

**Top 20**  
**B2B**  
**Marketing**  
**Charts**  
**of 2018**

 **SEISMIC**

 **NetLine**  
CORPORATION

**Sponsored by Seismic and NetLine**

## Foreword from MarketingCharts

---

Hi, and thanks for joining us in our review of 2018's top B2B marketing charts!

As you'll see in the following slides, buyer-vendor relationships were a popular topic this past year, as B2B buyers described their path to engagement with vendors, who seem to be struggling to reach their target audiences.

More charts inside indicate that while B2B vendors are making advances, there's still room for them to grow in their use of marketing technologies. And don't forget about face-to-face: research about events and their strategic value also feature prominently.

As such, the following deck is a collection of the charts that proved most popular with you, our readers, during this past year. This year we've sorted the charts by viewpoint – the buyer; and the marketer – in an effort to give a comprehensive overview of key themes.

We at MarketingCharts would like to thank you for trusting us with your data needs. We wish you the best for the year ahead.

Cheers,  
JC Lupis  
Editor, MarketingCharts

## Table of Contents

---

- 1. Types of Content Found More Credible by B2B Buyers**
- 2. How the Most Influential B2B Vendors Help Buyers Choose Their Product**
- 3. Why B2B Decision-Makers Initially Engage With Sales**
- 4. The B2B Buying Process Timeline**
- 5. When B2B Buyers Want to Hear From Sellers**
- 6. Buyer Perceptions of Point-of-Contact Sales Reps**
- 7. B2B Buyers' Preferred Resources for Problem-Solving**
- 8. Business Buyers' Expectations For A Consumer-Like Experience**
- 9. Pain Points in the B2B E-Commerce Buying Journey**
- 10. B2B Content Marketers' Considerations in 2018**

## Table of Contents

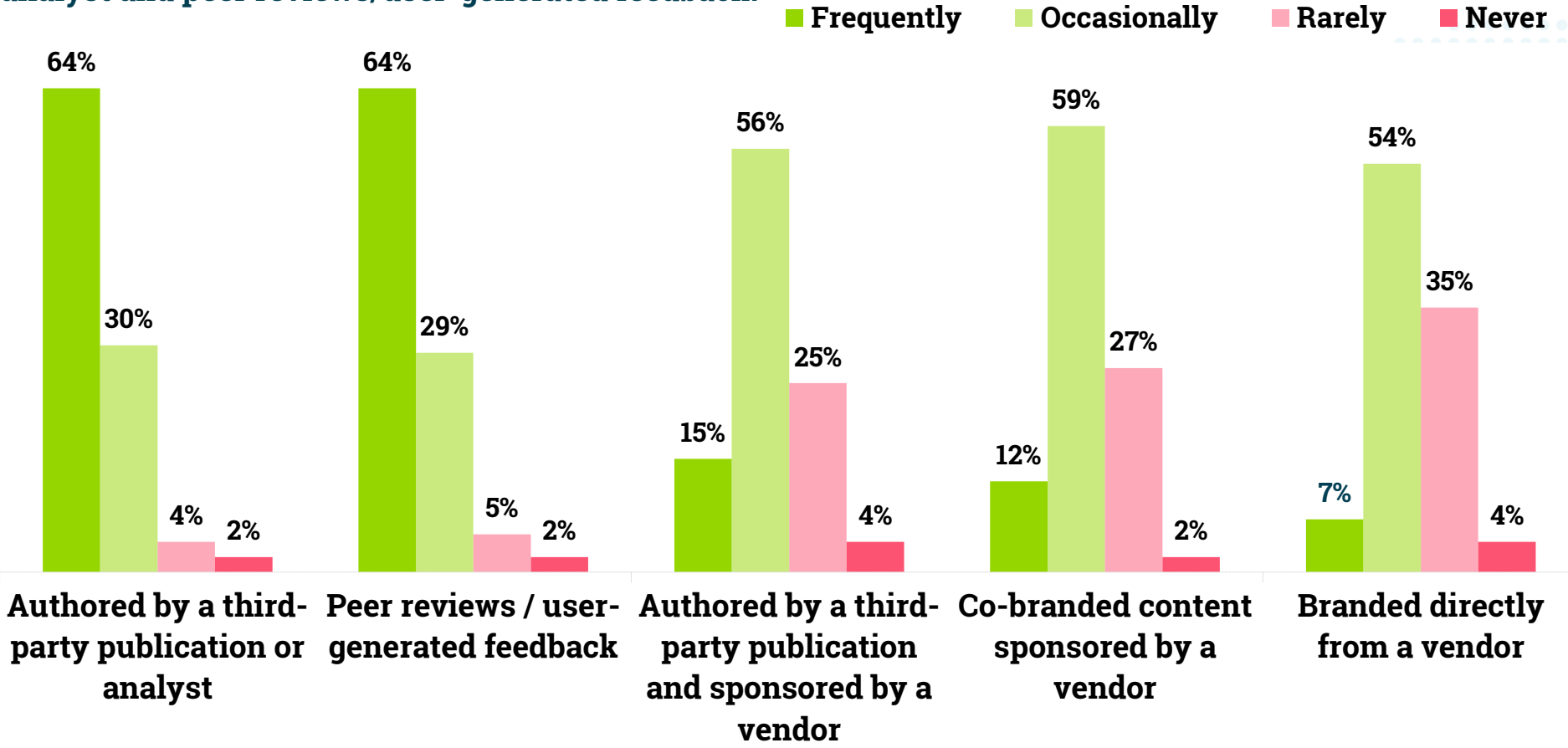
---

- 11. B2B Marketing Communications' Content Challenge**
- 12. B2B Marketers' Top Challenges in Generating New Leads**
- 13. B2B Demand Generation Channel Effectiveness**
- 14. B2B Marketers' Biggest Challenges to Measuring Their Impact**
- 15. B2B Marketing Metrics Important to Marketers and Business Leaders**
- 16. B2B Marketers' Use of Technologies in the Marketing Stack**
- 17. US B2B Marketers' Use of MarTech Features**
- 18. Why Companies Use Events: B2B vs. B2C**
- 19. Marketing Events Drawing the Largest Budgets: B2B vs. B2C**
- 20. B2B Exhibitors' Marketing Budget Allocation**

# The Buyer's Perspective

# Types of Content Found More Credible by B2B Buyers

Half of B2B buyers say they now rely more on content to research and make purchase decisions, and most are placing a higher emphasis on the trustworthiness of the source of the content, according to a Demand Gen Report study. As buyers lean more on content for purchase decisions, they're looking for that content to come from trustworthy sources, such as content authored by a third-party publication or analyst and peer reviews/user-generated feedback.

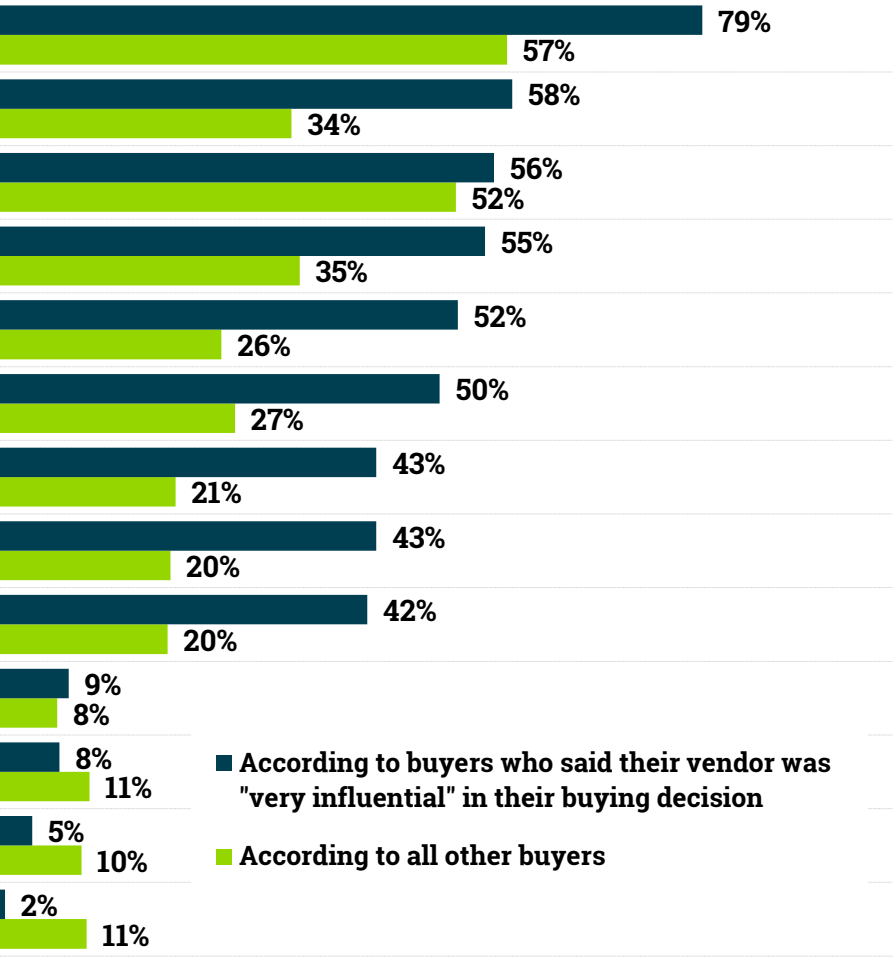


Published on MarketingCharts.com April 2018 | Data Source: Demand Gen Report

Based on a survey of 168 C-, VP- and Director-level B2B marketing representatives across several verticals  
 Q: "Which of the following types of content do you give more credence to?"

# How the Most Influential B2B Vendors Help Buyers Choose Their Product

Vendors considered "very influential" in buyers' decision-making were more likely to have taken a range of actions as part of their engagement, according to research from TrustRadius. One of the biggest gaps was for vendors being consultative and helping the buyer strategize the best approach for their use case.

