

# **Top 20** **B2B** **Marketing** **Charts** **of 2017**



**Sponsored by Seismic and NetLine**

## Foreword from MarketingCharts

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**Hi, and thanks for joining us in our review of 2017's top B2B marketing charts!**

**As you'll see in the following slides, content marketing remained a popular topic this year, as B2B marketers expressed an interest in understanding emerging content types and testing out content personalization.**

**Additionally, as B2B becomes more audience-centric, we examine how B2B marketers are tackling growth strategies and lead generation as well as how they can best convert leads to customers. Finally, our top charts also cover best practices in vendor relationships from the buyer's perspective.**

**As such, the following deck is a loosely-categorized collection of the charts that proved most popular with you, our readers, during this past year. While it isn't necessarily an all-encompassing list of the year's most important trends, it does contain some of the bigger developments of 2017 and foreshadows some of the most important ones to come.**

**We at MarketingCharts would like to thank you for trusting us with your data needs. We wish you the best for the year ahead.**

**Cheers,  
JC Lupis  
Editor, MarketingCharts**

## Foreword from Seismic

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**We're very excited to partner with MarketingCharts on this look at the most popular B2B marketing charts of 2017! The marketing landscape continues to evolve and the research found here helps us understand how marketers think about their jobs, buyers' habits, and the ways in which marketing can keep improving.**

**The one constant theme apparent in this collection of charts is the quest for knowledge. Buyers want to know more about the vendors with whom they interact, marketers want to know more about their buyers, and both marketing and sales want to know more about the effectiveness of their efforts.**

**At Seismic, we know that marketers crave knowledge and data that informs better decision making. Marketing teams want to know that the content they create is educating the market and enabling sales to win, ultimately resulting in revenue. In 2018, sales and marketing enablement will be critical for helping marketing teams gain the insights they need to perform better and make an impact on revenue.**

**Thank you for reading – we hope these charts help inspire you to make 2018 your best year yet.**

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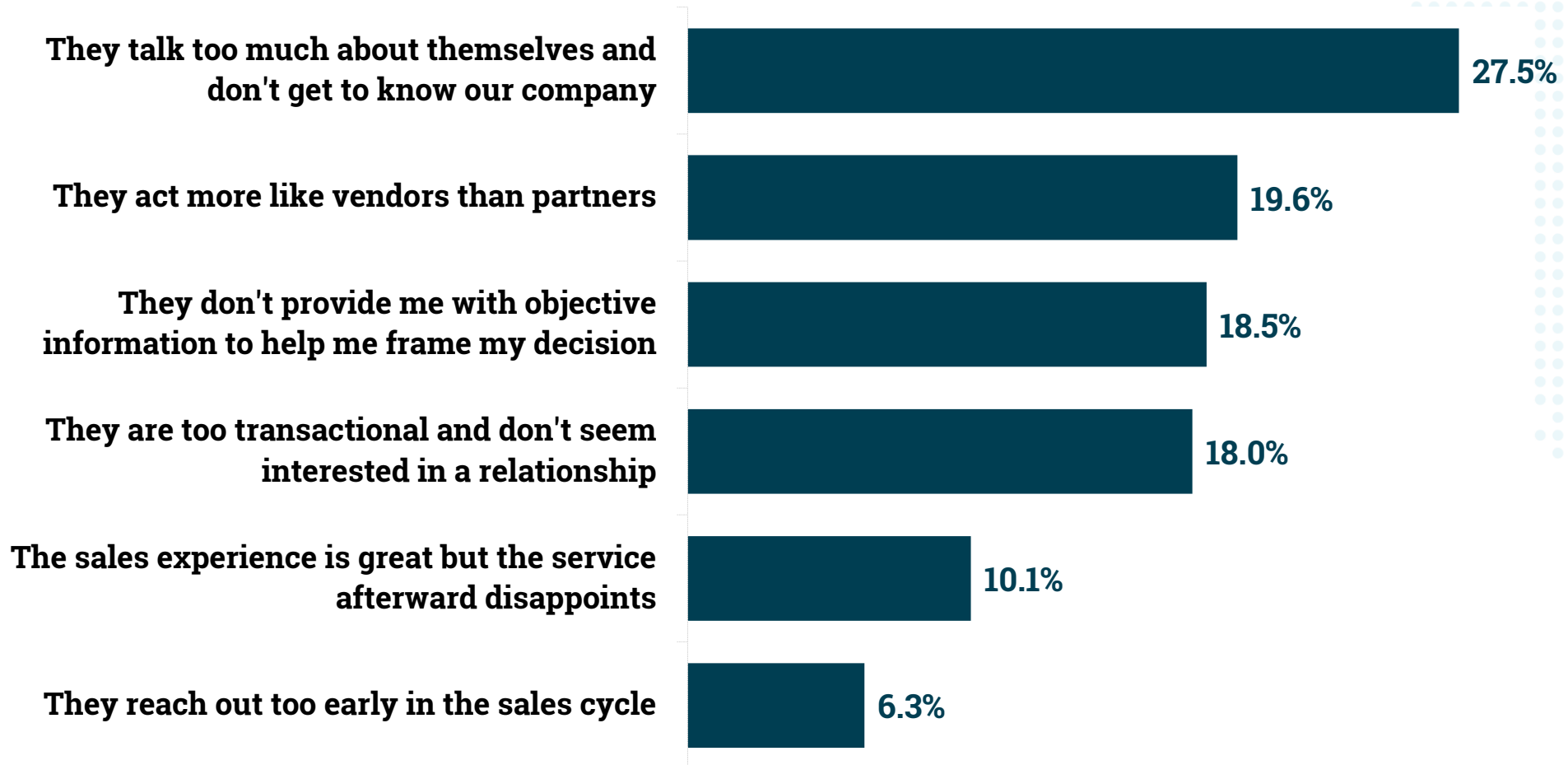
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# Buyer-Vendor Relationships

(The buyer's perspective)

# B2B Buyers' Biggest Turn-Off With the Sales Experience

B2B buyers value vendors that can support their companies' goals and can help sharpen their competitive differentiation, research from Aberdeen Group has found. This and other results from Aberdeen's study suggest that buyers want vendors to approach them with relationships in mind, not just transactions.

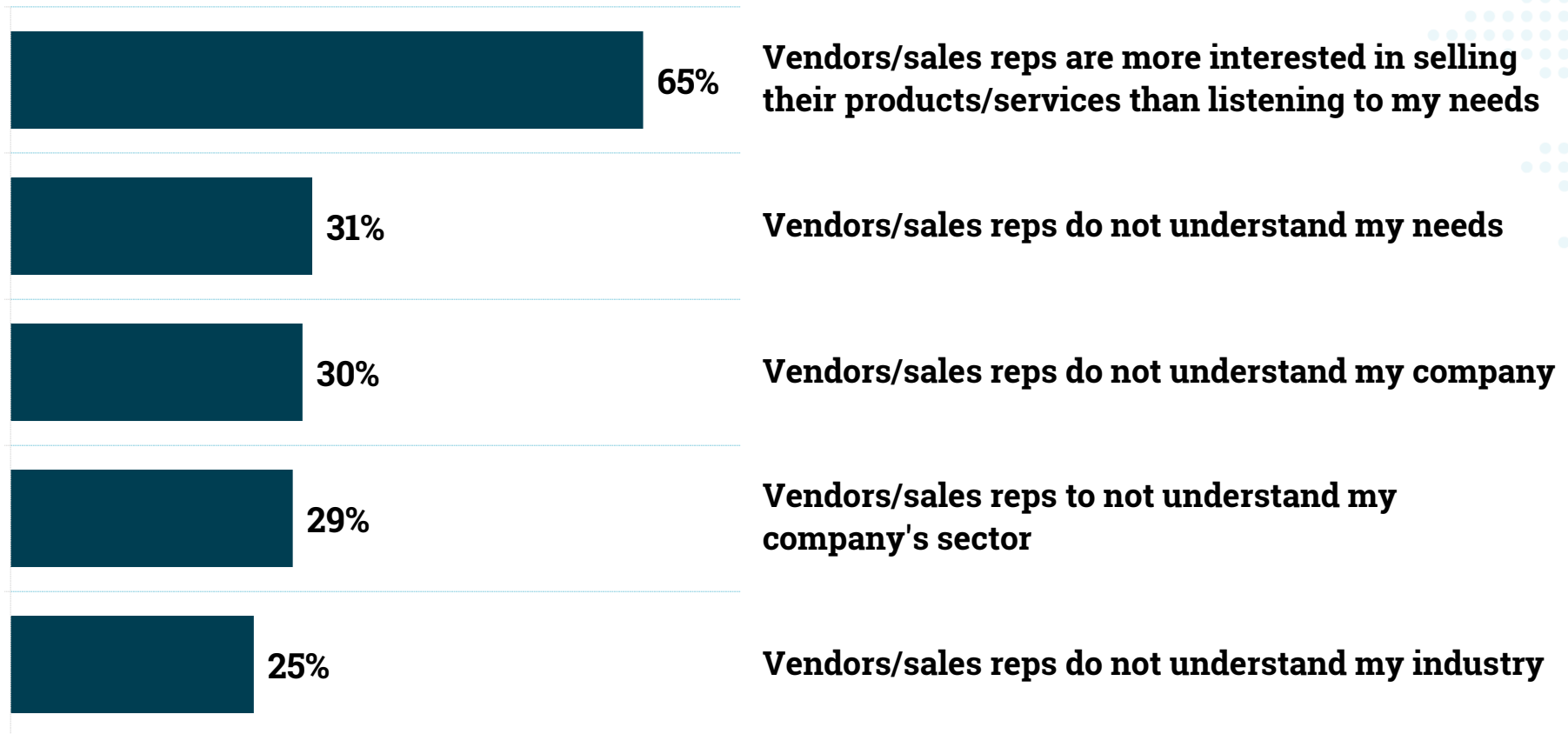


Published on [MarketingCharts.com](https://www.marketingcharts.com) in October 2017 | Data Source: [Aberdeen Group](#)

Based on a survey of more than 250 B2B buyers from a range of industries and company sizes  
Q: "What is your biggest turn off when companies are selling you products or services?"

# B2B Buyers' Biggest Challenges With Vendor Research

If there's something that really irks B2B buyers, it isn't a vendor's lack of understanding of the company, its needs, or even its industry. After all, those things can be learned or explained in the course of a discussion. But one thing needs to happen first: vendors have to listen, according to Merkle's 2017 B2B loyalty research.



