



# B2B

## CONTENT MARKETING

2018 Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends—North America



CONTENT  
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>3</b>	Welcome	<b>19</b>	Content Creation & Distribution
<b>4</b>	This Year's B2B Content Marketing Top Performers At-A-Glance	<b>30</b>	Goals & Metrics
<b>5</b>	Usage & Team Organization	<b>35</b>	Budgets & Spending
<b>10</b>	Commitment & Overall Success	<b>38</b>	Methodology & Demographics
<b>16</b>	Content Marketing Strategy	<b>39</b>	About

# WELCOME

## Greetings Marketers,

Welcome to B2B Content Marketing 2018: Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends—North America. Our latest research indicates B2B marketers are finding content marketing success as they explore ways to work more creatively and build their audiences.

Content marketing is no longer the shiny new object. Those who have caught on are no longer asking “should we do this,” but rather “how do we really dig in and get results?” One of the most convincing pieces of evidence of this maturation? We saw an 18% year-over-year increase in respondents who say they are focused on using content marketing to build their audience (one or more subscriber bases). And that’s what differentiates content marketing from other forms of marketing—its intent is to offer valuable information so people want to hear from your business . . . so they subscribe to your content because they are interested in it.

Read on for all the findings from our annual survey and consider how your organization stacks up against your peers. To take your content marketing to the next level, check out the resources on the last page of this report.

## Yours in content,



**Lisa  
Murton Beets**  
Research Director  
Content Marketing Institute



**Ann  
Handley**  
Chief Content Officer  
MarketingProfs

**Thanks to the following for their assistance with the annual content marketing survey and this report:** CMI team members Joe Pulizzi, founder; Stephanie Stahl, general manager; Robert Rose, chief strategy adviser; Kim Moutsos, vice president of content; Michele Linn, editorial strategy adviser; Nancy Reese, research consultant; Joseph Kalinowski, creative director; and Vahe Habeshian, MarketingProfs publications director. Thanks also to our report sponsor, Brightcove.

## COMPARISON CHART

# This Year's B2B Content Marketing Top Performers At-A-Glance

	Most Successful	All Respondents	Least Successful
Organization is extremely/very committed to content marketing	89%	56%	27%
Organization's content marketing is sophisticated/mature	73%	34%	4%
Has a documented content marketing strategy	62%	37%	16%
Measures content marketing ROI	55%	35%	18%
Percentage of total marketing budget allocated to content marketing (average)	40%	26%	14%
Rates project management flow during content-creation process as excellent/very good	70%	36%	14%
Agrees that organization is focused on building audiences	92%	80%	65%
Agrees that organization values creativity and craft in content creation and production	88%	74%	59%
Agrees that organization is realistic about what content marketing can achieve	86%	62%	45%
Agrees that leadership team gives ample time to produce content marketing results	84%	59%	38%
Always/frequently delivers content consistently	75%	59%	33%
Rates alignment of metrics and content marketing goals as excellent/very good	54%	19%	2%

**Chart term definitions:** A top performer (aka “most successful”) is one who characterizes his or her organization’s overall content marketing approach as extremely or very successful. The “least successful” characterize their organization’s approach as minimally or not at all successful. Base: B2B content marketers.

2018 B2B Content Marketing Trends—North America: Content Marketing Institute/MarketingProfs

# USAGE & TEAM ORGANIZATION



Team organization is similar to what was reported last year: Around half of respondents have small (or one-person) marketing/content marketing teams serving the entire organization.



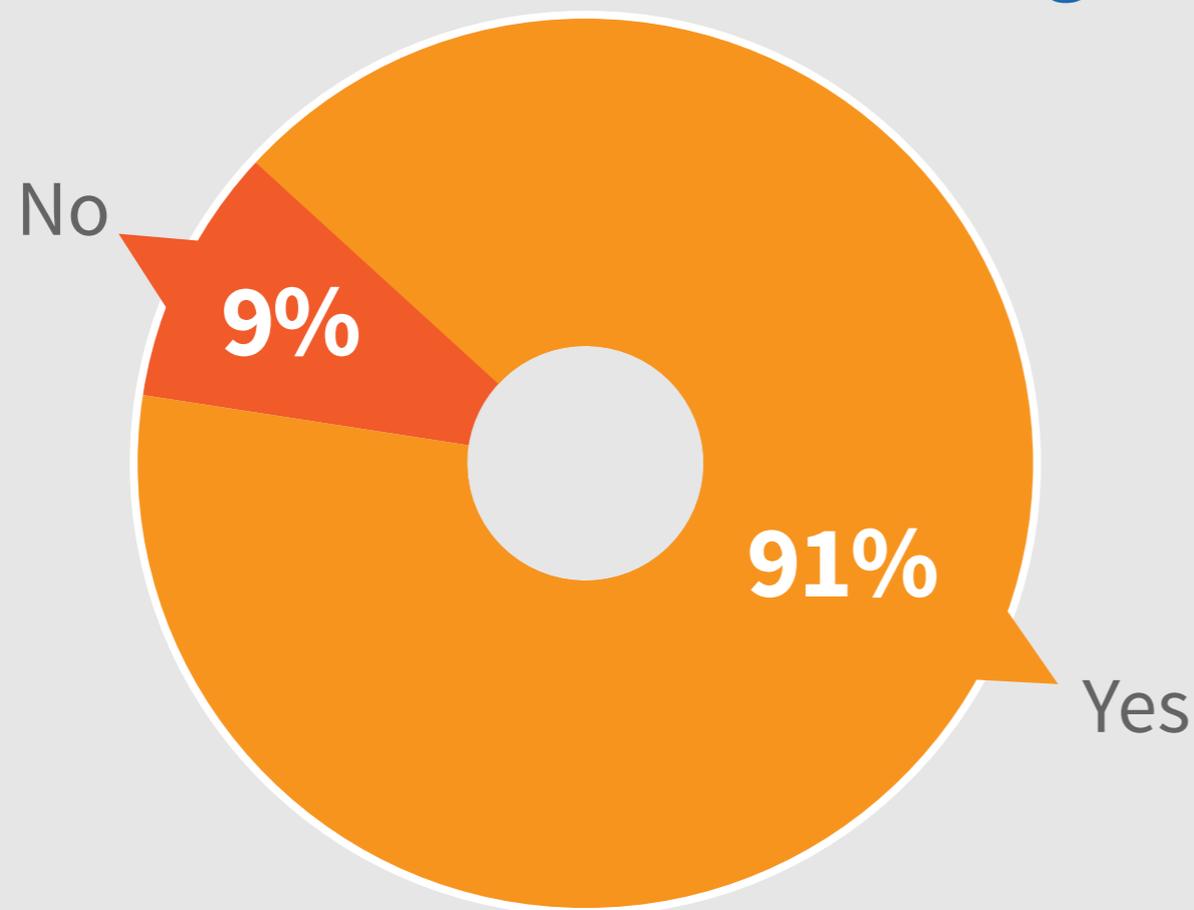
Respondents represented a good mix of organizational content marketing maturity, nearly equally divided into thirds by young/first steps, adolescence, and mature/sophisticated.



Nearly half of respondents (56%) outsource at least one content marketing activity; conversely, 44% do not outsource any content marketing activities.

# Does your organization use content marketing?

## Percentage of B2B Respondents Who Use Content Marketing



Content marketing is defined as “a strategic marketing approach focused on creating and distributing valuable, relevant, and consistent content to attract and retain a clearly defined audience — and, ultimately, to drive profitable customer action.”

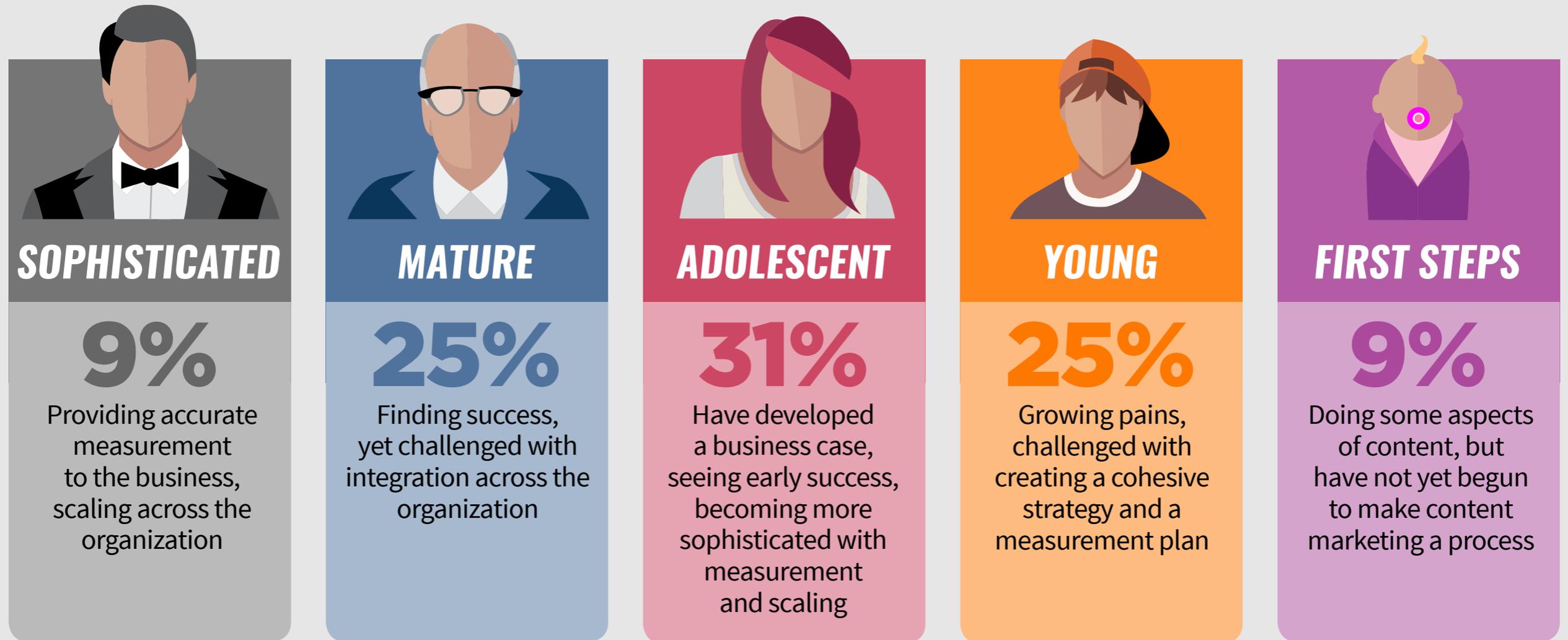
**Note:** Of the nonusers, 54% said they plan to launch a content marketing effort within 12 months; 43% had no immediate plans to begin using content marketing; and 4% had used content marketing in the past, but stopped.

*Base = All B2B respondents.*

2018 B2B Content Marketing Trends—North America: Content Marketing Institute/MarketingProfs

# How would you describe your organization's content marketing maturity level?

## How B2B Marketers Assess Their Organization's Content Marketing Maturity Level

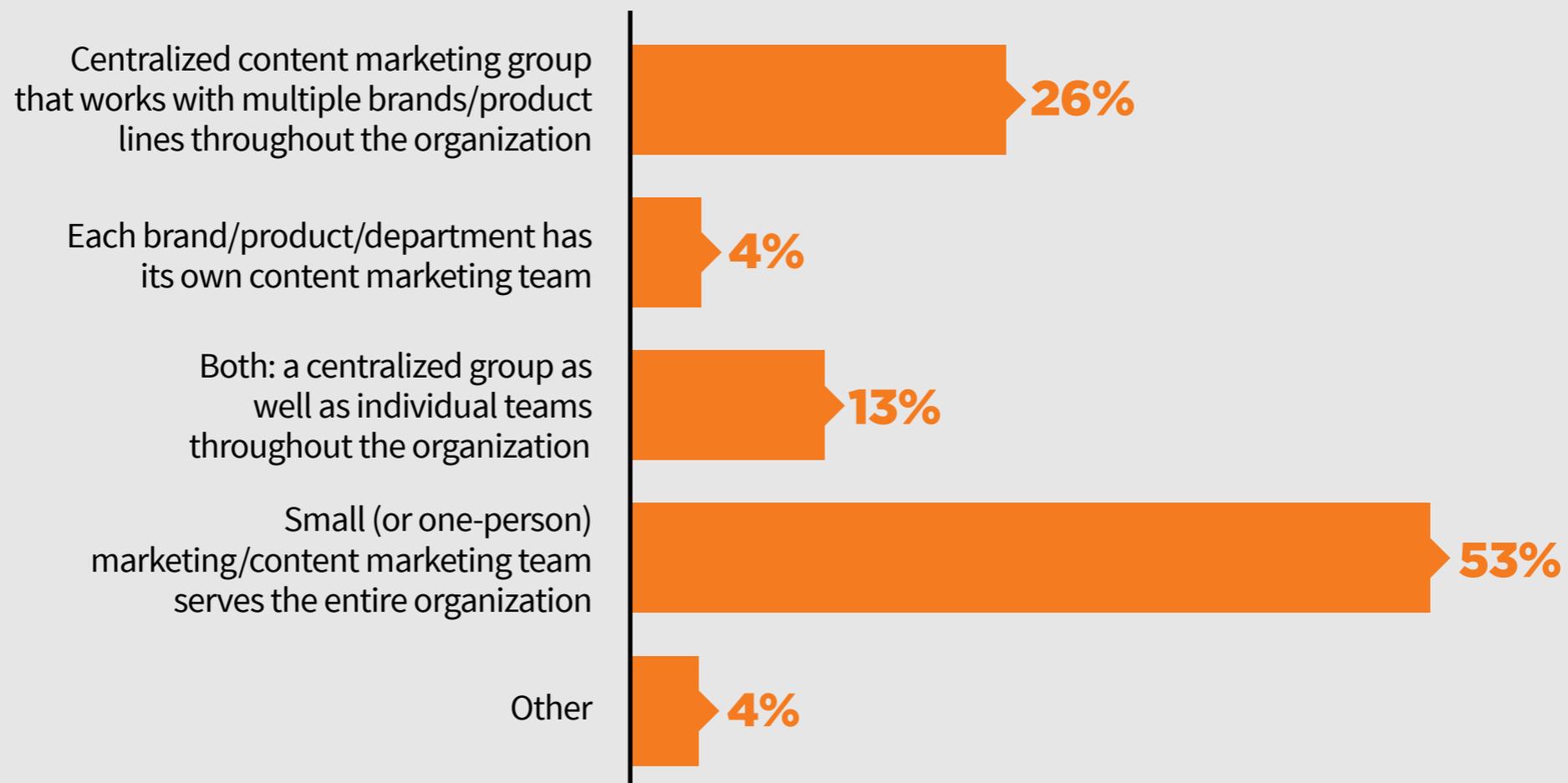


2018 B2B Content Marketing Trends—North America: Content Marketing Institute/MarketingProfs

Base: B2B content marketers; aided list.

