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# How Marketers Make Decisions: The State of Marketing Analytics

April 2026

**MMA**  
Marketing + Media Alliance

 **marketbridge**

# Executive Summary

Marketing measurement has reached an inflection point. After years of investment in analytics tools, platforms, and data infrastructure, the question is no longer whether marketing organizations measure. It's whether that measurement changes anything.

This study surveyed 103 senior marketers across North America to understand the state of marketing analytics and decision-making. The findings reveal a pattern that cuts across industries and company sizes: most marketing organizations have reached a level of analytics capability that is functional but not yet strategic. KPIs are consistent but primarily used for reporting: only 30% of marketers trust them enough to drive strategy. Data is consulted in decision-making, but only 29% can trace decisions back to a data-supported rationale. Analytics capabilities are growing in sophistication, but just 22% describe them as robust. Across governance, data trust, attribution, and data unification, roughly half the sample sits in a "partial" or "moderate" tier, enough to operate, not enough to lead.

Within this landscape, a segment of Advanced Marketers (29% of the sample) stands apart, not because they use different tools, but because they've built fundamentally different organizational infrastructure. They are twice as likely to trust their data at face value (70% vs. 36%), nearly twice as likely to use KPIs for strategic decision-making (57% vs. 30%), and significantly more

likely to have established cross-functional CLV ownership between marketing and finance (53% vs. 35%). Their advantages compound: better governance leads to higher data trust, which enables more strategic use of measurement, which drives better decisions. These organizations didn't leapfrog the rest with technology. They invested in the less visible, harder-to-build structures, dedicated analytics resources, formal data governance, and collaborative ownership models that make technology productive.

The study also surfaces differences between B2B and B2C organizations. B2B marketers are more likely to measure ROI at the customer level (53% vs. 32%), center their success metrics on lead generation (50% vs. 32%) and lean harder on third-party enrichment (60% vs. 45%). B2C has built stronger cross-functional collaboration on CLV (41% vs. 20%), the one dimension where B2C clearly leads. Neither side has a definitive advantage; they carry different strengths and different blind spots.

The implication for marketing leaders is that the next wave of analytics maturity will not come from better tools or more data. It will come from organizational decisions, where to place dedicated resources, how to govern data, who co-owns the metrics that matter. The distance between the advanced and the rest is not a just technology gap. It is a leadership gap.

# Agenda

- 01 The Big Picture: The gap between aspiration and execution**
- 02 Marketing Analytics & Decision Making:  
The need to “think fast and slow” – or “closing the gap between data that is immediately accessible and robust ROI”**
- 03 Challenges and Opportunities:  
Limited resources, imperfect data, brittle outcomes**
- 04 Deep Dive 1: The case for Advanced Marketers in analytics**
- 05 Deep Dive 2: B2B vs B2C**

# Study Makeup & Methodology

103 Private Sector Senior Marketers  
from North America

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Online Survey, LOI 13m  
Fieldwork: July-Nov 2025

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Respondents sourced from MMA  
and two verified external B2B  
panel providers.

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# 01

## The Big Picture

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The gap between aspiration  
and execution

# / The Big Picture

Marketers believe they've aligned measurement with strategy, but their own data tells a more cautious story.

Nearly half (46%) say measurement is significantly aligned with business strategy, and 41% say insights significantly drive innovation. Yet, the foundation is softer: only 30% trust their KPIs enough to use them strategically (most use them for reporting), only 29% can trace decisions back to data, and just 22% describe their analytics capabilities as robust.

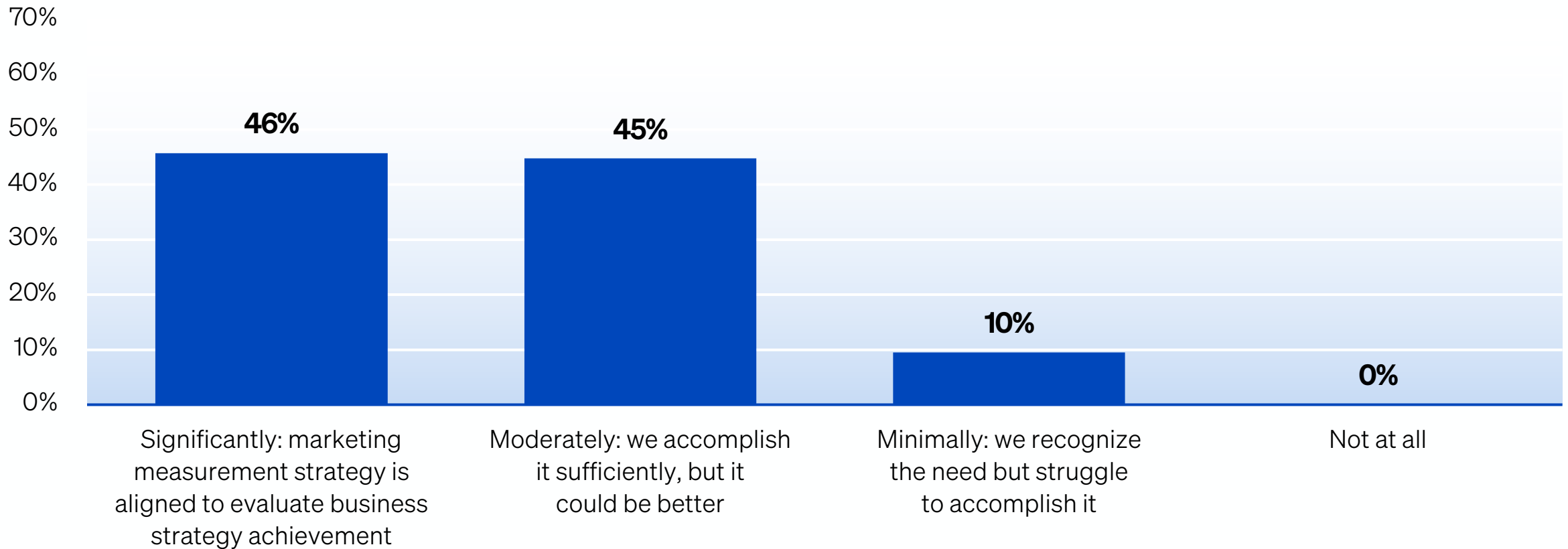
The majority sit in a “growing but not yet there” middle tier. The gap isn't awareness: it's execution. Marketers know what good looks like; they just haven't built the infrastructure or organizational muscle to get there consistently.

# Measurement is aligned with strategy, but the reality of current capabilities limits impact

Is Measurement aligned with Business Strategy?	Can analytics drive innovation?	Role of Marketing KPIs	Are decisions data driven?	Analytics Capabilities
<b>46%</b> Significantly	<b>41%</b> Significantly	<b>30%</b> Consistent and trusted	<b>29%</b> Decisions are traceable to data	<b>22%</b> Robust
Strategy and Innovation are two areas of focus		KPIs are not always trusted, although are consistent for most	Data is “consulted” but decisions are not validated	Most marketers claim established capabilities, but few say robust

# Marketers strive to align Measurement with Business Strategy

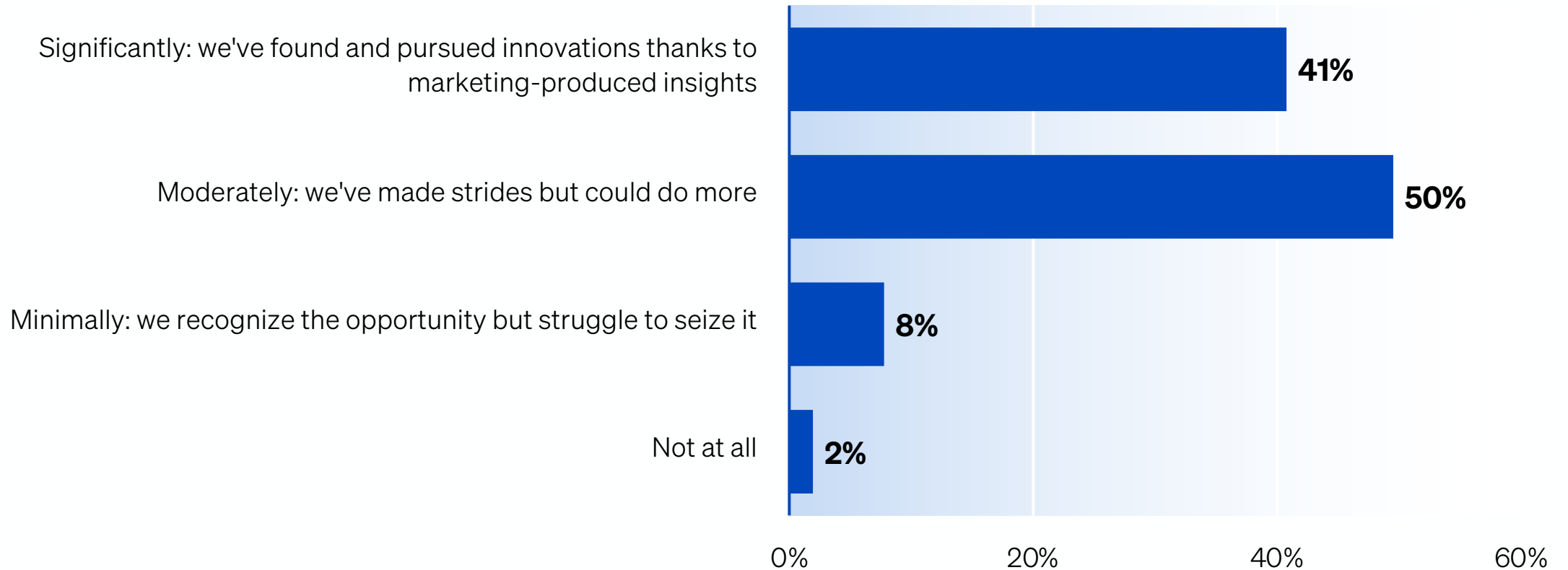
Alignment between Measurement and Business Strategy



Q: How well is your company's marketing measurement strategy aligned with its overarching business strategy? (Select one)  
N=103 Senior Marketers

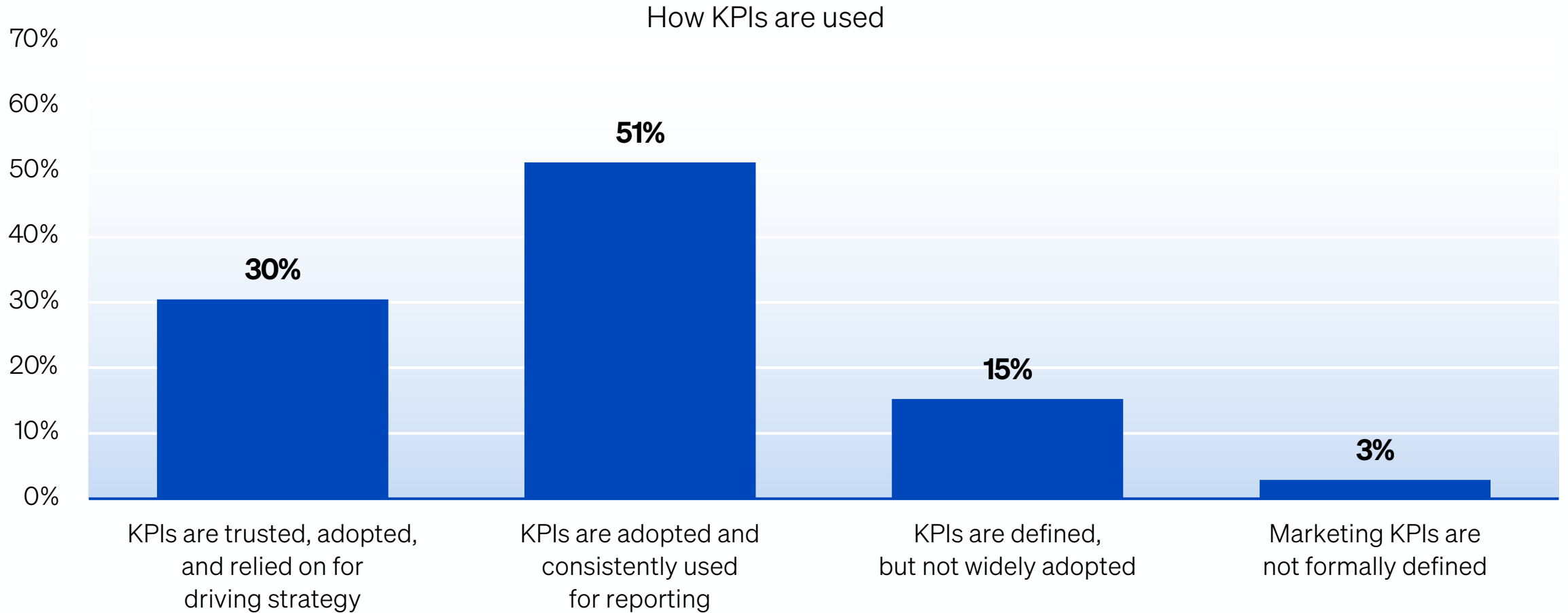
# Marketers see an opportunity for analytics to support long-term innovation

Contribution of insights to innovation



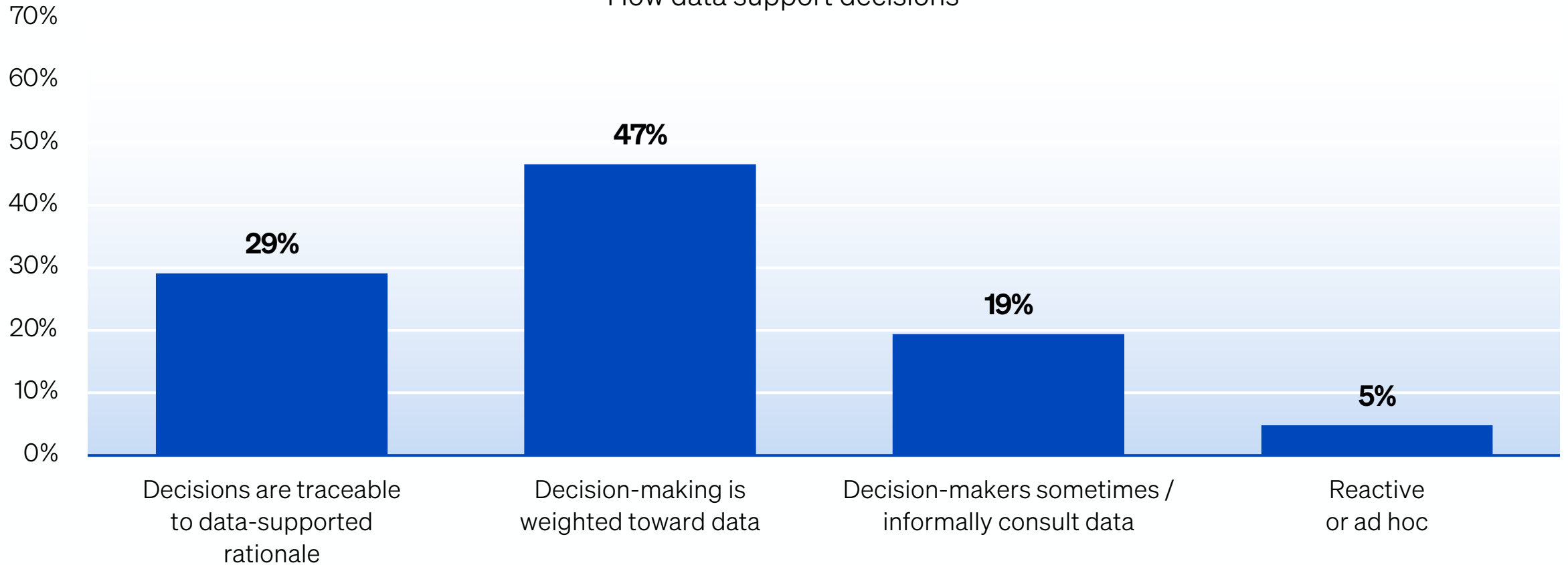
Q: How much do marketing produced insights contribute to strategic innovation at your company? (Examples include channel development, new business models, white space identification, new offerings, product extensions, and bundling.) (Select one)  
N=103 Senior Marketers

# KPIs are consistent but not always trusted

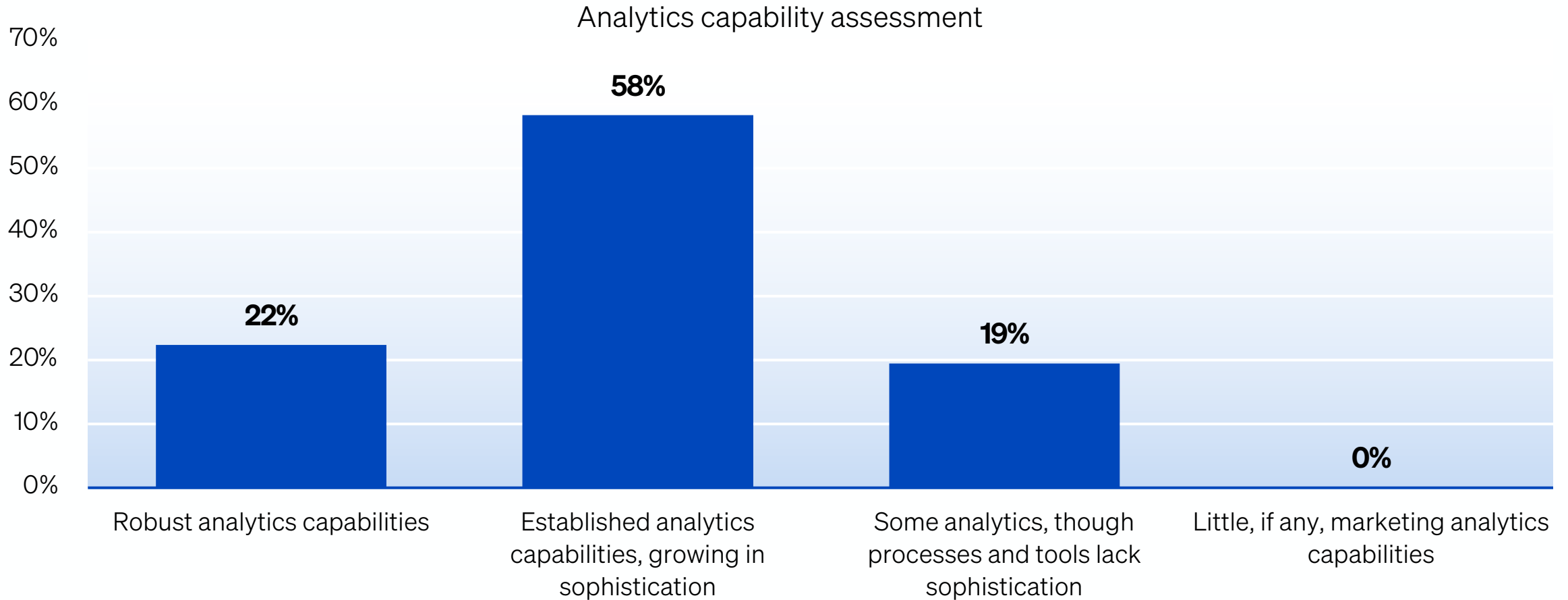


# Data is usually consulted but decisions are not yet data driven or validated

How data support decisions



# Analytics capabilities are growing in sophistication but are not robust yet



# 02

## Marketing Analytics and Decision Making

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The need to think “fast and slow” – or “closing the gap between data that is immediately accessible and robust ROI”

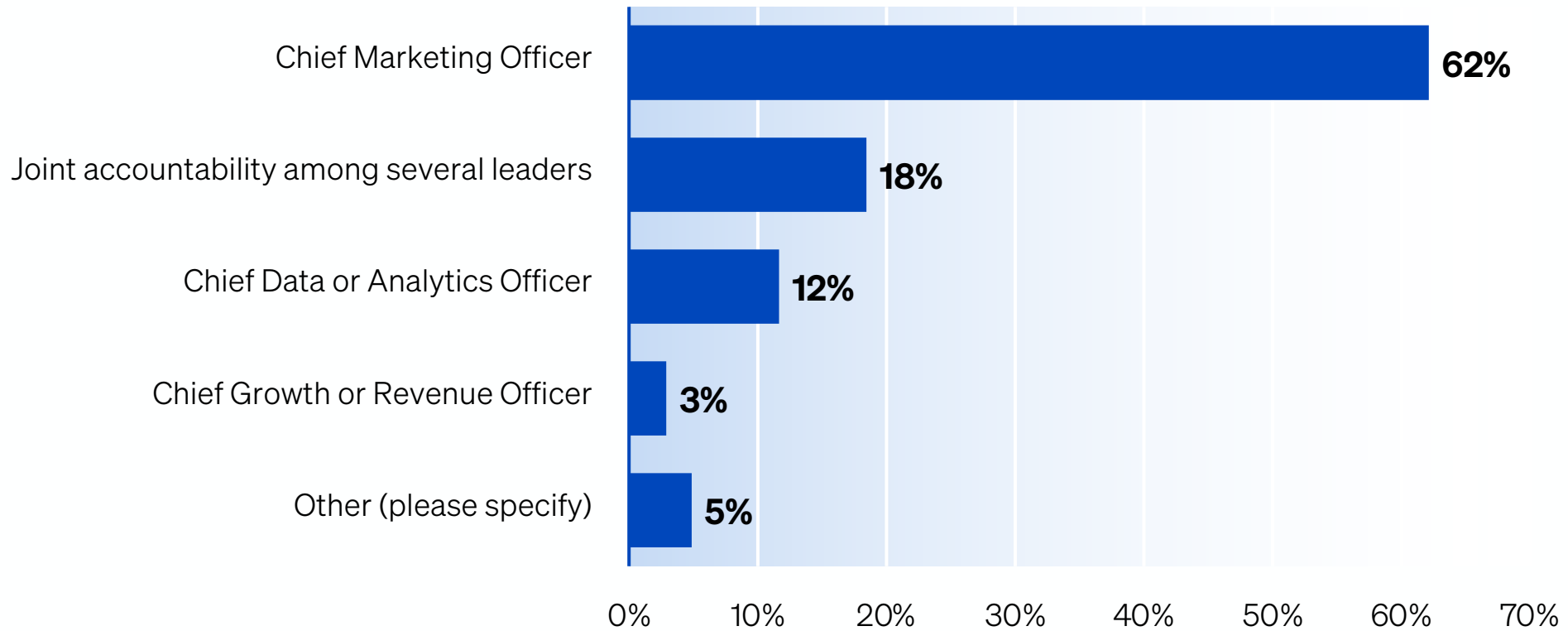
# / Marketing Analytics and Decision Making

The CMO owns the measurement roadmap (62%), but the toolkit they're working with favors speed over rigor. Analytics insights are being applied where the payoff is most visible: channel optimization (73%), media planning (72%), and segmentation (68%), while areas like personalization (53%) and first-party data acquisition (22%) lag behind. ROI measurement is channel-first (69%), with customer-level ROI still emerging (38%).

