



The 2024 B2B marketing trends report

NORVELL jefferson

JANUARY 2024

The 2024 B2B marketing trends report

In our survey, we looked at the latest trends in B2B marketing and what's expected in the future. Marketing has become more complex, especially since the pandemic in 2020 accelerated how much we rely on digital tools and AI.

Marketing teams are still adapting to this new digital world. They face ongoing challenges like collaborating effectively with sales teams, excelling at SEO, and establishing a robust social media presence. They're also striving to make marketing more personalized and tell stories that truly resonate with people.

All of this is occurring during challenging economic times, often with limited budgets. It's challenging for marketers to retain their top talent. In these difficult times, it's incredibly beneficial for B2B brands to have strong partners like agencies to guide them.

This trend report was intended to use survey insights to represent the industry's voice and provide inspiration and insights. This, in turn, could hopefully encourage you to develop better ways to ultimately build stronger brands through innovative marketing.



The **key** **insights** of this report

01

Investing in marketing during economic downturns can lead to long-term success

Historical evidence shows that companies that boldly advertise during recessions often emerge as market leaders, gaining greater market share and profitability.

02

The future of marketing is data-driven, efficient, and ethically responsible

There is a clear shift towards leveraging technology, personalization, and sustainability in marketing strategies. Brands are using data analytics, AI, and automation to gain insights, improve customer experiences, and create more individualized interactions.

03

Collaboration and partnerships are key

In-house teams and external agencies are collaborating more closely than before. Outsourcing creative tasks to agencies brings fresh insights, while functions like PR, analytics, social media, and SEO/SEM are managed internally or by freelancers.

04

B2B marketing focuses on brand cultivation and engagement

There is a strategic shift from aggressive sales tactics to building relationships, emphasizing brand development, content quality, and technological innovation. Experiential marketing plays a crucial role in creating immersive experiences and deepening connections with clients.

05

AI and automation are transforming marketing

B2B marketers are adopting AI to enhance copywriting, creativity, and content generation. While there are concerns about data privacy and accuracy, the majority recognizes the potential benefits of AI for data-driven decision-making, automation, and personalized customer experiences.





About the survey

We've conducted this survey amongst clients (n=134) and B2B marketers in North America & Europe. Across different industries, ranging from health and pharma to food industrials, kickstarters, scale-ups, and sustainability initiatives.

The ambition was to take a broad perspective to capture a wide range of responses and highlight the priorities among respondents. This allows us to showcase what they consider important and draw conclusions based on their feedback.

Throughout the survey, multiple-choice answers have been used, resulting in higher percentages for each question's outcome. This emphasizes the significance of the responses, reflected in the elevated percentages.

Table of contents

CHAPTER 1

A new defining outlook on marketing



CHAPTER 2

Personalization becomes the heart of modern marketing



CHAPTER 3

Content marketing's evolution: shifting from sales to tailored education



CHAPTER 4

Prioritizing brand cultivation and engagement with digital marketing



CHAPTER 5

Experiential marketing: A new opportunity in B2B client engagement



CHAPTER 6

AI and B2B marketing: navigating innovation with a focus on security and creativity





01

A new defining outlook on marketing

In the face of 2024, businesses grapple with the dual challenges of financial uncertainty and the need for strategic sales and marketing alignment. During economic shifts, a historical pattern emerges.

“Companies that dare to amplify their marketing in downturns often emerge stronger, seizing market share and securing customer loyalty.”

This strength is fueled by a transformative approach in marketing, which puts a spotlight on personalization, harnesses the latest technology, and steadfastly supports sustainable practices.

As the industry pivots towards a collaborative model, the road ahead is shaped by innovation and a commitment to value-driven engagement.



The challenges ahead

“In the middle of budget constraints, economic and competitive uncertainty, the drive to synchronize sales and marketing efforts persists.”

As companies look towards 2024, many are apprehensive about financial issues, particularly potential budget cuts or uncertainty influenced by changing markets and consumer habits. Economic instability is another major concern, with fears of market fluctuations and unforeseen events.

A significant number of marketers also recognize the need for better alignment between sales and marketing to engage customers effectively and increase sales.

These challenges collectively underline the need for flexible internal coordination and effective resource management to successfully steer through the uncertain economic conditions and meet organisational goals.

Interestingly, while content strategy and creation, lead generation, and adapting to technological changes may not be among the top challenges, they are crucial keys to solving them. Let's not forget the significance of attracting and retaining talent, which serves as the foundation for success.

How well-prepared are you to tackle these first four?

“In response to economic challenges, brand building will become even more important. A strong brand can differentiate a business and provide stability during turbulent times.”



Which three challenges do you foresee in achieving your objectives in 2024?



Budget decrease/
uncertainty



Sales and marketing
alignment



Competitive
landscape



Economic
uncertainty



Lead
generation



Attracting and
retaining talent



Adapting to
tech changes



Content strategy
and creation



Navigating
regulatory and
privacy concerns



Other

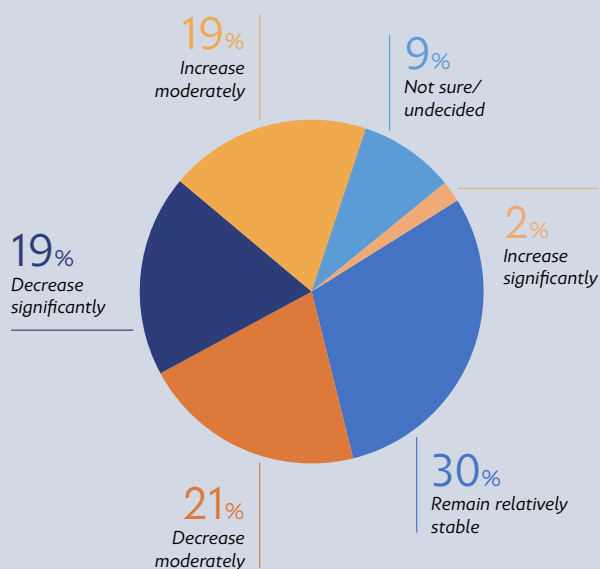




Approaching budgets with long-term success



How do you anticipate your budget allocation will change for 2024 compared to previous years?



“History shows us that companies who advertise boldly in economic downturns don’t just weather the storm, they emerge as market leaders.”

Historically, companies increasing their marketing spending during recessions outperform their competitors in the long term. Such investments can seem counterintuitive but often lead to greater market share and profitability, as they stay top-of-mind for consumers.

From Roland Vaile’s 1920s study to the 2008-2009 financial crisis, consistent evidence supports the benefits of this approach. Notable examples include Kellogg’s rise during the Great Depression, Toyota’s gains in the 1973-75 recession, and growth for Pizza Hut and Taco Bell during the 1990-91 downturn. Firms that market boldly during tough times position themselves for success when the economy bounces back.

