



AGENCY

CONTENT MARKETING 2019

Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends



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SURVEY TERM DEFINITIONS

Content Marketing: A strategic marketing approach focused on creating and distributing valuable, relevant, and consistent content to attract and retain a clearly defined audience—and, ultimately, to drive profitable customer action.

Success: Success is defined as achieving your organization’s desired/targeted results.

Note: Agency respondents were asked to answer the survey questions based on how their agency uses content marketing to market its own services, not on behalf of their content marketing clients.



**LISA
MURTON BEETS**

Research Director
Content Marketing Institute

Hello Agency Content Marketers,

Welcome to the first *Agency Content Marketing 2019: Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends* report. Here we present insights from the 320 agency marketers who replied to our ninth annual content marketing survey of 1,947 global content marketers. These 320 marketers all use content marketing to promote their agencies, with 83% reporting they used the approach successfully to create brand awareness in the last 12 months.

How does your agency's content marketing approach compare with others? Or are you just starting to use content marketing? In either case, use this report not only for benchmarks, but also to ignite ideas for growing your own approach.

For additional resources, see the back cover of this report. We're happy to help!

KEY FINDINGS

Many agencies report content marketing maturity and success

49% of those surveyed report their organization is in the sophisticated/mature phase of content marketing maturity. 64% of all respondents say they are more successful with content marketing compared with one year ago, indicating continued growth and development.

Agency marketers prize creativity

94% of respondents agree their agency values creativity and craft in content creation and production (69% agreed strongly, and 25% agreed somewhat). This isn't surprising considering creativity is an essential component of successful agencies.

Storytelling is a common approach

Considering that agencies are in the business of using words and images to communicate powerfully, it makes sense that 69% of respondents always/frequently use storytelling in their own content marketing.

They are committed to content marketing

When compared with content marketers across other industry verticals, agency marketers report higher levels of commitment to content marketing (74% say they are extremely/very committed). This suggests agency marketers see the value of using content marketing.

Content marketing has been key to creating brand awareness

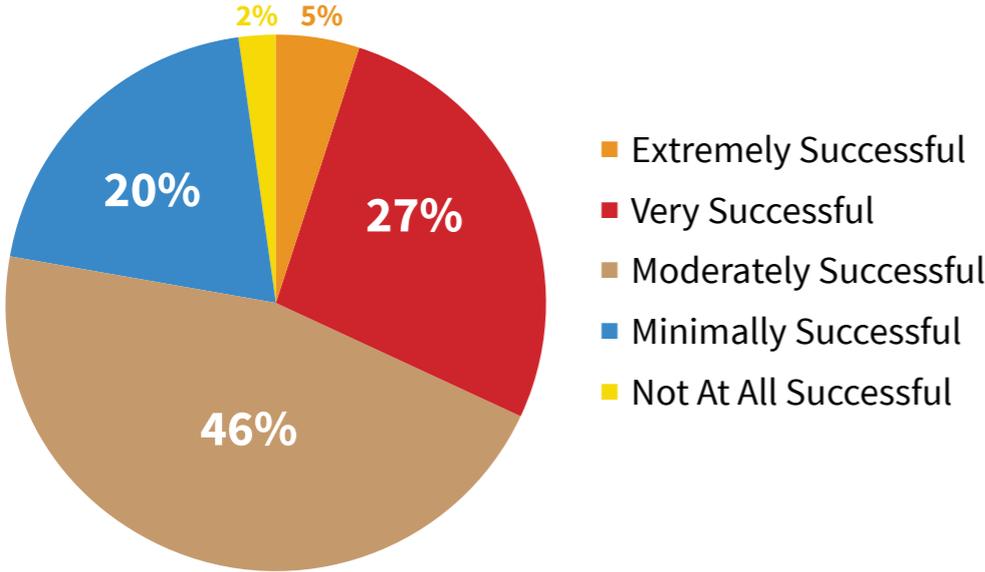
Agency marketers say they have used content marketing successfully in the last 12 months to create brand awareness (83%), build credibility/trust (75%), and educate audiences (72%). For a list of other goals agency marketers have achieved with content marketing, see page 33.



SUCCESS, MATURITY, & COMMITMENT

One out of three (32%) agency respondents report high levels of content marketing success.

How Agency Marketers Rate Their Organization’s Overall Level of Content Marketing Success

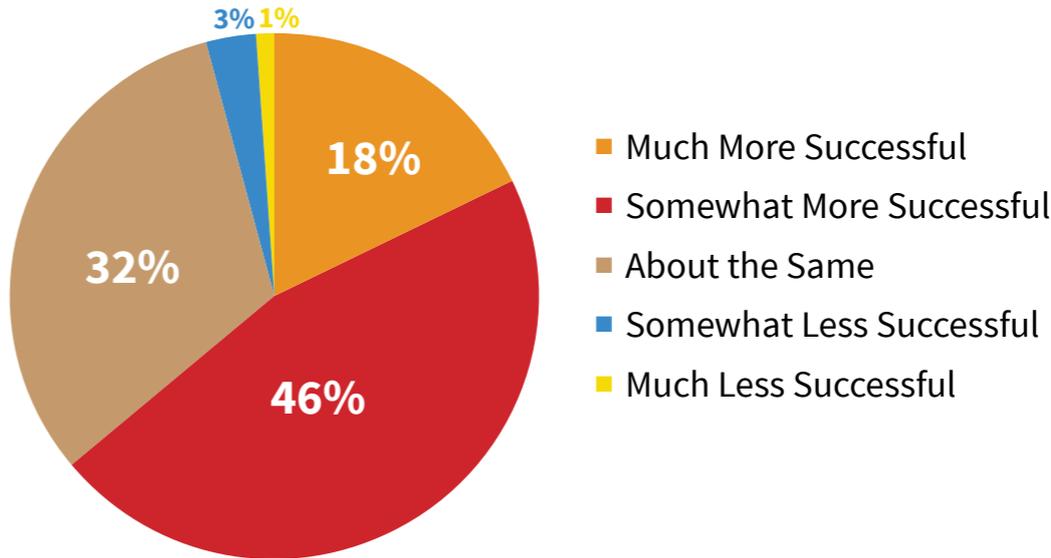


Note: The survey defined success as achieving your organization’s desired/targeted results.

Base: Agency content marketers; aided list.

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How Agency Marketers Rate Their Organization’s Content Marketing Success Compared With One Year Ago

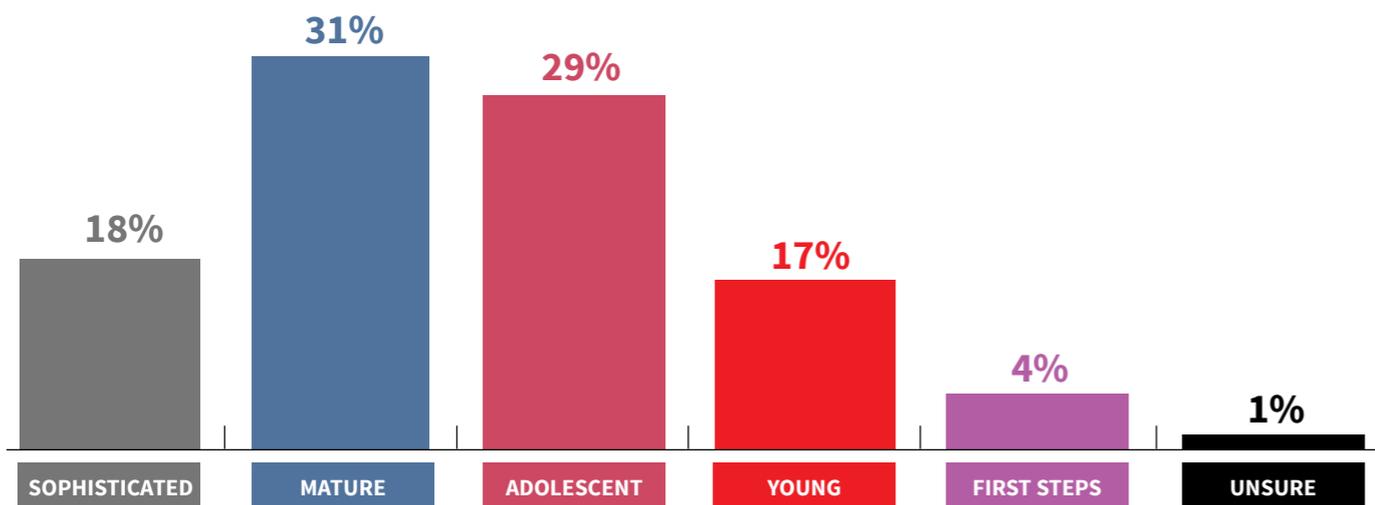


Base: Agency content marketers; aided list.

Agency Content Marketing 2019: Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends—Content Marketing Institute/MarketingProfs

49% of agency marketers report their organization is in the sophisticated/mature phase of content marketing maturity.

How Agency Marketers Rate Their Organization's Content Marketing Maturity Level



Base: Agency content marketers; aided list.

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SOPHISTICATED

Providing accurate measurement to the business, scaling across the organization

MATURE

Finding success, yet challenged with integration across the organization

ADOLESCENT

Have developed a business case, seeing early success, becoming more sophisticated with measurement and scaling

YOUNG

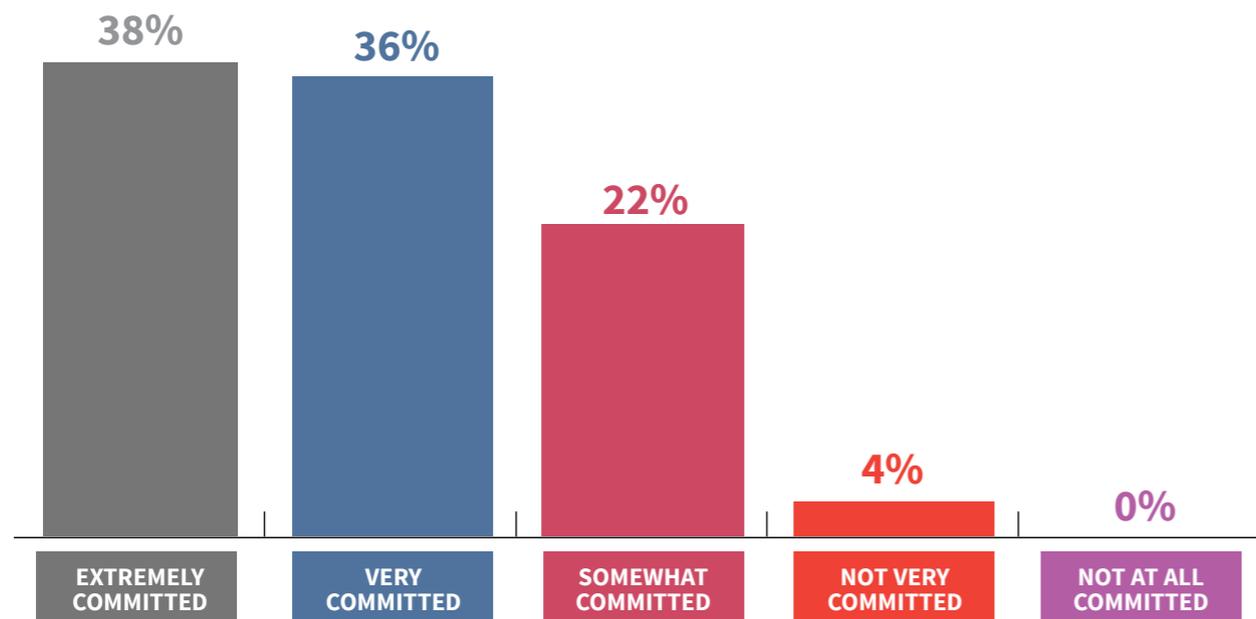
Growing pains, challenged with creating a cohesive strategy and a measurement plan

FIRST STEPS

Doing some aspects of content, but have not yet begun to make content marketing a process

74% of agency content marketers say their organization is extremely/very committed to content marketing.

