



# 2024 Outlook and Trends: Supply Chain Marketing

State of the Industry Survey Findings

Presented by:



**Virago  
Marketing**



How are supply chain companies evolving marketing to drive growth in today's complex economic environment? We gathered more than 100 responses from supply chain marketing leaders across technology providers, 3PLs, carriers, and shippers to find out.

The results reveal how companies approach marketing amidst inflationary pressures and cooling talent markets.

Our analysis uncovers key budget trends, tactics, and metrics—plus how company size and revenue correlate to marketing priorities.

Whether you lead marketing or advocate for resources, having peer-benchmarked data provides an edge. Discover what's changing from last year and how you stack up against your peers in the report ahead.

## Table of Contents

- Overview ..... 3
- Executive Summary ..... 4
- Sizing Up Marketing Teams and Budgets ..... 5–9
- Top Current Supply Chain Marketing Pain Points ..... 10–11
- Top Marketing Objectives ..... 12–13
- Metrics Supply Chain Marketers are Measuring ..... 14–16
- Upcoming Supply Chain Marketing Tactic Investment ..... 17–18
- Attitudes Towards Marketing Tech ..... 19
- State of Marketing and Sales Alignment ..... 20
- Supply Chain Marketing and Use of Agencies ..... 21–23
- Respondents' Demographics ..... 24
- Respondents' Companies ..... 25
- About Virago Marketing ..... 27

# Overview

As the transportation and supply chain industry navigates complexities moving into 2024, our second annual survey, with insights from 108 supply chain marketers, illuminates the evolving strategies and priorities shaping the marketing landscape. Building on the success of our previous report, we continue to unravel the industry's intricacies, focusing on challenges, tactics, technology, and objectives that will define marketing strategies over the next year.

## Survey Methodology:

With an expanded participant pool, our survey embraces a comprehensive approach to understanding the supply chain marketing landscape. The data was analyzed using Spearman's Rank Correlation, which measures the strength and direction of the association between two data sets (like company size and budget) when ranked by each of their quantities.

## Key Areas of Inquiry:

**Challenges & Objectives:** What shifts are driving marketing strategies into 2024?

**Tactics & Tech:** How are supply chain marketers innovating and embracing the integration of forward-thinking technologies into their tech stacks?

**Metrics:** How are marketing key performance indicators evolving across the industry?

**Demographics and Correlations:** What demographic correlations can we uncover to inform industry trends and patterns?

**Spending Trends & External Relationships:** How are supply chain marketers collaborating with external partners and marketing agencies?

As the supply chain industry looks toward 2024, our report aims to provide a nuanced understanding of the challenges, strategies, and future trajectories shaping marketing initiatives. Stay tuned for revealing insights that can guide marketers to adapt to industry demands, foster growth, and strengthen competitive positions.

The journey toward a comprehensive understanding of the industry's marketing dynamics starts here.

As the supply chain industry looks toward 2024, our report aims to provide a nuanced understanding of the challenges, strategies, and future trajectories shaping marketing initiatives.

## Executive Summary

Our second annual survey provides an updated benchmark on the current state of supply chain marketing, revealing several notable year-over-year trends.

Many supply chain companies face persistent issues like insufficient budgets and proving marketing's ROI. However, signs of progress appear. Respondents are taking more customer-centric, targeted approaches. The data shows rising investment in digital experiences, account-based marketing, and proven lead-generation tactics.

Specifically, the report reveals supply chain marketers are:

- Focusing more on virtual events to drive digital engagement
- Harnessing the power of AI to elevate their strategies
- Continuing to invest in organic channels like content, SEO, and email
- Placing greater emphasis on demonstrating marketing ROI
- Seeing hiring and retention challenges cooling year-over-year
- Leveraging deep marketing expertise, with 44% having 10+ years of experience

Our findings reveal that marketing struggles remain with budgets and misalignment, but progress is being made by using more strategic, analytics-driven methods.



Our second annual survey provides an updated benchmark on the current state of supply chain marketing, revealing several notable year-over-year trends.

# Sizing Up Marketing Teams and Budgets

## *Breakdown of Marketing Budgets by Total Number of Employees*

The data reveals tangible trends in how companies scale marketing department resourcing across revenue levels and organizational size.

On the revenue front, we observe a clear correlation between higher-earning companies investing in larger marketing teams (to no surprise). Firms under \$500K predominantly have solo marketing staff, while less than half of mid-market companies (\$1M-\$10M revenue) have teams exceeding three employees.

Shifting the lens to company-wide employee headcounts reveals similar upward curves in marketing team size with some interesting exceptions. Unsurprisingly, the smallest firms sustain solo staff despite million-dollar business. We then see a notable jump into the 2-3 member tier as companies pass 50 workers, potentially reflecting initial budget reallocation and growth prioritization taking root.

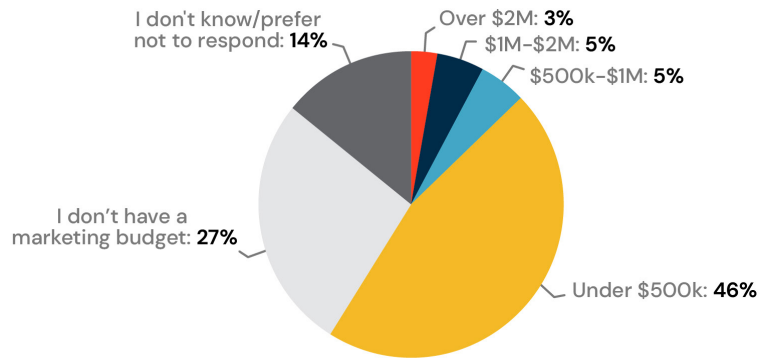
But drilling down further, it is the 100-250 total employee segment where scaling marketing teams first emerges as a majority norm. This mid-market zone represents a turning point in marketing team investment.



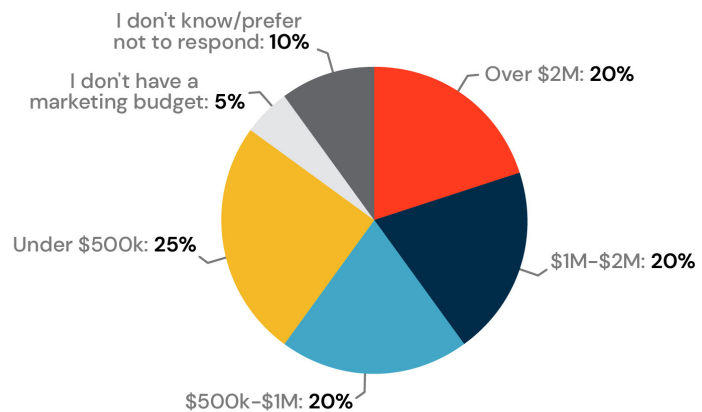
**On the revenue front, we observe a clear correlation between higher-earning companies investing in larger marketing teams.**

# Breakdown of Marketing Budgets by Total Number of Employees

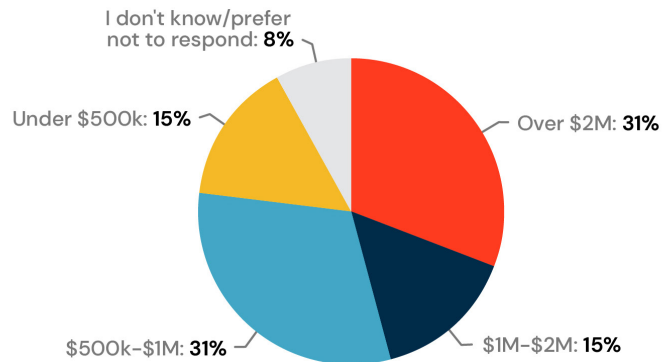
**0 to 100  
Employees**



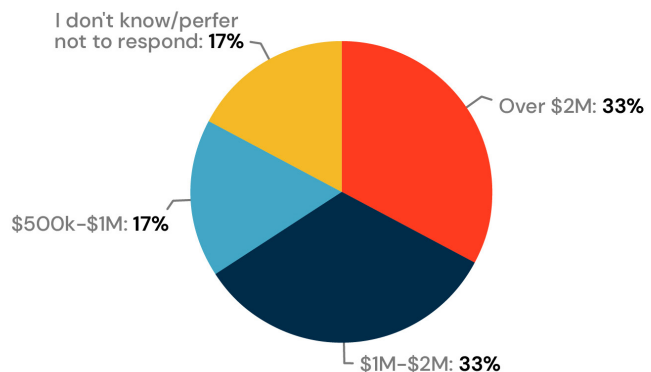
**101 to 499  
Employees**



**500 to 4,999  
Employees**



**5,000+  
Employees**



## Breakdown of Marketing Budgets by Revenue

The survey findings reveal a wide variance in marketing budgets tied to company size and revenue. Benchmarks from this study suggest that marketing departments of smaller supply chain companies are budget-constrained and likely unable to capitalize on opportunities fully.

For context, The [CMO Survey](#) indicates that marketing budgets for B2B companies fall between 7.4% and 7.9% of total revenue. In contrast, our data shows that most firms with under 100 employees have modest budgets of under \$500K, well under a 7 percent ratio given the typical revenue scale. Almost a third of companies report having no dedicated marketing budget, which severely limits their growth potential relative to this benchmark.

