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eBook

## **Future-Facing B2B:**

How AI and a New Generation of Marketers Are Redefining the Game

*Insights From Madison Logic's 2025 Harris Poll on the Future of Marketing, Strategy, and the Rise of Digital-Native Leadership*

# Introduction:

## Evolving Strategies for a New Era of B2B

B2B marketing is at a pivotal crossroads, driven by both generational change and rapid technological advancement. The way brands connect with buyers is being fundamentally redefined, as new expectations, tools, and behaviors take hold.

According to new data from Madison Logic's 2025 Harris Poll Survey on the "Future of Marketing, Strategy, and the Rise of Digital-Native Leadership," nearly all marketing decision-makers (96%) are actively evolving their strategies in response to a combination of industry and marketplace forces. These include rising economic uncertainty, increasingly empowered and digitally savvy buyers, and the growing influence of AI-powered tools that are reshaping how marketers engage, measure, and operate.

Between these evolving dynamics, buyer behavior and expectations are shifting dramatically. Today's B2B audiences expect personalized, value-driven experiences across channels and devices. They're conducting independent research, consuming content on their own terms, and making decisions collaboratively as part of large, cross-functional buying committees. In response, marketers are moving away from one-size-fits-all campaigns and short-term lead gen tactics. Instead, they're embracing agile, data-informed approaches that emphasize multi-channel engagement, always-on brand presence, and relevant content delivery—whether that's a webinar, a podcast, or an ungated infographic on LinkedIn.

This eBook unpacks the survey's key findings and explores what they mean for marketers today—and how to stay ahead of what's coming next.

**96%** of marketing decision-makers are evolving their strategies

Driving much of this evolution is a generational shift that's influencing the B2B landscape from both sides. Millennial and Gen Z professionals are not only shaping purchase decisions as key members of buying committees—they're also leading innovation within marketing and advertising teams. These digital natives bring fresh perspectives to strategy development, content creation, and technology adoption. They're more willing to experiment with new channels, champion data-driven decision-making, and prioritize authenticity, transparency, and agility. Their fluency with emerging platforms and comfort with constant change makes them uniquely equipped to thrive in today's dynamic environment. In turn, they're redefining not just how B2B brands engage with buyers, but how modern marketing organizations are built, led, and measured.



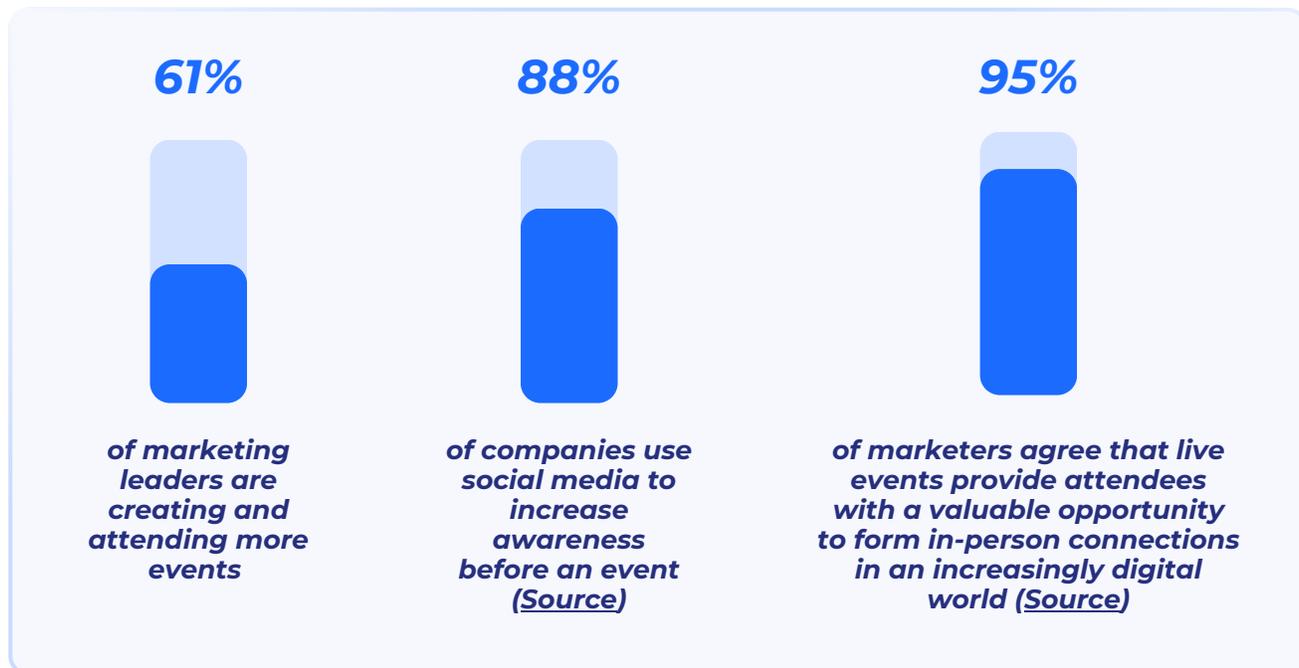
# Chapter 1: A Shift in Strategy—Driven by Disruption

