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# **THE 2026 STATE OF B2B GO-TO-MARKET (GTM) STRATEGY: FROM ACTIVITY ENGINE TO REVENUE DISCIPLINE**

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***GROWTH ACCELERATED***



The B2B go-to-market landscape in 2026 is defined by sustained pressure to deliver predictable, measurable revenue growth amid lengthening buying cycles, intensifying competition, evolving buyer expectations, and rapid technological advancement, particularly the rise of artificial intelligence.

Organizations that once relied on volume-driven demand generation and siloed execution models are being compelled to reevaluate foundational questions: Who owns GTM strategy? How aligned are the revenue-facing functions? Can ROI be clearly demonstrated across growing investments in channels, content, and technology? And perhaps most critically, how quickly can AI be operationalized before it becomes table stakes?

The findings from the **2026 State of B2B Go-to-Market (GTM) Strategy** report, based on a survey of 511 B2B professionals in the United States and the United Kingdom, show that GTM is evolving from a functional initiative into an enterprise discipline.

The transition, however, remains inconsistent. The gap between organizations that treat GTM as an enterprise discipline and those that run it as a collection of activities is where the competitive advantage lies.

## WHO'S BEHIND THE STRATEGY: FUNCTIONAL REPRESENTATION

The 2026 State of B2B Go-to-Market Strategy report reflects input from a broad cross-section of individuals actively involved in GTM execution and decision-making.



By job level, the respondent base skews toward **practitioners and mid-level leaders**. Managers represent the largest group at 35.8%, followed closely by Individual Contributors at 32.1%. Senior and Lead professionals account for 12.7%, with Directors at 9.8% and C-Suite respondents at 5.1%.

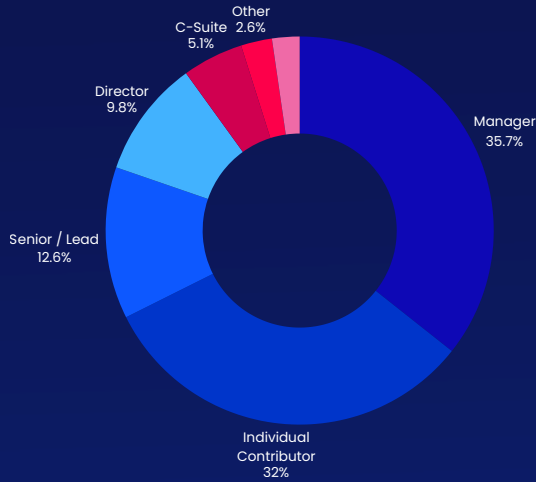
By function, **Sales and Business Development** leads at 33.8%, followed by Marketing at 24.9% and Product at 15.3%. Customer Success represents 6.5%, with Public Relations at 5.5% and a small Research contingent at 0.4%. The concentration across Sales, Marketing, and Product reflects the core revenue-facing functions where GTM ownership and execution friction are felt most directly.

By company size, the respondent base spans organizations of all scales. **The largest segment represents companies with 1 to 50 employees** at 29%, followed by 51 to 200 at 21.9% and 201 to 500 at 17%. Mid-market and enterprise organizations, those with 501 to 1,000 employees and 1,001 to 5,000, account for 11.7% and 10.6% respectively, with the largest organizations above 5,000 employees at 9.8%.

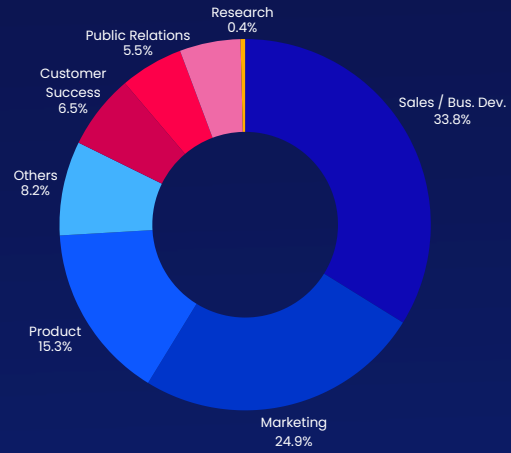
By annual revenue, **37% of respondents come from companies generating under \$10M, with 22.3% in the \$10M to \$50M range**. The \$50M to \$200M band represents 15.1%, while \$200M to \$1B accounts for 13.3% and companies above \$1B make up 12.3%. The spread across revenue tiers ensures the findings reflect GTM realities across growth-stage, mid-market, and enterprise contexts.

Taken together, the respondent profile reflects a practitioner-weighted, cross-functional view of B2B GTM in 2026.

