

HIGHSPOT

2020 MARKETING CHALLENGES

The Impacts of a Global Pandemic

INTRODUCTION

Attracting and keeping buyers' attention is not an easy feat – and that's without a global pandemic.

This report examines **the most common marketing challenges of 2020** for the three largest functions (content, product, and demand) and offers recommendations to help you **remain competitive in 2021**.

KEY FINDINGS

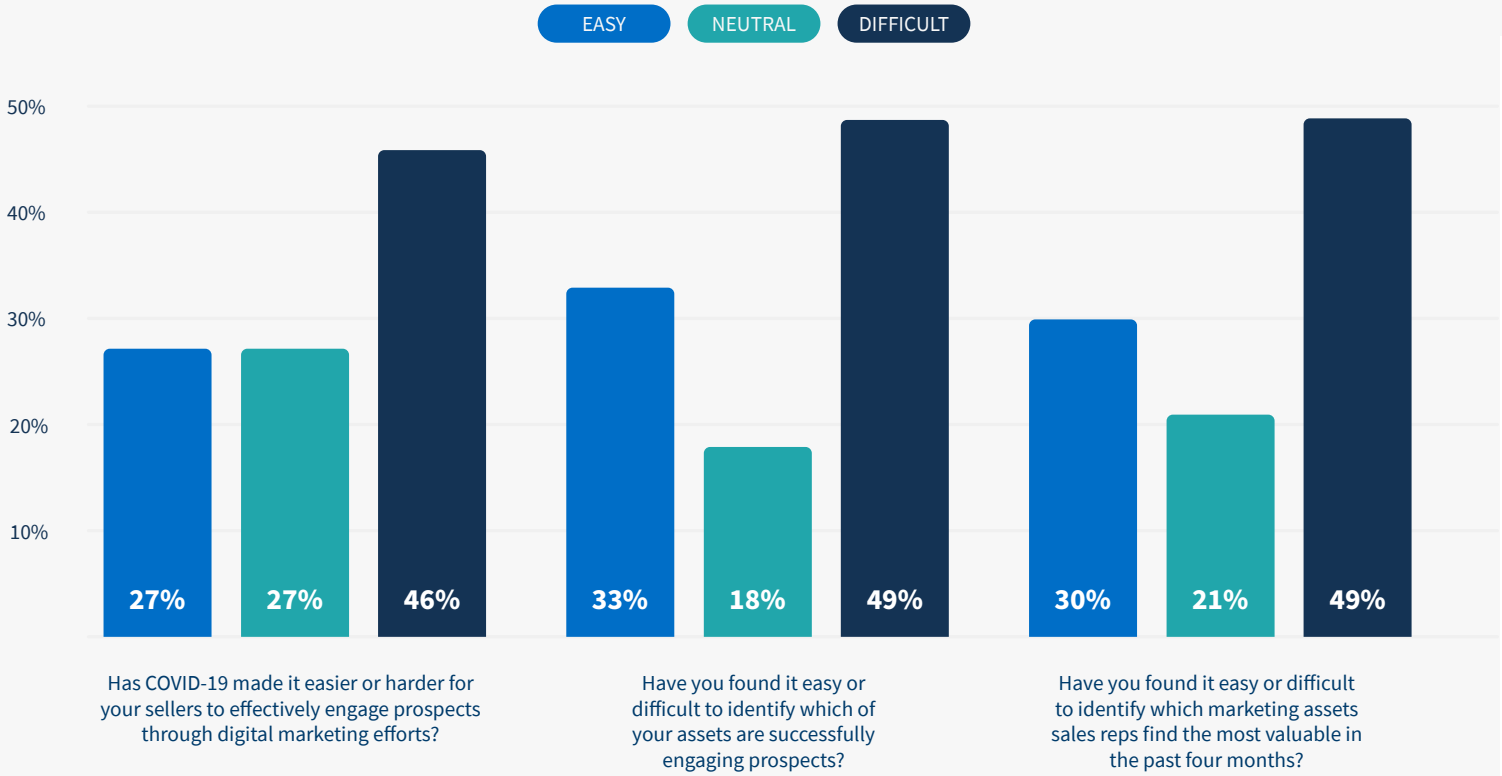


- The biggest concern for marketers across functions is identifying which assets are successfully engaging prospects.
- Respondents reported that the most effective kinds of content were webinars, case studies, and customer testimonials.
- The needs of sellers still remain somewhat of a mystery, with marketers struggling to identify which marketing assets sellers find most valuable.

