

Disruptions Derail Progress in Martech Utilization

Ensure that your marketing technology investments return value, unlock data and enable growth.

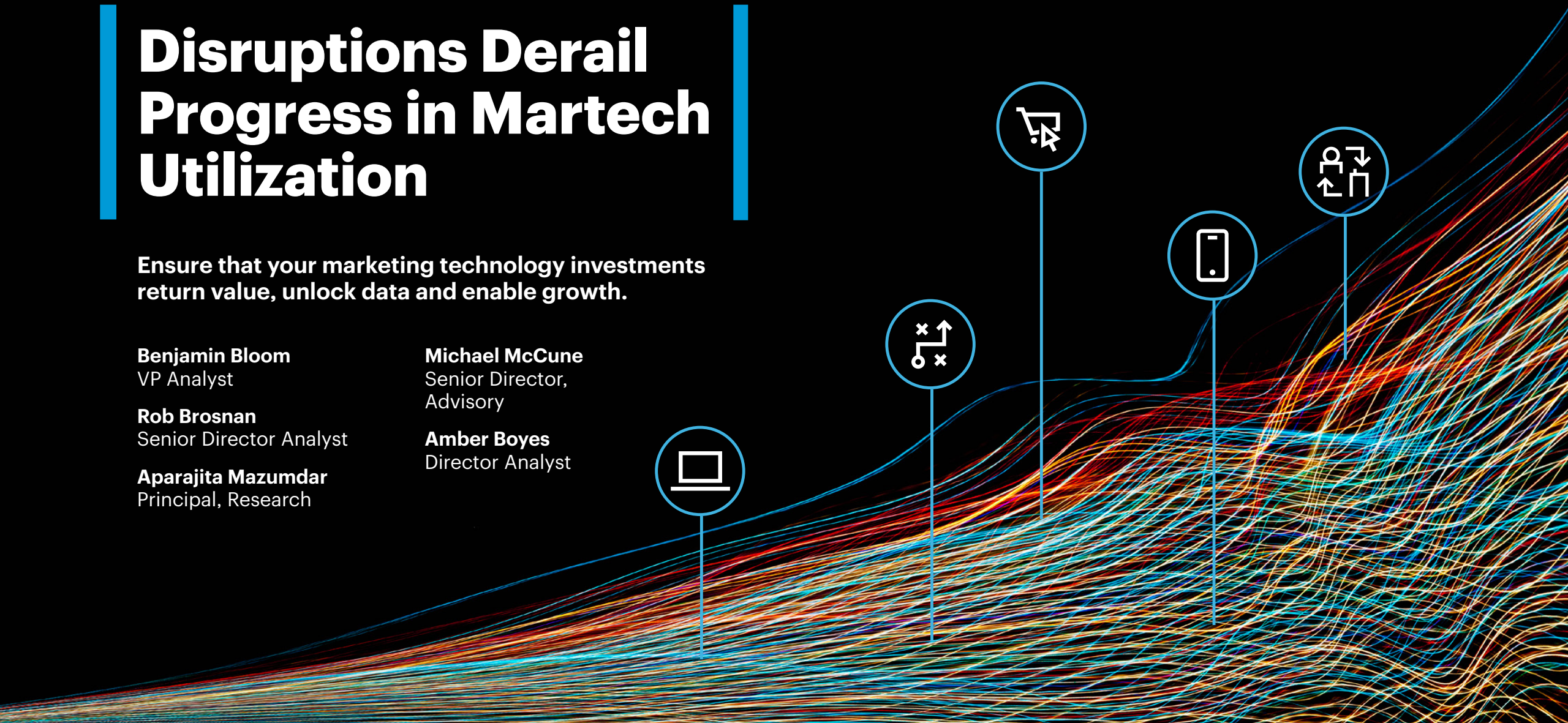
Benjamin Bloom
VP Analyst

Rob Brosnan
Senior Director Analyst

Aparajita Mazumdar
Principal, Research

Michael McCune
Senior Director,
Advisory

Amber Boyes
Director Analyst



Despite significant changes in how marketing manages martech, utilization of existing capabilities has decreased. CMOs can use insights from the 2022 Gartner Marketing Technology Survey to calibrate efforts and ensure that marketing technology investments return value, unlock data and enable growth.

