

Lead Nurturing Survey Report

DESPITE CHALLENGES,
MARKETERS TAKE A MORE
PERSONAL APPROACH
TO LEAD NURTURING &
SEGMENTATION WITH
MULTICHANNEL CONTENT,
INTENT/ENGAGEMENT DATA



Introduction

With the impact of COVID-19 influencing many B2B companies' daily operations, lead nurturing is now more important than ever to keep prospects engaged and help sales accelerate stalled deals and opportunities.

According to *Demand Gen Report's 2020 Lead Nurturing & Acceleration Benchmark Survey*, 49% of respondents stated that their lead nurturing strategies need improvement, with only 8% claiming that their strategy was excellent. More than 77% of respondents also noted it has been somewhat-to-very challenging to maintain a lead nurturing program during the pandemic, as opposed to 2019's [survey report](#) citing a 60% failure rate.

Lead nurturing is becoming more difficult, with most respondents noting they don't have insights into best practices, and struggle to develop relevant content and build efficient workflows. Diving deeper into the common challenges, respondents noted pain points such as:

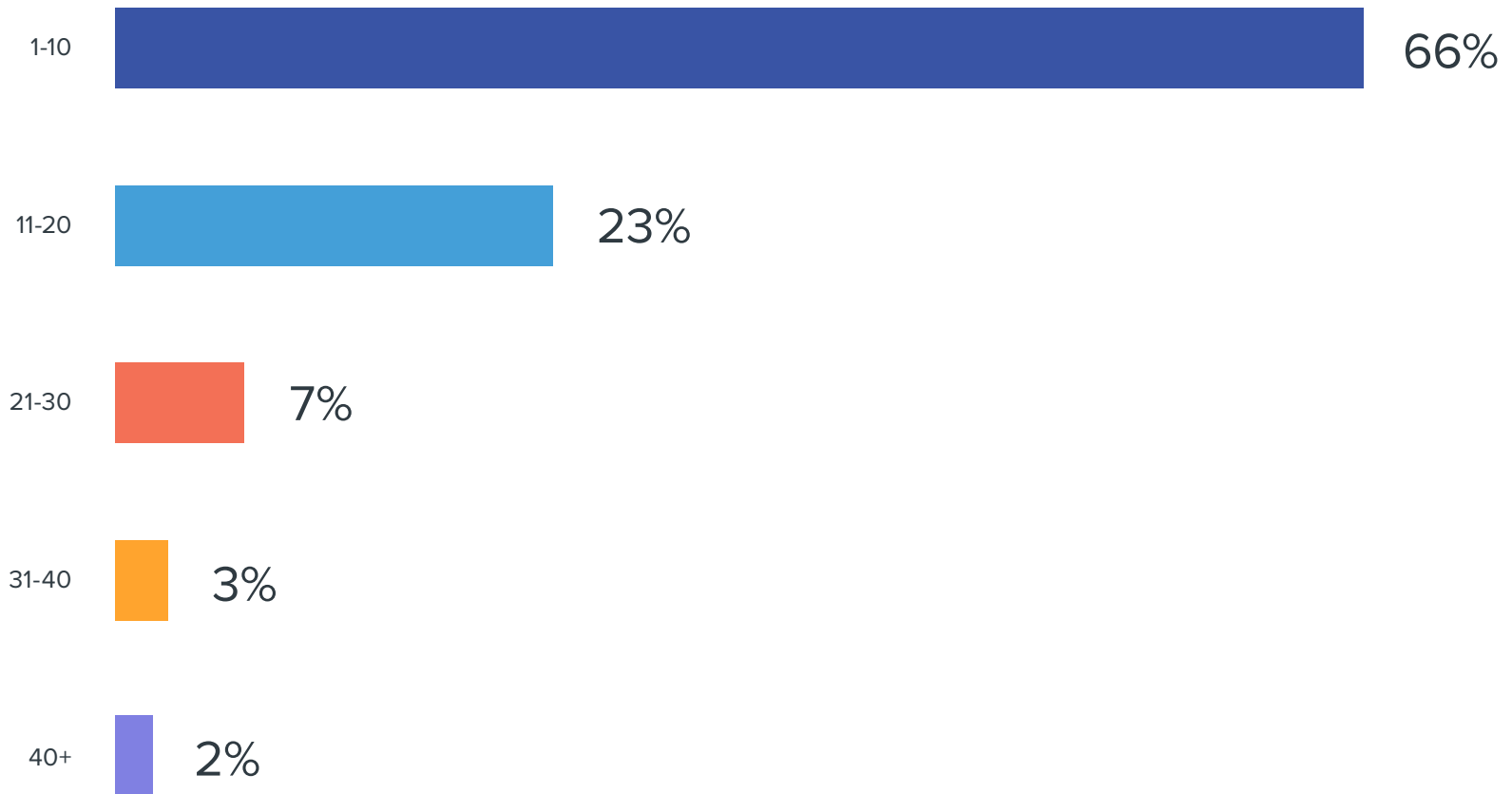
- Lack of insights into best practices (80%);
- Developing targeted content tailored to buyer interests (78%);
- Building right timing and workflows (77%);
- Declining response rates (71%); and
- Anonymous visitors driving traffic (66%).

