

HubSpot

The State of Marketing

IN CANADA




INTRODUCTION

Marketing in the Age of Intelligence

In the ever-evolving landscape of marketing, Canadian marketers are faced with a myriad of challenges and opportunities as they navigate through a changing reality. From adapting to shifting consumer behaviors and rapid technological advancements to integrating AI and unlocking data-driven insights, marketers are on a quest to remain competitive and drive tangible results. As AI, video content, and influencer marketing continue to reign supreme, leveraging these trends strategically is imperative for enhancing brand visibility and engaging with target audiences effectively. This report delves into the key findings from a recent survey, shedding light on the prevailing marketing trends, challenges, and goals that will shape the marketing landscape in 2025.

Let's dive.

The State of Marketing in Canada 

CHALLENGES

Navigating a Changing Reality

Effective marketing often entails navigating uncertainty, be it in consumer behavior, economic forecasts, or evolving technology landscapes. Our survey data reveals that the rapidly evolving technology landscape and shifting consumer behavior present significant challenges for Canadian marketers. As AI necessitates new ways of working, coupled with changes in data availability and shifting market dynamics as well as distinct regulations, marketers must adapt swiftly to remain competitive.

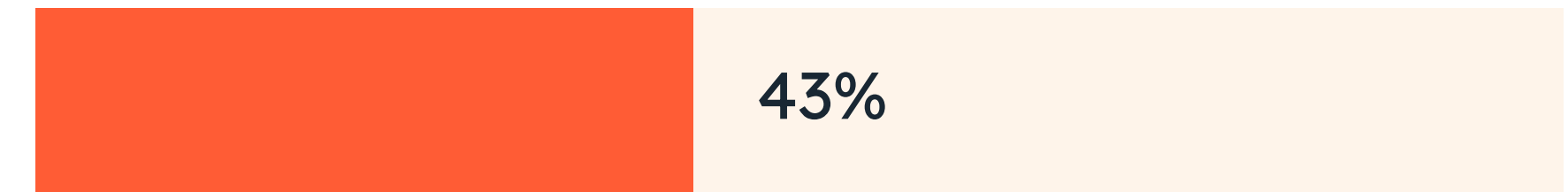
Top 4 Challenges Experienced in 2024

- 1 Meeting Goals (revenue, ARR, MQLs, etc.)
- 2 Generating Revenue
- 3 Generating Leads
- 4 Growing Brand Awareness

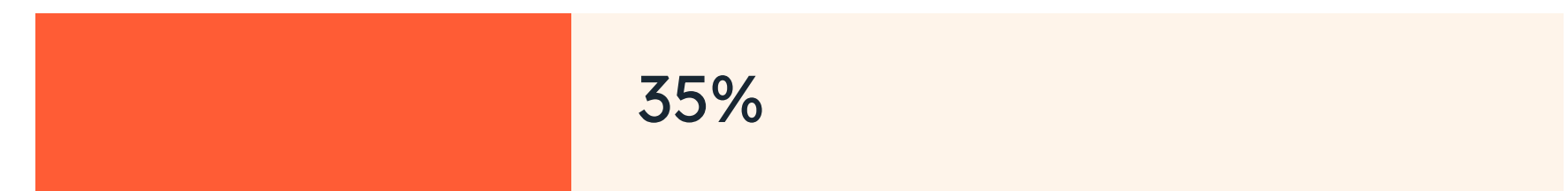


Top 5 Challenges in Understanding the Target Audience

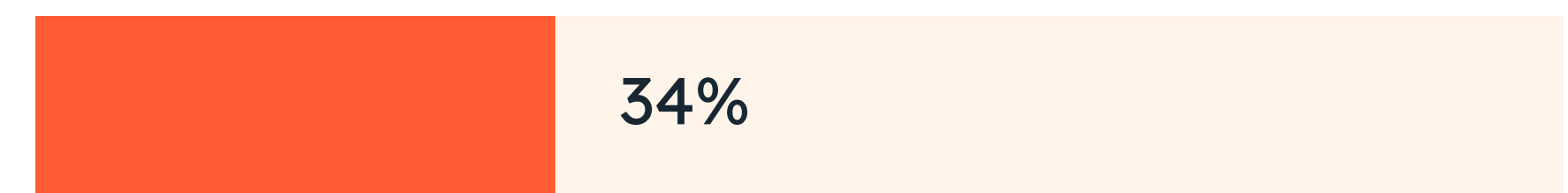
Rapid changes in audience lifestyles



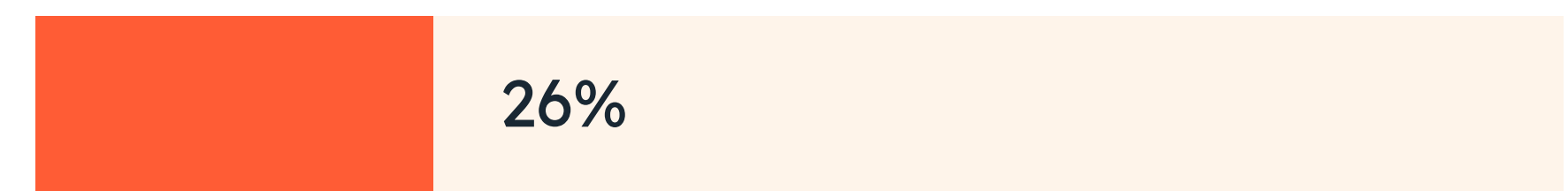
Increased data privacy regulations limiting access to personal data



