


A Guide to Accelerating Business Efficiency in 2024

Emerging Sales and
Marketing Trends in EMEA —
and What They Mean for
Your Business



HubSpot



As we head into 2024, one thing's certain: The B2B landscape is primed for efficiency. Today's customers are more informed, more engaged, and more open to conversations than ever before — and they're eager to find the right business partners.

That's the good news.

The even better news? Sales and marketing teams will also have more opportunities to connect with them. From new CRM integrations to generative AI, emerging technologies are opening all kinds of doors. These tools have the power to shorten sales cycles, create more personalised marketing, and strengthen customer relationships.

However, there is a catch. To become more efficient, sales directors, marketing directors, and business owners will need to take steps to ensure their teams are fully and truly aligned. And unfortunately, this is still a struggle at most organisations. Across EMEA, 96% of sales and marketing professionals say they face alignment issues that are undermining buyer experiences.

HubSpot is here to help. In this guide, we've pulled together the latest research to uncover what consumers want most in 2024 — and how you can provide it.



Table of Contents

Introduction

Streamlining Your Business in 2024

Chapter 1

The Evolving Customer Journey

Chapter 2

The Future of Sales and Marketing Alignment

Chapter 3

The New Realities of Data and AI

Chapter 4

Regional Spotlight

Chapter 5

Best Practices for a Successful 2024



Introduction

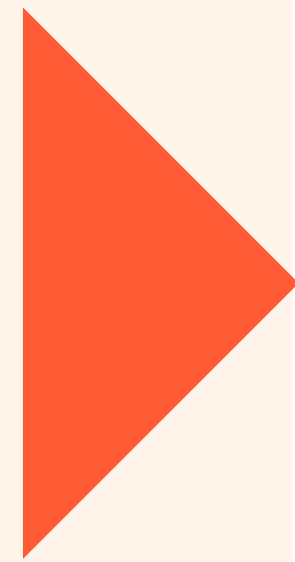
Streamlining Your Business in 2024

Many sales and marketing teams are entering 2024 with lingering impacts from a challenging 2023 environment. But we've already made it through several big challenges, and the latest trends indicate we're approaching the light at the end of the tunnel — with plenty of opportunities for business leaders to lower costs, save time and make more data-driven decisions. For example:

If you want your sales team to:

Increase efficiency

In 2023, the sales professionals we surveyed were spending just two hours a day selling — and approximately one hour a day on administrative tasks.



Embrace AI

Sales professionals who use AI tools to accomplish administrative tasks gain two extra hours each day. They spend more time connecting with customers, building relationships and progressing pipeline.

[Jump to section](#)

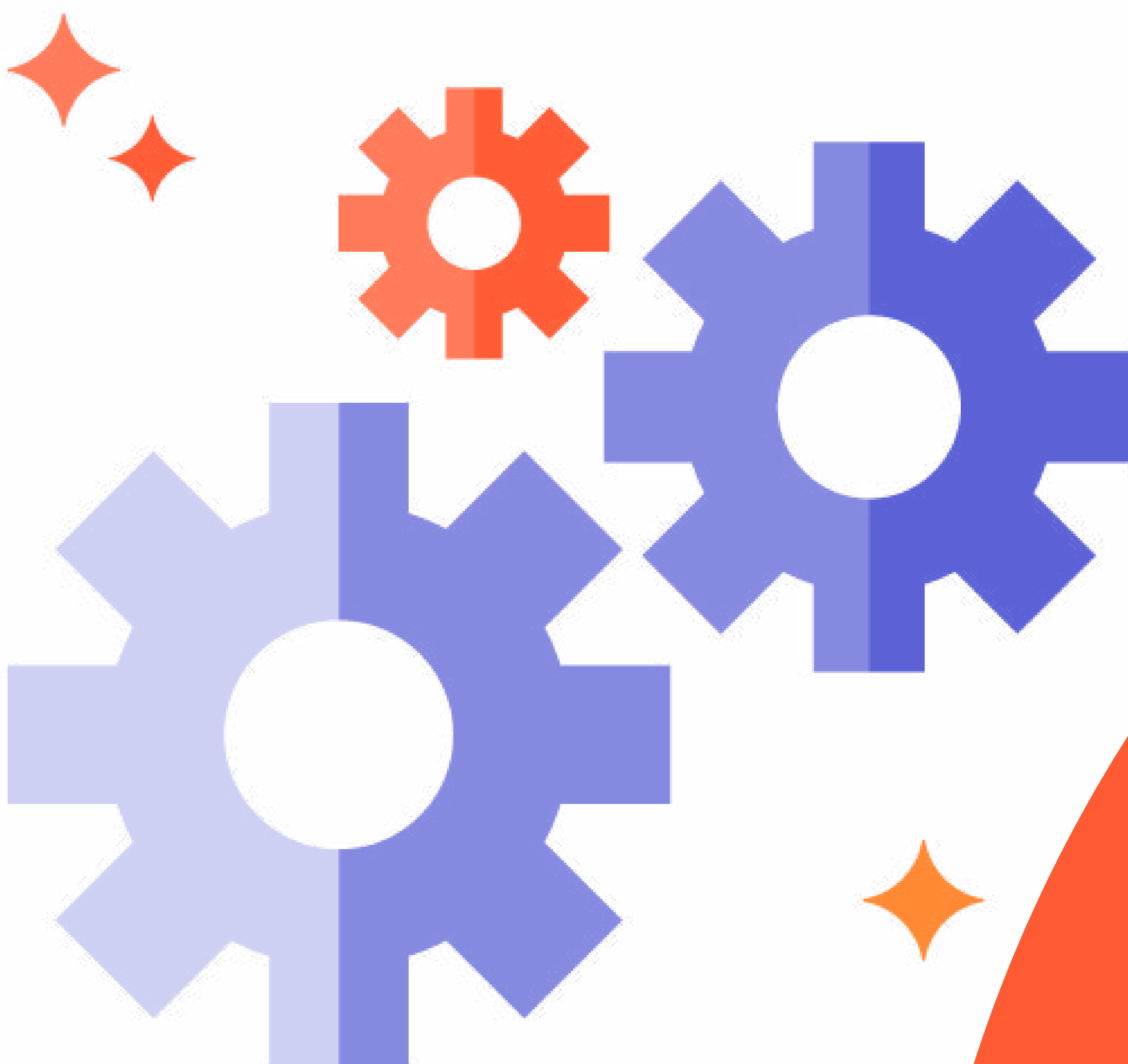
Engage digital-first consumers

Digital commerce is starting to overtake seller-led purchases. Seven in 10 B2B buyers want to do their own research, and 83% now prefer ordering services online.

Trade personalised for personal

When customers do end up on sales calls, they're looking for highly personal conversations that provide true value. As more people buy online, salespeople need to find new ways to connect with them one-on-one.

[Jump to section](#)



If you want your marketing team to:

Get more from your technology

Marketers have access to a wealth of advanced digital tools, but still struggle to make the most of them. More than 60% say their organisations either haven't acquired the right technology or aren't using existing technology to its full potential.



Explore generative AI

Generative AI is quickly becoming the ultimate marketing assistant, and will play an important role in 2024. While a third of marketers are yet to use it, six in 10 expect it to help them produce significantly more, higher-quality content.

[Jump to section](#)

Overcome data privacy issues

Increased data privacy regulations have been a hurdle for marketers over the past few years, from GDPR to Google's plans to phase out third-party cookies. More than 81% of surveyed marketers say they still rely on third-party cookies, and roughly one in five say they aren't prepared to lose access to them.

Focus on first-party data

Many marketers are going directly to customers to capture data. And they're preparing for more than just a cookieless future. By getting better, more reliable information straight from customers themselves, teams are laying the groundwork for highly personal experiences.

[Jump to section](#)

Both teams are now at a critical crossroads. More than half of sales professionals say a lack of high-quality leads and longer sales cycles made it harder to sell last year. Meanwhile, an unsettling 43% of marketers struggled to generate leads, understand customers, and obtain high-quality data.

We believe all that's about to change. Why? Because to meet and exceed customer expectations in 2024, teams will have no choice but to align around the new B2B journey.

The Evolving Customer Journey

The customer journey has evolved a lot — and it's shaking things up for sales and marketing alike. As we shift from the age of information to the age of intelligence, several significant trends are reshaping the B2B buying experience.