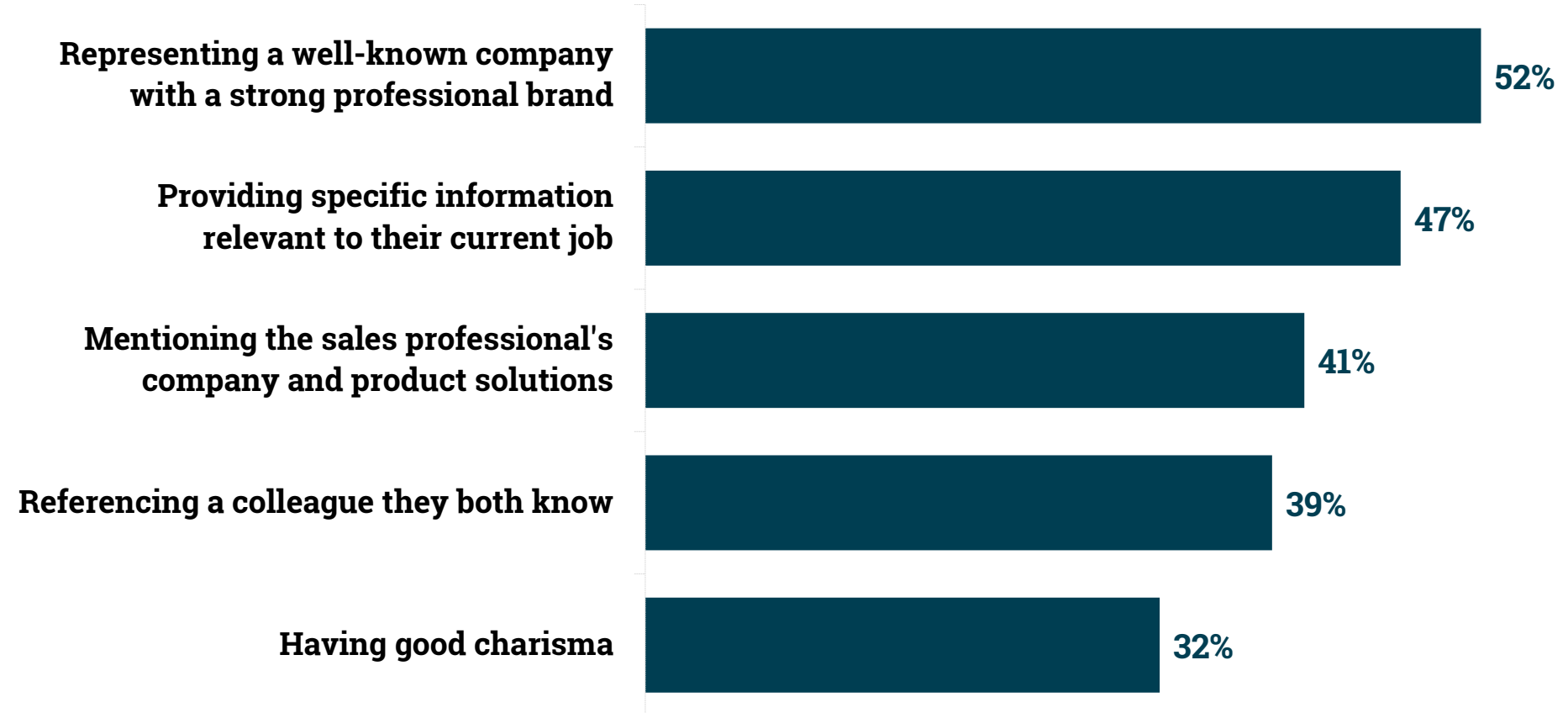


- The vendor worked with us on pricing and/or packaging.
- The vendor answered questions and provided examples based on our Request For Proposal.
- The vendor presented an overview of product features and/or a standard demo.
- The vendor presented a custom demo and/or helped us run a proof of concept.
- The vendor was consultative and helped us strategize the best approach for our use case.
- The vendor provided us with customer evidence (e.g. reviews, case studies).
- The vendor helped us understand potential ROI and/or sell internally.
- The vendor invited us to events, workshops, or other learning opportunities.
- The vendor connected us with customer references.
- The vendor was very salesy and mainly tried to convince us to buy the product.
- We bought from a partner or reseller, rather than the vendor.
- We didn't interact with the vendor at all.
- The vendor was hands-off or not very involved.

Based on a survey of 438 B2B buyers who played a significant role in an important software purchase decision for their organization in the past year, 23% of whom rated their vendor as "very influential" on their buying decision | Q: "How you would you describe the vendor's role in helping you choose their product?"

# Why B2B Decision-Makers Initially Engage With Sales

Needing help getting that prospect to engage? A strong professional brand will do the trick, according to a study from LinkedIn. Almost half of decision-makers also pointed to the importance of the salesperson providing specific information relevant to their current job. Personalized experiences are certainly critical: separately, virtually all respondents said that they were more likely to consider a vendor's products or services if the sales professional has a clear understanding of their business needs and role.



# The B2B Buying Process Timeline



Almost half of B2B buyers indicate that they're spending more time researching purchases, according to a Demand Gen Report study. But separate results suggest the timeline hasn't elongated too much, and that vendors can engage with buyers early on in their buying process: fully 69% of respondents indicated that they spoke to and engaged with a sales representative from the vendor they selected within the first 3 months of the process.

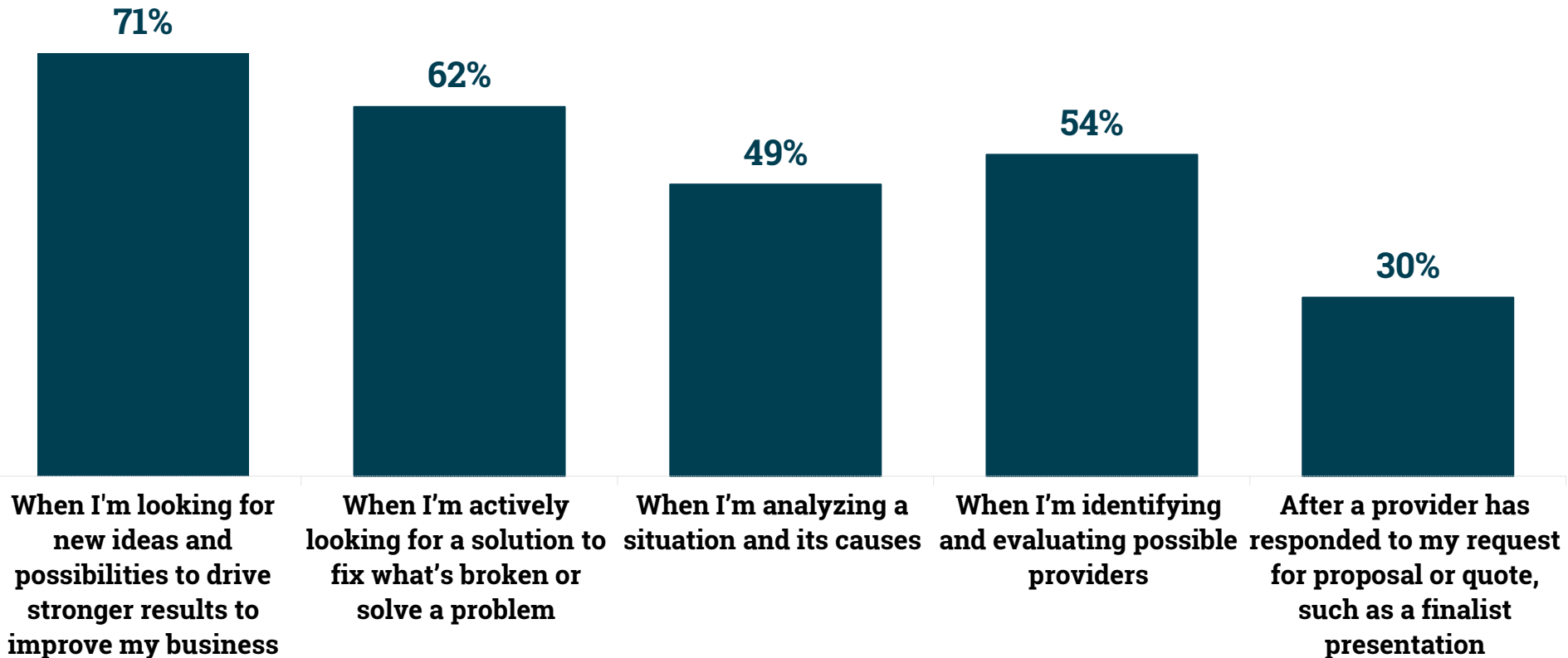
	<1 month	1-3	3-6	6-12	>12 months	N/A
Spoke to and engaged with a sales rep. from the vendor I selected	32%	37%	21%	6%	2%	2%
Conducted anonymous research on potential solutions	26%	41%	19%	8%	1%	5%
Developed informal list of potential providers	30%	38%	22%	5%	1%	4%
Collected preliminary information on pricing/costs	30%	42%	18%	7%	1%	2%
Brought in other team members to help with research process	25%	36%	20%	7%	2%	10%
Evaluated which solutions would fit well with existing partners	19%	46%	18%	8%	2%	7%
Sought input from industry analysts/consultants	20%	35%	16%	6%	3%	20%
Sought input from peers/existing users in the community	24%	38%	19%	6%	1%	12%
Accepted outreach from vendors and engaged in calls/demos	22%	41%	23%	5%	2%	7%
Sought RFP/competitive bids/pricing info from a select list of providers	19%	39%	18%	8%	2%	14%

Published on [MarketingCharts.com](https://MarketingCharts.com) in July 2018 | Data Source: [Demand Gen Report](#)

Based on a survey of 259 B2B buyers from a variety of company sizes and industries, with high-tech (31%) the most heavily represented  
 Q: "What was your timeline for taking the following steps in your buying process? (In months)"