# How is content marketing structured within your organization?

## B2B Content Marketing Organizational Structure

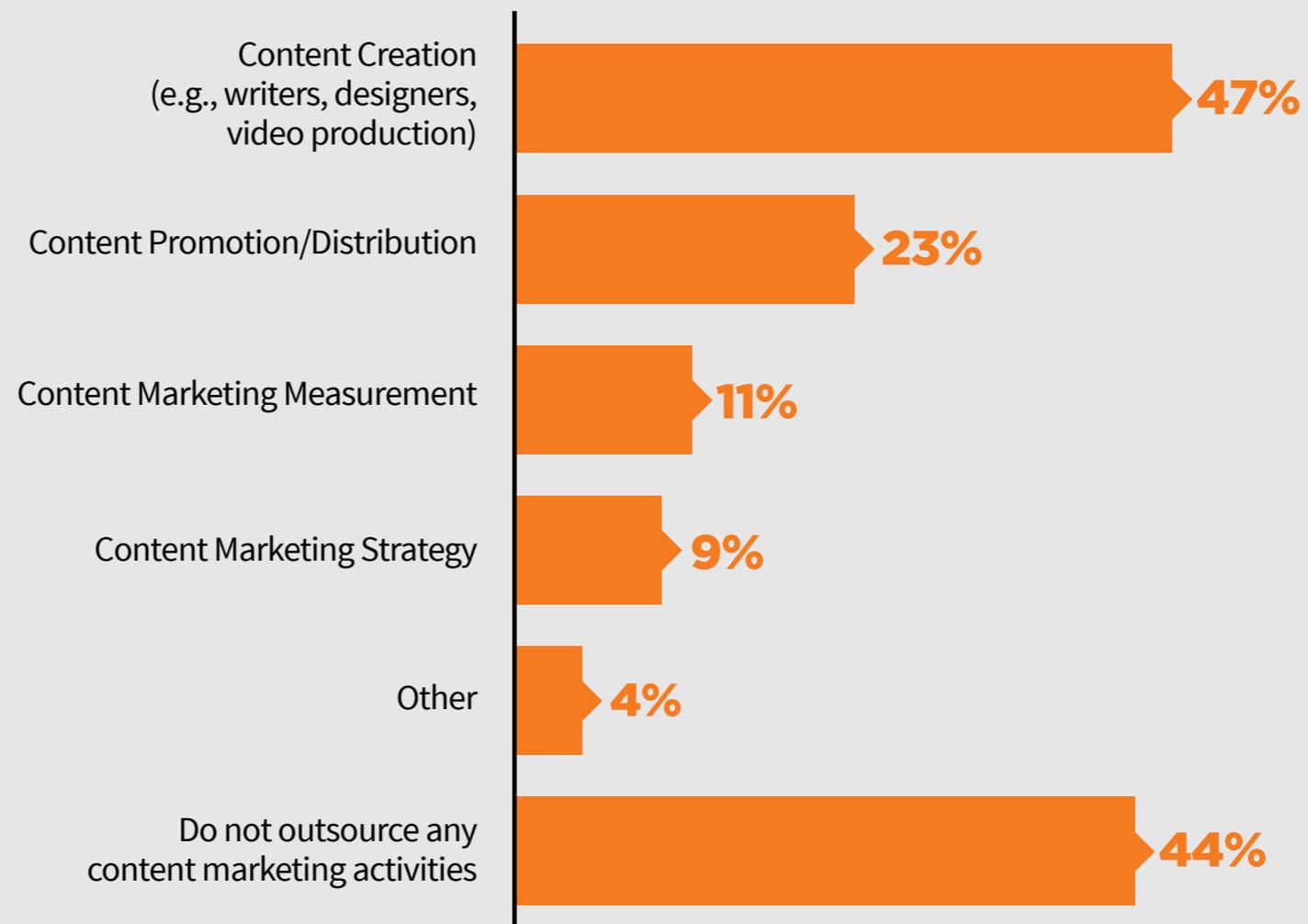


2018 B2B Content Marketing Trends—North America: Content Marketing Institute/MarketingProfs

Base: B2B content marketers; aided list.

# What content marketing activities does your organization outsource?

## Content Marketing Activities B2B Marketers Outsource



**Note:** More than half (56%) of respondents outsource at least one of the content marketing activities listed.

*Base: B2B content marketers. Aided list; multiple responses permitted.*

2018 B2B Content Marketing Trends—North America: Content Marketing Institute/MarketingProfs

B2B CONTENT MARKETING

# COMMITMENT & OVERALL SUCCESS



Content marketing commitment levels and overall success are nearly the same as respondents reported last year.



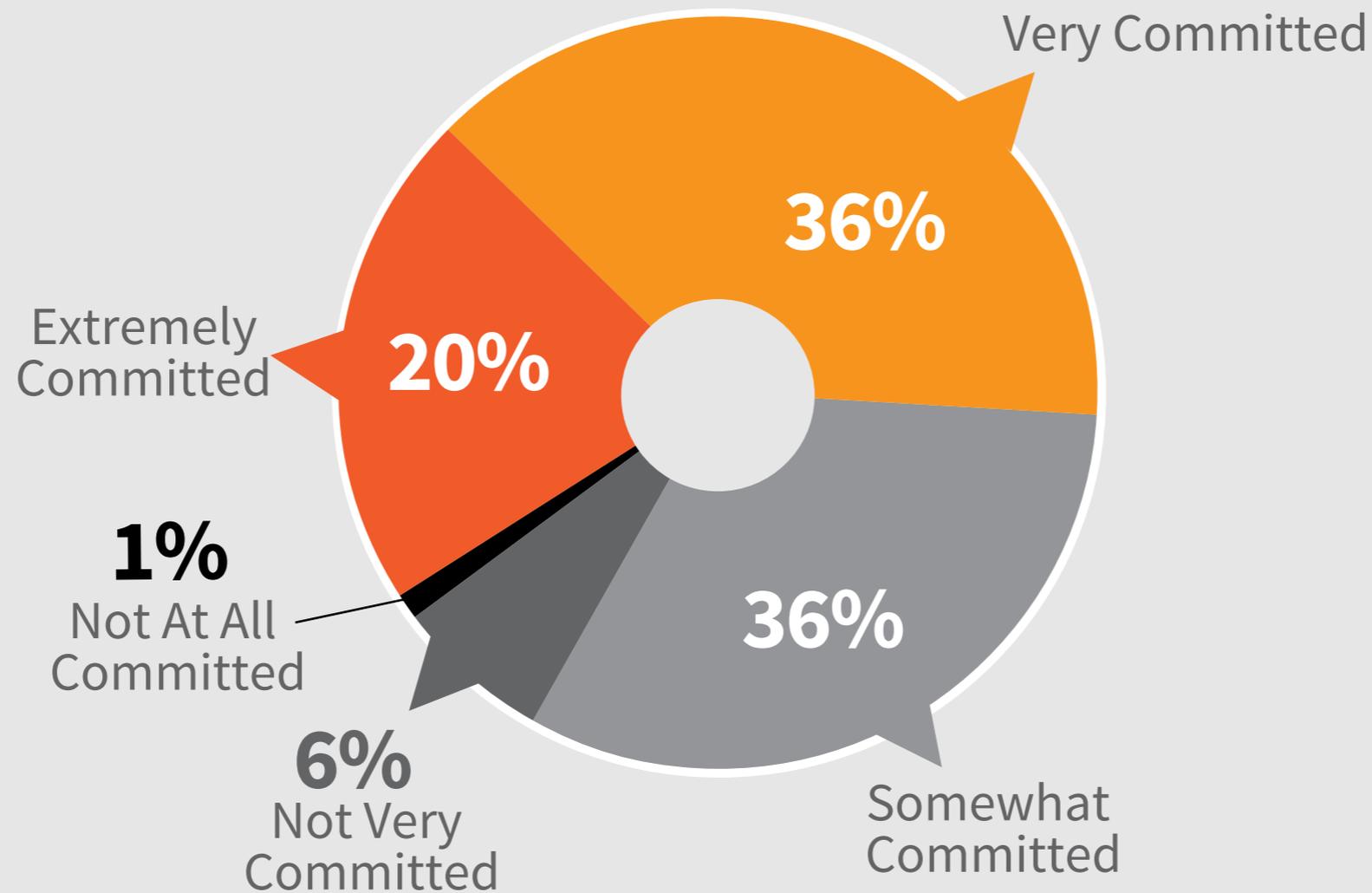
Like last year, nearly 65% of respondents said their overall content marketing success has increased (much more/somewhat more) compared with one year ago.



Compared with last year (68%), there was an 18% increase among respondents who agree that their organization is focused on building audiences (80%).

How would you describe your organization's commitment level to content marketing?

**B2B Organizations' Commitment to Content Marketing**

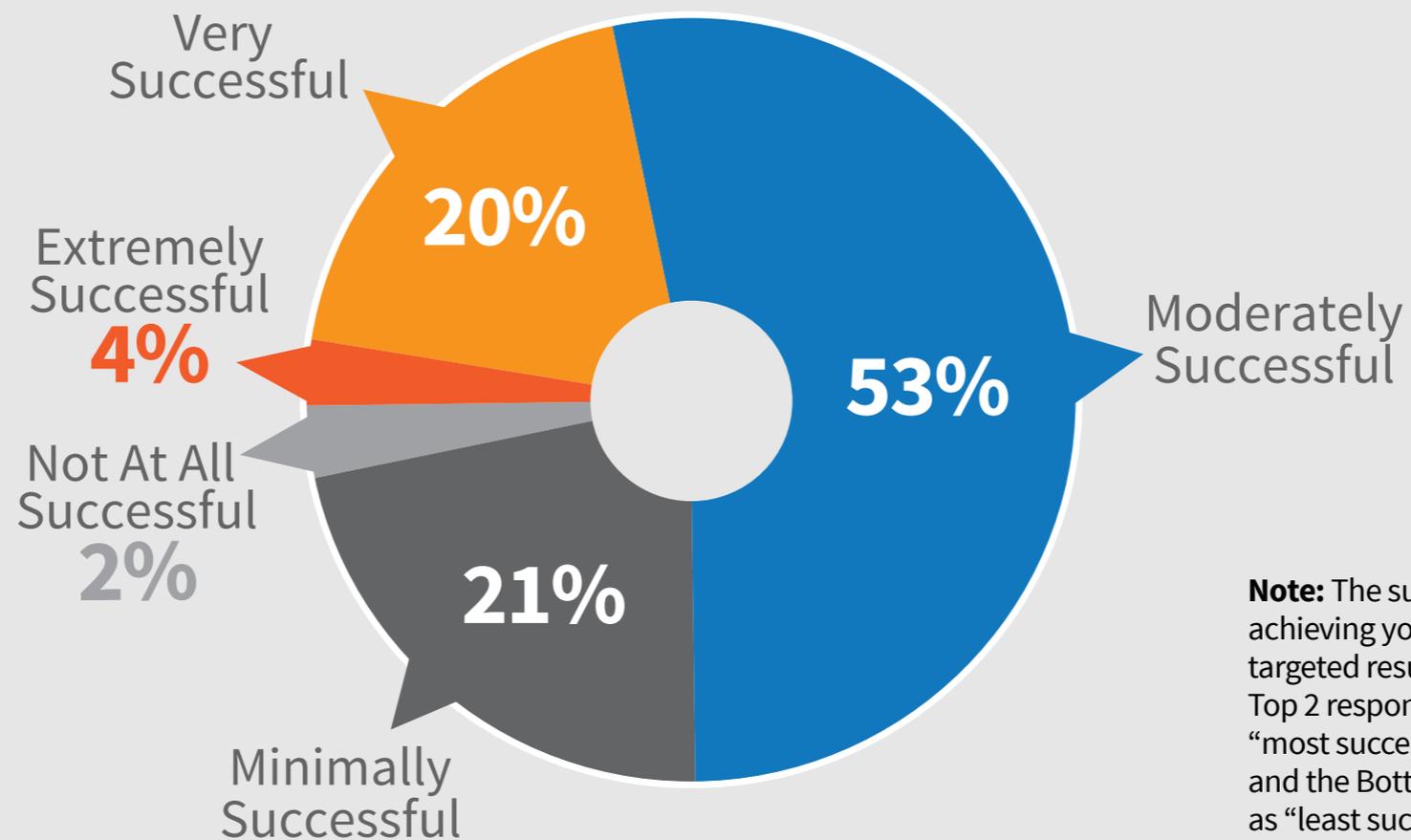


2018 B2B Content Marketing Trends—North America: Content Marketing Institute/MarketingProfs

Base: B2B content marketers; aided list.

# How would you characterize the success of your organization's current overall content marketing approach?

## How B2B Marketers Rate the Success of Their Organizations' Overall Content Marketing Approach



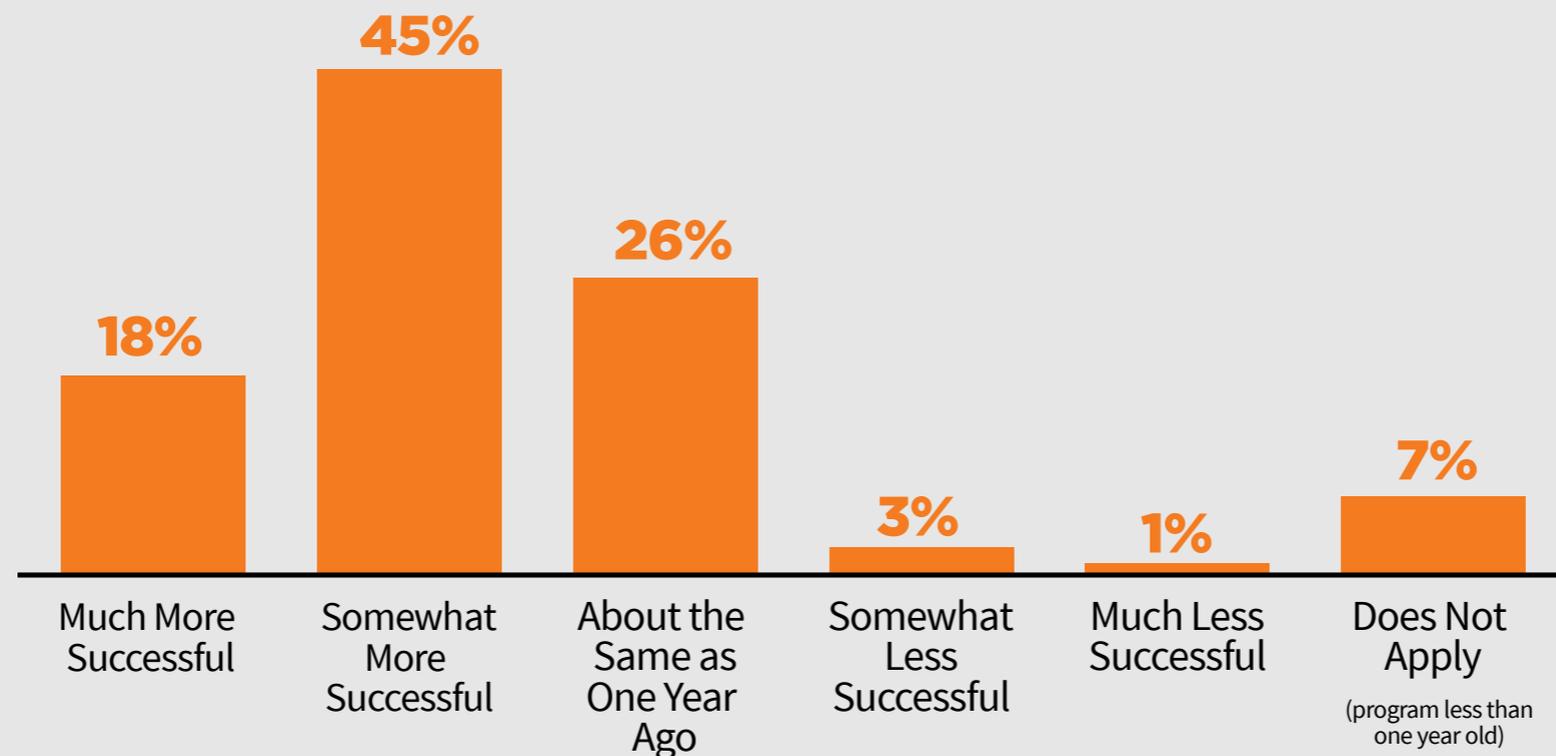
**Note:** The survey defined success as achieving your organization's desired/targeted results. This report defines the Top 2 respondents (extremely/very) as "most successful" or "top performers," and the Bottom 2 (minimally/not at all) as "least successful."

