DemandGen Report

2022

BENCHMARK SURVEY

As ABM Programs Mature, Practitioners Are Building Stronger Relationships & Generating Better ROI

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ABM gets better with age — but unfortunately, practitioners don't have the luxury of pouring it into an oak barrel for a couple decades to let it mature. *Demand Gen Report's* "2022 ABM Benchmark Survey" uncovered that 59% of experienced practitioners (those with ABM programs more than a year old) indicated their ABM programs are meeting or greatly exceeding their expectations, while only 45% of novices (those with ABM programs less than one year old) could say the same.

There's a definite correlation between mature ABM programs and more success. Specifically, experienced practitioners outpaced novices in three key categories:

- Aligned sales and marketing teams (70% versus 44%);
- Faster sales cycles (31% versus 24%); and
- Stronger, more trustworthy relationships with accounts (48% versus 39%).

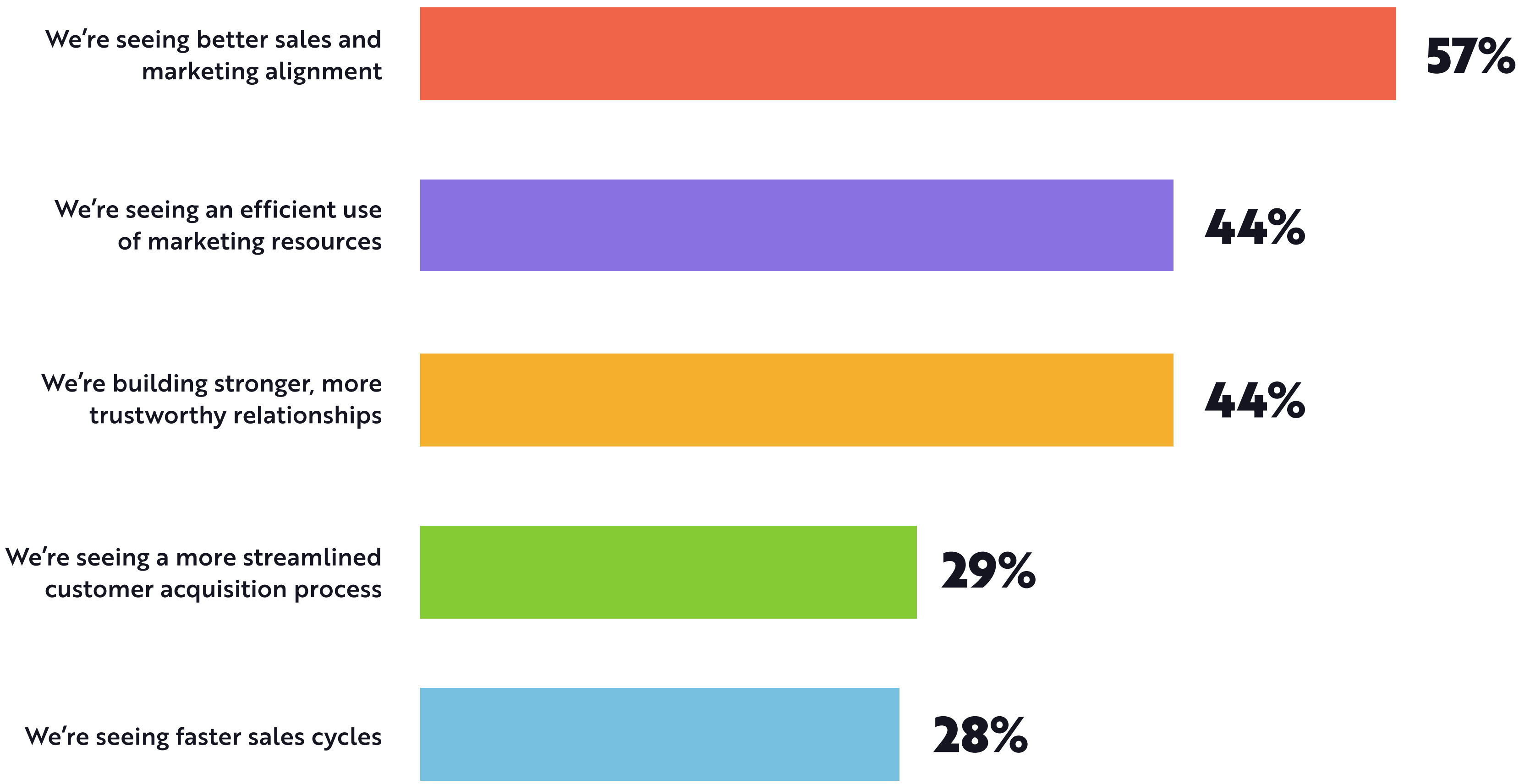
It's clear that marketers who are committed to their ABM programs and willing to make strategic investments are the ones who see the most success. Throughout this survey, we'll get a pulse on the current state of ABM and dissect key findings, such as:

- A deep dive into the strategies and technologies ABM marketers are leveraging;
- The shift toward more targeted, personalized assets;
- How marketers are meeting buyers' demands for self-service journeys; and
- Primary measurement metrics.

HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH THE IMPACT YOUR ABM EFFORTS ARE HAVING ON YOUR ORGANIZATION?

