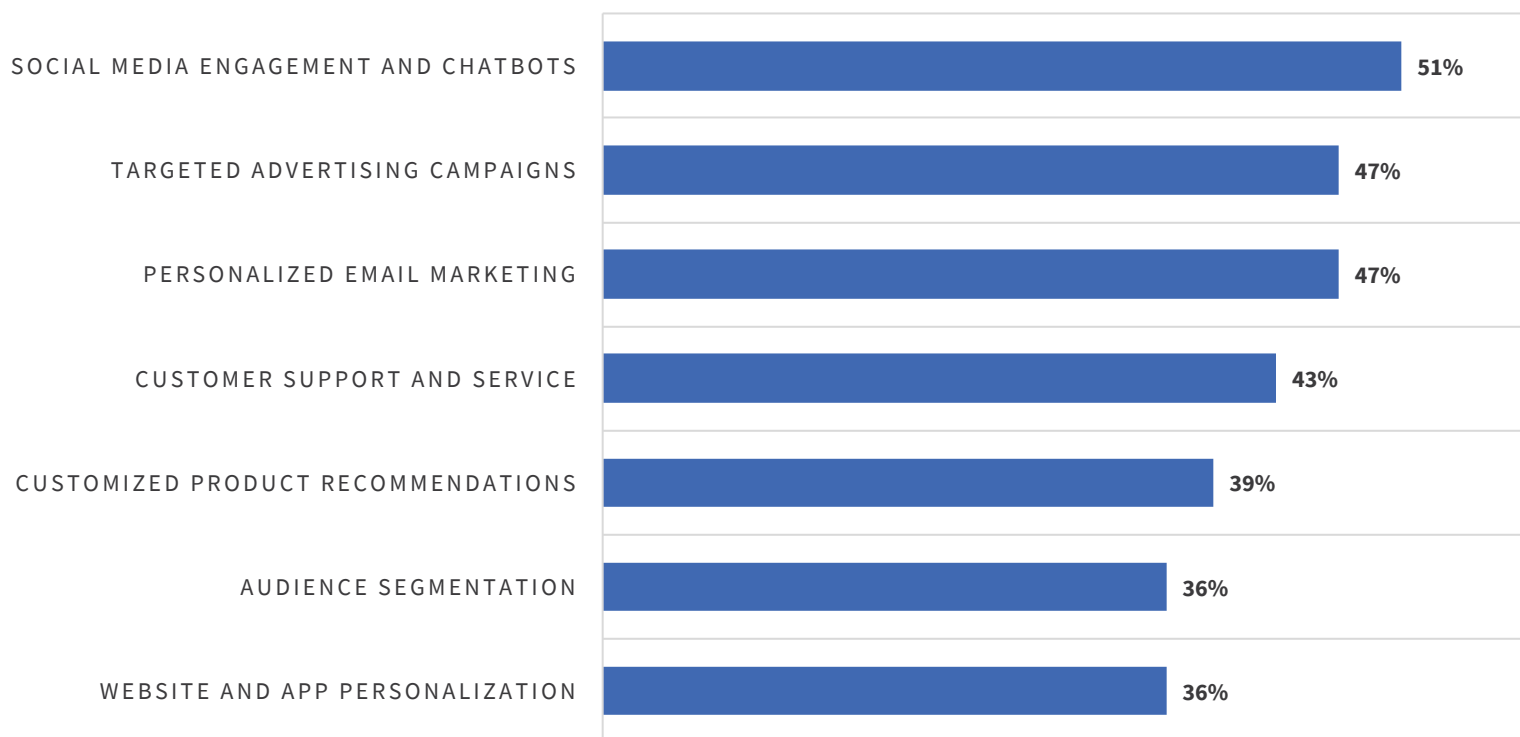


USE OF AI IN CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT

Data-intensive marketing tactics lead the way in how marketers are using AI in customer engagement.

The top three uses, social media (51%), targeted advertising (47%), and personalized email (47%), are all data-intensive and are more successful when you can segment and personalize your customer engagement. AI technology opens up opportunities that were not possible a few years ago, and as the technology advances, the opportunity will continue to grow.