Base = B2B content marketers; aided list.

2018 B2B Content Marketing Trends—North America: Content Marketing Institute/MarketingProfs

How does the success of your organization's current overall content marketing approach compare with one year ago?

### How B2B Marketers Rate Their Organization's Content Marketing Success Compared With One Year Ago

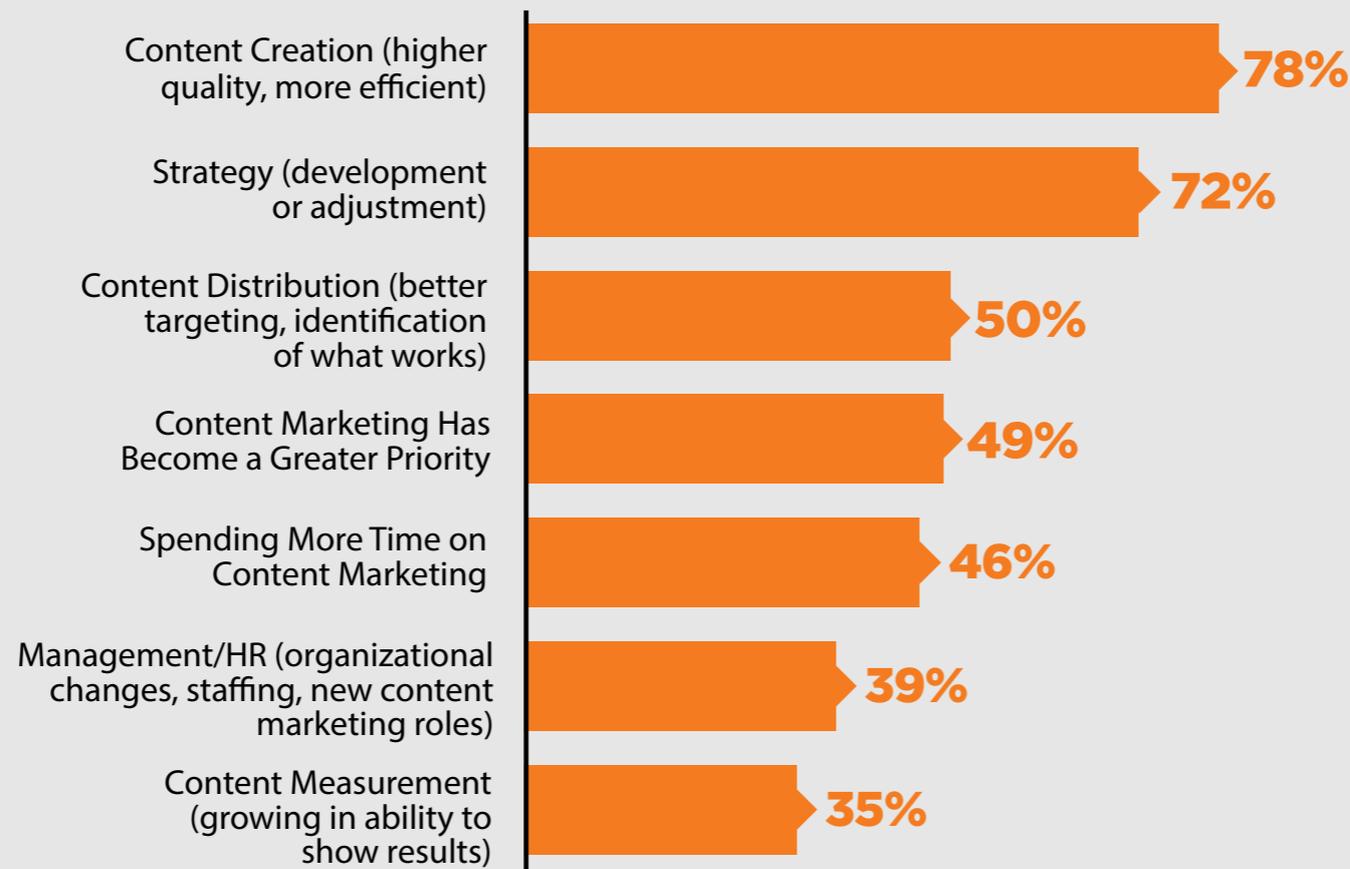


2018 B2B Content Marketing Trends—North America: Content Marketing Institute/MarketingProfs

Base: B2B content marketers; aided list.

# To what factors do you attribute your organization's increase in overall success with content marketing?

## Factors Contributing to B2B Marketers' Increased Content Marketing Success Over the Last Year



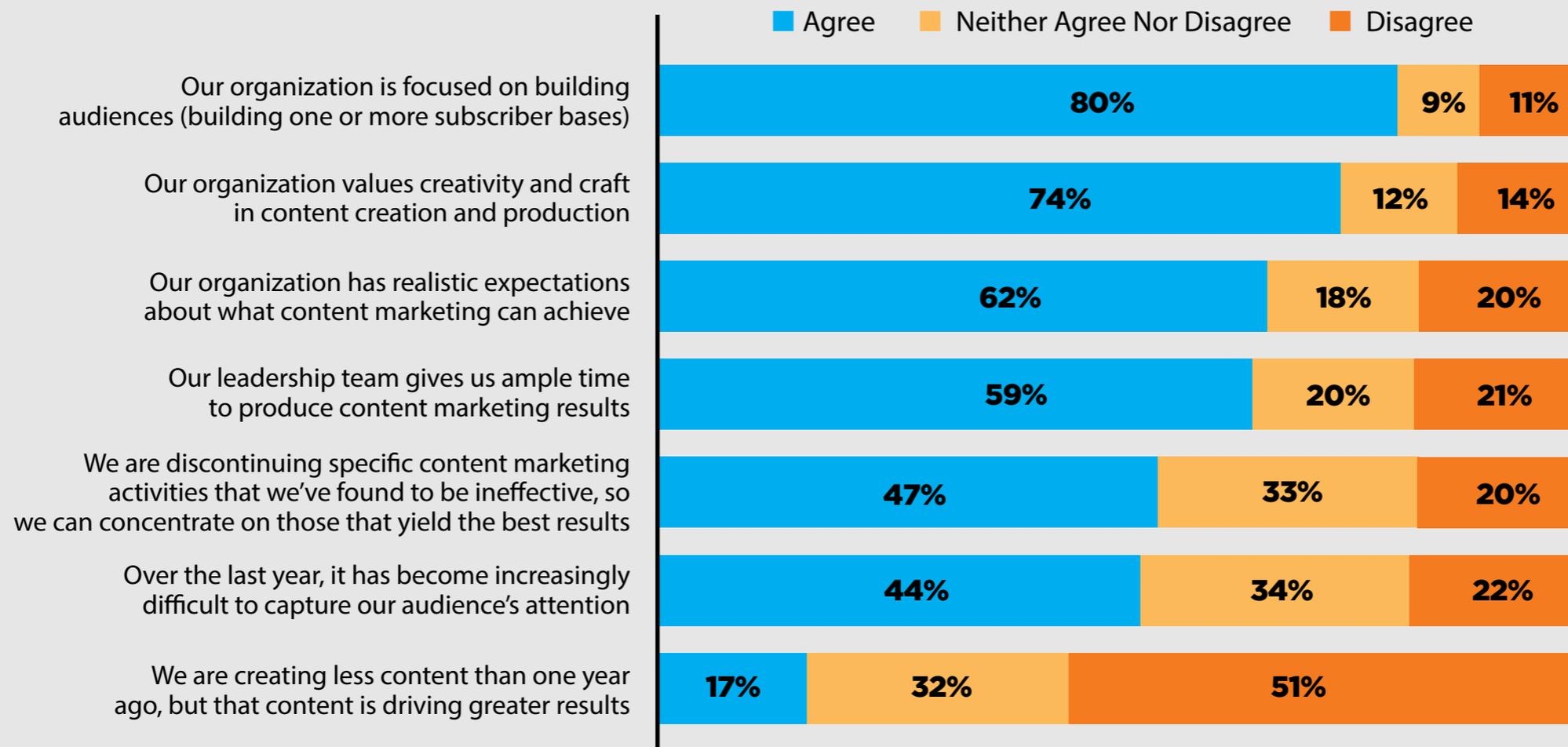
**Other factors cited:** Content Marketing Technologies/Tools (25%); More Budget for Content Marketing (25%); We Have Given Our Efforts Time to Bear Fruit and Are Now Getting Results (21%); Content Marketing Training/Education (19%); Assistance of Outside Expertise (7%); Changes in Our Target Audience(s) (5%); and Other (5%).

**Note:** Due to the low number of B2B respondents who said their organization's content marketing success had decreased compared with one year ago, this report does not include a chart showing factors contributing to decreased success.

## OPINIONS ABOUT CONTENT MARKETING

Indicate your level of agreement with the following statements concerning content marketing in your organization.

### B2B Marketers' Opinions About Content Marketing



2018 B2B Content Marketing Trends—North America: Content Marketing Institute/MarketingProfs

Base: B2B content marketers; aided list.

# CONTENT MARKETING STRATEGY



As they have in the past, respondents who have a documented content marketing strategy report higher levels of overall content marketing success compared with those who have a verbal strategy only, or no strategy at all.



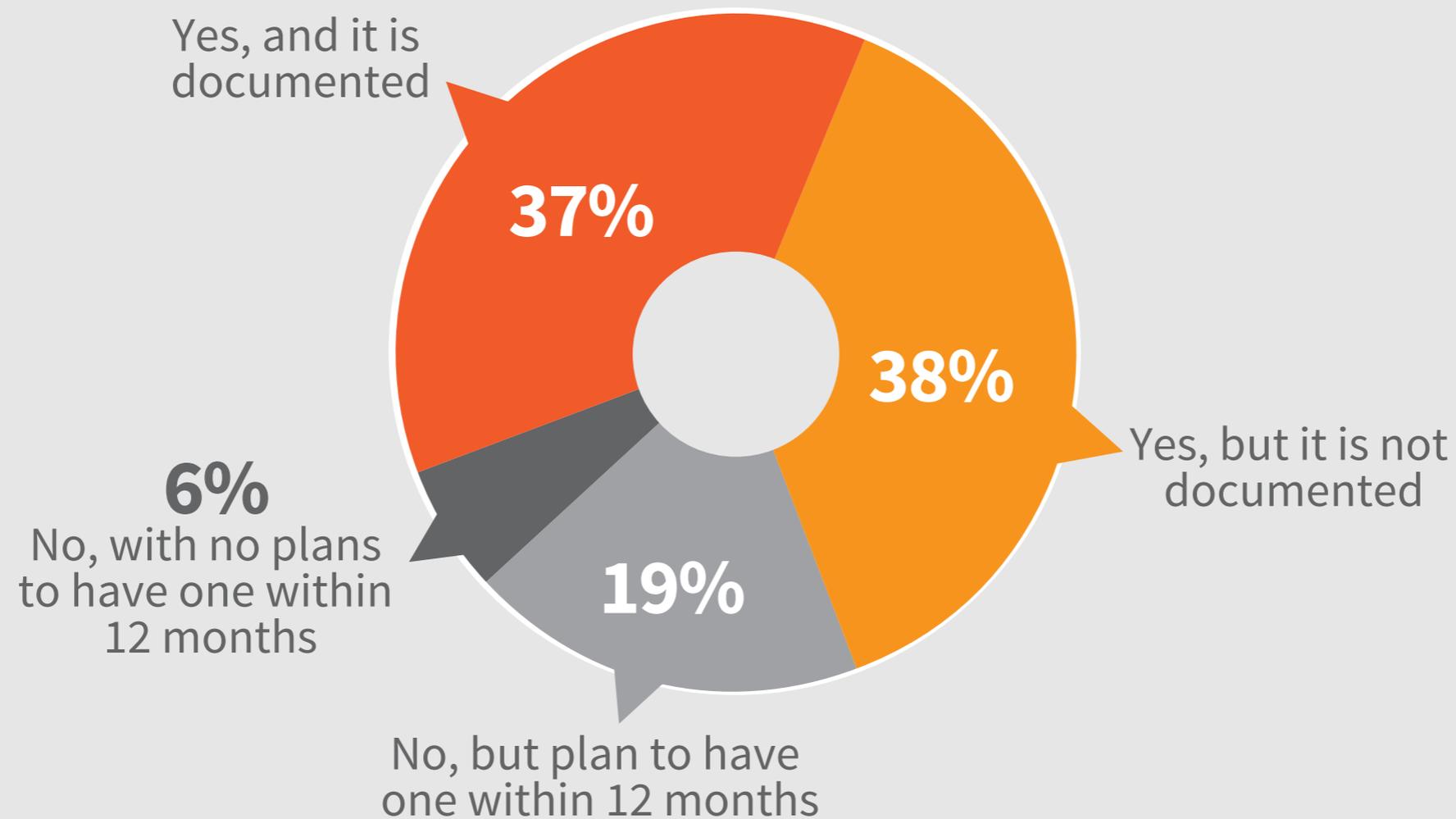
Approximately 75% of respondents who do not have a strategy plan to develop one within 12 months.



