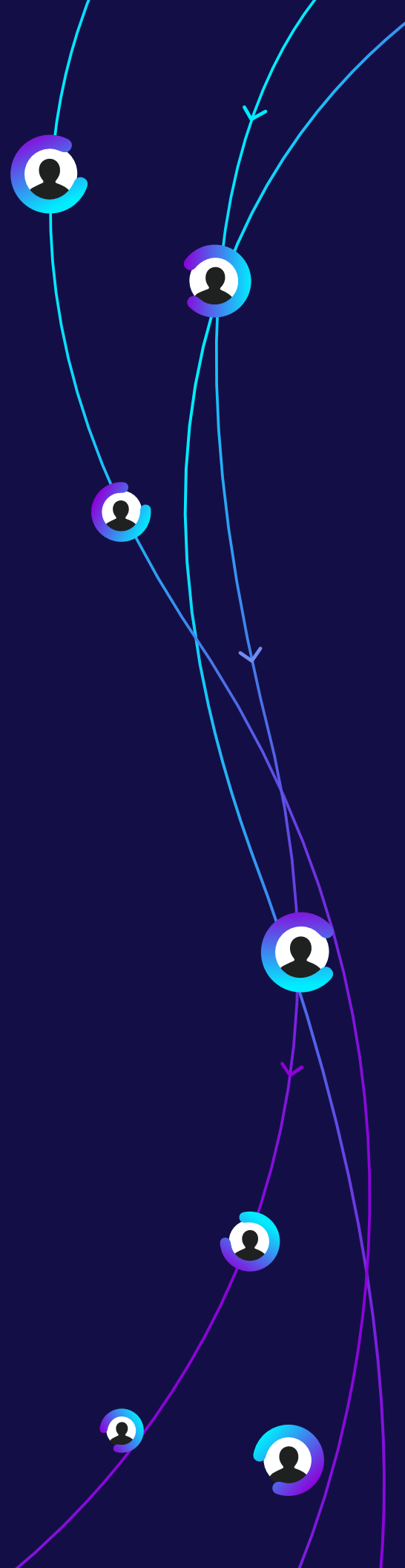




The 2024 *Marketing Executive* *AI Sentiment* Survey Report

AI Adoption, Future Plans and
Trust Levels Among Executive
Leaders in Marketing





Executive Summary

Conversica commissioned a survey of 454 marketing leaders at the CMO, VP, and executive levels regarding the utilization of AI in marketing over the past year, plans for the next 12 months, top marketing use cases for growth and general AI trust sentiment.

Key Findings Include

- ✓ **71% of respondents** used AI for **data gathering and analysis** in the past 12 months, while **only 40%** utilized AI for **funnel efficiency**
- ✓ **89%** reported that AI-driven initiatives **directly contributed** to an **increase in revenue** in the last year
- ✓ Those planning to use AI for inbound follow-up and outbound lead generation were even more likely to **have seen revenue increases** last year (**95% and 92%, respectively**)
- ✓ **89% of respondents** plan to **increase investment in AI tools** or **explore new AI applications** in the next year
- ✓ Marketing execs believe AI technologies have the **greatest potential** to **impact the middle of the funnel (44%)**, with **lead nurture and qualification** topping their list of use cases with the greatest impact on conversion rates (**45%**)
- ✓ Overall trust in AI in the organization is **moderately high**, with **45%** reporting **complete trust** and **44%** some trust
- ✓ AI's ability to **deliver trustworthy, brand-accurate** information was the **top concern** for **conversational AI use cases**

The report delves into each question's results, highlighting trends, concerns, and opportunities identified in the data.



Introducing the Marketing Executive AI Sentiment Survey Report

Over the past 12 months, the marketing landscape has witnessed a significant evolution in the adoption and experimentation with Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies. This period has served as a foundational stage, where organizations across industries have been exploring the capabilities of AI in various marketing functions. From content creation to data analysis and customer service, AI has permeated into diverse aspects of marketing operations.

As we transition into the next 12 months, the focus shifts towards refining AI strategies and harnessing its full potential to deliver tangible returns on investment. Our survey of 454 executive leaders working in Marketing reveals a resounding acknowledgment of AI's role, with 95% of leaders already integrating AI into their marketing endeavors. What's more compelling is that those leveraging AI are not merely testing waters but are reaping concrete returns from their AI initiatives: nearly 9 in 10 reported seeing increases in revenue directly tied to AI last year.

A striking finding from our analysis is the correlation between specific AI use cases and revenue growth. Marketing leaders planning to use AI for inbound lead response and outbound lead generation in the next 12 months were more likely to have seen a direct increase in revenue attributed to AI use last year. This emphasizes the strategic importance of aligning AI applications with revenue-driving activities, signaling a shift towards more targeted and results-oriented AI strategies.

