



March 2022 Panel Survey: Content Marketing

- A majority of the panel use Content Marketing. Brochures/flyers, newsletters and advertorials/articles/profiles are the most common types. (Page 3)
- Content marketing became more important one in four respondents last year, and a growing share predict they will do MORE of it in 2022. (Page 4)
- A higher share of SMB panelists expect to spend content marketing dollars on most categories in 2022 vs 2021. Informative videos, Sponsored content/segments and Seminars/workshops are expected to see the biggest increases. (Page 5)
- Informative videos are a content marketing methods that is increasing in use AND perceived as very effective. Blogs are used a fair amount but not as effective. (Page 6)
- The #1 objective when using content marketing is to increase awareness of the company/brand among consumers. (Page 7)
- New content is typically developed on a quarterly or monthly basis. (Page 8)
- Content marketing ideas are most often generated through internal brainstorming and internal staff members are commonly the creators of the pieces (Page 8 & 9)
- Website, social media and e-mails were the dominant ways of sharing content in 2021; among those who will use Content Marketing to promote their business this year, social media pages is by far the ONE most preferred method. (Page 10)
- Among SMB panelists who invested money in content marketing in 2021, the average spend was \$27,900, with somewhat more going towards production vs distribution. Most SMBs engaging in this tactic, spend less than \$10,000 per year. (Page 11)
- In terms of collaboration with local media companies, SMB panelists would like help with development/production of creative content as well as distribution/placement of stories. (Page 12)
- Getting the content in front of the right audience is the top challenge/area of concern among panelists, followed by results tracking and cost/ROI. (Page 13)

USE OF CONTENT MARKETING IN 2021

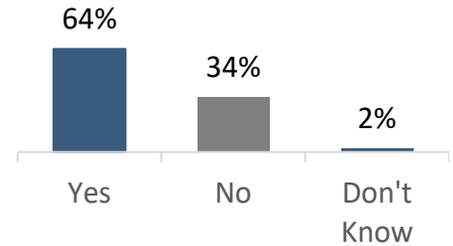
A majority of the panel use Content Marketing. Brochures/flyers, newsletters and advertorials/articles/profiles are the most common types.

Q. Based on this definition, did your business use content marketing in 2021?

“Content Marketing helps a business tell their story and/or showcase their expertise through promotional material. This material can be found in digital and non-digital formats and is used to engage and connect with a user (reader, viewer, listener) which will ultimately lead to interest in a company.”

What content marketing is NOT:

- It is NOT focused on directly selling a product or service.
- It is NOT promoting an upcoming sale or event.”



64%
Used Content
Marketing in 2021

Q. In 2021, did the company you work for pay money to develop, design or distribute any of the following types of content? Select all that apply.

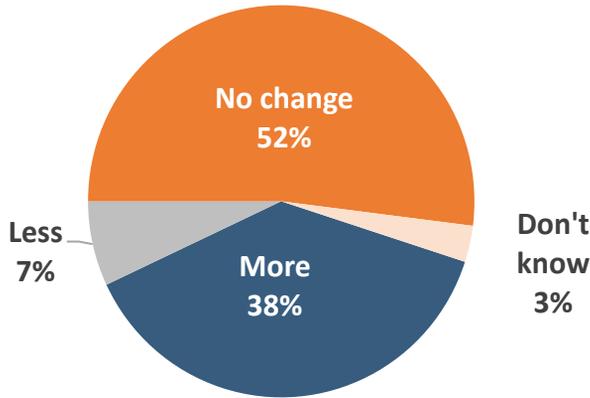




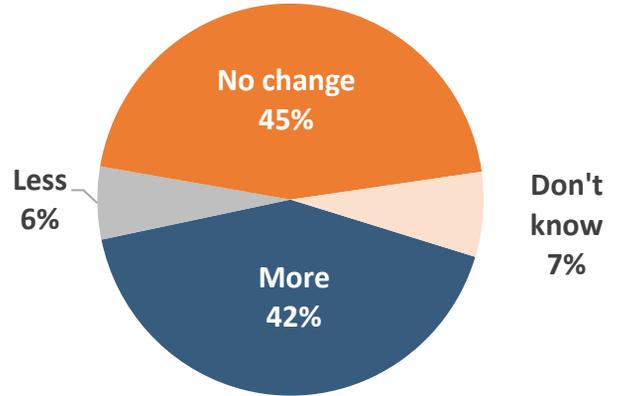
PRIORITY OF CONTENT MKTG

38% of survey takers said content marketing became more important to their business last year and 42% predict they will do MORE content mktg. in 2022.

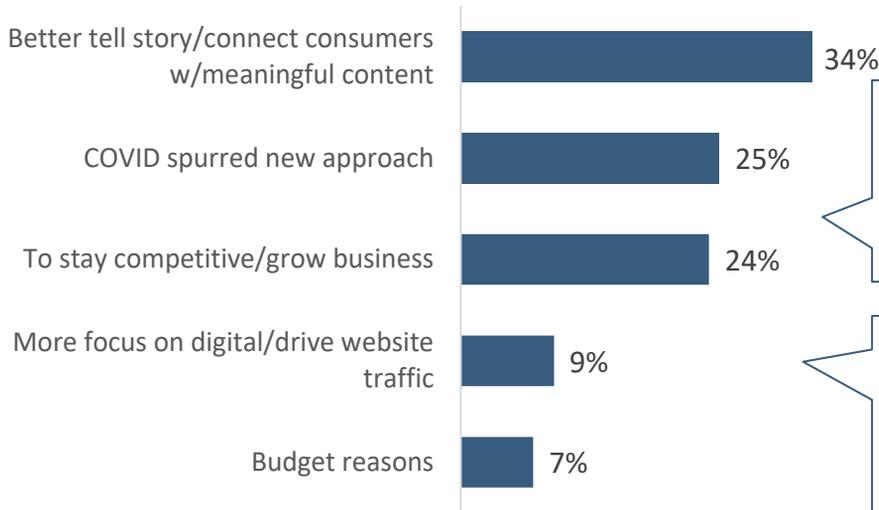
Q. In 2021 vs prior year, did content marketing become more or less of a priority to your business?



Q. In 2022, do you think your company will do more or less content marketing than it did in 2021?



Q. Why did content marketing become [MORE] of a priority to your business in 2021? (CODED Open-Ends, n=70)



“Creating an emotional connection with customers became more important “post COVID.”

“We have more of a complex story to tell during and (hopefully) post pandemic.”

