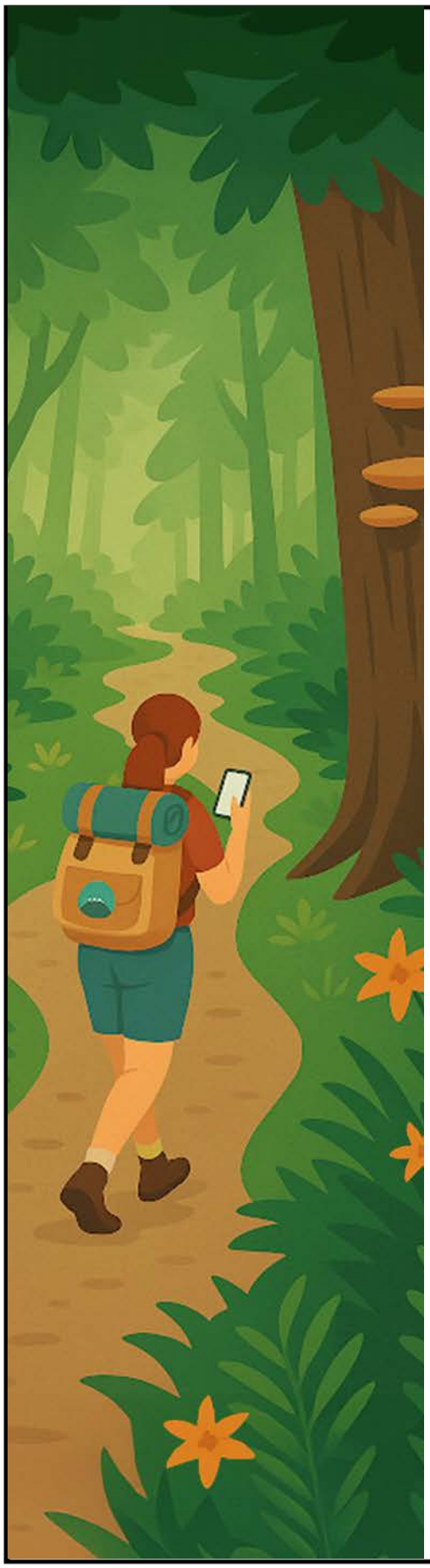

2025 SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING INDUSTRY REPORT

How Marketers Are Using Social Media to Grow Their Businesses

MAY 2025

BY MICHAEL A. STELZNER

Social Media Examiner

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Letter from the author…

Hello, fellow marketer!

Welcome to our **17th annual report!** This is the longest-running social media marketing study—and yes, social media marketing is still changing.

This **43-page report** contains easy-to-digest insights into how marketers are currently using social media and their future plans.

If you're in charge of marketing your business, you'll want to closely **examine the 50+ charts** on the following pages. I'll reveal the "not-so-obvious" findings in this data-rich content.

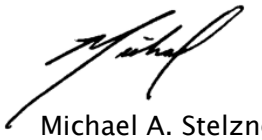
The report covers all of the major social platforms, organic and paid activities, video marketing, and much more.

More than 1,400 of your fellow marketers provided the kinds of insights you won't find elsewhere.

I hope you enjoy it! **If you find value in this report, please let your peers know about it.**

You can find the original page for the report here:
https://www.socialmediaexaminer.com/report2025/

All my best!



Michael A. Stelzner
Founder, Social Media Examiner
Host, Social Media Marketing podcast

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Executive summary

This study surveyed more than 1,400 marketers with the goal of understanding how they're using social media to grow and promote their businesses. On the following pages, you'll discover:

- **Most important questions for marketers**: The key concerns and questions marketers are seeking answers to regarding their social media strategies.
- **Social media marketing benefits**: The various ways social media impacts business outcomes and performance metrics.
- **Platform usage and importance**: Analysis of which platforms marketers are currently using for exposure, sales, leads, traffic, and loyalty, and how platform priorities are shifting over time.
- **B2B vs. B2C platform preferences**: Comparison of platform priorities and strategies between business-to-business (B2B) and business-to-consumer (B2C) marketers.
- **Future organic social plans**: Forecasted changes in organic posting activities across platforms in the next 12 months.
- **Content types and importance**: Analysis of different content formats used in marketing and their relative value.
- **Video marketing strategies**: Examination of video usage patterns by platform and future plans for video marketing activities.
- **Social ad usage and value**: Overview of advertising platform preferences and perceived value of different ad platforms.
- **Generative AI adoption**: Analysis of AI tool usage, experience levels, and desired applications among marketers.
- **Social media platforms to learn**: The platforms marketers are most interested in learning more about.

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Major findings

Here's a quick summary of some of our more interesting findings:

Platform importance shifting: Facebook continues its downward trend in importance, while LinkedIn has gained significant ground, surpassing Instagram for the first time as the second most important platform. For B2B marketers, LinkedIn is the dominant platform (53% rank it most important) compared to Facebook (22%), while B2C marketers still heavily favor Facebook (48%).

Video content dominates: Nearly half of marketers (46%) identify video as their most important content type, significantly outranking written content (28%) and visual content (23%). YouTube is the platform where most marketers (67%) plan to increase their presence in the coming year.

Rapid generative AI adoption: A significant majority of marketers (69%) now use generative AI tools either daily (45%) or weekly (24%), although 56% have less than a year of experience with these tools or haven't started using them yet. Marketers are primarily interested in using AI for content creation (70%), generating new ideas (67%), and expanding existing concepts (66%).

Organic growth plans: Instagram (55%) and LinkedIn (61%) show the strongest growth potential in organic marketing plans, while X/Twitter is experiencing the most significant decline, with 14% of marketers planning to decrease their organic activities there and 50% having no plans to use the platform at all.

TikTok showing mixed signals: While TikTok ranks highest for increasing business exposure (78% of marketers report this benefit), marketers' adoption remains relatively low at 27%, and 51% have no plans to use TikTok—an increase from 41% in 2024. This suggests a growing divide between those finding success with the platform and those avoiding it entirely.

Platform benefits align with experience: This study consistently shows that marketers with more experience (8+ years) report significantly better results across all platforms and metrics, including improved sales and increased exposure, leads generated, and loyal fans developed. For example, 80% of marketers with 8+ years of experience report improved sales, compared to just 16% of those with less than 12 months of experience.

The above summary is just a taste of what's in this report. On the following pages, you'll find 50+ charts that visually convey some of our fascinating findings.

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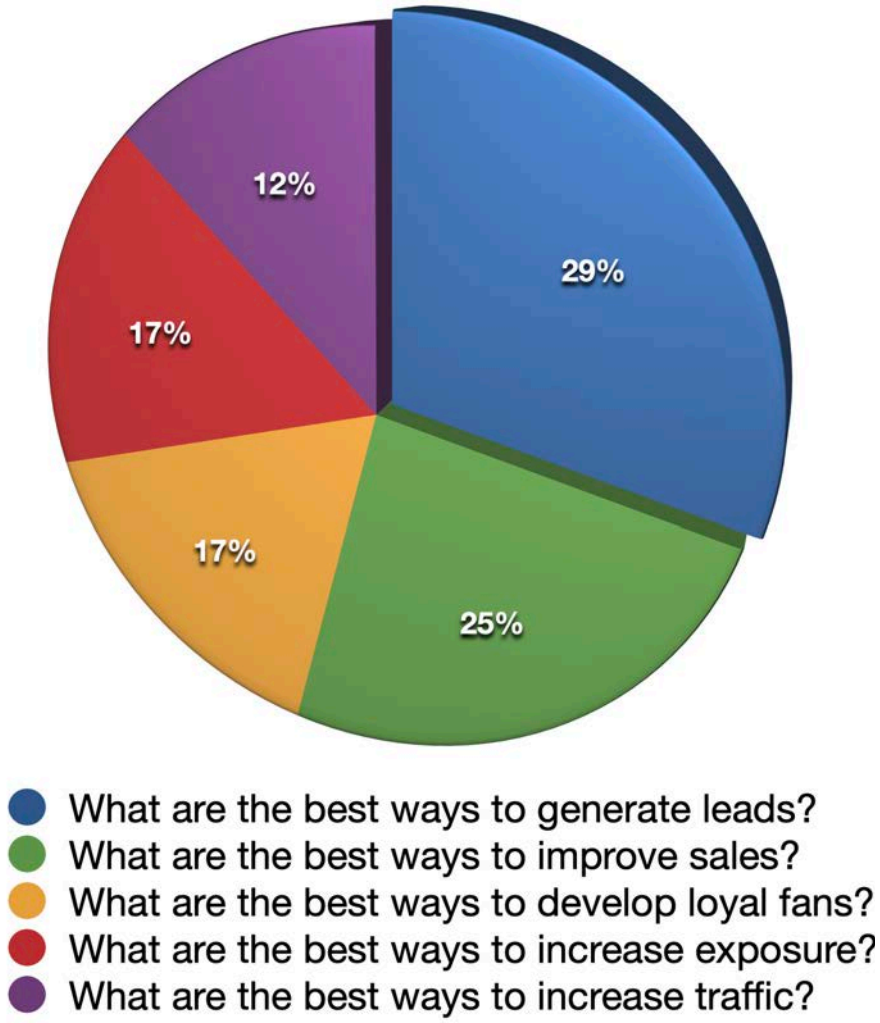
Most important question social media marketers want answered

We asked marketers to select the single most important question they want answered among a broad range of social media marketing questions. Here's what they said:



More than half of the marketers we surveyed want to know the best ways to generate leads and improve sales.

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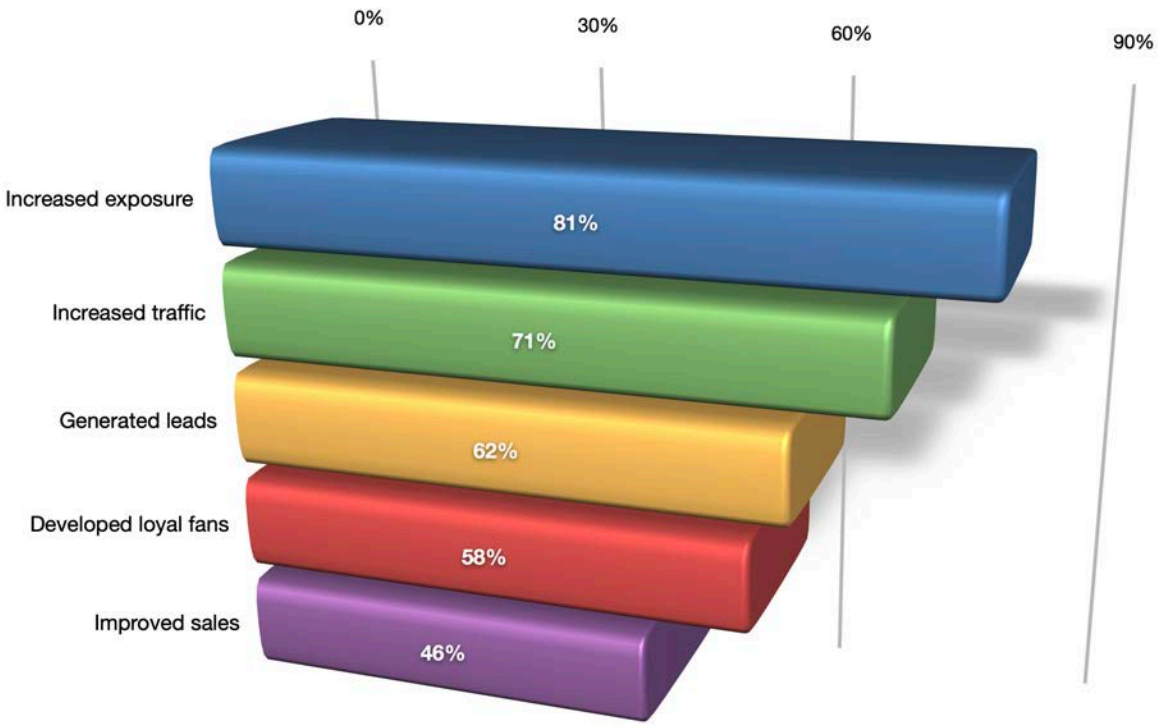
Benefits of social media marketing

A significant 81% of all marketers we surveyed indicated that their social media efforts have generated more exposure for their businesses. Increased traffic was the second major benefit, with 71% reporting positive results. These benefits have remained in the top two spots for the last 11 years.



Two questions naturally emerge from the above chart:

- Are marketers who've been using social media for years achieving better results?
- Which platforms contributed most to these benefits?

The following charts address these questions.

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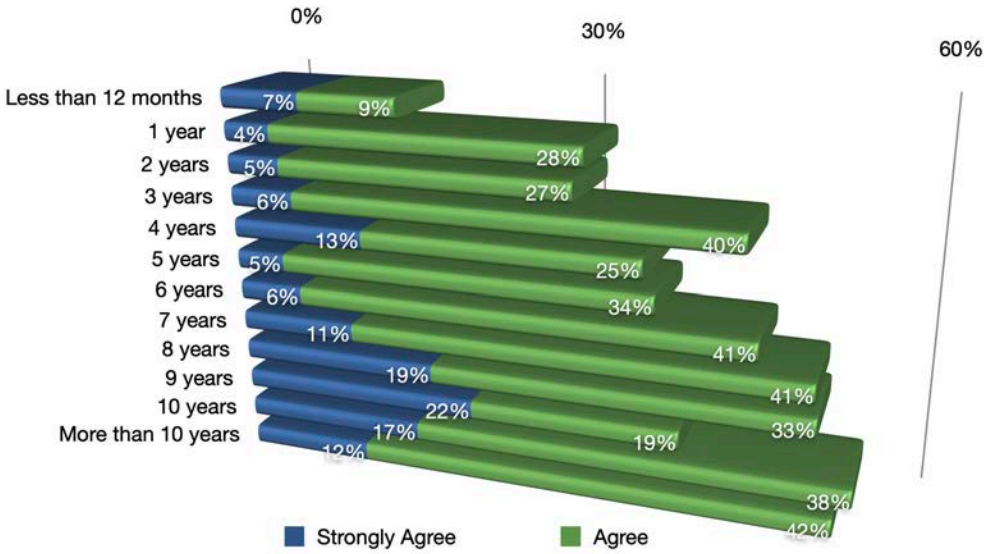
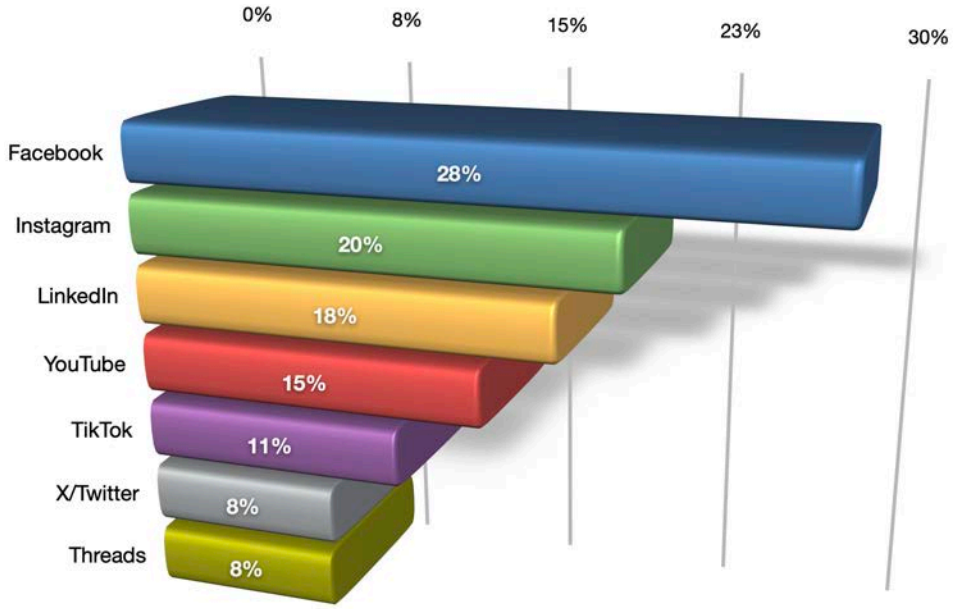
Improved sales: A large percentage of marketers find improved sales results with more years of social media experience.



