DATA-DRIVEN MARKETING TRENDS

2024

Research Created for Marketers

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RESEARCH-BASED MARKETING

IN THIS REPORT...

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 = 319 Marketing Decision-Makers

Primary Marketing Channel

B2B (Business-to-Business)	24%
B2C (Business-to-Consumer)	51%
B2B and B2C Equally	25%

Number of Employees

More than 500	28%
50 to 500	32%
Fewer than 50	40%

Primary role in company

Owner / Partner / C-Level	36%
Vice President / Director / Manager	31%
Non-Management Professional	33%

DATA-DRIVEN MARKETING TRENDS 2024

"In the age of information, leveraging data is not just an advantage but a necessity for marketers looking to stay ahead of the competition and meet the evolving demands of their audience." – Neil Patel, Digital Marketing Expert.

Data is the building block of successful marketing. Each year, marketing professionals become more focused on leveraging data to craft personalized and targeted campaigns that resonate with specific audience segments. You cannot stay ahead of the competition without a successful data-driven marketing strategy.

 For many years, Ascend2 has provided marketing professionals with research on data-driven marketing trends to help them stay competitive. This year's study examines the impact of AI on data strategies, data sources, technology trends, and more.

Ascend2 and our Research Partners conducted the Data-Driven Marketing 2024 Survey during the week of June 23, 2024. We thank the 319 marketing professionals who participated in the survey.

Additional reports in the Ascend2 research library that are data-focused include:

- Data-Driven Marketing 2023

- Outlook on Marketing Data Quality

- Using Data-Driven Marketing to Predict Future Performance

- Plus 10+ digital marketing topics. Get more research!

This Survey Summary Report, titled Data-Driven Marketing Trends in 2024, represents the opinions of all the market segments responding to the survey. Our participating research partners report specific market segments separately and exclusively.

This report, produced by Ascend2 for your benefit, is a practical tool for your marketing strategy. Use it to enhance your understanding, clip the charts for reference, write about the findings in your blog, or share them on social media. We encourage you to share this research, always crediting it as published, to help others in the industry benefit from the insights.

Enjoy the journey of discovery and learning that this report offers, and may it inspire you to create innovative and effective strategies.

The Ascend2 Research Team

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SUCCESS OF DATA-DRIVEN STRATEGY

Almost one-third (32%) of respondents consider their data-driven marketing strategy very successful (best-in-class) in achieving strategic marketing objectives. A majority of 63% of respondents rate their strategy as somewhat successful.

This data suggests that while many organizations recognize the benefits of data-driven marketing, there is still significant room for improvement and optimization to elevate their strategies from somewhat successful to best-in-class.

RATE THE OVERALL SUCCESS OF YOUR DATA-DRIVEN MARKETING STRATEGY IN ACHIEVING OBJECTIVES.