The modern B2B buyer is digitally empowered, always connected, and increasingly expects the same seamless, personalized experiences they receive as consumers. They're conducting independent research, engaging across multiple channels, and relying on peer networks and digital content long before reaching out to sales. In this environment, traditional, linear marketing tactics no longer suffice. As a result, we're seeing leading B2B marketers recalibrating their strategies in three key ways.

## 1. Redefining Events as Scalable, Relationship-Driven ABM Touchpoints

Marketers are doubling down on event-based marketing—not just as one-off lead generation moments, but as immersive, relationship-building experiences that drive long-term engagement and influence across the buying committee.

This renewed focus on events reflects a significant evolution in B2B engagement strategy. Once viewed primarily as pipeline-fillers or end-of-funnel plays, events are now being reimaged as strategic, multi-purpose touchpoints—designed to educate, connect, and convert. According to Forrester research, the B2B event mix encompasses in-person, virtual, and hybrid formats with 58% of marketers looking to hold more small, hosted and owned in-person events—making this format the fastest-growing event type increasingly integrated into a broader, multi-channel ABM strategy.



Several forces are fueling this shift toward in-person events. The pandemic accelerated the adoption of digital event platforms, normalizing virtual engagement and expanding access to audiences that were once difficult to reach. At the same time, a collective sense of “Zoom fatigue” and digital overload has created renewed appetite for in-person interactions, particularly among

# 82%

of B2B event organizers rate their in-person events as very or somewhat effective in achieving their business objectives ([Source](#))

high-value prospects and buying committees seeking meaningful, human connection in a trust-driven sales process.

Madison Logic's Harris Poll Survey confirms this momentum with 61% of marketing leaders saying that they are creating and attending more events than ever before. This trend is particularly pronounced among millennial and Gen Z marketers, who see events not just as sales opportunities but as platforms for thought leadership, brand storytelling, and community-building.

Today's event strategies are more data-driven, targeted, and personalized—designed to foster two-way engagement and deliver content experiences tailored to the specific needs of different personas within the buying group. In-person events offer the opportunity to deepen relationships, while virtual and on-demand formats provide scalable ways to engage broader audiences across geographies and time zones. Marketers are also focused on extending event impact, with Forrester finding that 92% of the respondents to their Q1 2024 State of B2B Events Survey saying that they're looking to improve their post-event attendee follow-up. These marketing leaders are now building integrated 12-month event plans that incorporate a range of event formats and use data and repurposed event content to drive attendee engagement between events.

As marketers continue to refine their multi-channel strategies, events are becoming cornerstone experiences—flexible, measurable, and impactful touchpoints that align brand presence with buyer intent. The

most successful programs integrate pre-event outreach, in-event interaction, and post-event follow-up to extend engagement well beyond the live moment, maximizing ROI and accelerating pipeline influence.

## 2. Investing More in AI-Powered Tools

Artificial intelligence (AI) is quickly becoming a cornerstone of modern B2B marketing, unlocking new levels of speed, precision, and personalization. A growing number of marketing teams are embracing AI-powered tools to not only enhance productivity, but to fundamentally transform how they identify, engage, and convert target accounts.

According to our Harris Poll Survey, a majority of B2B marketing leaders are actively investing in AI-driven solutions. These tools are being adopted across nearly every facet of the marketing workflow—from accelerating lead generation and content creation to optimizing performance measurement and real-time campaign adjustments.