In a shift of marketing dynamics that reflects the transformation traditional B2B is undergoing, the same principle applies. In the face of uncertainty, it takes a bold move to do what it takes and be seen more often, with stories that add value. It’s time to abandon a conservative mindset and put even more effort into staying ahead of the competition.



Emerging trends of 2024

“There is a strong movement towards not just creating content, but shaping it in a way that resonates on a personal level with the audience.”



In which three trends are you most interested?



The current marketing landscape shows a push towards refining content strategies, with a strong emphasis on personalisation and customer engagement. Brands are striving to improve content quality and interactivity, tailoring it to the distinct needs of their audience.

Adding experiential marketing to these efforts can enhance brand building. By delivering immersive and interactive content

experiences, companies can forge a deeper connection with their audience, creating a brand experience that's memorable and resonates long-term.

Content marketing, while not new, calls for marketers to elevate their approach as channels become flooded with material. The key to differentiation lies in crafting personalized, creative, and valuable content that cuts through the noise.



Ideas to get started

- ✓ **Prioritize authenticity**
Focus on demonstrating your brand's societal impact alongside quality offerings to resonate with consumers seeking meaningful connections.
- ✓ **Short video content**
Leverage the high ROI of short videos on platforms like Instagram Reels, YouTube Shorts, and TikTok to enhance your digital presence.
- ✓ **Niche content strategy**
Address content saturation by targeting specific niches and tailored content, distinguishing your brand in crowded markets.
- ✓ **Embrace hyper-personalization**
Integrate hyper-personalized elements like custom whitepapers and targeted content to engage effectively with B2B decision-makers.

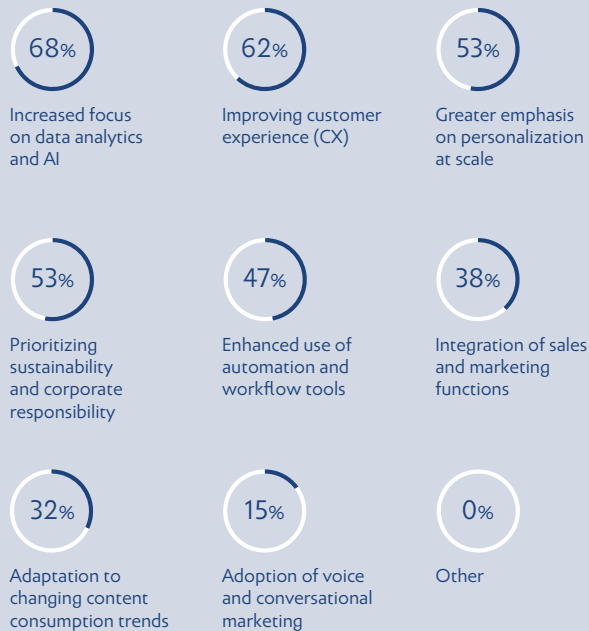




Driving the future of marketing



How do you foresee the role of marketing & communication evolving over the next five years?



The underlying trend is a clear shift towards leveraging technology to enhance marketing and communication strategies. There's a focus on using data analytics and AI to gain insights and automate processes, alongside improving customer experiences to meet modern consumers' expectations.

Sustainability and corporate responsibility are also becoming more integrated into business practices, indicating a move towards **value-driven marketing**. The push for personalization at scale suggests that technology will be used to create more individualized customer interactions.

In summary, these emerging trends underscore the need for businesses to evolve and stay agile. By embracing technology, sustainability, and personalization, they can create meaningful, data-driven marketing strategies that resonate with customers and their values.

“Marketing’s future is clear: become more insightful with data, quicker in action, and firmer on doing what’s right to provide value for your customers.”



Ideas to get started

- ✓ **Omnichannel consistency**
Maintain uniform branding and messaging across platforms, including websites and customer service.
- ✓ **Customer feedback utilization**
Implement surveys with tools like SurveyMonkey or Typeform for post-interaction feedback and insights.
- ✓ **Personalized customer interactions**
Segment customers and create targeted content based on detailed buyer personas.
- ✓ **Transparent CSR benchmarking**
Set specific goals for your company’s social and environmental efforts, making sure they match your company’s main goals and beliefs.
- ✓ **AI-driven chatbots for engagement**
Integrate chatbots on your website for lead qualification and real-time assistance, linking them with your CRM system for efficient data capture and scheduling.
- ✓ **AI-powered predictive analytics**
Utilize tools like Salesforce Einstein to forecast B2B customer buying patterns from sales data.





Evolving our ways of collaboration



“Better outcomes will thrive on partnerships, where internal and external teams collaborate to ignite innovation, quality, and brand excellence.”

The future of marketing is set to embrace a partnership model, with in-house teams and external agencies collaborating more closely than before. Blending expertise is key to elevate partnerships and drive more co-creation as this will become vital in safeguarding quality and brand consistency.

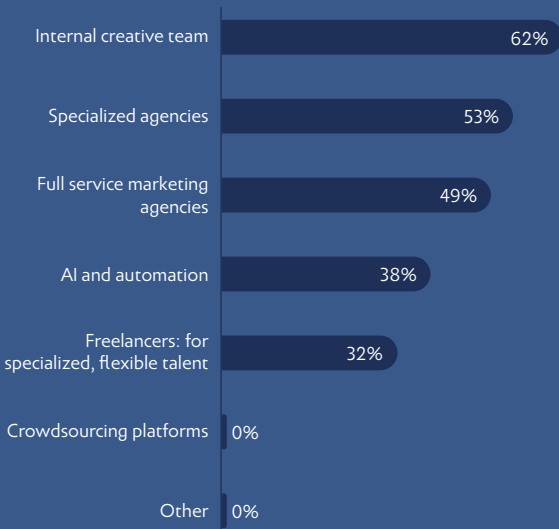
Making sure that whoever does it - they do it right. Getting external expertise and mixing it with internal capabilities help achieve that. Agencies must adapt their services to better align with evolving customer needs. They continue to provide valuable insights and expertise, while also helping customers optimize their efforts and resources.

Survey results indicate a preference for outsourcing creative campaigns, branding, and content creation, while functions like PR, analytics, social media, and SEO/SEM are less frequently outsourced, suggesting these may be managed internally or by freelancers or deemed less critical.

This transformative shift will give full-service agency collaboration a new meaning because of client empowerment.



Where do you expect to source creative marketing support in 2024?



Select three types of marketing activities you prefer to outsource to an agency



An abstract illustration at the top of the page shows two stylized faces of women. The faces are composed of geometric shapes in shades of blue, orange, and red. They are framed within a circular shape that is partially cut off by the top edge of the page. The background of the entire page is a solid dark red.

02

Personalization becomes the heart of modern marketing

What's the deal beyond your product?

While the appeal of performance marketing's reliability remains strong, it's becoming increasingly clear that the marketing landscape requires a seamless integration of brand-building and performance strategies.

