

HubSpot

| VENNGAGE

Marketing Statistics Report 2022



Analyzing marketing data from more than 100,000 customers of **HubSpot's CRM platform**, and trends in visual content strategies used by hundreds of marketers around the world interviewed by **Venngage**.

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Introduction

As it did with just about everything else, the COVID-19 pandemic had a serious effect when it comes to how the average company connected with consumers via marketing campaigns. Many businesses across the world closed or cut back hours while others fundamentally changed the way they operated, to say nothing of the millions of people who became infected with the virus, which continues to cause upheaval across the globe.

Venngage's interviews with hundreds of marketing professionals around the world showed that the majority adapted their visual content strategies because of the pandemic, and **HubSpot's** customer data shows that 2020 was a serious struggle

for many companies when it comes to connecting with consumers.

But while there may still be dark days ahead in the fight against the virus, for many companies around the world, business has returned to normal — or even better than it was before. In fact, HubSpot's data shows that companies are continuing to shrug off the impact of the virus on their marketing efforts.

We analyzed thousands of data points in more than a dozen categories related to visual content and marketing success from Venngage and HubSpot users to measure behavior and predict success across regions, industries and company size.



Methodology

The data contained in this analysis comes from two sources:



This data comes from HubSpot's customer base of more than 103,000 companies, covering a period of 23 months between February 2020 and December 2021, **using January 2020 as the baseline metric** across these categories:



Ad spend



Website traffic



Conversation



Contact growth

HubSpot's data is reported monthly relative to performance in a category vs. the January 2020 baseline. For example, in February 2020, the user base of about 103,000 reported website traffic as being 2 percent below the baseline. To create apples-to-apples comparisons over time,

we are using the metric of percentage point change. Using our website traffic example, that means that website traffic rose by 14 points from February to March 2020 (-2 to 13). Throughout this report, references to points when discussing how metrics have changed refers to percentage points.

For the purpose of comparing companies of varying size, those with fewer than 25 employees are listed as small, those with 25-200 employees are considered medium and those with 201 employees or more are classified as large.

Regional breakdowns include Asia-Pacific (Australia and India), Europe, the Middle East and Africa (France, Germany, the Netherlands, Spain and the UK), Latin America (Brazil and Mexico) and North America (Canada and the United States).

Most categories of data cover a period between February 2020 and December 2021, but certain categories cover a shorter period, and those are noted throughout the report.



This data comes from surveys of more than 200 marketers around the world on how visual content plays a role in their marketing

and growth strategies, what impact the pandemic had on their plans and what they think visual content marketing will look like in the years to come. This data is also segmented based on geography (Australia, Canada, the UK and the U.S.).

Chapter 01:

Overall Marketing Metrics

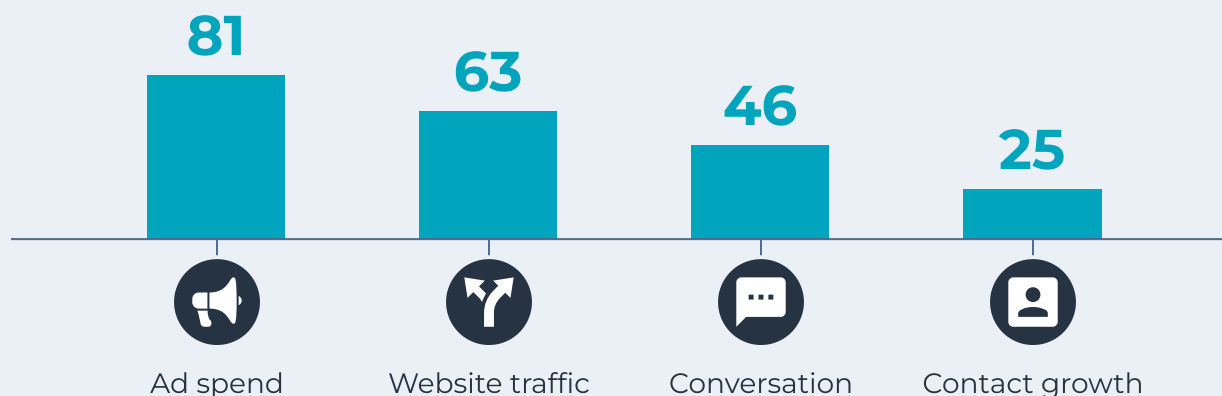
Most companies have seen Marketing Metrics improve after upheaval in early days of the Pandemic.

Among those four metrics, ad spend has seen the biggest bounceback over the benchmark of January 2020, two months before COVID-19 was declared a global pandemic. Between February 2020 and

December 2021, ad spend by HubSpot customers climbed by 81 points, the biggest bounceback across the four categories. (For a detailed explanation of what the HubSpot data means, see the methodology section.)

