

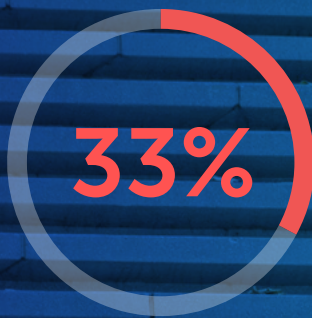
The Rise Of The Front-Line Marketer In Our **New Digital Selling Reality**

Survey Finds That Marketers Face Big Changes, Challenges
& Opportunities in a Buyer-Centric Marketplace



We live in the experience era, requiring B2B marketing teams to deliver the same personalized experiences as their B2C counterparts. Unfortunately, most organizations have struggled to meet the needs of today's digitally-savvy buyers — a trend that was exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. To fuel long-term growth, B2B marketers must adapt our new digital-first realities and embrace buyer-centricity.

This report will explore marketers' outlook in the wake of COVID-19, revealing marketing teams' greatest challenges, such as understanding buyers' changing needs and engaging them in the right channel with personalized campaigns and content. Additionally, the report will discuss the many roles of modern marketing teams are playing across the buyer journey, underscoring the importance of agile execution and alignment between sales and marketing.



Said the greatest challenge they have when working with their sales counterpart is "orchestrating digital campaigns that incorporate the sales team across different stages of the customer lifecycle."



Specifically,
this report
examines:



