

# 2009 -10

# B2B

# Marketing

# Benchmark Report

Note: This is an authorized excerpt from the full MarketingSherpa 2009 -10 B2B Marketing Benchmark Report. To download the entire Report, go to: <http://www.SherpaStore.com> or call 877-895-1717

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## **MarketingSherpa's 2009 -10 B2B Marketing Benchmark Report**

**US \$447 / ISBN: 978-1-932353-94-5**

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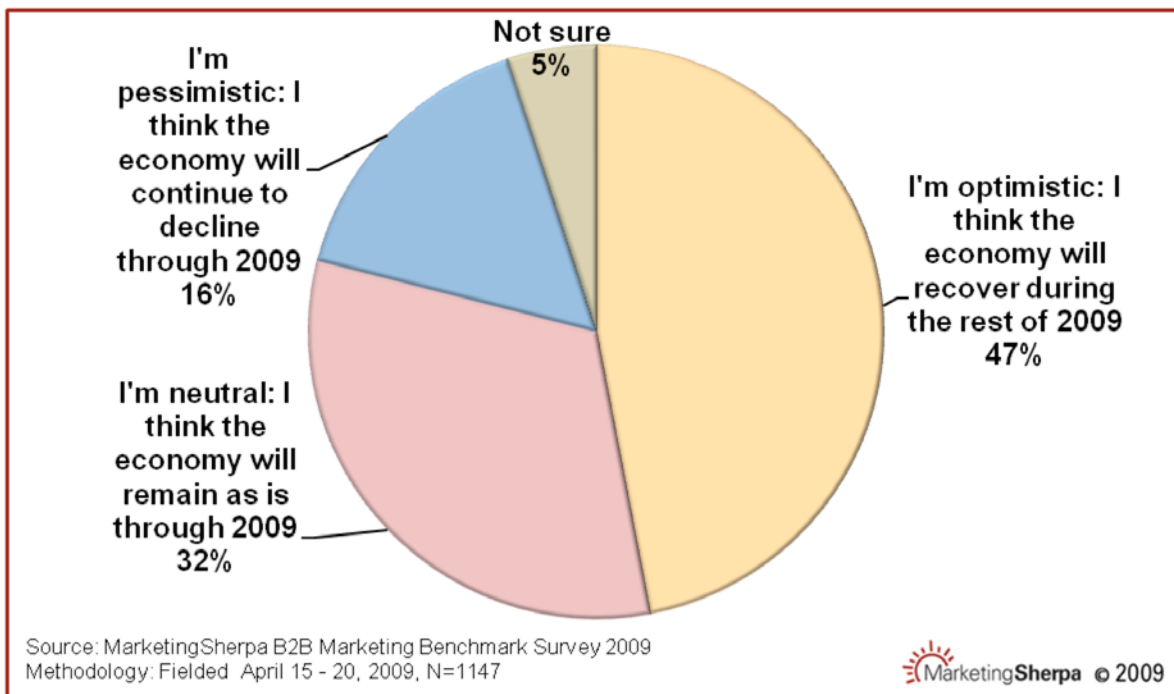
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# B2B Marketing Research Highlights

The publication of this report coincides with what is expected to be a turning point in the economic cycle – from recession to recovery. Following are highlights from the most comprehensive study available of B2B marketing at a cross roads.

## 1. Signs of Optimism among Marketers for the Rest of 2009

What is Your Business Outlook in Relation to an Economic Recovery This Year?