1. CUSTOMERS ARE DOING MORE RESEARCH

Today's customers want self-service experiences. An astounding 96% of prospects do their own research before speaking with sales, and more than half of sales professionals say the B2B customers they talk to are using self-serve tools more now than they did a year ago.

What does this mean for teams in 2024?

Sales reps accustomed to closing deals by walking people through features and benefits will need to behave more like consultants and partners. Marketers will need to expand their content libraries to include more self-guided demos, interactive tours and free trials. And companies that once required every transaction to go through a formal process will need to explore pricing packages that can be bought independently.

If those initiatives sound scary, take heart. We're not talking about methods that would mean less control and visibility. By leaning into your data to better understand your customers, you can get the right message to the right person at just the right time. These personalised experiences are what make many marketers 215% more likely to say their strategies are "very effective," and what help empower 31% of sellers to close €455,000+ deals without ever meeting buyers face to face. In fact, many companies are letting simple transactions happen entirely independently, while reserving more complex contracts for sales teams.

2. CUSTOMERS ARE USING AI

Instead of having discovery calls with different sales reps at different companies, buyers can now ask a chatbot to compare options for them. As a result, eight in ten already know about a company's products and services before their first interaction with sales. More than two-thirds of sales professionals expect AI to enhance these self-service journeys enough in 2024 that prospects will be able to make informed decisions without ever engaging with them directly. Many also say AI-powered research has the potential to shorten sales cycles and improve business performance, since it increases customer confidence and decision-making abilities.

What does this mean for teams in 2024?

The sooner you lean into this new reality, the better positioned your company will be to gain a competitive advantage. It means embracing the anonymous buyer — 75% of B2B customers won't fill out a lead gen form to access content. Instead, they prefer to interact with marketing content anonymously until they're ready to reach out to you. In fact, buyers who have already been exposed to marketing content in this way are 19% more likely to accept connection requests from sales.



3. CUSTOMERS WANT MORE RELATIONSHIPS

Customers don't want to be a conversion win on your website — they want to converse with you as part of a hyper-personalised experience. And they expect that experience to continue after the deal has been won and the sale is closed. This means your buyers will need sales and marketing in different ways compared to years past. They're no longer turning to you for product information and pricing details, but rather strategic guidance. Which is great news, since the resulting relationships are stronger, longer lasting and more fruitful. After all, existing customers don't just bring in the majority of revenue for most B2B companies. They also refer the highest-quality leads. Our research shows that 72% of company revenue comes from existing customers — more than 2x the amount generated by new pipeline.

What does this mean for teams in 2024?

By the time a buyer fills out a lead gen form or talks to sales, they're well past the basics. They're looking for value-packed consultations, with tailored use cases to showcase the ROI your product or services can promise to them specifically. It requires building and maintaining relationships like never before. Instead of personalisation, which leans on customer segmentation, think in terms of personal interactions that are all about the individual. One way to do this is through experiential marketing. So far, just 16% of marketers plan to foster a sense of connection at real-life events in 2024 — even though 75% believe personalised experiences increase sales and repeat business.

Clearly, there will be a lot of opportunities to connect with this new generation of customers in 2024. But first, your teams need to be on the same page.

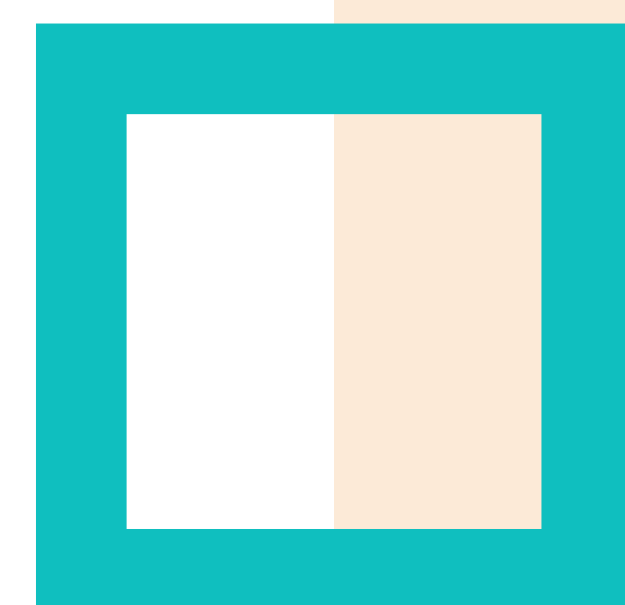


The Future of Sales and Marketing Alignment

What happens when sales and marketing teams aren't aligned? Budgets get wasted, leads are lost, and customers end up with a poor experience. But get everyone on the same page, and amazing results can happen quickly.

Marketers who are aligned with their sales teams are 26% more likely than those who aren't to say their strategies are very effective. And 61% of sales reps say alignment between teams is even more important now than it was last year — the customer journey is changing, which means the stakes are higher.

In other words: It's time to stop talking about alignment and take action to make it happen. No more second guessing or backtracking. It's time to come together and make 2024 the year true alignment happens.



What does sales and marketing alignment look like today?

Just 35% of marketers say their teams are strongly aligned with sales. Among sales professionals, that number dips to 30%. The two teams rely on separate systems that are not well integrated, can't access one another's data, and pursue different KPIs.

However, there are outliers. At companies where teams are fully aligned, sales professionals are 104% more likely to reach or exceed their goals. And because they have a single source of truth for customer data, marketers are 128% more likely to say their strategies are “very effective.”





So, how will businesses close the gap?

First, it's important to remember that customers don't see teams — just the experience as a whole. This means 2024 will be less about the funnel and more about [the flywheel](#). Once you align your entire company around the customer, from marketing to sales to customer service, your buyers can play an active role in growing your business. They'll renew and upgrade services, refer your products to others, advocate for your brand, and stay loyal to your company year after year. You can start right now by focusing on three essential pillars.

1. REIMAGINE ROLES

In 2024, responsibilities will no longer be tied solely to job roles. Teams must be willing to share knowledge with other parts of the business and pick up new skills outside their immediate areas of expertise. This first step will help set the stage for not only strengthening partnerships across disciplines, but collaborating on mission-critical data as well.

2. LEARN HOW TO SHARE DATA

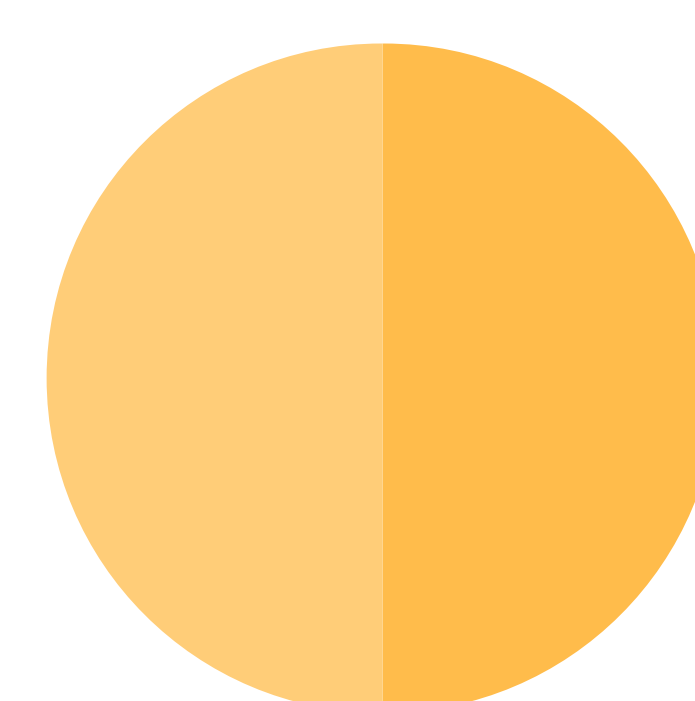
To better compete in the current customer landscape, teams will need a forensic understanding of their target markets. To achieve that, you'll need a single source of truth. The most successful businesses will be the ones that streamline siloed data within one central platform to paint a clear picture of the customer — what challenges they face, what motivates them, how they think and feel, and what they need right now.

3. COLLABORATE ON CONTENT

Sales professionals who use enablement content are 58% more likely to outperform their goals. And customers who have already been exposed to it are 19% more likely to connect with them. Those numbers have the potential to increase even more in 2024 — but only if sales and marketing collaborate and test new content together. The key is to focus on formats that provide real value to your customers while delivering ROI to the business.

