SPECIAL REPORT

Collected Research on What Really Works in Optimization

Data on Email, SEO, PPC, Lead Generation and B2B Optimization

marketingsherpa

Collected Research on What Really Works in Optimization

Data on email, SEO, PPC, lead generation and B2B optimization

Authors
Jen Doyle, Senior Research Manager
W. Jeffrey Rice, Senior Research Analyst
Kaci Bower, Senior Research Analyst

Editor
Stonie Clark, Research Associate

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INTRODUCTION

"Efficiency is doing things right; effectiveness is doing the right things." – Peter Drucker

Fellow evidence-based marketer,

What challenges undermine your marketing department's potential?

According to the 1,646 marketers we surveyed for the *2012 Executive Guide to Marketing Personnel*, a lack of funding or resources is what most inhibits marketers' growth and development.

Essentially, being stretched and doing more with less is the new norm. Anecdotally, we hear of marketers handling multiple disciplines. Email marketing. Social media marketing. SEO. PPC. The list goes on.

This is why we created the special report you are now reading, "Collected Research on What Really Works in Optimization: Data on email, SEO, PPC, lead generation and B2B optimization."

Whether your goal is more conversions or more organic traffic, optimization, at its essence, is the act of getting the best use out of the funding and resources you *do* have. Essentially, getting more juice out of every squeeze.

Our hope is that the data in this special report – culled from the *2012 Email Marketing Benchmark Report*, *2012 Search Marketing Benchmark Report - SEO Edition*, *2012 Search Marketing Benchmark Report - PPC Edition*, *2012 Lead Generation Benchmark Report*, and *2012 B2B Marketing Benchmark Report* – will help you not only prioritize the most effective tactics for your organization given your limited time and budget, but also execute those tactics in the most efficient way possible.

Here's to more effective, and efficient, marketing programs in the year to come.

Best regards,

Daniel Burstein
Director of Editorial Content
MECLABS (parent company of MarketingSherpa)

P.S. Our job is to help you do your job better. Let us know how we can help.

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B2B Website Design, Management and Optimization

Website Design, Management and Optimization Execution

This section will analyze the execution of website design, management and optimization. Learn what percentages of B2B organizations execute these tactics in-house, outsource to an agency, or use a combination of in-house and agency time.

Chart: The execution of website design, management and optimization

Q. Please select the statement that best represents your current website design, management and optimization practices.
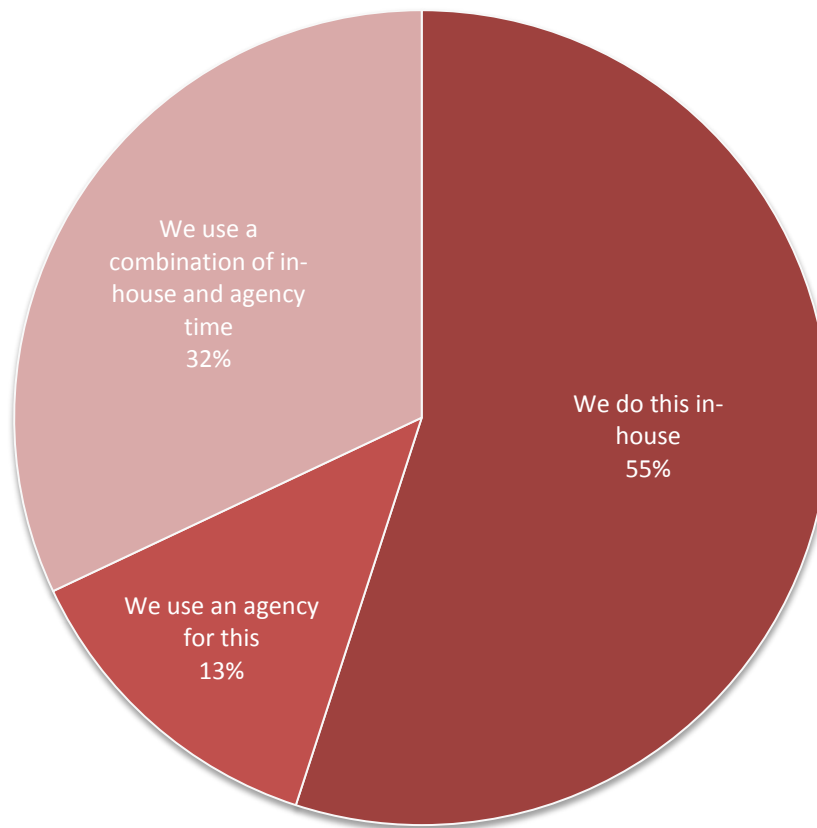
Source: MarketingSherpa B2B Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded Aug 2010, N=935

Nearly half of B2B organizations are either outsourcing their website design, management and optimization practices to an agency, or using a combination of in-house and agency time.

Web design is a highly specialized skill, and thus is very likely to be outsourced. Additionally, as the hub of all marketing practices, a company's website is a highly valuable asset and worthy of the level of investment that comes with contracting an agency to either manage or assist with the design, management and optimization.

CHART: OUTSOURCING WEBSITE DESIGN, MANAGEMENT AND OPTIMIZATION, BY ORGANIZATION SIZE

■ Website design, management and optimization outsourcing

Sm (<100 emp) �─ 16%

Med (100-1,000 emp) �─ 12%

Lg (>1,000 emp) �─ 57%

Source: MarketingSherpa B2B Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded Aug 2010, N=935
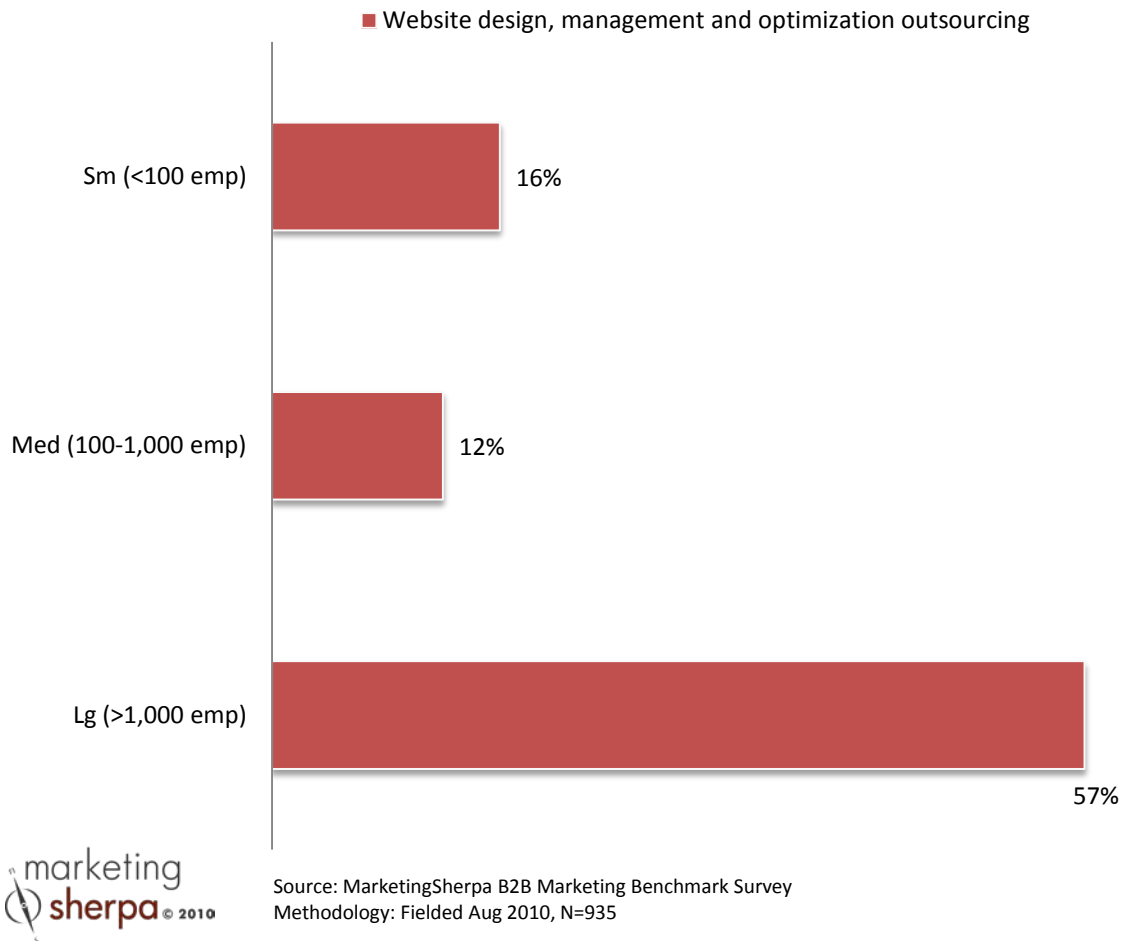
Outsourcing the design, management and optimization of a company website can bring a significant cost to an organization. Since large organizations tend to have greater financial resources than their smaller counterparts, they are the most likely to invest large budgets in outsourcing these tactics to agencies.

Website Design, Management and Optimization Effectiveness

In this section, we analyze the effectiveness of website design, management and optimization for all B2B organizations, and we will also analyze its effectiveness by B2B organization size and industry sector.

Chart: The effectiveness of website design, management and optimization
Q. Please indicate the effectiveness of website design, management and optimization for your organization.
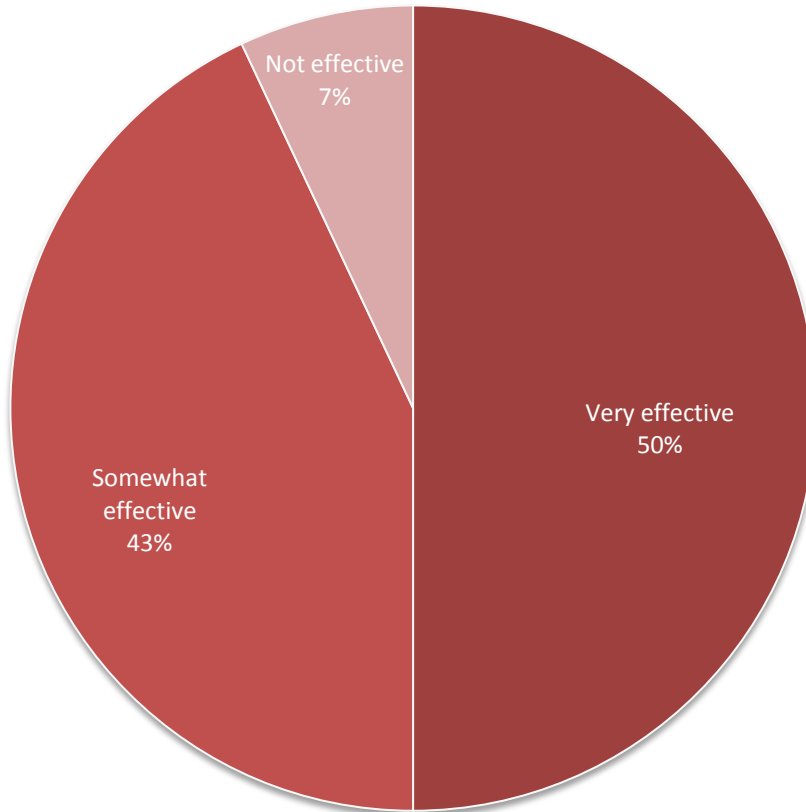
Source: MarketingSherpa B2B Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded Aug 2010, N=935

Since an organization's website is the hub for all of its marketing activities and commonly the key point of conversion, it's not surprising that the design, management and optimization of company websites is rated as "highly effective." Nearly all of the organizations that participated in this year's study indicated that these tactics were either "very effective" or "somewhat effective."

CHART: VERY EFFECTIVE RATINGS OF WEBSITE DESIGN, MANAGEMENT AND OPTIMIZATION, BY ORG SIZE
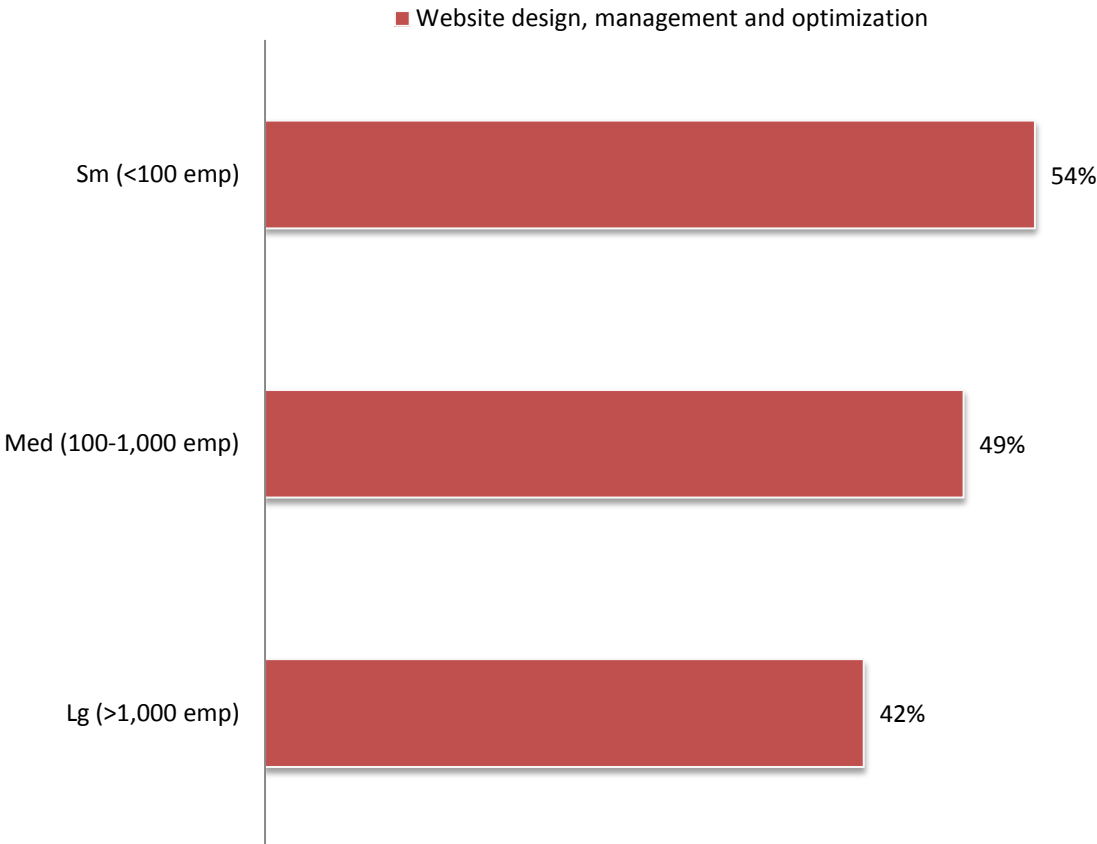
■ Website design, management and optimization

Sm (<100 emp)	54%
Med (100-1,000 emp)	49%
Lg (>1,000 emp)	42%

Source: MarketingSherpa B2B Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded Aug 2010, N=935

CHART: VERY EFFECTIVE RATINGS OF WEBSITE DESIGN, MANAGEMENT AND OPTIMIZATION BY INDUSTRY

■ Website design, management and optimization

Source: MarketingSherpa B2B Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded Aug 2010, N=935
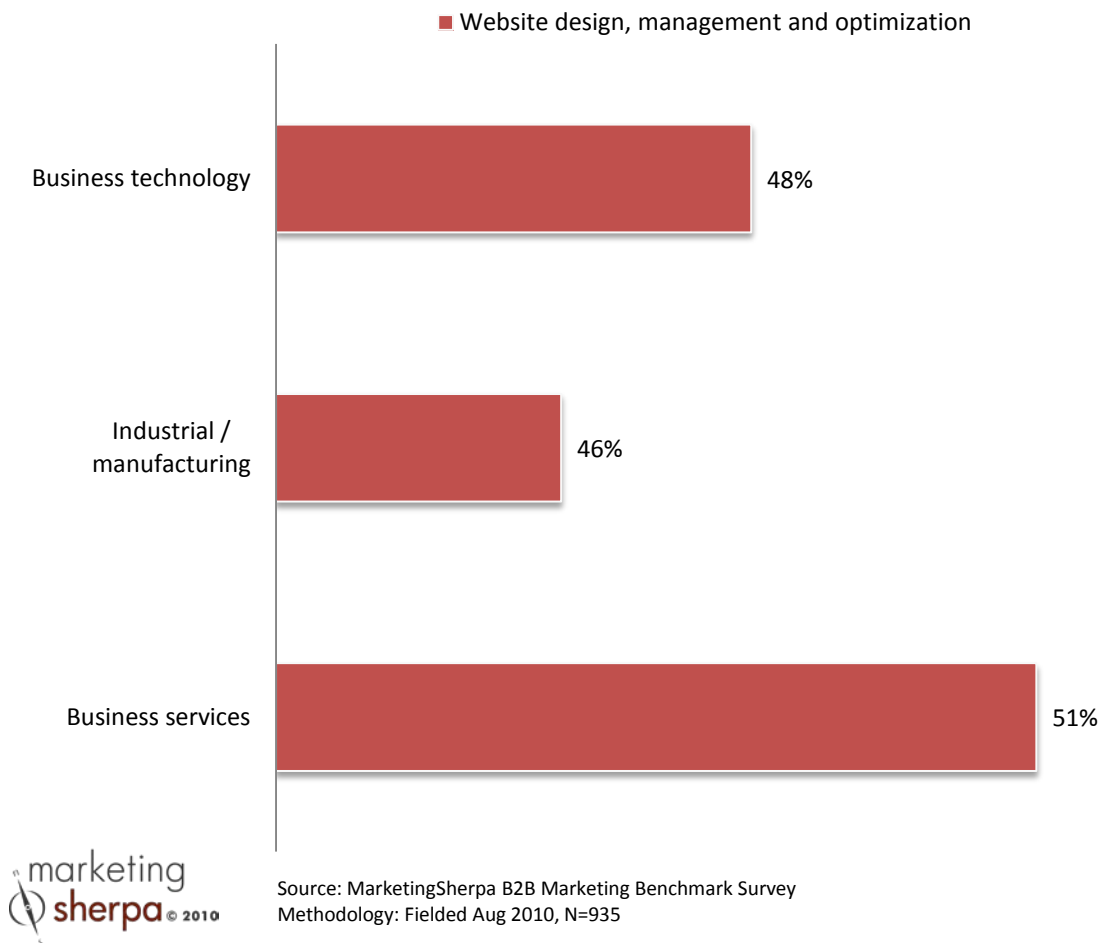
Organizations in the business services sector are the most likely to find the design, management and optimization of their company websites as a "highly effective" marketing tactic.

Organizations in this sector have a great need to perfect the look and efficiency of their websites, because their targets are generally well-versed in best practices for website design, management and optimization.

B2B WEBSITE DESIGN AND OPTIMIZATION

WEBSITE DESIGN, MANAGEMENT AND OPTIMIZATION TACTICS

We asked B2B organizations to identify which website design, management and optimization tactics were "very effective," "somewhat effective" or "not effective." The results are included in this section.

CHART: THE EFFECTIVENESS OF WEBSITE DESIGN, MANAGEMENT AND OPTIMIZATION TACTICS
Q. Which of the following website design, management and optimization tactics does your organization currently use? Please check all that apply.

■ Very effective ■ Somewhat effective ■ Not effective

Tactic	Very effective	Somewhat effective	Not effective
Implementing unique landing pages for various marketing campaigns	46%	48%	5%
Optimizing design and content for conversions	42%	50%	8%
Regularly optimizing site for SEO purposes	41%	51%	8%
Implementing separate microsites for specific brands or marketing initiatives	40%	47%	13%
Utilizing video content on site	31%	57%	11%
Implementing social media on site, such as a company blog, forum, etc.	27%	60%	14%
Implementing a live chat feature	25%	45%	30%
Implementing a click-to-call feature	19%	44%	37%
Cookie based personalization of website content	18%	60%	21%

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Source: MarketingSherpa B2B Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded Aug 2010, N=935

LEAD GENERATION CAMPAIGNS FOR THE MODERN B2B BUYER

CHART: THE EFFECTIVENESS OF B2B LEAD GENERATION TACTICS

■ Very effective ■ Somewhat effective ■ Not effective

Tactic	Very effective	Somewhat effective	Not effective
Website design, management and optimization	31%	53%	10%
Search engine optimization (SEO)	29%	46%	9%
Email marketing	26%	56%	6%
Content marketing	23%	48%	10%
Trade shows	20%	43%	15%
Virtual events / webinars	19%	29%	13%
Paid search (PPC)	16%	34%	17%
Telemarketing	13%	31%	14%
Public relations	13%	47%	17%
Direct mail	6%	34%	21%
Social media	6%	40%	29%
Print advertising	6%	30%	25%

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Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa B2B Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded June 2011, N=1,745

CHART: VERY EFFECTIVE B2B MARKETING TACTICS, BY INDUSTRY SECTOR

Website design, management and optimization
- 30%
- 13%
- 39%
- 43%

Search engine optimization (SEO)
- 32%
- 13%
- 20%
- 38%

Email marketing
- 26%
- 18%
- 34%
- 21%

Content marketing
- 23%
- 14%
- 41%
- 28%

Trade shows
- 22%
- 5%
- 31%
- 23%

Virtual events / webinars
- 23%
- 24%
- 23%
- 8%

Paid search (PPC)
- 16%
- 14%
- 4%
- 21%

Telemarketing
- 20%
- 12%
- 6%
- 3%

Public relations
- 13%
- 6%
- 13%
- 16%

Direct mail
- 1%
- 8%
- 10%
- 0%

Social media
- 5%
- 5%
- 13%
- 8%

Print advertising
- 1%
- 0%
- 14%
- 5%

Legend:
- Software or Software as a Service
- Professional or Financial Services
- Media or Publishing
- Manufacturing or Packaged Goods

Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa B2B Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded June 2011, N=1,745

The three most effective B2B marketing tactics have remained unchanged from 2010 to 2011. Clearly, websites, SEO and email marketing are fundamental aspects of an effective B2B marketing mix.

It's no surprise that organizations in the media or publishing sector are most likely to find content marketing to be "highly effective." Since these organizations are essentially in the business of content, it is expected that they would be able to employ the most effective content marketing strategies.

CHART: VERY EFFECTIVE B2B MARKETING TACTICS, BY ORGANIZATION SIZE
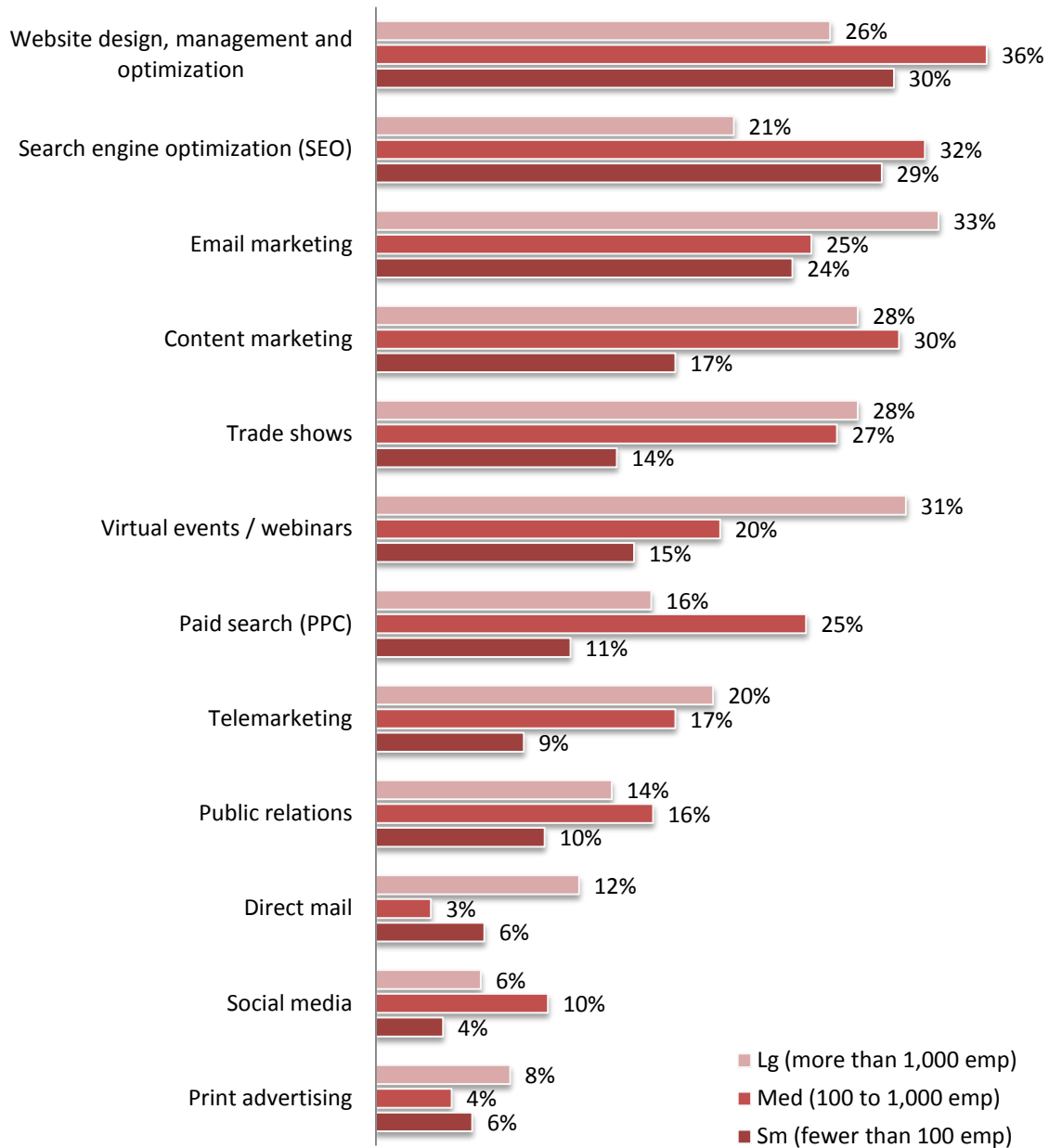
Website design, management and optimization
- 26%
- 36%
- 30%

Search engine optimization (SEO)
- 21%
- 32%
- 29%

Email marketing
- 33%
- 25%
- 24%

Content marketing
- 28%
- 30%
- 17%

Trade shows
- 28%
- 27%
- 14%

Virtual events / webinars
- 31%
- 20%
- 15%

Paid search (PPC)
- 16%
- 25%
- 11%

Telemarketing
- 20%
- 17%
- 9%

Public relations
- 14%
- 16%
- 10%

Direct mail
- 12%
- 3%
- 6%

Social media
- 6%
- 10%
- 4%

Print advertising
- 8%
- 4%
- 6%

- ■ Lg (more than 1,000 emp)
- ■ Med (100 to 1,000 emp)
- ■ Sm (fewer than 100 emp)

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Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa B2B Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded June 2011, N=1,745

Large organizations were most likely to find email marketing "highly effective." Earlier, when we analyzed top tactics for creating engaging content, we learned that large organizations were also most likely to indicate that segmenting content delivery was a "highly effective" tactic.

It is likely that large organizations find email marketing to be "highly effective," because they tend to apply segmentation to their email marketing campaigns.

WEBSITE DESIGN, MANAGEMENT AND OPTIMIZATION

CHART: VERY EFFECTIVE B2B MARKETING TACTICS, BY LEAD GENERATION MATURITY

Website design, management and optimization
- 42% Strategic
- 25% Transition
- 24% Trial

Search engine optimization (SEO)
- 38% Strategic
- 24% Transition
- 30% Trial

Email marketing
- 28% Strategic
- 26% Transition
- 16% Trial

Content marketing
- 32% Strategic
- 19% Transition
- 15% Trial

Trade shows
- 16% Strategic
- 23% Transition
- 18% Trial

Virtual events / webinars
- 27% Strategic
- 16% Transition
- 9% Trial

Paid search (PPC)
- 28% Strategic
- 10% Transition
- 9% Trial

Telemarketing
- 19% Strategic
- 12% Transition
- 2% Trial

Public relations
- 11% Strategic
- 15% Transition
- 7% Trial

Direct mail
- 7% Strategic
- 6% Transition
- 5% Trial

Social media
- 7% Strategic
- 7% Transition
- 2% Trial

Print advertising
- 5% Strategic
- 6% Transition
- 5% Trial

Legend:
- Strategic
- Transition
- Trial

Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa B2B Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded June 2011, N=1,745

For nearly all tactics, Strategic Phase organizations indicated the greatest levels of response for effectiveness. Since these organizations have established formal, repeatable processes for lead generation, it is expected they will gain the greatest results from their efforts.

