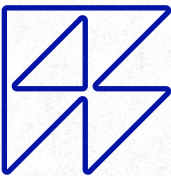# The State of AI in Marketing 2026

From experimentation to scale: findings from 1,400 marketers on AI in marketing

IN THIS ISSUE:
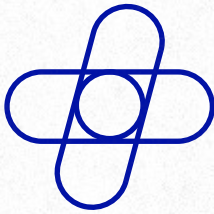
AI has entered its operational era

The challenge is no longer whether to use AI, but how to run it as part of marketing operations.
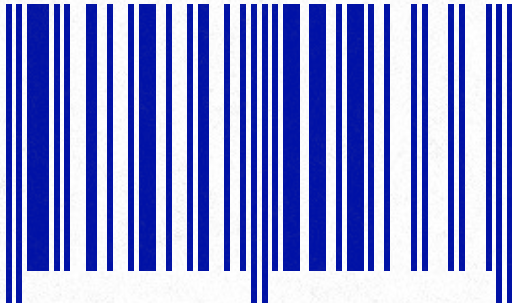
Scale is the priority, ROI is the proof point

As AI scales, expectations for return rise, making ROI harder to prove but more valuable when measured.
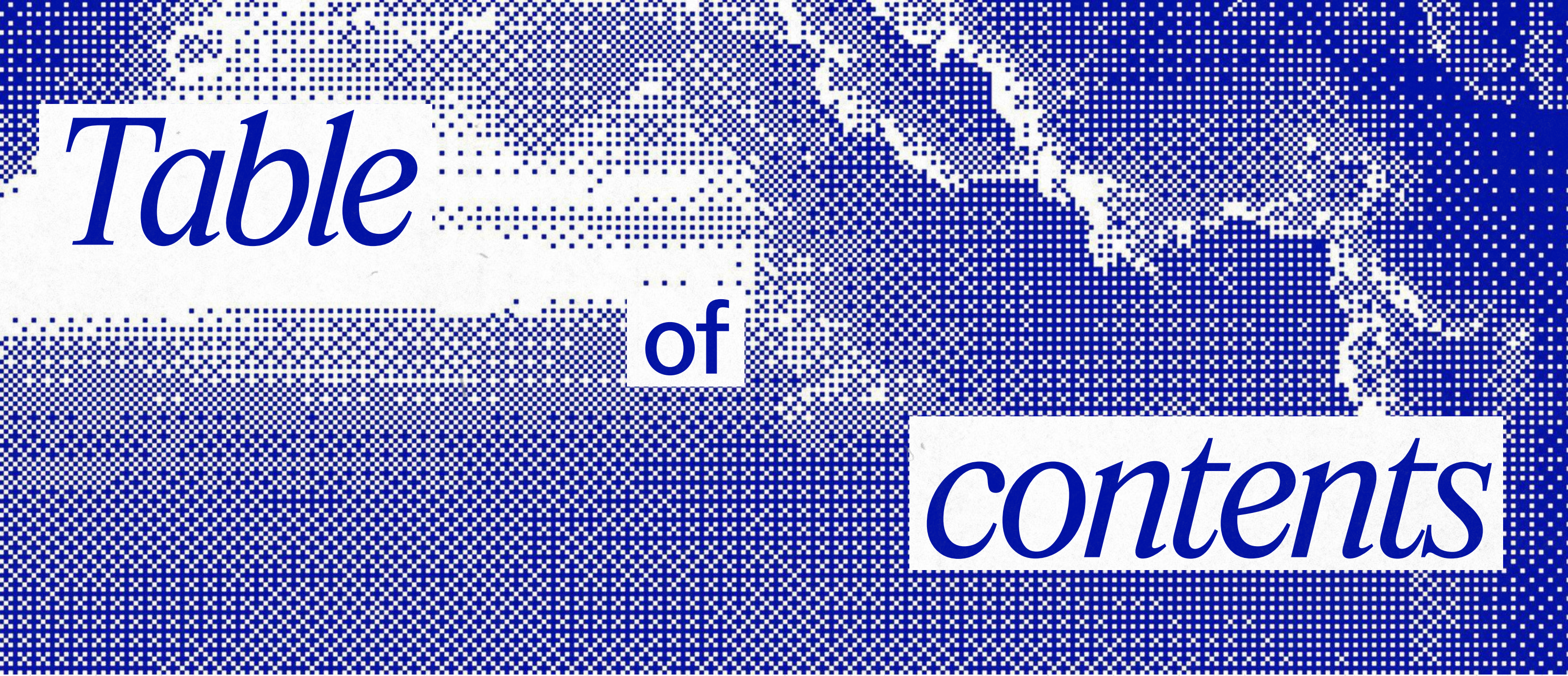
Maturity is the strongest predictor of impact

Teams with higher AI maturity outperform peers on speed, scale, ROI, and satisfaction.

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A letter from

Loreal Lynch

Over the past two years at Jasper, I've had a front-row seat to marketing's relationship with AI. What was once feared or cautiously tested is, in a remarkably short period of time, driving real, measurable value. No other technology in modern marketing has moved this quickly from nascent to necessary, and our 2026 data makes that shift unmistakably clear.

Compared to last year, we saw a decisive change in both adoption and expectations. In early 2025, marketers were still evaluating whether AI belonged in their workflows at all.

One year later, the conversation has fundamentally changed. Today, marketing sits at the center of enterprise AI adoption. No other function applies AI as broadly or as visibly across data, content, creativity, speed, and scale. What began as a productivity unlock has become a defining leadership opportunity for marketing organizations.

That position brings new expectations. Marketing is where AI's impact is proven first, and where demands rise fastest. Speed and efficiency are no longer differentiators. The focus has shifted to impact, accountability, and value creation, and marketing can no longer operate in isolation.

As AI scales, the rest of the enterprise is moving quickly to catch up. Legal, compliance, risk, and governance teams are now actively shaping how AI is used, measured, and managed. Their involvement marks the next stage of AI maturity, one where standards, guardrails, and ownership matter as much as innovation and speed.

This research reflects that shift clearly. **As adoption accelerates, expectations for return rise with it.** While AI continues to deliver gains in speed and efficiency, translating that momentum into meaningful business ROI has become more complex. Measurement standards are higher, and productivity alone no longer meets the demands placed on modern marketing organizations.

The organizations that have adapted to this reality are already seeing the payoff, reporting more than 2x the ROI on their AI investments. For everyone else, the pressure is mounting. AI is now embedded in the marketing operating model, and leaders are being asked to answer harder, more consequential questions:

- What returns are we seeing from our AI investments?
- How are we managing risk as we scale AI across the organization?
- Who owns the strategy, governance, and outcomes?

The next phase of AI maturity belongs to marketers who step into this moment. Those who treat AI not just as a tool, but as core operating infrastructure, and who turn speed, quality, and governance into lasting competitive advantage.

My hope is that this research gives you both clarity and conviction.

Not just to understand how far marketing AI has come in a single year, but to act with confidence, lead with intention, and help define what comes next.

Marketing has entered

the operational era of AI

In just one year, AI usage, investment, and leadership commitment have accelerated significantly, shifting the focus from adoption to execution. In 2026, the main challenge is no longer whether to use AI, but how to run it as part of the marketing function.

This shift introduces a new level of accountability. As teams move beyond experimentation, AI is no longer evaluated on potential or productivity gains alone. Success is increasingly defined by the ability to scale AI reliably and deliver sustained business value.

AI is embedded in core marketing workflows, and expectations for return have risen accordingly. At the same time, as AI scales, the definition of value has expanded beyond speed and efficiency, making ROI more difficult to prove as scrutiny increases.

Operating AI at this level requires strong governance, clear ownership, and disciplined measurement. AI must be treated as core marketing infrastructure, supported by operating models that align strategy with day-to-day execution.

To understand how marketing organizations are navigating this shift, we surveyed 1,400 marketers across industries, roles, and company sizes. This research examines how teams are operationalizing AI at scale, how that progress compares to last year's findings, where friction remains, and what separates true AI leaders from the rest.

Research
highlights

AI adoption is now universal and maturing

91% of marketing teams use AI, a sharp increase compared to 63% in 2025, and 63% report intermediate or advanced maturity.

ROI is harder to prove, and more valuable when it is

Only 41% of marketers can confidently prove AI ROI, down from 49% last year. This decline reflects rising expectations, not weaker performance. Where ROI is measured, most organizations report 2x or greater returns.
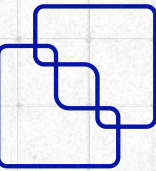
The CMO–IC divide is widening

CMOs report the highest levels of AI maturity, job satisfaction, and ROI confidence, with 61% saying they can prove AI ROI, compared to just 12% of individual contributors, who report a more complex experience as AI becomes operational and mandatory.
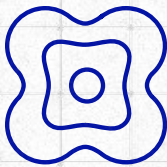
AI role disruption correlates with satisfaction, not burnout

The teams most impacted by AI report the highest job satisfaction, but only when AI is operationalized with clear structure, governance, and ownership.

Scale is now the defining AI priority

Scaling high-quality content is now the #1 AI objective and the fastest-growing compared to 2025, increasing 2.4x YoY as teams move from pilots to repeatable execution.
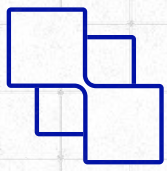
Governance & quality are now the primary constraints on scale

Legal, compliance, and brand governance concerns have increased 3.4x YoY, becoming the leading blockers to AI scale. This marks a shift from last year, when constraints centered on internal expertise, budget, and leadership buy-in.
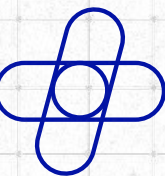
Maturity is the strongest predictor of marketing impact

High-maturity organizations operationalize AI through governed workflows, scalable content pipelines, and outcome-based measurement, focusing on business results rather than activity.
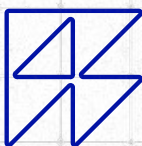
AI is changing marketing roles, not just workflows

1 in 3 marketers now have AI responsibilities built into their role, spanning prompt design, workflow development, and AI governance. 97% also say access to AI factors into their job decisions, and 75% say it is critical when considering a role.

Adoption and Benefits

AI adoption is nearly *universal*

AI is now a standard part of marketing operations. **91% of marketing organizations report using AI, up from 63% last year,** signaling that adoption has crossed a critical threshold.

However, structured adoption remains relatively recent for many organizations. Nearly half of teams (46%) formally sanctioned AI within the past 12 months, highlighting both the speed of adoption and the opportunity to deepen operational maturity.

ARE YOU ADOPTING AI IN MARKETING?

	2025	2026
NO	37%	9%
YES	63%	91%
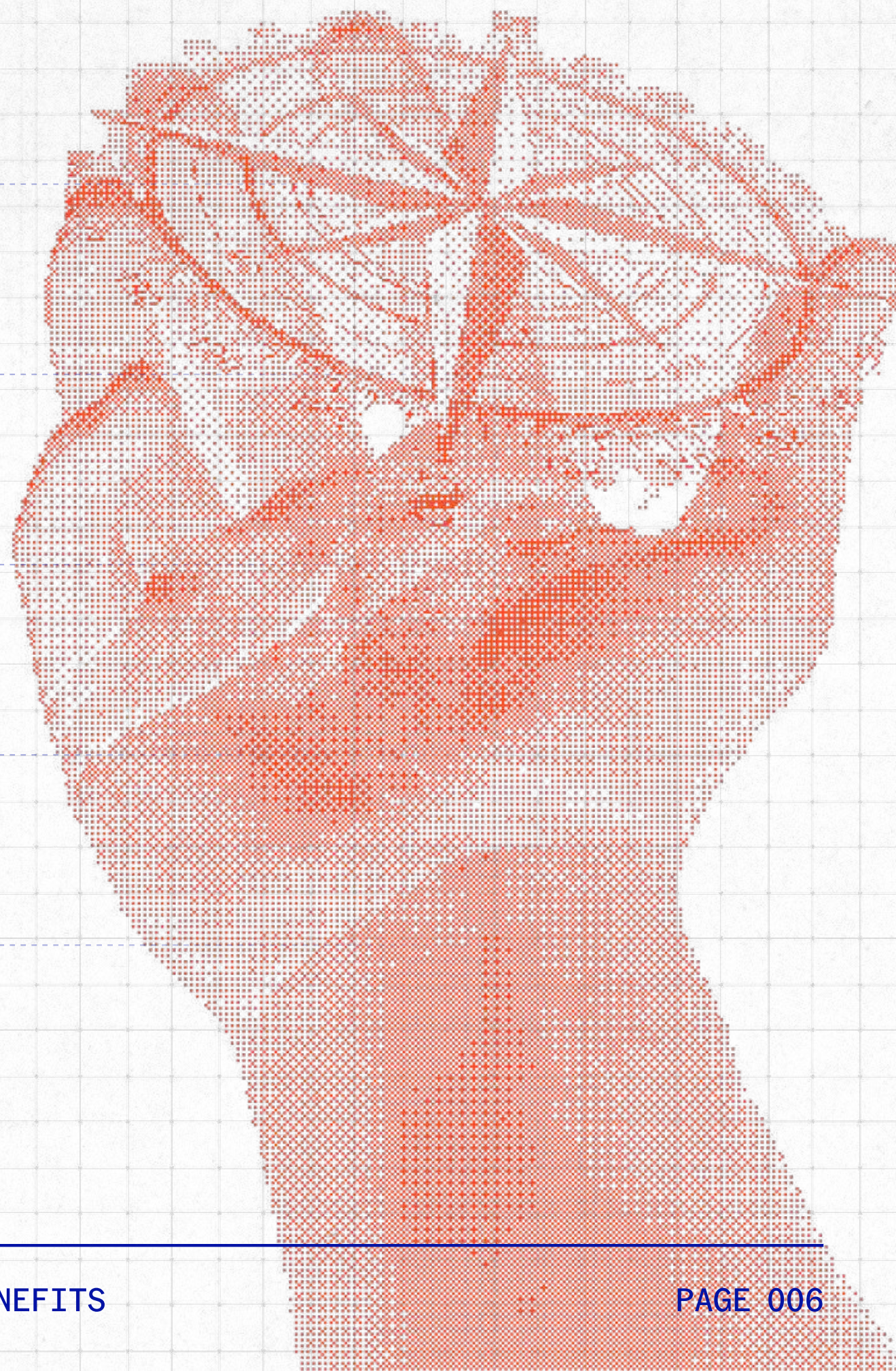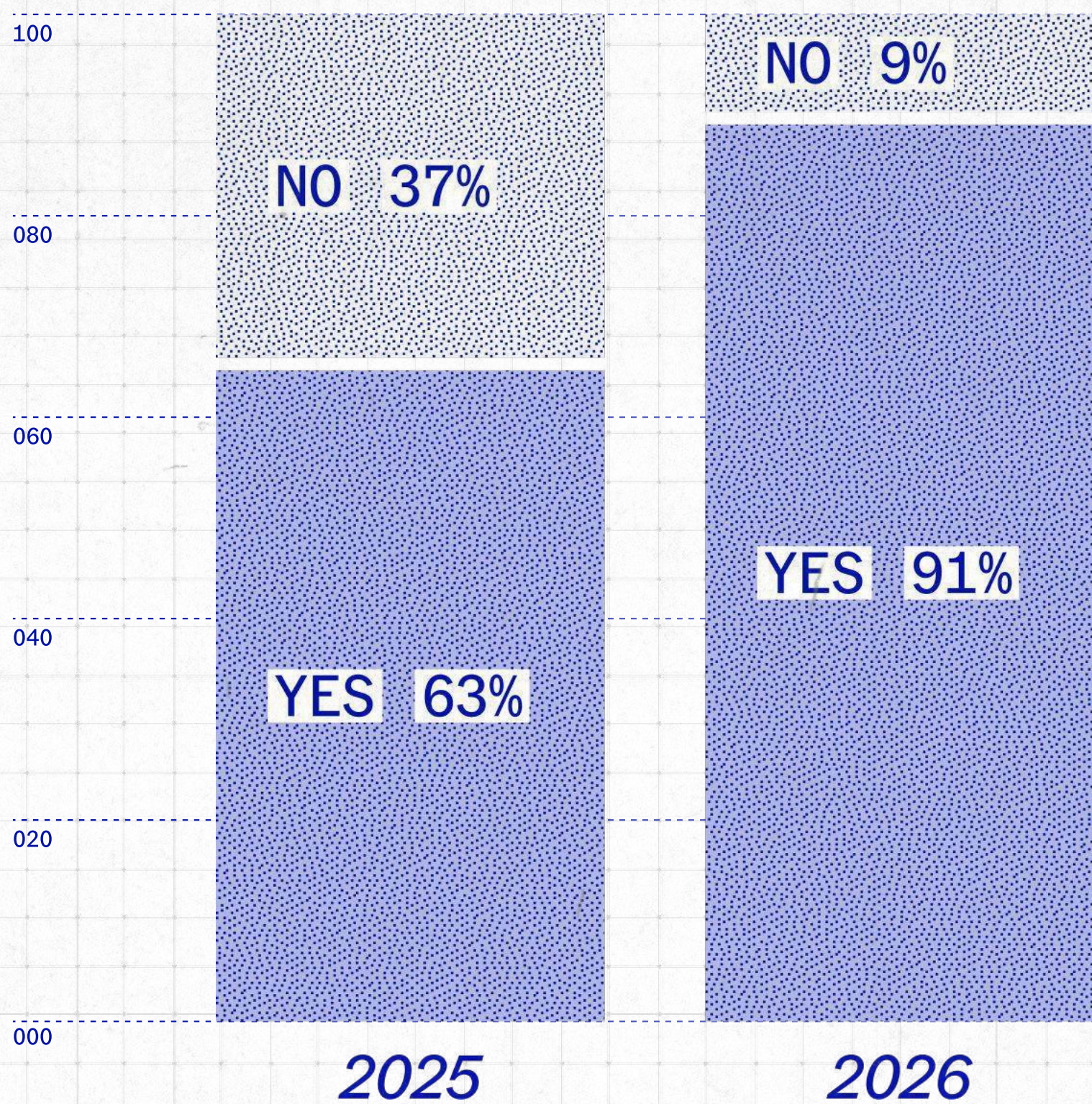
AI is embedded in content production

