

B2B

CONTENT MARKETING

SPOTLIGHT REPORT



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INTRODUCTION

More B2B Marketing Reports



B2B marketers are increasingly using content marketing tactics to better engage B2B buyers and to educate, inform, entertain and guide them along their customer journey.

This new Content Marketing Report is based on over 600 survey responses from marketing professionals to better understand the current state of content marketing and to identify new trends, and key challenges as well as best practices.

Many thanks to everyone who participated in this survey!

We hope you will enjoy this report.

Holger Schulze



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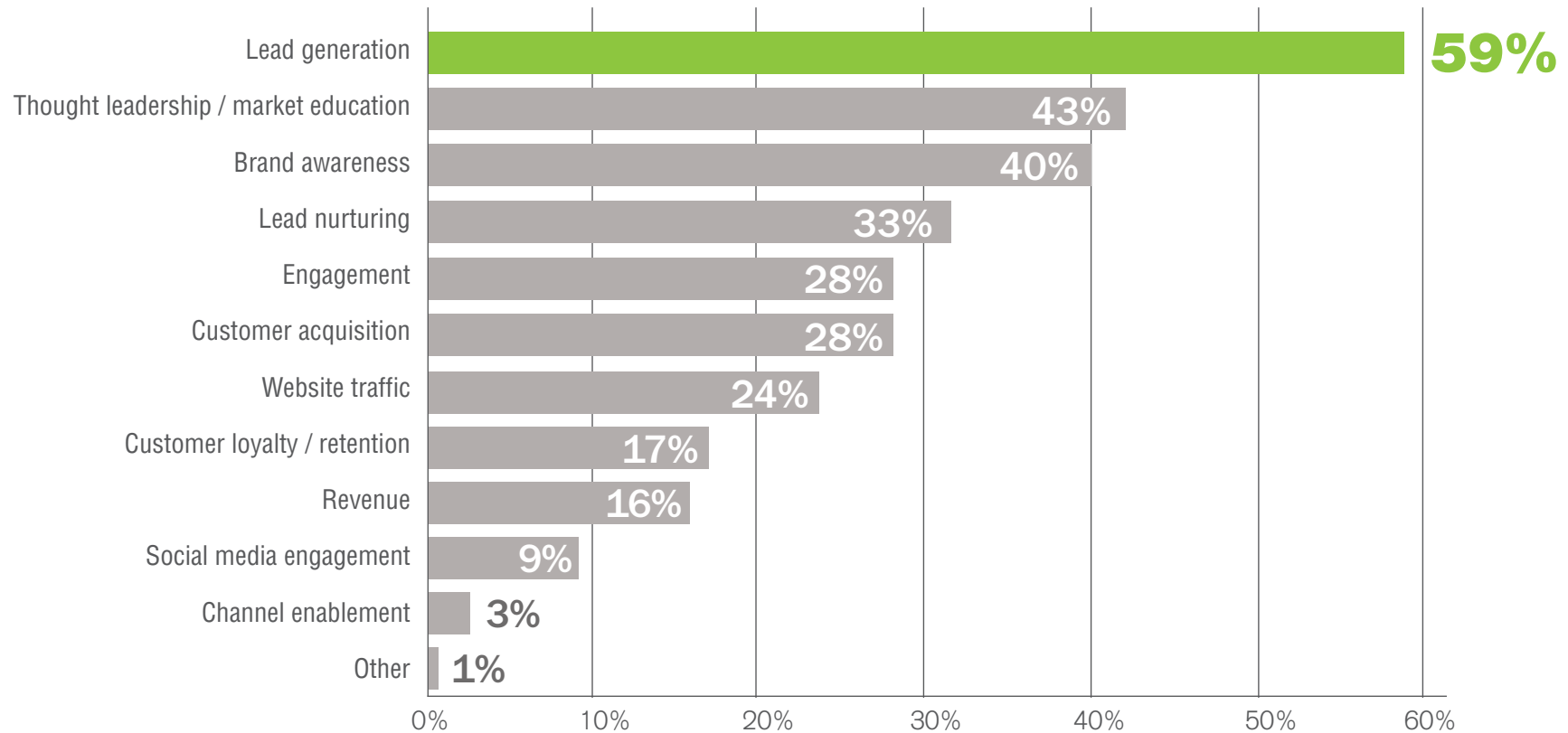
SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

Top-5 Trends in Content Marketing

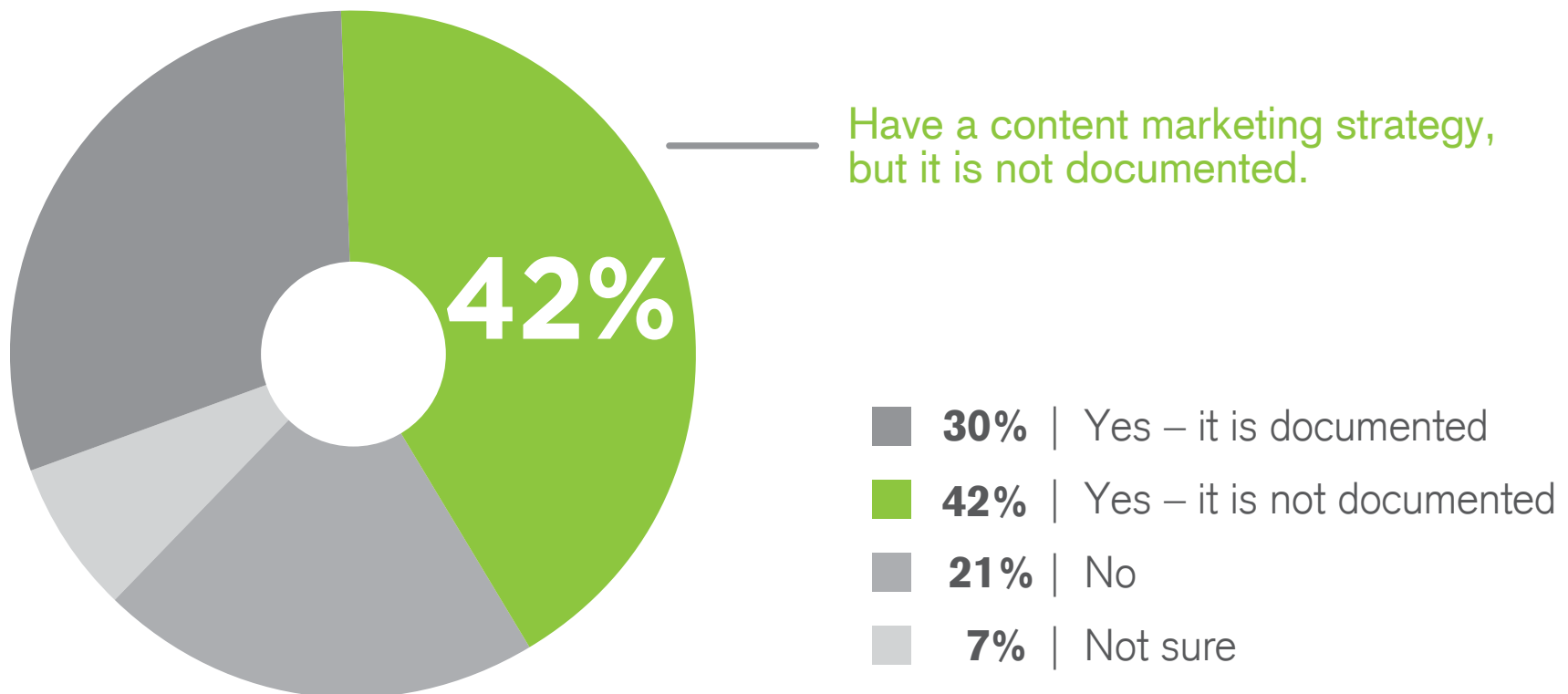
- 1** Lead generation is by far the number one goal of content marketing, followed by thought leadership and market education. Brand awareness is now the third most mentioned goal, taking the place of last year's number three goal: customer acquisition.
- 2** Companies with a documented content strategy are much more likely to be effective than those without a strategy. Only 30 percent of companies have a formally documented content strategy.
- 3** The most mentioned content marketing challenge is finding enough time and resources to create content. The next biggest content marketing challenge is producing enough content, followed by producing truly engaging content to serve the needs of marketing programs.
- 4** Content marketing ROI remains difficult to measure. Only a minority of respondents consider themselves at least somewhat successful at tracking ROI.
- 5** LinkedIn tops the list of the most effective social media platforms for distributing content marketing. The runner ups are Twitter (moving up one rank compared to last year) and YouTube (moving down from second to third place).

CONTENT MARKETING GOALS

When asked to identify their top 3 goals, lead generation is by a wide margin, the number one goal of content marketing (59 percent), as it was in last year's survey. Thought leadership and market education follows with a distant 43 percent. Surprisingly, brand awareness is now the third most selected goal (40 percent), taking the place of last year's number three goal: customer acquisition (which dropped to only 28 percent this year).

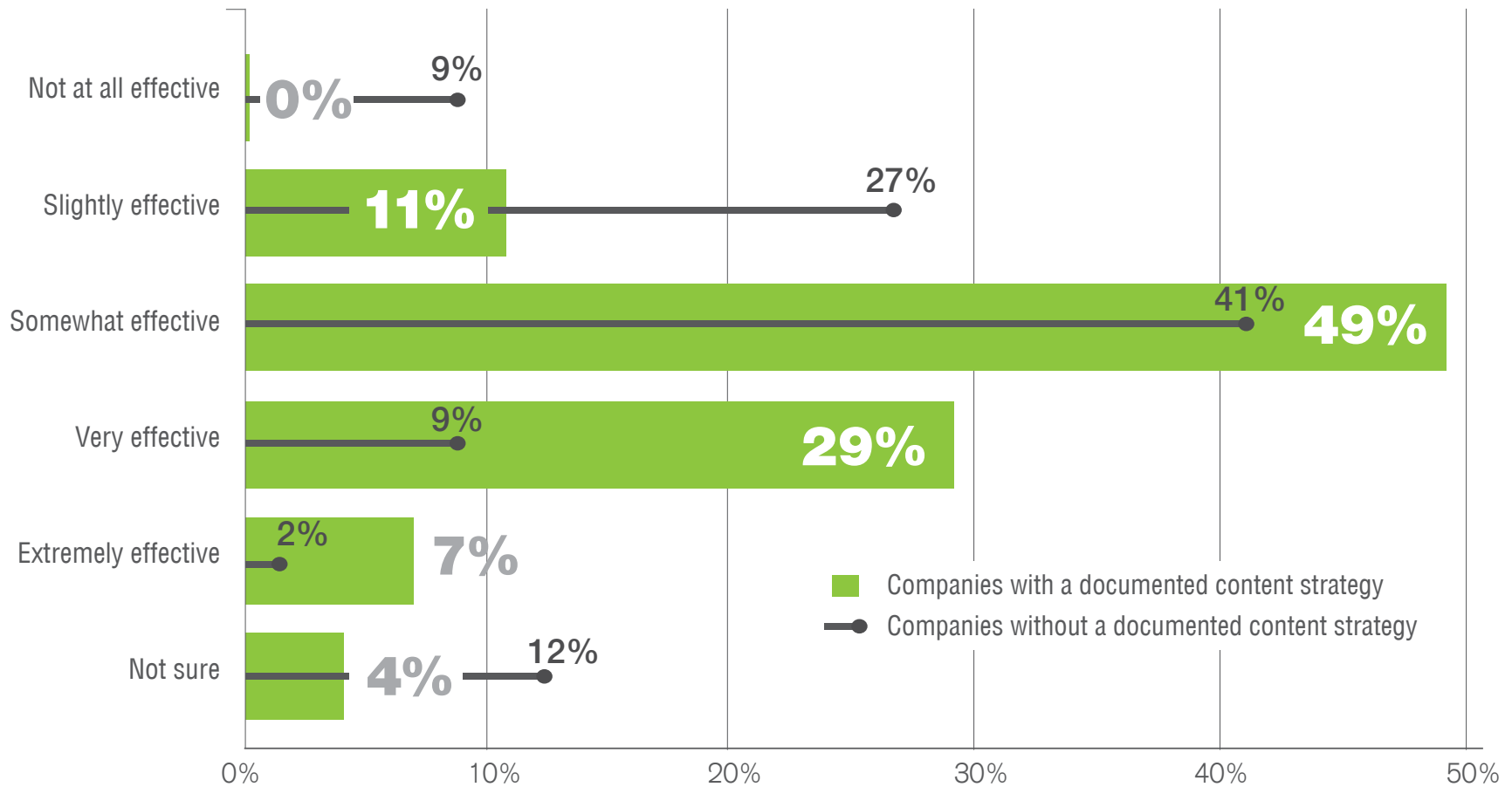


A whopping 72 percent of marketers have a content strategy in place. But only 30 percent have it formally documented.



