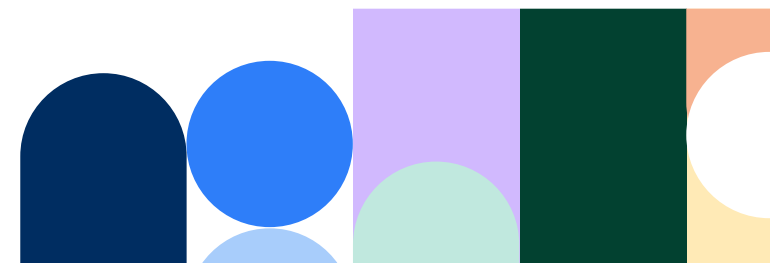
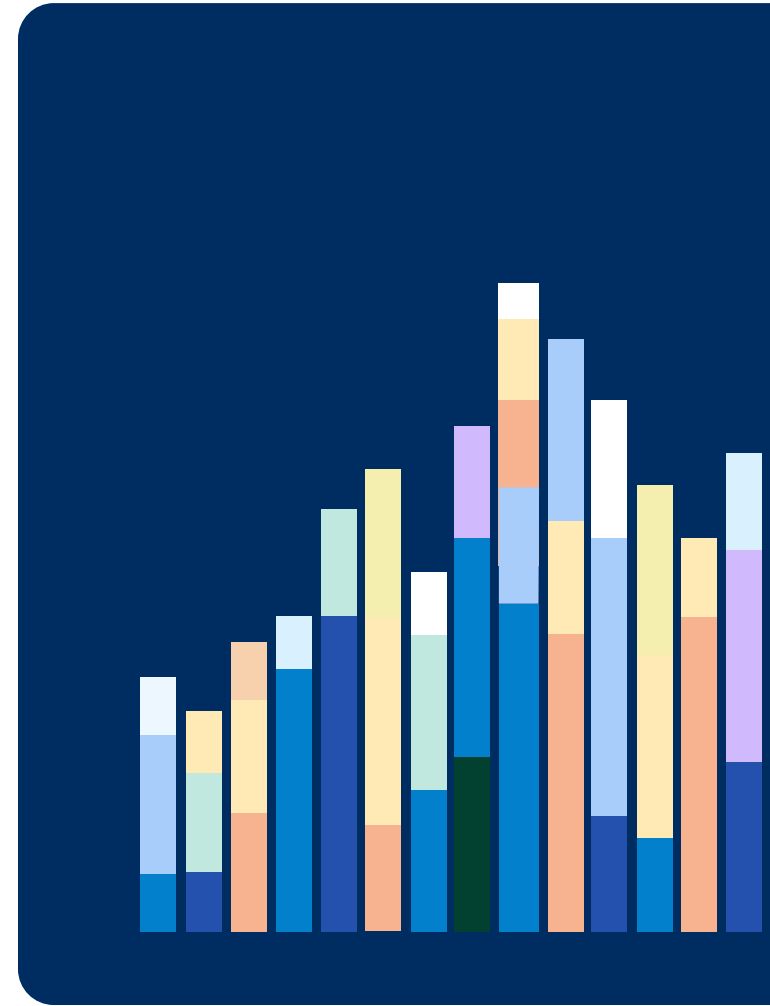


Airtable Marketing Trends Report



Overview

Despite investment in tooling and processes, marketers aren't operationally equipped to build customer experiences at scale —and they're punching in hours of manual work to make up the difference. So the question is: why is it happening? And more importantly: how can we fix it?

Key findings

Marketers don't have the luxury of choosing between creativity and speed—now they need to deliver on both simultaneously to capture customers' attention. We surveyed 300 marketers about the systems, tools, and workflows they're using to meet those demands—and the struggles they've had along the way. Here's a quick look at what we've found.

13hrs

Leaders are wasting more than one third of their weeks on repetitive tasks:

The average marketing leader spends 13 hours per week on manual, operational tasks

46%

Marketing leaders—like many leaders—are data rich, but craving insights:

46% of marketers say they lack timely data to make strategic decisions

86%

Increasing workload is leading to widespread stress:

86% of marketing leaders say their current workload is creating stress for their team

