

Industry Brief

From Content to Experience: How AI Is Shaping the Future of Marketing

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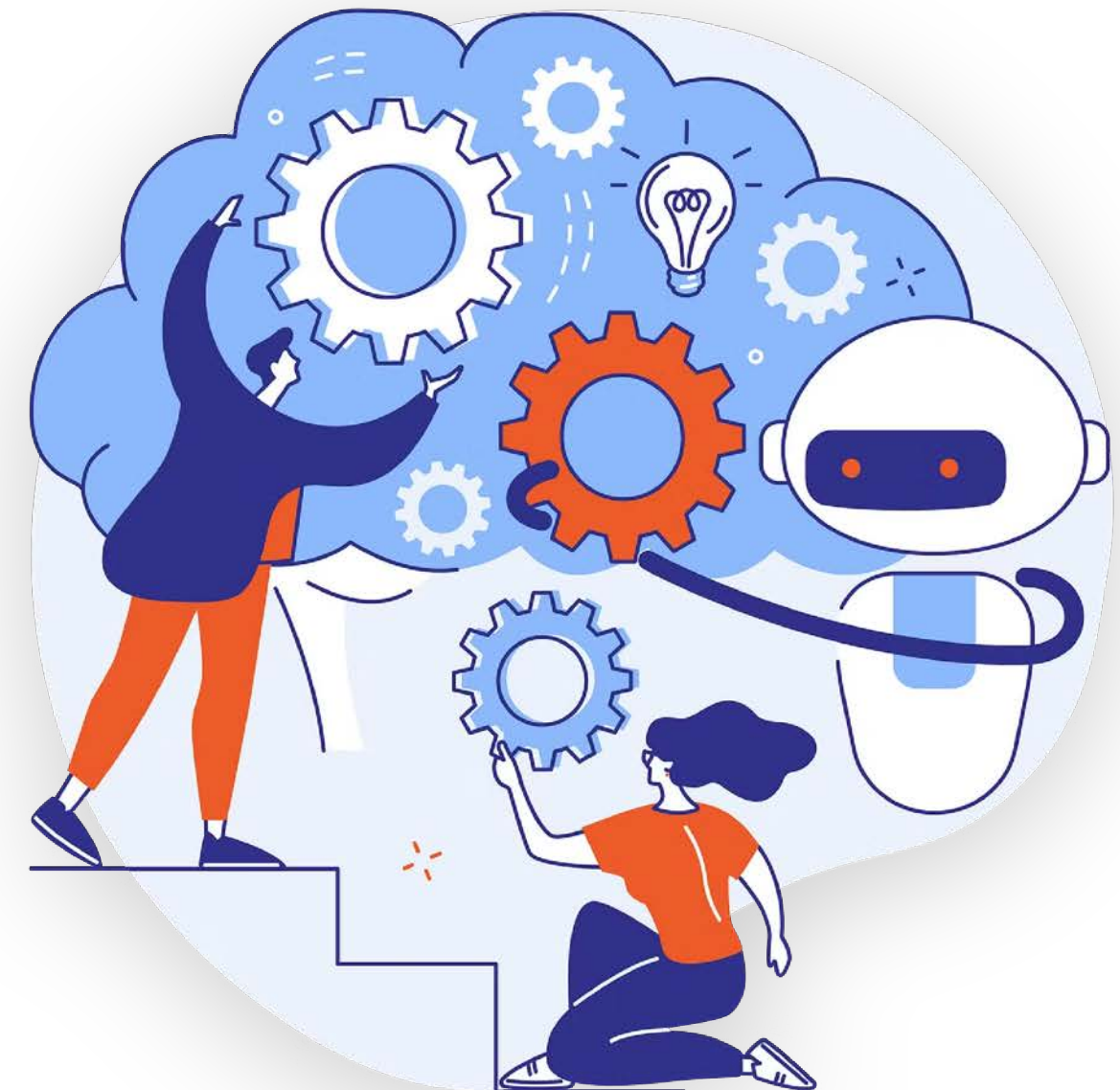
Incisiv's Industry Brief *"From Content to Experience: How AI Is Shaping the Future of Marketing"* is for marketing leaders seeking to understand and harness AI's transformative potential.

