



INTENTSIFY™

Activate the Power of Intent

# The B2B Marketer's **STATE OF INTENT DATA**

Research Conducted in Partnership with

**Ascend2™**  
RESEARCH-BASED MARKETING

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Intent data is information acquired from digital sources about a business's behavior and content consumption. B2B marketers are using this insight throughout their funnel, creating a picture of potential buyers' actions in order to identify and engage the right target accounts with the right content at the right moment.

**The use of intent data is on the rise...** a 90% majority of participants of this research are either currently using intent data, or are in the process of implementing the use of intent data. If you aren't using intent signals to enhance your overall marketing efforts, you're officially behind the curve.

But not all intent data is created equal and B2B marketers are faced with a myriad of challenges in making effective use of the data itself.

In the report that follows, we address these challenges and seek to discover how B2B marketers are using intent data to effectively maximize marketing output.

Here are 4 Key Insights from the research with additional segmented and more detailed data as you dive deeper into the report. Enjoy!

**David Crane**  
VP of Marketing at Intentsify



## KEY INSIGHTS

### **Gauging overall success**

Users of intent data perceive their overall B2B marketing strategy to be more successful than those who do not yet use intent data.

### **Strategic sophistication may come with intent use**

Marketers who reported the active use of intent data are most concerned with growth and fine-tuning challenges while intent non-users view more fundamental issues as their greatest obstacles.

### **Challenges come with major costs**

Nearly six out of ten B2B marketers experience wasted resources and staff time as a result of facing the challenges associated with intent data use.

### **The key to marketing and sales alignment**

What are the top complaints from sales according to B2B marketers? Data relevancy and ensuring that there is an established hand-off process that equips sales with appropriate messaging for targeted accounts.

# 1.0 Introduction

## PARTICIPANTS & METHODOLOGY

### INDUSTRY

Business services	10%
Computer hardware and software	25%
Construction	16%
Financial services	7%
Healthcare	4%
Manufacturing	6%
Retail	3%
Transportation	1%
Other	28%

### ANNUAL REVENUE

US \$10 - US \$25M	16%
US \$25M - US \$49.9M	12%
US \$50M – US \$99M	13%
US \$100M – US \$99M	40%
US \$1B – US \$9.9B	13%
Greater than US \$10B	6%

### ROLE IN COMPANY

C-Level	40%
SVP	2%
VP	5%
Director	11%
Manager	37%
Team Lead	4%

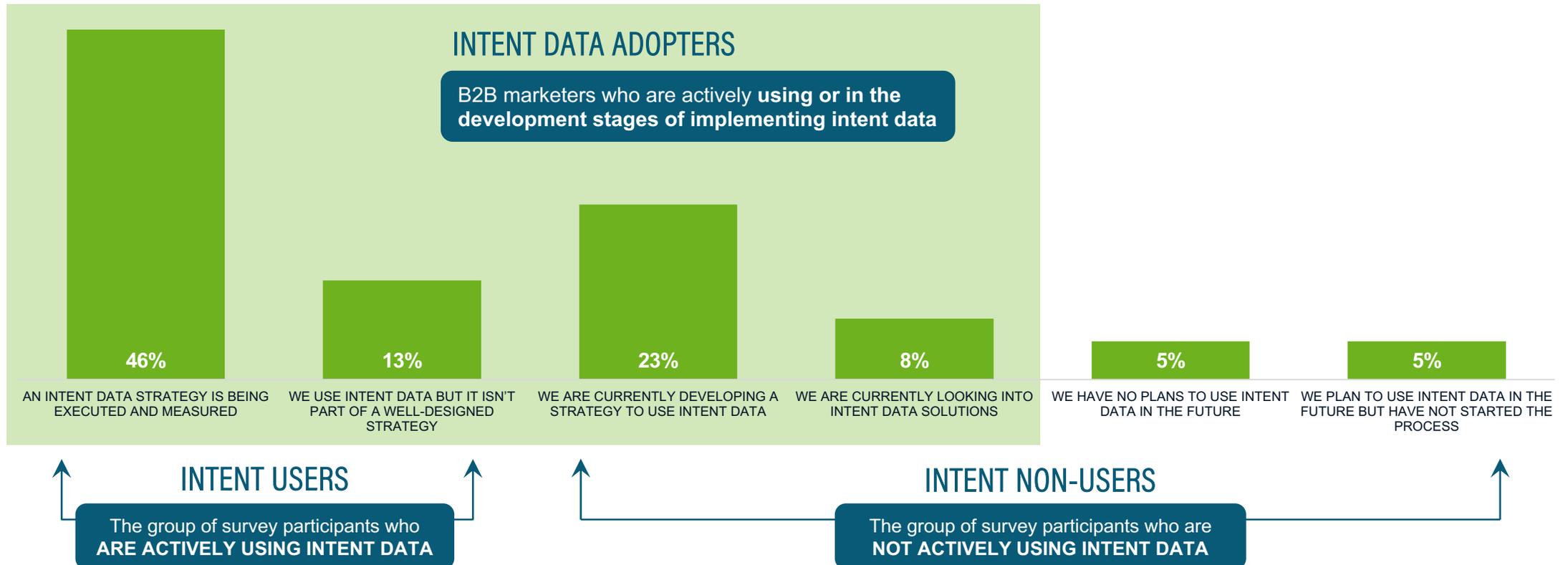
### THE METHODOLOGY

Ascend2 benchmarks the performance of marketing strategies, tactics and the technology that drives them. With a custom online questionnaire, this survey was fielded to a panel of 289 marketing professionals operating in the B2B channel during the month of March 2021. Participants work for companies operating in the U.S. with over \$10M in annual revenue.

# 1.0 Introduction

## IMPORTANT SEGMENTS

Throughout this research report, you will see data broken down into various segments. Much of the data in this report references the group of B2B marketers who are actively using or in the development stages of implementing intent data, charts referencing this group will be labeled as such. We also broke out the groups of participants who are actively using intent data, known as “Intent Users” and those who are not actively using intent data, known as “Intent Non-Users.”



