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CONTENT PARTNER: GILROY

# Riding the wave of martech change

## SUBMERGED IN AN UNMANAGEABLE SEA OF TECHNOLOGY AND FACING THE NEXT TIDE



HIGHLIGHTS REPORT

*(full version available to Propolis members only)*

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SECTION 1

# B2B marketing is digital and reliant on technology



**PETER O'NEILL,**
lead analyst,
B2B Marketing

**How many of us have signed up for a gym membership at the start of the year, pledging to go weekly, and then only worked out a handful of times that year?** Buying a gym membership may appear to be a tangible sign of progress towards fitness or good health, but it's not enough. Companies fall into a similar trap when viewing technology as a panacea: a solution or remedy for all problems. They buy the next shiny thing, but have not thought the process fully through, just as the aspiring fitness fanatic does not plan for long-term change.

In a survey I fielded globally late last year, I found that 83% of 1500 companies are now re-assessing the usefulness of their current marketing automation platform (MAP). Why? Well, because most of them are now focusing on digital marketing programmes, as society and business reacts to the Covid-19 crisis. In parallel, the focus of digital marketing is moving from the simple realisation of new business leads to a more engaging and relationship model. That raises questions about the type and functionality of MAP that is now needed.

Nearly three-quarters are using MAPs more than previously, with over half of those companies leveraging it for more products and services than before and/or for greater market coverage. But the crisis has accelerated the inevitable, and the increased dependency on digital marketing has exposed weaknesses in many MAP installations.

However, it's not just MAPs. Successful digital marketing is all about leveraging various technologies to communicate, calibrate, schedule, personalise, analyse and report success. So, while martech is recognised as critical component in enabling successful B2B marketing, the challenge of having the right martech stack is daunting. As if that wasn't enough, there's also the challenge of managing it efficiently. Some companies assign specific people or even teams to be responsible for their martech operations, while others try to operate the technologies in parallel with their day jobs. Regardless, most marketers are now realising that a radical transformation in their martech is probably necessary.

Martech has undergone a metamorphosis in the last couple of years. Digital dominates and what was innovative a few years ago is now commonplace. With nearly 9000 marketing tools and a never-ending increase in new technologies, it's easy to get distracted by shiny new toys.

**Karla Wentworth, founder and managing director, Vantage Clever, and Propolis Hive expert for Marketing Operations & Process:** *"Martech functionality has evolved to a point where tools used for entirely different purposes are now replicating each other's functionality in a bid to become 'the' marketing automation tool. Whilst helpful to some customers who can reduce the size of their tech stack, it is more confusing and financially wasteful for companies with a poor martech strategy, multiple tools duplicating functionality or little integration."*

## 1.2. B2B Marketing surveys marketers each year on their martech status

This report is based on the findings of our Q1-2022 survey of nearly 100 B2B marketers from companies of all sizes, small and large, and across all industries. The survey reveals the state of B2B's martech stack in 2022, the levels of satisfaction when it comes to those technologies, plus an overview of some of the challenges faced in operating it. When important, we also compare this year's data with the findings collected in previous years. The survey also posed several questions about the state of marketing operations (MOPs) within respondents' organisations.

For context, 32% of the survey respondents are the head of marketing in their organisation, while a further 42% are in the first line of reporting to the head of marketing. Over two-thirds of the respondents have formal responsibility for martech, and 75% claim formal responsibility for the MOPs function in their companies. However, not all of the interviewees have dedicated MOPs staff (as we will see later).

In addition to the survey, we conducted interviews with several senior marketers for a deeper dive into some of the questions. This report also provides an analysis of the 342 self-assessments already completed for the Marketing Operations & Process Competency Assessment Framework, which seeks to define the different stages of maturity when it comes to martech strategy, cross-organisational coordination, process definition and marketing operations management, and map them against different criteria required for success.

