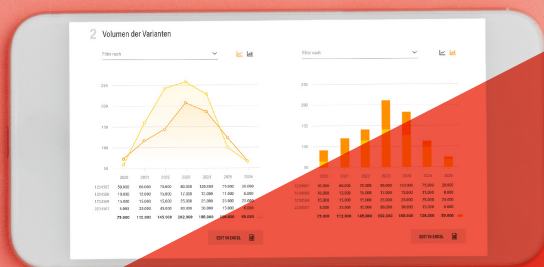


WPROMOTE



# 2019 STATE OF B2B DIGITAL MARKETING

See the new ways B2B marketers are driving success



## B2B DIGITAL MARKETING IS A UNIQUE DISCIPLINE WITH REQUIREMENTS AND

hurdles that can be vastly different from what retail and B2C marketers will face. B2B marketers have to expand their focus beyond simply making a sale, or even ensuring repeat sales; instead, they need to focus on long-term loyalty, upselling, renewal, and overall repeated engagement that provides great value and great customer service.

To do this while ensuring sustainable business growth, B2B digital marketers must be constantly evolving their strategies to account for the latest innovations and shifts in consumer needs. This is why each year, Wpromote conducts a survey assessing the state of B2B digital marketing, taking a deep dive into what B2B digital marketers are trying, how well they're succeeding, and what they're planning for the future.



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# Key Ideas

## Leads remain both the primary objective and biggest challenge.

Naturally, objectives and challenges for B2B digital marketers dovetail each other closely. Delivering quality leads is digital marketers' #1 objective, while generating enough leads is their biggest digital marketing challenge. In 2019, expect to see digital marketers pushing for not only lead quantity, but also lead quality as focus shifts towards customer lifetime value.

## Marketing budgets still haven't caught up with the times.


The data makes it clear that B2B digital marketers still aren't putting their money where their mouths are when it comes to creating sufficient budgets for their digital marketing efforts. Nearly 30% of our survey respondents said they put only 10-25% of their overall budget towards digital, meaning that the lion's share of their marketing budget is still going to traditional despite the demonstrated value of digital campaigns. Unsurprisingly, this statistic goes hand-in-hand with the finding that many B2B brands are still struggling to close the loop on attribution and reporting of their digital efforts.

## Performance is still measured through conversions.

When it comes to judging the effectiveness of digital campaigns, conversions remain the king: 35% of B2B digital marketers still look to conversions (lead to customer) as the top metric to measure performance, compared to 31% in 2017. While improving brand awareness is marketers' #2 goal, conversions are what ultimately matter the most.

## The power of social media is growing.

Social media is ascendant as the prime B2B marketing strategy, with a whopping 63% of B2B digital marketers saying that social media drives leads for them. This number far outstrips the closest competitor, email marketing, with just 47% of marketers saying that channel drives leads. In perhaps the biggest surprise, it's not LinkedIn driving all of this business, but instead Facebook by a wide margin. B2B digital marketers are increasingly understanding the value of a comprehensive social media presence.



A whopping 63% of B2B digital marketers say social media drives leads.

## Growing numbers of B2Bs recognize the need for mobile.

More businesses are designing their web presences to be friendly for mobile users, and businesses that aren't need to get on board the mobile-friendliness train sooner rather than later. About a quarter of B2Bs see 21-40% of their traffic come from mobile, while another quarter see 41-60% of their traffic come from mobile. Put together, more than half of B2B digital marketers are seeing significant percentages of their traffic coming from mobile despite a shocking 18% of marketers saying they have no plans to make a mobile-responsive website in 2019.

## B2Bs are still struggling to make full use of their marketing tech.

A majority of B2B digital marketers are still shying away from using AI and other predictive software, and over 30% think their email nurture program is ineffective or simply don't have one at all. In addition, over 40% say they do not have any kind of marketing automation system. B2Bs in 2019 need to be prepared to invest in and optimize their marketing technology stack in order to drop costs and boost conversions.

Note: Between the 2017/2018 survey and the 2019 survey, survey methodology and data collection methods underwent significant revision and optimization. For this reason, you may note significant changes between 2017/2018 figures and 2019 figures. Responses where major shifts are due to updated methods rather than genuine market developments will be noted with a dagger (\*).





# General Marketing Goals, Challenges, & Trends

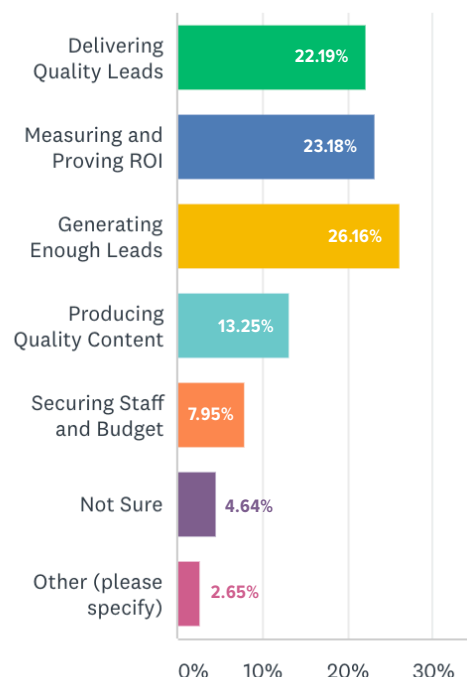
## WHAT IS THE #1 OBJECTIVE OF YOUR DIGITAL MARKETING EFFORTS?