Q. Why did content marketing become [LESS] of a priority to your business in 2021? (Open-Ends, n=13)

“Lack of time to produce content marketing”

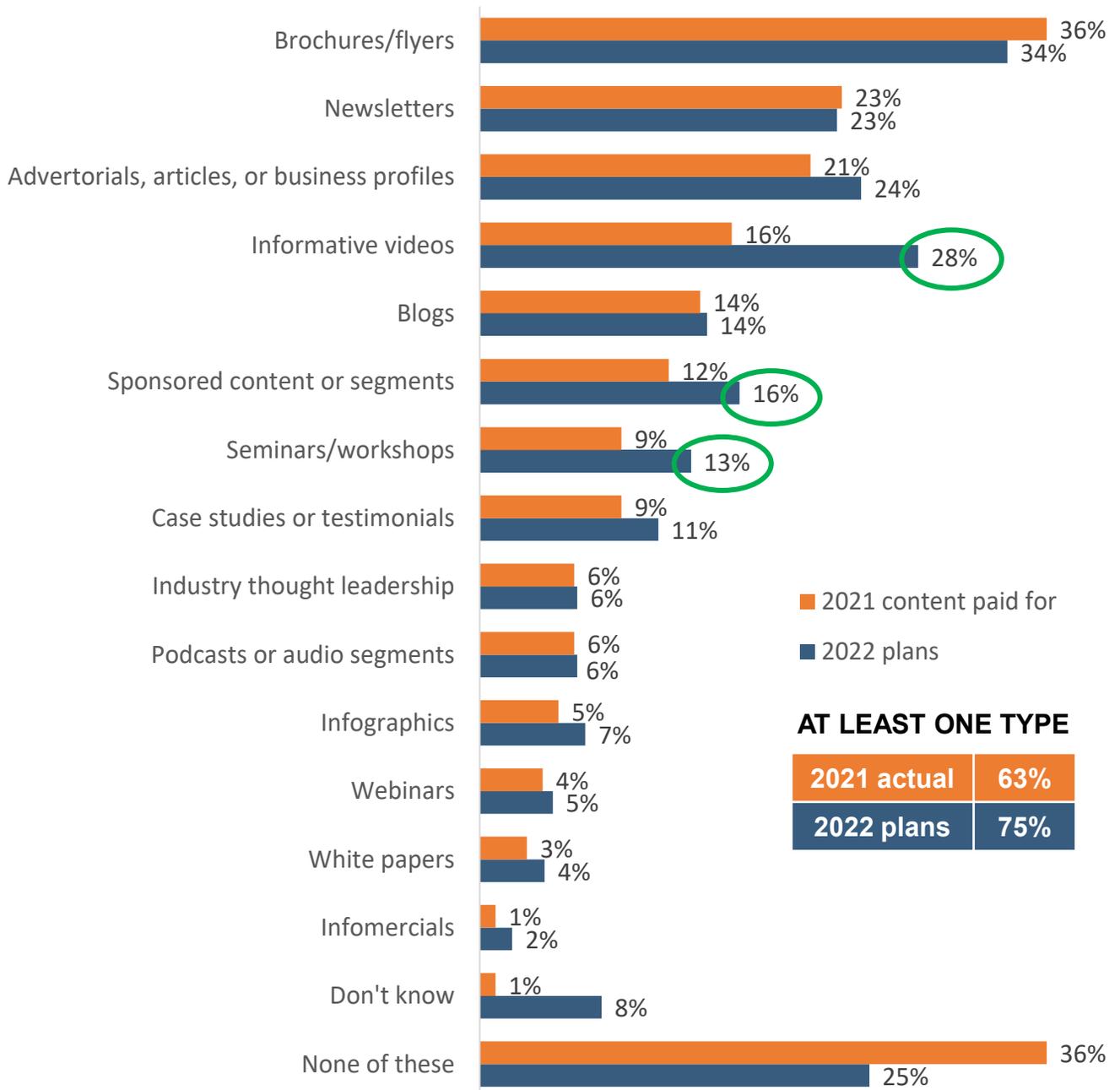
“Lack of staff meant less time to focus on content creation.”

“During the shut down I made videos of myself trying on the clothing I sell. Now that the shop is open regular hours and people aren't ordering for delivery or pick up, I stopped doing the videos.”

TYPES OF MORE/LESS USE IN 2022

A higher share of SMB panelists expect to spend marketing dollars on most of the categories listed in 2022 vs 2021. Informative videos, Sponsored content/segments and Seminars/workshops are expected to see the biggest increase.

In 2021, did the company you work for pay money to develop, design or distribute any of the following types of content? Select all that apply. Q. Now thinking about 2022, which of the following types of content do you expect your company to pay money to develop, design or distribute? Select all that apply