Marketing teams are applying AI most heavily in creative and production workflows, where it delivers immediate leverage at scale. **Idea generation remains the leading use case, cited by 56% of all marketers, and 68% of enterprise marketers.** Multi-asset generation follows closely at 51%, reflecting growing demand for systems that can move beyond single outputs to support faster execution and higher content volume.

Usage varies by company size. Larger organizations (>$10B) are the most likely to use AI for idea generation and single-asset creation, but many have yet to fully scale multi-asset workflows. **Enterprises are also more likely to use AI for SEO and AI search optimization as discoverability becomes more important.**

The type of tool also makes a difference. Compared to those using generic tools—who are primarily focused on idea generation—**marketers using domain-specific tools are more likely to use AI for single asset creation (64% vs. 31%), multi-asset generation (61% vs. 48%), and brand governance (38% vs. 22%).**

Compared to last year, when AI usage skewed toward ad hoc and isolated tasks, adoption is now moving deeper into production workflows. However, growth in more advanced use cases, such as hyper-personalization and brand governance, has been more gradual. This suggests that while AI is increasingly embedded in content execution today, use cases that require tighter coordination, governance, and system-level integration are still emerging.

TOP AI USE CASES IN MARKETING IN 2026

56% IDEA GENERATION

51% MULTI-ASSET GENERATION

47% RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS

39% SINGLE-ASSET CREATION

41% PRODUCT DESCRIPTIONS AND IMAGES

31% SEO / AI SEARCH OPTIMIZATION

30% HYPER-PERSONALIZATION

26% BRAND GOVERNANCE
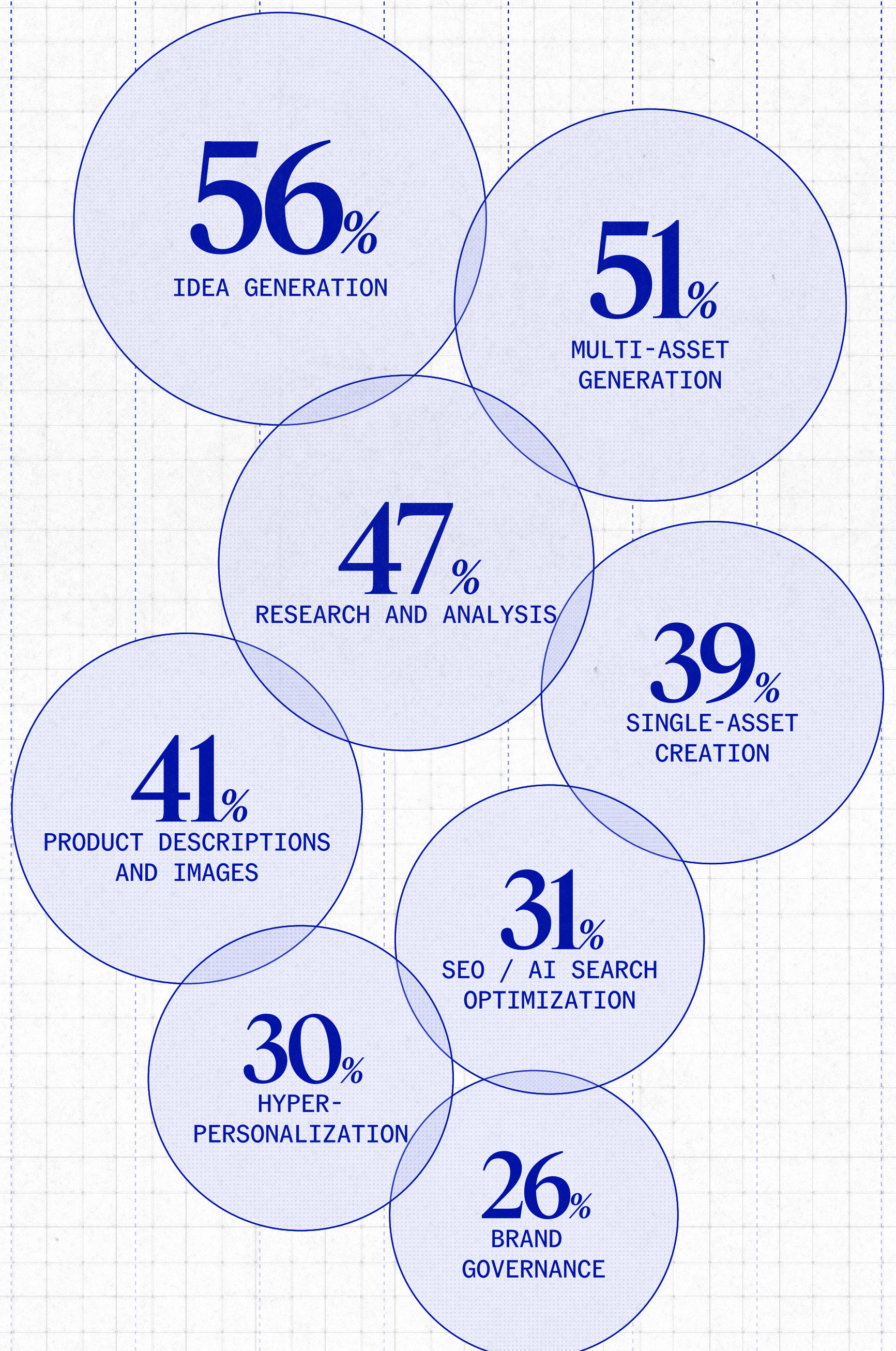
Efficiency & speed are the primary benefits of AI today
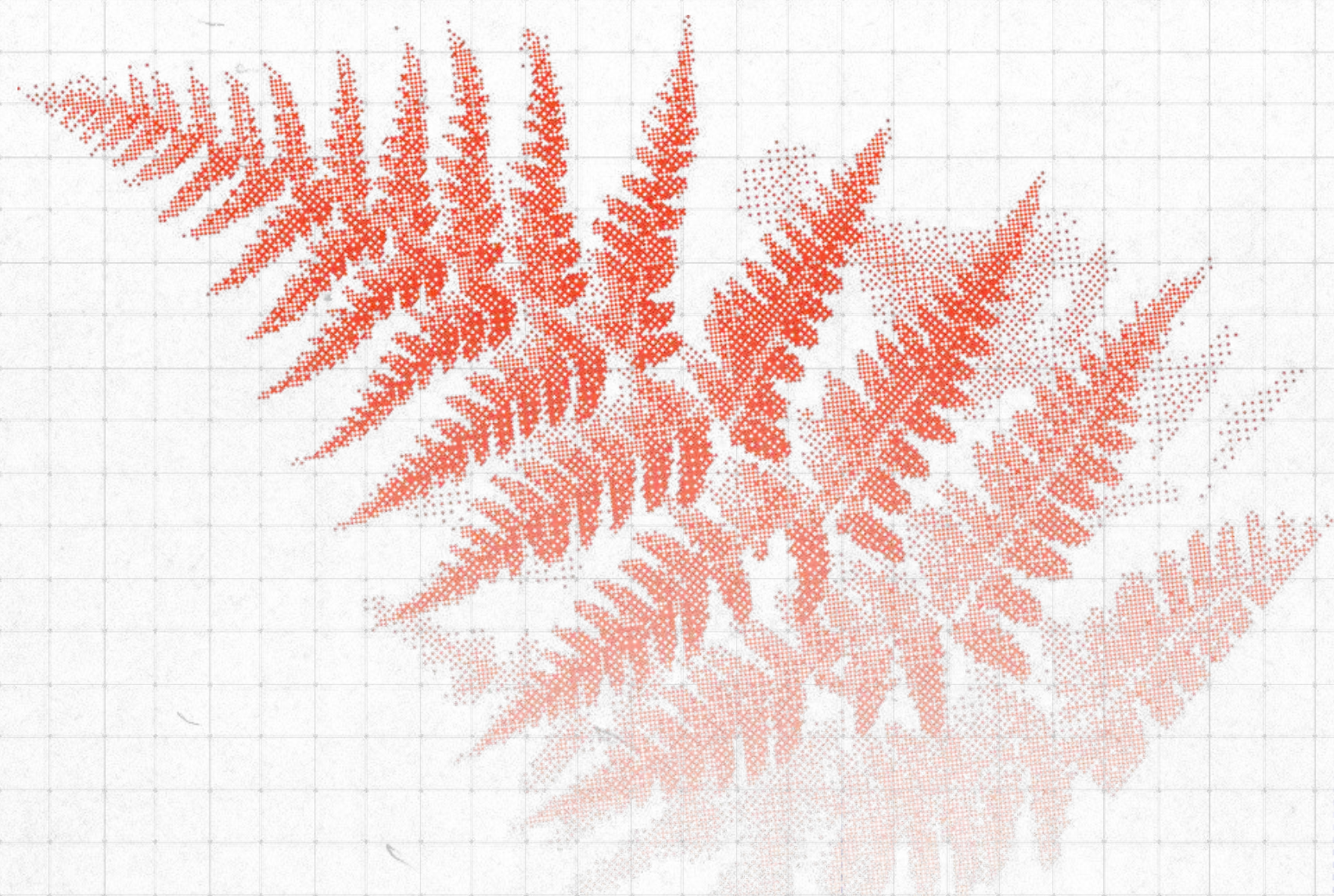
Efficiency and speed define how most marketing teams experience AI impact. **Accelerating time-to-market is the top realized benefit of AI,** cited by 51% of respondents, followed closely by scaling high-quality content production, which now ranks as both a top priority and a leading area for expanded use over the next 12 months.

Compared to last year, these benefits are becoming more pronounced. The share of marketers citing faster time-to-market as their top realized benefit more than doubled from 2025 to 2026, with scaling high-quality content showing a similar upward trend. Together, these gains reinforce that AI's clearest value today lies in enabling teams to move faster and operate at greater scale.