As in 2017, the #1 objective for marketers remains delivering quality leads, solidifying a gradual industry shift in preference towards lead quality over lead quantity. Improving brand awareness has experienced a huge leap in perceived importance, over all other goals including increased ROI. Together, these findings suggest that B2B digital marketers are starting to recognize the crucial role that top-funnel and content-focused initiatives play in winning over, and then retaining, high-quality clients who can consistently deliver returns.



## WHAT IS YOUR BIGGEST DIGITAL MARKETING CHALLENGE?

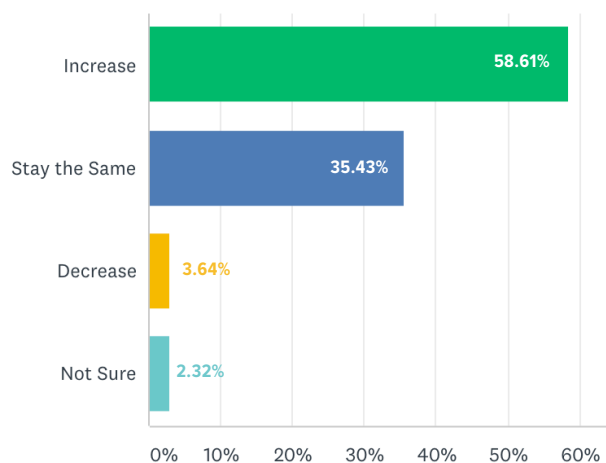
While B2B marketers have demonstrated a clear preference for lead quality, ensuring a sufficient volume of lead quantity still matters. Tied in closely with that need is the ability to clearly demonstrate that digital campaigns have measurable ROI. B2B digital marketers not only want quality leads, but to know that those quality leads are actually bringing in profits for their businesses and that they are getting their money's worth for their digital efforts. To this end, B2B marketers should take into account the power of their first-party CRM data: by understanding the behaviors and attributes of current best customers, B2B marketers can reach new prospects with similar attributes by way of building lookalike/similar audiences and significantly boost efficiency. This is an example of just one strategy marketers can and should employ to ensure that their digital marketing budgets are dollars well spent.



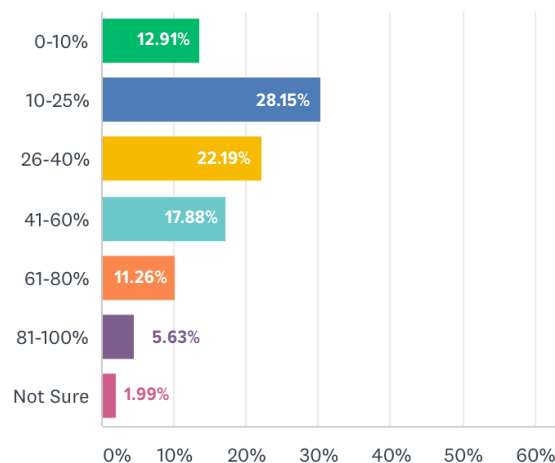
## DO YOU EXPECT YOUR DIGITAL MARKETING BUDGET TO INCREASE, DECREASE, OR STAY THE SAME IN 2019? WHAT PERCENTAGE OF YOUR OVERALL MARKETING BUDGET GOES TO DIGITAL MARKETING (VS. TRADITIONAL)?\*

Nearly 60% of B2B digital marketers say that their digital marketing budgets will increase in 2019, and roughly half of marketers say that between 10% and 40% of their overall marketing budget goes to digital, indicating that marketers have increasing faith in the effectiveness of digital campaigns. However, these positive developments mask a persistent problem: the biggest single chunk of the audience (28%) says that only 10-25% of their budget goes to digital. B2B audience targeting (specifically, prospecting) is challenging, with comparatively small pools of users who are in-market or actively searching for a generic or specific B2B solution. Investment in digital should continue to grow as data pools and targeting capabilities become more advanced. the biggest takeaway here is that B2B digital marketers must become willing to invest in their digital efforts if they want to see real results.

DO YOU EXPECT YOUR DIGITAL MARKETING BUDGET TO INCREASE, DECREASE, OR STAY THE SAME IN 2019?

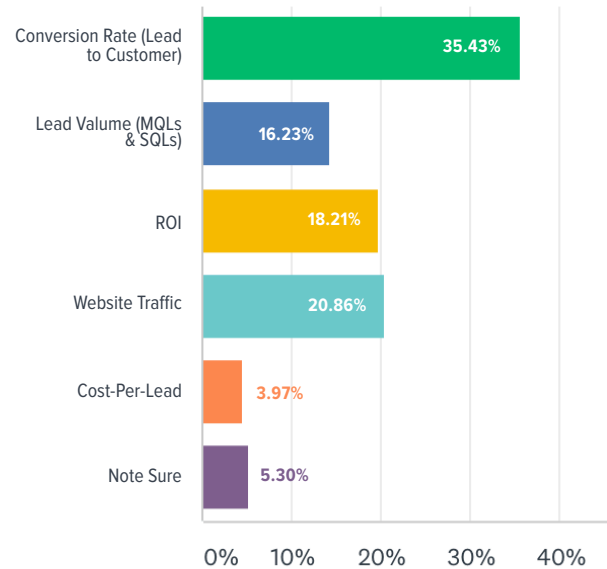


WHAT PERCENTAGE OF OUR OVERALL MARKETING BUDGET GOES TO DIGITAL MARKETING (VS. TRADITIONAL)?