## WHO'S BEHIND THE STRATEGY: FUNCTIONAL REPRESENTATION

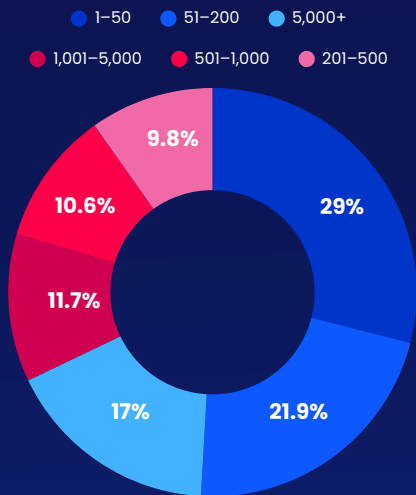


What is your job level?

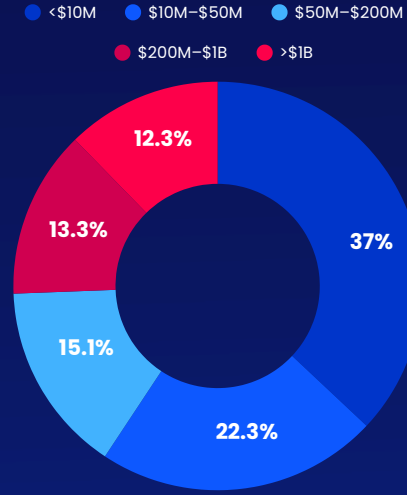


Which department/function do you primarily work in?

## COMPANY PROFILE: SIZE & REVENUE



Company Size (Employees)



Company Annual Revenue

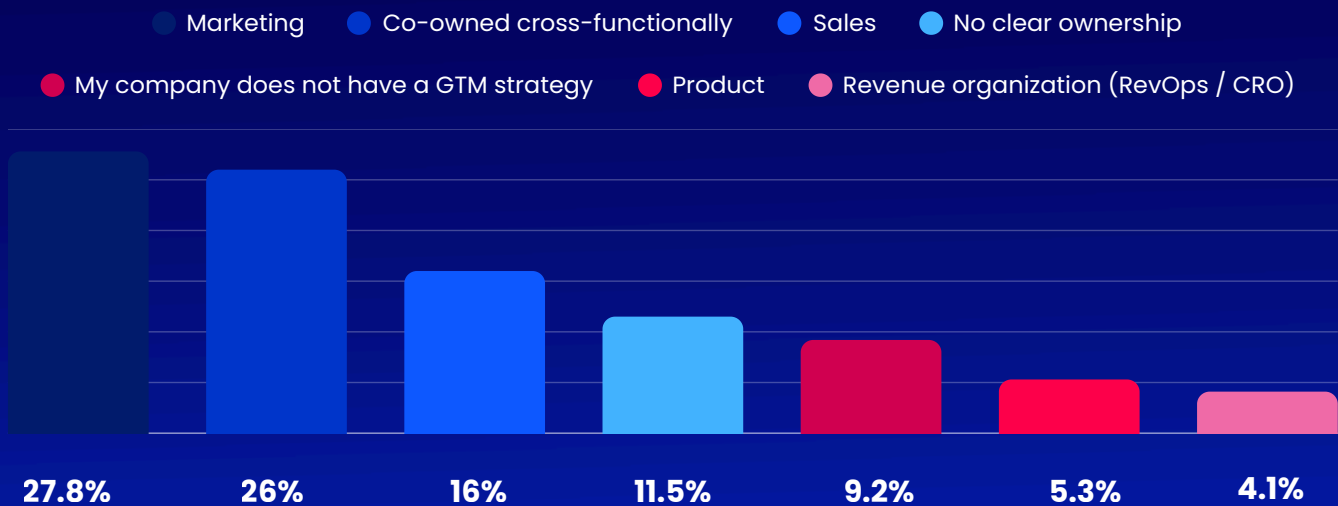
## A PERSISTENT DEFINITION GAP

A foundational challenge in modern B2B organizations is a widespread lack of clarity around what GTM truly entails. One of our most striking findings was that **only 37% of respondents demonstrate a clear understanding of GTM as an integrated, cross-functional revenue framework rather than a collection of marketing and sales activities.**

This ambiguity contributes to inconsistent execution and limits the organization's ability to drive coordinated revenue growth.

The challenge is compounded by fragmented ownership. Approximately 21% of companies either lack a formal GTM strategy or have no clearly defined ownership structure.

### ONE IN FIVE COMPANIES LACK EITHER FORMAL OWNERSHIP OR A GTM STRATEGY ENTIRELY



Even among organizations that assign ownership, accountability is often distributed across multiple functions without centralized leadership. While shared ownership can promote collaboration, the data suggests it frequently results in unclear accountability, slower decision-making, and difficulty measuring enterprise-wide performance.

