

# THE STATE OF MARKETING AUTOMATION

2024

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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 = 387 Marketing Decision-Makers

### **Primary Marketing Channel**

B2B (Business-to-Business)	21%
B2C (Business-to-Consumer)	46%
B2B and B2C Equally	33%

### **Number of Employees**

More than 500	23%
50 to 500	33%
Fewer than 50	44%

### **Primary role in company**

Owner / Partner / C-Level	44%
Vice President / Director / Manager	37%
Non-Management Professional	19%

# THE STATE OF MARKETING AUTOMATION 2024

Marketing automation continues to evolve rapidly with advancements in AI, personalization, and workflows. Marketing professionals must stay current on what is working (and not working) to determine their next steps regarding marketing automation to take advantage of what is possible to improve ROI and efficiencies.

## **So what automation adoptions are marketers making now, compared to a year ago, and what are their plans for the year ahead?**

To help answer this question, Ascend2 and our Research Partners fielded The State of Marketing Automation 2024 survey. We thank the 387 marketing professionals who responded to this survey during the month of February 2024.

Additional reports in the Ascend2 Marketing Automation collection include:

- [The State of Marketing Automation 2023](#)
- [The State of Marketing Automation 2022](#)
- [The State of Marketing Automation 2021](#)

This Survey Summary Report, titled *The State of Marketing Automation 2024*, represents the opinion of all the market segments responding to the survey. Specific market segments from the survey are reported separately and exclusively by our participating research partners.

Ascend2 produced this report for your use. Put it to work in your marketing strategy. Clip the charts, write about them in your blog, or post them on social media. Please share this research credited as published.

Enjoy the report as you plan to optimize your marketing automation in the months ahead.

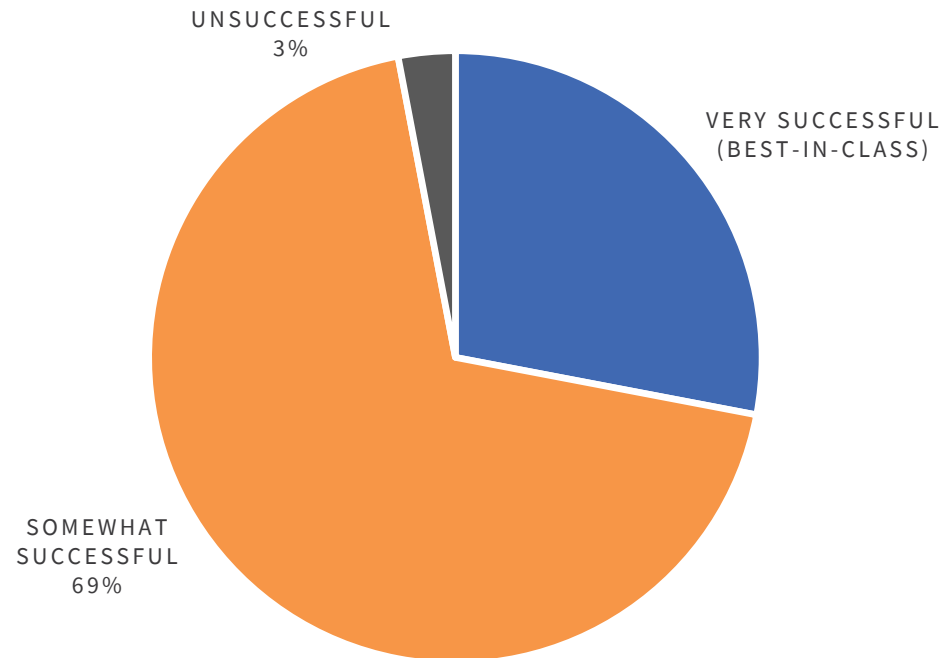
The Ascend2 Research Team

## RATING STRATEGIC SUCCESS

28% (an increase of 3% from last year) of marketing professionals surveyed feel that their current marketing automation strategy is best-in-class in supporting their efforts to achieve marketing objectives. 69% of those surveyed feel they see some success from the automation they have in place, and only 3% report that automation is unsuccessful.

