

CONTENT MARKETING & AI

2024

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 = 333 Marketing Decision-Makers

Primary Marketing Channel

B2B (Business-to-Business)	20%
B2C (Business-to-Consumer)	53%
B2B and B2C Equally	27%

Number of Employees

More than 500	24%
50 to 500	26%
Fewer than 50	50%

Primary role in company

Owner / Partner / C-Level	47%
Vice President / Director / Manager	35%
Non-Management Professional	18%

CONTENT MARKETING & AI

Content marketing constantly evolves, shaping how brands engage with their audiences and influence overall marketing strategies. Introducing AI into the content marketing landscape signals a significant shift in the industry. For years, Ascend2 has delivered valuable research to marketing professionals, focusing on emerging trends shaping content marketing strategies' effectiveness. This year, the study delves into the integration of AI in content marketing, offering insights to help you prepare for the future.

As AI becomes more prevalent, numerous questions arise: How will it affect content quality? What are the best practices for utilizing AI in content creation? And, ultimately, will AI become indispensable to content marketing? This research aims to answer these critical questions, guiding you through the evolving landscape.

Ascend2 and our Research Partners conducted the Content Marketing at 2024 Survey on August 11 - 17, 2024. We thank the 333 marketing professionals who participated in the survey.

Here are previous research studies by Ascend2 on content marketing:

- [Creating Original Content to Build Engagement](#)
- [Measuring Content Marketing Performance](#)
- [Building Thought Leadership with Content](#)

This Survey Summary Report, titled *Content Marketing and AI 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 this report offers, and may it inspire you to create innovative and effective content marketing programs in the coming months.

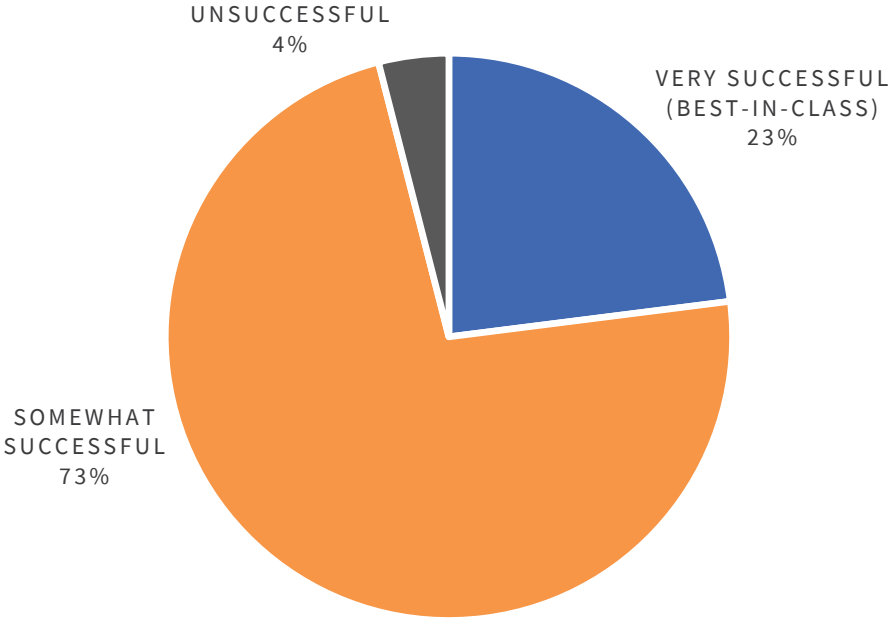
The Ascend2 Research Team

THE SUCCESS OF CONTENT MARKETING

Only 32% of respondents consider their content marketing strategy very successful (best-in-class) in achieving strategic marketing objectives. A majority of 73% of respondents rate their strategy as somewhat successful.

This data suggests that while content marketing can be very successful, many professionals struggle to develop a strategy that meets specific goals and objectives. Use this report's research findings and tips to move to the best-in-class group in the next 12 months.

HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE OVERALL SUCCESS OF YOUR CONTENT MARKETING STRATEGY IN ACHIEVING OBJECTIVES?



CONTENT MARKETING CHALLENGES

The most pressing issue regarding content marketing, cited by 55% of respondents, is generating enough traffic and leads. Next is the challenge of finding and targeting the right audiences, which 46% of marketers identify as a significant hurdle. Improving content engagement is a concern for 37%, while 34% struggle with limited budgets and resources. These findings underscore content marketing challenges' complex and multifaceted nature in today's landscape.

