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Report

The Future of Performance Marketing Measurement

Insights From Madison Logic's 2026 Performance Marketing Survey on the Growing Expectations Around Delivering Measurable Revenue Impact

The Accountability Shift.

Marketing is no longer measured by what it produces—it's measured by what it delivers.

Over the past few years, a clear and decisive shift has taken place: marketing is now accountable for driving tangible business outcomes, with pipeline and revenue emerging as the primary benchmarks of success. According to Madison Logic's 2026 Performance Marketing Survey, nearly two-thirds of organizations (63%) now evaluate marketing based on pipeline—whether generated or influenced—marking a clear departure from traditional top-of-funnel metrics like marketing qualified leads (MQLs) and lead volume, which measure activity but not impact.

While lead volume reflects how many potential buyers enter the system, pipeline reflects how many of those opportunities actually progress toward revenue—introducing a new standard of accountability around quality, conversion, and business contribution. In the past year alone, 76% of marketers report increased pressure from leadership to demonstrate accountability, with 41% saying those expectations have significantly increased. This reflects a broader shift toward performance-driven models, where marketing is expected to operate with the same level of precision and accountability as sales.

This report explores what this shift means in practice—how performance is being measured today, where gaps still exist, and how marketers can evolve to meet rising expectations.

76%

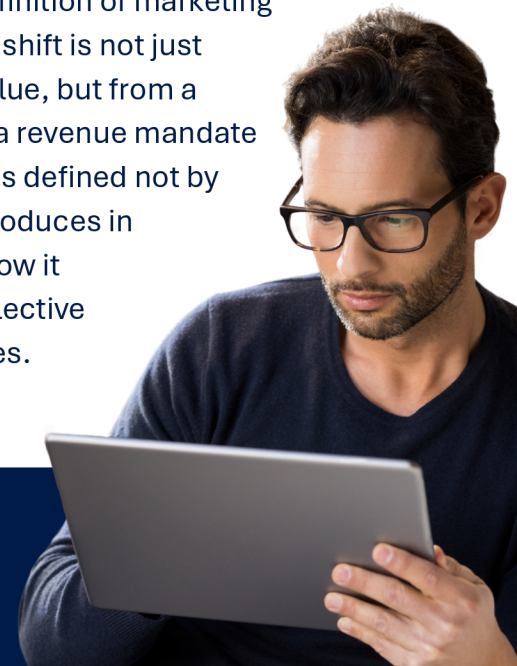
of organizations report increased expectations for marketing accountability

64%

of B2B marketing leaders say their organization doesn't trust measurement for decision-making¹

As a result, marketing's role is expanding beyond lead generation into direct influence on revenue outcomes. It is no longer confined to driving early-stage interest but increasingly accountable for how opportunities progress—shaping conversion, accelerating deal velocity, and contributing to revenue realization across the funnel.

Taken together, these changes signal a fundamental redefinition of marketing performance. The shift is not just from volume to value, but from a functional role to a revenue mandate—where success is defined not by what marketing produces in isolation, but by how it contributes to collective business outcomes.



¹ Forrester. *Forrester's Marketing Survey*, 2024.

The Pipeline Visibility Gap.

As marketing takes on greater accountability for pipeline and revenue, a critical challenge is becoming impossible to ignore: most teams lack the visibility needed to understand how their efforts actually influence pipeline creation and progression.

At the top of the funnel, measurement appears strong. Marketers report high confidence in tracking engagement (85%), leads generated (85%), and MQLs (71%). But as prospects move deeper into the funnel—where pipeline is created and revenue is realized—visibility begins to break down.