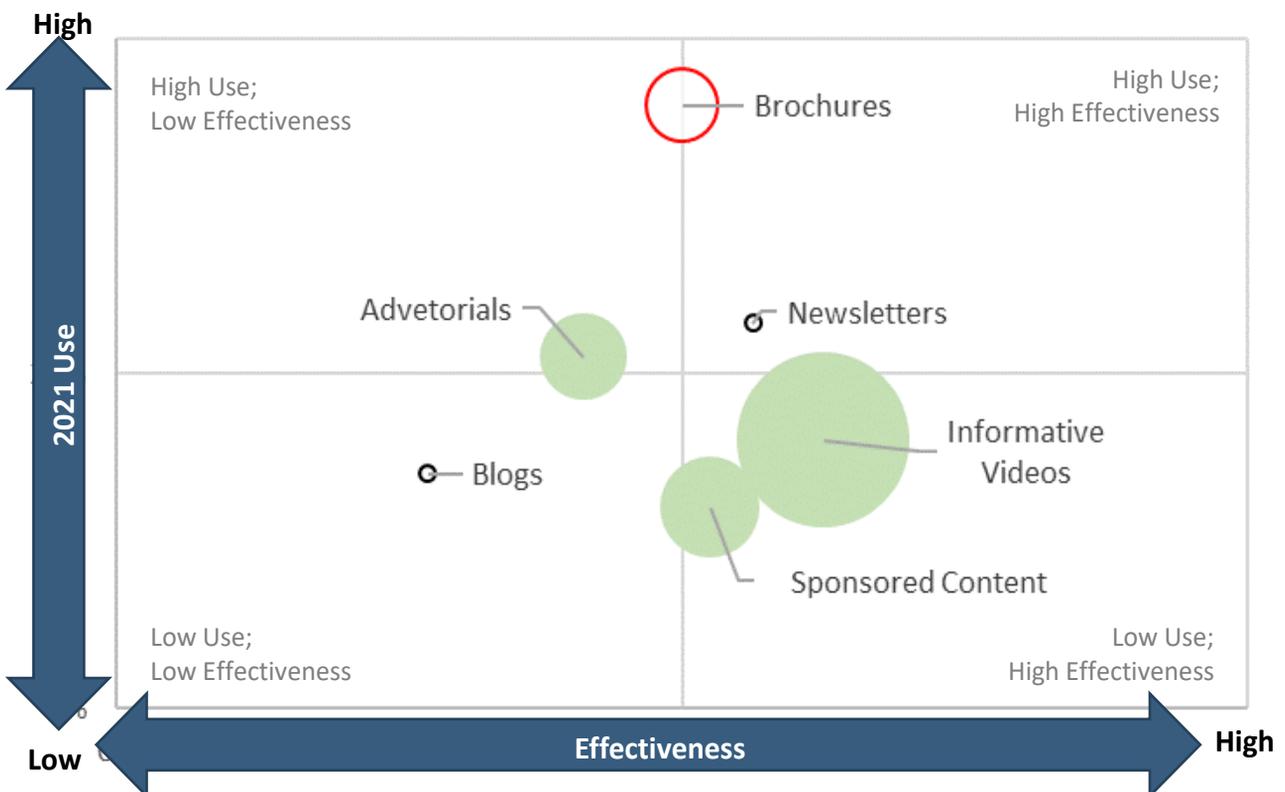


USE, EFFECTIVENESS, & YOY GROWTH

Brochures are the #1 type of content marketing used and seen as fairly effective. Their year-over-year use will remain about the same as 2021. Informative videos are not used as much but have higher rates of effectiveness and are likely to have more users in 2022.

In 2021, did the company you work for pay money to develop, design or distribute any of the following types of content? Select all that apply. Q. Now thinking about 2022, which of the following types of content do you expect your company to pay money to develop, design or distribute? Select all that apply. Q. In 2021, how effective were each of the following for your company? (% saying it was "Very or Extremely effective out of 5 on a 5-point scale. Among those using each content type) Showing only those with more than 20 responses.

Bubble Size Indicates Expected Use in 2022 vs. 2021. Larger bubble means more/less growth

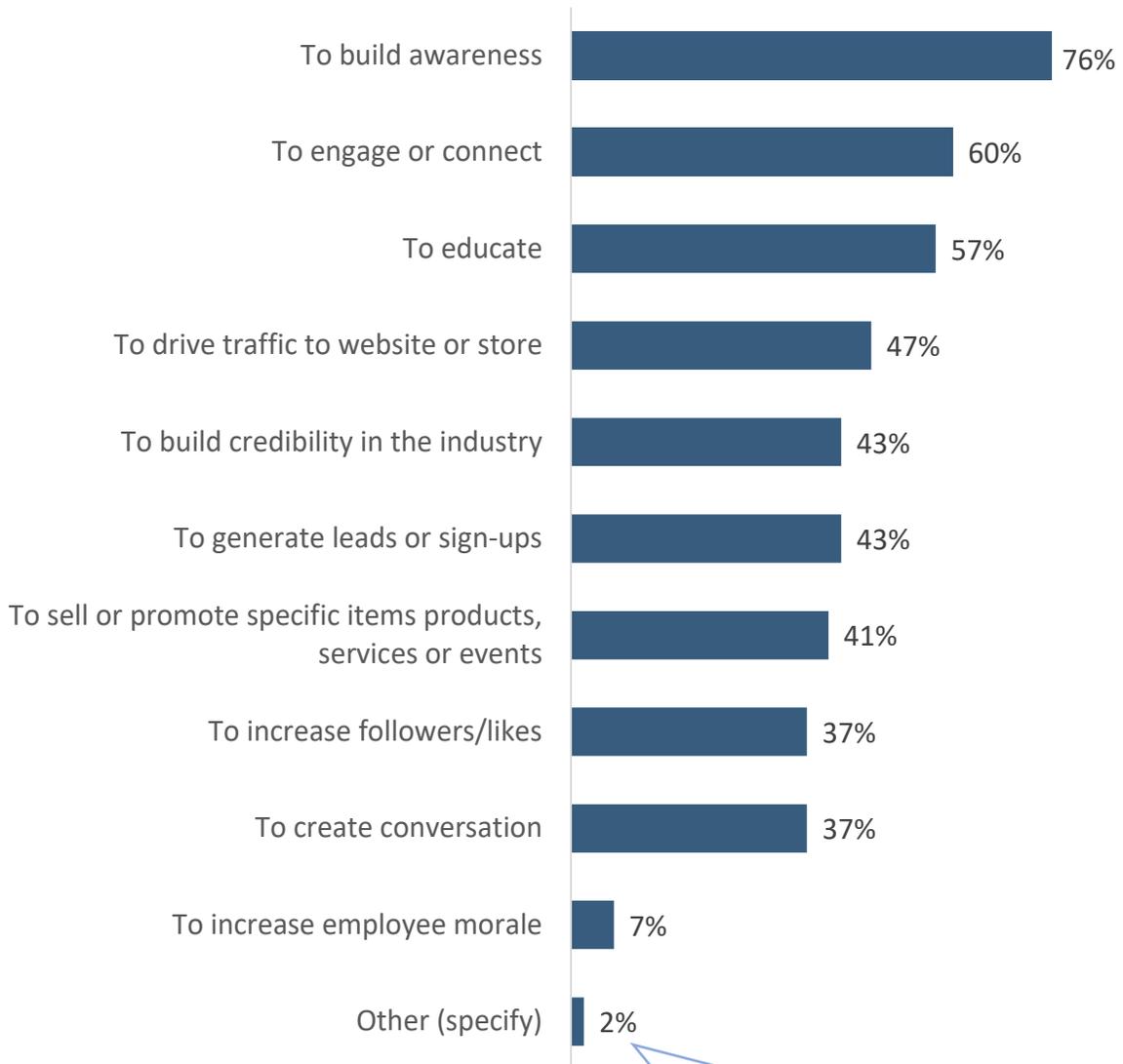


	2021 Use	Very/Extremely Effective	Year-over-Year Dif
Brochures/flyers	36%	40%	-2%
Newsletters	23%	45%	0%
Advertorials, articles, or profiles	21%	33%	3%
Informative videos	16%	50%	12%
Blogs	14%	22%	0%
Sponsored content or segments	12%	42%	4%

CONTENT MARKETING PURPOSE

Key goals among content marketing users are to increase awareness of the company/brand among consumers, engage or connect on a deeper emotional level, and educate others about the business or products.

