



The 2021 Outlook on Retargeting

Research-based strategies, tactics and trends for retargeting in the year ahead.

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About the Research Partners



The Research

The Audience

N = 176 marketers

Job Title

Owner / Partner / C-Level	16%
Vice President / Director / Manager	67%
Non-Management Professional	17%

Company Size

More than 500	50%
50 to 500	41%
Fewer than 50	9%

Primary Marketing Channel

B2B	25%
B2C	42%
B2B and B2C Equally	25%
We are an Agency	8%

Methodology

Ascend2 benchmarks the performance of marketing strategies, tactics and the technology that drives them. With a custom online questionnaire, this survey was fielded to a panel of marketing professionals and marketing research subscribers from a variety of industries.

Key Findings

- Small and large businesses face different challenges when it comes to retargeting. Small businesses report that attribution (47%) and lack of budget (33%) are their biggest concerns while enterprises face concerns with privacy (43%) and ad fraud (38%).
- B2B and B2C marketers have different priorities when evaluating a retargeting solution. Both value access to desired audiences but B2Bs are also looking closely at associated costs while B2Cs are more concerned with ease of use.
- Customer service matters. Across the board, marketers using retargeting solutions are looking for better customer service and support.
- The most successful retargeters are using or plan to use Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the year ahead to optimize their ad and conversion funnels, retargeting efforts, and improve on specific KPIs.

1.0 Introduction

2021 Outlook on Retargeting

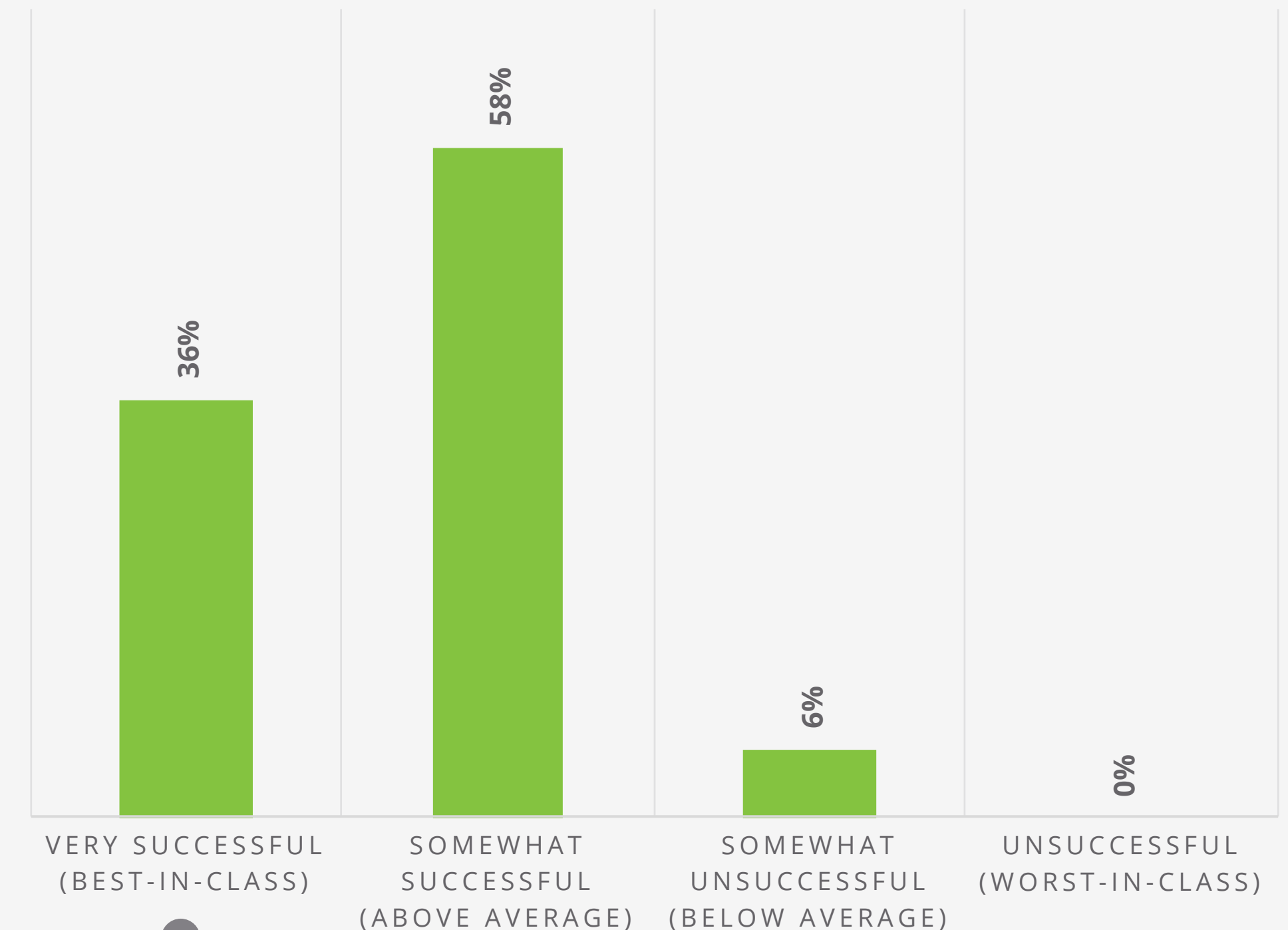
Retargeting provides an opportunity to connect with customers, generate more revenue, and play a more relevant role in their digital experiences.

But how can marketers use retargeting holistically, to amplify their entire marketing strategy?

To help you answer this question, SharpSpring Ads in partnership with Ascend2 fielded 2021 Outlook on Retargeting Survey.

This report represents the opinions of 176 marketing professionals during the month of February, 2021 from a variety of industries working with retargeting budgets that exceed \$2,000 monthly.

Which best describes the success of your retargeting strategy at achieving the goals set for it?



Just over one-third (36%) of those surveyed describe their retargeting strategy as very successful. This segment of best-in-class retargeters provides particularly helpful insight into what a successful retargeting strategy looks like and you will see this group referenced in certain sections throughout this report.

