

B2B Software Content Marketing: 2013 Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends – North America



FOREWORD

Hello Software Marketers!

Welcome to B2B Software *Content Marketing: 2013 Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends–North America*.

When we recently surveyed 1,416 business-to-business (B2B) marketers from North America (United States and Canada) representing a full range of industries, we found that in many ways, software companies have adopted content marketing with more gusto than their B2B peers overall.* For instance, 99% of software marketers use content marketing, they use more content marketing tactics than their peers, and they use those tactics with greater frequency, indicating their willingness to try different things.

Here are some other key findings:

- ▶ On average, software marketers allocate 29% of their total budget to content marketing.
- ▶ 53% say they will increase their content marketing budget over the next 12 months.
- ▶ Software marketers cite lead generation as their top goal and put more emphasis on thought leadership than other B2B marketers do.

Like their B2B peers overall, software marketers are challenged with effectiveness: just 38% believe they are effective at content marketing. However, they are no less challenged with lack of budget and executive buy-in than their B2B peers overall – and yet they have the highest adoption rate of content marketing – which indicates that software marketers are especially resourceful. Over time, we expect their confidence in their effectiveness to grow with more experience.

On with the content marketing revolution...



Joe Pulizzi

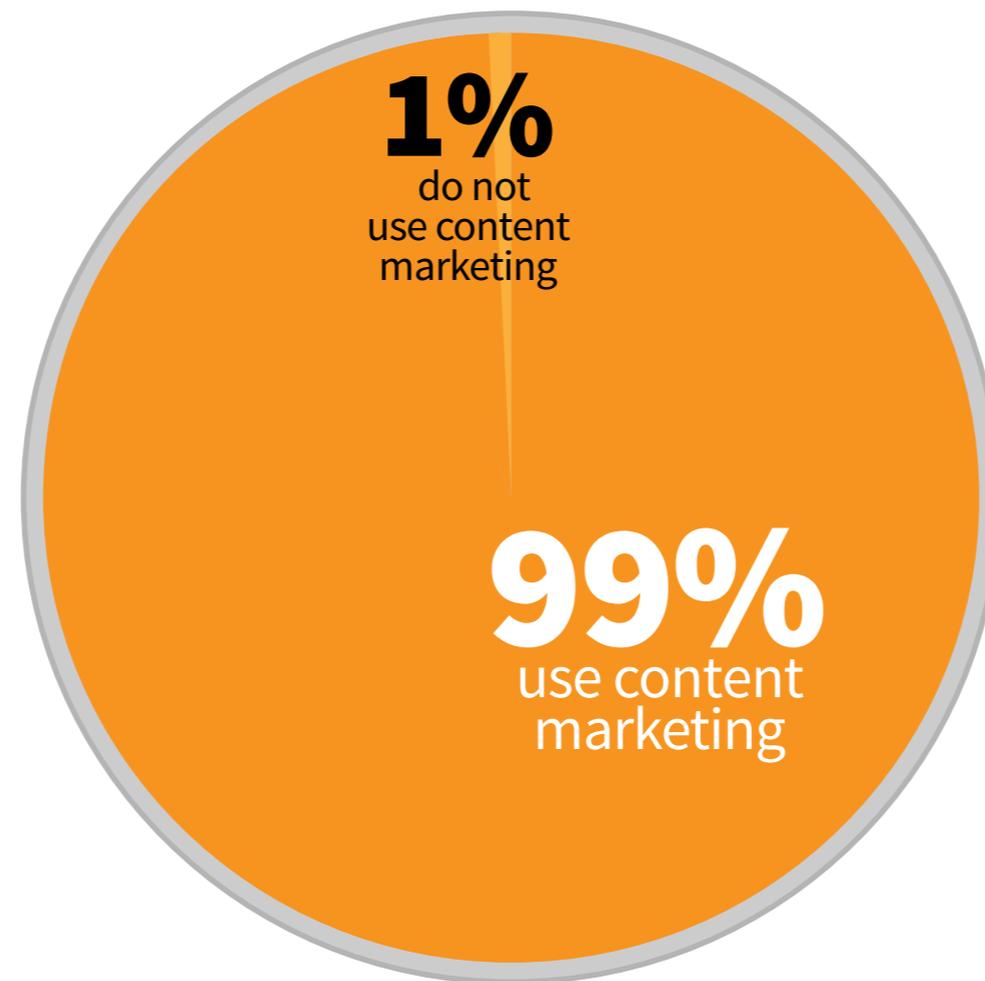
Founder

Content Marketing Institute

*See page 19 for study demographics.

99% of software marketers use content marketing.

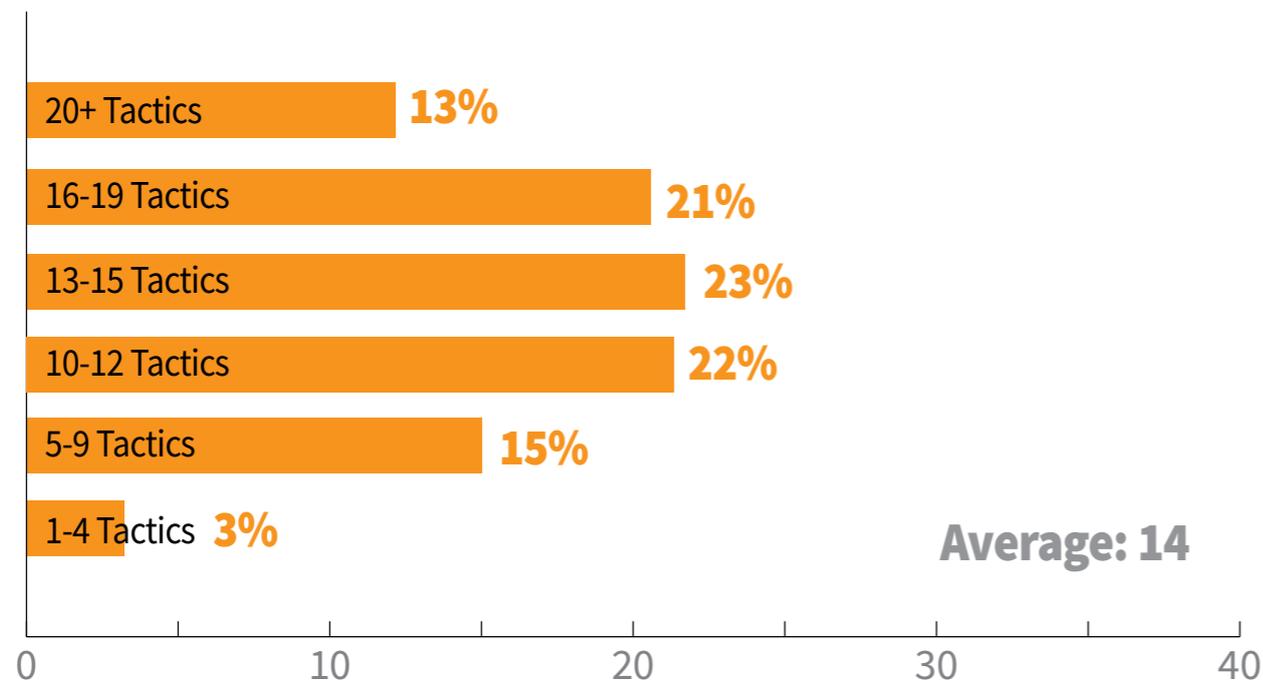
Percentage of Software Marketers Using Content Marketing