While this report will reveal some industry secrets, plenty of statistics and peer-to-peer advice, it's main aim is to ignite a conversation by providing actionable advice. It provides guidance to the organisation and process elements of managing marketing technology and processes effectively.

The advice given can help to open the debate in your company about the challenges and ambitions behind modernising your martech stack and building a modern MOPs function.

**This report includes:**

- The state of martech in practice.
- An industry audit of how much MOPs has been formalised.
- Advice on how to manage new marketing technology and processes effectively.

SECTION 2

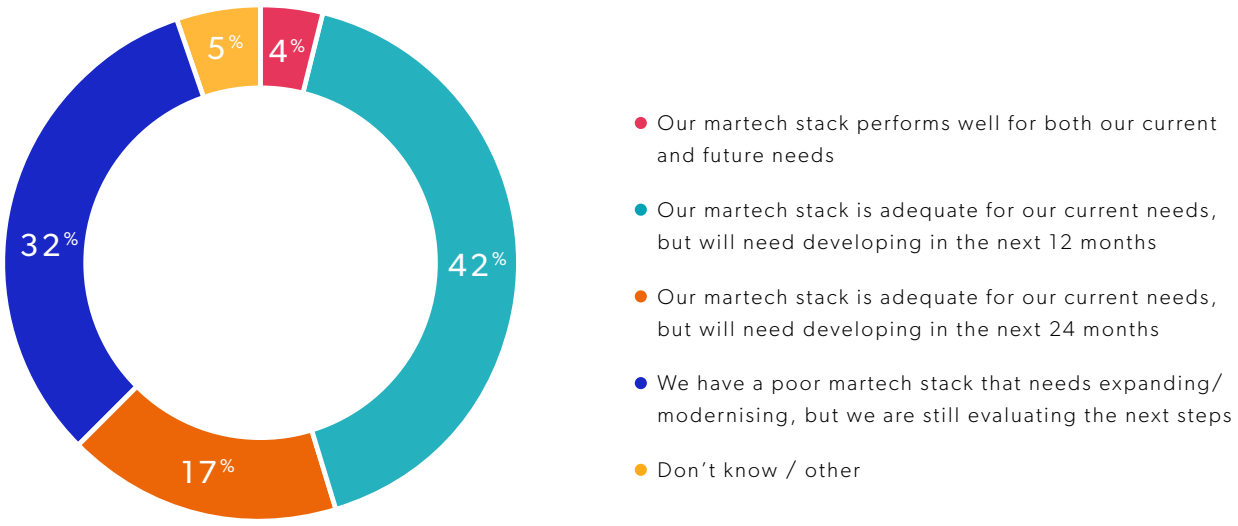
# Overall martech satisfaction sinks further

Each year, our opening question gives respondents a chance to self-assess the state of their martech stack. The assessment last year was already thought-provoking: only 11% of respondents had found that their martech stack was performing well for both current and future needs. This year, the result was even lower, with just 4% providing that answer. In addition to this initial assessment, we also asked about more detailed challenges, such as functionality and integration, and asked for this detail by technology area.

## 2.1. Everybody has issues with some systems in their martech stack

So, marketers continue to be critical about their current martech stack, and a staggering 96% of respondents are not able to confirm that the stack is performing well for both current and future needs (compared to 89% last year). This includes the 42% (46% last year) who stated that their stack is 'adequate, but will need development in the next 12 months, and a further 17% (21% last year) anticipating changes within 24 months. 32% (14% last year) confirmed that they know they have a poor martech stack that needs expanding/modernising, but claimed they still need to consider what to do about it, leaving 5% who are not quite sure.

