

**RSW/US**

Agency-Client Relationship Experts

**2014**  
**RSW/US**  
**AGENCY-MARKETER**  
**BUSINESS REPORT**

**AGENCY AND MARKETER  
PERSPECTIVE ON THE BUSINESS  
OF ADVERTISING AND MARKETING**



## **Background**

This study was commissioned by RSW/US. RSW/US is an outsourced agency new business firm. We work with over 50 agencies of various types/sizes, operating as their outsourced sales team. RSW/US was started in 2005.

In 2010, RSW started RSW/AgencySearch. To-date, RSW/AgencySearch has managed over 25 searches, primarily for smaller-budgeted brands.

Exposure to the agency and the marketer world has armed RSW with perspective unmatched in the industry. This perspective is woven throughout this survey report.

To learn more about RSW/US, visit [www.rswus.com](http://www.rswus.com).

To learn more about RSW/AgencySearch, visit [www.rswagencysearch.com](http://www.rswagencysearch.com).

-----

The 2014 [RSW/US](http://www.rswus.com) Agency-Client Business survey was completed by 110 senior level Marketers and 220 Marketing Agency executives during July, 2014. The purpose of the survey was to glean marketer and agency insight into the challenges associated with agency new business and new business directors, the new business tools agencies view as most effective, marketer expectations during meetings with agencies, and marketers' perception of the biggest deficiencies with agencies today.

In some cases, we compare survey responses to the same question asked as far back as our 2008 surveys to help provide perspective on how things are changing - for either the good or bad!

Our hope is the following key findings and implications from this study are of value as you work your way through the close of 2014 and start formulating your plans for 2015.

The agency sample came from the [RSW/AgencySearch](http://www.rswagencysearch.com) database of marketing service companies in the U.S. and Canada ranging in size from under \$5M in capitalized billings to over \$100M. The disciplines of each Agency varied from full service advertising, to digital, to PR, to marketing consultancies.

The marketer sample came from our [RSW/US](http://www.rswus.com) database of over 50,000 marketing decision maker contacts. Client company size, location, and size varied.

If you would like to reproduce any of our findings in any format whatsoever, please give either Mark Sneider or Lee McKnight Jr. a call (513-559-3101/3111) or email us at [mark@rswus.com](mailto:mark@rswus.com) / [lee@rswus.com](mailto:lee@rswus.com).

## **Survey Results and Implications - Agencies**

*We asked Agencies (of all types/sizes/locations) the following series of questions, focused primarily on the activities of agency new business. **Adweek** presented the final series of questions in this first section, centering on project versus retainer-type work, and its impact on an agency's financial health.*

*The second section of this report focuses on Marketer responses to questions related to agencies – how they learn about them, their preferred methods of contact, and their expectations of agencies during the “courtship” process. Perspective on pitching, prospecting, and getting to close is provided.*

-----

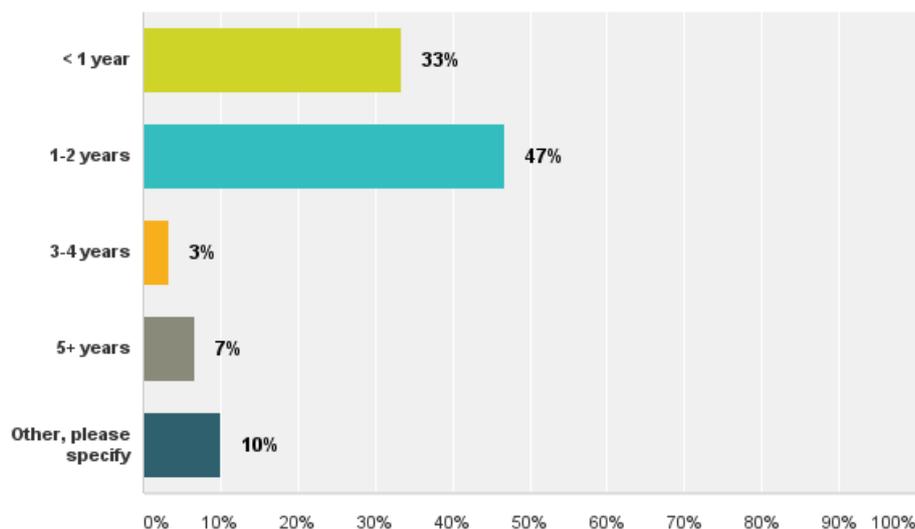


Nearly half of all agencies said they've hired a new business director in the past three years. Given the results below, it's a wonder why so many do! 80% of agencies surveyed said the tenure of their new business director was less than two years – less than a CMO!

As we'll see, there are a number of reasons why new business directors don't prove to be a success, but at the end of the day a big underlying factor is expectations. We hear it all the time. Too many agencies bring new business directors in thinking they will save the world, when in reality they can't. This is particularly true if they aren't well-armed and aren't focused on the job of stirring up opportunities for the agency.

### Agencies

#### How long was your most recent New Business Director employed at your agency?

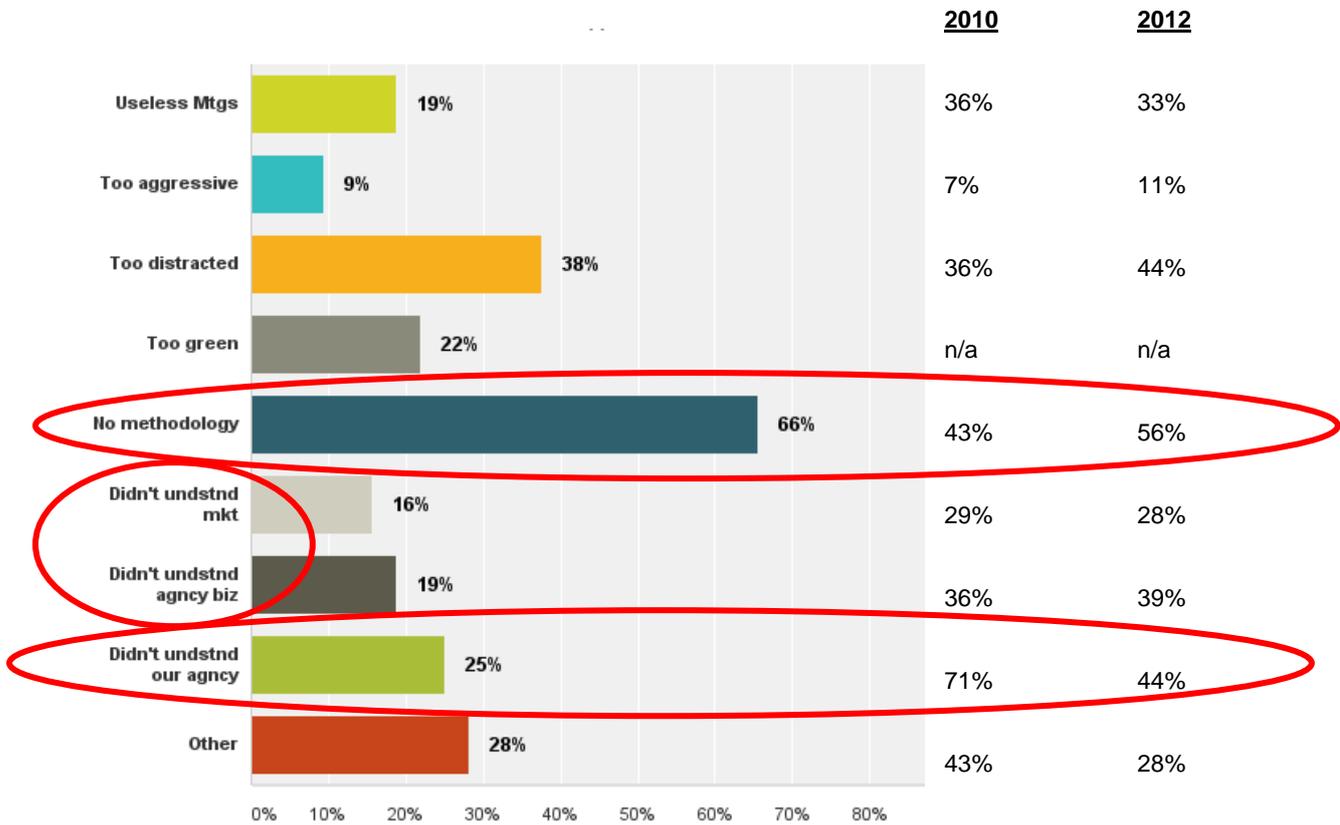


**Implications:** Be smart about who you hire and be prepared to invest at least a year into the relationship before you expect to see any return. In our world at RSW/US, about 20% of our clients see closure in the first 6 months of a program. Most see closure in months 7-12 and beyond. Being prepared to make the investment in resources to support your new business director (e.g. lists, CRM, content) and in the time required, is key to creating a successful program. Plainly put, new business isn't an overnight sensation.

