

2022

2022 DEMAND GENERATION BENCHMARK SURVEY

Marketers Prioritizing Quality Over Quantity; Increasing Aggression Around Growth Initiatives



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

With the light at the end of the Covid-19 pandemic tunnel flickering, expectations for driving growth in 2022 are growing — bringing along a push for increased pipeline performance and accountability. Based on insights gathered from the “2022 Demand Generation Benchmark Survey,” marketers are planning to ramp up the support for their demand gen programs. As teams focus on quality over quantity, they’re going all-in on ABM initiatives and targeted, customized buyer programs.

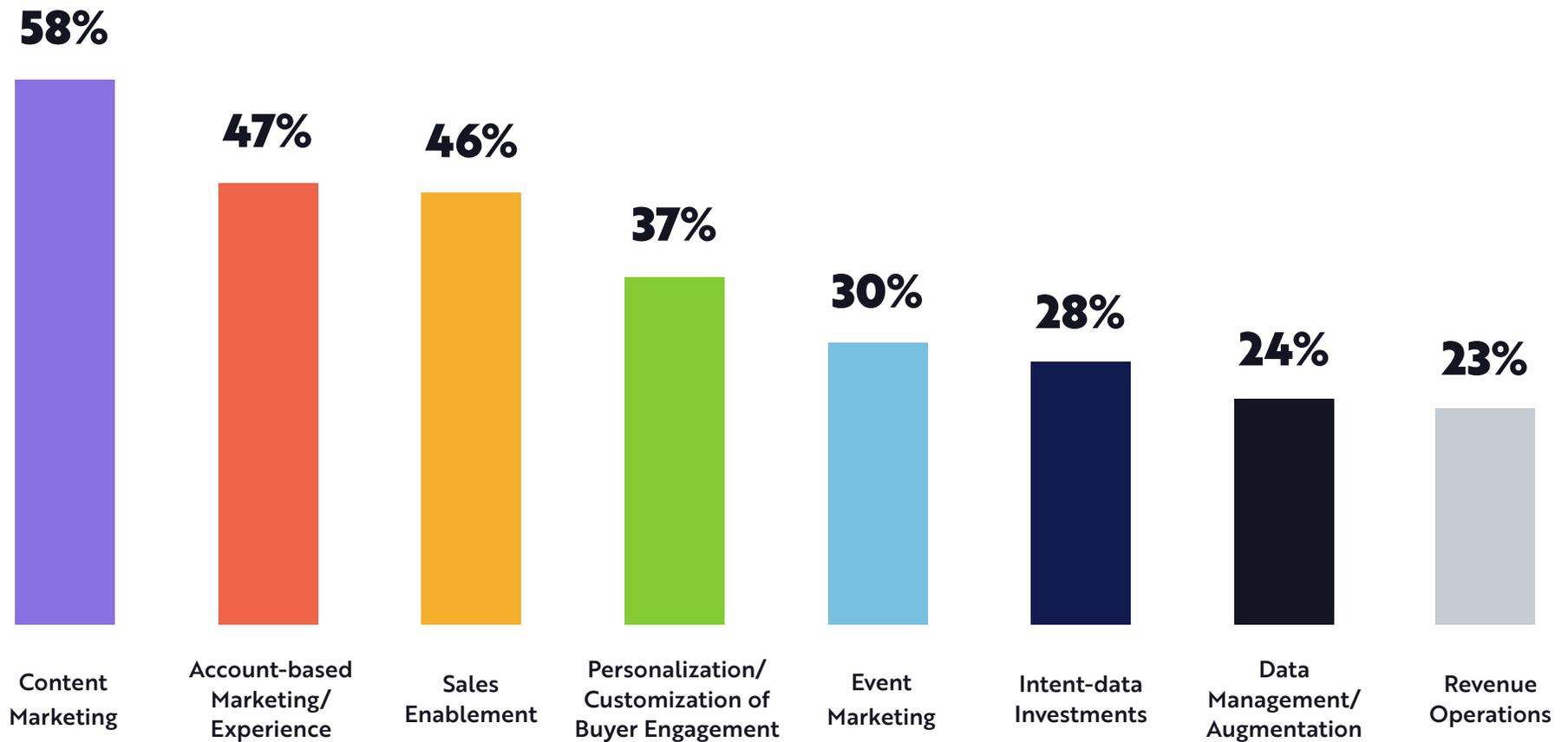
The survey found that marketers are taking what they learned about prospect preferences and successful strategies over the past two years to prioritize aggressive growth strategies. With ABM strategies now firmly established, organizations are looking to optimize existing campaigns in the new year to better target in-market, high-priority leads.

Just look at the increased budgets respondents forecasted: **69% indicated their budgets will increase between 1% and 20%**, reflecting what’s seen in the bigger picture of total marketing budgets, as **72% of respondents indicated increases between 1% and 20%**. With that in mind, **almost one third of respondents (31%) indicated they plan to increase revenue by more than 20%**.

The specific areas marketing teams want to invest in write an interesting story: **Content marketing emerged in the No. 1 spot with 58% of the vote**, while last year it secured the No. 2 spot. **While ABM fell to second, only 47% of marketers indicated the strategy as an area of budget prioritization** — compared to last year’s 61%. However, it still edged out sales enablement’s 46%, while personalization rounded out the top four with 37%.