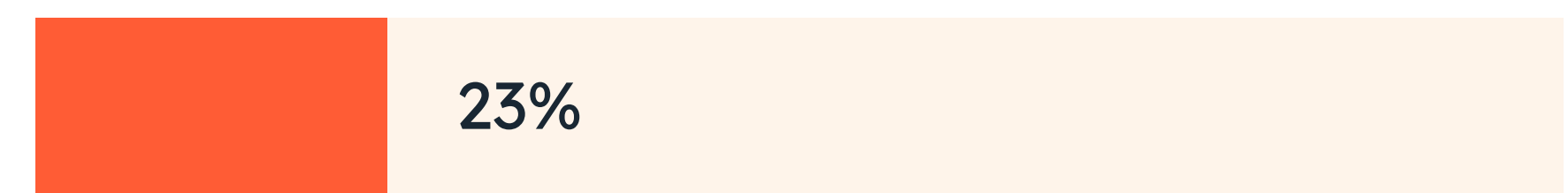
Decreased consumer trust in sharing personal data



Lack of basic demographic information



Poor data quality



Values Matter to Audiences Everywhere

While marketing trends evolve rapidly, the importance of value-driven content remains paramount. Authentic content reflecting a brand's values, such as social responsibility, resonates profoundly with audiences. Embracing this human element in marketing fosters community engagement and drives tangible results.

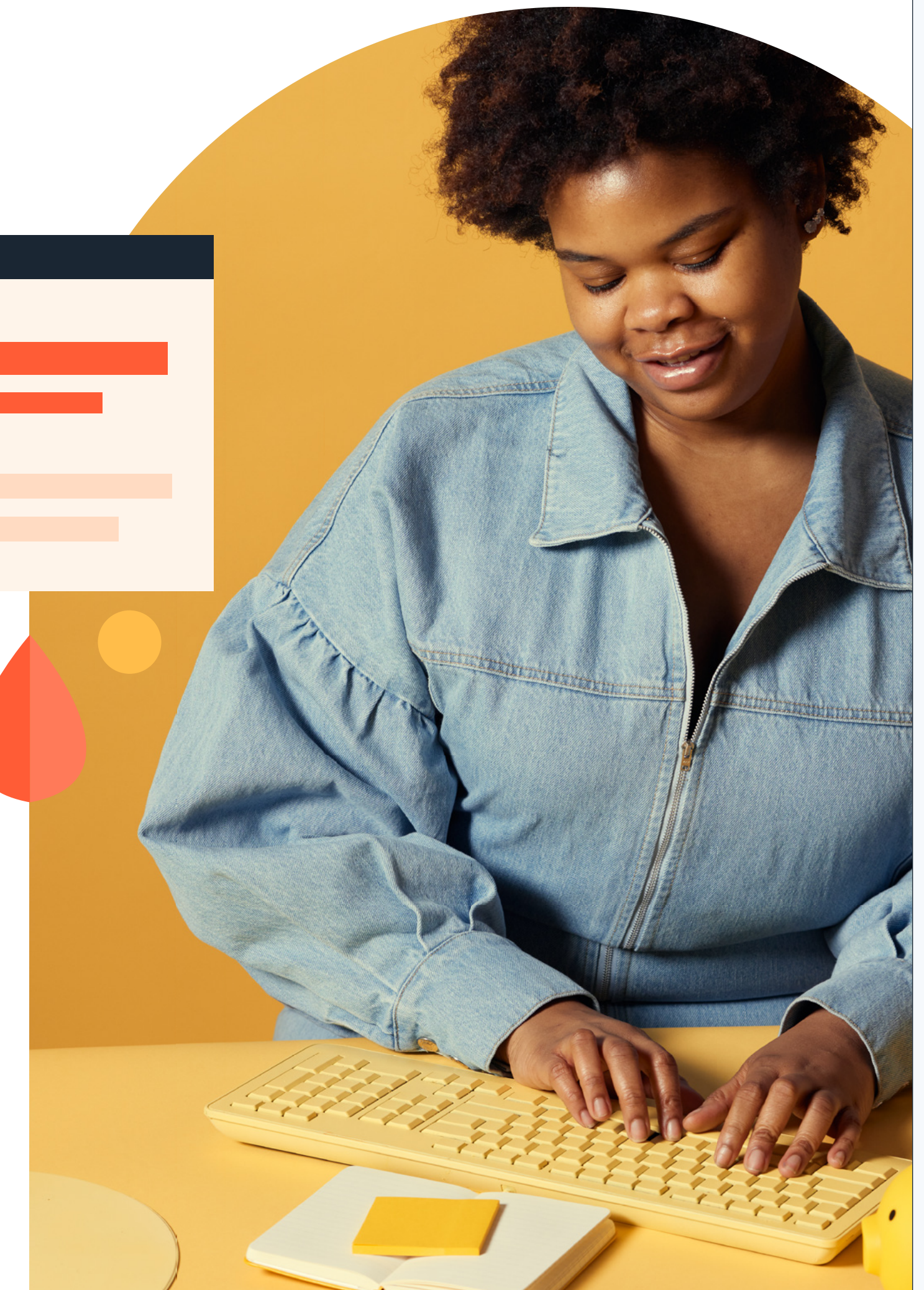
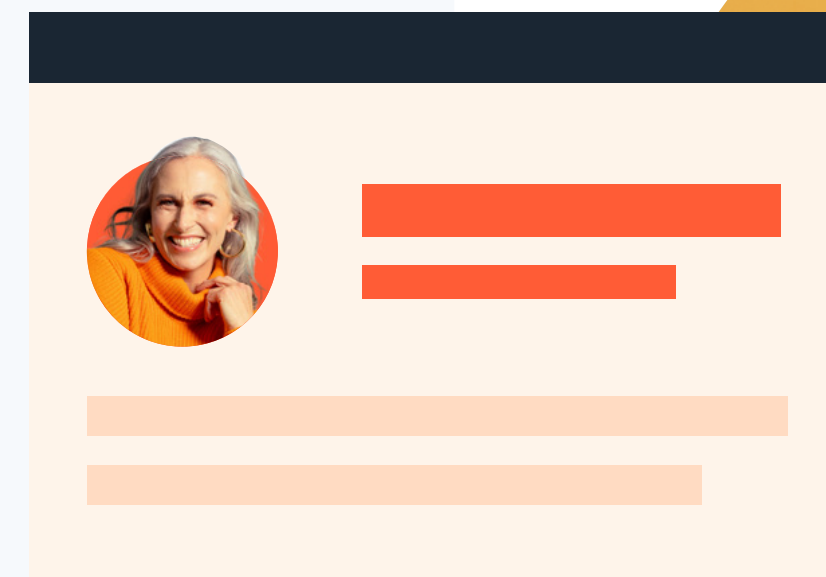
Top Marketing Trends Most Invested in 2024