Not only has the success of the average agency new business director dropped precipitously since 2012 (in 2012, 53% said their new business director was somewhat/very successful as compared to only 26% in this survey), the reasons for these challenges have changed in a rather interesting way. Back in 2010, the stated reason for poor performance was driven heavily by a “lack of understanding of our agency,” with only 43% stating that their new business director didn’t have a solid methodology. Today, those numbers are nearly reversed. Stunning.

**Agencies**

**Please select all the reasons why you think the new business hire was not that successful.**



**Implications:** We think there are several interesting reasons behind this reversal. When we started RSW/US in 2005, we saw a lot of agencies bringing new business directors in with the wrong kind of sales experience – or for the wrong reasons. As an example, we saw agencies wanting to bust into healthcare, so they’d bring in a sales person from the healthcare industry. Or they were wowed by the new business person with the well-connected rolodex (that was used in the previous three stints as a new business director). It was rare that approaches like these would deliver for the agency.



**Implications (cont'd.):** As agency new business evolves, agencies are getting smarter about their hiring – and we see it in the numbers today: more agency new business directors understanding their agency and the agency world, than in 2010. To share some perspective, at RSW/US it takes a large number of resumes, initial phone screens, multiple rounds of interviews and tests before we find a solid new business director to represent our agency clients. New business people are a unique breed – particularly in the agency space.

While the problem in past years was lack of insight into the world of marketing and agencies, today the problem is more about methodology: not being equipped with the right tools to manage prospecting in a more sophisticated way, the right resources to support list building and intelligence gathering efforts, the tools to support content generation and CRM, positioning that is compelling and differentiating and most importantly, not having the ability to maintain outreach in a consistent, ongoing fashion. The latter is probably one of the biggest issues facing most internal new business development programs today.

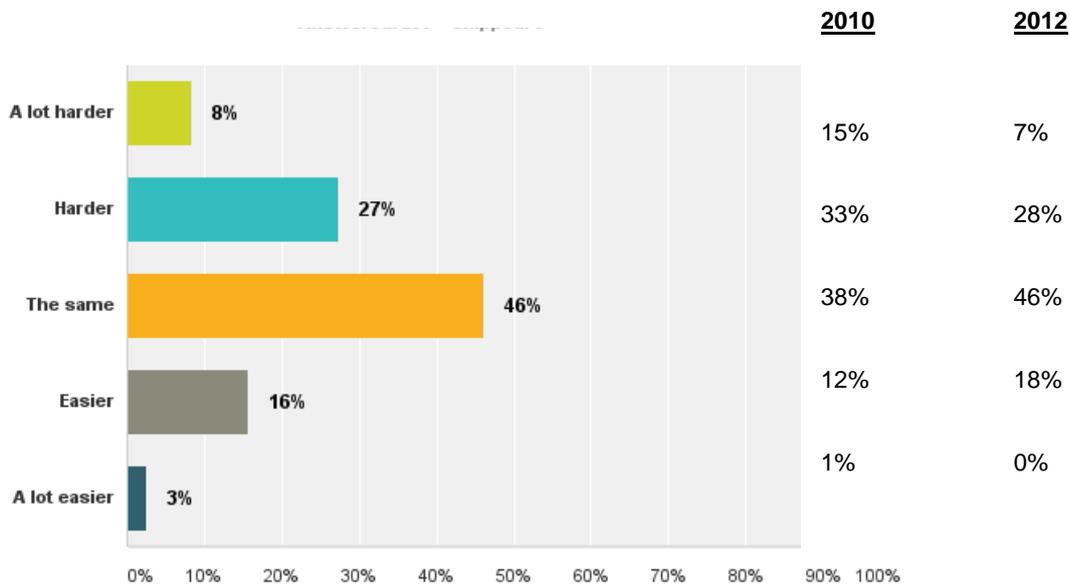
Being absent of one or many of these things can be the demise of a program. When they say “it takes a village” in regards to agency new business, it’s true. No *one* woman or man can do the job alone. They need the right resources and perspective to successfully manage one of the toughest jobs on the planet.

A large number of agencies say obtaining new business is harder this year than in years past. 35% of agencies say that winning new business is either harder or a lot harder than it was last year.

The good news is this number has improved since the depths of the recession and has leveled off to the mid-30% level. In 2010, 48% of agencies said it was harder/a lot harder to win new business than it was in 2009 and in 2012, 35% of agencies felt this way.

**Agencies**

**Is obtaining new business harder or easier than it was last year?**



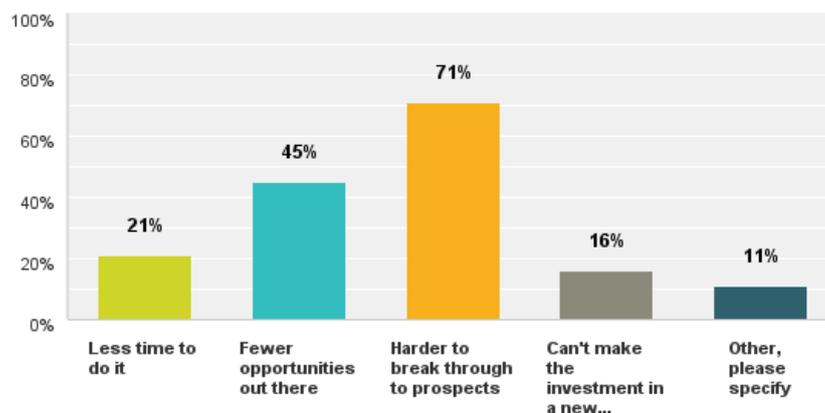
**Implications:** One thing that hasn't changed much since 2010 is how easy obtaining new business *isn't*. Back in 2010, 13% of agencies said finding and winning new business was easier. This year, only 19% of agencies felt this way. As we'll see later, a lot of it has to do with organization, methodology, and approach. Getting basic blocking and tackling in place and knowing how to effectively "dog" opportunities is the secret to success.

A number of factors impact the effectiveness of a new business program. Some of them are market-related, some process-related, and some “operator”-related. Year-after-year we consistently see one reason float to the top of the survey list as to why it’s harder to obtain new business: “Harder to break through to prospects.” Another that’s often repeated in past surveys, “Fewer opportunities out there.”

We would argue that “harder to break through” is systemic to the structure of many new business programs and “fewer opportunities” is what you make of it; if you believe there are fewer out there, and you don’t push to unearth the opportunities, the perception will become the reality. The game isn’t just about “finding,” it’s about helping prospects see they have a need and showing them how you can help them address that need.

### Agencies

**Why it is harder to obtain new business?  
Select all that apply**



**Implications:** Put together a well-organized program with the right person supporting it and there is no reason why it can’t be successful. As we’ll see next, part of the issue could be who you’re hiring to manage the program. Or it could be the fact that you’re relying only on yourself or the historical “referral” or “network” opportunity to carry the day.

Or as noted earlier, part of the problem might be the system that supports your efforts or the efforts of your new business person.



**Implications (cont'd.):** A new business director without the support of strong lists and compelling, value-added content and collateral will struggle. We hear it often when talking with potential agency clients.

And a program that does little to nurture opportunities and take advantage of connections made will likely meet with little success. We see prospects surface years after we first connect with them on behalf of our agency clients because we stay with them, and our clients support the effort to stay with them.