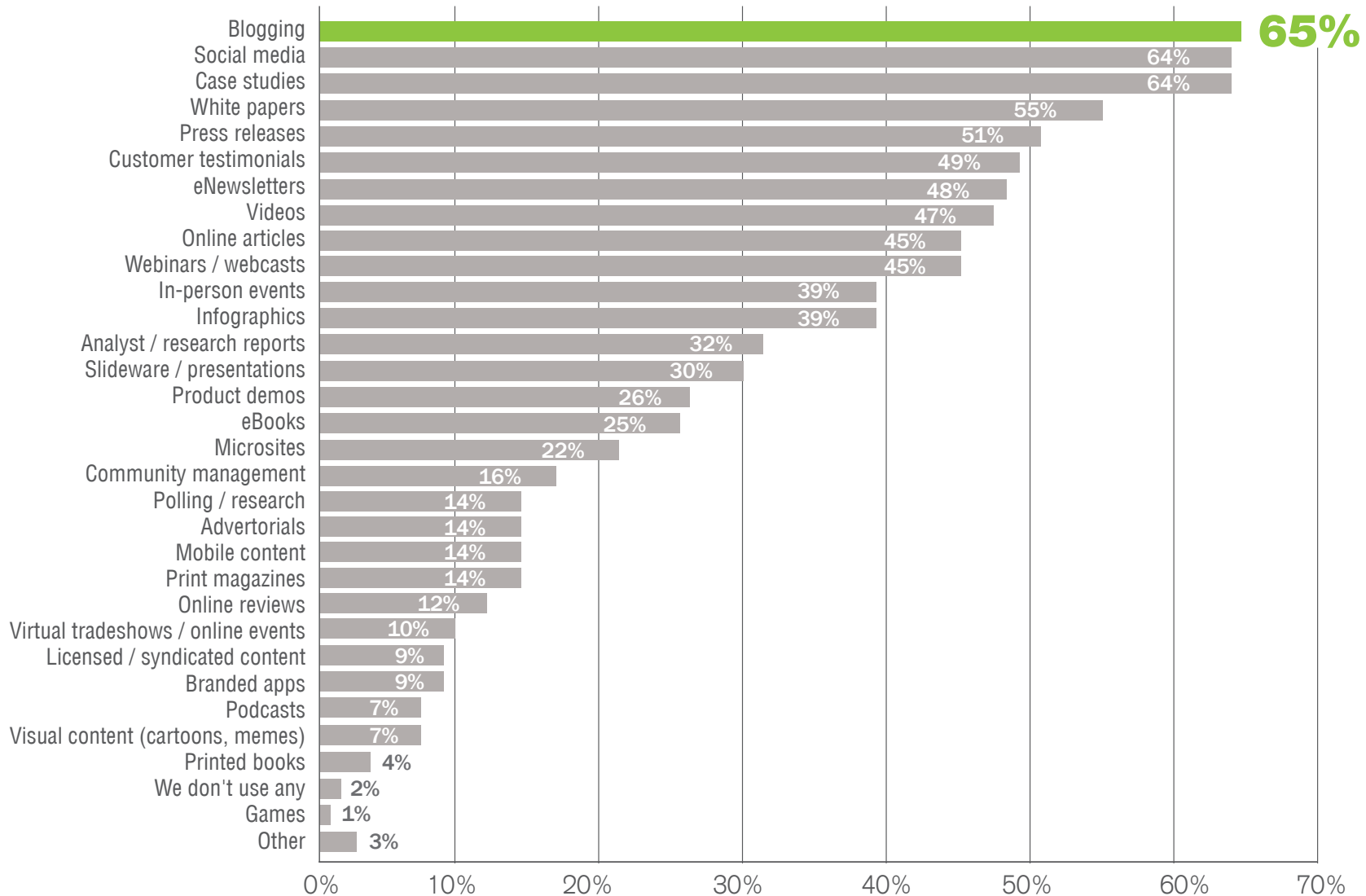
CONTENT MARKETING EFFECTIVENESS

Companies with a documented content strategy are much more likely to be very or extremely effective (36 percent) than those without a documented strategy (11 percent). Most companies consider their content marketing at least somewhat effective.

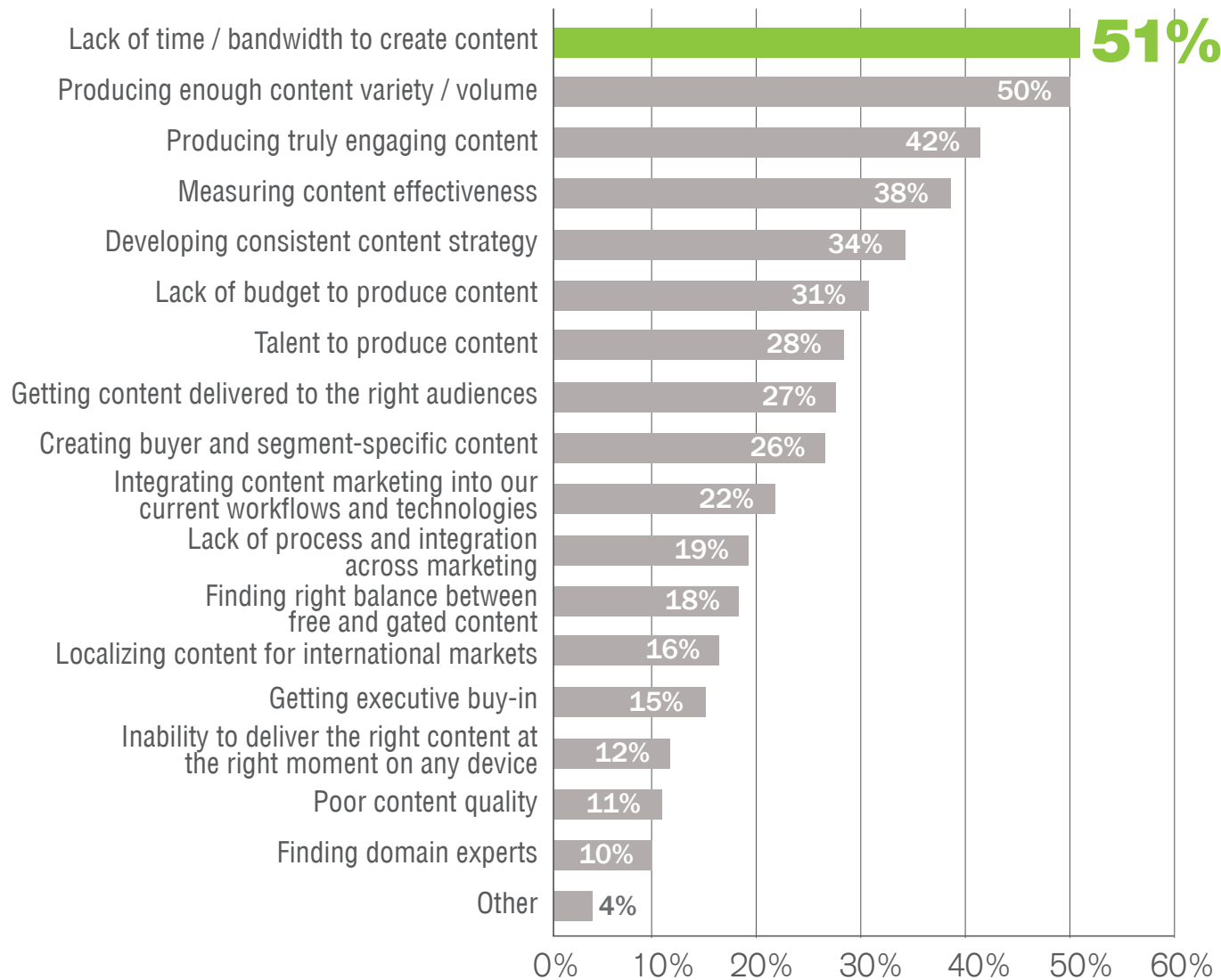


MOST USED CONTENT MARKETING TACTICS

Blogging, social media and case studies are the most routinely used content marketing tactics and formats.



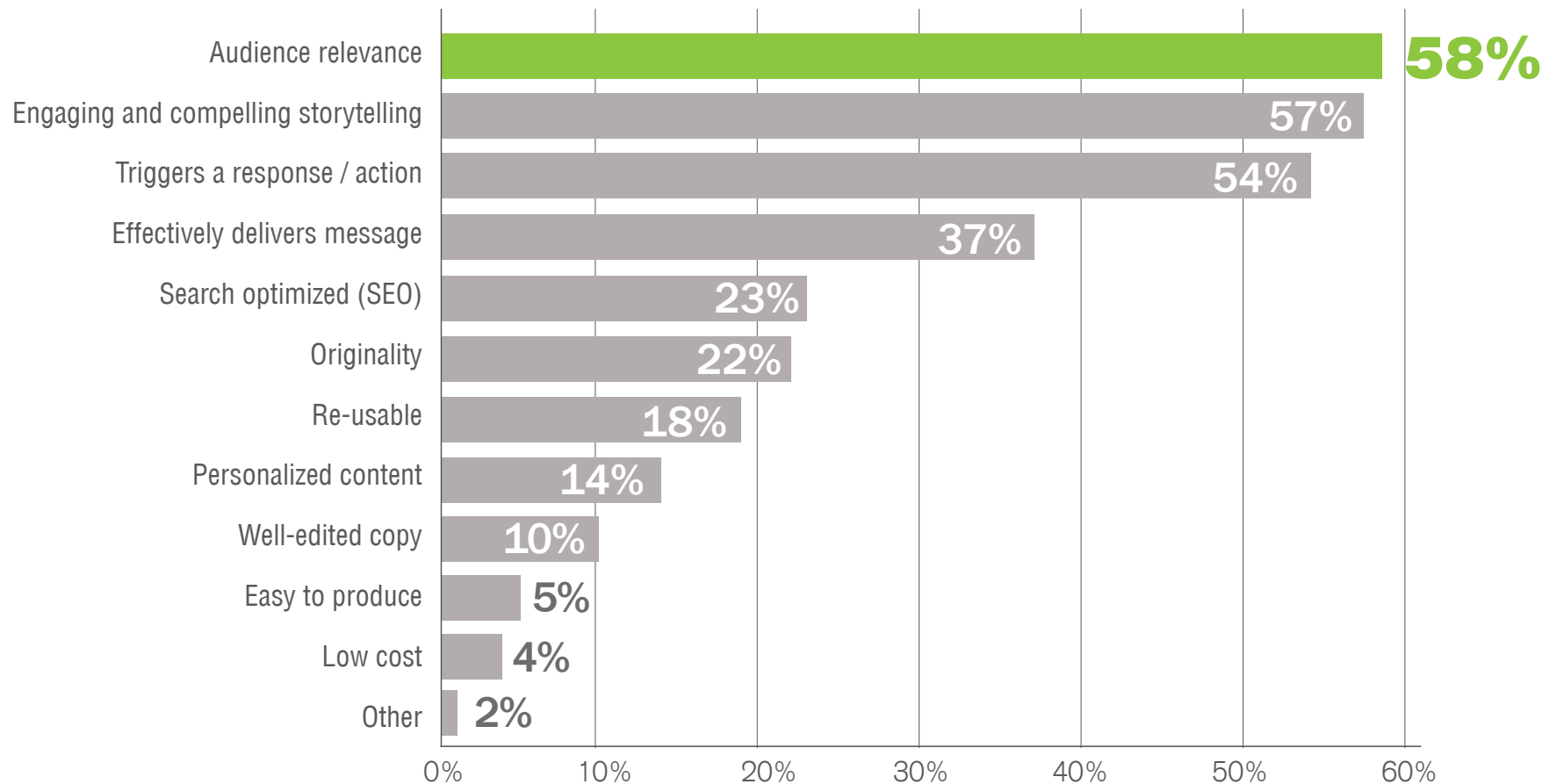
CONTENT MARKETING CHALLENGES



The number one content marketing challenge is having enough time and bandwidth to create content (51 percent). The next biggest content marketing challenge is producing enough content volume (50 percent) followed by producing truly engaging content to serve the needs of marketing programs (42 percent). Measuring the effectiveness of content marketing has risen from the number six spot last year (28 percent) to number four (38 percent) reflecting increasing pressure to demonstrate results and justify investment in content marketing.