With ABM and sales enablement ranking as top initiatives, this report will examine how the prioritization of content and personalization indicates a bigger focus on tailored, customized offerings. When combined with the increased budget prioritization across the board, the data clearly shows marketers are growing more aggressive with their demand generation strategies, with a specific focus on refining account targeting and aligning sales and marketing.

WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING STRATEGIES ARE SEEING INCREASED BUDGET PRIORITIZATION IN 2022?



ACCELERATING GROWTH THROUGH COLLABORATION

As marketing teams' confidence in their demand gen strategies increases, so does their aggression in driving pipeline — **31% of respondents plan to increase revenue by more than 20%**. By contrast, the 2021 edition of the survey found that most respondents (33%) only planned for an increase between 1% and 10%. It appears that marketers are turning their attention to setting up their demand gen programs to meet company-mandated growth goals as the industry starts to turn the corner on the Covid-19 pandemic.

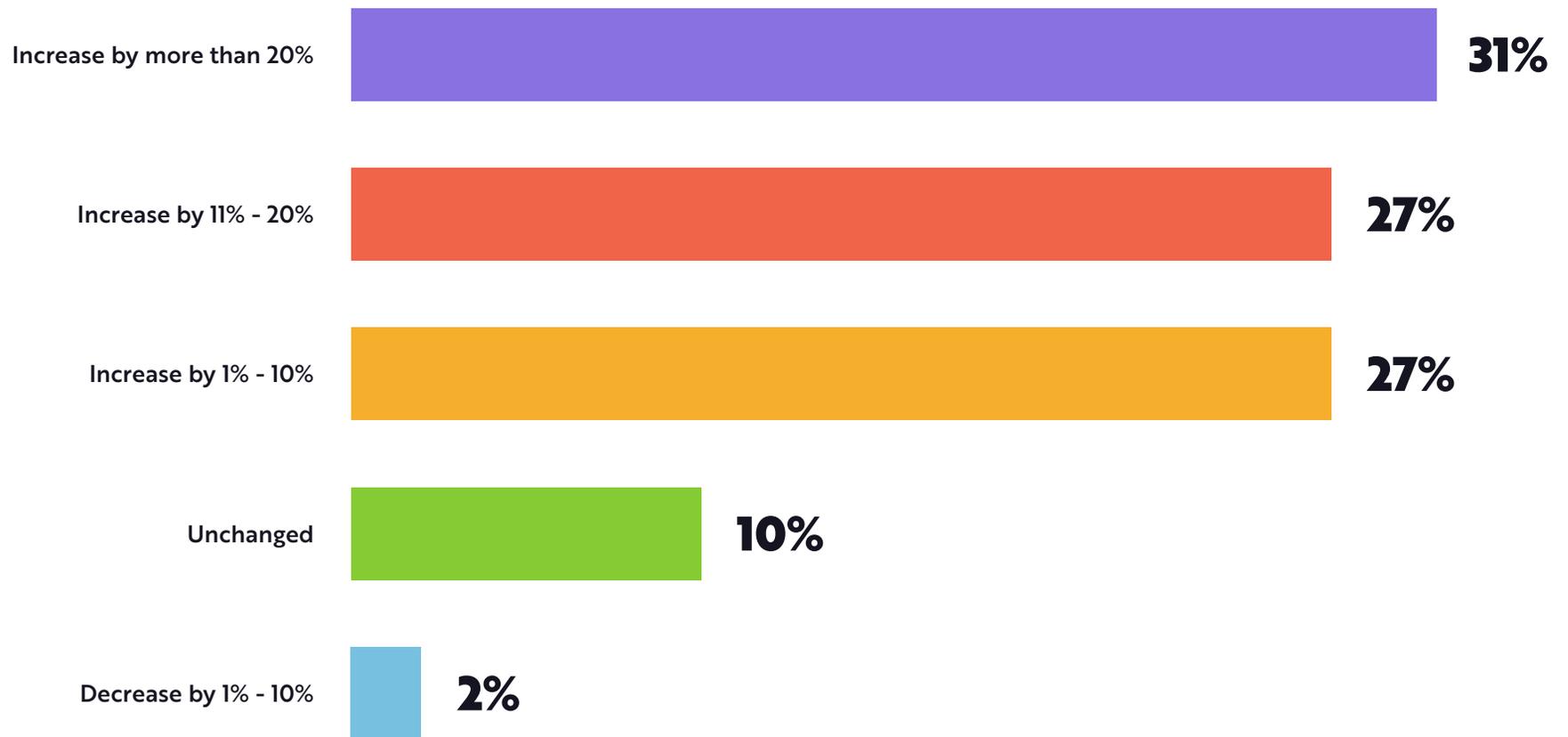
Given the increased growth goals, marketers are ramping up the top-line specific quotas they're setting, with revenue-based (34%) and lead-based (20%) leading the charge. Specifically, marketing teams are focusing on:

- Opportunities generated (49%);
- Revenue generated (48%);
- Total leads/inquiries (33%);
- MQL/SAL (33%); and
- Marketing-sourced revenue (32%).

Since many of these goals are typically associated with later stages of the funnel, they likely indicate a more mature approach to revenue conversion tactics — companies have moved beyond settling for marketing-generated inquiries and now want to know the results.

To that end, most organizations (34%) attributed marketing-generated leads (MGL) to between 11% and 25% of total revenue, while 22% attributed MGL for 26% to 50% of the total revenue and an additional 20% attributed less than 10% of MGL to revenue.