WEBSITE DESIGN, MANAGEMENT AND OPTIMIZATION

CHART: BALANCING QUALITY AND QUANTITY OF B2B LEADS WITH LANDING PAGE OPTIMIZATION
Q. Which of the following tactics do you use to balance quality and quantity of leads?
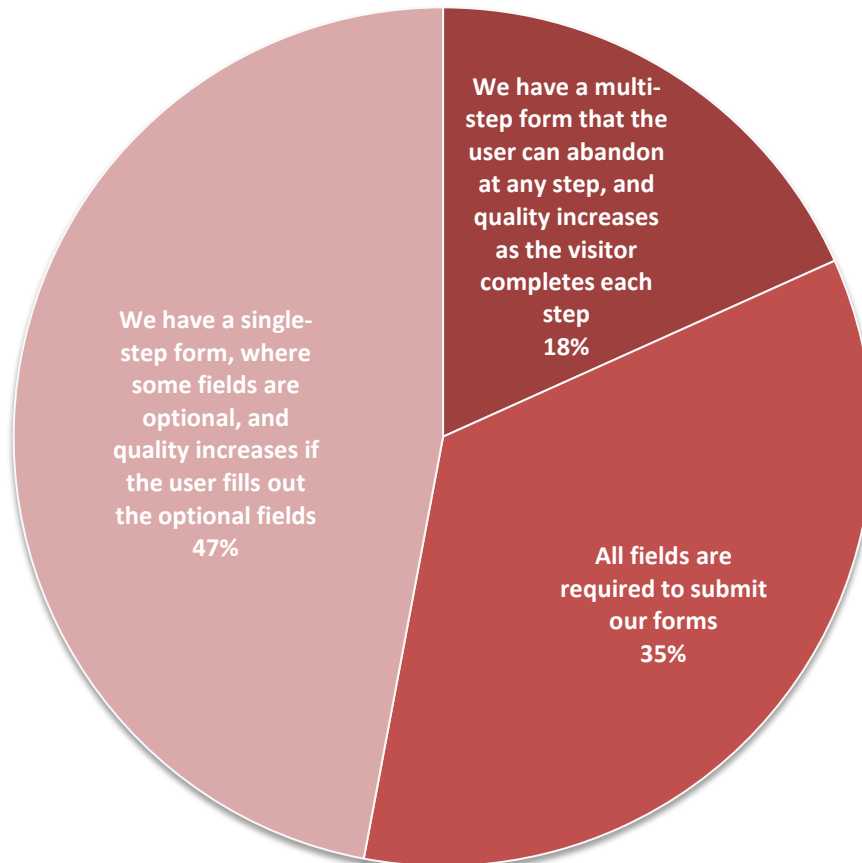
Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa Landing Page Optimization Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded February 2011, N=2,673

The website has become a main point of conversion for multichannel lead generation campaigns, and survey respondents rated its design, management and optimization as the top B2B marketing tactic for 2012. In the above chart, we analyze how organizations are balancing the quality and quantity of B2B leads, by optimizing the landing pages on their websites.

The number of required fields on a landing page has a great impact on both the quantity and quality of leads. Limiting the number of required fields on a landing page can increase quantity of leads, but overall quality may be low. Including a complex form with many required fields on the landing page may produce a lower volume of leads, but since those leads were motivated enough to fill out a long form, they are likely of higher quality.

The majority of B2B marketers are balancing quality and quantity of leads by incorporating optional fields on their landing pages, with a higher number of optional fields completed indicating higher quality.

CHART: BALANCING QUALITY AND QUANTITY OF B2B LEADS, BY INDUSTRY SECTOR
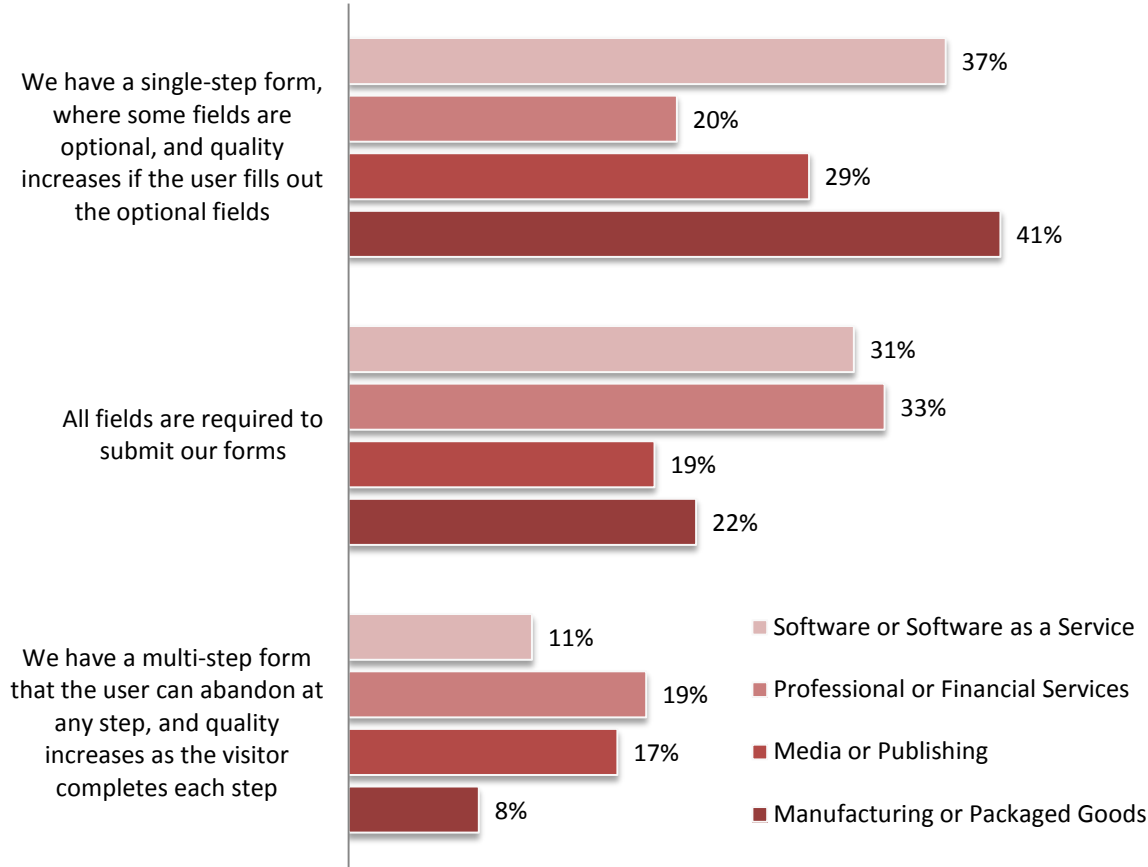
We have a single-step form, where some fields are optional, and quality increases if the user fills out the optional fields
- 37%
- 20%
- 29%
- 41%

All fields are required to submit our forms
- 31%
- 33%
- 19%
- 22%

We have a multi-step form that the user can abandon at any step, and quality increases as the visitor completes each step
- 11%
- 19%
- 17%
- 8%

- ■ Software or Software as a Service
- ■ Professional or Financial Services
- ■ Media or Publishing
- ■ Manufacturing or Packaged Goods

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Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa Landing Page Optimization Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded February 2011, N=2,673

CHART: BALANCING QUALITY AND QUANTITY OF B2B LEADS, BY ORGANIZATION SIZE
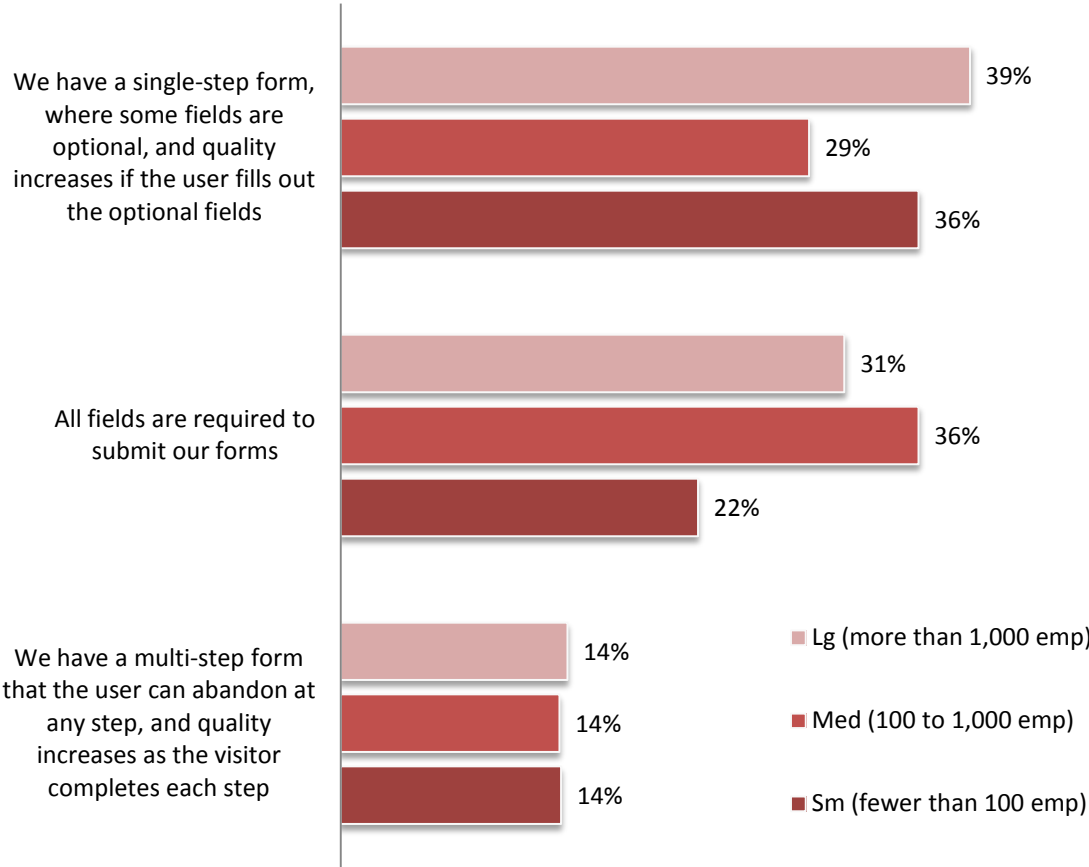
We have a single-step form, where some fields are optional, and quality increases if the user fills out the optional fields
- 39%
- 29%
- 36%

All fields are required to submit our forms
- 31%
- 36%
- 22%

We have a multi-step form that the user can abandon at any step, and quality increases as the visitor completes each step
- 14%
- 14%
- 14%

■ Lg (more than 1,000 emp)

■ Med (100 to 1,000 emp)

■ Sm (fewer than 100 emp)

Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa Landing Page Optimization Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded February 2011, N=2,673

SEO, PPC, AND THE STATE OF SEARCH MARKETING

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SEO

CHART: ORGANIZATIONS EXPERIENCE WIDE VARIABILITY IN CONVERSION RATES ON ORGANIC TRAFFIC

Q. What is your organization's conversion rate for organic traffic?
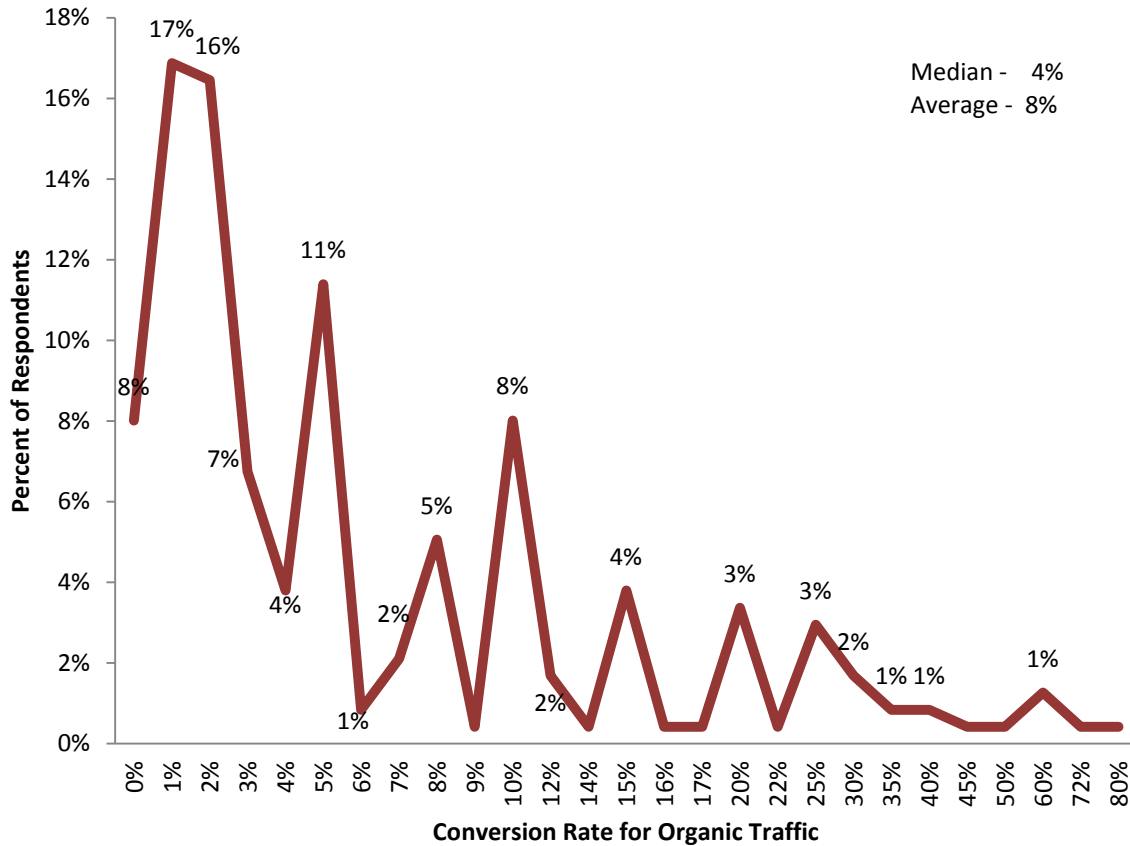
Median - 4%
Average - 8%

Percent of Respondents

Conversion Rate for Organic Traffic

Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa Search Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded April 2011, N=1,530

Conversion rates measure user behavior, so to speak. The median conversion rate for all organizations surveyed is 4%. Put another way, 96% of visitors to an organization's site leave without buying or taking other actions. Understanding *why* is crucial for improving SEO and marketing campaign performance. Here is where metrics play a part, because these reveal user behavior, from analyzing how visitors arrived on a site, to figuring out why they did or did not convert.

Fine-tuning a website to lower bounce rates and guide visitors to the desired actions is the process of conversion rate optimization. This process includes not just metrics analysis but also usability analysis, A/B testing, and even landing page and sales funnel optimization.

CHART: TARGETED KEY TERMS YIELD GOOD RANKINGS FOR MANY

Q. What is your organization's typical organic ranking for the majority of your targeted key terms?

28%	
31%	■ Positions 1 - 3
	■ Positions 4 - 6
	■ Positions 7 - 10
12%	■ Page 2
8%	■ Page 3+
8%	

Organic Ranking for Targeted Key Terms

More than 70% of organizations surveyed appear on the first page of targeted search results. At first glance, this appears successful, because appearing on Page 1 is obviously better than a later page. However, the difference in clickthrough rates between positions 1 and 2 on Page 1 is dramatic, not to mention the difference between the first and tenth positions.

A number of studies exist that look at the organic clickthrough rates by position. Despite the slight variations in the results of these studies, two things are always clear. First, position 1 always gets the most clicks. Second, the clickthrough rate from the first to second position drops sharply, sometimes by a factor of three or more. In other words, organizations that invest the resources to move from the second position to the first position could triple their traffic for a particular keyword or key phrase.

One caveat to keep in mind: It does not matter how great your ranking is, if the traffic does not convert. Common reasons for lack of conversion include optimizing for the wrong set of keywords or incurring high bounce rates due to poor landing pages and site experiences.

CHART: SEO ANALYTICS AND MONITORING SOLUTIONS, BY PRIMARY CHANNEL
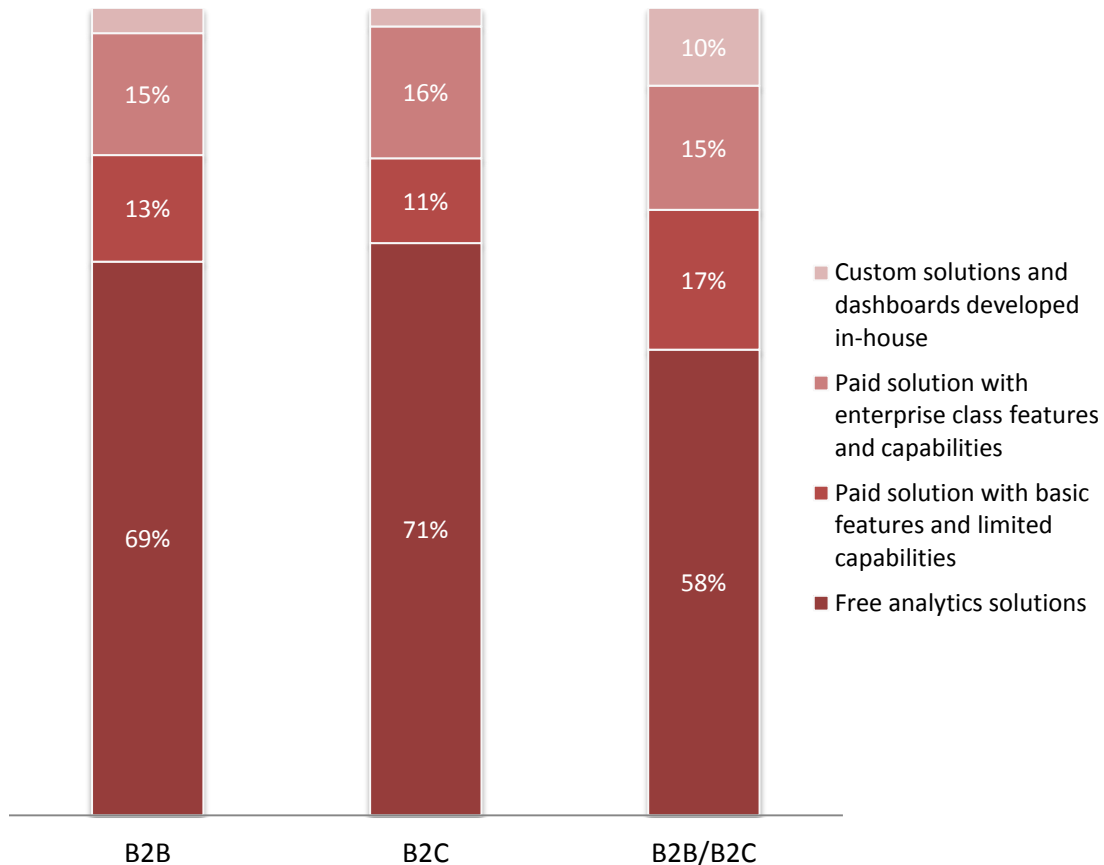
Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa Search Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded April 2011, N=1,530

Organizations targeting both business and consumer channels invest more readily in paid analytics solutions. More than 40% of these companies have moved away from free analytics solutions, compared to just 31% of B2B organizations and 29% of B2C organizations, respectively.

Implementing and learning the intricacies of an analytics tool takes time. If an organization discovers that what they have is not what they need, they lose more than just time and money: They can also lose competitive share of search.

"We use analytics to find pages with high bounce rates and/or low conversions and then better optimize those pages for sales." – Marketer insight

To maximize its success, an organization needs to carefully consider and select the right set of analytics tools for its unique needs along a two- to three-year horizon. Some organizations do not want, or need, to integrate with a survey system. Other organizations, like B2B companies, may require the ability to accept data from company ERP and CRM systems. Other companies, for which testing is part of the marketing culture, must be able to integrate their clickstream data with their multivariate vendors.

KEY FINDING: DIFFICULTY IN EXECUTION IS NOT A BARRIER TO USAGE

CHART: THREE-DIMENSIONAL VIEW OF PPC TACTICS, WITH SPHERE SIZE INDICATING LEVEL OF USAGE
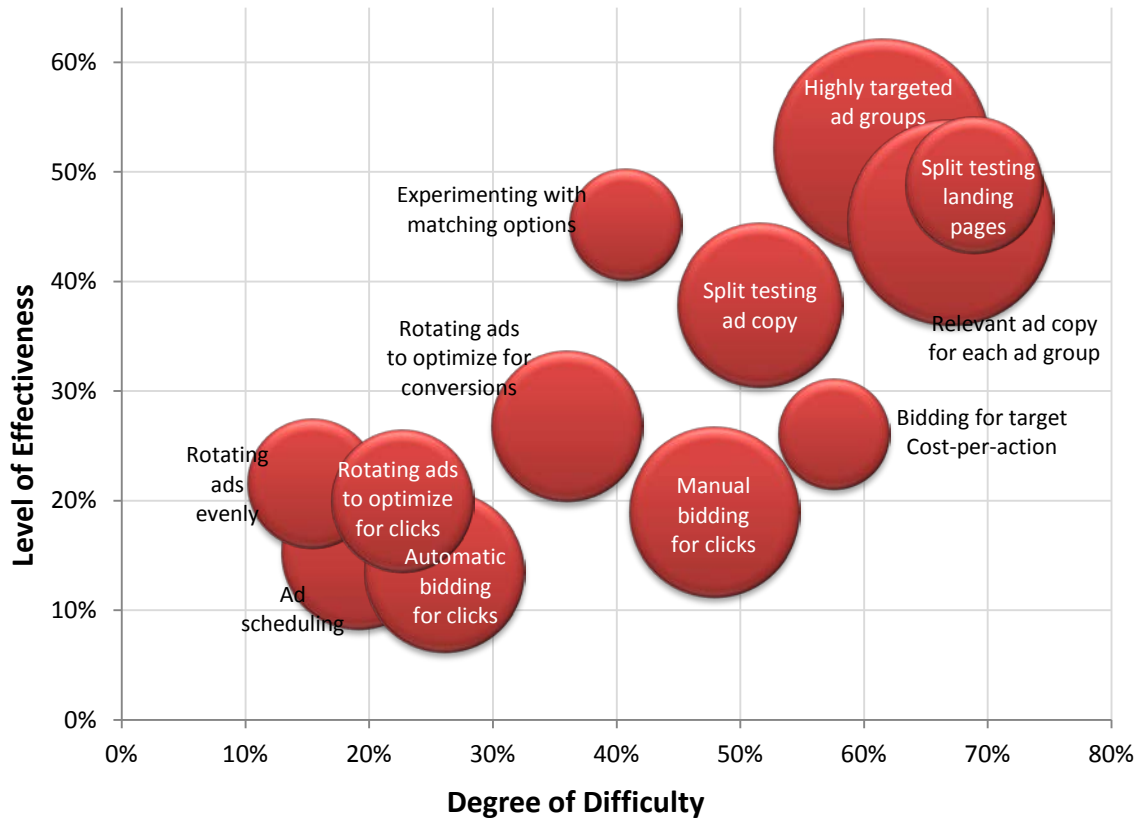
Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa Search Marketing Benchmark Survey
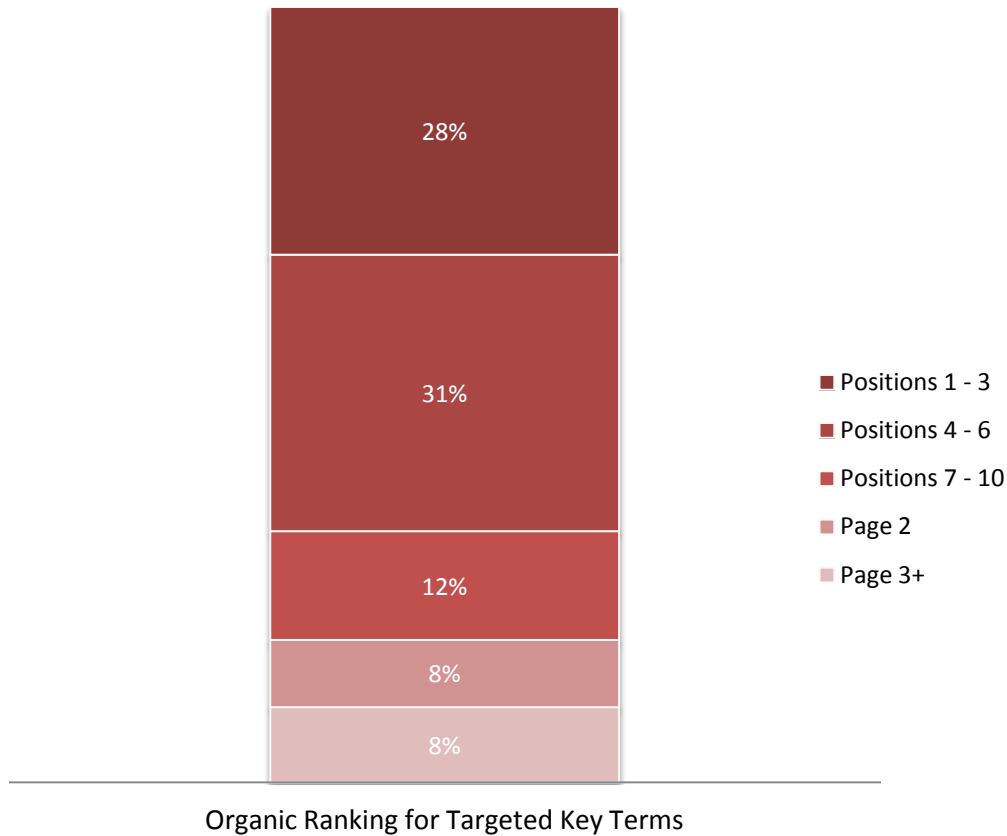Methodology: Fielded April 2011, N=1,530

"Taking the easy way out" is not the modus operandi for PPC marketers. Given their focus on achieving and increasing measurable ROI, marketers are willing to execute difficult PPC tactics because they are effective. For example, 82% of marketers are creating highly targeted ad groups. This high degree of execution comes despite 63% of them stating that dividing keywords into small, highly relevant ad groups requires fair to significant amounts of time, effort or expense. In close relation to this tactic, 74% are writing relevant ad copy for each ad group, despite 67% finding this tactic "somewhat" or "very difficult."

More marketers perform split testing of their ad copy than split testing of their landing pages. Split testing landing pages is a tactic employed by just 33% of organizations, despite nearly 50% finding this to be very effective in achieving marketing objectives. This tactic was viewed as the most difficult, with 31% finding it very difficult and an additional 41% finding it "somewhat difficult."

Experimenting with matching options poses an opportunity for marketers, given its higher levels of effectiveness, but lower usage. Only 22% of organizations currently try this, yet twice that amount deems this a "very effective" tactic.

KEY FINDING: PPC AND SEO WORK TOGETHER TO BRING IN LEADS

CHART: PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL LEAD VOLUME FROM PAID SEARCH VERSUS SEO
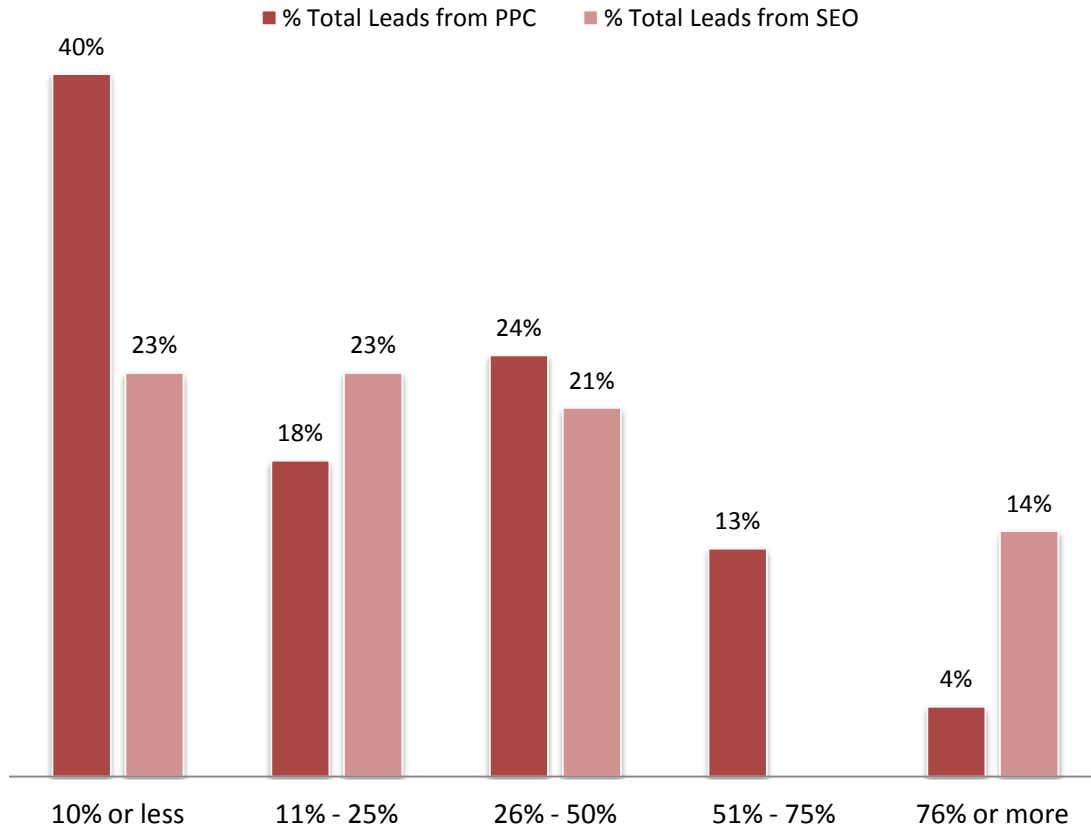
■ % Total Leads from PPC   ■ % Total Leads from SEO

Category	% Total Leads from PPC	% Total Leads from SEO
10% or less	40%	23%
11% - 25%	18%	23%
26% - 50%	24%	21%
51% - 75%	13%	
76% or more	4%	14%

Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa Search Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded April 2011, N=1,530

While most online marketers agree that SEO and PPC are both essential in search engine marketing, many favor one over the other. However, PPC and SEO do complement one another, and the combination of the two can produce results. In this chart, we see that 45% of marketers obtain between 25-50% of total leads from PPC and SEO. The more real estate a company commands on a search engine results page (SERP), the better the recognition, trust and, ultimately, clicks it will receive. In fact, users will typically click an organic listing up to three times as often as a sponsored ad. As such, using both SEO and PPC covers all angles.

"We use PPC to analyze traffic potential for SEO. We don't use PPC as a marketing tool in itself." – Marketer insight

SEO takes time to develop. Getting and staying in coveted top spots can bring about extended flows of traffic, leads and revenue for the long term. In the meantime, PPC is a quick traffic generator. But, its contribution doesn't end there. PPC enhances SEO in a number of ways. For instance, marketers can use PPC to find out which keywords actually drive traffic and convert – including valuable long-tail keywords – before pouring time and resources into search engine optimization. Using PPC, marketers can also split test landing pages, calls-to-action and ad copy for eventual use in meta descriptions.