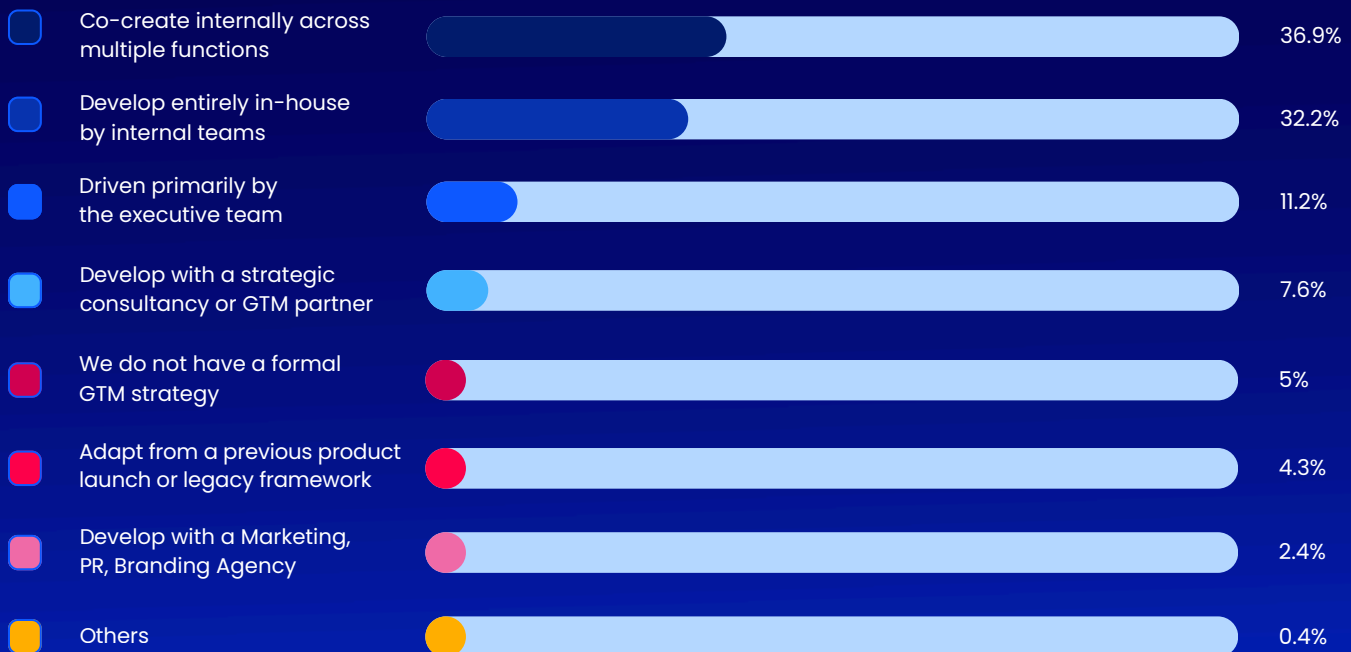
For marketing leaders, this reinforces a critical reality: GTM must be treated as a defined discipline with clear governance, not as an informal cross-functional initiative. Otherwise, the ambiguity shows up directly in how GTM strategies get built, and by whom.

## INTERNALLY-BUILT GTM IS THE PARADOX

Most organizations develop their GTM strategies internally, though the degree of collaboration varies significantly. A majority favor cross-functional input rather than top-down directives or externally led frameworks.

Approximately 69% rely entirely on internal development, either collaboratively across functions or within individual departments, while only 11.9% leverage external expertise or formalized strategic models. Roughly 5% report having no structured GTM strategy at all, aligning with earlier findings on ownership gaps.

### HOW COMPANIES BUILD THEIR GO-TO-MARKET STRATEGY



For marketing executives, this highlights an opportunity. Internal ownership fosters alignment, but without structured frameworks or objective external perspective, maturity can plateau. As competitive pressure increases, disciplined strategy development becomes a differentiator.

# CROSS-FUNCTIONAL ALIGNMENT SURFACES A 30% GAP

Alignment across Sales, Marketing, Product, and Customer Success is essential to GTM success. Encouragingly, nearly **70%** of respondents describe their organizations as mostly or fully aligned around shared GTM goals.

However, the remaining 30% report only partial or poor alignment—representing a significant execution risk. In complex B2B environments with extended sales cycles and multi-stakeholder buying processes, even minor misalignment can create measurable inefficiencies, including inconsistent messaging, delayed handoffs, and conflicting performance metrics.