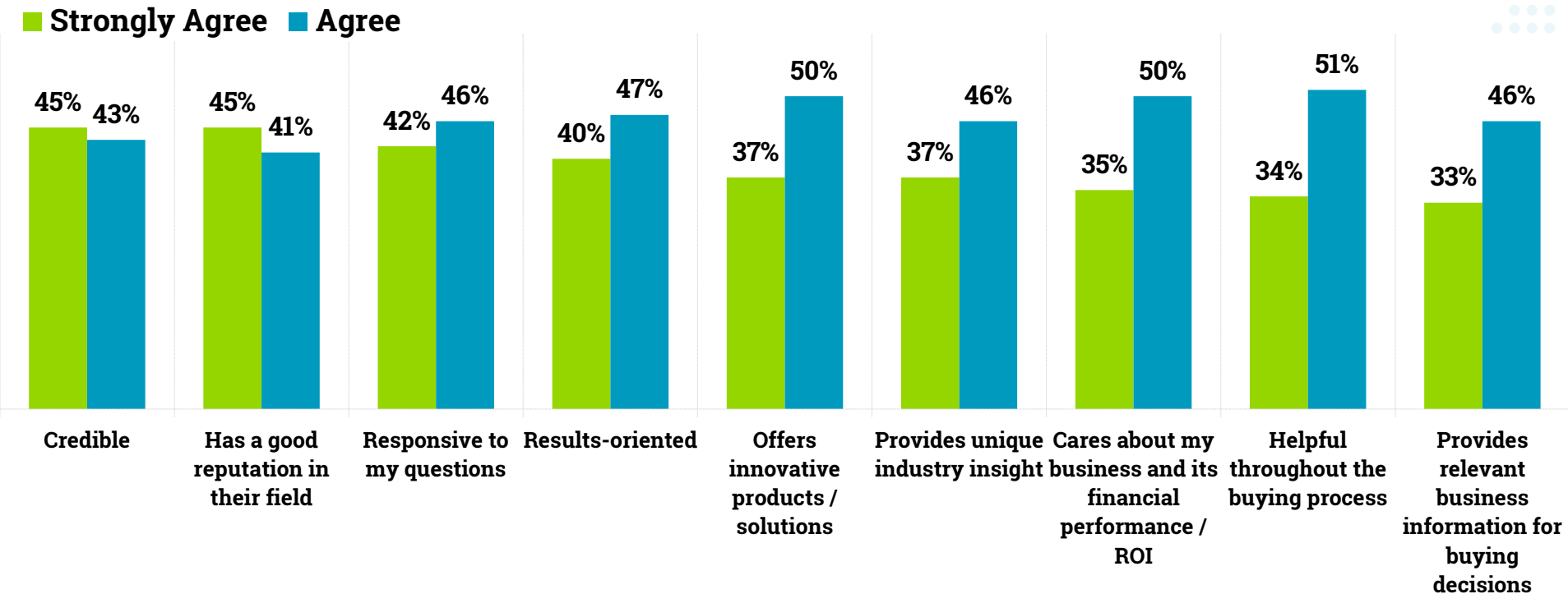
# When B2B Buyers Want to Hear From Sellers

Backing the previous slide's findings up is this study from the RAIN Group Center for Sales Research. In fact, the RAIN Group's survey found fully 71% of buyers saying they want to hear from vendors when they're looking for new ideas and possibilities to drive stronger results to improve their business.



# Buyer Perceptions of Point-of-Contact Sales Reps

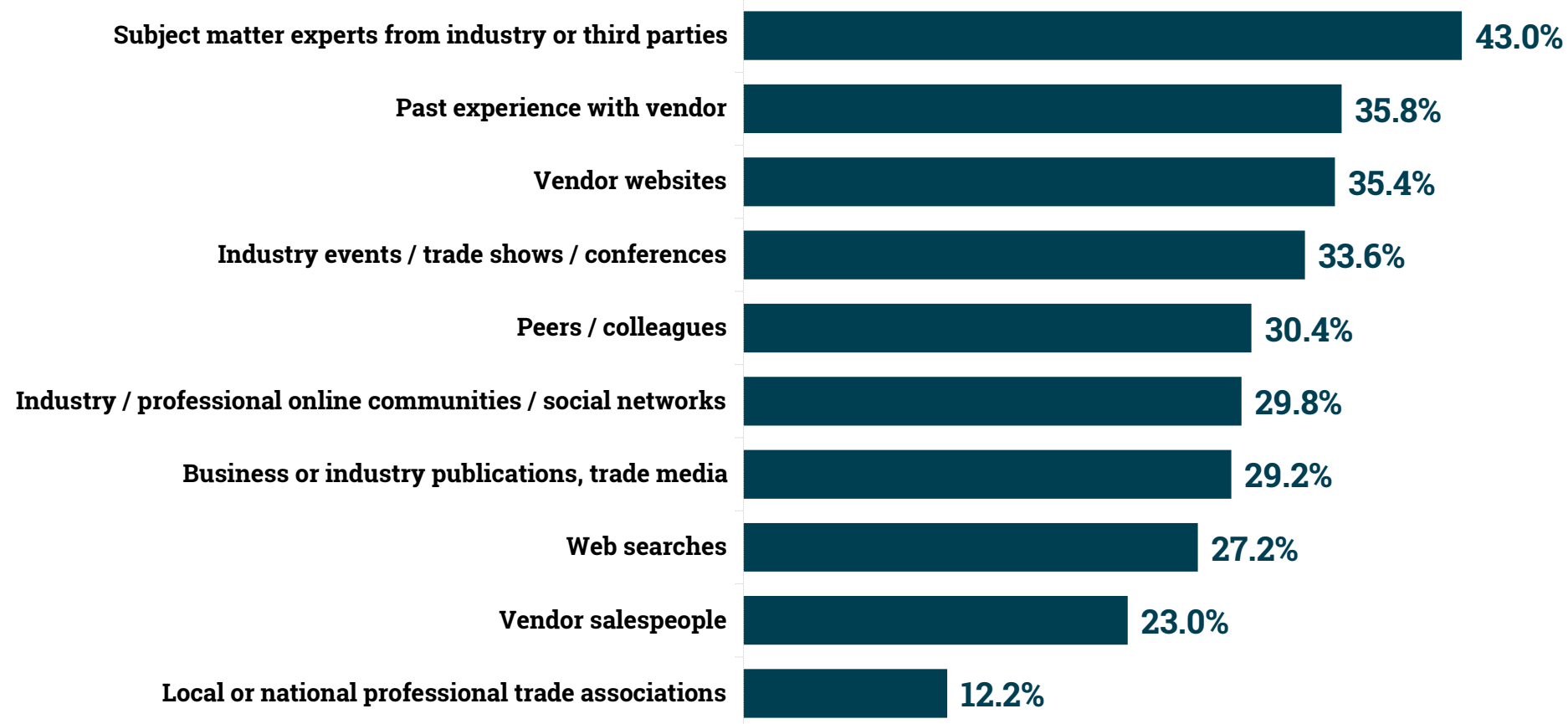
The vast majority (88%) of buyers agree that the point-of-contact sales representatives they interact with are credible, including almost half (45%) who strongly agree, per results from a study from ValueSelling Associates and Training Industry. Moreover, close to 9 in 10 agree that point-of-sale reps have a good reputation in their field, which is important given how critical brand reputations are to B2B buyers. Still, separate results indicate that many buyers approach vendors' credibility with some skepticism: roughly 6 in 10 agreed that their salesperson sometimes gives false information in order to make a sale.



# B2B Buyers' Preferred Resources for Problem-Solving

(% selecting each as a top-3 resource)

Given that buyers aren't always fully convinced by their salespeople, they can have a tendency to look elsewhere when business problems arise, according to the 2018 Buyer Preferences Study from CSO Insights, the research division of Miller Heiman Group. As part of the study, buyers were presented with a list of 10 information resources and asked which 3 they would consult in order to solve a business problem. Vendor salespeople came in 9th, cited by fewer than one-quarter (23%) of respondents.



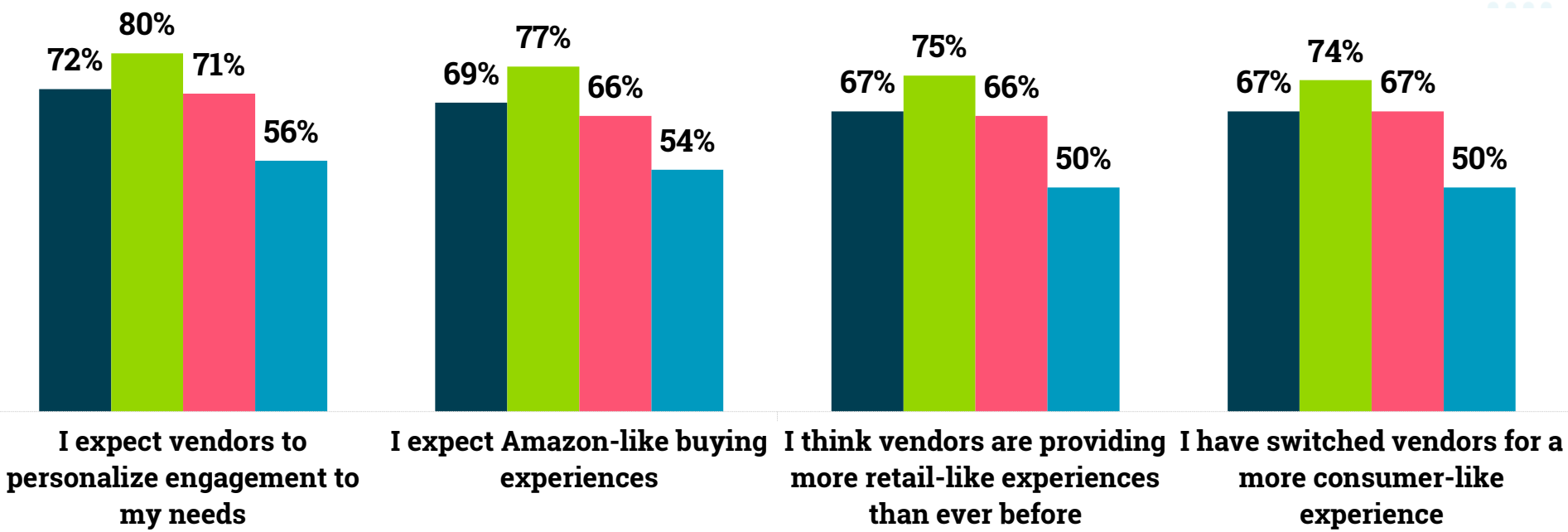
Published on [MarketingCharts.com](https://www.marketingcharts.com) in June 2018 | Data Source: [CSO Insights](https://www.csoinsights.com)

*Based on a survey of 500 B2B buyers - working for companies with revenues of at least \$250M - who have made purchases of at least \$10K. Respondents came from 25 industries and represented 21 countries. Half hail from North America and 30% from the EMEA region.*

# Business Buyers' Expectations For A Consumer-Like Experience

More than 8 in 10 business buyers want the same experience as when they're buying for themselves, reveals Salesforce Research. The study indicates that the customer experience is hugely important to business buyers, 8 in 10 of whom say the experience a company provides is as important as its products and services. Notably, business buyers – particularly younger buyers - are growing to expect more of a consumer-like experience when making purchases for their business.

