KANTAR

B2B Media (re)Actions

Evidence Based Guidance for Marketers in 2027

NewtonX

October 2026



About Media Reactions

Understanding where advertising thrives

For seven years, Kantar Media Reactions has explored a fundamental truth: **where advertising appears shapes how powerfully it lands.**

By revealing where audiences are most receptive and where marketer assumptions diverge from reality, the study has helped turn an increasingly complex media landscape into **clearer, more confident decisions.**

Bringing the Media Reactions lens to B2B

Kantar and NewtonX partnered to explore Media Reaction through the lens of the B2B marketer. This study examines how B2B marketers choose platforms, allocate budgets, and respond to emerging opportunities.

Audience:100+ B2B marketing decision-makers across advertisers, agencies, and marketing service providers. Recruited through NewtonX's verified professional network and surveyed on media investment, platform perceptions, AI adoption, measurement, and brand-building priorities.

Fielded: September 14th – September 21st 2026

Media Migration:
Dollars follow eyeballs

ROI matters, but shifting buying and media behavior is also impacting budget allocation decisions

Top Factors Impacting Budget Decisions



Media performance drives budget, but nearly 4 in 10 are shifting spend due to changing customer behaviors, edging out urgency to grow the pipeline

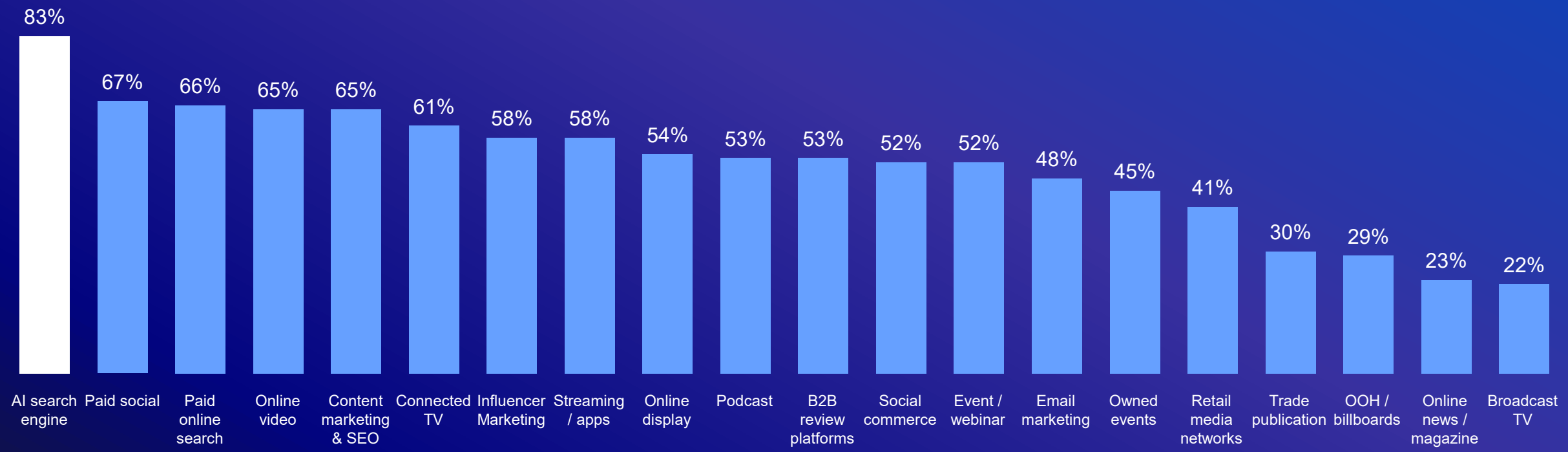
KANTAR | NewtonX

Base: n=102

Search momentum continues alongside the growth of AI

Search and Social will continue to grow, even while marketers begin putting money into AI Search. Video ads and Creator marketing continues to grow in importance.