How marketing will lead
digital selling and self-service
buying experiences



The future of selling
through hybrid go-to-market
(GTM) models



The importance of personalized
experiences in a digital-first
marketplace

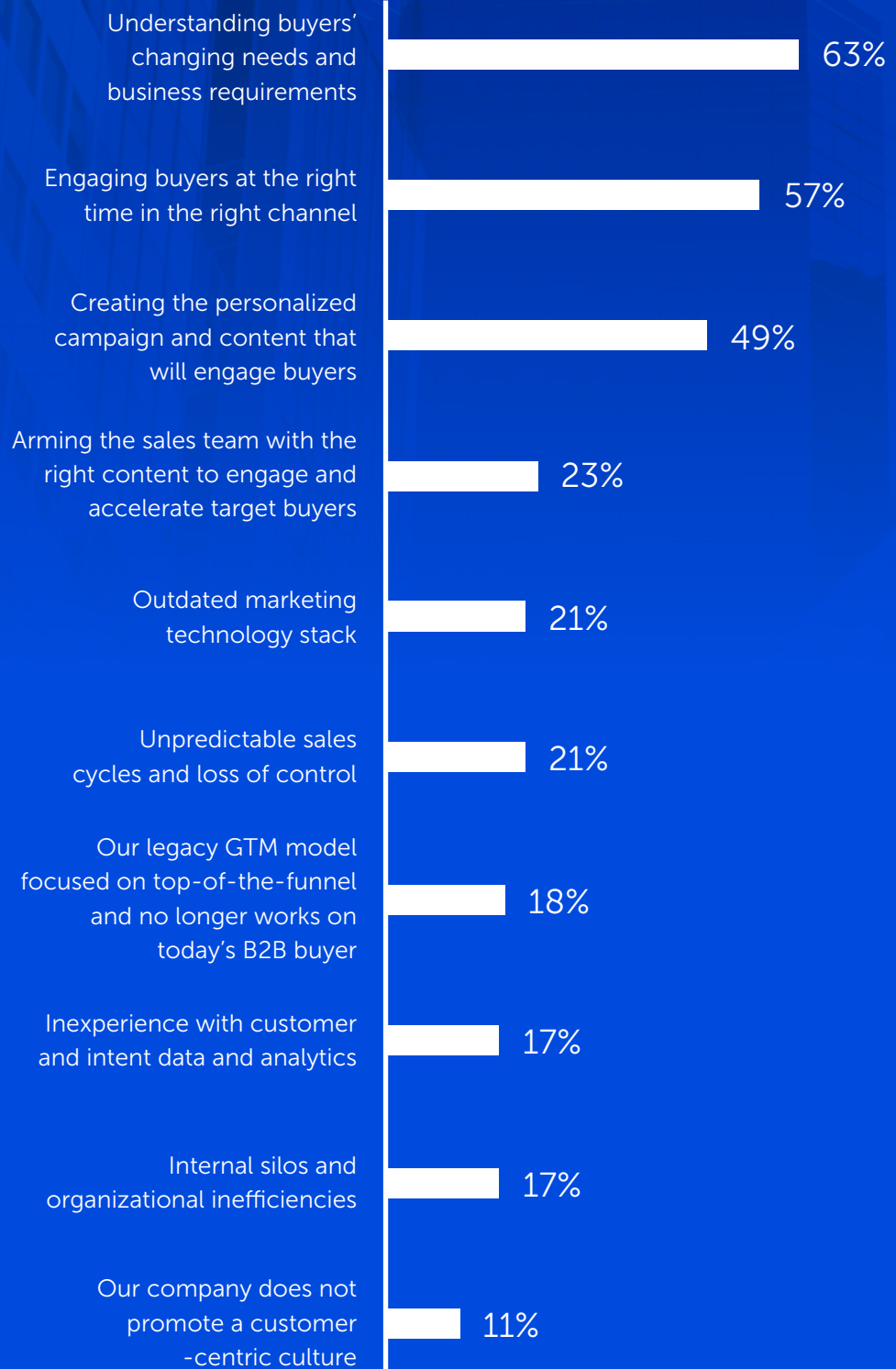


Areas where companies
struggle to drive pipeline and
expansion growth across the
customer lifecycle



Common execution challenges
to deliver buyer-centricity,
including outdated martech
tools, insufficient budgets and
lack of internal resources

When it comes to marketing to today's B2B buyer, what are your top three challenges?

