KNOWLEDGE CENTER

ALTT

AI Leadership Think Tank

State of Personalization

Annual Marketer Survey

November 2025

MMA Marketing + Media Alliance

.monks

EY



Foreword

As we enter 2025, personalization is more critical—and more urgent—than ever as brands grapple with mounting pressure to meet soaring consumer expectations for tailored, seamless experiences across every touchpoint.

The *2025 State of Personalization Report*, published by **MMA Global** in collaboration with **Monks** provides a comprehensive analysis of how marketing leaders are navigating personalization's complexities and charting its future. Drawing insights from over 115 senior marketing executives at large, established companies, this report captures a holistic view of personalization: its adoption, execution (manual vs. automated), measurement challenges, leadership dynamics, and evolving trends in content personalization.

As the findings reveal, the push for personalization is ambitious and widespread, but progress is uneven—marked by both promising advancements and persistent roadblocks. Many organizations report progress, but significant gaps remain in scaling efforts and accurately measuring ROI.

CMO leadership continues to be a critical driver of success because of higher investments in advanced data infrastructure, AI, and internal capabilities—as well as a stronger culture of collaboration and integration. And yet, automation gaps persist, with many marketers still relying heavily on manual processes despite having ambitious personalization goals. As demand for personalized content grows, especially across social platforms, marketers face increasing pressure to scale their efforts efficiently.

Many are turning to AI and enhanced data infrastructure to overcome these challenges, but concerns about quality, consistency and resources remain obstacles to full-scale automation.

These findings underscore a critical reality: To unlock personalization's full potential, marketing leaders must strengthen leadership, and elevate their data and technology capabilities. This report offers marketing leaders strategic insights and benchmarks to better understand the current state of personalization and where it is headed.

As organizations continue to enhance their data, technology, and talent, those who embrace innovation and strong leadership will be best positioned to deliver effective, scalable personalization.

KNOWLEDGE CENTER
ALTT
AI Leadership Think Tank

Executive Summary

Three themes emerge:

01 **The Personalization Gap:**
Ambitious aspirations, early results, manual execution

02 **The focus on content:**
Demand for content personalization surges, but scaling remains elusive

03 **Building the capability:**
CMO leadership accelerates personalization maturity

.monks EY MMA
Marketing + Media Alliance

KNOWLEDGE CENTER
ALTT
AI Leadership Think Tank

01 The Personalization Gap: Ambitious aspirations, early results, manual execution

Over 60% of marketing organizations claim to have established personalization capabilities, but these efforts remain heavily anchored to familiar channels like social media (61%) and email (59%). Ambitions to scale personalization are evident, with early signs of success—marketers report an average campaign lift of approximately +24% from personalization efforts, and many anticipate significant future gains.

Yet, execution continues to fall short. Despite ambitious goals, personalization efforts remain fragmented and overly reliant on manual processes. More than half (52%) of marketers still depend on hand-crafted creative assets, while even advanced marketers (60%) manually adjust personalized content delivery. This dependence on manual processes highlights a persistent gap between aspiration and reality—an inefficiency that stifles scalability, agility, and the ability to fully capitalize on personalization's potential.

.monks EY MMA
Marketing + Media Alliance

KNOWLEDGE CENTER
ALTT
AI Leadership Think Tank

02 The focus on content: Demand for content personalization surges, but scaling remains elusive

The push for personalized marketing content is intensifying, particularly across social platforms where demand continues to soar. However, scaling content personalization remains a significant challenge, with video cited as the most difficult format to tailor effectively. As brands strive to meet this growing demand, many content tasks are insourced (i.e. strategy, distribution, etc.), with actual content creation being a notable exception, where most marketers are experimenting with AI tools, but still maintain both insourcing and outsourcing workflows.

To bridge this gap, advanced marketers are increasingly leveraging AI tools for visuals, text generation, content adaptation, and repurposing across channels. However, scaling content creation remains constrained by existing resources and processes. Addressing this challenge will require a multifaceted approach: investing in new content capabilities, particularly AI (52%), upskilling talent (46%), and enhancing data infrastructure (41%).

.monks EY MMA
Marketing + Media Alliance

KNOWLEDGE CENTER
ALTT
AI Leadership Think Tank

03 Building the capability: CMO leadership accelerates personalization maturity

Improving data integration and quality, scaling content personalization, leveraging AI, and enhancing ROI measurement are top priorities for most companies as they work to advance their personalization capabilities. Within this context, strong executive ownership is a critical success factor in personalization initiatives.

In half of surveyed companies, the Chief Marketing Officer directly leads the personalization strategy—and these CMO-led organizations tend to invest more in data and technology. Nearly 67% of CMO-led firms have more advanced internal data management systems, compared to 53% of organizations without CMO leadership.

Importantly, CMO sponsorship also correlates with greater cross-team collaboration and integration in personalization efforts. This suggests that when marketing's top leader champions personalization, it drives a more data-driven culture and cohesive execution, fast-tracking the organization's personalization maturity.

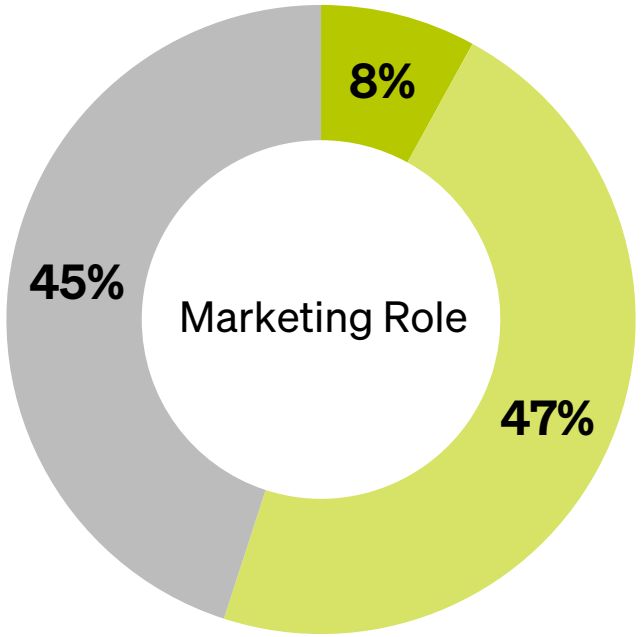
.monks EY MMA
Marketing + Media Alliance

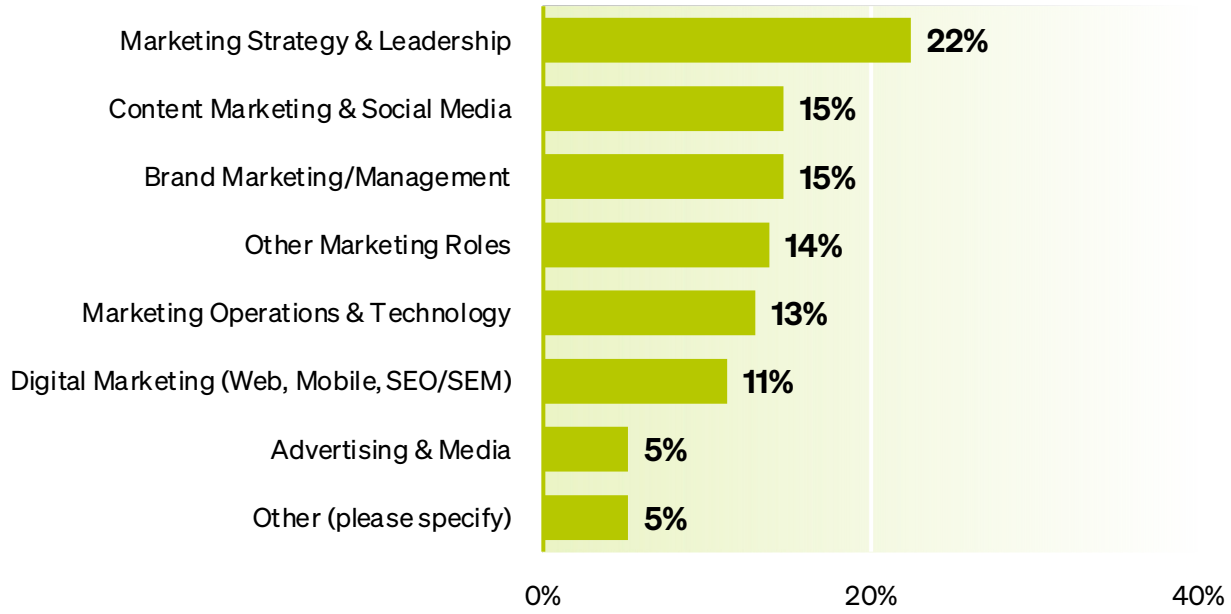
KNOWLEDGE CENTER
ALTT
AI Leadership Think Tank

Study Methodology

.monks EY MMA
Marketing + Media Alliance

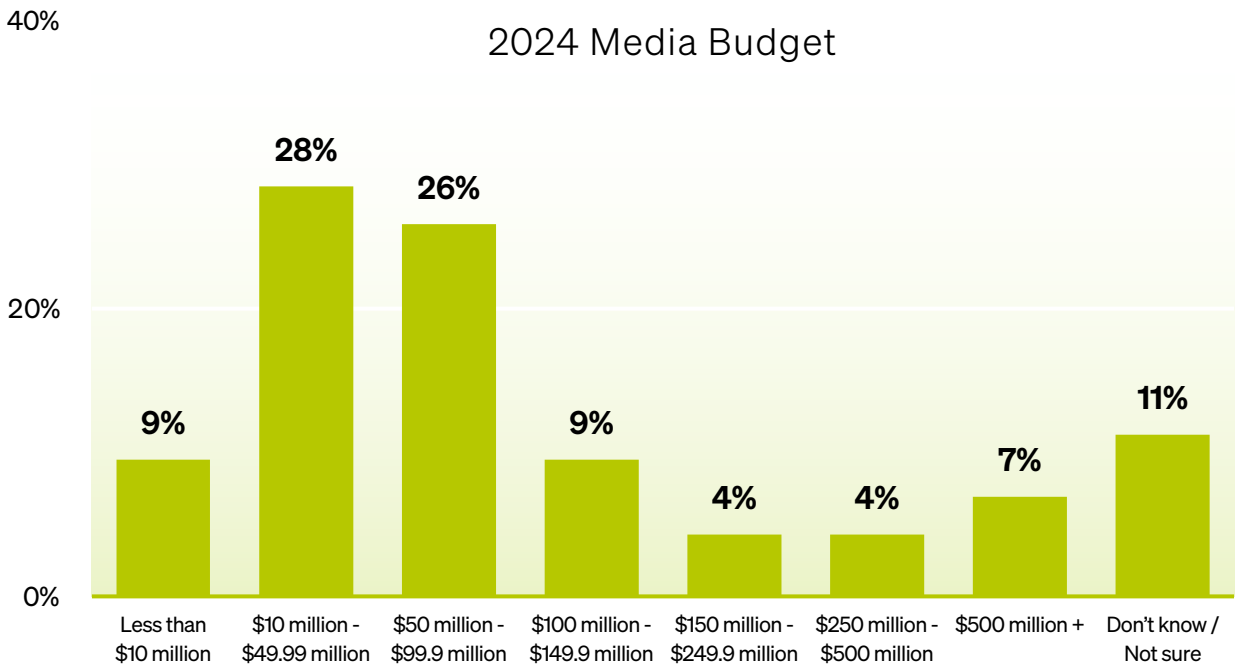
The 2025 State of Personalization includes perspectives from over 115 Senior Marketers involved in the personalization process:

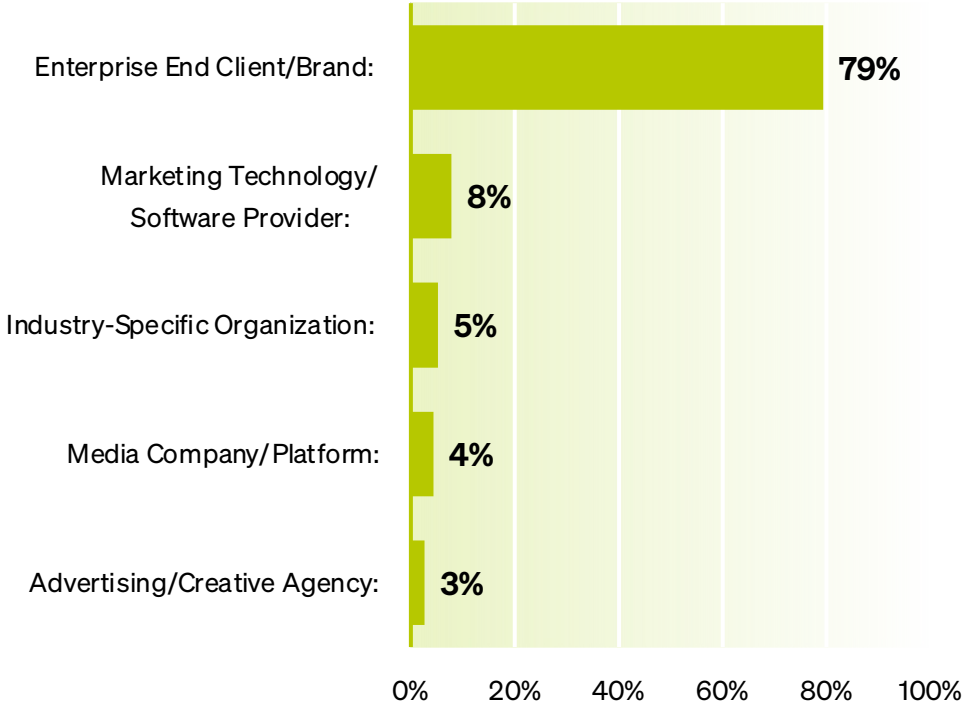




C-Suite Executives EVP/SVP/VP Senior Teammates

The 2025 State of Personalization includes perspectives from over 115 Senior Marketers from large, established companies:





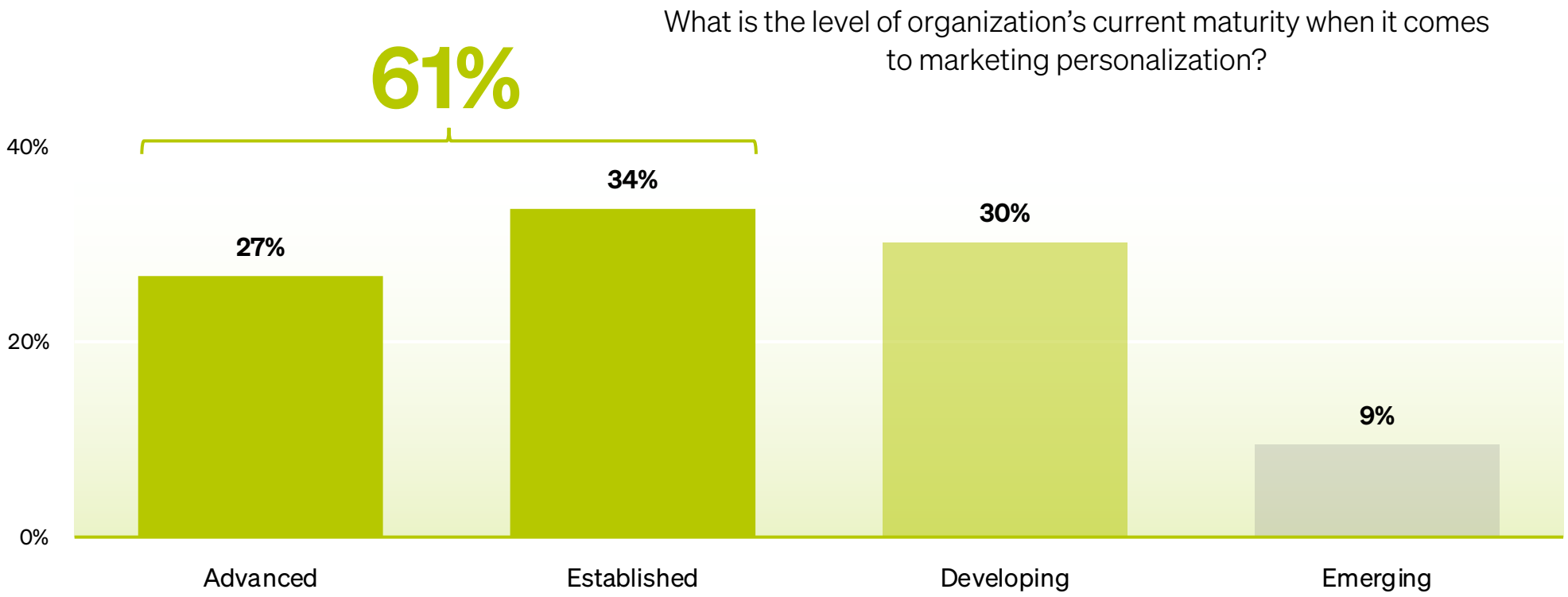
KNOWLEDGE CENTER
ALTT
AI Leadership Think Tank

01

Overall State of Personalization

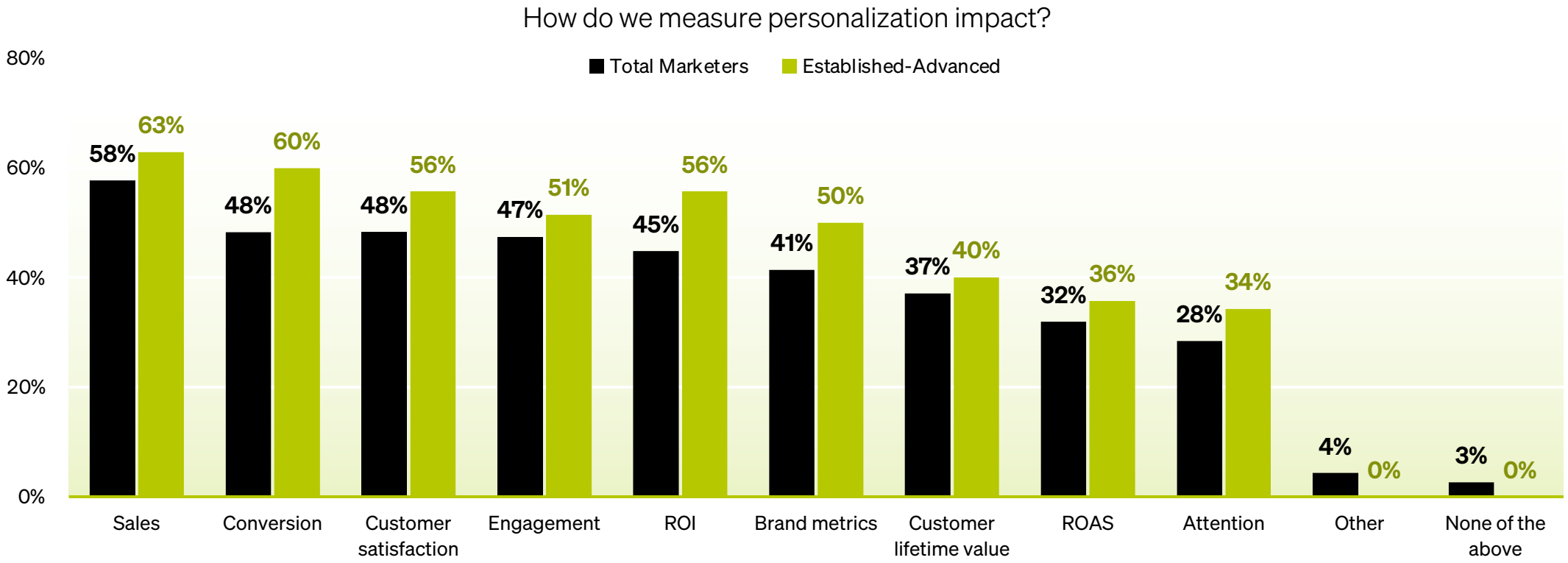
.monks EY MMA
Marketing + Media Alliance

61% of marketers claim to have established personalization capabilities



Q. What is the level of organization's current maturity when it comes to marketing personalization?
N=116 Senior Marketers

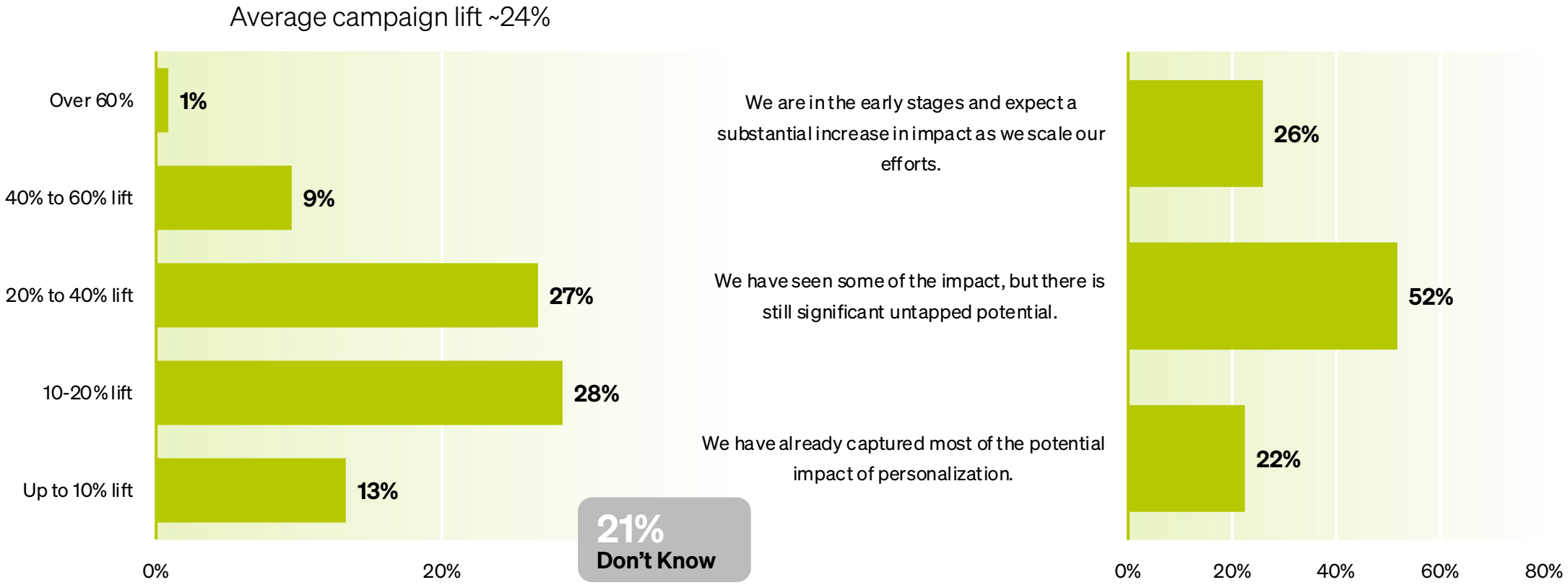
Organizations are becoming more focused on proving the true impact of personalization on sales, as their efforts mature



Q. For which of the following metrics do you have experiment-based evidence demonstrating the impact of your personalization initiatives? We have observed improvements in: (Select all that apply)
N=116 Senior Marketers
N=70 Established/Advanced Personalization Marketers