UNSUCCESSFUL
5%

VERY SUCCESSFUL
(BEST-IN-CLASS)
32%

SOMEWHAT
SUCCESSFUL
63%
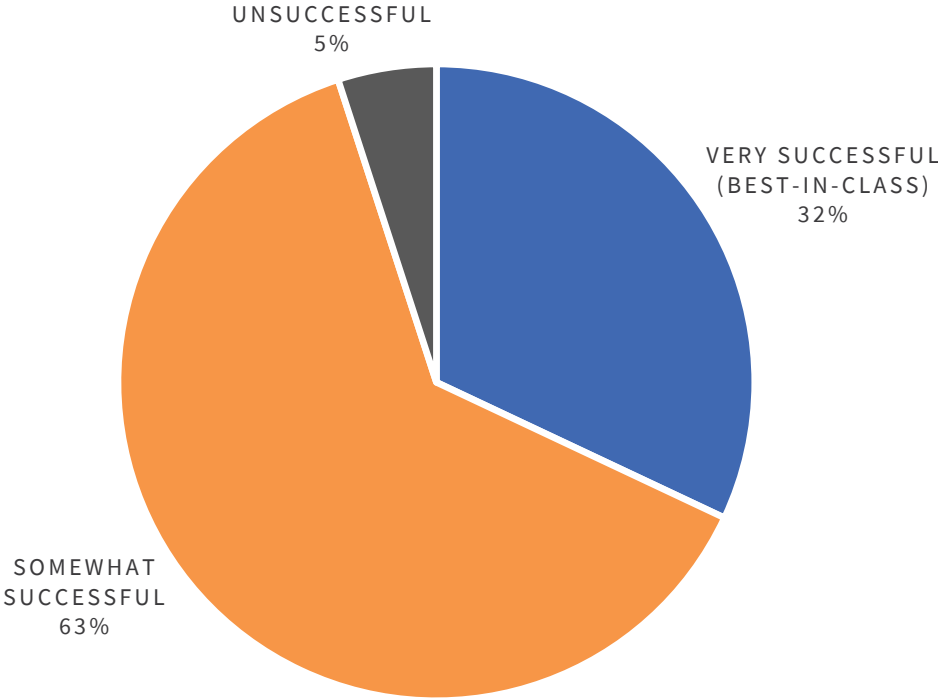
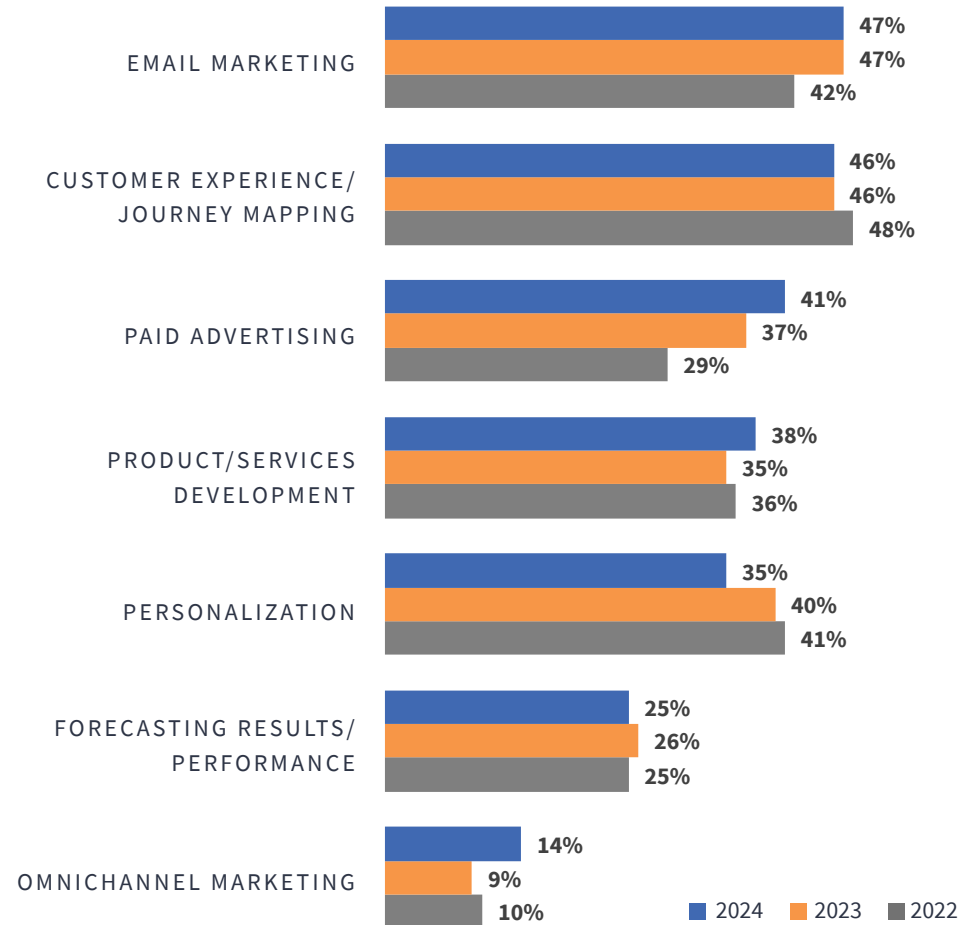# DATA-DRIVEN MARKETING EFFECTIVENESS

