

# B2B MULTI CHANNEL STRATEGY

MARKET RESEARCH REPORT



**InboxInsight** 

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# B2B MULTI CHANNEL STRATEGY: MARKET RESEARCH REPORT

LET'S TALK ABOUT WHY MULTI CHANNEL MARKETING IS IMPORTANT. AND MORE IMPORTANTLY, WHY DO THOSE CHANNELS NEED TO BE INTEGRATED?

Advertisers have dramatically shifted their approach and thinking when it comes to engaging with customers. They are no longer thinking about their channels in silos and are instead embracing a more holistic, connected approach to messaging. They are beginning to engage less as stages in the marketing funnel and more by meeting potential customers in the moments they are absorbed in relevant content.

Yet for some reason, media has been one of the last areas of marketing to move to this approach. Many brands are still thinking about media as following a linear journey within a silo, rather than a component of a multi channel strategy. The truth is this: prospects are all on their own individual journey and moving down different paths as they engage with your media. They don't care whether it is on social, a website, or in a search engine, they just want to engage with brands in a way that is relevant to them.

A truly integrated multi channel approach provides your prospects with a frictionless experience that gets them to a conversion point seamlessly.

The diagram on page 3 (Image 1.1), while by no means an exhaustible list of channels and content formats, demonstrates how the B2B buyer experience can ping back and forth between engagement points facilitated by the multi channel strategy. Every piece of content provides a potential touchpoint to provide value to your target audience while helping to build accumulative knowledge of your brand.



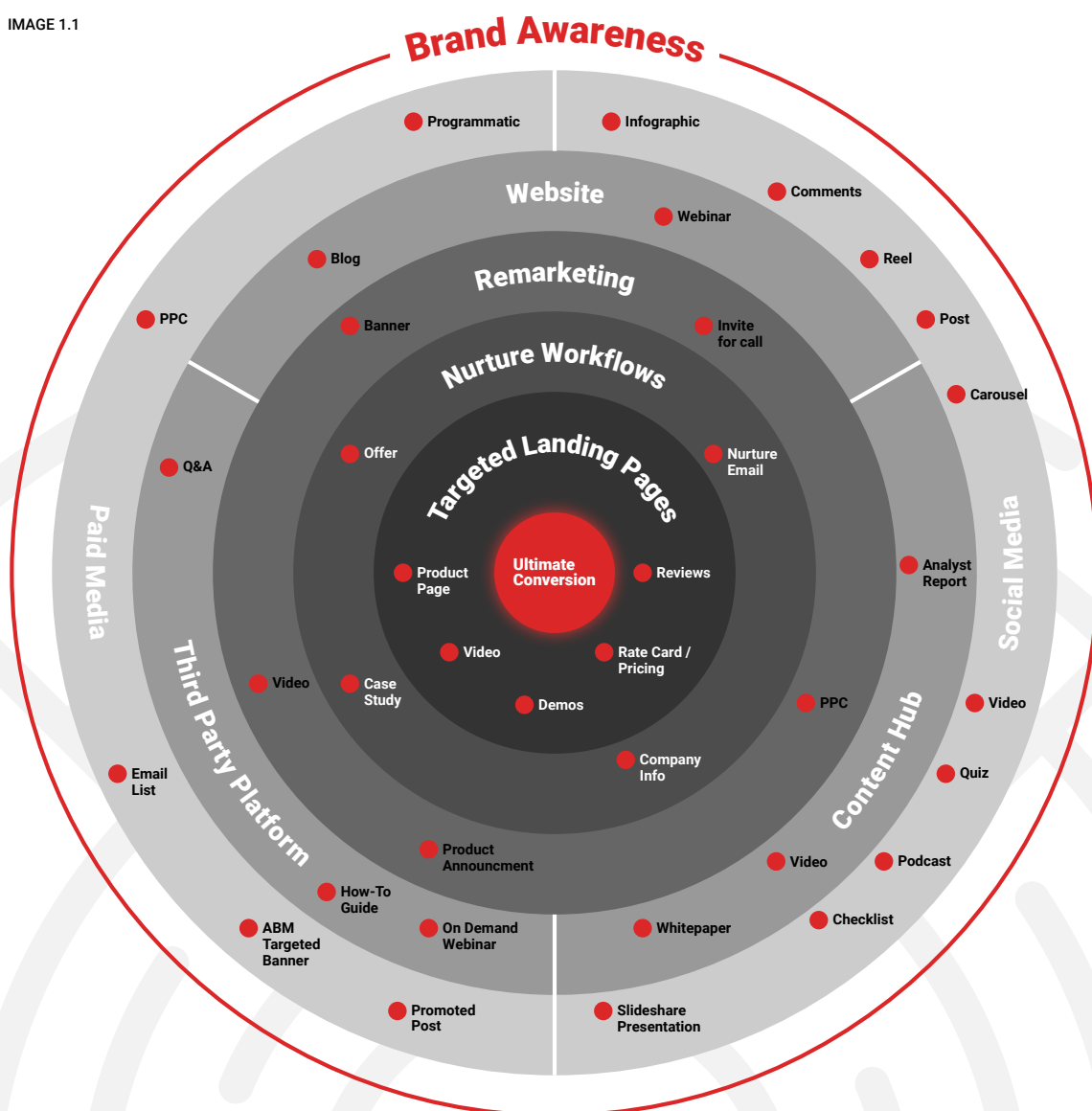
You can also see on our diagram how external channels such as Social and Paid channels increase the surface area for distributing your message and attracting early interest with greater reach. As we work inwards, the surface area becomes more concentrated helping to reign in the focus of your target audience and drive them ever closer to your ultimate goal.

By surrounding your audiences with immersive content experiences, supported by multi channel content distribution tactics, you stand a better chance of keeping your audiences orbiting your channel ecosystem towards your ultimate conversion goal.

When you start to think of multi channel strategies in this way, you can begin to identify how to plan your content to deliver a range of assets and messages required to build strong engagement.

Along with opportunities to repurpose long form content such as whitepapers into atomised assets adapted for consumption earlier on in the buyer journey and that can be used to serialize content or help build sequential messaging, aimed to support sustained multi-touchpoint engagement.

IMAGE 1.1



# RESEARCH PANEL OVERVIEW

## How does your multi channel marketing strategy compare?

While multi channel marketing is no new phenomenon, the art of building scalable, effective and cost efficient multi channel strategies can differ enormously from business to business.

This report comprises our latest first party research to provide an overview of the current multi channel marketing landscape, an analysis of what channels consistently perform well, which are most trusted by senior B2B marketers, and the key differences between a more advanced multi channel marketing strategy compared to an intermediate one.

We surveyed 200 B2B Marketers; profiled against, Company Size, Seniority and Industry. Read on to discover what insights the research uncovered regarding their multi channel approach.



## ABOUT OUR FIRST PARTY RESEARCH

### Where does this research come from?

Inbox Insight is the gateway to 4.1M active senior business professionals via our centralized publishing hub, **Insights for Professionals (IFP)**.

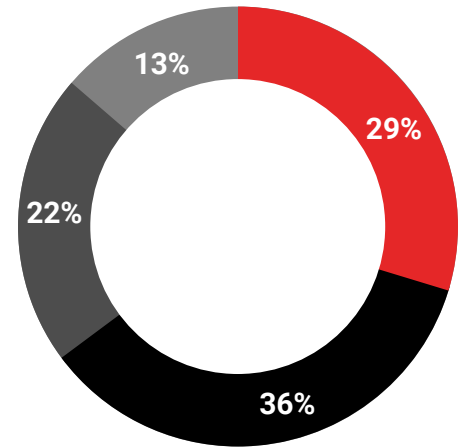
Within these IFP communities we have exclusive access to first party research panels, ensuring the most accurate, credible, and up-to-date data is obtained. This also means we can ensure that only relevant senior marketing decision makers are able to partake in our research, enhancing the validity and reliability of our data.

What value will this report deliver to B2B marketing professionals?

This report sets out to provide B2B marketers with a solid understanding of the current state of multi channel marketing, key obstacles faced within current multi channel practices, and takes a deep dive into what an effective 2022 multi-channel strategy looks like.

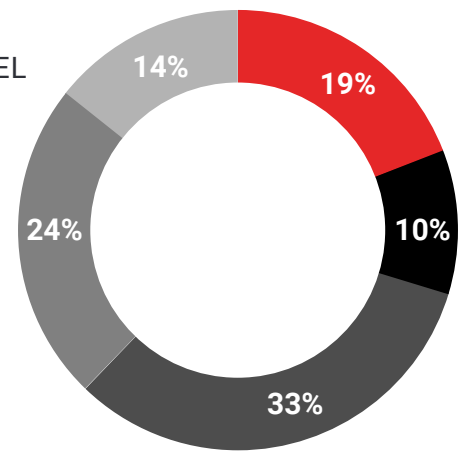
## HOW MANY EMPLOYEES ARE THERE IN YOUR ORGANIZATION?

- 500-999
- 1000-2499
- 2500-4999
- 5000+



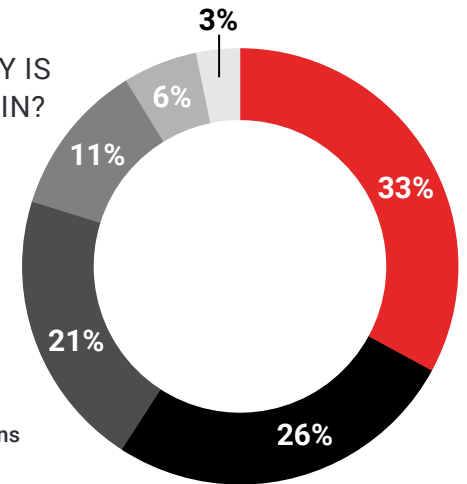
## WHAT IS YOUR AUTHORITY LEVEL WITHIN YOUR ORGANIZATION?

- Senior Manager
- Head Of
- Director
- VIP
- C-Suite



## WHICH INDUSTRY IS YOUR BUSINESS IN?

- Information Technology
- Finance & Banking
- Advertising/PR/Marketing
- Software
- Telecommunications
- Service Industry



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**SECTION 1**

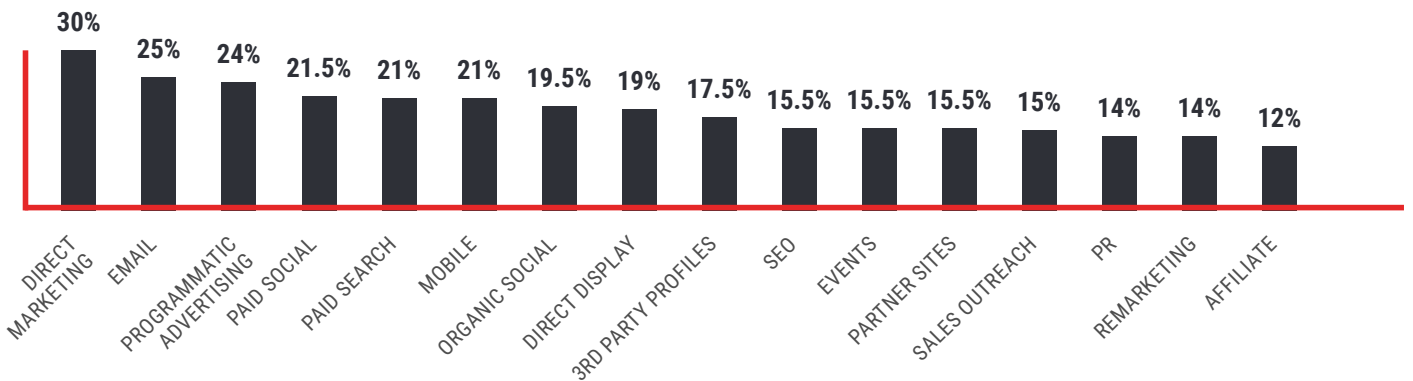
MULTI  
CHANNEL  
MARKETING:  
THE STATE  
OF PLAY

71% of senior B2B marketers say their multi channel strategy is advanced but **budget constraints, reporting and delivering a consistent communication strategy across all channels** are cited as common challenges by these top players.