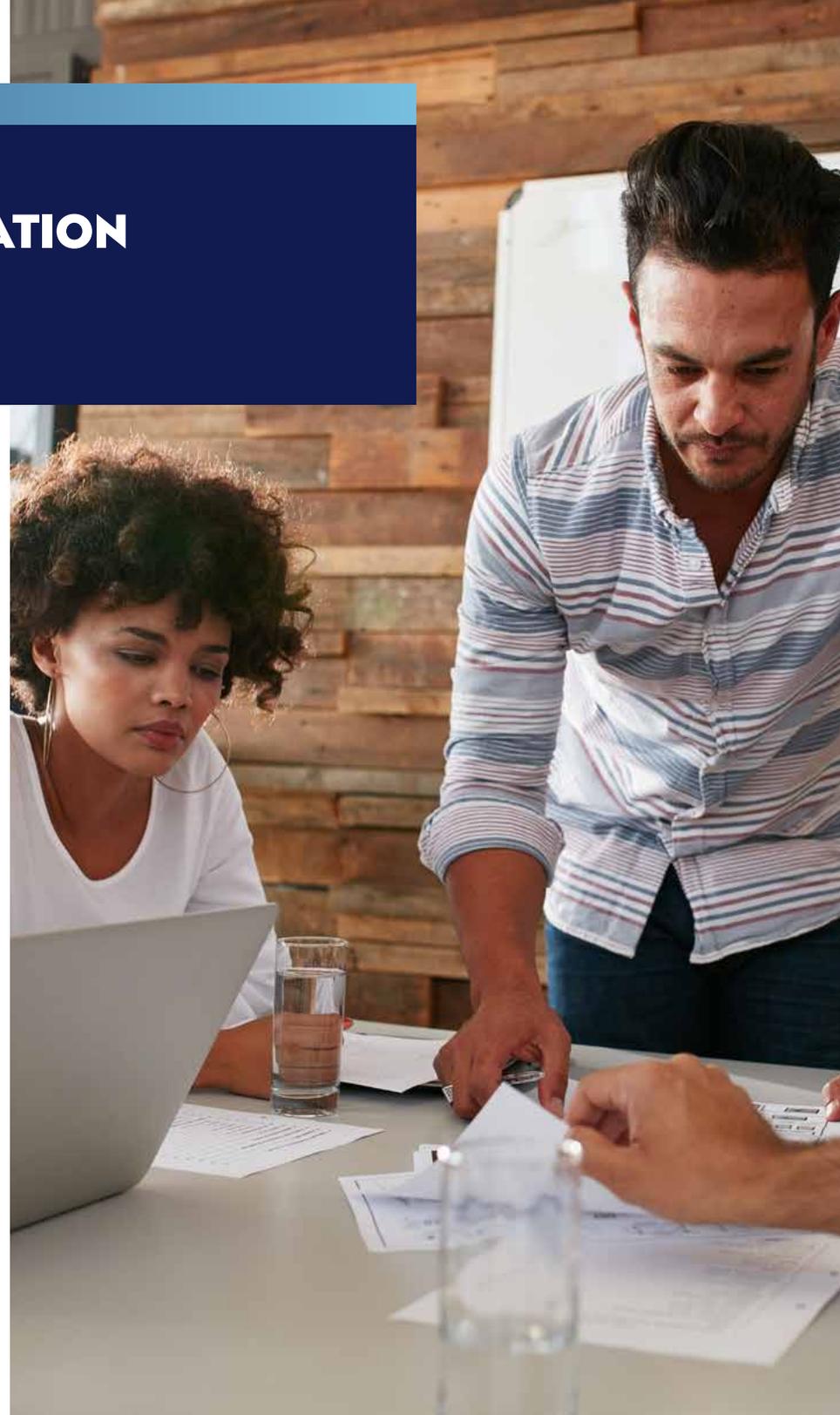
WHAT AMOUNT OF TOTAL REVENUE GROWTH IS YOUR ORGANIZATION PROJECTING FOR 2022?