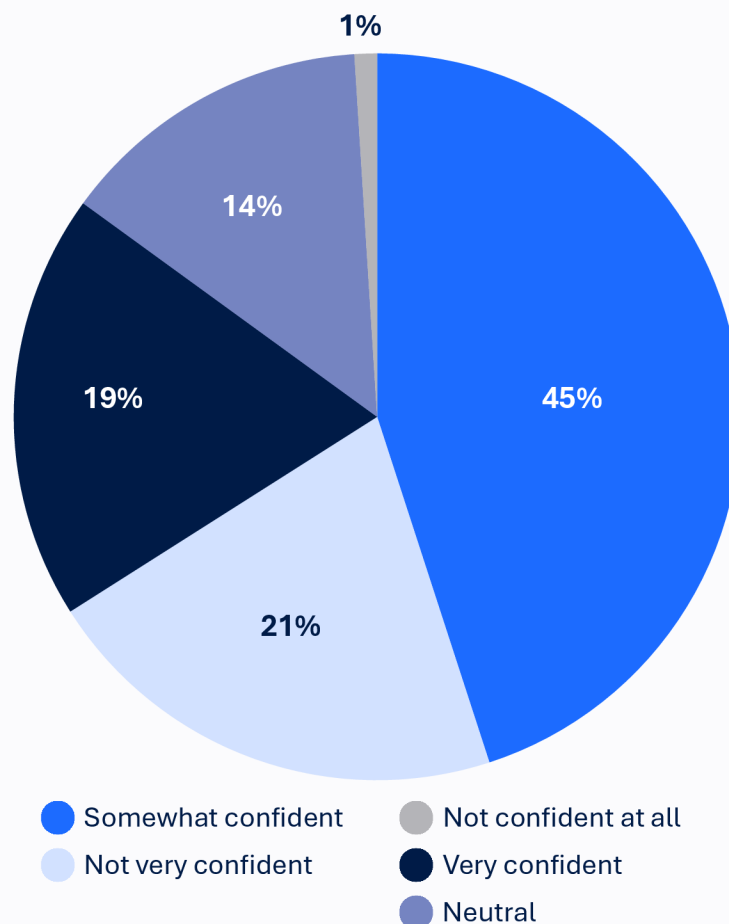
This creates a structural weak spot: while early-stage activity is well-instrumented, the stages most closely tied to revenue remain difficult to track, attribute, and optimize.

Confidence Drops Where Impact Matters Most

This breakdown in visibility is reflected in how marketers assess their own measurement capabilities. Despite increasing pressure to demonstrate performance, only 19% of respondents say they are very confident in their ability to measure marketing performance, while 66% report moderate to low confidence.

This is not simply a matter of perception—it's a signal of underlying measurement limitations. As tracking becomes less reliable deeper in the funnel, confidence declines accordingly. The result is a widening gap between accountability and insight: marketing is expected to drive pipeline outcomes but lacks consistent clarity into how those outcomes are created or influenced.

Marketer Confidence in Ability to Measure Pipeline-Influenced Creation and Progression



n=100

Q4: How confident are you in your ability to measure which marketing activities influence pipeline creation and progression?
Madison Logic. *Performance Marketing Survey*, 2026.