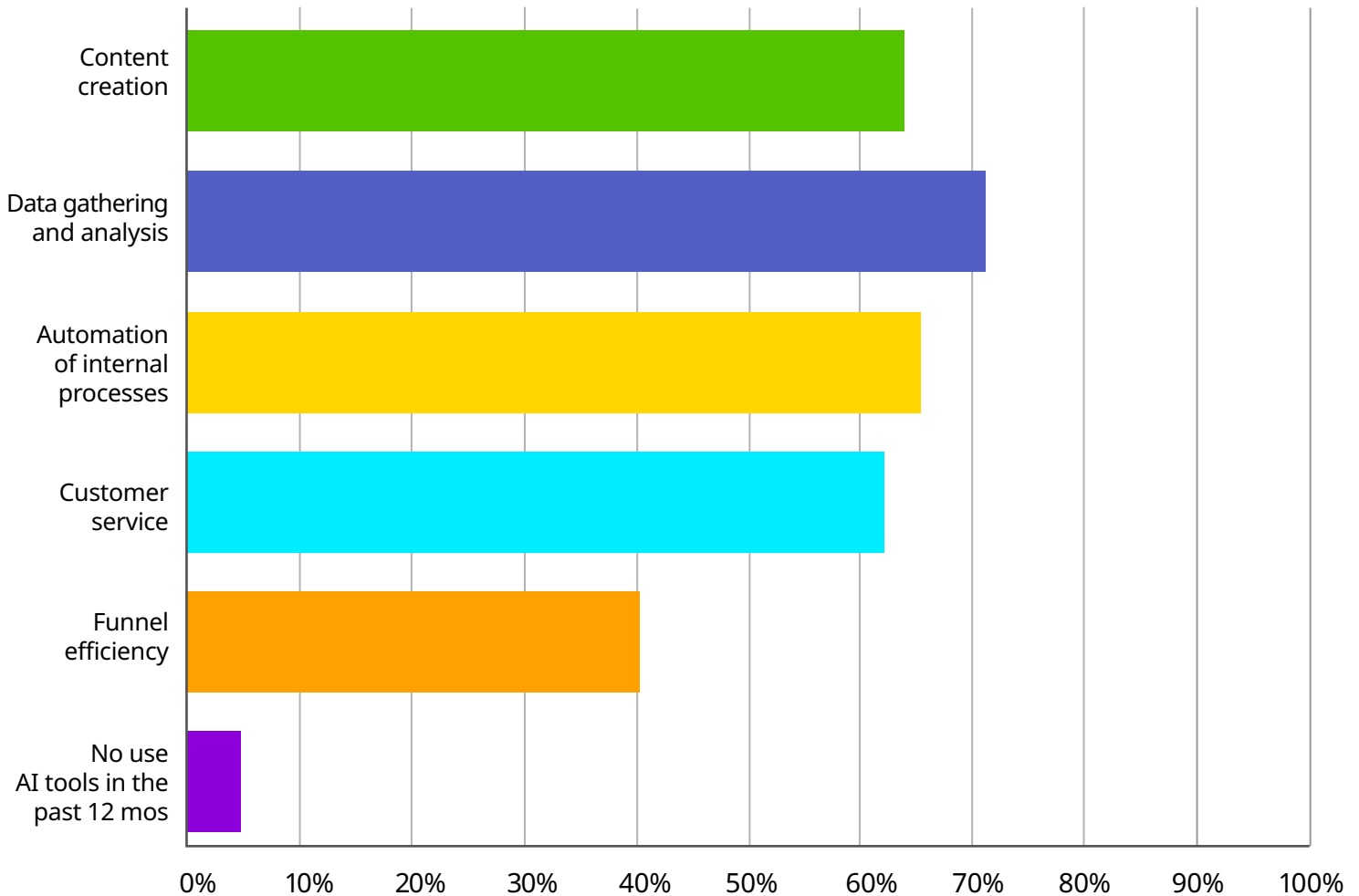
Despite the positive link between funnel-focused AI use cases, funnel efficiency overall is an untapped area for most Marketing executives. Our data reveals that while AI usage for content creation and data analysis is prevalent, funnel efficiency remains underrepresented. This presents a significant opportunity for marketing leaders to capitalize on AI's potential for optimizing funnel movement and conversions, thus reshaping the future landscape of AI in marketing beyond content creation.

In this report, we delve deep into the survey findings, uncovering insights, trends, and actionable strategies for marketing leaders to navigate the evolving AI landscape effectively. From understanding the current state of AI adoption to identifying key areas for strategic focus, this report serves as a guide for unlocking the full potential of AI in driving marketing success.



The Last Year in AI for Marketing

In the past 12 months, what functions did your Marketing organization leverage Artificial Intelligence technologies for most often?



The AI takeover of Marketing is well underway: **less than 5%** of marketing executives reported that **they had not used AI tools** in the past 12 months.

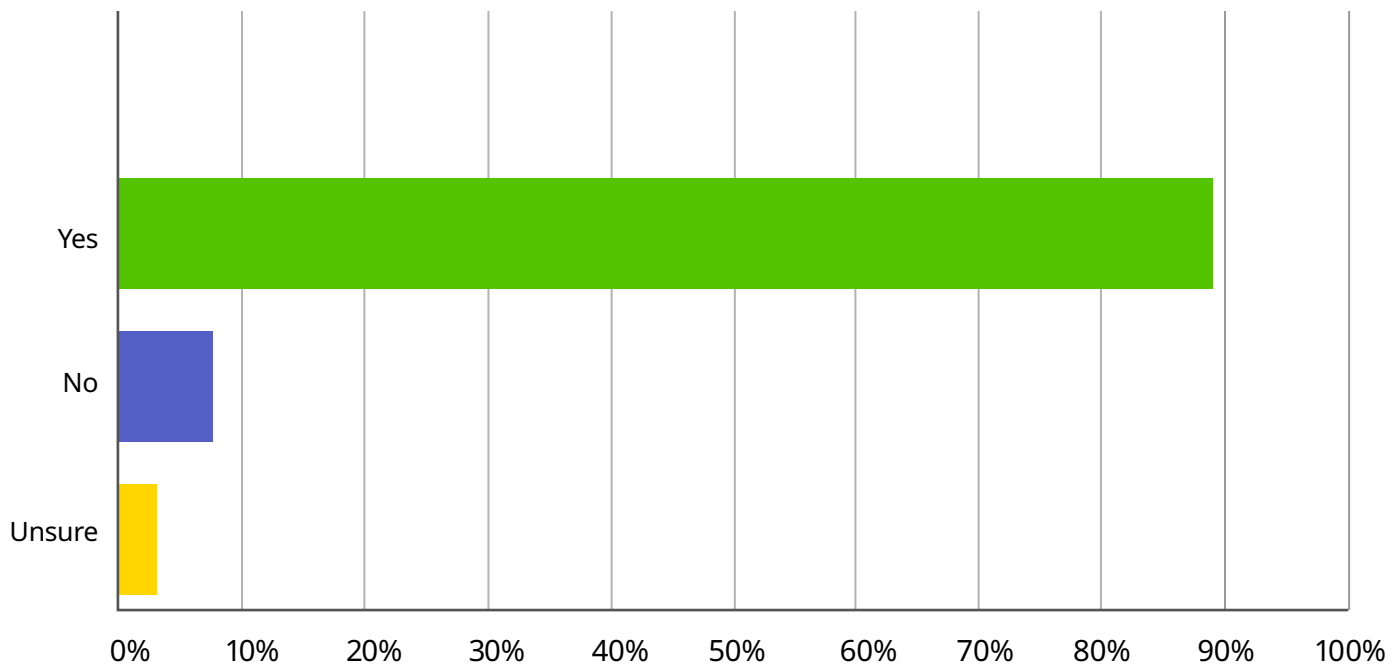
Of the 95% majority, **7 in 10 utilized AI for data gathering and analysis**, making it the most commonly leveraged function. **Automation of internal processes (65%), content creation (64%), and customer service (62%)** also emerged as significant use cases. These answers correlate with areas where specialized AI tools have been on the market for longer, indicating that adoption has naturally followed the technology curve.

