

# STATISTA CONTENT MARKETING COMPASS

2021

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# WELCOME TO THE CONTENT MARKETING COMPASS

## CONTENT MARKETING: SOON TO BE A TEN-BILLION EURO MARKET

Ten billion Euros. That is the level that content marketing investments by companies in the German-speaking region alone will soon surpass. This prediction can be derived from the results of a baseline study that has been regularly conducted by the Content Marketing Forum e.V., or CMF for short. (cf. CMF 2020).

Ten billion Euros – that is the content marketing budget that covers the production and distribution of content and increases by an average of 8% every year. And it is an economically relevant reason to offer a showcase for the most key results and insights available from studies about this marketing field in this comprehensive report.

The objective of the Content Marketing Compass is to provide you with conclusive and data-based facts and all insights about the most important content marketing studies in the German-speaking region as well as to summarize as the most crucial trends from North America. Data-supported strategies, which rely on thorough data analysis

and interpretation for every decision, are steadily gaining a competitive edge: for better understanding market mechanisms, further professionalizing this marketing discipline, and for making improved and quantified decisions regarding your future content marketing decisions.

## A PRELIMINARY NOTE ON THE METHODOLOGY

The Content Marketing Compass is not a primary source but is instead to be understood as a compendium of sorts that compiles the results of the most important studies about content marketing. In addition to the aforementioned baseline study by the CMF, other studies included are the study by the U.S.-American counterpart to the CMF, “Annual Content Marketing 2020 – Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends – North America,” which has been updated and released every year since 2010. Of course, our own Statista study in partnership with CMF’s “Content Marketing Trend Study” as well as its international version “Content Marketing Trend Study 2020” play important roles as well. However, we are convinced that it is the combined examination and comparison of the various facets of many different

studies of this exciting market that generates specific added value for those in the market. For this reason and as part of our series, we have created a separate compass for the topic of content marketing.

We hope you will discover many illuminating insights that contribute to your content marketing success!

Best regards,



**Dr. Sandra Gärtner** // Forschung & Beratung  
mediaresearch42



**Sebastian Schurz** // Senior Director,  
Statista Content & Information Design



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01

# CONTENT MARKET STRATEGY

A strategy is the basis for goal-oriented and promising corporate action. In other words: A strategy is the basis for success. As self-explanatory as this knowledge may appear, the gap between theory and practice is all the more astonishing. This chapter shows you why.

# STRATEGIZING AS A CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTOR

## DEFINITION CONTENT MARKETING

Before we dive into the availability of data, it makes sense to define the term which is at the center of this Statista Compass. We draw upon the definition by CMF, which is as follows:

// ***Content marketing is the communication discipline that uses editorial content to advance strategic corporate goals. All content generates a measurable effect on the channels used.*** // (cf. CMF 2016)

Thus it is all about producing content with a certain level of quality and to distribute it across channels in order to generate an effect that is conducive to the company's objectives and targeted to a specific audience.

## A STRATEGY IS THE NUMBER ONE SUCCESS FACTOR

A question that is formulated in nearly every marketing decision-maker survey involves a strategy – preferably

documented in writing. A strategy is the basis for goal-oriented and promising corporate action and should for this reason not be absent from any discipline. Practically speaking, the opposite is frequently apparent: in particular, when a new marketing trend appears on the horizon and throws the market as well as its protagonists into an uproar, blind actionism often appears to be the remedy of choice as opposed to a deliberate consideration against the backdrop of one's own strategic goals.

Time for an example? Think about the emergence of a new social media channel: the first question from management is "What is that?"; the second is "Could that be the next Instagram?" – which is invariably said with an undercurrent of accusation that "we are still hanging onto Facebook and might have missed the boat." An energy-draining round ensues: of research, decision papers, and discussions about not (yet) needing to be active in the new channel – not to mention the follow-up in the next quarter.

With a content marketing strategy, such decisions for or against engaging with this new social media channel with one's proprietary corporate account are made in a

way that requires significantly less time, energy, and conflict. The reason lies in the focus on clearly defined target groups and effects that one would like to achieve with them through content. Whether a new social media channel is suitable for the content marketing strategy of defined goals and target groups can be much more easily and successfully determined than not having a strategy according to which one must act. In other words:

## A STRATEGY MAKES FOR MORE SUCCESSFUL OPERATIONS.

By all means, the successes are clear: As the Content Marketing Trend Study confirms, 73% of decision-makers from B2B companies and 82% of those from B2C companies characterize their content marketing strategy as successful (cf. Statista et al. 2020a, p.4)

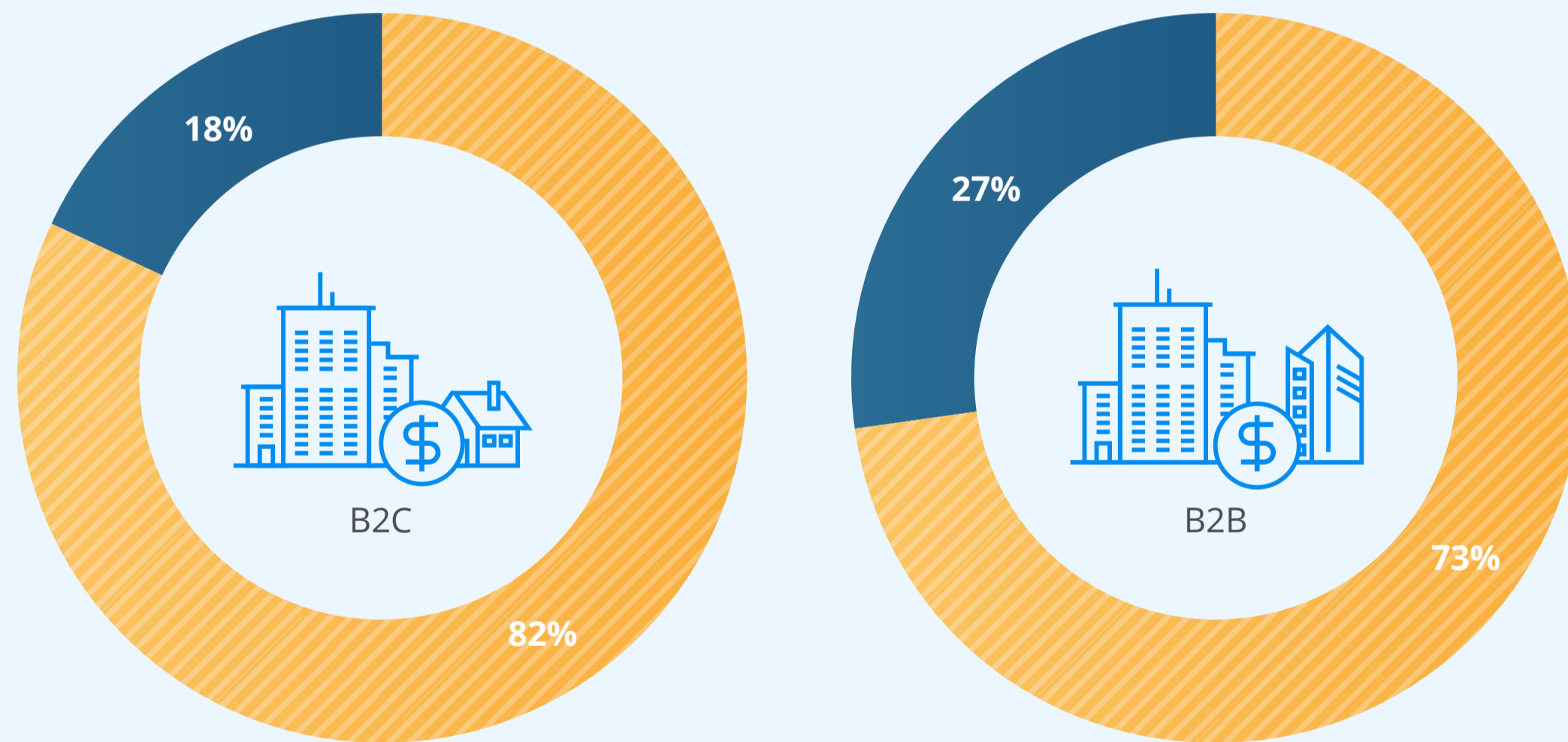
This decision, however, assumes that decision-makers also pursue a strategy. But this is far from being the case.





### HOW SUCCESSFUL IS YOUR CONTENT MARKETING STRATEGY?

● not so / less than successful    ● very / generally successful



### STRATEGIZING AS A CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTOR

- It is a bit surprising that the question of a strategy – one that is documented in writing – in the annual study by the Content Marketing Institute in 2015 (namely, over five years ago) was only affirmed by 27% (B2C) and 35% (B2B) of the content marketing decision makers who were surveyed. Against the background that a written strategy is crucial for success, the CMI already concluded in its study that:

*“If we had to pick one key theme that has emerged from this year’s B2B research, it would be this: If you want to be more effective at content marketing, document your strategy.”* (cf. CMI 2015, p.34)

The CMF also attested that strategizing plays a decisive but also challenging role in successful content marketing (CMF 2020, p.2)

The CMF’s baseline study attested that seven out of ten companies have a defined, clear, and long-term content marketing strategy to which management and employees feel committed, and yet at this level there is much catching up to do.

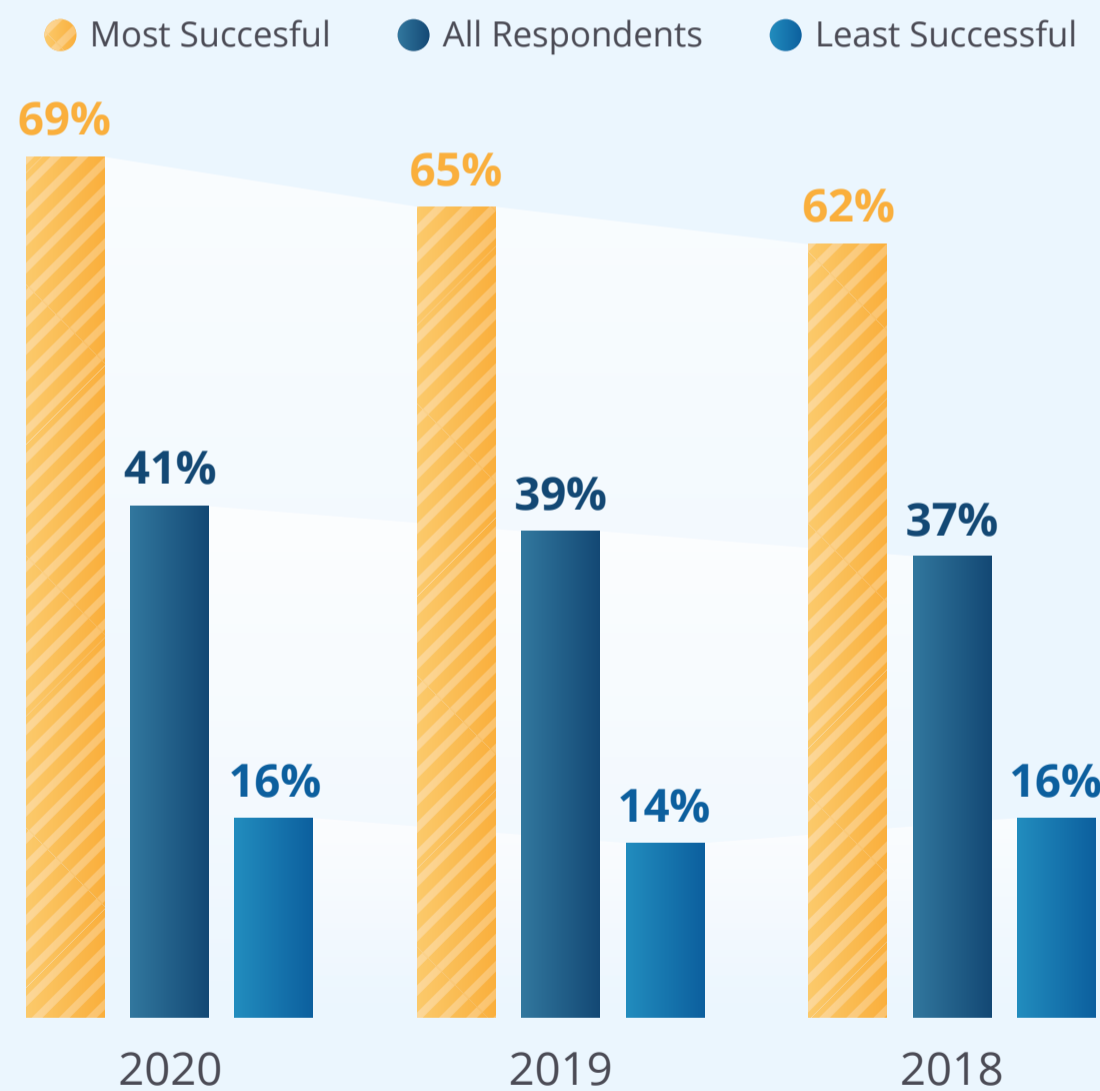
For in spite of the realization that a strategy is the central factor for success, and in spite of the increasing professionalism of content marketing, the percentage of those who can refer back to a content marketing strategy that is documented in writing is increasing rather slowly or not as strongly as the growth rates of the budgets suggest. Regarding the percentage of those who have a strategy, the study results vary widely, evidently due to different definitions of strategy. Thus, in North America in 2020, an average of 41% of the B2B decision makers and precisely a third of the B2C decision makers have a content strategy documented in writing, which is hardly more than it was five years ago.

One result that repeatedly appears and is manifested in the CMI benchmark study is the significantly larger share of an existing strategy in the group of those who self-assess their content marketing strategy as (very) successful – the so-named top performers. Of the successful content marketers, two thirds have a strategy that is documented in writing, whereas the percentage among the unsuccessful is at a mere 16%. (cf. fig. p.7)

The percentage of B2B marketers with a written content marketing strategy has increased only slightly over the last few years. But year after year, it has

Source: Statista et al. 2020a, p.4; base: people who work in companies that conduct digital content marketing themselves and pursue a strategy for customer retention; n=195 in total; n=76 B2C companies; n=119 B2B companies

### PERCENTAGE OF B2B MARKETERS WITH A WRITTEN, DOCUMENTED CONTENT MARKETING STRATEGY



Source: CMI 2020a, p.12; base: B2B content marketers (\* from the 2018 and 2019 reports); n=679 in total in 2020; of which most successful (a.k.a. top performers)=ca. 26% and least successful=ca. 16%

become consistently clear that a strategy is a key factor for the success of content marketing. (cf. fig.)

In order to also examine this connection, perhaps even the causality, between strategy and success in content marketing for the German market, the question was posed in a similar form for the first time in the Content Marketing Entscheider Analyse – COMAE for short. The result was clearly confirmed for German content marketing decision-makers as well: The majority of successful decision-makers (61%) had a significantly higher proportion of content marketing strategies documented in writing than the less successful decision-makers (23%). Thus, the studies clearly confirm:

**THOSE WHO HAVE A STRATEGY ARE MUCH MORE LIKELY TO BE IN THE CATEGORY OF SUCCESSFUL COMPANIES IN CONTENT MARKETING.**

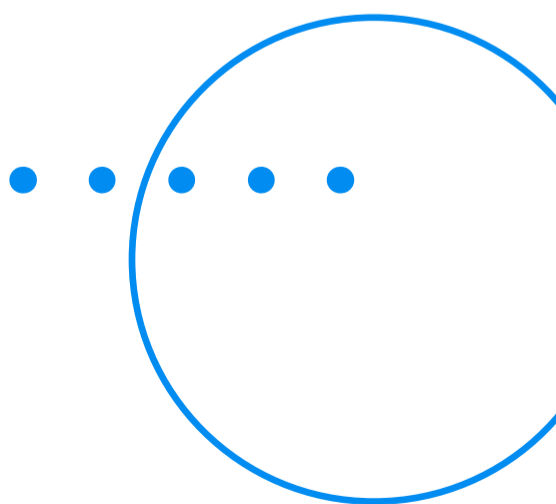
To recognize that many companies do not (against their better judgement) follow a content marketing strategy, we need not look across the Atlantic but only as far as Switzerland. One of the conclusions of a study about the inventory of content marketing by the Zürich School of Applied Sciences (ZHAW) was that content marketing is present, yet four out of five companies do not use it. This high avoidance rate of 81% along with 75% having no plans to implement content marketing indicates that major concerns are at play. The most important rationale for this rejection is that success is uncertain and not quantifiable. What the vast majority of

content marketing avoiders fear is confirmed by the active parties: “The greatest problem with content marketing for companies of all sizes is the relation between effort and return.” (Bächler et al. 2020, p.3)

The Swiss authors then conclude:

**“The most urgent task for all Swiss companies in content marketing is either to increase efficiency or efficacy. A content strategy as well as a clear definition of KPIs are decisive prerequisites for this optimization.”** (Bächler et al. 2020, p.3)

For the results also demonstrate that those who have recourse to a written strategy are confronted with notably fewer problems in day-to-day work and, in addition, are less dependent on external service providers.



# SUCCESSFUL COMPANIES DEMONSTRATE THEIR SUCCESSES SYSTEMATICALLY

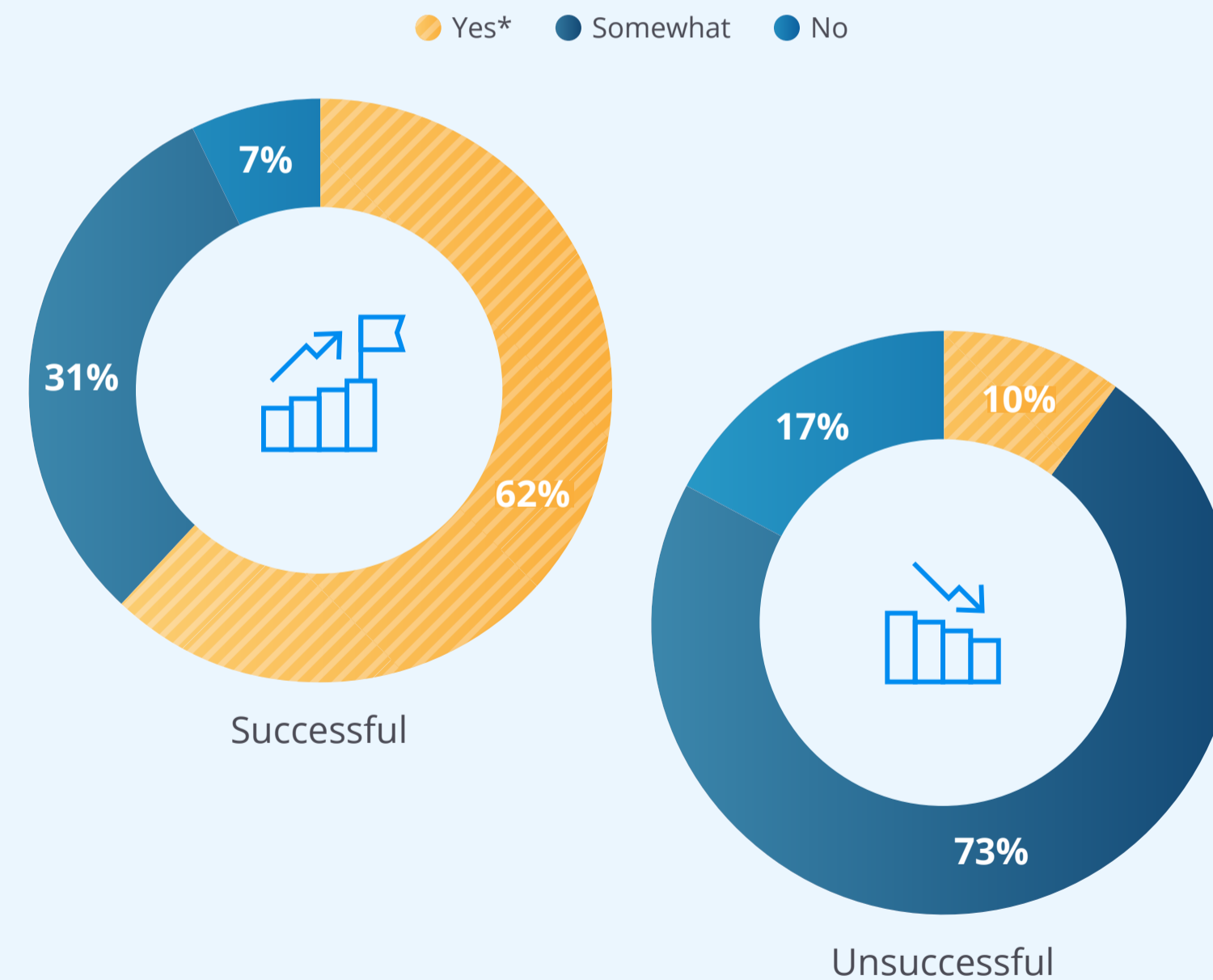


## THE SUCCESS FACTOR OF SUCCESS MEASUREMENT

In addition to strategy, the second factor for success that became apparent in equal parts in the CMI benchmark study as well as the COMAE survey is the fact that documented goals are also measured – and thereby demonstrated. As the figure shows, the topic of success measurement occupies a central role among successful content marketers with three statements: 80% use metrics to measure performance (95% among the successful) and 65% have developed key performance indicators – KPIs for short – to measure content initiatives (83% among those who are successful). The ultimate discipline, however, appears to be the return on investment, or ROI. On average, 43% do not report measuring ROI, whereas more than two-thirds of successful companies do.

Here too, COMAE reports similar values for content marketing in Germany, and similar to the topic of strategy, successful companies (61%) also have a clear plan to systematically measure the achievement of their content marketing goals – six times more than unsuccessful companies.

## DO YOU HAVE A CONCEPT FOR MEASURING YOUR CONTENT MARKETING ACTIVITIES?



Source: mediaresearch42 2017, p.18; base: n=85 total; n=55 successful (grade for CM success down to good) n=30 unsuccessful (satisfactory or worse); \*significant group differences (p ≤ .05)

## TOP PERFORMERS

As previously mentioned, the CMI study refers to those who rate their content marketing activities as (very) successful. They take the two success factors of strategy and success measurement into account much more frequently than average: with this, top performers in content marketing are those who routinely assess their degree to which they have achieved their goals based on a strategy documented in writing. In other words, with a slowly but steadily increasing percentage of those who have a content marketing strategy and attentively measure their documented strategies, the percentage of successful content marketers is likely to increase with time.

Yet the profiles of top performers also possess other characteristics: According to COMAE, the third success factor of successful content marketers is an efficient distribution strategy for displaying content. That is why in addition to the factor of success measurement, an entire chapter of this report is devoted to the success factor of distribution strategy.



# GOALS IN CONTENT MARKETING

## STRATEGIC GOALS IN CONTENT MARKETING TEND TO APPEAR AT THE BEGINNING OF THE FUNNEL

The basis of every strategy is the definition of strategic goals that every company would like to achieve by using content marketing.

According to the CMF baseline study, content marketing has a high momentum of over 90% approval along the entire customer journey – however, the greatest degree of goal attainment is accomplished at the beginning of the funnel. Above all, 97% favor the increase in awareness through content marketing. (cf. fig.)

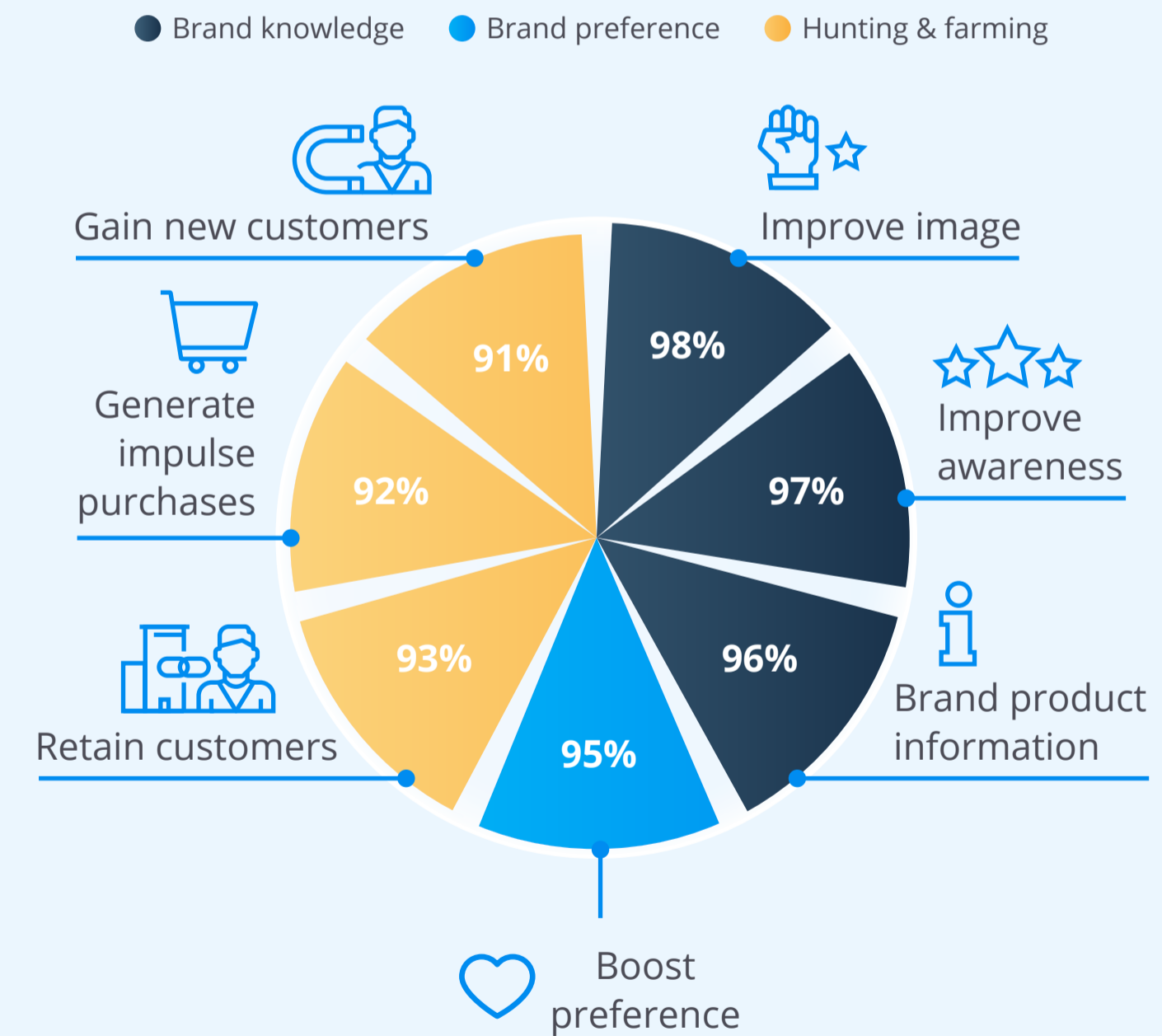
Based on their high level of relevance, strategic goals are surveyed in nearly every decision-maker study. At the same time, the results consistently reflect a certain disconnect among marketers, for only a small fraction of them can concentrate on one major strategic goal. Instead, they would prefer to do everything at once: bolster their own brand,

approach and gain new customers, and retain existing customers at the same time. The results of the content marketing trend study can also serve as an example here. (cf. Statista et. al 2020)

If marketers have to decide upon a strategic goal, content marketing in B2B as well as B2C primarily serves to strengthen the brand image and only secondarily to acquire new customers.