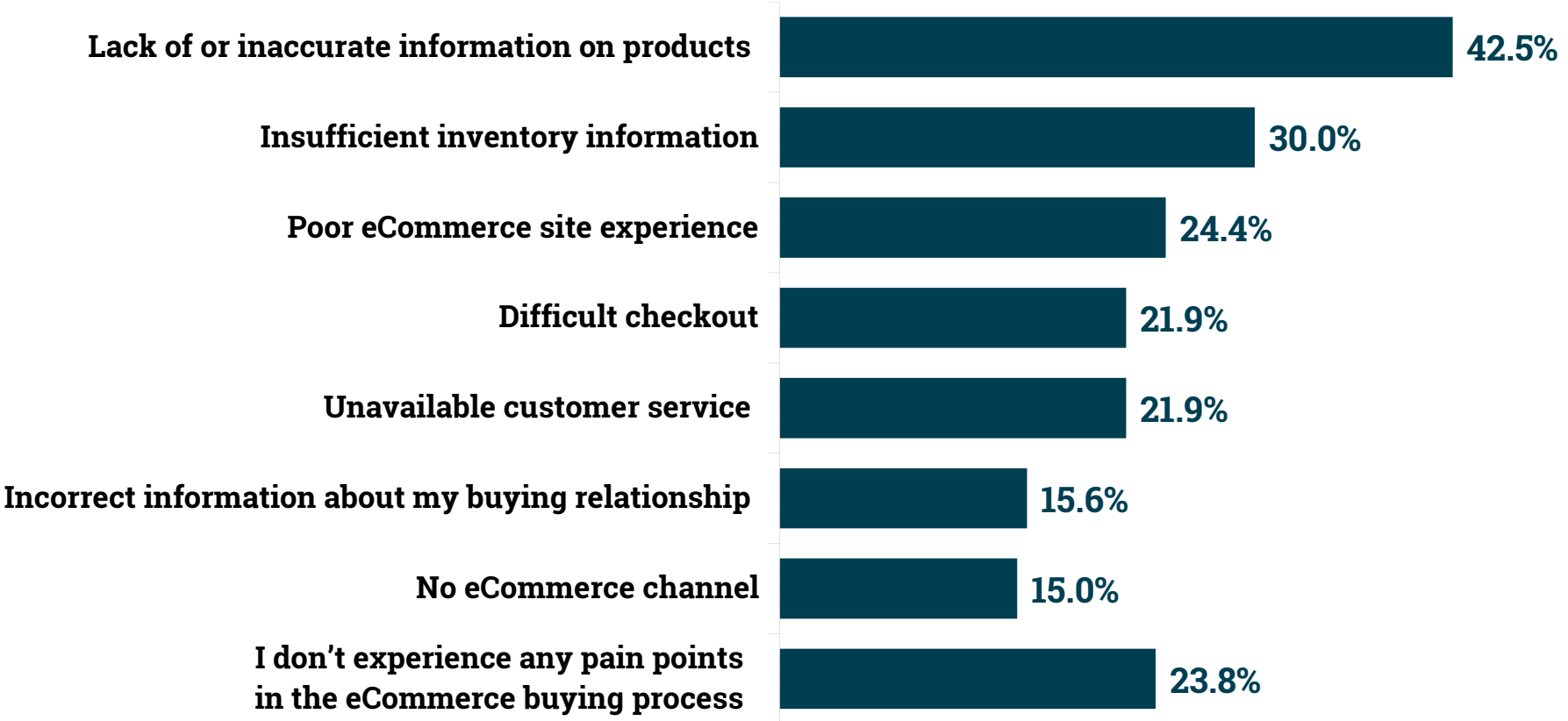
- Overall
- Gen Xers (born 1965-1980)
- Millennials / Gen Zers (born 1981-1999)
- Traditionalists / Baby Boomers (born before 1965)



*Based on business buyer respondents (33% share) from a global survey of 6,723 consumers and business buyers  
Business buyers are defined as "those reporting on their interactions with companies when purchasing on behalf of their employers"*

# Pain Points in the B2B E-Commerce Buying Journey

Almost 9 in 10 B2B firms report buying more online in the past year, reveals Avionos in a survey of 160 B2B procurement officers. Yet results from the study suggest that plenty of friction remains. Indeed, only 24% of procurement officers surveyed reported not experiencing any pain points in the e-commerce buying process, with issues including a lack of – or inaccurate – information on products, insufficient inventory information and poor e-commerce site experiences.



