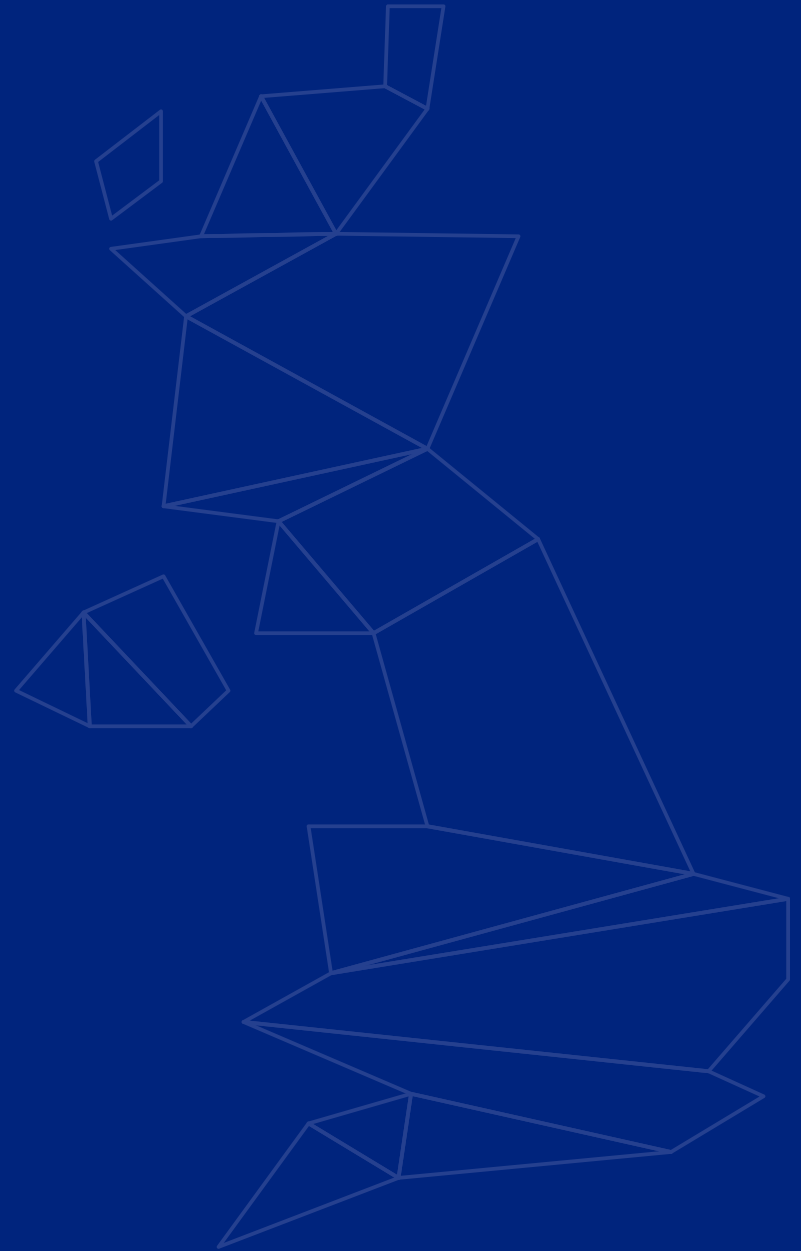
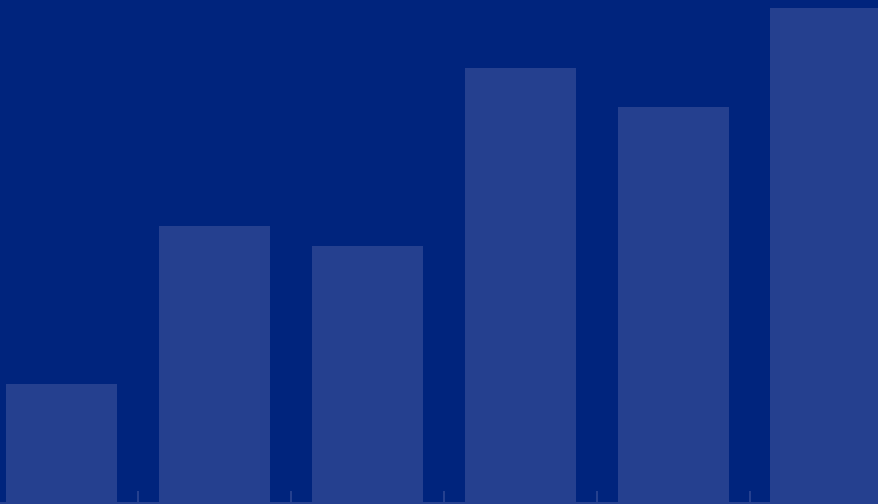




INBOUND INSIGHTS

United Kingdom



Inbound Marketing Adoption

Dramatic growth in adoption of inbound in 2014

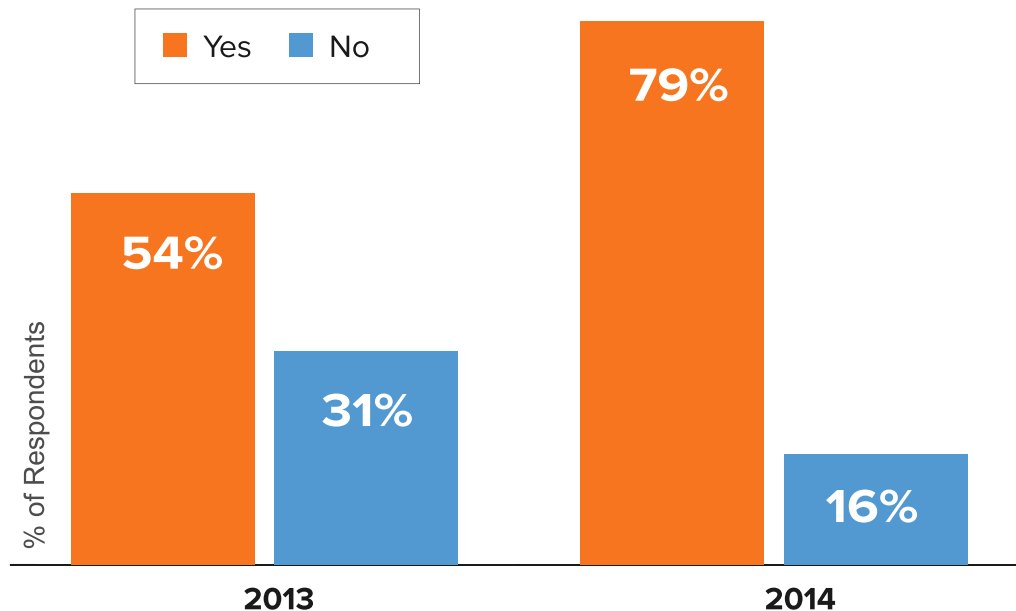
The number of UK marketers who are practicing inbound marketing in the UK has seen a dramatic increase in 2014 with an additional 25% of marketers adopting an inbound marketing strategy.

