

SURVEY REPORT: A LOOK
AT THE CONTENT AND
TECHNOLOGY DRIVING
TODAY'S DEMAND
GENERATION



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INTRODUCTION

In an effort to gain insight into the marketing technologies, tactics, and content that B2B organizations are currently using to support effective demand generation, TechValidate and Spear Marketing Group recently partnered to conduct a survey among B2B marketing professionals. In addition to examining current and projected importance of various marketing tactics, the companies aimed to identify areas where marketers might be missing opportunities for ROI.

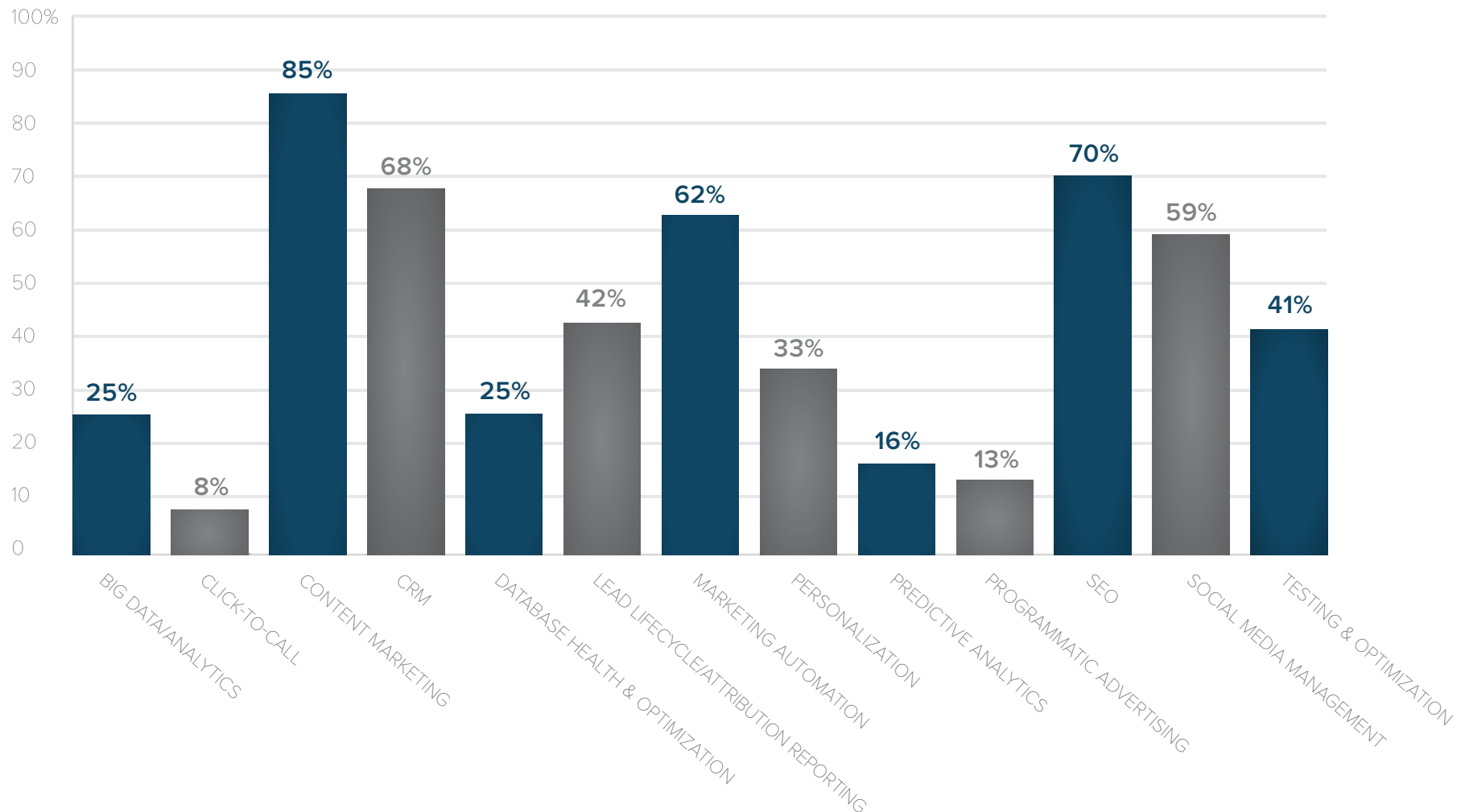
Through the results of the survey, TechValidate and Spear Marketing Group hope to help marketers better understand how their own approaches to demand generation measure up against their peers', and develop strategies to improve demand generation ROI.

ABOUT THE SURVEY

The survey was completed by more than 200 Marketing VPs, Directors, and Managers across the United States. Surveyed organizations ranged from large enterprises (>5,000 employees) to small businesses (50-100 employees), across industries including Computer Software, Media & Entertainment, Telecom, Financial Services, and more.