There is no debate about whether automation is successful; the only question is the best strategy to implement to make it even more successful.

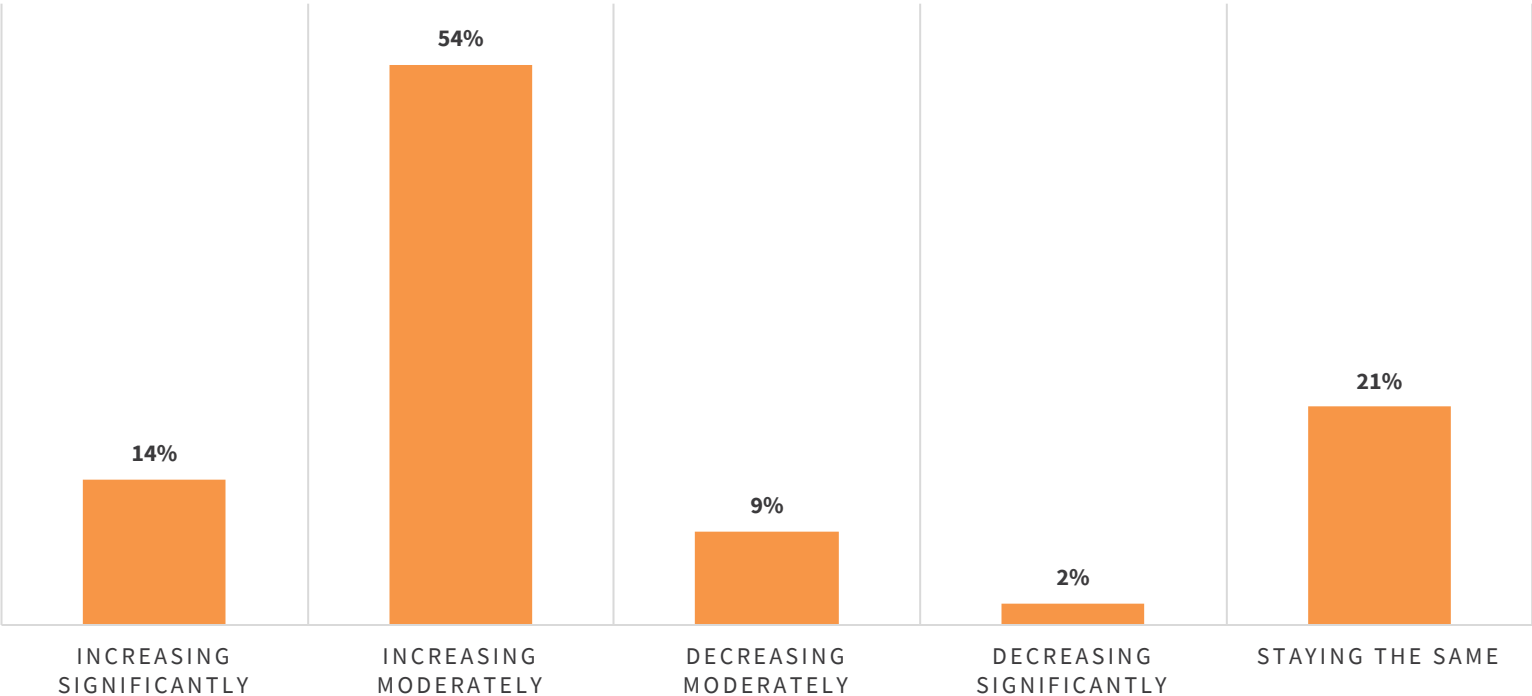
### HOW SUCCESSFUL IS YOUR MARKETING AUTOMATION IN HELPING YOU TO ACHIEVE MARKETING OBJECTIVES?



# BUDGET TRENDS

Automation budgets are trending up. 54% of marketers report an increase in their budget for marketing automation in the year ahead. Only 11% of marketers surveyed say their budgets will decline in the coming year, and 30% report that budgets will stay the same. Even with pressures to reduce budgets, marketing professionals prioritize investments in marketing automation.

