

2026 Tech Marketing Benchmarks Survey Data Snapshots

Optimize your marketing strategies to
inform 2027 plans.



The 2026 Gartner Tech Marketing Benchmarks Survey

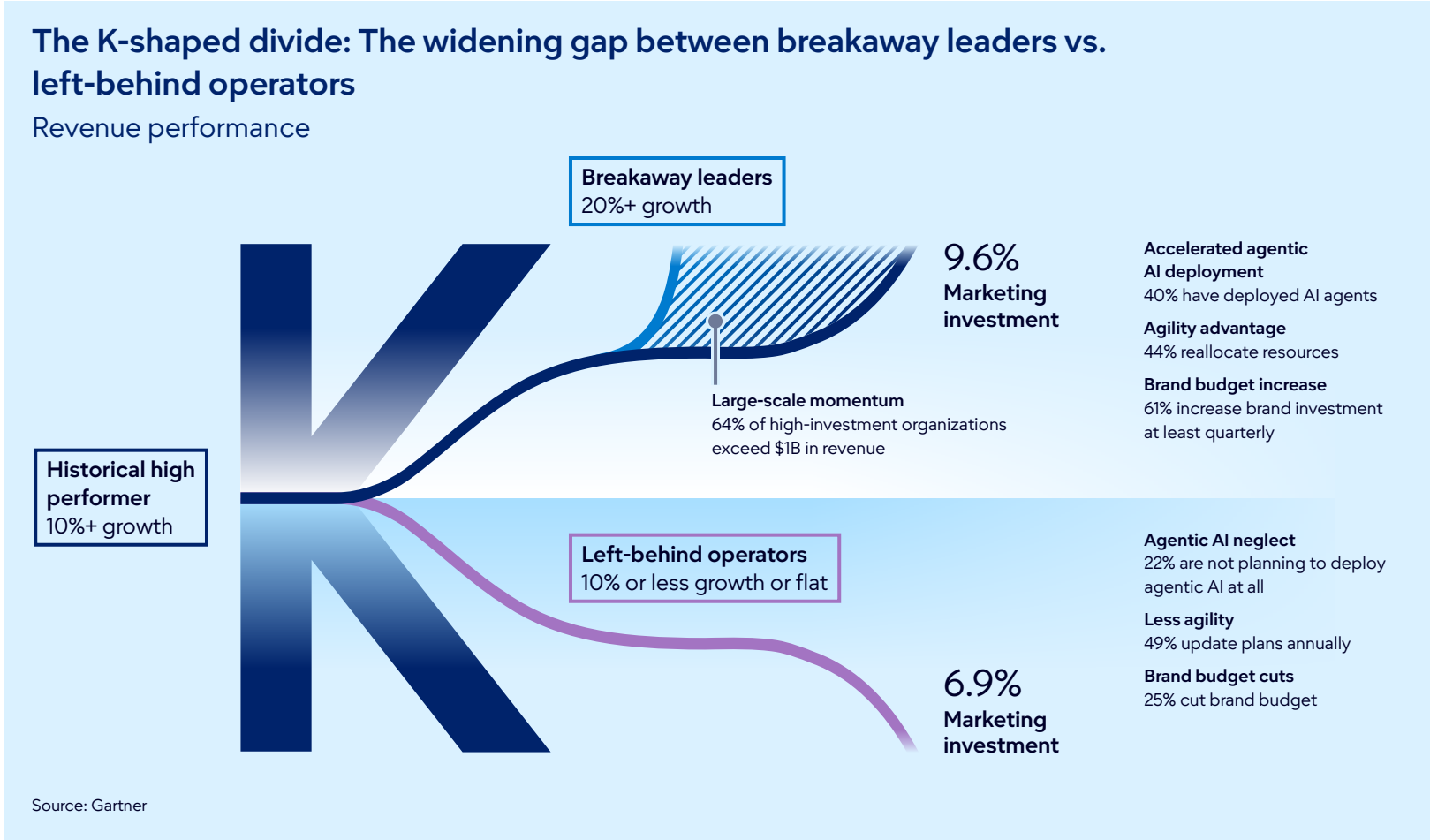
analyzes key trends around marketing investments, AI, brand, demand generation and account-based marketing (ABM) within B2B technology marketing organizations. This research includes respondents within software, hardware and services companies with more than \$100 million in revenue.