Percent Increasing Spend x Channel (among spenders)

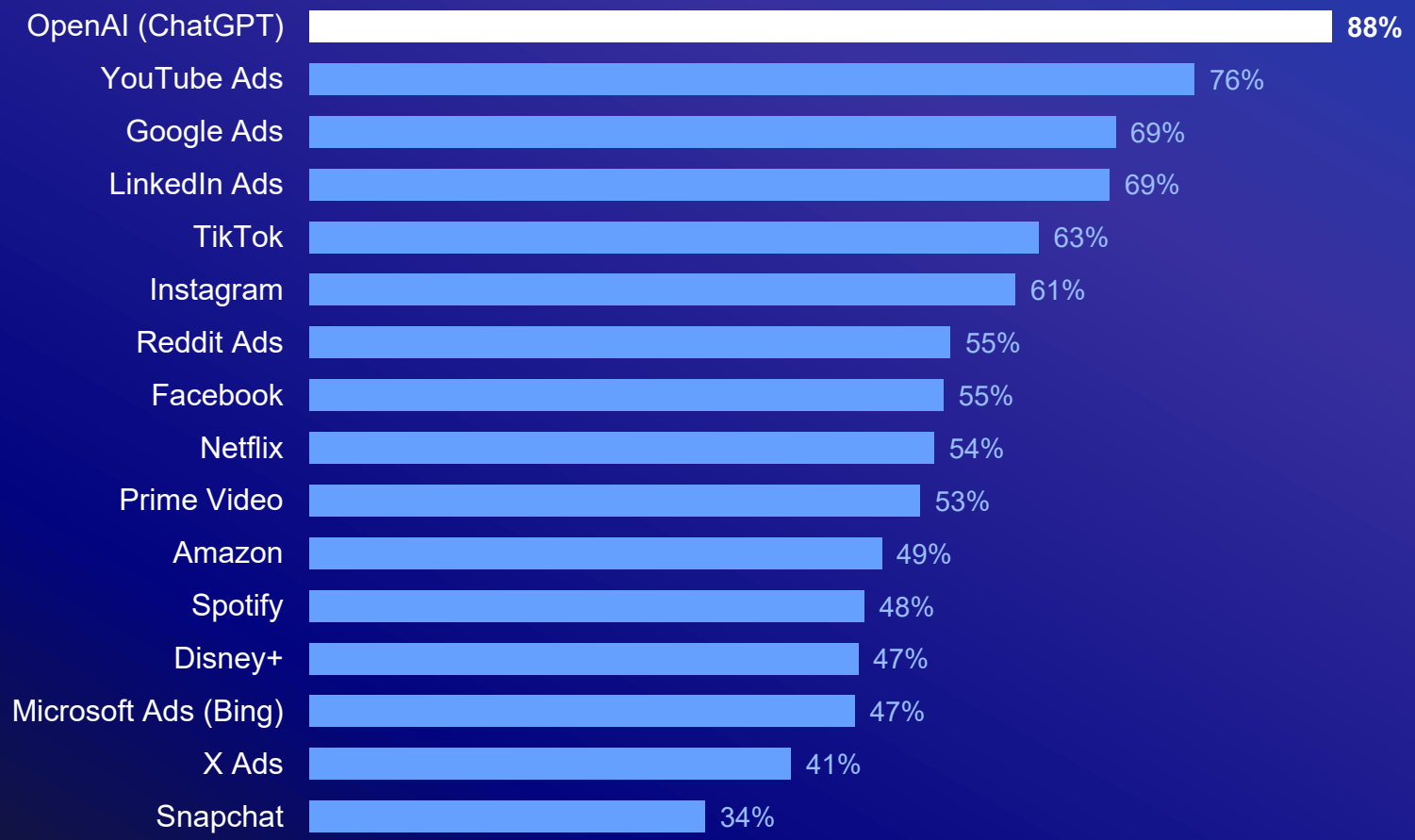


KANTAR | NewtonX

Base: n=102

Make room for OpenAI

Percent Increasing Spend x Platform (among spenders)