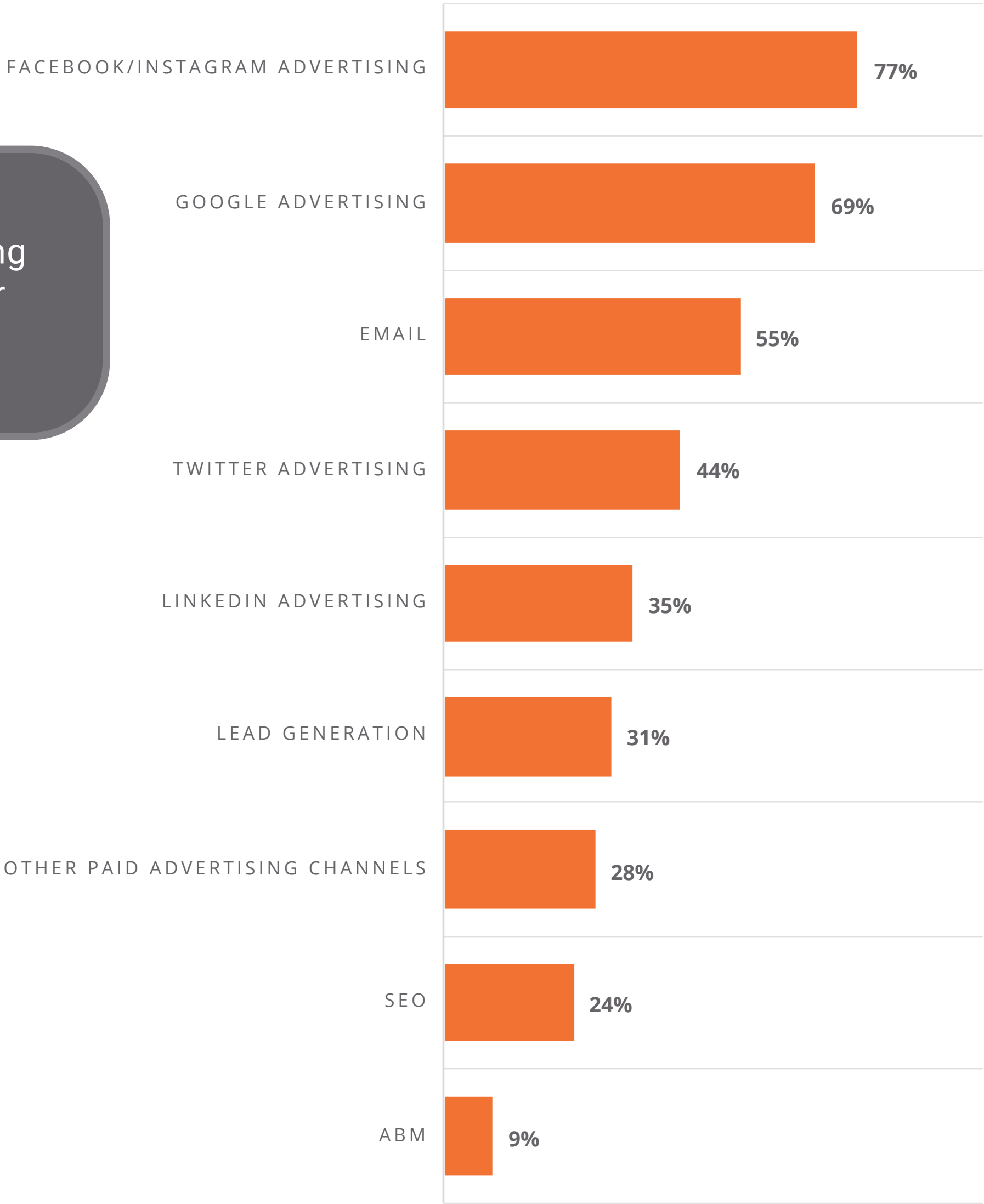
2.0 Current Situation

Strategic Use

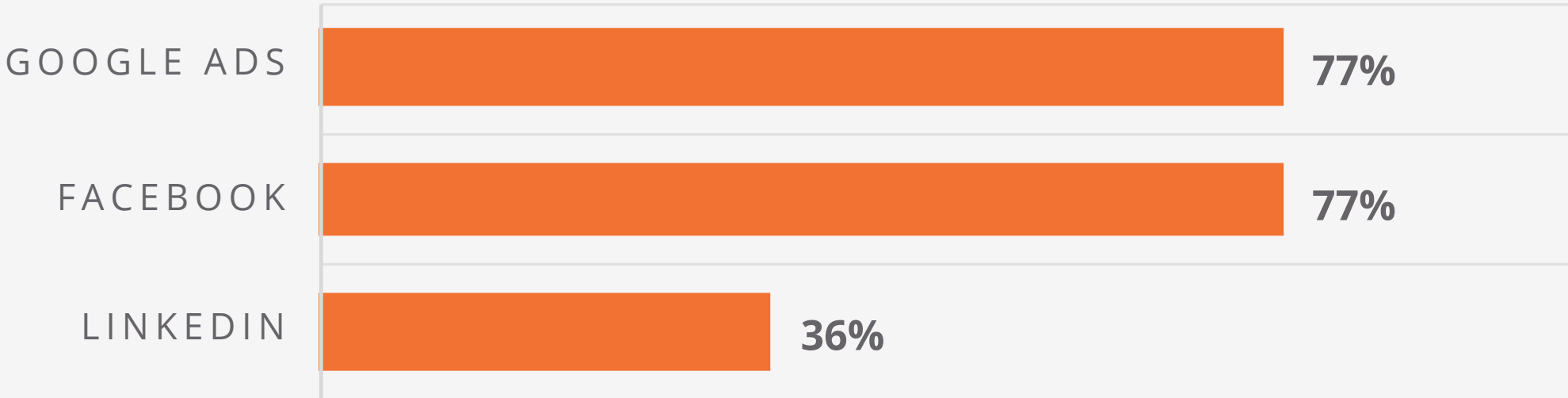
Facebook and Google remain retargeting giants. The majority of marketers report focusing their retargeting efforts here and using these platforms most frequently.

Over three-quarters of survey participants are using retargeting as part of their Facebook and Instagram advertising strategy.

Retargeting is part of my strategy for:



Platforms used most frequently

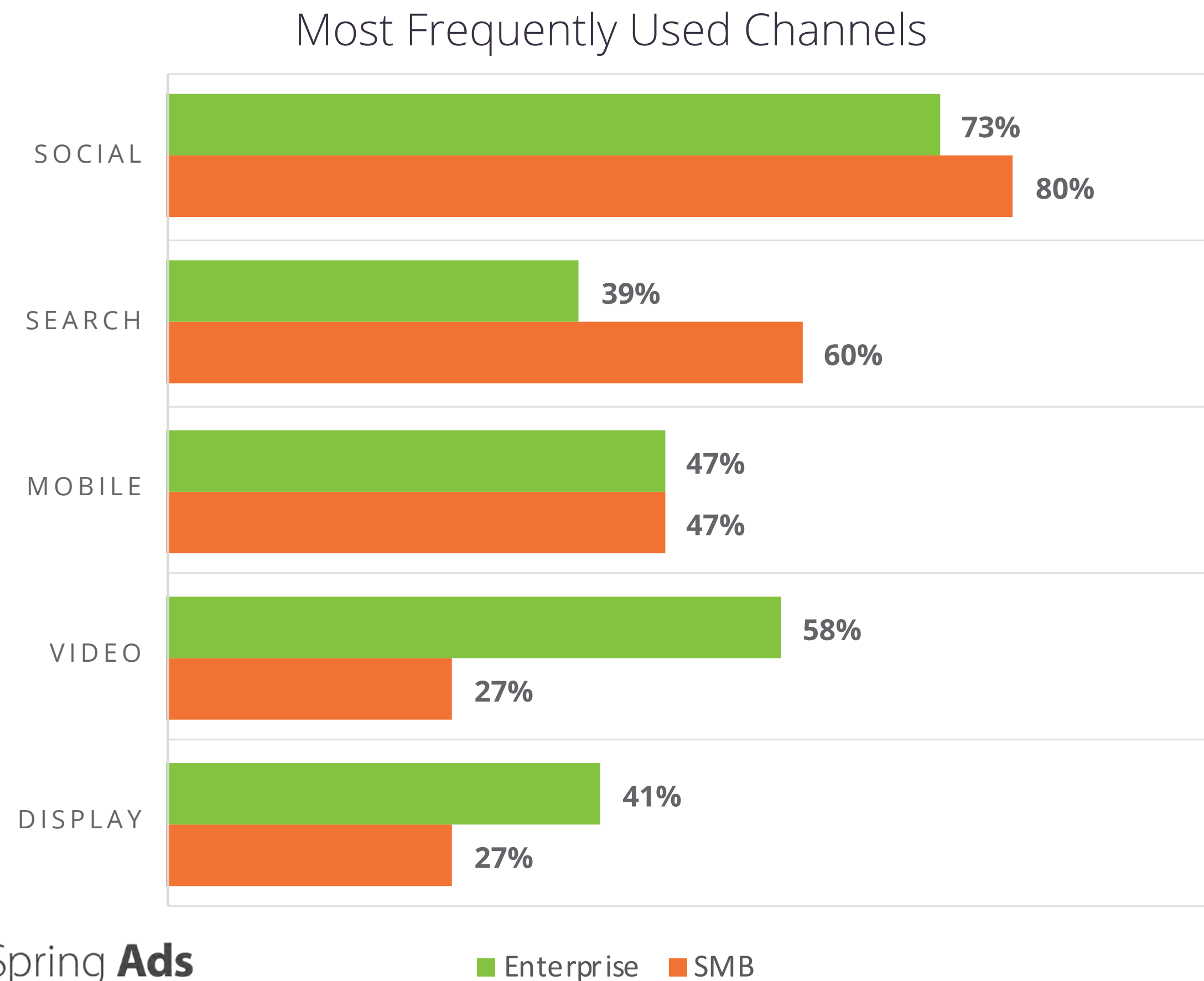


In order to better understand the challenges faced by marketers using retargeting, we must first establish which areas of their overall strategy they are using retargeting in and which platforms they are currently utilizing to do so.