Understanding your customers on a detailed level and creating content tailored precisely to their needs and preferences will be of greater importance.

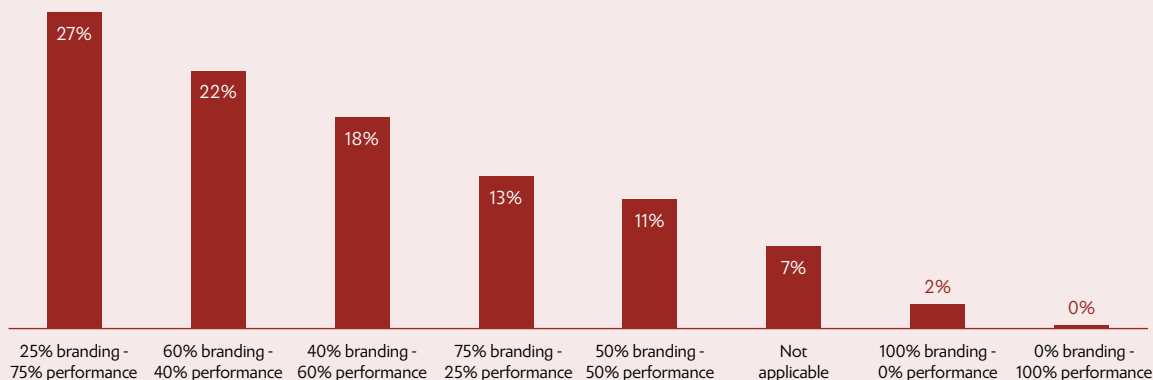
In an era where customers anticipate personalized interactions, brands that prioritize this approach will establish deeper connections and cultivate unwavering loyalty.



The right balance between brand and performance



How would you distribute your marketing communication activities between brand and performance marketing?



“As we enter 2024, let’s not forget: your brand’s distinct character is its strength, particularly in challenging times.”

In 2024, marketers must strike the right balance between brand and performance marketing. Economic uncertainties have intensified the debate. Budget allocation often leans heavily towards performance marketing due to its predictability and trackability, particularly in B2B contexts characterized by extended sales cycles.

While performance marketing provides measurable results, brand-building delivers both short-term lifts and long-term growth and equity. Brands must connect with a broad audience early, as many customers aren’t actively buying at any given time. Combining brand and activation strategies creates a multiplier effect that boosts both short-term and long-term performance.

The survey highlights a preference for integrated marketing strategies over purely branding or performance-oriented approaches, with a slight inclination towards prioritizing branding efforts.



Expanding your brand and generating growth



Which strategies would you select to expand your brand and generate growth?



“The path to brand expansion is paved with personalized journeys, technology-enhanced experiences, and captivating storytelling – all to forge deeper connections with our audience.”

The results reflect a clear trend towards personalized and technology-enhanced marketing strategies for brand expansion.

The leading choice, personalizing customer journeys, indicates a shift towards customer-centric approaches, acknowledging the importance of delivering tailored experiences. Enhancing digital presence is the next priority, signifying the necessity of a strong online footprint in today's market.

The emphasis on brand storytelling and the use of emerging technologies like AI reveals a desire to create more engaging and innovative interactions with customers. These strategies suggest that companies are looking to forge deeper connections with their audience, harnessing tech to refine their message and delivery.



Content driving future campaigns



The trend is unmistakable: there's a strong move towards digital and visually appealing content. Leading the pack are digital ads, infographics, and virtual events. They highlight the need for not just eye-catching visuals, but also informative and interactive content to really grab the audience's attention.

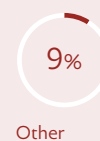
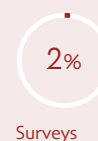
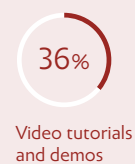
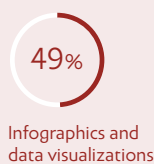
This shift indicates a growing preference for content that both educates and engages in a crowded digital world.

The evidence suggests a marketing world that appreciates a variety of content types to reach different consumer interactions. It's about harnessing digital media's strengths while still valuing traditional approaches.

“What the data tells us is simple yet profound: The variety in our content and how we interact with it will shape the future of marketing campaigns.”



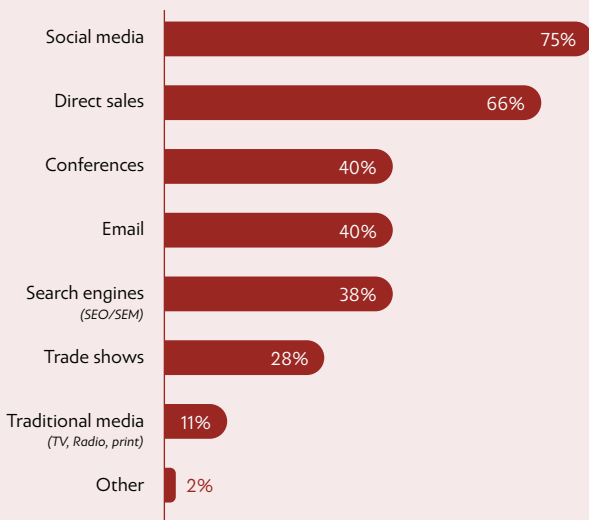
Which three types of content do you anticipate will be most effective in driving your campaigns?



The increasing importance of social media



Select the three most important channels you're planning on using in 2024



“B2B marketing is evolving, reinforcing personal relationships with the leverage of digital platforms to broaden influence and deepen engagement.”

A strong digital focus is evident, with social media leading upcoming marketing efforts. Businesses recognize the value of these platforms' reach and precision. Search engines are also crucial, highlighting the importance of digital visibility for attracting potential clients.

Direct sales remain essential, showcasing the enduring belief in personal customer engagement. Despite digital dominance, traditional in-person events like conferences and trade shows retain their value, emphasizing the irreplaceable benefits of physical networking and relationship-building.

Email marketing continues to be a preferred method, likely due to its direct approach and customization possibilities.

In summary, it becomes a strategic blend of digital innovation and traditional relationship-building in B2B marketing, as marketers navigate the balance between online engagement and the enduring need for personal interactions.



Ideas to get started

- ✓ **Targeted paid advertising**
Invest in PPC advertising on platforms like Google Ads or LinkedIn, focusing on specific demographics and industries. Implement retargeting strategies to re-engage interested visitors.
- ✓ **Advanced email personalization**
Customize emails based on the recipient's website interactions, purchase history, or stage in the buyer's journey, moving beyond basic personalization techniques.
- ✓ **Content marketing & SEO optimization**
Create high-quality content that addresses your audience's needs and interests. Optimise SEO strategies, including keyword research, on-page optimization, and authoritative backlinks, to enhance search engine rankings.
- ✓ **Website conversion optimization**
Ensure your website is user-friendly, quick to load, and optimized for conversions. Incorporate clear CTAs, simplify navigation, and guarantee mobile responsiveness.
- ✓ **Comprehensive A/B testing**
Routinely conduct A/B tests on email aspects like content, layout, send times, and CTAs, aiming to continually boost engagement rates.