The data reveals that email marketing (47%) and customer experience/journey mapping (46%) are the top areas where data-driven marketing is most useful. These results have been consistent for the past three years, highlighting the critical role of personalized and targeted communication in driving marketing success. Paid advertising (41%) and product/services development (38%) also show significant effectiveness, reflecting the importance of data in optimizing ad spending and refining offerings to meet customer needs.

The steady increase in the importance of data-driven marketing for paid advertising, rising from 29% in 2022 to 41% in 2024, reveals the growing reliance on data to optimize ad spending and enhance targeting precision. This trend indicates that marketers are increasingly recognizing the value of leveraging data insights to improve the effectiveness and ROI of their advertising campaigns.

Tip To capitalize on this trend, businesses should invest in advanced analytics tools and platforms that provide real-time insights and allow for dynamic adjustments to advertising strategies. This will ensure they can quickly adapt to market changes and maximize their ad performance.

IN WHICH AREAS IS DATA-DRIVEN MARKETING CURRENTLY MOST USEFUL?

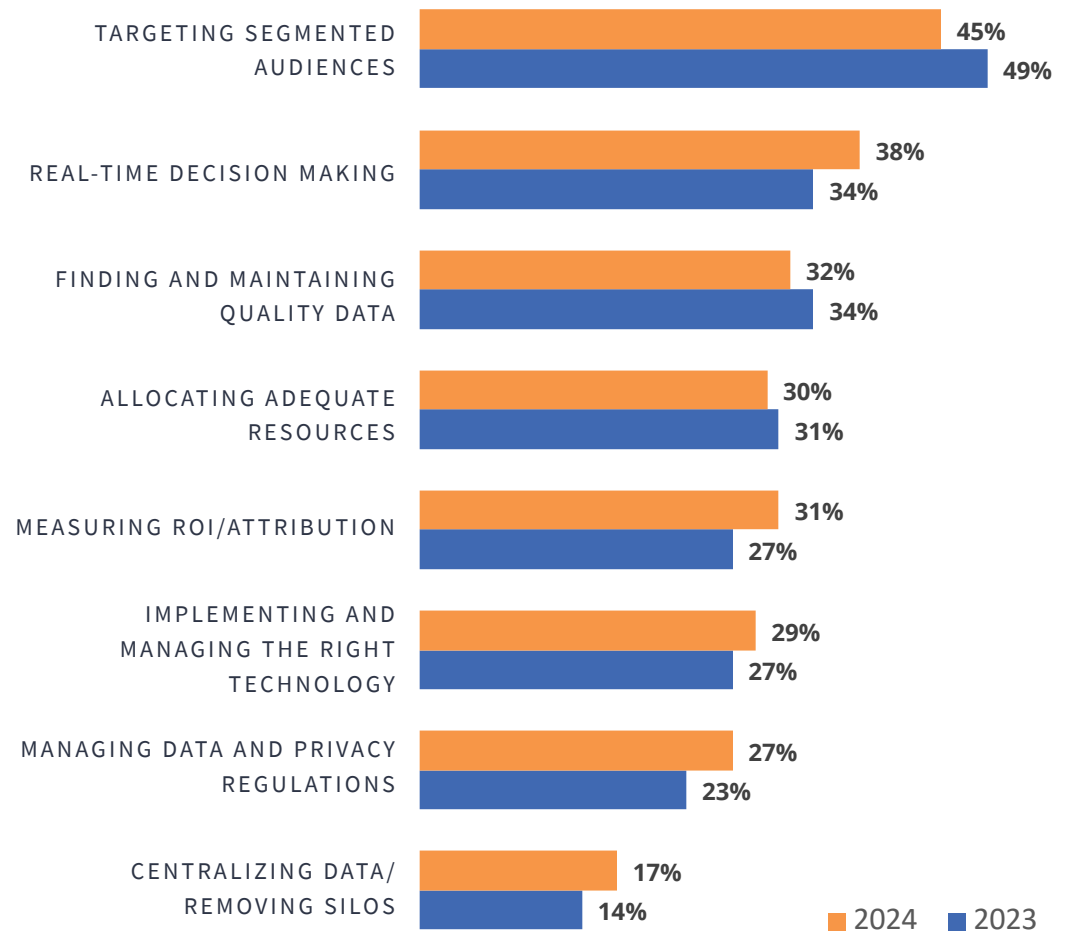| Area	2024	2023	2022
EMAIL MARKETING	47%	47%	42%
CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE/ JOURNEY MAPPING	46%	46%	48%
PAID ADVERTISING	41%	37%	29%
PRODUCT/SERVICES DEVELOPMENT	38%	35%	36%
PERSONALIZATION	35%	40%	41%
FORECASTING RESULTS/ PERFORMANCE	25%	26%	25%
OMNICHANNEL MARKETING	14%	9%	10%