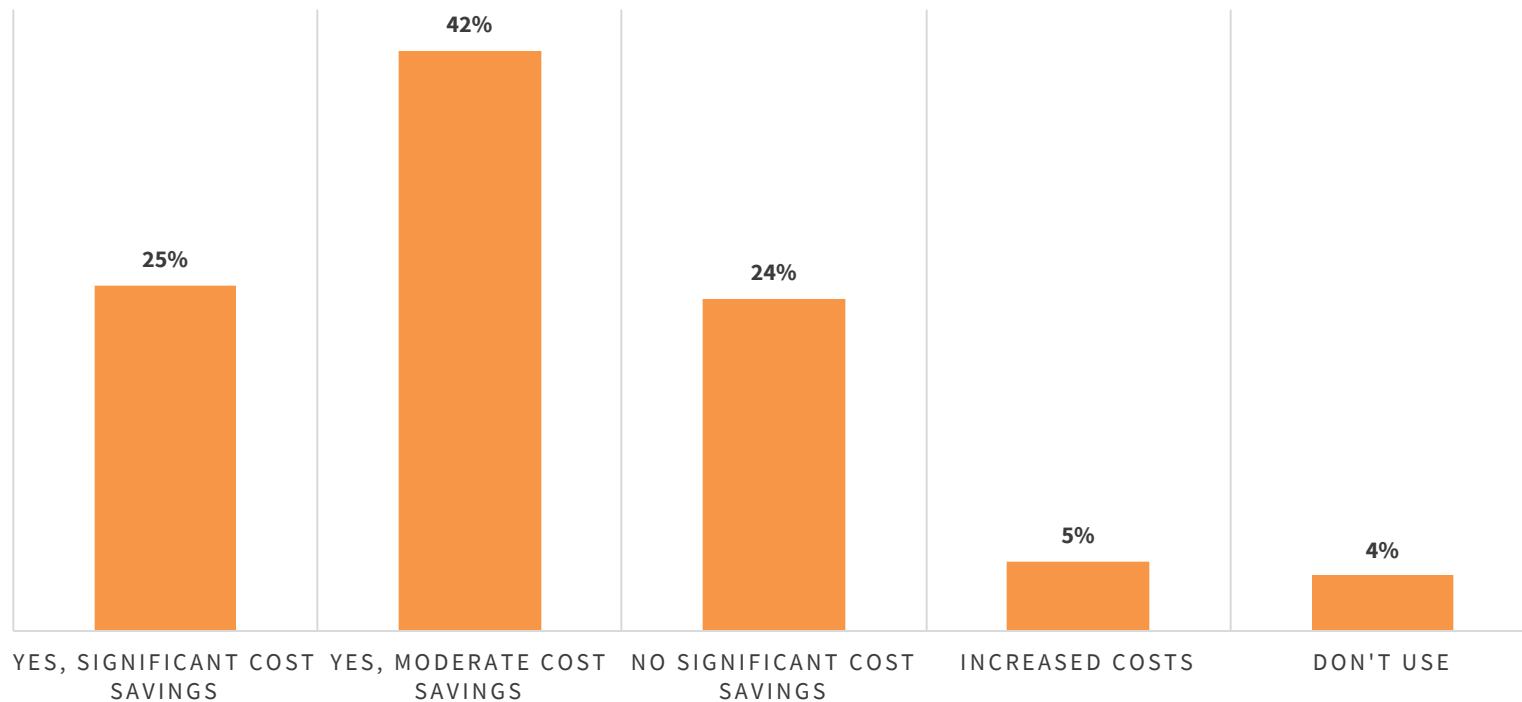
IN WHAT WAYS DO YOU USE AI TO ENHANCE CUSTOMER INTERACTIONS AND ENGAGEMENT?



COST-SAVINGS FROM AI

A penny saved is a penny earned, and AI saves companies a lot of money. When AI teams up with automation, 67% of companies are experiencing cost savings, and only 5% are experiencing increased costs. The data shows that the investment in AI is paying off for companies, and that trend should continue to grow as marketing better understands how to maximize the use of AI and automation.