- 1 Content reflecting the brand's values
- 2 Short-form video content
- 3 Inbound marketing

Top Marketing Trends Resulting in the Biggest ROI in 2024

- 1 Short-form video content
- 2 Inbound marketing
- 3 Content creation that reflects brand's value

In 2024, the top 5 marketing trends with the highest return on investment (ROI) are short-form video content leading at 47%, followed by content that reflects the brand's values at 36%. Inbound marketing comes in third at 29.33%, while influencer marketing and native advertising round out the list at 23.33% and 22.33%, respectively. These trends indicate a shift towards more visual and authentic content, influencer collaborations, and a focus on delivering value to consumers through inbound strategies and native advertising formats. Consider incorporating these trends into marketing strategies to optimize ROI and effectively engage the target audience.



MARKETING GOALS

Paving the Way for Success in 2025

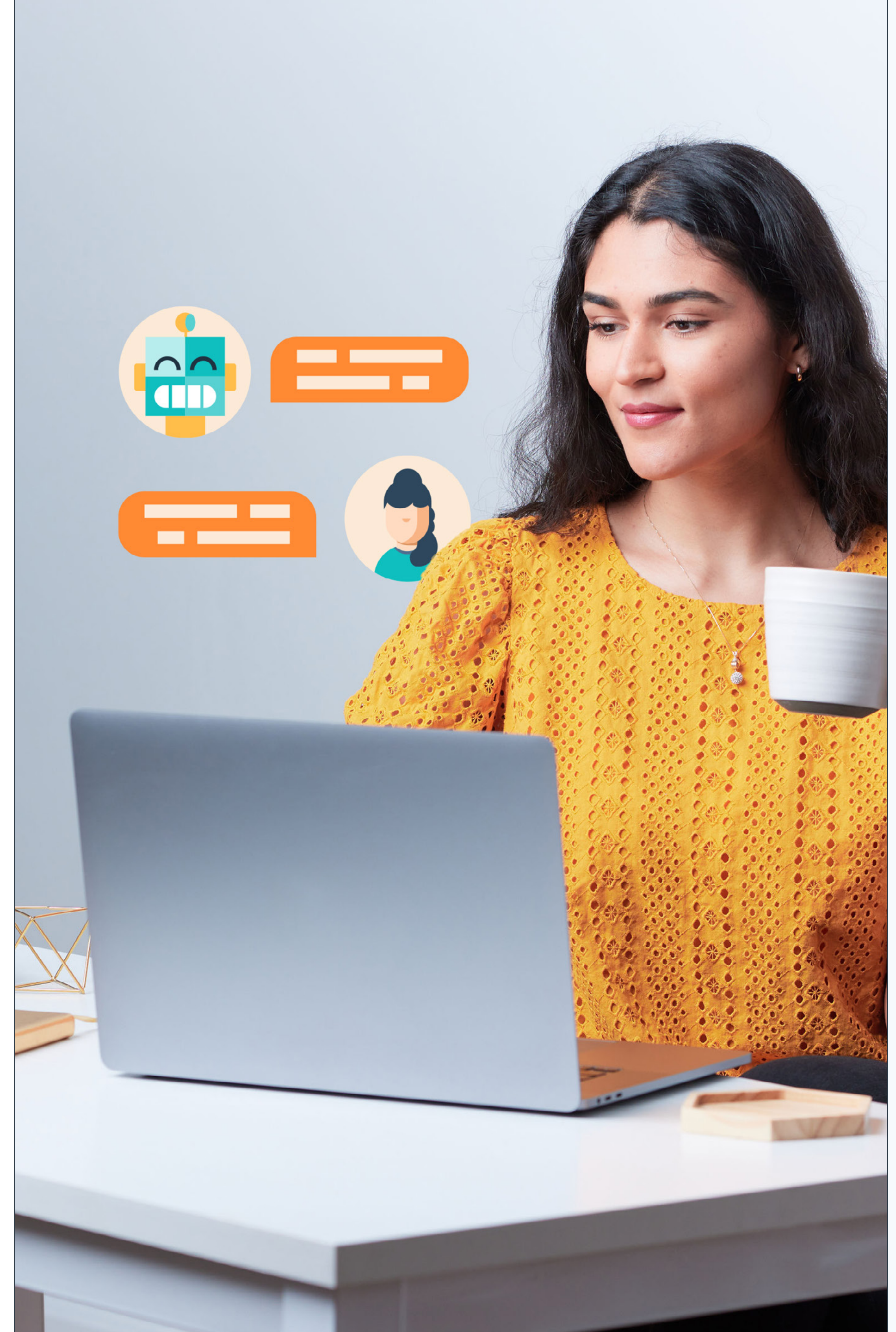
Canadian marketers' goals for 2025 reflect the challenges they face in 2024. Despite prevalent challenges, less than 10% of respondents believe their teams are underperforming, signaling a commitment to overcoming obstacles for a positive start to the upcoming year. With a strong focus on activities that have a direct impact on business growth, Canadian marketing leaders are investing into new trends, with a strong focus on AI.