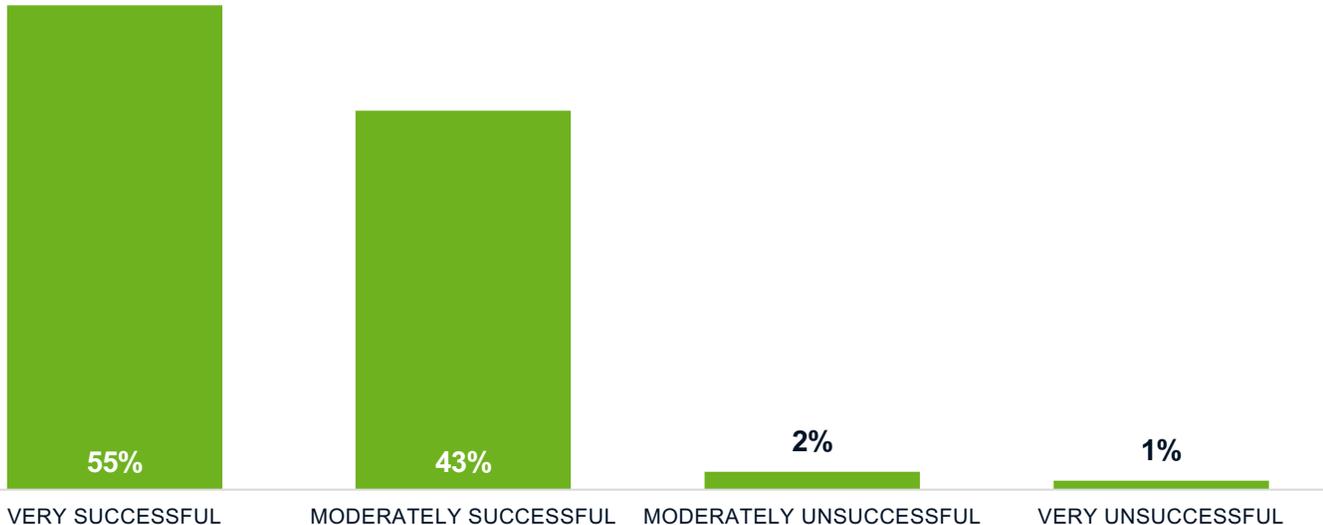
## 2.0 B2B Strategic Success

### INTENT USERS VS. NON-INTENT USERS

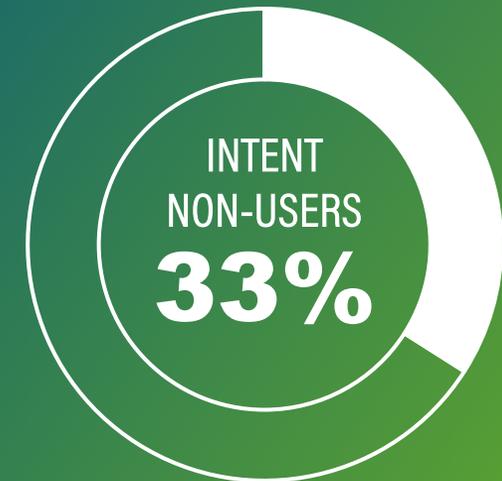
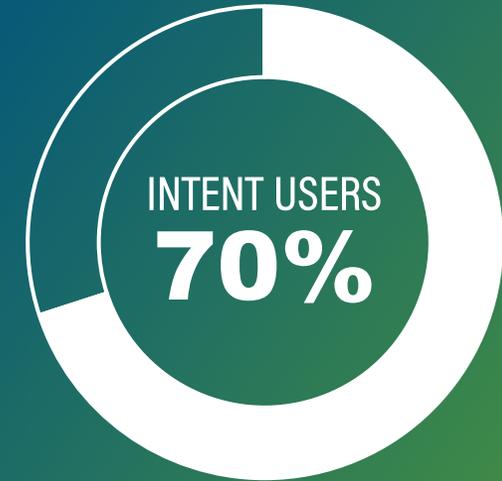
A B2B digital marketing strategy fueled by intent data yields greater success according to our research.

Overall, B2B marketers report experiencing success with their marketing strategies. But those marketers who are actively using or developing a strategy to use intent data experience a significantly higher rate of success with their digital marketing strategies than their non-user counterparts.

Which best describes the **overall success** of your B2B digital marketing strategy at achieving the goals set for it?