Trending alongside our North American counterparts

The UK is often cited as being 18 months behind marketing trends in the US, but this isn't true for inbound marketing. The UK adoption rate of 79% is marginally smaller than the current US adoption rate of 85%.

% OF MARKETERS THAT PRACTICE INBOUND MARKETING

Inbound marketing adoption has grown significantly in 2014.



Responses with N/A have been excluded from this chart

What the Experts Say ...

What changes have you seen in the demand for inbound services in the last 12 months? Why do you think that has been the case?



Alistair Norman
Marketing Director
Tomorrow People
[@AlistairNorman](#)

Inbound services have certainly increased. To be frank, we are seeing most businesses go for content provision rather than a cohesive strategy as they think content publishing without a purpose is enough to generate results, but the execution needs to be revisited for many businesses. The main thing missing is the focus on ensuring the content production is aligned to the media instead of what the organisations “think” the target audience & media require. Think channel first, then about what you have to say. Combining that with a creative experience to cut through the content “white noise” will stand you in good stead.

What role do you think inbound marketing will play in the next 12 months for B2B companies?



Joel Harrison
Editor-in-chief
B2B Marketing
[@Joel_B2BEditor](#)

B2B marketers are using inbound or content marketing to address both the brand and demand generation challenges, but they’re also increasingly using it to address other marketing-related challenges. In any instance where an organisation needs to communicate specific information to a specific audience or group of stakeholders, like recruitment and HR or customer service, there is the potential for inbound ‘marketing’ to play a role. In this day and age, we expect the information (of any kind) that we want to be freely available and accessible via search engines. The challenge for B2B brands is to present it in an attractive and digestible format.

Inbound Marketing ROI

B2C companies in the UK are having the most success with inbound

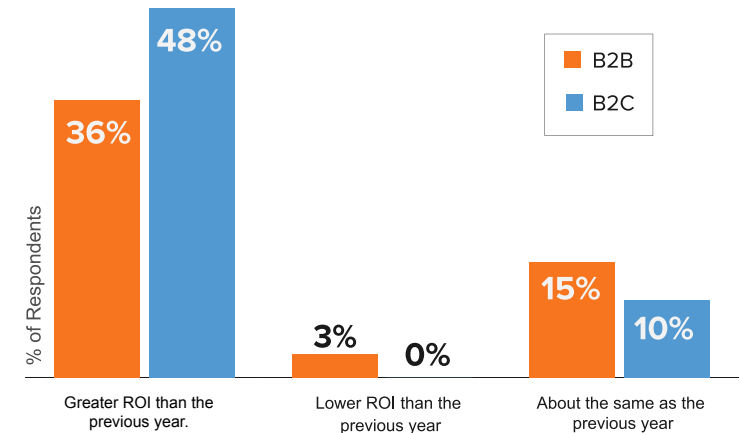
Almost half (48%) of B2C companies are seeing greater ROI with inbound marketing compared to 36% of B2B companies, and 40% of non-profits. This is different from the US where non-profits are seeing the most success (47%), with B2B and B2C both at 37%.

1 in 5 marketers are not measuring ROI

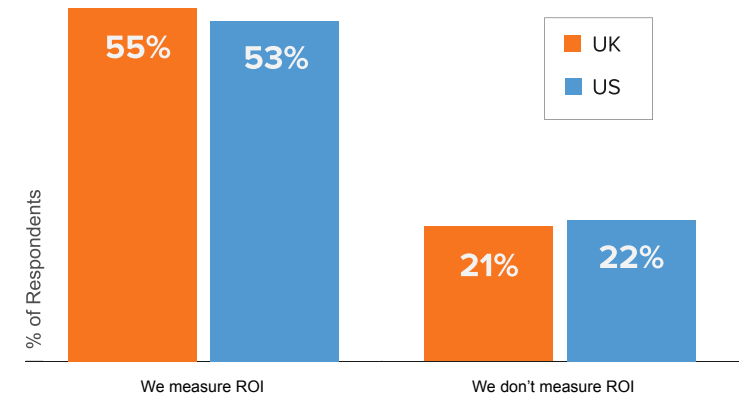
It seems there is much room for improvement here; 21% of UK marketers said they did not measure ROI, which was almost identical to the US figure of 22%.

INBOUND ROI BY COMPANY TYPE

B2C companies are seeing more success with inbound marketing.



INBOUND ROI MEASUREMENT UK vs US



Responses with N/A have been excluded from these charts

Inbound Marketing Budgets

B2C companies are growing their inbound budgets faster than B2B

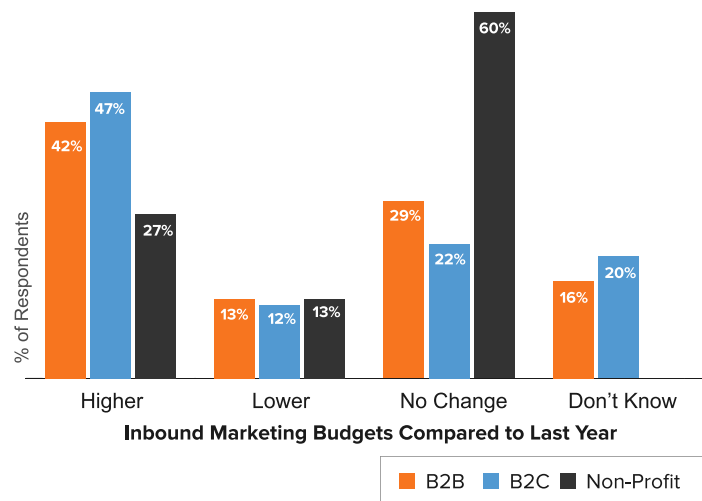
With B2C companies seeing better results from inbound marketing, more B2C (47%) have managed to increase their inbound marketing budgets than B2B companies (42%) or non-profits (27%). This differs from the US where B2B companies have seen the greater increase in their inbound marketing budget (47%) followed by B2C (42%) and non-profit (40%).