TOP PPC TACTICS

CHART: PPC TACTICS USED BY ORGANIZATIONS

Q. Which of the following PPC tactics has your organization used?

Tactic	Percentage
Creating highly targeted ad groups	82%
Creating relevant ad copy for each ad group	74%
Manual bidding for clicks	51%
Split testing ad copy	47%
Automatic bidding for clicks	45%
Ad scheduling	41%
Rotating ads to optimize for conversions	40%
Rotating ads to optimize for clicks	35%
Split testing landing pages	33%
Rotating ads evenly	29%
Bidding for target position preference	24%
Experimenting with matching options	22%
Bidding for target Cost per Action	21%

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Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa Search Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded April 2011, N=1,530

More than 80% of marketers work to correctly structure their PPC campaigns through the creation of highly targeted ad groups. Specificity is a key to improving quality scores, so it is expected that companies would report strong usage with this PPC tactic. In addition to the right structure, relevance remains paramount for optimizing PPC campaigns, and 74% of organizations report paying special attention to ad copy.

Organizations do embrace testing as a key component of PPC, although usage levels tend to be low. Forty-seven percent of companies run split tests of ad copy, while only a third indicate that they conduct split testing on landing pages.

CHART: PPC TACTICS, BY PPC MATURITY PHASE

Creating highly targeted ad groups — Trial 71%, Transition 85%, Strategic 89%

Creating relevant ad copy for each ad group — Trial 53%, Transition 77%, Strategic 86%

Manual bidding for clicks — Trial 36%, Transition 53%, Strategic 58%

Split testing ad copy — Trial 21%, Transition 48%, Strategic 64%

Automatic bidding for clicks — Trial 32%, Transition 51%, Strategic 49%

Ad scheduling — Trial 21%, Transition 41%, Strategic 58%

Rotating ads to optimize for conversions — Trial 15%, Transition 36%, Strategic 58%

Rotating ads to optimize for clicks — Trial 19%, Transition 29%, Strategic 47%

Split testing landing pages — Trial 15%, Transition 26%, Strategic 48%

Rotating ads evenly — Trial 18%, Transition 31%, Strategic 26%

Bidding for target position preference — Trial 10%, Transition 22%, Strategic 38%

Experimenting with matching options — Trial 10%, Transition 17%, Strategic 31%

Bidding for target Cost per Action — Trial 19%, Transition 11%, Strategic 26%

Legend: ■ Trial ■ Transition ■ Strategic

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Organizations with formalized processes and guidelines for PPC deployment engage more heavily in PPC tactics across the board. A greater percentage of these companies employ not only the more popular tactics, but also turn to tactics that organizations in other phases of PPC maturity may dismiss. For example, 58% of Strategic organizations rotate ads to optimize for conversions, but only 15% of Trial organizations and 36% of Transition organizations follow suit.

Strategic firms also do more split testing, whether ad copy or landing pages. Sixty-four percent of these companies test ad copy, and 48% test landing pages. By comparison, just a third as many Trial organizations (on a percentage basis) employ testing.

DIFFICULTY OF PPC TACTICS

CHART: PPC TACTICS VARY WIDELY IN THEIR DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY TO EXECUTE

Q. Please indicate the DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY (time, effort and expense required) for each of the PPC tactics used by your organization.

	Very difficult	Somewhat difficult	Not difficult
Split testing landing pages	31%	38%	24%
Creating relevant ad copy for each ad group	20%	47%	27%
Rotating ads to optimize for conversions	16%	20%	56%
Split testing ad copy	13%	38%	42%
Creating highly targeted ad groups	11%	51%	35%
Manual bidding for clicks	9%	39%	47%
Ad scheduling	8%	12%	71%
Rotating ads to optimize for clicks	7%	16%	68%
Bidding for target Cost per Action	6%	52%	30%
Bidding for target position preference	6%	29%	59%
Experimenting with matching options	4%	37%	52%
Automatic bidding for clicks	3%	23%	61%
Rotating ads evenly		15%	80%

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Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa Search Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded April 2011, N=1,530

Not surprisingly, designing and executing split testing on landing pages, which requires statistical know-how and interfacing with both Web development and IT, is considered very or somewhat difficult for 69% of marketers. These challenges also help explain why only 33% of marketers deploy this tactic for PPC campaigns.

For other PPC tactics, no direct correlation exists between their difficulty ratings and frequency of use. For example, while 51% rate split testing ad copy either somewhat or very difficult, 47% continue to utilize it in campaigns.

CHART: TOP 10 PPC TACTICS DEEMED VERY OR SOMEWHAT DIFFICULT, BY PPC MATURITY PHASE

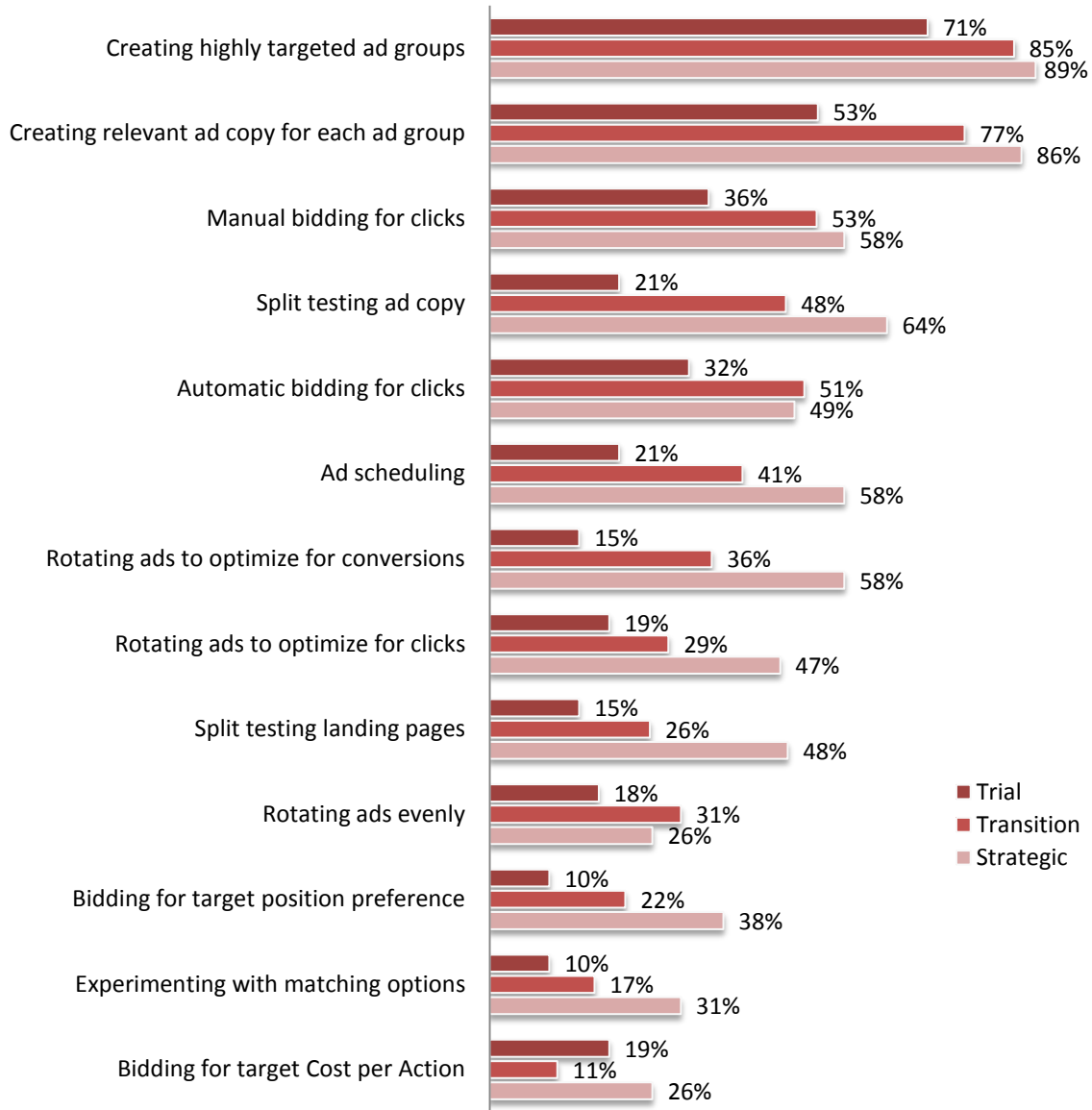| Tactic	Trial	Transition	Strategic
Split testing landing pages	50%	80%	72%
Creating relevant ad copy for each ad group	58%	74%	74%
Rotating ads to optimize for conversions	33%	40%	42%
Split testing ad copy	60%	62%	46%
Creating highly targeted ad groups	67%	69%	59%
Manual bidding for clicks	40%	44%	48%
Ad scheduling	29%	23%	19%
Rotating ads to optimize for clicks	20%	23%	38%
Bidding for target Cost per Action	40%	78%	55%
Automatic bidding for clicks	20%	30%	30%

Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa Search Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded April 2011, N=1,530

Transition organizations, or those with informal PPC processes sporadically applied, find a greater number of tactics more challenging than their counterparts in other phases. Transition companies are moving toward experimenting with and applying more advanced PPC strategies, such as testing and bidding for target cost-per-action. Before perfecting these tactics, they must go through a learning curve. Split testing is particularly difficult in terms of time, effort and expense for these organizations, with 80% challenged with performing this on landing pages, and 62% on ad copy.

Trial organizations seem to find many of these tactics less difficult. It is important to note that a smaller percentage of them are employing most of these tactics. Moreover, the perceived level of difficulty is only half the equation; using a tactic effectively is the other half. Here, Trial organizations falter.

CHART: PPC TACTICS DEEMED VERY OR SOMEWHAT DIFFICULT, BY PRIMARY CHANNEL

Split testing landing pages
- 68%
- 64%
- 78%

Creating relevant ad copy for each ad group
- 67%
- 71%
- 59%

Rotating ads to optimize for conversions
- 38%
- 39%
- 27%

Split testing ad copy
- 46%
- 64%
- 40%

Creating highly targeted ad groups
- 64%
- 65%
- 52%

Manual bidding for clicks
- 50%
- 52%
- 33%

Legend:
- ■ B2B
- ■ B2C
- ■ B2B/B2C

Bidding for target Cost per Action
- 57%
- 55%
- 63%

Bidding for target position preference
- 33%
- 36%
- 38%

Experimenting with matching options
- 42%
- 71%
- 13%

Automatic bidding for clicks
- 26%
- 45%
- 11%

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Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa Search Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded April 2011, N=1,530

Landing page optimization — a collaboration between marketing and Web developers, often requiring new technology — is a challenge for all channels. Nearly 80% of B2B/B2C companies consider split testing landing pages at least somewhat difficult, with 68% of B2B, and 64% of B2C companies experiencing the same.

In spite of only 19% of B2C companies experimenting with keyword match options, nearly three-quarters of them find this tactic taxing. Keyword matching can significantly improve PPC results; it is therefore important for organizations to identify the correct recipe of broad, exact and phrase match types.

CHART: TOP 10 PPC TACTICS DEEMED VERY OR SOMEWHAT DIFFICULT, BY ORGANIZATION SIZE
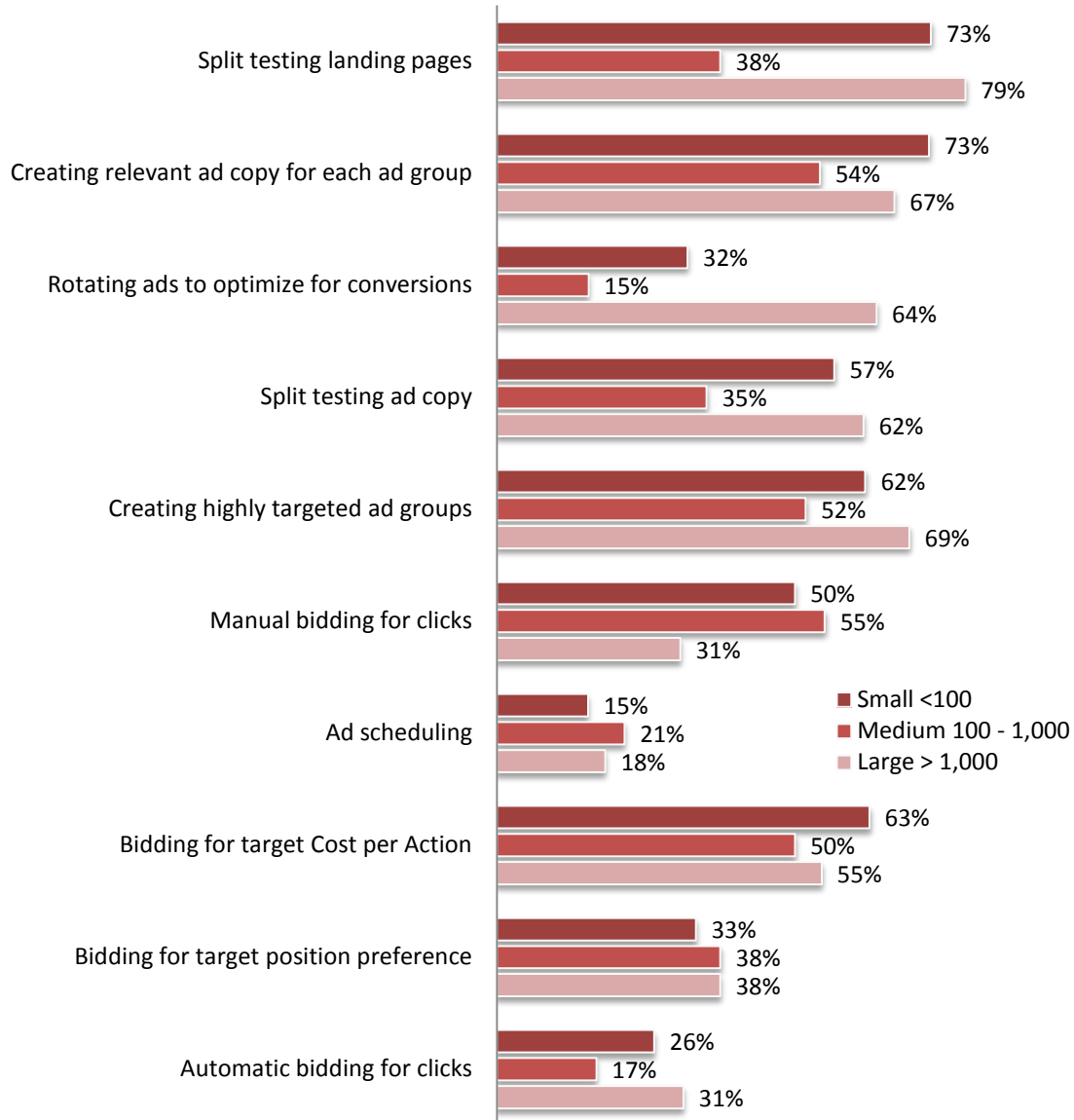
Split testing landing pages
- 73%
- 38%
- 79%

Creating relevant ad copy for each ad group
- 73%
- 54%
- 67%

Rotating ads to optimize for conversions
- 32%
- 15%
- 64%

Split testing ad copy
- 57%
- 35%
- 62%

Creating highly targeted ad groups
- 62%
- 52%
- 69%

Manual bidding for clicks
- 50%
- 55%
- 31%

Ad scheduling
- 15%
- 21%
- 18%

■ Small <100
■ Medium 100 - 1,000
■ Large > 1,000

Bidding for target Cost per Action
- 63%
- 50%
- 55%

Bidding for target position preference
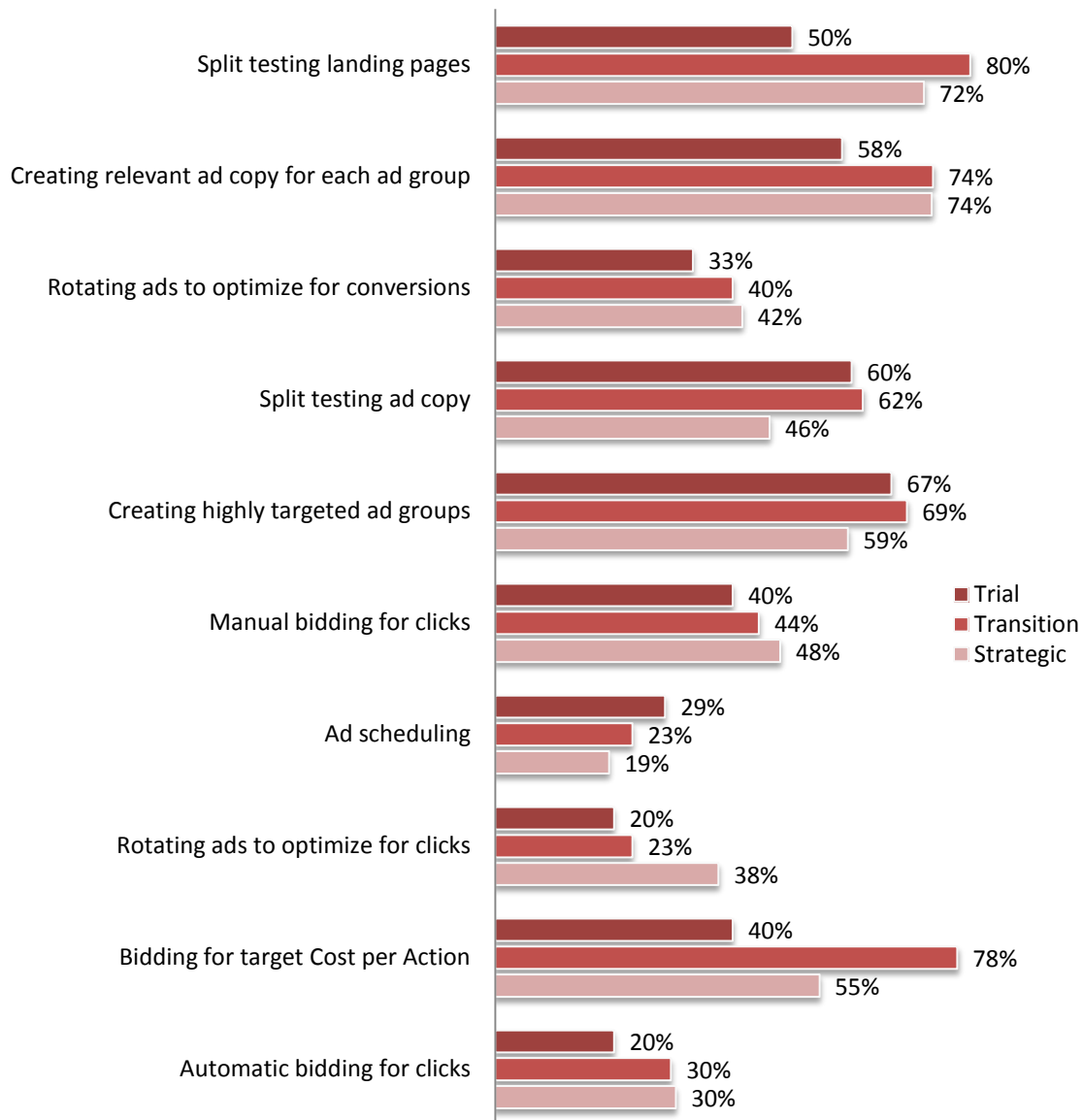- 33%
- 38%
- 38%

Automatic bidding for clicks
- 26%
- 17%
- 31%
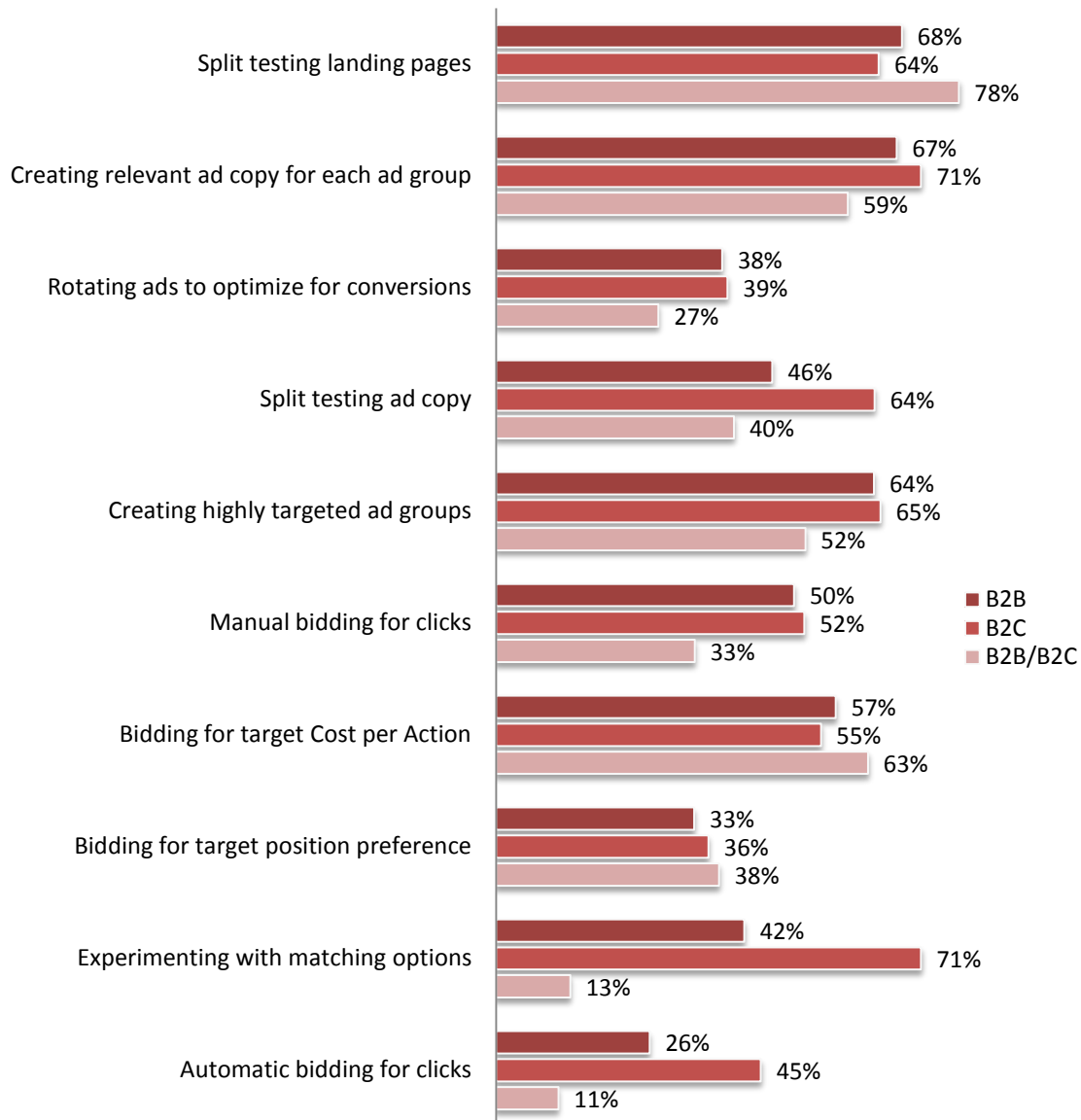
Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa Search Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded April 2011, N=1,530

Interestingly, many PPC tactics present greater degrees of difficulty for small and large companies than they do for medium-sized companies. For example, split testing landing pages is a top challenge for small and large companies, yet half as many medium-sized companies say the same. A similar imbalance exists for split testing ad copy, where small and large companies struggle with this to a larger extent.

Medium-sized companies find manual bidding for clicks more difficult than other organizations do. Organizations use this option when they know which keywords or ad placements are most profitable. They can then direct more advertising budget to those keywords and ad placements. This tactic can prove difficult, however, because companies need to devote time to managing manual bids. Additionally, they must develop an understanding into which keywords or placements are in fact the most profitable.

Split Testing Landing Pages May Be Difficult, But It Is Very Effective

Chart: Creating highly targeted ad groups is the most effective PPC tactic

Q. Please indicate the LEVEL OF EFFECTIVENESS (in terms of achieving objectives) for each of the PPC tactics used by your organization.

■ Very effective ■ Somewhat effective ■ Not effective

Tactic	Very effective	Somewhat effective	Not effective
Creating highly-targeted ad groups	52%	35%	8%
Split testing landing pages	49%	39%	7%
Creating relevant ad copy for each ad group	45%	38%	10%
Experimenting with matching options	45%	45%	7%
Split testing ad copy	38%	49%	5%
Bidding for target position preference	29%	55%	13%
Rotating ads to optimize for conversions	27%	46%	16%
Bidding for target Cost per Action	26%	61%	9%
Rotating ads evenly	22%	51%	22%
Rotating ads to optimize for clicks	20%	50%	16%
Manual bidding for clicks	19%	59%	14%
Ad scheduling	15%	63%	10%
Automatic bidding for clicks	14%	46%	23%

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Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa Search Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded April 2011, N=1,530

Correctly structuring ad groups has a dramatic impact on quality scores and by extension ROI. As such, 82% of marketers actively do this, with 87% rating this tactic as "very" or "somewhat effective." On the other end, experimenting with matching options nets more than 90% for success, but only 22% of marketers incorporate this into PPC campaigns.

Testing is also seen as a vital component to PPC success. While 30% rate split testing landing pages as "very difficult," 49% of organizations deem this tactic "very effective." Despite this high regard, only 33% of organizations employ this tactic.

CHART: TOP PPC TACTICS DEEMED VERY EFFECTIVE, BY ORGANIZATION SIZE
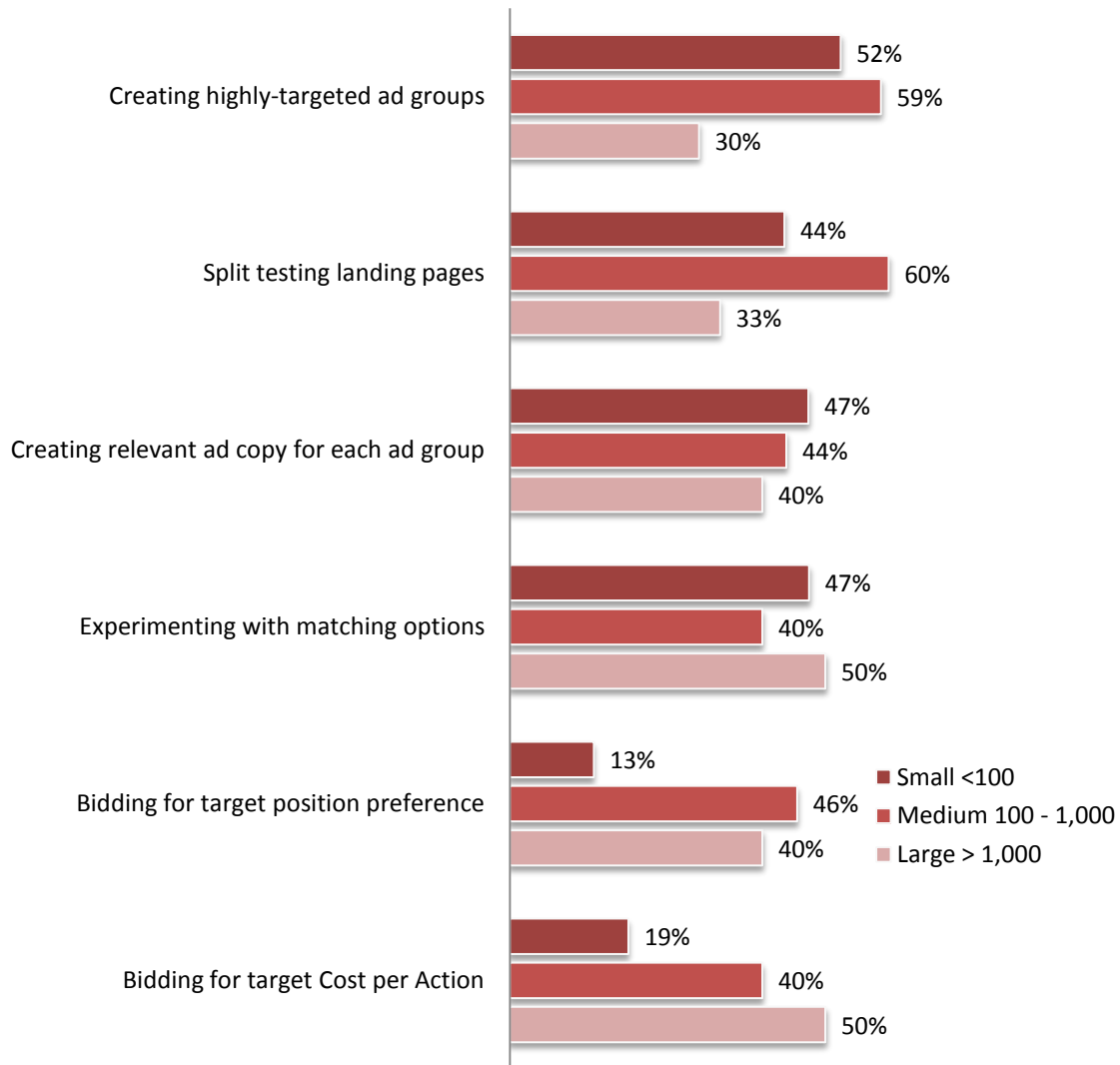
Creating highly-targeted ad groups
- 52%
- 59%
- 30%

Split testing landing pages
- 44%
- 60%
- 33%

Creating relevant ad copy for each ad group
- 47%
- 44%
- 40%

Experimenting with matching options
- 47%
- 40%
- 50%

Bidding for target position preference
- 13%
- 46%
- 40%

Bidding for target Cost per Action
- 19%
- 40%
- 50%

■ Small <100
■ Medium 100 - 1,000
■ Large > 1,000

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Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa Search Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded April 2011, N=1,530

Half of large organizations find bidding for target cost-per-action a very effective tactic. This tactic puts the focus on increasing profits, and simultaneously requires less time spent on managing bids — an attractive option for companies with extensive PPC campaigns.

Sixty percent of medium-sized firms favorably rated split testing landing pages. Their success with this tactic may be attributed to their relative ease in executing this tactic, represented by only 38% reporting difficulty with split testing.