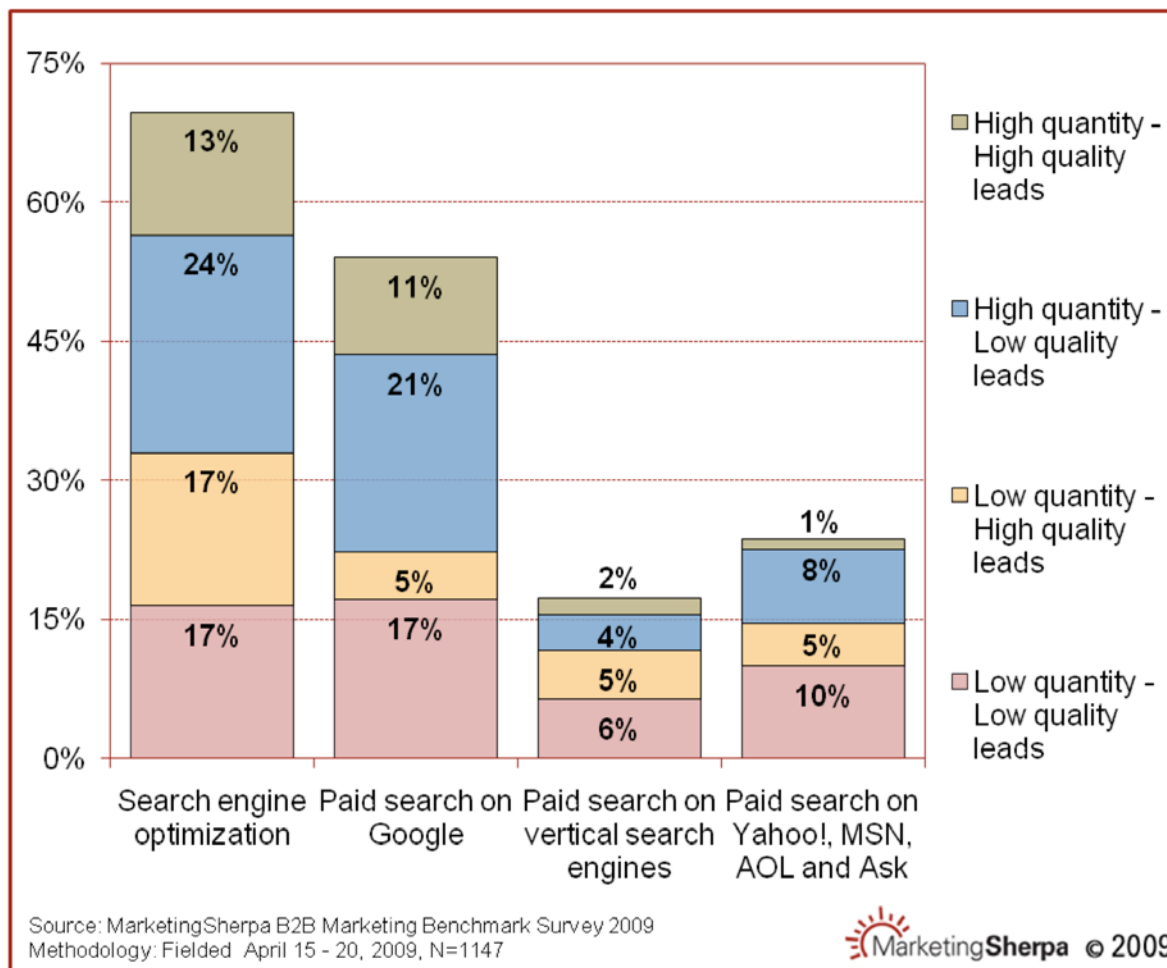
History has repeatedly shown us that the marketing organization is the first and hardest hit during difficult economic times. On the other hand, marketing also has the most to gain from a rebound so it's not surprising that they watch the economic barometer closely.

While 16% of B2B marketers continue to be pessimistic, nearly half of all respondents to this study are optimistic that we will see the economy begin to rebound during the remaining months of 2009.

The expectation of better days ahead will mean a change in marketing objectives and the strategies required to achieve them for 2010. Those organizations that have learned to be efficient marketers on a lean budget, will apply the lessons learned during these difficult times to become even more effective in the future.