Q. For what purpose did your company develop [content marketing] in 2021? Select all that apply



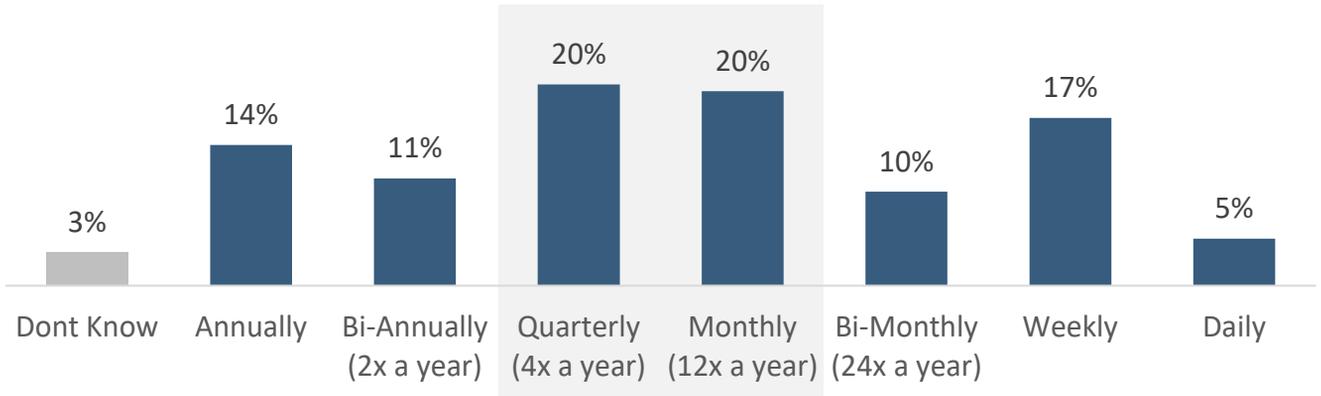
Other mentions:

“Build a sense that things are happening and that the reader/follower is missing out (FOMO).”
“To promote our business.”
“To increase client morale.”

CONTENT CREATION DETAILS

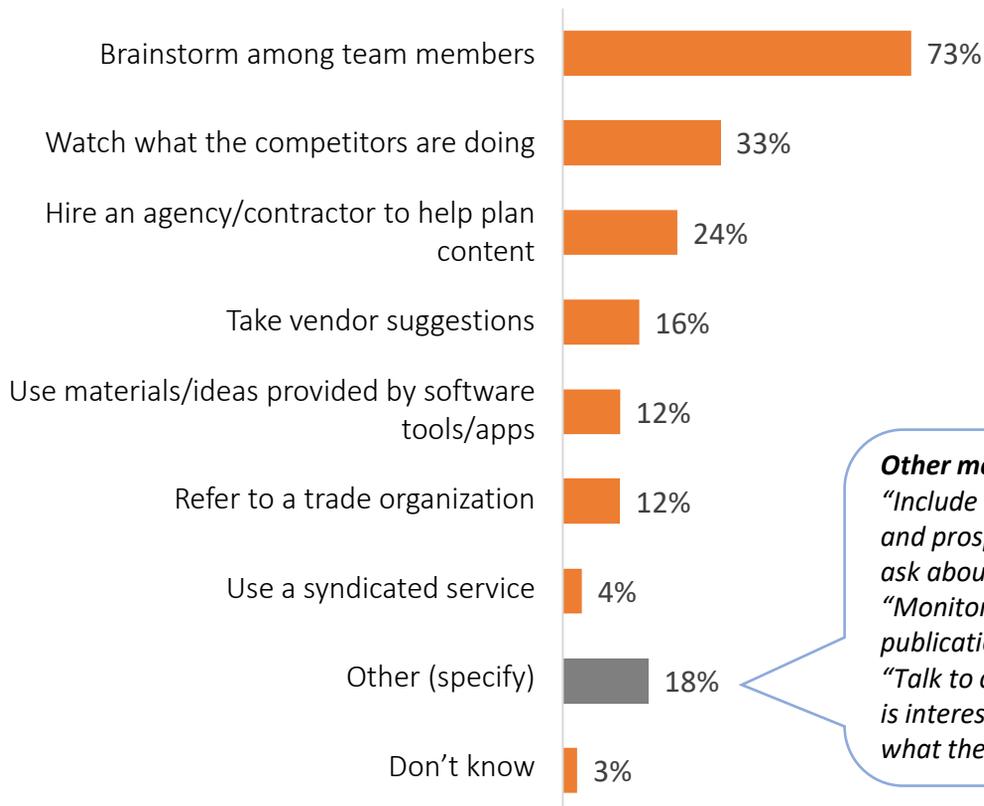
The most common frequencies of developing new content is quarterly & monthly, followed by weekly.

Q. How often does your company create new content?



73% of SMB Panelists using content marketing come up with ideas by brainstorming with team members.