How Agency Marketers Rate Their Organization's Commitment to Content Marketing



Base: Agency content marketers; aided list.

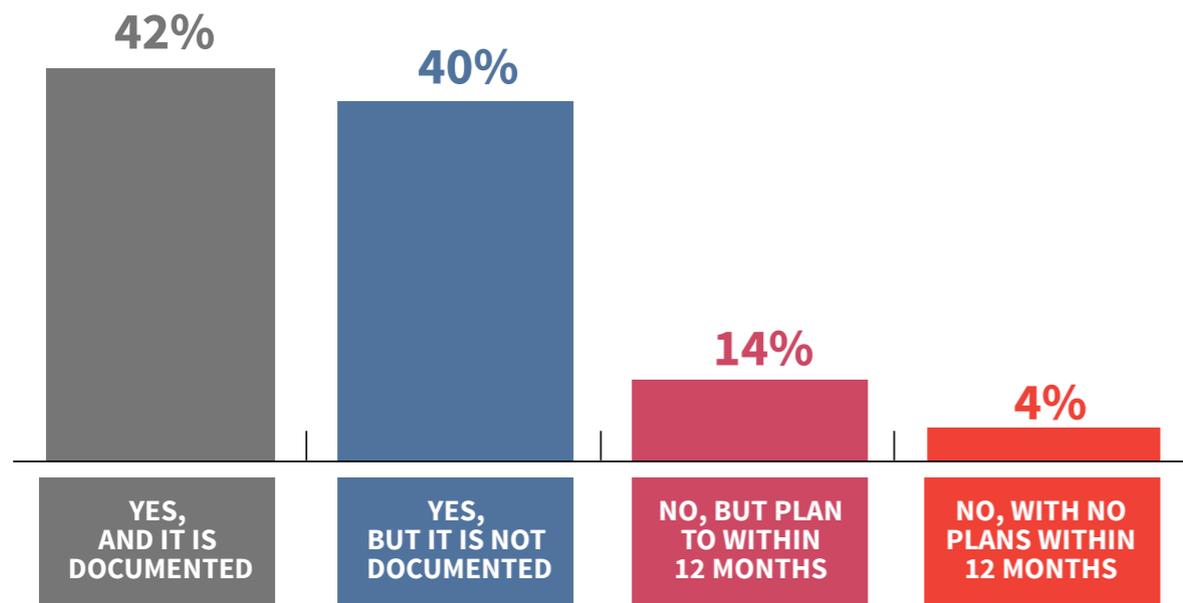
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CMI/MarketingProfs' annual research consistently shows that a strong commitment to content marketing often yields a higher level of overall success.

STRATEGY & OPINIONS

42% of agency marketers reported their organization has a documented content marketing strategy.

Proportion of Agency Marketers With a Content Marketing Strategy



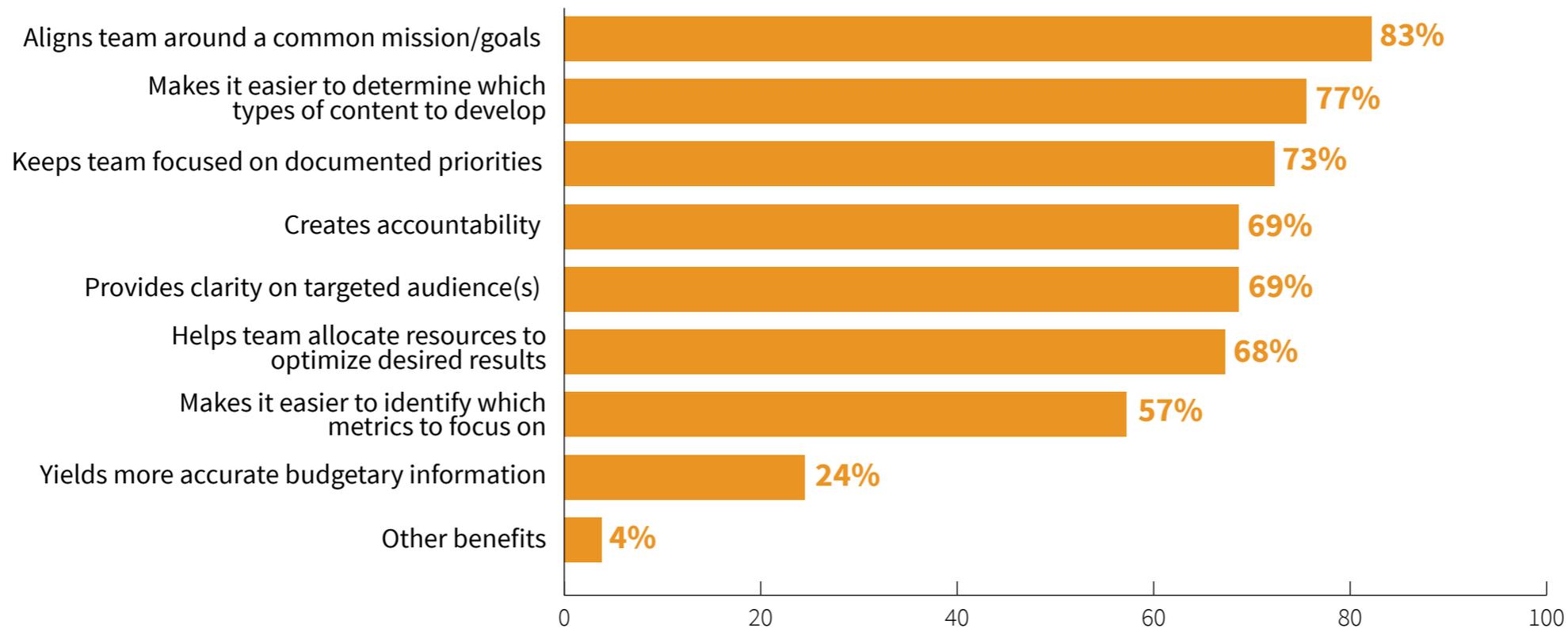
Base: Agency content marketers; aided list.

Agency Content Marketing 2019: Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends—Content Marketing Institute/MarketingProfs

CMI/MarketingProfs’ annual research consistently shows that content marketers who have a documented strategy often report higher levels of overall content marketing success in their organization.

Agency content marketers say the top benefits of a documented strategy are that it aligns the team around a common mission/goals and makes it easier to determine which types of content to develop.

Benefits of a Documented Agency Content Marketing Strategy

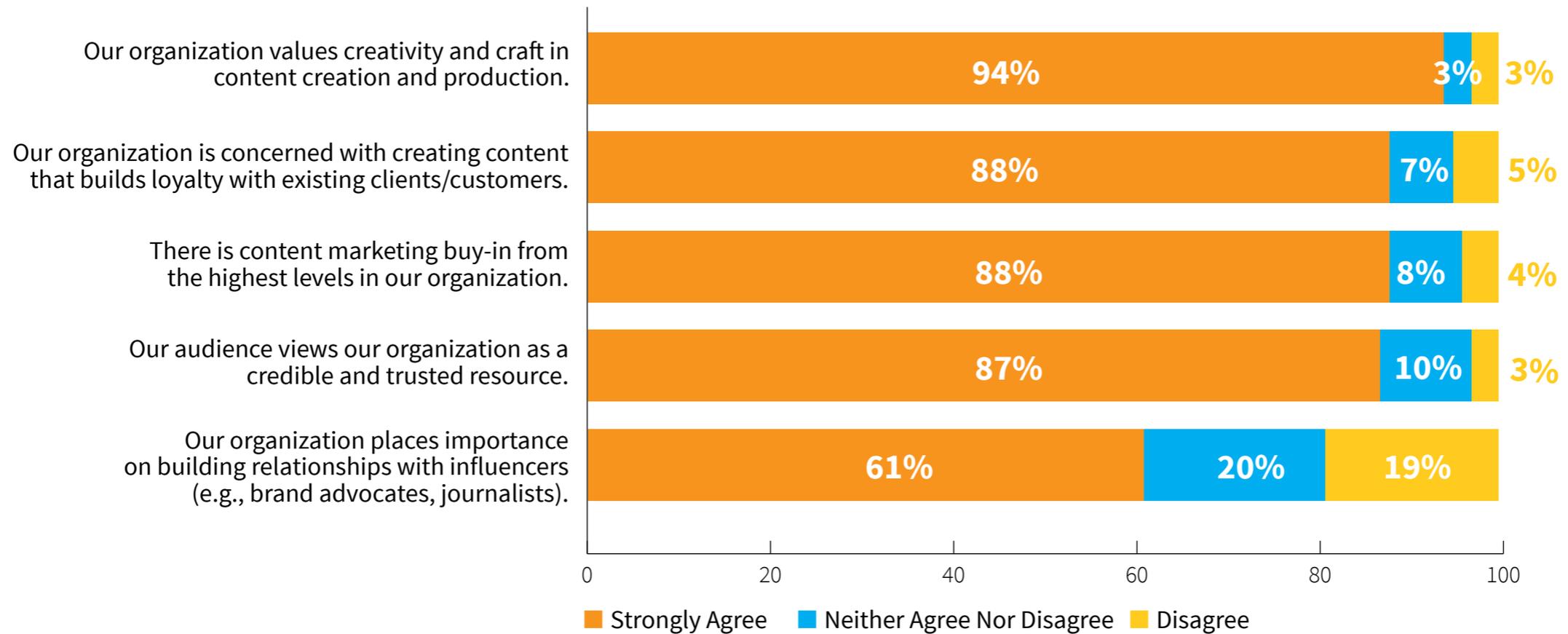


Base: Agency content marketers who have a documented content marketing strategy. Aided list; multiple responses permitted.

Agency Content Marketing 2019: Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends—Content Marketing Institute/MarketingProfs

94% of agency content marketers agree their organization values creativity and craft in content creation and production.