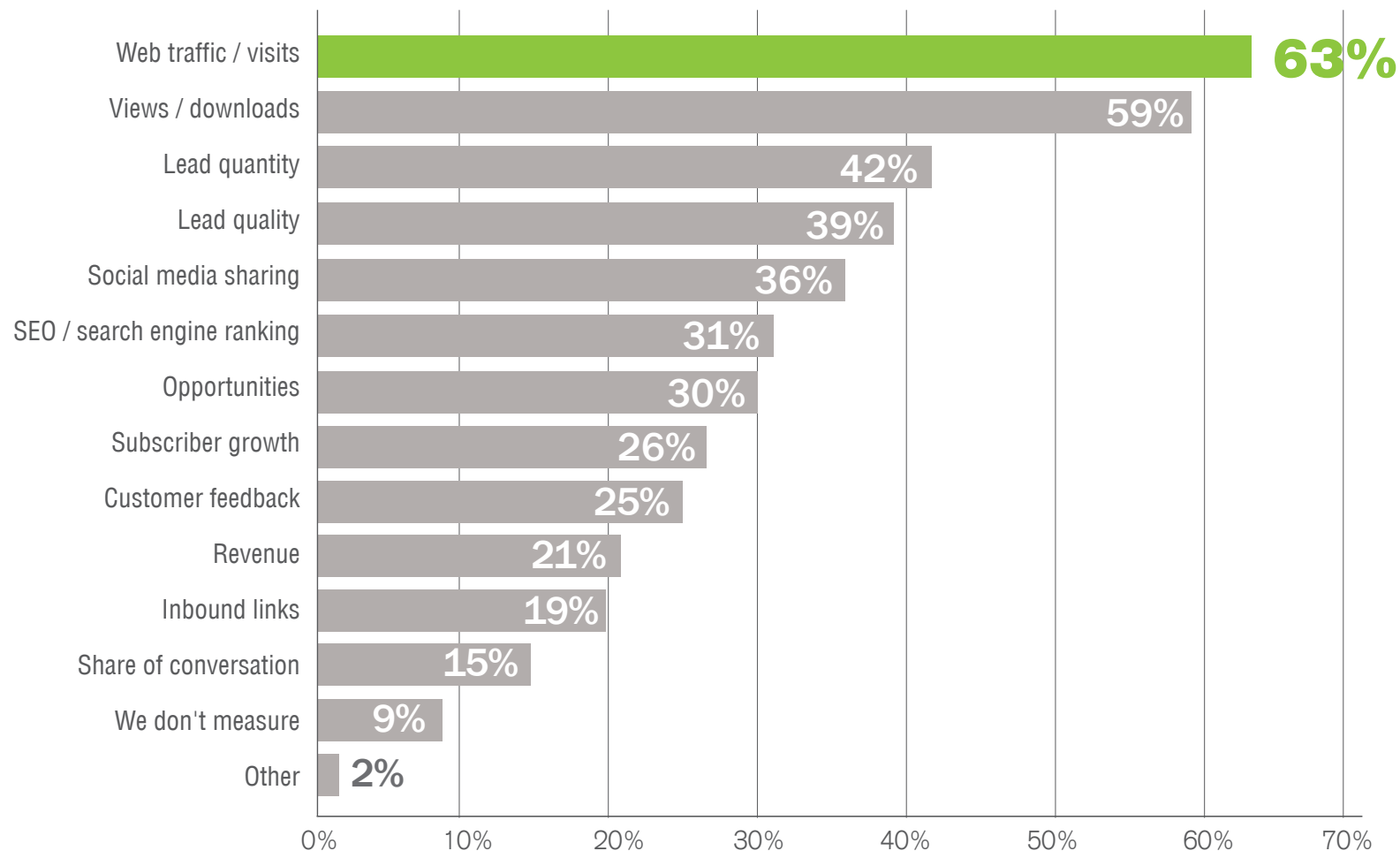
WHAT MAKES CONTENT EFFECTIVE

Content marketing success starts with audience relevance (58 percent), followed by engaging and compelling storytelling (57 percent) that triggers a specific response (54 percent) - these priorities have not changed compared to last year.



METRICS TO MEASURE CONTENT MARKETING SUCCESS

Web traffic and visits take the top spot of metrics marketers use to measure the impact of content marketing (63 percent). This is followed by views & downloads (59 percent) and lead quantity with 42 percent. Social metrics, such as sharing on social media platforms, have surprisingly low importance with 36 percent.



HOW CONTENT IS SOURCED

Content marketing ROI proves to be difficult to measure. Only 39 percent consider themselves at least somewhat successful at tracking ROI.



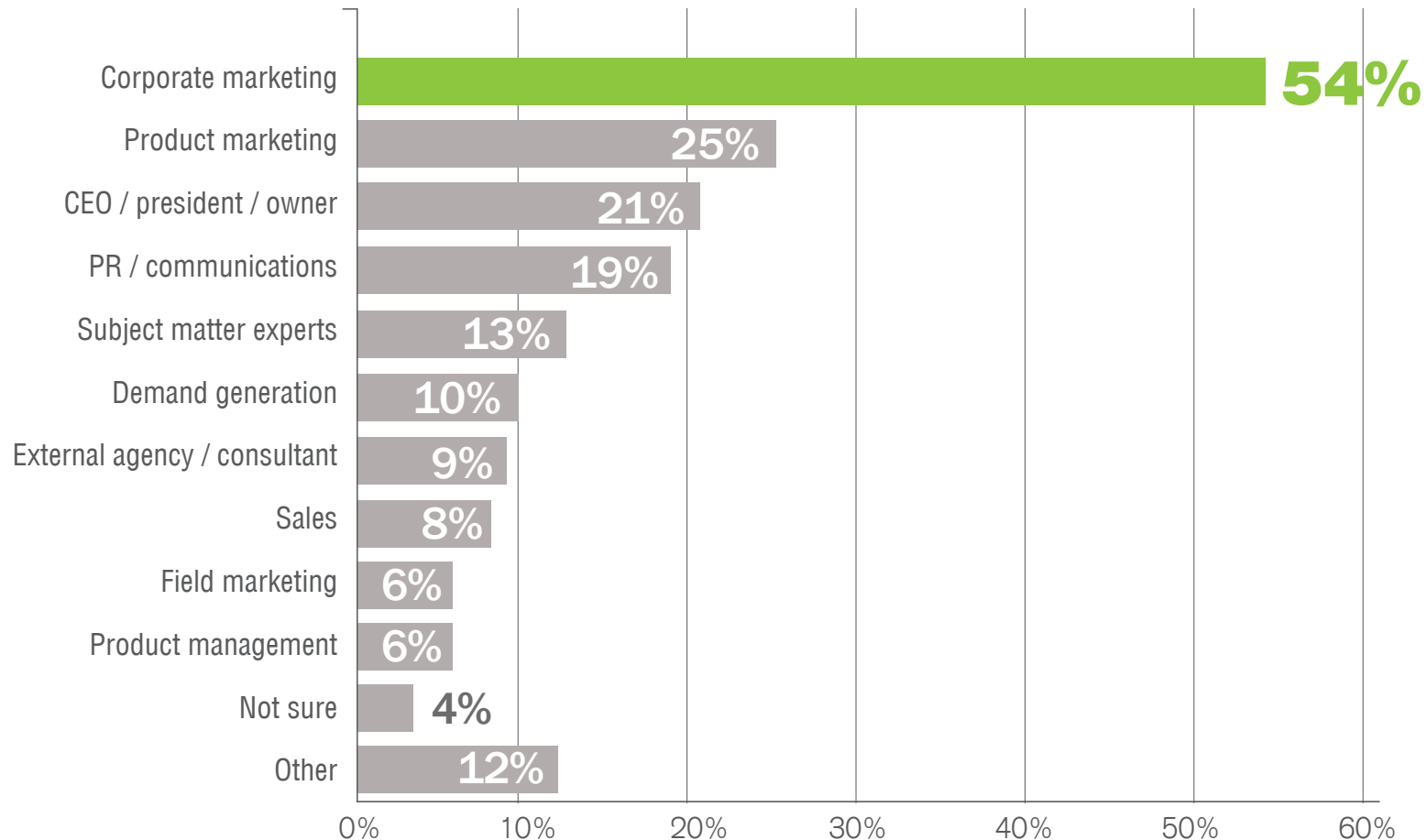
39%

consider themselves at least somewhat successful at tracking content marketing ROI

- 24% | Not at all successful
- 30% | Slightly successful
- 31% | Somewhat successful
- 6% | Very successful
- 2% | Extremely successful
- 7% | Not sure

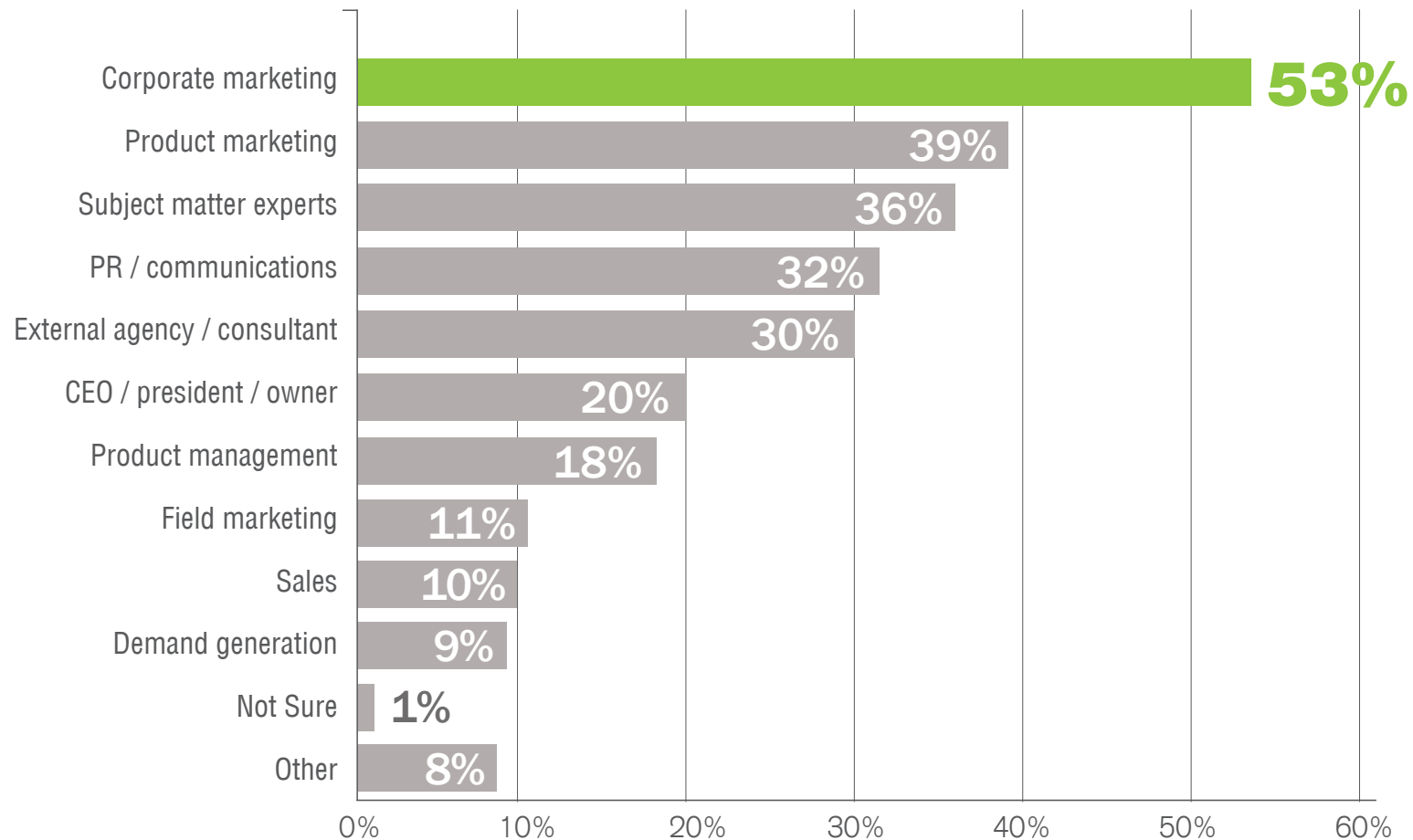
WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR CONTENT MARKETING STRATEGY?