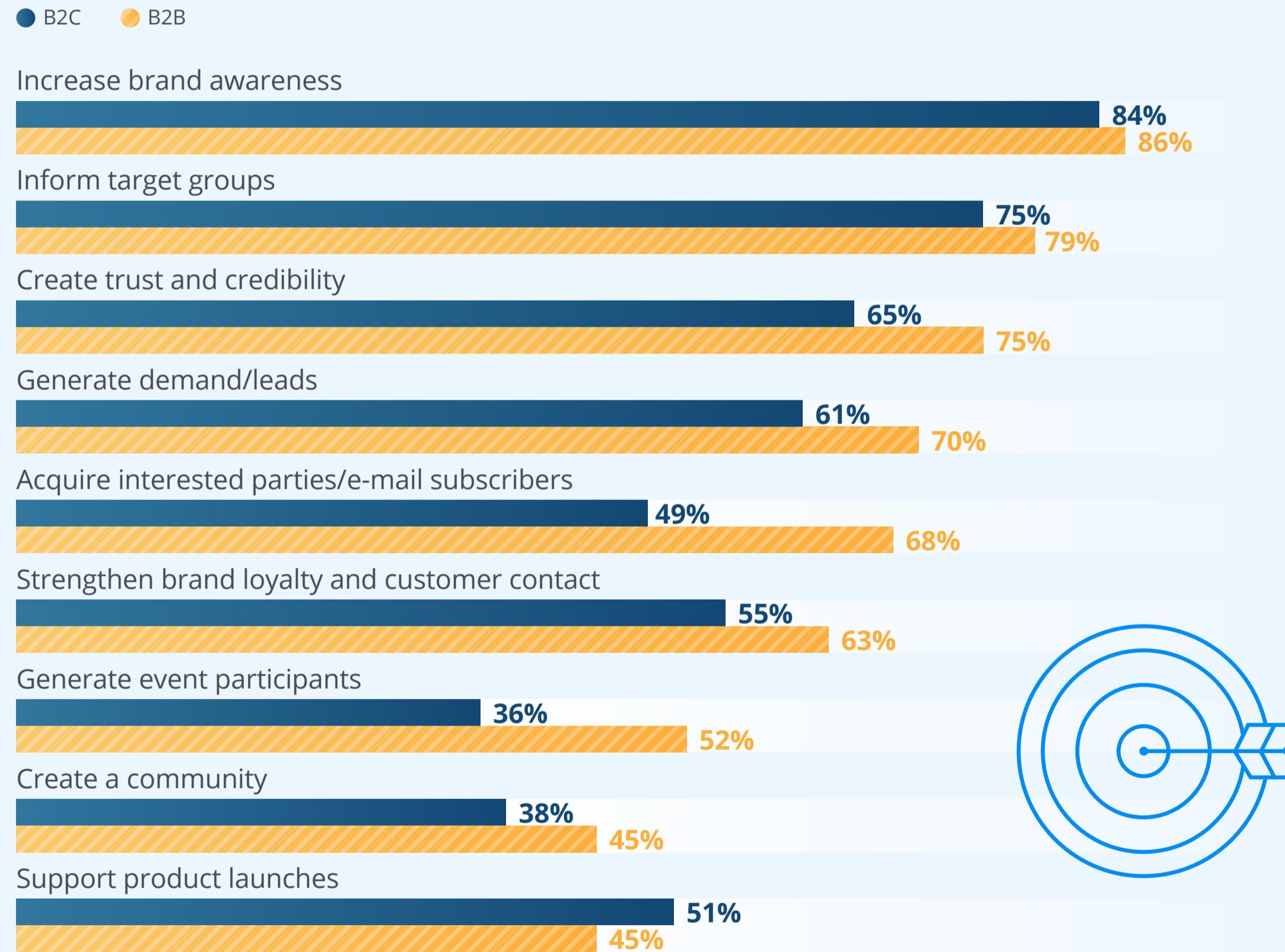
Yet even when additional strategic goals are pursued, there is no reason for concern, for research in advertising effectiveness does not at all see a conflict: Those who wish to gain new customers cannot do so without first working on branding, namely, to make themselves known and to generate an image in the minds of the people. And what could be better suited for this than good content marketing?

## DEGREE TO WHICH STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES ARE MET THROUGH CONTENT MARKETING



Source: CMF 2020, p.61; base n=319 CM decision-makers; Top 3 Boxes: excellent, very good, good

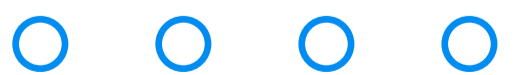
GOALS THAT HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFULLY ACHIEVED WITH CONTENT MARKETING IN B2B VS. B2C



Source: CMI 2020a, p. 33 & CMI 2020b, p. 30; base; n=679 B2B content marketers in North America; n=179 B2C content marketers in North America; multi-pick

GOALS THAT SUCCEED WITH CONTENT MARKETING

That content marketing is above all implemented at the beginning of the customer cycle is emphasized by the CMI results. These show that to start with, content marketing has a positive influence on brand awareness – this is confirmed by 84% and 86% of those surveyed. Moreover, with regard to the objectives of informing the audience, generating credibility and trust, and acquiring newsletter subscribers, those surveyed agree that content marketing performs an important service. In that sense, B2C decision makers are somewhat more reserved with regard to estimating the effectiveness of content marketing – with the exception of the aim to call attention to a new product. Here, B2C decision makers lead with 51% agreement, compared to B2B decision-makers (45%). (cf. fig.)



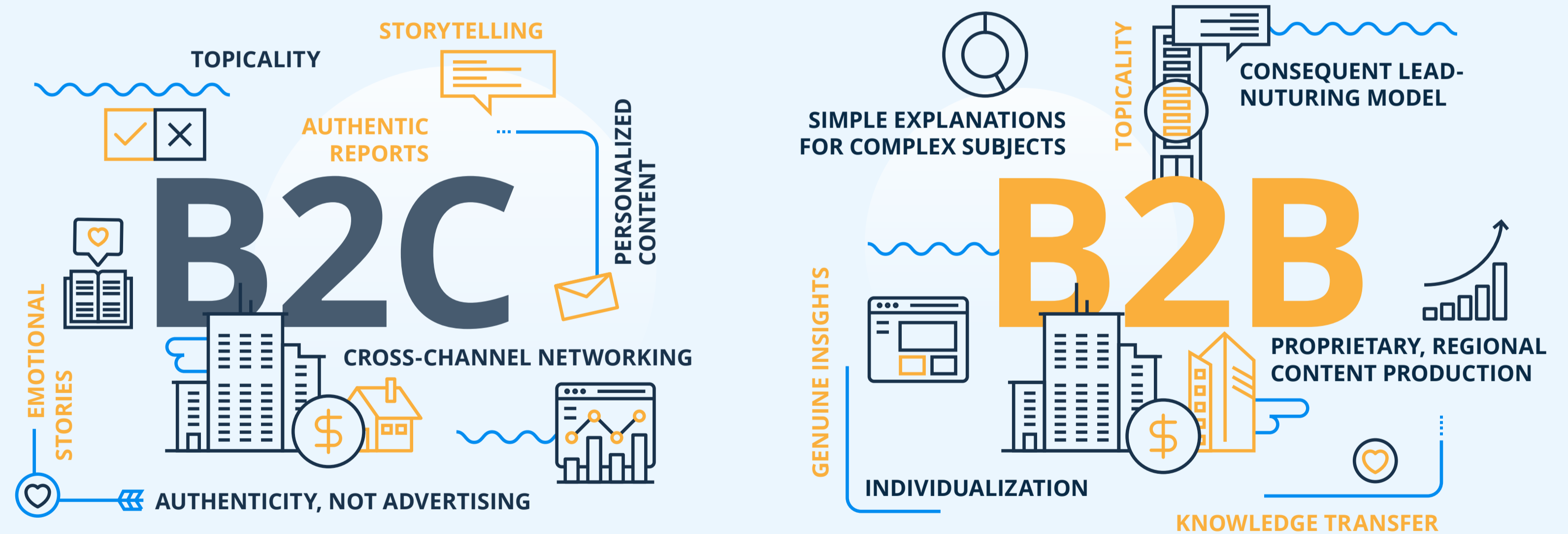
### DIFFERENT STRATEGIES IN B2B VS. B2C

B2C and B2B communications each account for one-third of annual content marketing investments. (CMF 2020, p.2)

To understand the different results of B2B and B2C content marketing decision-makers, it helps to consider the particulars of their respective strategies: Whereas B2C is very much focused on setting oneself apart from advertising with authentic reports and storytelling, content marketing in B2B is primarily used to disseminate information and deliver true, customized insights.

The action goals that are derived from the strategic goal vary according to the strategic goal, but B2B and B2C decision-makers also tick differently here: B2B decision-makers in particular focus on communicating industry news and trends with a view to strengthening their brands, whereas B2C decision-makers focus on targeted SEO measures with the strategic goal of acquiring new customers. (cf. fig. p.12)

### STRATEGIC CHARACTERISTICS IN B2B VS. B2C



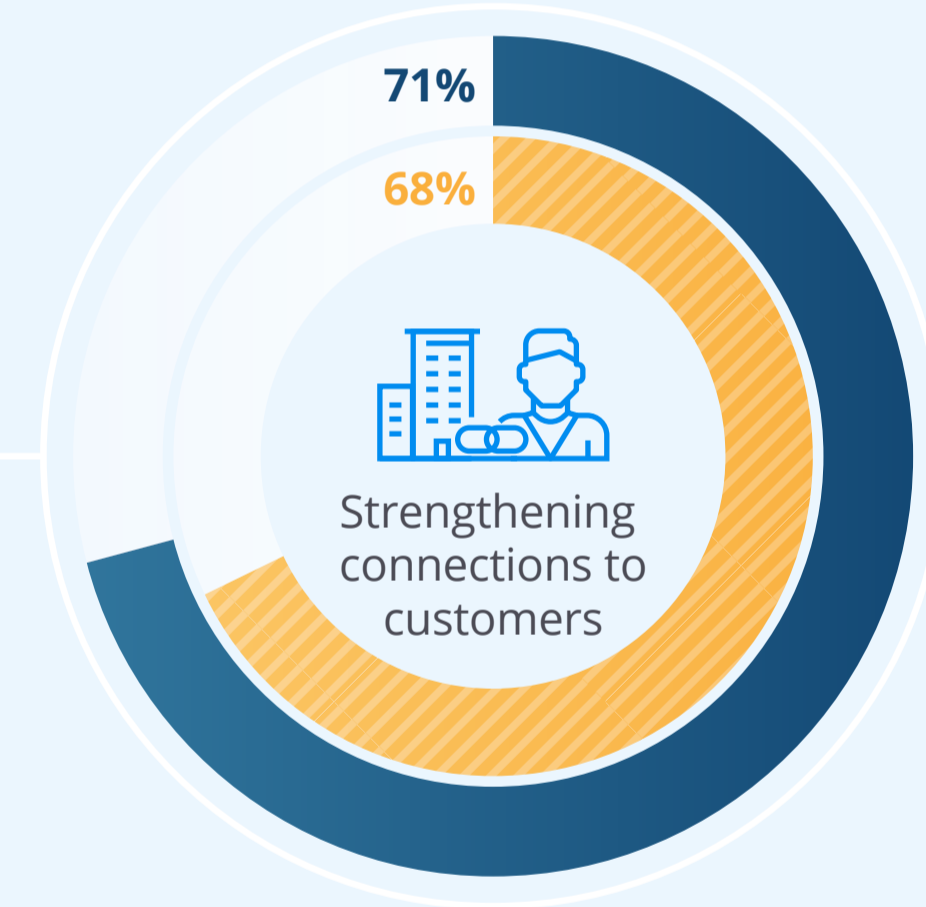
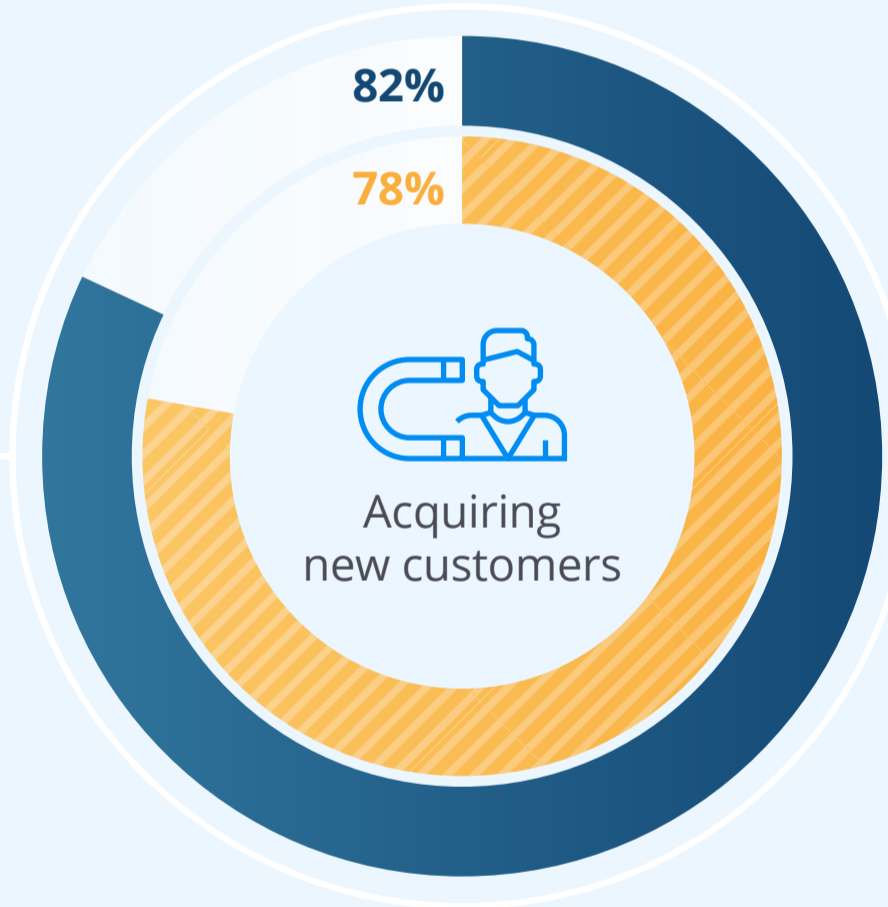
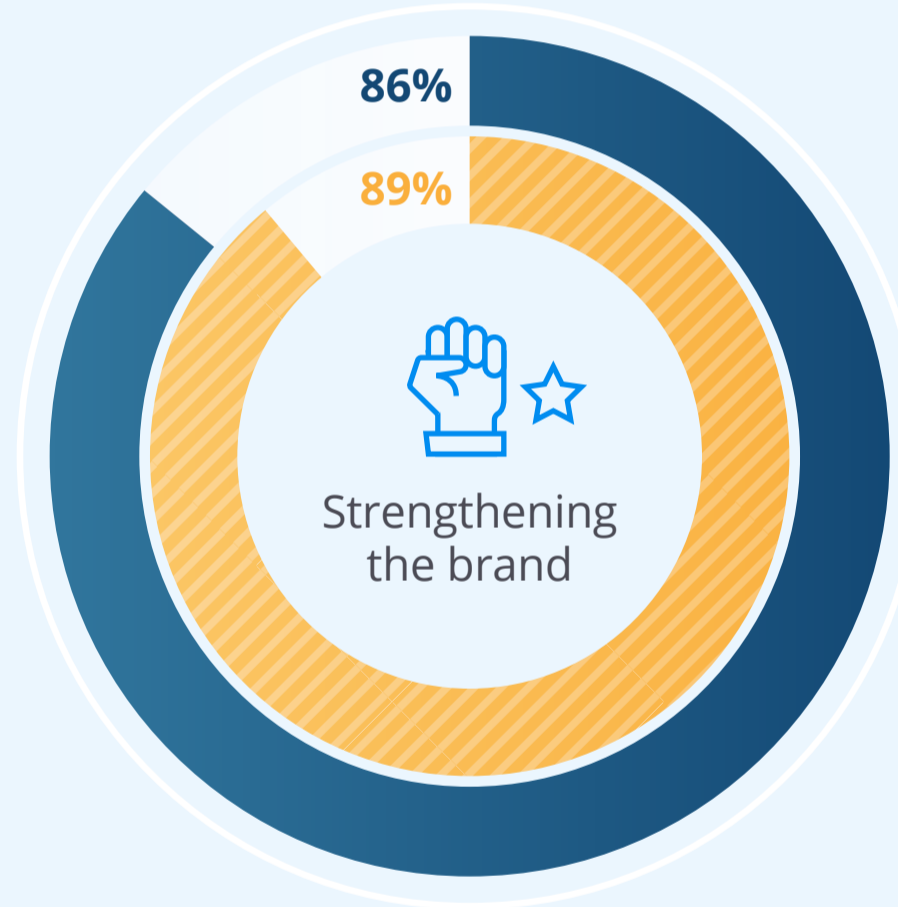
Source: Statista et al. 2020a, p.20; base: n=198 CM decision-makers; people who work in companies that do their own digital content marketing and have a successful strategy for their content marketing; open mentions; selection of answers; answers edited



### THE THREE MOST IMPORTANT CONTENT MARKETING GOALS AND IMPLEMENTED MEASURES IN B2B AND B2C

● B2C ● B2B

Goals:

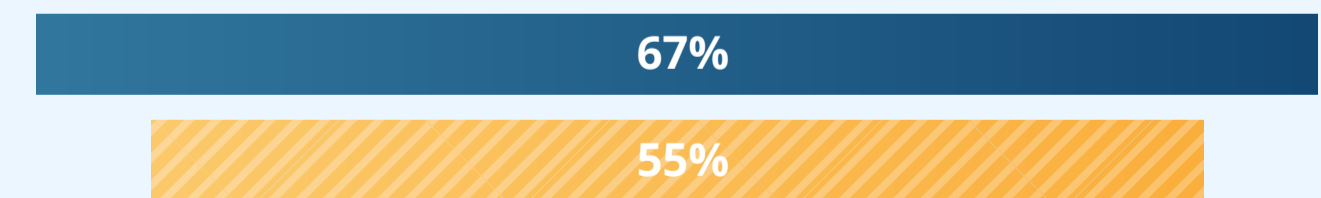
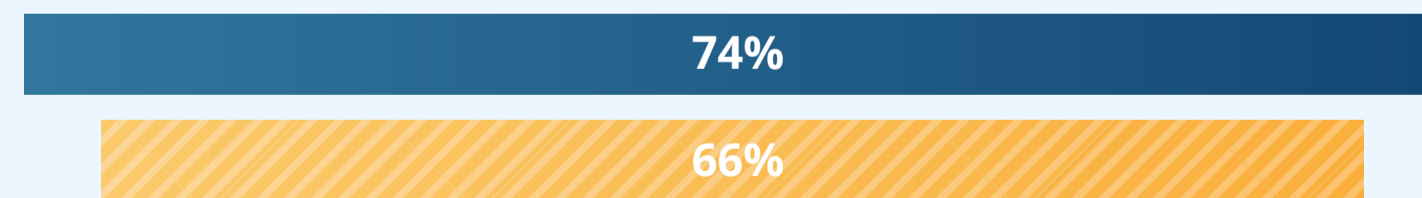
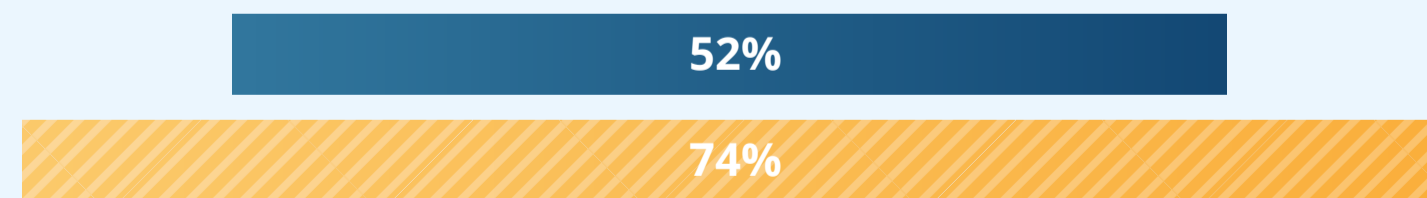


Measures:

News and industry trends

Targeted SEO measures

Explanatory content



Source: Statista et al. 2020a, p.4 & p.6; base: CM decision-makers n=76 B2C- and n=122 B2B companies and n= min. 83 B2B and n=54 B2C who pursue the respective strategic goal

# CONTENT MARKETING BUDGETS

## BUDGET DEVELOPMENT

In our introduction, we mentioned the ten-billion-euro mark reached by content marketing investments in DACH. Here, we will take a closer look at the composition of these investments in the DACH region, the situation in North America, and what this means for each individual company.

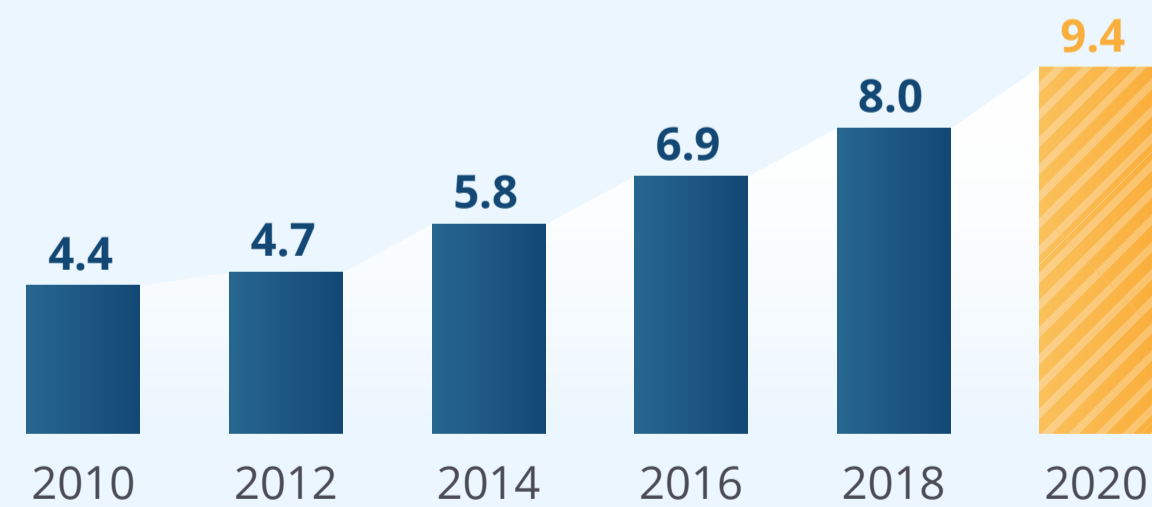
The biennial baseline study of the Content Marketing Forum has been reporting about the development in the DACH region since 2010. According to this survey, CM investments have increased by 111% since then – which corresponds to an average annual rate of 8%. And now it stands at €9.4 billion in DACH. (cf. fig. left).

Of this, Germany accounts for around €7.8 billion, Switzerland for €920 million, and Austria for €590 million.

The COMAE study also shows not only how the budget is distributed online and offline, but also how much is invested in production, distribution, and performance measurement within content marketing. According to this, approximately 50% of the budget flows into the production of

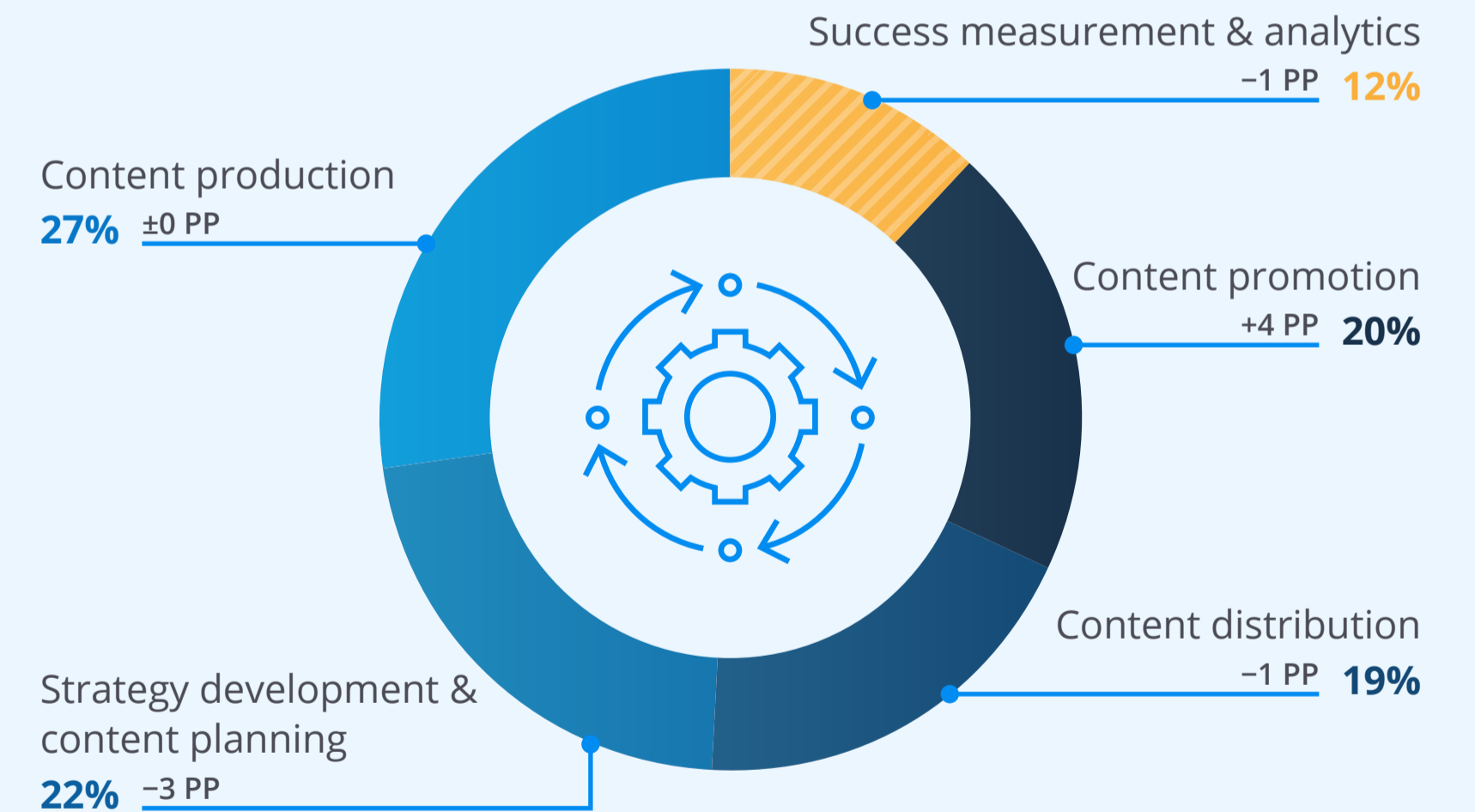
content, 40% is invested in distribution, especially in paid media, and 10% should be calculated for measuring success. A look at the CMF's baseline study also confirms this order of magnitude, where the areas of production and distribution are subdivided once again (see fig. right).