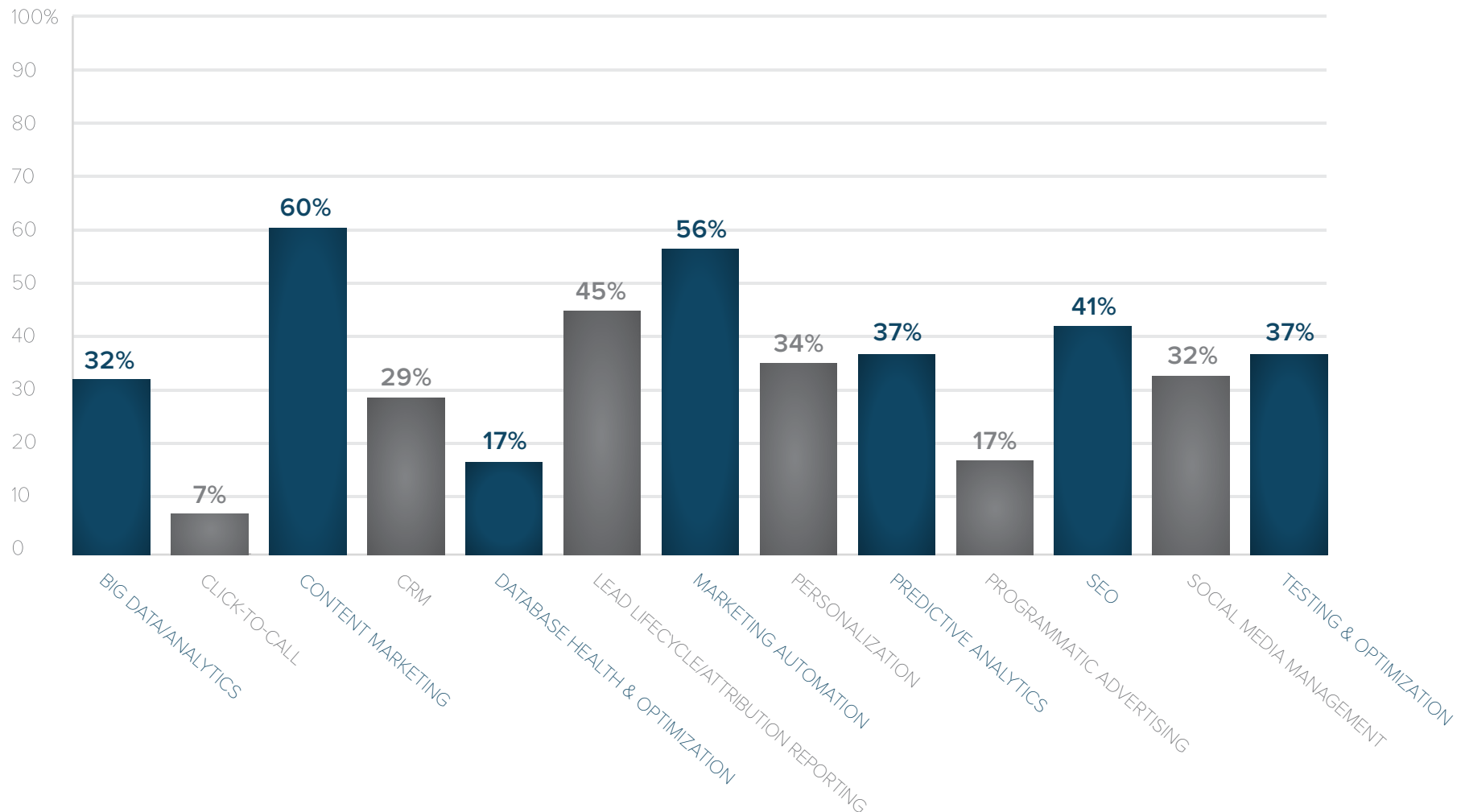
RESULTS: CURRENT MARKETING TECHNOLOGY IMPORTANCE

Content Marketing, SEO, CRM, Marketing Automation and Social Media Management were among the top technologies marketers considered most essential to the success of their organizations' marketing programs. Among those considered least essential were Click-to-Call, Programmatic Advertising, and Predictive Analytics.