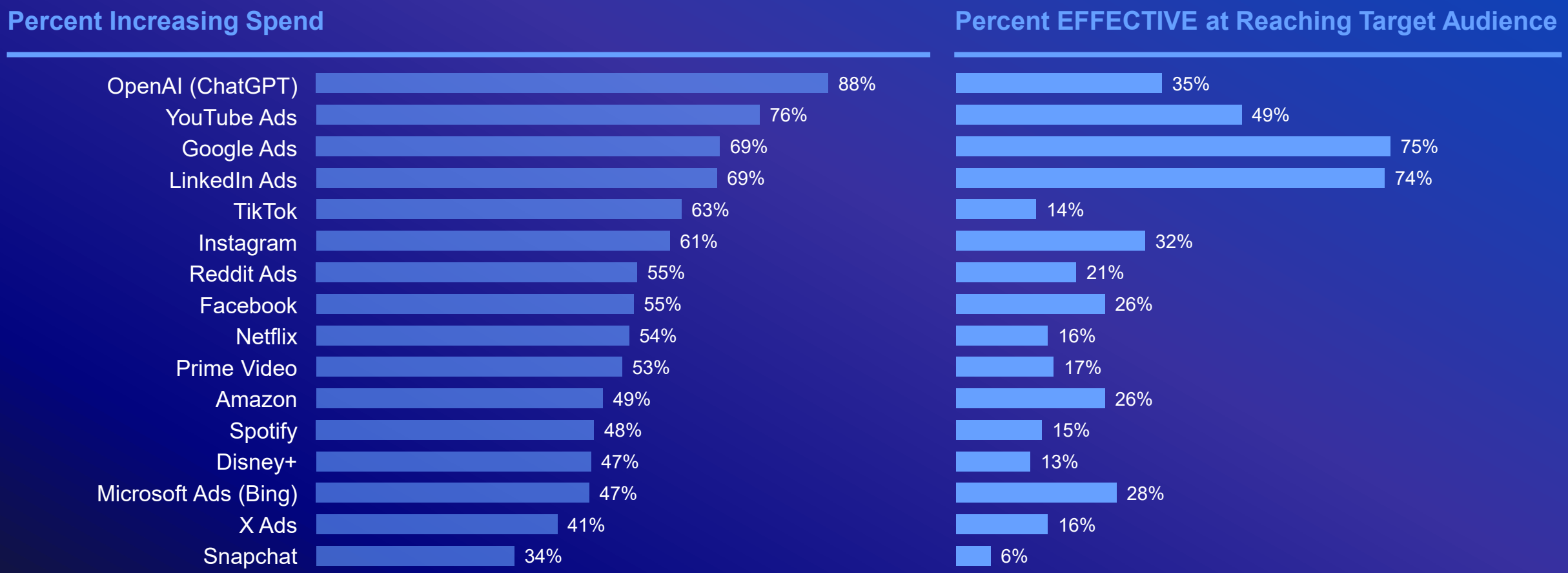
Google / YouTube and LinkedIn remain critical channels for B2B marketers but intent to grow spend on ChatGPT is strongest

KANTAR | NewtonX

Base: n=102

EFFECTIVE reach is king… but not all that matters

Google and LinkedIn lead on both ‘effective audience reach’ and growing spend intent, but emerging channels like ChatGPT and TikTok are drawing big spend momentum ahead of reach perceptions