Based on a comprehensive survey of 405 executives across retail, CPG, and manufacturing in North America, the UK, and Australia, this report explores how AI is revolutionizing marketing today and shaping its future. 85% of respondents represent organizations with annual revenue between \$1 billion to \$5 billion, and 69% are in roles VP level or higher. The report covers:

- **AI's current role as an integral yet fragmented part of marketing workflows**, where adoption often varies across functions and lacks standardized integration across the organization.
- **The readiness gap for scaling AI across marketing functions**, with an analysis of factors impacting companies' ability to adopt AI at scale effectively.
- **The future of augmented intelligence in marketing**, where AI and human creativity work in harmony to drive innovation, enhance decision-making, and deliver exceptional customer experiences.

You'll find a powerful combination of real-world insights and actionable guidance to help you build scalable, cohesive, and responsible AI-driven marketing strategies that position your organization for future success.

All data in this report is from the *"2025 State of the Industry: Artificial Intelligence in Marketing"* survey. [Detailed survey methodology](#), industries covered, and respondent firmographics are available at the end of the report.



74% of Companies Are Already Using AI in Marketing

And, with a further 19% in the planning phase, it's clear that AI has moved from a strategic option to an operational necessity – particularly as customers expect increasingly personalized, real-time interactions across websites, mobile apps, email, social media, and in-store experiences.

The pace of adoption is striking: 55% of companies aim to expand the use of AI across marketing within two years. This rapid shift reflects the broad applicability of AI across marketing functions – from content creation and campaign optimization to customer analytics and personalization. AI offers marketing teams the ability to scale personalized experiences, improve campaign performance, and respond more quickly to market opportunities.

Yet as organizations accelerate their AI initiatives, questions of preparedness and implementation approach come into sharper focus.

AI Adoption is Gaining Momentum

55%

of companies plan to adopt AI across marketing within the next two years.

The Clock is Ticking

47%

of these companies intend to implement AI across marketing within the next twelve months — highlighting the urgency for action.



Only 12% of Companies Are Fully Prepared for Large-Scale AI Adoption

While over half of companies expect transformative outcomes from AI within two years, the path to full-scale adoption requires more than just selecting the right technology. A marketing team might find their AI content pilot works well in one market but struggles with brand consistency across regions. Or their personalization engine might perform strongly for e-commerce but fail to integrate with in-store marketing systems.

Organizations face specific challenges in scaling AI beyond pilot programs. While 61% cite data privacy and security concerns, the more complex challenge lies in training AI to truly understand brand voice and context. Success requires starting with focused use cases: automating campaign reporting in a single region, testing AI-driven customer segmentation in specific product categories, or optimizing email subject lines before expanding to full content creation.

ROI Clarity

53%

of companies expect AI to deliver significant marketing outcomes within 24 months.

Lack of Readiness

However, only

12%

of companies are fully prepared for large-scale AI adoption.

This readiness gap helps explain what we see in current adoption patterns: fragmented implementations that deliver quick wins but struggle to scale.



Current AI Adoption Is Fragmented and Basic: Only 10% of Organizations Have Implemented AI Company-Wide in Marketing

Most brands have begun their AI journey through point solutions – a chatbot here, an automated email tool there. While these quick wins can demonstrate value, this piecemeal approach creates new challenges. A retailer might use AI for product recommendations but handle email personalization manually, creating disconnected customer experiences. A CPG brand might leverage AI for social listening but struggle to connect those insights to content creation, missing opportunities to shape messaging in real-time.

Without a strategic framework, organizations miss opportunities to drive growth and enhance marketing effectiveness. Building a unified AI strategy means carefully assessing technology needs, aligning stakeholders across the organization, and creating consistent frameworks for implementation. This allows marketing teams to connect AI-driven market analysis directly to campaign creation and optimization, ensuring faster response to market opportunities while maintaining consistent messaging across channels.