Agency Marketers' Opinions About Content Marketing in Their Organization



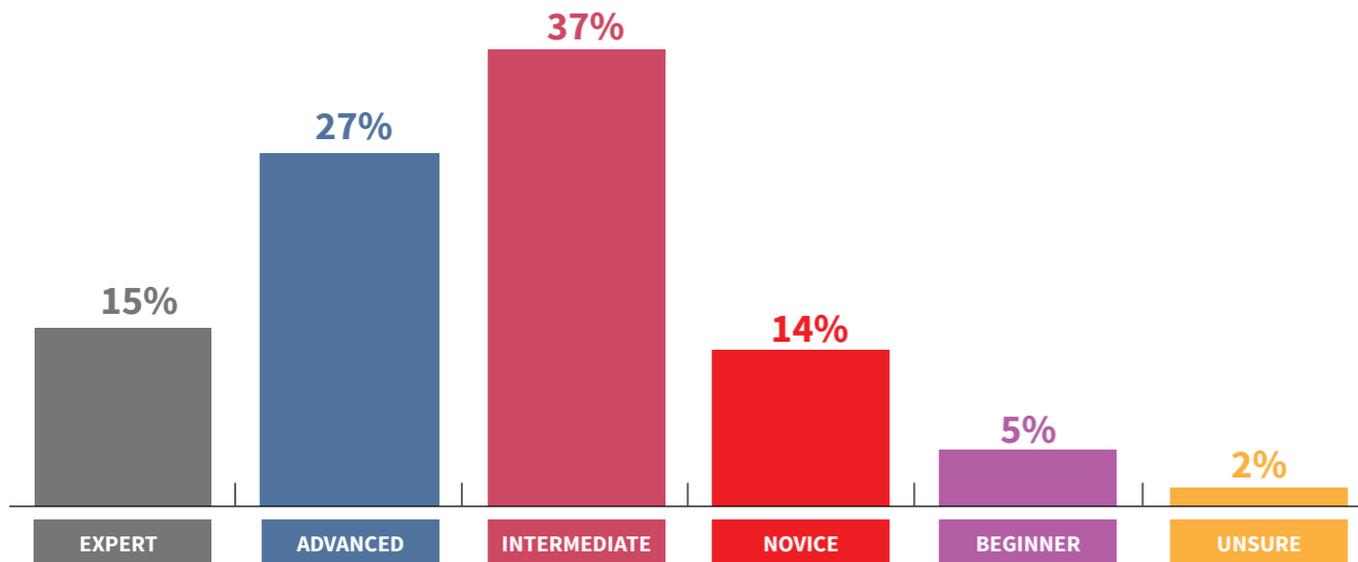
Base: Agency content marketers; aided list.

Agency Content Marketing 2019: Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends—Content Marketing Institute/MarketingProfs

TECHNOLOGY USE & PROFICIENCY

42% of agency content marketers describe their organization's proficiency with the use of content marketing technology as expert/advanced.

Agency Marketers' Proficiency With Use of Content Marketing Technology



Base: Agency content marketers whose organizations use one or more of the listed technologies presented on the survey. Aided list.

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EXPERT

Content marketing technology is integrated across the organization, experiencing the benefits

ADVANCED

Finding success, yet challenged with integrating content marketing technology across the organization

INTERMEDIATE

Becoming more consistent with the use of content marketing technology, seeing early success

NOVICE

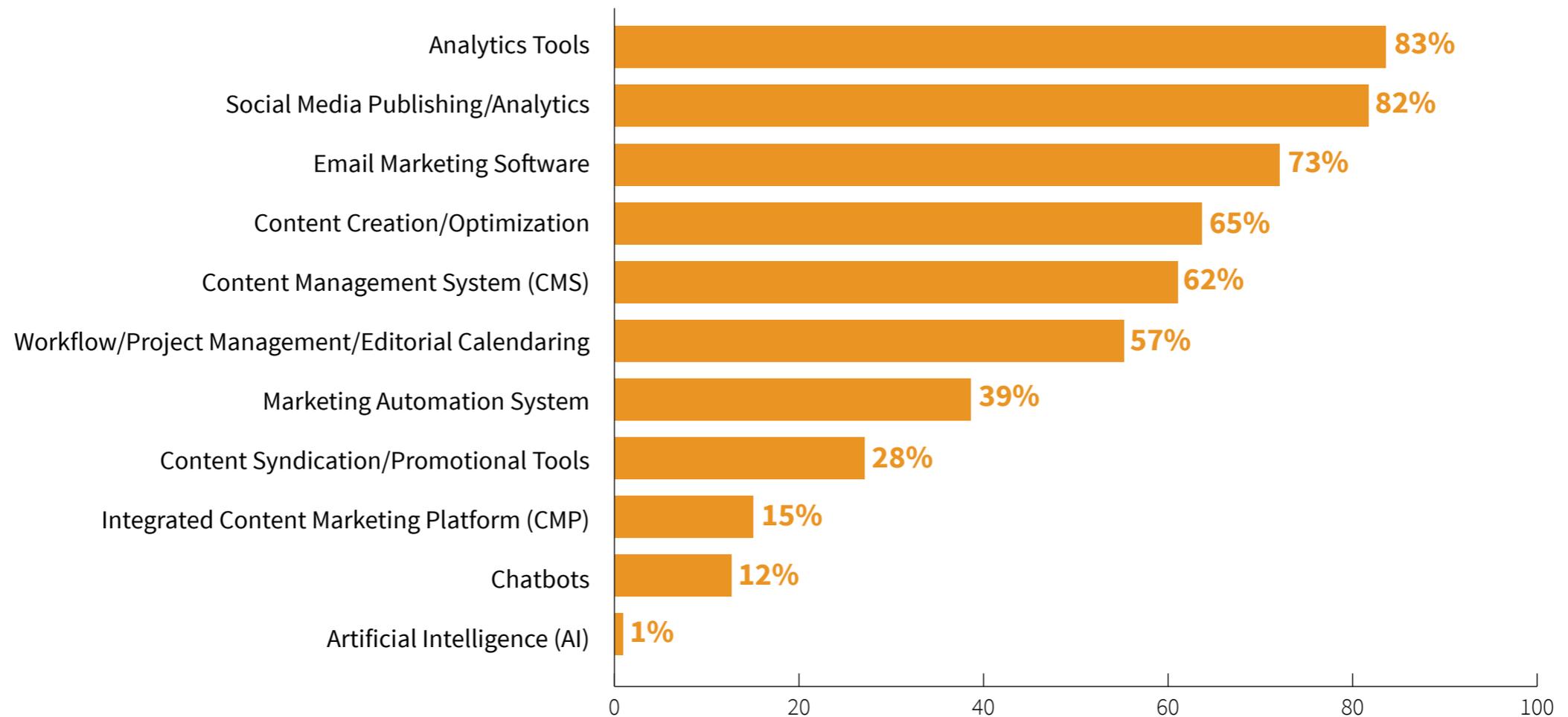
Growing in use of content marketing technology, but not using it consistently

BEGINNER

Just started using one or more content marketing technologies

The top two technologies agency content marketers use to assist with managing their content marketing efforts are analytics tools and social media publishing/analytics.

Types of Technologies Agency Marketers Use to Assist With the Management of Content Marketing Efforts

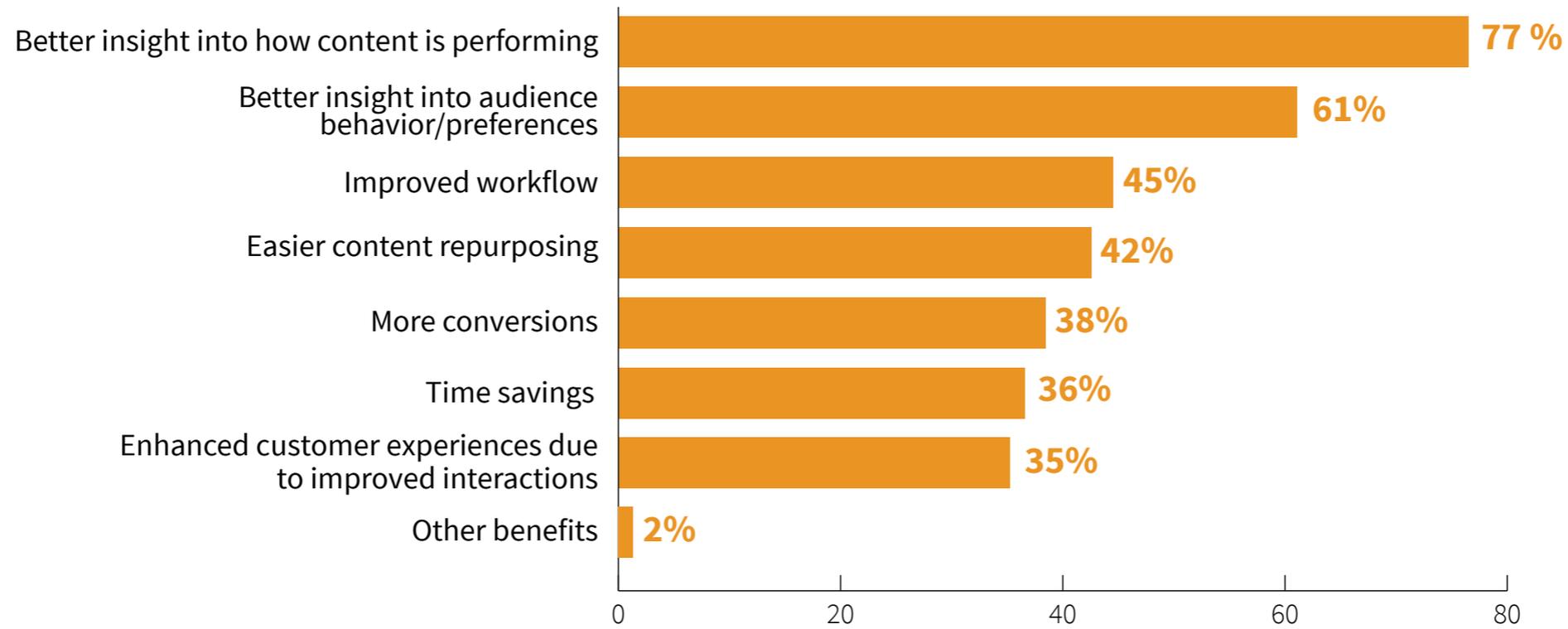


Base: Agency content marketers whose organizations use one or more of the listed technologies. Multiple responses permitted.

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Agency marketers say the top benefit of using content marketing technology is that it provides better insight into how content is performing.

Benefits Agency Marketers Derive from Using Content Marketing Technologies



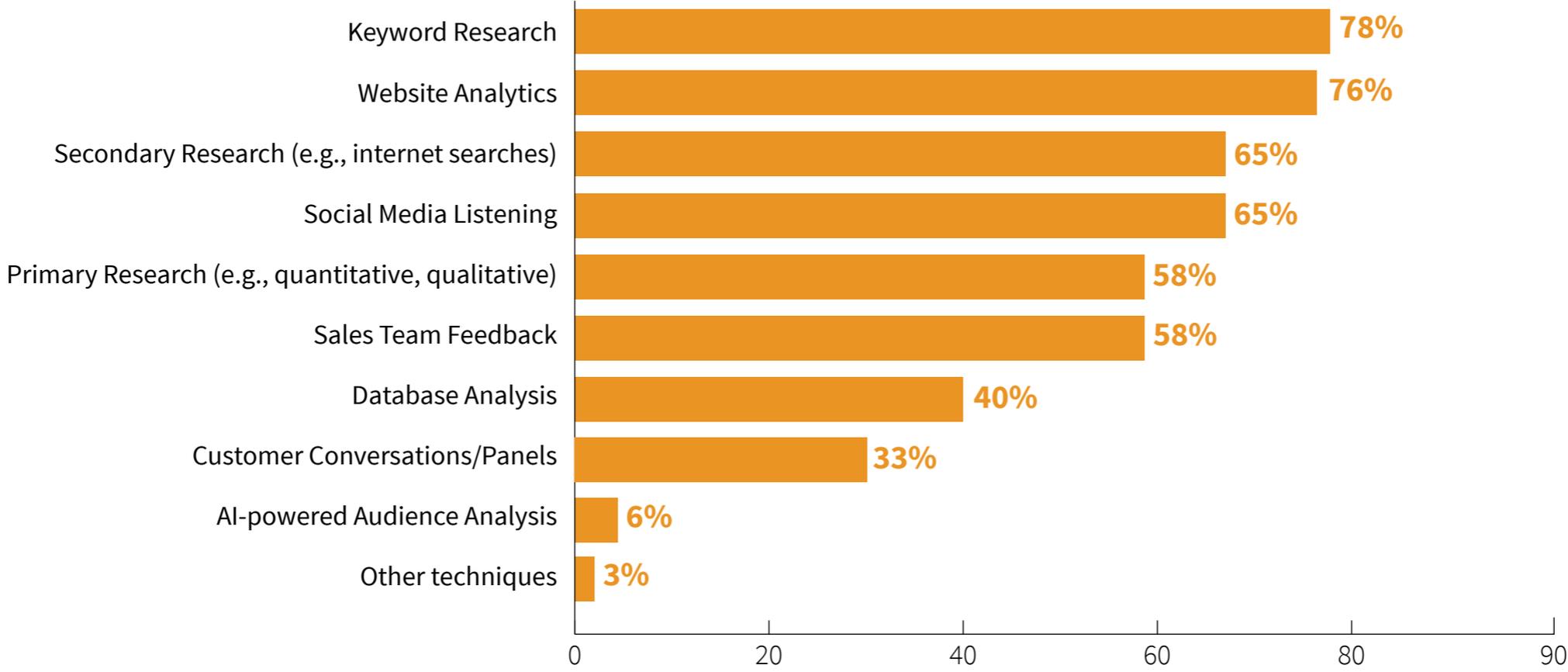
Base: Agency content marketers whose organizations use one or more of the listed technologies presented on the survey. Multiple responses permitted.