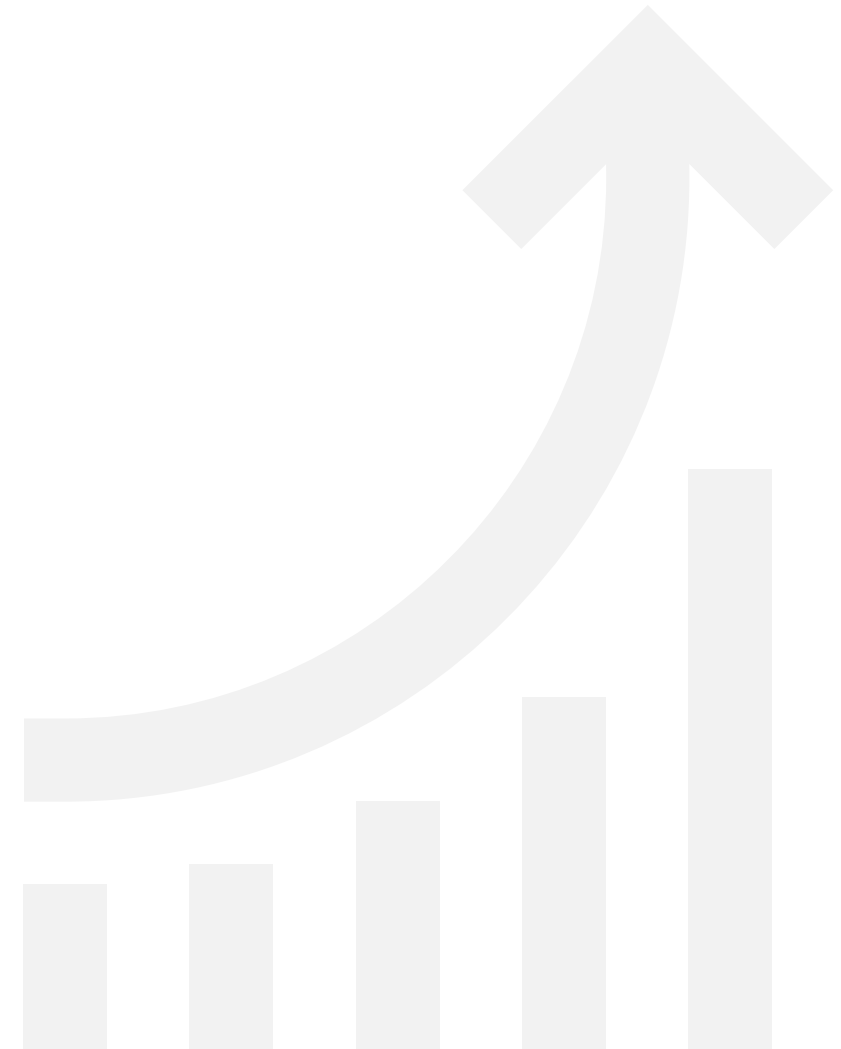
Benjamin Bloom
VP Analyst

Michael McCune
Senior Director, Advisory

Rob Brosnan
Senior Director Analyst

Amber Boyes
Director Analyst

Aparajita Mazumdar
Principal, Research



Overview

Key Findings

- **Martech utilization declines:** Survey respondents are using less of their martech stack than in previous years. Respondents say they utilize just 42% of the breadth of capabilities available in their martech stack overall, compared to 58% in 2020, undermining objectives of efficient resource deployment.
- **A preference for “integrated suites” is dominant:** Turbulence in the macroenvironment has cemented reliance on the integrated suite approach to procurement of marketing technologies. According to our survey, a staggering 60% of respondents say they prefer an integrated suite approach to selecting technology. Meanwhile, just 25% say they prefer a “best-of-breed” approach.
- **A formalized approach to the martech roadmap prevails:** Teams have incorporated agile behaviors into their roadmaps without adopting an Agile martech model. Just 13% report using an Agile approach to planning their martech roadmap, compared to 10% in 2020. Although formal roadmaps are more rigid, respondents are reviewing and updating their roadmaps with increased frequency compared to 2020.
- **The best-of-breed approach drives journey orchestration (JO) success:** Although only 20% of respondents have fully implemented customer JO across the customer life cycle, teams reporting successful business outcomes prefer a best-of-breed approach to the martech stack. The complexity of JO may confound the desire for an integrated suite.
- **Leaders prepare for a cookieless future with emerging technology:** Respondents are running pilot programs and deploying key technologies that enable advanced marketing tactics, such as social commerce, in-game advertising and connected TV (CTV) advertising. Combined with emerging tactics, such as non-fungible tokens (NFTs) and metaverse advertising, marketers seek to control their own destiny in a world of more fallible identifiers.

Recommendations

To maximize the value of marketing technology investments:

- Infuse marketing technology adoption and utilization goals into team performance objectives to minimize wasted marketing technology investments. Allocate dedicated resources that resolve barriers to adoption.
- Manage the risk of expensive integrated suite investments. Establish alternatives to preserve negotiation leverage and persistently validate the vendor's ability to support your desired martech capabilities.
- Review your approach to supporting customer JO with technology to ensure that martech and IT collaborate through capability-focused delivery teams with an iterative approach.
- Avoid leaving investments in tools and technologies for social commerce, podcast advertising and CTV/over-the-top (OTT) streaming advertising to agencies or service providers by default. Pursue long-term in-house capability development around these tools and include them in your martech roadmap. Validate potential to improve ROI through proofs of concept.

Survey Objective

The purpose of the 2022 Gartner Marketing and Communications Technology Survey was to investigate the state of marketing and communications technology acquisition, adoption and use. It included best practices for managing the technology stack, specific technologies in use and the degree of their adoption. The marketing respondents included 324 senior marketing technology decision makers reporting either in the marketing business unit or in IT roles specifically dedicated to supporting marketing.

Data Insights

CMOs report allocating a quarter of their entire marketing expense budgets to marketing technologies. ¹ Technology investments have remained a priority for CMOs despite turbulent budgets in previous years, proving value as a crucial instrument in marketing's transformation into a growth driver and profit center.

And yet, customer data frictions, new business models and disrupted customer journeys bring new and additional challenges to past adoption and utilization efforts. These survey findings offer several key insights that CMOs can use to maximize the impact of marketing technology investments and unlock the value of technology capabilities.

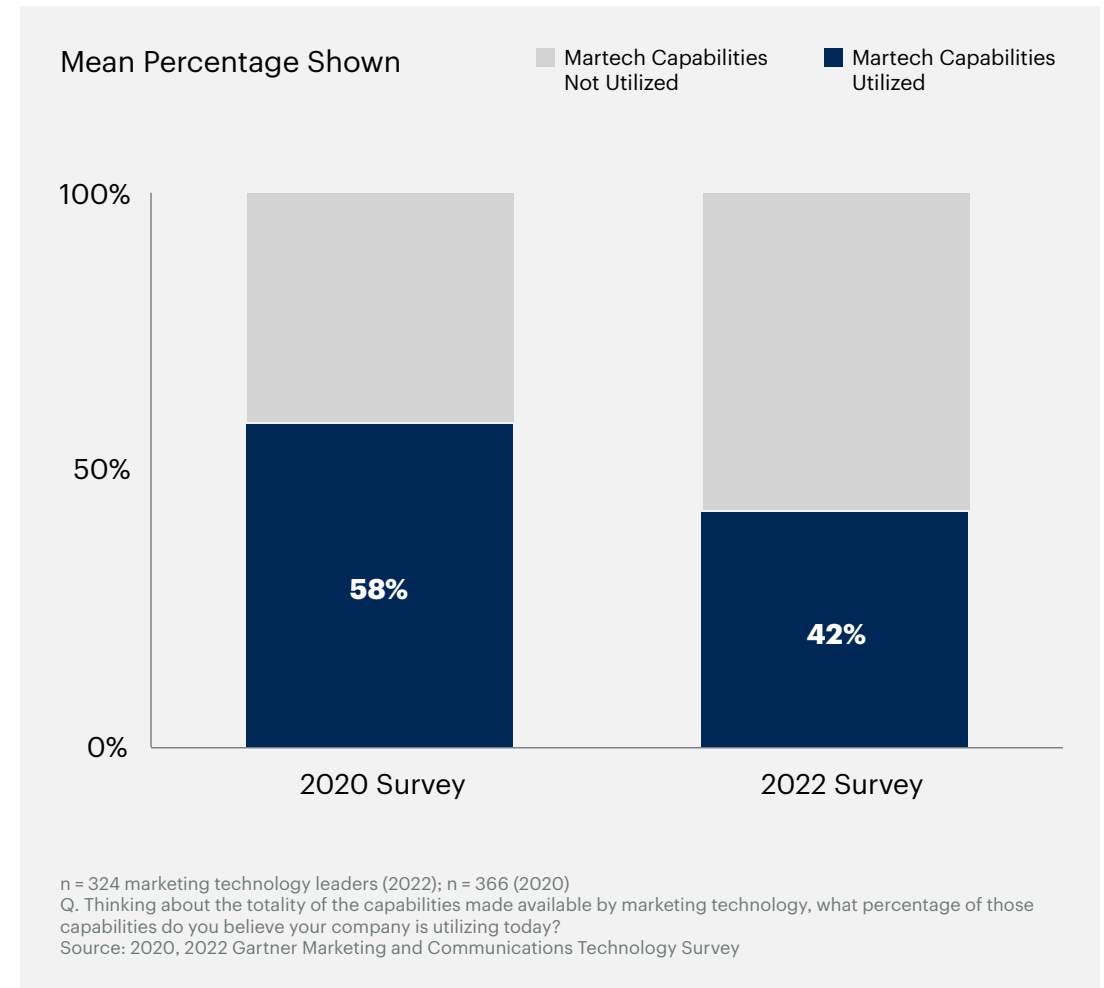
Marketing Technology Utilization Tumbles Into a New Valley of Unproductivity

Marketing is enjoying a rising independence in vendor selection, but experiencing worrisome underutilization of acquired technology. As JO becomes a larger priority, cohesiveness with nonmarketing data sources and applications becomes more important, since other functions such as customer service often have greater reliance on IT.