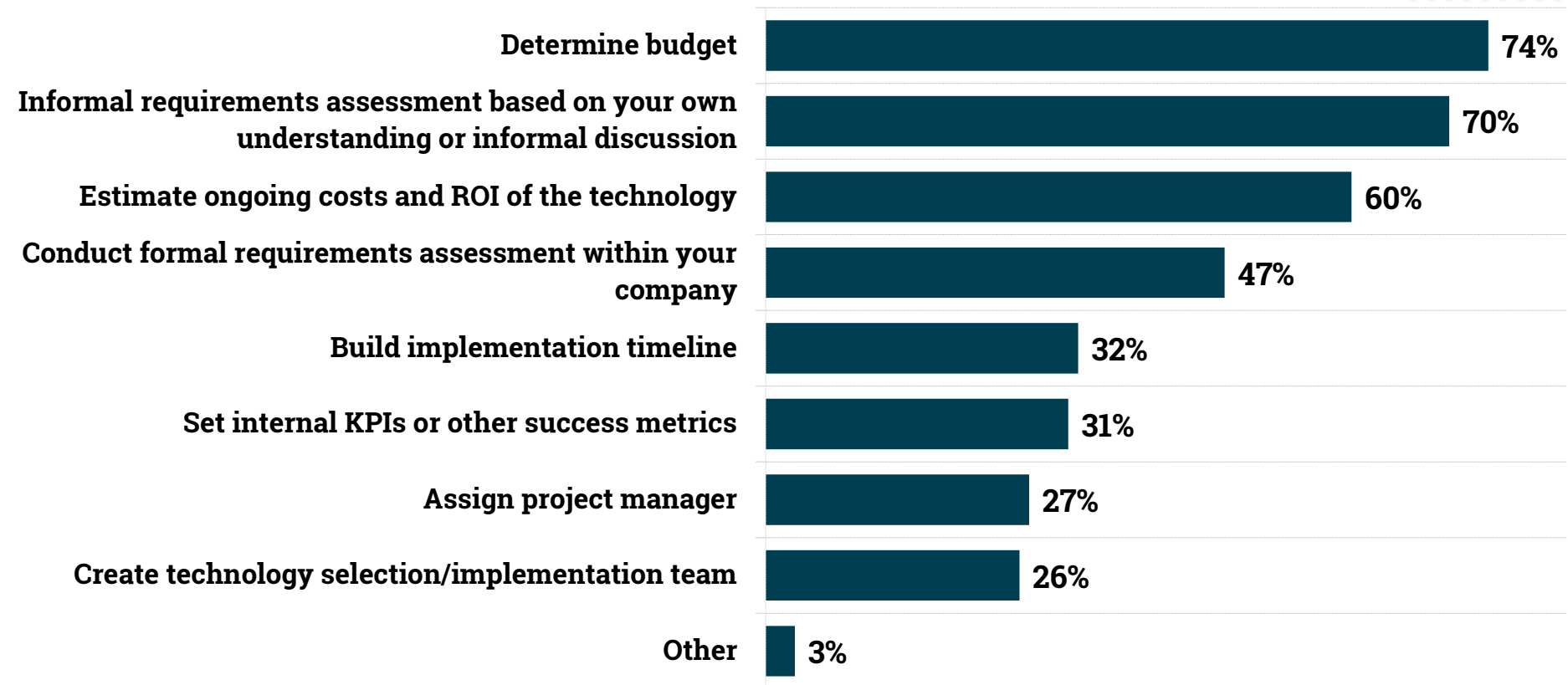
Published on [MarketingCharts.com](https://marketingcharts.com) in September 2017 | Data Source: [Merkle](#)

*BaBased on a survey of 200 B2B buyers in North America (100) and Europe (100)  
Q: "What are your biggest challenges in your process of searching for, identifying, and considering which business products and services to buy?"*



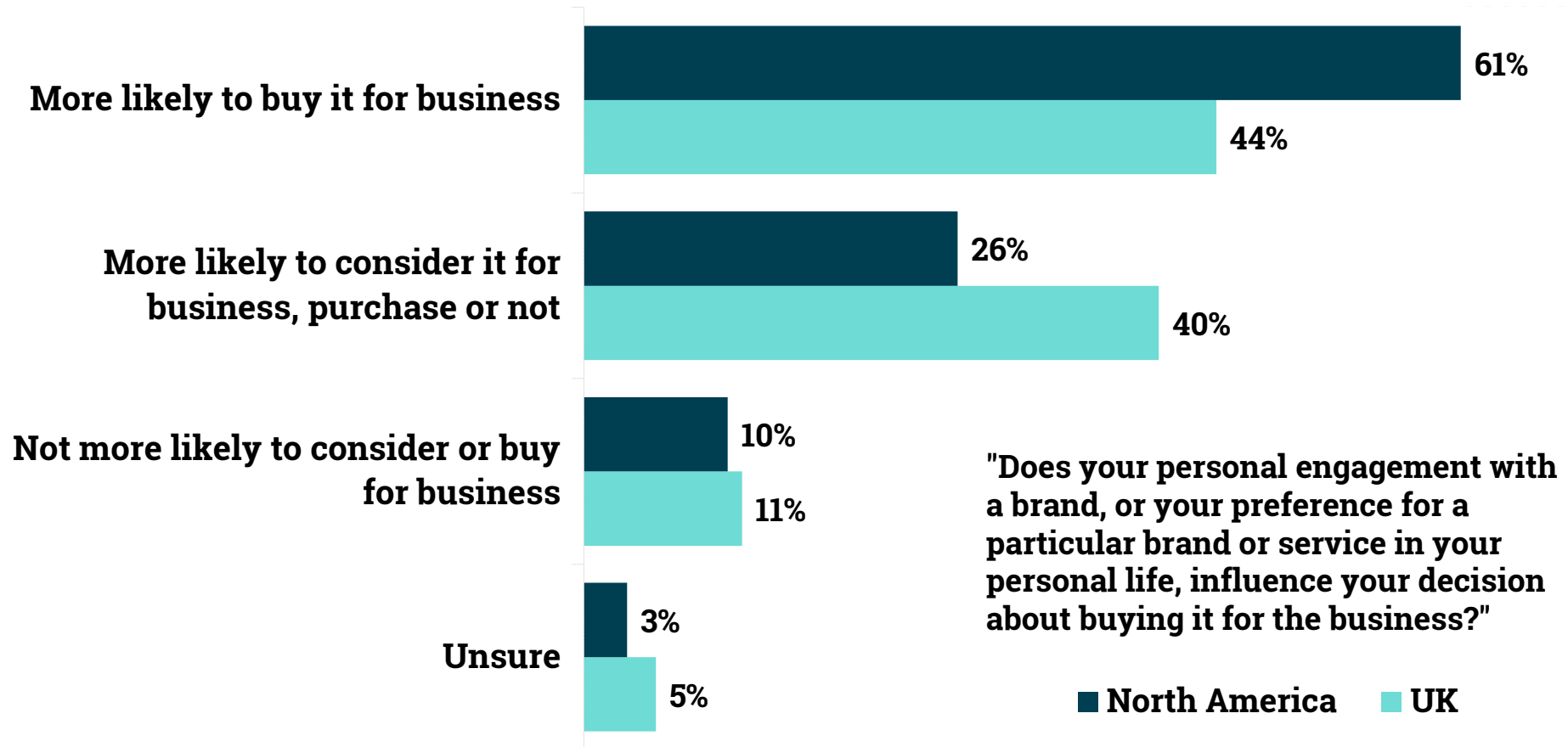
# Steps Taken Prior to Beginning the MarTech Buying Process

In a survey of 315 corporate B2B and B2C marketers, Target Marketing asked them which steps they take prior to beginning the research and procurement process for a significant marketing technology investment. The top response? Knowing how much money they have to work with, as roughly three-quarters (74%) said that they determine their budget first. Also, it's about twice as popular to estimate ongoing costs and ROI of the technology than it is to set internal KPIs or other success metrics.



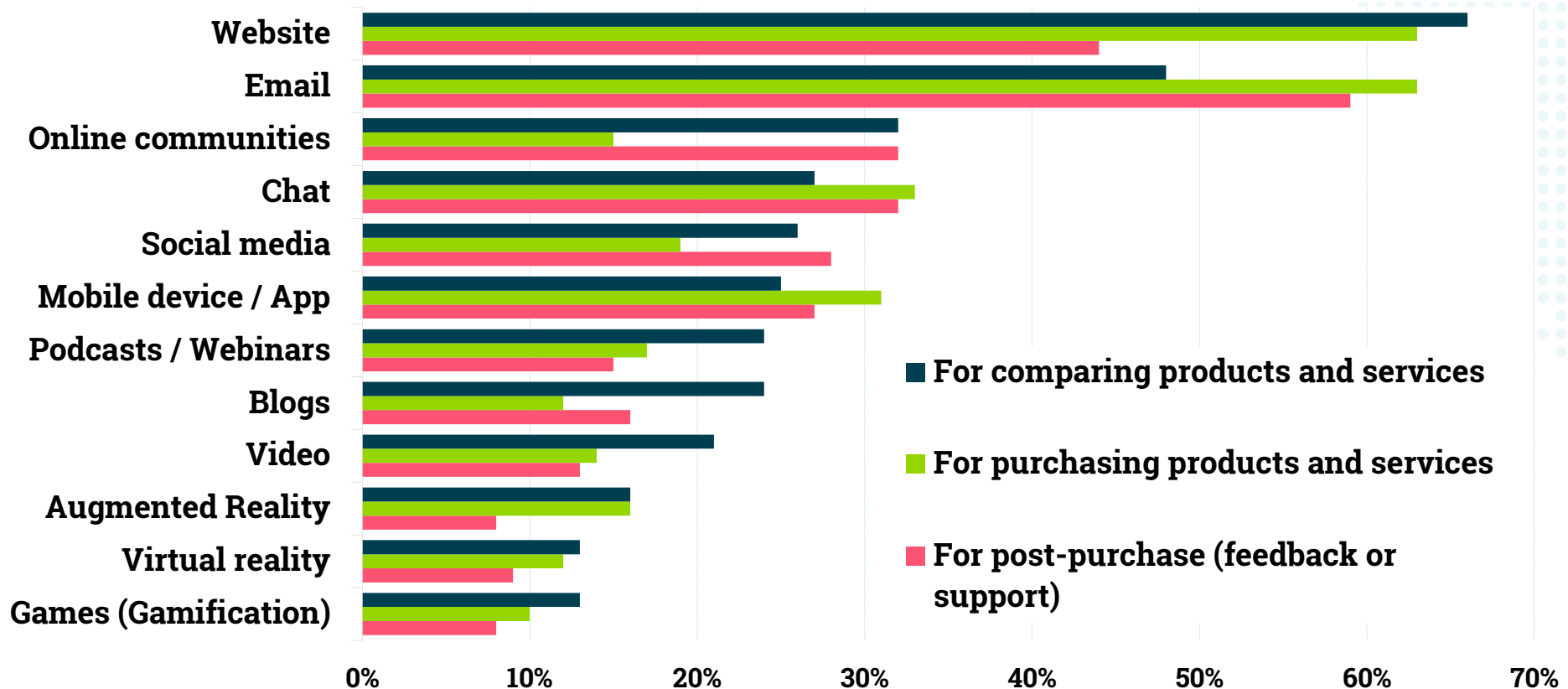
# Impact of B2B Buyers' Personal Brand Preferences and Engagements on Business Buying Decisions

The more likely a B2B buyer has a personal engagement with a brand, the more likely the buyer is to buy that brand for their business, finds a report from Merkle Loyalty Solutions. The survey of 200 B2B buyers in the North America and UK found more than 8 in 10 being more likely to consider or buy a brand for business if they have a preference for it in their personal life. As such, the study's authors recommend that B2B sellers "embrace customers as both business decision makers and as individual consumers."



