

BENCHMARK REPORT

2012 B2B Marketing Benchmark Report

Research and insights on attracting and
converting the modern B2B buyer

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2012 B2B Marketing Benchmark Report

Research and insights on attracting and converting the modern B2B buyer

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2012 B2B Marketing Benchmark Report

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

RESEARCH AND INSIGHTS ON ATTRACTING AND CONVERTING THE MODERN B2B BUYER

The pressure for B2B marketers is on. Modern B2B buyers have an increasing tendency and capacity to research purchasing decisions online long before they engage with Sales. They are empowered with information, and are reluctant from a persistently struggling economy. Winning over modern B2B buyers requires organizations to revolutionize their marketing approach, and the barriers to success are vast.

Facing great scrutiny, we must act on the buyer's terms, tie all activities into revenue, and continually optimize performance. Overall success will depend on our ability to influence change throughout organizational levels, and build strategies for buyer-centric lead generation and funnel optimization.

In this 2012 edition of the *B2B Marketing Benchmark Report* we will examine the top challenges B2B marketers are facing, the barriers that exist in preventing success, and best practices in overcoming them to attract and convert the modern B2B buyer.

Information and collective wisdom of 1,745 B2B marketers

More than 1,700 B2B marketers shared their knowledge and results in one of the most extensive studies in the industry – the MarketingSherpa 2011 B2B Marketing Benchmark Survey. Now, you can use this valuable knowledge to benchmark your organization's practices and performance against other organizations like yours, and learn top tactics and strategies to optimize campaign performance.

Benchmark data from multiple lenses, organized for quick reference

The *2012 B2B Marketing Benchmark Report* is a comprehensive reference guide containing more than 150 charts with analytical commentary, hundreds of informative insights from your peers, several abridged case studies of real-life social marketing success stories, and more. To help you quickly locate the information most relevant to your marketing situation, we have segmented data throughout this report by:

- Average of all respondents
- Key industry sectors
- Organization size
- Phases of marketing maturity

Highlights of this year's study

- The strategic priorities of CMOs and senior marketing executives for B2B marketing
- How organizations allocate B2B marketing budgets and key performance indicators
- Top tactics B2B marketers use to generate leads including social media, email marketing and more
- The opportunities that exist for B2B marketers in funnel optimization for lead generation ROI