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AUDIENCE RESEARCH & NURTURING

Keyword research and website analytics are the top two techniques agency content marketers use to research their audience(s).

Techniques Agency Content Marketers Use to Research Their Audience

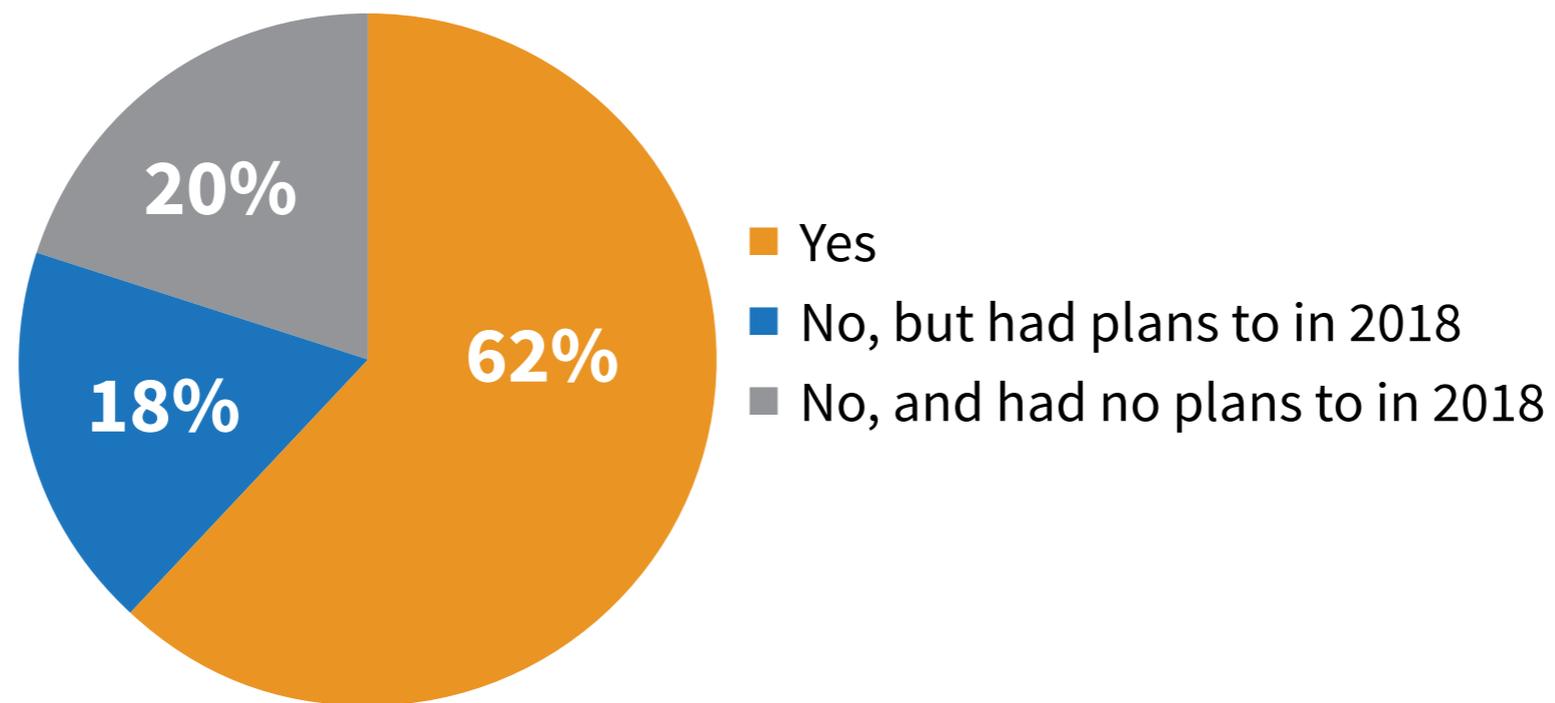


Base: Agency content marketers who research target audiences. Aided list; multiple responses permitted.

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62% of agency content marketers reported their organization uses personas; another 18% said it had plans to prior to year-end 2018.

Agency Content Marketers' Use of Personas in 2018

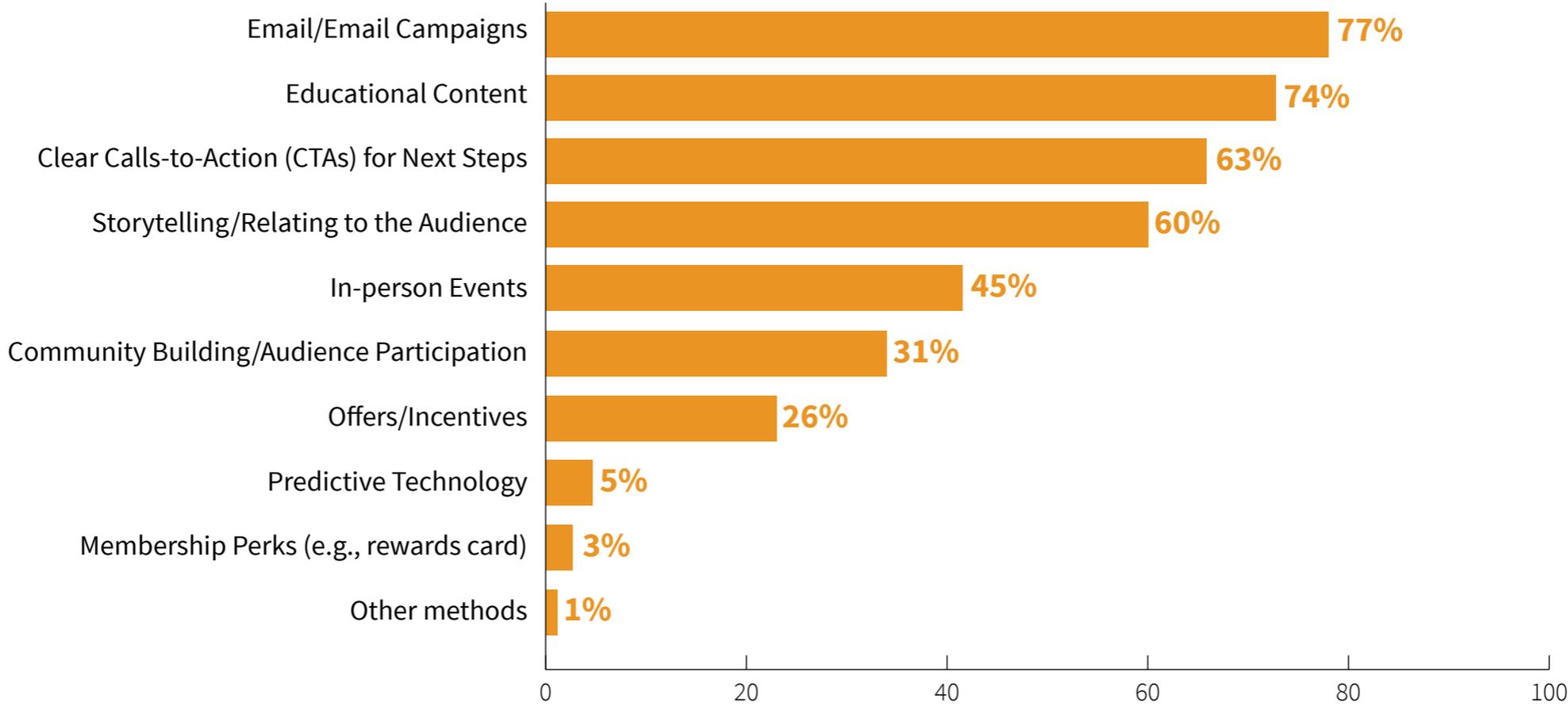


Base: Agency content marketers; aided list.

Agency Content Marketing 2019: Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends—Content Marketing Institute/MarketingProfs

Email/Email Campaigns and educational content are the top two ways agency content marketers nurture their audience.

