

Marketing Operations Report

Analyst Report



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Introduction

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CHAPTER 1:

Introduction

Marketing operations is essential for governing marketing processes and the strategic planning of campaign activity. And with the right marketing ops practices and accountability in place, brands can execute their campaigns more effectively.

Acting as the backbone to your entire marketing function, marketing ops is widely recognized as a priority for business growth – in a **2021 CMO survey**, it's reported to be the second most important skill. Yet 65% struggle to obtain meaningful marketing insights from operational data, while 41% are overwhelmed with the vast number of data sources.

What's also worth noting is that the main priority for CMOs is better tech stack integration – with a huge 90% unsatisfied with their current tools and technology. If this data reflects the reality of businesses today, it's clear that there are number of challenges that need to be addressed. The latest IFP Marketing Operations Report dives deep into some of the issues with data management, as well as looking at the current MarTech landscape and what the main priorities should be for marketing professionals.

How effective are your processes and what measures are you taking to maximize efficiency and improve your ROI?



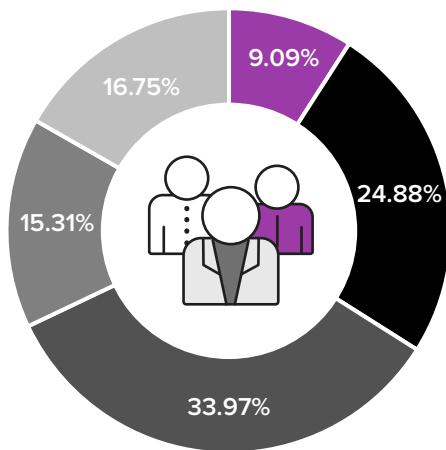
Survey demographics

Insights for Professionals surveyed 209 marketing professionals across a range of industries of different sizes from the United States and the United Kingdom, including Marketing (18%), Finance (12%), Manufacturing (8%), Retail (8%), Health (8%) and more.

Company size

The largest group (over a third) represent companies with a workforce size of 1,000 to 4,999 people, followed by almost a quarter (25%) of companies with 500 to 999 people.

How many employees are there in your organization?



- 250 to 499
- 500 to 999
- 1,000 to 4,999
- 5,000 to 24,999
- 25,000 or more

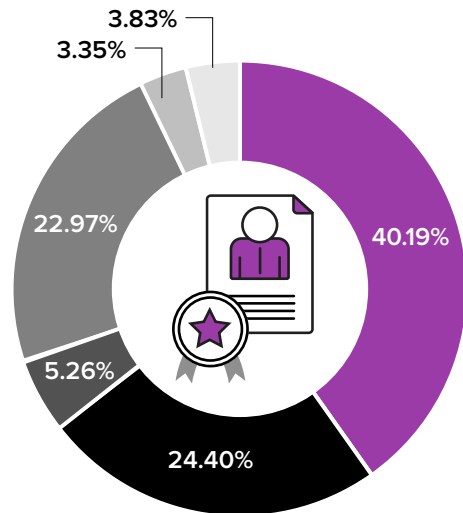
Which country are you based in?



Seniority level

Our respondents are all managers or above, with a quarter at senior level and 35% made up of Directors, Head of Departments, VPs and C-Suite executives.

Select your authority level



- Manager
- Senior Manager
- Head of
- Director
- VP
- C-Suite

Key findings from the report

Here are 15 of the key takeaways from our report:



1. Almost three-quarters of marketing professionals say that analyzing data effectively and fully understanding what the information means is their main barrier to success.
2. Almost 90% of smaller firms (with less than 500 employees) find data analysis difficult and struggle to derive the true value of their data.
3. Over 60% of marketers in the US and UK struggle to report accurately due to not being able to pull data from different sources.
4. The third biggest challenge for marketing professionals is integrating legacy systems with new technology, and this is most problematic with larger firms.
5. Nearly a third of marketers consider their data and analytics infrastructure to be inadequate – and only 20% would consider it to be excellent.
6. Around 73% of respondents are concerned about the accuracy of the data they're currently using in their organization – only 4% are confident that their data is accurate and clean.
7. Around 40% of companies cleanse their data automatically through an external partner.
8. Three-quarters of organizations are deploying up to 25 different types of MarTech for running their marketing operations.
9. Over 71% of marketers consider their biggest operational challenge to be the accurate measuring and reporting of campaign performance.
10. In relation to marketing technology, two-thirds of professionals say they're struggling to integrate different tools effectively.
11. Under two-thirds also reported problems with being able to streamline collaboration across multiple teams.
12. Alarmingly, a huge 71% of VPs believe that their current marketing automation strategy is only somewhat effective.
13. Over 38% of companies look to make data analytics one of their core focuses for marketing technology investments.
14. Over 37% of companies are prioritizing marketing automation over the next 12 months.
15. More than 60% of businesses will dedicate up to 15% of their marketing budget on MarTech, while 21% plan to allocate up to a quarter of their budget on new technology.

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The 7 key ingredients of marketing ops

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CHAPTER 2:

The 7 key ingredients of marketing ops

To truly understand the significance of marketing ops and the challenges that lay ahead for brands looking to elevate their marketing activity, it's important to look at the core responsibilities and focus areas of marketing operations teams.

Here are the seven must-have ingredients that make marketing ops run smoothly:

1. Process management

Marketing teams are often reluctant to stop, reflect and update their day-to-day tools and processes or find better ways of working. Not only is it hard to step back to look at the bigger picture, but time-poor marketers are mostly task-oriented.

This is where marketing ops brings a great deal of value. Their focus is on the wider strategy as well as the overall goals of the business, and this means they're the perfect changemakers to tweak and adapt processes for maximum efficiency and scalability.

2. Project management

Good campaign management ensures that the campaign objectives and the critical goals of the business are fully aligned. A project manager also brings leadership, vision, quality control and realistic timescale planning into the mix.

The role of marketing ops is to oversee projects and keep teams on track and motivated, while guaranteeing campaigns can be delivered on time and within budget.

3. MarTech management

Another vital component for marketing operations is being able to source, manage, maintain, review and update the technology stack. Does the team have the tools and software they need to perform their jobs? Is your existing MarTech making life easier or just clunky to use? Are there easier solutions that can save time, improve team collaboration and decrease app sprawl?

As mentioned above, driving forward change for tools and processes can take a backseat when there isn't a dedicated marketing ops function to push things along. A marketing ops specialist will look at CMS and CRM systems and social media management tools, as well as tools for email and marketing automation, and find ways to improve technology integration so that data can be shared seamlessly.

In the **2021 State of Marketing Operations CMO Survey**, the majority of marketers claimed to face barriers, with almost 40% naming inadequate technology to be the biggest problem. This is why marketing ops is an indispensable function and the foundation of any successful marketing team.



4. Content management

While marketing operations professionals aren't usually the content creators, they're the ones to facilitate content generation via tools, technology and processes.

Not only do they review content channels and help to create strategies and realistic campaign timelines, but they're also there to make sure the back-of-house is organized, efficient and accessible. For instance, they'll look after content management systems and create suitable processes for storing, sharing and editing.

5. Brand management

Businesses without a dedicated brand manager will often rely on marketing to take care of how the brand is presented – this can be both internally and externally. For many organizations, this is usually the case, and this is where marketing ops can shine.

Governing how the brand interacts with the outside world requires a combination of Digital Asset Management (DAM) tools and legal compliance efforts, as well as seamless brand management with external stakeholders, marketing partners and collaborators.

6. Data analytics & management

Utilizing data in the most consistent way should be integral to any organization, enabling collaboration and breaking down data silos that only hold the business back. Having a dedicated marketing ops team ensures data reliability – their role is to provide easy access to the right data, at the right time and for the right users.

To do this, there needs to be effective management of both customer data and performance data, such as KPIs and metrics. Not only will marketing ops govern how all of this is done, but they're responsible for making sure the technology lives up to requirements. This includes a strong CRM setup that allows for data segmentation, as well as the management of individual channels and tapping into their analytics.

7. CX management

Nothing is more important than customer experience (CX) in 2022. This applies to both B2B and B2C businesses. In fact, a study by SiriusDecisions tells us that **80% of all B2B buying decisions** are based on the buyer's direct or indirect experience with the brand – that means only 20% of buying decisions are based on the offering itself or price.

Marketing operations teams are usually responsible for overseeing the strategy for CX, and this can include managing demand and lead generation techniques as well as sales and marketing integration to ensure that customer experience is front of mind across every touchpoint.