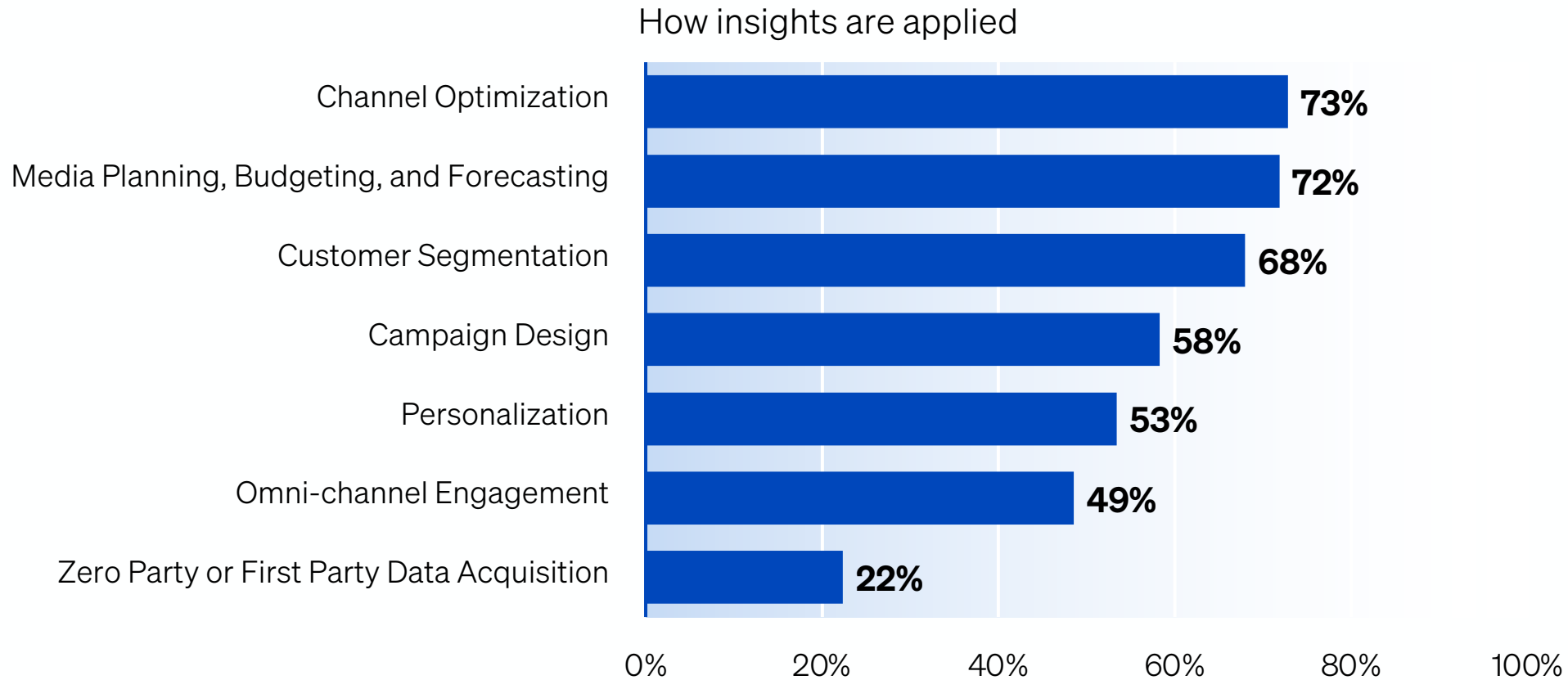
When it comes to how marketers actually measure, there's a clear divide between what's easy and what's rigorous: platform metrics (41% high reliance) and A/B testing (37%) dominate, while incrementality testing, MMM, and MTA sit in the middle tiers. Interactive dashboards are the primary reporting tool (41% high), with AI-based analytics starting to appear but not yet embedded. Most teams (71%) use data daily or weekly: the appetite is there, but the depth of what they're using it for skews toward accessible, fast-cycle metrics over longer-term, harder-to-compute insights.

# CMOs are accountable for Measurement and Analytics

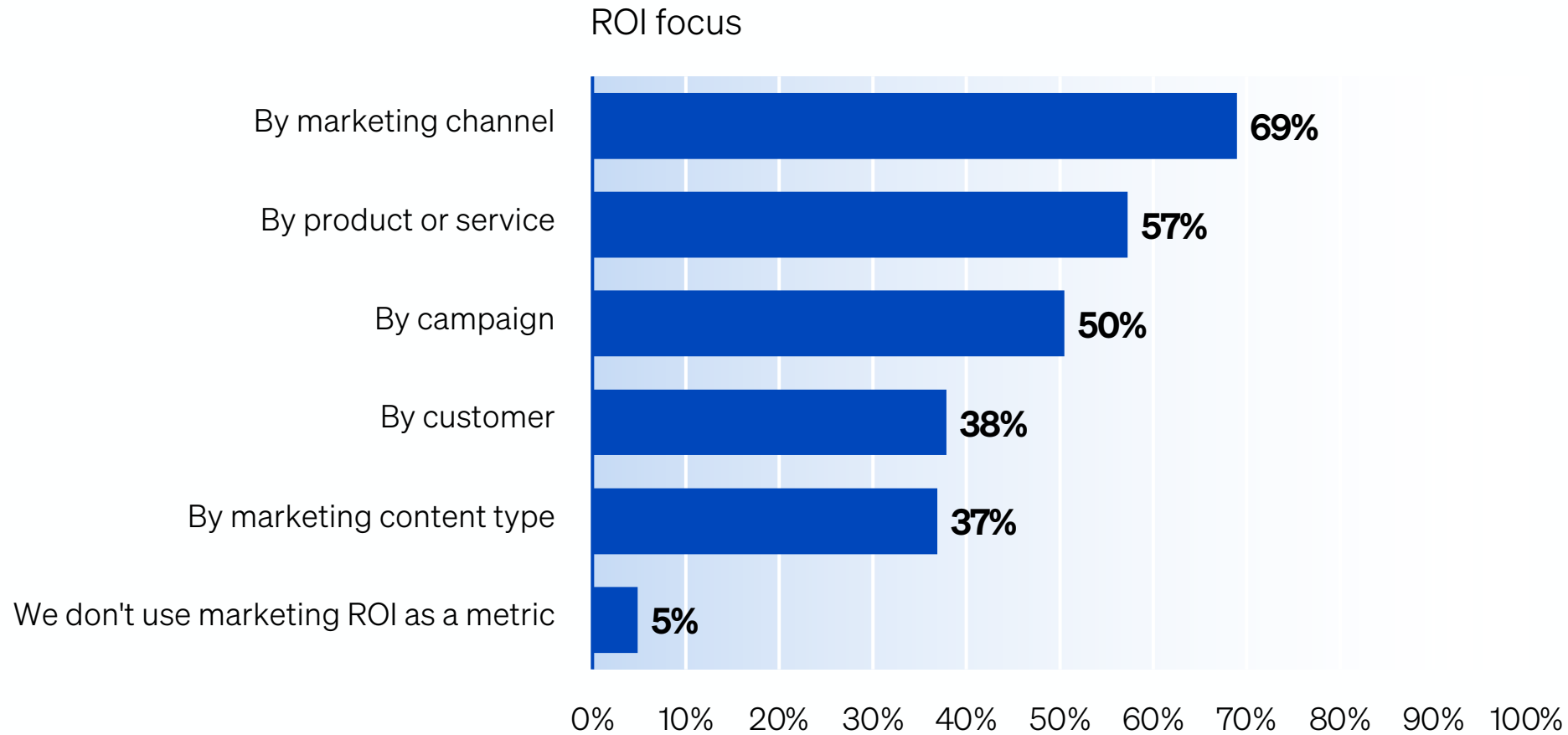
Who is accountable for measurement roadmap



# Impact: Channel optimization, media planning and segmentation are key areas where analytics adds value

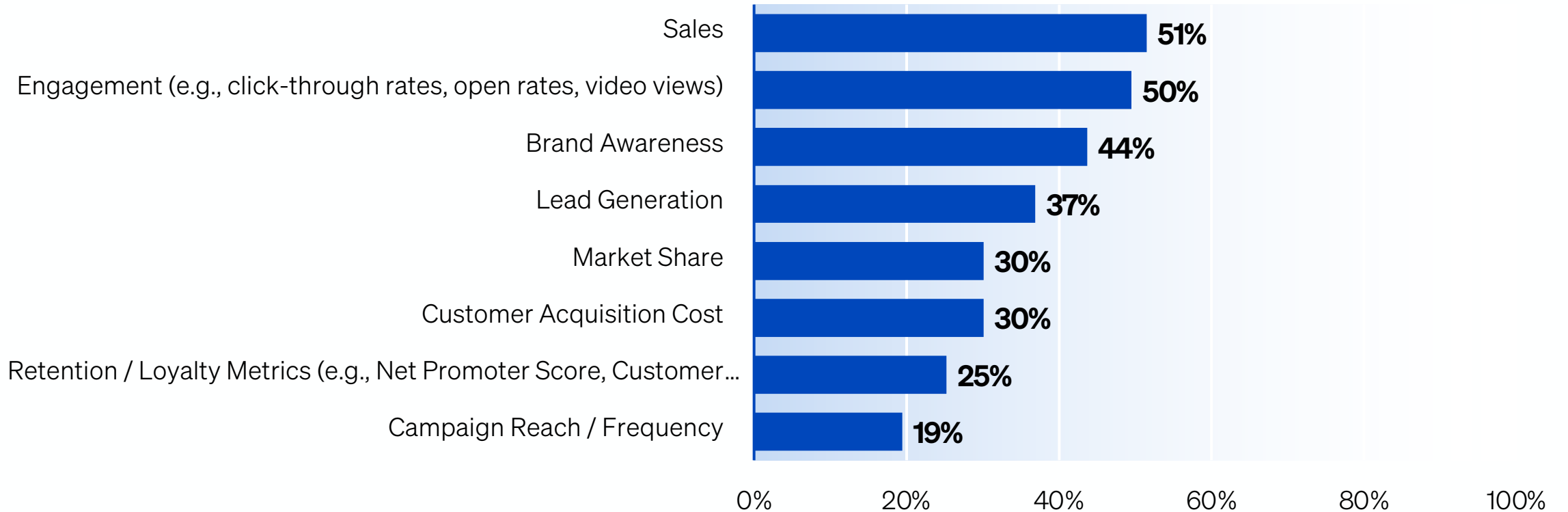


# Focus: ROI is mostly channel focused



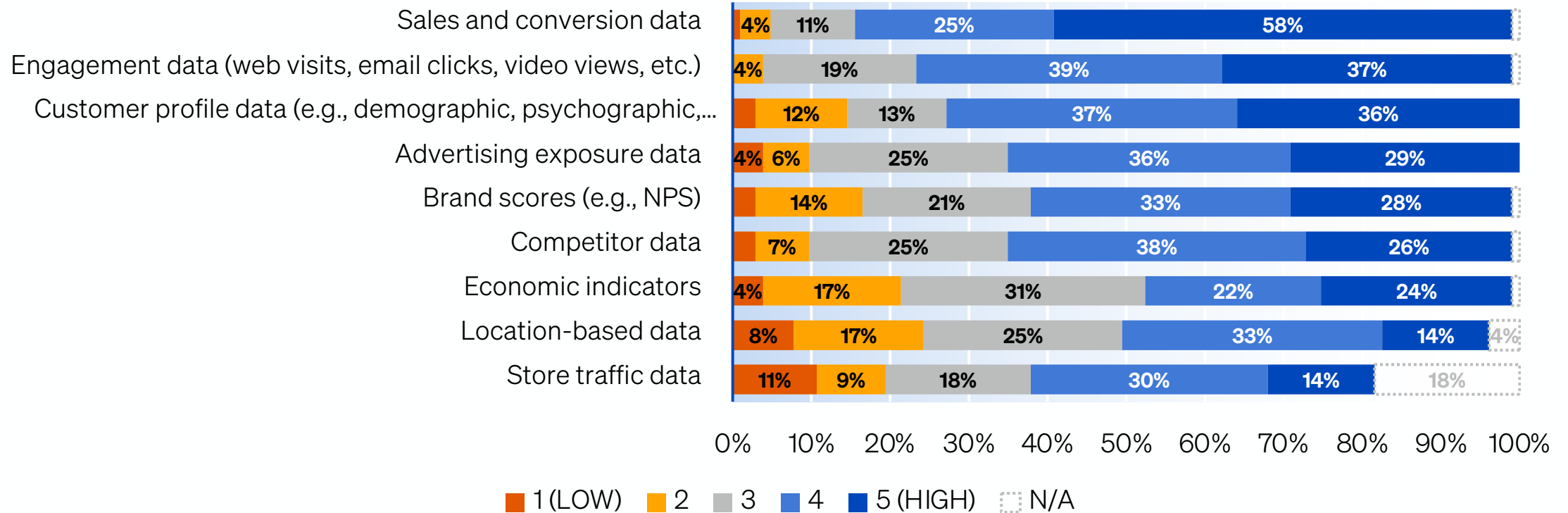
# Metrics: Stronger focus on sales (or precursors) vs planning metrics (reach)

Metrics used to define success



# In addition to sales/conversion/engagement data, marketers try to fuse profile, as well as ad exposure and brand data

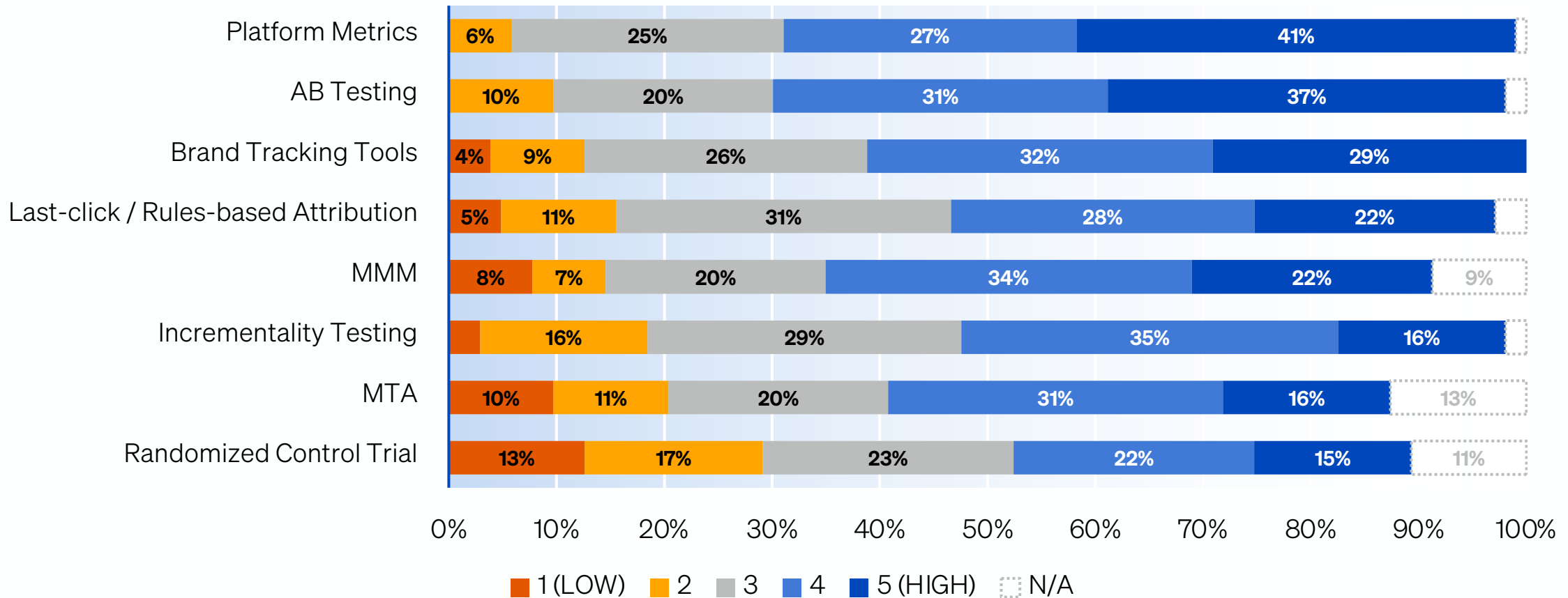
Data used for decision making



Q: To what degree does your company rely on the following data for decision-making? (Rate each item on scale from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest))  
 N=103 Senior Marketers

# Measurement: Platform metrics and AB testing is the norm, vs RCTs and other incrementality testing

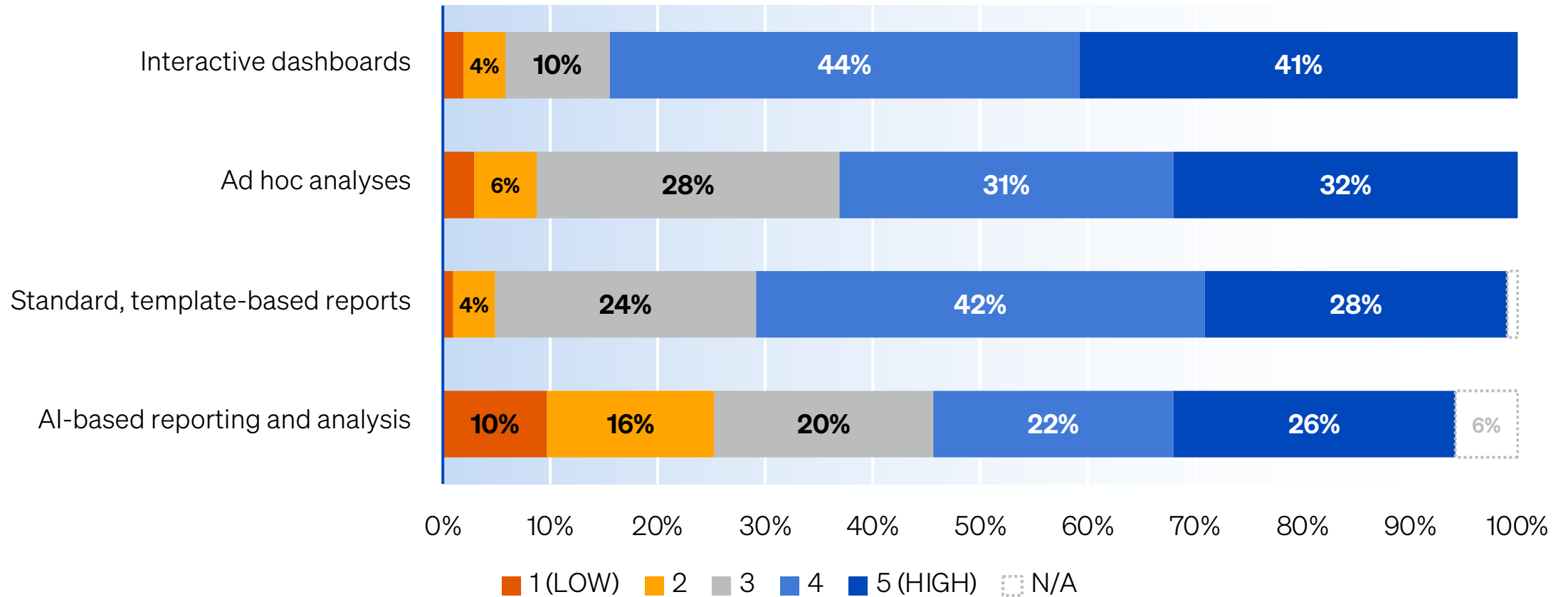
How much do you rely on the following:



Q: To what degree does your company rely upon the following resources or techniques for decision-making? (Rate each item on scale from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest))  
N=103 Senior Marketers

# Tools: Interactive dashboards are the norm, AI is emerging

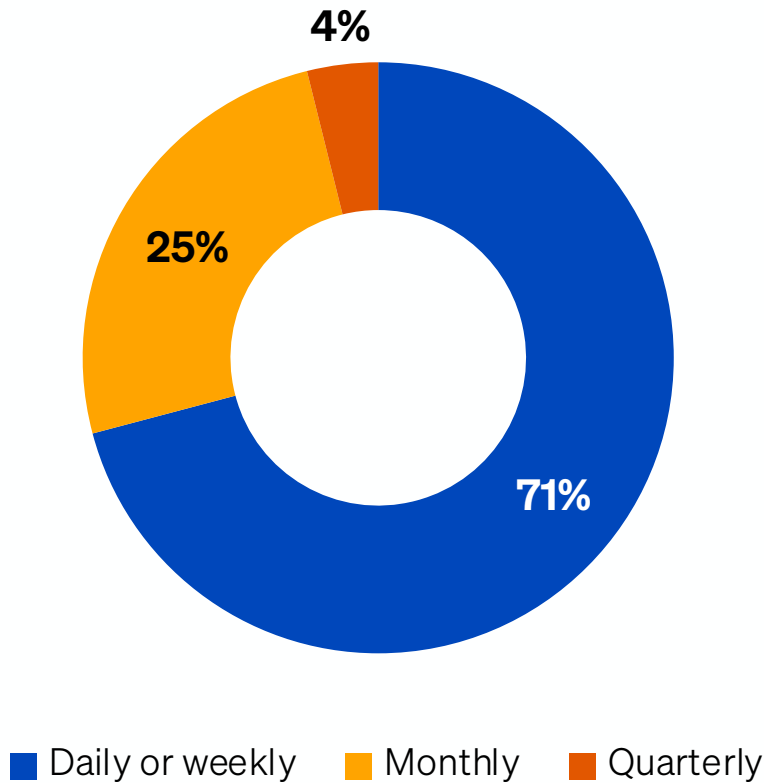
Tools used for decision making



Q: To what degree does your company rely upon the following tools for decision-making? (Rate each item on scale from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest))  
 N=103 Senior Marketers

# Marketers are striving to move toward daily data, to inform decisions

Frequency of using data to inform decisions



## Daily or Weekly Types of Measurements:

- Paid Media Performance
- Website & Digital Analytics
- Sales & Pipeline Metrics
- Customer Behavior & Engagement
- Financial Metrics
- Dashboards & BI Tools
- Social Media
- Email Marketing
- Channel Performance
- Attribution & Measurement
- Competitive & Market Research
- CRM & Database
- Content Performance
- Operational & Inventory
- Event & Webinar Analytics

# 03

## Challenges and Opportunities

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Limited resources, imperfect data,  
brittle outcomes

# / Challenges and Opportunities

The analytics infrastructure marketers rely on is functional but fragile.

Most organizations access analytics through shared services (48% sufficient, 28% limited) rather than dedicated teams (21%), which creates a resource bottleneck. Data governance is partial for nearly half (46%), enough to function, not enough to scale. Trust in data quality follows the same pattern: 50% say data is “generally good but needs explanation,” while only 36% trust it at face value.

