

# B2C CONTENT MARKETING

2014 Benchmarks, Budgets,  
and Trends—North America

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# OVERVIEW: THE STATE OF B2C CONTENT MARKETING IN NORTH AMERICA

Greetings Consumer Marketers,

In many ways, it's a good year for B2C content marketers. Adoption rates of content marketing are on the rise and confidence has grown:

- ▶ 90% of B2C marketers are using content marketing, compared with 86% last year.
- ▶ 34% of B2C marketers consider themselves effective at content marketing—up from 32% last year.
- ▶ B2C marketers have rated many tactics higher in effectiveness this year; in-person events and eNewsletters top the list of effective tactics.
- ▶ B2C marketers are using all social platforms more often, with LinkedIn use registering the biggest jump (from 51% to 71%).

This confidence in content marketing also shows in terms of investment: 60% of B2C marketers plan to increase the amount they allocate to content marketing. Perhaps surprisingly, the least effective B2C marketers plan to increase their content marketing budgets more than the most effective ones (69% vs. 55%): another indication that marketers believe in the principles of content marketing, even if they have not quite figured out how to best execute.

Read on to discover not only how the B2C content marketing landscape has changed over the last year, but also to learn what the most effective B2C marketers are doing differently than their peers.

## On with the content marketing revolution!



**Joe Pulizzi**

Founder  
Content Marketing Institute



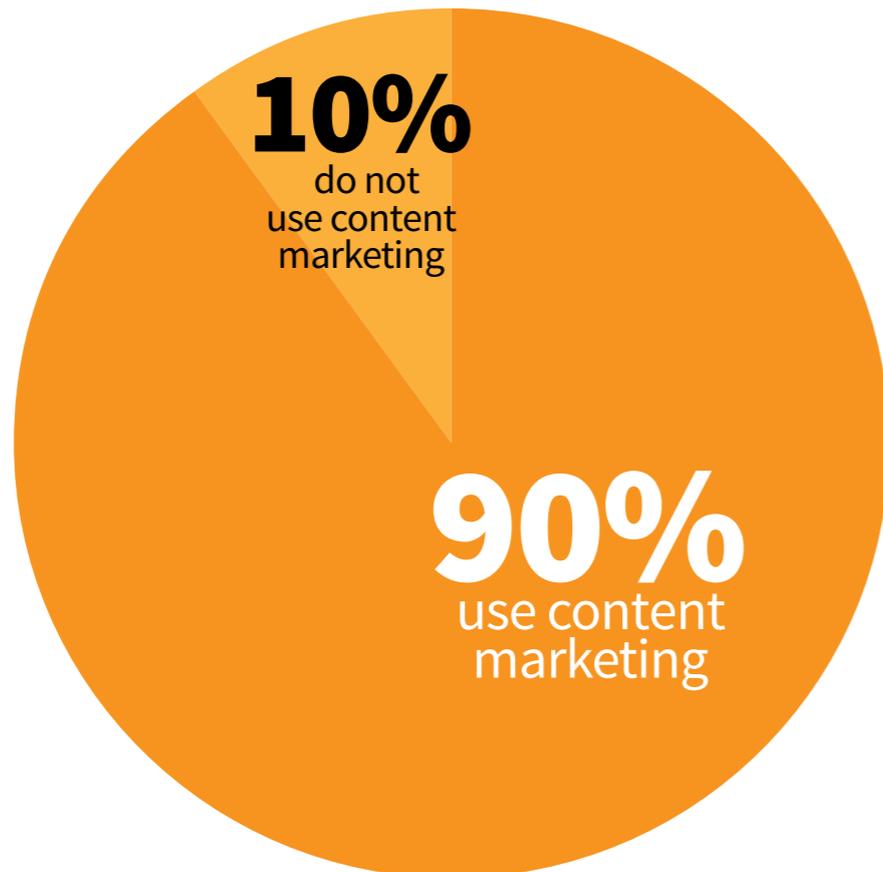
**Ann Handley**

Chief Content Officer  
MarketingProfs

*Note: Throughout this report, we refer to companies by size. Large companies are defined as 1,000+ employees; midsize as 100-999 employees; small as 10-99 employees; and microsize as 1-9 employees.*

# 90% of B2C marketers use content marketing.

## Percentage of B2C Marketers Using Content Marketing

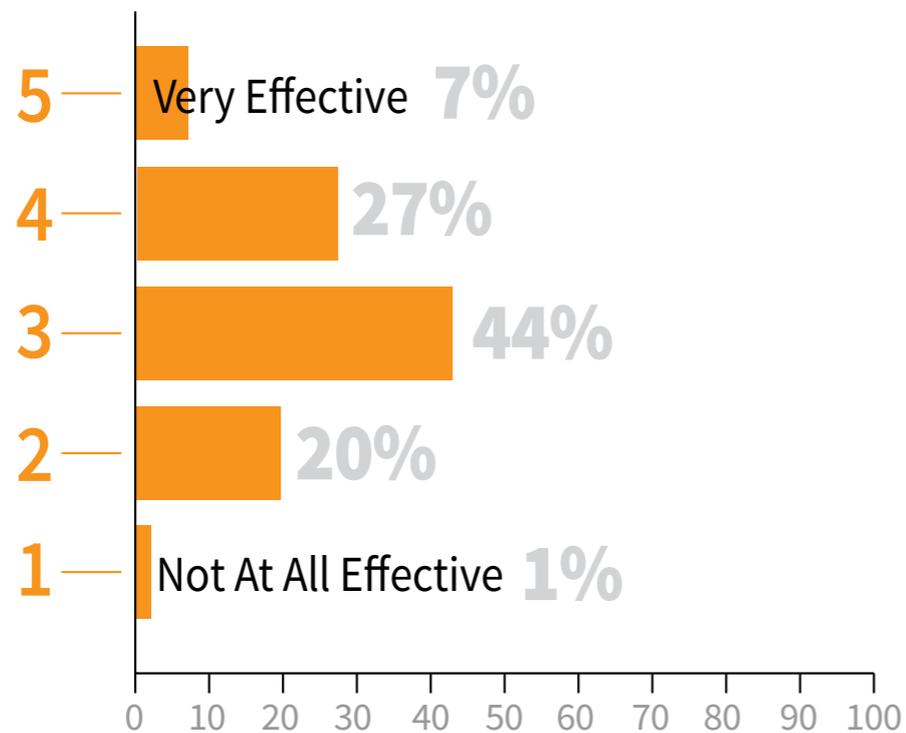


- ▶ Last year, 86% of B2C marketers said they used content marketing.
- ▶ While 93% of large B2C companies, 94% of midsize companies, and 95% of small companies use content marketing, only 78% of microsize companies do.