AI for funnel efficiency, however, **showed less popularity** among our respondents, with **40% indicating they leveraged this AI use case**. This gap reveals a potential area for increased AI adoption and optimization within marketing operations.



Contributions of AI to Revenue

Have AI-driven initiatives contributed to an increase in revenue at your organization?



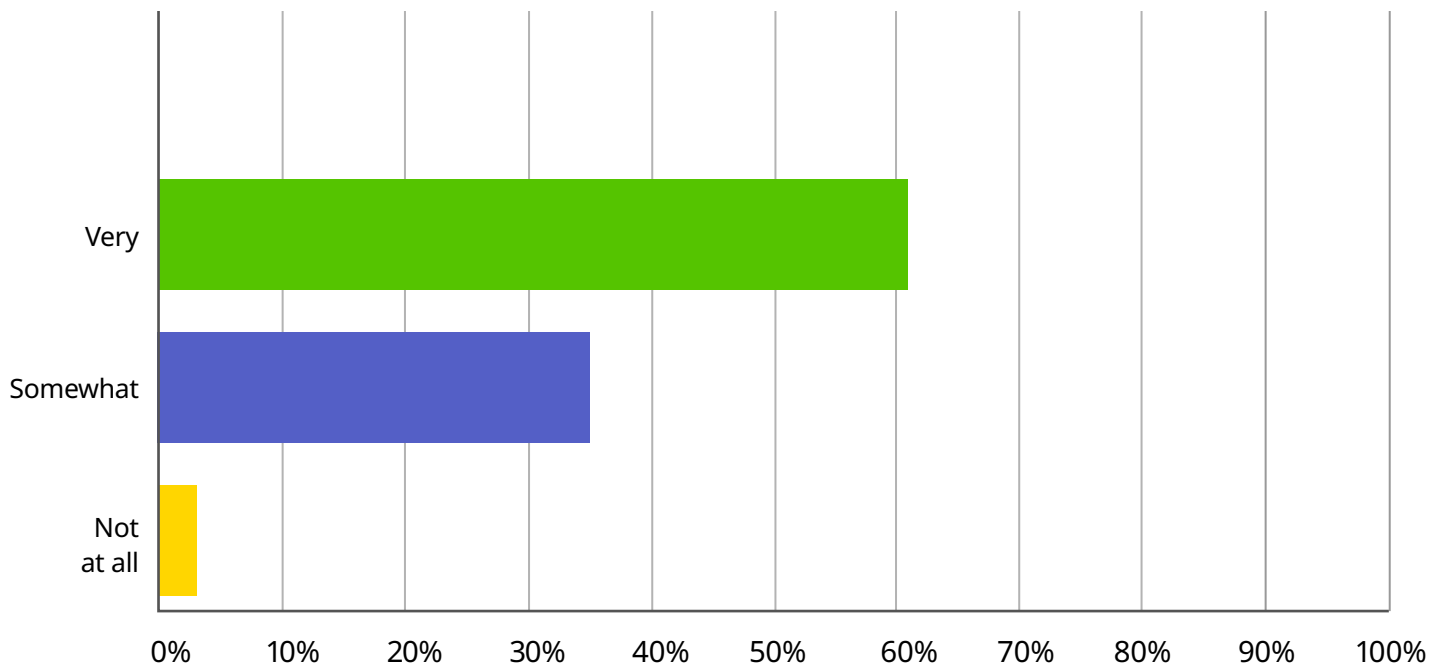
An **overwhelming majority of respondents (89%)** reported that **AI-driven initiatives contributed to an increase in revenue** at their organizations. This high percentage indicates the significant impact AI is having on revenue generation within marketing operations overall.

The percentage reporting an increase in revenue was even **higher among executives with plans to use AI for lead conversion-related use cases** in the next 12 months (Q7): 95% of those who expect AI to respond and engage with inbound leads at their organization this year saw AI-sourced revenue increases last year, with those planning to use AI for outbound lead generation close behind at 92%. We see this as a strong indication of the **correlation between funnel-focused AI use cases and revenue growth**.



Confidence in AI Effectiveness

How confident are you in your ability to measure the effectiveness of the AI technology your organization currently leverages?



