

Global CMO Survey Report / Feb 2024

FROM NOW TO NEXT

Crafting the Future of Marketing with Generative AI

comviva
A TECH MAHINDRA COMPANY

**Welcome to the new era of
marketing – an era of unparalleled
innovation and intelligence!**

Executive Summary

In the ever-evolving marketing landscape, Generative AI (GenAI) stands out as a transformative force, reshaping how we understand, interact, and influence consumer behavior. Today's marketing departments are not mere bystanders in the technological revolution; they are active participants, often at the forefront, leveraging GenAI to redefine the boundaries of creativity and personalization.

As with any emerging technology, there will be early adopters, cautious optimists, and skeptics. One thing, however, is certain: the marketing world must stay agile, learn quickly, and be ready to adapt to the GenAI wave that's set to break over the industry. Whether it's a complete transformation or a tool for specific improvements, GenAI is the future knocking on the door.

To delve further, Comviva's Research Centre conducted a comprehensive survey with 300+ key marketing decision-makers across various industries (refer to the Methodology on page 18). Our study uncovers that the rapidly unfolding GenAI revolution demands a proactive approach, widespread engagement, and thoughtful strategy formulation to seize emerging opportunities and navigate through potential challenges.

Based on the survey findings, this report introduces the 3Ts framework—Trust, Talent, and Technology—as the bedrock for mastering the GenAI tide. *Trust centers on building transparent GenAI-customer interactions, Talent focuses on cultivating GenAI-fluent professionals, and Technology underscores the integration of AI tools into marketing ecosystems.* This triad is your compass for navigating the GenAI revolution—a beacon for innovation and a call to action for marketers to gear up for impact.

Key Findings

1

GenAI emerges as a transformative force, capable of creating, optimizing, and personalizing marketing efforts at an unprecedented scale, with industry adoption ranging from initial exploration (30%) to strategic development (25%) to **full-scale deployment (12%)**, highlighting a shift towards strategic, insights-driven, and consumer-centric marketing approaches.

2

The integration of GenAI in marketing is expected to transform the industry significantly, with 70% of marketers anticipating a profound impact on creative content planning and generation. Meanwhile, **65% predict a transformative impact on personalized marketing and customer experiences**. The automation of routine tasks was also emphasized, with 61% of respondents expecting GenAI to boost both efficiency and creativity.

3

Marketing applications are on the brink of significant change, with 54% of participants indicating that GenAI will have the greatest impact on dynamic content creation. This is closely followed by **personalized marketing campaigns (52%)** and customized offer recommendations (44%).

4

GenAI is synonymous with financial gains, with **44% of those surveyed viewing revenue growth as the foremost indicator of GenAI investment success**. Customer engagement, valued by 38%, and cost reductions, prioritized by 37%, also stand out as critical metrics, highlighting the broad spectrum of benefits derived from GenAI initiatives.

5

Incorporating GenAI into marketing strategies introduces a multifaceted set of obstacles. Data privacy, identified as the main concern by 37% of survey participants, leads these challenges. This is closely followed by a **lack of in-house expertise (35%)**, ethical dilemmas (30%), difficulties with technical integration (29%), and the struggle to identify appropriate GenAI use cases (28%).

Drawing from our research outcomes, we've developed the **3Ts framework**—comprising **Trust** in customer relationships, **Talent** in GenAI expertise, and **Technology** in system integration. This framework offers a strategic guide for mastering GenAI challenges:

Trust and transparency are critical in employing GenAI, with 34% of organizations prioritizing clear communication about their use of GenAI as their leading strategy. Moreover, 32% of these organizations dedicate themselves to regular evaluations of GenAI's impact, aiming to align its use with their fundamental values and the expectations of customers.

Marketers must adapt to changing skill requirements. Data analysis emerges as the top skill (61%), followed by AI and machine learning expertise (51%) and ethical use of GenAI (42%). Marketers must adapt to a landscape where GenAI enhances creativity, demands new expertise, and prioritizes strategic thinking, signalling a profound change in the profession's dynamics.

The growing importance of GenAI capabilities in the selection of Marketing Technology (MarTech) solutions, with 74% of decision-makers considering these capabilities essential. It underscores the need for vendors to offer sophisticated GenAI solutions that are not only cutting-edge but also integrated, user-friendly, and ethically responsible to address the technical and ethical challenges in marketing.

The Age of Gen AI Marketing is Here

The future of marketing is not just about the data you have or the campaigns you run; it's increasingly about the intelligence behind your strategies. Enter GenAI, a groundbreaking force that's redefining the landscape of marketing with its ability to create, optimize, and personalize at scale. Like any other emerging technology, developing a long-term vision for GenAI has just started. We found marketing departments are at various levels of GenAI deployment:

- **Initial Exploration:** With **30% of companies in the initial exploration stage of GenAI**, it's evident that the industry stands at a tipping point. This presents a vast landscape of opportunities for growth and innovation
- **Strategic Development:** A quarter of marketers are engaged in the strategic development phase, a sign that many are taking a measured approach to GenAI integration. Among all industries, **telecom companies are most concentrated (30%) on devising a GenAI strategy**. Here, the planning is as much about the 'why' and the 'how' as it is about the 'what'
- **Vendor Evaluation:** **15% of companies are evaluating vendors and technologies**, suggesting a discerning and deliberate approach to GenAI investment. Selecting the right partners and tools is a critical decision that can determine the success of GenAI initiatives.
- **Pilot Testing:** **18% of companies are currently experimenting**. This phase is marked by trial and error, learning, and adaptation as companies begin to understand the practical benefits—and limitations—of GenAI.
- **Full-Scale Deployment:** Moving to full-scale deployment is a bold leap forward; **12% of companies have already taken this step**. These companies are the trailblazers, setting benchmarks and defining best practices for the industry.

"In this Generative AI-driven age, our network isn't just a means of communication; it's the backbone of a smart, responsive digital ecosystem. With Generative AI, we're not just connecting people; we're crafting experiences, reinventing how consumers interact with technology and transforming the telecom landscape into a realm of limitless possibilities."