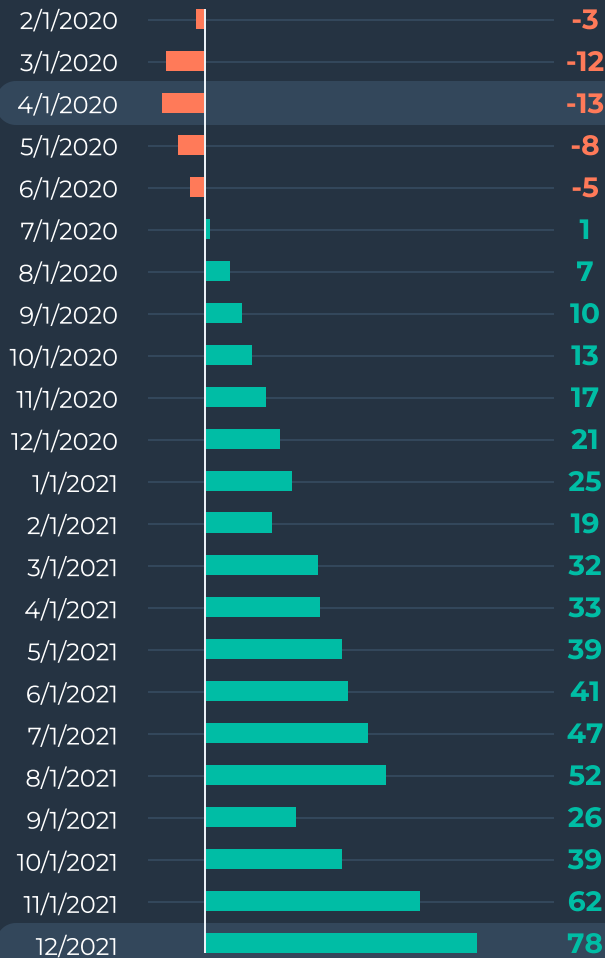
All other metrics have improved since the early days of the pandemic as well, indicating that companies investing in marketing and advertising efforts are likely to see positive returns.

Percentage point change vs. benchmark by category,
February 2020-December 2021*



*Based on aggregated data across HubSpot customer base of more than 100,000 companies.

Chapter 02: Ad Spend



We've already touched on the fact that ad spend has had the biggest improvement in terms of percentage point performance compared to our benchmark, but let's dig into those numbers a bit more.

February 2020, the first month after the benchmark, saw ad spend fall by 3 percent, a modest decline compared to the next two months, when ad spend dropped by 12 percent and 13 percent, respectively. In fact, after January, ad spend was in the negative for five straight months in 2020.

Since July 2020, ad spend has been in positive territory, but companies spent nearly half of that year underperforming the benchmark.

Compared to where ad spend ended 2021 and the month with the biggest decline (April 2020), the metric has rebounded by 91 percentage points, the most extreme variation of any of the four categories we studied.

Worst month
(April '20)

-13

Best month
(December '21)

78

Biggest Variation

91

Chapter 03: Website Traffic

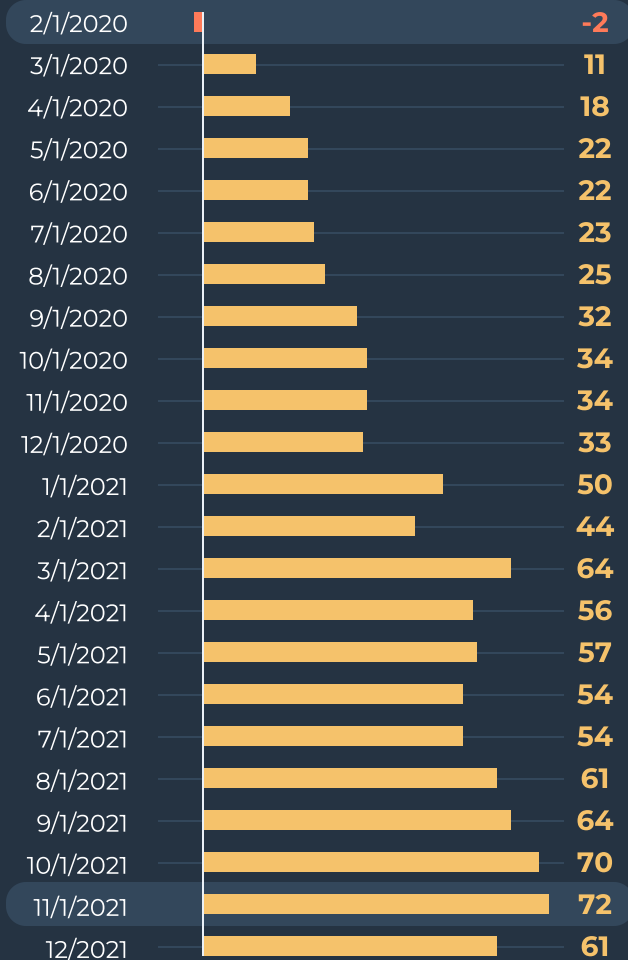


Like conversation, website traffic had just one month in the red, a modest dip of 2 points in February 2020, perhaps due to the pandemic's impact on marketing.