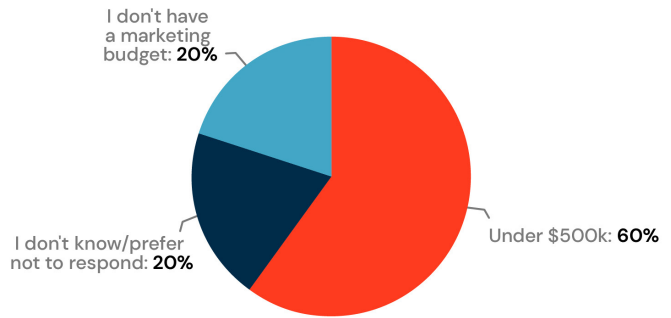
On the brighter side, our sample's top 20% of mid-market and enterprise players prioritize marketing with more than \$1 million in marketing spend, hitting or exceeding the survey benchmark. For supply chain marketers, these revenue-based figures provide another data lever to help justify allocating more resources to target gaps in capabilities and tech where underinvestment could be curtailing success.

**Benchmarks from this study suggest that marketing departments of smaller supply chain companies are budget-constrained and likely unable to capitalize on opportunities fully.**

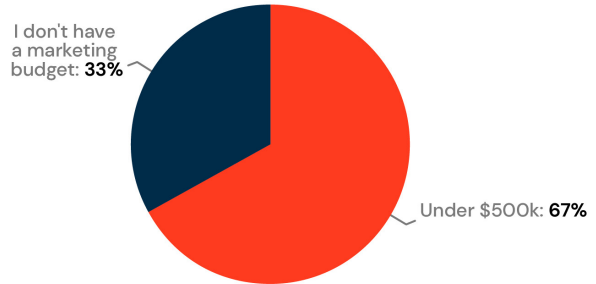


# Breakdown of Marketing Budgets by Revenue

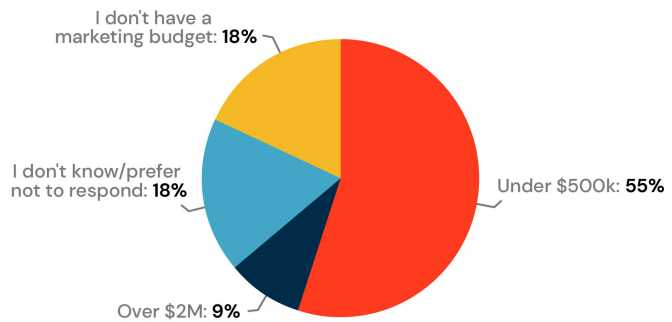
Less than \$500k



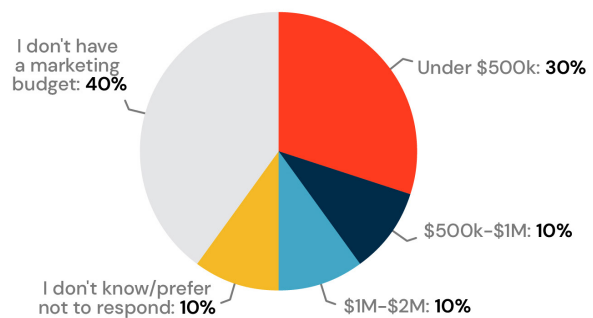
\$500k – \$1M



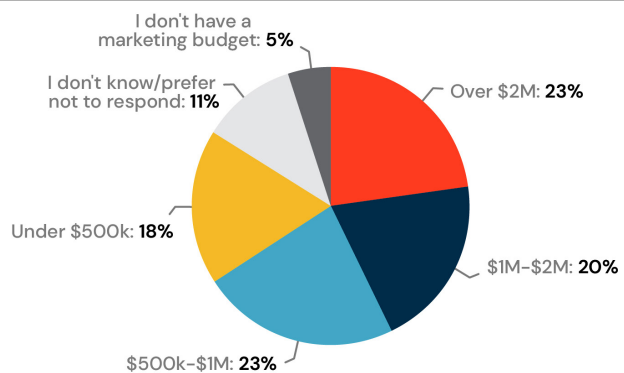
\$1M – \$5M



\$5M – \$10M



\$10M+



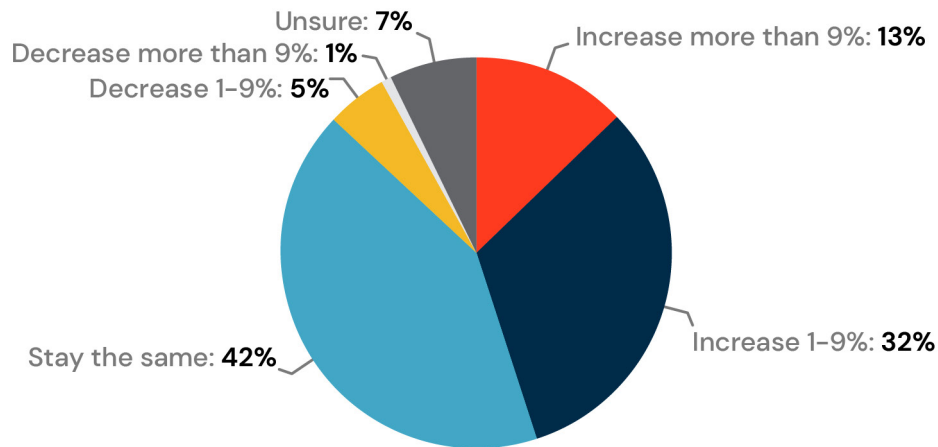


Having enough marketing resources— including sufficient budgets and staffing — is critical for B2B companies to drive more revenue growth.

Looking ahead, the [Content Management Institute's B2B Content Marketing Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends: Outlook for 2024](#) report findings suggest reasonably steady budgets for most companies rather than big swings up or down:

- 42% expect no change in marketing budgets in 2024
- 32% see small-to-moderate 1-9% budget increases coming

### How B2B Content Marketing Budgets Will Change in 2024



Source: 14th Annual Content Marketing Survey: Content Marketing Institute/MarketingProfs

Making data-backed cases to get more resources where they have a high impact remains essential. Whether improving efficiency internally or proposing selective expansions, a balance between controlling costs and investing is needed to grow marketing capabilities over time.



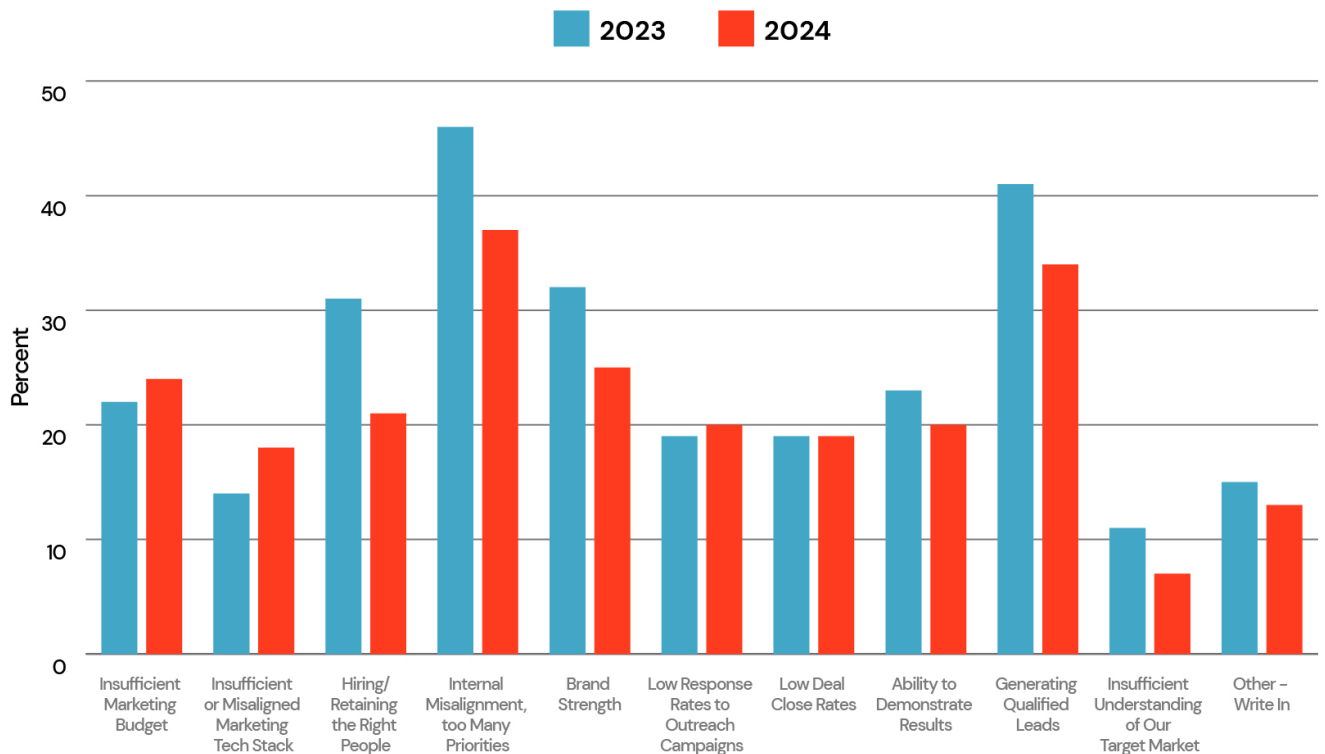
Having enough marketing resources— including sufficient budgets and staffing — is critical for B2B companies to drive more revenue growth.