When those who do *not* have plans to develop a strategy within 12 months were asked why, qualitative responses included “no buy-in from executives” and “lack of cohesion and coordination among departments.”

# Does your organization have a content marketing strategy?

## Percentage of B2B Marketers Who Have a Content Marketing Strategy

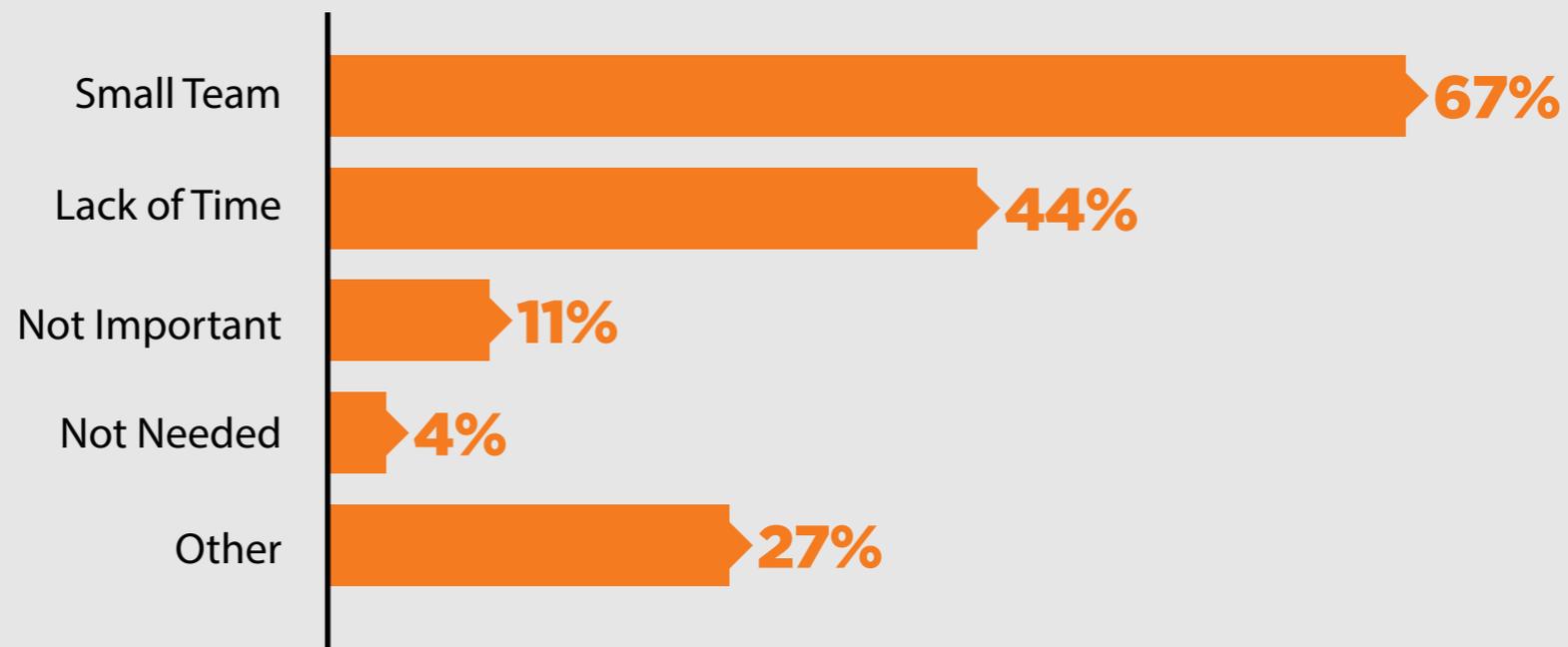


2018 B2B Content Marketing Trends—North America: Content Marketing Institute/MarketingProfs

Base: B2B content marketers; aided list.

Why do you think your organization does not plan to develop a content marketing strategy within 12 months?

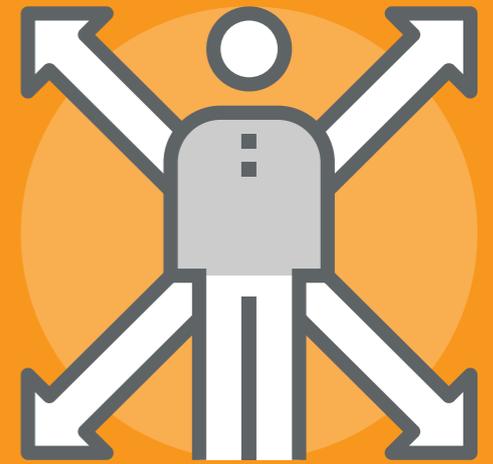
### Reasons B2B Marketers Do Not Plan to Develop a Content Marketing Strategy Within 12 Months



*Base: B2B content marketers who indicated their organization has no plans to develop a content marketing strategy within 12 months (n=45). Aided list; multiple responses permitted.*

2018 B2B Content Marketing Trends—North America: Content Marketing Institute/MarketingProfs

# CONTENT CREATION & DISTRIBUTION



36% of respondents rated the flow of content-creation projects within their organizations as excellent or very good; 31% rated it as good; and 32% rated it as fair or poor.



Among the content types, distribution formats, and social media platforms that respondents use, they rated ebooks/white papers, email, and LinkedIn as most effective at helping their organizations achieve specific objectives.

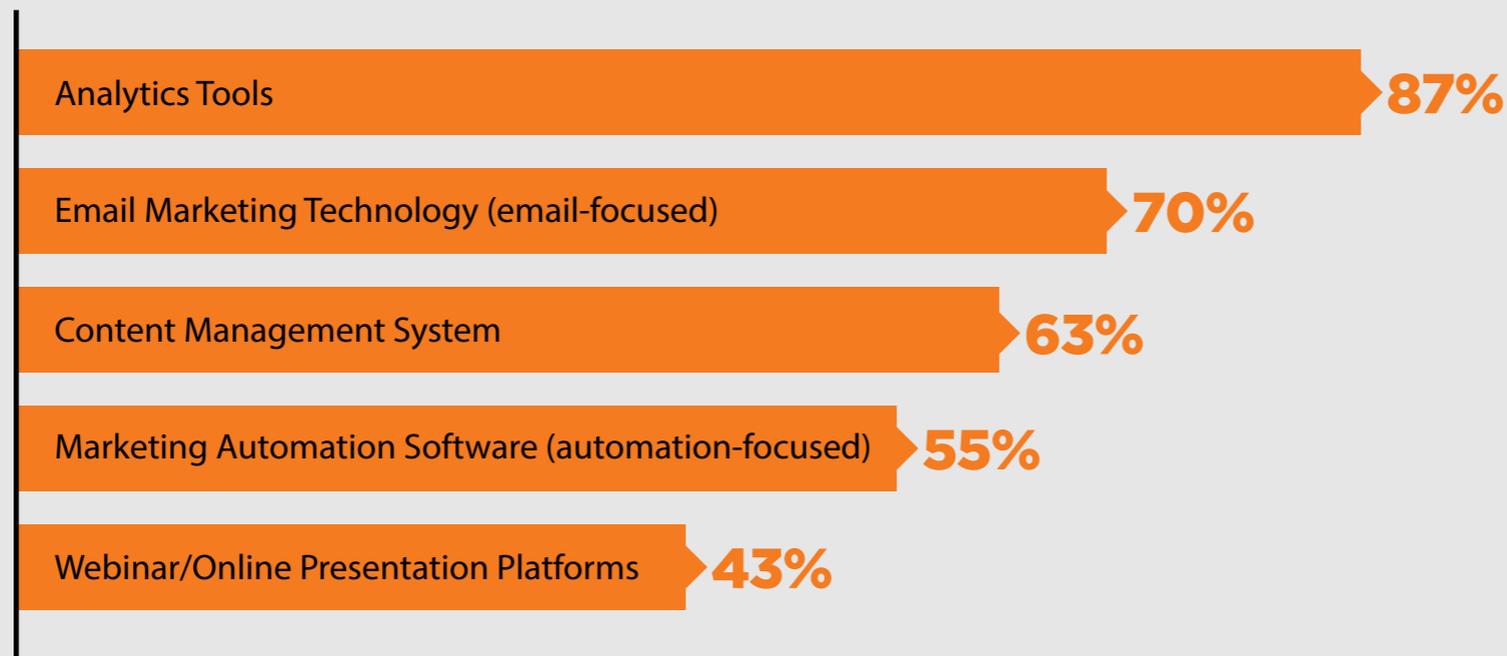


Nearly all respondents (94%) said they always or frequently ensure that their content is fact-based or credible.

## CONTENT CREATION & DISTRIBUTION

Which types of digital technologies does your organization use specifically for managing its content marketing efforts?

### Technologies B2B Marketers Use to Manage Content Marketing Efforts (Top 5)



**Other technologies used:**  
Video Tools/Platforms (24%);  
Content Collaboration/  
Workflow Software (22%);  
Content Promotion/  
Distribution Software (12%);  
Content Planning/Creation  
Software (11%); Digital Asset  
Management (DAM) System/  
File Storage (11%); Content  
Optimization Software (8%);  
and Other (6%).

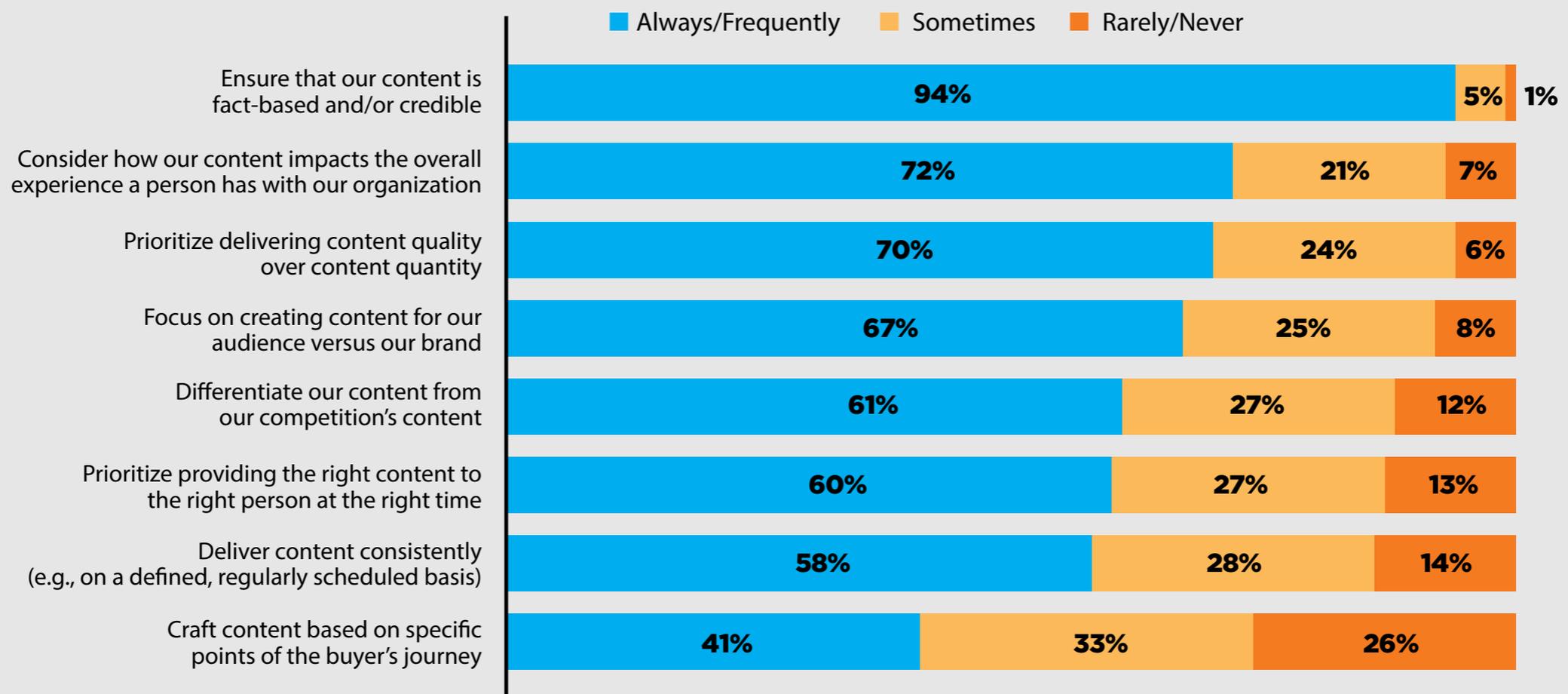
**AVERAGE NUMBER USED:**

Most Successful ..... 5  
All Respondents ..... 4  
Least Successful ..... 3

## CONTENT CREATION & DISTRIBUTION

How often do you take the following concepts into account while creating content for your organization?

### How Often B2B Marketers Consider Various Concepts While Creating Content



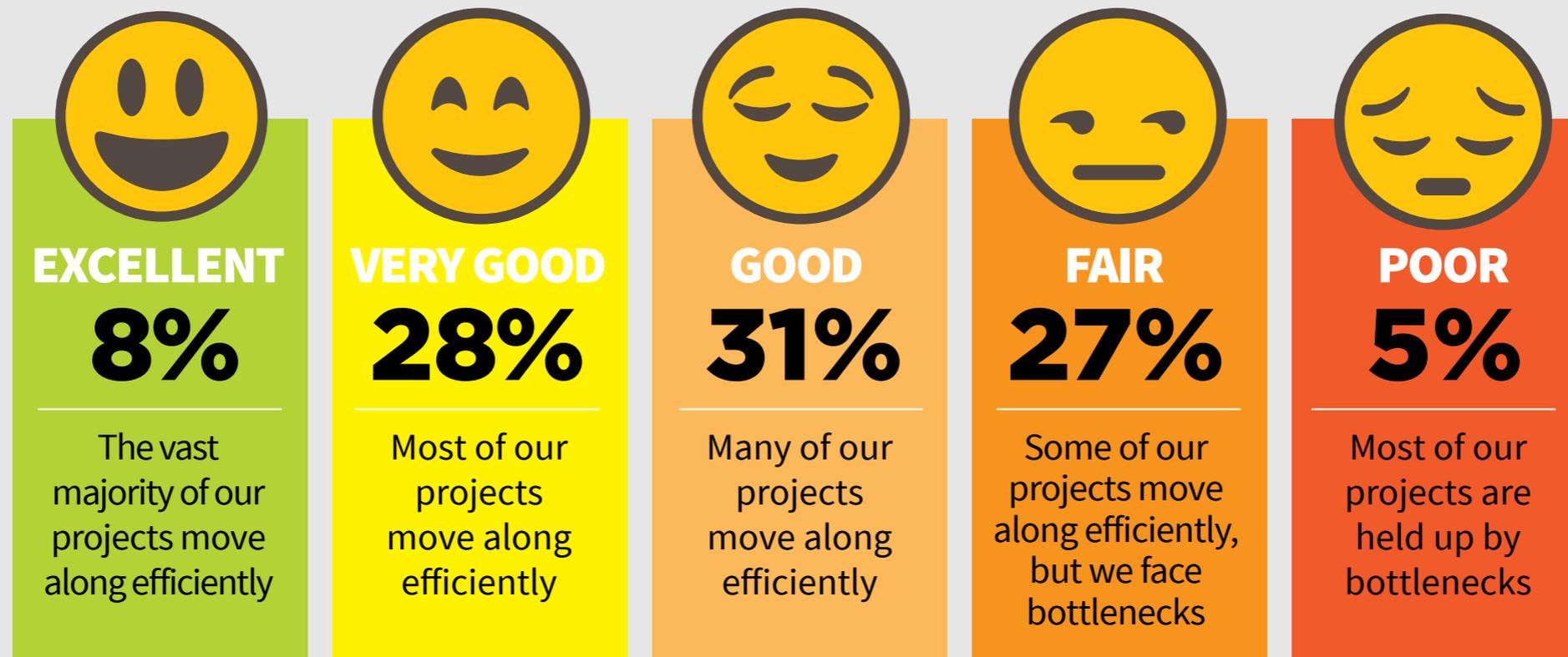
2018 B2B Content Marketing Trends—North America: Content Marketing Institute/MarketingProfs

Base: B2B content marketers; aided list.