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# 34% of B2C marketers believe they are effective at content marketing.

## How B2C Marketers Rate the Effectiveness of Their Organization's Use of Content Marketing



- ▶ Last year, 32% of B2C marketers said they were effective at content marketing.
- ▶ 42% of B2B marketers believe they are effective at content marketing.

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# Profile of a best-in-class B2C content marketer.

## Comparison of Most Effective B2C Content Marketers with Least Effective B2C Content Marketers

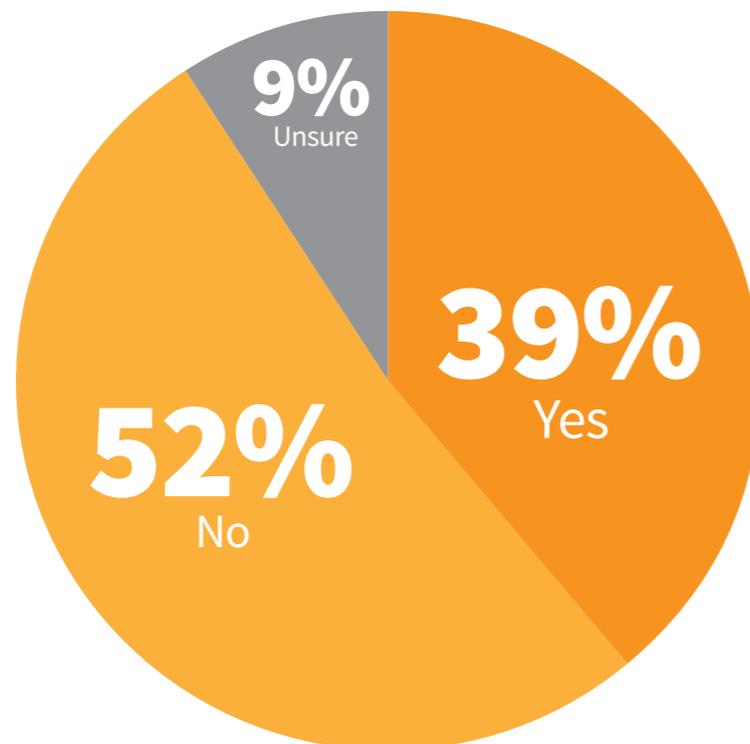
|  | Most Effective | Overall/Average | Least Effective |
|--|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Has a documented content strategy                      | 60%            | 39%             | 12%             |
| Has someone who oversees content marketing strategy    | 85%            | 67%             | 50%             |
| Average number of tactics used                         | 14             | 12              | 9               |
| Average number of social media platforms used          | 7              | 6               | 5               |
| Percent of marketing budget spent on content marketing | 32%            | 24%             | 10%             |
| Challenged with lack of budget                         | 36%            | 48%             | 67%             |
| Challenged with lack of knowledge and training         | 14%            | 33%             | 66%             |

- “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”)

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# 39% of B2C marketers have a documented content strategy.

## Percentage of B2C Marketers Who Have a Documented Content Strategy

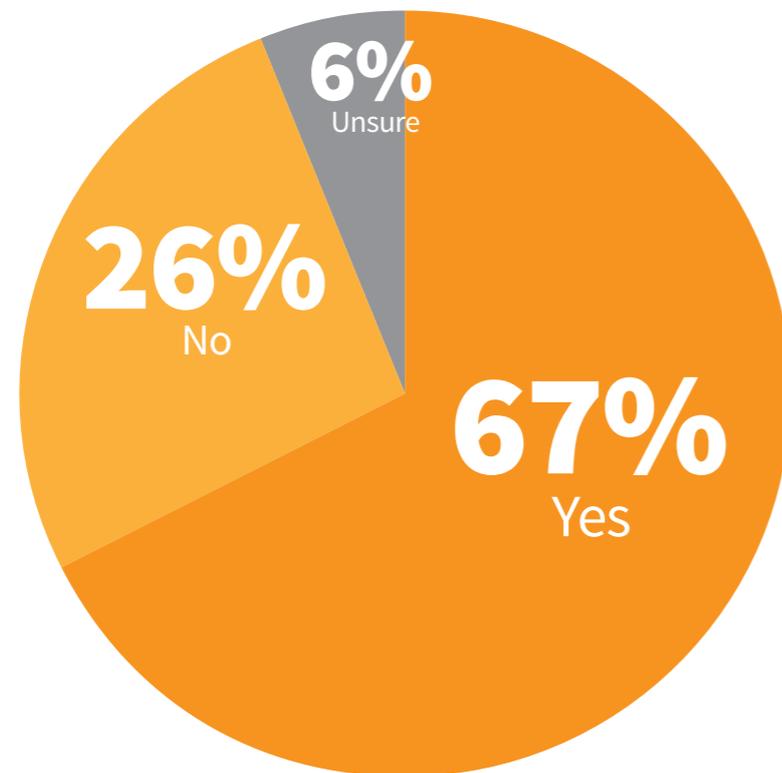


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- ▶ 60% of the most effective B2C marketers have a documented content strategy, compared with 12% of their least effective peers.
- ▶ Small B2C companies are more likely than large B2C companies to have a documented content strategy (46% vs. 41%).