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Data management

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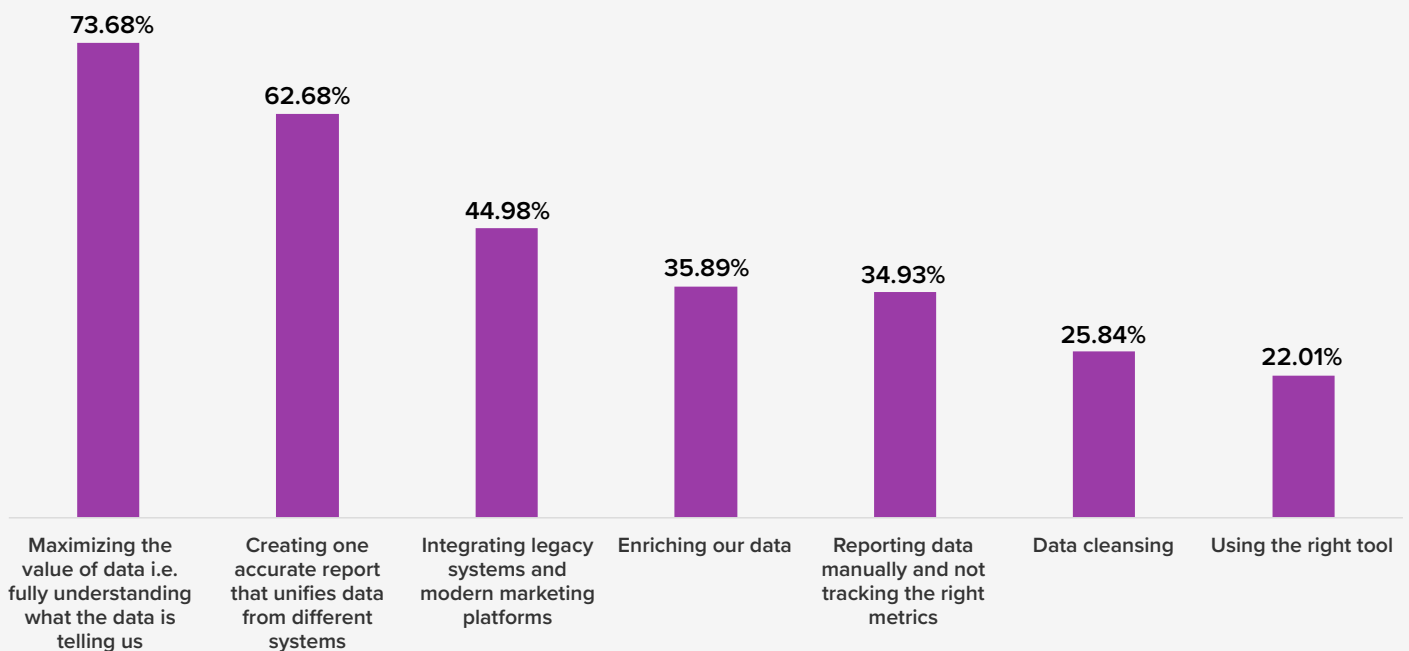
CHAPTER 3:

Data management

With such a large percentage (65%) of marketers struggling to turn data into actionable insights, according to the 2021 State of Marketing Operations CMO Survey, it's clear that data management is an area that needs a lot of focus this year.

What are the biggest data management challenges this year?

We asked marketing managers and leaders in our survey what their biggest data challenges are in 2022. A huge 74% of marketers admitted that analyzing data effectively and fully understanding what it means is their main barrier to success. This echoes the research conducted for the 2021 State of Marketing Operations CMO Survey.

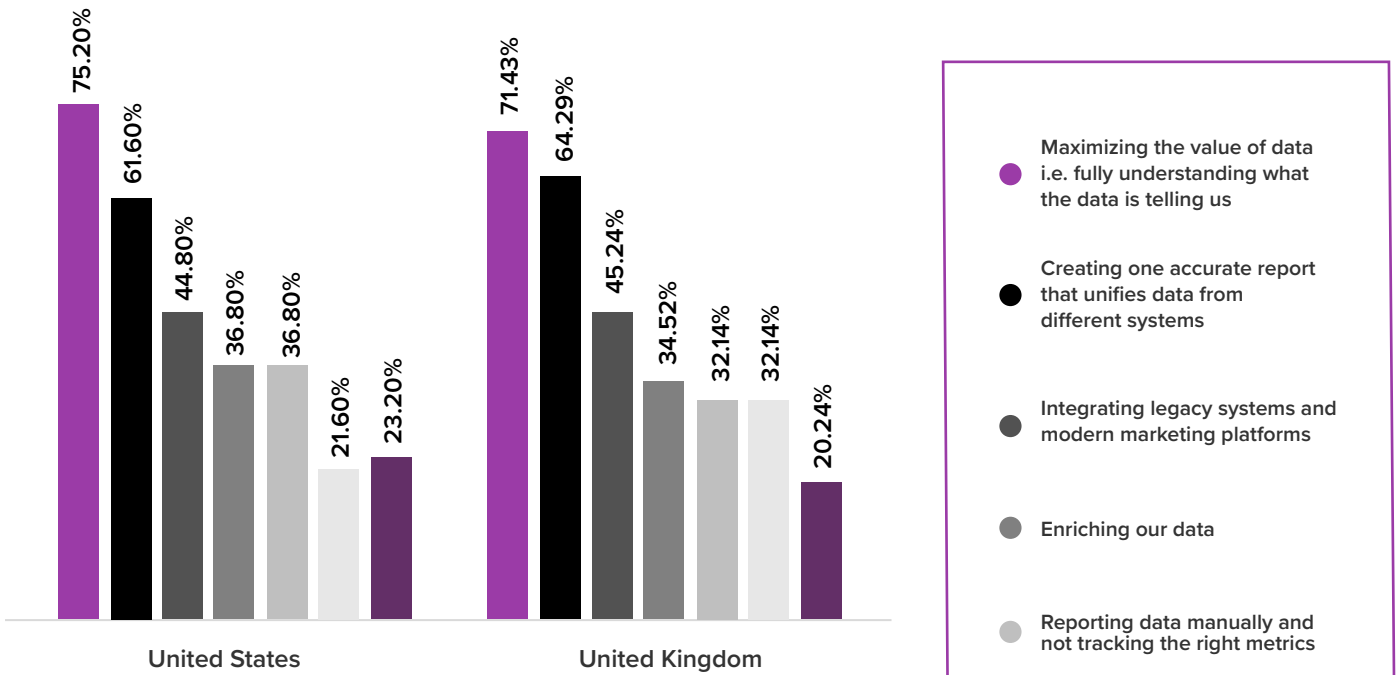


The second most reported challenge is being able to create accurate reports that pull data from multiple systems (63%), followed by being able to integrate legacy systems with modern platforms in a time of transformation (45%).

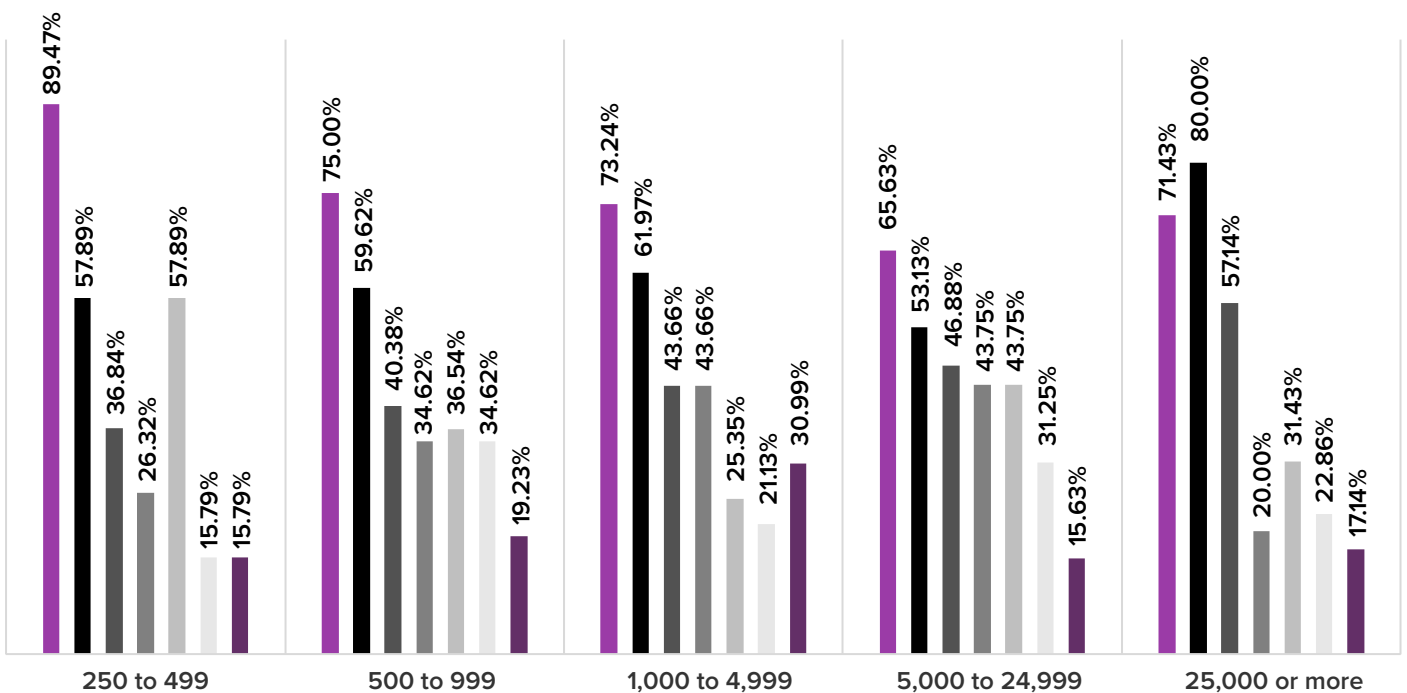
Other challenges conveyed include the enrichment of data, problems with manual reporting and the tracking of metrics, data cleansing and using the right tools.