A significant advantage AI provides is in helping marketers shift from reactive to predictive strategies. With advanced data models and machine learning algorithms, teams can now segment audiences with greater accuracy and personalize messaging with context that resonates across roles and industries.

# 57%

of marketing leaders are investing more in AI tools

According to [Salesforce's State of Marketing Report](#), taking advantage of AI is the biggest priority among B2B marketers but also the biggest challenge. It finds that only

# 32%

of marketing organizations have fully implemented AI in their workflows

In content production, generative AI tools enable faster development of copy, visuals, and even campaign frameworks—freeing up teams to focus on strategy and creativity.

As the B2B landscape grows more complex and competitive, AI isn't just a nice-to-have—it's becoming a strategic imperative. Marketers who invest early and integrate these tools thoughtfully are better positioned to meet rising buyer expectations and deliver measurable business outcomes with greater agility and impact.

### 3. Expanding into Emerging Digital Channels

As digital behavior continues to evolve, B2B marketers are prioritizing personalization and expanding their presence across emerging channels—meeting buyers where they are, on their terms, and in the formats they prefer. From connected TV to podcasts and digital audio, the modern media landscape is more fragmented and on-demand than ever before.

With attention spans shrinking and decision-makers multitasking across screens and devices, traditional engagement tactics are no longer enough. B2B buyers increasingly expect relevant, high-value content that fits seamlessly into their routines—whether they're working, commuting, or catching up on industry insights during a workout or running errands.



**Key Decision-Maker Adoption:** Gen Z and millennials make up the majority of the B2B decision-makers and 90% of these groups are digital audio users ([Source](#))



**Influence on Purchase Decisions:** Nearly half of B2B decision-makers report that thought leadership content, such as that found in podcasts, influences purchase decisions ([Source](#))



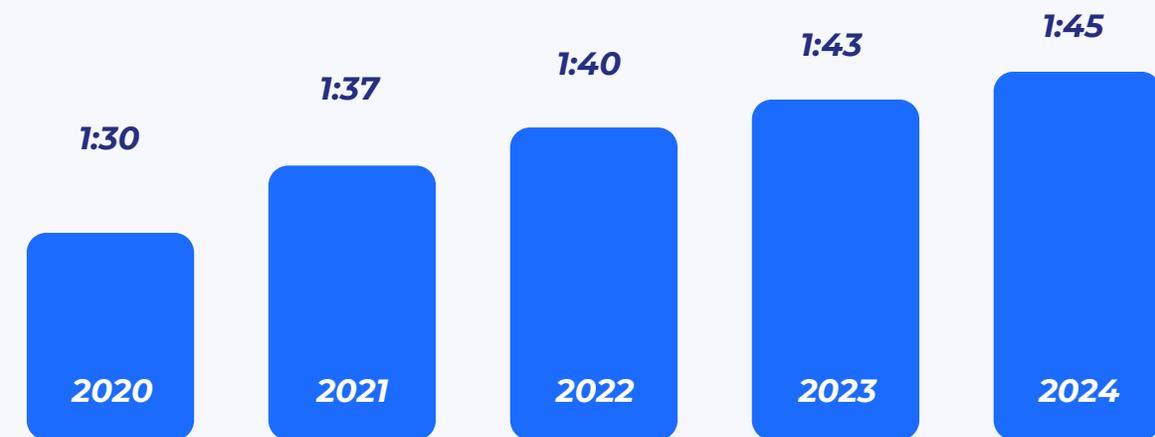
**Regular Consumption Patterns:** 83% of business executives are podcast listeners with many listening to five hours of content weekly ([Source](#))

In response, many marketers are rethinking their channel strategies to align with these shifts away from computer screens and into other streaming spaces. Madison Logic's Harris Poll Survey shows that 40% of marketing leaders are expanding into podcasts and digital audio advertising, recognizing these channels as powerful opportunities to cut through the noise and build meaningful, lasting connections.

Audio in particular is gaining traction not just for its reach, but for its emotional resonance. Unlike banner ads or pop-ups, audio creates a more personal, immersive experience—one that's well-suited to long-form storytelling and brand trust-building. When paired with robust intent data and ABM targeting, these emerging channels offer B2B marketers the ability to deliver highly relevant, personalized messages at scale.

### US Average Time Spent Per Day Digital Audio

2020-2024 Total US Population; Time Spent Per Day In Hours + Minutes



Source

As the lines between work and life blur and digital consumption becomes increasingly nonlinear, the brands that succeed will be those that embrace a digital-first, audience-centric approach—one that extends beyond the screen and into the daily lives of their buyers.