Facebook and Instagram contribute the most to sales for marketers.



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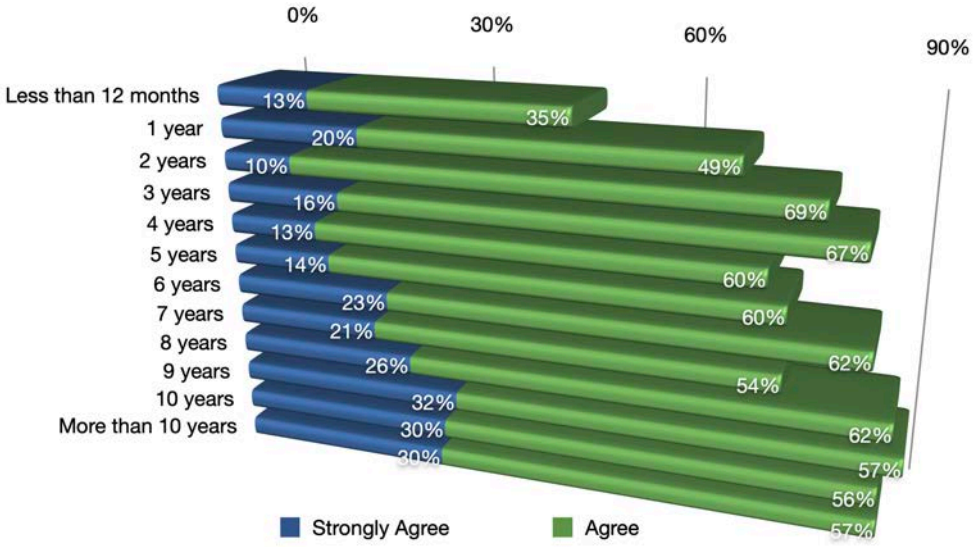
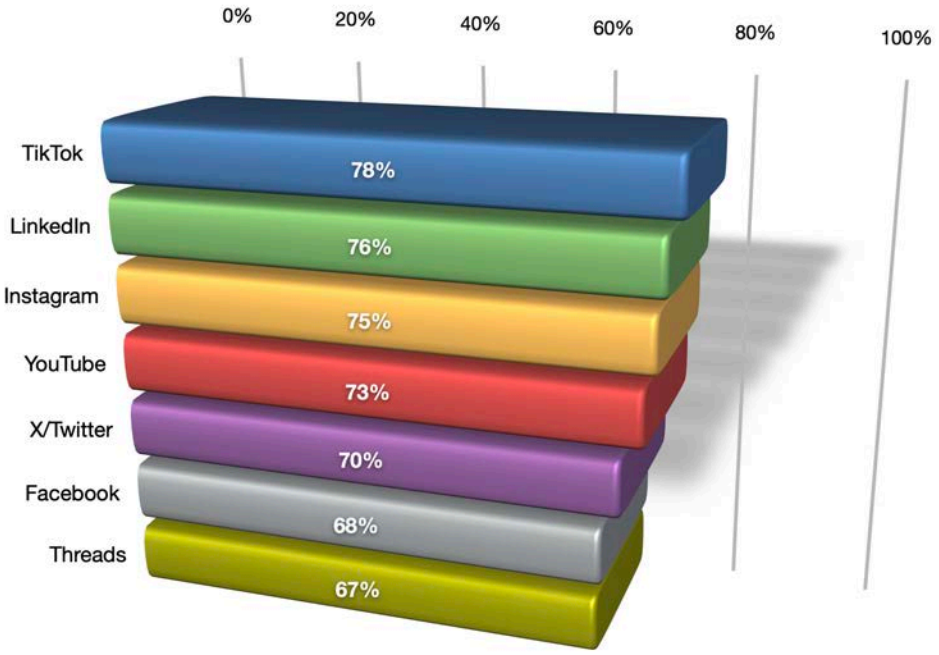
Increased exposure: Most marketers who've been using social media marketing for 1 year or longer report it generates exposure for their businesses.



All of the major social platforms seem to have a big impact on exposure, but TikTok sits at the top of the list.



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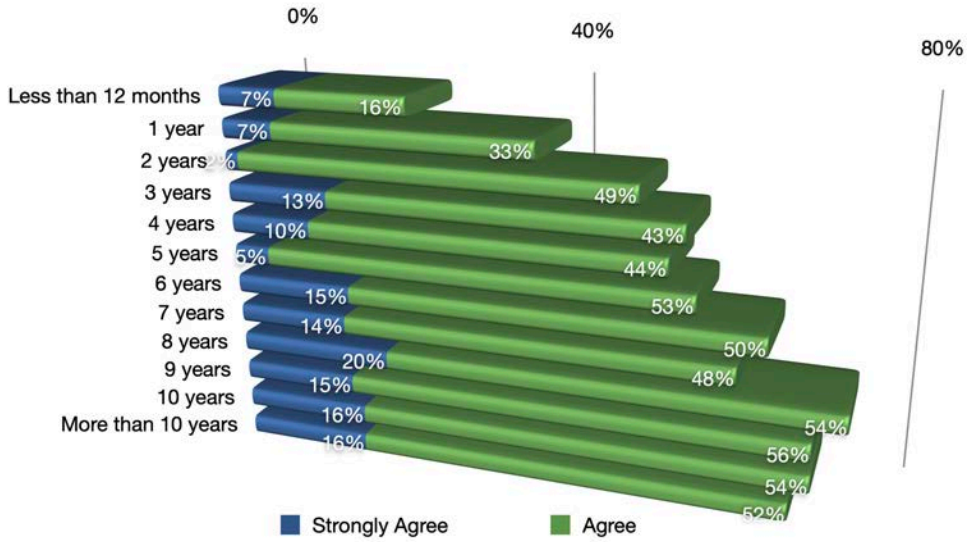
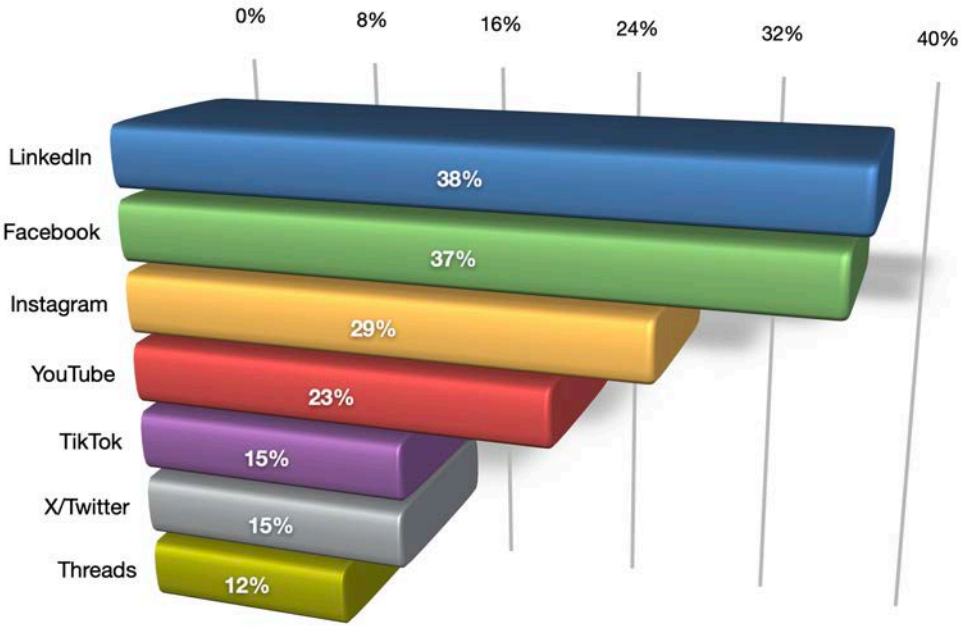
Generated leads: This chart shows that marketers get more proficient at generating leads via social platforms with more experience.



LinkedIn and Facebook generate the most leads for marketers.



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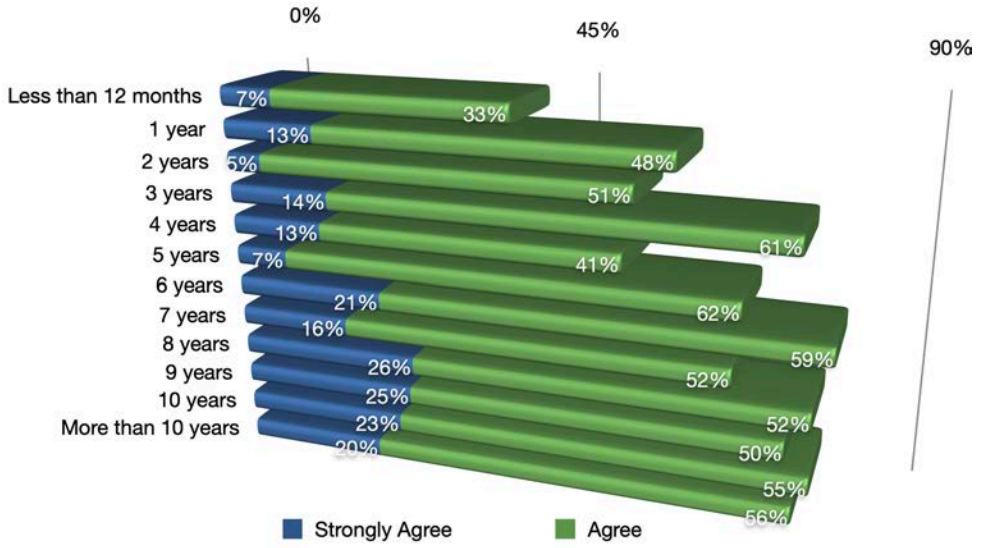
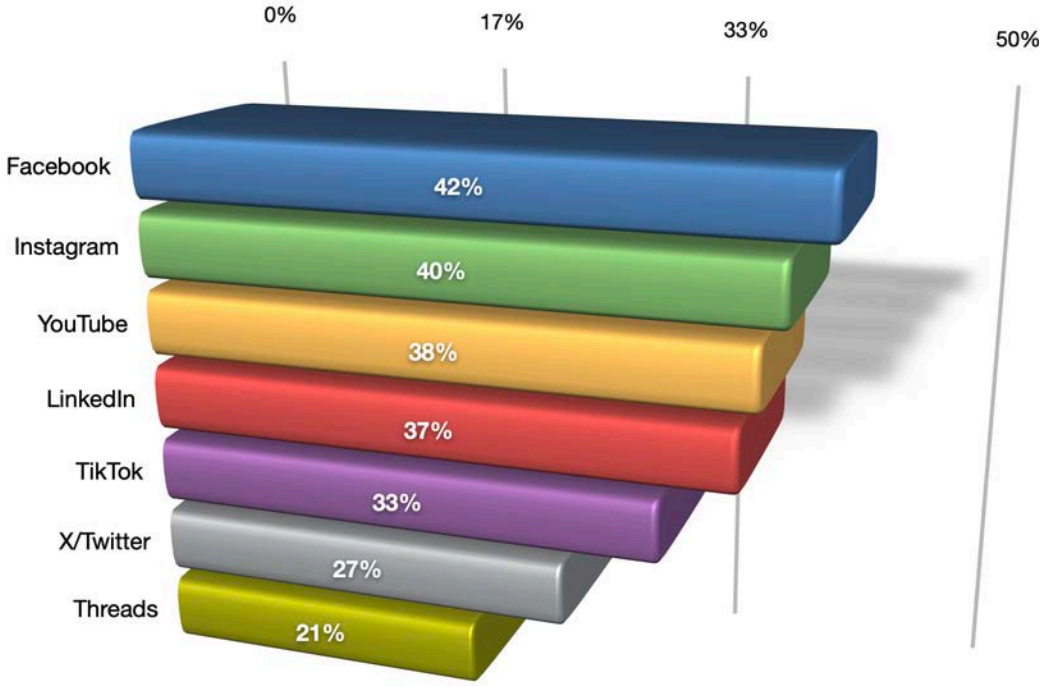
Increased traffic: Those who've used social media for 1 year or longer reported substantially better results driving traffic (54%+ reported benefits), compared to those with less experience.



Facebook drives the most traffic for marketers.