Content Marketing Methods Agency Marketers Use to Nurture Their Audience

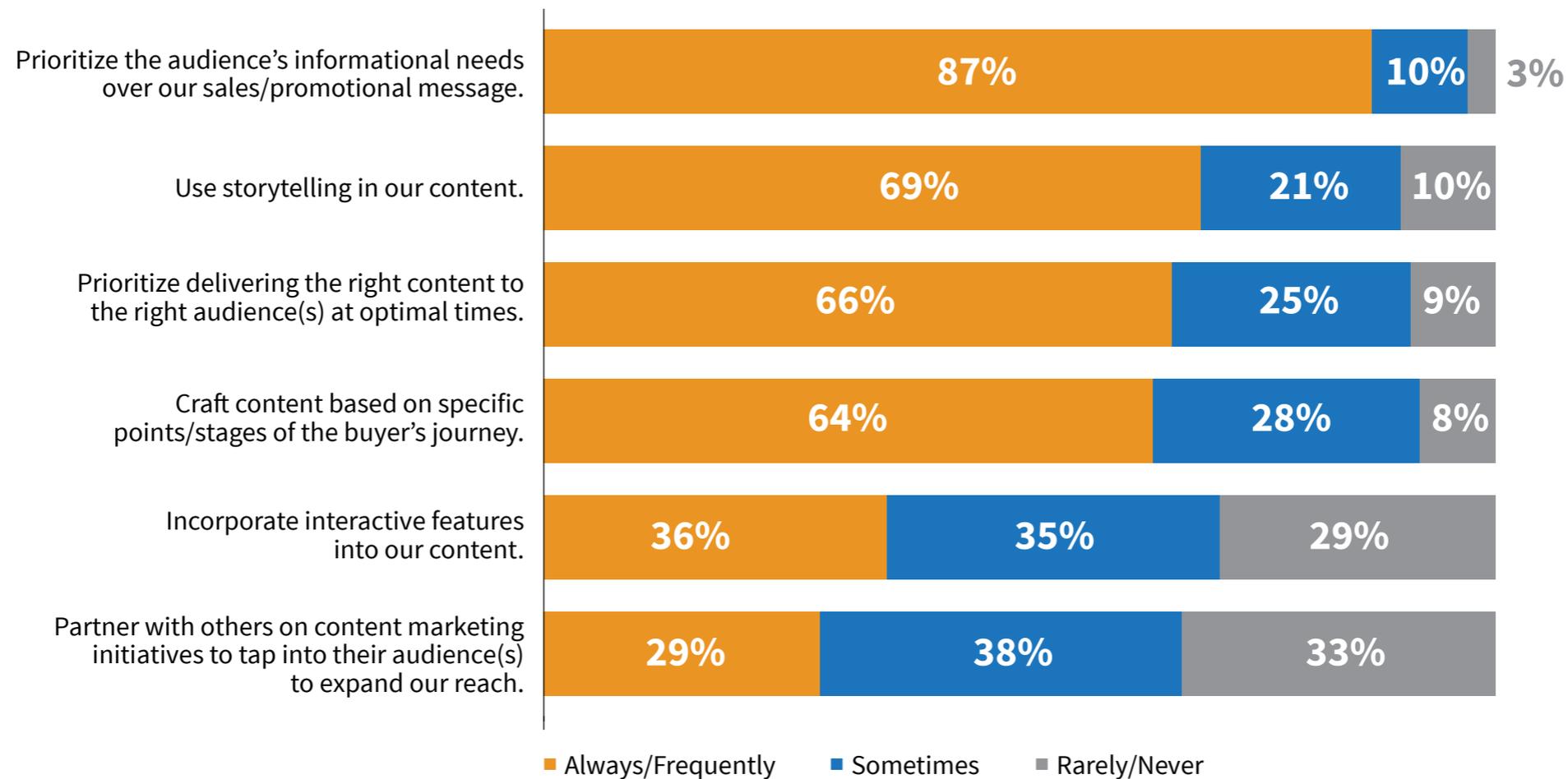


Base: Agency content marketers whose organizations nurture their audience. Aided list; multiple responses permitted.
Agency Content Marketing 2019: Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends—Content Marketing Institute/MarketingProfs

CONTENT CREATION & DISTRIBUTION

87% of agency content marketers say they always/frequently prioritize the audience’s informational needs over their organization’s sales/promotional message.

Concepts Agency Marketers Take Into Account While Creating Content for Their Organization

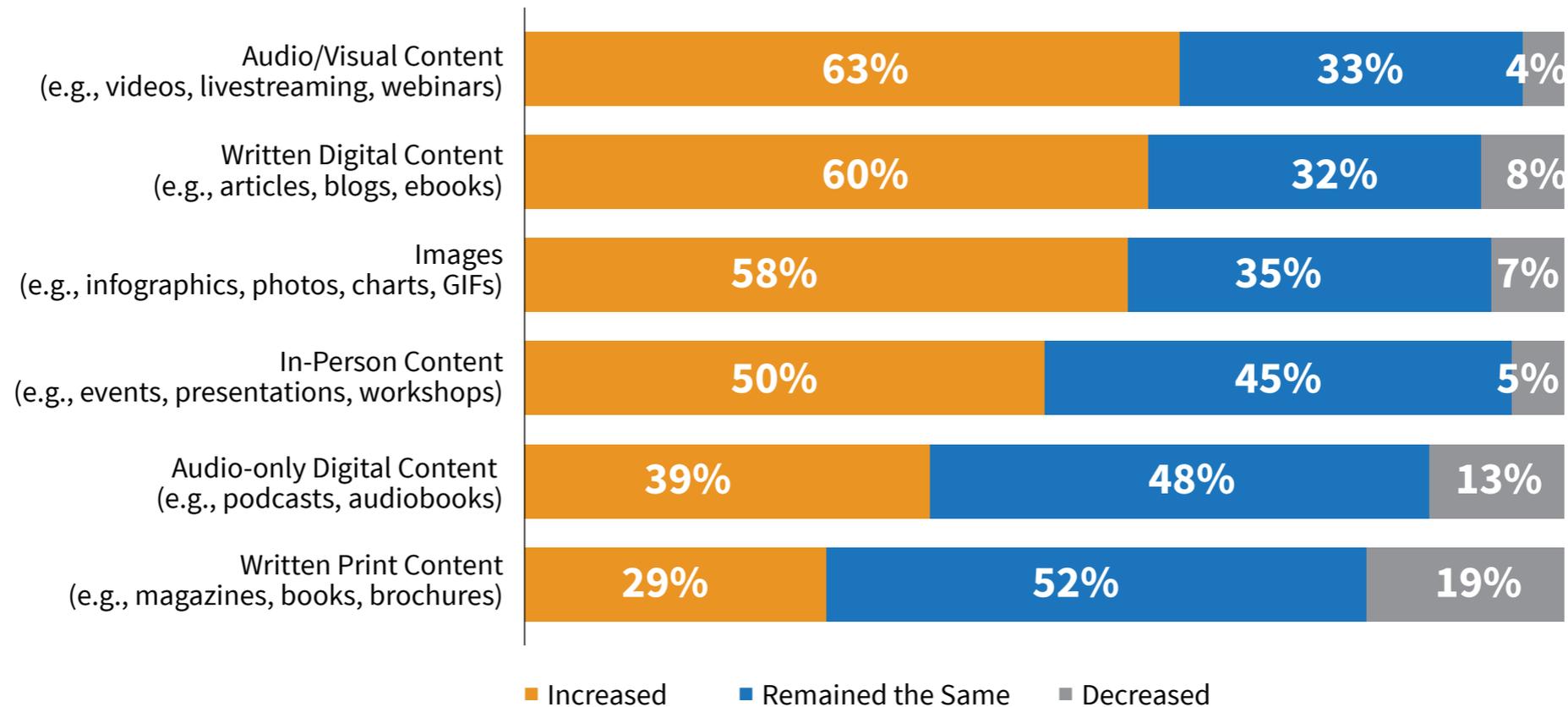


Base: Agency content marketers; aided list.

Agency Content Marketing 2019: Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends—Content Marketing Institute/MarketingProfs

The majority of agency content marketers say their organization increased its use of audio/visual content, written digital content, images, and in-person content compared with one year ago.

How Agency Content Marketers Who Use Various Content Types/Formats Changed Frequency Compared With One Year Ago

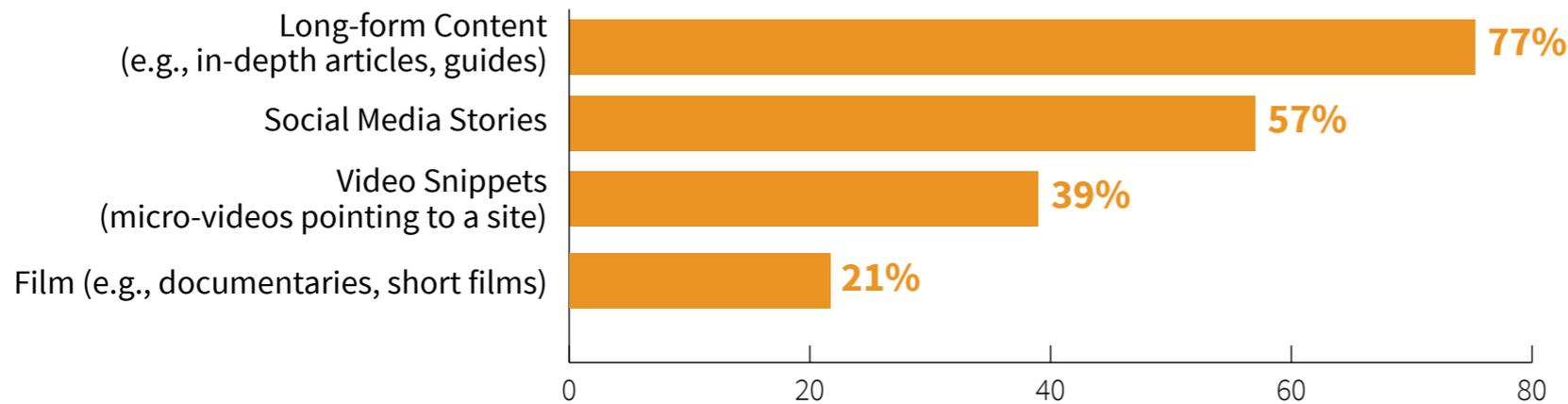


Base: Agency content marketers who use each type/format listed.

Agency Content Marketing 2019: Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends—Content Marketing Institute/MarketingProfs

77% of agency content marketers say their organization has used or developed long-form content in the last 12 months.

Agency Content Marketers' Use or Development of Select Types of Content in the Last 12 Months



Base: Agency content marketers. Aided list; multiple responses permitted.

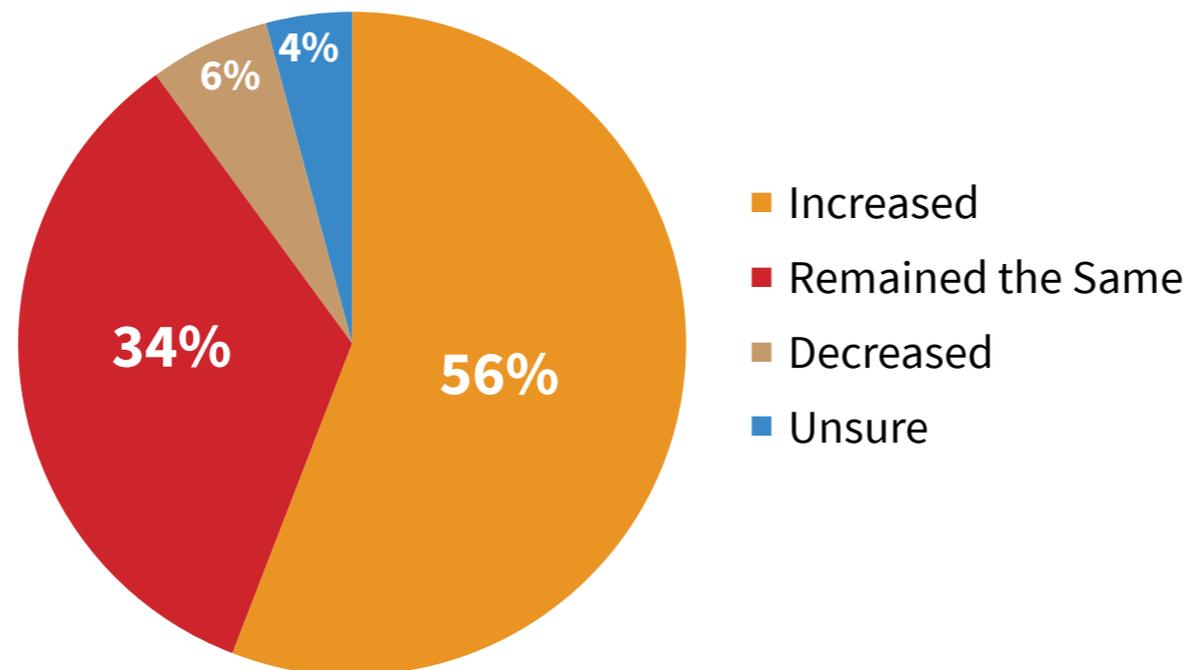
Agency Content Marketing 2019: Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends—Content Marketing Institute/MarketingProfs

Other types used or developed in last 12 months:

Digital Out-of-Home (DOOH) Placement (10%); Experiential Content (e.g., VR/AR, immersive) (10%); Branded Apps (9%); Games/Gamification (e.g., contests, badges) (6%); Dedicated Livestreaming Channel(s) (5%); none of the nine types/formats listed (9%).

