

# 2020 SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING INDUSTRY REPORT

*How Marketers Are Using  
Social Media to Grow  
Their Businesses*

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MAY 2020

BY MICHAEL A. STELZNER



**SocialMedia**  
**Examiner**

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## Letter from the author...

Hello, fellow marketer!

Welcome to our **12<sup>th</sup> annual report!** This is the longest-running social media marketing study. And yes, social media marketing is still changing.

This **46-page report** contains easy-to-digest insights into how marketers are currently using social media and their future plans.

If you're in charge of marketing your business, you'll want to closely **examine the 60+ charts** on the following pages. I'll reveal the "not-so-obvious" findings in this data-rich content.

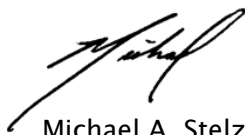
The report covers all of the major social platforms, organic and paid activities, video marketing, and much more.

More than 5,200 of your fellow marketers provided the kinds of insights you won't find elsewhere.

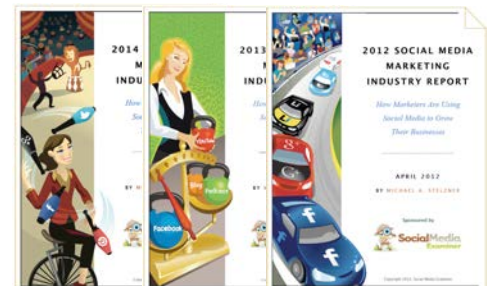
I hope you enjoy it! **If you find value in this report, please let your peers know about it.**

You can find the original page for the report here:  
<https://www.socialmediaexaminer.com/report2020/>

All my best!



Michael A. Stelzner  
Founder, Social Media Examiner  
Host, Social Media Marketing podcast



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## Executive summary

This study surveyed more than 5,200 marketers with the goal of understanding how they're using social media to grow and promote their businesses. On the following pages, you'll discover:

- **The top social media questions marketers want answered:** We reveal the big questions today's marketing pros want answered.
- **The benefits of social media marketing:** This section of our study reveals all of the major advantages marketers are achieving with their social media efforts. We also look at how years of experience affect the results.
- **Most-used social media platforms:** Discover which platforms marketers are using now and how their usage will change over the next 12 months. We also examine which platforms experienced marketers are using and the most important platforms for marketers. We added TikTok to this year's study.
- **Organic social media posting:** We explore how marketers plan on changing their future organic activities by platform.
- **Video marketing:** We reveal the video channels most popular with marketers, their use of live video, and how they plan on changing their video marketing over the next 12 months.
- **Paid social media:** We reveal the social advertising platforms marketers are using and which ad platforms they plan to focus on in the next 12 months.
- **Other analyses:** We examine marketers' ability to calculate return on investment (ROI), if they've seen a decline in organic social activities, and their interest in analytics. In addition, we take a look at how business-to-business (B2B) companies differ from business-to-consumer (B2C) companies. We also highlight significant changes since our 2019 study.



## Major findings

Here's a quick summary of some of our more interesting findings:

- **Facebook declining:** Marketers are diversifying away from Facebook. For the last 2 years, Facebook lost share as the most important platform for marketers. When asked to select their single most important platform, Facebook dropped from 67% in 2018 to 59% in 2020. One in ten marketers indicated they'll be decreasing their organic marketing on Facebook. Only 50% of marketers plan on increasing their Facebook organic activities, down from 62% 2 years ago.
- **Instagram is hot:** Seventy-six percent of marketers are using Instagram. It's the second most important social platform for marketing (behind Facebook). A significant 67% of marketers plan on increasing their Instagram organic activities over the next 12 months. Instagram is the number-one platform marketers want to learn more about.
- **Interest in Messenger bots is declining:** Messenger bots haven't caught on with marketers. Only 13% of marketers are using bots (down from 14% in 2019). Most marketers have no plans to use Messenger bots and only 25% of marketers plan on increasing their bot activities, down from 32% in 2019. Interest in learning more about Messenger bots dropped to 39% from 70% in 2018.
- **TikTok is ignored by most marketers:** Only 5% of marketers are using TikTok. A significant 74% do not plan on using the platform in the next year; however, 30% are interested in learning more about TikTok.
- **YouTube interest is high:** A significant 69% of marketers plan on increasing their use of YouTube video and 73% want to learn more about marketing on the platform. YouTube is the number-one video channel, used by 55% of marketers.
- **Facebook dominance still strong:** A very significant 94% of marketers use Facebook (followed by Instagram at 76%). Fifty-nine percent of marketers claim Facebook is their most important social platform. Facebook Live is the leading live video platform used by 38% of marketers. Facebook ads are used by 70% of marketers and 58% plan on increasing their use of Facebook ads over the next 12 months.

The above summary is just a taste of what's in this report. On the following pages, you'll find 60+ charts that visually convey some of our fascinating findings.

# Are Your Paws Tied With Social Media Gruntwork?

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Soon: **SEO Optimized** Blog Posts Too!

See Copyright Free **Graphics** Based on Your Social Media Post and **Suggested Hashtags**

Use Your Favorite **Graphic Editors** to Create Works of Art!



"[...] Thought it had incredible uniqueness. I don't know anybody else that is doing **A.I. for emojis**..."

- Tim Draper, Billionaire Investor, Founder of Draper Associates and DFJ Venture Capital



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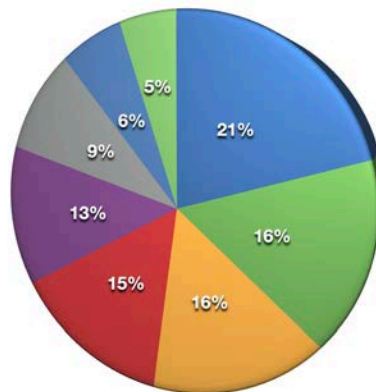
HelloWoofy.com

# Top questions faced by social media marketers

We asked marketers whether they'd like answers to broad social marketing questions. The graph below indicates the percentage who agreed or strongly agreed that they were seeking answers to these questions.

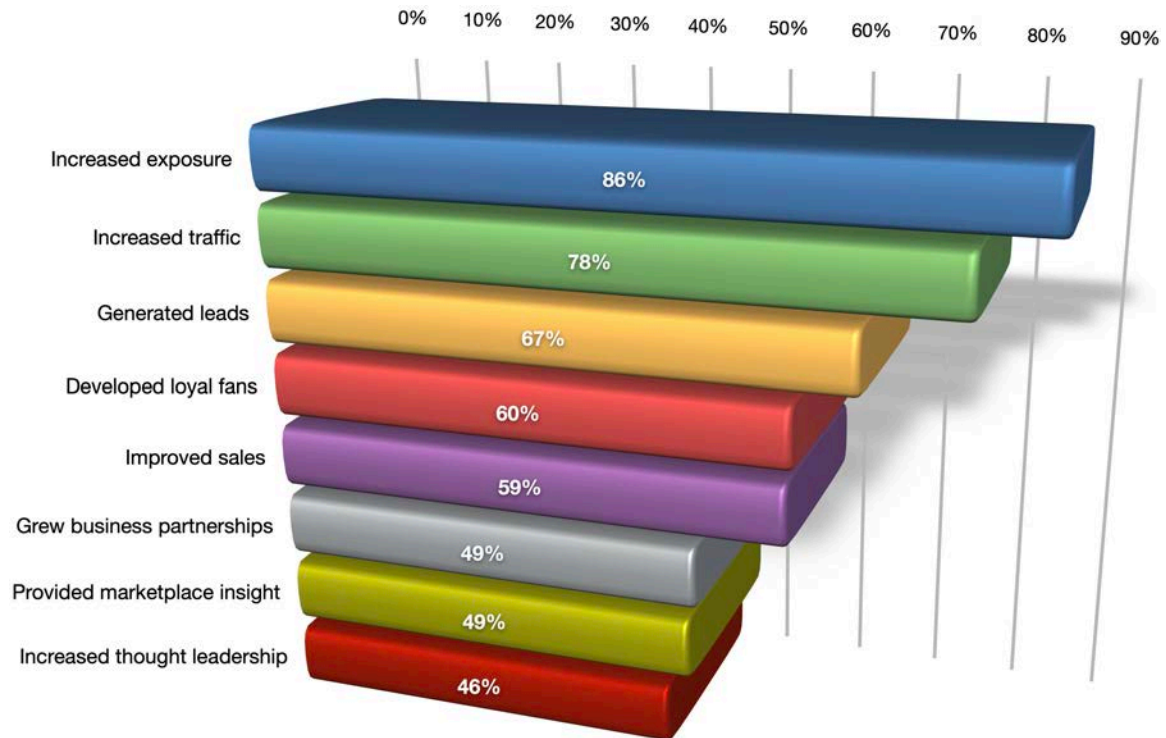


When asked to select the single most important question they want answered, here's what marketers said:



- What are the best ways to engage my audience?
- What are the best ways to measure and analyze my social activities?
- What are the best ways to acquire new customers?
- What are the best ways to improve my organic reach?
- What are the best social media marketing strategies?
- How do I become more well-known in my industry?
- What are the best ways to use social ads?
- What are the best social tactics?

# Benefits of social media marketing



A significant 86% of all marketers we surveyed indicated that their social media efforts have generated more exposure for their businesses. Increased traffic was the second major benefit, with 78% reporting positive results. These benefits have remained in the top two spots for the last 6 years.

All of the benefits have declined since 2019:

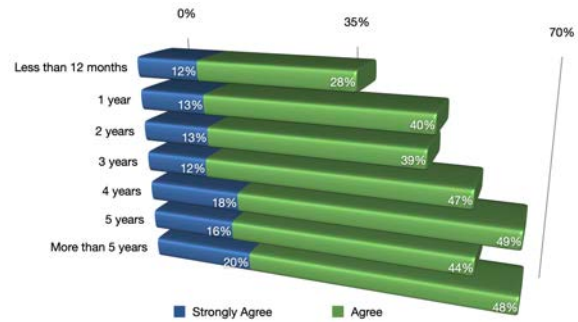
- Increased exposure fell to 86% from 93%.
- Increased traffic declined to 78% from 87%.
- Generated leads lowered to 67% from 74%.
- Developed loyal fans shrunk to 60% from 71%.
- Improved sales plummeted to 59% from 72%.
- Grew business partnerships dropped to 49% from 56%.
- Provided marketplace insight fell to 49% from 58%.
- Increased thought leadership declined to 46% from 56%.

A question that naturally emerges from the above chart is, "Are marketers who've been using social media for years achieving better results?" The following charts address this question.

## Improved sales

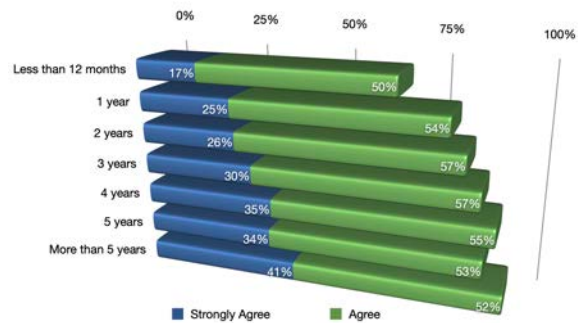
A large percentage of marketers find better sales results with more years of social media experience.

For example, more than half of marketers who've been using social media for more than 12 months report it helped them improve sales.



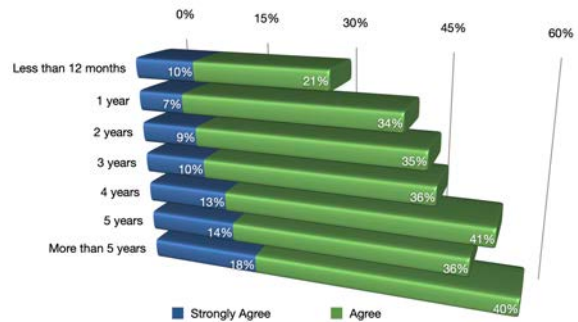
## Increased exposure

A significant group of marketers (79% or more) who've been using social media marketing for 1 year or longer report it generates exposure for their businesses.



## Grew business partnerships

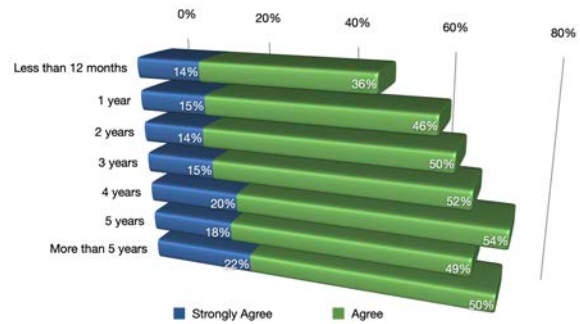
Using social media to grow partnerships seems to be underused by most marketers.





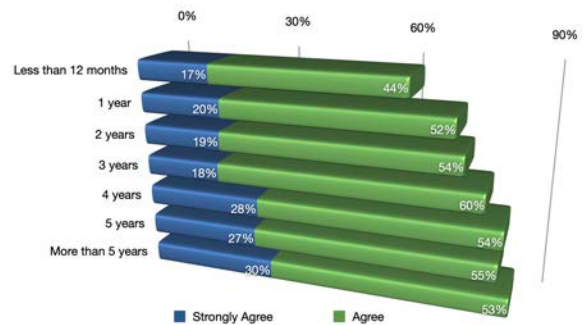
## Generated leads

This chart shows that marketers get more proficient at generating leads via social platforms with more experience.



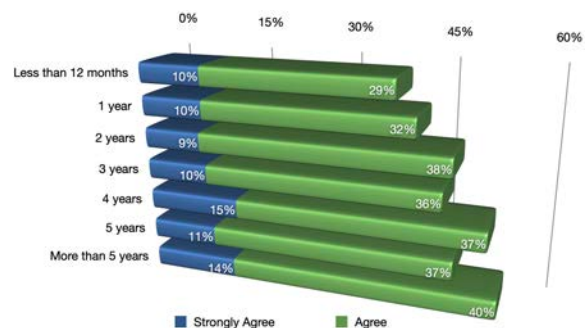
## Increased traffic

Those who've used social media for 1 year or longer reported substantially better results driving traffic (72%+ reported benefits), compared to those with less experience.



