

IMPRESSION

THE MARKETING LANDSCAPE IN 2026



Towards the end of 2025, we surveyed 1,000 marketing professionals to understand the challenges in the marketing landscape over the past 12 months and what businesses plan to do in 2026. We gathered responses from a mix of levels, from middle management to C-Level executives, across various industries, including automotive, FMCG, fashion, professional services and more.

This report shares our findings and allows you to benchmark your business and see how you compare to those of a similar size.

Gain insights into:

- The biggest business challenges marketers anticipate facing
- The marketing activities that are predicted to drive the most revenue
- The areas in which additional investments will be made
- How marketers are measuring the success of their efforts



77%

of businesses expect revenue growth

69%

expect to increase their marketing budget

54%

plan to grow their internal marketing team

44%

say that having a clear marketing plan is the key to success

54%

use audience segments to personalise marketing activity

55%

plan to increase investment in creative performance assets

Contents

WHO DID WE SURVEY?	03
MARKETING PERFORMANCE IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS	
→ Competition and Cost Challenges	05
→ Aligning Channels and Teams is Key	07
→ Organic Channels Lead Revenue	09
→ Social Media dominates both engagement and reach	12
→ AI Overviews & LLMs positively impact traffic	15
MARKETING PERFORMANCE IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS	
→ Revenue, Profit, and Market Share are top 2026 goals	17
→ Marketers predict 2026 revenue growth	18
→ Majority of marketers expect budget increases	19
→ Brand-Building activity to see largest investment	20
→ Mobile, Content, and Performance Creative investment rises	22
→ Organic and AI Channels to Drive Revenue	24
→ Marketing teams set to grow	26
→ Outsourcing set for multiple channels	27
→ In-House teams remain dominant	29
MARKETING MEASUREMENT & TECHNOLOGY	
→ AI and Automation to provide greater data insights	30
→ CLV and MMM track campaign effectiveness	31
→ CDPs and AI Tools power marketing goals	32
→ Personalisation focuses on audience segmentation	34
THE KEY TO SUCCESS IN 2026	35

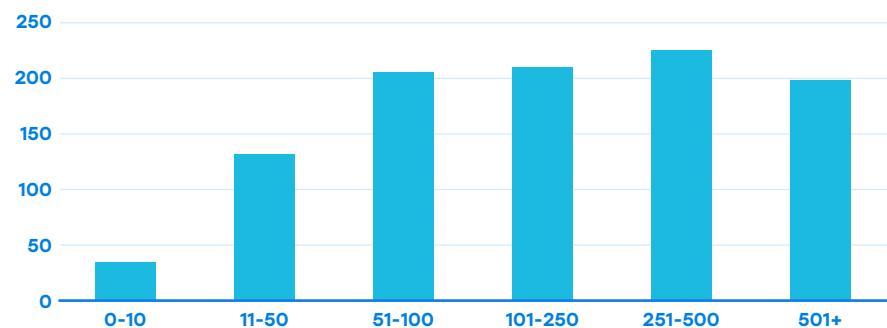
Who did we survey?

Survey data was collected from over 1000 individuals working in 'Marketing and Sales' and 'Advertising' roles in October 2025.

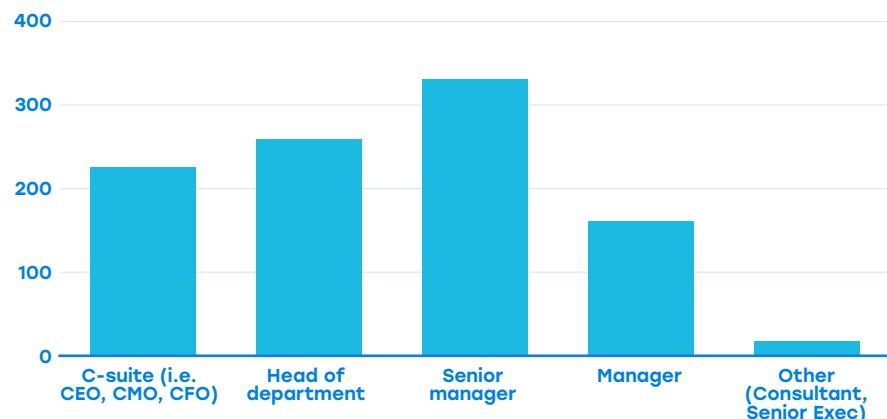
Respondents are UK-based.



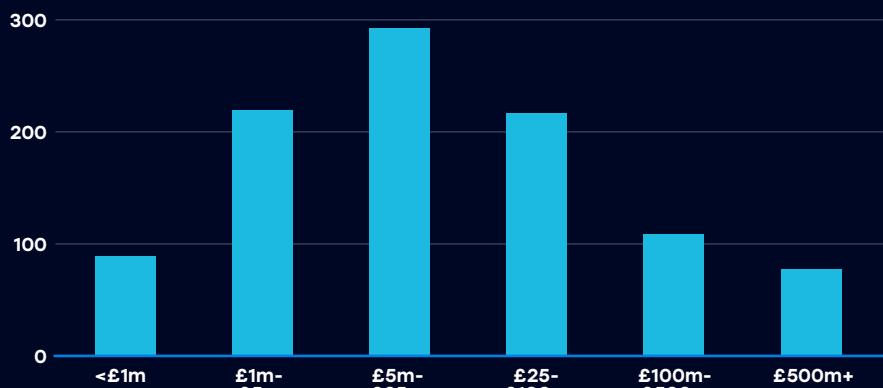
BUSINESS SIZE BY HEADCOUNT



ROLE IN BUSINESS



BUSINESS SIZE BY REVENUE



INDUSTRY SECTORS



Executive Summary

"This time last year, AI was, at best, a mystery; at worst, a threat. This year, it's fast

becoming the operating context, and only a handful of marketing teams are ready for it

We're now seeing what happens when AI shifts from a talking point to an actual delivery layer. Content output is scaling, search is changing shape, and organic visibility is being rebuilt around environments that don't always send traffic to your site. But most plans still look like they did two years ago. SEO is treated as a channel, not a discovery system. Creative is produced for volume, but not built to last. Measurement is still anchored to platform metrics that reward activity, not impact.

It's not a lack of investment; budgets are increasing, creative spend is increasing, and teams are growing. The question is whether that spend is attached to a model that knows how to make use of it. Integration remains the biggest challenge across the board, not because teams don't know what

good looks like, but because strategic planning and delivery still aren't joined up. The strategy sits in a slide deck; the activity runs IRL, somewhere else.

We're also seeing the limits of performance measurement that stop at CPA. More teams are referencing lifetime value, incrementality, and media mix modelling, but still too few are operationalising them. This isn't about tooling. It's about the questions being asked at the planning stage, and whether there's any intent to measure marketing's actual contribution to growth, rather than just its efficiency in-platform.

Creative production is heading in the right direction. Platforms demand variety, and most teams now recognise that scaling assets isn't optional. But reach alone

isn't enough. Brand consistency still matters. Memory still matters. And without the right systems in place, volume will just accelerate creative fatigue.

If last year was about disruption, this year is about response. Marketing maturity in 2026 will be defined by operational structure: which decisions get made, by whom, and based on what evidence. That's what will separate marketing that remains a line on the spreadsheet from marketing that fuels the ambitions of the business."

- CLAIRE ELSWORTH

Strategy Director at Impression



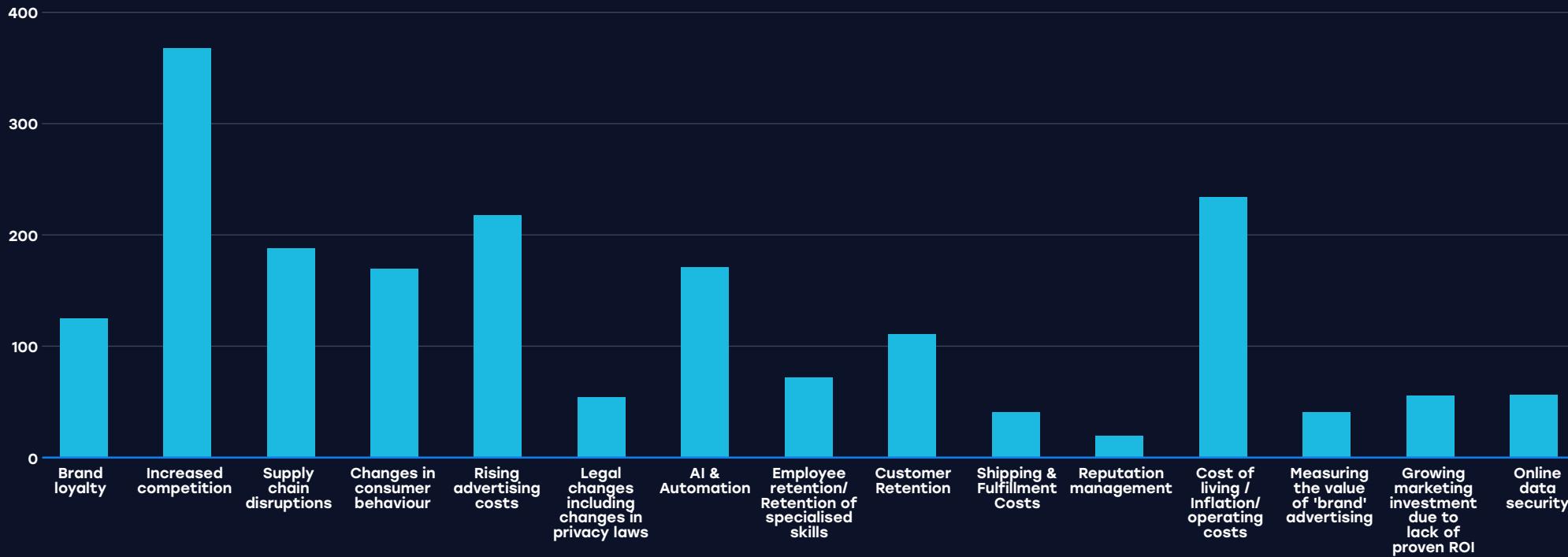
Increased competition and cost of living continue to be a challenge for businesses

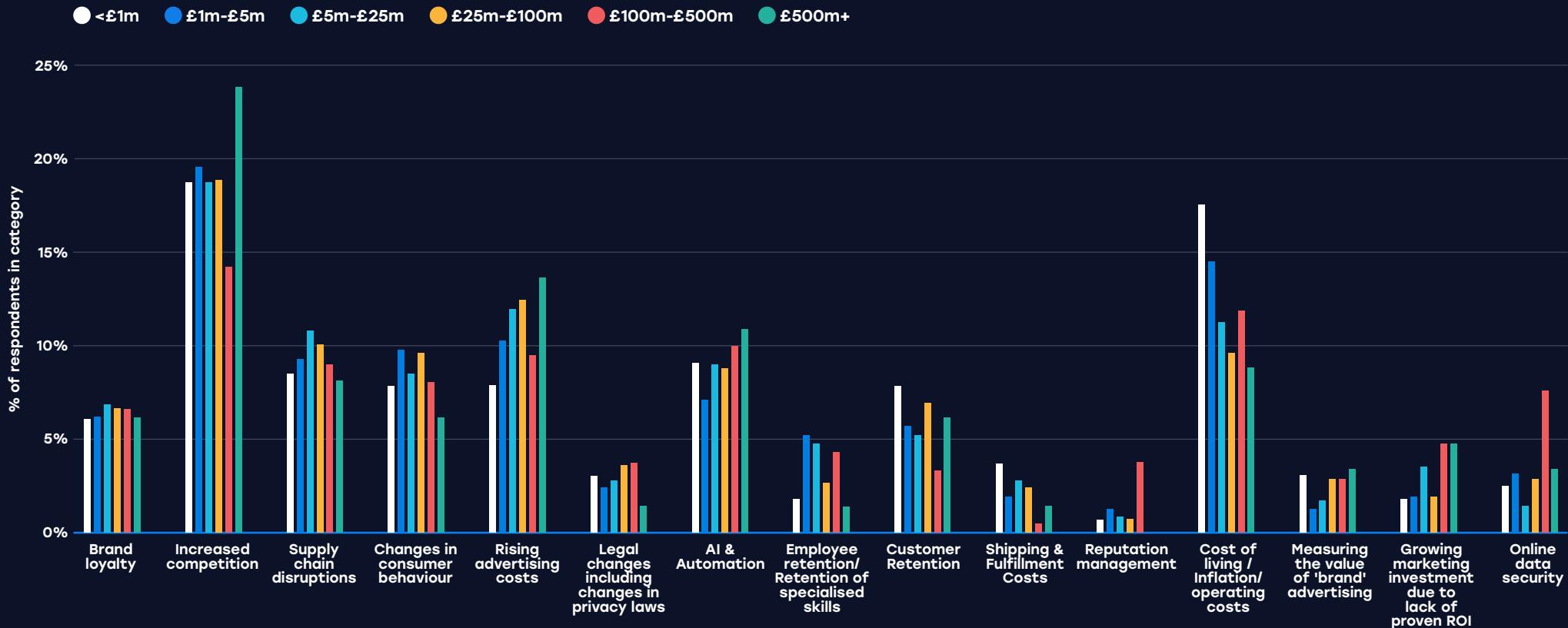
We asked our respondents to reflect on the biggest challenges their business faced in 2025.