CONTENT MARKETING CHALLENGES

Struggle for Visibility

Content marketers have always been tasked with **catching the attention of prospects and convincing them to move to the next stage of the buyer's journey**. However, since the start of the pandemic that goal has become a moving target for a large group of content marketers.



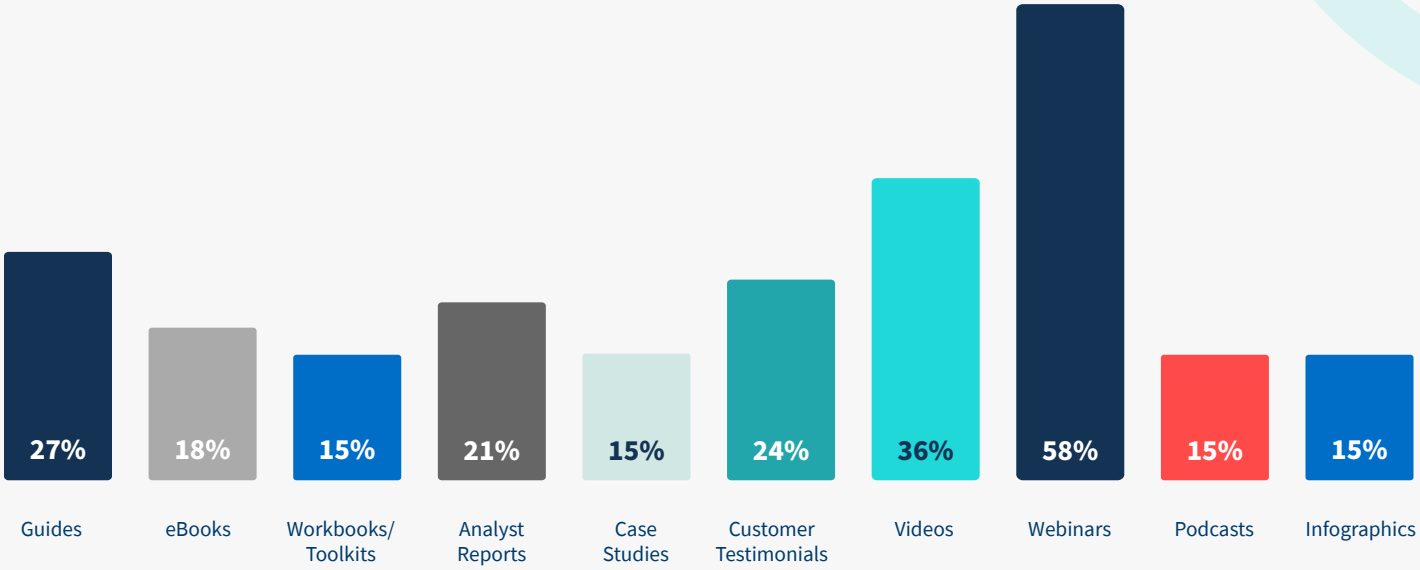
RESULTS

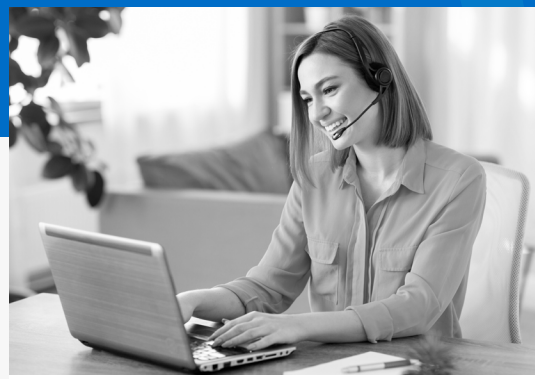
- 46% of content marketers surveyed found it difficult to effectively engage prospects.
- 49% of respondents find it difficult to identify which assets successfully engage prospects.
- 49% of those surveyed found it difficult to identify which marketing assets sellers find most valuable.