4. MAXIMISE YOUR CRM

Customer relationship management (CRM) software isn't just for sales. Marketing teams that use CRM tools are 128% more likely to report having an effective marketing strategy. More than half found their CRMs became more important in 2023, and that number will no doubt continue to grow in 2024. The CRM will also be critical for sales and marketing directors, since it provides a single source of truth to guide important decisions.



The future of sales and marketing alignment is bright — or at least, it can be

While full alignment is still the rare exception, it's getting better. More than 60% of surveyed professionals say their sales and marketing teams are more aligned now than they have been in the past. The best way to build on those improvements in 2024? Our research reveals several specific tactics that are proving to be particularly effective.

Use your CRM to integrate data and tools

An impressive 86% of marketers who use customer relationship software say it's effective at improving alignment. These teams also say their CRM plays a big role in overall strategy. Integrated systems are at the core of sales and marketing success — if you aren't already feeding your data through one central platform, now's the time to make that happen.

Test new types of content together

Only 25% of today's B2B buyers are willing to fill out a form in exchange for helpful content. But they're still looking for inspiration and information. To deliver the right messages at the right times, sales and marketing teams must work together to understand how best to meet customers where they are. Test different types of enablement content so you can invest more in what works.



Focus on developing a single source of truth

Now more than ever, having a single source for information will be vital to maintaining a top-notch customer experience. More than three quarters of marketers agree it helps them understand which strategies are working and what more they can do to support sales. Yet only 59% say the tools they use are interconnected. To boost alignment, start by identifying how and where your data is currently stored — and create a plan for eliminating any silos between sales and marketing.

Did you know?

93%

of marketers who use HubSpot CRM say their marketing strategy was effective last year.

Yes, successful alignment may require fundamental shifts in how your teams work. And no, it won't happen overnight. But thankfully, there are plenty of ways to ease the transition with technology.

The New Realities of Data and AI

If there's one strategy every company will need to get right in 2024, it's having the right systems in place. While fine-tuning tech stacks was more of an ideal to aspire to in years past, it's now essential to staying competitive. If you don't want to risk becoming irrelevant, this is one area you can't delay.

However, we're not talking about adding more complexity. After all, the average company already has [more than 200 apps](#) — more than half of which rarely or never get used. Instead, it's time to whittle down to the right technology. And for a fast-growing number of organisations, AI will play an increasingly important role in this process.

To be more efficient, embrace AI

Artificial intelligence is more than just a buzzword. From reducing the time spent on manual tasks to helping teams gain a better understanding of customers, AI is behind all kinds of positive results. And applications for sales, marketing, and customer service will continue to expand in 2024.



FOR MARKETING DIRECTORS

Marketers with connected tools and data performed significantly better last year — and AI is helping. Those who use it are 95% more likely to say their marketing strategy is effective compared to those who don't. And three in four marketers using AI and automation say it helps their organisations collaborate more effectively.

So, how can AI support marketing directors looking to improve team performance? While AI is not replacing marketing jobs, it is making them more efficient and cost-effective.

How AI Supports Content Creation

By using AI to assist with content creation, the marketers in our studies save three hours per piece of content — and 2.5 hours per day overall once you factor in manual, administrative, and operational tasks.

That doesn't mean they're using AI to replace human content creators. Only 6% of surveyed marketers use generative AI to write entire pieces for them. Instead, they're using it to provide ideas, inspiration, outlines, and first drafts. The vast majority — 95% — still need to edit copy, and for some those edits are significant. But even with this hands-on approach, generative AI is empowering teams to create more content, from social posts to emails to blog posts and more.

Best of all? More than half of marketers say their AI-generated content performs better than content created without it, and 85% say it improves quality. Looking ahead, approximately eight in 10 expect generative AI to change the way they'll create content in 2024.

85%

of marketers say generative AI improves the quality of content they create

82%

of marketers say generative AI helps them make significantly more content

How AI Enhances The Customer Experience

More than 95% of marketers say personalisation increases sales and repeat purchases. Yet only a third say their customers are actually getting a personalised experience, and just 65% of consumers say the content they see from brands feels relatable. Factor in data privacy changes and Google's phaseout of third-party cookies, and creating meaningful connections is getting even harder to achieve.

Here again, AI can help. Many marketers plan to use generative AI to create more personalised content tailored to target audiences. But that's not the only application. Our research also revealed that 72% of marketers agree AI and automation tools like chatbots will help them personalise the experience for customers — particularly when it comes to customer service — and 58% plan to increase investments in this area in 2024.

36%

of marketers use
AI chatbots in their
current roles



77%

of marketers say
generative AI helps
them create more
personalised content

Not sure where to start? You're far from alone. More than a third of marketers are yet to leverage AI at all, and only 21% use it daily. The rest are still in the experimentation phase.

For this reason, many of the companies we surveyed are hiring specialists specifically to help their teams leverage AI. If your team is overwhelmed by these new systems, consider hiring implementation experts to integrate AI-driven tools into your daily workflows.

Did you know?

With HubSpot AI, all of the latest content and customer creation tools are built right into your Marketing Hub – no need for your team to switch between platforms.

[Explore HubSpot AI](#)



FOR SALES DIRECTORS

For 82% of sales professionals, building relationships is the most important — and enjoyable — part of the job. But research shows only a third of sellers' time is spent actively selling. They have too many tools, are overwhelmed by their tech stacks, and are buried under manual tasks.

With the help of AI, sales directors can start to change that in 2024.

How AI Increases Sales Efficiency

Instead of spending time digging through different data sources to gather intel for an upsell call, AI tools can pull from those same sources to create the perfect talk track for you — all in a matter of minutes. AI tools are also making it easier for sales professionals to automate the more repetitive parts of their jobs. Those who use it for administrative tasks save two hours a day. That means they have 10 more hours a week to check on customers, connect with prospects, build relationships, and ultimately close more deals.



78%

of sales professionals
say AI can help them
be more efficient in
their roles

81%

of sales professionals
say AI can help them
spend less time on
manual tasks

How AI Improves Relationships

With the right AI-powered tools and systems in place, sales can spend less time preparing and more time building relationships. Two thirds of surveyed sales reps say AI helps them better understand their customers, and even more expect it to make upselling easier.

63%

of sales professionals say AI makes it easier to compete with other businesses

86%

of sales professionals say AI will make it easier to upsell

Did you know?

ChatSpot can save you hours each week by helping you write and customise talk tracks, email templates, and social posts — and by making it easier to decide which prospect to pursue next.

[Explore HubSpot AI](#)

To improve customer relationships, transition from third-party cookies to first-party data

For years, marketing and sales teams have relied on third-party data to connect with customers. It's how we know what content they interact with, which industries they work in, what technologies they use — and so much more. But now, that's all about to go away.

As Google begins to phase out tracking cookies, and as privacy regulations make access to data more difficult, teams will need to get more creative. This is especially true for the more than half of teams that don't know where their customers consume content, what products they're interested in, or which activities and hobbies interest them.

84%

of marketers say data privacy changes affected their strategy in 2023



76%

of marketers say Google's phaseout of third-party cookies will make marketing more difficult

The answer? Go straight to the customers themselves. Approximately 47% of marketers say their company is exploring alternatives to third-party cookies, with social media targeting and first-party data being the most popular solutions.

First-party data, or data collected directly from your customers, isn't just higher quality. It also provides better, more reliable insights. And with 84% of consumers in HubSpot's consumer trend survey saying data privacy is a human right, this method for collecting data helps ensure you're meeting important customer expectations.