What measures are you taking to overcome your data challenges?

Looking specifically at answers from the US and UK, the results echo each other, with a very similar pattern of challenges.



However, when looking at company size, it's clear that nearly 90% of smaller firms – those with 250 to 499 employees – struggle the most to maximize the value of their data, while larger firms are more advanced in this area. It's also worth highlighting that bigger companies are likely to be using more software, including legacy systems – this could explain why companies with more than 25,000 employees are concerned about the lack of integration between legacy systems and modern marketing platforms (57%).



The importance of data accuracy

With accurate reporting being the second most reported challenge, it's important for organizations to consider how marketing ops can facilitate better use and application of data, and how actionable data can be shared effectively.

When data is accurate, relevant and useful, businesses will realize the following benefits:



1. Better decision making

Good quality data is a crucial component for sound business decision making. With the right information, senior leaders can steer their teams in the right direction, meet customer demands and lower risk in outcomes.

2. Increased productivity

Bad data is a productivity killer. In fact, sales and marketing teams lose over **500 hours** across the year due to bad data – and this equates to roughly \$32,000 per sales rep. Collaboration between sales and marketing is more important than ever, and quality data sits at the heart of any successful partnership. If you get your data in order and share it with the right people, you can maximize productivity and output instead of wasting time finding and fixing data errors.

3. Reduced costs

Not only does improving data accuracy prevent wasted hours over fixing discrepancies, but doing so will help you make significant savings. Aside from eating into your time and making your teams less productive, data errors can negatively impact your brand in a much bigger way, as bad quality data damages your credibility and can remove the trust between you and your customers.

4. Higher ROI

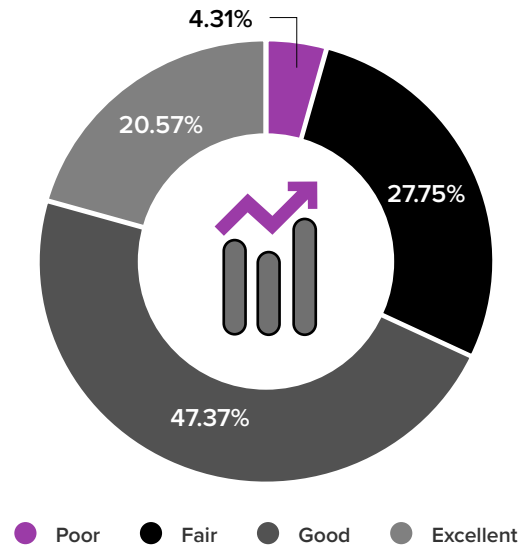
It's simple – good data leads to better marketing. Data accuracy is the key to delivering effective campaigns that hit the mark with your audience. With the right information, you can reduce time and cost, while also achieving better results, boosting ROI and nurturing the bottom line.

How do marketers feel about their data?

Our report also delves into the state of data quality, processes and tools in marketing teams right now. When asked to evaluate the existing data and analytics infrastructure within their business, almost half of professionals (47%) rated it as good, while only 20% rated it as excellent.

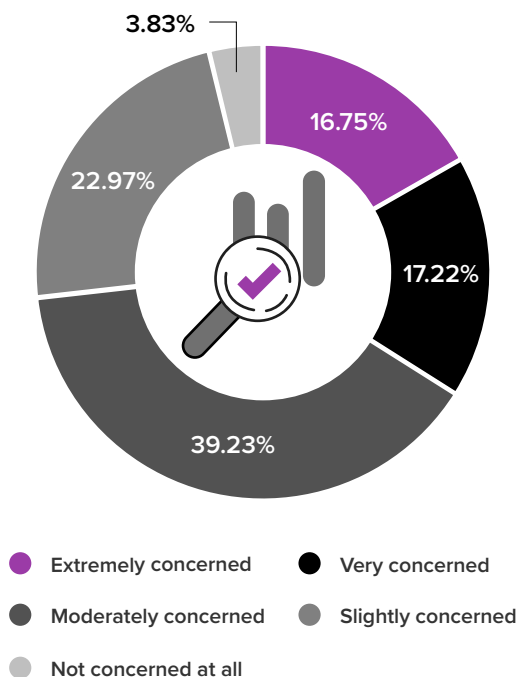
The remainder (over 32%) rated it as poor or fair, indicating that organizations are at varying stages of their data journey.

Rate your data and analytics infrastructure




A significant number of respondents also had concerns over data accuracy within their business. Almost 40% are moderately concerned, over 17% are very concerned and over 16% are extremely concerned. Less than 4% show no concern about the accuracy of data being used.

How concerned are you about the accuracy of your data?



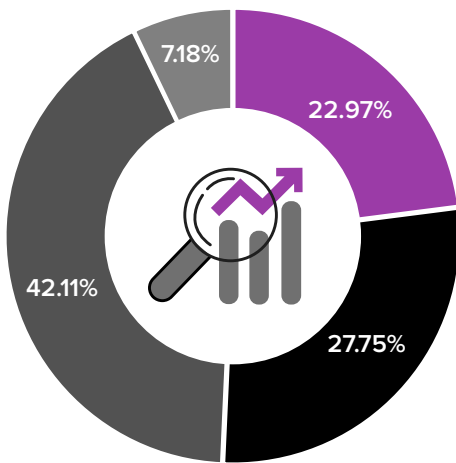
“It’s astounding to consider that only 4% of respondents aren’t concerned about data accuracy. Given the need for personalization for the consumer, knowing that 96% of data could be inaccurate creates enormous pitfalls for brands in sending incorrect information to consumers in all stages of the journey. While accurate attribution and third-party data become increasingly limited due to privacy regulations, it’s imperative that companies place focus and gather resources behind acquiring first-party data and keeping their information intact. This allows for personalized campaigns in order to differentiate with a strong customer experience - which might is the most important aspect to consider throughout the overall marketing journey.”



- Ashley Monk,
CEO of Onya

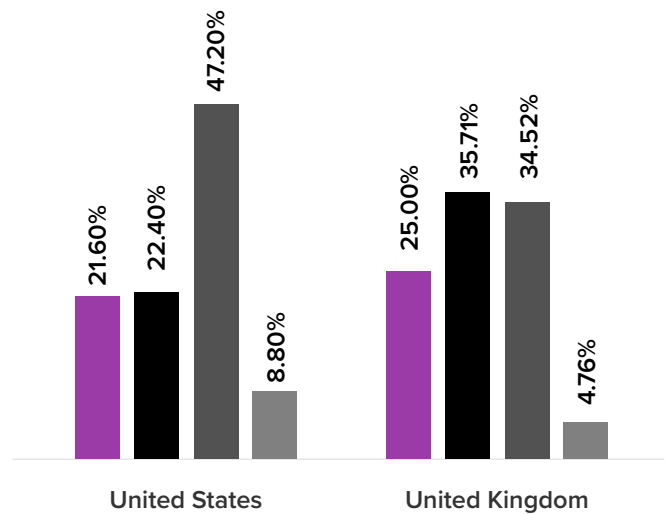
Thinking about what affects the accuracy of data, marketers reported incomplete and outdated data sets to be the biggest issue at 42%. This was followed next by data entry mistakes (28%), which highlights the growing importance of automation and the removal of manual and repetitive data entry tasks.

What affects the accuracy of your data the most?



● Bot traffic in Google Analytics ● Data entry mistakes ● Incomplete or outdated data ● Using the wrong report