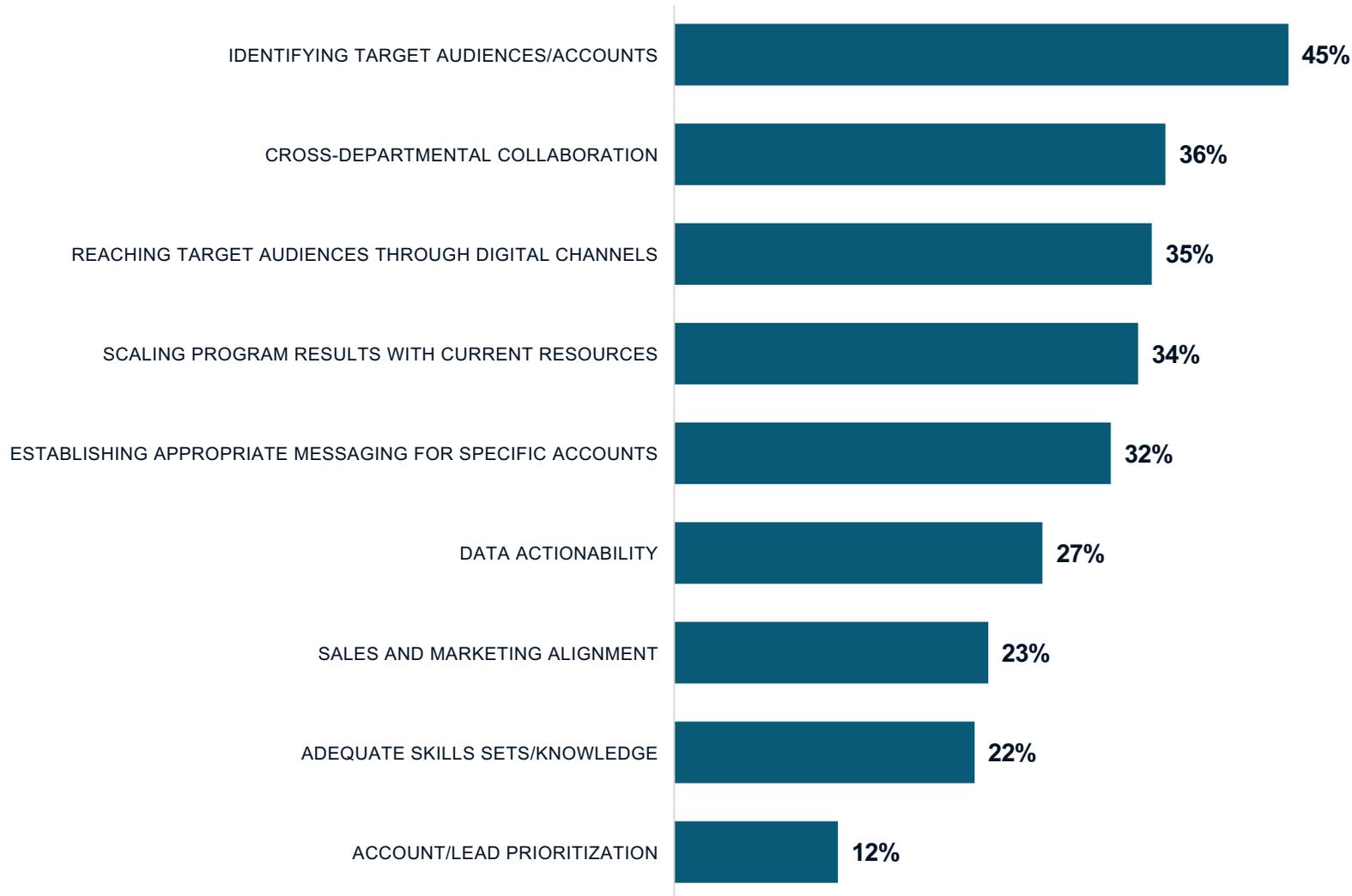


B2B marketers who rate their digital marketing strategy as **VERY SUCCESSFUL**



### 3.0 Critical Challenges for B2B Marketers

## WHICH ARE THE MOST CRITICAL CHALLENGES FOR A B2B DIGITAL MARKETING STRATEGY?



Having the ability to identify the right audiences or accounts to target is an essential piece of an overall digital marketing strategy, yet nearly half (45%) of those surveyed struggle with this. Around one-third of B2B marketers surveyed rated a variety of other challenges as major barriers to success including issues with collaboration, reach, scaling, and messaging.

**94%**

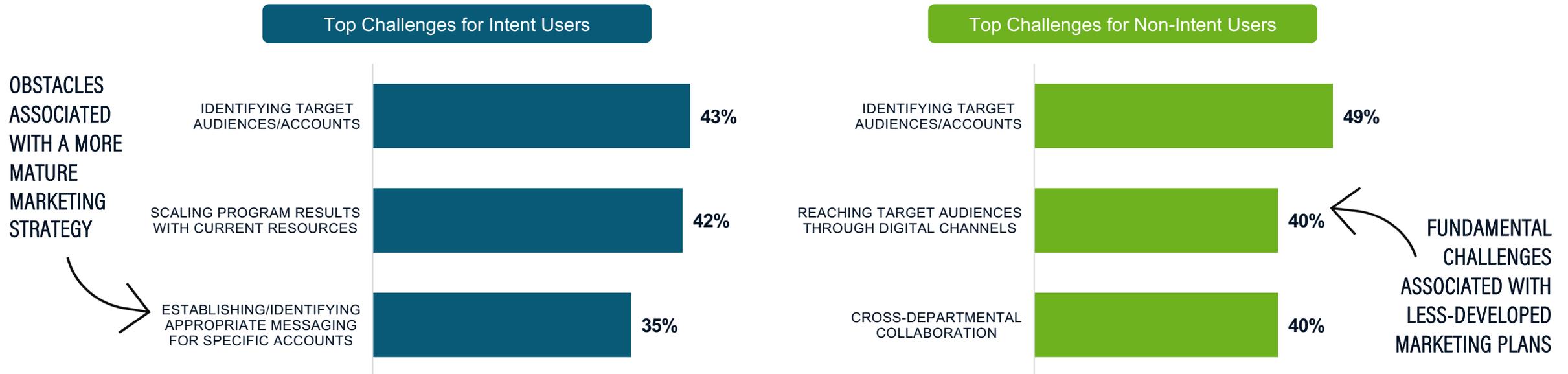
Of B2B marketers say that intent data is effective at solving for the most critical challenges.

### 3.1 Critical Challenges for B2B Marketers

#### INTENT USERS VS. NON-INTENT USERS

Marketing teams face different types of challenges based on intent data use, representative of varying levels of strategic sophistication.

B2B marketers are up against many challenges when it comes to their overall strategy, but this research found that these challenges vary between those who are currently using intent data and those who are not. Identifying target audiences is ranked as a top obstacle for both groups, however those marketers who reported the active use of intent data are most concerned with growth and fine-tuning challenges (scaling program with resources and establishing messaging for accounts) while intent non-users view more fundamental issues as their greatest obstacles (cross-departmental collaboration and reaching target audiences).



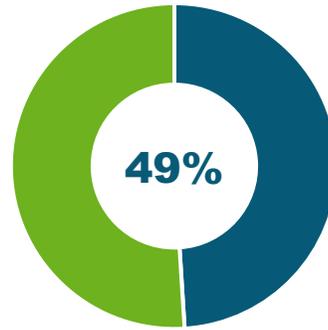
## 4.0 Measuring a B2B Strategy

### INTENT USERS VS. NON-INTENT USERS

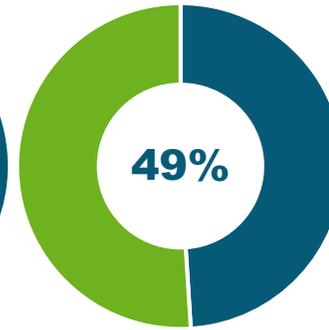
Optimizing a digital marketing strategy starts with measuring performance. Nearly half (49%) of B2B marketers use revenue contribution and sales-accepted leads as effective metrics to gauge overall success of their strategy.