The majority said that increased competition, alongside the cost of living/inflation. Those within the £500m+ bracket said they felt the most pressure from increased competition within their sector, whilst smaller-sized businesses said they suffered the most from the cost of living, inflation, and operating costs. Online data security was a breakout for those within the £100m - £500m bracket, highlighting the impact of how data breaches can affect brand trust and image.

WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE HAVE BEEN YOUR TWO BIGGEST CHALLENGES IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS?*

*Respondents were asked to choose up to two



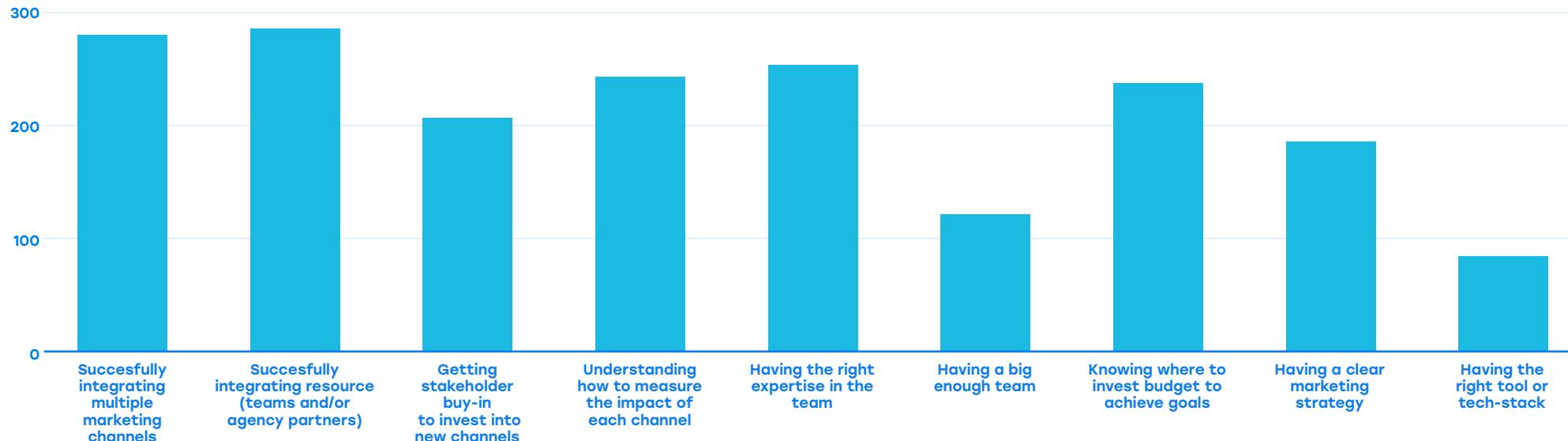


Integrating channels and teams is front of mind when planning & executing marketing activity

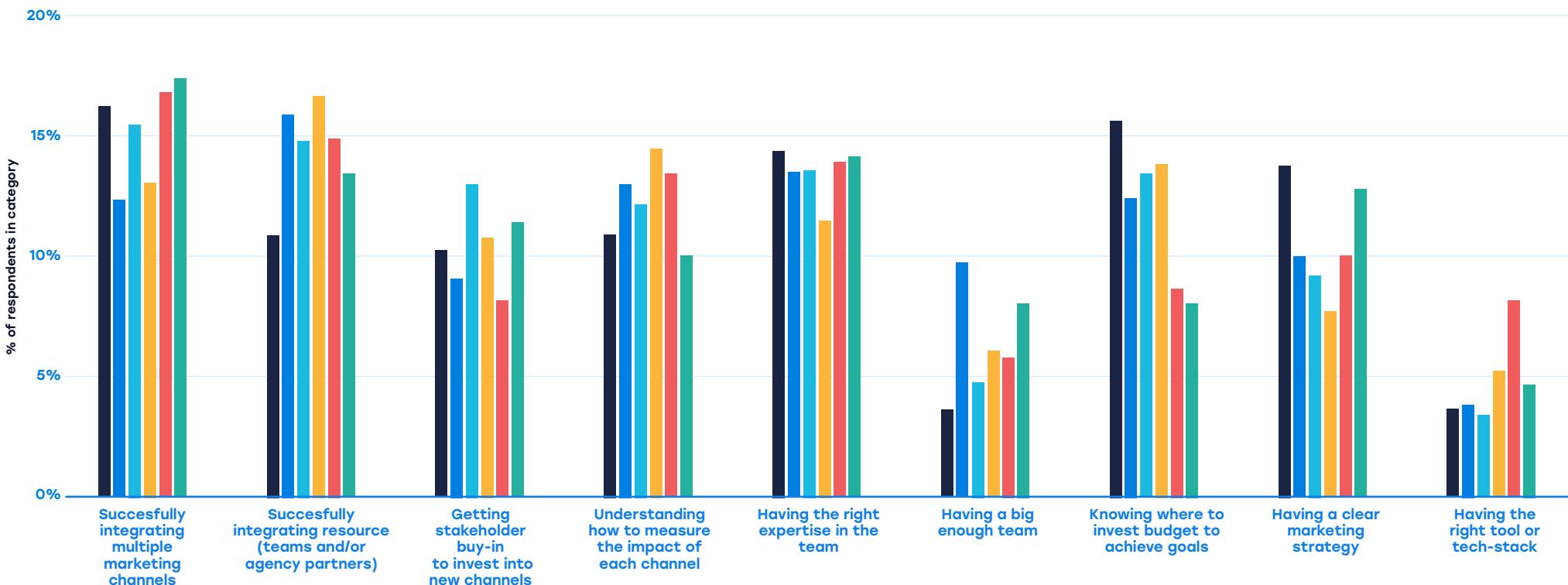
We asked our respondents to reflect on the biggest challenges when it came to planning and executing their marketing activity in 2025.

It was agreed unanimously that across businesses, the biggest challenges they faced were successfully integrating multiple marketing channels alongside integrating resources, such as teams and agency partners. For smaller businesses, they were more likely to struggle knowing where to best invest their budget to achieve their goals, alongside having a clear marketing strategy. Having the right expertise within teams and understanding how to measure the impact of each channel have also been concerns for marketers in the past 12 months.

WHAT WERE THE TWO BIGGEST CHALLENGES IN PLANNING AND EXECUTING YOUR MARKETING ACTIVITY IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS?*



*Respondents were asked to select up to two



CLAIRE ELSWORTH
Strategy Director

“Integration problems are usually about ownership. It’s easy(ish) to build a multi-channel plan, much harder to get teams, partners and platforms aligned behind a shared vision, objectives and timelines. If the challenge is integration, the fix is better coordination between strategic and delivery teams. Siloed channel leads will instinctively want to prove their value and secure more budget for their channel, but the real value comes in playing to their strengths and building an incrementally stronger plan which is greater than the sum of its parts.”

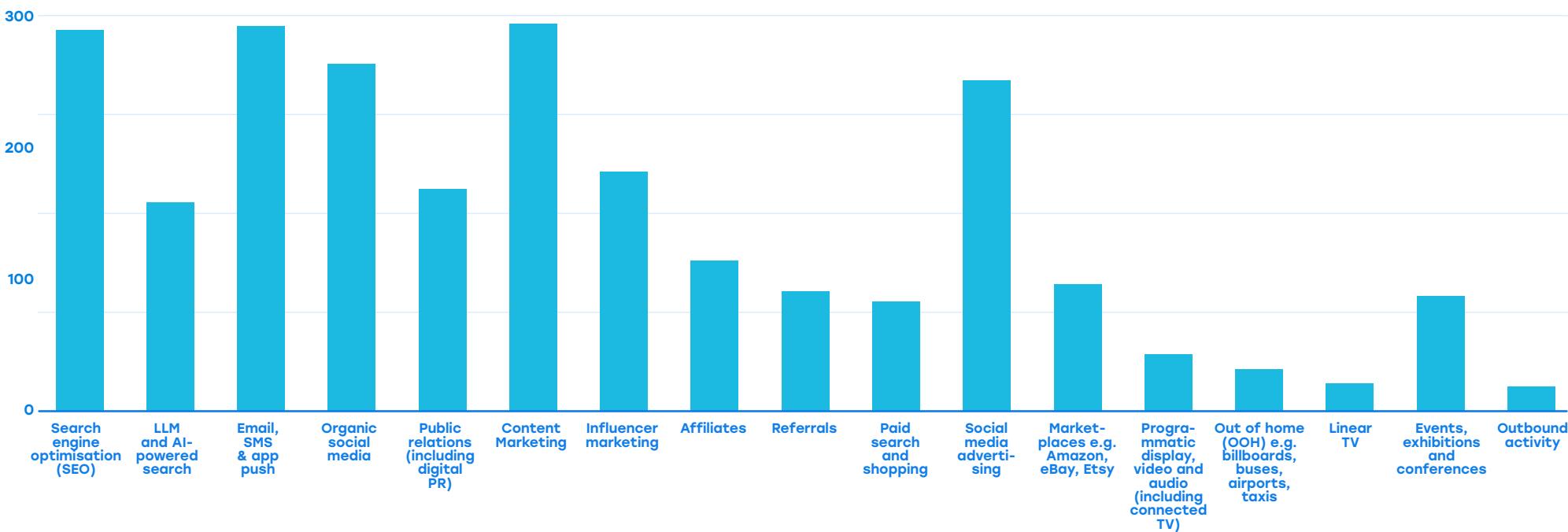
Organic channels shoot to the top as the biggest revenue drivers

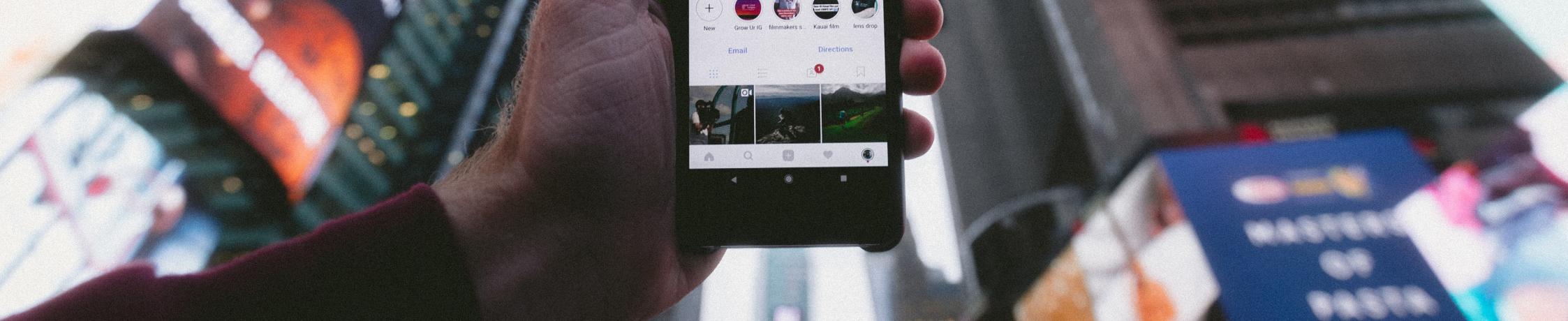
We asked marketers what their largest revenue drivers over the last 12 months were.

The top-voted channels were Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) and Content Marketing. This was closely followed by Email, SMS & app push and Social Media Advertising, which had seen success with businesses within the >£1m to £25-£100m brackets. Compared to previous years, social media advertising has fallen significantly as one of the most effective channels for driving revenue.