CMO of a large telecom player in the US

GenAI: Catalyzing a Marketing Transformation

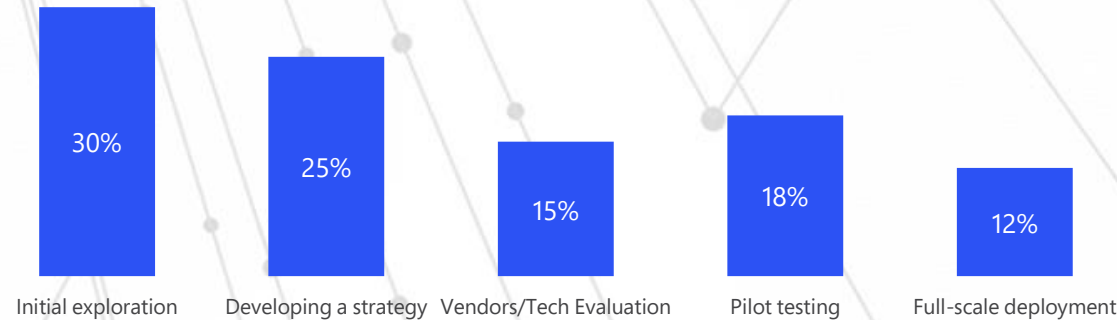


Figure 1 Q: What stage is your marketing department in deploying Generative AI?

77%

Businesses anticipate the transformative-to-significant impact of GenAI on Marketing

38%

Marketing departments have a clear vision for how and when GenAI will be used

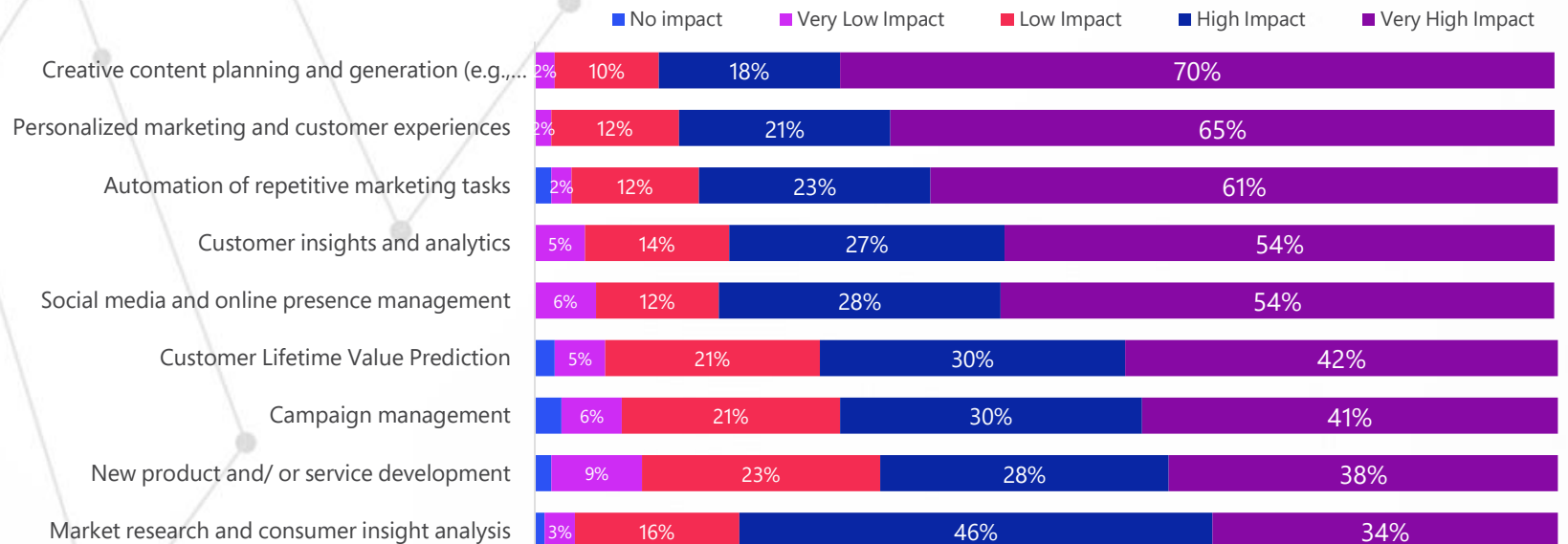
GenAI is poised to be the next big disruptor in marketing, with the majority of respondents anticipating significant changes on the horizon (see Figure 1). This technology could become the creative partner that marketers have longed for, handling the heavy lifting of data analysis and pattern recognition to curate campaigns that resonate on a deeper, more personal level with consumers.

As businesses continue to chart their course in the GenAI revolution, the business objectives are clear: be personal, innovative, efficient, quick, and above all, competitive.

A Glimpse Into Marketing's Transformative Future

Figure 2

Q: Which areas of marketing do you believe will be most impacted/ transformed by Generative AI?



"In the next 2-3 years, I expect Generative AI to revolutionize personalization and customer engagement. GenAI will enable us to create highly personalized content at scale, something we've already begun experimenting with in our email campaigns. This should lead to better customer engagement and higher conversion rates."

*Head-Product Marketing,
A large retailer in the US*

No Marketing Function Will Be Left Behind

Our data paints a vivid picture of what marketers expect in the near future: a marketing realm deeply transformed by the touch of GenAI (see Figure 2). **At the apex of this transformation, with a staggering 70% of respondents expecting a very high impact, is creative content planning and generation, such as writing and design.** Digital banks and financial services companies expect to experience the most significant transformational effect (78%) in the area of creative content planning. This signals a future where marketers' pen and palette are wielded by sophisticated algorithms, promising an unprecedented scale of personalized and engaging content.

Also, **65% of respondents anticipate a significant revolution in personalized marketing and customer experiences.** Vodafone is one of the telcos harnessing generative AI for analyzing anonymized transcripts of customer calls to create more accurate and insightful summaries of these interactions, thereby improving the personalization of content and services offered to customers. This speaks to a burgeoning reality where each customer interaction is tailored by deep learning insights, making generic experiences a relic of the past.

With **61% of marketing professionals expecting a very high impact on the automation of repetitive marketing tasks,** it's clear that GenAI is set to liberate the creative minds in marketing from the shackles of monotony. Wordtune, for example, is an AI generative tool and writing assistant that streamlines the writing process by fixing errors and generating text based on context.

Customer insights, **analytics and campaign management are both set to be significantly impacted by GenAI, with 54% and 41% of respondents, respectively,** predicting a very high impact. This suggests a future where campaign strategies are not just data-driven but data-empowered, and insights evolve from retrospective reports to prescriptive tools.