Business-led marketing technology blazed a trail by offering improved efficiency, unlocking new customer experiences and driving customer and business outcomes. Yet the process change and staff training that are critical to improve marketing technology adoption typically receive little attention.

The Gartner Marketing Technology Survey examines both the estimated utilization of the totality of respondents' martech stacks as well as individual technologies. Compared to our 2020 survey, both measures saw notable declines in 2022. On average, respondents leverage just 42% of their martech stacks today (see Figure 1), compared to 58% in 2020. Low levels of marketing technology utilization require urgent attention to maximize impact in the face of potential economic headwinds that bring on greater CFO scrutiny or forced budget cuts.

Figure 1. Percentage of Marketing Technology Capabilities Being Used



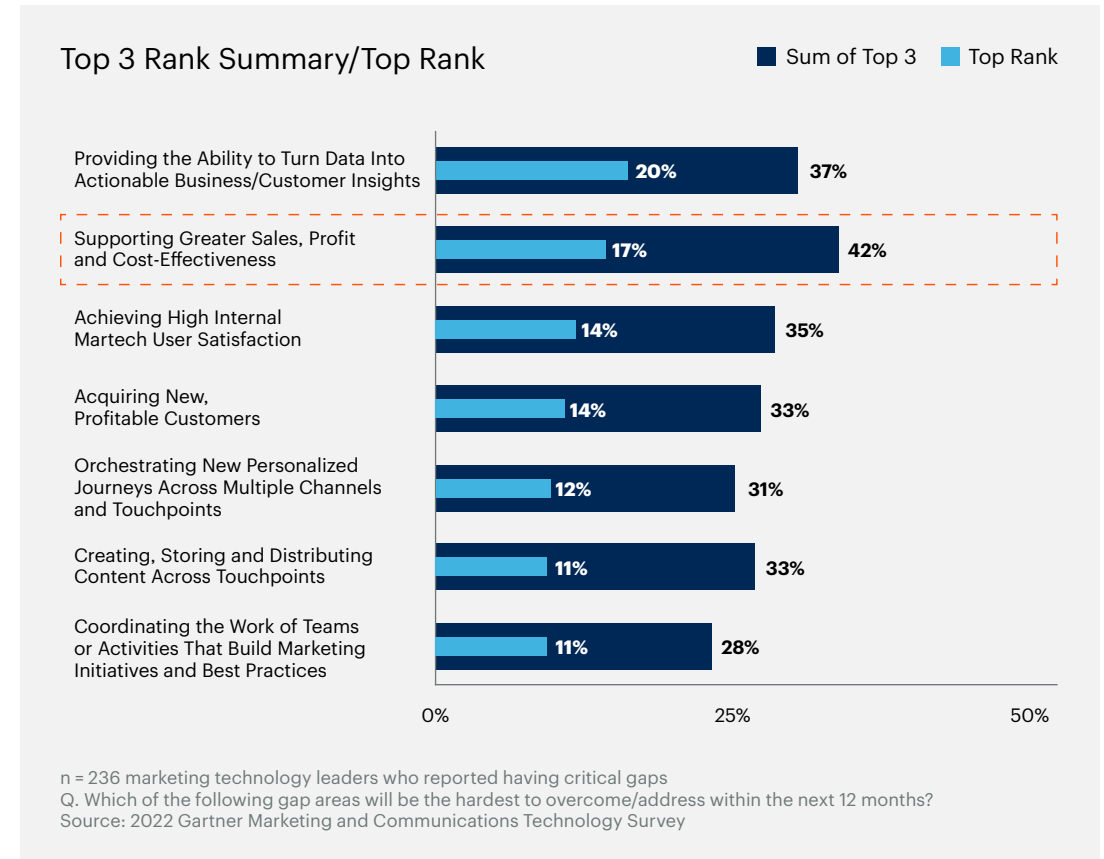
Despite the drop in overall utilization, the impediments to increased martech utilization are similar to the findings of our 2020 survey. In 2022, the impediments most often mentioned by survey respondents were:

- A significant amount of overlap among marketing technology solutions
- Difficulty identifying and recruiting talent to drive adoption/utilization
- Complexity/sprawl of the marketing technology ecosystem

These impediments consistently point to a lack of attention to the people and process dimensions of technology management. Yet these are the precise elements that can increase marketing technology utilization and raise business capability (see Best Practices to Improve Martech Utilization).

Low levels of utilization are particularly concerning given the critical gaps that respondents cited in aligning their martech stacks to organizational needs over the next 12 months. Respondents cited gaps related to demonstrating business growth, driving insight from data and supporting profitable customer acquisition (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. Critical Gaps in Aligning Marketing Technology Stack to the Organization’s Need



If marketing technology teams fail to leverage more of their technology stack's potential, these gaps will likely remain, and CMO credibility as a business-driven technology buyer and owner will be imperiled. The impact of such gaps will be even more detrimental in the event of recession-driven budget tightening, although many CFOs will prioritize solutions that accelerate topline revenue growth.² Assessing the current state of the marketing technology stack will be a critically important process to overcome this paucity of utilization, defend against budget scrutiny and overcome critical gaps.

Conduct an audit of your marketing technology ecosystem at least twice per year. Use Gartner's Toolkit: How to Audit and Communicate Your Marketing Technology Ecosystem or your own template to audit your martech stack. Then, schedule an inquiry to have a Gartner expert review and discuss opportunities for greater efficiency and impact.