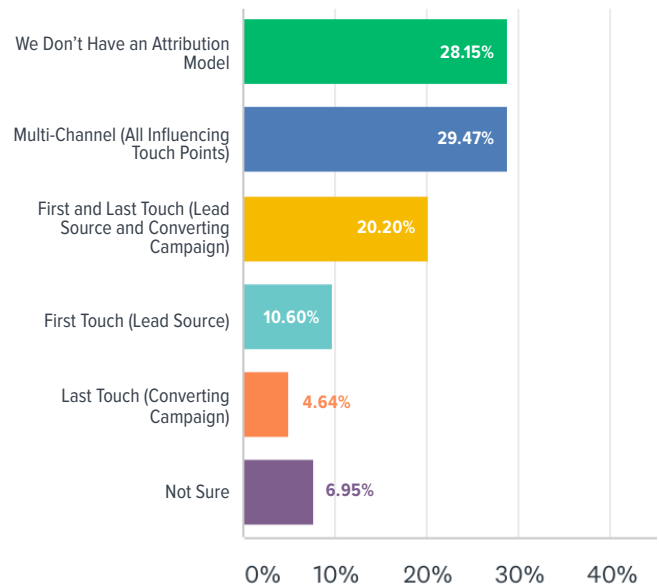
## WHAT IS THE #1 METRIC YOU USE TO MEASURE DIGITAL MARKETING PERFORMANCE?

While B2B digital marketers are increasingly acknowledging the importance of brand awareness as a goal for digital campaigns, conversions remain the #1 metric that marketers use to judge the performance of their efforts. Traffic, ROI, and lead volume (both marketing-qualified leads and sales-qualified leads) each constitute an important KPI. Falling costs associated with more efficient strategies and technological innovations mean that cost-per-lead no longer factors in as an important metric. Instead, B2B marketers should be looking to profitability as the new metric on which to judge their success.



## WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING ATTRIBUTION MODELS DO YOU USE TO MEASURE DIGITAL MARKETING ROI?

Troublingly, nearly 30% of marketers say they don't employ any kind of attribution modeling at all. Roughly 36% say that they use either first or last touch or both, with an additional 7% who aren't sure what model they're using, if any. This leaves only 30% of marketers actually using multi-channel attribution models. Tying back conversions to specific campaigns, audiences, keywords, and more has become critical to understanding what is truly driving new customers, and not just leads. In 2019, B2B digital marketers need to make a radical shift in their thinking and planning around attribution in order to get the most out of their digital campaigns. To truly succeed, marketers should be looking to **profit-driven marketing**.

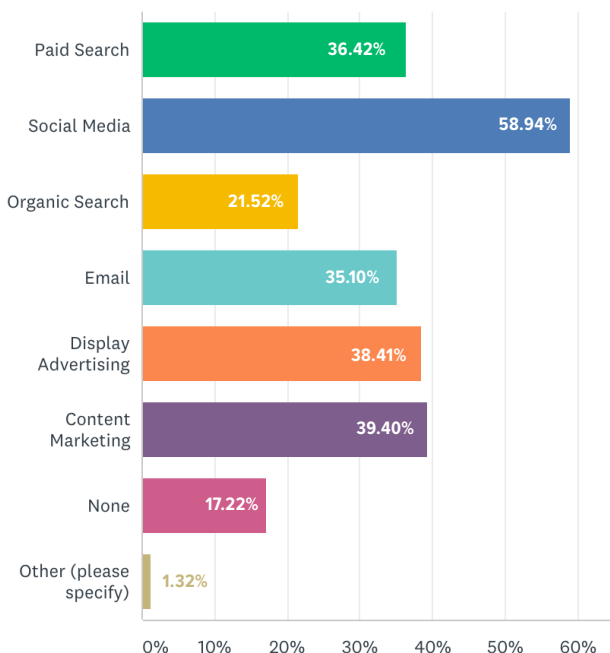




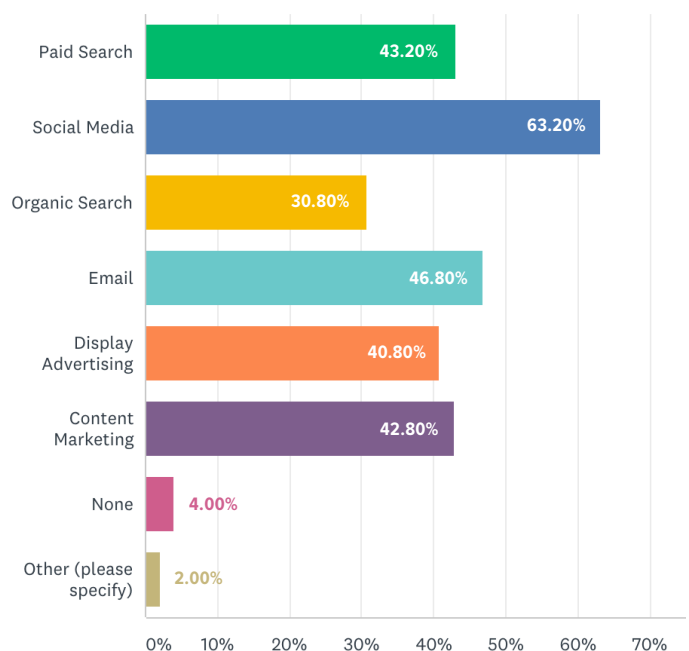
## DO YOU PLAN TO INCREASE BUDGET FOR THE FOLLOWING CHANNELS IN 2019? WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING CHANNELS DRIVE LEADS FOR YOU?

