

SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION STRATEGY

Survey Summary Report



Monthly Research Series Conducted in Partnership with Leading Marketing Solution Providers

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SEO Strategy	3
Important Goals for SEO Strategy	4
Ranking SEO Strategic Success	5
Significant Barriers to Success	6
Type of Sales Cycle Encountered	7
SEO Goals Versus Success Barriers	8
Most Effective SEO Tactics	9
How SEO Effectiveness is Changing	10
Ranking SEO Executional Difficulty	11
Resources Used to Execute Tactics	12
Effectiveness Versus Difficulty	13
Research-Based Demand Generation	14
About Ascend2	15

Survey Summary Report

Get the Latest Free Report in our Monthly Research Series plus get full access to all Survey Summary Reports in our Research Library at Ascend2.com

SEO STRATEGY

Search Engine Optimization plays an essential role in marketing success. But SEO success factors are constantly changing.

So what will an effective SEO strategy look like in the year ahead?

To find out, Ascend2 and our Research Partners fielded the Search Engine Optimization Survey. We thank the participants of the survey for sharing their valuable insights on this important marketing topic with us, and you.

The data in this edition of the study titled the *Search Engine Optimization Strategy Survey Summary Report* represent the average of all market segments responding to the survey. Specific segments from the survey are reported on separately and exclusively by our participating Research Partners.

This research has been produced for your use. Put it to work in your own marketing strategy. Clip the charts and write about them in your blog or post them on social media. Please share this research credited as published.

Enjoy!

Methodology

Ascend2 benchmarks the performance of the most popular digital marketing strategies using a standardized questionnaire and proprietary 3-Minute Survey format.

This survey was fielded to a panel of marketing influencers during the week of October 31, 2016. The 256 respondents are representative of the following:

Number of Employees

More than 500	37%
50 to 500	37%
Fewer than 50	26%

Role in the Company

Owner / Partner / CXO	41%
VP / Director / Manager	48%
Non-Management	11%

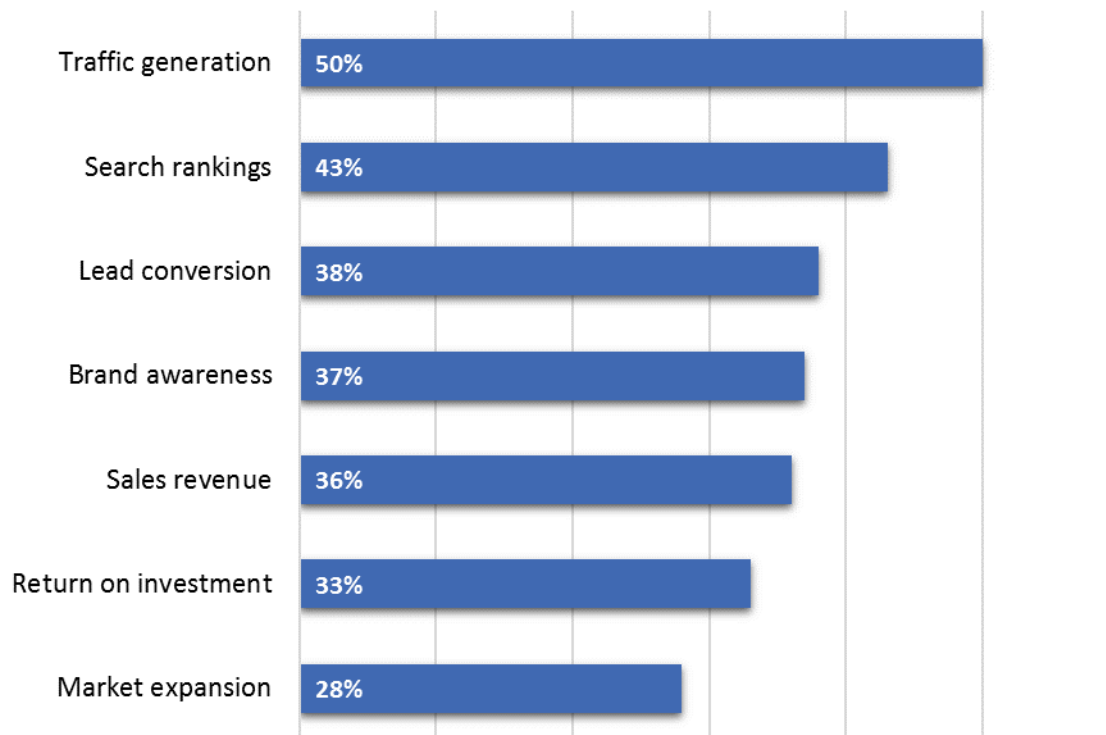
Primary Marketing Channel

B2B Business-to-Business	45%
B2C Business-to-Consumer	36%
B2B and B2C Equally	19%

IMPORTANT GOALS FOR SEO STRATEGY

Half of marketing influencers (50%) point to traffic generation as a most important goal for an effective SEO strategy to achieve. Website traffic is driven in large part by search rankings (43%).

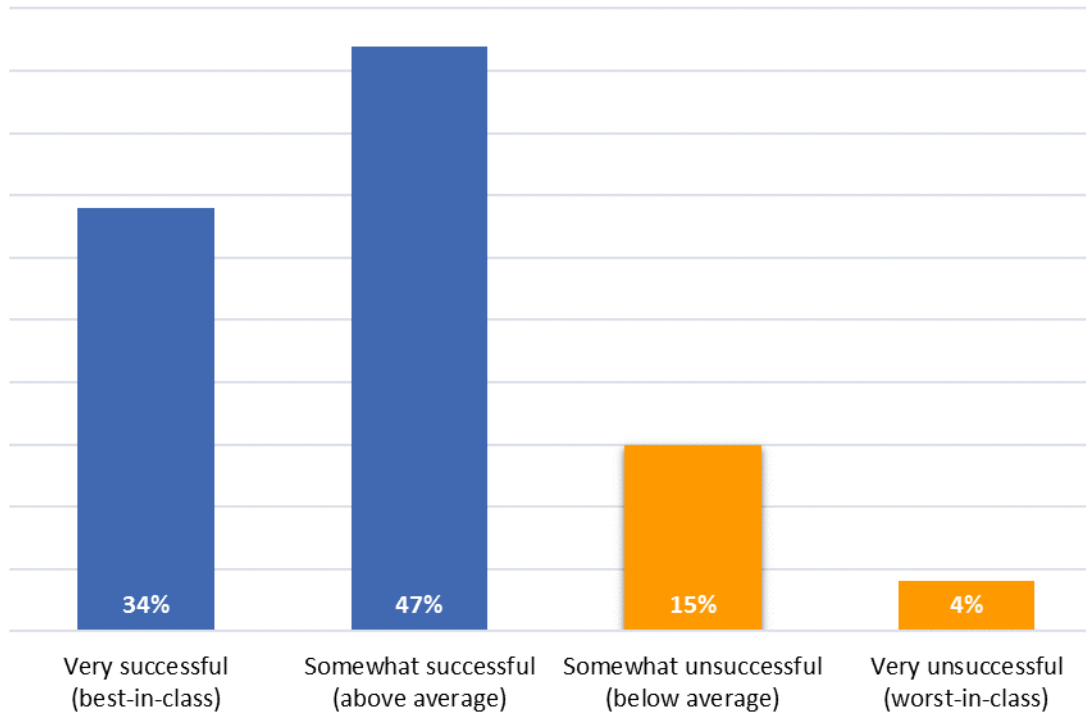
What are the MOST IMPORTANT GOALS for an effective SEO strategy to achieve?



RANKING SEO STRATEGIC SUCCESS

81% of marketing influencers describe their SEO strategy as successful to some extent. As with many marketing methods, achieving SEO goals is in direct proportion to the effort applied.