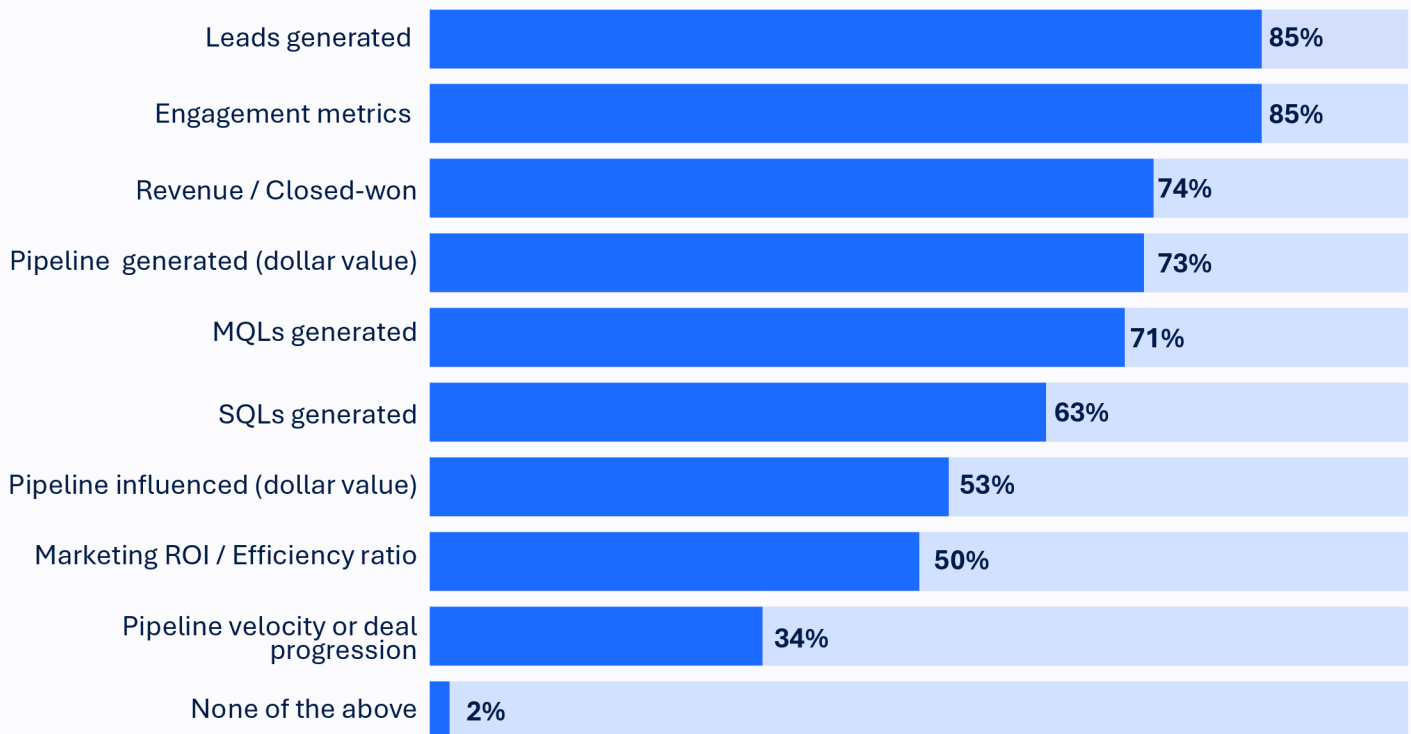
Visibility Breaks Down Across the Funnel

As prospects move through the buying journey, visibility becomes increasingly fragmented—not because activity decreases, but because it becomes harder to connect that activity to pipeline outcomes.

Two key gaps stand out. The first occurs early, during anonymous engagement, where buying intent is forming but not yet tied to known individuals or accounts. This includes behaviors such as researching topics through third-party content, consuming ungated assets, engaging with industry media, or comparing vendors across multiple channels—signals that indicate interest, but remain disconnected from CRM systems and attribution models.

The second and more critical gap appears in the mid-to-late funnel, where opportunities are created and deals progress toward revenue. Here, visibility fragments not due to anonymity, but due to complexity—multiple stakeholders engaging across channels, disconnected systems between marketing and sales, and limited insight into how marketing influences deal progression, velocity, and conversion.

The Metrics Marketing Teams Currently Measure and Report on with Confidence



n=100

Q3: Which of the following metrics can your team currently measure and report on with confidence? Select all that apply
Madison Logic. Performance Marketing Survey, 2026.

In fact, 30% of organizations report lacking visibility into opportunity progression altogether. At the same time, confidence drops sharply when measuring pipeline influence (53%), ROI (50%), and pipeline velocity (34%)—metrics that are directly tied to business outcomes.