Past success with inbound is the biggest reason for budget adjustments

It's clear from our data that past success with inbound is the number one factor in inbound marketing budget adjustments. 40% of UK marketers said this was the deciding factor, followed by a change in management (28%) and economy (27%).

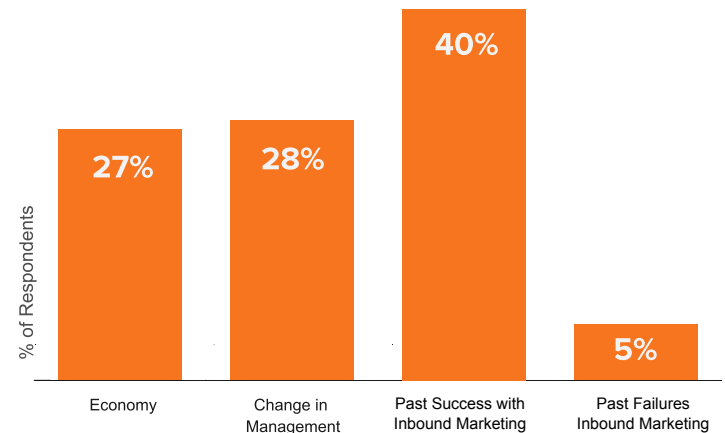
INBOUND MARKETING BUDGET BY COMPANY TYPE

B2C companies saw their budgets increase more than B2B.



FACTORS INFLUENCING INBOUND MARKETING BUDGET

Proving success is key to securing more budget.



Marketing Priorities

Smaller companies focus on growing the top of their funnel and customer base

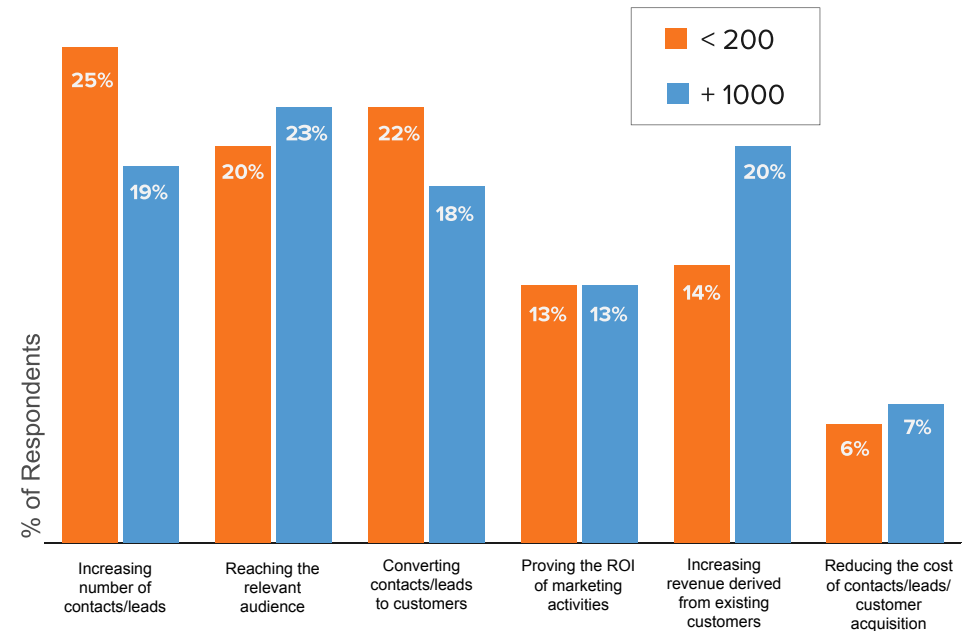
For companies of less than 200 employees, the top priorities are increasing leads (25%) and converting existing leads into customers (22%). These are the same priorities as a company in the US of a similar size who prioritise increasing leads (24%) and converting those leads into customers (22%).

Customer marketing is a bigger priority for larger companies

Bigger companies in the UK (1000+) are focused on reaching the right audience (23%) and increasing their revenue from existing customers (20%).

TOP MARKETING PRIORITIES BY COMPANY SIZE

Bigger companies tend to be more focused on increasing their revenue from existing customers.



Top Marketing Priorities

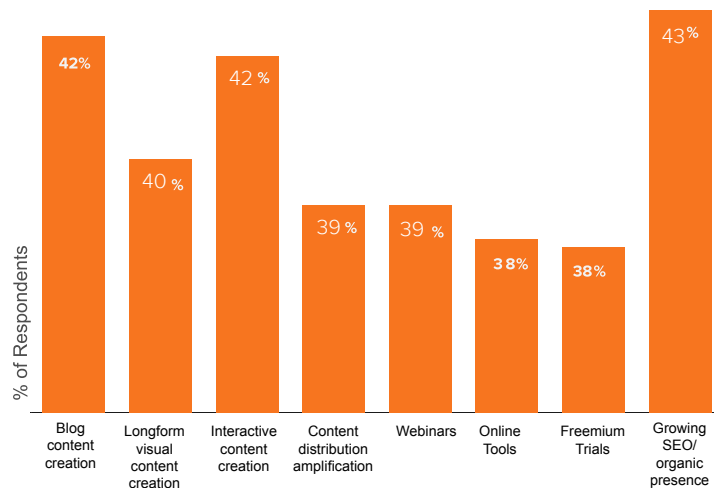
Inbound Marketing Priorities

Marketers who are being successful with inbound prioritise SEO

Marketers who saw a greater ROI from inbound marketing this year are prioritising the growth of their organic traffic through SEO (43%).

THE MOST SUCCESSFUL MARKETERS ARE PRIORITISING SEO

Marketers who saw a positive ROI from inbound marketing are prioritising the growth of organic traffic.