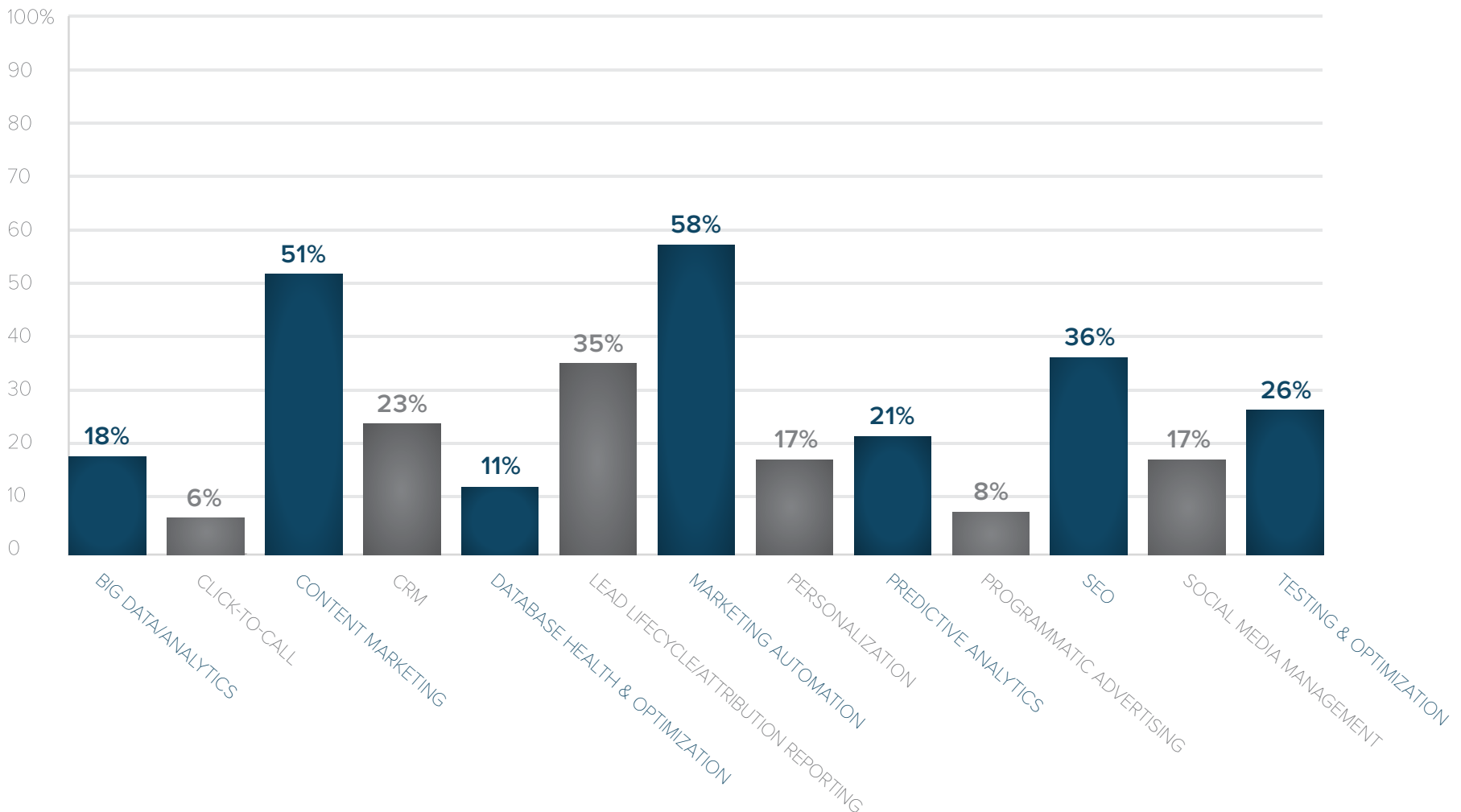
RESULTS: PROJECTED MARKETING TECHNOLOGY IMPORTANCE

When asked which technologies they anticipated being most important to their marketing efforts in the next 12-18 months, survey respondents ranked highest: Content Marketing, Marketing Automation, Lead Lifecycle/Attribution Reporting, Testing & Optimization—and, somewhat surprisingly, Predictive Analytics.