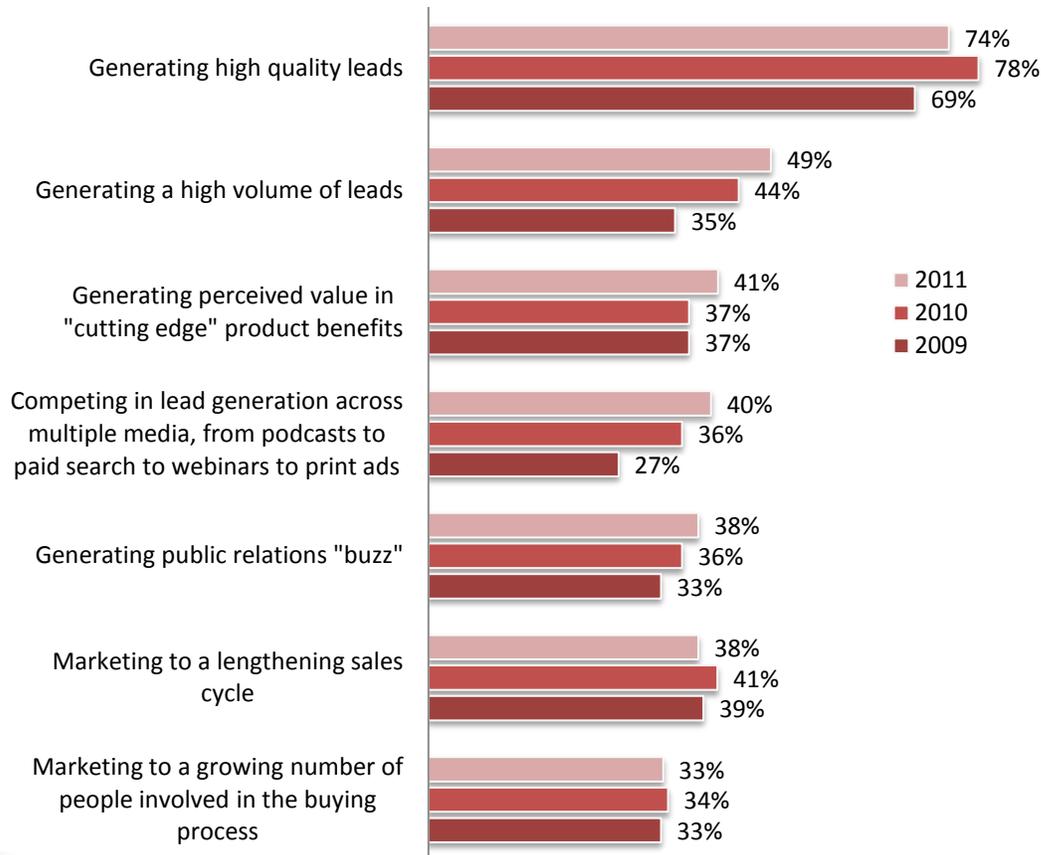
Benchmark Report

MarketingSherpa Benchmark Reports provide marketing executives and practitioners the comprehensive research data and insights needed to compare an organization's practices and performance against industry benchmarks, and guide strategic decisions and tactical planning.

KEY FINDING: THE B2B MARKETING ENVIRONMENT IS INCREASINGLY CHALLENGING

The effects of a continually struggling economy and evolving buyer behavior are apparent in the indications of B2B marketer's greatest challenges. In last year's *B2B Marketing Benchmark Report*, we learned that nearly all challenges had increased in pertinence from 2009. This trend has continued through 2011, as we learn that the majority have increased yet again.

Chart: B2B marketing challenges growing in pertinence



Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa B2B Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded June 2011, N=1,745

Top challenges of generating high-quality leads, and generating a high volume of leads, have held strong as the top two positions from 2010 to 2011, and marketers are struggling to achieve a balance of quality and quantity.

Contrary to the trend of increasing challenges, the number one challenge of generating high-quality leads has actually *decreased* in pertinence from last year's response. As lead qualification tactics have begun to gain traction, and marketers are beginning to embrace the screening of leads prior to sales team delivery, some are now falling back on their second greatest challenge – volume.

Data Highlights

*Majority of challenges are still increasing.