Top Marketing Priorities

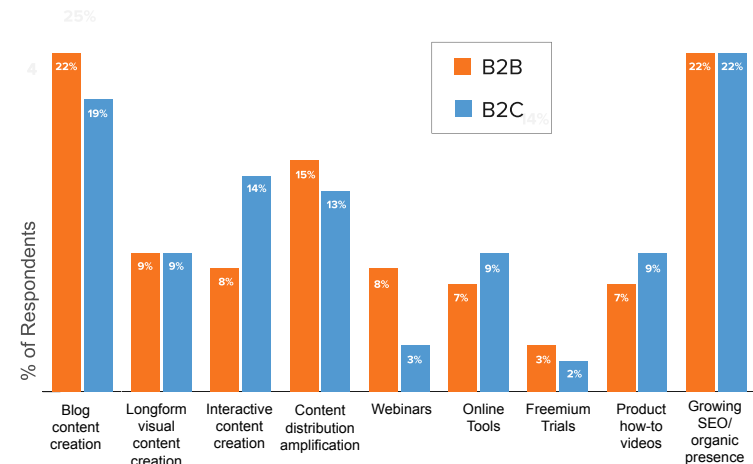
B2C companies have more interactive content

B2C and B2B companies are closely aligned on their top inbound marketing priorities; growing SEO and creating blog content.

However, B2C companies do tend to focus a lot more on creating interactive content, where B2B companies are a lot more focused on webinars.

TOP INBOUND MARKETING PRIORITIES BY COMPANY TYPE

B2C companies tend to put more importance on interactive content creation.



Top Marketing Priorities

What the Experts Say ...

We hear so much about SEO being dead, but the most successful inbound marketers are prioritising SEO. How important is SEO as part of an inbound marketing strategy?



Simon Penson
MD & Founder
Zazzle Media
[@SimonPenson](#)

Despite the fact there is a lot of noise around ‘content marketing’ or ‘data’ right now, the inescapable fact is that organic search is still THE most important channel for almost all brands and industries in ROI terms. Social is catching up relatively quickly and paid search is a profitable tactic but long-term brands need to grow an ‘owned’ audience if they have any ambition to truly grow value. Speak to any brand spending big across all digital ‘channels’ and they will always tell you that organic search is the most profitable for them if the strategy and execution is right.



Paddy Moogan
VP London
Distilled
[@PaddyMoogan](#)

To be clear, SEO is most certainly not dead, it is just changing and we need to adapt. There is still a strong need to have a technically sound website which is easy for search engines to crawl and understand, which contains quality content and provides a great user experience. The definition of SEO can be very subjective. If we put technical work to one side, we still have lots of other related areas including link building and promotion. These are as important as ever but again, things have changed quite a bit in terms of our approach and the impact of links.

I still believe that SEO is an important part of the overall strategy of a business and if you forget about it or ignore it, then all the other work you do may not be as effective as it could be.

What the Experts Say ...

Do you feel B2B companies could be a little more adventurous with the different types of content formats they produce? Are B2B companies still trailing B2C companies in this area?



Doug Kessler
Creative Director &
Co-Founder
Velocity Partners
[@DougKessler](#)

B2B content marketing is almost in a formats crisis. As a discipline, we've settled into a few staple formats – the blog post, eBook, SlideShare, explainer video and infographic. It's critical to expand our repertoire and find new ways to tell stories, especially ways that are made for the screens in our lives.

B2C brands are kicking our asses again; I hate that. B2B pioneered the new era of content but we're leaving the high ground – innovation, emotion and great storytelling – to the consumer guys.

B2C is more into interactive because they're creating screen-native experiences while B2B are still utilising formats from the print era. They realise that they're in the entertainment business as well as the education business. B2B brands need to wake up to this and go beyond our comfort zone and into the wild west, where lazy old-school presentation doesn't cut it.

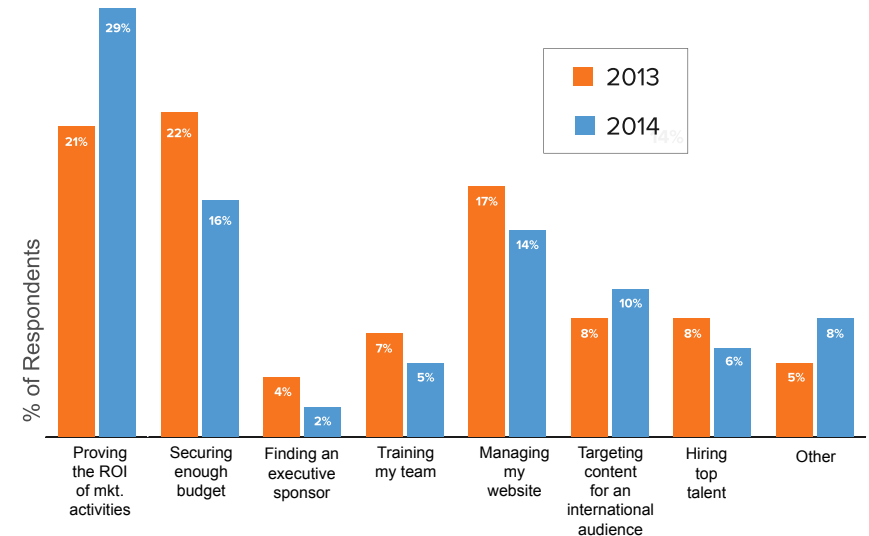
Top Marketing Challenges

Proving ROI has become more of a challenge for UK marketers

The top marketing challenges for UK marketers are proving the ROI of their marketing activities (29%) and securing enough budget (16%). This is a change from 2013 when securing enough budget was the top marketing challenge at 22%, and proving ROI was second at 21%. Although marketers feel proving ROI is a top challenge, it's interesting that so few listed it as a top priority (13%).

TOP MARKETING CHALLENGES

Proving ROI has become a bigger challenge for marketers in 2014.



Top Marketing Challenges

What the Experts Say...

With all the different analytics tools available today, why do you think such a large percentage of marketers are still not measuring ROI?



Craig Wiltshire
Founder & CEO, Struto
[@CraigWiltshire](#)

There is simply an overwhelming number of marketing related software products out there, analytics or otherwise. Marketers, especially generalists in smaller businesses without dedicated digital marketing teams simply don't have the skills or time to adequately research, evaluate, and narrow down a solution to their problems, let alone gain executive buy-in in order to implement a solution. These marketers need to stop spinning their wheels by committing multiple random acts of tactical marketing kindness and take time out to build their own strategic vision for the future of their marketing department.