WHICH CHANNELS DROVE THE MOST REVENUE FOR YOUR BUSINESS IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS?*

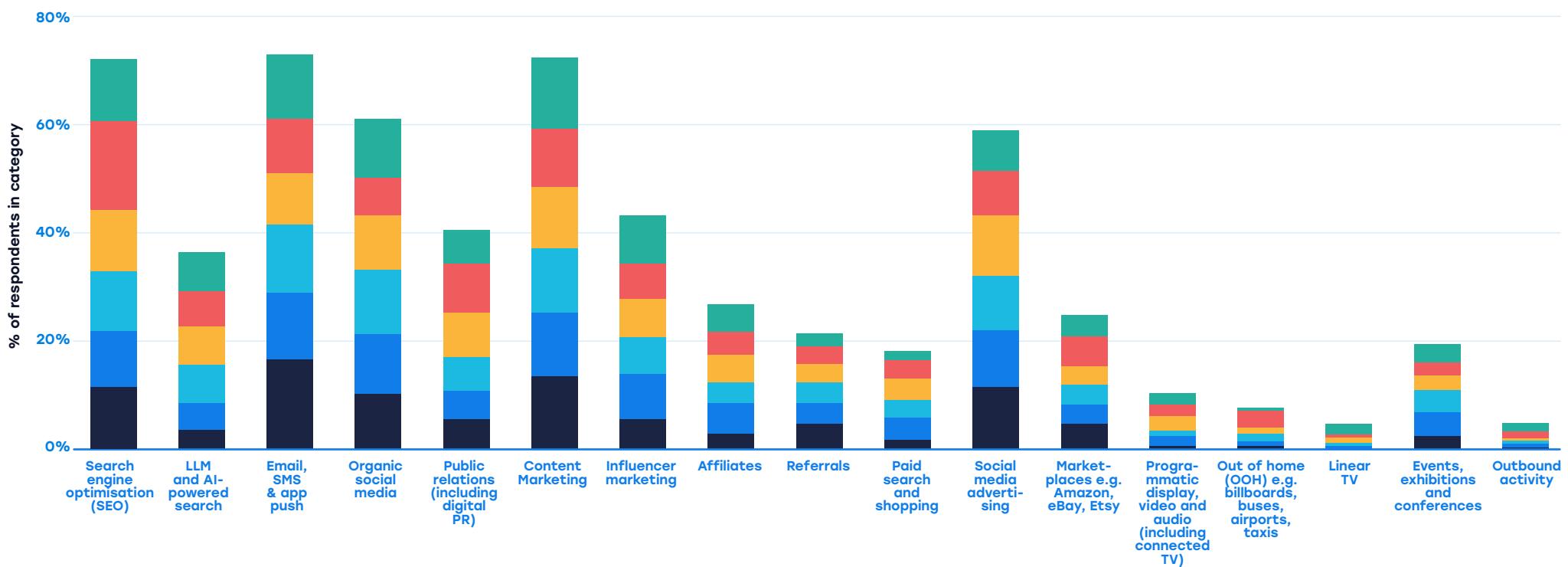
*Respondents were asked to select up to three





● <£1m ● £1m-£5m ● £5m-£25m ● £25m-£100m ● £100m-£500m ● £500m+

*Respondents were asked to select up to three



“

“It’s no surprise to see organic channels rising again as a leading revenue driver, especially against a backdrop of increasing paid media costs and more diverse opportunities to attract organic traffic.

However, revenue only tells part of the story. For established brands, a large portion of organic performance often comes from branded searches.

While valuable, marketers should focus on growing non-brand traffic; that's where organic marketing truly proves its worth.

Reviewing your Search Console data to understand how users are discovering your site beyond brand queries can uncover powerful opportunities for long-term growth.”



CHARLIE NORLEDGE
Head of SEO Performance

“

“The market is rebalancing as rising acquisition costs drive brands to prioritise their organic foundations. Being discoverable, genuinely useful, and building a compelling narrative are now key to success.

This doesn't diminish paid media, which works best amplifying an already strong foundation, not creating strength alone. The shift emphasises the critical need for earned, owned, and organic content to work together, delivering sustained visibility and trust.

For PR and social teams, this underscores the value of consistency, credibility, and authority-building. While slower to establish, these organic returns are ultimately more resilient and efficient over the long term.”

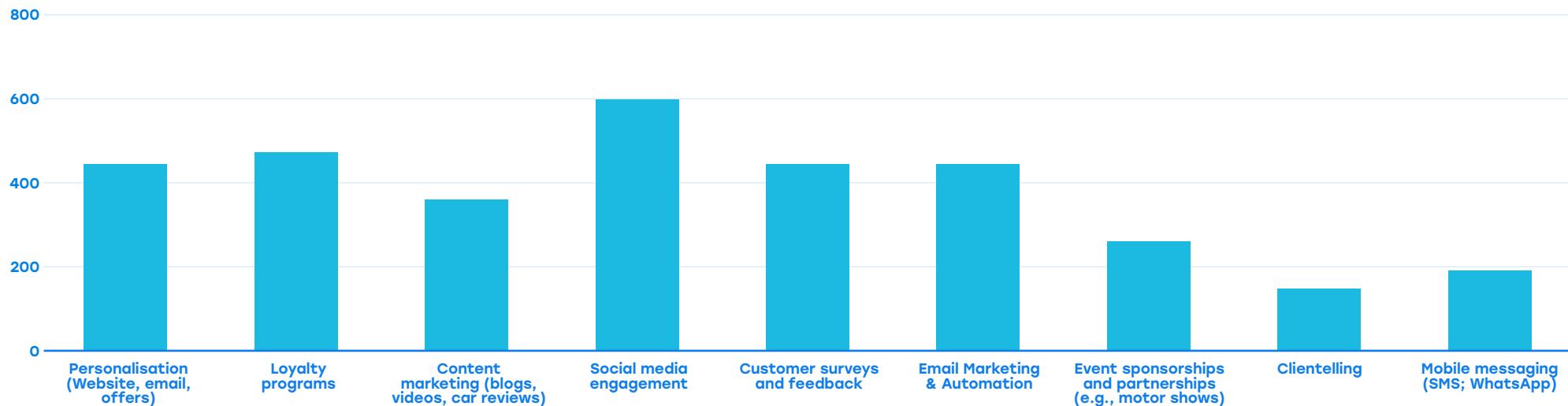


HANNAH CRAIG
Head of PR & Social

Social Media dominates both engagement and reach

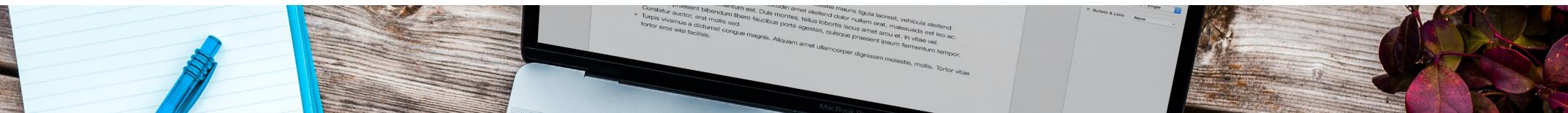
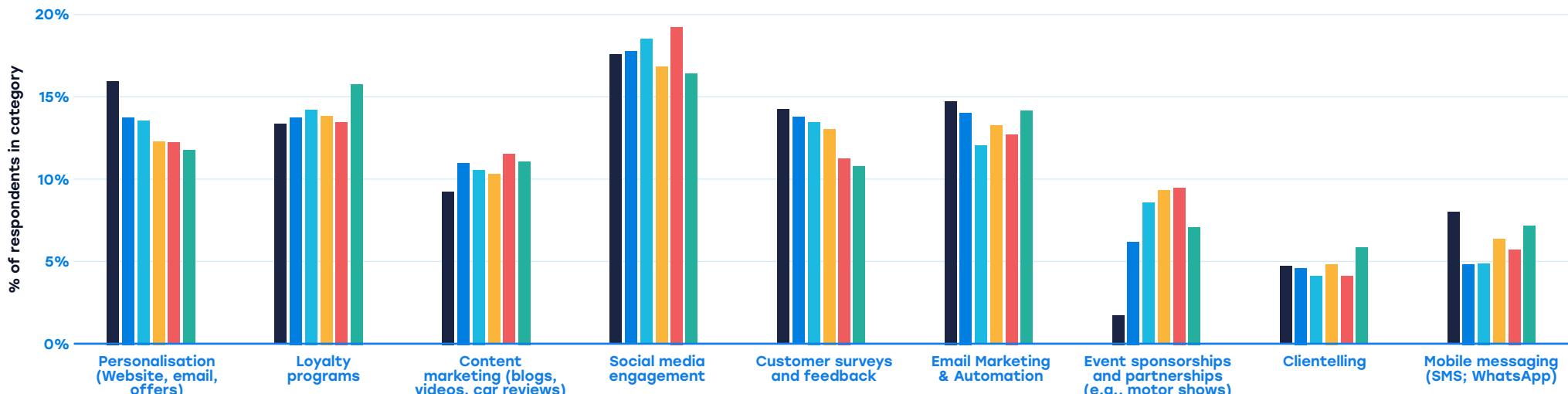
To understand how marketers forge deep, lasting relationships with customers, we asked them about the engagement strategies they use to build loyalty and advocacy through meaningful interactions.

WHAT ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES HAVE YOU USED TO BUILD RETENTION/LOYALTY, ADVOCACY IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS?*



*Respondents were asked to choose all that apply

Across all revenue brackets, the majority of respondents chose Social Media as a key channel for audience engagement. Social media is one of the easiest ways to do this, versus mobile SMS messaging, as the infrastructure to do this is free to use and accessible for businesses to use at scale. It is also the easiest way for businesses to have 1-2-1 interactions with their customers, not just having one-way communication through personalised emails. Larger companies with over £500+ in revenue are more likely to rely on using loyalty programs to engage with customers, whilst smaller businesses adopt personalised messages on their website and email communications.



When asked about what social media platforms businesses' audiences are most active on, respondents' top chosen platforms were Instagram and Facebook, making up a full 45% of all platforms on the list. YouTube and TikTok are the second-largest non-Meta social media platforms where businesses find their audience most active. TikTok has driven social media platforms into becoming video-focused, with platforms like Instagram and Facebook adopting TikTok-style features in an attempt to adapt to the changing landscape, and with Meta's more sophisticated **paid advertising capabilities**, this seems to have remained one of the more popular platforms to engage with audiences. YouTube has always been a video-led platform, but the adoption of YouTube Shorts and advertising capabilities for YouTube Shorts has tapped into pre-existing audiences on YouTube.

“

“It isn't surprising that Meta is still dominant. Their strength isn't just audience size. Although precise targeting is harder - Meta's sophisticated algorithm rewards brands that produce diversified creative at scale.

Watch out for big shifts in 2026 with Meta's pivot to 'agentic commerce'. By integrating AI-powered agents directly into WhatsApp and Messenger for business, Meta is closing the loop. They're connecting discovery (on FB/IG) directly to personalised, seamless conversion and support (all via chat) - owning the entire customer journey.

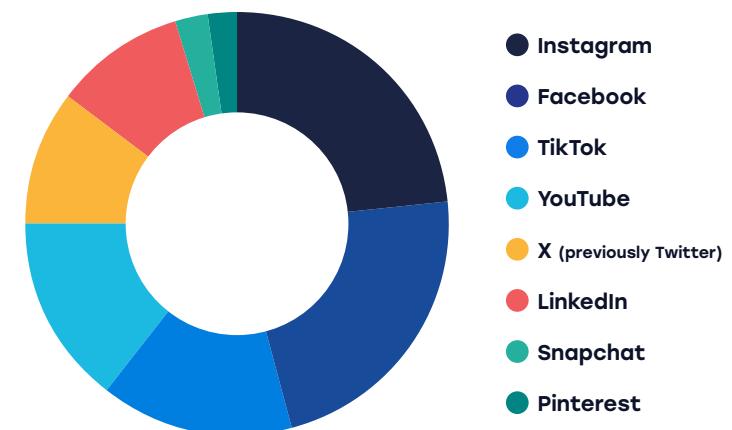
The pace of audience adoption is the key question - it's the go-to channel in many regions worldwide, but still relatively niche in EMEA and US.”



AMY STAMPER,
Head of Paid Social



ON WHICH SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS IS YOUR AUDIENCE THE MOST ACTIVE?