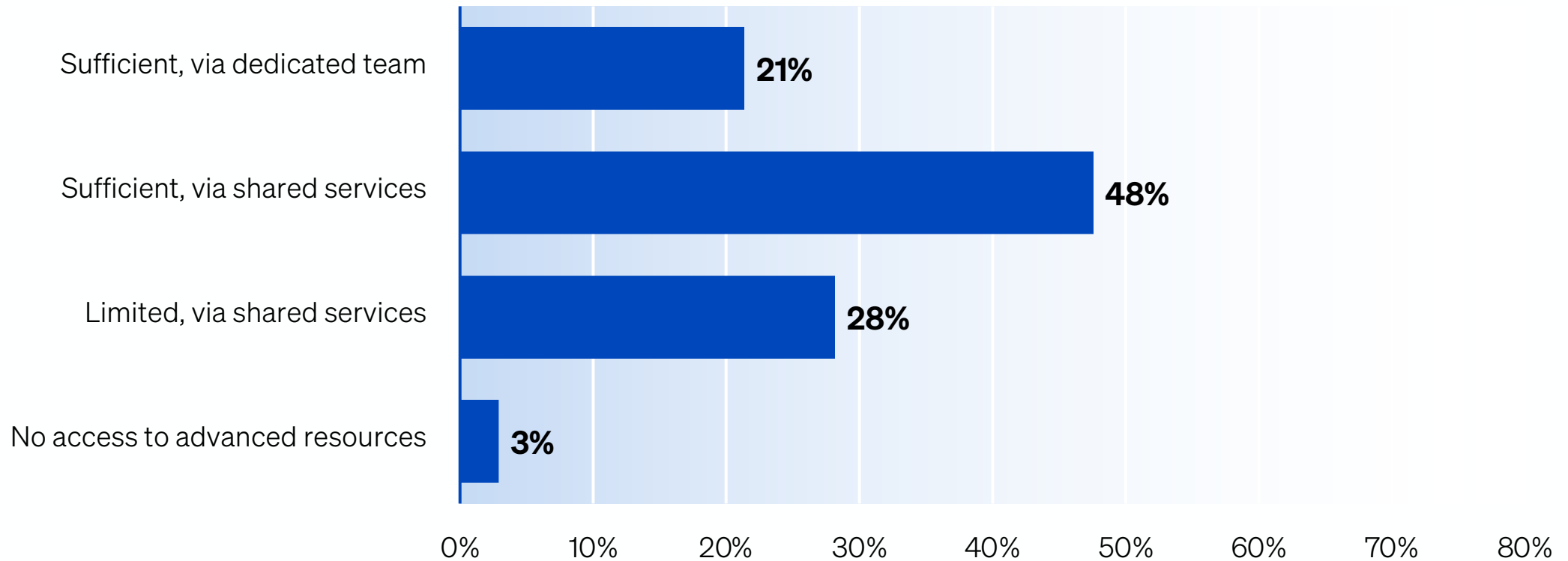
First-party data is an area of active investment: 43% have defined collection strategies and 38% treat it as a strategic asset, but data enrichment is key and depends heavily on third parties.

The downstream consequences are visible: data unification is incomplete (only 20% fully unified), attribution is partial and fragmented (only 19% comprehensive), and the hardest questions, balancing short vs. long-term (51%), forecasting outcomes (49%), and evaluating martech effectiveness (38%), remain unsolved.

Only a third of marketers have established collaboration between marketing and finance to compute CLV, while 13% don't compute it at all.

# Most organizations access analytics through shared services

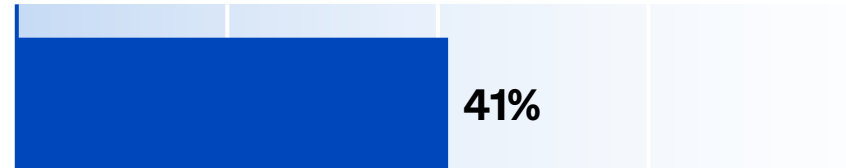
Availability of advanced analytics / data science resources



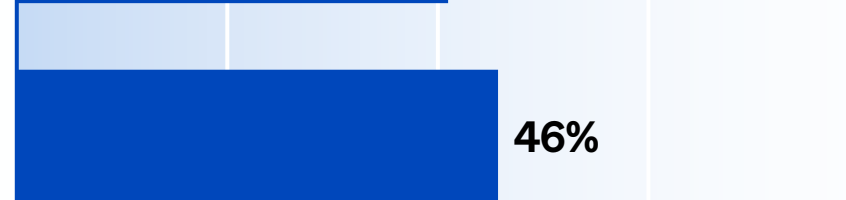
# Governance is partial for most marketers

State of data governance

Significant: dedicated governance structures are in place.  
It is comprehensive and widely adopted.  
Leaders maintain its priority



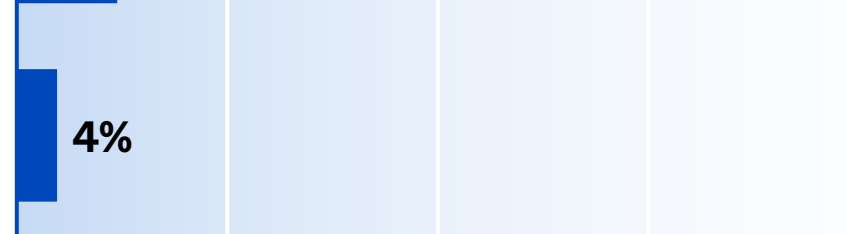
Partial: some governance is in place, but it's not comprehensive or widely adopted / supported by leaders, but priority might slip when org is constrained



Minimal: governance is ad hoc or reactive.  
No formal processes

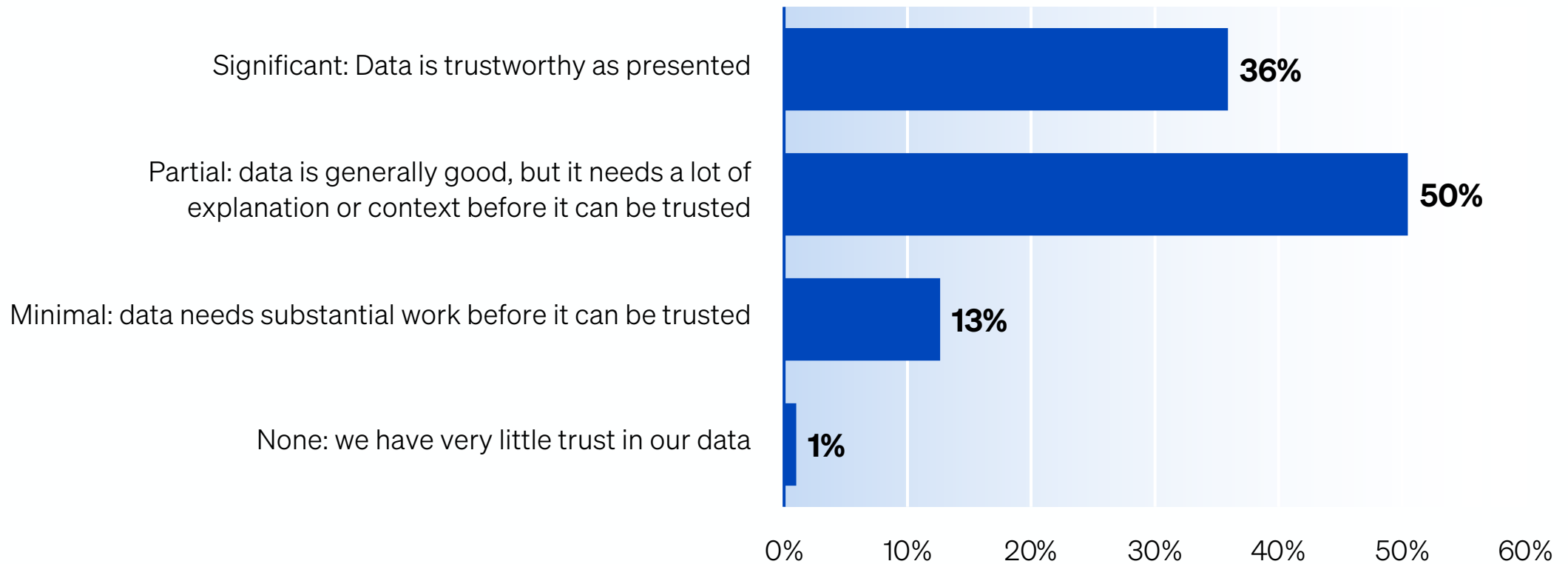


None: no customer or marketing-related data governance in place



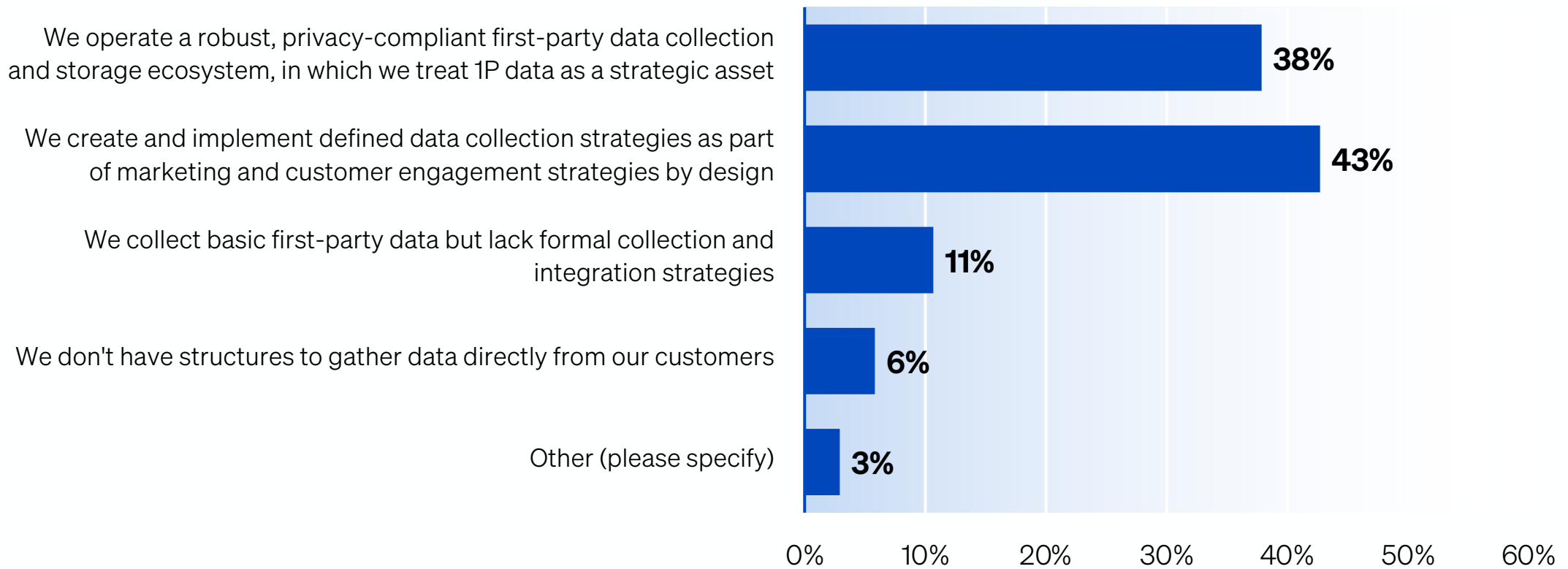
# Most marketers don't trust data at face value and need additional analysis

Level of trust on data and insights



# 1P data remains an area of focus, but few have robust, collection and storage capabilities

State of 1P data



# Most marketers rely on 3P for data enrichment

Data availability

We have extensive and complete first-party customer data that fully supports analytical requirements

16%

We enrich our first-party data with third-party data, supporting analytical needs as well as exploratory analysis and scenario development

50%

We have just enough demographic and behavioral customer data to support basic analysis and decision-making. It does not support more complex analysis

25%

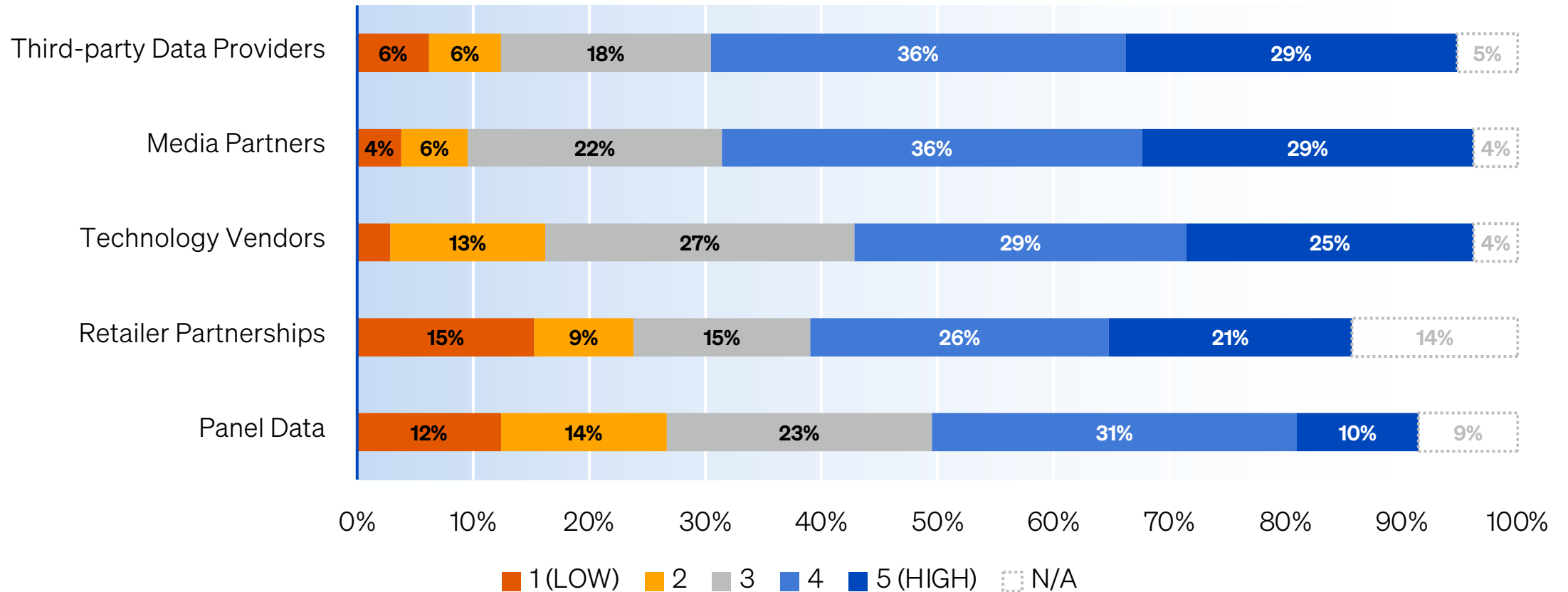
We have limited, inconsistent demographic and/or behavioral customer data. Analysis and decision-making is usually difficult

10%

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60%

# Third-party data providers and media partners do most of the data enrichment

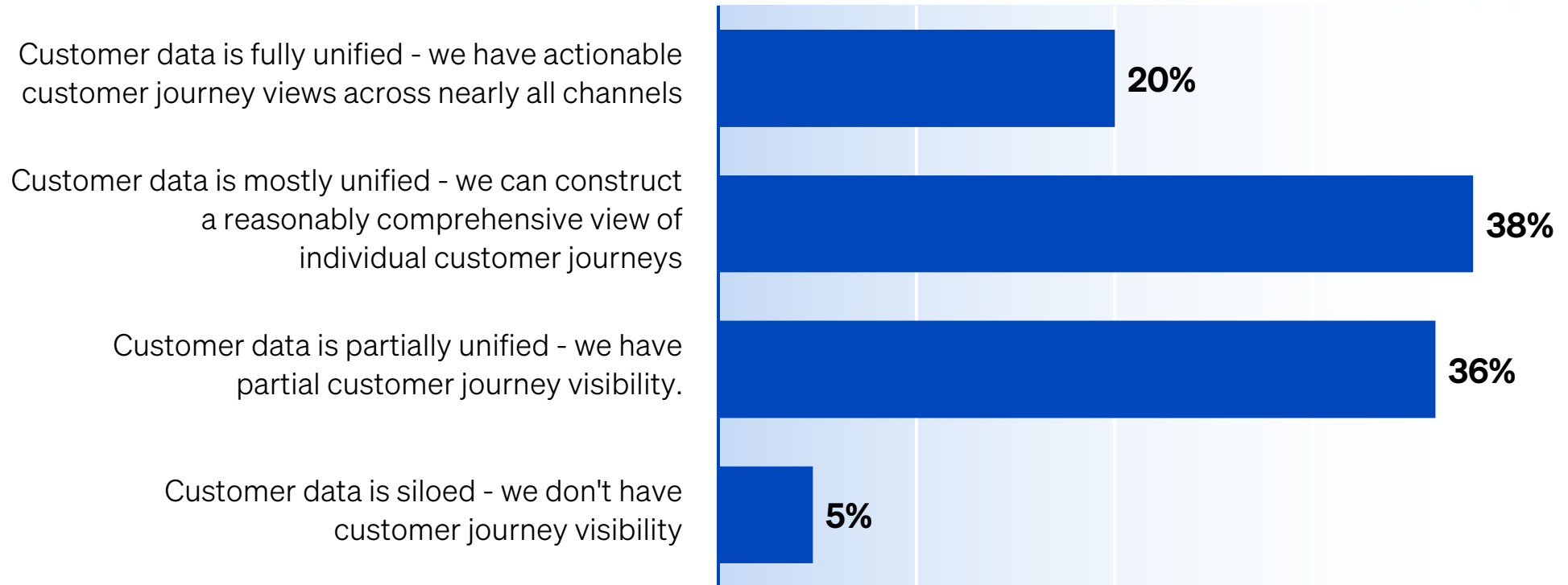
Data enrichment sources



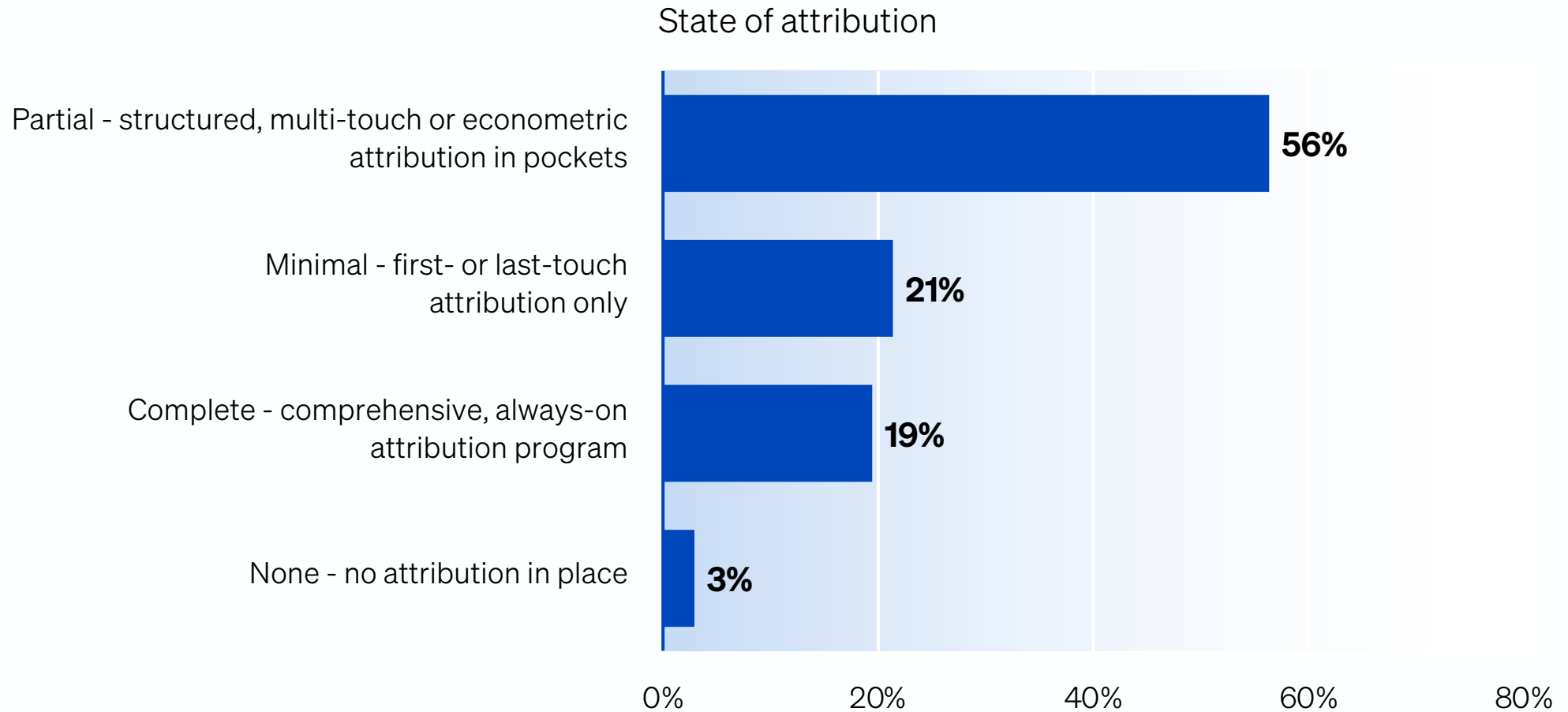
Q: To what degree does your company rely on the following to enrich your data? (Rate each item on scale from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest))  
N=103 Senior Marketers

# Data unification stands in the way of activating customer journeys across channels

State of data unification

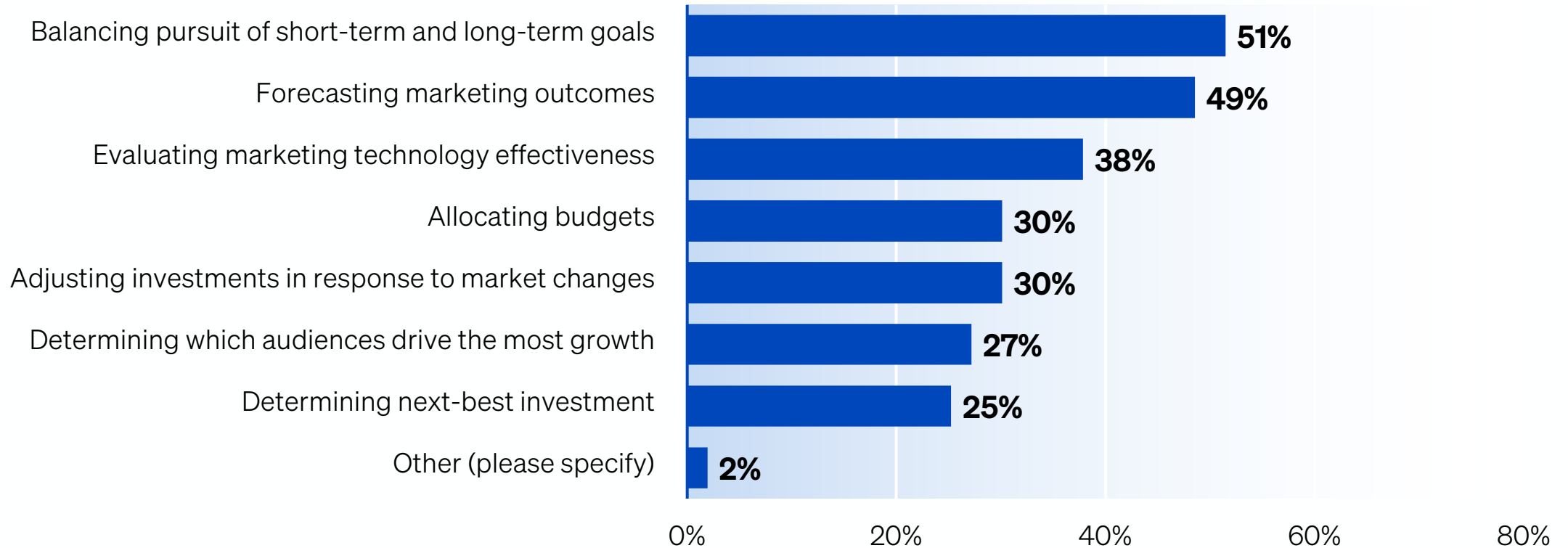


# Attribution is partial and fragmented



# Short- vs long-term goals remain the biggest challenge, along with overall forecasting

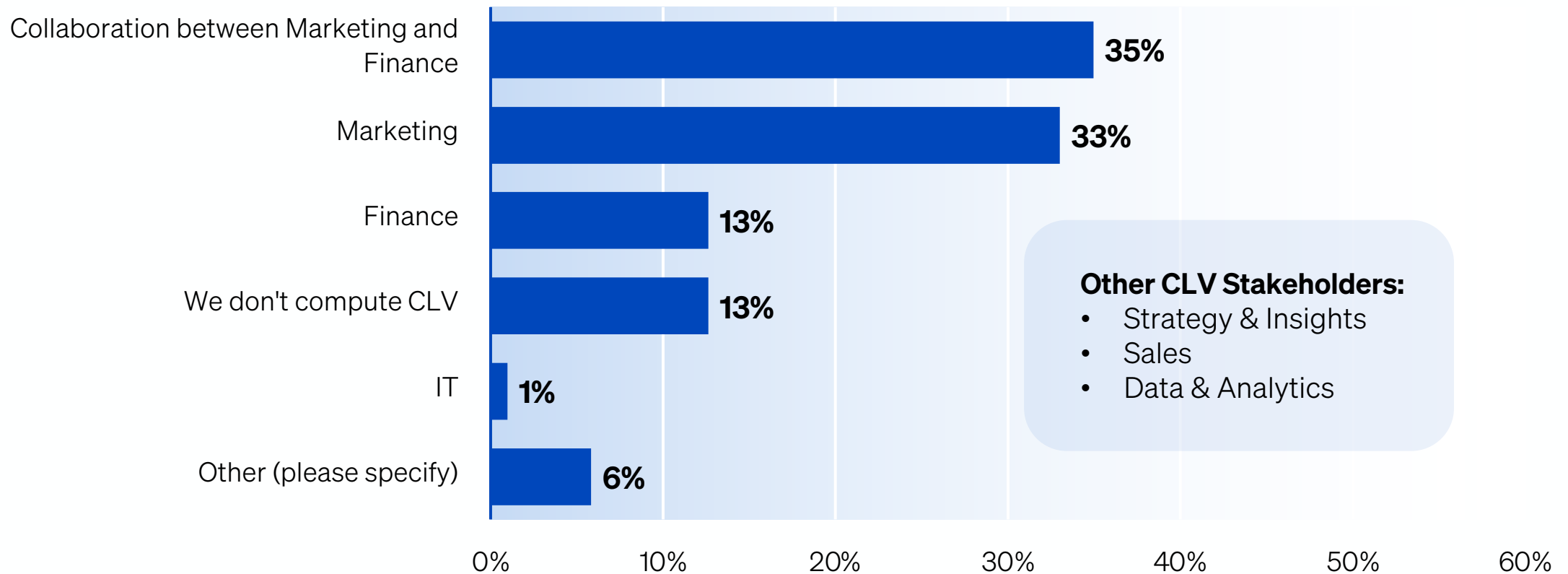
Hardest questions for marketing analysts



Q: What topics are hardest for your company's marketing analysts to address? (Select top 3)  
 N=103 Senior Marketers

# Only a third of marketers collaborate with Finance to calculate CLV

Who owns CLV calculation?