They need to build a story that they can take to their executive leadership that clearly articulates where they are versus where they could be as well as a potential path for getting from A to B. If they don't, they risk being stuck in a cycle that can only lead to dissatisfaction at their own performance or worse still, their employers being dissatisfied at their performance.

Top Marketing Challenges

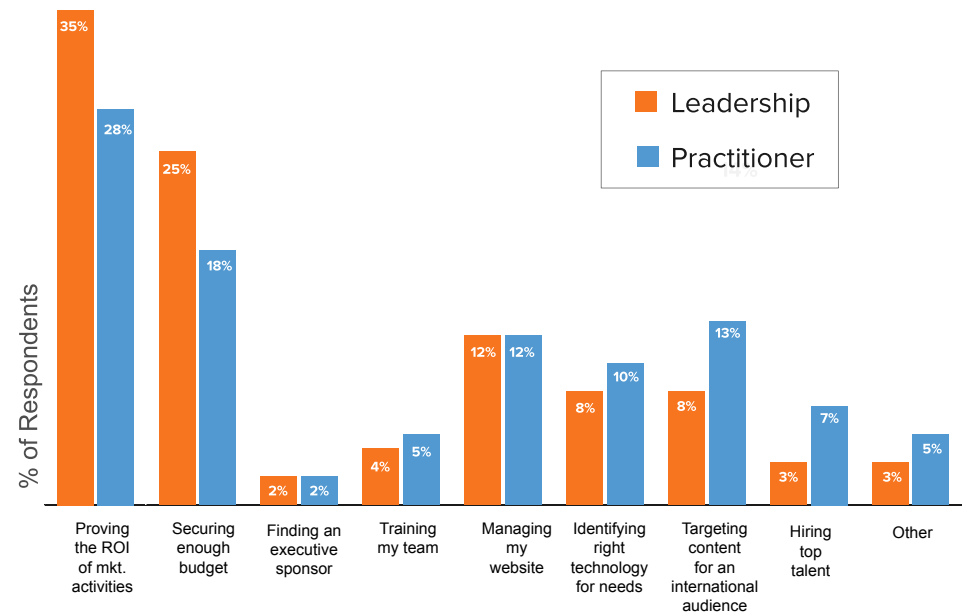
Marketing leaders and practitioners have the same challenges

There was no difference in the top challenges of a marketing leader versus a practitioner; they both listed proving ROI and securing budget as their top marketing challenges.

Hiring talent is not proving a challenge for marketing leaders

A surprising statistic is how little marketing leadership are troubled by hiring top talent, with only 3% of leaders citing this as a top challenge.

TOP MARKETING CHALLENGES BY ROLE



Top Marketing Challenges

What the Experts Say ...

How important is hiring talent to the success of a marketing team? Are you surprised by our statistic that shows only 3% of marketing leaders feel hiring is a top marketing challenge?



Bryan Adams
CEO & Co-founder
[PH Creative](#)
[@Bryan_phc](#)

Hiring talent is essential for the on-going success of a marketing team and should be a strategic priority. The team needs to be made up of key players who work together to achieve results and individuals with varied talents, from writing, to PPC, and SEO. Building a network of talented employees attracts other talented individuals to want to become a part of the business and networks.

It can be a difficult process but the key is not to be narrow in the recruitment funnel, as you run the risk of rejecting talented people; it's better to ask 'killer' questions and make sure that you're getting the right people in the right roles. Hiring right the first time can save a lot of pain further down the line.

Inbound Execution

Inbound practices generate the majority of leads

Both B2C (38%) and B2B (34%) companies are generating the majority of their leads from inbound practices. It's not surprising that B2C companies are on the higher end of the scale as we've already seen that they've had better success and are increasing their spend on inbound at a higher rate than B2B companies.

A lost opportunity

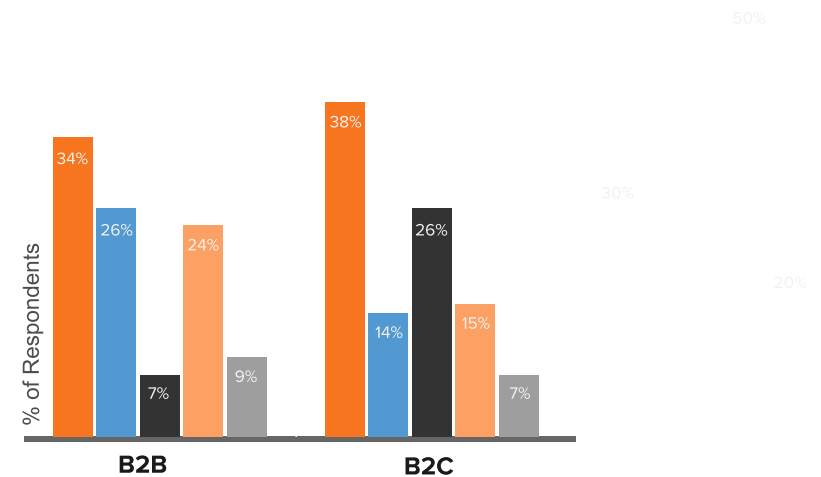
It's interesting to see so few B2B companies are using paid media, including social media ads to generate leads (7%). They could be missing a huge opportunity to leverage social media advertising to distribute their content and to generate leads.

US Companies Generate More Leads from Inbound than the UK

US marketers are generating a higher portion of their leads from

inbound than companies in the UK, with B2C companies at 48% and B2B at 44%.