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GREATEST CHALLENGES OF DATA-DRIVEN MARKETING

The data for 2024 highlights that the greatest challenge in executing a data-driven marketing strategy is targeting segmented audiences, with 45% of respondents identifying it as a key issue, though this has slightly decreased from 49% in 2023. Finding and maintaining quality data remains a significant challenge, increasing from 34% in 2023 to 38% in 2024, indicating growing concerns about data integrity.

Other notable challenges include real-time decision-making (32%) and implementing and managing the right technology (31%), with the latter increasing from 27% in 2023. Centralizing data/removing silos, though still a challenge, remains the least cited issue at 17% in 2024, up from 14% in 2023. These trends suggest a shift in focus towards enhancing data quality and managing technological implementations to support data-driven marketing efforts better.

WHAT ARE THE GREATEST CHALLENGES FACED WHEN EXECUTING A DATA-DRIVEN MARKETING STRATEGY?

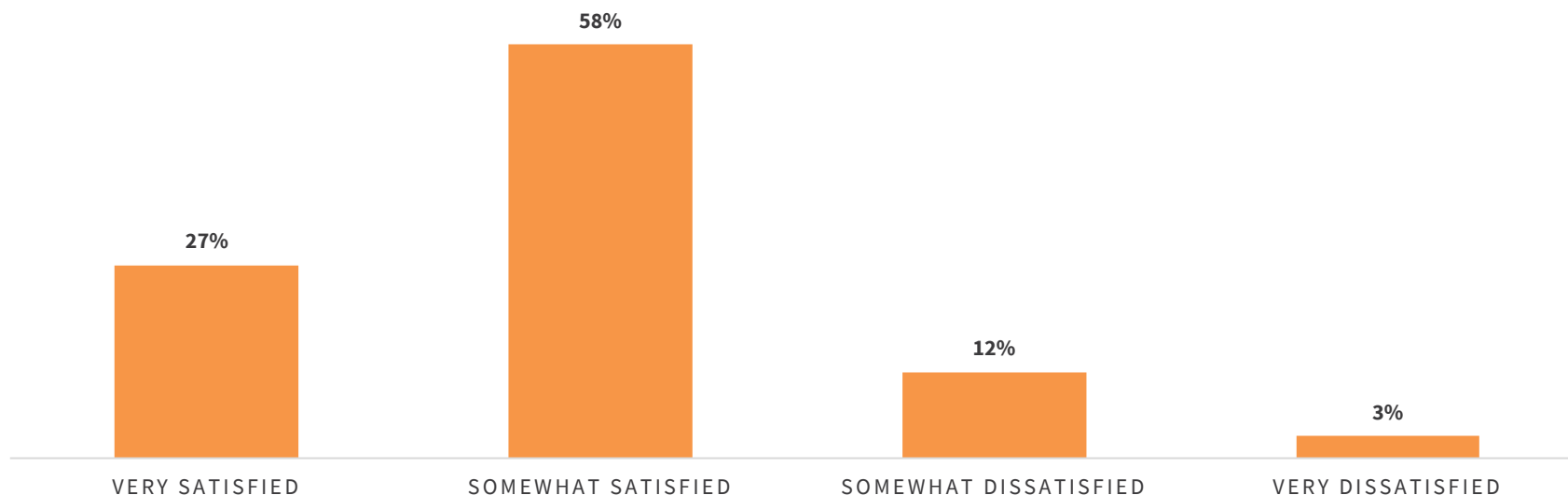| Challenge	2024	2023
TARGETING SEGMENTED AUDIENCES	45%	49%
REAL-TIME DECISION MAKING	38%	34%
FINDING AND MAINTAINING QUALITY DATA	32%	34%
ALLOCATING ADEQUATE RESOURCES	30%	31%
MEASURING ROI/ATTRIBUTION	31%	27%
IMPLEMENTING AND MANAGING THE RIGHT TECHNOLOGY	29%	27%
MANAGING DATA AND PRIVACY REGULATIONS	27%	23%
CENTRALIZING DATA/ REMOVING SILOS	17%	14%