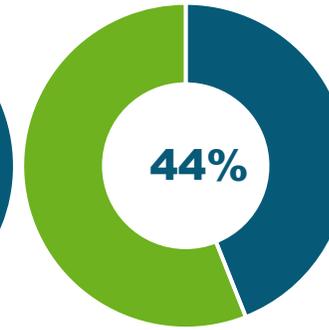
Build a strong use case for intent data by identifying one or two baseline performance metrics to measure the performance of your program. For example, work with your business development reps (BDRs) and sales teams to determine your baseline sales-accepted leads rate and track that metric as you implement your intent data strategy. This is the first step to developing a successful and scalable intent program.



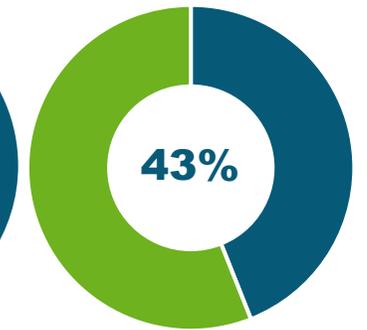
REVENUE CONTRIBUTION



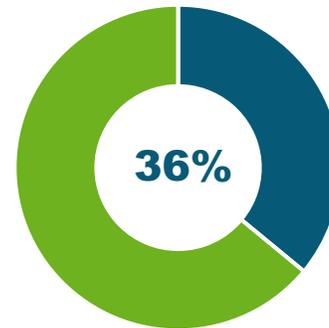
SALES-ACCEPTED LEADS  
(CONVERSION RATE OR  
VOLUME)



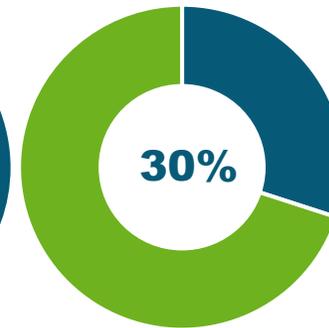
CUSTOMER RETENTION  
OR EXPANSION



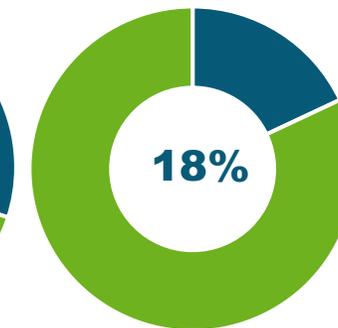
TARGET ACCOUNT  
PENETRATION



LEAD GEN VOLUME  
(MQL VOLUME)



RETURN ON MARKETING  
INVESTMENT

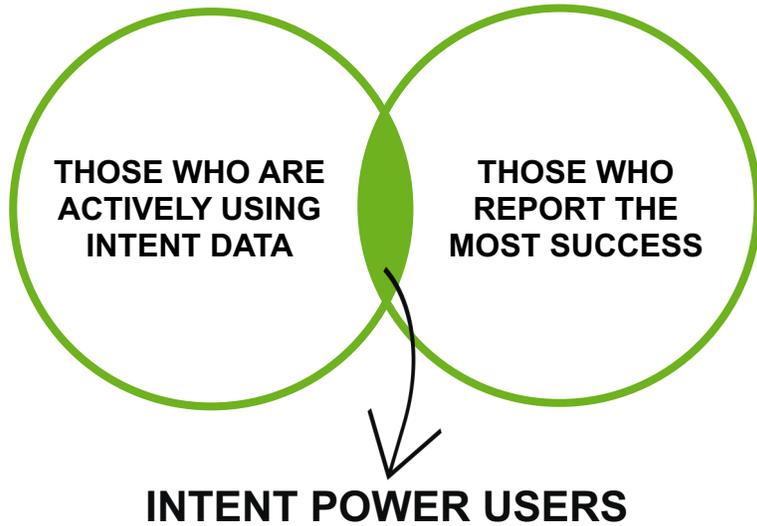


PIPELINE CONTRIBUTION

# 93%

Of B2B marketers report that intent data is effective to some extent at achieving goals associated with the most important metrics for measuring digital marketing success.