Tip: Meeting the challenge of generating enough leads is linked to finding and targeting the right audiences. To effectively use content marketing to find and target the right audiences, start by leveraging data-driven insights to segment your audience based on demographics, behaviors, and preferences. Tailor your content to meet each segment's specific needs and interests, ensuring that your messaging resonates and drives engagement with the most relevant audience groups. When you target the right audiences with your content, you will generate more (and higher-quality) leads.

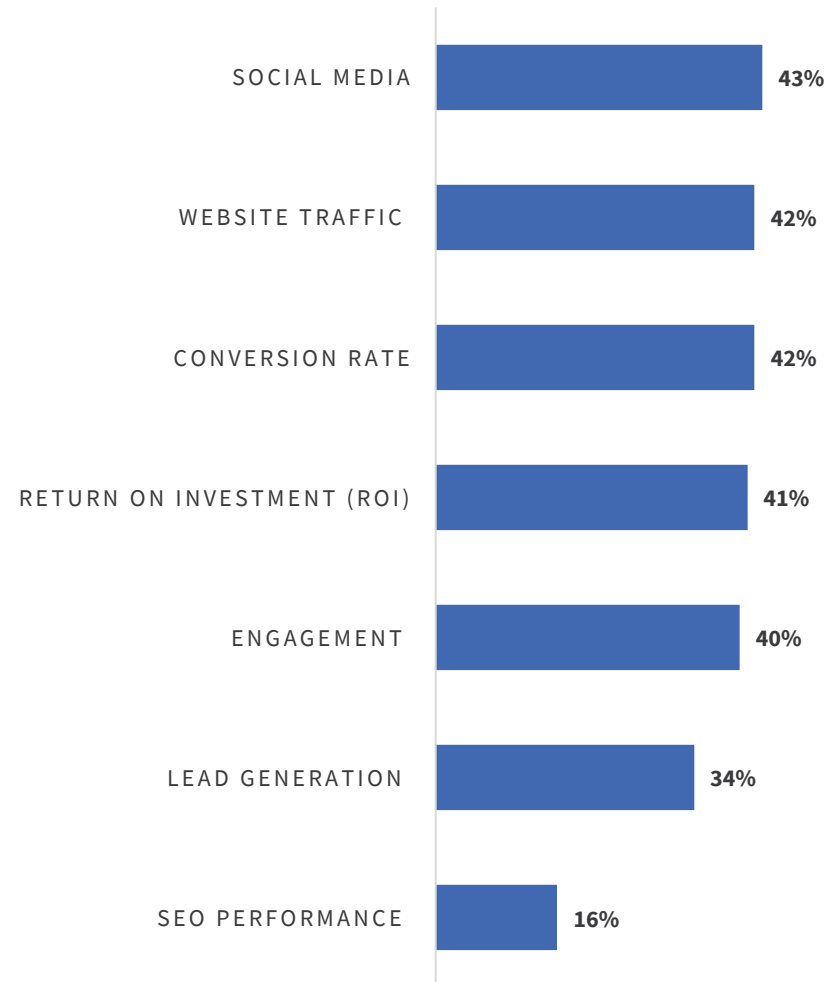
WHAT ARE THE MOST SIGNIFICANT CHALLENGES TO THE SUCCESS OF YOUR CONTENT MARKETING STRATEGY?



BEST METRICS

No single metric dominates as the definitive measure for content marketing programs, as the top metrics—social media engagement, website traffic, conversion rate, ROI, and engagement—are all used almost equally by marketers. The data indicates a diverse approach to evaluating content marketing success, with each metric providing valuable insights depending on the campaign's specific goals.

WHAT ARE THE BEST METRICS TO USE WHEN MEASURING YOUR CONTENT MARKETING PROGRAM?