TOP BENEFITS RECEIVED FROM AI IN 2026

Benefit	%
Accelerate time-to-market	51%
Scale high-quality content	48%
Improve team productivity	46%
Reduce operating costs	45%
Reduce outsourcing costs	32%
Improve campaign performance	30%
Strengthen brand governance	27%
Drive revenue growth	23%

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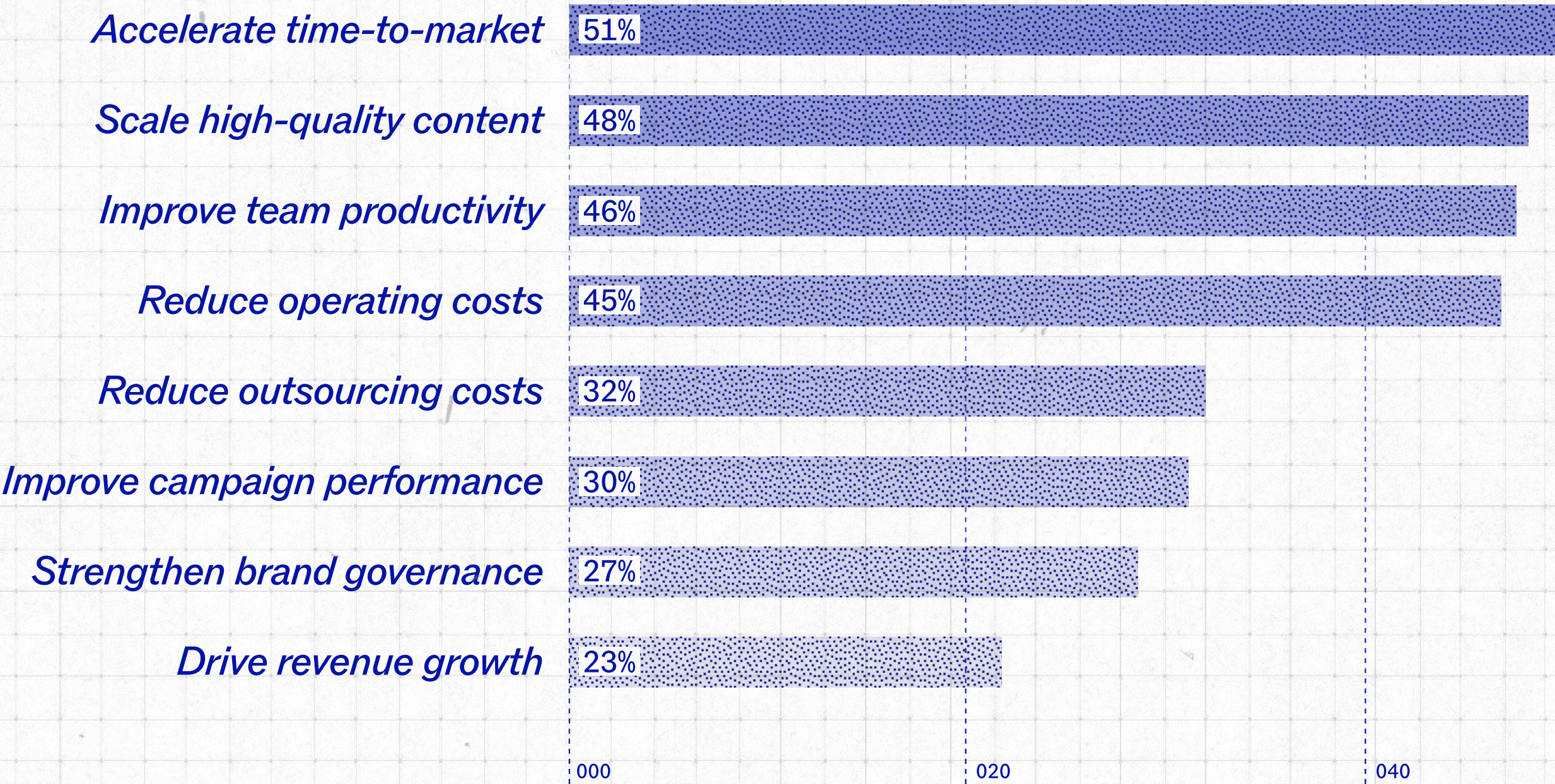
Marketers are looking to AI not just for efficiency, but *scale*

As AI adoption becomes widespread, marketers are redefining what they want AI to deliver. When asked to rank the top 3 benefits they seek from AI, **scaling the production of high-quality content emerged as the most important outcome,** cited by 50% of marketers. Speed and efficiency follow closely, with improving team productivity (47%) and accelerating time-to-market (45%) ranking next.

Comparisons to 2025 reinforce this shift. Demand for scaling high-quality content more than doubled compared to 2025, while faster time-to-market tripled. At the same time, productivity declined as the primary benefit sought, signaling a move away from individual efficiency gains toward system-level execution.

TOP BENEFITS MARKETERS SEEK FROM AI

28% Drive revenue growth

29% Improve campaign performance

29% Strengthen brand governance

32% Reduce outsourcing costs

40% Reduce operating costs

45% Accelerate time-to-market

47% Improve team productivity
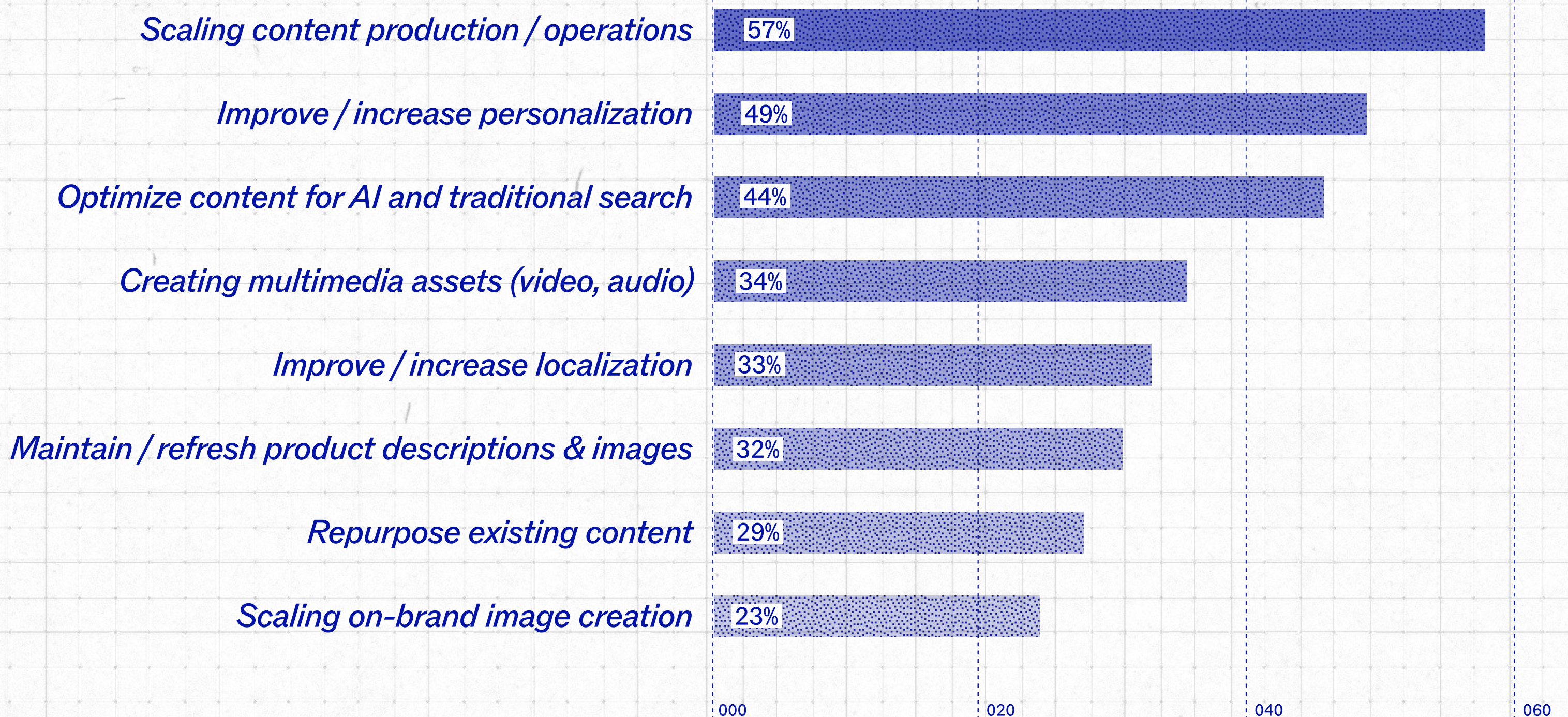
50% Scale high-quality content

The next year will focus on more *advanced* use cases

Looking ahead, marketers are translating these priorities into concrete action. Over the next 12 months, **scaling content production and operations is the leading area for increased AI use, cited by 57% of marketers.** Improving or increasing personalization and ABM follows at 49%, while optimizing content for both AI-driven and traditional search ranks next at 44%. Rather than expanding AI broadly, teams are narrowing their focus to use cases that enable repeatable workflows, faster execution, and greater consistency.

In terms of industry, tech companies are more likely to leverage AI to scale content production than any other industry (65%), while professional services are the most frequent users of AI for SEO and GEO/AEO (45%).

TOP AREAS WHERE MARKETERS WILL APPLY AI IN THE NEXT 12 MONTHS

| Area	%
Scaling content production / operations	57%
Improve / increase personalization	49%
Optimize content for AI and traditional search	44%
Creating multimedia assets (video, audio)	34%
Improve / increase localization	33%
Maintain / refresh product descriptions & images	32%
Repurpose existing content	29%
Scaling on-brand image creation	23%

Core Challenges

Speed at scale still has a long way to go

Despite widespread AI adoption and accelerating time-to-market being named the top benefit of AI, most marketing organizations still operate on long timelines for multi-asset campaigns. **Nearly 40% report that these campaigns take three to five months or longer, while only 22% operate on timelines measured in weeks.** Just 12% are able to execute in days or hours. Organizations that take six months or longer to launch multi-asset campaigns are twice as likely to self-report at the beginning stage of AI maturity.

This gap highlights a core challenge of the operational era of AI. Tools alone have not compressed timelines. True speed only emerges when AI is embedded into coordinated workflows that span planning, production, review, and activation. For most teams, execution maturity, not access to AI, remains the limiting factor.

TIME TO EXECUTE MULTI-ASSET CAMPAIGNS IN 2026

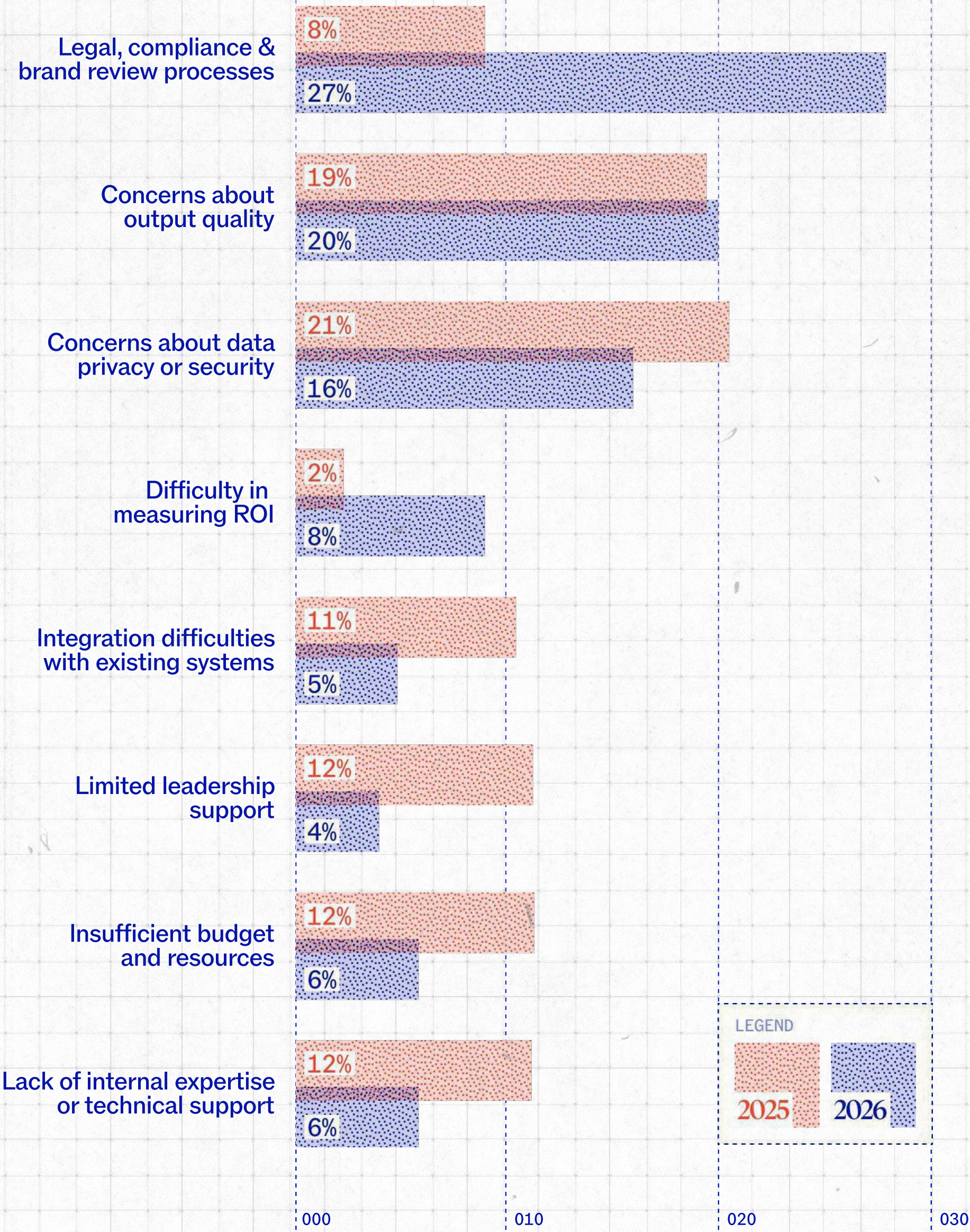| Hours	Days	Weeks	<3 Months	3 - 5 Months	6+ Months
2%	10%	22%	27%	29%	10%