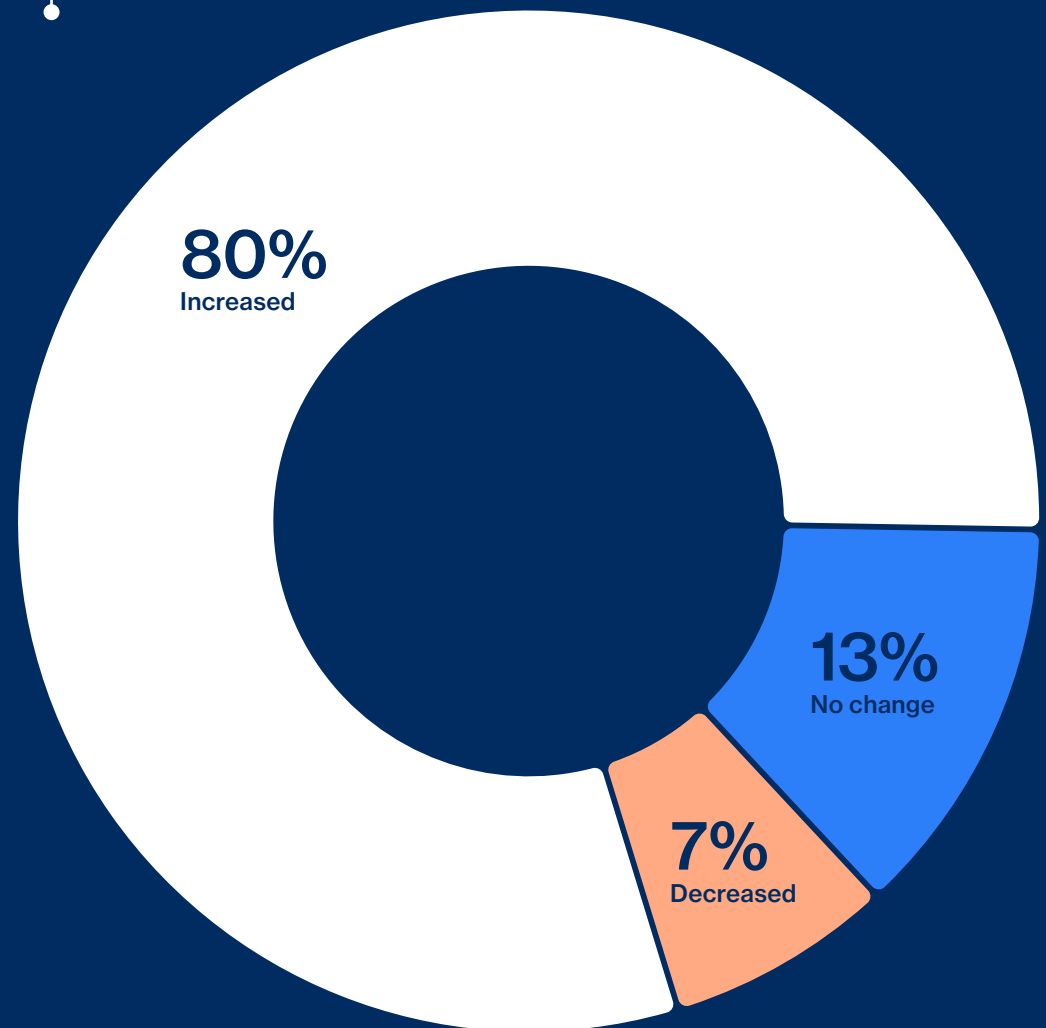
Demands for production are up—and so are stress levels

Historically, marketing teams served as a creative function, focused on capturing their target audiences through thoughtful, engaging campaigns. But in a world where the average person is now exposed to [577 marketing messages per day](#), standing out—and more importantly, driving impact—isn't easy. That's putting lots of pressure on production. And it's exposing operational gaps in the process.