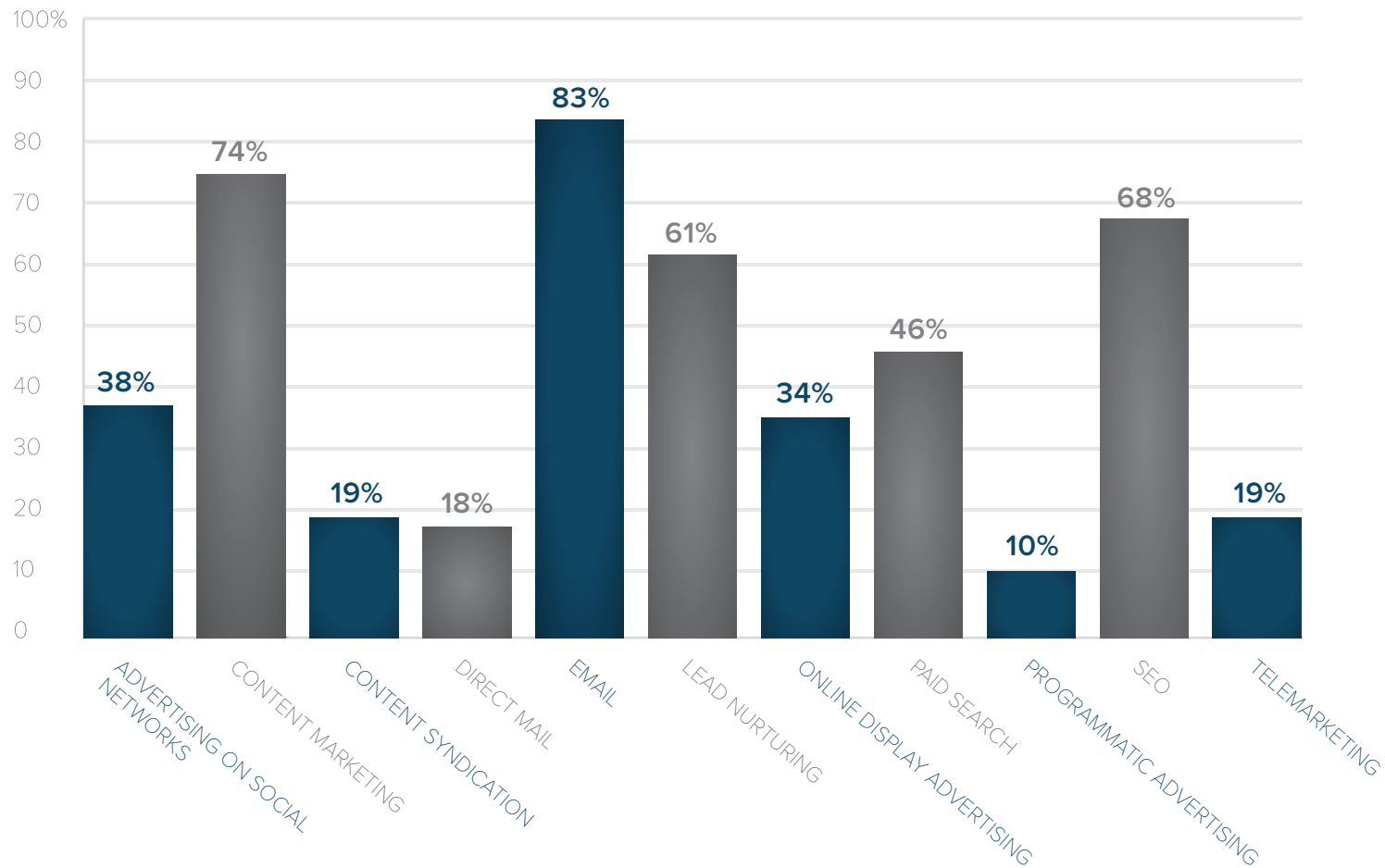
RESULTS: MARKETING TECHNOLOGIES EXPECTED TO DELIVER ROI

In terms of those technologies thought most likely to deliver significant, measurable ROI, marketers ranked as the top 5: Marketing Automation, Content Marketing, SEO, Lead Lifecycle Marketing Attribution Reporting, and Testing & Optimization.



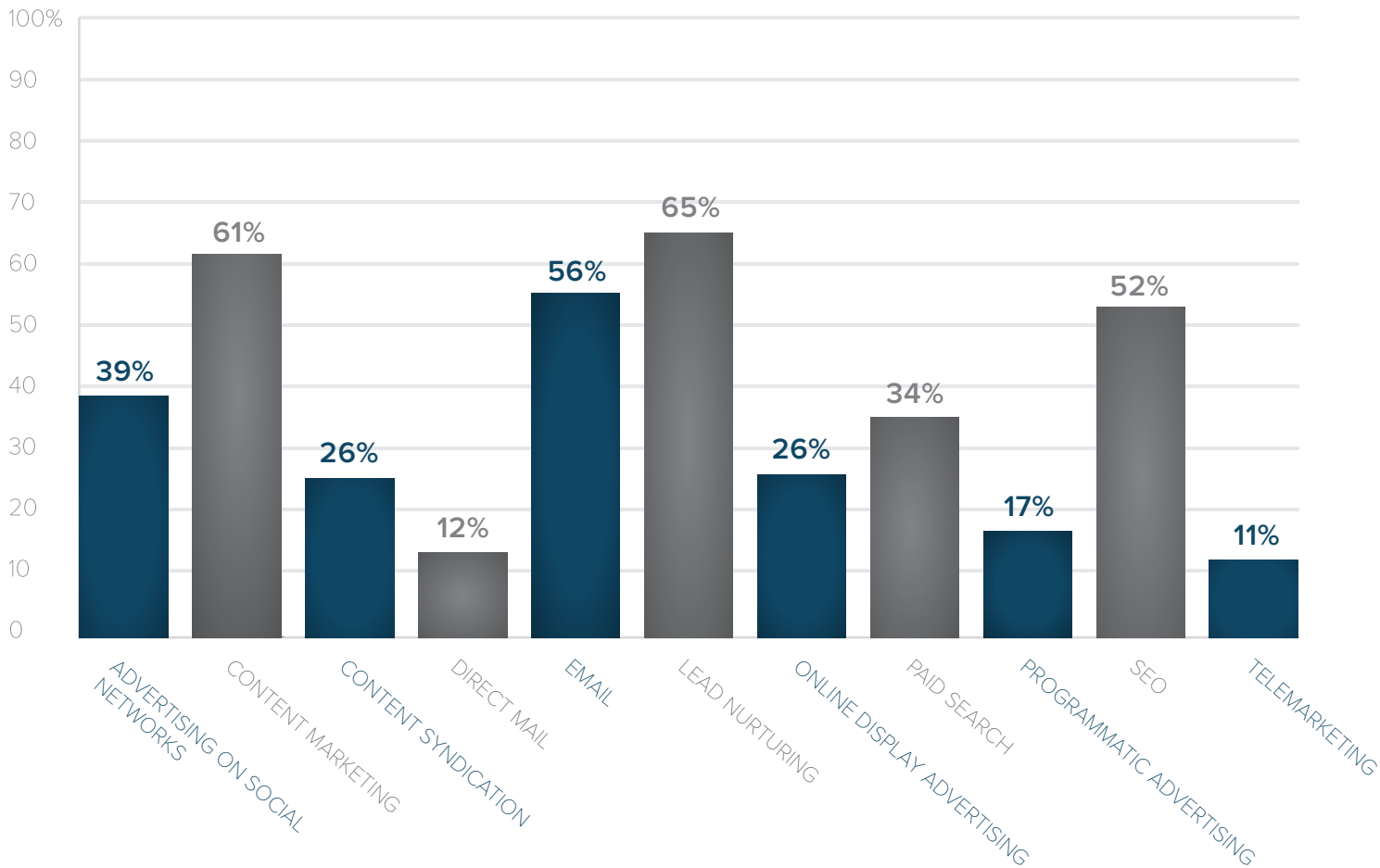
RESULTS: CURRENT MARKETING TACTIC IMPORTANCE

When asked to identify the tactics most critical to their current marketing programs, survey respondents cited Email, Content Marketing, SEO, Lead Nurturing, and Paid Search. Among the least important tactics were Programmatic Advertising, Direct Mail, Telemarketing, and Content Syndication.