## 2. Search Generating Bulk of B2B Leads – But How Good are They?

### The Quality and Quantity of Leads Generated by Search Sources



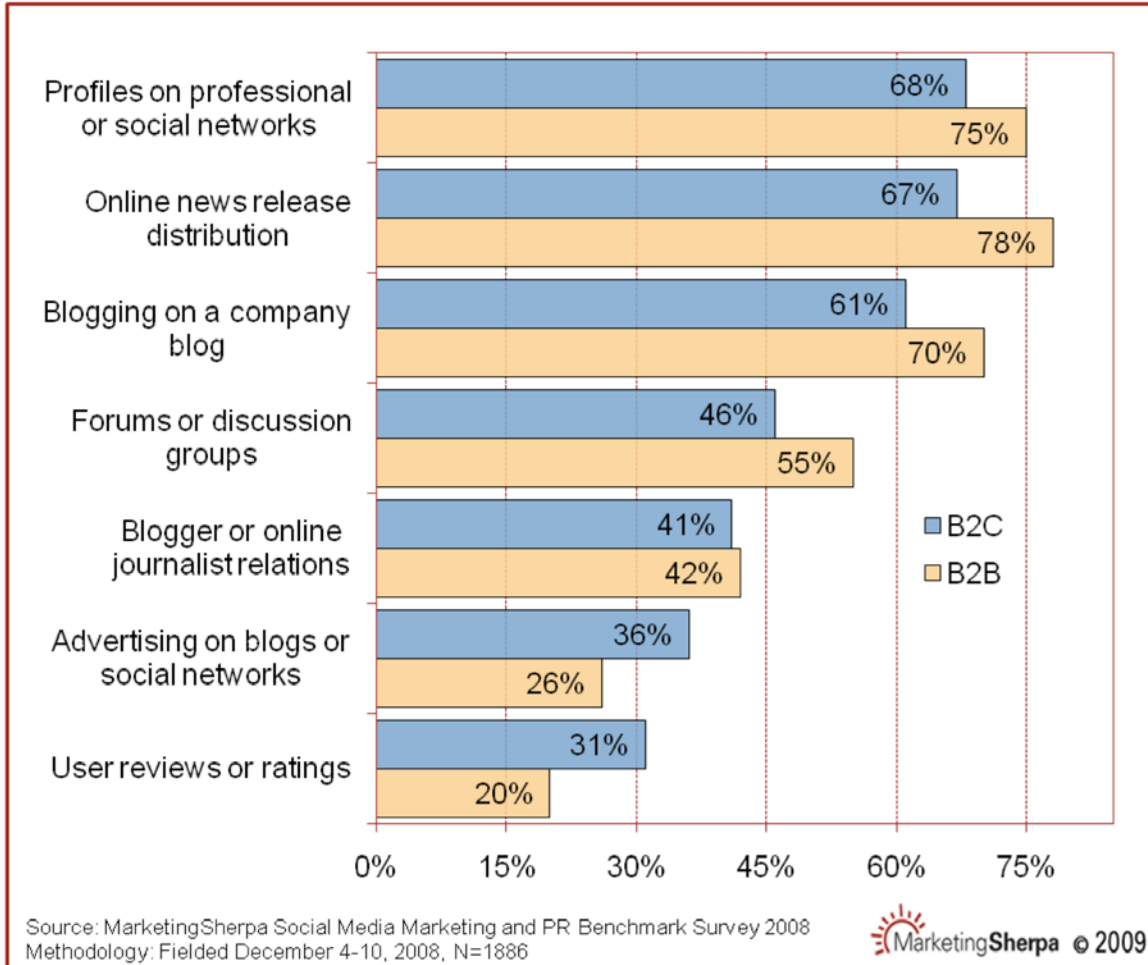
The success of a marketing program is too often judged by the quantity, rather than the quality, of leads produced. But when it comes to converting leads to revenue, the sales force will tell you that more isn't necessarily better – better is better.

Every organization needs to find the right balance between quantity and quality. Too many leads, even of high quality, and an overwhelmed sales team will be forced to allow opportunities to fall through the cracks. Too few leads or leads of low quality and sales force productivity will plummet.