How would you rate your current lead nurturing initiatives?



- 49%** Needs improvement
- 35%** Average
- 8%** Excellent
- 8%** Poor/Inadequate

How many different lead nurture programs do you currently run per year?





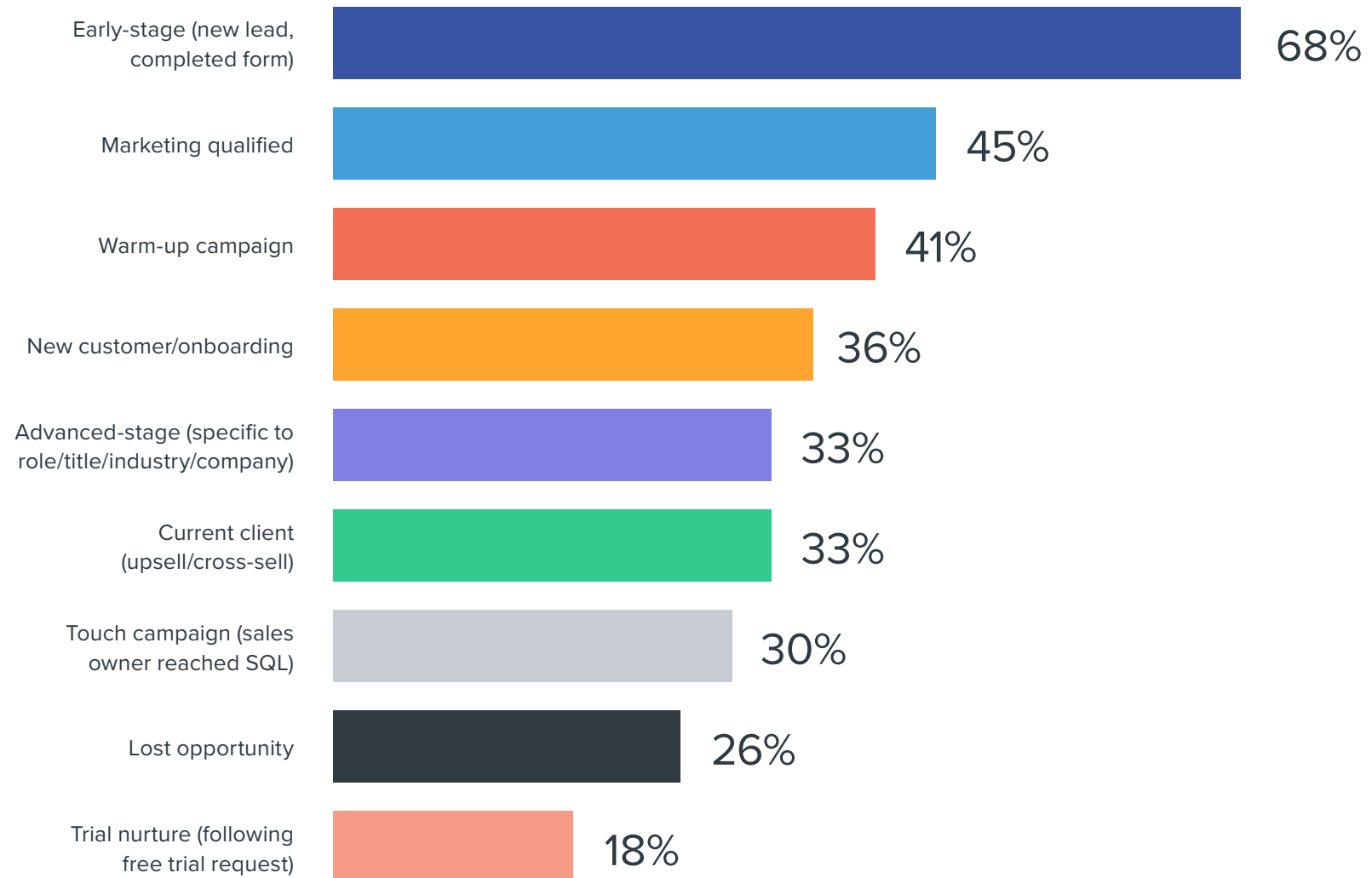
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Despite these challenges, marketers have become more creative with their lead nurturing strategies, adopting new tactics to overcome challenges and drive more revenue and sales.