03

Content marketing's evolution: shifting from sales to tailored education

2024 marks a significant turning point in content marketing, where brands are no longer just selling but actively seeking to educate and inform their consumers in order to inspire value in the way they communicate with them.

The preference for educational videos and tutorials underscores the importance of dynamic, knowledge-based content.

However, this shift towards knowledge-based marketing brings challenges such as tailoring content, differentiation, specialized knowledge, and content quality.



The current landscape of content marketing

“Brands are now more than just promoters; they’re becoming trusted sources of knowledge, blending customer experiences with expert insights to build trust in a competitive digital world.”

The central theme connecting the results is the strategic prioritization of content marketing as a key driver for brand authority and visibility. Organizations are heavily investing in digital content, with a notable consensus for videos and tutorials, showcasing the importance of dynamic and educational content. Customer success stories and case studies are also pivotal, emphasizing the value of relatable and real-world applications of products or services

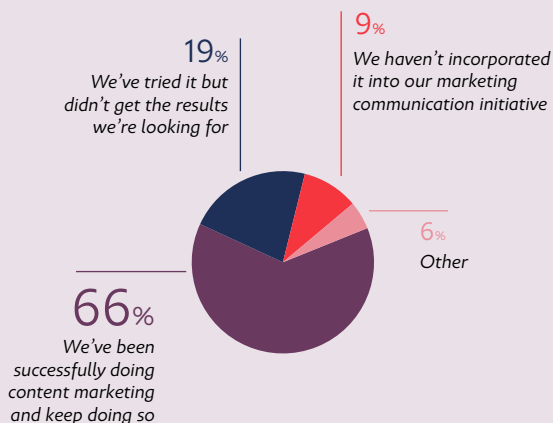
Another significant trend is the inclination towards thought leadership through whitepapers, blog posts, and webinars, indicating a move to position brands as authoritative voices in their respective industries. The data suggests a shift towards more personalized and knowledge-based marketing approaches, aiming not only to sell but also to inform and educate the consumer base.

Despite the strong focus on content marketing, the results also highlight the existence of hurdles, including unsatisfactory outcomes for some and financial limitations for others. The interest in automation and CRM integration reveals a response to these challenges, aiming to enhance the efficiency and impact of marketing campaigns.

In summary, overarching theme is the focused effort to adapt to a digital-centric marketplace, utilizing content marketing not just to sell, but to build trust and educate, thereby creating a more engaged and informed customer base.

“In a crowded content space, quality over quantity is prevailing. Underlining the importance of a better digital strategy, activated with content that provides value to customers.”

How much effort do you currently put into content marketing, and how much will you plan on doing next year?



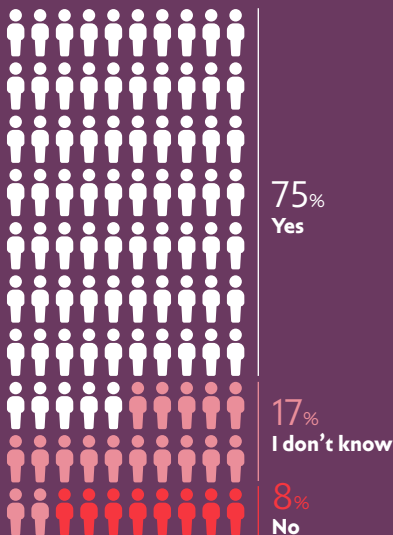
How do you plan to leverage content marketing to enhance your brand's visibility and authority in the industry?



Video's growing significance in audience engagement



Do you believe increasing moving content (videos) helps build more engagement among your audience?



The survey data suggests a strong consensus among respondents that increasing video content is believed to enhance audience engagement. It suggests a widespread acceptance that video, as a dynamic and versatile medium, has a considerable impact on audience interaction and connection. The data also reflect a possible trend in the marketing industry where there is a growing reliance on video content to capture and maintain the interest of a business audience.



For what type of communication would you primarily use video?

68%

Brand storytelling: sharing your brand's values, mission or history

62%

Product demonstrations: showcasing how your products or services work

55%

Educational content: providing tutorials, how-to's or informative content

53%

Customer testimonials: featuring stories or reviews from satisfied customers

40%

Live streaming: engaging with your audience in real-time through Q&As, webinars or live events

34%

Advertising: creating promotional or advertising content

32%

Event highlights: showcasing key moments from events, conferences or webinars

21%

Behind-the-scenes: giving a glimpse of your company culture or production processes

0%

Other

The hesitancy or skepticism of a minority suggests that while video is widely accepted as beneficial, there may be challenges or uncertainties related to its implementation, such as production costs, content quality, or measuring return on investment.

“Video has become the B2B marketer's tool of choice to articulate their values, vision and transform complex solutions into compelling stories.”

The survey highlights a strategic focus on using video for brand storytelling and product demonstrations, indicating a trend toward narrative-driven content in B2B marketing. Testimonials and educational content are also key, emphasizing trust-building and client education.

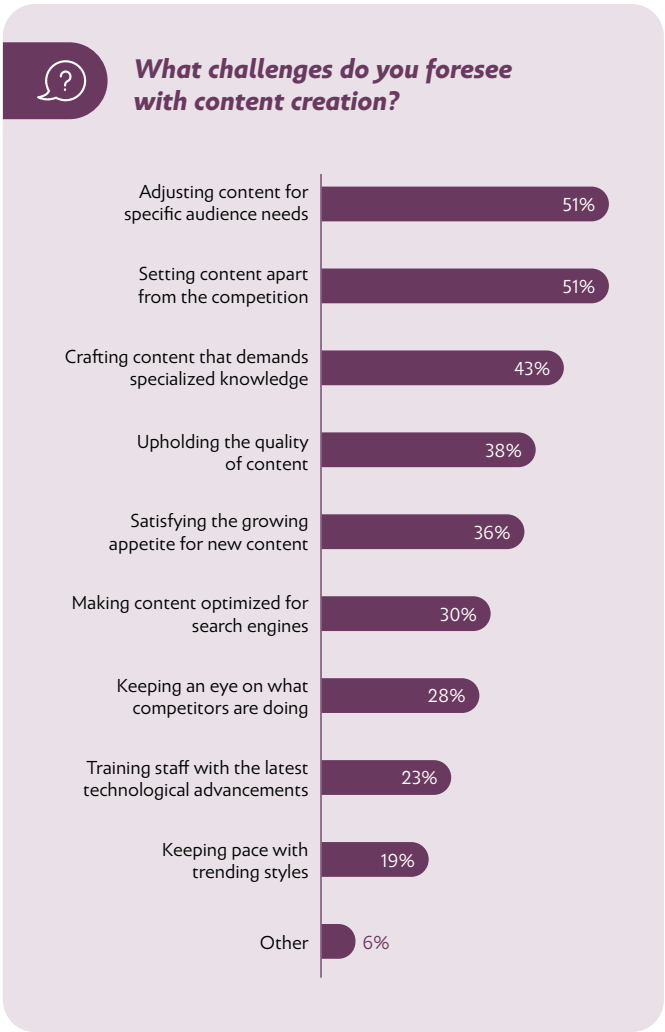
Live streaming points to a rise in interactive video engagement, while traditional advertising through video is less favored, suggesting a shift towards authenticity and adding value over direct marketing.