# 67% of B2C organizations have someone in place to oversee content marketing strategy.

## Percentage of B2C Marketers with Someone Who Oversees Content Marketing Strategy

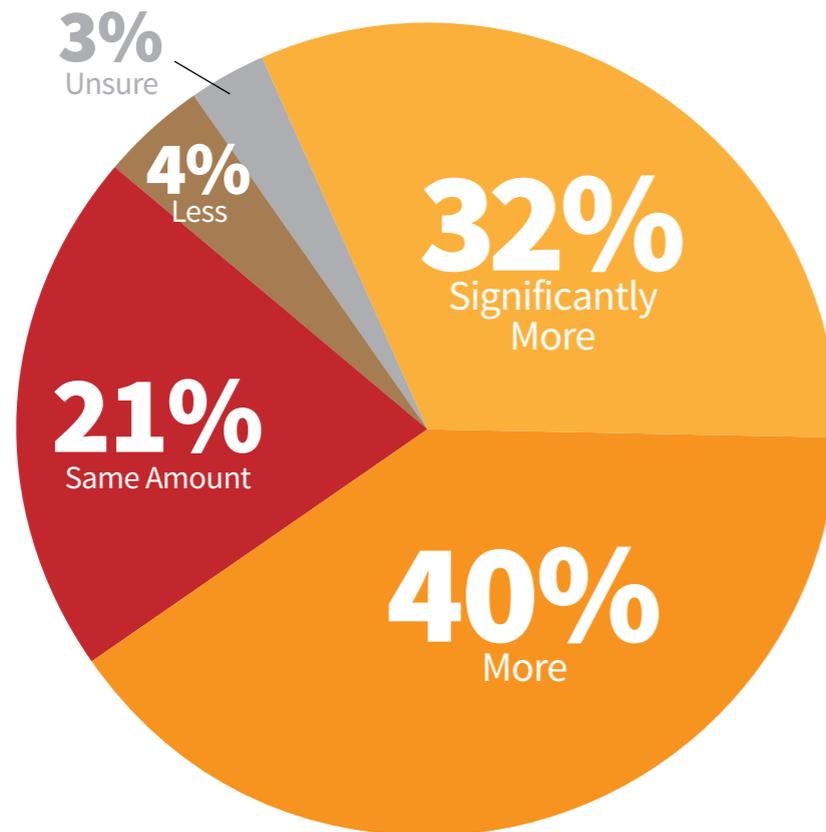


- ▶ 85% of the most effective B2C marketers have someone who oversees content marketing strategy, compared with 50% of their least effective B2C peers.
- ▶ Small B2C companies are more likely than large B2C companies to have someone who oversees content marketing strategy (69% vs. 58%).

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# 72% of B2C marketers are producing more content than they did one year ago.

### Change in Amount of B2C Content Creation (Over Last 12 Months)

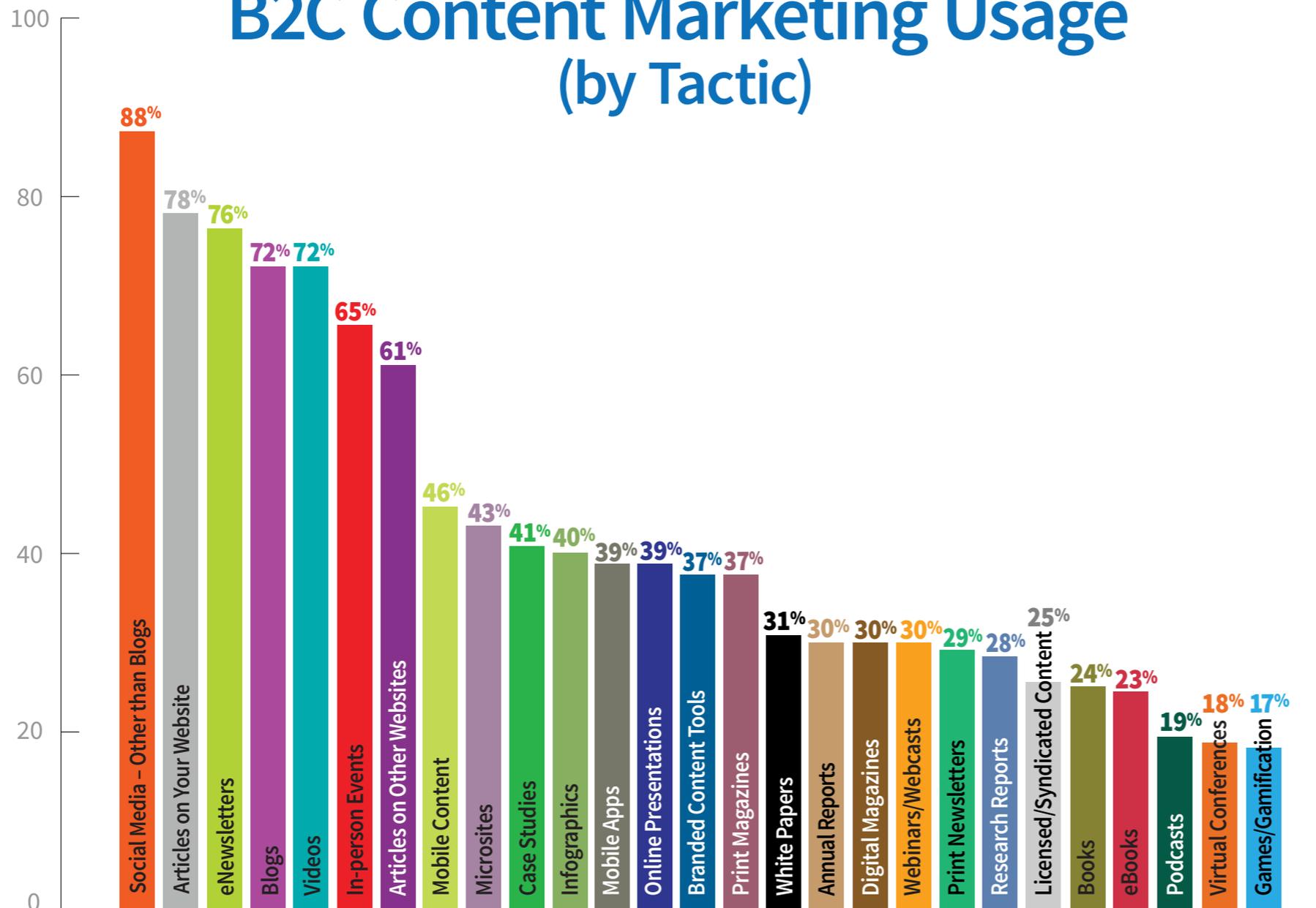


- ▶ 77% of the most effective B2C marketers are creating more content than they did one year ago, compared with 64% of their least effective peers.
- ▶ 81% of B2C marketers with a documented content marketing strategy are creating more content than they did one year ago, compared with 69% of those who do not have a documented strategy.

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# B2C marketers use an average of 12 content marketing tactics.