## CONTENT CREATION & DISTRIBUTION

How would you rate the project management flow during the content creation process (from concept through completion) within your organization?

### How B2B Marketers Rate the Project Management Flow During the Content Creation Process

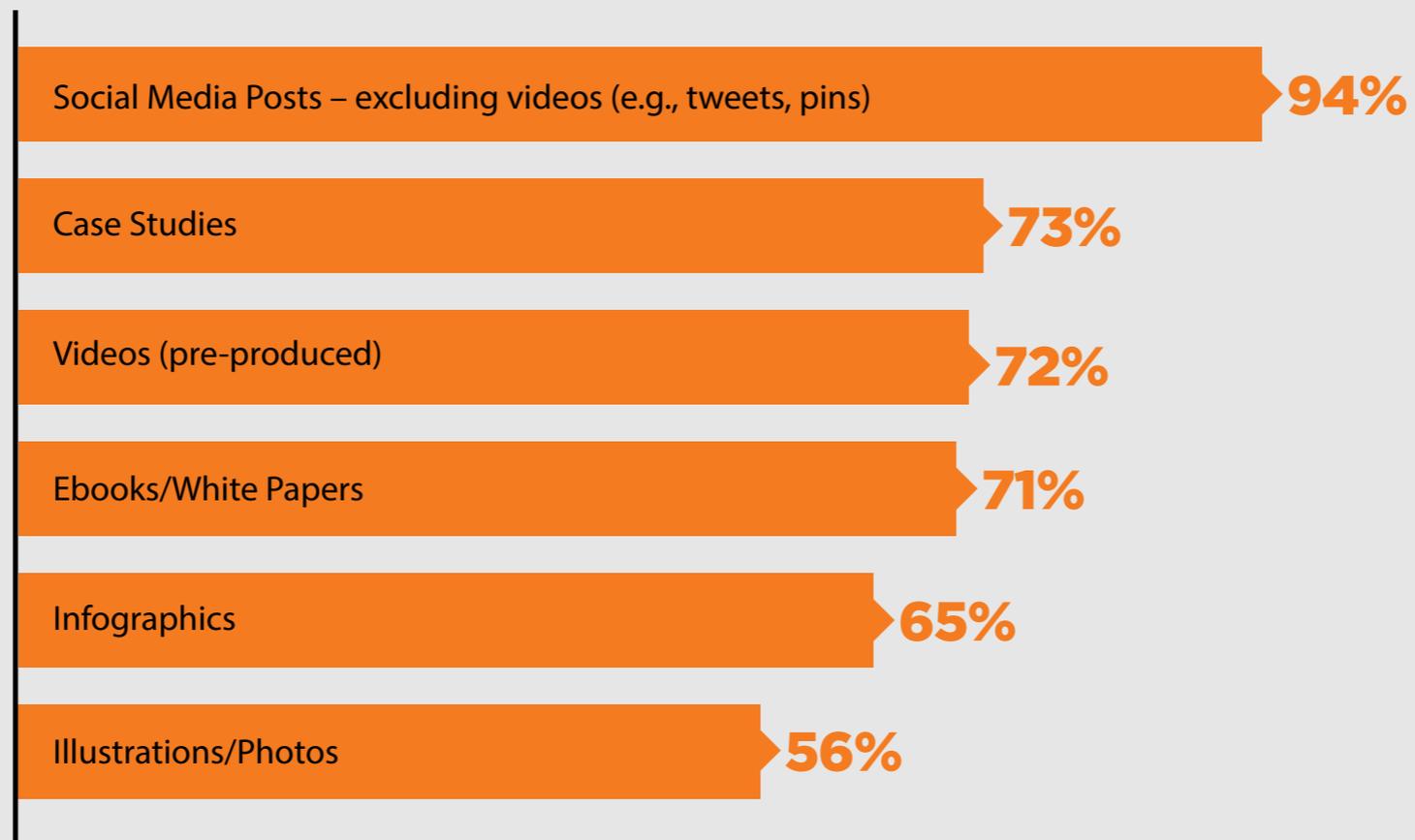


2018 B2B Content Marketing Trends—North America: Content Marketing Institute/MarketingProfs

Base: B2B content marketers; aided list.

# Which types of content does your organization use for content marketing purposes?

## Types of Content B2B Marketers Use for Content Marketing Purposes (Top 6)



### Other types of content used:

Research Reports (37%); Interactive Tools (e.g., quizzes, assessments, calculators) (33%); Podcasts (17%); Videos (live-streaming) (17%); Mobile Apps (11%); Film/TV (e.g., documentaries, short films) (4%); Virtual Reality/Augmented Reality (VR/AR) Experiences (4%); and Other (11%).

### AVERAGE NUMBER USED:

Most Successful ..... 7  
All Respondents ..... 6  
Least Successful ..... 4

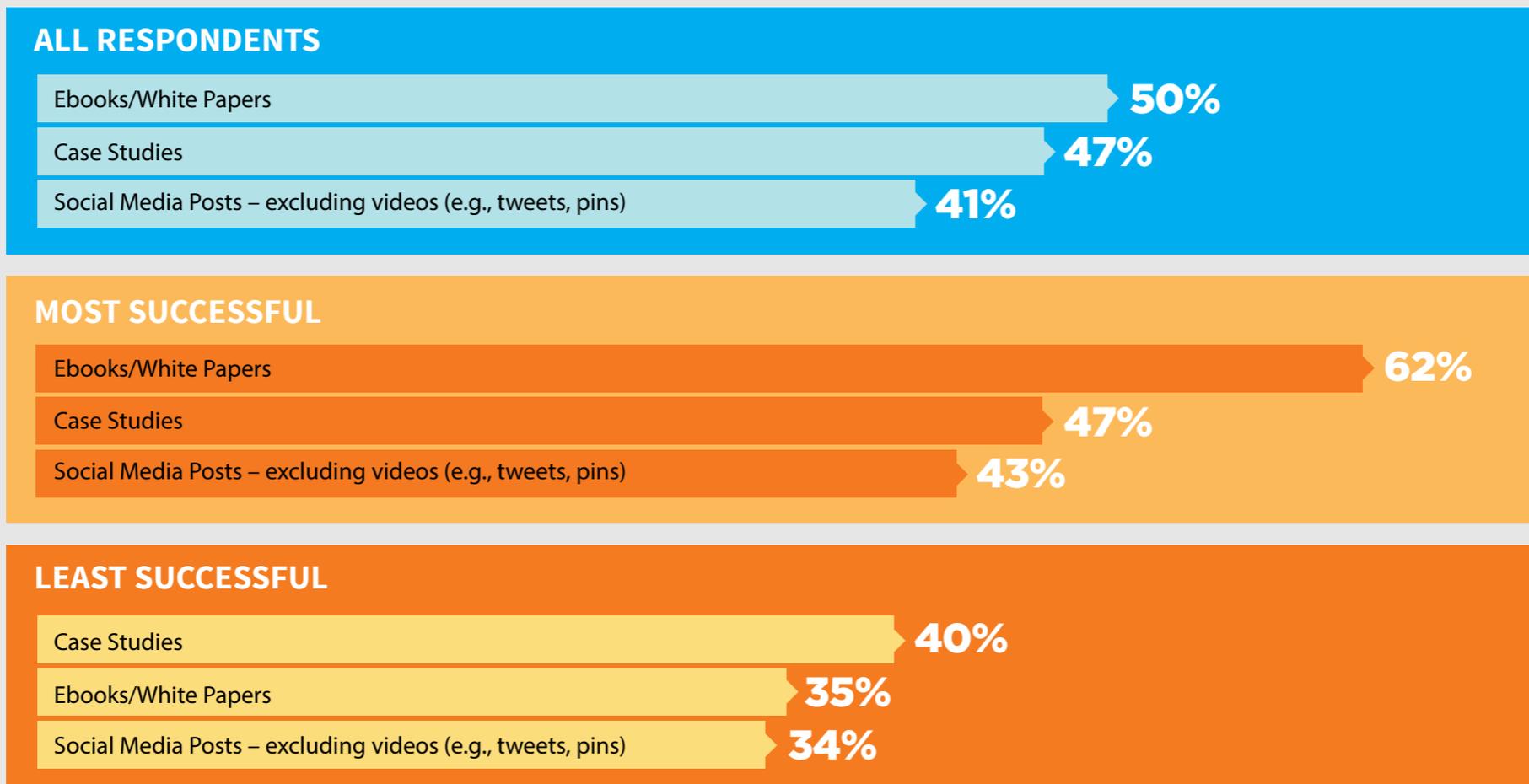
2018 B2B Content Marketing Trends—North America: Content Marketing Institute/MarketingProfs

Base = B2B content marketers. Aided list; multiple responses permitted.

## CONTENT CREATION & DISTRIBUTION

Of the content marketing types you use, which three are the most effective at helping your organization achieve specific objectives?

### Top 3 Most Effective Types of Content B2B Marketers Use for Content Marketing Purposes

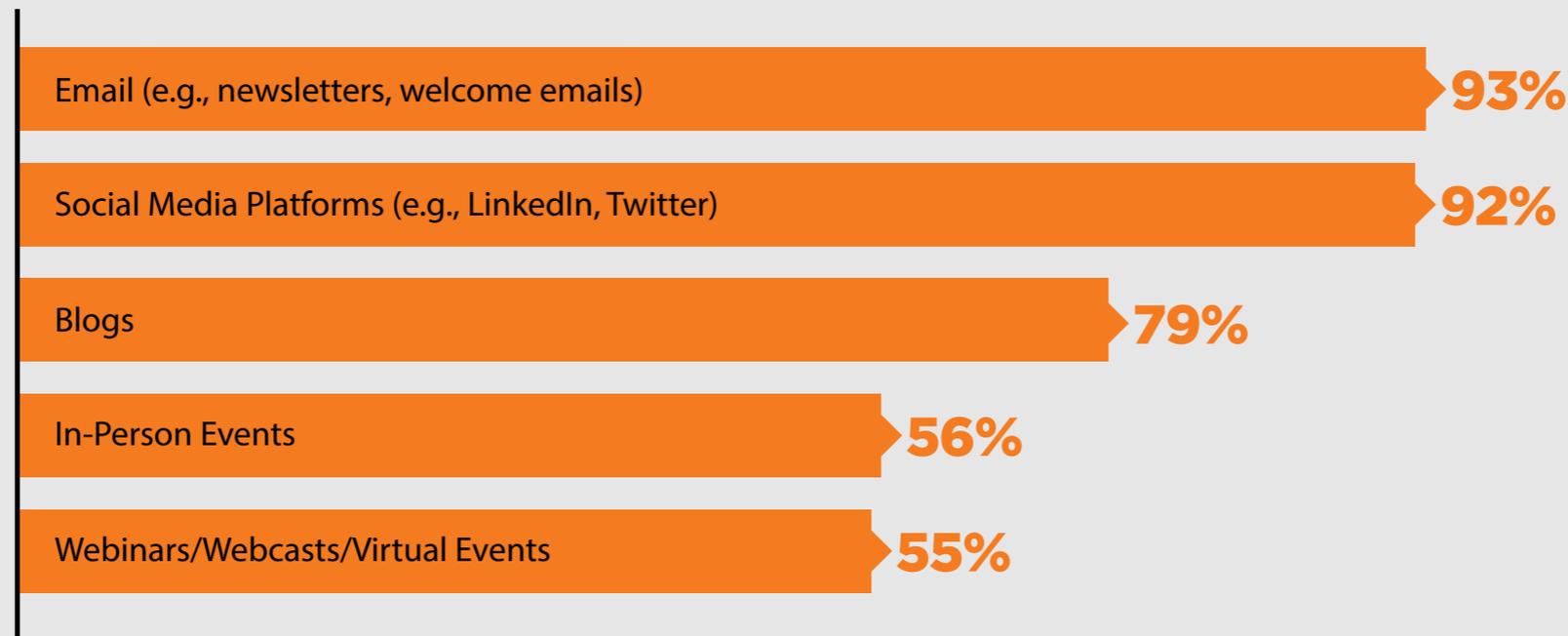


2018 B2B Content Marketing Trends—North America: Content Marketing Institute/MarketingProfs

Base = B2B content marketers who use the types listed. Maximum of three responses permitted. Results shown based on response frequencies.

# Which formats does your organization use to distribute content for content marketing purposes?

## Formats B2B Marketers Use to Distribute Content for Content Marketing Purposes (Top 5)



### Other formats used:

Separate Content Hubs (e.g., microsites, resource centers) (27%); Print Magazines (24%); Print (other than magazines) (23%); Digital Magazines (21%); Online Presentations (21%); and Other (4%).