MEDIAN WEB CONVERSION RATE ON PAID SEARCH TRAFFIC IS NEARLY 4%

CHART: ORGANIZATIONS EXPERIENCE WIDE VARIABILITY IN CONVERSION RATES ON PAID SEARCH TRAFFIC

Q. What is your organization's average PPC conversion rate (not including contextual/affiliate advertising)?
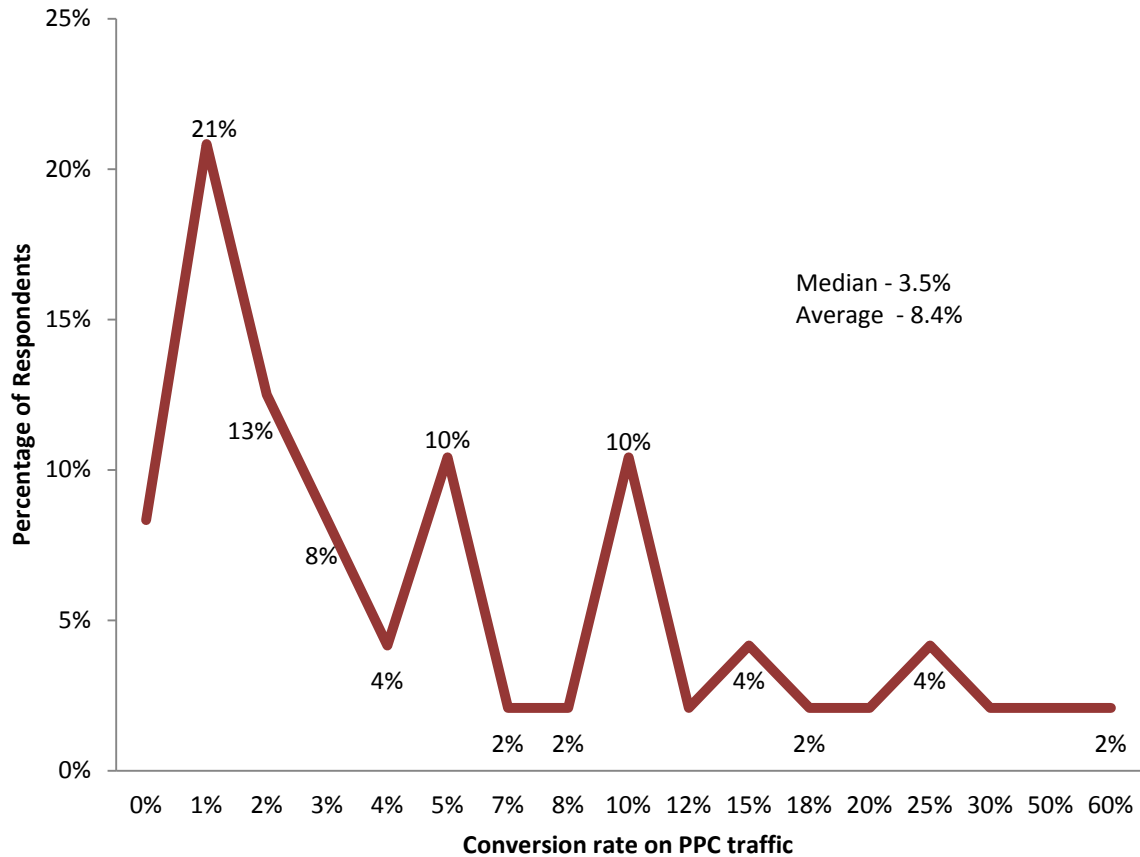
Median - 3.5%
Average - 8.4%

Percentage of Respondents

Conversion rate on PPC traffic

Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa Search Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded April 2011, N=1,530

The median conversion rate on Web traffic for all organizations surveyed is just under 4%, with the average Web conversion rate slightly more than double that. Put another way, 91% of visitors to an organization's site leave without buying or doing anything.

Understanding why is crucial for improving PPC and the marketing campaign performance. Metrics play a pivotal role in this examination. These reveal user behavior, from analyzing how visitors arrived on a site, to figuring out why they did or did not convert. A thorough analytical process includes not just a study of metrics and KPIs, but also encompasses usability analysis, A/B testing, and even landing page and sales funnel optimization.

Relevant Ad Copy and Highly Targeted Keywords Considered Most Effective

Chart: Effectiveness of PPC tactics, as rated by agencies

Q. Please indicate the LEVEL OF EFFECTIVENESS (in terms of achieving objectives) for each of the Paid Search (PPC) tactics a typical client organization is using.

Legend: ■ Very effective ■ Somewhat effective ■ Not effective

Tactic	Very effective	Somewhat effective	Not effective
Creating relevant ad copy for each ad group	63%	20%	
Creating highly targeted keywords for each ad group	62%	22%	
Split testing ad copy	44%	29%	3%
Split testing landing pages	43%	26%	4%
Experimenting with keyword matching options	32%	40%	6%
Manual bidding for clicks	24%	35%	11%
Ad scheduling	20%	42%	9%
Using the "optimize for conversions" ad rotation setting	19%	34%	11%
Content network or affiliate advertising	16%	38%	21%
Bidding for target position preference	16%	40%	15%
Using the "rotate ads evenly" ad rotation setting	15%	35%	18%
Using the "optimize for clicks" ad rotation setting	14%	37%	15%
Bidding for target Cost per Action	13%	35%	12%
Automatic bidding for clicks	10%	37%	22%

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Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa Search Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded April 2011, N=1,530

Precision is the name of the game when it comes to the PPC tactics that agencies find most effective in achieving their clients' marketing objectives. More than 60% state that they find the most success with creating relevant ad copy and tightly defined ad groups. As for testing, as in split testing ad copy or landing pages, 30% fewer agencies rate these as "very effective."

Content network and affiliate advertising fall into the middle of the pack, with just more than half of agencies assigning a favorable effectiveness rating to these options. Some agencies reported successful lead generation outcomes using remarketing campaigns that tracked and targeted users via more aggressive and promotional ad copy.

CHART: "VERY EFFECTIVE" PPC TACTICS, RATED BY AGENCIES AND CLIENTS

Tactic	Agency	Client
Creating relevant ad copy for each ad group	63%	45%
Creating highly targeted keywords for each ad group	62%	52%
Split testing ad copy	44%	38%
Split testing landing pages	43%	49%
Experimenting with keyword matching options	32%	45%
Manual bidding for clicks	24%	19%
Ad scheduling	20%	15%
Using the "optimize for conversions" ad rotation setting	19%	27%
Content network or affiliate advertising	16%	
Bidding for target position preference	16%	29%
Using the "rotate ads evenly" ad rotation setting	15%	22%
Using the "optimize for clicks" ad rotation setting	14%	20%
Bidding for target Cost per Action	13%	26%
Automatic bidding for clicks	10%	14%

■ Agency Perception
■ Client Perception

Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa Search Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded April 2011, N=1,530

Creating ad groups with highly targeted keywords and relevant ad copy are considered the most effective tactics by agencies. Marketers agree, but to a much lesser extent. These gaps speak to the deep PPC experience agencies gain from working on multiple campaigns, across multiple companies and verticals. In other words, agencies have more opportunities to see which PPC tactics work best for achieving client marketing objectives.

It's interesting to see that marketers also favor some tactics more strongly than agencies. Forty-five percent of marketers believe that experimenting with keyword matching options is a "very effective" tactic, yet only 32% of agencies say the same. Split testing presents another gap in perception. Although a greater percentage of agencies favor testing ad copy, a larger percentage of marketers give preference to split testing landing pages.

EMAIL MARKETING AND OPTIMIZATION

TOP PRIORITIES IN EMAIL MARKETING

CHART: GROWING AND RETAINING SUBSCRIBERS THE TOP PRIORITY FOR ORGANIZATIONS

Q. Which email marketing processes are TOP OBJECTIVES for your organization in the next 12 months? Select up to five processes.

Process	Percentage
Growing and retaining subscribers	71%
Delivering highly relevant content	69%
Achieving or increasing measurable ROI	41%
Increasing email engagement metrics	38%
Integrating email with other marketing tactics	35%
Segmenting email database	32%
Improving email deliverability	27%
Using email for funnel optimization	23%
Integrating email data with other data systems	21%
Improving database hygiene	21%
Enhancing the efficiency and speed of the email	19%
Expanding testing and optimization practices	18%

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Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa Email Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded July 2011, N=2,735

CHART: TOP 5 EMAIL MARKETING PROCESS PRIORITIES, BY PRIMARY CHANNEL
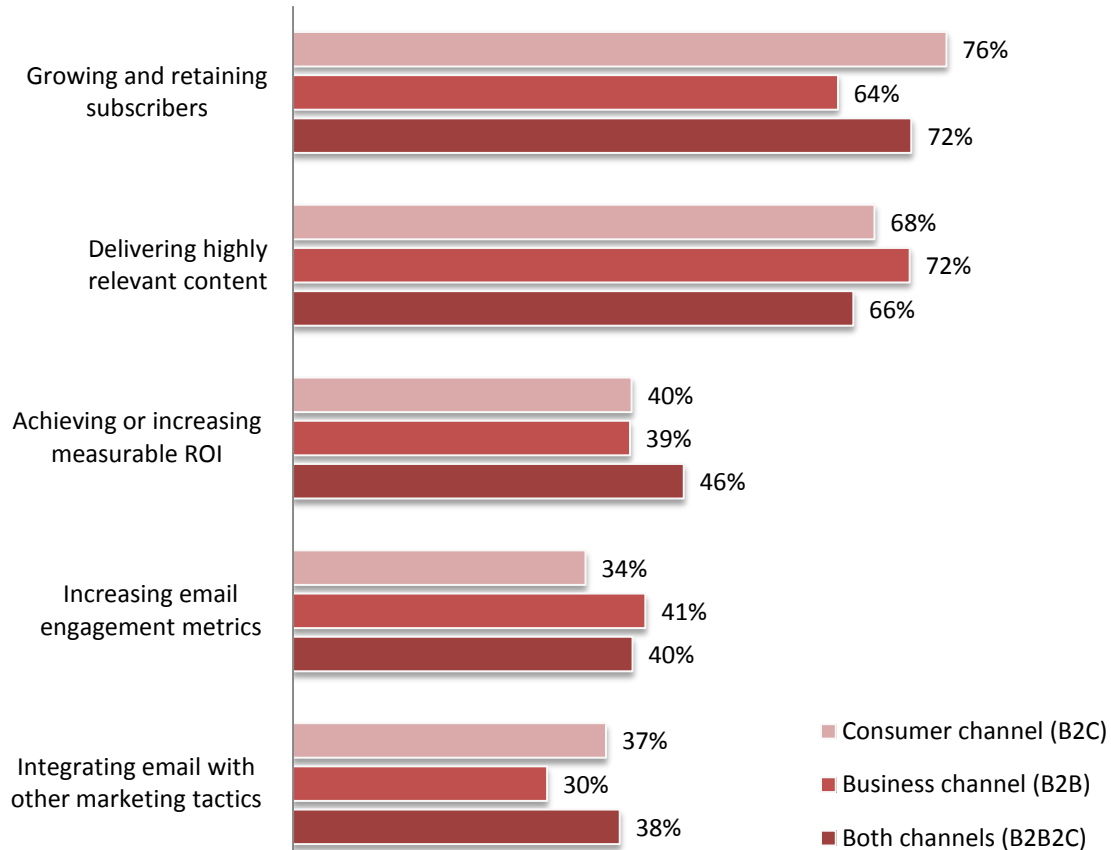
Growing and retaining subscribers
- 76%
- 64%
- 72%

Delivering highly relevant content
- 68%
- 72%
- 66%

Achieving or increasing measurable ROI
- 40%
- 39%
- 46%

Increasing email engagement metrics
- 34%
- 41%
- 40%

Integrating email with other marketing tactics
- 37%
- 30%
- 38%

■ Consumer channel (B2C)
■ Business channel (B2B)
■ Both channels (B2B2C)

Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa Email Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded July 2011, N=2,735

With the multitude of digital communications channels and media options, email marketers place the utmost priority on the processes to grow and retain subscriber lists, and deliver highly relevant content. These go hand-in-hand, as organizations cannot retain subscribers if they do not send relevant email messages. Conversely, without great content, firms find it difficult to attract new readers.

The marketing channel will determine the overall priority. The need for effective communication at each stage of the buying process drives B2B companies to place the highest priority on delivering relevant content.

Meanwhile, B2C and B2B2C organizations strive most to improve the processes for growing and retaining their subscriber lists. These marketing channels customarily have shorter buying cycles which require a large volume of new customers to keep orders flowing.

"Delivering highly relevant content – otherwise, we are just wasting people's time. I want my company to be the local expert in my industry."

-Marketer insight on priorities

CHART: TOP 5 EMAIL MARKETING PROCESS PRIORITIES, BY INDUSTRY SECTOR
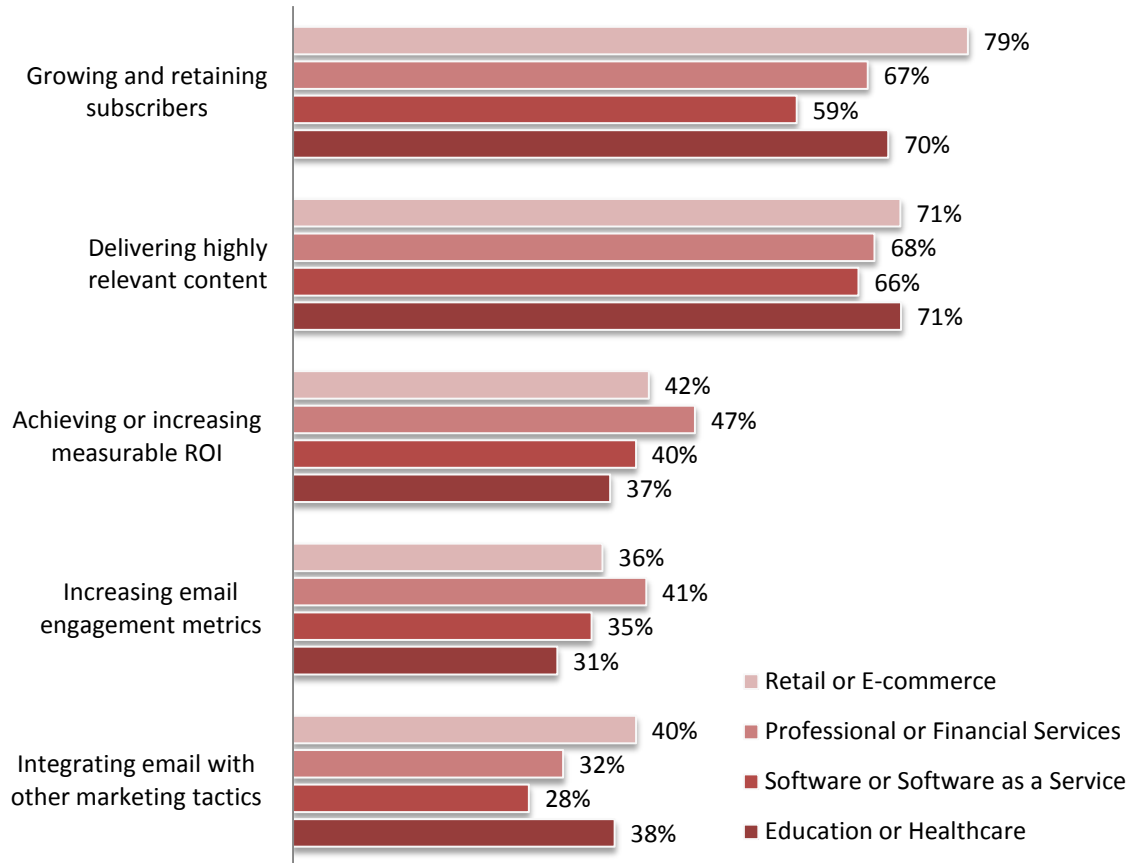
Growing and retaining subscribers
- 79%
- 67%
- 59%
- 70%

Delivering highly relevant content
- 71%
- 68%
- 66%
- 71%

Achieving or increasing measurable ROI
- 42%
- 47%
- 40%
- 37%

Increasing email engagement metrics
- 36%
- 41%
- 35%
- 31%

Integrating email with other marketing tactics
- 40%
- 32%
- 28%
- 38%

■ Retail or E-commerce
■ Professional or Financial Services
■ Software or Software as a Service
■ Education or Healthcare

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Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa Email Marketing Benchmark Survey
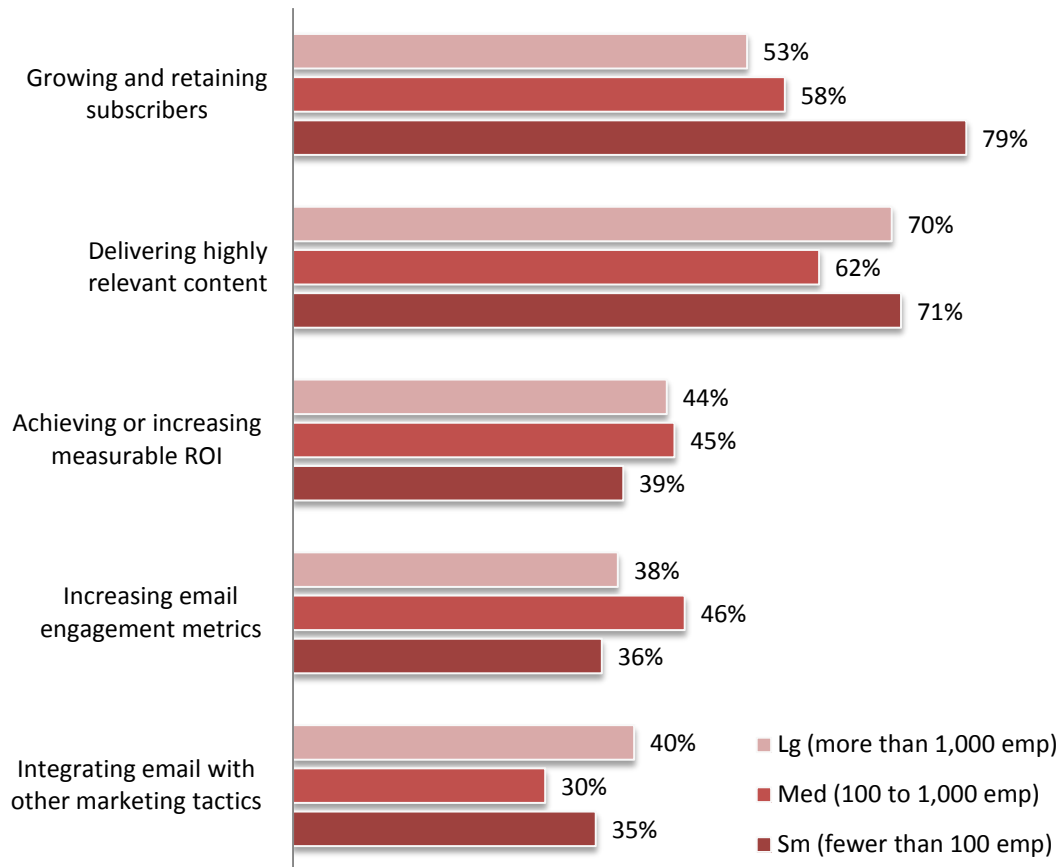Methodology: Fielded July 2011, N=2,735

Retail and e-commerce businesses are most likely than their counterparts to prioritize the integration of email with other marketing tactics. For retailers, it can be challenging to optimize email marketing to work synergistically with online or offline efforts.

A strategic plan must be in place to leverage SEO, website and social media tactics with email marketing. Likewise, email communications must be exceptional to capitalize on in-store promotions and live events.

"Growing and retaining subscriber list AND integrating email with social media tactics is a single objective for us, as most of our email subscribers find our website through blog content announcements and links that we place on the social sites."

-Marketer insight on priorities

CHART: TOP 5 EMAIL MARKETING PROCESS PRIORITIES, BY ORGANIZATION SIZE

Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa Email Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded July 2011, N=2,735

Smaller companies place a greater emphasis on growing and retaining their email subscribers than their larger competitors. Many marketers feel rushed to quickly build a large subscriber base. Remember: the size of the list is secondary to its quality.

The focus should be on building and maintaining a vibrant group of followers, who read, interact and share the relevant communications sent from an organization. Building these long-term relationships will take time.
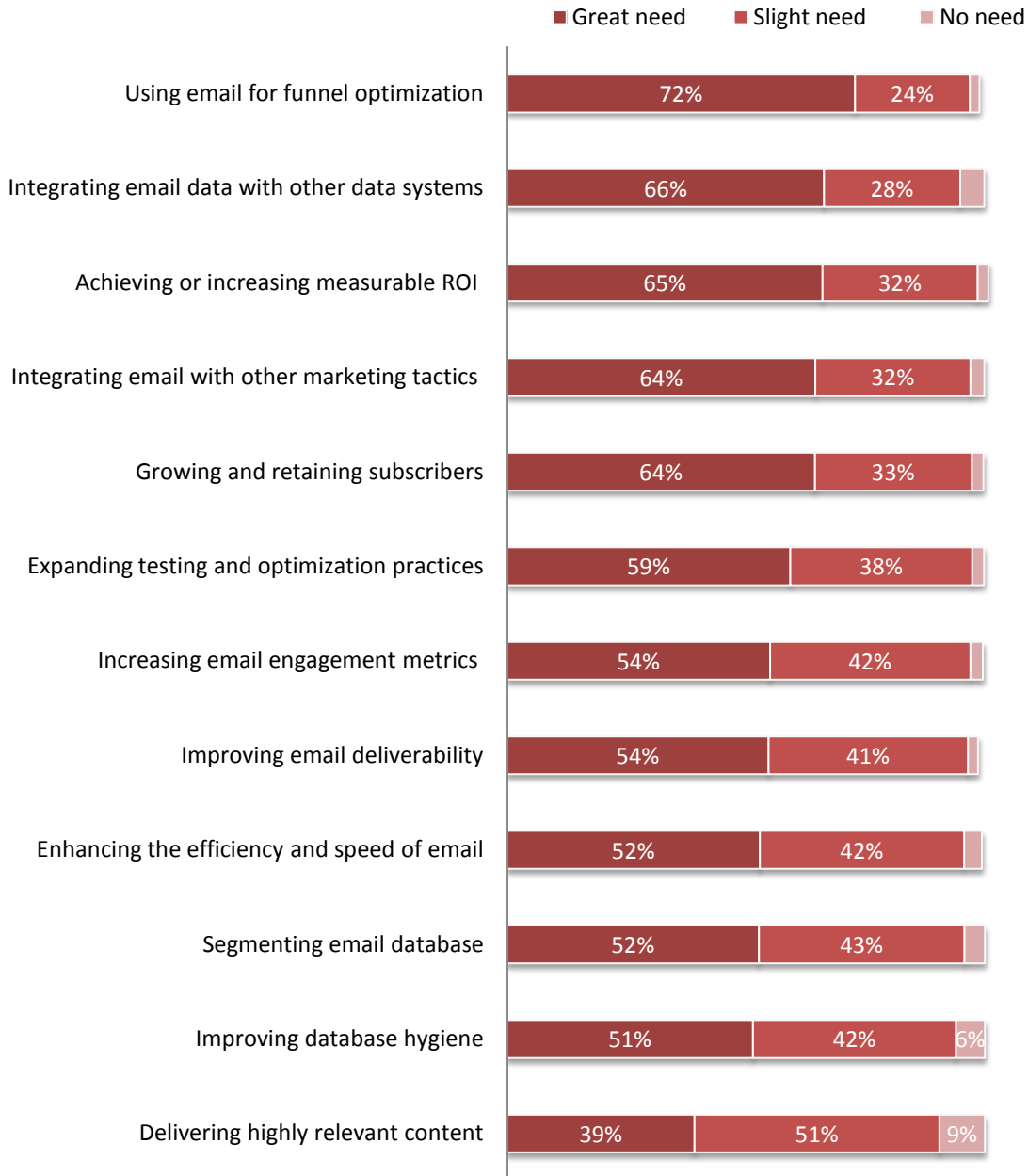
"Growing and retaining subscribers - as I haven't been using email marketing for long, that is still my priority."

-Marketer insight on priorities

EMAIL MARKETING NEEDS FOR IMPROVEMENT

CHART: MARKETERS INDICATE MOST IMPROVEMENT NEEDED USING EMAIL FOR FUNNEL OPTIMIZATION

Q. Please select your NEED FOR IMPROVEMENT in the following areas.

■ Great need   ■ Slight need   ■ No need

Category	Great need	Slight need
Using email for funnel optimization	72%	24%
Integrating email data with other data systems	66%	28%
Achieving or increasing measurable ROI	65%	32%
Integrating email with other marketing tactics	64%	32%
Growing and retaining subscribers	64%	33%
Expanding testing and optimization practices	59%	38%
Increasing email engagement metrics	54%	42%
Improving email deliverability	54%	41%
Enhancing the efficiency and speed of email	52%	42%
Segmenting email database	52%	43%
Improving database hygiene	51%	42% (6%)
Delivering highly relevant content	39%	51% (9%)

Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa Email Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded July 2011, N=2,735

CHART: GREAT NEED FOR EMAIL MARKETING PROCESS IMPROVEMENT, BY PRIMARY CHANNEL
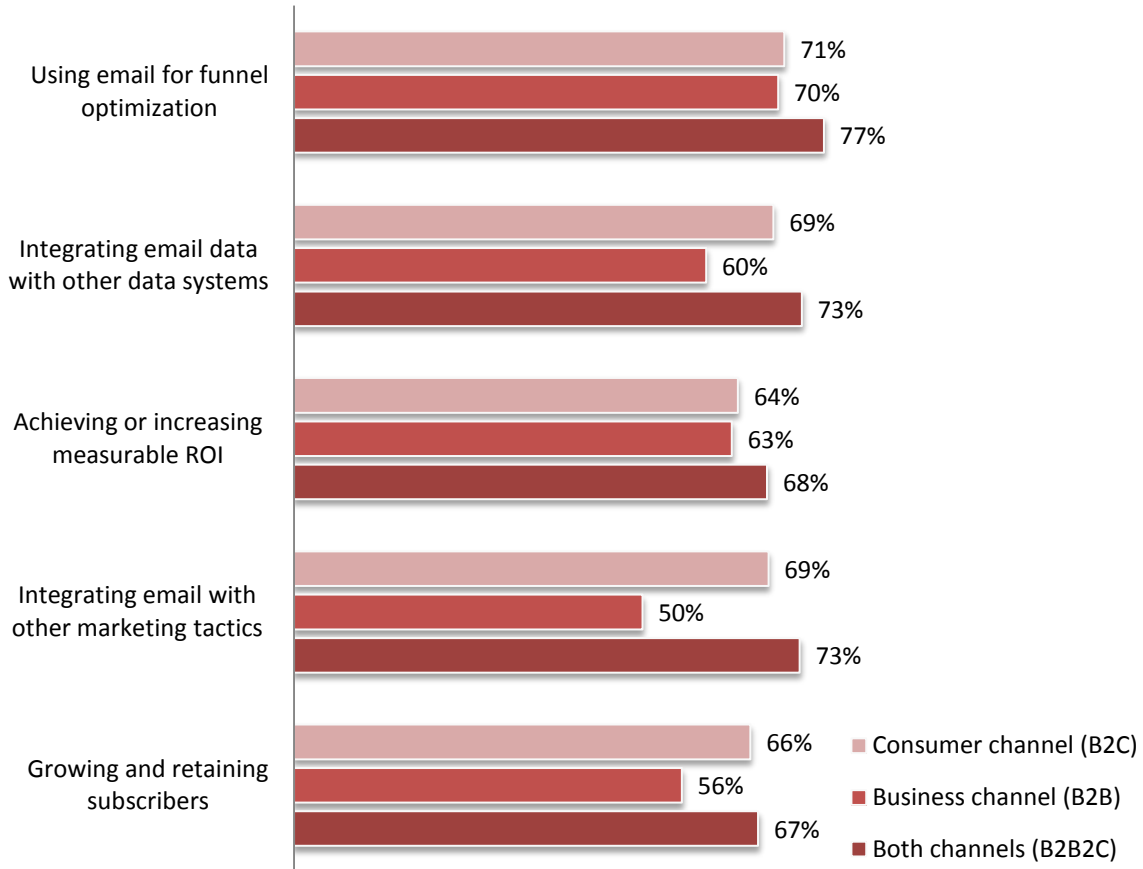
Using email for funnel optimization
- 71%
- 70%
- 77%

Integrating email data with other data systems
- 69%
- 60%
- 73%

Achieving or increasing measurable ROI
- 64%
- 63%
- 68%

Integrating email with other marketing tactics
- 69%
- 50%
- 73%

Growing and retaining subscribers
- 66%
- 56%
- 67%

- ■ Consumer channel (B2C)
- ■ Business channel (B2B)
- ■ Both channels (B2B2C)

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Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa Email Marketing Benchmark Survey
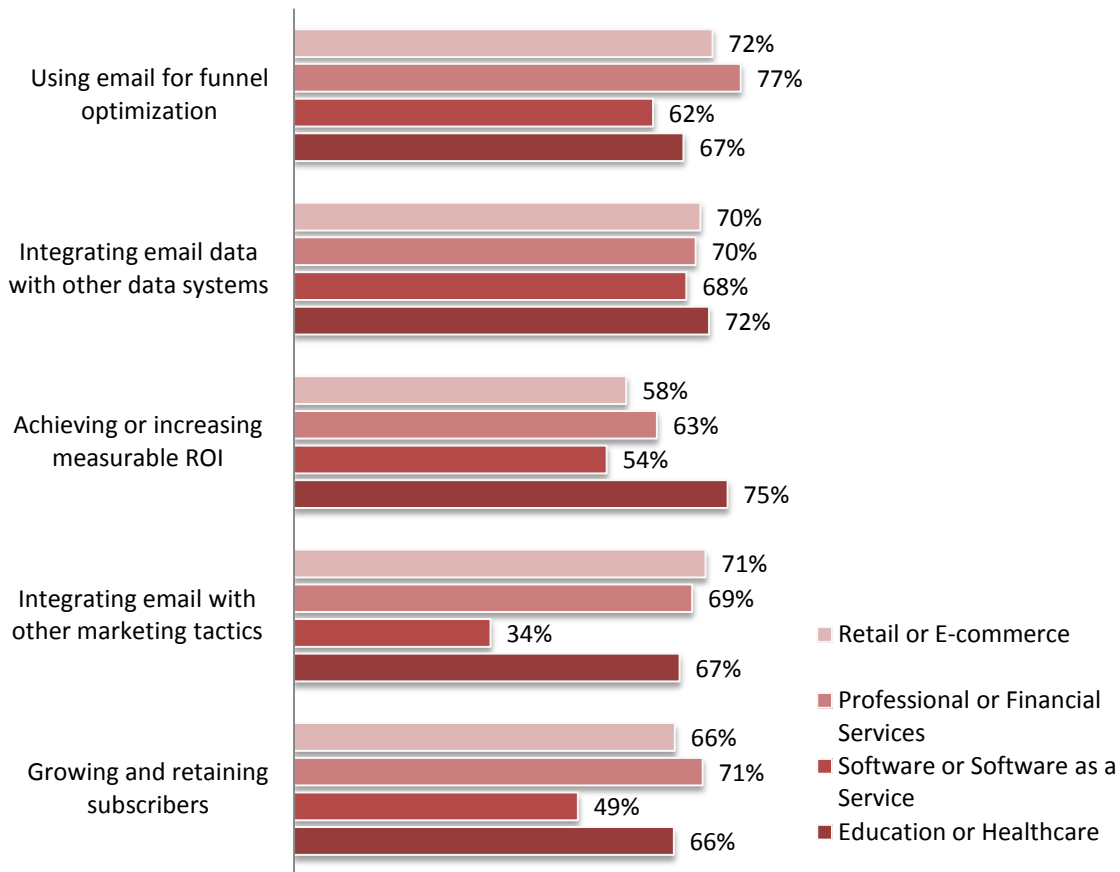Methodology: Fielded July 2011, N=2,735

B2B marketers, with their customarily long sales cycles, are predominantly focused on meeting prospects' needs at every stage in the Marketing-Sales pipeline, and find email to be an excellent communication tool. This is reflected in 70% of B2B organizations identifying a great need for improvement in using email for funnel optimization.