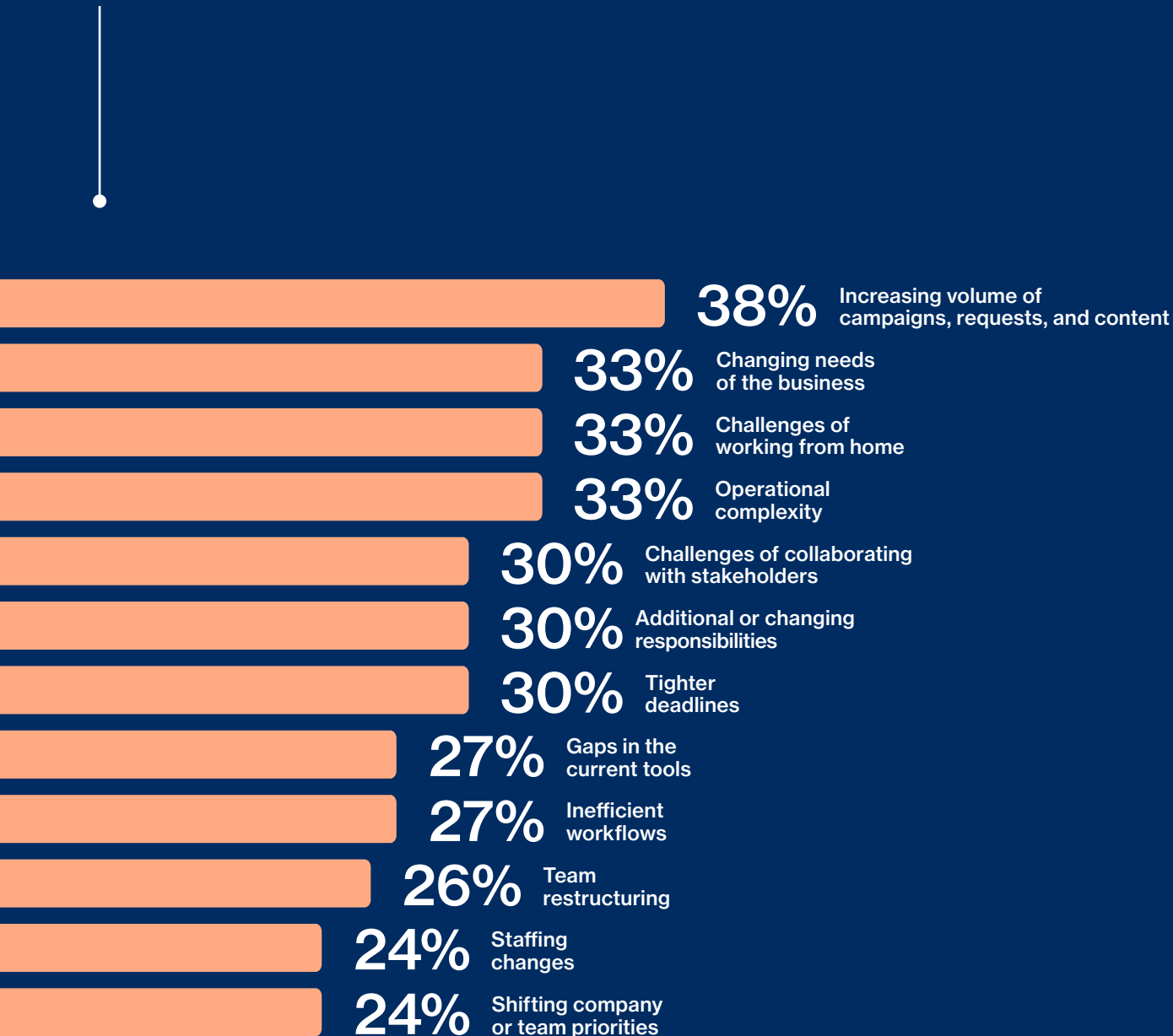
The pressure to produce is crushing marketing teams

Of the marketing leaders surveyed, 80% say that the volume of campaigns, requests, and content that marketing needs to deliver on has increased over the last year.

Compared to a year ago, how has the volume of campaigns, requests, and content changed?



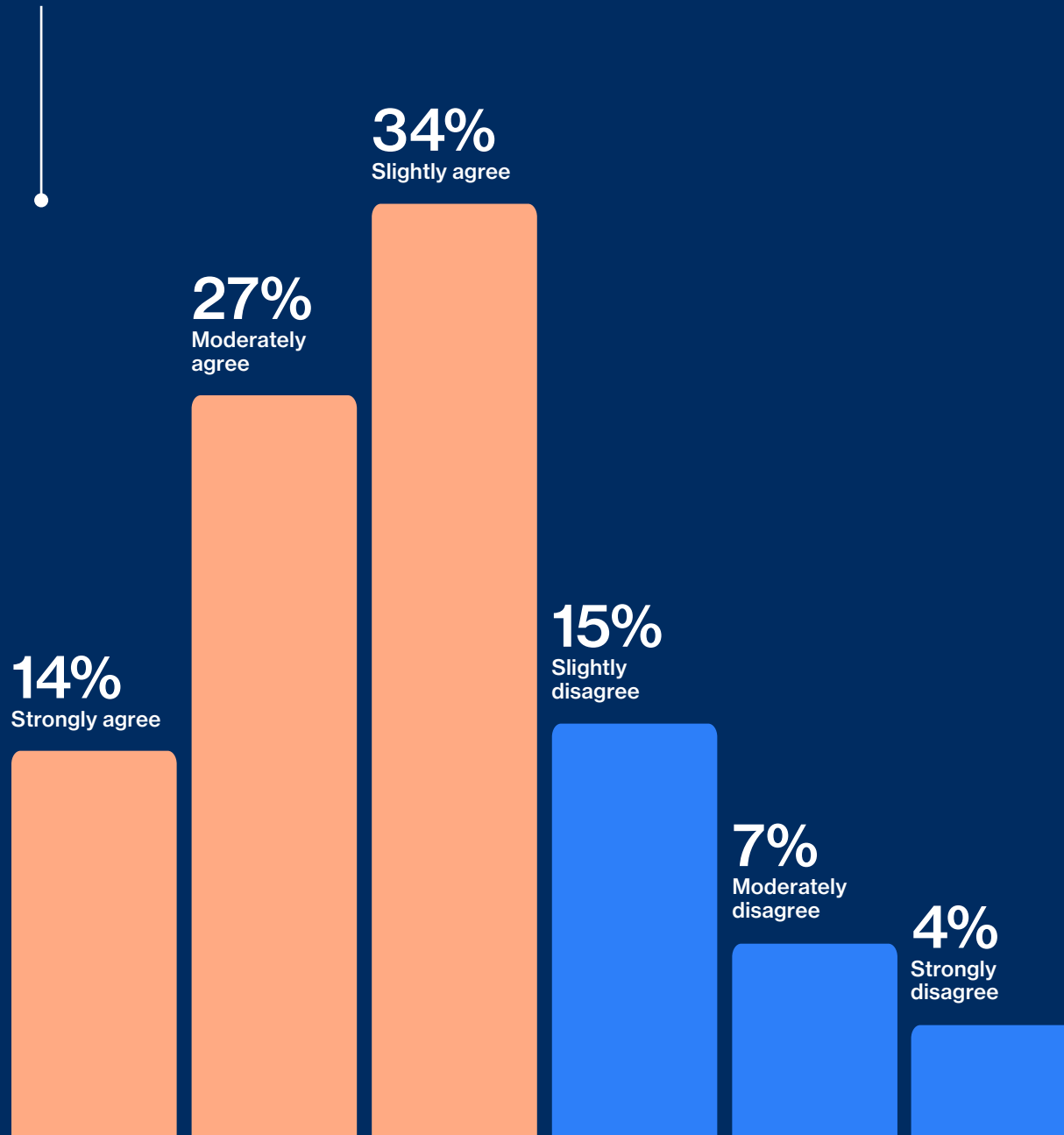
Which of the following are major factors contributing to workload stress for your team?