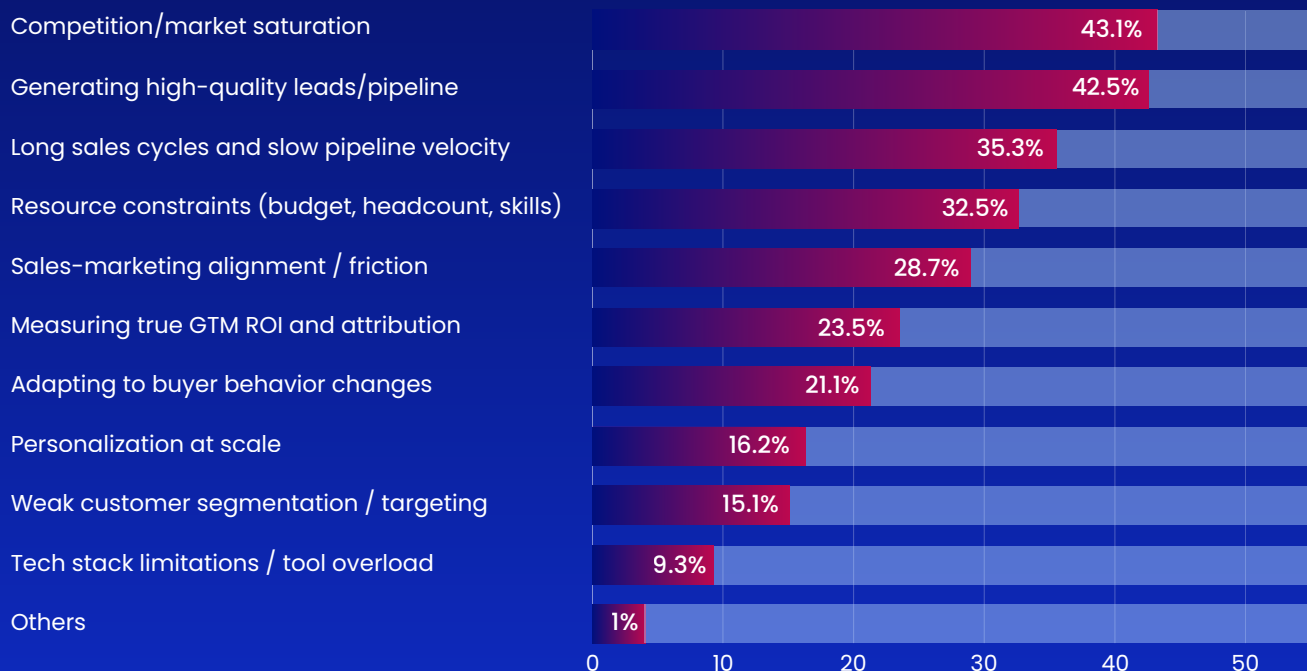
For revenue-driven marketing organizations, alignment is not merely cultural—it is a driver of velocity, win rate, and forecast reliability.



## TOP EXECUTION CHALLENGES

Despite technological advancement, the top GTM obstacles in 2026 remain largely structural.

### TOP GTM CHALLENGES ORGANIZATIONS FACE TODAY

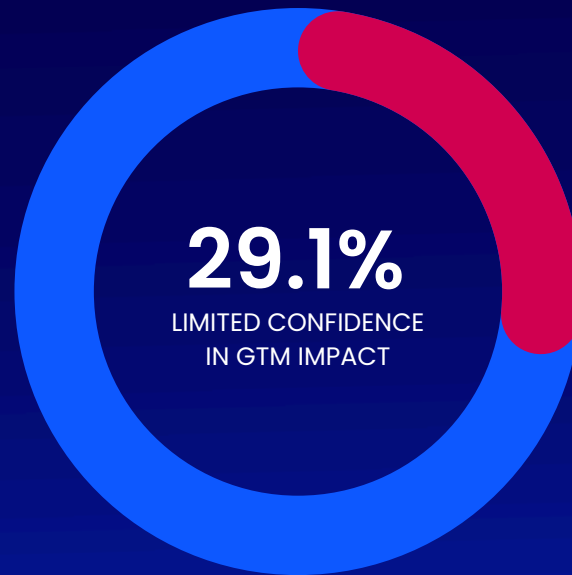


These findings reinforce that while channels and tools have evolved, the underlying GTM challenges remain largely consistent: pipeline quality, competitive differentiation, measurement rigor, and alignment.

Notably, **nearly one-third** of respondents lack confidence that their GTM efforts are driving measurable commercial outcomes, an indicator of both attribution complexity and strategy maturity gaps.

## THREE IN TEN GTM PROGRAMS CANNOT PROVE THEIR IMPACT

29.1% of respondents report limited confidence that their GTM initiatives effectively translate into measurable business impact.



For marketing leaders operating under heightened financial scrutiny, this confidence gap has implications beyond reporting: it affects budget defense, executive credibility, and long-term strategic influence.

Confidence is increasingly tied to measurable contribution, not activity volume.



