

2016

STATE OF DIGITAL MARKETING

Survey Summary Report

Ascend2

Monthly Research Series Conducted in Partnership with Leading Marketing Solution Providers

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Survey Summary Report

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2016 STATE OF DIGITAL MARKETING

Marketers are confronted with an increasingly complex and constantly shifting digital marketing landscape.

What are the most significant challenges to digital marketing success in 2016 and how are companies overcoming them?

To find out, Ascend2 and our Research Partners fielded the State of Digital Marketing Survey and completed interviews with 275 marketing professionals from March 1 to March 3, 2016. We thank them for sharing their valuable insights with us, and you.

The charts in this edition of the study titled the *2016 State of Digital Marketing Survey Summary Report* represent the average of all market segments responding to the survey. Specific market segments from the survey are reported on separately and exclusively by our participating Research Partners.

This research has been produced for your use. Put it to work in your own marketing strategy. Clip the charts and write about them in your blog or post them on social media. Please share this research credited as published.

Methodology

Ascend2 benchmarks the performance of popular digital marketing practices using a standardized questionnaire and proprietary 3-Minute Survey format.

This survey was conducted online from a panel of more than 50,000 professionals representing the following company sizes, roles and channels:

Number of Employees

More than 500	25%
50 to 500	28%
Fewer than 50	47%

Role in the Company

Owner / Partner / CXO	31%
VP / Director / Manager	55%
Non-Management	14%

Primary Marketing Channel

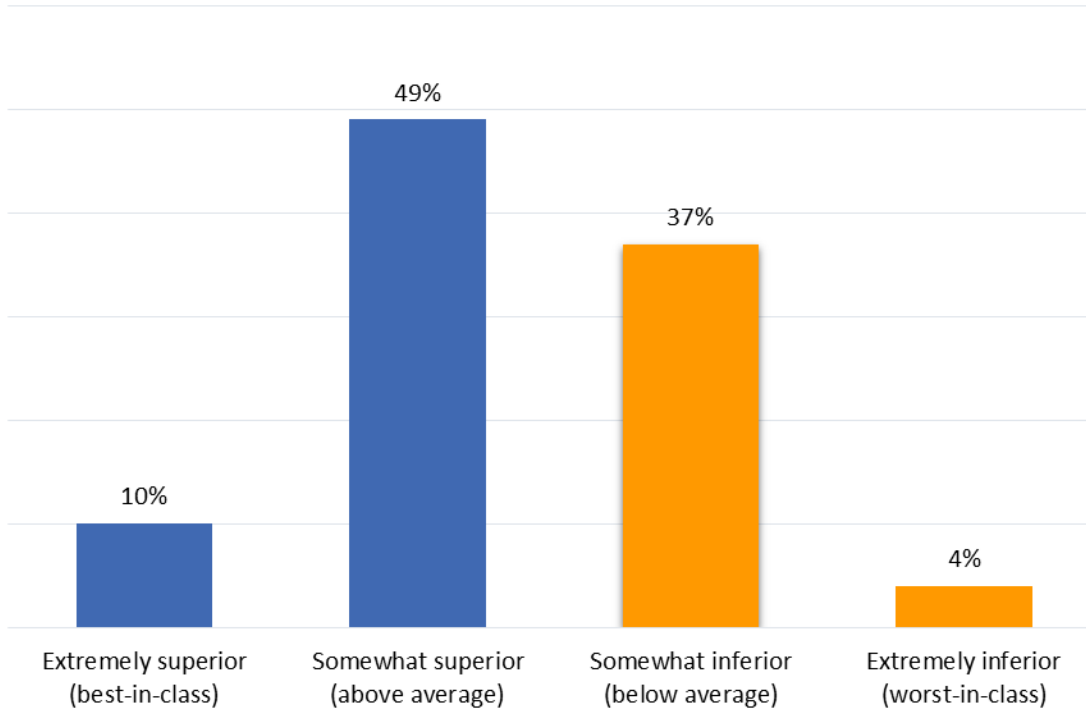
B2B	66%
B2C	16%
B2B and B2C Equally	18%

COMPETITIVE COMPARISON

While 10% of companies rate their digital marketing programs best-in-class, nearly half (49%) describe it more conservatively as “Somewhat superior” in comparison to their competitors.