### Which of the following best describes your organisation's current marketing technology stack?

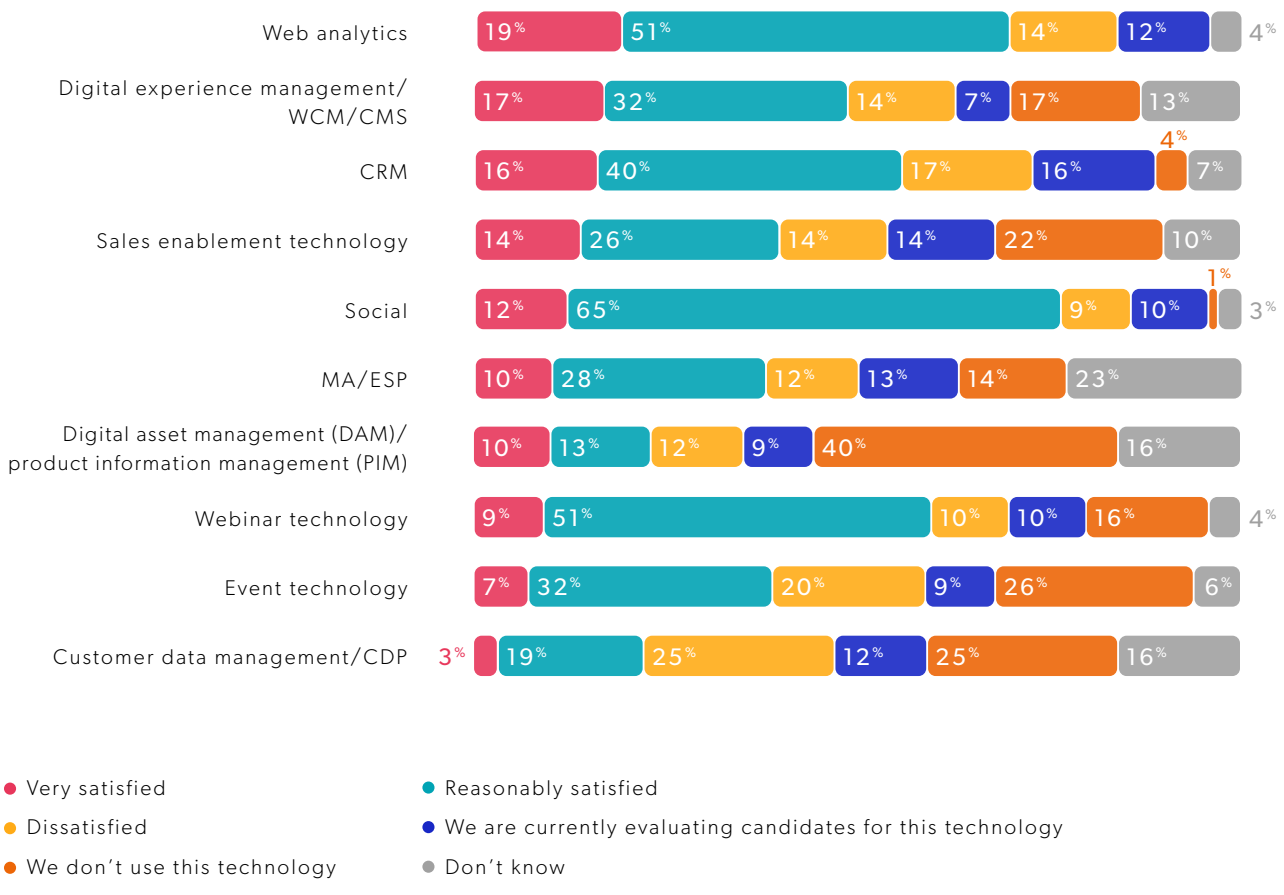


These numbers clearly demonstrate that martech is in a state of flux for most companies. Technology has advanced, but, more importantly, marketers' needs have changed.