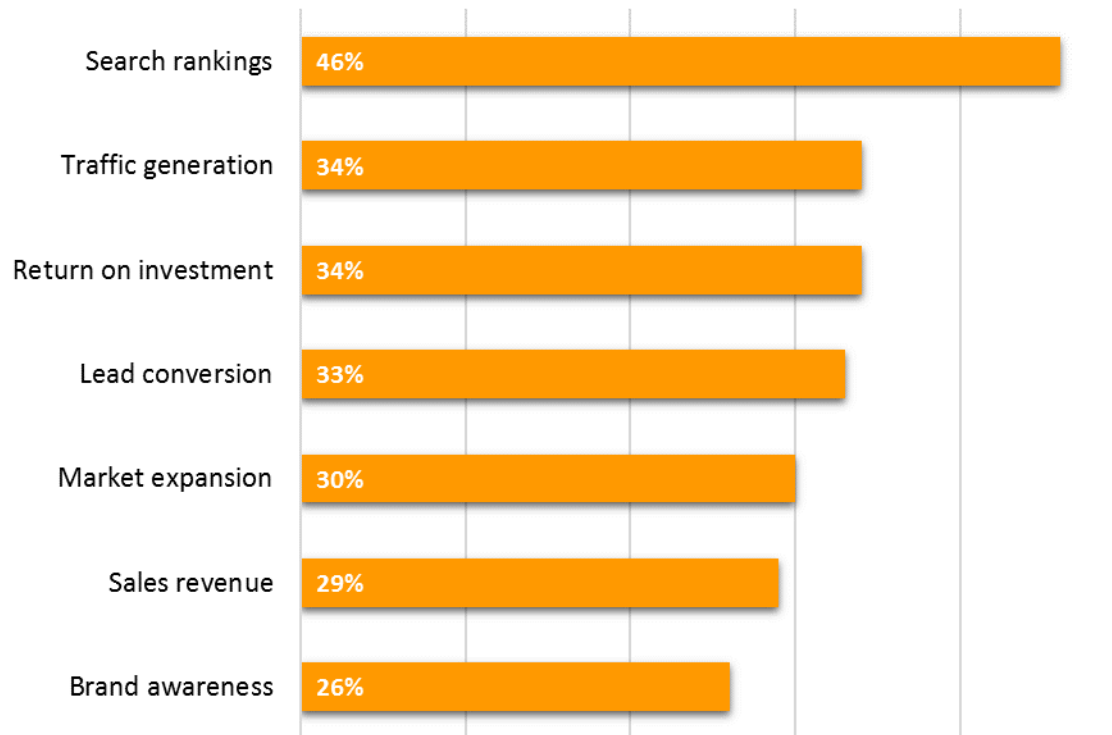
Which best describes the SUCCESS of your SEO strategy compared to competitors?



SIGNIFICANT BARRIERS TO SUCCESS

There are many barriers to SEO success but search rankings is most significant for 46% of companies. A lack of search rankings will hinder traffic generation, the most important goal for SEO.

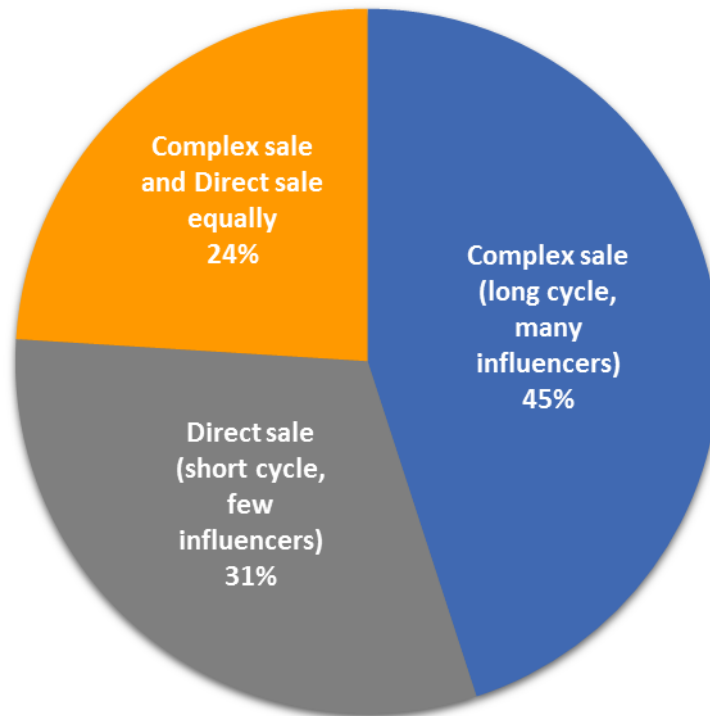
What are the MOST SIGNIFICANT BARRIERS to SEO success?