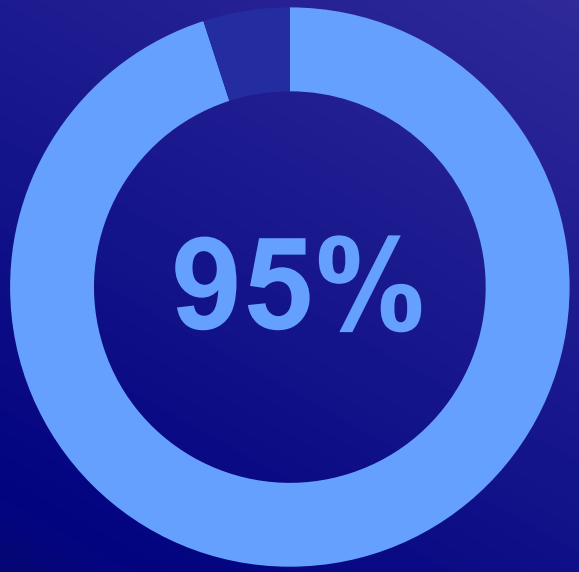
KANTAR | NewtonX

Base: n=102

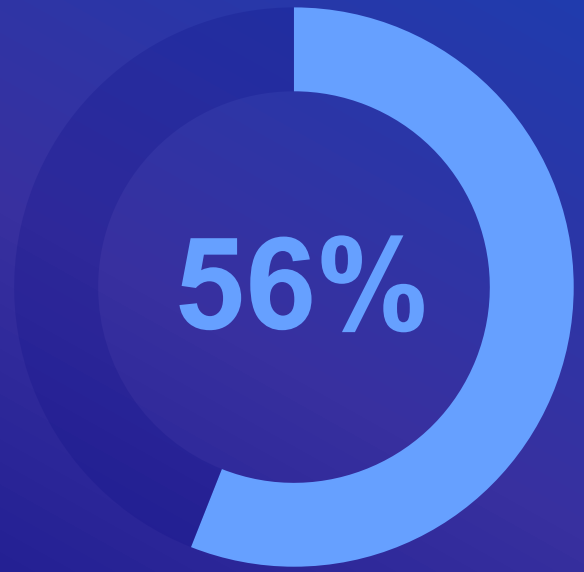
Navigating AI:
The LLMs are now open for business



Lots of activity, but less confidence



95% of B2B Marketers have taken some action to adapt strategy for AI assistants …



… but only **56%** feel they have a future-proof Discovery strategy to ensure strong brand presence in the evolving AI ecosystem (only 16% are ‘very’ confident)

KANTAR | NewtonX

Base: n=102

GEO is a focus, but paid ads are here

Actions Taken to Adapt Marketing & Media Strategy in Response to AI Search Assistants

	NOW Doing now	NEXT Priority over the next 24 months
Generative Engine Optimization (GEO)	79%	46%
Brand Monitoring in AI	67%	18%
Reallocating Media Budgets	49%	13%
Investing in Original Research	48%	5%
Paid AI Search Placements	46%	10%
Technical AI Search Schema	46%	6%
Ungating High-Value Content	30%	2%

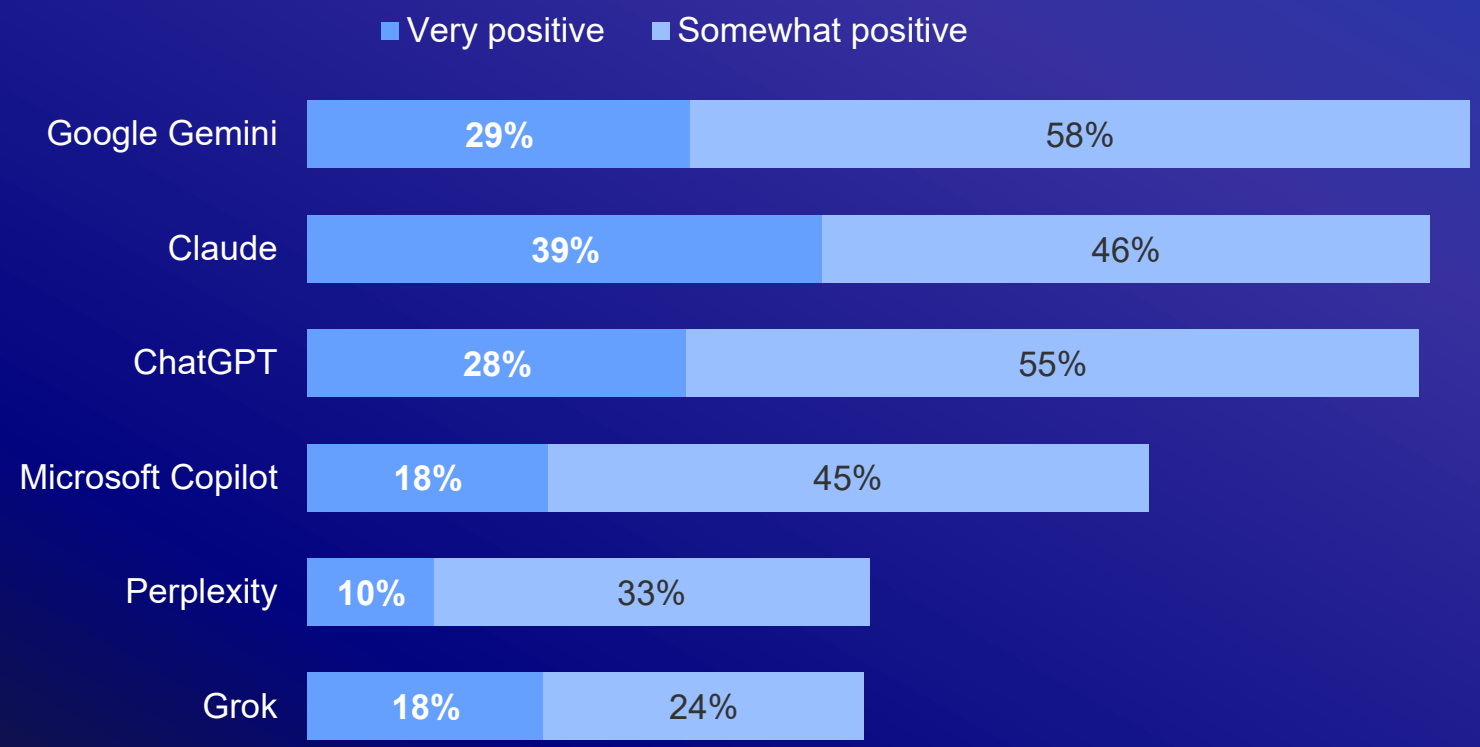
While there is heavy focus on GEO and measurement / monitoring, nearly half are looking into re-aligning media budgets and running paid ads alongside AI generated results.