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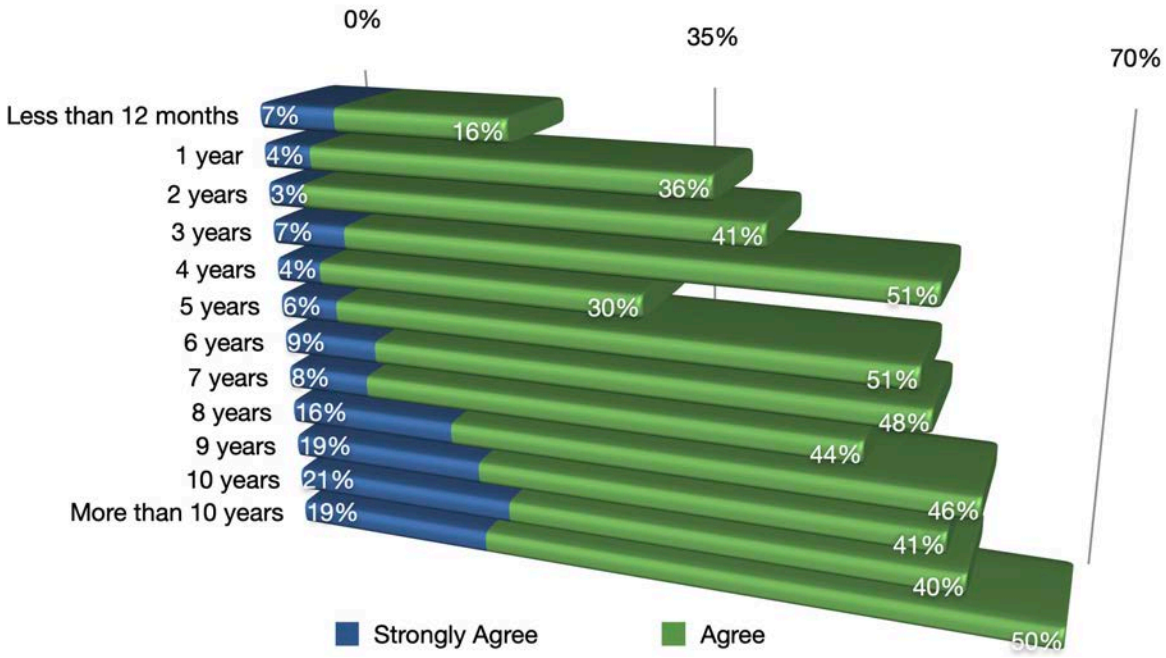
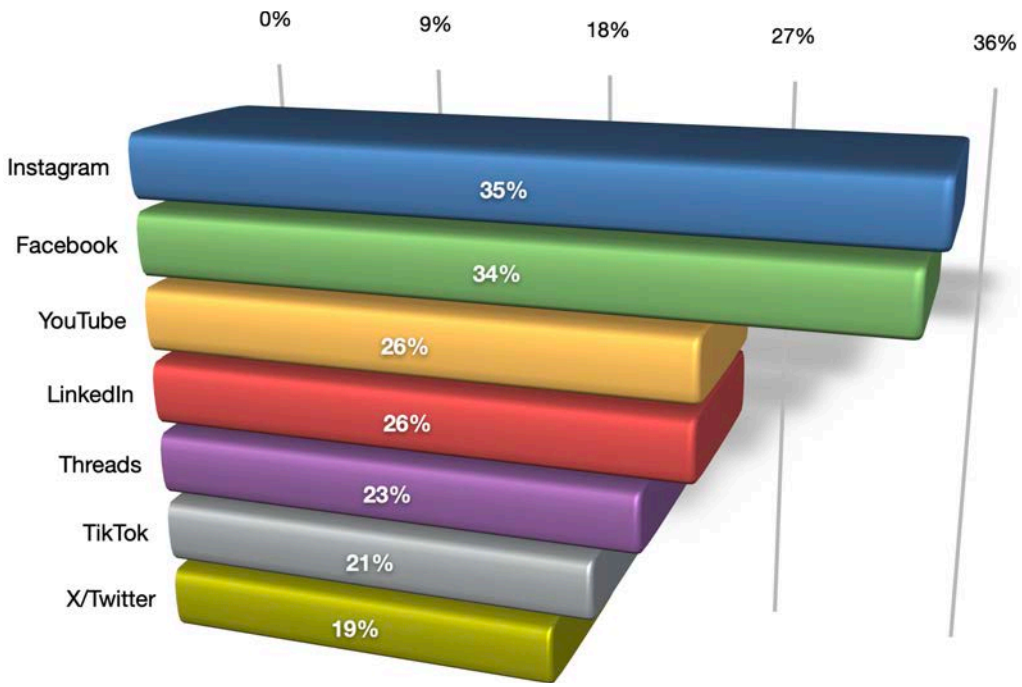
Developed loyal fans: Building a loyal fanbase seems to be an advantage that improves as marketers gain more years of experience.



Marketers declared Instagram and Facebook as the best platforms for developing loyal fans.



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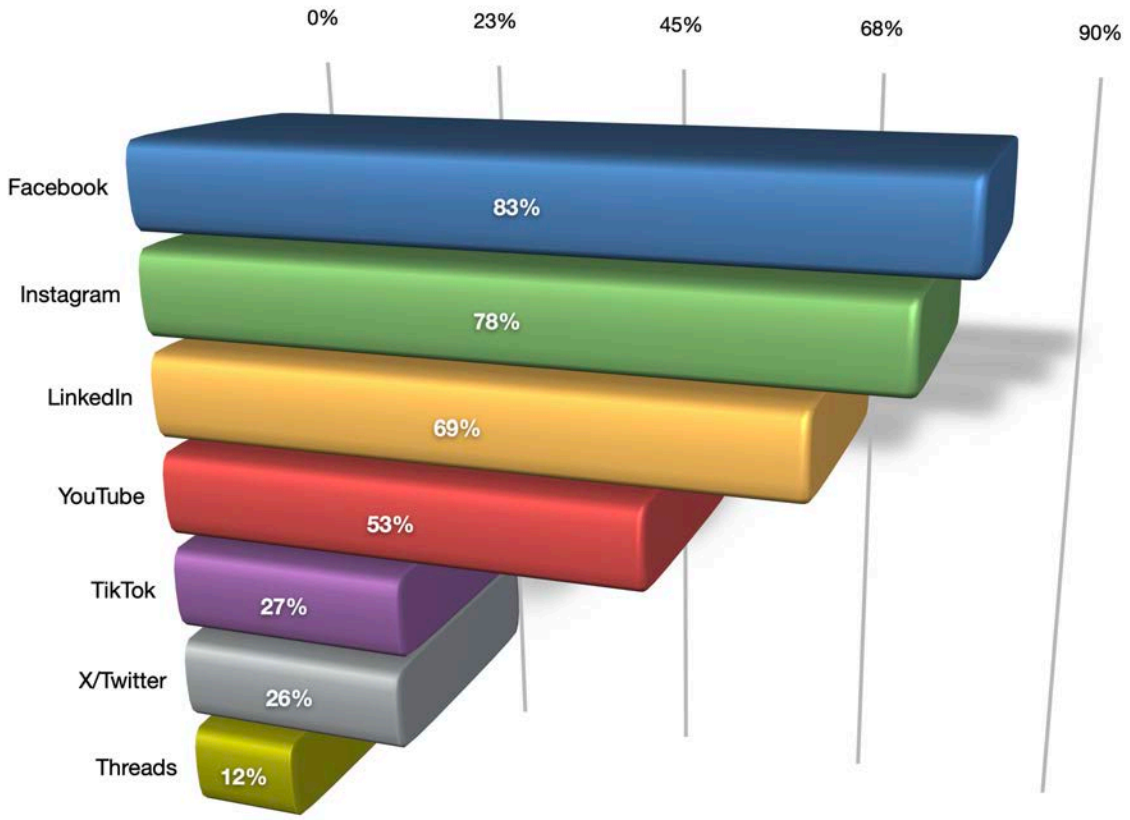
Commonly used social media platforms

Facebook and Instagram are the top two platforms used by marketers. All other platforms lag behind these top two.



NOTABLE CHANGES SINCE 2024

- X/Twitter dropped from 31% to 26%.

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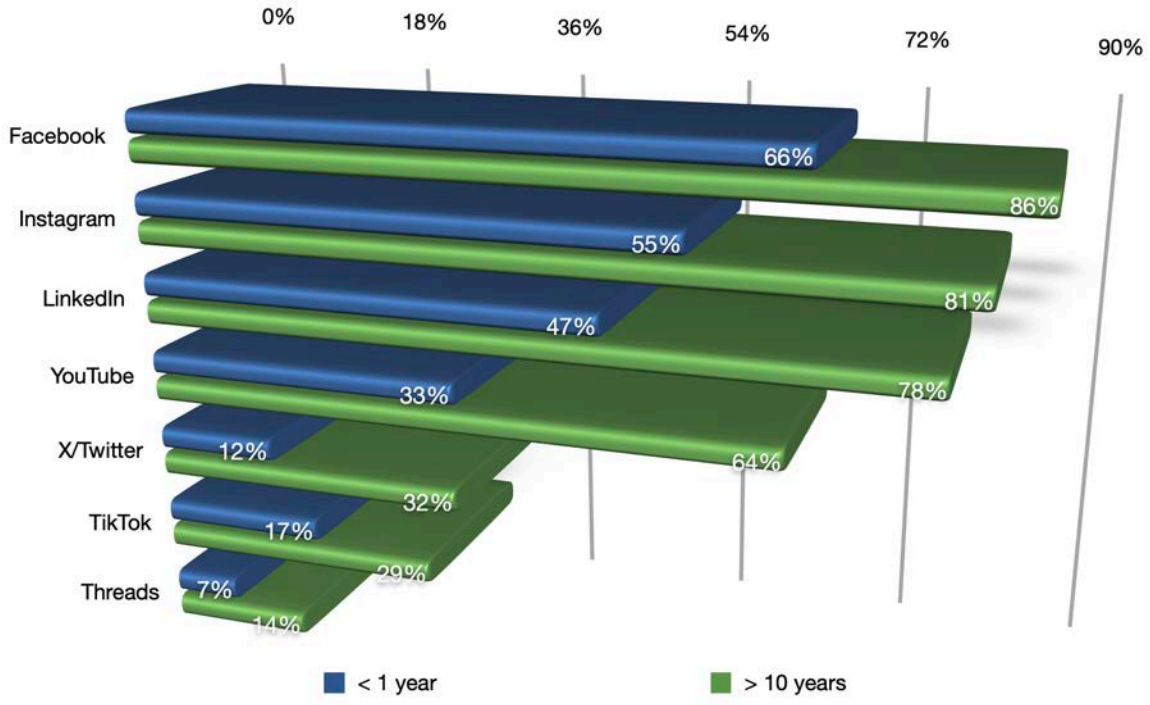
Platform use: Beginners vs. advanced marketers

Here's a close examination of the social channels that experienced social marketers are using (the green bars = more than 10 years of experience) compared to those just getting started (the blue bars = less than 12 months of experience).

New social marketers mostly focus on Facebook (66%) and Instagram (55%). The most experienced marketers are highly diversified.



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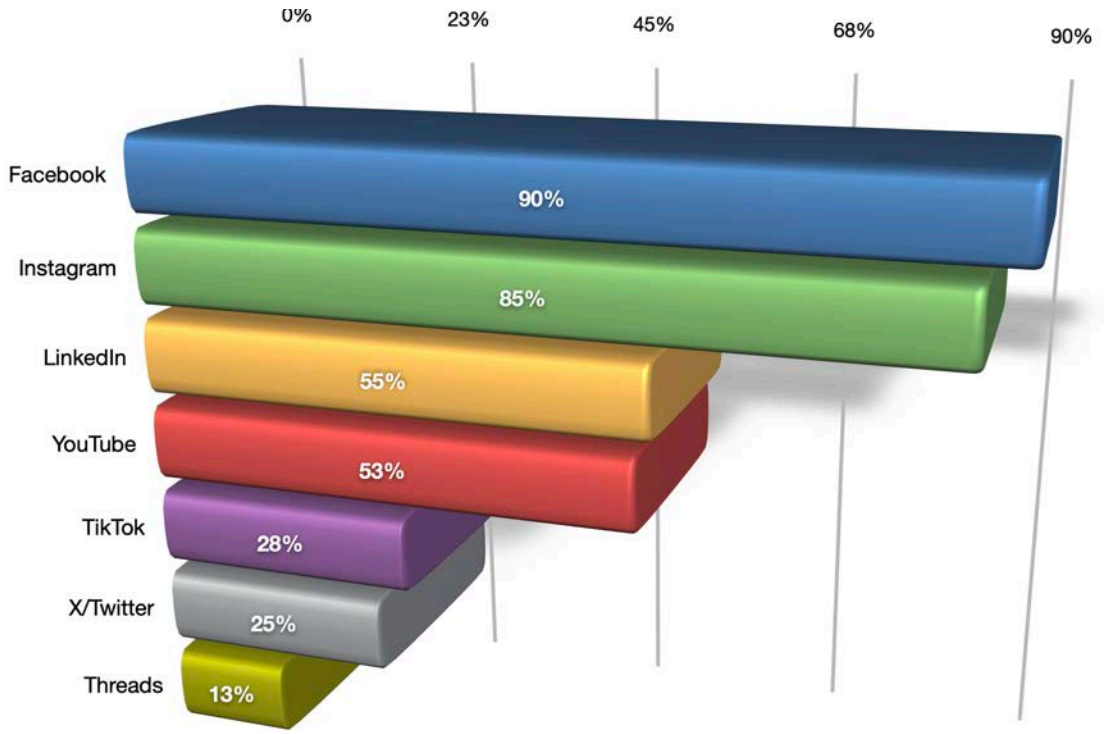
Platform use: B2C marketers

This chart shows that most B2C marketers are using Facebook and Instagram.



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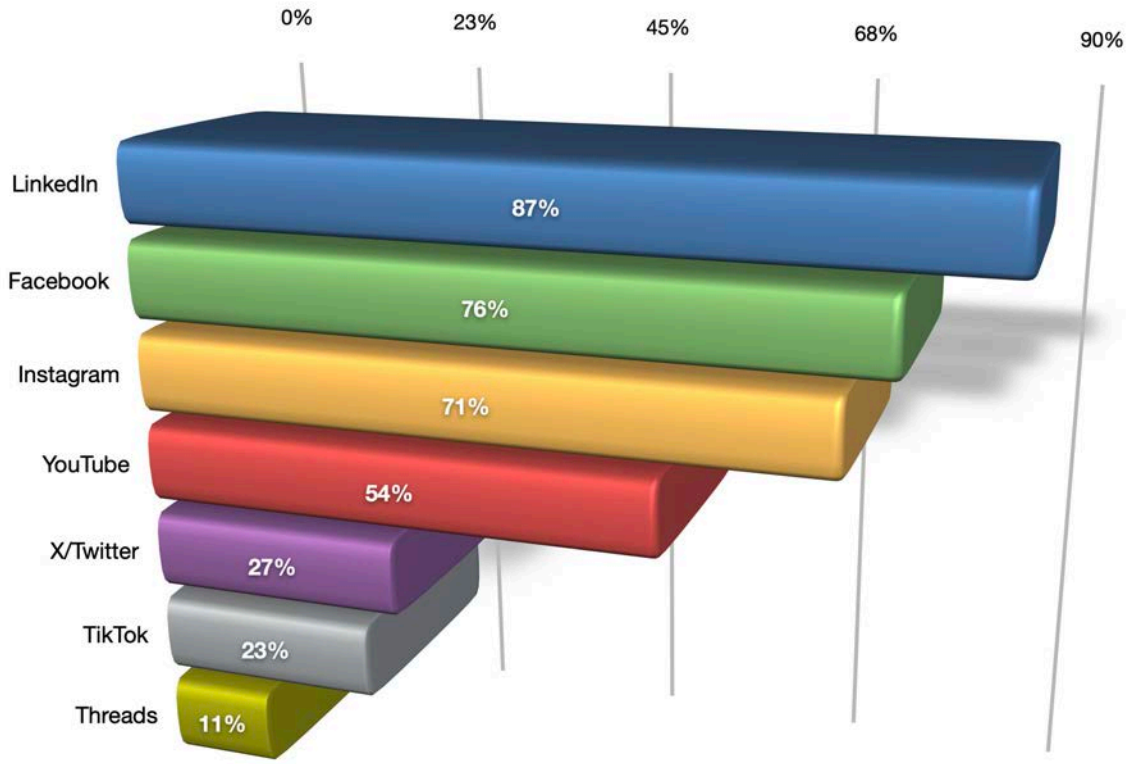
Platform use: B2B marketers

This chart shows that most B2B marketers use LinkedIn and Facebook.