The GenAI Effect: Revolutionizing Key Marketing Use Cases

Marketers stand at the precipice of a paradigm shift—from static content to dynamic storytelling, where GenAI crafts not just content but experiences tailored to the heartbeat of consumer behavior (see Figure 3):

- **Dynamic content creation** leads the way, with **54%** of marketers predicting a significant impact from GenAI. GenAI is set to revolutionize content creation by integrating data-driven insights, instantly making content more relevant and adaptive to consumer behaviors and preferences.
- **Personalized marketing campaigns** closely follow, with **52%** predicting a very high impact. This leap forward turns personalization from a common strategy into a custom-crafted reality, offering not just tailored content but deeply personalized experiences that align with each consumer's unique journey.
- For **tailored offer recommendations**, the expectations are similar, with **44%** anticipating a very high impact. A prime example of GenAI's potential is JPMorgan Chase's IndexGPT, a tool designed to tailor investment selections for wealth management clients, showcasing how generative AI can offer direct, customer-facing solutions. GenAI's predictive algorithms are set to overhaul how offers are crafted and presented, making them attractive and almost irresistible by aligning perfectly with consumer desires and needs.
- **Lead generation**, crucial for marketing, is poised for a **40%** major uplift due to Generative AI. This technology is set to revolutionize lead generation by streamlining previously manual, time-intensive tasks and enhancing personalized communication.

The potential for GenAI to revolutionize use cases is enormous, offering marketers the tools to craft more engaging, intuitive, and successful campaigns.

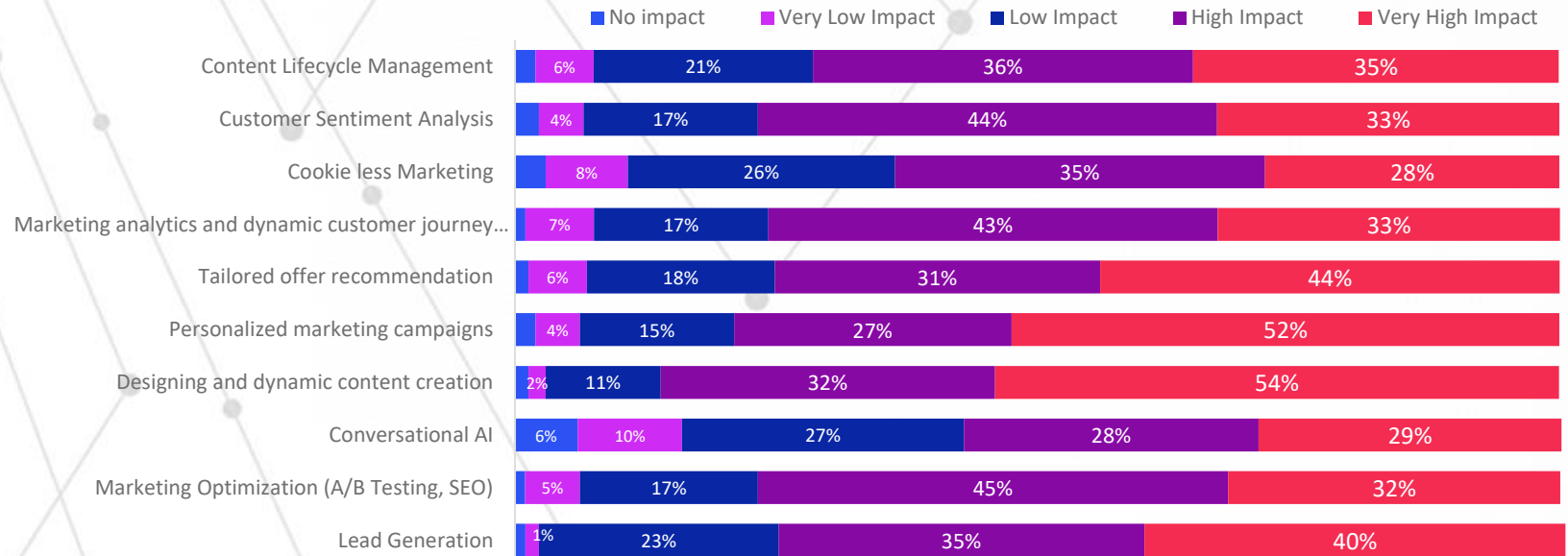
"We've been exploring various Generative AI tools for content creation, such as automated copywriting and visual content generation. For instance, we recently used GenAI to generate promotional materials for a new service launch, significantly reducing our time-to-market,"

VP-Loyalty Program, A large bank in the UK.

Dynamic content creation, personalized campaigns, and refine recommendations top the marketing GenAI use cases

Figure 3

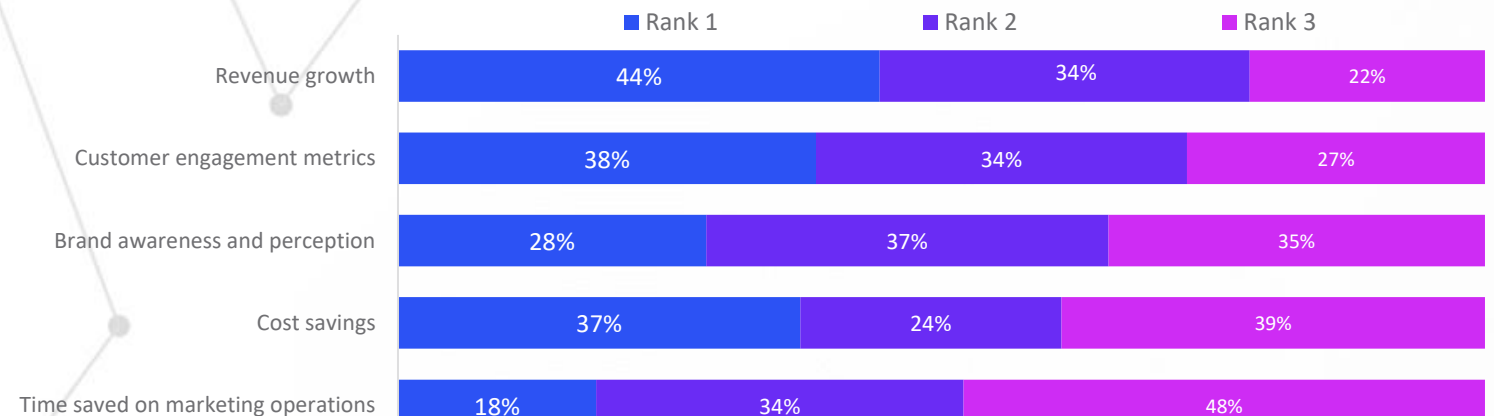
Q: Specifically, which marketing use cases will be most influenced by Generative AI?