B2B digital marketers are beginning to realize that social media is not just for retail brands; in fact, social media may be especially critical for B2B companies looking to stay top-of-mind with consumers and ensure brand loyalty and longevity. An incredible 60% of marketers are now looking to increase their social media marketing budgets thanks to 63% saying that social media drives leads. Display advertising and content marketing roughly tied in second place for prospective budget increases, with approximately 40% of marketers finding that each channel drives leads for them. While 45% of marketers say that email is responsible for driving leads, only 35% plan to increase their email budgets. Paid search sees a similar if somewhat smaller disparity. Only a scant 4% of marketers said that none of these channels drove leads. Overall, these findings suggest that while social media is most crucial for marketers in 2019, all channels should continue to receive ample attention and budget in order to create the kinds of integrated campaigns that will make the most use out of B2B marketers' budgets.

DO YOU PLAN TO INCREASE BUDGET FOR THE FOLLOWING CHANNELS IN 2019?



WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING CHANNELS DRIVE LEADS FOR YOU?



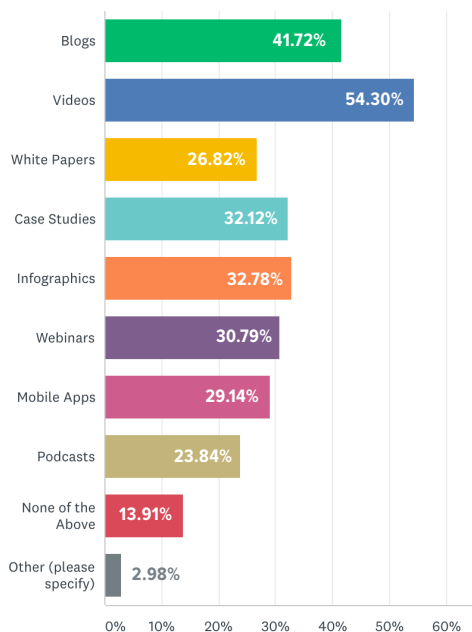


# Channels, Platforms, & Content

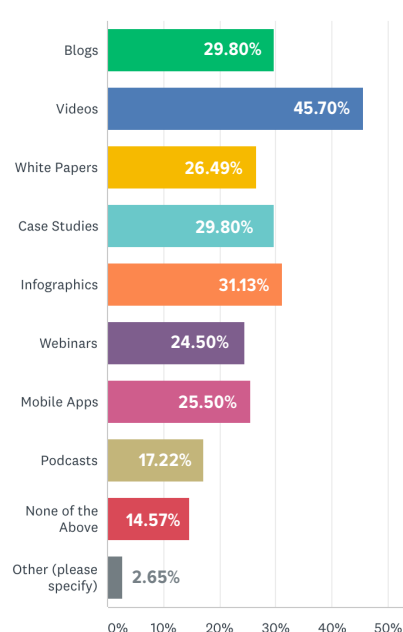
## WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING CONTENT TYPES DO YOU PRODUCE? WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING CONTENT TYPES DRIVE LEADS FOR YOU?\*

In an interesting trend that more than likely correlates strongly with the primacy of social media as a lead-generating channel, videos dominate B2B digital content marketing efforts with 54% of marketers producing videos and 45% saying videos drive leads. Blogs trail in second place with 41% producing blogs despite only 30% saying blogs drive leads. Roughly equal in both amount produced (32%) and leads generated (~30%) are case studies and infographics, with white papers only slightly trailing those two. Perhaps most interesting of all is the significant investment in mobile apps, with about 30% of marketers making such apps and 25% saying those apps drive leads. B2B digital marketers are getting more social and more mobile than ever, making more videos that can be posted to social media platforms like Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter and consumed on mobile devices, responding to audiences that take everything on the go.

### WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING CONTENT TYPES DO YOU PRODUCE?



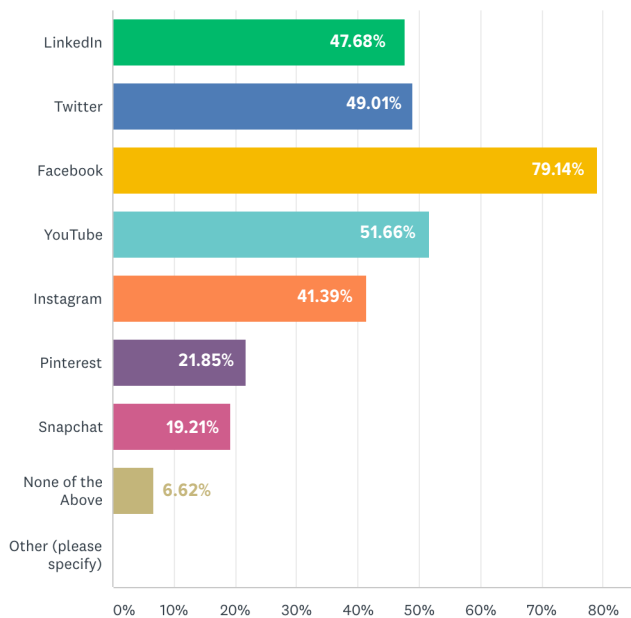
### WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING CONTENT TYPES DRIVE LEADS FOR YOU?