Likewise, B2C and B2B2C organizations have adopted this philosophy and are feeling a dire need to develop their email message ability to assist the customer at each step on the path to purchase.

"Using email for funnel optimization - We are working to have several nurture programs setup within the next 12 months. We want to be able to enable Sales with more qualified leads through an email program. We are also hoping to use the nurture program to gain more information on our leads that we can then use to segment our database."

-Marketer insight on priorities

CHART: GREAT NEED FOR EMAIL MARKETING PROCESS IMPROVEMENT, BY INDUSTRY SECTOR

Using email for funnel optimization
- 72%
- 77%
- 62%
- 67%

Integrating email data with other data systems
- 70%
- 70%
- 68%
- 72%

Achieving or increasing measurable ROI
- 58%
- 63%
- 54%
- 75%

Integrating email with other marketing tactics
- 71%
- 69%
- 34%
- 67%

Growing and retaining subscribers
- 66%
- 71%
- 49%
- 66%

■ Retail or E-commerce

■ Professional or Financial Services

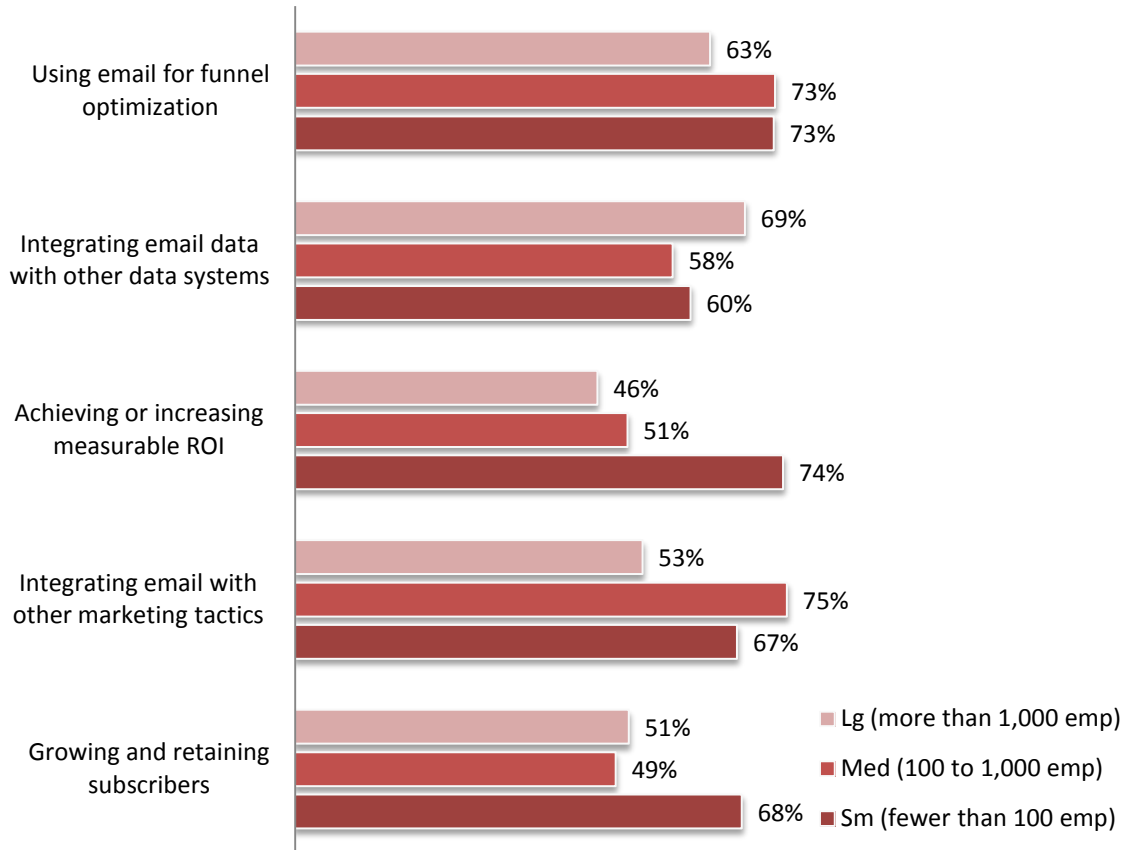■ Software or Software as a Service

■ Education or Healthcare

Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa Email Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded July 2011, N=2,735

Integrating email data with CRM systems can be an extremely complex process. Marketers hunger for the ability to leverage all the available data in a way that enables more relevant, customer-driven email messages. The unrelenting desire for more actionable intelligence drives marketers in a wide range of industries to signal a great need for improvement in this area.

"Integrating email data with CRM and maximizing segmentation and funnel optimization in a way that is effective and produces measurable results."

-Marketer insight on priorities

CHART: GREAT NEED FOR EMAIL MARKETING PROCESS IMPROVEMENT, BY ORGANIZATION SIZE

Using email for funnel optimization
- 63%
- 73%
- 73%

Integrating email data with other data systems
- 69%
- 58%
- 60%

Achieving or increasing measurable ROI
- 46%
- 51%
- 74%

Integrating email with other marketing tactics
- 53%
- 75%
- 67%

Growing and retaining subscribers
- 51%
- 49%
- 68%

Legend:
- Lg (more than 1,000 emp)
- Med (100 to 1,000 emp)
- Sm (fewer than 100 emp)

Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa Email Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded July 2011, N=2,735

In general, smaller companies do not have the luxury of having media specialists within their marketing department. Rather, each marketer uses a variety of communication channels to converse with customers, including email.

While email is an effective messaging tool, it can be time consuming. To justify the resource drain, 74% of companies with fewer than 100 employees find a great need to achieve or increase measurable ROI from their email campaigns. Less than half of larger companies feel the same way.
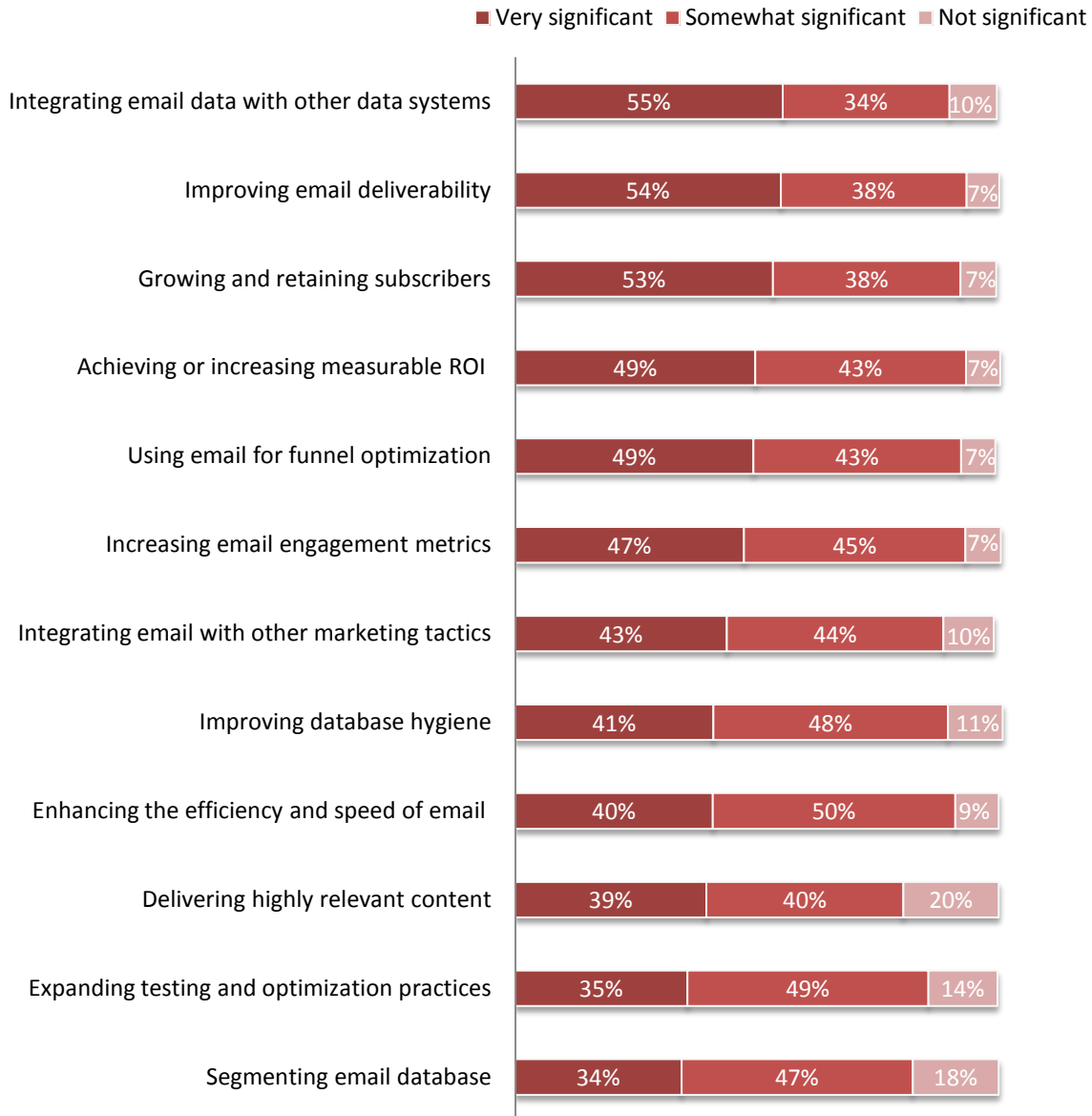
"Increasing measurable ROI from email programs - We need to improve our tracking and methodology on the program, which is hard with limited resources."

-Marketer insight on priorities

TOP CHALLENGES FOR EMAIL MARKETERS

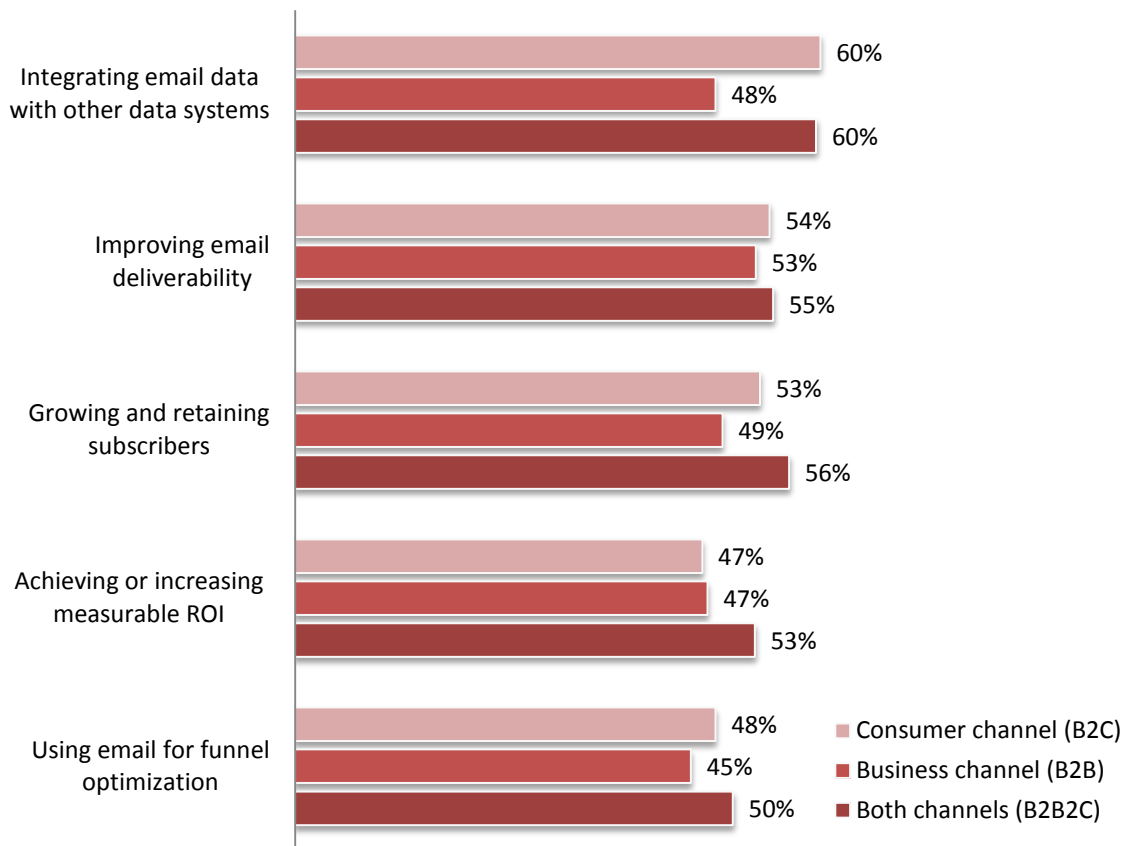### CHART: DATA INTEGRATION PROVIDES THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE FOR EMAIL MARKETERS

Q. How significant are the CHALLENGES to achieving the following email marketing objectives?

■ Very significant ■ Somewhat significant ■ Not significant

Objective	Very significant	Somewhat significant	Not significant
Integrating email data with other data systems	55%	34%	10%
Improving email deliverability	54%	38%	7%
Growing and retaining subscribers	53%	38%	7%
Achieving or increasing measurable ROI	49%	43%	7%
Using email for funnel optimization	49%	43%	7%
Increasing email engagement metrics	47%	45%	7%
Integrating email with other marketing tactics	43%	44%	10%
Improving database hygiene	41%	48%	11%
Enhancing the efficiency and speed of email	40%	50%	9%
Delivering highly relevant content	39%	40%	20%
Expanding testing and optimization practices	35%	49%	14%
Segmenting email database	34%	47%	18%

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Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa Email Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded July 2011, N=2,735

It seems marketers have made great strides in recent months in delivering highly relevant content to their subscribers. Last year, 65% of marketers reported that targeting recipients with highly relevant content was a very significant challenge, but this year only 39% agreed. Making headway, marketers are turning to the next challenge — finding ways to amass more data by unifying databases.

CHART: VERY SIGNIFICANT CHALLENGES TO EMAIL MARKETING EFFECTIVENESS, BY PRIMARY CHANNEL

Integrating email data with other data systems
- 60%
- 48%
- 60%

Improving email deliverability
- 54%
- 53%
- 55%

Growing and retaining subscribers
- 53%
- 49%
- 56%

Achieving or increasing measurable ROI
- 47%
- 47%
- 53%

Using email for funnel optimization
- 48%
- 45%
- 50%

Legend:
- Consumer channel (B2C)
- Business channel (B2B)
- Both channels (B2B2C)

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Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa Email Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded July 2011, N=2,735

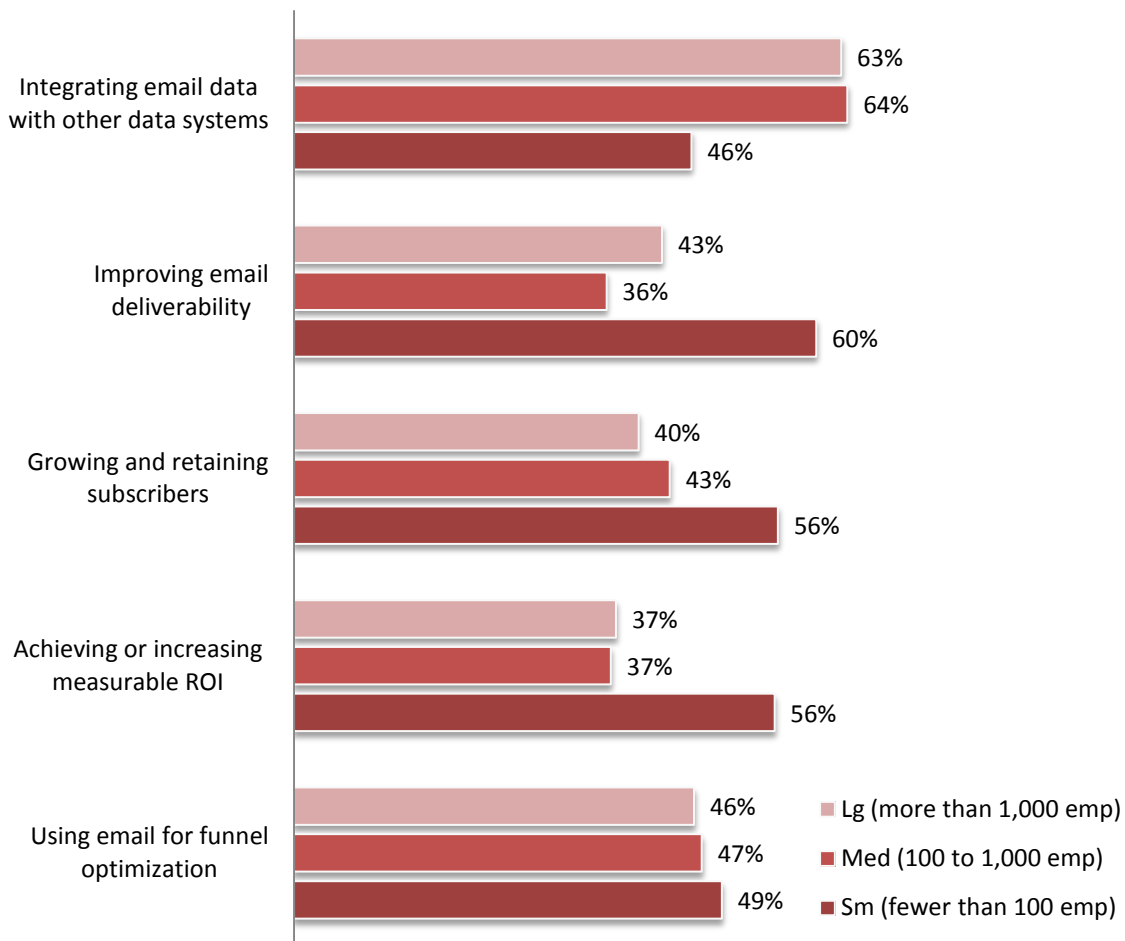Improving email deliverability is a very significant challenge for the majority of organizations across all business channels. Marketers feel frustrated by the lack of transparency with ISP filtering processes and the rules of the game seem to be endlessly evolving.

Making it to the inbox involves a complex set of issues for marketers. However, the reality is that marketers have more control over their deliverability metrics than they think. An organization's sender reputation is the most influential factor in an email reaching subscribers' inboxes. A company that maintains a clean list of quality subscribers, to which it only sends relevant content, will outperform a rival that does not maintain list hygiene and sends batch-and-blast communications.

Today, ISPs filter emails based on engagement metrics. An individual reader's action to open, delete, reply or forward an email determines placement inside the subscriber's inbox. Look for marketers to place increasing importance on nudging opt-ins to engage.

"Improving deliverability and placement rates are the most difficult because people in general are continuing to get bombarded with information in email, and social media. It's difficult to make your message standout and to also get through all of the spam filters, etc.

-Marketer insight on challenges

CHART: VERY SIGNIFICANT CHALLENGES TO EMAIL MARKETING EFFECTIVENESS, BY INDUSTRY SECTOR
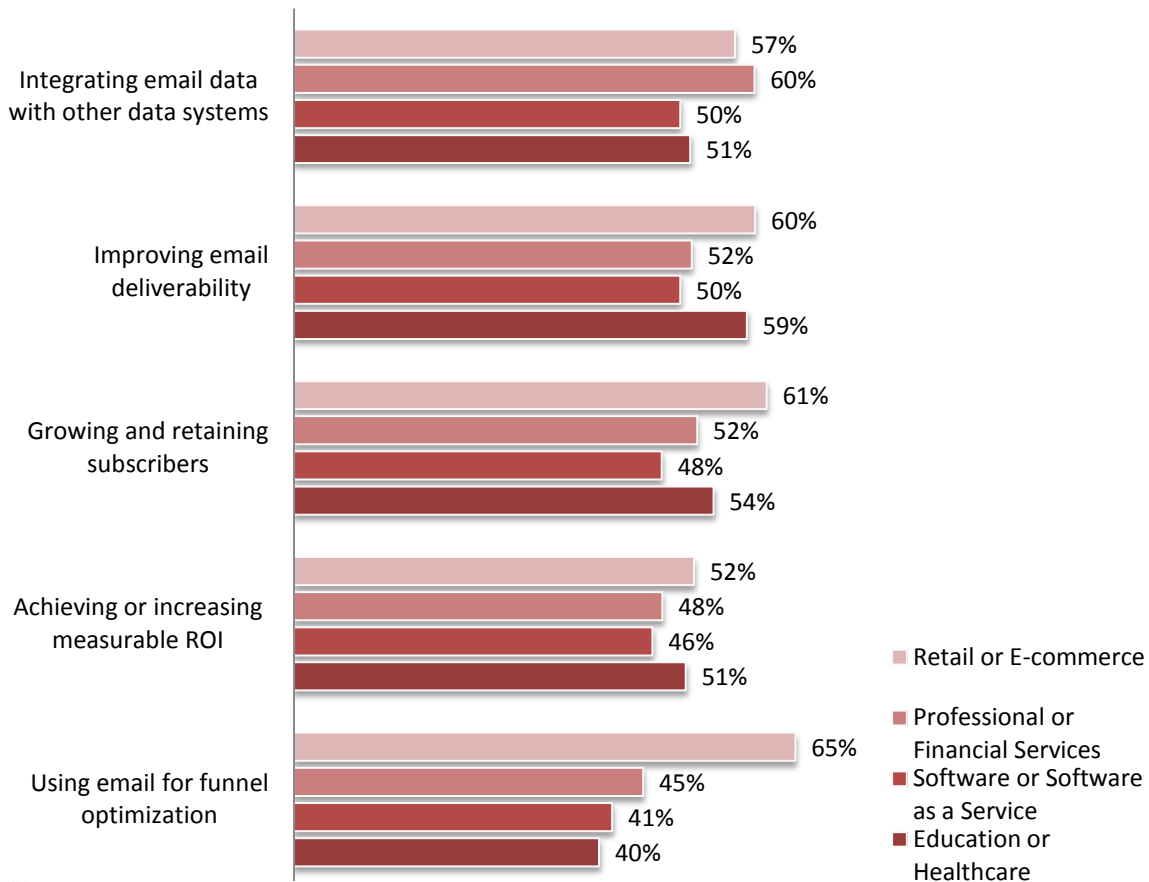
Integrating email data with other data systems
- 57%
- 60%
- 50%
- 51%

Improving email deliverability
- 60%
- 52%
- 50%
- 59%

Growing and retaining subscribers
- 61%
- 52%
- 48%
- 54%

Achieving or increasing measurable ROI
- 52%
- 48%
- 46%
- 51%

Using email for funnel optimization
- 65%
- 45%
- 41%
- 40%

Legend:
- ■ Retail or E-commerce
- ■ Professional or Financial Services
- ■ Software or Software as a Service
- ■ Education or Healthcare

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Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa Email Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded July 2011, N=2,735

Marketers are well aware of how important it is to deliver highly relevant content to grow and retain subscribers. However, with each new segment classified, more content is required to personalize the message. The demand for contagious content puts a greater strain on resources, and makes using email for funnel optimization problematic.

For this reason, retail and e-commerce organizations are more likely to find both growing and retaining subscribers, as well as using email for funnel optimization, to be more difficult. Because of its business model, it's not always easy for retailers to identify the steps that lead to consumption, or pinpoint the consumer's location in the path to purchase in real time.

"Funnel optimization because we lack the content and resources to support it."

-Marketer insight on challenges

CHART: VERY SIGNIFICANT CHALLENGES TO EMAIL MARKETING EFFECTIVENESS, BY ORGANIZATION SIZE

Integrating email data with other data systems
- 63%
- 64%
- 46%

Improving email deliverability
- 43%
- 36%
- 60%

Growing and retaining subscribers
- 40%
- 43%
- 56%

Achieving or increasing measurable ROI
- 37%
- 37%
- 56%

Using email for funnel optimization
- 46%
- 47%
- 49%

Legend:
- Lg (more than 1,000 emp)
- Med (100 to 1,000 emp)
- Sm (fewer than 100 emp)

Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa Email Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded July 2011, N=2,735

Organizations with more than 100 employees report the most significant challenge as integrating email data with their other customer management systems. The more intelligence captured, the greater the challenge to manage information efficiently and effectively.

The reasons for concern are as unique as the companies. Some struggle with legacy systems that were tailored for telesales business model and do not integrate well to optimize email performance.

Others may have several distinct business divisions, and the CRM solution may be one-size-fits-all, making it difficult for their email communications to be effective. Furthermore, larger corporations are more likely to have competing priorities for projects with a limited IT staff.

"The data comes across several divisions and the website is for all divisions. Coordination of sends, who owns the customer issues and silos are a huge problem."

-Marketer insight on challenges

CHART: BIGGEST BARRIERS TO EMAIL MARKETING SUCCESS, BY PRIMARY CHANNEL
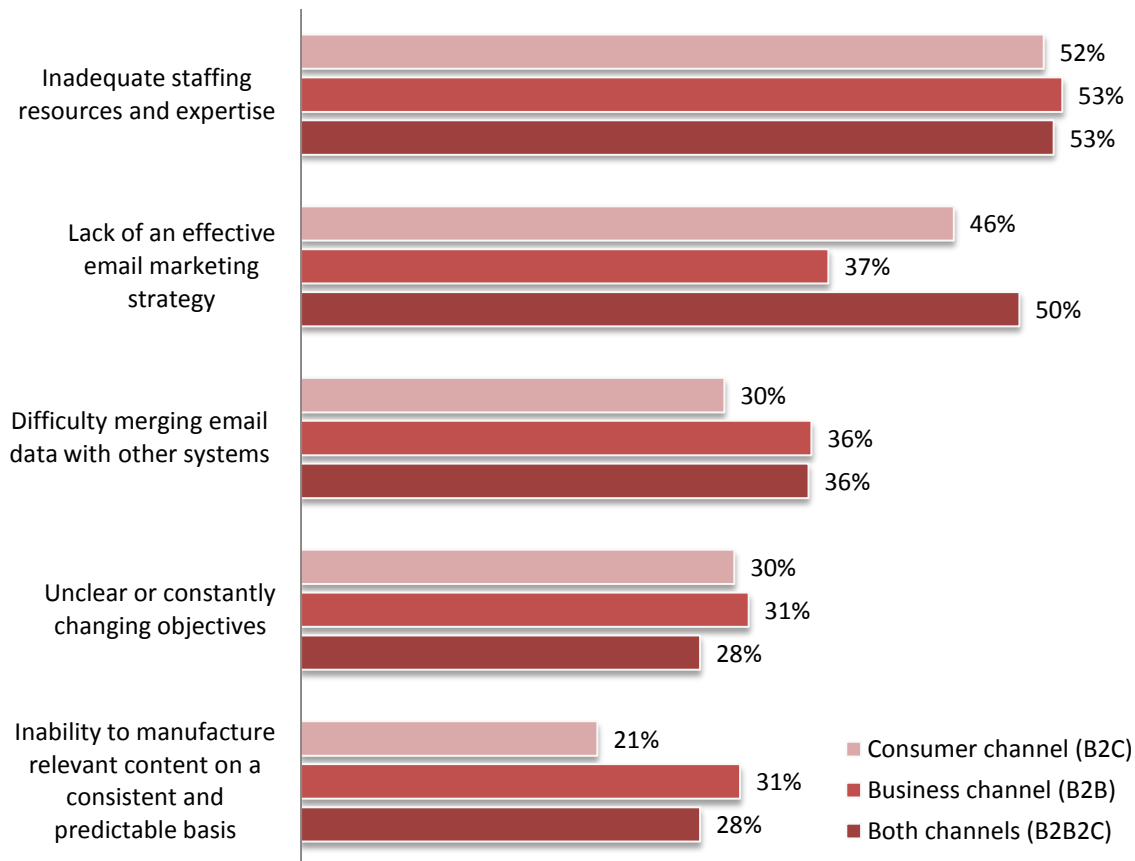
Inadequate staffing resources and expertise
- 52%
- 53%
- 53%

Lack of an effective email marketing strategy
- 46%
- 37%
- 50%

Difficulty merging email data with other systems
- 30%
- 36%
- 36%

Unclear or constantly changing objectives
- 30%
- 31%
- 28%

Inability to manufacture relevant content on a consistent and predictable basis
- 21%
- 31%
- 28%

Legend:
- Consumer channel (B2C)
- Business channel (B2B)
- Both channels (B2B2C)

Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa Email Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded July 2011, N=2,735

B2B marketers are more likely to mention the inability to manufacture relevant content on a consistent and predictable basis as a barrier to success than their B2C equals. An organization's charge to continuously provide content readers will crave at each stage of the buying process can be daunting.