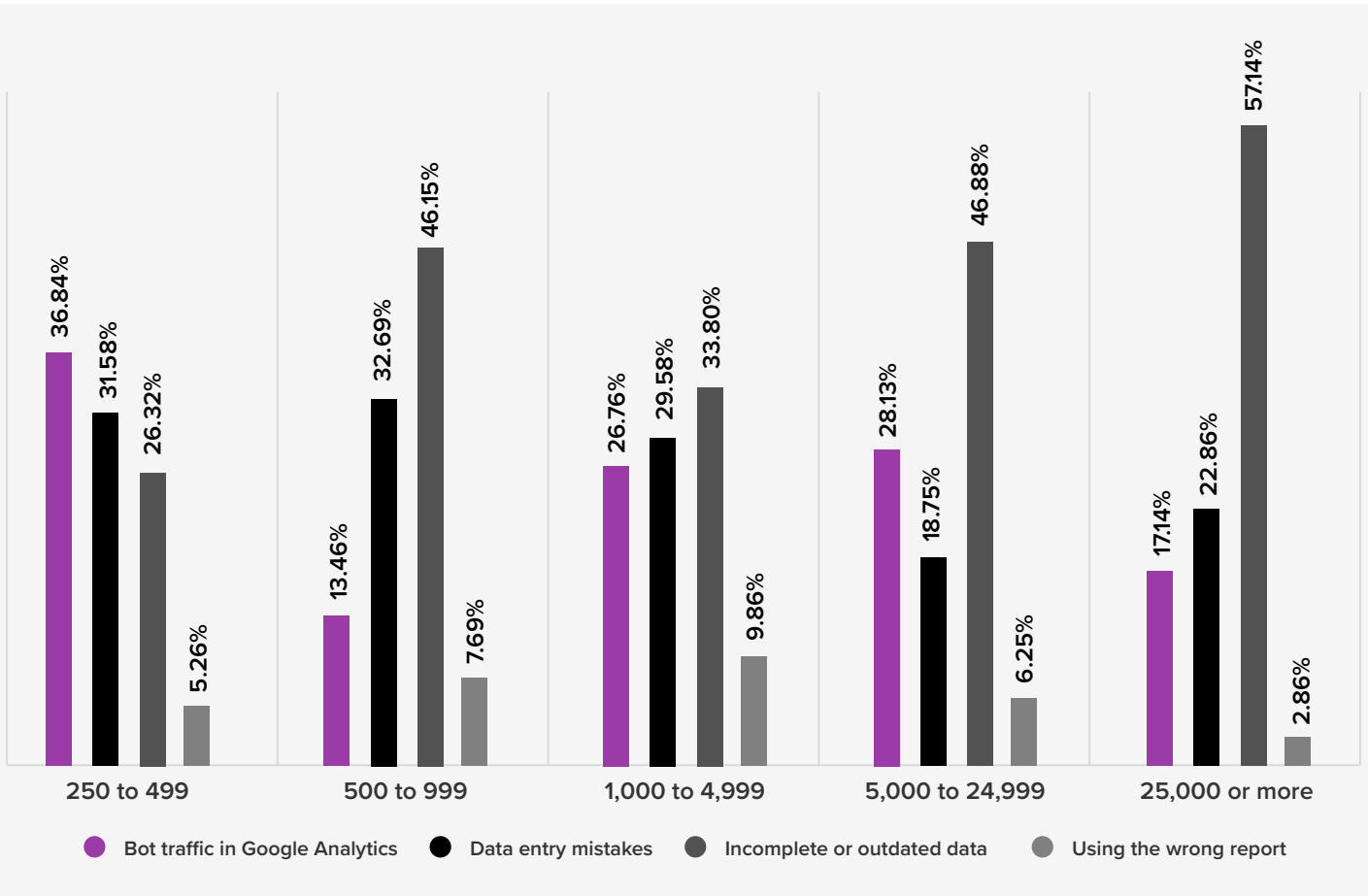
By region, problems with incomplete and outdated data seem to be significantly more prominent in the US (47%). Meanwhile, the main barrier to improving data accuracy is based on human error in the UK (36%).



Nearly two-thirds of companies with 250 to 499 employees say bot traffic in Google Analytics (GA) affects data accuracy the most – even though they’re the least (or not at all) concerned about the accuracy of their data (37%). This could be because of the wealth of resources available online to help exclude bot traffic in GA.



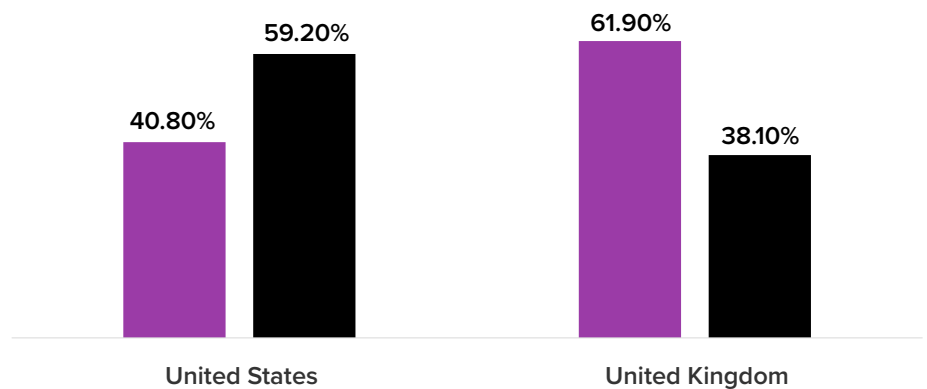
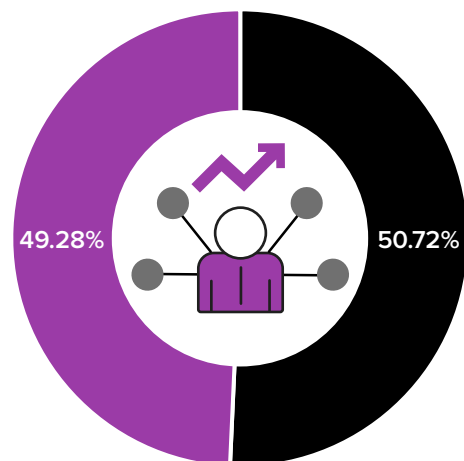
When looking at larger companies (5,000 or more people), the overwhelming majority say incomplete or outdated data is the main culprit (52%) compared to an average of 35% for smaller companies with less than 4,999 employees.



In regards to outsourced vs. internal data, there seems to be an even split, with half of respondents outsourcing their activities, and the other half managing activities in-house. The US and UK split is worth noting too, with the UK outsourcing much more than the US.

Do you currently outsource any data activities?

● Yes ● No

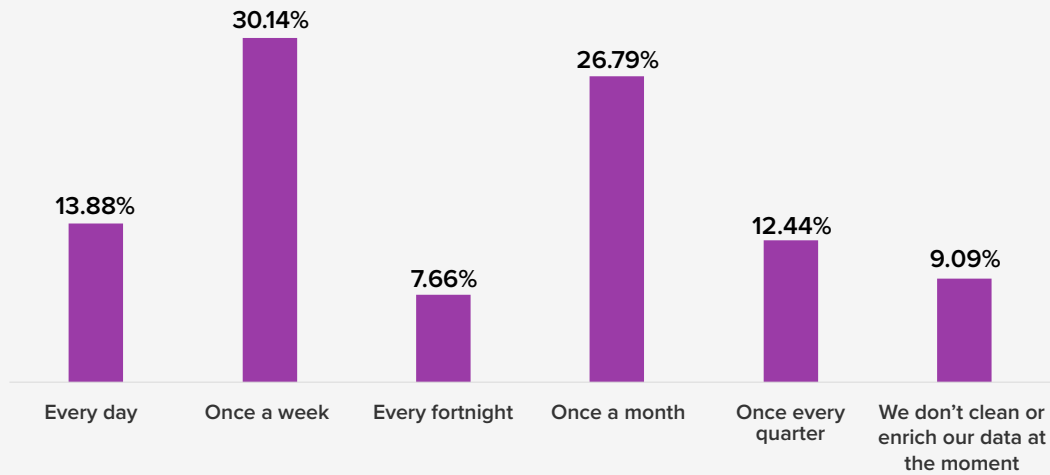


How are marketers addressing their data management issues?

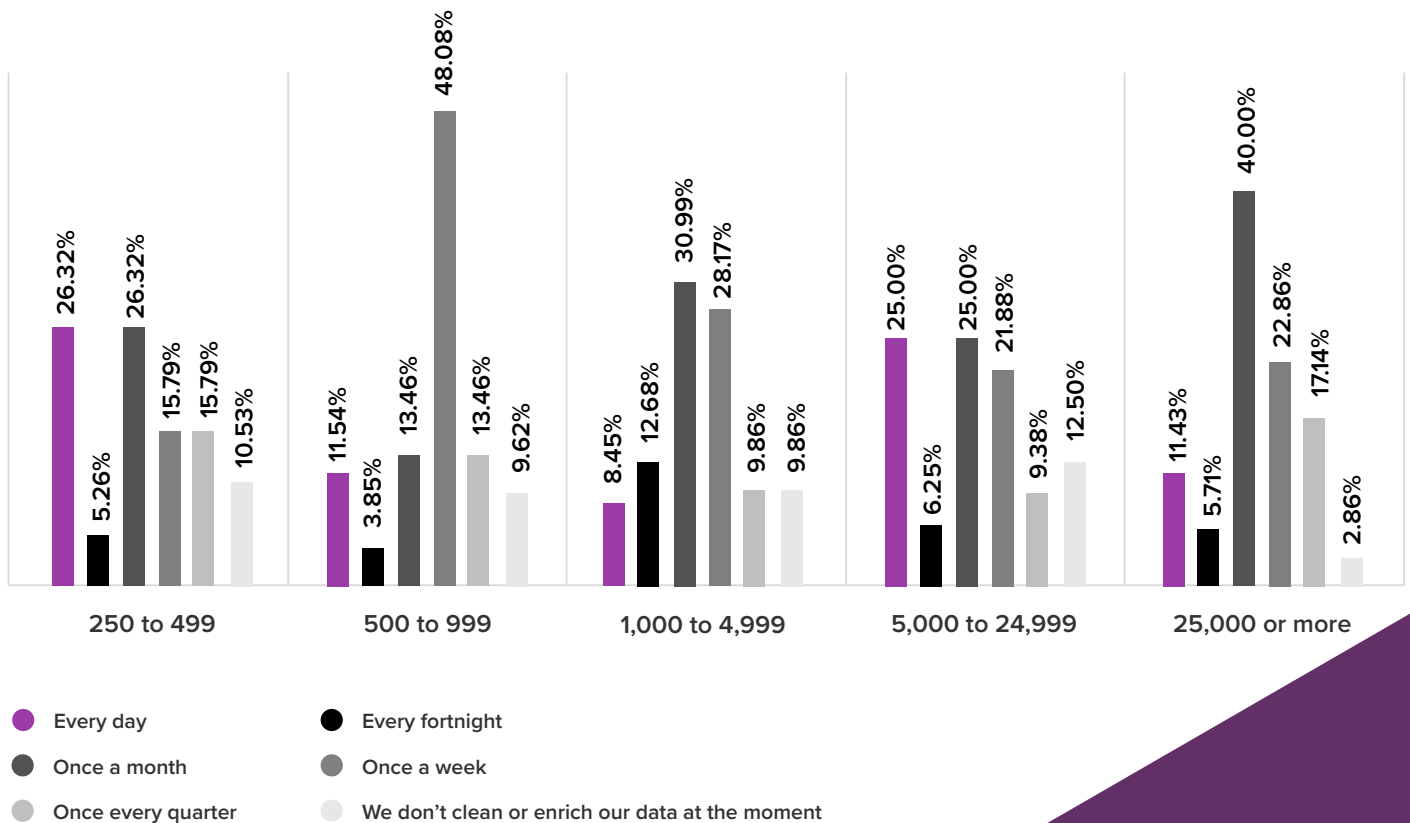
With data accuracy being a common problem, we decided to find out more about what businesses are doing to overcome the issue.