Search has become an ideal solution to balancing lead flow because, in many cases, the spigot can simply be opened or closed to control volume. The more complex challenge is controlling lead quality. This requires a much more strategic approach to optimizing not only web pages for SEO, but in the case of paid search, carefully aligning the sequence of PPC keywords, ad listings and landing pages.

### 3. B2B Ahead of B2C in the Adoption of a Social Media Strategy

#### Percent of Organizations Using Some Form of Social Media Marketing and PR



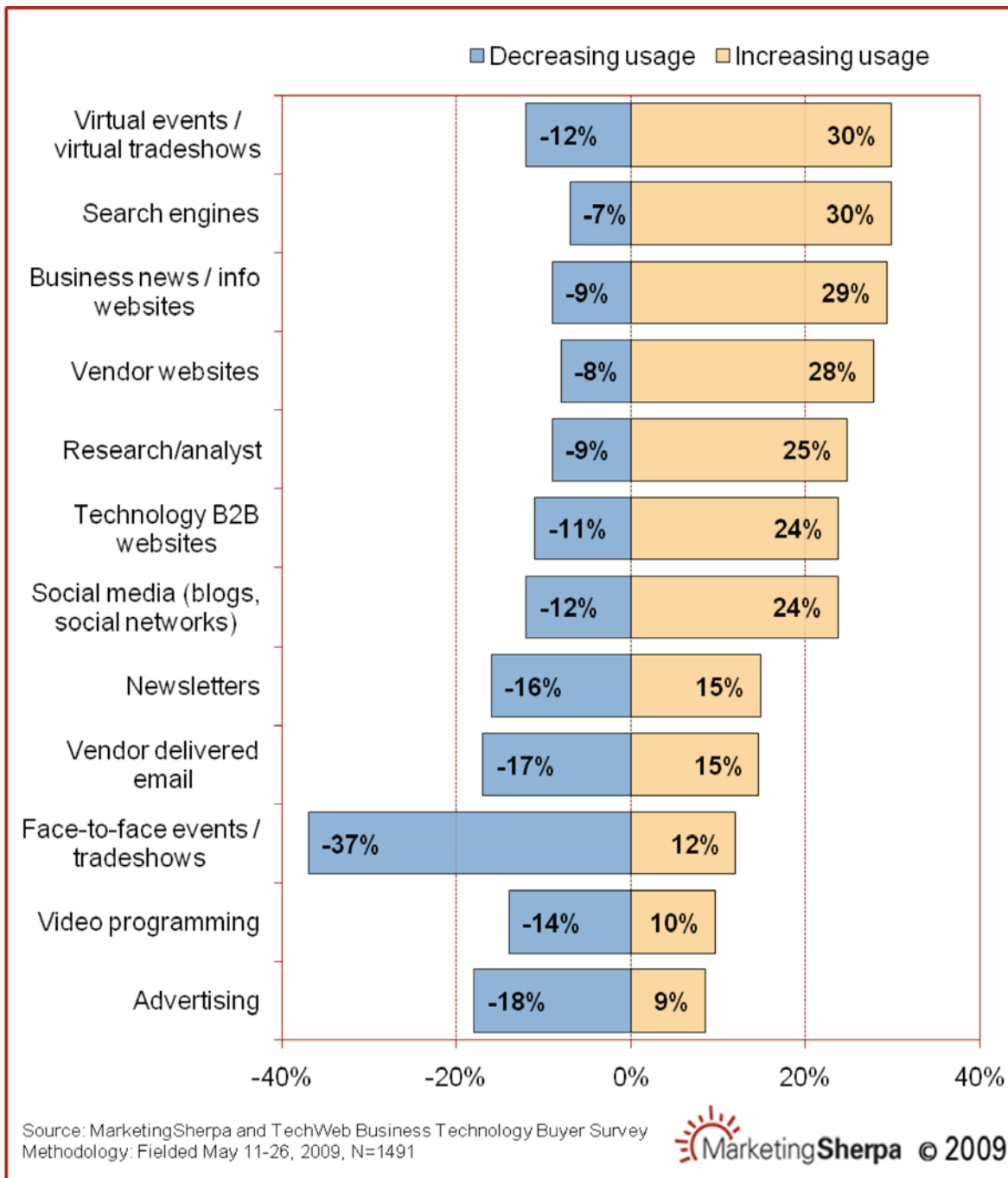
It's no secret that B2B marketing has often lagged behind B2C in the adoption of emerging new strategies. For example, as the World Wide Web first became an increasingly viable channel, B2B organizations would generally wait to see if a tactic worked in the consumer marketplace before implementing it in the business space. But, as this chart shows, B2B marketers have taken the lead in adopting nearly every category of social media.