Steffen Drucks, global head of operations and data analytics, Atos. *"Our martech stack needed a complete overhaul at this point. We've conducted a full audit to take a step back and stop arguing about individual pieces of technology. The audit provided a basis to set up a new strategy on retaining, replacing and deploying further technology."*

In the survey, we broke the martech stack down into 10 specific systems or platforms and asked about satisfaction within each system. Just over a half (56%) of the survey cohort reported satisfaction with their CRM platform, which is much less than last year's three-quarters. A high proportion continue to be satisfied with their web analytics (70%) and social platforms (77%). Last year, half of the respondents were satisfied with their MA or ESP platform, but this has now dropped to 38%. The lowest satisfaction numbers of all were for customer data management or customer data platforms (CDPs), with only 22% satisfied, and a further 25% explicitly not satisfied. The next-highest in being 'not satisfied' was event technologies at 20%, while just 40% were satisfied with their sales enablement system. This category also showed high buying activity, with 14% currently evaluating candidates, though CRM buying activity was higher at 16%. There is also noticeable increased buying activity for event and webinar platforms.

## Overall, how satisfied are you with the various martech systems you currently deploy?



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# Want to access the rest of this report?

Propolis members get exclusive access to the full version of this report, which includes more insight from senior marketers, as well as the full survey results. Specifically, the full report includes:

- The extent to which marketers' tech platforms are deployed.
- How well integrated marketers' tech platforms are.
- How marketers are managing their martech processes.
- Insight into who's even managing their tech stacks!
- Our Propolis Hive expert for Marketing Operations & Process, Karla Wentworth, explains who the winners will be in coming months when it comes to martech.
- The results of our Propolis competency assessment framework. These results show where most marketers are on the road to martech maturity.

> *In order to drive our business and global marketing team forward, we knew we would benefit from an international professional membership, which is exactly what Propolis with B2B Marketing gives us.*
>
> *Now more than ever, the need to come together as a community of B2B marketers isn't just relevant, but necessary*
>
> CAT DUTTON
> *global deputy CMO, Atos*

All this and more, exclusive to Propolis members. Want to find out more about Propolis? **Find out more here.**

SECTION 5

# Operating martech in practice is a challenge for most

The next section of the survey covered MOPs specifically. We asked about staffing and organisation, and went into more detail about who operated which processes across marketing.

Nearly one-fifth of the companies surveyed (17%) have a dedicated team of specialists for this work, with another 7% outsourcing it to an external provider, and 6% to their IT department. All in all, around 50% of companies do not have martech specialists at all.

## Who operates your martech stack?



In 34% of the companies surveyed, the martech stack is operated by generalist marketers across the team, which is down from the 51% in last year's survey. It looks like many B2B marketing organisations are now building up specialist resources as far as possible.

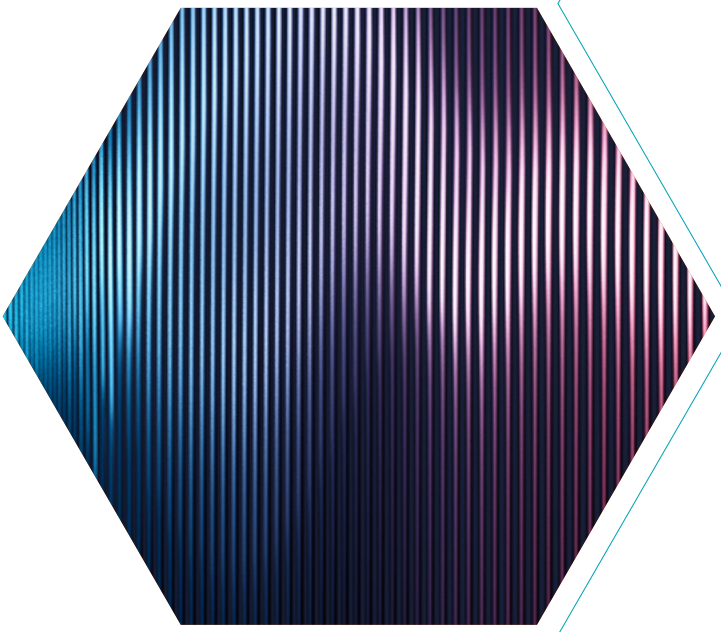
Gabriela Warren, senior director of marketing (EMEA), Workiva. *"I've learned very early on that having generalists only gets us so far. When we need to start integrating tools and talk to IT or different departments, we need specialists on their topics."*