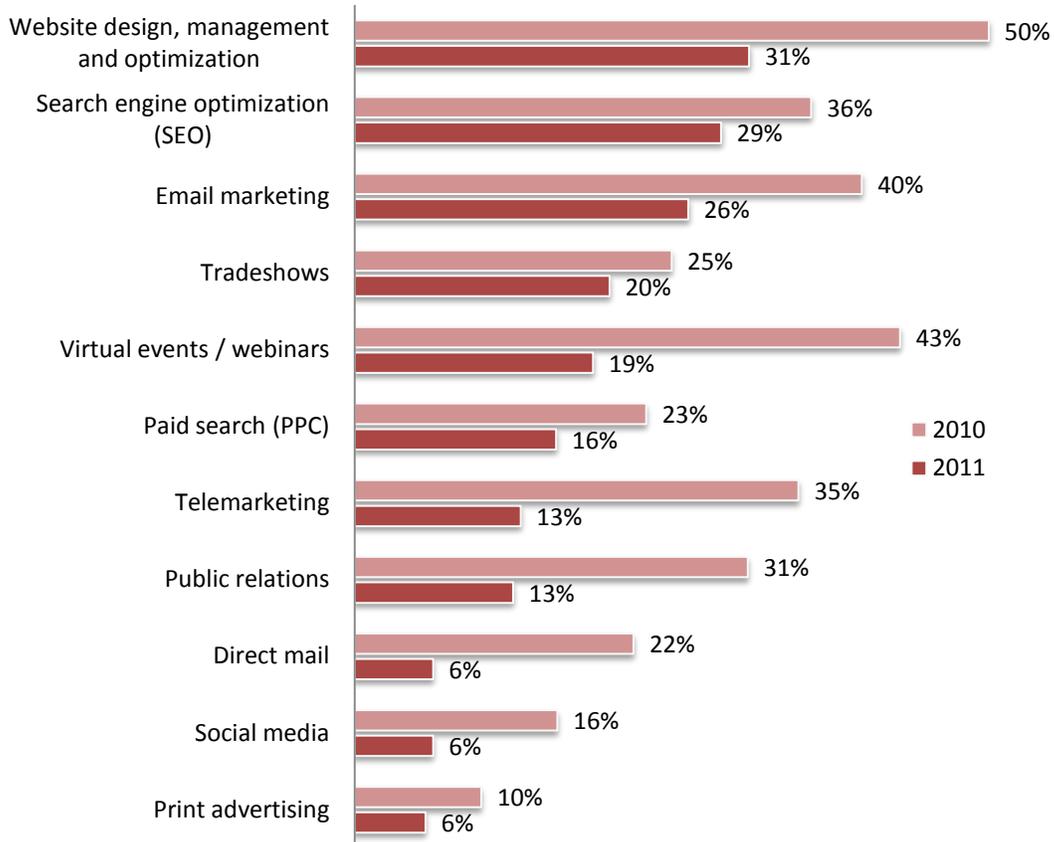
*Exception is top challenge of lead quality, which has decreased in pertinence.

*Last year's focus on quality has lead some marketers back to volume this year. The greatest challenge is achieving balance.

KEY FINDING: INCREASING CHALLENGES APPARENT IN TACTICAL EFFECTIVENESS

We further exemplify the challenges of the B2B marketer by analyzing the effectiveness of various marketing tactics or channels, as indicated by survey participants. The dramatic decline of tactical effectiveness from 2010 to 2011 is indicative of marketers' dissatisfaction of overall quality and quantity of leads generated.

Chart: Changes in the effectiveness of B2B marketing tactics



Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa B2B Marketing Benchmark Survey