**HOW IS THE BUDGET FOR MARKETING AUTOMATION CHANGING IN THE COMING YEAR?**



## PRIMARY GOALS FOR AUTOMATION

The top three goals for improving marketing automation in the year ahead are identifying your ideal customers (47%), improving data quality (40%), and decreasing costs (39%).

Last year, identifying your ideal customer ranked #3 on the list at 34%. Why the rise to #1 on the list this year? Automation and AI have dramatically impacted identifying ideal customers by using automated processes to pinpoint specific demographics and preferences, leading to more targeted messaging and increased conversion rates.

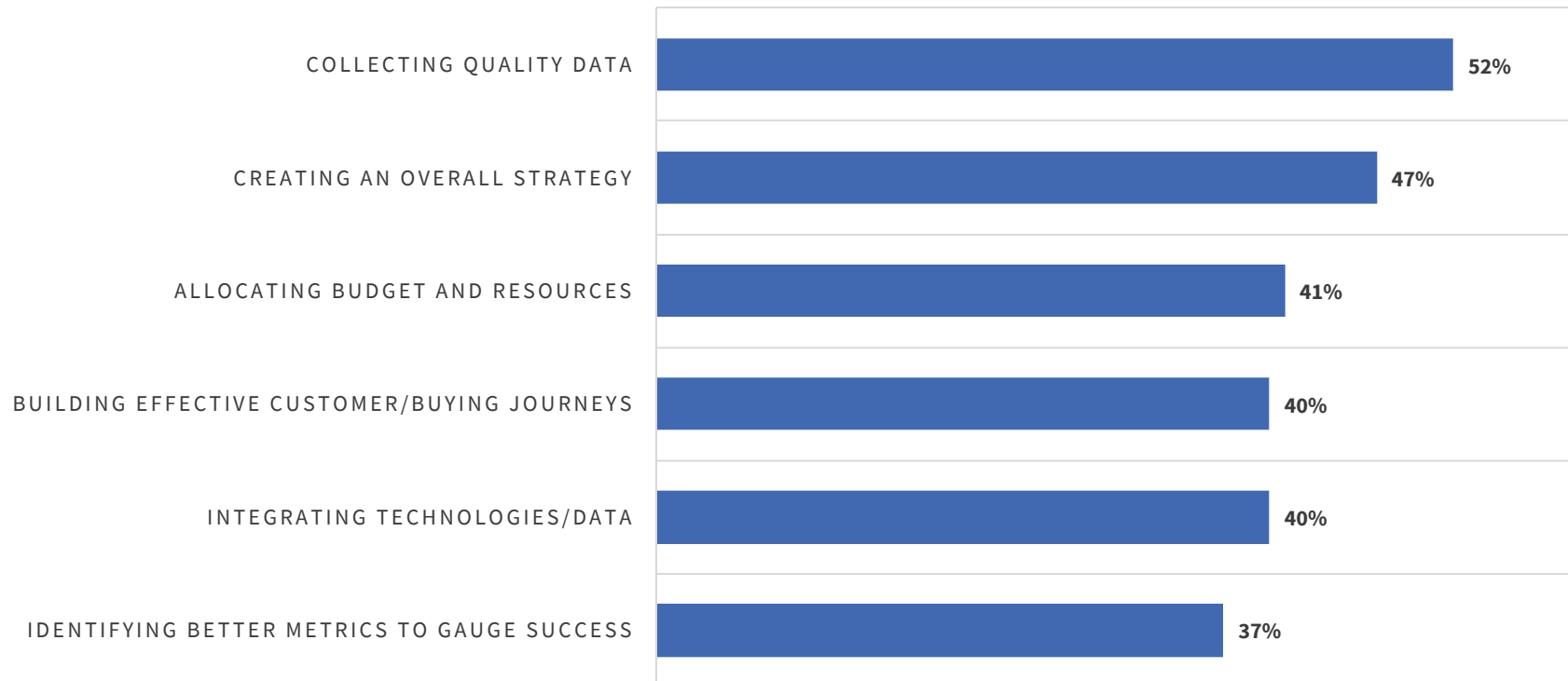
### WHAT ARE YOUR PRIMARY GOALS FOR IMPROVING YOUR MARKETING AUTOMATION IN THE YEAR AHEAD?