Clear Content Preferences Emerge

As work and life went virtual, vying for the attention of buyers has become even more difficult. Yet, there is a clear winner when it comes to content type – webinars. **The ability to watch live or on-demand, ask questions in real-time, and listen while multitasking makes webinars a buyer favorite.**

What content type have you found the most success with recently?





RESULTS

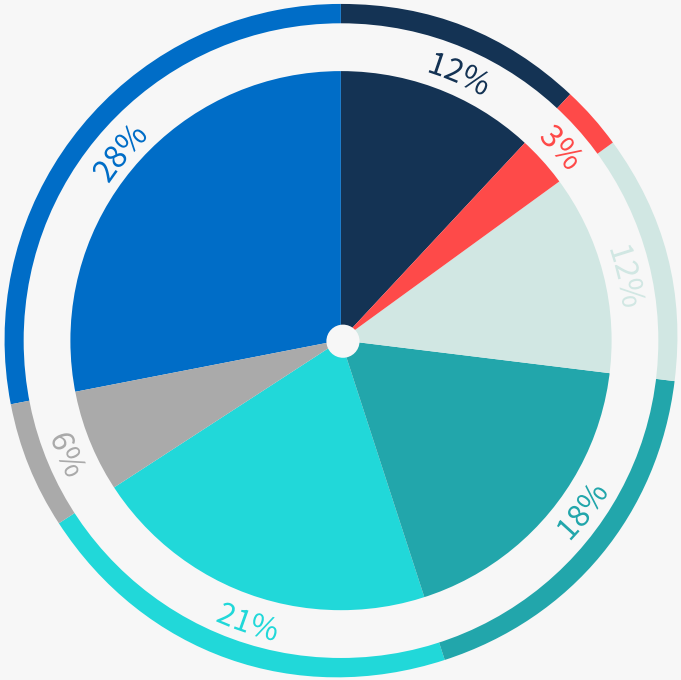
- 58% of content marketers found webinars to be the most successful type of content.
- Podcasts, infographics, and workbooks/toolkits are reported to be the least effective.

Uncertainty Stalls Buyers

Due to **the uncertainty of the economy and environment, organizations are hesitant to make buying decisions** – ultimately, resulting in longer buying cycles. As a result, content marketers are feeling the pressure to drive urgency – helping to move deals through the funnel.

What is your biggest content marketing challenge as a result of COVID-19?

- 28% DRIVING URGENCY
- 21% CREATING AWARENESS
- 18% CREATING EYE–CATCHING CONTENT
- 12% STANDING OUT FROM COMPETITORS
- 12% ENGAGING NEW AUDIENCES
- 6% MOVING LEADS THROUGH THE FUNNEL
- 3% IDENTIFYING WHAT CONTENT SELLERS FIND MOST USEFUL