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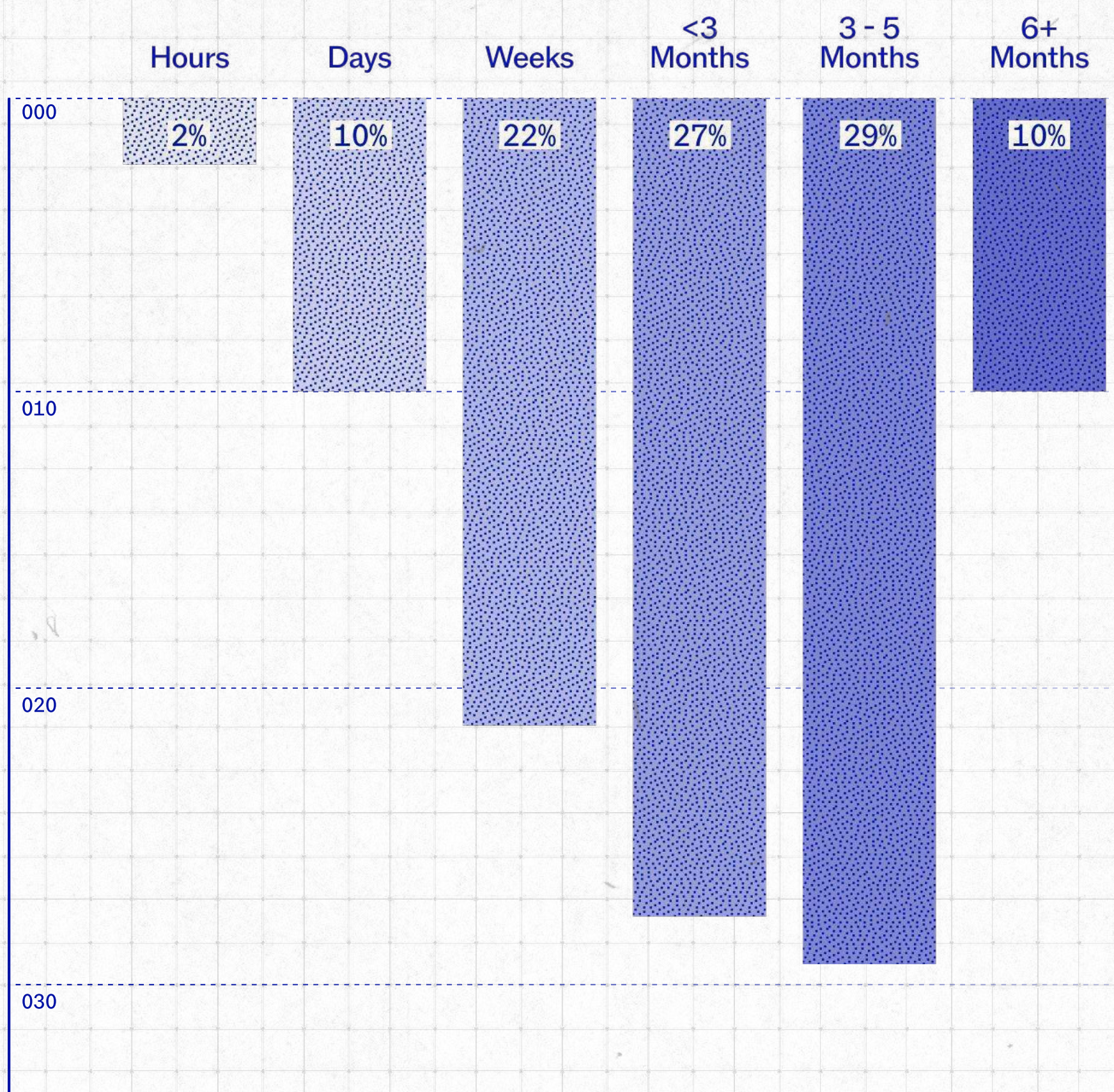
Governance is the main bottleneck to scale

As AI adoption has accelerated, the barriers to scaling it have fundamentally changed. In 2025, the number one reason marketing organizations are not scaling AI is no longer access, expertise, or budget. It's governance.

Legal, compliance, and brand review processes are now the leading constraint on AI scale. 27% of marketers cite legal and compliance as the #1 reason they are not scaling AI, more than tripled from 2025.

Concerns about output quality remain the second most common blocker and are largely unchanged year over year, reinforcing how closely quality and governance are linked as content volume rises. At the same time, earlier adoption barriers such as internal expertise, budget, and leadership support have declined sharply, signaling that willingness to invest is no longer the limiting factor.

#1 REASON MARKETERS ARE NOT SCALING AI (2025 VS 2026)

Legal, compliance & brand review processes
- 8%
- 27%

Concerns about output quality
- 19%
- 20%

Concerns about data privacy or security
- 21%
- 16%

Difficulty in measuring ROI
- 2%
- 8%

Integration difficulties with existing systems
- 11%
- 5%

Limited leadership support
- 12%
- 4%

Insufficient budget and resources
- 12%
- 6%

Lack of internal expertise or technical support
- 12%
- 6%

LEGEND
2025   2026

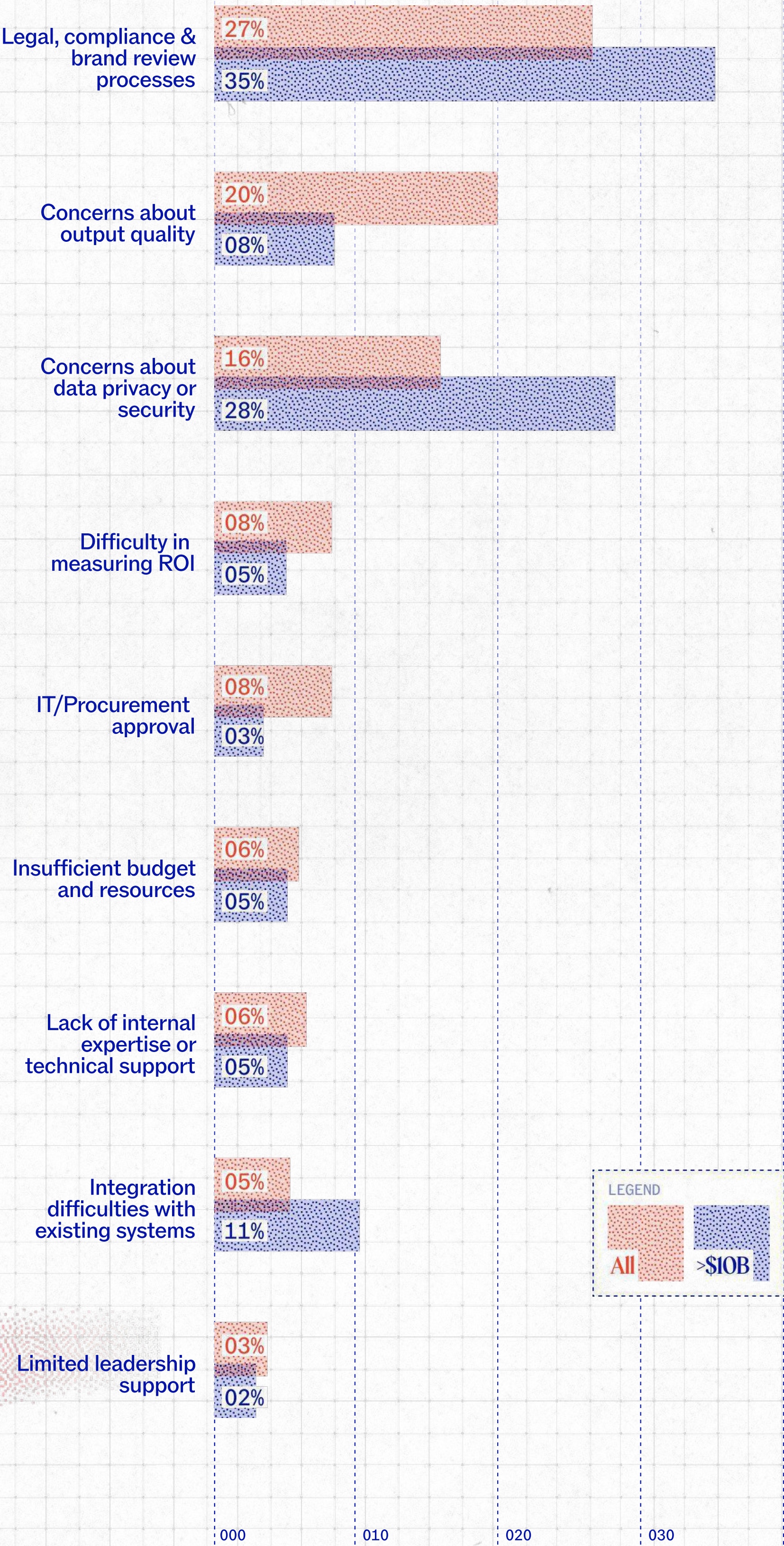000   010   020   030

Last year, companies >$10B considered AI output quality their top challenge. This year, the focus has shifted to governance. 55% of large organizations use domain-specific tools, suggesting AI designed for marketing helps reduce worry about raw output quality.

Together, these patterns illustrate how friction has moved inside the enterprise. The challenge is no longer whether marketing teams can generate content with AI, but whether existing governance, review, and measurement systems are equipped to handle AI-driven speed and volume.

#1 REASON MARKETERS ARE NOT SCALING AI (BY ANNUAL REVENUE)

Legal, compliance & brand review processes
- 27%
- 35%

Concerns about output quality
- 20%
- 08%

Concerns about data privacy or security
- 16%
- 28%

Difficulty in measuring ROI
- 08%
- 05%

IT/Procurement approval
- 08%
- 03%

Insufficient budget and resources
- 06%
- 05%

Lack of internal expertise or technical support
- 06%
- 05%

Integration difficulties with existing systems
- 05%
- 11%

Limited leadership support
- 03%
- 02%

LEGEND
All   >$10B

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AI challenges have *converged* across industries

Last year, technology companies clearly led AI adoption in marketing, moving faster to integrate AI into everyday workflows. In 2026, that gap has narrowed. **AI adoption has expanded rapidly across industries, and differences in usage are now driven less by industry and more by operational readiness.**

What separates industries today is not whether they use AI, but how well they manage scale and risk. Highly regulated and content-heavy sectors, including financial services, life sciences, and media, most acutely feel legal, compliance, and brand review as primary blockers to scaling AI—but every single industry reports this as their top blocker. Retail organizations, despite strong adoption and high content demand, face longer campaign timelines and greater difficulty converting productivity gains into measurable ROI.

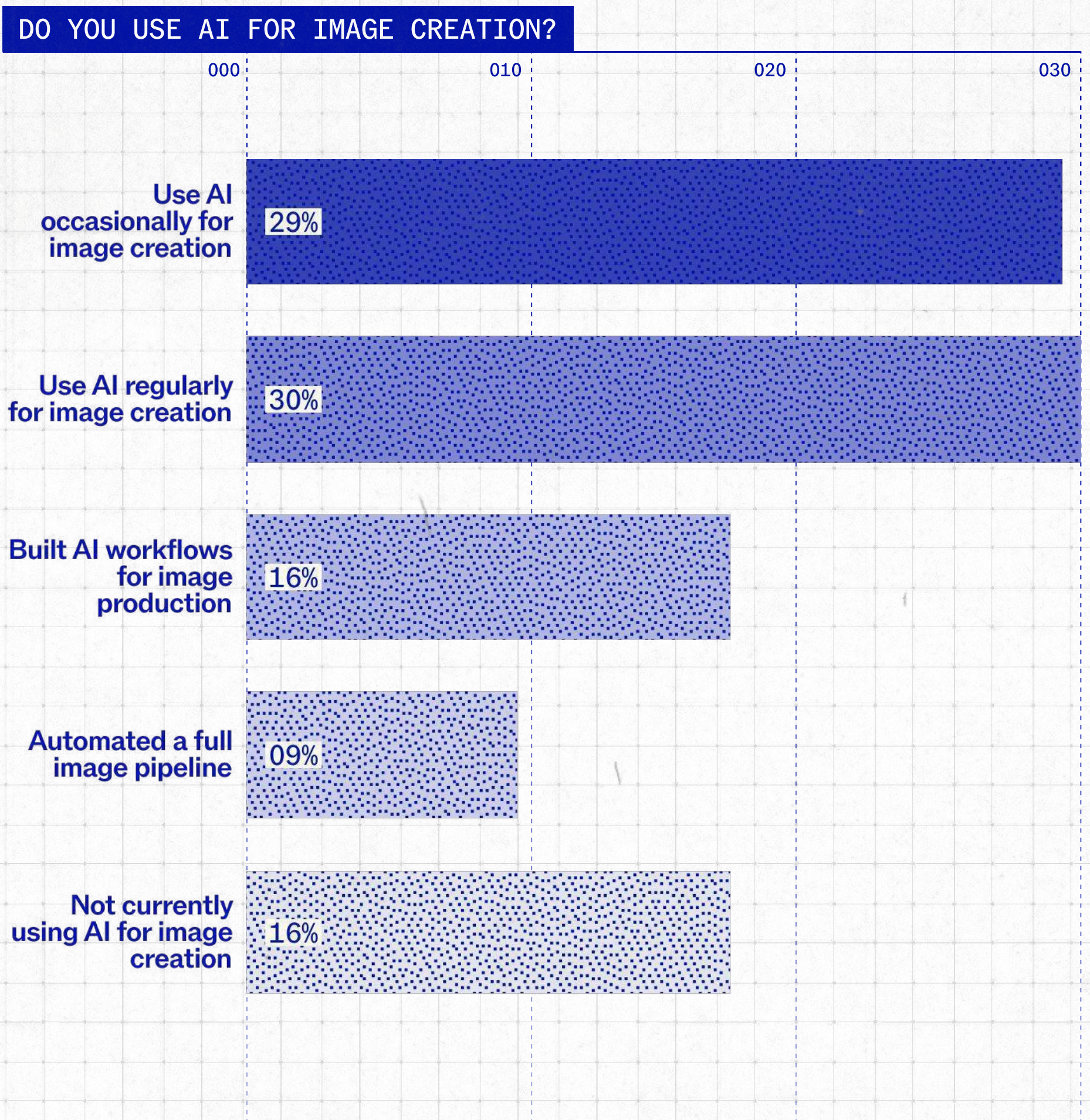| Industry	Top Blockers to Scale in 2025	Top Blockers to Scale in 2026
Technology	Insufficient budget or resources	
Professional Services	Insufficient budget or resources	
Financial Services	Concerns about output quality	**Legal, compliance, and brand review processes**
Retail	Limited leadership support or clear AI strategy	
Media & Comms	Concerns about output quality	
Life Sciences	Limited leadership support or clear AI strategy	

Using AI for images is widespread, but *hard to scale*

AI image creation is widely used, with 84% of marketers using it in some capacity. However, far fewer have operationalized it at scale. **Only 16% report building AI workflows for image production, and just 9% have automated an end-to-end image pipeline.**

The gap is most visible at the enterprise level. While interest in AI image creation is high, companies with more than $1B in revenue report significantly lower adoption. This drop is not driven by resistance, but by the difficulty of maintaining accuracy, brand fidelity, and compliance as image volume increases. At scale, even small inconsistencies or errors create risk, slowing approvals and increasing manual oversight.

These dynamics help explain why image generation often stalls at experimentation. Without systems that enforce brand context, accuracy, and review standards, organizations struggle to turn AI image creation into a repeatable, production-ready capability.

DO YOU USE AI FOR IMAGE CREATION?

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Use AI occasionally for image creation — 29%

Use AI regularly for image creation — 30%

Built AI workflows for image production — 16%

Automated a full image pipeline — 09%

Not currently using AI for image creation — 16%

ROI and the

Measurement Gap

ROI is *harder to prove,* but more valuable when it is

As adoption surges, confidence in AI ROI measurement is slipping among marketers. **Just 41% report being able to demonstrate return, down from 49% last year.** On the surface, that decline may suggest weaker performance. In reality, it reflects a more fundamental shift in how ROI is being defined and evaluated.

As AI moves from experimentation into core operations, expectations have changed. What once counted as ROI, such as productivity gains or increased usage, is no longer sufficient. Marketers are increasingly expected to tie AI investments to economic outcomes and business performance. As standards rise, confidence declines.

This pattern is visible across industries. In retail, for example, reported ability to prove AI ROI fell from 54% last year to 38% this year, even as AI usage remains strong. The gap underscores that adoption alone no longer translates to perceived ROI. Measurement rigor now matters as much as deployment.