Crafting tailored content: the challenge of specialization and quality

The survey results highlight two primary challenges in content creation that are of equal concern to respondents: tailoring content to specific audience needs and differentiating content from the competition. Both of these challenges, selected by over half of the respondents, underscore the importance of personalized and unique content in engaging an audience effectively.



Additionally, nearly half of the participants anticipate difficulties in producing content that requires specialized knowledge, pointing towards a need for expertise in content creation. There's also a remarkable concern for meeting the continuous demand for new content and maintaining high content quality.

Lesser, but still significant challenges include SEO optimization, competitive analysis, keeping up with technological advancements, and staying in line with current trends.

Overall, the survey reflects a content creation landscape that demands a delicate balance between customization and innovation, with a strong emphasis on expertise and quality to stay ahead.





“In content creation, the challenge lies in **crafting tailored content** that differentiates from competitors, requiring **specialized knowledge and continuous high-quality production.**”



Ideas to get started

- ✓ **Custom GPT bot for branded content**
Develop a customized GPT bot tailored to your brand's unique tone and style. This enables consistent, high-quality content creation, aligned with your brand's voice and messaging goals.
- ✓ **Interactive content for engagement**
Enhance user engagement with interactive elements like calculators, image sliders, and interactive infographics. Utilize tools such as surveys, polls, interactive webinars, and videos to create a dynamic user experience that encourages active participation.
- ✓ **B2B influencer collaboration**
Integrate B2B influencers into your marketing strategy for added credibility and reach. For instance, food brands can partner with chefs or nutrition experts, while Medtech companies can collaborate with healthcare professionals. This approach brings authenticity and expert insights to your content.
- ✓ **Unique and niche white papers**
Avoid generic content in white papers. Focus on unique aspects of business problems your buyers face, showcasing your expertise. Ensure your white papers are easily digestible in both design and content, offering a fresh perspective in your niche.
- ✓ **Personalized LinkedIn marketing**
Move away from generic marketing. Utilize LinkedIn's advanced targeting features to personalize content for specific audience segments, based on their interests, roles, or challenges. Provide solutions tailored to their needs, rather than broad promotions.
- ✓ **Repurpose content**
Starting with substantial pieces of 'pillar content' and repurposing them into 'micro content' maximizes output opportunities. Abandon one-off content and find new ways to repurpose materials, highlighting new aspects that substantiate your brand or product.





Prioritizing brand cultivation and engagement with digital marketing

In the B2B digital landscape, a noticeable transformation is taking place. Marketers are shifting their focus from aggressive sales tactics to strategic brand cultivation and engagement.

In essence, B2B marketers are adapting their strategies to address these challenges, emphasizing brand development, relationship-building, content quality, and technological innovation. This shift signifies a dynamic landscape where meeting evolving client expectations is central to success.





Ideas to get started

✓ **Unlocking YouTube's potential**

Marketers should not overlook YouTube's vast potential as it stands as the second-largest search engine, making it a key player for brand visibility.

✓ **Maximizing ROI on platform X**

Platform X offers a cost-effective opportunity to engage with a B2B audience; however, it demands diligent community management to truly capitalize on its value.

✓ **Pinterest: The hidden gem in targeted B2B brand market**

Pinterest warrants greater consideration from specific brands, as it remains an underutilized channel with untapped potential.

✓ **Interactive webinars and live streams on LinkedIn**

Interactive webinars and live streams on LinkedIn are not only excellent for real-time audience interaction but also are favored by the platform's algorithm.

✓ **The frequency formula: thriving with 3 or more quality posts weekly**

To stay relevant and maintain engagement, brands should aim to publish high-quality content at a minimum thrice weekly, though more frequent posting is advantageous.

✓ **B2B brands can't afford to ignore Search engine strategy**

A content strategy that's aligned with SEO best practices can improve organic reach and drive sustained traffic to a brand's digital assets, making content discoverability a key element of the digital marketing mix.

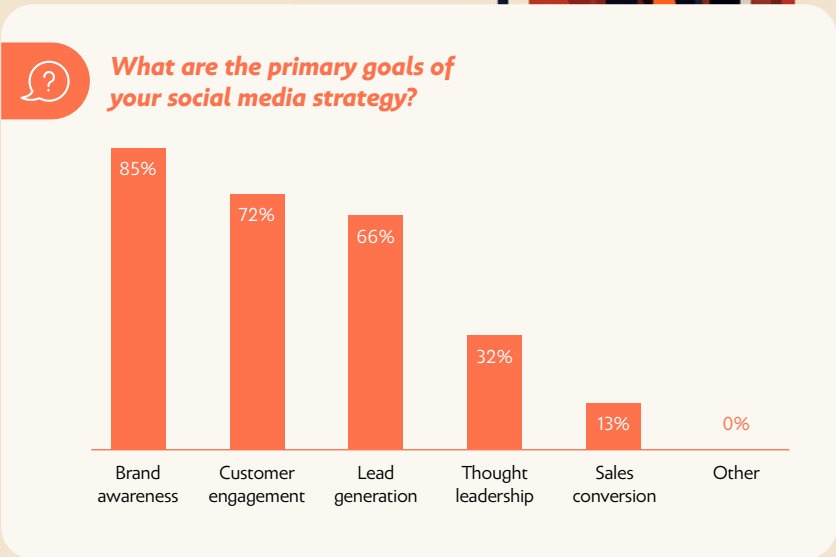
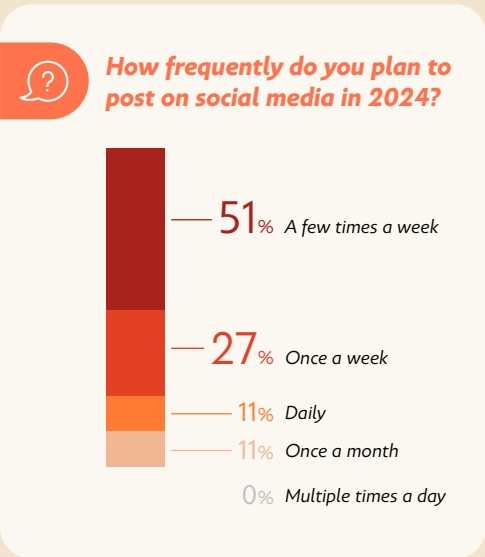
✓ **Creativity as the key to industry dominance**

Brands mastering high-quality content creation are taking the lead. By harnessing creativity, these brands gain a competitive edge in their sector, setting the stage to become the top names in their industries.

