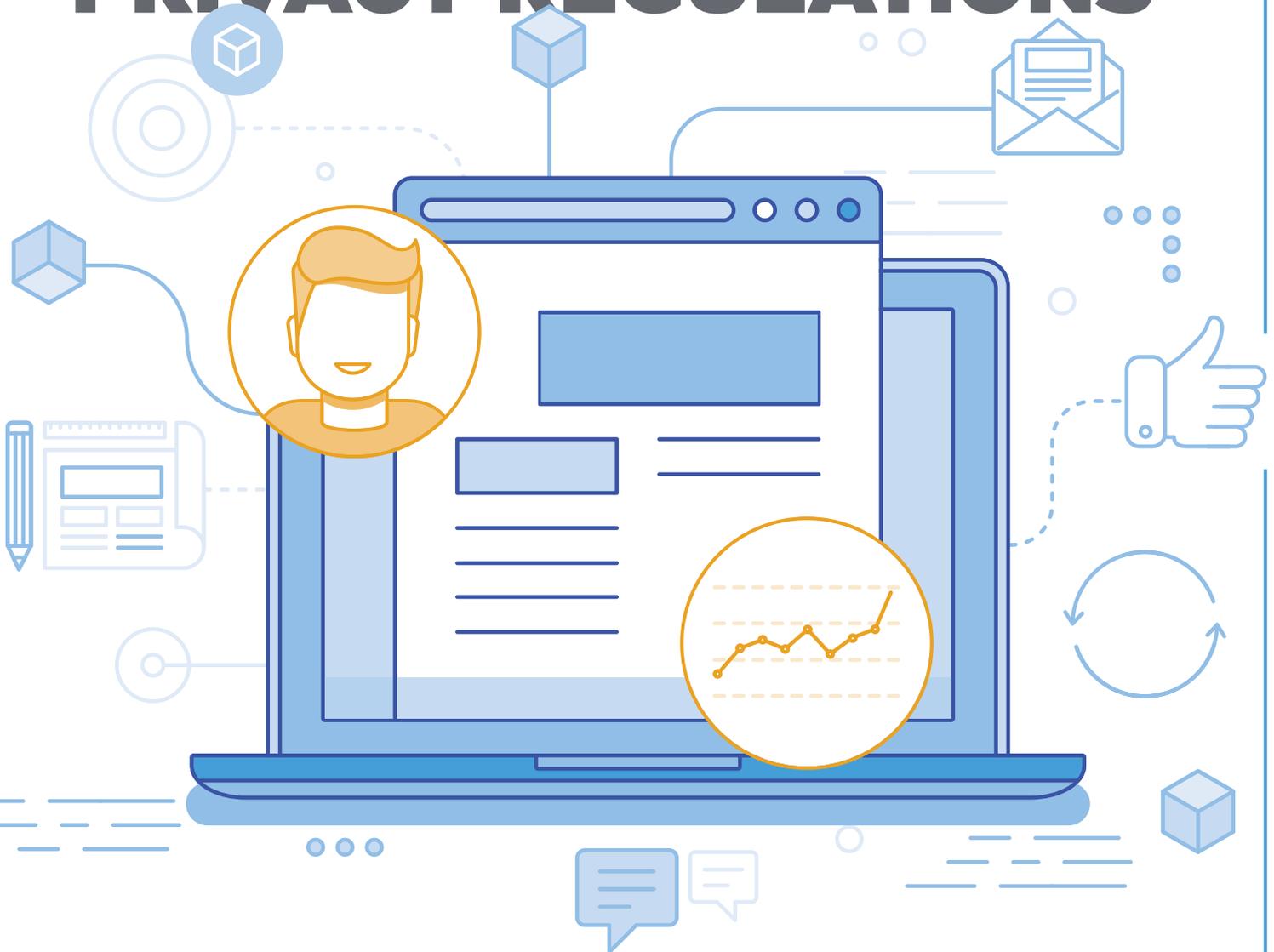


IMPROVEMENTS IN  
*Data Initiatives*  
CONTINUE AS B2B ORGS  
STRIVE TO MEET  
**BUYER EXPECTATIONS,  
PRIVACY REGULATIONS**



**43%**  
**OF RESPONDENTS**  
**SAID THEIR**  
**DATABASE**  
**INITIATIVES**  
**NEEDED**  
**SIGNIFICANT**  
**IMPROVEMENT,**  
**COMPARED TO**  
**51% IN 2017.**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