CAN YOU MEASURE THE ROI OF YOUR AI INVESTMENTS? (2025 VS 2026)

|	2025	2026
YES	49%	41%
NO	51%	59%
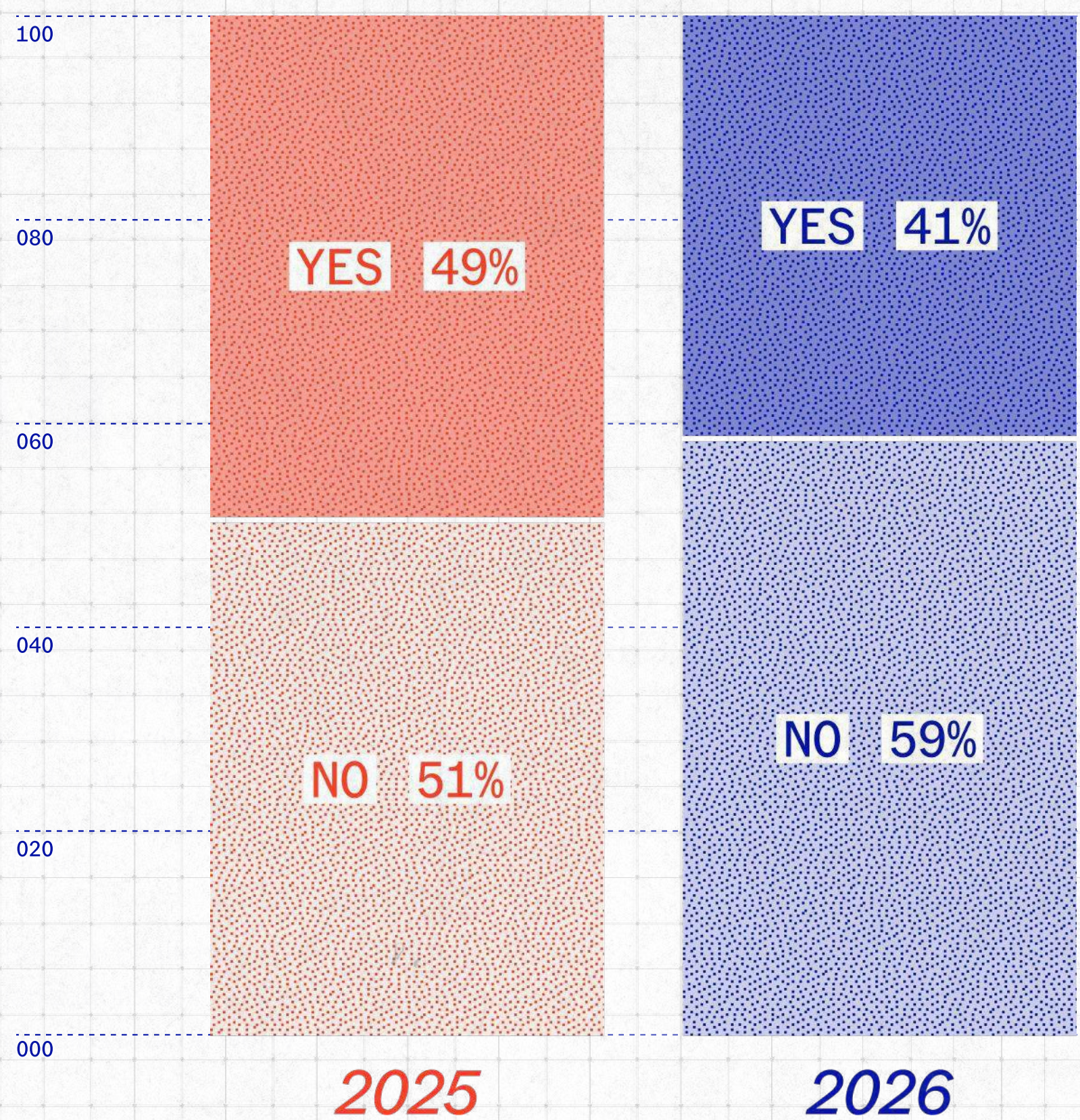
Importantly, when ROI is measured, the returns are significant. **60% of marketers who can prove ROI report at least 2x returns on their AI investments.** Among enterprises with more than $10B in revenue, that figure rises to 79%, reinforcing that disciplined measurement correlates with stronger outcomes.

The decline in reported ROI confidence is best understood as a signal of maturity, not regression. As AI becomes embedded in core operations, the bar has moved from demonstrating efficiency to defending business value, and those that meet it are seeing outsized returns.

LEVELS OF RETURN REALIZED FROM MARKETING AI INVESTMENTS IN 2026

Breakeven (1:1)
9%

Positive (1-2x)
31%

Strong (2-3x)
37%

Significant (3-5x)
16%

Very High (5x+)
7%
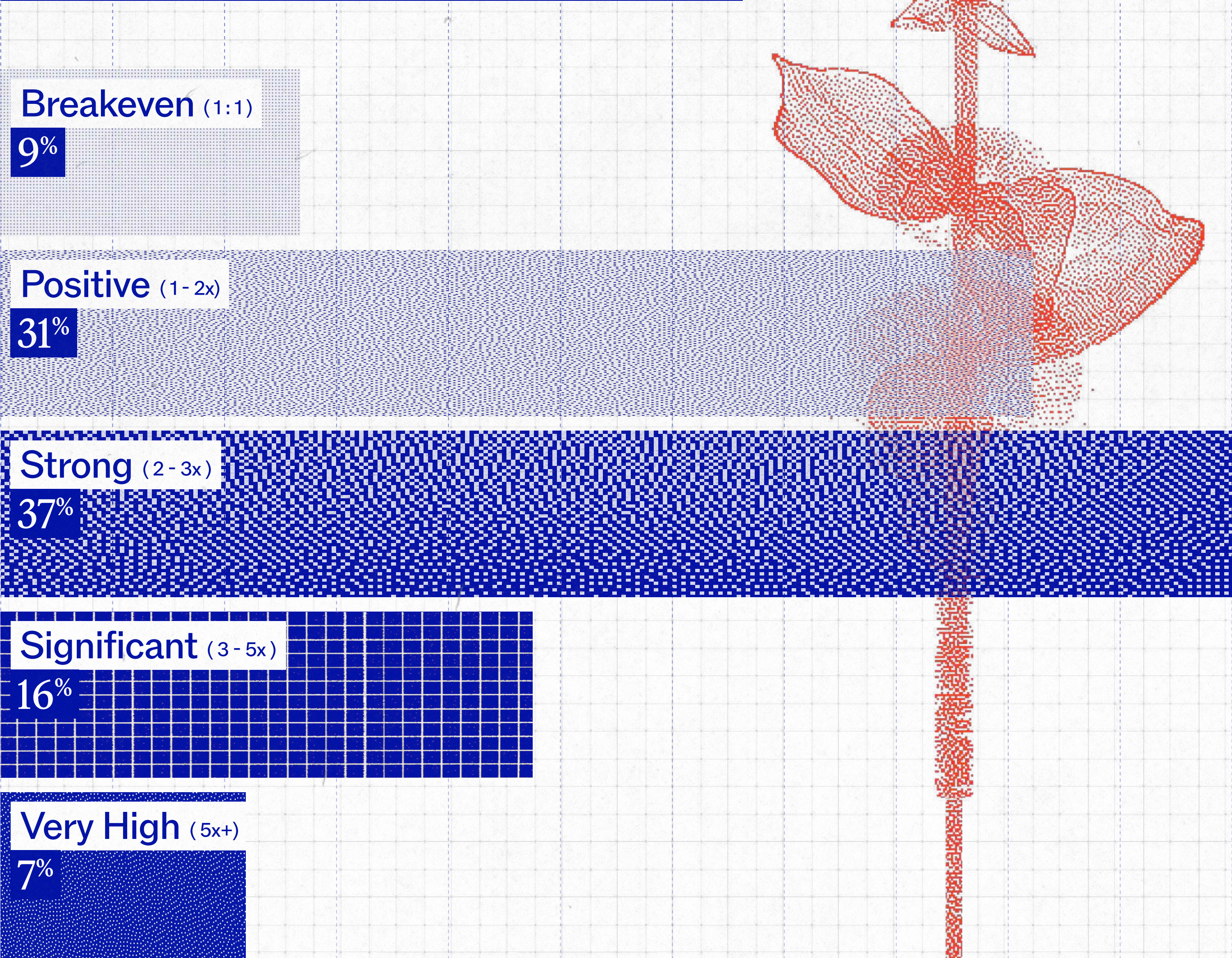
Most teams measure AI ROI through cost & activity, not growth

01	Hours saved by full-time employees	57%
02	Reduced outsourced vendor or agency costs	43%
03	Shortened campaign launch cycle	38%
04	Time saved in compliance or brand review cycles	34%
05	Lift in campaign conversion or engagement rates	29%
06	Reduction in cost per lead, click, or email	25%
07	Fewer brand review exceptions or escalations	19%
08	Pipeline or deal velocity improvement	8%

Most organizations are measuring AI ROI at the cost-reduction and execution layers of value. **The most common metric is hours saved by full-time employees (57%), followed by reduced outsourced vendor or agency spend (43%).** These measures align closely with early value drivers such as operational efficiency and reduced complexity.

Teams are also beginning to track operational impact. 38% measure faster campaign launches, 34% track time saved in compliance or brand review, and 19% report fewer brand review exceptions. Together, these metrics indicate progress in speed, output capacity, and brand control as AI becomes embedded in core workflows.

By contrast, growth-oriented outcomes remain the least measured. **Fewer than 1/3 of organizations track lift in campaign conversion, and only 8% measure improvements in pipeline or deal velocity.** This gap reflects a common pattern in the value journey: AI delivers measurable cost and execution gains first, while revenue and growth outcomes require deeper integration, cross-functional alignment, and more advanced measurement.

People, Roles, and Structure

The CMO–IC divide is growing
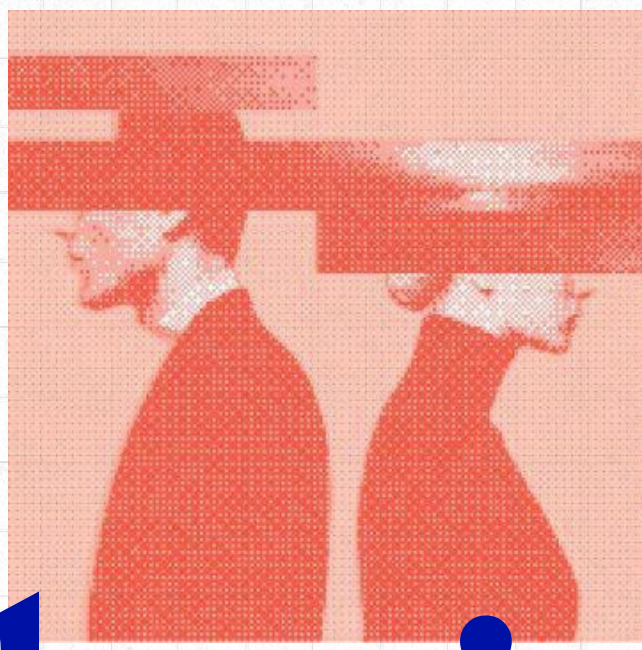
88%
SAY AI INCREASED THEIR JOB SATISFACTION

61%
CAN MEASURE AI ROI

42%
SAY AI ADDS CAPABILITIES TO THEIR TECH STACK

Leadership commitment to AI continues to rise. **83% of respondents say senior leadership is committed to AI, up from 76% last year.** At the same time, experience with AI varies sharply by role, creating a widening gap between strategic confidence and day-to-day execution.

CMOs report the highest levels of AI maturity and satisfaction, while individual contributors (ICs) describe a more complex reality. As AI becomes operational and increasingly mandatory, gains in role satisfaction are beginning to level off; **75% of marketers say that AI increased their job satisfaction in 2026, down slightly from 78% in 2025—a reflection of rising accountability rather than declining enthusiasm.**

Confidence in measuring ROI highlights the divide. **61% of CMOs say they can measure AI ROI, compared to 33% of managers and 12% of individual contributors.** At the same time, perceptions of AI's impact on the MarTech stack diverge sharply by role: 42% of CMOs believe AI is adding new capabilities to their stack, compared to only 12% of ICs. This suggests leaders often see AI's strategic potential before teams experience those capabilities consistently in practice.

ICs are also more likely to use AI to oversee brand consistency, cited by 44%, compared with 25% of C-level marketers, reflecting their closer proximity to execution and quality control. VPs and Directors are caught in the middle, managing pressure from CMOs to expand AI investment, define strategy, and justify ROI, while supporting teams responsible for using AI day to day.