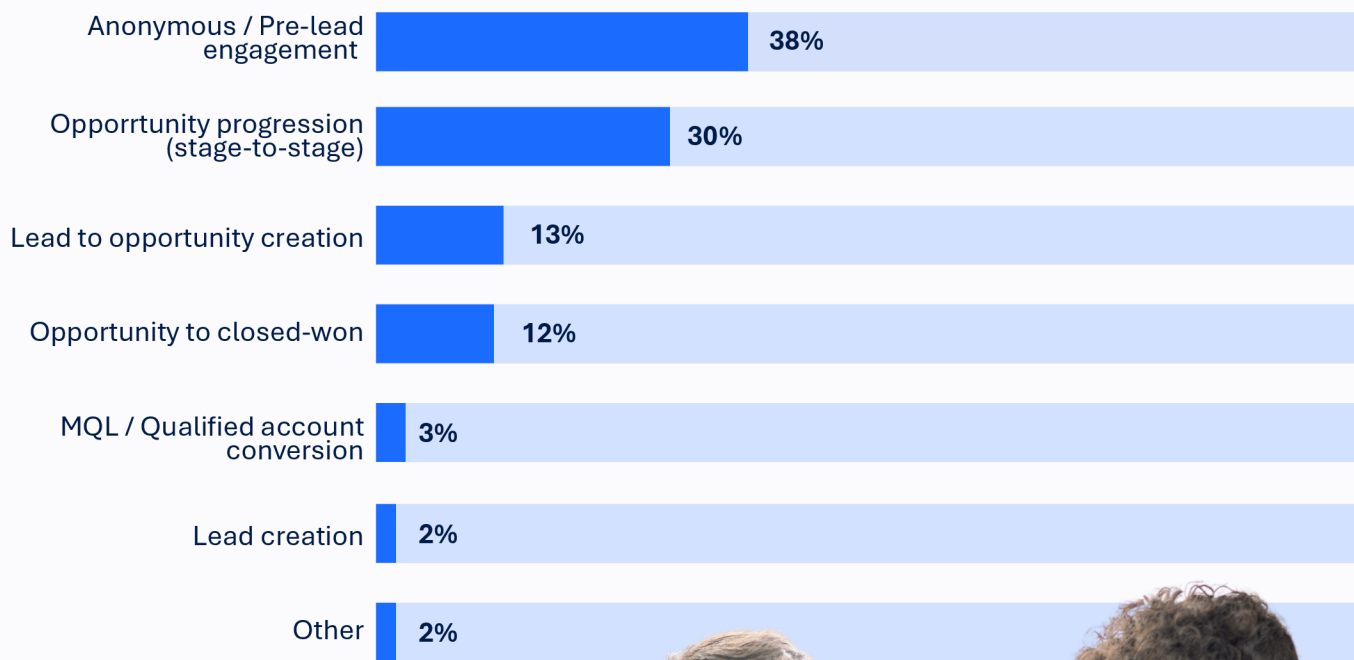
The result is a consistent pattern: marketers can measure activity, but struggle to measure impact.

The Mid-Funnel “Black Box”

Together, these gaps create a “black box” in the middle of the funnel between initial engagement and revenue realization. This is the point where marketing-driven activity transitions into pipeline, yet visibility into what happens next is often incomplete or entirely lost. Lead-to-opportunity conversion, deal progression, and pipeline acceleration are difficult to track in a connected, reliable way.

Without insight into this stage, marketers are left to infer impact rather than measure it directly. This makes it difficult to understand which efforts are truly driving pipeline, where breakdowns occur, and how to optimize performance against revenue outcomes.

Funnel Stage with the Least Visibility into Marketing’s Impact



n=100

Q5: At which stage of the funnel do you have the least visibility into marketing’s impact?
Madison Logic. Performance Marketing Survey, 2026.

Why Visibility Breaks Down.

The inability to connect marketing activity to pipeline is not simply a reporting challenge; it's a structural one. Across both quantitative data and open-ended responses, a consistent pattern emerges: marketing is effective at generating engagement, but the systems, processes, and models required to convert and measure that engagement as pipeline are not keeping pace with how modern B2B buying actually works.