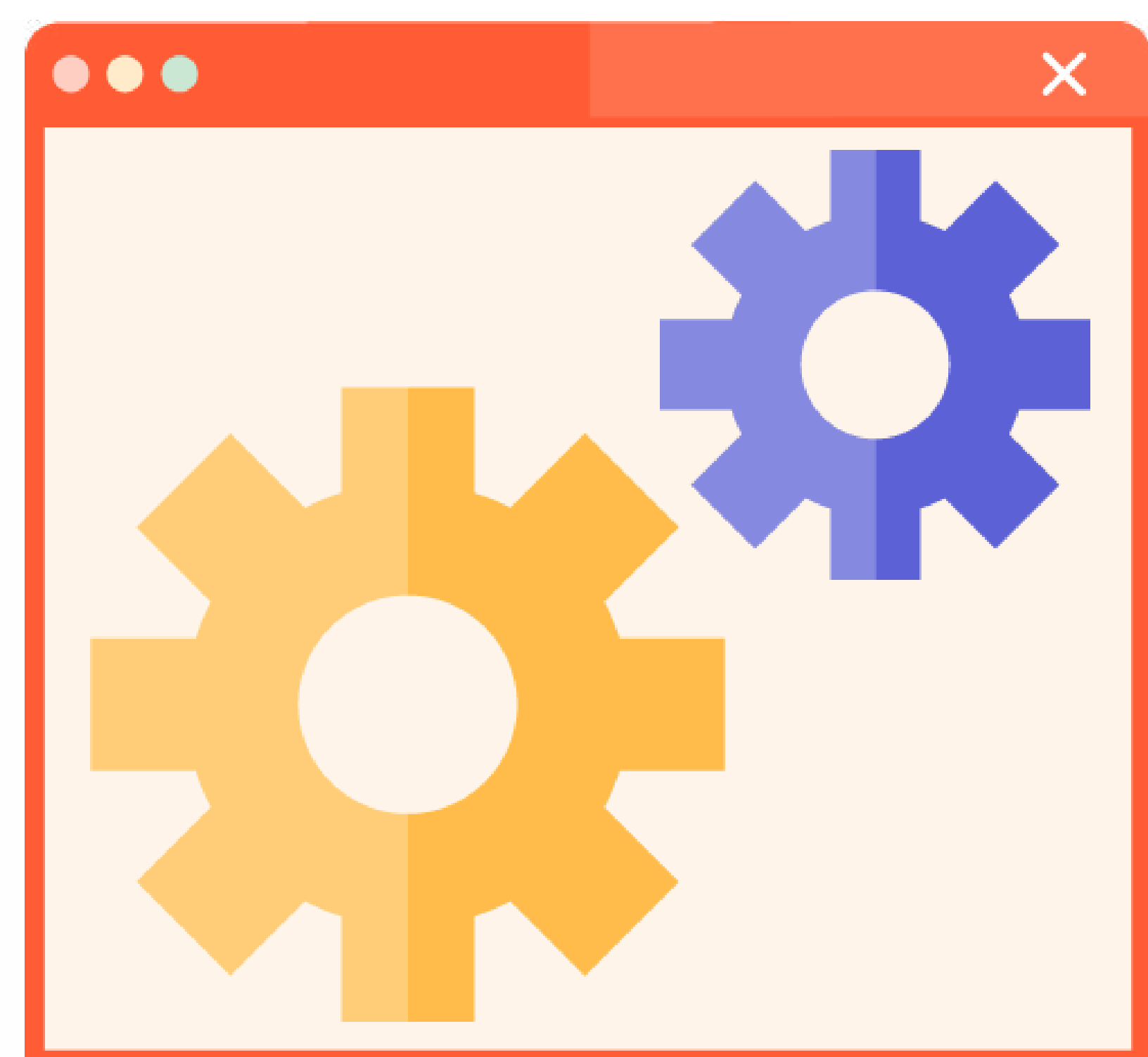
65%

of marketers report having high-quality data on their target audience



25%

of marketers plan to collect first-party data directly from customers in the future



Regional Spotlight

Clearly, there are some big changes occurring throughout EMEA. But what's happening in your specific region? To become an even more effective business leader in 2024, it helps to factor in these nuances.

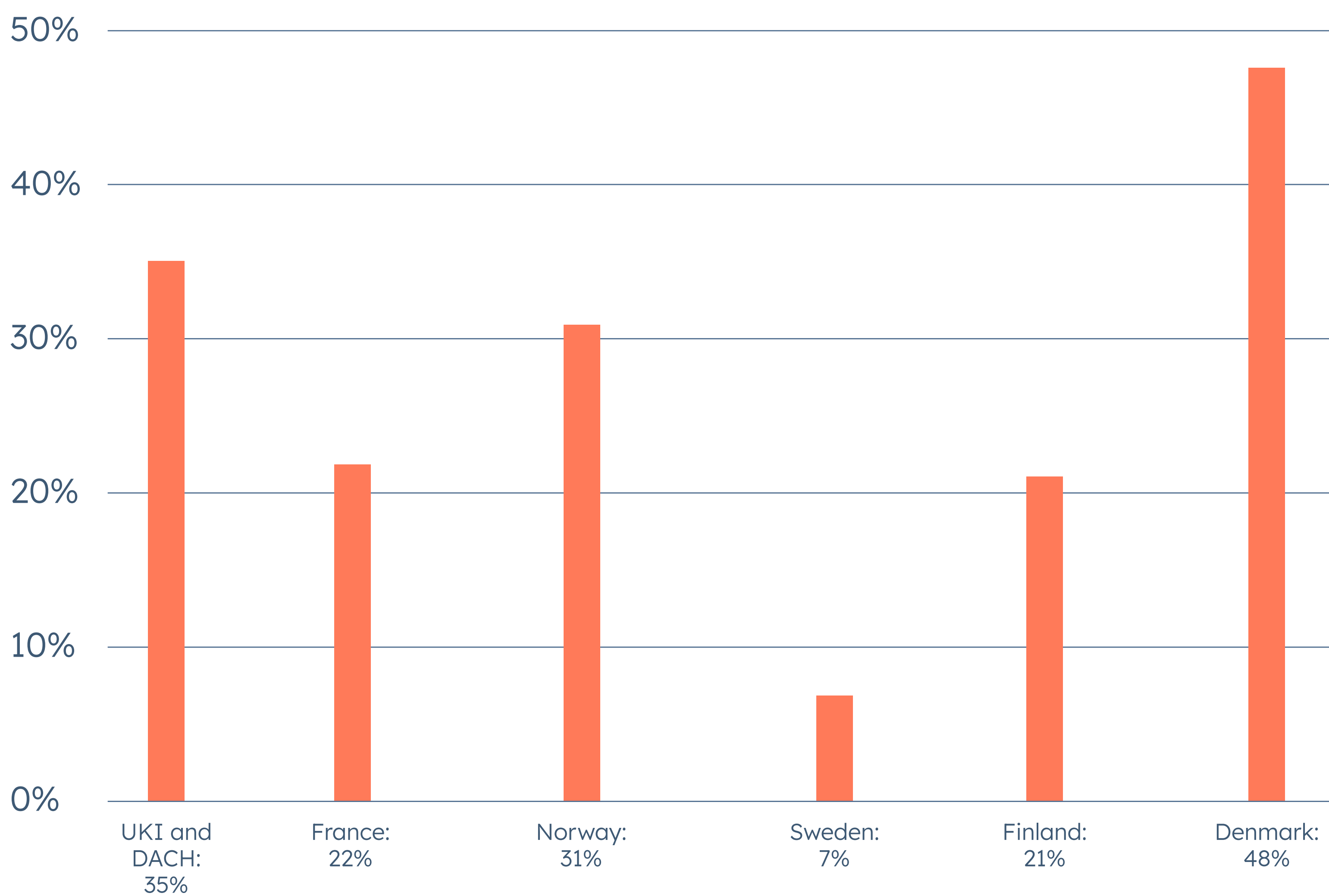
The need for alignment has reached a critical stage

While roughly a third of marketers and sales professionals throughout EMEA say their teams are strongly aligned, that number dips even lower in several countries. In the UK and Ireland, sales and marketing professionals seem to agree that there's room for improvement when it comes to their team's alignment. 35% of marketers feel their teams are strongly aligned, and that number just lowers to 32% amongst sales professionals. Compared to regions like Sweden, where only 7% of marketers think there is strong alignment, the UK&I is faring well. It is important for teams to have a realistic insight into their relationships, for example, while 48% of marketers in Denmark say their teams are strongly aligned, only 25% of sales professionals in the country agree. This shortfall suggests a lack of awareness of team goals from both parties and a clear room for improvement. In both Germany and France, it appears sales teams feel more alignment than marketing teams, so there is room there to close the gap.