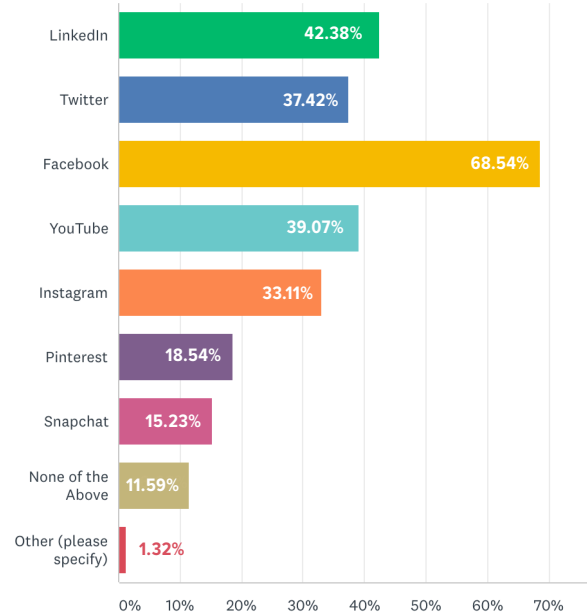
## WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS ARE A PART OF YOUR DIGITAL MARKETING MIX? WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS GENERATE LEADS FOR YOU?\*

While LinkedIn remains one of the best ways for B2Bs to network, advertise, and market themselves, a staggering 80% of B2B digital marketers are building their brands on Facebook, with only about half of marketers (48%) saying the same of LinkedIn. More B2Bs are now using YouTube (52%) and Twitter (49%) than LinkedIn. Even Instagram is commanding an impressive B2B audience, with about 40% making use of it and 33% saying the platform drives leads. Key to note here is that B2Bs aren't just building their brands on social media; significant percentages are saying that these platforms actively drive leads for their businesses. In 2019, B2B marketers should be looking to build their presences on all the major social media platforms to engage current customers and prospect for new ones.

WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS ARE A PART OF YOUR DIGITAL MARKETING MIX?



WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS GENERATE LEADS FOR YOU?



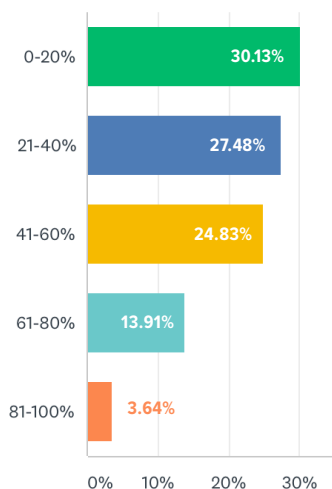
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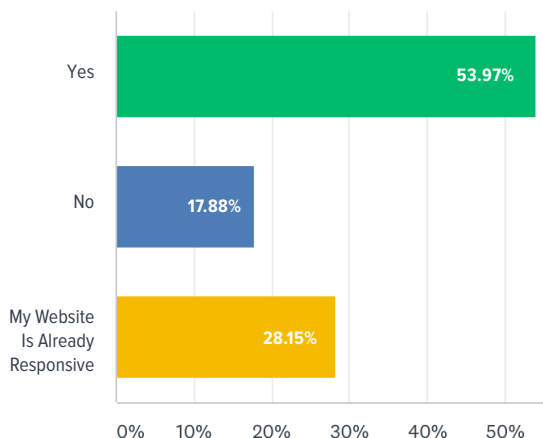
## WHAT PERCENTAGE OF YOUR TRAFFIC COMES FROM MOBILE? DO YOU PLAN ON INVESTING IN RESPONSIVE DESIGN/A MOBILE-FRIENDLY WEBSITE IN 2019?

Noteworthy here is how many B2B marketers say about half their traffic is mobile: 25%, with an additional 27% saying that 21-40% of their traffic comes from mobile. Put together, that's roughly half of B2B marketers saying that between 21% to 60% of their traffic is now mobile. While that's a wide range, it still indicates that half of B2B marketers expect a significant chunk of their traffic to be mobile, explaining an observed rise in the creation and usage of mobile apps. Despite this notable shift, many marketers are still ignoring mobile: 18% said they do not plan to invest in a mobile-responsive site in 2019. B2B marketers that want to truly engage their audiences need to change up this mindset and be ready to go mobile in 2019.

WHAT PERCENTAGE OF YOUR TRAFFIC COMES FROM MOBILE?



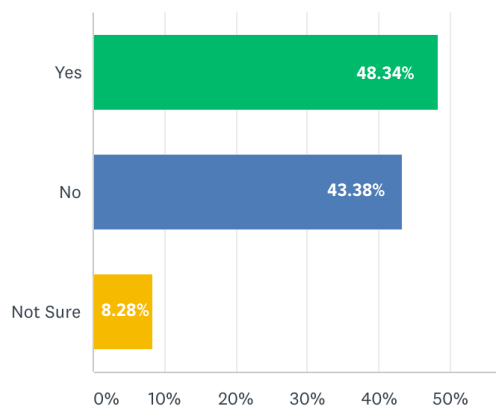
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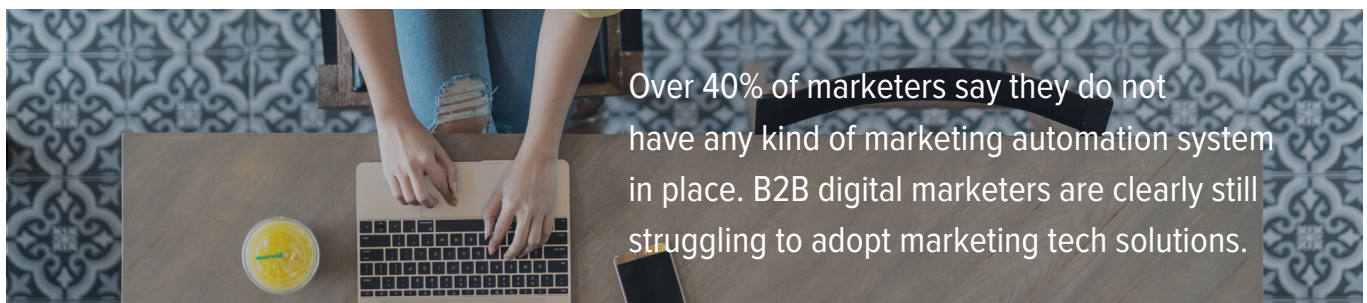
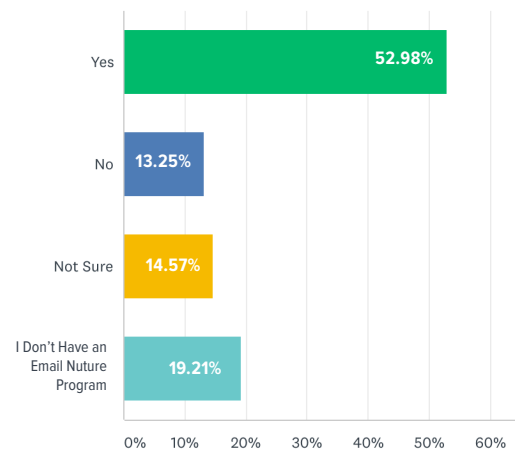
## DO YOU HAVE A MARKETING AUTOMATION SYSTEM IN PLACE? DO YOU THINK YOUR EMAIL NURTURE PROGRAM IS EFFECTIVE?

