



MARKETING IN 2022: HOW B2B LEADERS WILL DRIVE GROWTH, IMPACT AND PERFORMANCE

A DEEP DIVE INTO THE BIGGEST TECH MARKETING INVESTMENTS, STRATEGIES AND OPPORTUNITIES

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

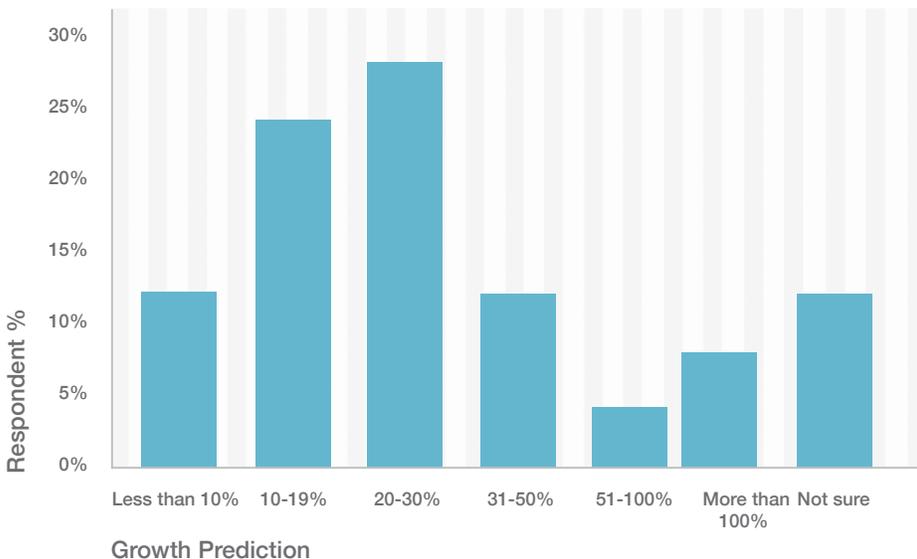
Make way for more growth.

Nearly two years into the pandemic, most B2B tech providers continue to thrive. While the initial pandemic shocks hit marketing teams hard and fast, the recovery was swift, especially for companies that helped customers digitize and automate, or solve pressing issues, like [supply chain](#) disruptions, workforce and labor issues, financials and enterprise risk.

That growth will continue in 2022. According to Corporate Ink's pulse survey of executives and marketing leaders, 40% of respondents said they expect to grow between 20 – 50% in 2022, and 8% expected to more than double. Only 12% of respondents projected an annual growth rate of 10% or less.

AN INTENTIONAL, **BALANCED** EFFORT

GROWTH PROJECTIONS FOR 2022



Marketing teams looking to step on the accelerator next year face numerous obstacles, including the ongoing talent shortages caused by the Great Resignation, uncertainty surrounding Omicron and the return to in-person events, and a cluttered digital world that overwhelms prospects and consumers alike.

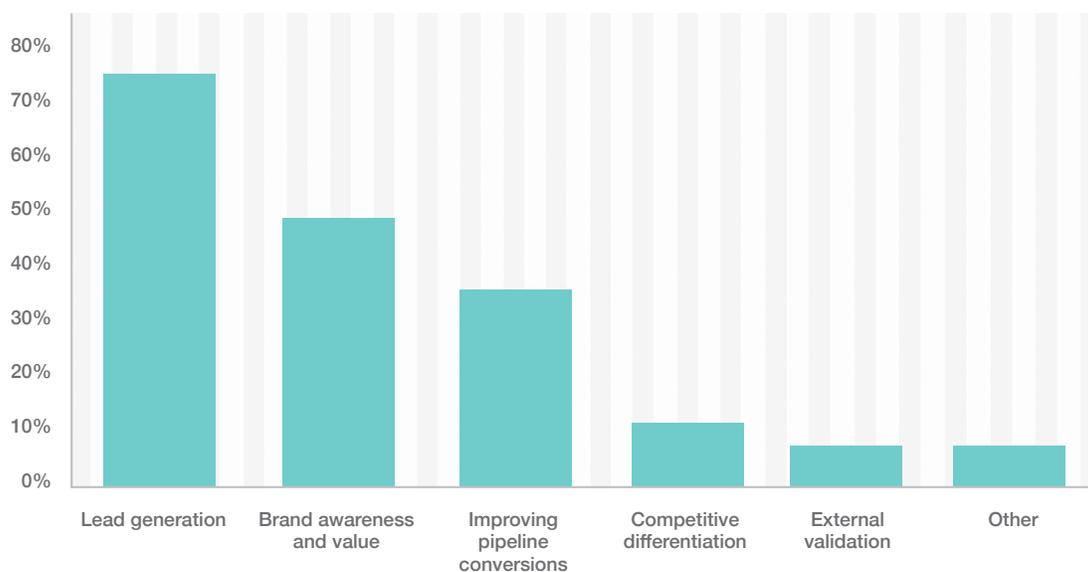
This report looks at how marketers are investing, what they are planning for 2022 and their growth strategies for the year ahead.