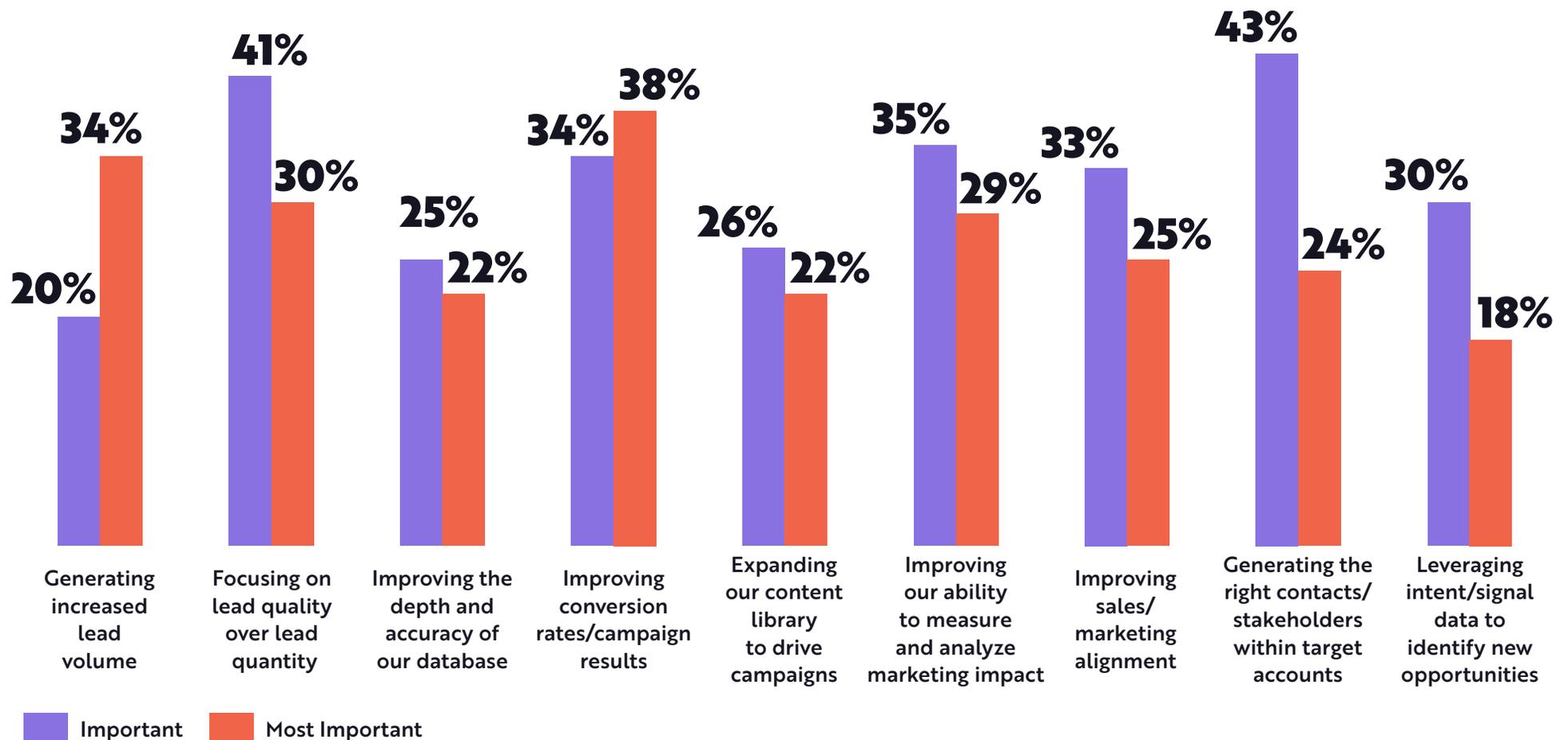
FOCUSING ON QUALITY LEAD GENERATION OVER LARGE QUANTITIES

As growth goals increase and ABM ramps up, marketers are refining their focus on targeting the right buyers. It's no longer about getting leads in the door and making the top-of-funnel as big as possible; there's a focus now on targeting in-market, hot leads to improve conversion rates and campaign results. That's reflected in organizations' top demand gen priorities, which include:

- Improving conversion rates/campaign results (38%);
- Generating increased lead volume (34%);
- Focusing on lead quality over quantity (30%);
- Improving sales and marketing alignment (25%); and
- Generating the right contacts/stakeholders within target accounts (24%).



RATE YOUR ORGANIZATION'S DEMAND GENERATION PRIORITIES FOR 2022.



As marketing teams work to capitalize on those prioritized, an interesting storyline emerges around engagement tactics. The adaptations of marketing teams and preferences of leads and accounts for digital interactions seem to be here to stay, as the effects of the pandemic are still influencing marketers' preferences for video/virtual engagement strategies. Specifically, marketing's top engagement tactics in 2021 included:

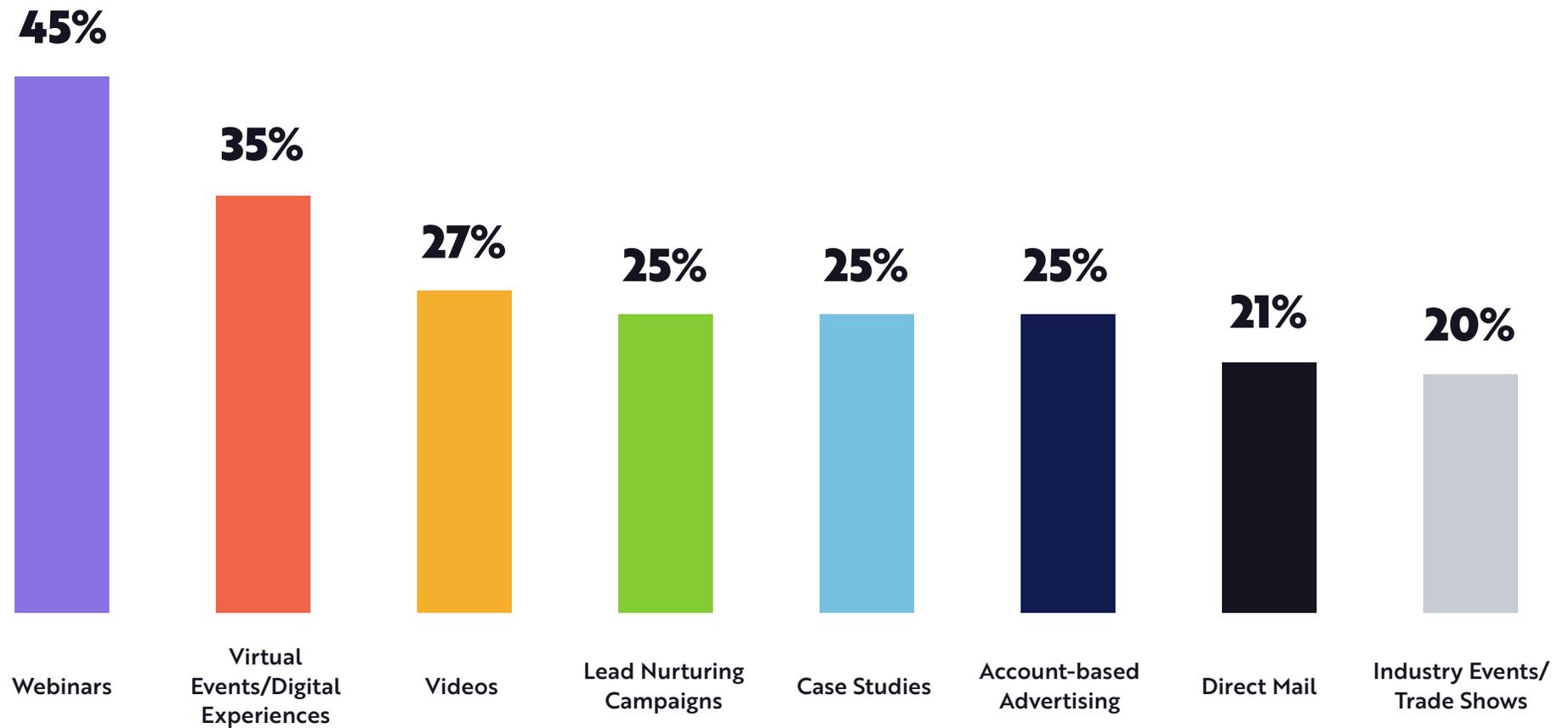
- Webinars (45%);
- Virtual events/digital experiences (35%);
- Videos (27%);
- Account-based advertising (25%); and
- Case studies (25%).