In most companies, corporate marketing sets content strategy (54 percent), followed by product marketing (25 percent), and the CEO / President / Owner (21 percent) in smaller companies that often don't have a dedicated marketing department.



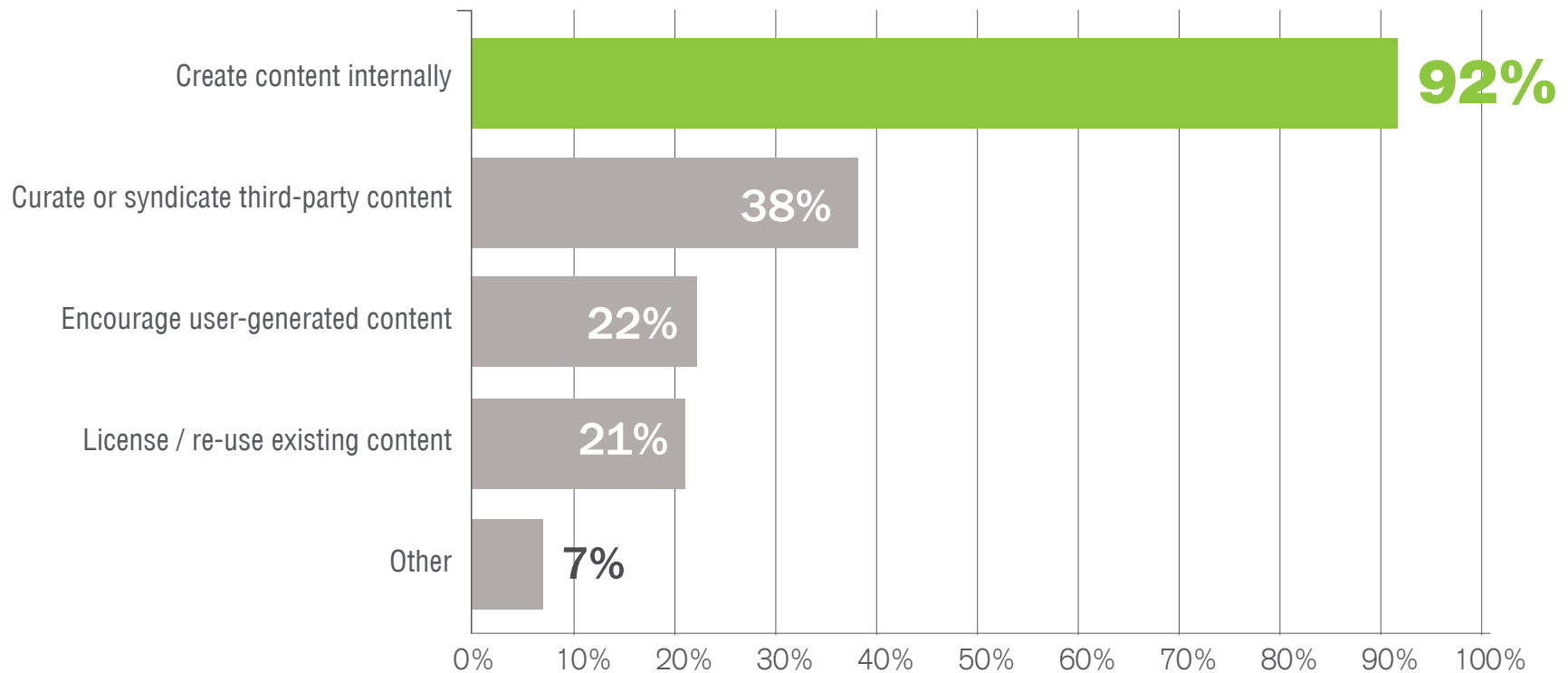
WHO CREATES CONTENT?

Virtually unchanged from last year, corporate marketing is still the number one creator of content (53 percent), followed by product marketing (39 percent) and subject matter experts (36 percent).



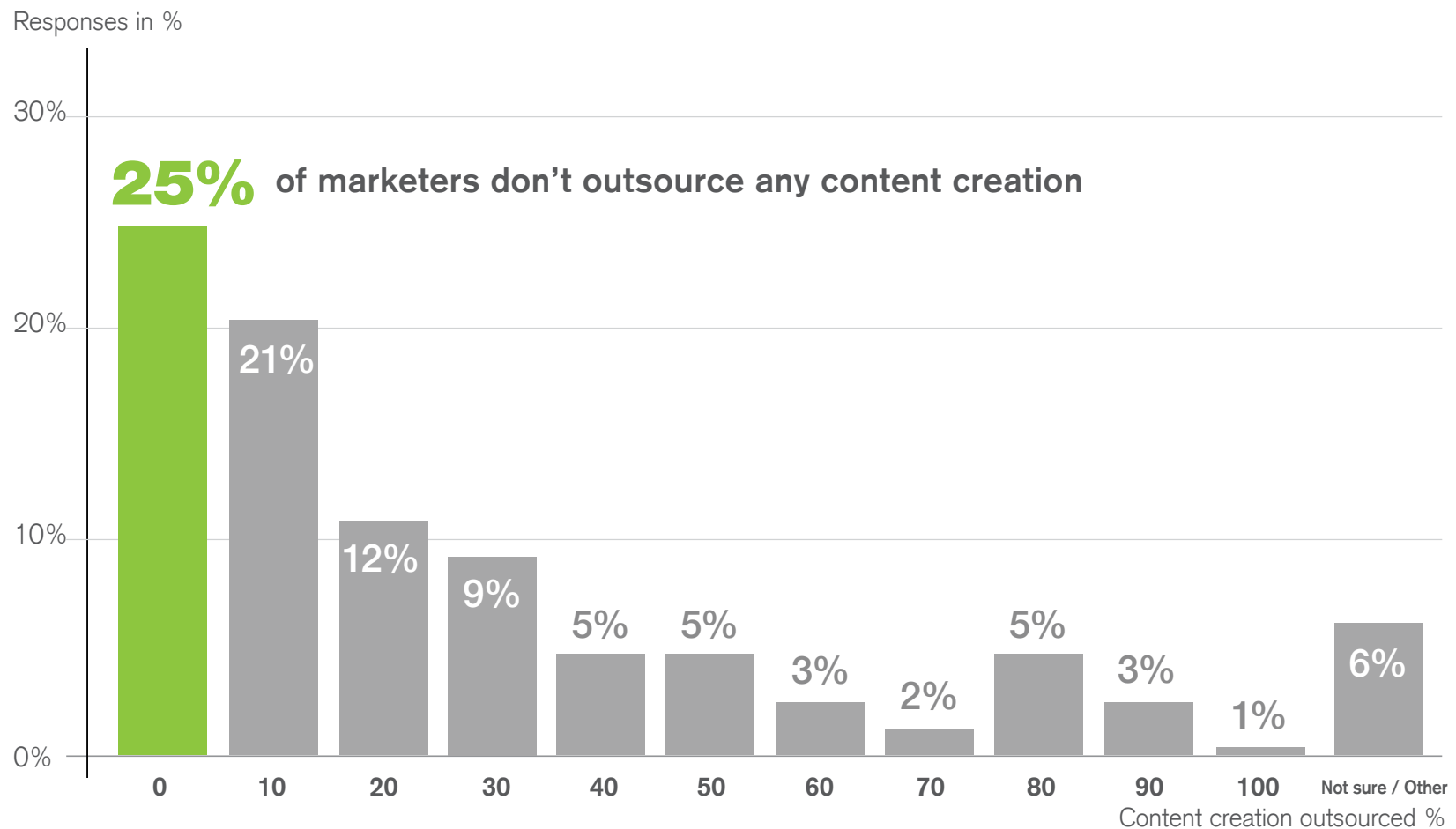
HOW DO YOU SOURCE CONTENT?

The vast majority of companies create content internally (92 percent). 38 percent curate or syndicate third party content.

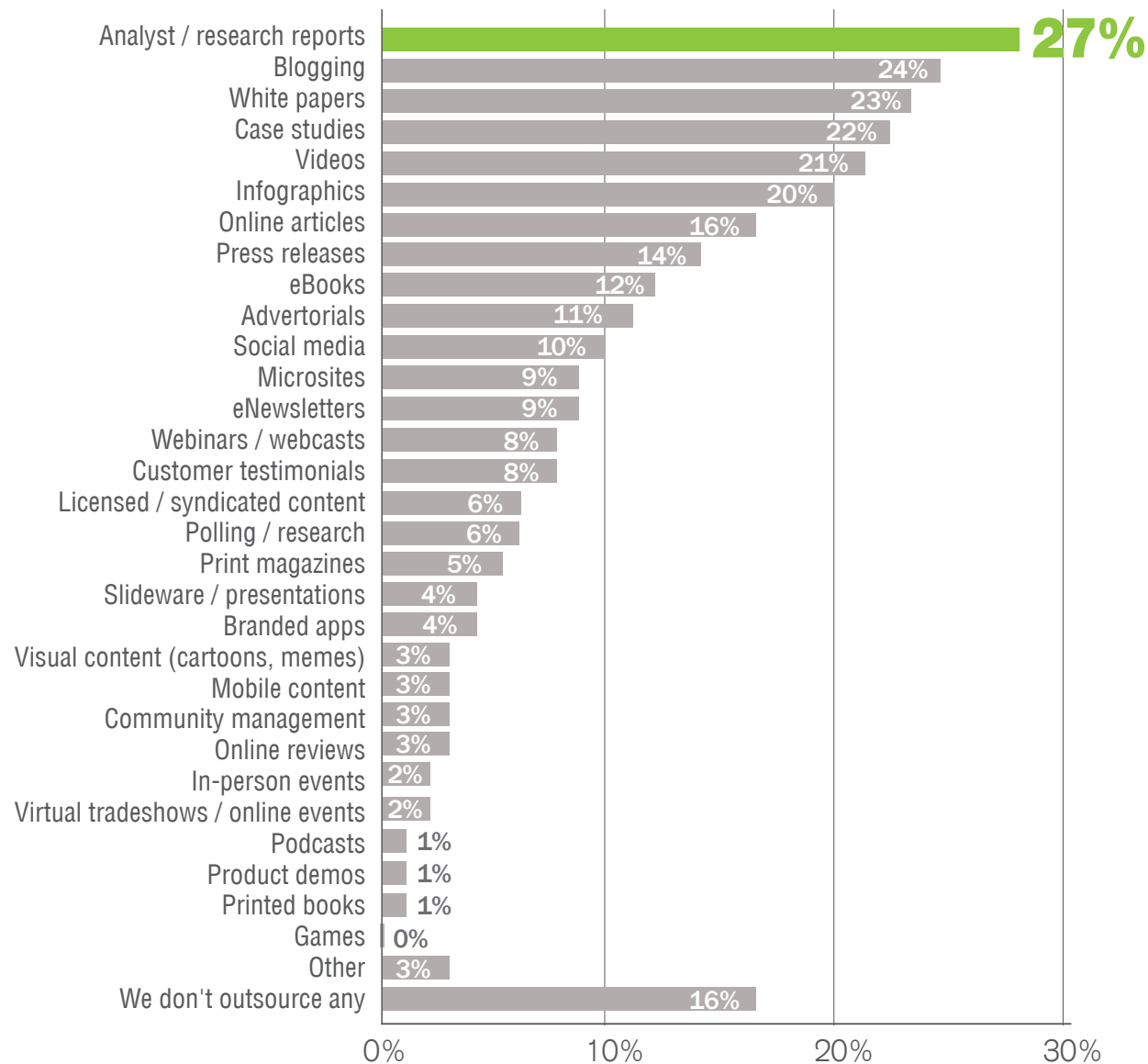


OUTSOURCING OF CONTENT PRODUCTION

Virtually unchanged from last year, most content marketing is produced in-house.