## B2C Content Marketing Usage (by Tactic)



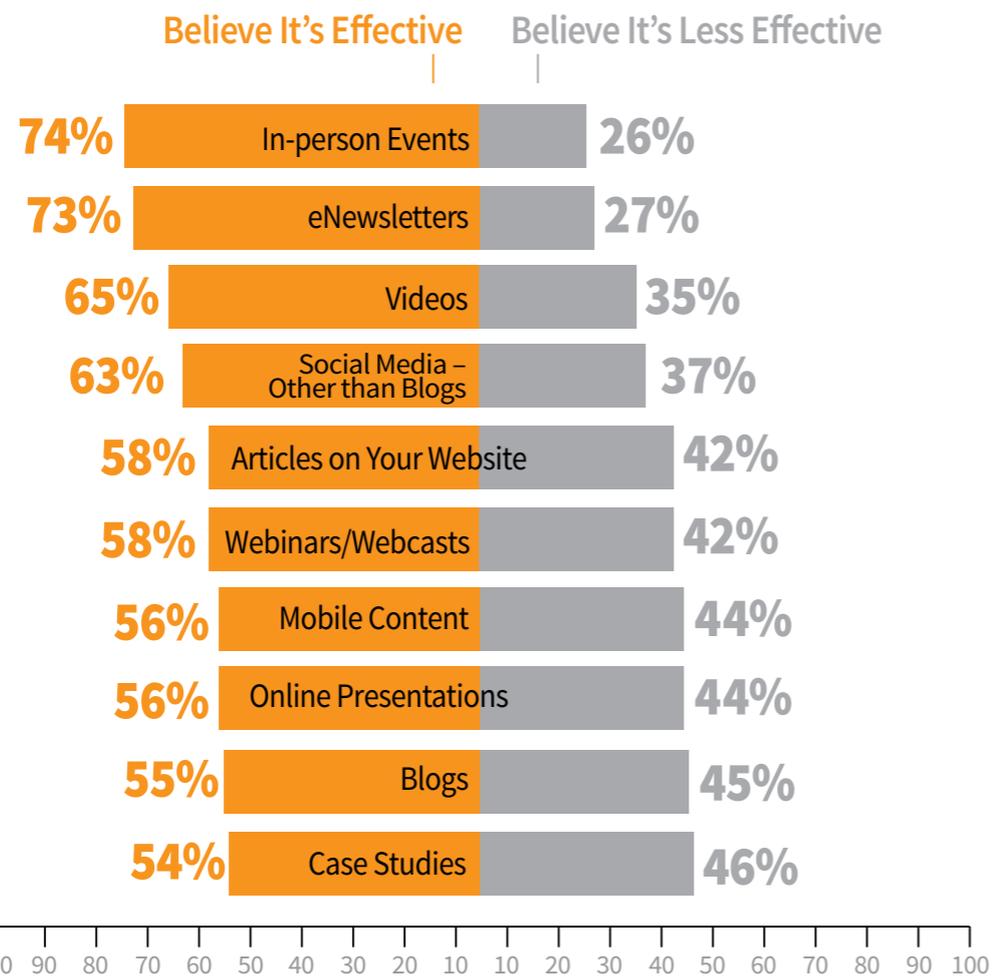
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- ▶ B2C marketers use the same number of tactics as they did last year (12); their B2B counterparts use 13.
- ▶ As with B2B, infographics has seen the largest increase in usage (from 33% last year to 40% this year).

# B2C content marketers have increasing confidence with many tactics.

## Confidence Gap

Effectiveness Ratings of Tactics Among B2C Users

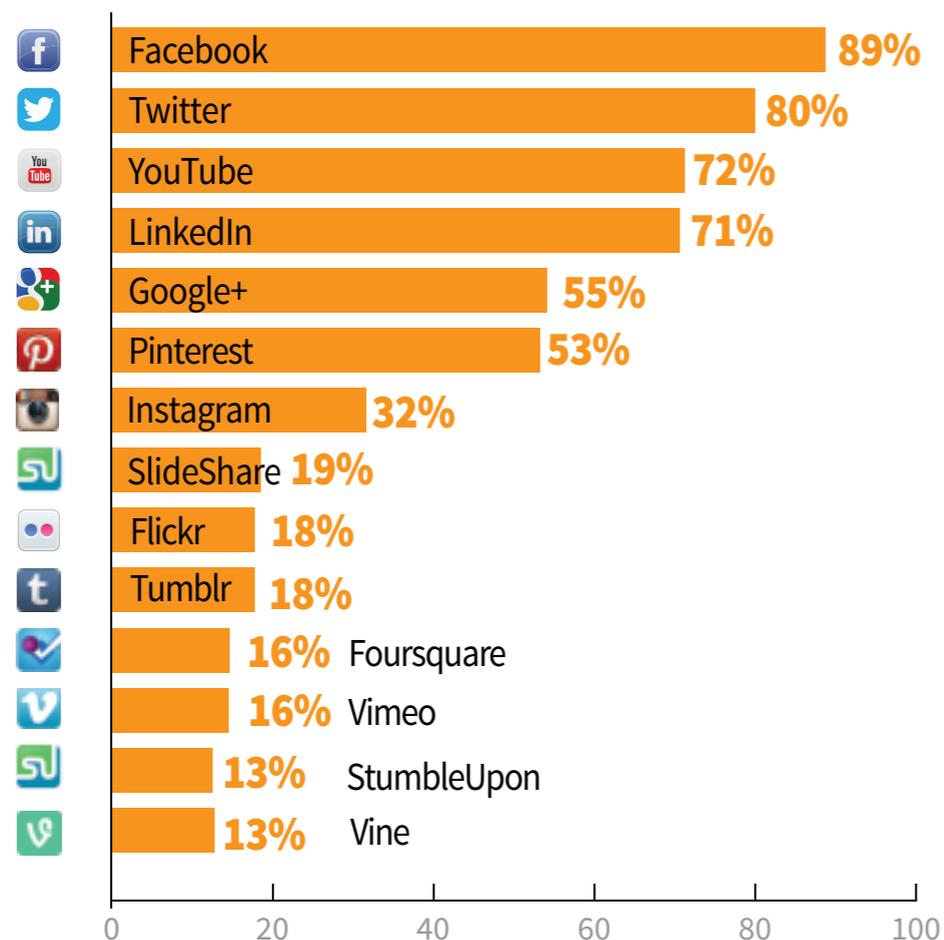


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- ▶ B2C confidence in the effectiveness of all these tactics has risen, with the exception of blogs, which is down two percentage points.
- ▶ For the second year in a row, B2C marketers have rated in-person events as the most effective tactic, with confidence in effectiveness increasing substantially (from 62% last year to 74% this year).
- ▶ The most effective B2C marketers, however, rate eNewsletters as the most effective tactic (91%), followed by in-person events (81%).