Marketing executives are generally bullish on **their ability to measure the effectiveness** of the AI technology they use. **61%** report a **very high level of confidence**, and **another 35%** say they are **somewhat confident**. Given that the **majority of respondents** reported **using AI for data gathering and analysis** in the first place, this positive perception makes sense.

However, there were **some variations** within certain groups. Respondents who said that **AI had not contributed to revenue increases** at their organization last year were **significantly less confident** in their ability to measure AI effectiveness: only **20% of this group** rated themselves as **“very” confident**.

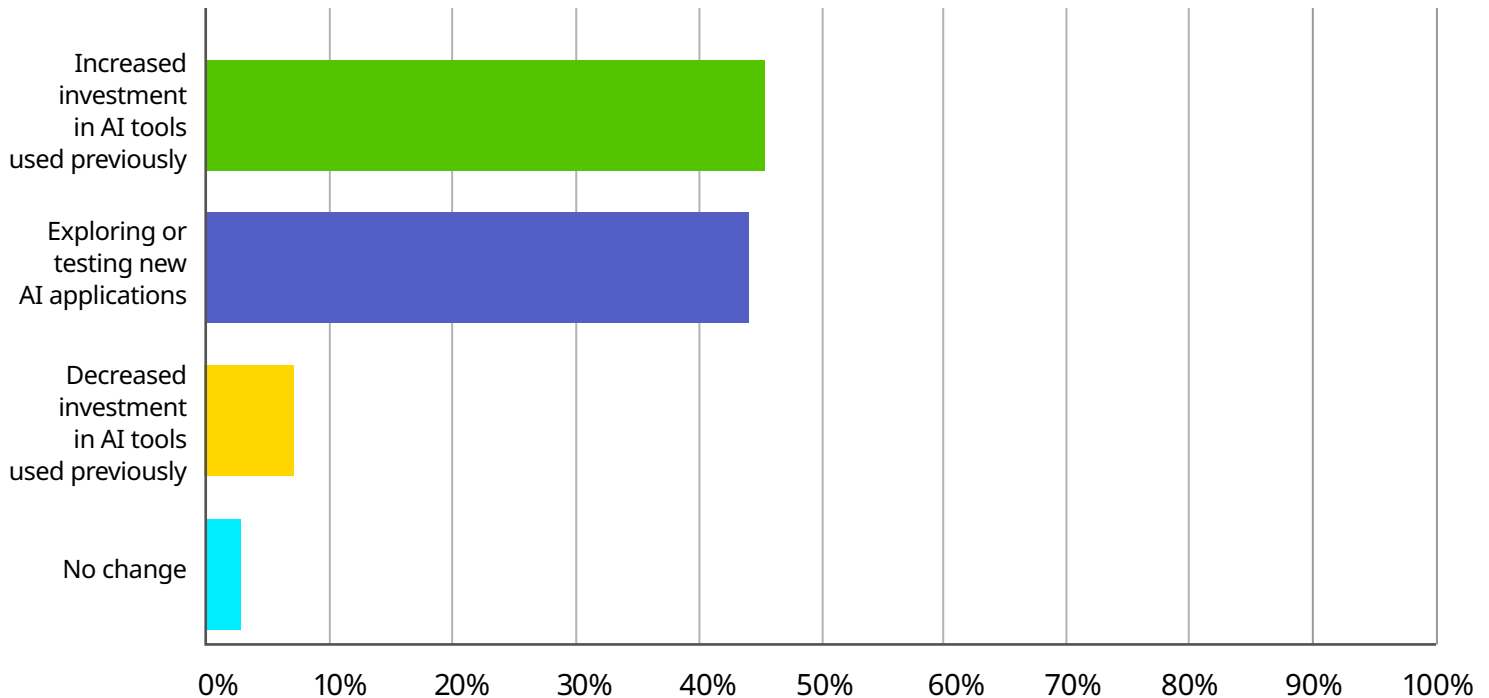
Overall **trust in AI’s ability to act autonomously** in their organization also correlated with a **higher confidence** in measuring effectiveness: **75% of respondents** who said they have **complete trust in AI to act autonomously** in their organization also reported that they were **very confident** in their **ability to measure its effectiveness**.

We see these variations as signs that **the more insight** Marketing leaders have into **AI’s impact and effectiveness**, the **more likely** they are to **see success and further their adoption**. Transparency **leads to trust** and more sophisticated use cases that **actively generate revenue** for the organization.



Marketing Executives' Future AI Plans

Which of the following best describes how you anticipate your Marketing team's AI strategy will evolve this year?



Once respondents gave us a clear view of their last 12 months of AI adoption, we wanted to know more about their **future plans**. Overwhelmingly, Marketing executives said they are **growing their use of AI**.

9 out of 10 respondents plan to **increase investment in AI tools** that they are currently using (**46%**) or **explore/test new AI applications** (**44%**) in the next year. This demonstrates a strong commitment to advancing AI strategies within marketing departments.