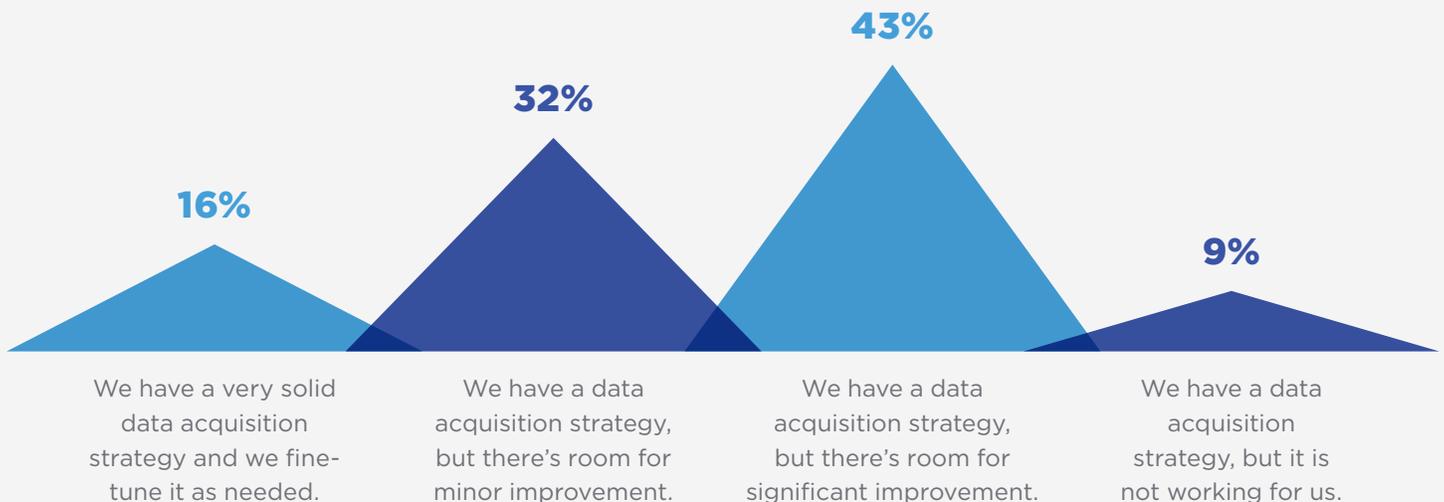
Effective database management and contact acquisition practices are the lifeblood of effective marketing and sales efforts. As buyers grow to expect more meaningful, relevant engagement and information during the buying process, companies must position themselves with the right insights to meet those expectations.

Last year's *Database Strategies & Contact Acquisition Survey* showed that many B2B businesses believed there was room for significant improvement in their data acquisition strategies, and this year's survey revealed companies are making strides to address their database issues. Roughly 43% said their database initiatives needed significant improvement, compared to 51% in 2017.

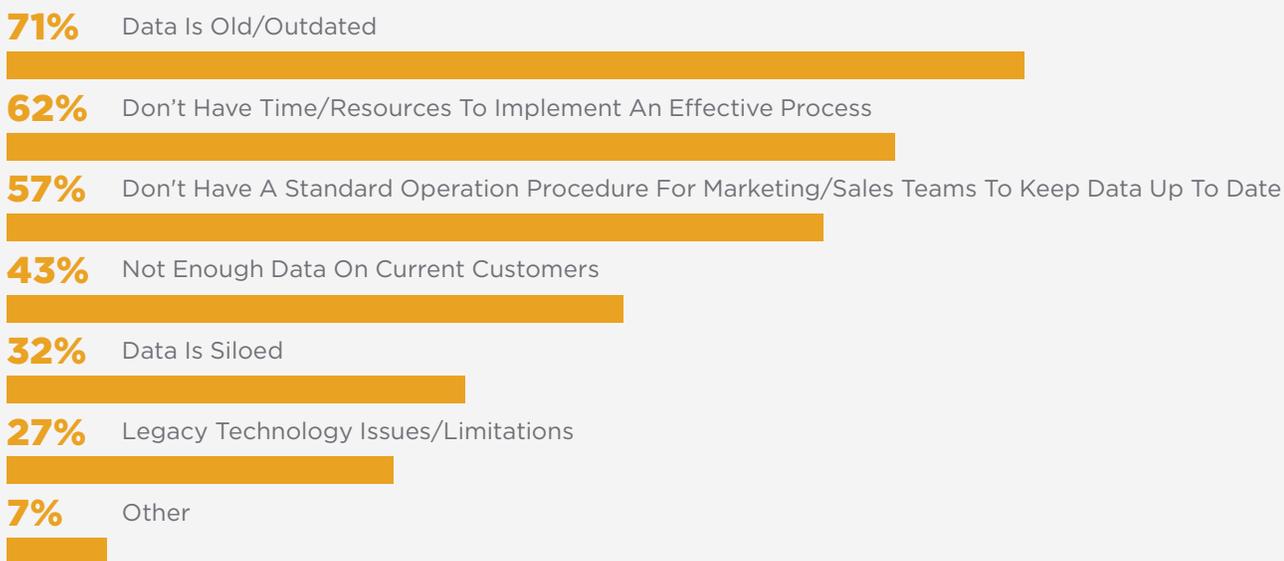
Additional data shows that:

- **16%** of respondents have a solid data acquisition strategy, up from **12%** in 2017;
- **32%** said their data acquisition strategy has room for minor improvement, equal to last year's data; and
- **9%** said their data acquisition strategy is not working for their company, up from **3%** in 2017.

