Marketing Leadership Perspective on
Marketing Automation Strategy

Benchmark research reveals how marketing leaders expect
an effective marketing automation strategy to perform in 2015.

Marketing Leadership Perspective on Marketing Automation Strategy

Ascend2 Research Conducted in Partnership with Act-On Software.

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How an effective marketing automation strategy performs.

According to 46% of marketing leaders, the "lack of an effective strategy" is the most challenging obstacle to marketing automation success.

But how do marketing leaders expect an effective marketing automation strategy to perform in 2015?

To find out, Act-On Software in partnership with Ascend2 fielded the Marketing Automation Strategy Survey and completed interviews with 317 business and marketing professionals.

The data in this edition of the study titled *Marketing Leadership Perspective on Marketing Automation Strategy* represent the opinions of the 188 marketing leaders participating in the survey with roles ranging from Marketing Director to CMO. We thank these busy professionals for sharing their insights.

This research has been produced for your use and can be used in your own marketing strategy planning and presentation materials. Clip the charts and write about them in your blog or post them on social media. Please share this research credited as published.

Janelle Johnson
Director of Demand Generation for Act-On Software

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64% of marketing leaders surveyed say their companies use marketing automation to some extent. Another 33% that are not currently using it are planning to in the future.

To what extent does your company currently USE MARKETING AUTOMATION?

27%	37%	33%	3%
Extensive use of marketing automation	Limited use of marketing automation	Not using now but PLANNING TO in the future	Not using now and NOT PLANNING TO in the future
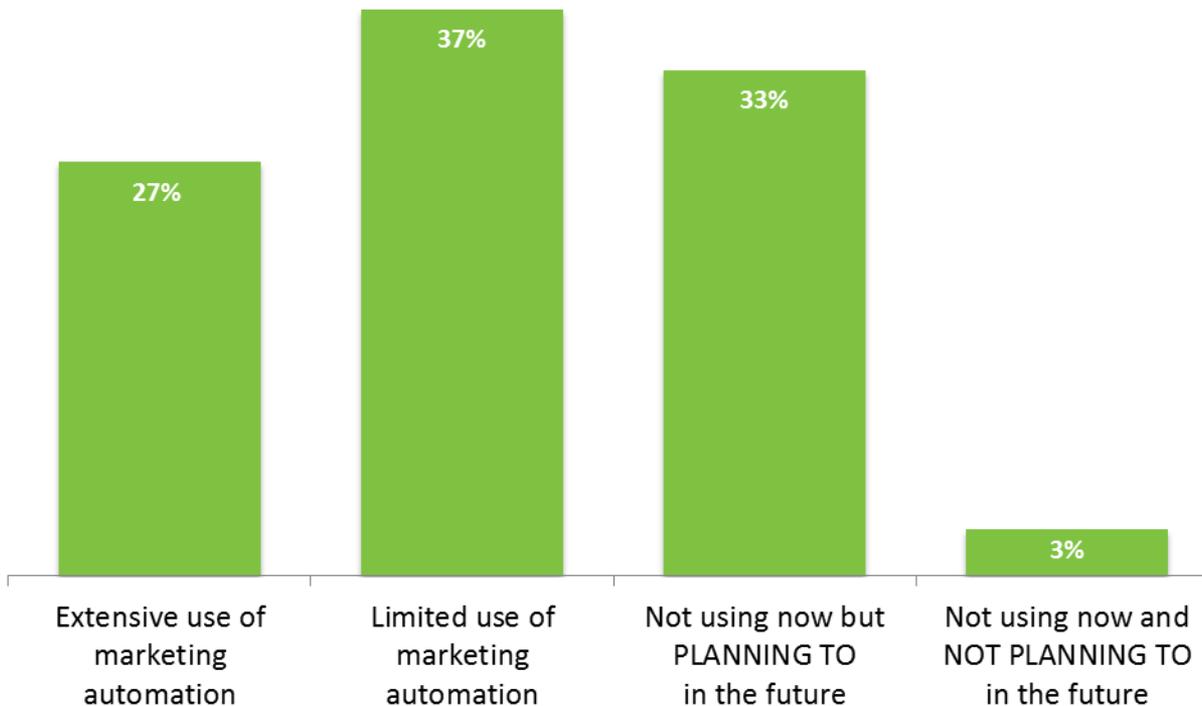
78% of successful marketers cite **marketing automation** as being most responsible for **improving revenue contribution**.