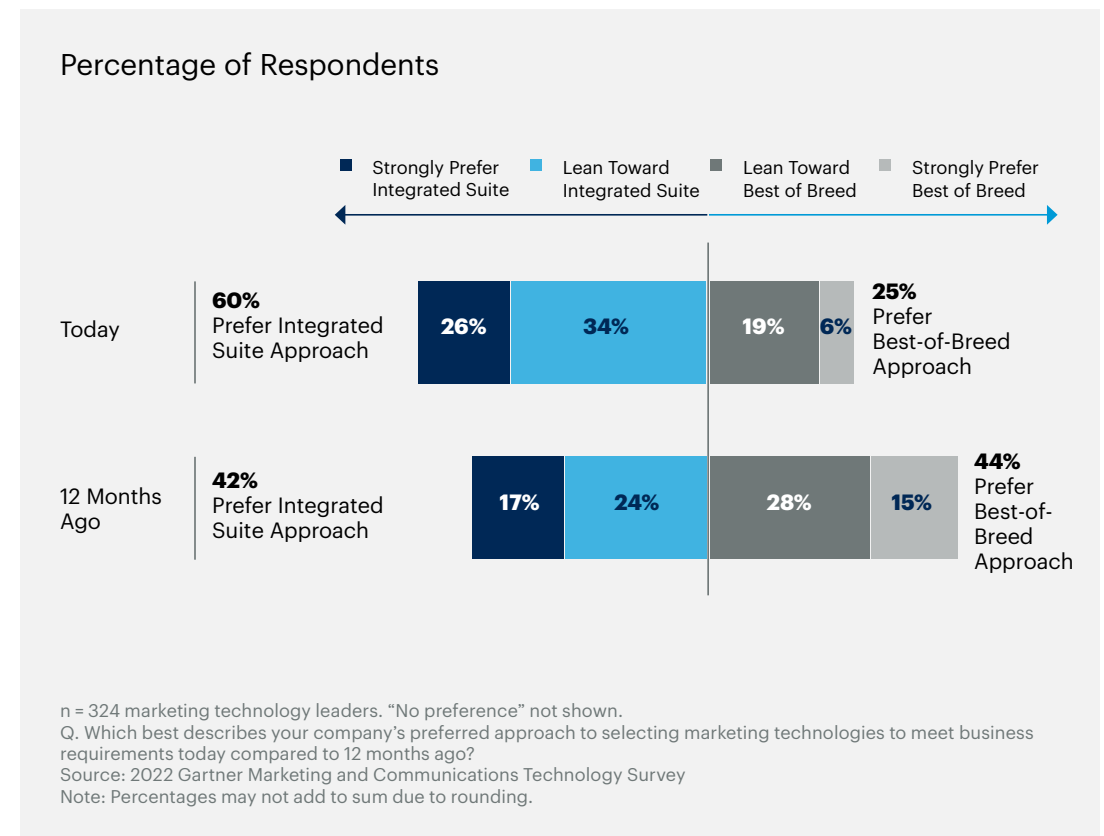
Action and continuous measurement are the critical path to improving marketing technology utilization. Encourage team members to speak up about obstacles to more and deeper use of current tools to proactively identify potential inefficiencies and redirect resources toward other priorities.

Upon completion of a marketing technology audit, form an action plan that includes updates to the marketing technology roadmap as needed. Pursue a two-prong approach of dedicated team resources and clear objectives. First, dedicate a full-time equivalent to assessing barriers to adoption and developing action plans to resolve. Next, incorporate martech adoption KPIs to management performance objectives to ensure that your team sees clear targets and can prepare to achieve them. The most frequently used measures of martech success among survey respondents are "efficiency" and "martech user adoption over time."

Martech Buyers Prefer Integrated Suite Solutions

Continuing a trend first seen in 2020, a majority of martech buyers say they prefer an integrated suite approach to selecting the marketing technologies that make up their stack, and fewer than a third of buyers say they prefer a best-of-breed approach (see Figure 3). Sixty percent of respondents say that they prefer an integrated suite approach today, compared to 42% a year ago. Further entrenchment of this shift in martech selection preference reflects the rising cohesiveness of offerings from vendors such as Adobe, Oracle and Salesforce, driven by internally developed data platforms. These efforts represent a departure from the previous drumbeat of technology M&A that hampered the value propositions of integrated suite vendors.

Figure 3. Preferred Approach to Selecting Marketing Technologies



In addition to greater belief in the value of the integrated suite, marketers are also in more direct control of vendor evaluation and selection than in 2020. In 2022, 61% of respondents say that marketing and IT jointly collaborate on the evaluation, selection and purchasing of martech, and 27% say marketing controls that activity entirely. Compared to 2020, 9% more respondents say that marketing controls that activity entirely, and slightly fewer (2%) respondents say IT controls it entirely.

Despite marketing optimism about the integrated suite value proposition, inquiries from Gartner clients related to delivering value from such integrated suites or from their component applications show no sign of abating. Clients report that many of the promises of a cohesive single suite and data platform are a work in progress, which buyers must scrutinize (see [How to Choose Between a 'Best-of-Breed' and 'Integrated Suite' Martech Strategy](#)). CMOs must have ready alternatives to specific modules/products or negotiate extensions with incumbent vendors. Such an approach can enable more critical examination of new and existing vendor capabilities and roadmaps, and lean into the development of marketing technology capabilities that support customer needs.