For many, those demands have increased significantly. Among marketers that say work has increased, 38% say that the volume of campaigns, requests, and content has increased by half or more.

And marketing leaders are feeling the heat. 86% of leaders surveyed say that their current workload is creating stress for their team. That's directly tied to the increase in production: 38% say that the increasing volume of campaigns, requests, and content is a top source of stress.

How strongly do you agree or disagree with this statement?
I am frustrated by how long it takes to ship most campaigns.



Leaders are universally frustrated by slow-moving campaigns

Despite the scramble to produce quality campaigns at higher volumes—and the stress that comes with it—most marketing leaders aren't satisfied with their teams' output. Three in four marketing leaders report that they're frustrated by the amount of time it takes to ship most campaigns.

The data points to a larger problem in the marketing function. Demand for campaigns and content is increasing—but the majority of teams haven't figured out how to produce fast enough to satisfy the business.

Spotlight: Red Bull Media House

Red Bull Media House tells stories at a global scale. With content spanning more than a dozen channels, 36 languages, 170+ countries, and 1,250+ annual events, they need to produce a high volume of content on a globally distributed team. To do it, they lean on a globally managed single source of truth for all of their campaigns, which helps maintain communication across the team in a high-volume, high-complexity set of campaigns. [Read more here.](#)

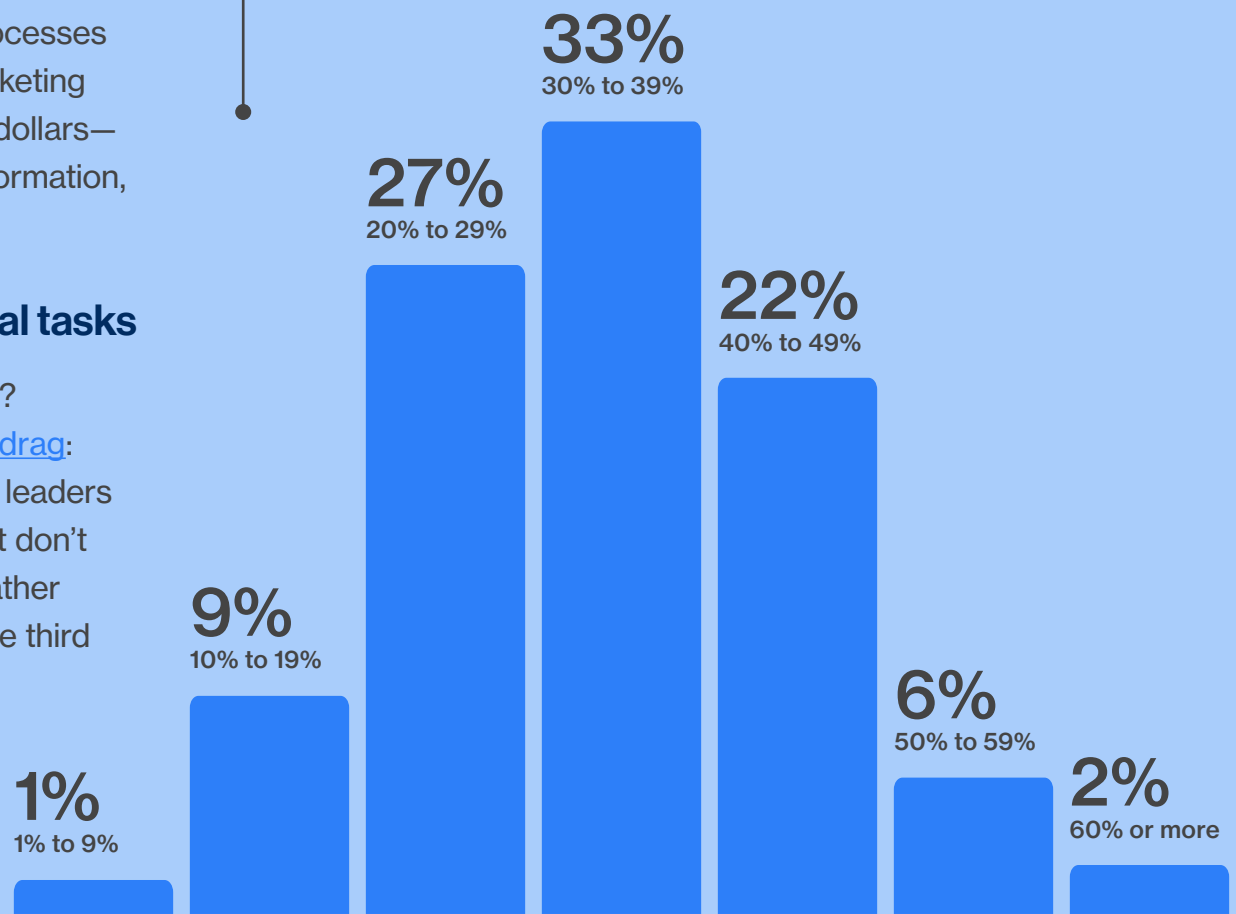
Teams are bearing the brunt of broken processes