With there being a wide range of roles possible within the MOPs position, the survey respondents were presented with an overall list and asked to describe how far their specialists fulfilled each role. The three most-important major roles selected for the martech specialists are as follows:

1. Ensure GPDR and other compliance processes.
2. Liaison with sales ops, IT, finance and other involved parties.
3. Managing the measurement, reporting and dashboards from the martech systems.

The first two roles were outside the top five in last year's survey, so it appears that MOPs has now taken on the (probably additional) workload of working with many external stakeholders. This is necessary as digital marketing affects, and is influenced by, many aspects of digital business.

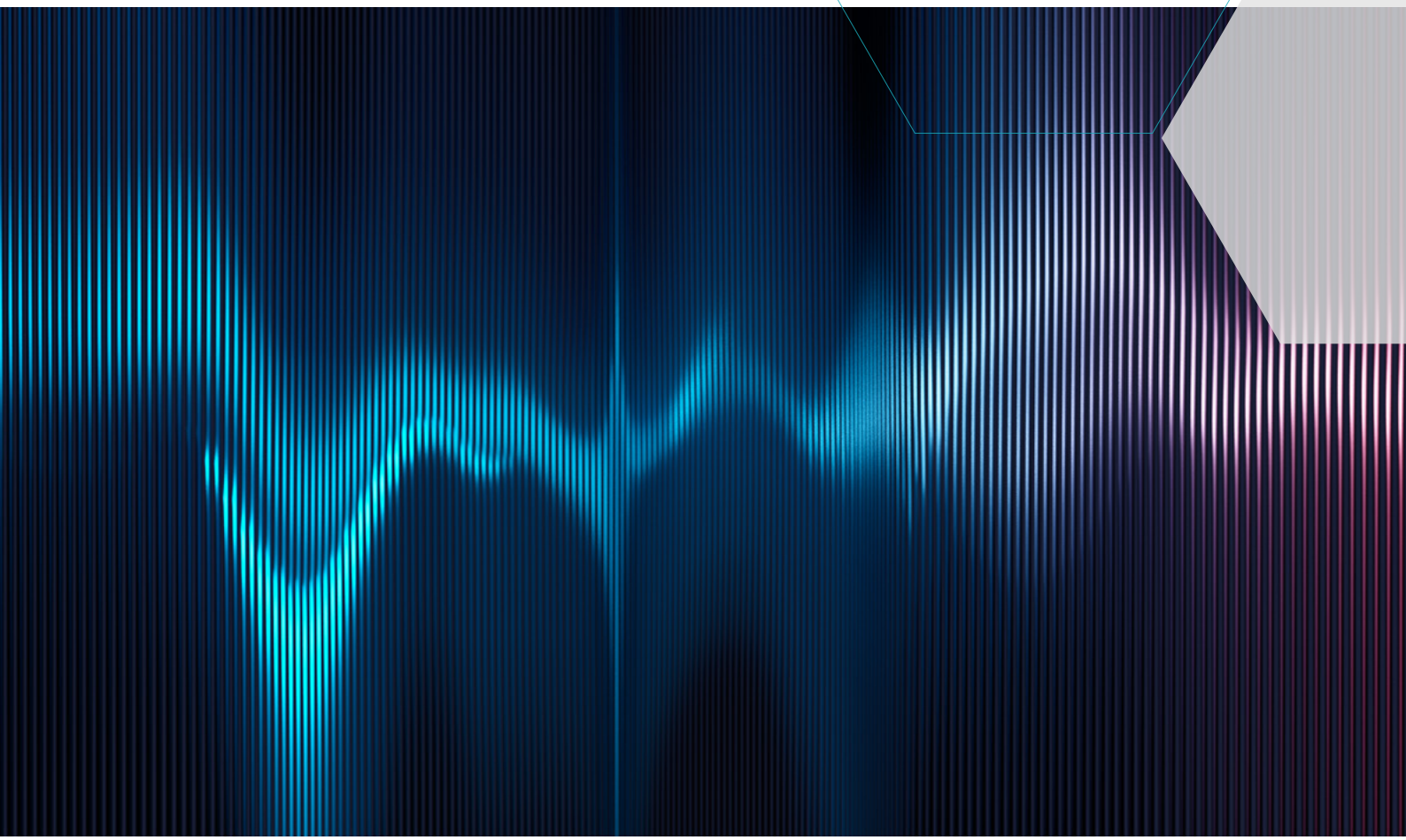
The least important, in terms of role adoption, is the auditing and cleansing of customer data on a regular basis.