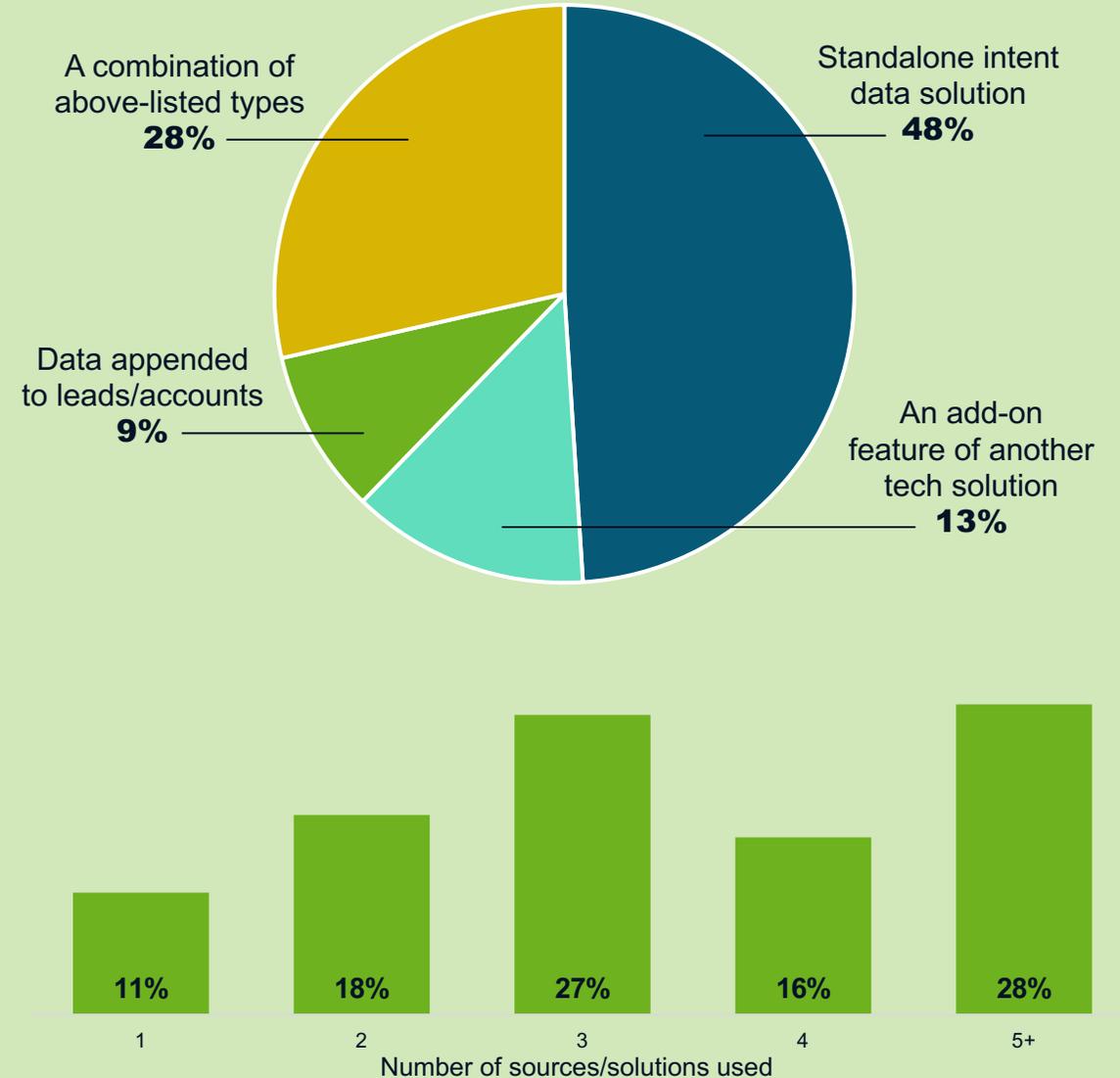
## 5.0 Using Intent Data CURRENT USE



59% of B2B marketers surveyed are actively using intent data.

Another 55% of those surveyed would describe their overall marketing strategy as “very successful” or best-in-class compared to competition. By segmenting by the cross-section of these two groups, we have found a group of **INTENT POWER USERS** whose insight is particularly helpful and you will see this group referenced throughout this section of the report.

## POWER USER INSIGHT Current intent data solutions used



## 5.1 Using Intent Data MOST IMPACTFUL USES

B2B marketers have found that the most impactful uses of intent data are for digital advertising purposes (64%), account identification (44%) and customer account expansion (44%). Marketers are also using intent signals for lead generation, including account-based and volume-based initiatives.



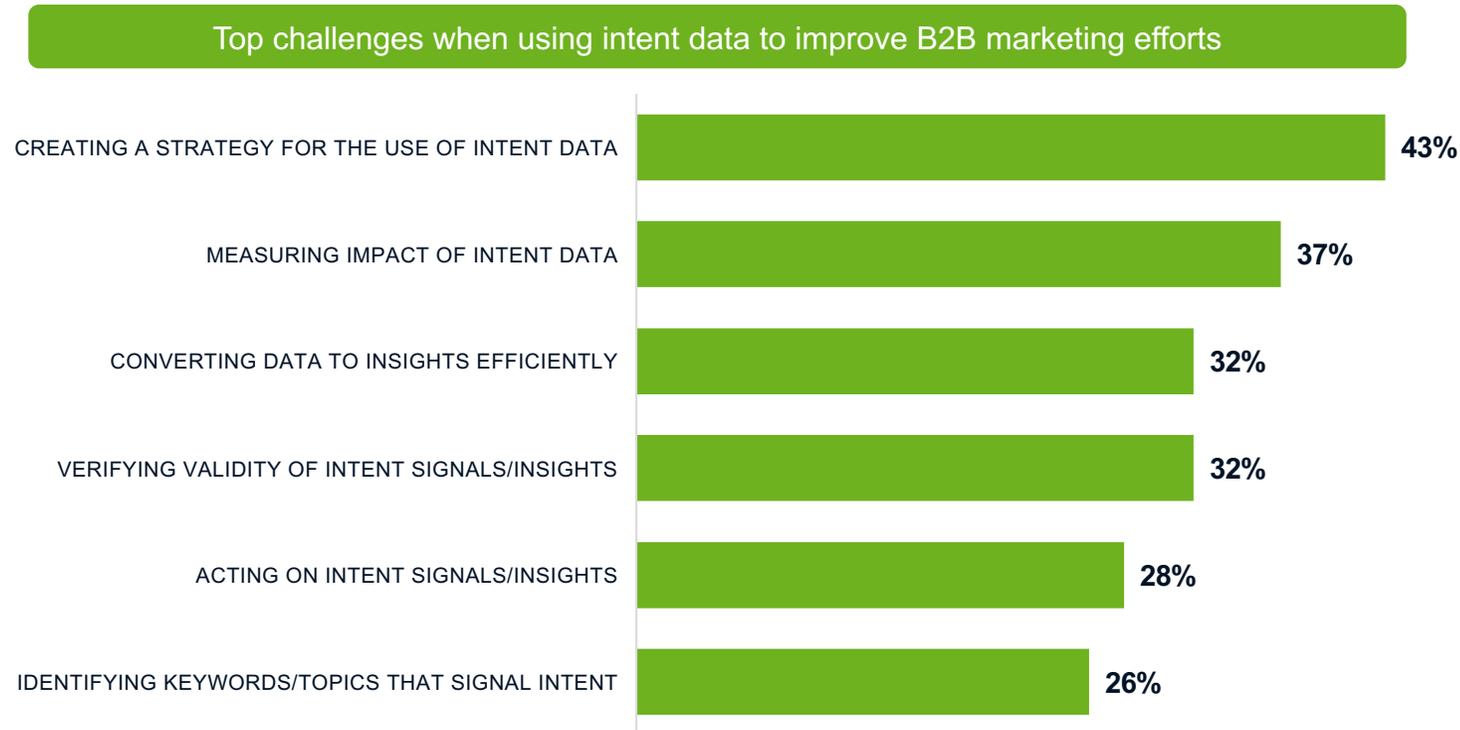
Intent data will help improve digital-ad campaign performance by ensuring impressions are served to intent-identified accounts in the right locations. Intentsify's [Intent-Activated Programmatic Solution](#) helps you do just that.