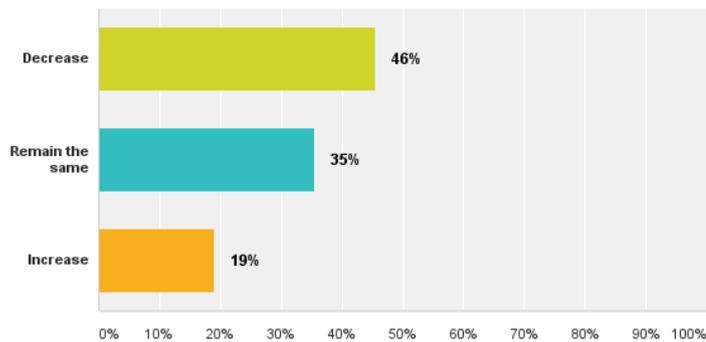
Remember, you are not #1 on their list. And just because you work in their space and you've done great work for other clients isn't reason enough for them to drop to their knees and come knocking on your door.

The good news is, while agencies believe they've seen the number of new business opportunities drop this year compared to last year, the outlook for the balance of this year, and the look into next year, is fairly positive. 42% of agencies believe the number of new business opportunities are likely to increase as they roll into the back half of 2014 and the start of 2015.

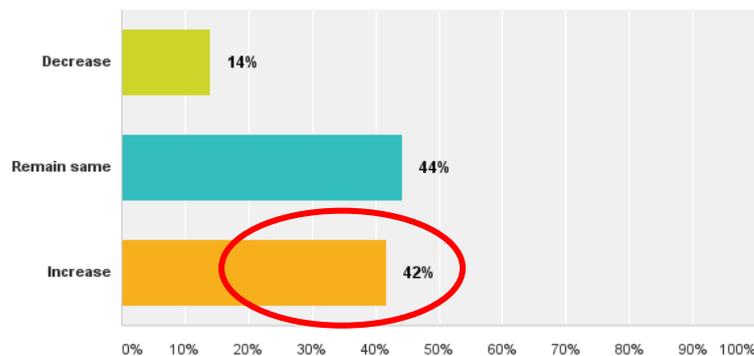
An interesting side note on the history of this question: back in the dark days of the recession, optimism was much higher – given everyone believed there was nowhere to go but up. In 2008, the number of agencies that believed 2009 would be brighter was 84% and in 2009 it was 72%. In some respects, better to be working from a solid base, than the base the industry was working from 6 years ago!

### Agencies

**Relative to last year, have you seen the number of opportunities for new business decrease, increase, or remain the same?**



**As you look to the close of 2014 and 2015, do you expect new business opportunities to decrease, increase, or remain the same relative to the same time period last year?**

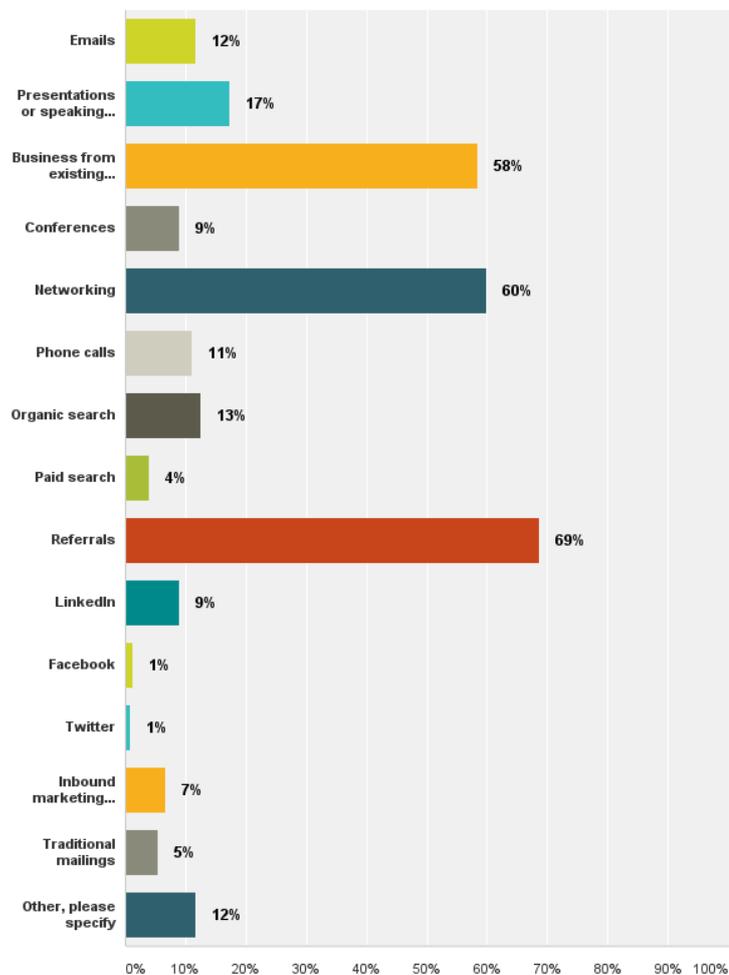


While networking, referrals, and clients moving from place to place continue to be the best form of generating new business, their impact is slowing. With corporate consolidations, larger agencies going after smaller pieces of the pie, and as we'll see, agencies getting more aggressive in their outreach, relying on these as the sole means of supporting your new business effort isn't the best move. While speaking at conferences, blogging to help drive inbound activity, and consistent use of social media (e.g. LinkedIn) are effective new business drivers, mailings, emailing, and phone campaigns are still solid complementary tools to referral sources of business.

So however you get the new business effort done, just do it.

### Agencies

**What 3 marketing tools have been most effective at generating new business?  
(Select up to 3)**





**Implications:** As suggested above, don't rely solely on traditional forms of growing new business, [like referrals](#), as the sole means of building your agency.

Brings to mind a conversation with an agency prospect where she asked if it was more effective to bring us on board as their outsourced lead generation firm, or rely on networking and referrals alone. In her mind it was an either/or. It isn't. You need both: a solid new business program (built inside or out) and a program that can get you leads through sources like networks, clients, and referrals.

Agencies are getting more aggressive in their outreach, so if you're not there, you need to be there, as the numbers are increasing year after year. And with more agencies touching more marketers, the likelihood that networking and referral opportunities will rise in number is low.

**% Of Agencies Stating That They Will Get "Somewhat" or "Much More" Aggressive In Their Approach To Winning New Business**

**2014:** 86%  
**2013:** 82%  
**2012:** 82%  
**2011:** 77%

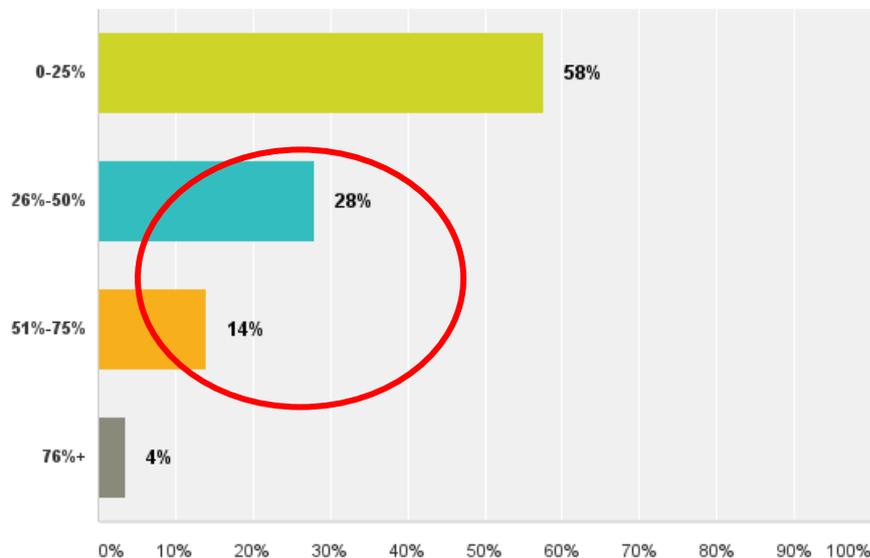
Just remember, while things might be great now, [who knows what lurks around the corner](#). An example from our business: an agency prospect called after jumping in two years ago to look at RSW/US when things were really good for him. Two years ago, things were good so he decided to hold off, the networking and referral opportunities were flowing in.

This time, he was getting ready to fire his New Business Director and believed he was about to lose one of his bigger clients. He wanted to jump in with us quickly, but may be a case of too little, too late. For his sake, we hope not.

Procurement playing a larger role in evaluating agencies and their usefulness for a client presents further new business challenges. 42% of agencies said procurement is involved 26% to 75% of the time when they compete for new business. In past surveys when asked about procurement’s general involvement in the process, these numbers have been much lower.