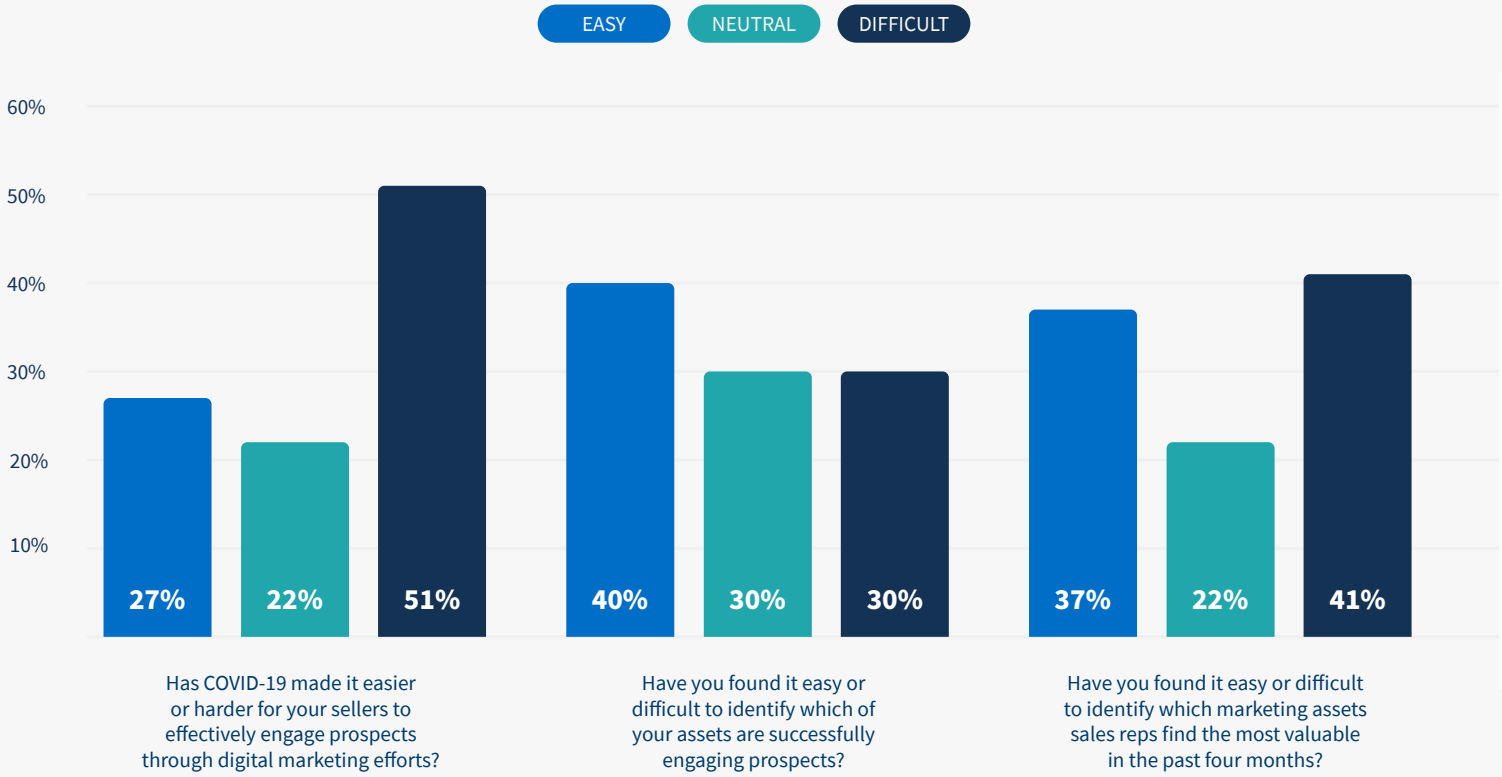
RESULTS

28% of content marketers report driving urgency as their biggest challenge as a result of COVID-19, followed by moving leads through the funnel.

DEMAND AND FIELD MARKETING CHALLENGES

Struggle to Grab Attention

With a plethora of martech tools available to gather and interpret data, demand and field marketers have a pretty good grasp of content performance. However, **the real struggle is grabbing the attention of buyers and persuading them to become leads**.



RESULTS

- 51% said that COVID-19 has made it difficult to effectively engage prospects through digital marketing efforts.
- Demand and field marketers were neutral as it pertained to identifying content performance.

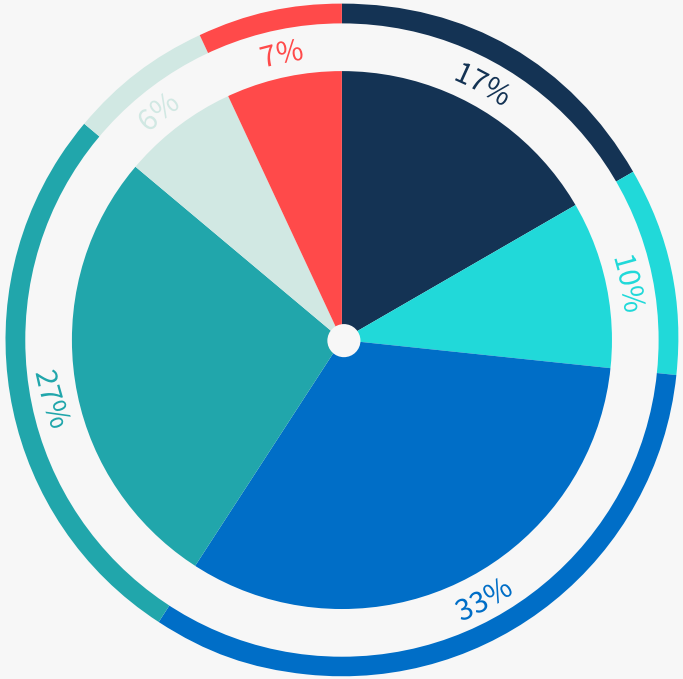
Finding the Right Buyers

Almost every organization has increased their digital marketing efforts exponentially causing overwhelmed and disengaged buyers. Now, demand generation **marketers are faced with the task of finding new prospects they can move through the funnel.**



What is your biggest demand marketing challenge as a result of COVID-19?

