

Accenture Interactive

# A brand's new world.

Rewiring marketing for  
performance and growth.



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# Yes, marketing is harder than ever

Marketers did amazing things to connect with customers against the odds. They navigated pandemic marketing with fractured organizations, partners that aren't incented to work together and shrinking marketing budgets. Some performed better than others. But now many are left wondering why marketing has become harder than ever.



# The marketing model is broken

Over the years, marketing leaders have structured their organizations to get closer to customers, move faster and maintain control. The irony is that these changes have often had the opposite effect. Marketers today work in highly-matrixed environments—most CMOs are responsible for numerous areas of marketing. What's more, specialization among agency partners adds even more silos, blind spots and complexity.

The pandemic exposed these vulnerabilities in marketing. At a time when customers' behaviors were shifting fast in wildly unpredictable ways, it was hard for marketers to be truly customer-centric. Continually having to pull off Herculean feats in spite of a broken model—and amid pressure to drive growth—is no way to work. It isn't effective, efficient or sustainable.

But rewiring marketing for performance and growth is no small task. Even if leaders want to realign teams and agency partners, they must do so while still delivering day-to-day marketing responsibilities. After all, there's no changing out the landing gear while the plane is already in flight.

**79%**

of consumers say the more personalization tactics a brand uses, the more loyal they are.<sup>1</sup>

**77%**

of consumers say businesses are not doing enough to earn that loyalty.<sup>1</sup>

# Studying the standouts

Where should marketers begin to change ways of working? How do they set priorities? What does the ideal marketing operating model look like? There's no one-size-fits-all solution to the challenges that marketers face today. No easy playbook to get from here to there.

However, our survey of senior marketing professionals across the world offers compelling insights into what winning brands are doing differently.



**We uncovered a group of top-performing marketers who are performing strikingly better than their peers.** More than half report double-digit revenue growth over the past three years, and just under half report double-digit profit growth over the same period. These marketers perform above industry average in 8 of 10 non-financial performance indicators across customer experience, innovation, and technology and talent categories.

These organizations perform so well because they work in distinctly different ways across five critical areas. By studying these standouts, marketers can make bold moves to design their organizations to deliver for customers—and for the business.

We conducted a **global benchmark study** to understand the state of marketing operating models across a variety of industries and geographic markets.

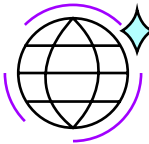
**700+**

**Senior Marketing Professionals**



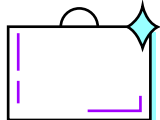
**10**

**Countries**



**20**

**Industries**



# Five winning moves for marketers





1

**Purpose**



# 50%

of consumers say that they have completely revised their personal purpose in the last 12 months.<sup>2</sup>

## Orbit around purpose—and customers

Purpose is the touchstone for marketers to connect with customers, even as the rules of engagement evolve post pandemic. Customers aren't only making choices based on product or price. They are seeking out brands that can deliver new experiences centered on trust, convenience, relevance and empathy. They want to know what a brand stands for and ensure that its values align with theirs.

**In fact, 8 in 10 say that purpose is at least as important to them as customer experience.<sup>3</sup>**

With purpose so vital to customers, it is understandably at the heart of customer-centric marketing. Winning marketers know this. It's how they show up. They deliver experiences grounded in a clear and powerful brand purpose because they have intentionally organized their business around it. Everything they do—from making day-to-day decisions to designing the operating model to selecting agency partners—aligns with the brand purpose. It's also how they attract top talent who understand modern ways of working. These high performers simply don't want to work for a marketing organization that isn't purpose and customer driven.

A young girl with glasses and a pink sweater is blowing bubbles. She is holding a bubble wand in her right hand and a large, colorful bubble in her left hand. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with trees and a building.

2

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**Creativity  
& Innovation**

## Obsess about right-brain talent

Modern marketing is the only area in the business that pairs the right-brained creative discipline to inspire and motivate people psychologically with left-brained planning, process and data science discipline.

It's a tricky balance that requires marketing organizations to have a broad and deep set of specialized skills across both their in-house employees and their agency resources. Marketing organizations also have to know how to integrate this very different kind of talent to make the most of the contributions of each.

Top-performing marketers emphasize uniquely human skills in their future talent needs.

