B2B MARKETING

HUT 3

# The State of AI:

## Today, Tomorrow and 2030



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# **Introduction:** The current state of AI integration



Kavita Singh,
*Head of Growth Solutions Content*
**B2B Marketing**



Steve Mudd,
*AI Expert,*
**Propolis**

When it comes to AI, every marketing team is on its own journey. Some are at a more mature stage while other businesses are just sinking their teeth into AI. But just a few years ago, experimenting with AI seemed like this shiny new object. And now, it has accelerated rapidly to help automate tasks, processes and decision making. And to say the speed of AI transformation is overwhelming would be a massive understatement.

This Hut 3 & B2B Marketing report explores how marketing organizations are adopting AI today - not as a single journey, but through two distinct paths: enterprise-level integration and individual productivity use. Using survey data from Sogolytics and Sentiment, we captured 129 responses from senior marketing leaders. Respondents were based in the UK and US. In addition, we sat down with five industry leaders to examine where AI is delivering value, where it's currently stalling and what maturity looks like heading towards 2030.

So with that being said, where are we at the moment? Let's start there.

When we spoke to marketing leaders, there was a general agreement that there is a two-pronged approach with AI. There are those who are experimenting with AI and testing pilots, which seems to be the more business-oriented and a long-term strategic approach to AI. Further to that, Steve Mudd, our Propolis Expert in AI, noted that more advanced organizations are beginning to integrate AI into automation. Although it's worth noting, full adoption of autonomous agents is not yet widespread.

And the second approach are those using AI as a personal operating system to enhance their individual work efficiency, covering tasks such as writing, strategy, and research. And this would be categorized as a short-term productivity boost.

Using this foundation, we will be exploring everything from the operational side of AI to its impact on ROI, its challenges and much more. Plus, we will reveal all the insights we found from both the quantitative and qualitative data. So let's dive in.

# Don't wait for perfection, start where you are



Darryl Merkli,
*Head of AI Studio & Services*, **Hut 3**

When B2B Marketing approached us to partner on this research into the state of AI in marketing, it felt like a natural fit. Helping marketing leaders navigate complexity, embrace AI-driven innovation and deliver measurable business outcomes is what we do every day. This report gave us the chance to step back and look at where the industry really stands — not where we assume it is, but where the data tells us it is.

What this report reveals is something we see working alongside marketing leaders across sectors: AI adoption is not one journey but many, running at very different speeds across different organizations. Some teams are already building basic agentic workflows that automate complex processes end-to-end. Others are still finding their footing with prompt-based tools for content and ideation. Both are valid starting points, but neither is a destination. The data shows that nearly a third of organizations describe their AI maturity as operational with some workflow integration, while only around one in ten have reached a truly transformative stage. That gap represents both the challenge and the opportunity ahead.

What struck me most in this research is the tension between ambition and infrastructure. Marketing leaders want full automation, connected systems and intelligent workflows. But the reality on the ground often looks different: siloed data, fragmented toolsets and governance frameworks that haven't kept pace with adoption.

This tells us something important: the bottleneck isn't desire; it's confidence and competence.

This is precisely where we focus our energy at Hut 3. Through our AI Studio, we help marketing teams move beyond experimentation into execution — building bespoke agentic workflows, deploying our proprietary Enigma AI platform for scalable personalization, insight and content production, and equipping teams with the training and strategic frameworks they need to adopt AI with purpose. We believe AI should enhance human expertise, not replace it. The most effective AI strategies we've delivered are the ones where technology amplifies creativity, sharpens decision-making and frees up people to focus on what they do best: building relationships, crafting stories, and driving growth.

My advice to any marketing leader reading this? Don't wait for perfection. Start where you are, be pragmatic about what AI can deliver today, and build a roadmap tied to real business outcomes — not isolated experiments. The organizations that will lead by 2030 are the ones taking deliberate, connected steps right now. I hope this report gives you the insight and confidence to take yours.