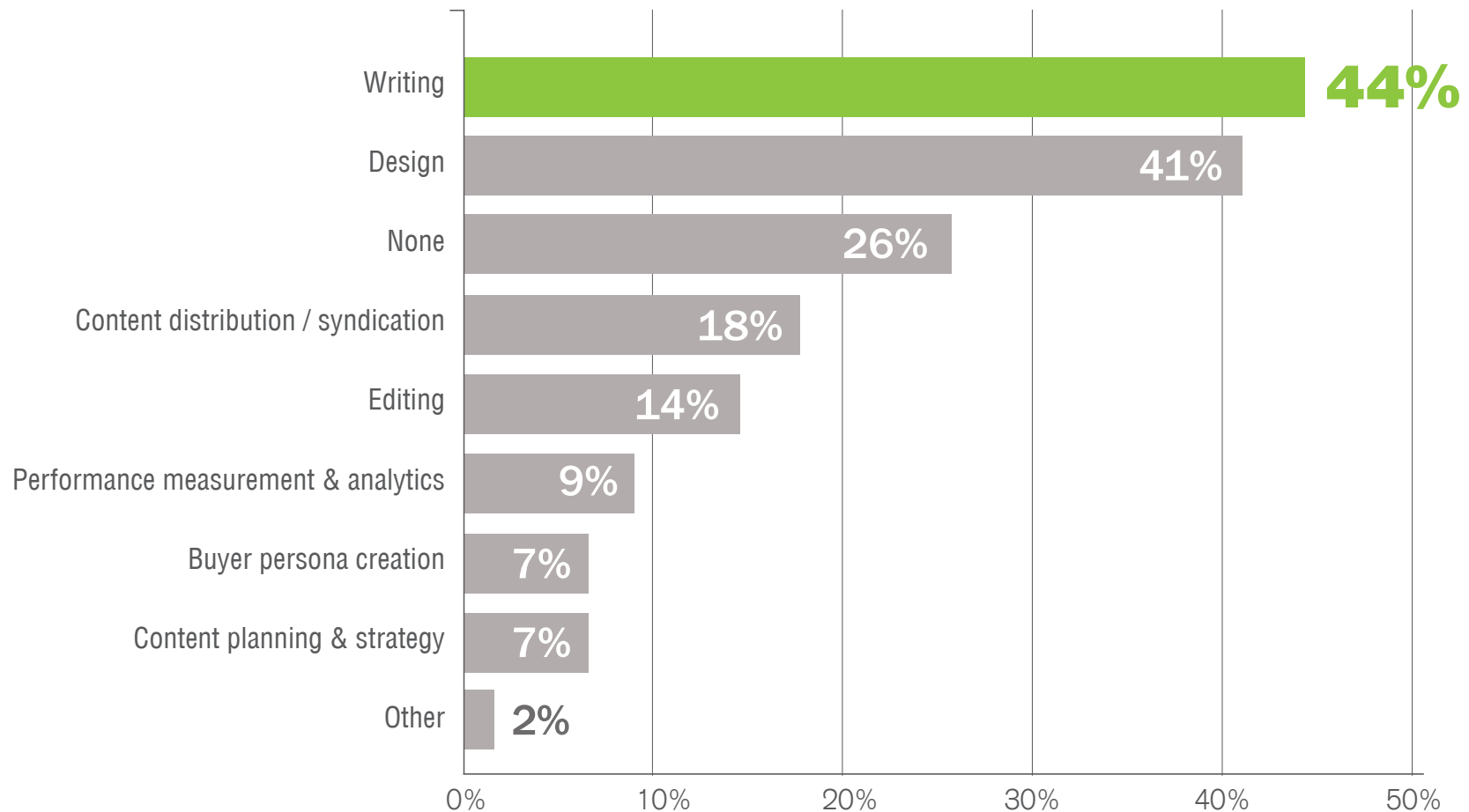
MOST OUTSOURCED CONTENT MARKETING FORMATS



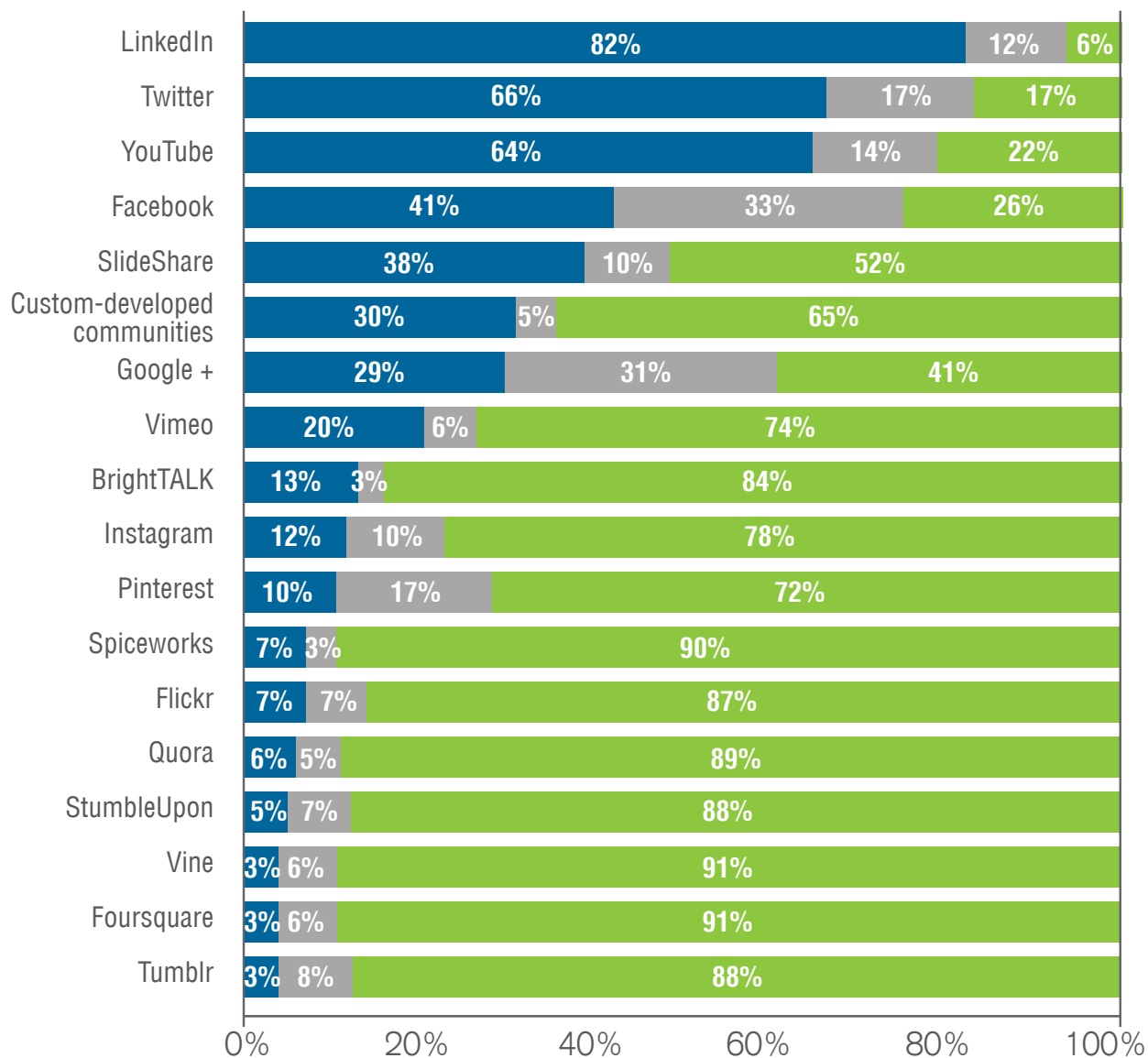
The most production-intensive content formats are also the most outsourced ones, no surprises here. Analyst and research reports top the list with 27 percent as they are mostly created by third parties. This is followed by blogging, white papers, case studies and videos.

MOST OUTSOURCED CONTENT MARKETING ACTIVITIES

The activities that consume the most time and require most domain expertise are typically the most outsourced ones. The two most outsourced activities are writing (44 percent) and design (41 percent) of content assets. Conversely, planning and strategy setting are rarely outsourced (only 7 percent).



EFFECTIVENESS OF SOCIAL MEDIA

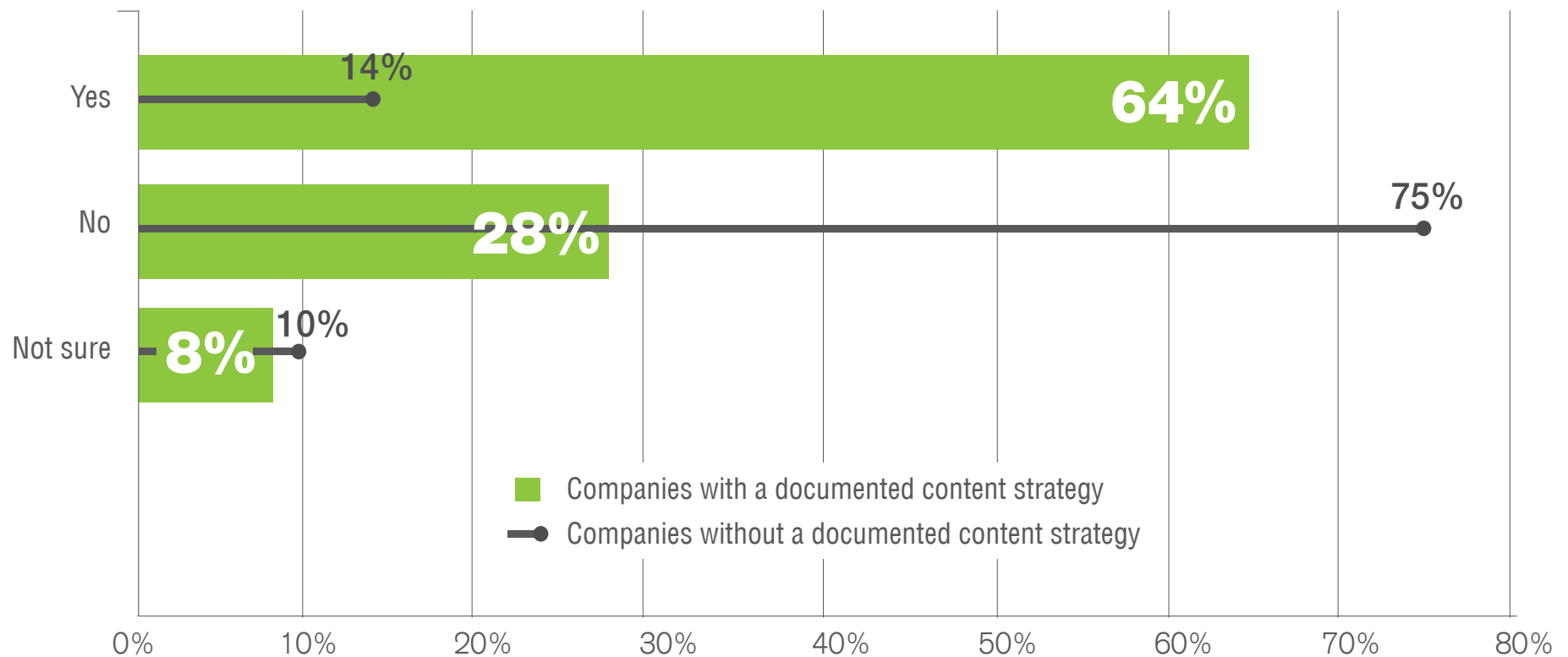


LinkedIn tops the list of the most effective social media platforms to deliver content and engage audiences (82 percent). The runners up are Twitter (66 percent, moving up one rank compared to last year) and YouTube (64 percent, moving from second to third place). Among the moderately effective social platforms, Google+ stands out with a higher ineffective rating (31 percent) than effective rating (29 percent).