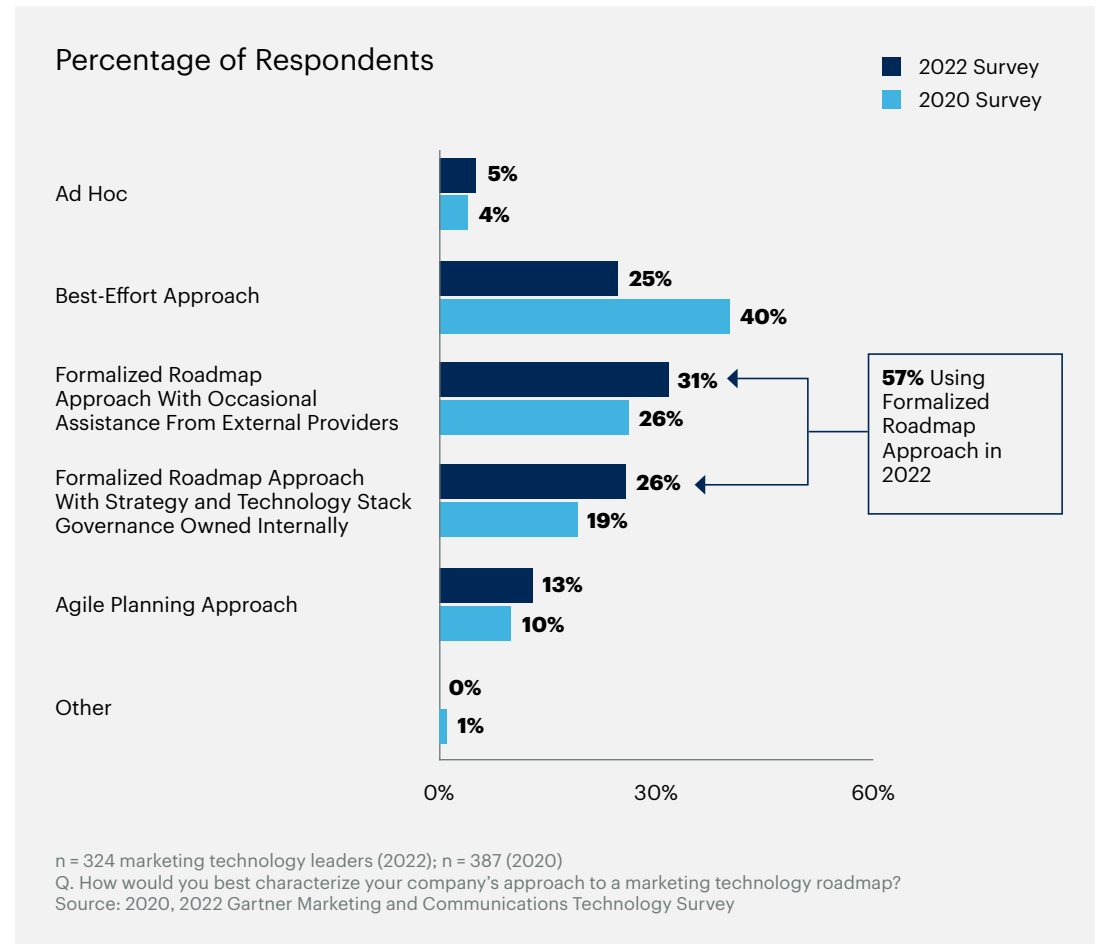


Frequent Reviews Keep the Martech Roadmap Aligned to Changing Business Needs

A turbulent macroenvironment has kept the best practitioners on their toes in the past two years, which could have encouraged more teams to compensate by embracing an Agile approach. Yet the share of teams taking an Agile approach to martech roadmapping in 2022 only increased by three percentage points compared to our 2020 survey. But that doesn't mean martech teams didn't alter their approach.

The first sign of progress was a decrease in the share of teams taking a "best effort" approach to the martech roadmap, signifying growing emphasis on strategic planning (see Figure 4). Fifty-seven percent of respondents describe their approach as using a "formalized roadmap," compared to 45% in 2020. Agencies and consultancies may have played a role in that shift, because the percentage of those obtaining input from external providers on their roadmap rose as well. Internally, marketing isn't going it alone, particularly with the martech roadmap — in 65% of organizations, marketing and IT collaborate on the management of the martech roadmap.

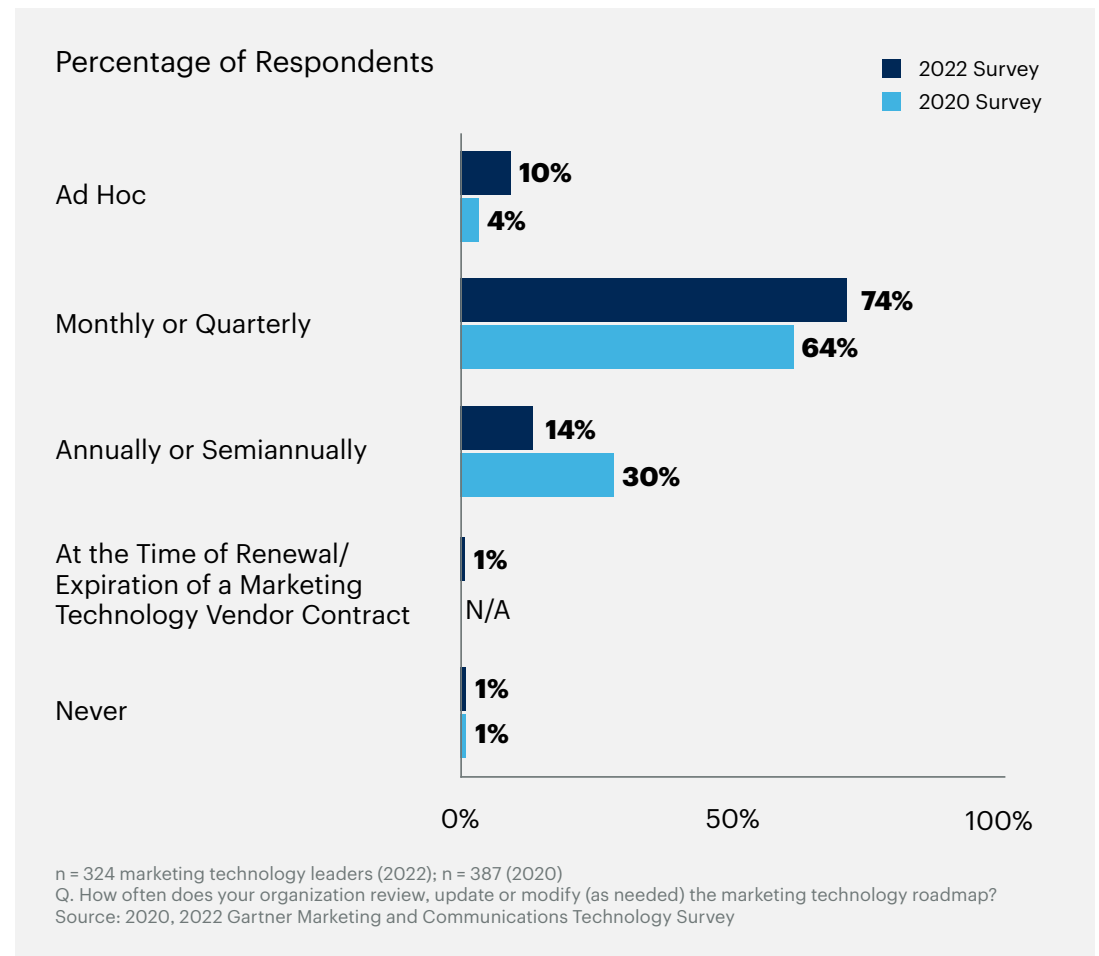
Figure 4. Approaches to the Martech Roadmap



Despite the potential for near-term volatility, martech teams actually reported an increase in the average time horizon of their martech roadmaps; the average roadmap length in 2022 is 15.5 months, compared to 14.5 months in 2020. The share of respondents with a roadmap longer than 18 months rose from 20% in 2020 to 30% in 2022.

While longer, formalized roadmaps could be locking in organizations to rigid plans in contravention of market conditions, martech teams report reviewing their roadmaps more frequently, with nearly three-quarters of respondents reviewing their martech roadmap quarterly or monthly (see Figure 5). This shift appears to represent an adoption of agile behaviors — even if their approach might not formally be considered Agile — in a pragmatic effort to keep stakeholders aligned and clearly communicate the direction of martech investments.