**Agencies**

**Thinking about the new business you have won over the past couple of years, what percent of the time did you have to work with procurement?**



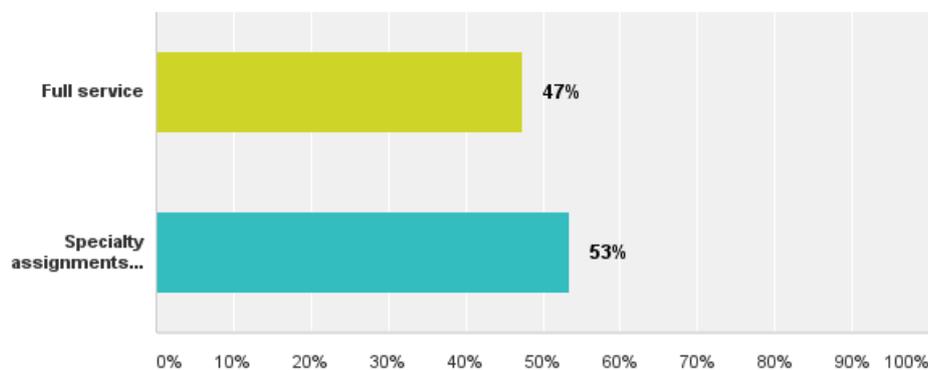
**Implications:** Procurement certainly isn’t something that can be ignored and the best advice we can give is “be aware.” Ask the right questions of your marketing prospects to find out if/how they get involved. If you have someone doing outbound work for you, include some procurement folks on your newsletter or blog releases to build up awareness of your agency brand-may lead to an easier sale.

Another area agencies say opportunities aren't as robust as they used to be? More and more marketers breaking up the pie and dishing out pieces of it to agencies – versus handing them the “whole pie.” We see this ourselves with more marketers starting with project-oriented opportunities versus seeking out full service firms. While this certainly can be a great way of building a relationship (which many of our clients do), it obviously is a slower way to build up business.

The good news about this phenomenon is there are more pieces available for you and your agency to get their hands on.

### Agencies

**--- Thinking about the new business you have won over the past couple of years, were the assignments most often for full service relationships or for specialty assignments (e.g. digital, social, content)?**



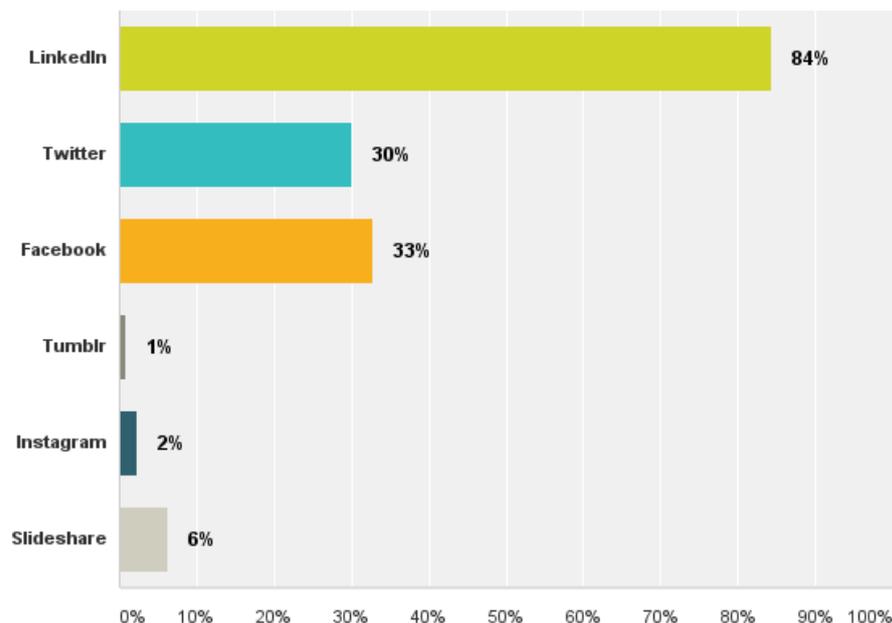
**Implications:** The implication here is a simple one: Get your face out there in front of as many prospects as you can for as long as you can...and eventually folks will come knocking....that is, so long as it's done in a smart, strategic and well-focused/positioned way. If it is, you are certain to create opportunities for yourself.

No surprise that LinkedIn is the most effective of the social media channels available to agencies. 84% of agencies say LinkedIn is the most effective social media channel for new business.

LinkedIn can be a great tool to gather intel and connect with prospects – if done in a coordinated, smart and respectful way.

**Agencies**

**Which social media channels have been most effective in supporting your new business efforts?**



**Implications:** LinkedIn is an effective tool when used as part of a multi-platform outreach. LinkedIn groups can also be ideal for generating agency awareness if you use it as a platform for promoting your thought leadership. Again, respectful use of the medium is key. Selling and pestering prospects will not only get you nowhere, it might also get you flagged in LinkedIn and locked out.

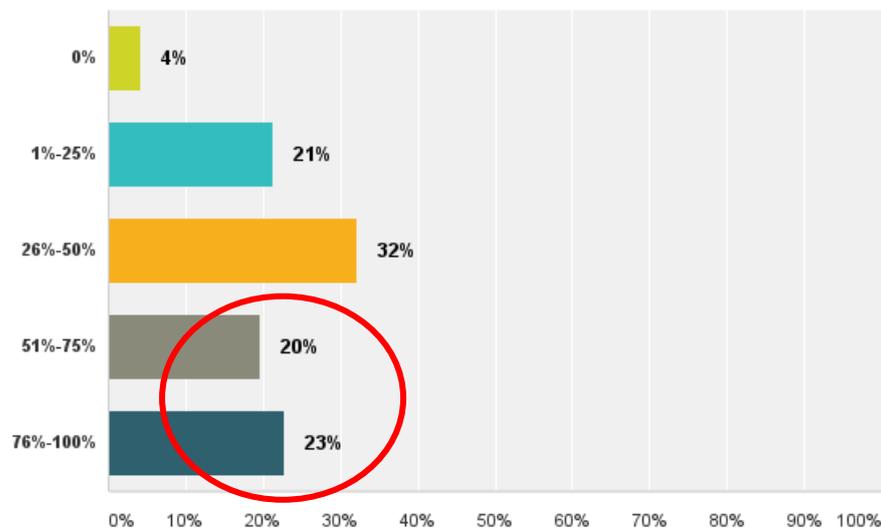
The following series of questions came from **Adweek** and focus on the growing trend of marketers parsing out more business in pieces rather than assigning a single AOR.

-----

39% of agencies say the amount of project work has increased in the past three years – decreasing the percentages of retainer-based work to lower levels. 43% of agencies state that 51%+ of their work is project-based. As marketers continue to look for best-in-class providers of specific marketing functions (e.g. marketing automation, digital, social media), this piecemeal distribution of opportunities will likely continue to increase.

**Agencies**

**Adweek is specifically interested in learning the following: What percent of your work is project versus retainer?**



**Implications:** Another variable driving project-based work over retainer is the fact that there are so many agencies out there today trying to knock on the marketer’s door – making it easier for the marketer to “sample” agencies by assigning specific project assignments until they find the right long-term partner for their business.

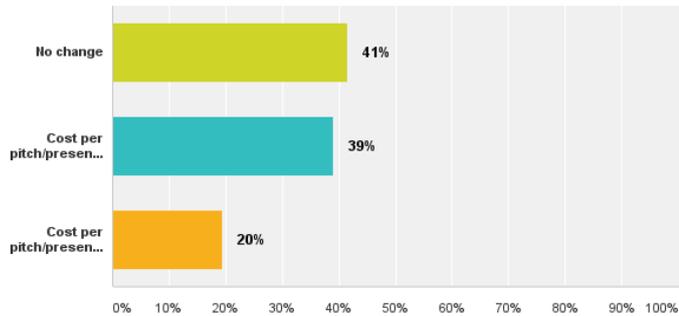
We see this occur in our RSW/US client programs. Marketers tell our new business directors they get hundreds of calls a week from agencies trying to get time with them. Key is consistency, coupled with multiple platform usage. Email alone or email with an occasional call simply won’t cut it. And as we’ll see later in the marketer section, if all you do is talk about yourself (which marketers say too many agencies do), you’re not going to garner any kind of attention from the prospects you want the most.