This role reversal is not surprising when you look at the B2B marketing-to-sales process and its reliance on trusted relationships. After all, the primary purpose of social media is to provide the means for interactions between people to build on these relationships.

Information about your products and services is being shared via social media. Your prospects, customers, the press and other influencers in the marketing process are listening and commenting on what's being said. And your organization is either part of that conversation, or potentially a victim of it.

## 4. Use of Information Resources in the Complex Purchase Process

### Changing Use of Information Resources by Technology Buyers in the Past Six Months

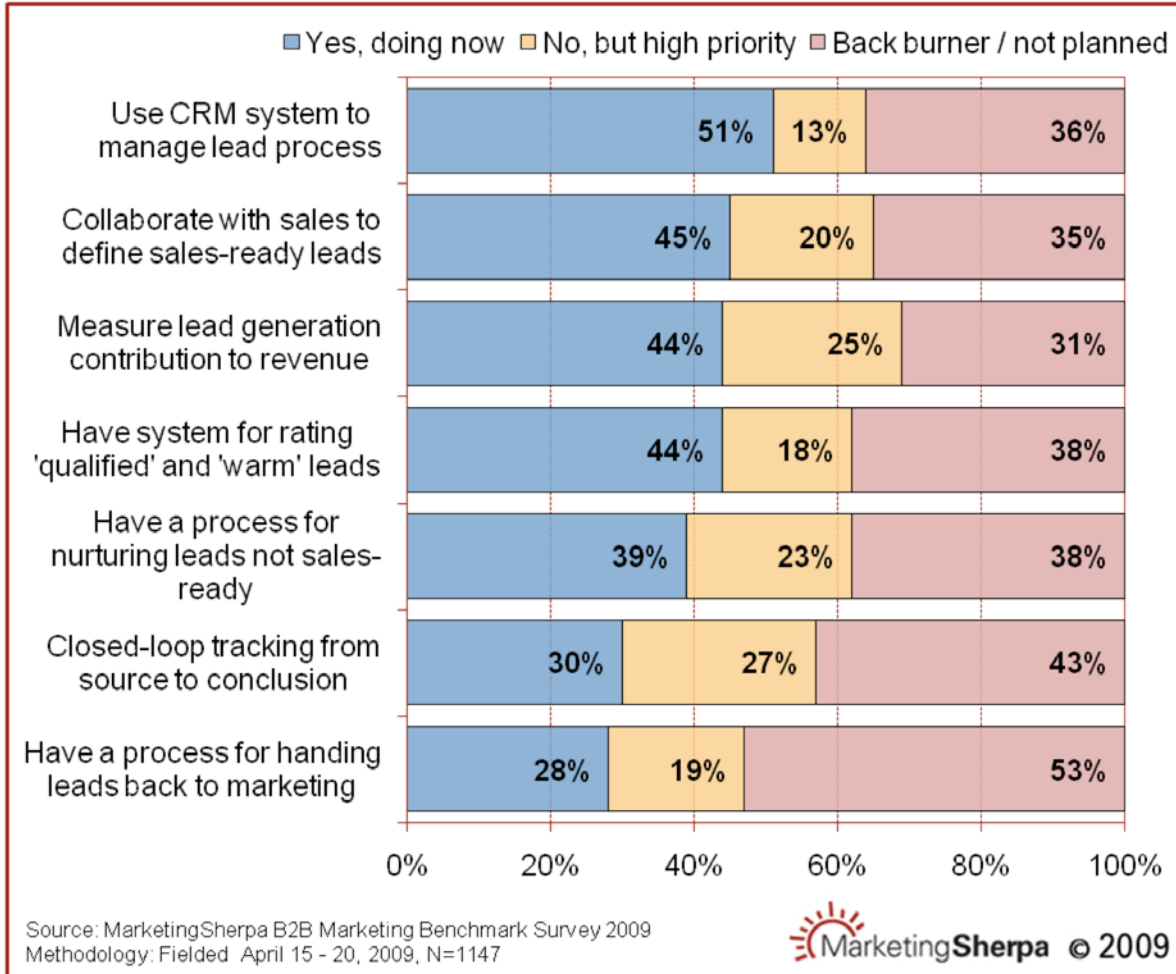


The sources of information relied upon for making large and complex purchases like business technology are changing at a rapid pace. The most dramatic change shown in this chart is the shift from face-to-face events and tradeshows to virtual events and tradeshows.

Use of search engines and websites to obtain the information needed for making large purchase decisions has continued to increase significantly during the past six months.