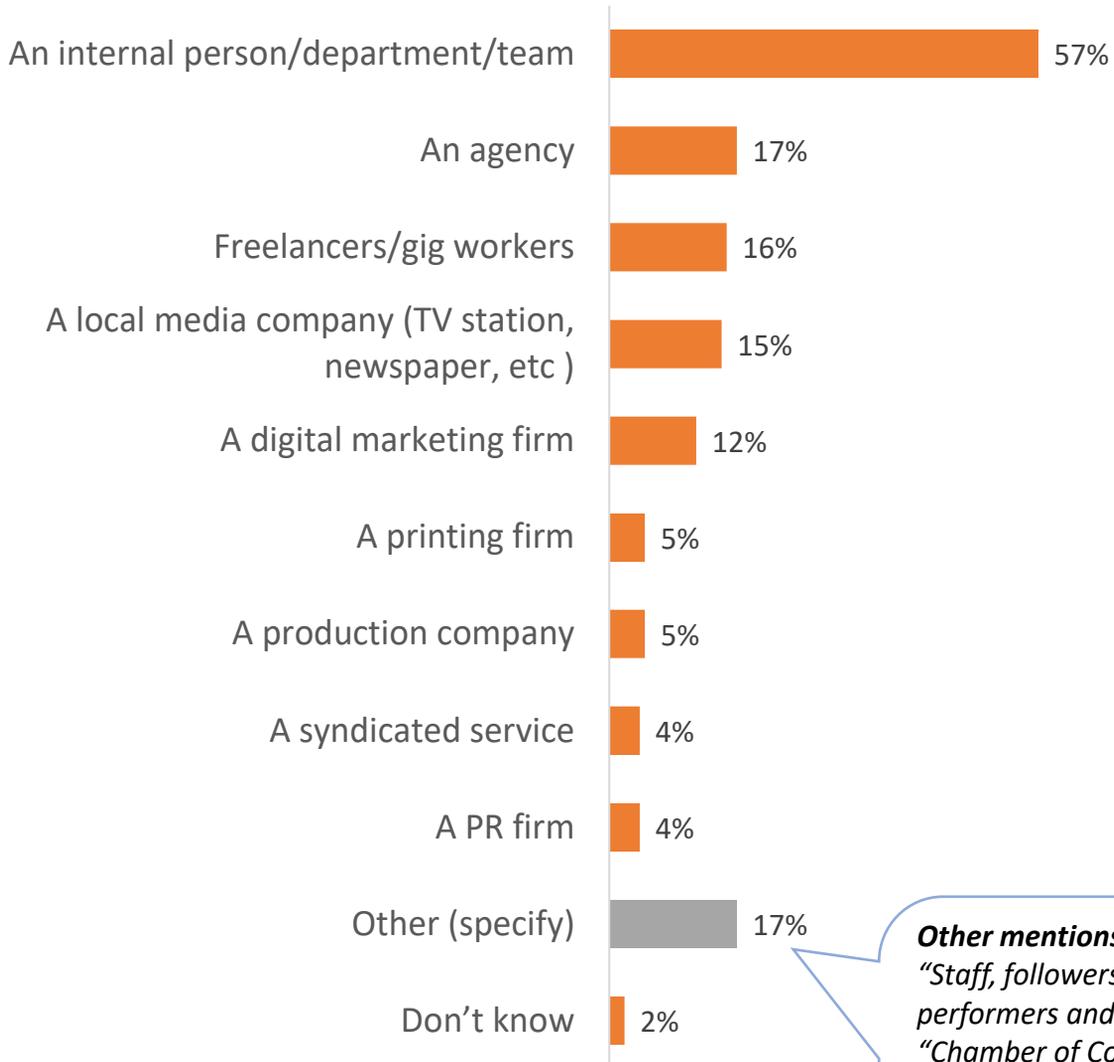
Q. How does your company come up with content ideas? Select all that apply



CONTENT CREATION RESOURCES

Creating content internally rather than outsourcing/hiring agencies is by far the most common scenario among SMB panelists.

Q. in 2021, who created content for your company? Select all that apply. Think specifically about the production only - writing, editing, filming, recording, designing.



Other mentions:
“Staff, followers, performers and artists.”
“Chamber of Commerce, Hotel Association.”
“Franchisor.”
“Friends.”
“Marketing team.”
“Newsletter owners.”

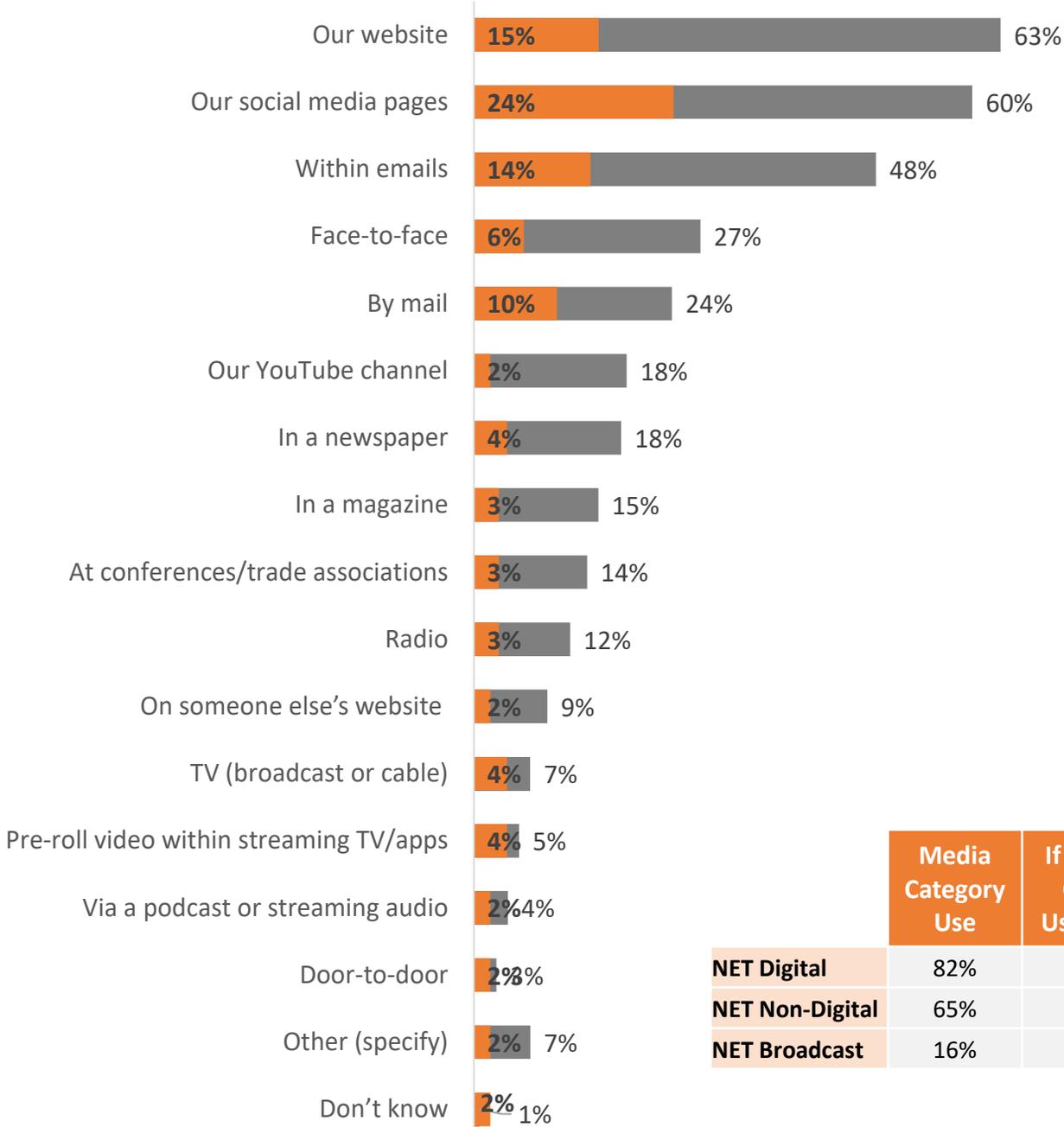


DISTRIBUTION METHODS USED/ PREFER

Website, social media and e-mails are the dominant ways of sharing content, although face-to-face and mail are methods still used by about 1 in 4 panelists. Among those who will use content marketing in 2022, social media is the MOST preferred distribution method.