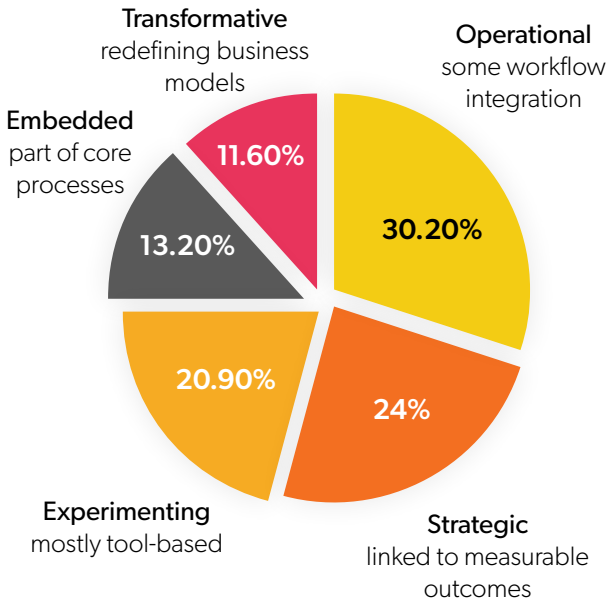
# What does AI look like today?

The first aspect of AI we wanted to explore was where organizations were currently at in their AI journeys. Our research revealed that about 30.20% of organizations feel their maturity level is operational with some workflow integration. Nearly a quarter of organizations are using AI strategically and linked to measurable outcomes. 20.90% stated they're in the experimentation phase, 13.20% said they've embedded AI into their core processes and 11.60% said AI is refining their business models.

When we take a step back, this distribution highlights how fragmented AI adoption can be with the majority of organizations clustered in early or mid-stage maturity, and only a small minority operating at embedded or transformative levels.

And this checked out when we conducted our in-depth interviews. For example, Siddharth Taparia, CMO, JLL said they're currently identifying where the best opportunities lie.

*Which of the following best describes your AI maturity today?*






Siddharth Taparia, *CMO*, **JLL**

He said: *"We encourage everyone to experiment with [AI], and explore use cases. AI helps JLL drive efficiency and increase productivity across our global organization.*

*We have our own JLL GPT with about 87,000 users company-wide and 70% of our marketing team uses JLL GPT daily. AI is a powerful tool that will help us create new value for our clients, our employees, and our business."*

In addition, PwC is running multiple AI pilots across a wide range of use cases, driving both speed and productivity - this can include everything from using tools like Microsoft Copilot for meeting summaries to using internal chatbots for drafting presentations and Chat PwC, the firm's secure enterprise AI assistant, for experimentation in a safe private environment. Additionally, the organization is experimentally using AI to fine-tune models for personalized advertising at scale, leveraging PwC's thought leadership and other training material.

It's worth stating that in general, leaders are striving for full automated workflows; however, that might be easier said than done. In the next section, we delve into this exact challenge.

# Challenges at an operational level

## Systems and data fragmentation

Now that we have established the current state of AI and where maturity lies, let's shift to some of the operational challenges. According to our research, approximately 55.8% of organizations are well-prepared, moderately prepared or fully ready for this next wave of AI automation. However, that does leave a concerning 44.2% of organizations that either said they're beginning to explore their options or aren't prepared at all.