56% of agency content marketers report their organization has increased its use of social media for content marketing purposes compared with one year ago; only 6% reported a decrease.

How Agency Marketers' Use of Social Media for Content Marketing Has Changed Compared with One Year Ago

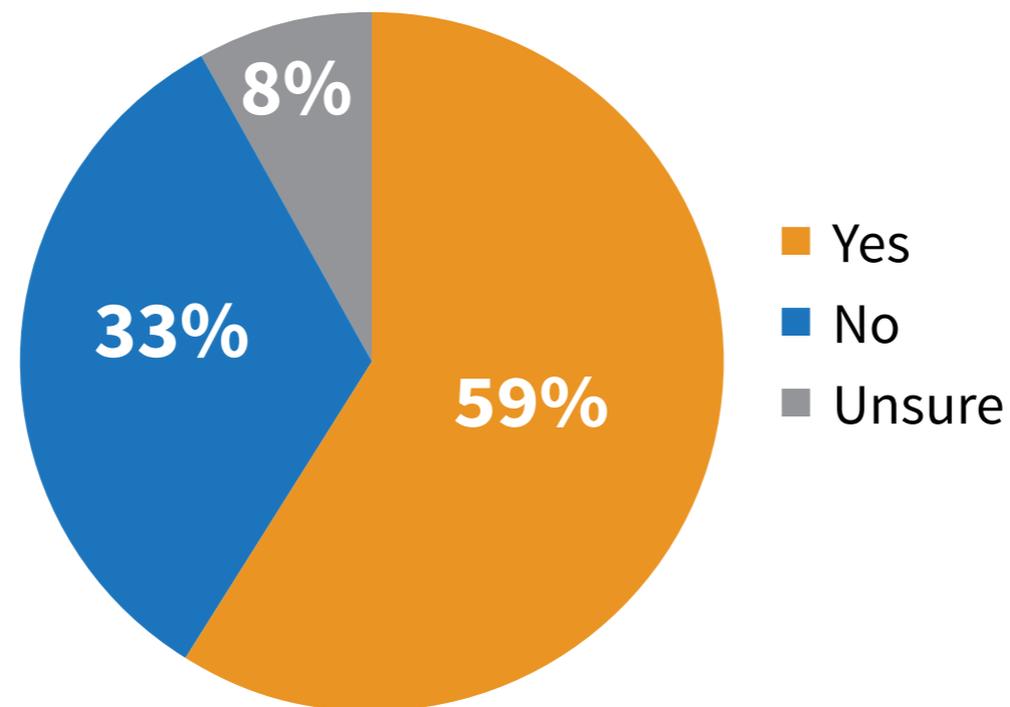


Base: Agency content marketers whose organizations have used social media for content marketing for at least one year.

Agency Content Marketing 2019: Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends—Content Marketing Institute/MarketingProfs

59% of agency content marketers say their organization uses paid methods to distribute content.

Proportion of Agency Content Marketers That Have Used Paid Methods to Distribute Content in the Last 12 Months

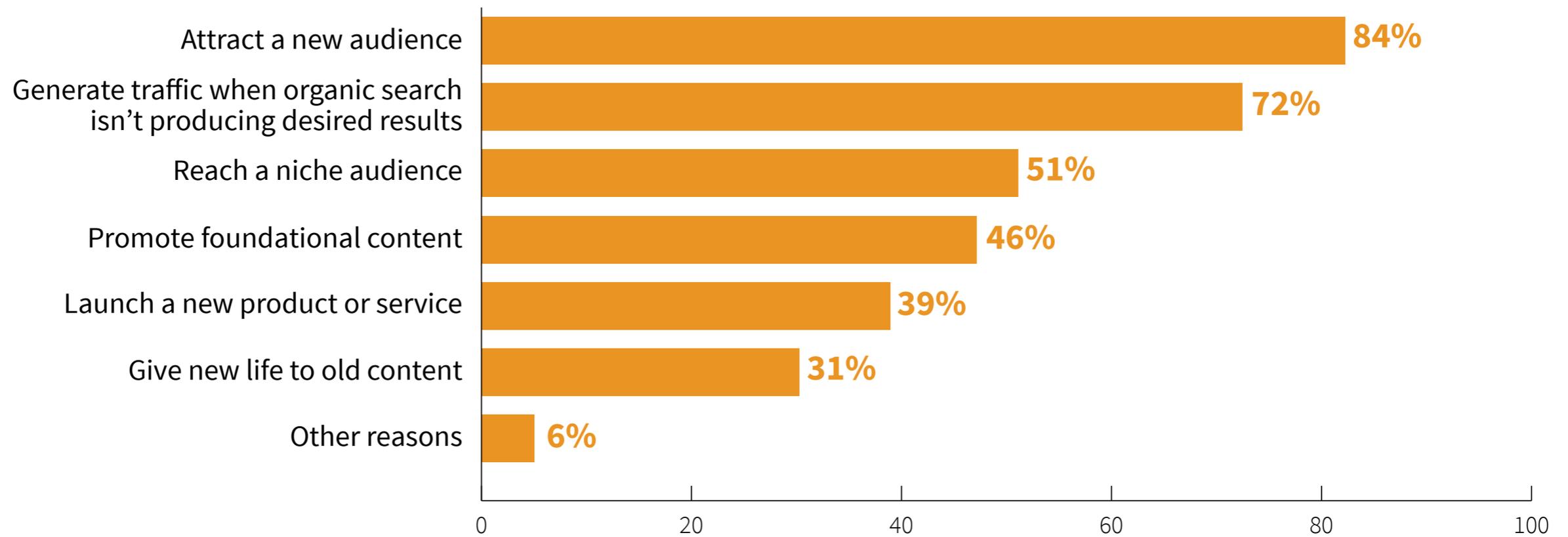


Base: Agency content marketers. Aided list; multiple responses permitted.

Agency Content Marketing 2019: Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends—Content Marketing Institute/MarketingProfs

Agency content marketers say the top reason their organization uses paid methods is to attract a new audience.

Reasons Why Agency Content Marketers Use Paid Methods to Distribute Content

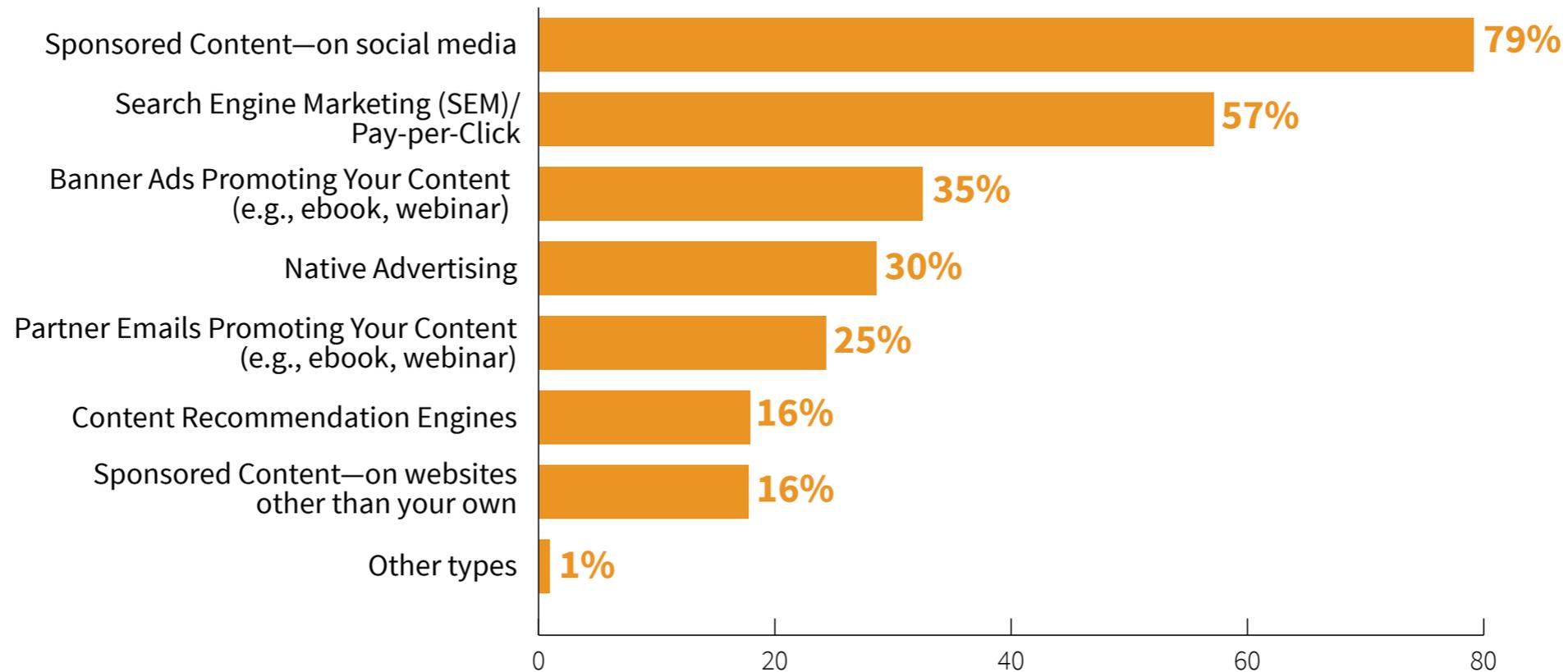


Base: Agency content marketers whose organizations have used paid methods to distribute content in the last 12 months. Aided list; multiple responses permitted.

Agency Content Marketing 2019: Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends—Content Marketing Institute/MarketingProfs

Sponsored content on social media is the most often cited method agency marketers use to distribute content.