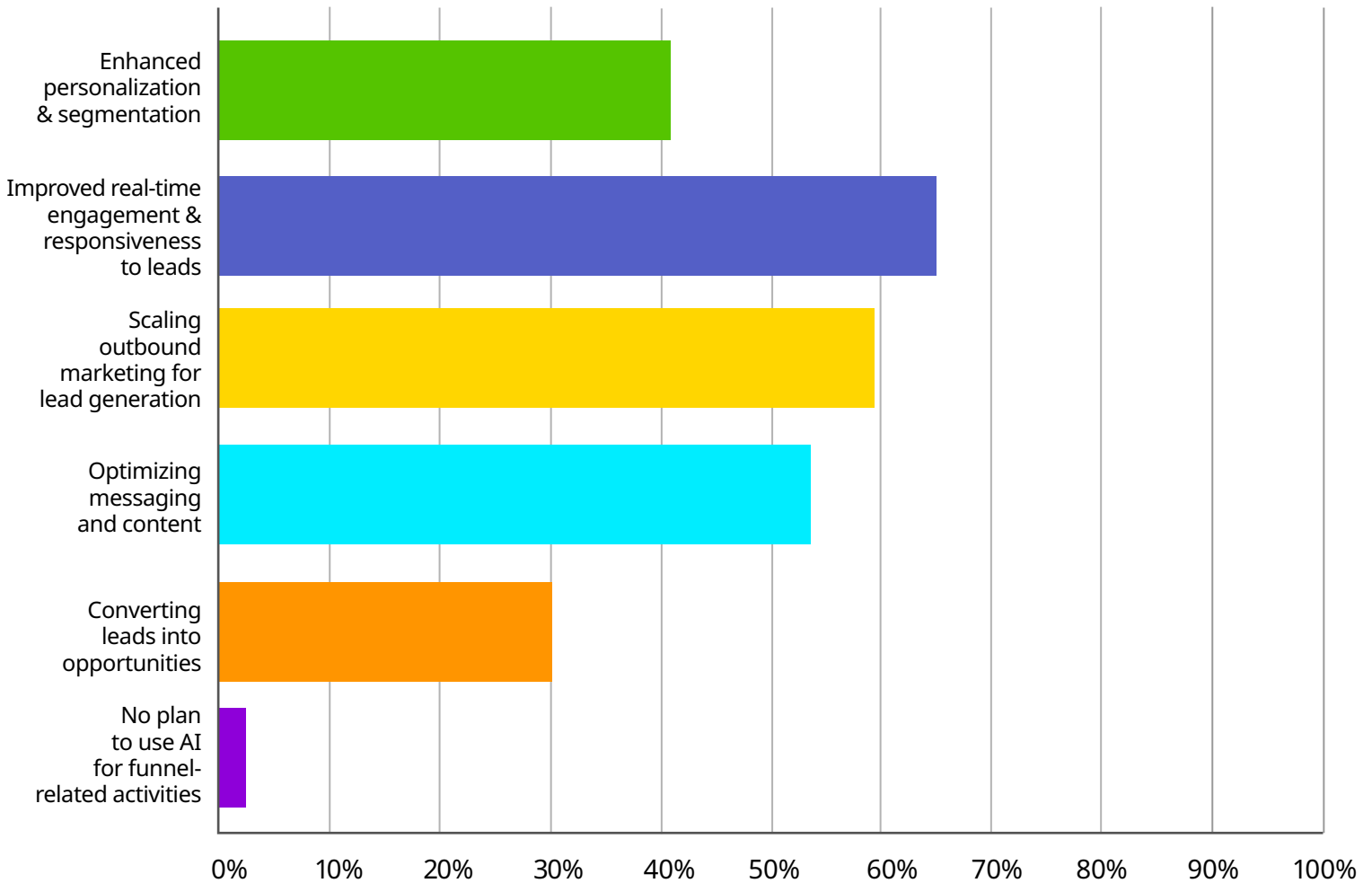
Perhaps unsurprisingly, those with **more trust** in AI to act autonomously were more likely to plan an **increase in investment** in AI tools they are currently using (**57.5%**). This group was also **less likely to explore or test new AI applications**—they **know what works** and they're doubling down. As Marketing executives find AI technology they like and gain more familiarity with it, they can take greater advantage of the **scalability** of these tools—there's **more trust** in giving technology you know greater autonomy than a new investment.

This **underscores the strategic importance** of adopting **the right AI tools** to get the most out of their use, **driving innovation** and **gaining competitive advantage** in Marketing.



Most Anticipated AI Use Cases

In the next year, what effects do you anticipate AI will have on your organization's funnel?



Improved **real-time engagement and responsiveness to leads (65.5%)** and **scaling outbound marketing for lead generation (59.5%)** topped the list for respondents' planned AI use cases to impact the funnel over the next 12 months.