According to our survey, most marketing ops teams conduct data cleansing and enrichment somewhere between once a week to once a month. A small number (14%) do it daily, while over 12% do it once every quarter. Less than 10% currently have no data cleansing processes in place.

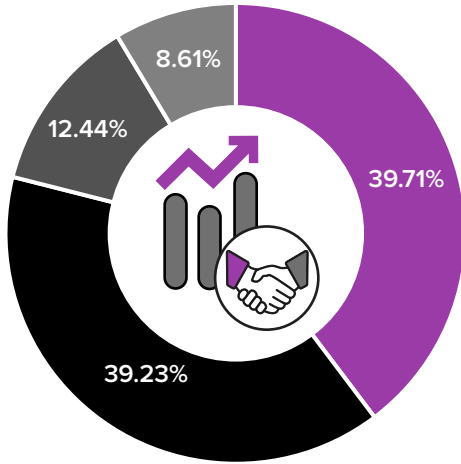
How often do you manually clean or enrich your data?



Businesses with 500 to 999 employees clean/enrich their data once a week, and larger organizations (25,000 or more employees) do this monthly – which could suggest they're either managing large amounts of data or have other urgent priorities.



Do you automatically clean or enrich your data via a partner?



● Yes ● No ● Don't know ● We're planning to

In terms of who manages the data cleansing/enrichment, almost 40% do it automatically with an external partner, and over 8% plan to in the near future.



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The MarTech landscape

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CHAPTER 4:

The MarTech landscape

One of the most interesting things about MarTech growth is its ability to withstand budget cuts. According to Gartner, marketing technology is a major focus for businesses, **making up over a quarter (26%)** of the average marketing budget.

The **global MarTech industry has been growing rapidly** in the last decade, and in terms of the number of vendors worldwide, we've seen an increase of over 5,000% since the year 2011, with the industry now being worth over \$344.8 billion.

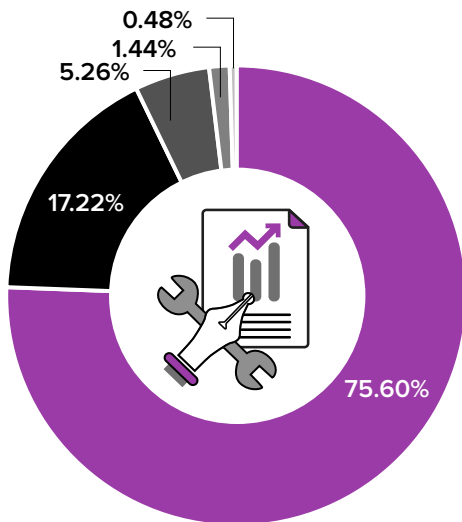
With overwhelming options in terms of vendors and technology services, there's never been a more advantageous time for brands to create MarTech-enabled marketing operations to redefine organizational structure and achieve marketing excellence. But how can organizations ensure they're making the most of opportunities, and what are the challenges being faced?

Our research looks a little closer at how far along businesses are in their technology journey.

The tools and technologies being used

When asked about current investment of marketing tools and solutions, three-quarters of marketers said they're using up to 25 different types of technology in their organization. Over 17% are deploying between 26 and 50 different types of technology, and just over 5% have between 51 and 100. Less than 2% have over 100 MarTech solutions.

How many marketing tools/solutions does your organization use?

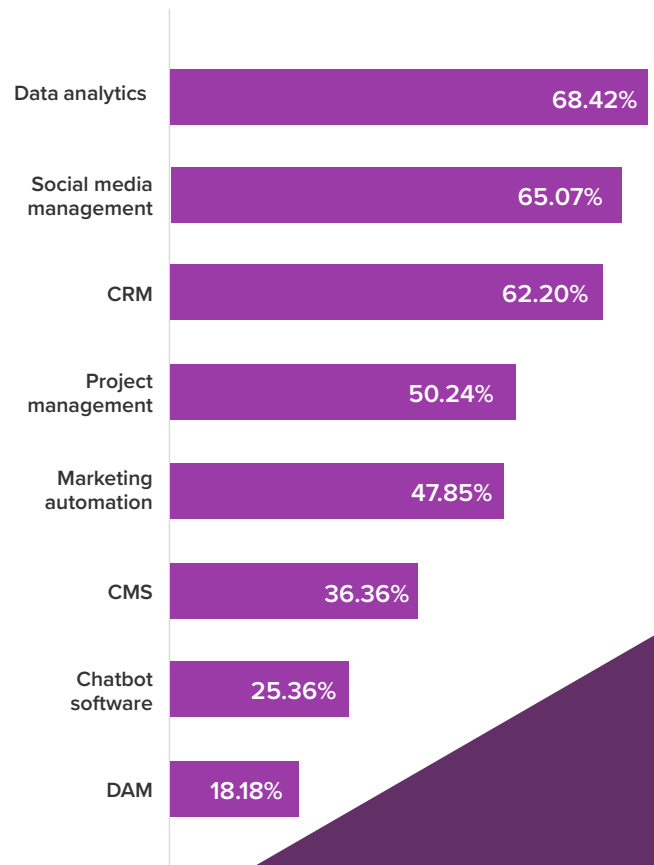


● 1 - 25 ● 26 - 50 ● 51 - 100 ● More than 100 ● None

The types of solutions currently being used are largely made up of data analytics tools, social media management platforms and CRM systems. Marketing automation is present in less than 50% of the organizations we surveyed – this could indicate that there's still room for growth and many businesses are still in the early stages of their automation journey.

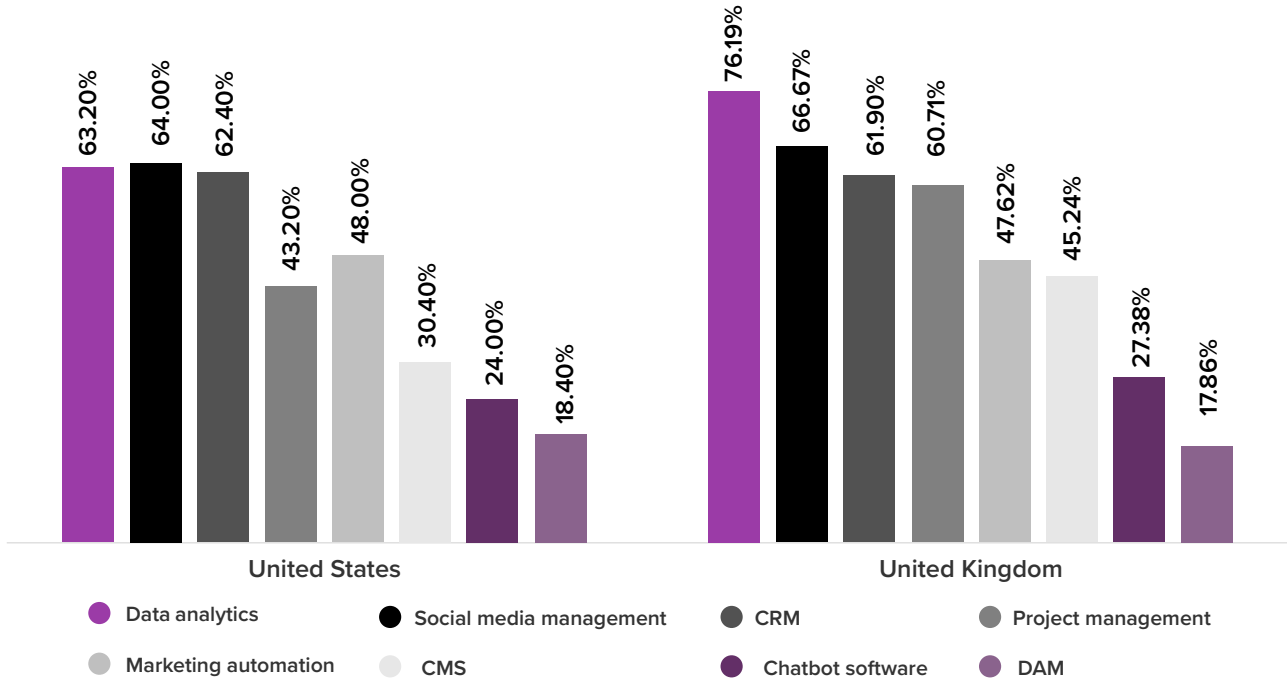
Other technologies being used by less than 50% of companies include CMS, chatbot software and DAM.