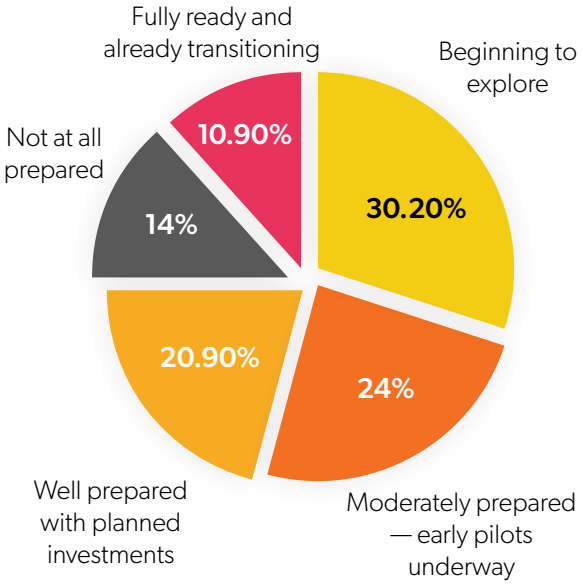
And one of the reasons businesses might be unprepared? The core issue could be the lack of system connectivity and how to approach it carefully and methodically. We dug deeper into the data and saw that 18.6% of organizations stated that their biggest AI barrier was related to siloed data and tools. That's nearly a fifth of organizations that feel it's their biggest challenge already.

Ryan Almond, VP Enterprise Marketing, Henkel advised on this saying connecting systems is ultimately not an AI problem. According to qualitative research we conducted with Convertr, some businesses believe AI can be a band-aid to connect systems together when in fact, it actually highlights gaps and misalignments even more.



Ryan Almond, *VP Enterprise Marketing*, **Henkel**

*How prepared is your organization for AI's next wave of integration (e.g. agentic systems)?*




*The Biggest Barriers to AI Maturity According to Marketing Leaders*



He explained: *"If you think about your CRM, your marketing automation platform, your service cloud, and all those other data platforms during the customer journey, even if you take AI out of the equation, having all those systems joined up gives you a better idea of what the customer is doing. And therefore, you can make better decisions. The problem doesn't change and adding AI onto that disconnect can actually make things worse. So you need to think about connecting your systems first. And then overlay AI, which will pick up on patterns humans wouldn't."*

And this makes sense when we look at the #1 barrier preventing AI maturity: skills and training gaps. For some organizations, not only are they dealing with disconnected systems, but people who are also lacking the skills to understand their best strategy and solution moving forward. And ultimately, this prevents organizations from scaling AI from "agentified" point solutions to truly agentic workflows that automate from end-to-end.



Alex Sladen, *Global Marketing Director*, **PwC**

Alex Sladen, Global Marketing Director, PwC said their organization is exploring and experimenting with agentic workflows built on top of large language models. He said: *"We're talking to media agencies around full agentic workflows, from brief creation to media distribution and everything in between. There's probably a likelihood in the future that we'll get to an AI powered 'workflow as a service' model within marketing and the industry more broadly, where rather than buying creative solutions from media and agencies, we're buying agentic workflows that we can then use for brief delivery in an automated way. That tech does exist today but humans are inserted between layers of the workflow and that will stay the same until a full agentic workflow from input to output is 100% accountable and trustworthy. We're not there yet and we shouldn't be there - we need to do a lot of testing and experimentation first."*



Jake Bird, *AI Consultant*

## A false sense of governance

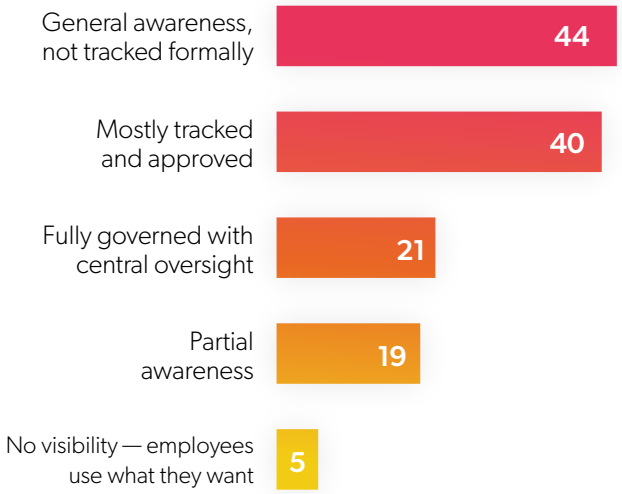
Another big barrier mentioned was the complexity behind governance and compliance with 22 marketing leaders stating it was their biggest challenge. According to Jake Bird, AI Consultant, CMOs and CROs might want full AI integration but Legal and Data Security teams might be the ones hitting the brake pedal due to fear of data training external models and security risks.