However, it's not all online: **Direct mail is quickly mounting a comeback, as 21% of respondents said they're prioritizing direct mail initiatives** — a marked increase from last year's 15%. **Additionally, in-person events are back on the rise: 20% of respondents utilized face-to-face connections**, compared to last year's 17%.

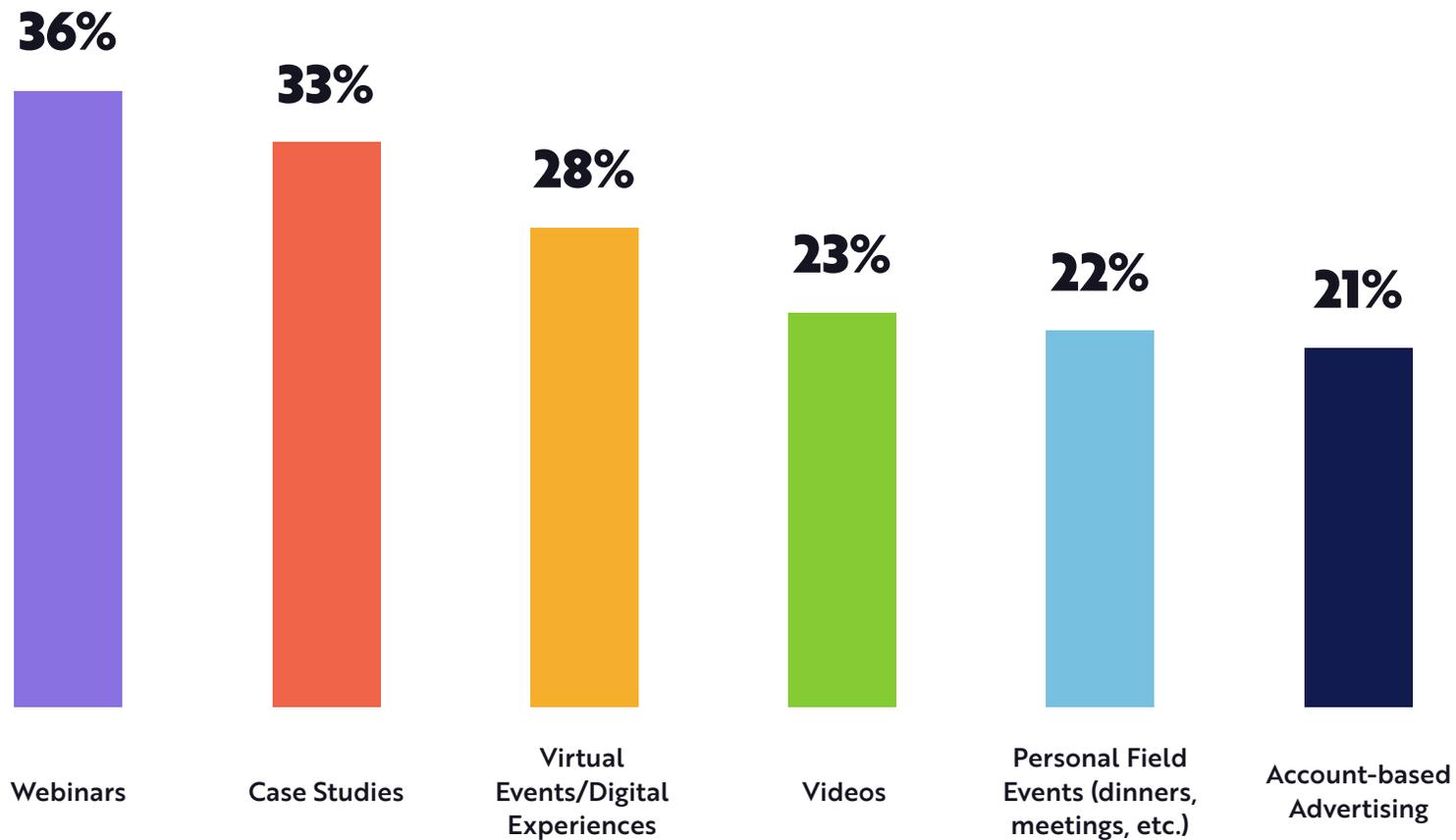
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WHICH ENGAGEMENT TACTICS WERE MOST SUCCESSFUL IN 2021 IN TERMS OF GENERATING QUALIFIED LEADS FOR THE TOP OF THE FUNNEL?