## WHICH OF THESE BEST DESCRIBES YOUR CURRENT DATA ACQUISITION STRATEGY?



## WHAT ARE YOUR BIGGEST CHALLENGES TO MAINTAINING DATA QUALITY IN YOUR CONTACT DATABASE?



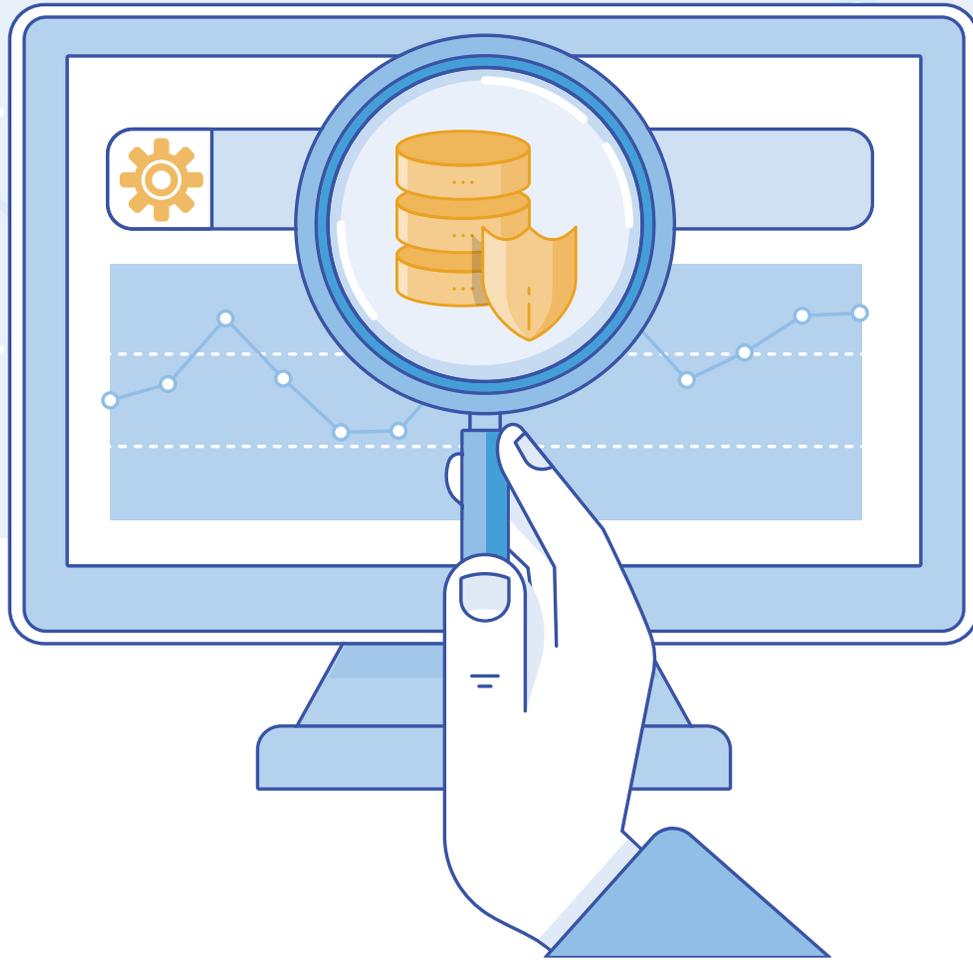
**COMPANIES ARE PUSHING TOWARDS MEASURING DATA THAT FOCUSES ON BUYERS' NEEDS AND PAIN POINTS (18%), AS WELL AS LOCATION (47%) DUE TO THE GROWING FOCUS ON DATA REGULATIONS IN EUROPE AND THE U.S.**

A continued focus on strengthening database strategies is a great sign given respondents' business goals. Specifically, respondents noted a focus on targeting segments with the right data to boost engagement and identify key stakeholders within target accounts to create meaningful relationships.

When asked what their goals were for their databases, more than two-thirds of respondents (68%) want to target specific segments for better engagement, while 55% hope to better identify key stakeholders within target accounts. Also, 54% want to better reach their total addressable market in defined sectors.

To meet those aspirations, B2B companies must assess their data and how they're collecting it. The study showed that companies are pushing towards measuring data that focuses on buyers' needs and pain points (18%), as well as location (47%) due to the growing focus on data regulations in Europe and the U.S.

But B2B businesses still struggle with common database challenges, especially old and inaccurate data (71%), lack of resources to implement an effective process (62%) and not having the right standard operating procedures for data upkeep within marketing and sales teams (57%).



**68%**  
OF RESPONDENTS  
WANT TO  
TARGET SPECIFIC  
SEGMENTS  
FOR BETTER  
ENGAGEMENT,  
WHILE **55%**  
HOPE TO BETTER  
IDENTIFY KEY  
STAKEHOLDERS  
WITHIN TARGET  
ACCOUNTS.

This report highlights the current state of B2B contact acquisition and database strategies and how companies are looking to hone their strategies and processes for greater success in 2019. Topics detailed in the report include:

- Specific data fields that are – and are not – being prioritized in respondents' acquisition strategies, such as location and engagement data;
- How data quality processes have improved year over year;
- Specific detailed insights into why buyer intent and engagement are top desires for respondents' databases;
- The growing role of marketing and sales operations in terms of database management; and
- The value respondents are finding in using third-party data in their go-to-market initiatives.

**47%**  
OF RESPONDENTS  
SAID THAT  
THEY COLLECT  
LOCATION DATA  
FROM THEIR  
CURRENT AND  
PROSPECTIVE  
CUSTOMERS.