Key Marketing Goals for 2025

- 1 Increasing revenue and sales
- 2 Increasing lead generation
- 3 Increasing engagement
- 4 Driving traffic to the website
- 5 Increasing brand awareness and reaching new audiences

Top Marketing Investments in 2025

- 1 AI-focused search optimization
- 2 Live-streaming
- 3 Influencer marketing
- 4 Voice-search optimization
- 5 AI-focused automation



DATA-DRIVEN INSIGHTS

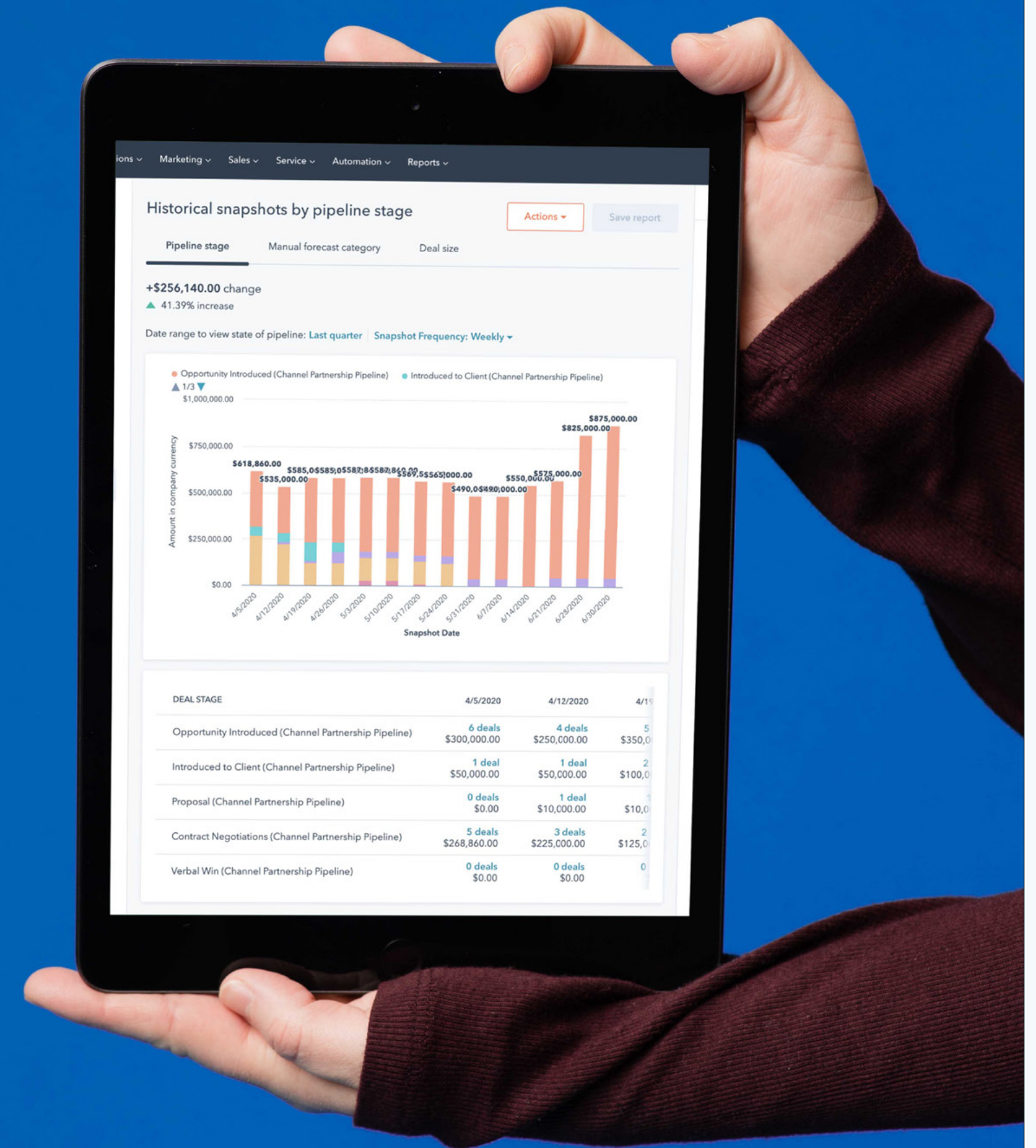
A Game-Changer for Marketers

The significance of customer data in shaping effective marketing strategies cannot be overstated. Despite the diverse tools available to marketing teams, complexities in data handling, and the multitude of stakeholders involved, tapping into data efficiently remains a challenge.

Only **50% of respondents strongly agree that they can transform available data into meaningful insights**, while 31% somewhat agree. While **only 44% of respondents noted using data to demonstrate ROI in the last two years**.

Furthermore, 59% believe that data aids them in effectively reaching their intended audience. Respondents' perceptions of their target audience data quality revealed that 59% consider it very high quality. When asked about the sufficiency of their data for reaching their target audience effectively, 45% strongly agree, and 30% somewhat agree.

Creating a centralized, reliable source of truth in marketing data is essential for dismantling silos, encouraging teamwork, and nurturing data-driven approaches. A significant majority of participants confirm having a singular source of truth for their marketing data (89%), emphasizing its substantial advantages.



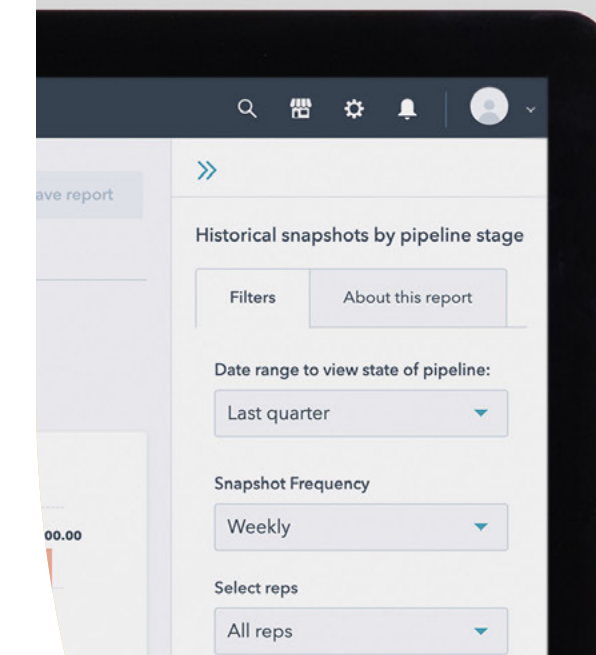
Video and Influencers Still Hold the Throne

Video Content is King

Video content and influencer collaborations continue to dominate the marketing landscape. The power of video cannot be underestimated in today's marketing strategies. Our survey revealed that platforms such as YouTube (89% increase in usage) and TikTok (49% increase in usage) have been key drivers in connecting with audiences and boosting ROI for brands in Canada, with this influence projected to further increase.