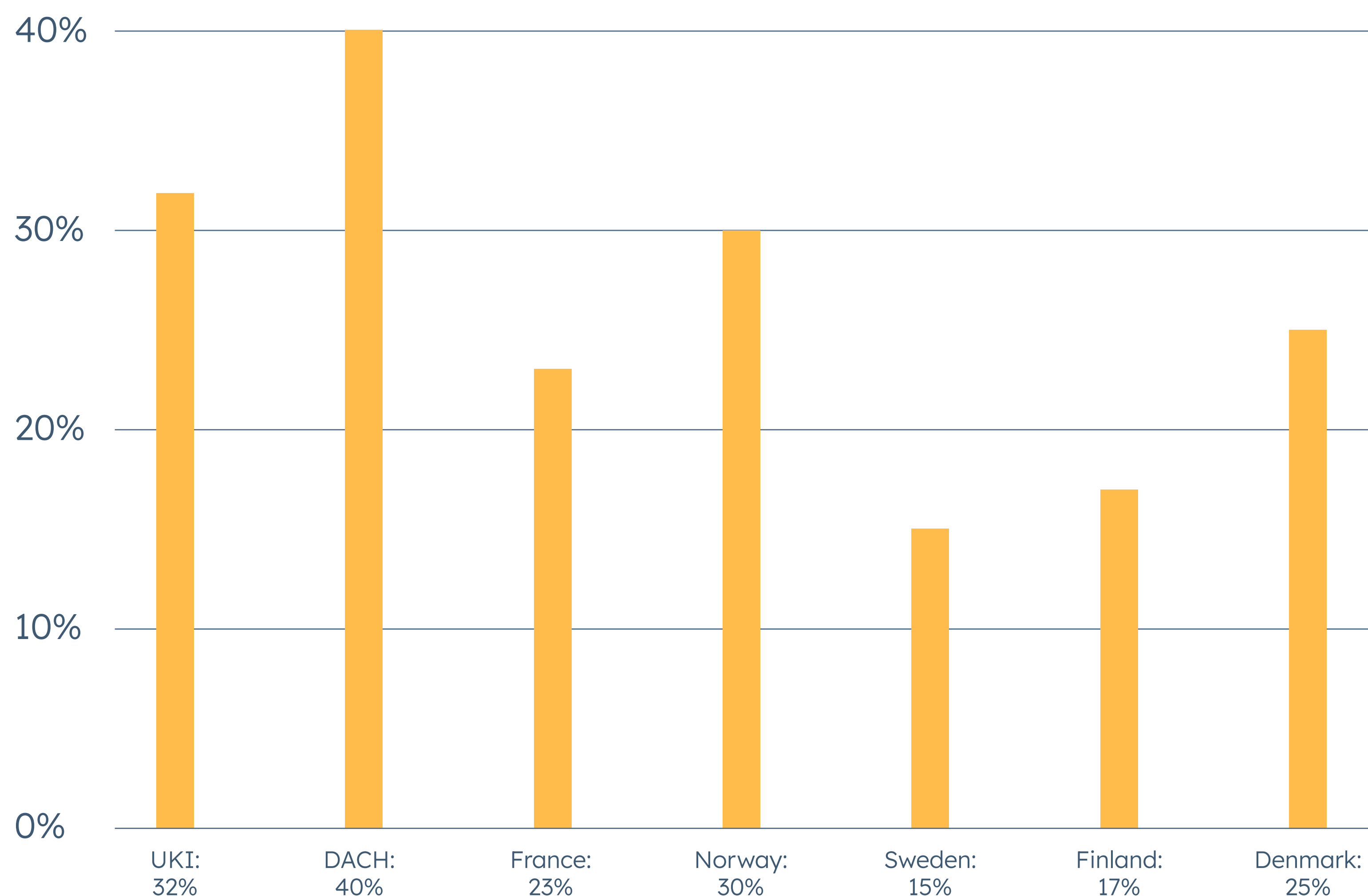
The sooner you can address this area of business efficiency, the better positioned you'll be to compete in 2024. Fully aligned teams are far more likely to build effective strategies and reach or exceed their goals.

How many sales and marketing professionals feel their teams are strongly aligned?

Marketers:



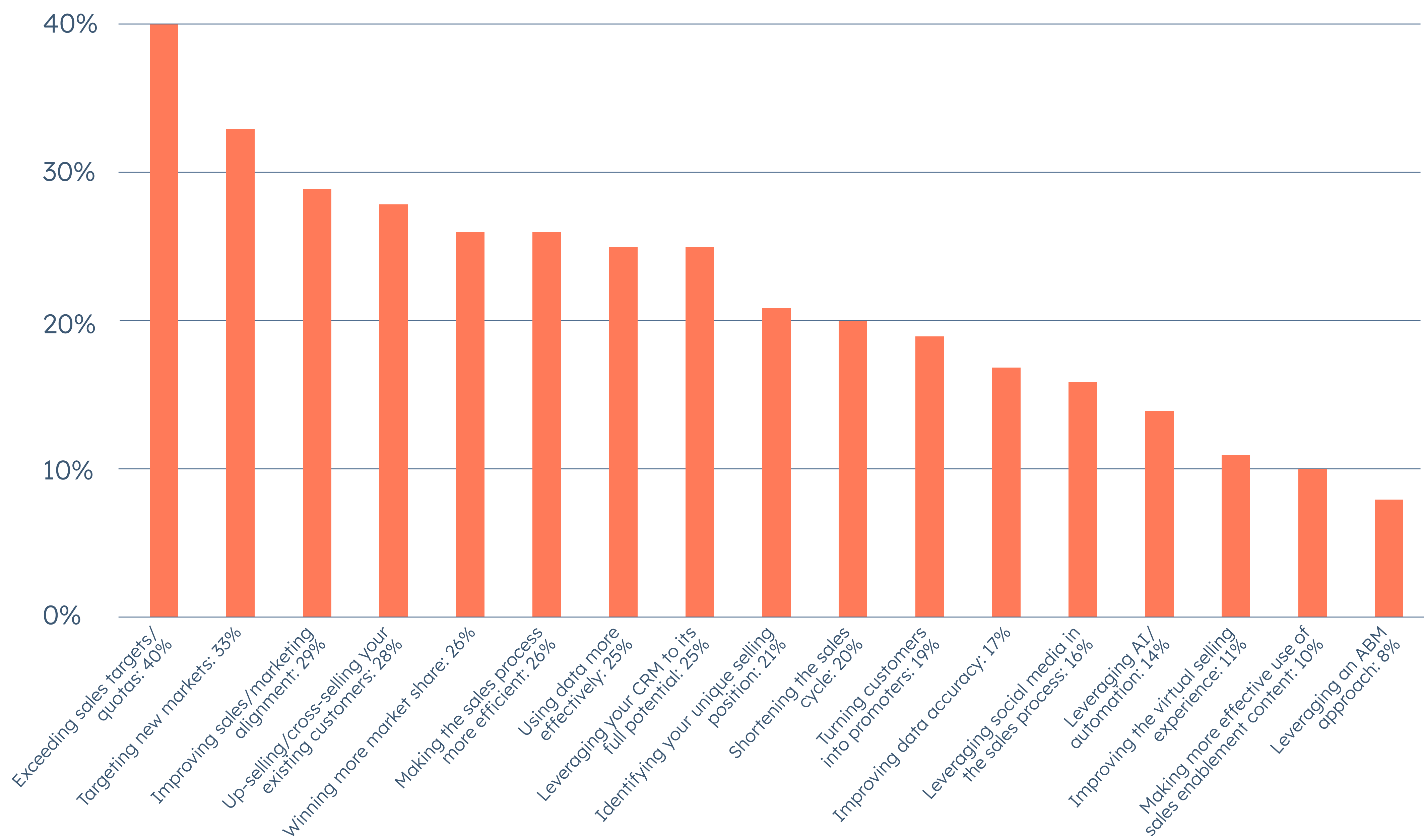
Sales professionals:



Yet when asked to name top goals for 2024, alignment is lower on the priority list for sales teams in most regions. The one exception is in the UK, where "improving sales and marketing alignment" is preceded only by "exceeding quotas" and "targeting new markets."

What are your top sales goals this year (UKI region)?

Marketers:



The sooner you can address this area of business efficiency, the better positioned you'll be to compete in 2024. Fully aligned teams are far more likely to build effective strategies and reach or exceed their goals.



Lucaas Taxgaard
Head of Revenue
Operations and Sales
Development, TimeLog

[Read more](#)

“With HubSpot, we get one place of truth, but we also get a central place to collaborate. We can communicate within one tool and make sure that we don’t miss out on data.”



teamwork.

Teamwork.com makes its sales team **50% more effective** with HubSpot.