# B2C marketers are using social media more frequently than they did last year.

### Percentage of B2C Marketers Who Use Various Social Media Platforms to Distribute Content



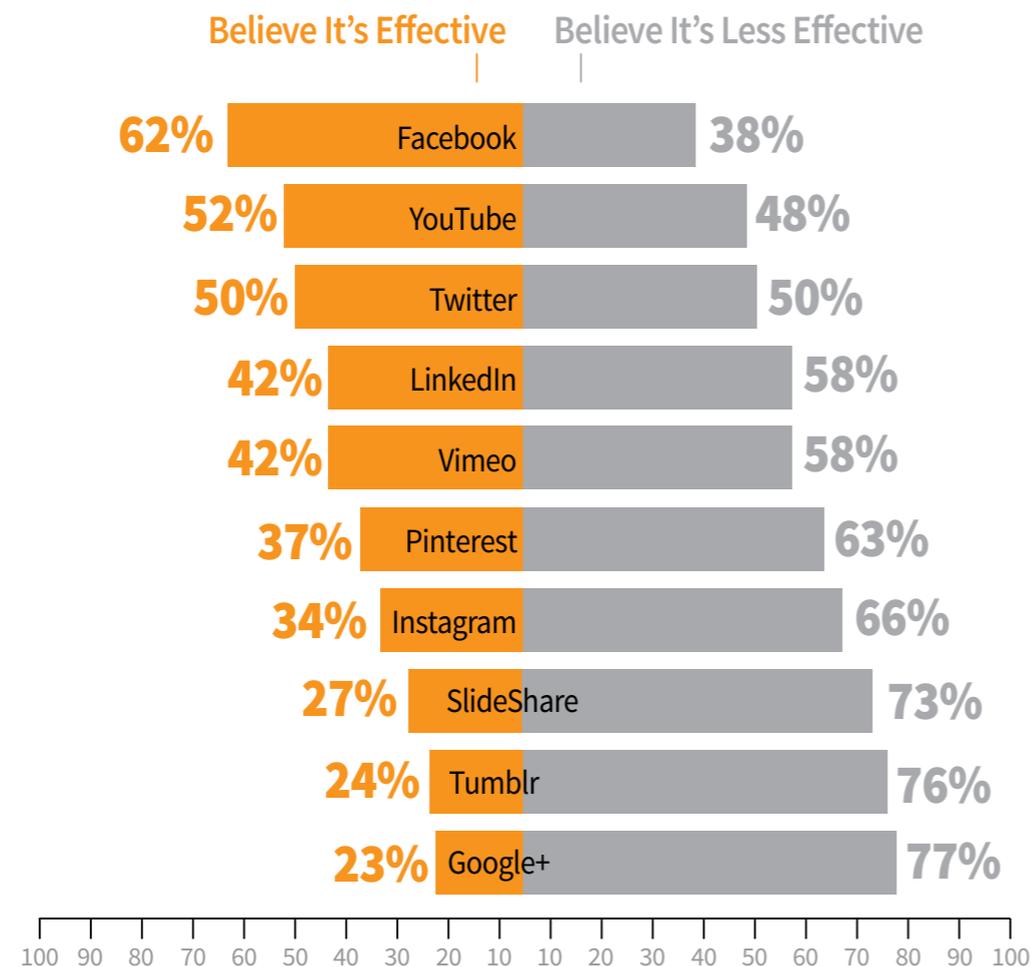
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- ▶ B2C and B2B marketers both use an average of six social media platforms; last year, B2C used four.
- ▶ B2C marketers are using every social media platform listed here more often than they did last year.
- ▶ LinkedIn had the biggest jump in B2C usage: from 51% last year to 71% this year.

# Although adoption rates of social media are high, B2C marketers are unsure of its effectiveness.

## Confidence Gap

Effectiveness Ratings of Social Media Platforms Among B2C Users

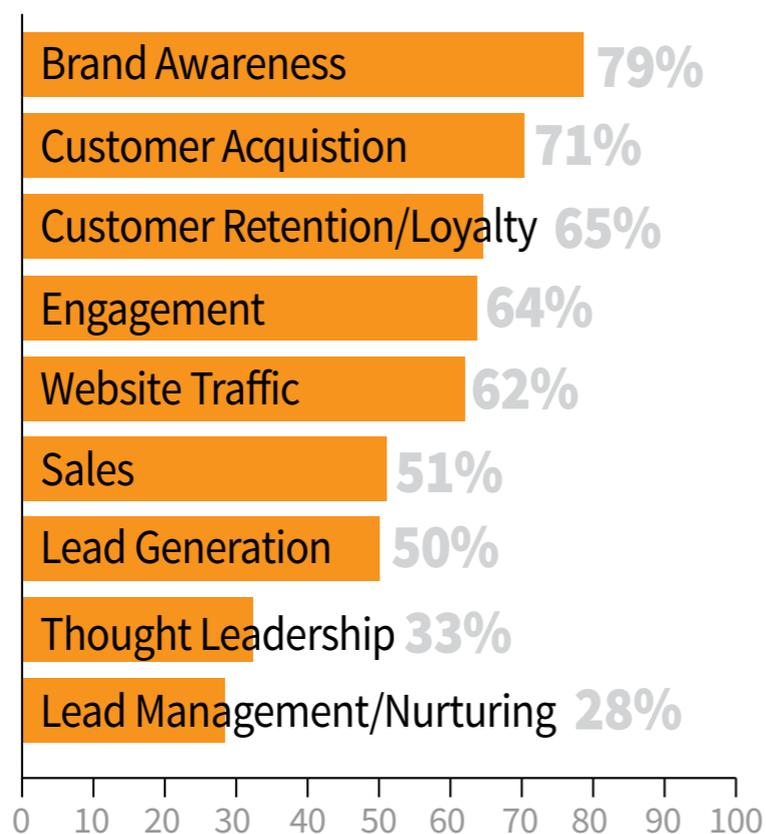


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- ▶ Overall, B2C marketers rate Facebook as the most effective social platform; however, large B2C companies rate YouTube as the most effective.
- ▶ B2C marketers have more confidence in Facebook, YouTube, Pinterest, Tumblr, and Google+ than their B2B counterparts do.