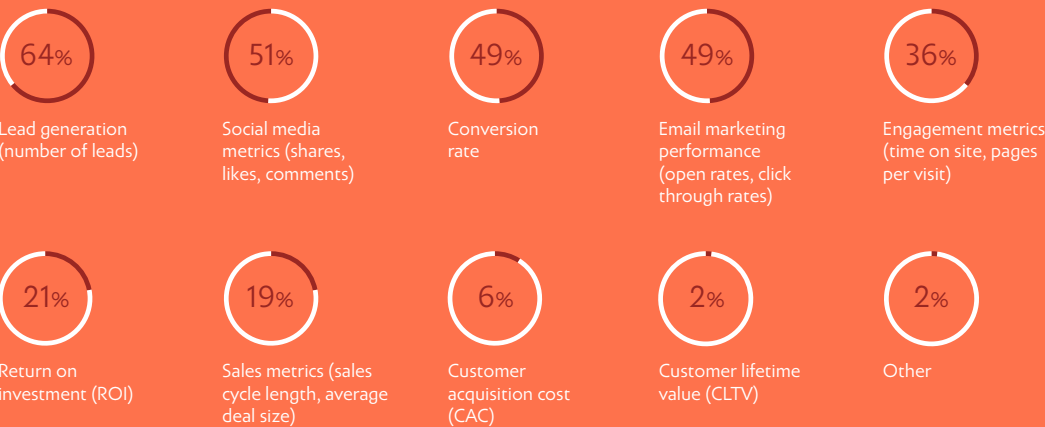
Strategic brand cultivation over sales aggression

A clear pattern emerges highlighting a strategic focus on brand cultivation and engagement rather than aggressive sales tactics. B2B marketing often involves longer sales cycles and relationship building, which aligns with the emphasis on brand awareness, customer engagement, and thought leadership. The marketers recognize that their clients are looking for expertise and solutions rather than quick transactions.

The preference for posting frequency being a few times a week rather than multiple times a day indicates a quality-over-quantity approach, which is often more effective in the B2B space where content needs to be more substantive and informative.



How do you measure the success of your campaigns?



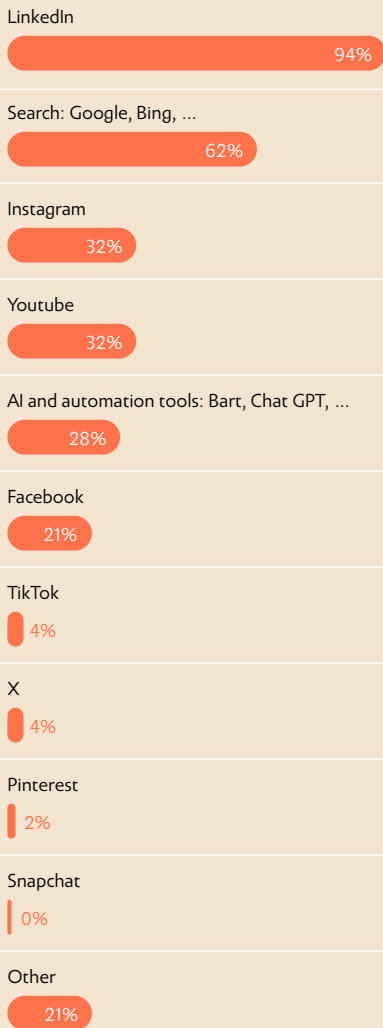
“In B2B marketing, expertise and tailored solutions are the currency of enduring relationships, where value trumps volume.”

“The embrace of AI and automation tools by B2B marketers reveals a forward-thinking strategy that leverages technology to enhance marketing effectiveness and elevate lead nurturing.”

LinkedIn emerges as a top choice for B2B marketing in 2024, but its growing popularity also brings a challenge. As the platform becomes increasingly crowded with B2B content, the imperative grows for marketers to create standout, audience-specific content. The success of LinkedIn will likely lead to higher campaign costs, making it crucial for marketers to ensure their content’s value and distinctiveness.



Which three digital platforms will be crucial for your marketing & communication in 2024?



“B2B buyers become more selective, the demand for standout content will grow. This is particularly important in saturated markets where differentiation is key. Content that offers genuine value and addresses specific needs and pain points of the B2B buyer will be crucial.”

In light of rising costs and competition on LinkedIn, B2B marketers might benefit from turning their attention to platforms like ‘X’, YouTube, or Pinterest, which may offer untapped potential and cost-effective reach.

Additionally, B2B marketers are looking beyond the usual suspects to include WeChat, marketing automation platforms, and third-party digital journals/platforms. **This strategy suggests an effort to find targeted and efficient ways to reach audiences amidst an ever-expanding digital marketing space.** Staying adaptive and creative in the use of digital platforms will be essential for making a lasting impact in B2B communication.



Ideas to get started

- ✓ **SEO Investments on the Rise**
Due to the unpredictable nature of search engines and its impact on website traffic, SEO investments are increasing. Marketers must stay flexible as search algorithms and user interfaces change frequently. As AI tools play a larger role in search engines, it’s important to optimize content for conversational queries, as voice search becomes more popular.
- ✓ **Third-party cookies going away**
With third-party cookies going away, B2B marketers will rely more on their own data from website interactions to create personalized ads. They must be transparent and get customer consent for data use. Tools like Google’s Topics API, which groups users by interests without sharing personal info, will be essential for targeted ads while respecting privacy.
- ✓ **Cracking the Code of Social Media Algorithms**
Social media platforms are likely to become trickier for content distribution, with algorithms potentially deprioritizing posts that contain external links. This underlines the necessity for B2B marketers to craft content that is optimized for each platform’s unique algorithms and user behaviors, emphasizing the value provided within the platform itself.





05

Experiential marketing: A new opportunity in B2B client engagement

In today's B2B marketing world, there's a strong shift towards getting clients directly involved with products and services.

The survey data shows that marketers are really focusing on this, with most of them now using hands-on demos and interactive events to really draw their audience in.

It's all about making sure clients can touch, use, and experience what's being sold, which goes way beyond just talking about the benefits. This hands-on approach is quickly becoming the go-to strategy for making a lasting impression in the B2B market.