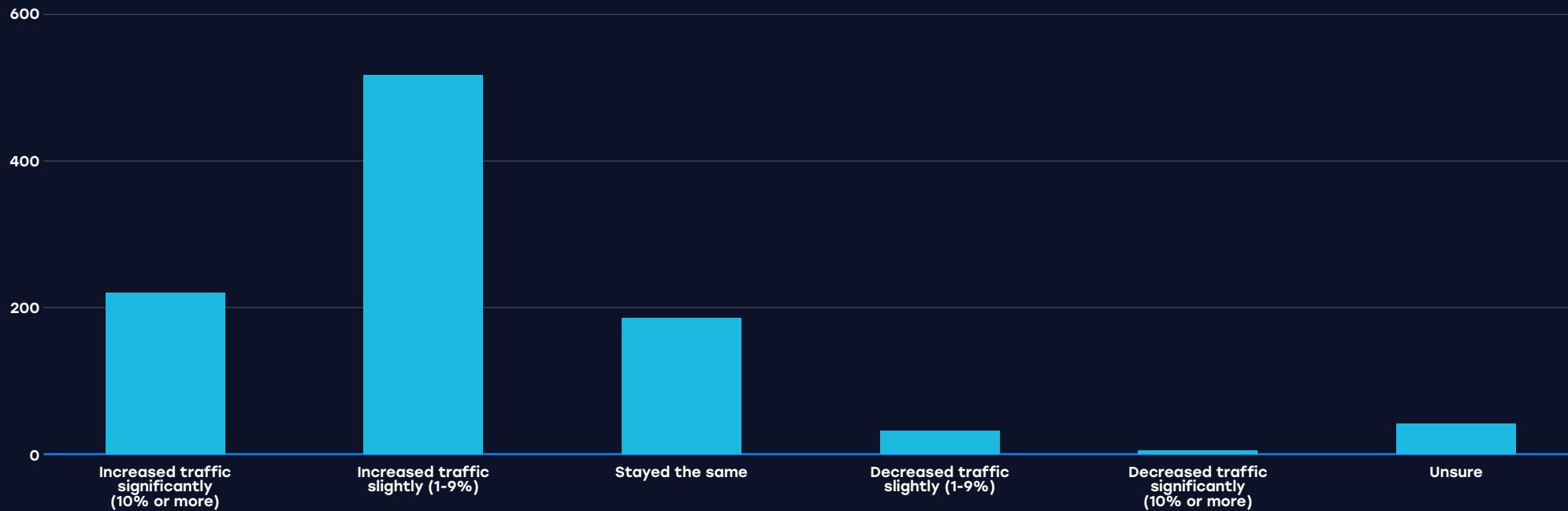


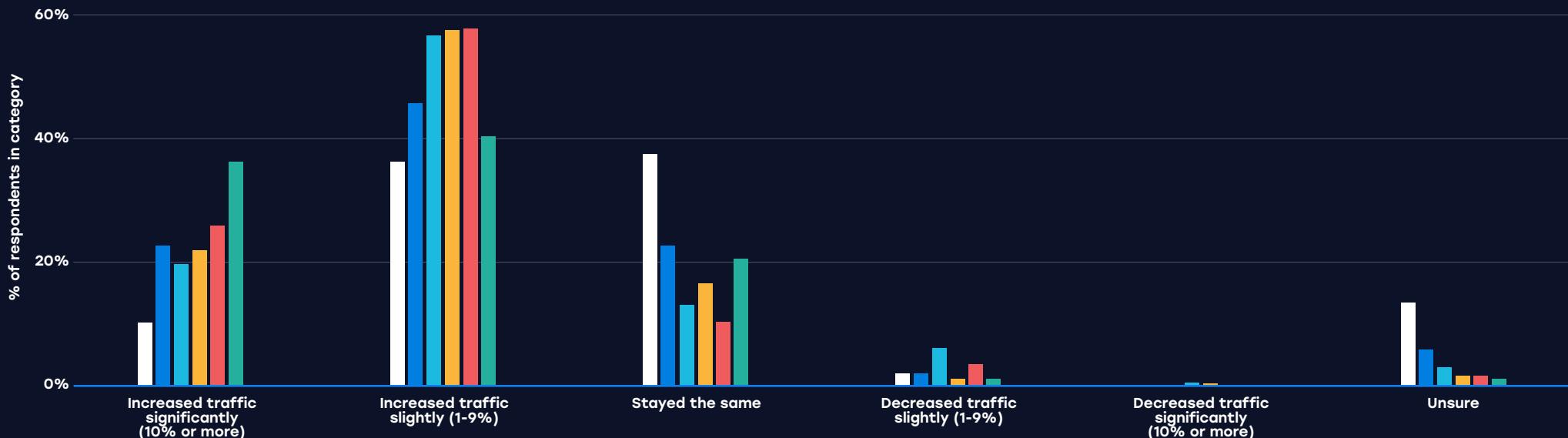
AI Overviews and LLMs have impacted over half of businesses in the last 12 months

AI is changing the way we search, and in the past 12 months, there have been multiple updates to search engines, such as Google, that have impacted businesses online.

AI Mode and [AI Overviews](#) mean that audiences can have answers without even clicking onto a website, however, more than half (52%) have reported a slight increase in overall traffic.

HOW HAVE ADVANCEMENTS SUCH AS AI OVERVIEWS AND LLMS IMPACTED YOUR ORGANIC SEARCH TRAFFIC?*





CHARLIE NORLEDGE
Head of SEO Performance

“AI Overviews and other LLM-powered search experiences mark one of the most significant shifts in organic search in recent years. It’s not all positive, as we’ve seen noticeable click declines for businesses that rely heavily on informational content.

Optimising for AI isn’t an exact science, but many of the traditional organic fundamentals still apply:

- **Building a strong brand that earns consistent off-site coverage**
- **Creating content that genuinely resonates with your audience**
- **Addressing gaps where you might not have the right content to a user's question**
- **Maintaining a fast and accessible website contributes significantly to stronger performance in an AI-driven search landscape.”**

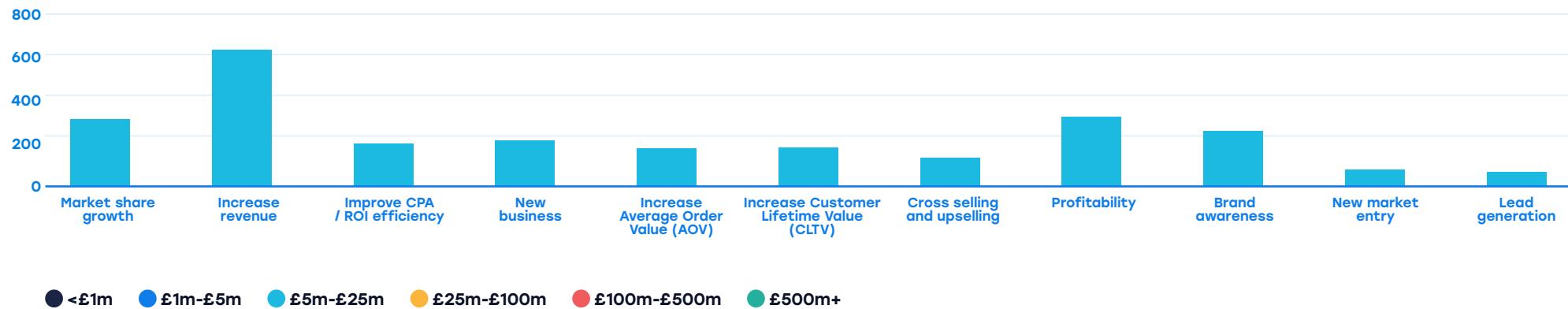
Revenue, profitability, and market share are positioned as the top objectives for 2026

Setting key business objectives is important in understanding and setting KPIs for all sales and marketing activity.

Whilst it is unsurprising to see revenue, profitability, and growth in market share to be positioned at the top, it is interesting to see that larger businesses are also keeping CPA/ROI efficiency, average order value and customer lifetime value in mind. On the other hand, smaller businesses are keen on acquiring new business and increasing brand awareness.

WHAT IS YOUR BUSINESS OBJECTIVE FOR THE NEXT 12 MONTHS?*

*Respondents were asked to select up to three



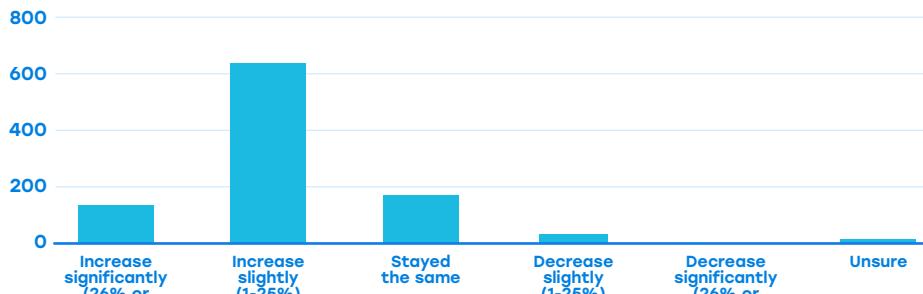
● <£1m ● £1m-£5m ● £5m-£25m ● £25m-£100m ● £100m-£500m ● £500m+



8 out of 10 marketers predict revenue growth in 2026

77% of respondents said that they expect their business to grow in 2025. 63% of respondents said they expect a slight increase (1-25%), whilst only 13% said they would see a significant increase (26%+). This is an 8% drop in confidence compared to last year's stats, where 85% of marketers expected revenue growth.

DO YOU EXPECT YOUR ORGANISATION'S ANNUAL REVENUE TO CHANGE IN THE NEXT 12 MONTHS?



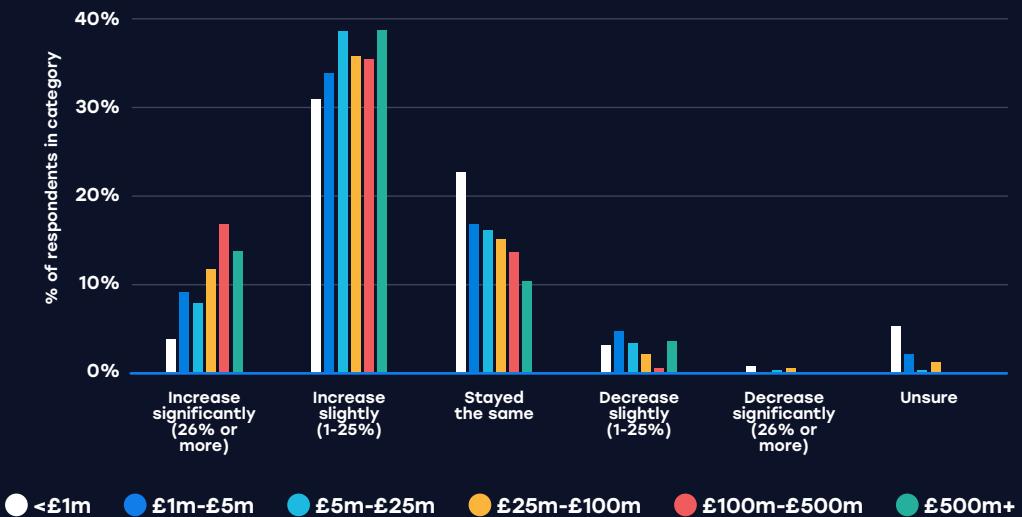
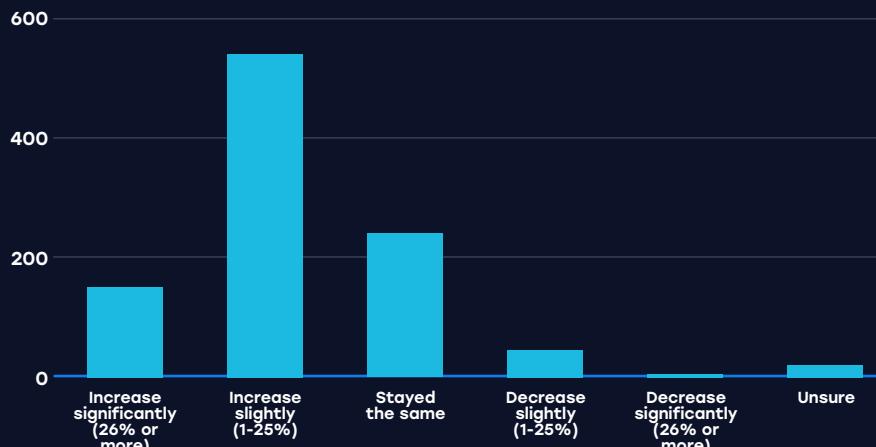
MIKEY EMERY
Commercial Director

"Marketers are notoriously optimistic, so high growth predictions are expected, despite the slight dip in confidence. While growth is certainly on the table for the coming years, it won't be universally achieved. Success will be reserved for those businesses that invest heavily in ensuring a leading product offering as their foundation. From there, they must proactively drive themselves through a robust digital maturity roadmap to efficiently outmanoeuvre competitors online. This disciplined investment in product quality and digital capability will be the key differentiator for realising revenue expectations in 2026 and beyond."

The majority of marketers will see budgets increase

As advertising costs continue to increase, it is expected to see marketing budgets follow. This was shown with 53% of respondents saying that they expect marketing budgets to increase slightly (1-25%), yet a smaller percentage (24%) will see their marketing budgets stay the same. Larger business sizes are more likely to see significant increases in marketing budgets, whilst smaller companies are more likely to keep their marketing budgets the same.