This report will provide a deeper look into the survey findings, including:

- New tactics marketers are using to combat lead nurturing challenges;
- How tailored content is critical for lead nurturing success;
- The most optimal times to nurture leads; and
- The biggest impacts of lead nurturing.

Which types of lead nurturing campaigns do you currently have?



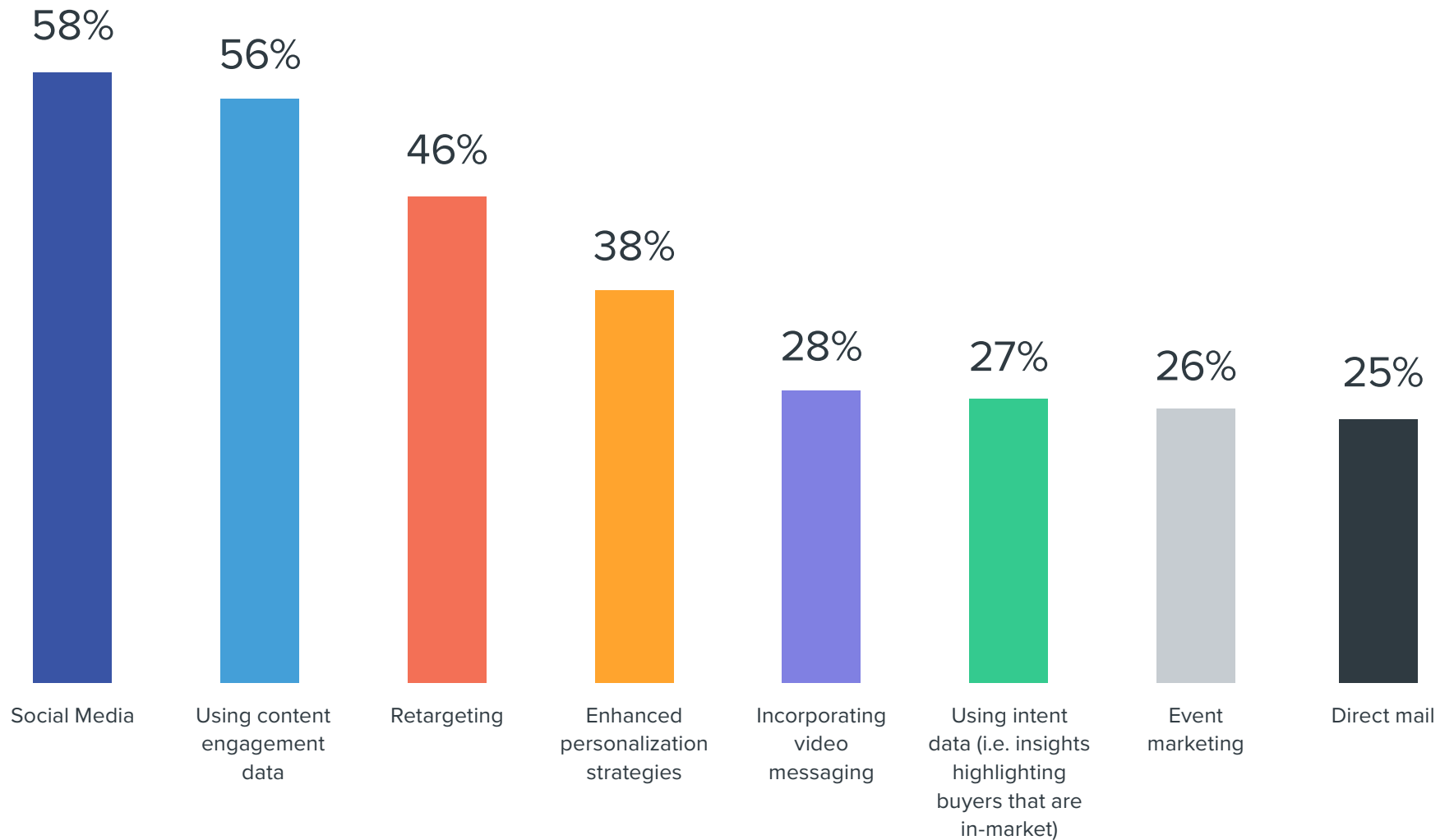
Employing New Tactics For A New Era

As B2B orgs continue to struggle with declining response rates and developing messaging that caters to buyer interests, marketers have had to get more creative to support their lead nurturing goals. Respondents noted that social media (59%), content engagement data (56%), retargeting (46%) and account-based nurtures (40%) are still important tools in their lead nurturing strategies, but newer methods are also growing in popularity.