DEVELOPMENT OF CONTENT MARKETING INVESTMENTS IN DACH IN € BILLION



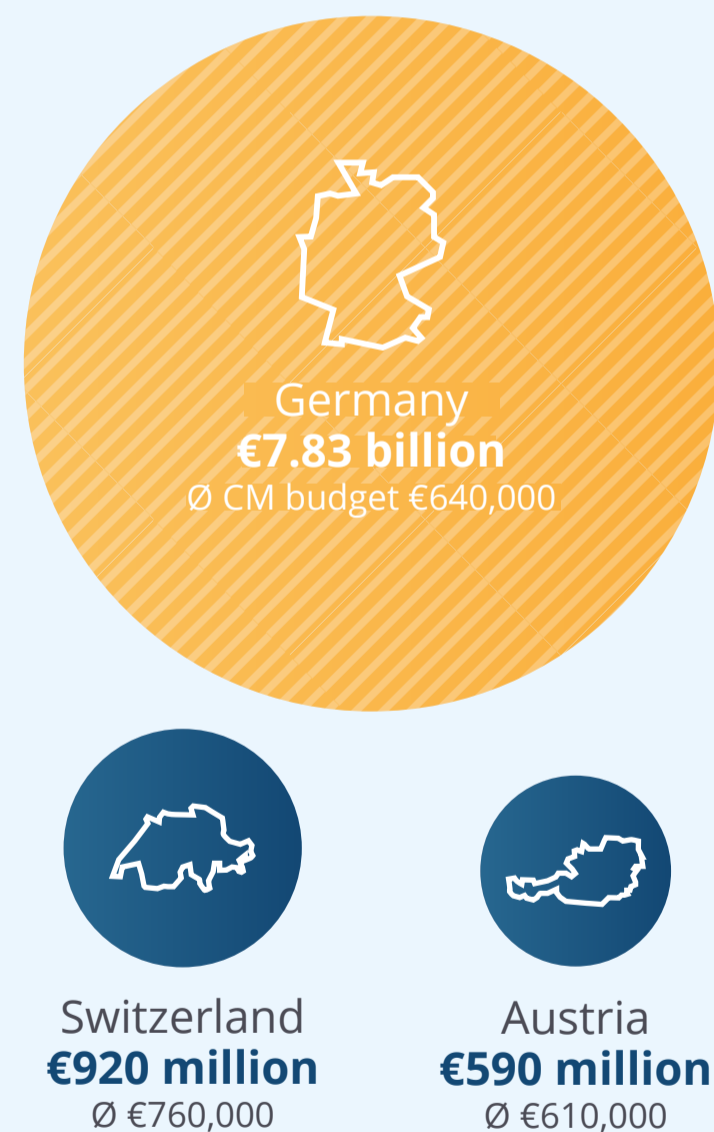
Source: CMF 2020, p.7; base: n=319 CM decision-makers in DACH, weighted

## CONTENT MARKETING INVESTMENTS: ACTIVITIES INCONTENT MARKETING CYCLE



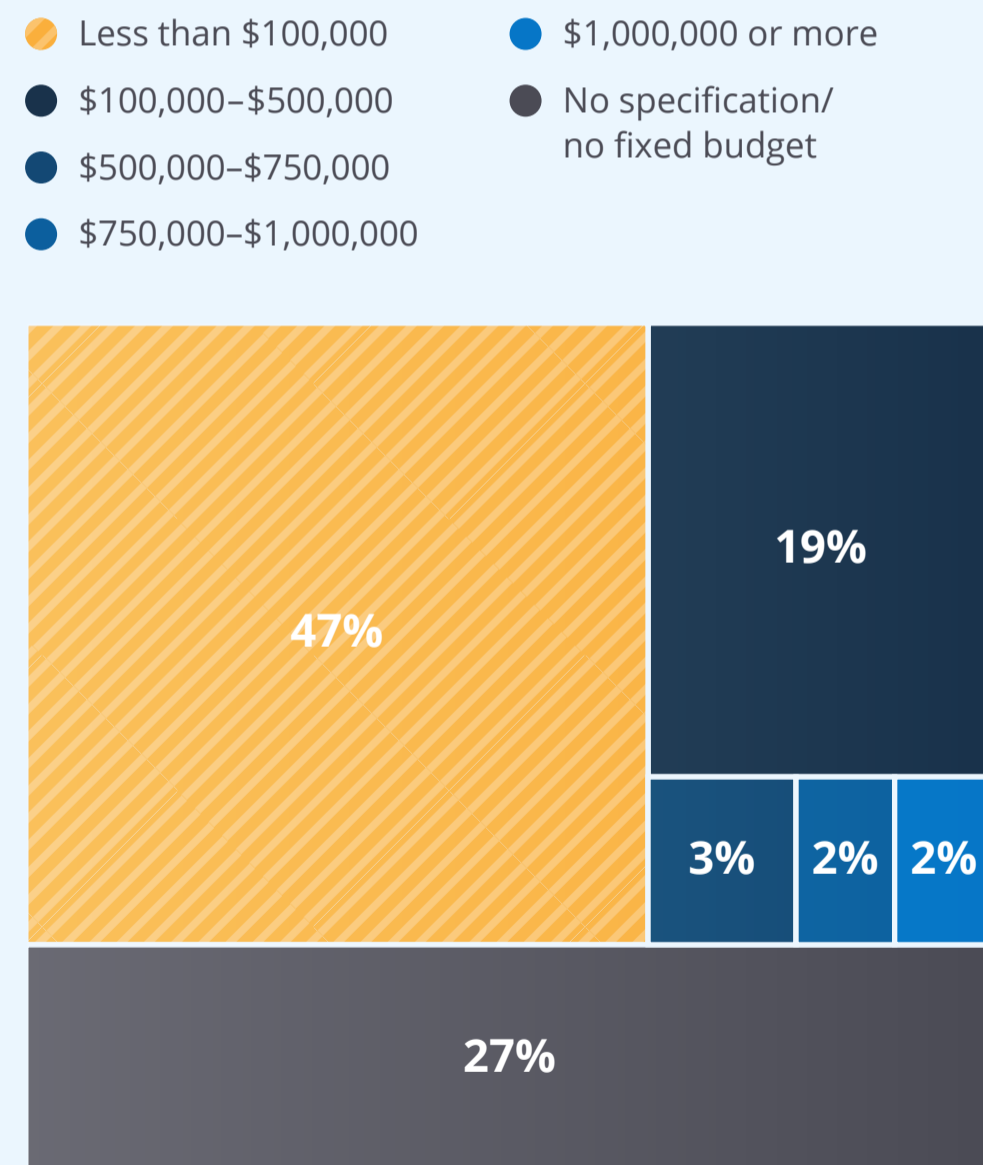
Source: CMF 2020, p.8 base: n=319 CM decision-makers in DACH, weighted

### AVERAGE CONTENT MARKETING INVESTMENTS IN DACH



Source: CMF 2020, p.7; base: n=319 CM decision-makers in DACH, weighted

### AVERAGE CONTENT MARKETING INVESTMENTS IN NORTH AMERICA IN B2B



Source: CMI 202a. p.35 base: n=679 B2B content marketers

### THE AVERAGE COMPANY BUDGET FOR CONTENT MARKETING

When it comes to budgets, an essential question for every company is how to determine the annual absolute amount. As a point of reference, the CMF's baseline study shows an average value across all companies that engage in content marketing.

**“Companies that use content marketing invest an average of €640,000 per year in their activities.”** (CMF 2020)

The CMF baseline study also provides a differentiated breakdown of the markets, recipient groups, and media channels into which investments are distributed. As the figure shows, German companies alone account for €7.83 billion of the €9.4 billion in total CM investments in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland. (cf. fig. left)

The overview of all B2B companies surveyed in the CMI study shows how the budgets are staggered, at least for the companies in North America. Although just under half of the respondents invest less than US\$100,000 per year, more than one in four companies has an annual CM budget above this figure. And 7% invest more than US\$500,000 in their content marketing:

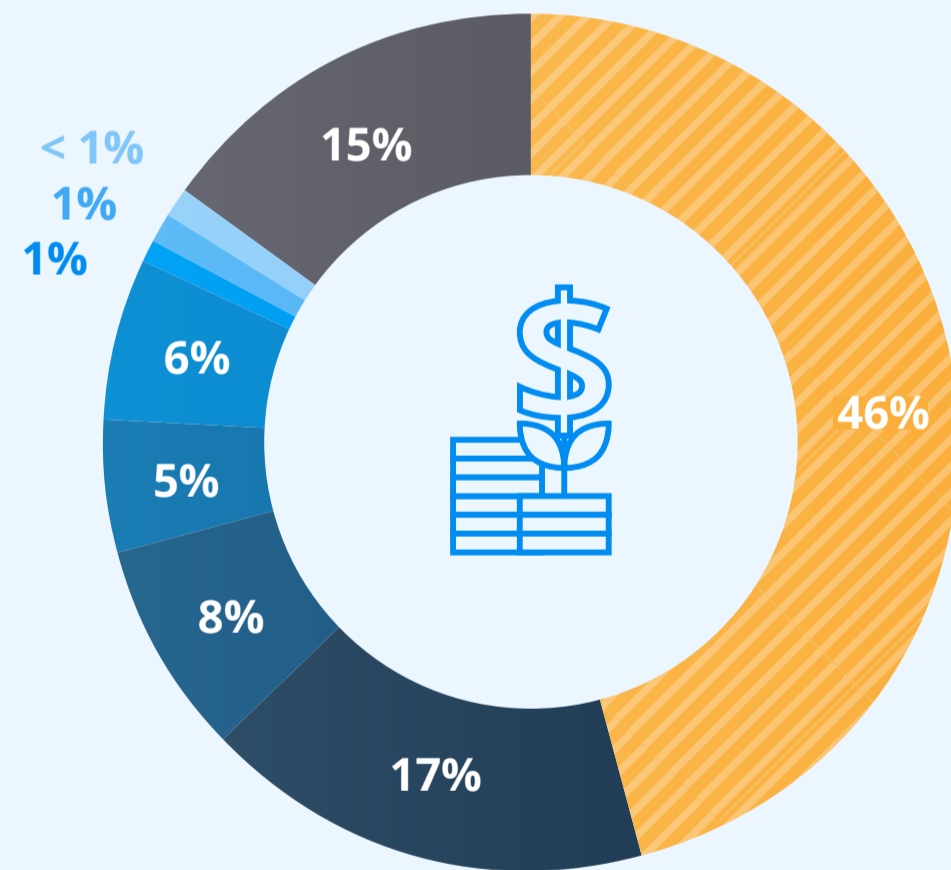
By comparison, the SEMrush study of 1,200 content marketers in 39 countries indicates a similar distribution of budgets, although these are significantly lower than in North America. Close to half invest less than €10,000 per year in content marketing, whereas a mere 10% invest more than US\$100,000 annually.

It becomes apparent that the amount of the absolute budget hinges upon various framework factors – company size above all else. It is therefore worth breaking down the average budget by company size, where the clear causality between company size and budget can be seen. (cf. fig. p.15)



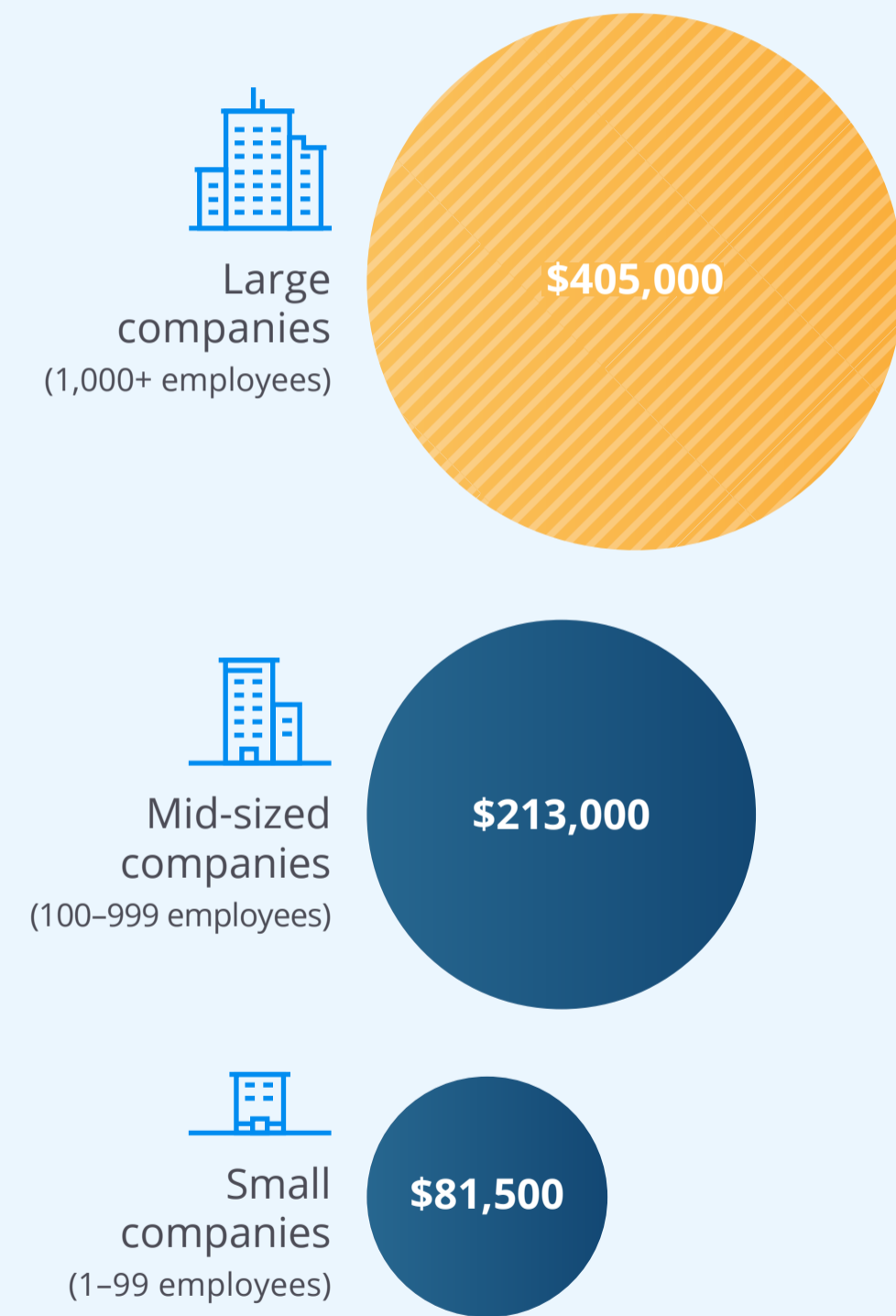
**AVERAGE CONTENT MARKETING INVESTMENTS, WORLDWIDE**

- \$10,000 or less
- \$10,001 to \$25,000
- \$25,001 to \$50,000
- \$50,001 to \$100,000
- \$100,000 to \$500,000
- \$500,001 to \$1 million
- \$1.01 million to \$5 million
- More than \$5 million
- I don't know



Source: SEMrush 2020, p.43; question: How much did your company invest in content marketing in 2019? („Wieviel hat Ihr Unternehmen in 2019 in Content-Marketing investiert?“); base: n=1,200 content marketers in 39 countries

**AVERAGE ANNUAL BUDGETS GROUPED ACCORDING TO COMPANY SIZE**



Source: CMI 2020a, p.35; Basis: n=679 B2B-content marketers; annual budgets in USD grouped according to company size

**BUDGET PROGNOSIS: OPTIMISTIC (INCLUDING COVID-19 SCENARIOS)**

There seems to be no end in sight to investment growth in content marketing, and the mood just preceding the coronavirus crisis clearly shows this:

**COMPANIES EXPECT AN ADDITIONAL 10% INCREASE IN INVESTMENT PER YEAR OVER THE NEXT THREE YEARS:**

This was the optimistic outlook in February 2020 before the pandemic struck. For the period following the coronavirus crisis, there are three scenarios: In the uppermost one, investments of €9 billion achieve the forecast level almost equal to the one without the coronavirus crisis; in the middle one, they are €8.4 billion; in the lowest one, investments could be reduced by more than 40% (CMF 2020, p.2)

A look across the Atlantic reveals the first actual budget effects from the pandemic in the freshly published 11th CMI study: While nearly half of B2B

decision makers were still expecting a somewhat significant increase in content marketing budgets for 2020 back in the summer of 2019, 53% of respondents reported a year later that their spending on content marketing had not changed, at least in the first half of 2020. Another 29% reported a decrease in spending, whereas 18% had actually increased their spending. This relatively low-level budget impact of the first COVID-19 wave was largely independent of company size. (see fig., next page)

The forecast for the second half of the year was reassuring: almost one-third of respondents estimate that their company would spend even more on content marketing by the end of the year in comparison to the first half. However, the majority anticipate that spending would remain unchanged for the remainder of 2020, with only twelve percent expecting a decrease in CM spending. (see CMI 2020c, p.41)

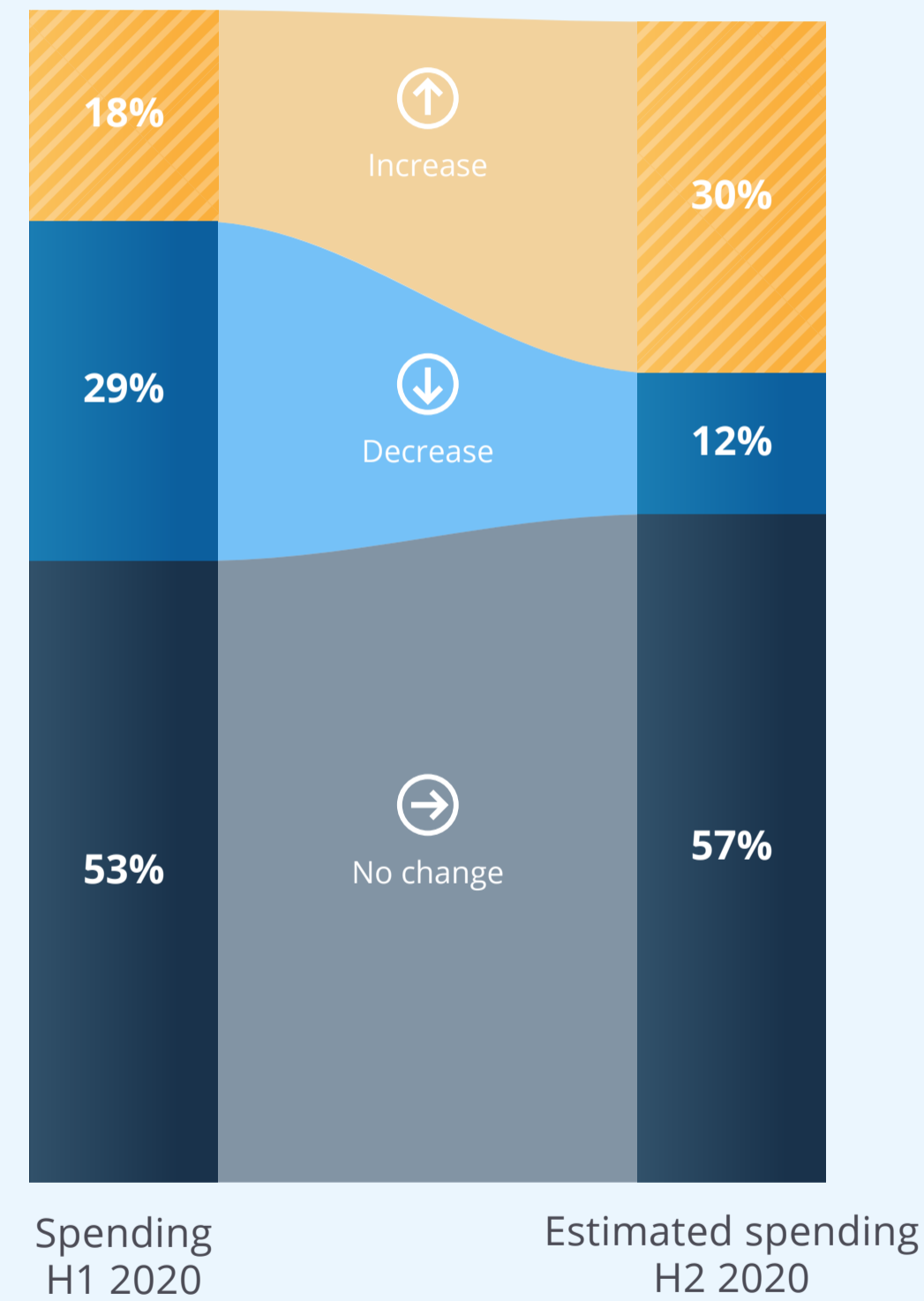
At the time of the most recent CMI B2B survey in July 2020, the mood appeared optimistic, with half of respondents estimating that the pandemic would have only a moderate long-term impact on their organization and content marketing success. Only 15% assumed a high (estimated negative) impact. (cf. CMI 2020c, p.44)

It will be interesting to see how the second wave of the pandemic will influence the results in 2021 and how German marketers think. Therefore, we will include this question in the next content marketing trend study in early 2021.

The higher the budgetary impact of the pandemic, the more important it will be to focus on content marketing measures that are both effective and promising. By a wide margin, the top predicted areas for content marketing investment in 2021 are a return to the core: content creation with 70% approval, and website adjustments with two-thirds approval. In each case, half of the respondents are readying themselves for events with flexibility in digital and/or hybrid formats and a focus on the organic distribution of content. This suggests that media spending in particular will be affected by budget cuts. (cf. fig.)

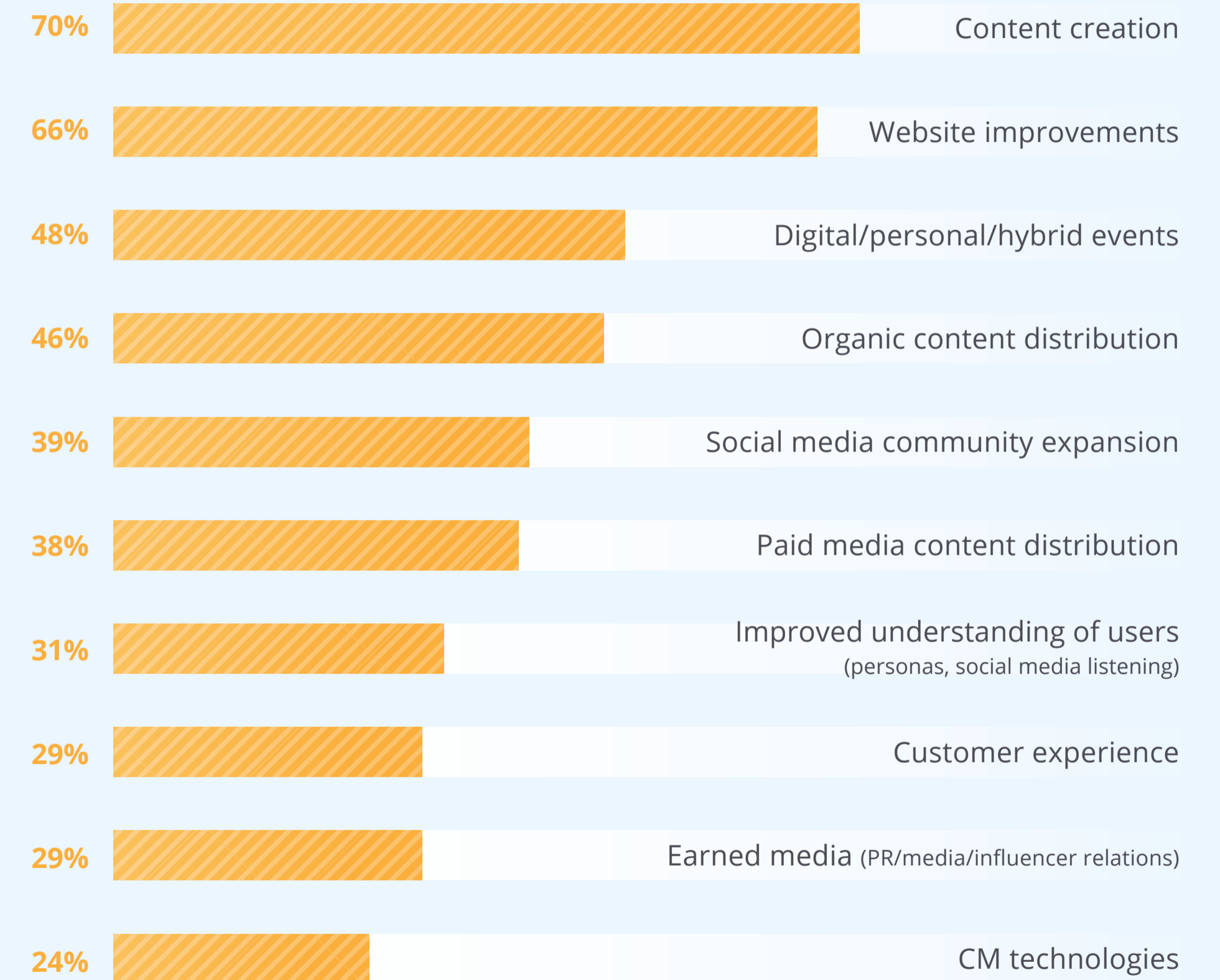


### RAMIFICATIONS OF COVID-19 ON ACTUAL AND ESTIMATED CM BUDGETS



Source: CMI 2020c, p.40/41; base: n=740 B2B content marketers; survey July 2020

### THE TOP TEN B2B AREAS IN WHICH CONTENT MARKETERS WILL INVEST IN 2021



Source: CMI 2020c; p.45; base: n=740 B2B content marketers



# EMPLOYER BRANDING AS THE THIRD PILLAR OF CONTENT MARKETING

## HOW CONTENT MARKETING PERFORMS IN THE WAR FOR TALENT

Whereas B2C and B2B communications each account for roughly one-third of annual content marketing investments, investments in employee communications – known as B2E communications – have grown the most, with a 12% increase compared to 2018, according to the CMF. The approximately €1,580 million invested in this area accounts for nearly a fifth of total CM investments. (see fig.)