Lack of Standardization

86%

of companies using AI in marketing do not use a standardized AI toolset across the organization.

Out-of-the-Box Solutions

80%

of companies using AI in marketing currently use out-of-the-box AI functionality from existing tools and platforms.

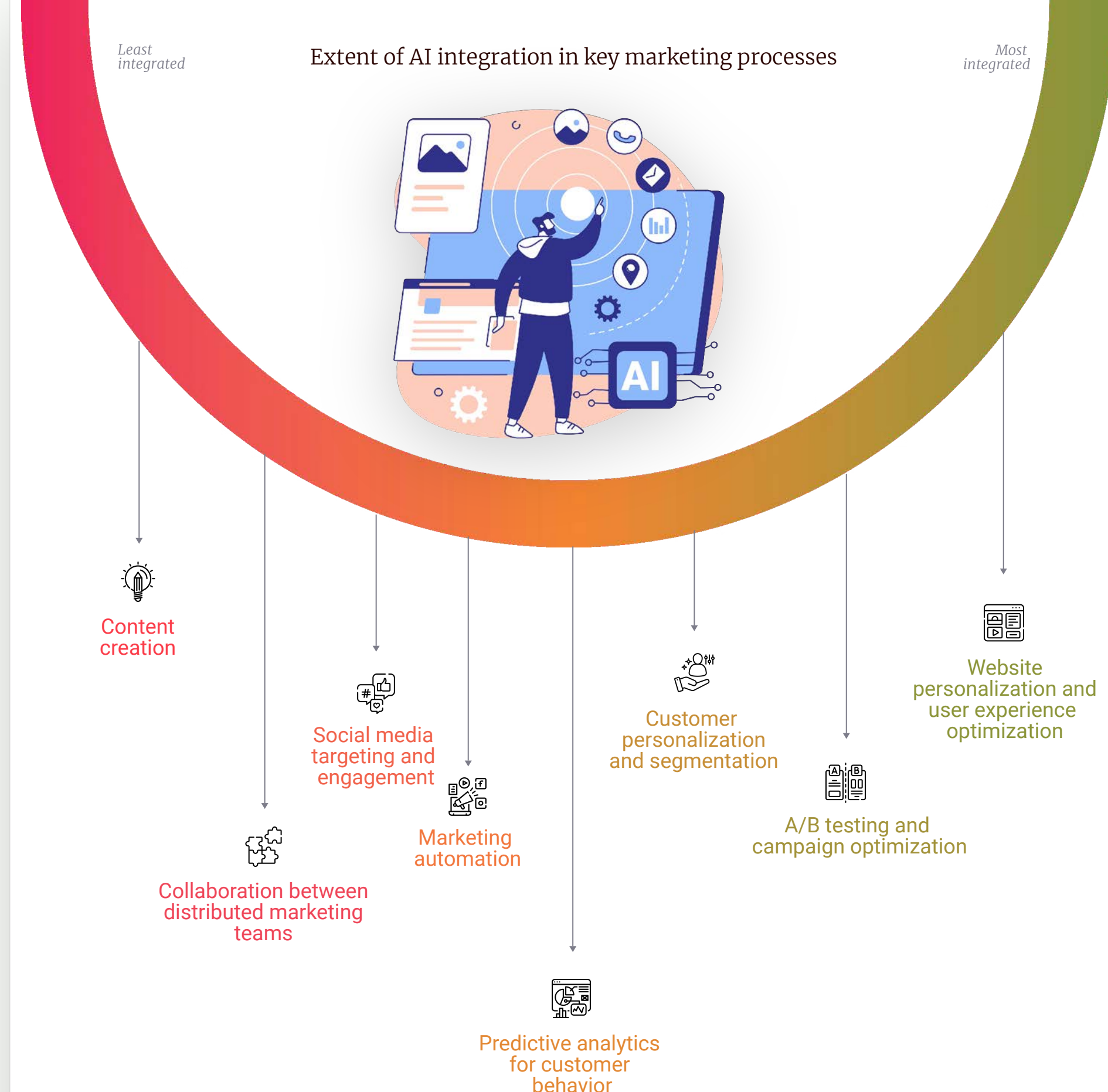


Website and Campaign Optimization Lead Full AI Integration, While Content Creation and Collaboration Lag

AI adoption varies significantly across marketing functions. Website personalization and A/B testing show the highest maturity, with over 1 in 3 companies reporting full integration. Meanwhile, areas like content creation, collaboration between distributed teams, and social media engagement remain underpenetrated with less than 1 in 5 achieving full integration.