2022 MARKETING STRATEGY SNAPSHOT: PRIORITIES AND INVESTMENTS

We asked respondents to select their top two marketing priorities for 2022 – and the results were hardly surprising. Seventy six percent of respondents said their top priority was lead generation, which was followed by increasing brand awareness (48%) and [improving pipeline conversions](#) (36%).

TOP MARKETING PRIORITIES FOR 2022



After marketing budgets decreased by [6.4% in 2021 according to Gartner](#), the expected growth for 2022 is refreshing – especially considering that the overall economic recovery will remain uneven, according to [Worldcom's October 2021 Confidence Index](#).

Marketing teams will play a critical role in enabling their organizations to scale. Where will the biggest investments take place in 2022? Corporate Ink found:

 72% plan to increase [content marketing](#) investments – with 52% saying they plan to increase budgets significantly

 72% also plan to increase PR investments – with 32% planning a significant budget increase and 40% planning a moderate increase

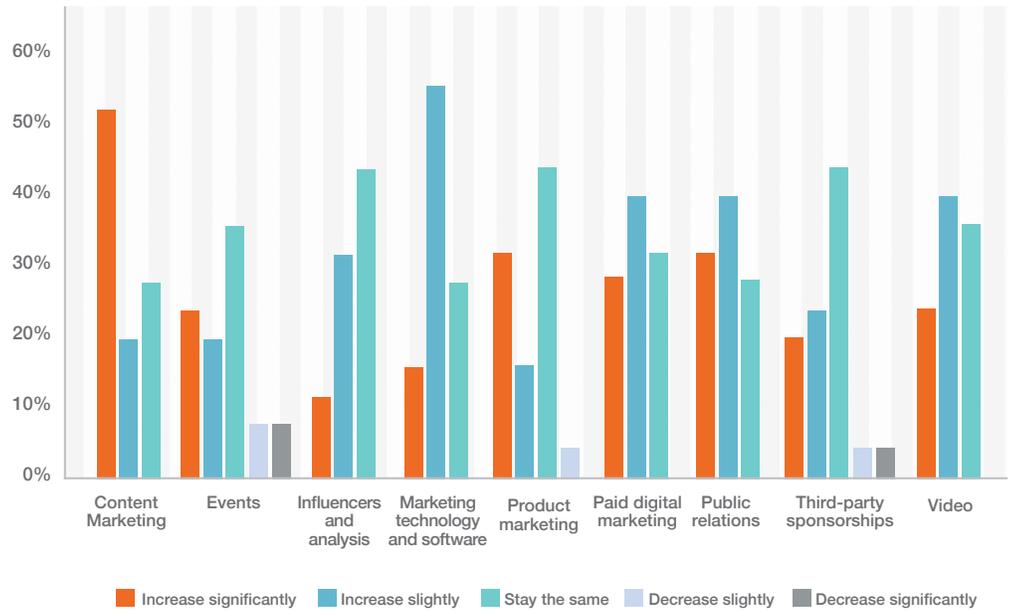
 68% plan to increase investments in paid digital

 64% plan to increase investment in video

 48% plan to increase product marketing investments

CHANGE IN MARKETING INVESTMENT IN 2022

While budgets will stay flat for some marketing leaders, very few are planning to decrease investments. The only areas where respondents reported expected budget decreases were events (16%), third-party sponsorships (8%) and product marketing (4%).