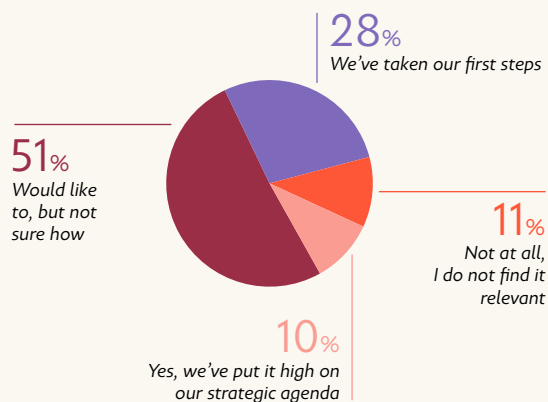
A birds-eye view on experiential marketing

Experiential marketing, also called engagement marketing, directly engages consumers and involves them in the brand's journey. Unlike traditional mass advertising, it focuses on creating interactive and memorable experiences to establish a profound emotional bond with the brand.

In a B2B context, experiential marketing includes activities like trade shows, interactive workshops, product demos, and brand experience centers. The goal is to craft meaningful and valuable experiences for business clients, fostering stronger brand loyalty and potential long-term partnerships.



How engaged are you in steering your marketing communication into experiential marketing?





There is a new opportunity to create more authentic connections with your audience

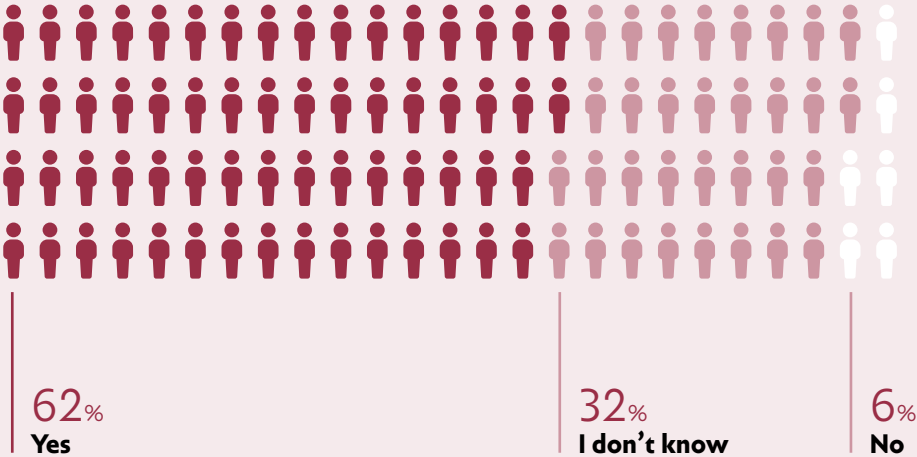
The survey responses from B2B marketers regarding experiential marketing reveal a significant interest in integrating these strategies, yet there is some uncertainty on how to proceed, suggesting a need for guidance and best practices in this area. Despite this uncertainty, there's a consensus that experiential marketing is key to innovation in connecting with target audiences and fostering meaningful connections.

The overarching theme is that B2B marketers are keen to adopt experiential marketing to deepen relationships and foster meaningful connections with their clients. However, there's a gap between interest and expertise, highlighting an opportunity for professional development in this area. Experiential marketing is seen not as a standalone tactic but as part of a holistic strategy to provide value, educate, and build trust with a well-informed B2B audience.

“In the realm of B2B experiential marketing, authentic connections are the bridges that link businesses to their audience, built on a foundation of trust and sincerity.”



Do you believe experiential marketing is key to innovating in how you connect with your target audience?





Expand trust and deepen relationships through interactions that extend beyond the digital realm

The survey results reveal that B2B marketers are placing a strong emphasis on tangible, interactive experiences in their experiential marketing strategies.

A significant majority of respondents prioritize offering hands-on experiences with their products or services, indicating a high value placed on direct engagement and real-world demonstrations for creating memorable brand experiences.

Similarly, a substantial number of participants advocate for immersive workshops and exclusive networking events, underscoring the significance of education and community building in the B2B sector.

These tactics are followed closely by the development of interactive product demonstrations and the establishment of dedicated brand experience centers, highlighting a commitment to engaging clients deeply and effectively through interactive and personalized experiences.



In the context of experiential marketing, which tactics do you believe will create better brand experiences for your clients or prospects?



“B2B marketers are threading a clear path with experiential marketing, valuing real connections and learning as the foundation for building trust and deepening relationships essential for sales success.”



Ideas to get started

- ✓ **The impact of emerging technologies in B2B strategies**
Emerging technologies will transform experiential marketing. Virtual, augmented, and mixed reality are being incorporated into B2B marketing, turning presentations into interactive experiences. These technologies transport customers to virtual environments, enabling unique product interactions. For instance, virtual reality simulates plant tours, and augmented reality dissects complex equipment for detailed exploration.
- ✓ **Embracing hybrid events in B2B marketing**
In the coming years, we can expect the industry to adopt a hybrid approach, blending digital and in-person activities. This strategy seeks to expand the reach to a broader and geographically diverse audience while harnessing the digital engagement trends accelerated by the pandemic. The widespread adoption of hybrid events by B2B marketers is likely to persist.





AI and B2B marketing: navigating innovation with a focus on security and creativity

In the current shift of B2B marketing, AI is more than a mere tool; it's a partner reshaping our creative approach. AI has the capability to enhance content and fine-tune engagement strategies, marking its significant role in marketing. Yet, adopting AI is not straightforward. It brings challenges alongside its benefits, as recent industry insights indicate.

So, what's the next move for B2B marketers?

They are figuring out how to embrace innovation through AI while ensuring their strategies remain secure and accurate.

“The human touch in an AI World: As we use AI, we must avoid generic AI text and visuals. It's crucial to blend our unique human touch with technology, ensuring authenticity and keeping realness alive in our stories, beyond the ordinary.”





We're at the starting point of embracing AI to drive efficiency

The survey highlights a growing interest among B2B marketers in embracing AI for their marketing and communication strategies in 2024.

A substantial majority of respondents, approximately 72%, are either beginning to use AI or planning to implement it to varying degrees, showcasing a forward-thinking approach in adopting AI technologies to elevate marketing tactics. However, a significant minority of about 17% remain uncertain, indicating either some reservations or a lack of clear direction on how to proceed, and approximately 11% do not plan to alter their current methods.

This trend underscores a movement towards innovation and adaptability, with most

respondents recognizing the potential of AI in enhancing data-driven decision-making, streamlining processes, and tailoring customer experiences.

However, the full-scale adoption of AI in everyday business is still unfolding. With only a small segment, roughly 9.8%, extensively using AI, it's clear that while progress is being made, truly integrating AI into regular marketing activities is just beginning to take shape.

These findings point to an acknowledgment within the B2B sector of the critical role that emerging technologies play in staying competitive and maximizing marketing effectiveness.

“B2B marketers are embarking on a journey towards innovation, driven by curiosity about AI and its potential to reshape marketing and communication landscapes.”



Do you expect to incorporate AI into your marketing & communication efforts in 2024?