SECTION 6

# Competency assessment results

As part of Propolis membership, an assessment framework has been created for the Marketing Operations & Process Hive, with all members invited to complete the self-assessment. A static version of this framework can be seen below. In the full version of this report (available only to Propolis members), a heat map has been created to show where most organisations stand on this framework.



# MARKETING OPERATIONS COMPETENCY ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK 1.0

| | BUSINESS CONTRIBUTION | 1. BUILDING | 2. DEVELOPING | 3. PERFORMING | 4. IMPROVING | 5. EXCELLING |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Marketing technology strategy | Martech selection, management and development | Piecemeal 'user-chooser' selection and management of tools, with minimal guidance or oversight. | Central oversight on tool management and deployment, plus some user guidance. | MOPs owns budget, tool selection, management and planning. | MOPs leads development using roadmap, including routine monitoring and ROI evaluation. | MOPs responsible for martech governance, including proactive management as part of ongoing change-management remit |
| Marketing operations management | Operations formalisation, structure and management | MOPs reponsibilities distributed across the team to non-specialists, with projects operated in isolation. | Expert users support wider team; formalisation of MOPs responsibilities begins, including project management | Individual MOPs specialists appointed, but with management outside of marketing. | MOPs team established, reporting to marketing leadership, including clear career progression, and project ownership/ oversight. | MOPs leader recognised as senior role; MOPs function recognised as a centre of excellence. |
| Marketing process definition and monitoring | Process formalisation and set up for ongoing improvement | Individuals operating in isolation with no formal methodologies. | Sharing and formalisation of workflows and best practice begins. | Centralised best practice repository maintained by MOPs, with standardisation of methodologies beginning. | Two-way dialogue regarding process development between users and MOPs; specific working methodologies in place. | Continuous improvement ethos for process evolution with MOPs co-ordinating uptake. |
| Reporting and analytics | Metric formalisation and monitoring, plus attribution | Reporting and testing highly individualised and effectiveness difficult to determine. | Centralised report creation and sharing begins, plus simplistic campaign testing. Attribution is manual. | Significant formalisation of report sharing and testing regimes; basic attribution instigated. | Robust and rigorous reporting via dedicated platform; rigourous and thorough campaign testing, aligned with statistical analysis. | Metrics driving business decisions; campaigns highly optimised and subject to continuous improvement; model-driven attribution enables in-depth analysis. |
| Cross-organisational coordination | Collaboration, deployment, budgeting and stakeholder management | Collaboration only through standard sharing docs; limited central view of spending or relationships with functions outside marketing. | Random acts of collaboration; standardised budgeting tools, but limited co-ordination; informal relationships outside marketing. | Standardisation of means and methods of collaboration; central spreadsheet tool to track budgets; informal cross-functional efforts on significant issues. | Marketing workflow tools integrated across organisation; marketing budgets formally linked to finance systems; proactive formal collaboration with wider stakeholder groups. | Ongoing workflow optimisation; proactive budget management to maximise utilisation; formal cross-functional working led by MOPs. |

SECTION 9

# Commentary by Gilroy



**KAROL GAJEWSKI,**
head of digital strategy, Gilroy

The road to digital marketing nirvana has long been littered with wasted budget, unused tools and discontented users or stakeholders. Covid-19 has not only moved the goalposts for businesses and society, but also exposed the gaps in digital transformation and digital marketing capabilities.