■ 2024 ■ 2023

TOOLS AND TECHNOLOGY

The volume and complexity of data require appropriate levels of tools and technology. The data shows that most respondents are generally satisfied with their organization's current tools and technologies for data-driven marketing, with 27% being very satisfied and 58% somewhat satisfied. However, 12% of respondents are somewhat dissatisfied, and 3% are very dissatisfied, indicating that there is still room for improvement.

The positive sentiment regarding tools and technology suggests that many organizations have implemented effective tools and technologies but may still face challenges or gaps in fully meeting their needs. To enhance satisfaction further, organizations should continuously evaluate and upgrade their marketing technologies, ensuring they address their teams' specific pain points and evolving requirements. Investing in user training and support can also help maximize the utility and efficiency of these tools, fostering greater satisfaction and productivity.

HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH YOUR ORGANIZATION'S CURRENT TOOLS AND TECHNOLOGIES AVAILABLE FOR DATA-DRIVEN MARKETING?

VERY SATISFIED	SOMEWHAT SATISFIED	SOMEWHAT DISSATISFIED	VERY DISSATISFIED
27%	58%	12%	3%

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Data-Driven Marketing Trends in 2024
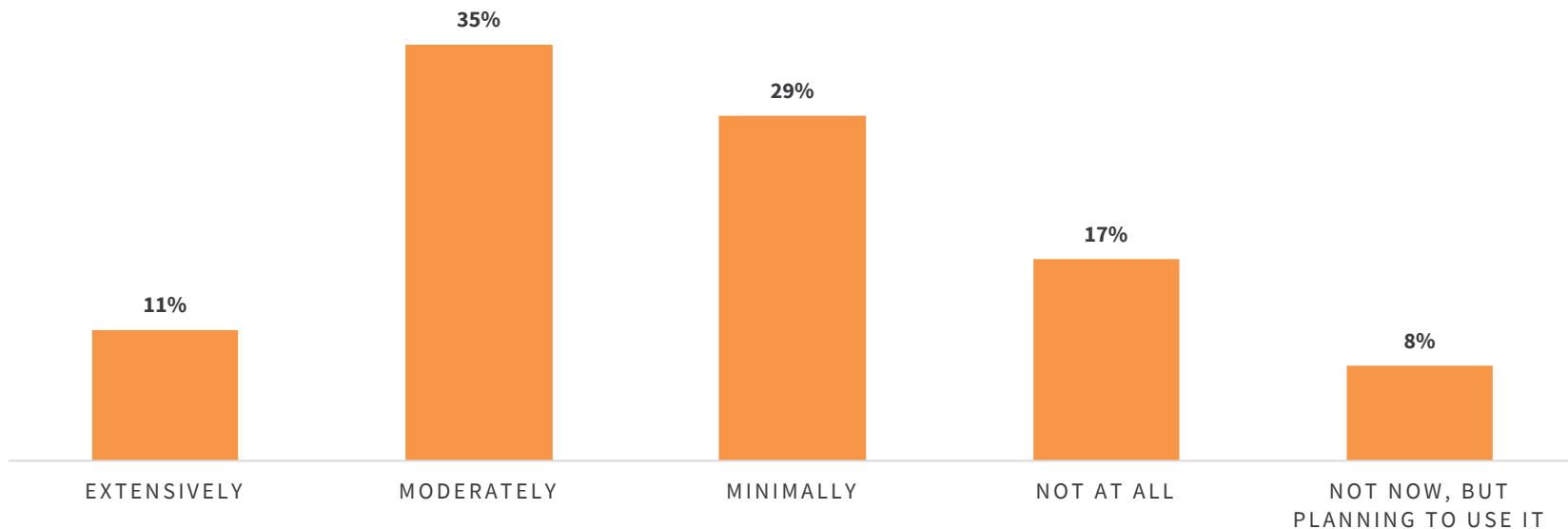Conducted by Ascend2 and Research Partners
Published July 2024

EXTENT OF USE OF AI IN DATA-DRIVEN MARKETING

While only a small portion of respondents (11%) use AI extensively in their data-driven marketing efforts, a larger segment (35%) is leveraging AI to a moderate extent, suggesting a growing but cautious adoption of AI technologies. Additionally, 29% are using AI minimally, and 17% are not using it at all, highlighting that there are still significant barriers or gaps in AI integration within many organizations.

