B2B Marketing Agility and Effectiveness

Survey Results

January 2026

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

B2B marketing teams are confident in their go-to-market direction, but execution remains inconsistent across channels, accounts, and buying groups. Fragmented data, siloed teams, and slow production cycles make it difficult to translate strategy into campaigns that break through and convert buyer intent into pipeline.

The findings highlight a growing gap between insight and activation. Marketing leaders want stronger audience intelligence and clearer measurement, but they also need faster, more adaptable creative systems that can support account-based journeys, stage-specific messaging, and coordinated execution across paid media, content, and the website.

Paid media performance is uneven, content is difficult to scale and repurpose, and websites often fail to guide buyers forward. Together, these challenges point to the need for orchestrated demand generation—where strategy, creative, and execution work in lockstep to deliver relevant, differentiated experiences that accelerate pipeline impact.

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WHO DID WE SURVEY?

Between September 2025 and February 2026, Gatepoint Research invited selected leaders to participate in a survey themed *B2B Marketing Agility and Effectiveness*
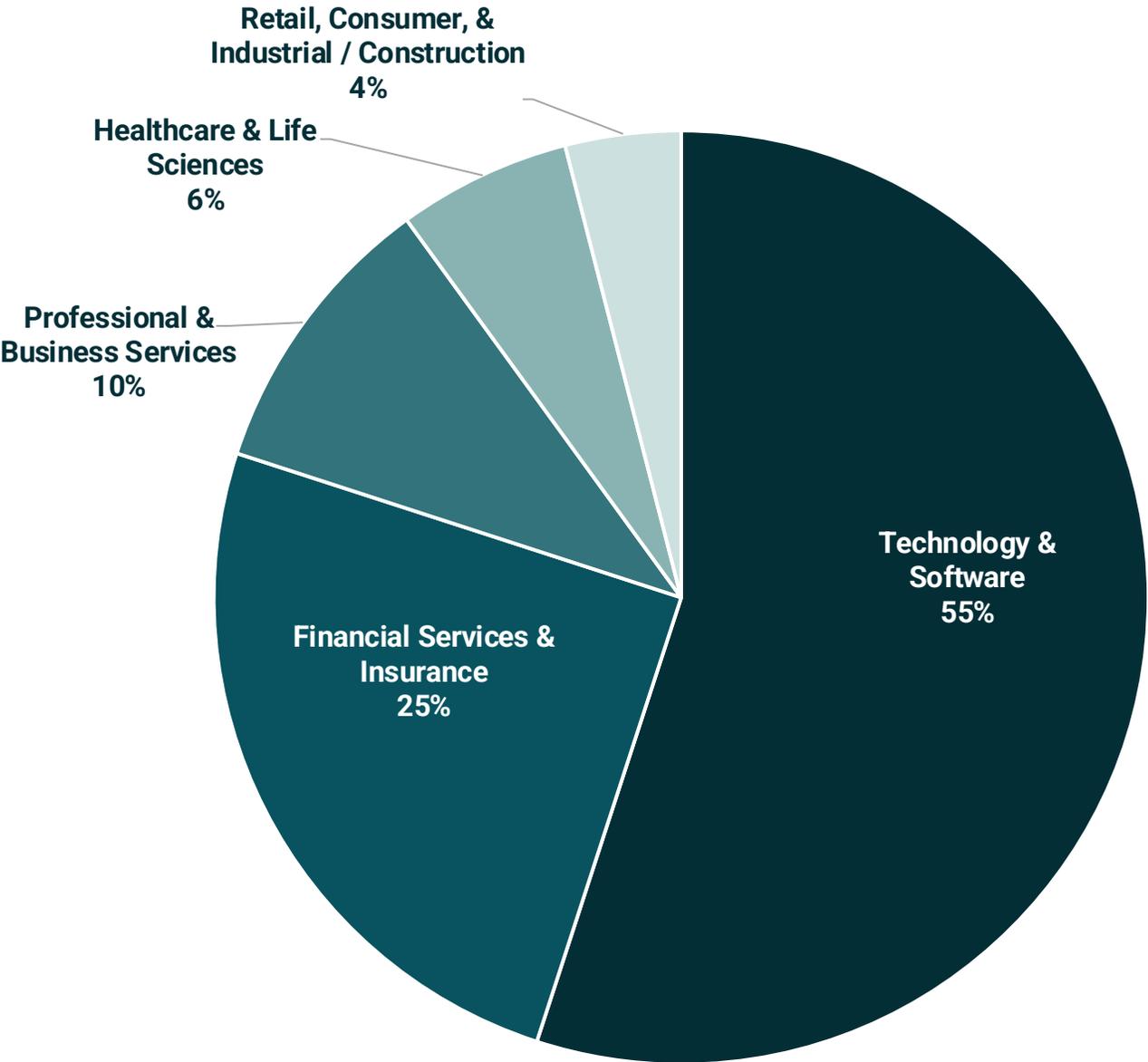
A total of 91 marketing executives and managers responded , including 12% vice presidents, 29% directors, and 59% senior or department managers. This mix captures both strategic leadership perspectives and day-to-day operational realities.

Respondents represent organizations from several industries and with annual revenues ranging from under $250 million to $1.5 billion or more.