Of respondents who described their digital marketing as “Somewhat inferior” to competitors, 69% also answered “Effectiveness is increasing marginally” when asked to describe the extent to which their digital marketing effectiveness is changing.

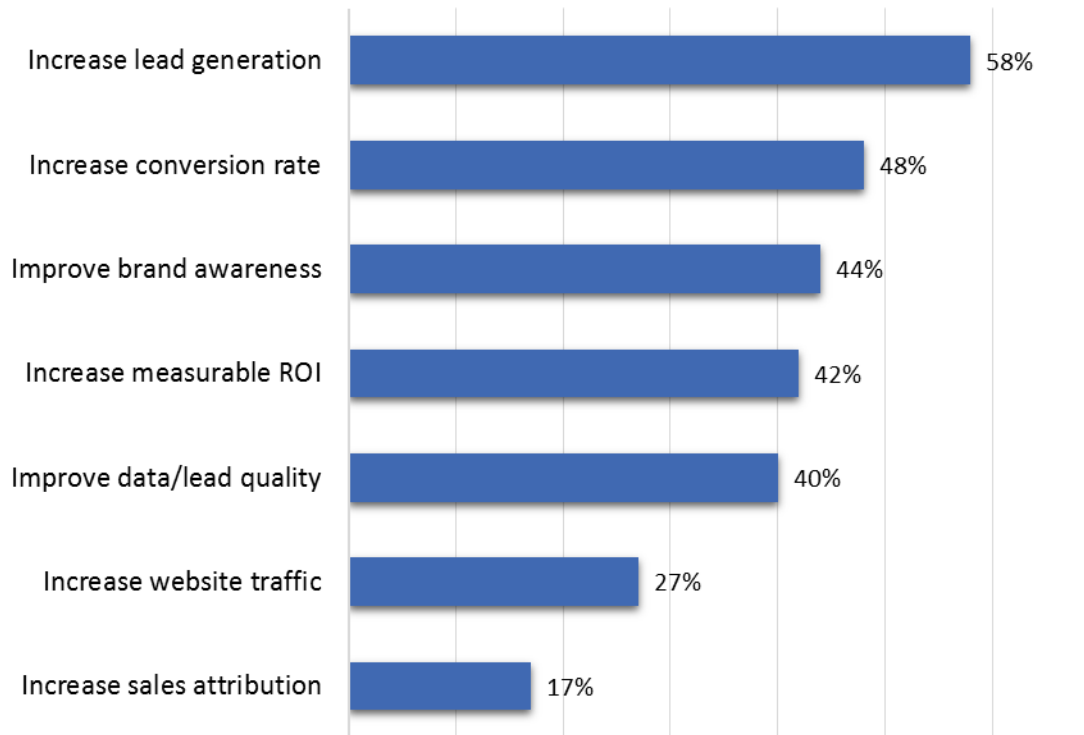
Which best describes the STATE OF DIGITAL MARKETING in your organization compared to its competitors?



MOST IMPORTANT GOALS

Strategically, marketing is generally focused on supporting – not replacing – the sales effort. As a result, 58% say increasing lead generation is a most important goal of digital marketing.

What are the MOST IMPORTANT GOALS of a digital marketing strategy?