**Top performers are focused on**

**Creativity**

**Innovation**

**Originality**

**Communication**

When it comes to recruiting talent to strike the right balance between these disciplines, top-performing marketers have a unique emphasis.

**A full 70% of them say that they have the customer experience, data insight and innovation skills in their marketing department to a great extent today.**

Although other marketers rank tactical data science and data analytics skills in the top-five critical skills needed over the next three year, top performers are not as focused here. Perhaps this is because they feel confident that they have these skills. Instead, they are focused on right-brain skills. They say that creativity, innovation and originality, and communication are among their top-five most critical future skills.

A woman with dark hair, wearing a colorful patterned shirt and white pants, is carrying another woman on her back. They are both smiling and laughing. The background shows a beach at sunset with the ocean and a stone wall in the foreground.

3

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**Agility**



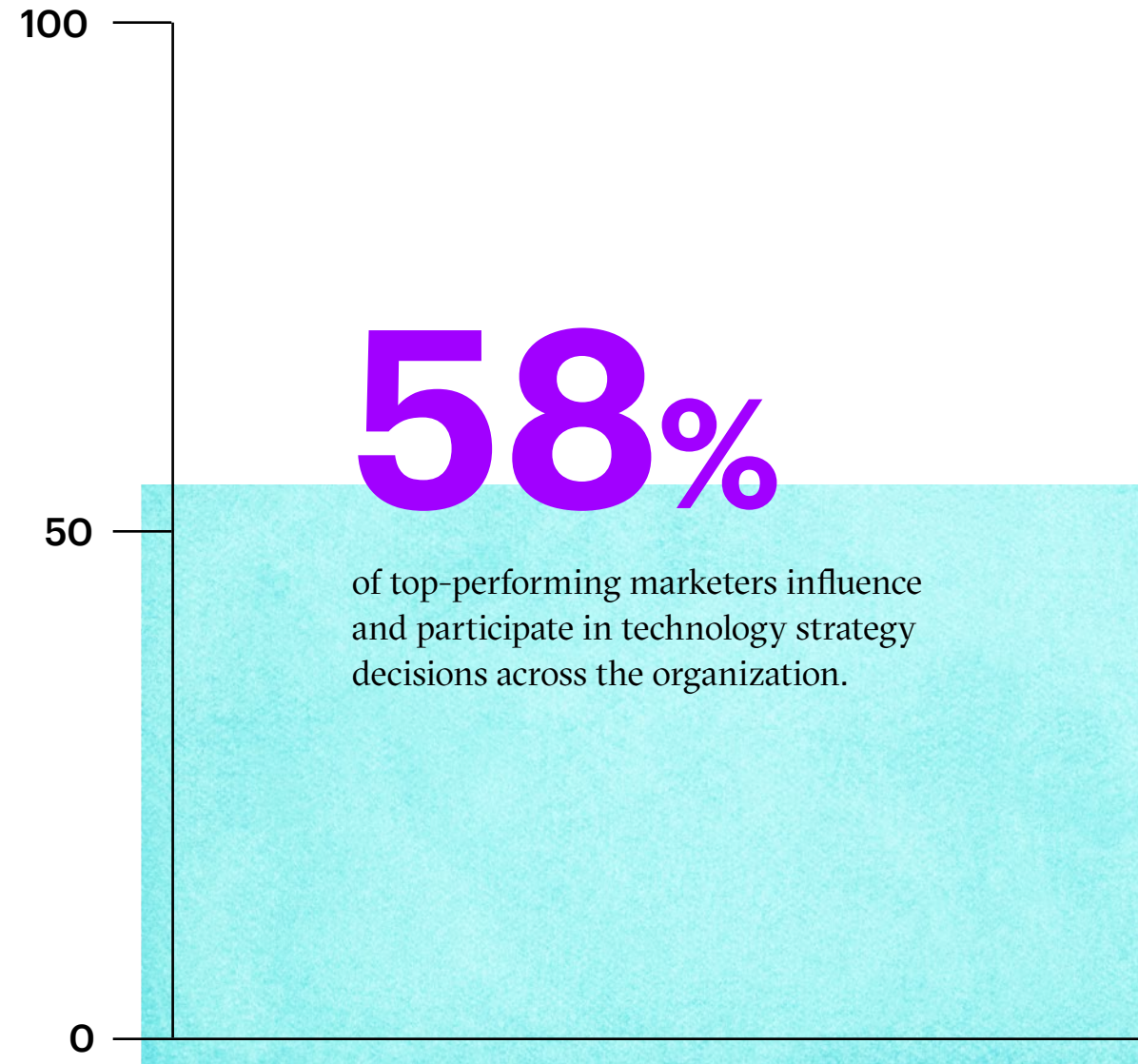
## Orchestrate humans and machines

Combining people and technology is critical to agile marketing execution. This is not simply about “plugging in” technologies and magically achieving results. It is about understanding what the core processes are, which can be shifted to machines, and which involve expressly human skills. The mindset has to be about selecting and leveraging technology to augment marketing capabilities, unlock efficiencies and support reinvestment in people and performance.

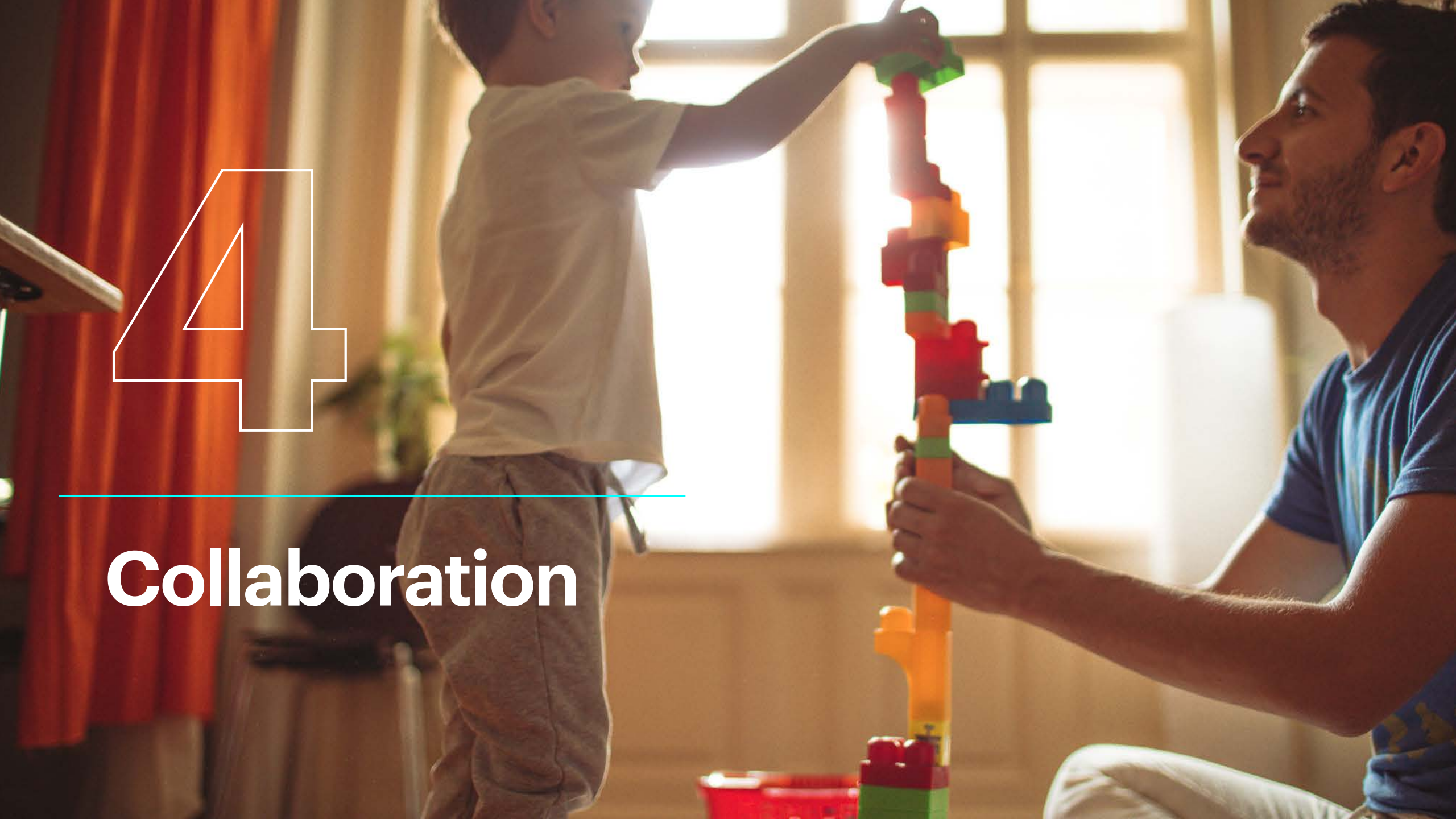
This strategic approach to marketing technology is evident among top performers. They implement technology through a human lens—both in terms of how marketers use the technology and how the technology ultimately impacts the customer experience.