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INDUSTRY PROFILE

The respondent base skews toward technology and financial services organizations with complex, multi-stakeholder buying journeys—creating an ideal environment for account-based marketing strategies that prioritize buying-group visibility, coordinated messaging, and measurable pipeline impact across long sales cycles.

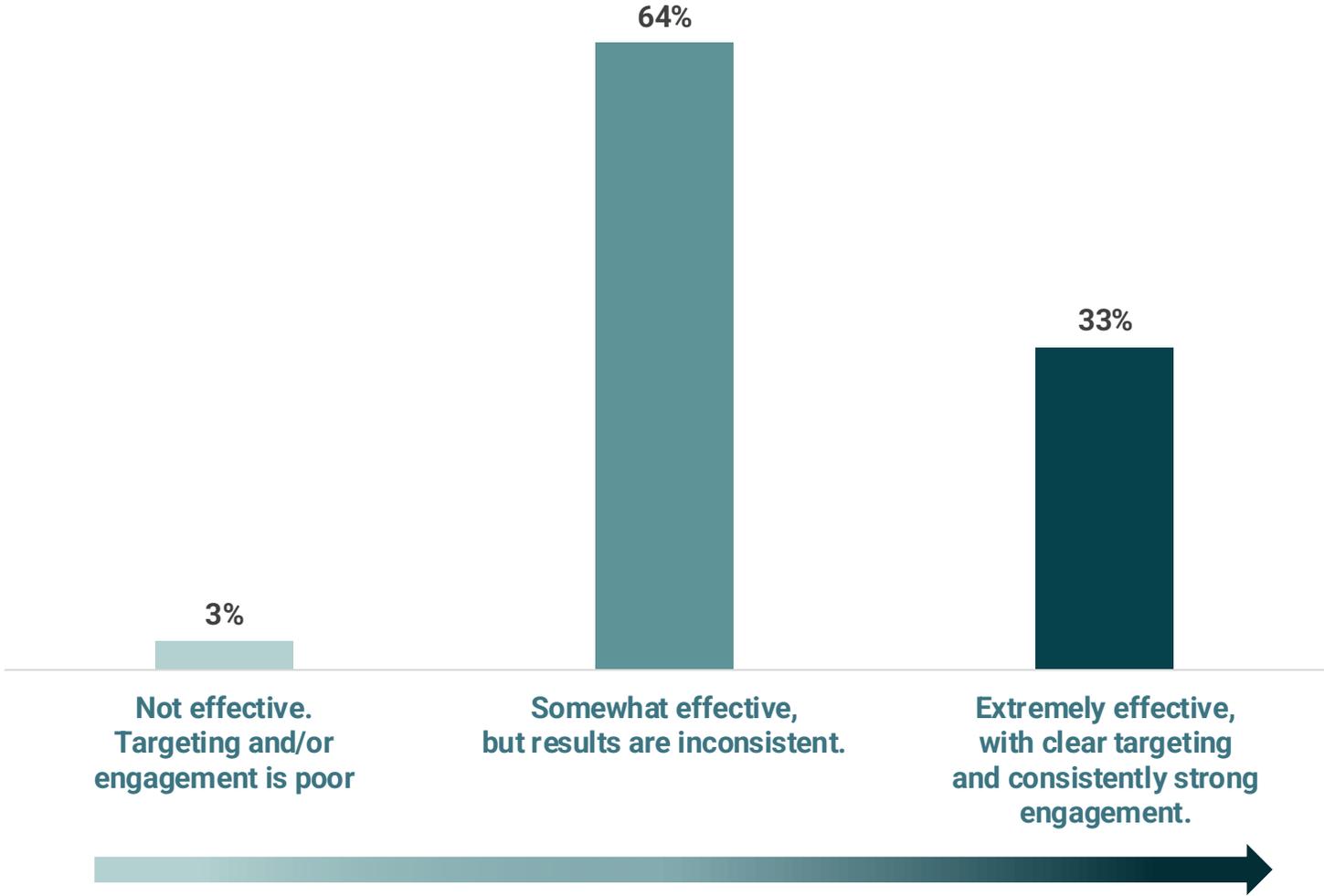Retail, Consumer, & Industrial / Construction
4%

Healthcare & Life Sciences
6%

Professional & Business Services
10%

Financial Services & Insurance
25%

Technology & Software
55%

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GTM STRATEGY EFFECTIVENESS

How effective is your go-to-market strategy at reaching and engaging your target audience?

64%

33%

3%

Not effective. Targeting and/or engagement is poor

Somewhat effective, but results are inconsistent.

Extremely effective, with clear targeting and consistently strong engagement.

Marketing leaders express confidence without consistency. More than two-thirds believe their GTM strategy is effective, yet struggle to operationalize it consistently across channels, accounts, and buying groups.