GenAI means money

Figure 4

Q: What key criteria will you use to measure the ROI of Generative AI investments?



"We're focusing on metrics like customer engagement rates, lead generation, and cost savings. For instance, if Generative AI can reduce the time spent creating marketing materials, that's a direct cost saving. Similarly, improved customer engagement metrics from Generative AI-driven campaigns would indicate a positive ROI,"

CMO of a large telecom player in the US

Decoding GenAI's ROI: The New Currency of Marketing Success

Beyond the excitement and innovation, a fundamental question lingers: How do we measure GenAI's return on investment (ROI)? Our data reveals how marketing leaders are looking at a spectrum of metrics, from tangible revenue growth and cost savings to the more intangible customer engagement and brand perception, to understand the true value of their GenAI investments (see Figure 4):

- **Revenue Growth: The Top Line Tells the Tale.** In terms of GenAI investments, **44%** of those surveyed consider revenue growth the foremost indicator of return on investment. Retail/eCommerce firms are leading the charge, with 54% prioritizing the measurement of GenAI's ROI. Whether through enhanced lead generation, upselling through personalized recommendations, or more effective targeting, the proof is in the profit.
- **Customer Engagement: The Heartbeat of Success.** Customer engagement metrics are nearly as prioritized, with **38%** of respondents marking it as their key metric and [telecom companies leading at 50%](#). Enhanced by GenAI, personalized marketing campaigns and dynamic content creation can lead to increased user interaction, stronger brand loyalty, and, ultimately, a more engaged customer base.
- **Cost Savings: The Efficiency Equation.** **37%** of respondents focus on trimming the fat and optimizing operations, ranking cost savings as their top ROI metric for GenAI. By automating repetitive tasks and streamlining marketing operations, GenAI is expected to reduce overheads and free up human talent for more strategic initiatives, making cost savings a tangible measure of GenAI's value.

Interestingly, a reasonable portion of respondents are still undecided or in the planning stages, reflecting the nascent nature of GenAI in marketing. As businesses continue to experiment and learn, these metrics will undoubtedly evolve.



“One major concern is ensuring the ethical use of Generative AI, particularly in handling customer data responsibly. Another challenge is integrating the technology seamlessly with our existing systems without disrupting our workflows.”

Head-Product Marketing, A large retailer in the US

Overcoming Marketing’s New Hurdles: Ethics, Talent, and Technology Integration

As marketing teams embrace GenAI, they’re facing a labyrinth of challenges, from ethical dilemmas to technical hurdles (see Figure 5). Understanding these concerns is pivotal for organizations looking to successfully integrate GenAI into their strategies:

- **Data Privacy: The Unyielding Gatekeeper.** **Data privacy and security are top-of-mind, with 37% of respondents considering it their main challenge.** As GenAI requires vast amounts of data to function optimally, safeguarding this data against breaches is crucial. Marketers must navigate the delicate balance between leveraging data for personalization and maintaining user privacy.
- **The Ethical Conundrum: With 30% ranking it as their primary concern, there are ethical implications of GenAI use.** As GenAI systems create content that’s indistinguishable from that produced by humans, questions arise: How do we ensure transparency? What about the potential for deepfakes or misleading information?
- **In-House Expertise: The Missing Link. The lack of in-house expertise in GenAI is a significant barrier for 35% of respondents.** To fully harness AI’s potential, organizations need skilled professionals who not only understand GenAI technology but can also apply it effectively within the marketing context.
- **Technical Integration: The Innovation Knot. Technical complexities and integration challenges are also major concerns, with 29% of respondents ranking this first.** Integrating GenAI into existing systems and workflows is a daunting task, and the technical hurdles can be substantial, from data compatibility issues to infrastructure readiness.
- **Finding the Fit: Relevant Use Cases. Identifying effective and relevant use cases for GenAI is also a key challenge (28% ranked it as their primary concern).** While the buzz around GenAI is loud, many are still unsure about how to apply it effectively to derive tangible business benefits.