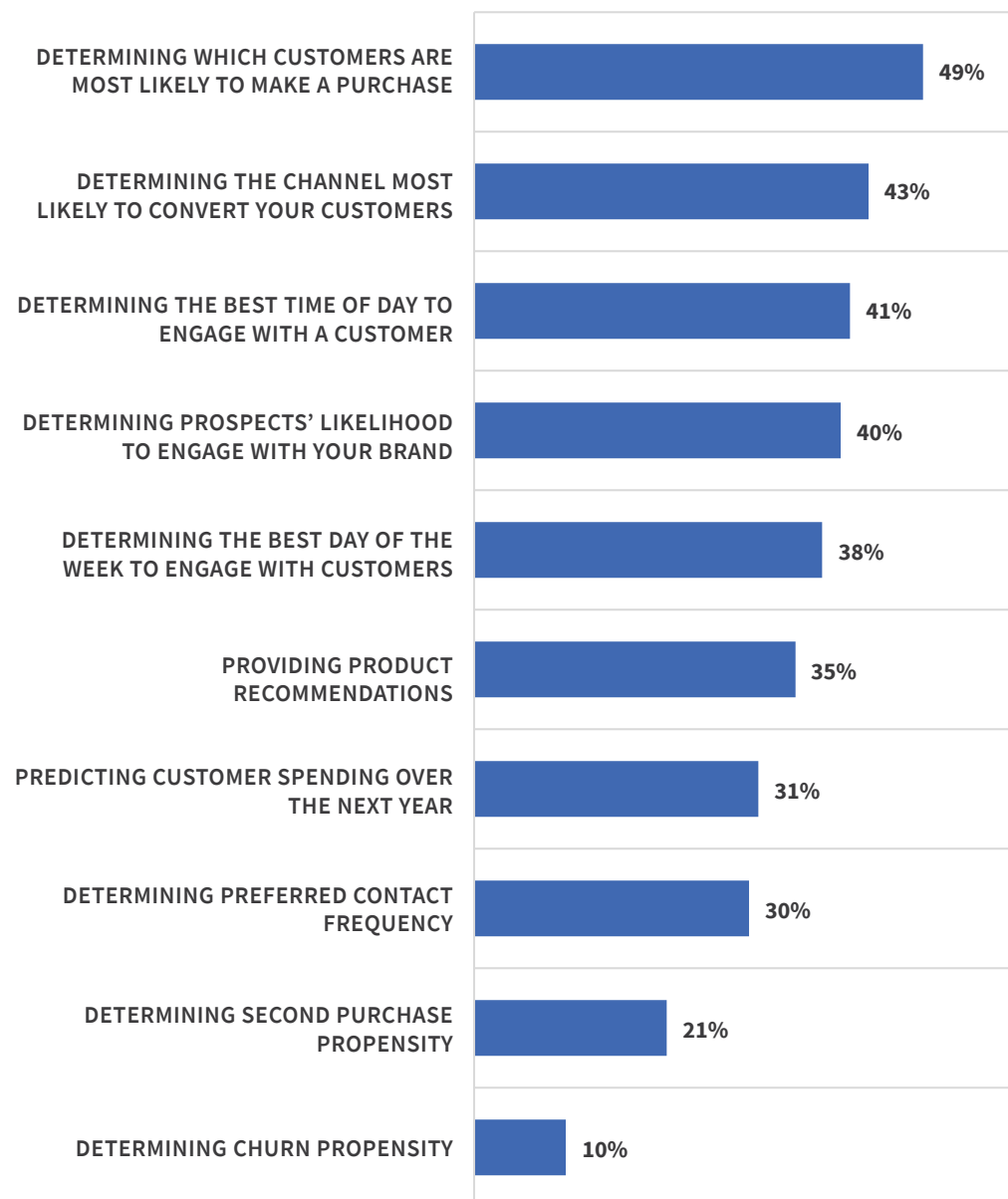
HAS AI-DRIVEN MARKETING AUTOMATION RESULTED IN COST SAVINGS FOR YOUR COMPANY?



USES OF AI

As AI progresses, marketers look to AI to help predict the future. Determining which customers are most likely to make a purchase (49%) and determining the channel most likely to cover your customers (43%) allows marketers to focus time and budget appropriately. AI's uncanny ability to predict future purchases and customer engagements challenges the boundaries of traditional marketing, offering a tantalizing glimpse into a future where businesses can anticipate desires even before customers themselves realize them.