Marketers are spending tons of energy (and budget) on processes and tooling. [Studies estimate](#) that worldwide spend on marketing technology is \$121.5 billion. But despite those efforts—and dollars—marketers work with fragmented systems for accessing information, producing content, and retrieving analytics.

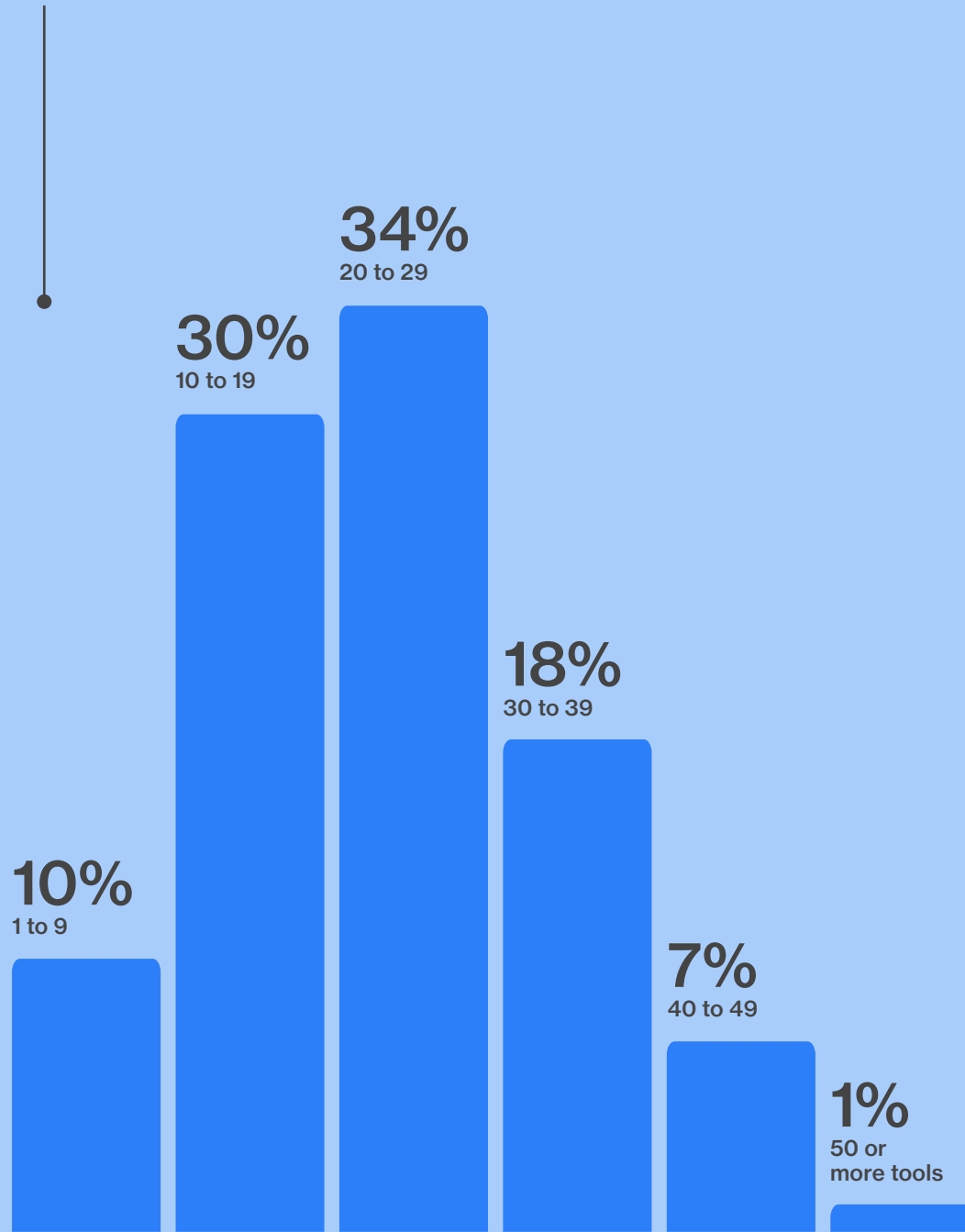
Leaders lose 13 hours every week to operational tasks