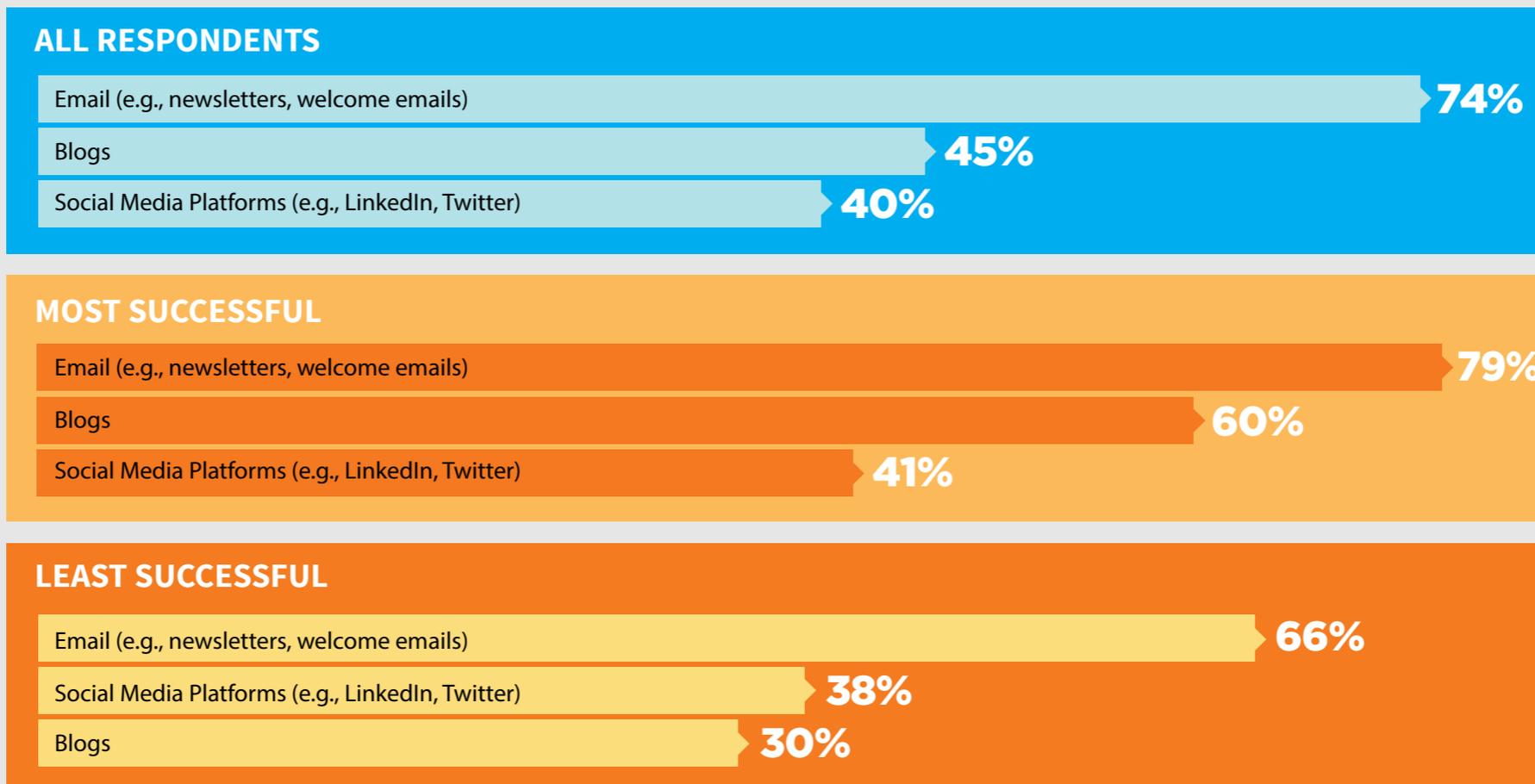
### AVERAGE NUMBER USED:

Most Successful ..... 5  
All Respondents ..... 5  
Least Successful ..... 4

## CONTENT CREATION & DISTRIBUTION

Of the formats you use to distribute content, which three are the most effective at helping your organization achieve specific objectives?

### Top 3 Most Effective Formats B2B Marketers Use to Distribute Content for Content Marketing Purposes

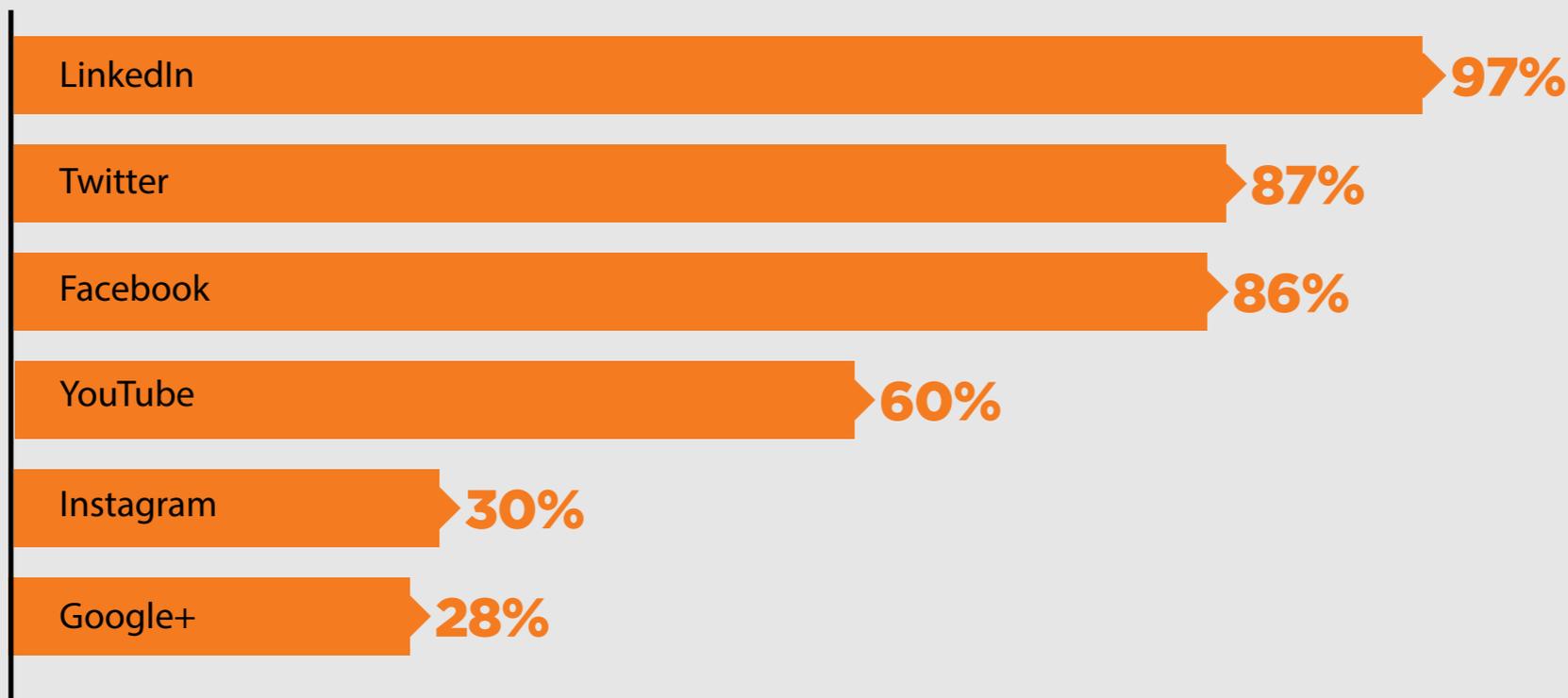


2018 B2B Content Marketing Trends—North America: Content Marketing Institute/MarketingProfs

Base = B2B content marketers who use the formats listed. Maximum of three responses permitted. Results shown based on response frequencies.

# Which social media platforms does your organization use as part of its content marketing efforts?

## Social Media Platforms B2B Marketers Use for Content Marketing Purposes (Top 6)



**Other social media platforms used:** SlideShare (19%); Pinterest (12%); Medium (6%); Snapchat (3%); and Other (4%).

**AVERAGE NUMBER USED:**

Most Successful ..... 5  
All Respondents ..... 5  
Least Successful ..... 4

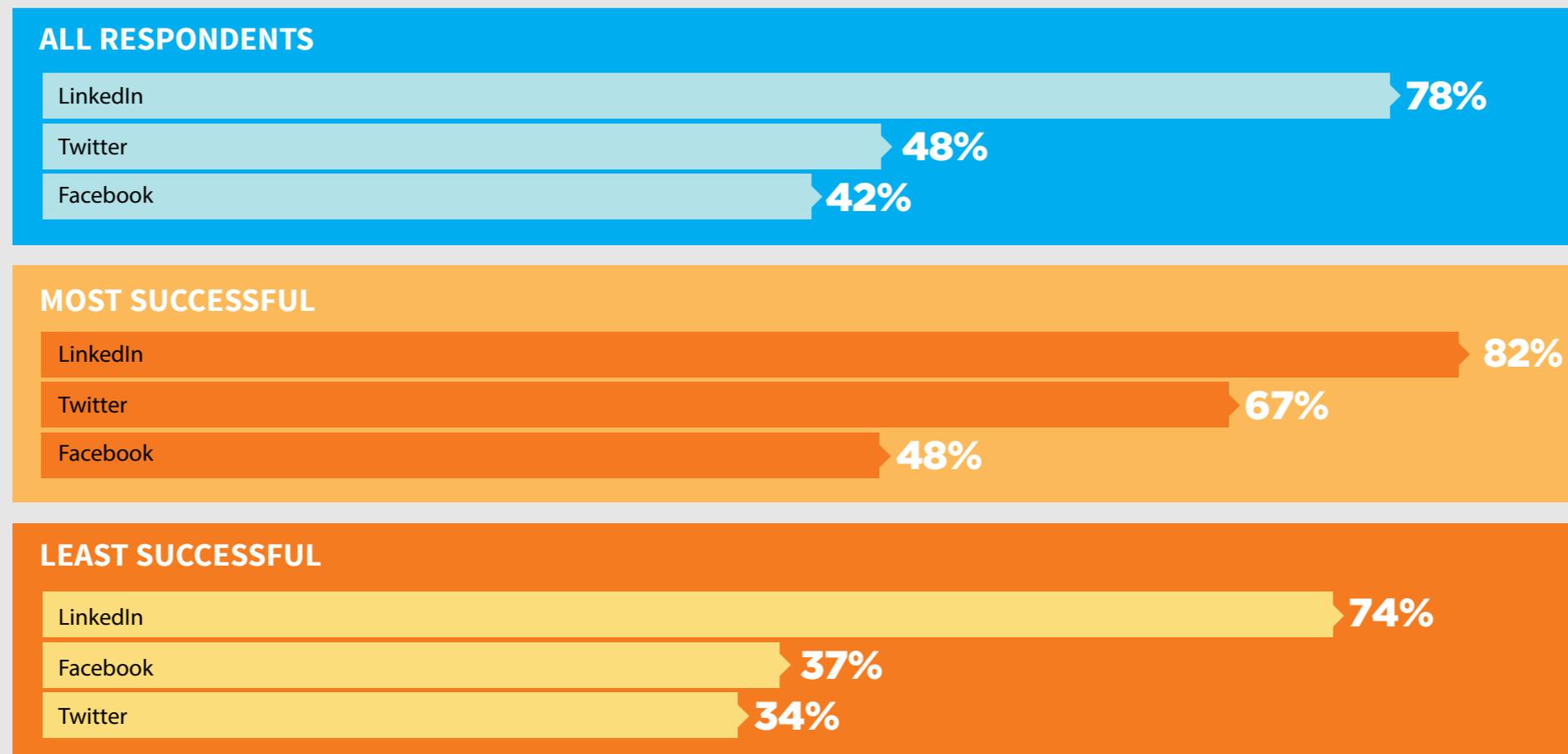
2018 B2B Content Marketing Trends—North America: Content Marketing Institute/MarketingProfs

Base = B2B content marketers who use social media platforms to distribute content.  
Aided list; multiple responses permitted.

## CONTENT CREATION & DISTRIBUTION

Of the social media platforms you use, which three are the most effective at helping your organization achieve specific objectives?

### Top 3 Most Effective Social Media Platforms B2B Marketers Use for Content Marketing Purposes

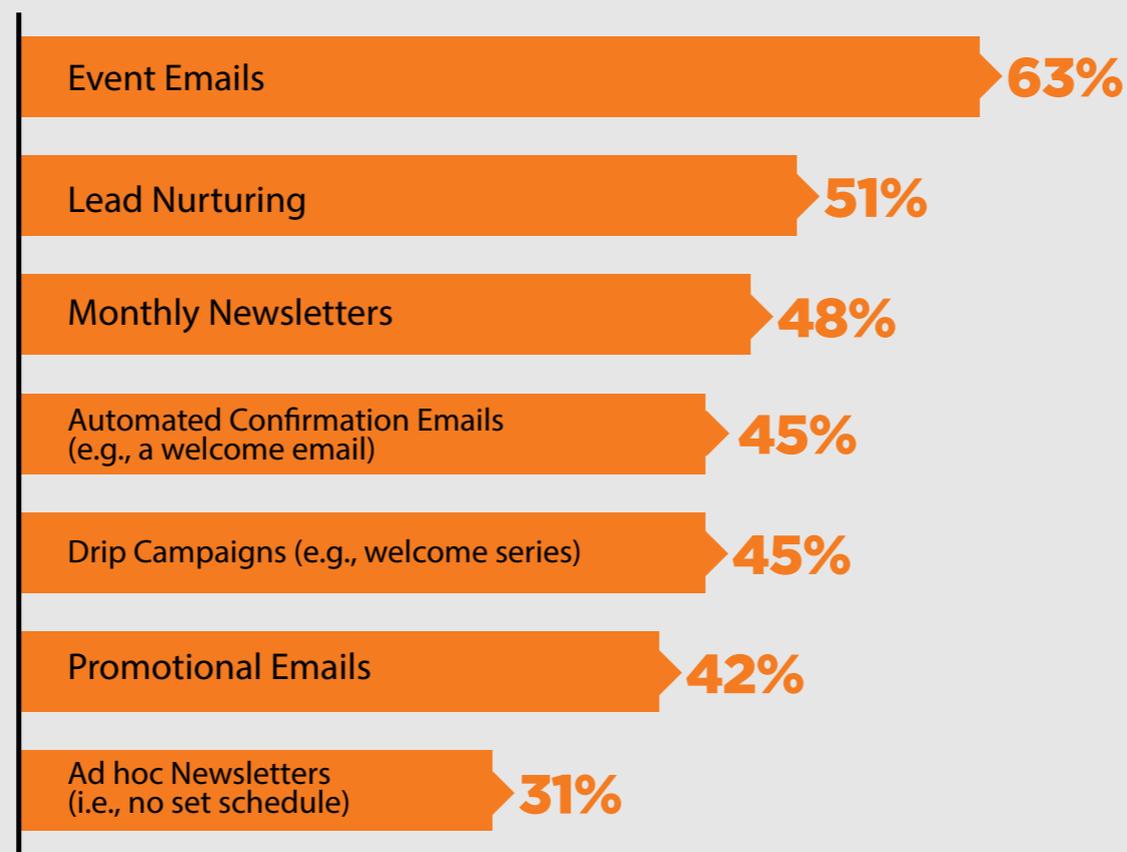


2018 B2B Content Marketing Trends—North America: Content Marketing Institute/MarketingProfs

Base = B2B content marketers who use the social media platforms listed. Maximum of three responses permitted. Results shown based on response frequencies.

# Which types of email does your organization use as part of its content marketing efforts?

## Types of Email B2B Marketers Use for Content Marketing Purposes (Top 7)



### Other types of email used:

Partnership Emails (16%); Biweekly Newsletters (every other week) (13%); Weekly Newsletters (11%); Daily Newsletters (3%); and Other (8%).