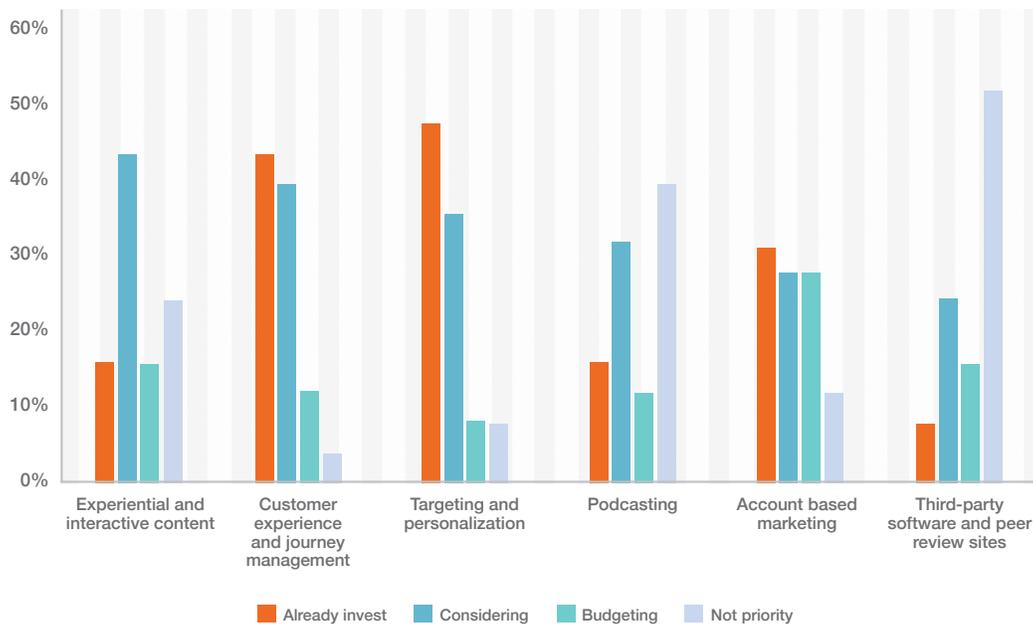
ELEVATE AND EXPAND: TAKING CONTENT MARKETING STRATEGIES TO ANOTHER LEVEL

Content has been king for a long time. However, many organizations unknowingly fall into the trap of creating content for content's sake. The focus must shift to [how content can be used within an overall strategy](#) and where each asset fits with other marketing elements. And given how much prospects are inundated with content offers, thinking more strategically and breaking through the noise becomes harder every year.

How are marketers planning to elevate and differentiate their approach (beyond whitepapers, blogs and eBooks) in 2022?

- 44% are considering making an investment in interactive and experiential content
- 40% are considering investments in customer experience and journey mapping
- 36% are considering paid targeting
- 32% are considering podcasts
- 24% are considering investments in third-party software and customer review sites

PERCENTAGE OF MARKETING TEAMS ACTIVELY CONSIDERING INVESTMENT



When asked specifically which content types would elevate their marketing programs in 2022 (not what they are budgeting for):

- 64% said data-driven content like market surveys, research and use of proprietary data
- 60% said interactive content
- 48% said conversational, informal and topical executive videos for social media
- 44% said sales content that addresses ‘elephant in the room’ type issues, like pricing, implementation, security, competitive differentiation, etc.

Regardless of where and how you plan to invest, here are seven reminders and recommendations for elevating your content in 2022:

- 1. Remember, quality trumps quantity.** It’s better to have one piece of standout content than five pieces of mediocre content.
- 2. The best content offers something fresh, bold and educational.** What’s your take? Offer something different and own your point of view.
- 3. Drop the marketing speak.** The highest-engaging content speaks directly to the needs of your intended audience. The more personalized and relevant, the better. Remember, B2B buyers are humans, after all.
- 4. Map content to your sales funnel and personas.** The needs of a buyer that doesn’t know you are drastically different than a prospect that’s been sitting in your pipeline for 18 months.
- 5. Tackle the big questions.** Often, marketers are afraid to tackle the “elephant in the room.” That’s always a mistake, as the questions (whether it be about price, data, security or something else) is always on the mind of the buyer. Own the narrative.
- 6. Prioritize data, customers and third-party voices.** Doing so adds credibility and increases trust.
- 7. Finally, think in campaigns.** The investment to create top-notch content is high. Repurpose it like crazy – video, infographic, webinar, blog series, and more – to expand reach and impact.



KPIS, ROI, SOV... WHAT'S THE TRUE VALUE OF PR?

The value of PR continues to grow, which is hardly surprising. PR offers flexibility in navigating crisis, builds trust with audiences, creates opportunities and supports a brand's purpose and growth through storytelling. All of which were paramount during the pandemic.

According to [The Business Research Company](#), the global market value of PR is expected to have increased by 10.2% in 2021.

The executives and marketing leaders surveyed by Corporate Ink see public relations as an essential component of their overall marketing and business strategy. Seventy-two percent plan to increase PR budgets moderately or significantly in 2022 – with no respondents planning a decrease.

While [PR has always been essential](#), several macro forces – including the shift away from in-person events, oversaturation on digital, and a society that struggles to trust – have made PR more important than ever – and for most companies, its delivering. The respondents surveyed by Corporate Ink report PR creates value for their businesses in numerous ways:

- 72% say PR helps increase brand value and awareness
- 60% say PR plays an important role in educating the market on their unique solution or approach
- 52% report PR helps them differentiate against competitors and build market trust and credibility
- 52% report PR helps create demand and interest from prospects
- 32% says PR contributes to hiring and retaining talent
- 24% says it helps attract investor attention

Our world today asks a lot of brands; to be purpose-driven, trustworthy and authentic. Not to mention solve a clear problem, make everything easy and be ready when the buyer is ready. Effective PR delivers by keeping a brand's purpose, credibility, expertise and capabilities front of mind, all the time. As [Ty Heath and Jon Lombardo of LinkedIn](#) said at HubSpot's [INBOUND 2021](#) conference, "It's not just what someone thinks of a brand, it's when."