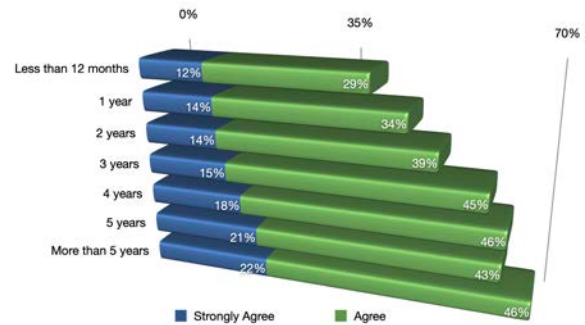
## Provided marketplace insight

There doesn't appear to be much of a change in this benefit based on years of experience.



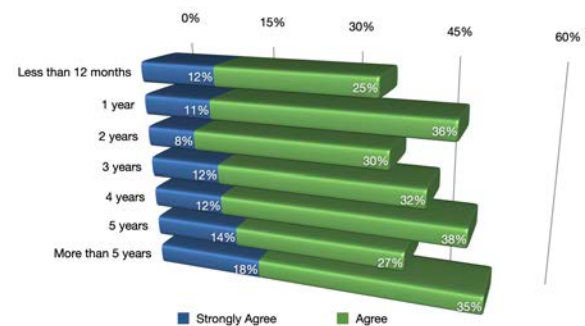
## Developed loyal fans

Building a loyal fan base seems to be an advantage that improves as marketers gain more years of experience.



## Increased thought leadership

Only those with the most experience (5+ years) have seen real success with building thought leadership.



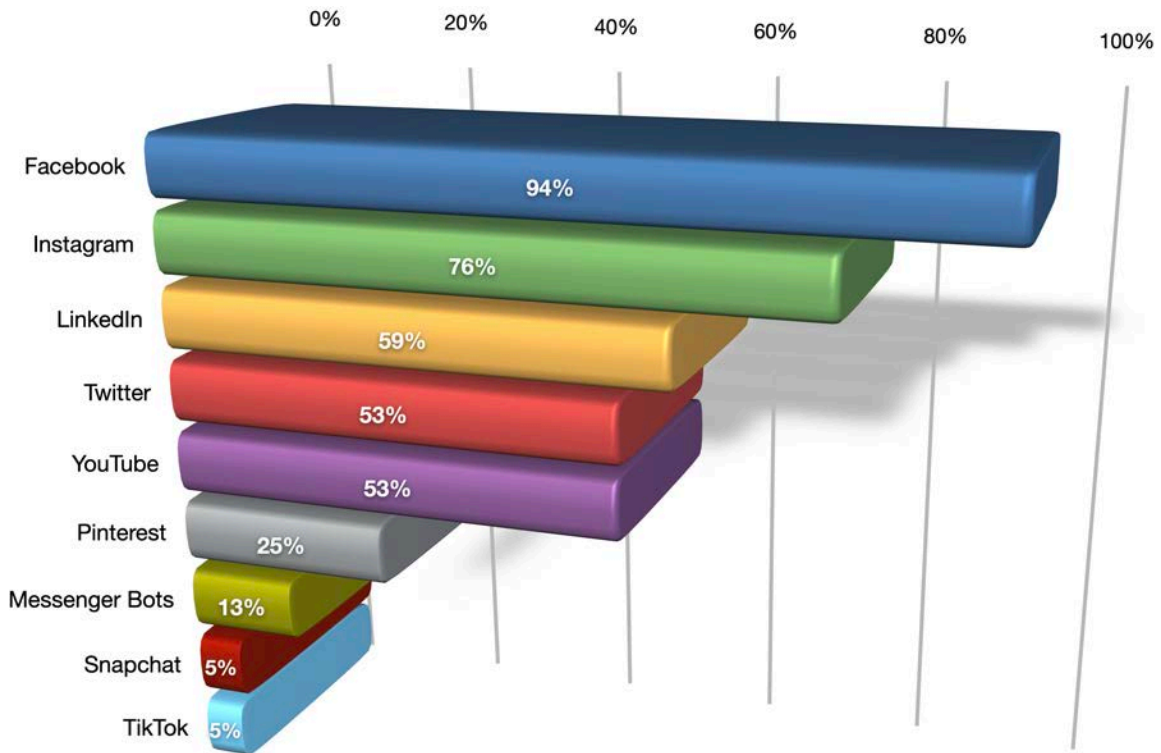
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# Commonly used social media platforms



Facebook and Instagram are the top two platforms used by marketers, by a long shot. All other platforms lag behind these top two.

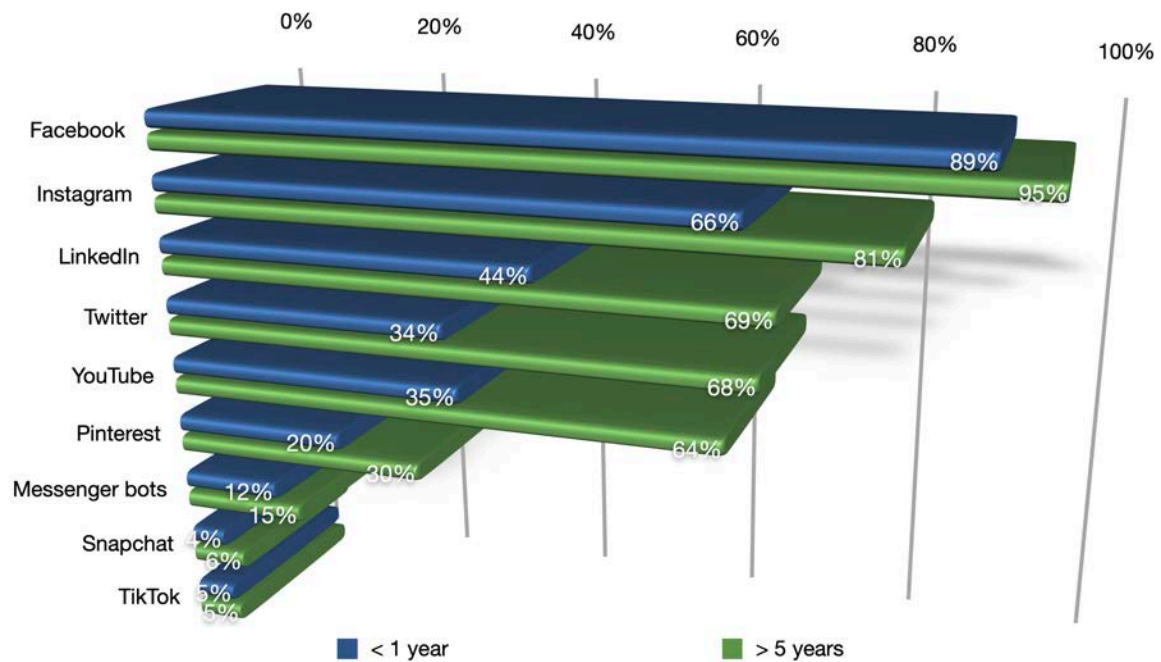
## NOTABLE CHANGES SINCE 2019

- Instagram grew from 73%.
- Twitter fell from 59% and moved from third to fourth place.
- Pinterest fell slightly from 28%.
- TikTok is new to our study.

## Platform use: Beginners vs. advanced marketers

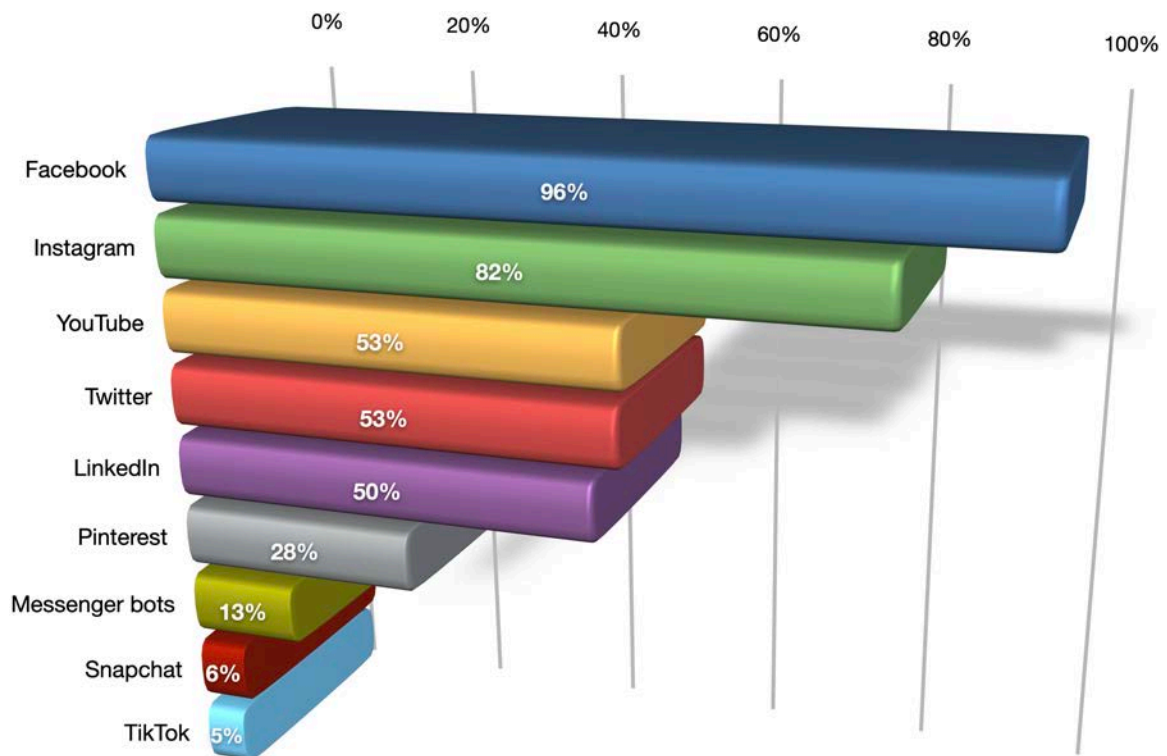
Here's a close examination of which social channels experienced social media marketers are using (the green bars = more than 5 years of experience) compared to those just getting started (the blue bars = less than 12 months of experience).

New social media marketers mostly focus on Facebook (89%) and Instagram (66%). The most experienced marketers are highly diversified.



## Platform use: B2C marketers

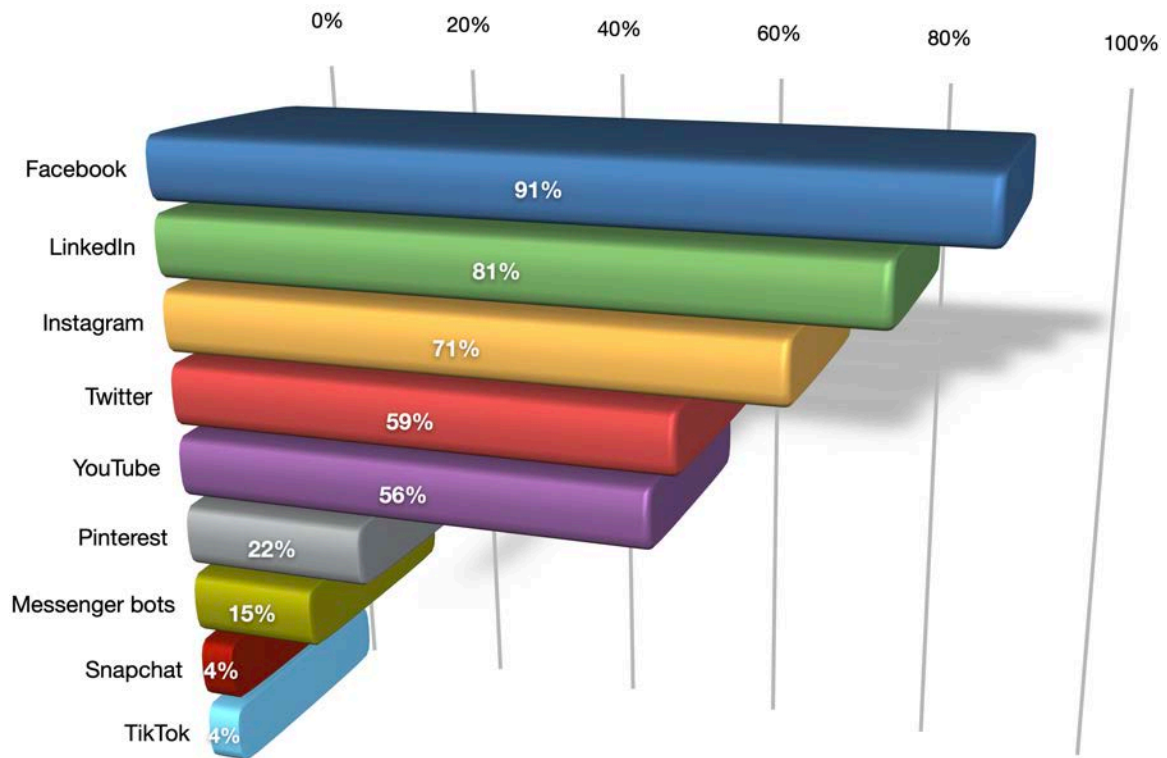
This chart shows that nearly all B2C marketers are focused on Facebook. Interestingly, B2C marketers reduced their use of Twitter (down from 57% in 2019) and increased their use of LinkedIn (up from 46% in 2019).





## Platform use: B2B marketers

This chart shows that most B2B marketers use Facebook and a significant percentage use LinkedIn. B2B marketers have increased their use of Instagram in the last year, up from 66% in 2019. Twitter use has declined from 67% in 2019.