■ Effective
■ Ineffective
■ I don't use it

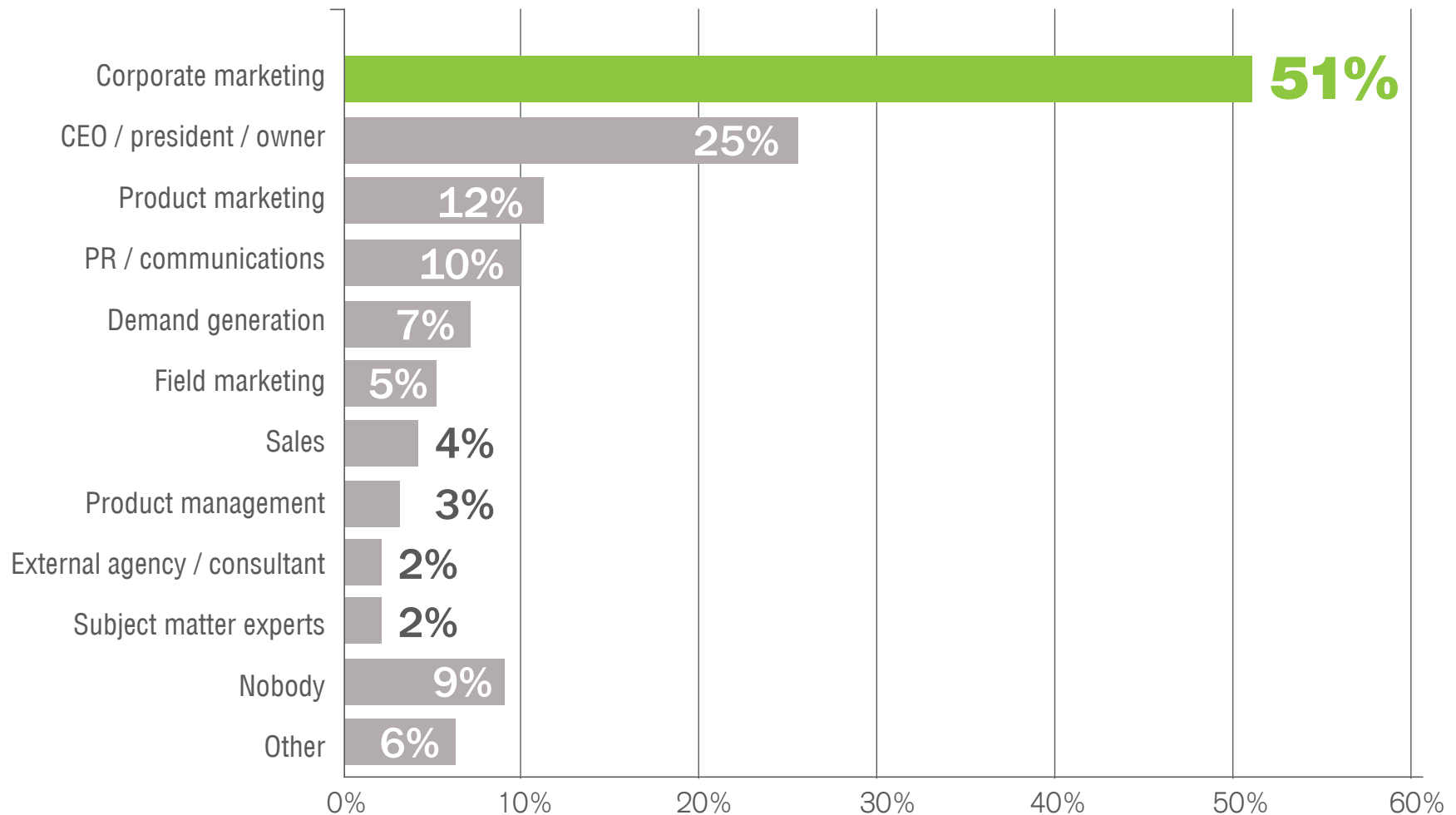
DO YOU HAVE A DEDICATED CONTENT MARKETING BUDGET?

The positive correlation of having a dedicated content marketing budget and having a documented content strategy couldn't be more clear. 64 percent of companies with a documented strategy also have a dedicated content marketing budget. On the flip side, only 14 percent of companies without a documented strategy have a dedicated content marketing budget.



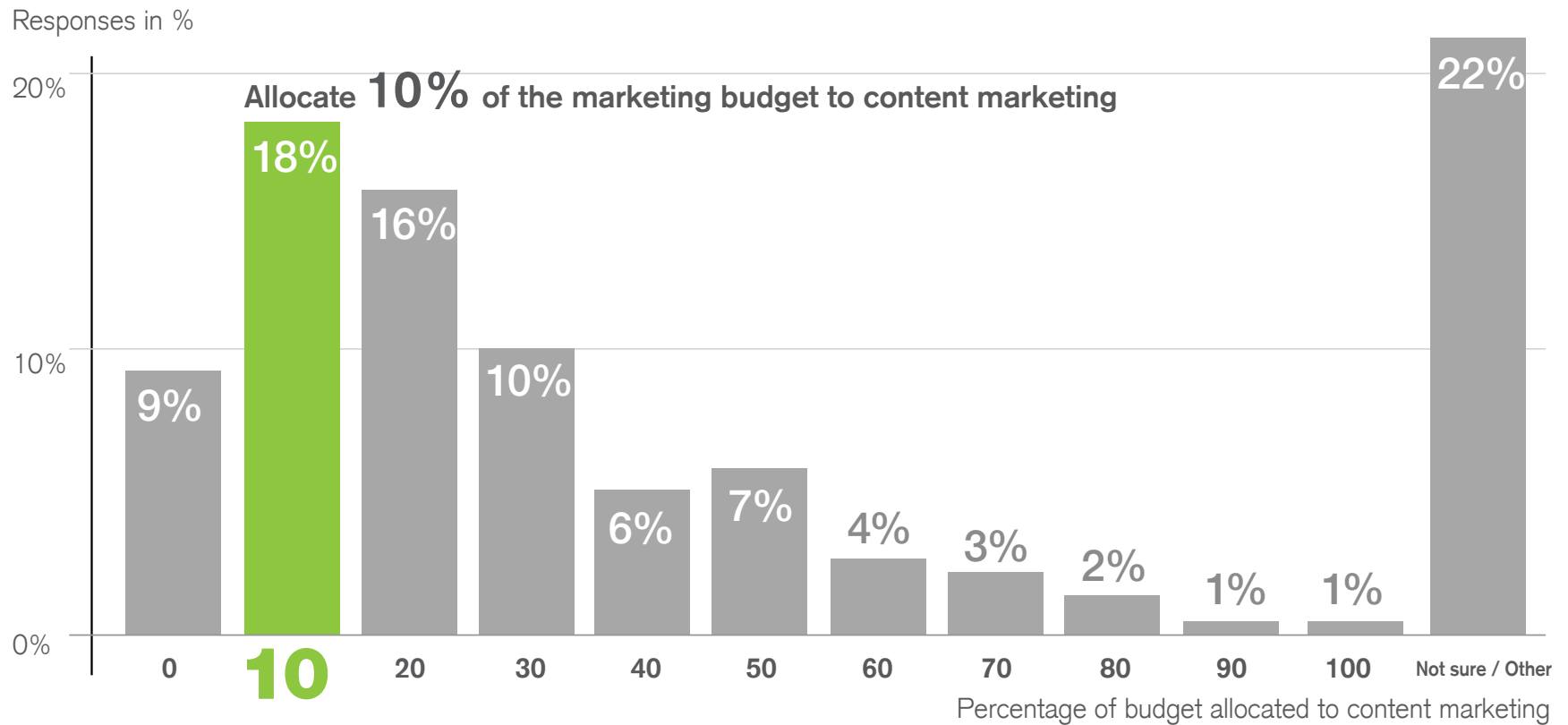
CONTENT MARKETING BUDGET OWNERS

For 51 percent of companies, corporate marketing owns content marketing funds, followed by the CEO / President / Owner (25 percent) in smaller companies.



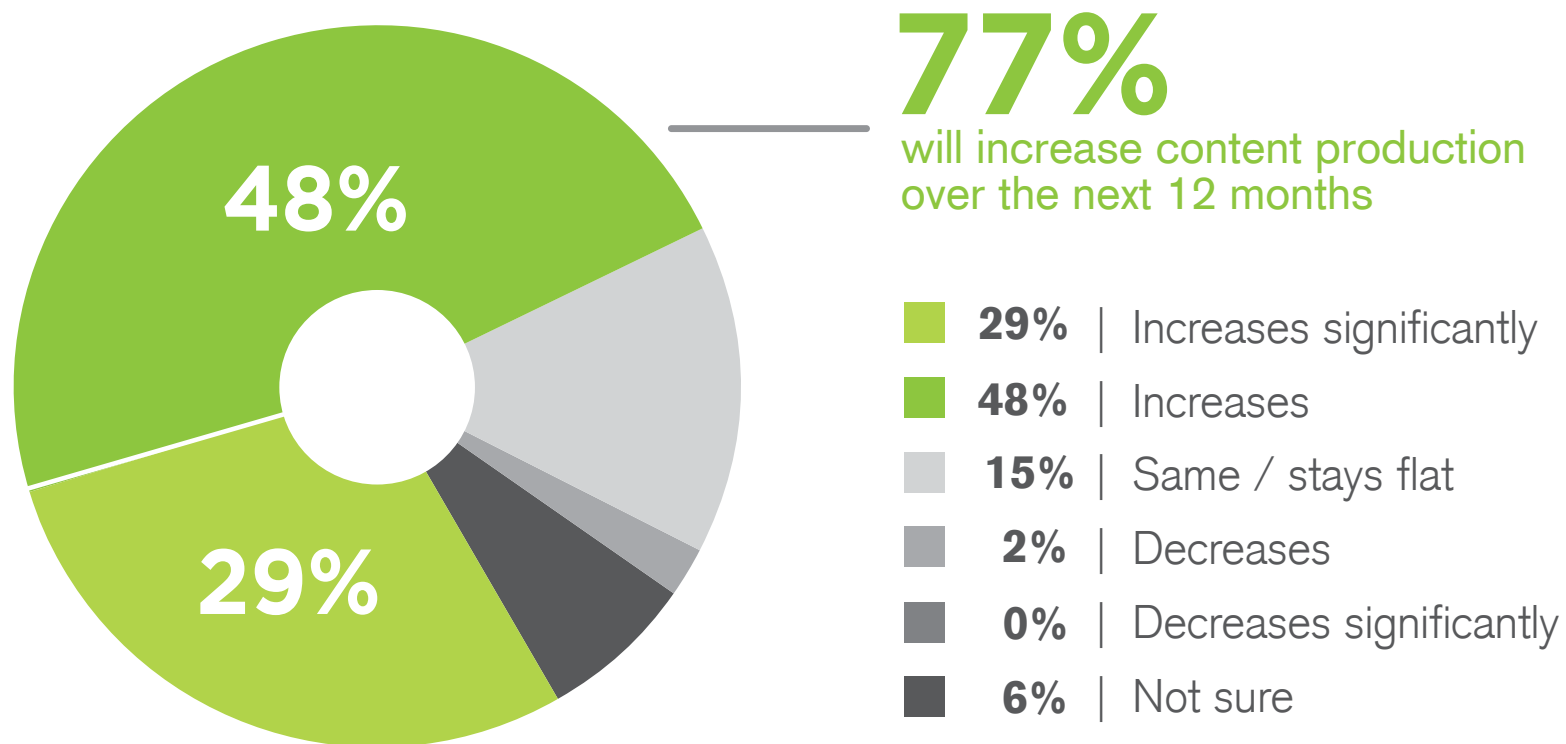
SHARE OF BUDGET FOR CONTENT MARKETING

Most frequently, companies allocate about 10 percent of their marketing budget (excluding headcount) to content marketing.