## DATA-DRIVEN MARKETERS MOVE BEYOND ESSENTIAL FIELDS, SPLIT ON LOCATION DATA

The survey found that the primary tactics leveraged by companies to obtain prospect and customer data include registration forms on company websites (70%), content downloads via dedicated landing pages (50%) and in-person events (53%) – similar to what respondents said last year.

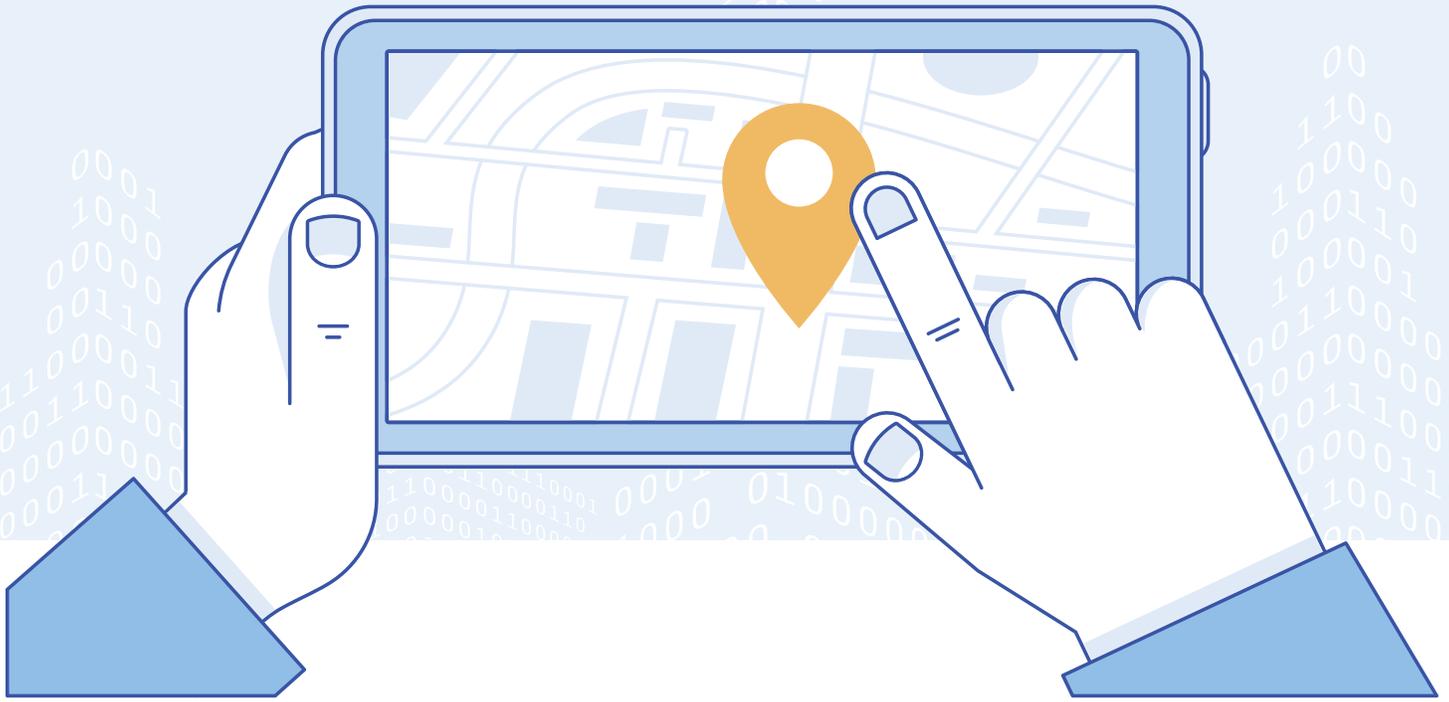
It also highlighted the types of data companies collect. The necessary data fields required to communicate with potential customers – such as name (92%), company (85%) and email address (91%) – topped the list, as expected.

However, the study shows that best-in-class companies want to gain an even deeper understanding of their audience beyond demographic and firmographic insights. This includes:

- Company size (23%);
- Industry vertical (22%); and
- Company revenue (16%).

### WHEN COLLECTING CONTACT INFORMATION, WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING TYPES OF INFORMATION ARE TYPICALLY REQUIRED?





**18%**  
**OF RESPONDENTS  
SAID THAT  
THEY COLLECT  
INFORMATION  
PERTAINING  
TO POTENTIAL  
CUSTOMERS'  
SPECIFIC NEEDS  
AND PAIN POINTS.**

One surprising finding was the notable split between respondents on the collection of location data. With the amount of discussion on GDPR compliance in the B2B marketplace, as well as the future California law going into effect in 2020, companies should place a deeper investment into obtaining location data. But even with GDPR in effect as of May 2018, less than half (47%) of respondents said that they collect location data from their current and prospective customers.

Another notable finding from the research shows that companies are even requesting information pertaining to potential customers' specific needs and pain points – 18% said they collect this type of information. This signals that progressive companies are looking to garner as much insight into their prospects as they can to provide them with relevant experiences that meet expectations.