THE MOST IN-DEMAND MARKETING SKILLS IN 2022

MarketingWeek found that [60% of marketers are planning to change jobs and half are planning an imminent career change](#). Meanwhile, two-thirds of marketing employers plan to hire.

These factors have combined to result in marketing’s version of ‘The Great Resignation.’ This perfect storm of openings and resignations means one thing: Marketing expertise remains in high demand.

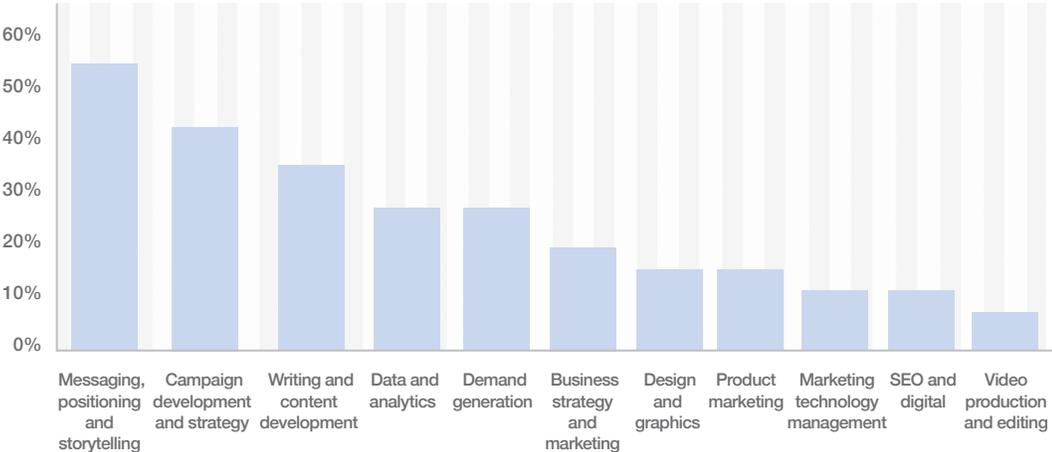
We asked respondents to share the top three in-demand skills for 2022. The number one answer was telling: 56% of respondents said messaging, positioning and storytelling capabilities.

On its own, the finding is somewhat surprising. We expected the most in-demand skill to be something more technical like data and analytics (28%), or strategic like business strategy and alignment (20%). Looking at the results more broadly in the context of marketers’ 2022 priorities, and the need for storytelling and positioning expertise comes through loud and clear.

Today’s prospects don’t want to be sold. Most don’t want to be marketed to, either. They want to be educated. They want to be enabled to come to their own decisions. And they want to establish trusting and meaningful connections with the brands they partner with. This requires marketers to get personal, go beyond functionality and benefit, and simplify complex concepts so they resonate with the end user.

MOST IN-DEMAND MARKETING SKILLS

Naturally, this requires a renewed emphasis on messaging and storytelling. The third most in-demand skill for 2022 – content and writing (36%) – drives this point home. It’s one thing to have an awesome story – it’s another thing to communicate it in a way that resonates and engages.





Interestingly, [SEO](#), video and design/graphics are lower on the wish list for marketing teams as we enter 2022, which likely speaks to the fact that organizations are increasingly outsourcing these services to specialized third parties.

Which raises the question: which of these skills should be outsourced to an agency and which should be developed internally?

Every situation requires a different answer. The Great Resignation and the difficulty involved with hiring and training makes outsourcing an easier solution, but not always the right one. Each organization should do due diligence to determine their needs and gaps, and how to build a complimentary team of internal and external experts that enables them to scale the reach and impact of their programs.

FINAL THOUGHTS

2022 presents an opportunity for us to get closer to pre-pandemic normalcy. While Omicron and The Great Resignation certainly muddy the waters, most executives are betting big on growth and turning to marketing and PR teams to deliver.

Thriving in 2022 will require an intentional strategy, strong investments in messaging, content and PR, and a hybrid team of internal and external marketers and communicators with the expertise, talent and ambition to match your growth plans.

ABOUT CORPORATE INK

Corporate Ink is a buyer-centric B2B tech PR and content marketing agency in Boston. We build brands. We create demand. And we accelerate growth.

Our difference is our people. When talented and empowered people love where they work, they make smarter decisions and go above and beyond. For our clients, that means deep and honest relationships, incredible results, top performance and ultimately, impact on your most strategic objectives.

If you are interested in learning more about how Corporate Ink can help accelerate your growth, drop us a line at talktome@corporateink.com.

Sign up for more marketing and PR advice [here](#), or follow us on [LinkedIn](#) and [Twitter](#).