Unfortunately with so much more business going the way of project work, margins are decreasing while costs are increasing. Roughly 40% of agencies in our survey tell us their costs to pitch have risen and margins have suffered as a result of the project orientation of many marketer’s businesses.

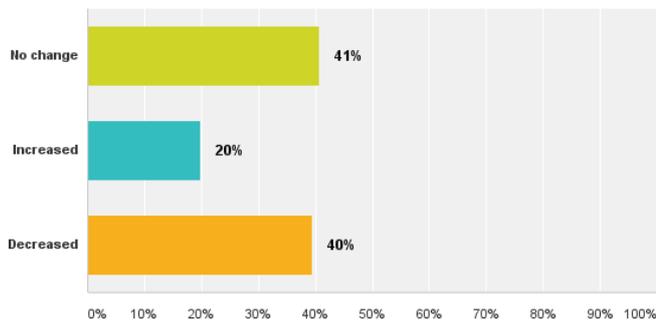
Too much emphasis on project work makes it harder to manage overhead, makes it difficult to forecast, and creates uncomfortable lulls in business – which often sets the stage for diminished employee morale.

**Agencies**

**If project work is increasing as a percentage of your business, how has that impacted pitch costs and/or the cost of presenting?**



**If project work is increasing as a percentage of your business, how has that impacted your operating margins?**



**Implications:** If this is the direction marketers are headed, it means you [can't take the pedal off the agency new business gas](#). Consistent blogging and other content creation vehicles need to be part of the SEO-driving nature of your business. You need to consistently be in front of your desired prospects, speaking to their challenges, so they feel you understand their business and situation. The more project opportunities you can generate, the more selective you can be, and make your project work a margin driver and not a margin detractor.

## **Survey Results and Implications - Clients**

*This section of the report focuses on Marketer responses to questions related to agencies – how they learn about them, their preferred methods of contact, and their expectations of agencies during the “courtship” process. Perspective on pitching, prospecting, and getting to close is provided.*

*At the end of this section are a few questions provided by **Adweek**, which focus on payment terms and strategic partnerships established by agencies.*

-----

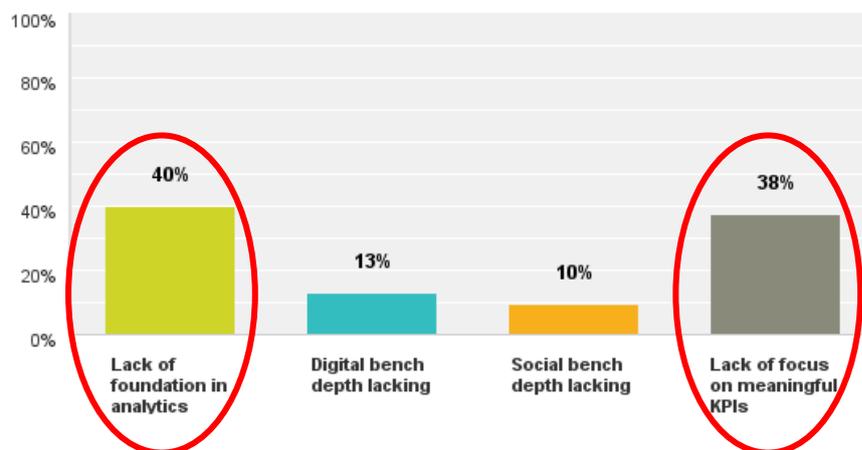


We'll start with marketers' perception of agencies – which will ideally help agencies manage how they present themselves when vying for new business. We asked marketers what they consider the single biggest agency deficiency: the top two were: “a lack of foundation in analytics” and “a lack of focus on meaningful KPIs.”

We witness this in searches on the RSW/AgencySearch side of our business. For example, we ran a search for a DIY/CPG brand and the *unsuccessful* agencies were those who didn't offer a compelling story about how they would help the marketer track, analyze, and goal-set for their business.

### Marketers

**What would you say is the single biggest deficiency you see among marketing agencies vying for your business?**



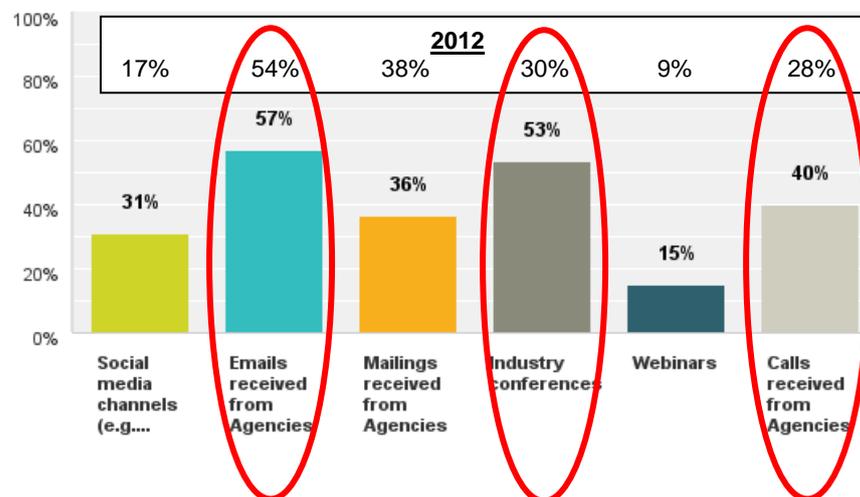
**Implications:** Too much pressure is placed on marketers today for agencies to gloss over this one. The expectation is there and will only continue to grow, so if you don't have the talents and resources in-house now, look to establish a strong strategic partnership, and do your best to build up some experience together.

Marketers learn about agencies a host of different ways, suggesting that relying on one type of outreach will not serve your new business efforts in the best possible way. Most marketers rely on emails, industry conferences, and calls from agencies as their primary means of finding out about firms. Interestingly, 36% of marketers say they also find out about agencies via mailings – an approach we use at RSW/US as a complement to the other outreach we do on behalf of our clients.

The high marks for conferences are also interesting, as conferences have been a part of the agency-client space for decades – but only recently are we seeing these kinds of numbers (in 2012, only 30% of marketers said they learned about agencies at conferences versus 53% this year). We suspect the response reflects a growing aggressiveness on the part of agencies to connect with marketers at shows. At RSW/US we often work to set meetings for our agency clients that head to trade shows and conferences. We also encourage our agency clients to seek out speaking engagements at these shows – another ideal way to get noticed.

### Marketers

**Other than referrals, how do you most often learn about new agencies? Select all that apply.**

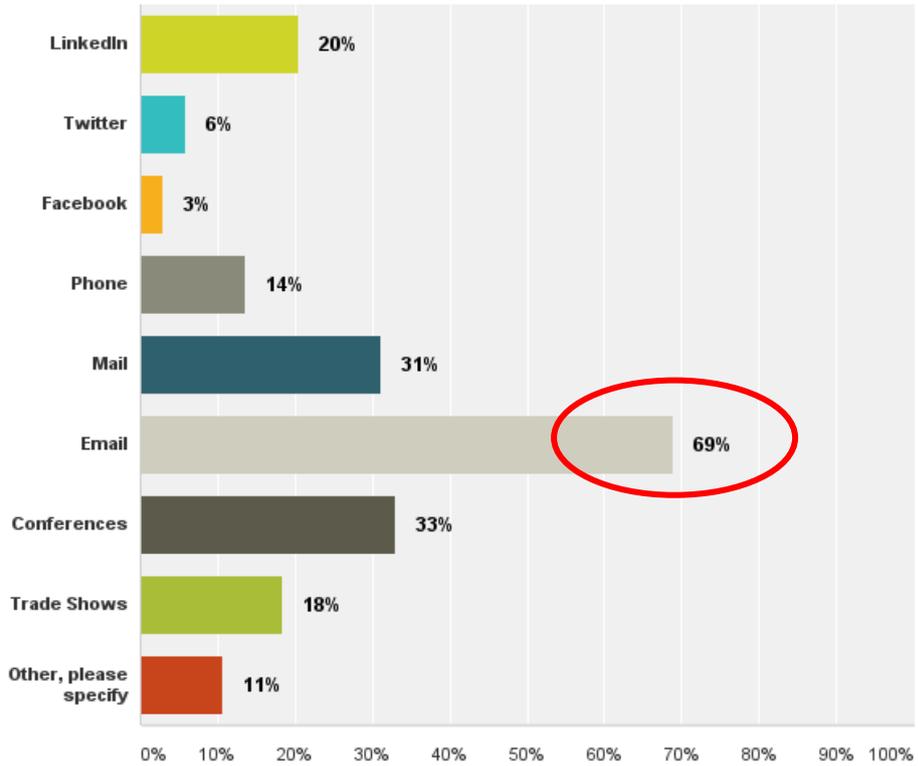


**Implications:** The data suggests that you need to cover all the bases – not unlike a program you’d put together for your clients, so consistently think about integration across platforms. Given you never know how prospects will best respond to your messaging, and it takes 5-7 touches on average to even garner the attention of a prospect, you need to have your hands in it all, or at least a good portion of it, to make your agency new business program a success.