KNOWLEDGE CENTER
ALTT
AI Leadership Think Tank

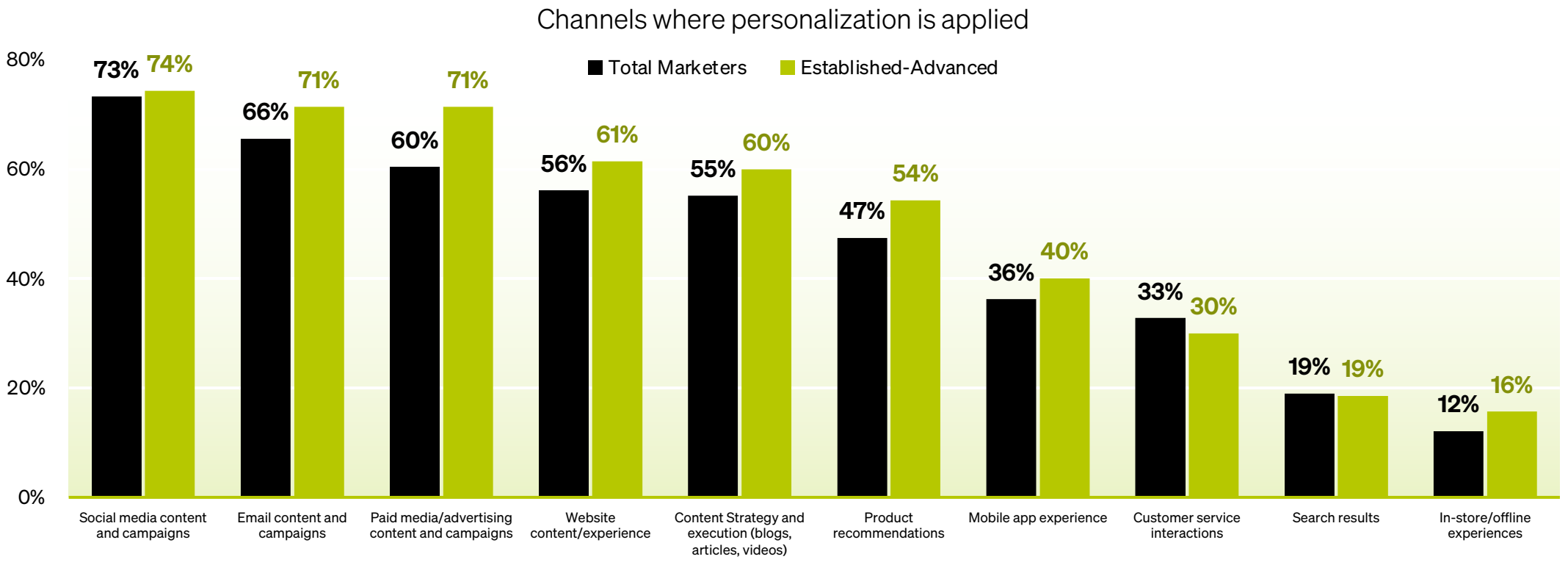
Marketers see early signs of impact (~+24%) from personalization and expect significant more upside



Q. What is the average campaign lift that you observe when it comes to the outcomes that you are measuring, that is attributed to your personalization efforts? Q. How do your results so far compare with your expectations about the ultimate impact that personalization can have on your marketing efforts?
N=116 Senior Marketers N=70 Established/Advanced Personalization Marketers

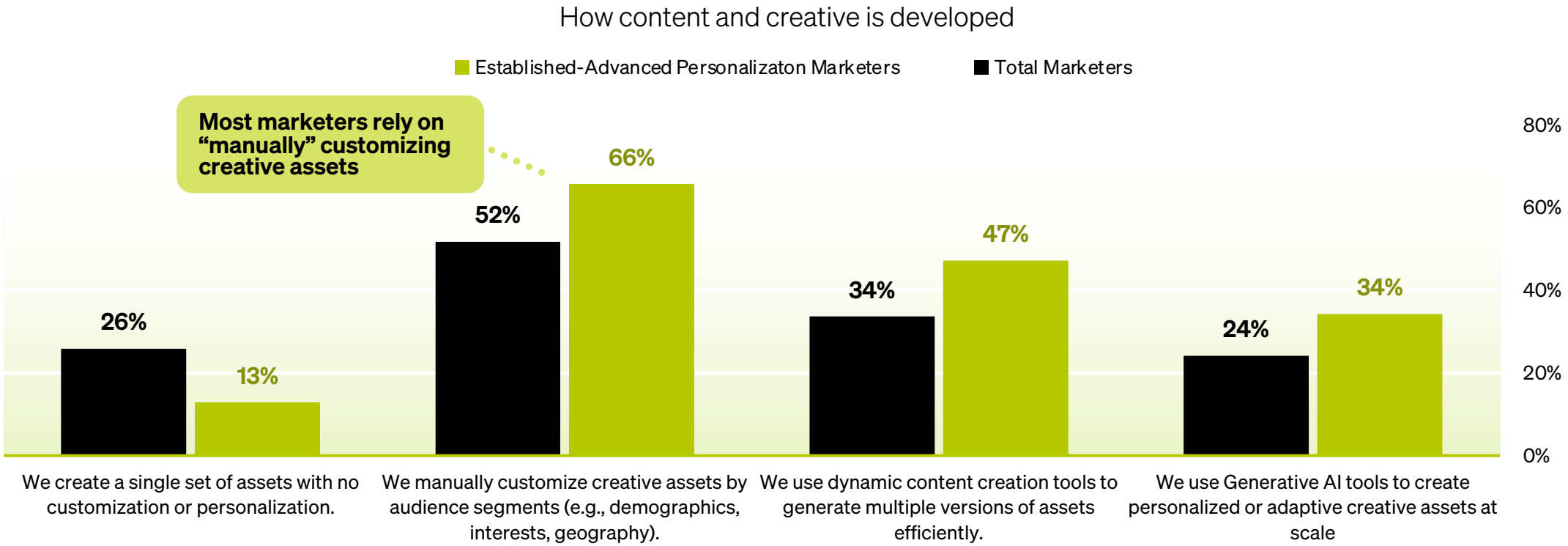
.monks EY MMA Marketing + Media Alliance

Social and Email is where most marketers start with personalization, but more advanced marketers expand to other touchpoints.



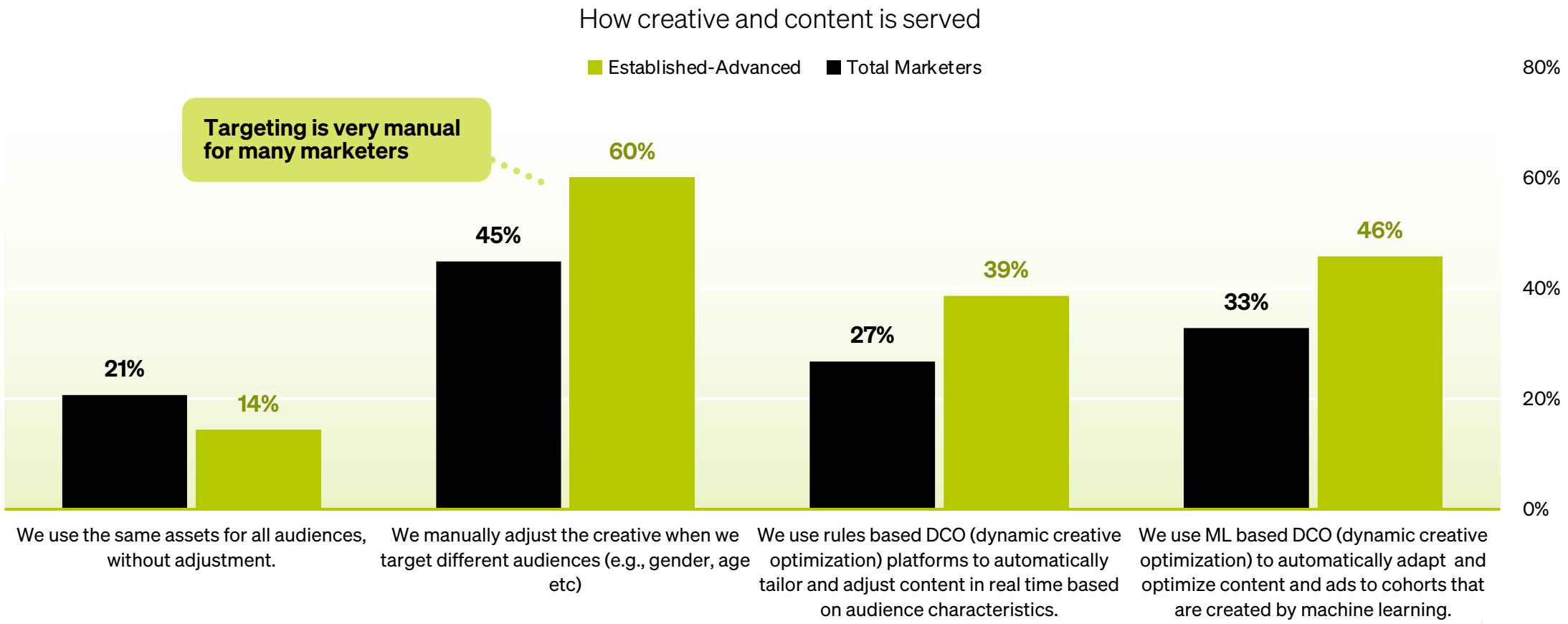
Q. Where is personalization currently applied in your organization? (Select all that apply)
N=116 Senior Marketers
N=70 Established/Advanced Personalization Marketers

Unfortunately, most marketers, even more “advanced” still rely on “manually” customizing creative assets



Q. To what extent does your organization use each of the following approaches when developing content and creative assets?
(Each row needs a response: Regular / Occasionally / Case-by-Case / Never)
N=116 Senior Marketers
N=70 Established/Advanced Personalization Marketers

Similarly, targeting remains very manual for many marketers



Q. To what extent does your organization use each of the following approaches when it comes to how you serve creative assets and content to maximize performance? (Each row needs a response: Regular / Occasionally / Case-by-Case / Never)
N=116 Senior Marketers
N=70 Established/Advanced Personalization Marketers

Summarizing:
State of Personalization

KNOWLEDGE CENTER ALTT AI Leadership Think Tank

Adoption of personalization

1. 60% of marketers claim to have established personalization capabilities, with social and Email being the areas where most marketers (over 2/3rds) start with personalization.
2. Most marketers (even more advanced) still rely on “manually” customizing creative assets
3. Similarly, targeting remains very manual for many marketers

Impact of personalization

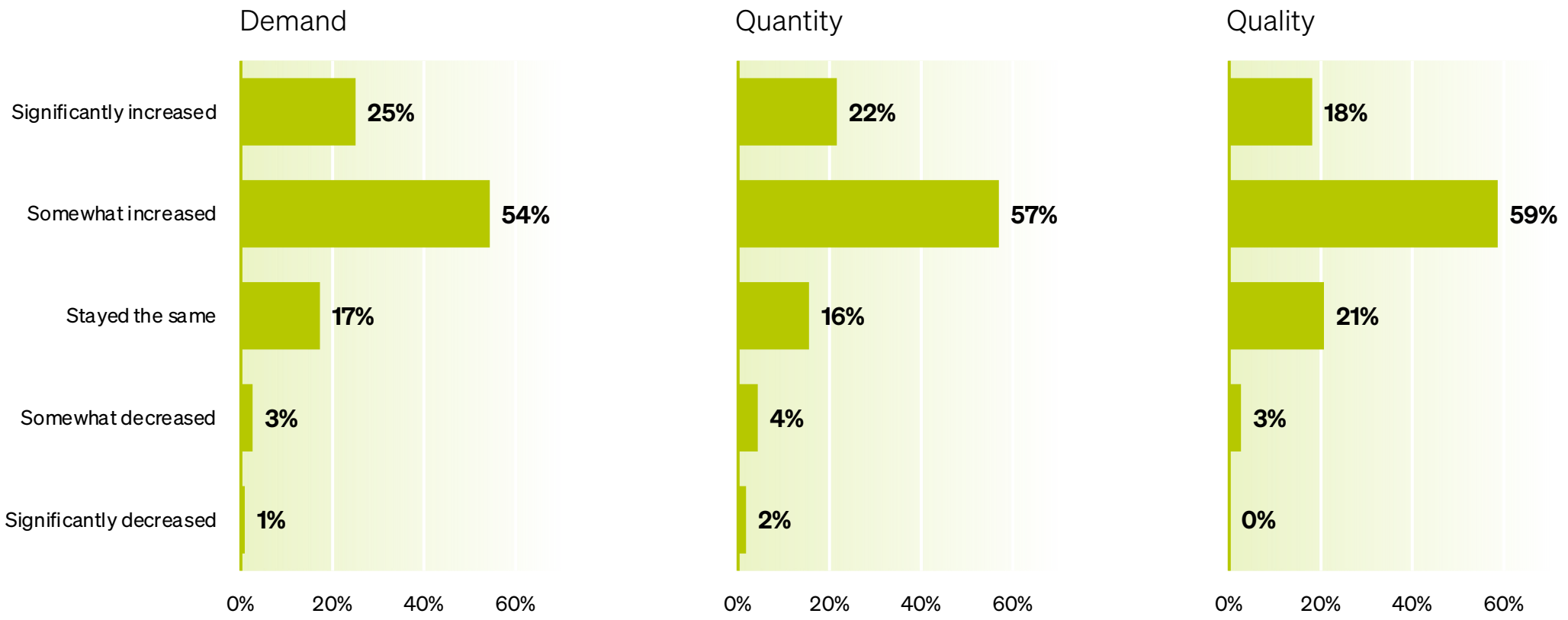
1. Organizations are becoming more focused on proving true impact of personalization on sales, especially as their personalization efforts mature
2. Marketers see early signs of impact (~+24%) from personalization and expect significant more upside