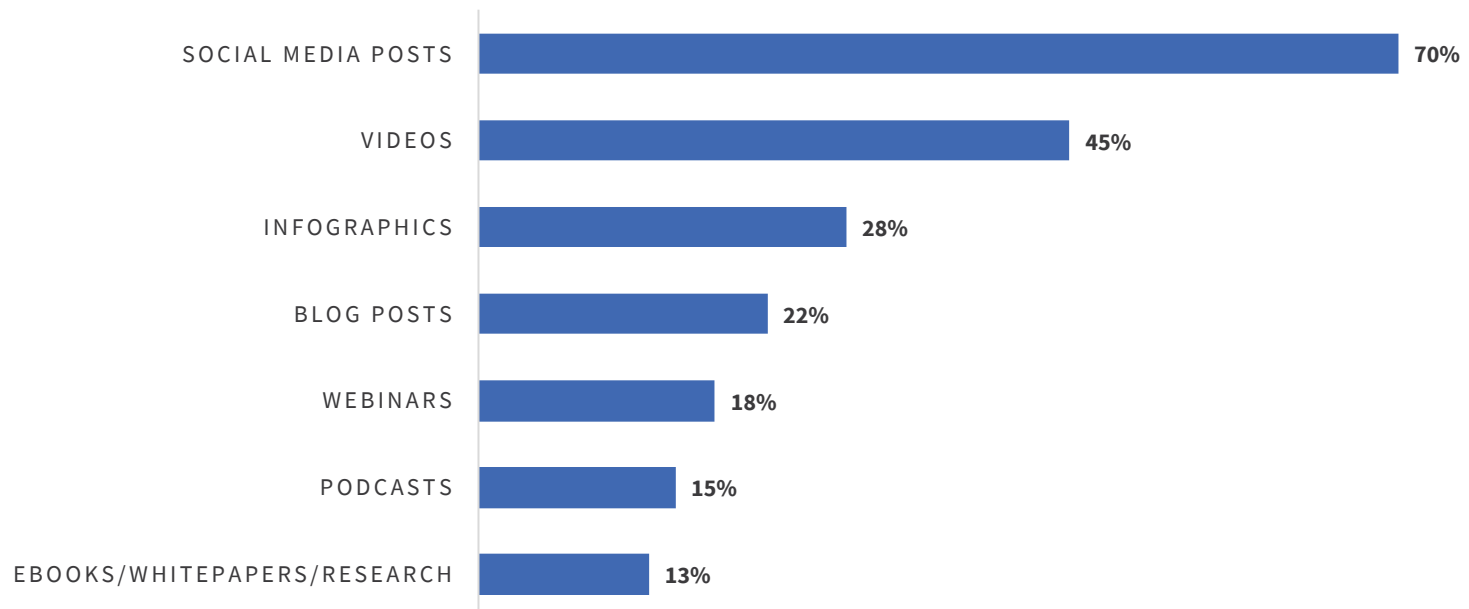


CONTENT FORMATS

Social media posts (70%) are considered the most effective content format for engaging audiences, followed by videos (45%) and infographics (28%), with other formats like blog posts, webinars, and podcasts trailing behind.

Tip: How do you use a research study to fill your content machine? To maximize the effectiveness of your content strategy, use research studies to generate data-driven insights that can be repurposed across the top content formats. For instance, create visually engaging infographics and videos to highlight key findings and use social media posts to share snippets and drive traffic to more in-depth resources like blog posts or webinars. By aligning your content creation with the most effective formats—such as social media, videos, and infographics—you can better engage your audience and enhance the impact of your research.

WHICH CONTENT FORMATS DO YOU FIND MOST EFFECTIVE FOR YOUR AUDIENCE?