# 04

## Deep Dive: The case for Advanced Marketers in analytics

# The case for Advanced Marketers in analytics

Advanced Marketers aren't just incrementally better: they operate in a fundamentally different way.

Where the total sample shows aspiration, Advanced Marketers (AM) show execution: 80% have significantly aligned measurement with strategy (vs. 46% total), 57% say insights drive innovation (vs. 41%), and 57% trust their KPIs for strategy (vs. 30%).

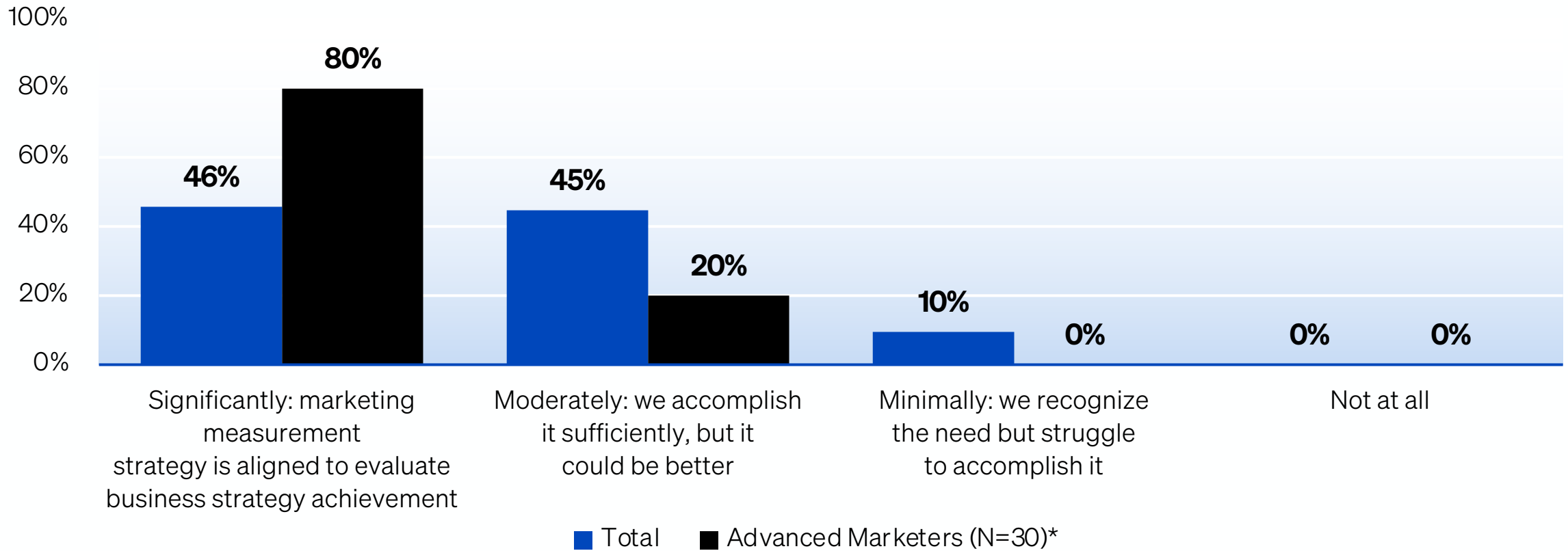
The differences compound across infrastructure: 40% have dedicated analytics teams (vs. 21%), 63% have significant data governance (vs. 41%), and 70% trust their data at face value (vs. 36%). On first-party data, the gap is stark with 67% treating 1P data as a strategic asset (vs. 38% total).

This carries through to outcomes: AM have nearly double the rate of full data unification (37% vs. 20%) and complete attribution programs (37% vs. 19%). They're also more likely to drill ROI by content type (57% vs. 37%) and focus insights on personalization (67% vs. 53%) and segmentation (77% vs. 68%). Perhaps most telling: 53% of AM have established marketing-finance collaboration on CLV (vs. 35% total), and only 3% don't compute CLV at all (vs. 13%).

Even AM have room to grow: 60% are still "established, growing" on analytics capability rather than robust, but the pattern is clear: Advanced Marketers have closed the gap between measurement aspiration and organizational execution through better governance, dedicated resources, data trust, and cross-functional collaboration.

# Advanced Marketers (AM) have aligned Measurement with Business Strategy

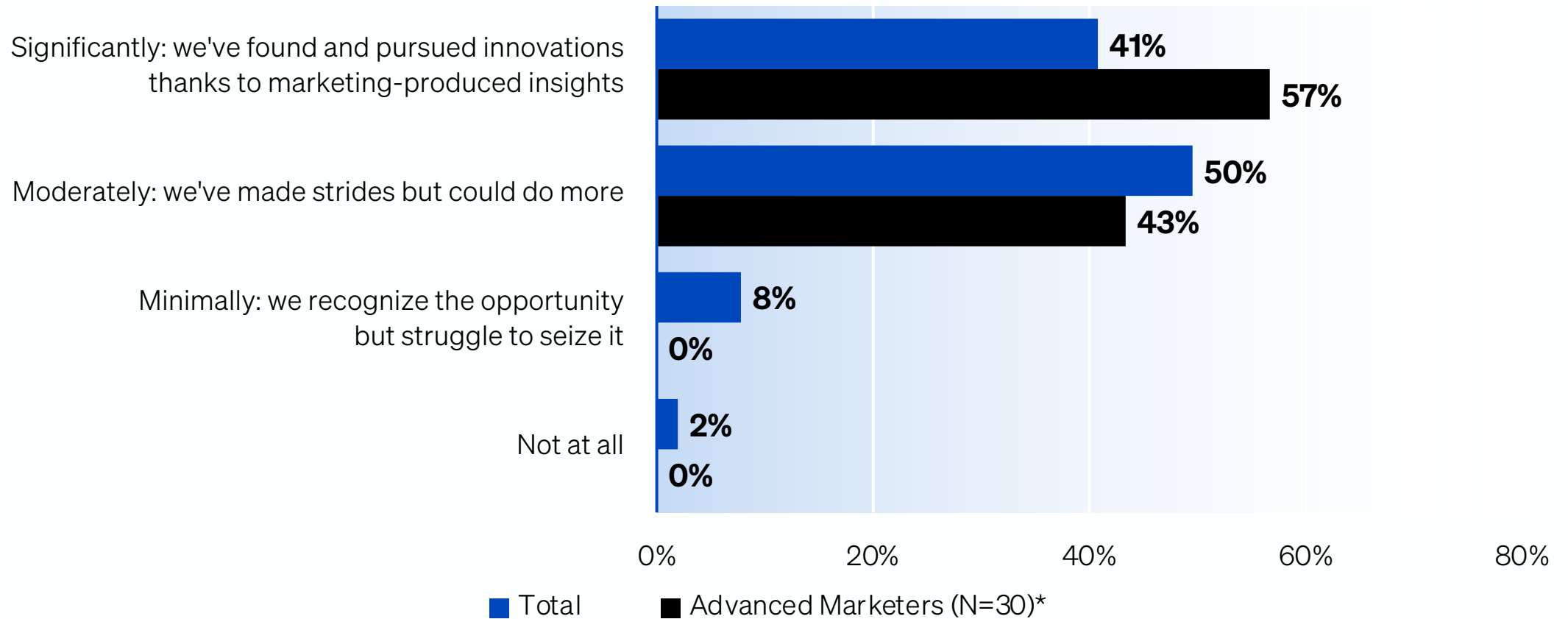
Alignment between Measurement and Business Strategy



Q: How well is your company's marketing measurement strategy aligned with its overarching business strategy? (Select one)  
 N=103 Senior Marketers  
 \*Advanced Marketers = Small Base

# AM use analytics to support long-term innovation

Contribution of insights to innovation



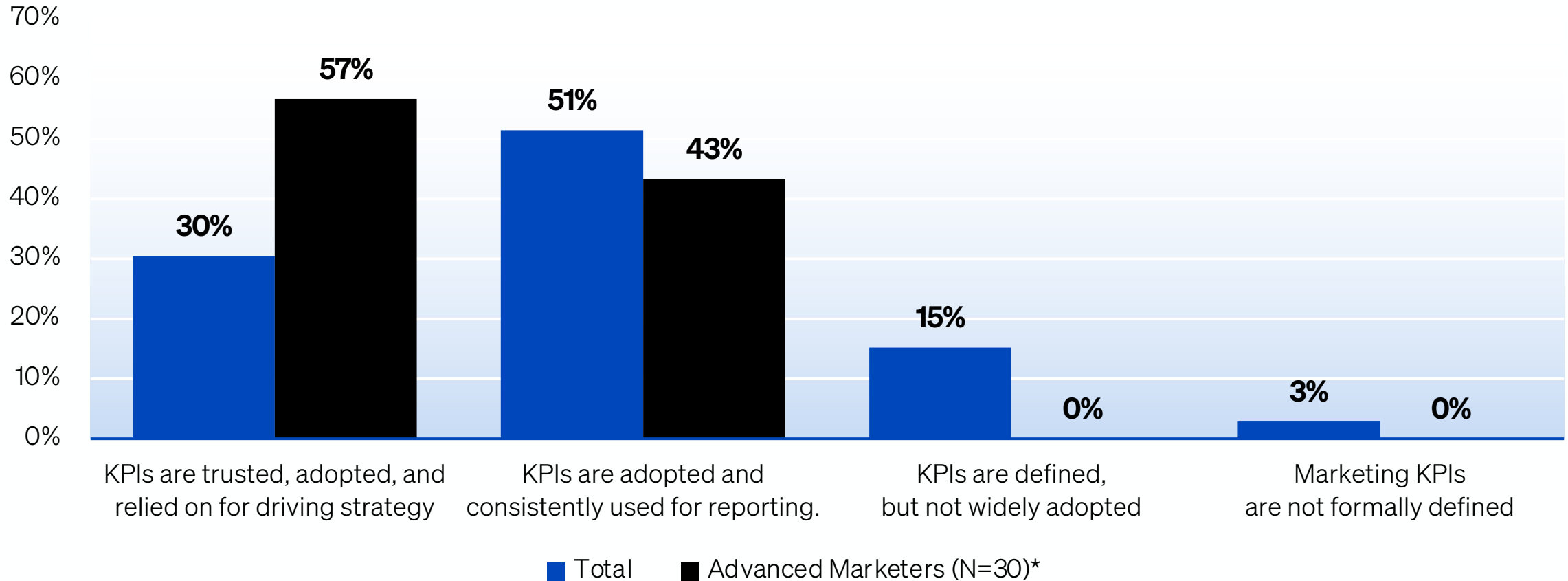
Q: How much do marketing produced insights contribute to strategic innovation at your company? (Examples include channel development, new business models, white space identification, new offerings, product extensions, and bundling.) (Select one)

N=103 Senior Marketers

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# AM have KPIs that are consistent and trusted

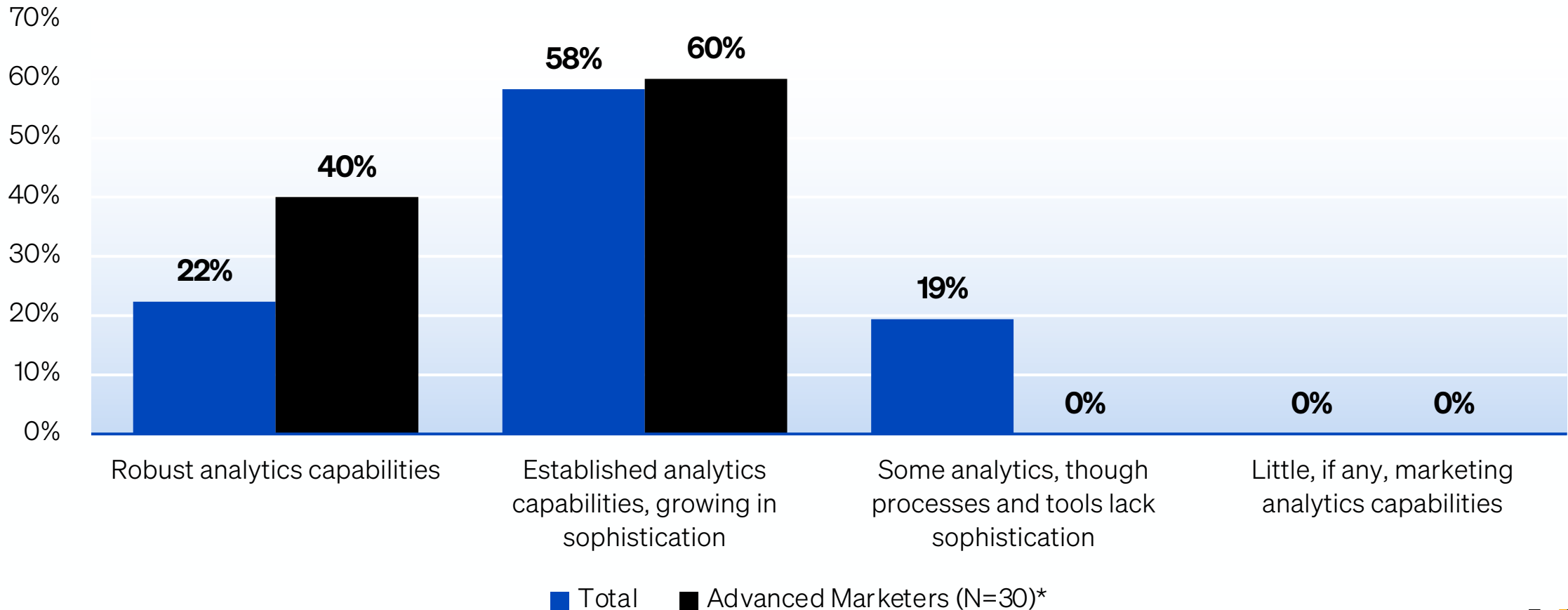
How KPIs are used



Q: KPIS...  
 N=103 Senior Marketers  
 \*Advanced Marketers = Small Base

# Even AM can further improve their analytics capabilities

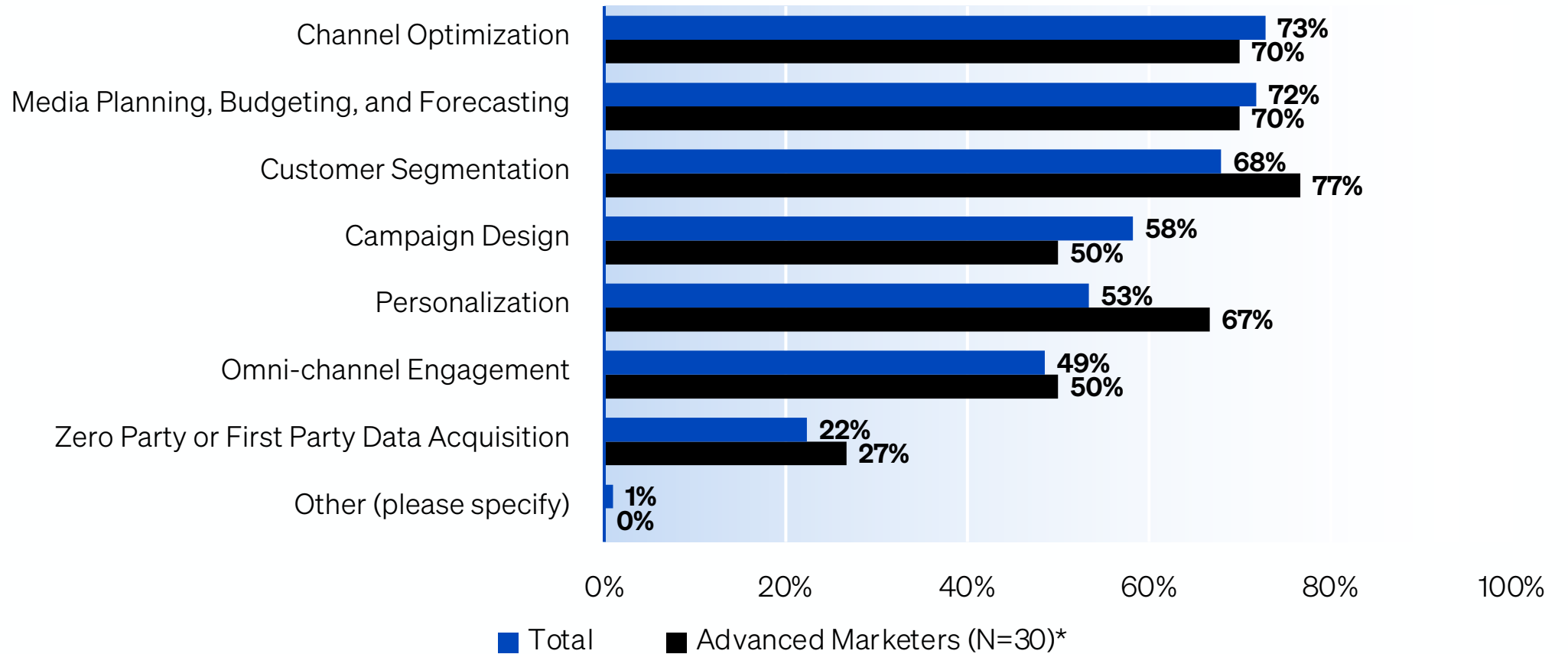
Analytics capability assessment



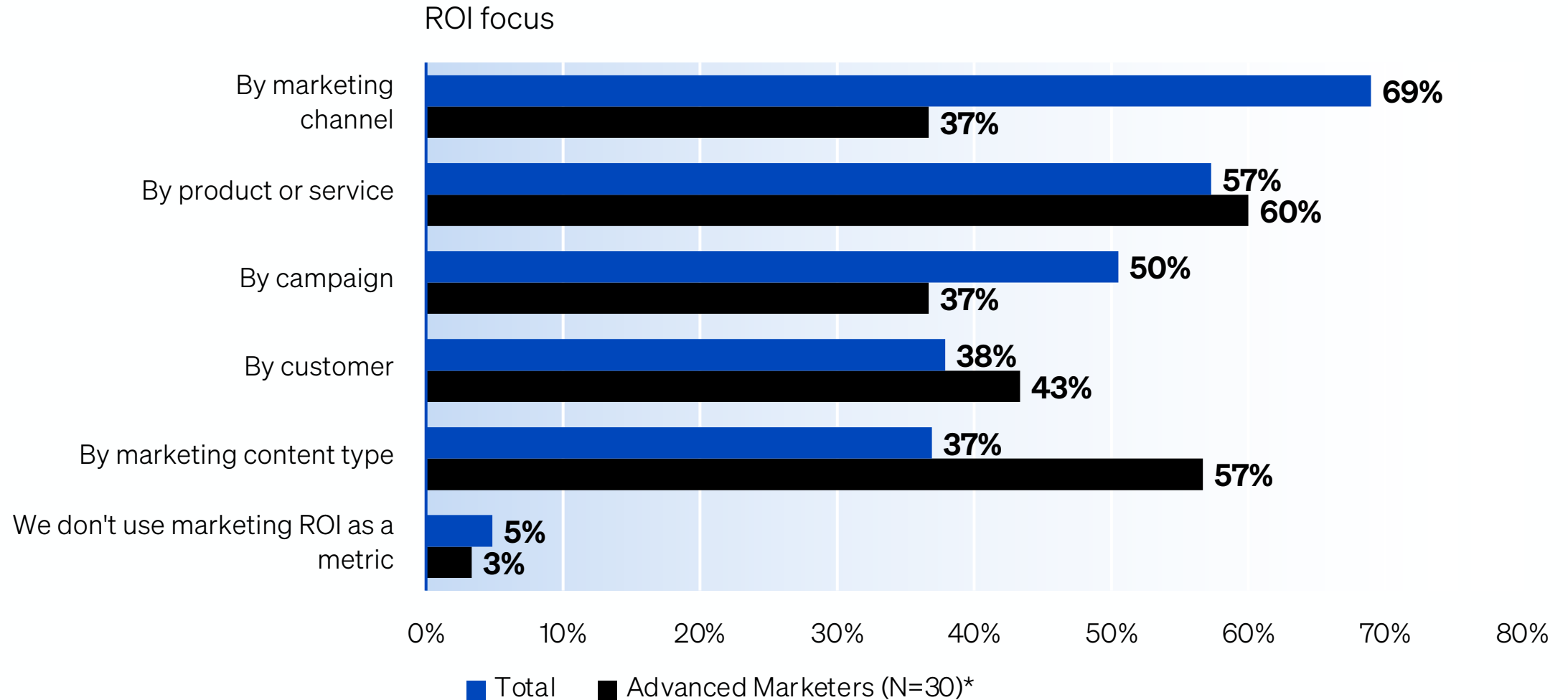
Q: Analytics...  
 N=103 Senior Marketers  
 \*Advanced Marketers = Small Base