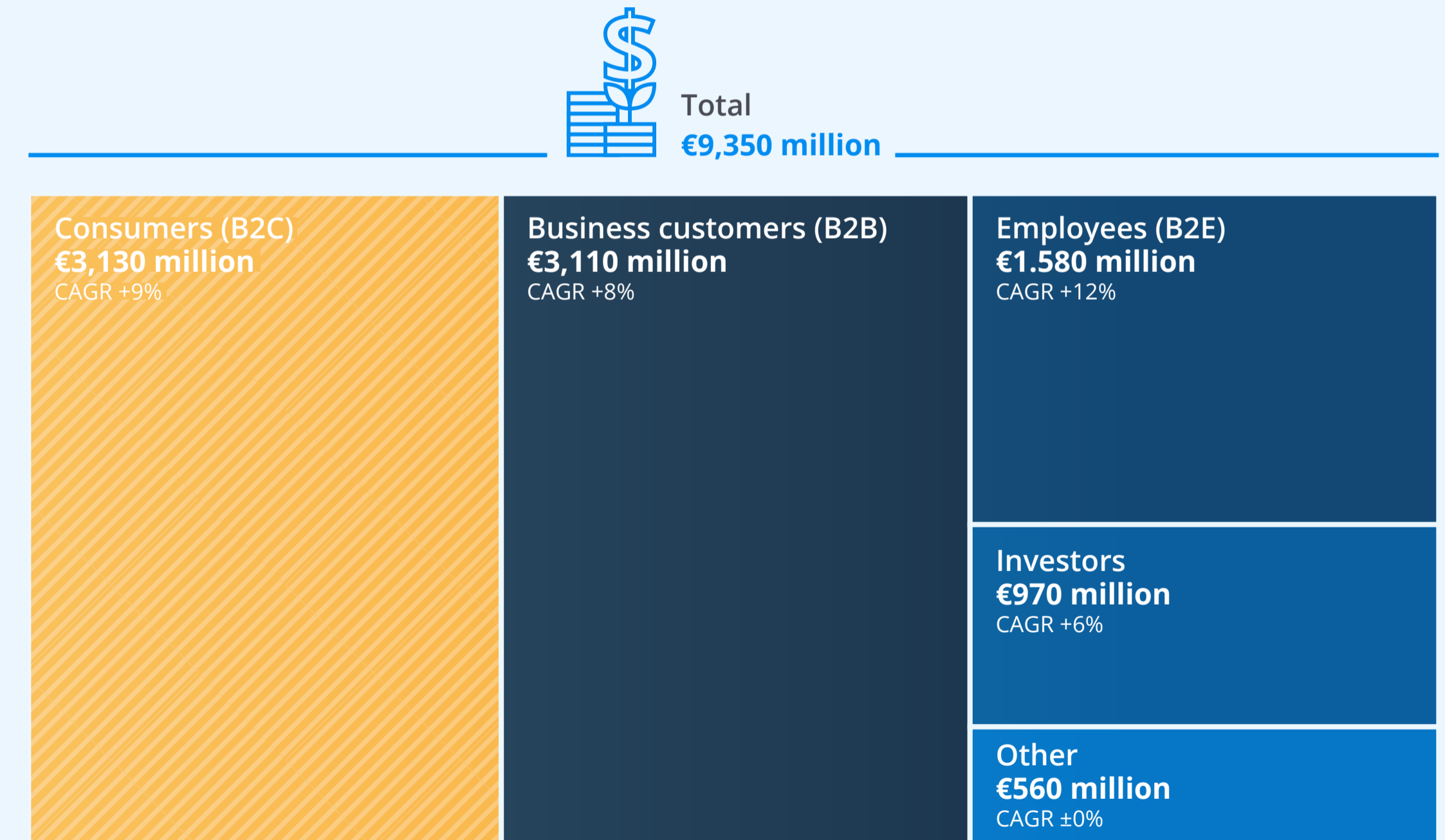
The development of the results from the CMF baseline study emphasize that content marketing is becoming the central instrument for achieving employer branding and recruiting goals. This is not surprising, given that credible as well as helpful content are in demand in the context of jobs and careers.

Content marketing makes it possible for a company to tell a consistent story about itself and its job offers to potential employees – more than two-thirds of companies are therefore relying increasingly

more on content marketing in personnel marketing, both to convince new employees and to accompany change management processes for employees. (CMF 2020, pp.30 & 31)

**OVER TWO-THIRDS OF COMPANIES ARE CONVINCED: CONTENT-MARKETING HELPS TO WIN THE WAR FOR TALENTS, ESPECIALLY WITH CONTENT-SAVVY GENERATION Y.**

## DISTRIBUTION OF CM INVESTMENTS ACROSS DIFFERENT RECIPIENT GROUPS



Source: CMF 2020, p. 11; base: n=319 CM decision-makers in DACH, weighted





02

# CONTENT CREATION AND DISTRIBUTION

Whereas ten years ago, the challenges for content marketing decision-makers all revolved around the processes and quality of content marketing, the most recent content shock phenomenon has led to the realization that the targeted dissemination of content is at least as important. For this reason, both also belong in one chapter.

# DISSEMINATING CONTENT: PAID, SOCIAL UND DIGITAL

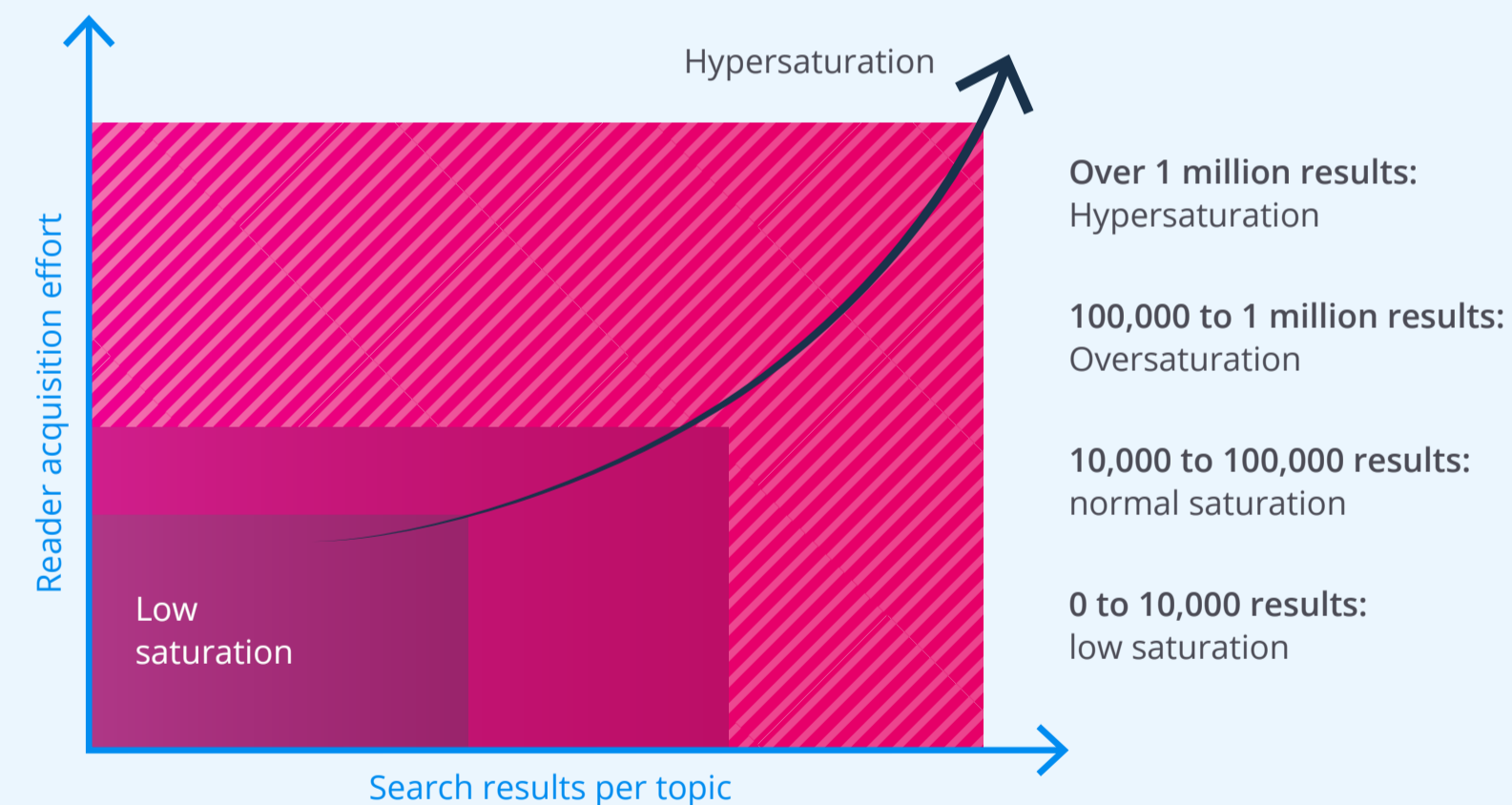
## WHY CONTENT CREATION AND ITS DISSEMINATION GO TOGETHER

In a growing market, the challenge is that more and more content producers are competing for the same user groups as the size of potential recipients remains the same. This means that the barriers to entry are growing for those who currently intend to start with content marketing, yet it is also becoming increasingly difficult for established players to efficiently reach the desired personas with their content.

This connection is exemplified by what is known as the content saturation index.

## THE CONTENT SATURATION INDEX

The content saturation index describes the amount of search results about a topic.



WITH INCREASING SATURATION, THE EFFORT TO PLACE CONTENT AND GENERATE LEADS INCREASES OVERPROPORTIONALLY.

Source: CMF 2016 p.5; base: illustration inspired by Marc Schaefer 2015

Thousands upon thousands of content and communicative messages inundate the public on a daily basis. This phenomenon has been outlined by Mark Schaefer and is known as content shock. In such times, companies require an established strategy in order to stage their content, which also includes an advertising context, by increasing the reach they have established beyond their owned media target groups.

Only reach is able to ensure that content achieves their goals and can allow their effect to take hold. To expand this reach, the following are necessary:

- detailed **knowledge about users** and their information needs
- an established **overview about paid media options** of individual channels
- **Knowledge** about which combination of promotions is suitable for a concrete communication goal, and last but not least
- a **process and a plan** about which contents should be advertised over which platform.

Otherwise, there is a high risk of simply wasting the high distribution share through botched experiments and missing target formulations.

Content media planning also fundamentally means:

**“Content creation and marketing have to go hand in hand; both belong in a common editorial plan.”**

(CMF Content Promotion White Paper 2016, p.6)

Content production as well as marketing belong in a common editorial plan. Connecting both worlds requires a new way of thinking, for in the past, many companies did not see the necessity of marketing and focused predominantly on the challenges of high-quality content production.

### PAID MEDIA AS A DRIVER FOR INCREASING CM INVESTMENTS

Yet now, nearly two-thirds of decision makers are convinced that content marketing does not work without a paid scope, a.k.a. **pay to play**. This is a clear increase in comparison to 2018. (CMF 2020, p.3)

In absolute numbers, this means that €1,880 million is invested each year in content promotion in the DACH countries – an increase of 20% in comparison to 2018.

### ONLINE VS. OFFLINE: THE CHANGING RELATIONSHIP OF DIGITAL TO PRINT

If one endeavors to reach the public in a targeted manner with content, the proper channels and/or platforms need to be addressed. These change continuously and hinge upon which factors are being observed: the platform’s growth factor, its net reach, and the length of time spent. If one looks at the channels where content marketing investments are sizable, these are also becoming increasingly digital in nature: Ten years ago, most people still thought of print with regard to the topic of content marketing (in the form of client magazines, for example). Nowadays, these are digital platforms, websites, and/or at least a landing page where content is staged.

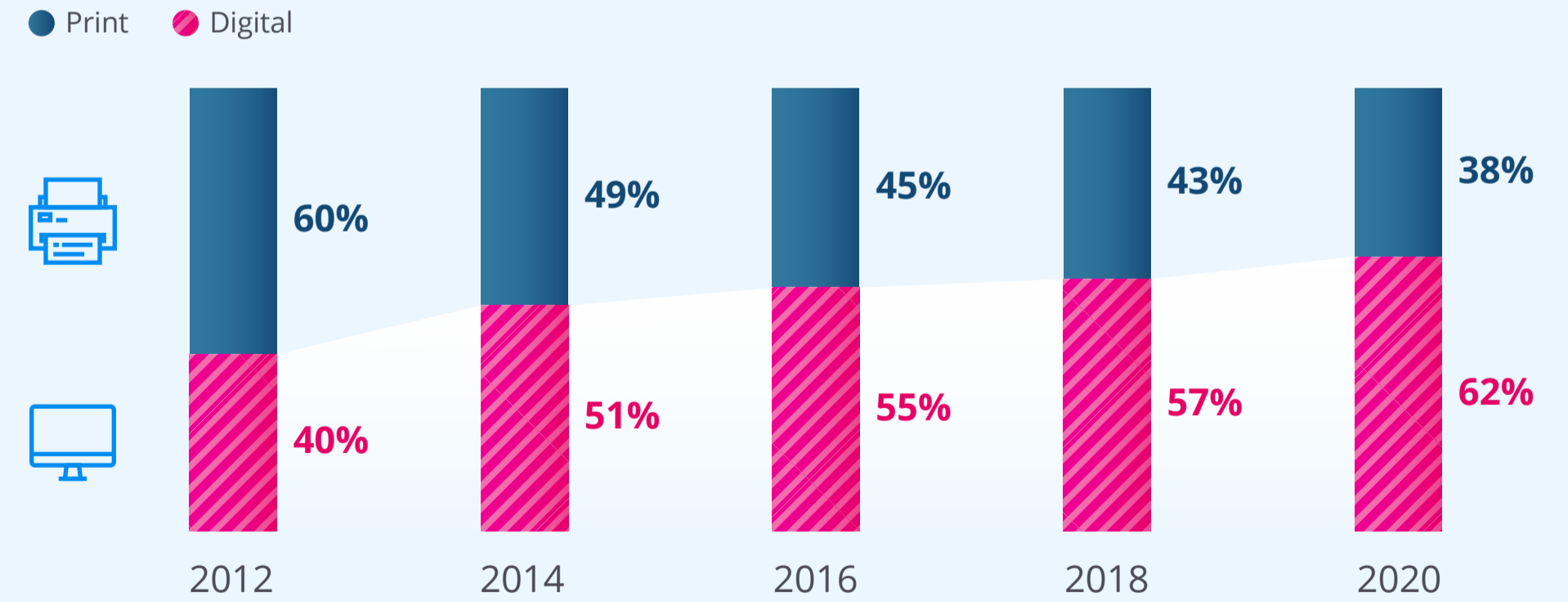
This about-face from print to digital is also reflected in the results of the baseline study: Whereas in 2012, 60% of investments went into print, the ratio is now more than reversed:

**62% OF INVESTMENTS ARE DIGITAL, MEANING THAT CONTENT MARKETING IS INCREASINGLY TAKING PLACE ONLINE.**

**Where print plays to its strengths:** Since 2012, digital content management investments have more than tripled – but print investments have also increased.

Thanks primarily to its tactile experience, which enhances its media impact, print continues to play a very important role. This is particularly true for B2B and investor communications - where print shares are higher than in the B2E and B2C sectors, which invest more than average in digital media. (CMF 2020, p.2)

### SHARES OF DIGITAL MEDIA AND PRINT MEDIA IN CM INVESTMENTS OVER TIME



Source: CMF 2020, p.22; base: n=319 CM decision-makers; weighted

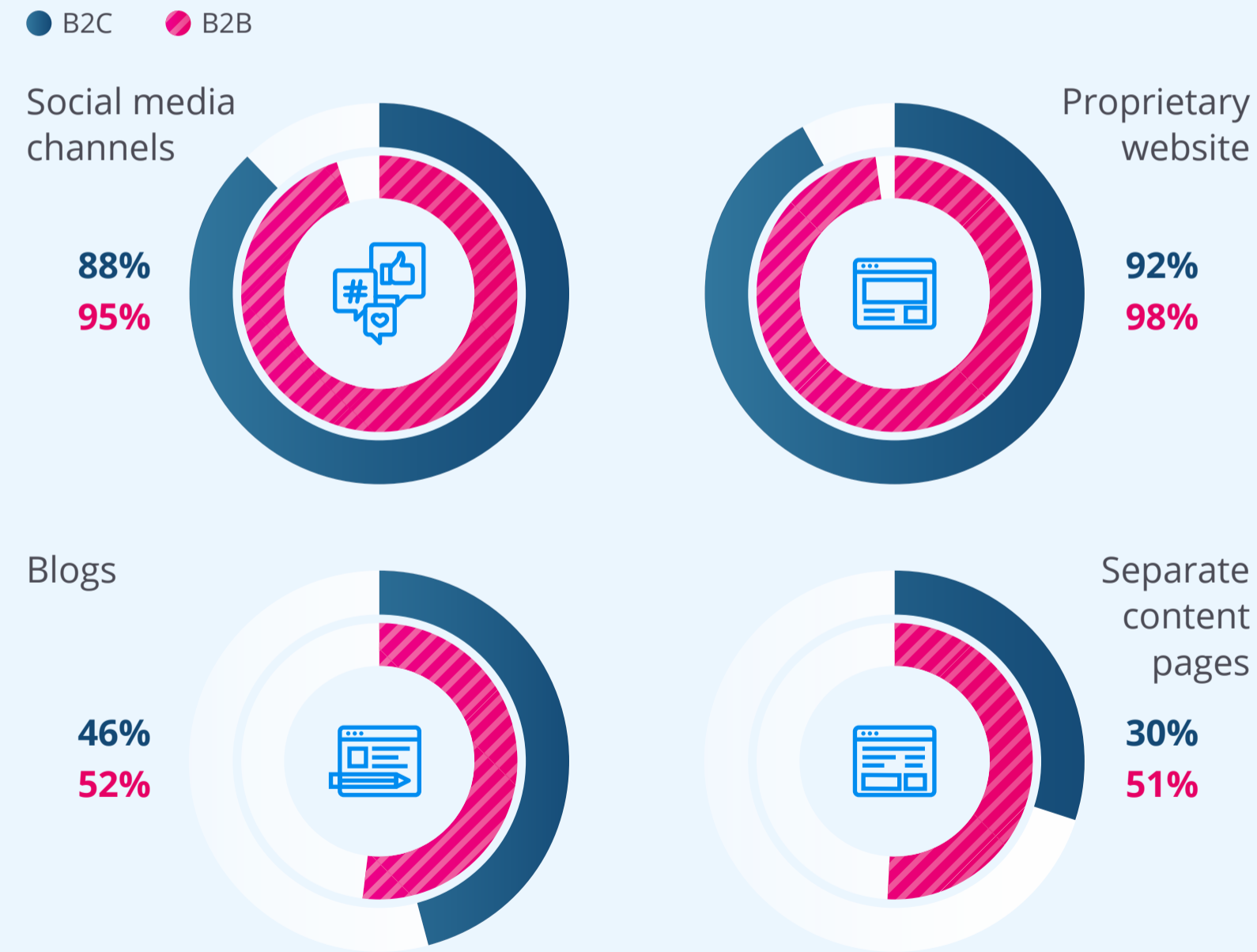


**SOCIAL MEDIA AND PAID SOCIAL ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT DISTRIBUTION CHANNELS**

Over the past few years and alongside proprietary websites, social media platforms have become the most important distribution channel for content marketing and constitute part of the content marketing strategy for 95% of B2B and 88% of B2C companies (cf. figure, left).

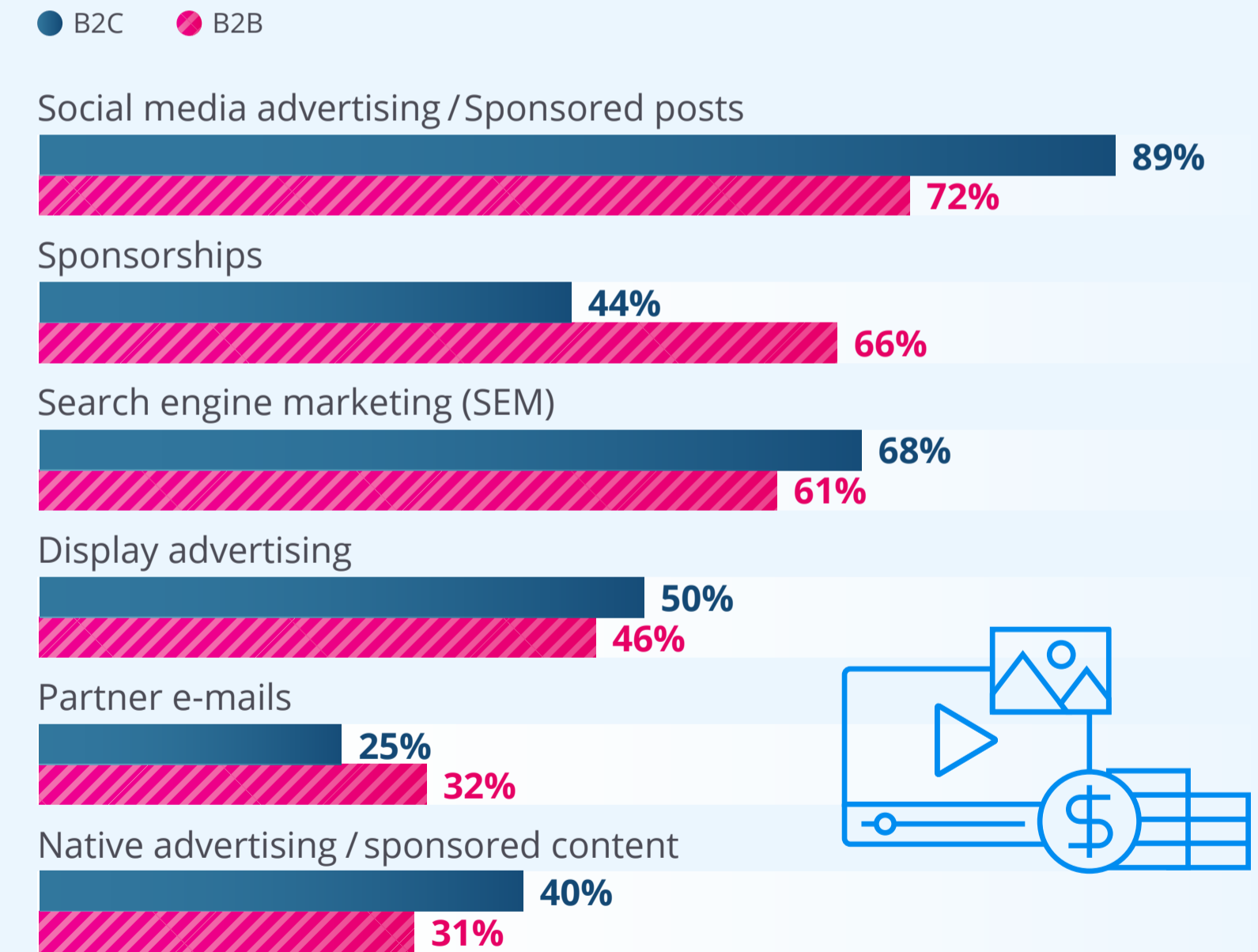
According to the CMI report, social media, in addition to a proprietary blog/website and e-mail, is the most important organic distribution channel for nine out of ten B2B decision makers. Yet 84% of B2B decision makers and 85% of those in B2C also use content promotion, i.e., paid distribution channels. Here too, paid social – particularly at LinkedIn for B2B and at Facebook and Instagram for B2C (see next chapter) – plays the most important role (cf. figure, right).

**WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING CHANNELS DO YOU USE FOR CONTENT MARKETING?**



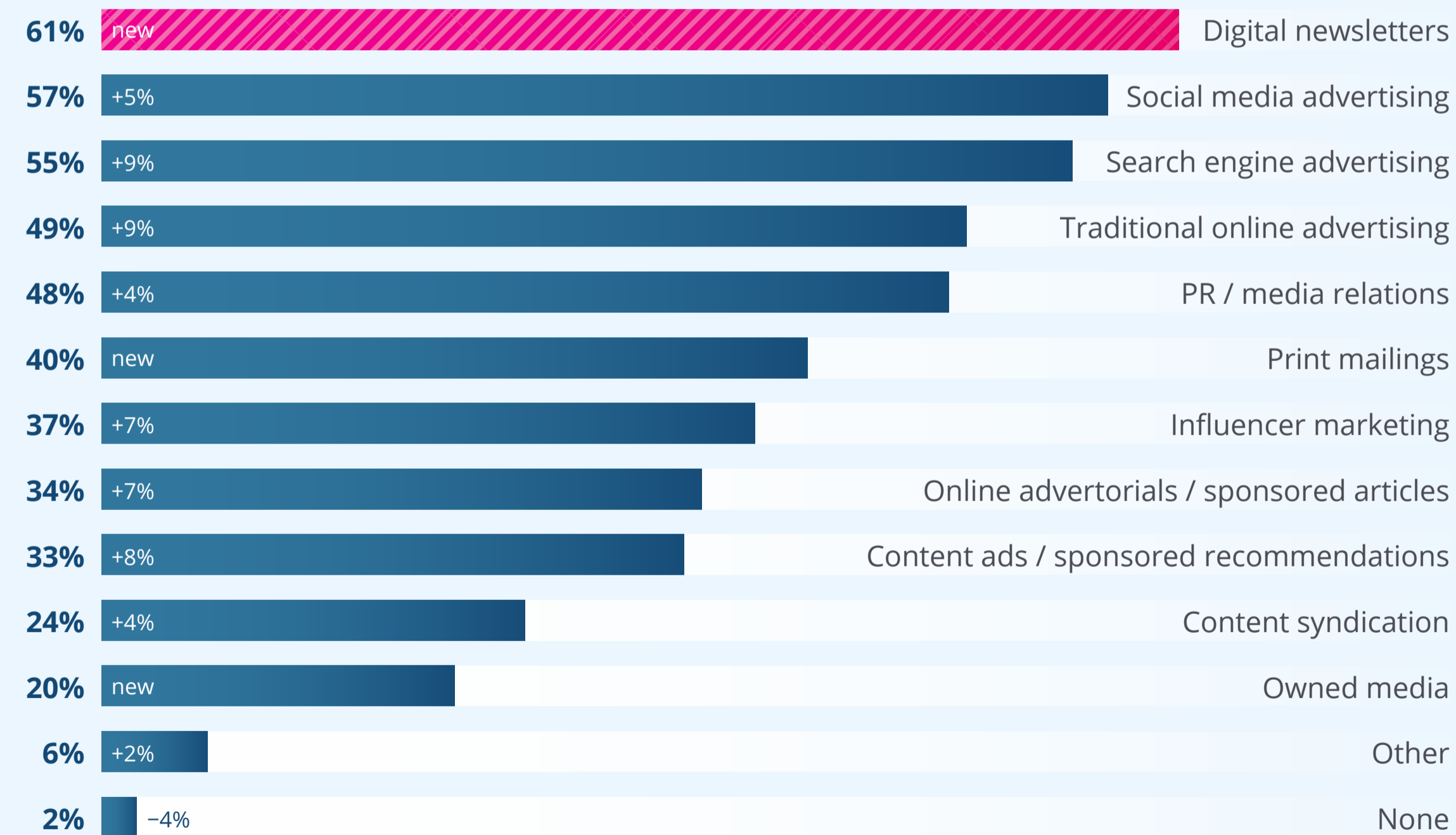
Source: Statista et al. 2020a, p.13; base: n=198 CM decision-makers in total; n=76 B2C companies; n=122 B2B companies; multi-pick

**PAID MEDIA MEASURES APPLIED IN B2B AND B2C IN NORTH AMERICA IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS**



Source: CMI 2020a, p.27 & CMI 2020b, p.25; base: n=679 B2B content marketers, n=179 B2C content marketers

CONTENT PROMOTION MEASURES APPLIED IN DACH 2020 COMPARED TO 2018



Source: CMF 2020, p.47; base: n=319 CM decision-makers; entries compared to baseline study in 2018

APPLIED CONTENT PROMOTION MEASURES

At CMF, the list of applied content promotion approaches continues to expand with each passing year. A whopping 61% of CM decision makers who were surveyed use a newsletter, followed by paid social and paid search. A strategy with the highest growth quotas is the aforementioned influencer marketing, now used by 37% of CM decision makers. (cf. fig.)