## About Our Sponsor, NetLine



# NetLine

## Successful B2B Marketers Start Here

Promote Your Content with the #1 B2B Content Syndication Lead Generation Network

Get Started Now

Watch How It Works

**125M** UNIQUE MONTHLY VISITORS  
**700K** LEADS PROCESSED MONTHLY  
**40M** LEADS PROCESSED TO DATE

**15K**  
WEB PROPERTIES

**10**  
CONTENT PROMOTION CHANNELS

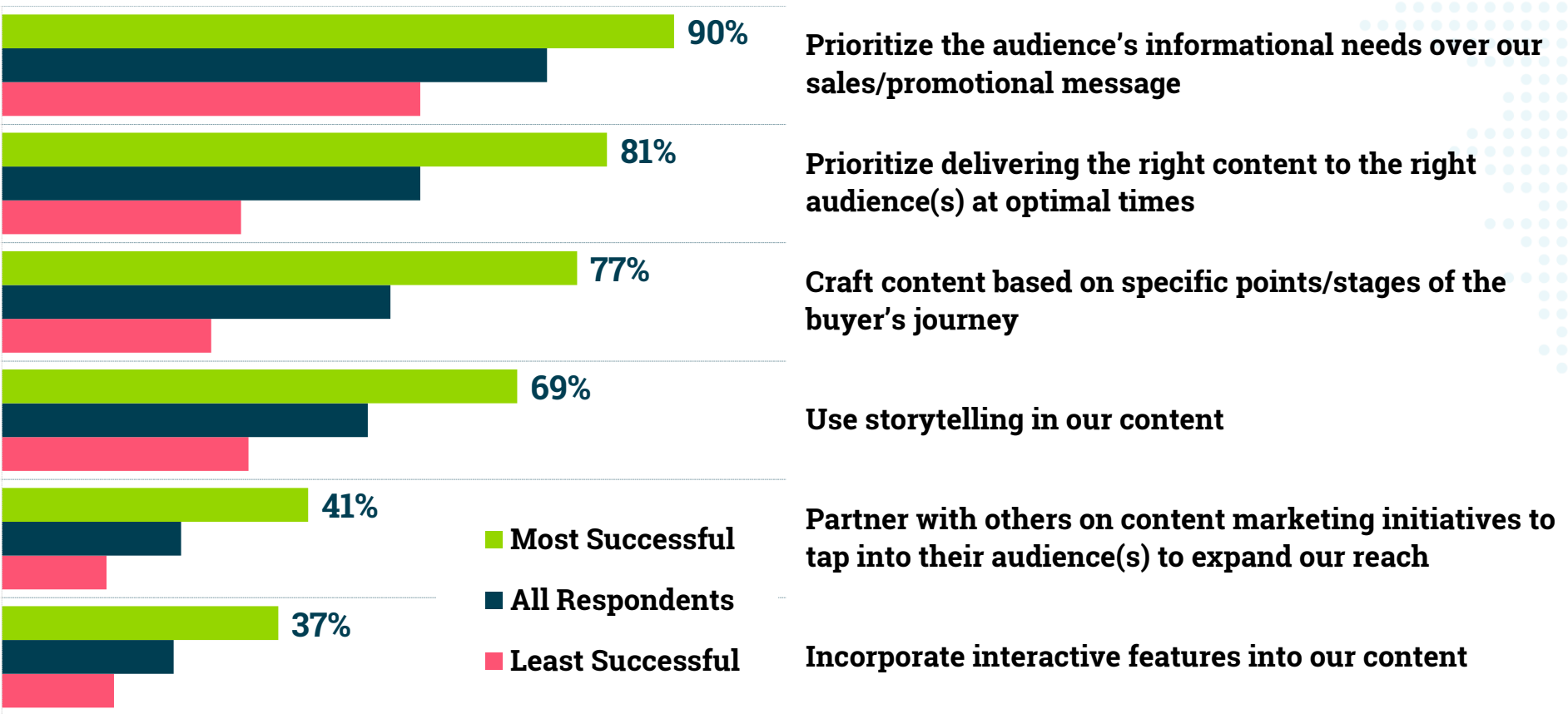


# The Marketer's Perspective

# B2B Content Marketers' Considerations in 2018



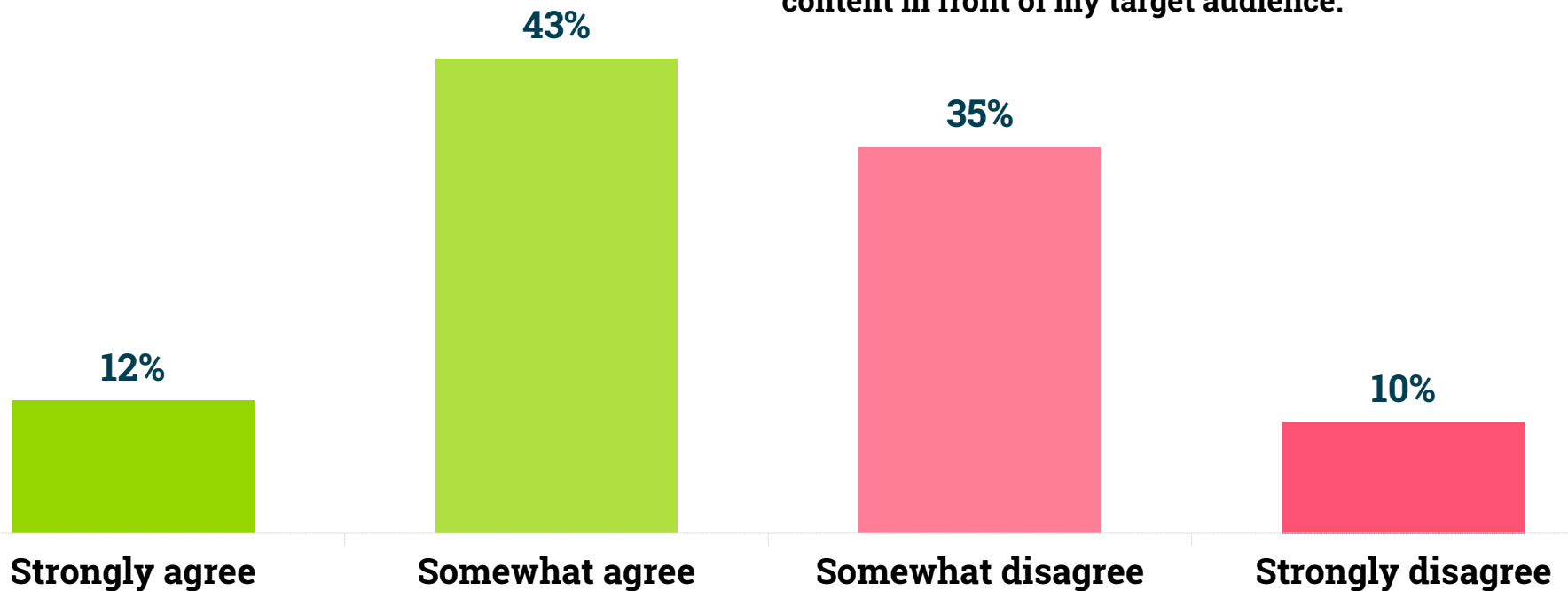
The most successful B2B content marketers are putting their audiences' needs first, according to an annual study of B2B content marketing from the Content Marketing Institute and MarketingProfs. Fully 9 in 10 "most successful" B2B content marketers prioritize their audience's informational needs over the sales/promotional message, compared to just 56% of the "least successful" respondents. Other survey findings likewise found a heightened focus on audiences.



# B2B Marketing Communications' Content Challenge

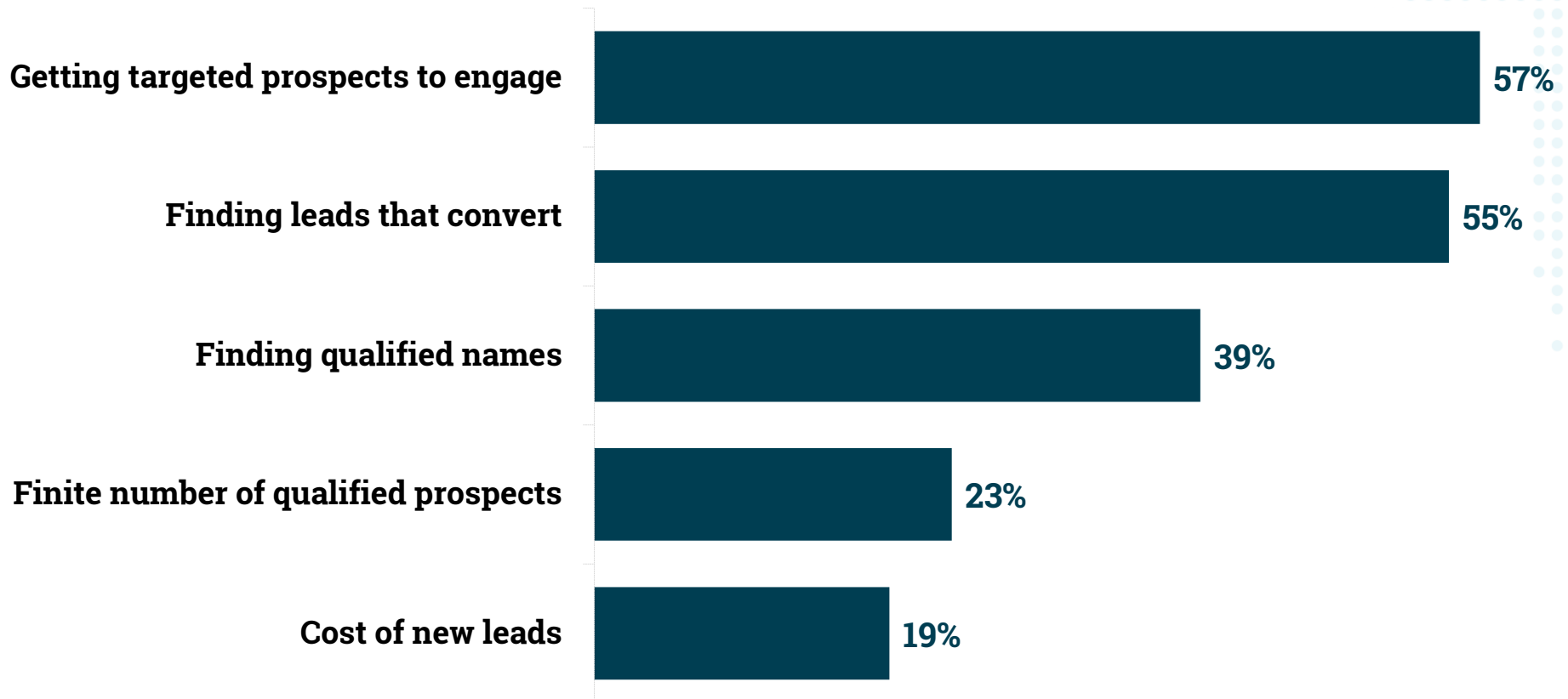
Marketers may be speaking more to their audiences, but B2B marketing communication campaigns are facing difficulties reaching those target audiences, according to the 2018 State of B2B Communications report from Ytel. The study finds a majority of survey respondents agreeing that they have a hard time getting their message and content in front of their target audience, tabbing this the joint top challenge of their marketing communication campaigns.

"How much do you agree with this statement: 'I have a hard time getting my message and content in front of my target audience.'"



# B2B Marketers' Top Challenges in Generating New Leads

Indeed, B2B marketers are still struggling to get targeted prospects to engage, according to Chief Marketers' 2019 B2B Marketing Outlook. Almost 6 in 10 respondents said this is a challenge for them in generating new leads, on par with the previous year's results, when it was also their top lead generation challenge. Engaging prospects is proving to be a bigger challenge than actually finding qualified names, which was cited as a challenge by 4 in 10 respondents.



# A Word from Our Sponsor...



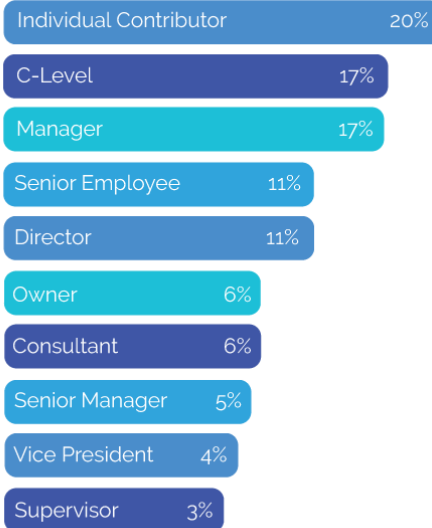
## HOW TO OVERCOME B2B LEAD GEN CHALLENGES

Many marketers inherently struggle with inbound traffic and lead generation from content when they rely too heavily upon traffic-yielding outbound strategies. Marketers commonly turn to display ads and retargeting, looking for a quick fix. Unfortunately, impressions and clicks do not address the top-line challenges marketers are facing. Lack of specificity, quality, scale and cost can be overcome with content syndication on the NetLine network.

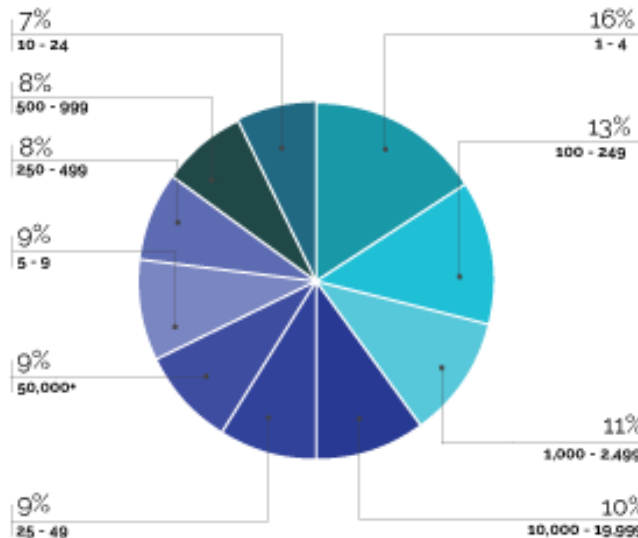
Our network delivers more than 800,000 leads per month to marketers across a diverse spectrum of industries. With NetLine's scale and diversity, marketers can specifically target in-market professionals actively consuming content.

### NETLINE'S 2018 ACTIVE AUDIENCE DATA

#### AUDIENCE BY JOB LEVEL



#### AUDIENCE COMPANY SIZE



#### "TAP INTO REAL-TIME BUYER INTENT"

NetLine utilizes an exclusive content recommendation logic called AudienceTarget™ to tap into real-time buyer intent signals as they are actively discovering, researching and consuming content related to their business challenges.

By aligning lead filter criteria with content and campaign objectives, marketers can control and achieve ideal prospect targeting of their content.