## ROI ACCOUNTABILITY & MEASUREMENT

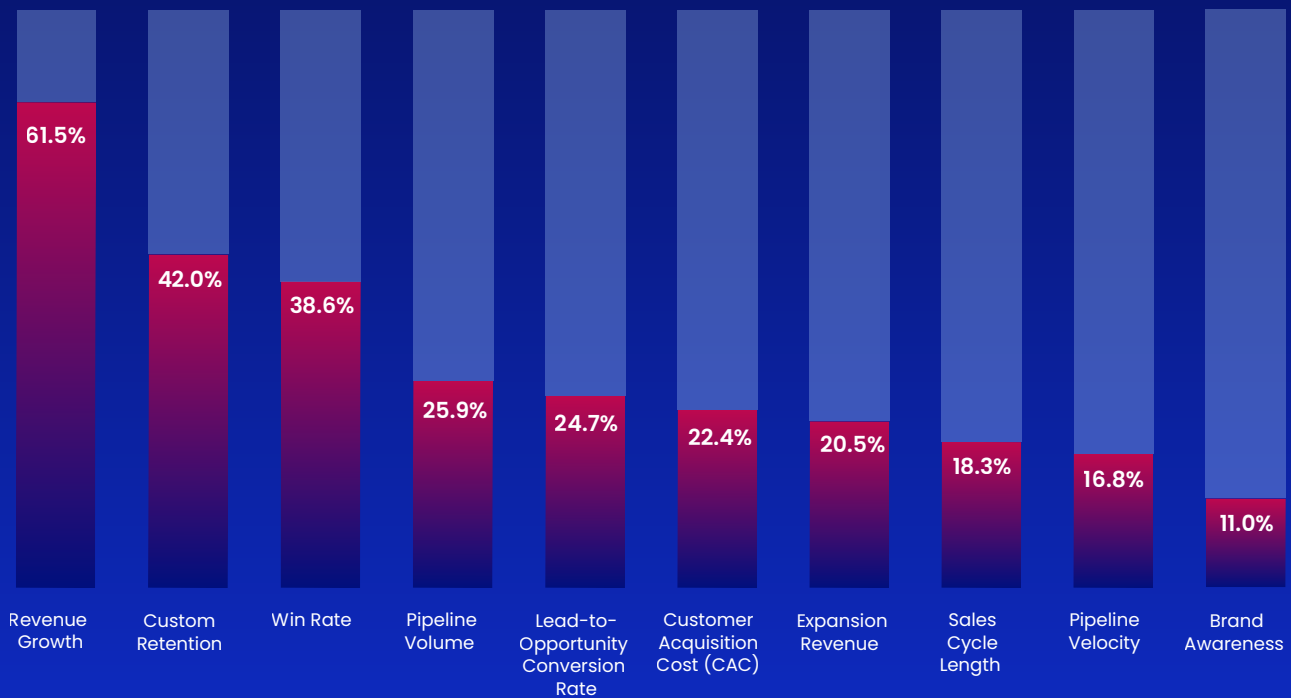
Despite continued investment in analytics, marketing technology, and data platforms, many organizations struggle with clear accountability for GTM ROI.

Below are a number of key factors influencing measurement integrity.

### MOST IMPORTANT INTERNAL GTM PERFORMANCE METRICS

Revenue-driven metrics dominate executive priorities:

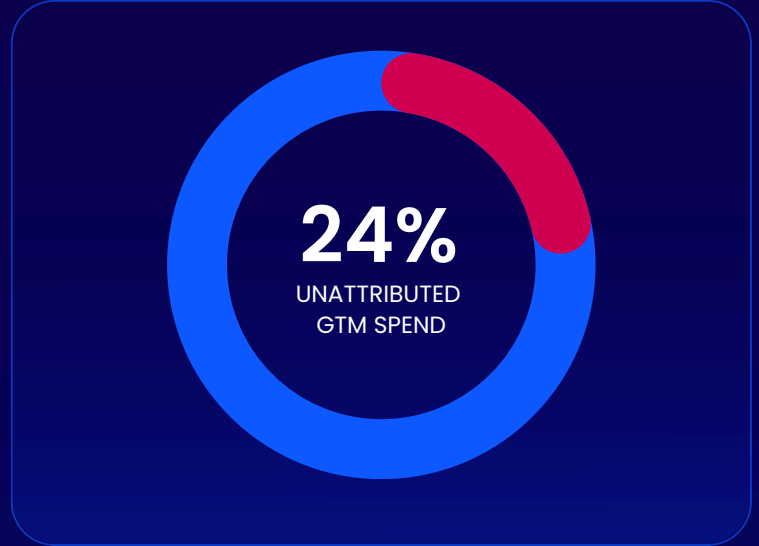
#### MOST IMPORTANT GTM PERFORMANCE METRICS TODAY



The emphasis on revenue, retention, and win rate underscores executive focus on top-line impact. Meanwhile, brand metrics rank comparatively low, suggesting organizations continue to favor measurable short-term performance over longer-horizon brand investment.