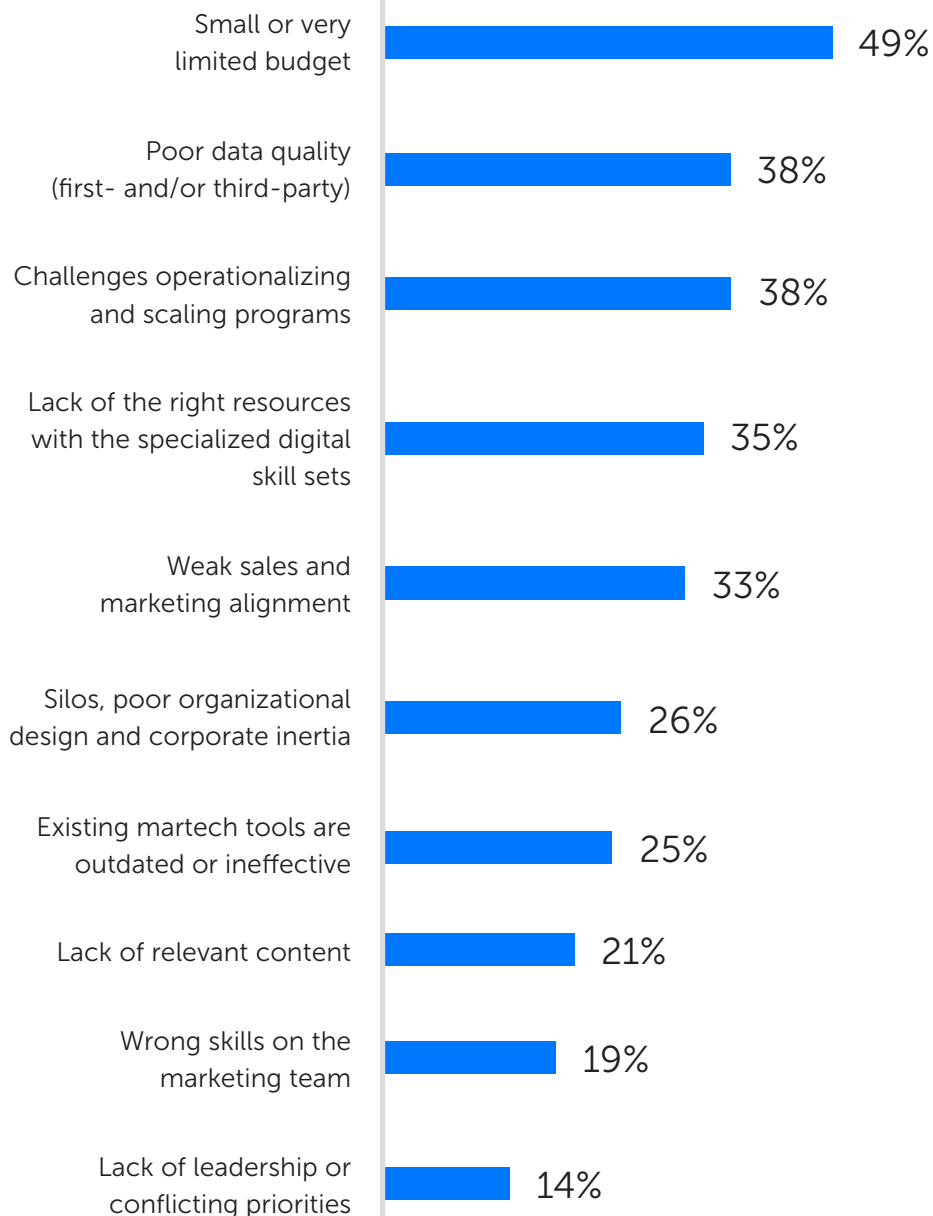





When asked a series of questions relating to their ABM programs, less than half of respondents (48%) agreed that their ABM programs scale well, indicating one of the many persistent challenges marketers face to keep pace with today's B2B buyer.

Specifically, marketing teams are dealing with small budgets (49%), poor data quality (38%) and/or challenges operationalizing and scaling programs (38%). While some are able to meet the challenge, others are falling behind due to inadequate resources and adapting to a rapidly-changing and digital-first B2B ecosystem.

What are the top three internal challenges you face related to creating and launching ABM and/or data-driven personalized marketing campaigns?





When asked about the current state of account-centric execution practices, nearly half of respondents (43%) indicated success driving pipeline growth during early stages of the customer lifecycle (awareness and demand generation).