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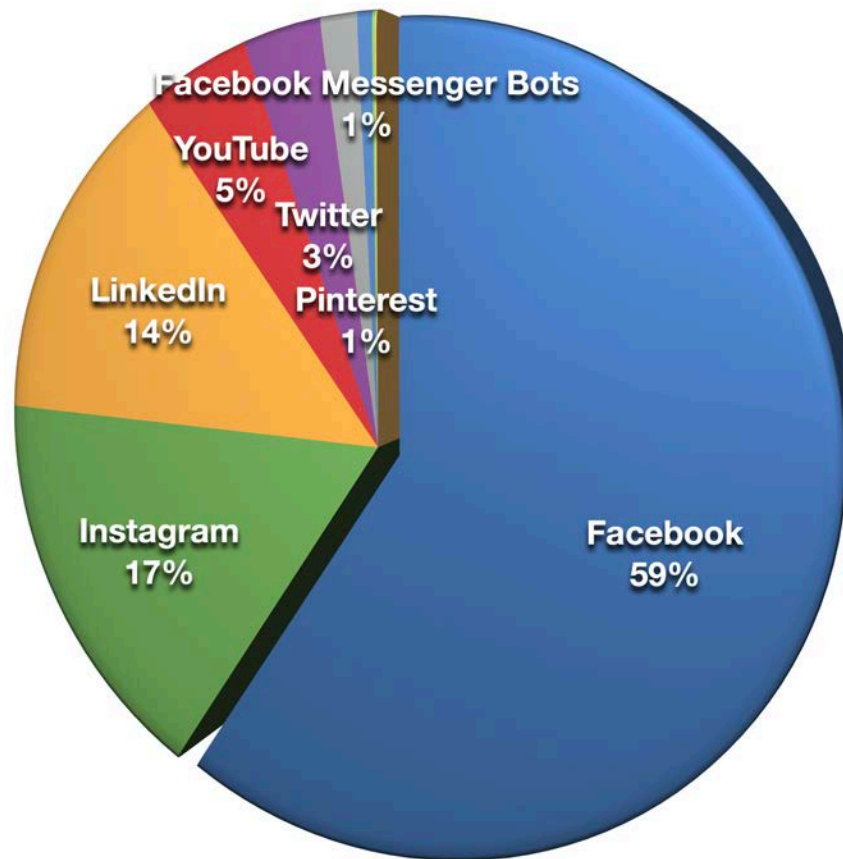


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## The most important social platform for marketers is...



We asked marketers to select the single most important social platform for their business. Because only one choice was allowed, the findings are revealing.

Most marketers (59%) chose Facebook as their most important platform. This chart clearly reveals Facebook is still the primary platform for marketers.

### NOTABLE CHANGES SINCE 2019

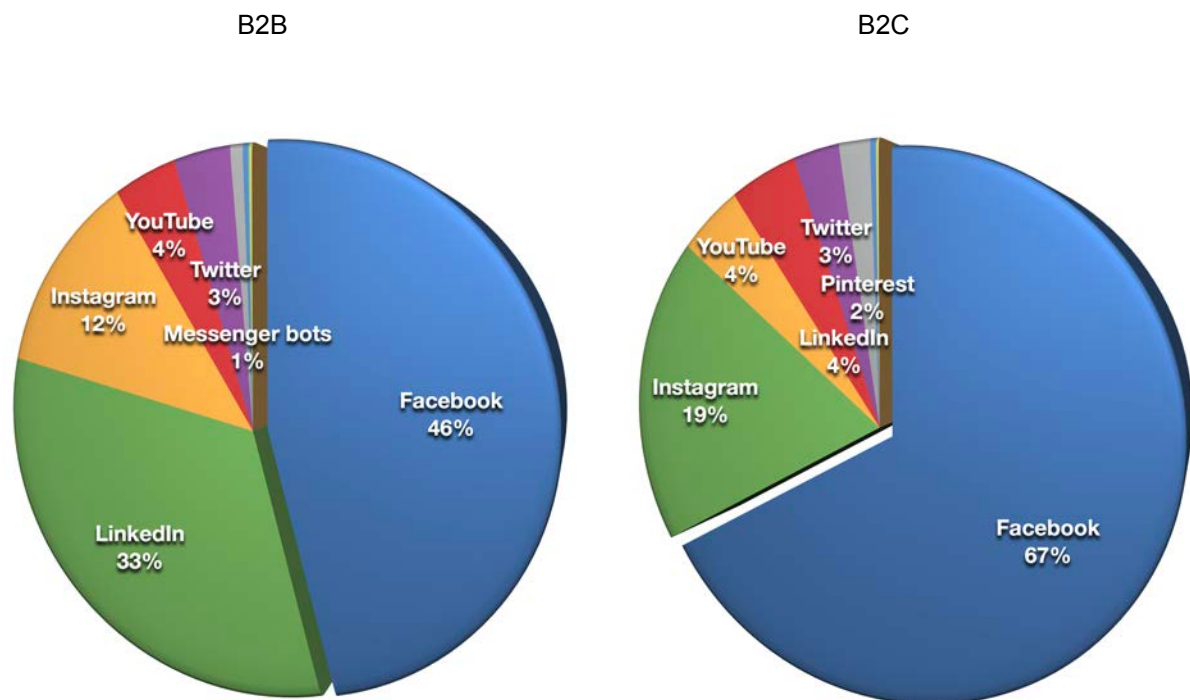
- Facebook dropped from 61%.
- Instagram grew from 14%.
- Twitter declined from 4%.

## B2B vs. B2C

Notice the fascinating differences between B2B- and B2C-focused marketers.

Clearly, Facebook dominates in the B2C space (67% of marketers select it as their number-one choice). However, for B2B marketers, Facebook also grabs the most important slot, surpassing LinkedIn.

For B2C marketers, Facebook dropped from 69% and Instagram grew from 16% in 2019.

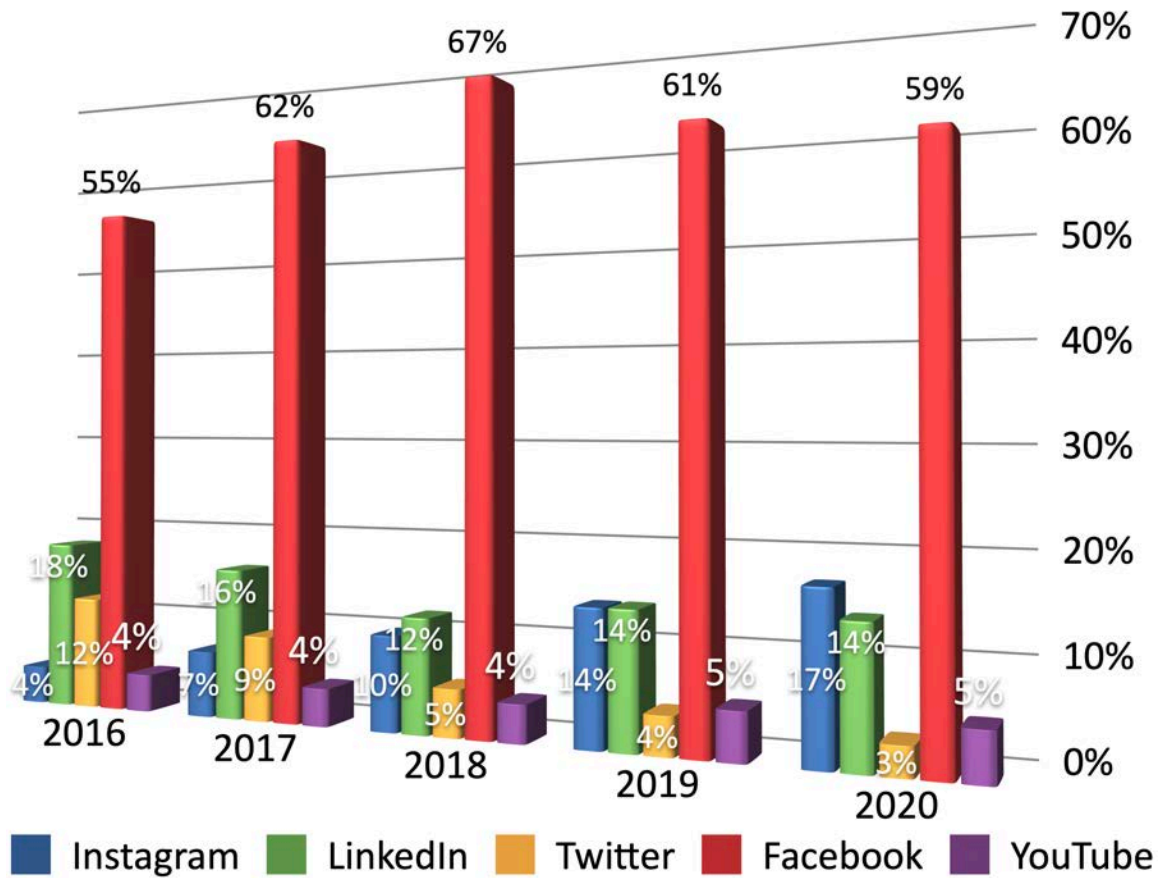


# The rise and fall of social platforms

Here we show the top five social platforms that marketers deem most important over a 5-year period.

Facebook continues its decline that started in 2019.

The rise of Instagram can be clearly seen (blue), alongside the decline in Twitter (yellow).





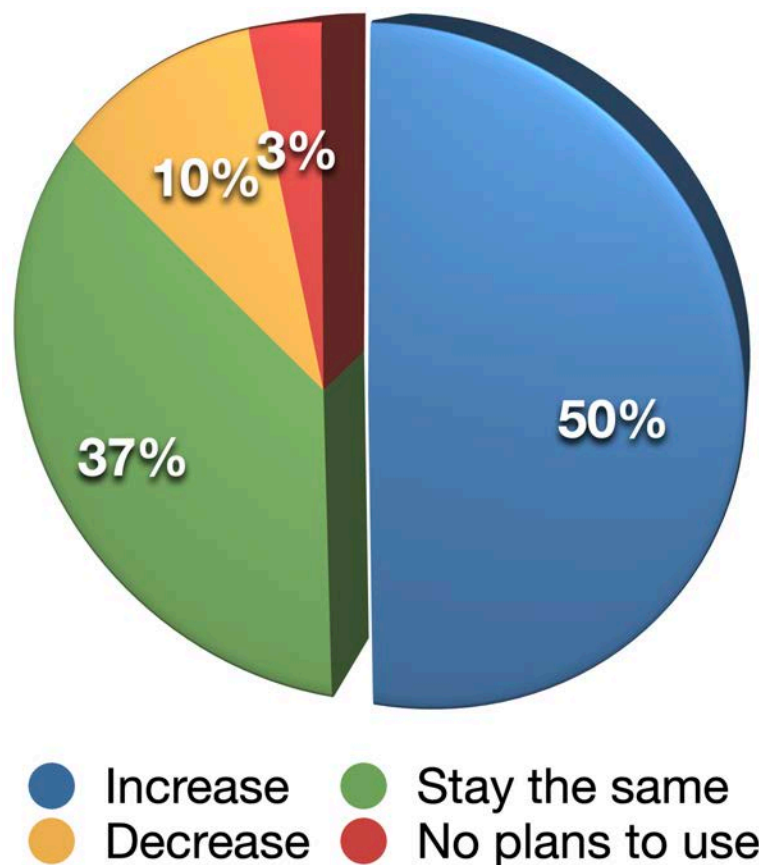
## Organic social media posting

We asked marketers how their organic posting activities will change over the next 12 months. Here's a breakdown by social media channel:

### Future Facebook plans

Our research shows that 10% of marketers indicated they'll be decreasing their organic marketing on Facebook. This is greater than for any other platform.

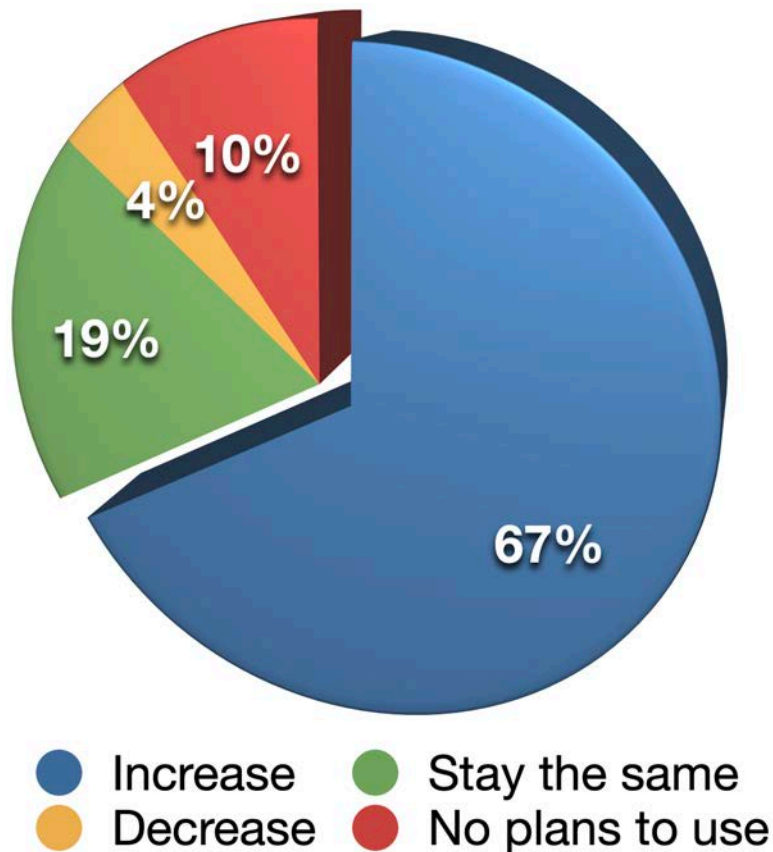
Fifty percent of marketers plan on increasing their Facebook organic activities. Yet, as shown earlier, Facebook is still the most important social network for most marketers.