Individual contributors

56%
SAY AI INCREASED THEIR JOB SATISFACTION

12%
CAN MEASURE AI ROI

12%
SAY AI ADDS CAPABILITIES TO THEIR TECH STACK

Marketing teams and roles are evolving in real time

Marketing roles are changing as AI becomes embedded in everyday work. **1 in 3 marketers now have AI policy, strategy, or governance as part of their role,** and many are taking on hands-on responsibilities such as designing prompts and AI-supported workflows (36%), analyzing data to improve AI outputs (34%), building AI systems or content pipelines (33%), or defining AI strategy, governance, or policies (33%). This reflects a structural shift in how marketing operates, not incremental tool adoption.
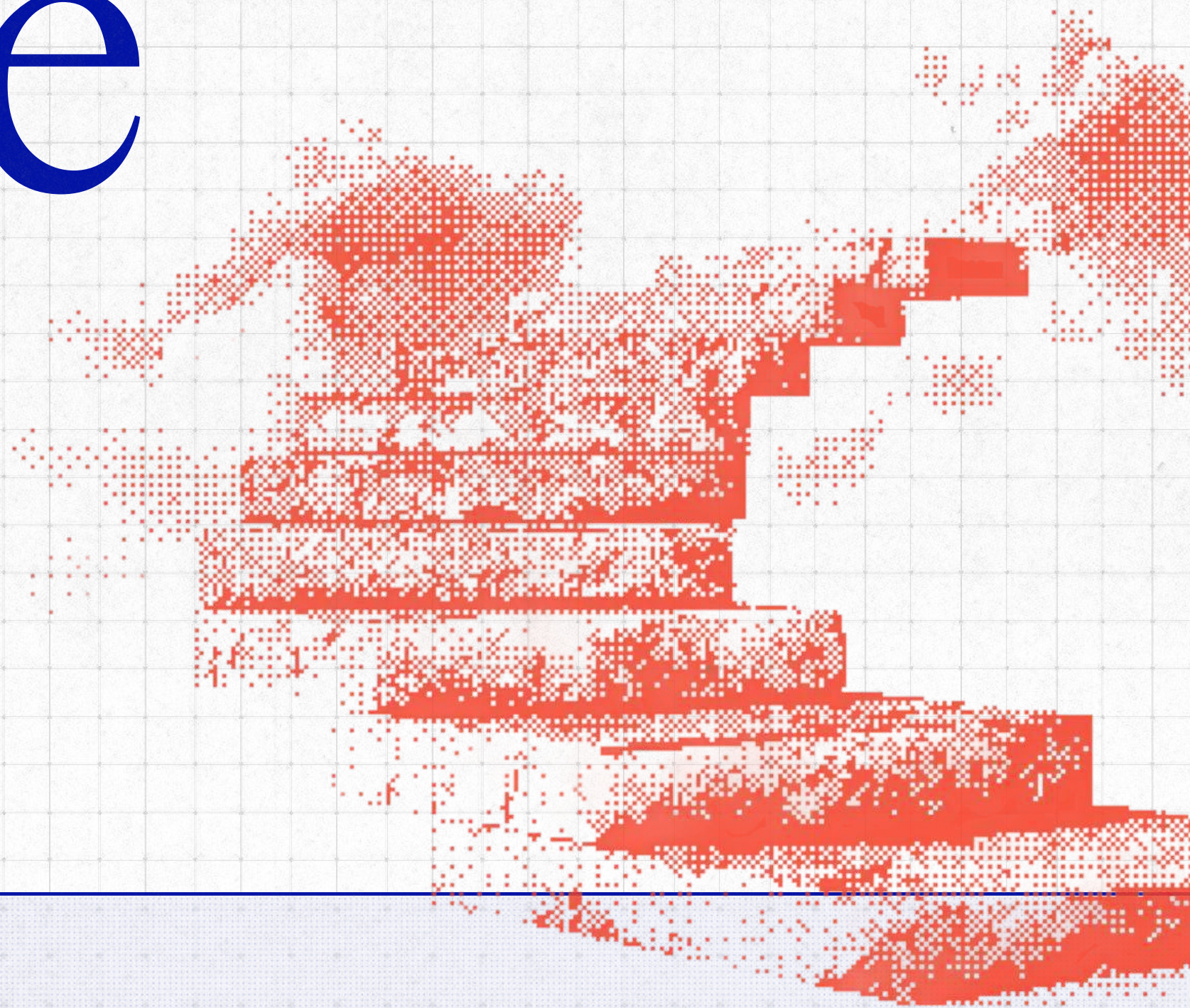
TOP 7 NEW AI RESPONSIBILITIES CITED BY MARKETERS IN 2026

001
Designing prompts, templates, or workflows for others

002
Analyzing data to train or improve AI outputs

003
Building AI systems or content pipelines

004
Defining AI strategy, governance, or policies

005
Connecting AI tools across the MarTech stack

006
Managing AI agents or automated processes

007
Overseeing compliance in AI-generated content

1 / 3

marketers have added AI strategy, policies, and governance to their existing roles

That change is playing out differently across the organization. Individual contributors are more likely to report hands-on execution responsibilities, including **designing prompts and workflows (65% of ICs vs 41% of C-level leaders) and overseeing brand consistency (44% vs 25%). By contrast, C-level leaders are more likely to cite responsibilities tied to data analysis and model improvement (47% vs 12%)** and defining AI strategy and governance.

Together, these patterns show AI redistributing work across teams, concentrating strategic ownership at the leadership level while pushing execution, quality control, and day-to-day orchestration closer to the front lines.

Marketing roles are being reshaped by AI— and the most impacted are the happiest

AI-driven role change is widespread, with 74% of marketers saying AI has impacted their work, and those in more mature organizations far more likely to describe that impact as significant (84%).

Crucially, this disruption correlates with higher satisfaction for very advanced organizations (66%) compared to beginners (15%)— suggesting that when AI is implemented with structure and clarity, evolving roles feel empowering rather than destabilizing.

Organizations are redesigning marketing for AI

65% of marketing organizations now report having a designated role to design or manage AI workflows, either formally (29%) or informally (36%), with another 19% saying these roles are currently in development. Only 17% report having no designated ownership, signaling a clear shift from individual experimentation to shared responsibility and operational accountability.

Planned hiring reflects how teams expect to scale AI over the next 12 months. **AI Search Specialists top the list (40%), signaling growing focus on visibility in AI-driven discovery and search.** This is followed by AI Transformation Leads (34%), AI Trainers or Prompt Engineers (31%), and AI Architects or Operations roles (31%). Together, these roles point to a shift toward system-level execution, not ad hoc usage.

Notably, while scaling content production is the top AI priority, the role most directly responsible for enabling that scale remains underdeveloped. Only 19% plan to add a Content Engineer role, despite widespread reliance on AI for content creation. This gap suggests many teams are attempting to scale content without dedicated ownership for system-level content operations
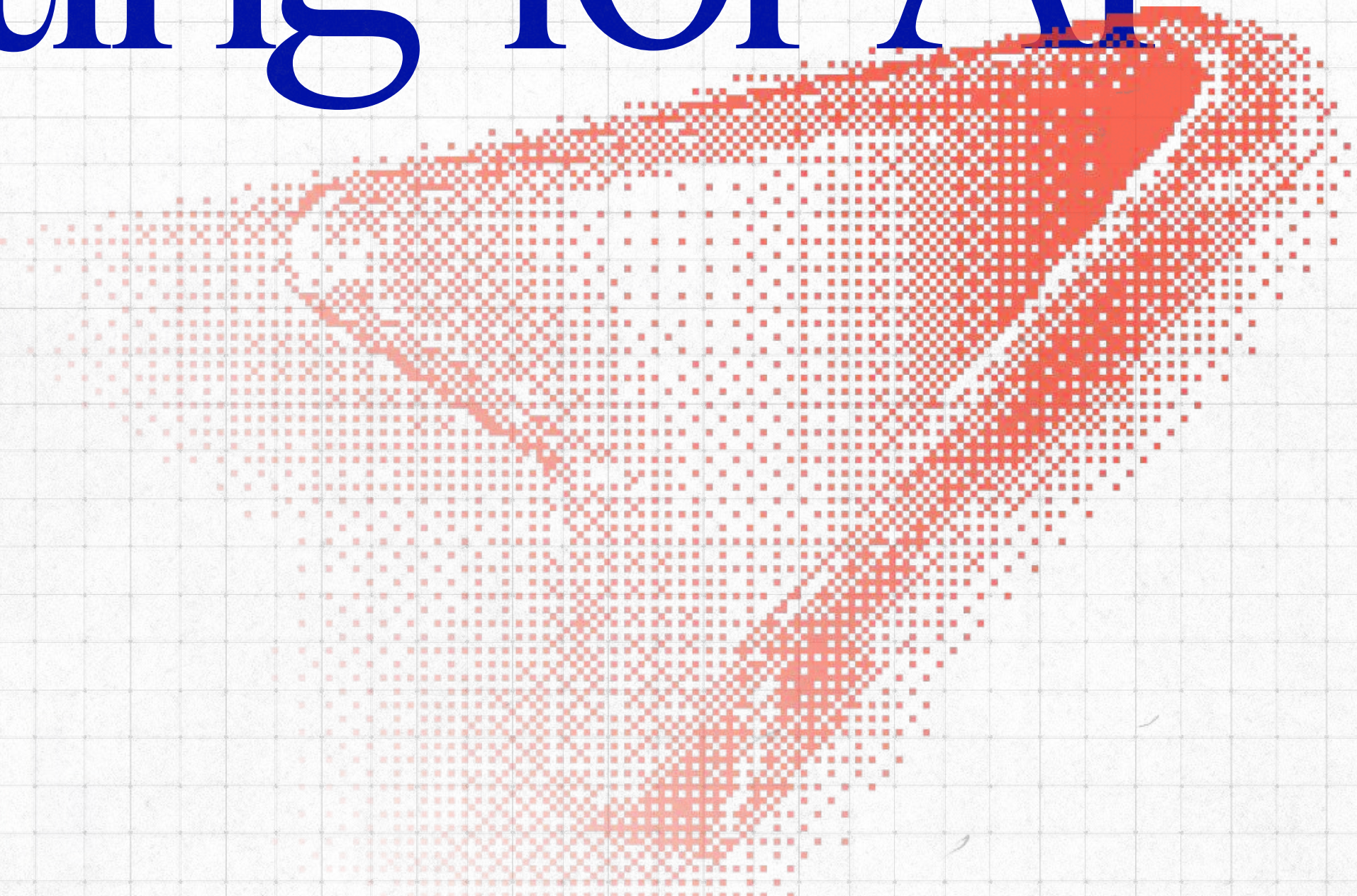
TOP AI HIRES IN MARKETING IN THE NEXT 12 MONTHS

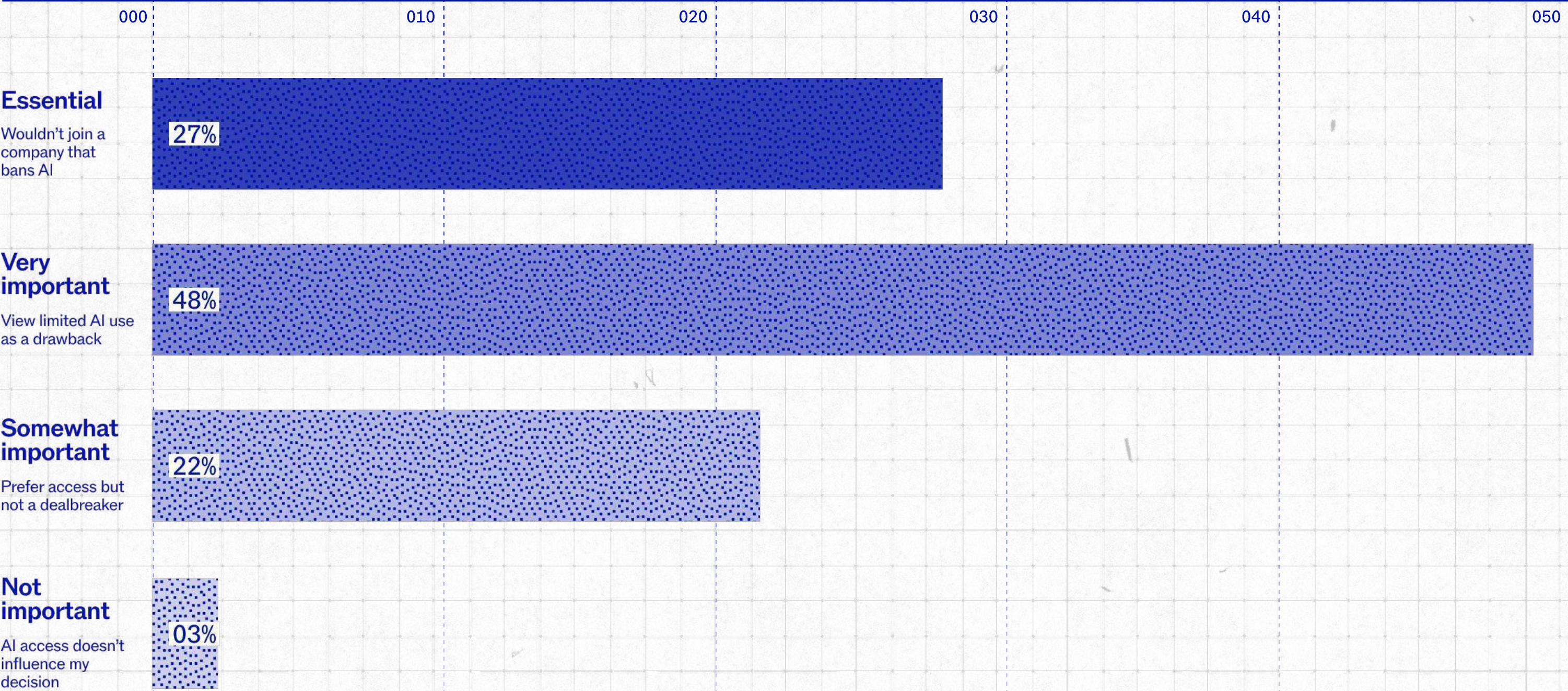|		
001	AI Search Specialist	40%
002	AI Transformation Lead	34%
003	AI Trainers or Prompt Engineers, AI Architects/Operations	31%
004	AI Ethics and Compliance Lead	28%
005	Content Engineer	19%

AI access is now table stakes for talent

AI access has become a baseline expectation for marketing talent. **97% of marketers say access to AI factors into their job decisions, and 75% say it is critical when considering a role.** This expectation is strongest among senior leaders and in technology organizations. 44% of CMOs say they would not join a company that bans AI, compared to 26% of individual contributors, and 85% of technology marketers cite AI access as a key factor in role consideration.

Together, these signals show that AI adoption is increasingly viewed as a proxy for innovation and leadership quality. AI access is no longer a perk or a productivity enhancer. It is a clear indicator of how seriously an organization is investing in its future marketing capabilities.