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Software marketers use an average of 14 content marketing tactics.

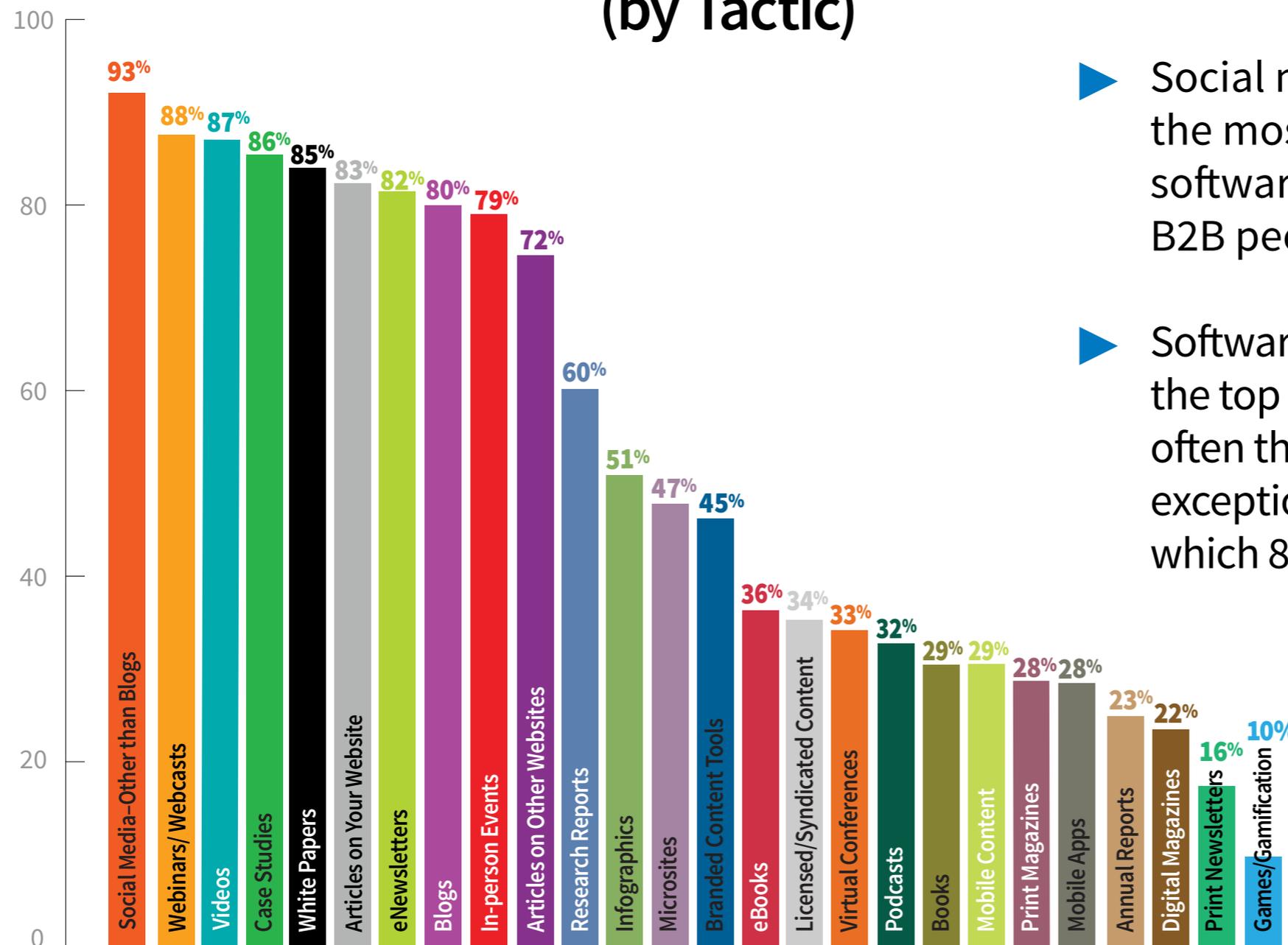
Number of Tactics Software Marketers Use



▶ Software marketers use more tactics than their B2B peers, who use an average of 12.

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Content Marketing Among Software Marketers (by Tactic)