(The Lenskold and Pedowitz Groups, Nov 2013)

Marketing Automation Strategy Survey, N=188 Marketing Leaders
Ascend2 and Act-On Software, Published March 2015

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Marketing leaders understand the importance of automating marketing processes. 68% of them say marketing automation is "very important" to the overall success of marketing.

How important is MARKETING AUTOMATION to the overall success of a marketing program?
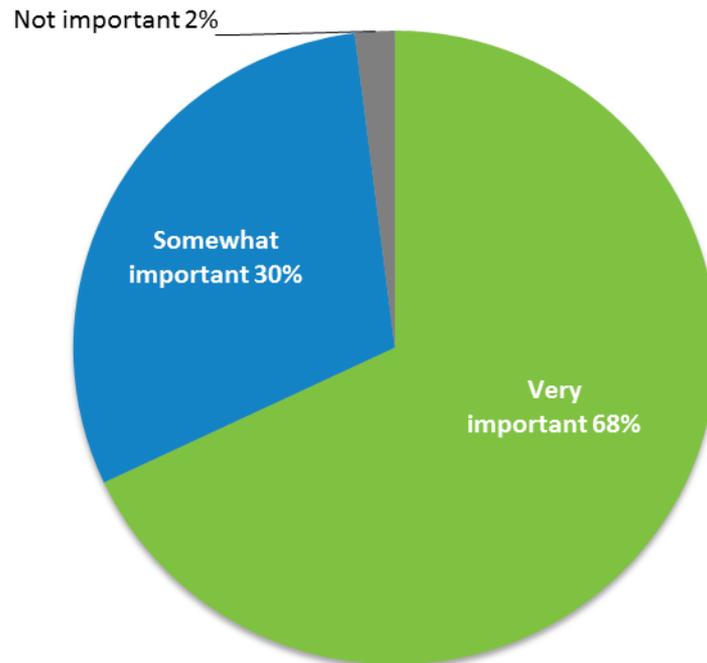
Not important 2%

Somewhat important 30%

Very important 68%

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Quick Facts:

- Businesses that use marketing automation to nurture prospects experience a **451% increase** in qualified leads. In turn, nurtured leads make **47% larger purchases** than non-nurtured leads.

  -The Annuitas Group, Nov 2012

- Companies that adopt marketing automation see **53% higher conversion rates** (from initial touch to MQL) and 3.1% higher annual revenue rates than do non-adopters.

  -Aberdeen Group, Jul 2012

- Businesses that have implemented marketing automation **reduce customer churn by 43%** over businesses that do not automate.

  -MathMarketing, Nov 2013

Planning an effective marketing automation strategy begins by setting objectives. Increasing sales revenue is the most important objective for marketing leaders.

What are the MOST IMPORTANT OBJECTIVES of a marketing automation strategy?

Objective	Percentage
Increase sales revenue	49%
Increase lead generation	45%
Improve lead nurturing	41%
Improve marketing productivity	38%
Improve customer engagement	36%
Improve performance measureability	24%
Improve campaign targeting	24%
Improve marketing-sales alignment	22%

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ACT-ON HELPS CUSTOMERS NURTURE LEADS AND GET THEM SALES-READY, INCLUDING ...

- Seeing a **49% increase** in monthly lead flow and a **68% decrease** in cost-per-lead, all without having to add staff.
  – RME360

- Delivering an average of **25% more** sales-ready leads.
  – ON24

- **Increasing revenue by 20%** using lead scoring through the funnel.
  – Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce

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87% of marketing leaders rate their marketing automation strategy successful to some extent at achieving important objectives. What obstacles do the rest need to overcome?