## GREATEST CHALLENGES

Collecting quality data (52%) and creating an overall strategy (47%) are the top challenges in using automation to improve performance. Collecting quality data is a challenge worth investing in, as it is needed to deliver personalized experiences, enhance segmentations, and advance buying journeys that marketing professionals seek with automation programs.

### WHAT ARE THE MOST CHALLENGING ASPECTS OF USING MARKETING AUTOMATION TO IMPROVE PERFORMANCE?

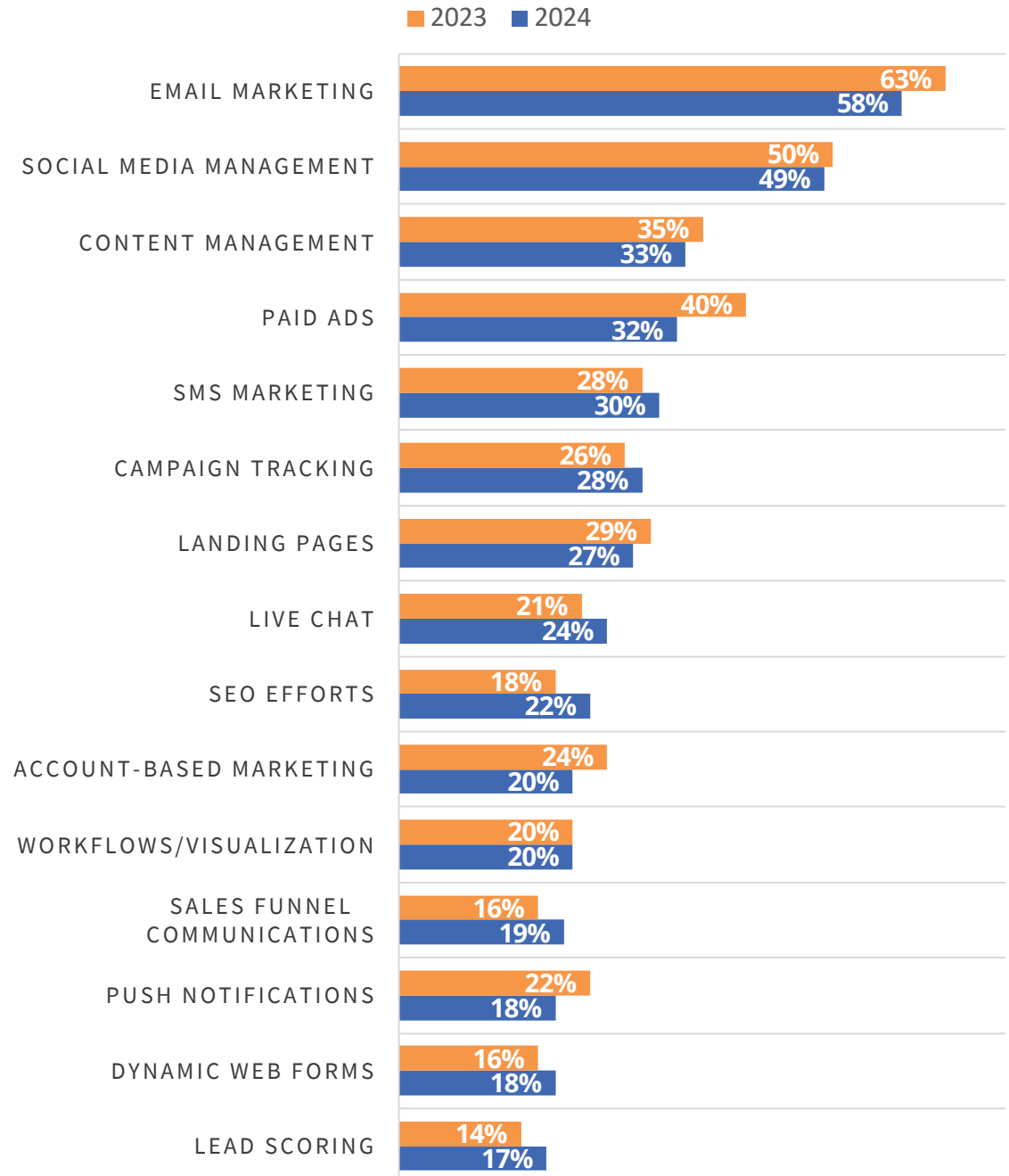




## AREAS OF CURRENT USE 2023/2024

For the third year, email marketing and social media management are the top-reported areas where marketers utilize marketing automation. SMS marketing (30%), campaign tracking (28%), live chat (24%), and SEO efforts (22%) are a few of the tactics that increased in use from the previous year. The data indicates that marketers are taking a slow and systematic approach to areas where they can utilize automation to improve their marketing programs.

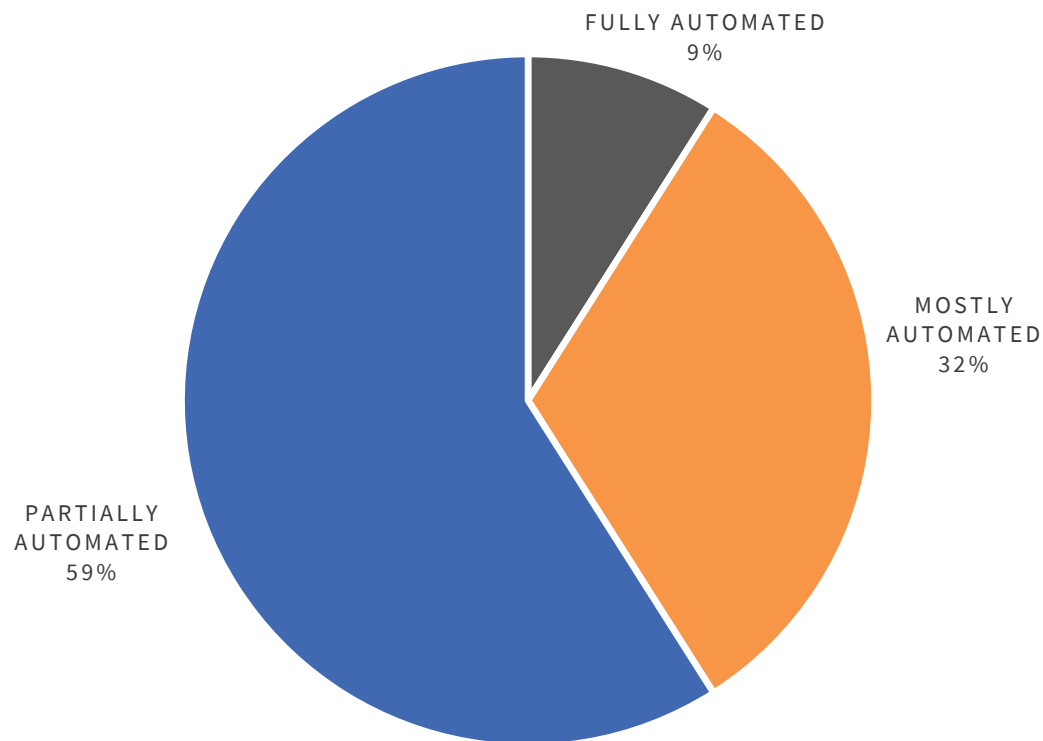
### IN WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING AREAS DO YOU CURRENTLY UTILIZE MARKETING AUTOMATION?



## AUTOMATION OF THE CUSTOMER JOURNEY

Marketers continue grappling with how much of the customer journey should be automated. Only 9% have fully automated the process, while 32% have mostly automated the process. Partial automation (59%) is the most popular with marketing professionals and likely balances efficiency and effectiveness.