While B2B digital marketers are growing more accepting of the need for social presences and mobile-ready websites, many still show an aversion to other technological innovations. Over 40% of marketers say they do not have any kind of marketing automation system in place, while similar numbers lack faith in their email nurturing program, with 13% saying it's ineffective, 15% saying they simply aren't sure, and 19% saying they don't have an email nurture program at all. B2B digital marketers are clearly still struggling to adopt marketing tech solutions, despite over half of those who do have an email nurture program saying that they do find it effective for their needs. In 2019, B2B digital marketers should be looking to update their tech stacks to take advantage of the many opportunities that automation and nurturing programs can afford.

DO YOU HAVE A MARKETING AUTOMATION SYSTEM IN PLACE?



DO YOU THINK YOUR EMAIL NURTURE PROGRAM IS EFFECTIVE?



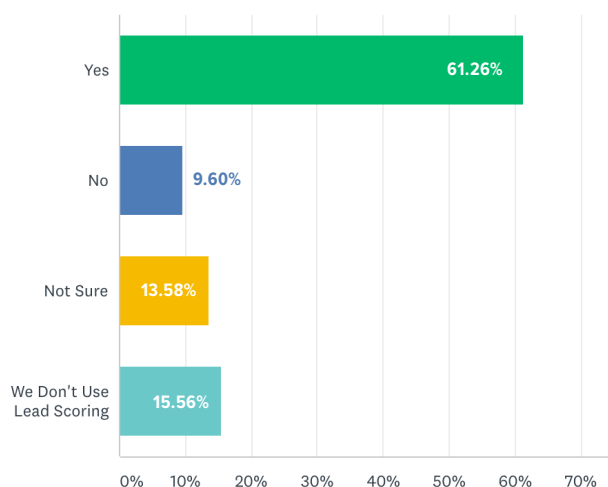


# Marketing Technology & Sales Goals

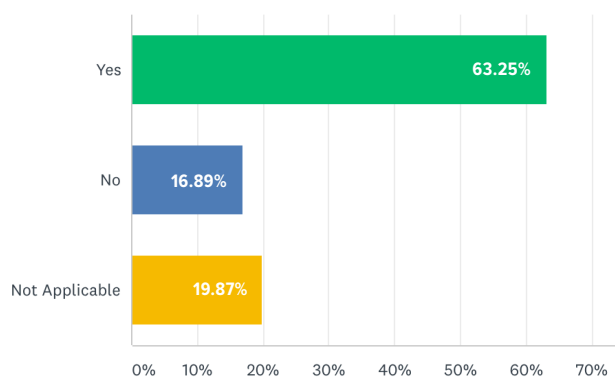
## DO YOU THINK YOUR CURRENT LEAD SCORING IS EFFECTIVE? DO YOU THINK SALES FINDS YOUR CURRENT LEAD SCORING EFFECTIVE? IN YOUR OPINION, DOES YOUR TEAM HAVE WELL-DEFINED CRITERIA FOR WHAT MAKES A SALES-QUALIFIED LEAD?

Encouragingly, it seems like the vast majority of B2B digital marketers are using lead scoring and find their current lead scoring effective. In fact, 77% of marketers say they even have well-defined criteria for what makes a “sales-qualified lead,” meaning they feel confident in their lead scoring giving them leads that will turn into sales. However, there is still room for improvement. Effective lead scoring ensures that marketers are pouring their time, energy, and precious budget into the customers that are most likely to give a return on that investment, and is thus a must-have. While roughly 60% of B2B marketers said their lead scoring was effective, that still leaves 40% of marketers saying it’s either not effective (10%), they aren’t sure (14%), or worse, they don’t use lead scoring at all (16%). Wpromote strongly encourages the implementation and use of lead scoring to make sure that campaigns are worthwhile and profitable.