For example, Jake has seen many businesses embedding AI with such tight security restrictions that the tools become impractical for strategic or creative work. Others have stopped all AI usage entirely due to security fears, which can backfire because employees end up paying for personal AI licences because they don't want to work without it.

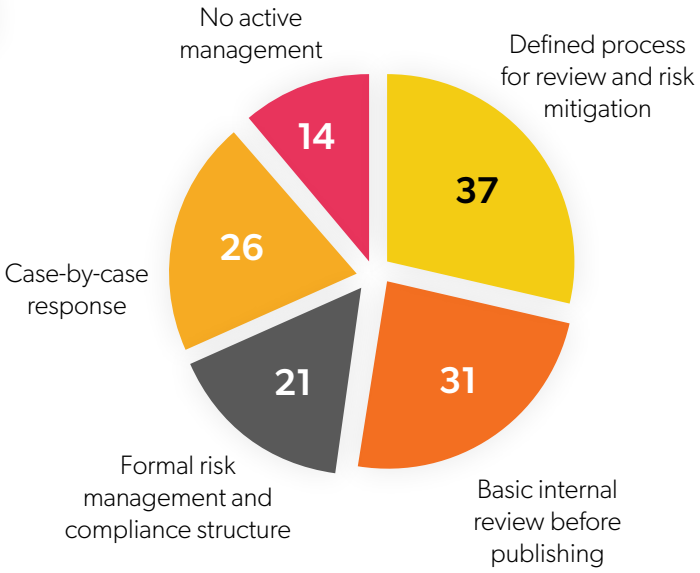
He said: *"This new era of Shadow IT presents real issues because employees haven't been trained on how to use AI responsibly, especially around what data you can and can't put into it."*

For clarity, Shadow AI is the practice of utilizing unapproved use of AI tools by employees, such as ChatGPT or embedded AI features in apps, without IT department oversight which inevitably runs a risk in itself. Interestingly, our research suggests that organizations aren't fully aware of the AI tools being used across their teams. Only 16.3% of businesses said they're fully governed with central oversight. 34.1% stated their organization had a general awareness but wasn't tracked formally while nearly 14.7% of organizations said they were 'partially aware'. A concerning 3.9% of organizations stated there was no visibility. So out of the 129 organizations we surveyed, only 21 are fully being tracked while others could fully be using AI for their own personal use on their own personal accounts.

*How aware are you of all the AI tools currently used across your teams?*




*How do you manage brand, data, and compliance risks from AI use?*




When organizations were specifically asked how they manage brand, data and compliance risks from AI use, the stats looked slightly more promising. Nearly 29% stated they had a 'defined process for review and risk mitigation' and 16.3% stated they had some sort of 'formal risk management and compliance structure.

So why the discrepancy? Well remember the two main use cases of AI? Business use versus personal use? Our guess is that there might be a formal infrastructure from an overall business point of view and stance. However, when it comes to managing teams' personal usage of AI, that has yet to be done. This indicates a clear fragment in marketing's workflows despite efforts to create a safe and compliant environment.

The good news? By 2030, there will most likely be better integration. However, Jake believes real AI transformation needs to be a ground-up approach - focusing on individual tasks, getting those right for the way you work, then building up and connecting things together.

He said: *"We're all years away from fully integrating, and the tech is developing every day - so we have to build the new house while we're also living in it."*

As mentioned in the introduction, organizations like PwC and JLL are already deploying secure, enterprise-grade AI assistants built on top of existing large language models which seems to be what leaders are pushing others to do.