- 33% ENGAGING NEW AUDIENCES
- 27% MOVING LEADS THROUGH THE FUNNEL
- 17% CREATING EYE–CATCHING CONTENT
- 10% STANDING OUT FROM COMPETITORS
- 7% DRIVING URGENCY
- 6% IDENTIFYING WHAT CONTENT SELLERS FIND MOST USEFUL



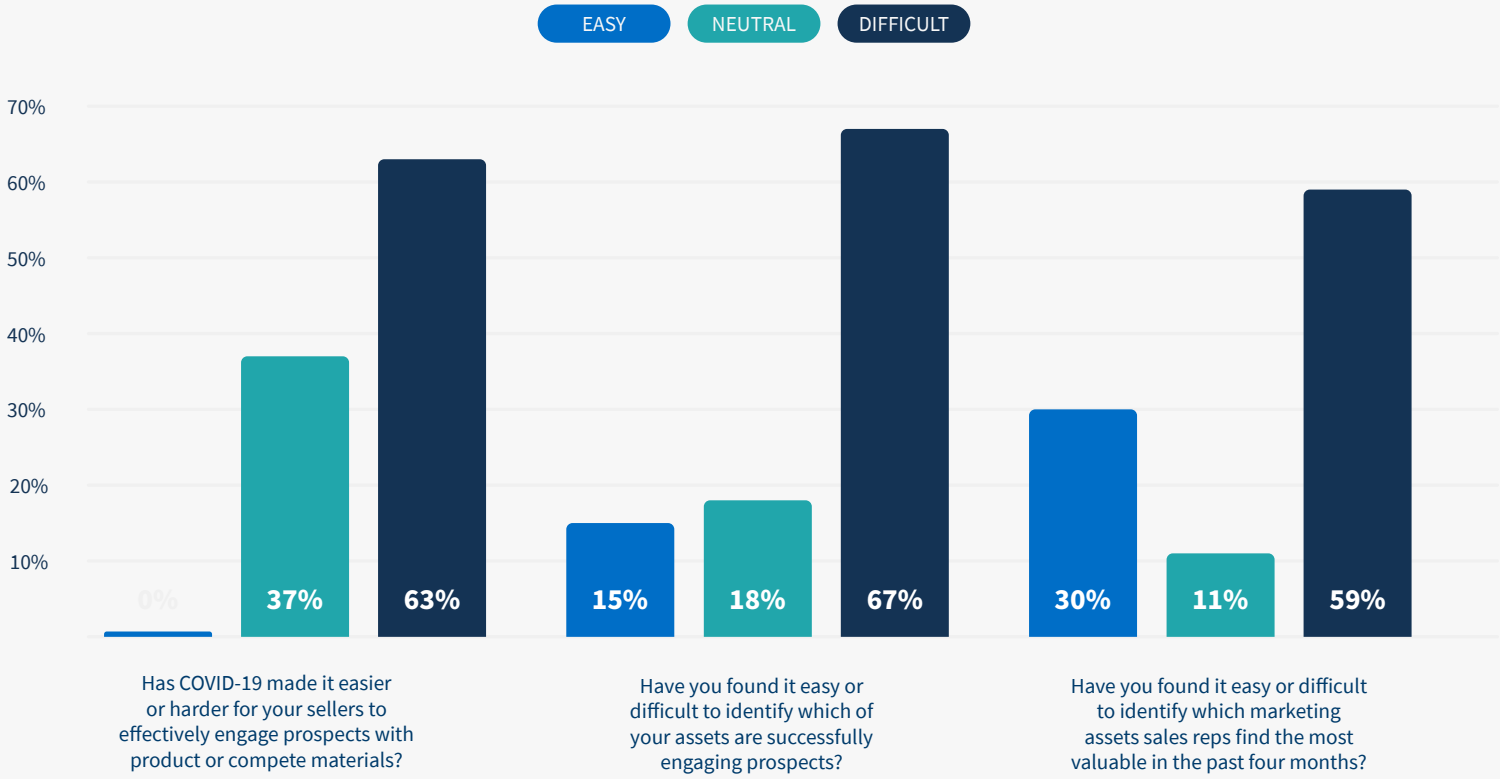
RESULTS

- 33% of demand and field marketers found engaging new audiences to be their biggest challenge.
- Surprisingly, moving leads through the funnel came in second place with 27%.