# AM are more likely to focus on segmentation and personalization

How insights are applied

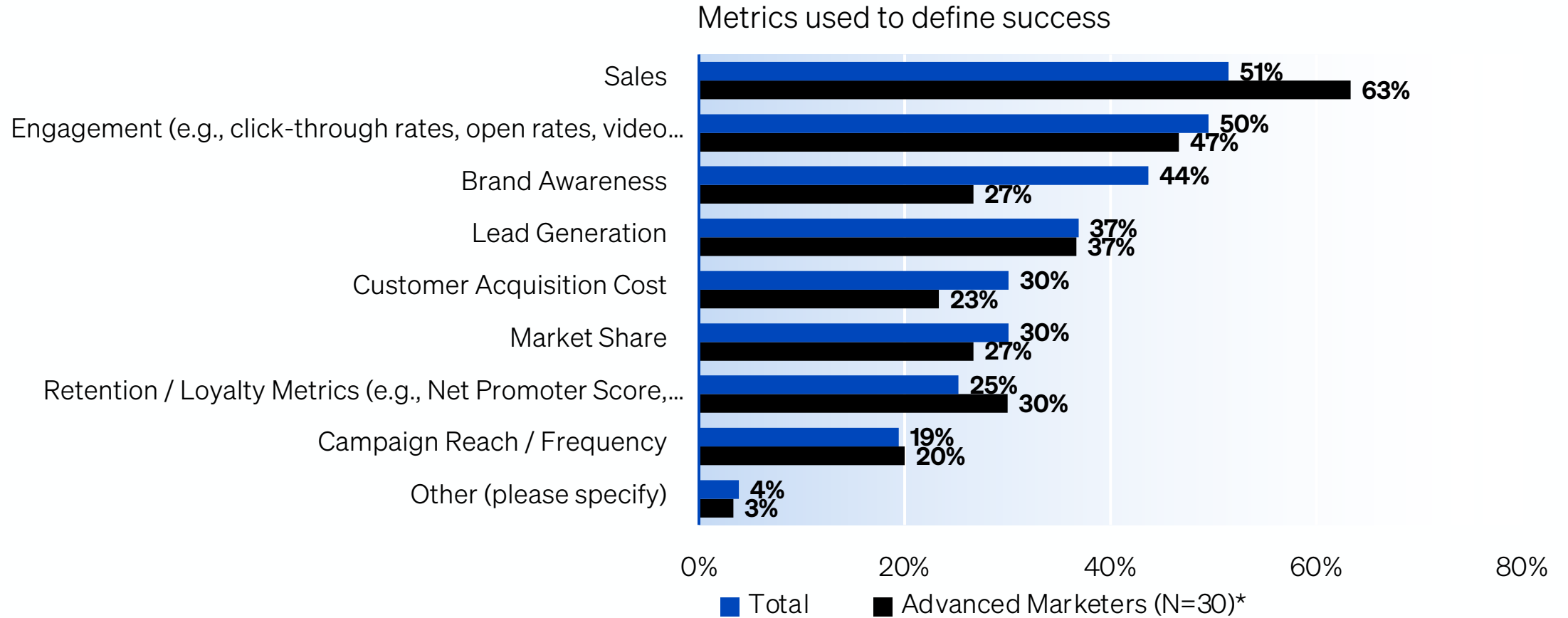


# AM are more likely to drill ROI by content type



Q: By what dimensions does your company calculate return on marketing investment (marketing ROI)? (Select all that apply)  
 N=103 Senior Marketers  
 \*Advanced Marketers = Small Base

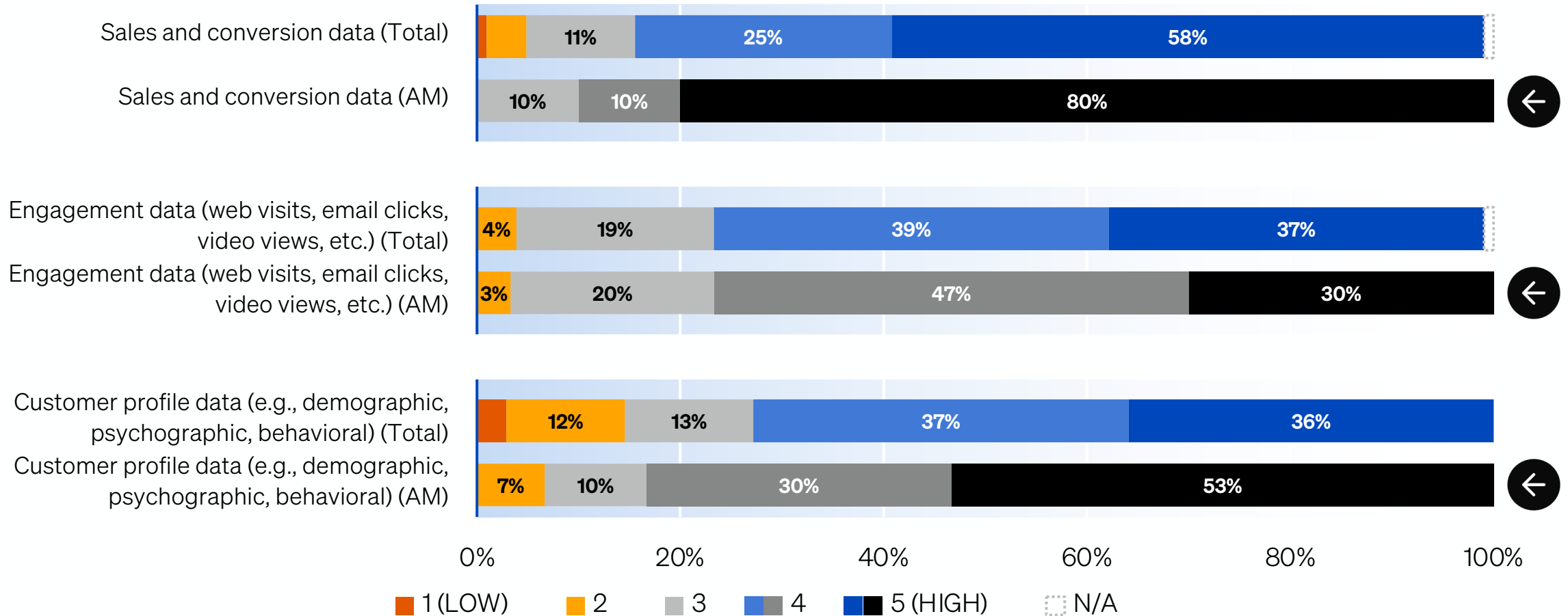
# Metrics: Stronger focus on sales (or precursors) vs planning metrics (reach)



Q: Which metrics does your company use to define marketing success? (Select the top 3)  
 N=103 Senior Marketers  
 \*Advanced Marketers = Small Base

# AM are more likely to focus on sales and customer profile data than engagement

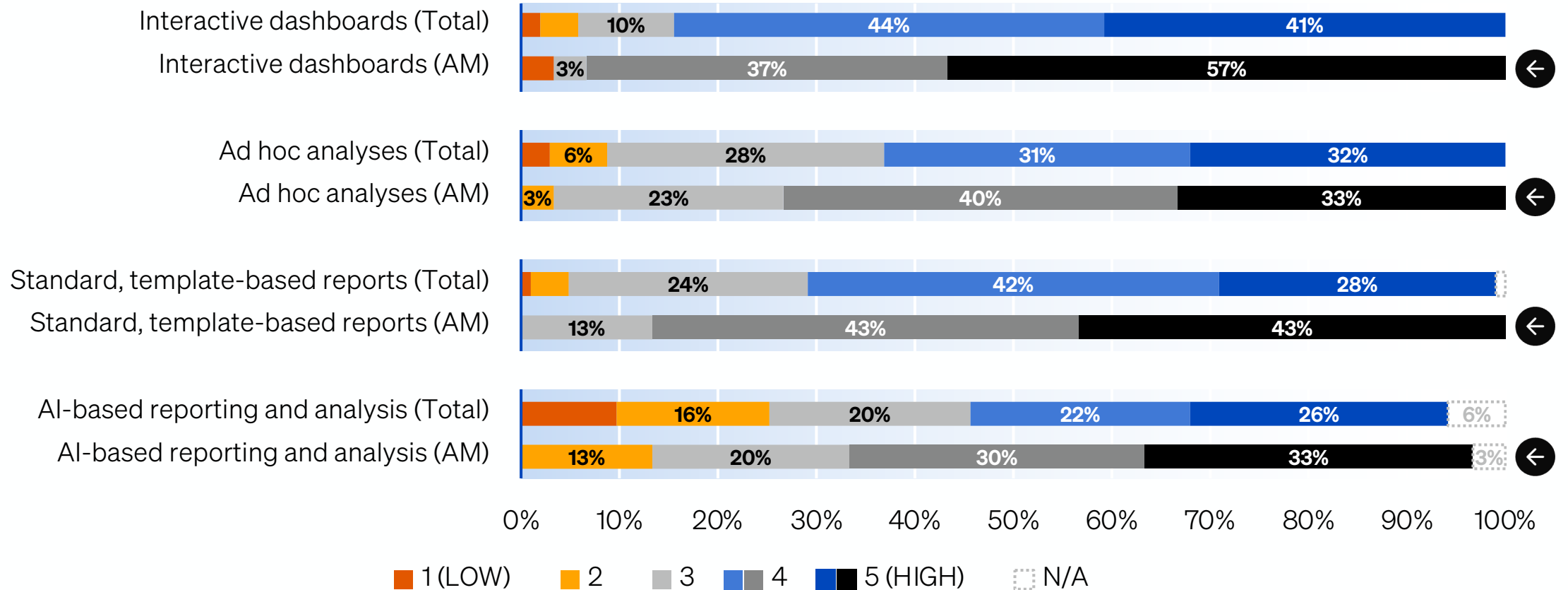
Data used for decision making



Q: To what degree does your company rely on the following data for decision-making? (Rate each item on scale from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest))  
N=103 Senior Marketers  
\*Advanced Marketers = Small Base

# Tools: Interactive dashboards are the norm, AI is emerging

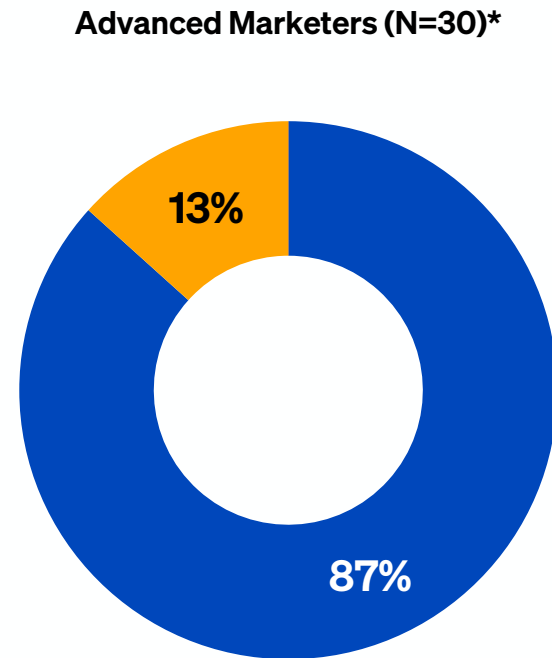
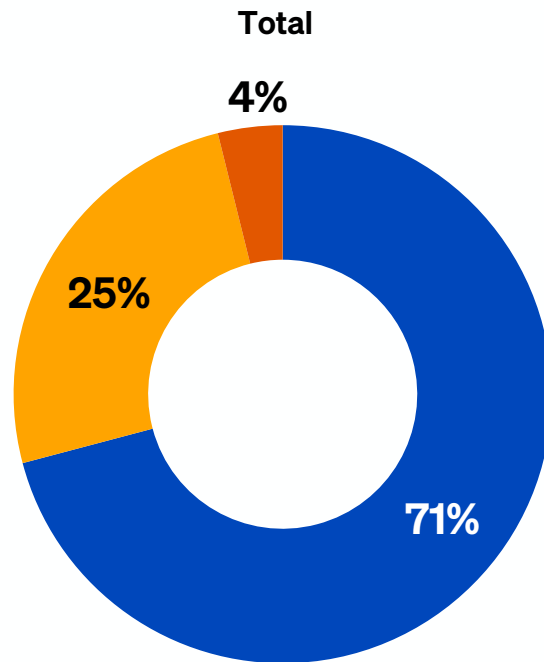
Tools used for decision making



Q: To what degree does your company rely upon the following tools for decision-making? (Rate each item on scale from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest))  
N=103 Senior Marketers  
\*Advanced Marketers = Small Base

# Marketers are striving to move toward daily data, to inform decisions

Frequency of using data to inform decisions



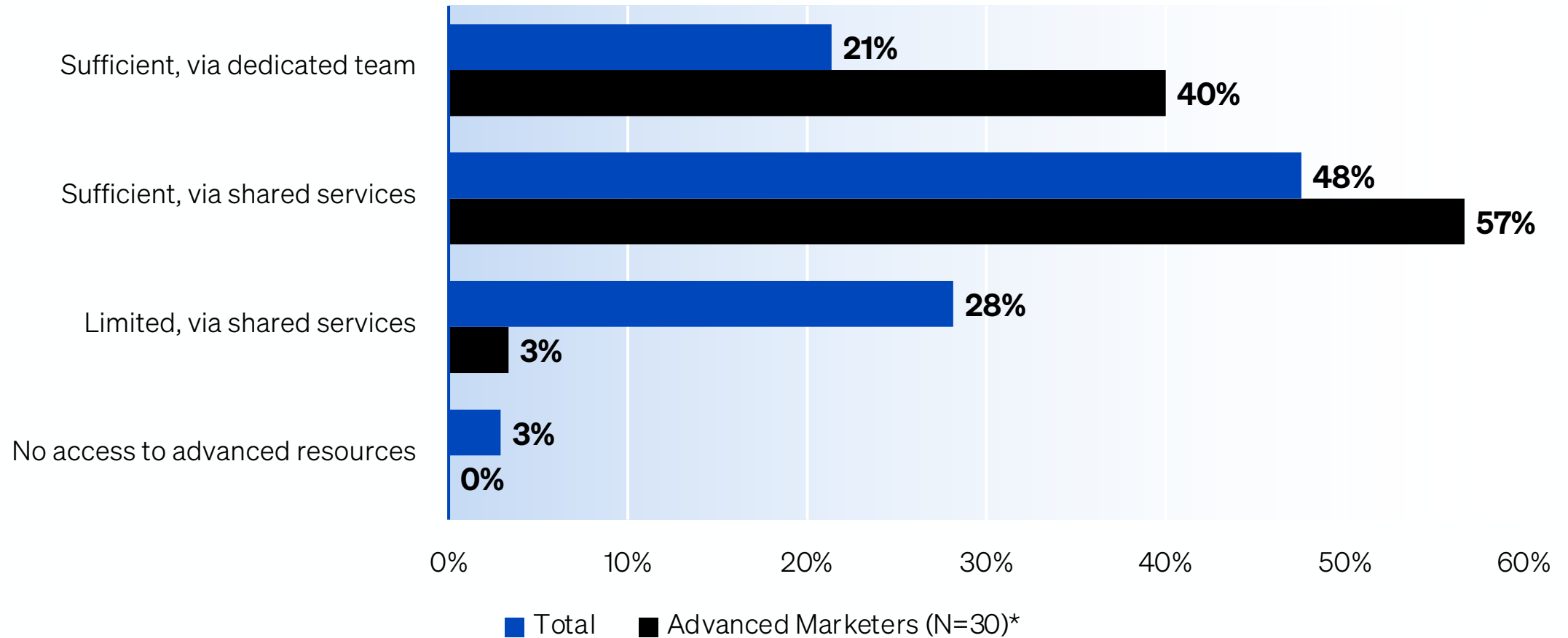
■ Daily or weekly ■ Monthly ■ Quarterly

■ Daily or weekly ■ Monthly ■ Quarterly

Q: How frequently do you or your teammates use marketing data and analytics to make or inform business decisions? (Select one)  
N=103 Senior Marketers  
*\*Advanced Marketers = Small Base*

# AM have more dedicated resources for analytics

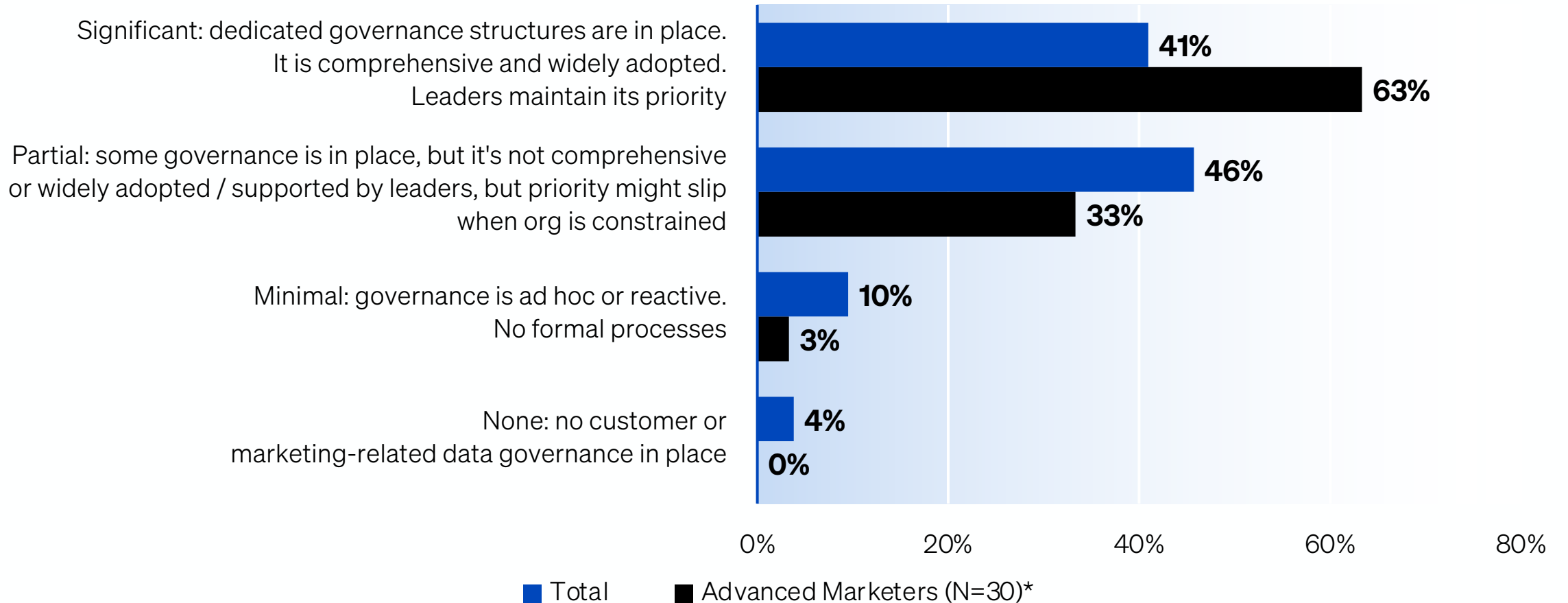
Availability of advanced analytics / data science resources



Q: Which of the following describes your marketing organization's access to advanced analytics and data science resources? (Select one)  
 N=103 Senior Marketers  
 \*Advanced Marketers = Small Base

# Governance is more established among AM

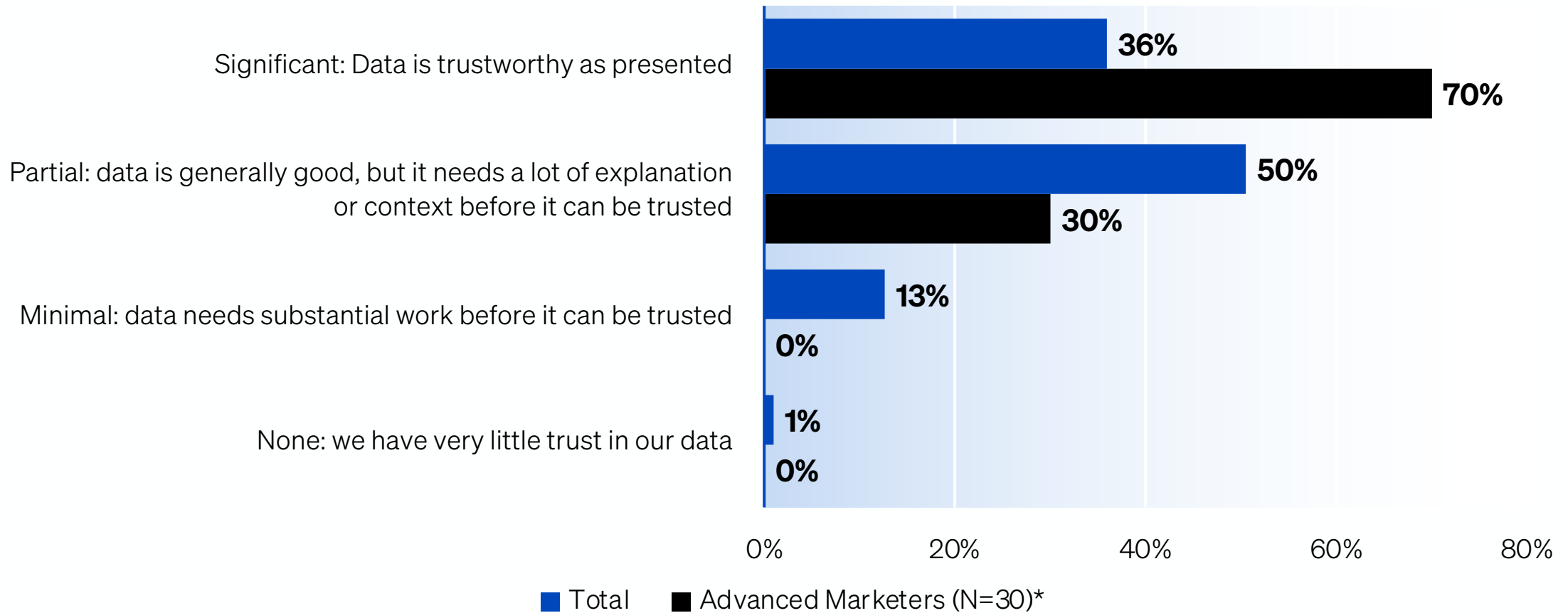
State of data governance



Q: Which of the following best describes your company's governance of customer or marketing-related data at your company? (Select one)  
 N=103 Senior Marketers  
 \*Advanced Marketers = Small Base