Engagement Is Visible But Conversion Is Not

Marketers today have strong visibility into early-stage activity. Engagement, lead generation, and MQL performance are well tracked and widely understood. However, that visibility drops off significantly once prospects move deeper into the funnel.

This disconnect is not just theoretical. More than half of marketers (56%) report that strong top-of-funnel campaign performance sometimes fails to translate into meaningful pipeline impact, while 36% say this happens often or very often.

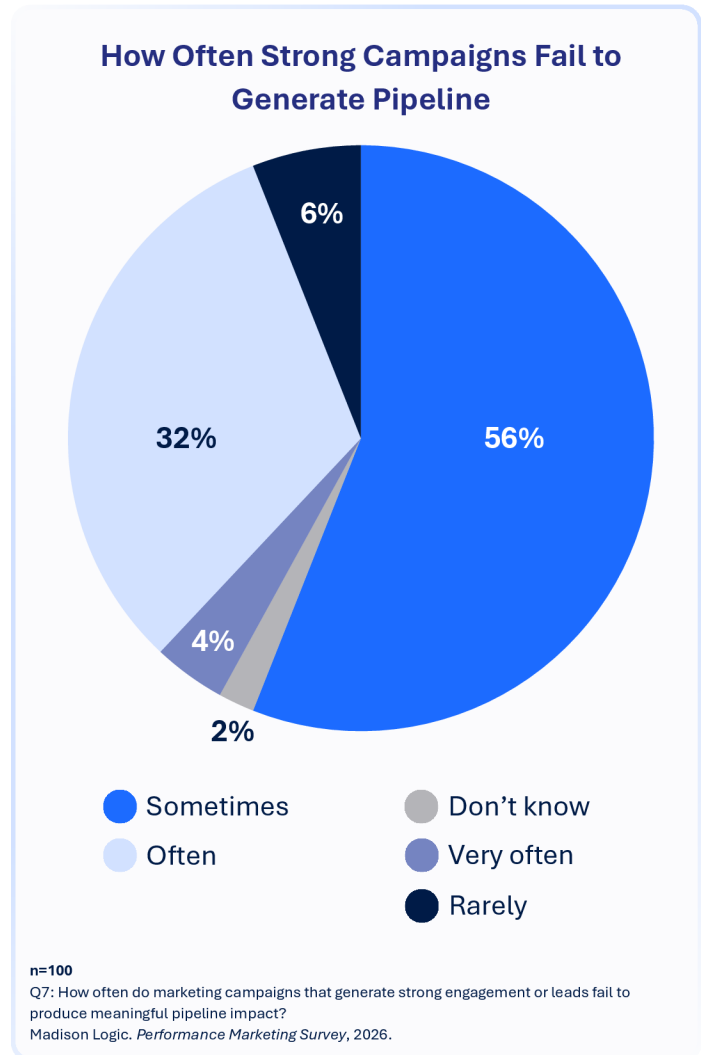
When asked why, respondents consistently point beyond campaign performance to what happens after engagement is created, highlighting breakdowns in sales follow-up, targeting precision, organizational alignment, and conversion pathways.

The implication is clear: the challenge is not generating engagement but converting and tracking it through to revenue.

The Funnel Breaks at the Point of Conversion

A significant portion of this visibility gap emerges at the transition from marketing to sales. Respondents most frequently cite breakdowns in sales follow-up, where leads are not acted on quickly or effectively enough to maintain momentum. At the same time, misalignment between marketing and sales—ranging from inconsistent definitions of qualified leads to lack of shared processes—creates friction that prevents engagement from progressing into pipeline.

Even when leads are valid, they are often not actioned in a way that reflects the context in which they



were generated, leading to missed opportunities and stalled deals.

This breakdown is further compounded by gaps in nurturing and funnel orchestration. Without a structured path to guide prospects from initial engagement to opportunity creation, even strong interest can dissipate before conversion.