The Federal Association for a Digital Economy (Bundesverband Digitale Wirtschaft e.V. or BVDW) differentiates among three types of content in its Content Marketing KPI Finder ([www.kpi-finder.com](http://www.kpi-finder.com)): explore, evaluate, and engage. As a matrix, the model provides a highly structured and clear basis for an overview of one's own content marketing actions. Thus, depending on the strategy, such content is distributed via diverse channels such as websites, blogs, online stores, e-mail newsletters, native ads, as well as numerous social media platforms. (cf. BVDW 2020)

In order to efficiently position social media within the context of a successful distribution strategy and, at the latest, as soon as a social media platform is hyped, social media use studies serve as an argumentation aid and foundation for decision making for paid content media planning.

For after all, media budgets flow to wherever the target groups are, and at the same time, the pressure is on the marketing decision makers to demonstrate the success of media issues via reliable data.

First, the numbers have to show that media usage is shifting significantly. What is initially a gut feeling must be backed up with hard facts so that media budgets can be allocated more efficiently.

- Which channel reaches which target group?
- In which use situation are they located?
- Are the conditions for addressing the personas better as compared to other channels?

Responses to this topic are provided by the excellent and freely accessible ARD/ZDF online study, which shows developments in Germany with regard to media but also social media use. Since 1997, this fundamental study has provided outstanding representative data on an annual basis about media use in Germany. It is one of the most valuable sources for describing the evolution of media use behaviors via the arrival of the internet.

# THE MOST IMPORTANT SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

## WHICH SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM IS IN THE LEAD?

Of all the social media offerings, Instagram has shown the highest spike in use as early as 2018 and is used primarily by those under 30 years of age. Among 14-to-29-year-olds, 62% use Instagram at least once a month. This is followed at a considerable distance by Snapchat, Twitch, XING, LinkedIn, and Twitter. In general, Instagram and Snapchat are used especially frequently by 14-to-29-year-olds: TikTok, for example, reaches five percent of those between the ages of 14 and 29 years every day. (Beisch et al., 2019)

The CMF study also shows how social media platforms have shifted over the last few years. Yet even if no allegedly clear winner emerges – Instagram and WhatsApp in B2C und LinkedIn surpasses XING and Twitter in B2B – one must always differentiate between target groups and targets. Facebook might demonstrate the greatest losses and Instagram the greatest percentual profits, but a glance at the age

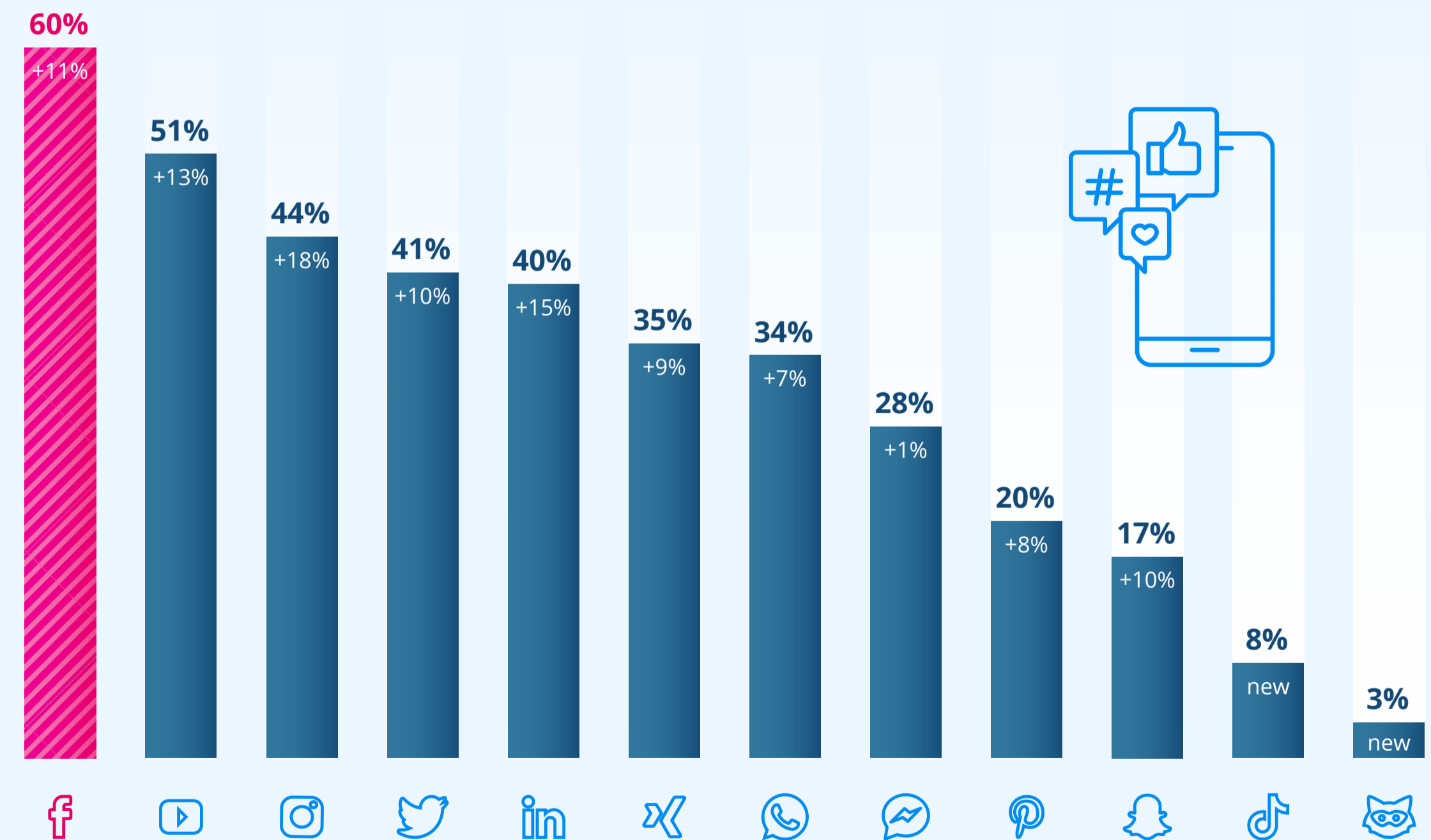
structures and absolute numbers indicates: Instagram has singularly knocked Facebook from its pedestal among those aged up to 29 years, but among the above-30-set, Facebook continues to dominate the winner's podium for social media. (cf. fig.)

**“Facebook continues to be used the most frequently. The chart toppers are Instagram und LinkedIn.”** (CMF 2020, p.39)

The CMI study also delves into the use of social media platforms and differentiates between organic content and paid social as well as between B2B and B2C. The results here are as follows: In B2B, LinkedIn has the edge over Twitter and Facebook with regard to organic content, whereas in B2C, Facebook with over 90% paid and organic holds a significant lead over Instagram.

The CMI study also delves into the use of social media platforms and differentiates between organic content and paid social as well as between B2B and B2C. The results here are as follows: In B2B, LinkedIn

SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS APPLIED IN DACH IN 2020 COMPARED TO 2018

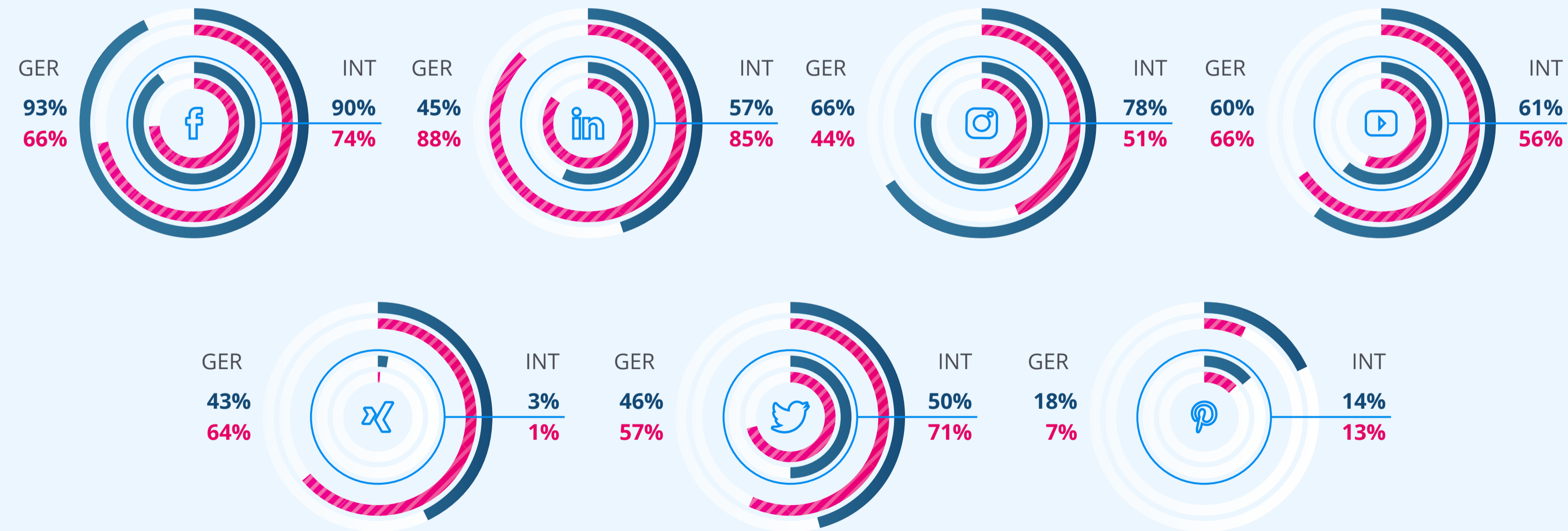


Source: CMF 2020, p.39; base: n=319 CM decision makers; entries compared to baseline study in 2018



WHICH SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS DO YOU USE FOR YOUR CONTENT MARKETING?

● B2C ● B2B



Source: Statista et al. 2020a, p.14; base: n=183 CM decision-makers total; n=67 B2C companies; n=116 B2B companies; multi-pick

has the edge over Twitter and Facebook with regard to organic content, whereas in B2C, Facebook with over 90% paid and organic holds a significant lead over Instagram.

In the B2C category, Instagram has clearly assumed greater significance and occupies second place for the most popular social media channels, but as has been the case in the past, is far behind Facebook while leading YouTube. (cf. fig.)

INSTAGRAM BEFLÜGELT INFLUENCER-MARKETING

Yet unrelated to which platform happens to be in the lead, the mechanics continue to be the same: As soon as user numbers go up, so does marketing spending. According to the BVDW study, 61% of advertising drivers wish to increase their budgets for influencer marketing in 2019 and the discipline of influencer marketing is already poised to cross the billions threshold. (Goldmedia 2018)

Correspondingly, and according to Socialbakers, the number of influencers who use the hashtag "#ad" have markedly increased over the past few years. (Socialbakers 2020)

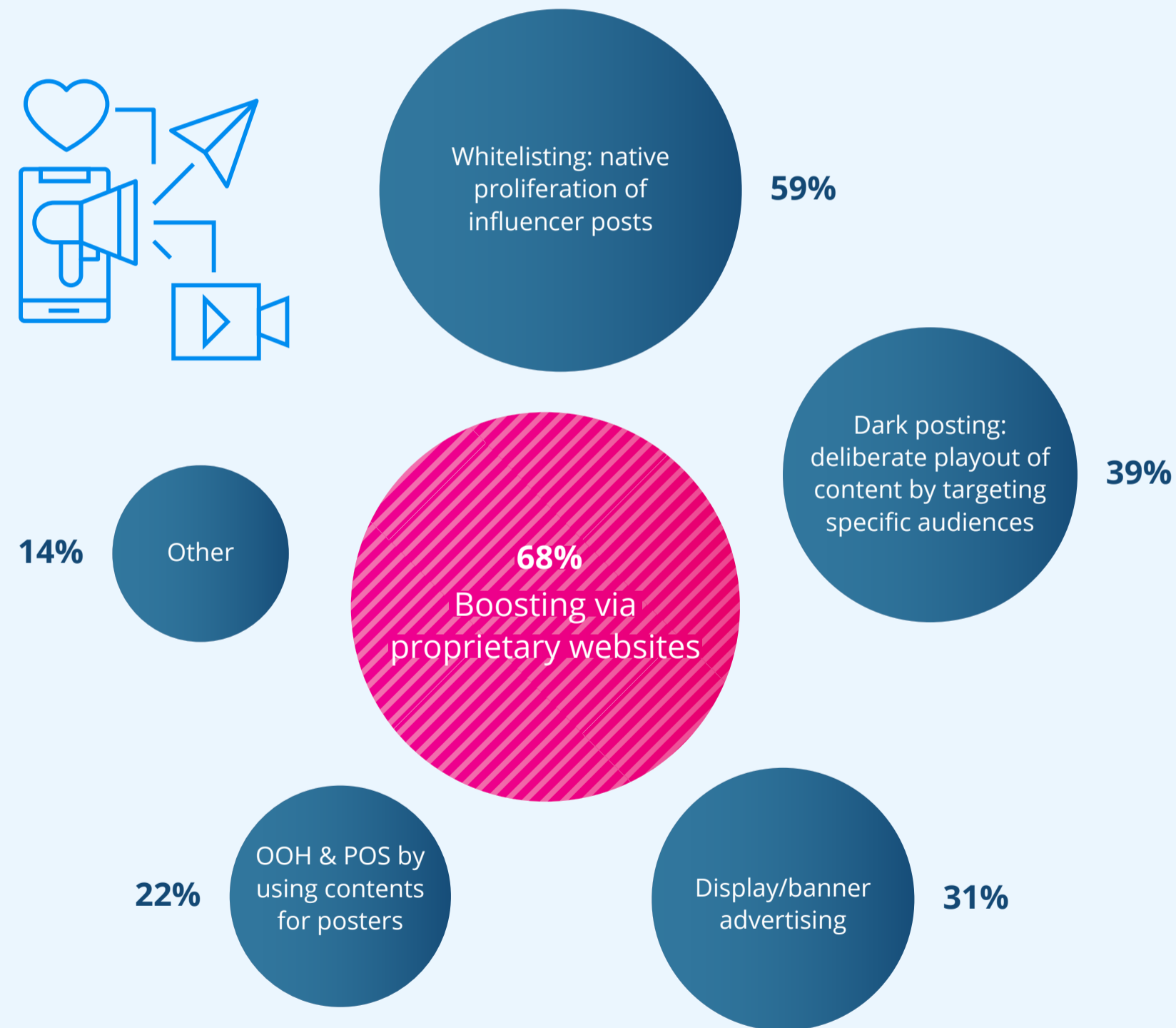
For all those who are interested in digging deeper into the current state of research with regard to influencer marketing, the influencer marketing compendium summarizes the most important studies about this topic. It illustrates the fact that influencer marketing has become a permanent fixture in digital marketing and is taking on an

increasingly important role as a distribution channel in content marketing and outlines how this has come to pass. (cf. GreenAdz 2020)

For example, the COMAE study in 2017 already rated influencer marketing as the only distribution channel that is used significantly more frequently by successful companies, thereby making it the most important paid media trend alongside the use of native advertising.

Similarly, the CMF baseline study has also identified influencer marketing as the most rapidly growing distribution channel in content marketing since 2016 (see: applied content promotion measures, cf. p.22).

### WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING STRATEGIES HAVE YOU APPLIED WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF YOUR INFLUENCER MARKETING STRATEGY OVER THE PAST YEAR?



Source: ACTIVATE 2019, p.17; base: n=111 US marketing decision makers in total; multi-pick

### INFLUENCER MARKETING AS A DRIVER IN CONTENT PRODUCT PRODUCTION

Not only does the discipline of influencer marketing play an increasingly important role as a distribution channel for content marketing. Over the past two years, the trend in influencer marketing has emerged that applying this discipline is especially worth the effort for the reason that influencers also serve as content creators and are increasingly evolving into crucial sources for content production.

By focusing on enduring influencer relationships with a high brand fit, the criteria used to select influencers are shifting from community size to qualitative aspects such as compatibility with brand values as well as the quality and creativity of content production. Along with sponsored content, influencers have become the second most frequently used "content creators only," in other words, not as distributors, but as content studios. Is this a cheaper option for content production? Because by 2019, three-quarters of the U.S. marketing decision-makers who were surveyed were already using the content from their influencer campaigns elsewhere, and, in particular, the incidence of multiple content (re-)use continues to increase from year to year. (cf. ACTIVATE 2019)

# THE ANATOMY OF SUCCESSFUL CONTENT

## APPLIED CONTENT FORMATS IN B2C VS. B2B

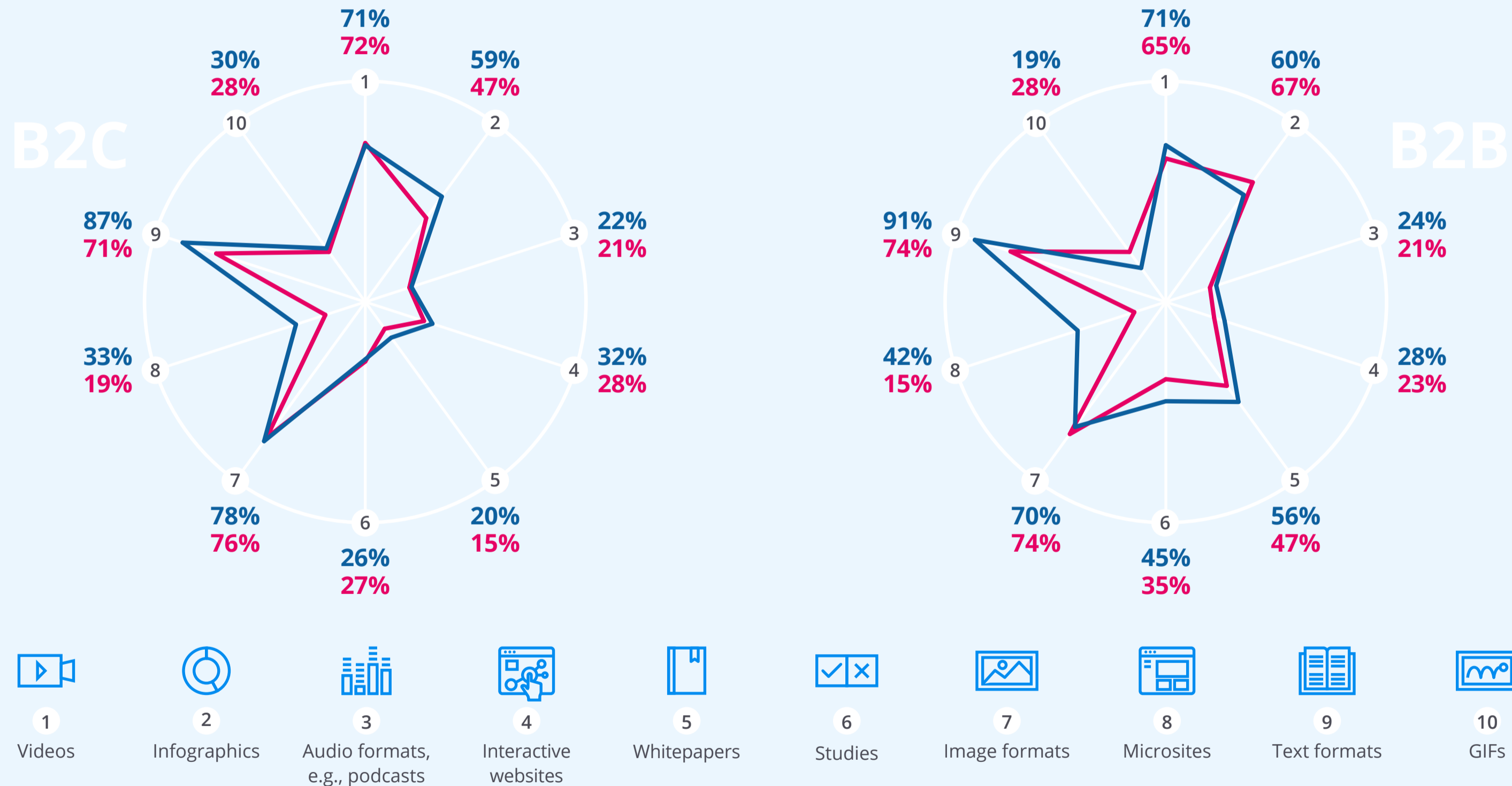
Although developing publication channels in order to optimally achieve reach goals is indeed exciting, a section about the ways and means of content should of course not be left out. Here, a comparison between B2C and B2B marketing is important, for target groups, their requirements for content function, as well as the context of its use vary considerably.

The differences are clearest with the white paper content format. These are used by 56% of the B2B marketers (49% internationally), whereas the share of white papers in B2C at 20% (and 15% internationally) amounts to only one-third of that. Similarly, studies are used by nearly half the German B2B content marketing decision-makers, whereas only a quarter of the B2C respondents use them. (cf. fig.)

By international comparison, white papers and studies are used very frequently for content marketing within Germany's B2B sector.

### WHICH FORMATS DO YOU CURRENTLY USE FOR ONLINE CONTENT MARKETING?

● GER current ● INT current



Source: Statista et al. 2020a, p.2; base: n=192 CM decision-makers in total; n=122 B2B companies / multi-pick; Statista et al. 2020a & 2020b, p.12; base GER/INT: n=198/374 CM decision-makers, of which n=76/175 B2C and n=122/199 B2B companies



**INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT FORMATS IN B2C VS. B2B**

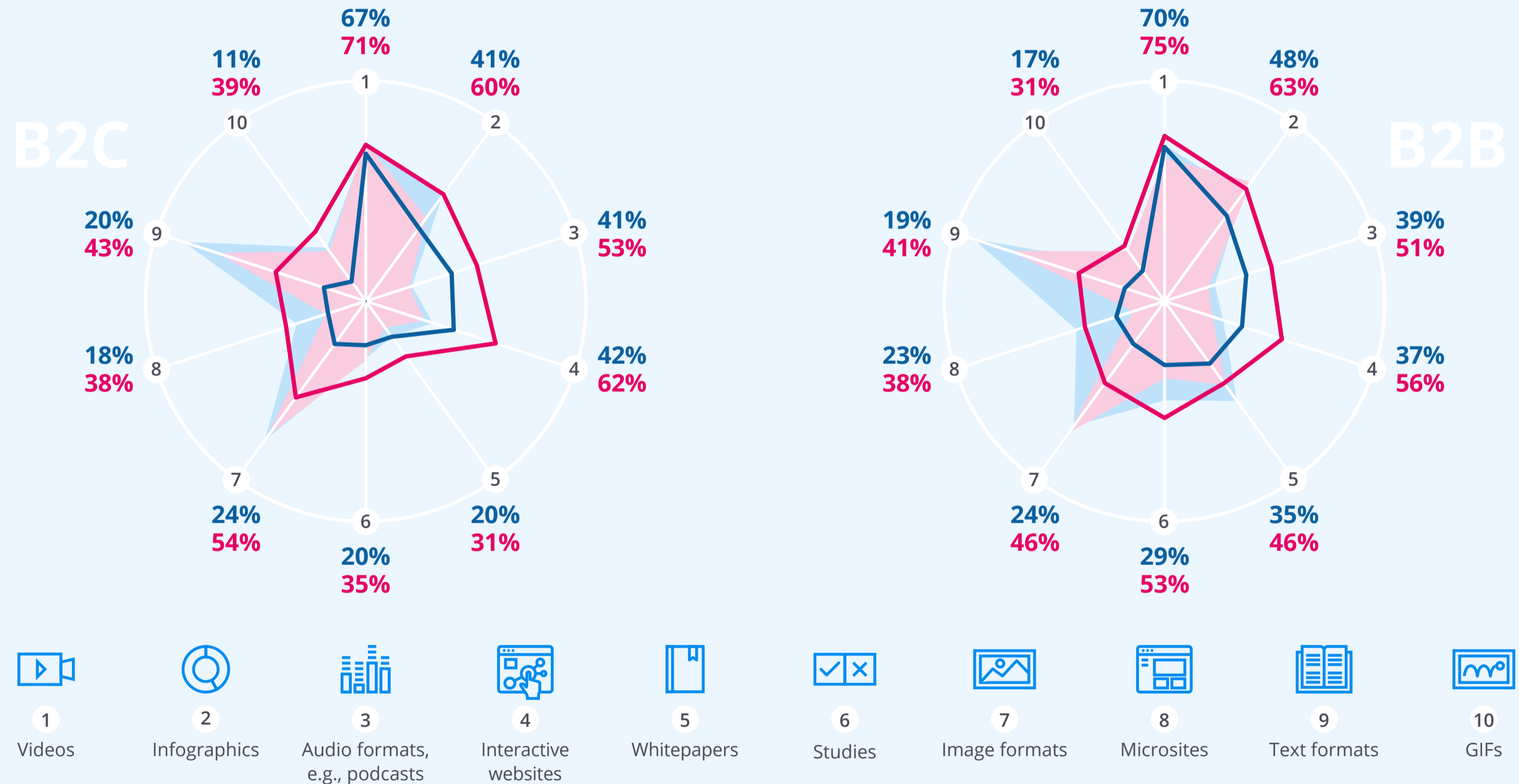
It is also interesting to compare which formats are poised to gain greater traction from the perspective of survey respondents.

Taking on greater importance are video formats – more than two-thirds of those surveyed would like to implement them more frequently – as well as interactive websites and infographics for both target groups. Moreover, studies and white papers are used more often at rates of 35% and 29% in B2B. (cf. fig.)

When compared on an international scale, it appears that there is a greater need to catch up. Here, infographics, as well as studies and white papers, are trending even more strongly than videos. (cf. fig.)