Types of Paid Content Distribution Methods Agency Marketers Use



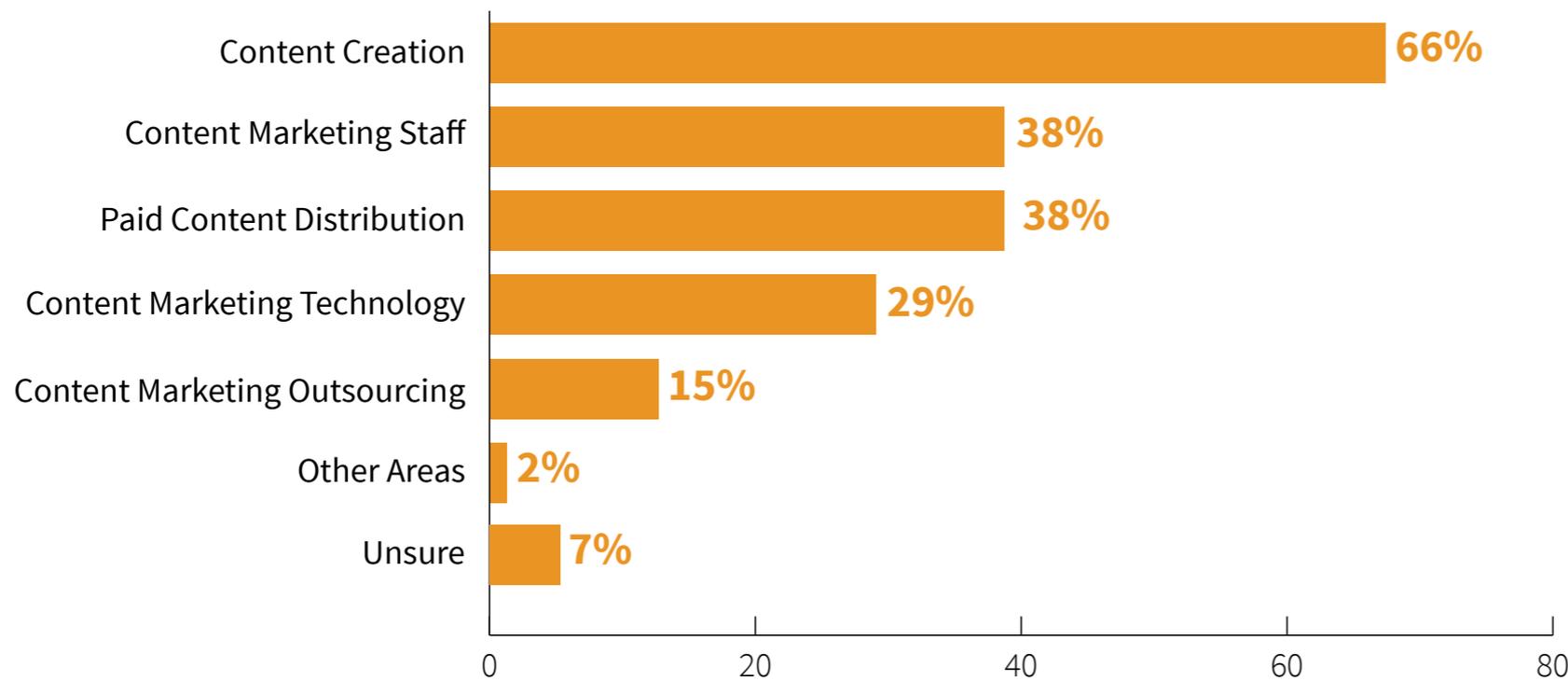
Base: Agency content marketers whose organizations used paid methods in the last 12 months. Aided list; multiple responses permitted.

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BUDGETS & SPENDING

Agency content marketers say their organization increased spending on content creation more so than other areas of content marketing in the last 12 months.

Areas Where Agency Content Marketers Increased Content Marketing Spending in the Last 12 Months



Note: 17% of respondents indicated their organization did not increase content marketing spending in the last 12 months.

Base: Agency content marketers whose organizations increased spending in the last 12 months. Aided list; multiple responses permitted.

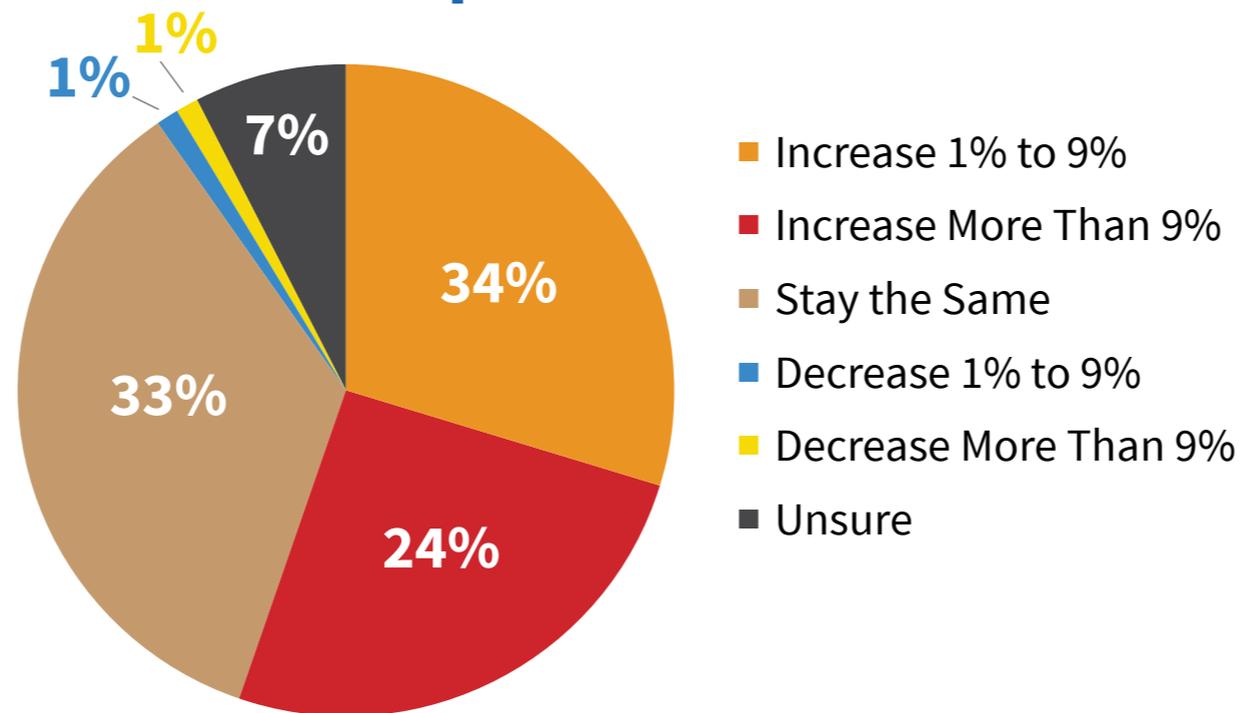
Agency Content Marketing 2019: Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends—Content Marketing Institute/MarketingProfs

The top three skills sought by those who increased spending on content marketing staff:

- ▶ Marketing 65%
- ▶ Creative/Design 36%
- ▶ Journalism 36%

58% of agency content marketers expect their content marketing budget to increase in 2019.

Agency Content Marketers' Expected Change in 2019 Content Marketing Budget Compared With 2018



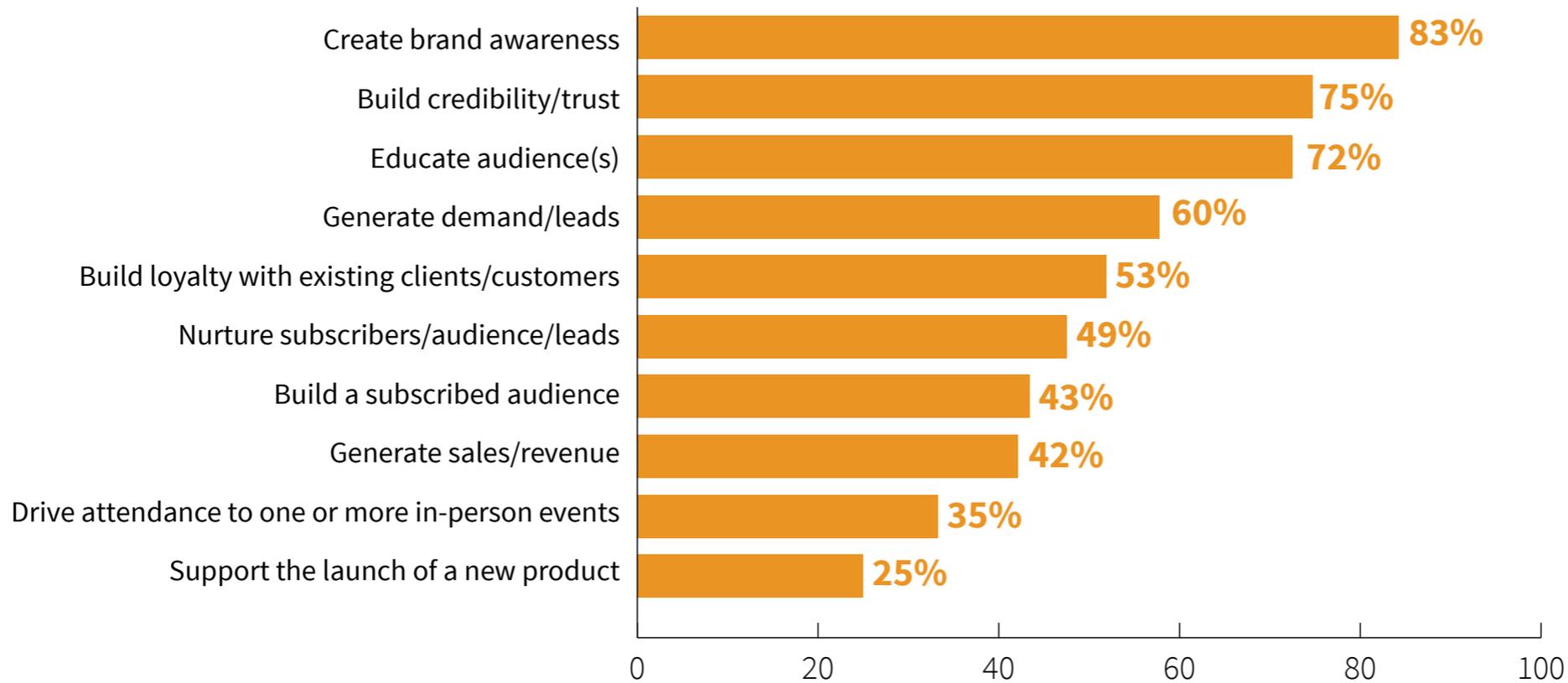
Base: Agency content marketers; aided list.

Agency Content Marketing 2019: Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends—Content Marketing Institute/MarketingProfs

GOALS & METRICS

83% of agency content marketers report their organization has used content marketing successfully over the last 12 months to create brand awareness.

Goals Agency Marketers Have Achieved by Using Content Marketing Successfully in Last 12 Months



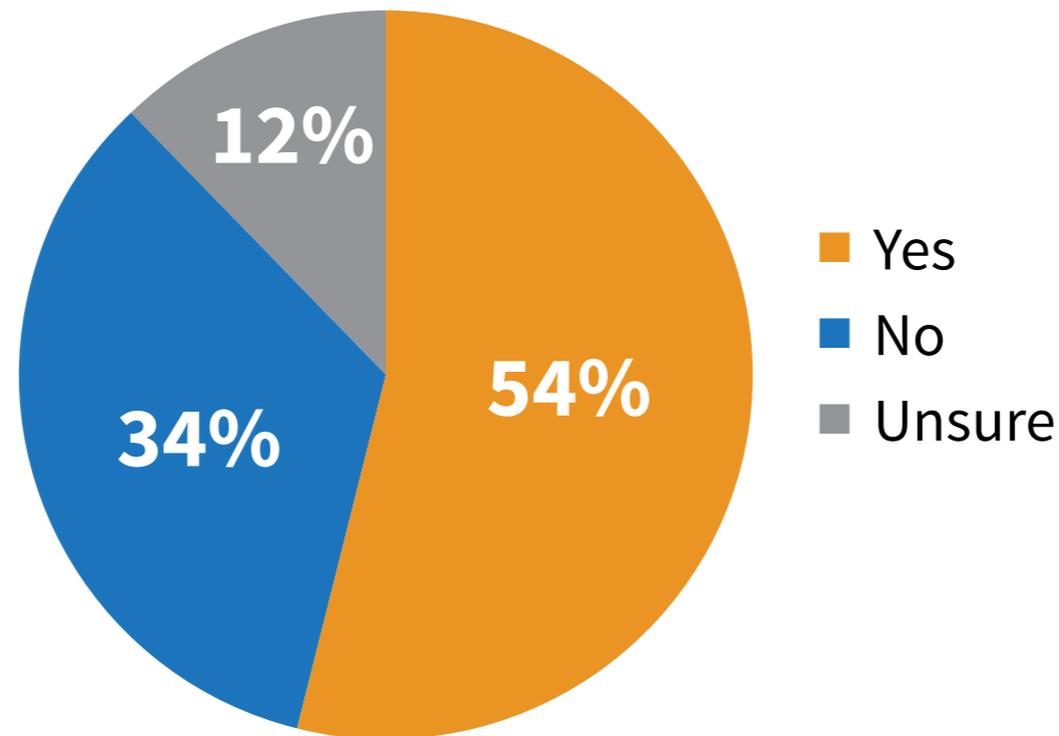
Note: 6% said none of the above.