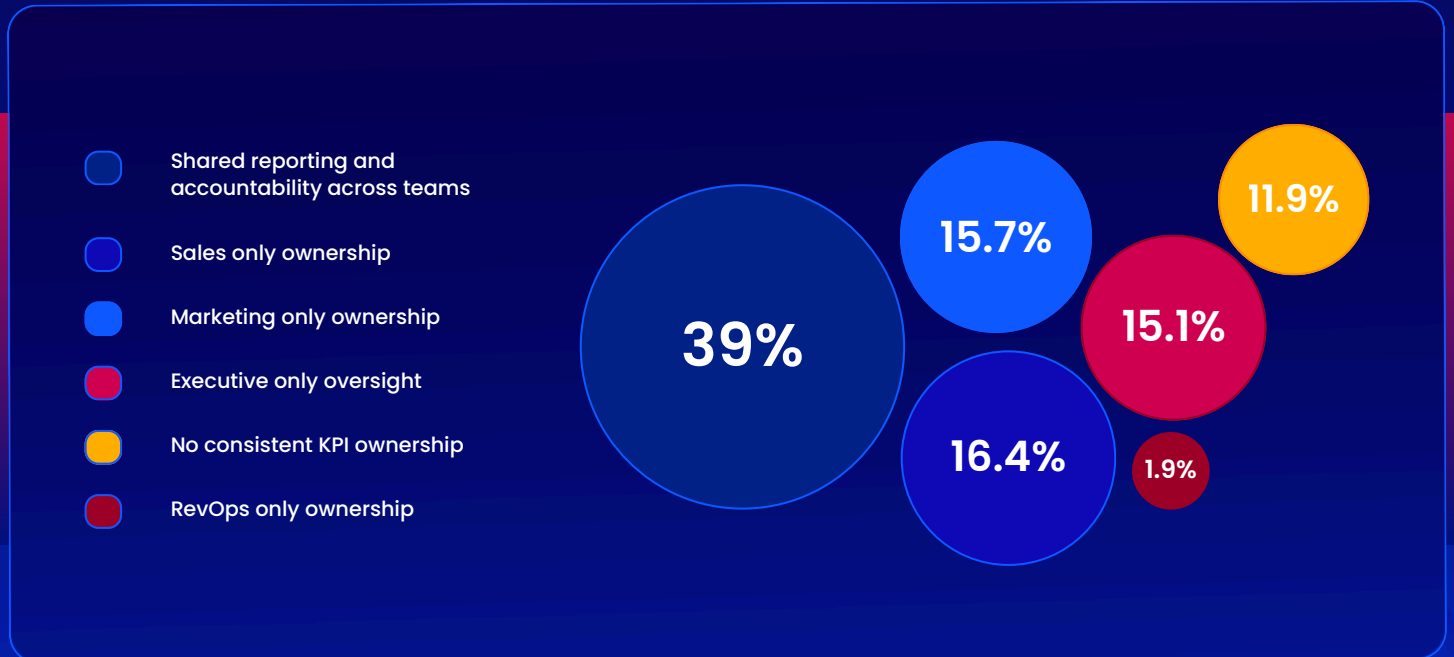
## UNMEASURED GTM SPEND

On average, **approximately 24%** of GTM budgets are allocated to initiatives without traceable commercial outcomes. This represents both a vulnerability and an opportunity. In an environment where CFOs and boards demand clarity, reducing unmeasured spend through stronger attribution modeling, closed-loop reporting, and disciplined experimentation can materially improve ROI visibility.