2.1 Current Situation

Most Used Channels: SMBs vs Enterprises

Small businesses are focusing their retargeting efforts on different channels than enterprise-level companies.



A Powerful Team: Paid Search & Social

Just **2% of website visitors convert on the first visit**. Retargeting allows you to continue to build awareness, consideration, and conversion as part of your search and social channels. People who view retargeting ads are **70% more likely to convert!**

With retargeting, you create a synergy among your advertising efforts across channels. With search and social combined, you can create new and powerful ways to target warm leads.

3.0 Strategy

Primary Objectives for Retargeting

Businesses are implementing retargeting strategies with the primary objectives of driving overall sales and increasing brand awareness, according to those surveyed.

Goals for retargeting: B2B vs B2C

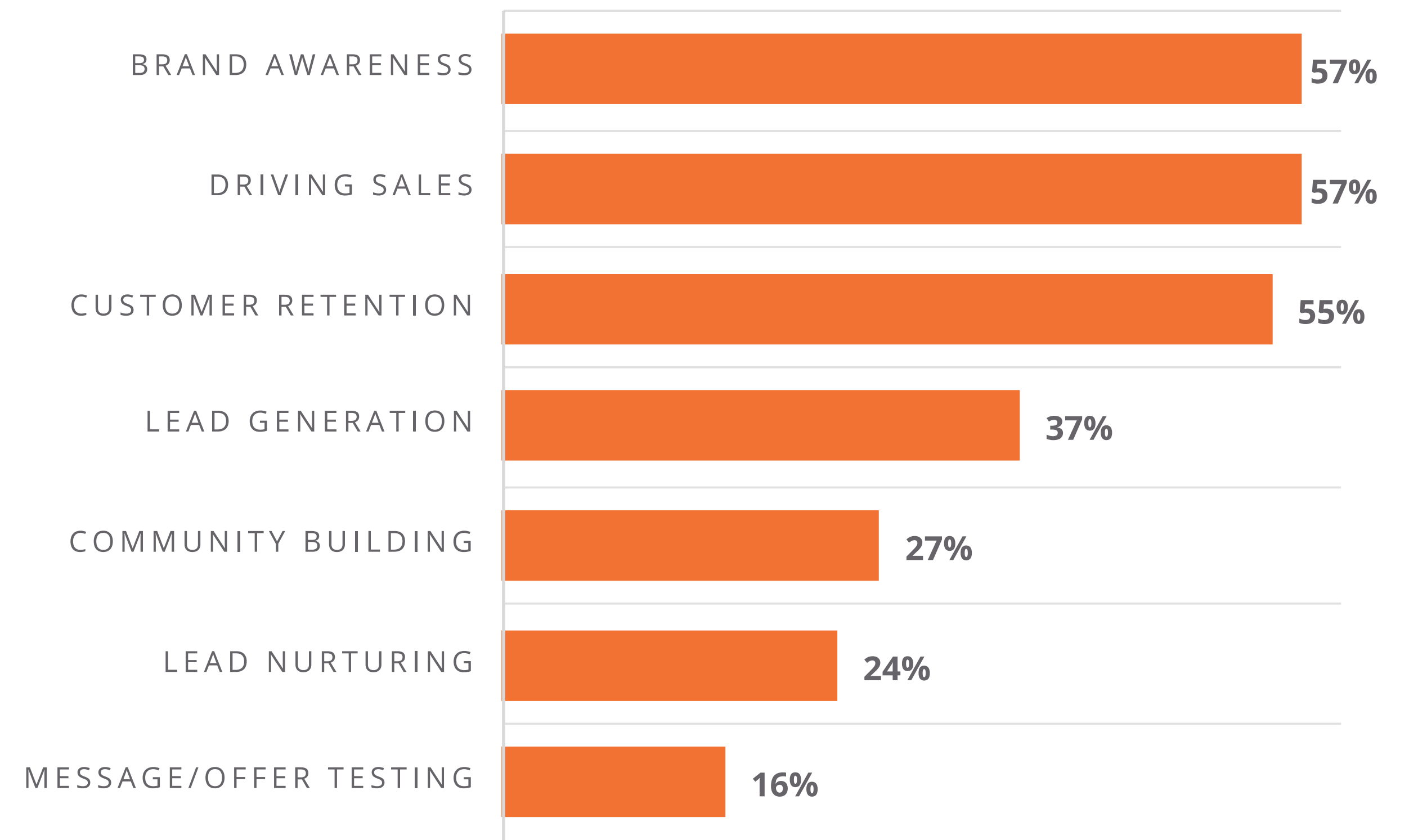
Primary goals for a retargeting strategy vary between B2Bs and B2Cs. Those operating in the B2B channel say they are aiming to improve brand awareness while B2Cs are using it as a mechanism to increase customer retention.

B2B

Brand awareness: 58%
Driving sales: 44%

B2C

Customer Retention: 66%
Driving sales: 64%



3.1 Strategy

Top Challenges to Successful Retargeting

Marketers are up against a wide variety of obstacles when implementing and executing retargeting efforts. These concerns vary greatly by company size and marketing channel.

Top Challenges : B2B vs B2C

When it comes to retargeting, the greatest concerns facing B2B marketers are reportedly a lack of time and staff required to execute as well as managing brand image concerns. B2C marketers are challenged by identifying and reducing ad fraud and have difficulty attributing performance.

B2B | Resources (38%)
Brand image (36%)

B2C | Ad fraud (43%)
Attribution (37%)

Top Challenges: SMB vs Enterprise

For businesses operating with fewer than 50 employees, issues with attribution of retargeting campaigns tops the list of challenges along with lack of adequate budget to execute. Enterprise marketers report that handling privacy concerns and reducing ad fraud are their greatest obstacles.

SMB | Attribution (47%)
Budget (33%)

Enterprise | Privacy (43%)
Ad fraud (38%)