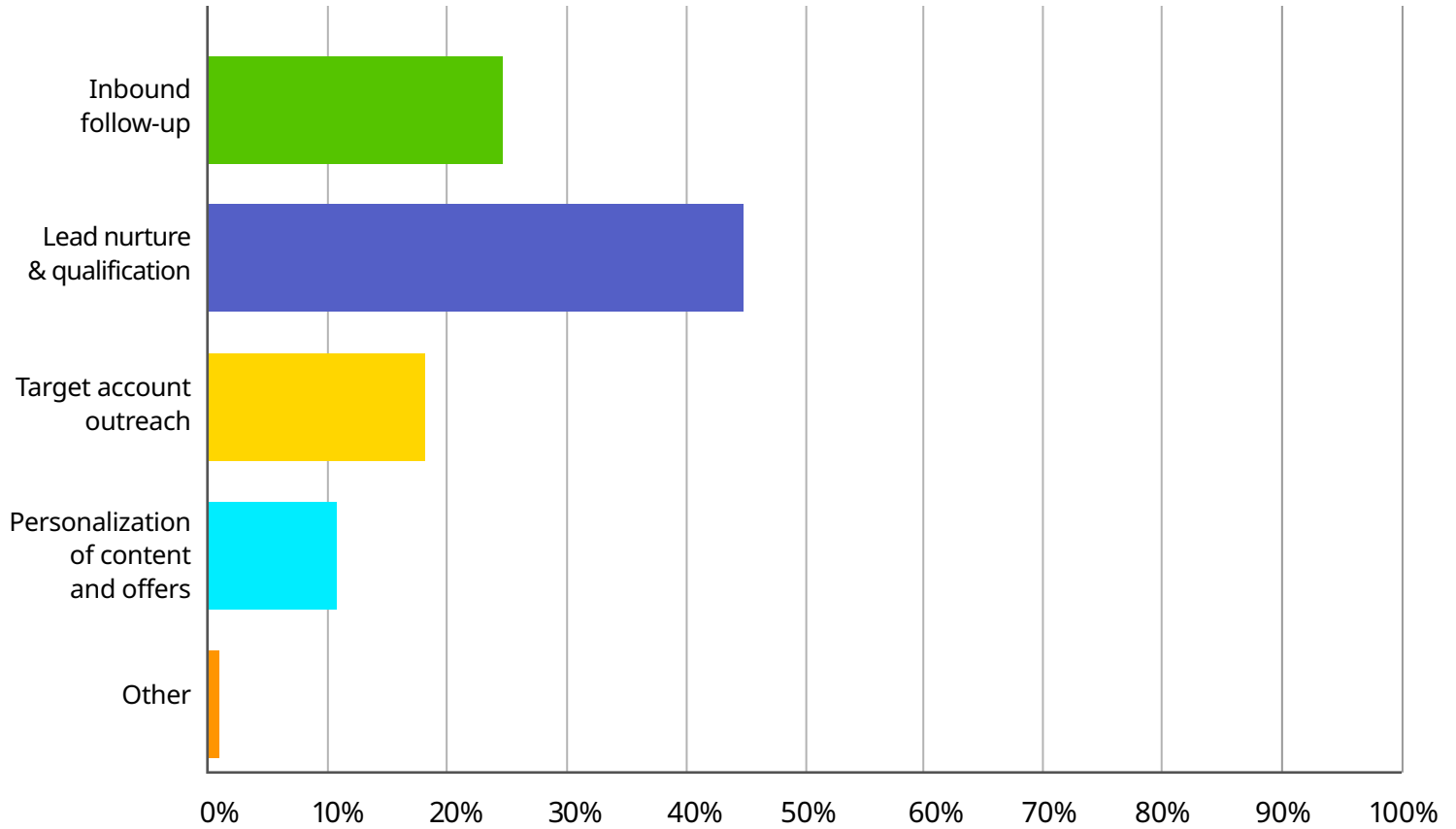
Both are focused on applying AI to higher funnel use cases, such as what conversational AI solutions offer. However, **only 30% expect AI to help their team convert leads into opportunities** this year.

Optimizing messaging and content (55%) and had a middling response, potentially indicating a lukewarm take on the proliferation of plug-ins and add-ons for text generation tools like ChatGPT.



AI's Potential for Funnel Impact

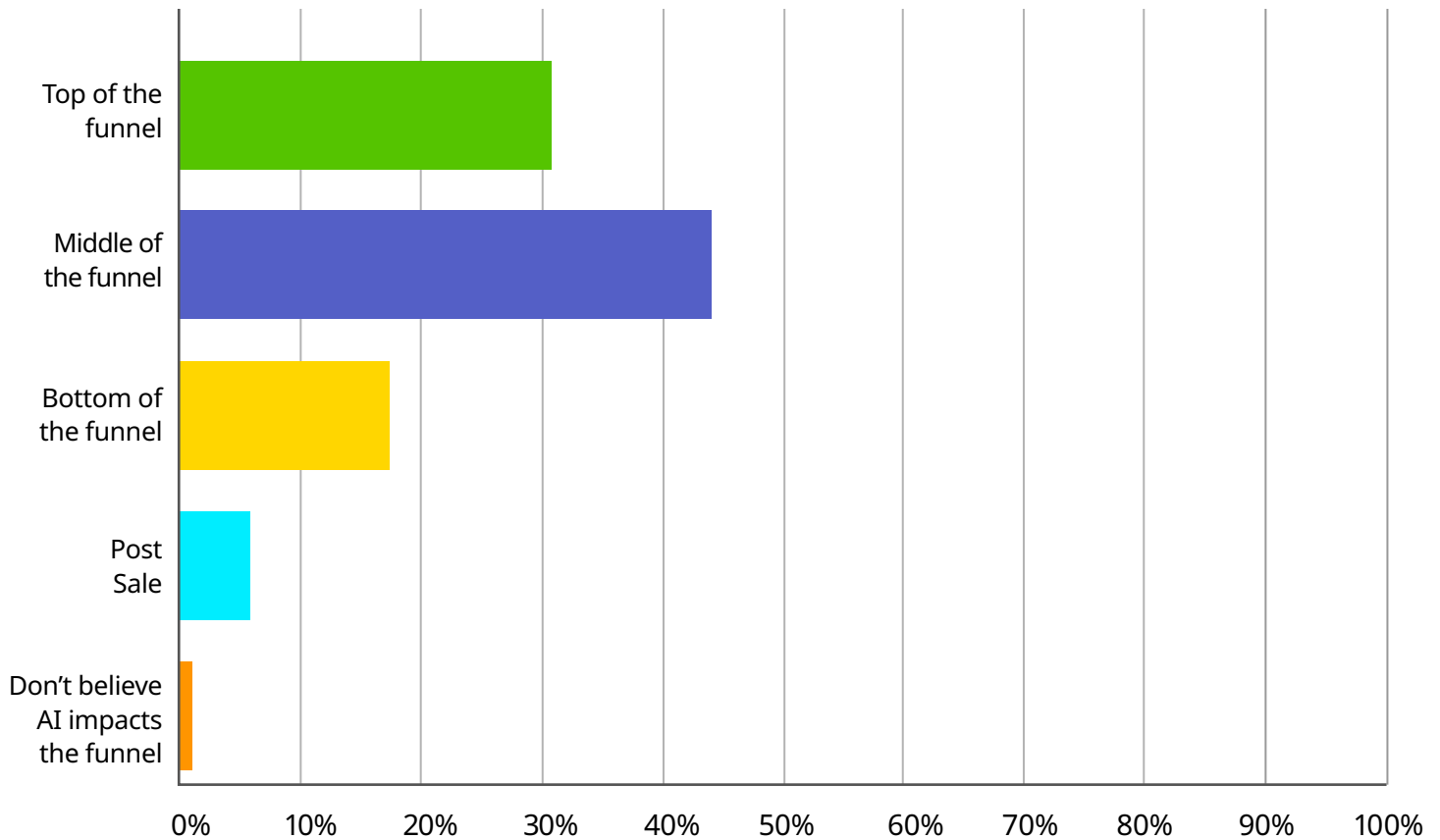
Which AI use case do you think has the greatest ability to impact conversion rates?