**WHICH FORMATS WOULD YOU LIKE TO MAKE GREATER USE OF ONLINE FOR YOUR CONTENT MARKETING IN THE FUTURE?**

● GER future ● GER current ● INT future ● INT current



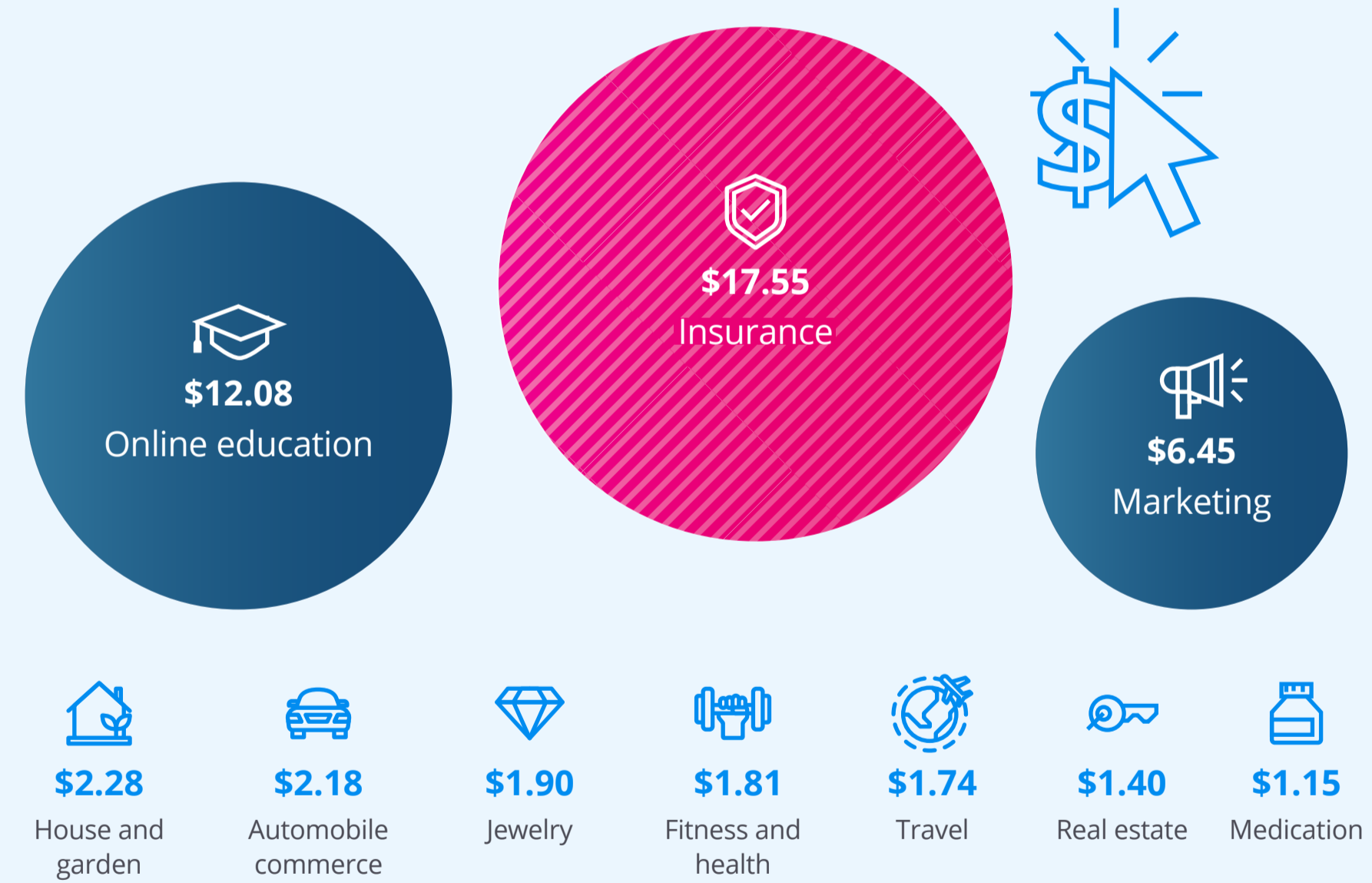
Source: Statista et al. 2020a, p.12; base: n=198 CM decision-makers total; n=76 B2C companies; n=122 B2B companies|multi-pick; Statista et al. 2020a & 2020b, p.12; base GER/INT: n=198/374 CM decision-makers, of which n=76/175 B2C and n=122/199 B2B companies

THE ANATOMY OF A LEADING INDUSTRY BLOG

The areas where advertising hits a wall are where content becomes the most valuable source of leads and opportunities to gain the attention of users. And where surveys hit a wall is where content analysis of social media tool providers are called into action. These are in the position to access user behaviors combined with analyzed content and with it, enormous data pools.

One example of such an analysis is the comprehensive SEMrush study about the current state of content marketing worldwide. In conjunction with a large expert survey, the analysis illustrates which traffic sources work best in each industry for selecting the correct publication paths and advertising their contents. To this end, an analysis was carried out for over 1,000 English-language industry blogs that received the most traffic in the ten industries between April and September 2019 within the ten industries representing the most expensive digital markets. (cf. fig.)

AVERAGE CLICK PRICE FOR OFFERS FROM INDUSTRY KEYWORDS



Source: SEMrush 2020, p.21; base: evaluation in the period from April to September 2019

Example:

Led by an average click price of US\$17.55 in the insurance industry, it is definitely worth bearing in mind from an ROI perspective the cost of attracting a prospect in an industry such as insurance. Moreover, the SEMrush survey provides points of departure by industry about the level of mobile traffic (42%), the percentage of searches on the webpage (64%), the length of blog articles that generate the most traffic (almost 4,000 characters), and which type of content is used the most (FAQs at 24%).

### CONTENT PERFORMANCE DRIVERS

As already demonstrated, content performance can be assessed using several different metrics. Yet the ways in which traffic, social shares, visibility, and interaction rates are influenced by the characteristics of the text – content length, time spent reading, or structure – is shown by the SEMrush study of content analysis, based on a good 700,000 articles appearing on blogs with 50,000 to 500,000 sessions.

**The summary of the most important facts** (SEMrush 2020, p.28).

**The longer, the better:** Long reads of over 3,000 words receive three times more traffic, four times the number of shares, and three-and-a-half times more backlinks than articles of average length (901–1,200 words).

**Headlines can improve performance:** Articles with long headlines (more than 14 words) receive twice as much traffic, five times the number of backlinks, and are twice as likely to be shared as articles with short headlines (7–10 words). Of the articles with h2+ and h3 headlines, 36% perform highly with regard to traffic, shares, and backlinks.

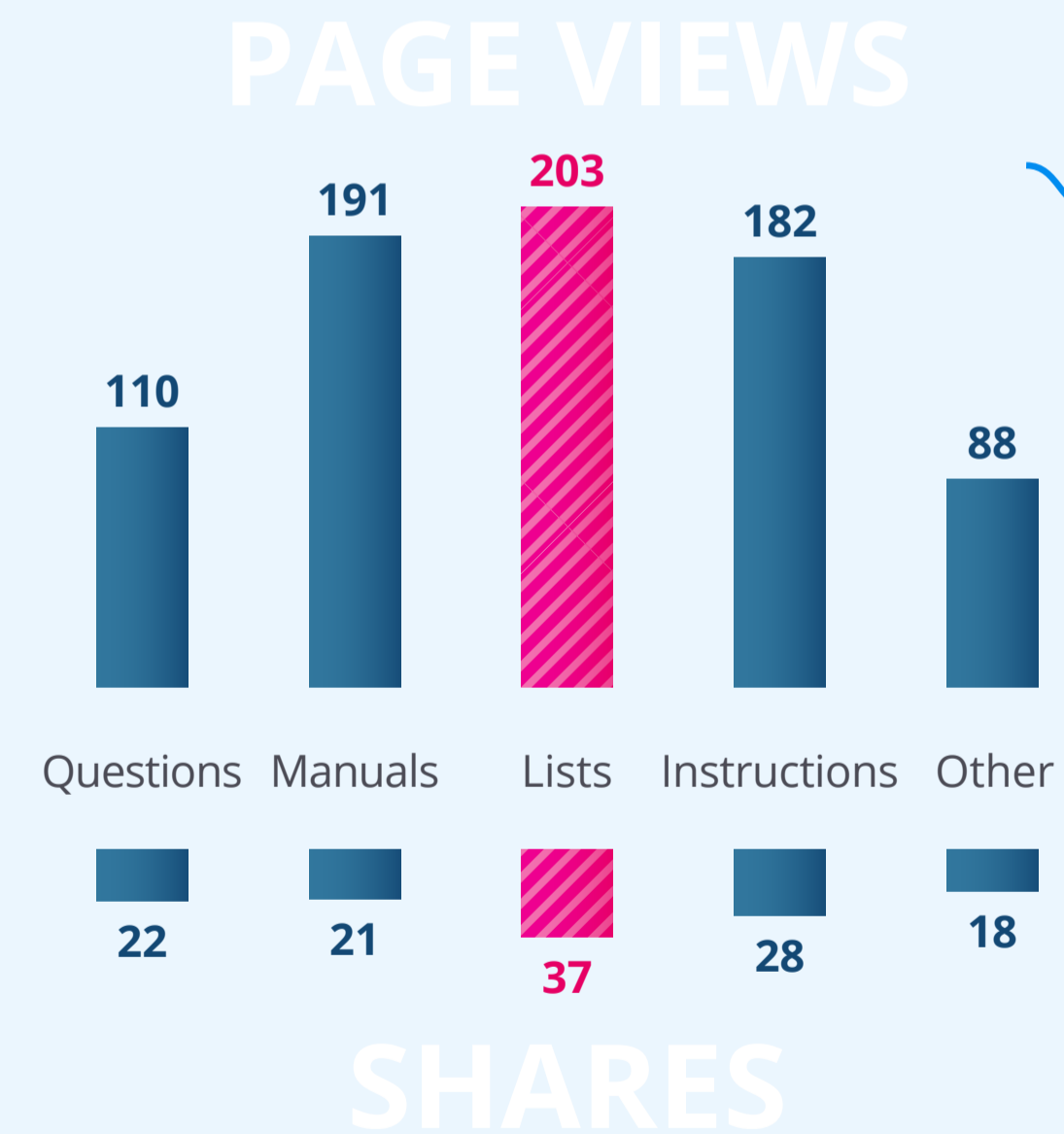
**List articles yield shares and traffic:** So-named listicles are shared the most and receive the most traffic (up to

twice as much than other types of blog posts), followed by guides and how-to articles.

**Are absolute values preferable?** Perhaps you also feel that instead of abstract pie charts and bar graphs, you would rather refer to tangible comparative values in order to define your goals based on such benchmarks and categorize your successes accurately. To this end, the study indicates benchmarks for the average number of page views as well as the number of shares for various content formats.

For this purpose, average individual page views per month were calculated as well as shares on Twitter and Facebook with differently worded headings (questions and answers, manuals, best-of lists, instructions, and more). It shows, for example, that lists are shared an average of 37 times, as opposed to 22 times for FAQ formats, and generate an average of 262 page views. (cf. fig.)

### INFLUENCE OF HEADLINES ON CONTENT PERFORMANCE



Source: SEMrush 2020, p.21; base: average number of page views as well as shares based on content type in 2019; evaluation in the period from April to September 2019



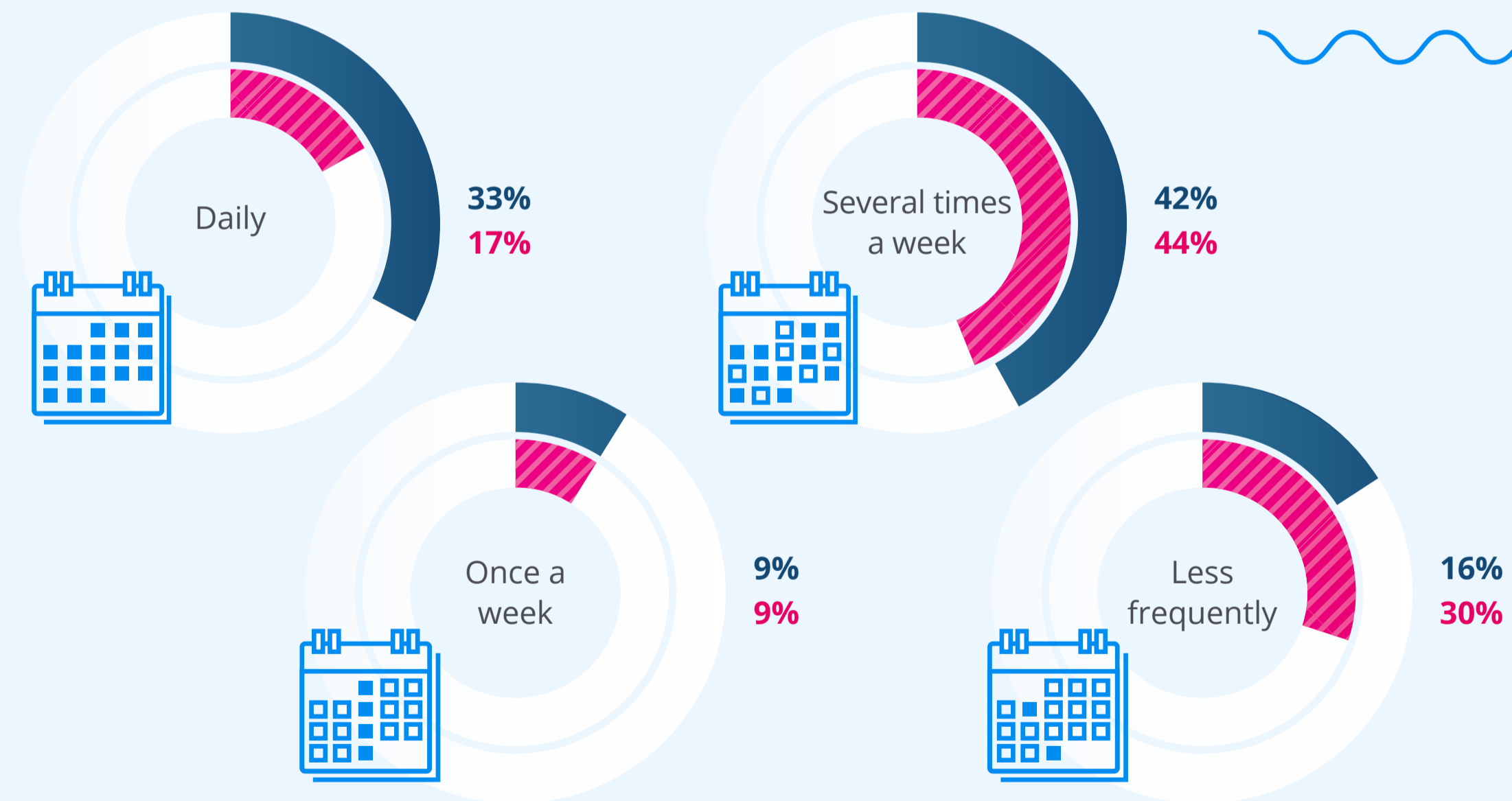
### PUBLICATION FREQUENCY AT LEAST SEVERAL TIMES A WEEK

Through the shift to digital distribution channels, particularly social media, the frequency of content publication has also increased. Above all, B2C companies are more active and a third of them publish content on a daily basis. An additional 42% do so at least multiple times a week. In B2B, the percentage of those who publish less than once a week – 30% – is nearly twice as high as the percentage in B2C companies. (cf. fig.)

By the way: by international comparison, the discrepancy between B2B and B2C – at least with regard to this question – is not quite as large.

### HOW FREQUENTLY DO YOU PUBLISH CONTENT?

● B2C ● B2B



Source: Statista et al. 2020a, p.10; base: n=198 CM decision makers in total; n=76 B2C companies; n=122 B2B companies; multi-pick

03

# SUCCESS AND MEASUREMENT

By definition, success indicates the achievement of self-determined goals. And because the level of achieving these goals can only take place by measuring and gathering corresponding metrics and KPIs, the concepts of success and measurement belong together. For this reason, this chapter is completely dedicated to all the aspects of success measurement in content marketing.



# THE MUST-HAVES OF SUCCESS MEASUREMENT

## SUCCESS MEASUREMENT IS INCREASINGLY GAINING RECOGNITION AS A MUST-HAVE

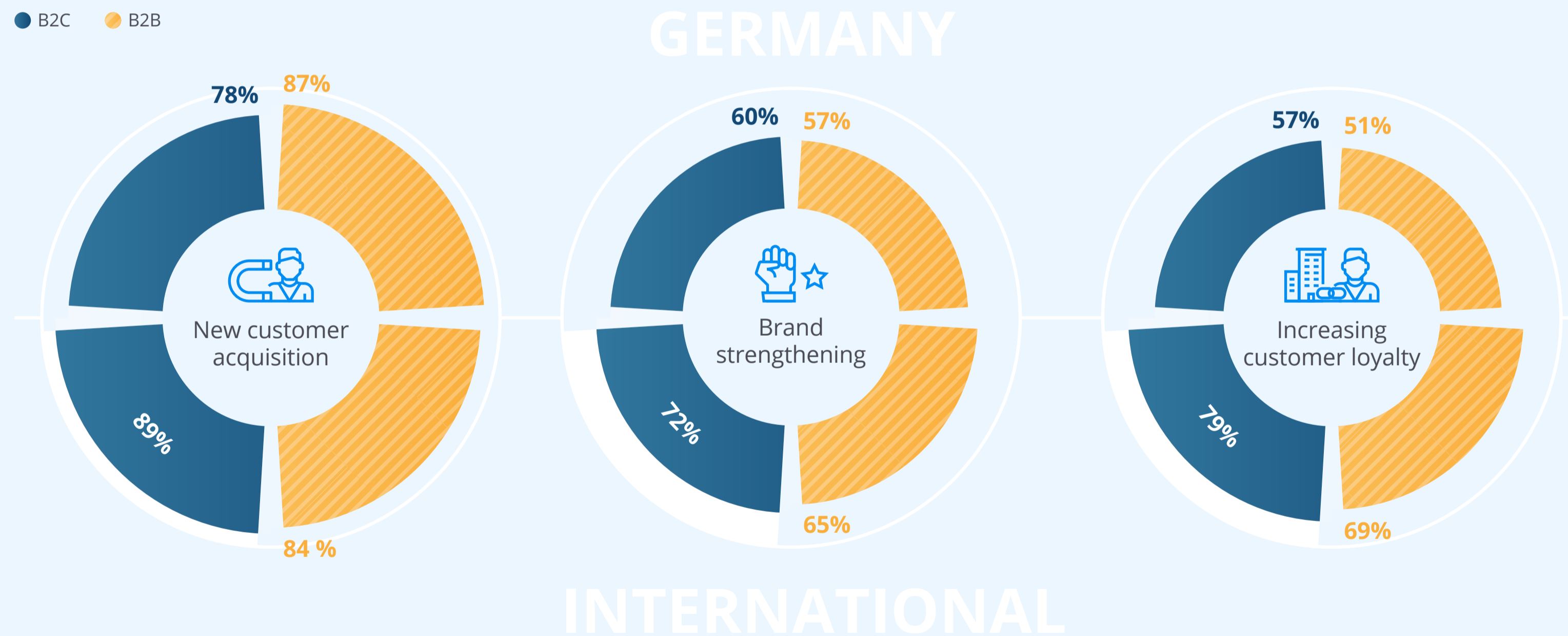
Whereas in 2016, fewer than half of content marketers (43%) had a concept for measuring success, eight out of ten decision-makers have since acknowledged success measurement as a must-have and follow a concept for measuring success and at the very least measure content performance that are based on clearly defined communication goals, responsibilities, and budgets. (cf. CMI 2020a, p.4).

At the same time, this topic has been at the forefront of the biggest challenges in content marketing for years now. This is because measuring success requires clear goals, and therefore a strategy, and as we have already learned, a content marketing strategy documented in writing is (unfortunately) against all better judgment still far from standard practice.

According to the Content Marketing Trend Study from 2020, success is measured primarily for the strategic goal of acquiring new customers. This is hardly surprising, since leads and conversion rates are easier to measure than metrics that allow statements to be made about brand uplift or strengthening customer loyalty. (cf. fig.)

### IN WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING AREAS DOES SUCCESS MEASUREMENT TAKE PLACE?

● B2C ● B2B

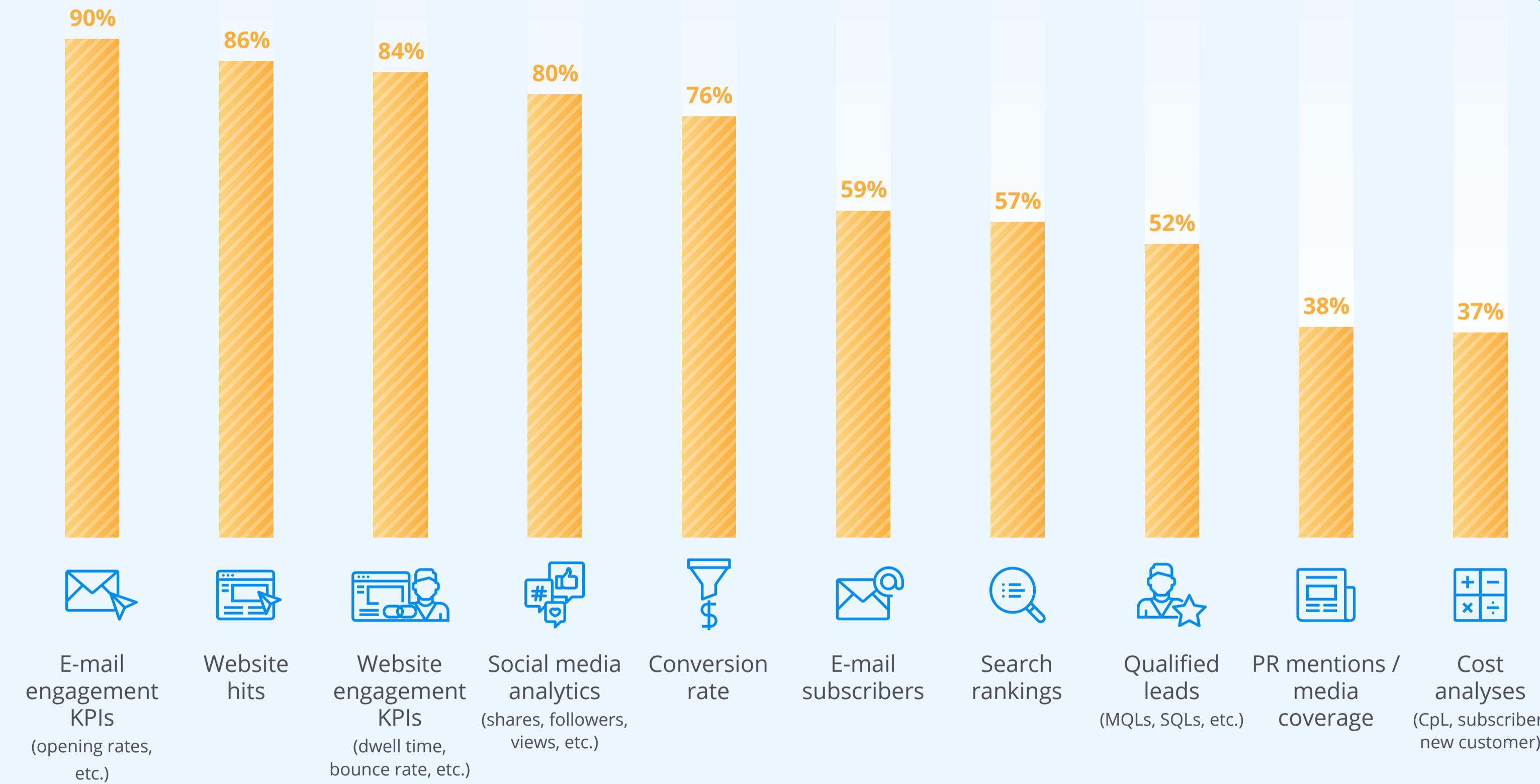


Source: Statista et al. 2020a, p.16; in comparison to trend study: Statista 2020b, p.20; base: people who work in companies that practice digital content marketing themselves and pursue a strategy for strengthening brand and external image / for acquiring new customers / for retaining customers; n=137 to 173 total; n=at least 54 B2C companies; n=at least 83 B2B-companies





APPLIED METRICS FOR MEASURING CONTENT PERFORMANCE IN NORTH AMERICA



THE MOST POPULAR METRICS FOR MEASURING CONTENT PERFORMANCE

The trend study also differentiates between B2B and B2C in terms of the most popular KPIs associated with new customer acquisition. Both rely primarily on newsletter subscribers with at least 60% approval. But while paper downloads in B2B are also at a very high level at 60%, whereas in B2C, the focus is on measured sales made via published articles – the buzzword here is native advertising.

The Content Marketing Institute also shows the metrics for measuring success in B2B content marketing, referred to by the CMI as content performance. Here, too, email engagement metrics are at the top, followed by website traffic and engagement as well as social media metrics, each of which is used by more than 80% of those surveyed. On the other hand, conversion rates, search engine rankings, and qualifying lead metrics fall far short by comparison. (cf. CMI 2020, p.31).

Compared to B2B, the metrics used to measure content performance, with the exception of search rankings, are at a much lower level, and website-based metrics are given higher priority in B2C than, for example, e-mail marketing KPIs.

Source: CMI 2020a, p.31 & CMI 2020b, p.29; base: n=679 B2B content marketers; n=179 B2C content marketer-applied metrics in the last 12 months, multi-pick

# FROM AIDA TO ROI MEASUREMENT

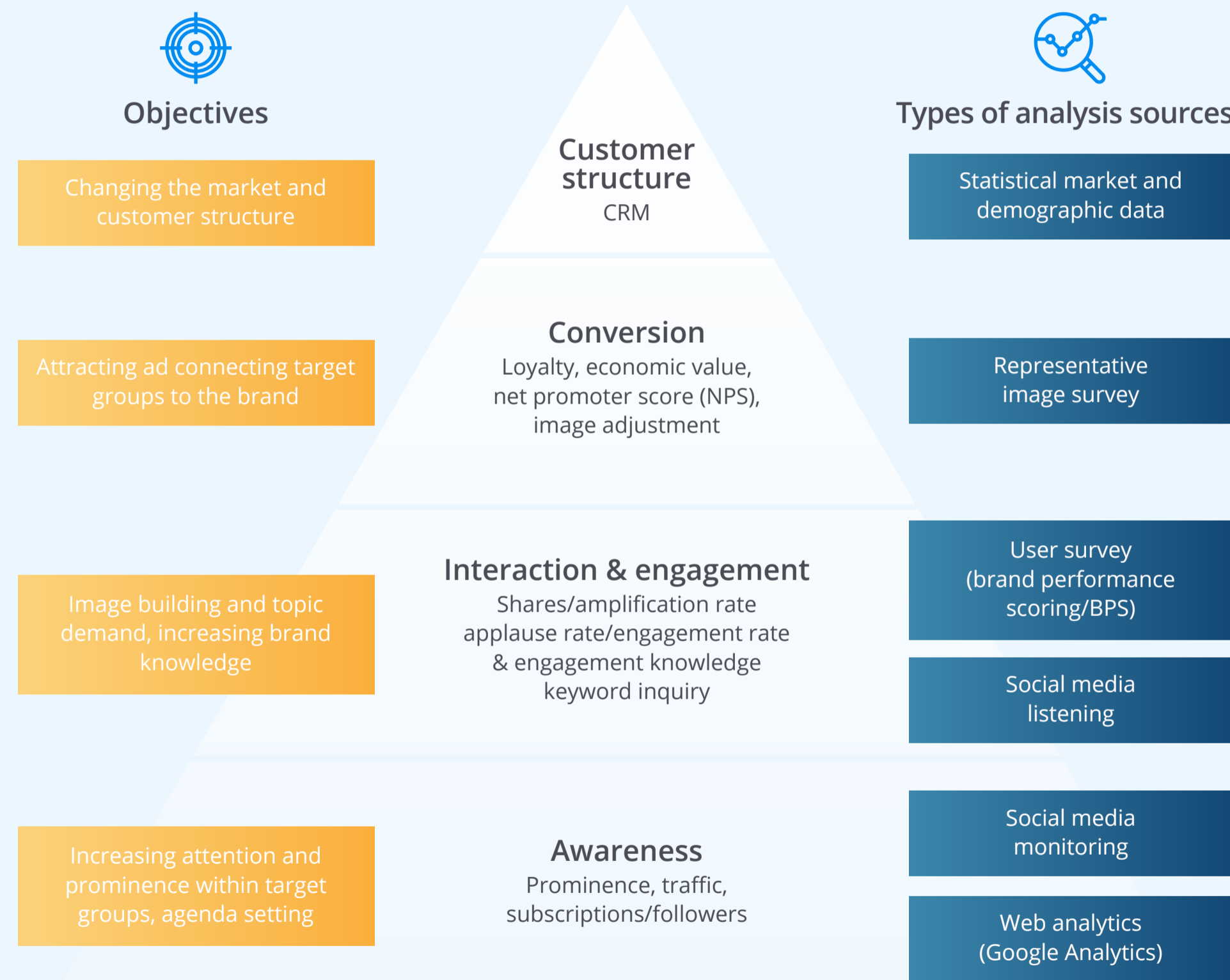
## THE CONTENT AND SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING EFFECTIVENESS PYRAMID

The basis of every success measurement resides in deriving the right metrics and KPIs from the goals that have been documented in the content marketing strategy with the SMART approach. What I consistently preach in my success measurement workshops is to concentrate on what is essential and not merely measure everything because it is possible to do so.