IN 2021, WHICH TACTICS WERE MOST SUCCESSFUL IN HELPING TO CONVERT AND ACCELERATE LEADS AT THE MIDDLE AND LATE STAGES OF THE FUNNEL?



Moving down the funnel into the middle and late stages, the top five engagement tactics included:

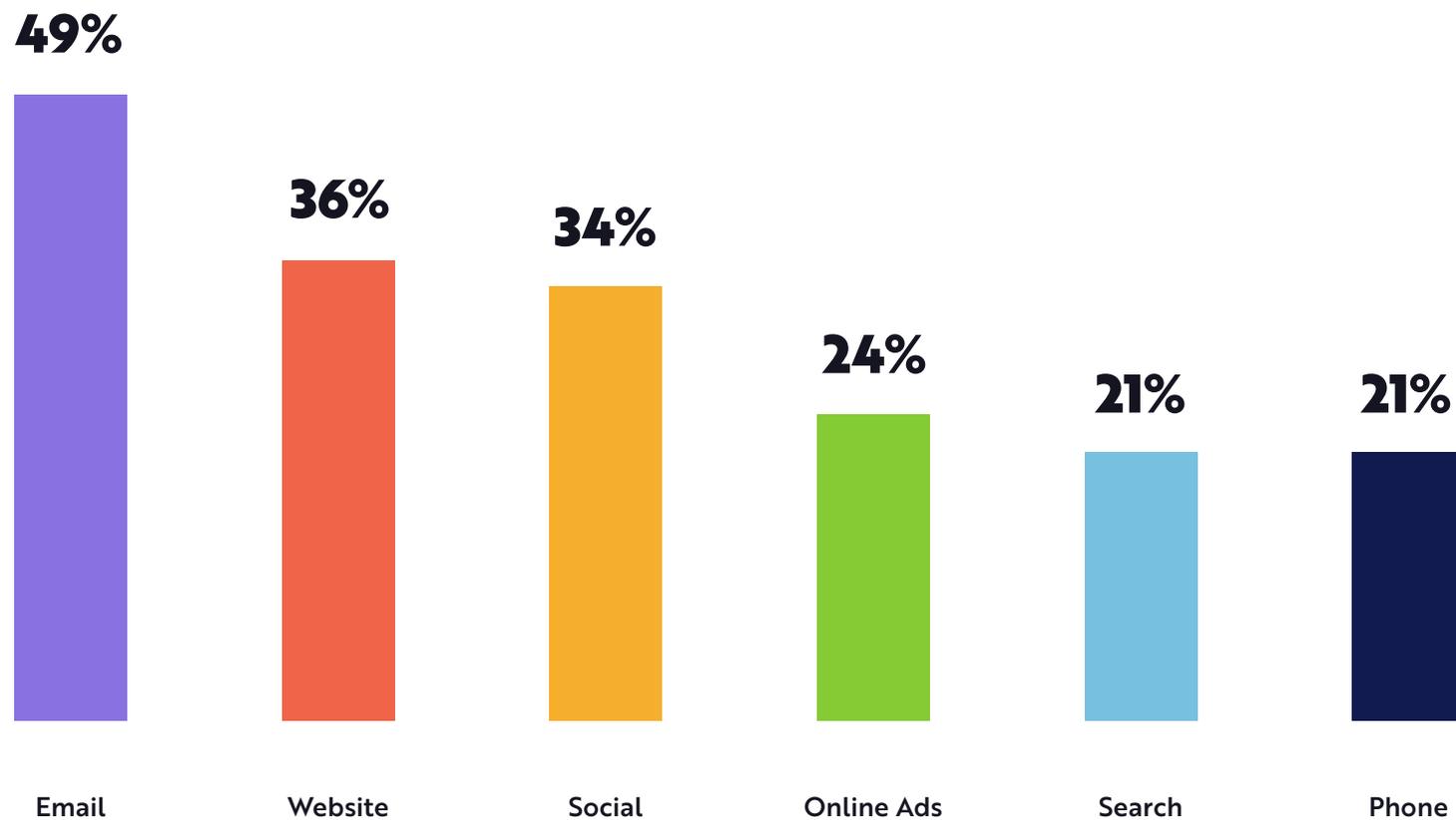
- Webinars (36%);
- Case studies (33%);
- Virtual events/digital experiences (28%);
- Video (23%); and
- Personal, in-the-field events (22%).

Email remained the top channel to drive leads into marketers' pipeline (49%), followed by website (36%), social media (34%) and online ads (24%). Similarly, when asked about top channels for early-stage engagement, respondents once again pointed to email (51%), social (38%), website (35%), search (26%) and online ads (21%).

Interestingly, while email still secured the top spot for drawing conversions later in the funnel (46%), the preference for more targeted buyer outreach was clear: **Product demos secured the No. 2 spot at 40%, followed closely by website (38%) and phone (36%).**

Webinars have proven their effectiveness across all stages of the buyer's journey, as they can do everything from generate leads to provide useful advice on how to use a product or solution once it's adopted. Across early-, middle- and late-stage engagement, multiple write-in responses indicated webinars as a key strategy — further securing its stronghold.