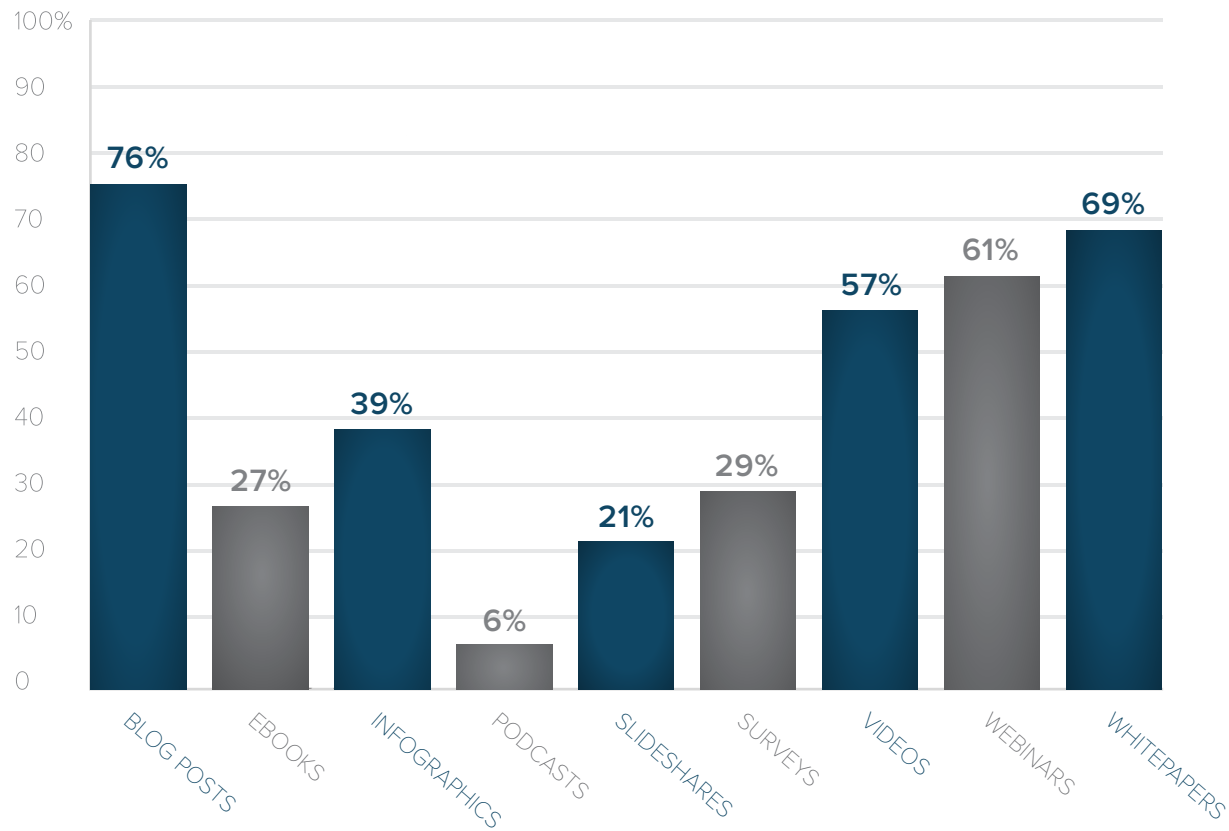
RESULTS: PROJECTED MARKETING TACTIC IMPORTANCE

As marketers look forward to the next 12-18 months of business, they predict that four of their current key tactics will remain most important, with Paid Search dropping in the ranks to make way for Advertising on Social Networks.