.monks EY MMA Marketing + Media Alliance

02

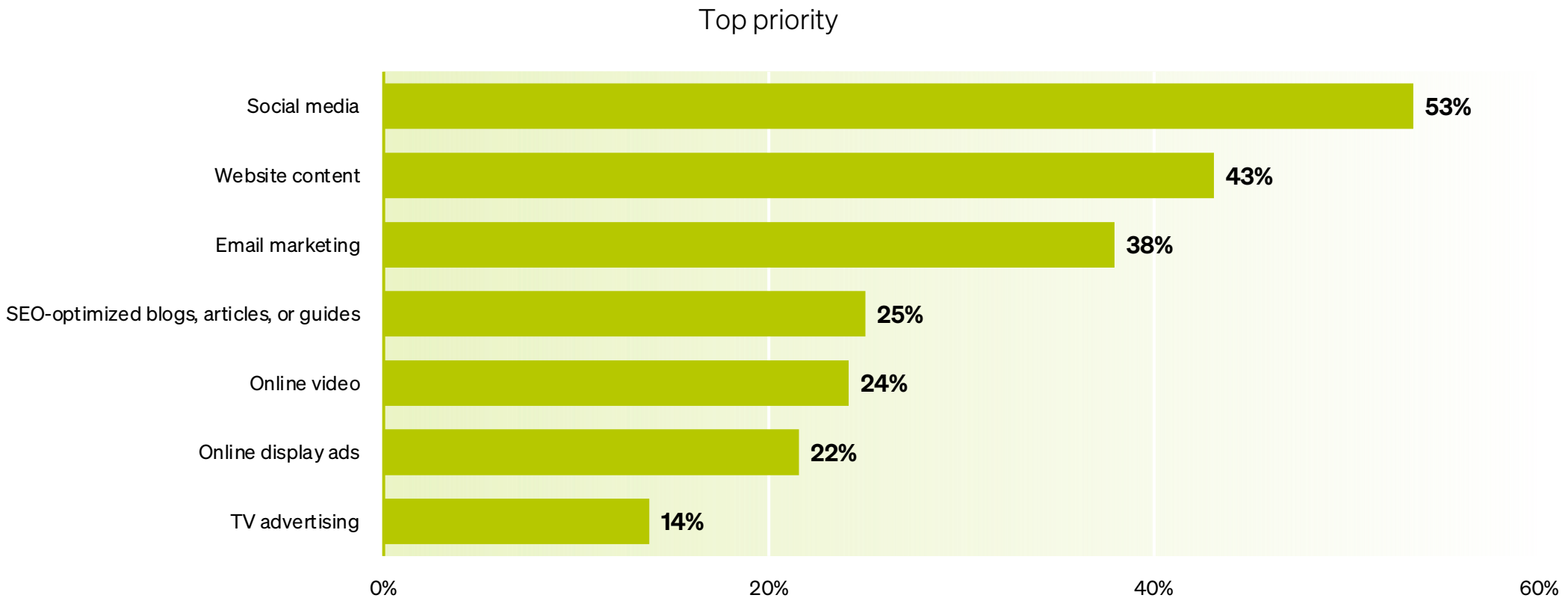
Content Personalization

Expectations for content creation continue to rise



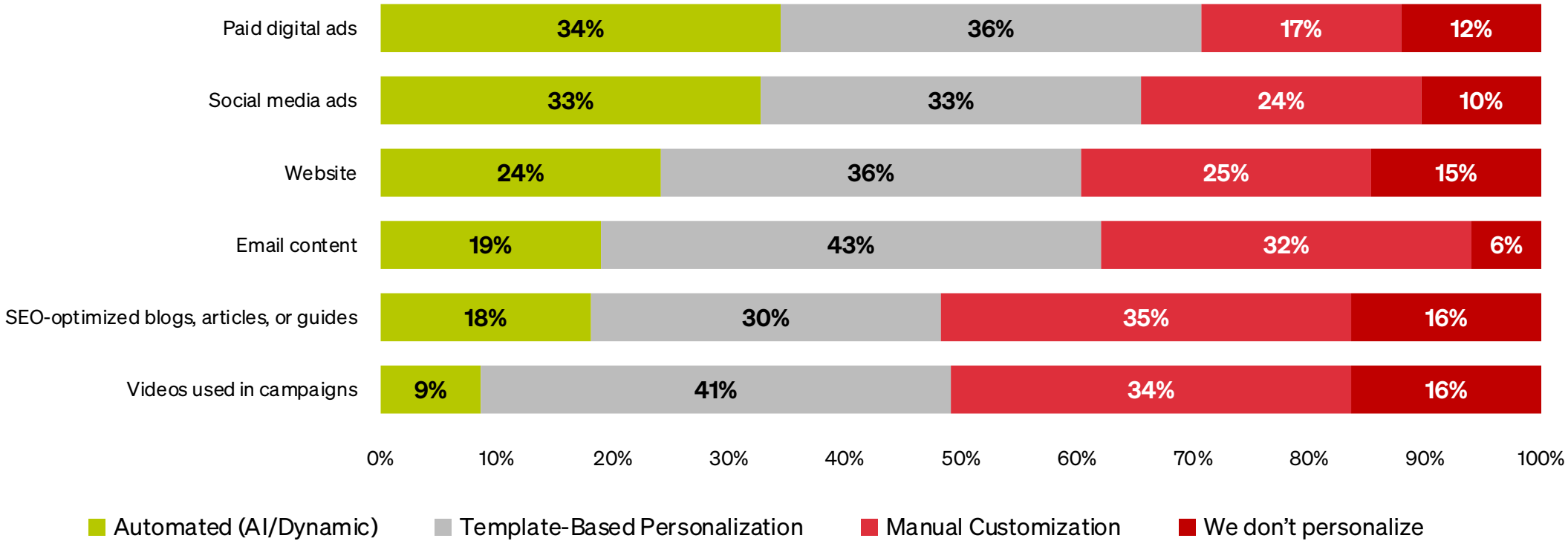
Q. How has the **demand**, **quantity**, and **quality** for content creation changed in the past year?
N=116 Senior Marketers

Content expectations also shift, with clear prioritization of social



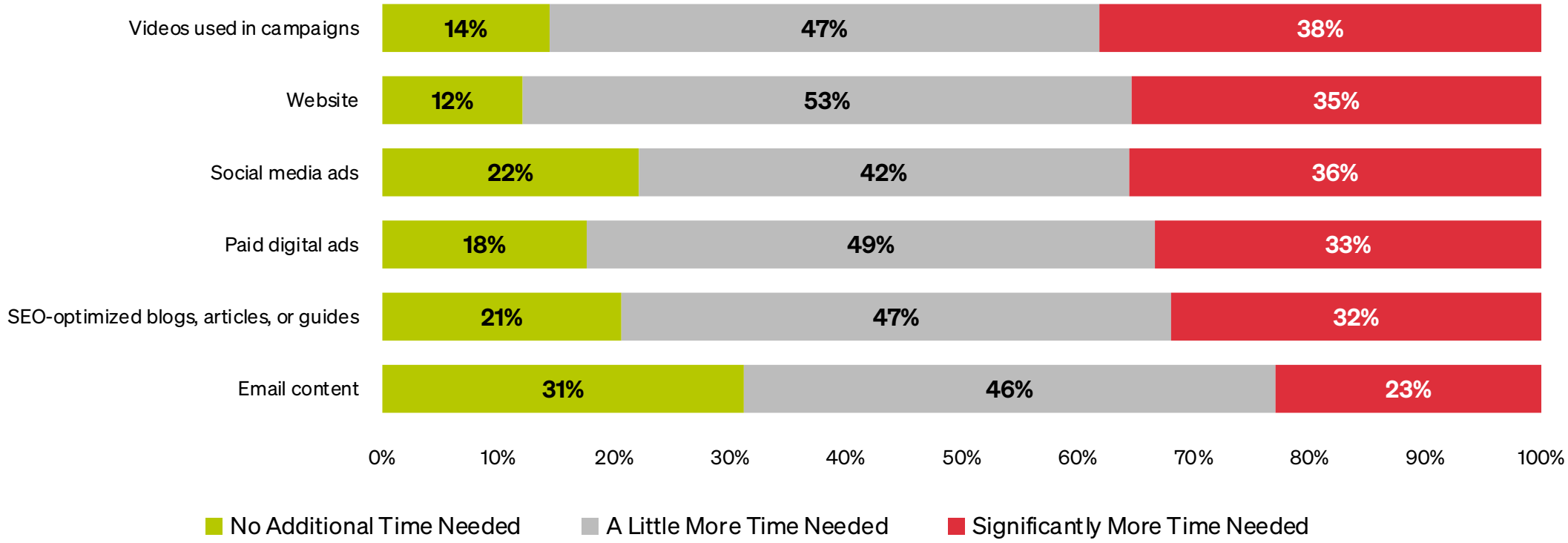
Q. How would you prioritize the following content types in order of priority for your marketing campaigns and initiatives?
N=116 Senior Marketers

Overall, marketers have a long way to go to automate content customization, especially in videos



Q. For each of the following content types, how does your organization typically/mostly approach personalization? Please check what you typically/mostly do.
N=116 Senior Marketers