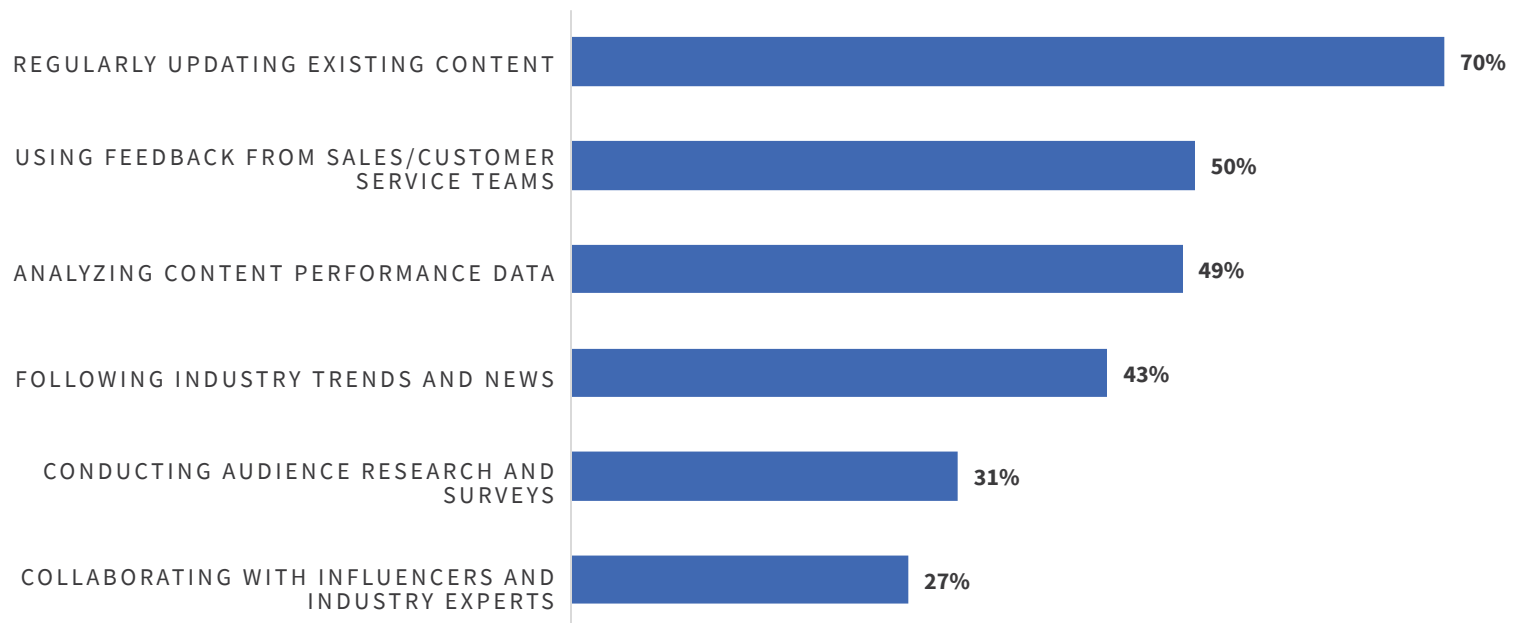


ENGAGING AUDIENCES

The most effective strategy for keeping content relevant and engaging is regularly updating existing content, a practice 70% of respondents use. Additionally, gathering feedback from sales and customer service teams (50%) and analyzing content performance data (49%) are key approaches, indicating that continuous improvement and responsiveness to audience needs are critical for content success.

Tip: Examples for updating content may include doing an annual research study to keep your audience informed on industry changes and year-over-year trends. Annual research will keep your audience engaged and enhance your content's credibility and relevance.

HOW DO YOU KEEP YOUR CONTENT RELEVANT AND ENGAGING FOR YOUR AUDIENCE?