But perhaps the more telling statistic is on the outer edge, where only a quarter (25%) of the respondents claimed success driving growth across the entire customer lifecycle. This finding implies that 75% of teams aren't ready to market across the entire customer lifecycle in the new digital reality, illustrating how very few marketers have successfully executed against a buyer-centric strategy that requires digital competency across the entire customer lifecycle.

Which statement best applies to the current state of your marketing team's execution of account-centric best practices?

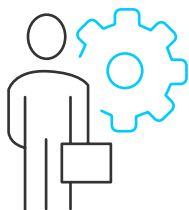
We successfully drive growth across the entire customer lifecycle **25%**

43% We successfully drive pipeline growth during early stages of the customer lifecycle (awareness and demand generation)



We are ineffective at driving growth across the entire customer lifecycle **17%**

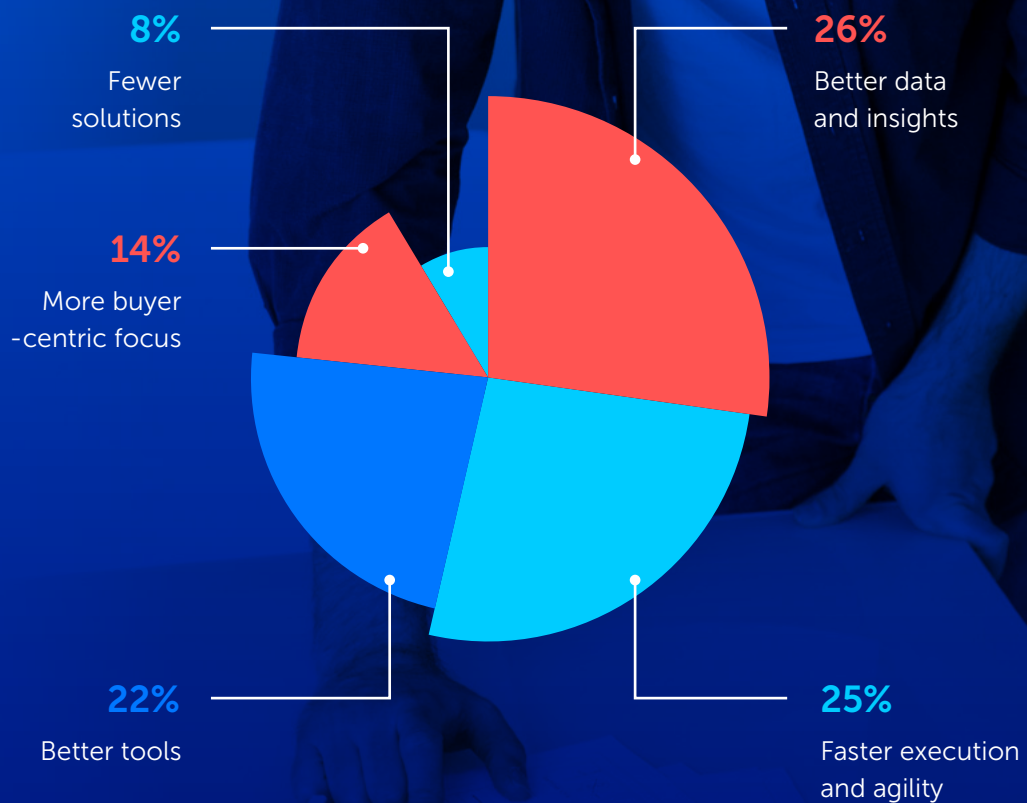
14% We successfully drive pipeline and expansion growth during early and latter stages of the customer lifecycle (awareness, demand generation, cross-sell and upsell)