[See how](#)



Eastridge
WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS

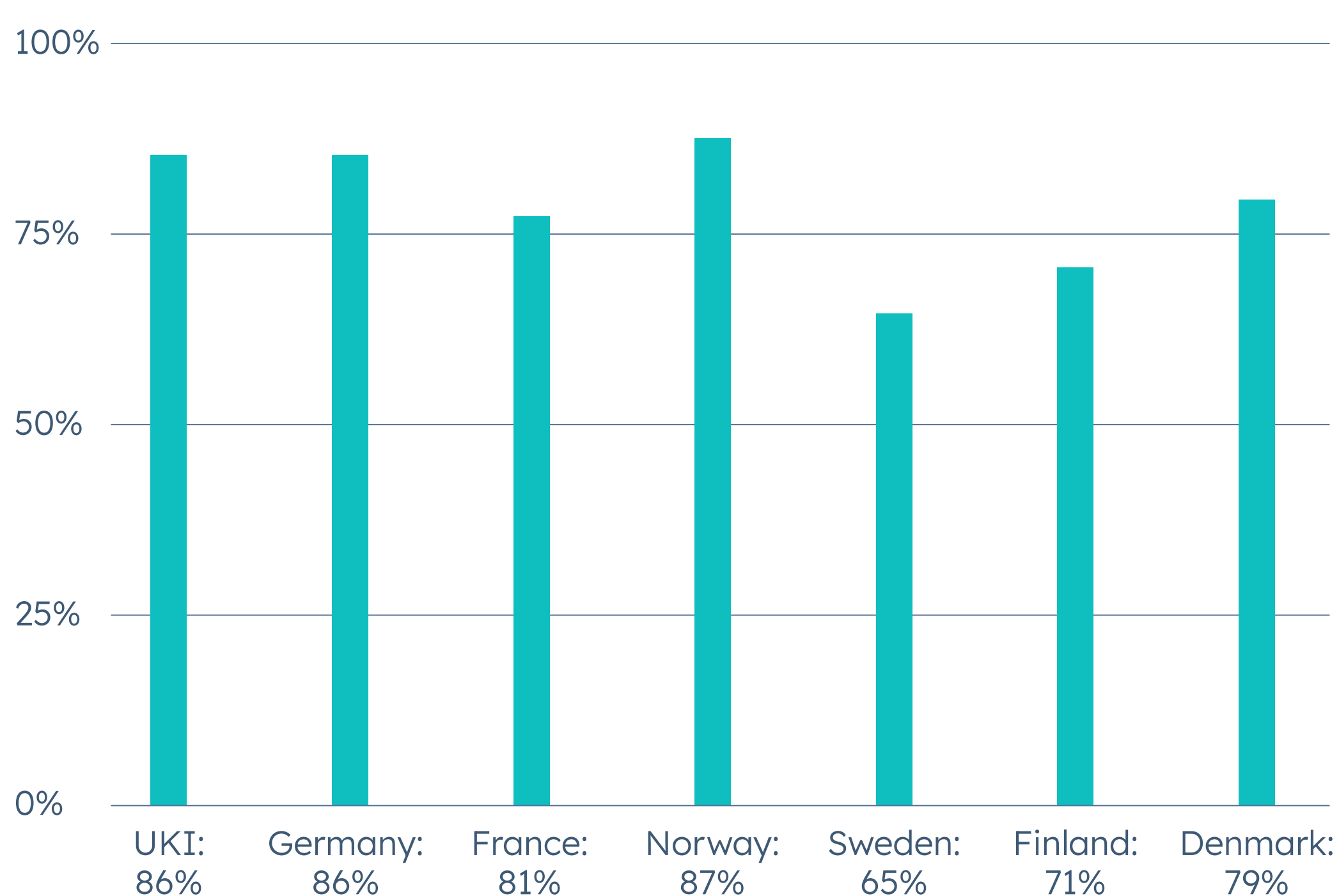
Eastridge attracted **10% more customers** while saving **4+ hours** a week.

[See how](#)

Having the right technology and tools can help

When sales and marketing have a shared system for data, communication and strategy, the two teams operate as one unified organisation. For many, the ability to unlock this potential starts with developing a single source of truth — and CRMs are helping.

How many marketers say their CRM is “somewhat” or “very” effective at improving alignment?



With the right CRM:

Reed generated an 8-figure income in two years.

[See how](#)

Agicap generated 6x more monthly recurring revenue.

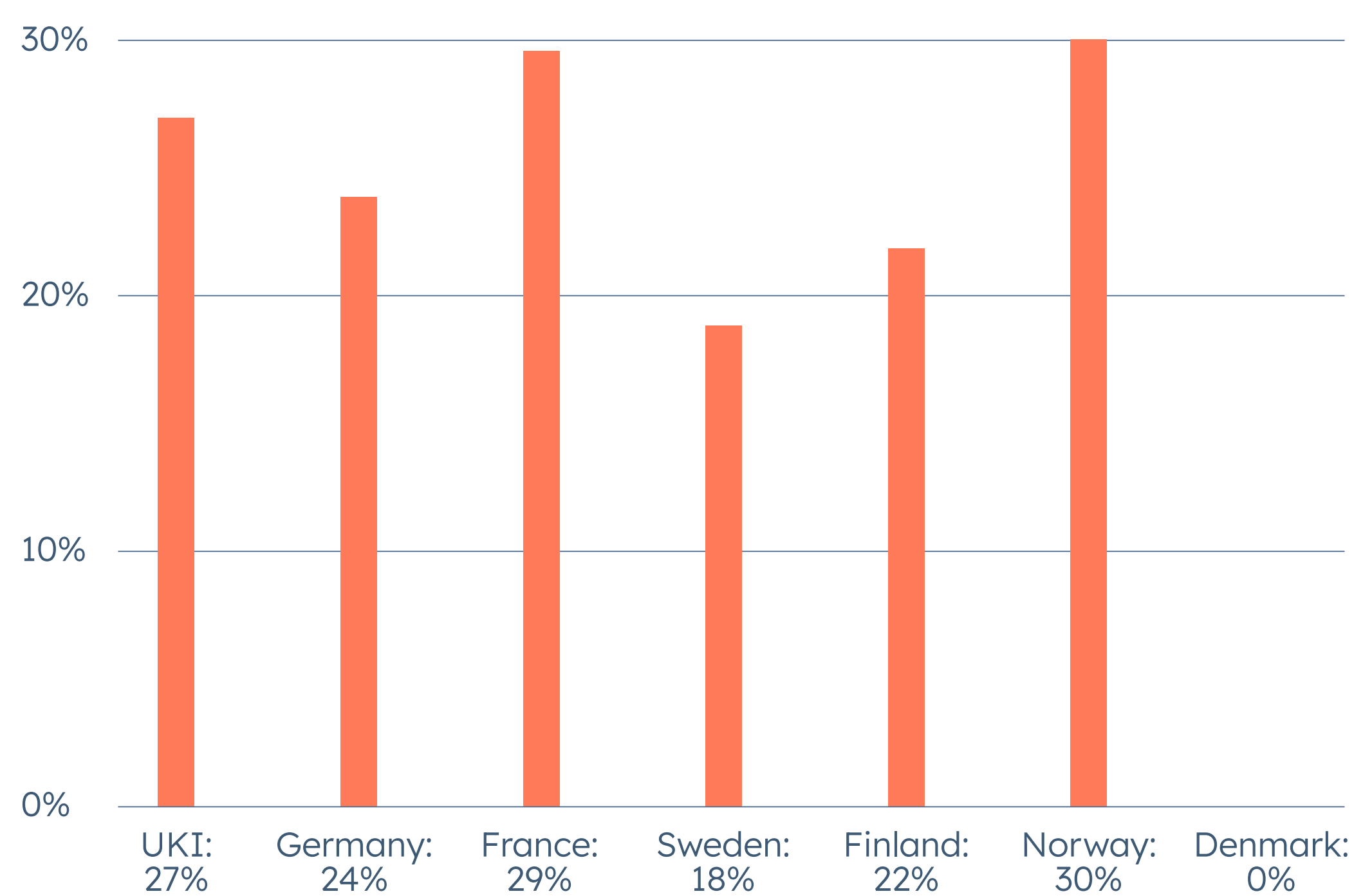
[See how](#)

While most marketers in these regions say they plan to use generative AI in 2024, many also say they'll avoid becoming overly reliant on it. While 12% of marketers in the UK (and 10% in the Nordic Region) say you should leverage generative AI as much as possible, just 4% in Germany and 6% in France agree.