### DO YOU THINK YOUR CURRENT LEAD SCORING IS EFFECTIVE?



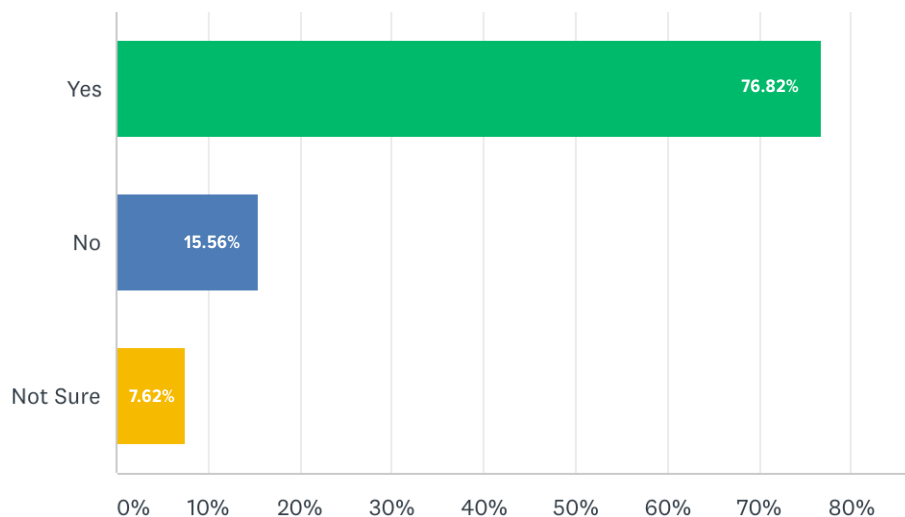
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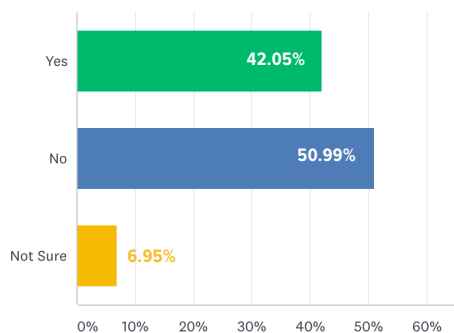
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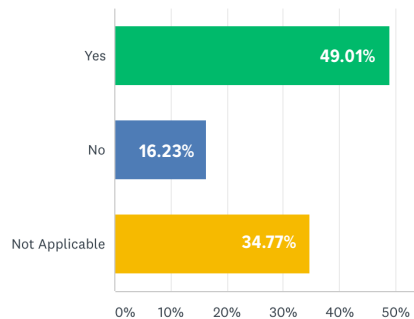
### HAVE YOU EVER TRIED, OR ARE YOU CURRENTLY ENGAGED IN, ACCOUNT-BASED MARKETING (ABM)? IF YES, DO YOU THINK YOUR CURRENT ACCOUNT-BASED MARKETING (ABM) STRATEGY IS EFFECTIVE?

Account-based marketing (ABM) is an alternative marketing strategy that focuses on acquiring a list of pre-selected ideal target accounts through direct outreach rather than through more traditional inbound marketing tactics. For B2B companies, a single account or handful of accounts can have a huge impact. For this reason, the use of ABM can be an efficient and cost-saving method to boost profits while reducing costs and outlay. The majority of B2B digital marketers say they are not using ABM, with 50% saying no and 7% saying they simply aren't sure. Despite this, nearly 50% of those who do use ABM say they find it effective.

HAVE YOU EVER TRIED, OR ARE YOU CURRENTLY ENGAGED IN, ACCOUNT-BASED MARKETING (ABM)?



IF YES, DO YOU THINK YOUR CURRENT ACCOUNT-BASED MARKETING (ABM) STRATEGY IS EFFECTIVE?

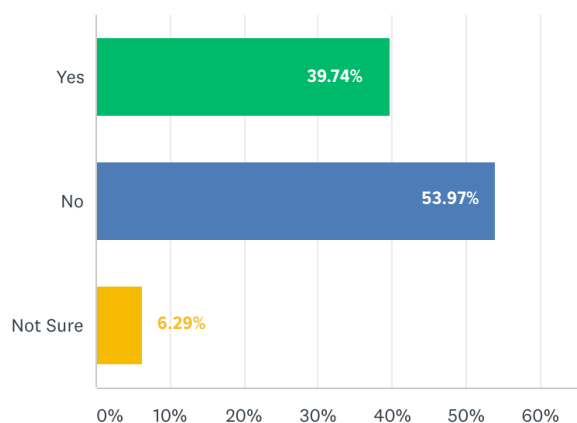




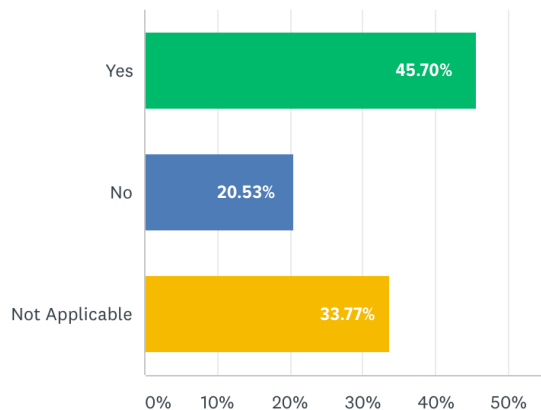
## HAVE YOU EVER TRIED, OR ARE YOU CURRENTLY ENGAGED IN USING, AI (ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE) OR PREDICTIVE SOFTWARE? IF YES, DO YOU THINK YOUR CURRENT AI/PREDICTIVE SOFTWARE STRATEGY IS EFFECTIVE?