# Top Current Supply Chain Marketing Pain Points

Heading into 2023, supply chain companies most often reported internal misalignment, lead generation, brand strength, and hiring/retaining talent as their top marketing challenges.

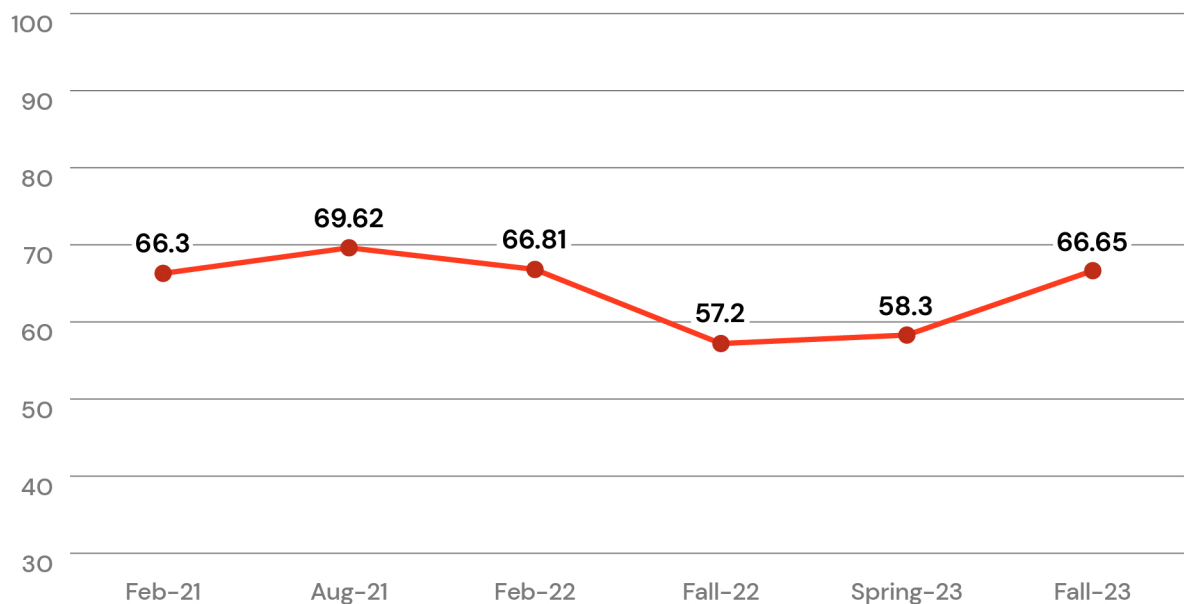
But priorities shifted moving into 2024 planning, with hiring dropping to the #5 spot as retention pressure eased amid recessionary concerns. Insufficient marketing budget concurrently rose to the #4 top pain point. Tighter budgets likely forced clampdowns on expanding teams.

What are your top pain points?



The pain of insufficient budget is echoed by the [Content Management Institute's B2B Content Marketing Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends: Outlook for 2024](#) report, which cited lack of resources as the #1 situational challenge B2B teams face.

## Rate Your Optimism about the U.S. Economy on a Scale from 0–100 with 0 Being the Least Optimistic and 100 Being the Most Optimistic



Source: Fall 2023 Edition of The CMO Survey

The [CMO Survey](#) found marketers' optimism improving from 57 in fall 2022 to 67 (on a scale of 0–100) in 2023.

As recession fears abate, we hope to see the ambition to enhance marketing departments with additional skilled team members return. Broader economic tailwinds could fuel this, allowing budgets to catch up to demand for marketing capabilities critical to post-pandemic growth.

The data also shows that larger supply chain companies struggle more with limited marketing technology and poor cross-team alignment than their smaller peers. Reasons likely include having increasingly fragmented and complex IT systems and rigid silos between departments as their organizations scale.

Employees at large organizations know the difficulties of aligning priorities and adopting new tools, like sales and marketing, across scattered departments. Big companies tend to move slowly, and internal divides can make it harder for supply chain leaders to keep pace with marketing innovation.

# Top Marketing Objectives

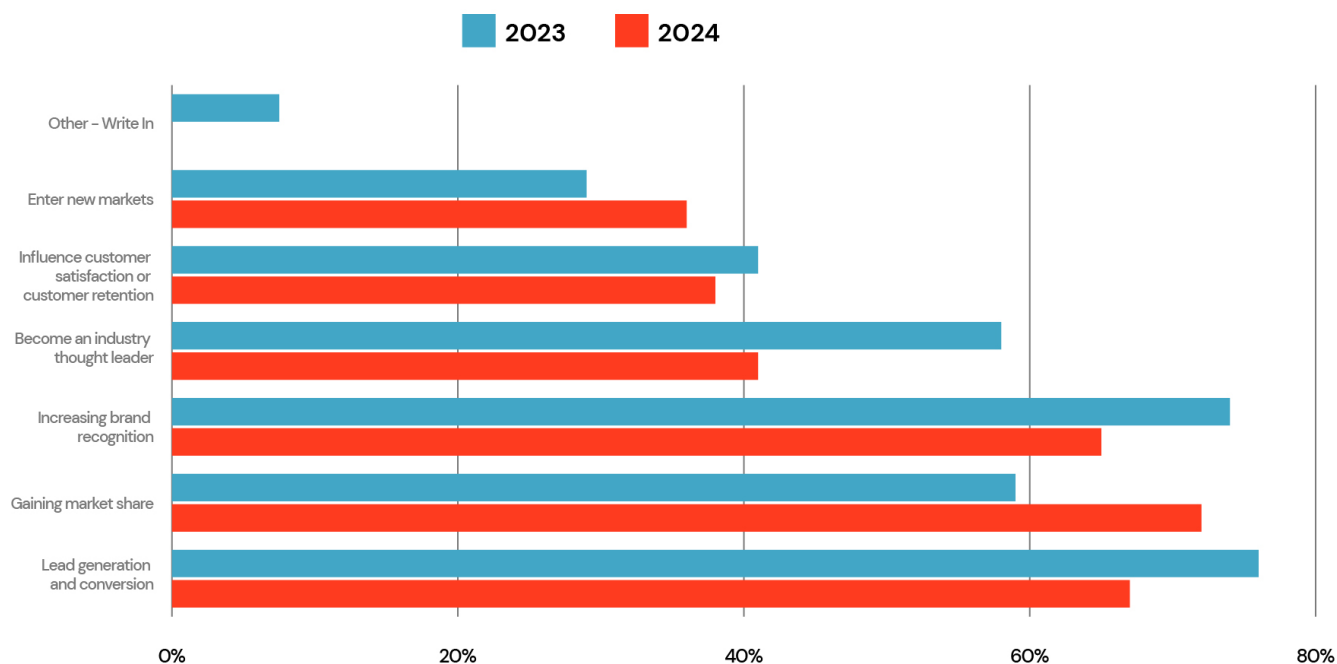
Lead generation, gaining market share, and **increasing brand awareness** remained in the top 3 spots, with “gaining market share” moving to #1, lead generation falling to #2, and increasing brand awareness moving down to #3.

Gaining market share and lead generation are objectives that are both closely tied to revenue, which aligns with **HubSpot’s findings** that the #1 goal of marketing leaders is “increasing revenue and sales.” The slight shift toward market share may indicate that supply chain marketers want to solidify their existing position rather than prioritize raw lead volume growth. Taking share signals stability.