### WHAT ARE THE MOST IMPACTFUL USES OF INTENT DATA FOR A B2B DIGITAL MARKETING STRATEGY?



## 5.2 Using Intent Data CHALLENGES

Creating a strategy to use intent data (43%), measuring impact (37%), converting data to insights efficiently (32%), and verifying the validity of intent signals (32%) are listed as top challenges that B2B marketers face when using intent data. Nearly six out of ten (59%) B2B marketers experience wasted resources and staff time as a major cost associated with these challenges.



Marketers tend to struggle less with creating a cohesive view of all intent data, ingesting data into CRM or MA system, achieving broad coverage of all target-account research activities and aligning account intent data to contacts for outreach with less than one-in-five marketers reporting these as challenging.

POWER  
USER  
INSIGHT

Greatest costs associated with these challenges

**65%**

Wasted resources and staff time

**59%**

Missed opportunities for revenue

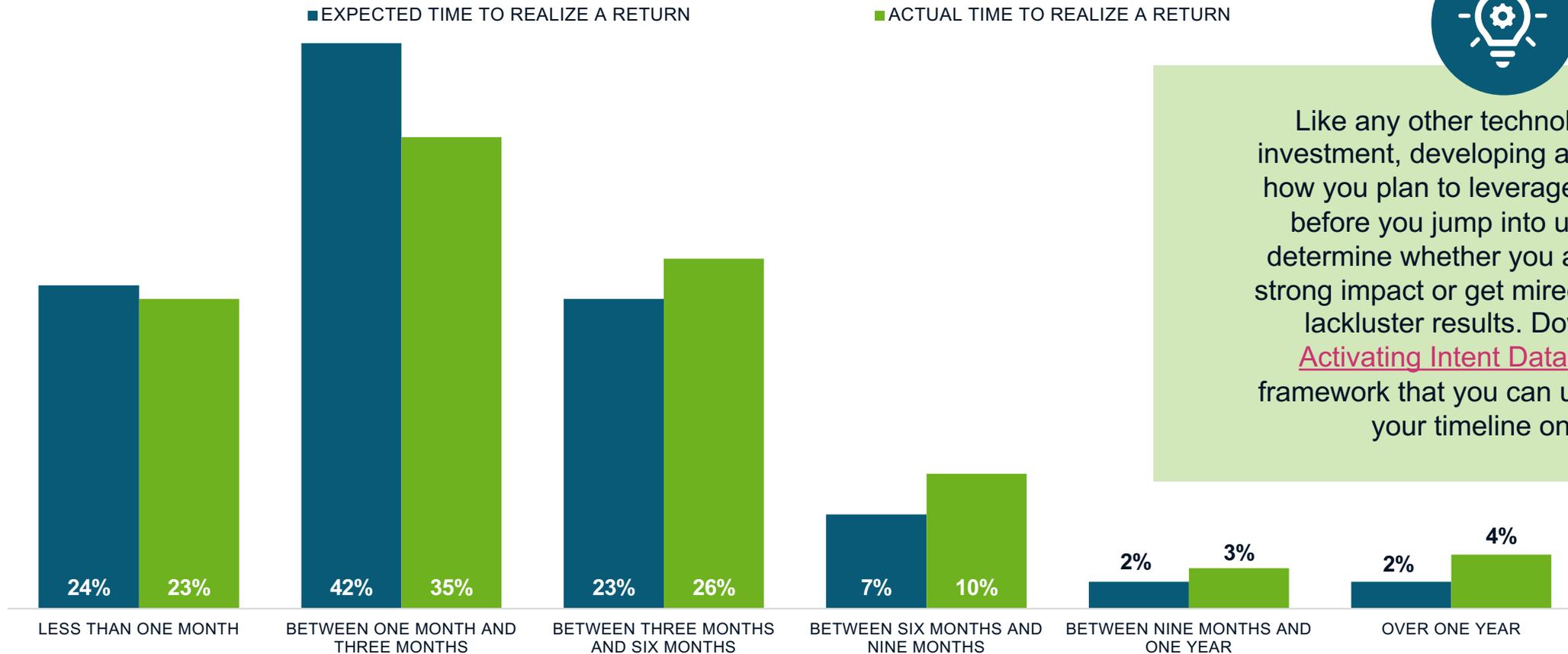
**50%**

Wasted budget

## 5.3 Using Intent Data RETURN ON INVESTMENT

Intent data seems to be quite reliable when it comes to how long it takes to realize a return. Marketers were consistent across all segments when reporting expected time and actual time to realize a return on intent data implementation.