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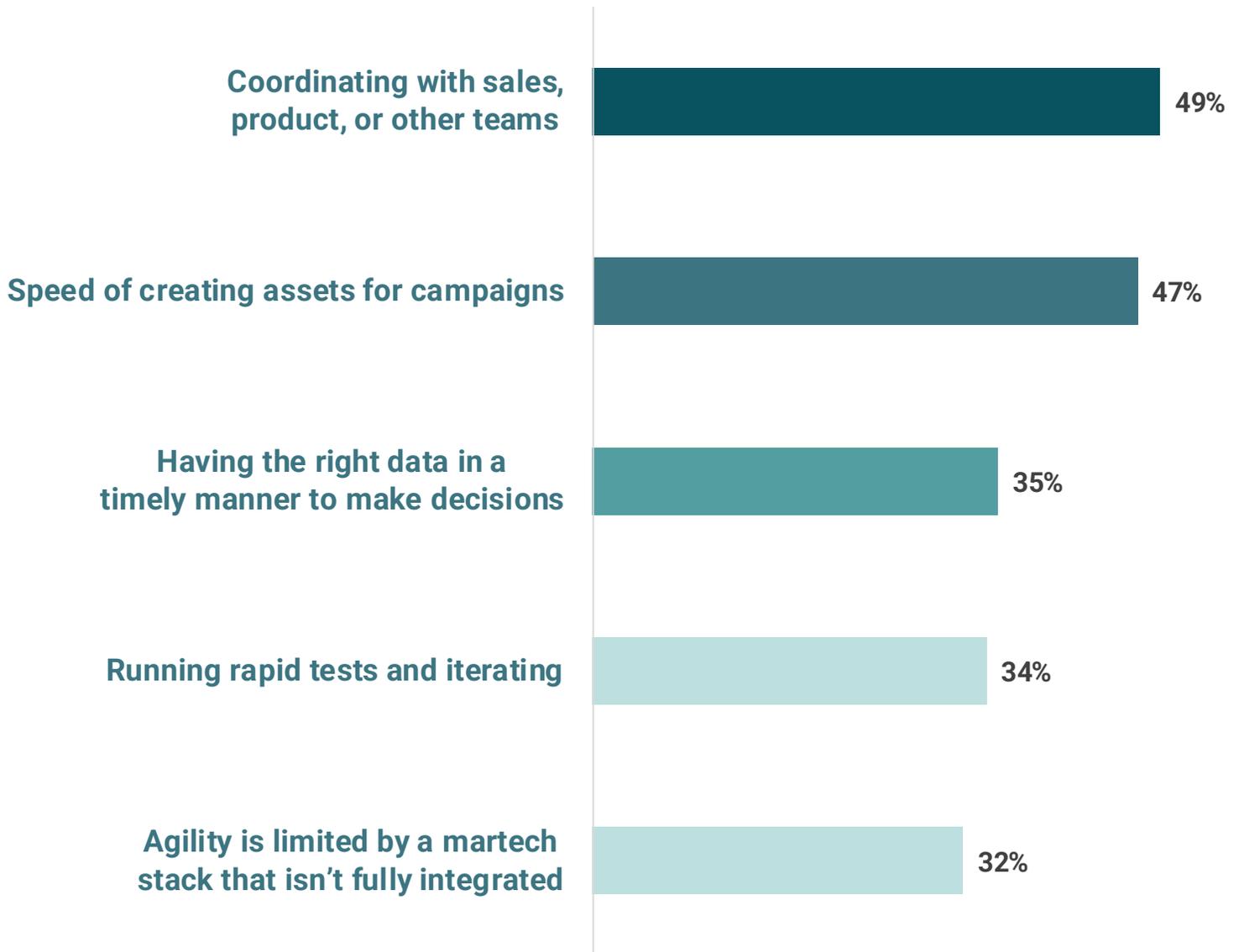PULSE REPORT

STRATEGY CHALLENGES

What's the biggest challenge to getting the results you need from your GTM strategy?