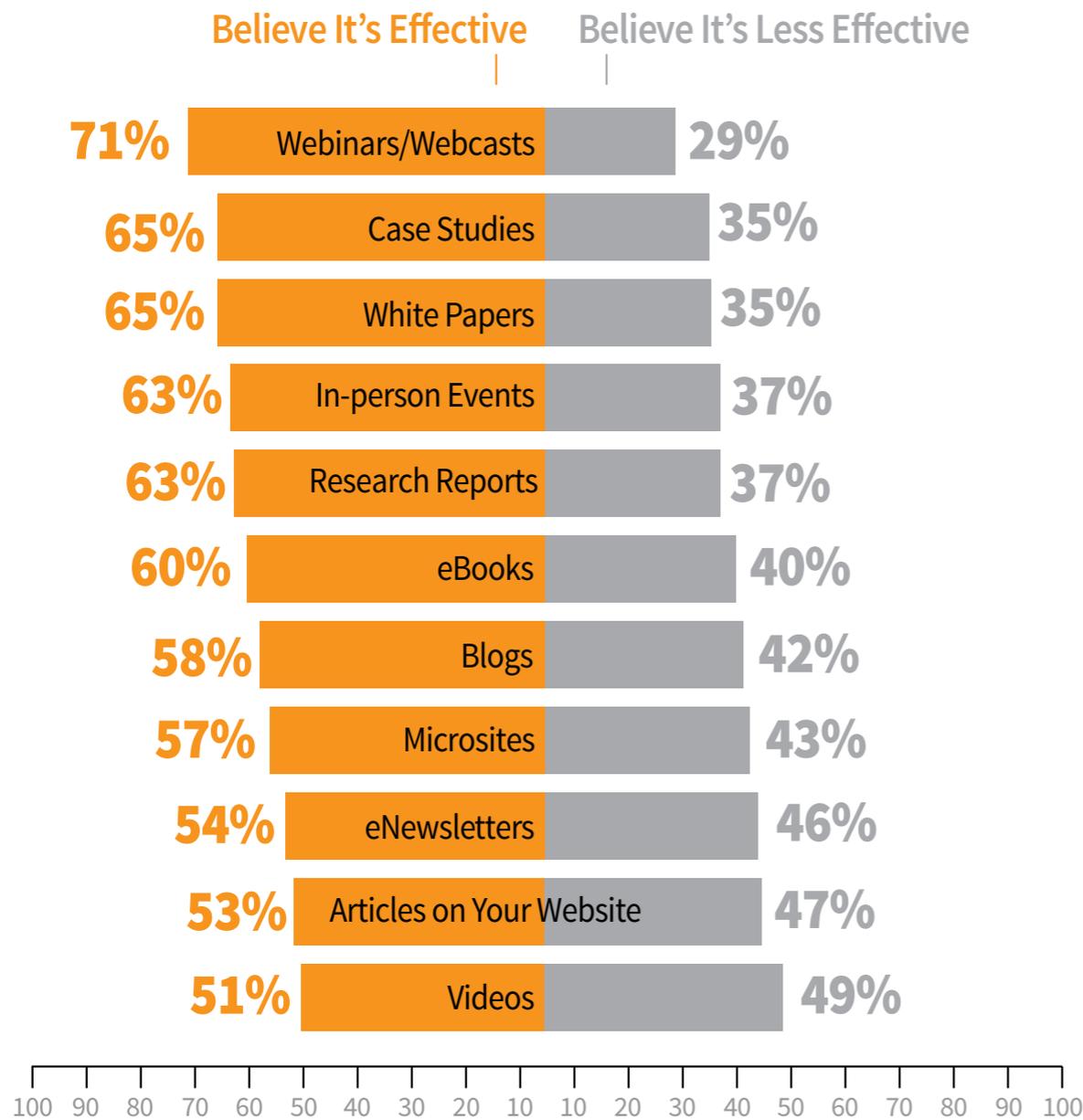


- ▶ Social media (other than blogs) is the most popular tactic among software marketers (93%) and their B2B peers (87%).
- ▶ Software marketers use all but one of the top 15 tactics shown here more often than their B2B peers. The exception is “articles on your website,” which 83% of both groups report using.

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Confidence Gap

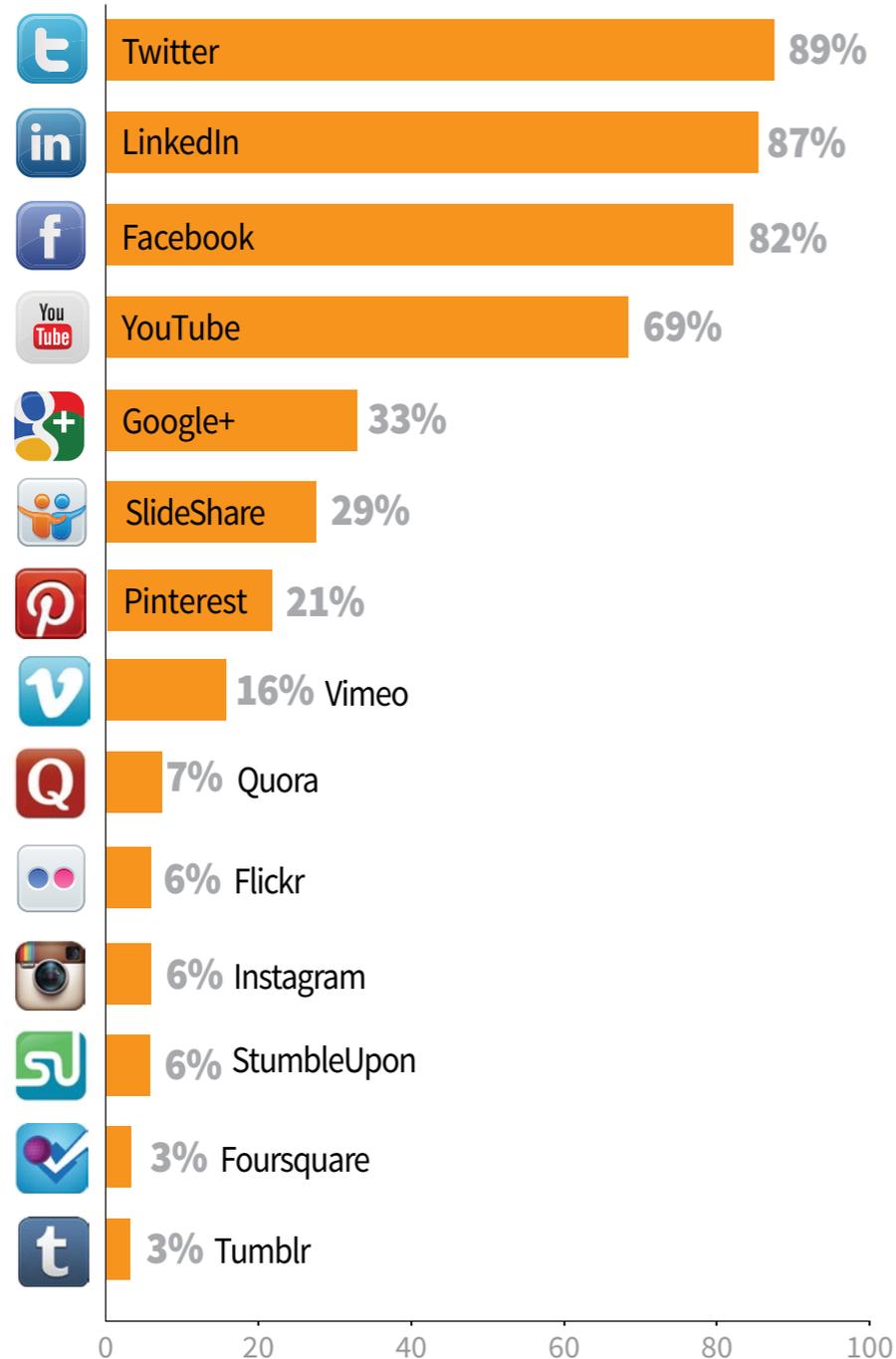
Effectiveness Ratings of Tactics Among Software Marketers



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- ▶ While B2B marketers overall consider in-person events to be the most effective content marketing tactic (67%), software marketers say they get better results with webinars than their peers do (71% vs. 61%).
- ▶ Software marketers consider these tactics less effective than their B2B peers do: videos (50% vs. 58%), social media (39% vs. 49%), and articles on other websites (36% vs. 50%).
- ▶ Software marketers consider these tactics more effective than their B2B peers do: white papers (65% vs. 57%), research reports (63% vs. 57%), ebooks (60% vs. 55%), and microsites (57% vs. 50%).