Many companies were forced to scale back marketing and advertising campaigns during the first few months of the pandemic, while some firms closed entirely. Website traffic, on the other hand, tends to be less impacted by brick-and-mortar changes.

Between February 2020 and December 2021, website traffic improved 63 points vs. the benchmark, and website traffic has been consistently the best performer of the four metrics we studied — averaging 23 points better vs. the benchmark in 2020 and 59 points better in 2021.

On the other hand, website traffic also shows some volatility. The difference between its low point (February 2020) and its high point (November 2021) is 74 percentage points, second only to ad spend.



Worst month
(February '20)

-2

Best month
(November '21)

72

**Biggest
Variation**

74

Chapter 04: Conversation



Conversation was much less affected by the pandemic than ad spend and contact growth, spending just one month below the benchmark — February 2020 (7 points).

While most months have been positive for conversation, this category has also shown modest gains for the average company.

Between February 2020 and December 2021, conversation rose by 46 percentage points, which is a healthy improvement. But it also signals the fact this area tends to lag behind others, according to benchmark data.

In fact, while conversation had the second-best 2020 of the four categories we examined, its average performance vs. the benchmark in 2021 (27 points) was the lowest. However, conversation metrics were also the most predictable, with a 48-point difference between their valley in 2020 and peak in 2021.

Worst month
(February '20)

-7

Best month
(November '21)

41

**Biggest
Variation**

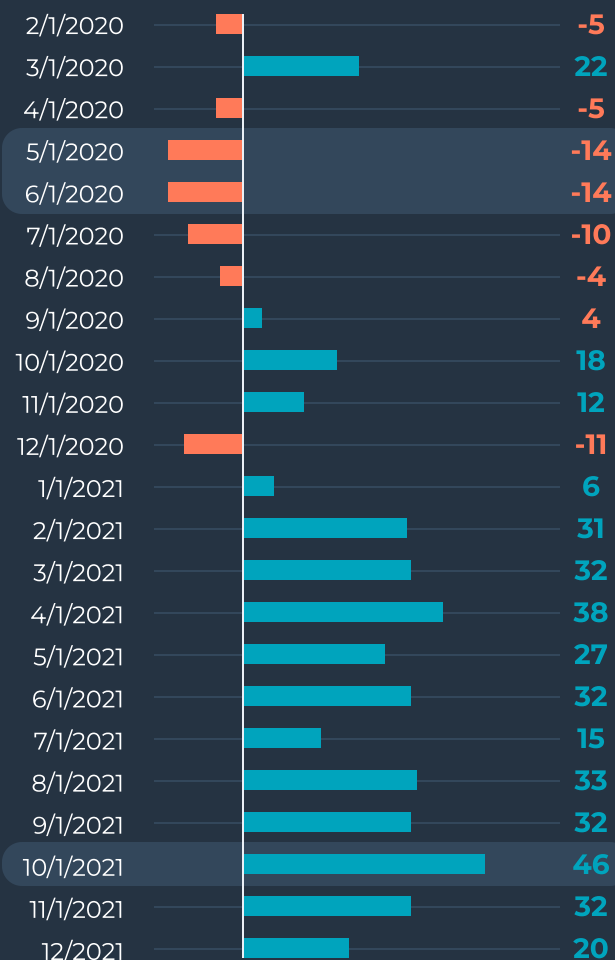
48

Chapter 05: Contact Growth

Contact growth, which refers to the average number of new contacts added to a customer's portal, had the worst 2020 of all four metrics, spending nearly two-thirds of the year underperforming the benchmark of January 2020. It also had the least robust rebound, climbing 25 percentage points between February 2020 and December 2021.

Excluding an outlier month of March 2020, which saw contact growth outperform the benchmark by 22 points, this area saw companies fall into the red in six of the first seven months. This category also shows the most lingering effects from the pandemic, with a month below the benchmark in December 2020 (11 points), a time when all other categories were well into positive territory.

Negativity aside, contact growth, like all other areas we analyzed, made solid gains in 2021, which points to a positive 2022. Contact growth sits at 29 points better than the benchmark for 2021, all but one month that year showed double-digit improvements over the benchmark, and the metric's best month came late in 2021.



Worst month
(May + June '20)

-14

Best month
(October '21)