### Realizing a Return on Intent Data Implementation

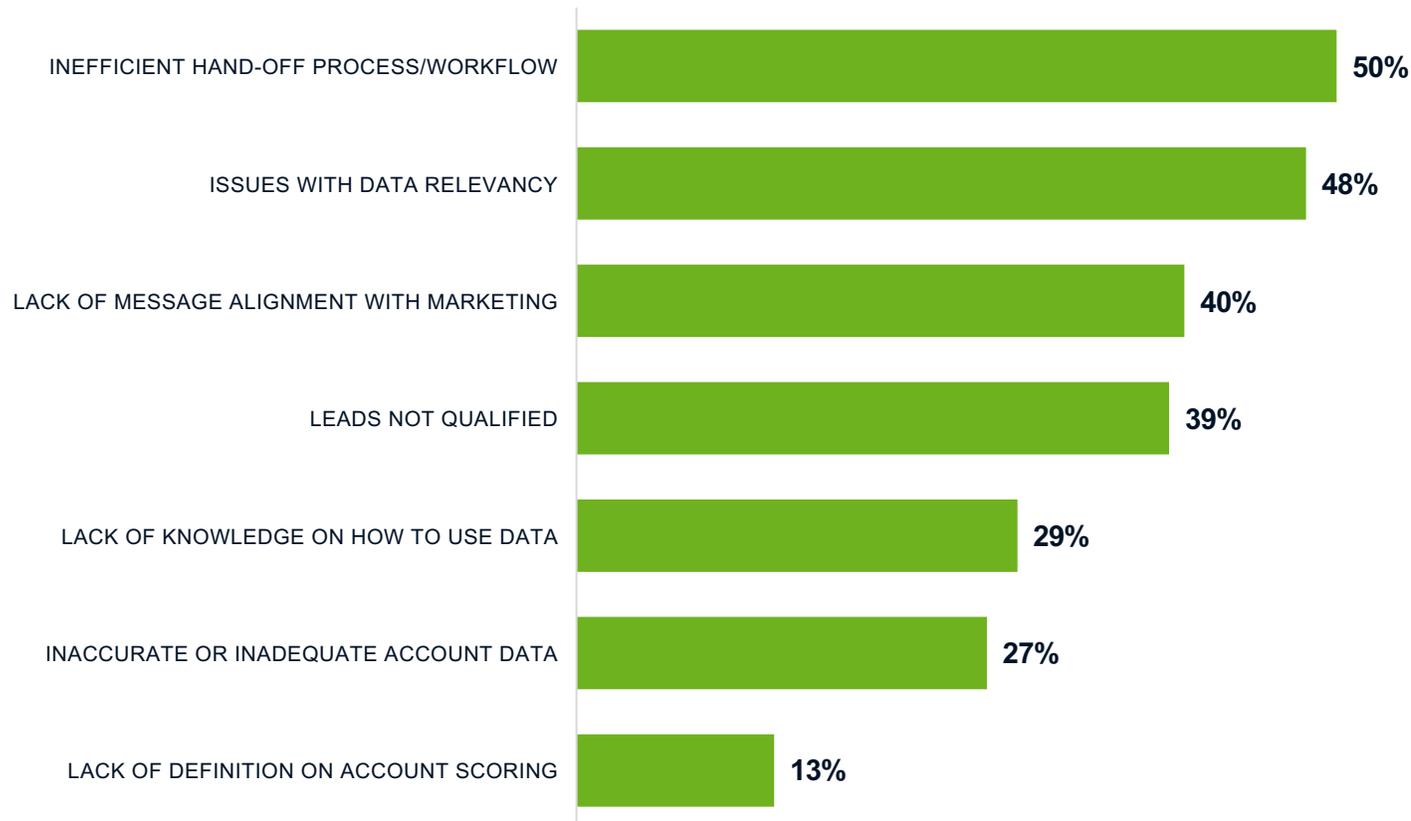


Like any other technology or data investment, developing a framework for how you plan to leverage intent data—before you jump into using it—can determine whether you achieve quick, strong impact or get mired in frustrating, lackluster results. Download the [Activating Intent Data](#) guide for a framework that you can use to optimize your timeline on ROI.

## 5.3 Using Intent Data SALES CONFLICT

Our intent power user group presumably has the most experience and most success when it comes to utilizing intent data. Their insight is particularly useful when examining the relationship between marketing and sales.

What are the biggest complaints from sales/business development teams in regard to the use of intent data?



### POWER USER INSIGHT

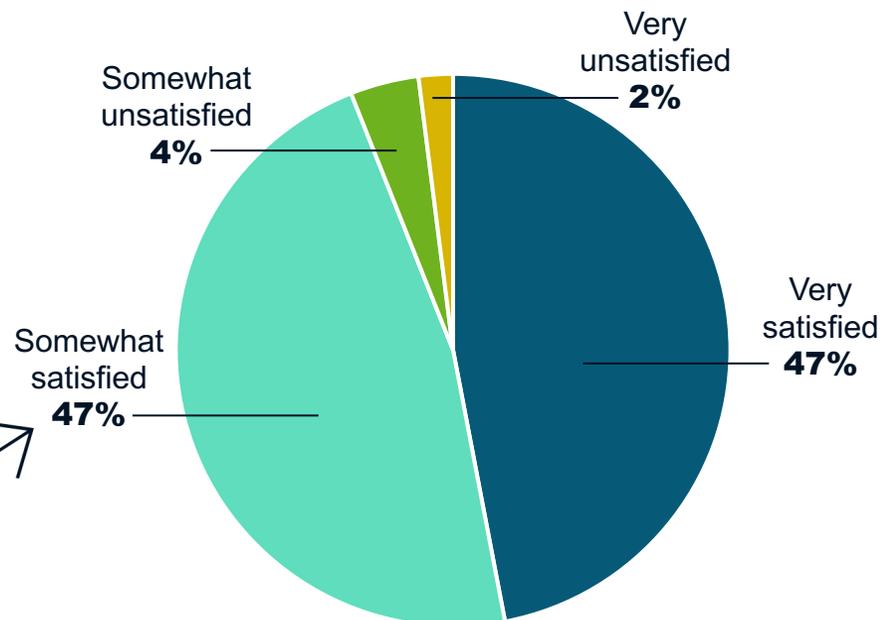
Half of our power user group agrees that when utilizing intent data, it is essential to secure an established hand-off process that equips sales teams with appropriate messaging for targeted accounts is also of utmost importance. Data relevancy is also a reported issue and listed as a top complaint from sales according to B2B marketers.

## 5.4 Using Intent Data ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

### INTENT DATA IS AN OVER-ACHIEVER.

Across all segments, nearly all respondents agree that intent data is effective at supporting its most impactful uses (97%), solving for critical challenges of a B2B strategy (94%), and achieving goals associated with most important metrics (93%).

STILL, 47% OF RESPONDENTS REPORTED BEING SOMEWHAT SATISFIED WITH THEIR CURRENT INTENT DATA SOLUTION.



### The Problem:

- Each intent feed only provides a piece of a confusing picture, preventing the full, accurate view B2B marketers need to identify the right accounts, decision-makers, and messaging; and
- Acting on intent signals remains tedious; marketers can't easily aggregate multiple feeds, draw decisive conclusions, or distribute insights to all the teams responsible for acting on them.