How marketers hear about agencies and how they *prefer* to hear about agencies doesn't completely align. We've seen this in past surveys where marketers favor content they can control (easily delete) like emails over other platforms available to agencies.

**Marketers**

**What are your preferred methods of contact if an Agency is trying to reach out to you to make you aware of the value they can bring to your company? Select up to three (3)**



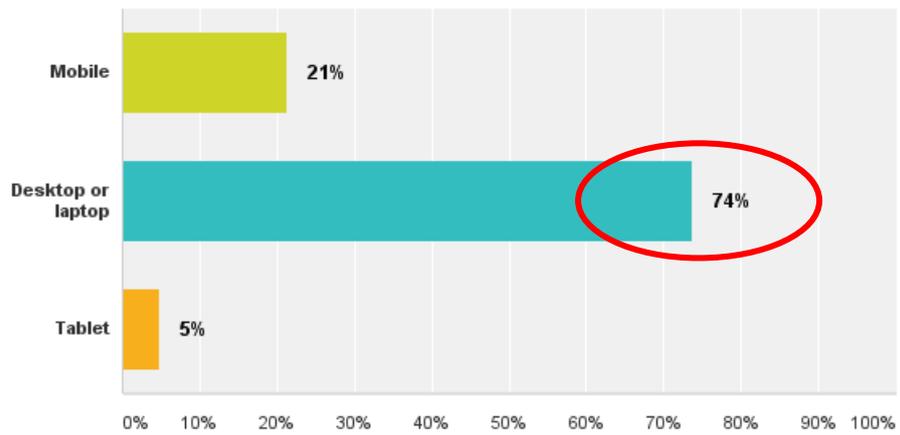
**Implications:** Just because prospects prefer it doesn't mean it's the only way they should receive it. Plus, if we all tried to communicate via the marketers' preferred way of communication, think how crazy-messy their inboxes would be, and think about how virtually impossible it would be to break down a door.

Go (to many places) where they least expect it – and then you'll have a better chance of connecting.

While it's important to make sure your emails can be easily read on a prospect's mobile device, 74% of marketers told us they still read emails on their desktop or laptop.

**Marketers**

**On which device do you most often read your emails?**

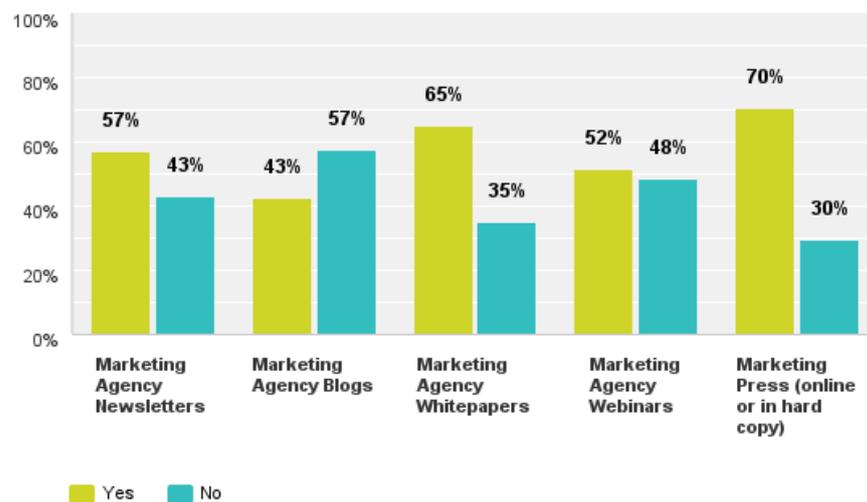


**Implications:** We know mobile numbers will only grow, so don't look at this data and dismiss the importance of checking your email newsletters and other content you push out to prospects to make sure they look good and work well on a mobile device.

Good news is, all the effort you're putting forth to generate content for your marketing prospects is time well spent. While we didn't ask frequency of consumption, we did learn that marketers are reading the content agencies are pushing out – like blogs, whitepapers, and newsletters.

### Marketers

#### Do you read/view any of the following?



**Implications:** Since there isn't one magic bullet here, it remains important to touch as many of these content platforms as you can. Use PR to announce new business at your agency, write whitepapers and blogs (keep them short) to showcase your thought leadership thinking in your space.

And recognize all this is only as good as you are able to *activate* all this content. [Simply "writing and resting" isn't a winning strategy.](#) With so many social media platforms available, it's important to leverage your content across as many of these channels as possible.

It's also important to get as much out of what you write as possible. As an example, we'll use the contents from this survey to push out press releases, write blogs, host webinars, create videos, and possibly develop white papers. We will push this out to thought leaders in the social space and attempt to get as much exposure and as much support for our efforts as we can.

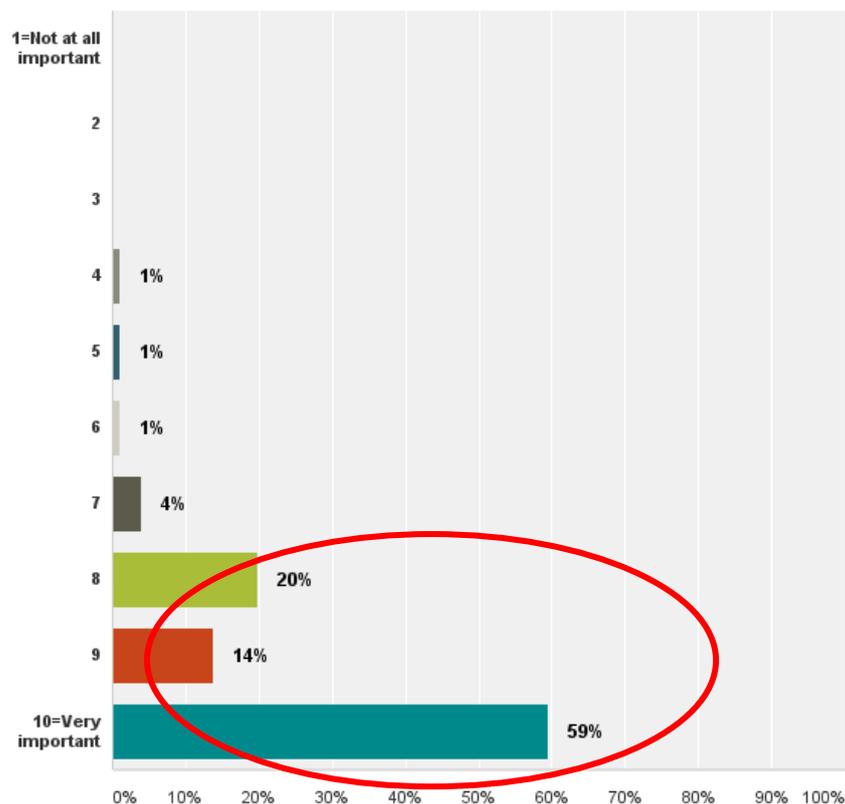
You need to do the same with your agency.

So if you're good enough to get a marketer to pay attention to your thought leadership content, the extra effort can't stop there. The last thing you want to do is get a meeting set with a marketing prospect, only to walk in the door and [just talk about yourself](#).

93% of marketers told us in this survey (and in surveys past) how important it is that agencies come into initial meetings with thoughts about their business and/or smart questions that show knowledge of, and general interest in, their business.