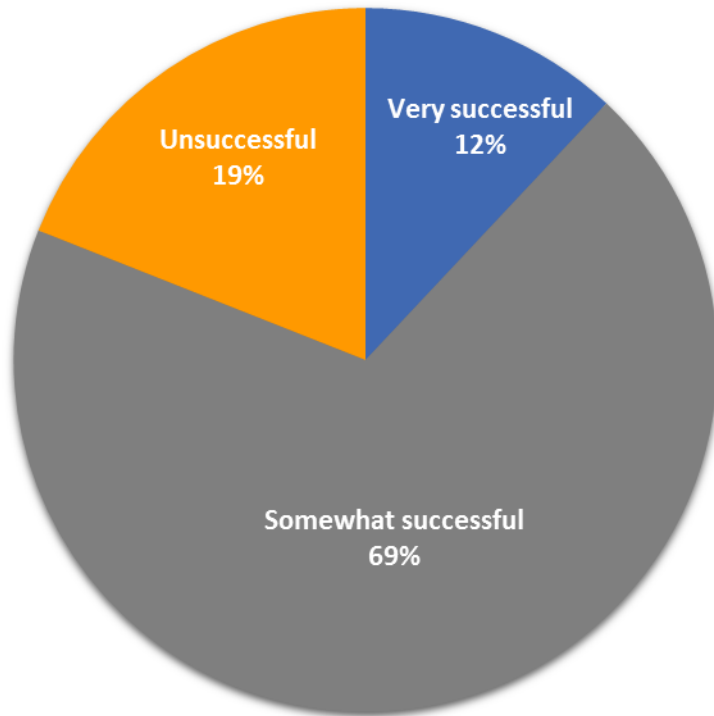


STRATEGIC SUCCESS

More than eight out of ten (81%) of companies rate their digital marketing strategy successful to some extent at achieving their important goals, with 12% rating it “Very successful”.

Of respondents who replied “Very successful”, 69% said they use a “Combination of outsourced and in-house resources” to execute digital marketing tactics.

How SUCCESSFUL is your digital marketing strategy at achieving important goals?



MOST SIGNIFICANT BARRIERS

Successful digital marketing requires financial support, tactical proficiency and strategic efficacy. Consequently, the most significant barriers to success is a lack of these requirements.

Of respondents who said "Lack of an effective strategy" was a significant success barrier, 55% work for companies with "Fewer than 50" employees.

What are the MOST SIGNIFICANT BARRIERS to digital marketing success?

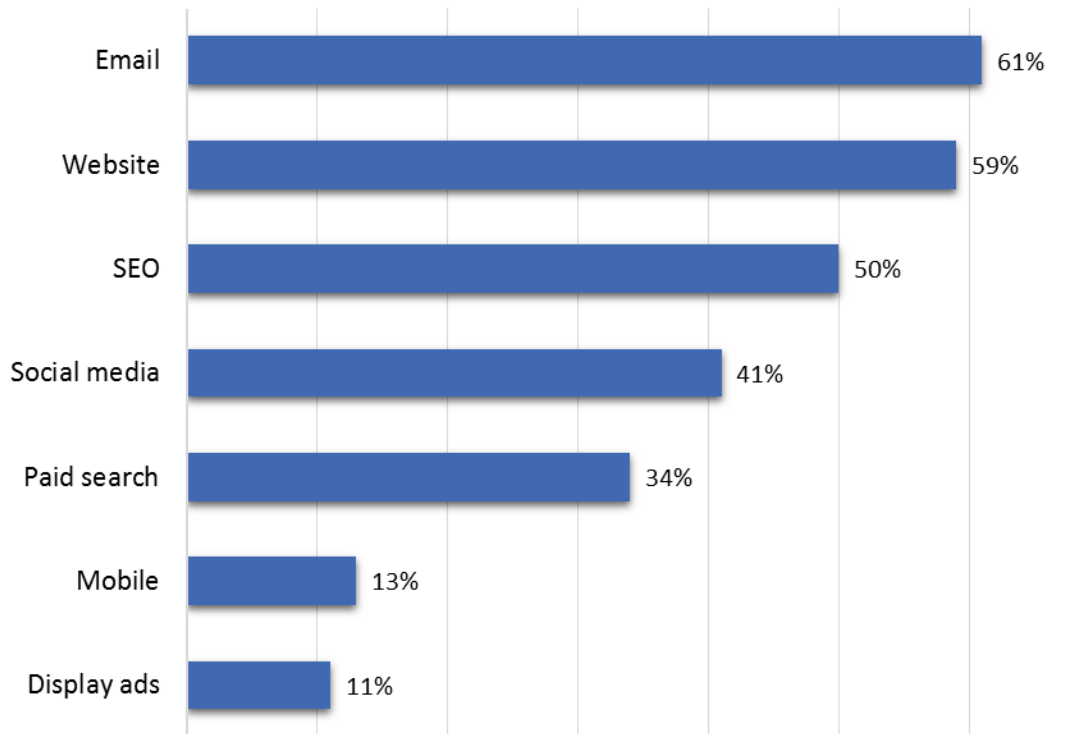


TACTICAL EFFECTIVENESS

Email and websites are the most effective digital marketing tactics used by more than half of companies (61% and 59% respectively), followed by search engine optimization with 50%.