#### Key Takeaway

This isn't about doing more—it's about doing better. B2B buyers are more informed and selective than ever. The new imperative is agility: the ability to respond to shifting market conditions, emerging buyer behaviors, and competitive pressures with smarter, faster, and more data-driven strategies. In short, it's not just the message that matters—it's the timing, delivery, and relevance that determine impact. B2B marketers embracing a channel mix that mirrors consumer behavior—always-on, personalized, and deeply relevant to the buyer's journey—will continue to achieve success.

# Chapter 2:

## Embracing the Full Buying Group

The B2B decision-making process has fundamentally changed. No longer driven by a single stakeholder or decision-maker, today's purchases are shaped by a collective of influencers, users, budget owners, and gatekeepers—each bringing unique priorities and expectations to the table.

Research from Gartner shows that the average B2B purchase now involves 14-23 stakeholders who each come to the decision with their own sets of priorities, pain points, and research. These groups often span departments—from marketing and IT to finance, procurement, and legal. Each of these roles enters the conversation at different stages of the buyer's journey, with different levels of influence, authority, and expertise.

This expansion means that purchase decisions are no longer linear. Instead, they follow a nonlinear, parallel path, where stakeholders are conducting independent research, vetting vendors from various angles, and collaborating asynchronously before arriving at consensus. The traditional funnel has been replaced by a complex web of touchpoints, driven by internal dialogue, peer validation, and digital content consumption. And, according to our Harris Poll Survey, 93% of B2B marketers say they've adopted new strategies to better engage with this more diverse and complex set of decision-makers.

### Reaching Consensus Requires a Coordinated Approach

Trying to influence a buying decision by focusing on a single persona is no longer effective. The modern B2B buyer is a team, and marketers must account for the needs and concerns of each role within that team. A compelling value proposition for an IT leader may not resonate with someone in procurement or finance. To be effective, messaging must be multi-dimensional, role-specific, and responsive to the committee's internal dynamics.

Moreover, the path to consensus can be slow and risk averse. The growing number of decision-makers has introduced new friction: longer sales cycles, increased scrutiny, and a stronger need for cross-functional alignment. As a result, marketers are rethinking how they nurture accounts, often engaging multiple stakeholders with content that is tailored, timely, and empathetic to individual concerns.