Figure 5. Cadence of Martech Roadmap Review/Update/Modification



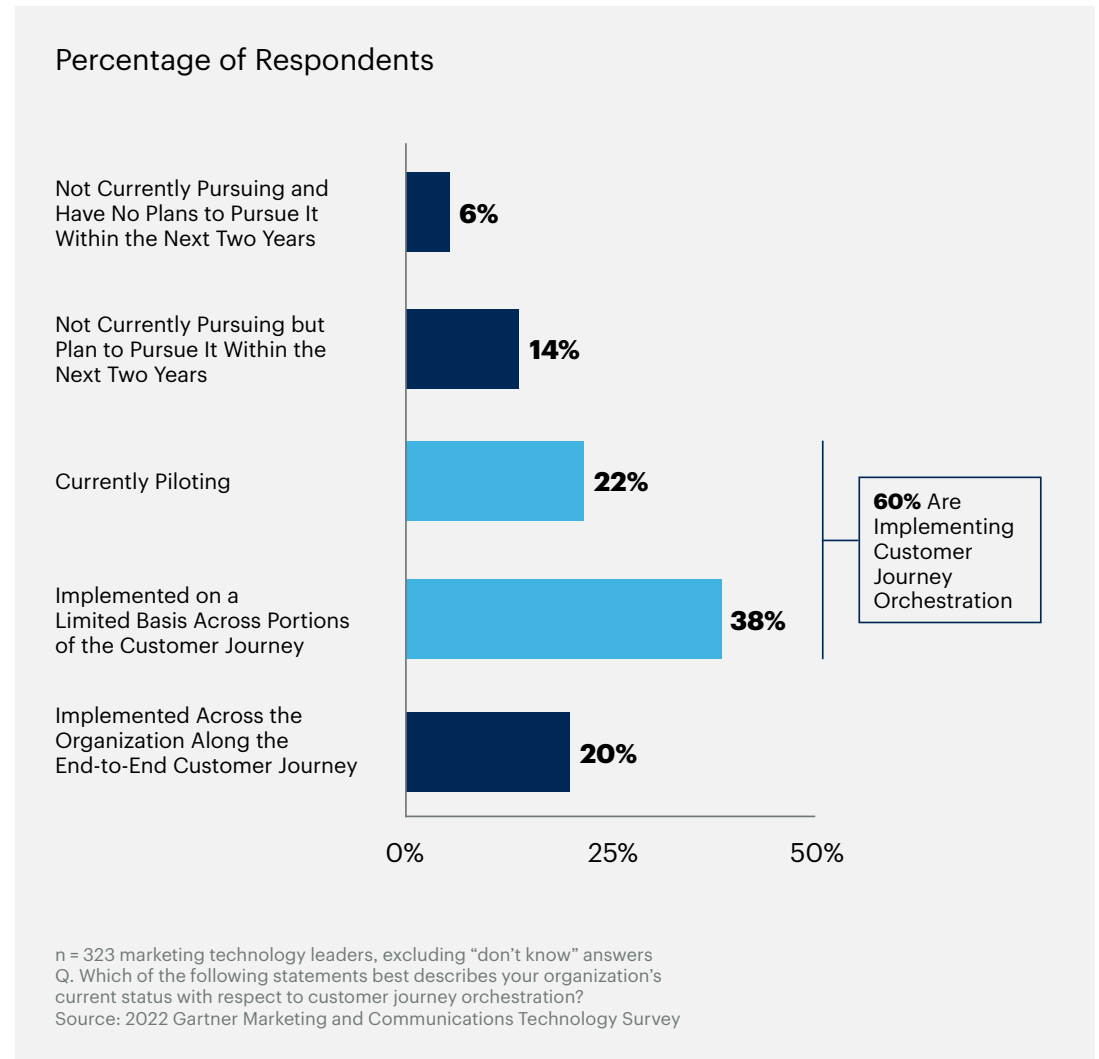
Marketing Technology Teams Are Investing in Cohesive Customer Journey Orchestration

One of the key themes in CMO priorities for 2022 is customer journey orchestration (JO).¹ No single technology vendor or application is sufficient for cohesive JO (see Reset CMO Expectations on Customer Journey Orchestration: An Interview With Gartner’s Benjamin Bloom).

Just 20% of respondents reported that they have successfully implemented JO across the end-to-end customer journey. Yet interest and aspiration are high among marketing technology teams; 60% of respondents are either piloting or have partially implemented customer JO (see Figure 6). Within two years, 94% of respondents expect to be pursuing JO (including those that have implemented, are currently piloting and are planning to pursue within the next two years), reflecting the coming saturation of this approach across the customer engagement landscape.

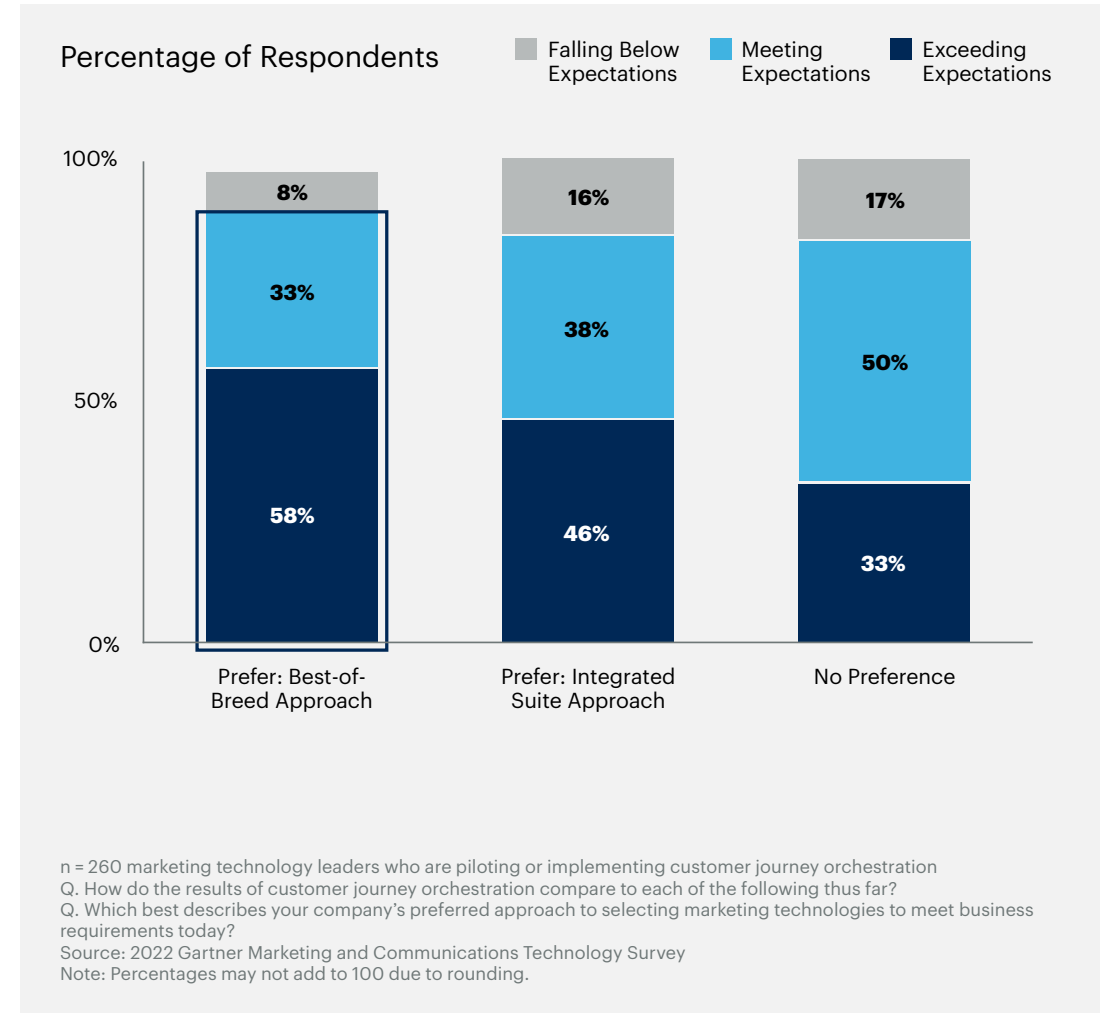
Gartner defines customer journey orchestration as the process of organizing a set of recommended interactions to create or respond to customer signals throughout the customer life cycle. This may include leveraging customer data and technology to time and sequence interactions across channels.