For any company to accomplish this objective, it must maximize all of its available resources across the department lines. Content will be created by a combination of subject matter experts and editors skillful at repurposing executive interviews, whitepapers and product spec sheets.

Even user-generated blog posts, videos and testimonials can be fodder for contagious content.

To manage this cross-functional project, it will require an editorial calendar to identify the production schedule with milestones, approvals and ship dates.

"Our senior management does not foster company-wide support and active commitment to create high quality content. Week-by-week, seat of the pants, non-integrate "rush" campaigns to pull revenue seriously dilutes our ability to execute a coherent and measurable marketing plan."

-Marketer insight on big barriers

CHART: BIGGEST BARRIERS TO EMAIL MARKETING SUCCESS, BY INDUSTRY SECTOR
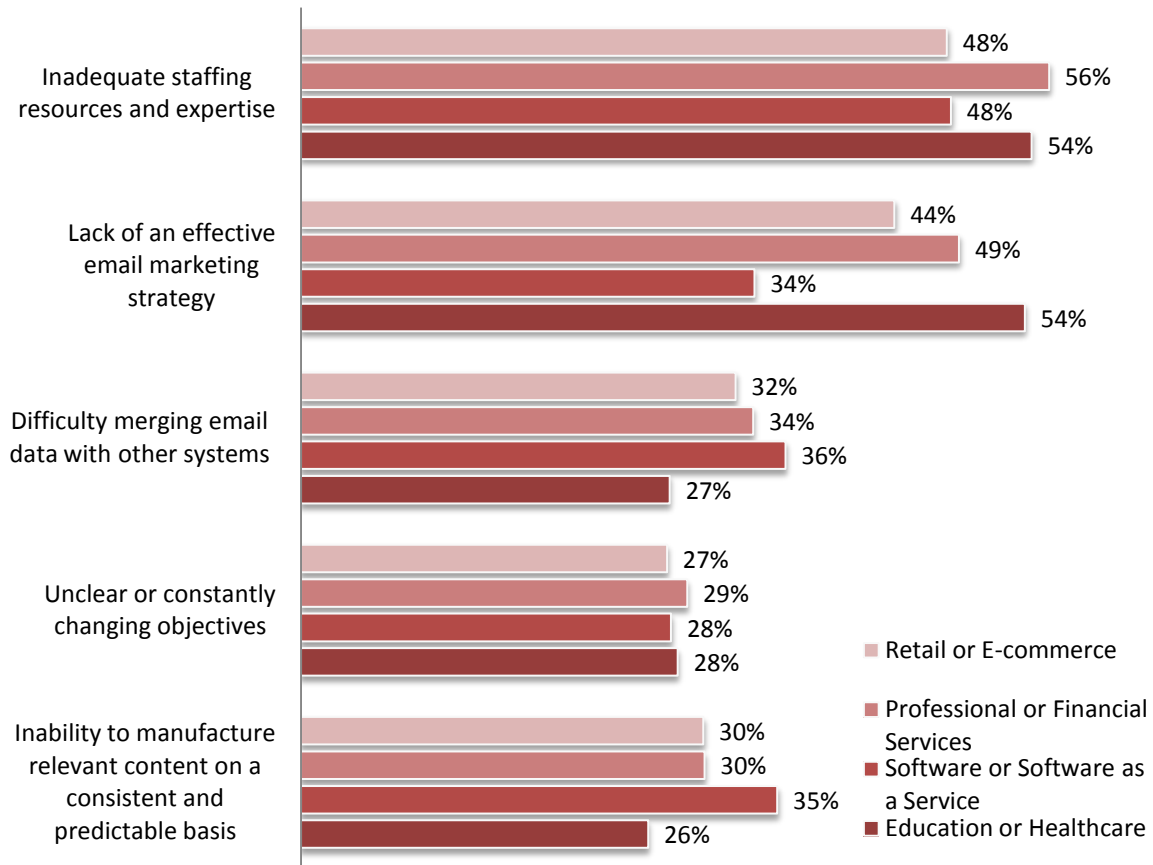
Inadequate staffing resources and expertise
48%
56%
48%
54%

Lack of an effective email marketing strategy
44%
49%
34%
54%

Difficulty merging email data with other systems
32%
34%
36%
27%

Unclear or constantly changing objectives
27%
29%
28%
28%

Inability to manufacture relevant content on a consistent and predictable basis
30%
30%
35%
26%

■ Retail or E-commerce

■ Professional or Financial Services

■ Software or Software as a Service

■ Education or Healthcare

Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa Email Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded July 2011, N=2,735

Organizations with an online business plan will have an easier time creating an effective email strategy than those with traditional business models. In the above chart, retail, e-commerce, software and SaaS do not report having a lack of an effective email marketing strategy as education, healthcare, professional and financial service firms.

With so many companies in survival mode, it can be an overall industry challenge for executives to share a long-term vision for the organization versus the immediate monthly results. More than 25% of marketers cited the lack of clear objectives as a barrier to success. This obstacle makes it difficult for marketers to engineer email marketing campaigns that maintain longstanding relationships with readers.

Furthermore, the next chart will illustrate almost half of small businesses cite a lack of effective email marketing strategy as a hurdle to overcoming top email marketing challenges.

"The biggest challenge we have is crafting a strategy that will be applicable three months down the road. We need leadership that says, "This is the path we're going down" and stick to it — constantly changing directions makes it incredibly difficult to plan or act on anything strategic.

-Marketer insight on big barriers

CHART: BIGGEST BARRIERS TO EMAIL MARKETING SUCCESS, BY ORGANIZATION SIZE
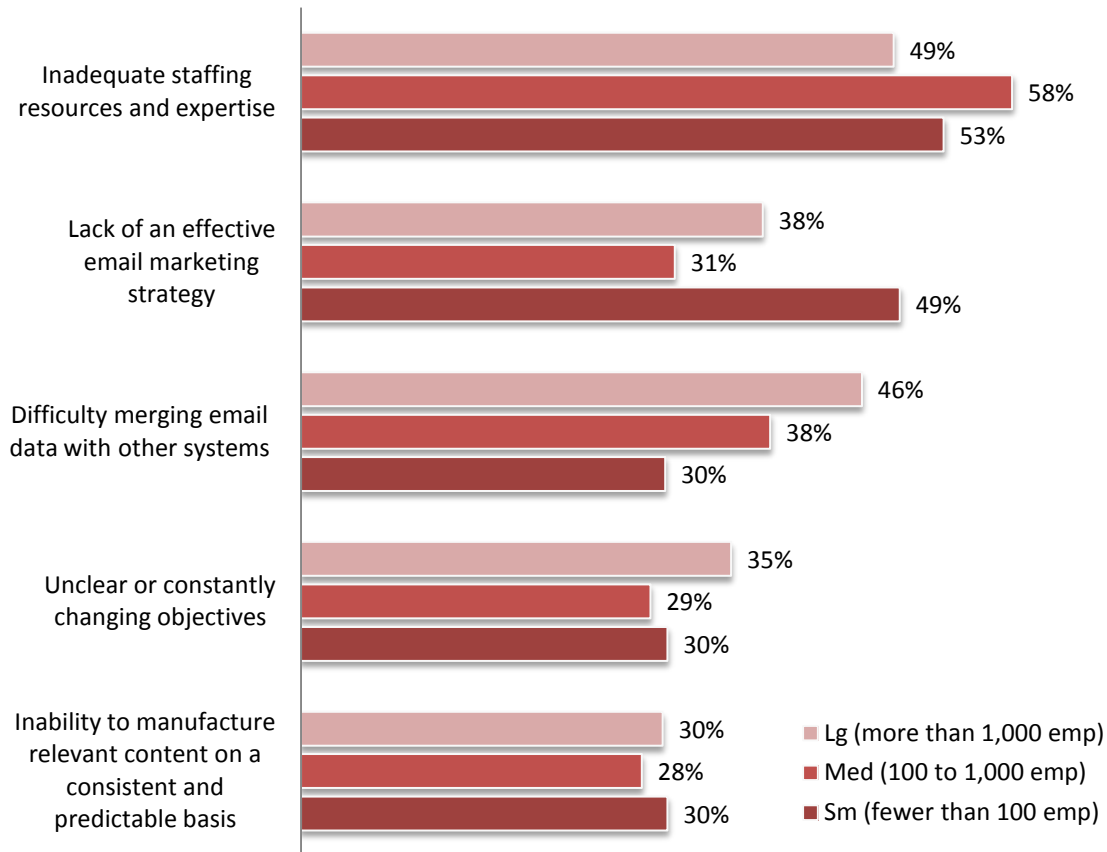
Inadequate staffing resources and expertise
- 49%
- 58%
- 53%

Lack of an effective email marketing strategy
- 38%
- 31%
- 49%

Difficulty merging email data with other systems
- 46%
- 38%
- 30%

Unclear or constantly changing objectives
- 35%
- 29%
- 30%

Inability to manufacture relevant content on a consistent and predictable basis
- 30%
- 28%
- 30%

■ Lg (more than 1,000 emp)
■ Med (100 to 1,000 emp)
■ Sm (fewer than 100 emp)

Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa Email Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded July 2011, N=2,735

Again, the larger the organization, the greater the difficulty in merging email data with other customer relationship management or marketing automation systems. With each graduating organizational size, the percentage of marketers who identified this tedious task as a barrier showed an 8% growth.

"Integrating with other systems - So many places to get different information: data from the data team, email from our ESP, analytics from another tool, and an Excel sheet holding everything together. We need the ability to have multiple systems talk with each other and the resources to build these integrations."

-Marketer insight on big barriers

CHART: PERCENT OF EMAILS SUBJECT TO TESTING AND OPTIMIZATION

Q. What percentage of emails tested and optimized does your organization dedicate to testing email campaigns — using A/B split, multivariate or other methods — to optimize performance?
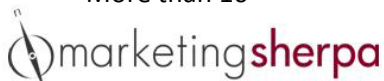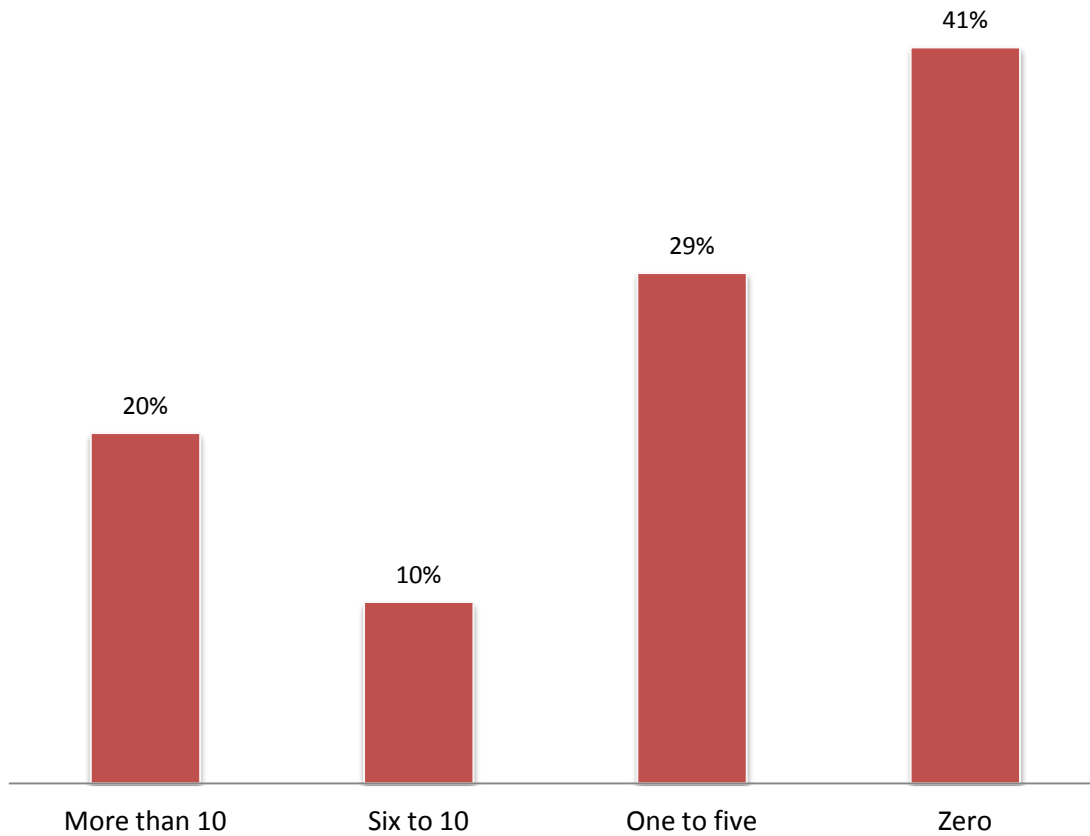
Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa Email Marketing Benchmark Survey
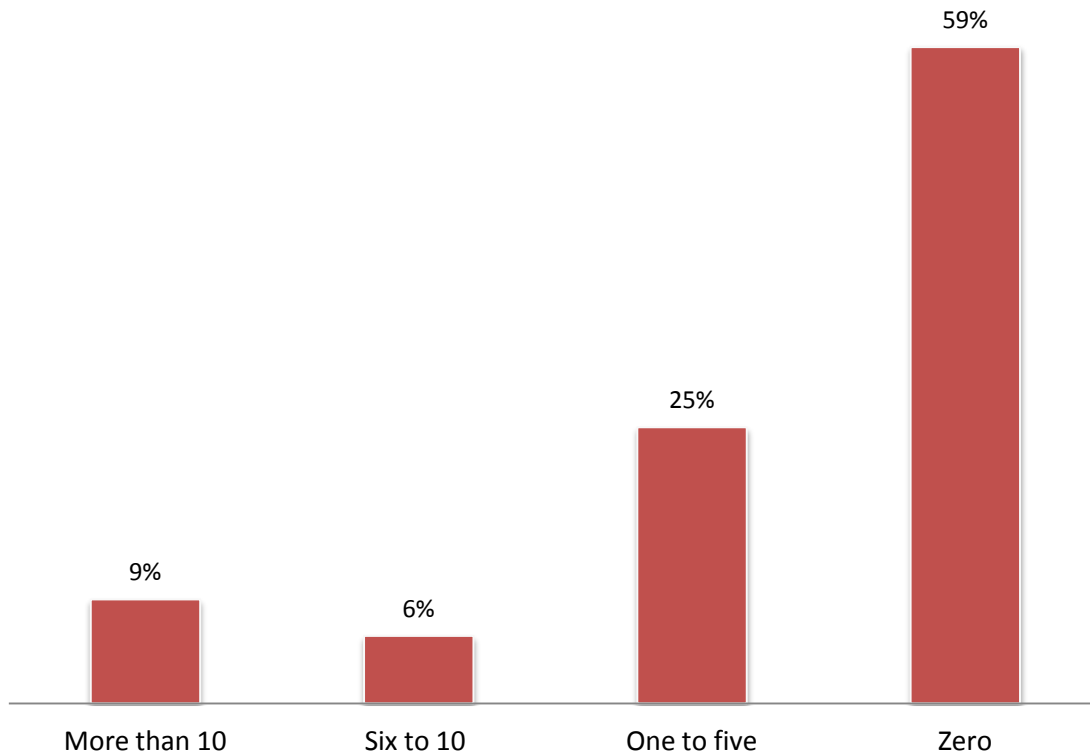Methodology: Fielded July 2011, N=2,735

Earlier in this benchmark, we learned that only 35% of marketers said testing was a very significant challenge. This was the second-least reported challenge. Only segmenting the existing email database was rated lower. This does not correlate to organizations testing a high percentage of their email campaigns.

Testing 6-10% of an organization's email generates a measurable sample size without overtaxing researchers' time with an abundance of data to review and track. In this survey, 10% of marketers responded to testing this percentage of email communications.

EMAIL TESTING AND OPTIMIZATION BUDGETS

CHART: PERCENTAGE OF EMAIL BUDGET DEDICATED TO TESTING AND OPTIMIZATION
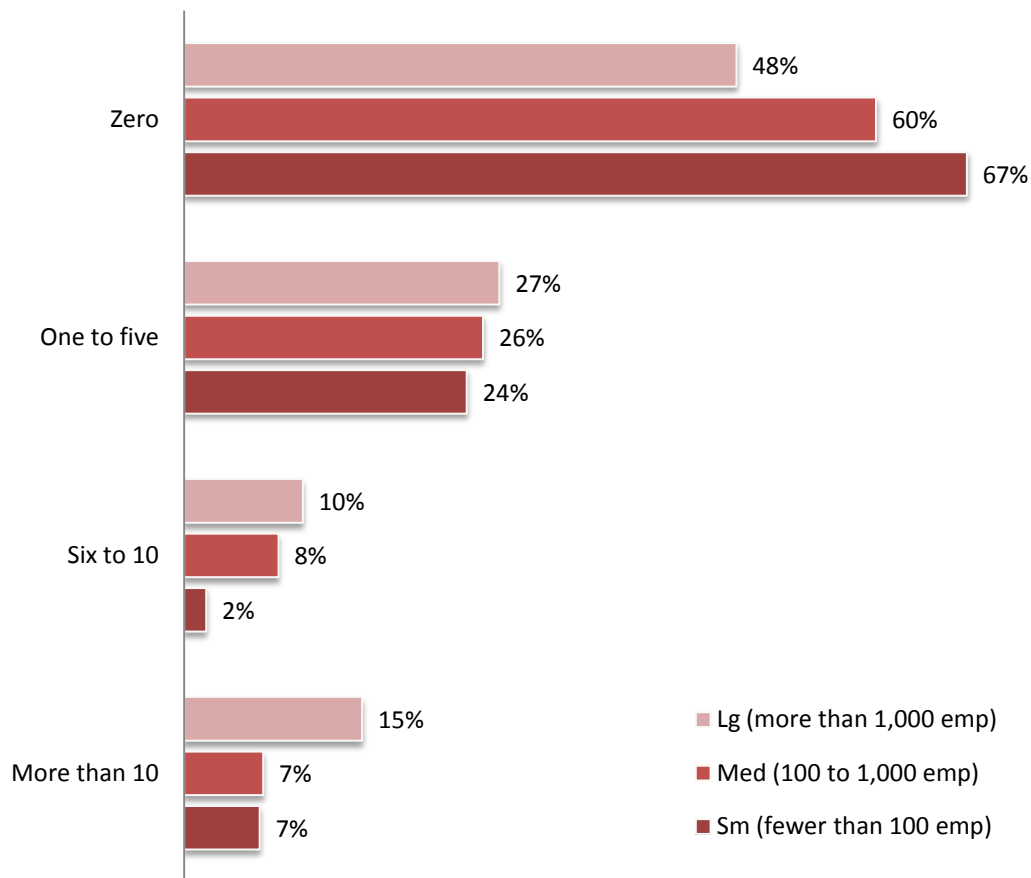
Q. *What percentage of the email budget is dedicated to testing and optimization?*

Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa Email Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded July 2011, N=2,735

Unfortunately, a majority of organizations are not spending any portion of their budget on testing optimization. Having a budget for testing and optimization gives marketers the option to dedicate an internal resource to manage experimentation process, from brainstorming on testing ideas to maintaining benchmarks.

In addition, organizations may choose to outsource email analytics, viewing mobile layouts across a variety of platforms, or the actual testing process.

"Testing and optimization is a foreign practice to our company. Budget constraints impact us proceeding with this step."

-Marketer insight on challenges

CHART: PERCENTAGE OF EMAIL BUDGET DEDICATED TO TESTING, BY PRIMARY CHANNEL
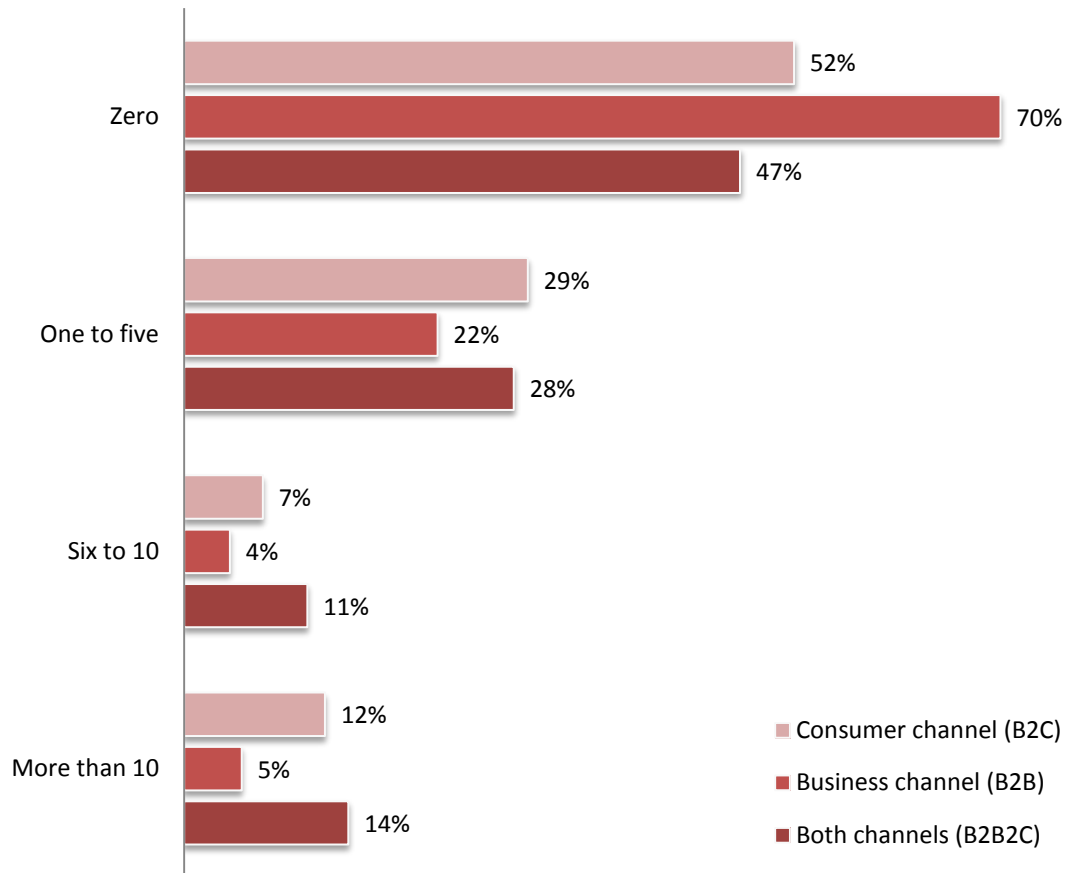
Zero
- 52%
- 70%
- 47%

One to five
- 29%
- 22%
- 28%

Six to 10
- 7%
- 4%
- 11%

More than 10
- 12%
- 5%
- 14%

■ Consumer channel (B2C)

■ Business channel (B2B)

■ Both channels (B2B2C)

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Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa Email Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded July 2011, N=2,735

It is disappointing to discover 70% of B2B organizations dedicate *zero* dollars to testing and optimization. With a smaller pool of prospects to work with than their B2C counterparts, it is even more critical for B2B firms to deliver the most effective email communications possible.

B2C marketers are twice as likely to spend more than 10% of their email budget as their B2B colleagues. This may be due to the high volume of conversion opportunities made available in the B2C channel that makes a direct impact on a B2C organization's bottom line.

CHART: PERCENTAGE OF EMAIL BUDGET DEDICATED TO TESTING, BY INDUSTRY SECTOR
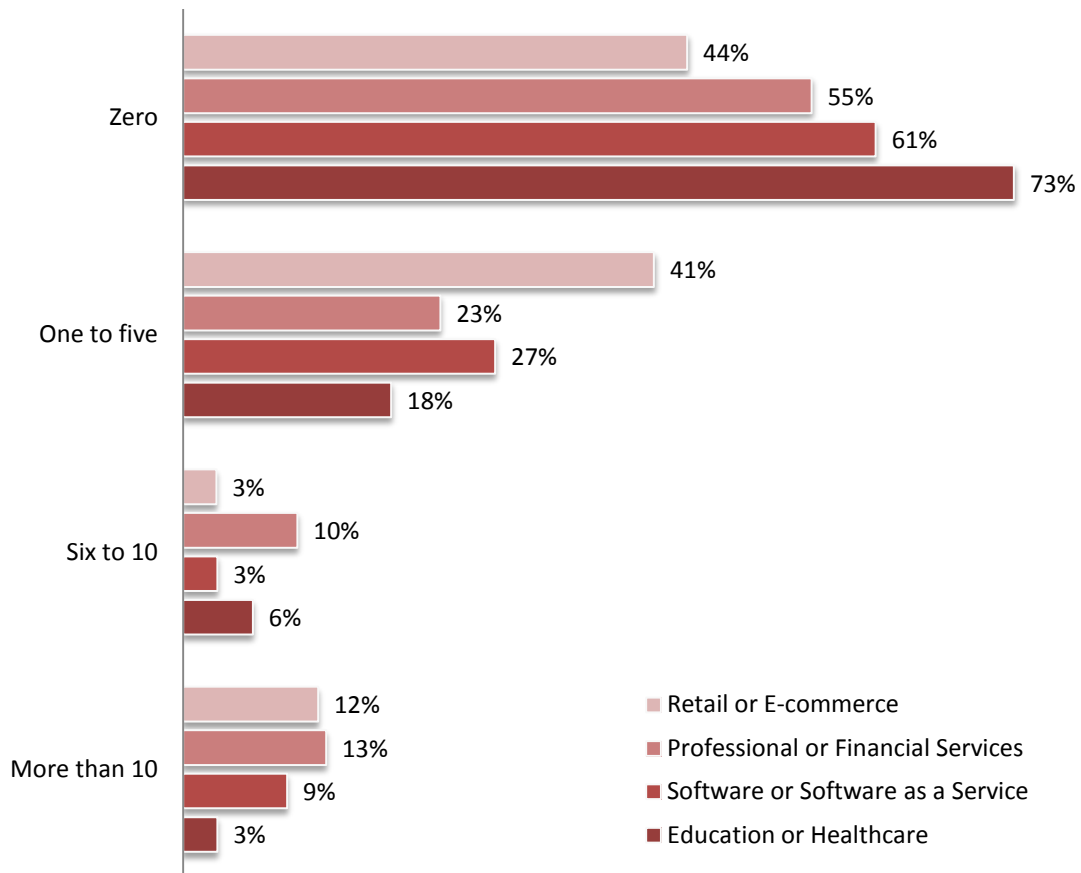
Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa Email Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded July 2011, N=2,735

Software and SaaS have shown the sophistication and success of their email programs throughout this benchmark. So, it is surprising to learn six out of 10 SaaS marketers do not spend a portion of their email budget on message testing and optimization.

CHART: PERCENTAGE OF EMAIL BUDGET DEDICATED TO TESTING, BY ORGANIZATION SIZE

Zero
- Lg: 48%
- Med: 60%
- Sm: 67%

One to five
- Lg: 27%
- Med: 26%
- Sm: 24%

Six to 10
- Lg: 10%
- Med: 8%
- Sm: 2%

More than 10
- Lg: 15%
- Med: 7%
- Sm: 7%

- Lg (more than 1,000 emp)
- Med (100 to 1,000 emp)
- Sm (fewer than 100 emp)

Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa Email Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded July 2011, N=2,735

As expected, the larger the organization, the more likely they are to dedicate a portion of their email budget to testing. The biggest differential is in the email budget range of more than 10%, where larger firms are twice as likely to spend this amount compared to small- and medium-sized companies.