**Forrester estimates that brands that have embraced buying groups are generating**

**10-20%**

**more opportunities from existing engagement**

**and**

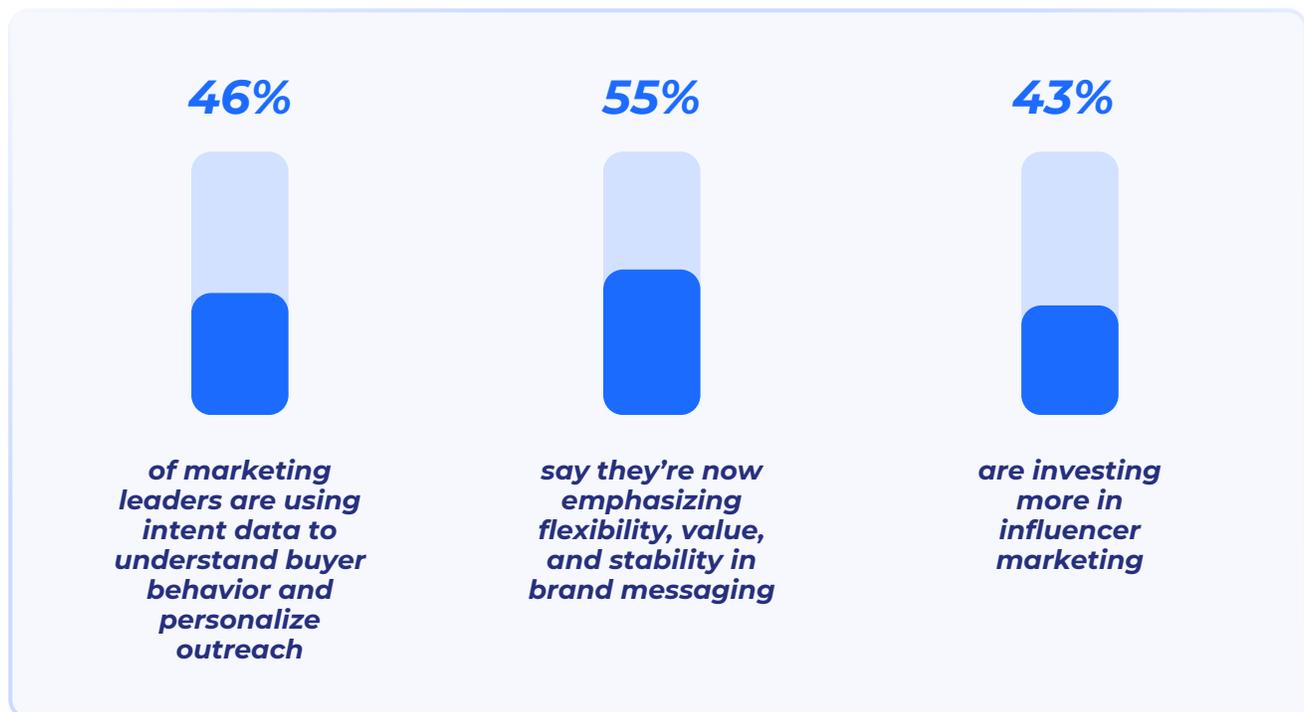
**20-50%**

**improved sales efficiency. (Source)**

## What Leading Marketers Are Doing

To address the growing complexity within the buying group and buying journey, marketers are shifting from siloed, single-persona outreach to orchestrated, full-funnel engagement across the entire buying group. This includes:

- Engaging multiple personas across the buying cycle with messaging that speaks to their specific roles, goals, and objections. For example, technical deep-dives for IT, ROI calculators for finance, or ease-of-implementation stories for operations teams.
- Empowering internal thought leaders—including product experts, data scientists, and executives—to publish content and share insights on social channels. According to our research, 90% of marketers are leveraging this strategy to deepen credibility and build trust with key influencers.
- Leveraging intent data and behavioral signals to understand which roles are actively researching their category or solution. This allows marketers to activate highly targeted outreach—connecting with the right personas at the right time.
- Embracing more human, consumer-like storytelling—especially important as millennial and Gen Z stakeholders grow in influence. These younger buyers value transparency, authenticity, and content that reflects real-world use cases.



### Key Takeaway

Success in B2B no longer comes from convincing a single stakeholder. It requires a coordinated strategy that reaches the entire buying committee—with personalized, intent-driven content that maps to their individual concerns while uniting them around a shared solution.

# Chapter 3:

## The Rise of Generational Leadership

The generational makeup of buying groups is evolving. Millennial and Gen Z professionals are not only influencing decisions—they're leading them. According to Forrester research, [67% of global buyers making purchases of \\$1 million or greater are millennials or Gen Z](#). These digital natives expect relevant, value-driven engagement, are more likely to self-educate, and are drawn to authentic content experiences across digital channels. Marketing teams that recognize this shift are rethinking their tone, tactics, and platforms to build trust with younger decision-makers—delivering value across preferred formats like LinkedIn thought leadership, podcast interviews, peer-led webinars, and even short-form video.

### A Generational Edge

This generational shift isn't just happening in buying groups; it's also happening in the rooms where marketing strategies are determined. According to Madison Logic's Harris Poll Survey, B2B marketing leaders across generations recognize the distinct advantages millennials and Gen Z bring to the table—and how their mindsets are shaping the future of the industry.

These rising marketers are more than just digital natives—they're strategic catalysts for change. Their lived experience in a tech-saturated, always-on world gives them an innate fluency in emerging platforms, fast-moving trends, and data-driven decision-making. They challenge traditional silos, champion new channels, and prioritize transparency, social impact, and innovation over legacy playbooks and short-term metrics. They're also comfortable navigating ambiguity, quick to test and learn, and unafraid to challenge outdated norms in pursuit of smarter, more relevant engagement.

**71%** of B2B buying group members are millennials and Gen Zers ([Source](#))

More than 70% of marketing leaders surveyed in Madison Logic's Harris Poll said their younger team members are pushing the organization to:

- Adopt new channels and content formats faster
- Lead with values and authenticity in brand messaging
- Embrace experimentation over perfection
- Evolve their ABM and content strategies to reflect changing buyer expectations

At the same time, younger marketers are gaining influence in strategic decision-making. They're leading cross-functional initiatives, championing new technologies (like AI and automation), and driving cultural shifts that prioritize agility, transparency, and long-term brand building over short-term lead metrics.