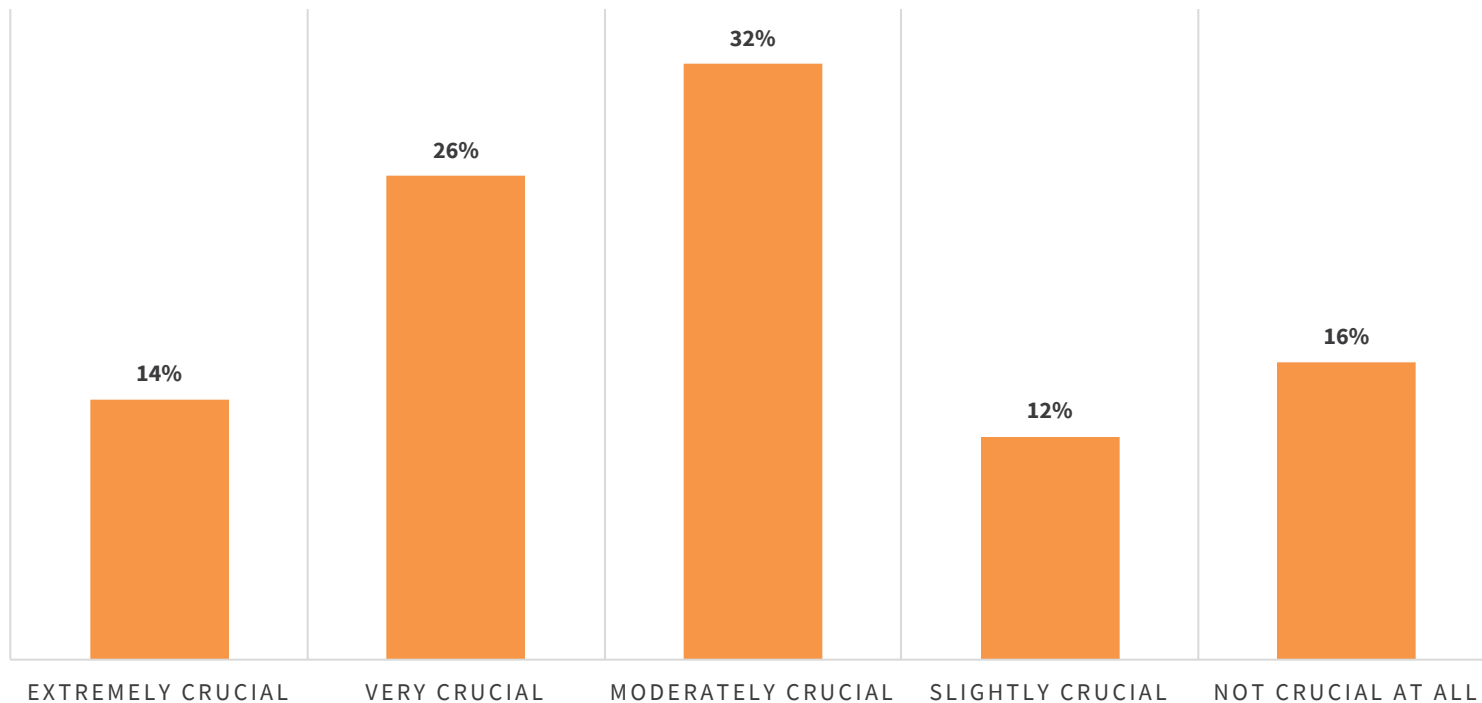
WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING ARE (OR WOULD BE) THE MOST HELPFUL USES OF AI?



THE FUTURE OF AI

84% believe that AI will be a crucial part of future marketing strategies for their company. AI will only become more critical to engaging with customers as marketers improve their AI strategies, personalize messages, optimize campaigns, allocate resources, and make more informed decisions based on AI technology. Regardless of your industry, AI will impact how you perform your marketing in the years ahead.

TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU BELIEVE AI WILL BE A CRUCIAL PART OF FUTURE MARKETING STRATEGIES FOR YOUR COMPANY?



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 say.

“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

"The firm truly embeds itself into the research and data needs of your organization...

The team is communicative, easy to work with, and willing to partner in other ways to make sure the data story comes to life through content, comms, social and PR efforts.

-Jillian Ryan, Senior Director of Content Strategy, Brightcove

“Ascend2 research is esteemed in the marketplace, so even press contacts that you don't know will pick it up — and **Ascend2 rates allowed me to do more with my budget** (always a plus!). Adding an Ascend2 original research project is almost always part of my content strategy.”
Waynette Tubbs, Director, Content Marketing, Oracle

-Waynette Tubbs, Director, Content Marketing, Oracle

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