# B2B Buyers' Digital Vendor Engagement Channels

When it comes to digital engagement channels, websites and email remain the clear leaders for B2B buyers, according to a Marketo report. Websites are used more often than email for comparing products and services, but as buyers progress through buying stages, the influence of websites recedes and that of email increases. There are some channels, though, that are as likely – if not more so – to be used for post-purchase feedback than for initial product comparisons. Those include chat, social media, and online communities.

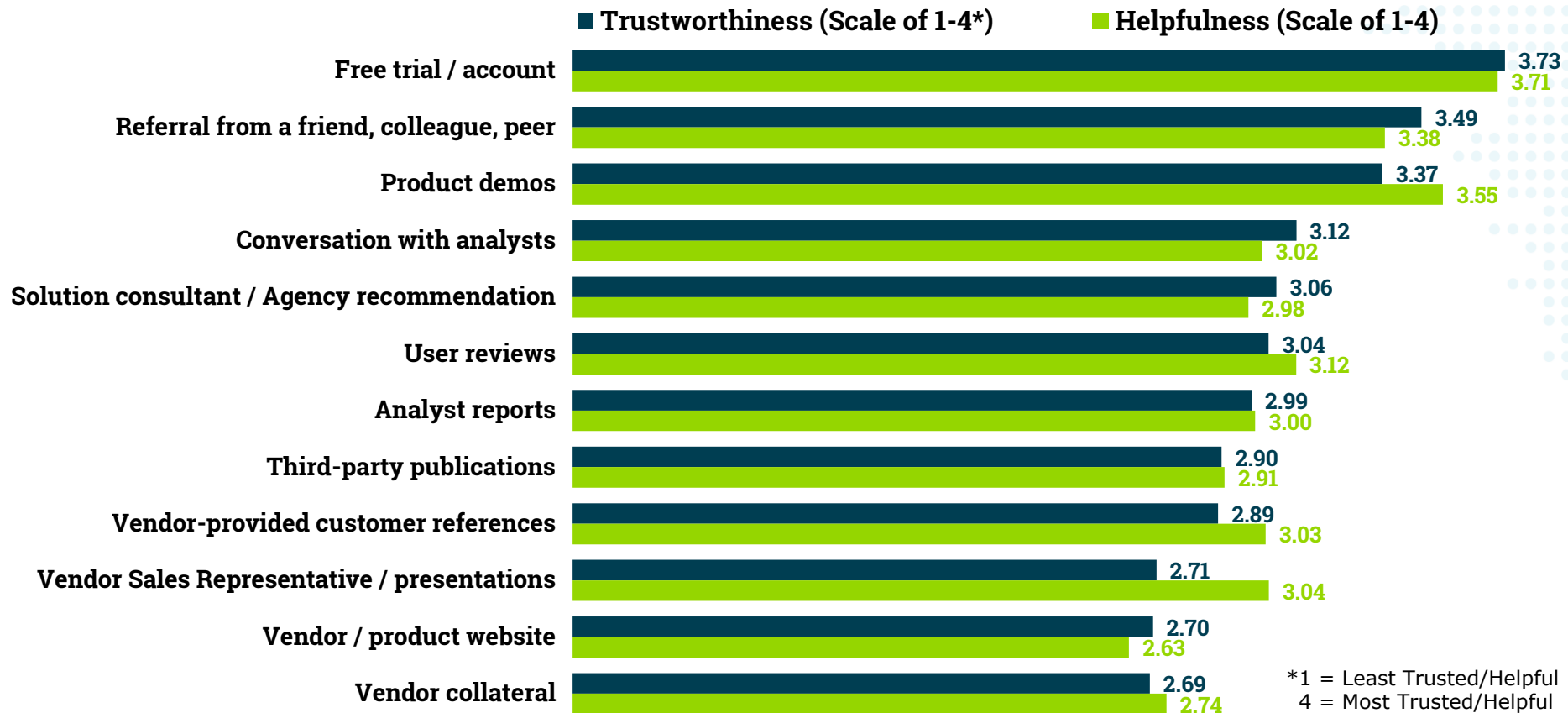


Published on [MarketingCharts.com](https://marketingcharts.com) in September 2017 | Data Source: [Marketo](https://marketo.com)

*Based on a survey of 489 B2B consumers who purchase products and services on behalf of their organization and engage directly with current and prospective vendors using digital channels. Respondents hail from the US, UK, France and Germany, and 58% are from SMBs (<500 employees, in the US; <250 in Europe).*

# Most Helpful and Trustworthy Information Sources for B2B Buyers

Vendor websites might be one of the most used information sources by B2B buyers, but they're towards the bottom of the list in helpfulness and trustworthiness, according to a report from TrustRadius. Instead, free trials, product demos and referrals are among the information sources that lead the way in trust and utility, per the study. As the analysts note, "it is clear buyers want a realistic view of how a product will work for them on a day-to-day basis."



Published on [MarketingCharts.com](https://marketingcharts.com) in February 2017 | Data Source: [TrustRadius](https://trustradius.com)

Based on a survey of 418 individuals who played a key role in a significant software purchase during the prior 2 years

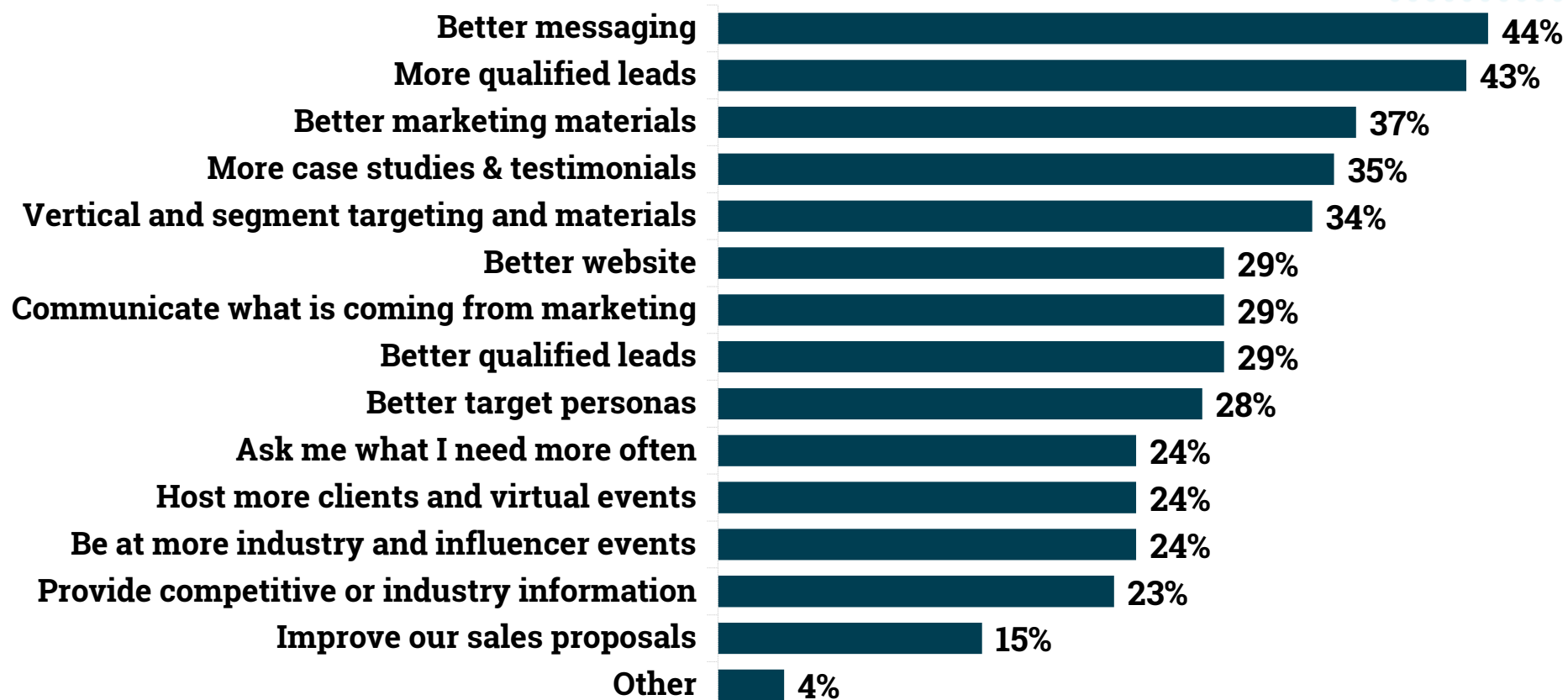
# Lead Generation & Management

(The marketer's perspective)