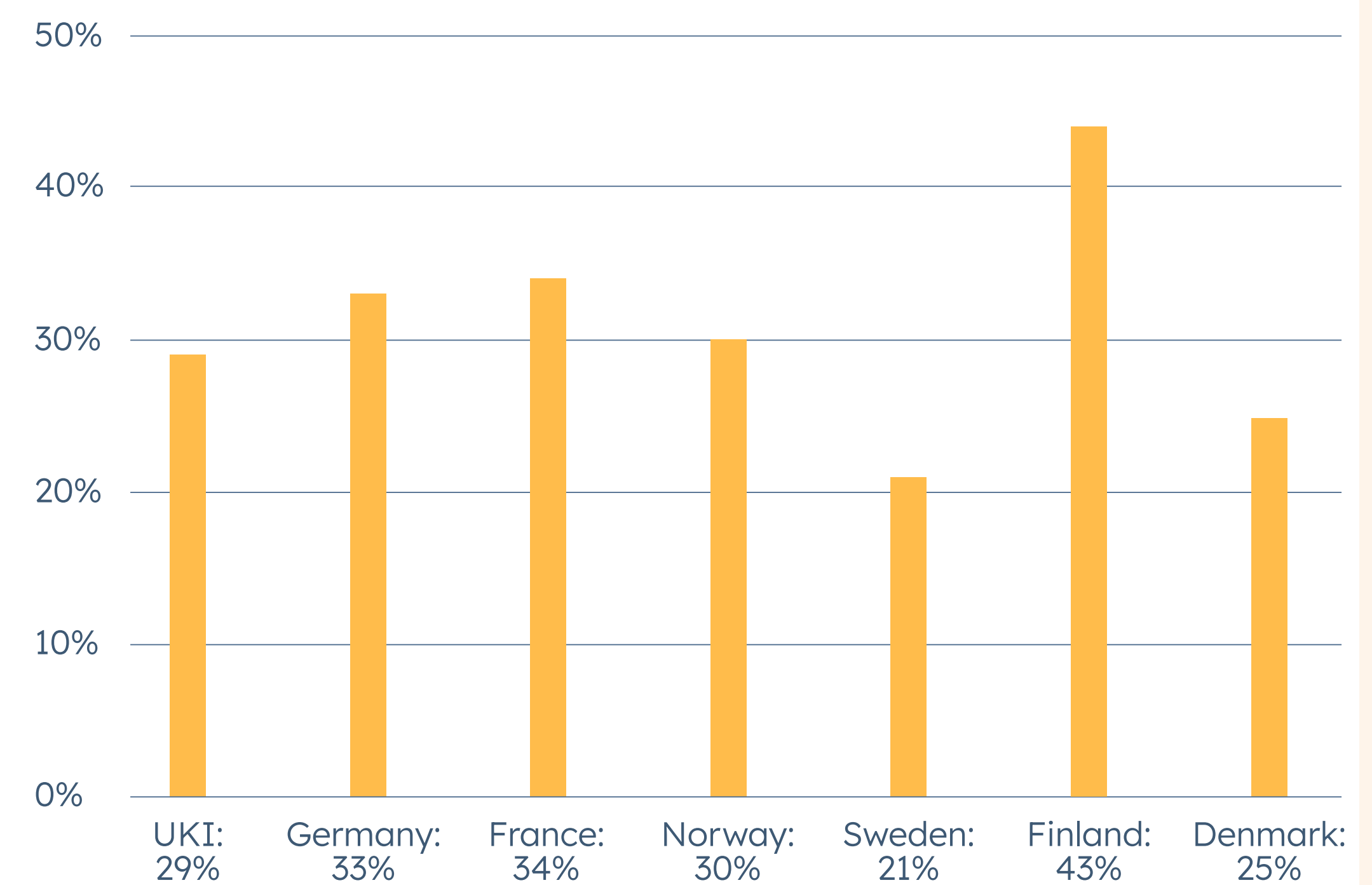
Meanwhile, sales teams would like to see a reduction in the number of tools they have to use. Nearly a third of sales professionals in the UK&I, France and Norway say a smaller tech stack would free them to spend more time selling, and 43% in Finland say it would make them more efficient.

If your company reduced the amount of tools in your tech stack, how would that benefit your work?

I'd have more time to sell:



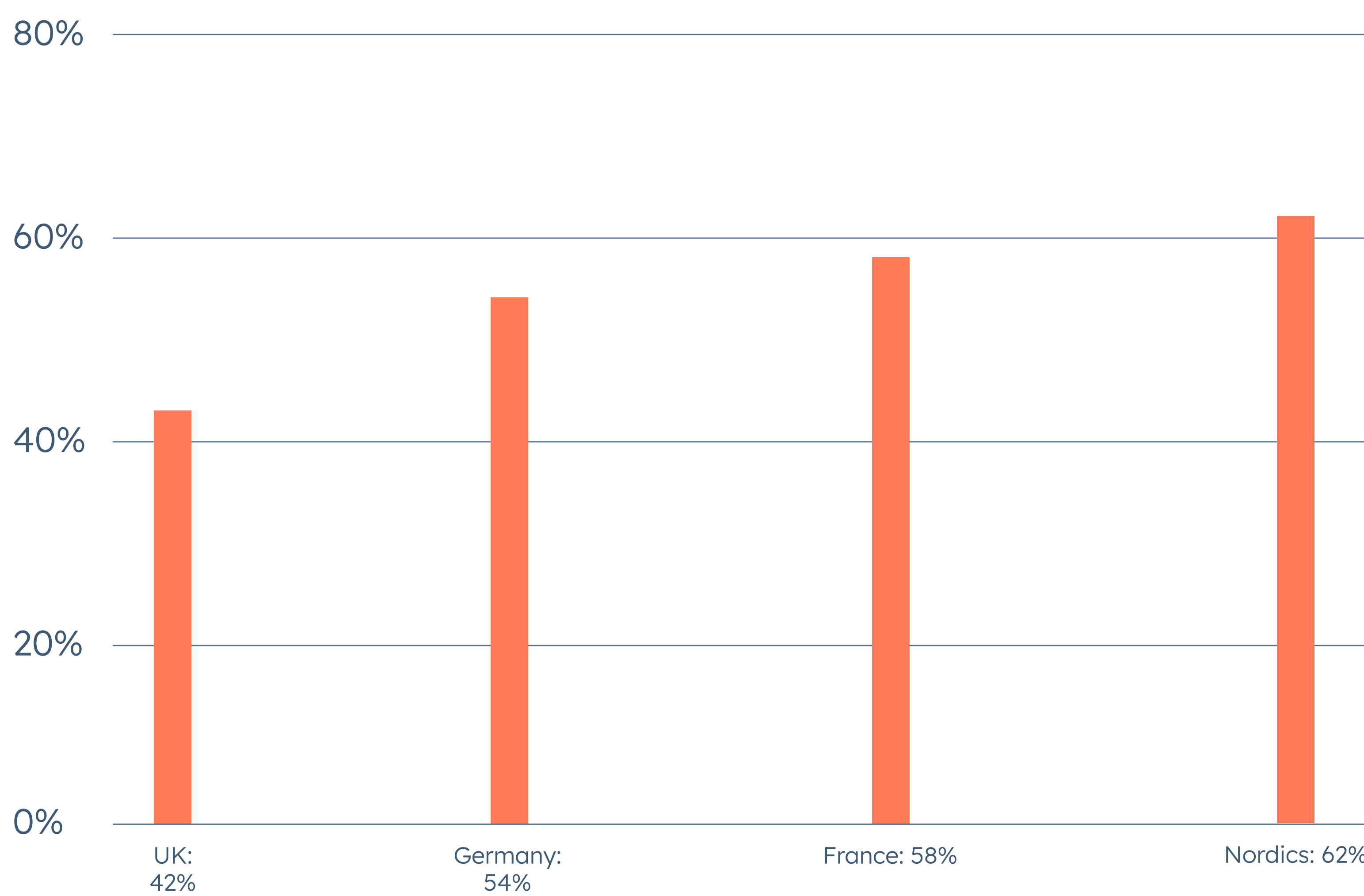
I'd be more efficient:



Marketers are at a critical crossroads of AI and automation

In an effort to get ahead of competitors, marketers are taking the reins on AI and automation — especially in the UK. Among UKI marketers who don't already use artificial intelligence, 45% plan to start this year. And they're far less overwhelmed by the prospect of adding AI tools into daily workflows. While as much as 72% of marketers in other regions say they're anxious about implementing AI, just four in ten say the same in the United Kingdom and Ireland.