This uneven adoption creates operational bottlenecks. A marketing team might use AI to rapidly test and refine campaign messaging, but still spend weeks manually producing content variations for different markets. Similarly, a retailer might excel at AI-driven website personalization but struggle to maintain consistent messaging across email, social, and in-store campaigns due to disconnected workflows.

Success requires connecting AI capabilities across the marketing workflow. When AI-powered analytics inform content creation and feed into campaign optimization, teams can automatically generate, test, and adapt content across channels while maintaining brand consistency and quality control.



The Real AI Challenge: Integration, Not Adoption

Having seen how AI adoption varies across marketing functions, the fundamental challenge becomes clear: technical integration, not team resistance, is the primary barrier to success. While marketing teams show enthusiasm for AI's potential, with only 15% of organizations expecting team resistance, the true challenge lies in technical complexity. A marketing team might discover their legacy customer data platform can't integrate with modern AI tools, or find their existing content management system lacks the APIs needed for AI-powered optimization.

Success requires marketing leaders to build strong partnerships across the organization. This means creating cross-functional alignment: marketing defines use cases and success metrics, IT validates technical compatibility, legal addresses data privacy protocols, and finance aligns on ROI measurements. This coordinated approach helps avoid implementing AI tools that create technical debt or compliance risks.

Once these integration foundations are in place, organizations can begin realizing AI's transformative potential across marketing operations and customer engagement.

Tool Complexity

76%

of companies are overwhelmed with the volume and complexity of AI tools.