PRODUCT MARKETING CHALLENGES

Struggle to Differentiate

As content and demand marketers struggle to catch the attention of prospects at the top of the funnel, product marketers are struggling to prove ROI and differentiate later in the sales cycle. **With in-person interactions put on hold for the time being, sellers are forced to rely on product marketing materials to help them seal the deal**.



RESULTS

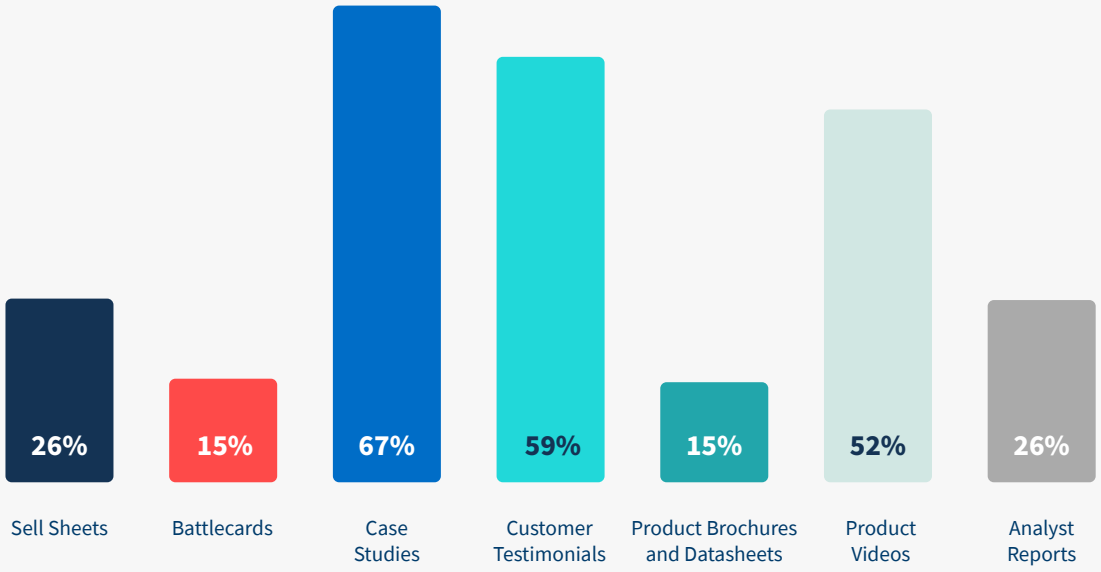
- 63% of respondents found it difficult for sellers to effectively engage prospects with product or compete materials .
- 67% of product marketers have found it difficult to identify which assets are successfully engaging prospects.
- 59% found it difficult to identify which marketing assets sellers find most valuable.

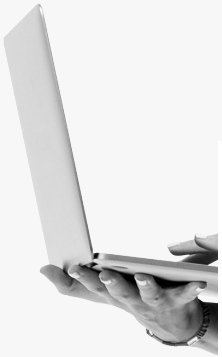
Customer Voices are Crucial

Customer testimonials and case studies have always been a necessary part of product marketing, but **buyers want validation from their peers** now more than ever. Customer voices provide prospects with peer-to-peer validation, offering assurance that helps to cut through the noise.



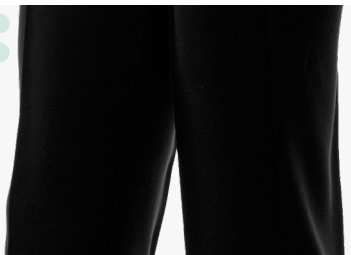
What content type have you found the most success with recently?





RESULTS

- 67% of product marketers found case studies to be the most effective type of content.
- Product brochures and battlecards were the least successful.