**“Systematic success measurement is successful when it makes the success of the content marketing measures visible, learns from missteps, and ascertains recommendation measures for optimizing.”** (Gärtner)

Yet which metrics and KPIs are the right ones for which objectives, and how are they measured? One point of departure is provided by the content and social media marketing effectiveness pyramid that is based on the well-known funnel and/or pyramid logic. (cf. fig.)

### EXEMPLARY OBJECTIVES, KPIS AND METRICS, AND TYPES OF ANALYSIS SOURCES FOR MEASUREMENT ALONG THE CUSTOMER JOURNEY



Source: Illustration based on Dr. Sandra Gärtner 2020

## THE MOST IMPORTANT SOURCES AND TOOLS FOR SUCCESS MEASUREMENT

As already outlined, the accompanying sources for success measurement tend to be found at the beginning of the funnel among widely disseminated web analytics and social media measurement tools for assessing content performance.

As one progresses up the funnel, the relevance of metrics on the degree of achievement of branding goals becomes greater. Such metrics, in turn, tend to be fed by surveys, social media listening tools, and representative studies. (cf. fig.)

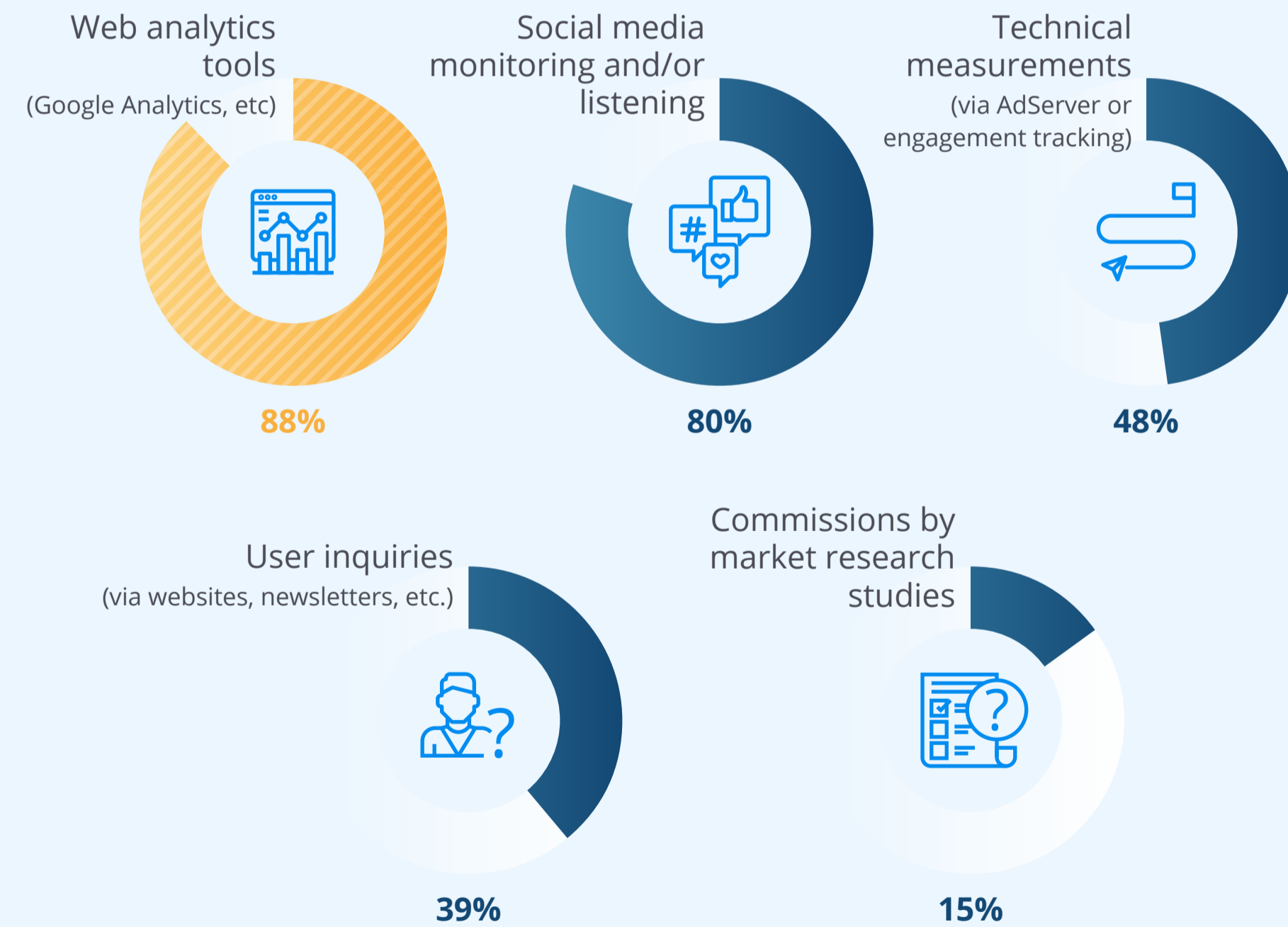
Since most CM decision-makers in this country are, despite great interest, intimidated by the complexity of ROI calculation, most of them start small — and inexpensively — with success measurement. For example, the most widely used tool for measuring success is by far web analytics such as Google Analytics, followed by social media monitoring and listening. Eight out of ten decision-makers use these simple tools to measure content performance.



However, the most commonly used instruments unfortunately do not gauge changes in brand image. For this, market research studies are needed because image changes cannot be made visible via (click) behavior measurement. (cf. fig.)

A special analysis by COMAE about the differences between B2B and B2C indicates that B2B companies place a stronger focus on leads, whereas traditional branding goals are pursued considerably more often in B2C – most likely because proof of brand uplift for advertising campaigns in B2C is typically provided by advertising effectiveness studies accompanying the campaign. It is therefore no great surprise that B2B companies, in contrast to B2C, (still) seem to have reservations about classic market research instruments, simply because they seldom use them elsewhere. However, this attitude should have already changed with the next wave of COMAE, because it is well known that successful marketers invest significantly more often in market research as proof of the success of their CM objectives. (cf. mediaresearch42 2017)

### THE MOST FREQUENTLY USED INSTRUMENTS OF SUCCESS MEASUREMENT



Source: mediaresearch42 2018, p.19; base: n= 85 CM decision makers with success measurement concept

### PREMIERE CLASS: SUCCESS MEASUREMENT AT THE CAMPAIGN AND ROI LEVELS

Content performance metrics are relatively easy to measure, as their click-based behavior allows for almost seamless tracking.

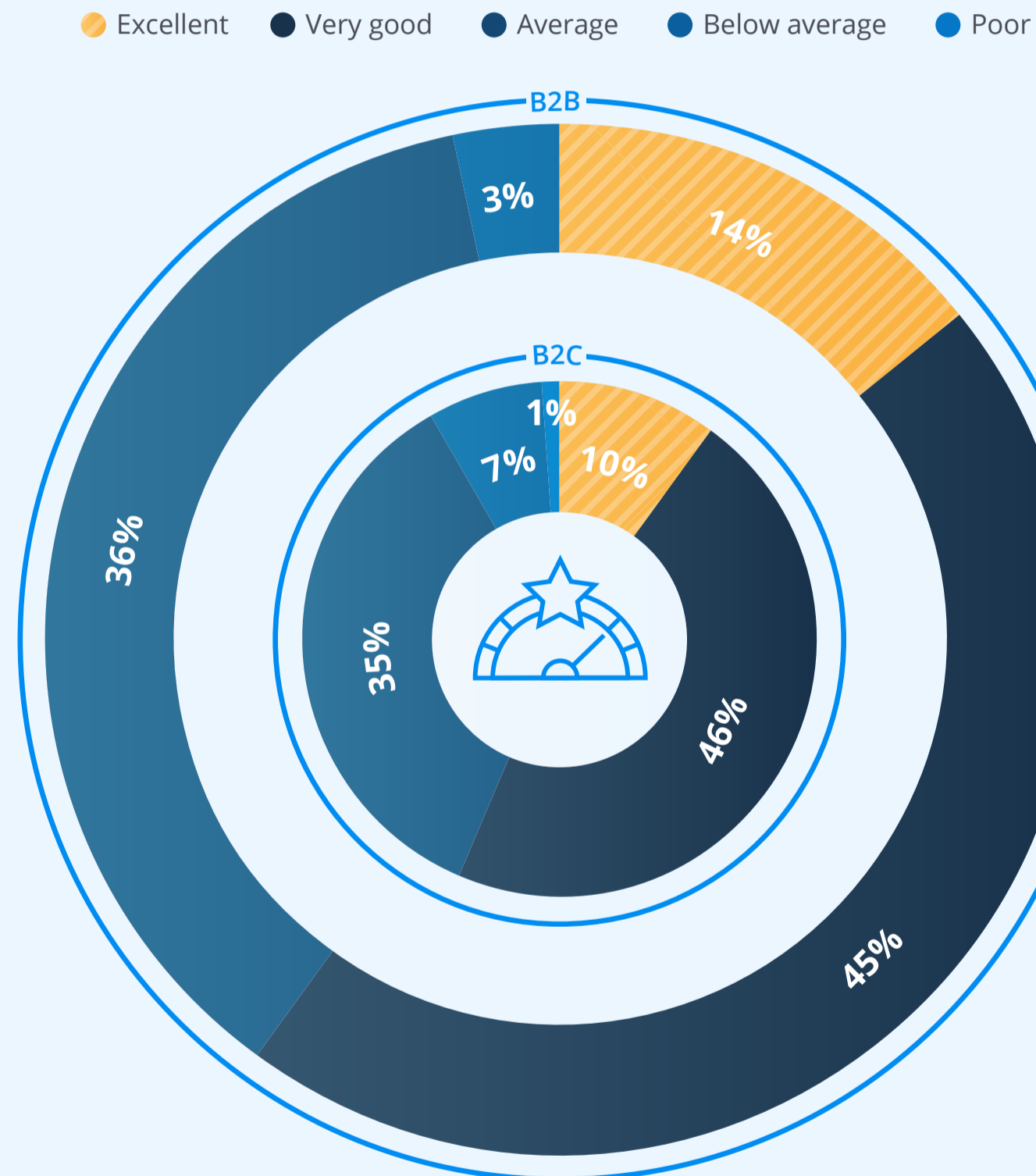
A different story is seen with metrics that serve the popular strategic goals of brand building and customer loyalty. The Content Marketing Institute rigorously separates these levels of performance measurement and shows that while 80% of B2B decision-makers use metrics to measure the success of content performance, only two-thirds track success at the campaign level with appropriate KPIs, and content marketing ROI is measured by only 43% of B2B decision-makers. (cf. CMI 2020a, p.30) In B2C, the measurement of success at these three levels is 78% for content performance measurement, 63% for campaign evaluation, and at 51%, more than half already calculate content marketing's return on investment. (see CMI 2020a, p.30 & CMI 2020b, p.28)



Of interest here is that the majority of those who make the effort to derive and calculate ROI for their content marketing measures are convinced that by doing so, they achieve very good results. (cf. charts B2B vs. B2C)

The BVDW's content marketing focus group also tackled the challenges of presenting content marketing KPIs. Its user-friendly result was an operational and dynamic KPI framework that provides a pool of key figures for the target levels of attention, interaction, and completion in the form of an interactive tool via the [www.KPI-Finder.com](http://www.KPI-Finder.com) website. The white paper behind it, which explains the approach and development of the underlying ROI model for measuring the success of content marketing, is also highly recommended. (cf. BVDW 2020)

### SATISFACTION WITH ONE'S OWN CONTENT MARKETING ROI MEASUREMENT IN NORTH AMERICA B2B VS. B2C



Source: CMI 2020a, p.32 & CMI 2020b, p.30; base: n=679 B2B content marketers; n=179 B2C content marketers that measure ROI; single-pick



- Excellent**  
We have holistic data for measuring ROI
- Very good**  
We have already demonstrated ROI for at least one of our CM campaigns and have good insights for the others
- Average**  
We have good insights, but fail to show ROI in concrete terms
- Below average**  
We tend to have conjecture over hard data
- Poor**  
We have virtually no data on what works well and what works poorly



**ADDITIONAL TOOLS & TECHNOLOGIES IN CONTENT MARKETING**

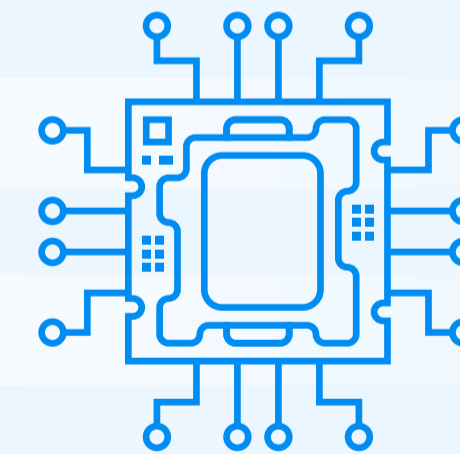
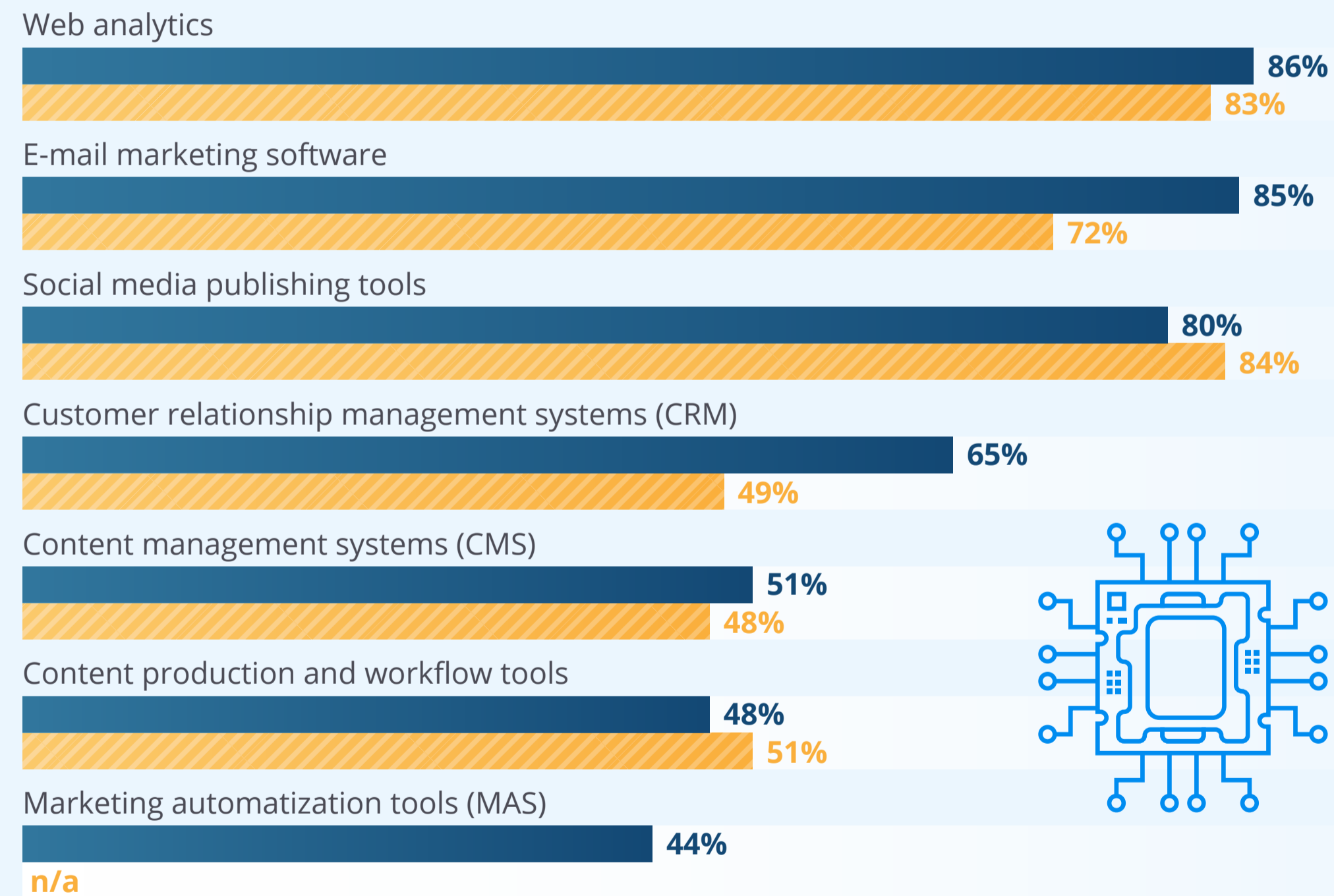
In addition to technologies and tools for proving success, there is a wealth of instruments that have already come into play. As the results of the CMI for North America show, the most frequently used technologies in content marketing, in addition to measuring success, primarily support the distribution of content. In addition to web analytics tools, which are also in first place here, these are primarily email software providers and social media publishing and analytics tools. The priority of the technologies differs slightly, but not significantly, between B2B and B2C. (cf. fig.)

The international SEMrush marketer survey distinguishes between the tools even more distinctly. Here too in first place is web analytics, followed by SEO tools and social media posting tools, which continue to remain ahead of email marketing software. (cf. SEMrush 2020, p.21)



**THE MOST FREQUENTLY APPLIED CONTENT MARKETING TECHNOLOGIES IN B2B AND B2C IN NORTH AMERICA**

● B2C ● B2B



Source: CMI 2020a, p.14 & CMI 2020b, p.12; base: n=679 B2B content marketers, n=179 B2C content marketers; metrics applied in the past 12 months, multi-pick



04

# ORGANIZATION, PROCESSES, AND TEAM STRUCTURES

In this important chapter, we will address the foundation for all content marketing activities: the people who develop, create, and distribute them. Most decision-maker studies deal with the question of how companies integrate content marketing organizationally and how the teams are set up for this purpose. This chapter supplements the most important findings in this area by addressing which skills are in demand in the war for talent in content marketing.



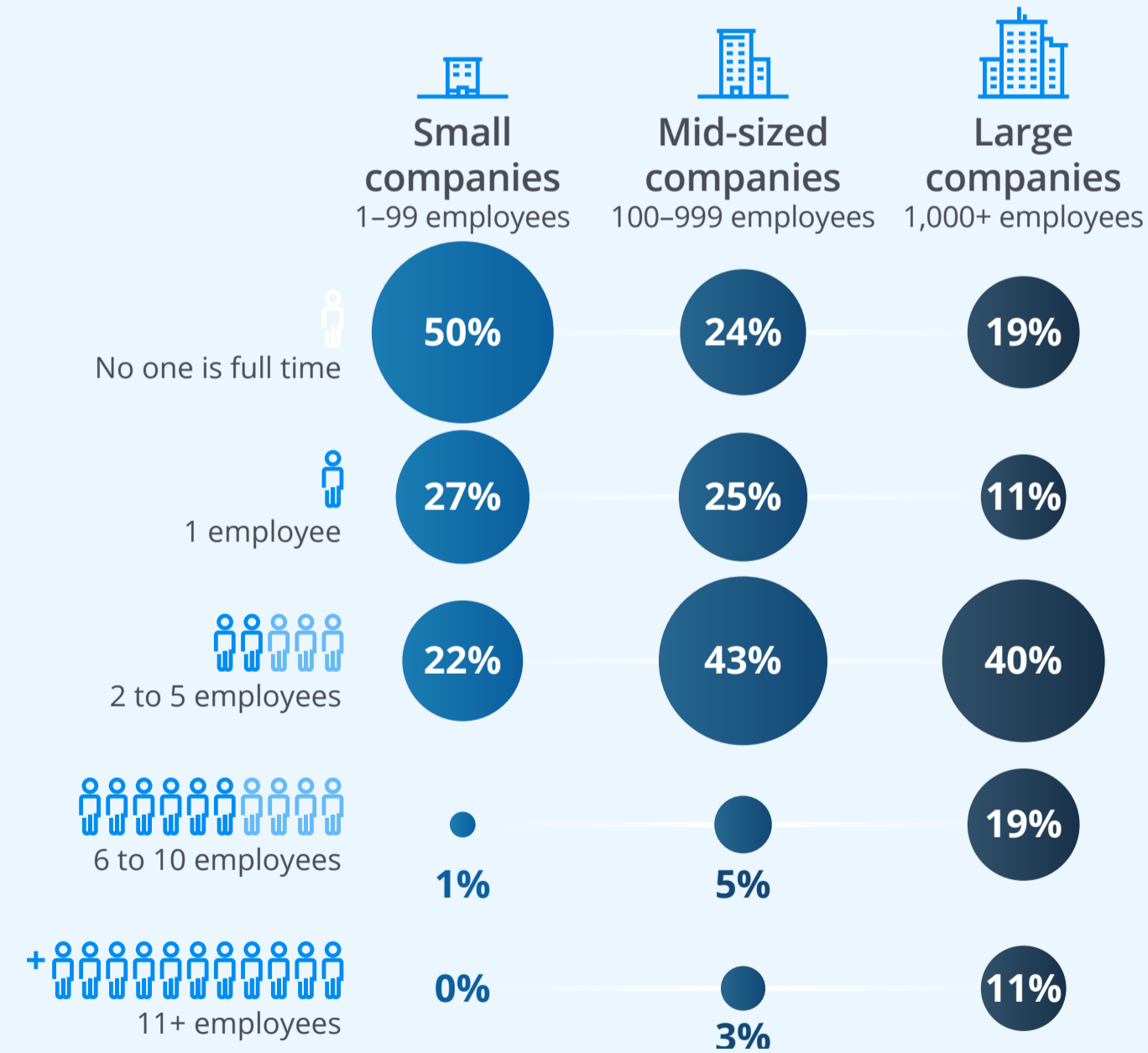
# SIZE AND ORGANIZATION OF CM TEAMS

## SMALL TEAMS ARE THE NORM

Only one-third of all companies that engage in content marketing have an independent department for content marketing (cf. Statista et al. 2020a, p.9). Even in North America, the majority of internal content marketing teams are between two and five people strong, regardless of company size. Only 30% of large companies with more than 1,000 employees have a CM team that is larger than five full-time employees. (cf. fig. left).