## 5. Managing the Pipeline from Lead Generation to Sales Conversion

### How Organizations are Managing Their Marketing-to-Sales Process

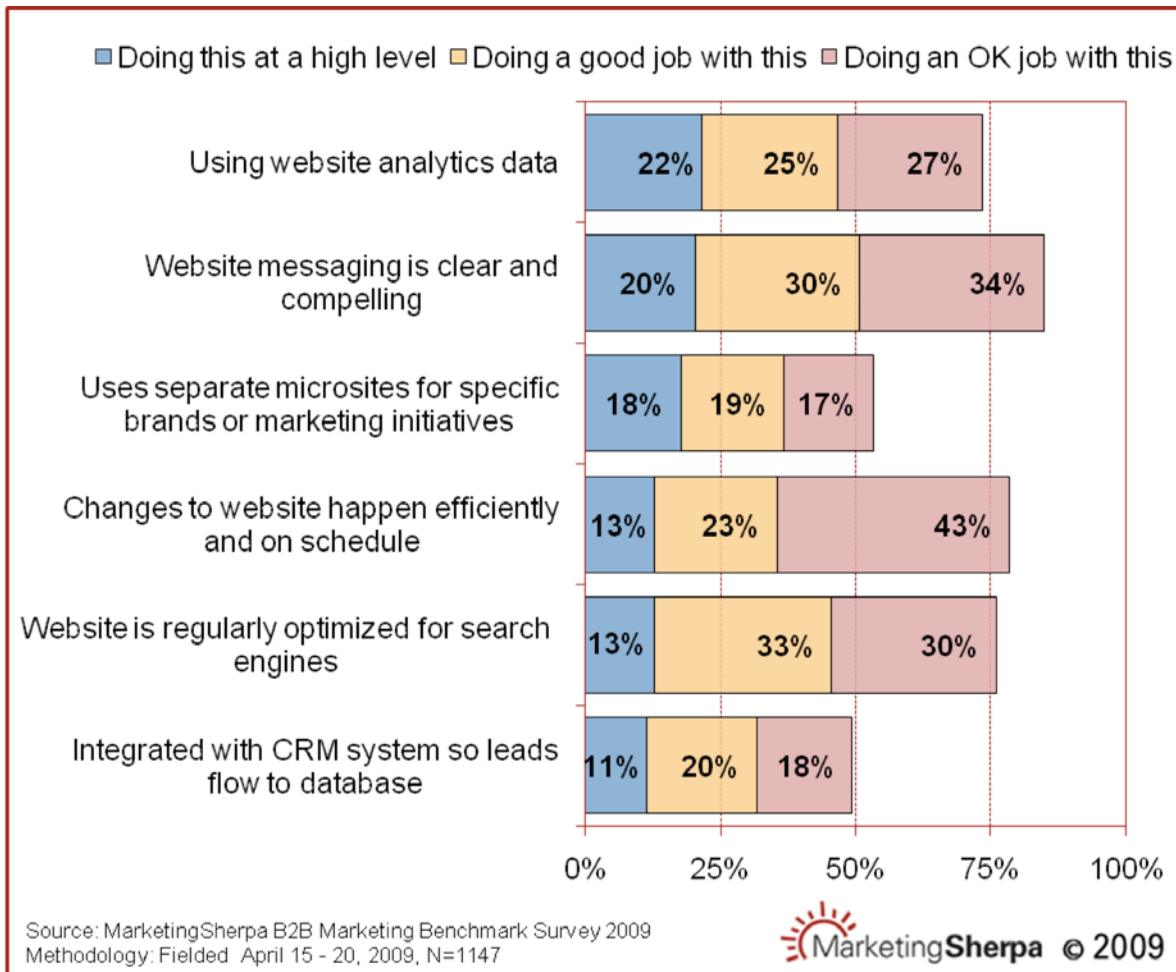


Closely aligning marketing and sales is essential to creating a productive new business pipeline. As this chart demonstrates, many marketing and sales organizations are collaborating at the shallow end of the pool – by mutually engaging in best practices like defining what a sales-ready lead is – but few are diving deeper to make the pipeline flow in both directions.

This two-way flow requires feedback from the sales organization about leads that are not ready for conversion. This feedback results in highly effective practices like the closed-loop tracking of leads from source to conversion. A pipeline flowing in both directions can also enable a process for sales to hand leads back to marketing for re-engagement and continued nurturing – creating opportunities for the sales force to pursue again in the future when the timing is optimal.