**46%**  
OF RESPONDENTS  
WERE NOT SURE  
HOW OFTEN THEIR  
DATABASE WAS  
CLEANED.  
NOW, **ONLY 27%**  
SAID THEY ARE  
NOT SURE.

## DATA QUALITY PROCESSES IMPROVING AS COMPANIES TACKLE GOVERNANCE CHALLENGES

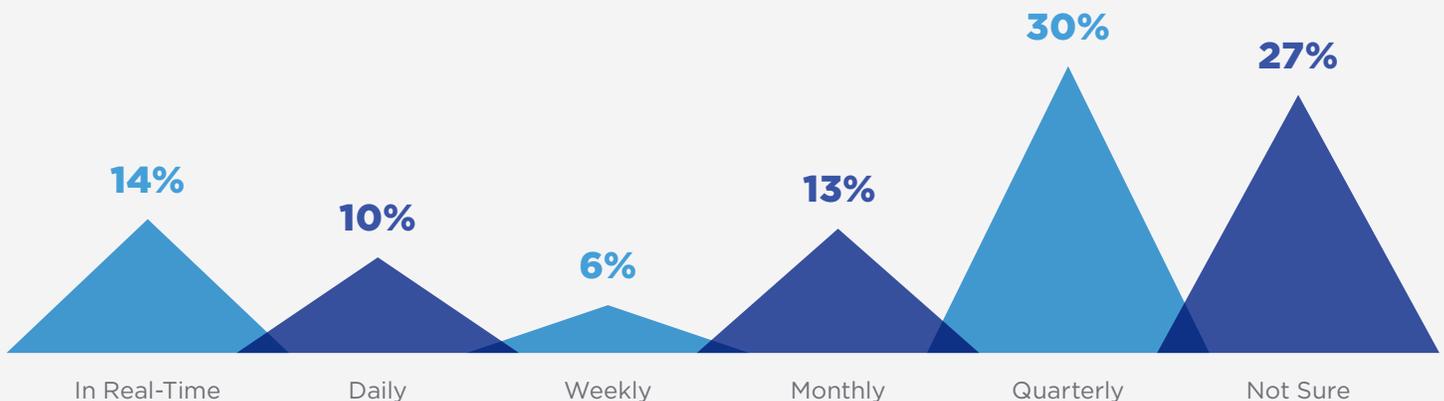
Data quality and process challenges continue to be rampant in the B2B community. As mentioned earlier, 71% said old and inaccurate data is their biggest challenge, while 62% said they lack the resources to implement proper data governance. But the study shows that companies are taking the right steps to adopt more consistent data quality initiatives.

Last year's survey showed that many B2B companies were not sure how often they were cleansing their database and assuring data quality. However, this year's research shows that companies have been moving towards setting consistent processes in place to keep their data up to date. In 2017, close to half (46%) were not sure how often their database was cleaned. Now, only 27% said they are not sure.

Close to one-third (30%) have begun scrubbing their databases on a quarterly basis, up from 16% in 2017. The respondents' challenges around old and outdated data and lack of standard operating procedures can be limiting them to take smaller steps in properly implementing data quality processes. The study also shows that progressive companies are moving towards cleaning their database more frequently, including:

- Monthly (13%);
- Daily (10%); and
- Weekly (6%);
- In real time (14%).

### HOW OFTEN DO YOU SCRUB YOUR DATA FOR ACCURACY AND DATA QUALITY?



WHEN ASKED WHAT TYPE OF DATA THEY WANT TO COLLECT ON CONTACTS, BUYING INTENT INSIGHTS WAS THE TOP CHOICE FOR MORE THAN HALF (53%) OF RESPONDENTS.

## INTENT, ENGAGEMENT DATA TOP DESIRES FOR ORGANIZATIONS

The survey results also hint at how B2B companies look to collect deeper insights on buyer behavior — specifically when it comes to buyer intent and other engagement data.

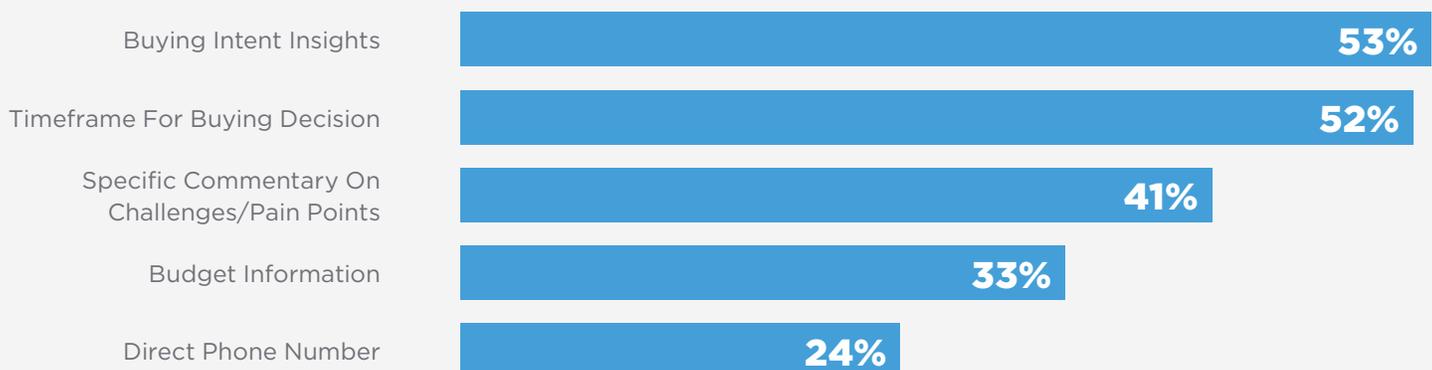
When asked what type of data they want to collect on contacts, buying intent insights was the top choice for more than half (53%) of respondents. This can point to the ongoing need to create more relevant, contextual experiences with buyers. Roughly 41% of respondents also said they want to collect specific commentary on buyer challenges and pain points, providing further context into buying decisions.