Q. In 2021, where did your company distribute content? Select all that apply (Among content marketing users, n=147)
Q. In 2022, if you could choose only ONE method to distribute your company's [content marketing], which ONE method would you choose? Select ONE (Among 2022 content marketing users, n = 131)

Preferred Method | Methods used in 2022



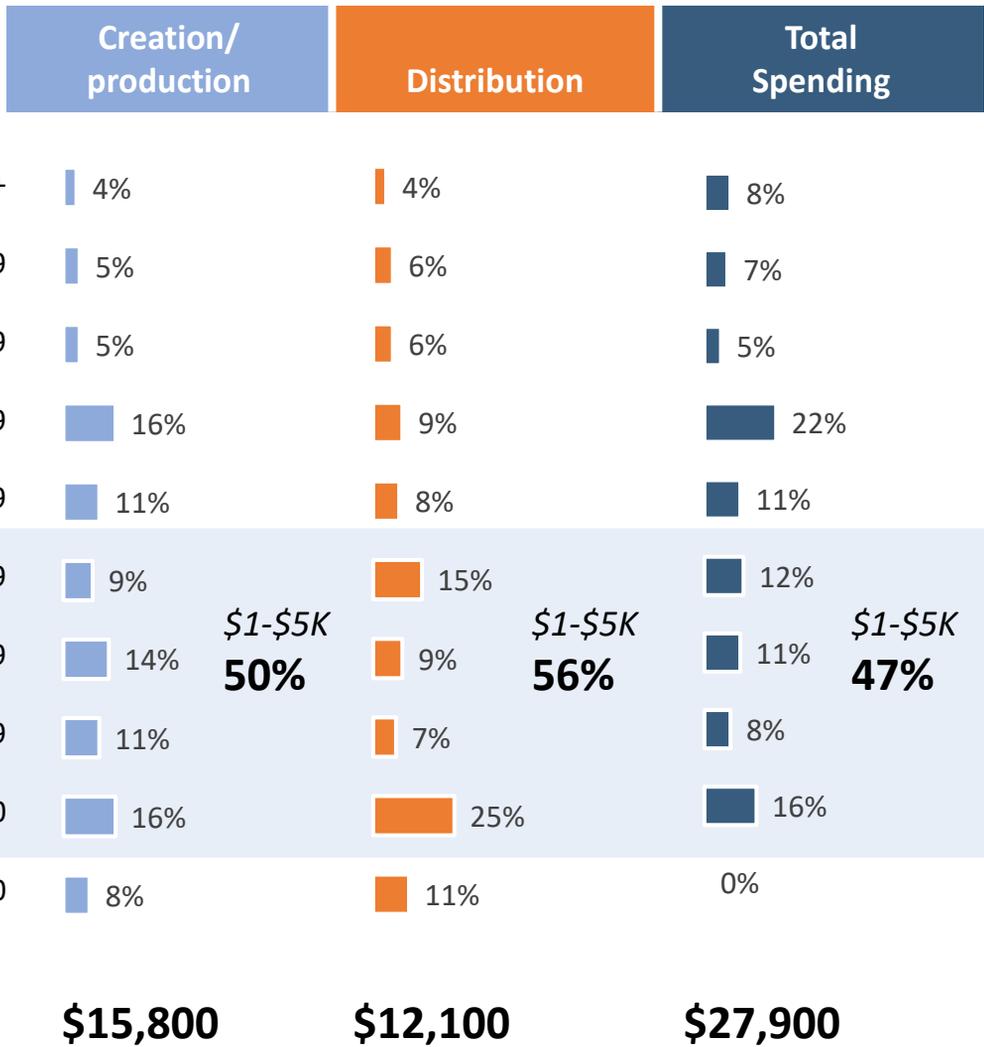
	Media Category Use	If Could Only Use One
NET Digital	82%	63%
NET Non-Digital	65%	27%
NET Broadcast	16%	7%



CONTENT MARKETING SPENDING

Among SMB panelists who invested money in content marketing in 2021, 92% spent on creation and 89% spent on distribution. In total, 47% of spenders spent less than \$5,000. One in five spent between \$10,000 to \$25K with slightly more of that going towards creation than distribution.

Q. In 2021, about how much money did your company spend to create and distribute content? (Among Spenders n=106)

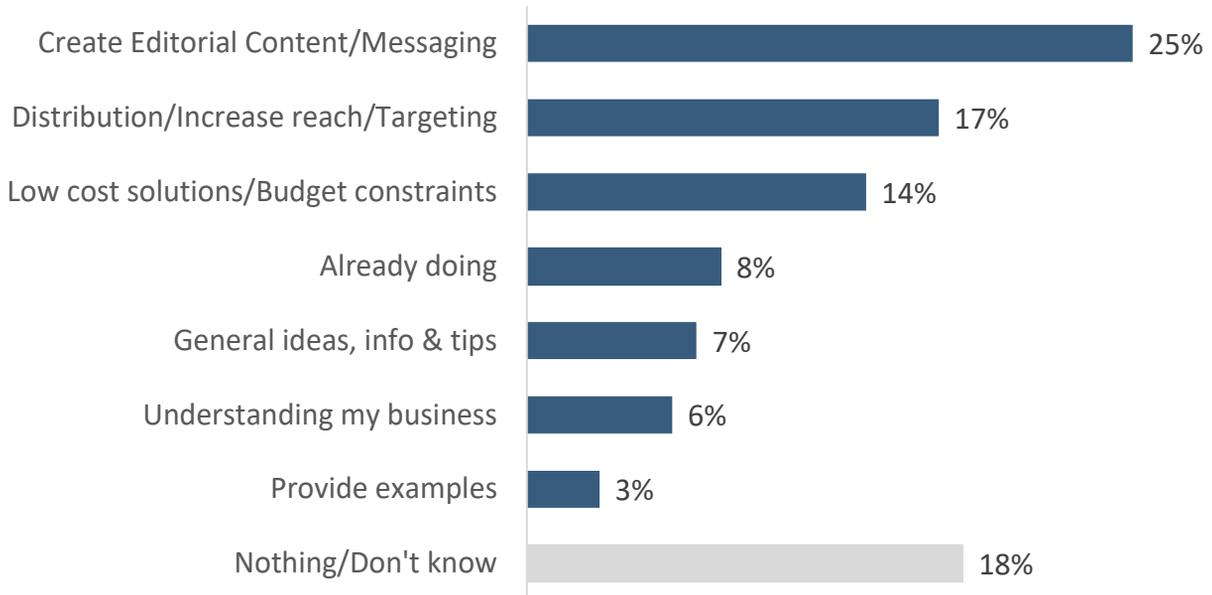


Creation/production costs included internal and external costs where possible, including mailing, emailing, hosting, sponsoring, or placement fees **Distribution costs** included internal and external production costs where possible, including tools, people’s time, or services

SUGGESTIONS FOR LOCAL MEDIA ASSISTANCE WITH CONTENT MKTG

SMB panelists would like help with development/production of creative content as well as distribution/placement of stories.