### SO, HOW CAN MARKETERS IMPROVE THEIR USE OF INTENT DATA?

### The Solution:

Intent Activation™ is a new category of intent-focused technology, supporting B2B marketing efforts by:

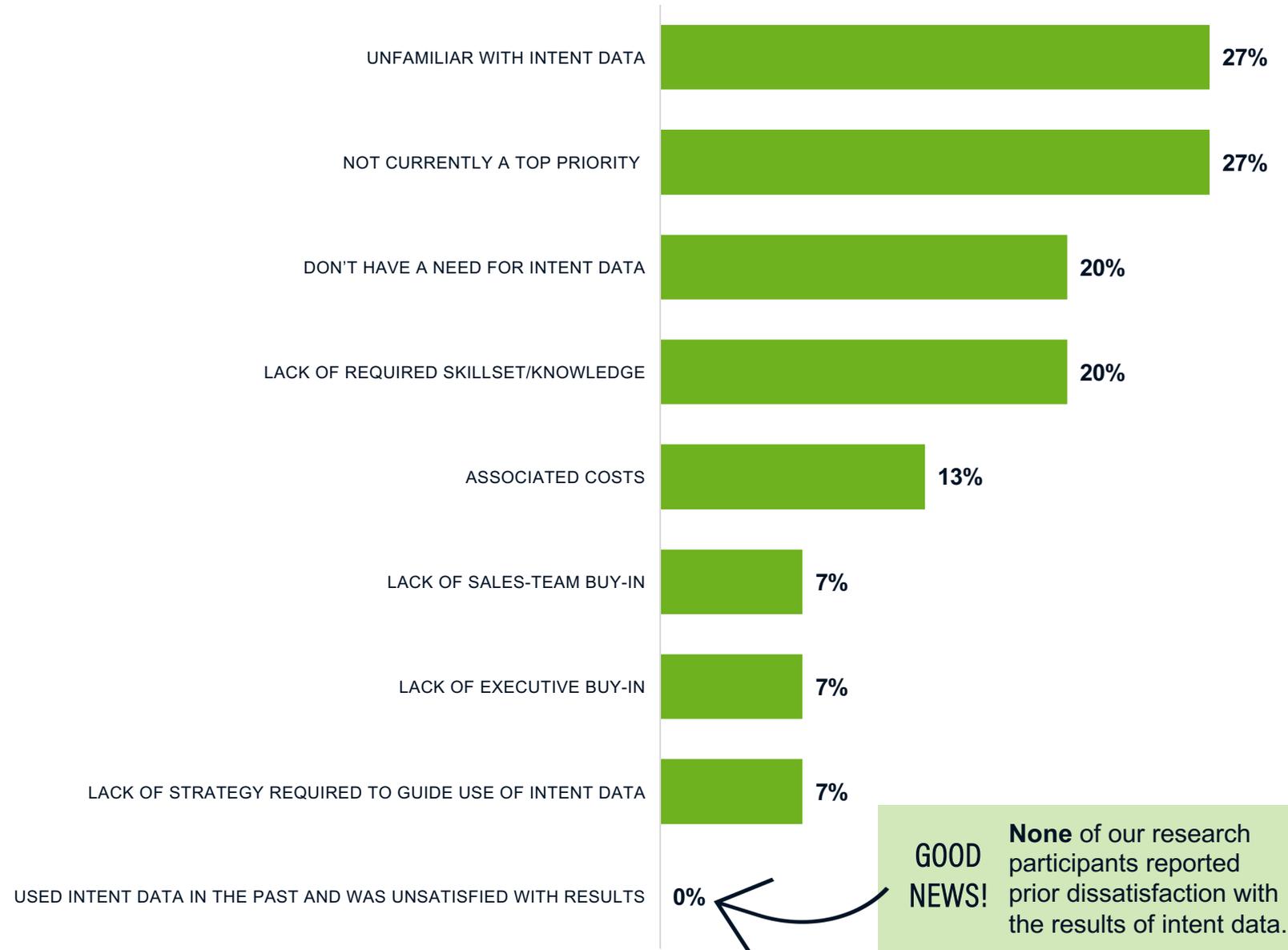
- Layering multiple, complementary intent feeds upon Intentsify's proprietary intent data to provide a broader, more precise picture of target-buyer needs, amplifying the most valuable intent insights; and
- Making it easy for B2B marketers to act on the insights across multiple use cases.

LEARN MORE ABOUT  
INTENT ACTIVATION

## 5.5 Using Intent Data WHY NOT?

### What is preventing some organizations from adopting an intent data solution?

About 5% of our survey respondents reported that they have no plans to use intent data in the future. For about one-quarter of this group, the top reason for this is that they are unfamiliar with what intent data is and can be used for. B2B marketers also don't feel that there is a need for intent data or it is low on their list of priorities. Interestingly, one-in-five marketers listed a lack of required skillset or knowledge to implement intent data in their organization.



## About the Research Partners



Intentsify's Intent Activation™ software and solutions make intent data more actionable and impactful for B2B marketers. Building on Intentsify's proprietary intent data, our software layers multiple intent data feeds, verifies the strongest intent signals, and quickly converts insights into actions via demand generation and programmatic solutions to help you scale account-based demand and pipeline velocity—more efficiently and effectively.

Customer benefits you can expect:

- Increased ROI on intent data investments
- Greater marketing efficiency—time, energy, and resources are quickly allocated to the right accounts
- Better prospect and customer experiences, higher conversion rates, and greater customer retention and expansion
- A jump in marketing's contribution to pipeline, and sales' strengthened confidence in marketing
- More customers and revenue

Learn more about [Intentsify.io](https://intentsify.io)



Companies partner with Ascend2 to conduct original research and to supplement their marketing content, generate leads, and engage prospects to drive demand through the middle of the funnel. Ascend2 performs research for Oracle, Adobe, Vidyard, Dun & Bradstreet, HubSpot, and more. Ascend2 research is regularly featured by MarketingProfs, AdWeek, eMarketer, Forbes, Media Post, Search Engine Land, Marketing Land, Convince & Convert, and more.

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