TYPE OF SALES CYCLE ENCOUNTERED

The longer the selling process, the more frequently a purchase influencer will search for product and company information. Information gathered is often used to justify purchase decisions.

Which best describes the type of SALES CYCLE your organization most often encounters?

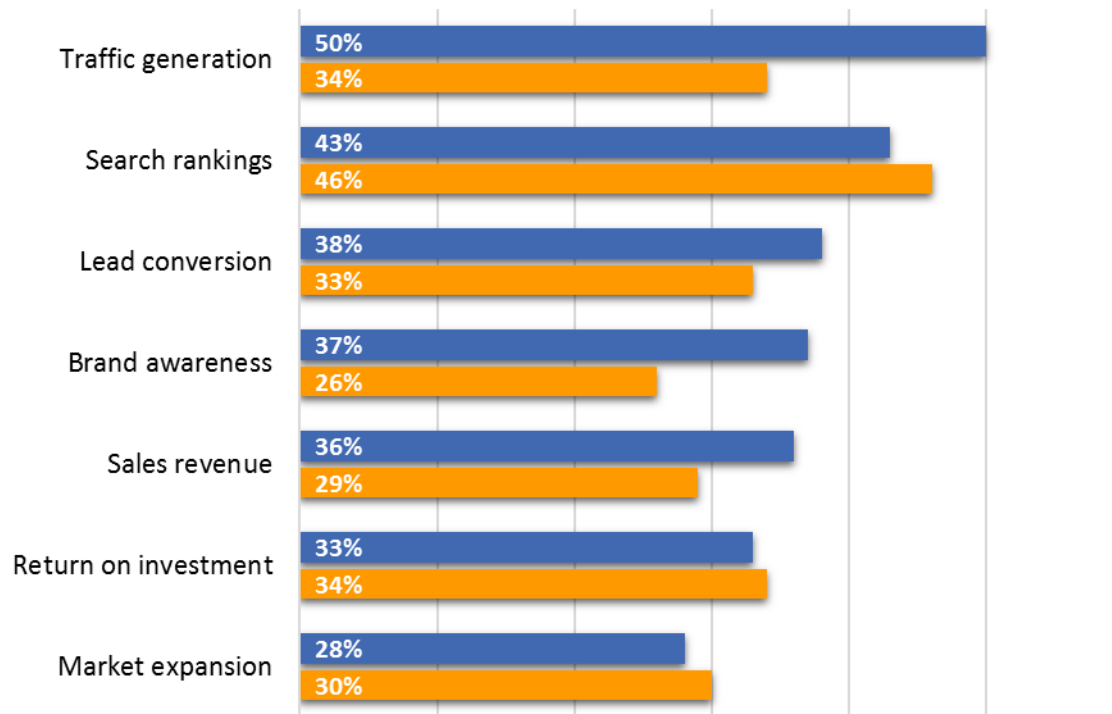


SEO GOALS VERSUS SUCCESS BARRIERS

Prioritizing goals by comparing their significance as a barrier to success is required for the development of a well balanced and effective search engine optimization strategy.

Strategic comparison of goals and barriers.