When considering respondents' database goals for easier segmentation and better engagement, as well as identify key stakeholders in buying decisions, it makes sense why intent data is growing as a category as it provides deeper context into purchase decisions. This ultimately can position companies to gain a holistic view of a potential customer's needs and engage them in a relevant, contextual way.

Other data points respondents said they would like to collect include:

- First-party engagement data (16%);
- Budget information (33%); and
- Timeframe for buying decision (52%).

## WHAT TYPE OF DEEPER DATA INTELLIGENCE ARE YOU CURRENTLY NOT COLLECTING, BUT WANT TO COLLECT BEYOND BASIC FIELDS?



**15%**  
OF RESPONDENTS  
SAID THEIR  
MARKETING  
OPERATIONS  
DEPARTMENT WAS  
RESPONSIBLE FOR  
THEIR DATABASE,  
COMPARED TO  
**10% IN 2017.**

## OPERATIONS ROLES GROWING AS DATA GATEKEEPERS

When asked which department is mainly responsible for accessing and updating their database, the study shows that many businesses are still trying to identify who exactly should be the “data gatekeeper” in their business.

A combination of both sales and marketing was the top choice, with 26% of respondents noting both departments work together to manage the company’s database. About another quarter (22%) said that marketing was the sole department in charge of accessing and updating the data. Surprisingly, only 14% said sales was the sole department in charge of their database. With the CRM system as the main location where a majority (47%) of respondents said their database resides, you would expect that number to be higher.

Year-over-year comparison also shows that operations departments are growing more prominent as the ones to oversee their company’s database strategy.

Roughly 15% of respondents said their marketing operations department was responsible, compared to 10% in 2017. Only 5% said that sales operations were the sole proprietor of their database, while 12% said it was a mix of both the marketing operations and sales operations teams – up from 7% in 2017.

As more B2B businesses look to build operations teams within their organization, and with operations teams usually the ones tasked with owning and managing the company’s tech stack, it would make sense to see these numbers grow in the future.

### WHICH DEPARTMENT IS MAINLY RESPONSIBLE FOR ACCESSING AND UPDATING THE DATA?



Marketing Ops



Sales Ops



Marketing and Sales Ops

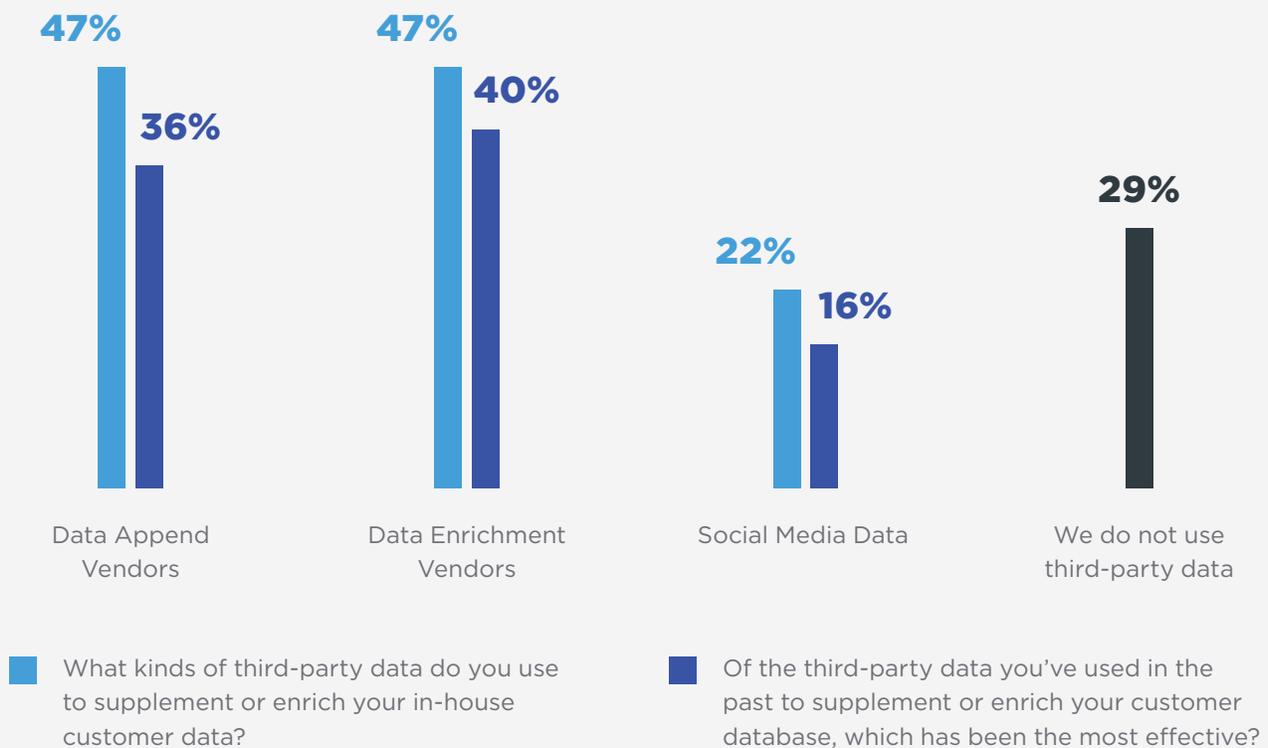
**47%**  
OF RESPONDENTS  
SAID THEY USE  
DATA ENRICHMENT  
VENDORS TO  
SUPPLEMENT  
THEIR IN-HOUSE  
CUSTOMER DATA.