# AM has significantly stronger trust in their data

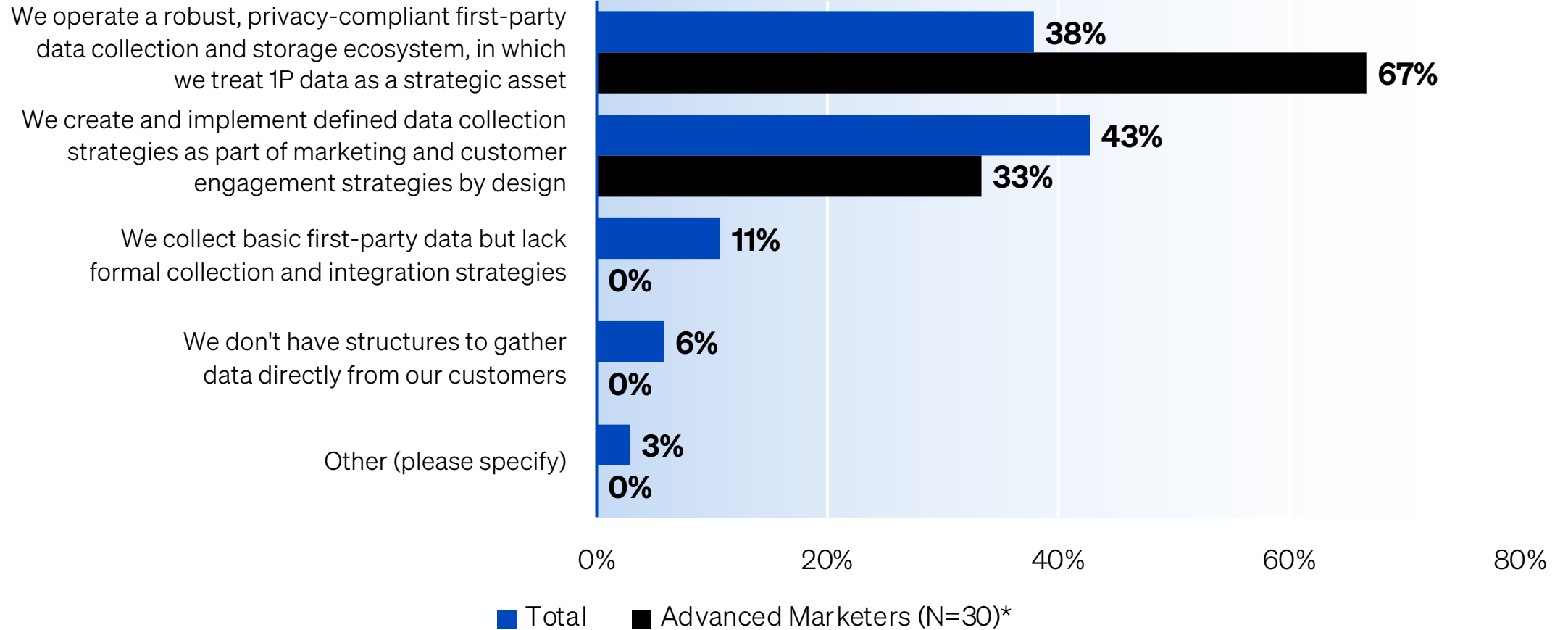
Level of trust on data and insights



Q: Which of the following best describes the level of trust your company has in the quality of its marketing-produced data or insights to inform decisions?  
 (Select one) N=103 Senior Marketers  
 \*Advanced Marketers = Small Base

# AM have more robust 1P data capabilities

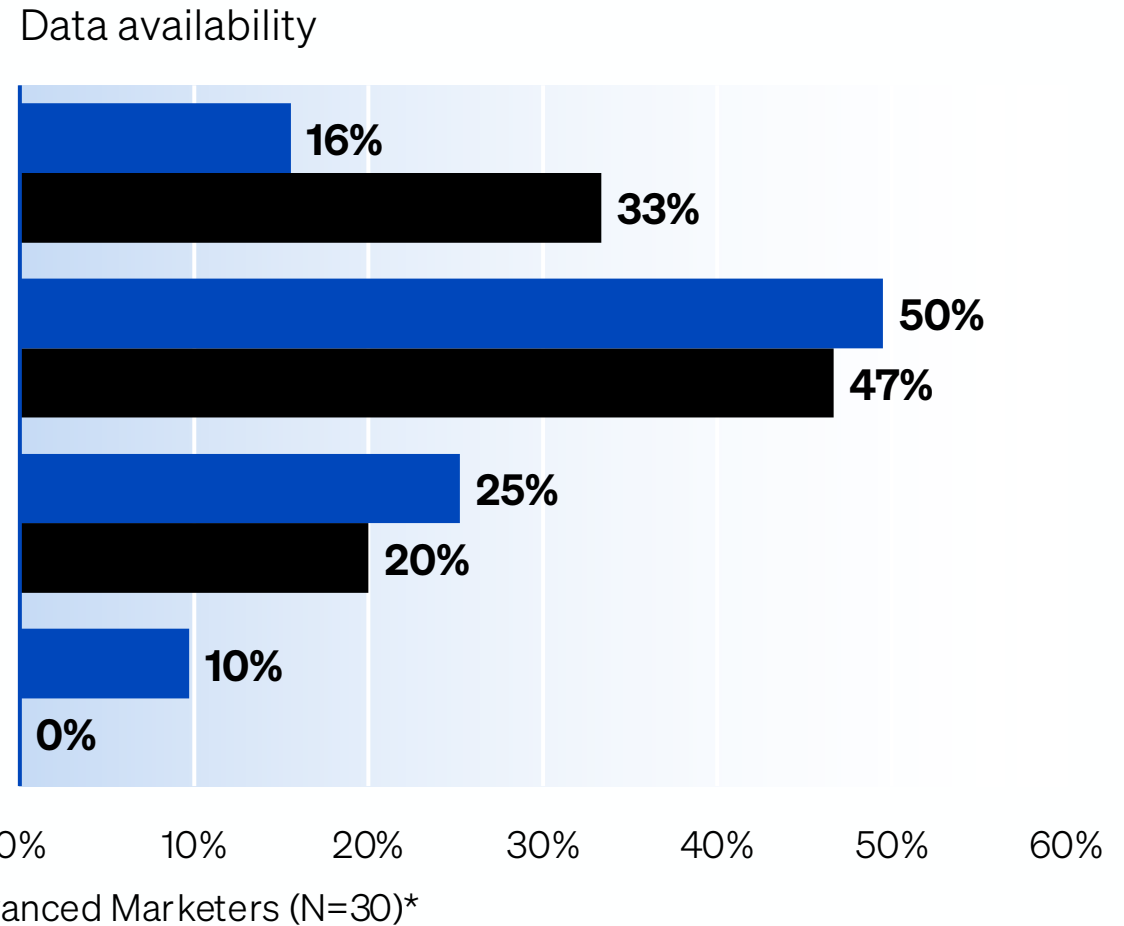
State of 1P data



Q: Which statement best describes how your company uses marketing efforts to collect first party (1P) customer data? (Select one)  
 N=103 Senior Marketers  
 \*Advanced Marketers = Small Base

# In addition to 3P enrichment, AM have stronger 1P data

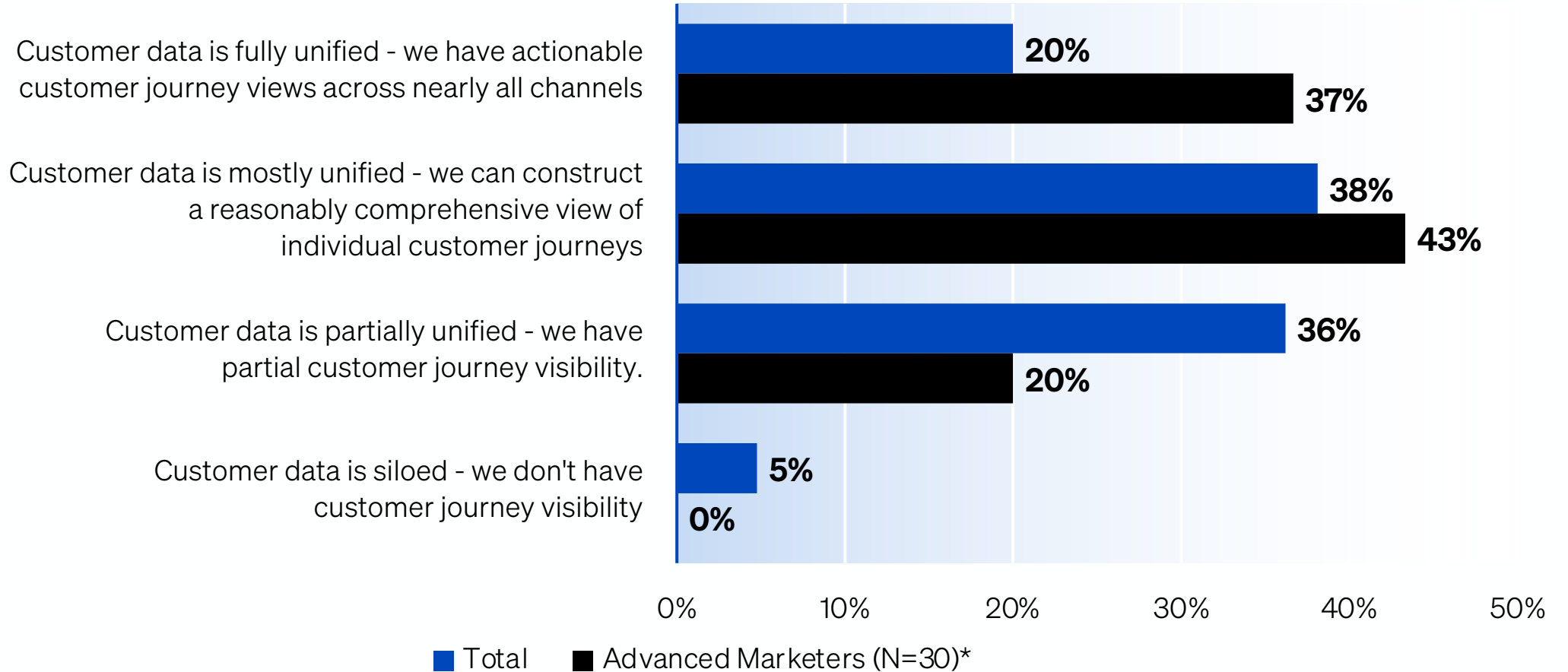
- We have extensive and complete first-party customer data that fully supports analytical requirements
- We enrich our first-party data with third-party data, supporting analytical needs as well as exploratory analysis and scenario development
- We have just enough demographic and behavioral customer data to support basic analysis and decision-making. It does not support more complex analysis
- We have limited, inconsistent demographic and/or behavioral customer data. Analysis and decision-making is usually difficult



Q: Which of the following best describes the availability of customer's demographic and behavioral data available to support analysis and decision-making?  
 (Select one) N=103 Senior Marketers  
 \*Advanced Marketers = Small Base

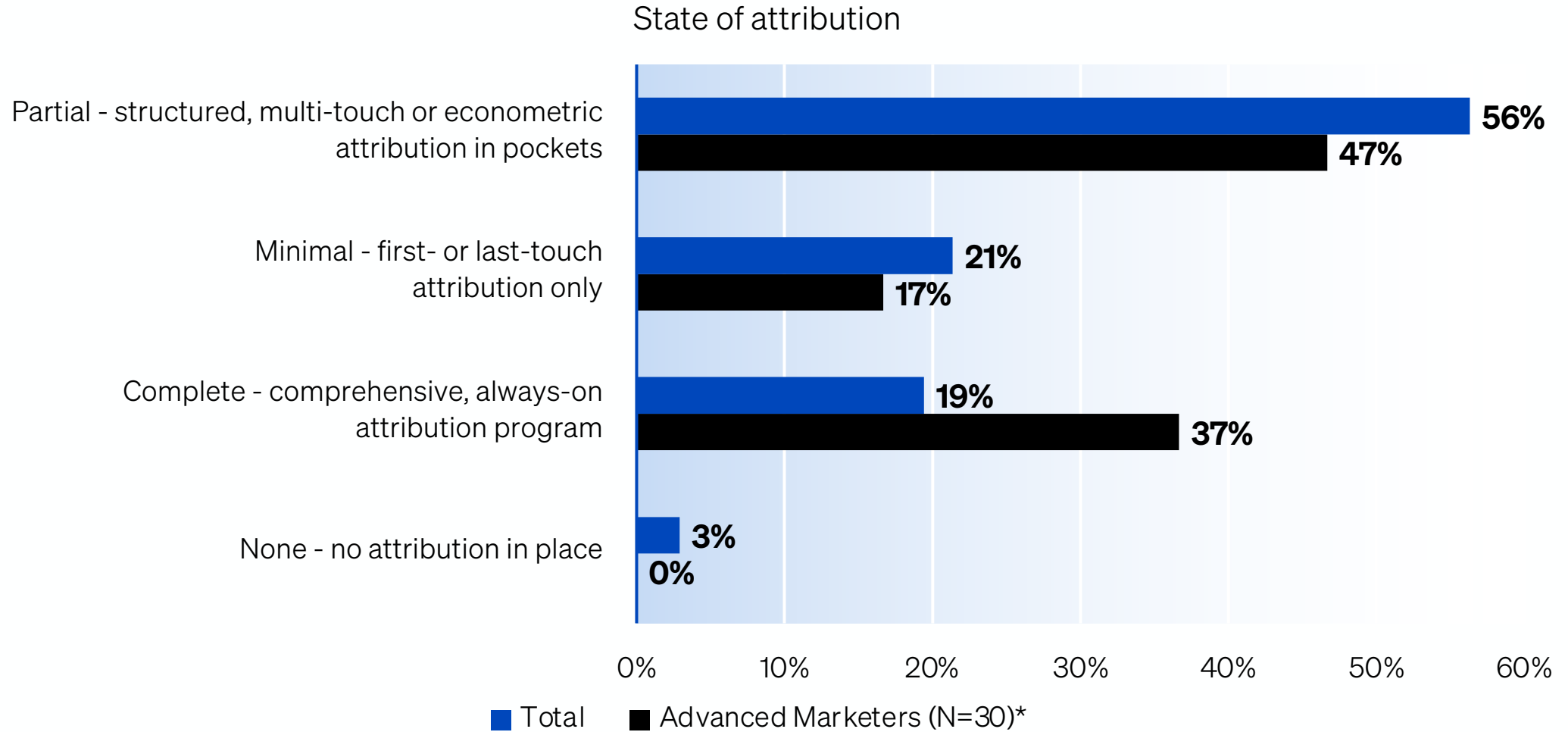
# Data unification is less of a problem among AM

State of data unification



Q: Which statement best describes your company's customer data unification and ability to analyze customer journeys? (Select one)  
 N=103 Senior Marketers  
 \*Advanced Marketers = Small Base

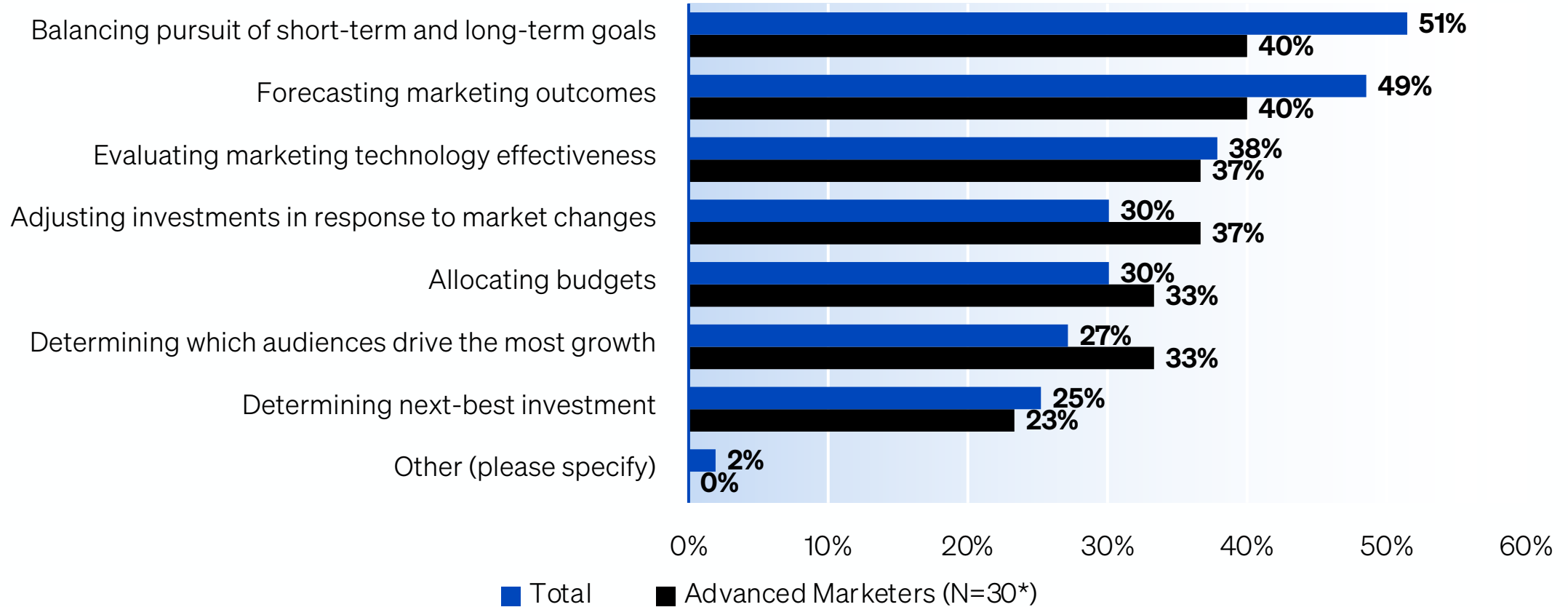
# Attribution is partial and fragmented



Q: Which of the following describe the status of attribution at your company? (Select one)  
 N=103 Senior Marketers  
 \*Advanced Marketers = Small Base

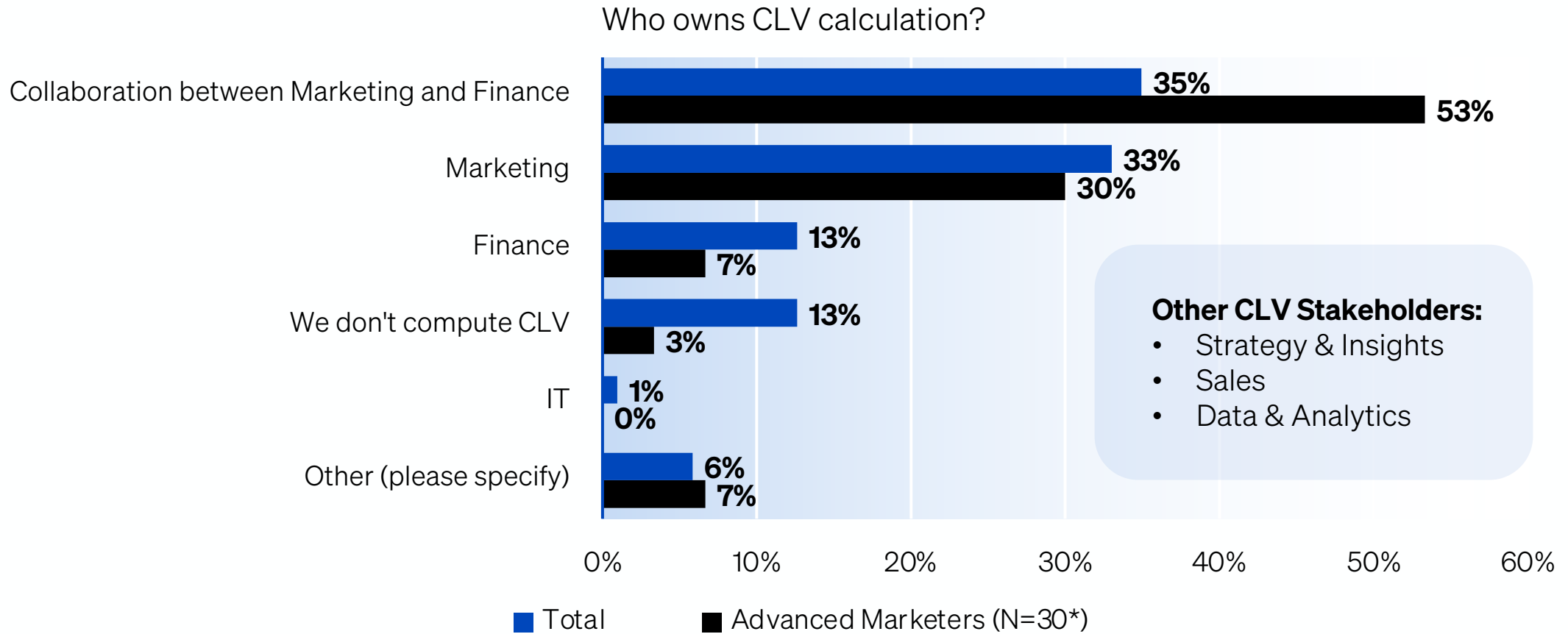
# Short- vs long-term goals remain the biggest challenge, along with overall forecasting

Hardest questions for marketing analysts



Q: What topics are hardest for your company's marketing analysts to address? (Select top 3)  
 N=103 Senior Marketers  
 \*Advanced Marketers = Small Base

# AM are much more likely to have established collaboration between marketing and finance



Q: Which of your company's department(s) compute customer lifetime value (CLV)? (Select one)  
 N=103 Senior Marketers  
 \*Advanced Marketers = Small Base

# 05

## Deep Dive 2: B2B vs B2C

# / B2B VS B2C

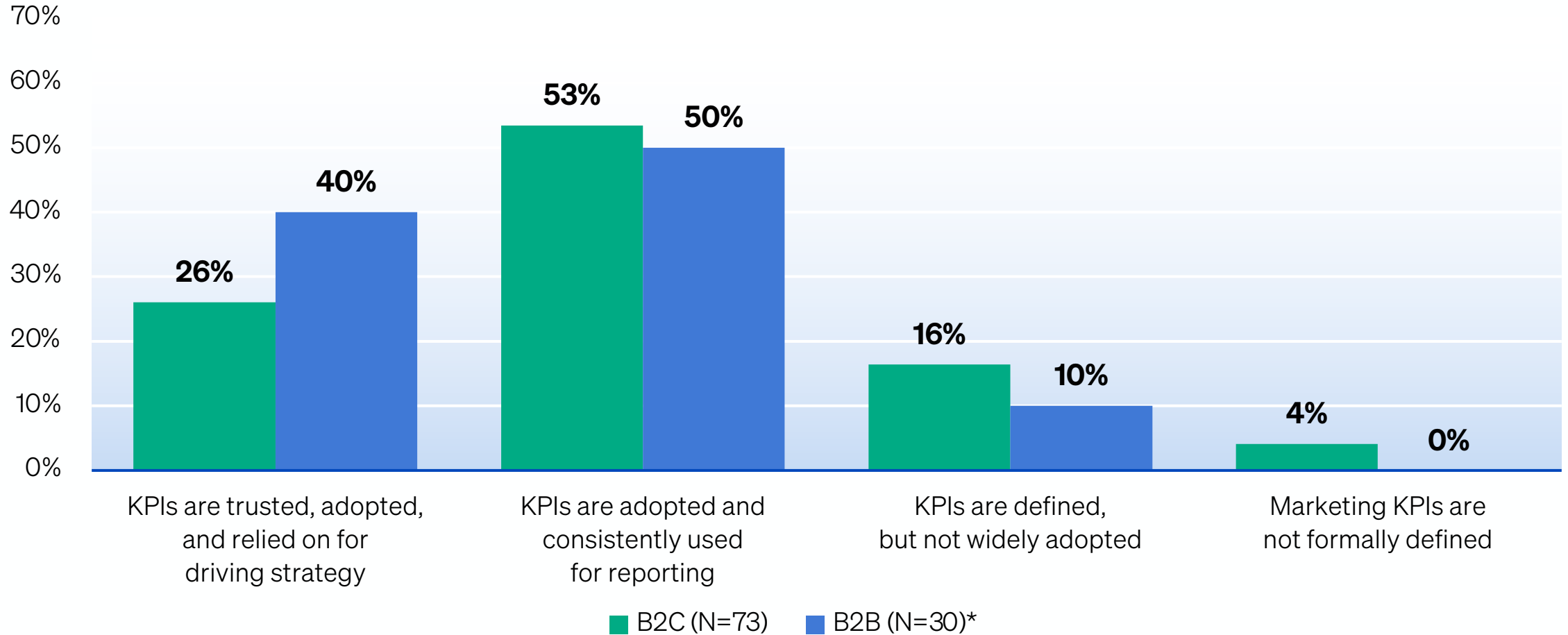
B2B and B2C marketers face the same analytics challenges but approach them from different starting points. B2B may use KPIs more strategically (40% trusted for strategy vs. 26% B2C), and measures ROI closer to the customer – 53% compute ROI by customer vs. 32% for B2C, with stronger focus across campaign (57% vs. 48%) and product dimensions (63% vs. 55%).