# How B2B Marketers Can Help Sales Win More Deals

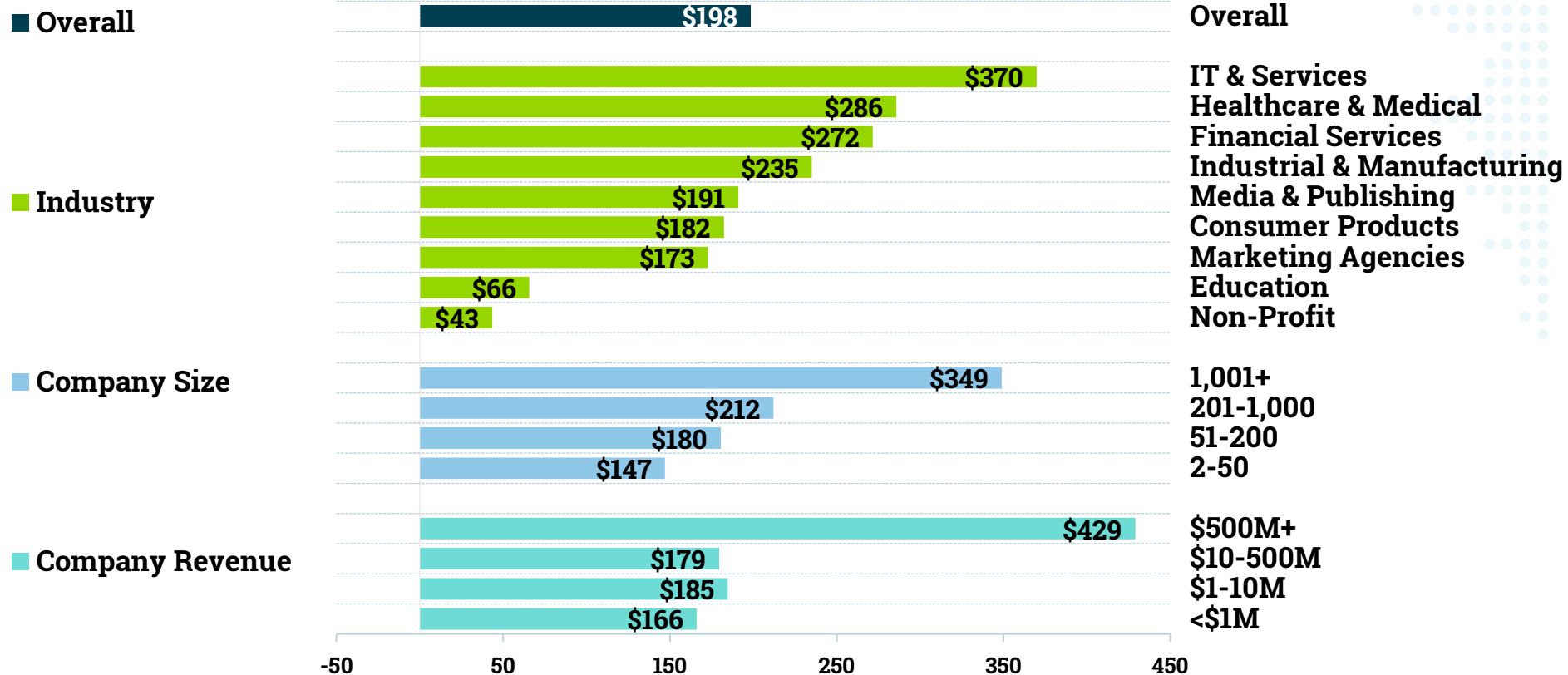
## (Top 5, According to B2B Salespeople)

It probably comes as no surprise that salespeople want more qualified leads from marketing, but what else can marketing do to help the sales function along? As it stands, better messaging is a key factor for B2B salespeople, according to a study from Televerde. On a related note, salespeople are also looking for improved materials from marketing. Encouragingly, more than 75% of the respondents to Televerde's survey characterized the quality of leads generated through marketing activities as "good" to "excellent."



# Average Cost Per Lead (CPL), by Company Type

The average cost per lead across 350 companies surveyed by HubSpot is almost \$200 (\$198.44). Yet as the chart demonstrates, these figures vary quite dramatically depending on industry, company size, and revenue. The report indicates that larger companies are paying much more for leads, while IT & Services companies spend the most on an industry basis.

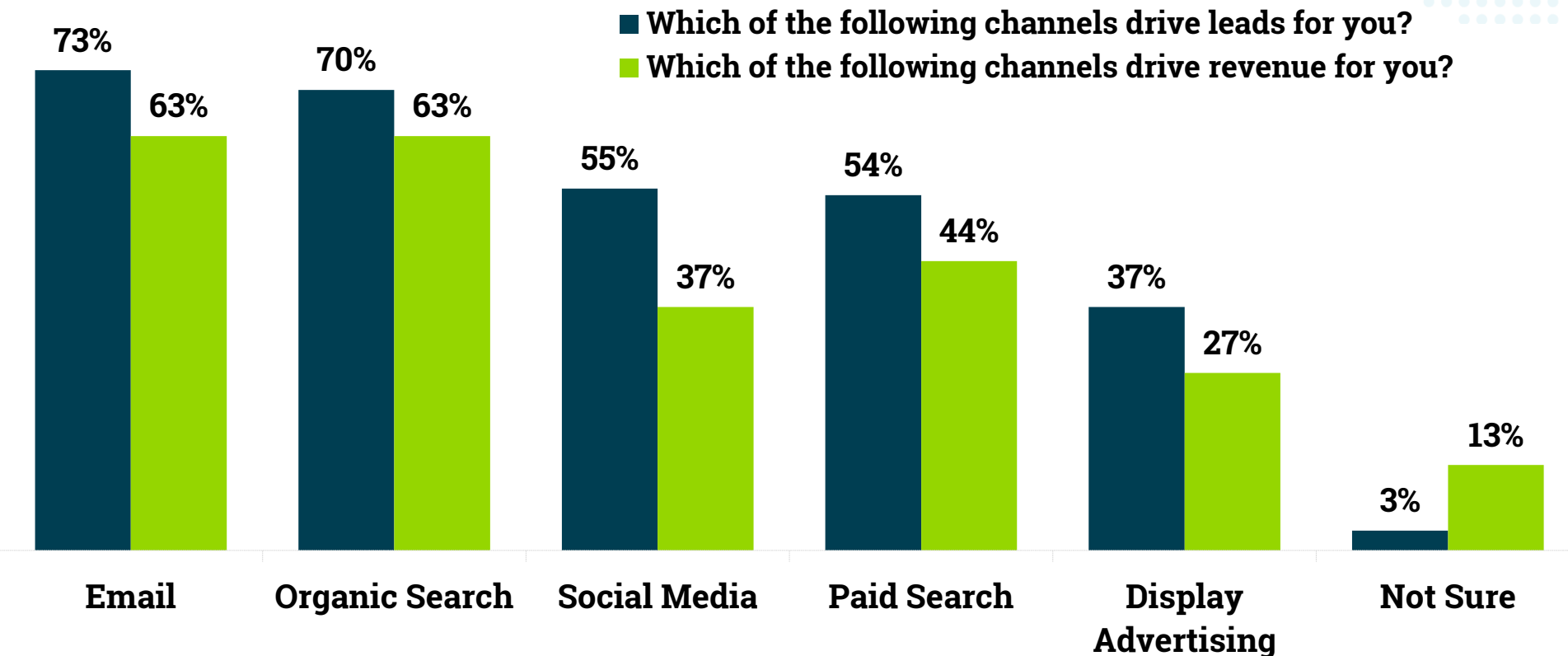


Published on [MarketingCharts.com](https://marketingcharts.com) in August 2017 | Data Source: [HubSpot](https://hubspot.com)

Based on a survey of more than 350 companies

# Channels Driving Leads and Revenue for US B2B Marketers

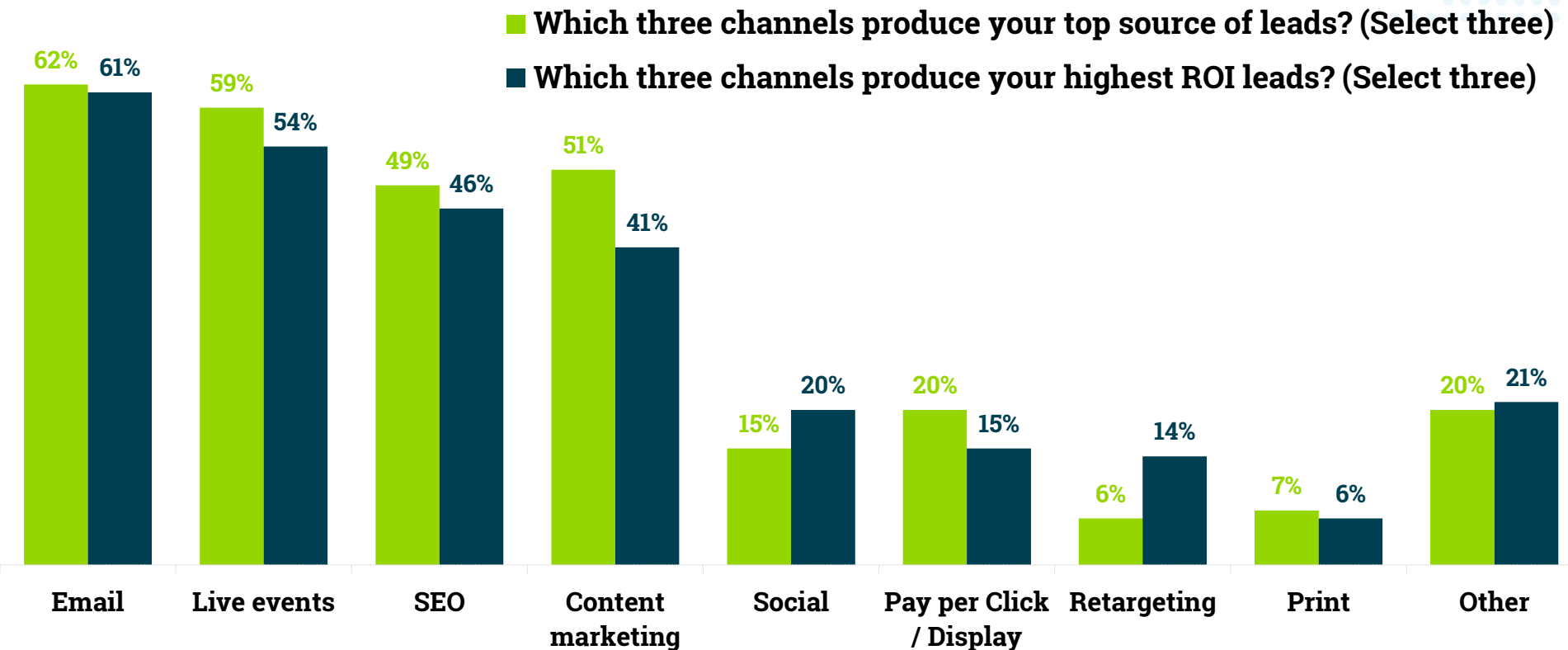
Not too surprisingly given its popularity, email tops the list of lead-generating channels for B2B marketers surveyed by DemandWave, with almost three-quarters (73%) indicating that email drives leads for them. Close behind, 7 in 10 report that organic search is a lead driver, with fewer (54%) saying the same about paid search. With respect to revenue generation, B2B marketers were as likely to point to organic search as they were to say email drives revenue.