### AVERAGE NUMBER USED:

Most Successful ..... 4  
All Respondents ..... 4  
Least Successful ..... 3

2018 B2B Content Marketing Trends—North America: Content Marketing Institute/MarketingProfs

Base = B2B content marketers who use email to distribute content for content marketing purposes. Aided list; multiple responses permitted.

# GOALS & METRICS



19% of respondents rated their organizations as doing an excellent/very good job of aligning metrics with content marketing goals; among the most successful, 54% rated their efforts as excellent/very good.



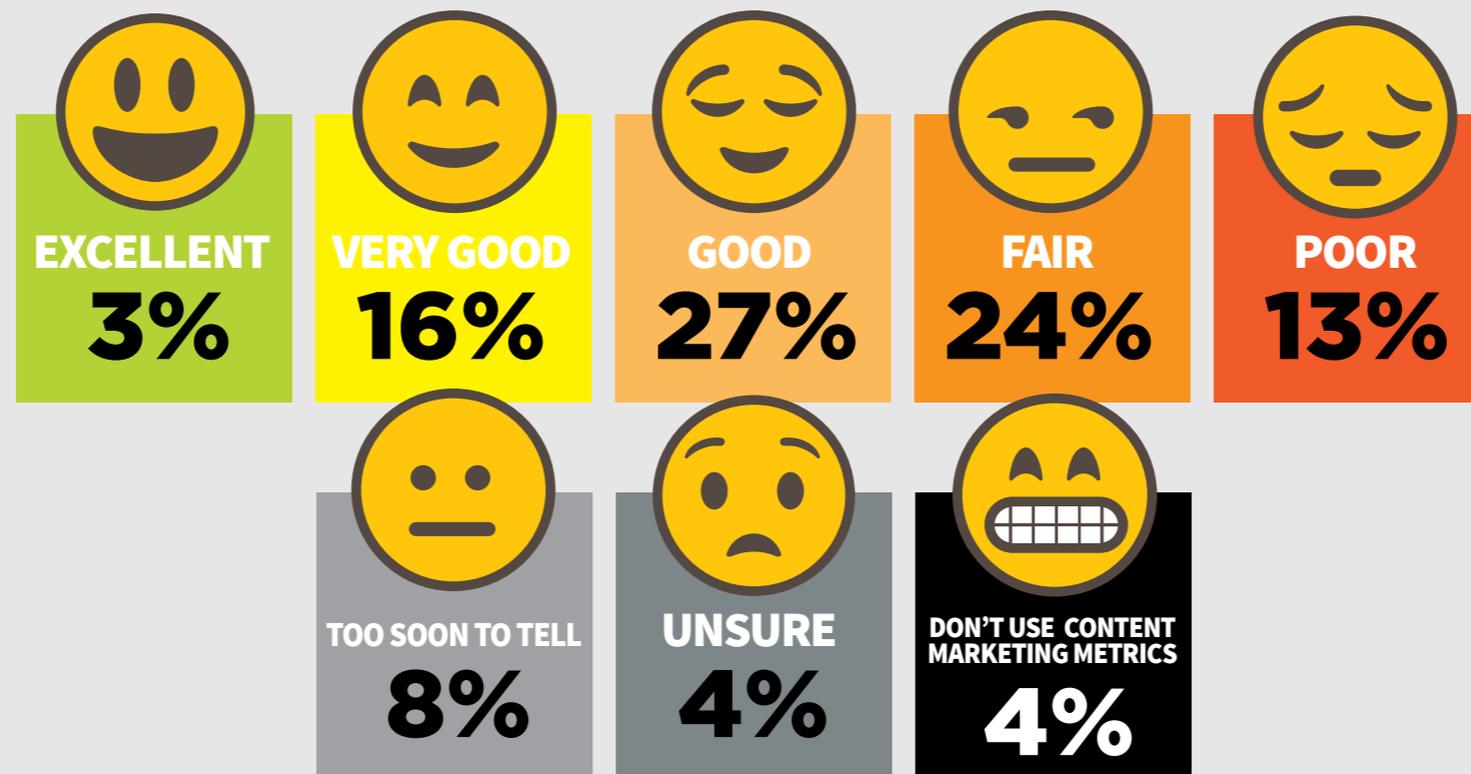
Respondents who do not measure content marketing ROI (47%) cited the top two reasons as “no formal justification required” and “we need an easier way to do this.”



More than 70% of respondents agreed they can demonstrate, with metrics, how content marketing has increased audience engagement and their number of leads. They are less likely to be able to show how content marketing has increased sales (51%) and decreased the cost of customer acquisition (25%).

What type of job does your organization do in terms of aligning metrics with content marketing goals (i.e., are you measuring the “right things”)?

### How B2B Marketers Rate Alignment of Their Metrics and Content Marketing Goals

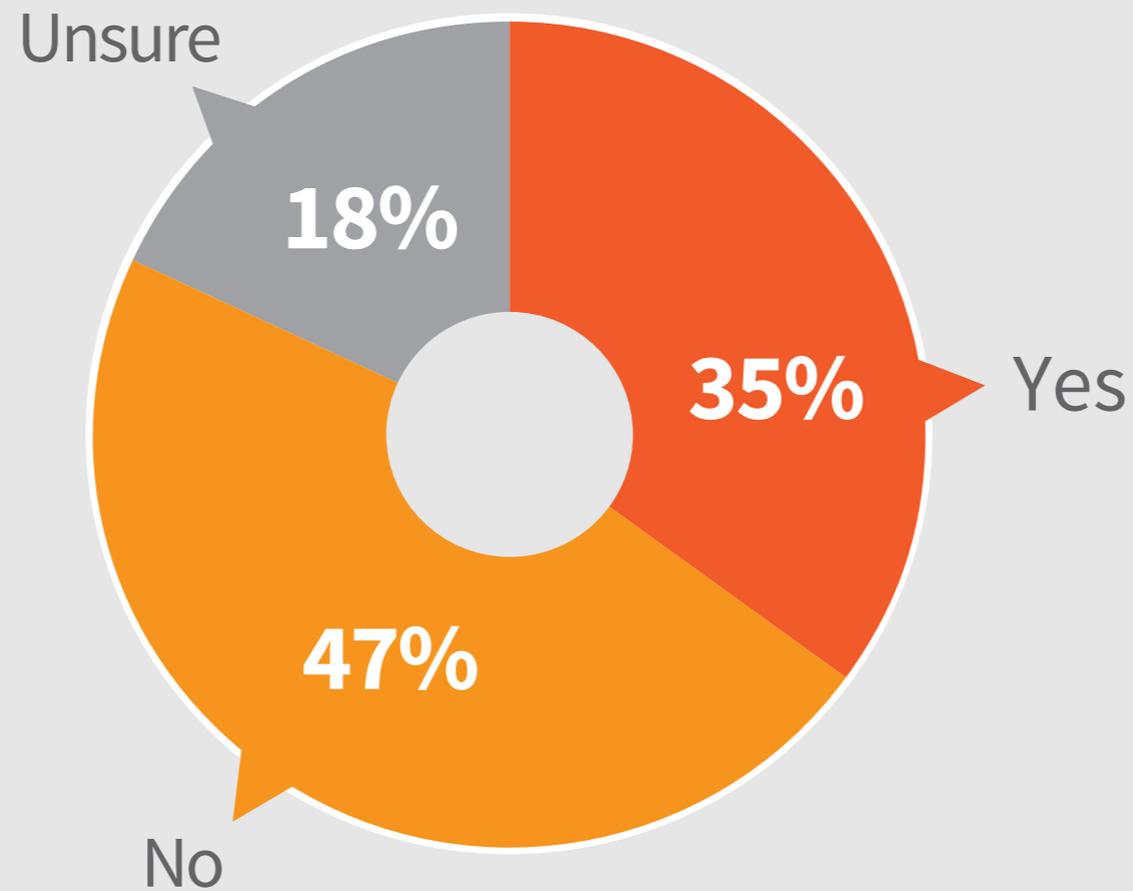


2018 B2B Content Marketing Trends—North America: Content Marketing Institute/MarketingProfs

Base: B2B content marketers; aided list.

# Does your organization measure the return on investment (ROI) of its content marketing efforts?

## Percentage of B2B Marketers Who Measure Content Marketing ROI

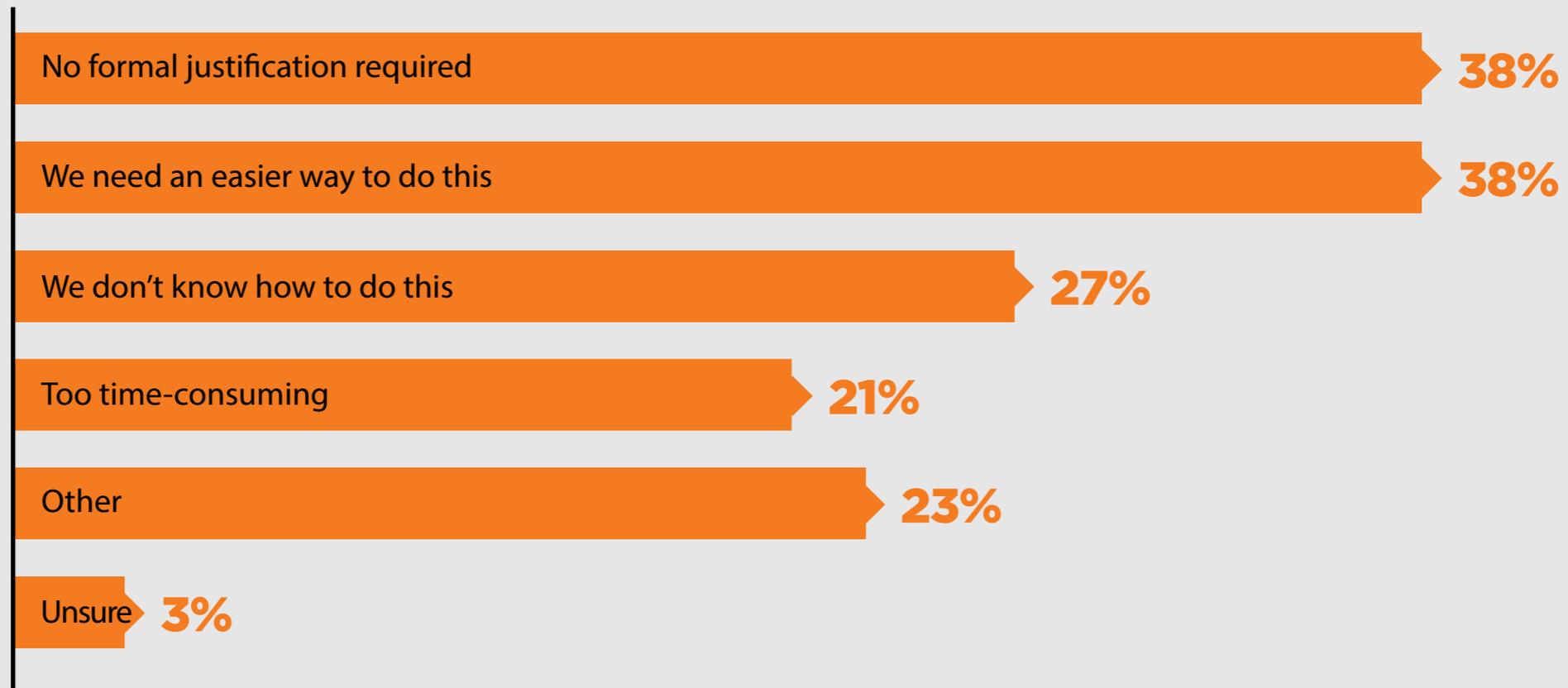


2018 B2B Content Marketing Trends—North America: Content Marketing Institute/MarketingProfs

Base: B2B content marketers; aided list.

# Why doesn't your organization measure the return on investment (ROI) of its content marketing efforts?

## Why B2B Marketers Don't Measure Content Marketing ROI



2018 B2B Content Marketing Trends—North America: Content Marketing Institute/MarketingProfs

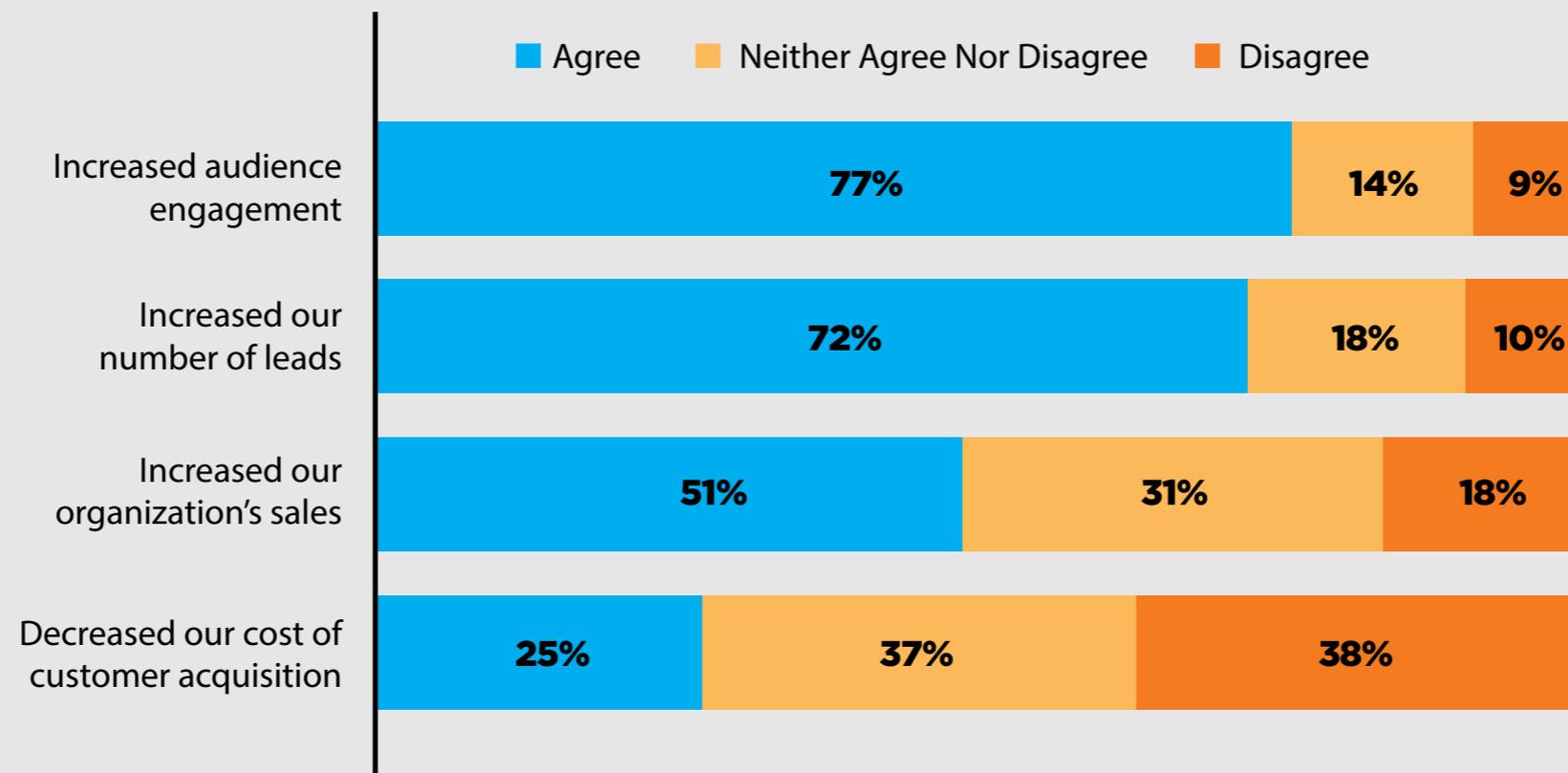
Base: B2B content marketers whose organizations do not measure content marketing ROI. Aided list; multiple responses permitted.