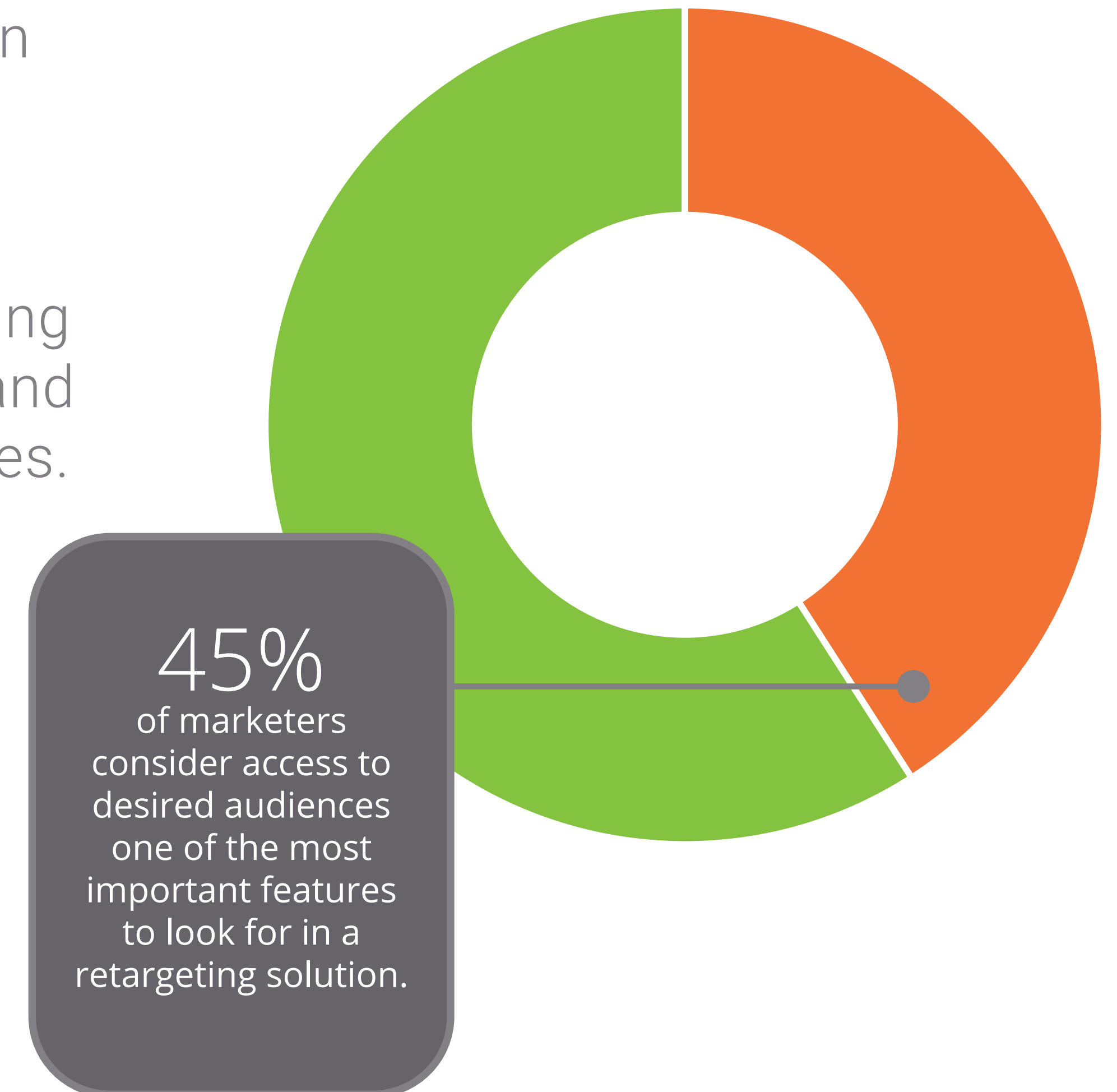
4.0 Retargeting Solutions: What Matters

Access to the Right Audience

Where is your audience? With Facebook, you can reach roughly 23% of your potential global audience. With Google, you can reach another 31%. But how do you reach the other 46%?

Many times the hard-to-reach audiences that cannot be reached by Facebook or Google may be your best-performing audiences. Why? Because they are specialized audiences and don't have the same competition as easy-to-reach audiences. With SharpSpring Ads, you can set a total budget and the platform will work to optimize your bids to get the lowest price per click across every network (Facebook, Google, and everyone else). By including smaller advertisers, you may be able to substantially lower CPC for reaching your target audience across the web.

For more tips, download the special report, Retargeting Beyond Facebook and Google: [Surprisingly Simple Strategies to Boost Your Ad Retargeting](#)



4.1 Retargeting Solutions: What Matters Customer Service

Not only is customer service listed as a top feature that retargeting vendors should improve on, it also comes up as one of the most important things to consider when shopping for a new solution.

Retargeting technology and the process surrounding execution of a strategy can often be complex and require expertise external to an organization. Throughout this research, customer service was listed as a top priority of those surveyed.

Most Helpful Type of Customer Service Support

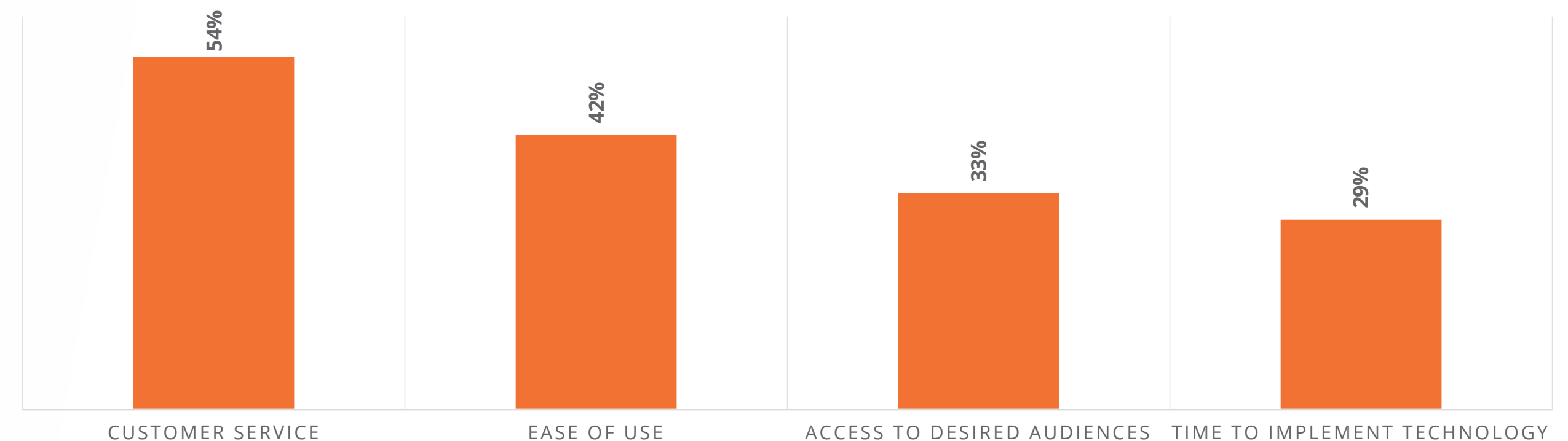
Email 57%

Live chat 51%

Phone call 48%

The Executive Team Perspective

When asked what their **top considerations are when evaluating new retargeting solutions**, those at the executive-level report that they are evaluating **customer service** above all else.



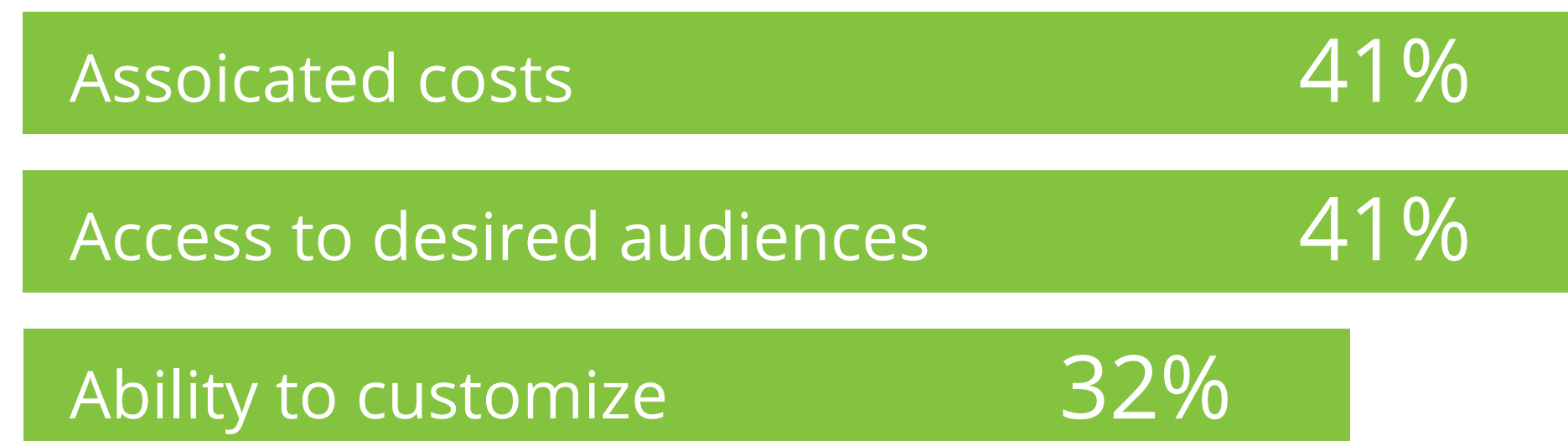
4.2 Retargeting Solutions: What Matters

B2B vs B2C

B2B and B2C marketers have different priorities when evaluating a retargeting solution. Both place a high value on access to desired audiences but B2B marketers are looking more closely at costs associated with a new solution and their ability to customize features while B2Cs are more concerned with ease of use and customer service.

What are the top considerations when evaluating new retargeting technology?

B2B



B2C



SharpSpring Ads - Top Considerations

One Platform – Double Customer Reach:

Reach Google, Instagram, PLUS tens of thousands of publishers from one single platform. No more windows filling up your screen. Attribution consolidation from every channel into a single dashboard.