Martech is supposed to help manage the ever-growing choice of channels, touchpoints and volume of data. Instead, vendors vie for marketers' attention by making big promises around all-encompassing features, integrations, and ease of implementation, but the reality often falls well short. Add the complex relationships between different business functions and often unclear ownership of technology and you end up in the pickle many businesses find themselves in today.

Only 4% of respondents believe their tech stack meets current and future needs, close to 60% recognise the need for redevelopment in the next 12–24 months and a staggering 32% know that their tech doesn't cut it, but don't know what to do about it.

The breakdown of the tech category satisfaction makes it clear that we are looking at a maturity curve. Web analytics, web management and CRM systems lead the way (they have been around the longest), whereas customer data and sales enablement platforms have the lowest adoption and satisfaction levels. Given the vast amounts of data in today's world, and the need for marketing and sales to work very closely together, this is worrying.

What becomes apparent is that the current tech stack needs an evolution if not a revolution. Do we throw everything away and start afresh? I'd advise a different approach.

First of all, it is far more productive to nail your marketing and tech strategy and create a cross functional centre of excellence than it is to buy more tech. In the marketing operations world processes, goal definitions and integrations play a more critical role than implementing new platforms.

Secondly, automation still needs people to set it up and make it work. Investing in the right talent, training and adoption goes a long way in getting the most out of your tech. It is promising to see that the focus on higher adoption of existing tech has more than doubled in the last year alone, from 19% in 2021 to 52% this year.

Thirdly, don't judge a martech platform by its website. During an audit of over 60 leading platforms relevant to large enterprises, we have reinforced our view that there is no such thing as a perfect, all-encompassing tool, even within its category.

The old consulting people, processes and technology framework is still very valid. The report results confirm that the biggest challenge with tech is a lack of time and resources (87%), followed by issues with integrating marketing and martech processes with other functions and systems used by the business.

The promised easy integration between platforms is often just scratching the surface and the orchestration tools that can make sense of different types of data are often necessary to achieve a tech stack's full potential. Orchestration systems also need people with the right skills, know-how and time. This is where external experts come in handy in navigating the complexities of multiple systems, agreeing common definitions and streamlining processes.

Don't chase new toys. Follow your strategy and find your own way to evolve your martech stack.

# About

## B2B Marketing & Propolis

B2B Marketing was founded in 2004, starting life as a print magazine. It has since evolved into the world's go-to resource for B2B marketers looking to become best-in-class at what they do, and place themselves at the forefront of marketing evolution.

B2B Marketing produces a number of products, including: insight reports; interviews with the best minds in the business; *The B2B Marketing Podcast*; webinars; conferences; and even Awards programmes.

The latest product in B2B Marketing's extensive portfolio is Propolis – an exclusive community for B2B marketers. Propolis gives you instant access to unbiased experts, training, technical resources, research and peer-to-peer learning, all supported by a dedicated customer success manager.

Want to learn more about B2B Marketing or Propolis specifically? Just get in touch using the contact details below and start your journey with us today.

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## Gilroy

Gilroy is a leading enterprise B2B agency and the home of SMART ABX. We work collaboratively with world leading technology and B2B brands, taking an insight driven, customer-centric approach that applies the strategic intent of ABM to a digitally led multichannel landscape.

SMART ABX addresses the entire sales funnel, from awareness and engagement, through nurture, and on to winning major bids and deals. By bringing together first, second and third-party data with contextual research by our in-house analysts, we can effectively respond to the challenges and opportunities customers face, informing, influencing, and inspiring them throughout their buying journey.