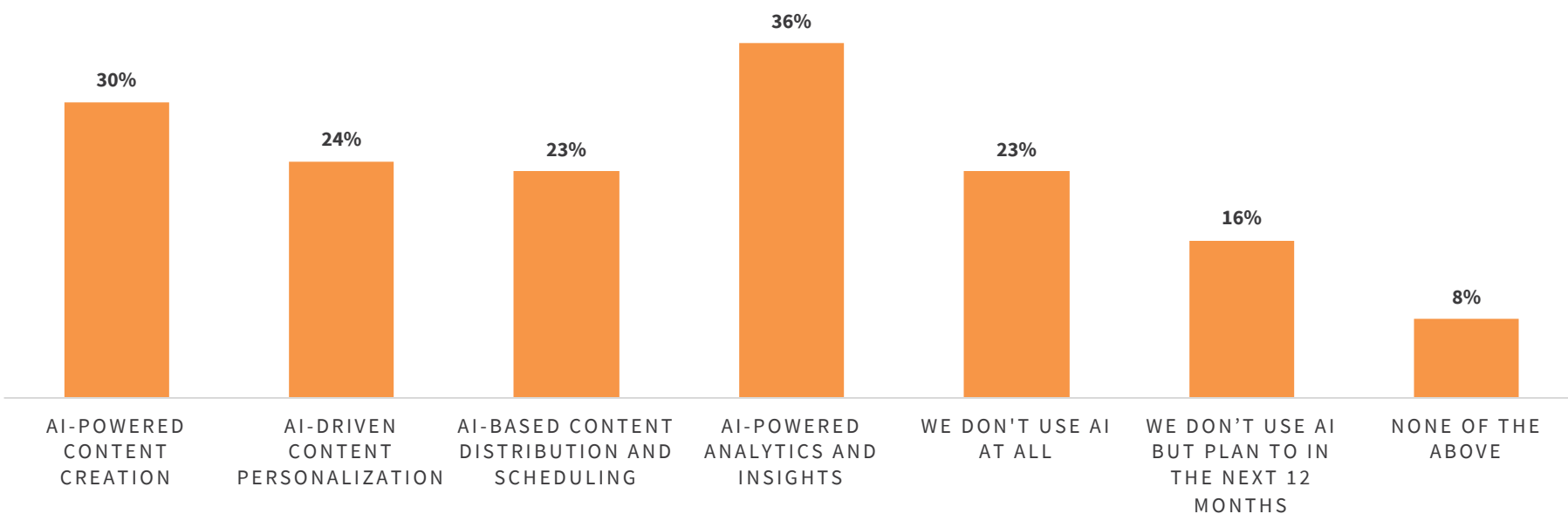


USE OF AI IN CONTENT MARKETING PROGRAMS

AI-powered analytics and insights are the most common use of AI in content marketing strategies, with 36% of respondents leveraging these tools. Meanwhile, 30% of respondents use AI for content creation and 24% for personalization, showing a growing trend toward integrating AI to enhance various aspects of content marketing. However, 23% of respondents still do not use AI at all.

Tip: To maximize the effectiveness of AI-powered analytics and insights in your content marketing strategy, use these tools to identify trends, optimize content performance, and make data-driven decisions. Regularly analyzing your content's impact and adjusting your strategy can enhance audience engagement and drive better results from your marketing efforts.

HOW DO YOU CURRENTLY USE AI IN OUR CONTENT MARKETING STRATEGY?

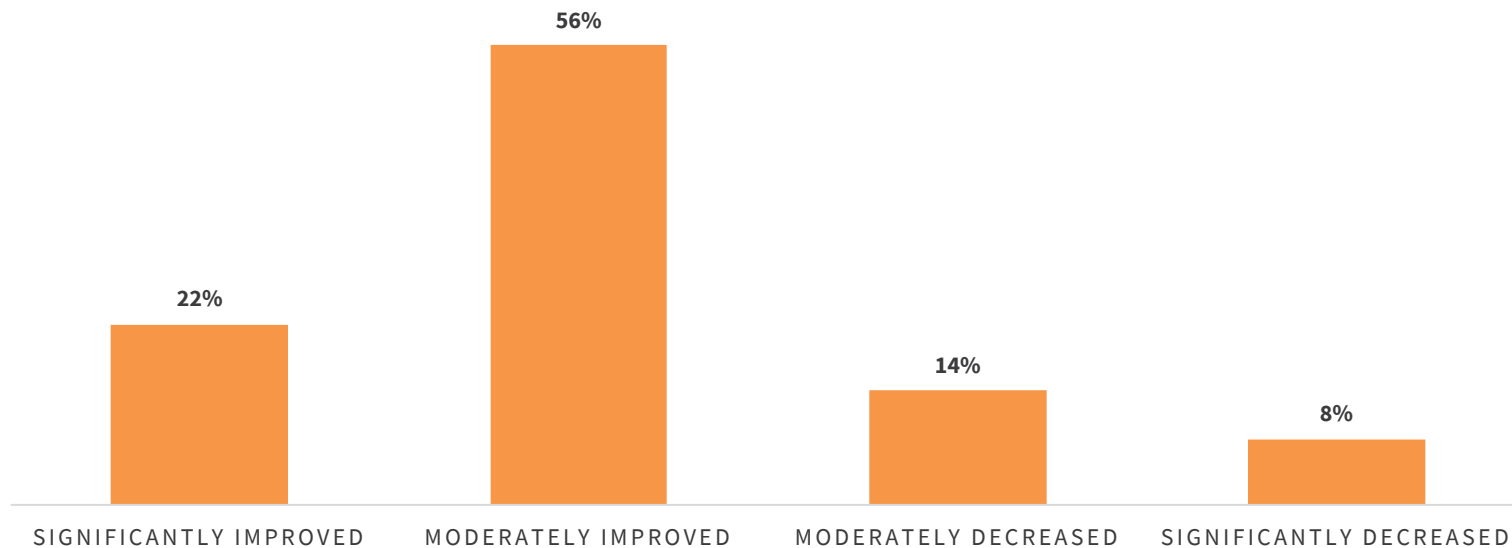


IMPACT OF AI ON CONTENT QUALITY

AI has positively impacted content quality for most respondents, with 56% reporting moderate improvement and 22% experiencing significant improvement. However, 22% of respondents noted decreased content quality, highlighting the importance of careful implementation and oversight when integrating AI into content creation processes.