## GOALS & METRICS

Indicate your level of agreement with each statement concerning the content marketing metrics used in your organization.

### B2B Marketers' Metrics Agreement Statements

*I/my team can demonstrate how content marketing has...*



2018 B2B Content Marketing Trends—North America: Content Marketing Institute/MarketingProfs

Base = B2B content marketers who use metrics to determine content marketing results. Aided list.

# BUDGETS & SPENDING



The average percentage of total marketing budget spent on content marketing is 26% (among all respondents); the most successful, however, spend 40%, while the least successful spend 14%.



As content marketing maturity grows, organizations tend to spend more of their total marketing budget on content marketing. Those in the:

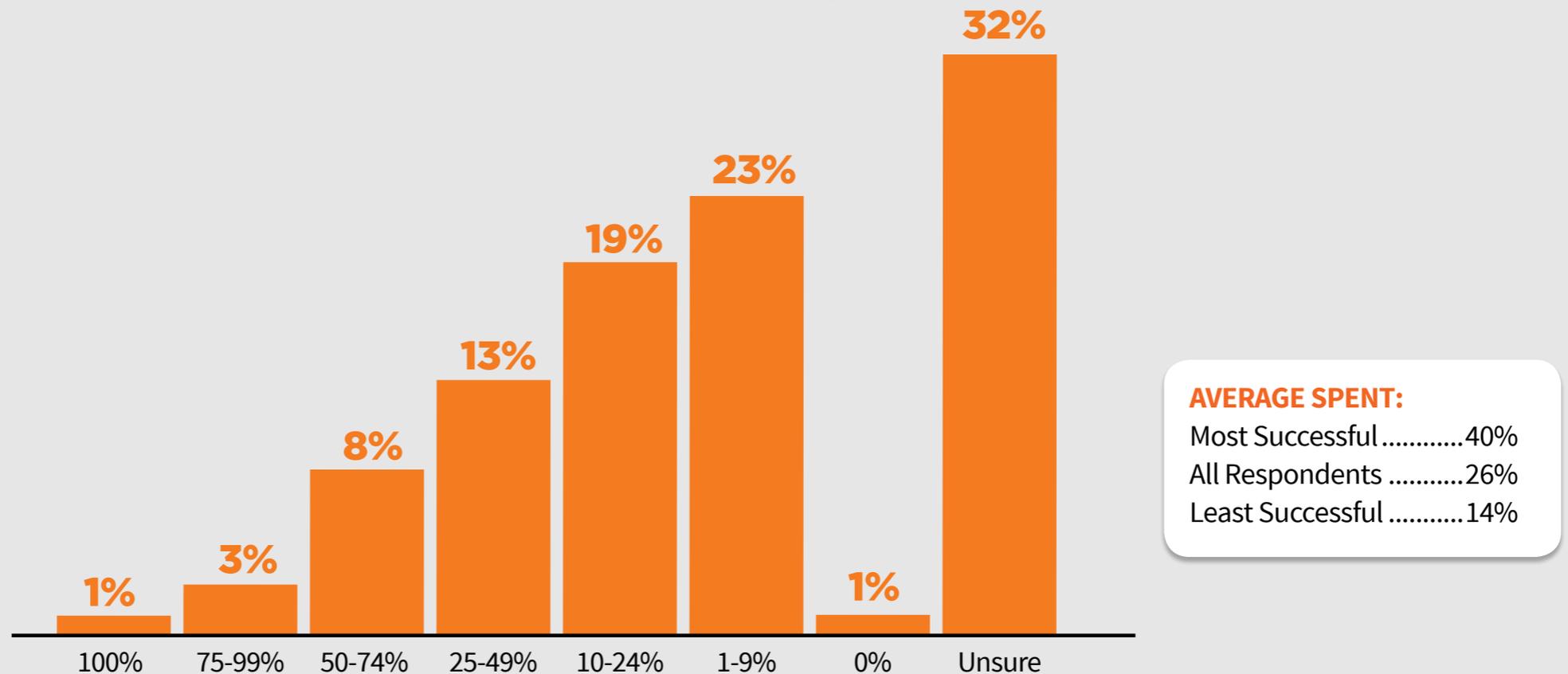
- Young/first steps phase spend 19%
- Adolescent phase spend 25%
- Sophisticated/mature phase spend 33%.



38% of all respondents expect their content marketing budget to increase in the next 12 months; that figure is nearly the same percentage reported by the most successful and the least successful.

Approximately what percentage of your organization's total marketing budget (not including staff) is spent on content marketing?

### Percentage of Total Marketing Budget Spent on B2B Content Marketing

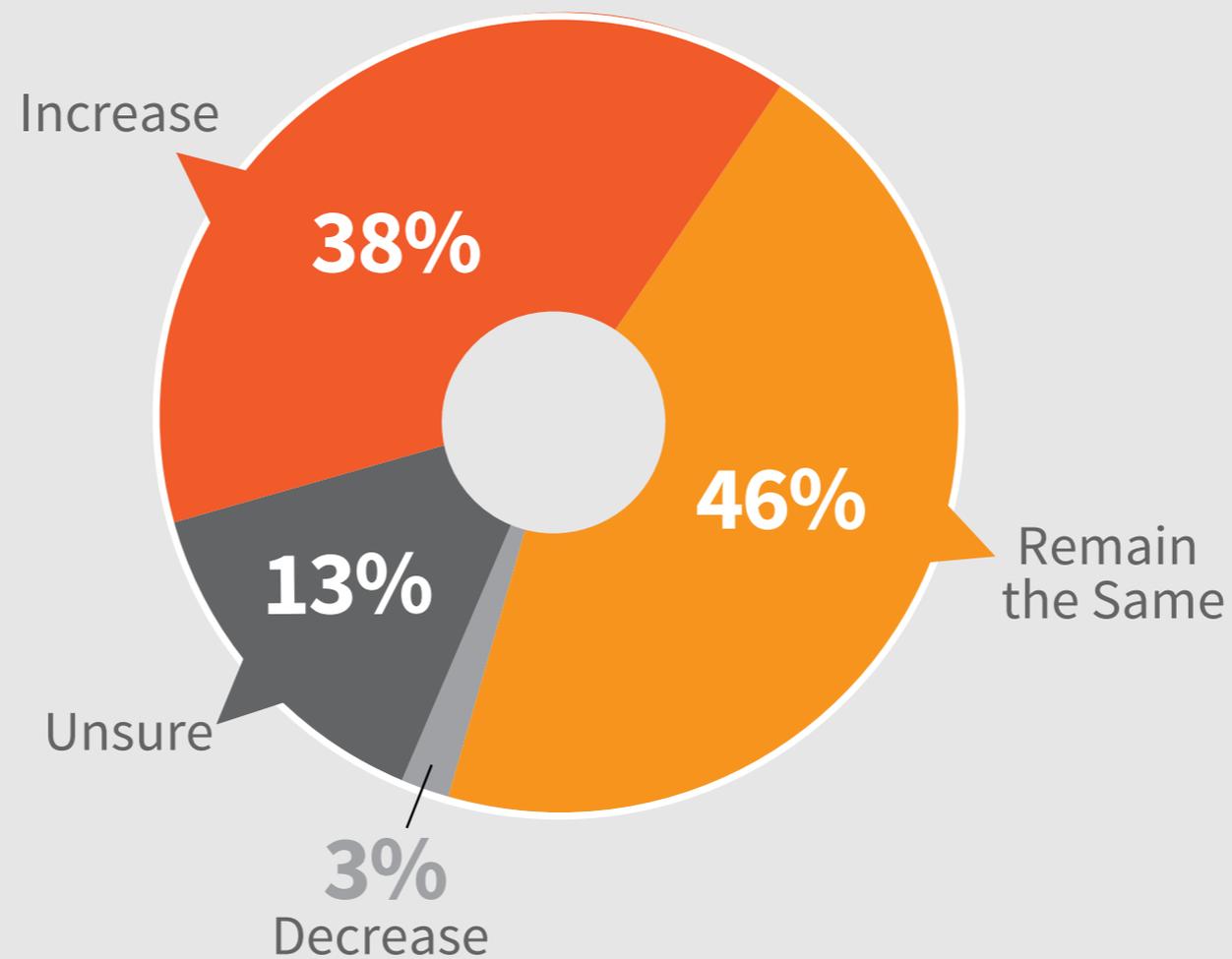


2018 B2B Content Marketing Trends—North America: Content Marketing Institute/MarketingProfs

Base = B2B content marketers; aided list.

# How do you expect your organization's content marketing budget to change in the next 12 months?

## B2B Content Marketing Spending (Over Next 12 Months)



2018 B2B Content Marketing Trends—North America: Content Marketing Institute/MarketingProfs

Base = B2B content marketers; aided list.

# METHODOLOGY/DEMOGRAPHICS

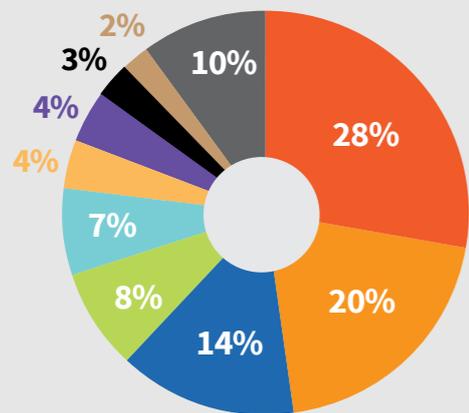
B2B Content Marketing 2018: Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends—North America was produced by **Content Marketing Institute** and **MarketingProfs** and sponsored by **Brightcove**.

The eighth annual content marketing survey, from which the results of this report were generated, was mailed electronically to a sample of marketers using lists from Content Marketing Institute, MarketingProfs, The Association for Data-driven Marketing & Advertising (ADMA), WTWH Media, and Technology for Marketing (TFM).

A total of 2,190 recipients from around the globe—representing a full range of industries, functional areas, and company sizes—responded to the survey during June and July 2017. This report presents the findings from the 870 respondents who indicated their organization is for-profit in North America, primarily selling products/services to businesses (B2B).

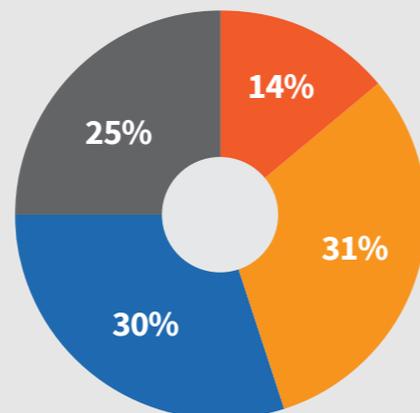
*Note: The B2B content marketers referred to in the base lines (and bullet points) in this report are the survey respondents who indicated their organization uses content marketing.*

## B2B Industry Classification



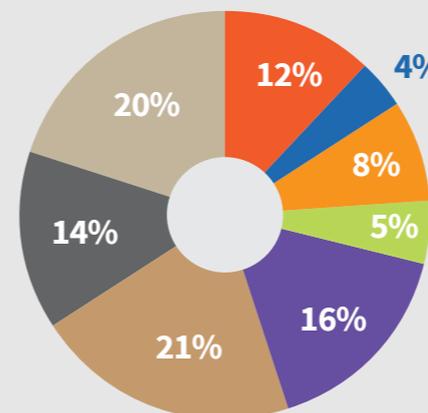
- Technology
- Agency (Advertising, Digital Marketing, Content Marketing, PR, Marcom)
- Manufacturing
- Professional Services
- Consulting
- Financial Services
- Publishing/Media
- Healthcare/Pharmaceuticals
- Insurance
- Other

## Size of B2B Company (by Employees)



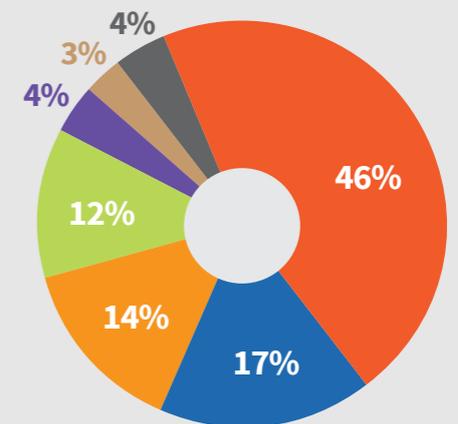
- Micro (Fewer than 10 Employees)
- Small (10-99 Employees)
- Midsize (100-999 Employees)
- Large (1,000+ Employees)

## B2B Organization 2016 Total Annual Revenue



- More than \$1 Billion
- \$500,000,001 - \$1 Billion
- \$100,000,001 - \$500,000,000
- \$50,000,001 - \$100,000,000
- \$10,000,001 - \$50,000,000
- \$1,000,000 - \$10,000,000
- Less than \$1,000,000
- Unsure

## B2B Job Title/Function



- Marketing/Advertising/Communications/PR Management
- Content Creation/Management
- Corporate Management (Owner/President, CEO, CMO)
- Marketing - Staff/Support
- General Management (GM, VP)
- Sales and Business Management
- Other

2018 B2B Content Marketing Trends—North America: Content Marketing Institute/MarketingProfs

## ABOUT

*Content Marketing Institute and MarketingProfs thank all the survey respondents and survey distribution partners who made this research possible.*

### About Content Marketing Institute (CMI)

**Content Marketing Institute** is the leading global content marketing education and training organization, teaching enterprise brands how to attract and retain customers through compelling, multichannel storytelling. CMI's **Content Marketing World** event, the largest content marketing-focused event, is held every September in Cleveland, Ohio, USA, and the **Intelligent Content Conference** event is held every spring. CMI publishes the bi-monthly magazine **Chief Content Officer**, and provides strategic consulting and content marketing research for some of the best-known brands in the world. Watch this [video](#) to learn more about CMI. To view all research and subscribe to our emails, visit [www.contentmarketinginstitute.com](http://www.contentmarketinginstitute.com).

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