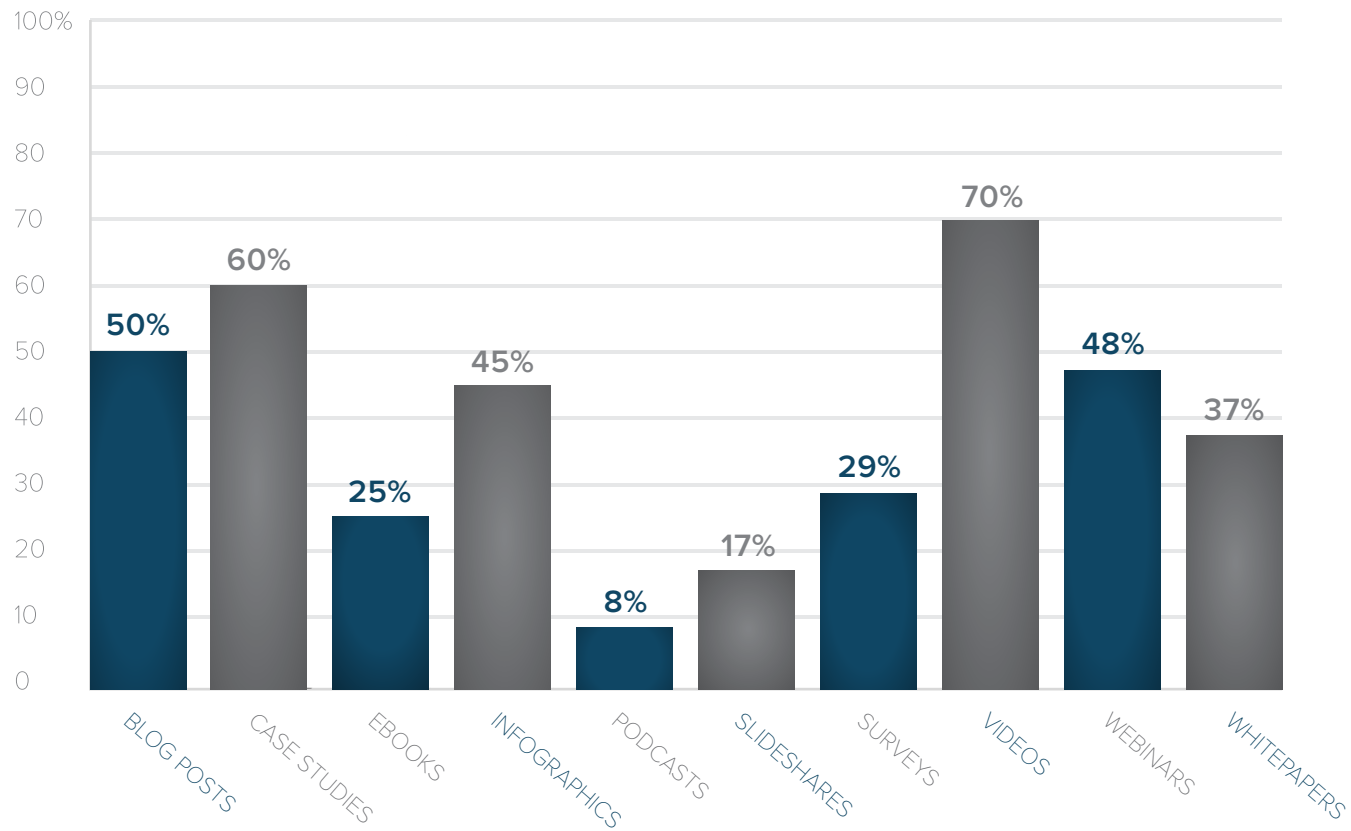
RESULTS: CURRENT IMPORTANCE OF VARIOUS CONTENT TYPES

When it came to the types of content considered most key to marketers' current programs, Blog Posts, Whitepapers, Webinars, Videos, and Infographics topped the list. Podcasts were the least important, with just 6 percent of respondents citing them as meaningful.



RESULTS: PROJECTED IMPORTANCE OF VARIOUS CONTENT TYPES

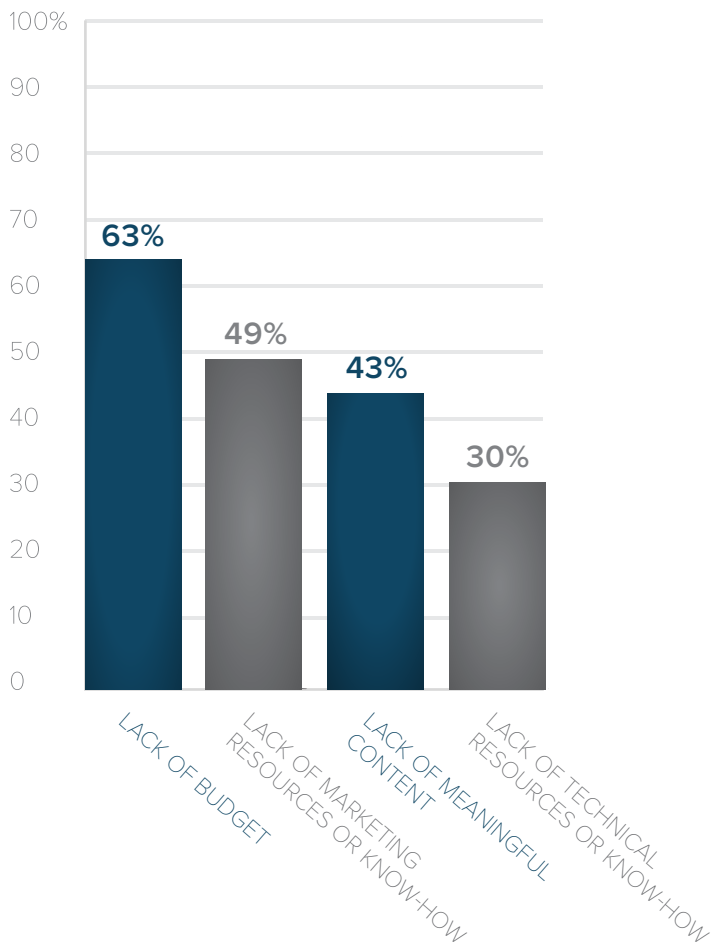
For future marketing endeavors, the same leaders were considered essential—however Videos topped the list, followed by Case Studies, Blog Posts, Webinars, and Infographics.