Meeting organizational expectations	35%
Exceeding organizational expectations	31%
Underperforming organizational expectations	18%
Greatly exceeding organizational expectations	16%

HOW ARE YOUR ABM INITIATIVES POSITIVELY IMPACTING YOUR BUSINESS?



HARNESSING TECHNOLOGY & DEDICATED PLATFORMS

There are several strategies marketers can implement when orchestrating ABM campaigns. In terms of the most popular tactics practitioners are leveraging, the survey uncovered:

- 45% are in the early stages and testing their ABM program;
- 43% are practicing ABM lite, or a named account model (1:few);
- 42% are practicing strategic ABM, or a large account model (1:1);
- 40% are using their current tech stack (CRM, MAP, etc.) to target certain accounts;
- 37% practice programmatic ABM (1:many); and
- 27% have a dedicated ABM platform integrated into their tech stack to streamline efforts.

Though dedicated ABM platforms were at the bottom of the pile, it doesn't mean they aren't effective — it just means more practitioners are in the early stages of implementing them. Specifically, 34% of experienced ABM-ers leveraged a dedicated platform, compared to just 20% of novices. With a dedicated platform, practitioners are also getting better results: 40% of those with dedicated platforms say their ABM programs are meeting their expectations, whereas only 34% without one agreed.

No matter what tactics practitioners apply, ABM works best when it's fueled by a comprehensive tech stack. To that end, the technologies that practitioners use remained steady year-over-year. While the top five tools remained the same as **last year's findings**, some of the tech switched places:

- **CRM** retained the top spot, coming in at 76% this year;
- **Marketing automation** held its No. 2 spot with 58% of the vote;
- **Measurement and reporting tools** (52%) flipped with **intent monitoring tools**, which slipped to the fourth place with 45%; and
- **Account-based advertising tools** (a newcomer to the category) came in at 44% (usurping web and content personalization tools).

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR CURRENT ABM INITIATIVES?

WHICH BEST DESCRIBES YOUR CURRENT MARKETING OPERATIONS?

We have integrated our demand gen and ABM processes to streamline our marketing — **45%**

We prioritize traditional demand gen over our ABM efforts — **36%**

We prioritize ABM efforts over our traditional demand gen efforts — **19%**

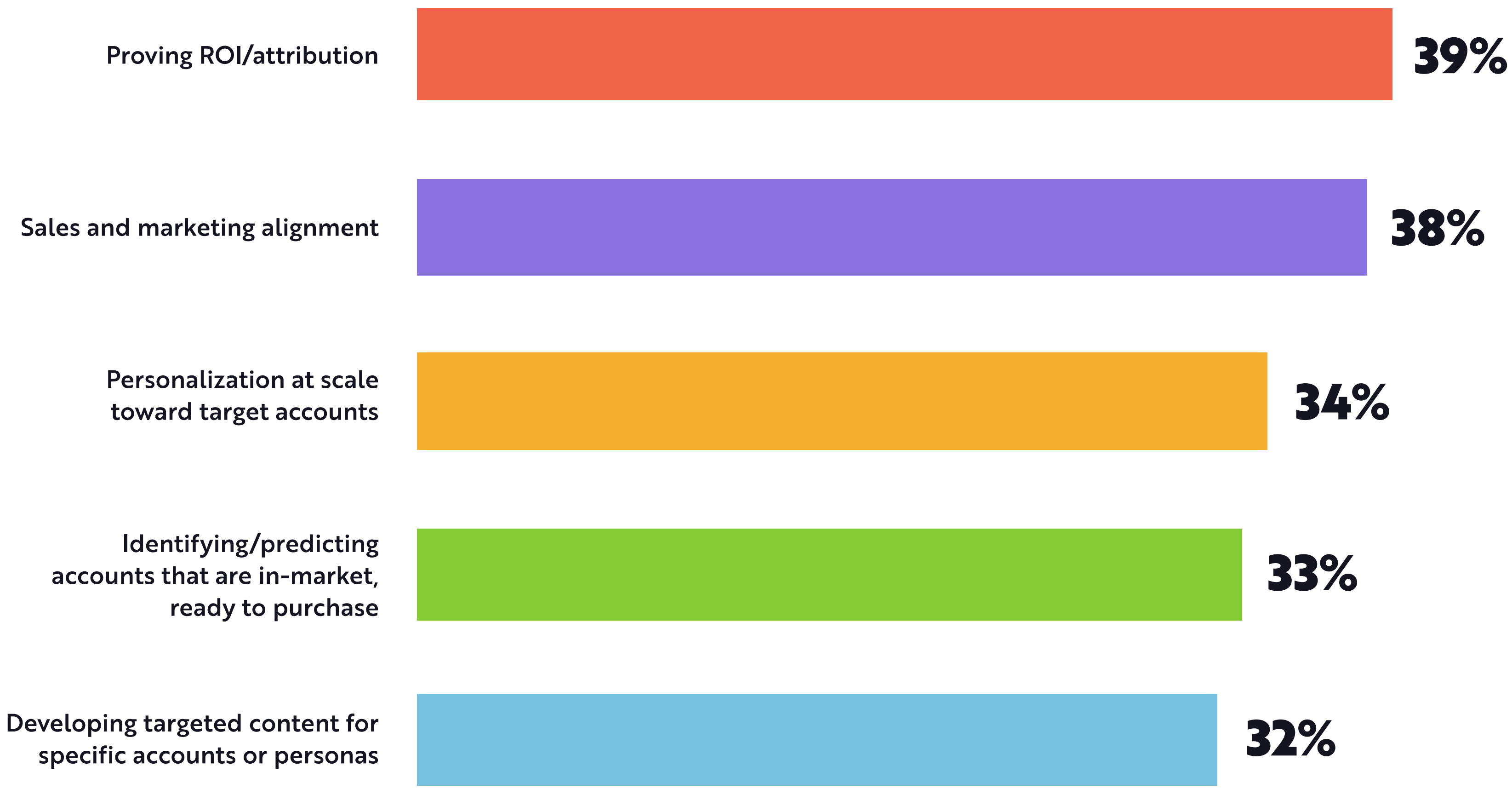
But don't count personalization out. When practitioners listed their top challenges, personalization at scale plummeted from 46% to 34% — indicating marketers are getting a firmer handle on personalization strategies. In fact, the survey found that organizations are more experienced across the board regarding the top challenges: Proving ROI/attribution saw a slight decrease from 43% in 2021 to 39%, lack of internal resources fell from 32% to 26% and scaling existing efforts saw a steep decline, dropping from 35% to 21%.