Tackling the top challenges of GenAI in marketing

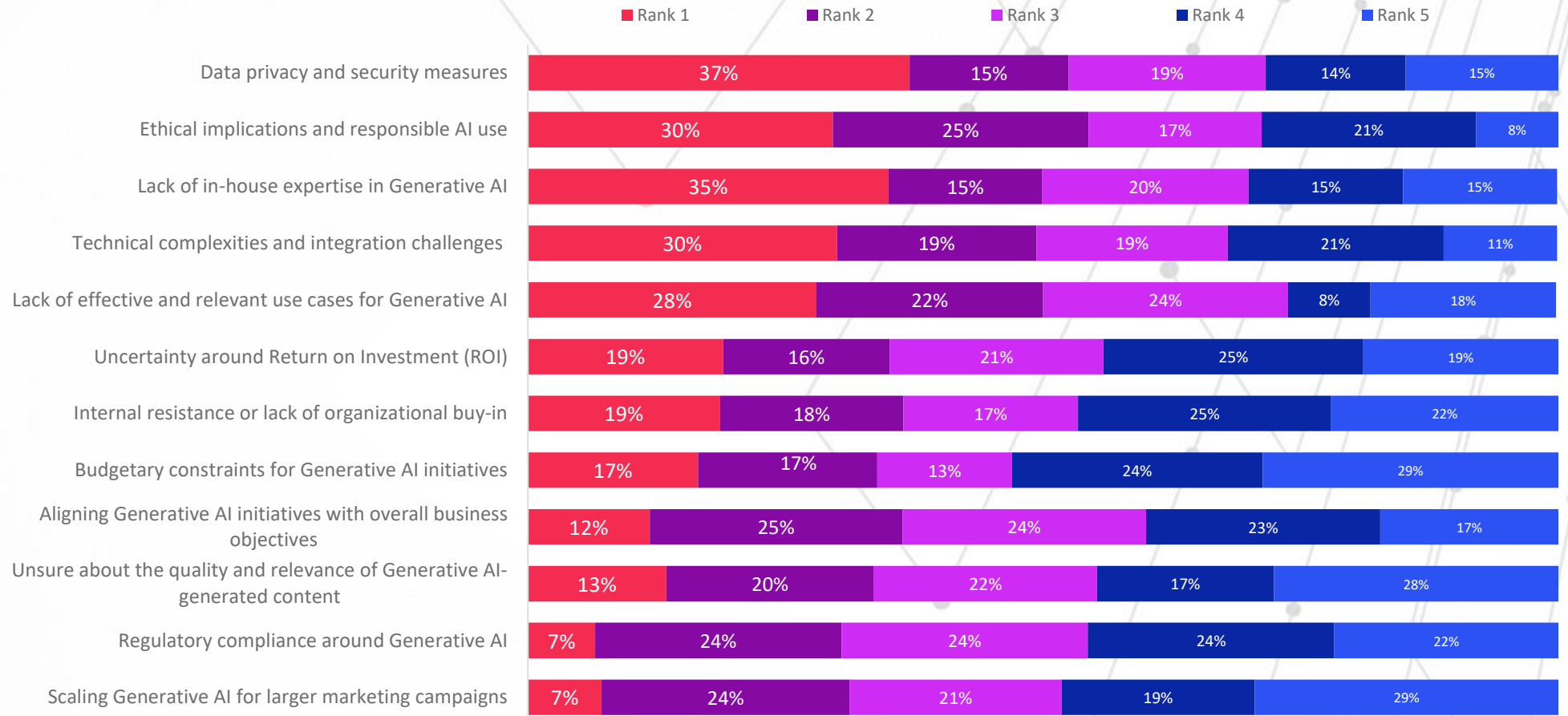
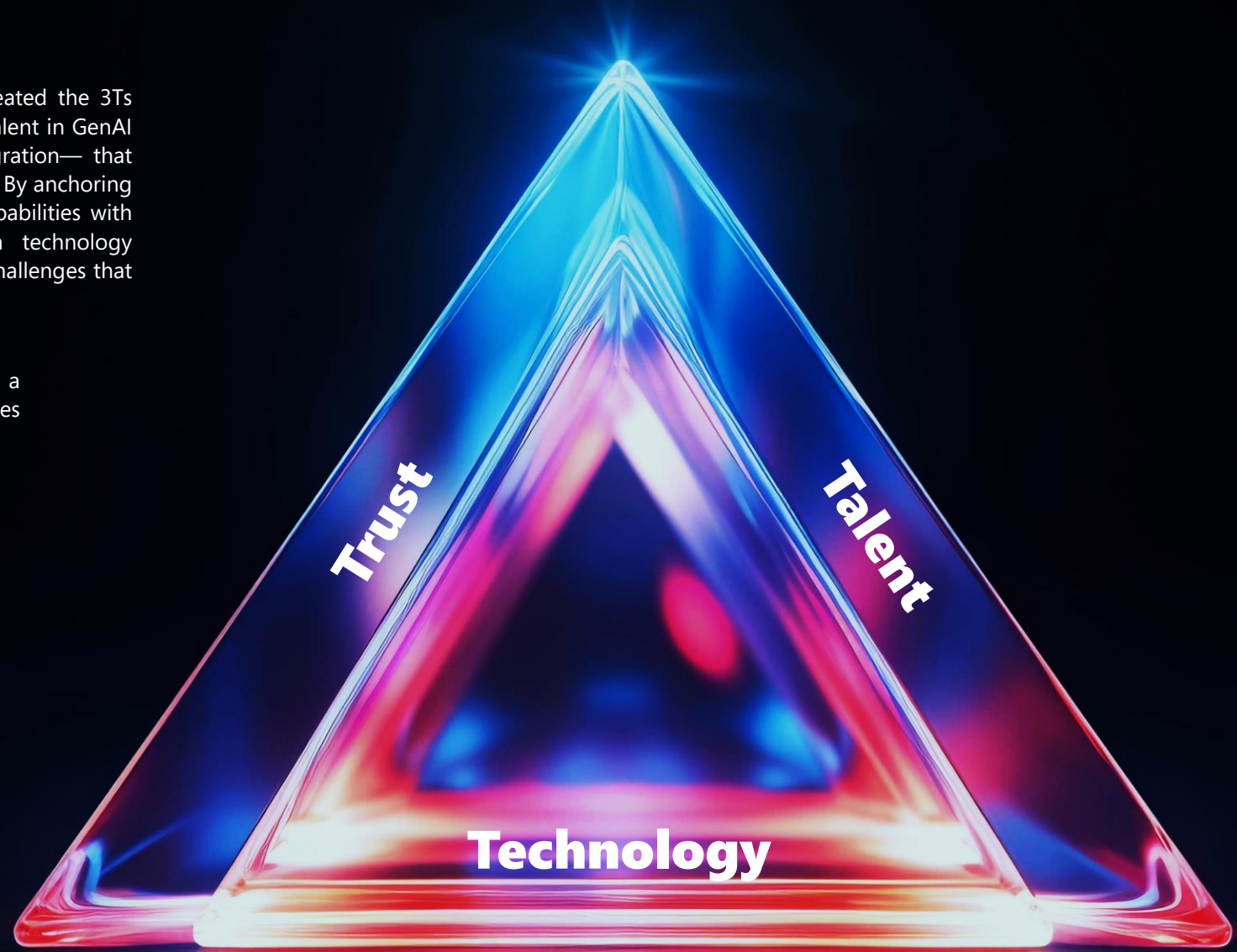


Figure 5 Q: What are the key challenges or concerns your organization anticipates when incorporating Generative AI into marketing strategies?

Mastering the Gen AI Ecosystem with 3Ts Framework: Trust, Talent & Technology

Based on our study findings, we have created the 3Ts framework—Trust in customer relations, Talent in GenAI proficiency, and Technology in tool integration— that provides a blueprint for conquering GenAI. By anchoring strategies in consumer trust, fortifying capabilities with talent, and driving innovation through technology integration, marketers can surmount the challenges that GenAI presents.

Let's explore how these pillars can create a robust foundation for overcoming obstacles and harnessing the full power of GenAI.



TRUST



“Transparency is key. We plan to be open about our use of GenAI and ensure that our customers understand how their data is being used. We’re also investing in AI systems that provide explainable outputs, so customers and regulators can understand how decisions are made,”

VP-Loyalty Program, A large bank in the UK

The Path to Transparent Customer Relationships

Trust and transparency form the cornerstone of customer relationships. As recent data illustrates, organizations leveraging/planning to leverage GenAI are acutely aware of this and are adopting proactive measures to maintain this delicate balance.