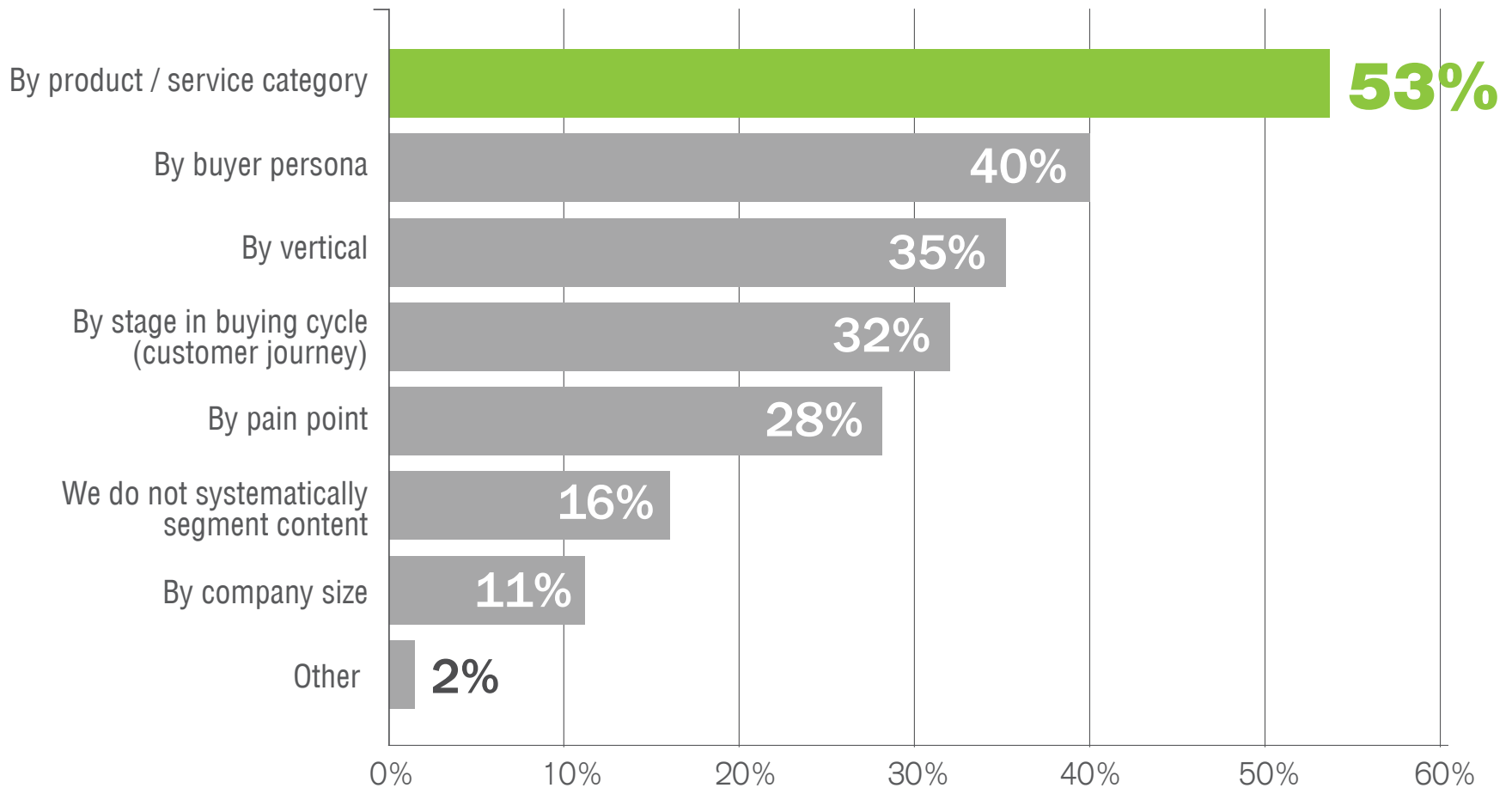
CONTENT PRODUCTION GROWTH

More than 77 percent of marketers are increasing content production over the next 12 months, 29 percent of them significantly so. 15 percent of marketers expect content production to stay flat. Virtually no marketers expect content production to decline.



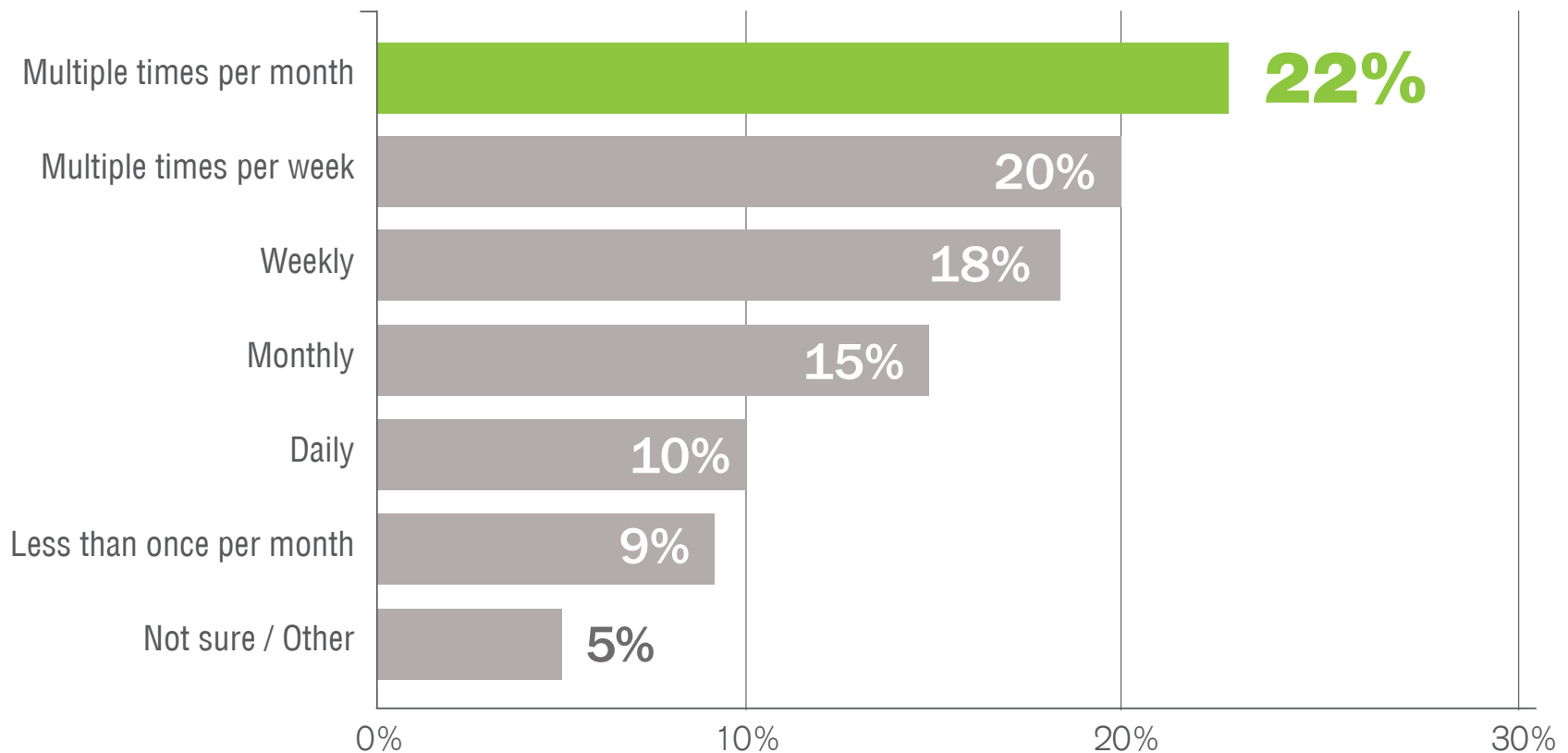
20 HOW DO MARKETERS SEGMENT CONTENT?

The most popular type of segmenting content is by product category (53 percent). Buyer personas have become more popular with 40 percent, followed by vertical segmentation with 35 percent. The least popular segmentation dimension is company size with 11 percent. Only 16 percent of marketers don't systematically segment content.



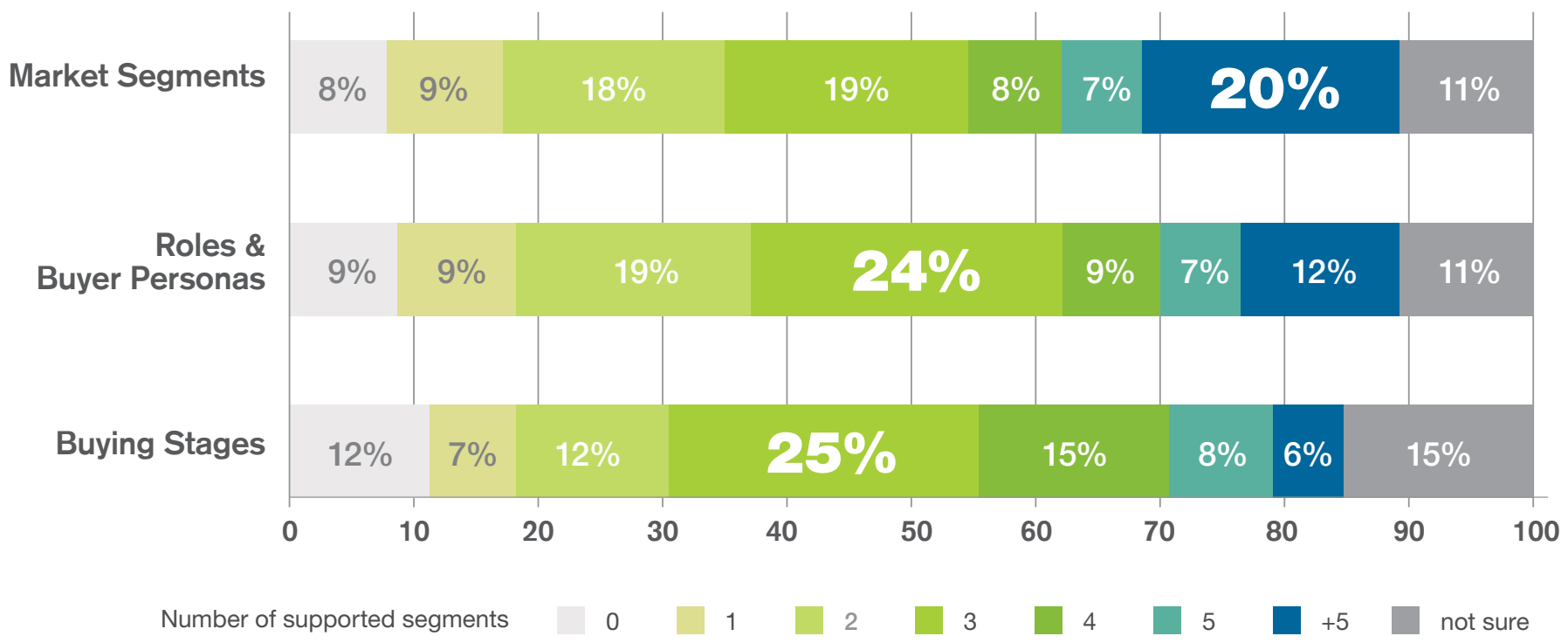
HOW FREQUENTLY IS CONTENT PUBLISHED?

Most frequently, marketers publish content multiple times per month (22 percent), 20 percent even publish multiple times per week.