On the subject of lead generation, HubSpot goes on to say:

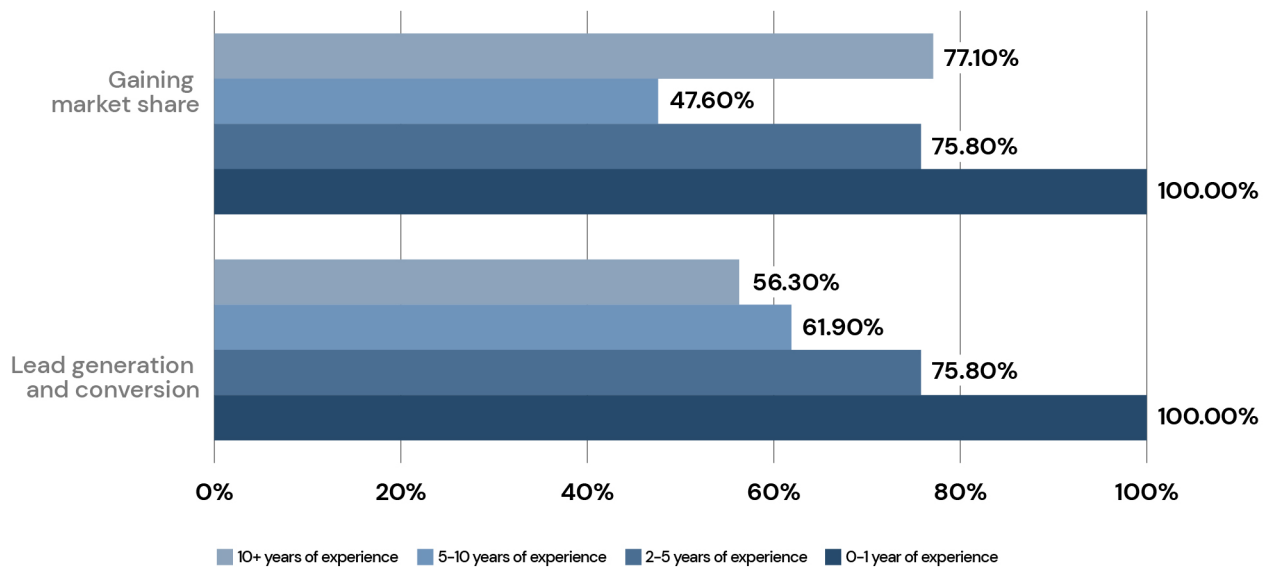
“To increase revenue ... marketing leaders will want to focus on lead generation. There is no one-size-fits-all approach to effective lead generation. To improve your lead generation strategy, you might test out new landing page CTAs, try creating stronger offers, or re-focus your efforts on more powerful lead nurturing campaigns. It’s also important to continually test new platforms — like TikTok or podcasting — to reach new audiences.”

## What are your key objectives for 2023–2024?



Interestingly, respondents with more experience tend to be progressively less interested in lead generation and conversion as a key objective:

What are your key objectives for 2023–2024?



At Virago, we've seen (and encouraged) a shift to demand generation (and if you're struggling to figure out the difference, [check out this blog](#)).

Demand generation is about building awareness, brand recognition, and creating interest in your business or product so prospects seek you out when they're ready to buy. It allows prospects to research information independently, digest it at their pace, and engage with companies as they see fit, without worrying that the phone will ring or their email inbox will be inundated with sales messages. Demand generation prioritizes high-intent leads – you're watching and waiting to engage them until they've met an engagement threshold.

For next year's survey, we'll correct our mistake of leaving demand generation out – and see how that influences the results.

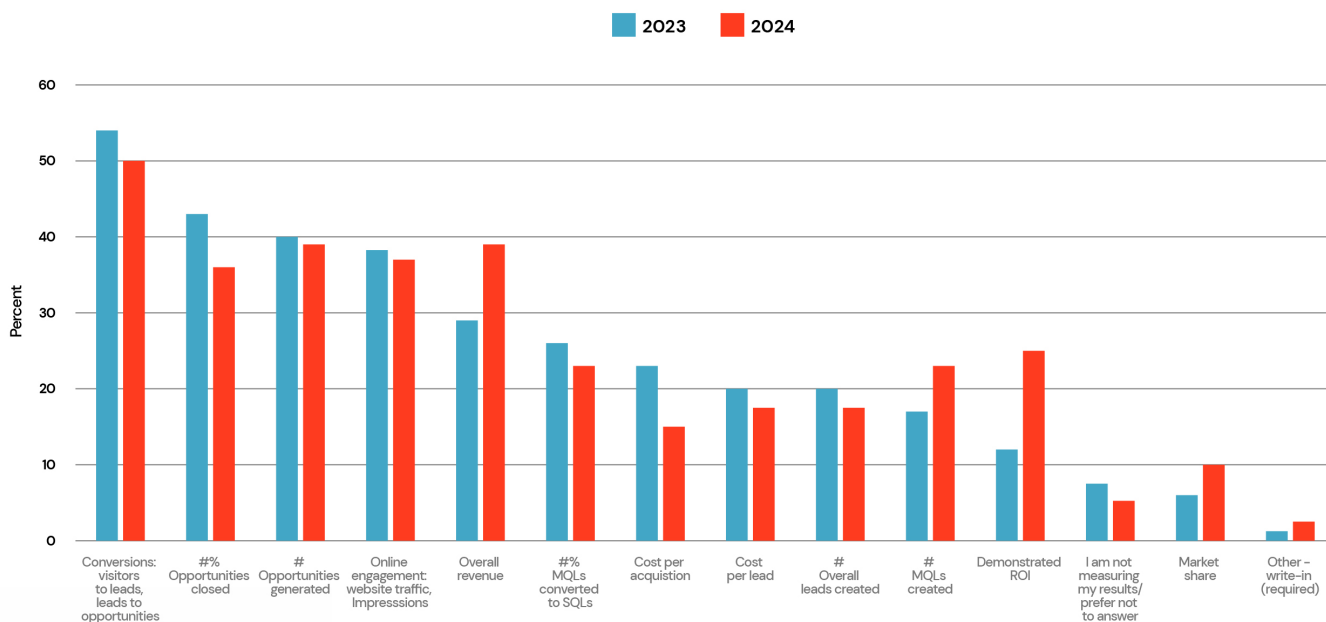


# Metrics Supply Chain Marketers are Measuring

Supply chain marketers' focus on demonstrated ROI increased significantly heading into 2024. It rose from 12% to 25%, year over year, from our Q4 2022 survey, indicating pressure to prove returns. Increasing overall revenue tied for 2nd place with opportunities generated. Conversions won the day again this year.

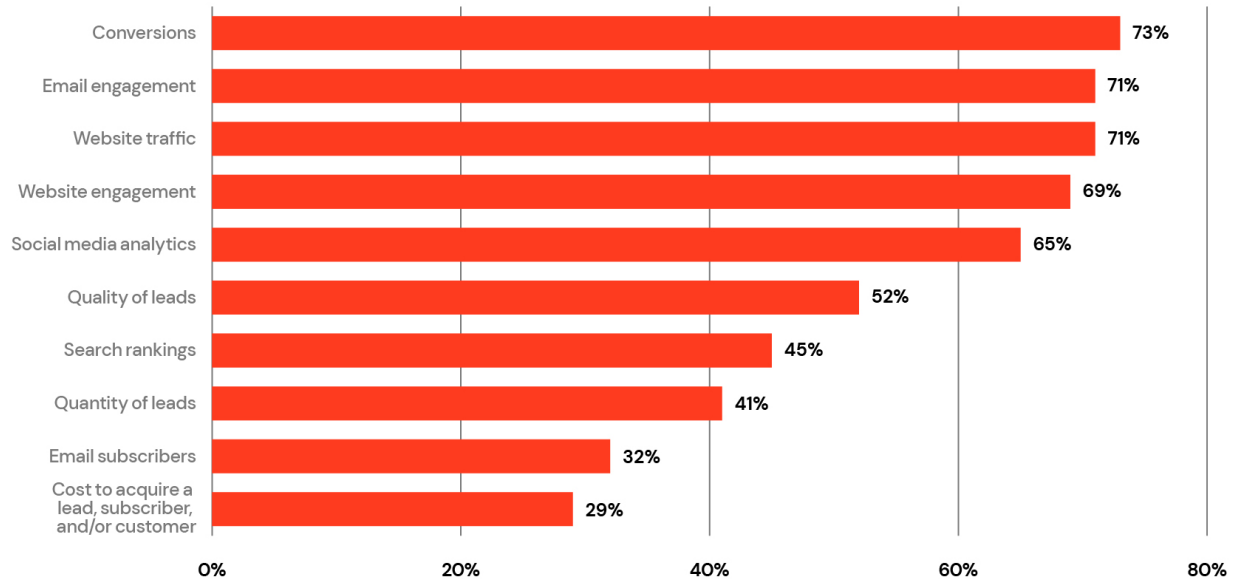
**Supply chain marketers' focus on demonstrated ROI increased significantly heading into 2024.**

If you are measuring your results, what metrics are you most focused on?



The focus on conversions aligns with the [Content Management Institute's B2B Content Marketing Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends: Outlook for 2024](#) report. We suspect it's a more significant metric for marketers because they have more control over it – especially if they've closely defined the stages of their pipeline.