Figure 6. Current State of Customer Journey Orchestration



Among those respondents with a JO activity in place, more of those who had a best-of-breed approach to martech were meeting or exceeding business goals than those with an integrated suite approach (see Figure 7). This suggests that despite the increasing preference for integrated suites, JO success may require teams to buck that trend, as the integration and cross-functional coordination muscles may be better developed in a team already oriented around a best-of-breed approach. Connecting to other data sources and applications outside of marketing but still within the customer journey are highly useful capabilities to drive the intelligent coordination needed for JO (see 3 Shifts CMOs Must Make to Get Customer Journey Orchestration Right).

Figure 7. Business Results of Customer Journey Orchestration by Technology Acquisition Preference



To ensure that JO initiatives deliver business value, infuse priorities for JO into your marketing technology roadmap, and direct your team to maintain a robust pipeline of potential JO interventions to test and optimize (see Focus Your Journey Orchestration Business Case With Size-of-Opportunity Modeling). Informed business stakeholders should ensure that customer insights drive the development of technical capabilities for JO that business teams will adopt.

Leaders Prepare for a Cookieless Future With New Adtech and Commerce Technologies

The risk of an integrated suite approach extends beyond contract lock-in. Uncertainty driven by privacy and identity developments also compels CMOs to invest in viable strategies leveraging emerging channels. Yet no amount of vendor white papers nor case studies can perfectly predict how your team or customers will adopt new technologies and touchpoints. Therefore, leaders must constantly test the fit of technologies and vendors from outside the integrated suites. A strong fit can be differentiating and help nurture new talent and approaches to marketing challenges.

Internal experimentation is crucial to internal understanding of martech and adtech opportunities (and limitations) leading to institutional knowledge on which to build compounding levels of utilization and business value on a firm foundation.

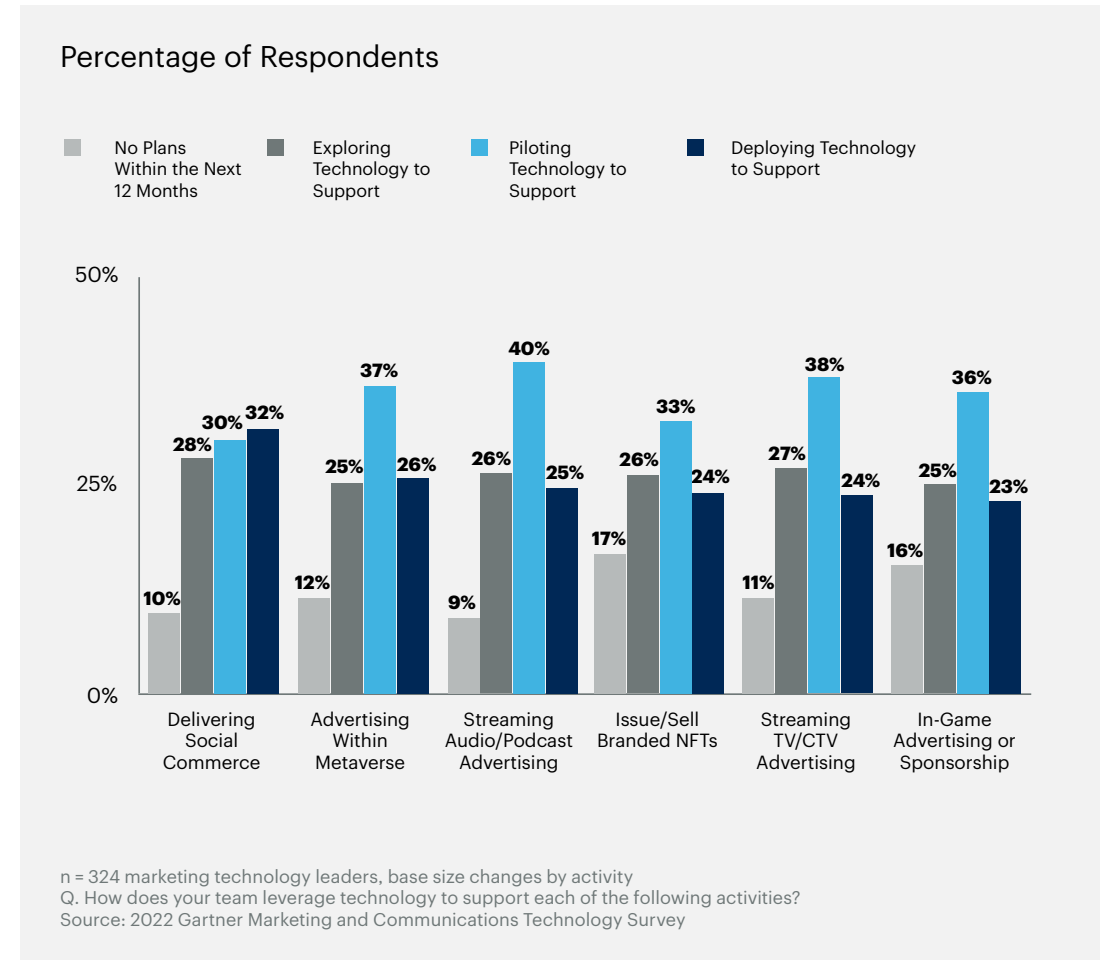


With a large base, there is plenty of room for incremental impact to add up: More than 60% of digital investments currently go into paid channels, according to the Gartner 2022 CMO Spend and Strategy Survey. Although digital display, social and search advertising are relatively well-understood, lesser understood channels such as digital video and audio advertising represent over 16% of marketing budgets alone (see The State of Marketing Budget and Strategy in 2022).

Directing paid digital advertising investments increasingly requires adapting to the demands of publishers and formats, and the deployment of first-party data and trusted measurement technology that can support these innovative channels. Some marketing innovation approaches, particularly those with substantial advertising components, are often mediated by agencies rather than run in-house, but the mandate to provide insight and ROI to justify these investments still falls on the CMO.