DO YOU EXPECT YOUR MARKETING BUDGET TO CHANGE IN THE NEXT 12 MONTHS?



CLAIRE ELSWORTH
Strategy Director

"We know that reach is one of the most important contributors to marketing effectiveness, but more budget doesn't automatically mean more impact. The value is in what you do with it, ensuring you're delivering the most impactful message in the media you're buying"

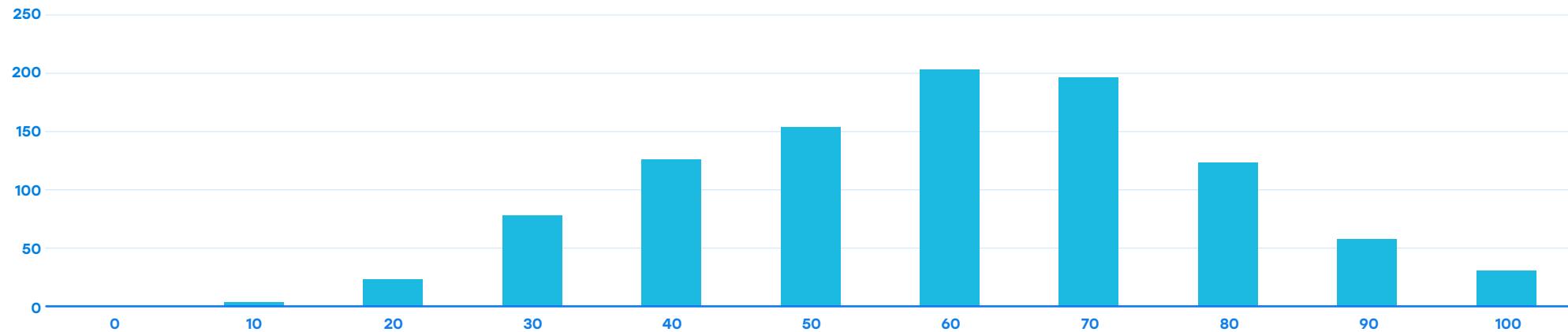
Brand-building activity is expected to be invested in the most

As famously covered in [The Long and the Short of it: Balancing Short and Long-Term Marketing Strategies](#) by Les Binet and Peter Field, brands need to balance long-term brand building with short-term sales activation to achieve maximum and sustainable profit growth. For most consumer brands, the most effective balance is spending approximately 60%

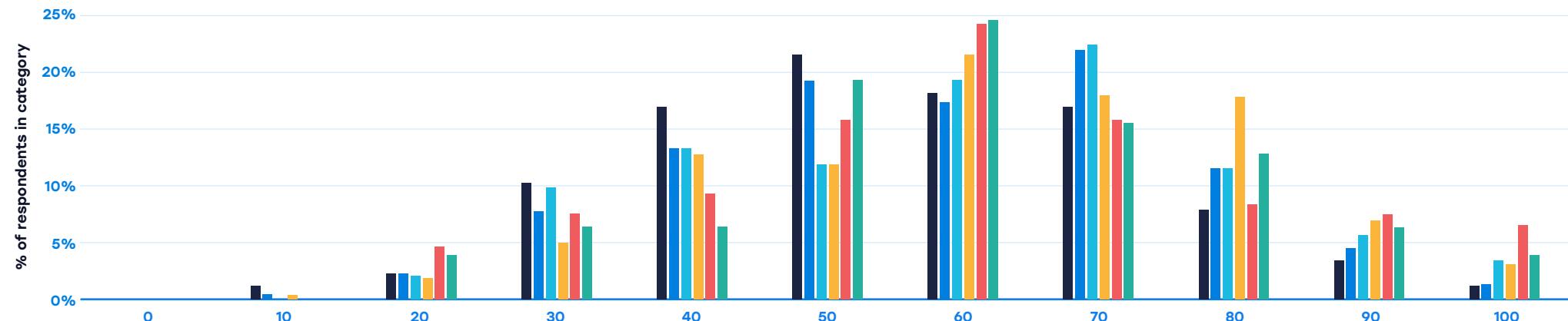
of the budget on long-term brand building (primarily driving mental availability and broad reach) and 40% on short-term sales activation (driving immediate response and purchases). Whilst it is the average benchmark, it isn't fit for purpose for all businesses; brands must use their own data to determine what split best works for them.

With this in mind, we asked respondents where they plan to invest their budgets between brand-building and performance marketing. Most businesses responded with a 60:40 or a 70:30 split. It was found that smaller businesses would invest more heavily in short-term performance marketing, whilst larger businesses would have a more balanced split.

WHAT IS THE APPROXIMATE SPLIT OF YOUR MARKETING BUDGET BETWEEN BRAND-BUILDING ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE MARKETING?



● <£1m ● £1m-£5m ● £5m-£25m ● £25m-£100m ● £100m-£500m ● £500m+

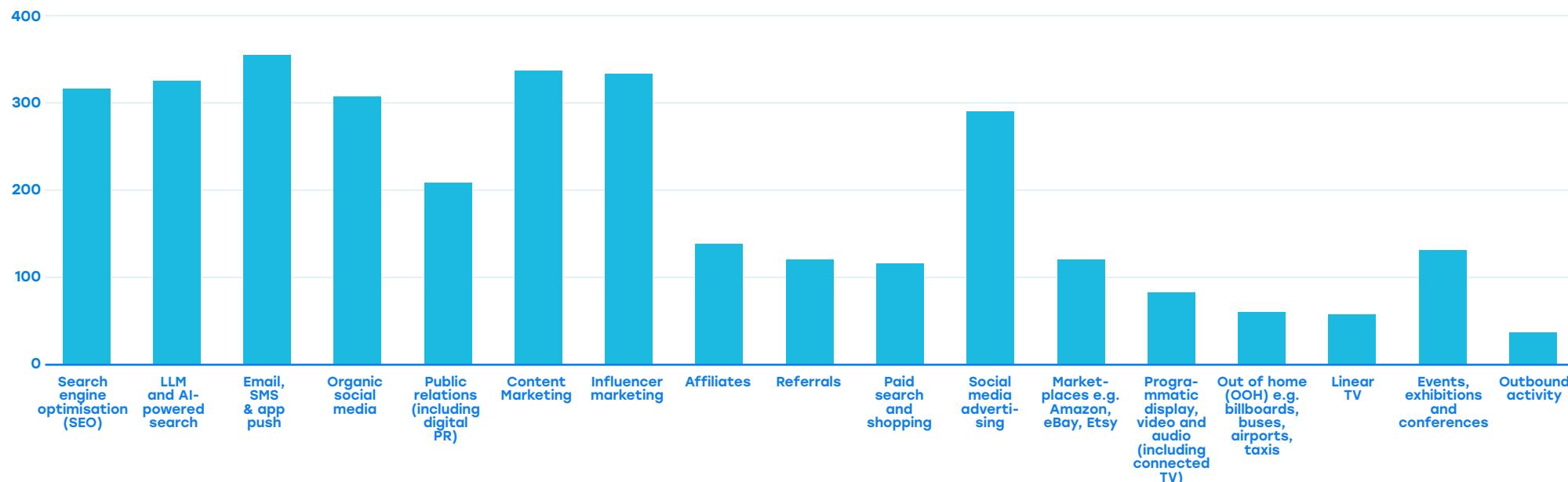


CLAIRE ELSWORTH
Strategy Director

"More marketers leaning into brand investment is a positive shift - too much overreliance on performance tactics alone will eventually lead to "overfishing" - once you've exhausted your in-market audience, you'll find it harder and harder to maintain those metrics you've become used to. Smaller brands focusing on performance aren't necessarily short-sighted; it may just be appropriate to their stage. The key is being intentional. Use your own evidence to justify the balance, rather than relying on rules of thumb."

Mobile, content and performance creative set to receive greater investment

FOR WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING MARKETING CHANNELS DO YOU PLAN TO INCREASE INVESTMENT IN THE NEXT 12 MONTHS?*



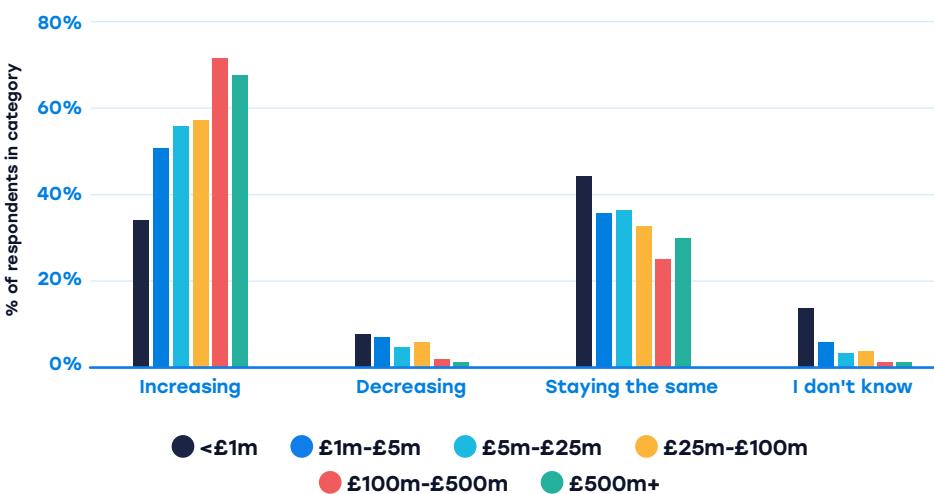
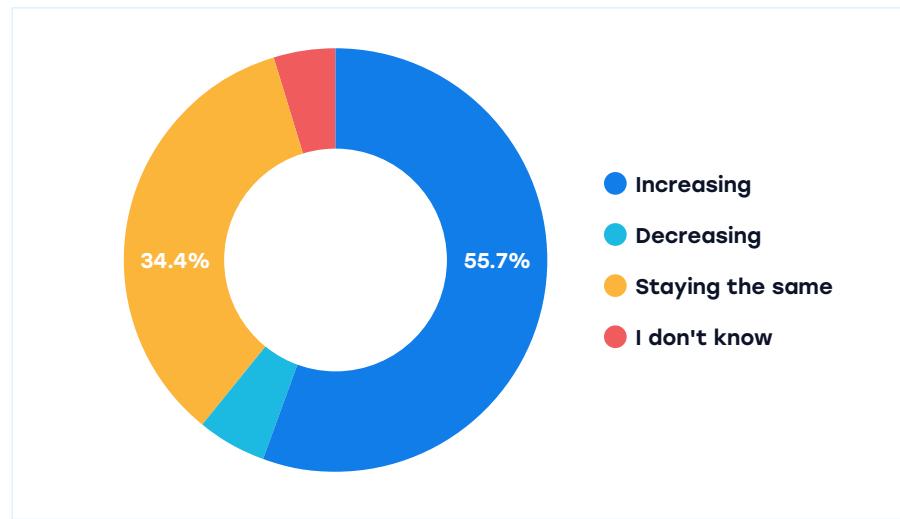
*Respondents were asked to choose all that apply



ISABELLA SPOONER
Head of Strategy

"If you're reading this, chances are your phone isn't far away, you might even be reading on it right now. We don't have to wait to turn on the TV or search online to see ads anymore; they find us where we already are. It's easy to see why mobile continues to be a focus for brands - we're not just scrolling passively, we're often second screening, checking our phones while watching TV or streaming content. This overlap creates even more opportunities for brands to connect, generating truly multi-channel customer journeys."

IS YOUR INVESTMENT INTO CREATIVE ASSETS FOR PERFORMANCE MARKETING CHANNELS INCREASING OR DECREASING WITHIN THE NEXT YEAR?



"No matter how perfectly targeted your media buy is, if your creative isn't fit for purpose, platform, and audience need, it's just not going to land. Focusing on creative that delivers has always been critical to unlocking better results, so it's encouraging to see more marketers recognising the importance of that, with a whopping 56% increasing investment over the next 12 months. We know that the major platforms, particularly across Social, need variety and diversity of content to perform against platform metrics, but brands still need to maintain consistency to drive those behavioural responses beyond what the platforms deliver. The key for brands of all shapes and sizes will be to balance that effectively as they deploy their creative investment in the most effective way."