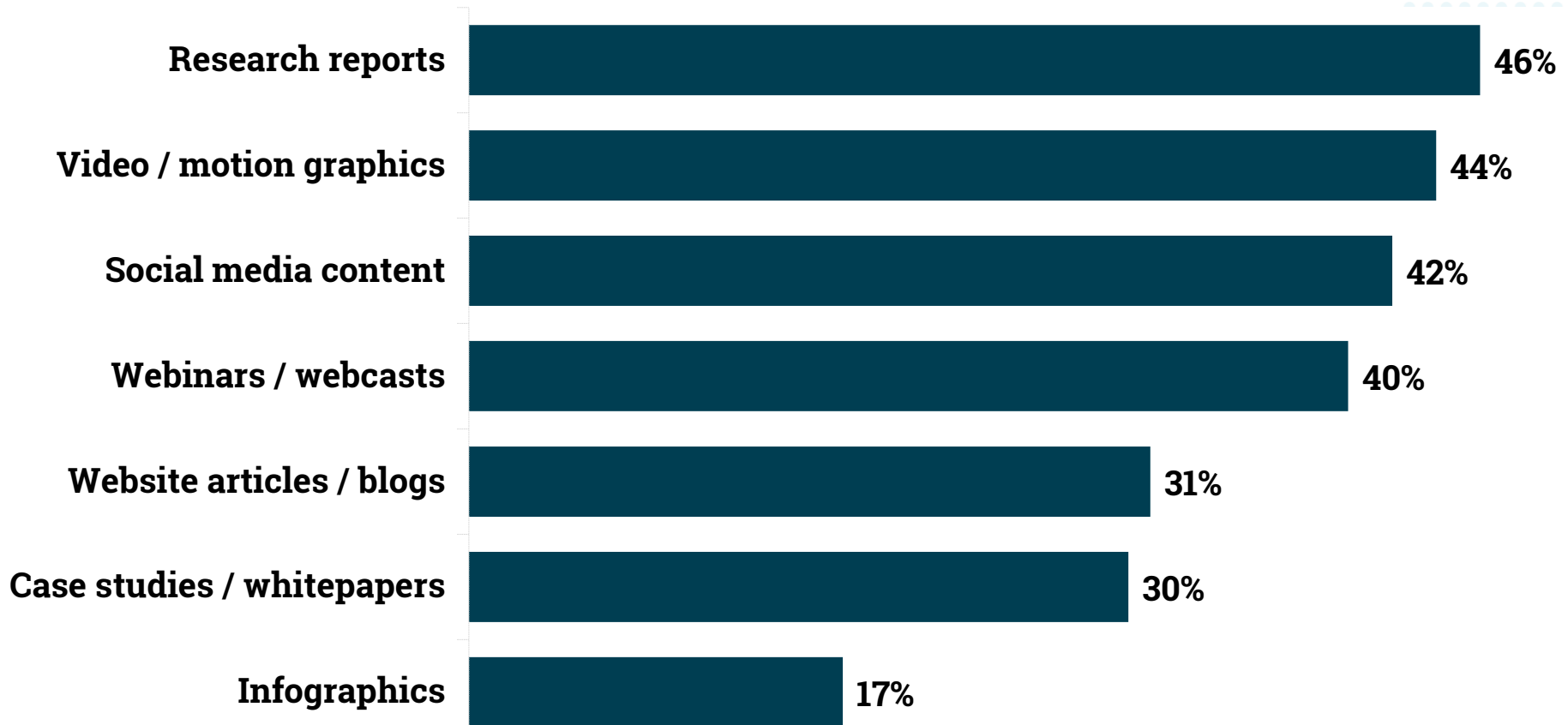
# Top B2B Lead Generation Channels

Score another one for email. On the heels of DemandWave's research showing that email is the top lead- and revenue-producing vehicle for B2B marketers, another study from Chief Marketer revealed that email is also the channel producing the highest ROI leads in the B2B space. Conducted among more than 200 B2B marketers across industries and company sizes, the survey indicated that email tops live events and SEO as the channel delivering leads with the best ROI.



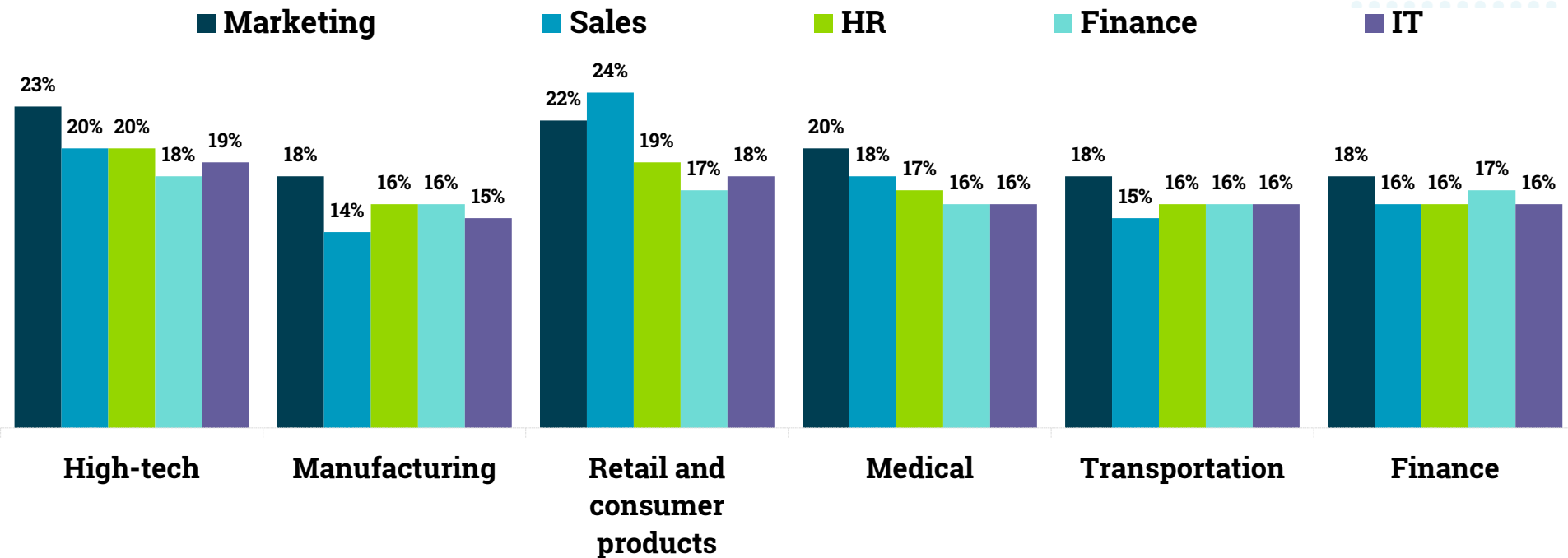
# Content Types That Produce Leads With the Highest Customer Conversion Rates

The most important objective of a lead generation strategy is to increase lead-to-customer conversions, according to a survey from Ascend2 and its Research Partners. Ascend2's survey found that there's enthusiasm surrounding the conversion rate for leads generated by research reports. In fact, research reports narrowly topped respondents' list of content types that produce leads with the highest customer conversion rates.



# Average Annual B2B Persona Churn\* by Vertical & Department

Targeting B2B marketers? You'll enjoy the prospect (pun intended) of a new influx of personas, but be faced with the problem of higher churn rates than other departments, according to a fascinating report from Salesforce Research. The report indicated that the average annual churn rate for any single persona is 17%. In 5 of the 6 sectors measured, the marketing department had the highest churn rate, with an above-average rate in each of the 6 verticals.



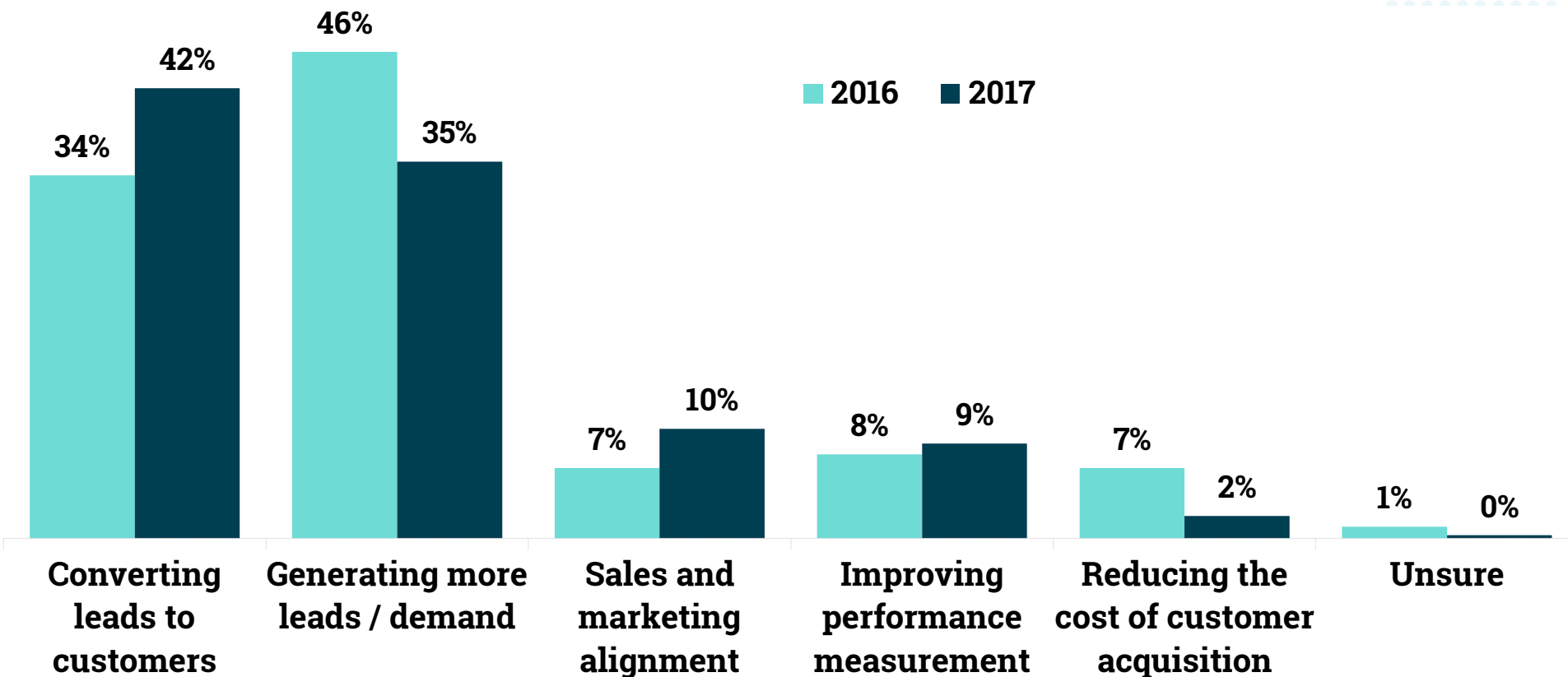
\*"Churn was measured as the combined vertical and horizontal movement inside an organization as well as external moves, which cause an individual's email address to be invalid within a target audience. This either means the address is still valid but no longer a target persona, or an individual has moved to a new company and has a new email but is still a part of the target audience."