## Future Instagram plans

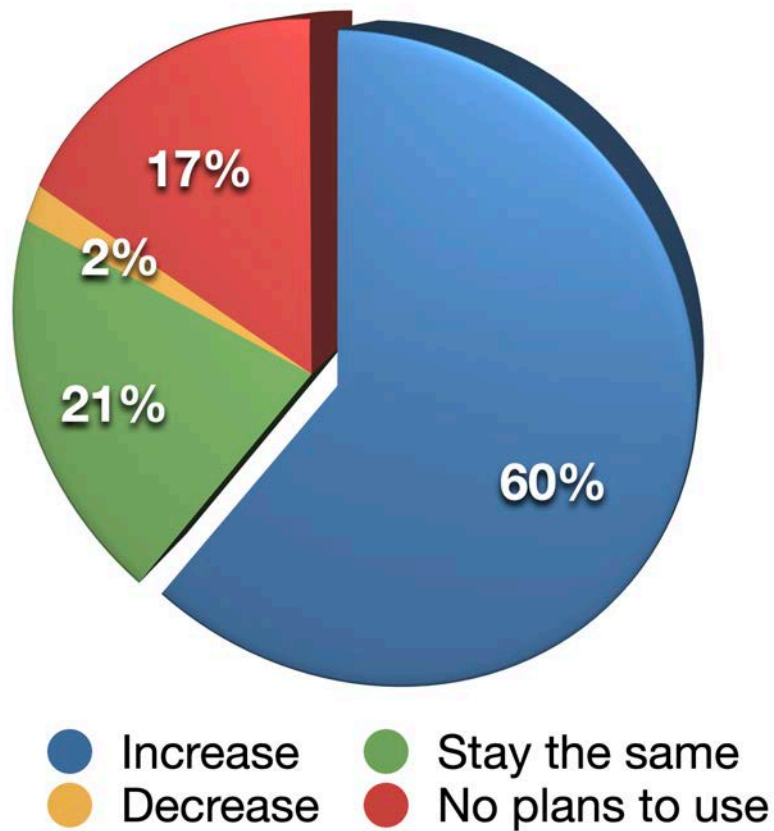
Our research shows a significant **67% of marketers plan on increasing their Instagram organic activities** over the next 12 months, making it the platform where marketers most plan on doing more.

Seventy-one percent of B2C marketers plan on increasing Instagram organic activities, compared to 64% of B2B.



## Future YouTube plans

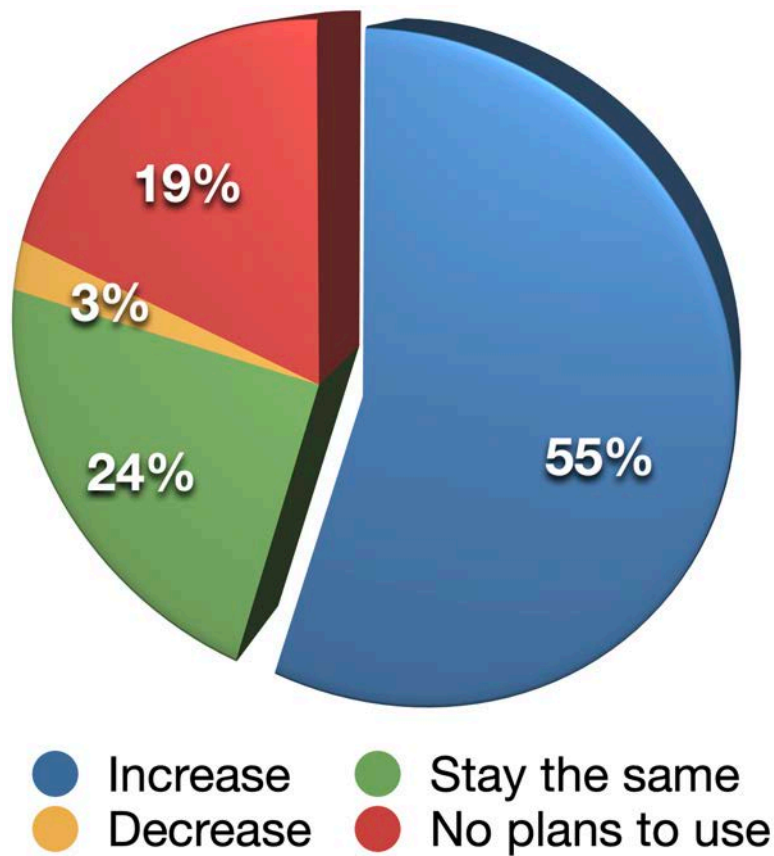
A significant 60% of marketers plan on increasing their YouTube organic activities over the next 12 months. Note that on page 32, we asked this question in a different way and 69% of marketers indicated they plan to increase their YouTube video marketing efforts.



## Future LinkedIn plans

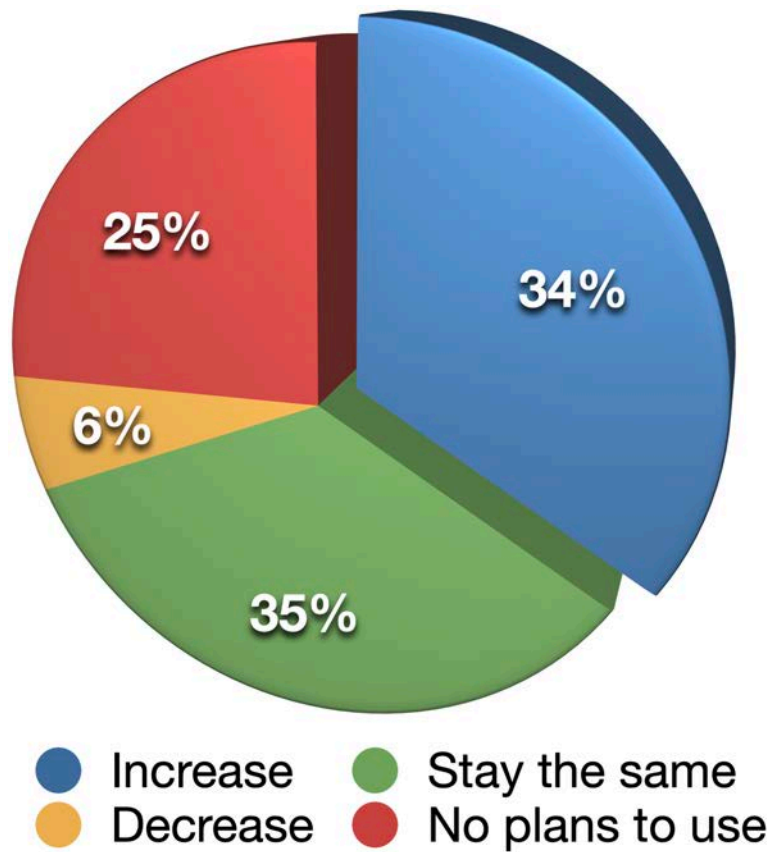
More than half of marketers (55%) plan on increasing their LinkedIn organic activities over the next 12 months, up 3% from 2019.

Seventy-three percent of B2B plan on increasing LinkedIn organic activities, compared to 46% of B2C.



## Future Twitter plans

About one in three (34%) marketers plan on increasing their Twitter organic activities over the next 12 months.

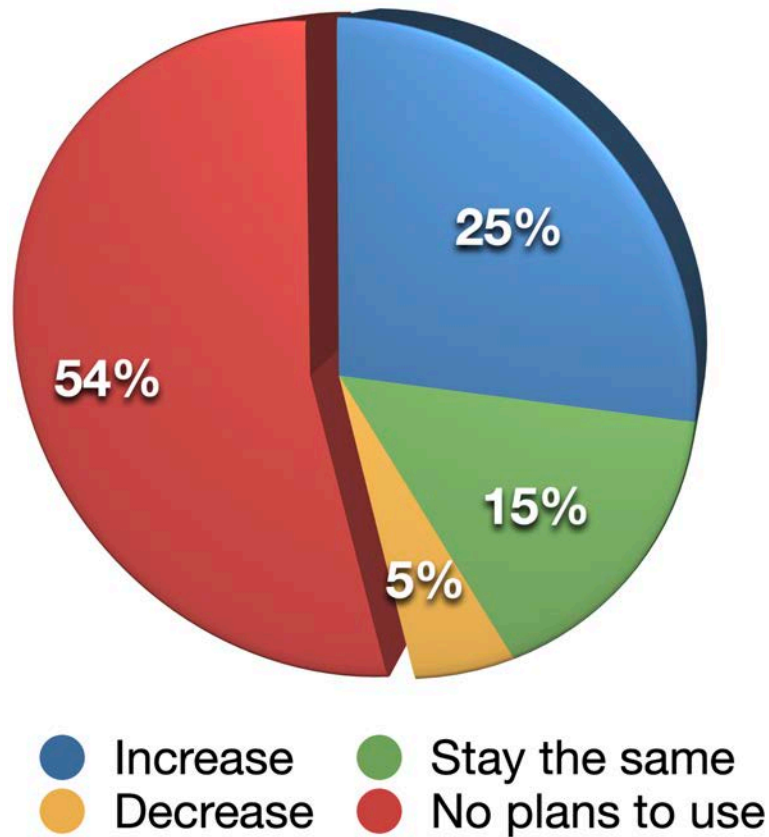




### Future Messenger bot plans

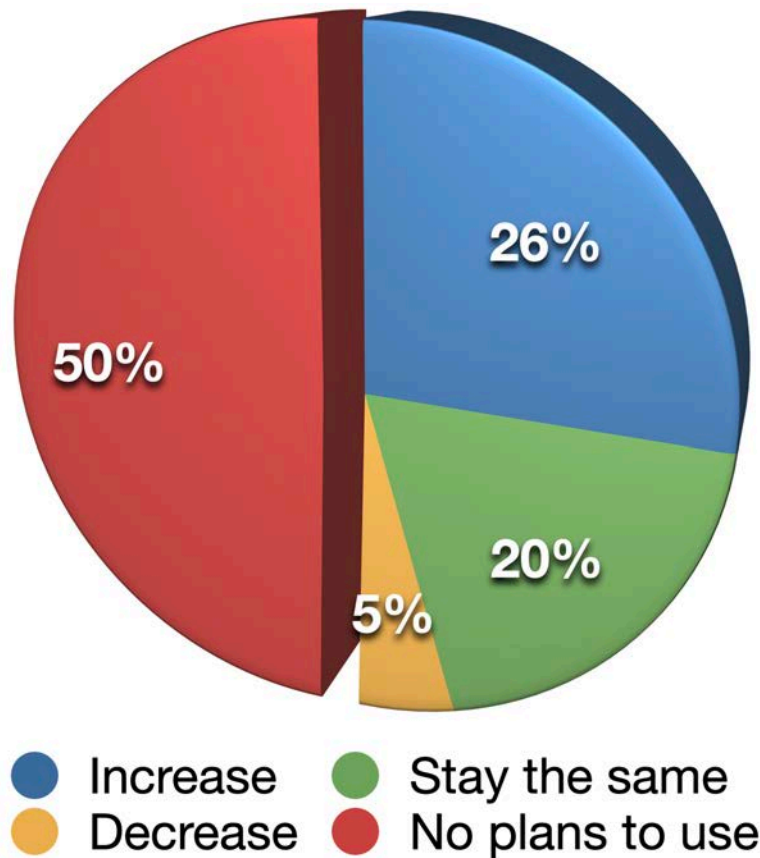
One in four marketers (25%) plan on increasing their Messenger bot activities over the next 12 months, a drop from 32% in 2019.

It's also worth noting that 54% of marketers have no plans to implement Messenger bots.



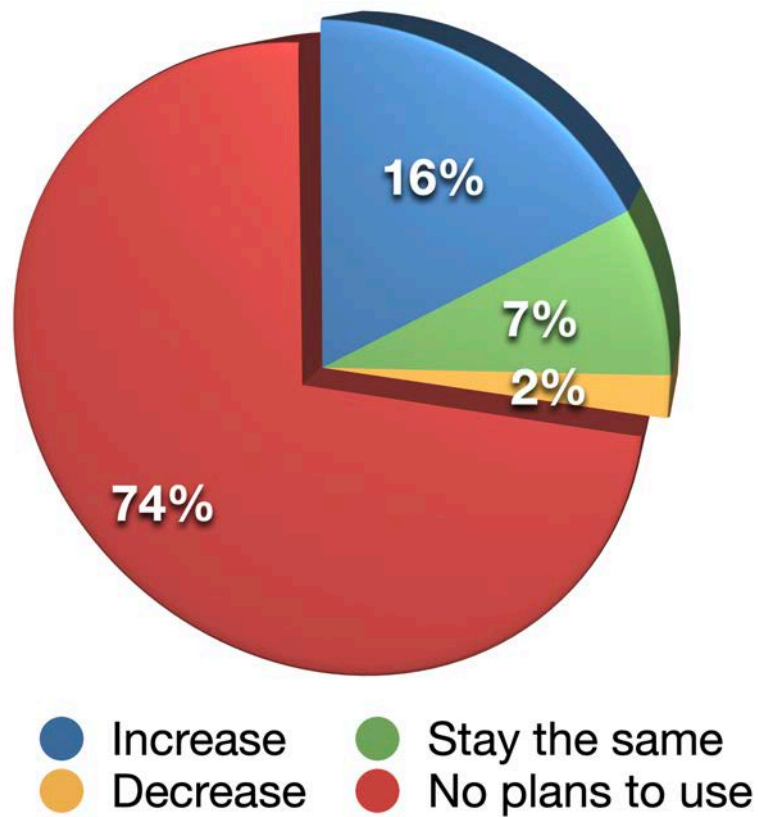
## Future Pinterest plans

Twenty-six percent of marketers plan on increasing their Pinterest organic activities over the next 12 months.



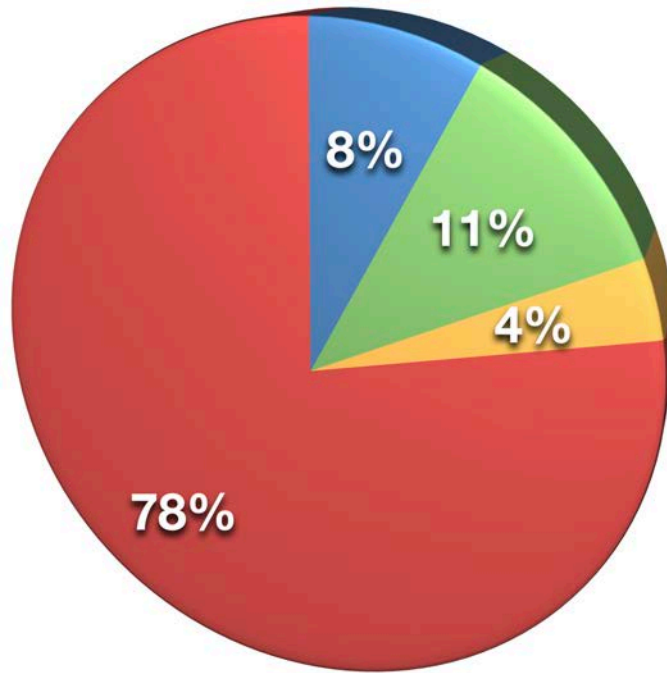
## Future TikTok plans

Sixteen percent of marketers plan on increasing their TikTok organic activities over the next 12 months. A significant 74% of marketers have no plans to use TikTok.