However, it appears that practitioners still haven't mastered sales and marketing alignment, as the category had a slight uptick in difficulty: 38% of respondents indicated it as a problem, compared to 36% last year. However, the alignment issue impacts novices the most: While 41% of beginners considered it a challenge, just over one-third (35%) of experienced respondents indicated it as a pain point.

Rounding out the top 10 challenges for practitioners are:

- Identifying/predicting accounts that are in-market and ready to purchase (33%);
- Developing targeted content for specific accounts or personas (32%);
- Providing sales with the right content/messaging for target accounts (29%);
- Data enrichment (29%); and
- Lack of budget (28%).

WHAT ARE YOUR BIGGEST ABM-RELATED CHALLENGES? (SELECT ALL THAT APPLY)



UNCOVERING TARGET ACCOUNTS & LEVERAGING DATA TO INFORM CAMPAIGNS

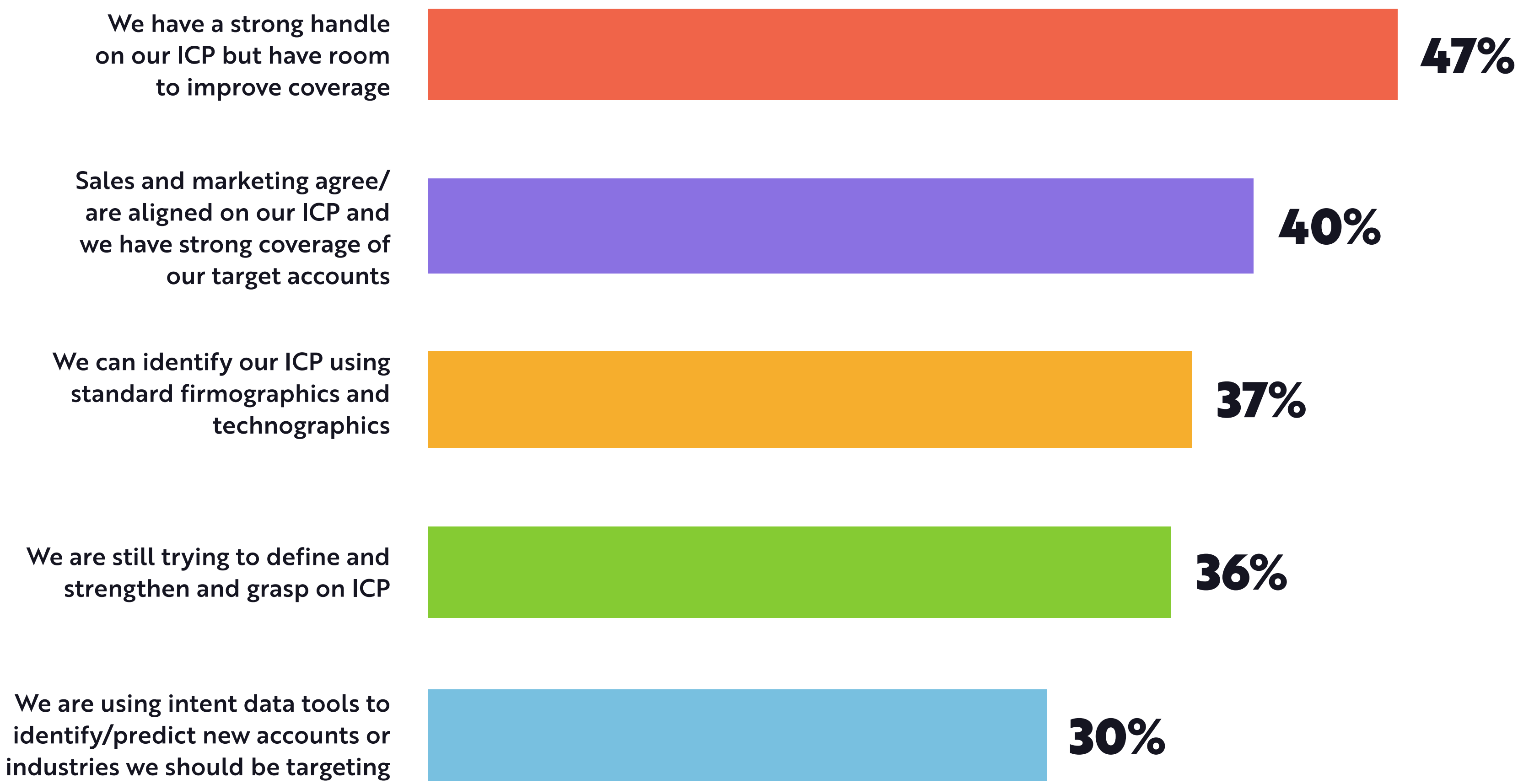
Over on the account selection side, respondents indicated that when thinking about which accounts to include in their existing or potential ABM program, they:

- Have a strong handle on their ICP but have room to improve coverage (47%);
- Agree/are aligned on their ICP across sales and marketing, and have strong coverage of their target accounts (40%);
- Can identify their ICP using standard firmographics and technographics (37%);
- Are still trying to define, strengthen and grasp ICP (36%); and
- Use intent data tools to identify/predict new accounts or industries they should be targeting (30%).

While an equal number of novices and mature practitioners pointed to the use of intent as a key component of their ABM, more experienced practitioners outperformed novices in sales and marketing alignment/strong coverage (43% versus 37%) and leverage firmographics and technographics (42% versus 32%).

Drilling down into the specific types of data practitioners use, intent/behavioral data brought in 60% of the vote. In a testament to the data set's power, the survey found that intent is the fuel of more mature (and successful) ABM strategies: While 55% of novice practitioners indicated they use intent/behavioral data, two-thirds (66%) of experienced marketers revealed they rely on intent/behavioral signals.

WHEN THINKING ABOUT WHICH ACCOUNTS TO INCLUDE IN YOUR EXISTING OR POTENTIAL ABM PROGRAM:



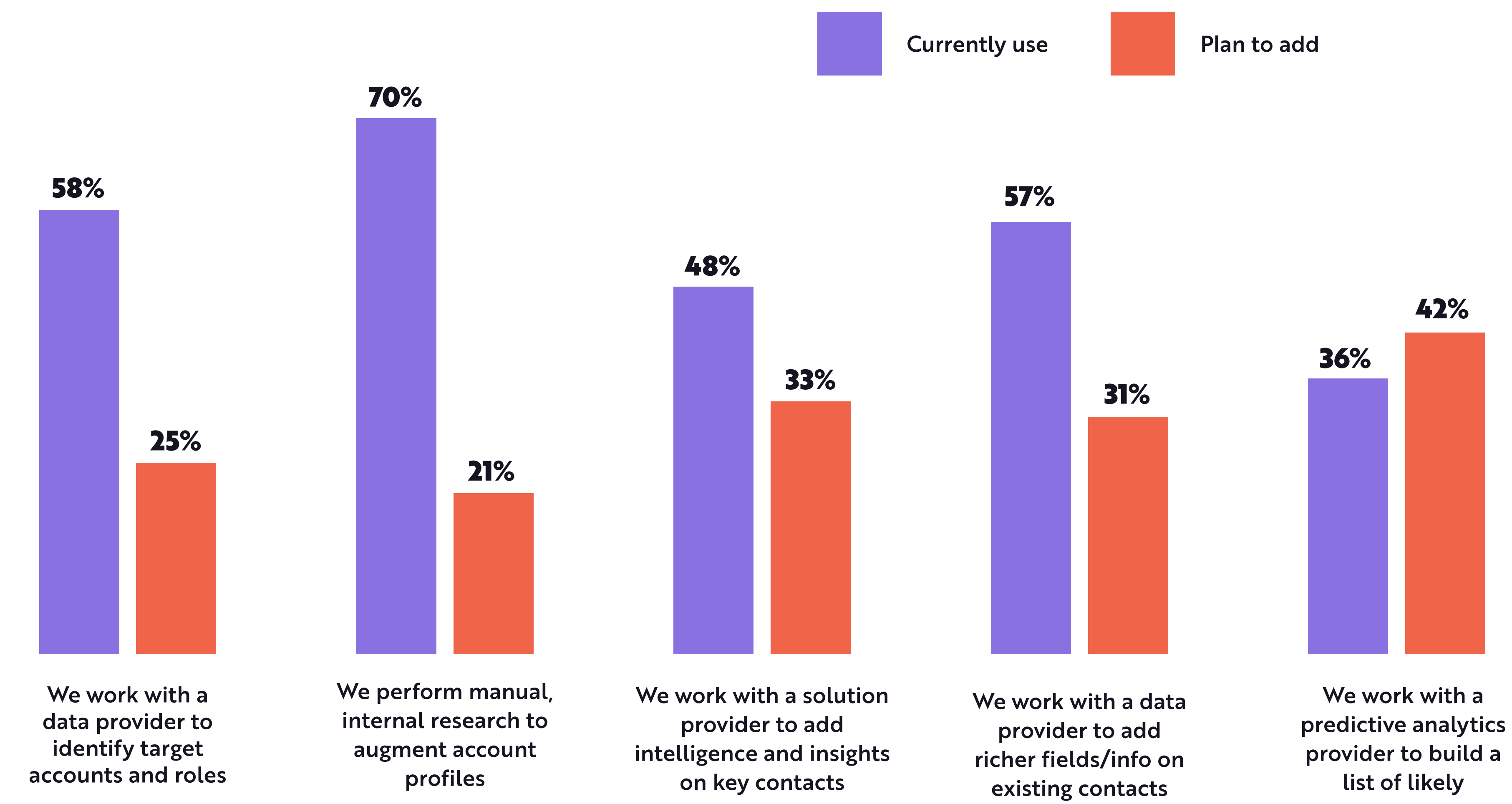
Altogether, the other most popular data sets included:

- Sales-team selected (74% currently use, 18% plan to implement);
- Firmographic (55% currently use, 24% plan to implement);
- Predictive (47% currently use, 39% plan to implement); and
- Technographic (45% currently use, 38% plan to implement).