## CO-OWNERSHIP OF GTM KPIS AND REPORTING

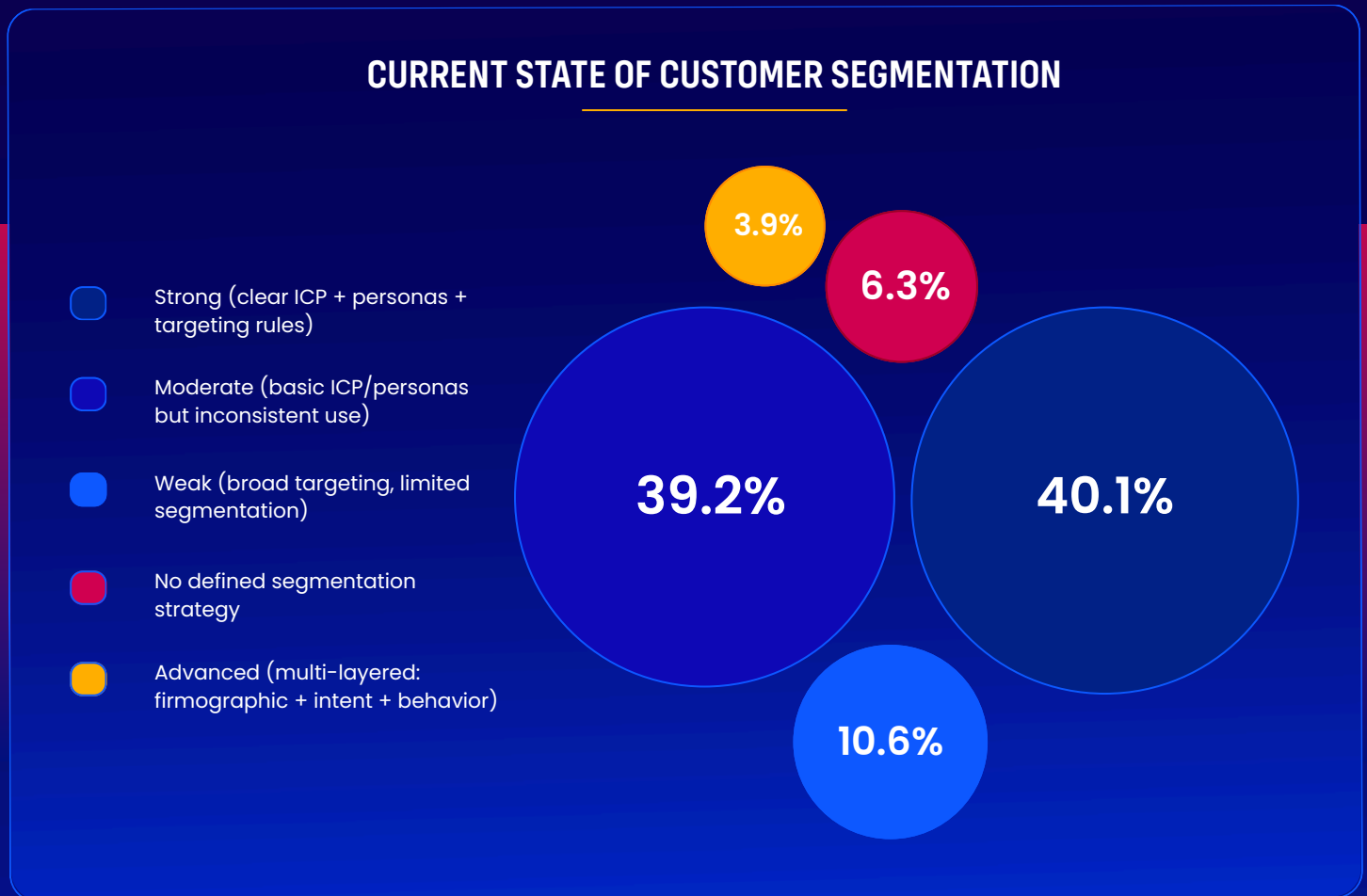
KPI accountability mirrors broader ownership fragmentation:



While shared accountability is common, dispersed ownership can dilute responsibility. Without clear governance and unified reporting frameworks, measurement remains fragmented and optimization reactive rather than strategic.

## CUSTOMER SEGMENTATION MATURITY

Strong segmentation is foundational to effective targeting, personalization, and measurement, yet maturity levels are moderate at best:

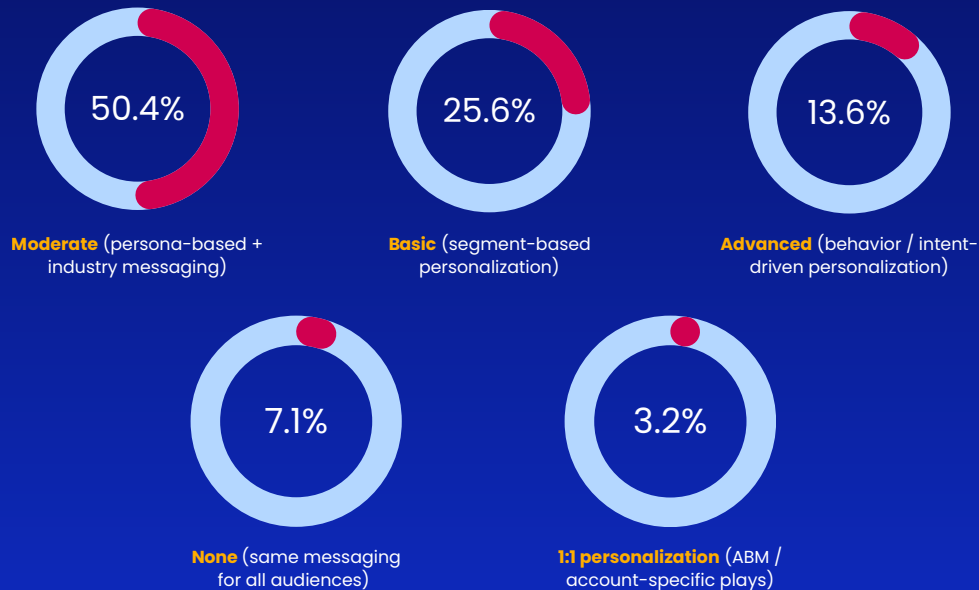


Fewer than **4%** leverage advanced segmentation integrating firmographic, behavioral, and intent data. Limited segmentation precision undermines personalization effectiveness and complicates attribution accuracy.