Ryan explained: *"In a world of AI, we need to make sure that IP, knowledge and expertise is protected." Not only does this protect your company's expertise, it also ensures that information cannot be easily copied by public LLMs like Gemini or ChatGPT. "*

# The impact of AI & 2030 predictions

Now that we've discussed the operational side of the business and the potential challenges with workflows, we will break down the overall impact of AI. Plus, this led to asking leaders what AI maturity looks like in 2030.

## Thinking: Treat AI as A Sparring Partner

When AI was introduced, there was a misconception that AI would replace our jobs. However, over time, we concluded that AI won't replace people's jobs but people who don't use AI will be replaced by those who do. At JLL, Siddharth believes that AI will increasingly serve as a thought partner, generating ideas while being integrated into marketing workflows. He clarified that human beings still play a crucial component though by providing:

- Critical thinking
- Cultural understanding and sensitivities
- Understanding of what is ethical and right
- Creativity and the humanizing of marketing outcomes
- Oversight, as an agent shouldn't work completely autonomously

Alex also noted that this shift has led to PwC's teams becoming more experimental due to the low cost of creation, and a "democratization of ideas" where junior staff can bring forward ideas previously associated with third parties or senior leaders.

And the research we conducted supports this. 76.7% are at least moderately confident in their team's ability to think critically and a majority of teams (58.9%) reported a positive shift in their team's learning behaviors.

Siddharth suggested that even in advanced organizations, the human experience remains critical to maintaining high-quality content. He said: *"Our people are essential to our organizational success, and we are focused on empowering them with data, AI, and future-ready skills so they can do their best work. Human judgment remains important to ensure legal compliance, brand consistency, creativity, emotions and originality."*

## The misuse of AI - what can go wrong

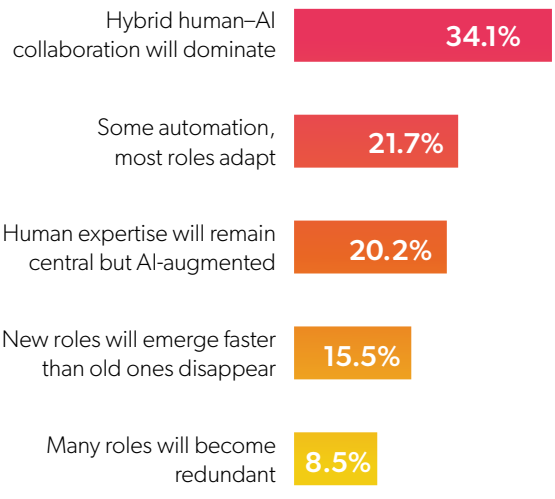
While it is impacting organizations positively, we also noted that AI can be misused. Along with Shadow AI in the fold, AI can change how teams brainstorm. After all, there is that lingering 11.6% of respondents that cited that AI has led to a decline in their team's skills development.

Jake mentioned that misuse of AI happens when individuals over-rely on it. He said: *"In terms of how individuals use it, you should be using it sparingly while understanding the restrictions of the technology and using your own insights to feed the context and use it as a sparring partner, rather than a strategist and partner. That's where issues come up."*

So what can you do? Interrogate your AI suggestions and avoid taking AI at face value. And if you are using it? Own it. People tend to worry that revealing AI usage will diminish their own credibility but if used correctly, can still be a testament of your strategy.

This need to interrogate, contextualize, and take responsibility for AI outputs is exactly why marketing roles aren't disappearing - they're evolving.

*How do you see AI affecting marketing roles in the next 2–3 years?*



## AI shifting time; creating value

When we asked organizations about the time-saving aspect when using AI, 73.7% of respondents say AI reduces total time spent on tasks. This doesn't come as a surprise as AI spans from using ChatGPT for ideation to full automated workflows - in both scenarios, AI is a time-saver.