Notably, 8% of respondents plan to adopt AI in the future, indicating an upward trend in AI utilization as businesses recognize its potential benefits and seek to enhance their marketing capabilities through advanced technologies. To capitalize on this trend, organizations should focus on educating their teams about AI benefits, investing in scalable AI solutions, and fostering a culture of innovation to stay competitive.

HOW EXTENSIVELY DO YOU USE AI IN YOUR DATA-DRIVEN MARKETING EFFORTS?

EXTENSIVELY	MODERATELY	MINIMALLY	NOT AT ALL	NOT NOW, BUT PLANNING TO USE IT
11%	35%	29%	17%	8%

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USE OF AI IN DATA-DRIVEN PROGRAMS

A significant portion of respondents (33%) are utilizing AI to personalize marketing content, which is the most common application of AI in improving data-driven marketing programs. Improving customer service with chatbots (31%) and enhancing the accuracy of marketing forecasts (28%) are also prominent uses, indicating that AI is being leveraged to refine both customer interactions and predictive analytics. However, 23% of respondents are not using AI for any of these purposes, suggesting that while AI adoption is growing, a substantial group has yet to integrate AI into their marketing strategies.

Tip To effectively use AI for personalizing marketing content, leverage machine learning algorithms to analyze customer data and generate tailored recommendations and messaging that resonate with individual preferences and behaviors. Additionally, continuously test and refine AI-driven content strategies using A/B testing and performance metrics to ensure the highest engagement and conversion rates.

HOW ARE YOU CURRENTLY USING AI TO IMPROVE YOUR DATA-DRIVEN MARKETING PROGRAMS?