Percentage of Software Marketers Who Use Various Social Media Platforms to Distribute Content

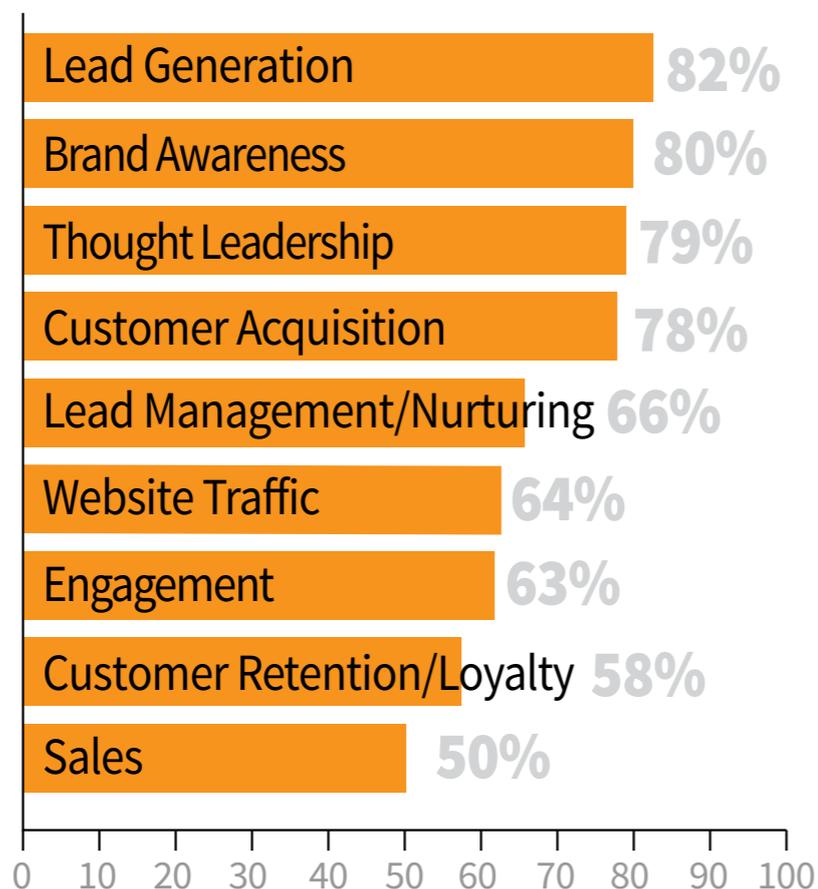


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- ▶ Software marketers, like their B2B peers, use an average of five social media platforms to distribute content.
- ▶ Software marketers use these platforms more often than their B2B peers do: Twitter (89% vs. 80%), LinkedIn (87% vs. 83%), Facebook (82% vs. 80%), YouTube (69% vs. 61%), and SlideShare (29% vs. 23%).
- ▶ Software marketers use these platforms less often than their B2B peers do: Google+ (33% vs. 39%) and Pinterest (21% vs. 26%).

Software marketers cite lead generation as their top goal for content marketing.

Organizational Goals for Content Marketing (Software Companies)

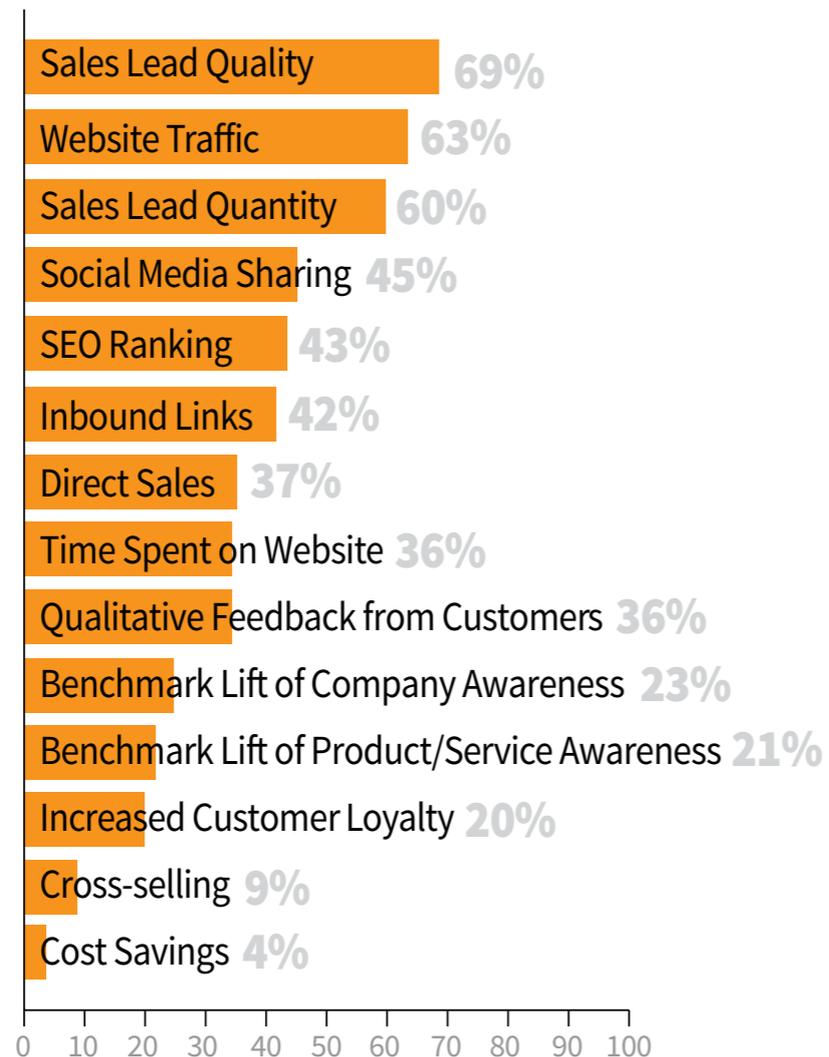


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- ▶ The following goals are more important to software marketers than they are to their B2B peers:
 - Lead generation (82% vs. 71%)
 - Thought leadership (79% vs. 64%)
 - Lead management/nurturing (66% vs. 45%)
- ▶ Thought leadership is an important goal even for software marketers who rate themselves as least effective at content marketing, with 82% of that group citing it as a top goal.