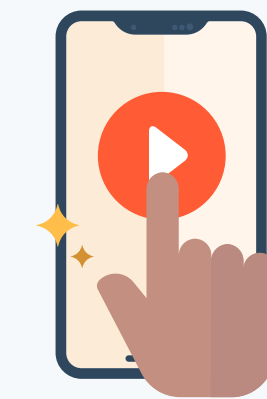
Looking ahead, Canadian marketing leaders expect to increase utilization of these platforms, the strongest increase for YouTube (69% increase in 2025).

Short-form video content, including TikTok, Reels, and YouTube Shorts, is identified as the top marketing trend for ROI in 2024 by 47% of respondents. Additionally, long-form video content is predicted to be the leading tactic poised for growth in the near future, with a notable 58% of respondents indicating an anticipated increase in its usage.



#1 marketing tactic ROI in 2024

Short-form video content
(including TikTok, Reels,
YouTube Shorts, etc.)



#1 tactic expected to increase in 2025

Long-form video content



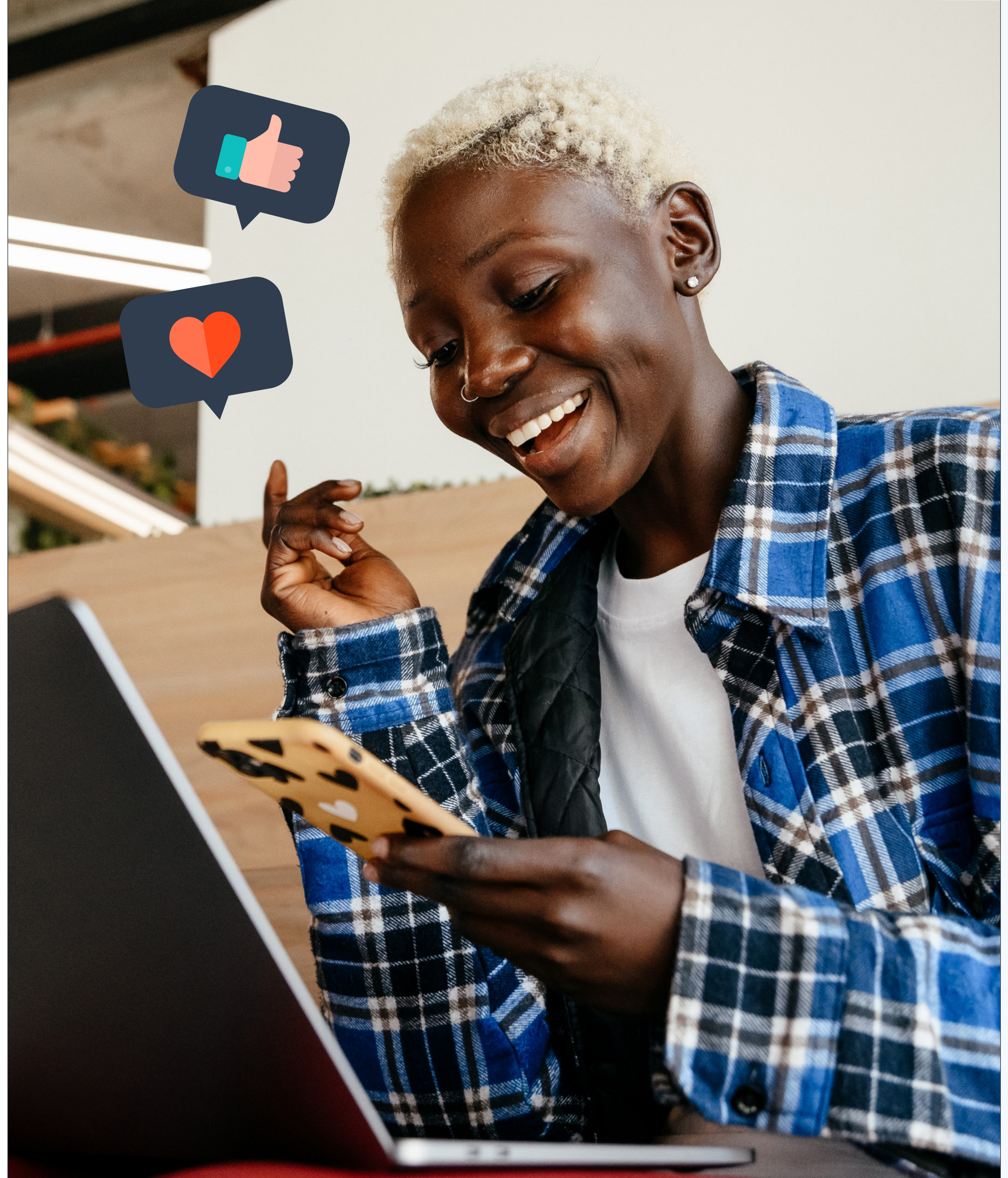
Can't Forget about Influencer Marketing

When mentioning video content, we can't forget about the rise of influencer marketing. Content creators possess a unique ability to cultivate dedicated communities around their video-centric content. Brands have long recognized and capitalized on this potential, with the practice remaining robust and lucrative. Over the past year, there has been a noticeable increase in the utilization of influencers and content creators by teams, as reported by 59% of respondents. Additionally, 23% of respondents identified Influencer Marketing as a primary driver of ROI in 2024.