Targeting, Intent, and the Limits of Engagement

Another contributing factor to the breakdown in visibility is the nature of the engagement itself. Respondents frequently point out that not all engagement reflects buying intent. Campaigns may successfully generate activity, but from audiences that are not part of the ideal customer profile, not in a position to buy, or not yet ready to engage in the sales process.

In many cases, engagement represents early-stage research rather than active demand. Long buying cycles, complex decision-making groups, and shifting priorities further dilute the connection between initial interaction and eventual pipeline creation. As a result, high engagement levels can create a false signal of performance if they are not properly contextualized within the broader buying journey.

Fragmented Data Is the #1 Barrier

While process and alignment issues play a major role, the most significant barrier to visibility is structural: fragmented data. Nearly two-thirds of organizations cite disconnected systems as their top challenge in understanding marketing's impact on pipeline. Core platforms—such as marketing automation, CRM, and analytics tools—are often not fully integrated, resulting in incomplete or inconsistent data across the funnel.

This fragmentation makes it difficult to connect touchpoints across channels, track engagement across buying groups, and build a unified view of how marketing contributes to pipeline creation and progression.

Without connected data, visibility breaks down by default.

Attribution Models Fail to Reflect Reality

Even when data is available, the models used to interpret it are often insufficient. Traditional attribution approaches—whether single-touch or simplified multi-touch—struggle to capture the complexity of modern buying journeys. Nearly half of respondents (46%) report that their attribution models do not provide insight at the stage level, limiting their ability to understand how marketing influences deal progression.

These limitations show up in three key ways: a lack of stage-level visibility, an overreliance on easily trackable touchpoints, and an inability to account for the multiple stakeholders and interactions that shape B2B buying decisions. As a result, even when activity is captured, its impact on pipeline progression remains unclear.



This is reflected in overall confidence levels—just over half of respondents (53%) say they can measure pipeline influence with confidence. Rather than validating current approaches, this suggests that many teams are working with incomplete or oversimplified views of performance. By prioritizing what is easiest to measure over what is most meaningful, these models create a distorted view of performance that often underrepresents marketing’s true impact.

Modern Buying Behavior Has Outpaced Measurement

Underlying many of these challenges is a fundamental mismatch between how buyers buy and how marketing is measured.

Today’s B2B buying journeys are non-linear, multi-channel, and group-driven. Decisions are made by committees, not individuals, and influenced by a wide range of interactions—many of which occur outside of trackable systems.

Respondents consistently highlight challenges such as:

- Multiple stakeholders across roles and functions
- Long, non-linear decision processes
- Engagement spanning digital, offline, and “dark funnel” channels
- Limited visibility into peer research, direct traffic, and sales conversations

Despite this complexity, most measurement frameworks remain linear and lead-centric—designed for a simpler era of marketing.

6-11

members in a typical buying group²

58%

of Google searches now result in zero clicks³

75%

of B2B buyers will prefer a rep-free experience by 2030⁴

The Reality Marketers Are Facing

Marketing’s visibility gap is not caused by a single breakdown but the result of structural limitations spanning data, systems, processes, and measurement models.

While marketing has become more accountable for pipeline and revenue, the infrastructure required to support that accountability has not fully evolved. Until it does, organizations will continue to face challenges connecting engagement to pipeline—and proving the true impact of marketing on growth.

² Gartner. *Gartner B2B Buying Report*, 2023.

³ Datos. *Zero-Click Search Study*, 2024.

⁴ Gartner. *The Future of Sales 2030*, 2025.

The Shift Toward Performance Marketing.

As accountability rises and visibility gaps persist, marketing teams are rethinking how performance is measured.

The shift underway is not about adding more metrics but instead about measuring what actually matters. Traditional models have focused on attribution and activity (where leads come from and which touchpoints get credit). But these approaches fall short in explaining how marketing drives pipeline outcomes.

In response, organizations are moving toward a progression-based view of performance that prioritizes pipeline movement over activity tracking. The key question is no longer “What generated the lead?” but “What moved the opportunity forward?”