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The widening gap between leaders and operators

As AI reshapes go-to-market teams, capabilities and expectations, B2B tech marketing budgets are seeing increases. However, a widening K-shaped divide in revenue growth performance is appearing. Breakaway leaders are winning big with 20%+ revenue growth over the last year, while operators experiencing flat or up to 10% growth are at risk of being left behind. Leaders are making different decisions than operators, such as investing above the industry average in marketing, accelerating agentic AI, prioritizing brand and delivering on agile planning.



AI influences agency dependence

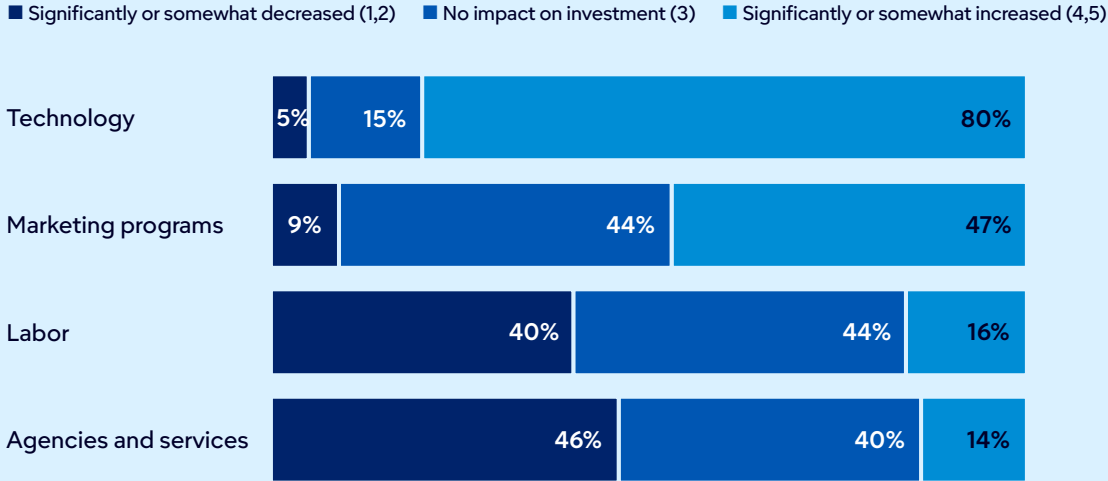
Technology investment is a priority, driven by investment in AI, and agency allocation is decreasing due to AI.

Breakaway leaders are investing more in upskilling internal teams on AI than their operator counterparts.

AI is driving major shifts in marketing investment; most notably increasing spend on technology and programs

Impact of AI on marketing organization's investment

Scale: 1 = significantly decreased investment to 5 = significantly increased investment



n = 239, technology marketers with \$100M or more in annual revenue and who believe AI is important in marketing (Q66)
Q112: How, if at all, has AI impacted your marketing organization's investment in the following categories?
Source: 2026 Gartner Tech Marketing Benchmarks Survey, conducted Jan '26–March '26 among 335 global tech marketers. Fielded by Gartner through an independent third-party research provider.

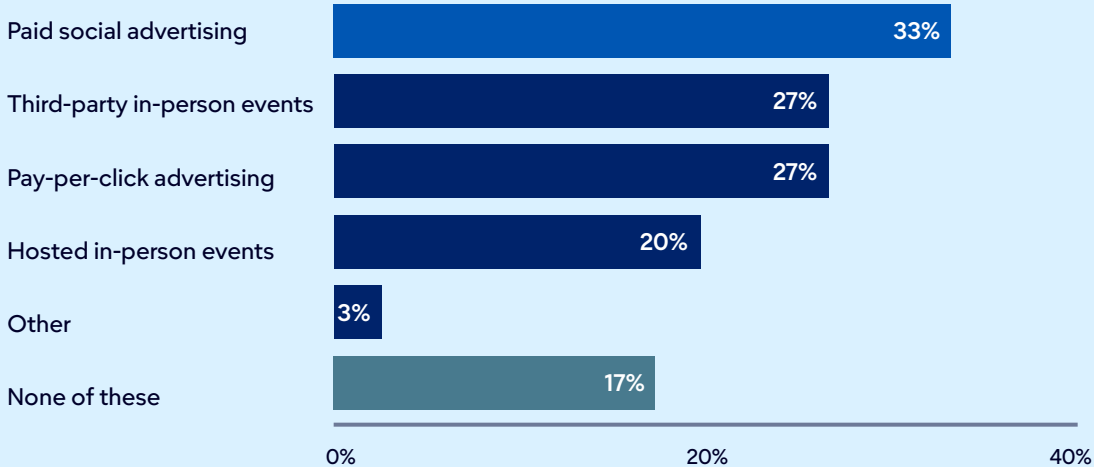
Channels that underperform below expectations