**When compared to other marketing organizations, top performers are twice as likely to say they have successfully leveraged process and workflow management technology.**

They are also twice as likely to say they have successfully automated marketing processes. What's more, 73% are able to ensure that automated outputs from innovative technologies do not conflict with their brand values.







4

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**Collaboration**

## Own a seat at the table

All marketers take pride in knowing customers better than any other function in the business does—and they should take the lead on the company’s customer experience strategy. Their close connection to customers should naturally earn marketing leaders a seat at the table in driving the strategic direction of the business. That’s how the business can operate as a customer-centric organization. Yet the reality is that too few marketers today wield this kind of influence.

Not surprisingly, top performers excel here. They use their proximity to the customer to bring valuable data and insights to other parts of the organization. In the process, they are bridging silos and building agile, cross-functional teams tuned to customer needs and behaviors.

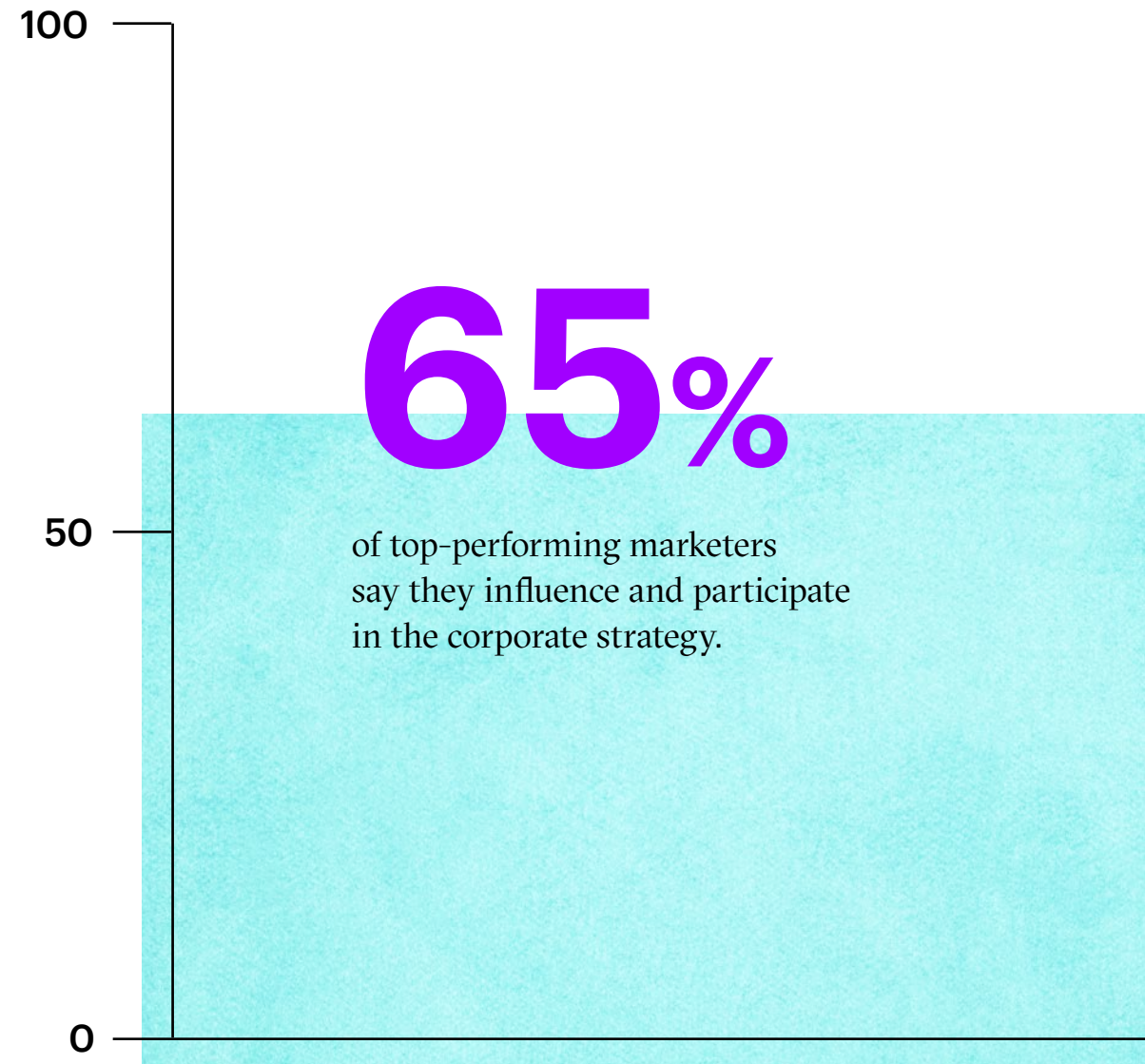


# 75%

of top-performing marketers influence and participate in technology strategy decisions across the organization.

The survey results reveal a significant gap in influence between top performers and other marketers in customer experience strategy (75% vs. 55%), sales strategy (74% vs. 57%) and product strategy (71% vs. 51%) among other areas.

**Notably, 65% of top performers say they influence and participate in the corporate strategy. This influence is essential to support the growth agenda. So it's no wonder that these marketers outshine the rest in profit and revenue growth.**





# Accountability

11%

The average marketing budget of company revenue.

## Overhaul spending mindsets

**Contrary to common wisdom, top-performing marketers aren't spending more money than their peers to be successful. However, they do have a very different mindset when it comes to marketing spend and accountability.**

Top-performing marketers are more likely to measure spend against previous results and current expectations. They are also more likely to conduct past expense analysis and tracking. In addition, they set themselves apart in spend management because they don't rely on historical expenditures to make today's spending decisions. Instead, they locate funds by current needs. Beyond being highly disciplined and comprehensive in managing and measuring spend, standout marketers create a marketing culture where everyone makes financial decisions with an owner mindset. Thirty percent are embedding a cost management culture in their organization, compared to just 16% of their peers.



# Break free from “how things are done”

There’s an old expression that says doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results is the definition of insanity. Too many marketers find themselves in this position. They want to connect with customers in line with their brand purpose and drive future growth. Yet the very structure of their organization makes this more difficult than it should be. There’s no easy fix to what’s broken. That’s why it’s time to fundamentally change how marketing is done.