### Metrics B2B marketers rely on most to evaluate content performance



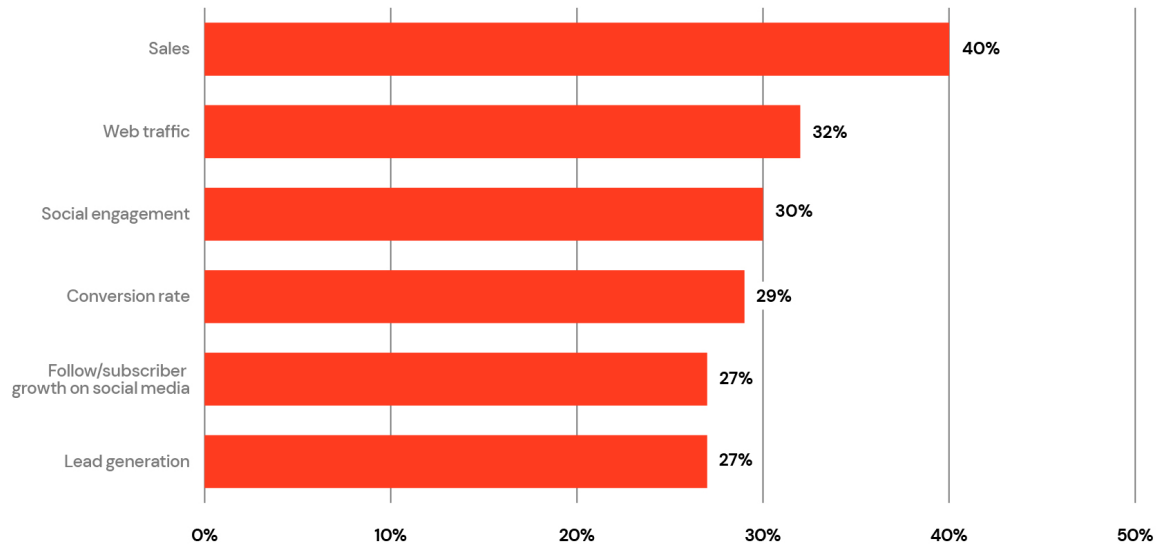
Source: 14th Annual Content Marketing Survey: Content Marketing Institute/MarketingProfs

As discussed in our blog, [Maximizing Conversions: Insights and Best Practices for Supply Chain Marketers](#), measuring marketing success is essential for supply chain companies to stay competitive in today's market. Converting leads at each stage is critical to driving revenue, but as with most things, it takes time, effort, and a solid strategy.



The focus on revenue, on the other hand, echoes the findings of [The State of Marketing 2023](#) released by HubSpot in November. The report indicates sales as the most critical metric for measuring the effectiveness of content marketing strategy – and also named blogs, social media shopping tools, and influencer marketing as the highest ROI-driving marketing channels.

### What are the most important metrics for measuring the effectiveness of your content marketing strategy? (Top 6)



Source: *The State of Marketing 2023 Report* by HubSpot, Litmus, Rock Content, and Wistia

While not statistically significant, the percentage of respondents who answered “I am not measuring my results” dropped from 8% to 5% – and as a data-driven marketing agency, we’re here for it..

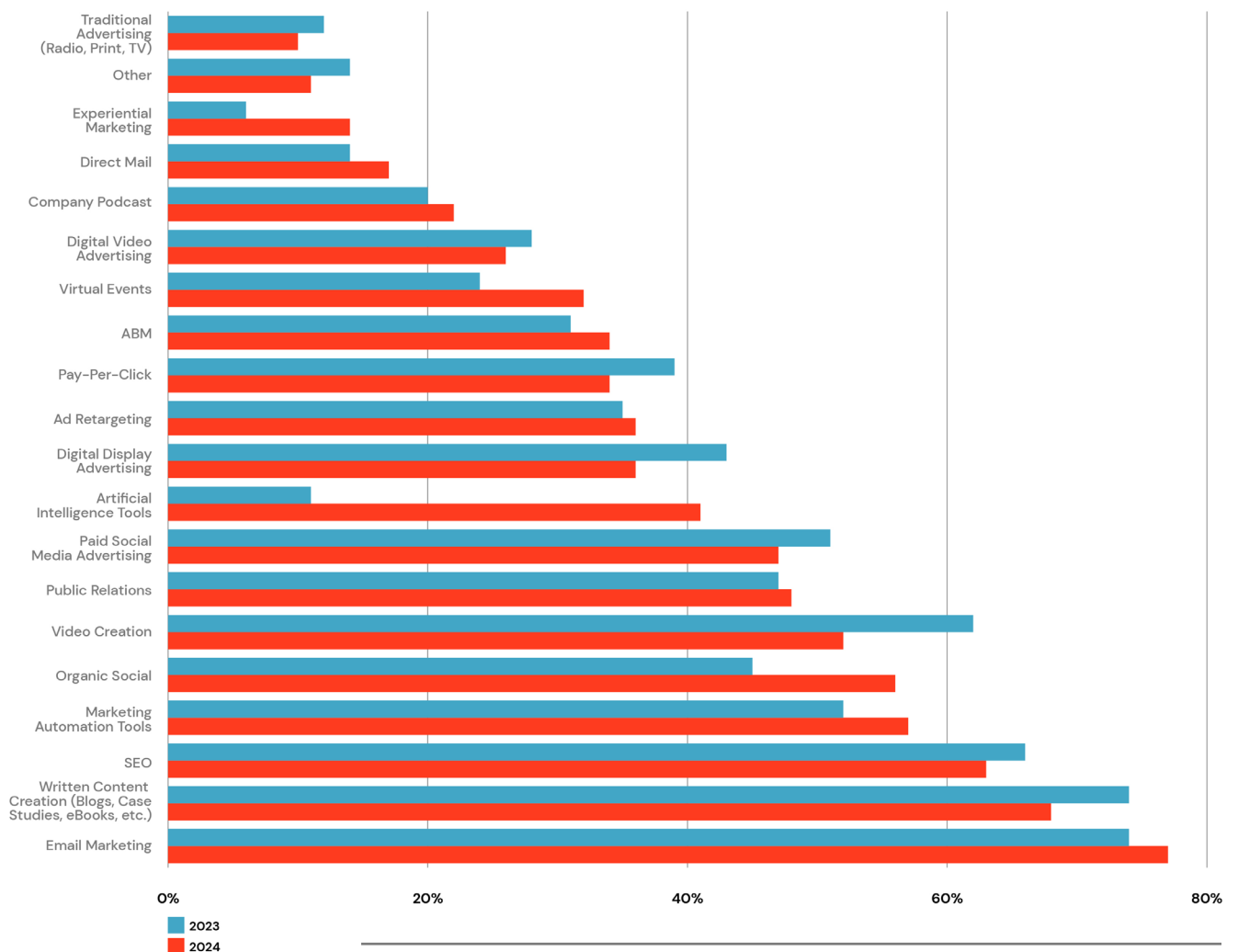




# Upcoming Supply Chain Marketing Tactic Investment

Interest in SEO (62%), written content (67%), and email (76%) remains high year-over-year, emphasizing the continued importance of organic growth channels (and we'd argue top-notch written content is the key to supercharging both email and SEO – call us!). [According to the Content Marketing Institute](#), the most popular forms of written content are short articles and posts, case studies, and customer stories. With endless AI-generated content flooding the internet today, developing branded stories and helpful resources that deeply resonate with key audiences is more valuable than ever.

What marketing tactics do you plan to invest in, in the next year?

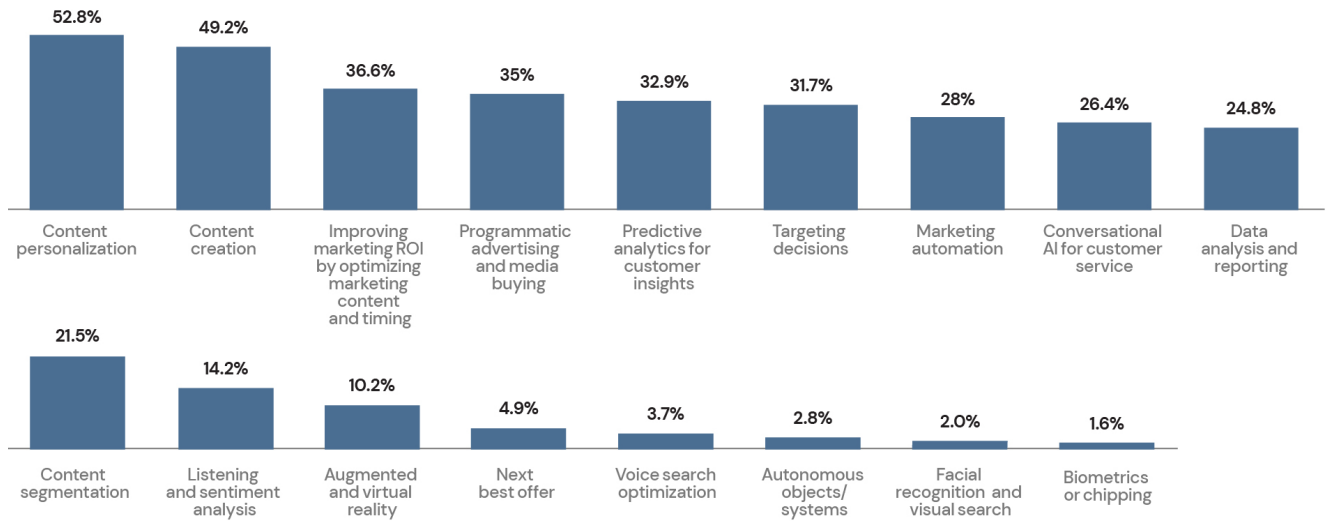


Planned investment jumped for virtual events (31%, up from 23% in 2022), showing increased prioritization of digital experiences, and investment in AI tools surged to 41%, up from 11% last year. [The CMO Survey](#) found that using AI in marketing increases sales productivity and customer satisfaction and lowers marketing overhead costs by more than 7%. So, it's undoubtedly a ripe area for investment.

As for what marketers are utilizing AI for, [The CMO Survey](#) found the top uses are content personalization (53%), content creation (49%), and optimizing marketing content and timing to improve ROI (37%).