Established channels like pay per click (PPC) and paid social are under pressure with answer engine optimization (AEO) on the rise. As zero-click searches increase, this could explain the missed expectations for paid social and pay-per-click advertising. While still performing, they are falling behind expectations most likely based on historical performance.

AEO may now be delivering high-intent referral traffic and attracting the same quality audiences that PPC once captured.

Underperforming marketing channels based on expectations in 2025

Multiple responses



n = 260 technology marketers with \$100M or more in annual revenue and who have these marketing channels included in their organization's 2026 marketing plan, excluding "don't know" answers

Q: Which, if any, of the following marketing channels performed below expectations in 2025?

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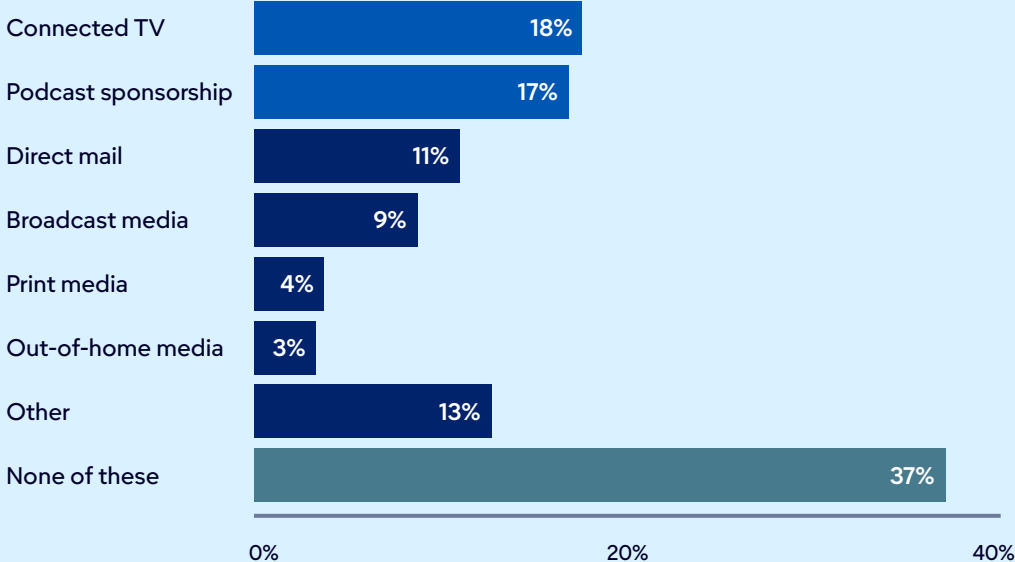
Channels that overperform against expectations

Lower-visibility channels like connected TV and podcast sponsorships exceeded expectations for nearly a fifth of tech marketing leaders, which suggests these emerging platforms hold untapped value. Nontraditional B2B social media channels like YouTube and Reddit are outperforming expectations for tech marketing leaders, reflecting an emerging shift in how demand generation teams engage buyers with content.

Notably, these channels are also frequently sourced by answer engines, which increases their relevance in the evolving channel landscape.

Marketing channels that outperformed expectations in 2025

Multiple responses



n = 182 technology marketers with \$100M or more in annual revenue and who have these marketing channels included in their organization's 2026 marketing plan (Q10), excluding "don't know" answers

Q: Which of the following marketing channels delivered better results than expected in 2025?