Reduce Costs and Increase ROI.

How about 8-10x ROI? Retargeting is the most effective advertising channel you can use.

Easy, intelligent, and Automated.

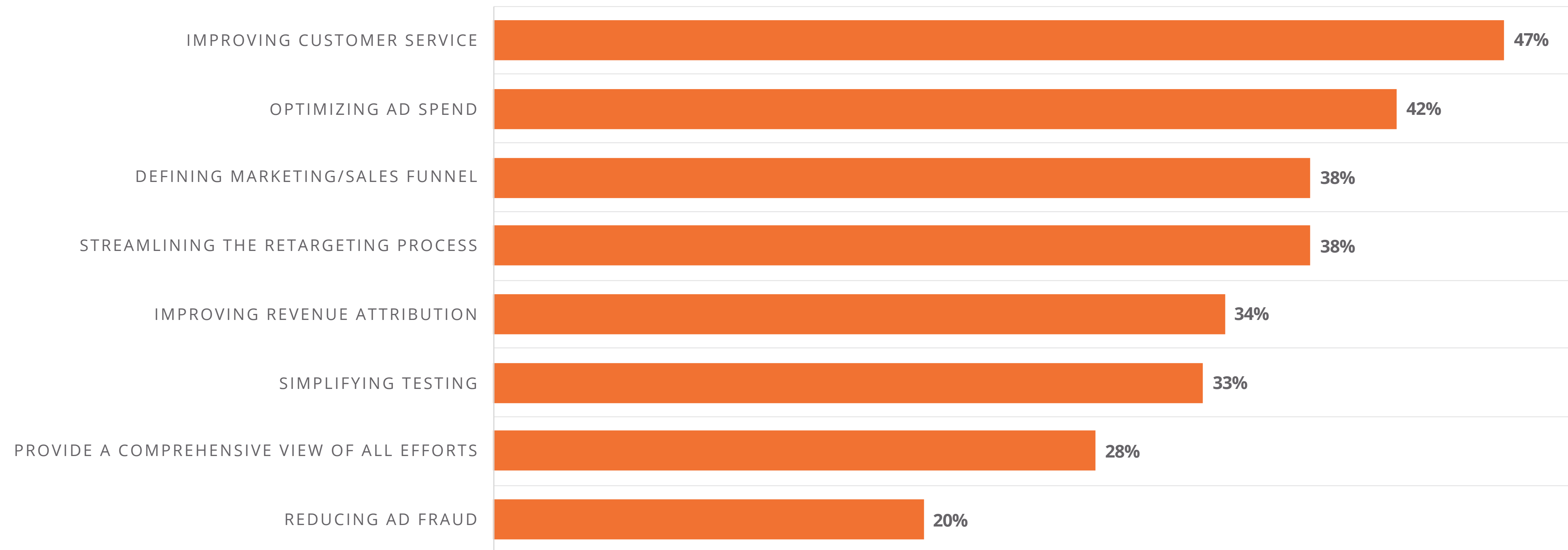
Load in your ads, create your campaign, and our system starts to learn, fast.

4.3 Retargeting Solutions: What Matters

Room for improvement

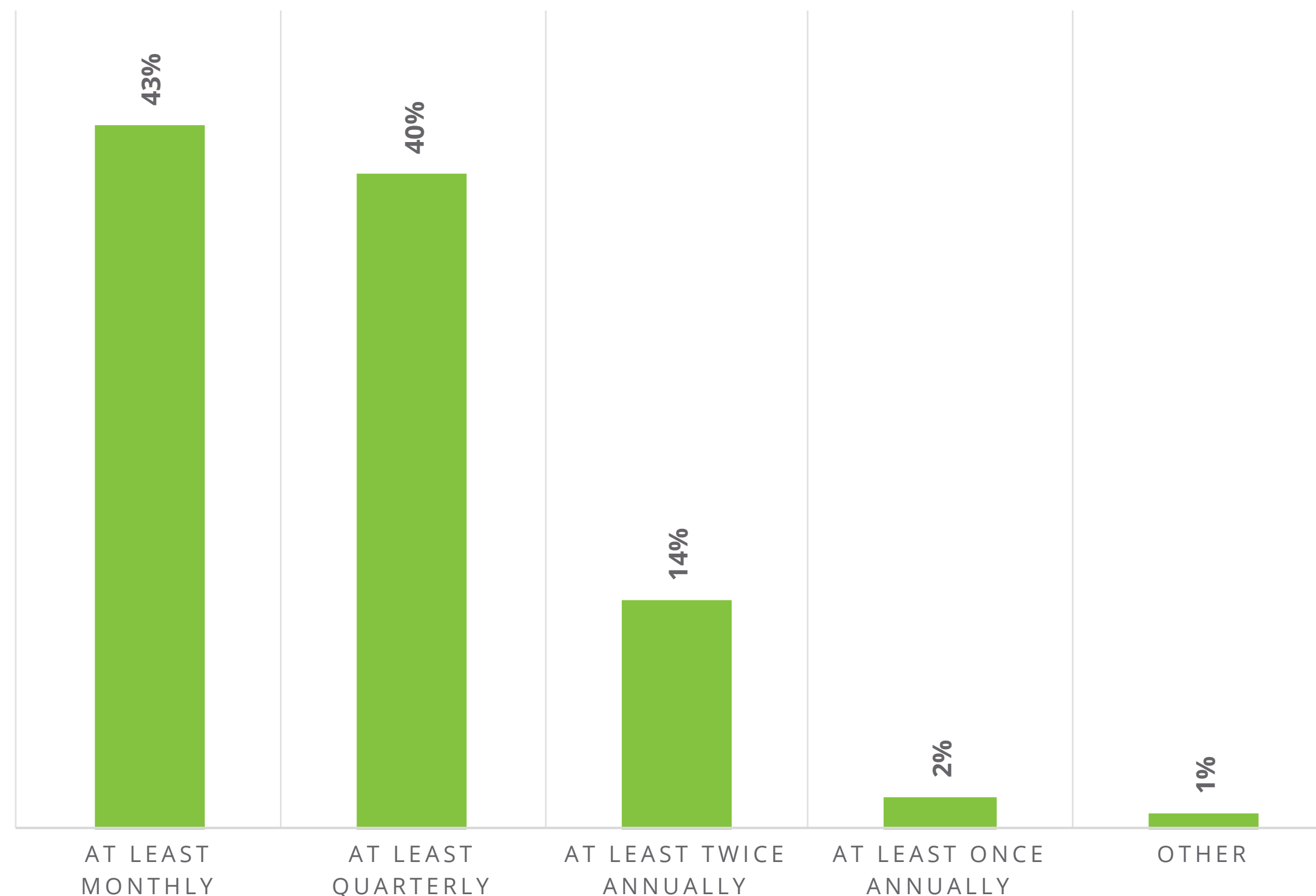
Don't overlook the customer service that your platform provides. Do they have digital advertising experts you can talk to about your specific programs? Do they help you optimize your ads? As you optimize your ads, you improve your ROI and as result, you optimize your ad spend.

What are the most important features that your retargeting platform should improve on?