Specifically, some fresh lead nurturing tools and tactics respondents highlighted include:

- Ungated content (32%);
- Video messaging (28%);
- Intent data (26%);
- Direct mail (25%); and
- Bundled content (23%).

What new approaches/tactics have you taken with your nurture program?





26% of respondents who employ account-based strategies cite a website visitor's buying intent to increase the accuracy of leads.

Marketers have also experimented with segmentation, opting to create a more accurate lead nurturing strategy through specially designed campaigns based on unique characteristics. Respondents noted the following segments as priorities:

- Industry (51%);
- Title/role (44%);
- Personas (40%);
- Company size (34%); and
- Funnel stage (32%).

By segmenting their leads into these various categories, marketers are better equipped to create custom campaigns that nurture their leads based on their preferences, needs, state in the buying cycle, etc.

Intent data has also seen a major uptick, as 26% of respondents who employ account-based strategies cite a website visitor's buying intent to increase the accuracy of leads. Intent data has allowed marketers to determine which potential leads are looking to buy and which are false leads from anonymous visitors.

Developing Targeted Content Is Critical To Lead Nurturing

As marketers become more creative with their tactics, the use of content to engage, target and keep leads warm has become essential to lead nurturing success.

The survey showed that 63% of respondents have “multipurpose” content, which tends to be evergreen and designed for a larger audience. Using the same generic content to engage various leads at multiple stages of the buying cycle may create a gap that isolates the lead and fails to cater to their needs.

Now, only 30% of respondents plan to create lead-exclusive content, with 7% planning to create lead-exclusive content over the next year. Although these results are similar to last year’s survey, the current pandemic has made the need for lead-exclusive content creation more apparent.

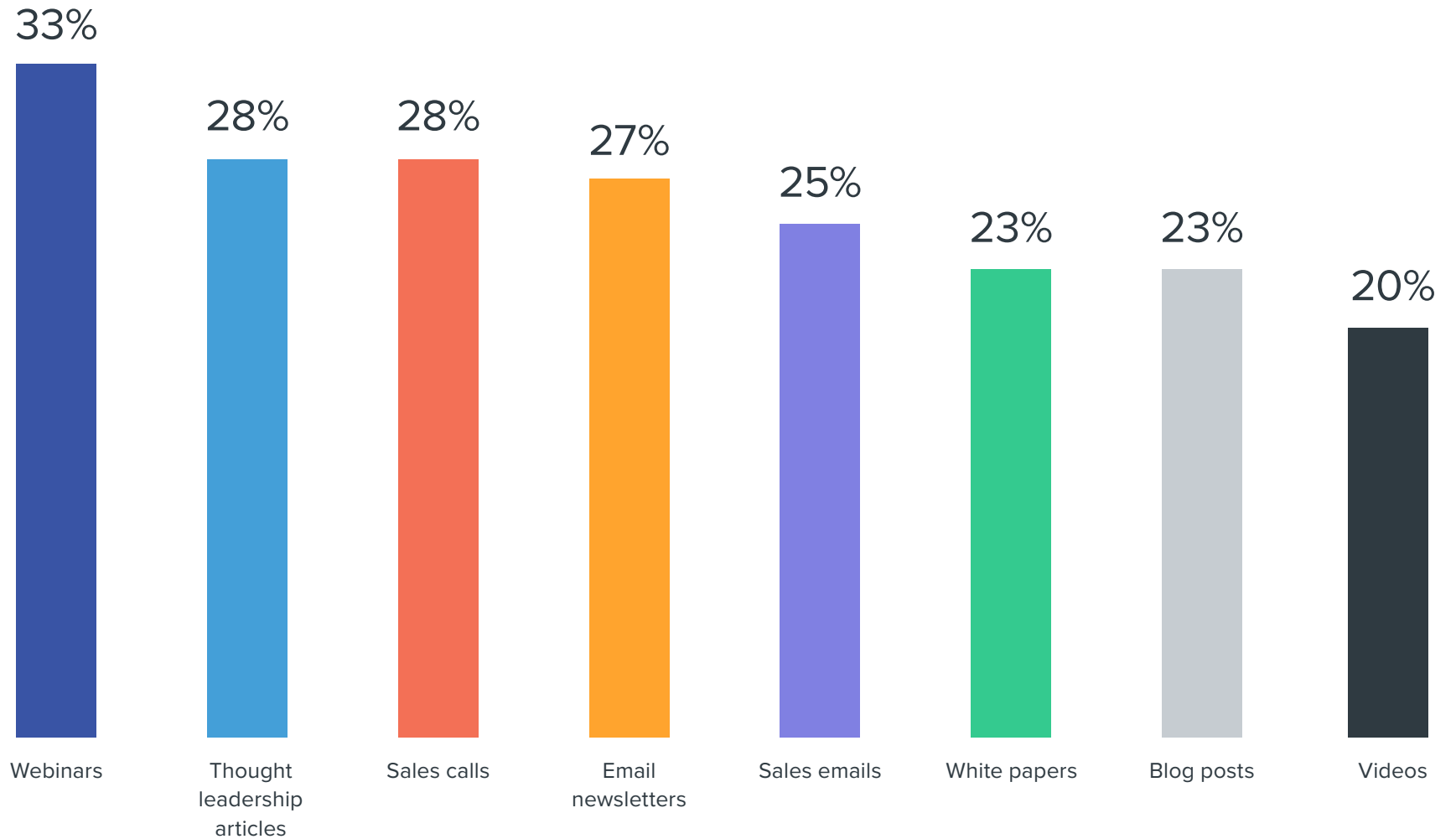
As a result, marketers are beginning to shake up their content creation to engage their leads, focusing more on the type of content they are providing and how it can drive sales.