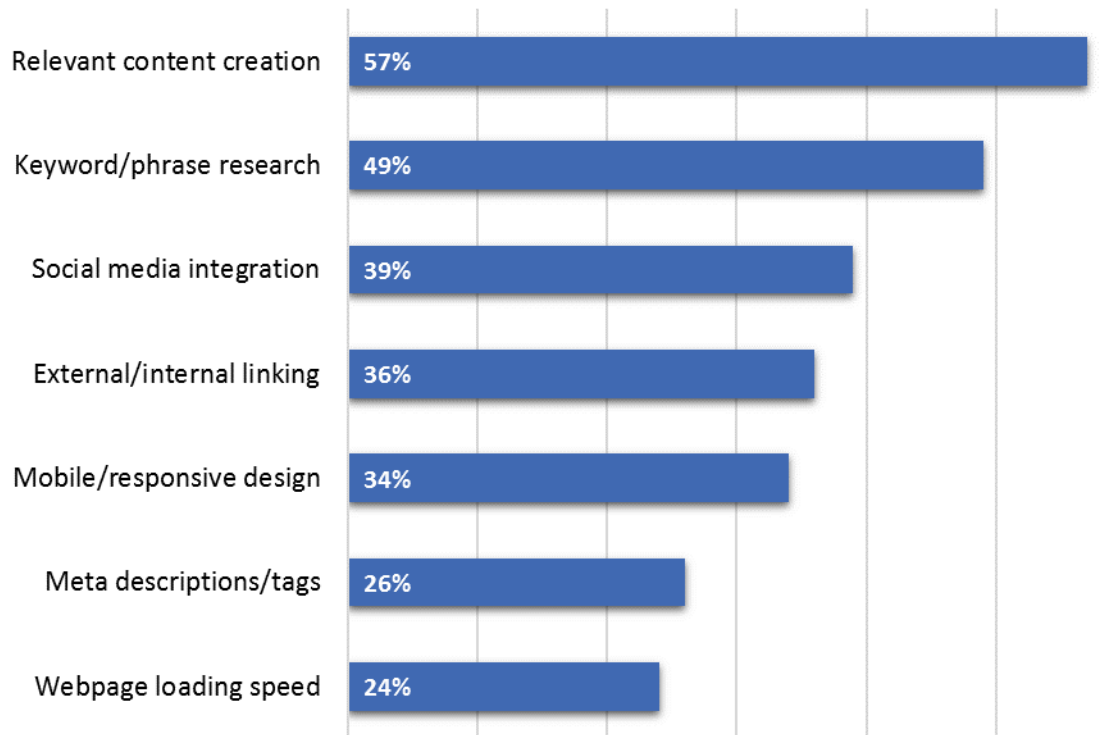
■ Most Important Goals ■ Most Significant Barriers



MOST EFFECTIVE SEO TACTICS

The most effective tactics used to achieve important SEO goals include creating relevant content (57%) and researching keywords and phrases (49%) to be used in the content created.