IMMY FOX
Head of Creative

Organic and AI-driven channels set to leave a positive impact as revenue drivers

Out of the following channels, these were the most anticipated channels that will be the biggest revenue drivers in the next 12 months:

26%

said Search engine optimisation (SEO)

25%

said LLM and AI-powered search

28%

said Email, SMS & app push

27%

said Content Marketing

28%

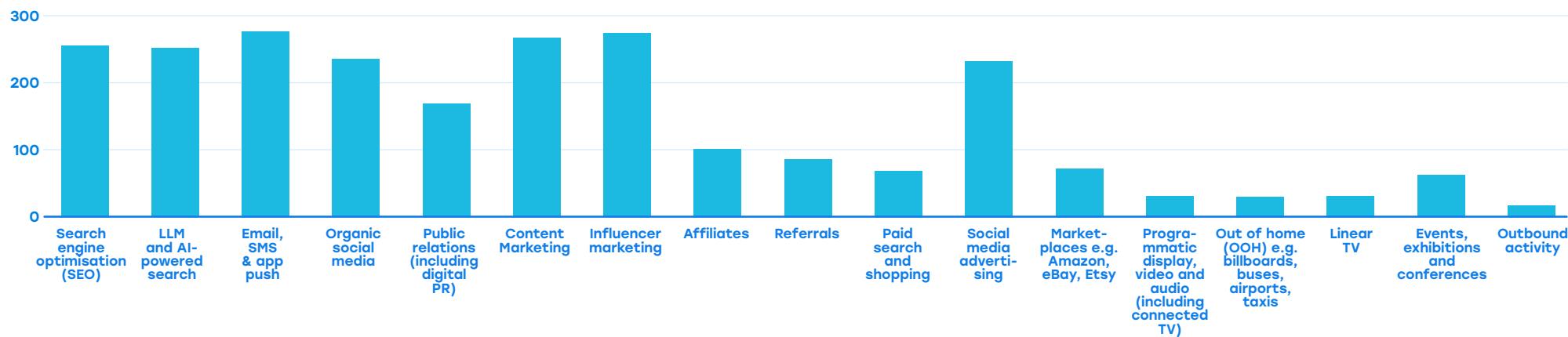
said Influencer Marketing

23%

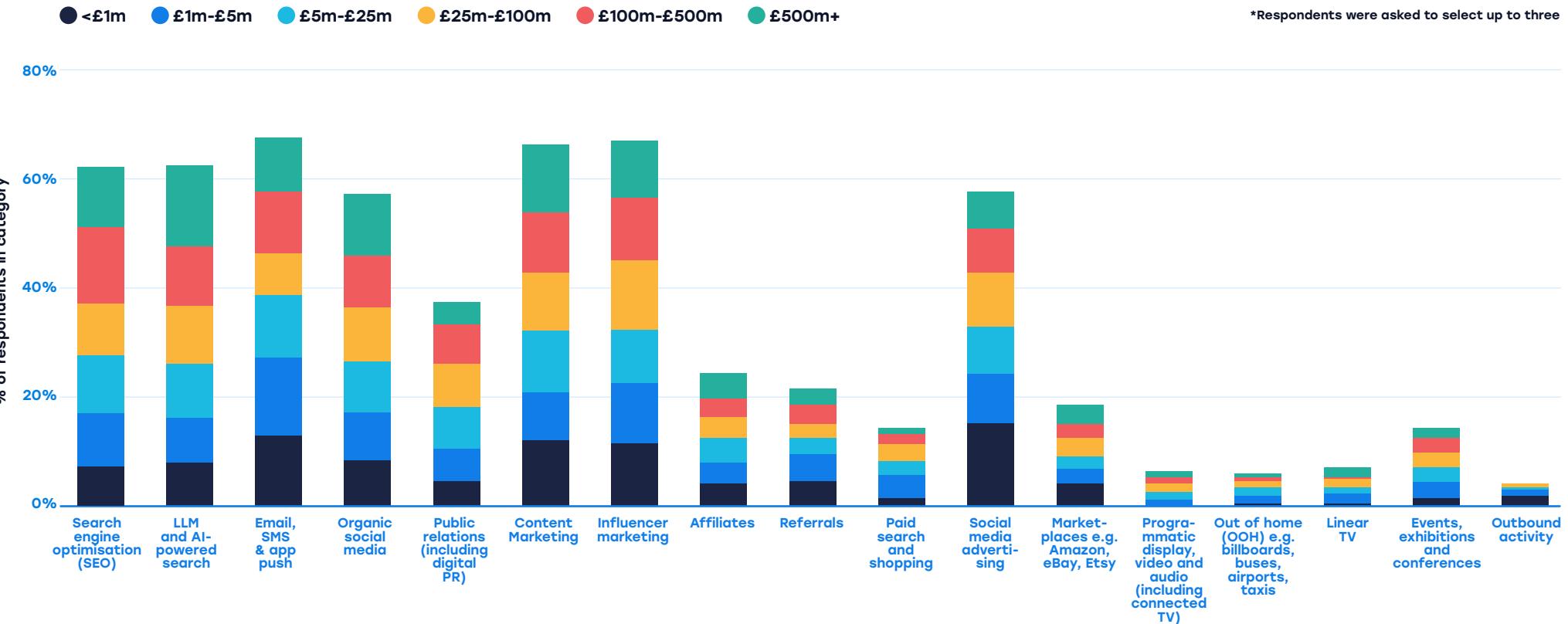
said Social Media Advertising

WHICH CHANNELS DO YOU ANTICIPATE WILL BE YOUR BIGGEST REVENUE DRIVERS IN THE NEXT 12 MONTHS?*

*Respondents were asked to select up to three

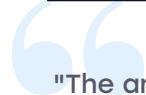


Ultimately, the channels set to drive the most revenue depend on the type of business the industry operates in, as well as the size of the business itself. Social Media Advertising is anticipated to have the most impact for smaller businesses, while larger businesses are expecting to see the benefits from LLMs.



The majority of marketing teams are expected to grow in the next 12 months

New challenges for marketers involve figuring out how to **optimise for LLMs** and how to integrate strategies on a **total search basis**. Businesses will always be looking for talent and problem solvers to address these emerging needs.



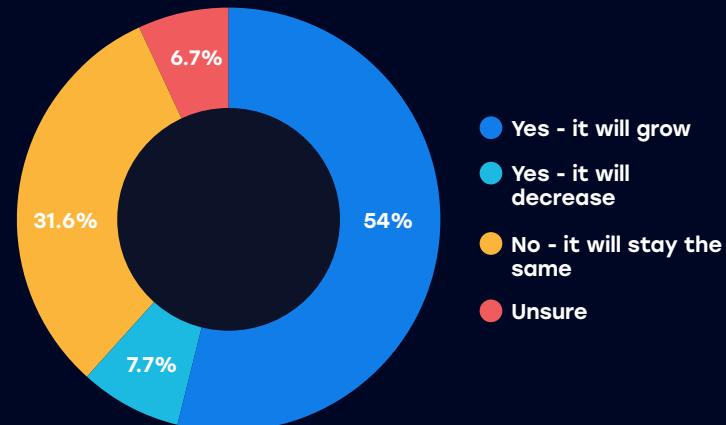
"The anticipated growth in marketing teams shows that the AI job scaremongering could still be a bit premature. AI isn't replacing roles entirely; it's elevating them by taking over execution tasks. Future success will rely on brands recruiting hybrid talent who can expertly harness AI and automation to reduce delivery costs and gain efficiency. This strategic use allows our faulty, old human brains to concentrate more on what the technology can't replicate (yet): deep creativity and essential problem-solving. Deployed in the right way, the human marketer remains an indispensable powerhouse behind effective campaigns."



MIKEY EMERY

Commercial Director

DO YOU EXPECT THE SIZE OF YOUR INTERNAL MARKETING TEAM TO CHANGE IN THE NEXT 12 MONTHS?



Brands set to outsource multiple channels over the next 12 months

We asked respondents what top challenges they face when it comes to planning and executing their marketing activity. The biggest concerns were:

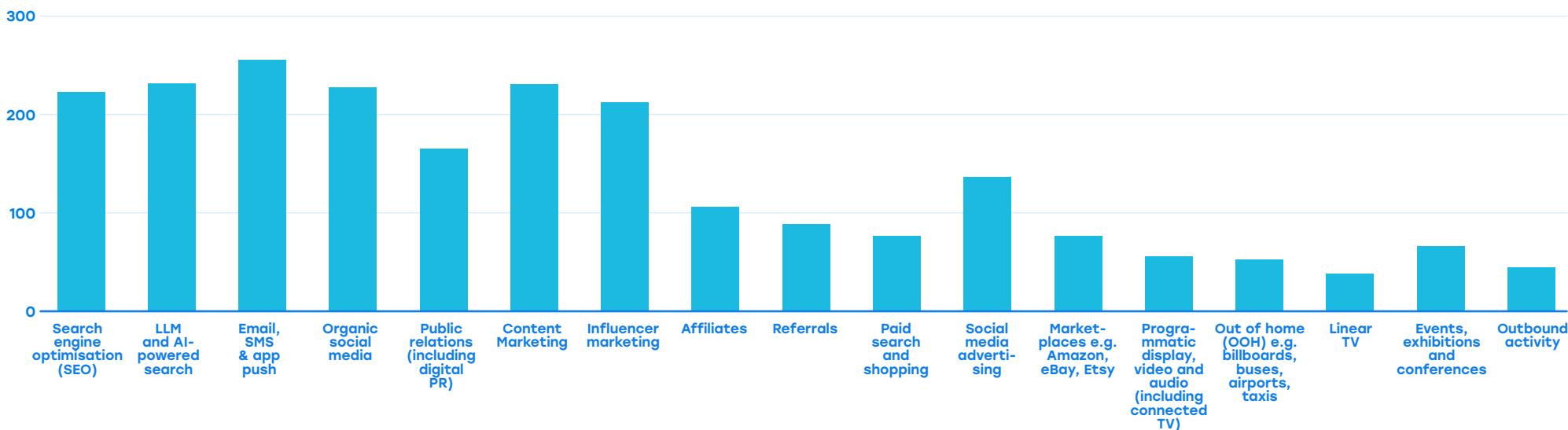
26% outsource or plan to outsource email, SMS & app push

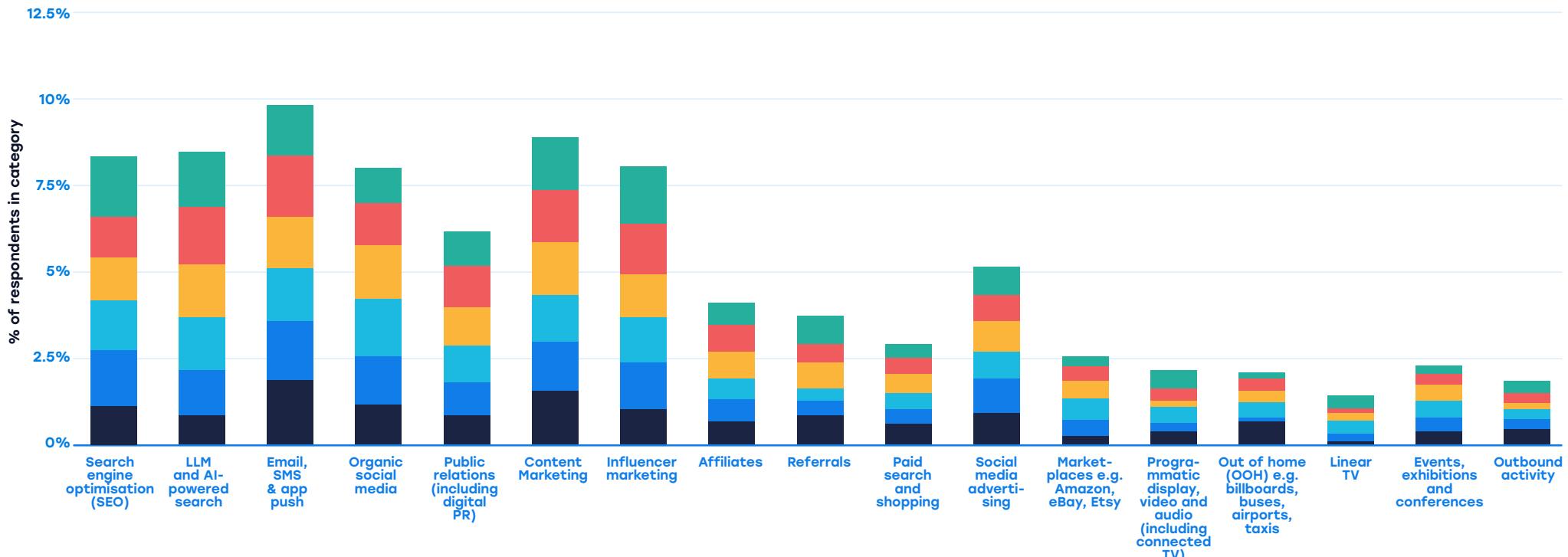
23% outsource or plan to outsource content marketing