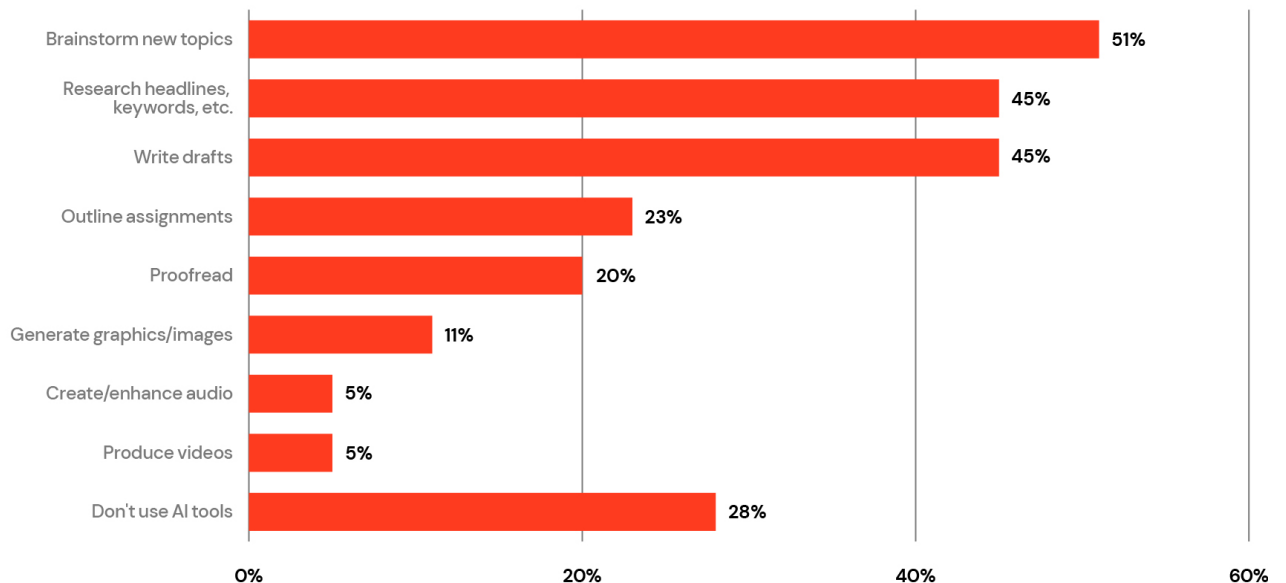
# Content Personalization and Creation are Top Marketing Uses for AI

How is your company using AI in its marketing activities?



Source: 14th Annual Content Marketing Survey: Content Marketing Institute/MarketingProfs

The Content Marketing Institute's report digs deeper into how specifically content marketers use AI, with 51% using generative AI to brainstorm new topics, and 45% using AI to research headlines and keywords or write drafts.



Source: 14th Annual Content Marketing Survey: Content Marketing Institute/MarketingProfs

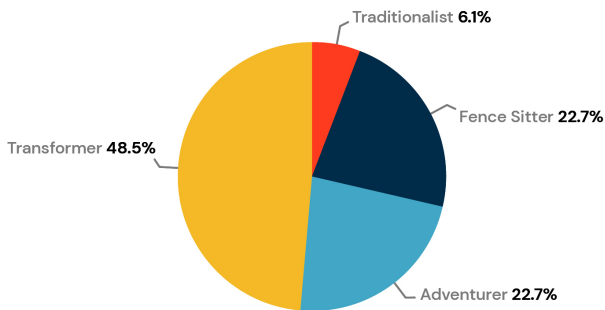
In aggregate, the data suggests supply chain marketers are still leaning on foundational marketing tactics while beginning to embrace AI and virtual events. Blending traditional and emerging marketing priorities has tremendous potential to help augment time- and budget-strapped supply chain marketing teams.

# Attitudes Toward Marketing Tech

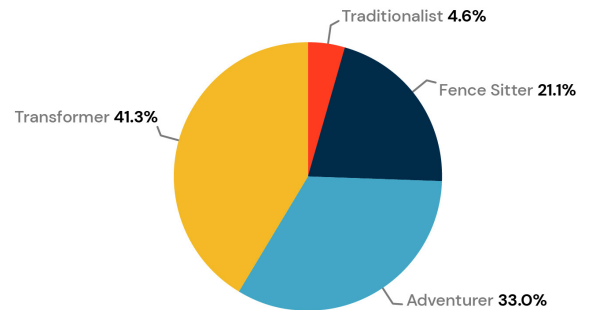
While statistically insignificant, slightly fewer people categorized their company as a Transformer in our 2023 survey, perhaps due to the pace of change in business today. Otherwise, responses were consistent with what we saw last year.

## How would you describe your company's attitude towards adaptability and overall change?

2022



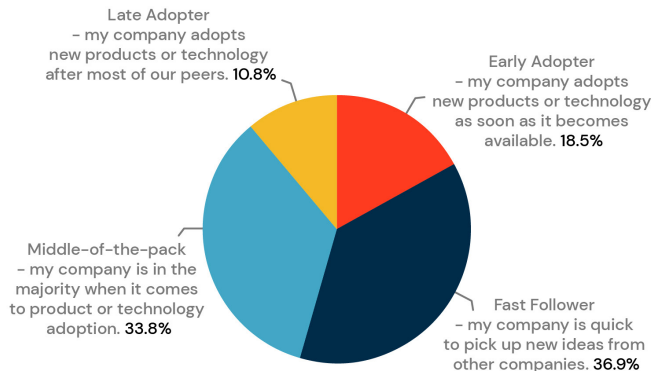
2023



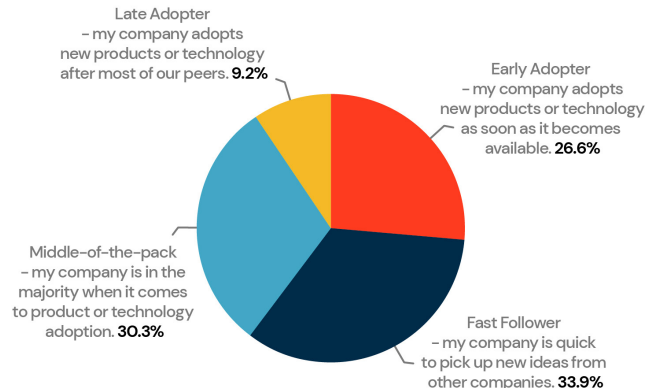
Results were similar in terms of attitudes toward marketing tech, with most supply chain marketers continuing to consider their companies Fast Followers or Middle-of-the-Pack when it comes to new martech:

## How would you describe your company's overall strategy regarding new marketing technologies?

2022



2023

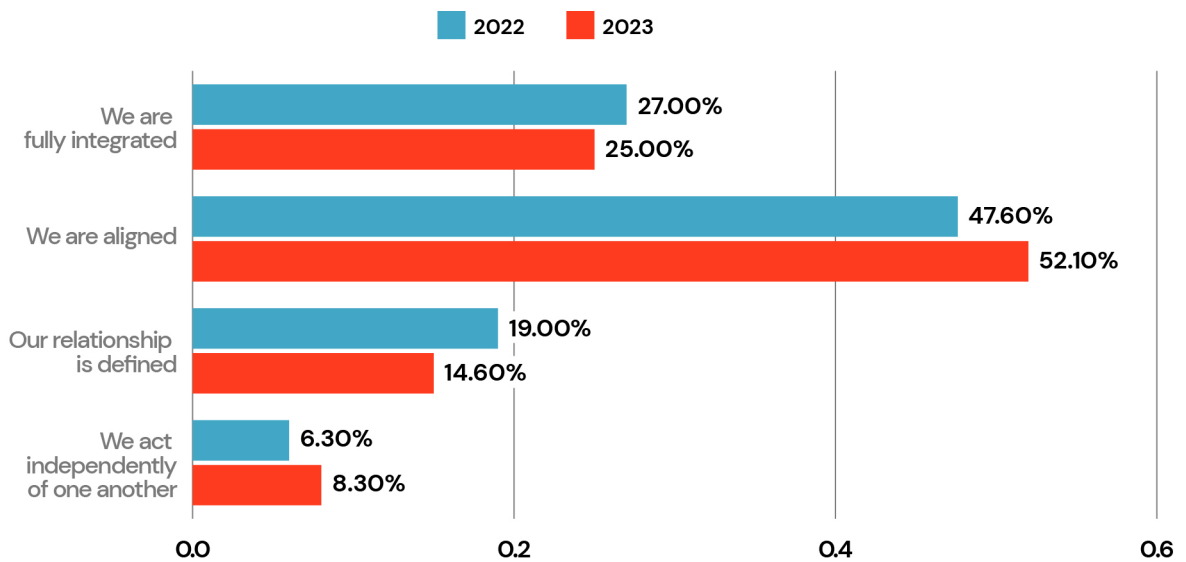


# State of Marketing and Sales Alignment

The survey asked supply chain companies about the working relationship between sales and marketing teams. Fortunately, collaborative alignment remains common.