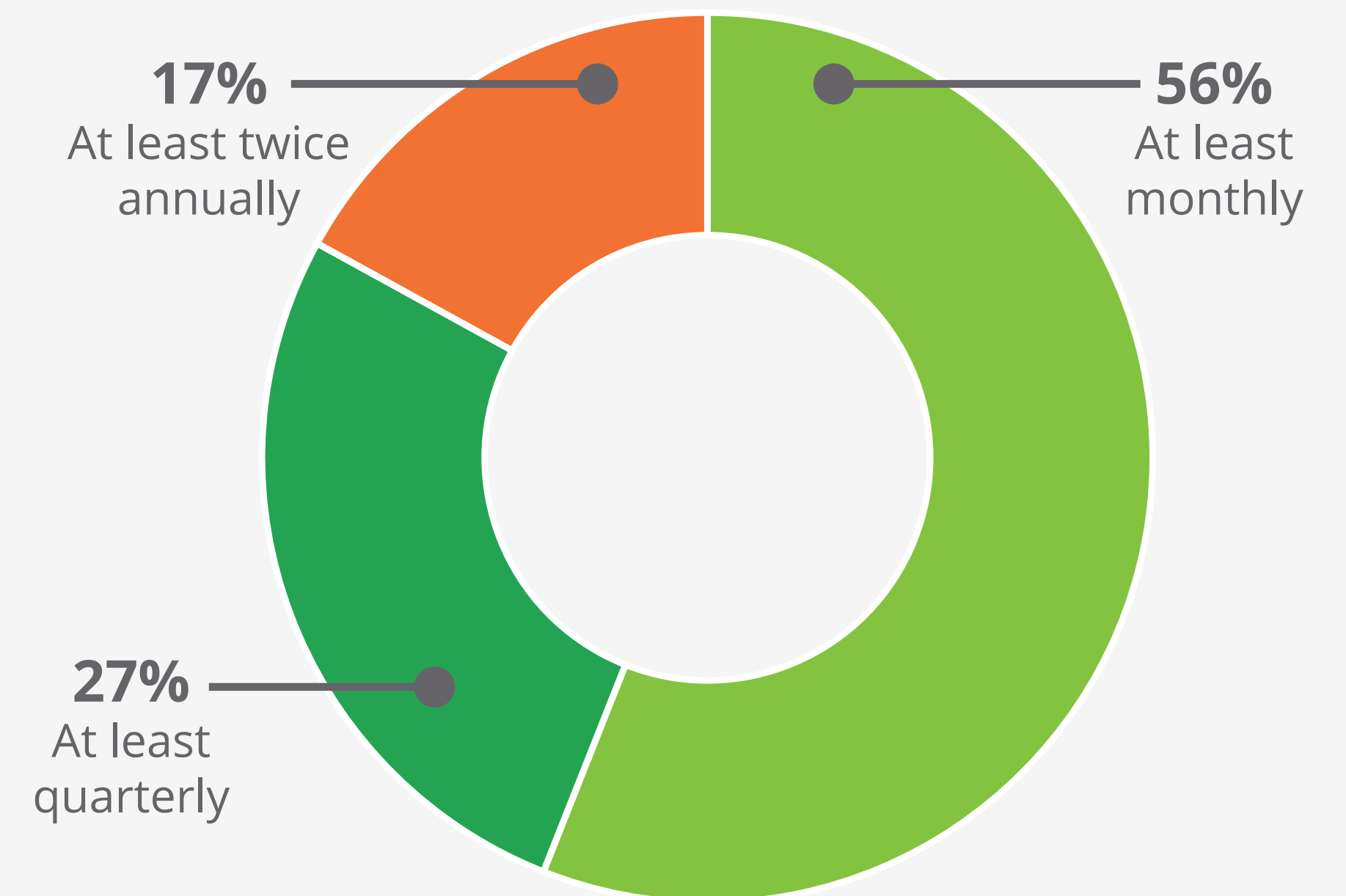
5.0 Measuring Performance

How often should retargeting technology be evaluated for performance?



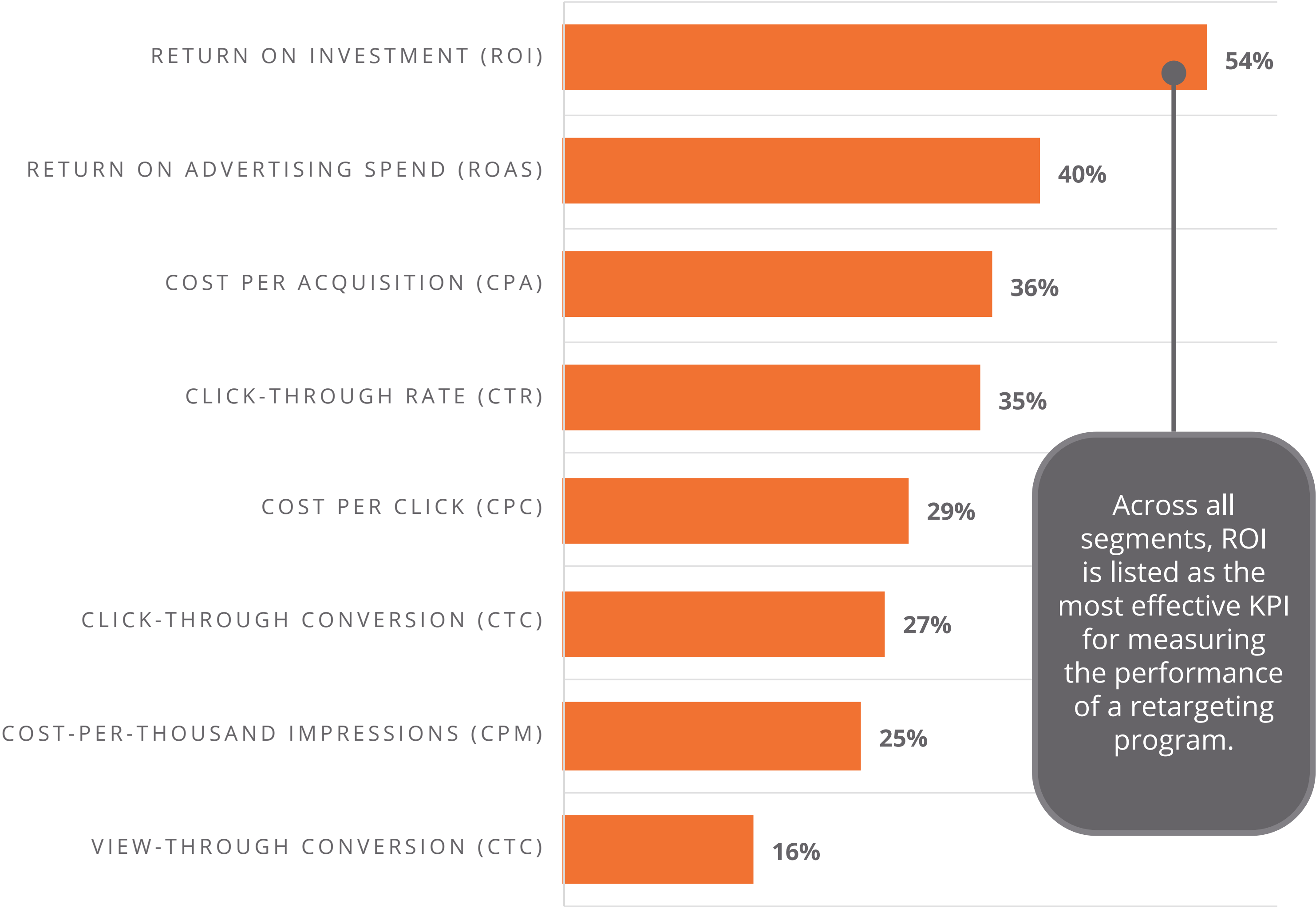
An 83% majority of marketers are evaluating the performance of their retargeting technology at least quarterly, with more than half of that group (43% overall) reporting this activity happens at least monthly.

The most successful retargeters evaluate their technology more frequently.



5.1 Measuring Performance

Key Performance Indicators



Those who consider themselves to have the most successful retargeting strategy put almost as much weight on Return on Advertising Spend (ROAS) and Cost Per Acquisition (CPA) as they do on Return on Investment (ROI).