Base: Agency content marketers. Aided list; multiple responses permitted.

Agency Content Marketing 2019: Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends—Content Marketing Institute/MarketingProfs

54% of agency content marketers report their organization measures content marketing ROI.

Proportion of Agency Marketers That Measure Content Marketing ROI

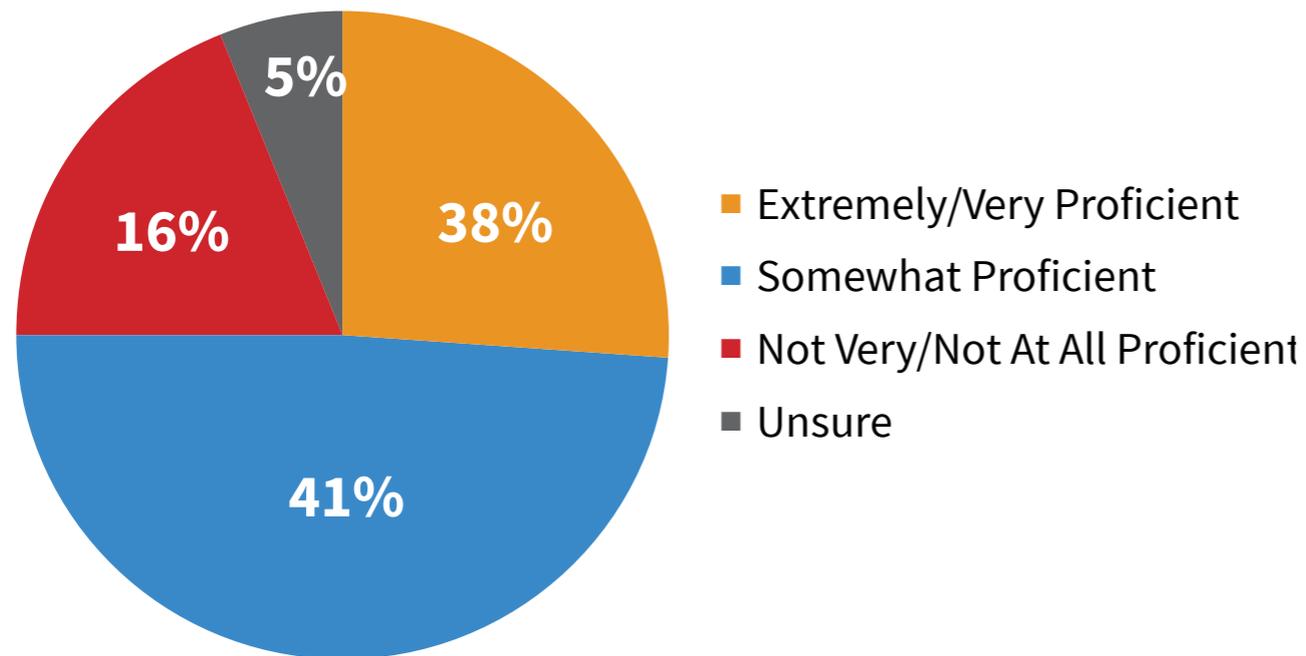


Base: Agency content marketers.

Agency Content Marketing 2019: Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends—Content Marketing Institute/MarketingProfs

38% of agency content marketers say their teams are extremely/very proficient with using the metrics they've selected to monitor content marketing performance.

How Agency Content Marketers Rate Their Proficiency With Using Selected Metrics



Base: Agency content marketers whose organizations use metrics to measure content marketing performance; aided list.

Agency Content Marketing 2019: Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends—Content Marketing Institute/MarketingProfs

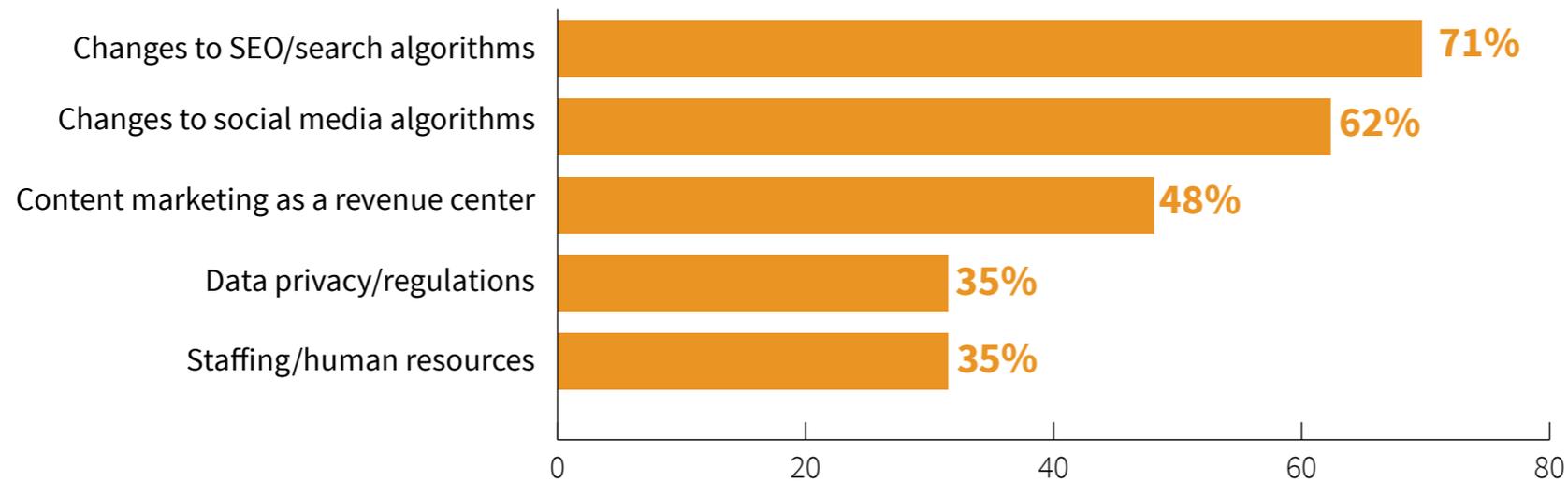
There are many metrics and techniques available for measuring content marketing results. The key is to identify the metrics that will yield the most meaningful insights based on specific goals.

This chart shows how agency content marketers rate their teams' proficiency with using the metrics they've selected. Those reporting low proficiency may have a need for additional resources (e.g., training or the addition of skilled staff) or they may need to reevaluate which metrics to use.

CONTENT MARKETING ISSUES OF IMPORTANCE

Agency content marketers say changes to SEO/search algorithms is a top content marketing issue of importance to their organization.

Top 5 Content Marketing Issues That Were Important to Agencies in 2018



Base: Agency content marketers. Aided list; multiple responses permitted.

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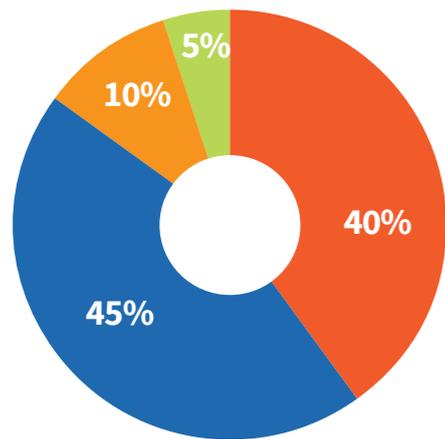
Other issues cited:

Preparing Content for Voice Search (30%); AI Technologies (22%); Public’s Trust Issues with Media (22%); Content Security (e.g., HTTPS encryption, ID theft) (19%); Other Issues (2%); and Unsure (3%).

Agency Content Marketing 2019: Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends was produced by **Content Marketing Institute**.

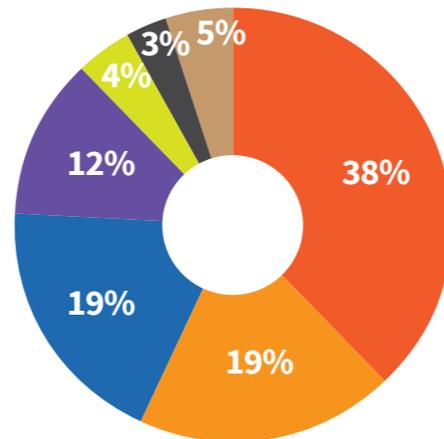
The ninth annual content marketing survey, from which the results of this report were generated, was mailed electronically to a sample of marketers using lists from Content Marketing Institute, MarketingProfs, The Association for Data-driven Marketing & Advertising (ADMA), WTWH Media, and UBM Technology Group.

**Size of Agency
(by Employees)**



- Micro (Fewer than 10 Employees)
- Small (10-99 Employees)
- Midsize (100-999 Employees)
- Large (1,000+ Employees)

**Agency Content Marketing
Job Title/Function**



- Corporate Management (CEO/Owner/President/CMO/CCO)
- Content Creation/Management (Writer/Creative Director/Editor)
- Marketing/Advertising/Communications/PR Management
- General Management (General Manager/VP)
- Marketing Staff/Support/Administration
- Sales/Business Management (Sales Manager/Accounts Director)
- Other

A total of 1,947 recipients from around the globe—representing a full range of industries, functional areas, and company sizes—replied to the survey during June and July 2018. This report presents the findings from the 320 respondents who indicated 1) their organization is a for-profit agency and 2) they are directly involved with or oversee content marketing within their agency. Most agency respondents are based in North America (76%), followed by Europe (10%), Asia (5%), and Other (9%). Agency respondents were asked to answer the survey questions based on how their agency uses content marketing to market its own services, not on behalf of their content marketing clients.

Additional reports based on the annual survey are available at www.contentmarketinginstitute.com/research. Special thanks to MarketingProfs for their assistance with the annual survey and the B2B and B2C reports.

Content Marketing Institute and MarketingProfs thank all the survey respondents and survey distribution partners who made this research possible.

About Content Marketing Institute

[Content Marketing Institute](#) is the leading global content marketing education and training organization, teaching enterprise brands how to attract and retain customers through compelling, multichannel storytelling. CMI's [Content Marketing World](#) event, the largest content marketing-focused event, is held every September in Cleveland, Ohio, USA, and [ContentTECH Summit](#) event is held every spring. CMI publishes the quarterly magazine [Chief Content Officer](#), and provides strategic consulting and content marketing research for some of the best-known brands in the world. Watch this [video](#) to learn more about CMI. Content Marketing Institute is organized by UBM, which in June 2018 combined with Informa PLC to become a leading B2B information services group and the largest B2B events organizer in the world. To learn more and for the latest news and information, visit www.ubm.com and www.informa.com.

About MarketingProfs

MarketingProfs is the most trusted name in marketing education, giving marketers worldwide the tools and training they need to exceed their goals. Its on-demand training, live online events, and in-person conferences help individuals, small teams, and large teams increase efficiency, productivity, and (best of all!) revenue. Find out how learning can change your life: marketingprofs.com.



Looking for more insights on content marketing for agencies? **Content Marketing World 2019**, being held September 3-6 in Cleveland, will include an agency workshop, an agency track, and a branded content track.