PRIMARY LEAD SOURCE BY COMPANY TYPE



- Inbound practices (e.g. SEO, Referrals, Social Media, Content/Blog)
- Outbound practices (e.g. Cold Calling, TV/Outdoor Ads, Trade Shows, Purchased lists)
- Paid media (e.g. PPC, Social Media Ads)
- Self-sourced leads from sales team
- Don't know/ not applicable

Inbound Execution

Social becomes an invaluable lead source

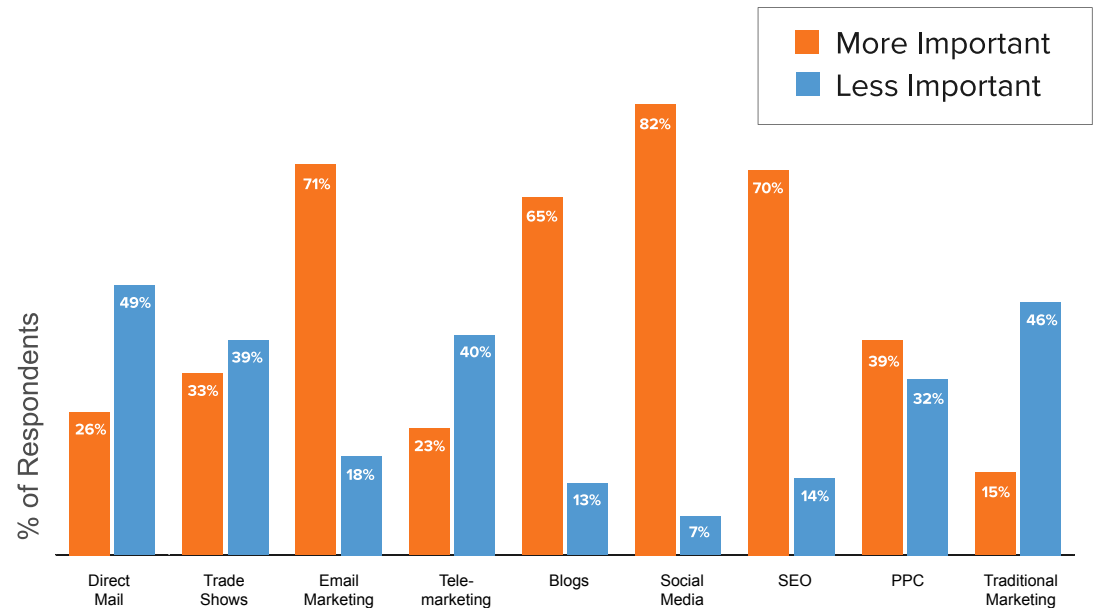
Leads from inbound channels are more important than ever, with social media topping the list at 82%. Email marketing (71%), SEO (70%) and blogs (65%) are the other channels that marketers value as a source of leads.

Traditional marketing is declining in popularity

When it comes to lead sources that are declining in value, again both the US and UK are aligned, with direct mail, traditional advertising, and tradeshows down at the bottom of the scale.

LEAD SOURCES THAT HAVE BECOME MORE OR LESS IMPORTANT (OVER LAST 6 MONTHS)

Social media is increasingly becoming an important source of leads for marketers.



Lead Sources

What the Experts Say ...

Why do you feel social media has become such an important source of leads for marketers? Do you feel it's because marketers are starting to understand how to use social more effectively?



Lilach Bullock
Co-founder & Director
Comms Axis
[@LilachBullock](#)

Although it's refreshing to see social media playing a key role in sourcing leads, we still have a long way to go with brands and marketers using social media effectively. There is still far too much broadcasting and explicit selling – which will not convert your target audience into customers. Businesses need to be a lot smarter – social media takes time; building trust and loyalty doesn't happen overnight, you have to build and nurture relationships. It's about connecting with your target audience and showing a brands human side, people buy from people after all.



Javier Burón
CEO & Co-founder
SocialBro
[@JavierBuron](#)

With 1.8 billion active social network users and the number growing rapidly by the day, social media has transitioned to a mature and essential marketing channel. Social media is a rich source of information about what potential customers really need, their interests, and what motivates them. I don't think any other channel provides such actionable intelligence. In the same way analytics revolutionised planning and deployment of PPC campaigns, data and insights gathered from social media are now the game changer in the industry; it enables a new level of dynamic targeting. Marketers can identify opportunities and act on them immediately, not just through social channels, but right across the marketing mix.

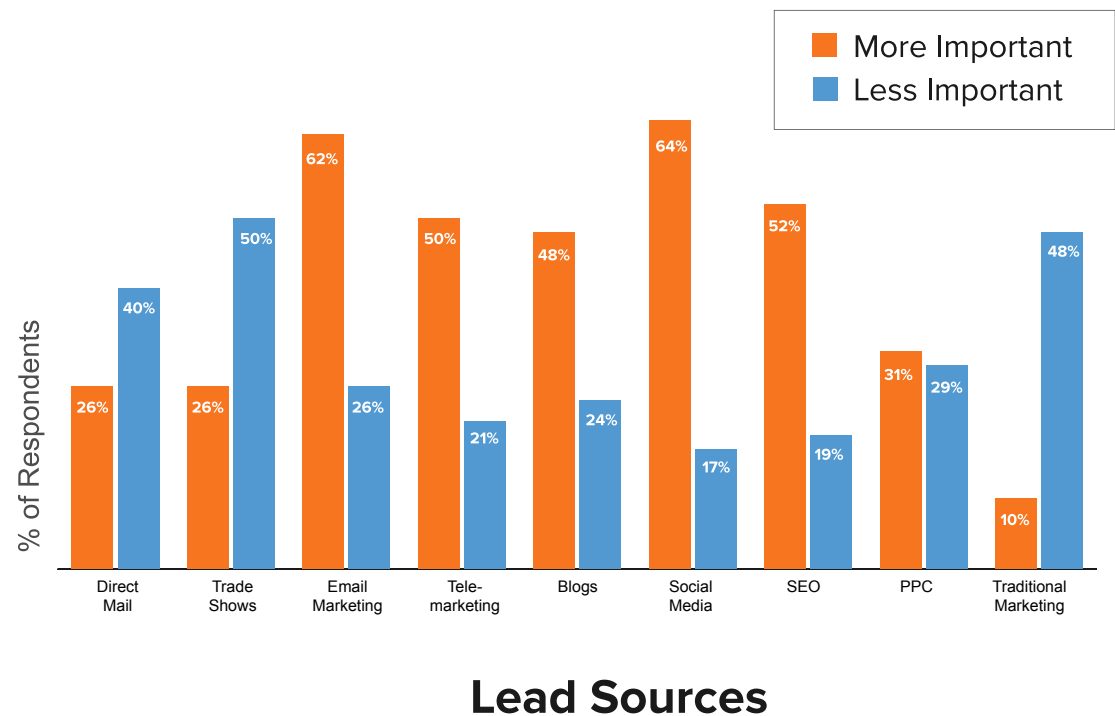
Inbound Execution

Sales are on board with inbound leads

Interestingly, sales are also starting to value leads from inbound channels more, with social media on top (64%) followed by email marketing (62%) and SEO (52%). This would suggest the quality of leads from inbound channels are higher than leads generated through outbound methods.