### Marketers

**How important is it to you that a marketing agency come to an initial meeting with thoughts about your business and/or smart questions that show they have interest in your business/company?**

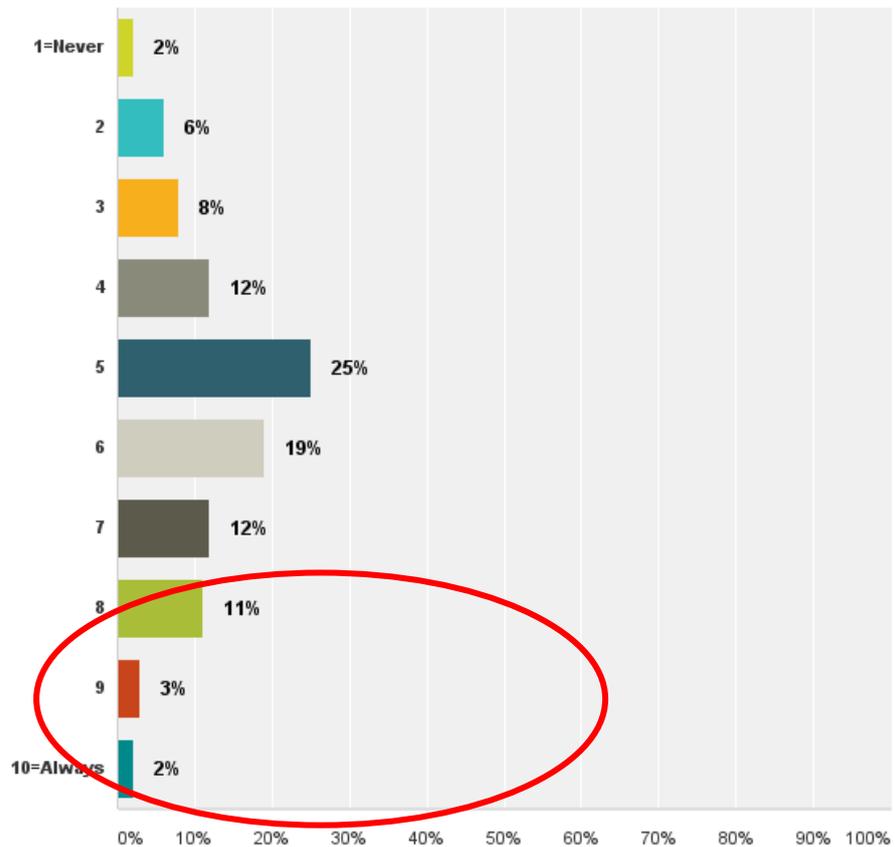


**Implications:** Keep your laptop closed. Come prepared with questions that can help you get the prospect talking so you can subtly sell them by bridging their situation back to similar situations you've been in with your clients. It's something we call "Check the Boxes." [Here's](#) a webinar we did on the topic...worth a look.

Unfortunately, while most marketers want their agency counterparts to come prepared, few do. Only 16% of marketers place agencies in the “Always” category when asked how often agencies bring insights/smart questions to the table in initial meetings.

**Marketers**

**How often do marketing agencies come to an initial meeting with thoughts about your business and/or smart questions that show they have interest in your business/company?**



**Implications:** You want to break out of the agency pack? Do what we tell our agency clients to do: [Listen more than talk](#). Ask more than answer. Think more than sell.

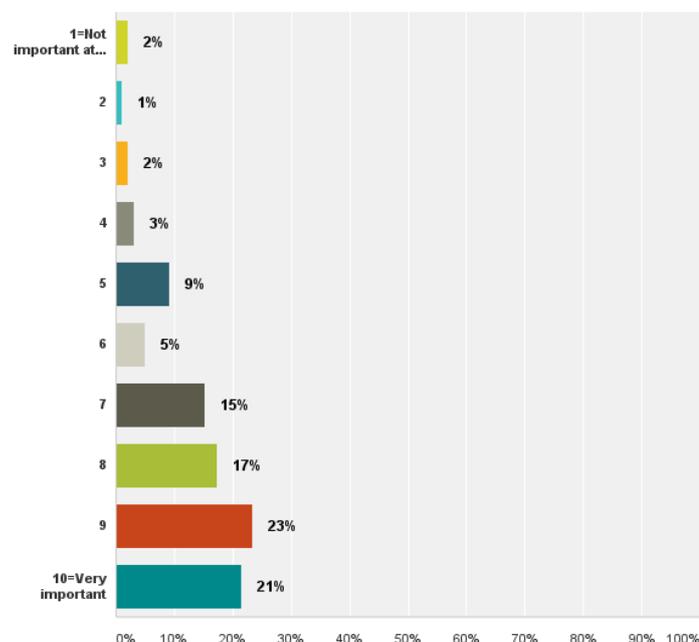
When in a pitch situation, marketers more often than not want to see some creative presented. Obviously this depends on the situation and is not always the case. An example from a pitch on our RSW/AgencySearch side: the marketer insisted that if he saw creative, he would not be happy – because he knew the challenges facing his digital landscape where bigger than creative.

I’ve also seen “creative” manifest itself in ways that aren’t campaign executions, with the agency that didn’t present the campaigns, win. In two recent cases, the winning agencies presented smart strategic platform ideas (grounded in insights they gleaned from their study of the client and their marketplace). No creative, but direction based on sound logic and reasoning.

As you know, the challenge in presenting creative is you could end up completely off the mark. Our recommendation: if you’re going to present creative, ground it. We’ve seen agencies present ideas that aren’t grounded in insights and it makes the agency look too tactical. The other thing you might want to consider (just saw this done in a recent hospital search) – is present a few directions that provide a continuum of possible ways to carry the brand forward, from very close in – to the uncomfortable.

### Marketers

**In general, when reviewing agencies for a potential partnership, how important is it that creative be presented as part of the pitch?**



**Implications:** If you can, talk with your client prior to the presentation. Make sure you’re clear on expectations. And when you present, show them how you got to where you landed – so they know there’s solid strategy backing up any creative.

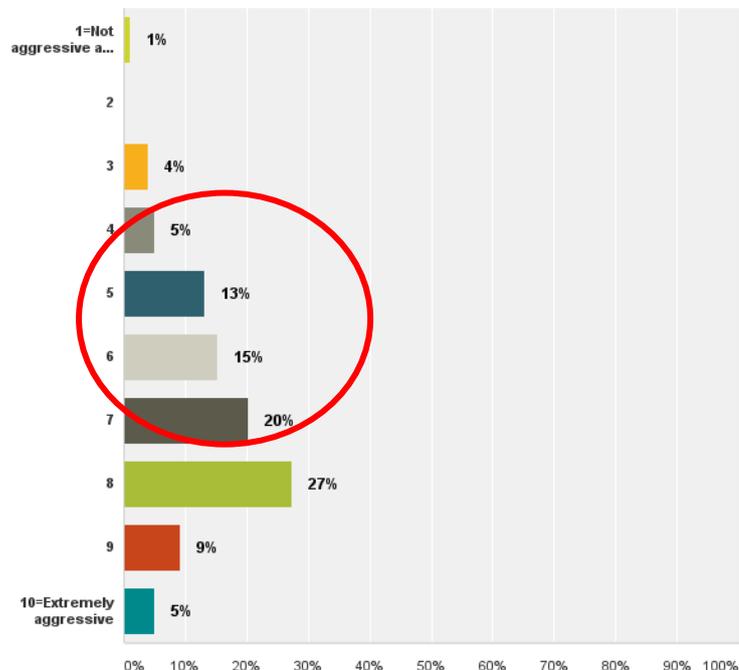
Once you get in front of a marketing prospect and you have the opportunity to present, the game does not end there. Back in the day when we first started the RSW/US outsourced agency new business program, we assumed “ok, get them to the table and all else will follow, they’ll carry it to close.” Well, not exactly. While there are clearly agency folk that are great sales people, there are many others who are only great when in the meeting or in the pitch. The follow-through is often less than stellar.

Getting to the meeting is only half the battle. The other half (which is equally as tough, if not tougher) is moving the opportunity to close. Wrote a post on it: [The Second Hardest Part of Prospecting](#).

Too many agencies don’t do enough. What they think is aggressive, really isn’t. The majority of marketers surveyed (53%) said that agencies aren’t too aggressive, and in fact, aren’t aggressive enough, when following up after a meeting.