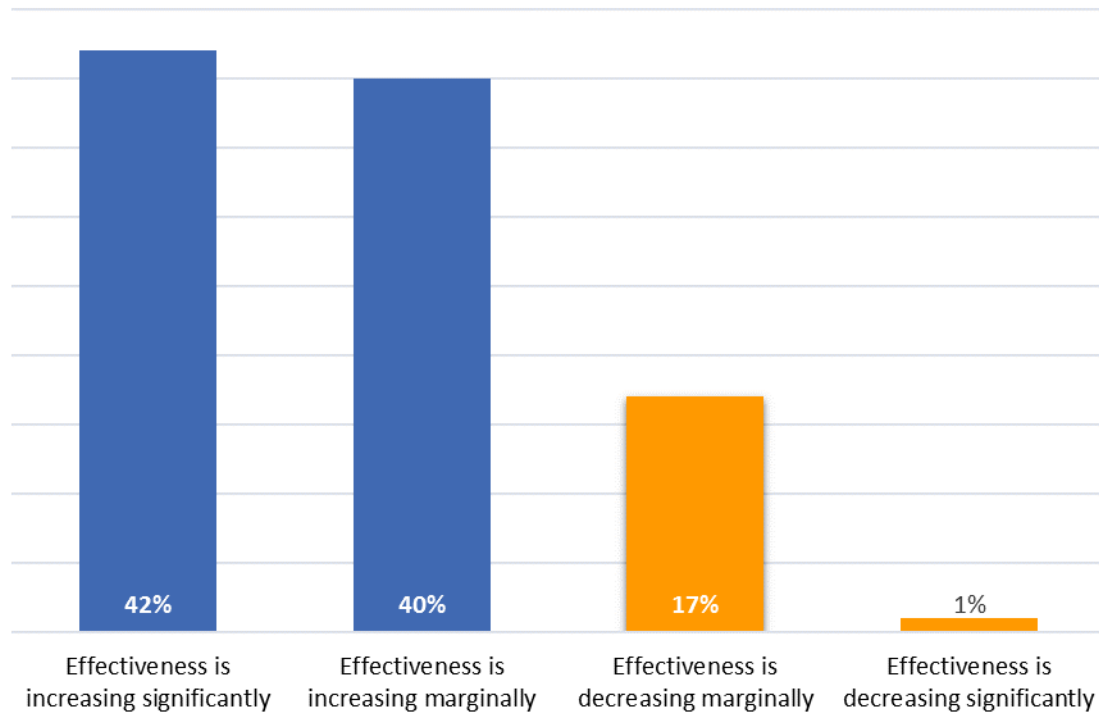
What are the MOST EFFECTIVE SEO TACTICS used to achieve important goals?



HOW SEO EFFECTIVENESS IS CHANGING

In total, 82% of marketing influencers say SEO effectiveness is increasing with more than half of those (42%) describing the increase as significant. For 18%, effectiveness is decreasing.

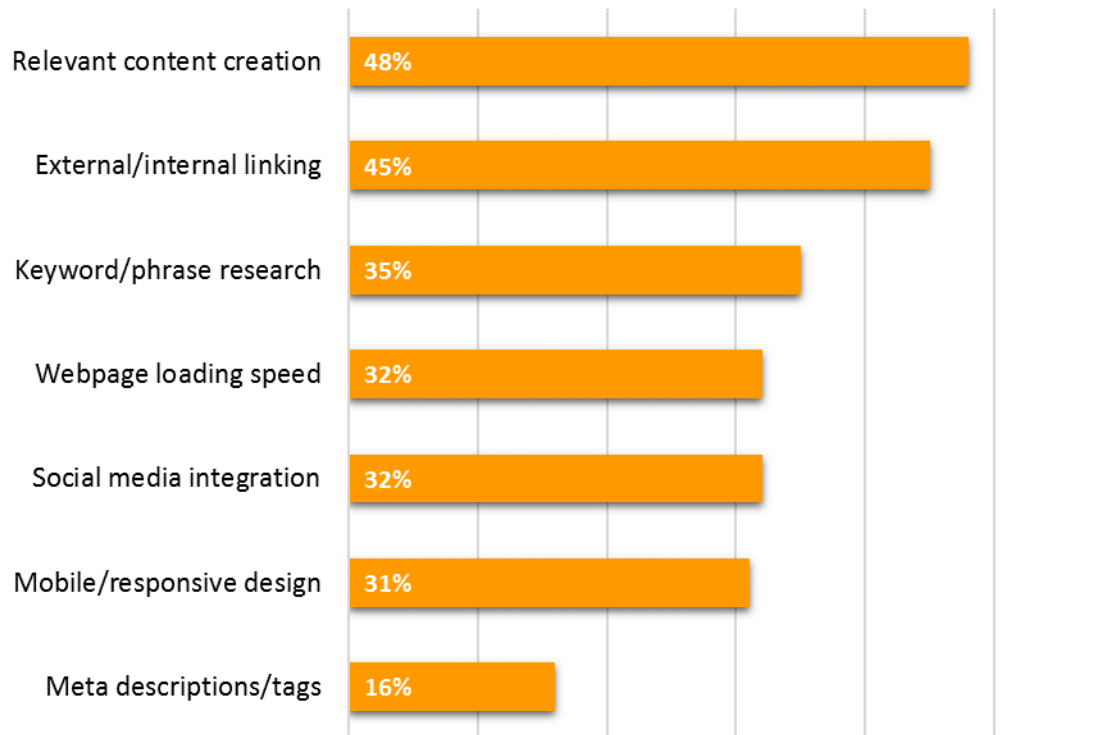
To what extent is the EFFECTIVENESS CHANGING for SEO tactics used?