Which MarTech tools do you currently have in place within your organization?



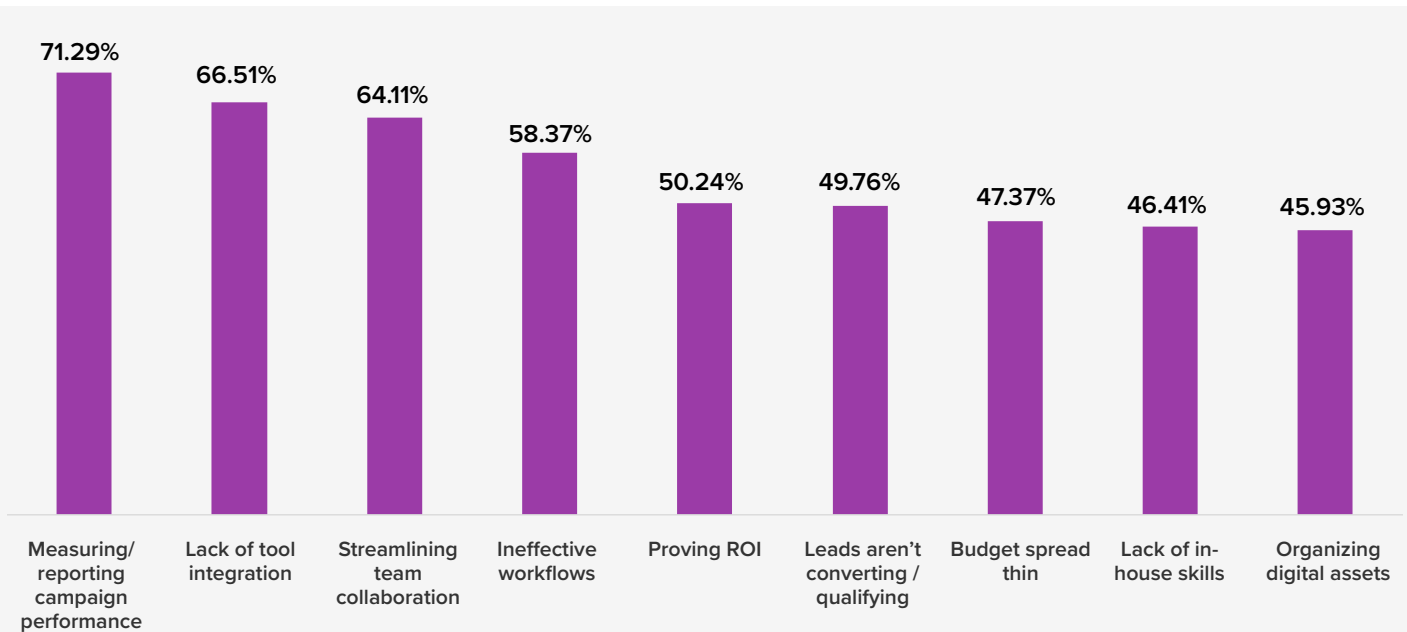
In terms of data analytics, the UK is slightly ahead of the US. The UK also invests more heavily in project management tools, with over 60% of companies using these technologies compared to just over 43% in the US.

Another disparity is CMS deployment, with over 45% of UK businesses using CMS software and only 30% of US businesses doing the same.

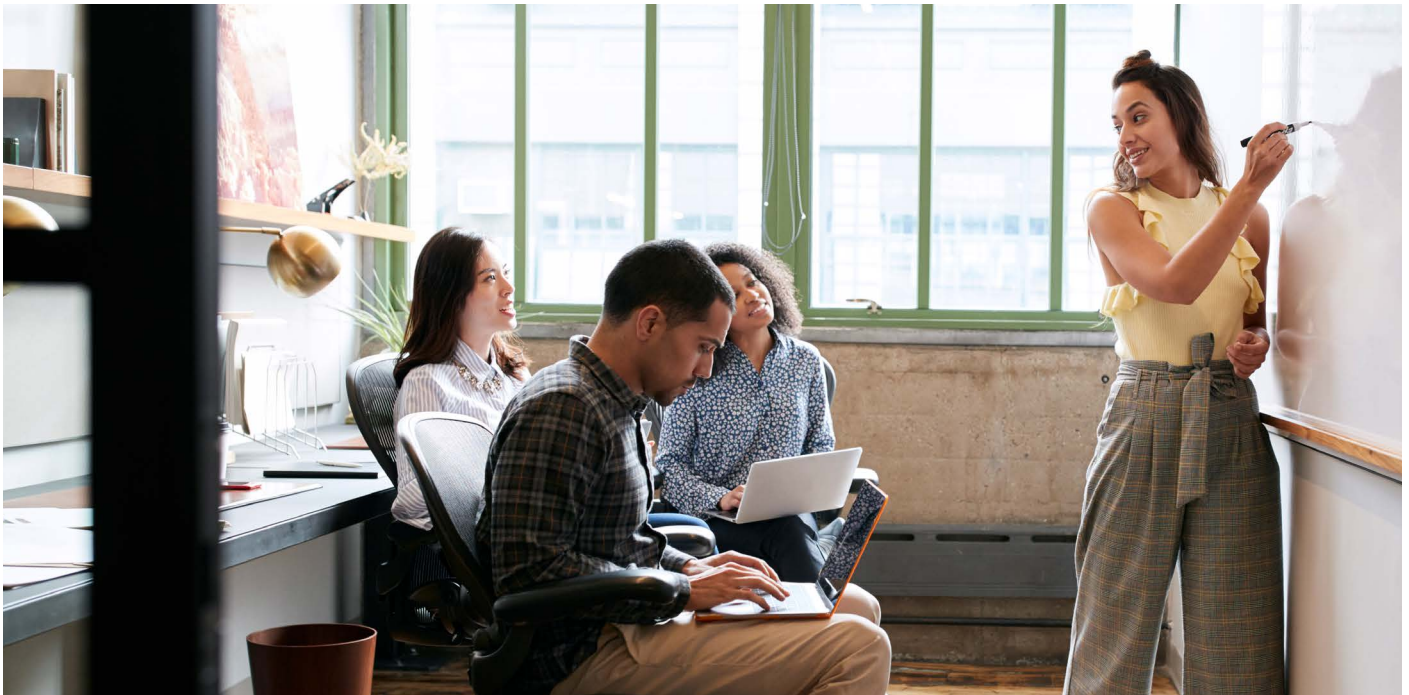


Top five operational challenges

We asked marketing leaders about their top five operational challenges, and the biggest issues include measuring and reporting, lack of integration across the tech stack, improving collaboration for teams, dealing with inefficient workflows and proving ROI to stakeholders. Interestingly, all of the challenges received over 45% of the votes.

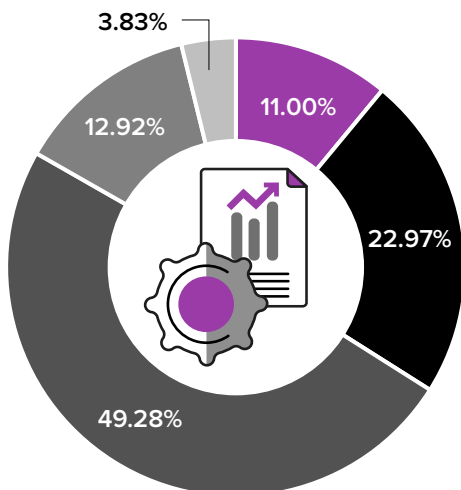


Organizing digital assets is a widely reported issue for both UK and US marketing professionals, yet we've seen very little investment in this type of solution. This suggests that there could be a big opportunity to improve digital asset management by updating the tech stack.



Delving further into marketing automation, when asked about how effective their strategies were, almost half of marketing leaders answered moderately effective. Over 16% rated their strategies slightly effective or not effective at all. Only 11% answered extremely effective, which tells us that organizations are at very different phases in their automation journey, and there are many improvements to be made.

How effective is your marketing automation strategy?