# Brand awareness is the top organizational goal for B2C content marketing.

## Organizational Goals for B2C Content Marketing

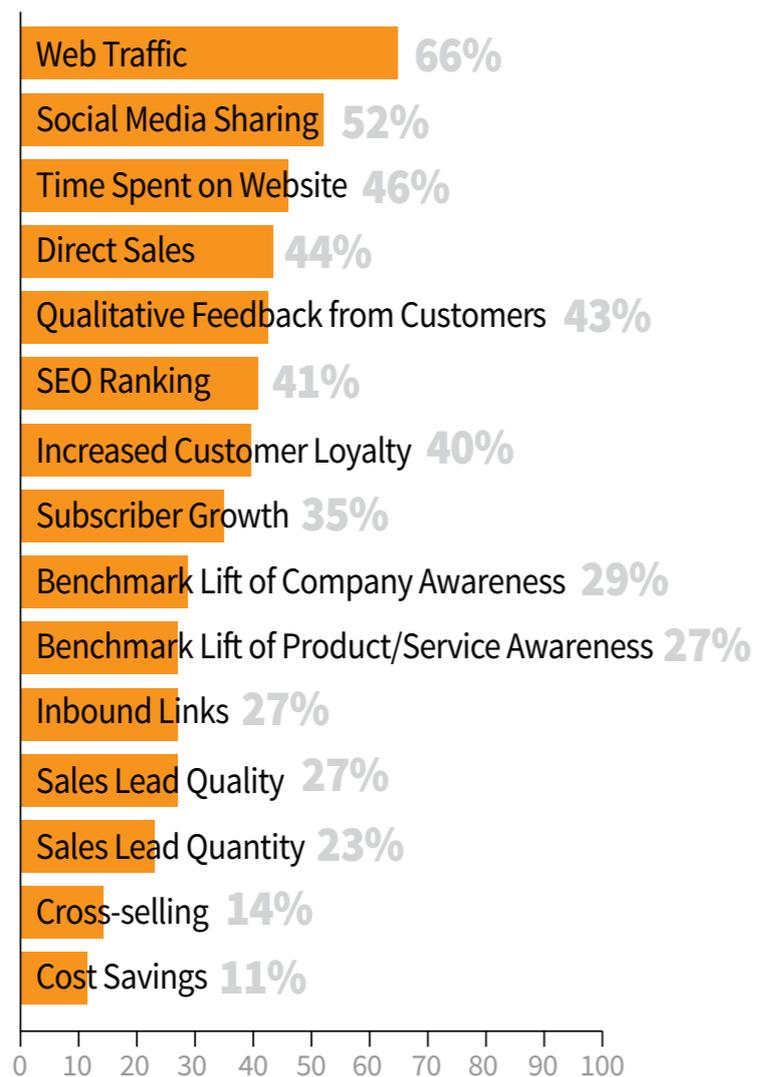


- ▶ Brand awareness has replaced customer retention/loyalty (which was 77% last year) as the top goal for B2C content marketing.
- ▶ 74% of the most effective B2C marketers cite engagement as a goal, compared with 43% of their least effective B2C peers.

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# B2C marketers cite Web traffic as their top content marketing metric.

## Metrics for B2C Content Marketing Success

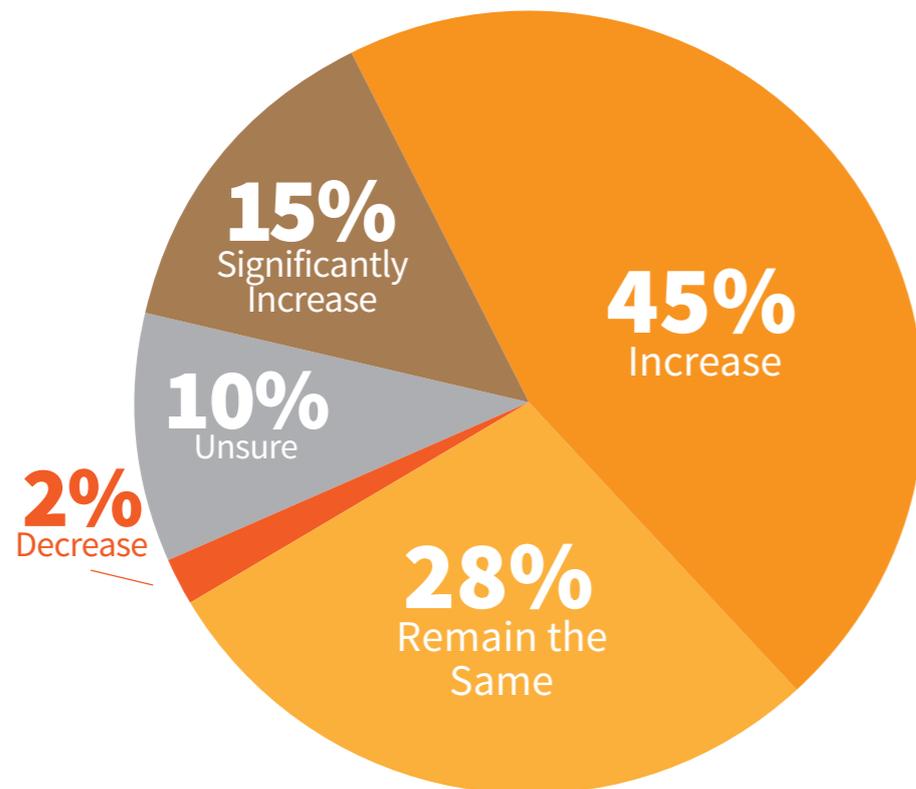


▶ For the second year in a row, B2C marketers have cited Web traffic and social media sharing as their top two content marketing metrics.

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# 60% of B2C marketers plan to increase their content marketing budget over the next 12 months.

## B2C Content Marketing Spending (Over Next 12 Months)

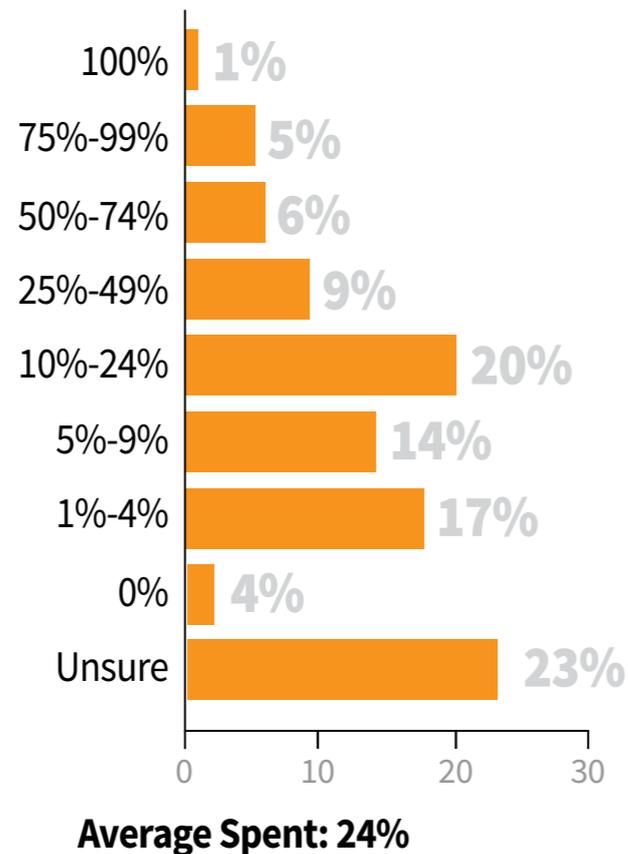


- ▶ A higher percentage of B2C marketers plan to increase their content marketing budget compared with last year (60% vs. 55%).
- ▶ B2C marketers will increase content marketing spend more so than their B2B counterparts (60% vs. 58%).
- ▶ 69% of the least effective B2C marketers plan to increase their spend, compared with 55% of the most effective.

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On average, 24% of B2C marketing budgets are allocated to content marketing.

### Percent of Total Marketing Budget Spent on B2C Content Marketing



- ▶ The most effective B2C marketers allocate 32% of their total budget to content marketing, while the least effective allocate 10%.
- ▶ Large B2C companies allocate 19% of their marketing budget to content marketing, while small B2C companies allocate 24%.