According to the 2020 survey, 32% of respondents are using ungated content for thought leadership, product demos and how their product can benefit them. Another 23% said they deliver this information in content packages (or bundles) that are based more on topics relevant to the buyer.

The top content formats for lead nurturing cited by respondents include:

- Webinars (33%);
- Email newsletters (27%);
- Sales calls (28%);
- Thought leadership articles (28%); and
- Blog posts (23%).

Which tactics have worked best within your nurture initiatives?



Knowing When To Engage Current & New Leads

Timing and cadence represent an ongoing challenge for marketers, as many leads are forgotten or go cold due to a lack of communication and engagement. In the typical three to six-month sales cycle, the more marketers contact their leads, the warmer and more engaged they will be. Specifically, respondents noted they nurture leads:

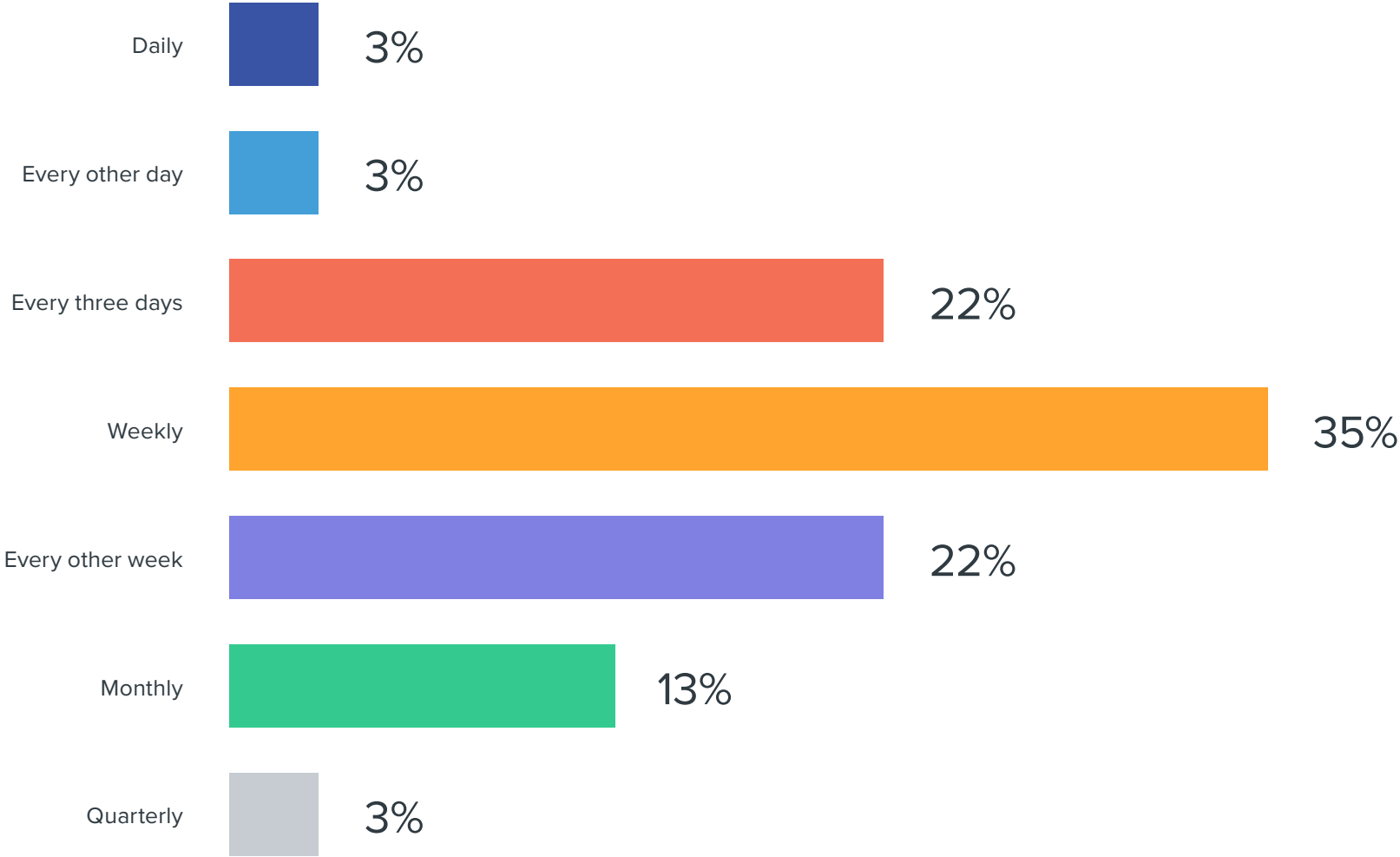