Team Readiness

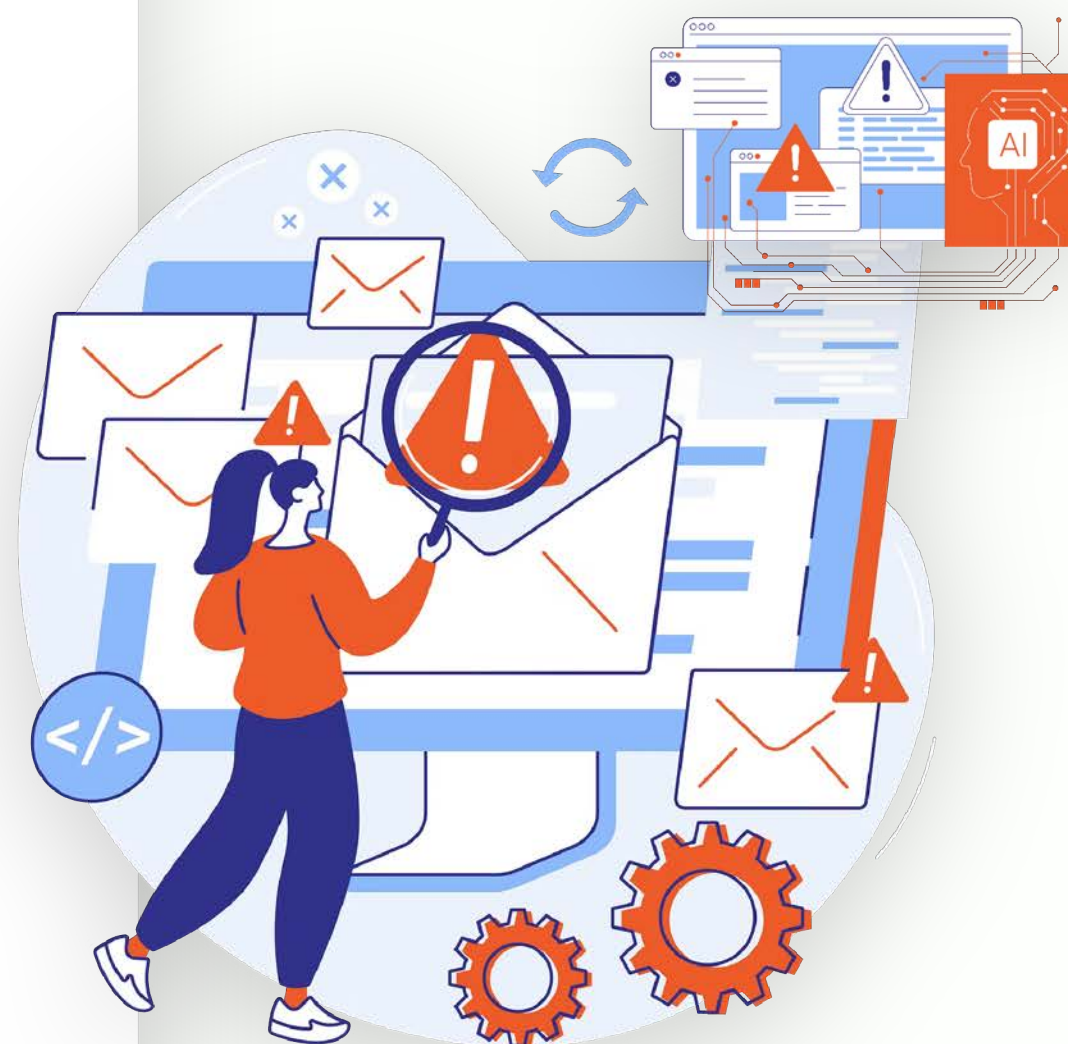
85%

of companies do not expect resistance to adopting AI from marketing teams.

Integration Challenge

63%

say complexity in integrating AI with existing systems and workflows is one of their biggest challenges.

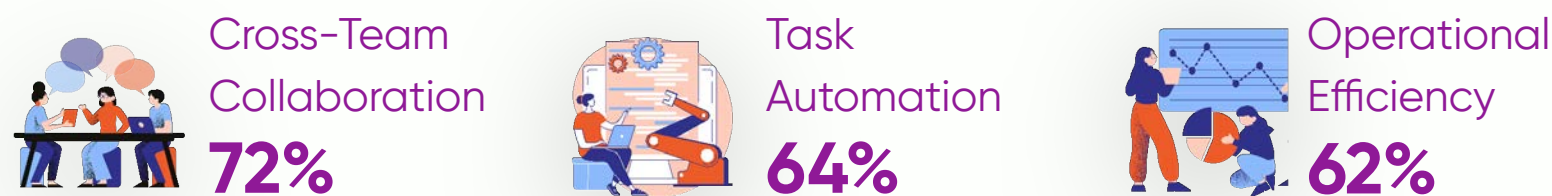


AI Transforms Marketing Operations: From Manual Tasks to Strategic Focus

With the right integration foundation in place, AI transforms daily marketing operations in specific, measurable ways. Rather than spending hours manually segmenting audiences and creating email variations, marketing teams can now focus on strategy while AI handles execution. A marketing team launching a seasonal collection might compress their campaign timeline by using AI to automatically generate multi-channel product descriptions, test email variations, adjust campaign parameters in real-time, and create performance reports.

This shift from manual execution to AI-assisted workflows allows teams to focus on higher-value activities like strategic planning and creative direction.

Top 3 internal benefits expected from AI in marketing



Companies See AI-Based Personalization Driving The Greatest ROI Impact

AI transforms how brands deliver personalized experiences by connecting three critical elements: customer data analysis, content creation, and delivery optimization. When a customer browses winter coats on a retailer's website, AI synthesizes their full journey from past purchases to email interactions to support conversations. The system then tailors product recommendations, adjusts email timing, and personalizes their mobile experience – creating a cohesive experience impossible to orchestrate manually.

This capability scales across millions of customer interactions. A brand might analyze shopping patterns across retail partners to identify emerging trends and automatically adjust their marketing mix.