Leading the pack, **34% of organizations emphasize transparent communication about GenAI involvement as their primary strategy (see Figure 6)**. A practical example involves GenAI algorithms that sift through customer behavior and preferences to customize service propositions, such as individualized data plans or additional services. In presenting these customized offers, customers are notified that GenAI technology has been utilized to refine the suggestions according to their behavior patterns, guaranteeing that the offers are pertinent and advantageous. Moreover, customers are given straightforward choices to withdraw from personalized marketing and to adjust the extent of data analysis conducted on their accounts. This strategy demonstrates a dedication to transparency, making sure customers are well-informed about the role of GenAI in influencing their service interactions.

Subsequently, **32% prioritize conducting regular assessments of GenAI’s influence on customer relations to guarantee the precision of outputs**. Traditional banks, financial services companies, and telecom businesses are particularly concentrated on these frequent evaluations of GenAI to maintain output accuracy (37% each). These regular audits act as a compass, ensuring that GenAI’s trajectory aligns with the company’s values and customer expectations. Furthermore, the fact that only 15% of organizations have established a comprehensive ethical framework for GenAI usage is not unexpected (see Figure 7). As enterprises begin to grasp the practical applications of GenAI, the impetus will grow to formulate enduring ethical guidelines that govern its utilization. The ethical use of GenAI is not an afterthought but a fundamental component of corporate strategy that demands urgent attention.

Proactive customer education about GenAI use is the strategy for 30% of organizations. Educating customers about the benefits and workings of GenAI not only empowers them but also mitigates apprehensions and misconceptions about the technology.

Building bridges of consumer trust with transparency

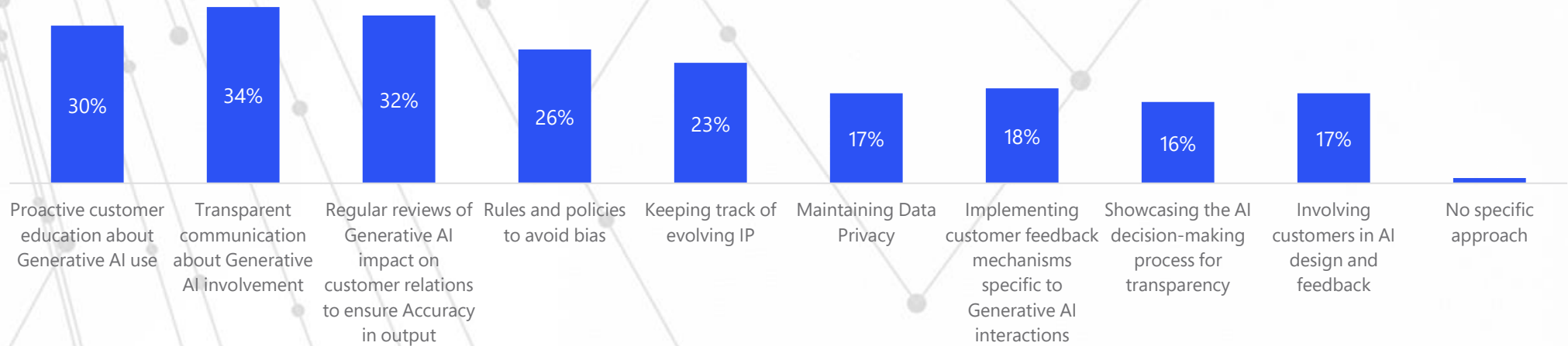


Figure 6

Q: How is your organization planning to maintain customer trust and transparency when using Generative AI?

Building a long-term ethical strategy is a work in progress

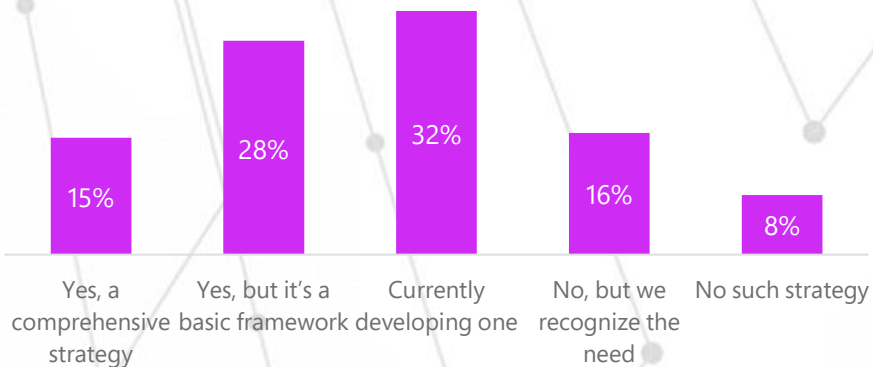


Figure 7

Q: Does your organization have a long-term ethical strategy for the use of GenAI?

Essential skills for tomorrow's marketers

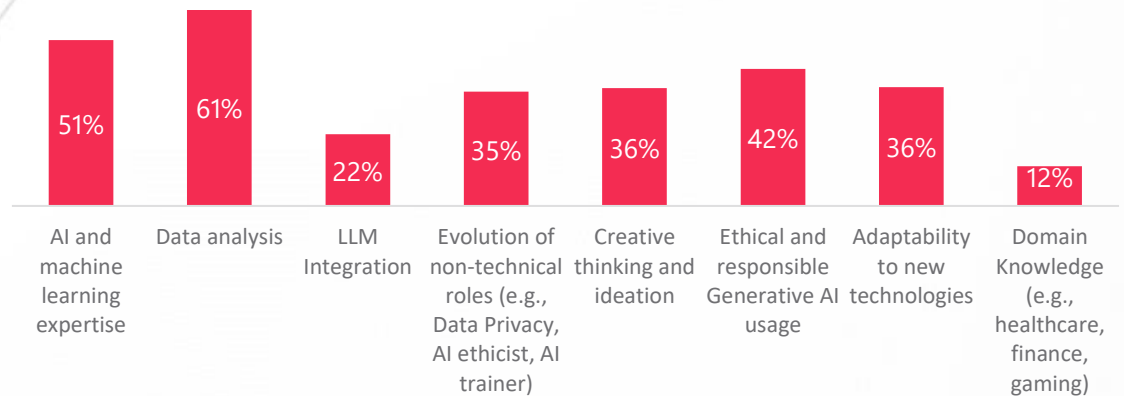


Figure 8

Q: Which skills do you believe will become most crucial for marketers in the age of Generative AI?