Artificial intelligence and predictive software are both enjoying a steady rise in popularity as more businesses add automation to their processes and rely on smart software to help them save time and resources when meeting their customers' needs or making marketing decisions. As with ABM, a surprising number of marketers are still not embracing new technologies, with over half (54%) saying no and 6% saying they simply aren't sure. Important to note is that of those who do use AI and/or predictive software, 46% find it effective, meaning that for marketers who do use these technologies, the vast majority of them find it useful (compared to just 20% saying it's not). B2Bs that haven't yet implemented these technologies will want to do so in 2019 in order to stay competitive. AI and predictive software are both part of a strategy informed by [digital intelligence](#), and Wpromote strongly encourages our clients to [incorporate digital intelligence](#) to make their marketing work smarter, not harder.

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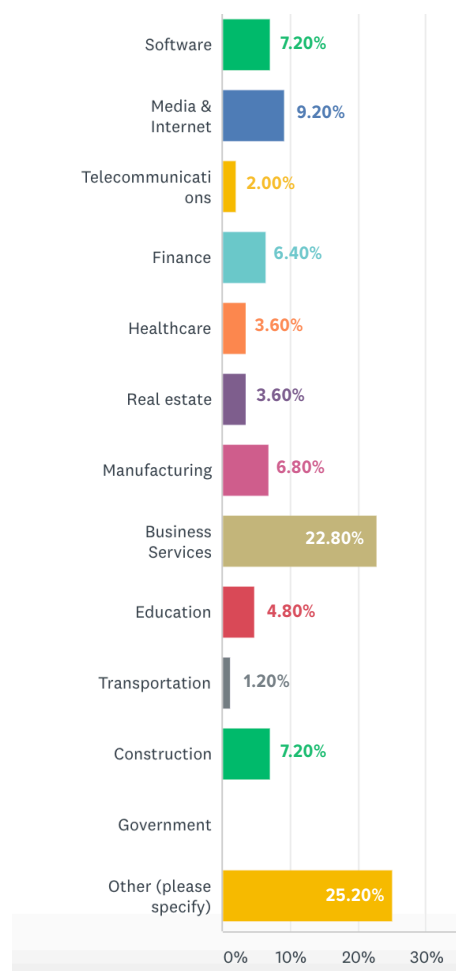


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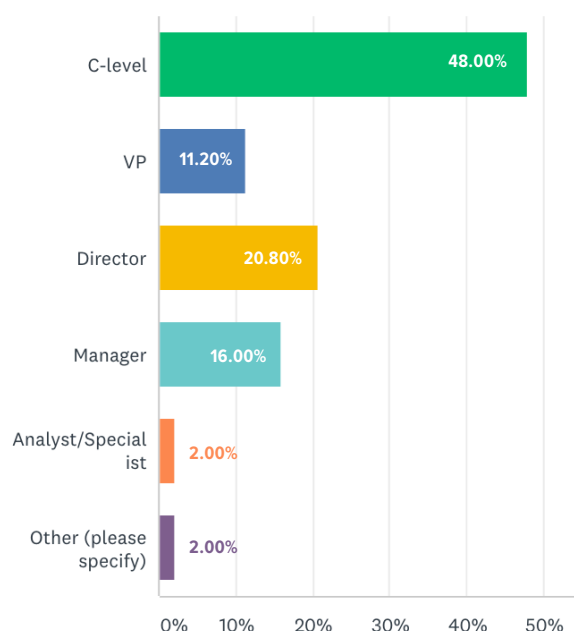


# Demographics & Survey Methodology

WHICH INDUSTRY DOES YOUR BUSINESS BELONG TO?



WHAT IS YOUR JOB LEVEL?



This survey was conducted online in December of 2018. All participants responded to a survey created on SurveyMonkey and were sourced from a pool of B2B digital marketers who met our specific targeting criteria. We received 302 responses from U.S. B2B marketers across a wide-range of industries and job levels/roles.

Percentages stated in this report are rounded to the nearest percent. Questions marked with an asterisk exceed a 100% total, as respondents were asked to select all applicable answers for these questions.





# Final Thoughts

In 2019, B2B digital marketers have begun to recognize that social media channels and mobile platforms are increasingly the ways in which their consumers engage with their brands, and are making significant strides in accommodating these needs. While B2B marketers are still treating conversions as king, growing numbers of B2Bs are realizing the importance of brand awareness, and the role brand awareness plays in the long-term profitability of their brands.

As B2B marketers grow more comfortable expanding beyond traditional desktop- and website-based marketing strategies, they are increasingly looking for ways to ensure that the leads they bring in are of high quality and in sufficient volume to ensure success. For B2Bs to ensure that their digital efforts are worthwhile, they need to continue making significant changes to their digital marketing approaches, including:

- ▶ Implementing long-term profit-driven strategies that look at the total value of an account over time
- ▶ Developing and launching fully mobile-ready web presences, including at least a mobile-responsive site but possibly also mobile apps and mobile-focused social media presences
- ▶ Investing in their marketing technology stacks, looking into and/or actually adding AI, predictive software, marketing automation, email nurturing, and lead scoring programs

Going forward in 2019, B2B digital marketers should expect marketing automation of all kinds to become increasingly critical to successful digital marketing strategies, and prepare accordingly. They should also be looking to update or adjust their content marketing based on trends towards interactive social channels and videos which can be consumed anywhere, and are often watched on social media and on the go. Responsive design will become even more critical, and B2Bs will no longer be able to ignore the importance of thinking mobile-first when designing their websites. Above all, B2B digital marketers will need to be agile, able to quickly adapt to shifting trends and quickly update their strategies to stay ahead of the competition.



For B2Bs to ensure that their digital efforts are worthwhile, they need to continue making significant changes to their digital marketing approaches.




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# READY TO BE A CHALLENGER?



Contact Wpromote today  
and we'll guide you through  
digital strategies & more!

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