KANTAR | NewtonX

Base: n=102
Stronger shading indicates a higher percentage (0–100% scale).

Gemini & ChatGPT lead the push

Advertiser Receptivity to AI Search / Answer Platforms



Anthropic's Claude has surged in popularity more recently, even among marketers, despite its public commitment to not include advertising on its Claude platform*

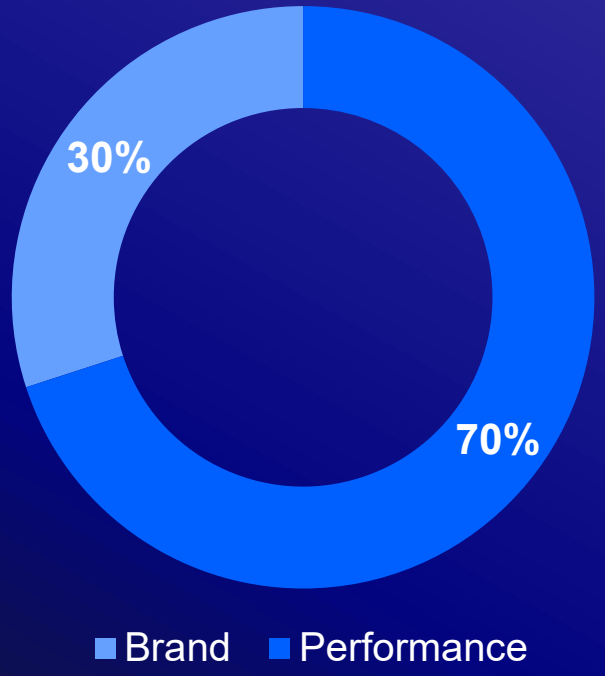
KANTAR | NewtonX

Base: n=102
* Is leading to more focus on GEO for this platform

The Performance Trap: Is brand being neglected in B2B?

Budgets still overwhelmingly skew toward Performance

Average Budget Split Among B2B Marketers



Even though many marketers feel like they have the right balance and leadership buy-in on the importance of brand

	Very confident	Somewhat confident
Strikes the right balance between long-term brand building and short-term demand generation	22%	47%
Has executive leadership buy-in on the long-term ROI of brand building	28%	38%

KANTAR | NewtonX

Base: n=102

Why brand matters in B2B

Brand is a commercial growth lever, building demand today while protecting value for tomorrow

Strong brands make it easier to be chosen, easier to be defended, and harder to replace

Brand strength helps:

- Build demand before it is visible
- Simplify complex group decisions
- Protect long-term value

48%

Of B2B pricing power is driven by perceived brand difference…

Strong brands consistently outperform the market

Share-price growth, 2006–2025



KANTAR | NewtonX

The chart compares the Kantar BrandZ Strong Brands Portfolio with two major market indices.
**The Strong Brands Portfolio is a subset of the Kantar BrandZ Global Top 100. Approximately 25% of total BrandZ Top 100 value is derived from B2B brands.
Source: Why Difference Matters for B2B Marketers

Measurement Matters: But the landscape is changing

Measurement drives trust, but confidence is low

Top Drivers of Ad Platform Trust



Advertisers say measurement credibility is the top driver of trust, but nearly half indicate little to no confidence they can measure true impact of their media spend