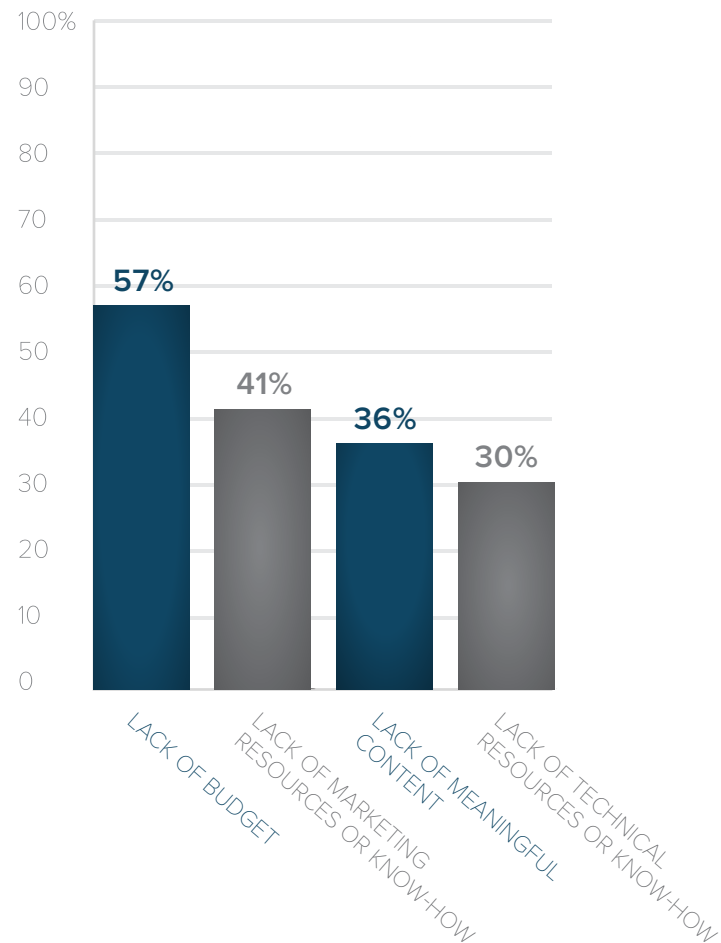
RESULTS: CHALLENGES IMPACTING DEMAND GENERATION MARKETING INITIATIVES

The survey distilled marketing challenges down to four options, asking respondents to select the issues they felt currently—and would increasingly—impact their marketing initiatives. Though lack of budget was the biggest challenge for most marketers, insufficient marketing resources and a scarcity of meaningful content also played major roles.

CURRENT CHALLENGES



FUTURE CHALLENGES



WHAT THE SURVEY RESULTS COULD MEAN FOR MARKETERS

From the survey results, four primary potential takeaways surfaced:

1. Important marketing technologies are being under-utilized.
2. Insufficient marketing resources and/or technical know-how are causing marketers to miss opportunities offered by certain technologies.
3. Marketers may not be using the content they have at their fingertips to its full potential.
4. Insufficient resources and/or know-how are causing marketers to struggle with content production.

1. IMPORTANT MARKETING TECHNOLOGIES ARE BEING UNDER-UTILIZED.

Display and Programmatic Advertising

The survey results showed that 34 percent of respondents felt Online Display Advertising was essential to their current marketing approach. However, when it came to Programmatic Advertising—in theory, a smarter, more targeted version of Display—only 10 percent considered it essential. Given the high degree of overlap between these two tactics, one could argue that the perceived value of Programmatic should have been higher. This likely suggests that Programmatic Advertising, though a “hot topic” in B2B circles, has yet to reach a level of awareness where B2B marketers fully understand its capabilities or potential.

Database Health & Optimization

Database Health & Optimization technologies were considered essential to current marketing efforts by just 25 percent of respondents—and, surprisingly, even fewer (17 percent) said they expected them to become essential in the near future. With Database Marketing remaining a key element to overall demand generation strategy for most B2B companies, database health is critical to the success of those programs. After all, a database campaign is only as strong as its list.

Though there may be a variety of factors keeping marketers from implementing these types of technologies, this data suggests that marketers may not fully appreciate either the benefits of database health or the availability of various technologies and data companies that can improve data hygiene significantly.

Testing & Optimization

Of the survey respondents who said Paid Search, Social Advertising, PPC, Online Display Ads, and/or Programmatic Advertising were essential marketing tactics, only 46 percent also considered Testing & Optimization tools important. Without question, there are companies that consistently and successfully build testing and optimization into their marketing campaigns without the use of specialized testing tools. However, the survey findings may also underscore a point routinely revealed through other studies: Marketers don't test and optimize nearly enough.

2. INSUFFICIENT MARKETING RESOURCES AND/OR TECHNICAL KNOW-HOW ARE CAUSING MARKETERS TO MISS OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED BY CERTAIN TECHNOLOGIES.

Skillset Needs Are Constantly Changing

Marketing is growing more technical all the time, with required skillsets changing more rapidly than marketing departments can hire and adjust. As a consequence, there appears to be a real talent gap in the field. Evidence of this: Thirty percent of survey respondents admitted to lacking technical resources or know-how and 49 percent claimed to lack marketing resources or know-how.

ROI Could Be Suffering

It's possible that this lack of resources and/or knowledge correlates with some of the more pessimistic ROI outlooks that came through in the survey. In spite of the perceived importance of certain marketing technologies, many respondents reported that they did not expect to see meaningful ROI from those same "essential technologies." For example, of the 59 percent of respondents who said they expected to see a significant, measurable ROI for Marketing Automation, 47 percent confessed to lacking marketing resources or know-how and 29 percent said they lacked technical resources or know-how. This lack of knowledge could be part of the reason why more than 40 percent of those surveyed did not anticipate realizing a return on their Marketing Automation investment.

One reason for this consistent discrepancy could be that marketers haven't yet established solid plans or strategies to leverage the technologies in which they plan to invest. Another possibility is that companies expect to benefit from marketing technologies but not in a way that's measurable.