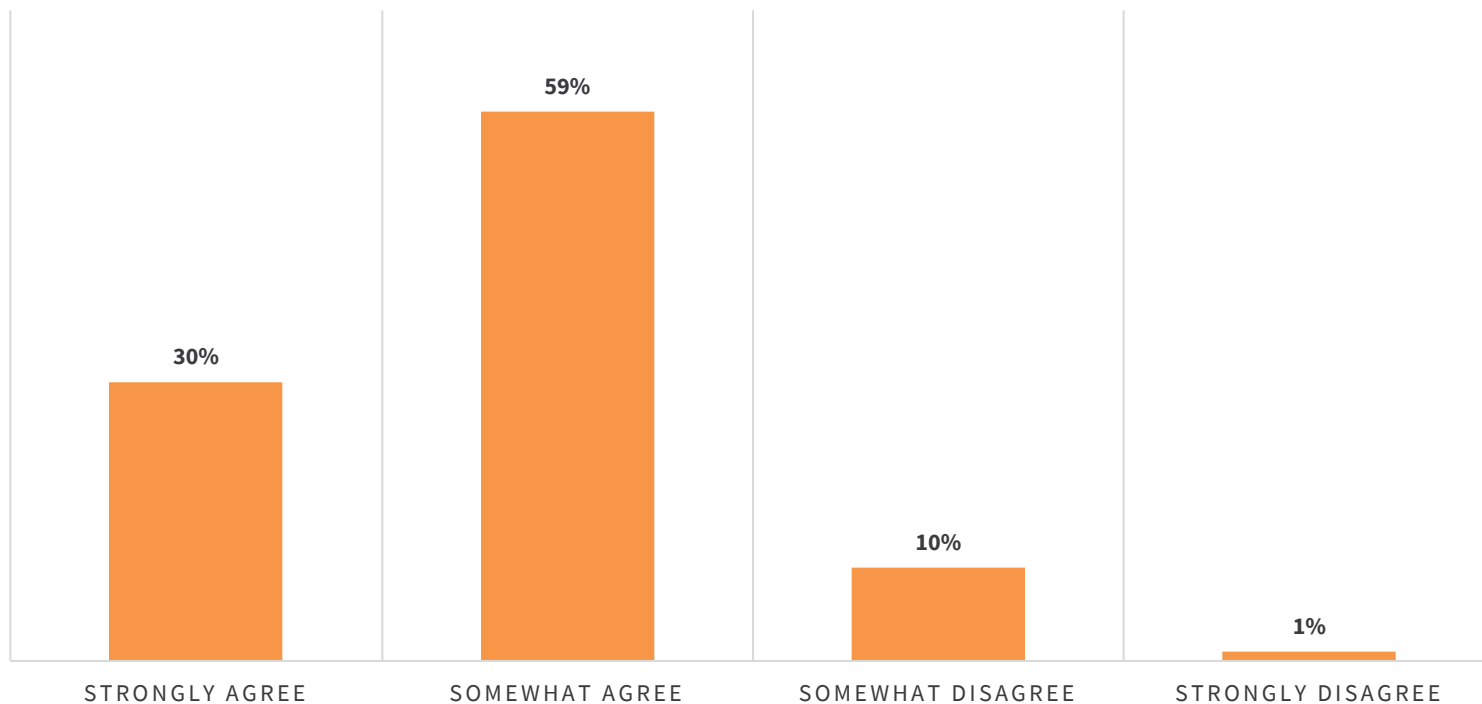
### TO WHAT EXTENT IS YOUR OVERALL CUSTOMER JOURNEY AUTOMATED?



## USING AUTOMATION TO BUILD EFFECTIVE CUSTOMER JOURNEYS

Marketing professionals are making advancements when it comes to creating effective customer journeys, as 89% agree that automation helps and 30% strongly agree (compared to 22% in 2023). Marketers benefit from automation's ability to simplify the construction and orchestration of personalized interactions across multiple touchpoints, fostering seamless engagement, and nurturing relationships throughout the entire sales funnel.