Q. How, if at all, could local media companies help you when it comes to content marketing? **CODED Open-Ends (n=134)**



“They would have to show understanding and proof of success from previous clients they've had in my industry.”

“Help in the design and distribution. Like many organizations, we are short-staffed and find it difficult to recruit new people and refill open positions. Help in these areas would be valuable.”

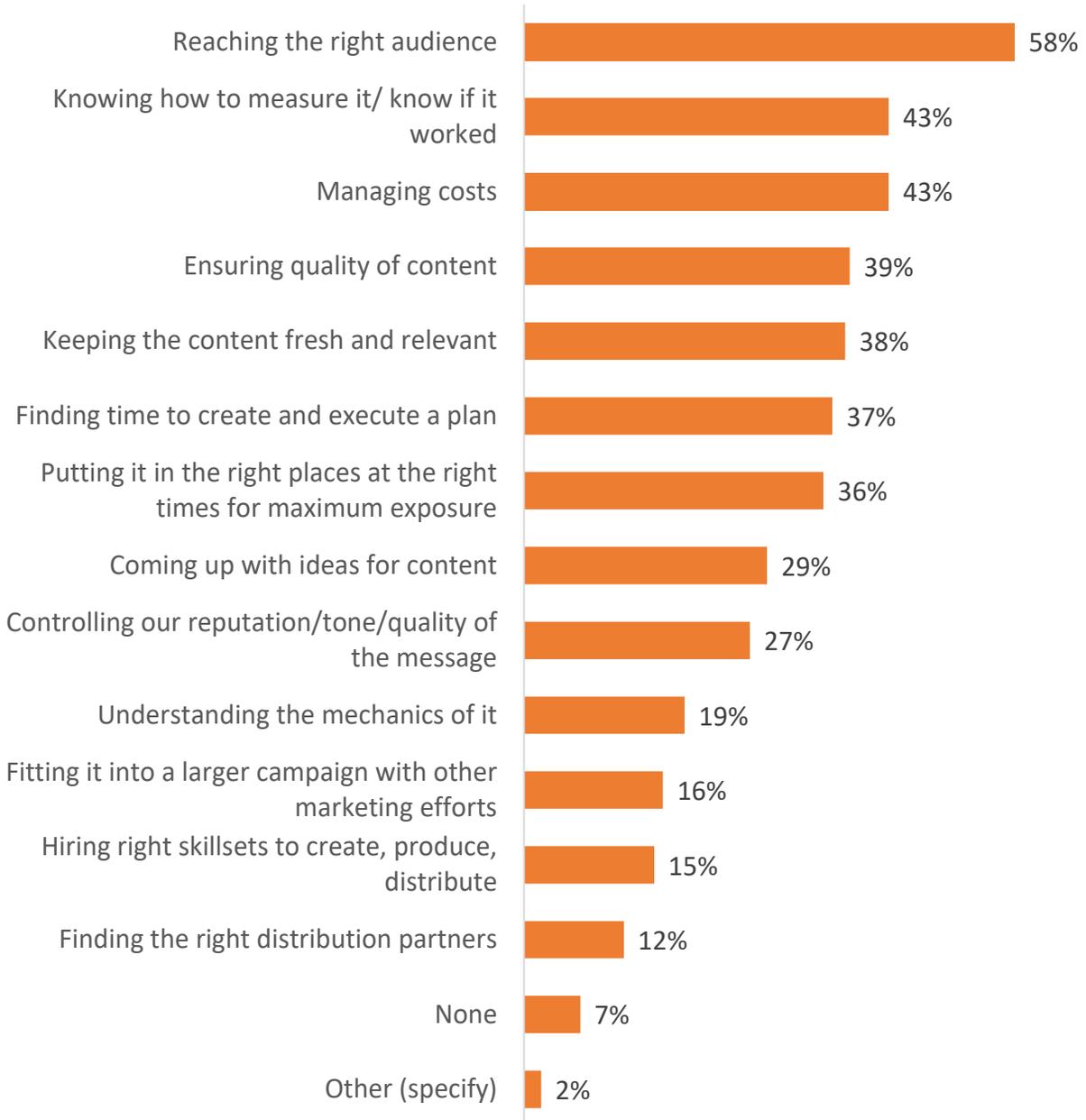
“Content is everything. Businesses are great at what 'they' do... but expecting to also be great at content marketing -- without help from a structured and experienced team of experts -- is not a great plan.”

“Provide free/low-cost webinars through/sponsored by the local radio, and newspaper about creating effective content. Kind of like how this group did a few years ago with our local newspaper - it's how I got connected with Borrell. It was an interesting and informative webinar from a couple of years ago..”

“They need to start by completely understanding my business. This has been the biggest challenge.”

Getting the content in front of the right audience is the top area of concern among panelists, followed by results tracking and cost/ROI.

Q. And finally, what concerns, if any, do you have regarding content marketing? Select all that apply



Other mentions:

- "It contributes to over-commercialization, consumerism, and lack of integrity in business, media, and society."*
- "Finding time to DIY create content."*
- "I have to look my absolute best to appear in front of the camera."*
- "We can barely keep up with business now, not going to advertise until we can hire more stable, reliable employees."*



SURVEY STATS

SURVEY PERIOD: 03/15/22 - 03/28/22

194 Completed Surveys

Top Industries of Respondents

	#
Retail Trade	38
Healthcare & Social Assistance	23
Services – Other	19
Services – Prof. and Business	19
Information, Media or Adv	18
Construction / Contracting	16
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation	15
Services – Educational	9
Manufacturing	8
Finance and Insurance	6
Real Estate, Rental, or Leasing	5
Other	18