Similarly, an international comparison shows that three-quarters of those queried state that they work in teams of one to three specialists. Close to an additional one-fifth work with four to ten content marketing specialists. (see fig. right)

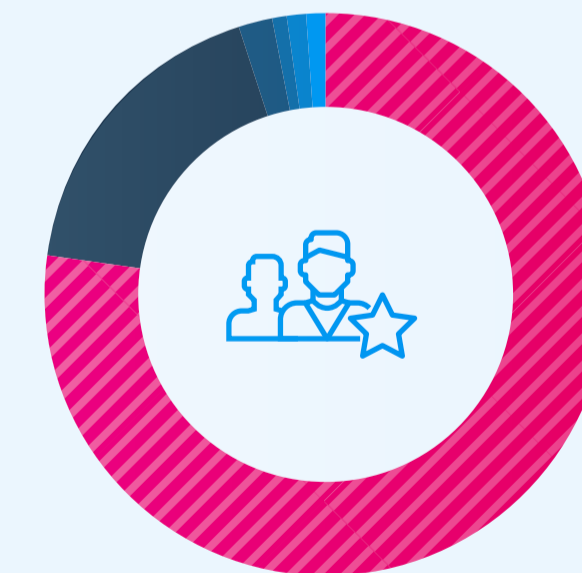
## AVERAGE TEAM SIZE IN CONTENT MARKETING IN B2B COMPANIES IN NORTH AMERICA



Source: CMI 2020c, p.16; base: n=740 B2B content marketers

## HOW MANY PEOPLE ARE ACTIVE IN YOUR CONTENT MARKETING TEAM?

- 1-3 Specialists **78%**
- 4-10 Specialists **18%**
- 11-20 Specialists **2%**
- 21-35 Specialists **1%**
- 36-50 Specialists **<1%**
- 50+ Specialists **<1%**



Source: SEMrush 2020, p.44; base: n=1,200 content marketers in 39 countries

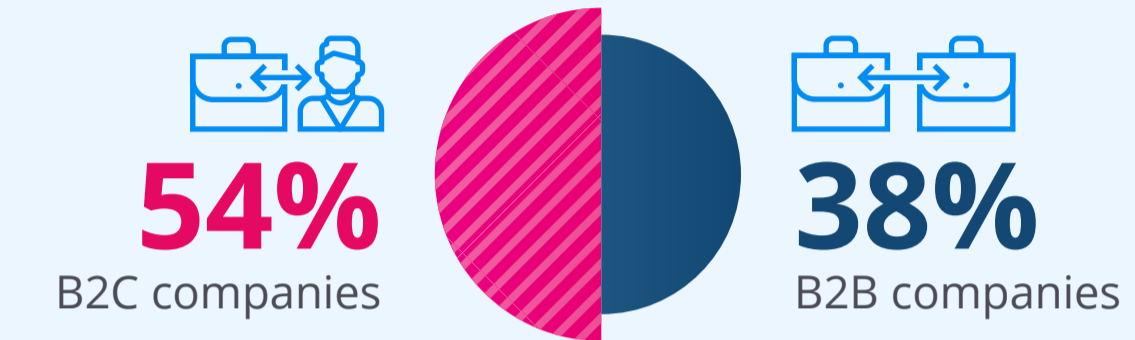
More than half of in-house employees are (also) copywriters or creatives, more than a third follow the trend and are social media managers, and another third are SEO content managers. Apparently, content distribution also plays an increasingly important role in team structures. (cf. fig. left)

### WHAT KINDS OF SPECIALISTS ARE IN YOUR CONTENT MARKETING TEAM?



Source: SEMrush 2020, p.45; base: n=1,200 content marketers in 39 countries

### PERCENTAGE OF DECISION-MAKERS WHO (ALSO) OUTSOURCE CONTENT MARKETING TO AN AGENCY



Source: Statista et al. 2020a, p.9

### OUTSOURCING VS. IN-HOUSE

Half of all companies outsource at least one content marketing task. As a rule, this involves content creation and production (84%), which, irrespective of size, budget, or success, is implemented externally. This is followed at a considerable distance by distribution or technologies (31%) and technologies (22%). In comparison, content strategy, editorial planning and measurement are generally carried out in-house. (cf. CMI 2020, p.18)

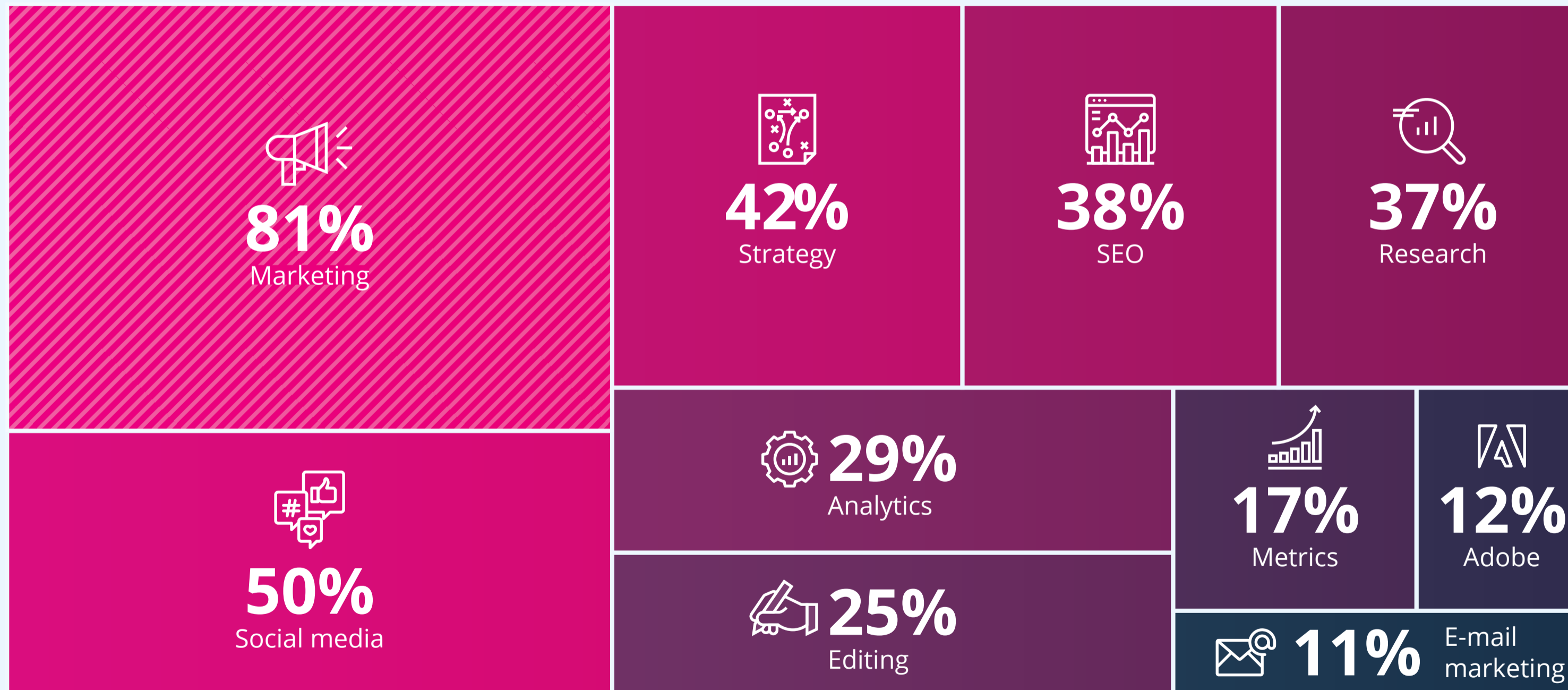
In German-speaking countries, the response to the question is similar: here, content marketing activities are also outsourced by B2C companies in particular, whereas significantly fewer agencies are commissioned by the B2B sector (38%).

And this is also confirmed by the CMF's baseline study: **Within companies, there is (still) a clear internal trend toward greater organizational specialization of content marketing.** (CMF 2020, p.3)

# THE JOB MARKET IN CONTENT MARKETING



## THE TOP TEN SKILLS IN CONTENT MARKETING



Source: SEMrush 2020, p.55; base: the top ten skills according to how often a skill is mentioned in the totality of job offers in content marketing

## THE TOP TEN CONTENT MARKETING SKILLS

As the findings of this report show, content marketing is complex and often requires a wide range of skills and abilities or skills from storytelling to analytics, from graphics and design to programming. For the list of skills needed in content marketing teams, SEMrush clustered content analytics requirements from more than 17,000 job postings for content marketers.

Logically, content marketers should also be able to get a handle on the term marketing, but also on the concepts of strategy development, social media, and SEO. Obviously, analytical minds are more in demand than creative ones.

The three most important soft skills identified in this context are leadership (19%), meeting deadlines (16%), and written communication (8%).

By far the most common job titles given in job postings are Marketing Manager (26%), CEO (15%), and Content (Marketing) Manager (14%).

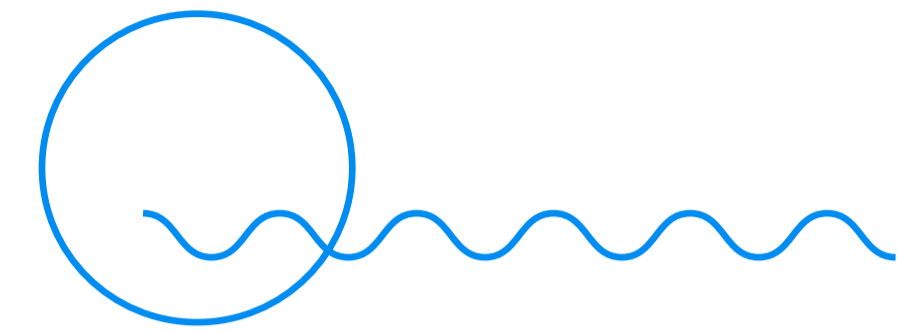


05

# CHALLENGES AND TRENDS

This Content Marketing Compass would not be complete without a look towards the future – where does the path lead and what are the challenges we need to overcome? In addition to the themes and trends from the perspective of decision makers, we will also examine this question in this chapter through the lens of content analysis.

# CONTENT ANALYSIS #CONTENTMARKETING

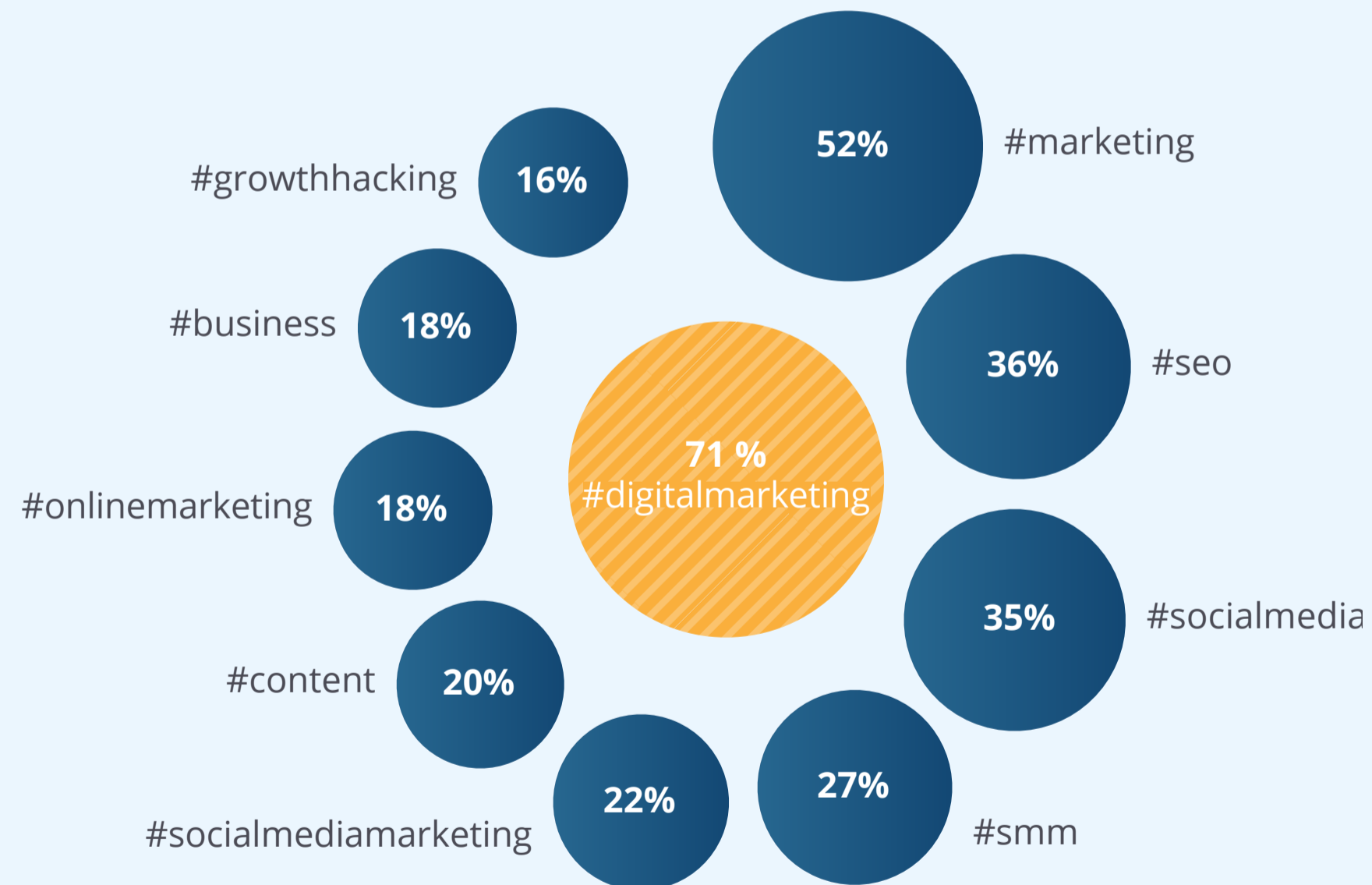


## CM-SEARCH QUERIES, SEARCH TOPICS, AND SEARCH KEYWORDS

Also providing a fascinating perspective is the content analysis of the aforementioned SEMrush survey, which evaluated 450,00 tweets, hundreds of thousands of search queries, and more than 700,000 blog articles by social media providers.

For content marketing trends, search queries with the topic of content marketing from the year 2019 were evaluated, and more than 450,000 English-language tweets between January and September 2019 with the hashtag #ContentMarketing (cf. SEMrush 2020)

## THE TEN MOST FREQUENTLY USED HASHTAGS IN THE CONTEXT OF #CONTENTMARKETING



Source: SEMrush 2020, p.8; base: share of hashtags that were mentioned in conjunction with #ContentMarketing in the most popular Tweets (20 Retweets or more)

## THE MOST POPULAR TOPICS IN WHICH #CONTENTMARKETING WAS USED



Source: SEMrush 2020, p.9; base: share of topic terms mentioned together with #ContentMarketing in the most popular tweets (20 retweets or more)

THE TOP TEN GOOGLE SEARCH QUERIES



QUERY KEYWORDS ABOUT #CONTENTMARKETING

- 1 // What is content marketing?
- 2 // What is content strategy?
- 3 // Why is content marketing important?
- 4 // Why do content marketing?
- 5 // What is content marketing strategy?
- 6 // What is content marketing in SEO?
- 7 // How do you develop a content marketing strategy?
- 8 // How is content marketing used in sales?
- 9 // How do you research keywords for content marketing?
- 10 // How do you write (for) content marketing?



RANKING OF THE MOST IMPORTANT INFLUENCERS ON THE TOPIC OF #CONTENTMARKETING

The results quite concretely demonstrate which authors and influencers are active about the topic #ContentMarketing and could be brought into in the following ranking based on the number of their likes, retweets, and high-performance tweets for the year 2019: (cf. SEMrush 2020, p.11)

Should you wish to position yourselves within this topic and have internalized that influencer marketing illustrates on of the up-and-coming (coming) distributions channels, you know whom to approach in order to expand your reach.

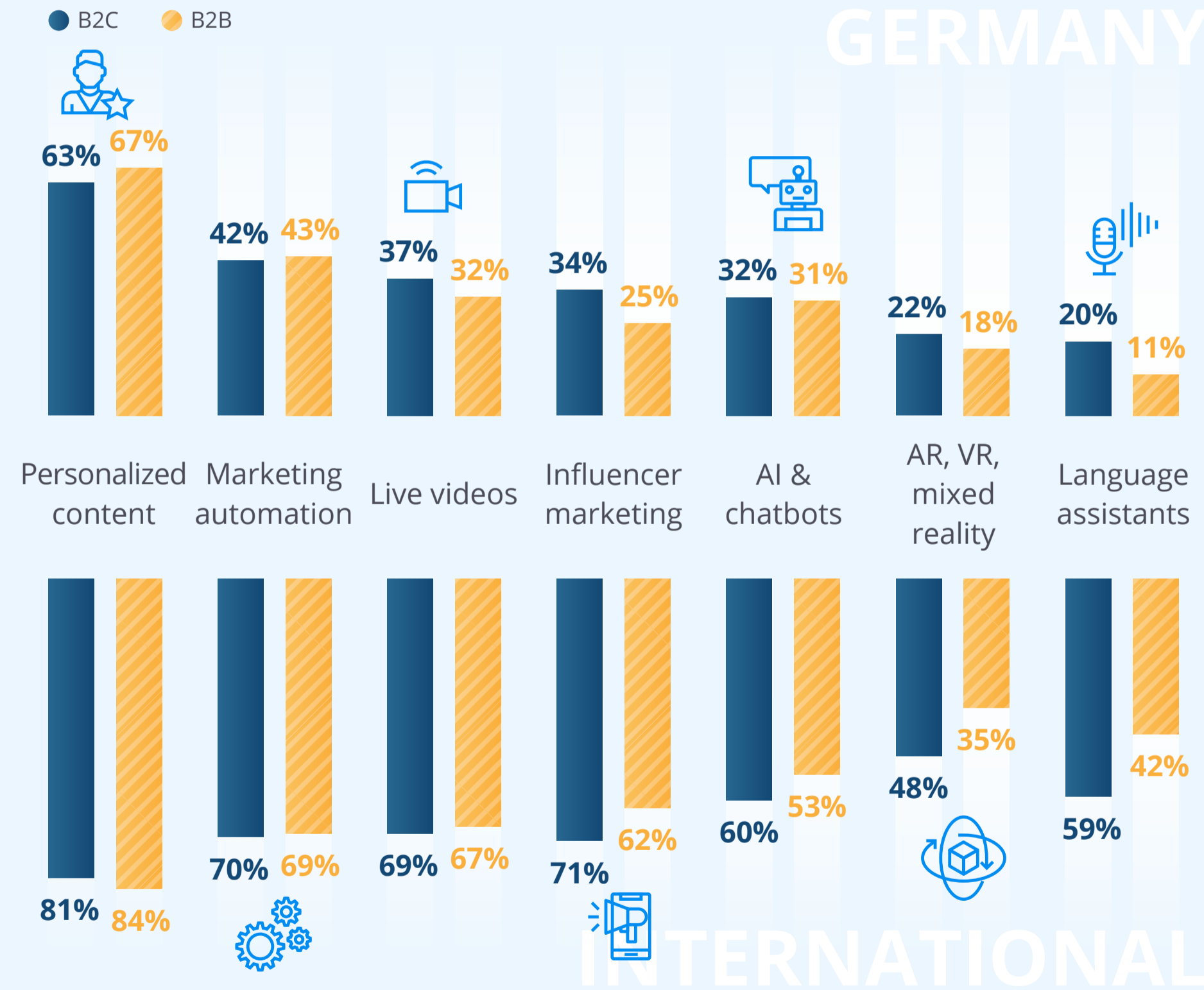
- |                                 |                                |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Mike Schiemer @MikeSchiemer     | Bryan Kramer @bryankramer      |
| Evan Kirstel @evankirstel       | The Startup Nerd @Startup_Nerd |
| Jeff Bullas @jeffbullas         | Nika Stewart @NikaStewart      |
| Larry Kim @larrykim             | Mike Quindazzi @MikeQuindazzi  |
| Ben Kamau @BenKamauDigital      | Antonio Grasso @antgrasso      |
| Michael Brenner @BrennerMichael | Marsha Collier @MarshaCollier  |
| Rebekah Radice @RebekahRadice   | Chris Do @theChrisDo           |
| Isabella Jones @IsabellajonesCI | Kevin Lim @_kevinlim           |
| Jonathan Aufray @JonathanAufray | Franz Russo @franzrusso        |
| Kirk Borne @KirkDBorne          | John Abraham @iamjony94        |

Source: SEMrush 2020; p.12; base: Google search queries in the context of content marketing keywords with the largest monthly search volume



# THREE CONCLUDING HYPOTHESES

## TOPICS THAT HAVE A HIGH OR VERY HIGH VALUE FOR A COMPANY



Source: Statista et al. 2020a & 2020b, p.19; base GER/INT: n=198/374 CM decision-makers, of which n=76/175 B2C companies and n=122/199 B2B companies

### PERSONALIZED CONTENT - IDEALLY AUTOMATIZED

The topics that have a high significance for content marketers in B2B and B2C can be illustrated by the reliable survey among their peers. According to the trend study, these are not so much hip topics such as AI/chatbots, voice or AR/VR, but instead quite practical challenges such as individually adapting contents to personae:

### TWO-THIRDS OF GERMANY-BASED DECISION-MAKERS REGARD THEIR CONTENT AS MEANINGFUL, FOLLOWED BY MARKETING AUTOMATION. (cf. fig.)

It is also worth taking a look at other countries: The hierarchy of meaningful topics is nearly identical, yet in comparison to Germany, the level is clearly higher on an international level and particularly in the area of B2B. An estimated 71% of international content marketers in B2C believe that the topic of influencer content marketing is (very) relevant – with that, it is in second place ahead of marketing automation.

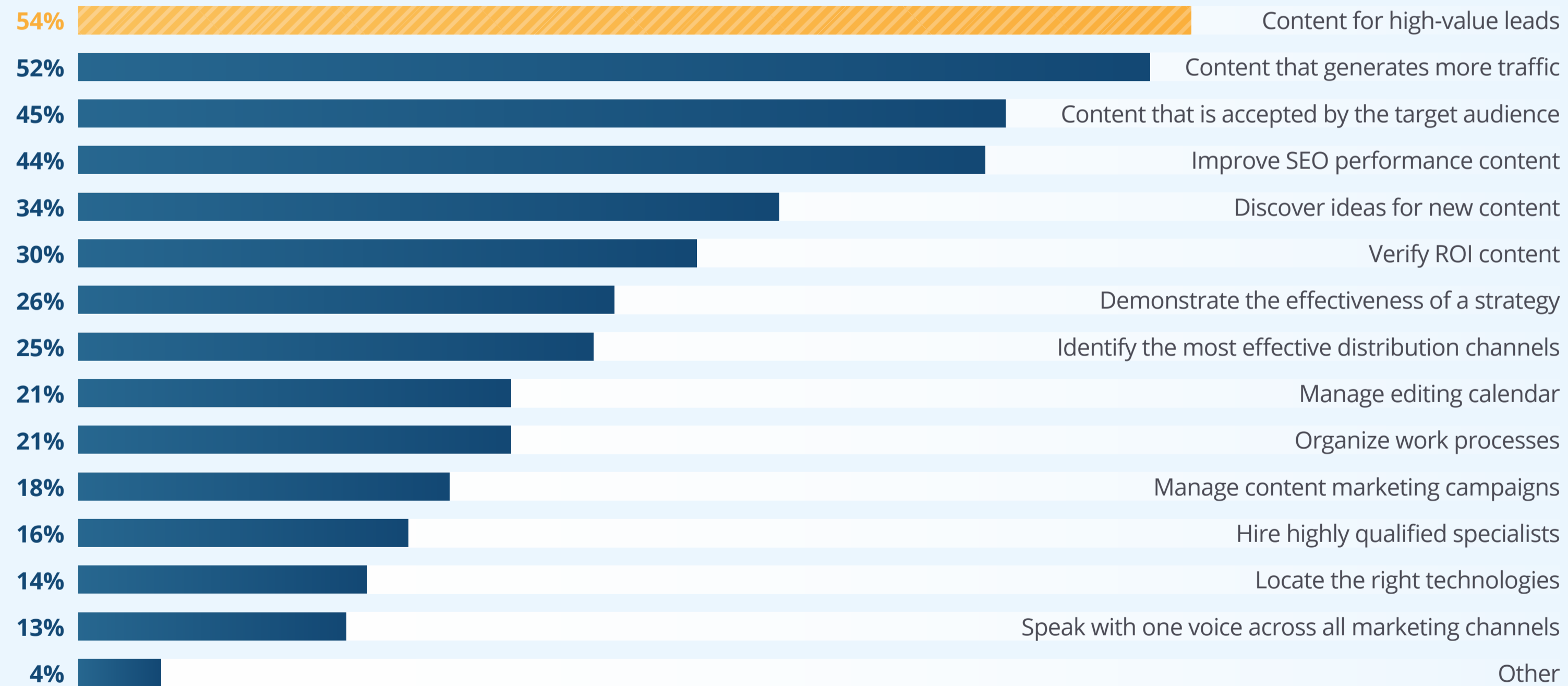
### HIGH POLARIZATION IMPLEMENTING NEW TECHNOLOGIES

The diagram suggests that Germany's decision-makers are particularly cautious in regard to new technologies and, for the time being, are preoccupied with mastering the basics.

Yet the openness towards new technologies is consistently high: Six out of ten decision makers are convinced that they offer attractive opportunities for content management. And every tenth Euro is invested in new technologies such as AR, VR, chatbots, etc. according to respondents to the Content Marketing Forum. (CMF 2020, p.17)

The trend study also demonstrates that content marketers in Asia above all have taken up a broader range of new topics at an early stage. Asia appears to have replaced the USA as a market with a view to the future – at least in terms of meaningful trends. It is therefore worth looking more often across the Pacific and not just across the Atlantic.

### THE GREATEST CHALLENGES FACED BY CONTENT MARKETING TEAMS



Source: SEMrush 2020, p.46; base: n=1,200 content marketers in 39 countries

### THE EVOLUTION OF CONTENT MANAGEMENT CHALLENGES

The greatest internationally identified challenges of the content marketing industry also correlate – according to the SEMrush survey – with their most important objectives: to create content that generates more traffic (52 %), generates high-value leads (54 %), and is accepted by the target audience (45 %). (cf. fig.)

Whereas a few years ago, the greatest challenges centered around organizing content production and then shifted to developing strategy and (later) to assessing ROIs, challenges now seem to be about understanding a given audience (even) better in order to reach it via personalized content, and also in an automated and efficient manner at the higher level of the customer journey funnel – the catchphrase here being lead generation.

We wish you great success and hope that some of the insights from this Content Marketing Compass prove to be of assistance to you.

# EXPERTS FOR YOUR PROJECT'S SUCCESS

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22% of working Europeans have suffered from stress

the economic cost totalling €20 billion

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Top Managing Challenges according to a survey of managers

- 77% Different work expectations between generations
- 72% Uncomfortable when younger employees manage older ones
- Nearly 50% of millennial workers say physical workplace environment & working remotely are big factors in choosing a workplace

75% of managers agree managing multi-generational teams is a challenge



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MAPPING MAASTRICHT in de culturele en creatieve industrie

Het onderzoek Mapping Maastricht is uitgevoerd door Maastricht University onderdeel van het programma Made in Maastricht. Dit programma valt onder de 2e pijler van de economische visie 'Made in Maastricht', namelijk de creatieve industrie.

Maastricht is een veld op de grenzen van de wetenschap, de kunst en de economie. Deze studie was opgezet als uitdaging voor het onderzoeksveld met het oog op 'Maastricht Cultureel Hoofdstad'.

Het onderzoek Maastricht heeft betrekking op de impact in de creatieve industrie op zoek naar het effectieve en met zoek. De onderzoekers zijn op zoek naar effecten (zoals en verder). Deze worden in een mogelijk verspreid onderzoek wel meegenomen om te kijken het rendement van de impact.

Highlights: Groei in cijfers

1 op de 6 bedrijven en zelfstandig ondernemers was deel van de creatieve industrie in Maastricht in respectievelijk 2009 en 2016, dat is hoger dan het landelijk gemiddelde.

Totname aantal bedrijven in Maastricht, 2009-2016

2009	2016
1.171	1.736

Totaal aantal creatieve bedrijven

Het aantal zelfstandig ondernemers in de mode sector van Maastricht is twee keer sneller gegroeid dan het landelijk gemiddelde.

Het aantal zelfstandig ondernemers in de culturele en creatieve industrie is gegroeid met 35% dit is sneller dan het landelijk gemiddelde.

In 2015 lieverste data beschikbaar van het laatste aantal zelfstandig ondernemers in de mode in Maastricht twee keer zo groot als Nederland. Dit betekent tussen 2009-2016 met 23% gegroeid in Maastricht, in vergelijking met 2% in Nederland.

Het aandeel van de culturele en creatieve industrie in de economie van Maastricht is met bijna 20% gegroeid in de periode 2009-2016. Het aantal Maastrichtse bedrijven in de culturele en creatieve industrie is met bijna 50% gegroeid in de afgelopen 8 jaar met beschikbare data.

Art, Antiques and Collectibles Branching Out into Online Trade





THE AUTHOR:

**Dr. Sandra Gärtner** is a co-founder of the market research and technology service provider GreenAds and an energetic, ecologically spirited freelance market research consultant from Hamburg with mediaresearch42. Ecological, for GreenAdz stands for “market research that plants trees” and the sustainable incentivization concept, which is coming fully into effect, particularly in the areas of influencer market research as well as studies associated with the impact of influencer campaigns on advertising.

In addition, she is a member of the BVDW social media expert panel, publisher of COMAE (Content Marketing Analyse Entscheider), and a jury member for the bcm Award (best of content marketing), where she conducts evaluations on a regular basis for the – often insufficiently existing – concepts for success measurement for social media and content marketing campaigns. This is yet another reason to move the topic of success measurement in digital marketing (even) more firmly into the spotlight.

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## IMPRINT & CONTACT

Statista GmbH  
Johannes-Brahms-Platz 1  
20355 Hamburg

Mail: [content-design@statista.com](mailto:content-design@statista.com)  
Phone: +49 40 284 841-476

[www.statista.design/en](http://www.statista.design/en)

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