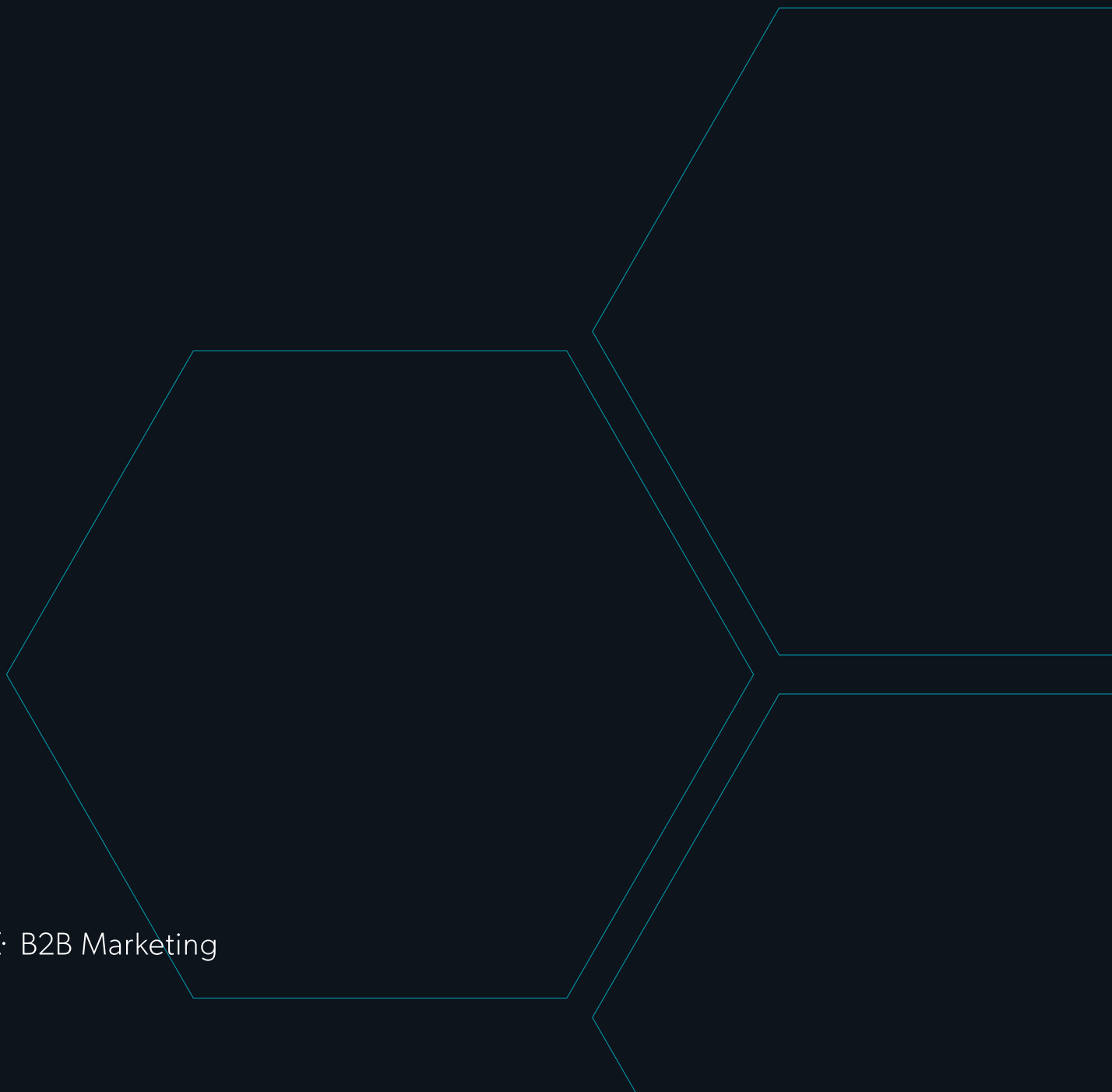
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