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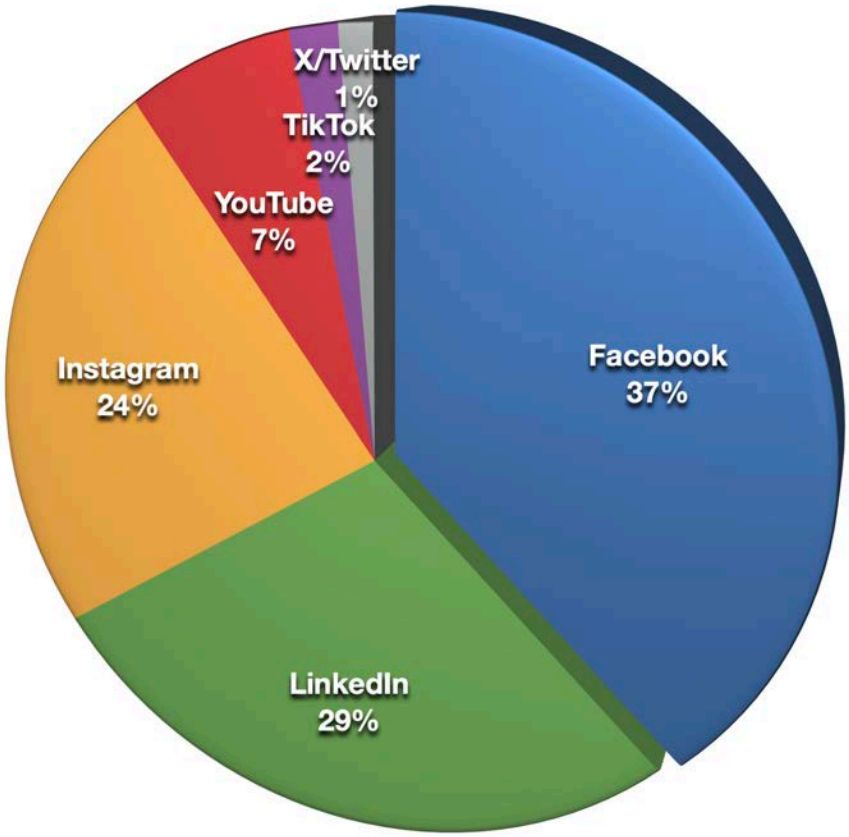
The most important social platform for marketers is…



We asked marketers to select the single most important social platform for their business. Because only one choice was allowed, the findings are revealing.

NOTABLE CHANGES SINCE 2024

- Facebook dropped from 44% to 37%.
- LinkedIn moved from 21% to 29%, securing the #2 spot.

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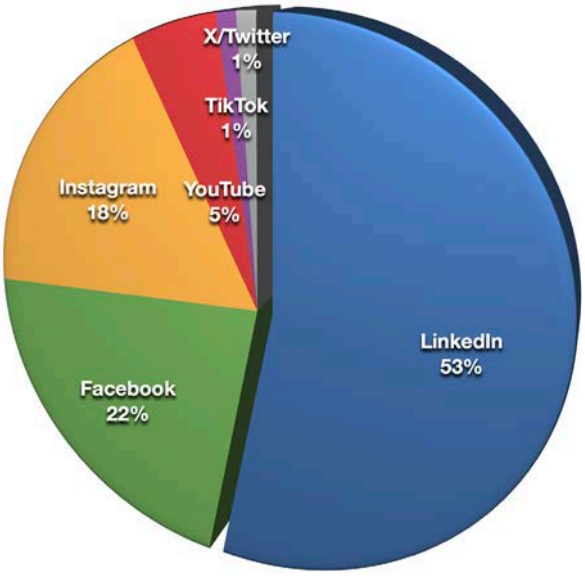
B2B vs. B2C

Notice the fascinating differences between B2B- and B2C-focused marketers.

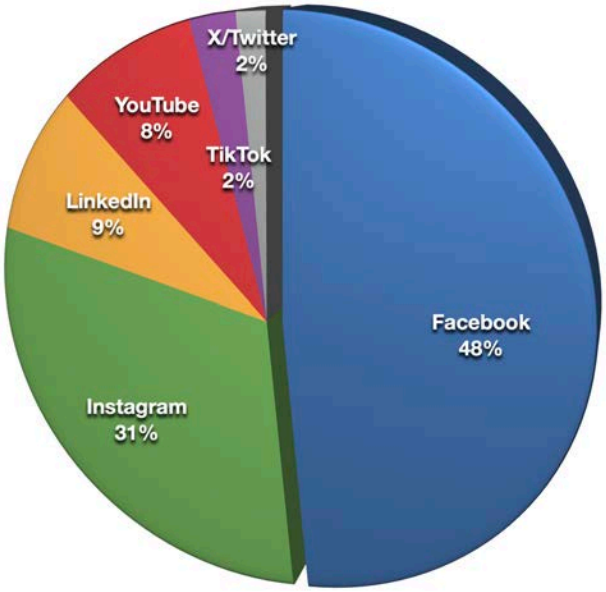
Clearly, Facebook dominates the B2C space (48% of marketers select it as their #1 choice). However, for B2B marketers, LinkedIn grabs the most important slot, surpassing Facebook.

For B2B marketers, Facebook and Instagram dropped from a combined share of 50% in 2024 to 40% in 2025.

B2B



B2C



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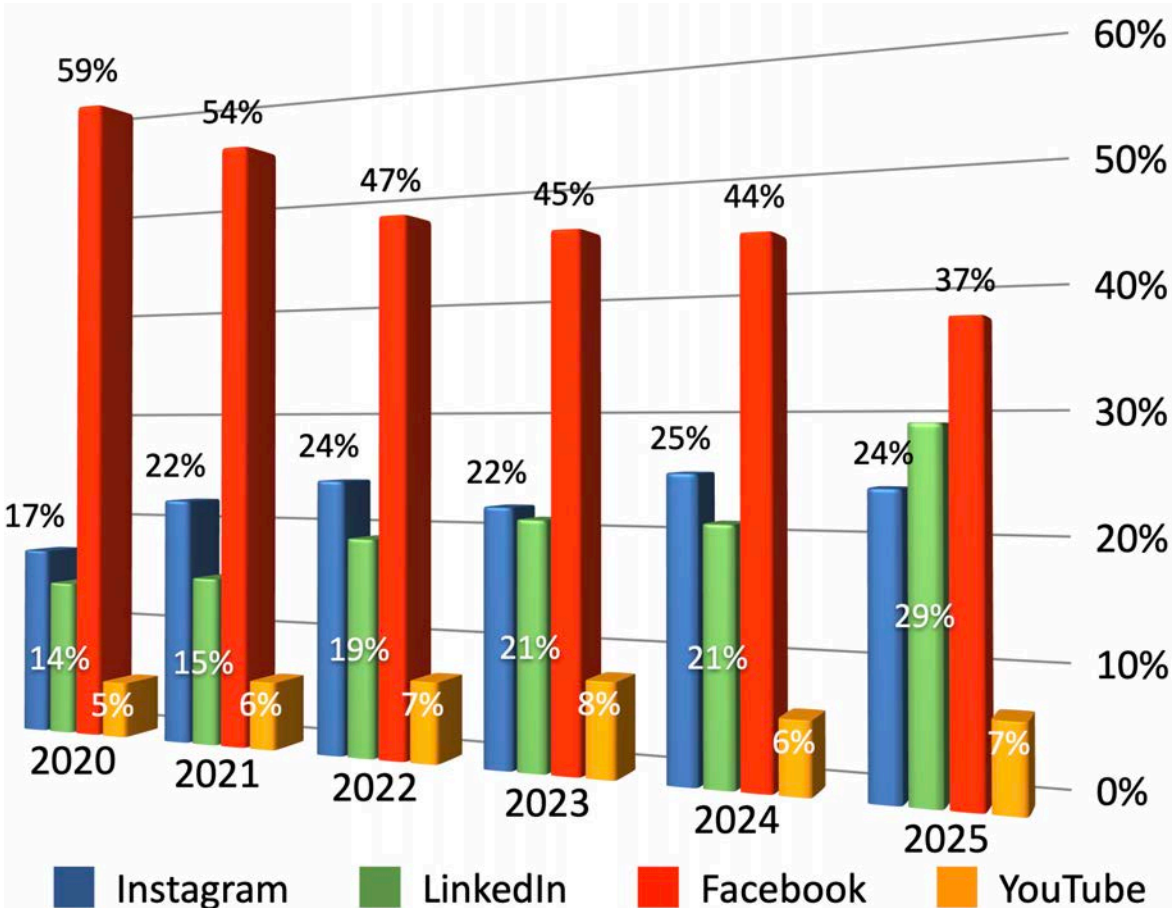
The rise and fall of social platforms

Here we show the top five social platforms that marketers deem most important over a 6-year period. Facebook continues its decline as LinkedIn is becoming far more important, surpassing Instagram for the first time.



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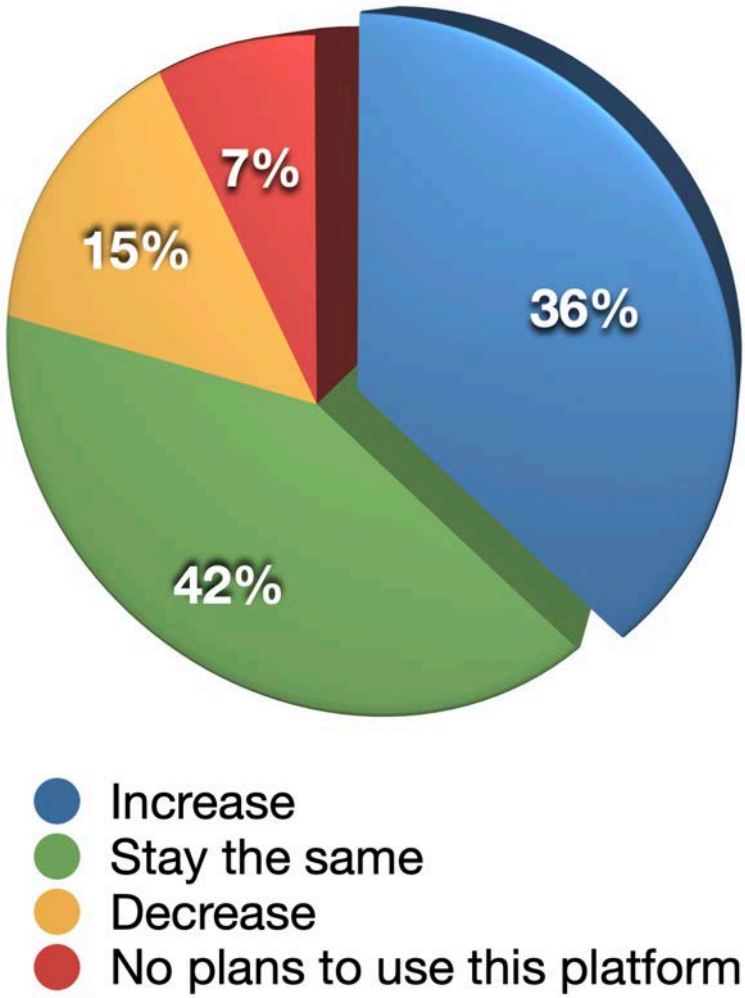
Organic social plans

We asked marketers how their organic posting activities will change over the next 12 months. Here's a breakdown by platform:

Future Facebook plans

Our research shows that 15% of marketers indicate they'll decrease their organic marketing on Facebook over the next 12 months. Thirty-six percent of marketers plan on increasing their Facebook organic activities. As shown earlier, Facebook is still the most important social network for most marketers.

Thirty-one percent of B2B marketers plan on increasing Facebook organic activities, compared to 44% of B2C.



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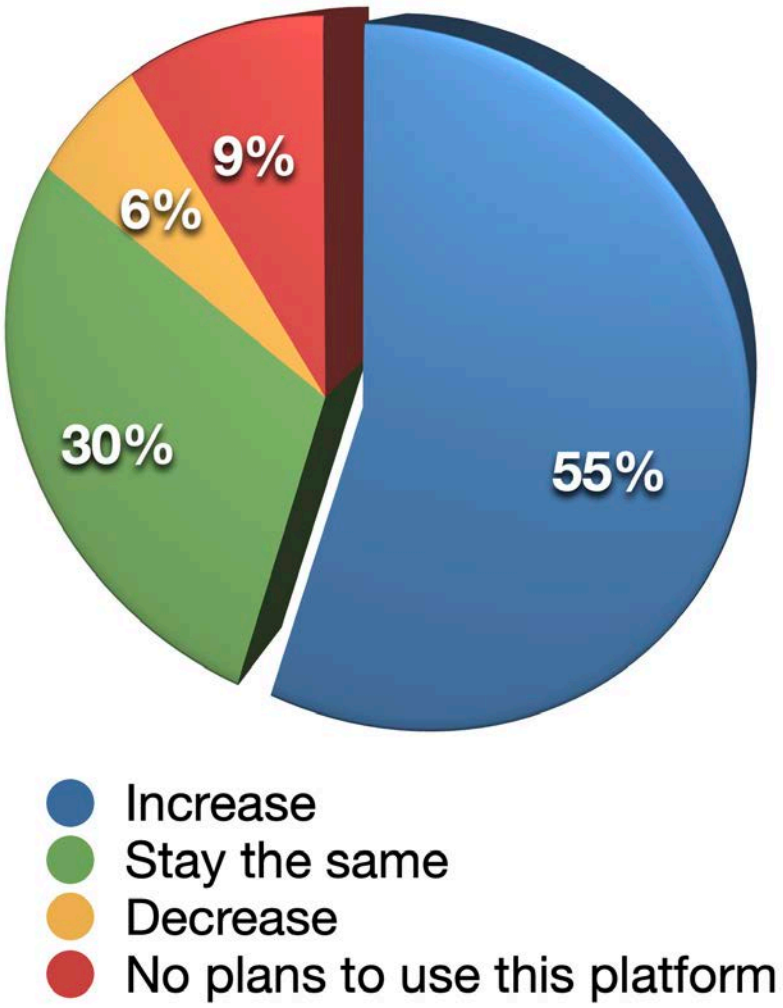
Future Instagram plans

Our research shows a significant 55% of marketers plan on increasing their Instagram organic activities over the next 12 months.

Fifty-one percent of B2B marketers plan on increasing Instagram organic activities, compared to 60% of B2C.