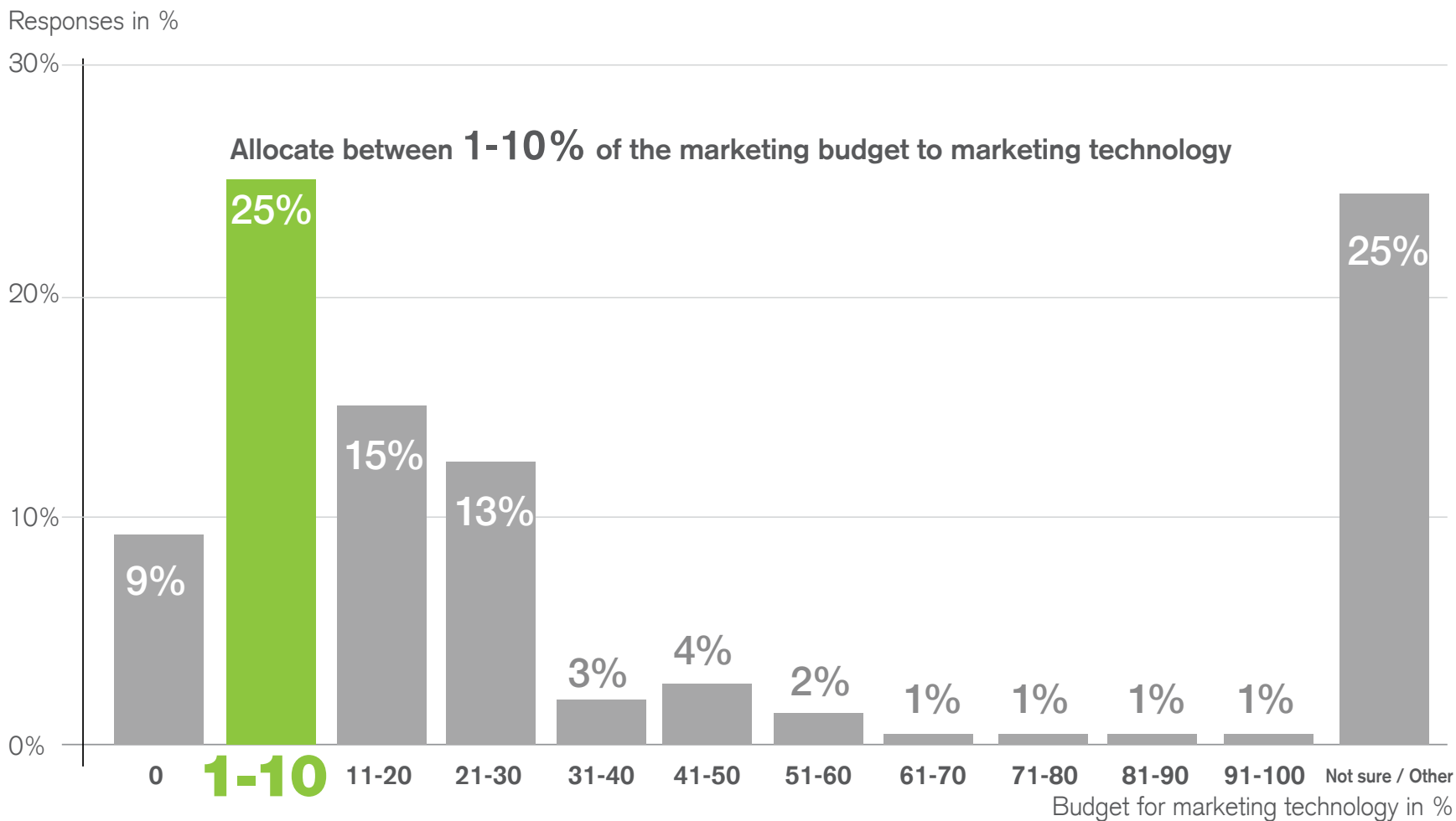
HOW MANY SEGMENTS DO MARKETERS SUPPORT WITH CONTENT?

Most frequently, our respondents support more than five different market segments, three roles & buyer personas, and three buying stages with dedicated content.



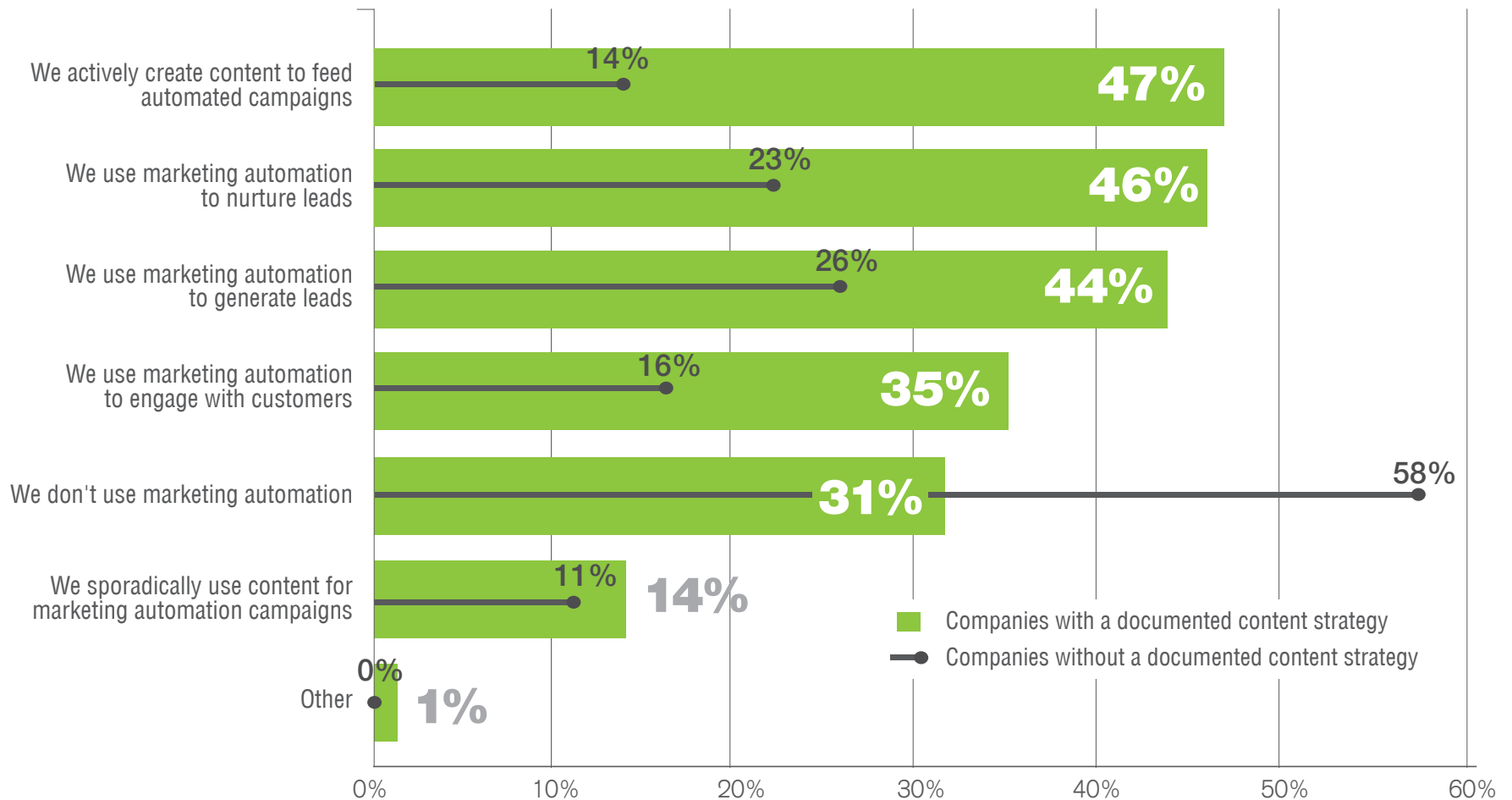
MARKETING TECHNOLOGY BUDGET

Most frequently, 25 percent of marketers allocate between 1 and 10 percent of marketing budgets to marketing technology.



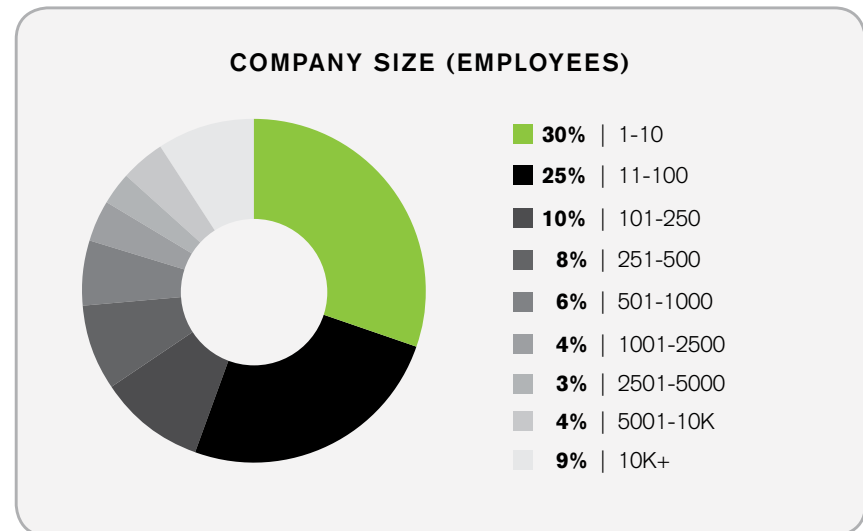
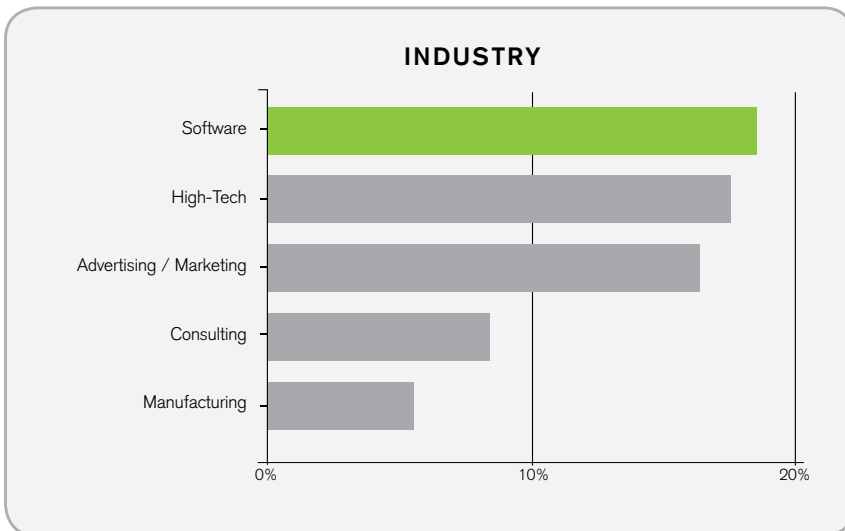
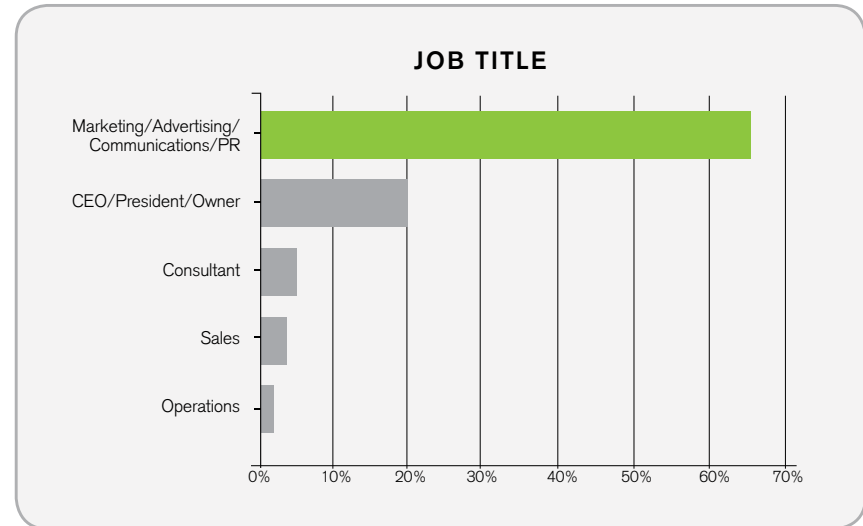
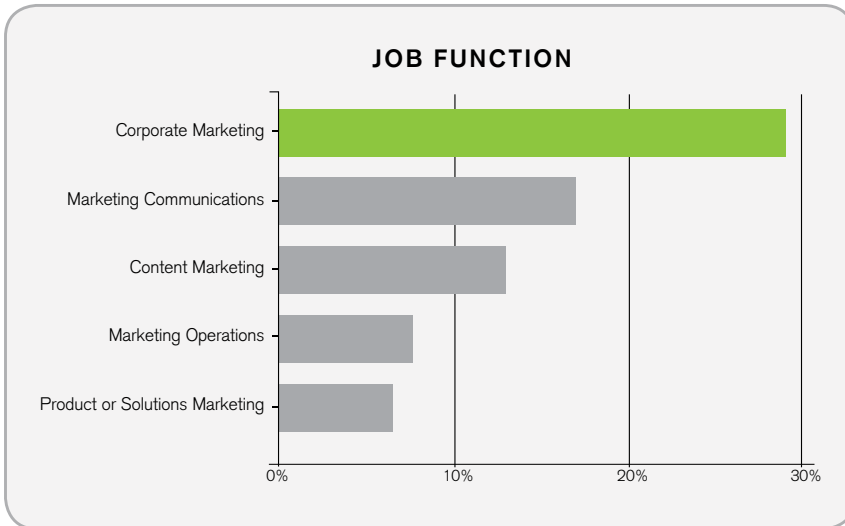
INTEGRATION OF CONTENT MARKETING AND MARKETING AUTOMATION

Companies with a documented content marketing strategy are much more likely to actively use marketing automation. A majority of companies without content strategy don't use marketing automation (58 percent).



DEMOGRAPHICS & METHODOLOGY

This survey was conducted from July through September 2014. We collected 634 responses from B2B marketing professionals. Here is a detailed breakdown of the demographics.



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