CHART: PERCENTAGE OF EMAIL BUDGET DEDICATED TO TESTING, BY TESTING MATURITY
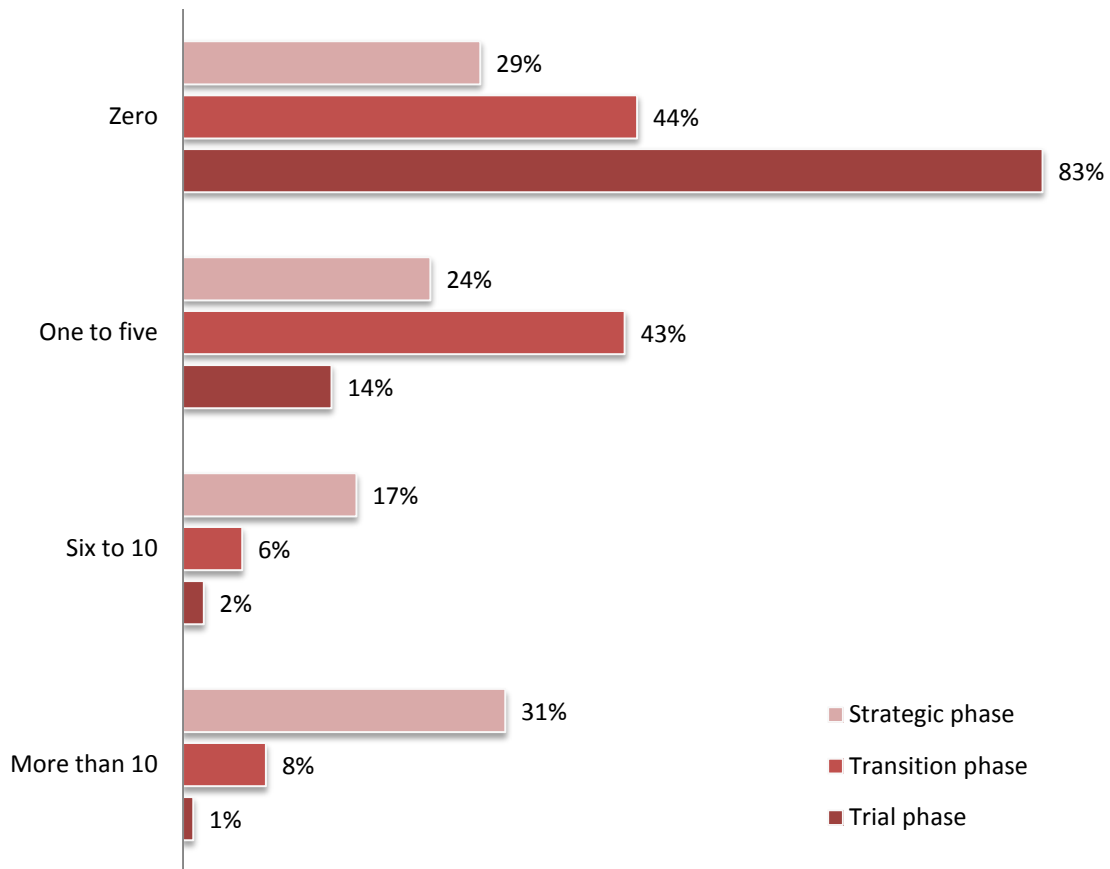
Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa Email Marketing Benchmark Survey
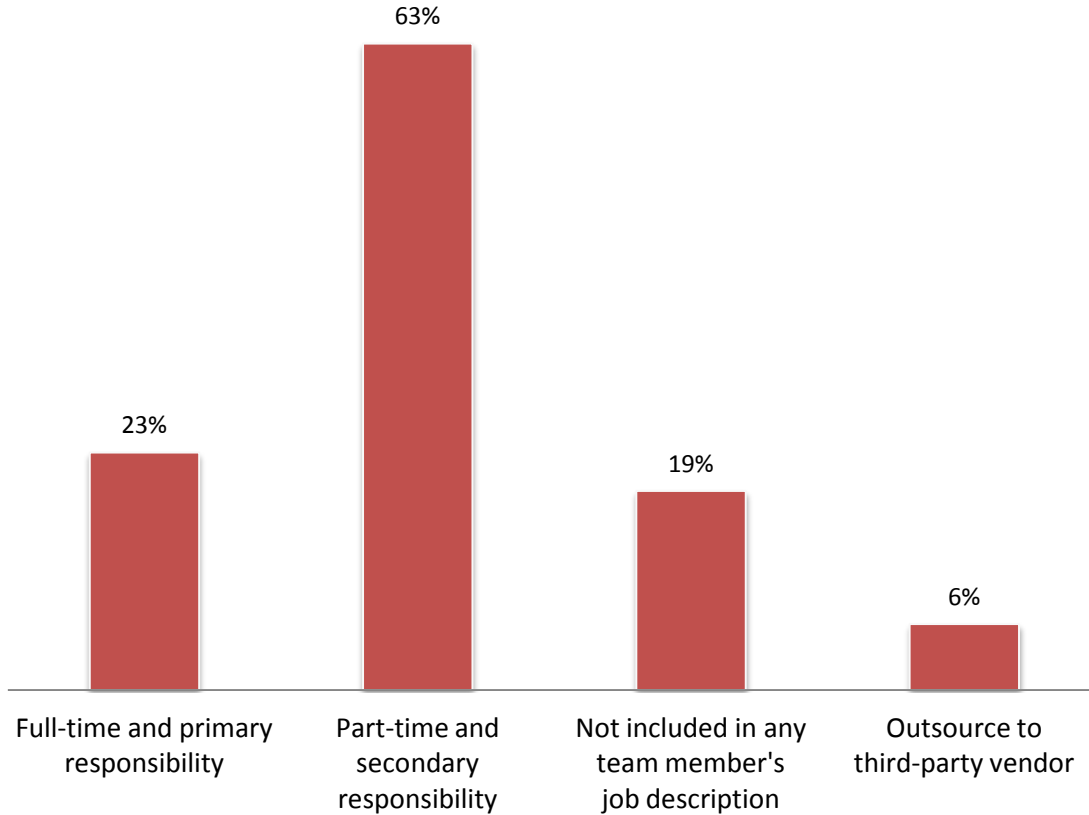Methodology: Fielded July 2011, N=2,735

We saw that 31% of marketers who have written guidelines, and formal processes they routinely execute for testing email campaigns, reported spending more than 10% of their budgets on email experiments. This grouping represents the greatest percentage of organizations in the Strategic Phase of testing maturity.

Strategic Phase organizations build strong cases for running effective email trials that justify the additional funding needed to expand their research capacity.

RESOURCE ALLOCATION DEDICATED TO EMAIL TESTING AND OPTIMIZATION

CHART: TESTING IS A SECONDARY JOB FUNCTION FOR MOST ORGANIZATIONS
What resources does your organization dedicate types to email testing and optimization?

Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa Email Marketing Benchmark Survey
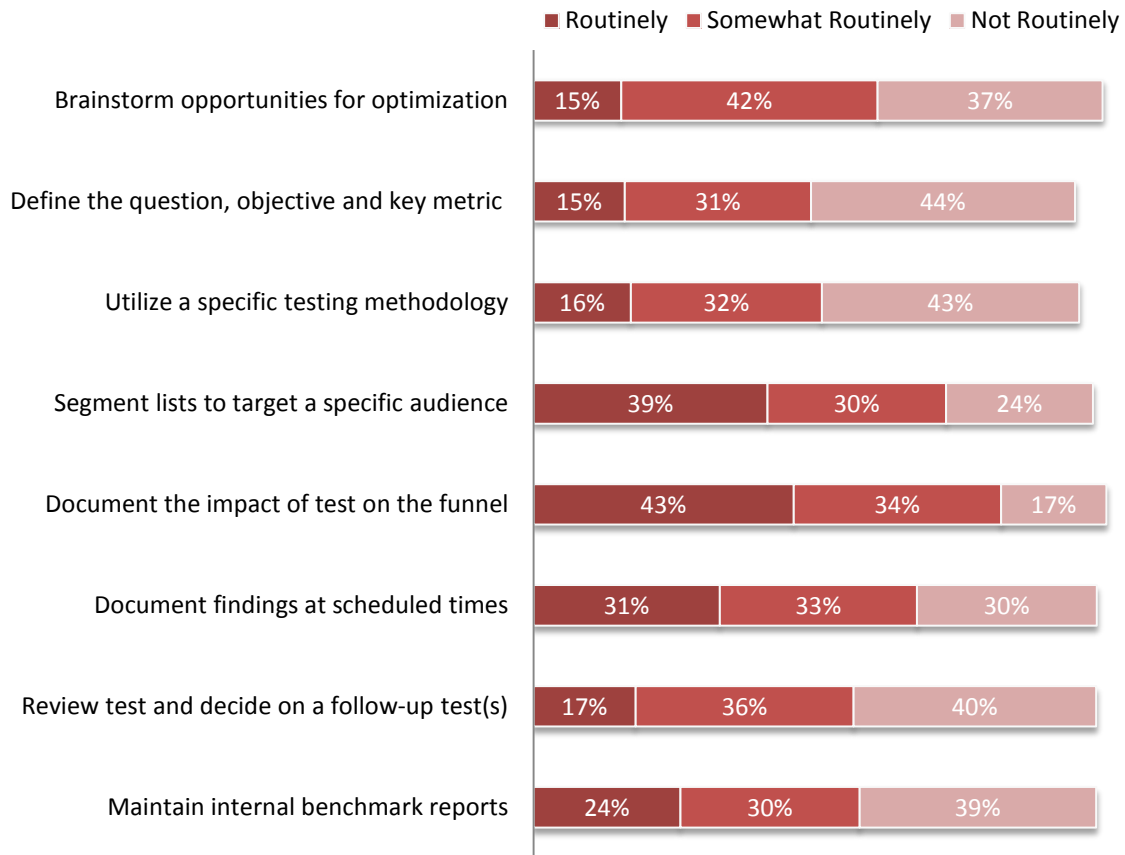Methodology: Fielded July 2011, N=2,735

This chart provides a look into employees' levels of expertise and the time companies are committing to email testing and optimization. Please note marketers surveyed had the option to check all selections that applied.

At 63%, the most common hired resource is a part-time employee whose secondary responsibility is testing and optimization. Workers in this resource-strapped economy will not be shocked that 19% of marketers surveyed reported their colleagues were testing email campaigns, even though it was not in their job descriptions.

TESTING PRACTICES MOST ROUTINELY IMPLEMENTED

CHART: MORE TIME NEEDED FOR BRAINSTORMING AND DEFINING THE TESTING OBJECTIVE

*How routinely does your organization implement the following testing practices?*

■ Routinely ■ Somewhat Routinely ■ Not Routinely

Practice	Routinely	Somewhat Routinely	Not Routinely
Brainstorm opportunities for optimization	15%	42%	37%
Define the question, objective and key metric	15%	31%	44%
Utilize a specific testing methodology	16%	32%	43%
Segment lists to target a specific audience	39%	30%	24%
Document the impact of test on the funnel	43%	34%	17%
Document findings at scheduled times	31%	33%	30%
Review test and decide on a follow-up test(s)	17%	36%	40%
Maintain internal benchmark reports	24%	30%	39%

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Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa Email Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded July 2011, N=2,735

The above chart displays common testing practices in chronological order from top to bottom. We asked marketers to share which tasks their organization routinely executed. The survey uncovered organizations are spending the most time segmenting their lists, understanding the impact of the test on the entire funnel, and documenting their findings. *Where* firms can commit more time is defining the question, identifying key metrics, and actually reviewing the tests to decide on follow-up actions. Defining the question and reviewing the test is where the essential learning happens. Remember, the goal of the test is not to get a lift, rather a discovery.

Also startling was that only 16% of organizations utilized a specific methodology to analyze data and create new single and multi-factor tests. A methodology can provide guidance for planning, designing, conducting and interpreting optimization tests to reduce the time-to-discovery. A methodology freely made available on MarketingExperiments website is the Email Messaging Optimization Index. The heuristic is **eme + rv (of +i) – (f +a)** [©]. Wherein, **eme** = email messaging effectiveness index; **rv** = relevance to the consumer; **of** = offer value; **i** = incentive to take action; **f** = friction elements of process; and **a** = anxiety.

TOP EMAIL ELEMENTS TO TEST

CHART: THREE DIMENSIONS OF TESTING ELEMENTS - EFFECTIVENESS, DIFFICULTY AND USE
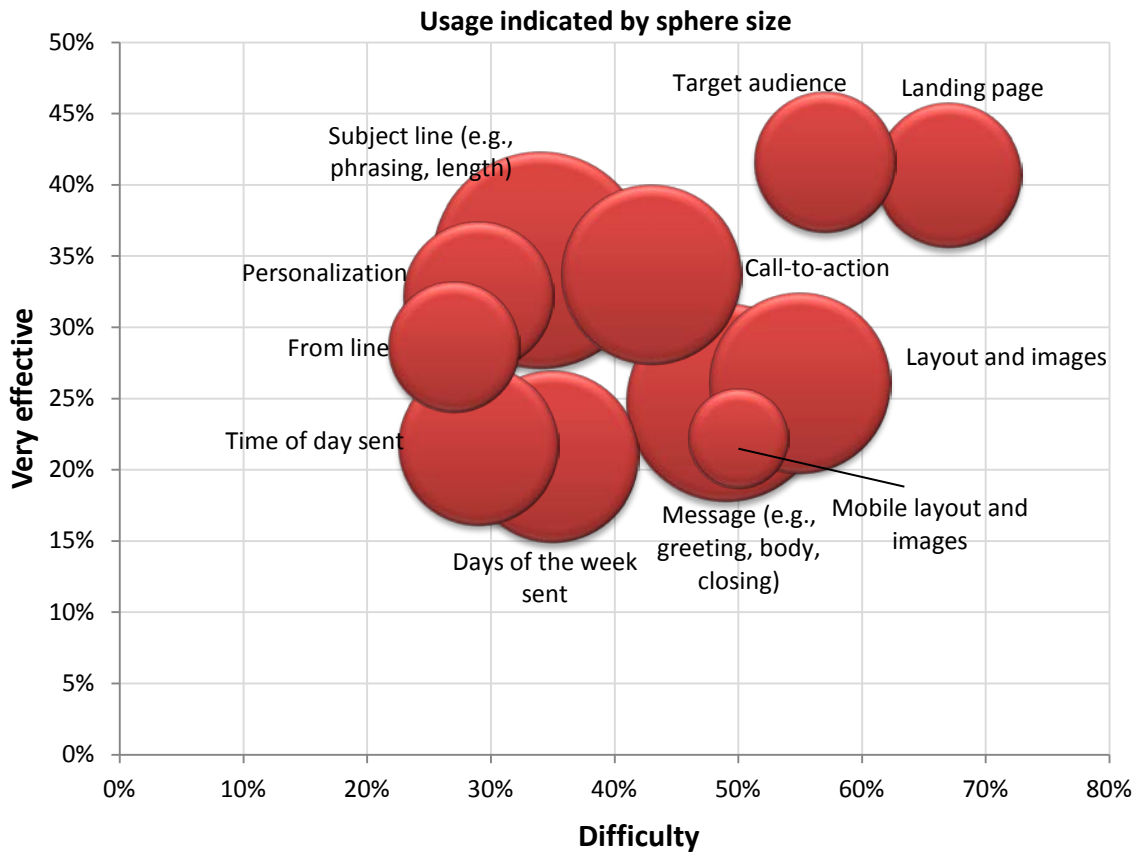
Usage indicated by sphere size

Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa Email Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded July 2011, N=2,735

When marketers begin to brainstorm on elements of an email campaign to test, it can seem overwhelming to decide which components should be examined. It is important to focus on the behavior and motivations of the subscriber to increase relevance and reduce any apprehensive feelings. At the same time, organizations must consider available resources.

The above chart displays the effectiveness, difficulty and usage of common email testing elements. Testing elements of target audience and landing pages are cited by marketers to be the most effective, even though they are not the most frequently tested.
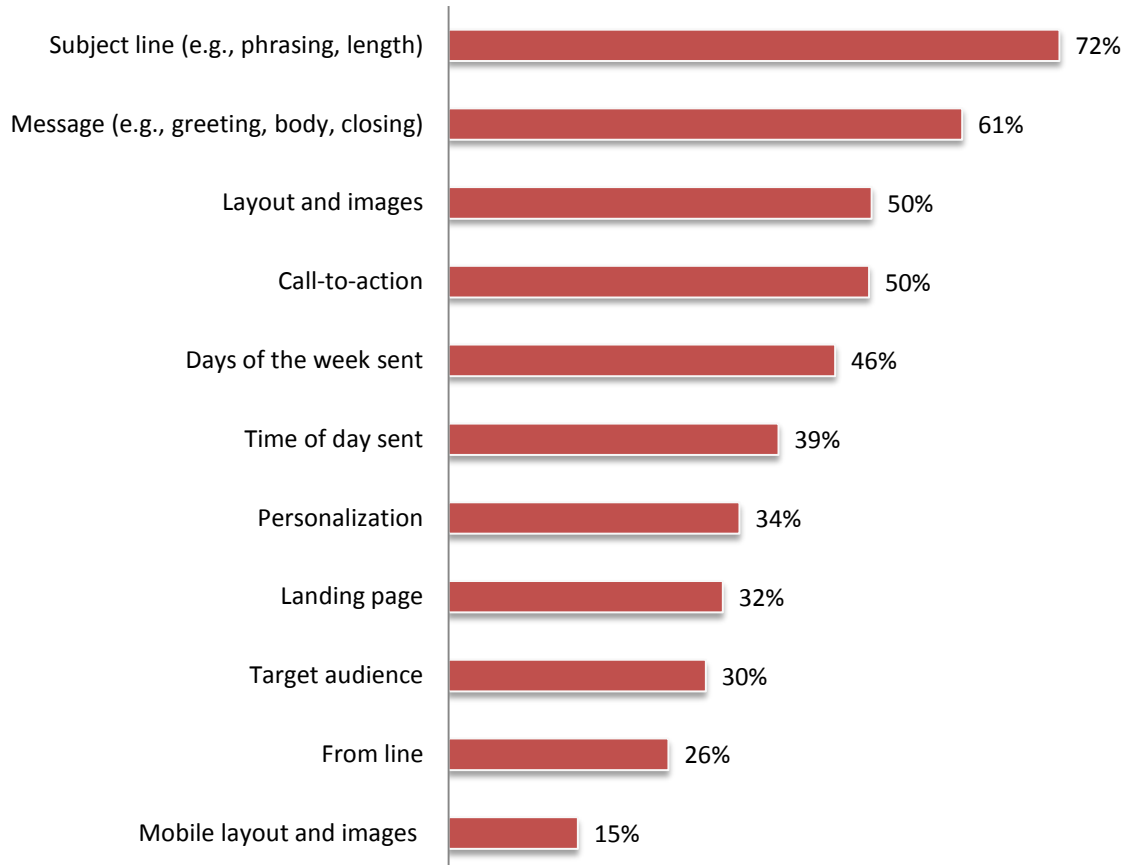
This chart also shows that marketers find the time, effort and expense spent on these elements to be high.

Learn more about testing and optimization practices in Chapter 9 of the MarketingSherpa 2011 Email Marketing Advanced Practices Handbook.

MOST ROUTINELY TESTED EMAIL ELEMENTS

CHART: SUBJECT LINES MOST POPULAR EMAIL ELEMENT TO TEST

Q. Which of the following email campaign elements do you routinely test to optimize performance?

Element	Percentage
Subject line (e.g., phrasing, length)	72%
Message (e.g., greeting, body, closing)	61%
Layout and images	50%
Call-to-action	50%
Days of the week sent	46%
Time of day sent	39%
Personalization	34%
Landing page	32%
Target audience	30%
From line	26%
Mobile layout and images	15%

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Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa Email Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded July 2011, N=2,735

The impact subject lines have on open rates, and the ease in which marketers can substitute them, makes experimenting with subject lines the most popular email element to test. The subject line acts as a mini-billboard, trying to quickly grab readers' attention as they scan their inbox. Successful subject lines are brief, branded and truthful to the intention of the email, so many marketers experiment with length, personalization and real-time events.
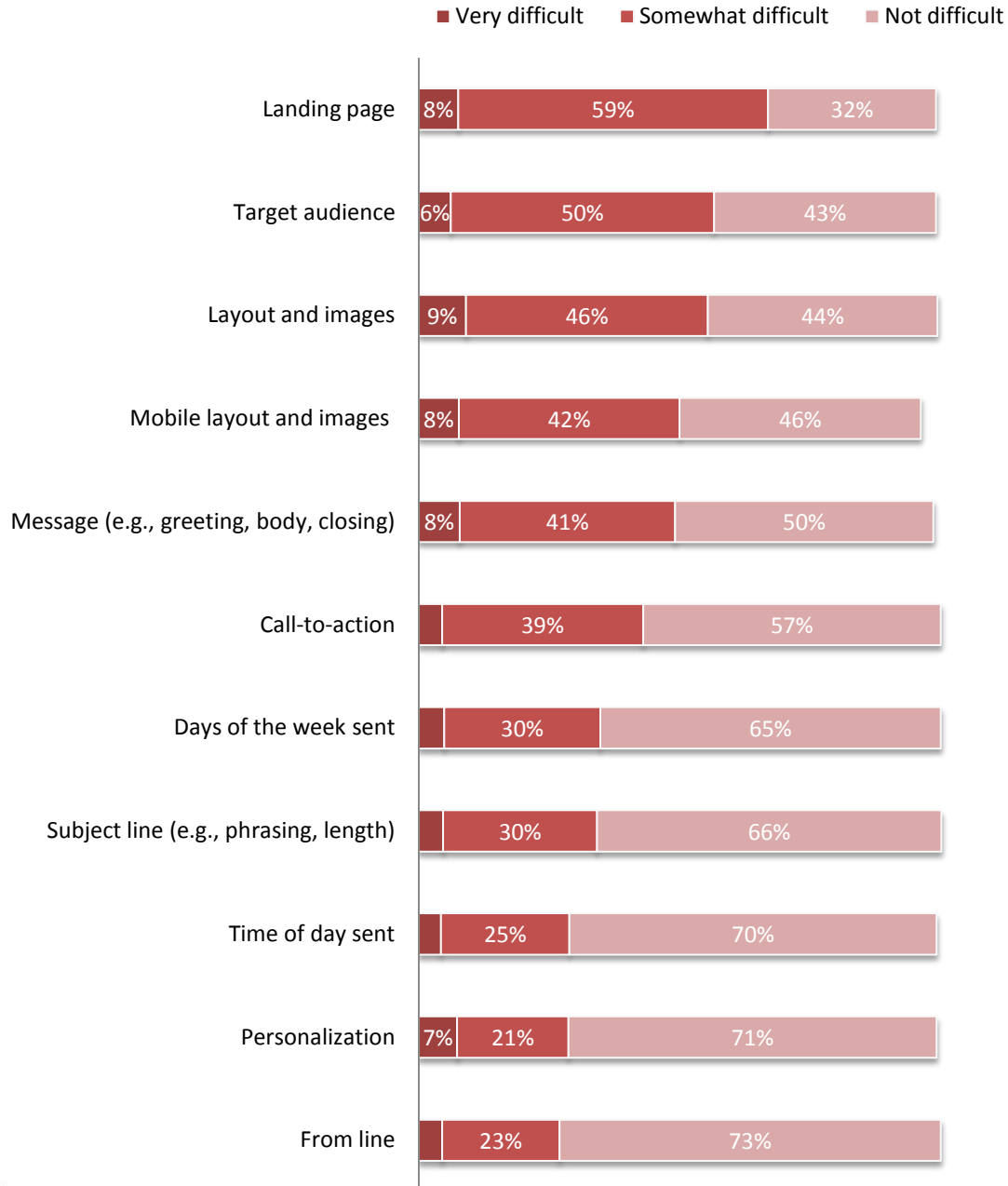
Testing layout and images is also a popular component for marketers to test. The time to change layouts, images, fonts and colors can be time intensive. However, the trials may lead organizations to discover the size and color of the call-to-action button can impact conversion rates.

With the mass adaption of mobile devices, including smartphones and tablets, look for the number of marketers testing mobile layouts and images to dramatically increase in the months ahead.

THE TIME, EFFORT AND EXPENSE REQUIRED FOR EMAIL ELEMENTS TESTED

CHART: LANDING PAGES LISTED AS A DIFFICULT ELEMENT TO TEST

Q. Please indicate the degree of DIFFICULTY (time, effort and expense) for each of the email testing and optimization tactics your organization is using.
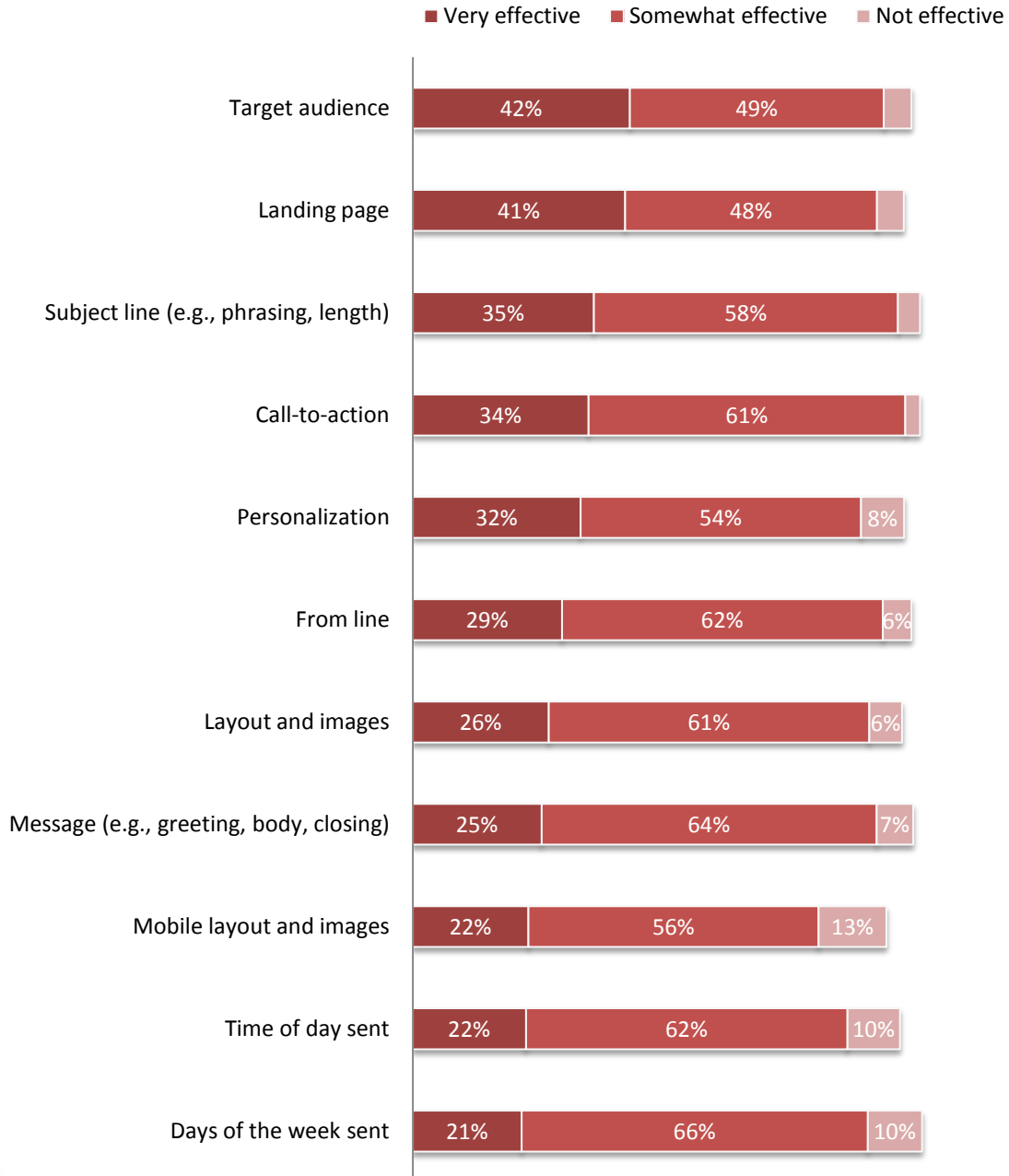
Legend: ■ Very difficult ■ Somewhat difficult ■ Not difficult

Element	Very difficult	Somewhat difficult	Not difficult
Landing page	8%	59%	32%
Target audience	6%	50%	43%
Layout and images	9%	46%	44%
Mobile layout and images	8%	42%	46%
Message (e.g., greeting, body, closing)	8%	41%	50%
Call-to-action		39%	57%
Days of the week sent		30%	65%
Subject line (e.g., phrasing, length)		30%	66%
Time of day sent		25%	70%
Personalization	7%	21%	71%
From line		23%	73%

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Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa Email Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded July 2011, N=2,735

MarketingSherpa: *Collected Research on What Really Works in Optimization*

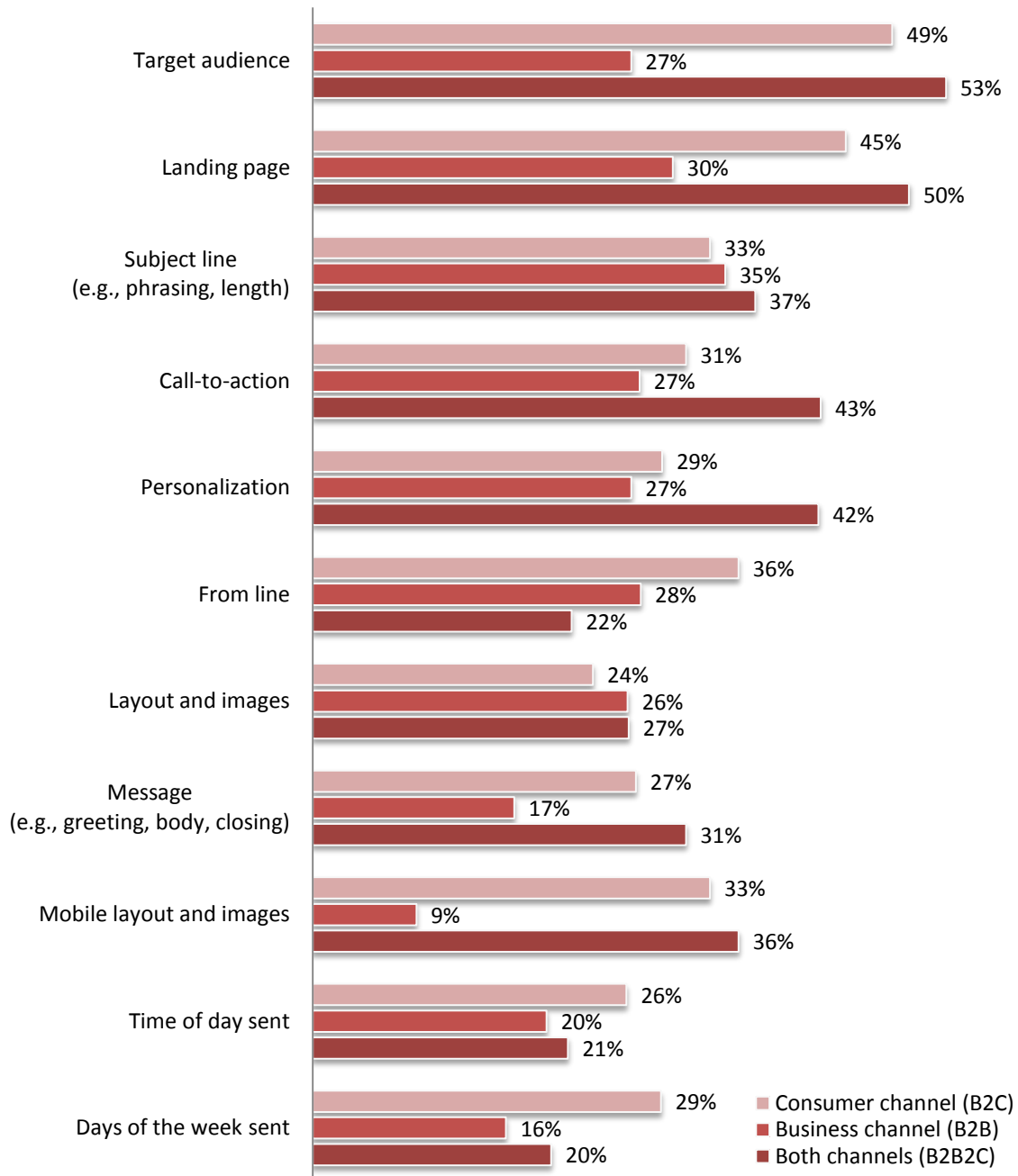## EFFECTIVENESS OF EMAIL TESTING AND OPTIMIZATION ELEMENTS

CHART: TARGET AUDIENCE IS THE MOST EFFECTIVE ELEMENT TO TEST

Q. Please indicate the level of EFFECTIVENESS for each of the email testing and optimization tactics your organization is using.