Challenge	Percentage
Obtaining actionable audience insights	48%
Execution is siloed by channel	47%
Journey paths have dead ends— leads are caught and released	33%
Programs are stale; all segments look alike year after year	29%
Aligning on the ICP	23%
Product features take center stage	14%
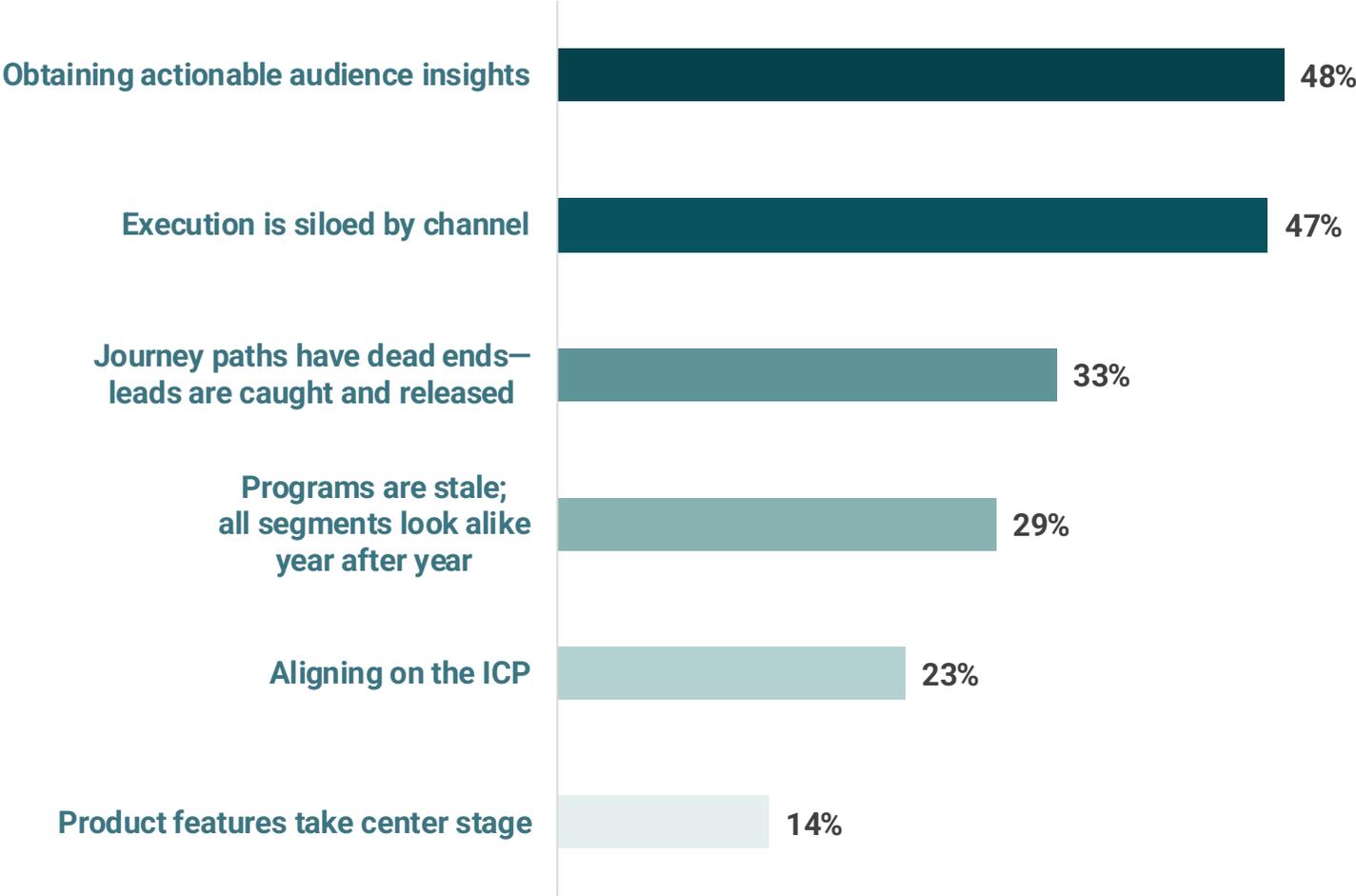
The top blockers to GTM success are rooted in insight and execution. Nearly half cite difficulty obtaining actionable audience insights (48%) and lack of alignment across channels (47%). Abandoned leads (33%) and stale, repetitive programs (29%) point to fragmented buyer journeys and declining engagement.

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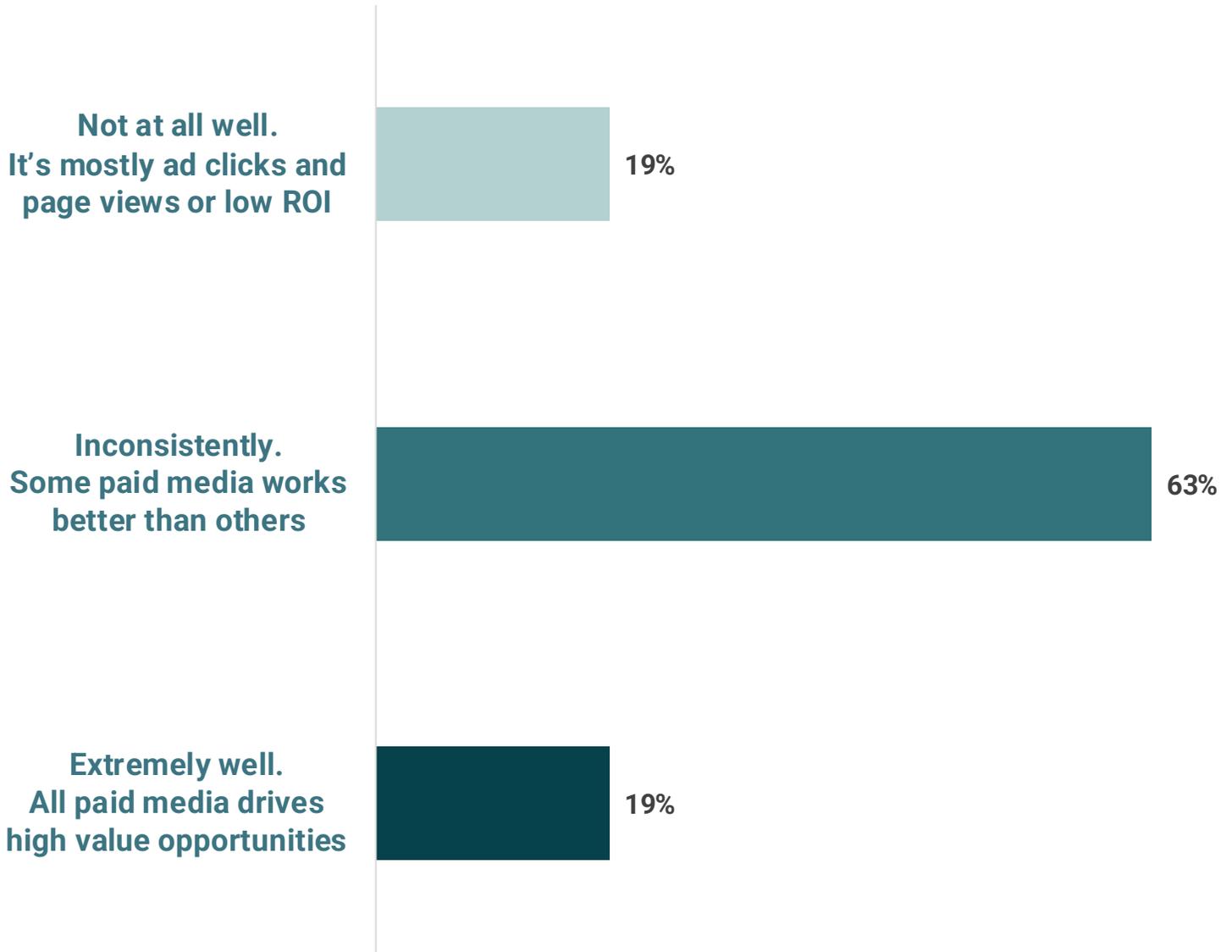PULSE REPORT