LEAD SOURCES THAT SALES ARE PRIORITISING

Sales are starting to value leads from inbound channels more.



What the Experts Say ...

Email is still one of the most important channels for marketing, why do you feel it has remained such a constant for marketers even through the growth of things like SEO and Social Media?



Kath Pay
Marketing Director
[cloud.IQ](#)
[@KathPay](#)

One of email's strengths is that it's a push channel, whereas SEO and Social are pull channels. This of course explains why sites such as LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter account for the majority of emails being sent worldwide – they are trying to leverage the power of driving traffic back to their sites. Being a permission-based push channel means that we can deliver valuable and relevant content to our prospects' inboxes.

Another of email's strengths is the power of personalising the journey for the customer. Over the years, consumers have been conditioned and delighted by the likes of Amazon with their personalised emails and website. So much so, that as consumers we've now come to expect this as being the norm. Using email to nurture these inbound leads by sending the leads more valuable and personalised information/content according to their persona, position in the funnel, their browsing or transactional behaviour, generates not only warmer leads for marketers, but also a helpful experience for our leads -- so it's a win-win situation!

The way I see it is that we don't want to be looking at this via channels – but rather what works best for the customer as well as ourselves.

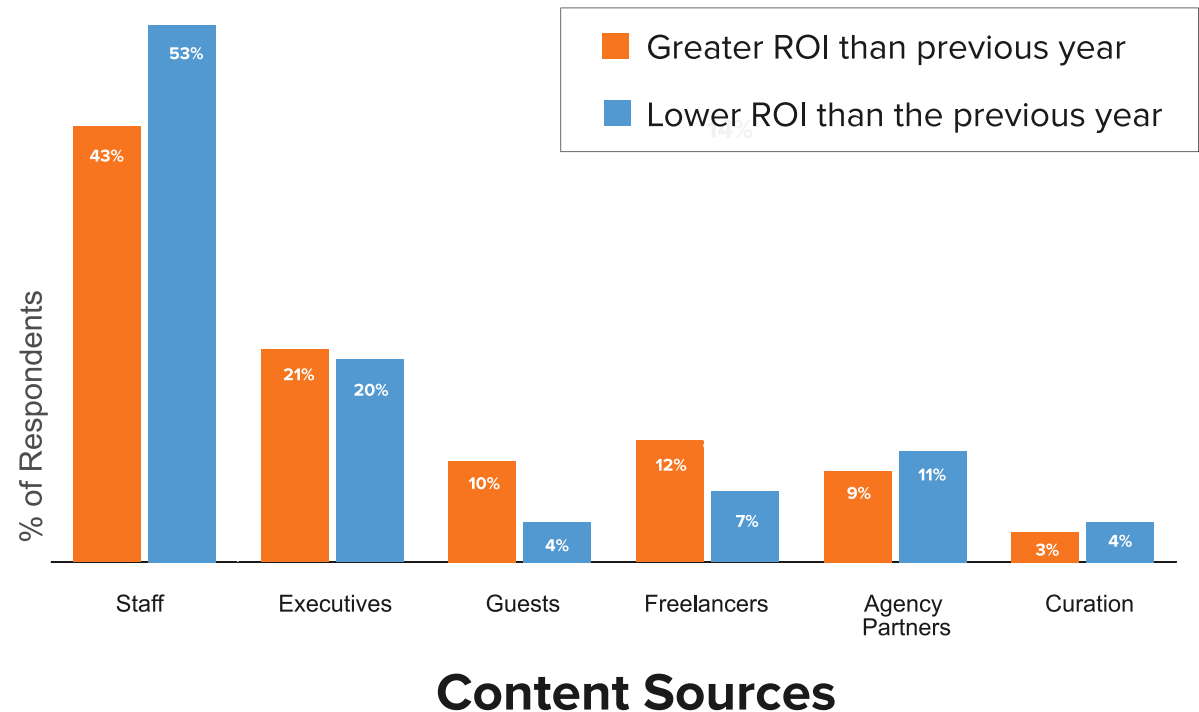
Inbound Execution

Successful inbound marketers create content themselves

Companies who have seen a greater ROI from inbound marketing in 2014 use their staff (43%), executives (21%) and freelancers (12%) as their top content sources. Although staff is the top content source for marketers who've been successful with inbound marketing, it's also the top source (53%) for people who have a lower ROI this year from inbound. Could this be related to the fact that hiring top talent hasn't been prioritised?

WHO CREATES CONTENT BY INBOUND ROI

Companies who are successful with inbound marketing tend to use their staff for content creation.