TALENT

"I believe GenAI will lead to more strategic roles in marketing. The technology will handle routine tasks, allowing marketers to focus on strategy and creative aspects that AI can't replicate. This shift will require our team to adapt and develop new skills. Upskilling our staff to work effectively with new GenAI tools and shifting from traditional marketing methods to GenAI-driven strategies will require time and resources."

CMO of a large telecom player in the US

Essential Skills for Future Success

Investing in talent is crucial because a lack of in-house expertise is a significant barrier to GenAI adoption. Our survey sheds light on the specific skills marketers believe will become indispensable in this new era. **Topping the chart at 61%, data analysis is the most sought-after skill.** Marketers must now become adept at sifting through vast amounts of information to uncover patterns, predict trends, and personalize customer experiences (see Figure 8). This is followed by AI and machine learning expertise, deemed essential by 51% of respondents. Marketers must understand how these technologies work to better utilize them for automated campaigns, customer segmentation, and real-time decision-making.

With 42% of respondents highlighting its importance, ethical considerations and responsible use of AI are pivotal. Marketers must navigate the moral complexities that AI presents, ensuring that initiatives are not only innovative but also ethical and respectful of privacy.

Despite the rise of GenAI, creative thinking and ideation stand strong at 36%. The human element of creativity is irreplaceable in crafting campaigns that resonate emotionally with audiences. Marketers must blend their creative prowess with AI's analytical capabilities to craft compelling narratives.

Integrating GenAI into marketing is not just changing the skills but reshaping the roles that define the industry.

- **Nearly half of the professionals surveyed (47%) believe that GenAI tools will augment creative roles.** [AT&T's new GenAI tool](#) is designed to help employees be more effective, creative, and innovative. Marketers can use GenAI to generate ideas, produce content, and analyze the effectiveness of creative campaigns, allowing humans to focus on big-picture strategies and nuanced brand storytelling (see Figure 9).

- Furthermore, **42% of respondents foresee the introduction of specialized roles dedicated to managing GenAI.** This indicates a pressing demand for experts capable of comprehensively grasping and deploying GenAI technologies, while adeptly weaving them into marketing processes. One potential position that might arise in the telecom industry is that of a GenAI Network Optimization Specialist, aimed at employing GenAI algorithms to boost the efficiency and dependability of networks. Another potential position is that of a GenAI Content Creator, tasked with producing marketing materials such as advertisements, tailored campaigns, and social media content to amplify brand engagement and visibility.

- Parallel to this, **40% anticipate a shift towards more strategic and analytical roles,** implying that as routine tasks become automated, the focus will shift to higher-level strategy and analysis work. With GenAI providing rich insights from data analysis, marketers are expected to interpret these insights to make informed decisions. Also, marketers will need to harness their creative skills to leverage GenAI-generated insights and outputs in ways that create compelling brand narratives and customer experiences.

GenAI is not just changing the game; it's changing the players. Marketers must be prepared to adapt to a new paradigm where GenAI augments creativity, specialized GenAI roles become the norm, and strategic and analytical thinking takes precedence. Marketing teams should brace for a shift that will not only redefine roles but also require a new set of skills, emphasizing adaptability, technical acumen, and strategic foresight.

GenAI: Catalyzing a Marketing Transformation

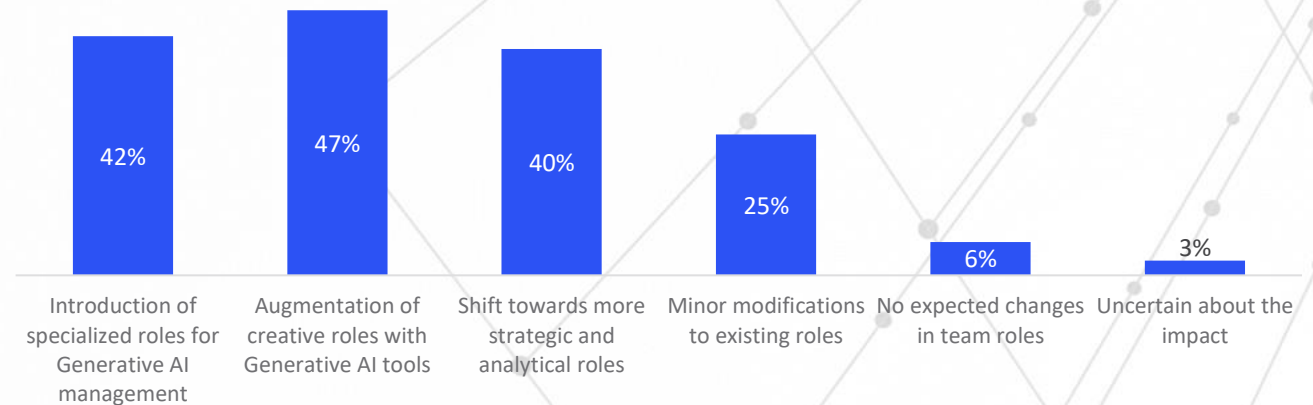


Figure 9 Q: What impact do you expect Generative AI to have on various marketing roles in the future?

GenAI is reshaping the vendor selection criteria for marketing technologies

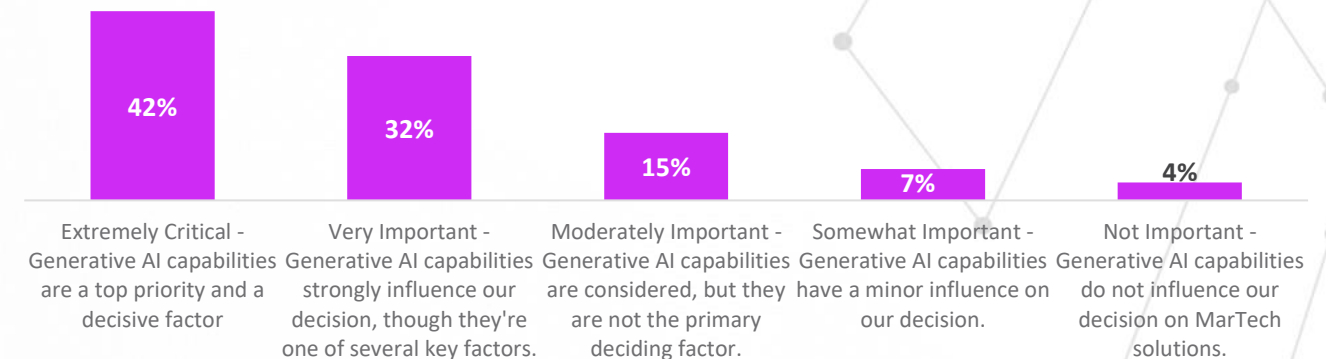


Figure 10 Q: How important do you consider vendor capabilities in Generative AI when deciding on Marketing Technology (MarTech) solutions?