63%

say data fragmentation across multiple tools and platforms is one of the biggest challenges they face connecting activity to pipeline

From Attribution to Pipeline Movement

This shift reflects a fundamental change in how marketing impact is defined. Rather than assigning credit to individual touchpoints, marketers are increasingly focused on understanding how campaigns influence deal progression, accelerate velocity, and contribute to revenue outcomes. Performance is no longer measured by isolated interactions, but by their ability to drive momentum across the funnel. This requires a more connected

view of the buyer journey that links engagement across channels to account- and opportunity-level outcomes.

New Measurement Priorities Are Emerging

To support this move from attribution to pipeline movement, marketers are prioritizing a new set of capabilities focused on how opportunities progress and convert. This includes the ability to track stage-to-stage progression, understand how campaigns influence opportunity health, and identify where deals advance or stall. It also requires deeper insight into multi-channel engagement—how different touches work together to move accounts forward—and stronger visibility into buying group activity.

Just as importantly, teams are focusing on diagnosing breakdowns across the funnel, from targeting and messaging to sales follow-up and conversion paths. The goal is not just to measure performance, but to continuously improve it based on what actually drives deal progression and revenue outcomes.

A Redefinition of Performance

Taken together, these changes represent a broader evolution in how marketing operates.

Performance is shifting from campaign-level success to pipeline-level impact, from volume-based metrics to progression and velocity, and from channel reporting to full-funnel visibility. In this model, marketing is not just generating demand but is actively shaping how pipeline is created, advanced, and converted.

The Future of Marketing Performance.

As measurement expectations continue to evolve, marketing teams must rise to new challenges and come equipped to meet that expectation.

Closing the visibility gap requires more than incremental improvements. It demands a more connected approach to data, stronger alignment with sales, and a shift toward measuring what actually drives pipeline progression.

Without this evolution, marketing teams risk making decisions based on incomplete signals—overinvesting in high-activity, low-impact programs while underestimating the initiatives that influence long-term pipeline and revenue. Over time, this not only limits performance, but erodes confidence in marketing's contribution to the business.

To move forward, organizations must rethink how performance is defined and operationalized. This means looking beyond activity-based metrics, connecting engagement to outcomes, and building the capability to understand how marketing influences pipeline creation, progression, and conversion.

The teams that succeed will be those that can see beyond surface-level performance, align measurement to revenue outcomes, and continuously optimize based on what moves opportunities forward.