Ryan said: *"We are able to work on more strategic customer-facing things through the use of AI. We want to reposition our time so we're working on the more strategic items. We're using AI to help us become quicker and scale up on things like we couldn't before so we can become more targeted and personalized."*

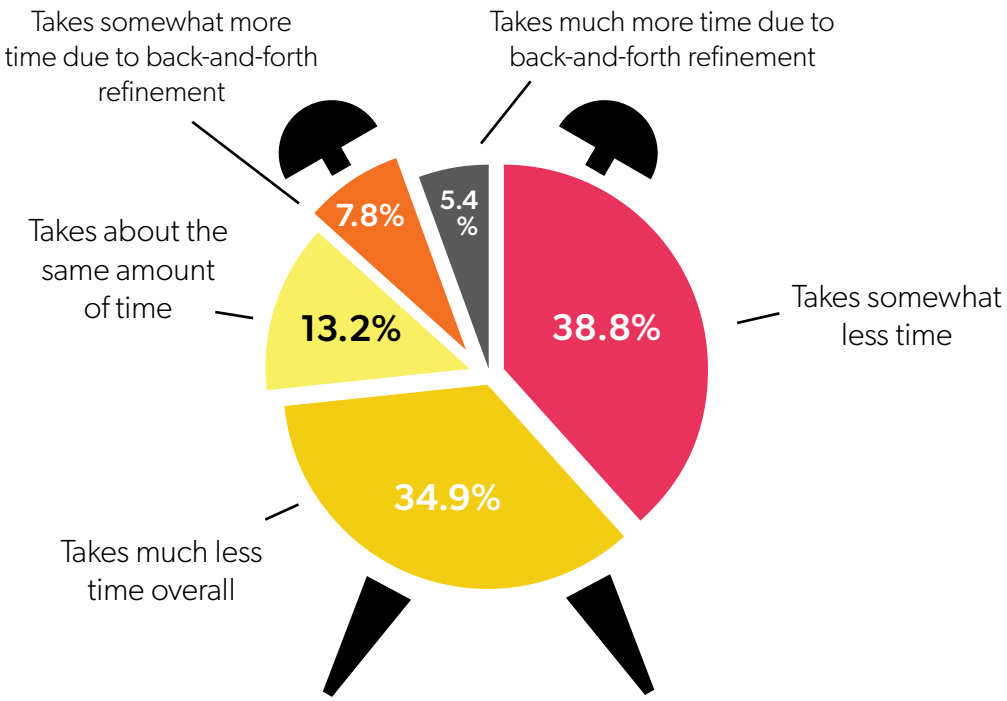
However, we also wanted to explore the time commitment involved when organizations really embrace AI. PwC for example has invested time in its people through learning and upskilling programs, including specific AI pathways for marketing teams and senior leaders taking an intensive course. In addition, the organization is also focusing its efforts on governance, trust and ensuring clear guidelines for AI usage.

## AI is delivering value but organizations struggle to prove it

Regardless of where organizations are currently at, there seems to be a resounding conclusion that AI is widely used, it saves time; however, its ROI attribution is still immature. For example, PwC has done a massive amount with AI already but their next phase is to measure AI's ROI in terms of business deliverables, focusing on how it adds to the top or bottom line.

This can certainly suggest that AI adoption is happening across businesses but it might be at a stage of limited depth or enterprise-wide integration. Ultimately, if workflows are still fragmented and lacking a unified strategic roadmap, there will continue to be challenges with measuring AI's success.