23% outsource or plan to outsource Generative Engine Optimisation (LLMs & AI-powered search)

WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING MARKETING ACTIVITIES DO YOU CURRENTLY OUTSOURCE, OR PLAN TO OUTSOURCE, TO AN EXTERNAL AGENCY OR CONSULTANT IN THE NEXT 12 MONTHS?*

*Respondents were asked to choose all that apply





MIKEY EMERY
Commercial Director

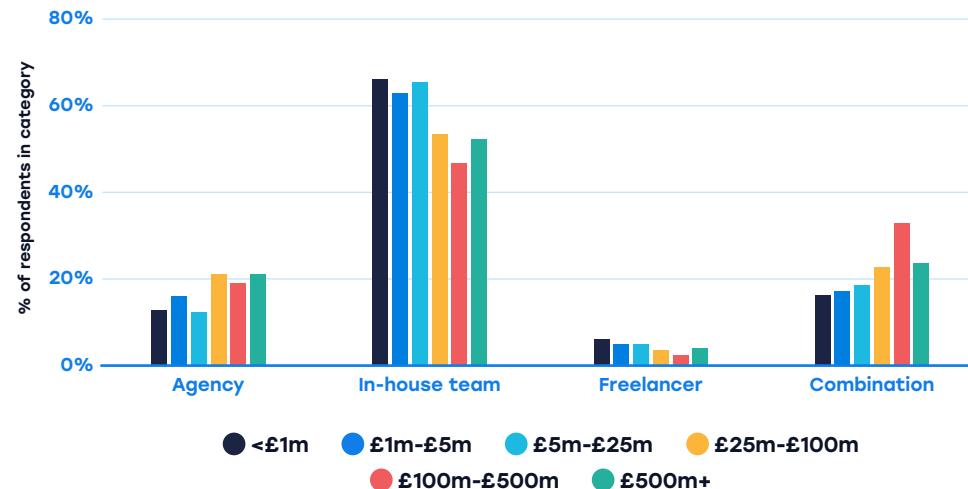
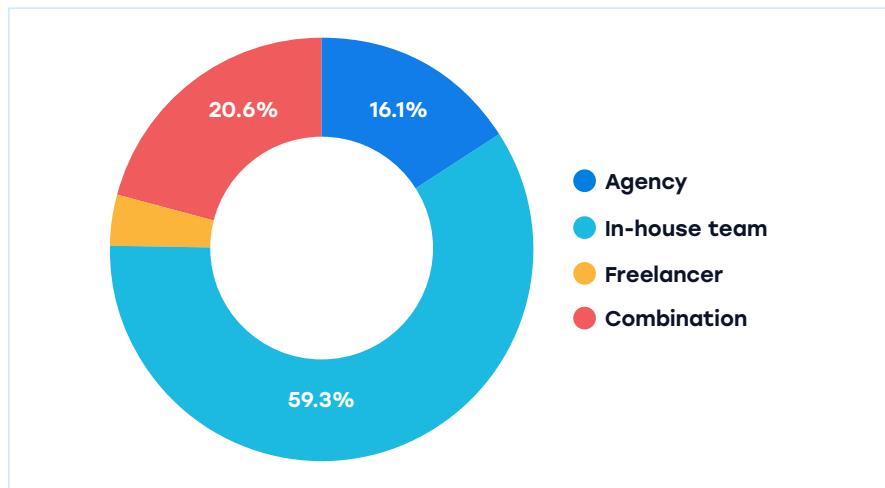
"Outsourcing remains an essential, effective, and unsurprising tool in a marketing strategy. Whether to buy immediate capability, reduce long-term salary commitments, or bring in support to solve specific problems (like the 23% targeting Generative Engine Optimisation), third-party expertise offers flexibility. Successful agencies must recognise this need and consistently add value in how they show up for clients. Crucially, the most successful agencies won't just react; they will proactively point out future challenges for brands and support them in solving those problems before they are realised, cementing their role as forward-thinking partners."

Brands set to keep the majority of marketing activity in-house

In what has been a growing trend over the last few years, we've seen a growth in brands looking to keep marketing activity in-house or use a combination of agencies and in-house teams.

For the first time this year, the majority of marketers (59%) report they will deliver activity in-house, and the 'Combination' approach has also grown more than in previous years. Those businesses which rely solely on agencies have shrunk the most, now occupying only 16%. Businesses which operate on a larger scale and have greater revenue are more likely to work with agencies or in a combination of in-house and agency. Whilst smaller businesses are looking to keep activity in-house, either as a cost-effective measurement or to use AI and automation to support their existing in-house teams.

HOW DO YOU EXPECT TO DELIVER YOUR MARKETING ACTIVITY IN THE NEXT 12 MONTHS?



Businesses plan to use AI and automation for data analysis to gain greater insight

AI and automation have been making leaps and bounds within the global marketing landscape over the past few years, especially with the launch of Google Analytics 4 and Performance Max.

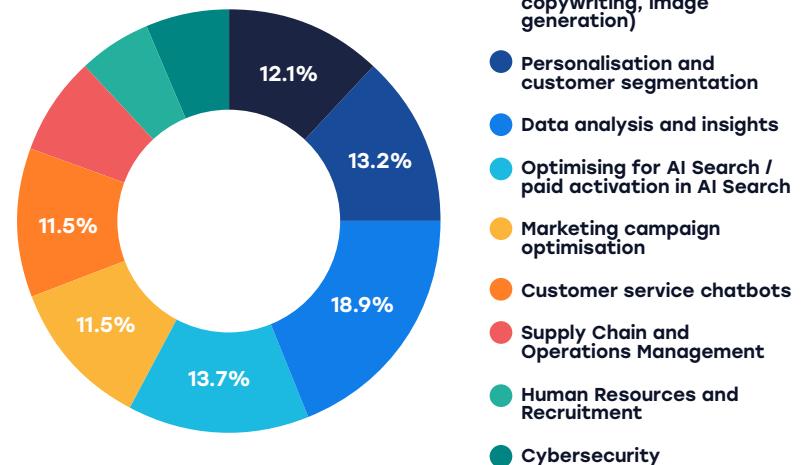
AI tools like ChatGPT and Gemini do well at compiling data into easy-to-consume visualisations and can pick out key points. But we must always remember that AI and automation aren't completely fool-proof, as AI has the potential to hallucinate even when given solid data.



AARON DICKS
Technology Director

"There have been huge advancements in gen AI creative and video this year, especially with the release of the latest video models, so we're seeing a lot more uses here. Because many applications of AI chatbots or processes have access to private data and a higher variety of tooling, we are also seeing uses in data analysis across marketing performance and customer data, and that's where it's getting really exciting for us in performance marketing."

IN WHICH AREAS DO YOU PLAN TO LEVERAGE AI AND AUTOMATION IN THE NEXT 12 MONTHS?*



*Respondents were asked to select up to three

Marketers are using CLV analysis and Marketing Mix Modelling to understand the effectiveness of their campaigns

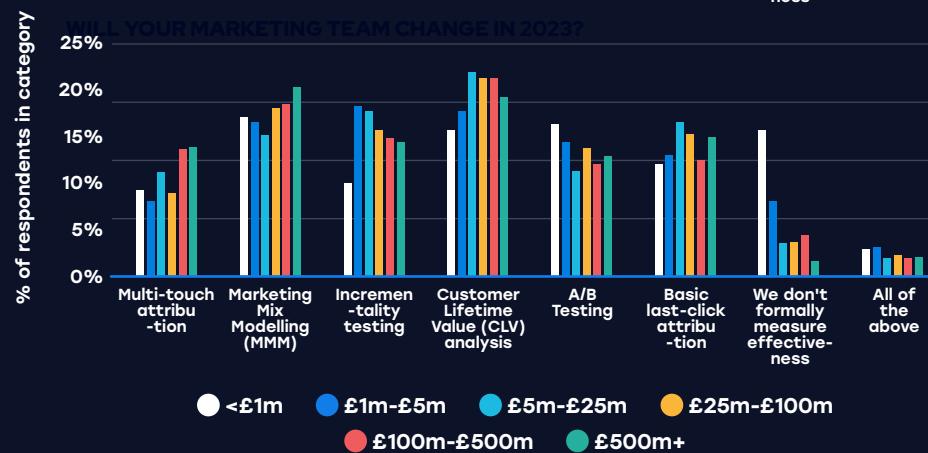
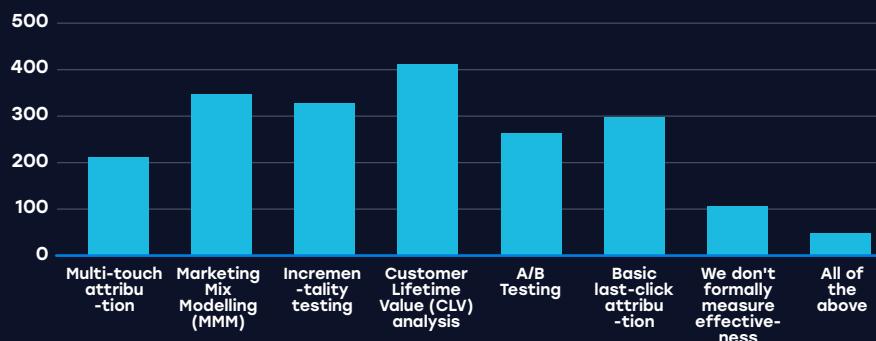
Understanding where our investment goes and how well it performs is becoming an increasing concern for marketers. When spend is scrutinised, we need to back it up with evidence on how they turned from a viewer to a buyer.

Optimising your Customer Lifetime Value focuses on building lasting relationships and generating maximum value across customer experience, acquisition and retention, through a range of digital marketing practices to achieve more from your existing media mix.

Meanwhile, Marketing Mix Modelling (MMM) is a statistical analysis method that quantifies the impact of various marketing efforts, such as advertising, pricing, and promotions, on sales or market share to help businesses optimise future budget allocations.

The only outlier here amongst the different revenue brackets is small businesses, which are more likely not to measure any marketing effectiveness.

WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING TOOLS AND TACTICS DO YOU CURRENTLY USE TO MEASURE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF YOUR MARKETING CAMPAIGNS?



Customer Data Platforms and AI tools set to help marketers achieve their goals

Marketing technology is vital in supporting the operation of day-to-day marketing activities, so when asked about what technology is going to be most important for marketers in the next 12 months, here's what our respondents said:

29%

of marketers said Customer Data Platforms

27%

of marketers said AI/Machine Learning tools

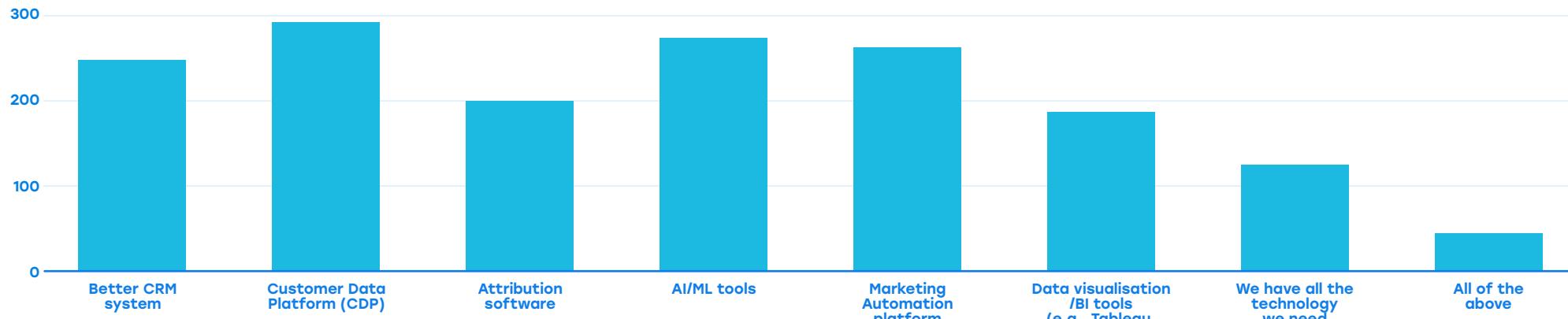
26%

of marketers said Marketing Automation platforms

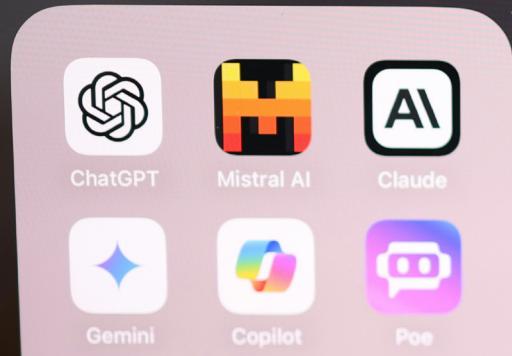
25%

of marketers said better CRM systems

WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING TECHNOLOGIES IS YOUR MARKETING TEAM MOST IN NEED OF TO ACHIEVE ITS GOALS IN THE NEXT 12 MONTHS?*