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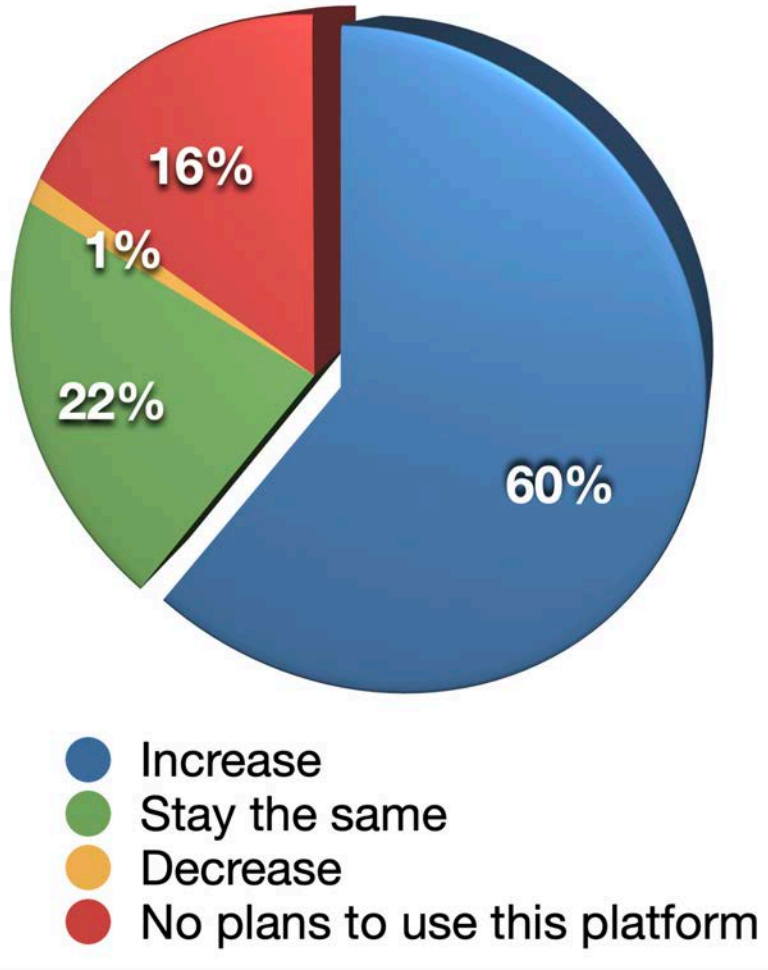
Future YouTube plans

A significant 60% of marketers plan on increasing their YouTube organic activities over the next 12 months, making it the top platform where marketers plan on doing more.

Note that on page 32, we asked this question differently and 67% of marketers indicated they plan to increase their YouTube video marketing efforts.



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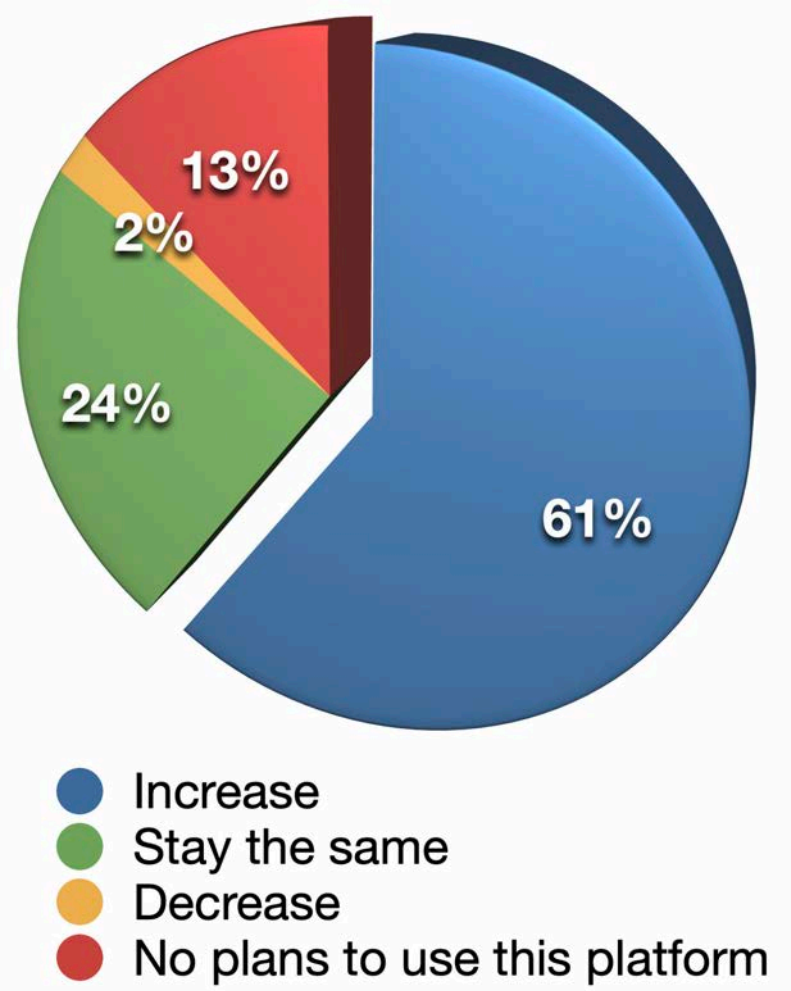
Future LinkedIn plans

Almost two-thirds of marketers (61%) plan on increasing their LinkedIn organic activities over the next 12 months.

Seventy-six percent of B2B marketers plan on increasing LinkedIn organic activities, compared to 51% of B2C.



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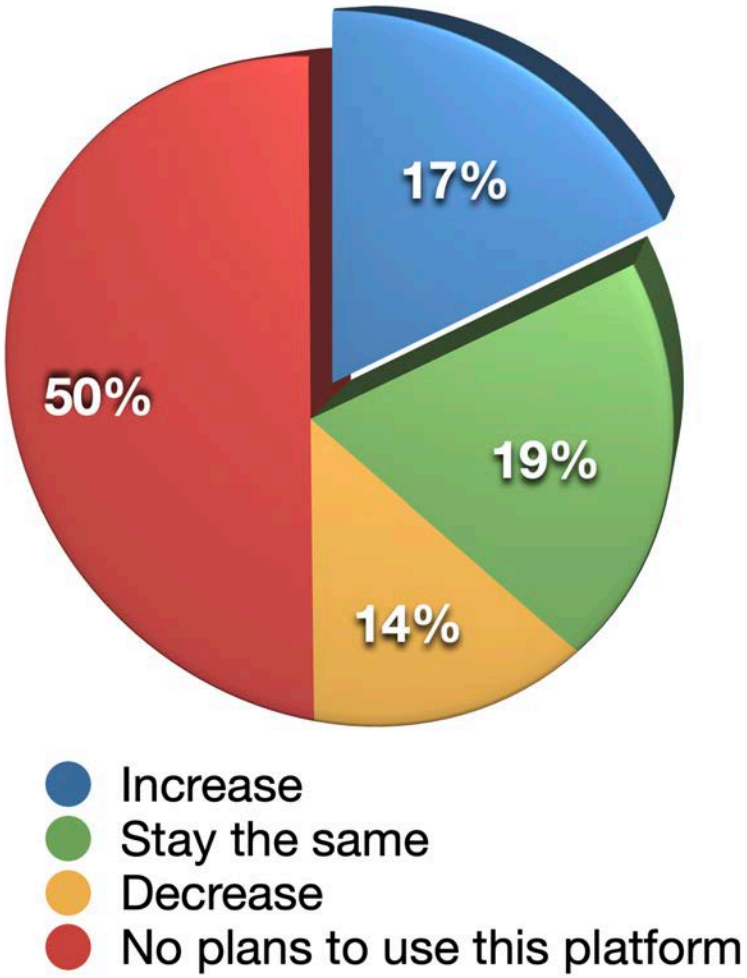
Future X/Twitter plans

Our research shows that 14% of marketers indicate they'll be decreasing their organic marketing on X/Twitter. This is greater than for any other platform.

Fewer than one in five (17%) marketers plan on increasing their X/Twitter organic activities over the next 12 months.



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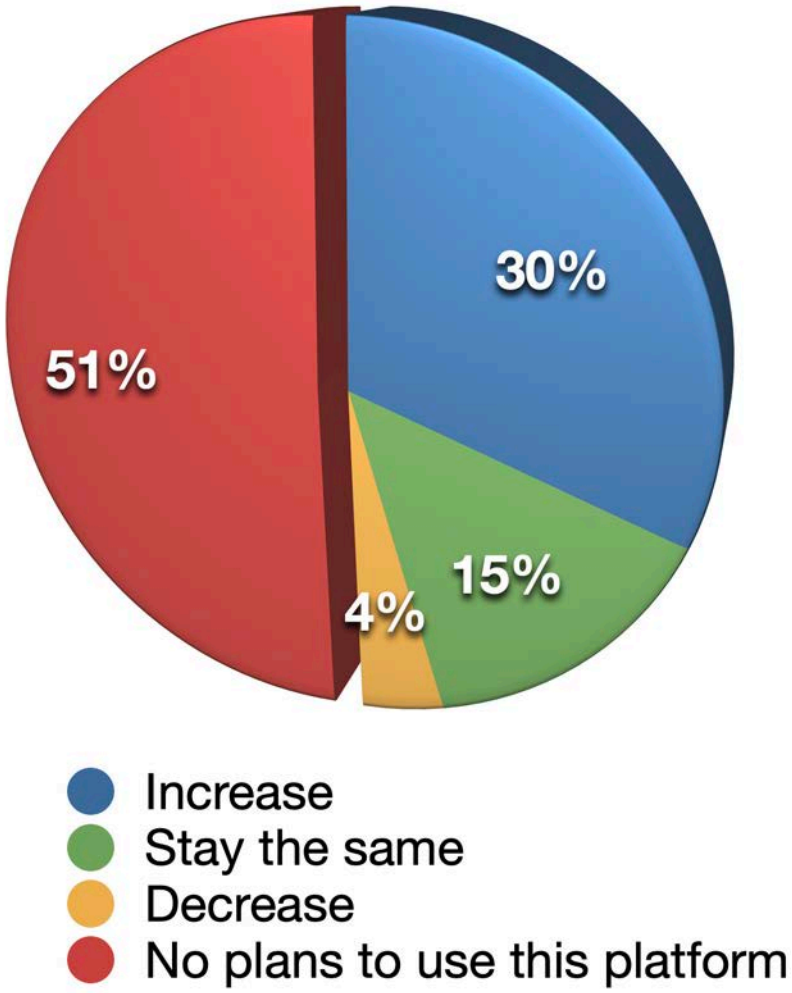
Future TikTok plans

Thirty percent of marketers plan on increasing their TikTok organic activities over the next 12 months. A significant 51% of marketers have no plans to use TikTok—an increase from 41% in 2024.



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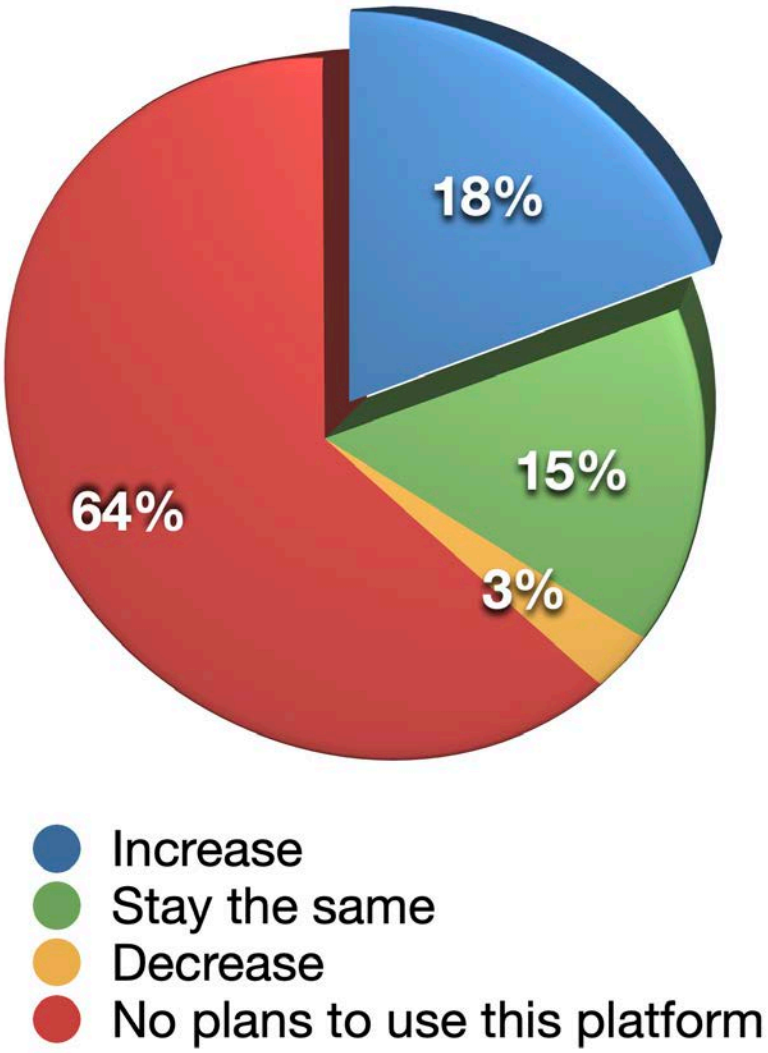
Future Threads plans

Only 18% of marketers plan on increasing their Threads organic activities over the next 12 months. A significant 64% of marketers have no plans to use Threads.



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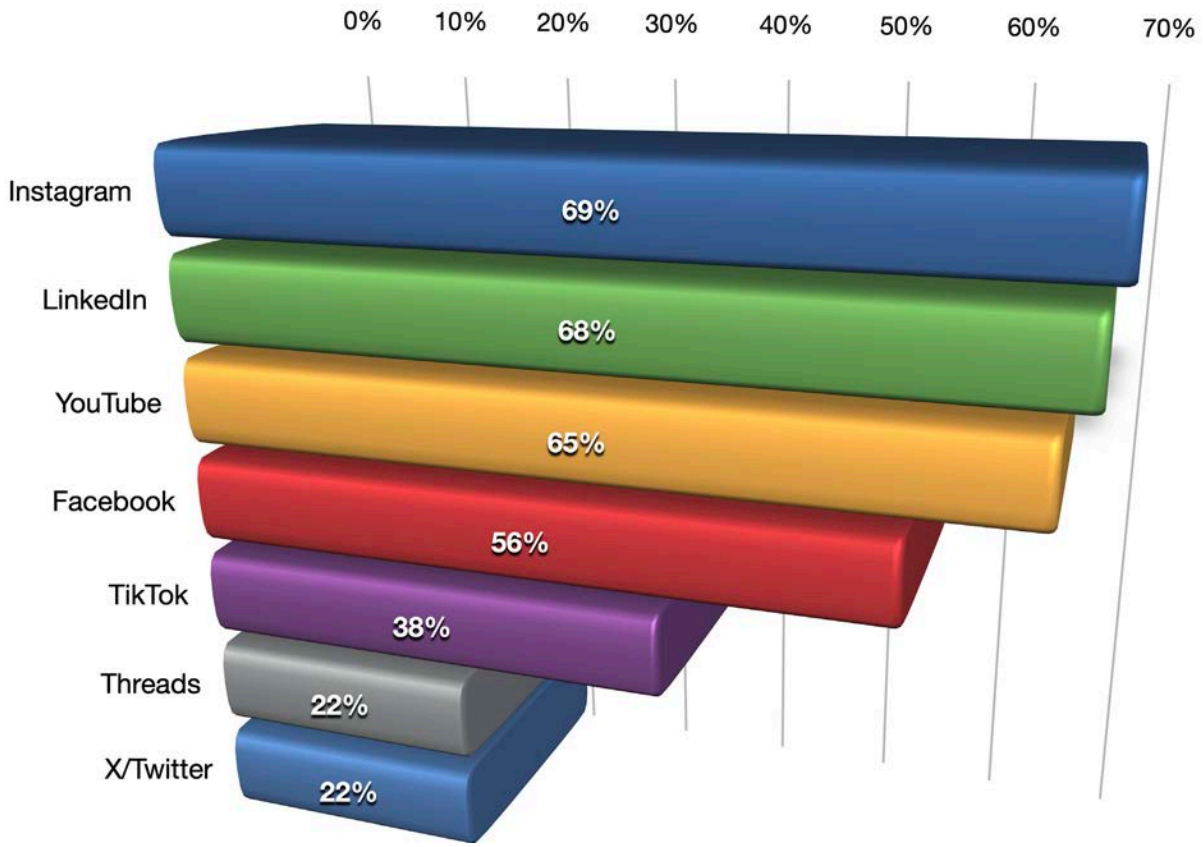
Social media platforms marketers want to learn more about



We asked marketers to identify which social media platforms they want to learn more about. Instagram held the top slot for the seventh year in a row. LinkedIn grew to 68% from 63% in 2024.