Tip: Marketing professionals can use AI-powered tools like Grammarly or Hemingway to enhance grammar, clarity, and readability, ensuring their content is polished and professional. Additionally, leveraging AI for data-driven insights can help tailor content to audience preferences and optimize for engagement, making the content more relevant and impactful.

HOW HAS AI IMPACTED THE QUALITY OF YOUR CONTENT?

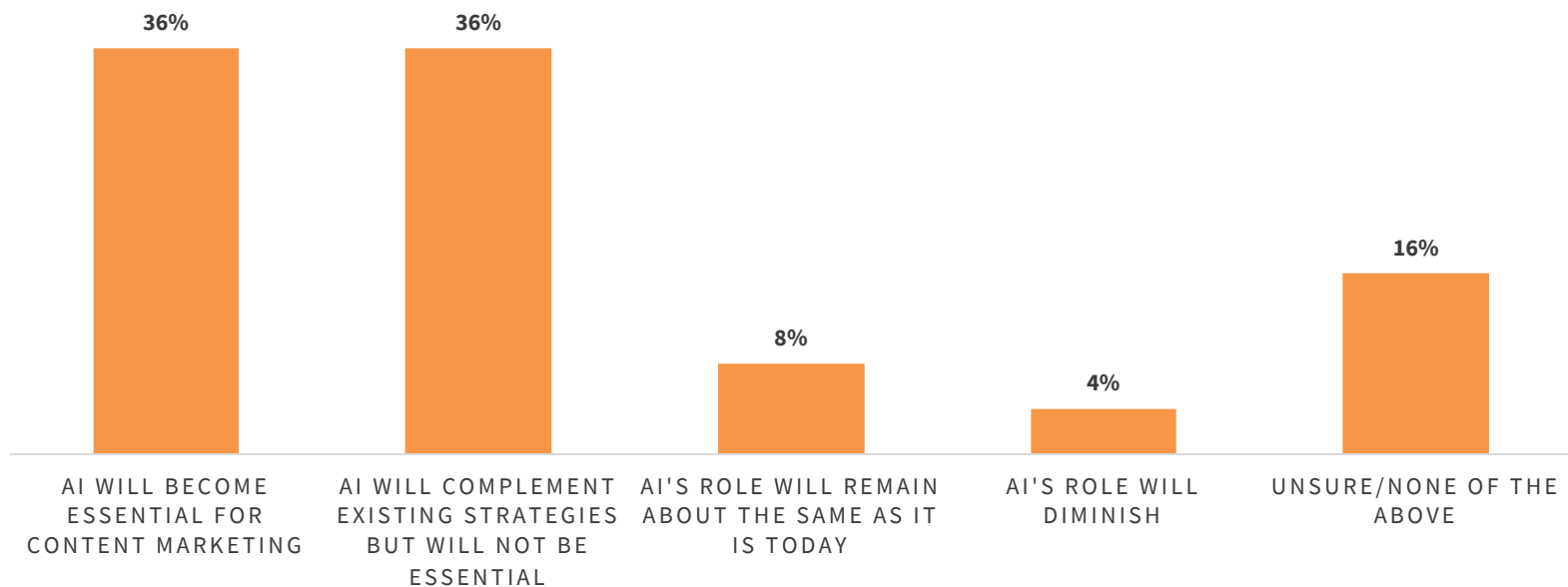


FUTURE ROLE OF AI IN CONTENT MARKETING

The survey data suggests that in the next 3-5 years, AI will play a crucial role in content marketing, with 36% of respondents believing it will become essential, while an equal percentage sees it as a complementary tool that enhances existing strategies without being indispensable. While AI's influence is expected to grow significantly, there is still some uncertainty about its ultimate dominance in the field.

Tip: How do you stay ahead of the competition? Embrace AI. It's crucial to be proactive by integrating AI tools into your strategy sooner rather than later. Start experimenting with AI-driven analytics, content creation, and personalization tools to enhance efficiency and stay ahead of industry trends. This approach prepares you for the future and ensures that your content remains competitive and relevant as AI continues to evolve.

HOW DO YOU SEE THE ROLE OF AI IN CONTENT MARKETING EVOLVING IN THE NEXT 3-5 YEARS?



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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