- Weekly (35%);
- Every three days (22%);
- Every other week (22%); and
- Monthly (13%).

Last year's survey found that 41% of marketers are reaching out on a weekly basis, as opposed to this year's 35%. However, some marketers have initiated an "every-three-days" outreach campaign (22%) that increases the frequency of interactions between brand and buyer. Marketers are placing more of an emphasis on immediate communication to engage their leads than last year, allowing them to remain in constant contact.

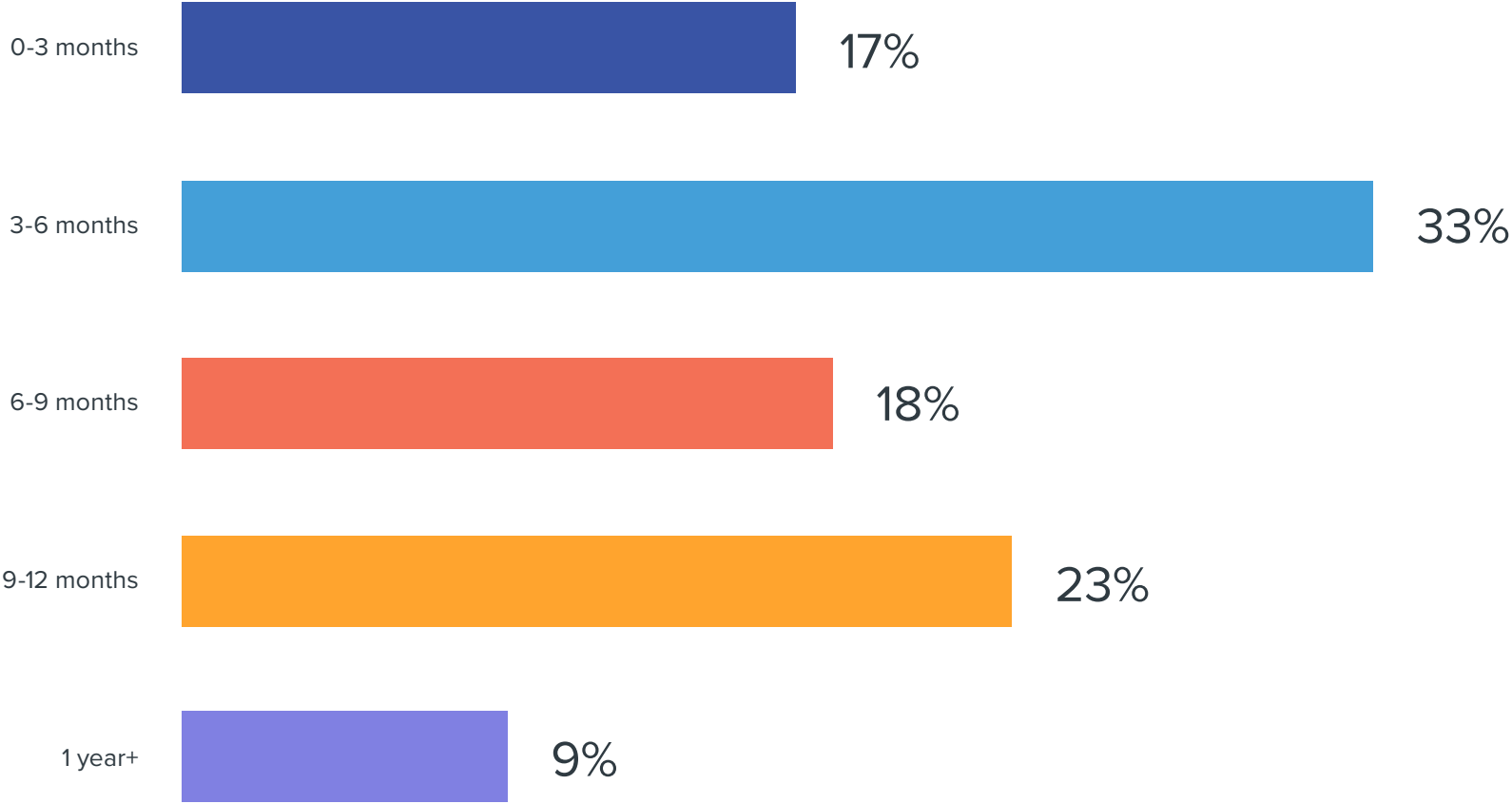
The survey revealed that an optimal time to engage leads is at the earliest stage of the buyer's journey, noted by 68% of respondents. Many of these leads are nurtured by the exchange of contact information via form fills. This allows marketers to continuously contact and engage their leads from the start, maintaining a presence in their buying journey and keeping the lead warm.