RANKING SEO EXECUTIONAL DIFFICULTY

Creating relevant content is not only the most effective tactic, it is also the most difficult SEO tactic to execute for 48% of marketing influencers. Also difficult for 45% is link building.

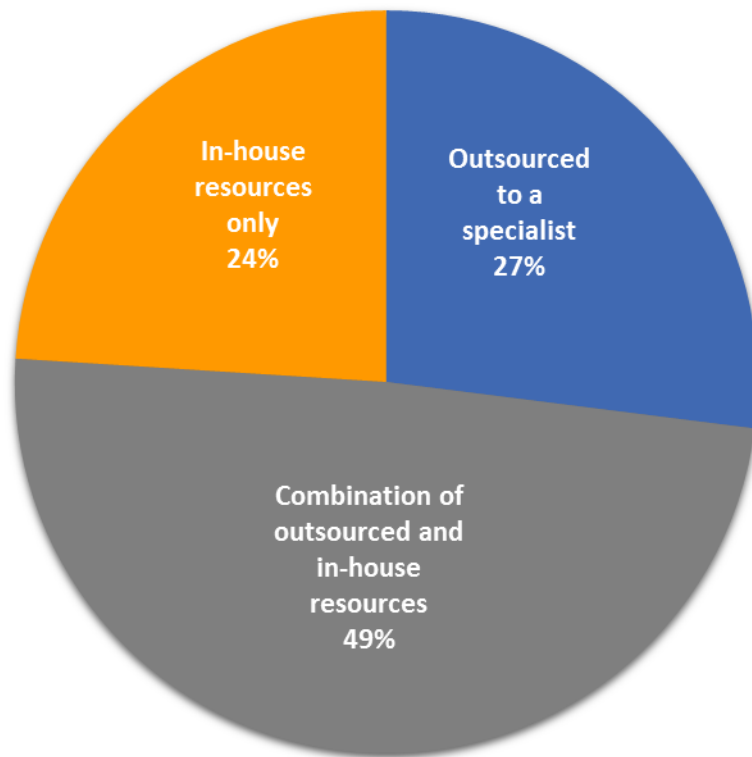
What are the MOST DIFFICULT SEO TACTICS to execute?



RESOURCES USED TO EXECUTE TACTICS

Creating relevant content and link building are difficult and time consuming tactics to execute. Which is why 76% of companies execute all or part of their SEO tactics using external resources.