	Very confident	Somewhat confident
Accurately measures full-funnel attribution to prove marketing impact on revenue	17%	38%

KANTAR | NewtonX

Base: n=102

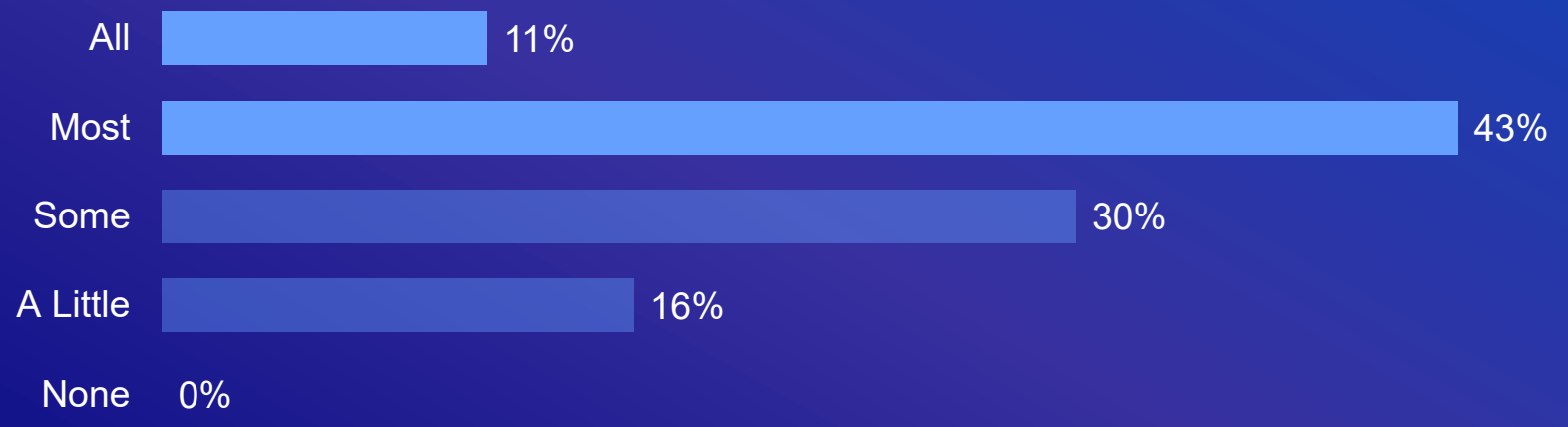
Creative testing: essential, but seemingly optional?

82%

agree that early-stage creative development research leads to better campaigns…

But only **54%** of B2B marketers pre-test most of their creative

How much of your creative is tested?



KANTAR | NewtonX

Base: n=102

Creative testing turns media spend into a more productive investment

+25%

Sales Likelihood

Potential uplift in the likelihood of a short-term sales increase from early-stage idea research.

+33%

Sales Volume

Typical sales volume difference for creatives that have high short-term sales likelihood score versus average.