46

Biggest Variation

60

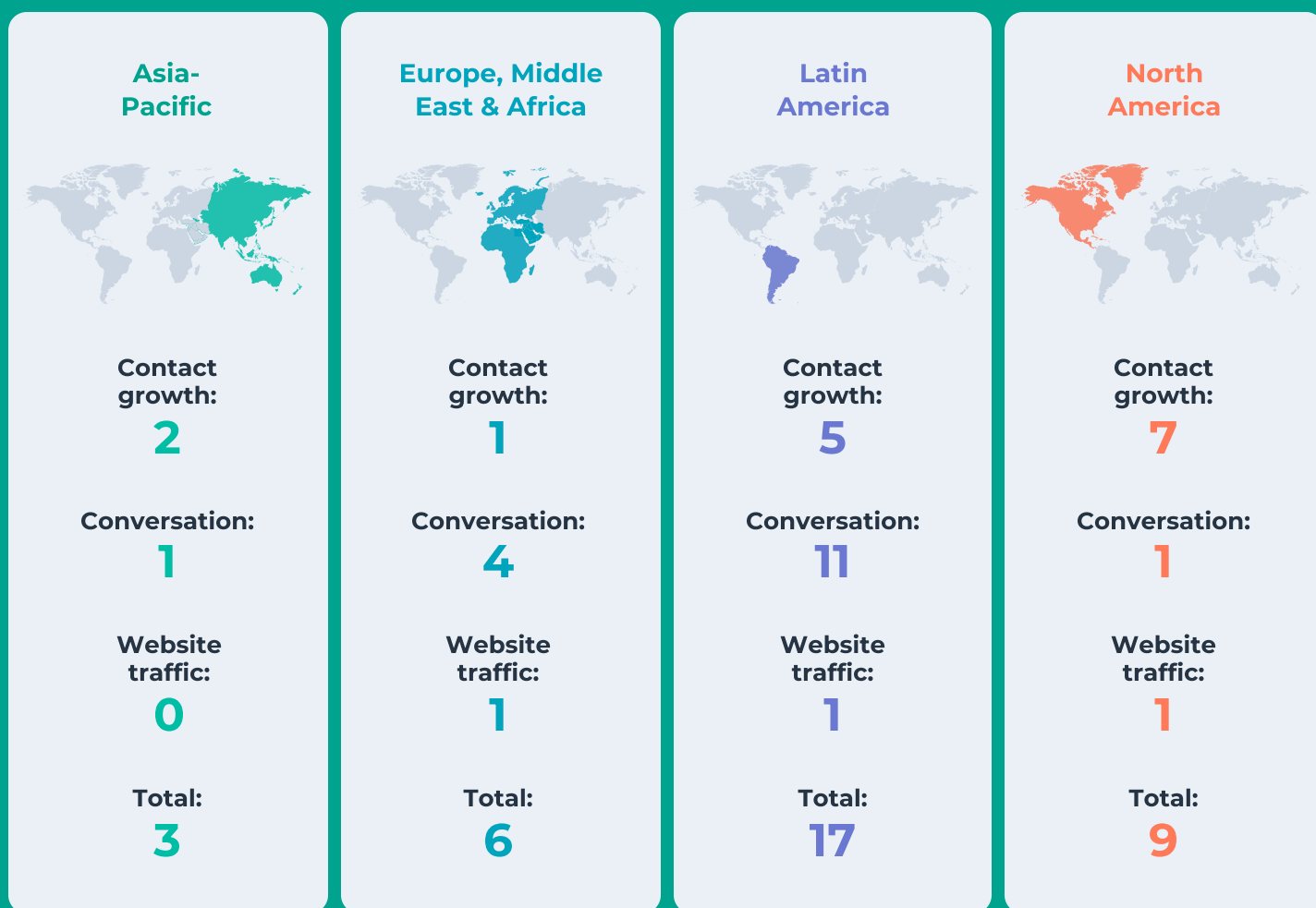
Chapter 06: Regions

Companies in Latin America and North America hit hardest, while those in Asia-Pacific show strongest performance.

For the most part, firms in Latin America and North America bore the brunt of declines across marketing measures in

2020, excluding ad spend, which was not included due to currency differences. Those two regions had the most modest rebounds across contact growth, conversation and website traffic, and Latin America spent almost as many months with metrics performing below the baseline as the other regions combined.