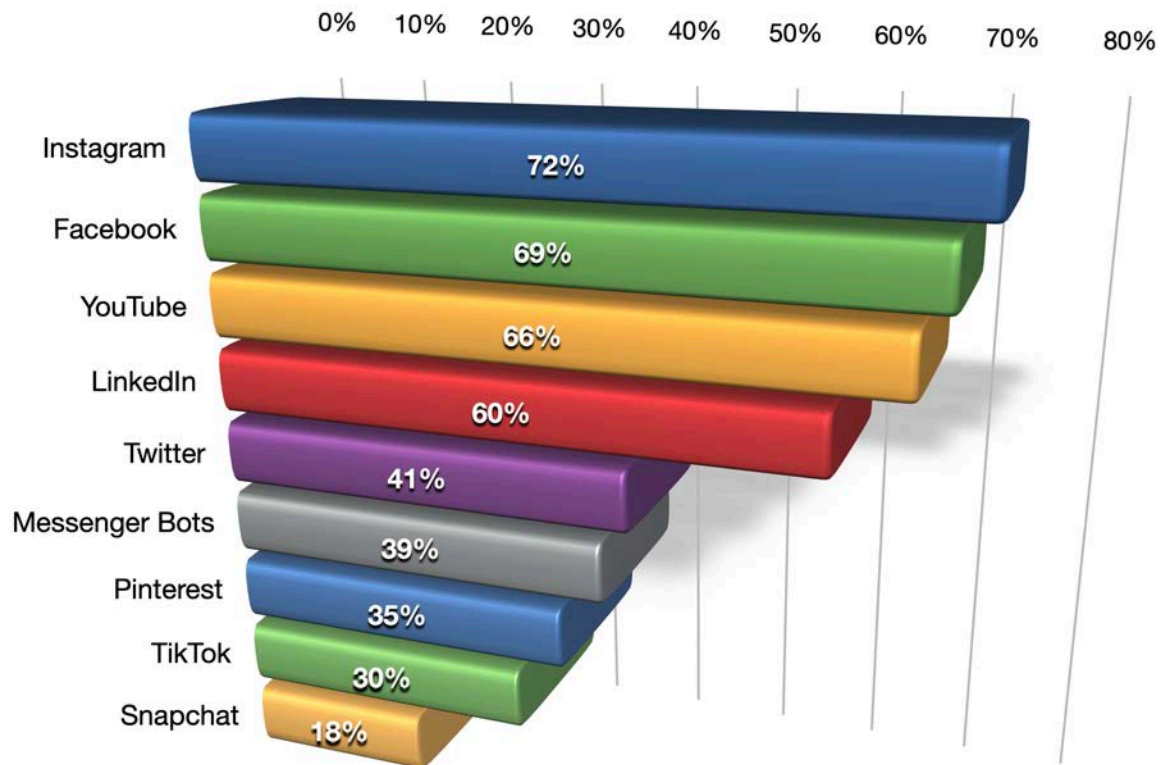
## Future Snapchat plans

Only 8% of marketers plan on increasing their Snapchat organic activities over the next 12 months. A significant 78% of marketers have no plans to use Snapchat.



- Increase
- Stay the same
- Decrease
- No plans to use

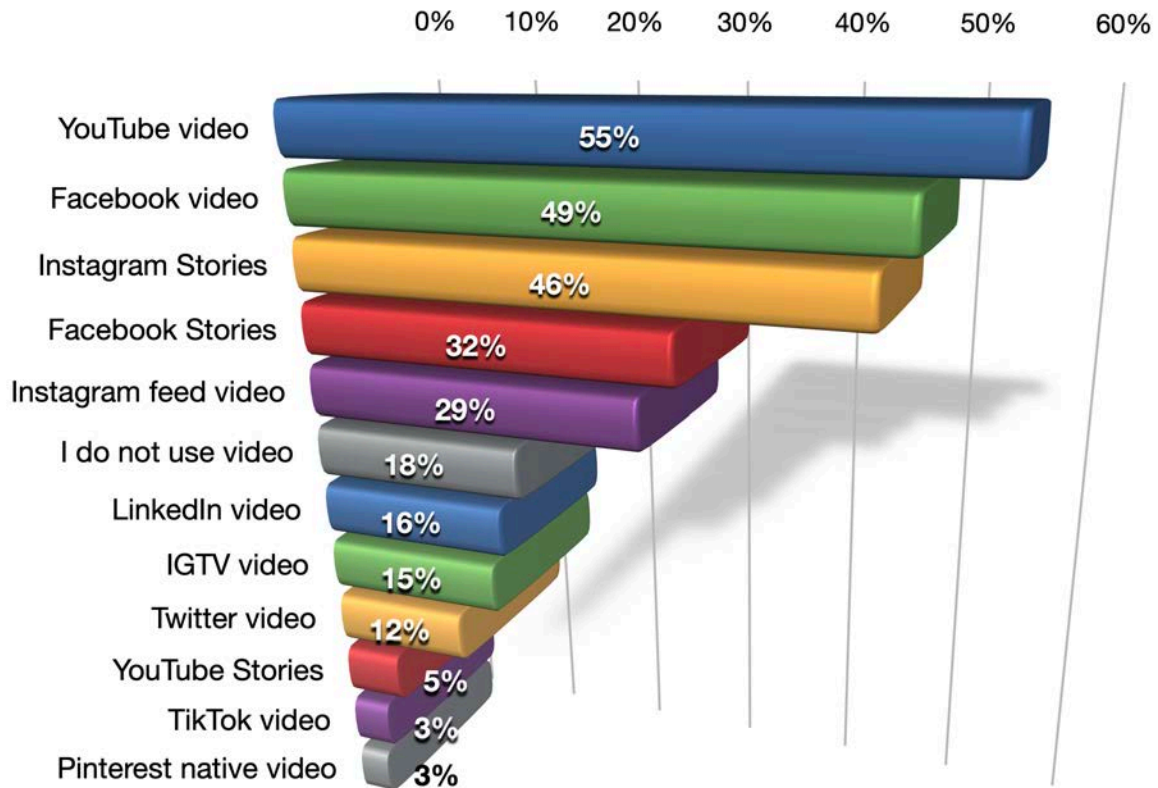
## Social media platforms marketers want to learn more about



We asked marketers to identify which social media platforms they want to learn more about. Instagram held the top slot for the second year in a row. Interest in learning more about Messenger bots dropped to 41% from 45% in 2019.

B2C marketers are more interested in learning about Instagram (76% B2C vs. 65% B2B), Facebook (73% B2C vs. 62% B2B), and Pinterest (38% B2C vs. 29% B2B), than their B2B counterparts. B2B marketers are far more interested in learning about LinkedIn (72% B2B vs. 52% B2C).

## Video channels used by marketers

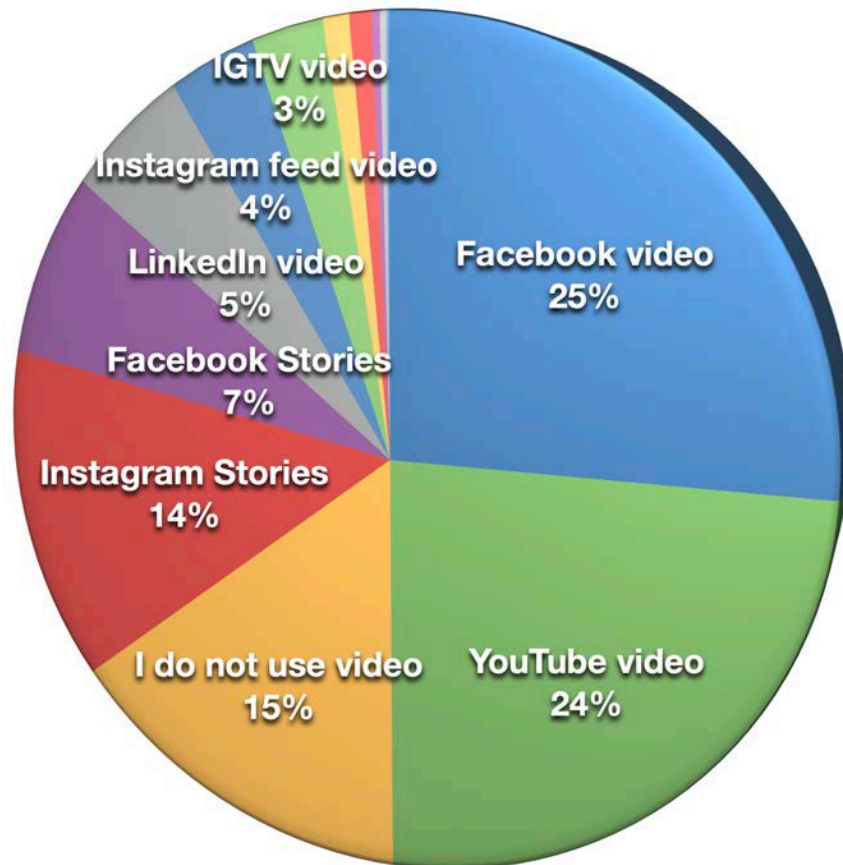


We asked marketers to indicate which platforms they regularly used for their video marketing. YouTube was the number-one video channel used by 55% of marketers, followed by Facebook native videos (49%). The use of Instagram Stories saw a dramatic increase from 22% in 2019 to 46%.

B2C marketers use more Instagram Stories (50% B2C vs. 41% B2B) and Facebook video (51% B2C vs. 46% B2B), than their B2B counterparts. B2B marketers use more LinkedIn video (27% B2B vs. 10% B2C).



## The most important video channel for marketers is...

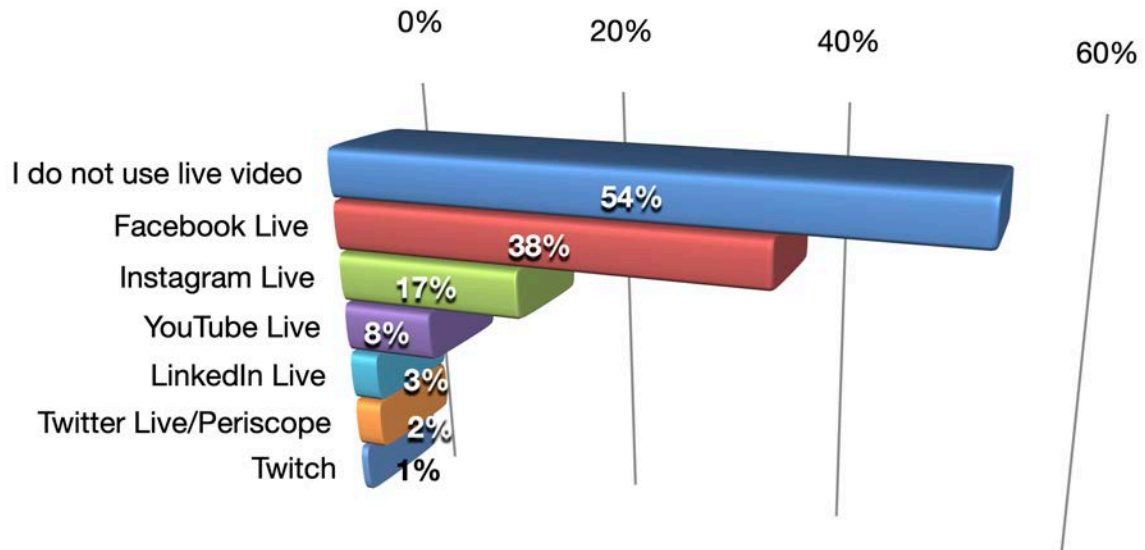


We asked marketers to select the single most important video channel for their business. Because only one choice was allowed, the findings are revealing.

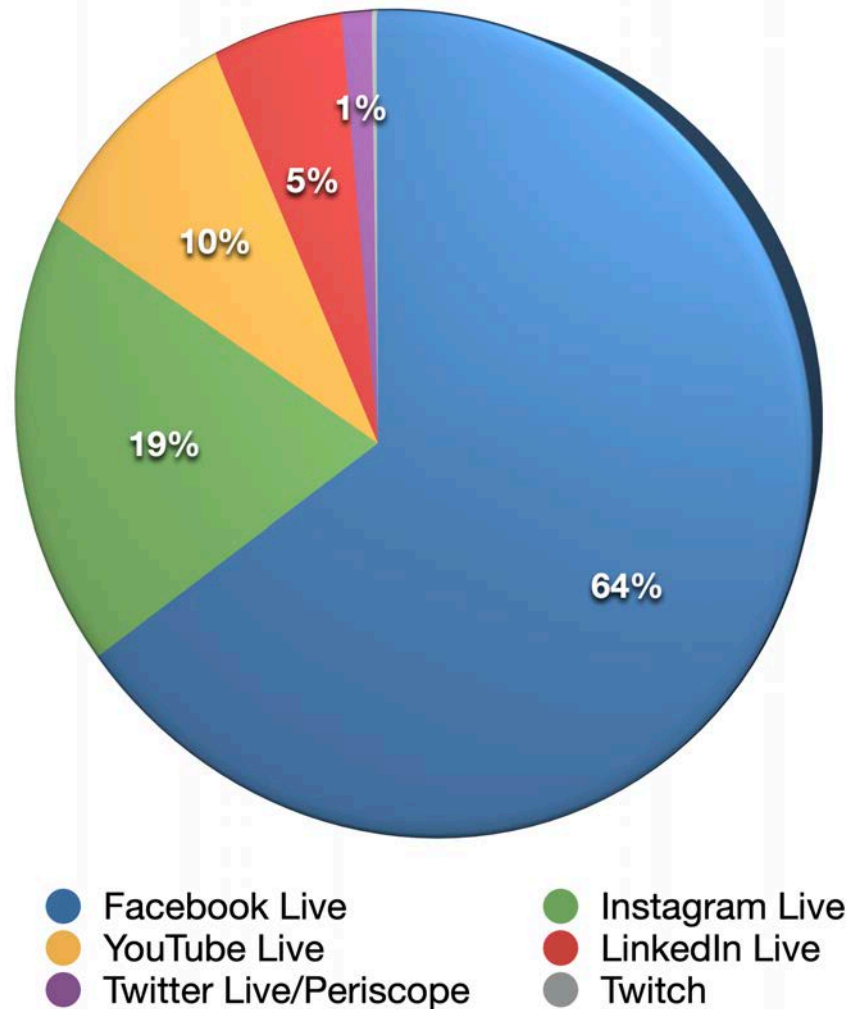
Most marketers (51%) chose either Facebook or YouTube as their most important platform. This chart clearly reveals Facebook is still an important video platform for marketers.