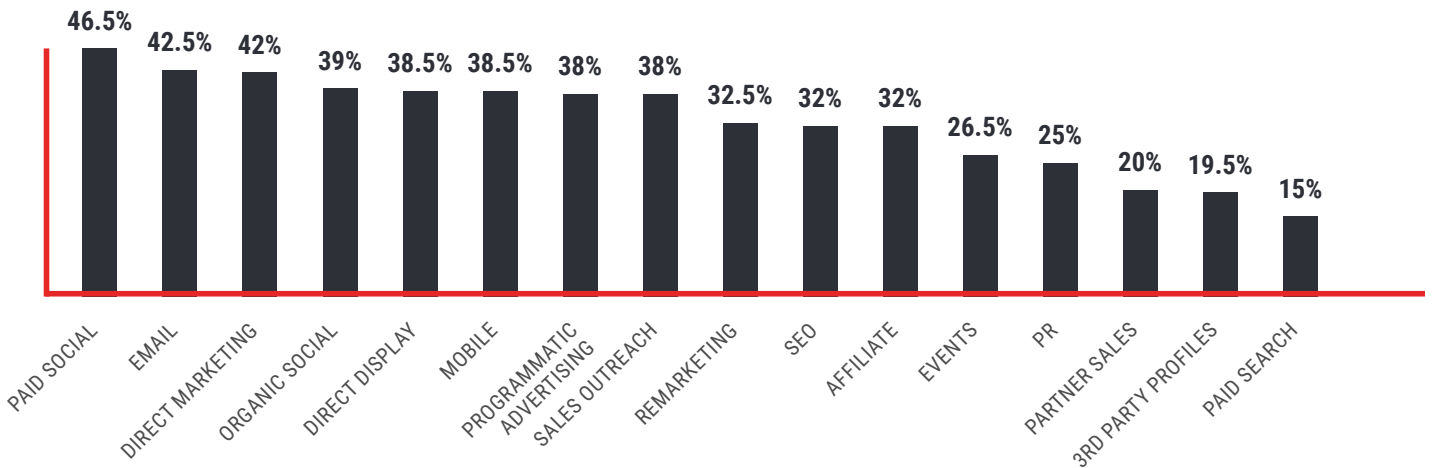
We've used our inhouse research facility to dig deeper into the current state of play. What do these first party insights reveal?



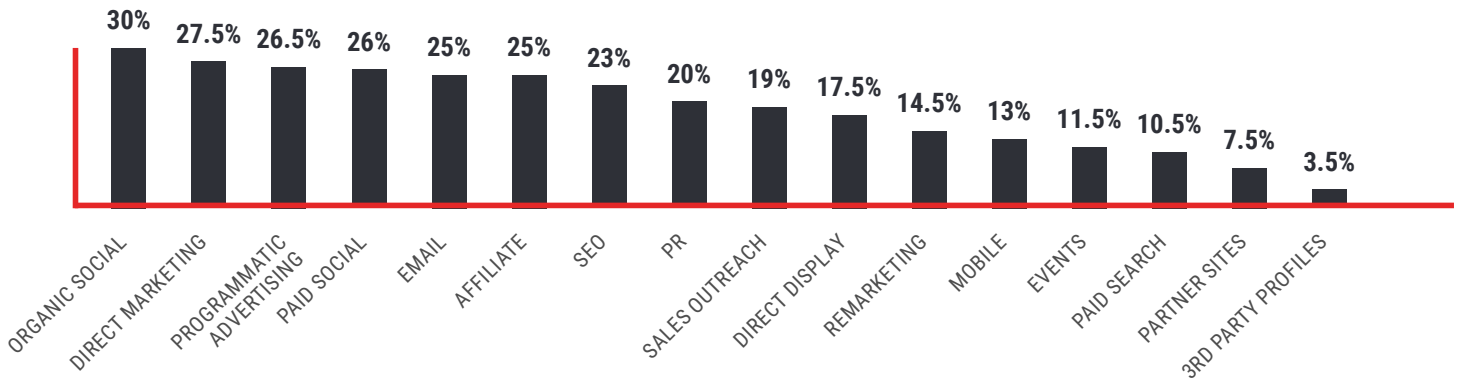
### WHICH CHANNELS ARE MOST CRITICAL TO YOUR STRATEGY? (PICK YOUR TOP 3)



### WHICH CHANNELS ARE YOU LOOKING TO INVEST MORE IN, IN 2022? (TICK ALL THAT APPLY)



## WHICH CHANNELS ARE THE MOST DIFFICULT TO MANAGE? (PICK YOUR TOP 3)



## WHICH CHANNELS IN YOUR CURRENT STRATEGY ARE UNDERPERFORMING? (PICK YOUR TOP 3)



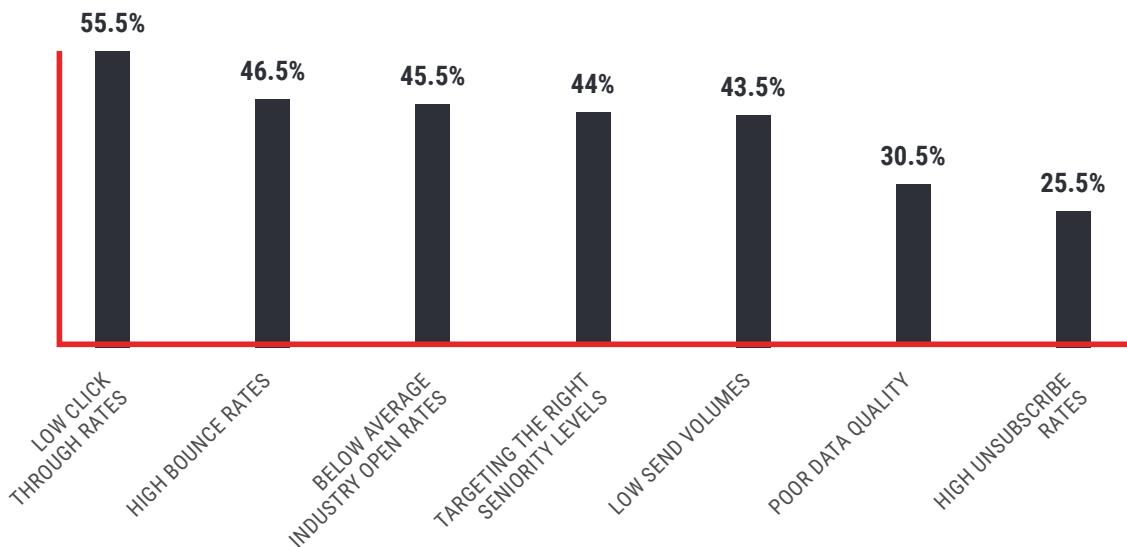


Overall, Email remains one of the top 3 channels and looks set to stay, with 43% of marketers looking to invest more into it this year. However, it was also cited as the most underperforming channel and appears in the top 5 most difficult to manage.

This suggests investment will be made into improving its performance and to overcome challenges such as **targeting the right seniority levels** (44%), **low send volumes** (44%) and **poor data** (31%). Key areas that can be overcome through investment in better data acquisition.



## WHICH EMAIL PAIN POINTS DO YOU MOST STRONGLY IDENTIFY WITH? (PICK YOUR TOP 3)



Direct Marketing also appears not to have lost its prominence in the marketing arsenal with 30% of B2B marketers still leveraging it and 42% looking to invest more this year. While our data does not dig further into the specific Direct Marketing activity, it does flag how direct response initiatives are high on the agenda for B2B marketers this year.

Programmatic advertising appears third on the priority list as most critical channel. B2B marketing has lagged behind B2C with the adoption of this channel, due in part to niche audiences, constraints around good quality data and concerns around supply-chain transparency. Our research shows that Programmatic has evolved to a point where data, targeting, dynamic and sequential messaging allows it to play an integral role in today's multi channel strategies.



**42%**  
**OF B2B MARKETERS**

---

**ARE LOOKING TO INVEST MORE IN DIRECT MARKETING THIS YEAR.**

Perhaps unsurprisingly we see Organic Social appearing as the most difficult channel to manage as cited by 30% of marketers and the 2nd most underperforming channel (29%), as perceived by our research panel.

**Frequency of posting** (40%) and **engaging followers with low reach** (26%) were 2 significant pain points reported by our B2B survey panel. As social platforms are swayed towards the monetarization of sponsored posts, it's hard to cut through the oversaturated content environment of Organic Social to get seen on the right people's feeds - as demonstrated by low reach ratios.

In contrast, Paid Social appears in the top 5 most critical channels, while spending plans reveal nearly half (47%) of marketers are looking to invest in this channel this year. This highlights the importance of running both Organic and Paid Social concurrently in your multi channel strategy to make these platforms work more effectively.

While our research reveals Paid Search shows no signs of leaving the multi channel mix, appearing joint 4th in the most critical channels, planned investment does fall behind other channels (15%). However, as only 9% feel that Paid Search is underperforming, this suggests that B2B marketers have mastered bidding strategies and optimization techniques to make this channel work effectively.

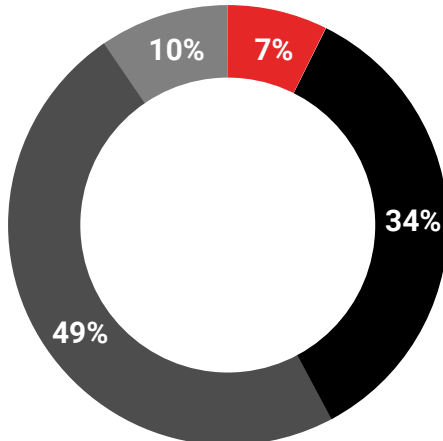
# 49%

OF THE SENIOR B2B MARKETERS WE SURVEYED OUTSOURCE 50-75% OF THEIR CHANNELS.



WHAT % OF YOUR CHANNELS ARE OUTSOURCED?

- 0-25%
- 25-50%
- 50-75%
- 75-100%



Nearly half (49%) of the senior B2B marketers we surveyed outsource 50-75% of their channels. Could this suggest a current skill shortage inhouse for specific channels?