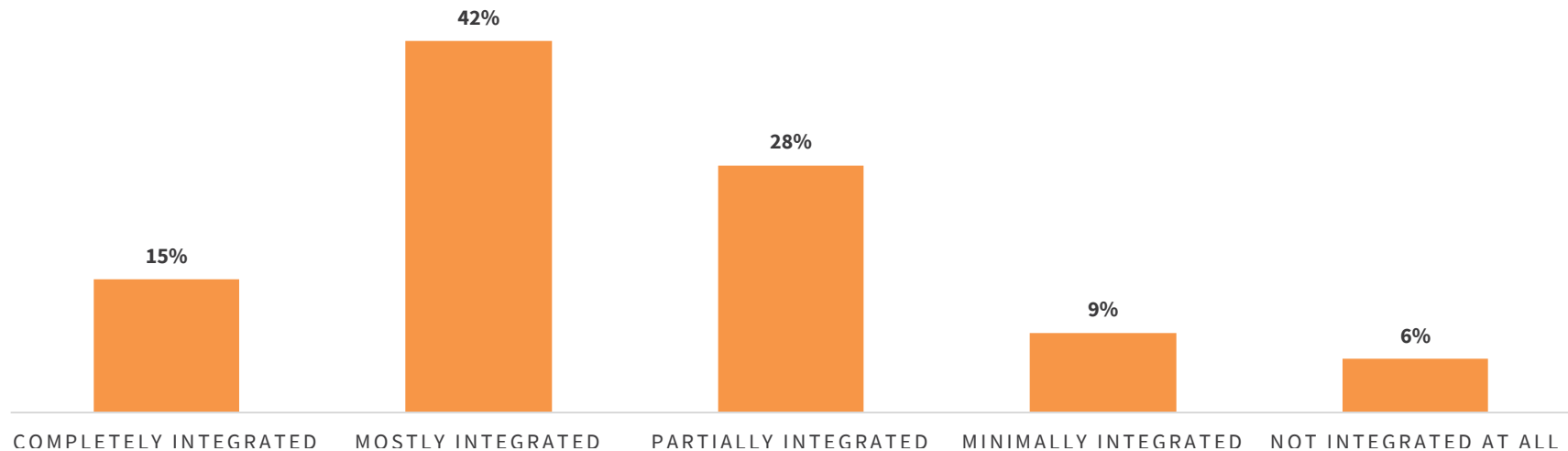|	
PERSONALIZING MARKETING CONTENT	33%
IMPROVING CUSTOMER SERVICE WITH CHATBOTS	31%
ENHANCING THE ACCURACY OF MARKETING FORECASTS AND PERFORMANCE PREDICTIONS	28%
PREDICTING CUSTOMER BEHAVIOR AND TRENDS	26%
AUTOMATING MARKETING CAMPAIGNS	26%
ANALYZING AND INTERPRETING LARGE DATASETS FOR INSIGHTS	26%
IDENTIFYING HIGH-VALUE LEADS AND PROSPECTS	22%
OPTIMIZING AD PLACEMENTS AND BIDDING STRATEGIES	20%
ENHANCING CUSTOMER SEGMENTATION	19%
NONE OF THE ABOVE	23%

DATA INTEGRATION FROM MULTIPLE CHANNELS

Most organizations have made significant strides in integrating data from multiple channels into a unified marketing strategy, with 42% reporting mostly integrated and 15% completely integrated systems. However, 28% of organizations only partially integrate their data, and a combined 15% have minimal or no integration, highlighting ongoing challenges and opportunities for improving data integration to enhance marketing effectiveness.

Tip To effectively integrate data from multiple marketing channels, consider investing in a customer data platform (CDP) that can centralize and unify data from various sources, providing a comprehensive view of customer interactions and behaviors. Additionally, establish standardized data governance practices and use advanced analytics tools to ensure the data is consistently accurate, actionable, and aligned with your overall marketing strategy.

TO WHAT EXTENT DOES YOUR ORGANIZATION INTEGRATE DATA FROM MULTIPLE CHANNELS (E.G., SOCIAL MEDIA, EMAIL, WEBSITE ANALYTICS) INTO A UNIFIED MARKETING STRATEGY?