## Live video use

We asked marketers to indicate the platforms they use for live video. Surprisingly, 54% of marketers don't use live video, up from 44% in 2019. Facebook is the most popular live video platform (38%).



## The most important live video channel for marketers is...



We asked marketers who use live video to select the single most important video channel for their business. Because only one choice was allowed, the findings are revealing.

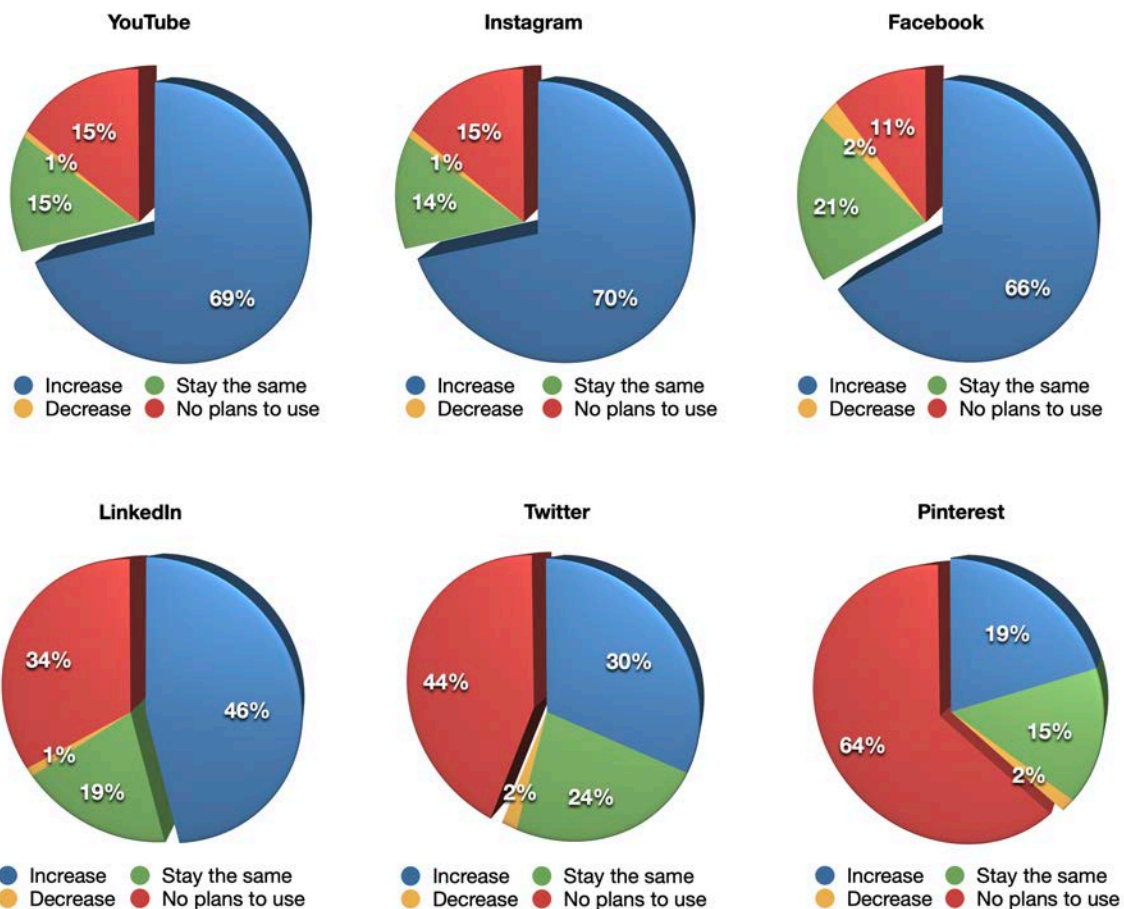
Most marketers who use live video (64%) chose Facebook Live as their most important platform.

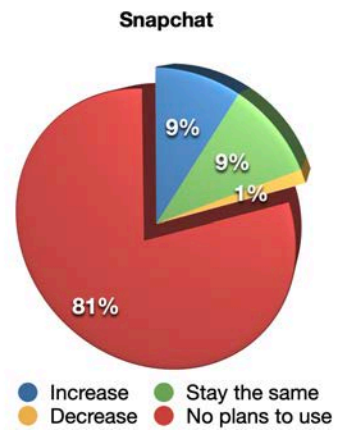
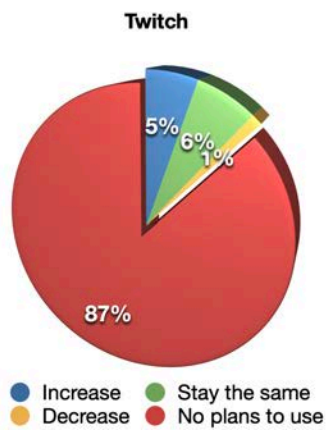
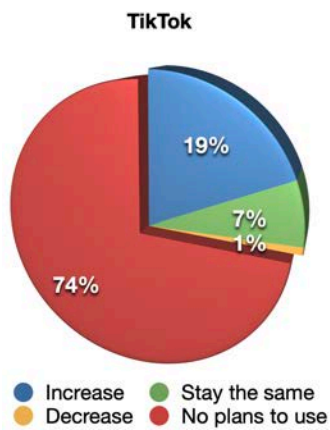
# How will marketers change their future video marketing activities?

We asked marketers to indicate how they'll change their video marketing use in the near future. Respondents were asked to indicate whether they plan to increase, decrease, remain the same, or not use various platforms in their video marketing.

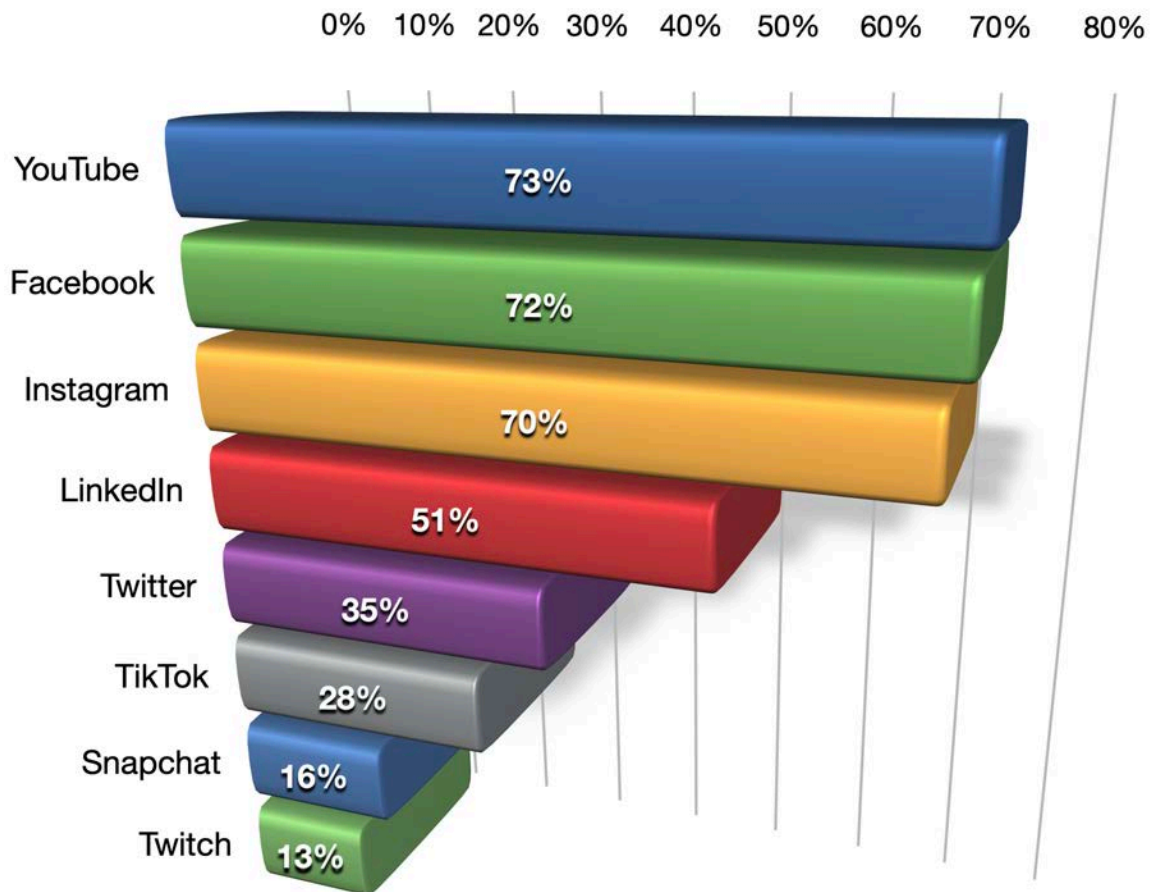
Marketers mostly plan on increasing their use of YouTube video (69%), Instagram video (70%), and Facebook video (66%).

Here's a breakdown by platform:





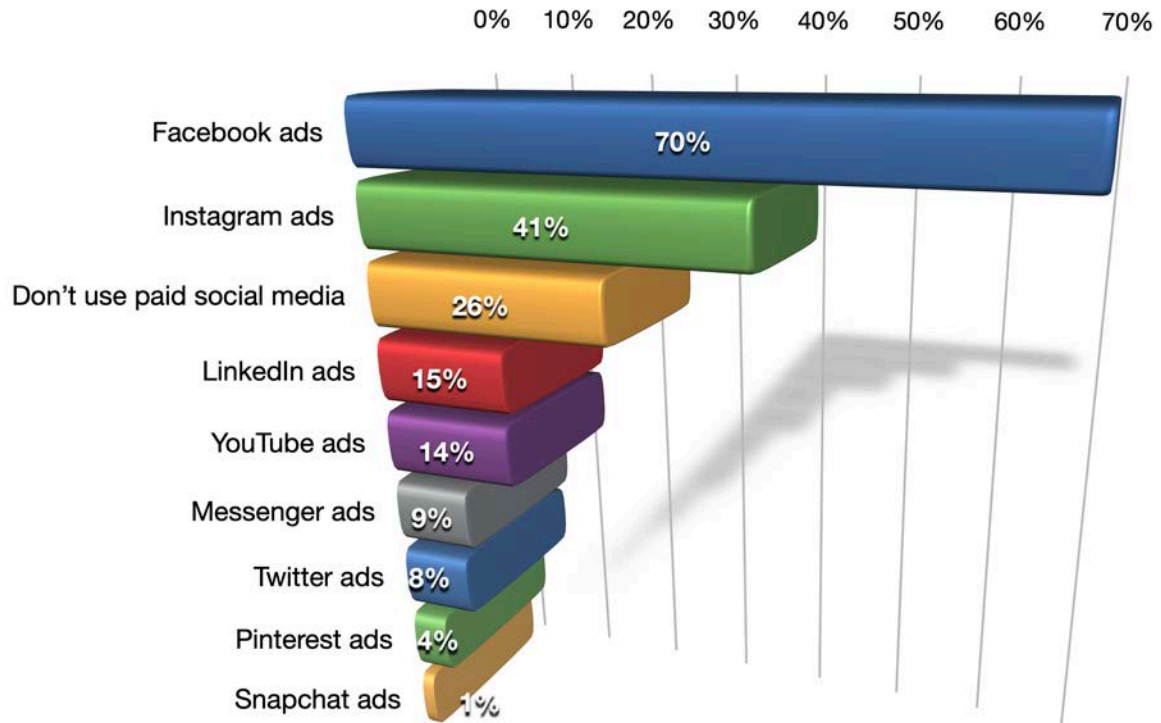
## Video platforms marketers want to learn more about



We asked marketers to tell us the platforms where they'd like to improve their video marketing knowledge. YouTube and Facebook were the top video platforms marketers wanted to learn more about.

B2C marketers are more interested in learning about Instagram video (75% B2C vs. 62% B2B) and Facebook video (77% B2C vs. 65% B2B) than their B2B counterparts. B2B marketers are far more interested in learning about LinkedIn video (69% B2B vs. 43% B2C).

# Social media ads



We asked marketers to identify which platforms they regularly use for social media ads.

The ad platform most used by marketers is Facebook (70%), followed by Instagram (41%).

B2C marketers are more likely to use Facebook ads (74% B2C vs. 62% B2B) and Instagram ads (45% B2C vs. 34% B2B) than their B2B counterparts. B2B marketers are using more LinkedIn ads (23% B2B vs. 10% B2C).