Currently, 25% report full integration between the departments, down slightly from 27% last year. Fifty-two percent say they have alignment in 2023 compared to 48% in 2022. So combined, over three quarters indicate that sales and marketing are cooperative, with 15% having a defined relationship and 8% still operating independently in silos.

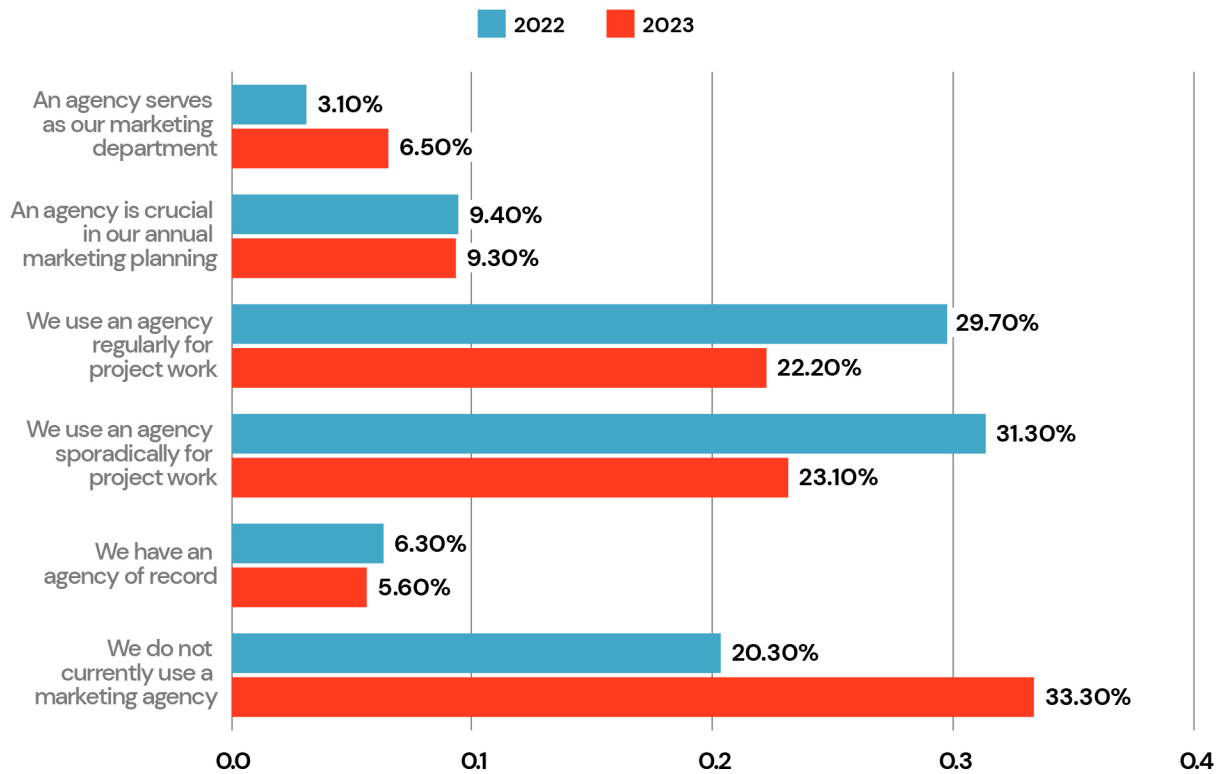
## How would you characterize your company's marketing and sales relationship?



# Supply Chain Marketing and Use of Agencies

Similar to last year, more than 65% of supply chain marketers use an agency in some capacity. Over 45% lean on them for project work, and 21% use agencies as a critical part of their marketing efforts. A third operates without agency support.

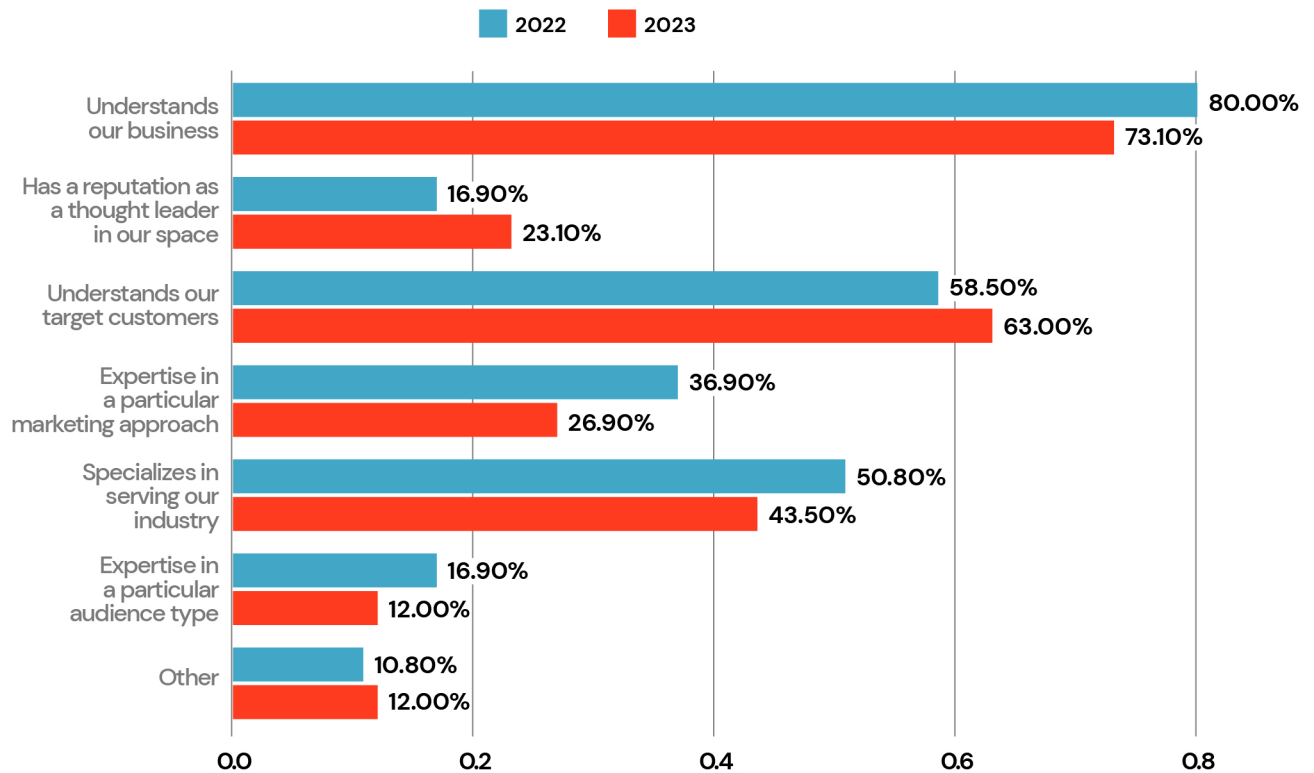
### How would you characterize your company's relationship with marketing agencies?



More than 65% of supply chain marketers use an agency in some capacity.

Most often, survey respondents look for a marketing agency that understands their business (73.1%), followed by wanting an agency that understands their target customers. These same two characteristics were also the most sought in 2022.

### What do you look for in an agency?



When asked whether they plan to use marketing agencies more or less in 2024, the majority (62%) will maintain the same level of agency support.

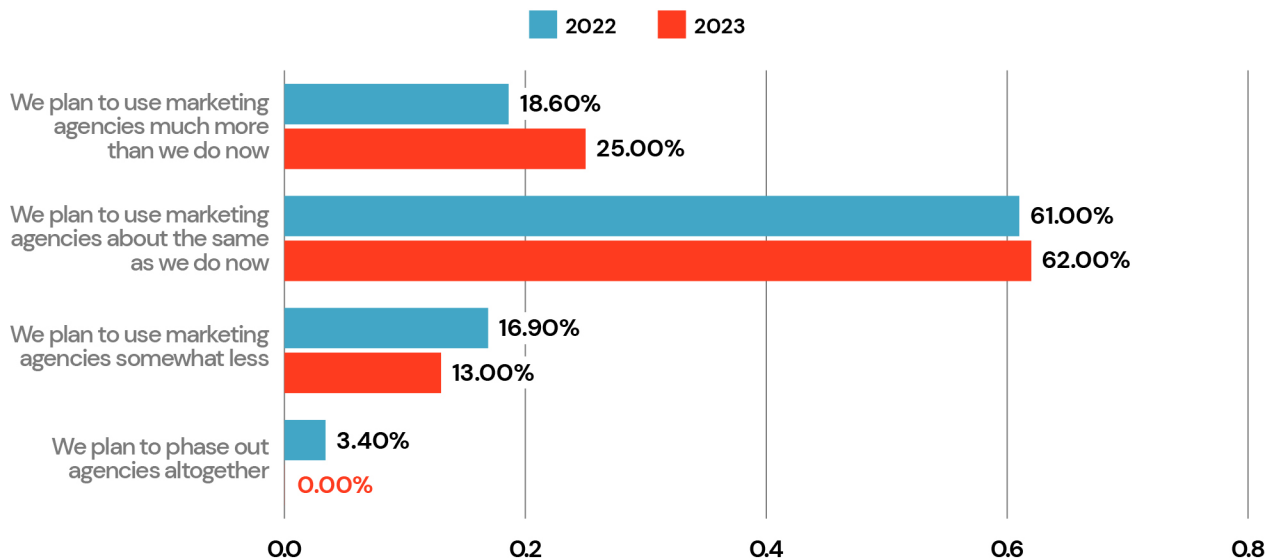
Comparatively, 25% intend to utilize agencies more this year — almost twice the percentage of companies planning to rely on outside agencies less. This suggests most organizations still see ongoing value in the specialized skills, external perspective, and extra bandwidth that marketing agencies provide.