With that in mind, customization adds time based on current capabilities

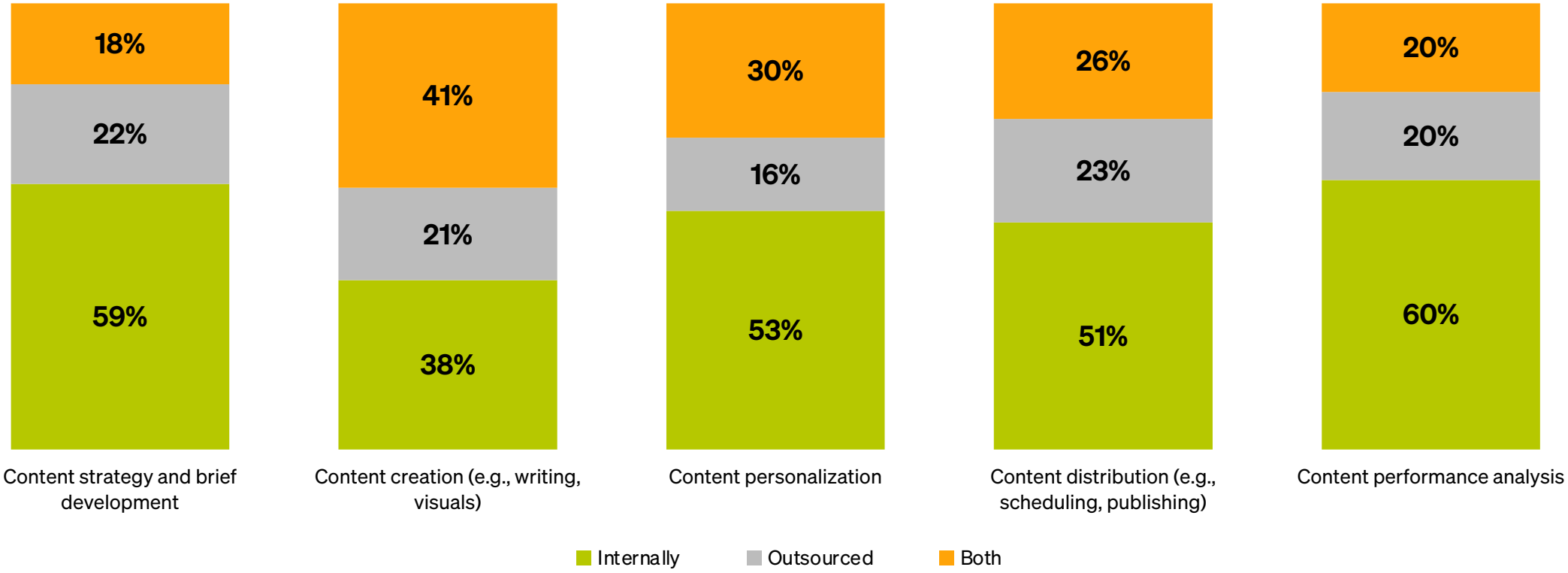


Q. For each type of content in your campaigns, indicate whether your organization needs more time to create personalized versions, compared to producing non-personalized content.
N=114 Senior Marketers

In summary: Social ads are a big priority and have the highest level of customization

	Digital ads	Social ads	Website	Email	Blogs	Videos
Priority	Medium	High	High	High	Medium	Medium
Customization approach	AI and templates	AI and templates	AI, templates and manual	Manual and templates	Manual and templates	Manual and templates
Time needed	Average	Average	More than average	Less than average	Average	More than average

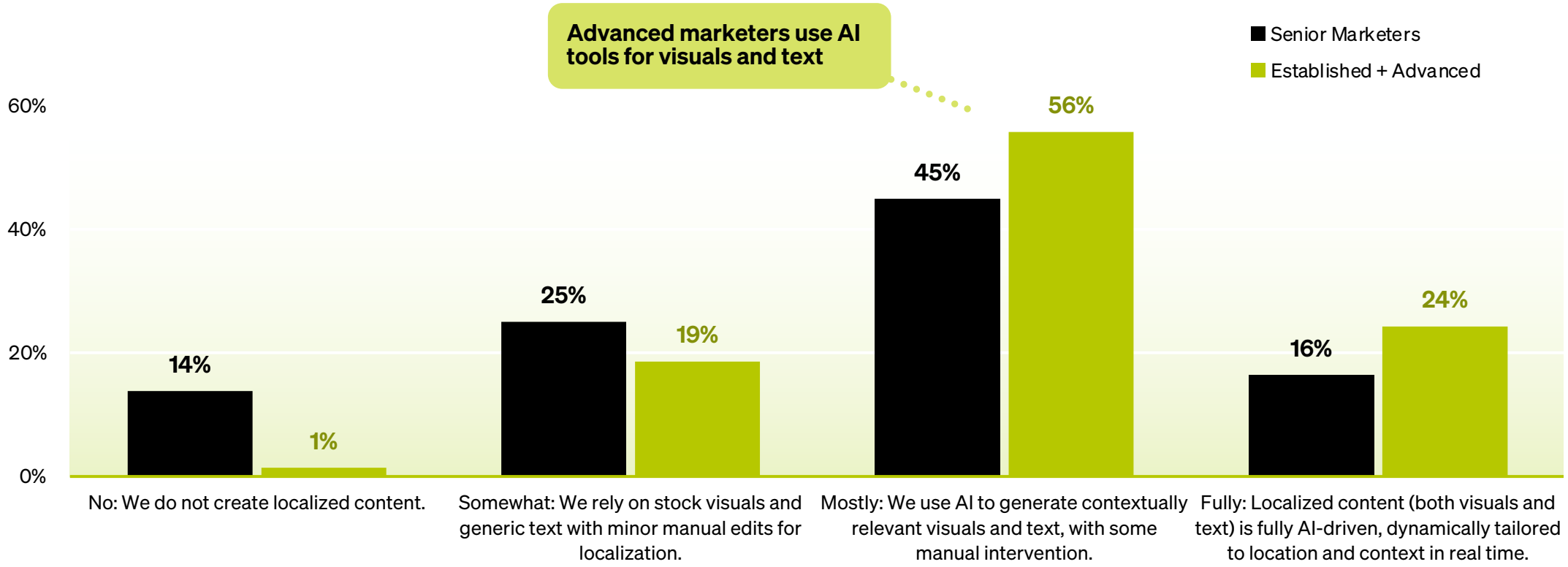
Most tasks are insourced, with the exception of actual content creation where outsourcing also remains strong



Q. How are the following content-related tasks primarily managed in your organization?
Instructions: For each task, select whether it is primarily done internally, outsourced, or a mix of both
N=116 Senior Marketers

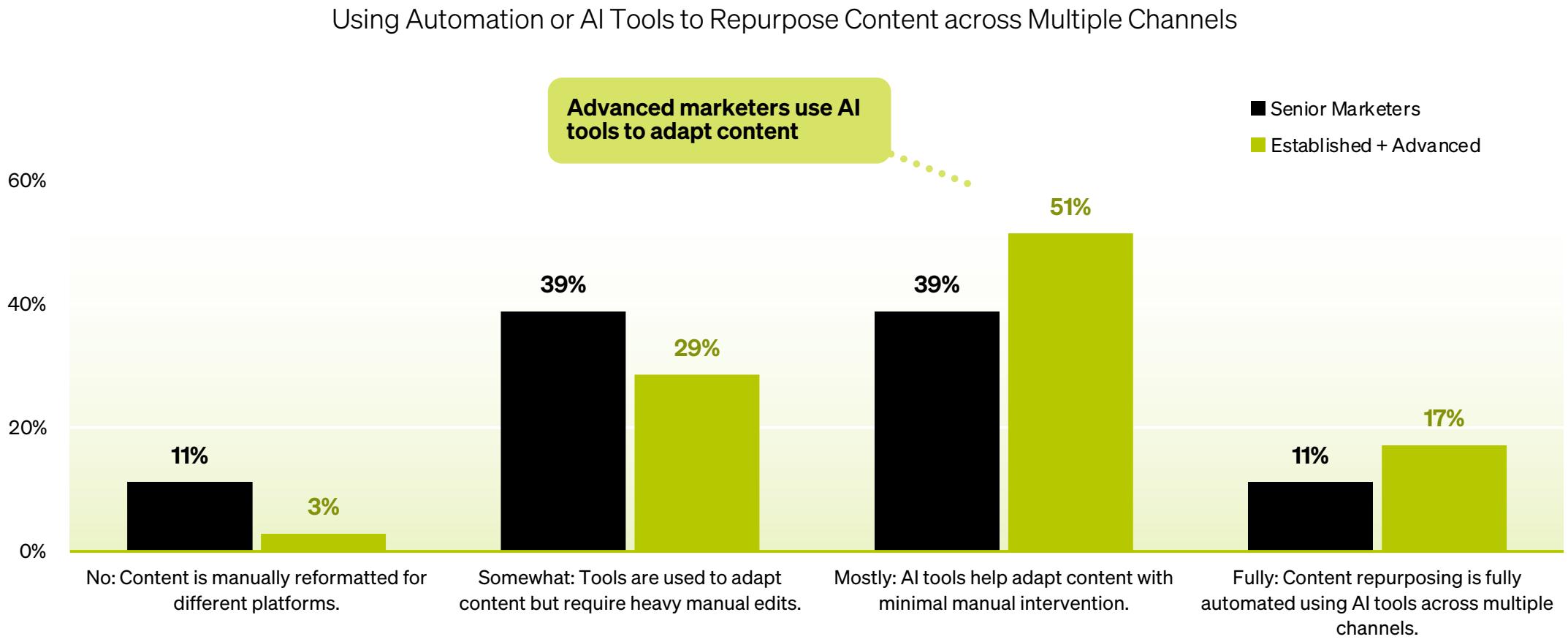
Advanced marketers are more likely to use AI tools for visuals and text...

Generating Localized Content for Websites or Promotional Materials, and How



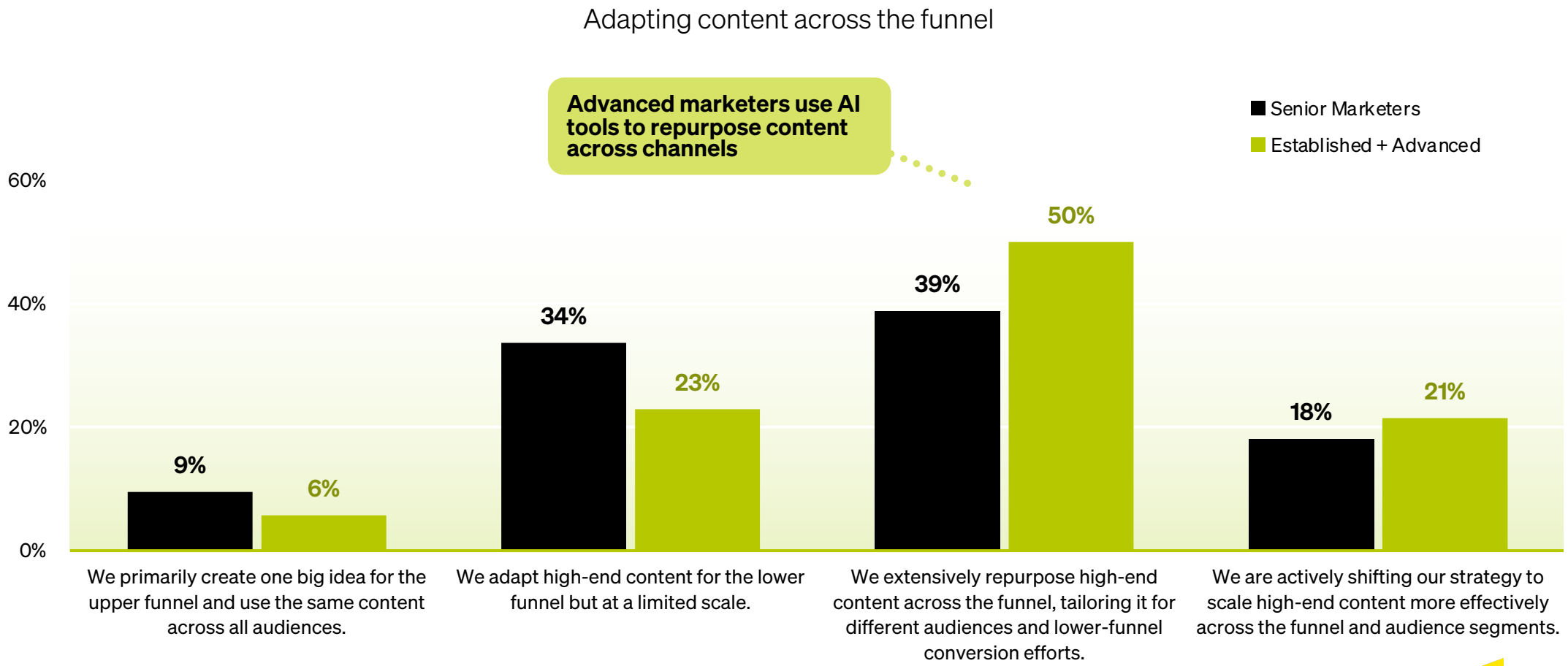
Q. Do you...
N=116 Senior Marketers
N=70 Established/Advanced Personalization Marketers

...also use AI tools to adapt content...