Unfortunately, a high percentage of respondents still perform manual, internal research to augment account profiles. However, it's clear that mature ABM-ers are more aware of the downsides: Just 16% of experienced practitioners indicated they plan to add manual processes, compared to a quarter (25%) of novices.

Luckily, the use of partners is growing as marketers realize the benefits of teaming up with agencies and consultants. This year, organizations are working with data providers to identify target roles and titles (58%) and add richer fields/information on existing contacts (57%). In fact, adding richer fields/information increased in priority compared to last year.

PLEASE SHARE HOW YOU CURRENTLY, OR PLAN TO, AUGMENT YOUR CONTACT LIST TO OPTIMIZE YOUR REACH AND CAMPAIGNS:



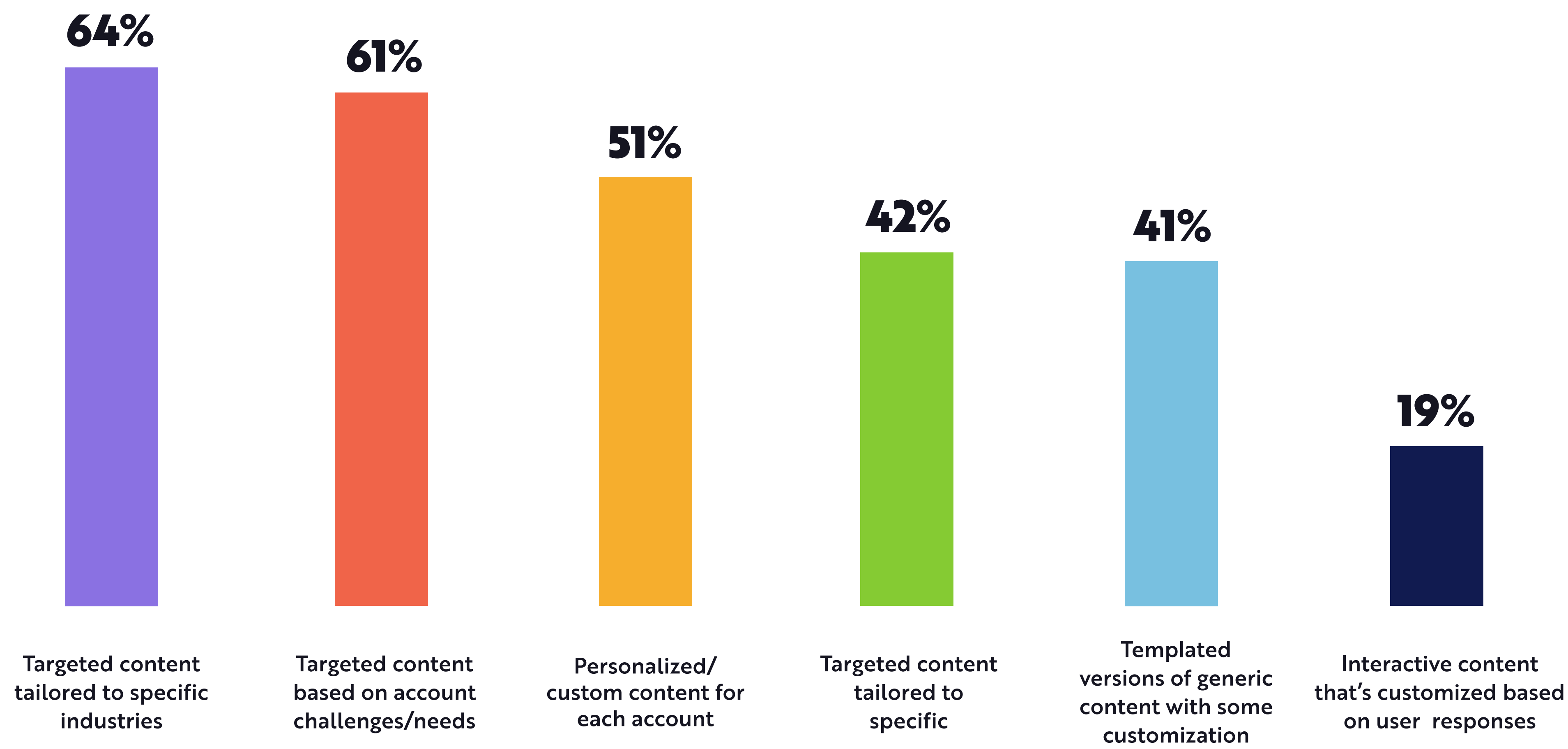
REFINING CONTENT STRATEGIES TO BETTER MEET PERSONALIZATION & DELIVERY DEMANDS

Shifting gears to messaging and content, the research found that organizations are hearing prospect and customer demands for highly targeted and personalized content. When asked what type of content they're leveraging in their ABM outreach, the respondents indicated:

- Targeted content tailored to specific industries (64%);
- Targeted content based on account challenges/needs (61%);
- Personalized/custom content for each account (51%);
- Targeted content tailored to specific roles (42%);
- Templated versions of generic content that is customized based on user responses (19%); and
- Interactive content that's customized based on user responses (19%).