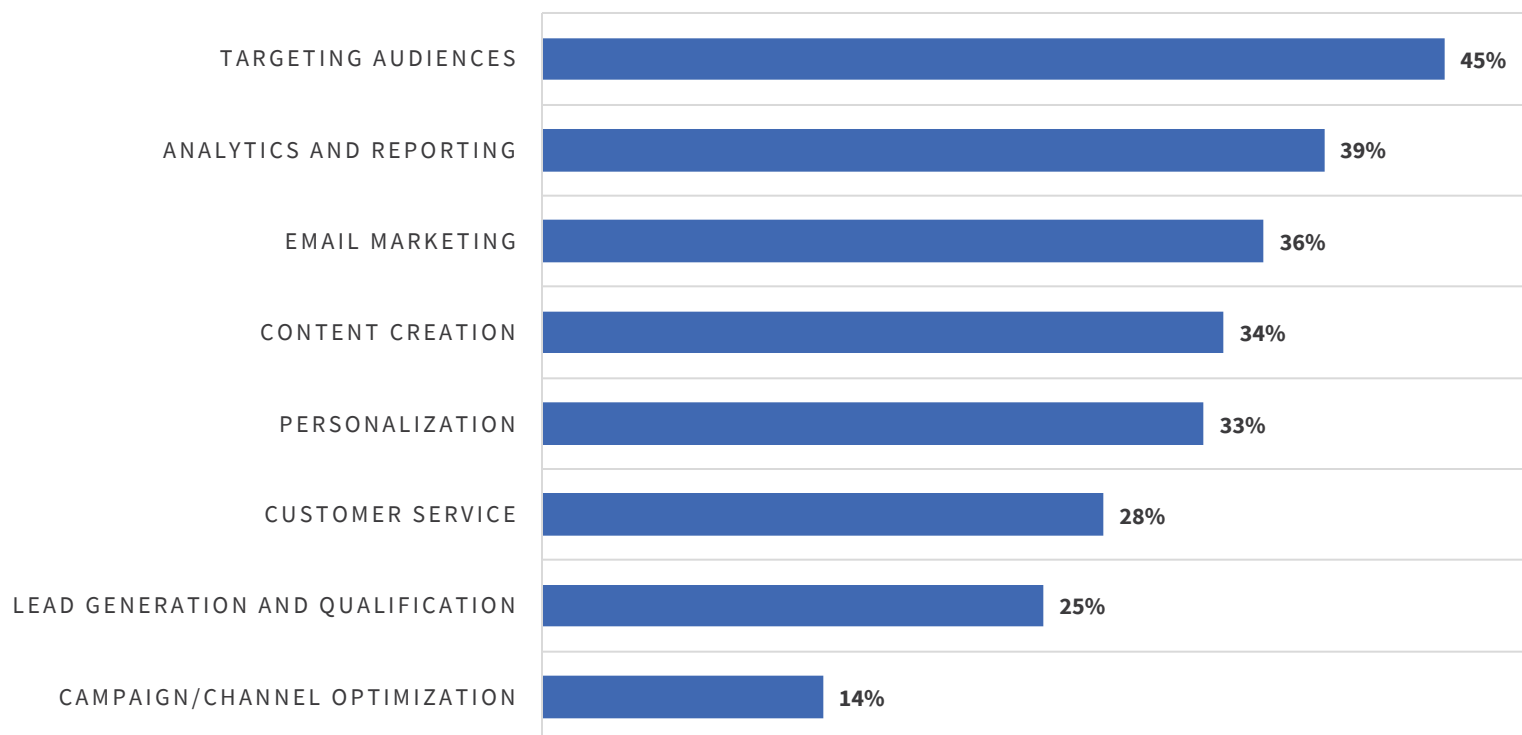
### MY MARKETING AUTOMATION SOLUTION MAKES IT EASY FOR ME TO BUILD EFFECTIVE CUSTOMER JOURNEYS.



## AI AND AUTOMATION

How are marketing professionals using AI in marketing automation? Targeting audiences is the top application, aligning with the top goal of improving marketing automation (see page 6). Improving data quality (40%), decreasing costs (39%), and increasing personalization (37%) are other top uses of AI in automation. It is clear that marketers plan to lean on AI to improve the effectiveness of marketing automation this year and for years to come.

### WHAT ARE THE MOST EFFECTIVE APPLICATIONS OF AI IN MARKETING AUTOMATION?



# 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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