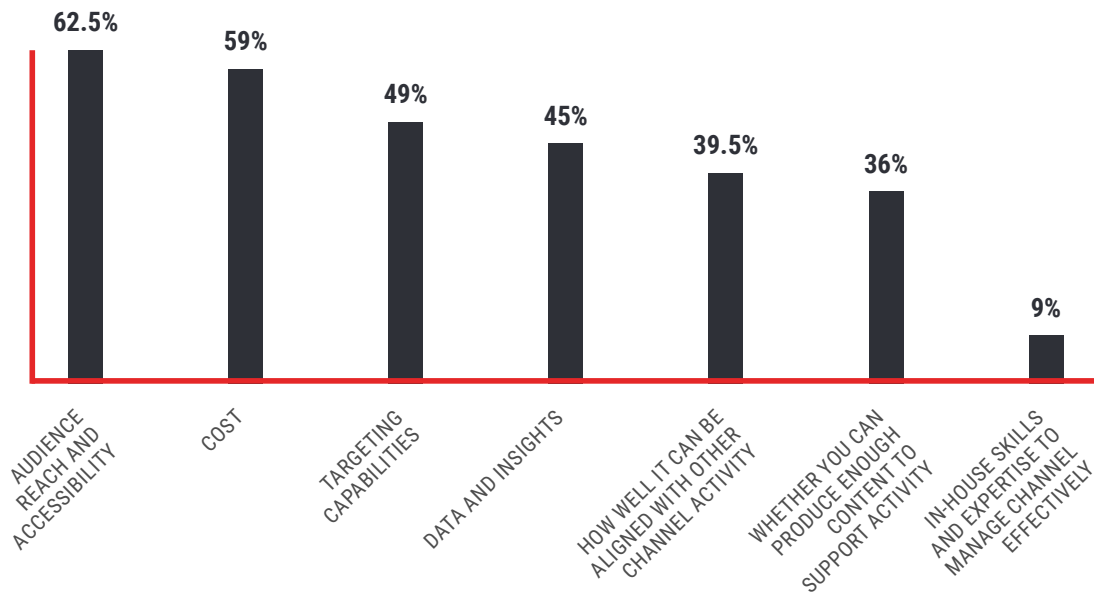
Or perhaps it can be explained by the fact many companies choose to execute their Paid Media strategy through agencies because it's easier than building expert capabilities in house - a strategy usually put in place by the CMO.

However, it's worth noting some brands may choose to inhouse the majority of their Paid Media (7%), as they believe they have better visibility and control – 2 essential components of an effective multi channel strategy.

Programmatic and Paid Social appear in the top most difficult channels to manage. **Controlling ad placements** was the number one pain point for Programmatic (38%), while **time and resource management** was cited as key pain point for nearly 40% of B2B marketers.

These insights provide an indication of why B2B marketers opt to outsource specialist channels in order to overcome a lack of inhouse expertise.

## WHAT ARE YOUR KEY CONSIDERATION POINTS WHEN DECIDING WHICH CHANNEL TO UTILIZE? (PICK YOUR TOP 3)



A lot of the key considerations when deciding which channel to utilize are around data, reach and targeting – a key focus and theme which we explore in more depth in Section 2.

**Audience reach and accessibility** is the top deliberation point for almost two-thirds (63%) of B2B marketers, no doubt due to the overarching need to market to and engage with high numbers in order for the channel to be worthwhile adopting and pursuing from the outset, especially with early brand awareness activities.

Growing sophistication in targeting strategies is another potential factor, as marketers' segmentation criteria becomes more refined it can be restricting when it comes to reaching their target audience at scale. **Targeting capabilities** (49%) is cited as the third biggest challenge, which supports this further.

**Cost** ranks second (59%) as a key consideration point. If the cost is too great this will inevitably impact ROI, so it's no wonder over half of B2B marketing professionals cite this in their top 3.

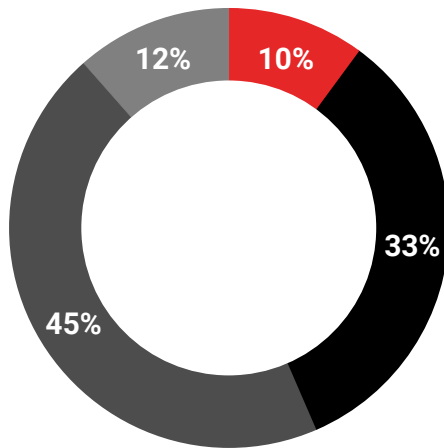
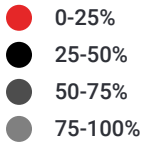
This ties up with the number one pain point around multi-channel management **budget spread too thin across channels** (40%). Budgets are tight and as the cost of operating multiple channels adds up, decisions have to be made around the best pricing models to enable channels to perform at their best.

What's more, **pressure from key stakeholders to focus on ROI** is the greatest multi channel management challenge according to 22% of B2B marketers. Likewise, **placing too much emphasis on ROI** (40%) is seen as a key difficulty.

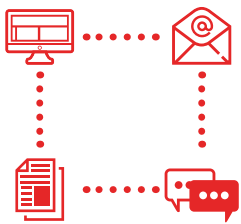
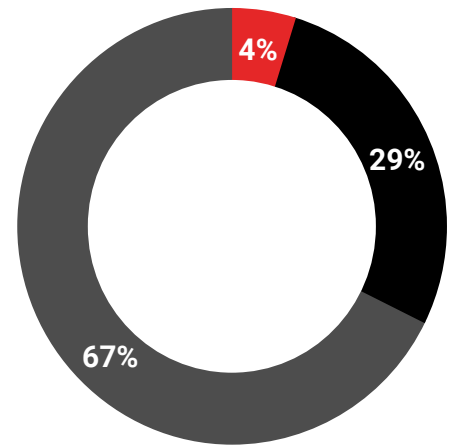
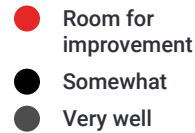
It is therefore clear why cost appears so highly on the list of considerations for B2B marketers when deciding which channels to leverage; the pressure to demonstrate ROI is ever present across key stakeholders and so, as long as this stands, cost will always play a considerable factor.

**63%**  
OF B2B MARKETERS  
**HAVE AUDIENCE REACH  
AND ACCESSIBILITY  
AS THEIR TOP  
DELIBERATION POINT**

WHAT % OF YOUR BUDGET DO YOU ALLOCATE FOR BRAND AWARENESS?



HOW WELL ARE YOUR CHANNELS CURRENTLY ALIGNED TO ONE ANOTHER?



67%

OF B2B MARKETERS SAY THEIR CHANNELS ARE CURRENTLY ALIGNED 'VERY WELL' TO ONE ANOTHER.

Brand awareness has always been a heavily debated area within marketing as it is traditionally hard to measure and therefore pushed aside for more tangible results when pressure is applied to demonstrate ROI.

**Quantifying the impact of brand awareness activity** poses a key challenge for 42% of our marketing survey panel when it comes to multi channel analytics. However, our research shows a return to focus with 45% of marketers reporting to allocate **50-75% of their budget** towards it and **45% of businesses with employee size 1000+ will be outsourcing brand awareness this year.**

This demonstrates the importance of brand awareness in a multi channel strategy, especially if engagement throughout the buyer journey is to be achieved.

This accounts for the planned investment this year in **Paid Social** (47%), **Direct Display** (39%) and **Programmatic Advertising** (38%) as highlighted in our research findings.

A true multi channel approach means you have everything working together towards a final outcome. While the role and expectation of each are different and must be measured accordingly and supported by consistent reporting, all components of your channel activity should align to an overarching strategy which ultimately aims at achieving a seamless customer journey.

67% of B2B marketers say their channels are currently aligned '**very well**' to one another. 29% say '**somewhat**', while just 4% feel there is '**room for improvement**'.

If you're evaluating how to improve your current strategy and side with the third of our audience panel that do not feel their channels are aligned '**very well**', then a good place to start is analysing how your individual channel objectives address your overarching agenda.

If you've researched your target audience and market well, you should know which channels are the most crucial, how they align to your target buyer's journey and what content works best to progress them through your buyer's journey.

Use this knowledge to map out your channels against your goals and objectives to better understand how each activity is going to help you achieve your multi channel strategy.

## EXAMPLE FRAMEWORK

	INSIGHT	INTEREST	ENGAGEMENT	NURTURE	OUTREACH	SALES	PIPELINE
OBJECTIVE	Position brand as expert in solving client challenges and identify target accounts	Reach target accounts through multiple channels	Engage target accounts with content and create touchpoints	Further engage DMU at target account	Boost sales efficiency and enable them to connect with leads in person	Target personas that have responded to message	Close deal with prospect and convert to customer
RESULT	Accurate segmentation	Brand cut-through	Lead generation	Lead nurture/ sales intelligence	Sales automation	Sales enablement	Conversion Rate Optimization
EXAMPLE METRICS	Example metrics: sentiment ration, # in segments	Example metrics: CTR %, % identified	Example metrics: Average time on page, Cost per lead	Example metrics: % activated contacts, email open rate	Example metrics: # in sequence, % reply	Example metrics: % appointment/ demo	Example metrics: # proposals sent, % opportunity closed
CHANNELS	Programmatic, Search, Social	Display, Video, Email, Mobile, Programmatic, Search, Social	Content syndication, Search, Social	Email, Remarketing, Programmatic	1:1 Sales Outreach, Email Nurture, Direct Mail, Remarketing, Live Chat	1:1 Sales Outreach, Webinars, Private Events	1:1 Sales Outreach, Webinars, Private Events, Case Studies
OPTIMIZATION TECHNIQUES	Test 3rd party data	A/B creatives, review traffic sources	New vs Returning sessions, landing page CRO	Cleanse data, refine ad targeting	Streamline workflows, split test messaging	A/B test sales scripts, lead quality benchmark	Time to close, lead source to conversion

IMAGE 1.2

Having a holistic master plan such as the above (Image 1:2) will help define the stages of the process and expected outcomes, it will also allow you to evaluate the stages that were more successful than others within a clear framework.

Our research reveals the top method for ensuring all different channel teams are working towards the same agenda is 'weekly report' (46.5%) followed by 'regular communication' (46%), 'daily report' and 'monthly report' (both 43.5%). Reporting appears numerous times in the top 3 methods, suggesting it plays a key role in aligning channel agenda which in turn will lead to a more synchronized channel experience.

Frequent communication to ensure channel messaging, content formats, and performance learnings are shared across channel teams is crucial to create transparency, consistency and true alignment. As are accurate objective and KPI setting.