### Marketers

**In general, how aggressive (or not aggressive) are marketing agencies when following up after an initial meeting with you?**



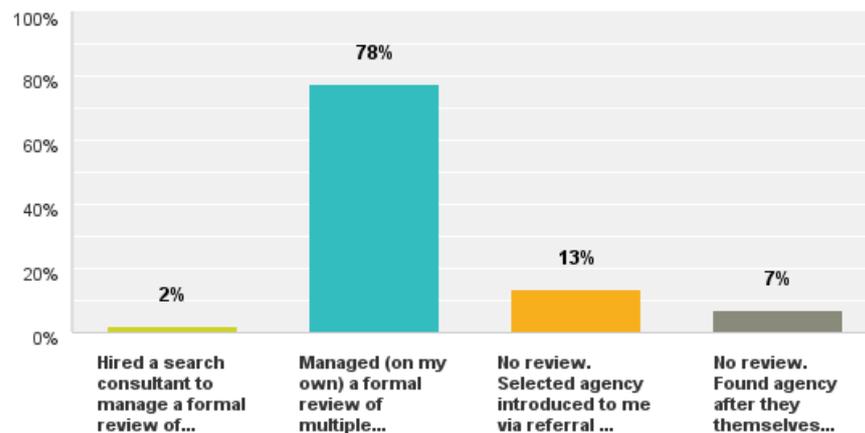
**Implications:** One or two emails over the course of a couple of weeks does not make a strong follow-up plan. Multiple touches, some value-added in nature, keeps you on the radar without being a pest. The way we look at it is, as long as you’re polite in your persistence, you have nothing to lose and everything to gain.

Many marketers responding to this survey historically managed agency searches on their own (77%) - which can be positive, if they have the time and visibility of all the agency possibilities available to them. While the majority of marketers said the search they ran was very successful, there were a significant number (42%) that believed the search was only “somewhat” or “not at all” successful.

Issues typically range from “lack of time,” “lack of visibility of a good set of agencies,” “uncertainty if they were doing everything they needed to” and “hard to sort through the ‘fluff’.”

### Marketers

**Thinking about the last time you brought a new marketing agency on board, what best describes the process you used?**



**Implications:** Again, get in front of these marketers. If they’re doing it on their own, figure out a way to get into their consideration set. 98% of marketers either found their agency, the agency found them, or they were introduced to the agency via a friend/co-worker. As we noted earlier, while networking and referrals are solid ways to win new business, making yourself known is equally as effective if done correctly.

The following series of questions came from **Adweek** and focus on strategic partnerships established by agencies, payment terms and the degree to which they are lengthening.

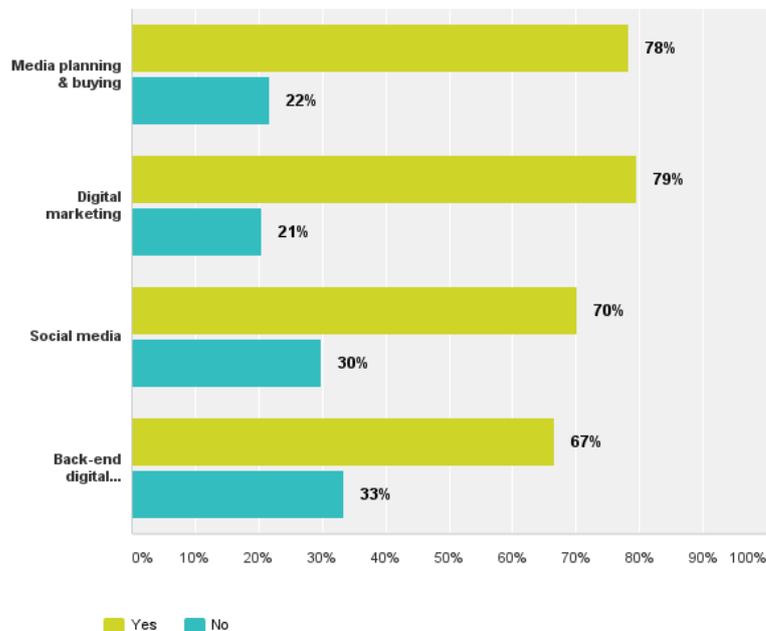
-----

Marketers are showing a willingness to work with agencies that have solid strategic partnerships with firms that specialize in specific disciplines. Across the board, marketers say they're open to partnering with agencies that do partnering of their own – with media planning/buying firms, digital shops, social agencies, and back-end digital firms.

This is good news, given it's often tough for integrated agencies to keep up with emerging technologies from a resource standpoint. Key though is making sure the partnerships are solid – and the agencies you're partnering with have good reputations in the spaces they operate.

### Marketers

**In general how willing would you be to work with an agency that relies on a strategic partnership to support the following:**



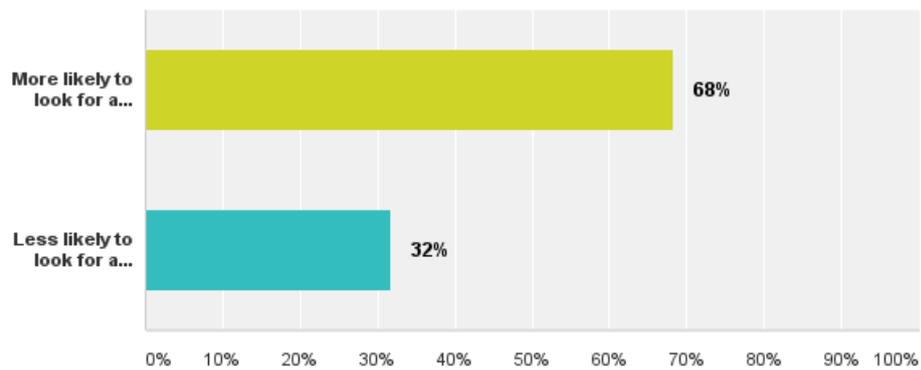
**Implications:** We have a post on our blog titled [Strategic Agency Partnerships – Good When Great](#) which talks about this very topic. In it, we offer up points to consider prior to putting a “strategic partner” in front of a potential marketing client.

Due diligence is so important because marketers are much more likely to look for a specialist agency than they were 3-5 years ago.

68% of marketers tell us they're more likely to look for a specialty agency than they were in the past.

### Marketers

**Are you less or more likely to look for a specialist agency (e.g. digital, social, content) versus a full service agency than you were 3-5 years ago?**

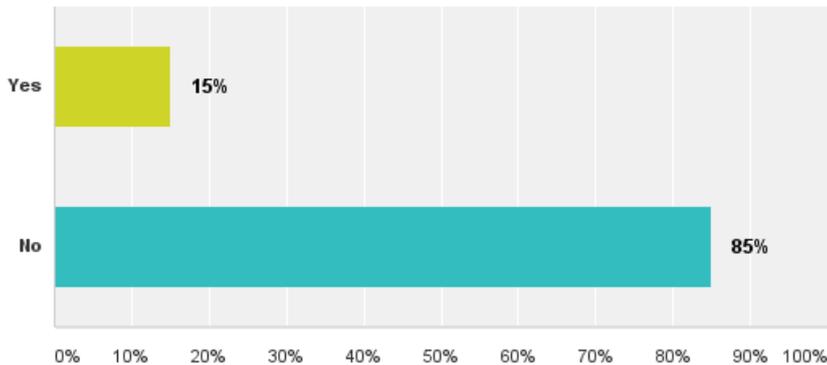


**Implications:** You need to have your act together on the “specialist” front to avoid that marketer bringing you in and then looking elsewhere for the specialty they’re after.

The final question from Adweek focuses on payments terms – and the degree to which marketers are extending them. While we’ve heard a good deal of news lately about some of the bigger marketers (like P&G) extending terms, it doesn’t appear to be a widespread phenomenon. Only 15% of marketers in this survey said payment terms (in number of days) have increased over the past few years.

**Marketers**

**Adweek submitted questions for our survey. Here is the first: Have payment terms to your marketing agency partners grown (in number of days) over the past few years?**



**Implications:** Keep plenty of cash in the bank!

Download our *Agency New Business-A Look Into The Marketer's World-RSW/US Infographic* [here](#).