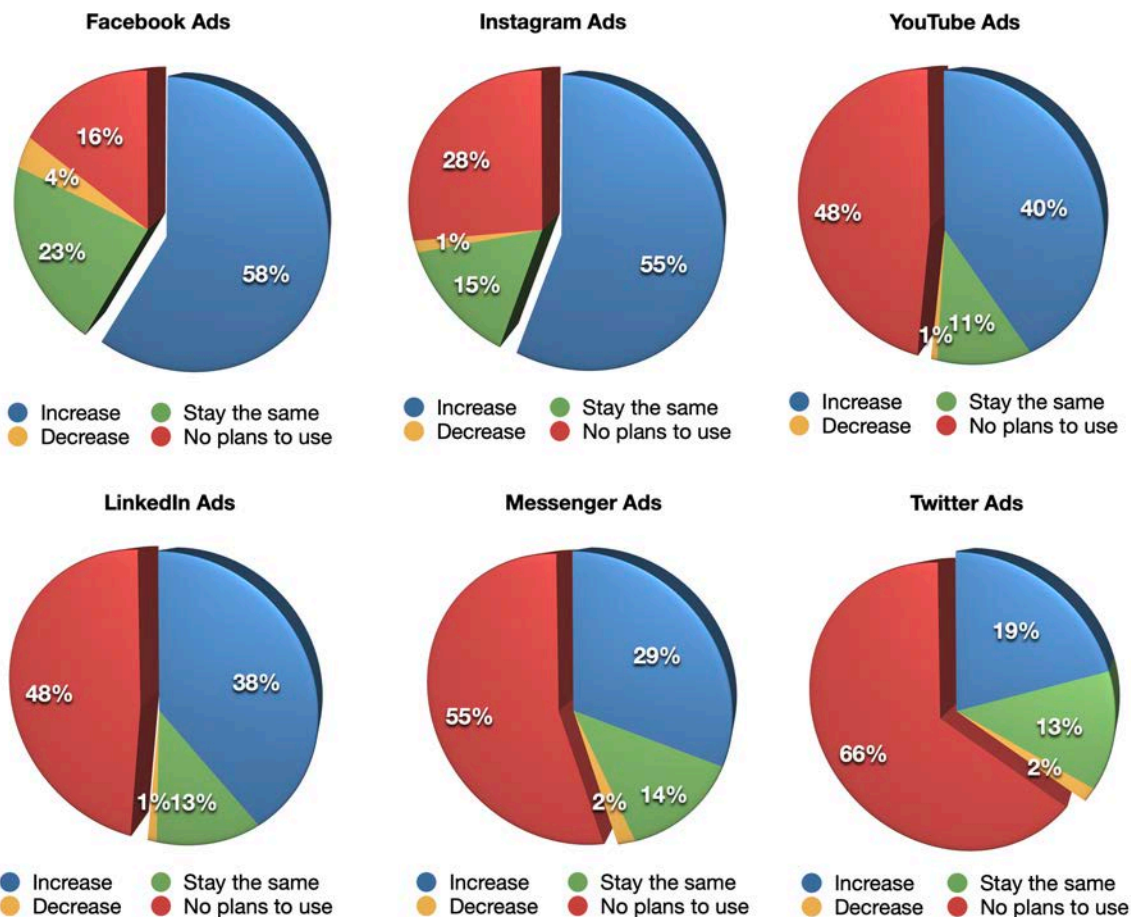


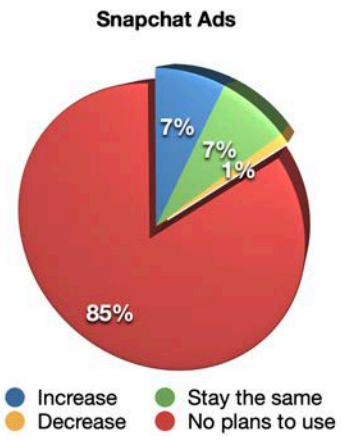
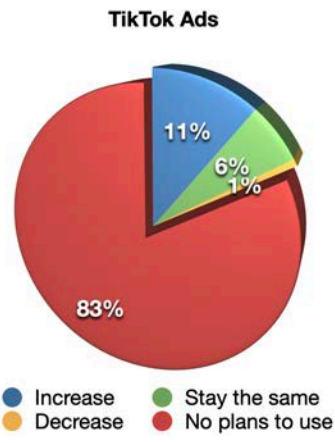
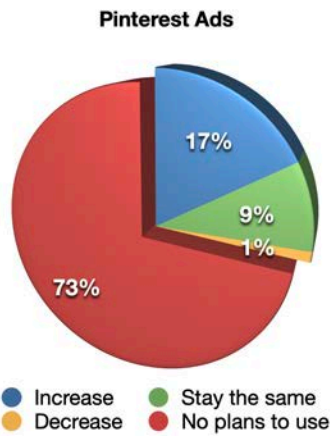
# How will marketers change their future social media ad activities?

We asked marketers to indicate how they'll change their social media ad use in the near future. Respondents were asked to indicate whether they plan to increase, decrease, remain the same, or not use ads on various platforms.

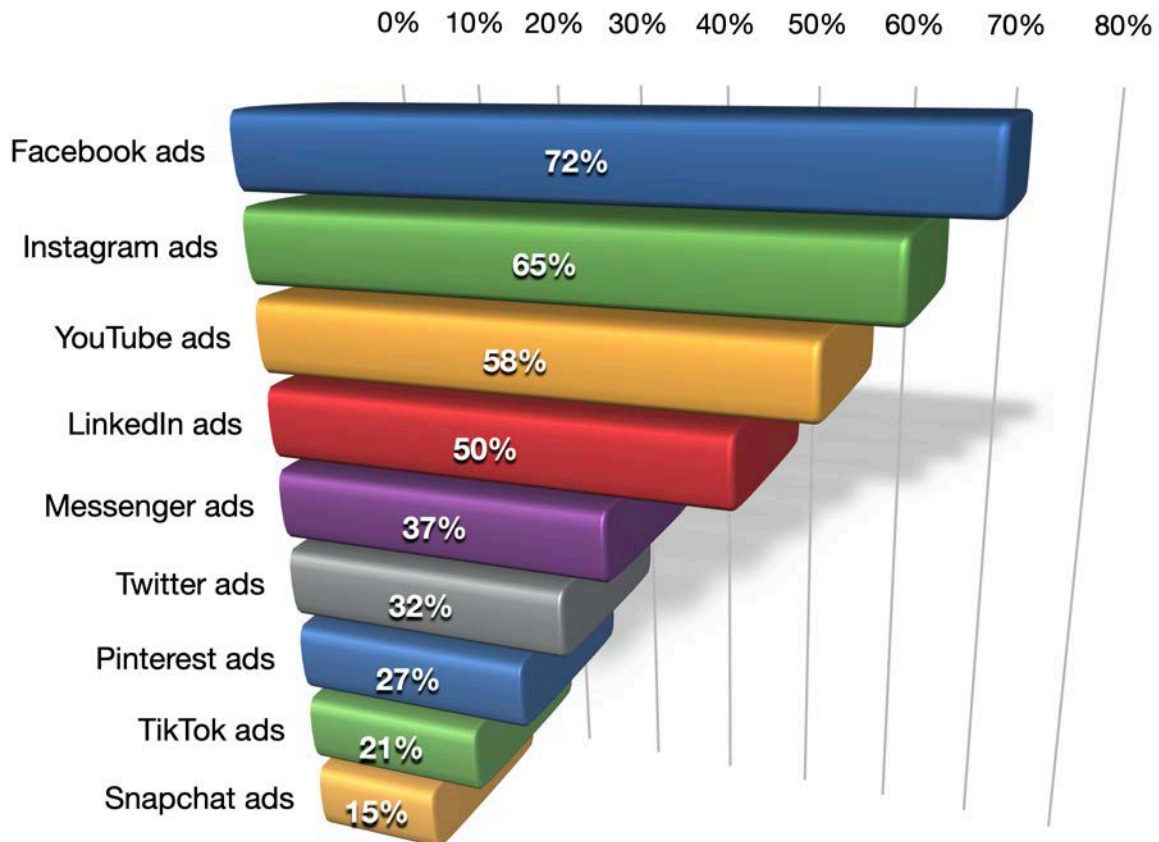
Marketers mostly plan on increasing their use of Facebook ads (58%), Instagram ads (55%), and YouTube ads (40%).

Here's a breakdown by ad platform:





## Social media ad platforms marketers want to learn more about



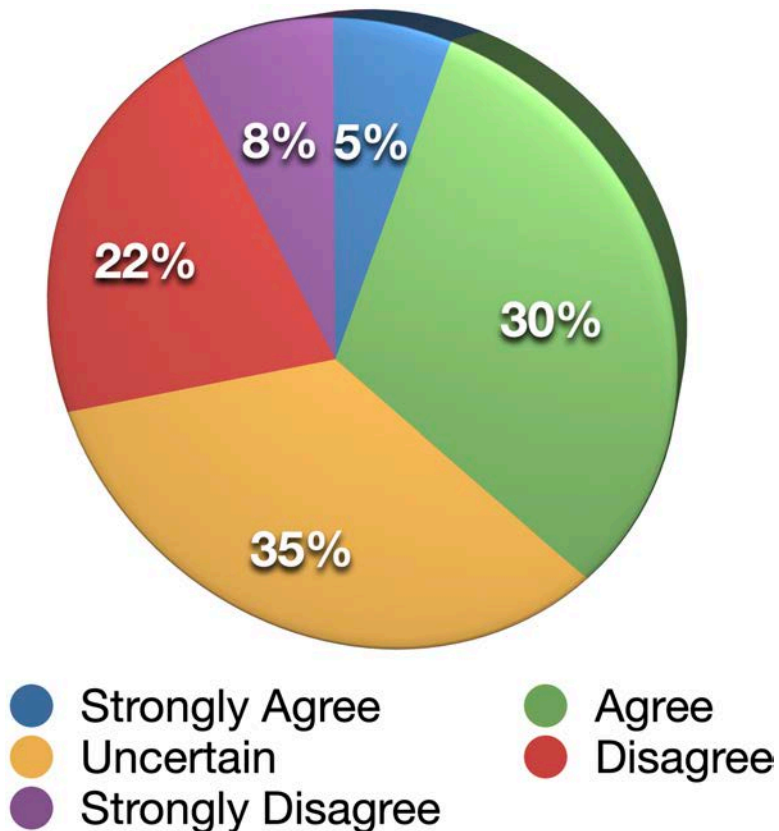
We asked marketers to identify which social media ad platforms they want to learn more about. **Facebook took first place at 72%, followed by Instagram at 65%.**

B2C marketers are more interested in learning about Facebook ads (76% B2C vs. 66% B2B) and Instagram ads (69% B2C vs. 58% B2B) than their B2B counterparts. B2B marketers are far more interested in learning about LinkedIn ads (63% B2B vs. 43% B2C).

## Measuring ROI of organic social activities

We wanted to understand marketers' ability to measure the return on their organic social media activities so we asked them to rate their agreement with the following statement: "I am able to measure the return on investment (ROI) for my organic social media activities."

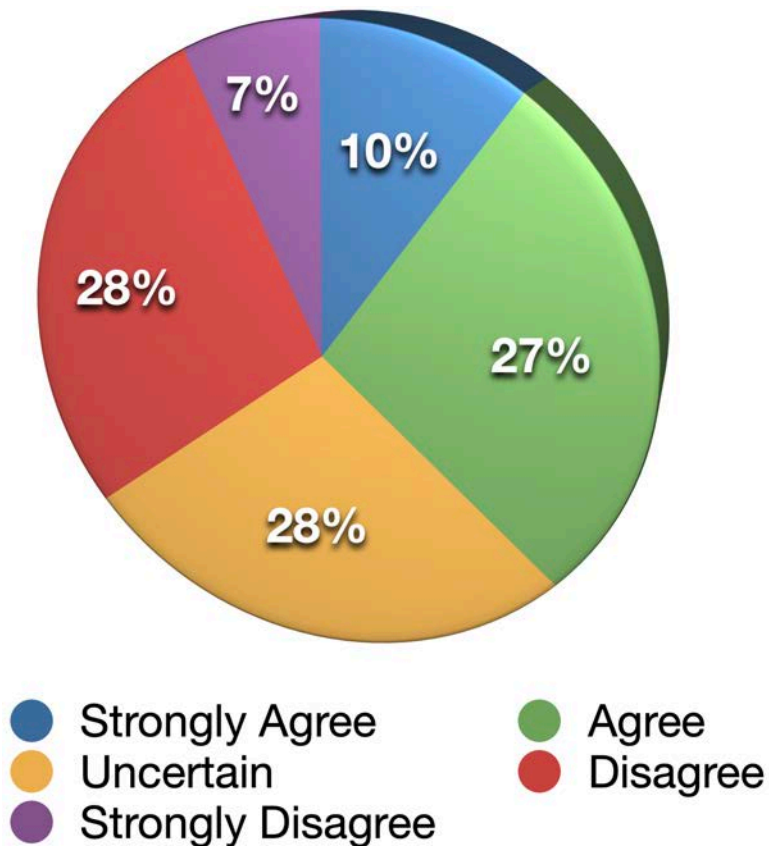
Only 35% agreed they were able to measure their organic social activities, down from 44% in 2019. The ROI issue has plagued marketers for years.



## Organic reach decline

We wanted to understand whether marketers have seen any changes in their organic reach by asking them to rate their agreement with the following statement: "The organic reach of my social activities has declined in the last year."

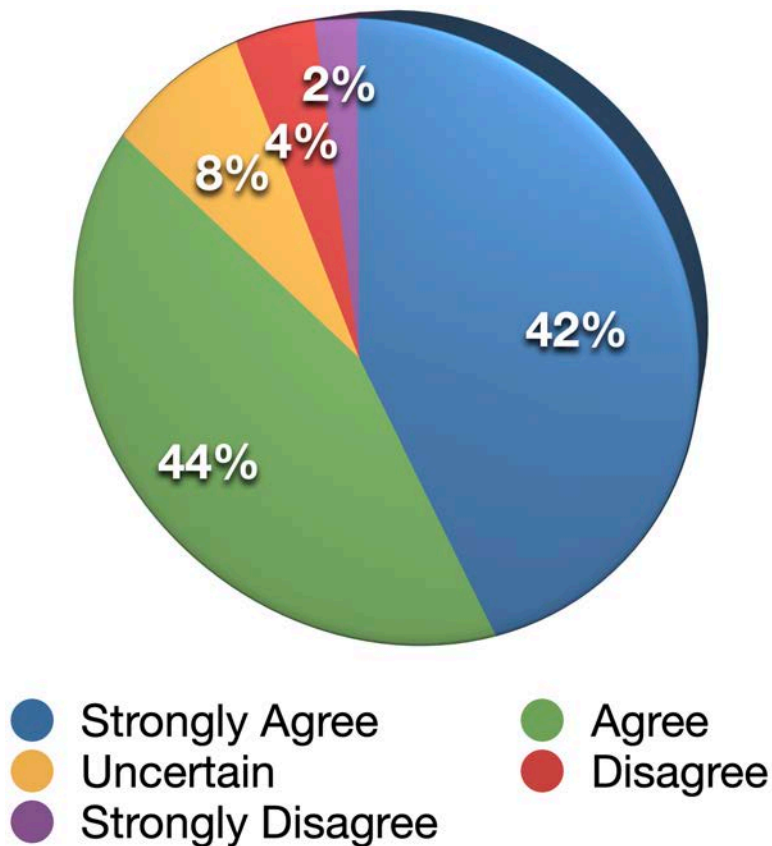
Slightly more than one in three marketers (37%) either agreed or agreed strongly that their organic reach has declined.