B2B's success metrics center on lead generation (50% vs. 32%) and engagement (53% vs. 48%), while B2C indexed higher for reach/frequency (25% vs. 7%) and retention (29% vs. 17%). On data, B2B relies more heavily on sales and conversion data (70% vs. 53% at the highest tier) and brand scores like NPS (43% vs. 22%) for decision-making and leans harder on third-party enrichment (60% vs. 45% at the enrichment tier).

On the organizational side, B2C has built stronger cross-functional CLV ownership – 41% collaborate between marketing and finance vs. just 20% for B2B, where CLV sits in either marketing (37%) or finance (30%) separately. B2B also struggles more with budget allocation (40% vs. 26%) as an analytics challenge.

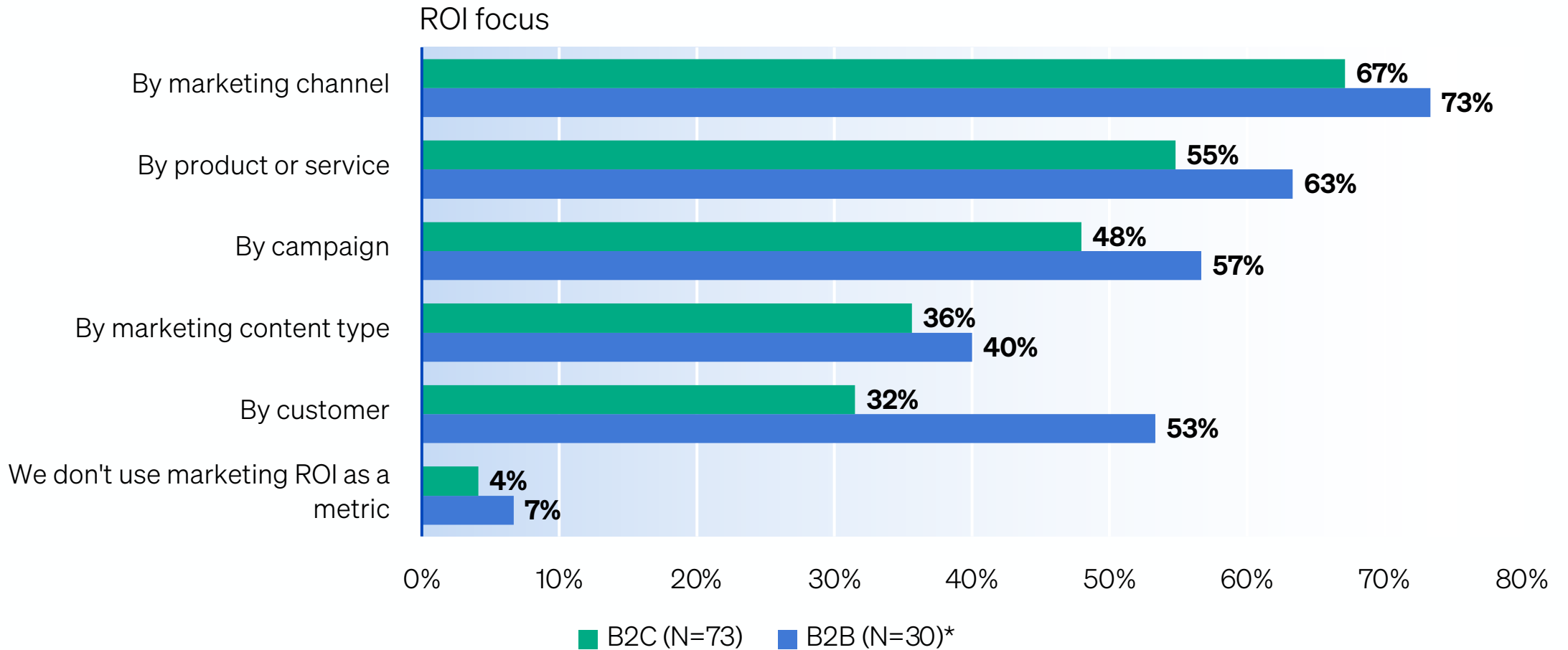
# B2B may use KPIs more strategically

How KPIs are used



Q: KPIS...  
 N=103 Senior Marketers  
 \*B2B Marketers = Small Base

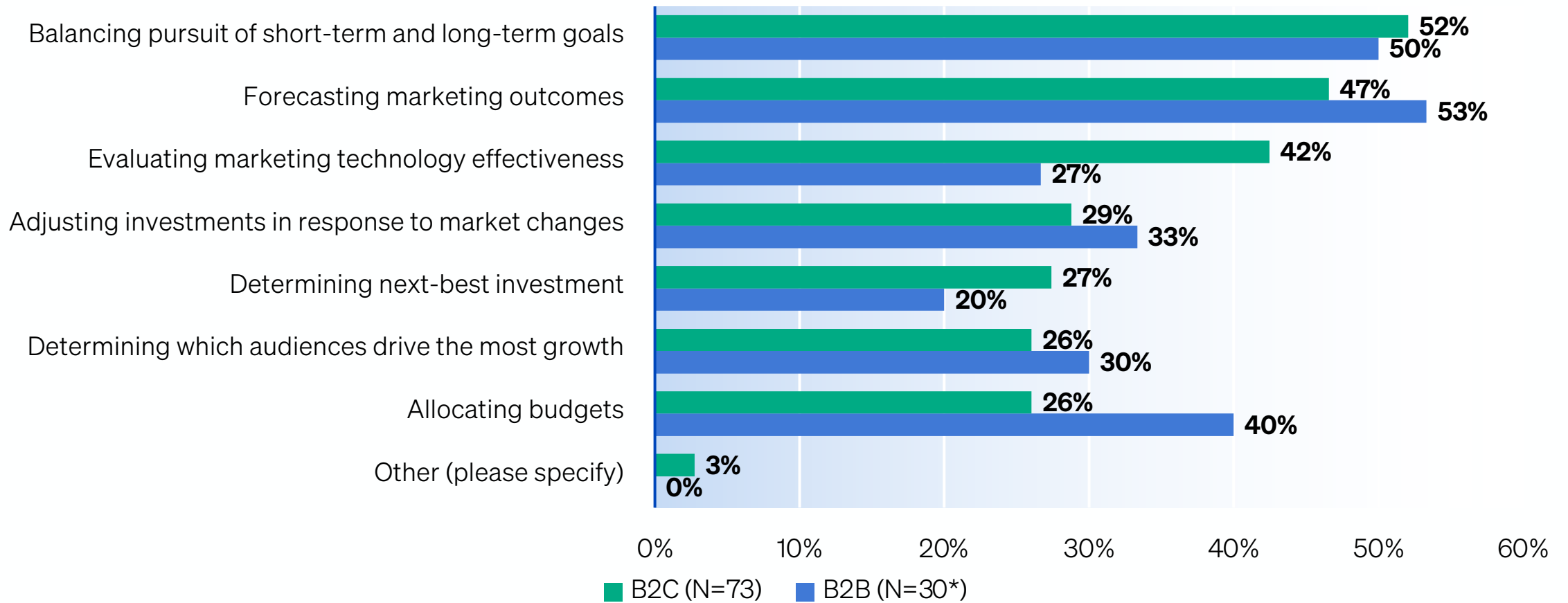
# B2B measures ROI by customer far more than B2C



Q: By what dimensions does your company calculate return on marketing investment (marketing ROI)? (Select all that apply)  
 N=103 Senior Marketers  
 \*B2B Marketers = Small Base

# B2B struggles more with budget allocation

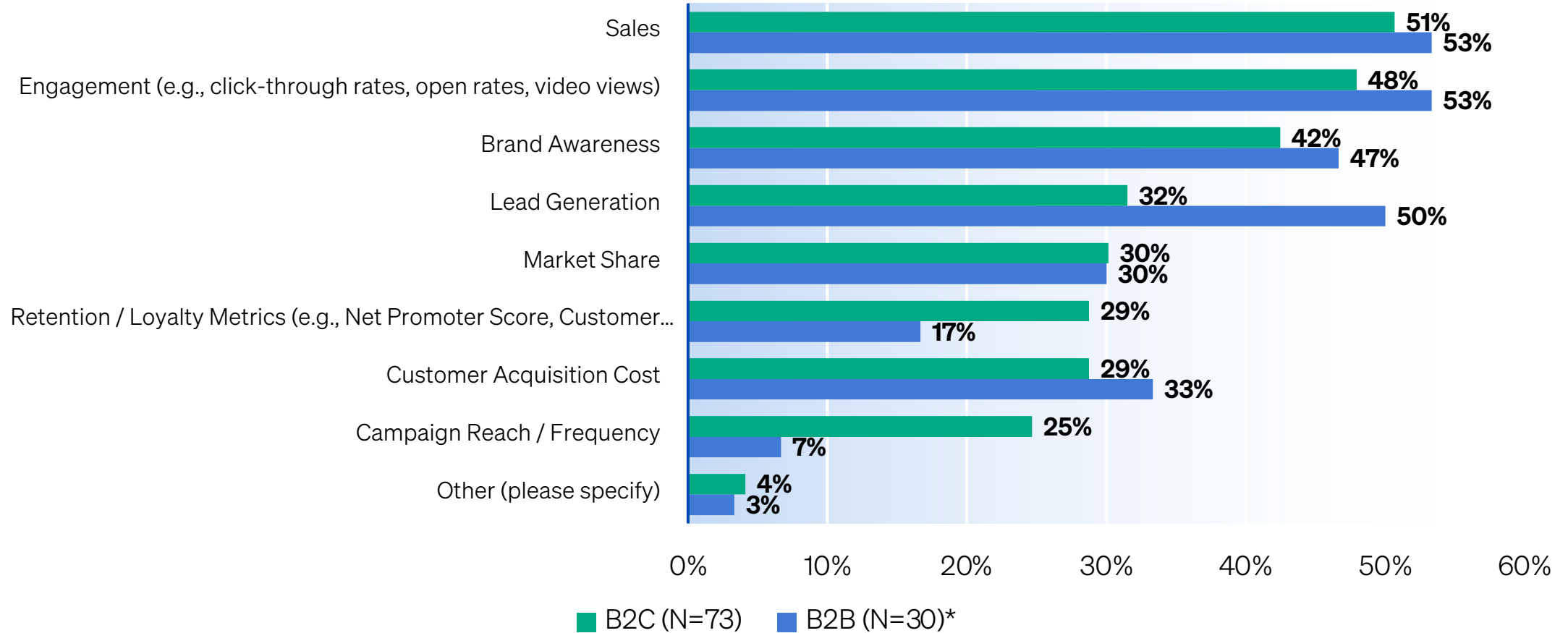
Hardest questions for marketing analysts



Q: What topics are hardest for your company's marketing analysts to address? (Select top 3)  
 N=103 Senior Marketers  
 \*B2B Marketers = Small Base

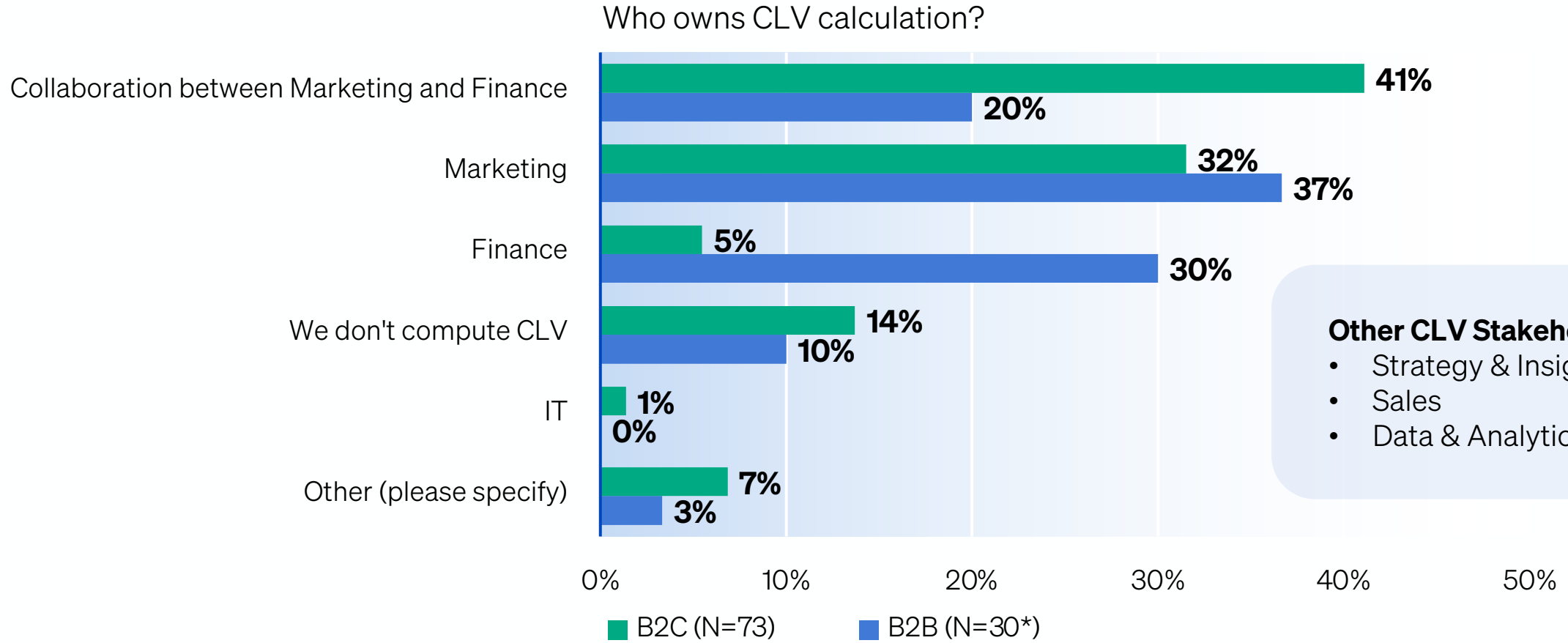
# B2B indexes on lead gen, B2C on reach/frequency

Metrics used to define success



Q: Which metrics does your company use to define marketing success? (Select the top 3)  
 N=103 Senior Marketers  
 \*B2B Marketers = Small Base

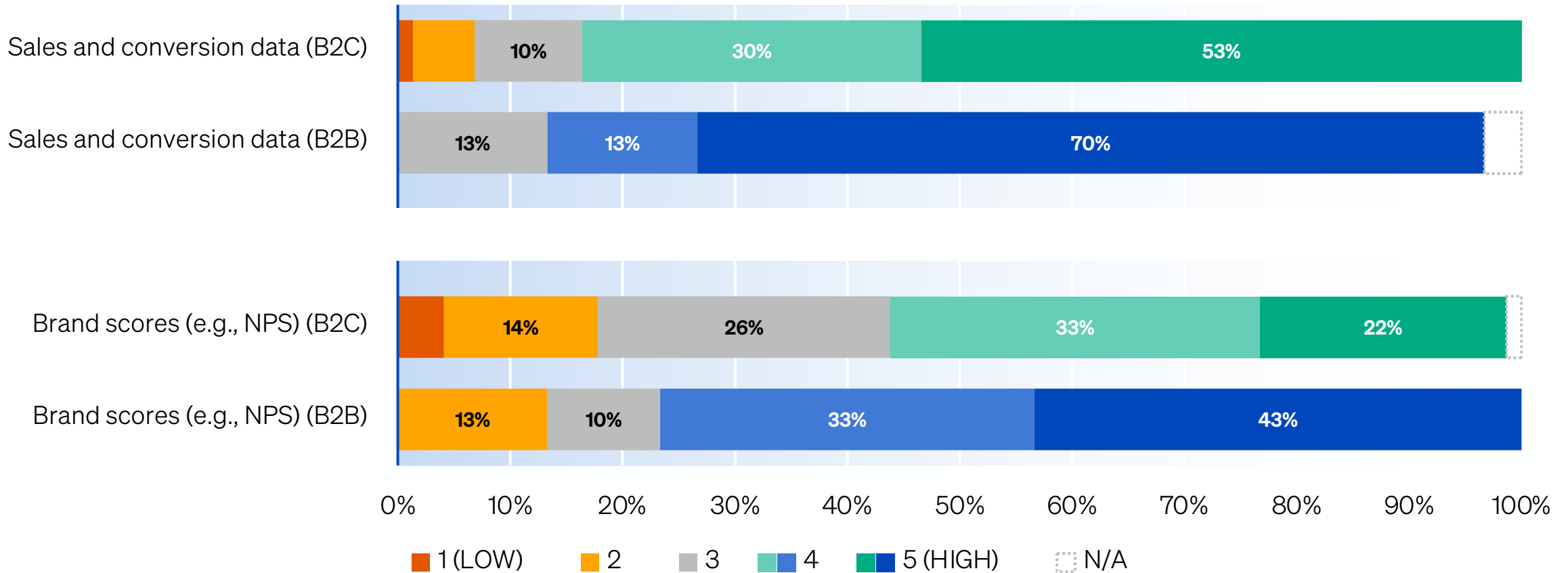
# B2C co-owns CLV across marketing + finance; B2B is less likely



Q: Which of your company's department(s) compute customer lifetime value (CLV)? (Select one)  
 N=103 Senior Marketers  
 \*B2B Marketers = Small Base

# B2B relies more heavily on sales data and brand scores (NPS) for decision-making

Data used for decision making



Q: To what degree does your company rely on the following data for decision-making? (Rate each item on scale from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest))  
 N=103 Senior Marketers  
 \*B2B Marketers = Small Base

# B2B enriches with 3P more to get to the right data

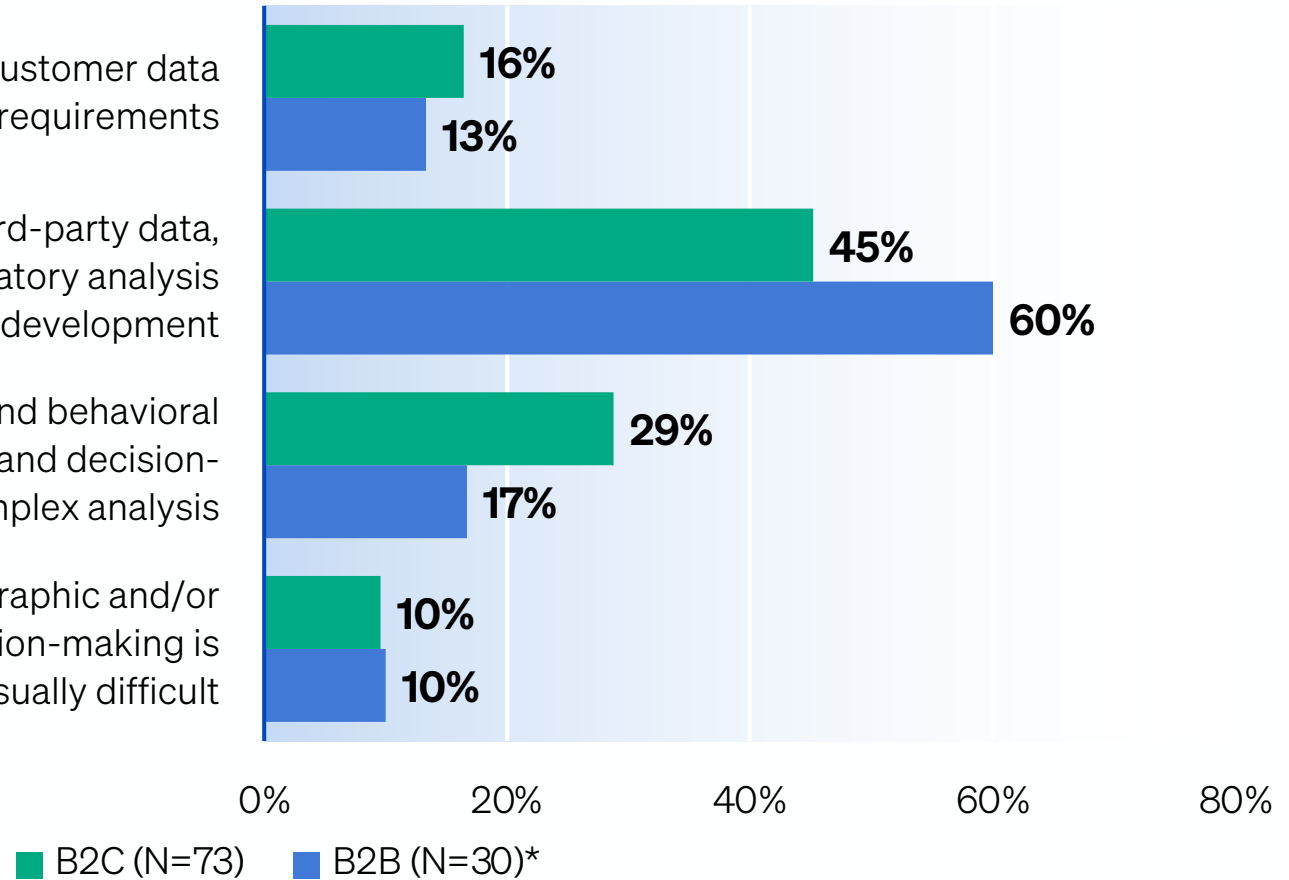
We have extensive and complete first-party customer data that fully supports analytical requirements

We enrich our first-party data with third-party data, supporting analytical needs as well as exploratory analysis and scenario development

We have just enough demographic and behavioral customer data to support basic analysis and decision-making. It does not support more complex analysis

We have limited, inconsistent demographic and/or behavioral customer data. Analysis and decision-making is usually difficult