Another positive trend is the impact of lead warming and touch campaigns. Lead warming campaigns have proven effective, with 41% of respondents agreeing that engaging their leads often in relevant ways is important for success. Thirty percent also noted they use multitouch campaigns to achieve lead warming through specific avenues, such as sales calls, content, etc.

What is the typical cadence of your nurture campaigns?



What is the length of your average sales cycle?



Measuring The Positive Impacts Of Lead Nurturing

Marketing and sales teams agree that creating and maintaining an effective lead nurturing strategy is important to increase revenue. The survey cited that 27% of respondents saw a 10% or higher increase in sales opportunities from nurtured leads.

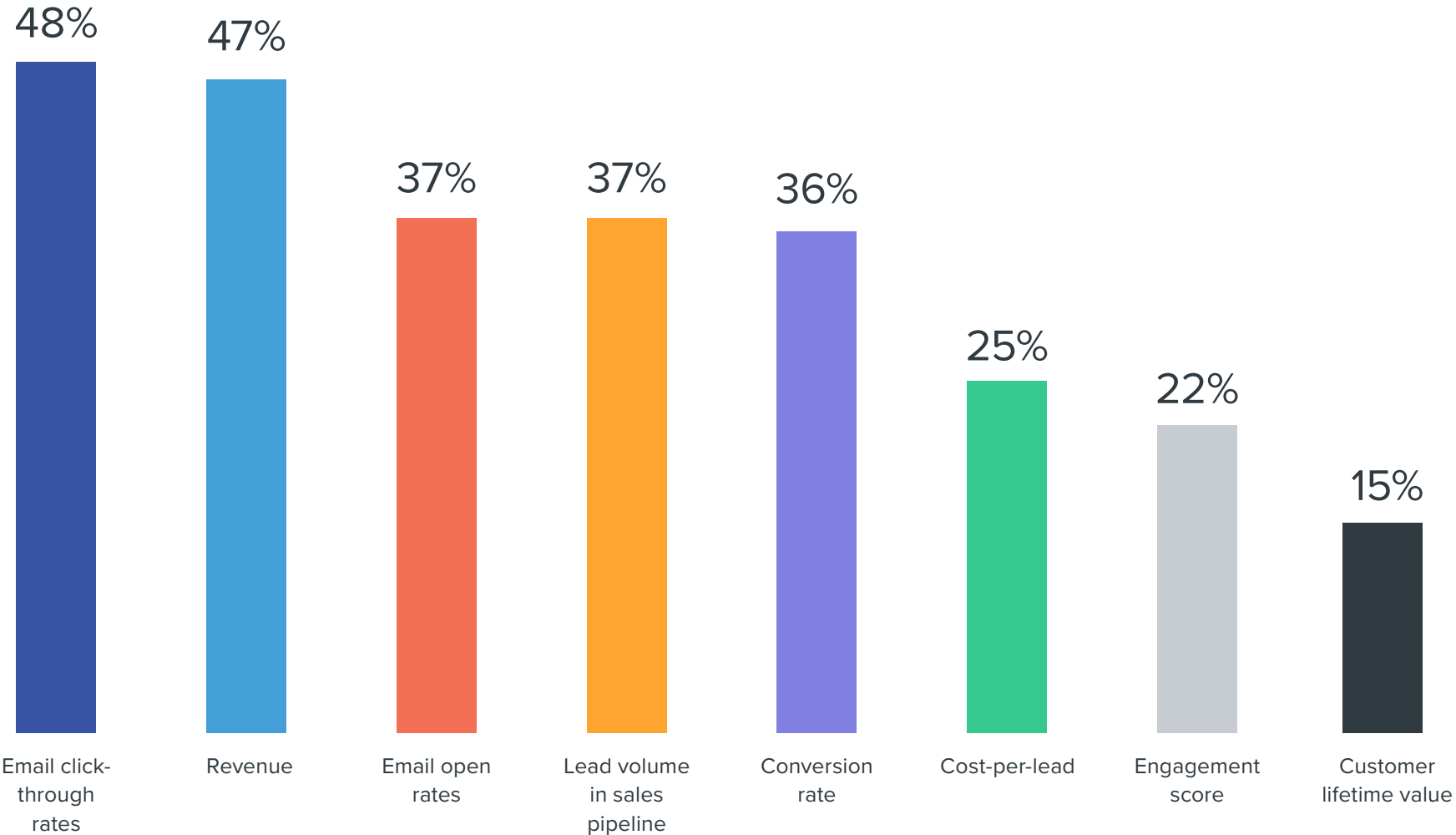
To measure the success of their lead nurturing efforts, marketers are leveraging the following KPIs to gauge the impact of their strategies:

- Click-through rates (48%);
- Revenue (47%);
- Lead volume (37%);
- Email open rates (37%);
- Conversion rates (36%);
- Cost-per-lead (25%); and
- Engagement score (22%).

By upgrading their lead nurturing efforts, respondents cited:

- Better response to campaigns/offers due to targeting (47%);
- The ability to generate warmer, sales-ready leads (35%); and
- The ability to segment processes based on interests and behaviors (34%).

What metrics do you use to measure lead nurturing success?



Conclusion

Lead nurturing strategies are proving beneficial for marketers in 2020, allowing them to overcome some of the challenges they've experienced in previous years through new creative tactics and content.