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# Large B2C companies outsource content creation more frequently than small B2C companies.

## Insourcing vs. Outsourcing of B2C Content Creation

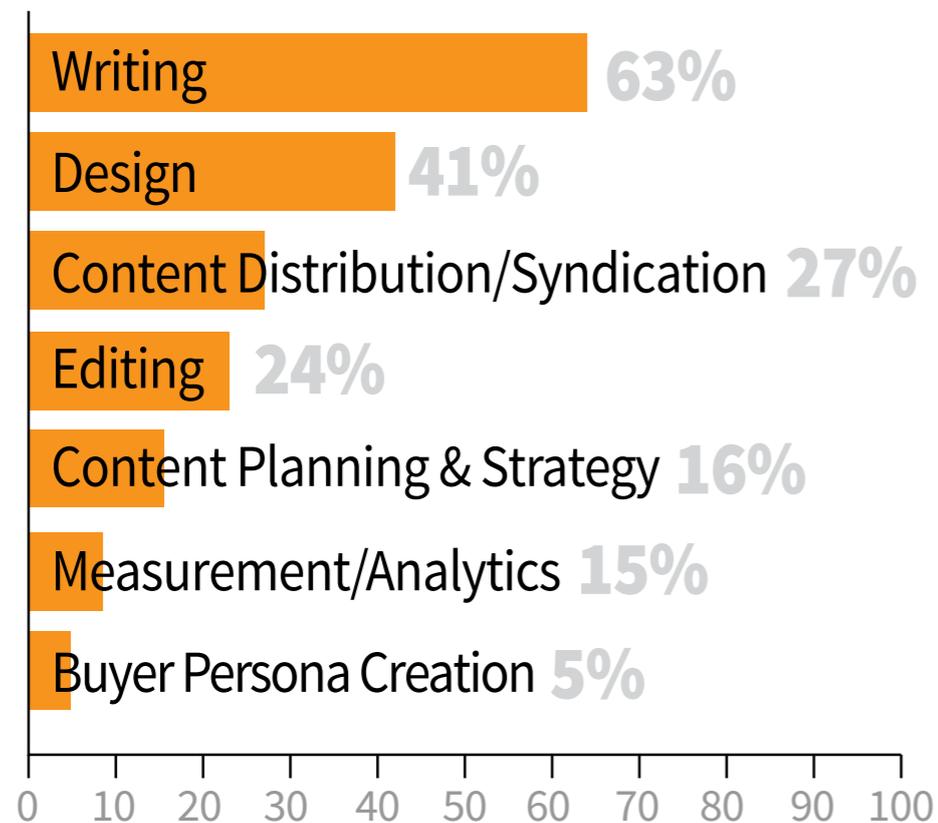
|                 | Overall/Average | Large Companies<br>(1,000+ Employees) | Small Companies<br>(10-99 Employees) |
|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| In-house Only   | 51%             | 35%                                   | 54%                                  |
| Outsourced Only | 2%              | 4%                                    | 1%                                   |
| Both            | 47%             | 61%                                   | 44%                                  |

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- ▶ B2C marketers overall are outsourcing slightly more than they did last year (49% vs. 47%).
- ▶ There are no substantial differences between how much content the most effective and least effective B2C marketers outsource.
- ▶ B2C marketers outsource content more often than their B2B counterparts do (49% vs. 44%).

# Writing and design are the functions most likely to be outsourced.

## Functions that B2C Marketers Outsource

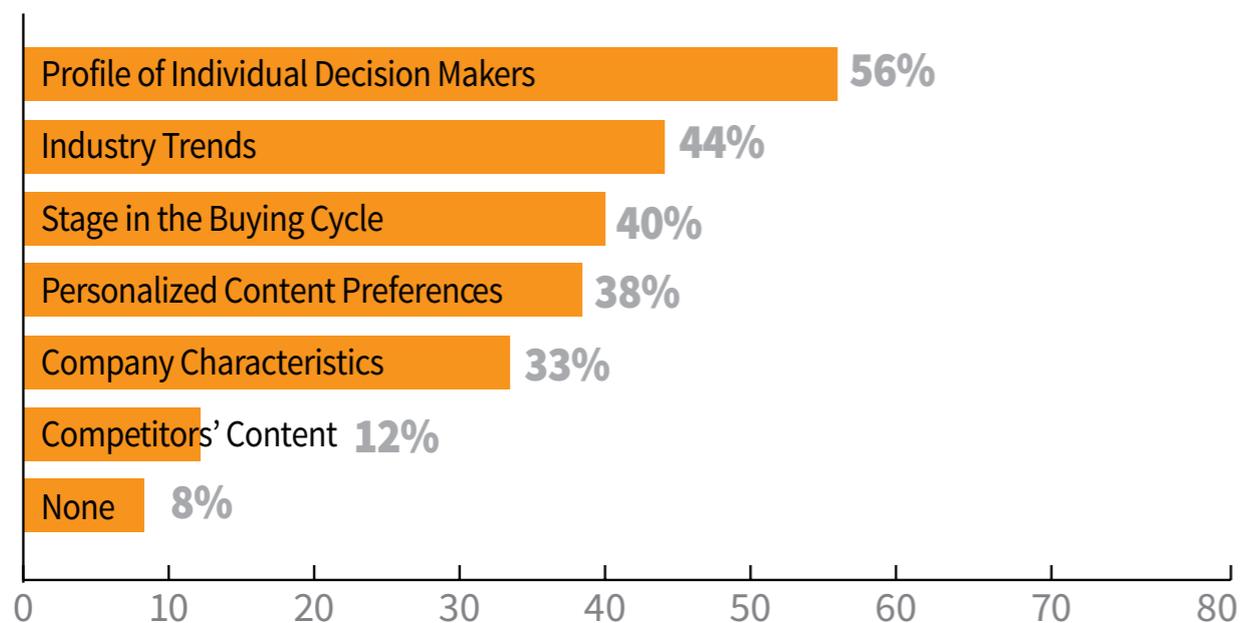


- ▶ The most effective B2C marketers are less likely to outsource most aspects of content marketing with one notable exception: 19% are more likely to outsource measurement and analytics, compared with 14% of their least effective peers.

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# B2C marketers most often tailor content based on profiles of individual decision makers.

## How B2C Organizations Tailor Content



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- ▶ 91% of B2C marketers segment their content in at least one way.
- ▶ B2B marketers tailor content more often than B2C marketers in every category listed here, with one exception: B2C marketers are more likely than their B2B counterparts to tailor content based on personalized content preferences (38% vs. 21%).