Published on [MarketingCharts.com](https://marketingcharts.com) in June 2017 | Data Source: [Salesforce Research](#)

*Based on an analysis of 15 million data points and 21.3 million full-time B2B professionals over a 4-year period*

# B2B Marketers' Top Priority

While lead generation was important for B2B marketers in 2017, they were in fact more focused on converting leads to customers than in generating more leads and demand, according to a report from Bizible. That was a reversal from 2016, when respondents' named demand generation their top priority. Sales and marketing alignment trailed distantly as a top priority, perhaps due to progress in that area outlined elsewhere in the report.



Published on [MarketingCharts.com](https://marketingcharts.com) in October 2017 | Data Source: [Bizible](https://bizible.com)

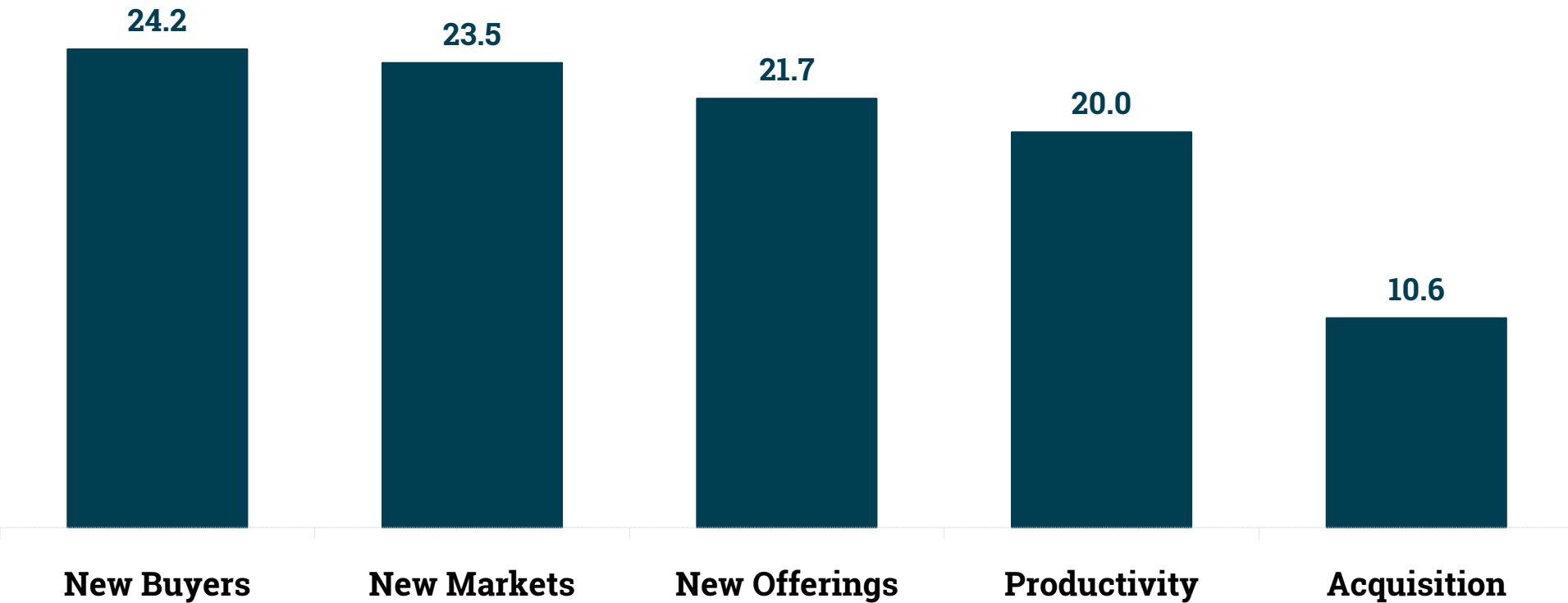
*Based on a survey of 350 marketers from a mix of company sizes and job levels, 92% of whom work at an organization they classify as B2B*

# B2B CMOs' Most Important Growth Strategies, Ranked

(Relative weighting, 100 points total)



B2B CMOs around the world last year were focusing on new buyers and new markets over new offerings when it came to their growth strategies, a study from SiriusDecisions found. That an enhanced customer experience was seen to have the biggest influence on growth strategies in the next 2 years merely highlighted the shift towards audience-centricity undertaken by CMOs.



Published on [MarketingCharts.com](https://marketingcharts.com) in October 2017 | Data Source: [SiriusDecisions](https://siriusdecisions.com)

*Based on a survey of 271 B2B CMOs around the world, the majority (54%) of whom come from organizations with more than \$250 million in revenues. Relative weighting of highest-ranked / prioritized strategies / Q: "Rank the following growth strategies in terms of importance to your organization over the next two years."*

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VISITORS  
LEADS  
PROCESSED  
MONTHLY  
LEADS  
PROCESSED  
TO DATE



**15K**  
WEB PROPERTIES



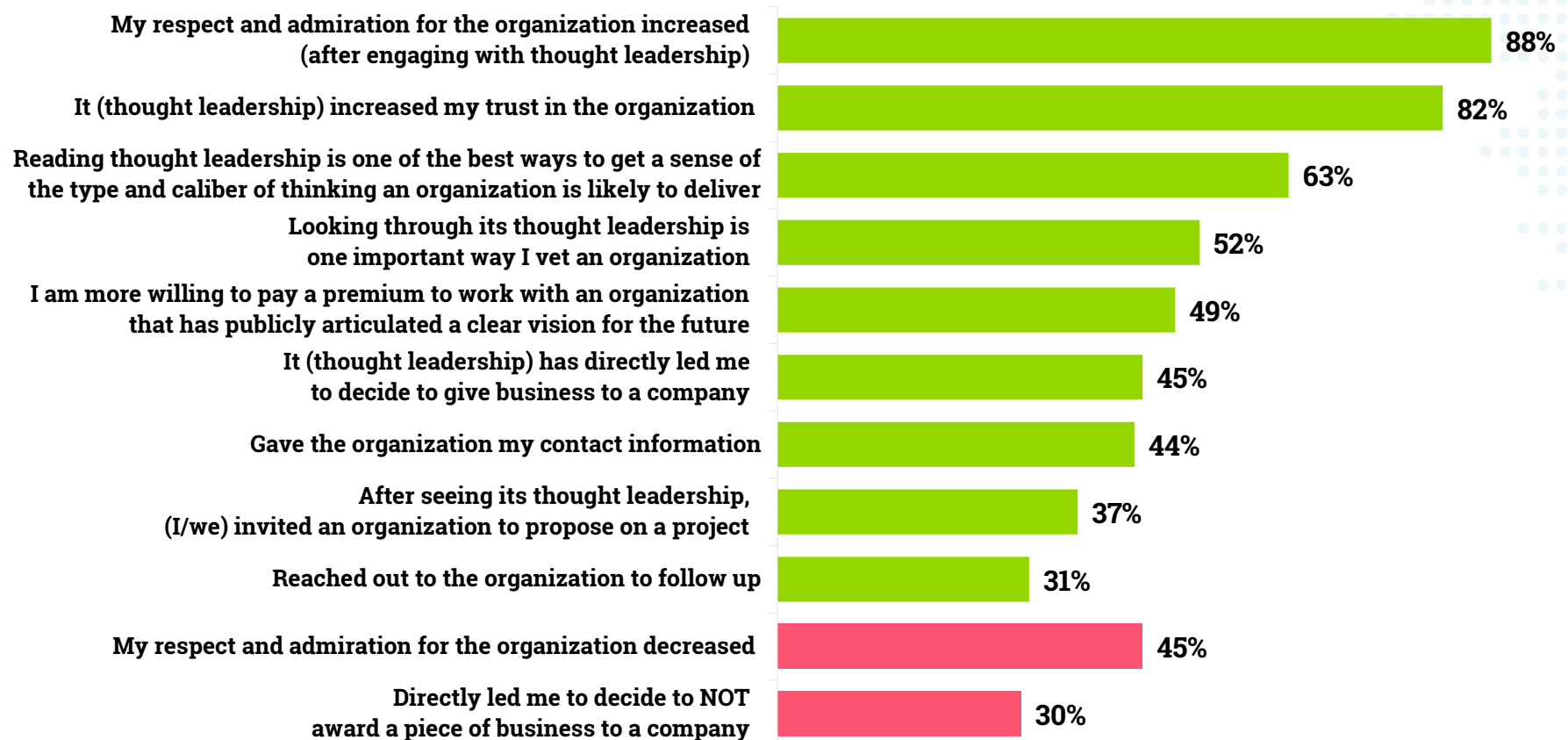
**10**  
CONTENT  
PROMOTION  
CHANNELS



# Content Marketing

# Business Decision-Makers' Reactions to Thought Leadership

Thought leadership can have a positive impact throughout the purchase funnel, but poor quality content may ultimately drive decision-makers away, according to an Edelman and LinkedIn survey of more than 1,300 US business decision-makers who are LinkedIn members. Almost half (45%) said that thought leadership has directly led them to decide to do business with a company, while 30% said it had led them to remove a company from consideration.



Published on [MarketingCharts.com](https://www.marketingcharts.com) in June 2017 | Data Source: [Edelman / LinkedIn](#)

*Based on a survey of 1,329 business decision-makers who are members of LinkedIn*



# B2B Marketers' Content Personalization Efforts

2 in 3 B2B marketers are testing out personalization of content or offers, according to a Chief Marketer survey, perhaps in an effort to counter challenges with engagement. The primary form of personalization being tested by respondents is the type of content that targets are engaging with, though many are also trying out personalization by job function and title.

"Are you testing personalization of content or offers?"