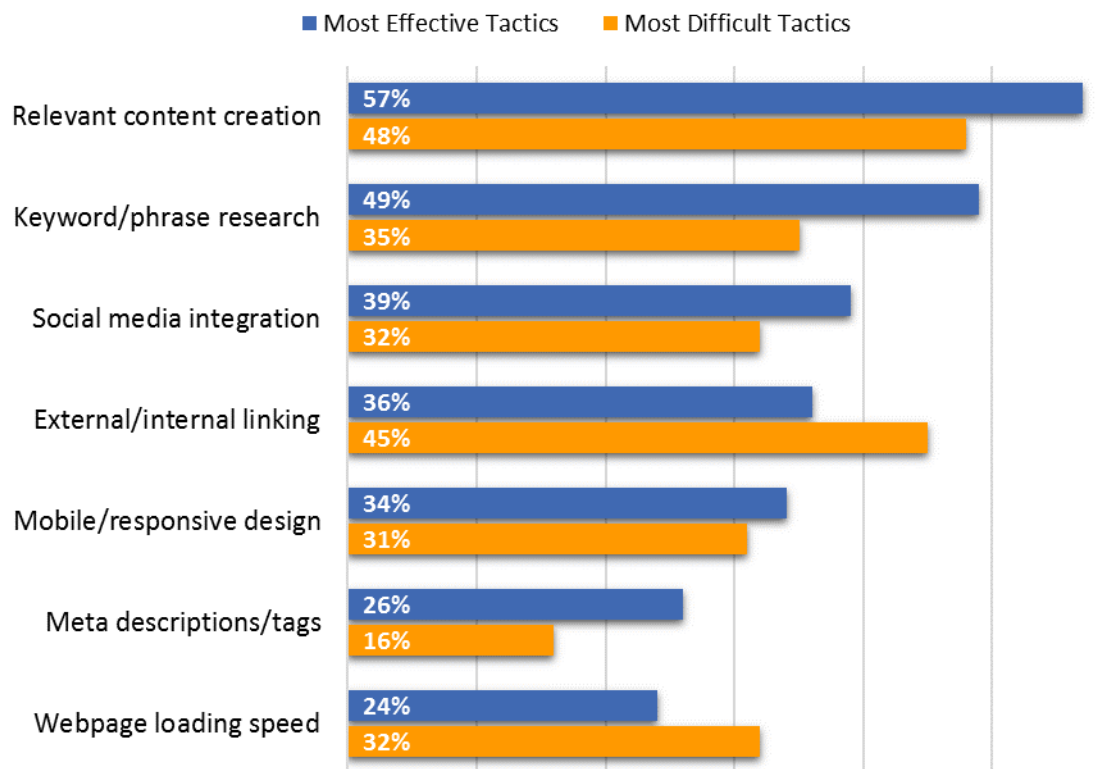
Which best describes the RESOURCES USED to execute SEO tactics?



EFFECTIVENESS VERSUS DIFFICULTY

SEO tactics that are more effective than difficult to execute are less likely to be outsourced. Conversely, tactics that are more difficult to execute than effective are often outsourced.

Tactical comparison of effectiveness and difficulty.



RESEARCH-BASED DEMAND GENERATION

Research Partner Programs rapidly deliver research-based content and a guaranteed number of leads to marketing technology and data companies, and digital marketing agencies in two simple steps:

1. **Choose marketing topics of interest to your target audience.**
 - New marketing topic surveyed every month
2. **Choose an exclusive data segment for each marketing topic.**
 - Successful Strategy Benchmarks
 - Leadership Benchmarks
 - B2B Benchmarks
 - B2C Benchmarks
 - Enterprise Benchmarks
 - SMB Benchmarks
 - Agency Benchmarks
 - Complex Sale Benchmarks
 - And more!

As a marketing technology or data company, or digital marketing agency, your prospective customers are marketing influencers with an interest in the facts about improving marketing performance; and facts are what our research provides.

According to a CMO Council study, research is the most influential type of content marketers use. Research-Based Demand Generation is a process we developed to generate leads using research content of interest to your target customers, and nurture those leads to marketing-qualified status in the name of your brand.

Our unique process enables us to provide the quick-win turnkey programs and longer term demand generation needed to achieve your goals.

ABOUT ASCEND2

Research-Based Demand Generation for Marketing Solution Providers

Marketing software and data companies, and digital marketing agencies, partner with Ascend2 to reliably generate demand and supplement marketing content for their firms. Our Research Partner Programs are transparent – focusing on your brand and the interests of your audience.

Below are just a few of the leading marketing solution providers that Partner with us for research-based demand generation.

Learn more about us at Ascend2.com



Survey Summary Report

A monthly research series conducted in partnership with marketing solution providers.



This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 3.0 Unported License.

You may adapt, copy, distribute and transmit this work. However, you must attribute the work as produced by Ascend2 and its Research Partners but not in any way that suggests that they endorse you or your use of the work.

When you share this content, please provide a link back to <http://ascend2.com>