TECH NOLOGY

“We look for vendors who not only offer advanced GenAI capabilities but also align with our ethical standards and integrate well with our existing technology stack. The vendor’s ability to provide ongoing support and adapt to the evolving GenAI landscape is also crucial,”

VP-Loyalty Program, A large bank in the UK

The Vital Role of Vendors in Bridging the Technology Gap

As the digital marketing world embraces the dawn of GenAI, businesses are weighing the significance of vendor capabilities in this innovative technology when selecting their Marketing Technology (MarTech) solutions. Our research shows that a significant **74% of decision-makers consider the GenAI capabilities of vendors to be extremely critical or very important when selecting MarTech solutions** (see Figure 10). This places a significant onus on vendors to deliver robust GenAI-driven solutions that can truly revolutionize marketing efforts and outcomes. Moreover, technical complexities and integration challenges push marketers to consider an integrated GenAI-MarTech solution.

Vendors are tasked with not just providing cutting-edge tools but also training and ethical frameworks that will underpin the responsible development and application of GenAI in marketing. To meet the high expectations of the majority, vendors must not only offer advanced GenAI capabilities but also ensure that they are seamlessly integrated, user-friendly, and aligned with the ethical standards demanded by the industry.

Engage or Be Left Behind: The GenAI Transformation of Marketing

The advent of GenAI in marketing heralds a renaissance of creativity, strategy, and personalization. For marketers, the clarion call is to embrace GenAI with a visionary approach, deep engagement, and strategic integration. Those at the vanguard of this revolution will redefine customer connection through intelligence and innovation. The future of marketing beckons—a future sculpted by the power of Generative AI.

The future of marketing with GenAI is not just about staying ahead of the curve; it's about reshaping it altogether. It's a future where creativity is augmented by algorithms, strategies are driven by data, and personalization is genuinely personal. For marketers looking to capitalize on GenAI, the time is now to develop a clear vision, engage deeply with the possibilities, and embark on a strategic path to GenAI integration. Those who do will likely lead the charge in the next great marketing revolution, characterized by intelligence, innovation, and an unprecedented level of customer connection.

Step into the groundbreaking epoch of marketing propelled by the power of Generative AI.

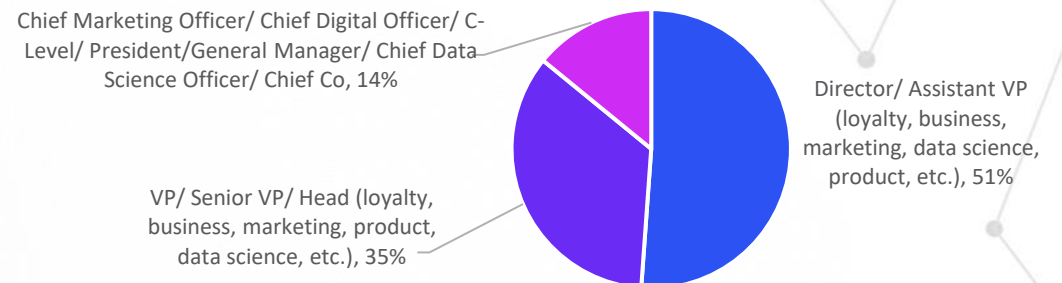
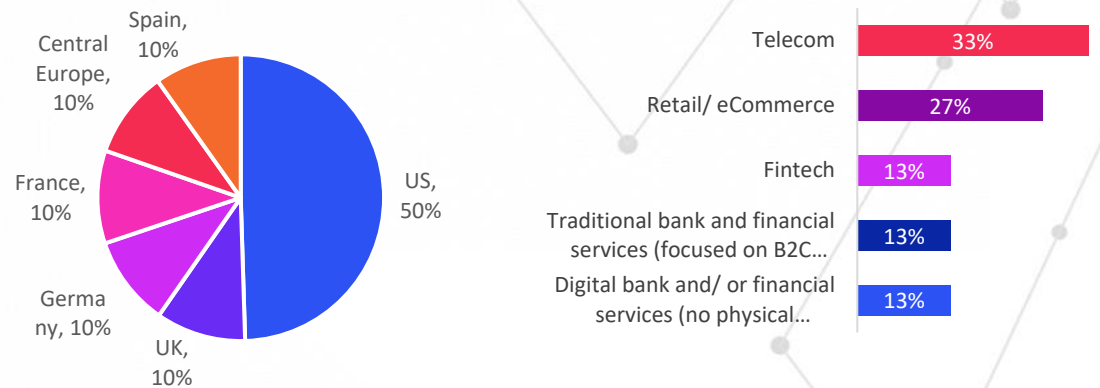
About Comviva's Research Centre

The center examines current and future trends that will shape the future of the telecom industry. The Centre provides thought-provoking research & analysis of business and technology trends and dynamics, and collaborates with a wide range of business, technology, and academic thinkers regarding what the future of telecom will look like as technology changes every aspect of the industry. Research Partner: [Curious Insights](#), Images Credits: [Freepik](#)

Methodology

Comviva Research Centre conducted an online panel survey with 300+ senior marketing executives at telecom, banking and financial services, fintech, and retail/ eCommerce companies. The sample was distributed across the US, UK, Germany, France, Spain, and Central Europe. In addition, three qualitative interviews were also conducted to get first-hand feedback from companies using GenAI.

Through a multi-industry survey, our methodology encompassed diverse sectors, ensuring that the insights presented are reflective of the global market sentiment towards GenAI





Comviva is changing the world through digital experiences. Our innovative portfolio of digital solutions and platforms brings greater choice, faster time to market, and flexibility to meet our customers' evolving needs better as they drive growth, transform, and bring efficiency. From maximizing customer lifetime value to enabling large-scale digital transformation, we partner globally with communications and financial industry organizations to solve problems fast and transform for tomorrow. Comviva solutions have been deployed by over 130 Communication Services Providers and Financial Institutions in more than 90 countries. They have delivered the benefits of digital and mobility to billions of people around the world. For more information, visit us at www.comviva.com