Highlighting the challenge that marketers lack the support in our new digital-first reality, respondents said if they could change one thing within their marketing team, the majority wanted to eliminate internal silos. Respondents also wanted more efficient technologies and empowerment to execute personalized campaigns at scale.

Twenty-six percent indicated that their one change would be for “better data and insights,” while 22% said they would have “better tools.” An additional 25% stated that they would opt for “faster execution and agility.” In total, 73% of respondents expressed a desire to bolster their ability to do the job. Most marketers know what it takes to get the job done but lacked the resources and support to execute effectively.

If you could change one thing within your marketing team, what would it be?

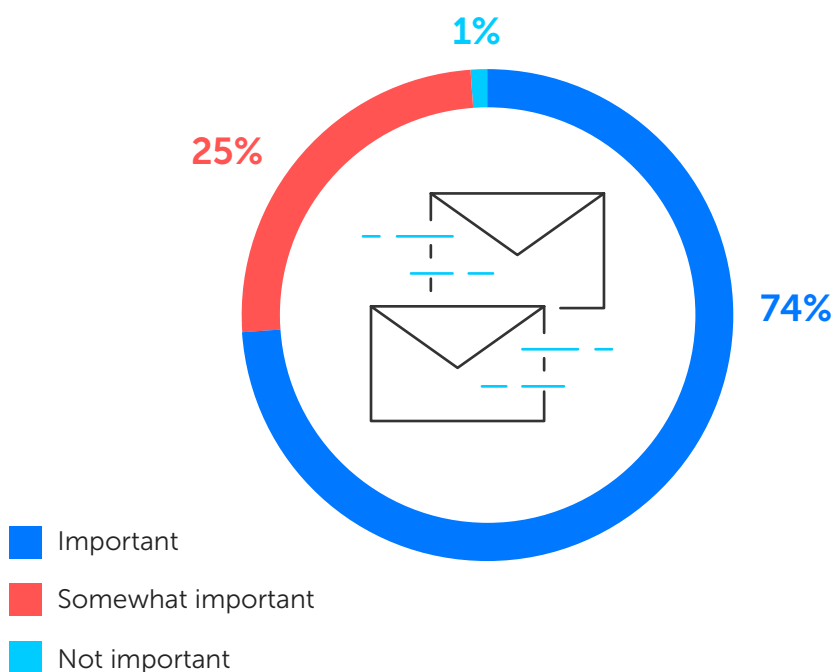




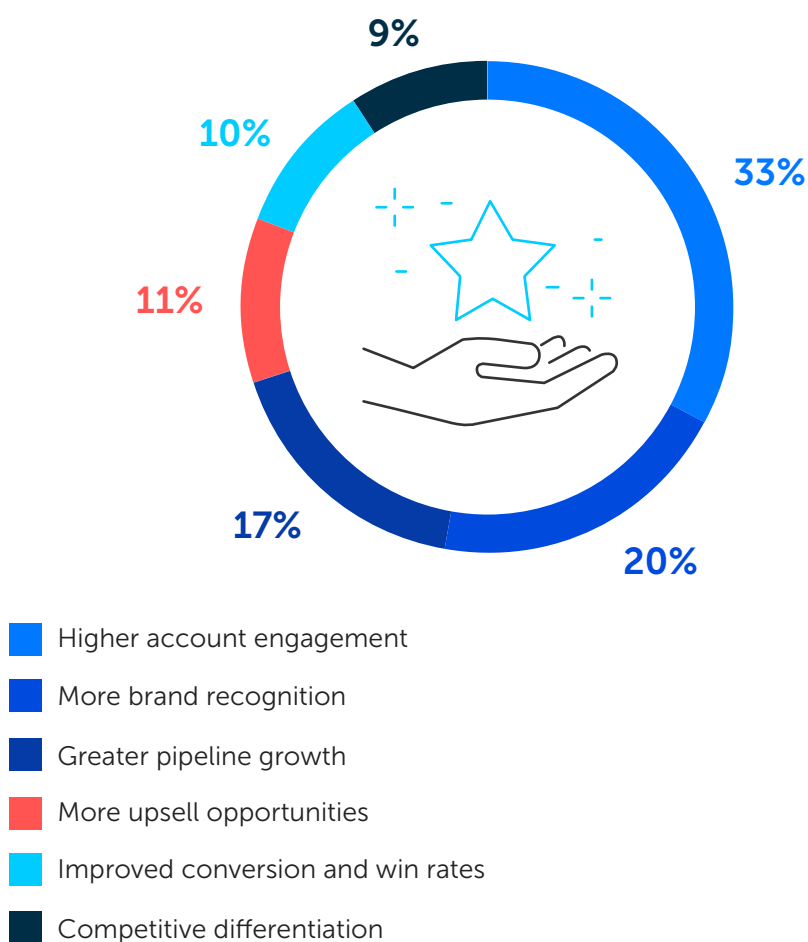
Looking to the future, marketers understand the correlation between personalization and micro-targeting with buyer engagement and growth. When asked how important personalized content, messaging and journeys are to engage their buyers, 74% said it was “important” and an additional 25% said it was “somewhat important.” With a whopping 99% agreement (and only one dissenter answering “not important”), that’s about as close to consensus as you’ll find.

Digging deeper into the increased value of personalized marketing, respondents said they perceived the greatest benefits to be “higher account engagement” (34%), “more brand recognition” (20%) and “greater pipeline growth” (17%).

In 2021 and beyond, how important is personalized content, messaging and journeys to engage your buyers?



What do you perceive as the greatest benefit of personalized marketing?