 Methodology: Fielded June 2011, N=1,745

We asked survey participants to indicate the effectiveness of various marketing tactics in 2010 and 2011, allowing participants to indicate “very effective,” “somewhat effective” or “not effective” for each tactic. This chart shows the level of response indicating “very effective” in 2010 and 2011, for each tactic.

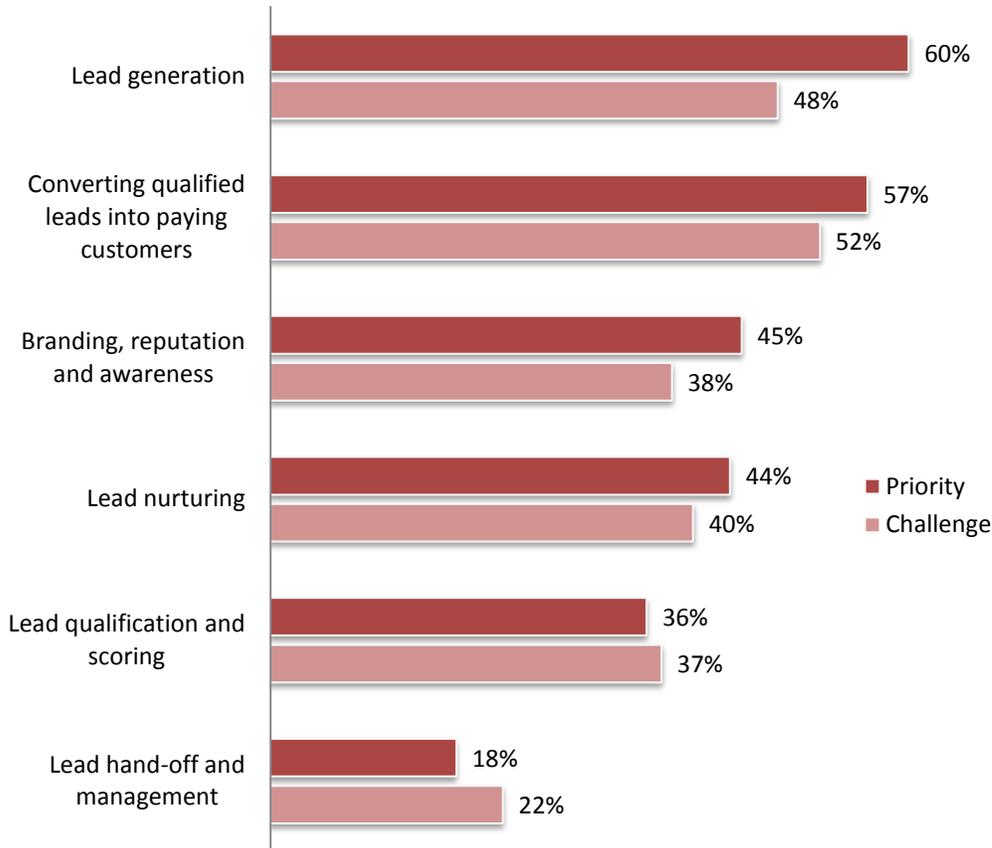
In 2011, B2B marketers experienced severe declines in the tactical effectiveness for many of their marketing channels, when compared to the previous year. Multiple tactics declined by 50 percent or more. Times are tough and it is becoming more critical than ever for marketers to improve results. And it is becoming hauntingly evident that it’s time for change.