This influence is already having measurable impact. Organizations with generationally diverse marketing teams report being more adaptive to change, faster to implement new tools, and more confident in their ability to meet the expectations of modern B2B buyers.

In short, millennials and Gen Z aren't waiting for permission to lead—they're already doing it. And the organizations that recognize and empower this leadership edge are better positioned to stay ahead of market trends, buyer behavior, and competitive disruption.

## Next-Gen Marketers: Strengths by Generation

As millennials and Gen Z professionals take on greater influence in marketing teams, they're bringing complementary strengths that reflect the evolving demands of B2B marketing. From digital fluency to cultural authenticity, these generations are reshaping how brands engage buyers, adopt new technologies, and adapt to change.

The chart below highlights the distinct (but equally valuable) contributions our Harris Poll Survey found that each generation brings to the table, and why embracing both is key to building agile, future-ready marketing organizations.

Strength	Millennials	Gen Z
<b>Tech Fluency</b>	Grew up during the digital transformation	Born into mobile-first, platform-native world
<b>Channel Experimentation</b>	Unafraid to test and learn (55%)	Early adopters of emerging formats (62%)
<b>Global &amp; Social Awareness</b>	Value inclusivity and global thinking (52%)	Prioritize transparency and brand values
<b>Strategic Thinking</b>	Strong grasp of data-driven strategy (48%)	Fast decision-makers driven by real-time feedback
<b>Messaging Style</b>	Skilled in campaign narrative building	Fluent in authentic, trend-based storytelling (51%)
<b>Adaptability</b>	Comfortable managing complexity	Thrive in fast-moving, multi-modal environments (45%)

## An Opportunity for Forward-Thinking Brands

Rather than resist this generational shift, forward-thinking organizations are seizing it as a strategic advantage. They recognize that millennial and Gen Z marketers offer more than fresh ideas—they bring a new lens for how marketing should operate in an increasingly complex, digital-first world.

Successful B2B brands are intentionally creating space for younger talent to lead, experiment, and shape the strategic agenda. B2B brands are not only integrating millennial and Gen Z perspectives into campaign development—they're inviting them into decision-making roles, tapping their instinct for innovation, and empowering them to rethink how marketing teams deliver value.

Here's how this is playing out across leading organizations:

- Cross-generational collaboration is being used to fuse institutional knowledge with new thinking—resulting in more balanced, future-ready strategies.
- Younger marketers are being elevated into visible leadership roles, where they can influence company messaging, tech adoption, and go-to-market approaches.

- Experimentation is encouraged, not penalized—whether it's launching a new content format, testing a micro-campaign on emerging platforms, or piloting AI-powered tools to streamline production and personalization.

Cultural shifts are happening from the inside out. Priorities like transparency, agility, sustainability, and purpose-driven messaging are becoming embedded in day-to-day marketing operations—not just external branding.

This approach isn't just good for morale—it's good for results. According to Madison Logic's Harris Poll Survey, companies that actively integrate millennial and Gen Z perspectives into their marketing strategy are:

- 25% more likely to report increased buyer engagement
- 32% more confident in their ability to adapt to new channels
- More likely to outperform competitors in areas like brand trust, creative innovation, and campaign agility

By aligning internal leadership evolution with external market expectations, these companies are building stronger, more relevant brands—ones that resonate with the next generation of buyers while staying ahead of the competition.



### Key Takeaway

Millennial and Gen Z marketers aren't waiting for permission to lead—they're already doing it. And the organizations that recognize and empower this leadership edge are better positioned to stay ahead of market trends, buyer behavior, and competitive disruption.

# Chapter 4:

## The AI Opportunity Is Now

Artificial intelligence is no longer on the horizon—it's here, evolving rapidly, and pushing the boundaries of what's possible in B2B marketing. Once seen as an experimental advantage or automation tool, AI is now becoming a cornerstone of the modern marketing tech stack.

According to our Harris Poll Survey, 97% of marketing leaders are excited about incorporating AI not only to drive efficiency but to unlock entirely new capabilities across the funnel. More than three-quarters (76%) of surveyed respondents say they see greater value in using AI for B2B efforts than for consumer-facing campaigns—largely due to the complexity, data demands, and strategic nuance of engaging buying committees over long sales cycles.