How much time do you spend on manual, operational tasks? Probably more than you think. That leads to [organizational drag](#): time and energy lost to bloated processes. Most marketing leaders are spending a significant portion of their time on tasks that don't actually contribute to deliverables—or “work about work” rather than the work itself. The average marketing leader loses one third of their week (or, 13 hours) to manual, operational tasks.

On average, about what percentage of your work week do you spend on manual, operational tasks?



Approximately how many marketing tools does your marketing team use on a regular basis?



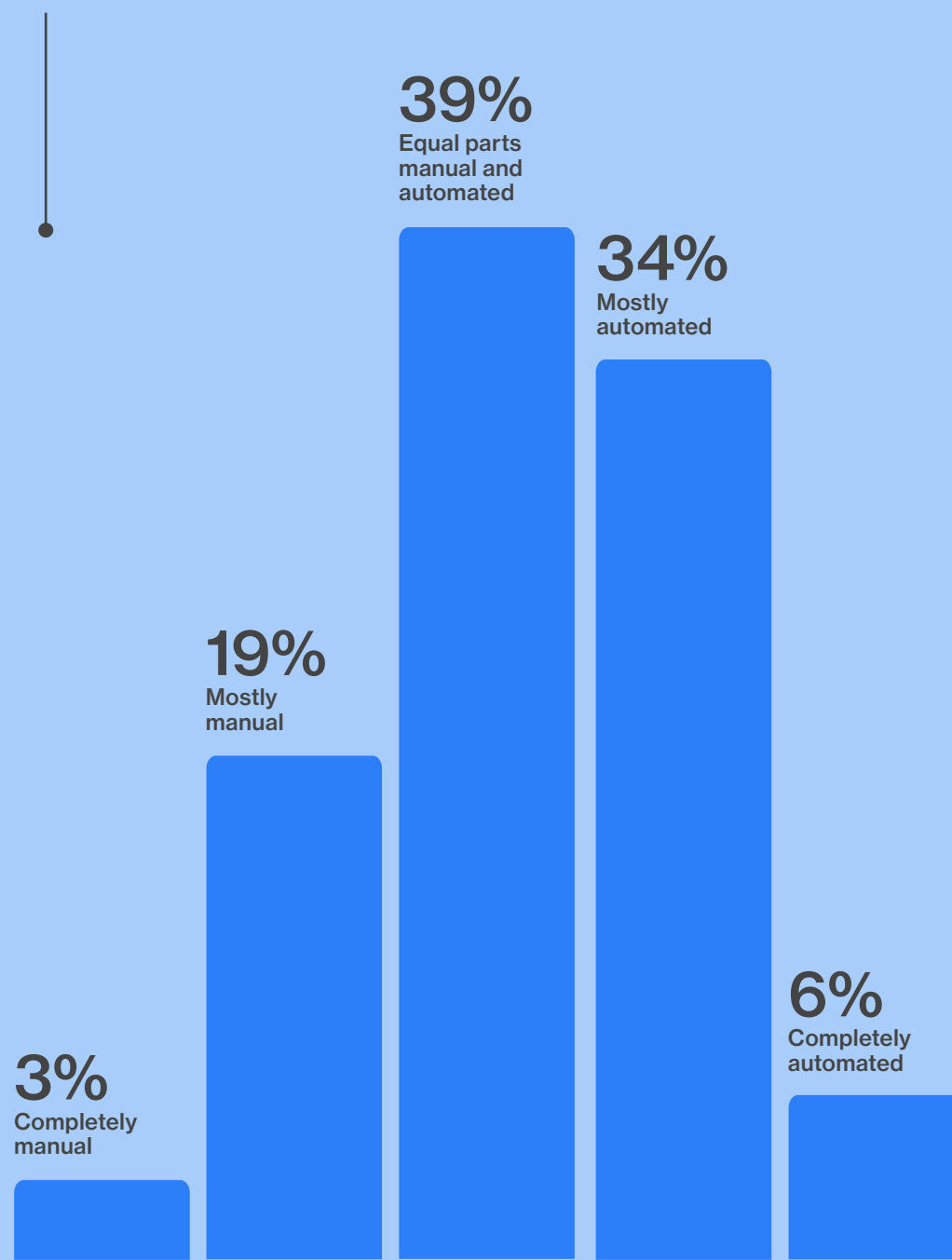
And disjointed tools are causing too many headaches

That time lost to manual, operational tasks isn't just a symptom of managerial duties. It's directly tied to the way marketers use their tools, and in part, the sheer volume of tools that they're using. 60% of marketers are using 20+ tools on a regular basis.