Of respondents who said "SEO", 52% also said the state of their digital marketing was "Somewhat superior" in comparison to their competitors.

What are the MOST EFFECTIVE TACTICS used?

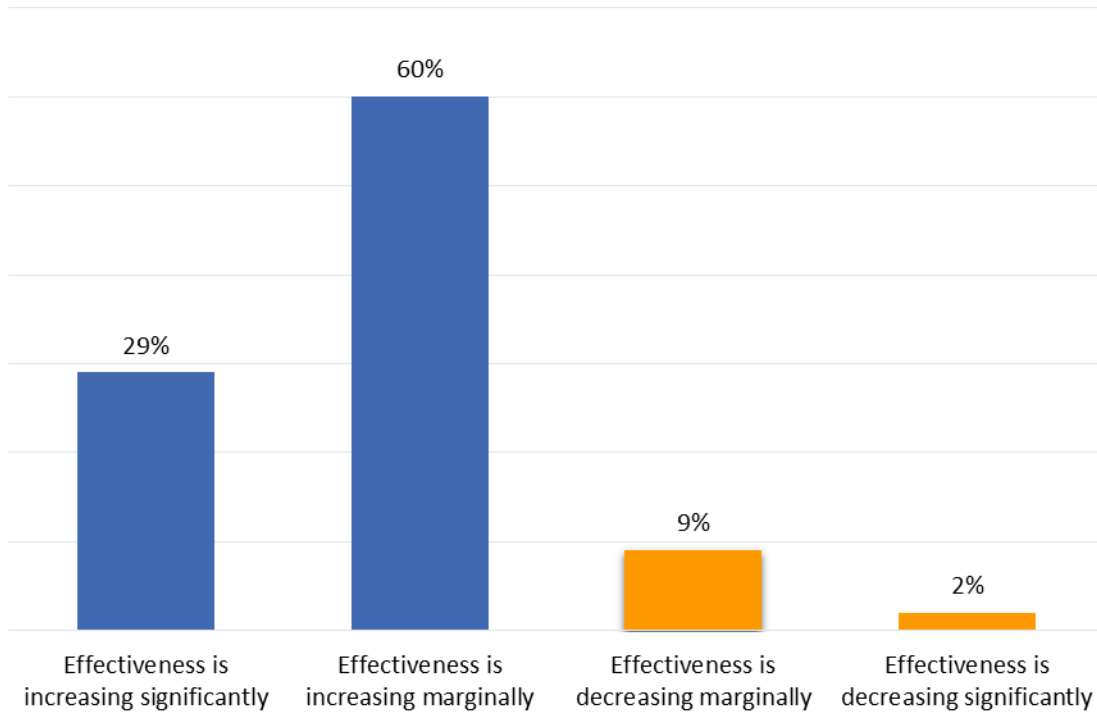


HOW EFFECTIVENESS IS CHANGING

The effectiveness of digital marketing to achieve important objectives is increasing to some extent for 89% of companies, with 29% saying “Effectiveness is increasing significantly”.

Of respondents who said “Effectiveness is increasing significantly”, 66% said they use a “Combination of outsourced and in-house resources” to execute digital marketing tactics.

To what extent is digital marketing EFFECTIVENESS CHANGING?