50%

of respondents anticipate further investment in influencer marketing and content creators in 2025.



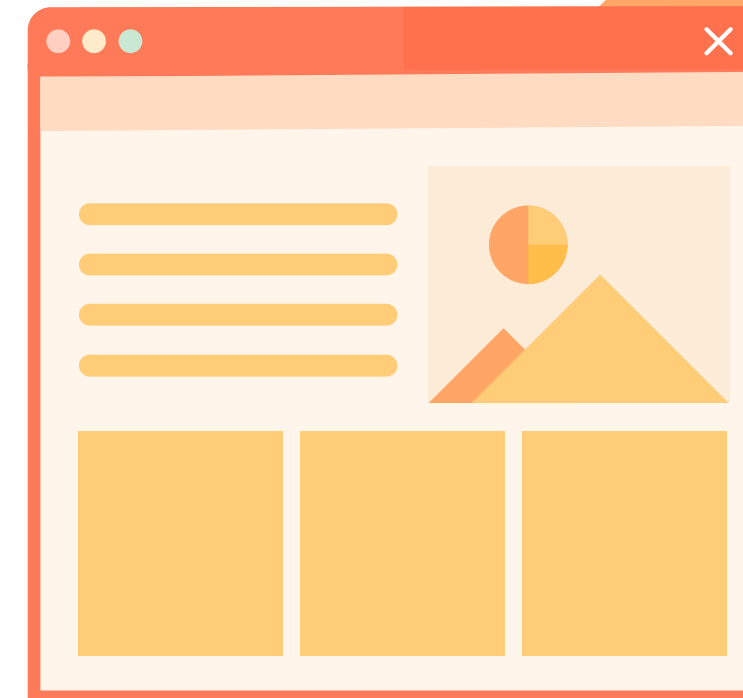
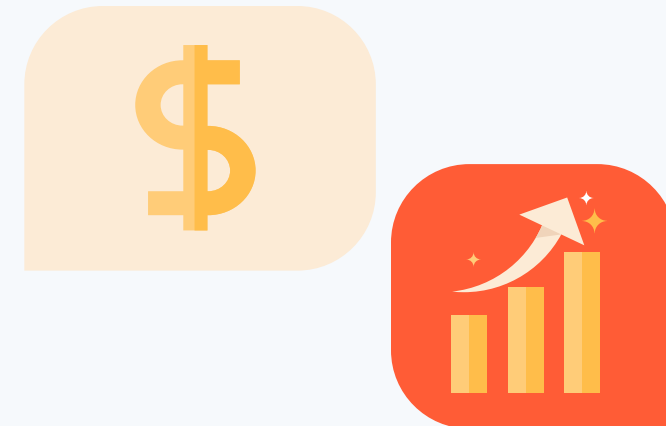
Community Marketing and Organic Growth

Building and nurturing communities remain pivotal strategies for driving audience engagement and results. Community marketing was identified as one of **the most significant lead generators** by 49% of respondents.

Investing in channels like the website, blog, SEO, and organic social media content appears to be a primary focus for 2025, with a substantial percentage of respondents emphasizing the effectiveness of these channels.

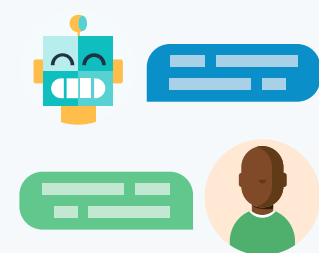
Top planned investment channels for 2025

- 1 Website/blog/SEO
- 2 Organic social media content



Reshaping Marketing Dynamics

The integration of AI and automation tools continues to reshape marketing landscapes. Canadian marketers are proactively incorporating AI (**92% say they already use AI**) into their marketing efforts to boost efficiency and outcomes, with most respondents having a positive sentiment towards AI. While AI adoption is slowly paving its way into marketing operations, the full integration of AI remains low (55% of respondents have fully integrated AI).