In this report, we analyze the strategies and tactics of top performing, high maturity B2B organizations, so you can learn from their success and apply proven tactics to increase the effectiveness of your campaigns.

KEY FINDING: LEAD GENERATION IS TOP PRIORITY, CONVERSION IS GREATEST CHALLENGE

Amidst the struggle to increase effectiveness, marketers align priorities accordingly for the upcoming year. It is natural for marketers to prioritize lead generation, as we learned that balancing quality and quantity of leads are top challenges. The following key finding chart examines the importance of sales conversion, and its close relation to lead generation.

Chart: B2B marketing priorities vs. challenges



Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa B2B Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded June 2011, N=1,745

While lead generation presents a greater priority, and converting qualified leads presents a greater challenge, response levels are relatively similar for the priority and challenge of both tactics. This demonstrates their interdependence.

Lead qualification. Too much time is spent following up on leads that have low probability of becoming sales.

-Marketer insight on challenges

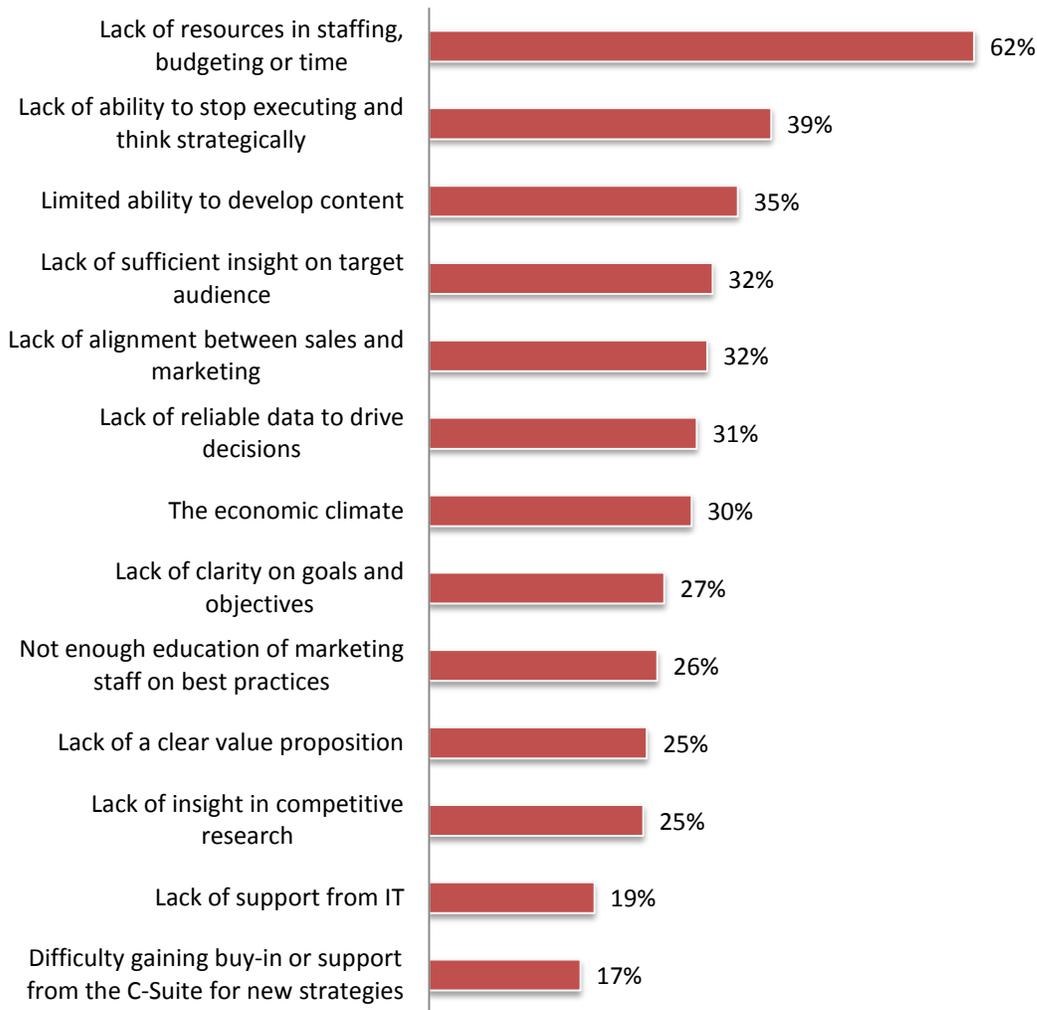
Marketers now prioritize lead conversion over branding, reputation and awareness, despite its traditional connotation as a “Sales responsibility.” Marketers are realizing the importance of supporting conversion as a marketing function by incorporating funnel optimization strategies to accelerate sales pipeline performance.

KEY FINDING: B2B MARKETERS CRAVE SUFFICIENT RESOURCES FOR SUCCESS ENABLEMENT

The challenges of the B2B marketer are on the rise, and barriers to success are inhibitive. External forces are at certainly at play, but internal barriers exist as well. What can we do internally to overcome these challenges and rise above the competition?

The following chart analyzes barriers that exist in preventing marketers from overcoming their greatest challenges. In order to succeed, we must precisely identify and address these barriers within our organizations, and develop solutions.