AGILITY CHALLENGES

Where do you face challenges to being more agile?

Challenge	Percentage
Coordinating with sales, product, or other teams	49%
Speed of creating assets for campaigns	47%
Having the right data in a timely manner to make decisions	35%
Running rapid tests and iterating	34%
Agility is limited by a martech stack that isn't fully integrated	32%

Agility breaks down across people, process, and platforms. Teams struggle with cross-functional coordination (49%), slow asset creation (47%), and limited access to timely data. In many cases, disconnected or non-scalable tools further increase operational friction.
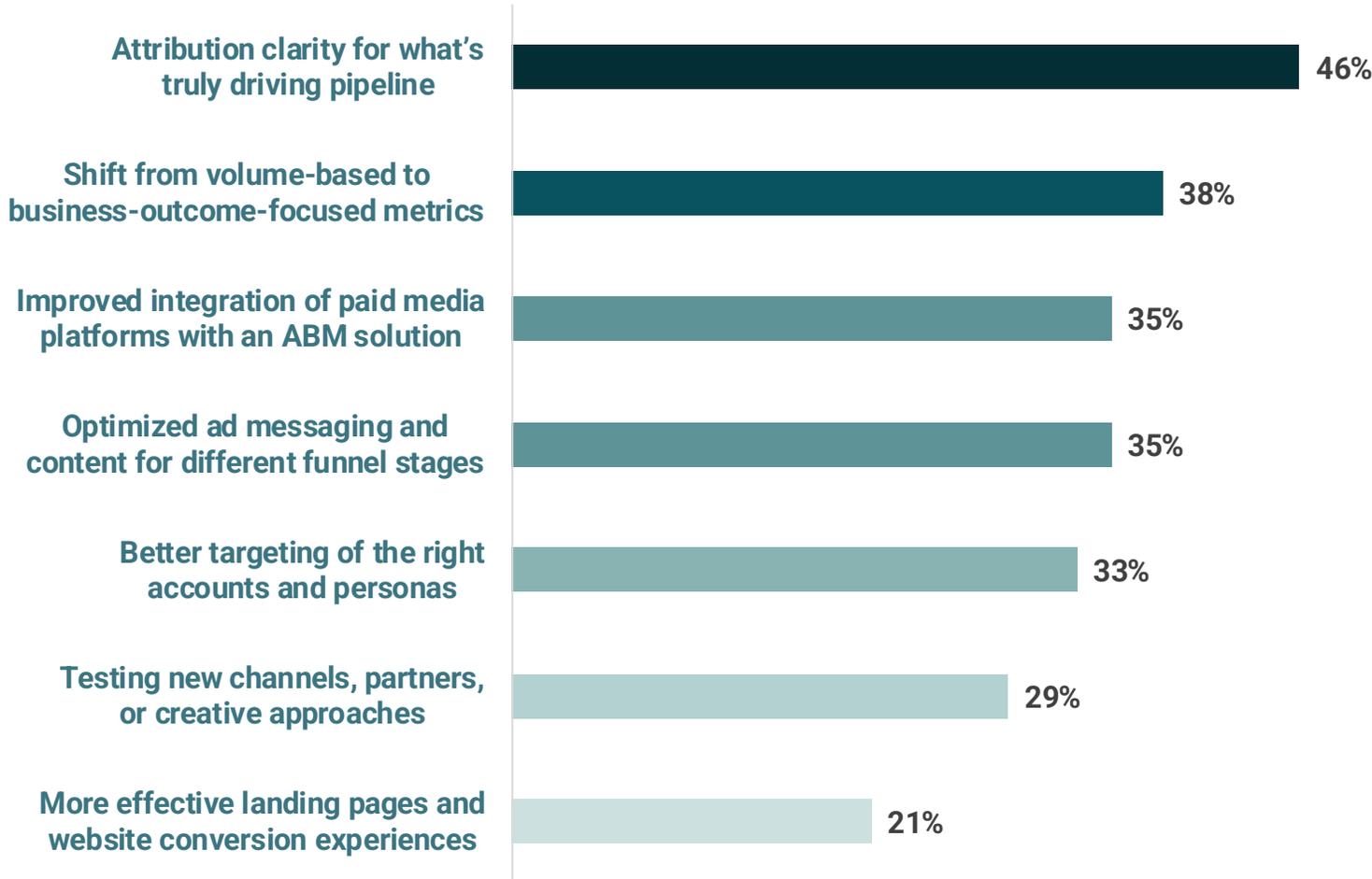
PAID MEDIA RESULTS

How well is your paid media pushing real opportunities to you?