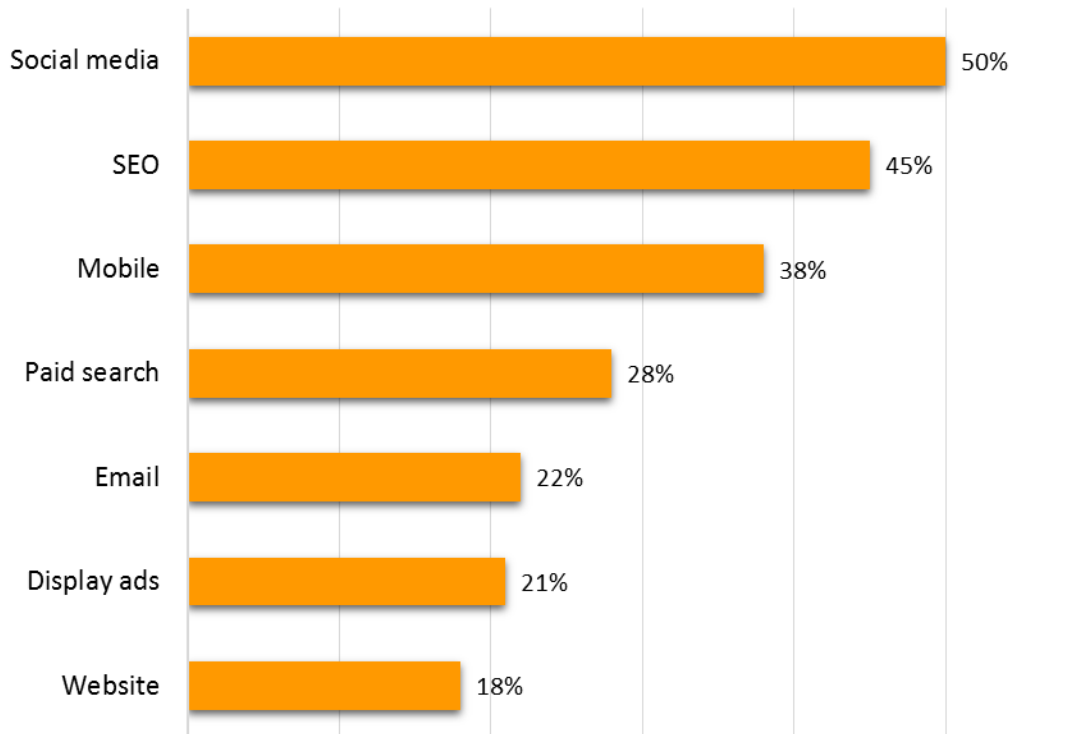


TACTICAL DIFFICULTY

Social media and SEO were named as the most difficult digital marketing tactics to execute. Both tactics are time-intensive requiring skilled resources not always available in-house.

Of respondents who said "Social media", 53% also said the state of their digital marketing was "Somewhat superior" in comparison to their competitors.

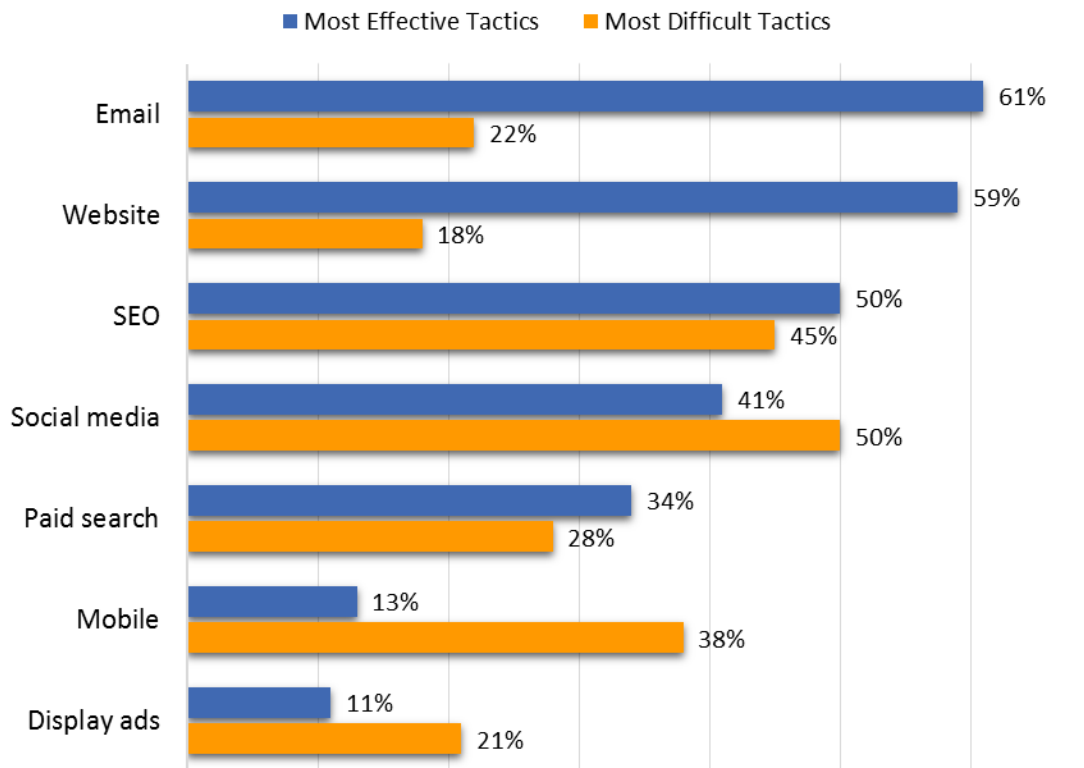
What are the MOST DIFFICULT TACTICS to execute?