Chart: Lack of resources presents greatest barrier to B2B marketing success



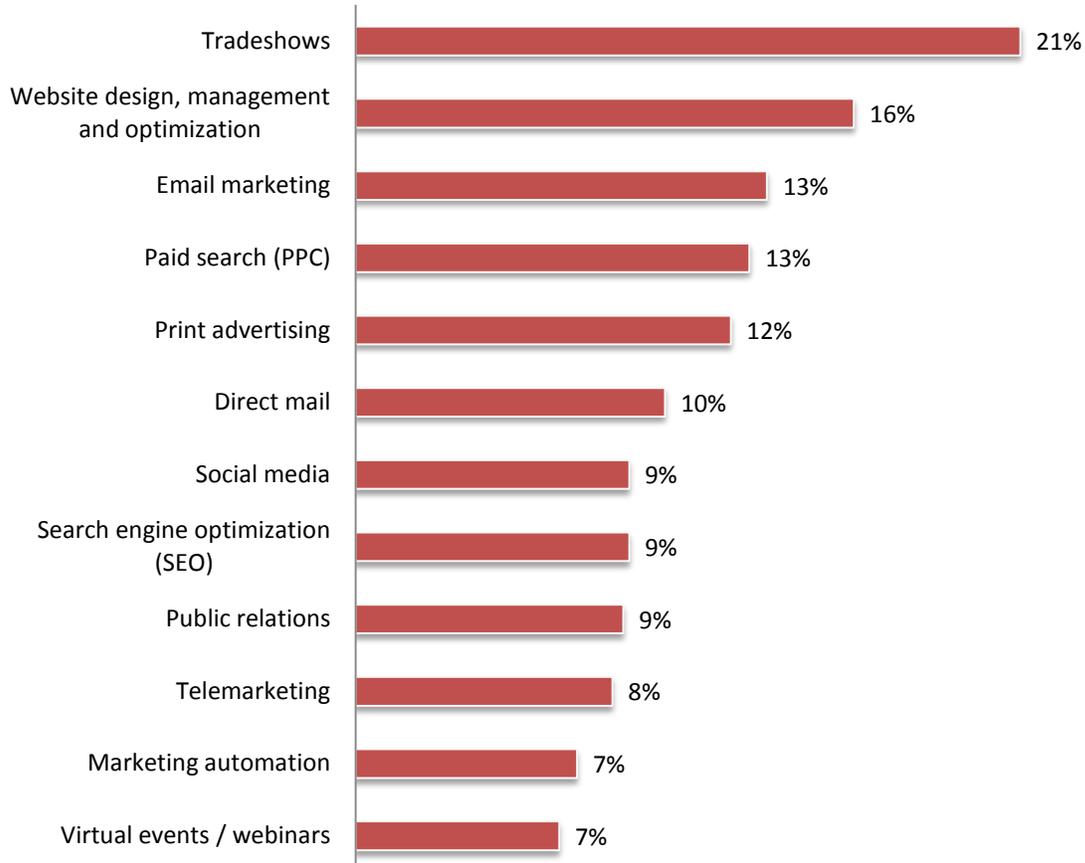
Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa B2B Marketing Benchmark Survey
 Methodology: Fielded June 2011, N=1,745

Traditional perceptions of Marketing are crippling to success. Organizations traditionally view Sales as the revenue engine, and marketing teams must work more diligently to barter for investments in their departments. In order to receive these much-needed investments, it is critical for marketers to demonstrate their contribution to revenue and overall success. This benchmark report analyzes key strategies for accomplishing this demonstration of value.

KEY FINDING: TRIED-AND-TRUE TACTICS ARE VALUED IN THE ALLOCATION OF BUDGETS

In challenging times, we must test new strategies and tactics to improve marketing effectiveness. We need to maintain agility, and adapt to an evolving marketplace, but cannot completely sacrifice tried-and-true tactics that have driven our lead generation programs for years. When we analyze the allocation of B2B marketing budgets, we learn that marketers are investing in traditional tactics that have been standbys for past success.

Chart: The average allocation of B2B marketing budgets



Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa B2B Marketing Benchmark Survey
 Methodology: Fielded June 2011, N=1,745

We asked survey participants to indicate the percentage of marketing budget they allocate to each of the above tactics, including personnel, media and other direct costs. We learned that marketers are investing in tried-and-true tactics such as tradeshows, website marketing and email, and are allocating the greatest slices of their budgets to these tactics.

Tradeshows moved from the seventh most effective tactic last year to the fourth position this year. This perceived increase in effectiveness has led to significant investment. Meanwhile, the top three slices of B2B marketing budgets remains consistent year-over-year.