26%

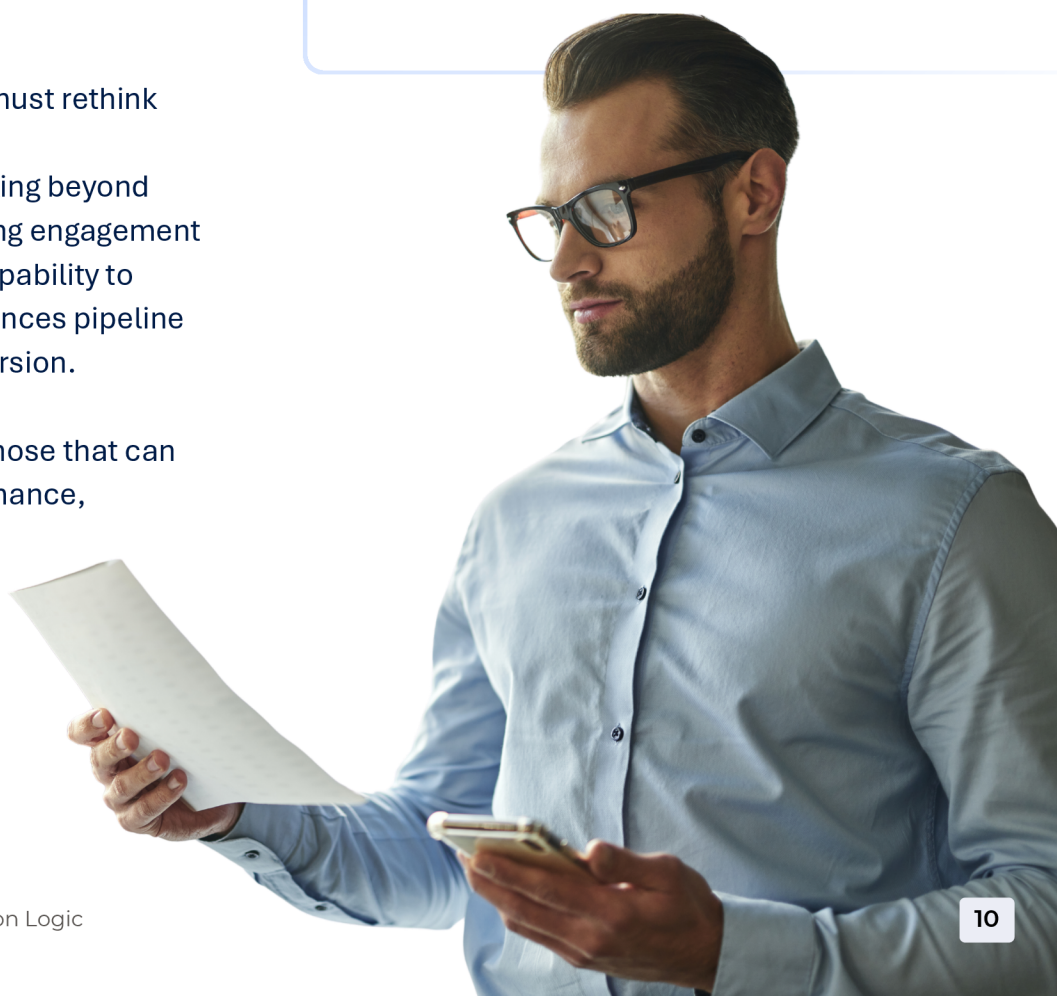
of marketers cite improving multi-touch attribution accuracy as a top priority for improving your measure of marketing performance over the next year

24%

will better align sales and marketing measurement

19%

plan to optimize campaign spend based on pipeline insights



Connect Marketing Activity to Pipeline Movement with **Madison Logic**.

From awareness to engagement to conversion, Madison Logic's best-in-breed ABM solutions measure cross-channel engagement and ROI to drive smarter investment decisions.

[Pipeline Insights Dashboard](#) is a game-changing feature designed to help marketers visualize and measure campaign impact by connecting channel exposure directly to stage movement within the CRM. Instead of reporting on activity or retroactive attribution alone, the dashboard shows whether media programs are contributing to forward momentum. Marketers can analyze which campaigns are advancing, stalling, or regressing opportunities, understand the level of multi-channel engagement required to move an account to the next stage, and identify where pipeline movement is breaking down.

For the first time, marketers can now connect content syndication, programmatic, and social engagement signals directly to stage-by-stage

pipeline advancement in real time, gaining clear visibility into how multi-channel campaigns influence opportunity movement across the buying journey.

By bridging the gap between engagement reporting and retroactive attribution, the Pipeline Insights Dashboard empowers teams to make data-driven decisions that transform engagement into measurable pipeline acceleration. Visit www.MadisonLogic.com to learn more.

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Survey Methodology

This survey was conducted online within the United States from March 13 - 25, 2026, among 100 B2B marketing professionals in director and manager roles across a range of industries, locations, and organizational sizes (enterprise and mid-market). Respondents represent marketers responsible for demand generation, account-based marketing, and performance strategy.

The research combined quantitative and qualitative inputs. Structured survey questions were used to identify trends in measurement practices, performance metrics, and organizational priorities, while open-ended responses provided deeper insight into the challenges behind connecting marketing activity to pipeline and revenue outcomes. All results are reported in aggregate. Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding or multi-select questions.