## THE TOP 3 METHODS FOR ENSURING DIFFERENT CHANNEL TEAMS WORK TOWARDS THE SAME AGENDA ARE:

1. Weekly Report 46.5%
2. Regular Communication 46%
3. Daily / Monthly Report 43.5%

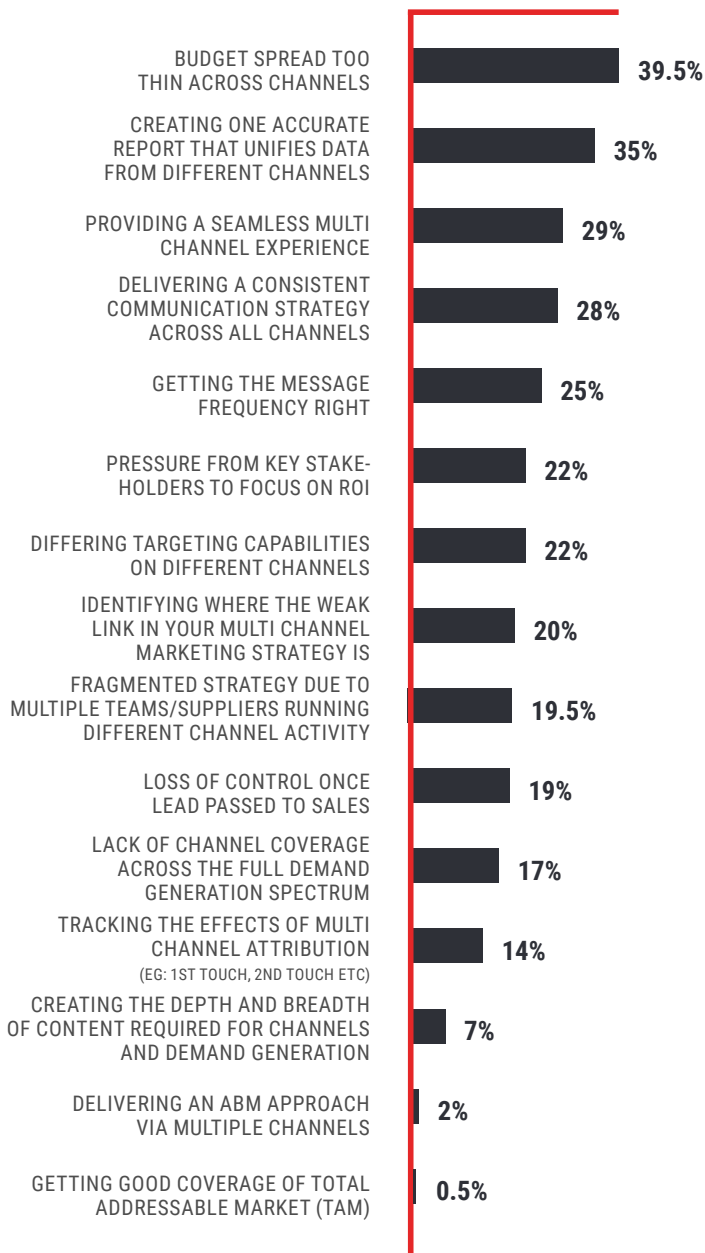
**SECTION 2**

MULTI  
CHANNEL  
CHALLENGES:  
9 COMMON  
PITFALLS

## WHAT CHALLENGES ARE PREVENTING MARKETERS FROM TAKING THEIR MULTI CHANNEL STRATEGY TO THE NEXT LEVEL?

This section takes a look at some of the most prevalent pain points impacting success.

### WHAT ARE YOUR BIGGEST PAIN POINTS AROUND MULTI CHANNEL MANAGEMENT? (PICK YOUR TOP 3)



When it comes to multi channel management, the top 3 most prominent barriers to success are:

1. Budget spread too thinly across channels (40%)
2. Creating one accurate report that unifies data from different channels (35%)
3. Providing a seamless multi-channel experience (29%)

Budget is evidently a significant area of concern for marketing professionals who are yet to develop and advance their multi channel approach. Focusing on the quality rather than quantity of channels or exploring different platform pricing models to optimize spend wherever possible, is required.

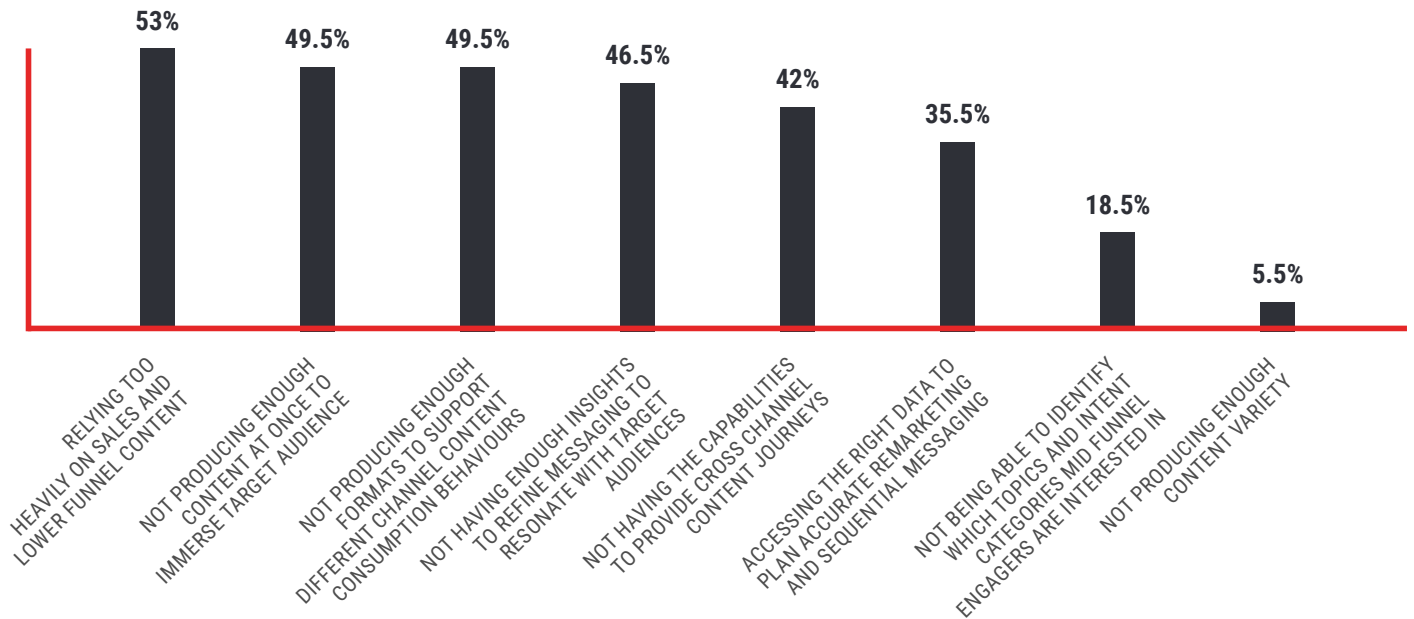
Not having a unified report which correlates all the different data points holds many marketers back and will continue to put them at a disadvantage. You can't manage what you don't measure - without accurate data, channel performance can't be monitored, benchmarked and optimized.

What's more, the key to multi channel management success is the fine balance of channels. Therefore, lacking one source of truth from which all your teams can access and be accountable to, will have a knock on effect to the alignment of your channels and the compatibility of their outcomes.

If you are not able to measure the impact each channel activity is making on the overall user journey, it is no surprise creating a seamless multi channel experience features in the top 3 pain points, particularly for those with basic (50%) approaches.

Tracking your prospects through the different channels is crucial to understanding where they are on their customer journey to know what content to serve them next.

## WHAT ARE YOUR BIGGEST PAIN POINTS WHEN IT COMES TO PLANNING CONTENT STRATEGY FOR MULTI CHANNEL DISTRIBUTION? (PICK YOUR TOP 3)



### When it comes to planning your content strategy, the top 3 pain points are:

1. Relying too heavily on sales and lower funnel content (53%)
2. Not producing enough content at pace to immerse target audience (50%)
3. Not producing enough formats to support different channel content consumption behaviours (50%)

Relying too heavily on sales activity is what causes brands to lose sight of the wider demand generation strategy and simply churn out sales jargon rather than focused, engaging and timely content which has the ability to attract target audiences and build long term multi touchpoint engagement.

Content teams need to focus their content strategy on top trending topics, obtainable through first party intent data which delves into key areas being actively searched by your specific target audiences.

This will also help when looking to produce more content at pace, as content creators can make data driven decisions around which core categories they should be focusing on.



Furthermore, gaining market intelligence through competitor analysis and closely monitoring the types of content your competitors are producing, and for which channels, will provide invaluable insight to inform your content strategy. It will do this through exposing strengths and weaknesses in their strategy along with any gaps in the market for you to tailor your messaging or optimize your media execution and gain cut through.

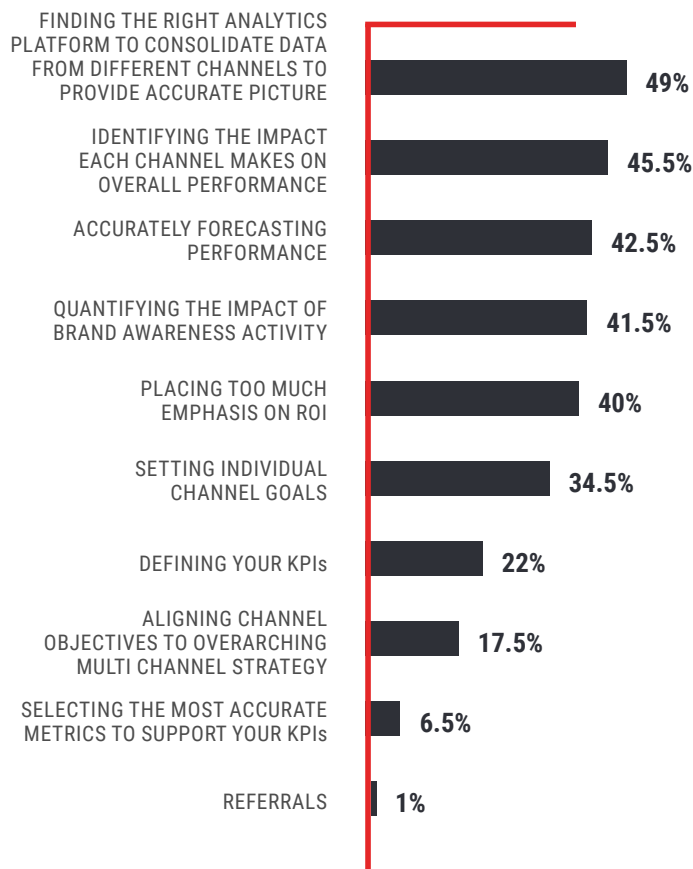
What content formats perform well? Which channel sees the greatest reach? Are some channels being utilized more than others?

Such competitor intelligence will also help to determine which content formats to spend time producing, to support different channel content consumption behaviors.



## WHICH ASPECTS OF MULTI CHANNEL ANALYTICS POSE THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE?

(PICK YOUR TOP 3)



### The 3 most significant multi channel analytics challenges are:

1. **Finding the right analytics platform to consolidate data from different channels to provide an accurate picture (49%)**
2. **Identifying the impact each channel makes on overall performance (46%)**
3. **Accurately forecasting performance (43%)**

Most channels have similarities when it comes to the metrics used to measure performance, however they can also be frustratingly different. It's no surprise therefore that the more developed and complex the multi channel approach, the more difficult it seems to find an analytics tool which combines all channel data into one, unified platform for real time insight into the impact each channel has on overall performance.