AI's Potential for Funnel Impact

What stage of the funnel do you think AI technologies have the greatest ability to impact positively?



Looking beyond their own immediate plans, **nearly half (45%)** of Marketing leaders **rated lead nurture and qualification** as the AI use case with the **highest potential to impact conversion rates**. **Inbound follow-up**, which the group selected as their **top planned use case** over the next year, was a **distant second** when it came to **potential conversion rate impact**, with less than a quarter placing it at the top of their list.

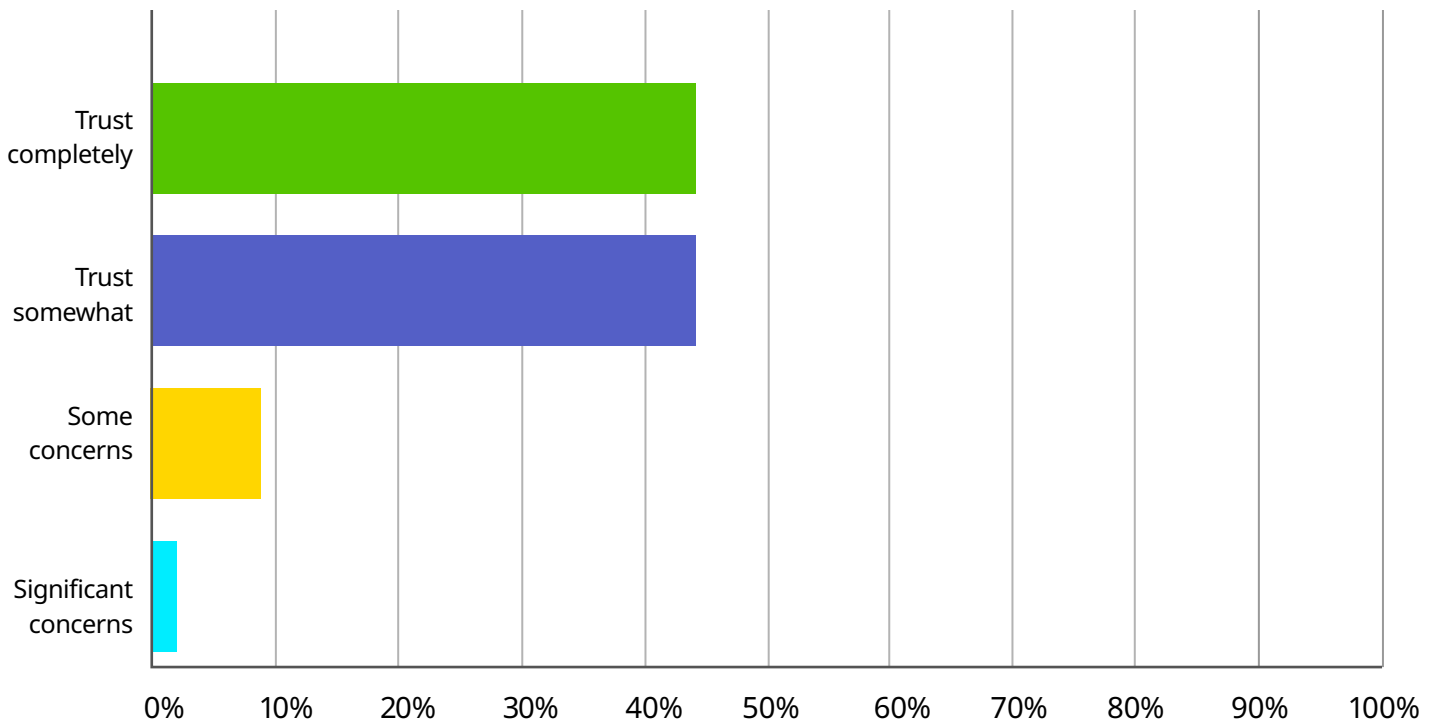
The rankings of top use cases roughly align with Marketing execs' perceptions of AI's potential positive impact on funnel stages. **Just over 44%** said **"Middle of the funnel: Qualifying and converting leads to Sales opportunities"** was **the stage where AI technology could do the most good**, which correlates to the lead nurture and qualification use case they rated most highly in question 8.

This may seem like a contradiction from the group's responses in question 7, where **only 30%** said they expect their **AI use to help them convert leads into opportunities** over the next year. However, this misalignment may indicate that Marketing executives **recognize the potential** of AI to impact lead-to-opportunity conversion while **lacking the ability to apply it** at their own organization in the coming year.



Trust in AI

When thinking about your planned applications of AI technology over the next year, how much do you trust AI to act autonomously in your organization?



AI autonomy is a tricky area. One of the key benefits of AI in business is **scalability**. But to take advantage of that scalability, Marketing leaders must be able to **trust AI** enough to **allow it to act on its own**: inserting a large amount of **human oversight** into the equation cancels out many of the efficiency gains promised by AI adoption.