B2C marketers are more interested in learning about Instagram (75% B2C vs. 61% B2B), Facebook (64% B2C vs. 44% B2B), and TikTok (42% B2C vs. 34% B2B) than their B2B counterparts. B2B marketers are far more interested in learning about LinkedIn (79% B2B vs. 58% B2C).

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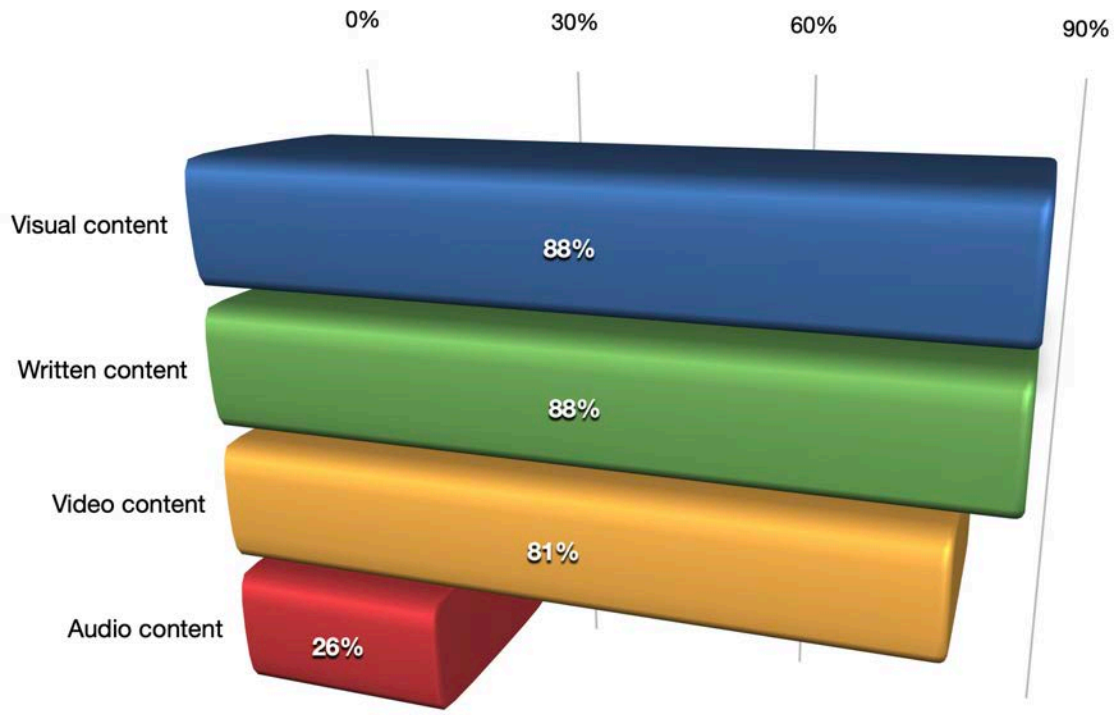
Types of content used in marketing

We decided to study the different types of content used by marketers.

Visual content and the written word are the top two content types used by 88% of marketers.

Ninety-one percent of B2B marketers use written content, compared to 85% of B2C.



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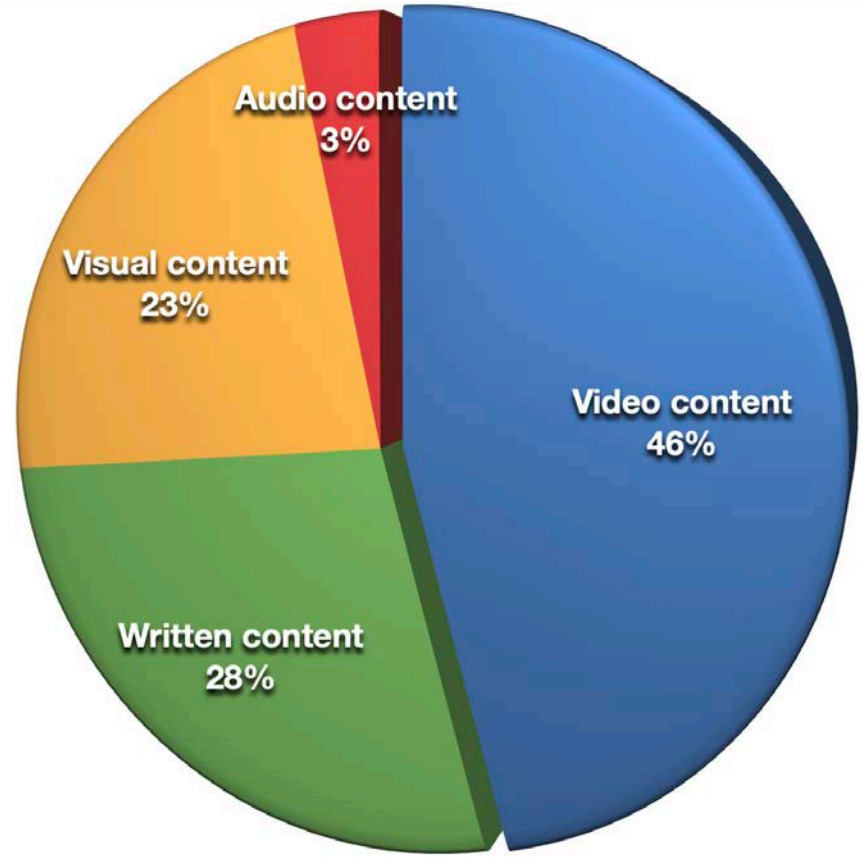
The most important content for marketers is…



We asked marketers to select the single most important form of content for their marketing. Because only one choice was allowed, the findings are revealing.

Nearly half of marketers (46%) chose video as their most important type of content.

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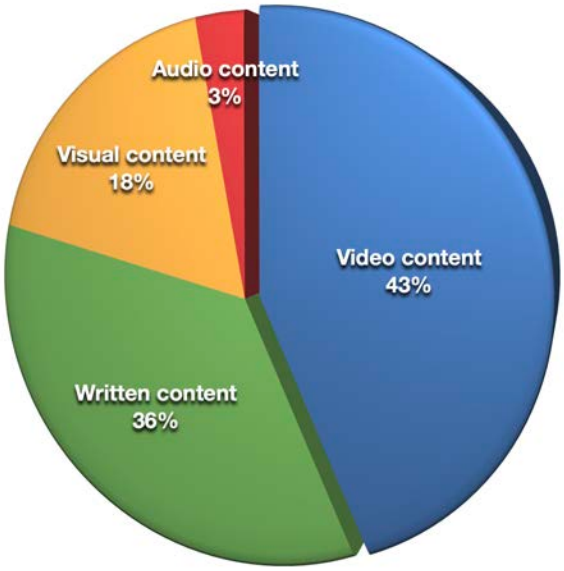
B2B vs. B2C

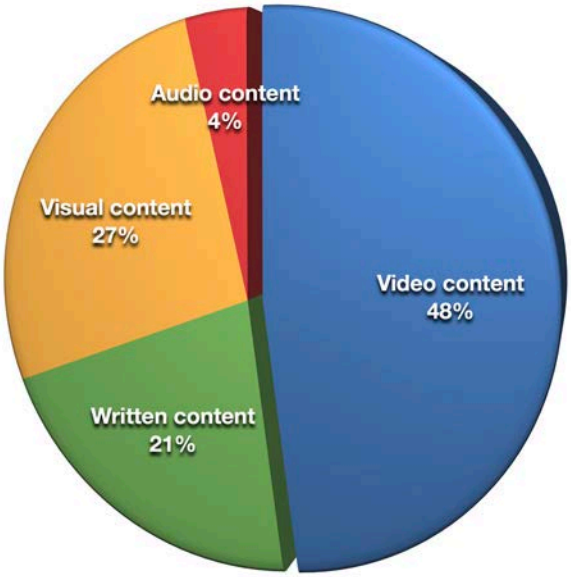
Notice the fascinating differences between B2B- and B2C-focused marketers.

Clearly, video content holds strong across both audiences. However, written content (36%) is far more important for B2B marketers than B2C marketers (21%).

B2B



B2C



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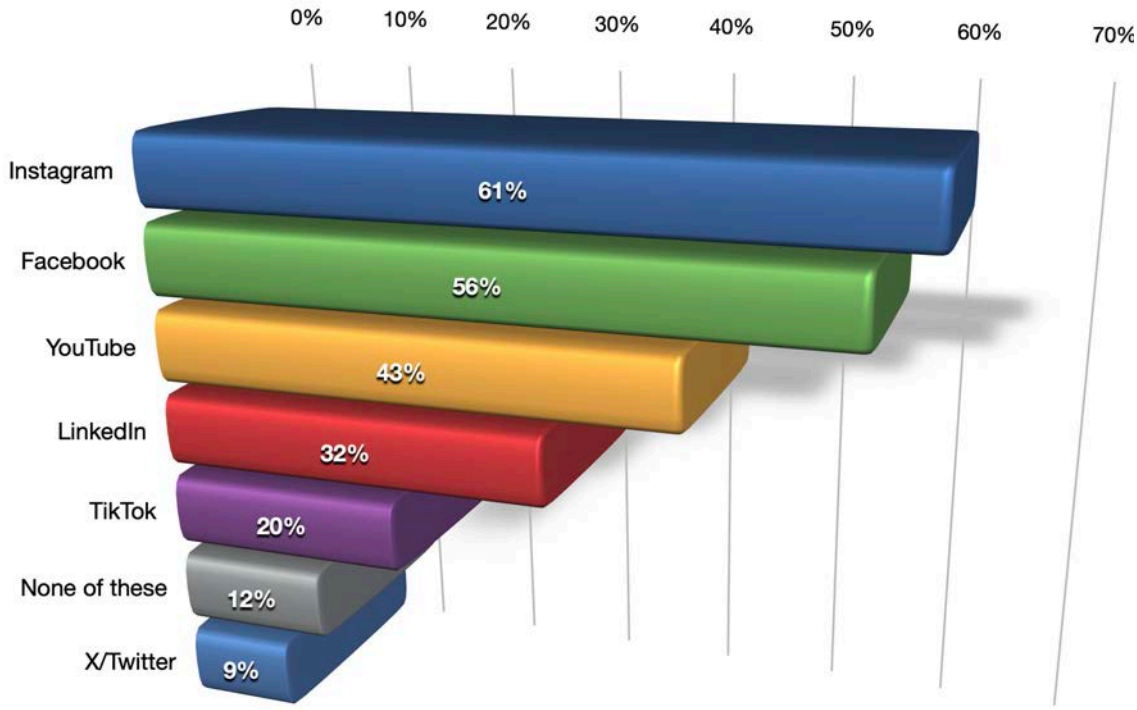
Regular video use by platform

Instagram is the top platform (61%), followed by Facebook (56%) and YouTube (43%).



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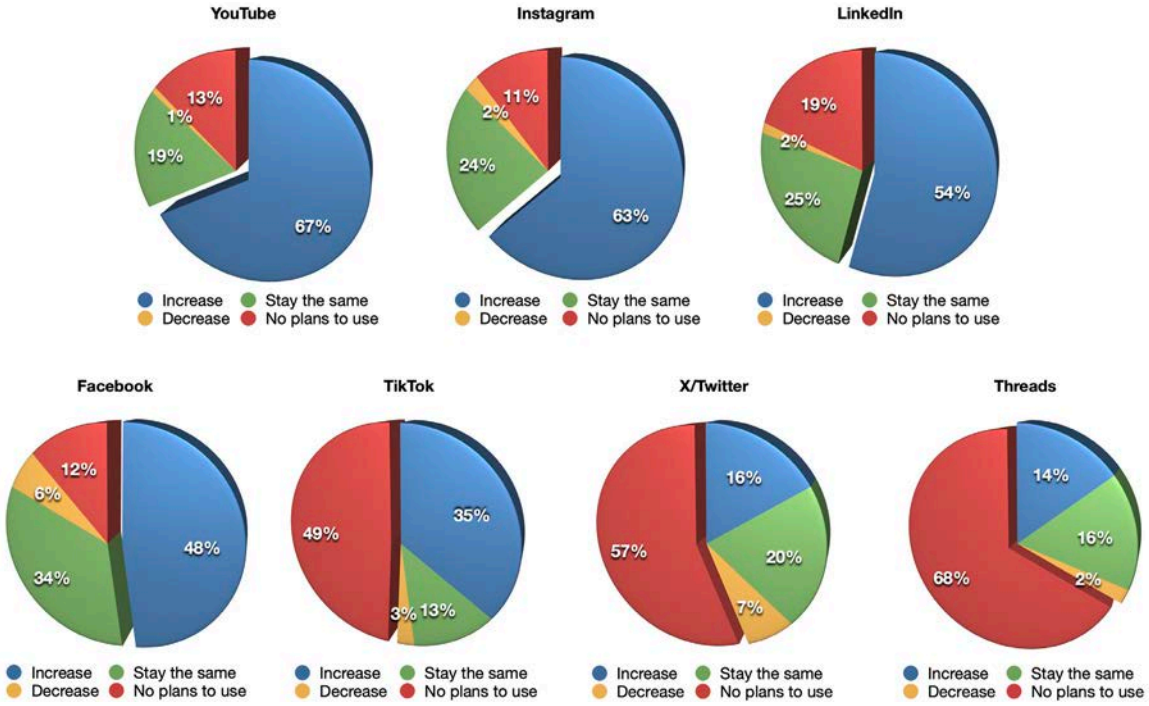
How will marketers change their future video marketing activities?