Q. Do you...
N=116 Senior Marketers
N=70 Established/Advanced Personalization Marketers

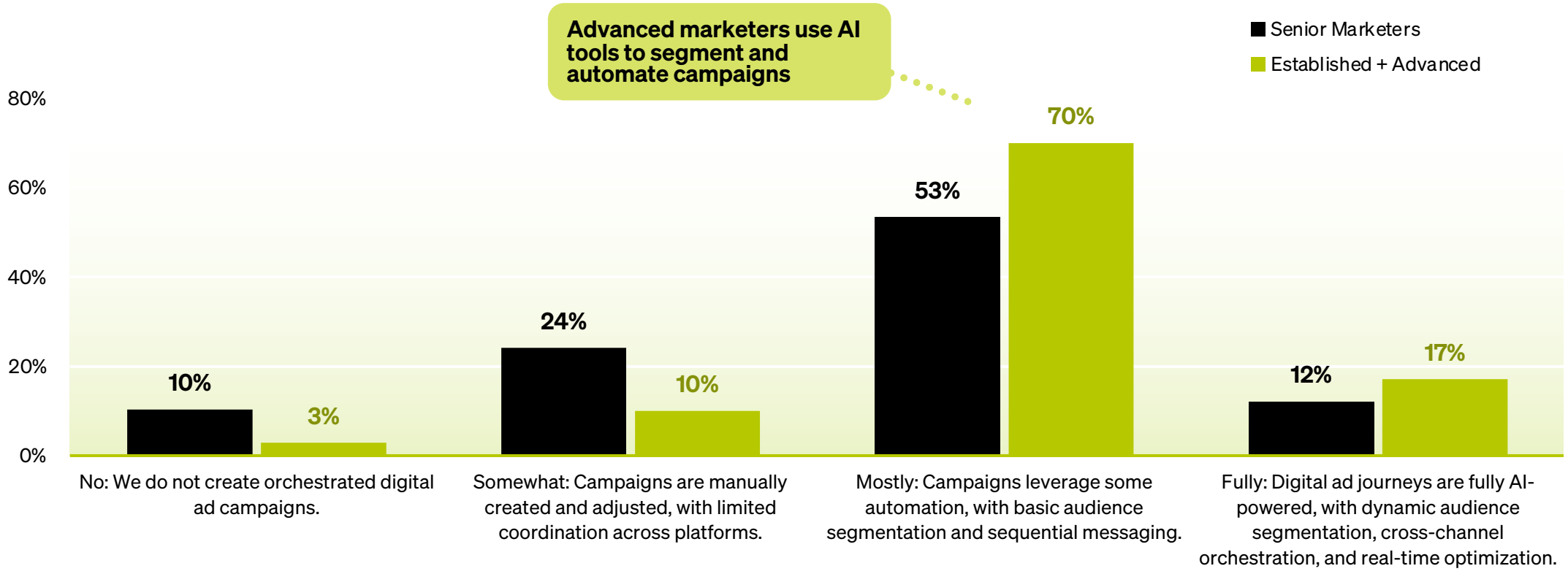
… use AI to repurpose content across channels…



Q. How are you approaching the use of high-end, high-working content across the marketing funnel and for different audience segments? (Select one)
N=116 Senior Marketers
N=70 Established/Advanced Personalization Marketers

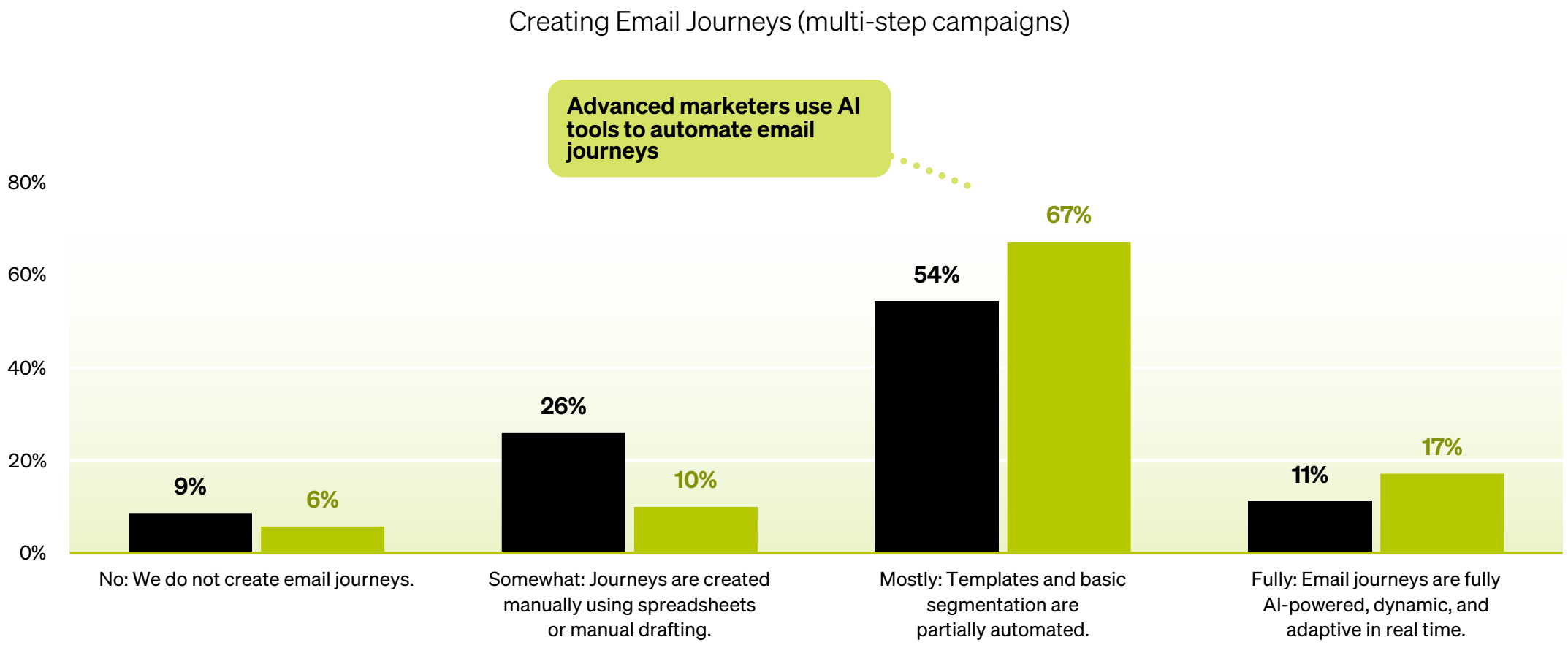
… but also segment and automate campaigns…

Orchestrating Multi-Step Digital Ad Campaigns, and How



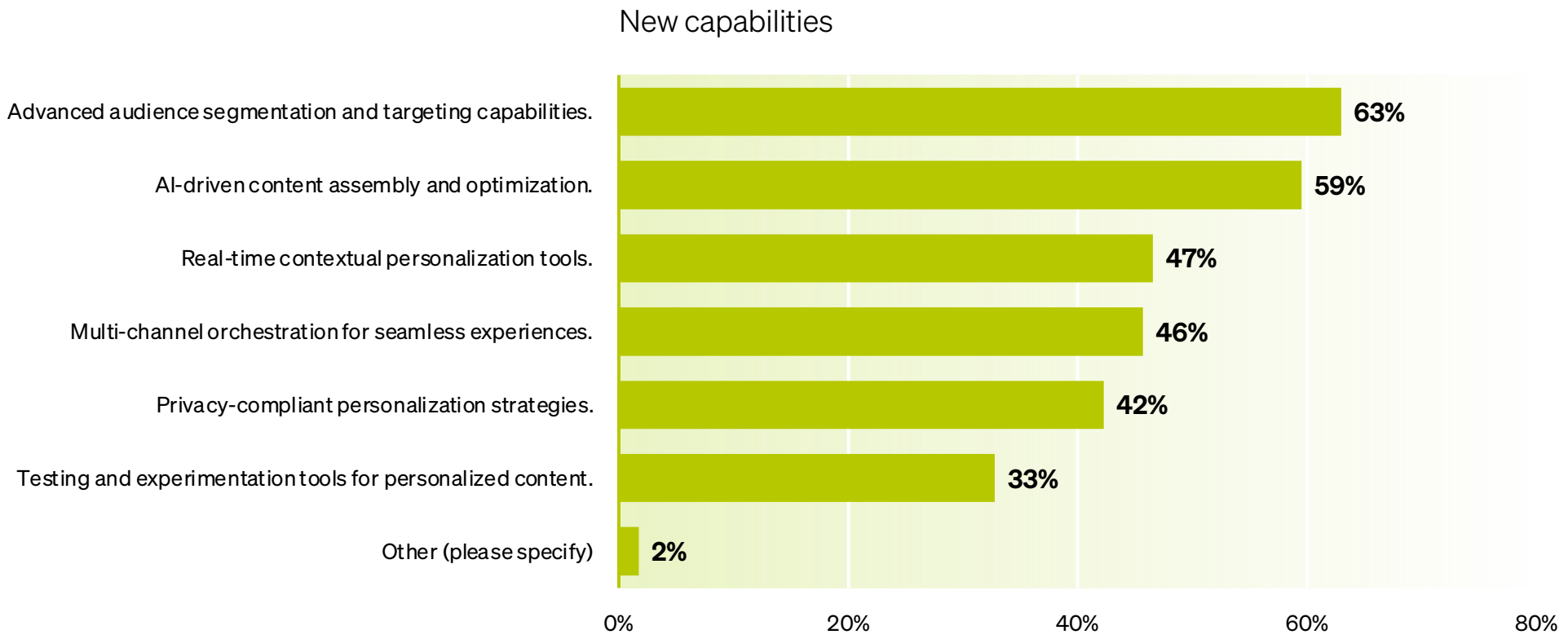
Q. Do you…
N=116 Senior Marketers
N=70 Established/Advanced Personalization Marketers

… as well as automate email journeys.



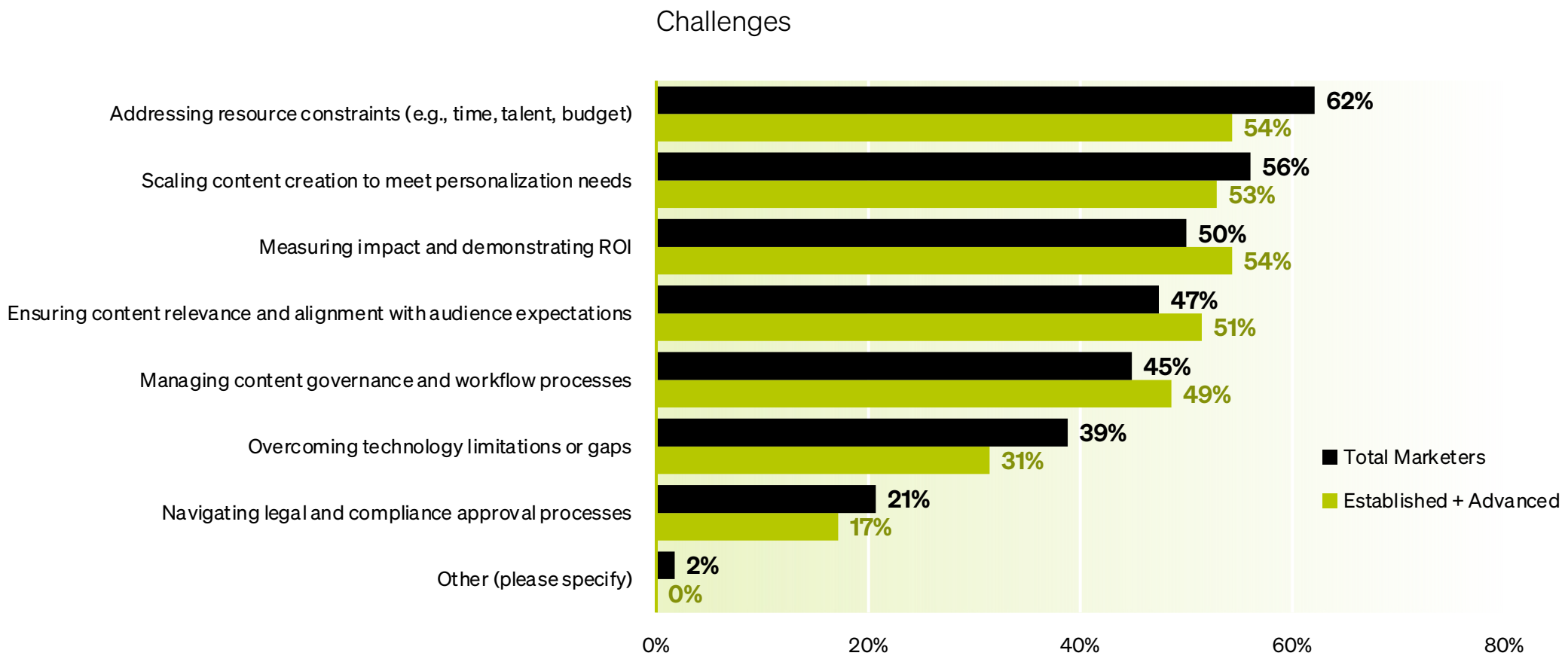
Q. Do you…
N=116 Senior Marketers
N=70 Established/Advanced Personalization Marketers