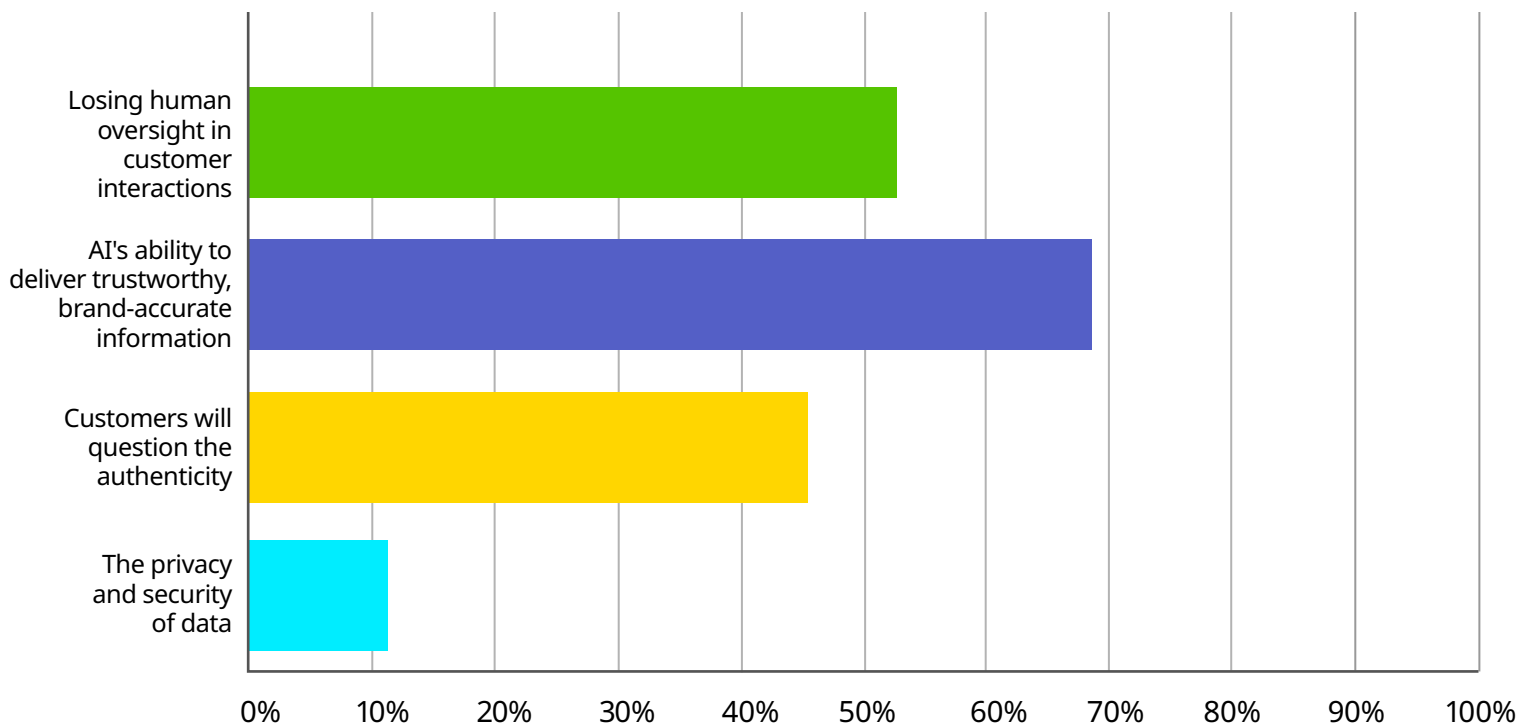
Overall, we found Marketing executives have a **decent level of trust in AI** at their organization in the next year. **45%** say they have **complete trust** in AI to **act autonomously** in their organizations, while **44.5%** trust AI somewhat. Only **11%** reporting some (**9%**) or significant concerns (**2%**).

If we return to the correlation between the AI trust question and confidence in ability to measure effectiveness, we find that those who were somewhat or not at all confident in their organization's ability to measure AI's effectiveness were about **half as likely** to report **high trust in AI (26%)**, underscoring that ability to **show results** is **critical to success** in AI adoption.



Concerns About Using Conversational AI for Conversions

What concerns do you have about using Conversational AI to improve conversions?



Regarding concerns about using Conversational AI to improve conversions, AI's ability to **deliver trustworthy, brand-accurate information (69%)** topped the list, with **losing human oversight in customer interactions (53%)** coming in second.

Given respondents' **overall trust in autonomous AI** at their organizations, it's interesting that so many **expressed concern** about these two potential negative outcomes, both of which are **naturally linked** with increased AI autonomy.

This slight tension highlights the **importance of trustworthy AI** technologies that offer **scalable human-in-the-loop solutions**. Closed, brand-specific large language models are **also crucial** to **maintaining the balance** between autonomous AI actions and Marketing executives' valid concerns about the trustworthiness of conversational AI in particular.

Ethical AI practices, transparency, and maintaining **brand integrity** in AI-driven interactions are vital priorities as Marketing leaders **expand their adoption** of AI technologies.



Revitalize Your Funnel

Conversational AI can be an incredibly powerful part of your marketing toolkit. With it and an RDA, all your efforts are empowered and taken to the next level.

Your funnel could be better. Follow-up on all leads. Re-awaken dormant ones. Increase the quality of leads passed to Sales. Conversational AI transforms your routine marketing activities and cultivates amazing buying experiences, generating more revenue than ever.

See how. Transform your Sales and Marketing funnel with Conversica.

[Request a demo today](#)