How do you RATE THE SUCCESS of marketing automation to achieve important objectives?
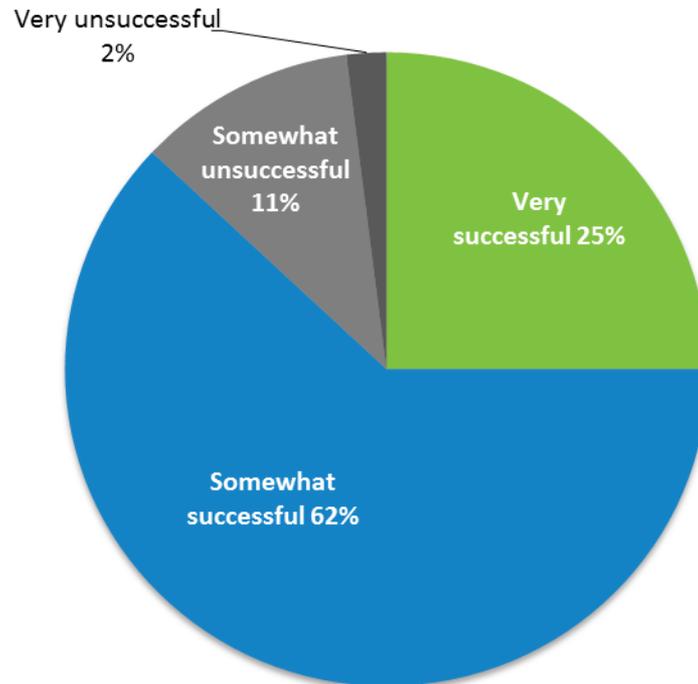
- Very unsuccessful 2%
- Somewhat unsuccessful 11%
- Very successful 25%
- Somewhat successful 62%

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MARKETING AUTOMATION BENEFITS

Done well, marketing automation can:

Increase overall sales, both for new and repeat customers

Shorten the sales cycle by 50% or more

Increase deal sizes

Increase sales quota achievement rates

Lower the cost per lead

Lower overall sales and marketing costs across the company

Increase alignment of sales and marketing teams

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The most challenging in a long list of obstacles for marketing leaders to overcome is the lack of an effective strategy for marketing automation success.

What are the MOST CHALLENGING OBSTACLES to marketing automation success?
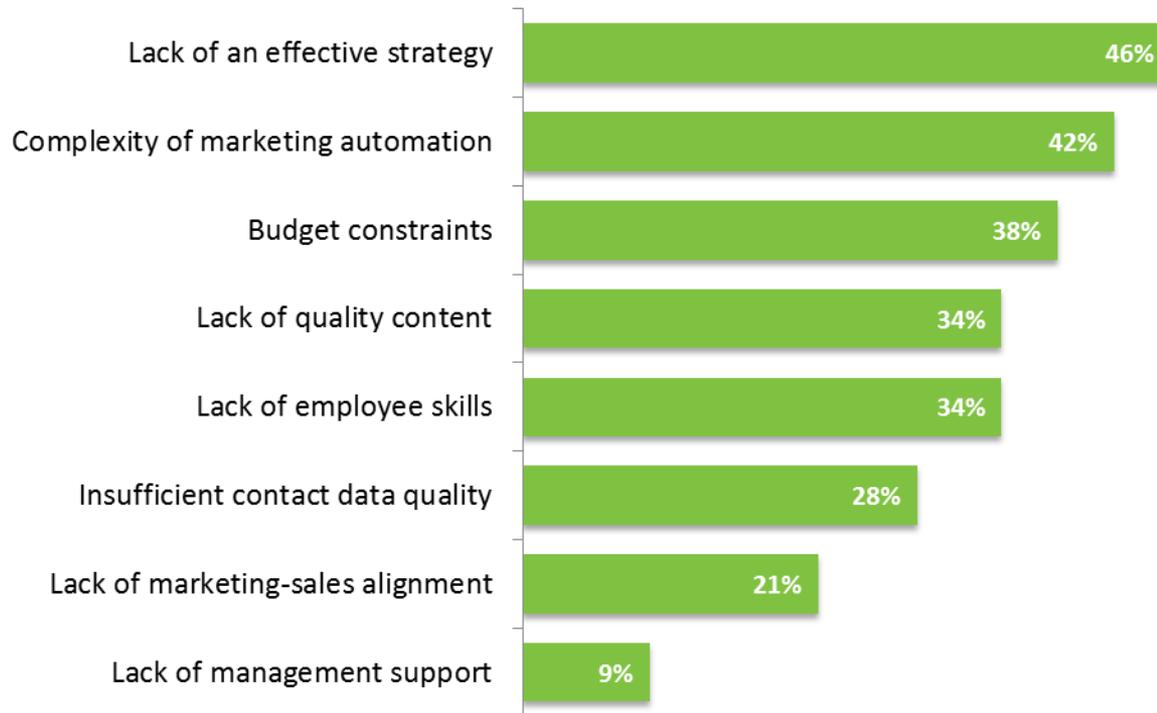
Obstacle	Percentage
Lack of an effective strategy	46%
Complexity of marketing automation	42%
Budget constraints	38%
Lack of quality content	34%
Lack of employee skills	34%
Insufficient contact data quality	28%
Lack of marketing-sales alignment	21%
Lack of management support	9%

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Budget constraints are also a top challenge. But 59% of marketing leaders plan to overcome this obstacle with an increase in their marketing automation budget for 2015.