Months below benchmark by region, February 2020-December 2021



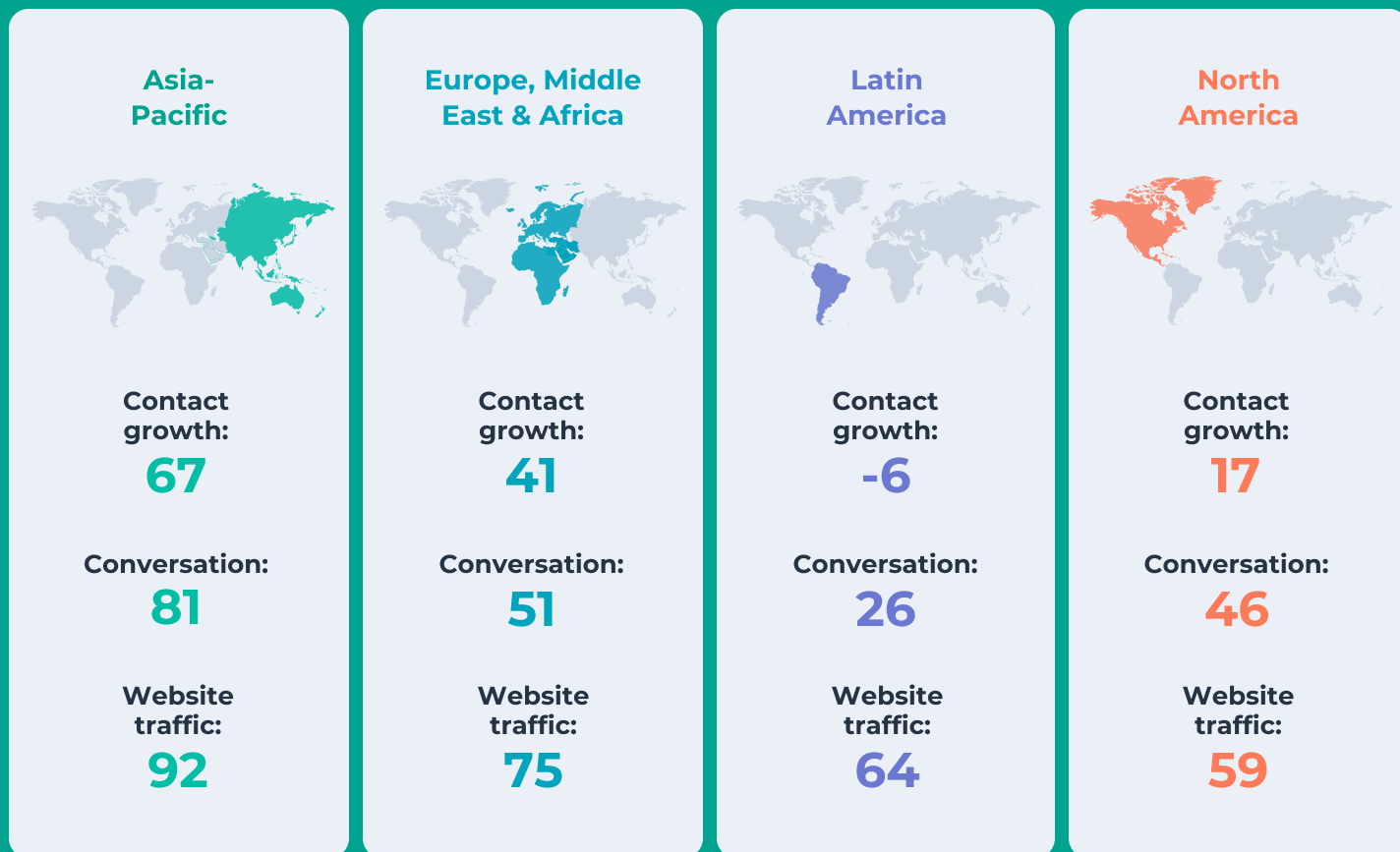
Companies in Latin America finished 2021 in a worse position than they began in February 2020 in contact growth, going from 22 points above the benchmark in this category to 16 points, and while the region fared better in conversation and website traffic, it was in the bottom half for both.

Asia-Pacific firms had the fewest months performing below the benchmark in contact growth, conversation and website traffic — by far. That region had only three months in which its overall measures fell short of the

baseline, compared to the next-closest region with six (Europe, Middle East and Africa).

Asia-Pacific also had the biggest rebounds when comparing February 2020 to December 2021, and the region's average performance against the benchmark in both 2020 and 2021 leads all regions in the three categories with available regional data, making it the strongest performer across the board.