32%

Yes, to a moderate extent

17%

Unsure

11%

Yes, to a significant extent



29%

We aim to take our initial steps

11%

No change in our approach





Data security and accuracy: Top concerns for B2B marketers adopting AI

The survey data highlights key concerns that B2B marketers have about incorporating AI into their operations. The most significant issue, mentioned by a majority of respondents, pertains to data privacy and security, underscoring the critical importance of protecting client information in the digital age.

The second most frequently noted concern relates to the accuracy of AI outputs, emphasizing the necessity for reliable and precise AI systems in marketing strategies.

Other noteworthy challenges encompass integration difficulties, a lack of understanding of AI

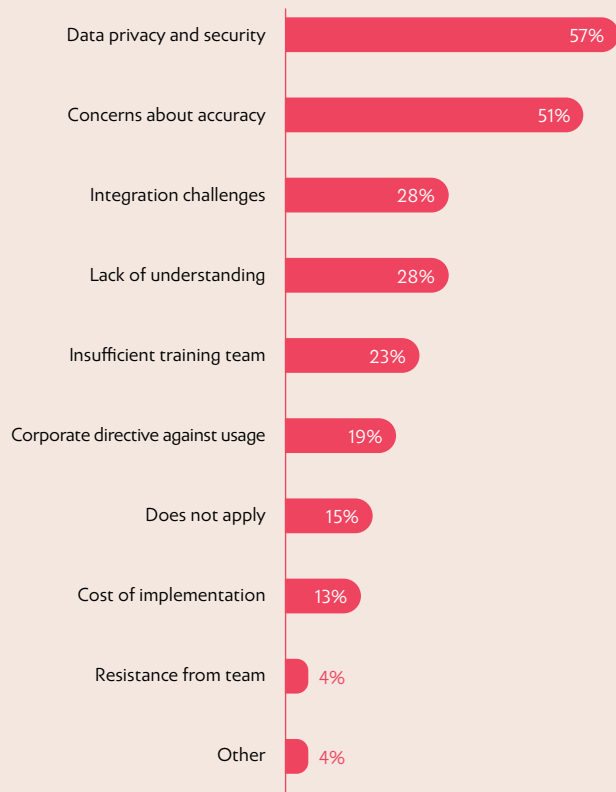
technology, and the absence of a trained team to manage AI tools. These concerns illustrate the practical hurdles businesses face when adopting new technologies.

The overarching theme is one of cautious optimism:

B2B marketers are eager to explore AI's potential, but they are also aware of the substantial risks and challenges that require management. This indicates a deliberate approach to AI adoption, prioritizing security, accuracy, and proper implementation to ensure that the technology enhances rather than hinders their marketing efforts.



If you incorporate AI, what is your main concern when it comes to incorporating AI?



“B2B marketers are prepared to embrace AI, but they are closely monitoring data security and accuracy as they progress. Factors such as understanding, integration, and customizability will play pivotal roles in accelerating the adoption rate.”



AI in B2B marketing: Enhancing copywriting, creativity and content



The most prominent finding is the overwhelming interest in utilizing AI for copywriting. This reflects a broader trend in the industry towards automation and efficiency in content creation. AI's ability to generate text can streamline the creation of marketing copy, allowing marketers to focus on strategy and creativity.

Visual elements are also a significant consideration, with nearly half of the respondents seeing the potential for AI application. This suggests an openness to exploring how AI can enhance graphic design, create data visualizations, or tailor visual content to specific audiences.

Brainstorming sessions, typically rooted in human-centric approaches, are experiencing a shift in perspective, as a significant number of respondents express openness to integrating AI contributions. This signifies a transition towards embracing AI as a collaborative tool to enhance human creativity and decision-making.

Overall, the B2B marketing landscape is evidently shifting towards AI adoption, with a focus on augmenting human creativity and operational efficiency. The trend reflects a growing recognition of AI's role in driving personalized marketing campaigns and the desire to leverage technology to gain a competitive advantage while maintaining the human insight that underpins strategic decision-making.

“To maximize AI’s potential, providing the right input is crucial. Expert guidance can optimize setup, streamline processes, address concerns, and ensure top quality, paving the way for broader AI adoption and endless possibilities.”



***If you incorporate AI,
where would you apply it?***

74%
Copywriting

45%
Visual elements

41%
Brainstorming

17%
Video production

14%
Does not apply

14%
Localization efforts

12%
Strategy

10%
Coding

7%
Other





Ideas to get started

✔ Utilize AI for audience insights and predictive analytics

AI tools can process and analyze large volumes of data to gain insights into buyer behavior and preferences. This can aid in creating highly targeted content and in predictive analytics, helping identify potential leads and guiding sales teams towards the most promising prospects.

✔ Personalize the B2B customer journey with AI

AI's capacity to analyze individual customer preferences and behavior can enable marketers to personalize content recommendations at scale, thereby fostering stronger connections with potential clients.

✔ When you use AI for copy prioritize informational content

B2B prospects often need to be convinced that your solution is right for them, not just sold on a product. Informational copy should be supported by research and industry insights, and it should be SEO-friendly to ensure visibility during their research process.

✔ Autonomous AI agents

Developments in autonomous AI agents, such as AutoGPT, show the future potential of AI in marketing, where bots could autonomously perform tasks like market research or product purchasing. This technology is still developing and may become mainstream in the future.

✔ Conversational AI

Advances in conversational AI are enabling chatbots to handle more nuanced customer queries, guiding site visitors through the sales funnel and improving customer experience.





Thank you for joining
us on a journey into
marketing's next chapter!



We're thrilled that we
could share the key
insights that hopefully
inspires **your next
strategic steps.**

Think of innovation, personalization, and collaboration not just as buzzwords, but as your tools in the dynamic realm of marketing.

We hope that this report can guide you to captivating your audience, sparking growth, and leaving a memorable mark.

Here's to crafting compelling marketing stories that resonate and spark the conversation! Your adventure in making these insights come to life starts now. Let's make it extraordinary!



Who we are

Norvell Jefferson is a creative marketing agency specializing in the Health, Food, Tech, and Sustainable industries.

We shape smarter communication and activation strategies to ensure success. We transform complex science into comprehensive and insightful narratives and use your authenticity to create visually unique stories.

We aim to make you the go-to brand in your industry. Our key?

Imagination.

[DISCOVER OUR WEBSITE](#)

“Imagination drives our curiosity to solve problems through unexpected ideas. Thinking in possibilities. Envisioning that which is not.”

Got inspired?

Subscribe and follow for more imagination:

[FOLLOW US ON LINKEDIN](#)



AMSTERDAM

info-nl@norvelljefferson.com
+31 20 209 33 52

ANTWERP

info-be@norvelljefferson.com
+31 20 209 33 52
(reception via Dutch office)

BOSTON

info-us@norvelljefferson.com
+1 978 70 49 566