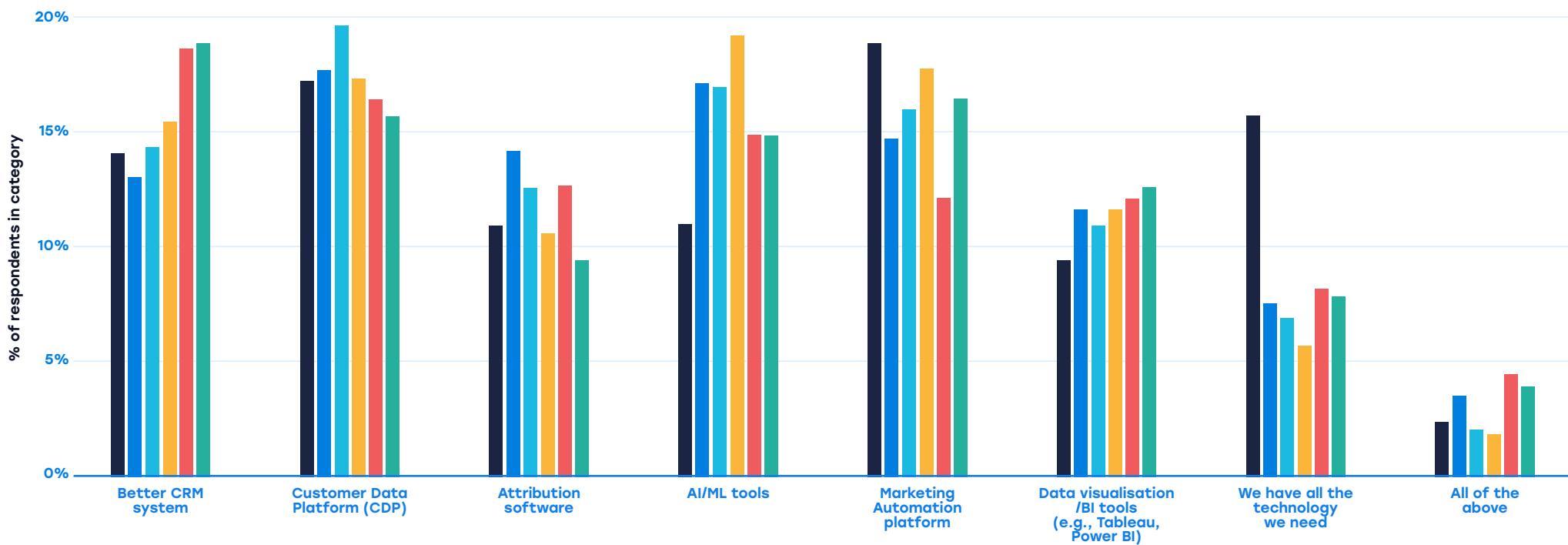


*Respondents were asked to select up to two



● <£1m ● £1m-£5m ● £5m-£25m ● £25m-£100m ● £100m-£500m ● £500m+

*Respondents were asked to choose all that apply

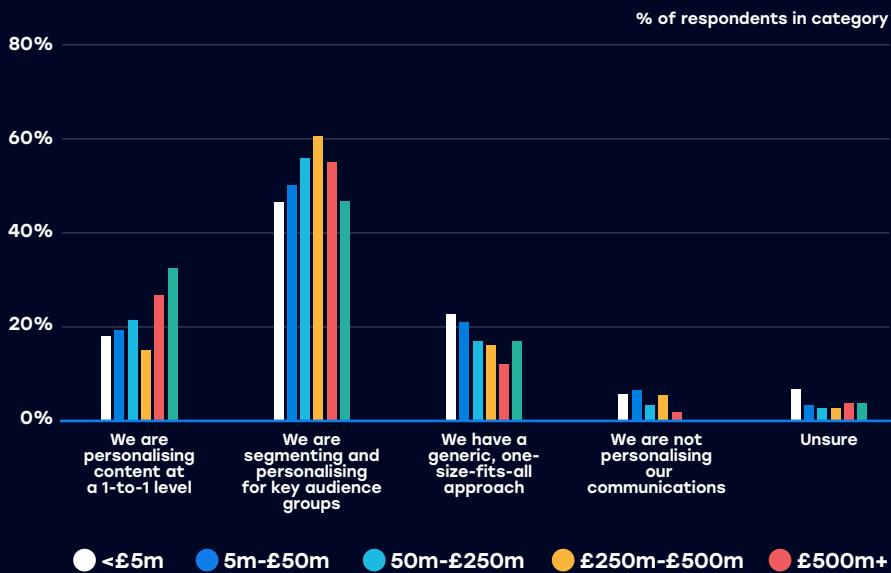
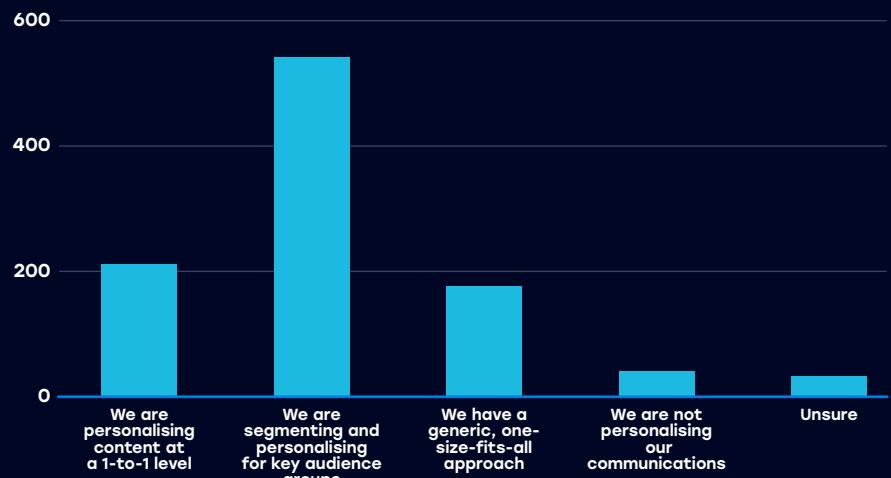


The majority of brands are personalising experiences and communications on a segmented basis

Personalisation is essential for brands as consumers become more sophisticated in how they buy. They expect brands to deliver highly relevant experiences, moving marketing from generic broadcasting to valued one-to-one conversations. The majority of marketers are not personalising on a one-to-one basis; they are segmenting and personalising experience for key audience groups. Whilst one-to-one provides the best experience, segmentation can help marketers manage the time and effort when it comes to personalisation through the creation of customer profiles on which they base their marketing communications.

Due to the time and effort required to personalise on a one-to-one level, it's no surprise that larger businesses are more likely to do this as they have the resources available. Although across the majority of revenue brackets, there is some form of personalised marketing.

TO WHAT EXTENT ARE YOU PERSONALISING YOUR CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE AND COMMUNICATIONS?



The key to success in 2026

Respondents were asked what they believe will be the key to marketing success over the next 12 months - here are the answers:

44% said having a clear marketing plan

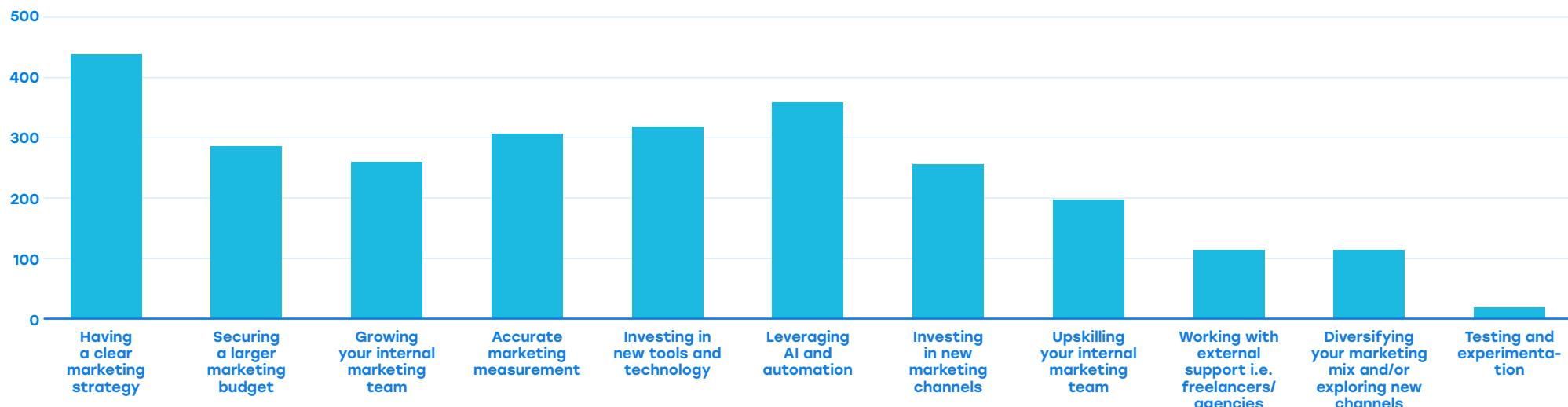
36% said leveraging AI and automation

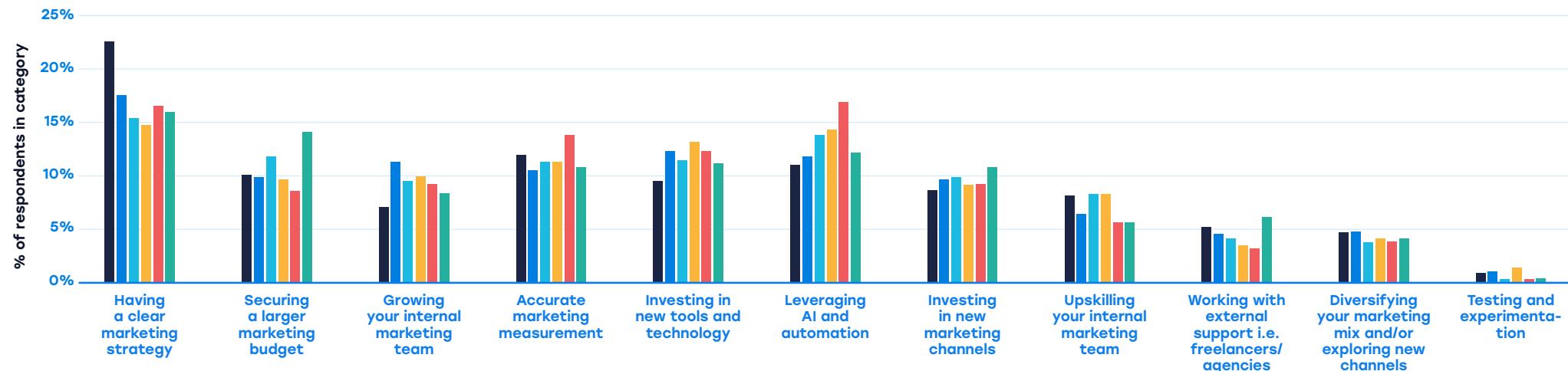
32% said investing in new tools and technology

A clear marketing plan is arguably the most crucial resource to have before starting any marketing activity. It directly outlines your goals, performance indicators, and the strategy for achieving them. This sentiment aligns with other top industry priorities. Marketers must achieve more with less, and AI and automation are proving essential by increasing both effectiveness and efficiency.

WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE WILL BE THE KEY TO MARKETING SUCCESS IN THE NEXT 12 MONTHS?*

*Respondents were asked to select up to three





CLAIRE ELSWORTH
Strategy Director

“This is a useful reminder that clarity still beats complexity. AI and automation are high on the list, but without a clear plan, they risk becoming distractions. Having a strategy isn’t just about what you’ll do; it’s also about knowing what you won’t. The basics still matter: solid foundations, fit-for-purpose tools, and a team that understands how it all connects to get the most out of your investment.”

IMPRESSION

CONTACT US FOR HELP SETTING YOUR DIGITAL STRATEGY



hello@impressiondigital.com

NORTH AMERICA

New York

160 Varick Street, New York,
New York, 10013, USA

UK

Nottingham

Fothergill House, 16 King Street,
Nottingham, NG1 2AS

London

Runway East Borough Market,
20 St Thomas St, London, SE1 9RS

Manchester

Beehive Mill, Jersey St, Ancoats,
Manchester, M4 6JG