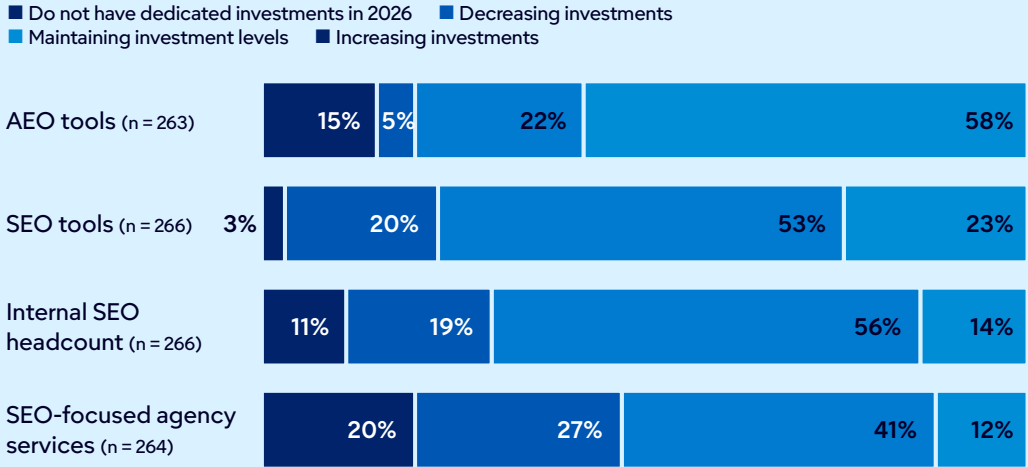
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Investment in AEO tools/SEO

Surprisingly, less than a quarter of tech marketers are decreasing investments in SEO tools despite the growth in AEO. Fifty-eight percent of marketing leaders report increasing investments, while most other SEO-related investments remain flat.

AEO tools stand out with the strongest investment growth (with 58% reporting increasing investments) while most other SEO-related investments remain largely flat

Investment in AEO/SEO

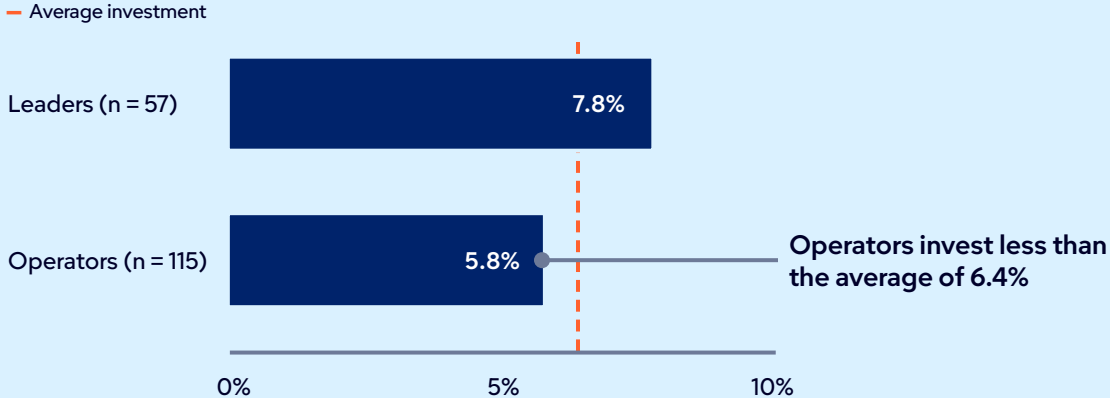


n varies, technology marketers with \$100M or more in annual revenue, excluding "don't know" answers
Q112: How, if at all, has AI impacted your marketing organization's investment in the following categories?
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Leaders invest more in AI training and upskilling

The average investment in AI training and upskilling is 6.5%. However, as the rise of AI in marketing continues, we see breakaway leaders rapidly looking to advance team skills by investing 7.8% in training, as compared to operators that invest below the overall average.

Average labor investment in AI training and upskilling – leaders vs. operators



n = varies, technology marketers with \$100M or more in annual revenue and marketing budget allocated to labor >0% (Q06New)
Q57: What percentage of your organization's 2026 marketing labor budget is allocated to training and upskilling existing talent on AI skills?
Source: 2026 Gartner Tech Marketing Benchmarks Survey, conducted Jan '26–March '26 among 335 global tech marketers. Fielded by Gartner through an independent third-party research provider.

Actionable, objective insights

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