WHICH CHANNELS ARE YOU CURRENTLY USING TO DRIVE LEADS INTO YOUR PIPELINE?



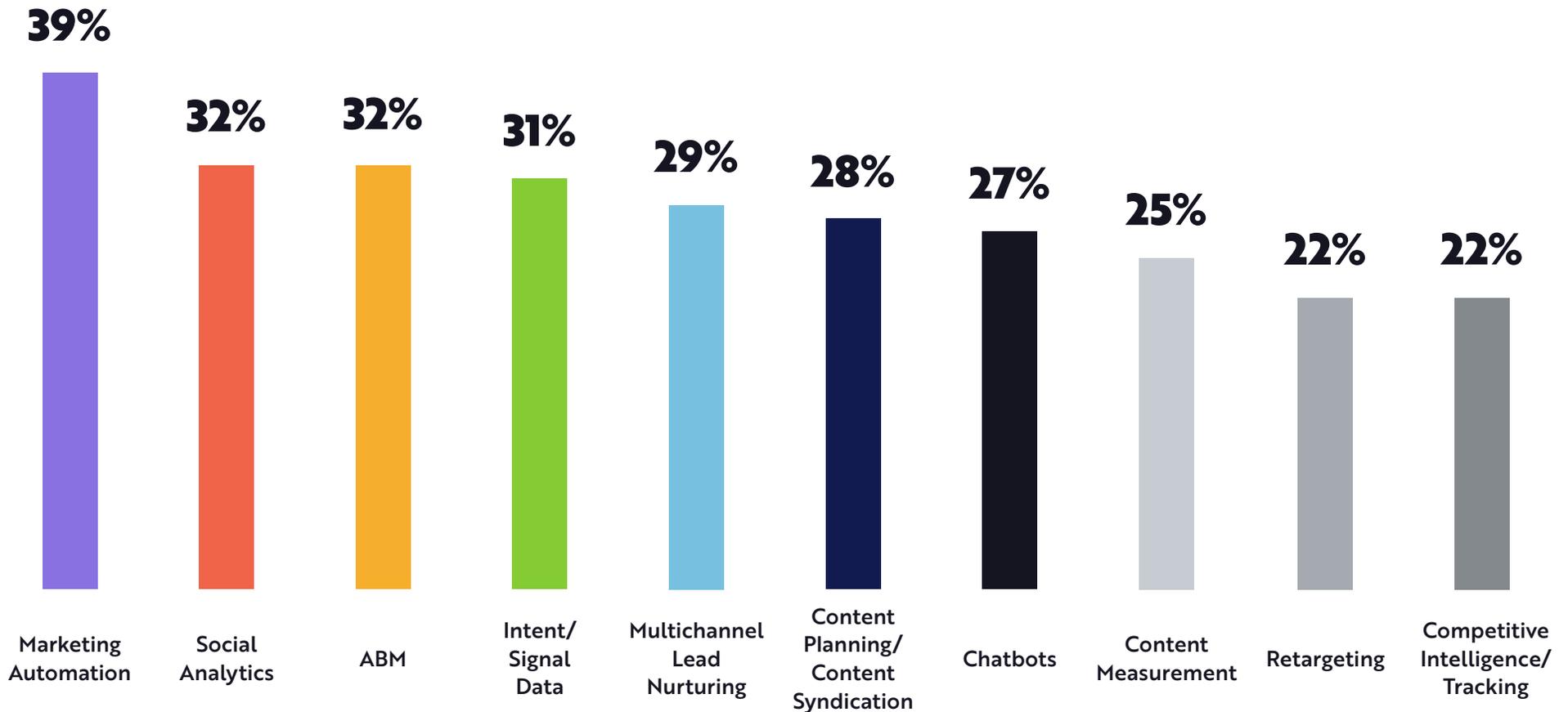
LOOKING AHEAD TOWARD FUTURE GOALS

Throughout 2022, marketing teams plan to implement several new initiatives and solutions to help accelerate their demand gen strategies and reflect the more mature approach they're taking to ABM. When asked about their key initiatives in the new year, respondents cited:

- Marketing automation (39%);
- ABM (32%);
- Social analytics (32%);
- Intent/signal data (31%); and
- Multichannel lead nurturing (29%).

Though marketing automation isn't new, it's clear that marketers are still viewing it as something to test out. Similarly, intent signals are poised to become an even bigger part of demand gen strategies as organizations refine their focus on personalization and tailored content for accounts. **Engaging leads across social channels grew in marketers' lists of priorities — up from 25% last year — indicating social initiative are growing in importance and catching up to email.**

WHICH TOOLS AND/OR TACTICS ARE YOU PLANNING TO TEST AND/OR DEPLOY IN 2022?