Software marketers most often use sales lead quality to measure content marketing success.

Measurement Criteria for Content Marketing Success (Software Companies)

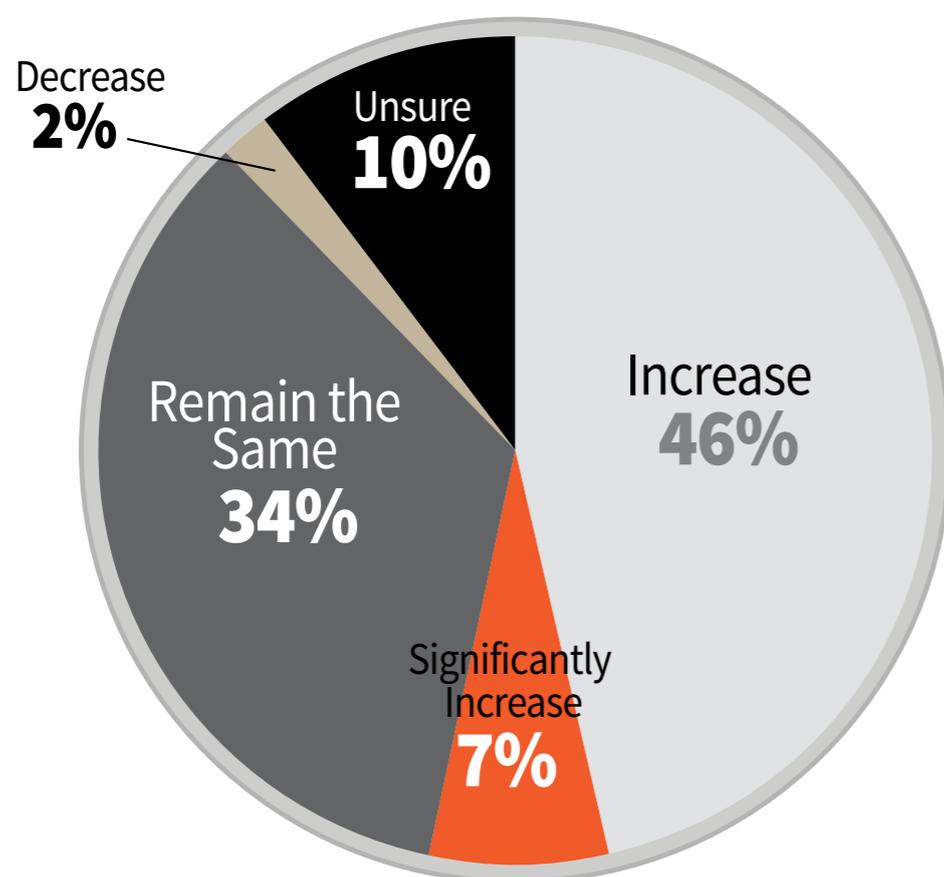


▶ Software marketers most often use sales lead quality to measure success, whereas their B2B peers most often use website traffic.

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More than half of software marketers plan to increase their content marketing budget over the next 12 months (2012-2013).

Content Marketing Spending Among Software Marketers (Over Next 12 Months)

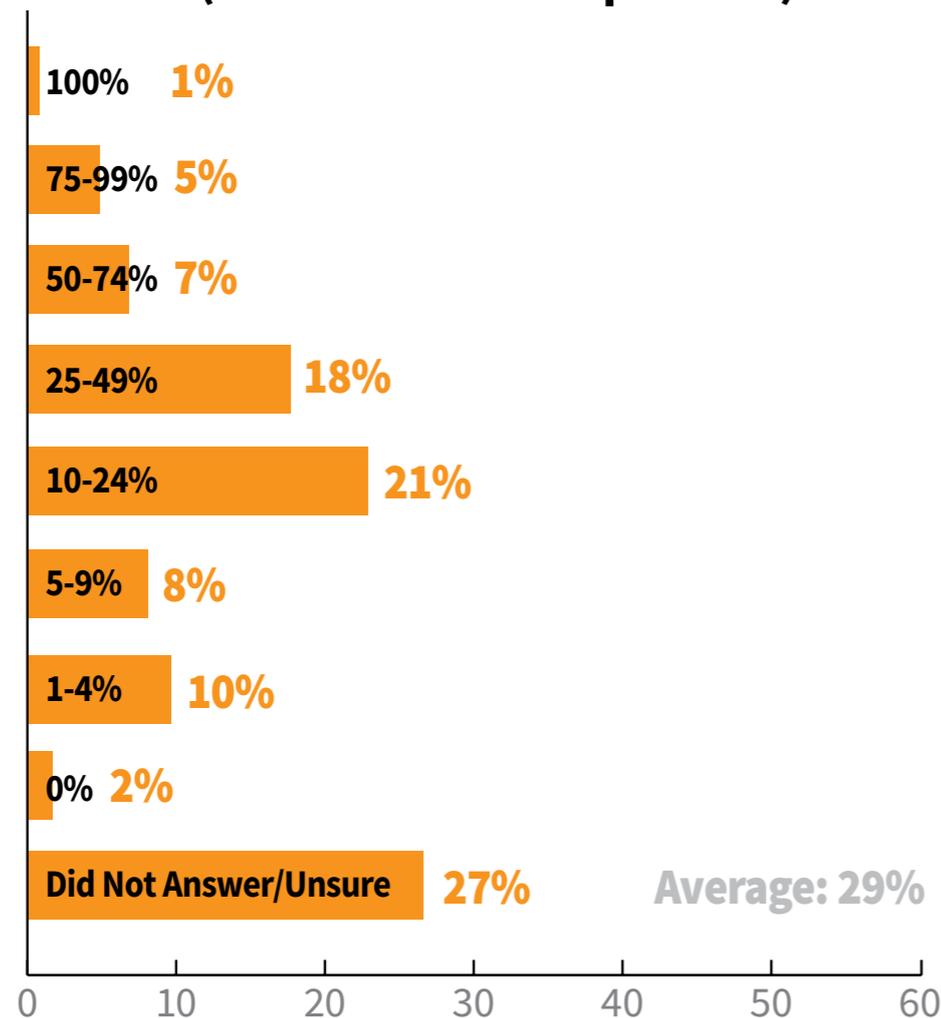


- ▶ 53% of software marketers say they will increase their content marketing spending.
- ▶ The spending patterns shown here closely resemble the patterns of B2B marketers overall.