**Leveraging content based on strategic prospect filtering, marketers can overcome every one of the most common challenges.**

[Get Started Now](#)

Create your free NetLine Portal account

Dec. 2018 - Jan. 2019

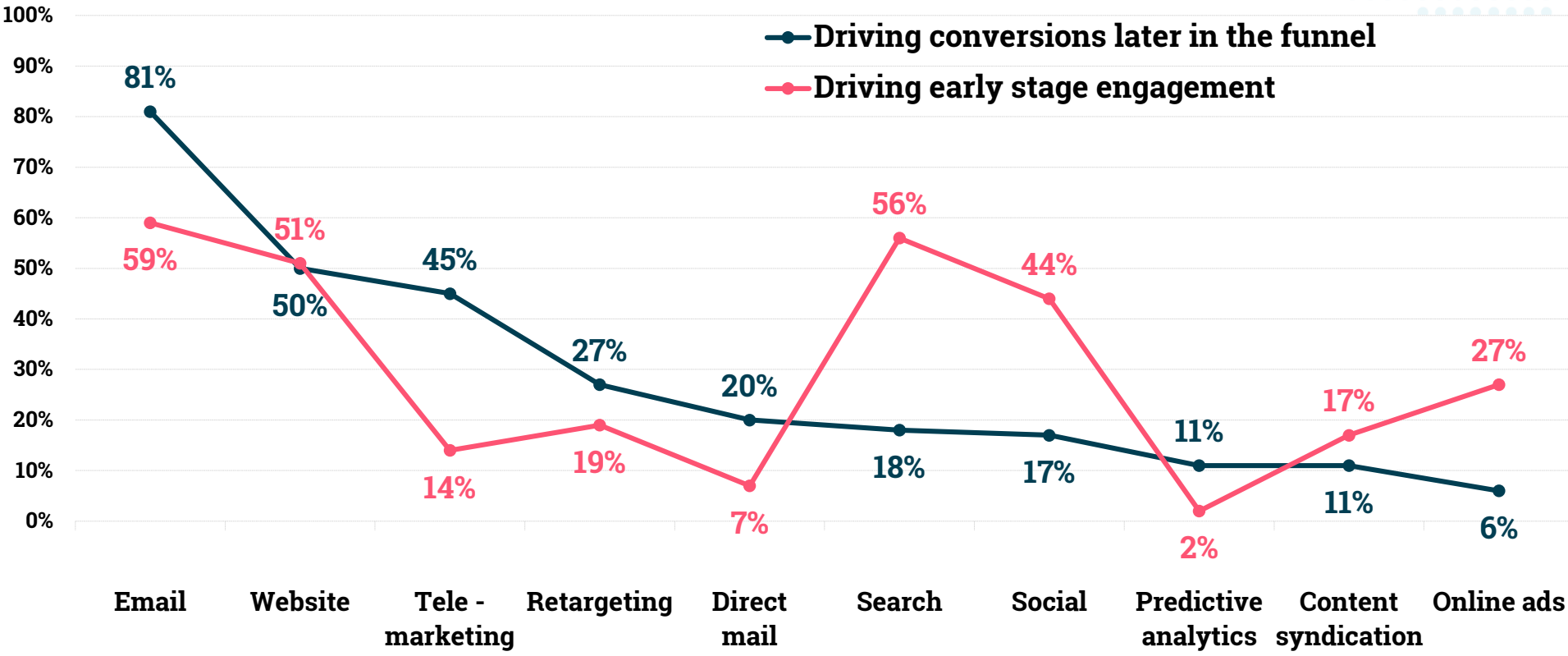


NetLine Corporation | Successful B2B Marketers Start Here  
[www.netline.com](http://www.netline.com)

# B2B Demand Generation Channel

## Effectiveness (% rating as effective)

For a majority of B2B marketers surveyed by Demand Gen Report, email (59%), search (56%) and websites (51%) are the channels that have been most effective in driving early-stage engagement. (They're also the most-commonly used for lead generation.) Shift to later in the funnel – a greater priority this past year – and the picture changes. Email takes strong precedence in conversions, with an impressive 81% saying that it has been most effective in the latter stages of the funnel. The only other channels to see a meaningful response were websites (50%) and telemarketing (45%).



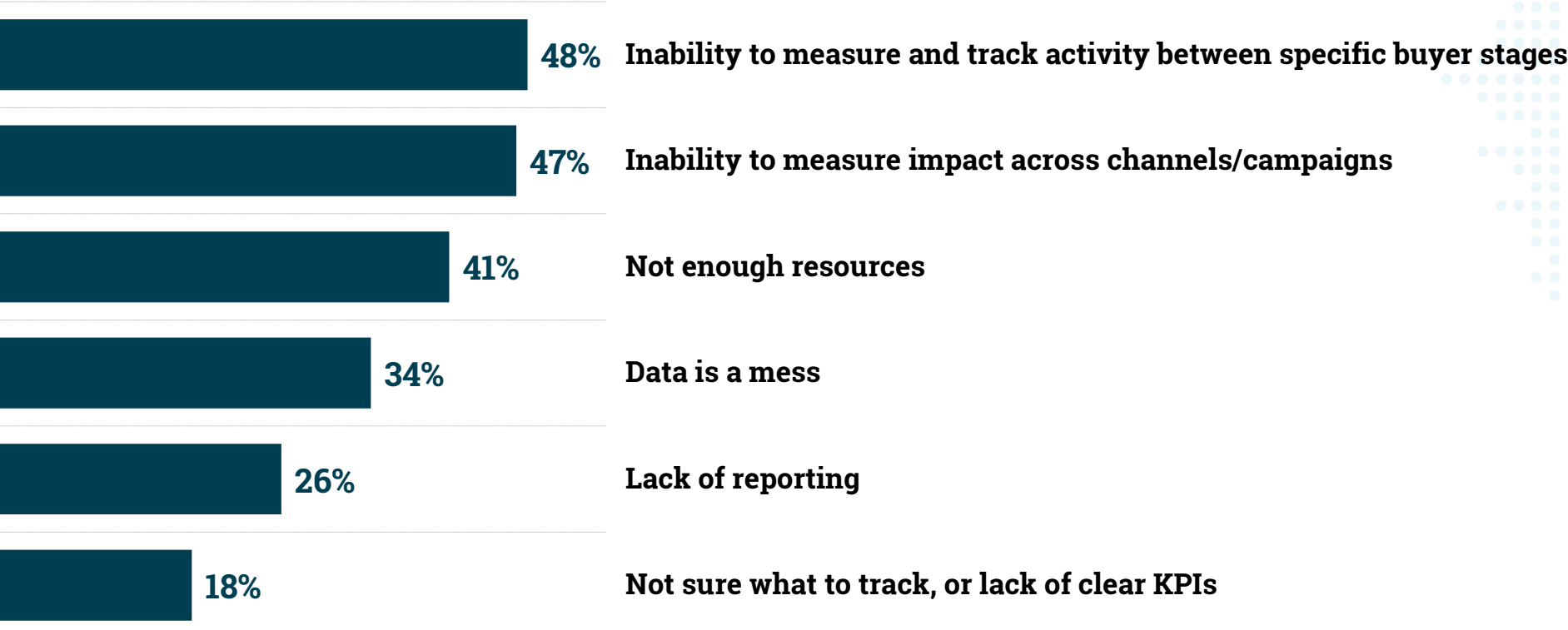
[Published on MarketingCharts.com in February 2018](#) | Data Source: [Demand Gen Report](#) / [Content4Demand](#) / [Integrate](#) / [Selling Simplified](#)

*Based on a survey conducted in December 2017 among 160 B2B marketing executives, the vast majority of whom are from North America (87%). Roughly two-thirds come from companies with more than \$10 million in revenues. The software/tech industry was the most heavily represented.*

# B2B Marketers' Biggest Challenges to Measuring & Demonstrating Their Performance & Impact



Just 7% of B2B marketers in the US rate their company's current ability to measure and analyze marketing performance and impact as "excellent," according to a study from Demand Gen Report. Respondents indicate that they're facing a variety of challenges to measuring and demonstrating their impact. Chief among those are an inability to measure and track activity between specific buyer stages (48%) and an inability to measure impact across channels and campaigns (47%). Part of the problem, the report shows, is an absence of measurement at later stages of the funnel, combined with a lack of attribution across channels.



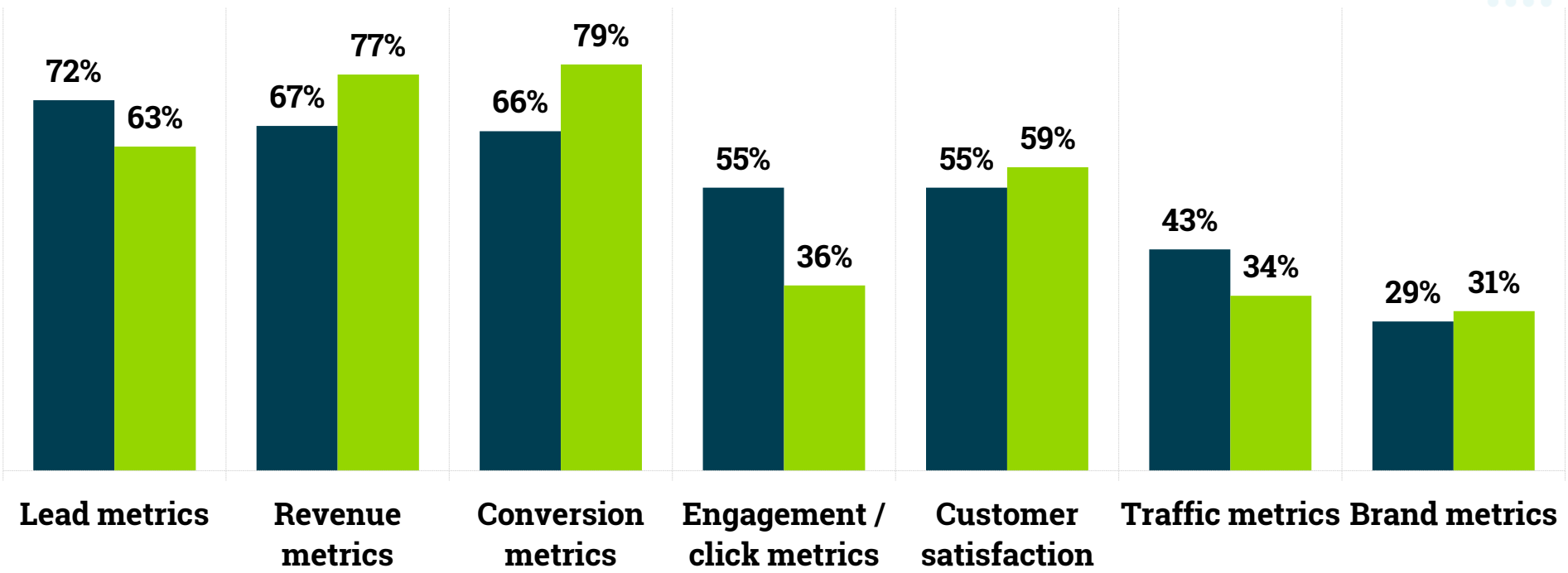
Published on [MarketingCharts.com](https://MarketingCharts.com) in June 2018 | Data Source: [Demand Gen Report](#)