HOW IMPORTANT AI ACCESS IS TO MARKETERS' ROLES IN 2026

000   010   020   030   040   050

Essential
Wouldn't join a company that bans AI
27%

Very important
View limited AI use as a drawback
48%

Somewhat important
Prefer access but not a dealbreaker
22%

Not important
AI access doesn't influence my decision
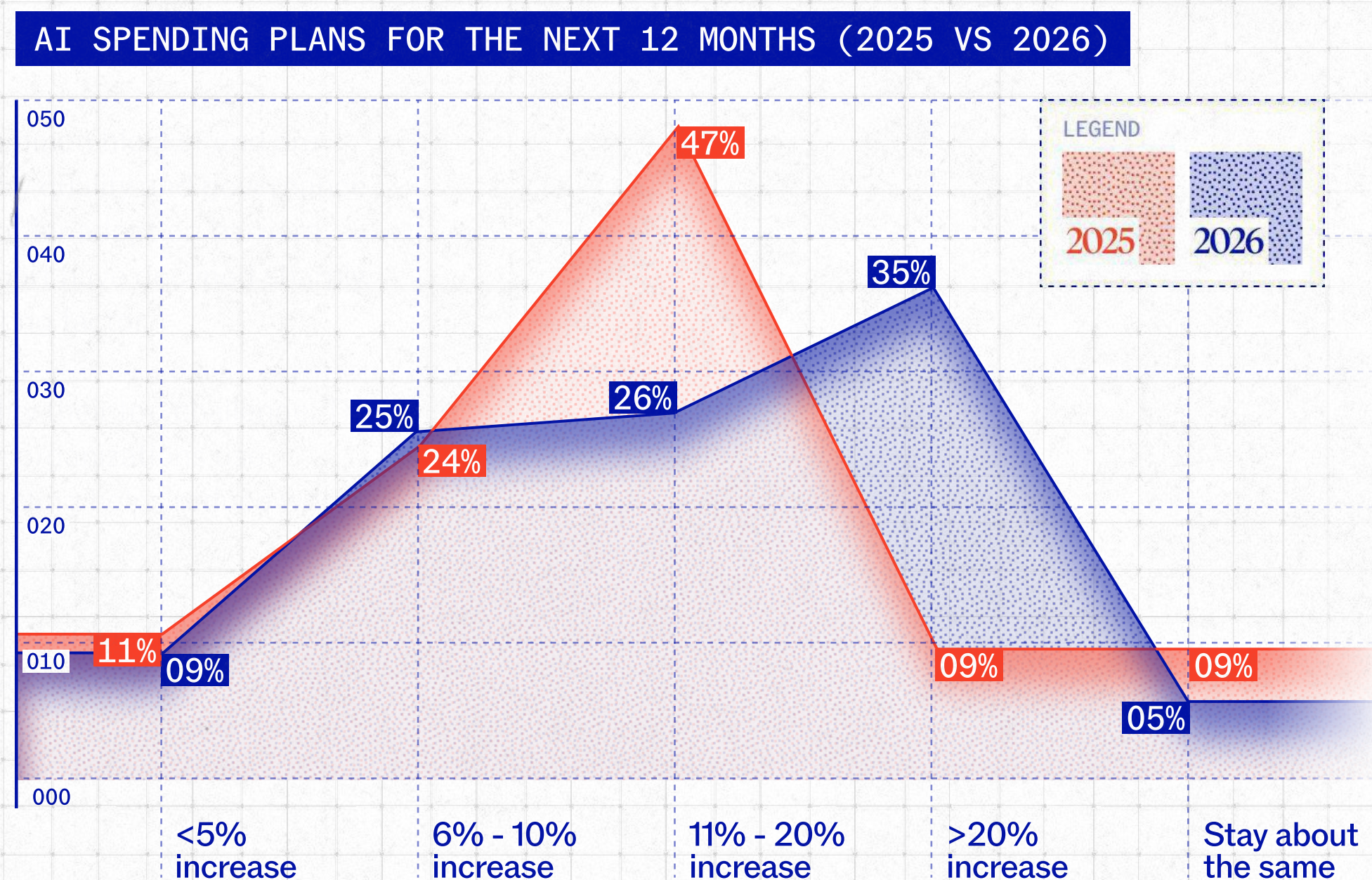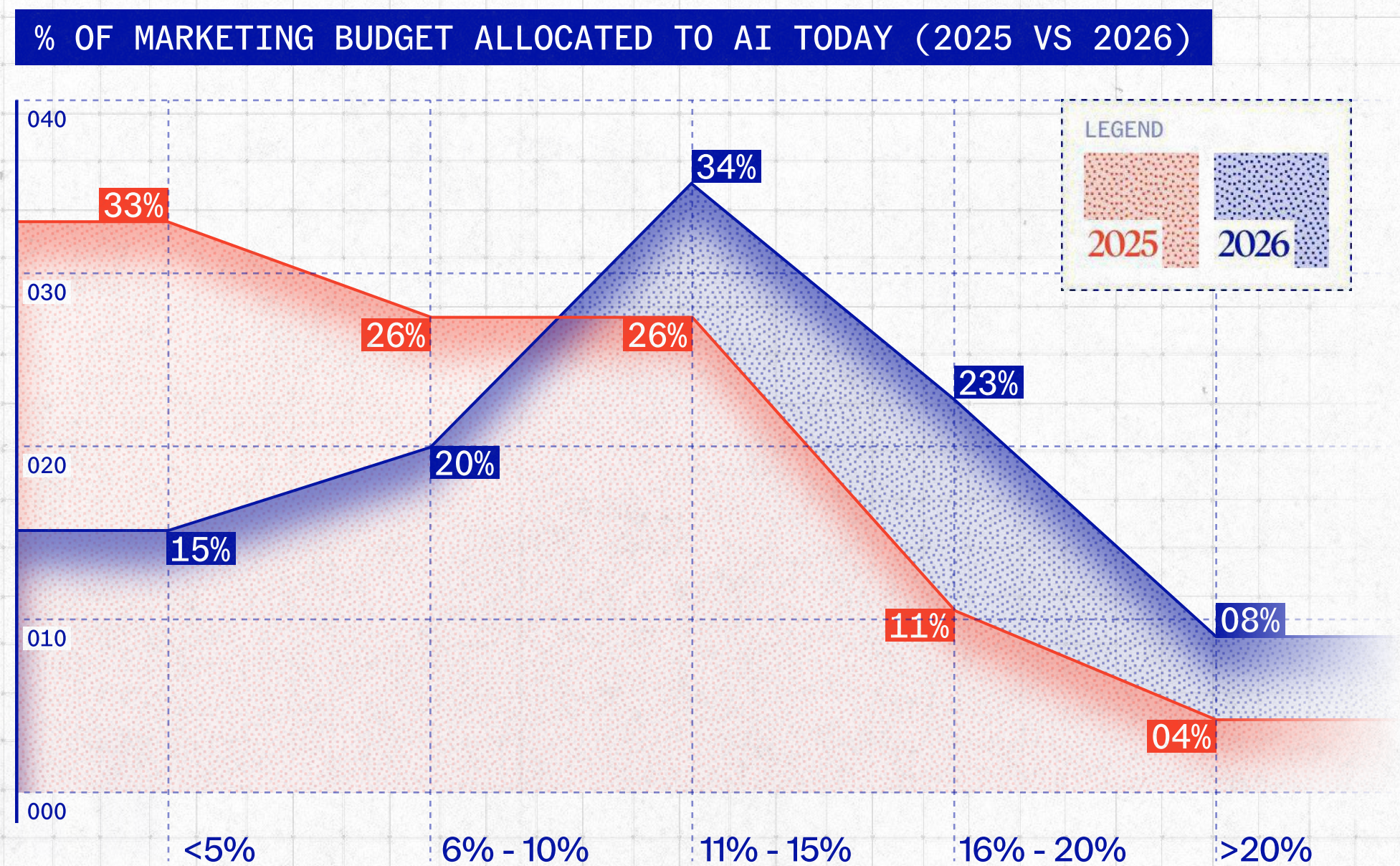**03%**

Investment and Infrastructure

AI budget commitment has increased, and *continues to grow*

AI now represents a meaningful share of marketing budgets, and that commitment has deepened year over year. **In 2026, the largest group of organizations (34%) will allocate 11%–15% of their total marketing budget to AI, up from 26% last year.** Another 23% allocate 16%–20%, more than double the 11% reported in 2025.

This trend is most pronounced at the enterprise level. Companies with more than $1B in revenue are committing the largest share of budget to AI, with 32% allocating 20% or more of their marketing spend. **These investments reflect confidence in AI as a long-term capability, not a short-term experiment.**

AI investment is rising across marketing organizations as teams commit more resources to scaling AI in core operations. **95% of marketers plan to increase AI spend in the next 12 months, and 66% expect to allocate 10% or more of their marketing budget to AI,** underscoring how central AI has become to marketing strategy.

% OF MARKETING BUDGET ALLOCATED TO AI TODAY (2025 VS 2026)

LEGEND
2025 | 2026

	<5%	6% - 10%	11% - 15%	16% - 20%	>20%
2025	33%	26%	26%	11%	04%
2026	15%	20%	34%	23%	08%

AI SPENDING PLANS FOR THE NEXT 12 MONTHS (2025 VS 2026)

LEGEND
2025 | 2026

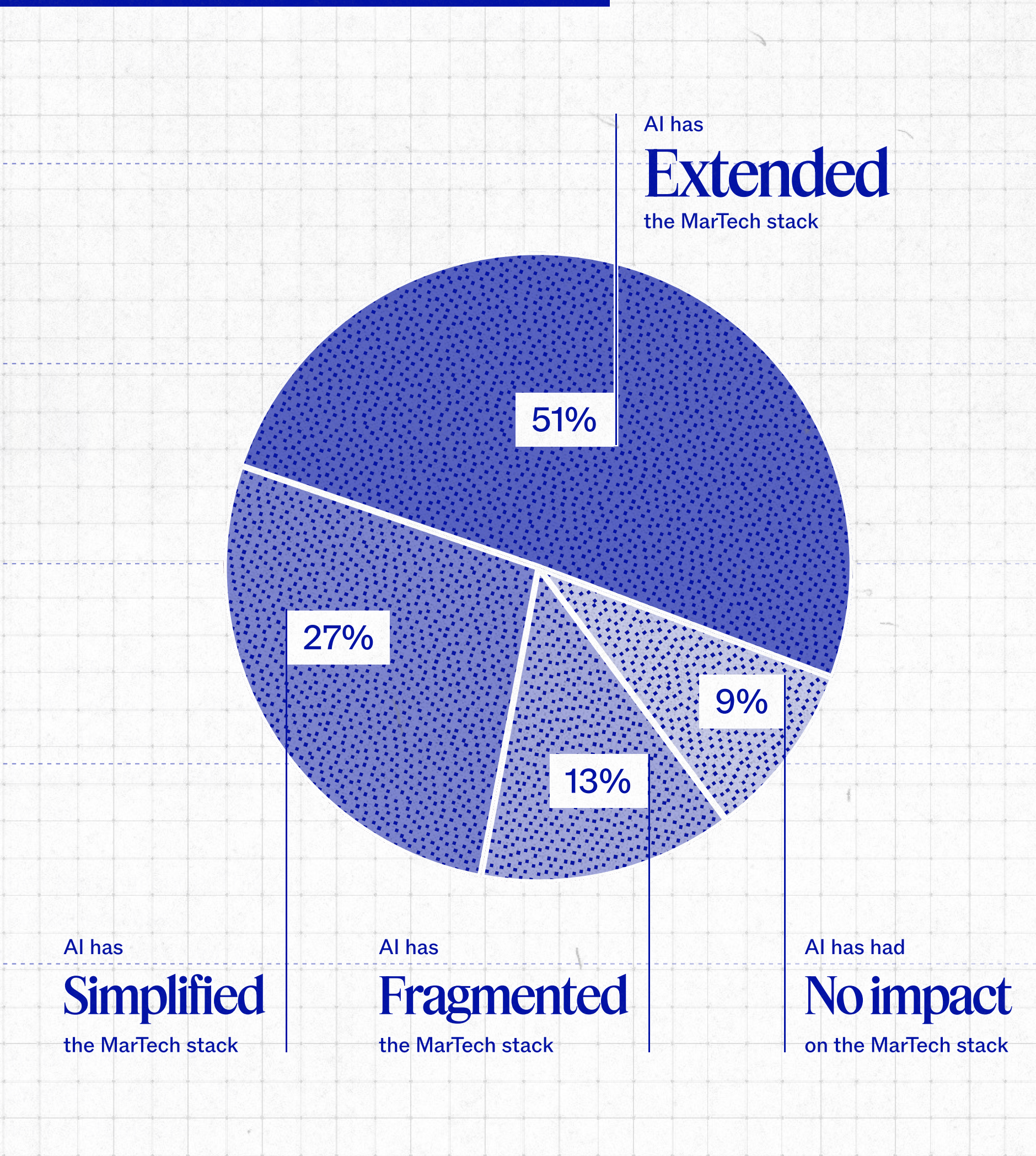|	<5% increase	6% - 10% increase	11% - 20% increase	>20% increase	Stay about the same
2025	11%	24%	47%	09%	09%
2026	09%	25%	26%	35%	05%

AI is simplifying and extending the MarTech stack

AI is reshaping the marketing technology stack in two directions at once. **27% of marketers say AI has simplified or consolidated their stack, while 51% report that it has extended their stack with new capabilities.** Rather than replacing existing tools outright, AI is changing how systems connect, how work flows between them, and what they can support.

This dynamic is more complex at the enterprise level. Half of enterprise organizations say AI has simplified their MarTech stack, yet 20% also report increased fragmentation, the highest rate of any segment. This suggests that while AI can streamline execution within teams, it can introduce complexity across departments, systems, and approval layers when adoption happens in parallel without shared governance or integration standards.

Perception also differs by role. 46% of C-level leaders believe AI has helped consolidate and optimize the MarTech stack, compared to 58% of individual contributors. The gap highlights how AI may feel simplifying at the execution layer while still creating coordination challenges at the organizational level.

AI IMPACT ON THE MARTECH STACK IN 2026

AI has
Extended
the MarTech stack

51%

27%

9%

13%

AI has
Simplified
the MarTech stack

AI has
Fragmented
the MarTech stack

AI has had
No impact
on the MarTech stack

AI Maturity

Maturity is the strongest predictor of impact

As AI adoption becomes ubiquitous, results are diverging sharply. Organizations that self-report with advanced or very advanced maturity levels consistently outperform peers on speed, scale, ROI, and satisfaction, reinforcing that AI maturity is the primary factor driving impact.

That difference shows up clearly in team experience. **66% of very advanced teams report significantly increased satisfaction, compared with 15% at the beginning level.** This suggests that when AI is implemented with structure, governance, and clarity, role evolution is not destabilizing. It improves how marketers work and how they experience their roles.

JOB SATISFACTION IN 2026 BY AI MATURITY

	000	020	040	060	080

Lower AI maturity teams — 15%

Very advanced AI teams — 66%
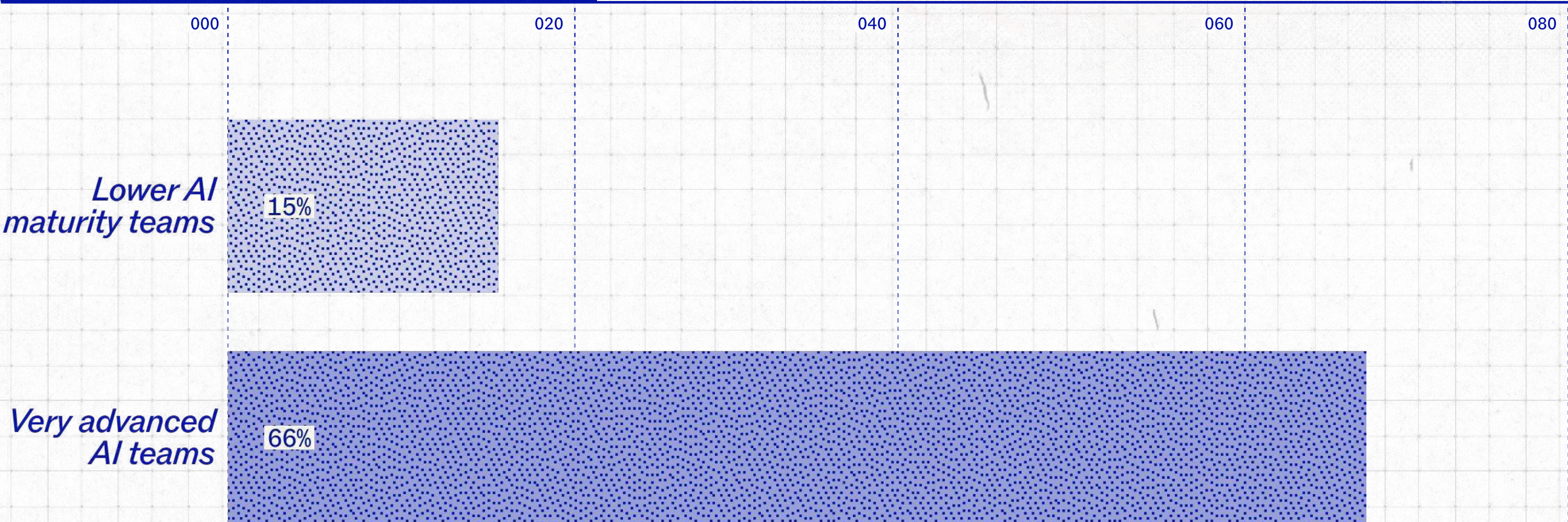
High-maturity organizations show *the way forward*

As AI becomes embedded across marketing operations, a consistent set of traits separates teams that scale AI effectively from those still struggling to translate usage into outcomes.