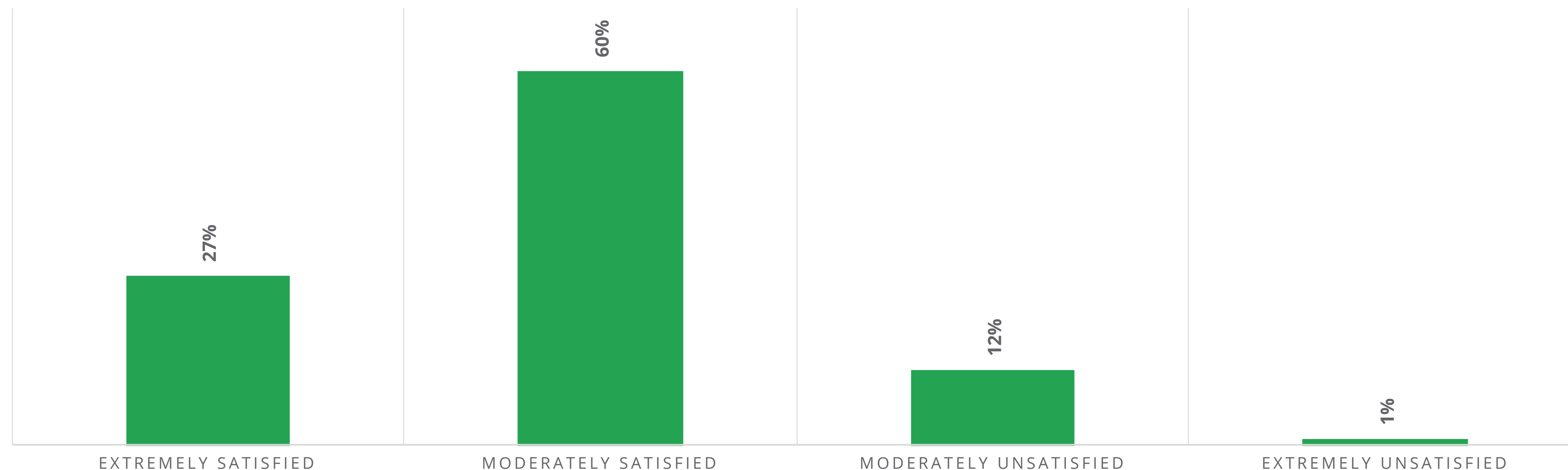
Most Successful Retargeters

- 48%
Return on Investment (ROI)
- 47%
Return on Advertising Spend (ROAS)
- 44%
Cost Per Acquisition (CPA)

5.2 Measuring Performance

Only 27% of marketers are extremely satisfied with their ability to determine the ROI of their retargeting program.

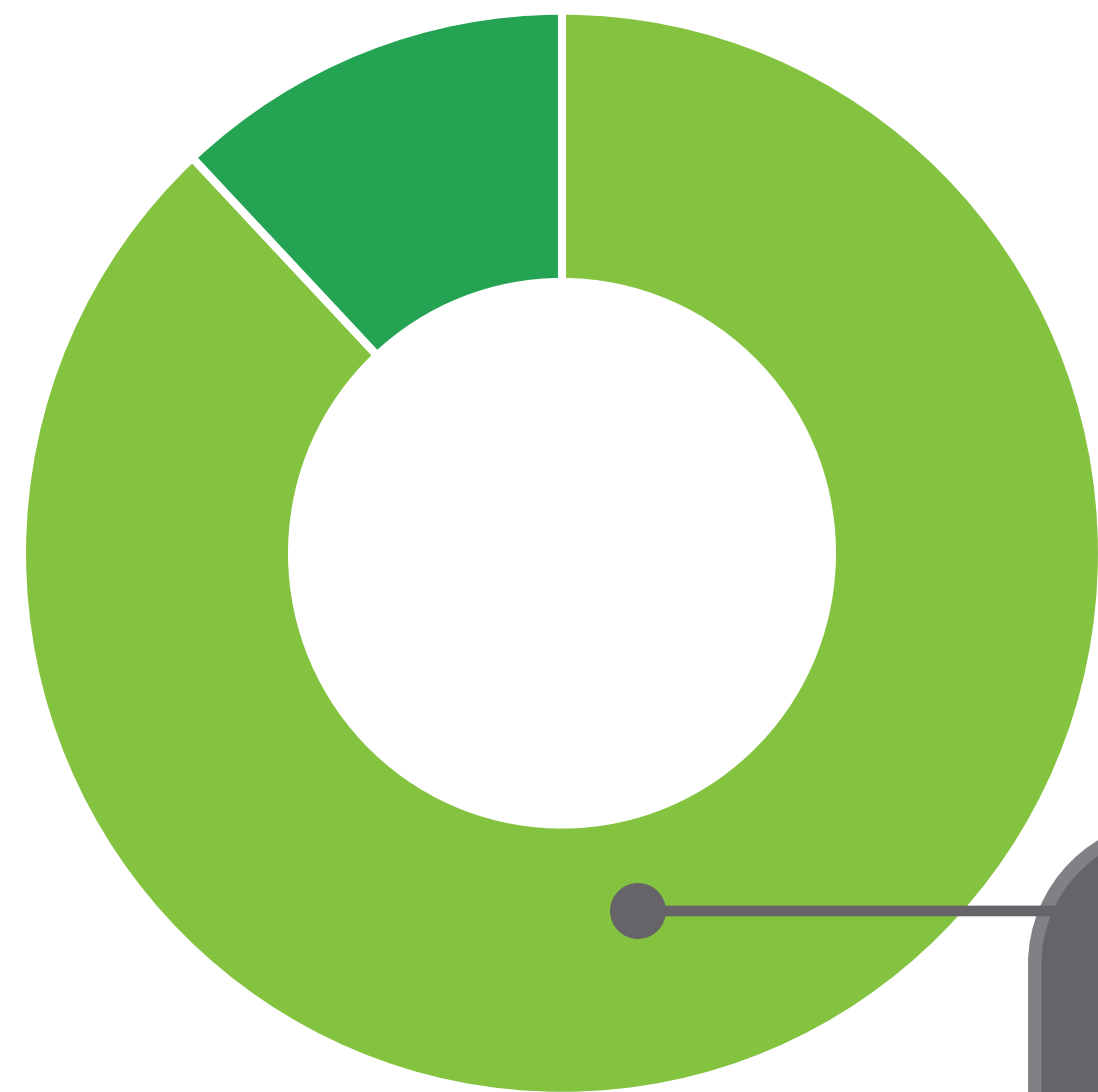
Measurement and attribution matter. When you can see the ROI of each ad, you know which ones to stop running, which to keep going, and which to give another shot. Having one platform allows you to see ROI from a single dashboard, make better decisions, and make those decisions quickly.



6.0 Industry Trends

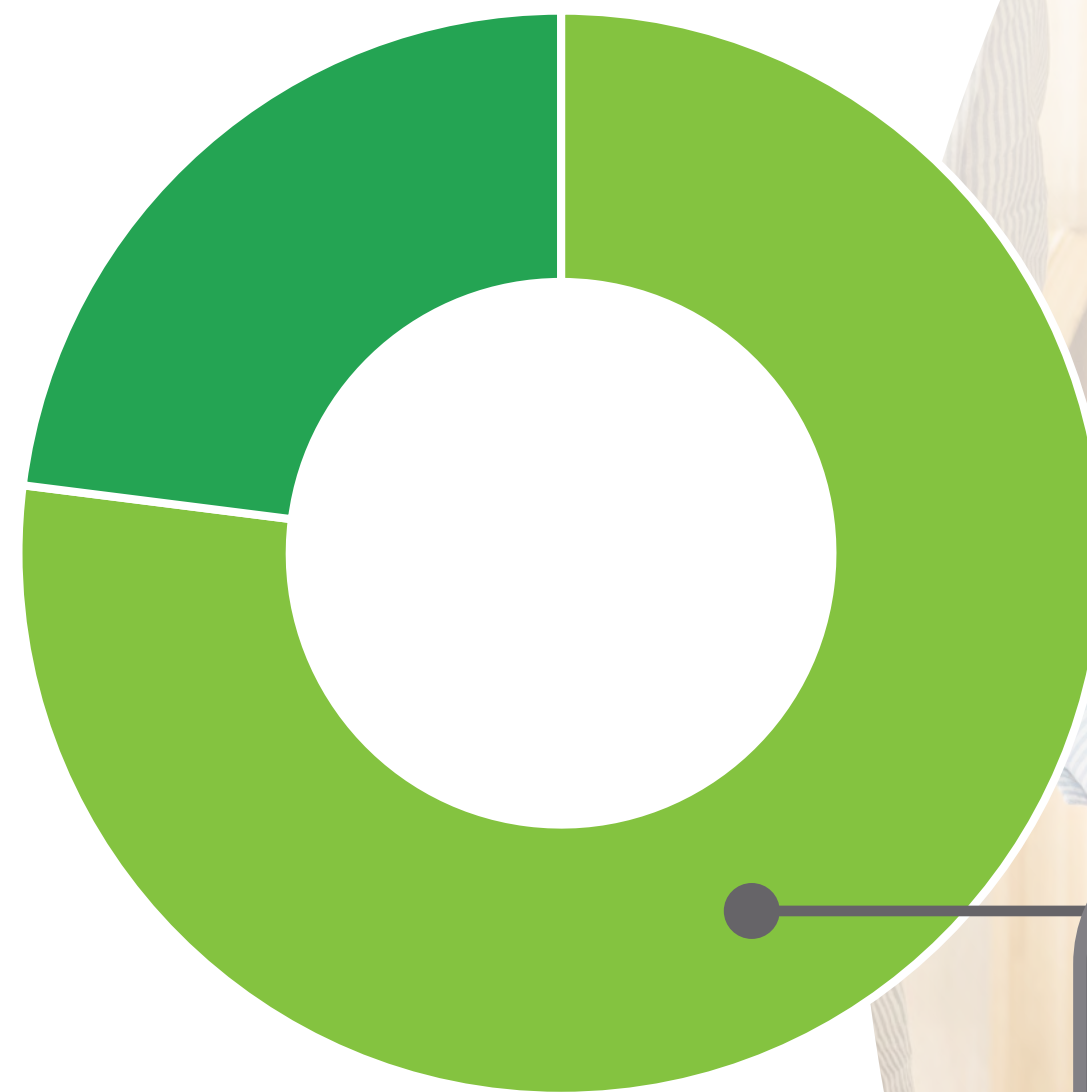
What is top-of-mind for marketers using retargeting?