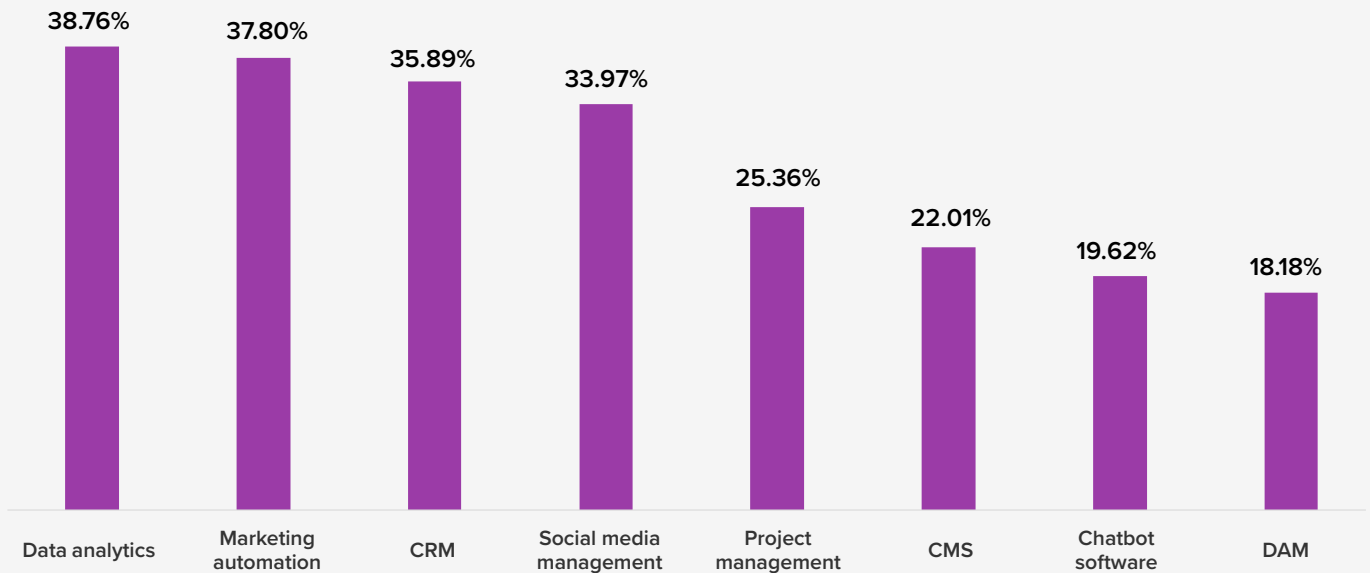
- Extremely effective
- Very effective
- Moderately effective
- Slightly effective
- Not effective

By role, it's concerning to hear that over 71% of VPs say their strategy is only somewhat effective. What's more, almost 55% of department heads say their plan is somewhat or slightly effective – which could explain why marketing automation is such a big priority in the year ahead.

What are the key priorities?

Looking ahead to the next 12 months and assessing potential future investment, the biggest areas respondents plan to invest in are data analytics, marketing automation, CRM and social media management, which all received over a third of the votes.

Which tools do you plan to invest in over the next 12 months?



Going back to department heads, of which over half said their plan is only moderately or slightly effective, it makes sense that automation is their core focus for this year. And, comparing all the other roles, it's clear that priorities are all very different.

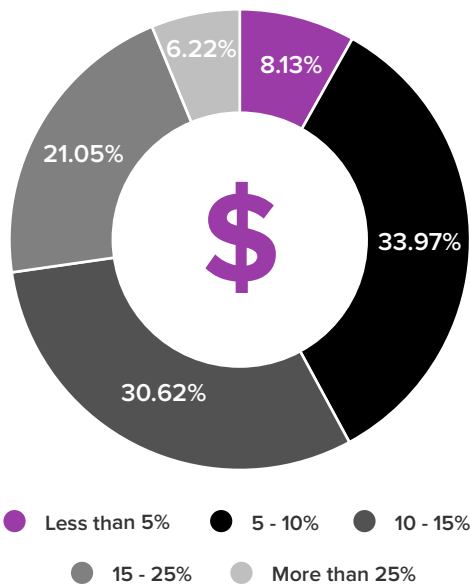


Over 57% of VPs say they plan to invest in chatbot software, while almost 40% of Managers say they plan to invest in CRM.

How much are marketers willing to spend?

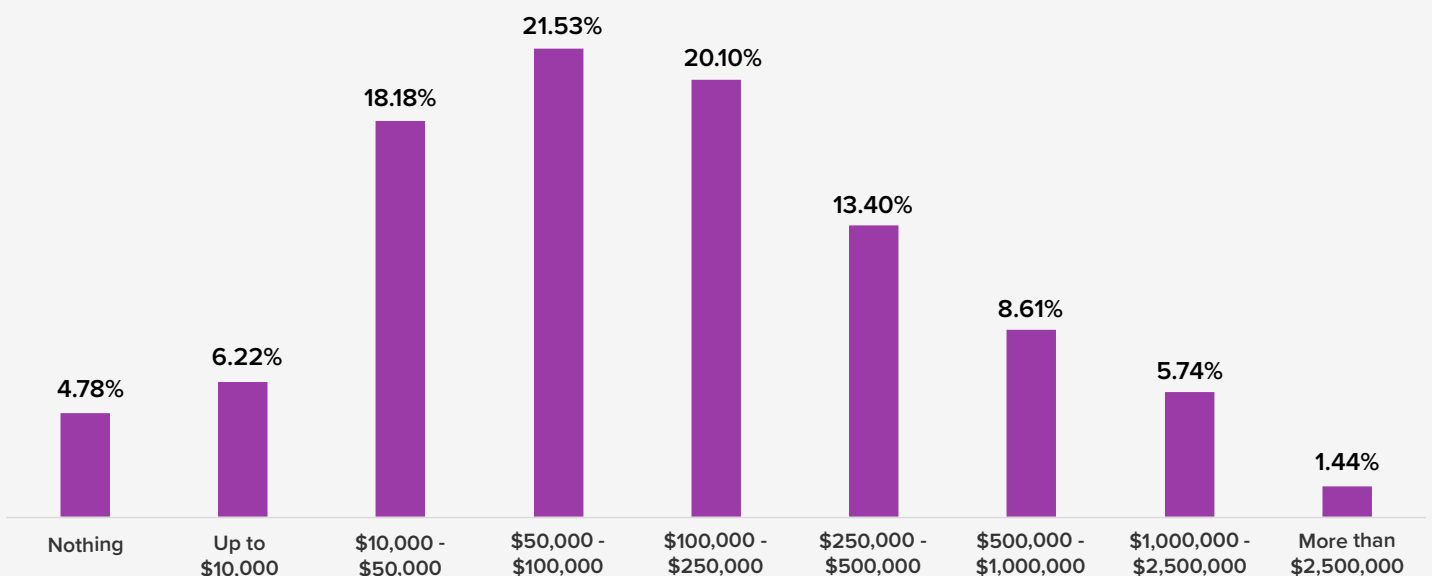
In terms of budget allocation for the next 12 months, the largest group (34%) are planning on spending between 5-10% of their budget, while over 30% are looking to allocate between 10-15% of their budget and over 21% plan to allocate between 15-25%. Only a small number (8%) will be using less than 5% of their budget on new technology.

How much of your budget are you willing to spend on marketing technology?



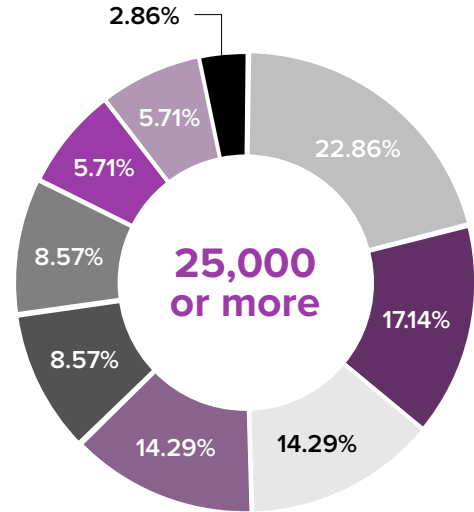
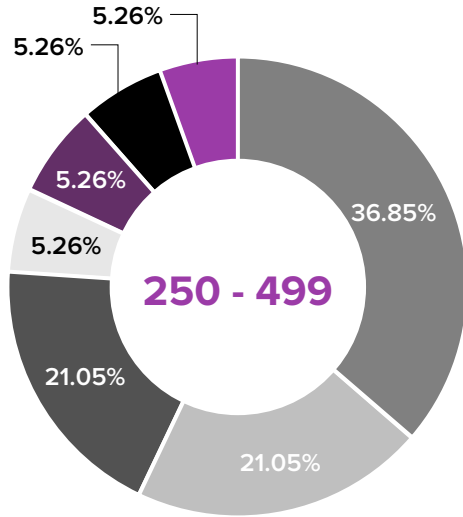
In monetary terms, this can be translated as the majority of MarTech buyers (almost 60%) being ready to spend anywhere between \$10,000 and \$250,000. Over 13% of decision-makers are willing to spend in the region of \$250,000 to \$500,000, and more than 8% are looking to spend between \$500,000 to \$1 million.

How much are you planning to invest on MarTech solutions in the coming 12 months?