## MARKETERS FIND VALUE IN THIRD-PARTY APPEND, ENRICHMENT DATA

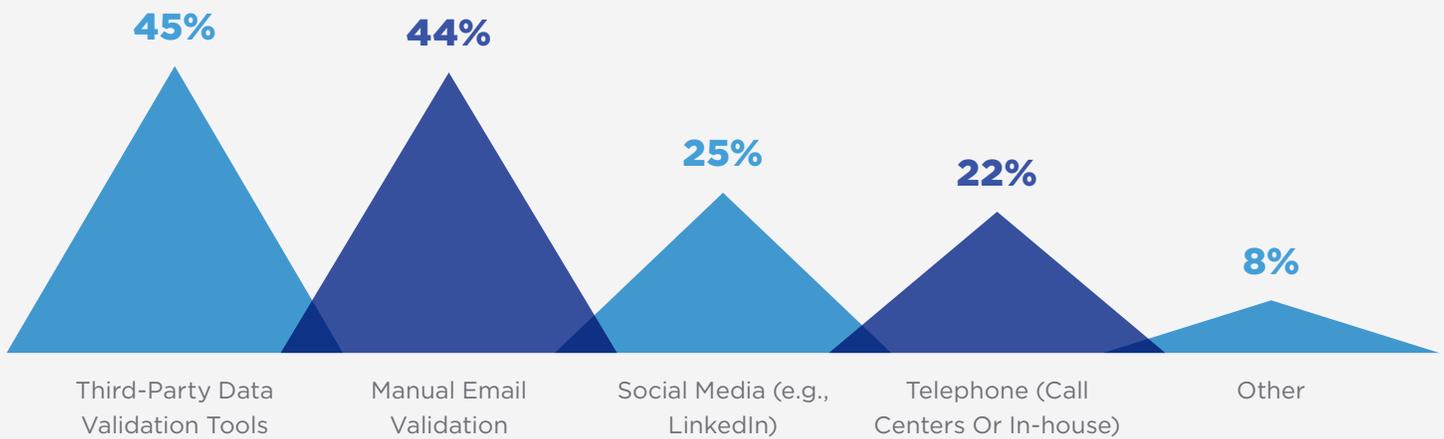
The study also found that B2B businesses are finding value from partnerships with third-party data providers to gain a more holistic view of their target audience and improve data accuracy.

Almost half (47%) said they use data enrichment vendors to supplement their in-house customer data. Another 47% said they use data append vendors. Roughly one-third (29%) said they do not use third-party data.

### THIRD-PARTY DATA: USAGE & EFFECTIVENESS



## IF HANDLED IN-HOUSE, HOW DO YOU VALIDATE CONTACT ACCURACY TO ASSURE DATA QUALITY AND UP-TO-DATE RECORDS?



**47%**  
**OF RESPONDENTS SAID THEY USE DATA APPEND VENDORS.**

When asked which types of third-party data have been the most effective, respondents noted:

- Data enrichment vendors (40%);
- Data append vendors (36%); and
- Data garnered from social media (16%).

Close to half (45%) said they use third-party validation tools to assure contact accuracy and data quality, up from 33% in 2017. That can be compared to the 44% of companies that perform manual email validation to assure data quality, down from 58% in 2017.