Importance of having a single view of attribution



88%
of marketers
say that having
a single view of
attribution is
important.

Concern about the potential impact of ad fraud



77%
Over three-
quarters of
those surveyed
are concerned
about ad-fraud.

Potential Impact:
Deprecation of third-
party cookies

Seven-in-ten (71%)
marketers say that the
deprecation of third-
party cookies with
have an impact on their
retargeting program.

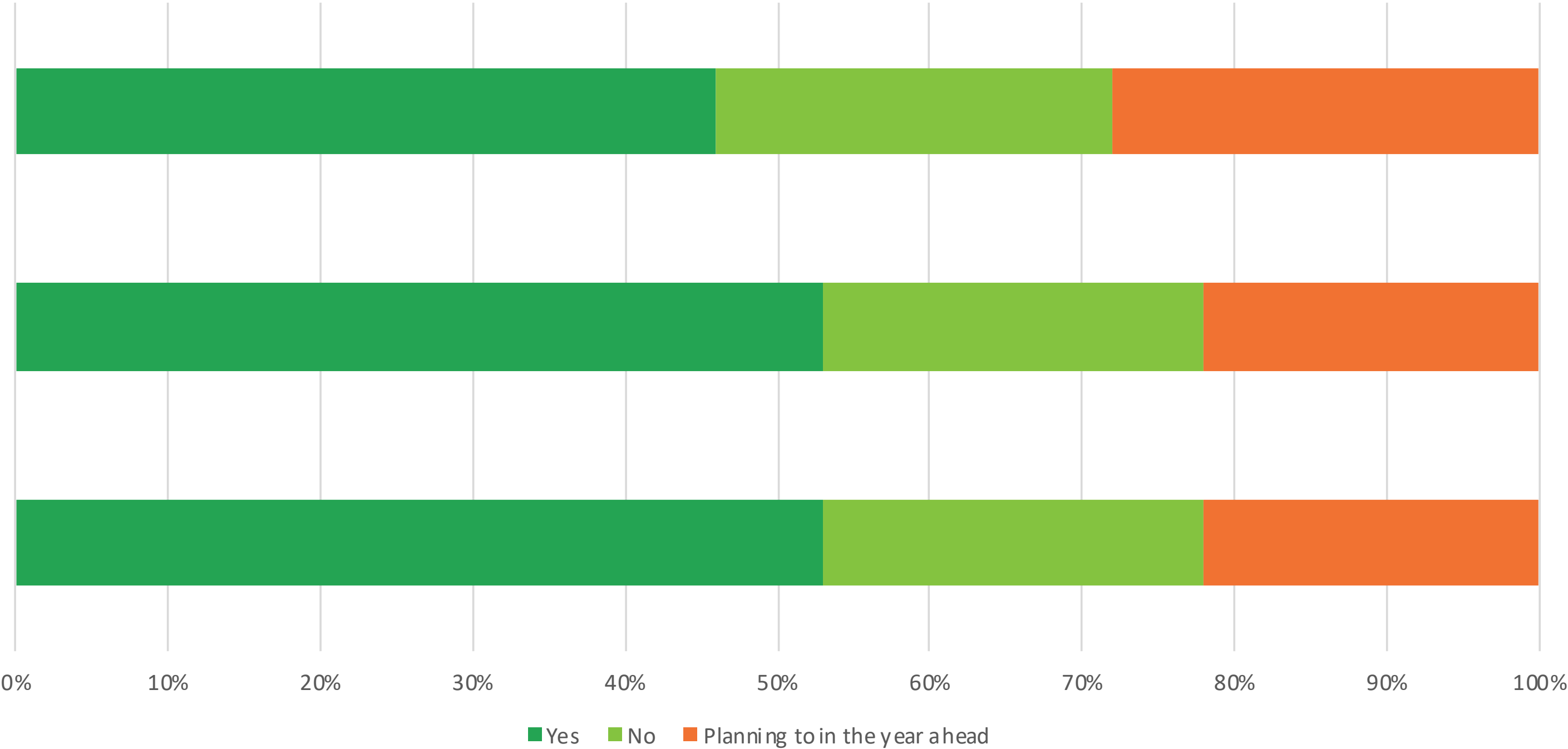
6.1 Industry Trends

Optimization with AI

Are you able to use AI to optimize for a specific KPI?

Are you using AI to optimize your retargeting program?

Are you using Artificial Intelligence (AI) or machine learning to optimize your ad and conversion funnel?



The most successful retargeters are more likely to be using AI.

82%
are able to optimize
for a specific KPI
using AI or are
planning to in the
year ahead

88%
are using AI to
optimize their
retargeting programs
or are planning to in
the year ahead

86%
are using AI to optimize
their advertising and
conversion funnel or
are planning to in the
year ahead

\$1,000 Matching Ad Credit Offer

One powerful intelligent platform serves ads to your past website visitors across Facebook, Instagram and Google.

Register your free account today and we'll match up to \$1,000 in ad spend!



One platform to rule them all.

Reach Google, Facebook, Instagram PLUS tens of thousands of publishers from one single platform. No more windows filling up your screen. Attribution consolidated from every channel into a single dashboard.

2-3x better than standard display ads.

It makes sense. Why would you keep advertising to new customers when you could reach people who are already familiar with you? Retargeting is effective bottom of the funnel channel optimization.

Easy, intelligent and automated.

We know. One more thing to set-up. But think of it this way. Take 15 minutes. One time. Load in your ads, create your campaign, and our system starts to learn, fast. And we'll build your Perfect Audience.

We all want ROI.

How about 8-10x ROI? Simply put, retargeting is the most effective advertising channel you can use.

The Research Partners



Well, we're happy to announce that Perfect Audience has joined with the leading revenue growth platform, SharpSpring. In the process, we've renamed Perfect Audience to SharpSpring Ads. SharpSpring Ads has all the same features under one roof, with no subscription fees or hidden costs. And, as always, our popular FREE unlimited support. [Get your FREE account today!](#)



Companies partner with Ascend2 to conduct original research and to supplement their marketing content, generate leads, and engage prospects to drive demand through the middle of the funnel. Ascend2 performs research for Oracle, Adobe, Vidyard, Dun & Bradstreet, HubSpot, and more. Ascend2 research is regularly featured by MarketingProfs, AdWeek, eMarketer, Forbes, Media Post, Search Engine Land, Marketing Land, Convince & Convert, and more.

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