How will your marketing automation BUDGET CHANGE in the year ahead?

Decrease 2%

Stay the same
39%

Increase 59%

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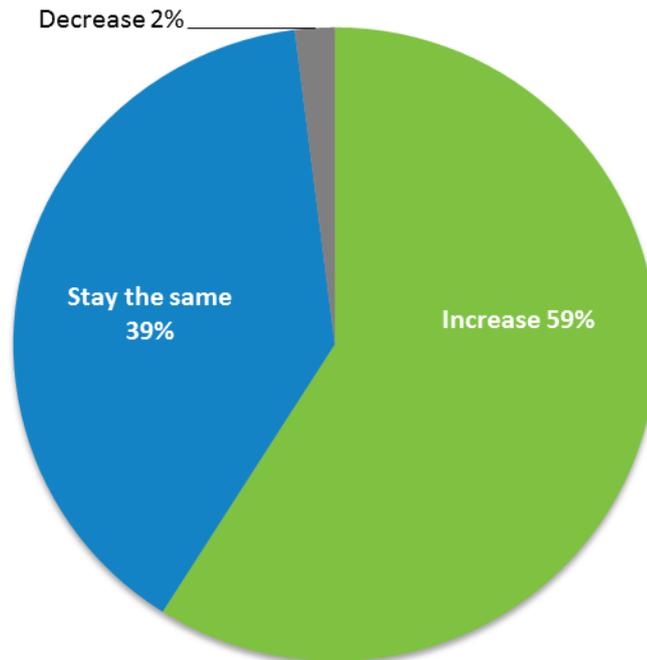
In the new age of accountable, technology-driven marketing, you need to have the right staff, structure, and budgets in place to thrive. Check out Act-On's guide, "The High Performance Marketing Department," and get a in-depth look at budget allocation for high performing marketing teams.

The
High-Performance
Marketing Department
A Guide to Staffing, Team Structure, and Budgets

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http://bit.ly/1vHmAAy

The most useful combination of metrics marketing leaders rely on for measuring marketing automation performance is the conversion rate of leads and revenue generated.

What are the MOST USEFUL METRICS for measuring marketing automation performance?
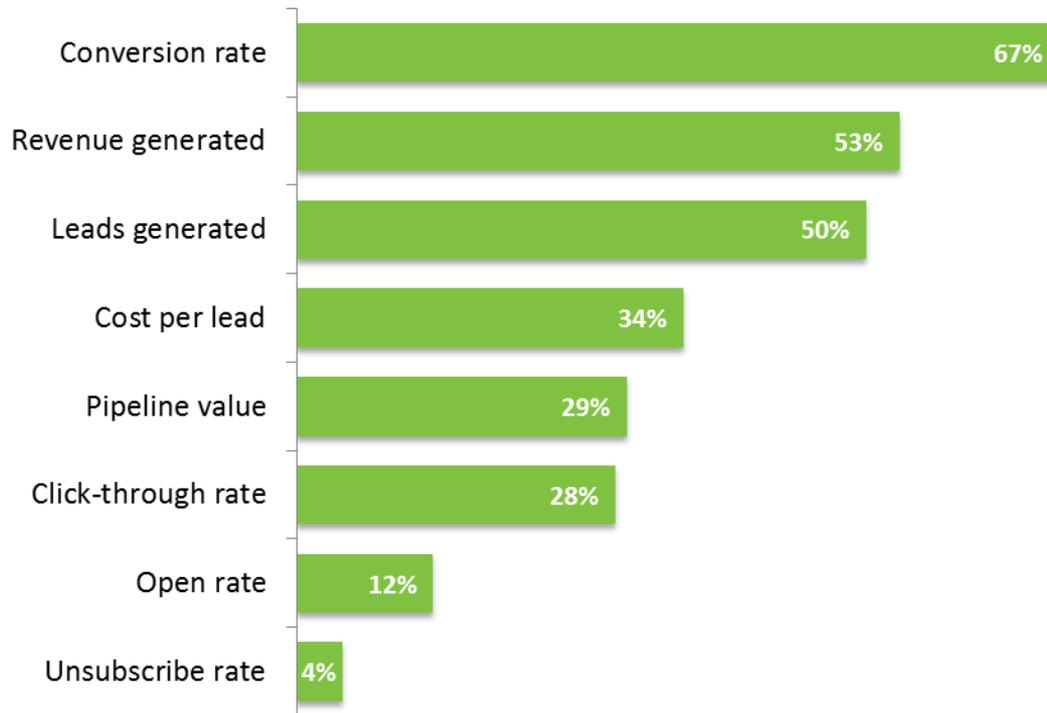
Metric	Percentage
Conversion rate	67%
Revenue generated	53%
Leads generated	50%
Cost per lead	34%
Pipeline value	29%
Click-through rate	28%
Open rate	12%
Unsubscribe rate	4%