6 Minutes
Median time to complete survey

Marketing Expertise

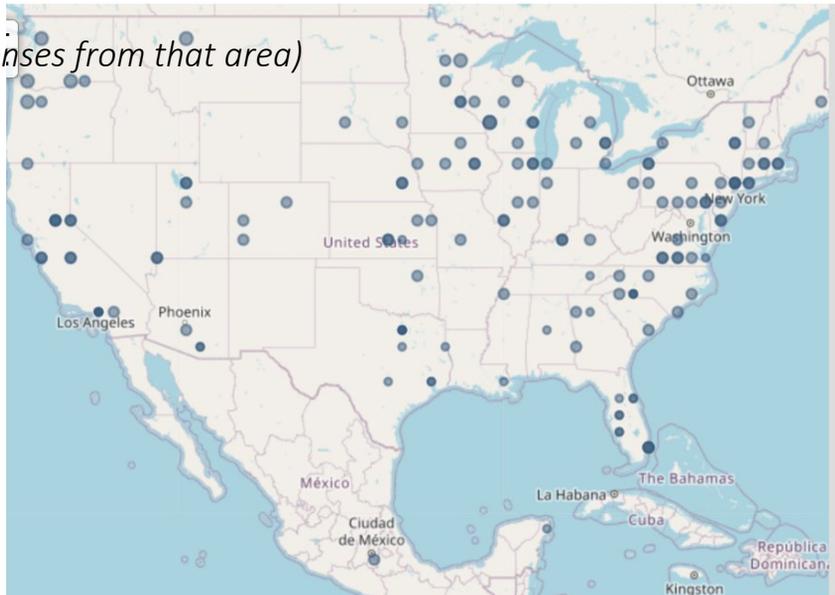
	%
Novice	45%
Mid-Level	21%
Master	34%

Device Used

	%
Mobile/Tablet	11%
Desktop	89%

Location of Respondents

(darker bubble indicates more responses from that area)



Census Region

	%
South	29%
Midwest	26%
West	24%
Northeast	16%

Q. Why did content marketing become [MORE] of a priority to your business in 2021?

1	The shift in how people interact with the world. Everything is online and digital so we had to adapt to that world.
2	We have more of a complex story to tell during and (hopefully) post pandemic.
3	Marketing is new to our school district. It wasn't a priority in the past.
4	Competition
5	The ability to drive the conversation and also drive traffic to our website
6	With the pandemic, trade shows, conferences and seminars were mostly conducted virtually, so we need to pivot our resources away from traditional advertising.
7	We have cheaper tools than before.
8	Because now people are now more moved by feelings in my opinion. If you can get them feeling excited about a product they will be more likely to purchase.
9	It worked during the pandemic and was therefore increased.
10	Needed to update identity and offerings
11	Changing media outlets, growth of content marketing
12	Had more money to do more things
13	Cost concerns - spending less on other avenues because of Covid and taking advantage of our staff skills.
14	Had to break through the clutter with real, meaningful content.
15	We earned more business with better visibility of diverse platforms that we had not used previously!
16	It was an area that we hadn't take advantage in the past
17	It was determined that we were losing our audience due to pandemic and market consolidations. We felt we needed to let them know that we knew what we were talking about.
18	More thing happening
19	With covid restrictions lifting in 2021, we were able to distribute to people in person again at meetings, events, etc.
20	video
21	More time was available
22	Wanting to keep front-of-mind awareness of our community involvement and other non-sales efforts.
23	Growth
24	It seemed this was a transition in the area of marketing to showcase your product or service but tie to real life experiences.
25	recovery from 2020 COVID setbacks
26	I don't think we were telling our story well and needed to up our game.
27	We closed all retail and went online only.
28	We listened to what our customers were looking for, and made a plan to create meaningful and helpful content. They don't want the same old tired things everyone else has said and done.
29	Customers needed to see us as a different retail shop and gallery, a hybrid.
30	Pandemic, Had to get our name out there
31	advertising
32	Because it's so important.
33	As Covid restrictions decreased we ramped up clients
34	Prices all around went up
35	Gotta stay relevant and in people's forefront!
36	We are trying to increase awareness and recruit more 'clients/students'.
37	Attempting to grow the business more (in relationship to the 2020 disaster of the pandemic lockdown)
38	Not as many customers, not as many products to sell, increased prices. Needed to bring in new customers to increase our customer base.
39	Because it's a great vehicle to educate and inform consumers.
40	It's how I want to do my work/run my business

Q. Why did content marketing become [MORE] of a priority to your business in 2021?

- 41 We had significant changes that we wanted to communicate
- 42 It's effective
- 43 content is king
- 44 need to improve rentals
- 45 Desire to reach a wider audience
- 46 Trying to rebuild a business after the lockdowns.
- 47 I think it's important to share your story, so people 'get' where you're coming from and can better understand what makes you and your biz tick. It helps in developing relationships with current and potential customers.
- 48 We do it internally and it is more personal
- 49 Sharing information regarding our business and the area is more important because we needed to entice people to travel here.
- 50 We know it's important so just put more of an emphasis on it.
- 51 part of overall SEO strategy and social media marketing strategy to increase lead conversions.
- 52 Back to business as normal without covid restrictions.
- 53 We were presented with opportunities that made sense and had a great reach for us.
- 54 harder to reach people
- 55 limited face to face contact so follow up content necessary via e mail mail LinkedIn Facebook
- 56 Changed the focus on how to market our product.
- 57 Limited budget so used more internal resources
- 58 Interest in our sector, tree care became more important as more people spent more time at home because of covid.
- 59 WE ARE TRYING REESTABLISH OUR NAME IN OUR MARKET. OVER THE YEARS THE BIG BOXES HAVE TAKEN OVER THE MARKET AS FAR AS NAME RECOGNITION AND US SMALL GUYS ARE ALMOST INVISIBLE
- 60 Building our brand
- 61 Because we need more clients
- 62 Business was slow due to COVID and retaining new clients became a priority
- 63 It's authentic and effective.
- 64 Cut through the noise on social media and email pitches, and to target specific audience. Focusing on customer problems/needs first in content marketing rather than pushing our services.
- 65 expanding the company and wanted to continue the growth
- 66 To bounce back from the effects of COVID.
- 67 It was our 2nd year in business. Plus, managing through 2020 with the ongoing pandemic, we were forced to look for additional ways to get our messages out into market.
- 68 We had the staff to make it happen.

Q. Why did content marketing become [LESS] of a priority to your business in 2021?

- 1 Lack of time to produce content marketing
- 2 COVID 19
- 3 It's unethical, immoral, ineffective, a waste of money, and contributes nothing positive to society.
- 4 Social Media, we don't have to pay for. vs. radio/tv expensive and we get a less than 1% return vs social media where we get a 85% roi.
- 5 Covid
- 6 Needed to cut back on budget
- 7 My business is getting well known within the area. Word of mouth has been the leading increase in business profits.
- 8 Marketing thru social media does not drive business
- 9 Lack of staff meant less time to focus on content creation.
- 10 Supply chain issues, adequate leads.
- 11 during the shut down I made videos of myself trying on the clothing I sell. Now that the shop is open regular hours and people aren't ordering for delivery or pick up, I stopped doing the videos
- 12 Reduction in business due to covid