Top 3 external benefits expected from AI in marketing



Brand Integrity in the AI Era: New Scale Brings New Risks

While maintaining brand consistency has always been complex, AI introduces new dimensions to this challenge. An AI system might generate product descriptions in British English for an Australian market, or produce social media responses that miss a brand's professional-yet-approachable tone. When AI generates and adapts content across channels, minor inconsistencies can quickly scale into major brand misalignment. Our data shows this is the top risk factor in AI implementation, particularly as marketing teams become more distributed.

The solution isn't to limit AI, but to strengthen brand governance for an AI-powered world. This means evolving traditional brand guidelines into machine-readable parameters that AI can consistently apply. 54% of organizations acknowledge the significant effort required to train AI in brand voice—but those who invest in this foundation can scale content creation while maintaining brand authenticity.

Companies can implement tiered approval workflows where AI has full autonomy on low-risk content like product descriptions or performance reports, but requires human review for high-stakes communications like campaign headlines or brand storytelling.

Risk Assessment

39%

of companies cite "ensuring brand consistency across distributed teams and channels" as the highest risk area for implementing AI.

Security Concerns

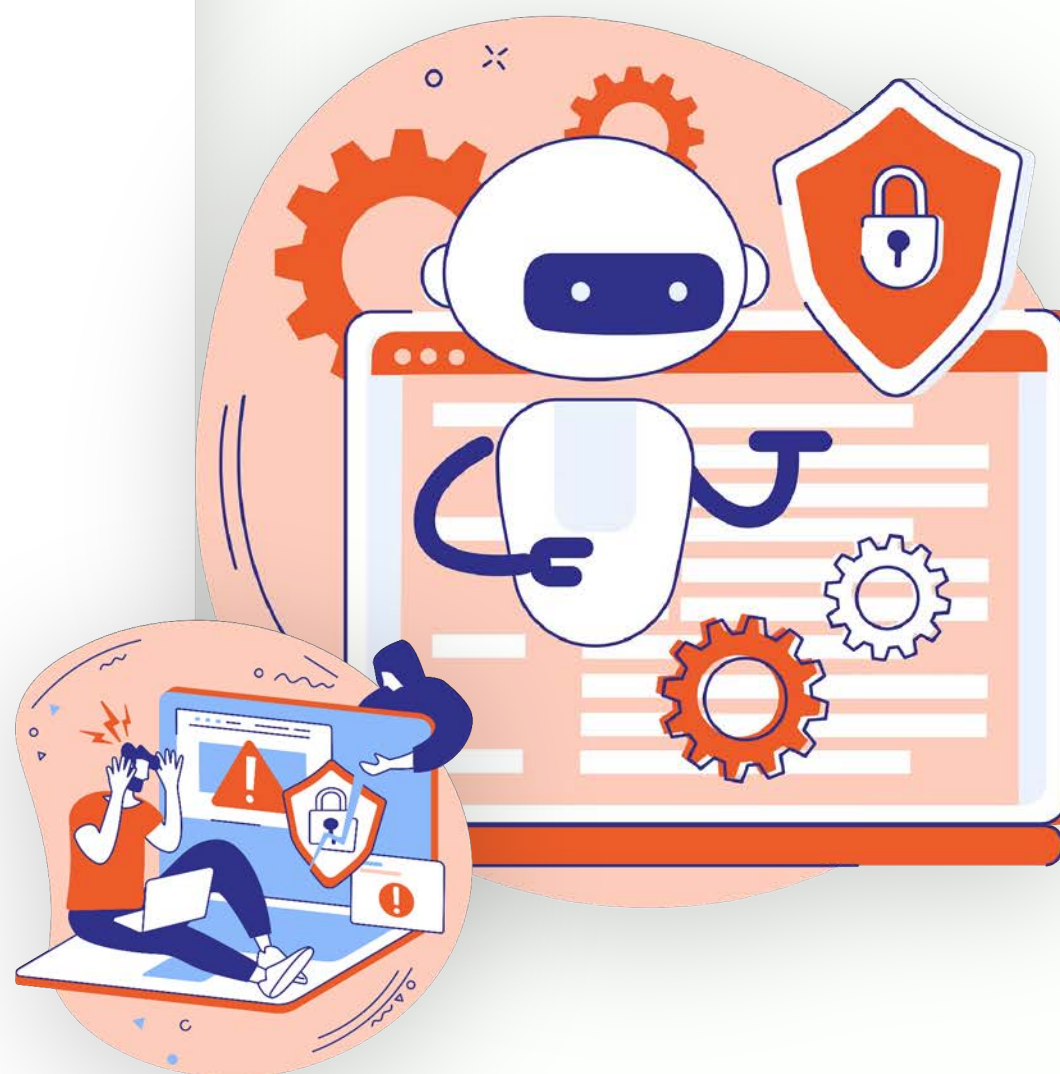
61%

of companies cite "concerns over data privacy and security" as their biggest concern in scaling AI across marketing functions.