Marketers seek such a solution so that they can efficiently and reliably view all channel analytics on one dashboard, to gain a clear and accurate picture. This allows quick identification of underperforming channels as well as those exceeding expectations, while helping to accurately forecast performance.

The need is clear, though it is understandable why a reliable, all-channel encompassing tool is difficult to build due to the complexity of combining varying metrics. This ties up with the 2nd biggest pain point around multi channel management **creating one accurate report that unifies data from different channels** for over a third of B2B marketers (35%).

Ensuring all your channels have SMART objectives assigned to them along with accurate KPIs to benchmark success will help marketers maintain control and visibility, even if they have to work off multiple reports, as long as they continuously refer back to their overarching multi channel strategy.

While guaranteed inventory and fixed pricing structures can help marketers hit their numbers, they are not always the most reliable means for accurately forecasting performance and often carry higher cost implications which is not ideal if you are wanting to optimize your budget. Analysing past performance alongside other data insights and benchmarking these against industry standards pose a more accurate method for forecasting, but again this requires a move towards more sophisticated analytics which our research suggests is currently lacking.



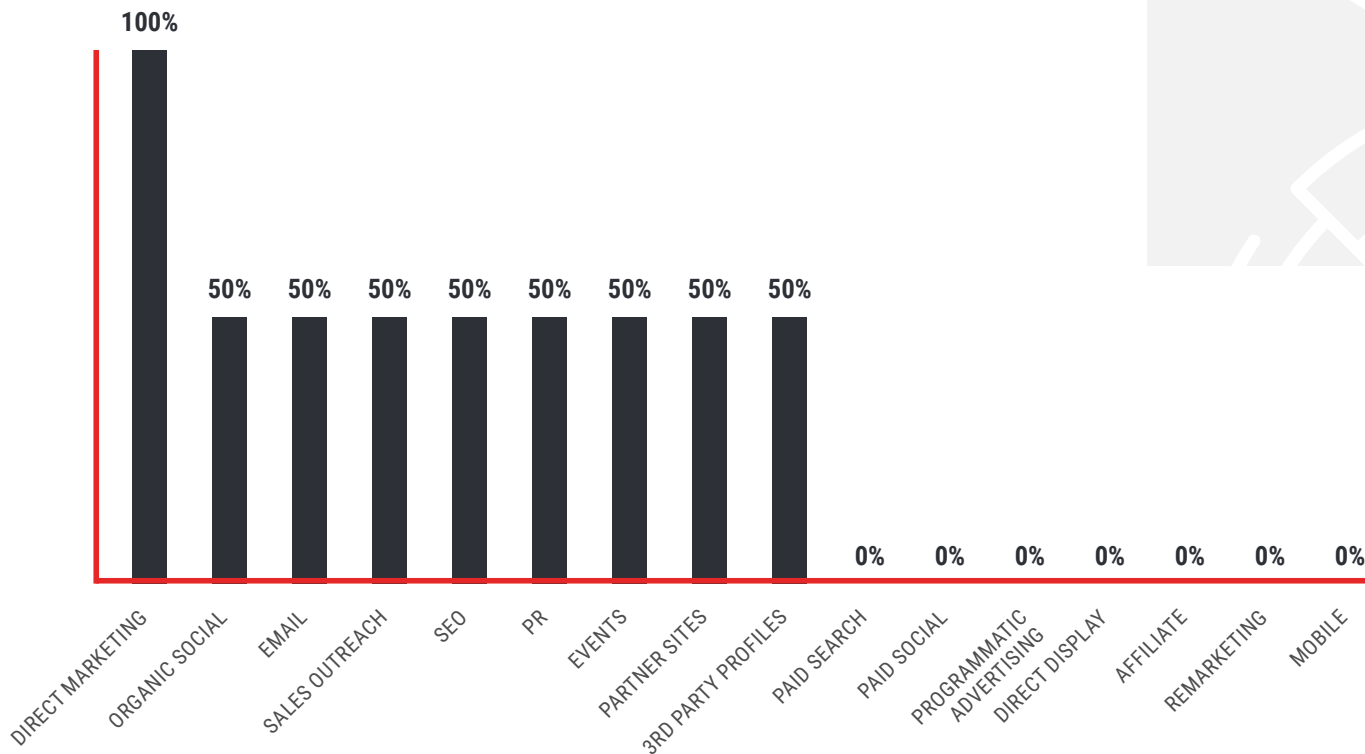
## **SECTION 3**

# MULTI CHANNEL STRATEGY: WHAT SETS THE MOST EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES APART?

We asked users to self identify, whether they thought they used basic, intermediate or advanced multi-channel strategies. We have pulled a direct comparison of the channels used by these audiences who self identified with each type, from the research panel. Where does your approach fit in?

## CHANNEL PROFILE OF A BASIC STRATEGY

### WHICH CHANNELS DO YOU CURRENTLY UTILIZE? (BASIC)



Our research shows a distinct lack of variety and a heavy reliance on traditional approaches such as Direct Marketing, by those survey participants ranking their multi channel strategy as basic.

Direct Marketing allows marketers to target those with known or potential interest in their product or service offering, hence why the aim is predominantly for direct response rather than brand building objectives.

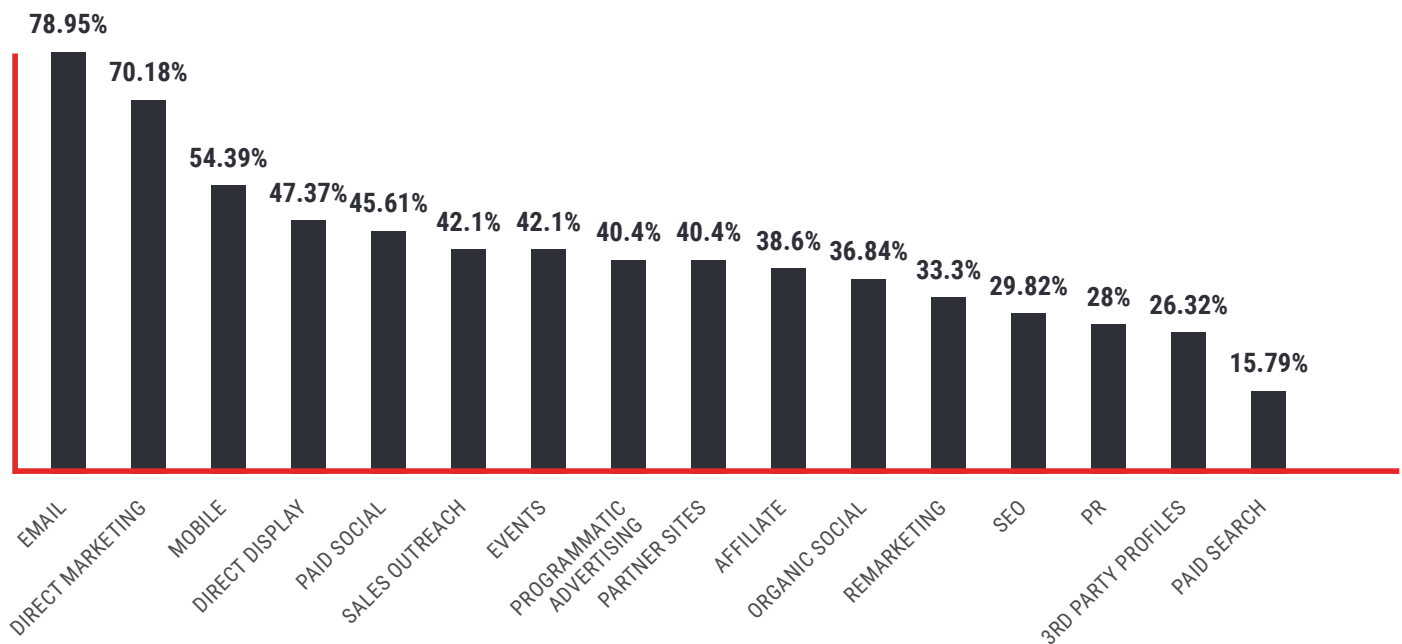
Notably, the common channels required for brand awareness are significantly lacking in the responses from our survey panel reporting to be operating a basic strategy. The clear absence of Paid Search and Paid Social activity, not only omits the opportunity to reach greater audiences, it also means that organic content is not being optimized to its maximum potential.

Creating content for **Organic Social** (50%) is often time-consuming and tricky to get right. Not pushing it via Paid Social could therefore be considered a waste of valuable resource due to the limited reach it provides compared to the effort, time, and thought gone into it.

This suggests that in order to reach an intermediate level of multi channel that achieves a fuller range of demand generation objectives, marketers need to expand their channel mix to include brand awareness and early engagement building.

## CHANNEL PROFILE OF AN INTERMEDIATE STRATEGY

### WHICH CHANNELS ARE THE MOST DIFFICULT TO MANAGE? (PICK YOUR TOP 3)



The more complex the multi channel approach, the more we see a significant increase in channel variety. **Email** (78.95%) comes out top for intermediate levels, followed closely by **Direct Marketing** (70.18%).

Direct Marketing clearly still plays a key part in the channel mix and cannot simply be disregarded altogether for the benefits other direct approaches can provide marketers with. For instance, increased reach of in-market buyers, personalized messaging and measurability.

It's unsurprising that Email scores so highly. It plays a central role in multi channel strategy, often as the main communications channel binding various other channels together. This promotes channel alignment and enhances the channel experience, encouraging it to feel more unified.

It is worth noting that **Paid Social** (45.61%) is utilized by almost half of marketing professionals here, compared to 0% with a basic approach. Paid Search is the least adopted channel, yet is still used by 15.79% of marketers and is therefore on the rise.