Percentage point change vs. benchmark by region, February 2020-December 2021



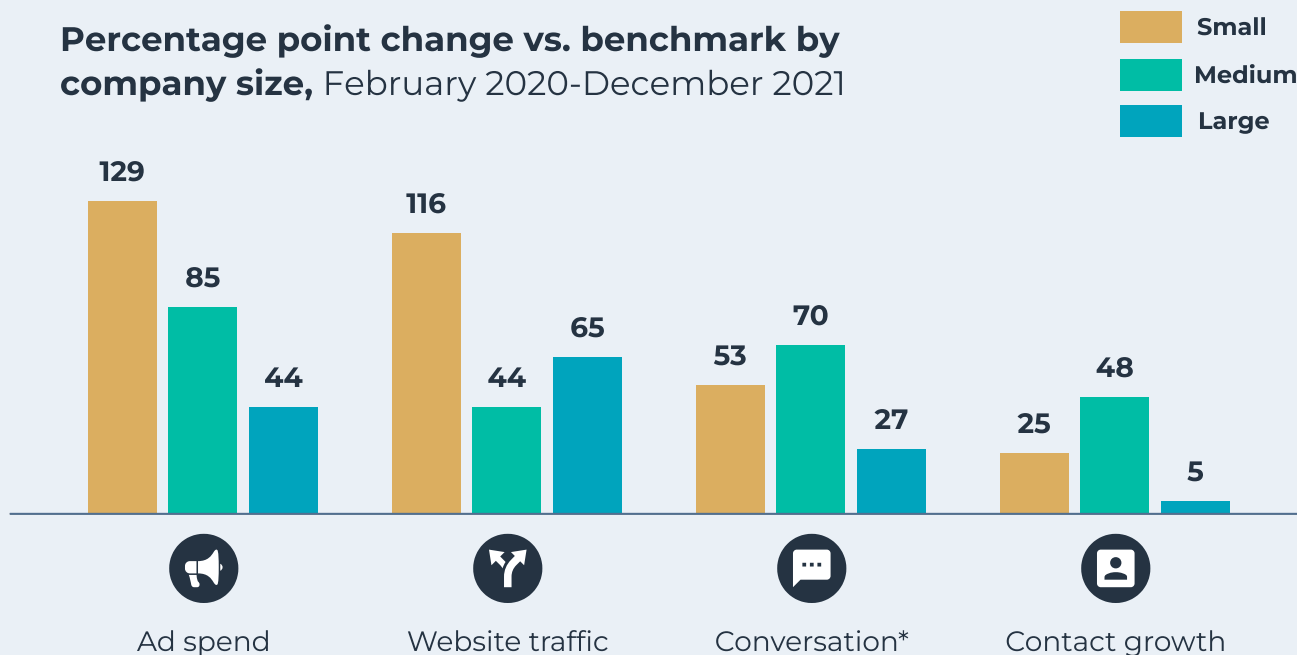
Chapter 07: Company Size

Mid-Sized firms show slower but steadier improvement.

When it comes to company size, large organizations (more than 200 employees) tended to fare worse over the past couple of years than smaller ones (25 or fewer), though small companies struggled to grow their subscriber base in 2020.

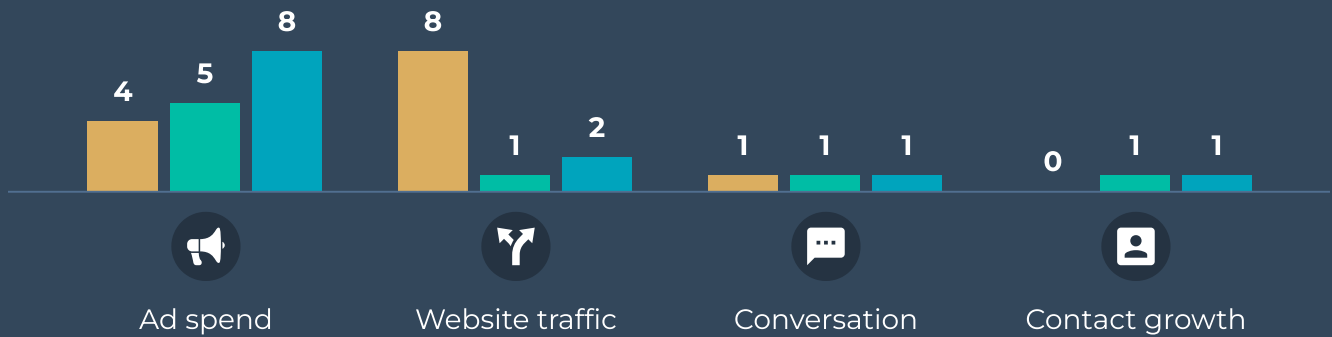
Mid-sized companies (26-200 employees) had the fewest months where they struggled to reach benchmarks and finished 2021 leading in two of the four marketing statistical categories we examined.

Percentage point change vs. benchmark by company size, February 2020-December 2021



*Conversation data based on company size covers February 2020-November 2021

Months below benchmark by company size, February 2020-December 2021



TOTAL
(Small sized)

13

TOTAL
(Medium sized)

8

TOTAL
(Large sized)

12

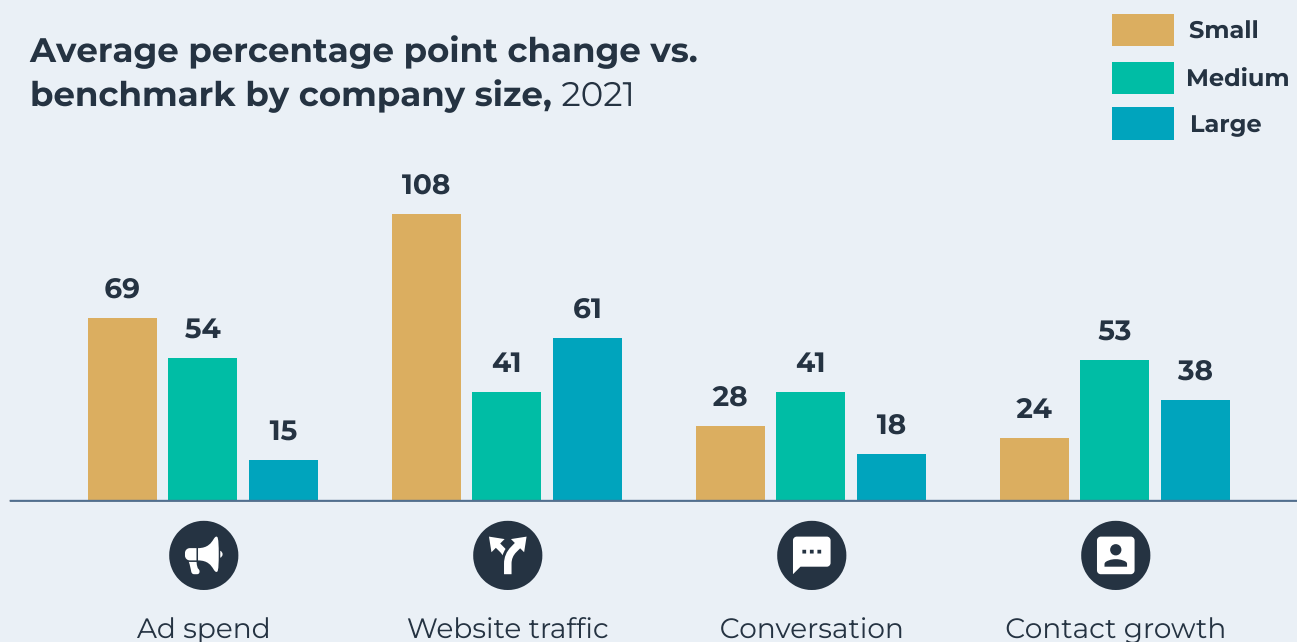
Small organizations, presumably with smaller ad budgets to begin with, had the fewest months in which they lowered their ad spending, and they had by far the biggest comeback in that metric.