But those tools don't work well together. In fact, 60% of marketing leaders say that their process for synchronizing data across tools is somewhat or completely manual.

That time spent syncing data manually—and across a wide stack of tools—is linked to the high volume of manual, operational work managers are facing. Paired with the growing appetite for content, campaigns, and requests, it's unsurprising that teams are feeling stressed.

How manual or automated is your process for synchronizing data across your marketing tools?



Poor flow of information is hobbling decision-making

Marketing teams have oceans of data available to them, but still find it difficult to get the right insights they need to make better, faster decisions. When critical information is hidden or siloed, the risk of misalignment, duplicated work, and error increases dramatically.

The spread of the not-so-singular source of truth

The foundation for creating alignment and visibility? It's a single source of truth: an integrated, up-to-date source of information that provides everything you need to manage the campaigns, requests, and content that your team needs to deliver.

Encouragingly, most marketers feel they have one. 86% of marketing leaders report that they have a single source of truth for content production, campaign production, and analytics.

But while most teams have a “single source of truth” in name, in practice, it's not quite so clean-cut. For example, the average marketing leader says that 34% of the information they work with is duplicated across multiple sources like spreadsheets, documents, and apps. Most say that between 20-49% of information is duplicated across sources.

So even though most marketing teams believe they have a single source of truth...they don't appear to operate that way.

Approximately what percentage of the data you work with is duplicated in multiple places, such as spreadsheets, docs and apps?