**Not at all well.
It's mostly ad clicks and
page views or low ROI** — 19%

**Inconsistently.
Some paid media works
better than others** — 63%

**Extremely well.
All paid media drives
high value opportunities** — 19%

Paid media is generating activity but translating that activity into pipeline is inconsistent. While 19% say paid media consistently drives high-value opportunities, an equal share report low ROI driven by clicks and page views. Most respondents fall between these extremes, indicating uneven performance.

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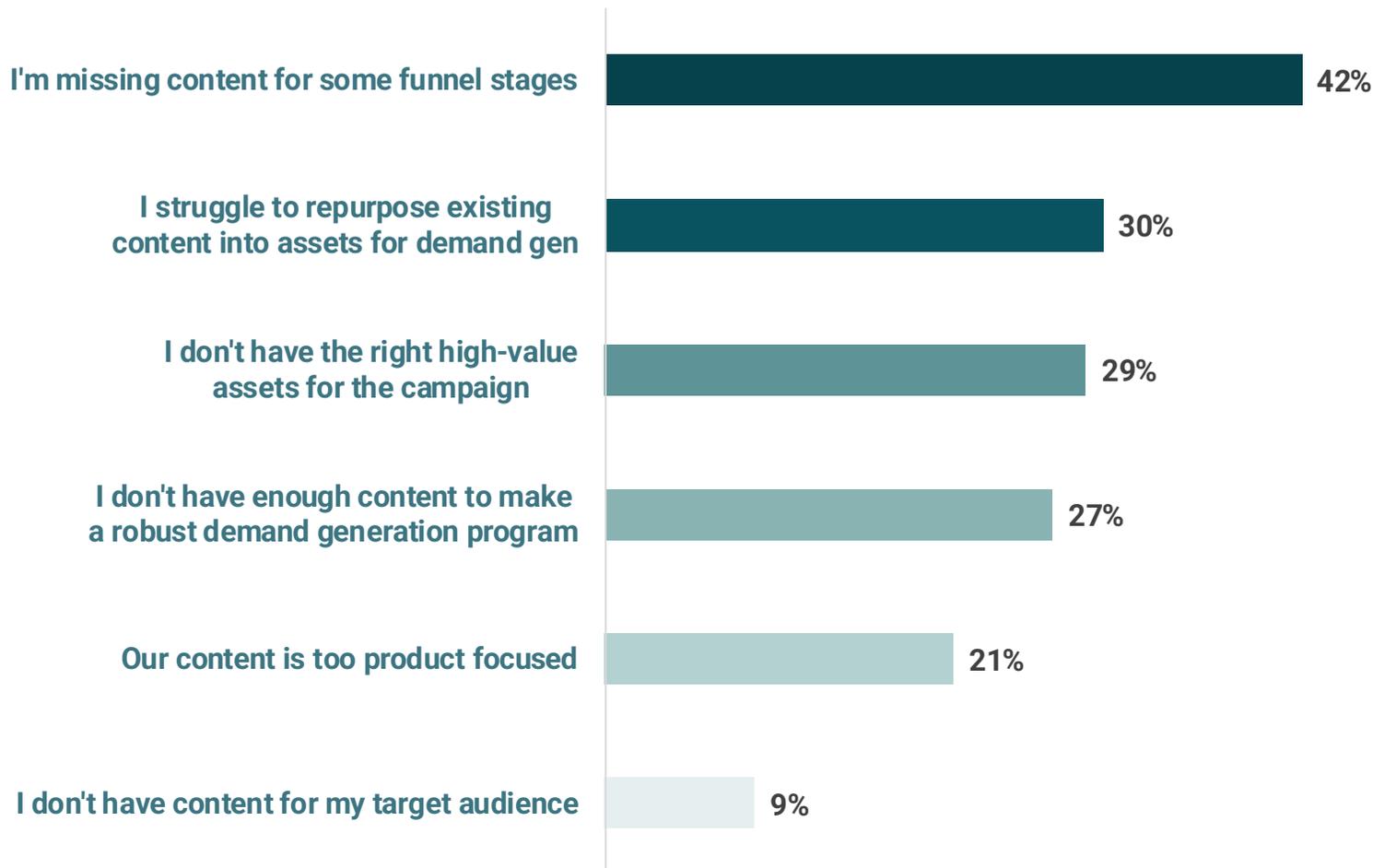PULSE REPORT

PAID MEDIA IMPROVEMENTS

What would help your paid media produce a stronger, more valuable pipeline?

Category	Percentage
Attribution clarity for what's truly driving pipeline	46%
Shift from volume-based to business-outcome-focused metrics	38%
Improved integration of paid media platforms with an ABM solution	35%
Optimized ad messaging and content for different funnel stages	35%
Better targeting of the right accounts and personas	33%
Testing new channels, partners, or creative approaches	29%
More effective landing pages and website conversion experiences	21%

Marketing leaders want clearer visibility into what is *truly* driving pipeline (46%) and are increasingly shifting toward revenue-aligned KPIs (38%). Integrating paid media with ABM platforms (35%) enables more precise targeting, stage-appropriate messaging, and coordinated optimization across accounts, personas, and buying groups.