COMPLETELY INTEGRATED	MOSTLY INTEGRATED	PARTIALLY INTEGRATED	MINIMALLY INTEGRATED	NOT INTEGRATED AT ALL
15%	42%	28%	9%	6%

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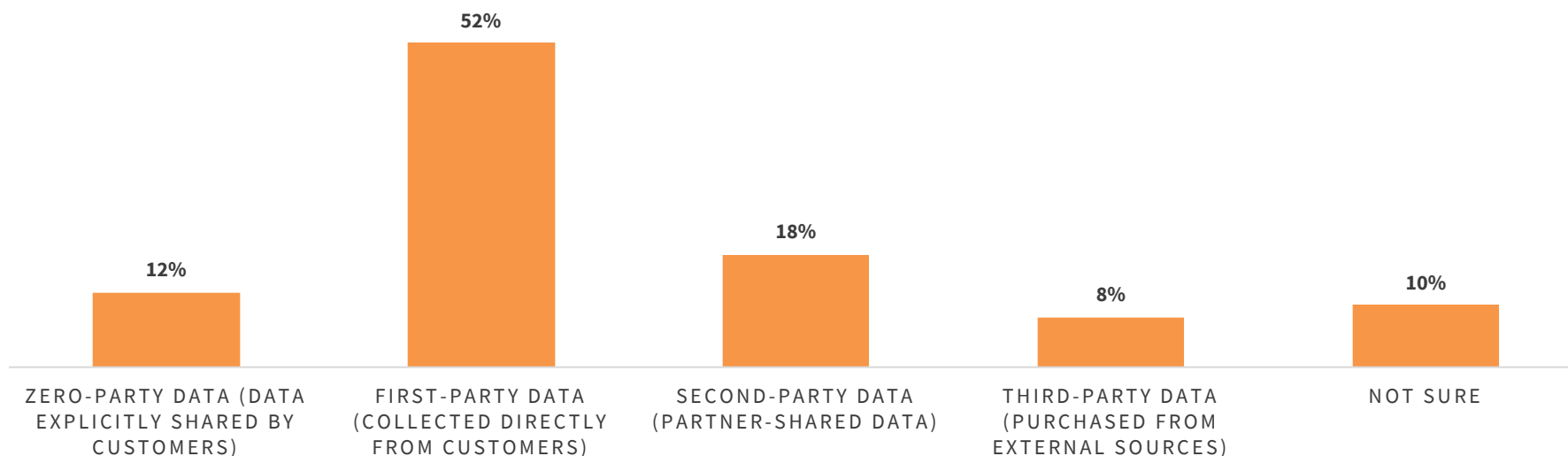Conducted by Ascend2 and Research Partners
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DATA SOURCES

First-party data, collected directly from customers, is the predominant data source used in data-driven marketing strategies, with 52% of respondents indicating its primary use. In contrast, zero-party data (12%), second-party data (18%), and third-party data (8%) are less commonly relied upon, reflecting a preference for directly acquired customer information, which is typically more accurate and reliable for personalized marketing efforts.

Tip Regarding Zero-Party Data: To collect zero-party data, create engaging and interactive experiences such as quizzes, surveys, and preference centers where customers willingly share their information and preferences. Additionally, offer incentives like discounts, exclusive content, or personalized recommendations in exchange for customers voluntarily providing their data, ensuring transparency about how the information will be used.

WHAT IS THE PRIMARY SOURCE OF DATA USED IN YOUR DATA-DRIVEN MARKETING STRATEGY?

Source	Percentage
ZERO-PARTY DATA (DATA EXPLICITLY SHARED BY CUSTOMERS)	12%
FIRST-PARTY DATA (COLLECTED DIRECTLY FROM CUSTOMERS)	52%
SECOND-PARTY DATA (PARTNER-SHARED DATA)	18%
THIRD-PARTY DATA (PURCHASED FROM EXTERNAL SOURCES)	8%
NOT SURE	10%

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"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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