According to the survey, 69% of marketers believe that having a strong lead nurturing strategy can lead to an increase in the number of sales opportunities in their pipeline, allowing them to generate warmer, sales-ready leads. Sixty percent of respondents also believe that their lead nurturing strategies have increased their conversion rates and driven more sales.

The increase in campaign response rates and lower costs for qualified leads is another positive trend, as marketers are better able to segment and target their prospects for higher revenue.

The survey shows that lead nurturing is a constantly evolving, never-ending process. Although there is still plenty of room for improvement, 2020 proves that marketers' efforts are landing in the positive.

What are some of your future goals/priorities for your lead nurturing programs?



About The Survey

The 2020 Lead Nurturing Survey includes responses from 120 B2B marketing, sales and IT executives from August through to September of 2020.



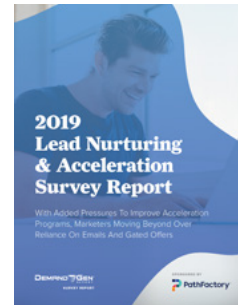
Demand Gen Report is a targeted online publication that uncovers the strategies and solutions that help companies better align their sales and marketing organizations, and ultimately, drive growth. A key component of the publication's editorial coverage focuses on the sales and marketing automation tools that enable companies to better measure and manage their multi-channel demand generation efforts.

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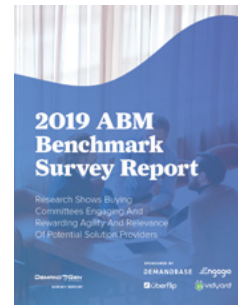
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