It's promising that practitioners are realizing the value of going beyond just a basic, industry-level understanding of accounts' needs and getting more granular around the target's specific pain points. In last year's survey, only 56% of respondents provided industry-specific messaging. Strengthening the targeting and personalization angle, the research also found that practitioners are refining the targeting process and demonstrating a deeper understanding of specific account pain points.

WHAT TYPE OF MESSAGING OR CONTENT ARE YOU LEVERAGING IN YOUR ABM OUTREACH? (SELECT ALL THAT APPLY)



Targeting content based on account challenges and needs was only a priority for 54% of practitioners in 2021 — and it's now favored by 61%. Marketers are realizing that everyone is facing staffing issues and contending with the economic downturn, and they're responding by shifting their strategies away from broad demographics and instead drilling down to demonstrate their knowledge of each business.

In terms of specific content formats practitioners are relying on, the top five remained the same — though some assets shifted positions. With that in mind, marketers relied on:

- White papers (65%);
- Case studies (62%);
- Articles/blogs (56%);
- Analyst reports (54%); and
- Research (54%).

Though it didn't make the top five, direct mail is quickly rising as a force to be reckoned with. While it was only a marginal difference, the use of direct mail as a delivery channel grew from 33% to 35%. This is likely because direct mail tends to be a bigger, more expensive investment — especially as 28% of practitioners indicated lack of budget as one of their biggest challenges.

PLEASE SELECT FIVE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT CONTENT FORMATS WHEN EMPLOYING YOUR ABM STRATEGY:

IDENTIFYING & MEETING BUYERS' DEMANDS FOR DYNAMIC CONTENT EXPERIENCES

Although targeted executive invitations ranked as practitioners No. 1 content format of choice, pulling in 56% of the vote, it did drop several percentage points from last year — in 2021, it was favored by 63% of respondents. In a similar vein, sales meeting invitations also fell: Only 44% utilized it this year, compared to 52% last year. On the flip side, dynamic content shot up:

- Interactive content rose to 45%, up from 37%;
- Influencer/advocate-related content climbed to 35%, compared to 24%;
- Video content landed at 49%, as opposed to 39% last year; and
- Promotional item giveaways grew to 35%, whereas only 26% utilized it last year.

In terms of delivery channels, there were no big surprises: Email (84%), in-person events (70%), account-based advertising (64%), outbound tele-prospecting (53%) and personalized website content (45%) secured the top-five spots. Despite the traditional findings, the survey found that ABM practitioners have made strides over the past year to keep up with buyers' self-service demands, as:

- Custom resource centers rose to 41%, up from 30%;
- Chatbots grew in adoption, with 39% leveraging them compared to 23% in 2021;
- Text messaging surged in use, growing from 10% in 2021 to 33%; and
- Messenger platforms sharply increased, rising from 17% to 35%.

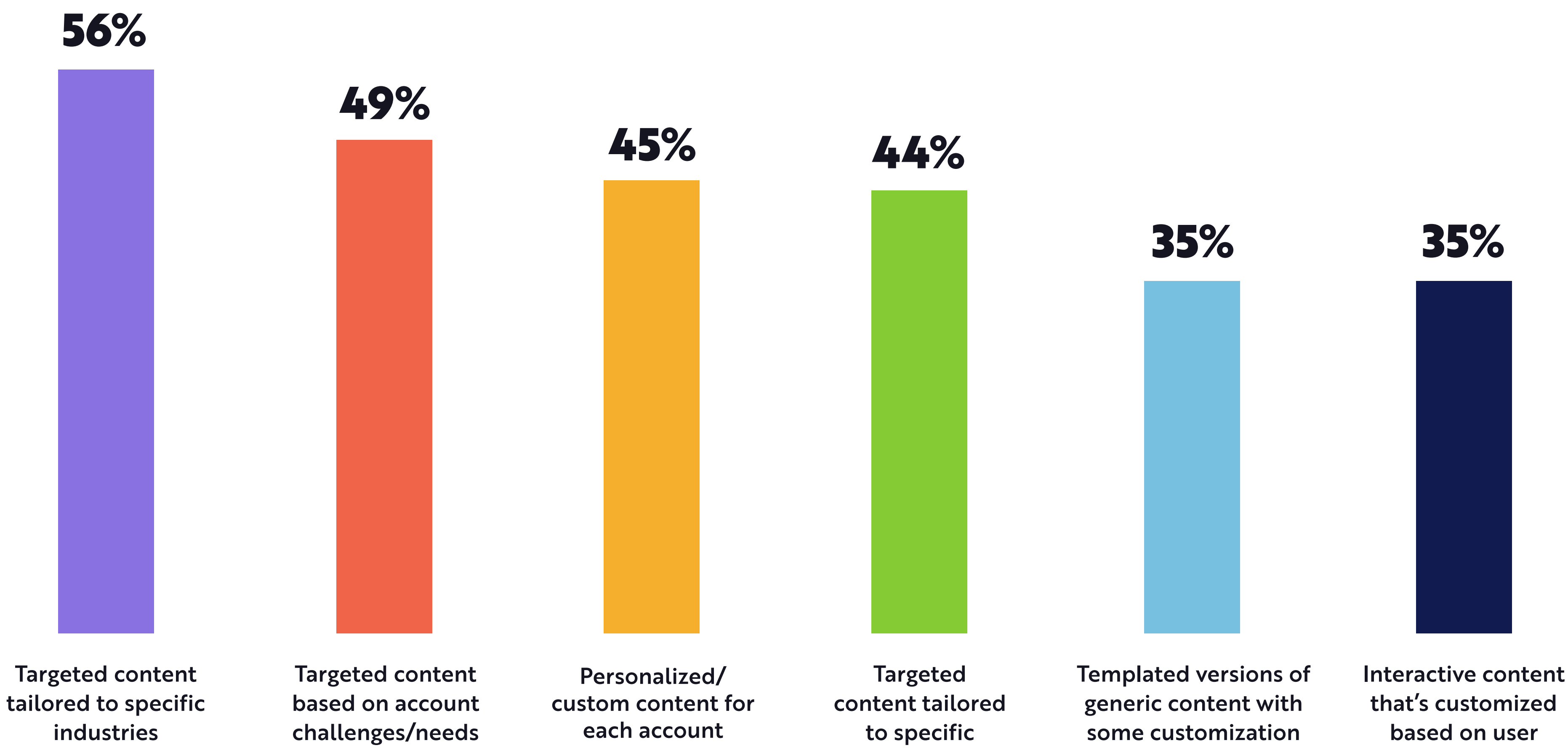
Again, the potential and growth of direct mail is highlighted here, as it claimed 46% of the vote this year compared to 42% last year.