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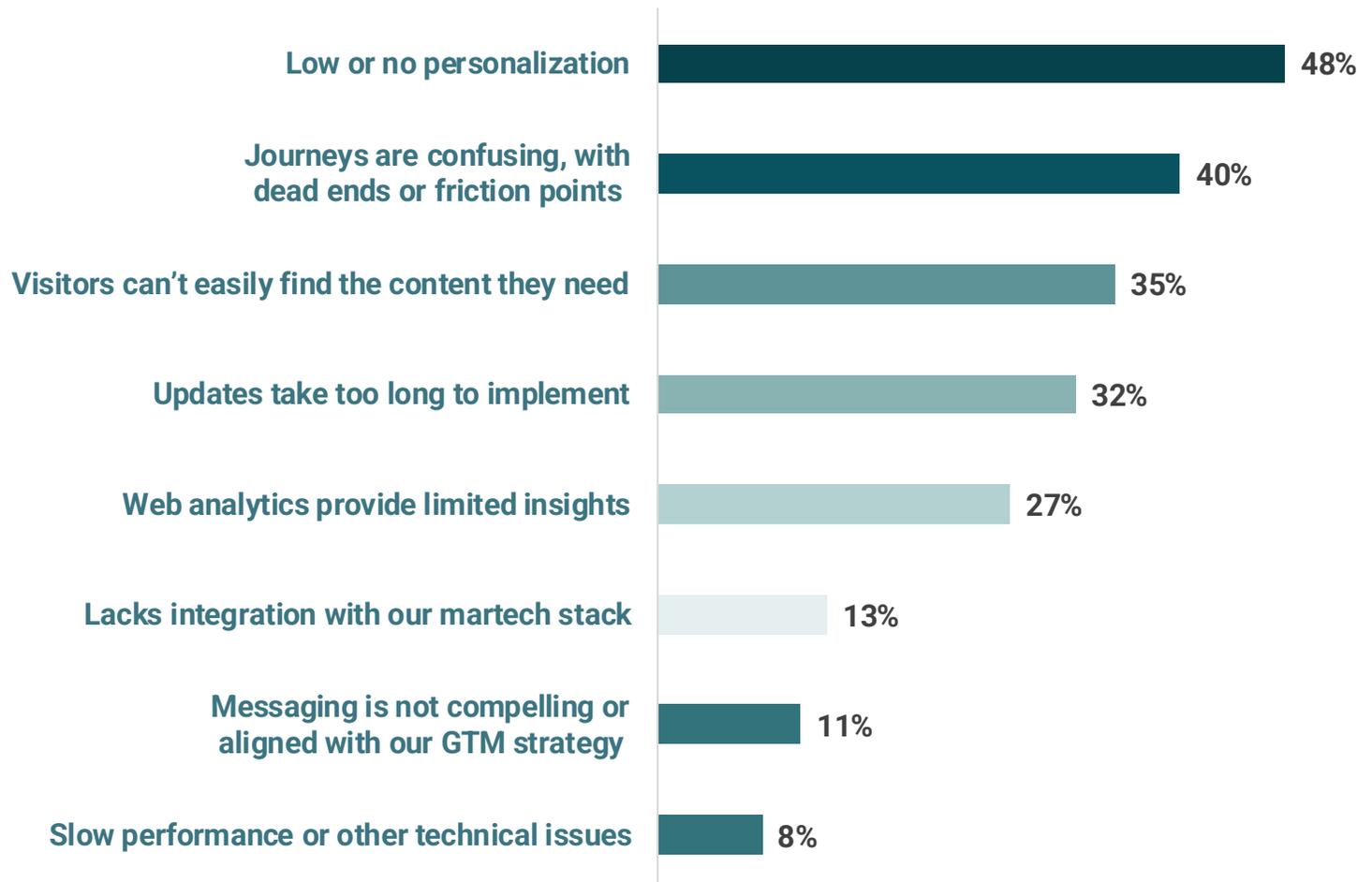
DEMAND GEN CONTENT BLOCKERS

What are your biggest challenges when selecting content for your demand generation program?

Challenge	Percentage
I'm missing content for some funnel stages	42%
I struggle to repurpose existing content into assets for demand gen	30%
I don't have the right high-value assets for the campaign	29%
I don't have enough content to make a robust demand generation program	27%
Our content is too product focused	21%
I don't have content for my target audience	9%