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An effective strategy requires marketing automation expertise not often found in-house. That's why 79% supplement internal capabilities by outsourcing all or part of the planning process.

What are the MOST EFFECTIVE RESOURCES for planning a marketing automation strategy?

Outsource planning to a specialist 9%

In-house planning resources only 21%

Combination of outsourced and in-house resources 70%

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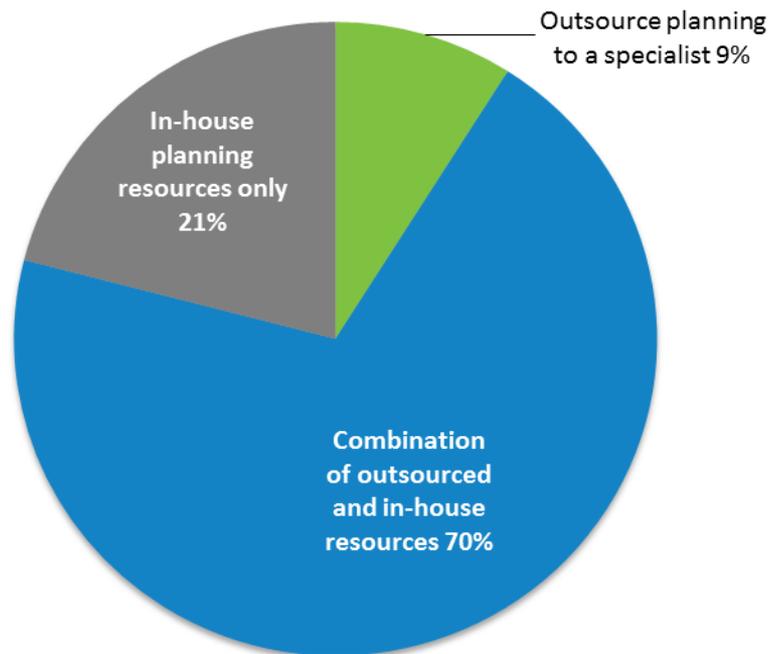
Act-On Professional Services

Lack of attention – to both details and processes – is the most common reason why organizations do not see positive ROI from marketing automation. Our experts can fix this for you. They can also coach YOU through it, so you gain the hands-on knowledge of what to do, why to do it, and when to do it.

http://bit.ly/18vTZnK

Marketing leaders have a long list of marketing automation features they value. Topping the list is analytics and reporting, lead nurturing and email marketing.

What are the MOST VALUABLE FEATURES of a marketing automation system?

Feature	Percentage
Analytics and reporting	50%
Lead nurturing	48%
Email marketing	42%
Integration capabilities	39%
Campaign management	39%
List segmentation	27%
Lead scoring	24%
Landing page creation	15%