According to The CMO Survey, firms plan to outsource 5% more marketing activities in 2024.



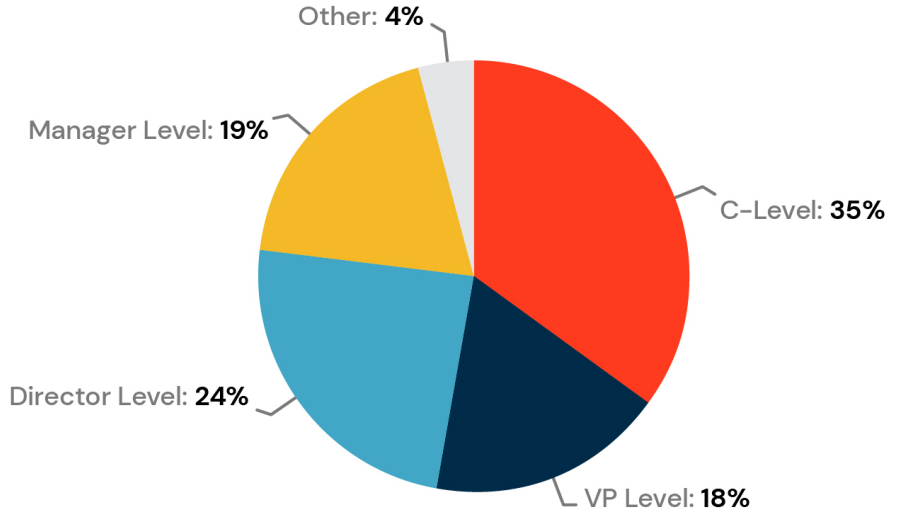
Looking forward to the next two years, how do you expect to incorporate the use of marketing agencies?



# Respondents' Demographics

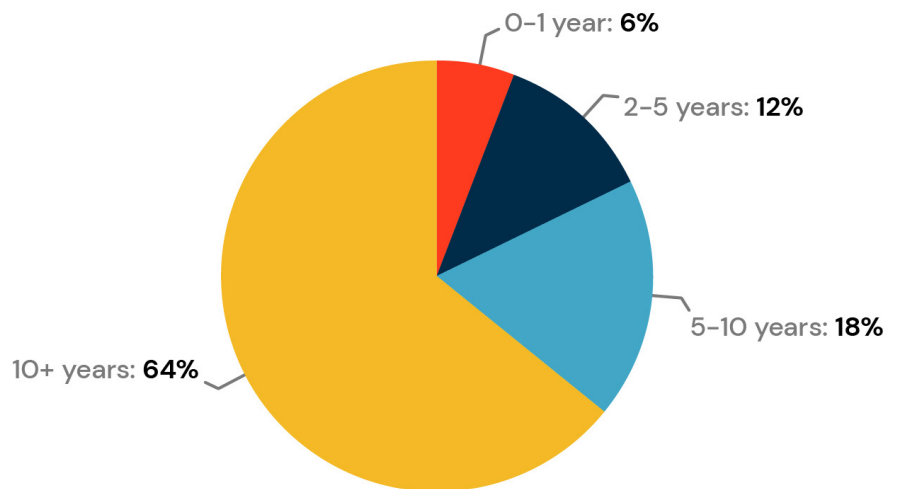
Our survey targeted a mature audience that handles overall marketing department strategy. Most participants were higher-level leaders and managers.

**Respondents' Level of Responsibility**



How many years of marketing experience do you have?

**Respondents' Years of Experience**



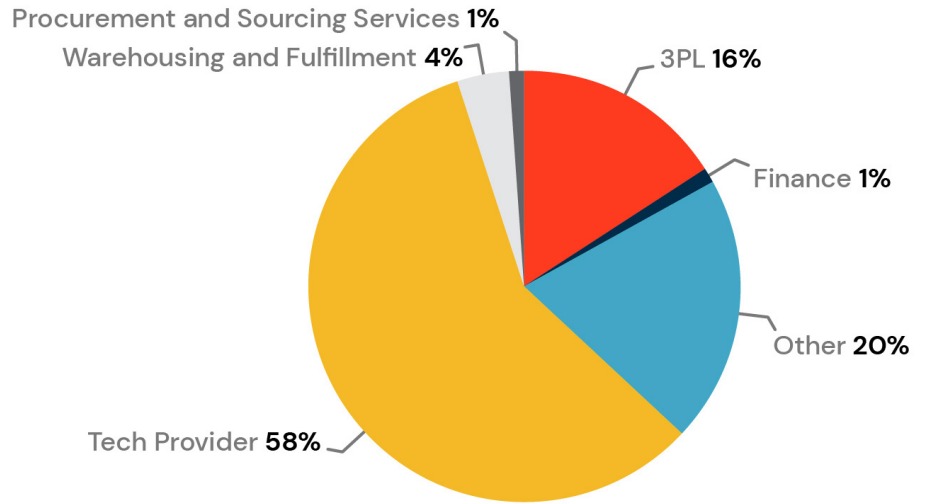
Most participants have over 10 years of marketing experience.



# Respondents' Companies

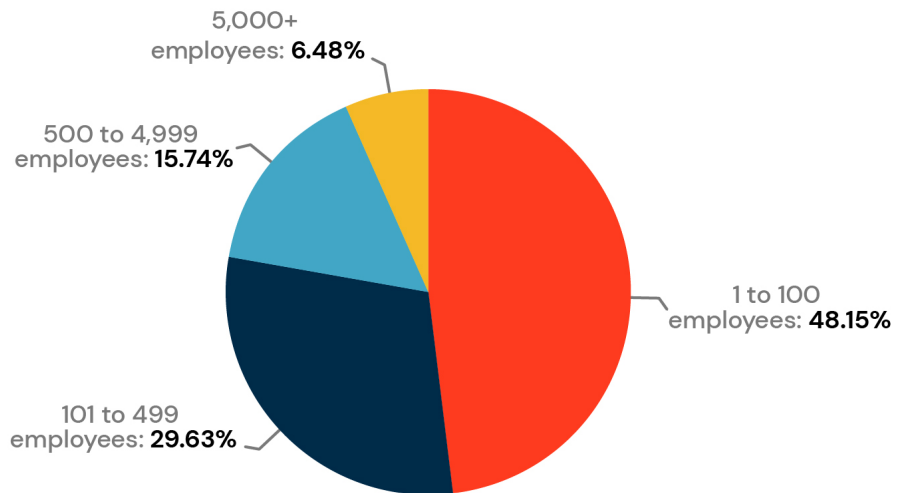
The survey targeted supply chain marketers. The majority of respondents indicated that they were from supply chain technology companies.

## Primary Service



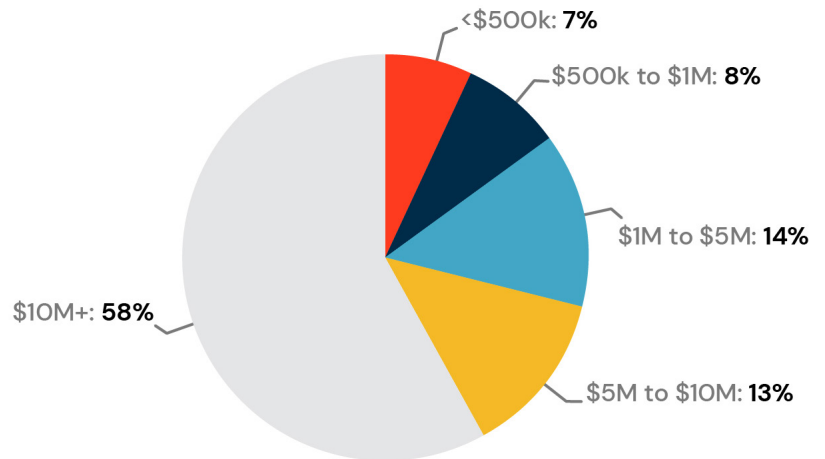
## Company Size

Almost 80% of respondents are from companies with 1-499 employees.



## Annual Revenue

Most participants reported annual company revenues of more than \$10 million.



## About Virago Marketing

### You won't have to explain TMS to us.

Virago Marketing is a full-funnel supply chain and transportation marketing agency that creates content that compels conversations.

The hearts and minds of customers are won through the thought leadership and indispensable information you provide. We help you harness the power of the industry's best content to drive awareness, engagement, and sales.



### Brand

The building blocks that make your strategy successful.



### Demand Capture

Content that differentiates and elevates your brand with prospects.



### Lead Generation

Campaigns that feed leads and drive revenue.

# Virago Marketing<sup>1</sup>