## Google Analytics insight

We wanted to understand marketers' interest in Google Analytics so we asked them to rate their agreement with the following statement: "I would like to improve my Google Analytics knowledge."

A significant 86% either agreed or strongly agreed that they'd like to understand more about Google Analytics.



# Survey participant demographics

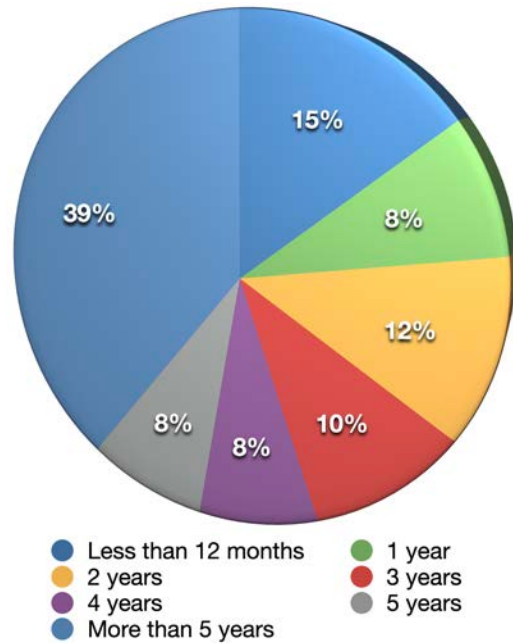
We leveraged email to find participants for our survey. We conducted this survey in January 2020 by emailing a list of 363,000 marketers and asking them to take the survey. After 7 days, we closed the survey with **5,243 participants**.

Here are the demographic breakdowns:

## Years using social media marketing

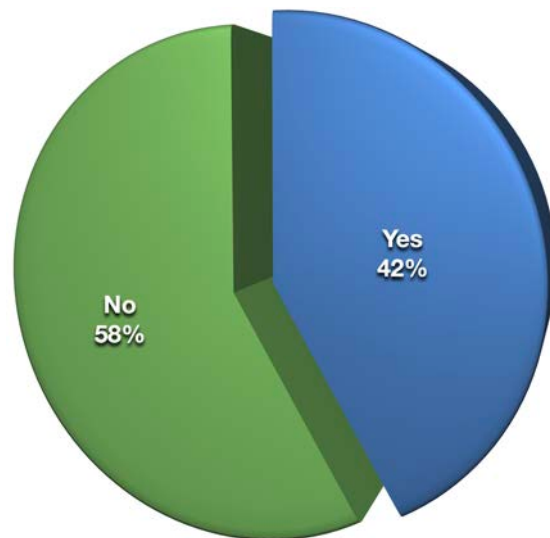
We asked participants how long they've been using social media for marketing.

Sixty-five percent of marketers surveyed have at least 3 years of social media marketing experience.



## Is social media marketing your main job responsibility?

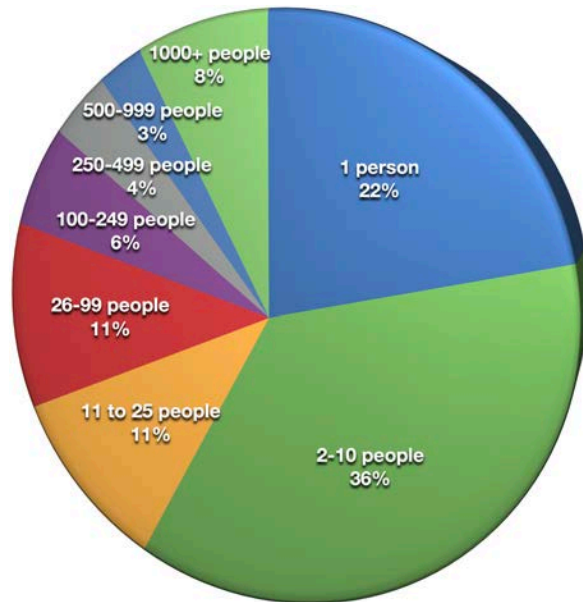
Slightly more than two out of five (42%) marketers said social media marketing was their full-time responsibility.





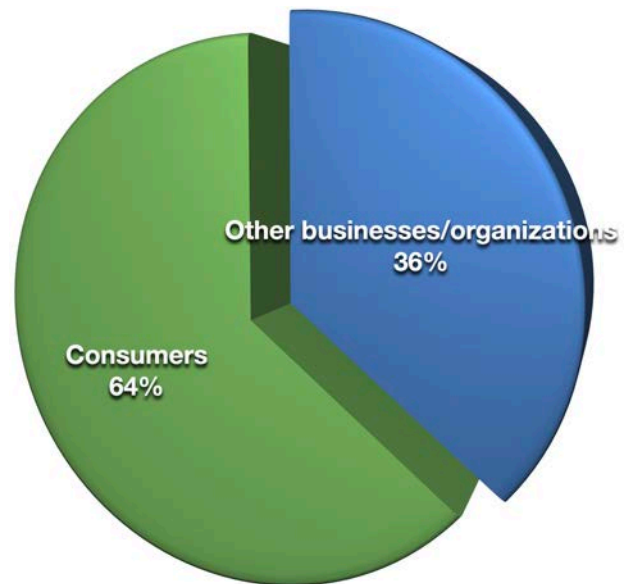
### Business size

The largest group that took the survey works for small businesses of 2–10 employees (36%), followed by the self-employed (22%). Twenty-one percent of people taking the survey work for businesses with 100 or more employees.



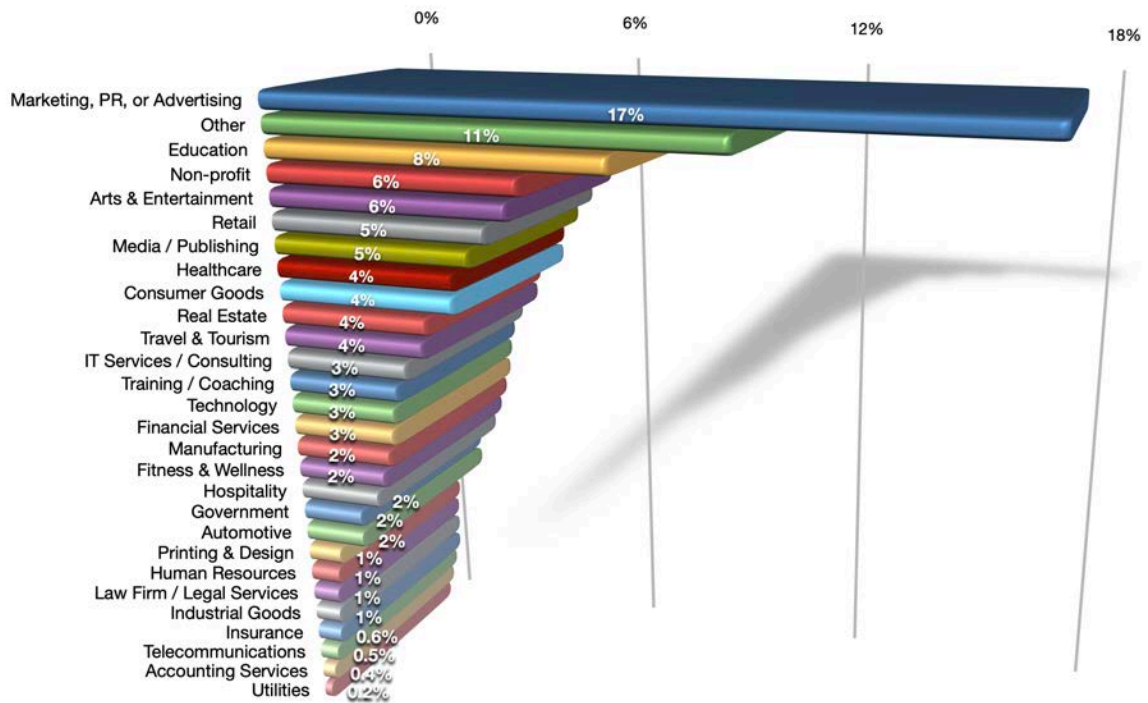
### Primary target audience

About two-thirds (64%) of survey participants focus primarily on attracting consumers (B2C) and the other 36% primarily target businesses (B2B).



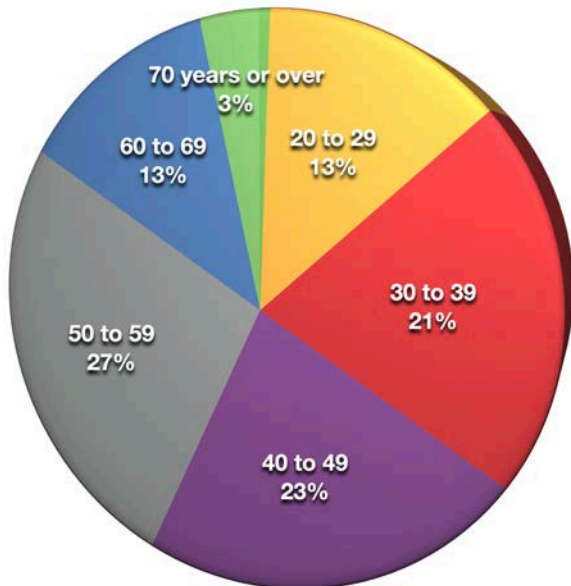
## Industry

Below are the different industries of survey participants.



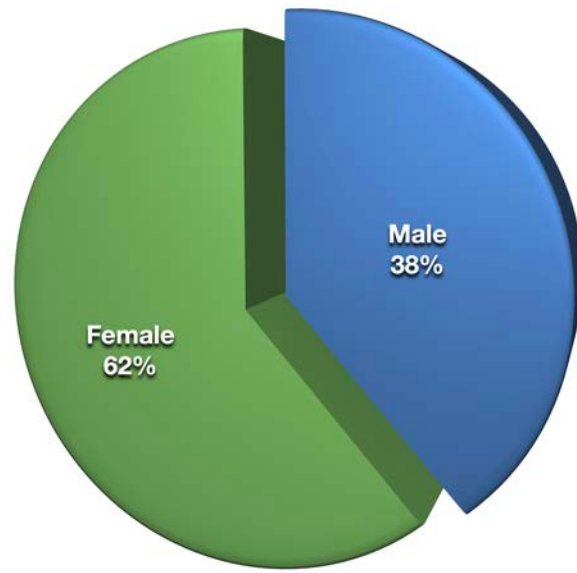
## Age of participants

Most survey participants (87%) were age 30 or older.



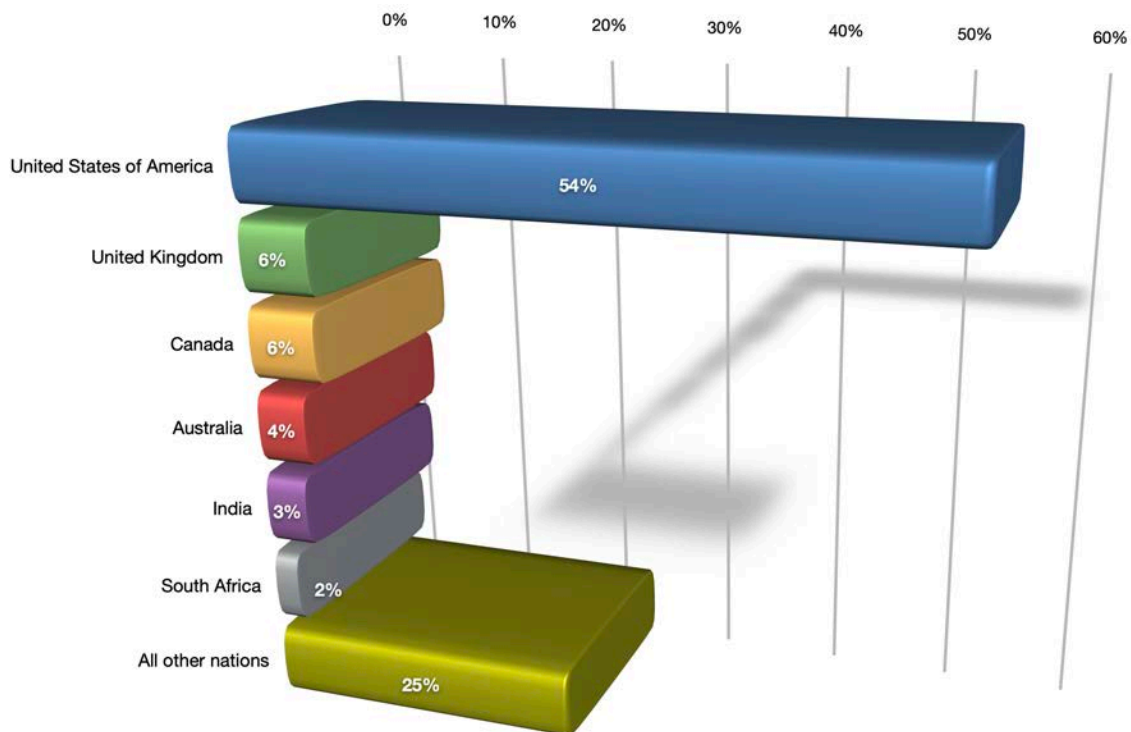
## Gender

Females edged out males, representing 62% of all participants.



## Country

Most participants were based in the United States (54%), followed by United Kingdom (6%), Canada (6%), Australia (4%), and India (3%).



## About Michael A. Stelzner

Michael Stelzner is the **founder of Social Media Examiner**, author of the books **Launch** and **Writing White Papers**, and host of the **Social Media Marketing podcast**—a top business podcast on Apple Podcasts.

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