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On average, software marketers allocate 29% of their budget to content marketing.

Percentage of Marketing Budget Spent on Content Marketing (Software Companies)

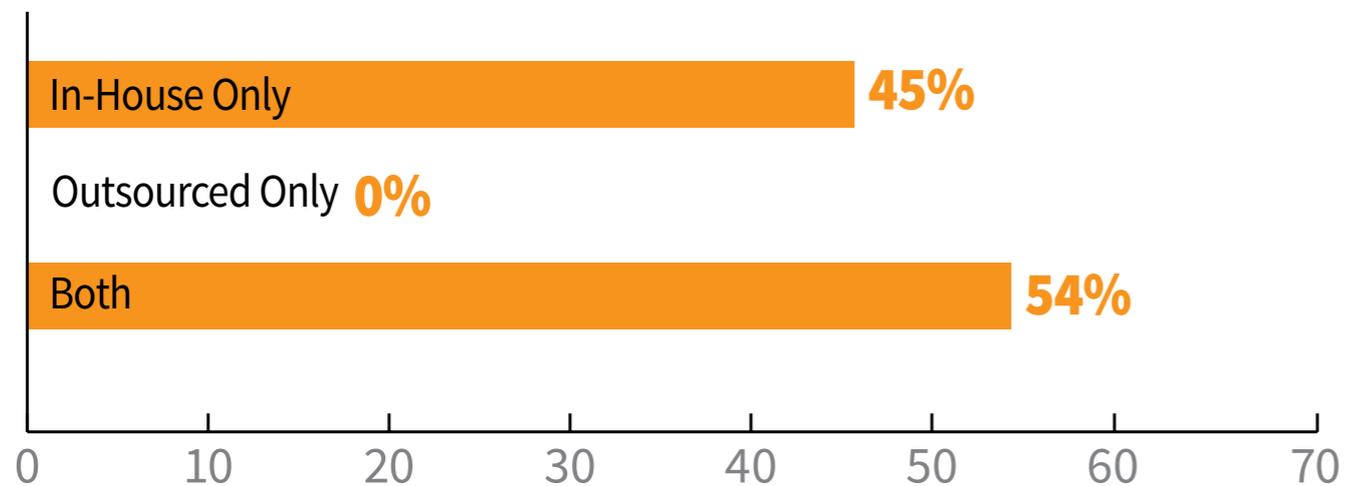


▶ Software marketers allocate slightly less of their marketing budgets for content marketing (29%) than their B2B peers (33%) do.

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54% of software marketers outsource content creation.

In-sourcing vs. Outsourcing of Content Creation (Software Companies)

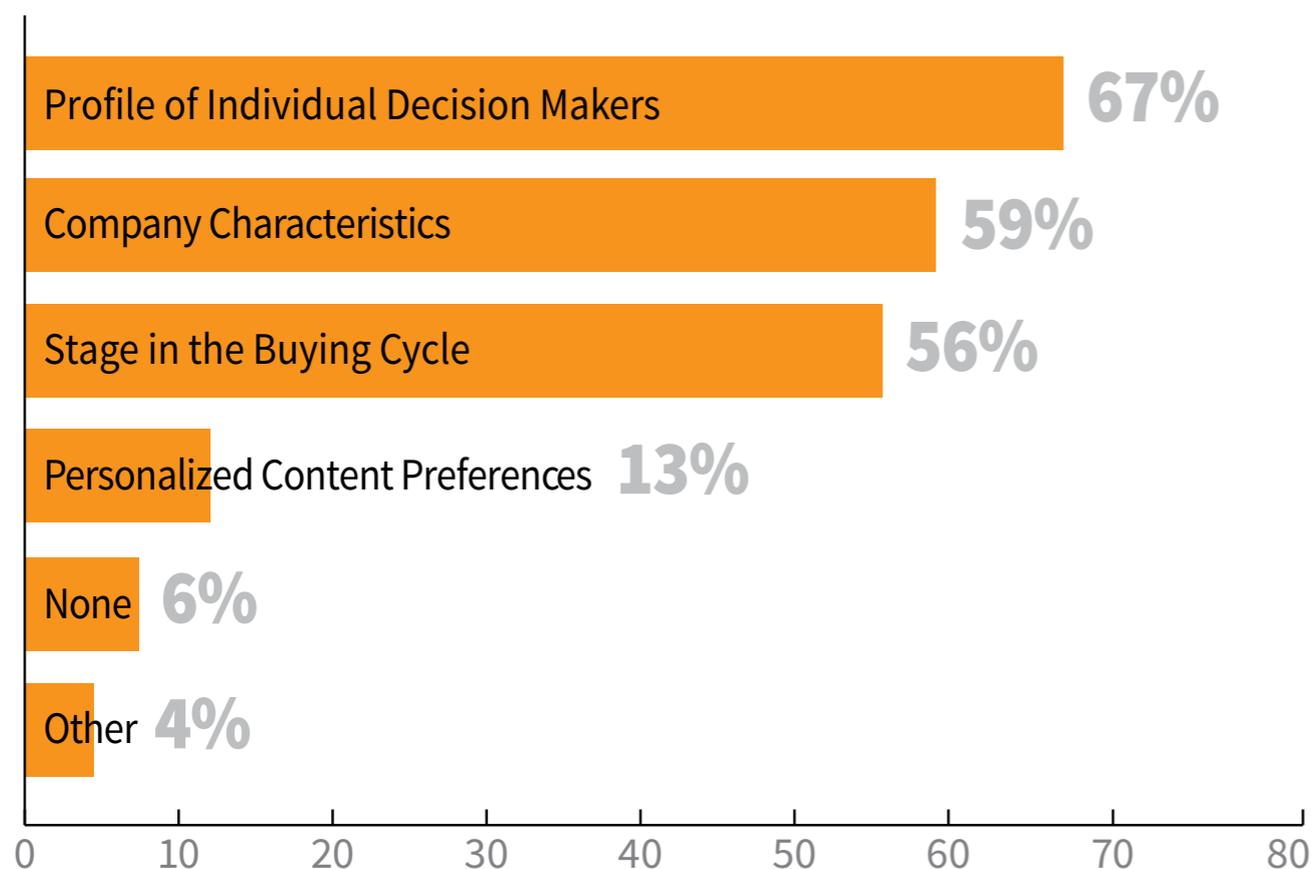


▶ Software marketers outsource content creation more frequently than their B2B peers (43%) do.