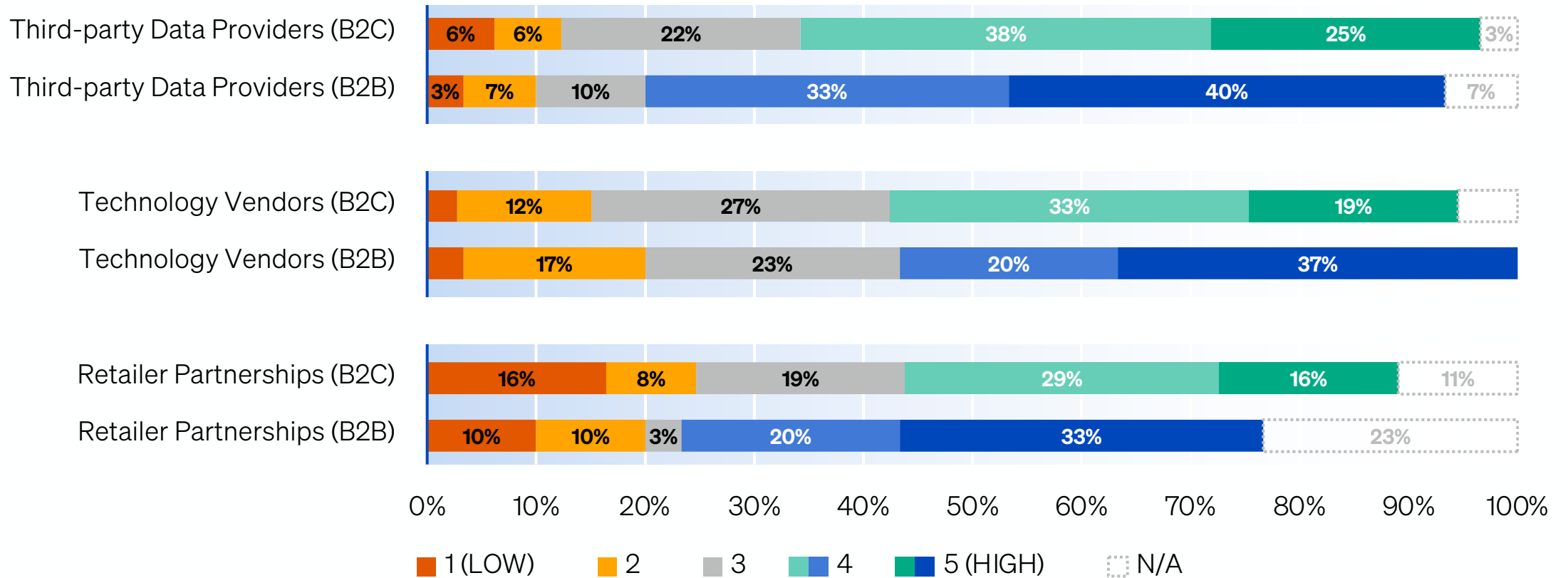
Data availability



Q: Which of the following best describes the availability of customer's demographic and behavioral data available to support analysis and decision-making?  
 (Select one) N=103 Senior Marketers  
 \*B2B Marketers = Small Base

# B2B relies more on 3P, tech vendors and retailer partnerships for enrichment

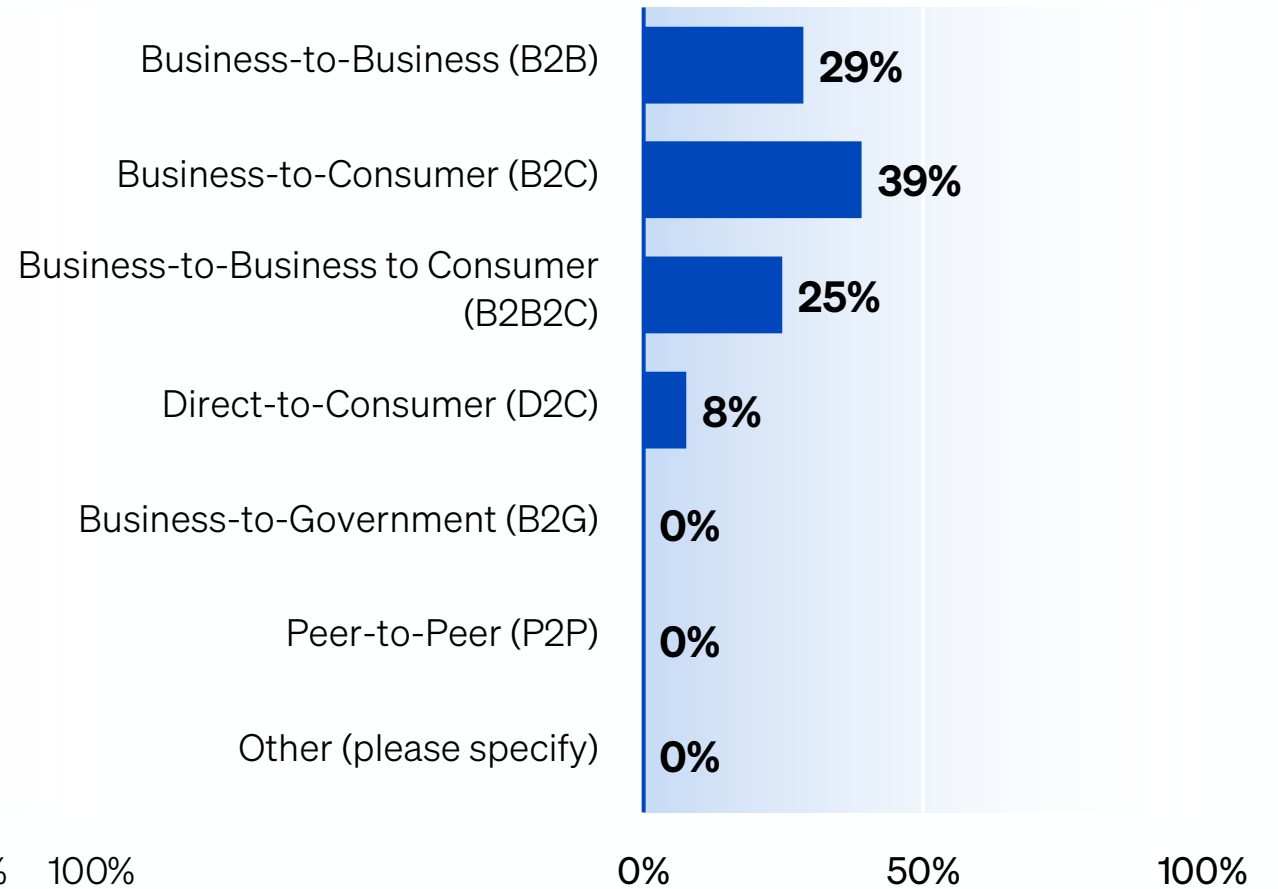
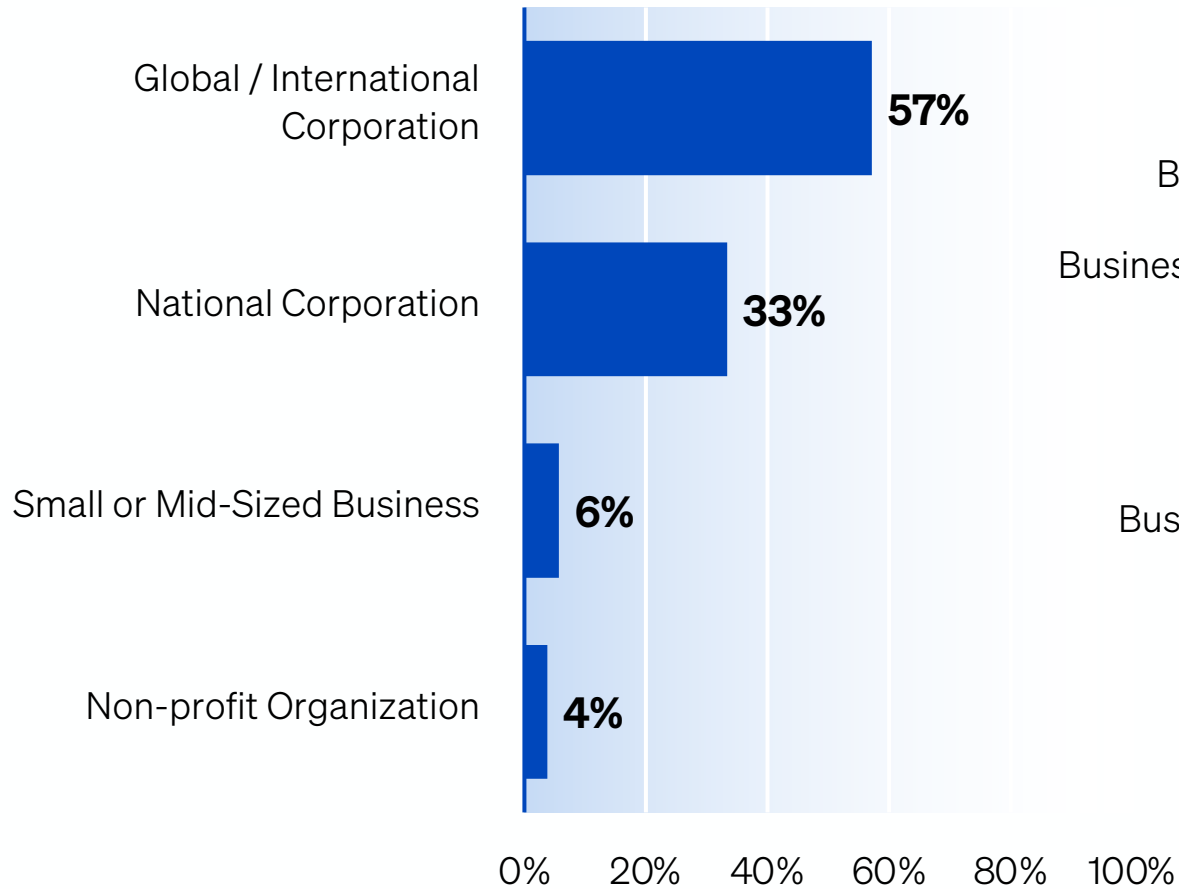
Data enrichment sources



Q: To what degree does your company rely on the following to enrich your data? (Rate each item on scale from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest))  
N=103 Senior Marketers  
\*B2B Marketers = Small Base

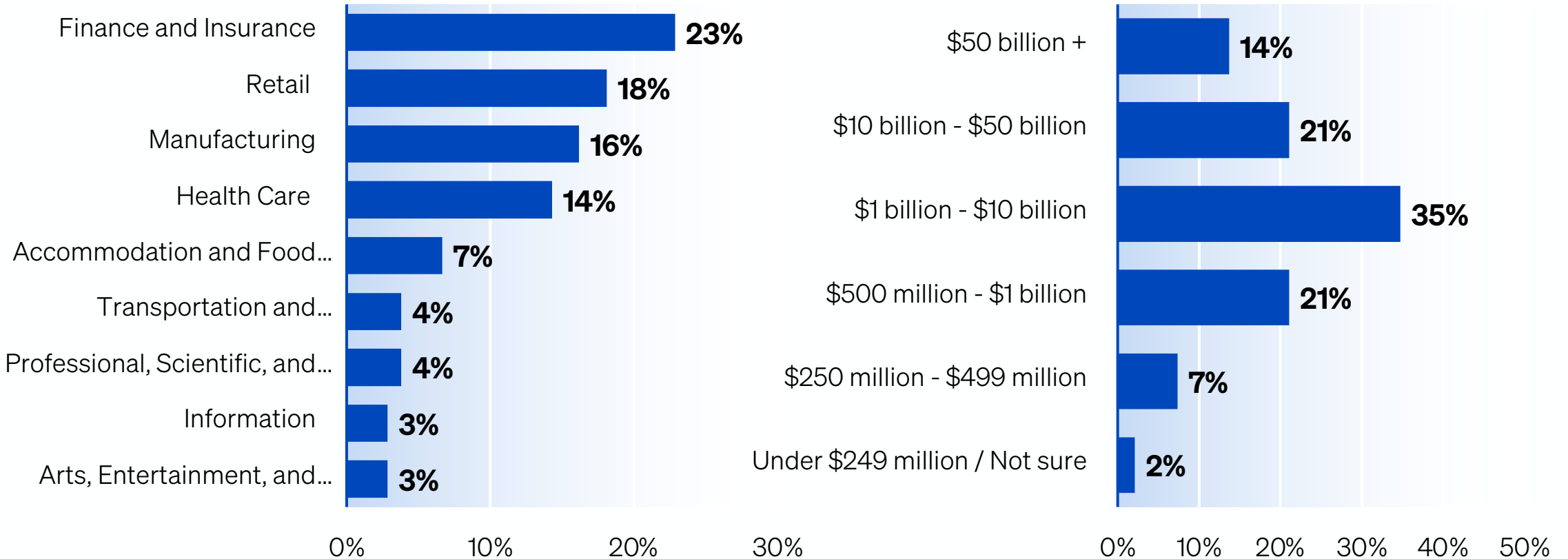
# Firmographics

# Company Firmographics



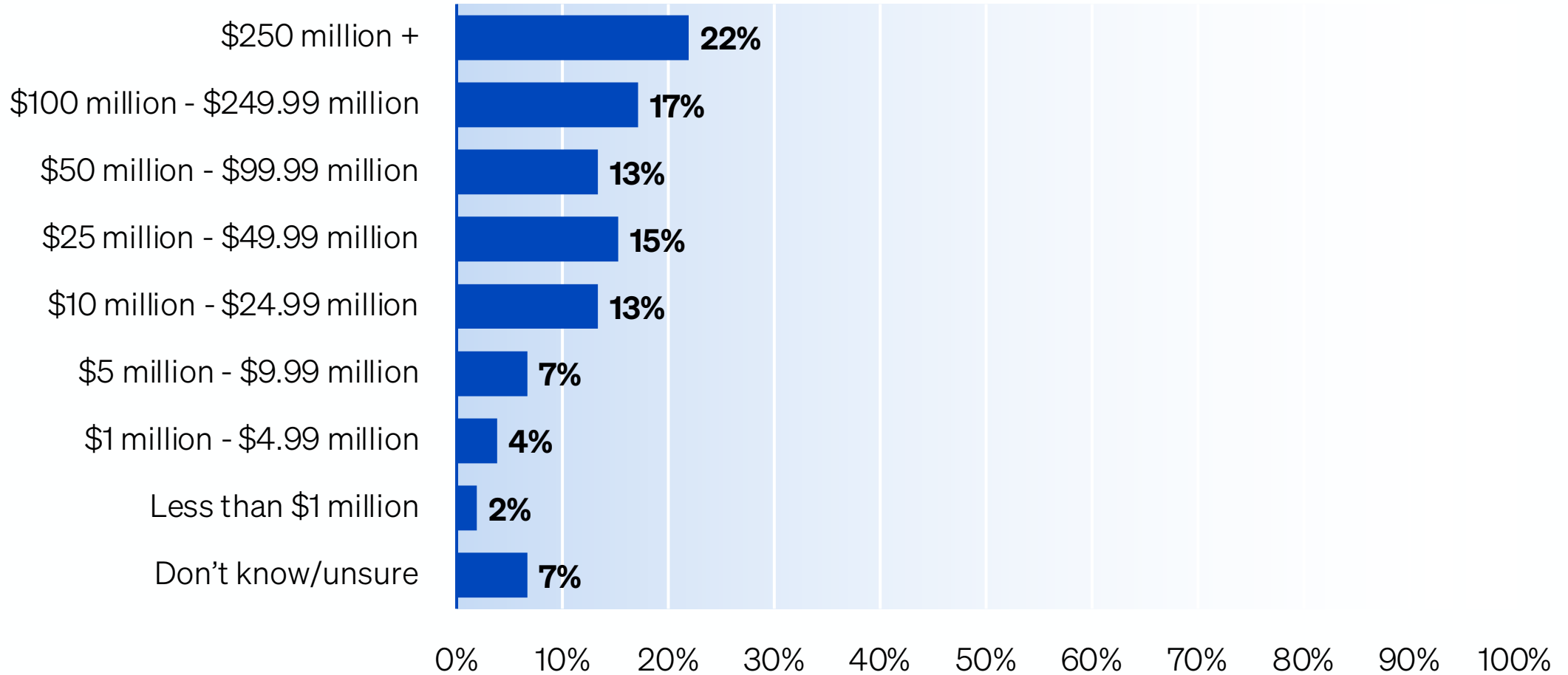
Q: Which of the following best describes the type of company you work for? (Select one)  
 Q: Which of the following best describes your primary approach to the market? (Select one)  
 N=103 Senior Marketers

# Industries Represented & Revenue

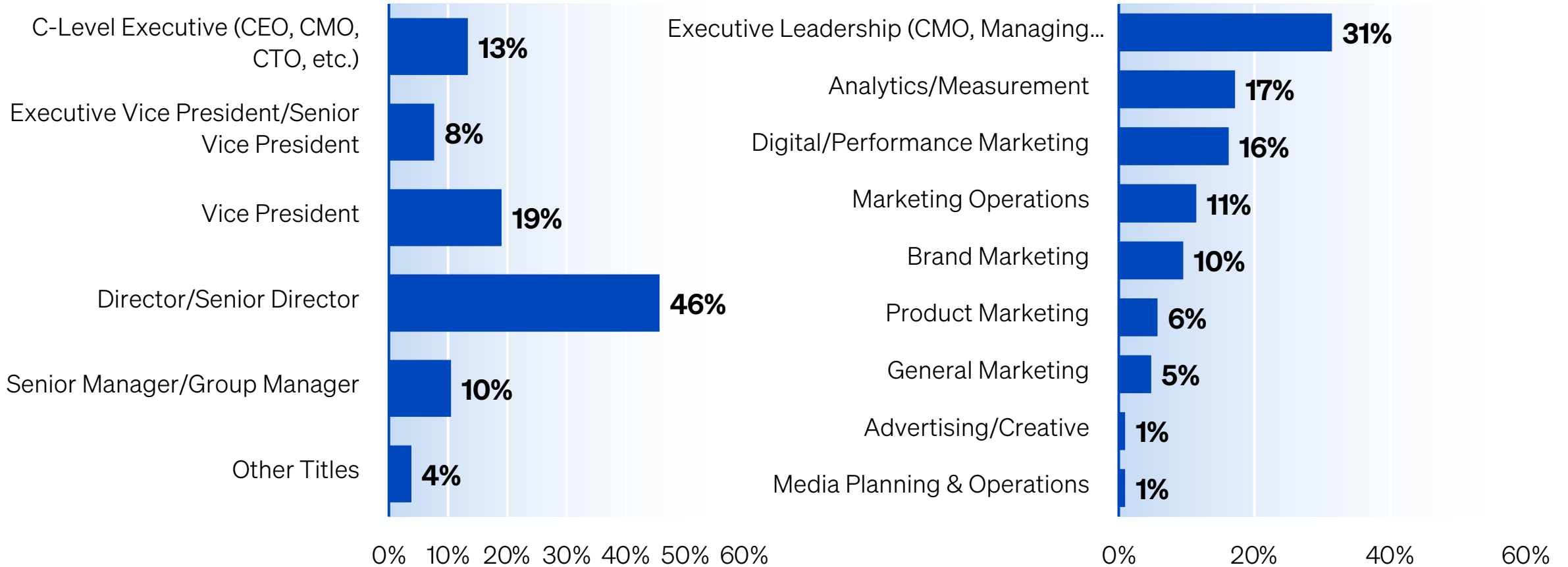


Q: Which of the following best describes the type of industry you work in? (Select one)  
 Q: To the best of your knowledge, what was your company's 2024 reported annual gross revenue? (in US Dollars)  
 N=103 Senior Marketers

# Marketing Budget

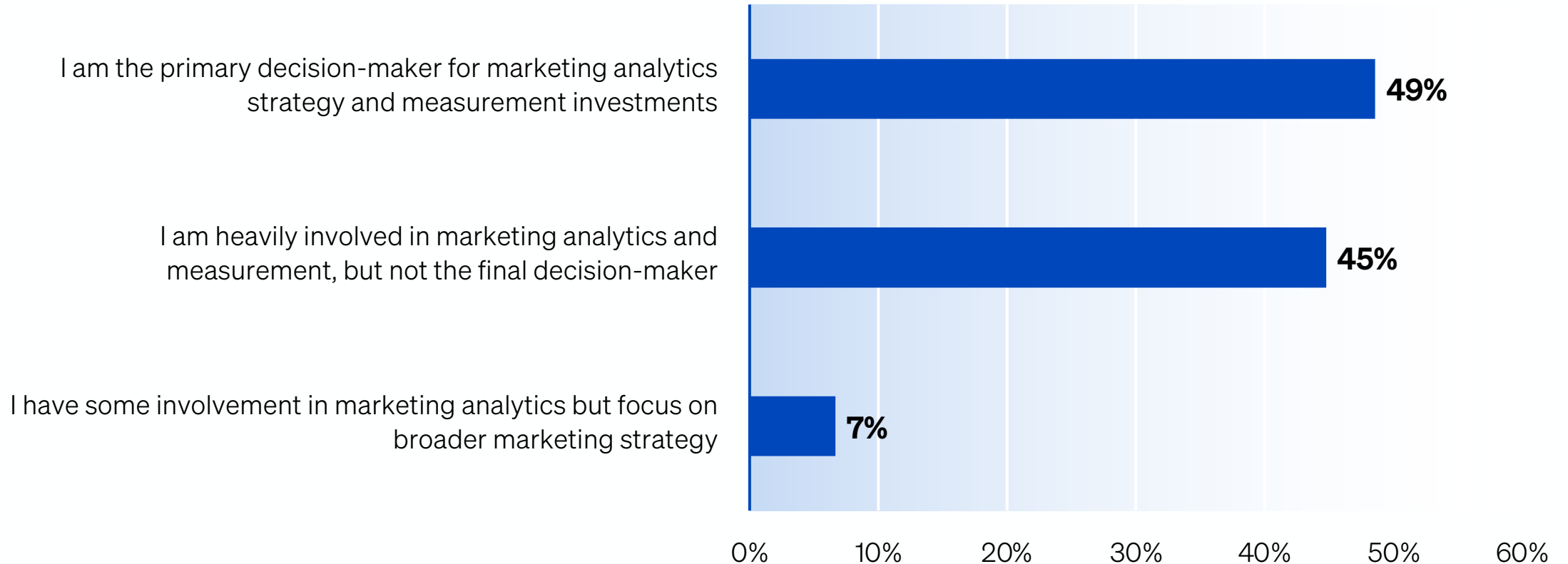


# Marketer Role & Seniority



Q: Which best describes your current title/level within your organization? (Select one)  
 Q: In which area best describes your role within the marketing department at your current company? (Select one)  
 N=103 Senior Marketers

# Analytics Responsibility



# The leading trade association for marketing.

The Marketing + Media Alliance (MMA) is the only trade association that unites the entire marketing ecosystem—CMOs, MarTech, AdTech, media, and marketer-supported companies—working collaboratively to architect the future of marketing while delivering growth today. Led by CMOs, the Alliance drives marketing change by tackling unanswered questions and challenging entrenched assumptions. We are unapologetically committed to science and inquiry, knowing that transformative impact only comes from constructively disrupting the status quo. Through peer-driven collaboration, the Alliance helps members aggressively adopt proven, science-backed practices. Each year, MMA Global invests millions in breakthrough research to deliver unassailable truths, actionable insights, and practical tools. By enlightening, empowering, and enabling marketers, we shape the future of marketing and propel business growth.



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