Content gaps persist across the funnel. Forty-two percent report missing content for key buying stages, while others struggle to repurpose existing assets (30%) or lack high-value campaign content (29%). These gaps point to the need for modular, adaptable content systems that support varied buying roles and journeys.
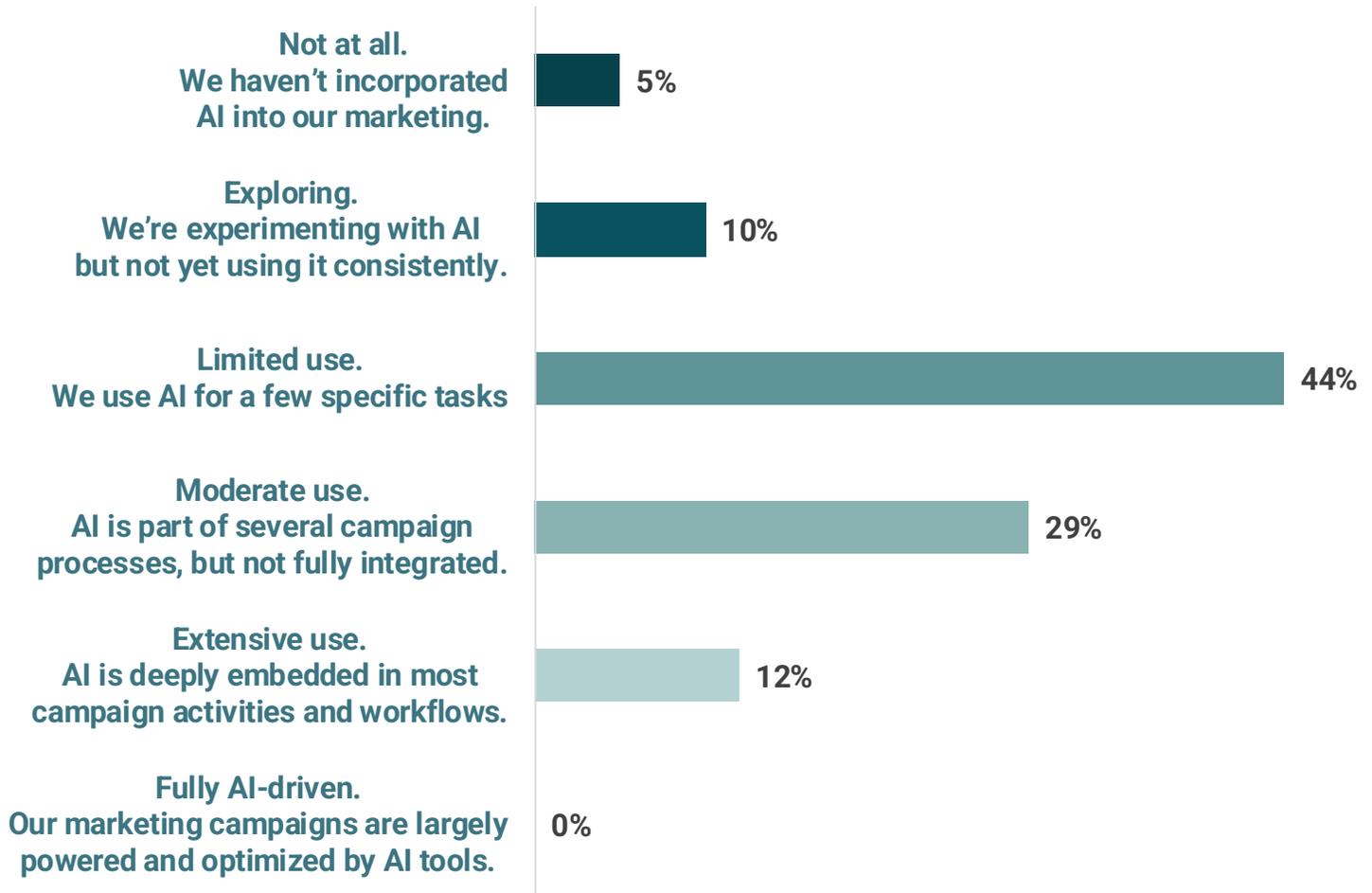
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WEBSITE LIMITATIONS

Which of the following best describes your website's main limitations?

Limitation	Percentage
Low or no personalization	48%
Journeys are confusing, with dead ends or friction points	40%
Visitors can't easily find the content they need	35%
Updates take too long to implement	32%
Web analytics provide limited insights	27%
Lacks integration with our martech stack	13%
Messaging is not compelling or aligned with our GTM strategy	11%
Slow performance or other technical issues	8%

The website should function as an accelerator, not a bottleneck. Despite serving as a primary conversion entry point, many websites fail to support account-based journeys or adapt to buyer intent—limiting the impact of upstream marketing investments.

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AI ADOPTION

To what extent are you using AI in your marketing campaigns to drive agility and efficiency?

Not at all.
We haven't incorporated AI into our marketing. 5%

Exploring.
We're experimenting with AI but not yet using it consistently. 10%

Limited use.
We use AI for a few specific tasks 44%

Moderate use.
AI is part of several campaign processes, but not fully integrated. 29%

Extensive use.
AI is deeply embedded in most campaign activities and workflows. 12%

Fully AI-driven.
Our marketing campaigns are largely powered and optimized by AI tools. 0%

AI adoption is progressing but remains fragmented. Most respondents (44%) use AI for limited, task-specific activities, while 40% report moderate or extensive use. No respondents describe their programs as fully AI-driven. While leaders view AI as a lever for speed and efficiency, adoption remains largely tactical rather than transformational.

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ABOUT THE COMPANY

Iron Horse is a demand generation marketing agency focused on B2B enterprise and emerging growth companies. They are go-to-market experts with a collective passion for creating audience-centric programs that deliver pipeline. Iron Horse transforms autopilot media programs into strategic demand drivers.

Learn more at ironhorse.io

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