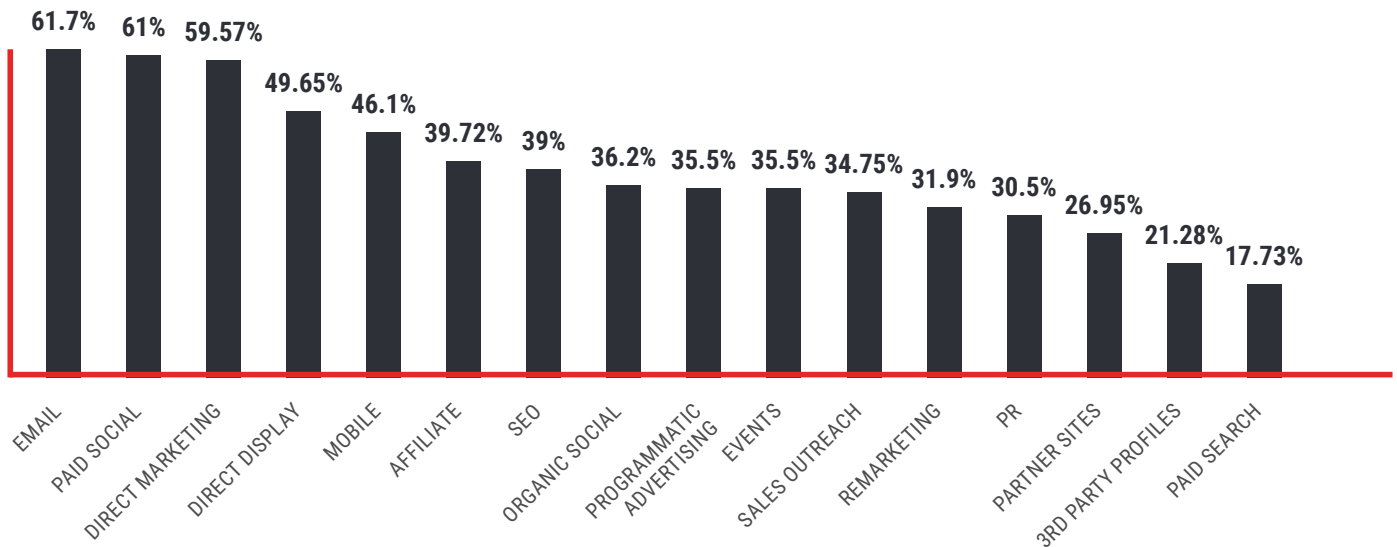
# 45%

## OF MARKETING PROFESSIONALS

UTILIZE PAID SOCIAL  
COMPARED TO 0% WITH  
A BASIC APPROACH

## CHANNEL PROFILE OF AN ADVANCED STRATEGY

### WHICH CHANNELS DO YOU CURRENTLY UTILIZE? (ADVANCED)



**Sales Outreach** (34.75%) holds less significance for those with an advanced multi channel strategy, especially compared to those with a basic one (50%). This is no doubt due to a far better coverage of channels being utilized, all of which support full funnel demand generation and have the ability to reach greater target audiences.

Almost two-thirds of B2B marketers consider **Paid Social** (60.99%) a priority channel here, showing how a more advanced approach holds the ability to understand and incorporate more complex channels often requiring a specialist skillset.

Paid Social allows marketers to target specific audiences and ensures your content and brand reaches new and existing followers to remain at the forefront of their minds. Our research suggests this is not so much the case when first adopting a multi channel strategy due to the inherent need to understand what channels work best for your audience, how budget should be divided, and which channels to omit.

It is therefore no wonder **Organic Social** (36.17%) has dropped off somewhat compared to with basic (50%) and intermediate (36.84%) approaches. The more advanced the approach, the more the budget can focused towards generating greater accuracy and demand in social against your followers, target person's or accounts with **Paid Social** and capturing demand with users showing intent through **Paid Search** (17.73%).

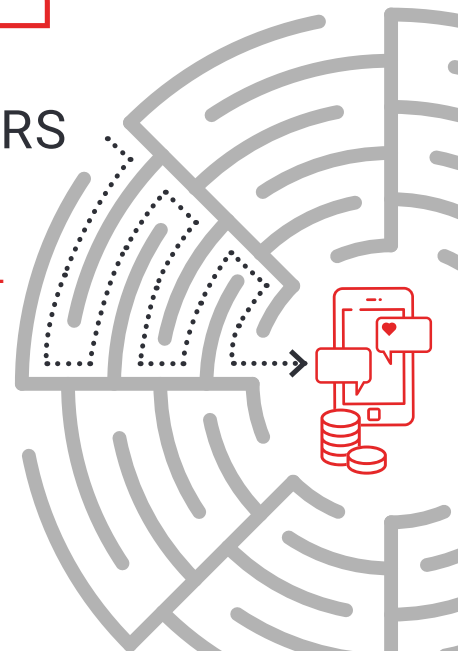
It is at this point where you fully understand which channels are best performing and you can realise the potential of those channels, which in-turn will provide a more accurate analysis of what content engages your audience effectively, and where to focus resource.

# 2/3



OF B2B  
MARKETERS

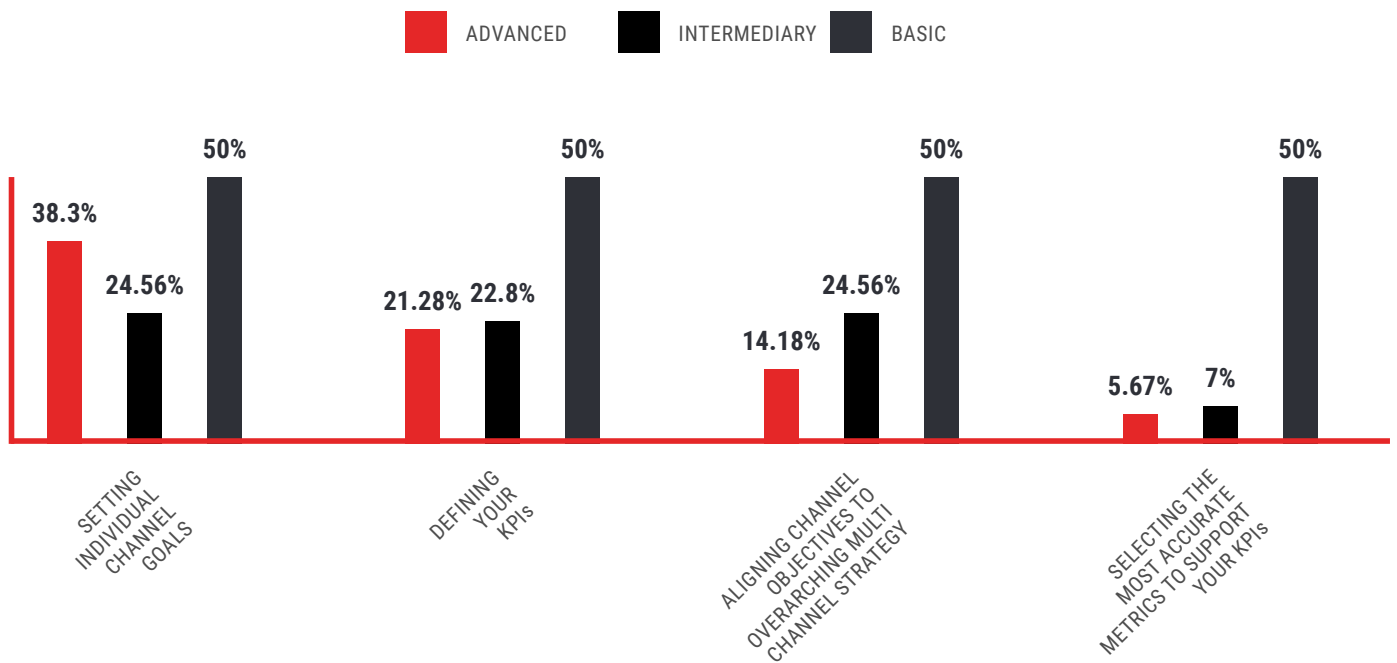
CONSIDER  
PAID SOCIAL  
A PRIORITY  
CHANNEL



While our channel profile comparison provides an overview of the number of channels used in relation to the complexity of the strategy, it does not tell the full story.

Running on lots of channels alone isn't an instant guarantee of strategy success. Another pertinent difference that sets an advanced strategy apart is the mastery of reporting. A key factor our research picked up on:

## WHICH ASPECTS OF MULTI CHANNEL ANALYTICS POSE THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE?

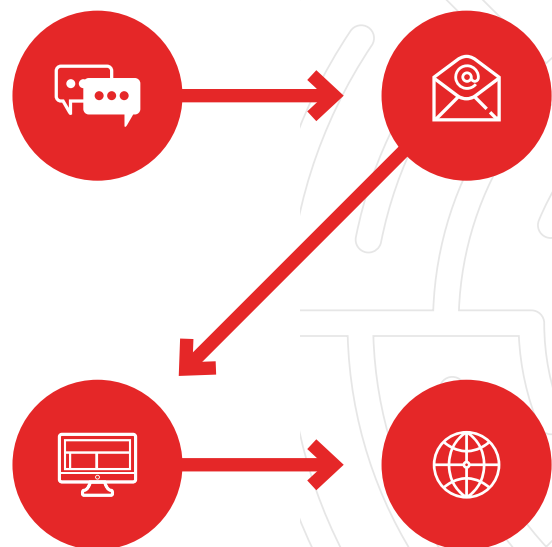


As our research shows, those marketers operating less sophisticated strategies continue to grapple with some of the core aspects required to effectively report and analyse multi channel performance.

While you need a diverse range of channels to ensure thorough coverage and accurate reporting, there are also other crucial elements that need masterminding.

These include:

- Channel alignment to your overarching strategy
- Cross-channel integration to provide seamless experiences
- Aligned messaging to buyer stage and channel context
- Sequential messaging within each channel
- Connected touchpoints to keep audience orbiting your channel eco system



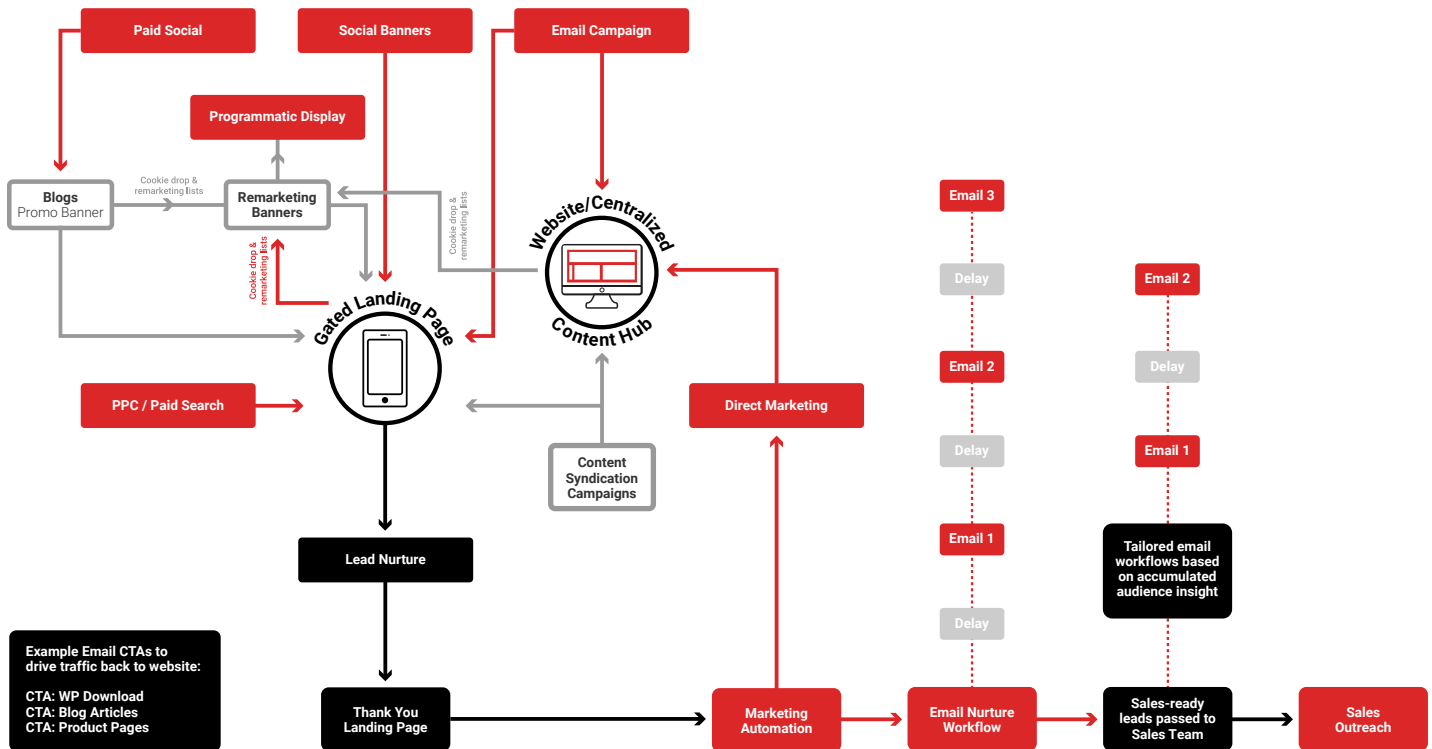
**SECTION 4**

MULTI  
CHANNEL  
PRACTICES:  
BLUEPRINT FOR  
SUCCESS

The key take away from our channel analysis is that an integrated multi channel approach is essential for ensuring all channels have a role in helping your audiences move around the user journey and have a seamless cross channel experience.