**49%**  
**OF RESPONDENTS  
ARE COLLECTING  
PROSPECTIVE  
BUYER BEHAVIOR  
TO BOOST  
ENGAGEMENT AND  
MESSAGING.**

## CONCLUSION

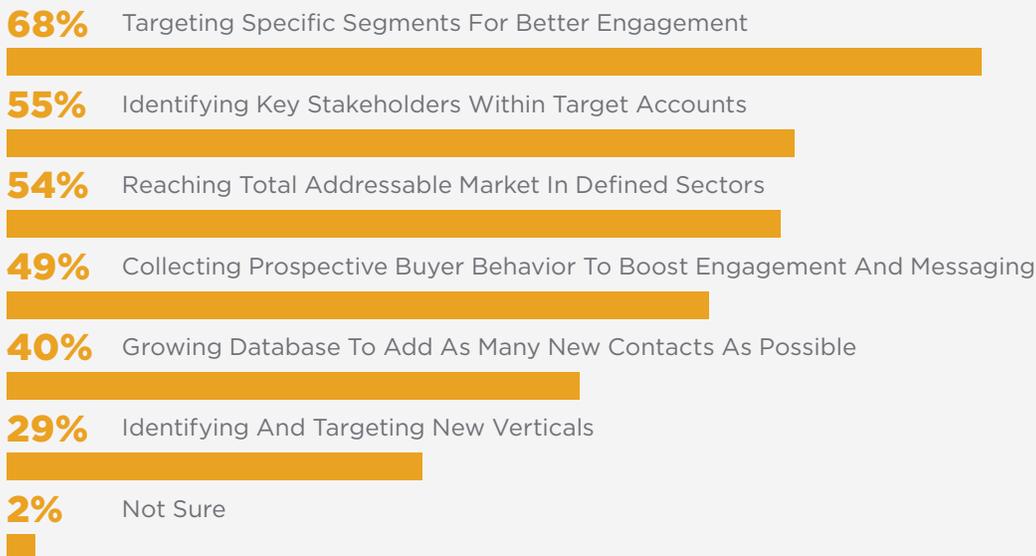
Findings from this year's *Database Strategies & Contact Acquisition Survey* show that B2B organizations are making progress in terms of formulating and implementing the right processes to collect deep insights on current and prospective customers.

To meet database goals, such as targeting specific segments for better engagement (68%), better identifying key stakeholders within target accounts (55%) and better reaching their total addressable market in defined sectors (54%), the research shows that necessary steps are being made to guarantee the right data is collected to fuel marketing and sales initiatives.

Other goals highlighted by respondents include:

- Collecting prospective buyer behavior to boost engagement and messaging (49%);
- Growing their database to add as many new contacts as possible (40%); and
- Identifying and targeting new verticals (29%).

## WHAT ARE YOUR DATABASE GOALS?



**53%**  
**OF RESPONDENTS**  
**HOPE TO**  
**COLLECT BUYER**  
**INTENT DATA IN**  
**THE IMMEDIATE**  
**FUTURE, WHILE**  
**41% WANT TO**  
**COLLECT SPECIFIC**  
**COMMENTARY**  
**ON BUYER**  
**CHALLENGES AND**  
**PAIN POINTS.**

Many of these goals revolve around a common theme: database strategies should be designed to properly fuel marketing and sales efforts with relevant and contextual insights that meet buyer needs. Therefore, many progressive companies are looking to collect deeper insights on buyer engagement and intent. More than half (53%) hope to collect buyer intent data in the imminent future, while 41% want to collect specific commentary on buyer challenges and pain points.

However, growing regulations around data (GDPR and the incoming California data legislature) amplify the need for companies to get their database strategies sorted. As 43% of respondents said their database strategy needs significant improvement, there are a variety of opportunities for businesses to streamline their data initiatives, including:

- Identifying who oversees the company's database, whether it be a partnership between marketing and sales (26%), the marketing ops team (15%) or both the marketing and sales ops teams (12%);
- Moving beyond essential data fields to collect location data (47%) and details on customers' specific needs and pain points (18%); and
- Considering a partnership with third-party data providers, where 40% of respondents said their data enrichment vendors have been the most effective to their database efforts and 36% said the same about their data append vendors.

## ABOUT THIS SURVEY

The *2018 Database Strategies & Contact Acquisition Benchmark Survey* surveyed 129 B2B marketing and sales professionals across the high-tech industry (50%) and a variety of other verticals — including business services (12%), professional services (11%) and manufacturing (8%). More than a third (36%) of respondents hold managerial positions, while 29% hold director-level positions and 28% hold VP-level or above job roles.

With most of the respondents located in the United States (85%), the survey shows a healthy mix of responses from different-sized organizations. Specifically:

- 54% work for a SMB, defined as a company that makes less than \$50 million in annual revenue;
- 28% are employed by midmarket-sized companies, making between \$50 million and \$1 billion in annual revenue; and
- 19% work for enterprise-level businesses, making more than \$1 billion annually.



DiscoverOrg has a mission: Accelerate pipeline and revenue for growthbound companies with the most accurate B2B sales and marketing intelligence on the planet. Our award-winning data solutions offers a pipeline of accurate, dynamic buying intelligence used to identify, engage, and sell to target buyers more effectively. DiscoverOrg is integrated with leading CRM, Sales Engagement, and Marketing Automation tools, flowing seamlessly through systems. Data is collected and constantly refreshed through DiscoverOrg's proprietary technologies, and verified by an in-house research team. The result? Only the highest level of guaranteed accuracy available across B2B sales and marketing data providers.

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*Demand Gen Report* is a targeted online publication that uncovers the strategies and solutions that help companies better align their sales and marketing organizations, and ultimately, drive growth. A key component of the publication's editorial coverage focuses on the sales and marketing automation tools that enable companies to better measure and manage their multi-channel demand generation efforts.

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