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Nearly all software marketers segment their content.

How Software Marketers Tailor Content

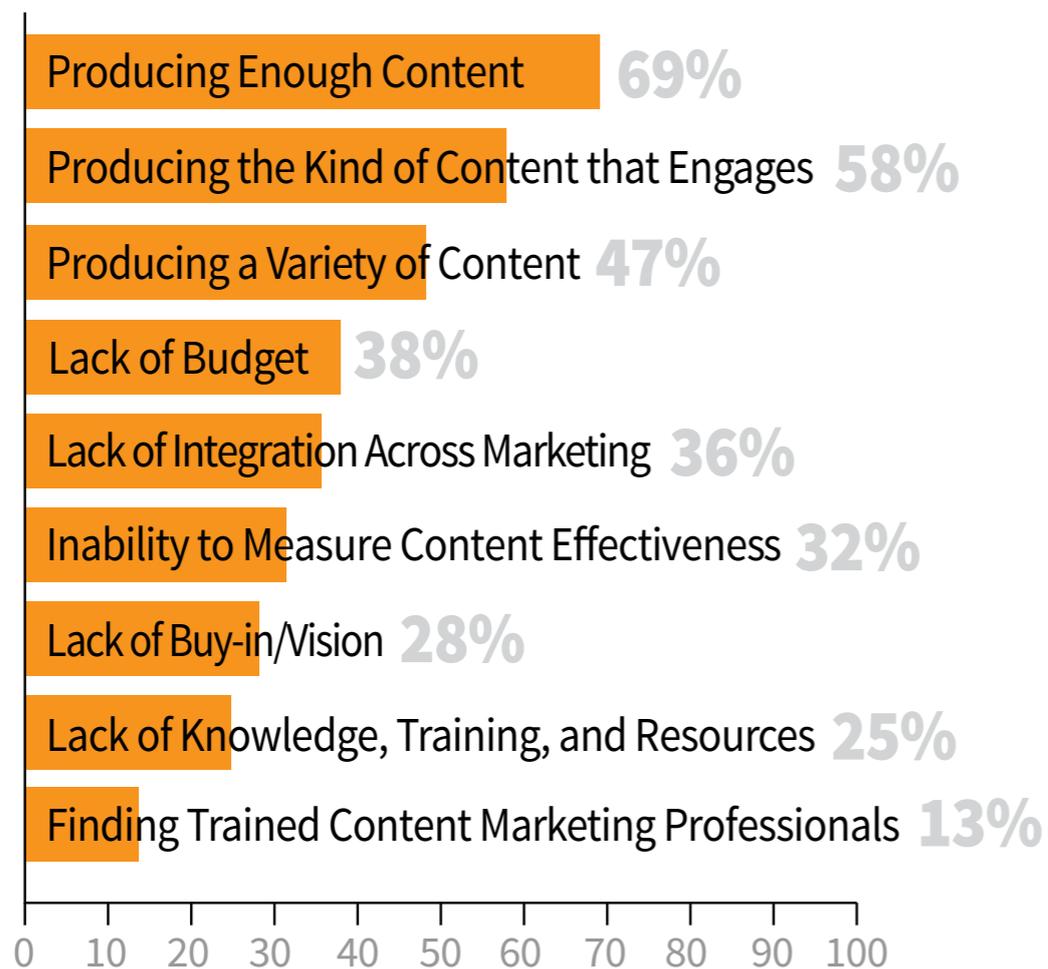


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- ▶ 94% of software marketers tailor their content in at least one way, compared with 91% of B2B marketers overall.
- ▶ Software marketers are more likely than their B2B peers to tailor content by profile of individual decision maker (67% vs. 59%), company characteristics (59% vs. 52%), and stage in the buying cycle (56% vs. 42%).
- ▶ Software marketers are less likely than their B2B peers to tailor content by personalized content preferences (13% vs. 23%).

Producing enough content is the top challenge faced by software marketers.

Challenges that Software Content Marketers Face



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- ▶ Software marketers are slightly more challenged with producing enough content (69% vs. 64%) and producing the kind of content that engages (58% vs. 52%) than their B2B peers are.
- ▶ Lack of integration across marketing is a particular area of challenge for software marketers, when compared with their B2B peers (36% vs. 25%).

Biggest Content Marketing Challenge for Software Marketers

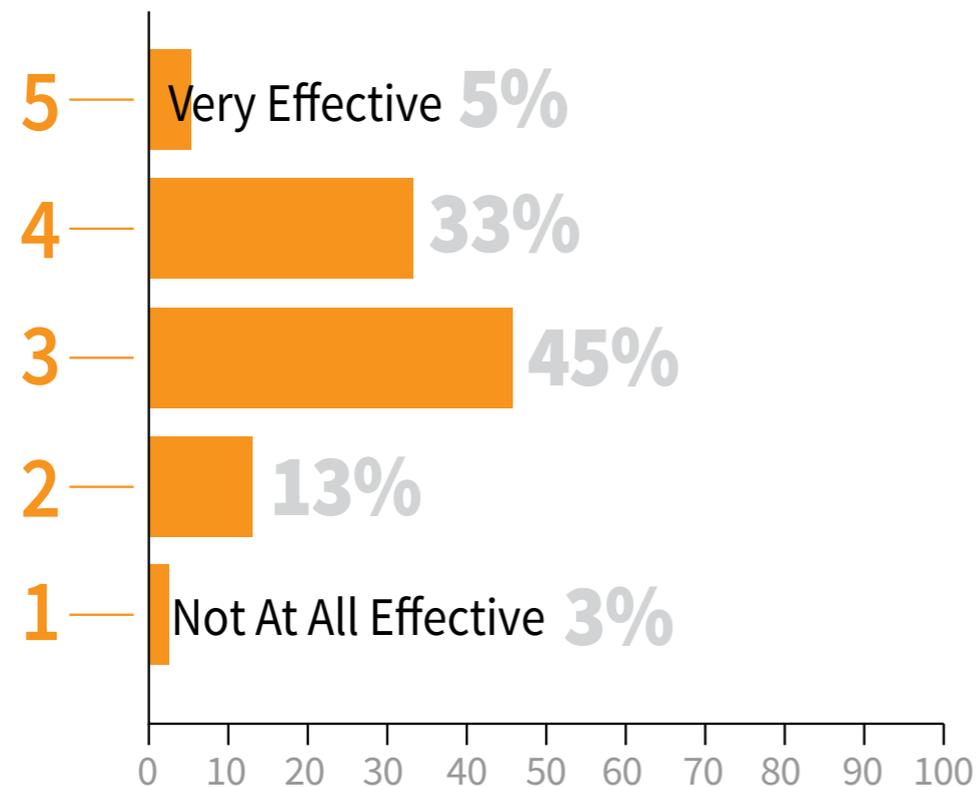


▶ Like their B2B peers, the two biggest challenges software marketers face are producing enough content and producing the kind of content that engages.