■ Very effective   ■ Somewhat effective   ■ Not effective

Element	Very effective	Somewhat effective	Not effective
Target audience	42%	49%	
Landing page	41%	48%	
Subject line (e.g., phrasing, length)	35%	58%	
Call-to-action	34%	61%	
Personalization	32%	54%	8%
From line	29%	62%	6%
Layout and images	26%	61%	6%
Message (e.g., greeting, body, closing)	25%	64%	7%
Mobile layout and images	22%	56%	13%
Time of day sent	22%	62%	10%
Days of the week sent	21%	66%	10%

Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa Email Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded July 2011, N=2,735

CHART: VERY EFFECTIVE EMAIL TESTING ELEMENTS, BY PRIMARY CHANNEL

Target audience
- 49%
- 27%
- 53%

Landing page
- 45%
- 30%
- 50%

Subject line (e.g., phrasing, length)
- 33%
- 35%
- 37%

Call-to-action
- 31%
- 27%
- 43%

Personalization
- 29%
- 27%
- 42%

From line
- 36%
- 28%
- 22%

Layout and images
- 24%
- 26%
- 27%

Message (e.g., greeting, body, closing)
- 27%
- 17%
- 31%

Mobile layout and images
- 33%
- 9%
- 36%

Time of day sent
- 26%
- 20%
- 21%

Days of the week sent
- 29%
- 16%
- 20%

■ Consumer channel (B2C)
■ Business channel (B2B)
■ Both channels (B2B2C)

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powered by MECLABS

Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa Email Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded July 2011, N=2,735

B2C organizations were much more likely to find success experimenting with the target audience than the B2B firms in this study. In general, B2C companies have a greater diversity of their customer base than B2B firms. By segmenting a portion of their email lists closely tied to the testing objective, B2C marketers make more discoveries than testing across the board. This narrow focus allows the research team to see specific results rather than the data pulling them in an array of directions.

CHART: VERY EFFECTIVE EMAIL TESTING ELEMENTS, BY INDUSTRY SECTOR
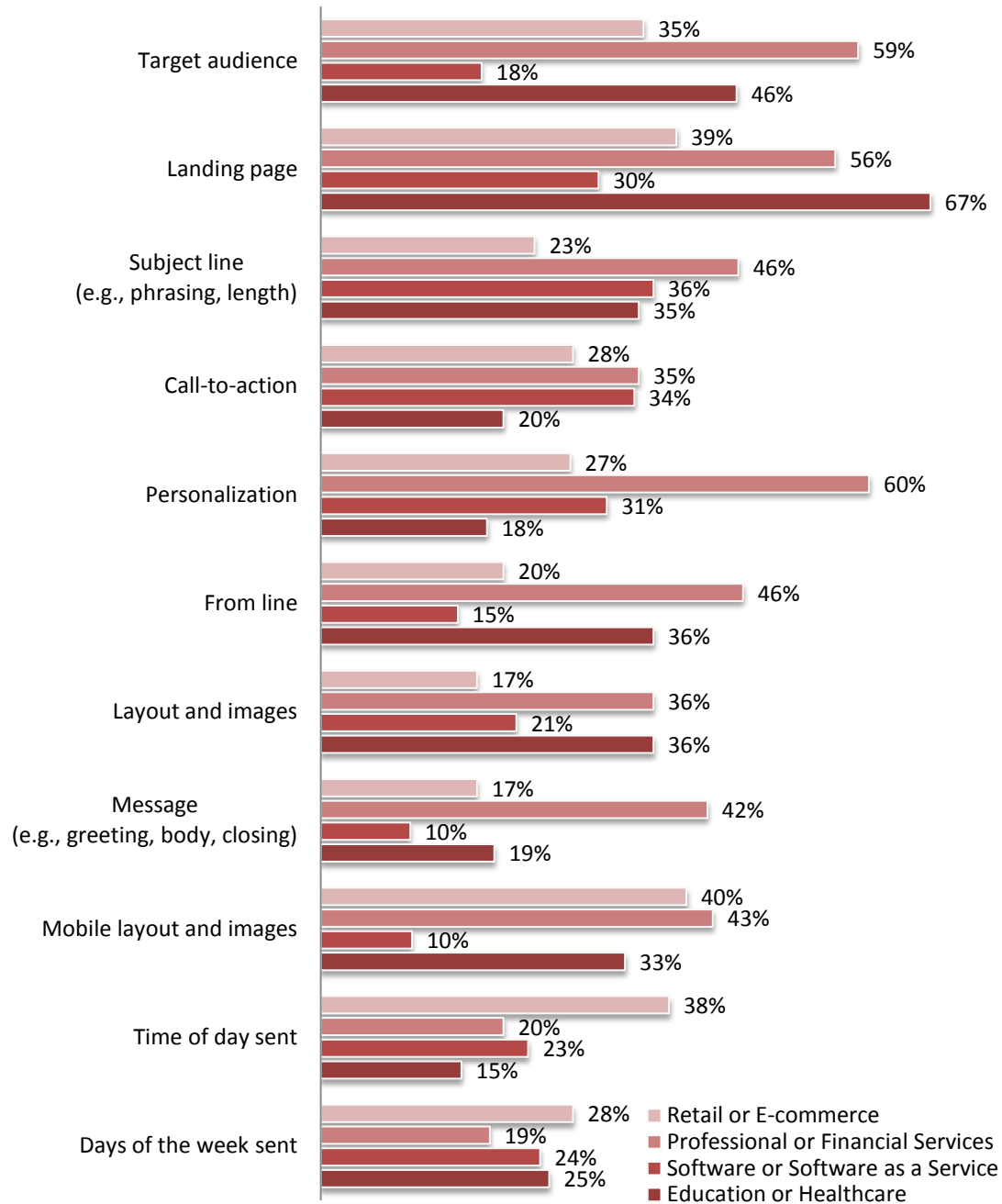
The goal of an email is to earn a click. It is the landing page that does the heavy lifting to create a conversion. For industries where the sale involves deeply personal information regarding finances or fitness levels, landing pages provide additional evidence to make the reader at ease to move forward on the path to purchase. This is apparent in the education and healthcare fields, wherein 67% of organizations reported landing page optimization as "very effective."

CHART: VERY EFFECTIVE EMAIL TESTING ELEMENTS, BY ORGANIZATION SIZE
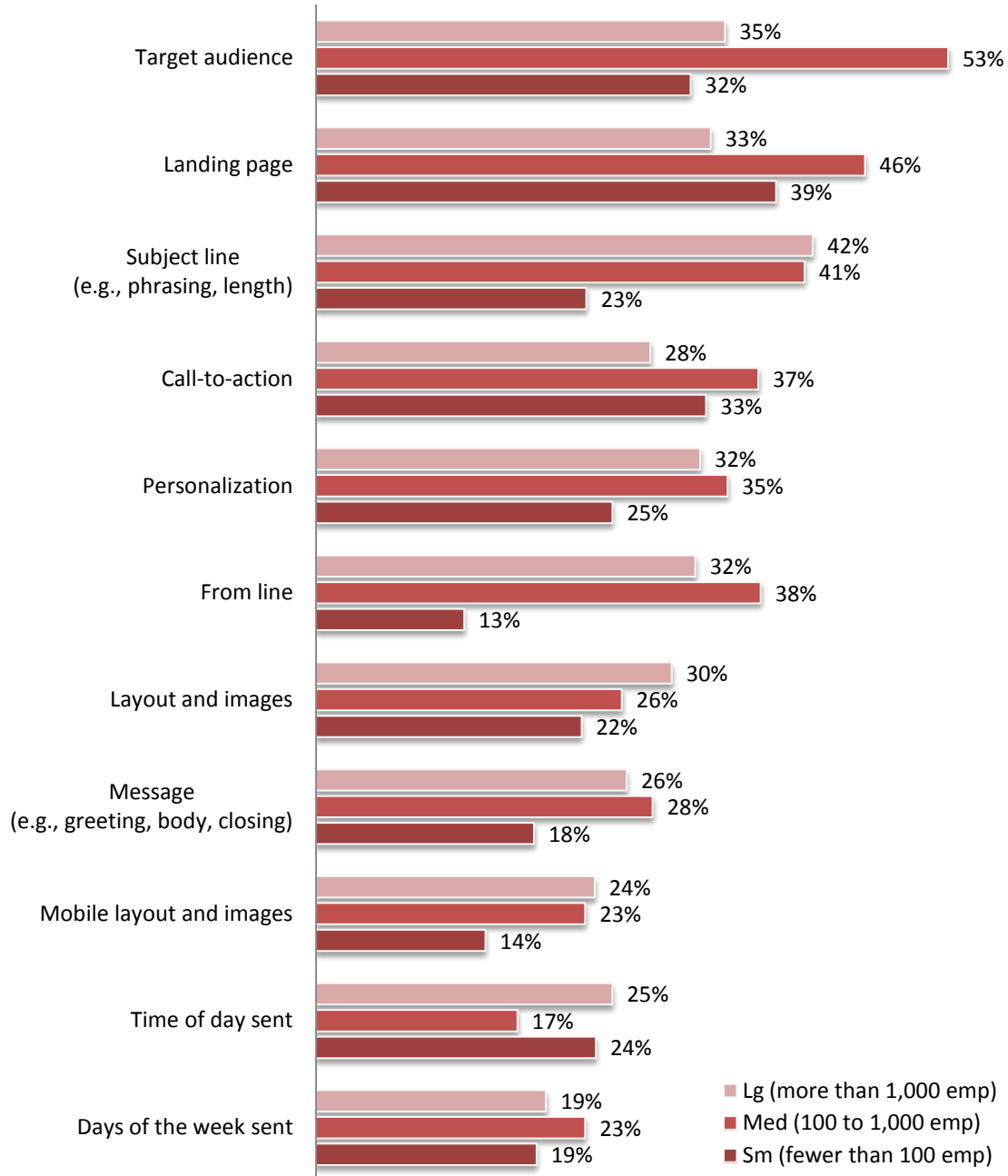
Target audience
- 35%
- 53%
- 32%

Landing page
- 33%
- 46%
- 39%

Subject line
(e.g., phrasing, length)
- 42%
- 41%
- 23%

Call-to-action
- 28%
- 37%
- 33%

Personalization
- 32%
- 35%
- 25%

From line
- 32%
- 38%
- 13%

Layout and images
- 30%
- 26%
- 22%

Message
(e.g., greeting, body, closing)
- 26%
- 28%
- 18%

Mobile layout and images
- 24%
- 23%
- 14%

Time of day sent
- 25%
- 17%
- 24%

Days of the week sent
- 19%
- 23%
- 19%

Legend:
- Lg (more than 1,000 emp)
- Med (100 to 1,000 emp)
- Sm (fewer than 100 emp)

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Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa Email Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded July 2011, N=2,735

MarketingSherpa: *Collected Research on What Really Works in Optimization*

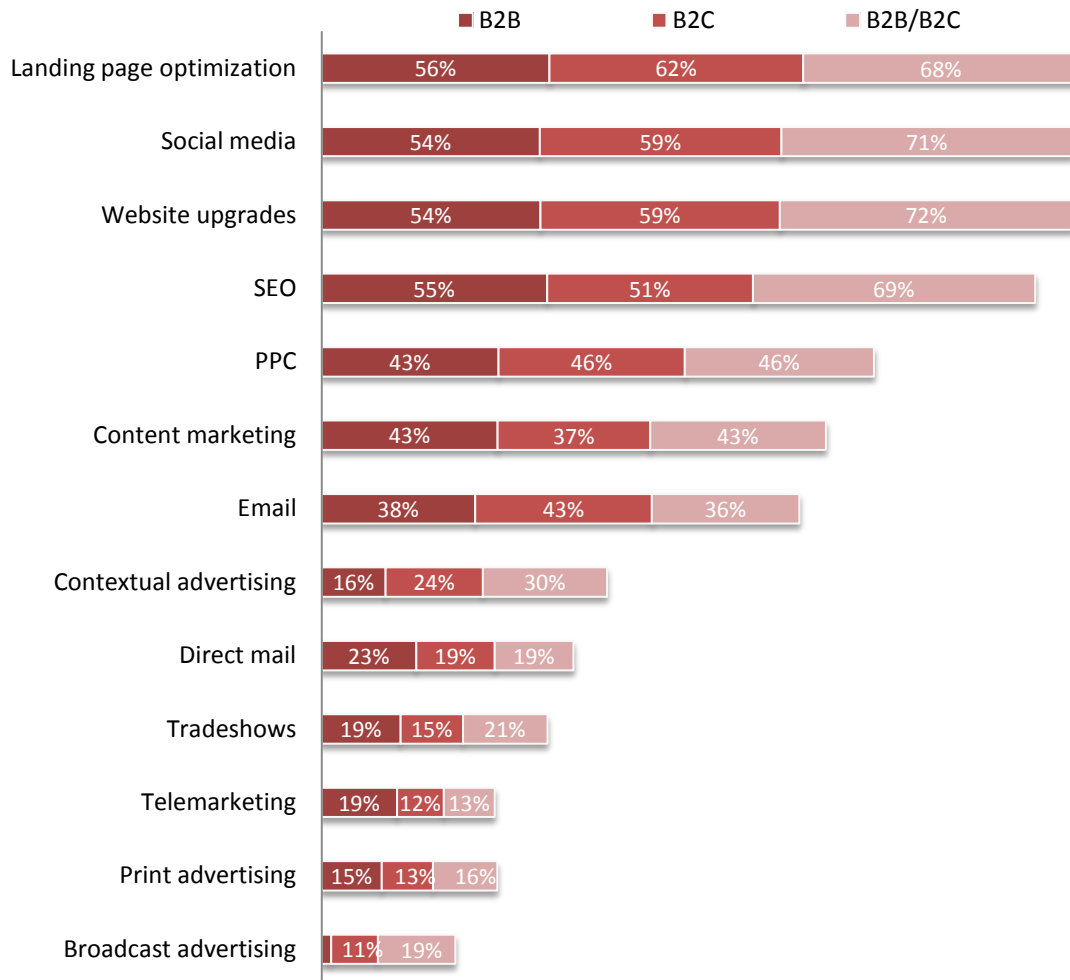CHART: VERY EFFECTIVE EMAIL TESTING ELEMENTS, BY TESTING MATURITY
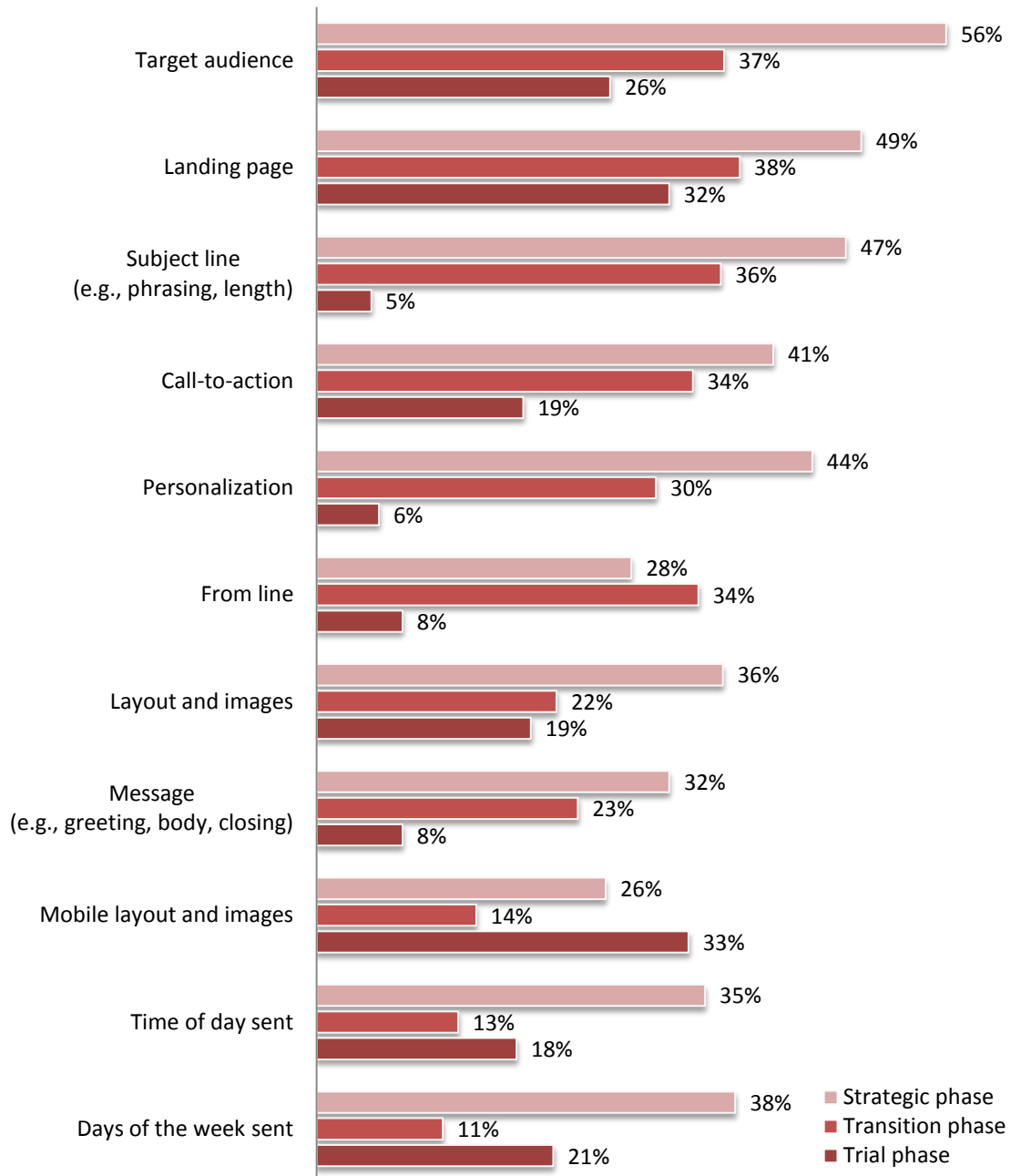
Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa Email Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded July 2011, N=2,735

Regarding the five most effective testing elements, the greater the testing maturity of an organization, the greater the effectiveness of its experiments. This is especially evident in optimizing subject lines, where 47% of firms in the Strategic Phase find the practice "very effective," as compared to only 5% of Trial Phase organizations.

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KEY FINDING: LESS POPULAR EMAIL ELEMENTS TO TEST ARE FOUND TO BE MORE EFFECTIVE

Testing and optimization practices have proven to be extremely efficient means to increase email performance. Routinely running tests enables marketers to discover new approaches, initiatives and insights, leading to communications that are more effective.

In Chapter 9: Testing Drives Innovation of MarketingSherpa's *2012 Email Marketing Benchmark Report*, one of the more interesting discoveries was that the most popular testing elements were not always the most effective. In the chart below, two of the least tested elements, landing page and target audience, were found as the most effective elements to test.

CHART: LANDING PAGES FOUND TO BE MORE EFFECTIVE ELEMENTS TO TEST THAN SUBJECT LINES
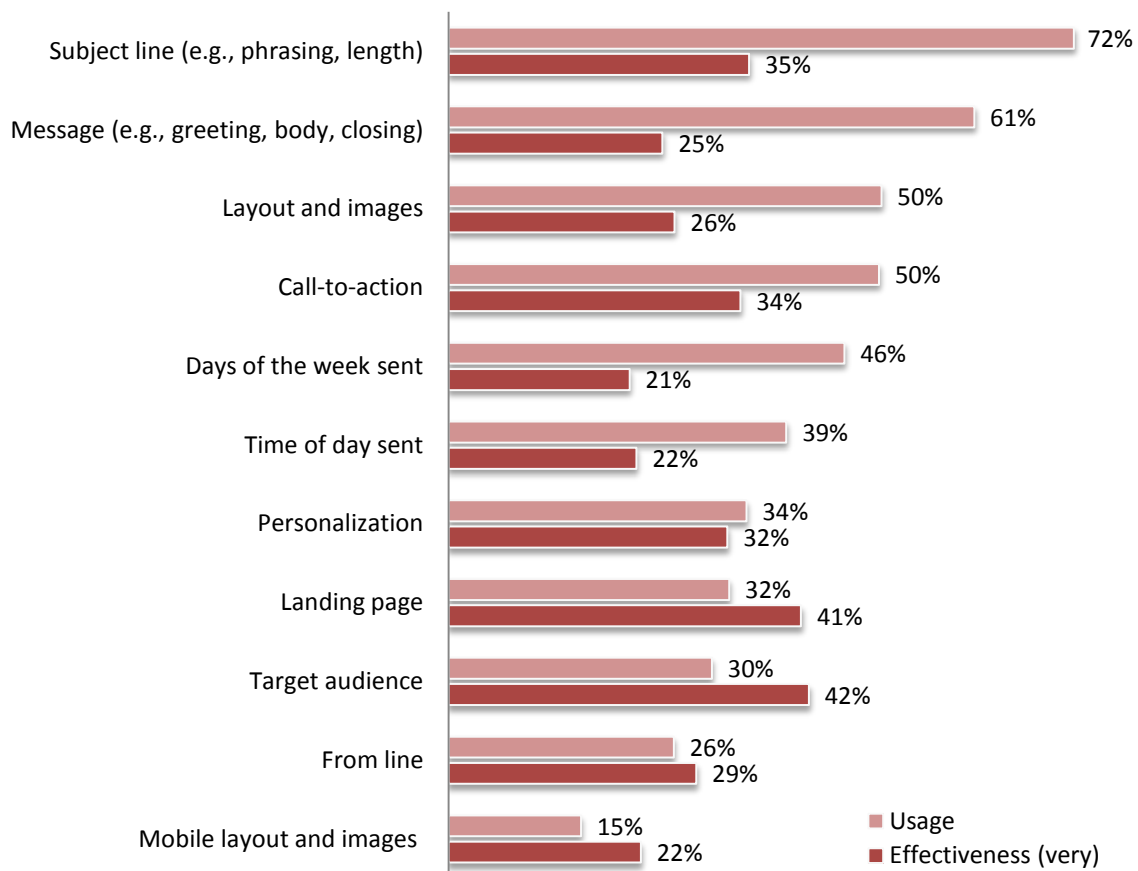
Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa Email Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded July 2011, N=2,735

Additionally, we inspected the entire testing process, broken down into traditional steps, to learn which parts marketers can improve. We found an opportunity for organizations to glean more knowledge from their own research by focusing more on a few strategic areas of the testing cycle. Only 15% of respondents said they routinely brainstormed new testing ideas, or took the time to define key metrics. Likewise, only 17% of marketers routinely reviewed the results and decided on follow-up tests. These three steps are vital in the overall learning progression for an organization.

MARKETING BUDGETS

CHART: PERCENTAGE OF ORGANIZATIONS INCREASING BUDGETS OVER 12 MONTHS, BY PRIMARY CHANNEL

■ B2B   ■ B2C   ■ B2B/B2C

Channel	B2B	B2C	B2B/B2C
Landing page optimization	56%	62%	68%
Social media	54%	59%	71%
Website upgrades	54%	59%	72%
SEO	55%	51%	69%
PPC	43%	46%	46%
Content marketing	43%	37%	43%
Email	38%	43%	36%
Contextual advertising	16%	24%	30%
Direct mail	23%	19%	19%
Tradeshows	19%	15%	21%
Telemarketing	19%	12%	13%
Print advertising	15%	13%	16%
Broadcast advertising	11%	19%	

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Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa Search Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded April 2011, N=1,530

The company website is the center of a company's marketing plans. All lead generation activities, whether inbound or outbound in nature, drive traffic back to the site. This is why a website is commonly referred to as "the hub."

A website is arguably the greatest asset in any marketing mix. It is also one of the most expensive. Nevertheless, because of its central role, companies are prepared to invest in its design, management, performance and optimization. To illustrate, here we see that 54-72% of all organizations plan to increase budgets for website upgrades. Additionally, most organizations plan to increase budgets for landing page optimization. These LPO efforts help organizations increase the quantity and quality of the visitor response to the website experience.

One last big area of investment is in the interrelated areas of social media and SEO, both major sources of a company's inbound Web traffic.

CHART: ALLOCATION OF ONLINE MARKETING DOLLARS

Q. What percentage of your ONLINE MARKETING budget is allocated to each of the following online tactics (including personnel, media and other direct costs)?
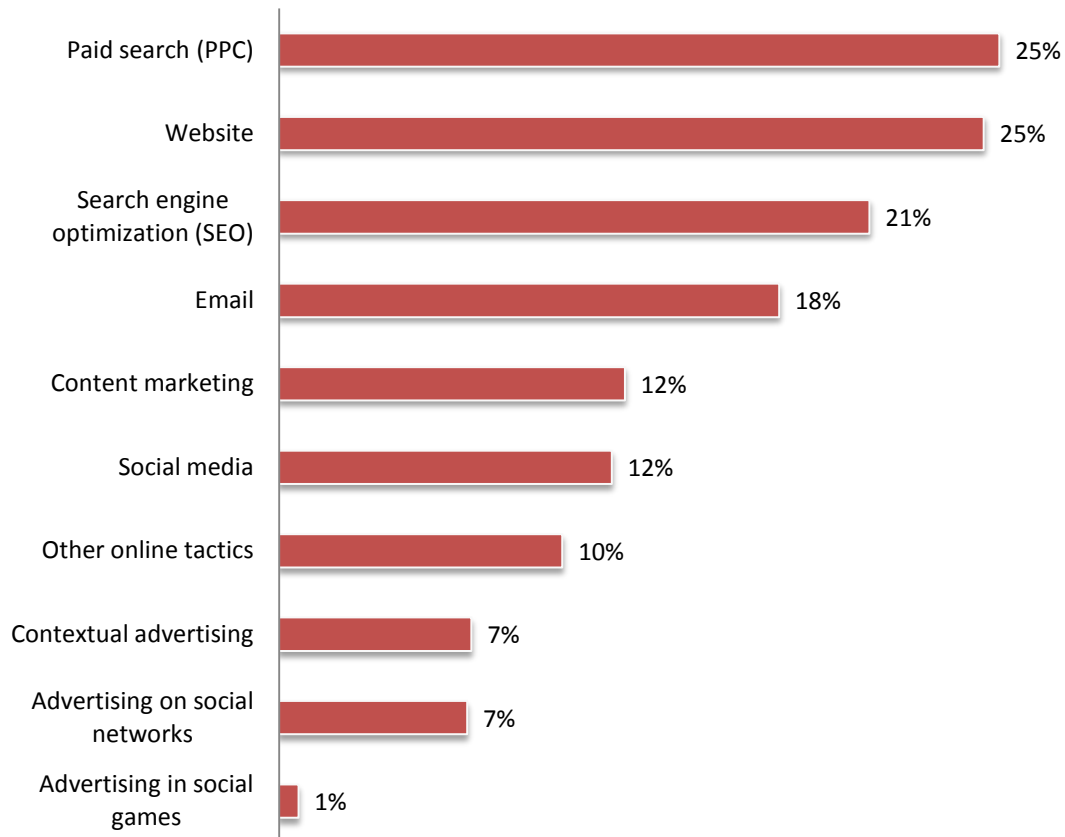
Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa Search Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded April 2011, N=1,530

Paid search, website management and design, and search engine optimization are the top three tactics to which organizations designate online marketing dollars.

Organizations devote one-quarter of their online marketing budgets to their websites. Even the best marketing efforts are for naught if the website is not optimized (in terms of performance and design) to communicate the "offer" and trigger a "response."

Paid search also comprises 25% of the budget. SEO tactics often take time to make an impact on search rankings. For this reason, many organizations use paid search to supplement SEO efforts.

About MarketingSherpa LLC

MarketingSherpa is a primary research facility, wholly-owned by MECLABS, dedicated to determining **what works in marketing** via exclusive case studies, surveys, and results data analysis. Then we publish what we learn so our community of marketers and weekly readers can improve their results and train their teams.

Praised by *The Economist*, Harvard Business School's Working Knowledge Site and Entrepreneur.com, Marketing-Sherpa is distinguished by offering **practical, results-based marketing** information researched and written by a staff of in-house reporters.

MarketingSherpa features:

- **Best Practices:** 1,000+ brand-side marketer case studies and 3,500+ creative samples
- **Research:** 2,000+ marketing and research abstracts
- **Instruction:** 800+ how-to articles
- **Newsletters:** 230,000+ marketers read weekly case studies on topics such as email, search, social, lead generation, lead nurturing, optimization and content marketing
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About MECLABS

MECLABS is a science lab that uses real-world research and training to **help business leaders get better use out of sales and marketing technology and resources**, including Internet marketing, website optimization, and lead management. We have been involved in direct research partnerships with companies throughout Europe and North America since 2001.

MECLABS deploys a rigorous methodology to conduct research. This research is compiled from:

- More than **10 years** of research partnership with our clients
- **1,300** experiments
- Over **1 billion** emails
- **10,000** landing pages tested
- **5 million** telephone calls
- **500,000** decision maker conversations

MECLABS has consulted with companies like Cisco, Johnson & Johnson, *The New York Times*, 1-800-Flowers, and NetSuite to optimize sales and marketing processes and achieve triple-digit ROI gains.

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1300 Marsh Landing Parkway Suite 106
Jacksonville, FL 32250

www.meclabs.com