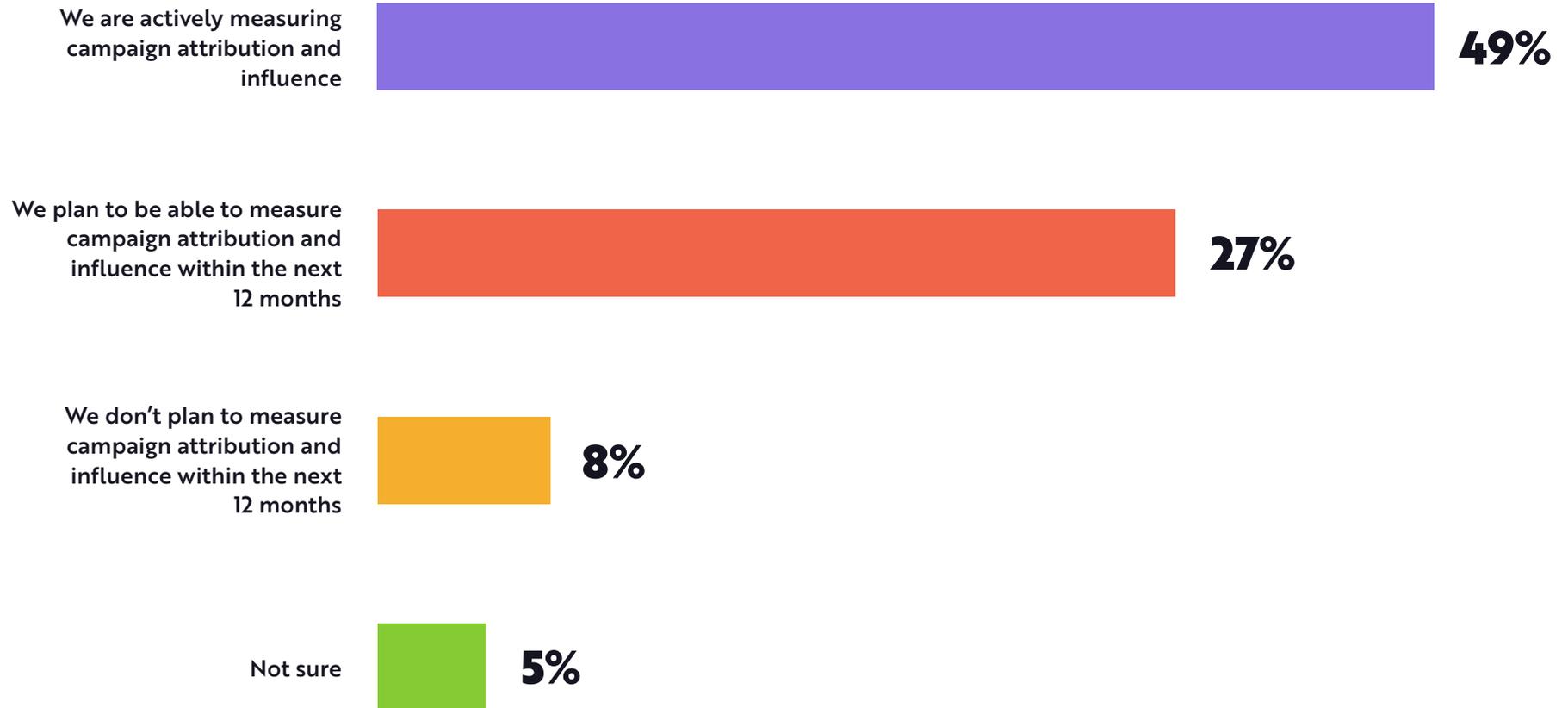
Overall, when asked to describe their current ability to measure campaign and influence, almost half of respondents (49%) said they actively measure campaign attribution and performance, while 37% plan to start measuring it within the next 12 months. Specifically, respondents indicated that demand gen goals throughout the year include:

- Better aligning marketing and sales departments around go-to-market initiatives (42%);
- Nurturing leads to prevent missing opportunities (40%);
- Increasing conversion of MQLs to opportunities (38%);
- Better measuring the ROI of demand gen initiatives (36%); and
- Reassessing and re-formulating their strategy for generating qualified leads (32%).

Internal alignment emerged as the top priority, demonstrating that organizations are trying to grow their prospect targeting and retention processes in a more collaborative manner at the campaign level.

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HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR CURRENT ABILITY TO MEASURE CAMPAIGN ATTRIBUTION AND INFLUENCE?



WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING ARE PRIORITIES IN TERMS OF YOUR DEMAND GENERATION GOALS?



CONCLUSION: MARKETING TEAMS ARE SETTING MORE AGGRESSIVE DEMAND GEN GOALS

Modern demand generation initiatives now center around narrowing the top of the funnel to generate best-fit leads and nurturing them throughout the lifecycle to generate the best ROI. Marketers are facing the “quality vs. quantity” challenge by actively communicating with sales to ensure:

- Leads are being followed up with (61%);
- They are practicing ABM and targeting the right stakeholders (52%); and
- They are using intent data to better assess prospects that are actively researching a buying decision (47%).

Marketing is no longer just turning leads over to sales and hoping for the best; the two departments are working together to better identify qualified leads and ensure there's follow up across the entire journey so key opportunities aren't missed.

ABOUT SURVEY

The “2022 Demand Generation Benchmark Survey” collected responses from 116 B2B marketing practitioners from the end of December 2021 until mid-January 2022, with most respondents based in the U.S.

Almost half (47%) of respondents said they work in the software/technology industry, while 17% said they work in the business services/consulting realm.

Other industries, represented by less than 10% a piece, include financial services, retail, consumer products, telecom, healthcare and manufacturing.





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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.

888.603.3626

info@demandgenreport.com



KELLY LINDENAU

is an editor and writer who loves covering the latest B2B marketing trends, research and industry insights. She's a New Jersey native, runner and reader who always has a GIF from *The Office* at the ready.