*Based on a survey of 283 B2B marketers, 99% of whom are from companies based in the US and 56% of whom are from companies with more than \$50 million in annual revenues. Almost all are Manager-level and above.*

# B2B Marketing Metrics Perceived As Important to the Marketing Department and to Business Leaders

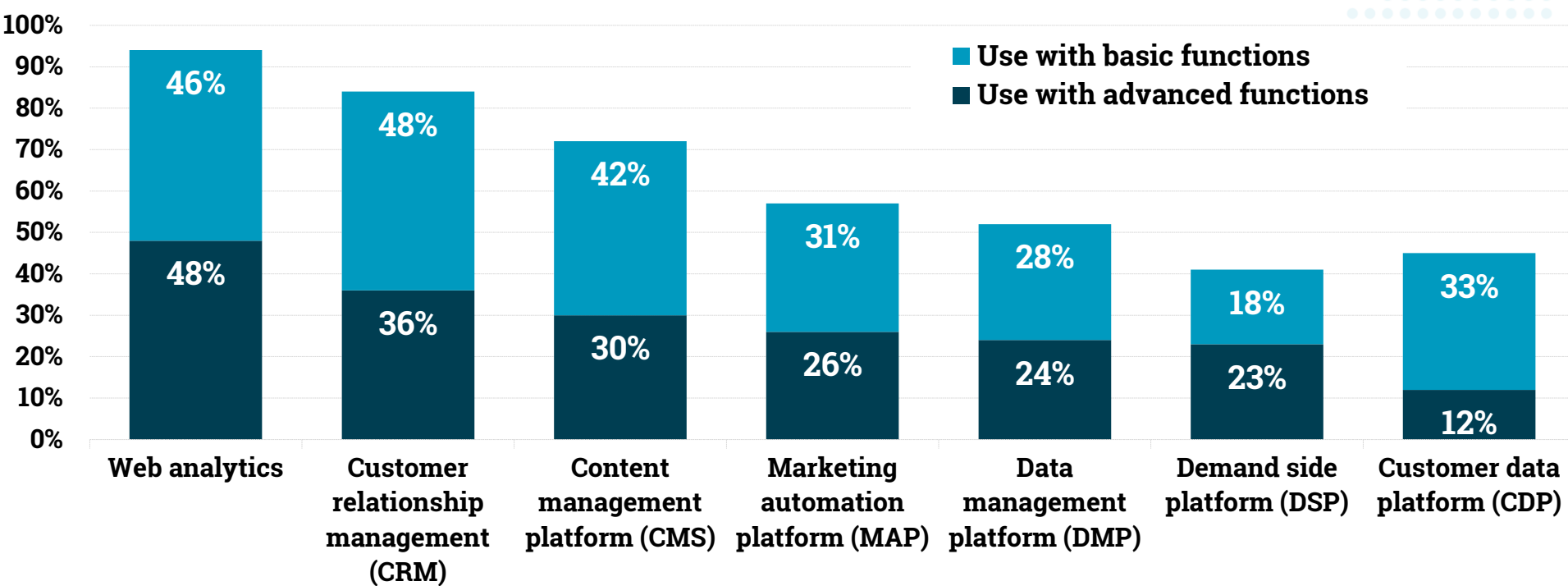
While they measure them most, B2B tech marketers acknowledge that traffic and conversion metrics are less important to the marketing team than lead metrics, revenue metrics and conversion metrics. But while they feel that lead metrics are most important overall to the marketing department, respondents are most apt to believe that conversion metrics and revenue metrics are prioritized by business leadership.

■ % saying metrics are very or extremely important to the marketing department  
 ■ % saying metrics are very or extremely important to business leaders



# B2B Marketers' Use of Technologies in the Marketing Stack

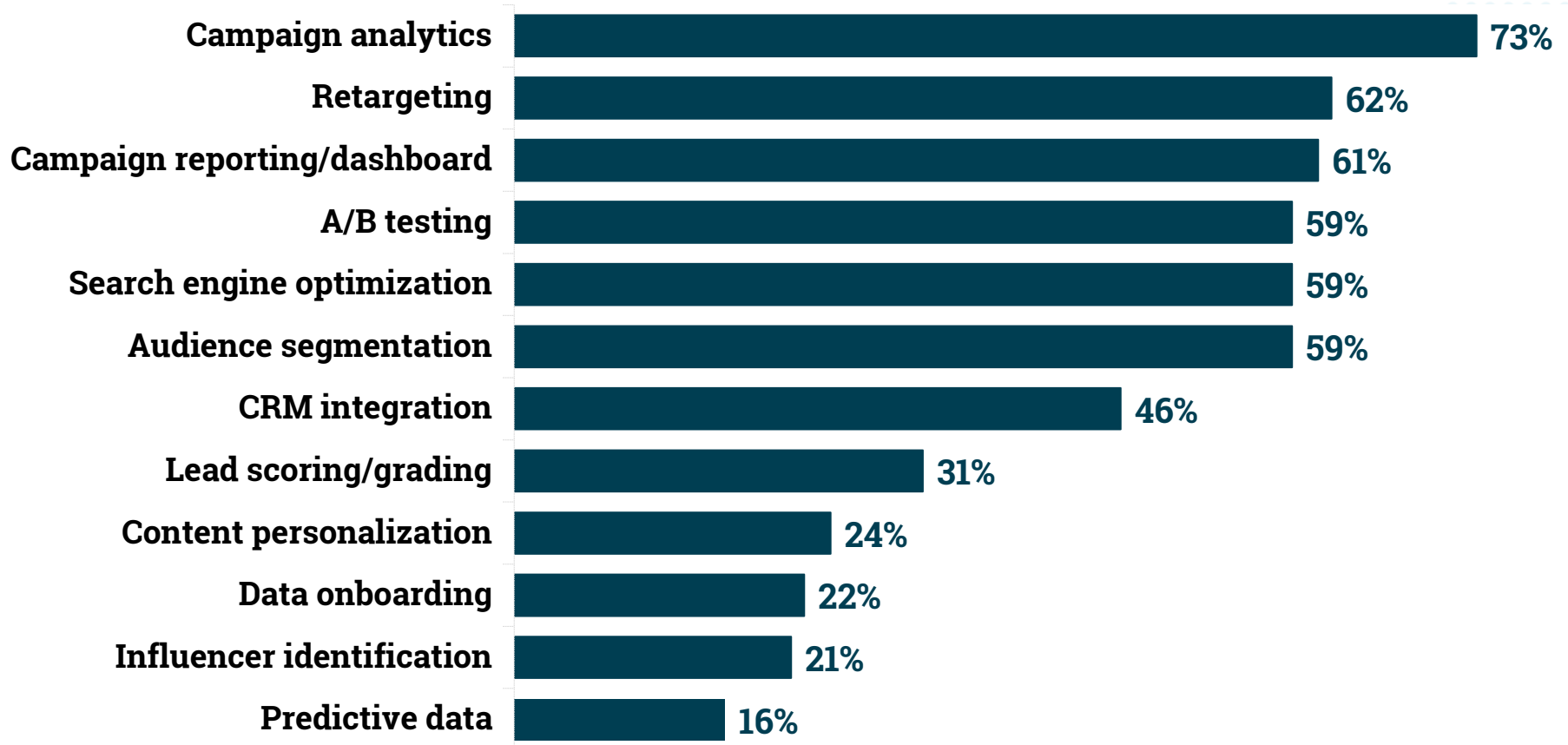
B2B marketers are expressing confidence in their sophisticated use of web analytics but have a ways to go in adopting customer data platforms, per results from Dun & Bradstreet's 2019 Data-Driven Marketing & Advertising Outlook survey. B2B marketers have also widely adopted content management platforms and customer relationship management (CRM) though more use them for basic than advanced functions.



# US B2B Marketers' Use of MarTech Features



In a similar finding, B2B marketers are prioritizing data-driven marketing, but are not yet making full use of the tools available to them, according to results from a Dun & Bradstreet (DnB) study. Based on a survey conducted among 164 B2B marketers by Adweek BrandShare, the report indicates that relatively few are utilizing martech features such as lead scoring/grading and data onboarding, which the analysts say are more commonly used by B2C marketers.



Published on [MarketingCharts.com](https://MarketingCharts.com) in January 2018 | Data Source: [Dun & Bradstreet](#) / [Adweek BrandShare](#)

Based on a survey of 164 B2B brand marketers and agencies, all of whom have job titles of Manager or above and are located in the US  
Q: "Which of the following mar tech features does your company currently use?"

# Why Companies Use Events: B2B vs. B2C



B2B and B2C companies approach events with different goals in mind, though they do share some primary objectives, according to a report from Opus and Event Marketer. Both groups look to drive sales revenue and educate customers, prospects and attendees, but B2B companies are more focused than their B2C counterparts on driving leads, and less concerned with brand awareness.