We asked marketers to indicate how they'll change their video marketing use in the near future. Respondents were asked to indicate whether they plan to increase, decrease, remain the same, or not use various platforms in their video marketing.

Marketers mostly plan on increasing their use of YouTube video (67%), Instagram video (63%), and LinkedIn video (54%).

Here's a breakdown by platform:



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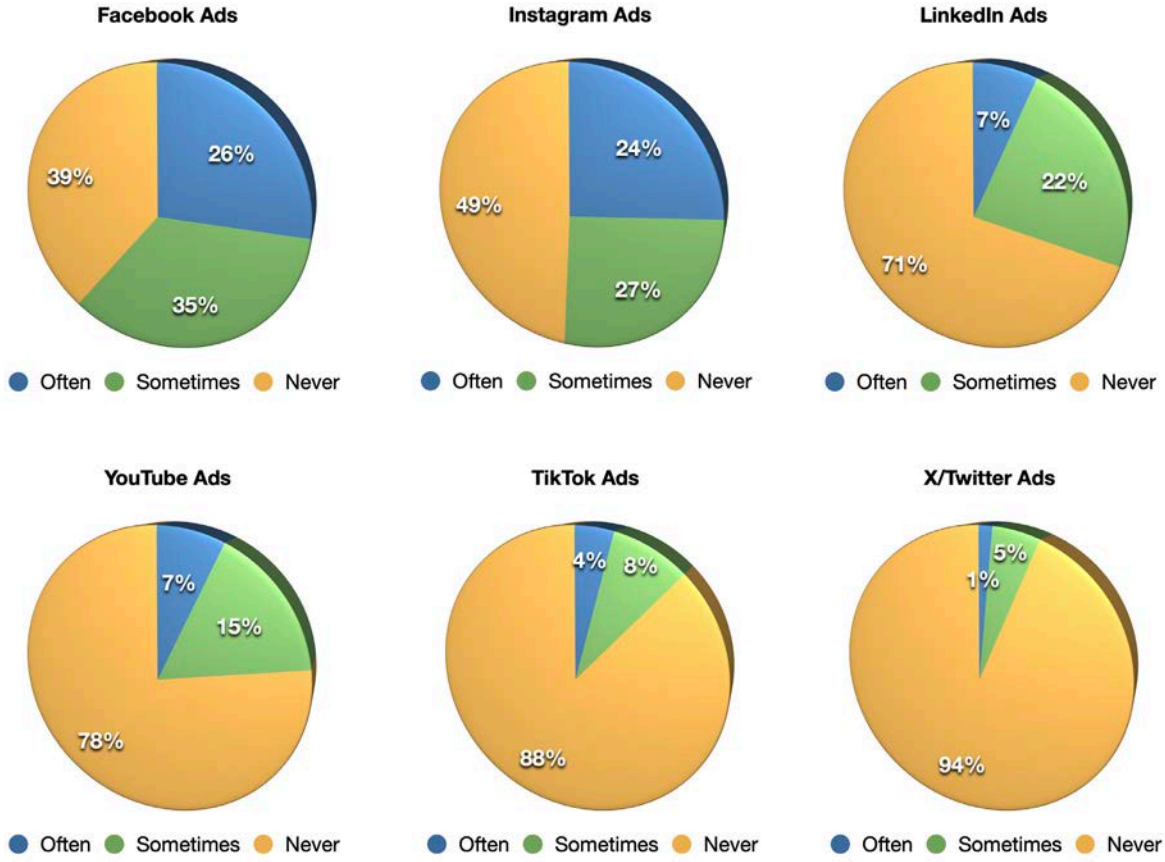
Social ad use

We asked marketers to indicate how frequently they run ads on a variety of social platforms (often, sometimes, or never).

The ad platform most used by marketers is Facebook (61%), followed by Instagram (51%).

B2C marketers are more likely to use Facebook ads (68% B2C vs. 53% B2B) than their B2B counterparts. B2B marketers are using more LinkedIn ads (39% B2B vs. 19% B2C).



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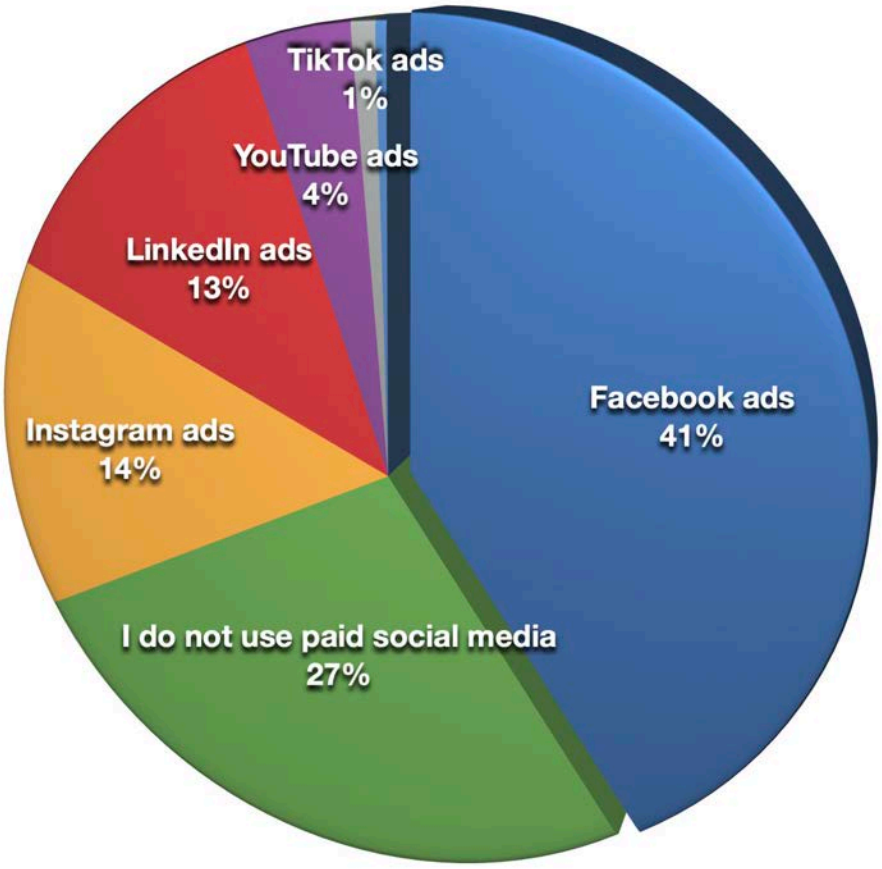
The most valued social ad platforms

We asked marketers to select the single most important platform for social ads, and they responded that Facebook is the most valued ad platform (41%).

It's worth noting that 27% of marketers don't use social ads but instead rely on organic social activities.

B2C marketers are more likely to value Facebook ads (48% B2C vs. 31% B2B) than their B2B counterparts. B2B marketers place more value on LinkedIn ads (24% B2B vs. 4% B2C).



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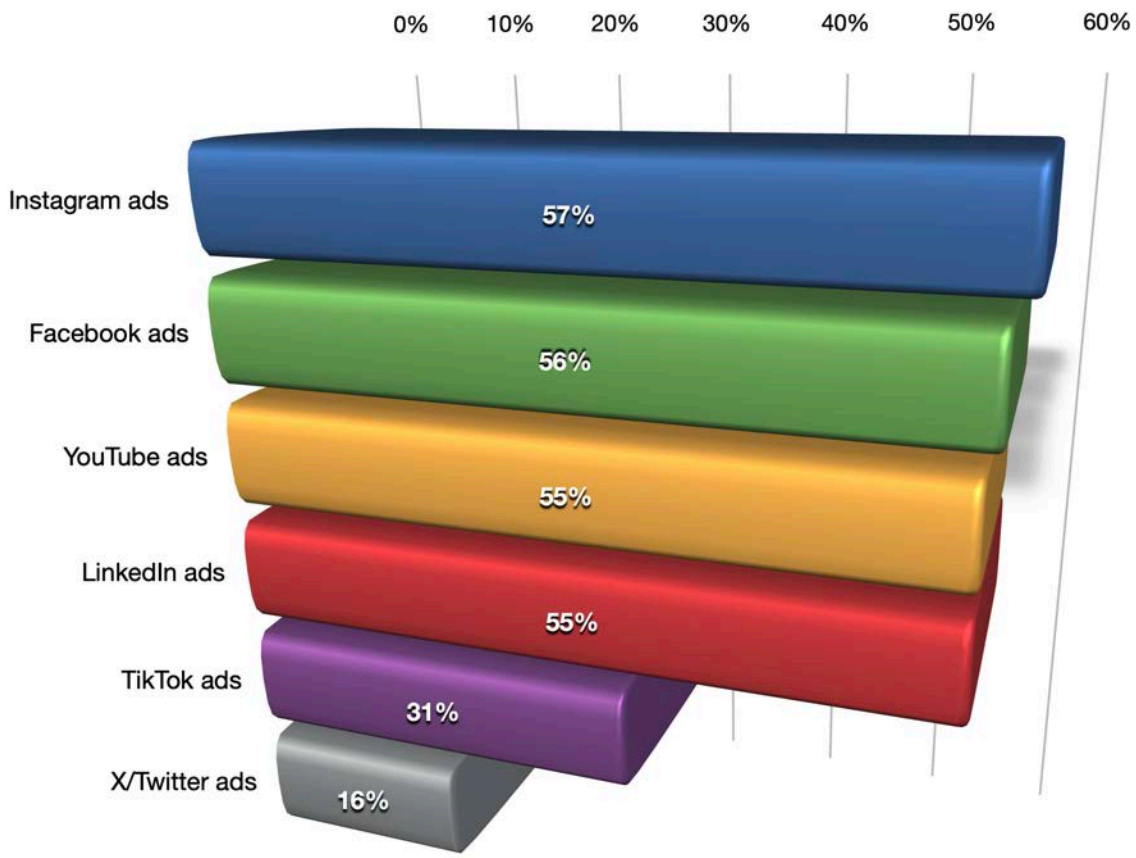
Social ad types marketers want to learn more about



We asked marketers to identify which types of social ads they want to learn more about. Instagram ads took first place at 57%, followed closely by Facebook ads at 56%.

B2C marketers are more interested in learning about Instagram ads (64% B2C vs. 49% B2B) and Facebook ads (62% B2C vs. 49% B2B) than their B2B counterparts. B2B marketers are far more interested in learning about LinkedIn ads (65% B2B vs. 47% B2C).

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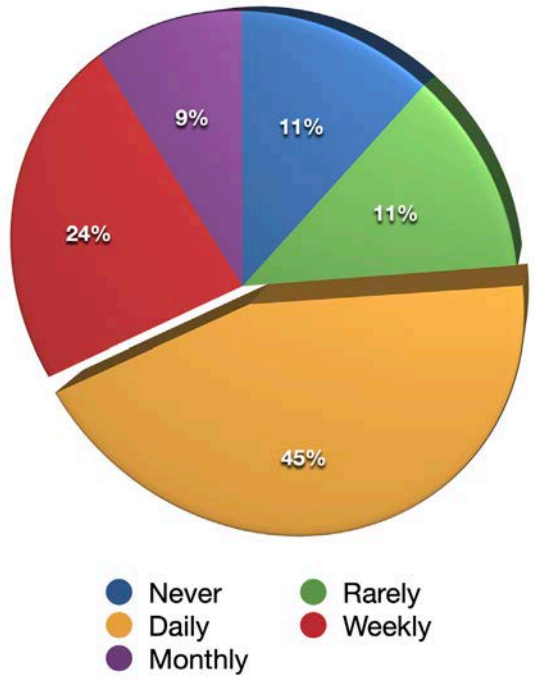
How often do marketers use generative AI tools?

We defined generative AI as a type of artificial intelligence that can create new content (i.e., text, images, music, or videos) by learning from existing content. For example, ChatGPT is a generative AI tool.

More than two in three marketers (69%) we surveyed are using generative AI tools, either every day or weekly. A significant 45% of marketers use AI each day.



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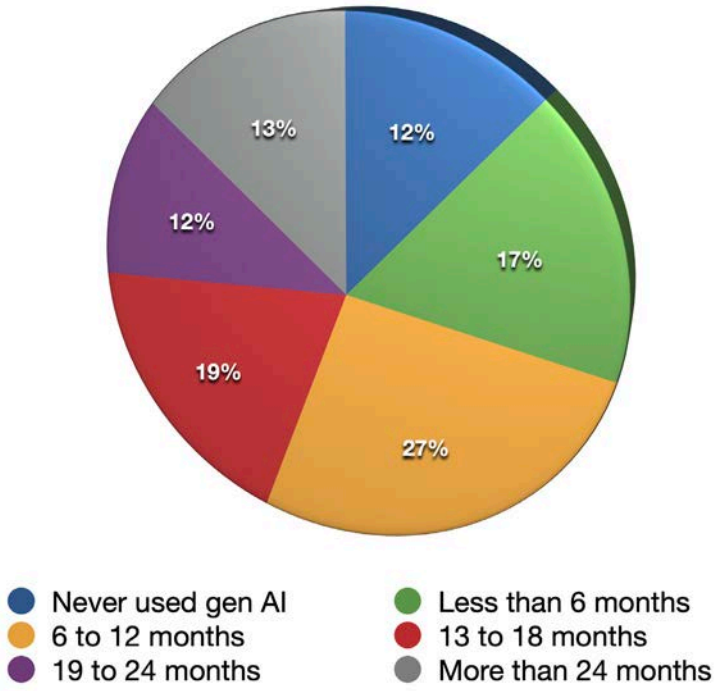
How long have marketers used generative AI tools?

A substantial 56% of marketers have used generative AI tools for less than a year or have not yet used generative AI.

B2B marketers tend to have more experience with generative AI, with 31% having more than 18 months of experience compared to only 21% of B2C marketers.