EFFECTIVENESS VERSUS DIFFICULTY

Email and websites are not only the most effective tactics used, they are also two of the least difficult tactics to execute – factors worth considering when developing a digital marketing strategy.

How do the most effective tactics compare to the most difficult?

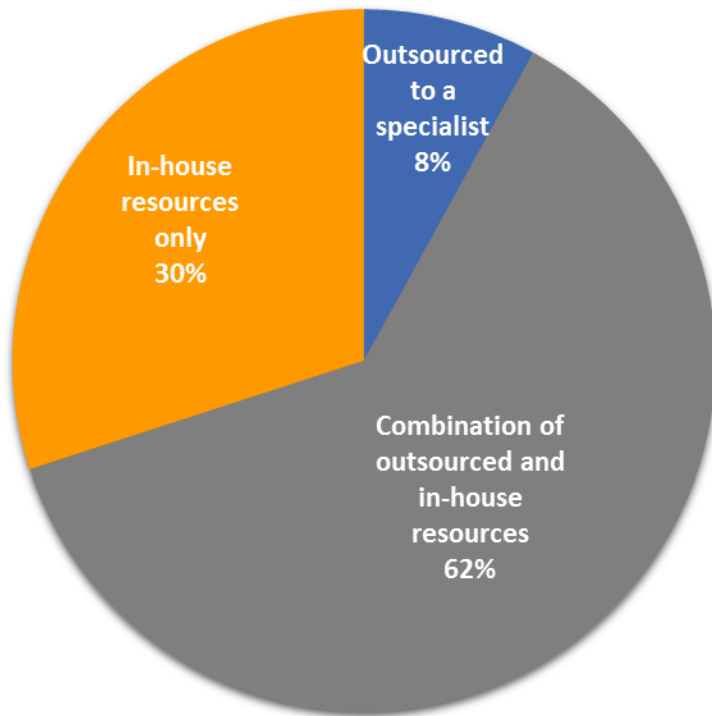


TACTICAL RESOURCES USED

62% of companies outsource all or part of their digital marketing tactics, primarily the most difficult types to execute. Outsourcing supplements internal skills to improve performance.

Of respondents who said "In-house resources only", 19% also said digital marketing "Effectiveness is increasing significantly".

Which best describes the RESOURCES USED to execute digital marketing tactics?



RESEARCH-BASED DEMAND GENERATION

Research Partner Programs rapidly deliver research-based content and a guaranteed number of leads in two simple steps:

1. Choose marketing topics of interest to your target market.
2. Choose an exclusive data segment for each marketing topic.
 - Successful Strategy Benchmarks
 - Leadership Benchmarks
 - B2B Benchmarks
 - B2C Benchmarks
 - Enterprise Benchmarks
 - SMB Benchmarks
 - Agency Benchmarks
 - Other Survey-Specific Benchmarks (when available)

A Few of the Leading Marketing Solution Providers that Partner with Ascend2.



According to a CMO Council study, research is the most influential type of content marketers use. Research-Based Demand Generation is a process we developed to generate leads with research content of interest to your target customers, and nurture those leads to sales-ready status in the name of your brand.

As a marketing software or data company, or digital marketing agency, your prospective customers are marketing decision-makers with an interest in the facts about improving marketing performance; and facts are what our research provides.

Our unique process enables us to provide the quick-win turnkey programs and longer term demand generation needed to achieve your goals.

ABOUT ASCEND2

Marketing software and data companies, and digital marketing agencies, partner with Ascend2 to reliably generate demand and supplement marketing content. Our Research Partner Programs are transparent – focusing entirely on your brand and the interests of your market.

Learn more at Ascend2.com

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