# Lack of budget, while still an issue, is no longer the top challenge for B2C content marketers.

## Challenges that B2C Content Marketers Face



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- ▶ The top three challenges last year were lack of budget (52%), producing enough content (51%), and producing the kind of content that engages (49%).
- ▶ B2C marketers are less challenged in all areas listed here than they were last year, except for lack of time (new this year), producing the kind of content that engages, and lack of buy-in/vision.

# Marketers at large companies face different challenges than marketers at small companies.

## Biggest B2C Content Marketing Challenge (by Company Size)

|   | Large Companies<br>(1,000+ Employees) | Small Companies<br>(10-99 Employees) |
|---|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Producing the Kind of Content that Engages      | 16%                                   | 13%                                  |
| Lack of Buy-in/Vision                           | 15%                                   | 7%                                   |
| Lack of Integration Across Marketing            | 14%                                   | 0%                                   |
| Lack of Time                                    | 14%                                   | 24%                                  |
| Lack of Budget                                  | 7%                                    | 16%                                  |
| Lack of Knowledge and Training                  | 5%                                    | 7%                                   |
| Producing Enough Content                        | 5%                                    | 10%                                  |
| Inability to Measure Content Effectiveness      | 4%                                    | 9%                                   |
| Producing a Variety of Content                  | 3%                                    | 0%                                   |
| Lack of Integration Across HR                   | 3%                                    | 0%                                   |
| Finding Trained Content Marketing Professionals | 0%                                    | 4%                                   |

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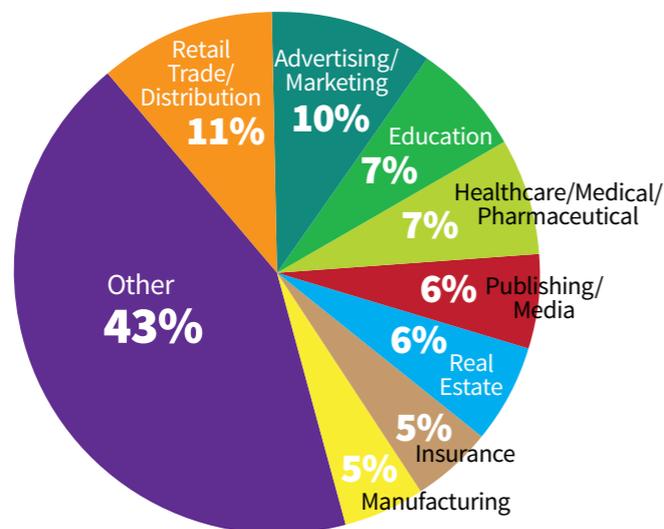
## DEMOGRAPHICS

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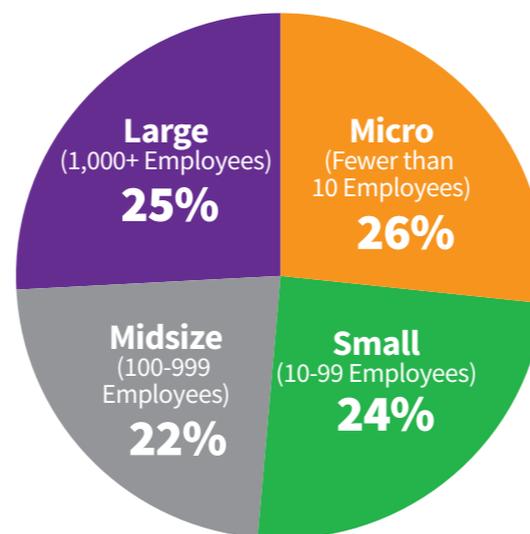
The fourth annual Content Marketing Survey, from which the results of this report were generated, was mailed electronically to a sample of marketers using lists from Content Marketing Institute, MarketingProfs, Brightcove, Blackbaud, King Content, The Association for Data-driven Marketing & Advertising (ADMA), the Direct Marketing Association UK (DMA), *Industry Week*, and *New Equipment Digest*. A total of 4,397 recipients from around the globe—representing a full range of industries, functional areas, and company sizes—responded throughout July and August 2013.

*B2C Content Marketing: 2014 Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends—North America* reports on the findings from 307 (out of the total 4,397) respondents who identified themselves as B2C marketers in North America.

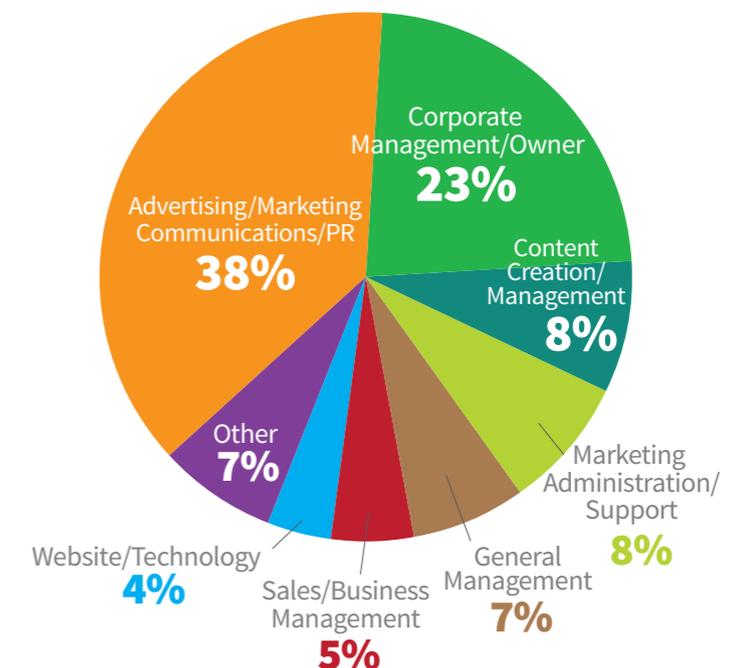
### B2C Industry Classification



### Size of B2C Company (by Employees)



### B2C Job Title/Function



### About Content Marketing Institute:

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](#), the largest content marketing-focused event, is held every September, and [Content Marketing World Sydney](#), every March. 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. CMI is a 2012 and 2013 Inc. 500 company. View all original CMI research at [www.contentmarketinginstitute.com/research](http://www.contentmarketinginstitute.com/research).

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Imagination creates original custom content that's guided by thoughtful strategy, powered by big ideas, and executed flawlessly. Founded 19 years ago by James E. Meyers, president and CEO, Imagination delivers strategic, integrated content marketing programs for more than 20 blue-chip clients and associations. Today, Imagination employs nearly 100 full-time content marketing professionals, including editors, strategists, community managers, analysts, developers, and designers. Company capabilities include content strategy and planning, custom magazine publishing, digital content and design, social media strategy, video, community management, and marketing automation. We listen to you. We connect with your audience. We create content marketing programs that will achieve your business objectives.