In the end, marketers acknowledge the need to reinforce both targeting and content creation capabilities



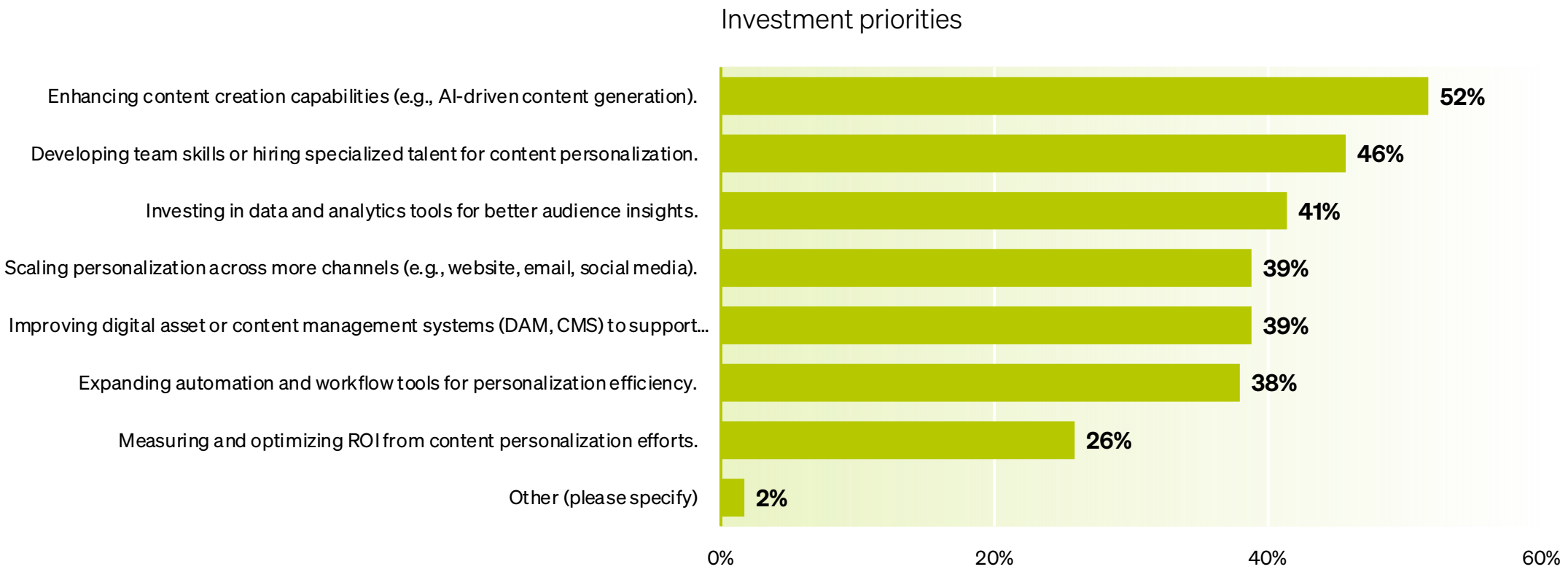
Q. Which new capabilities is your organization planning to develop to enhance content personalization? (Select all that apply.)
N=116 Senior Marketers

Unfortunately, scaling content creation under their current resource constraints remains the main challenge



Q. What are the biggest challenges your organization faces in implementing content personalization? (Select all that apply)
N=116 Senior Marketers

The solution will come from a combination of AI and upskilling of existing talent.



Q. What are your organization's top investment priorities for content personalization over the next 12 months? (Select up to 3 options.)
N=116 Senior Marketers

Summarizing: Content Personalization

KNOWLEDGE CENTER ALTT AI Leadership Think Tank

Present

1. Expectations for content creation continue to rise, but also shift, with clear prioritization of social
2. Overall, marketers have a long way to go to automate content customization, especially in videos. With current capabilities in mind, customization adds time and becomes a concern.
3. Most content tasks are insourced with the exception of actual content creation, where companies tend to experiment with both insourcing and outsourcing.
4. In line with this, advanced marketers use AI tools for visuals and text, content adaptation and repurposing across channels, as well as automation of delivery across channels.

Future

1. Marketers acknowledge the need to reinforce both targeting and content creation capabilities.
2. Scaling content creation under their current resource constraints remains the main challenge.
3. The solution will come from a combination of AI and upskilling of existing talent.

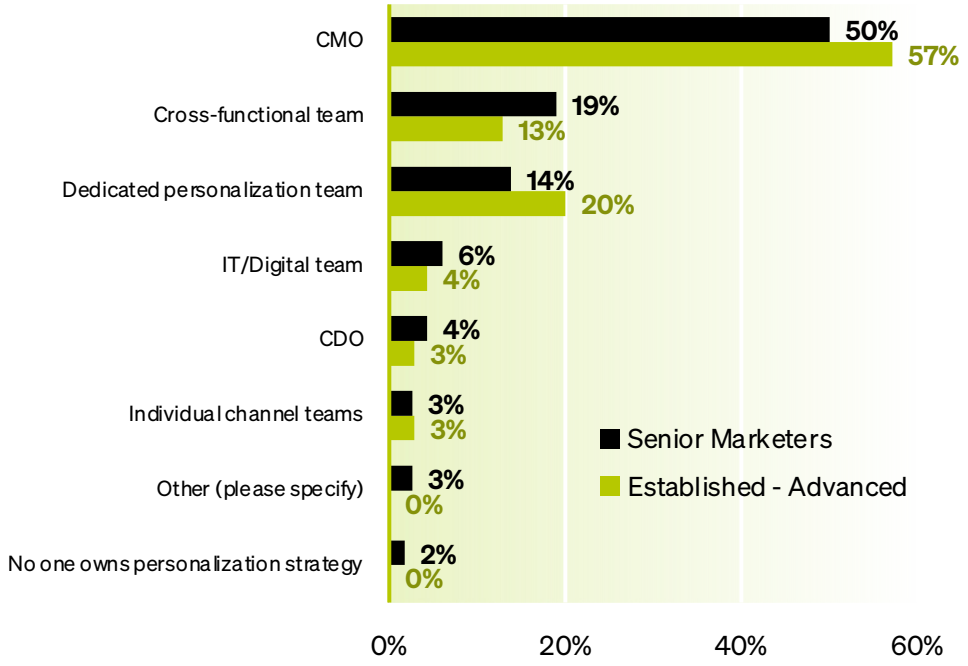
.monks EY MMA Marketing + Media Alliance

03

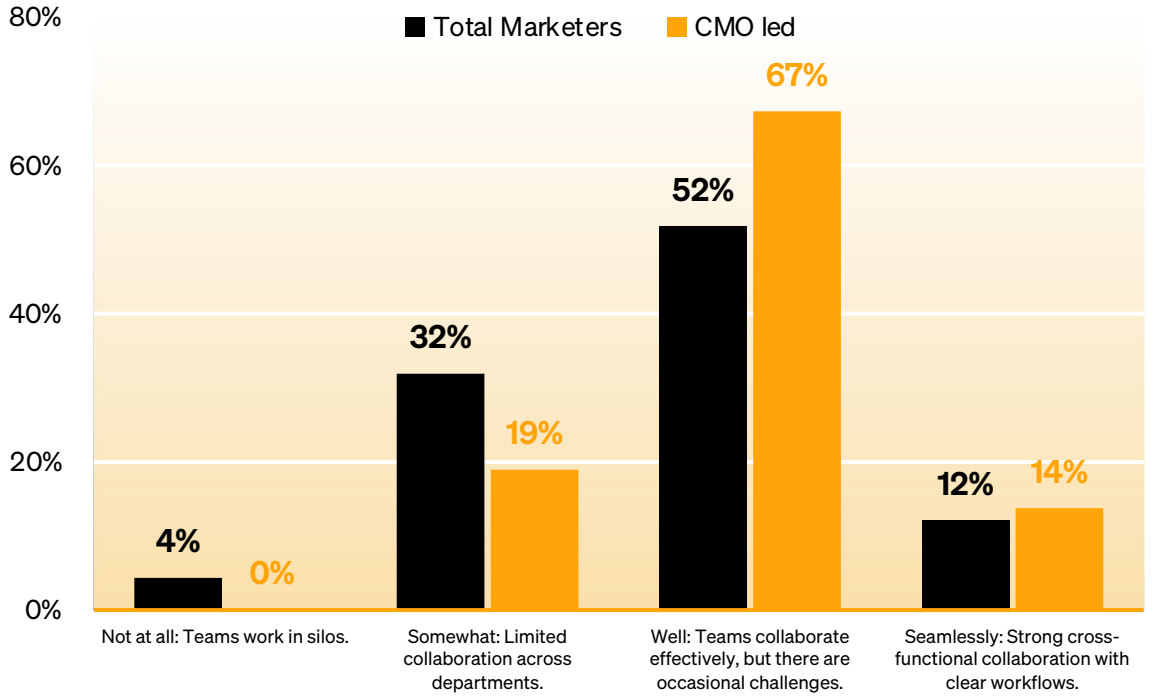
Building a Personalization Capability

Organization: CMOs lead personalization efforts in 50% of the companies and have a positive effect on team collaboration.