This diagram (Image 1.3) is an example of how to combine both data and channels to keep your audience within your channel eco system and moving through your demand generation engine.

IMAGE 1.3



## WHY EVERY MULTI CHANNEL STRATEGY NEEDS A MULTI-TOUCHPOINT CONTENT STRATEGY

An advanced multi channel strategy used to achieve overarching demand generation objectives should aim to turn net new engagements into multi-touchpoint engagers. This requires the use of cookies and intent data to deliver timely messages via multi channel tactics to build always-on, always present immersive content environments. This is essential for keeping your brand front-of-mind.

This is where sequential messaging and content repurposing are vital to your multi channel strategy - and not only because they are essential for aligning your messaging to deliver seamless channel experiences.

These established practices will also directly address 2 of the main pain points previously identified by our research:

- Not producing enough content at pace to immerse target audience (50%)
- Not producing enough formats to support different channel content consumption behaviors (50%)



## MASTERING SEQUENTIAL MESSAGING

There are a number of ways to approach sequential messaging, but it all comes down to 2 things, understanding what buying or engagement state the target user is in and adapting your message to increase the relevance of the message to the individual or group of individuals who share a common state.

You can look at it as stages of the funnel, interest vs. desire (and everything in-between) or simply cold, warm and hot. Sometimes with advertising it is easier to use a combination, since joining up messaging and content can have great benefits.

Whether you use a dynamic approach through cookies and feeds or simply rotate the messaging to allow the platforms to optimise once they understand what “state the user is in”, both methodologies can deliver results and an uplift in performance, as long as the goals are clearly defined.

You can either use sequential to tell a story and take a user from “ways to increase efficiency” to “How to increase efficiency” to “which are the best providers for efficiency” or you can take them from “Learn more” to “trial” to “buy now”.

## A GUIDE TO SETTING UP A SEQUENTIAL STRATEGY

You start with a segment which could be your target accounts or target person's. If you want to understand your total addressable market (TAM) you can take that segment and model it with look-a-likes, either within the platforms or using AI to create optimal segments. **There are many additional data points available, where possible leverage intent data to overlay behavioral targeting to enhance your targeting activity across all channels.**

It's vital you have a strong understanding of your target buyer cycles so you can identify key touch-points to engage and win their interest through your messaging.

Use these lists in your paid social, email and programmatic display to reach, engage and drive a pre-qualified audience to your owned channels. At this stage using introductory content and micro content formats optimized for channel engagement will help to incite your audiences to continue engaging.

A topic or category re-marketing approach drives strong alignment with your audience needs, you can set up re-marketing lists from the page which is the focus of the prospecting and then create a follow up message using re-marketing.

Or to take this deeper you can further categorize the content within a feed for the platforms or your site XML feed, based on what stage the content is in the funnel. You can also categorize this within some of the Demand Side Platforms (DSP's) or feeds for paid social platforms. If you want to use sequential messaging in platform set out your ad suite in the 'campaign' and then run the ads simultaneously until you get engagement and then further segment with the next message in the sequence.

## WHAT ARE YOUR CONFIDENCE LEVELS IN DELIVERING SEQUENTIAL MESSAGING ACROSS MULTIPLE CHANNELS?



Make sure all sequential content and calls to action (CTAs) are logical and relevant for your target personas. For example if they came to your owned media via an info-graphic, re-target them with the next piece of content in the series or the full report.

Harvesting intelligence about your users that go beyond business card details such as capturing and tracking real-time engagements across all your media, this equips you with the agility to create highly accurate follow-up messaging that powerfully resonates with your audience. This intelligence can be used to control the user experience, heightening relevancy and message accuracy and then be utilized in your sales follow up.

Over half (51%) of senior B2B marketers cite their confidence levels in delivering sequential messaging across multiple channels as 'Med-High'. 31% say 'High', 15% 'Medium', and just 3% 'Medium-Low'.

## CHECKLIST FOR CONVERSION OPTIMISATION:

- **Establish your goal.**

What action do you want them to take? How does it work within the context of their buyer's journey? How will completing this action contribute to your ultimate goal—revenue!

- **Know what makes your audience tick.**

What is the incentive for following your CTA? How will you make their buying decision less complex or stressful?

- **Create a mutually beneficial exchange.**

How does following your CTA generate real value for your reader? If you're using a form to gather information, what are you offering in return?

- **Anticipate the next conversion point.**

What do you want your reader to do next? How will this bring them closer to your ultimate conversion goal?



## CROSS-PROMOTING CONTENT FOR OPTIMIZED MULTI CHANNEL PERFORMANCE

Content repurposing provides the opportunity to cross-promote your best content across multiple channels to create optimized content journeys that accelerate the buyer journey.

Through plotting your formats against your demand generation funnel, you can weave a compelling content journey that widens the touchpoints for engagement across your owned and paid for media channels. A key tactic to achieve this, is to take a cumulative approach and ensure every piece of content served to your users, is relevant and builds on what they learnt before.

This can be achieved through taking your best performing content and repurposing it into content formats that address each stage of your funnel – all the way down to sales promotional materials. You can then build out your content amplification strategy by matching each content format to the most suitable channels, and coordinating your CTAs so that your readers are seamlessly guided along your plotted content journey.

A more advanced approach would be to combine the above with intent data and content intelligence to isolate other key assets that resonate with real time need and make sure these are included as primary assets within your content strategy. This approach takes into consideration past performance and future trends in order to select a range of content with the greatest propensity to engage your target audiences at crucial touchpoints.

Getting this formula bang on may require a little trial and error to begin with. However by continuously monitoring and improving your conversion paths and leveraging intelligent insight to better understand how your target audiences want to consume your content, you are in a strong position to serve up the right content, to the right people, in the right way.

**SECTION 5**

MULTI  
CHANNEL  
MANAGEMENT:  
CONTROL AND  
MEASUREMENT

Placing too much emphasis on ROI was reported as the biggest challenge for 40% of our survey panel. When demand generation strategies are too highly ROI / CPL focused, there tends to be a disproportion focus on sales and lower funnel activity such as demo sign ups. This often results in less emphasis in the media plan on brand activity that immerse audiences in the topics and themes they are interested in. Taking such a short term approach removes the opportunity to build early engagement and positive brand associations which can have a negative impact in the long run.

The best performing multi channel strategies move back from this approach, often using a blended CPL model so that channels can work together to support wider demand generation objectives. This includes room for brand spend, which doesn't need to deliver direct ROI but is instead accountable to other metrics and KPIs such as Reach, Frequency and Viewability.

As our previous research shows, there are positive signs that marketers are moving towards the latter approach, with 45% reporting to allocate 50-75% of their budget to brand awareness.

However, 42% cited quantifying the impact of brand awareness activity as one of their core challenges. A further 46% reported identifying the impact each channel makes on overall performance as their key concern.

So what are the overarching KPIs and Metrics senior B2B marketers are currently focusing on? We used our research to dig down further, paying attention to the differences between US and UK senior marketers.

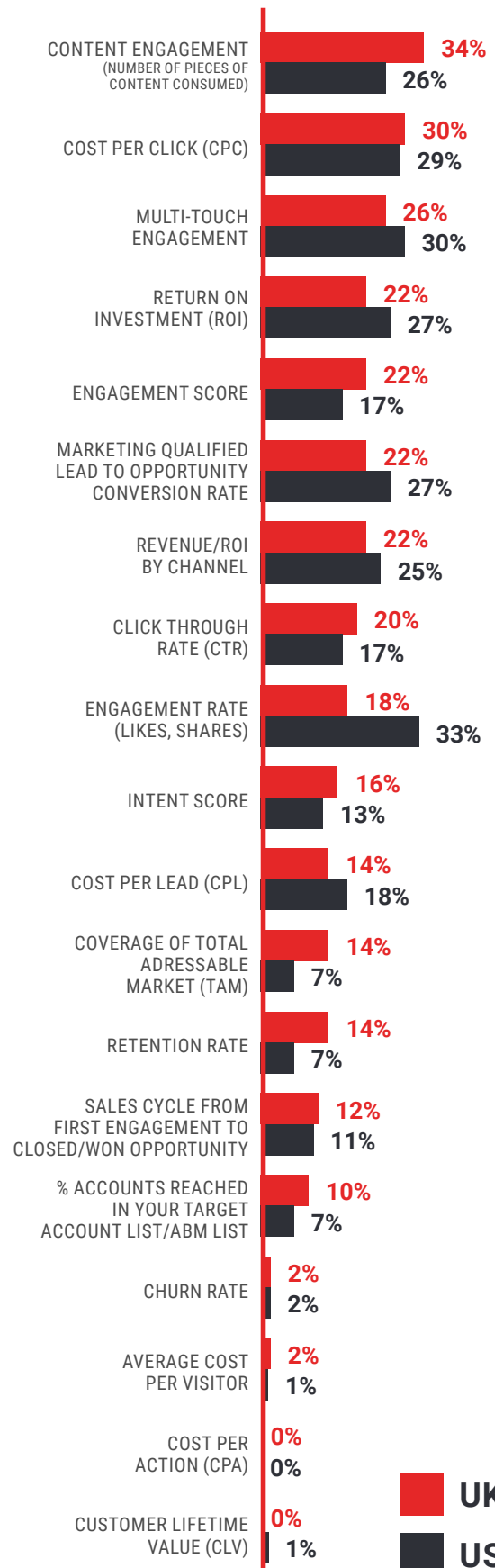
### What differences stand out?

Engagement rate, (likes and shares) is the top KPI used to measure overall multi channel strategy effectiveness for almost a third (32.67%) of US marketing professionals. However, only 18% of UK marketers feel the same. They instead consider content engagement (number of pieces of content consumed) as the overarching KPI (34%), compared to just 26% of US respondents.