Brand Voice Training

54%

of companies cite the "heavy lift to train AI to truly know brand voice" as their biggest concern in scaling AI across marketing functions.



Augmented Humanity: AI Amplifies Rather Than Replaces Marketing Creativity

AI isn't enhancing creativity directly—it's creating space for it. Marketing teams spend significant time on campaign mechanics: scheduling posts, adjusting audience parameters, and analyzing performance data. AI automation of these tasks allows teams to focus on brand storytelling and emotional connection.

Our research shows marketers value this distinction: 71% believe AI excels at personalization and analytics, while 74% maintain that brand values and voice require human expertise.

In campaign development, human marketers should lead strategic direction and emotional storytelling, and use AI to support with data-driven insights and execution. For instance, creative teams can define campaign narratives and key messages, then use AI to test variations, optimize delivery timing, and scale personalization across markets—combining human inspiration with AI's ability to execute at scale.

Human Authenticity

40%

of companies expect creative strategy and brand management to remain fully human-driven

AI Orchestration

35%

of companies see customer personalization and segmentation being fully AI-driven in the future



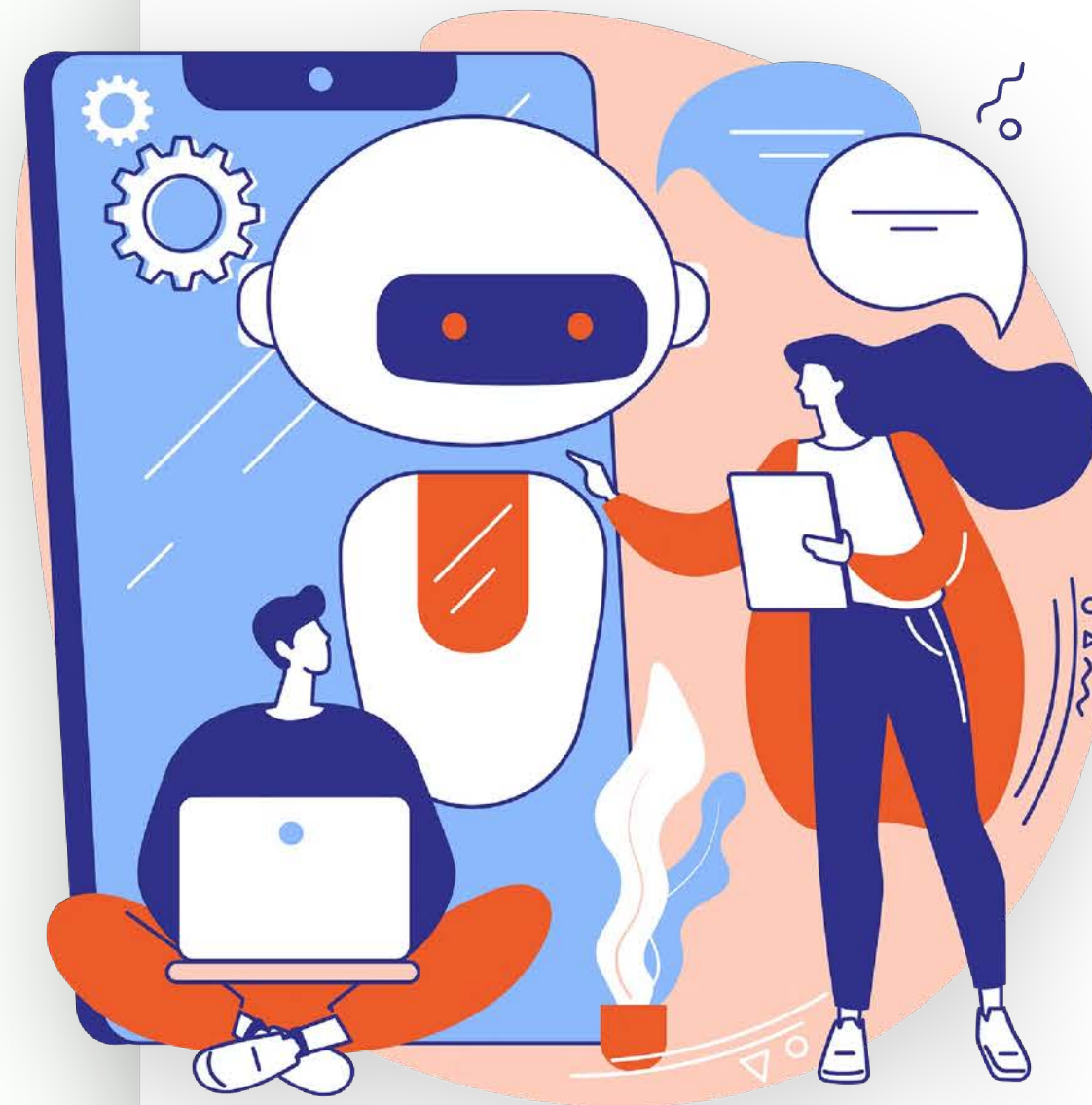
This collaborative approach amplifies each side's strengths: AI excels at processing data, identifying patterns, and handling repetitive tasks, while humans bring emotional intelligence, cultural understanding, and innovative thinking.