Personalization Ownership

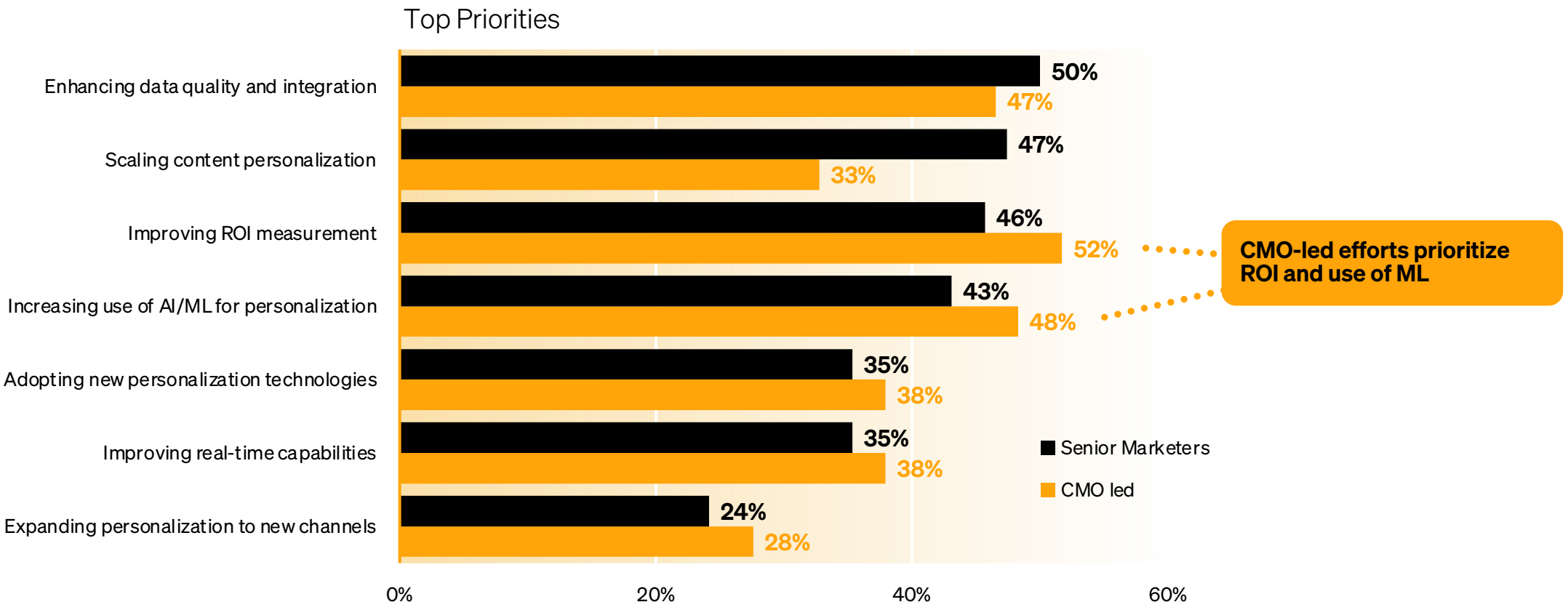


Team collaboration



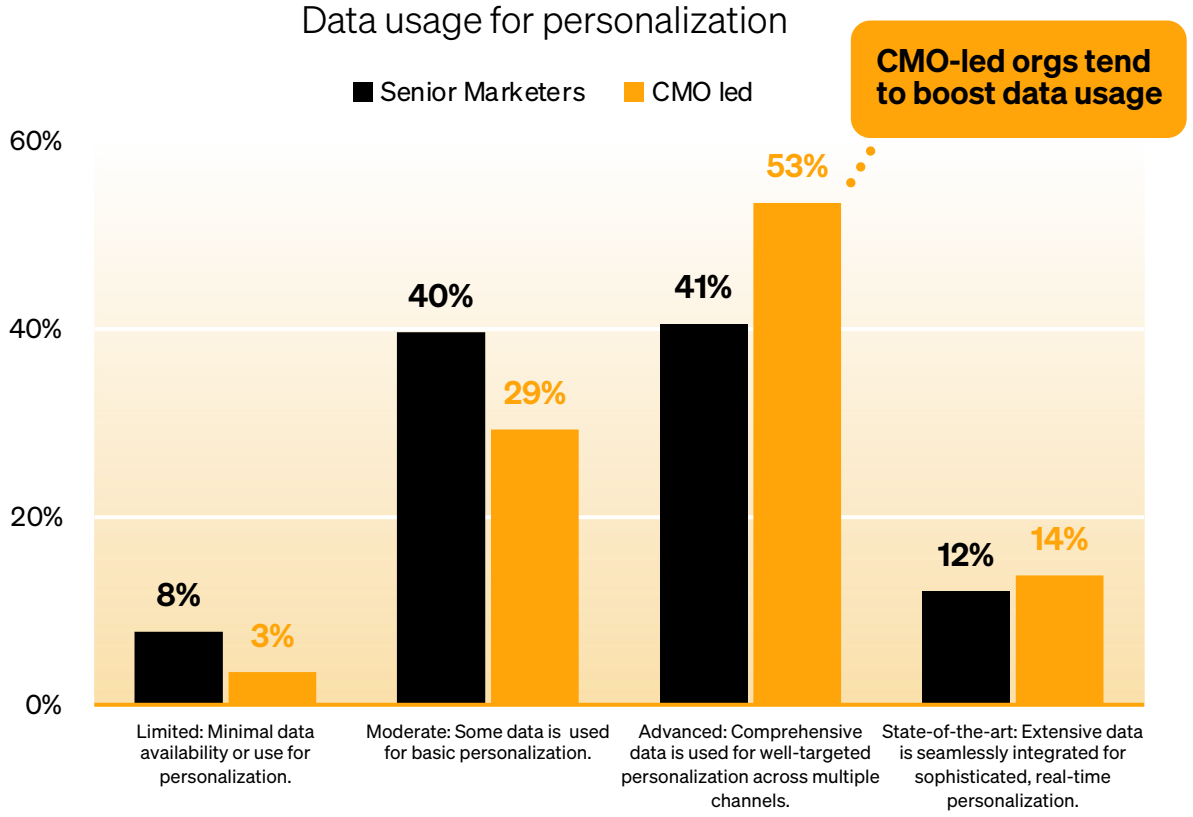
Q. Who has primary ownership of personalization strategy in your organization? (Select one)
Q. How well do teams collaborate on personalization efforts within your organization?
N=116 Senior Marketers
N=70 Established/Advanced Personalization Marketers
N = 58 CMO Ownership

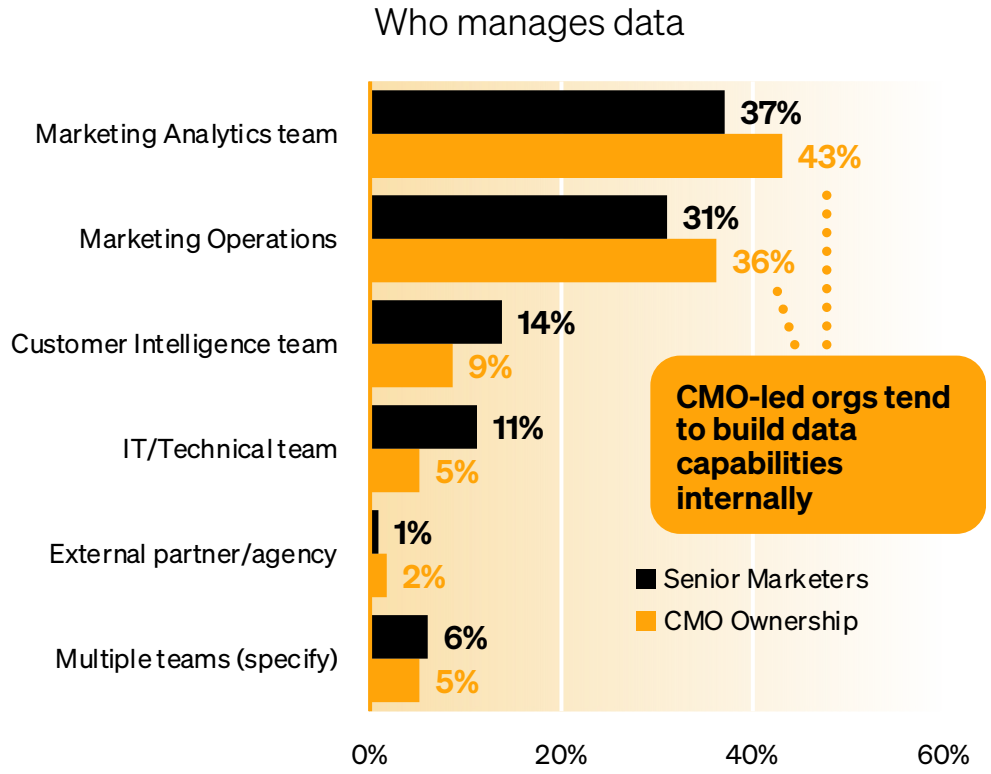
Priorities: Most organizations focus on data and content as the backbone for personalization. CMO-led efforts also prioritize ROI and use of ML



Q. What are your organization's top priorities for improving personalization over the next 12 months? (Select up to 3)
N=116 Senior Marketers
N = 58 CMO Ownership

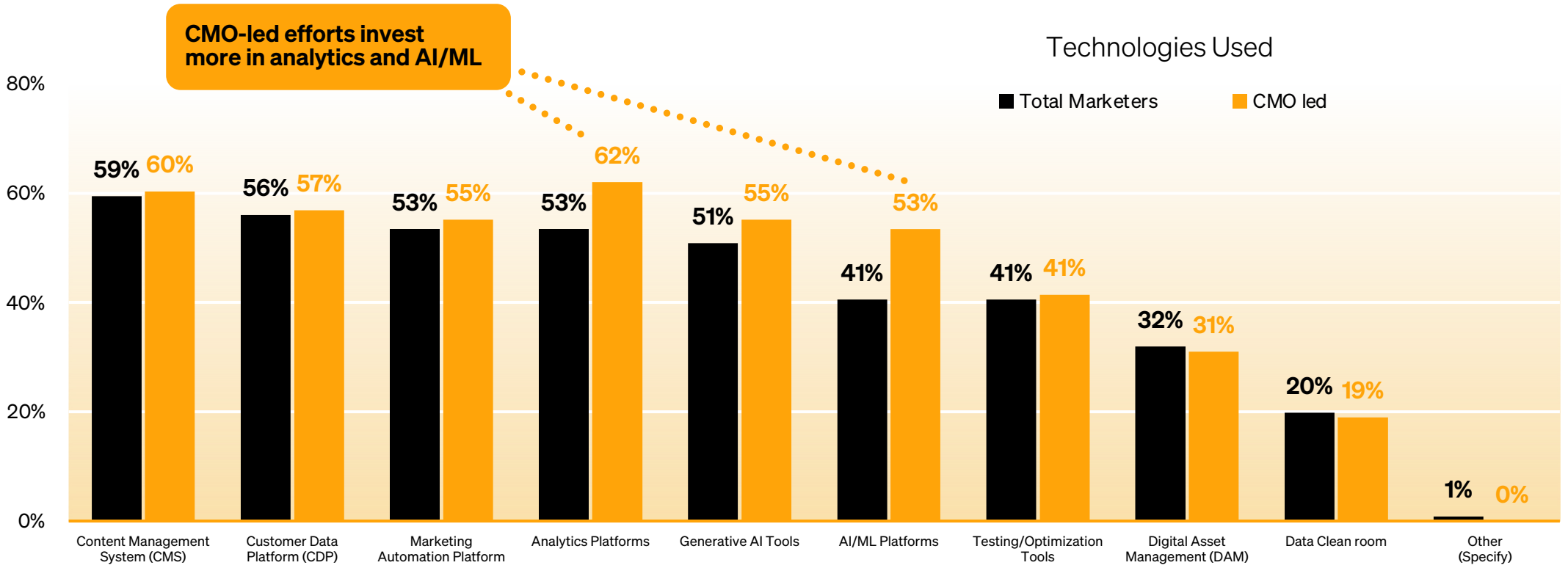
Data: More work is needed to advance data capabilities. CMO led orgs tend to build those capabilities internally and boost data usage





Q. How would you rate your organization's ability to effectively leverage customer data for personalization efforts?
Q. Who manages customer data for personalization initiatives?
N=116 Senior Marketers
N = 58 CMO Ownership

Tech Stack for personalization remains complex, with CMO led efforts investing more across the board, especially in analytics and AI/ML



Q. Which technologies does your organization currently use to support personalization? (Select all that apply)
N=116 Senior Marketers
N = 58 CMO Ownership

Summarizing:
Building a Personalization capability

KNOWLEDGE CENTER
ALTT
AI Leadership Think Tank

1. CMOs typically lead personalization efforts (50% of marketers) and have a positive impact on boosting collaboration among teams

2. Most organizations focus on data and content as their natural backbone for personalization. CMO-led efforts also prioritize ROI and use of ML

3. More work is needed to advance data capabilities. CMO led orgs tend to build those capabilities internally in marketing and boost data usage

4. Tech Stack for personalization remains complex, with CMO led efforts investing more across the board, especially in analytics and AI/ML.

.monks EY MMA
Marketing + Media Alliance

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.

MMA
Marketing + Media Alliance

MMA Member Organizations Include:



Learn more at mmaglobal.com


MMA
Marketing + Media Alliance