Additionally, the research found that practitioners are taking accounts' preferences for creative, customized content seriously. When asked what they're turning to agency and consulting partners to help assist with, the respondents pointed to:

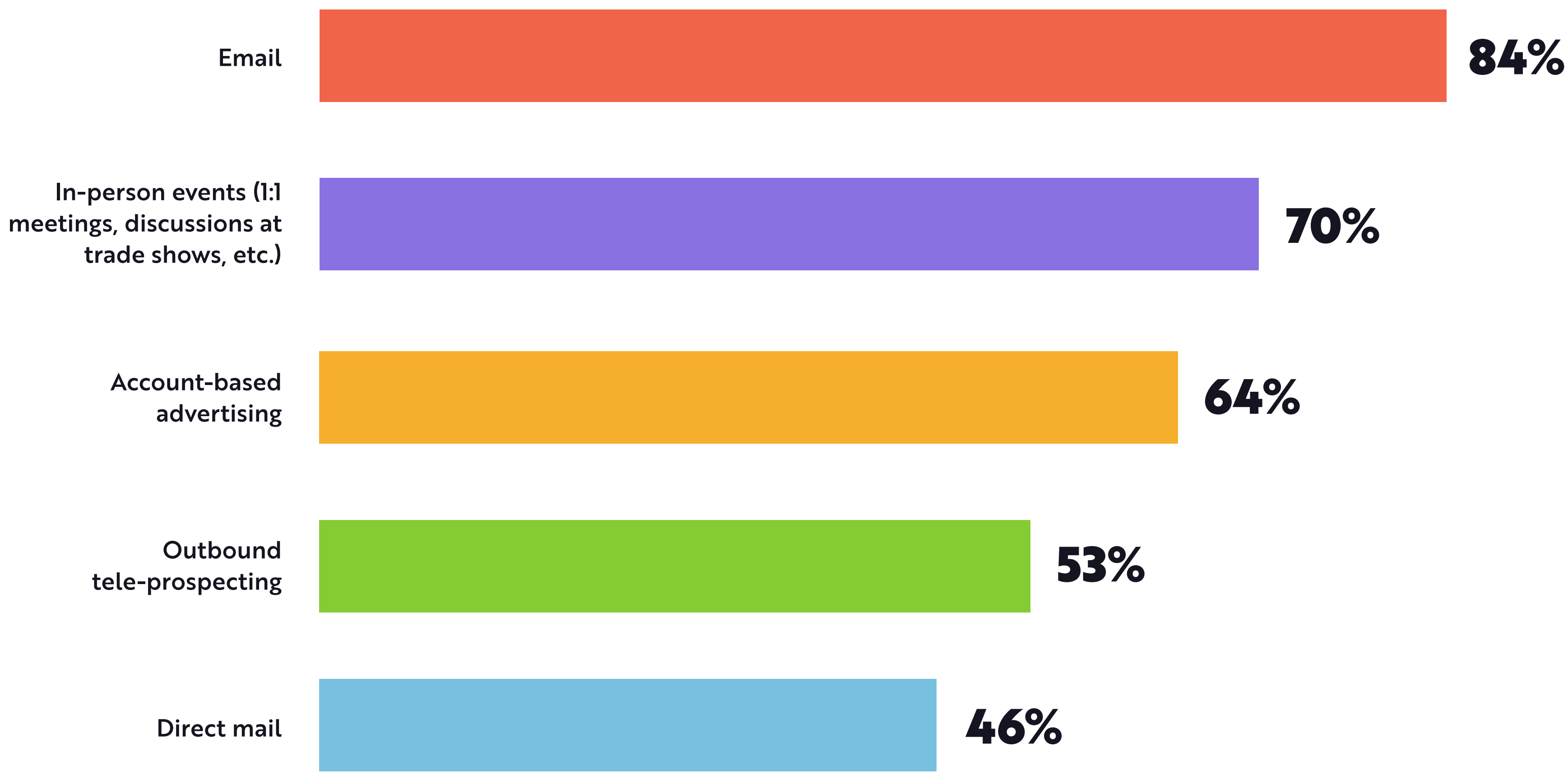
- Developing content assets (35%);
- Designing creative/campaign themes (34%);
- Helping to set an overall ABM strategy (31%);
- Assisting in account selection/prioritization and contact list development (31%); and
- Overall ABM program execution (28%).