Now Is the Moment to Lead.

Our research reveals a critical inflection point in marketing's AI journey. **While 74% of organizations are using AI, only 12% are fully prepared for large-scale adoption.** The path forward requires both strategic vision and practical execution:

- Start with clear governance frameworks that address both marketing needs and technology requirements. When CMOs and CIOs align on data security, brand safety, and integration protocols early, implementation accelerates. This collaborative approach turns potential friction points into opportunities for creating robust, scalable AI systems.
- Build from focused use cases that deliver measurable impact. Begin with areas showing high AI maturity, such as website personalization or campaign optimization. Use these successes to develop repeatable processes before expanding to more complex applications like autonomous content creation.
- Balance automation with human oversight. The most successful organizations maintain clear boundaries: AI excels at scaling personalization and optimizing performance, while human teams focus on strategy, creativity, and brand storytelling.

The future of marketing belongs to organizations that can thoughtfully integrate AI across the entire customer experience while maintaining brand integrity and operational excellence. Those who establish these foundations today will be better positioned to capture AI's expanding capabilities tomorrow.



Survey Firmographics

Incisiv conducted a hybrid online + Computer Aided Telephonic Interview (CATI) survey of 405 executives in the UK, North America, and Australia. The study was conducted from **Sep 25, 2024 - Oct 10, 2024**.

Respondents by Industry

Retail	33%
CPG	33%
Manufacturing	33%

Respondents by Market

North America	37%
UK	37%
Australia	26%

Role

Customer Experience & Digital Experience	21%
Digital Marketing Operations	19%
E-commerce & Digital Commerce	17%
Campaigns & Content Marketing	16%
Digital Platform & Technology Management	15%
Marketing Strategy & Digital Transformation	13%

Respondents by Designation

C-Suite/Executive	23%
VP/SVP	46%
Director	31%

Respondents by Annual Revenue

\$1 billion - \$5 billion	85%
\$5 billion +	15%

Respondents by Role

Approver	25%
Buyer	51%
Influencer	24%



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