	All	B2B	B2C
Raise brand awareness	64%	51%	65%
Drive sales revenue	62%	68%	65%
Educate customers, prospects and attendees	60%	64%	71%
Gather leads	43%	53%	32%
Establish/enhance leadership position in the industry/market	41%	38%	35%
Enhance customer satisfaction/loyalty	35%	28%	47%
Enhance partner relationships	32%	28%	35%
Launch new products or services	31%	17%	32%
Other	4%	2%	6%

Published on [MarketingCharts.com](https://MarketingCharts.com) in July 2018 | Data Source: [Opus / Event Marketer](#)

*Based on a survey of 305 brand marketers, primarily from large companies (62% with revenues of at least \$1 billion)*

# Marketing Events Drawing the Largest Budgets: B2B vs. B2C



Events hog a large portion of marketing budgets for B2B exhibitors, and a Splash-sponsored survey from Harvard Business Review (HBR) Analytics Services confirms their budget influence, with B2B respondents allocating 29% of their budgets and B2C respondents 19% of their budgets on average to events. The report indicates that educational events are among the most popular types, and also the ones for which B2B respondents in particular spend the most money.

B2B Events	Hosted	Sponsored	B2C Events	Hosted	Sponsored
Multiple-day conferences	24%	28%	One-day conferences or seminars	16%	17%
Industry trade shows/conventions	23%	44%	Product launches	15%	9%
One-day conferences or seminars	22%	17%	In-store events	15%	6%
Business or channel partner events	19%	17%	Entertainment events	10%	21%
Thought-leadership workshops	14%	9%	Business or channel partner events	10%	11%
VIP breakfasts/lunches/dinners	11%	4%	Community meet-ups	10%	8%
Product launches	10%	3%	Industry trade shows/conventions	9%	15%
Press or influencer events	9%	4%	Lectures	9%	8%
Road shows	8%	4%	Road shows	9%	5%
Product trainings	8%	3%	Thought-leadership workshops	9%	3%
User groups	7%	4%	Multiple-day conferences	8%	15%
Satellite/ancillary events*	5%	8%	Press or influencer events	8%	8%
Award ceremonies	5%	7%	Product trainings	8%	3%
Entertainment events	4%	5%	Fundraisers/philanthropic events	7%	11%
Cocktail parties or happy hours	4%	2%	Cultural festivals (e.g. literary, art)	7%	11%

Published on [MarketingCharts.com](https://MarketingCharts.com) in September 2018 | Data Source: [Harvard Business Review \(HBR\) Analytics Services / Splash](#)

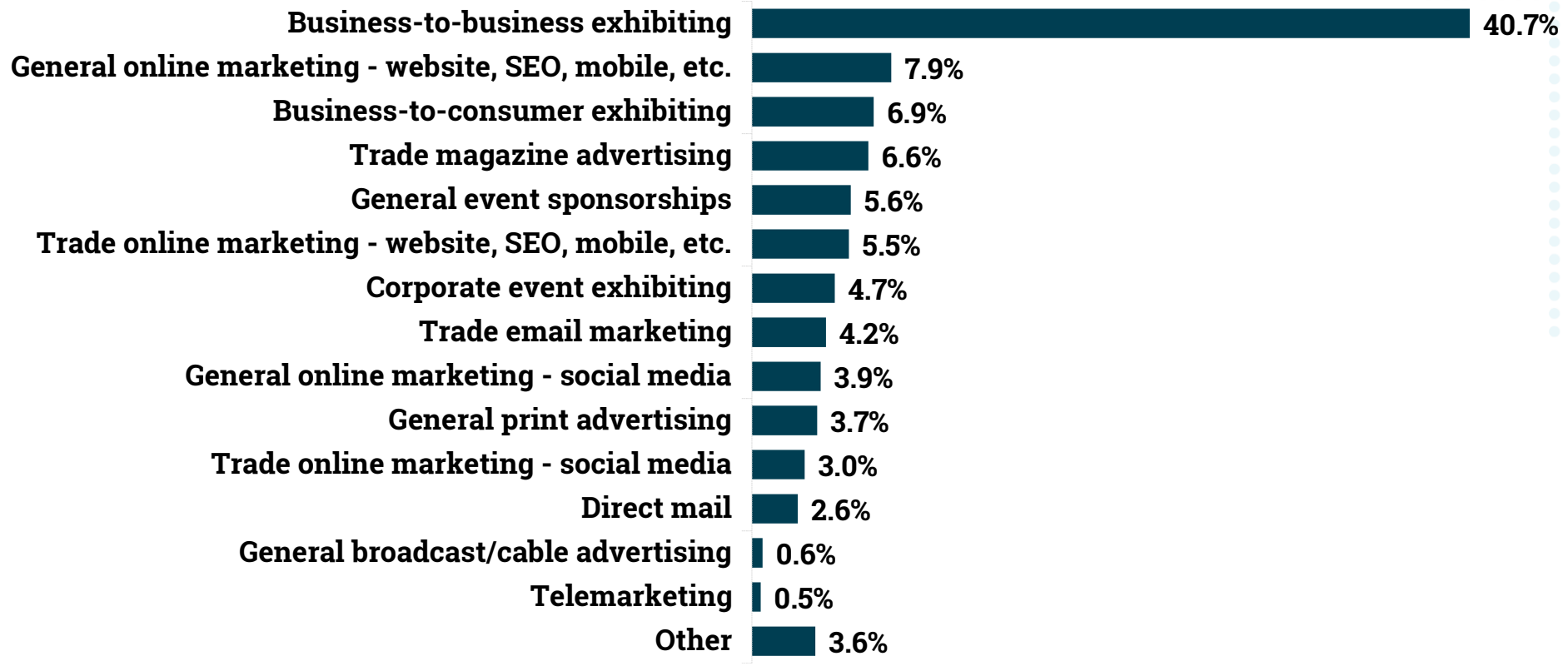
*Based on a survey of 739 members of HBR's audience, half of whom are from organizations with more than \$1 billion in revenues*

*\*Such events around conferences and trade shows | Read as: When sponsoring events, 44% of B2B companies spend the most on industry trade shows/conventions*

# B2B Exhibitors' Marketing Budget Allocation



B2B exhibitions are important for marketers to satisfy critical goals in identifying new customers, reaching sales leads, and building product and company awareness. The importance of exhibitions is reflected by a Center for Exhibition Industry Research (CEIR) survey of 424 exhibitors who had participated in a B2B exhibition within the previous 2 years. These respondents estimated allocating roughly half of their marketing budgets to exhibitions, with the vast majority of that going to B2B (40.7%) exhibitions, and some to B2C events (6.9%) and corporate events (4.7%).



Published on [MarketingCharts.com](http://MarketingCharts.com) in February 2018 | Data Source: [Center for Exhibition Research \(CEIR\)](#)

*Based on a survey of 424 exhibitors who had participated in a B2B exhibition within the 2 years prior to the survey. Only those executives involved in decisions on whether to exhibit and other advertising and marketing channel decisions were invited to participate.*

## About Our Sponsor, Seismic

---

**Seismic is the recognized leader in sales and marketing enablement, equipping global sales teams with the knowledge, messaging, and automatically personalized content proven to be the most effective for any buyer interaction.**

**Powerful content intelligence and analytics enable marketers to prove and improve their impact on the bottom line, revealing what is really driving revenue and what needs to be adjusted. The result for more than 500 global enterprises including IBM, American Express, PayPal, and Quest Diagnostics is better win rates, larger deals, and higher customer retention.**

**Seismic is headquartered in San Diego with additional offices in North America, Europe, and Australia.**

**To see how Seismic is being used by firms in your industry, visit <http://www.seismic.com>.**



marketing  
charts

**Content? Yes. But DYK About Our Services?**  
**Visit our [Services page](#) to learn more.**

# Services



**MarketingCharts attracts a highly qualified audience of tens of thousands of professionals in the marketing ecosystem.**

**Our readers are typically experienced marketers and supply-siders who are Directors, VPs and C-level execs involved in decision-making. They're committed to staying on top of the latest trends and using research and data to shape strategy and decisions.**

## CONTENT CREATION

**You'll get the top-notch content we're known for.**

We can create sponsored or white-labeled data-driven reports in various formats:

- Topic-based decks
- Longer research reports
- and more...

**TELL ME MORE**

## LEAD GENERATION

**We'll help you generate high-quality leads.**

Use research content to reach our audience and drive leads through:

- Dedicated emails
- Native email promotions
- and more...

**I'M INTERESTED**

## BRANDING

**Ally with our trusted & unbiased brand.**

Choose from several ways to present your story to our audience, including:

- On-site display ads
- Sponsored posts
- and more...

**I'M INTRIGUED**

**"Partnering with MarketingCharts has helped us introduce our content to an entirely new audience not previously known to us. Working closely with the MarketingCharts team on our email sends we have enjoyed high click through rates and an influx of new, quality leads."**

**"Working with MarketingCharts was a great experience! They took the time to understand our business and what our goals were before launch of the project. We've seen results in terms of expanding our reach and garnering quality net new leads in our work with MarketingCharts."**

**"MarketingCharts has helped us reach a highly sophisticated audience that's focused on data, results, and transparency. Adding MarketingCharts to our mix of publications brings in an additional class of experienced leads for us to market towards."**

## Thanks for reading!

---

If you're trying to keep up with the latest marketing data and insights, **we're here for you.**

Need to make convincing arguments to your boss or client?

**We'll provide you with quick access to fact-based information that's also summarized in charts.** Stay ahead of the curve and get the micro-content you need.

Having covered the gamut of online and offline marketing and media trends by the numbers since 2007, **we are known for our quality, trustworthy, and unbiased work.**

**Our commitment to you: We will always -**

- Provide quality, relevant, and interesting data
- Prioritize your site experience over our short-term gain
- Offer context, context, context
- Credit the source of the data and provide links wherever available
- Look for interesting angles, not just parrot the PR line

[www.marketingcharts.com](http://www.marketingcharts.com)

[@marketingcharts](#)

[editorial@marketingcharts.com](mailto:editorial@marketingcharts.com) (submissions & questions)

[reports@marketingcharts.com](mailto:reports@marketingcharts.com) (sponsorships & lead gen services)