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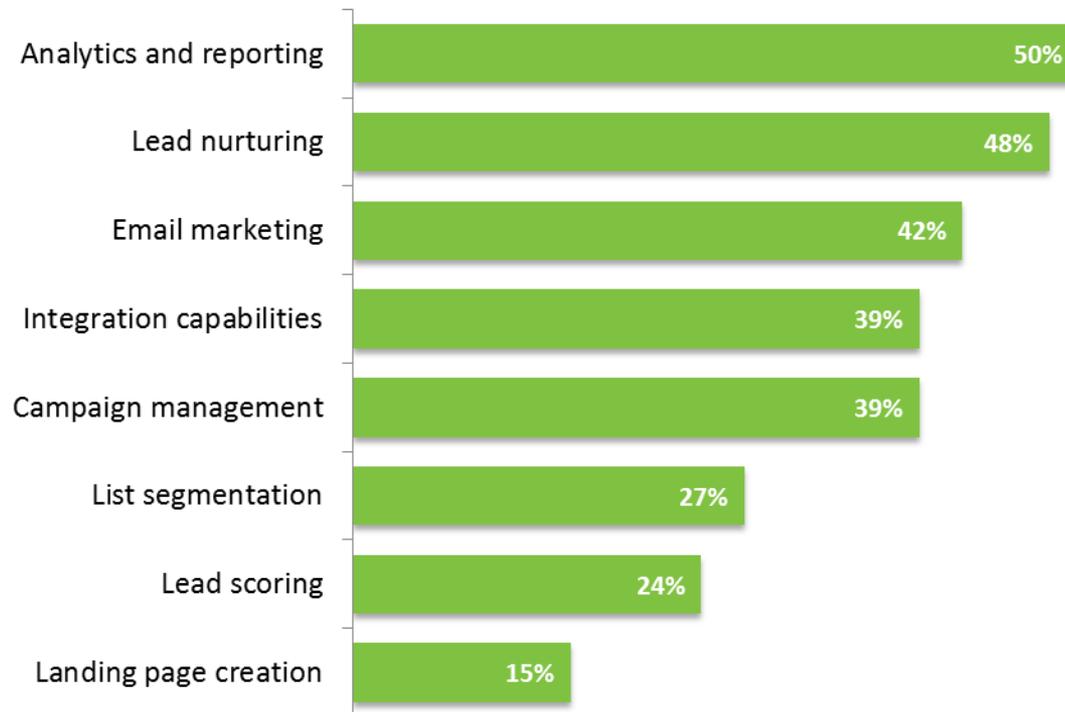
Measure What Matters

Measuring and analyzing the performance of your campaigns and initiatives is fundamental to good marketing; it lets you calibrate how you're doing, learn what works and what doesn't, and optimize future efforts for maximum impact. With Act-On, you won't need a degree in finance or statistics to quickly and easily connect the data dots, make informed strategic decisions, and calculate ROI.

Act-On's integrated analytics suite measures what matters. Simply, accurately, and from a single platform.

http://bit.ly/1z9R62M

Acclaim for act-on

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2014 BEST PRACTICES AWARD

Inc. 500 2013 & 2014 FASTEST GROWING COMPANIES

LEADER in Forrester Research, Inc. report, The
FORRESTER WAVE
Lead-To-Revenue Management Platform Vendors, Q1 2014

Forbes 2013
AMERICA'S MOST PROMISING COMPANIES

Deloitte.
Technology Fast500

See all of Act-On's
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About Act-On software

Act-On Software delivers cloud-based integrated marketing automation software. Marketers can manage all their online marketing efforts from a single dashboard that can be seamlessly integrated with CRM, giving sales access into various marketing functions. Act-On's fresh approach to marketing automation gives its users full functionality without the complexity other systems impose, and makes campaign creation and program execution easier and faster.

www.act-on.com | @ActOnSoftware | #ActOnSW

Research methodology and survey demographics

Ascend2 benchmarks the performance of popular digital marketing strategies and practices using a standardized questionnaire, research methodology and proprietary 3-Minute Survey format. Findings are examined in a quantitative context by experienced analysts and reported objectively.

This survey was conducted online from a panel of more than 50,000 US and international marketing, sales and business professionals. The following is a breakout of the demographic roles, regions, channels and company sizes represented in this report:

Number of Employees

- More than 500   19%
- 50 to 500   23%
- Fewer than 50   58%

Primary Marketing/Sales Channel

- B2B (Business-to-Business)   77%
- B2C (Business-to-Consumer)   23%

About the Research Partners

Our Mission: To Delight Small Marketing Teams with Big Ambitions!

Act-On Software is the world's fastest growing marketing automation company; its cloud-based marketing automation platform is the foundation of successful marketing campaigns everywhere – from small, simple and direct, to complex globally implemented programs.

Learn more at www.Act-On.com

Research-Based Demand Generation for Marketing Solution Providers

Marketing software, data companies and digital marketing agencies partner with Ascend2 to reliably generate demand and supplement marketing content. Our Research Partner Programs are transparent – spotlighting your brand and the interests of your market.

Learn more at www.Ascend2.com