68%



32%



No

Yes

Type of Content Engaged With

Job Function/Title

Type of Organization

Size of Business

Channel

Geographic Location

Type of Product/Price Point

Other

"What are you testing?  
(Select all that apply)"

66%



53%



43%



39%



34%



31%



30%

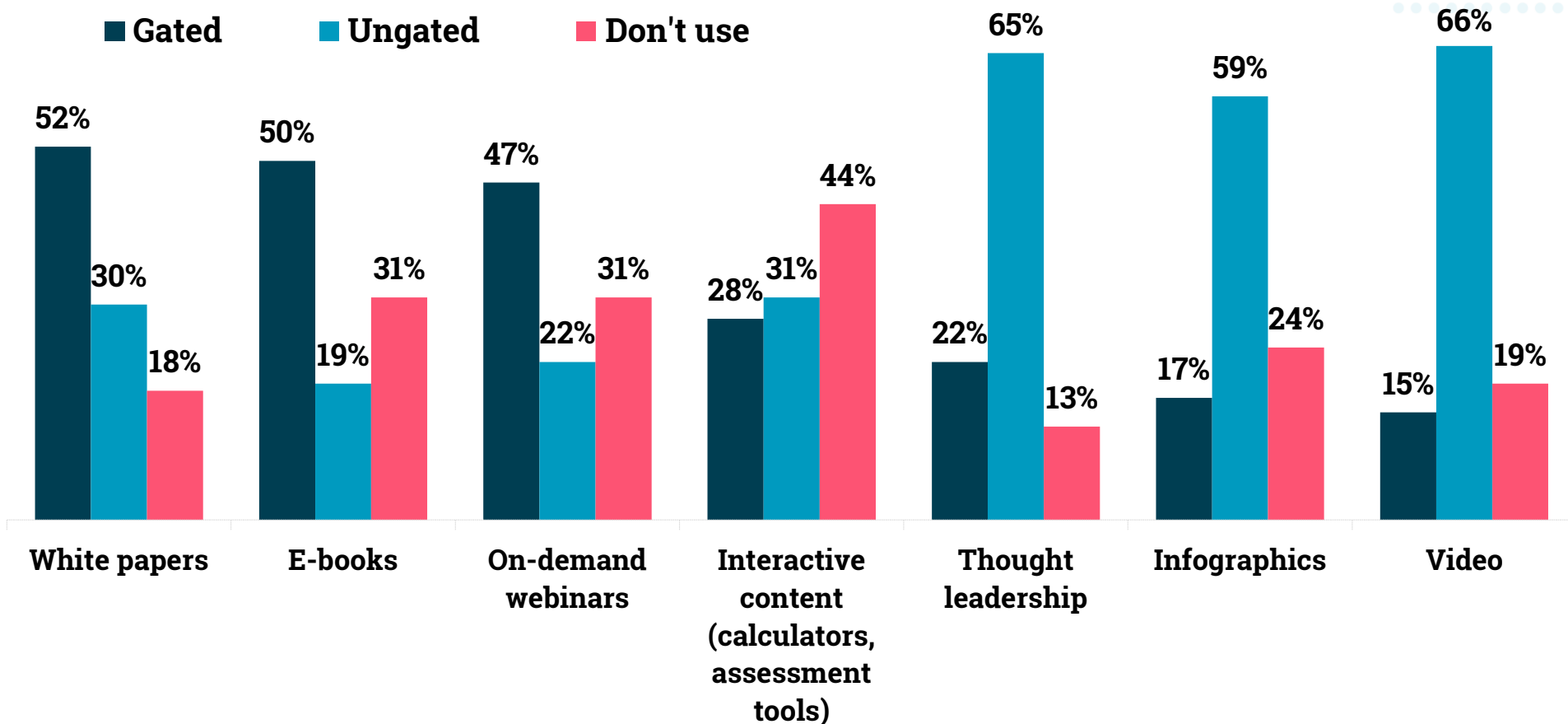


2%



# Content Used in B2B Nurture Campaigns

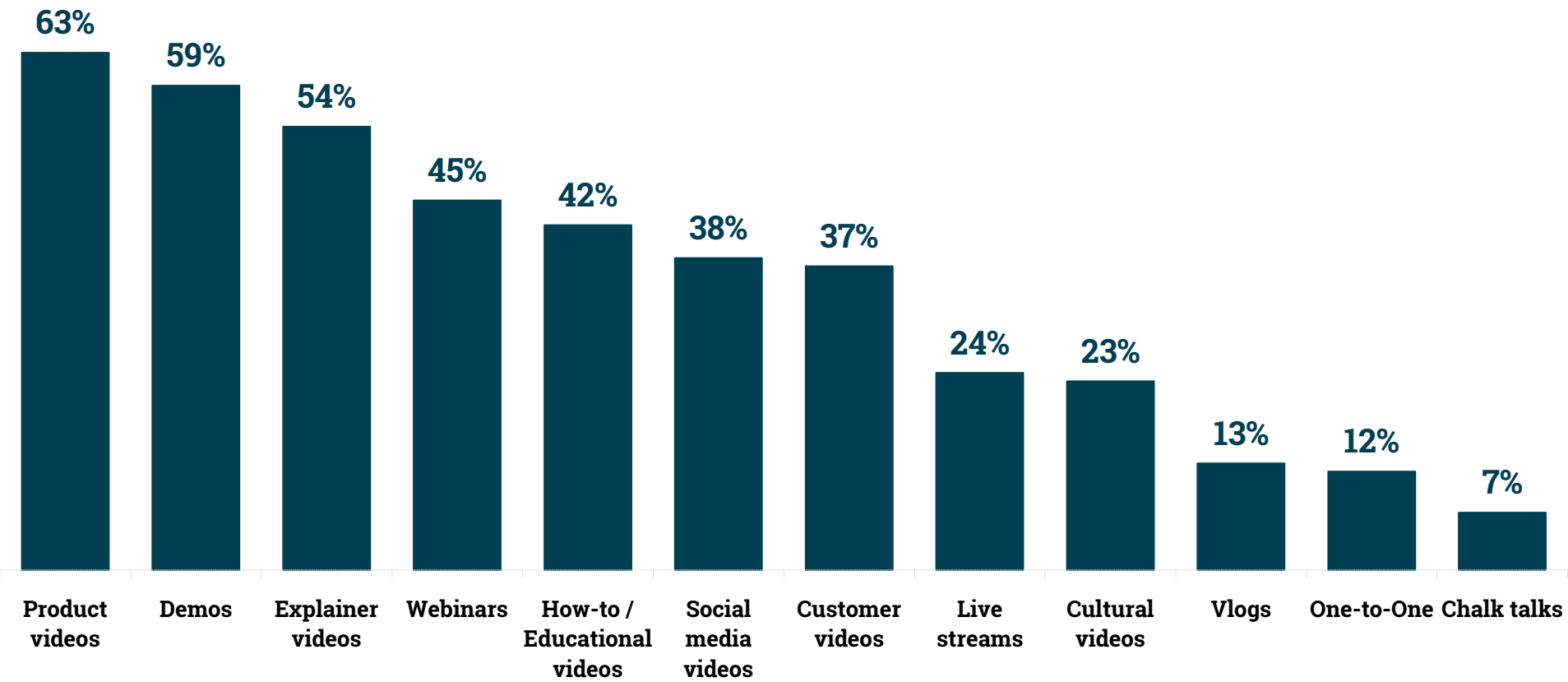
To gate or not to gate? It depends on the content type, found a study from Demand Gen Report. Among those using the various content types, e-books (72% of users), on-demand webinars (68%) and white papers (63%) were the most likely to be gated in nurture campaigns. By contrast, only a small share were gating video (19% of those using them), infographics (22%) and thought leadership (25%).



# Types of Video Content Used by Marketers



Marketers are brimming with enthusiasm about video, according to “The State of Video Marketing 2017” study from Demand Metric in partnership with Vidyad. It’s clear from the types of videos that are being produced that education is a key component to business use of video this year. In fact, the fastest-growing video type is the Demo, used by twice as many respondents this year (59%) as last (28%).



Published on [MarketingCharts.com](https://marketingcharts.com) in November 2017 | Data Source: [Demand Metric / Vidyad](#)

*Based on a survey of 159 executives at a mix of company sizes.*

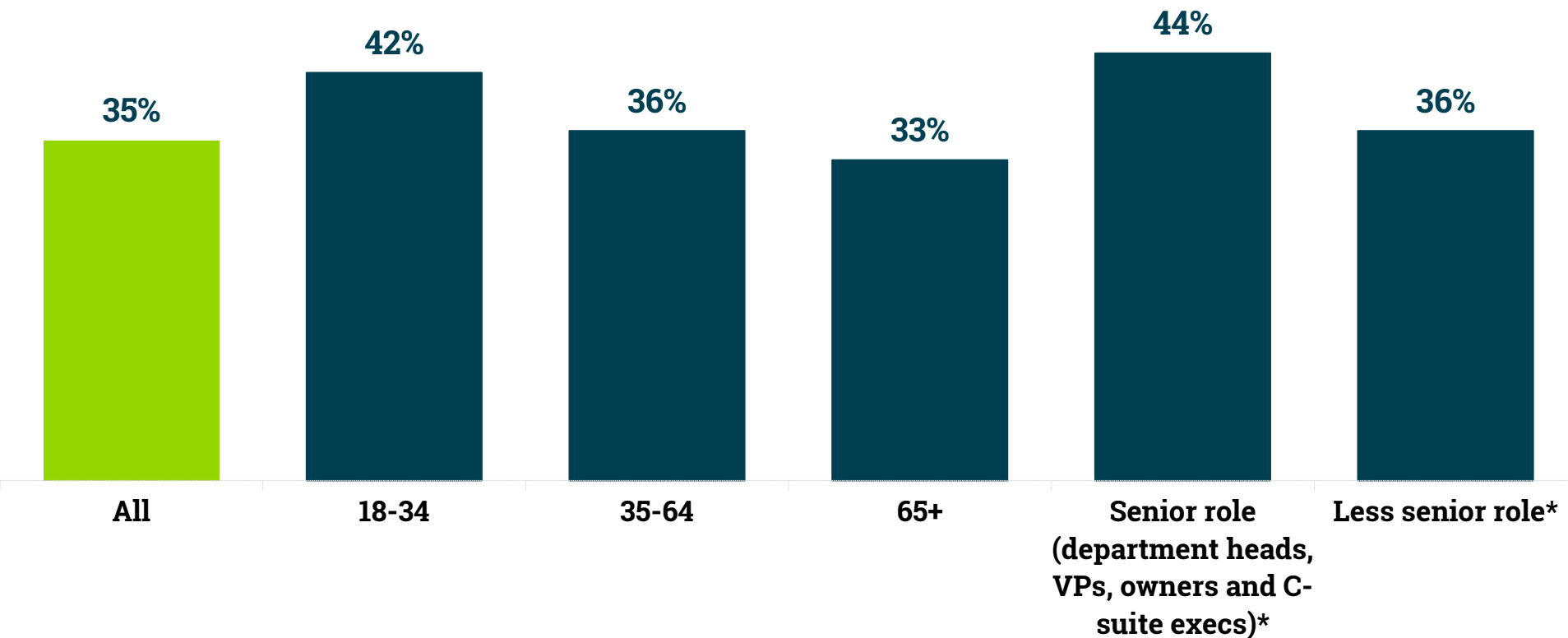
*The majority of these respondents work for organizations that are mostly or entirely B2B (57%) or are a blend of B2B and B2C (28%).*

# Podcast Audiences on LinkedIn

## (% of members who listen to podcasts)



More than one-third (35%) of LinkedIn members around the world listen to podcasts, and fewer than 1 in 10 (8%) don't know what a podcast is, per results from a LinkedIn survey of more than 2,500 members. The LinkedIn analysts argue that podcasts are underused in B2B marketing, pointing to higher engagement with these platforms among senior executives. Specifically, 44% of senior-level decision-makers on LinkedIn (department heads, VPs, owners and C-suite executives) who know what a podcast is say they make time to listen to them. That compares with 36% of less senior executives and professionals.