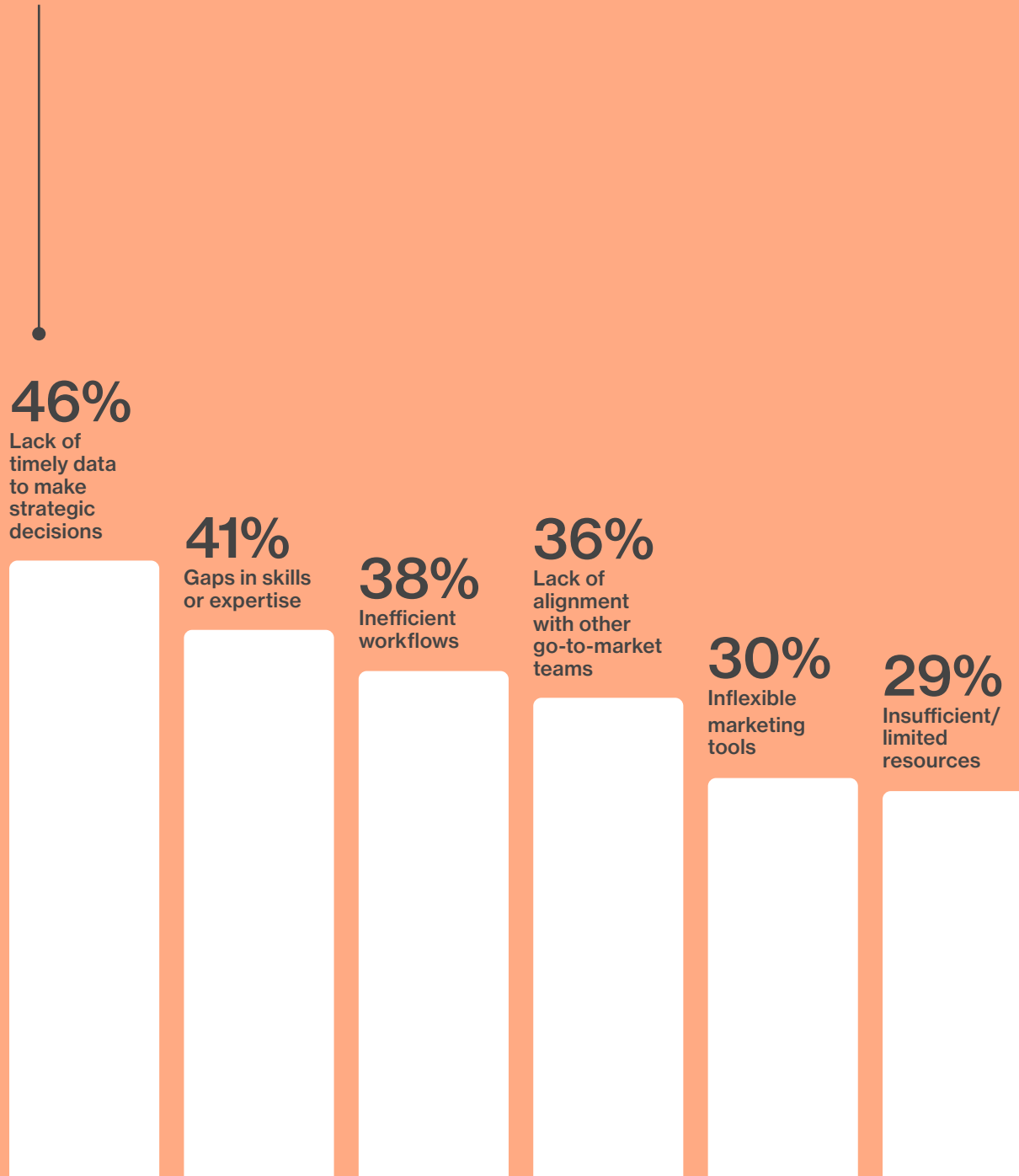
73%
20% to 49%

11%
None to 19%

15%
50% to more



Which of the following are inhibiting your team's success?



Hazy visibility is holding marketers back

That missing single source of truth is making it harder for leaders to find the data they need. Almost half of marketing leaders (46%) said that they lack the timely data they need to make strategic decisions. They may have systems for tracking their campaigns, but they aren't able to quickly access key info when they need it.

To revamp their processes, some leaders are taking matters into their own hands: 33% of leaders say they use no-code and low-code tools on a regular basis. No-code/low-code tools let you build your own customized apps and workflows using visual editors—no coding required. This flexibility empowers marketers to create processes that work for them—instead of brute forcing their way through broken workflows.

Spotlight: Hearst

Hearst Magazines manages a portfolio of more than 25 US brands, publishing 300 editions and 245 websites around the world. When they had to streamline operations across web, magazine, and subscription management, they set out to create a global publishing ecosystem to unite activities across all three areas. That single source of truth, in turn, allowed them to unlock greater publishing speed and scale. [Read more here.](#)

Takeaways

1. Demands for production agility are increasing

38% of marketers say that the volume of content, campaigns, and requests has increased by 50% or more. But most marketing teams aren't equipped with the tooling, the best practices, and the workflows to keep pace with those demands. Investing in operational capabilities—like automation, for example—can help alleviate some operational burden to give time back to creative, strategic work.

2. Tooling has tangible impacts on decision-making and productivity

The lack of integration across tools —paired with the sheer volume of tools that marketers use—comes at a steep time cost for marketing leaders. They're losing more than a third of every week to manual tasks. 15% of marketing leaders report that more than half of the data they work with is duplicated in multiple places like spreadsheets, docs, and apps. That's making it hard to find what they need: 46% say that lack of timely data is a top barrier to their success. Investing in integrated and automated workflows can help marketers keep productivity high, even as business needs change.

3. To fix broken workflows, teams need flexibility

27% of marketing leaders say that gaps in current tools are causing stress for their team. And 38% say that inefficient workflows are inhibiting their team's success. That's why marketing leaders are embracing flexible solutions: 33% say they're using low-code/no-code tools on a regular basis. Leaning into tools that enable fully customized processes —like low-code/no-code tools—can help them stay agile, and maintain flexibility as their business evolves.

Appendix

Methodology

This report is based on a 300 person survey fielded March 10-16, 2021 by Airtable in partnership with [Lawless Research](#). The study included respondents from [Quest Mindshare's B2B panel](#) who met the following criteria:

- Full-time employee of a US company with 500 or more employees
- Senior manager and above in the marketing department
- Responsibility or oversight for communications, content creation, editorial, or publishing

Respondent breakdown

- Company size: 17% - 500 to 999; 56% - 1,000 to 4,999; 21% - 5,000 to 9,999; 4% - 10,000 to 24,999; 2% - 25,000+
- Marketing department size: 2% - 1 to 9; 12% - 10 to 19; 25% - 20 to 49; 25% - 50 to 99; 22% - 100 to 99; 14% - 200 or more
- Primary market: 31% - Businesses (including government agencies and nonprofits); 33% - Consumers (including constituents, patients, students); 36% - About half businesses and half consumers

The 10-minute survey was designed by Lawless Research and programmed in Qualtrics. Data was analyzed using Q Research.

About Airtable

Marketing teams need greater agility and adaptability than ever before. Airtable empowers teams to keep up with change by creating a single source of truth around dynamically changing information, ensuring data is always in sync and up to date. Our platform enables agile marketing teams to view, analyze, and build workflows in the ways that work best for them, streamlining every phase of the content lifecycle and customer journey.

Airtable is an app platform that enables teams to build workflows that modernize their business processes. More than 250,000 organizations, including more than half of the Fortune 1000, use Airtable's visual, flexible tools to customize workflows that meet their exact needs, whether they're creating blockbuster movies, designing running shoes, distributing life-saving vaccines, or anything in between.

Interested in exploring Airtable for your team?

[Learn more here.](#)