Our 2022 Marketing and Communications Technology Survey reveals that many of the tools to support innovative marketing channels are building steam, such as those that support podcast advertising, social commerce and streaming/connected TV (CTV) advertising. Meanwhile, those that support metaverse initiatives and non-fungible tokens (NFTs) are on the radar but enjoy more nascent support (see Figure 8).

Figure 8. How Marketing Leaders Are Leveraging Technology to Support Emerging Activities



Some of these technologies have risen substantially in prominence in recent years, such as social commerce, with 62% of respondents saying they have deployed or plan to deploy such technology. Technology to support advertising execution and measurement in audio and CTV environments has also found a base of support.

Marketers indicate interest in commercial activity within the nascent metaverse, with 62% exploring or piloting technology to support metaverse advertising and 59% exploring or piloting technology to enable creation of NFTs. CMOs should balance these investments against the rest of their innovation portfolio so that insights and new capabilities can inform future marketing strategies and outfox the competition. Use Gartner's Hype Cycle for Digital Advertising, 2022 to place technologies such as promotional NFTs in context.

Additional Research Contribution

Karen Carter, Shikhar Sahai

Evidence

Research Methodology

2022 Gartner Marketing and Communications Technology Survey: The purpose of this survey was to investigate the state of technology acquisition, adoption and use. It included best practices for managing the technology stack, specific technologies in use and the degree of their adoption. The research was conducted online from May through early June 2022 among 422 respondents, with 228 in North America (U.S. and Canada), 159 in Western Europe (U.K., Germany and France) and 35 in the Nordic region (Denmark, Norway and Sweden). Respondents were required to be senior decision makers, where the majority of their daily responsibilities are mostly aligned with either business- or IT-focused marketing (n = 324) or business- or IT-focused communications (n = 98). Seventy-eight percent of the respondents came from organizations with \$1 billion or more in annual revenue. The respondents came from a variety of industries: financial services (n = 57), tech products (n = 37), manufacturing (n = 49), consumer products (n = 50), media (n = 40), retail (n = 56), healthcare (n = 52), IT and business services (n = 32), and travel and hospitality (n = 49).

This research focuses on the 324 respondents aligned with marketing. Fifty-six percent of marketing respondents reported directly in the marketing function, and the remainder reported in the marketing and communications, marketing communications, brand management, customer experience, or product marketing and management function. Sixty-five percent of these respondents were solely responsible for making decisions related to marketing technology, while the rest were either a leader of or an advisor to the group responsible for making decisions on marketing technology.

Disclaimer: Results of this survey do not represent global findings or the market as a whole, but reflect the sentiments of the respondents and companies surveyed.

2022 Gartner CMO Spend and Strategy Survey: The purpose of this survey was to understand the marketing organization's strategic priorities and budget allocations for 2022. The research was conducted online from February through April 2022 among 405 respondents in the U.S. (38%), Canada (9%), France (7%), Germany (9%), the U.K. (28%), Denmark (3%), Sweden (4%) and Norway (1%).

Respondents were required to have involvement in decisions pertaining to setting or influencing marketing strategy and planning, as well as have involvement in aligning marketing budget/resources. Seventy-four percent of the respondents came from organizations with \$1 billion or more in annual revenue. The respondents came from a variety of industries: financial services (n = 66), tech products (n = 38), manufacturing (n = 49), consumer products (n = 42), media (n = 35), retail (n = 40), healthcare providers (n = 57), IT and business services (n = 35), and travel and hospitality (n = 43).

Disclaimer: Results of this survey do not represent global findings or the market as a whole, but reflect the sentiments of the respondents and companies surveyed.

2020 Gartner Marketing Technology Survey: The purpose of this survey was to understand how marketers are investing in, deploying and getting value out of marketing technology. The research was conducted online from July through September 2020, among 387 respondents in the U.S. (54%), Canada (3%), France (6%), Germany (8%) and the U.K. (29%). Respondents were required to be involved in decisions related to their company's marketing technology strategy. Eighty-five percent of the respondents came from organizations with \$1 billion or more in annual revenue.

The respondents came from a variety of industries: financial services (n = 46), high tech (n = 51), manufacturing (n = 63), consumer products (n = 27), media (n = 40), retail (n = 46), healthcare providers (n = 48), IT and business services (n = 44), and travel and hospitality (n = 22).

Disclaimer: Results of this survey do not represent global findings or the market as a whole, but reflect sentiments of the respondents and companies surveyed.

Source References

¹ The State of Marketing Budget and Strategy in 2022

Gartner, Inc. | G00773779 Page 18 of 18

² CFOs Prioritize Spending on Talent, Digital Amid Recession Risk

Recommended by the Authors

Some documents are only available to Gartner clients.

How to Build and Present a Business Case for Marketing Technology Investments

Quick Answer: What Does a Technology Reference Model for Marketing Look Like?

Drive Agility and Scale for the Future With Content Operations

Choose Your Google Analytics 4 Path Now

How Digital Marketing Leaders Can Prepare Martech for First-Party Marketing



Actionable, objective insight

Explore these additional complimentary resources and tools for marketing leaders.

Webinar

The Gartner 2022 Martech Survey:
New Insights to Maximize ROI

Understand which martech trends to adopt and which ones to ignore to maximize ROI.



[Watch Webinar](#)

Podcast

#Hashtags: The Gartner Marketing & Communications Podcast

Build in-house strategic marketing capabilities that maximize value creation.



[Listen to Podcast](#)

The CMO Journal

The Chief Marketing Officer

Navigate the risks and opportunities of economic turbulence.



[Download Now](#)

Already a client?

Get access to even more resources in your client portal. [Log In](#)

Connect With Us

Get actionable, objective insight to deliver on your mission-critical priorities. Our expert guidance and tools enable faster, smarter decisions and stronger performance. Contact us to become a client:

U.S.: 1 855 811 7593

International: +44 (0) 3330 607 044

[Become a Client](#)

Learn more about Gartner for Marketing Leaders

gartner.com/en/marketing

Stay connected to the latest insights



© 2022 Gartner, Inc. and/or its affiliates. All rights reserved. Gartner is a registered trademark of Gartner, Inc. and its affiliates. This publication may not be reproduced or distributed in any form without Gartner's prior written permission. It consists of the opinions of Gartner's research organization, which should not be construed as statements of fact. While the information contained in this publication has been obtained from sources believed to be reliable, Gartner disclaims all warranties as to the accuracy, completeness or adequacy of such information. Although Gartner research may address legal and financial issues, Gartner does not provide legal or investment advice and its research should not be construed or used as such. Your access and use of this publication are governed by [Gartner's Usage Policy](#). Gartner prides itself on its reputation for independence and objectivity. Its research is produced independently by its research organization without input or influence from any third party. For further information, see "Guiding Principles on Independence and Objectivity." CM_GBS_1954806

Gartner®