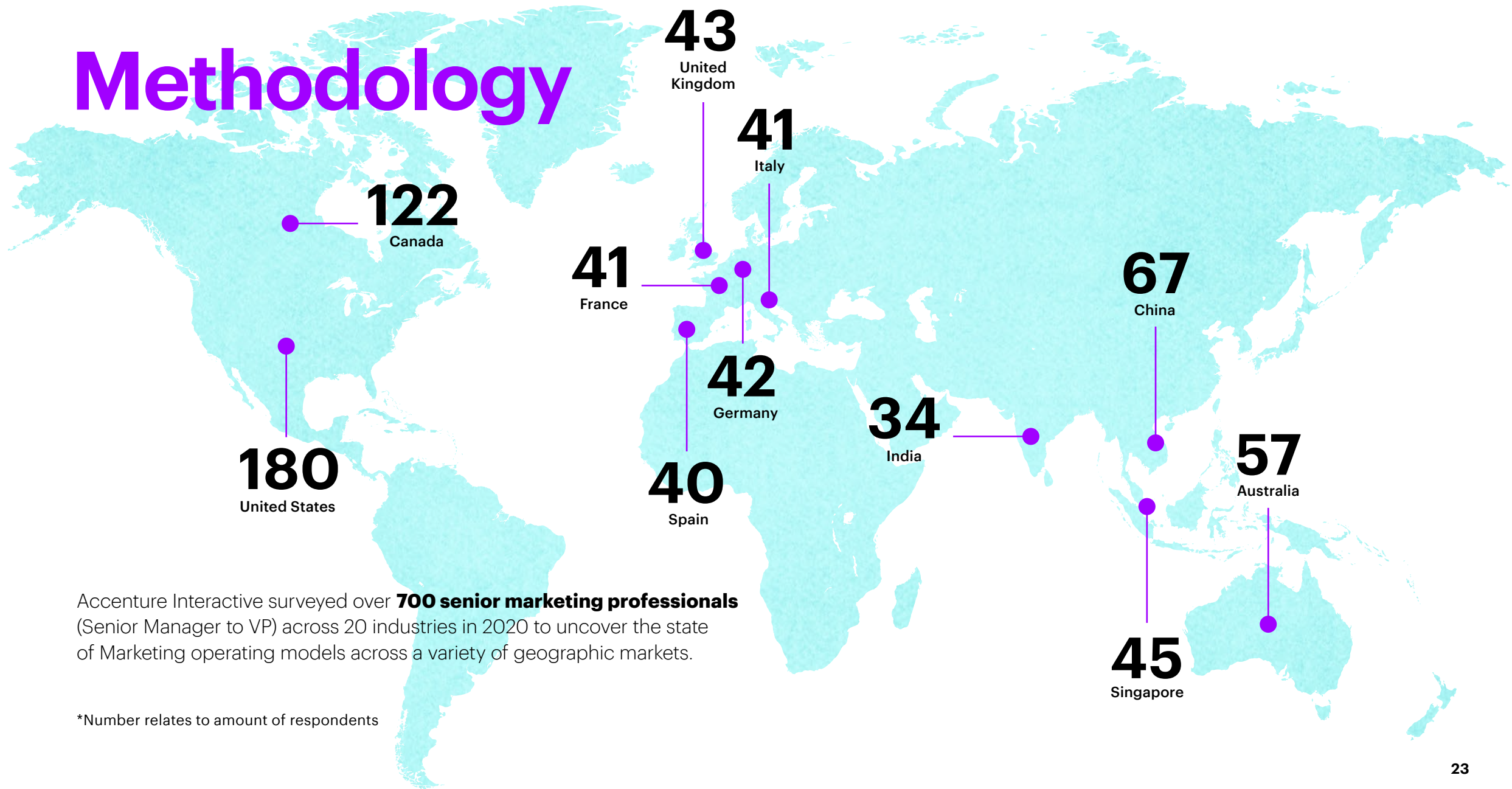
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# Methodology



Accenture Interactive surveyed over **700 senior marketing professionals** (Senior Manager to VP) across 20 industries in 2020 to uncover the state of Marketing operating models across a variety of geographic markets.

\*Number relates to amount of respondents

## About Accenture

Accenture is a global professional services company with leading capabilities in digital, cloud and security. Combining unmatched experience and specialized skills across more than 40 industries, we offer Strategy and Consulting, Interactive, Technology and Operations services—all powered by the world’s largest network of Advanced Technology and Intelligent Operations centers. Our 537,000 people deliver on the promise of technology and human ingenuity every day, serving clients in more than 120 countries. We embrace the power of change to create value and shared success for our clients, people, shareholders, partners and communities. Visit us at **[www.accenture.com](http://www.accenture.com)**.

## About Accenture Interactive

Accenture Interactive is reimagining business through experience. We drive sustainable growth by creating meaningful experiences that live at the intersection of purpose and innovation. By connecting deep human and business insights with the possibilities of technology, we design, build, communicate and run experiences that make lives easier, more productive and rewarding. Accenture Interactive is ranked the world’s largest digital agency by Ad Age and has been named a Most Innovative Company by Fast Company. To learn more, follow us @AccentureACTIVE and visit **[www.accentureinteractive.com](http://www.accentureinteractive.com)**

## References

1. “The Need for Hyper-Individualization,” at <https://formation.ai/brand-loyalty-2020-the-need-for-hyper-individualization>
2. Accenture 2021 Global Consumer Pulse Survey.
3. Accenture, “Generation P(urpose): From Fidelity to Future Value,” at [https://www.accenture.com/\\_acnmedia/PDF-117/Accenture-Generation-P-urpose-PoV.pdf%23zoom=40](https://www.accenture.com/_acnmedia/PDF-117/Accenture-Generation-P-urpose-PoV.pdf%23zoom=40)