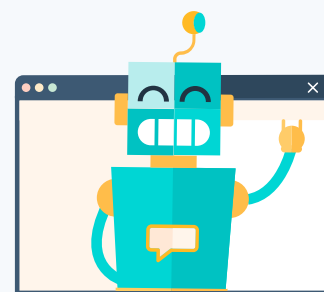
92%

of respondents **already use AI** or automation tools



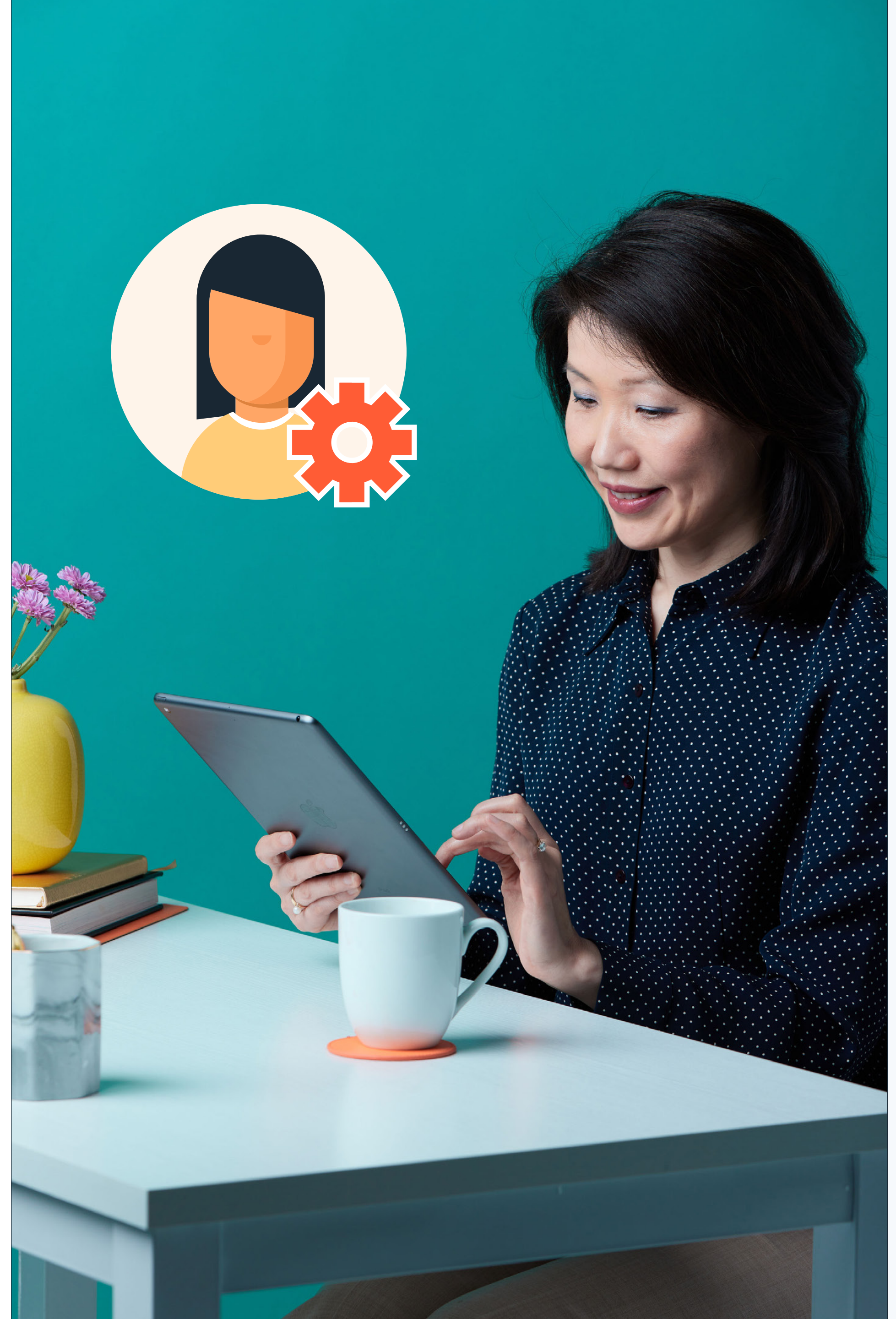
60%

believe AI is a **game-changer** for marketing



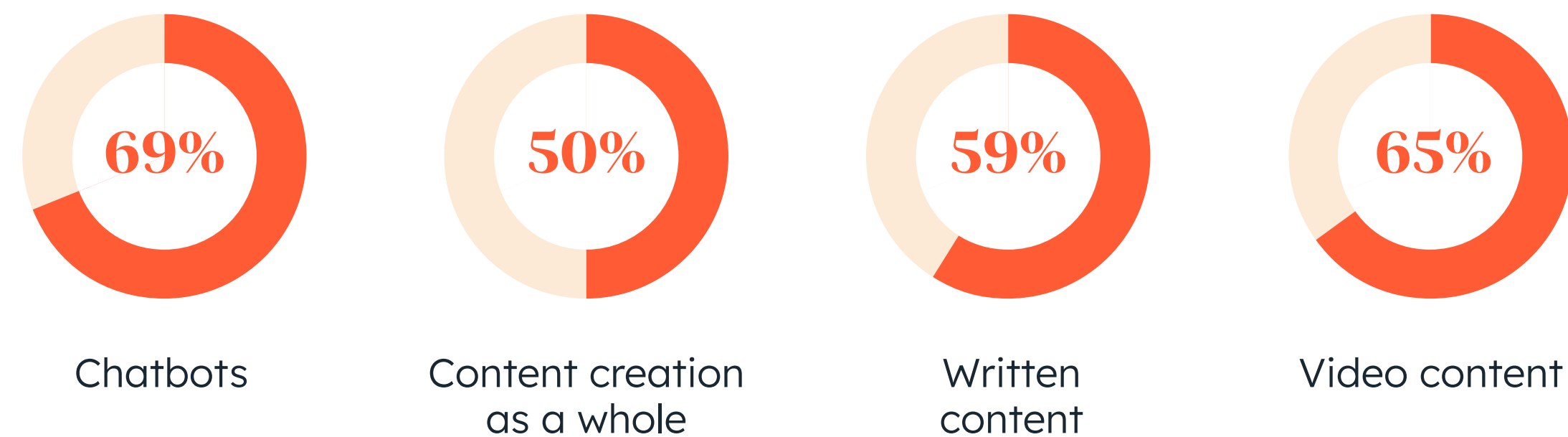
55%

have **fully integrated AI** into their marketing efforts



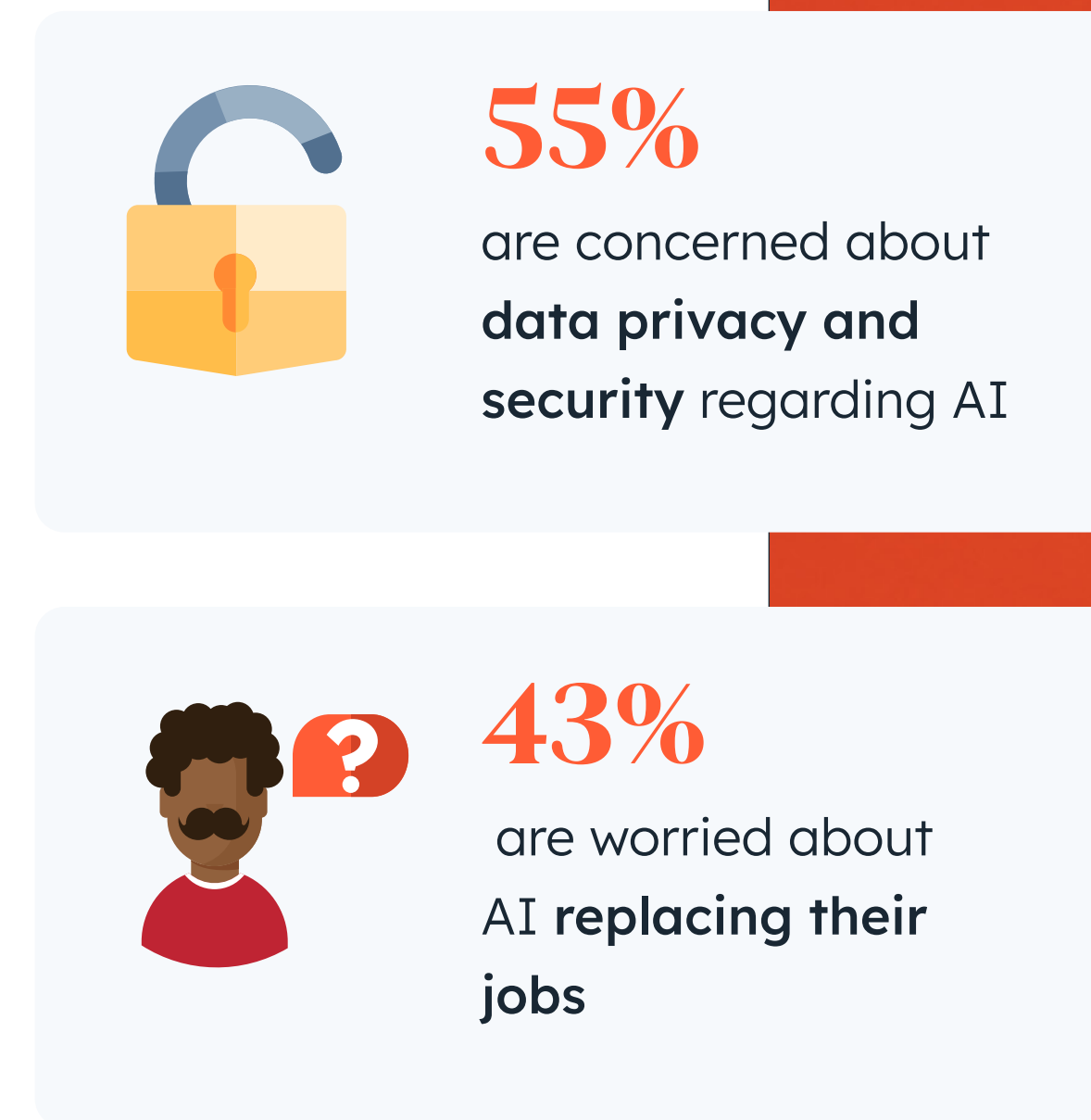
When asked “**which trends do you plan to leverage for the first time in 2025?**” - 33% of respondents mentioned updating the SEO strategy to prepare for generative AI in search, and 31% of respondents mentioned leveraging AI/automation (e.g. chatbots, segmentation, etc.).

Over which aspect of marketing your team isn't fully prepared for the impact of AI?

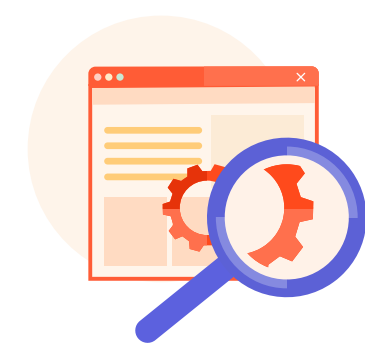


Marketers spend four hours a day on average on manual, administrative, or operational tasks. But with AI tools, **marketers are saving 3 hours per piece of content** and 2.5 hours per day overall. In fact, 56% of Canadian marketing leaders agree that the use of AI and automation will reduce hiring in the next year. Along with the many benefits, most respondents agree AI raises some concerns.

Top 2 concerns on the use of AI in 2025:



Takeaways



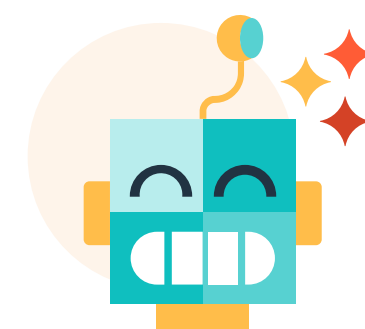
Marketing Challenges