## 6. How Well Managed is the Hub of Your Marketing Strategy?

### Agencies and Consultants Rate How Their Clients are Managing Website Capabilities



The foremost change in B2B marketing during the past decade or so has been the emergence of a company's website as the primary point of contact with prospects and customers. The website has also become an extremely efficient platform for integrating and automating the lead generation process. As a result, the role of a company's website has been elevated from simply a spoke in the marketing mix wheel to the hub of the marketing strategy.

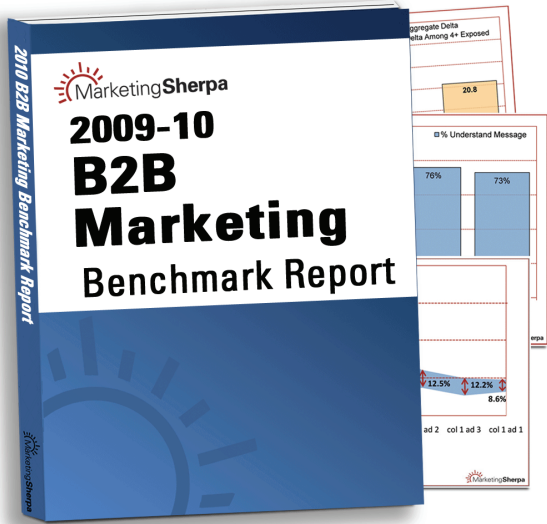
So how well are B2B websites being managed? Rather than ask client-side marketers to self-evaluate their own performance, we asked their agencies and marketing consultants to provide a more objective assessment.

While many website capabilities are being managed at a high level, or clients were at least doing a good job of managing them, we found that system integration which enables the flow of leads generated on a website to the CRM system was a weak point. As we learn later in this study, the lead management process has become critical to the success of

marketing and sales programs, and it all begins with the timely transfer of leads from their source to the lead management automation.

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