Data Highlights

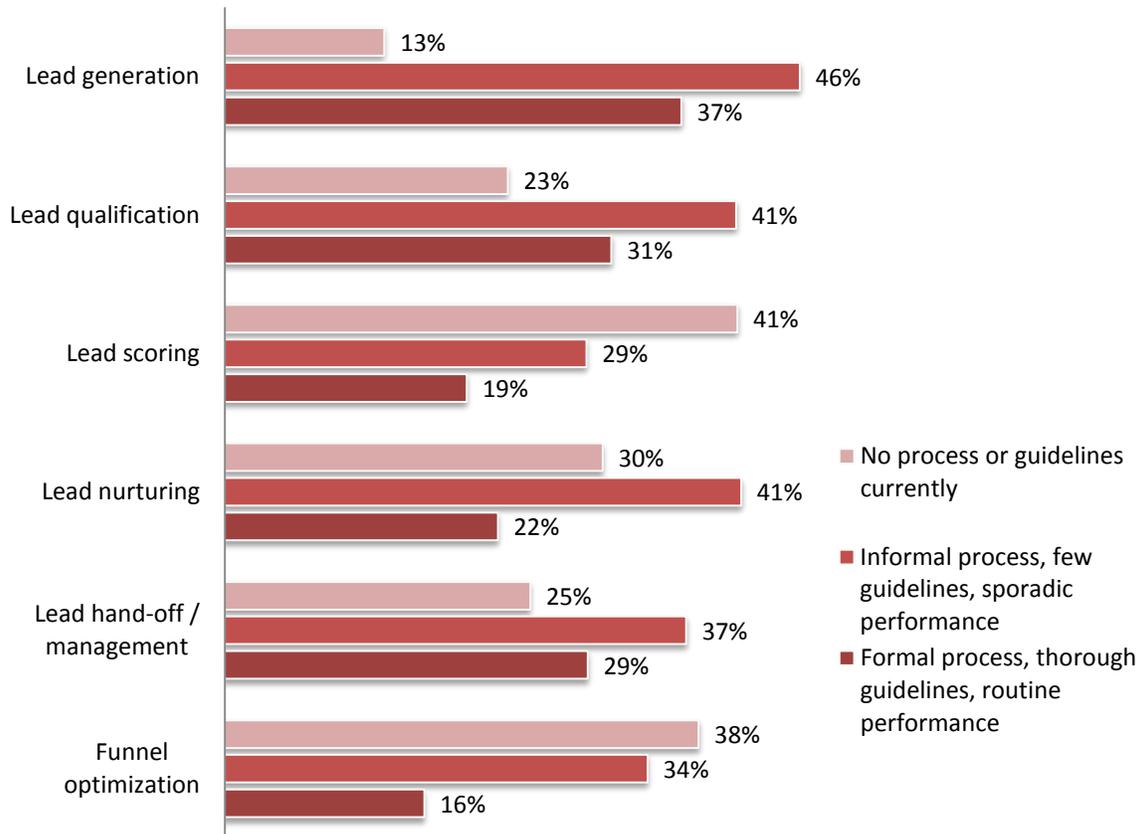
*Marketers value tried-and-true tactics; tradeshows, website and email

*These top three slices remain consistent year-over-year

KEY FINDING: FUNNEL OPTIMIZATION PRESENTS GREAT OPPORTUNITY FOR MARKETERS

Marketers have prioritized the support of sales conversion over traditionally marketing-owned priorities, such as branding, awareness and reputation. The marketplace has grown to accept sales conversion as a Marketing *and* Sales function, and not Sales alone. However, marketers are struggling to gain maturity in funnel optimization tactics that support conversion.

Chart: B2B marketers show high levels of maturity at top of the funnel, not at the bottom



Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa B2B Marketing Benchmark Survey
 Methodology: Fielded June 2011, N=1,745

“This isn’t a challenge – it’s an opportunity. That old tagline “Just do it” pretty much sums up the process – make the calls, send the emails, JUST DO IT. The tools work if you use them, but nothing works if you don’t follow through.”

-Marketer insight on funnel challenges

We asked survey participants to indicate the type of processes they use to execute the above tactics, whether it is formal, informal or nonexistent. We learn that B2B marketers are showing significantly greater levels of maturity in lead generation and qualification than overall funnel optimization.

There is a short window of time for marketers to capitalize on this trend, get ahead of the curve, and establish their companies and themselves as industry leaders. By gaining maturity in funnel optimization strategies, marketers will be able to accelerate sales pipeline performance. They will become true contributors to their organization’s success, leaders in the industry, and champions over the competition.

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