Additional ROI Forecasts

- **Big Data/Analytics:** Of those who said it was essential to their current efforts, only 44 percent expected it to deliver ROI.
- **CRM:** Of those who said it was essential to their current efforts, only 28 percent expected it to deliver ROI.
- **Database Health & Optimization:** Of those who said it was essential to their current efforts, only 22 percent expected it to deliver ROI.
- **Personalization:** Of those who said it was essential to their current efforts, only 29 percent expected it to deliver ROI.
- **Predictive Analytics:** Of those who said it was essential to their current efforts, only 50 percent expected it to deliver ROI.
- **Programmatic Advertising:** Of those who said it was essential to their current efforts, only 33 percent expected it to deliver ROI.
- **SEO:** Of those who said it was essential to their current efforts, only 45 percent expected it to deliver ROI.
- **Social Media Management:** Of those who said it was essential to their current efforts, only 22 percent expected it to deliver ROI.
- **Testing & Optimization:** Of those who said it was essential to their current efforts, only 46 percent expected it to deliver ROI.

3. MARKETERS MAY NOT BE USING THE CONTENT THEY HAVE AT THEIR FINGERTIPS TO ITS FULL POTENTIAL.

The Gap Between Content and ROI

Fifty-one percent of respondents who said they expected ROI from Content Marketing also claimed to lack the content necessary to drive those same programs. This could indicate that those organizations are short on marketing resources—or it could mean that companies are thinking too narrowly when it comes to the type of content that works for demand generation.

Repurposing Blog Posts

Blog Posts are a good example of content that can be repurposed to create other marketing assets—Whitepapers, Podcasts, Infographics, Slideshares, even Webinars. And given that 76 percent of survey respondents found Blog Posts essential to their current initiatives, there's a good chance they have usable content at the ready.

Though more than 50 percent of marketers deemed Podcasts, Infographics, Webinars, and Slideshares as non-essential to their current marketing programs, content for those asset types could be easily pulled from their organizations' existing Blog Posts. Expanding their marketing arsenals to include those content types might prove that the materials do have value, and could also help combat a possible lack of content diversification—which was another matter revealed by the survey findings.

Diversifying Marketing Content

Amongst the respondents who said they lacked meaningful content, only 4 content types were noted as essential to more than half of them. While this lack of enthusiasm for content diversification could be a result of companies only seeing real value or ROI from a limited number of content types, it's more likely that companies simply need to think “outside of the box” when it comes to sourcing or repurposing marketing content.

4. INSUFFICIENT RESOURCES AND/OR KNOW-HOW ARE CAUSING MARKETERS TO STRUGGLE WITH CONTENT PRODUCTION.

The Gap Between “Essential” and “Doable”

Eighty-five percent of survey respondents reported that Content Marketing technologies were essential to their current marketing tactics, yet more than 40 percent admitted to struggling with a lack of meaningful content. This broad gap between importance and feasibility may exist, in part, because of similar gaps in marketing resources and/or know-how.

Of those companies that said Content Marketing technologies were essential, 50 percent currently struggle with a lack of marketing resources or know-how, and 28 percent struggle with a lack of technical resources or know-how. Marketers may simply not know how or have the bandwidth to create the content they so fiercely desire.

Missed Connections Between Content Types

It's also possible that marketers are missing the connections between certain types of content. For example, 60 percent of survey respondents said they expected case studies to become significantly more important to their endeavors over the next 12-18 months, yet only 28 percent felt the same way about surveys—overlooking the potential to identify case study candidates through customer surveys.

NEXT STEPS: START SEIZING MISSED OPPORTUNITIES

Based on the themes that came through in the survey findings, there are several steps organizations can take to improve the success and ROI of their demand generation marketing programs. Moving forward, marketers should:

1. Make sure to fully investigate the potential and value proposition of each technology or tactic before dismissing it.
2. Work to fill gaps in marketing resources and/or technical know-how, either by training in-house staff or by leveraging third-party resources.
3. Increase efforts to fully leverage and repurpose existing content, rather than constantly developing new assets.
4. Strengthen content production resources and/or know-how by training in-house staff or taking advantage of third-party resources.
5. Use a variety of content types to support demand generation marketing efforts.

ABOUT TECHVALIDATE

TechValidate is a software platform that creates marketing content. Its on-demand offering is the first and only automated platform that collects and transforms customer experience data into credible content (case studies, ROI analyses, customer testimonials, customer reviews) for use across all key marketing and sales communication channels. Unlike other content marketing offerings that focus solely on managing the process of creating content, TechValidate is the industry's only solution that systematically generates actual marketing content.

For more information about how TechValidate can help you develop breakthrough content, visit techvalidate.com or call 510-982-6640.



ABOUT SPEAR MARKETING GROUP

Spear Marketing Group is a full-service demand generation agency that helps B2B technology companies generate, nurture, and convert leads to revenue. The firm's holistic approach to demand generation incorporates **strategic expertise, creative flair**, and a deep understanding of **marketing technology** to drive measurable results across every stage of the lead lifecycle: lead generation, lead nurturing, and customer marketing. The firm's services include email marketing, search engine marketing (SEM), lead nurturing, digital advertising, social media, and content development. Spear clients include Google, Navicure, and Sungard AS.

For additional details about how Spear Marketing Group can help you drive better marketing results, visit spearmarketing.com or call 925-891-9050.