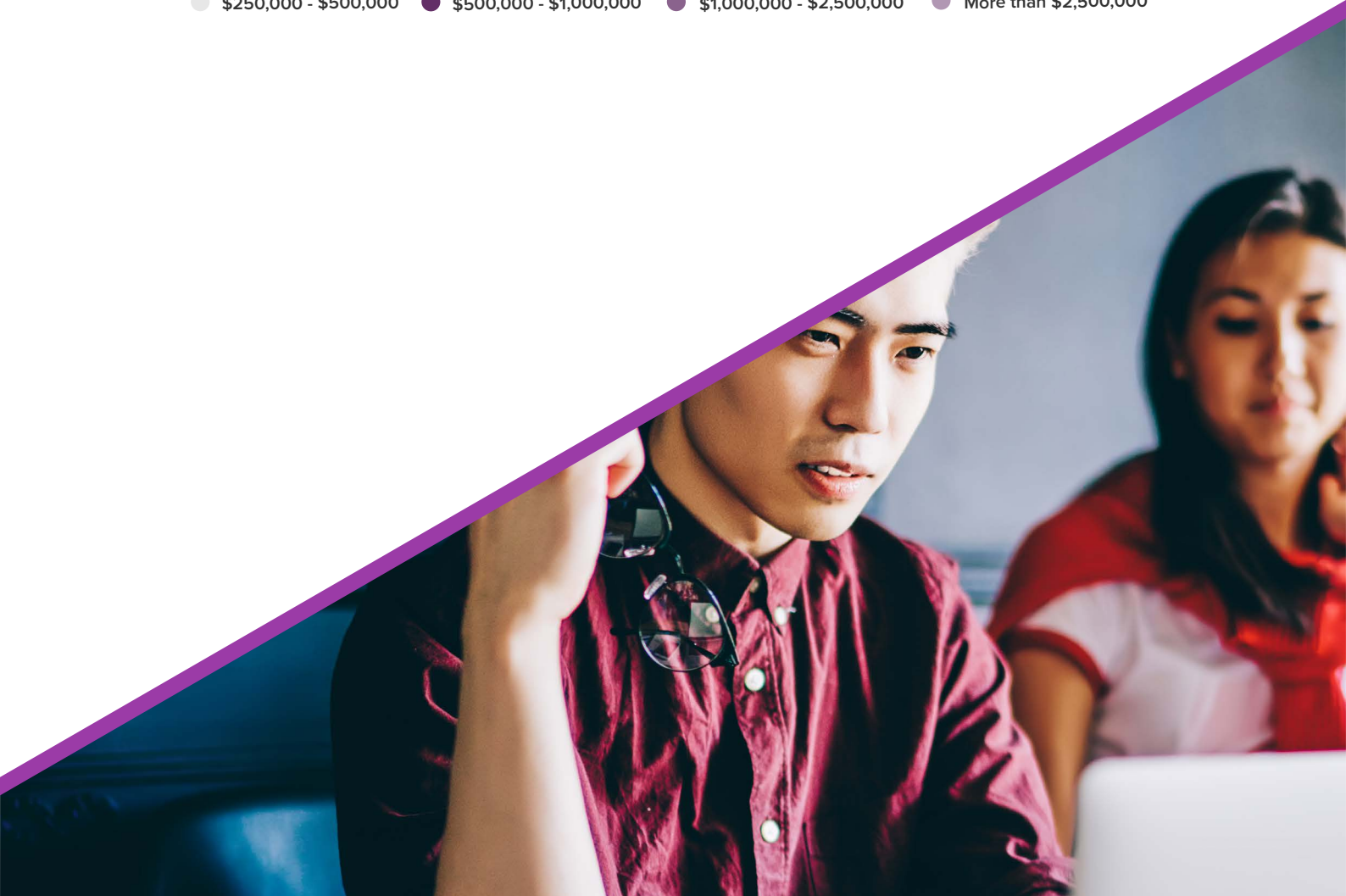


By company size, nearly two-thirds of marketers (63%) in the smallest firms (250 to 499 employees) say they plan to spend up to \$100,000 on MarTech in the coming 12 months.

In the largest companies (25,000 + employees), 37% of respondents say they aim to spend between \$100,000 and \$500,000. What's more, 31% say they're even prepared to invest in the region of \$500,000 to \$2.5 million on tools.



- Nothing
- Up to \$10,000
- \$10,000 - \$50,000
- \$50,000 - \$100,000
- \$100,000 - \$250,000
- \$250,000 - \$500,000
- \$500,000 - \$1,000,000
- \$1,000,000 - \$2,500,000
- More than \$2,500,000



Conclusion

One of the biggest challenges within marketing ops is being able to make sense of data. This can be caused by having so much but not having enough structure to manage the information and make it meaningful. In fact, **more than a third of marketers** say they have more data at their fingertips than they could ever effectively analyze.

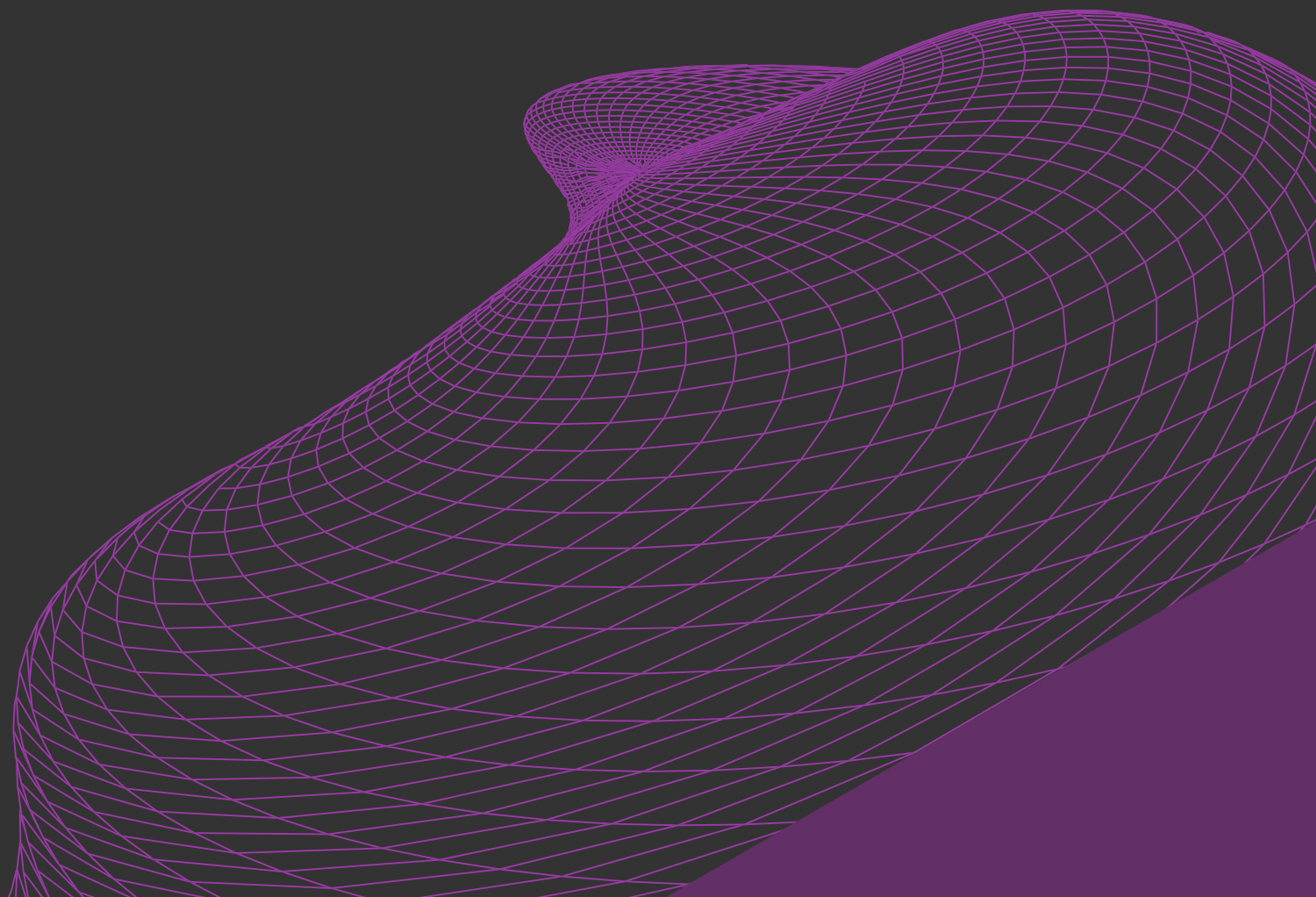
Having the right technology matters, and this could be why smaller firms are the ones that are struggling to analyze data effectively. The second biggest challenge is being able to create accurate reports by pulling data from different systems. This paints a clear picture: data – and the application of it – is a major sticking point for companies in the US and UK, which aligns with the fact that both regions are looking to invest heavily in data analytics technology in the coming 12 months.

Data tools are also the number one focus for C-Suite leaders, with three-quarters looking to make analytics technology a priority this year – that's double the number of C-Suite execs wanting to invest in automation or social media management platforms, and three times the number of people interested in CRM, project management software, chatbots or DAM.

While our data indicates that larger firms have the upper hand in terms of their MarTech budget, they have their own challenges to overcome, with the main one being the integration of the tech stack from legacy systems. This was the third most reported challenge for US and UK professionals – and the third biggest problem for companies with 25,000 employees or more.

Other major investments in the coming months for the companies we surveyed are marketing automation and CRM, which shows a keen interest in operational efficiency and for improving customer experience.

The areas with the least investment over the next year are CMS, chatbots and digital asset management. This indicates that there are untapped opportunities for growth, and we may see these technologies becoming more mainstream in the future.



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