These findings indicate a clear difference in how multi channel performance measurement differs between the US and UK. They both look towards engagement, yet focusing on the rate of engagement as opposed to content engagement will inevitably produce quite different results when tracking multi channel strategy effectiveness.

It also suggests that UK marketers potentially produce greater amounts of content than in the US, for the fact that UK look towards content consumption over likes and shares which can be seen regardless of the amount of content being produced.

## WHICH OVERARCHING KPIs ARE USED TO MEASURE THE OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF MULTI CHANNEL STRATEGY? (PICK YOUR TOP 3)



## WHICH METRICS DO YOU USE TO ANALYZE YOUR OVERARCHING KPIs? (PICK ALL THAT APPLY)

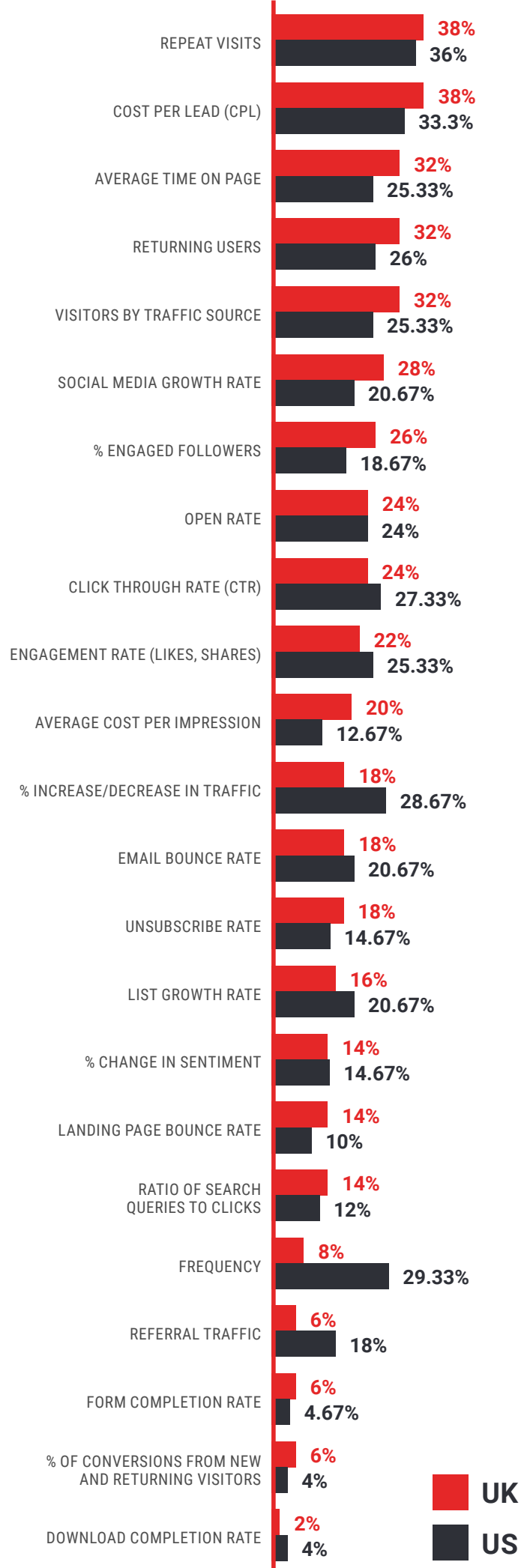
### What differences stand out?

Frequency is in the top 3 key metrics used to analyze overarching KPIs according to almost two-thirds of US respondents (29.33%), while just 8% of UK marketers agree. It appears that the UK focus more on consumption than rates of occurrence as seen in the US, indicating a focus on quality over quantity – the opposite to the US.

28.67% of US marketers look at percentage increase and decrease in traffic compared to just 18% of those in the UK. This again reflects a heavier focus on quantity for US marketers who might spend too much time analyzing patterns in traffic over what content actually engages and resonates with their target audience.

On the theme of traffic, 18% of our US research panel also look to referral traffic for KPI analysis, while only 6% of the UK panel cite this. It appears that US marketers place more emphasis on where their numbers are coming from, which can really add value when it comes to understanding which channels are best performing and whether there are further opportunities to leverage additional key channels not currently being utilized to their full potential.

This can also help when it comes to budget allocation, especially as cost is a key consideration factor when it comes to deciding which channels to utilize according to 60% of US and 56% of UK senior marketing professionals.



**SECTION 6**

# SUMMARY AND KEY TAKE AWAYS

While the majority of senior B2B marketers feel their multi channel strategy is advanced, challenges are continuously faced when it comes to achieving an all-encompassing multi channel experience across a broad range of key channels.

Budget constraints, reporting, and delivering a unified multi channel strategy across all channels feature as some of the biggest pain points felt across the board, both in the UK and US. Budget spread too thinly and cost are recurring challenges, resulting in difficult decisions around which channels to dedicate resource to while undoubtedly jeopardizing the performance of others.

Where this is the case, focusing on the quality of channel content and reach rather than the quantity of channels, and likewise placing budget on fewer channels well rather than lots of channels poorly, could be a beneficial short-term solution.

Email stands out as the top utilized channel in today's digitalized world, though it also appears in the top three underperforming channels for both US and UK marketers. Further training in this area will boost skills and knowledge and help improve channel performance. The other option is to work with a specialist email provider to help deliver optimized copy, subject line testing and

personalized content and messaging. This also allows you to tap into multiple skill sets and focus your attention on goals and objectives.

Direct marketing remains a key player in multi channel marketing, with two-thirds of marketers still relying on this as a pivotal channel. However, it is the highest underperforming channel for UK marketers, suggesting that behaviors of target audiences have shifted in recent years and therefore investment needs to focus around understanding how to engage effectively through direct marketing in today's B2B landscape.

Competitor analysis would be a great place to start. Benchmark your efforts against top performing competitors to learn how they are achieving success. What content are they creating? What formats perform best? Which channels are they utilizing the most?

Almost half of senior B2B marketers outsource 50-75% of their channels, indicating a lack of specialist skills required to manage specific channels inhouse. Bringing in workers with the right expertise and skillset could drive channel performance through generating a greater understanding of how they work and interlink with one another within a multi channel strategy.



## IT IS INTERESTING TO SEE THAT THE CHANNELS BEST SUITED TO BUILDING BRAND AWARENESS – PPC AND PAID SOCIAL – APPEAR NON-EXISTENT IN CURRENT BASIC MULTI CHANNEL STRATEGIES, MISSING A KEY OPPORTUNITY TO REACH GREATER AUDIENCES AND OPTIMIZE CONTENT.

The main considerations when deciding which channels to utilize are around data, reach and targeting. These prominent areas reveal the reasons behind adopting a multi channel strategy and for focusing resource on driving it to an advanced stage; a multi channel approach can drive reach, make way for effective targeting, and has the ability to provide copious amounts of relevant data to inform strategy.

On that note it is interesting to see that the channels best suited to building brand awareness – PPC and Paid Social – appear non-existent in current basic multi channel strategies, missing a key opportunity to reach greater audiences and optimize content.

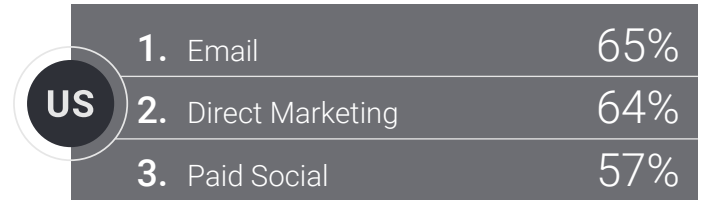
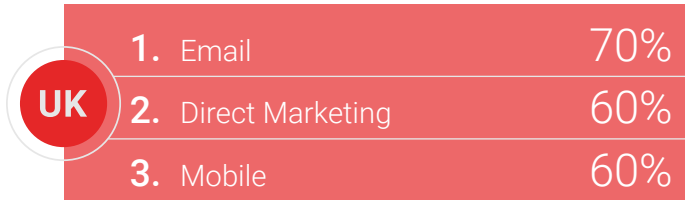
However, the more advanced the multi channel strategy becomes, the considerable increase in the number of channels utilized. An advanced strategy focuses on linking channels and creating a unified multi channel experience to support full funnel demand generation and reach greater target audiences. This is why more complex channels often exist at this stage, along with the specialist skills and expertise needed to understand and master them.

Overall, it is evident that an integrated multi channel approach is vital for providing your target audiences with a seamless and unified channel experience. They need to see your message frequently and across multiple channels to drive brand awareness and interest in your product or service.

## KEY INSIGHT TAKE AWAYS

### THE TOP 3 CHANNELS USED IN MULTI CHANNEL STRATEGY

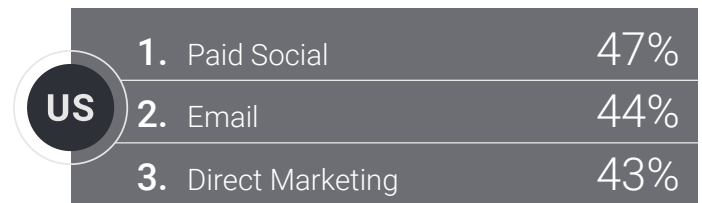
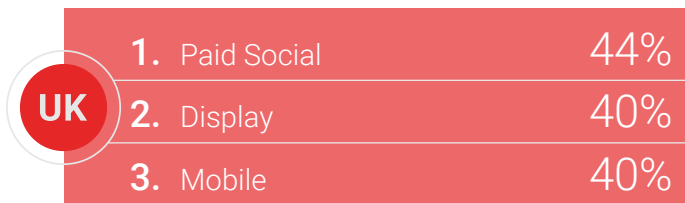
The top 2 channels currently utilized by US and UK marketers are the same. While Paid Social comes 3rd for US, it appears 4th on the list for UK (54%), while Mobile ranks 5th for US (44%).



### TOP 3 INVESTMENT AREAS

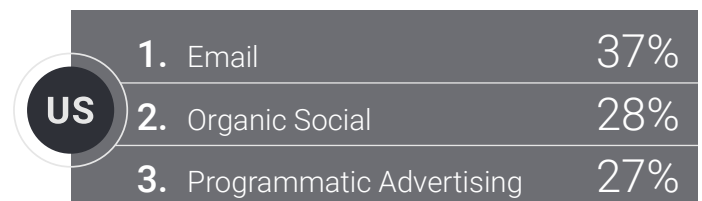
Paid Social is the clear winner when it comes to investment intentions for 2022, suggesting a focus on building brand awareness with both UK and US audiences.

US marketers plan to invest in Email and Direct Marketing, while those in the UK look to spend more on Display and Mobile. This indicates a strong emphasis on communication and reach in the US, and tying up the multi channel experience across different devices and platforms for UK.



### TOP 3 UNDERPERFORMING CHANNELS

Email and Organic Social are underperforming across the board suggesting both US and UK marketers have to work harder to identify and overcome current hurdles to performance. Meanwhile, Programmatic Advertising appears more of a concern for the US than for UK making it into their top 3 underperforming channels.





## ABOUT INBOX INSIGHT

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