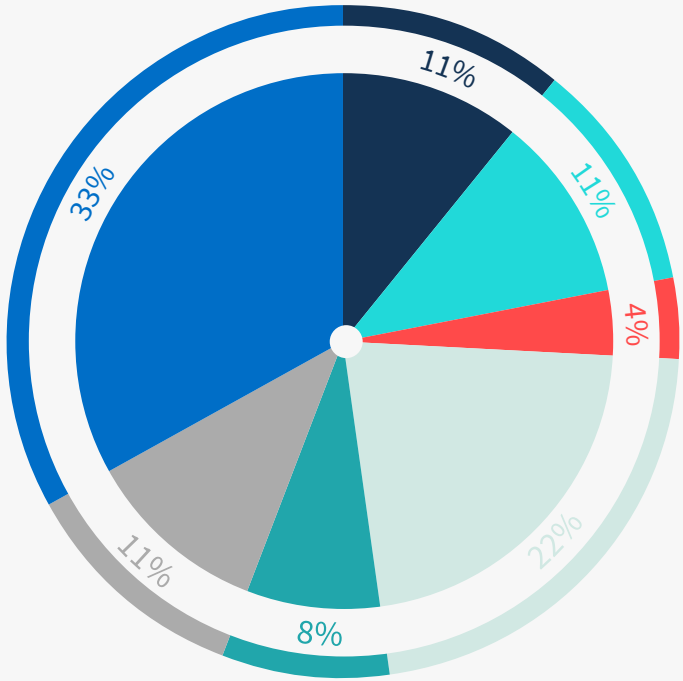
Buyers Want Proof

Without the ability to address concerns in-person or see products live, sellers struggle to prove value and effectively land differentiators. As a result, **product marketers are receiving more requests for proof of ROI and customer impact studies to help sellers close the deal**.



What is your biggest product marketing challenge as a result of COVID-19?

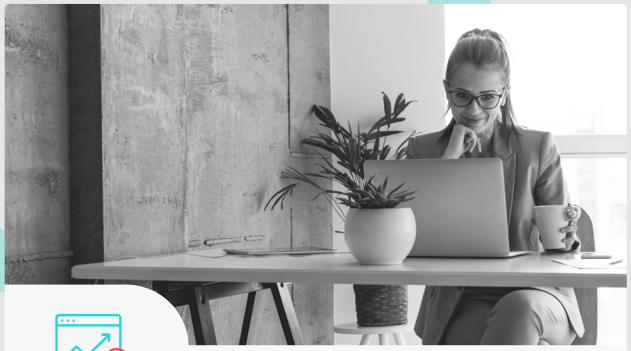
33%	PROVING VALUE/ROI
22%	LANDING PRODUCT DIFFERENTIATORS INTERNALLY AND WITH PROSPECTS
11%	STANDING OUT FROM COMPETITORS
11%	MOVING LEADS THROUGH THE FUNNEL
11%	DRIVING URGENCY
8%	CREATING COMPELLING PRODUCT CONTENT
4%	IDENTIFYING WHAT CONTENT SELLERS FIND MOST USEFUL



RESULTS

- 33% of product marketers report proving value/ROI as their biggest challenge as a result of COVID-19.
- Landing product differentiators internally and with prospects was the next biggest challenge.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2021



Use Content Analytics

Use content analytics to identify content that resonates with buyers through engagement data such as number of views. You can also use the data to recognize patterns such as the most engaging content kind and topic trends buyers are eager to consume.



Examine Usage Numbers

To uncover which content sellers find most valuable, examine usage numbers such as how often an asset is emailed to a prospect. With content usage data, you can see if the content sellers are using is resonating with buyers. If not, this is an opportunity to enable them on what content is working.



Identifying Analytics

Identifying effective internal and external analytics then allows you to re-examine your content, product, and demand strategies to better align with what's working.

HIGHSPOT

Highspot is the sales enablement platform that reps love. We empower companies to elevate customer conversations that drive strategic growth. Our intuitive platform combines intelligent content management, training, contextual guidance, customer engagement, and actionable analytics. Revenue teams use Highspot to deliver a unified buying experience that increases revenue, customer satisfaction, and retention. With 90 percent average monthly recurring usage and global support across 125 countries, Highspot is the highest-rated sales enablement solution on Salesforce AppExchange, G2 Crowd, Microsoft Store, Google Play, and Apple AppStore.

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