Top challenges for marketing teams included meeting goals, generating revenue, and diversifying channels, highlighting areas for improvement.



Marketing Goals

Lead generation, brand awareness, and driving website traffic were key objectives for 2024-2025, focusing on growth and visibility.



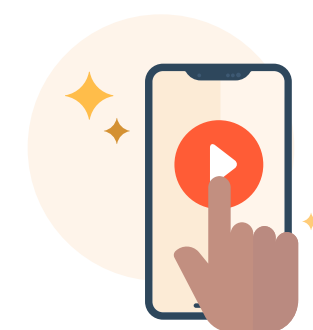
AI and Automation

High adoption of AI and automation tools indicates a push for technology-driven marketing performance enhancement.



Target Audience Insights

Understanding demographics, interests, shopping habits, and preferences emerged as crucial but challenging for marketing teams, impacting campaign effectiveness.



Future Trends

Expect increased investments in inbound marketing, short-form video content, and influencer marketing, shifting towards these impactful trends.

TLDR



Leverage data



Video is king



Try AI



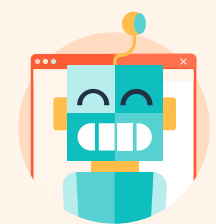
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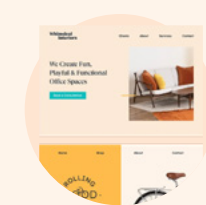
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Methodology

We conducted a survey of 300 B2B Canadian marketing leaders across various industries to gather the insights of this report.

Report created in collaboration with Datalily.

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