+35%

Sales / Impressions

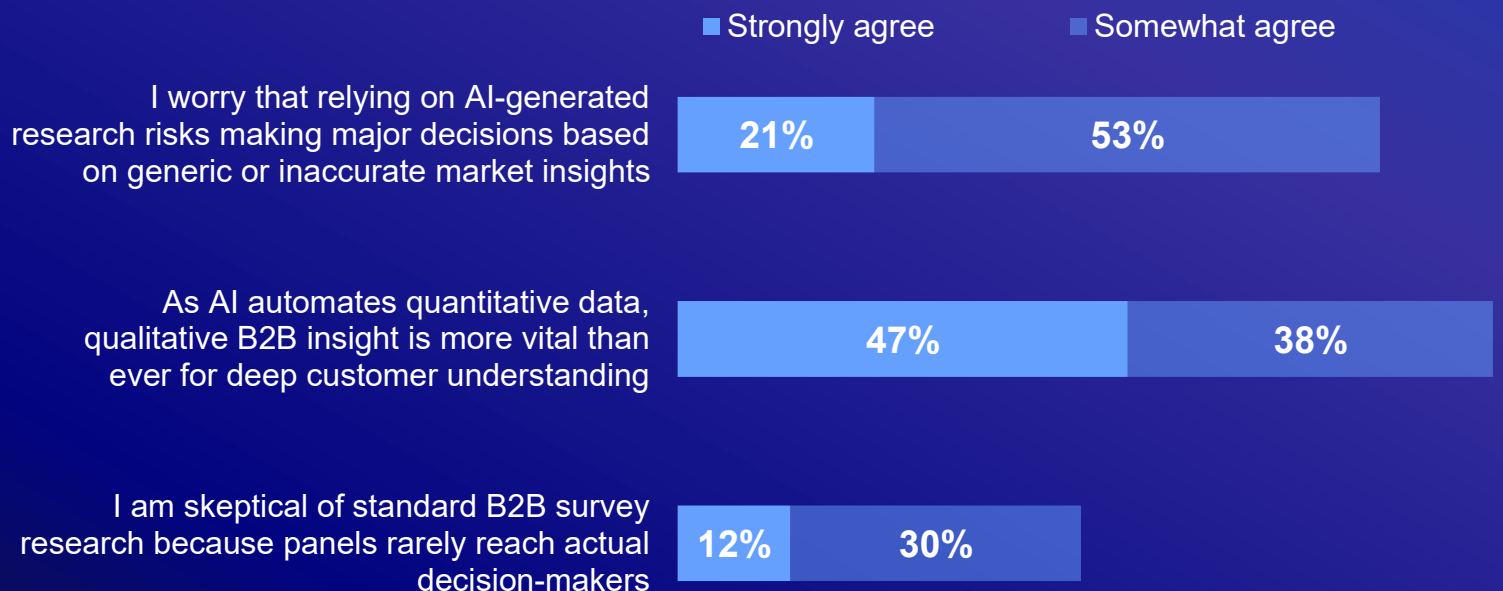
For digital content in the top third for creative quality versus lower-performing content.

KANTAR | NewtonX

Source 1: Kantar validation of LINK qualitative from embedding LINK creative development
Source 2:LINK sales validation (2022)
Source 3: Kantar LINK+ digital validation

Yes, AI is a gamechanger, but high-quality signals still matter

How AI Signals still matter



In the age of AI, high-quality insight will matter more than ever. 85% feel qualitative insight is becoming more important to augment AI insights and 73% see a risk in over-relying on AI to drive strategy. Yet there is growing skepticism of traditional survey panels in the B2B sphere.

KANTAR | NewtonX

Base: n=102

The people behind the data matter

AI can accelerate research. Defensible decisions depend on data you can trace to people with firsthand expertise.

What matters	Why it matters
Verified people	Research should draw on people with firsthand experience of the decisions being studied.
Traceable evidence	Credible findings make clear who informed them and how the data was collected.
Research rigor	The right question, method, and interpretation turn input into decision-ready insight.

5 Things to Do in 2027 (or sooner)

	Mandate	Actionable Execution Blueprint
1	**Diversify Discovery**	Scale Creator, CTV, and AI Search. Shift budget from low-leverage display to high-momentum conversational ads and visual streaming.
2	**Secure AI Real Estate**	Earn organic Share of Model (GEO) and actively pilot paid placements on Gemini and ChatGPT before inventory saturates.
3	**Escaping the "Trap"**	Reallocate media to Brand Building. Transition away from the 70/30 skew to protect blended CAC and accelerate SDR deal velocity.
4	**Creative Intelligence**	Mandate agile pre-testing. Stop running unvetted creative on premium CPC channels; test in native feeds first.
5	**Signal Superiority**	Use AI to scale but rely on Verified Ground Truth. Never base multi-million dollar GTM strategies on cheap consumer panels.

Behind the Research

About Kantar

Kantar is the world's leading marketing data and analytics business. We deliver the intelligence needed to power brand growth. We provide the signals that help organizations act quickly and confidently. We empower brands to make effective marketing decisions based on predictive evidence. And we help them craft powerful growth strategies rooted in the connection between consumers, brands and enterprise value. All this is powered by our uniquely robust human and synthetic data, our unrivalled IP, our AI-native platform and the team of global brand experts that bring this all together.

About NewtonX

NewtonX is the only B2B research intelligence platform that delivers AI-speed insights with data you can trace. NewtonX is trusted by Google, TikTok, Salesforce, Stripe, Microsoft, and Coinbase, with research cited by Gartner, Fortune, Forbes, Adweek, and The Wall Street Journal.