*Total time spent on marketing initiatives with AI vs without AI*



# AI predictions for 2030

**So now that we know what the challenges are, we wanted to find out what leaders' 2030 predictions were. And their thoughts? Agentic workflows are the future but people are equally essential to making this happen.**

- **Siddharth** predicted that by the near future, leading companies will have a well-developed and adopted ecosystem of agents automating complex workflows and driving efficiency, with a focus on capturing more market and revenue opportunities.
- **Alex** shared a similar sentiment saying: *"The shift from experimentation to strategy development and automation will separate leaders from followers. Organizations that embed agentic workflows into models — with governance and trust built in from the start — will gain a major advantage. The sooner teams standardize these automated, multi-agent workflows to produce outputs that are demonstrably better than today's, the sooner they'll pull ahead."*
- As demonstrated earlier in our report, human judgment doesn't just get replaced. It can simply be amplified by AI. **Jake** predicted: *"AI is not going to be running everything autonomously all the time. We'll have a lot more chatbots by 2030. People will always buy people. Relationships are so important. AI is not going to automate that so figure out where AI fits within the marketing workflow - that massively enables us to be able to give people those experiences whilst also growing the business."*
- **Steve Mudd** emphasized **Jake's** statement and indicated that the most important factor separating AI leaders from followers by 2030 will be their investment in their people.

# Conclusion: Treat AI as a capability not a tool

Let's reflect. AI adoption in marketing is no longer a question of 'if', but of depth, discipline, and direction. Organizations that treat AI as a connected capability rather than a collection of tools will be best positioned to scale value responsibly.

**So with that being said, remember to:**

- Start small
- Connect systems
- Invest in people
- Build toward agentic workflows with governance baked in

Siddharth said: *"A very important milestone will be when this technology is not a separate thing. When we stop talking about AI and the technology gets integrated into how marketing is done and into the fabric of the organization. I don't think we talk about marketing automation anymore because marketing automation is integrated into marketing. You don't talk about marketing automation as a separate thing."*

However, until we get there, it's important for marketing leaders to lean into bespoke integrated workflow AI solutions, while investing in their people as well. As evidenced by the qualitative and quantitative data, AI adoption is still quite fragmented due to governance, Shadow AI and disconnected workflows.

Ryan Almond concluded:

> ***Don't be scared of AI. From simple prompting to agentic workflows - there's a big gap there. But if you're at the beginner's stage, just start."***

# About HUT 3

HUT 3 exists to help enterprise organisations navigate the shift from campaign-led marketing to intelligence-led growth. In complex B2B environments, where buying decisions are made by groups and sales cycles are long, success depends on focus, relevance and proof — not volume.

Our approach is rooted in Account-Based Marketing, but evolved for today's reality. We combine strategic clarity, creative excellence, deep technology expertise and Agentic AI to design systems that govern growth, rather than simply execute campaigns. Insight informs direction, orchestration adapts in real time, and performance is measured commercially — not cosmetically.

We believe AI and data should power scale, efficiency, and decision-making. But trust, differentiation and impact are created by people. That's why our work blends intelligent systems with authentic human creativity, ensuring brands engage buying groups with relevance, credibility, and purpose.

HUT 3 partners closely with enterprise clients to embed new ways of working — empowering teams, aligning marketing and sales, and turning ambition into measurable action. The result is marketing that earns trust, stands up to board-level scrutiny, and delivers sustainable growth.

# About B2B MARKETING

B2B Marketing is the world-renowned provider of insight, professional development, events and training for marketers and leaders in B2B.

Since our launch in 2004, we've amassed the largest global network of B2B marketers, giving us the unique ability to place your brand in the centre of the B2B buzz.

At the core of our business are the 85,000+ members of our website worldwide and five of the biggest and most influential annual events in the B2B calendar, alongside a host of webinars, podcasts, roundtables and training.

## What can we do for you?

Our dedicated marketing and media solutions team can help you:

**Build** powerful brand recognition at the heart of the B2B industry.

**Deliver** your marketing content and proposition to the right audience at the right time through our weekly content emails.

**Create** compelling stories around your brand with headline-grabbing research and analysis through our reports.

**Get face to face** and engage with some of the industry's most influential decision-makers and buyers at our events.

**Share** your brand stories and content with our 160k+ subscribers, 80k+ monthly website users and 260k+ social media following.

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