However, it's not all roses for small companies. These firms had seven straight months with contact growth below the benchmark measure and finished 2020 eight points below the baseline for contact growth.

Regardless of size, companies tended to cut back on ad spend during the early days of the pandemic, but large firms spent eight straight months in 2020 trimming their ad budgets, and despite being in positive territory for all of 2021, these firms averaged just 15 points above the benchmark when it comes to ad spend for the year. Still, compared to 2020, 2021 was an improvement for firms of all sizes.

Medium-sized companies show the most consistent performance levels when compared to the January 2020 benchmark, with only about 13 percentage points separating their best showing from their worst, and given that they led all size categories in two of the four measures, this is undoubtedly a sign of solid performance by companies of this size.

Average percentage point change vs. benchmark by company size, 2021



Chapter 08: Industry

Financial Services, Media and Staffing Firms endure biggest downturn.

The consumer products and manufacturing industries have fared the best over the past couple of years, while firms in areas like financial services, marketing and staffing have been the hardest-hit. However, while there certainly were some dark days, all industries are seeing the needle move in a positive direction.

Most industries have seen ad spend rebound the fastest of the four key marketing metrics we examined, and companies in the

consumer products space ended 2021 at 127 percentage points better than they started in February 2020 — though December 2021 wasn't even their best month. That honor goes to the previous month, November 2021, when these firms were spending 155 percentage points more than the benchmark of January 2020, likely due to the holiday shopping season.

Companies in the media/marketing industry were the only ones for which ad spend didn't account for the biggest rebound over the past two years. For firms in this field, contact growth was the clear winner.

Percentage point change vs. benchmark by industry,
February 2020-December 2021

Industry	Consumer products	Financial services	Manufacturing	Media / marketing	Software / IT	Staffing / recruiting
Ad spend	127	86	92	57	87	78
Website traffic	80	52	53	25	73	19
Conversation	66	56	30	34	86	64
Contact growth*	83	33	20	156	51	47

*Contact growth data for companies in the manufacturing and media/marketing industries covers February 2020-November 2021



Months below benchmark by industry, 2020-2021

Industry	Consumer products	Financial services	Manufacturing	Media / marketing	Software/IT	Staffing / recruiting
Ad spend	2	12	0	6	6	5
Website traffic	1	1	0	4	0	4
Conversation	1	1	8	6	3	1
Contact growth	1	8	0	3	1	4
TOTAL	5	22	8	19	10	14

No field was hit harder in our metrics than those in the financial services sector, which spent the remainder of 2020 performing below the ad spend baseline set in January of that year. That industry's first positive month for ad spending was February 2021, but the field has been moving in the right direction since.

Media and marketing firms have also spent many months dipping below the benchmark, underperforming for at least three months in all four statistical categories we looked at. That includes six straight months of declining ad spend and a 48-point drop in contact growth in February 2020.





While there no doubt have been dark times for many companies, regardless of industry, all sectors saw their marketing metrics improve in 2021. Perhaps because so many companies have shifted to remote work, firms in the software/IT industry finishing 2021 surpassing the contact growth benchmark by more than 100 points, while a few other industries approach the 100-point mark, including media/marketing in contact growth and manufacturing companies in ad spend.

Average percentage point change vs. benchmark by industry, 2021

Industry	Consumer products	Financial services	Manufacturing	Media / marketing	Software / IT	Staffing / recruiting
Ad spend	72	24	80	24	53	55
Website traffic	57	52	60	23	68	28
Conversation	52	39	47	14	52	41
Contact growth	65	35	69	87	104	62

Chapter 09:

Covid Impact

How has COVID-19 impacted companies' marketing efforts?

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is most evident in a couple of places, including:



Ad spend

Overall, ad spending declined for five straight months between February and June 2020, with a few months in 2021 showing signs of trouble. Ad spend for all companies in our dataset in September 2021 was only 26 percentage points above the baseline, though companies finished the year 78 points above the baseline in that category.