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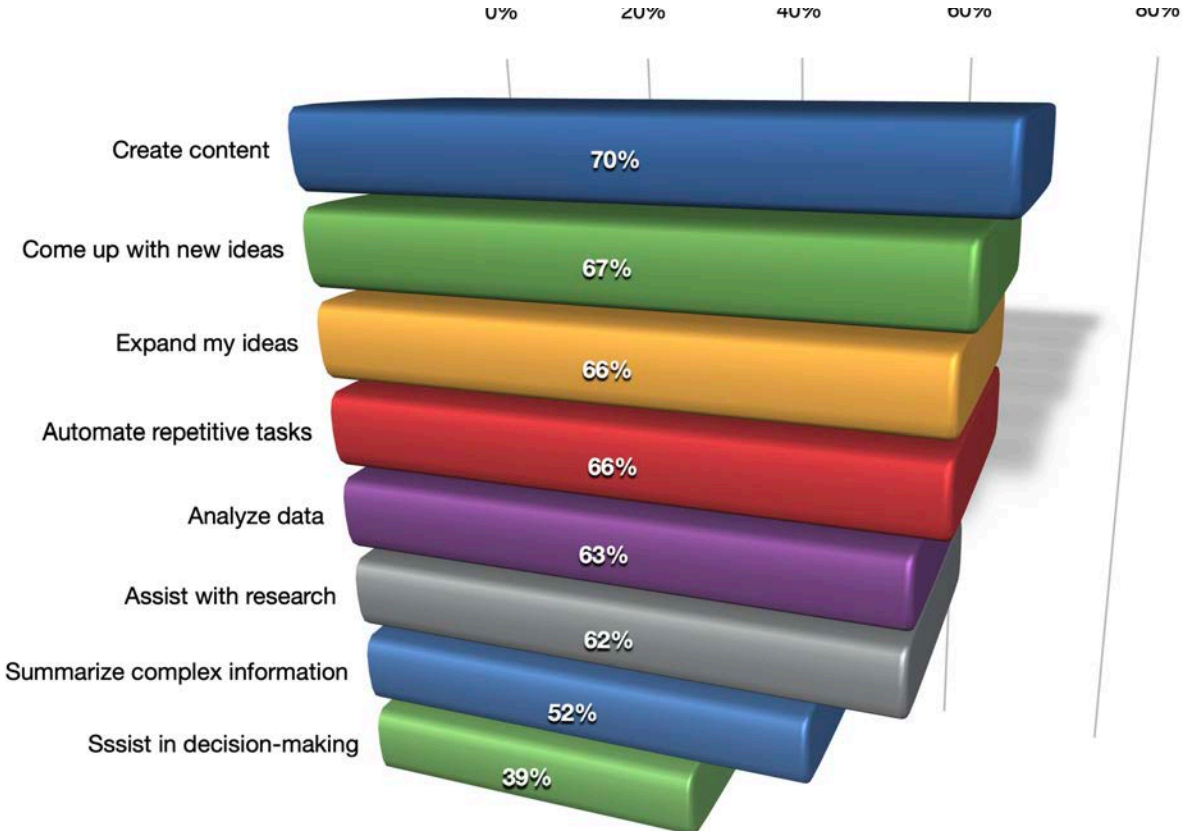
Generative AI tasks marketers want to learn more about



We asked marketers to indicate areas where they want to learn to apply generative AI to specific tasks.

The top areas of interest included creating content (70%), coming up with new ideas (67%), and expanding ideas (66%).

B2B marketers were far more interested in automating repetitive tasks (72%) vs B2C marketers (62%).

Most marketers have little interest in using AI to assist in decision-making.

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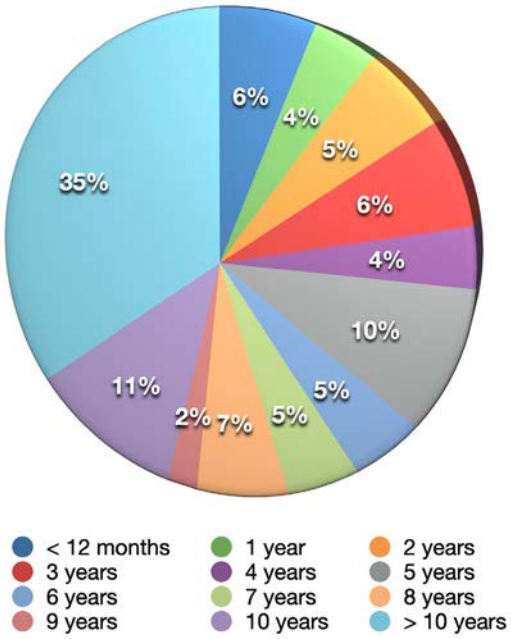
Survey participant demographics

We leveraged email to find participants for our survey. We conducted this survey in January 2025 by emailing more than 245,000 marketers and asking them to participate. After 4 weeks, we closed the survey with **1,435 participants**. Here are the demographic breakdowns:

Years using social media marketing

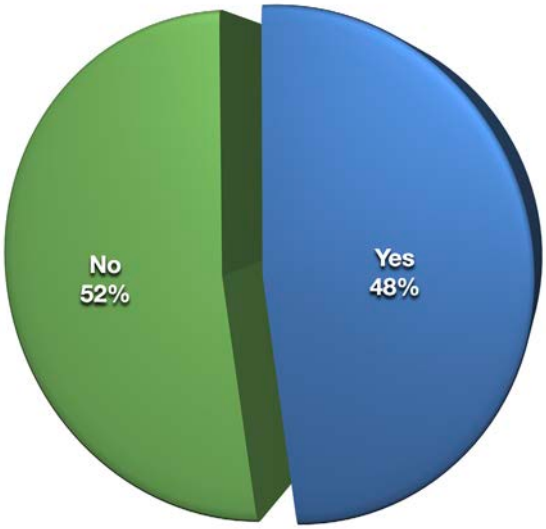
We asked participants how long they've been using social media for marketing.

Fifty-five percent of marketers surveyed have 8 or more years of social media marketing experience.



Is social media marketing your main job responsibility?

Approximately half (48%) of marketers said social media marketing was their full-time responsibility.



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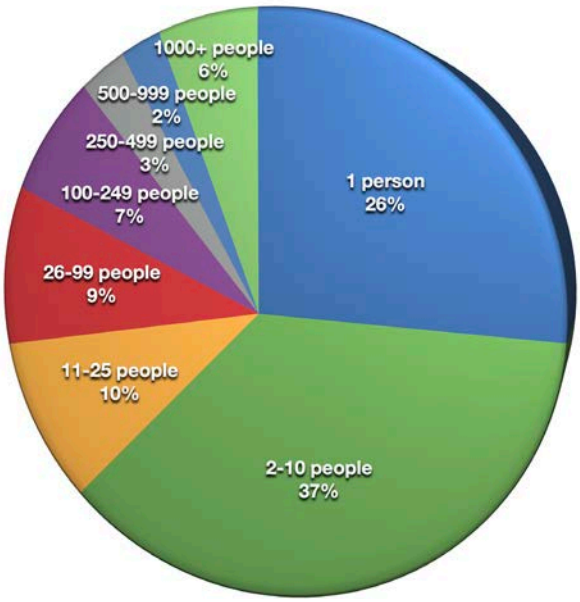
Business size

The largest group that took the survey works for small businesses of 2–10 employees (37%), followed by the self-employed (26%).



Primary target audience

About half (54%) of survey participants focus primarily on attracting consumers (B2C) and the other 46% primarily target businesses (B2B).

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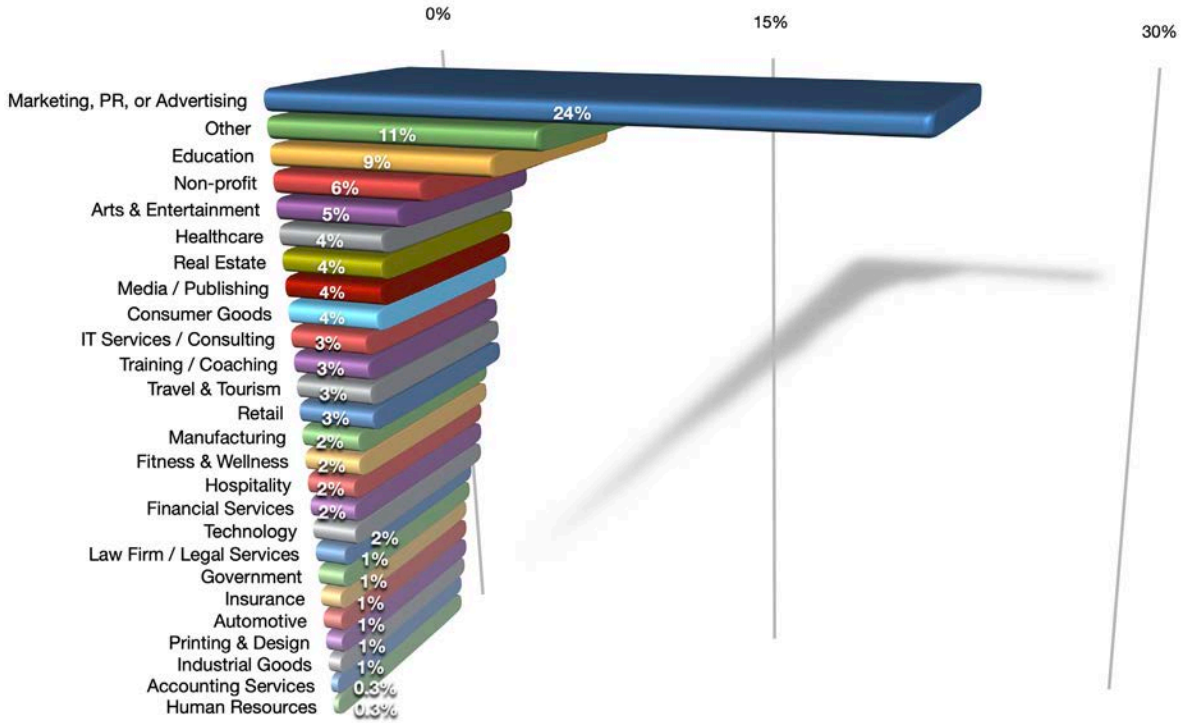
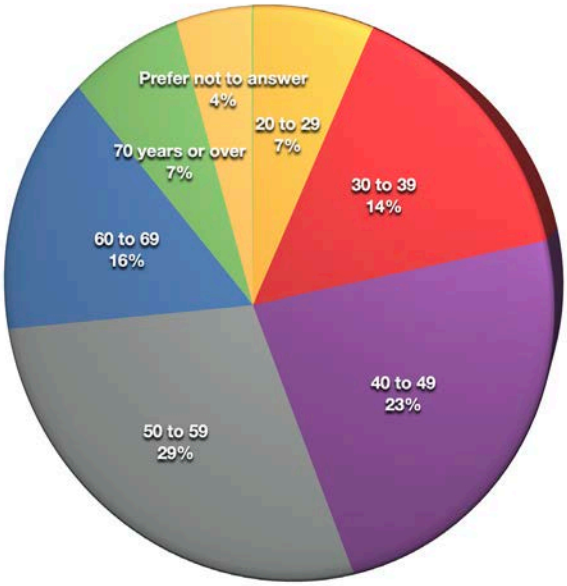
Industry

Below are the different industries that survey participants work in.



Age of participants

Most survey participants (89%) were age 30 or older.



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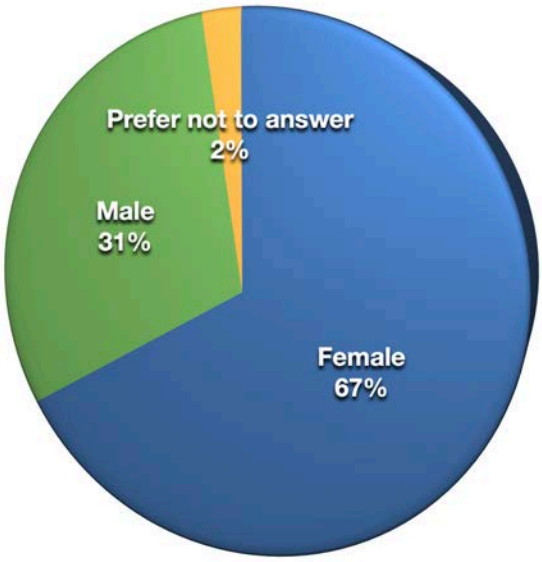
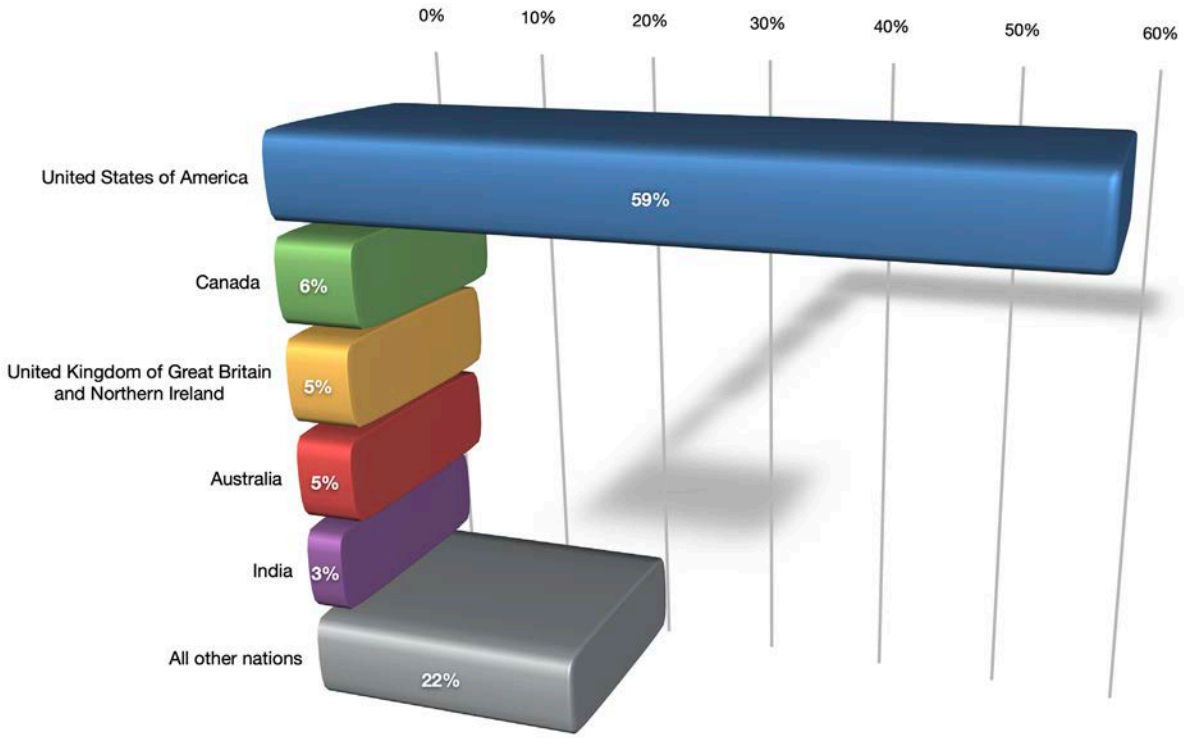
Gender

Females outnumbered males, representing 67% of all participants.



Country

Most participants were based in the United States (59%), followed by Canada (6%), the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland (5%), Australia (5%), and India (3%).



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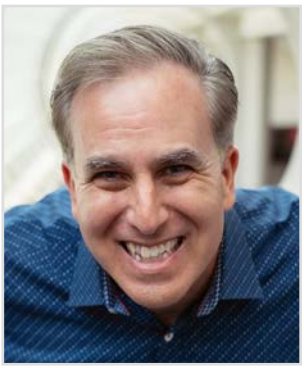
About Michael A. Stelzner



Michael Stelzner is the founder of Social Media Examiner and author of the books Launch and Writing White Papers. He's also the host of the Social Media Marketing podcast, the AI Explored podcast, and the founder of Social Media Marketing World.

Follow Michael on X/Twitter: x.com/mike_stelzner or Facebook facebook.com/stelzner/

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