\*Among those who know what a podcast is

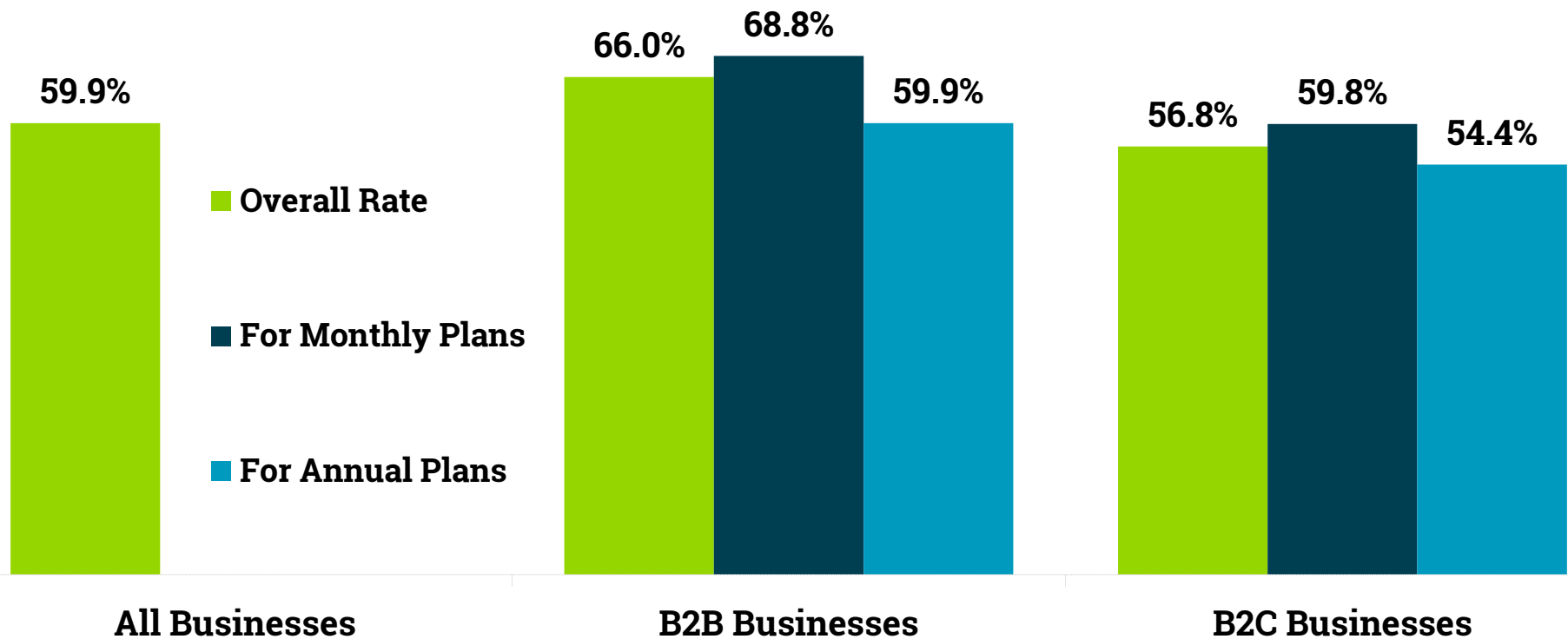
Published on [MarketingCharts.com](https://MarketingCharts.com) in December 2017 | Data Source: [LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com)

Based on a survey of more than 2,500 LinkedIn members around the world

# Bonus Charts

# Subscription Businesses' Free Trial Conversion Rates

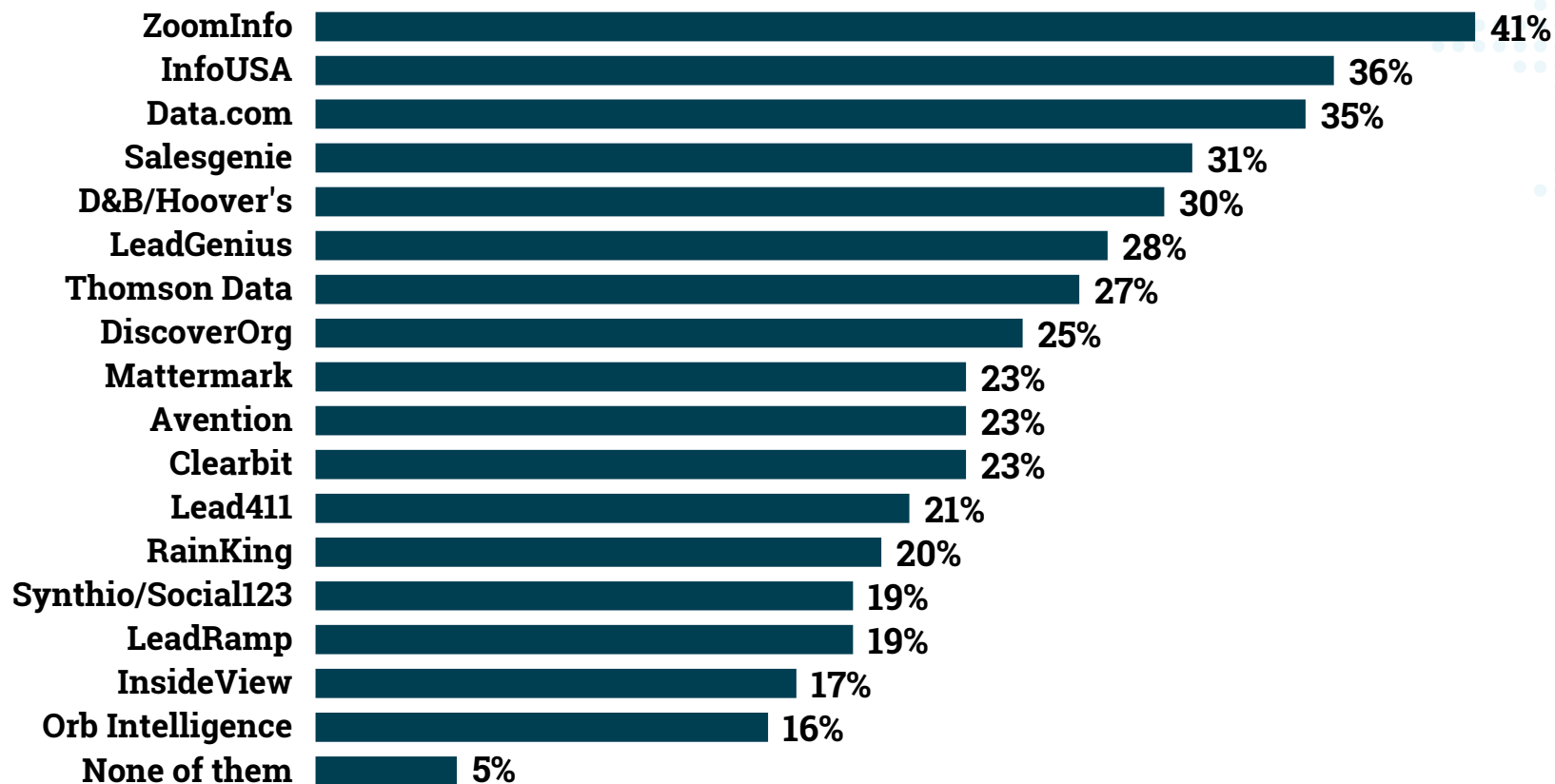
An impressive 6 in 10 free trials convert to paid subscriptions, according to a Recurly analysis. B2B businesses have more success with free trials than their B2C counterparts: Recurly found that the median rate for conversions for B2B businesses was 66%, indicating that on average, 2 in 3 free trials convert for B2B businesses. Interestingly, it's not the length of the trial period that impacts conversion rates. Rather, it's the plan itself that appears to influence the prospect's choice to commit. For example, B2B businesses' trial conversion rates averaged 68.8% for monthly plans, compared to 59.9% for annual plans.



# Popular B2B Data Providers

(% having used)

ZoomInfo appears to be the leading data provider for B2B marketers, with 41% of respondents to an Openprise study reporting that they have used its services. ZoomInfo is even more popular with enterprise companies (5,000+ employees), with 61% of marketers at these companies having used the provider, per the report. Following ZoomInfo in the B2B data provider popularity stakes were InfoUSA (36%), followed closely by Data.com (35%), with SalesGenie (31%) and D&B/Hoover's (30%) rounding out the top 5.



Published on [MarketingCharts.com](https://MarketingCharts.com) in April 2017 | Data Source: [Openprise](#)

*Based on a survey of 175 US B2B marketers at companies with more than 200 employees*

## About Our Sponsor, Seismic

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Headquartered in San Diego and with more than 300 employees across the globe, Seismic is privately held by its executive team and investment firms General Atlantic, JMI Equity, and Jackson Square Ventures.

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**MarketingCharts attracts a highly qualified audience of tens of thousands of professionals in the marketing ecosystem.**

**Our readers are typically experienced marketers and supply-siders who are Directors, VPs and C-level execs involved in decision-making. They're committed to staying on top of the latest trends and using research and data to shape strategy and decisions.**

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**I'M INTERESTED**

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**"Working with MarketingCharts was a great experience! They took the time to understand our business and what our goals were before launch of the project. We've seen results in terms of expanding our reach and garnering quality net new leads in our work with MarketingCharts."**

**"MarketingCharts has helped us reach a highly sophisticated audience that's focused on data, results, and transparency. Adding MarketingCharts to our mix of publications brings in an additional class of experienced leads for us to market towards."**

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