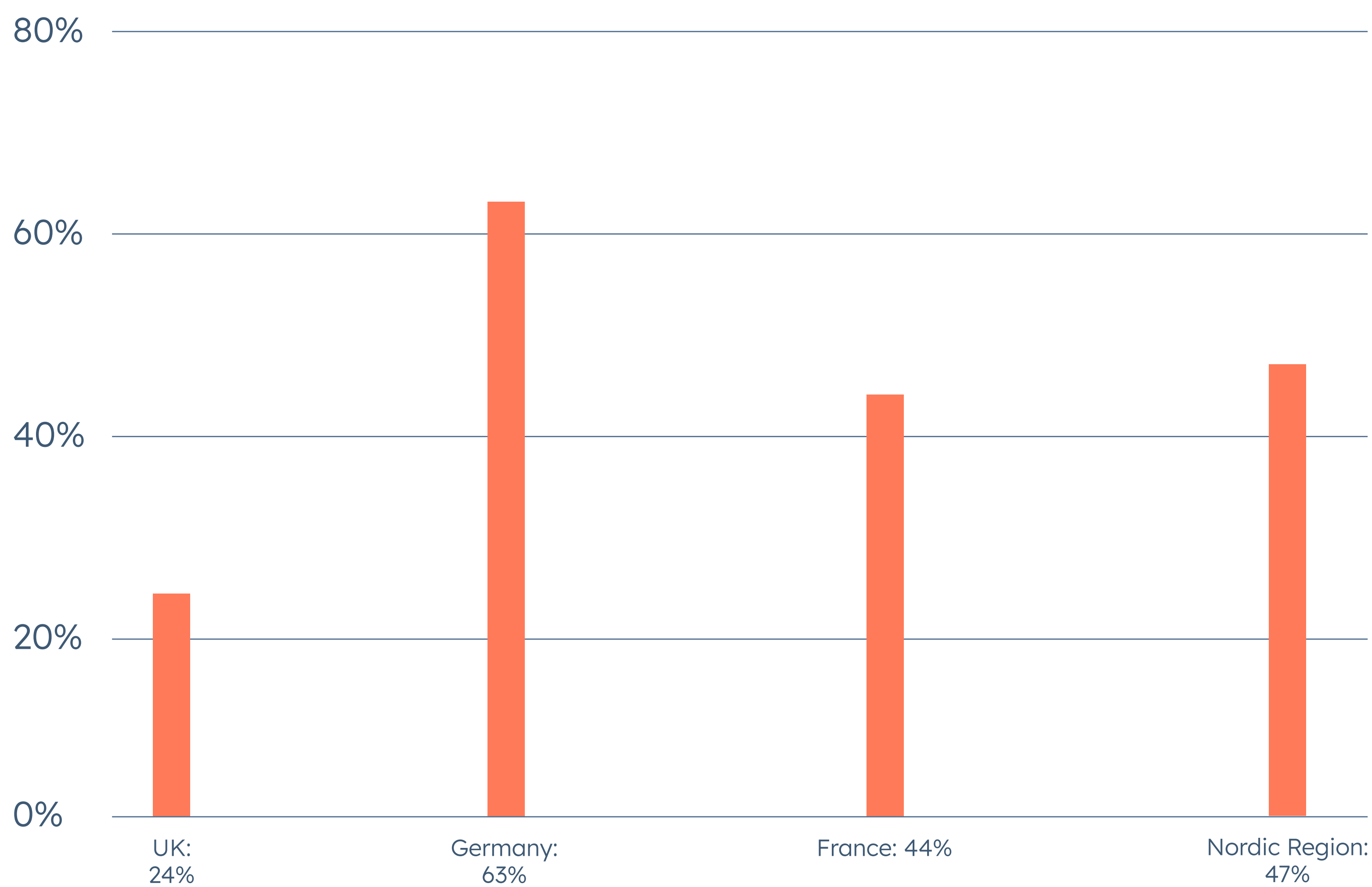
Do you feel overwhelmed by the prospect of implementing AI tools into your daily processes and workflows?



This may be because UKI teams are taking more personal ownership of the process. Just 24% have hired implementation specialists, compared to more than 40% throughout EMEA.

Has your company hired a new employee specifically to help your marketing team leverage AI?

But while this region is taking the lead on AI and automation adoption, others are paving the way when it comes to making progress on first-party data. Just 37% of UK marketers say their company is exploring alternatives to third-party cookies — even though 83% say data privacy changes affected their strategy in 2023.



Helsinki Partners

"The leadership team and CEO can easily see what's happening based on the reports from HubSpot. Helping our CEO provide accurate reporting to the Board is a major source of value."

Sirpa Salmi
Senior Manager,
Digital Business,
Helsinki Partners

[Read more](#)

More HubSpot success stories

Better coordination with a central data source:



Growth Tribe saw a 300% increase in conversions after consolidating 10 tools into one.

[Read more](#)



WeightWatchers created a seamless customer experience by replacing four sales and marketing tools with one platform.

[See how](#)



Best Practices for a Successful 2024

The consumer journey is changing fast, and tactics that worked even a few months ago may no longer apply today. But that doesn't mean hope is lost. In fact, the opposite is true. By adopting a few best practices starting today, you can set the stage for a successful 2024 — and maybe even your most rewarding year yet.

1. Trim your tech stack

For years, companies have been accumulating new and emerging tools — for good reason. As automation improved and features became more sophisticated, the breadth of technology options were understandably enticing. But now, we've reached a breaking point. Many surveyed sales professionals say a smaller tech stack would make them more efficient, let them spend more time selling, and increase the quality of customer data. And because many tools don't integrate well, teams spend too much time manually syncing systems that don't connect automatically.

Start by assessing which tools your teams regularly use — and which ones they don't. Then, as you discover which apps are essential, take a deeper look to determine how they can be connected for work that flows from one team to another. The ideal tech stack will equip you with native integrations that make it easy to track activity across multiple systems so you can consistently deliver the right message to the right person, at the right time.

2. Address the disconnection crisis

Customer data will be more important than ever in 2024, but will also be difficult to obtain. And with so much of it stored in separate systems, what data companies do have is often so disconnected it's not usable. Around one in four marketers say it's difficult to share data with other teams and get the data they need, usually because the way it's stored is inaccessible.

The sooner you address those disconnections, the better positioned your teams will be. Marketers who say the tools they use are interconnected are 64% more likely to have a highly effective marketing strategy. And for most of them, AI is playing a big role in improving data sharing capabilities. As you whittle down your tech stack, opt for solutions that complement one another and create seamless connections — not just from tool to tool, but also team to team.

3. Support the self-service journey

Today's customers increasingly crave self-directed digital journeys. If you're not already catering to them, now's the time to start. Sales professionals who provide self-service tools are 47% more likely to be over goal than those who don't.

These days, if a buyer decides to fill out a form or schedule a call they have very high intent — you need to be ready to help take the deal over the finish line. For marketing, that means focusing on creating self-service content like on-demand videos and free trial prompts. Sales can help fine-tune your enablement content by testing, tweaking, and providing feedback to marketing. And both teams should leverage AI to improve content quality. Look for technology that makes it easier to create content that:

- Expertly contextualises products for each customer
- Shows usefulness and value for each customer's unique needs
- Personalises package options and service offerings

Looking for an easy-to-implement solution that plays well with other tech tools?

HubSpot has helped more than 184,000 businesses improve performance across the entire customer journey, with more than 1,000 integrations spanning marketing, sales, and service.

Teams that use Marketing Hub:

Achieve 505% ROI within three years

Generate 129% more inbound leads

Launch campaigns 68% faster

Teams that use Sales Hub:

Close 55% more deals at a 105% better close rate

Increase meeting attendance 128%

Boost revenue by 13%

Sales and marketing are the fuel for success

And now, you have insights to accelerate business efficiency in 2024.

As you align teams around the new B2B buyer journey — and put the right systems in place to meet customer needs — the results will follow.

With so many exciting technology trends to pave the way, it's time to hit the ground running.

Ready to unleash your full sales and marketing potential?

Learn More

Book a Demo