Responses with 'Other' have been excluded from these charts

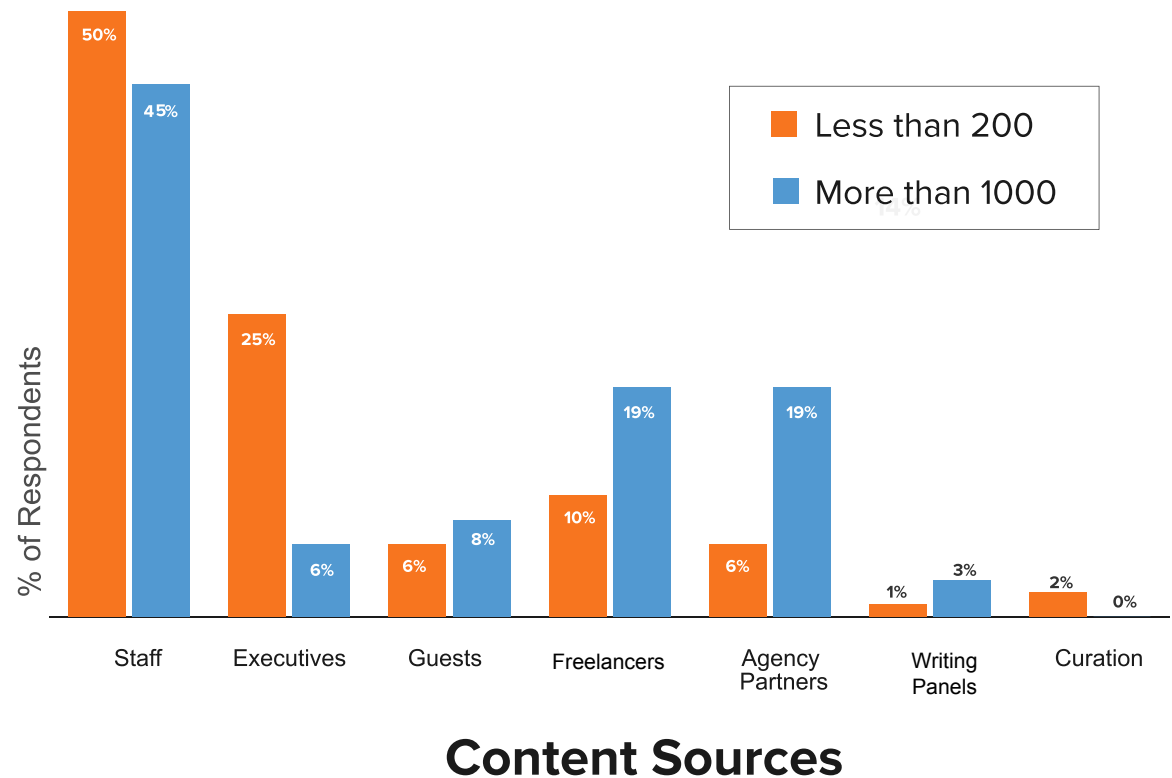
Inbound Execution

Larger companies are more likely to outsource their content creation

Companies of all sizes listed staff as their top source of content, but unsurprisingly companies greater than 1000 employees were making a lot more use of both agencies (19%) and freelancers (19%).

WHO CREATES CONTENT BY COMPANY SIZE

Smaller companies are more likely to use internal resources to create their content.



What the Experts Say ...

Do you feel small companies are sourcing their content from the right places? What are they missing out on?



Catherine Toole
Chairman, Sticky Content
[@CatherineToole](#)

Small businesses should aim for content self-sufficiency. Clever content marketing can really accelerate business growth but to crack this, you have to build an internal culture for content, one where everyone contributes. You want an environment where your owned media are seen as valuable business assets, and people are proud to be part of the publishing process.

If I could only afford to invest in one thing, I'd get an expert to devise strong, re-usable, adaptive content formats for all my contributors to create content into. These pay dividends by cutting creation time, streamlining production, and increasing the usability and quality of the content, whatever the ability of the author.



Chris Lake
Director of Content
Econsultancy
[@Lakey](#)

Many small business owners have a perception that the costs of content marketing are oppressively high, but I think this is a fallacy. Content doesn't need to be expensive, it just needs to be properly targeted to the audience. Make a business case, experiment, and remember that great content drives leads and sales over the long-term.

Consider where existing budgets are being spent and the ROI from those investments. For example, plenty of SMEs retain PR agencies and freelancers, even though PR is harder than ever and it's difficult to measure. In an age where all businesses can become publishers, is it wise to spend a monthly retainer on a PR agency if it means you cannot invest in content, social, or SEO? The costs vary massively, but really it's just about the business case. If it works, forget about the costs. If it doesn't work, bin it.

Inbound Execution

1/3 companies don't have good alignment between sales & marketing

There is a high number of UK marketers (33%) who have not created an SLA for their sales team. However, the number of marketers who have created an SLA is higher than those who have not, with both the UK and US at 40%.

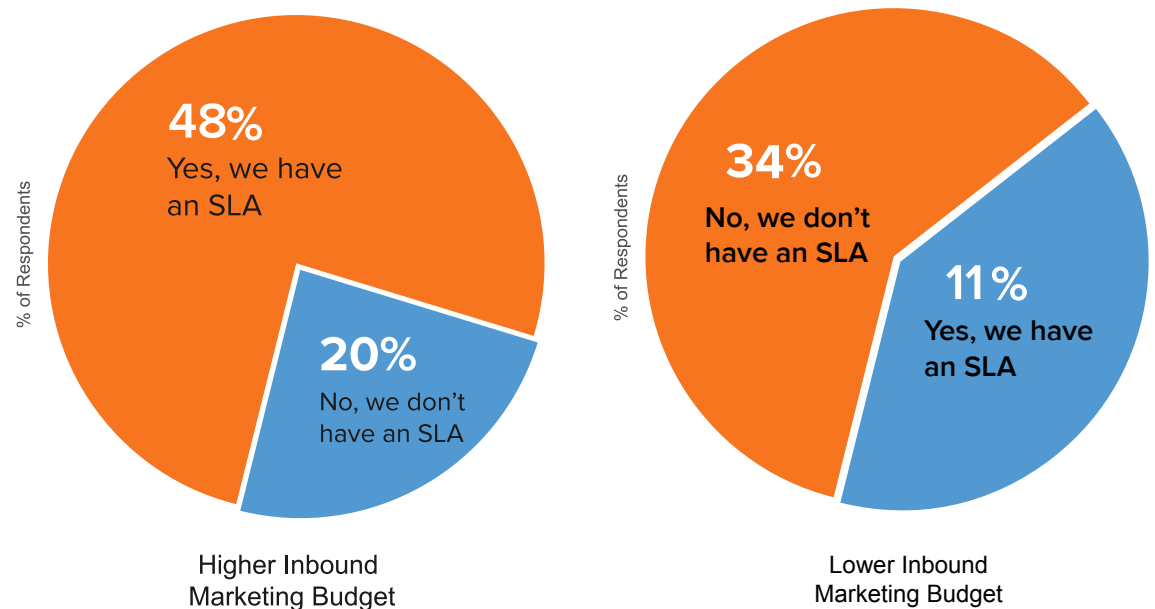
Having an SLA positively correlates to a higher inbound budget.

Almost half (48%) of companies who have implemented an SLA saw an increase in their inbound budget, compared to 34% who didn't have an SLA in place. Furthermore, it also correlates with seeing a reduction in budget, with

20% of marketers who haven't implemented an SLA reducing their budget for inbound and only 11% of marketers who did have an SLA reducing theirs.

SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT (SLA) BY BUDGET

SLA positively correlates to higher inbound budget.



Responses with N/A have been excluded from these charts