For large companies, budget cuts were in place even longer, falling below the baseline through September 2020 and not reaching double digits in positive territory until March 2021. And both September and October 2021 saw this measure fall to just a few percentage points above the benchmark for companies with more than 200 employees.

Financial services, media/marketing & staffing/recruiting

For financial services firms, the entirety of 2020 was spent at or below the January 2020 baseline for ad spend, while those in media and marketing weren't far behind, falling at or below the baseline in for eight months. Staffing/recruiting firms spent the first five months of the pandemic riding below the benchmark.

Not surprisingly, their troubles didn't end with ad spend. Companies in these industries were also more likely to see lackluster growth (or declines) in contact growth, conversation and website traffic.

On average, firms in these industries have spent about one in five of the past 23 months falling below the benchmark in one of these key marketing categories.

Visual content

In addition to **HubSpot's** CRM platform data, **Venngage's** survey data also shows us how much the pandemic has changed how companies reach out to customers (and potential customers) through their marketing efforts.

Just under 60 percent of marketers said they pivoted their visual content marketing strategy in 2020 because of the pandemic, but marketers in the UK were much more likely to say they made shifts in their approach after the virus hit.

Countries that pivoted visual content marketing strategies in 2020 because of the pandemic

64%

Australia

62%

Canada

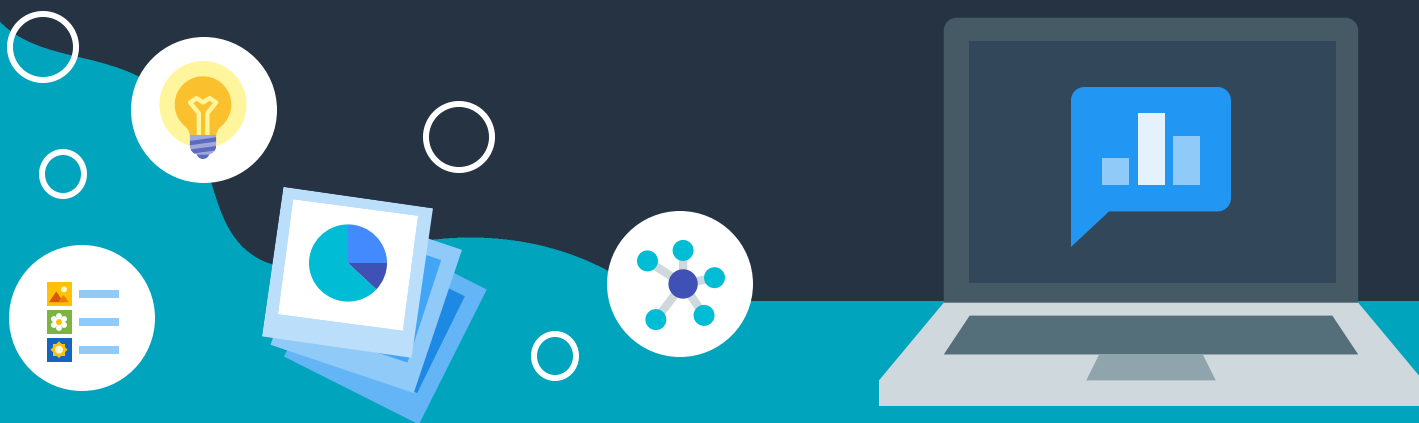
73%

UK

50%

US

Overall: **57%**



Though they may have shifted their strategies, most marketers believe visual content will remain a key to marketing in 2022. Nearly two-thirds expect businesses

to rely heavily on visual content as a key plank in their marketing strategies in 2022, though the effect is expected to be strongest in Australia.

Percentage of businesses that will rely heavily on visual content in marketing strategies in 2022

86%

Australia



76%

Canada



80%

UK



60%

US



Overall: 63%

What does visual content look like for the average marketer? Infographics, illustrations and stock photos are the most popular types of visual content, according to those Venngage interviewed, and nearly half of marketing content contains visuals.

Visuals used most frequently



33%

Infographics & illustrations



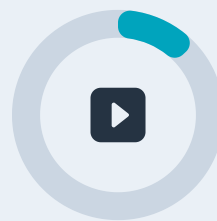
30%

Stock photos



15%

Charts & data visualizations



13%

Videos & presentations



5%

Multipage lead-en docs

Conclusion

Though vaccine rollouts have not reached every place on earth and new variants are likely to continue to emerge, the past two years have illustrated the resilience of the average marketer. From shifting their priorities to adapting to new ways of working, what the past couple of years may reveal is that whatever the future holds, marketers are well-equipped to handle it.



About HubSpot

HubSpot is a leading customer relationship management (CRM) platform that provides software and support to help companies grow better.

The platform includes marketing, sales, service, operations, and website management products that start free and scale to meet our customers' needs at any stage of growth.

Start free or get
a free demo



About Venngage

Venngage is the simple design platform for bringing dull data, dry documents and complex communications to life.

With more than 7,500 engaging visual communication templates, made by expert in-house designers, you can create professional and sleek business communications with no design experience required.

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