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Just 38% of software marketers believe they are effective at content marketing.

How Software Marketers Rate the Effectiveness of Their Organization's Use of Content Marketing



▶ Slightly more software marketers (38%) rate their organizations as effective at content marketing, when compared with their B2B peers (36%) overall.

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Profile of a best-in-class B2B content marketer.

Comparison of Most Effective Software Content Marketers with Least Effective Software Content Marketers

	Most Effective	Overall/Average	Least Effective
Percentage of marketing budget allocated to content marketing	37%	29%	13%
Average number of tactics used	16	14	10
Average number of social platforms used	5	5	4
Plan to increase content marketing spend in the next year	54%	53%	42%
Tailor content to profile of decision maker	87%	67%	35%
Challenged with producing engaging content	40%	58%	77%
Challenged with producing enough content	65%	69%	85%

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- ▶ “Most Effective” = Respondents who rated their organization’s use of content marketing as 4 or 5 in terms of effectiveness (on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being “Very Effective”)
- ▶ “Least Effective” = Respondents who rated their organization’s use of content marketing as 1 or 2 in terms of effectiveness (on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being “Not at all Effective”)

Profile of a best-in-class B2B content marketer.

Like their best-in-class B2B peers, the most effective software marketers:

- ▶ Allocate a greater percentage of their marketing budget to content marketing
- ▶ Use more content marketing tactics
- ▶ Use more social media platforms to deliver content
- ▶ Tailor content to specific profiles/personas much more frequently
- ▶ Are far less challenged with producing engaging content
- ▶ Are less challenged with producing enough content

DEMOGRAPHICS

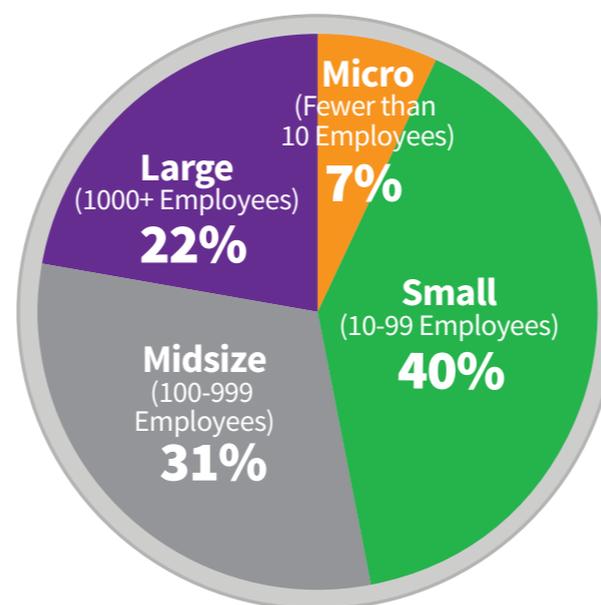
B2B Software Content Marketing: 2013 Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends—North America was produced by Content Marketing Institute and sponsored by International Data Group (IDG).

This report is based on the responses of 165 software marketers who were part of a larger business-to-business (B2B) North America (United States and Canada) survey, from which the overall comparisons in this report were drawn (for more information, see [B2B Content Marketing: 2013 Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends—North America](#)). The electronic survey was mailed to a sample of B2B marketers from among subscribers of MarketingProfs and Content Marketing Institute in August 2012. A total of 1,416 B2B marketers from North America responded, representing a full range of industries (advertising/marketing, software, consulting, manufacturing, healthcare, finance, and others), functional areas, and company sizes. Special thanks to MarketingProfs for their participation in the overall B2B North American comparisons used in this report.

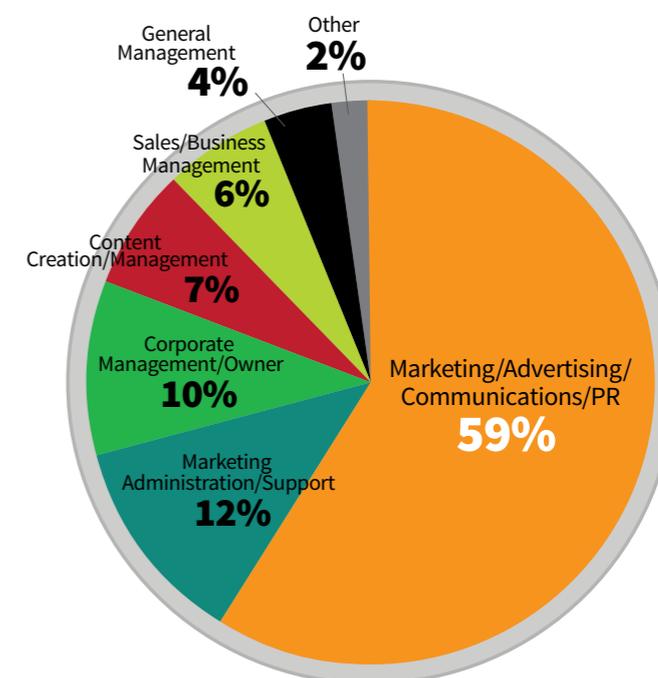
Industry Classification, Software



Size of Company, Software (by Employees)



Job Title/Function, Software



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About the Content Marketing Institute:

The [Content Marketing Institute](#) (CMI) is the leading global content marketing education and training organization. CMI teaches enterprise brands how to attract and retain customers through compelling, multi-channel storytelling. CMI's [Content Marketing World](#) event is the largest content marketing-focused event. CMI also produces the quarterly magazine *Chief Content Officer*, and provides strategic consulting and content marketing research for some of the best-known brands in the world. Get more content marketing resources at [ContentMarketingInstitute.com](#). CMI is a division of Z Squared Media, a 2012 Inc. 500 company. View all [content marketing research](#) from CMI.

View additional **content marketing research** at the CMI website. For more insights on content marketing in the software industry, register for the **Content Marketing World Tech Summit** being held September 12, 2013 in Cleveland.

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