The top-three needs for outside expertise and resources revolve around content, creative and overall strategy. Unsurprisingly, this is consistent with the ABM conversations that *Demand Gen Report* is hearing around the industry. Many industry experts are speaking at conferences about the need for better, more customized content, and it's clear practitioners are getting the message to ensure they have the right creative and that it all fits into the strategy.

WHAT TYPE OF CONTENT OR EXPERIENCES ARE YOU OFFERING AS PART OF YOUR ABM INITIATIVES? (SELECT ALL THAT APPLY)



WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING CHANNELS ARE YOU USING TO ENGAGE YOUR ABM LIST?



CONCLUSION: MORE MATURITY RETURNS BETTER ABM RESULTS

In terms of technical components, practitioners indicated that their top methods of measuring their ABM efforts include:

- Number of qualified leads (62%);
- Net-new accounts engaged (51%);
- Account engagement score (49%);
- Contribution to pipeline revenue (44%); and
- Win rate (42%).

Account engagement score as a measurement form climbed up quite a bit from the 2021 survey, where it only ranked at 42%. When combined with the prioritization placed on net-new accounts engaged, it's clear that organizations are focused on delivering the experiences that generate the most clicks and conversions.

Of course, those measurement metrics are only useful with clean, consistent data. This year, respondents indicated they're reviewing their account lists:

- Quarterly (30%);
- Monthly (29%);
- Weekly (22%); and
- Annually (7%).

Promisingly, practitioners are increasing the frequency that they review their account lists to ensure they have accurate, up-to-date information fueling their campaigns. Last year, only 9% of practitioners indicated they review their list weekly. Additionally, the number of practitioners who review their lists monthly and annually went down as well, dropping from 17% to 7% annually and 31% to 29% monthly.

As practitioners prioritize and form stronger long-term relationships, they're shifting their ABM strategies to become more targeted, personalized and accurate — and meeting buyer demands in the process. When compared by program length, it's clear that the marketers who invest more time in their ABM strategies see the most success.

ABOUT THE SURVEY

Demand Gen Report surveyed 273 B2B marketing executives and professionals of various roles and within various industries throughout August and September 2022. The respondents of the "2022 ABM Benchmark Survey" range from Manager (35%), Director (23%), C-level (22%) and Vice President (13%). Thirty-six percent of respondents work in high-tech industries, followed by professional services (12%), financial services (9%) and more. The respondents came from companies that generated a variety of annual revenue, with 32% working for companies generating less than $25 million. Other respondents came from companies that generate more than $25 to $50 million (17%), $50 to $100 million (15%) and $100 to $500 million (13%).

Accelerate your growth with ZoomInfo, an Inc. 5000 company. ZoomInfo's Growth Acceleration Platform offers the most accurate and actionable B2B contact and company intelligence to help organizations accelerate growth and profitability. The continuously updated database enables sales and marketing teams to execute more effective marketing campaigns and improve sales prospecting efforts with access to on demand direct dial phone numbers, email addresses, and background information.

866.904.9666
info@zoominfo.com

Inspire engagement, loyalty, and love for your brand with Salesforce for Marketing. Built on the world's #1 CRM, know your customers with a single view of their activity across your business. Personalize their experience with AI. Engage them across every step in their journey with your brand. And use powerful analytics to optimize campaigns as you go. Learn more at **salesforce.com/marketing**.

info@salesforce.com

ON24 provides a leading cloud-based digital experience platform that makes it easy to create, scale, and personalize engaging experiences to drive measurable business growth. Today, we are helping over 1,900 companies worldwide convert millions of prospects to buyers.Through interactive webinars, virtual events, and always-on multimedia experiences, ON24 provides a system of engagement, powered by AI, which enables businesses to scale engagement, conversions & pipeline to drive revenue growth.

415.369.8000
solutions@on24.com

MRP Prelytix is the only enterprise-class predictive ABM platform. For organizations that serve multiple partners, lines of business, geographies, or industries, MRP Prelytix is the only ABM platform toempower sales and marketing teams to simplify their environment's complexity and produce measurable and high-performance conversion, pipeline velocity, and closed revenue. Applying the industry'sonly real-time predictive analytics and data management, we fuel 1,000 ABM programs across six continents to coordinate, execute, and optimize their ABM programs using eight channels, produced in 20languages. Powered by Kx, Prelytix sits on top of the fastest streaming analytics database in the world. For more information visit: **www.mrpfd.com**

215.587.8800
MRPFD.COM/CONTACT-US/

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.