### How B2B Marketers Are Putting AI to Work

B2B marketers are no longer using AI solely to automate tasks—they're embedding it across the marketing lifecycle to create smarter, more impactful programs. As buyer journeys become more complex and personalized engagement becomes a business imperative, AI is stepping in to deliver the scale, speed, and strategic foresight marketers need to stay competitive.

From accelerating content production to helping teams make faster, more informed decisions, AI is transforming how marketers plan, execute, and optimize campaigns. Here are some of the most powerful ways B2B organizations are putting AI to work today:

#### ***Hyper-Personalization at Scale***

AI enables marketers to deliver dynamic, personalized experiences tailored to the unique needs, behaviors, and preferences of each account and persona. From personalized email sequences and landing pages to content recommendations and ad creative, AI helps marketers engage buyers with the right message at the right time—across every touchpoint.



#### ***Accelerated Content Creation***

AI-powered tools are revolutionizing how quickly and efficiently marketing teams can produce content. From blog posts and video scripts to nurture emails and A/B testing variants, AI assists in generating high-quality assets—freeing up time for teams to focus on strategy and creativity.



#### ***Predictive Analytics for Smarter Decision-Making***

AI is transforming the role of data in marketing, moving beyond reporting into predictive foresight. With AI-powered analytics, marketers can identify patterns, anticipate buyer behavior, and make proactive decisions about campaign planning, channel investments, and content strategy.



As B2B buyers continue to expect more relevant, timely, and personalized experiences, AI is becoming the engine that enables marketing teams to meet these demands—not just efficiently, but intelligently.

### AI Adoption Is Accelerating

The growth in AI adoption isn't hypothetical—it's happening now:

- Three in five marketing professionals use AI in their current role ([Source](#))
- 45% are using AI to write copy for marketing content like blogs and emails ([Source](#))
- 75% agree that AI helps them spend less time on manual tasks ([Source](#))

The marketers embracing AI today aren't just future-proofing their strategy—they're shaping the future of the B2B industry. They're building more responsive, data-driven organizations that can move at the speed of the buyer and ahead of the competition.



### Key Takeaway

AI enables B2B marketers to do what they've always wanted—but with scale, speed, and precision. As the market shifts toward predictive, personalized engagement, AI isn't just supporting the strategy—it's driving it.

# Conclusion:

## Rethink, Realign, and Reimagine

The B2B marketing landscape is undergoing a profound transformation, shaped by evolving buyer behaviors, rapid technological advancement, and a generational shift in leadership. What worked yesterday won't cut it tomorrow. To remain competitive, marketers must be willing to rethink outdated tactics, realign around data-driven strategies, and reimagine what meaningful engagement looks like in today's digital-first world.

The findings from Madison Logic's Harris Poll Survey make it clear: top-performing marketers aren't waiting for change to happen—they're actively driving it. They're embracing AI not as a trend, but as a core enabler of precision, personalization, and scale. They're empowering millennial and Gen Z marketers to bring fresh thinking, creative experimentation, and digital fluency into leadership roles. And they're expanding beyond traditional channels to meet buying groups where they are—whether that's in a podcast, a LinkedIn influencer post, or an interactive webinar.

Above all, they're prioritizing people-first, insights-led strategies that reflect the new reality of modern B2B: complex buying groups, cross-functional influence, and content that drives connection—not just conversion.

This is your opportunity to lead with intent, evolve with purpose, and shape the future of B2B marketing.

Are you ready to rethink your playbook, realign your priorities, and reimagine what success looks like in the next era of growth?

Let's get to work.

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### Survey Methodology

This survey was conducted online within the United States by The Harris Poll on behalf of Madison Logic from April 17-22, 2025, among 305 U.S. adults aged 21+ who are employed full-time, as marketing, advertising, communications, public relations, or social media decision-makers (director level or higher) at their current company (referred to as "marketing decision-makers"). The sampling precision of Harris online polls is measured by using a Bayesian credible interval. For this study, the full sample data is accurate to within +/- 5.7 percentage points using a 95% confidence level. For complete survey methodology, including weighting variables and subgroup sample sizes, please contact us at [contact@madisonlogic.com](mailto:contact@madisonlogic.com).