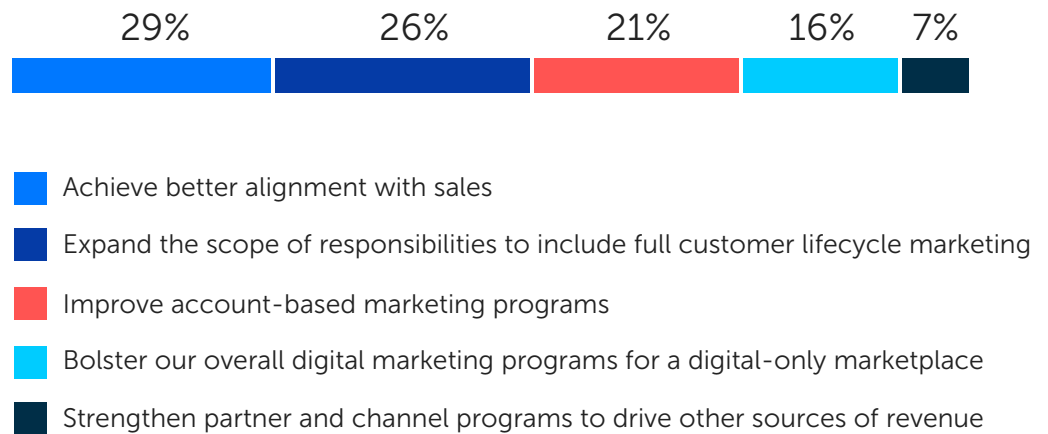




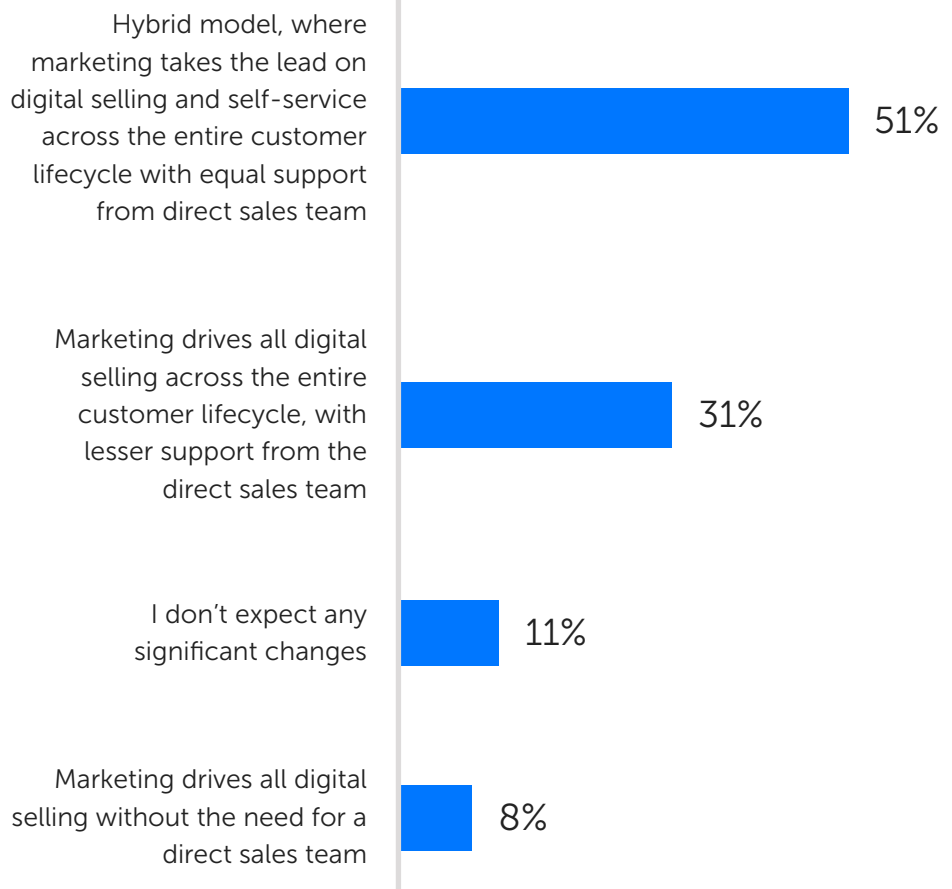
As companies emerge from the pandemic and embrace a digital-selling reality, respondents said that their biggest GTM priorities are “achieving better alignment with sales” (29%) and “expanding the scope of responsibilities to include full customer lifecycle marketing” (26%). Both responses indicate the changing relationship between sales and marketing and the importance of customer-facing — or frontline — marketing teams to drive growth.

As those roles continue to evolve over the next few years, marketers foresee changes in their GTM organizations. More than half of them (51%) envisioned a hybrid model, with marketing taking the lead on digital selling and self-service across the entire customer lifecycle and equal support from the direct sales team. Another third of them (31%) see marketing driving all digital selling across the full customer lifecycle, with lesser support from direct sales. Marketers clearly anticipate their responsibilities increasing, led by frontline marketing teams.

In the aftermath of COVID-19, what has become your biggest GTM priority?



Over the next 1-3 years, how do you envision your GTM organization changing?



Conclusion:

In a digital -selling marketplace, the new B2B marketing mandate requires buyer-centricity and flawless execution across the entire customer lifecycle.

This survey illustrates the new reality that marketers face as the world emerges from COVID-19 pandemic, which served as a catalyst to accelerate digital transformation across every industry. In its wake, digital-first buyers own the entire buying journey. To meet this new reality, B2B marketers understand their elevated role in driving predictable growth across digital channels and orchestrating success with their sales counterparts.

As frontline marketers become the digital architects of growth, they must be empowered with the right tools and resources to successfully execute with both precision and impact.

Looking ahead, the relationship between sales and marketing will continue to evolve as companies embrace buyer journey-centric strategies. There's no question that while these changes will present new challenges for marketers, they'll also present new opportunities. As B2B buyers demand more self-service options and digital experiences, frontline marketers will play a central role fueling growth across the entire customer lifecycle.

About the Survey

Demand Gen Report surveyed 104 B2B marketing executives and professionals in April of 2021. The respondents range from Manager (20%), Director (32%), Vice President (16%) and C-level (26%) roles.

Respondents work across a variety of industries, including business services/consulting (21%), software/technology (18%), manufacturing (10%) and financial services (9%). Their companies are equally diverse, with annual revenues ranging from under \$100 million (43%) to greater than \$10 billion (13%).



Folloze builds the leading B2B Buyer Experience Platform. With Folloze, sales and marketing teams can quickly create rich, personalized, and value-added experiences that maximize the revenue impact across the entire customer journey. Top B2B brands, including Autodesk, RingCentral, Cisco, and ServiceNow trust Folloze to boost customer engagement, revenue growth, and expansion across their target accounts.

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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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