Our research shows that organizations self-reporting advanced or very advanced AI maturity align across a common set of operational behaviors, from how they produce content and govern quality to how they measure ROI and assign ownership.

These patterns suggest that **AI maturity is no longer driven by access, experimentation, or intent.** It is shaped by how deliberately organizations design their operating model around AI, embedding it into workflows, governance structures, and leadership accountability.

## 6 TRAITS OF HIGH-MATURITY MARKETING ORGANIZATIONS IN 2026

Content as a system

72% use AI for multi-asset generation and are far less likely to use it for primarily idea generation. 79% have a content engineer, compared to 30% of beginners.
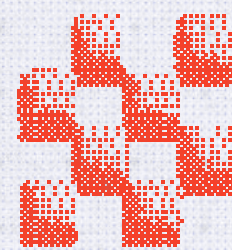
Embedded governance that scales

Governance is integrated into execution, which is why they are more likely to have a role overseeing governance (77%) and see "time saved in brand and compliance reviews" (54%) as a crucial ROI metric.
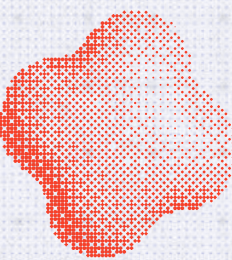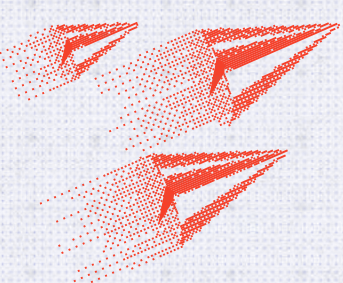
Clear ownership and accountability

73% have a formally defined AI role, creating clarity around AI ownership rather than relying on distributed responsibility.
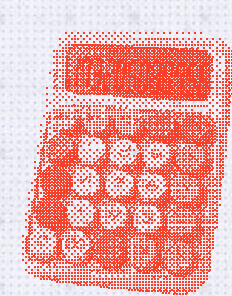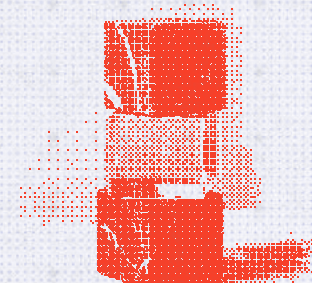
Stronger ROI confidence

61% can prove ROI (vs. 41%) and are far more likely to track business outcomes (e.g. fewer brand reviews, campaign lift) other than hours saved.

A long-term operating mindset

82% dedicate 10%+ of their marketing budget to AI, with 1 in 3 expecting increases of 20–50%+. 86% also report high leadership commitment, compared to 32% of low maturity.

Marketing-specific tools and workflows

They are 45% more likely to use tools and workflows made for marketing (vs. generic tools), which get campaigns to market faster and are more likely to assist with multiple assets and brand governance.

What comes next for marketing leaders?

Marketing AI success in 2026 will be defined by governance, workflow integration, and measurement discipline. These factors determine whether AI will accelerate execution or compound friction as usage scales.

High-performing organizations offer a model for how to treat AI as an operating capability:

- **Define clear ownership for AI outcomes:** Assign explicit responsibility for AI strategy, governance, and performance measurement so accountability doesn't diffuse across teams as usage scales.

- **Operationalize AI through repeatable workflows:** Move beyond one-off use cases by embedding AI into standardized content pipelines, campaign execution, and review processes.

- **Evolve ROI measurement beyond productivity:** Complement time-saved metrics with outcome-based indicators like cost reduction, campaign lift, and speed-to-market improvements that resonate with leadership.

- **Build governance into execution, not after it:** Integrate brand, legal, and compliance standards directly into AI workflows to reduce friction without slowing output.

- **Enable teams as deliberately as you set strategy:** Invest in training, tooling, and change management so team-level execution keeps pace with leadership ambition.

In 2026, AI success will be determined by organizational readiness. Leadership vision alone is no longer enough. Impact depends on whether teams are equipped with clear ownership, governed workflows, and the ability to measure results as AI scales. Without those foundations, increased AI usage simply creates more activity and more friction.

The next phase of AI maturity is about building better operating models. The organizations that win will be those that design for scale from the outset, embed governance into execution, and hold AI to the same standards of accountability as any core marketing system. The era of AI experimentation is over, opening a door to a more disciplined and scalable way of working.

Demographics and Methodology

The State of AI in Marketing 2026 is based on a survey of 1,400 marketing professionals, conducted in partnership with Benchmarkit, a trusted third-party research firm. Respondents were sourced from a combination of Jasper's ecosystem and an external panel to ensure a representative sample.

Participants span key industries including technology, financial services, retail, media and communications, and life sciences, and represent a wide range of marketing functions and seniority levels. The survey was designed to capture a comprehensive view of AI adoption, operational maturity, governance, organizational impact, and ROI measurement as AI scales across marketing teams.

SAMPLE SIZE
1,400 marketing professionals

SURVEY METHOD
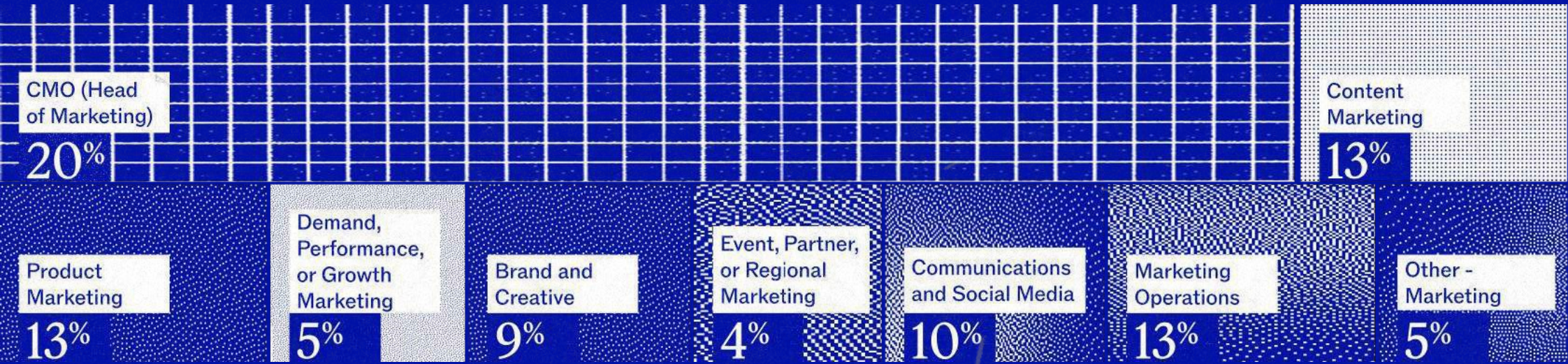Online quantitative survey

SURVEY PERIOD
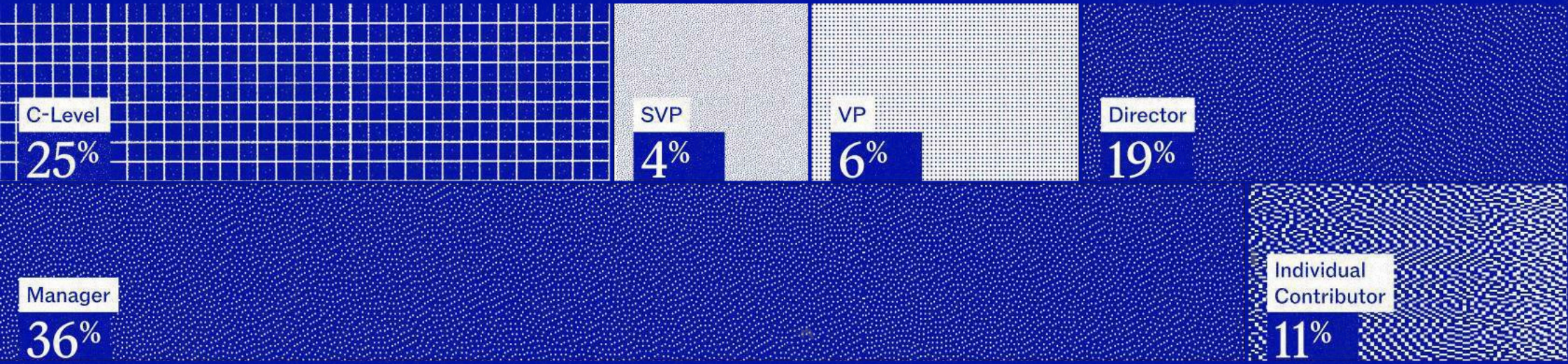November 2025 – December 2025

TARGET AUDIENCE
Marketing professionals across company sizes and roles, from individual contributors to C-level leaders, with strong representation from mid-market and enterprise organizations in North America.
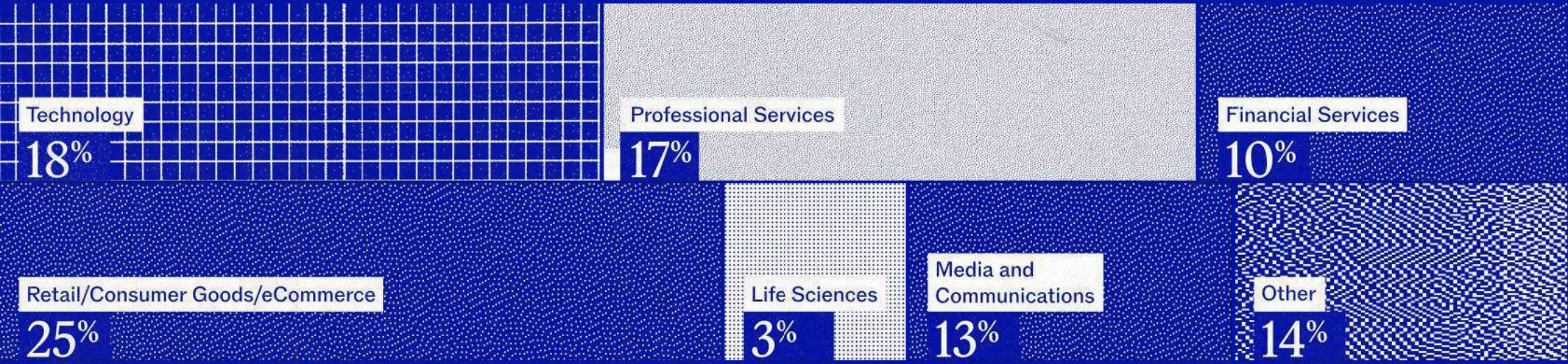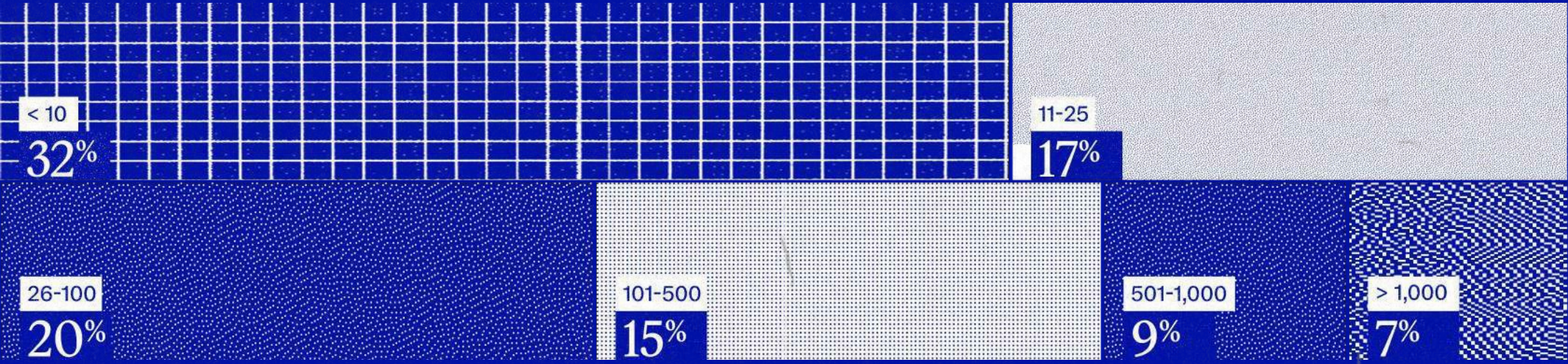
Participant profile by department

CMO (Head of Marketing)
20%

Content Marketing
13%

Product Marketing
13%

Demand, Performance, or Growth Marketing
5%

Brand and Creative
9%

Event, Partner, or Regional Marketing
4%

Communications and Social Media
10%

Marketing Operations
13%

Other - Marketing
5%

Participant profile by seniority

C-Level
25%

SVP
4%

VP
6%

Director
19%

Manager
36%

Individual Contributor
11%

Participant profile by industry

Technology
18%

Professional Services
17%

Financial Services
10%

Retail/Consumer Goods/eCommerce
25%

Life Sciences
3%

Media and Communications
13%

Other
14%

Participant profile by number of people in marketing

< 10
32%

11-25
17%

26-100
20%

101-500
15%

501-1,000
9%

> 1,000
7%

Participant profile by annual revenue

$1M - $50M
42%

$50M - $100M
20%

$100M - $500M
17%

$500M - $1B
9%

$1B - $10B
8%

> $10B
4%

jasper