## PERSONALIZATION ACROSS GTM PROGRAMS

Personalization maturity shows progress but remains surface-level for many:

## PERSONALIZATION ACROSS GTM PROGRAMS



While most organizations employ some degree of personalization, few achieve scalable, data-driven customization capable of materially improving conversion efficiency.

## BALANCING BRAND-BUILDING VS. PERFORMANCE MARKETING

Most organizations aim for equilibrium, though performance edges slightly ahead in emphasis:

- Balanced brand and performance equally (**44.6%**)
- Mostly brand-focused (**23.1%**)
- Mostly performance-focused (**21.1%**)
- Heavily brand-focused (**6.0%**)
- Heavily performance-focused (**5.2%**)

The ~44% balanced approach is encouraging, as pure performance focus can starve long-term pipeline creation, while heavy brand investment risks poor short-term measurability. Although many aim for balance, the prevalence of unmeasured spend suggests that brand contribution is still insufficiently quantified in many organizations.

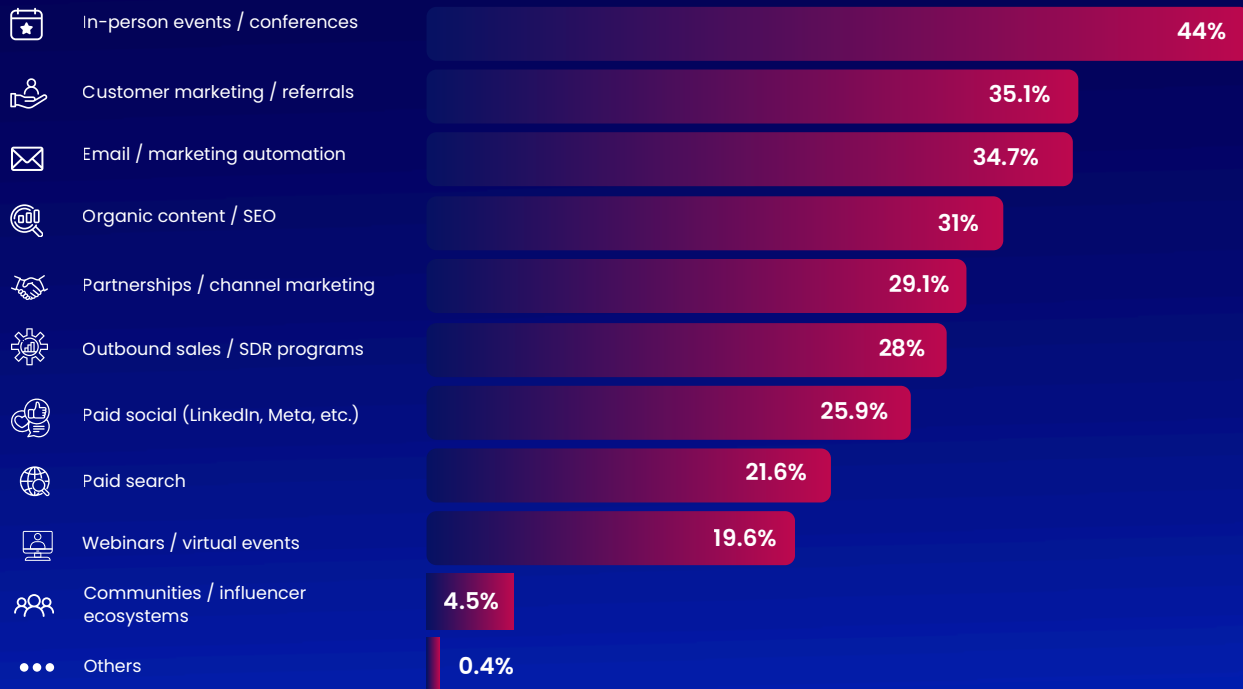
## GTM TECHNOLOGIES

As B2B go-to-market strategies grow more complex and multichannel, the supporting technology stack and investment priorities play a pivotal role in execution quality, efficiency, and competitive differentiation.

### MOST IMPORTANT GTM CHANNELS FOR DRIVING PIPELINE TODAY

Respondents identified a mix of relationship-driven and scalable channels:

#### MOST EFFECTIVE CHANNELS FOR PIPELINE GROWTH

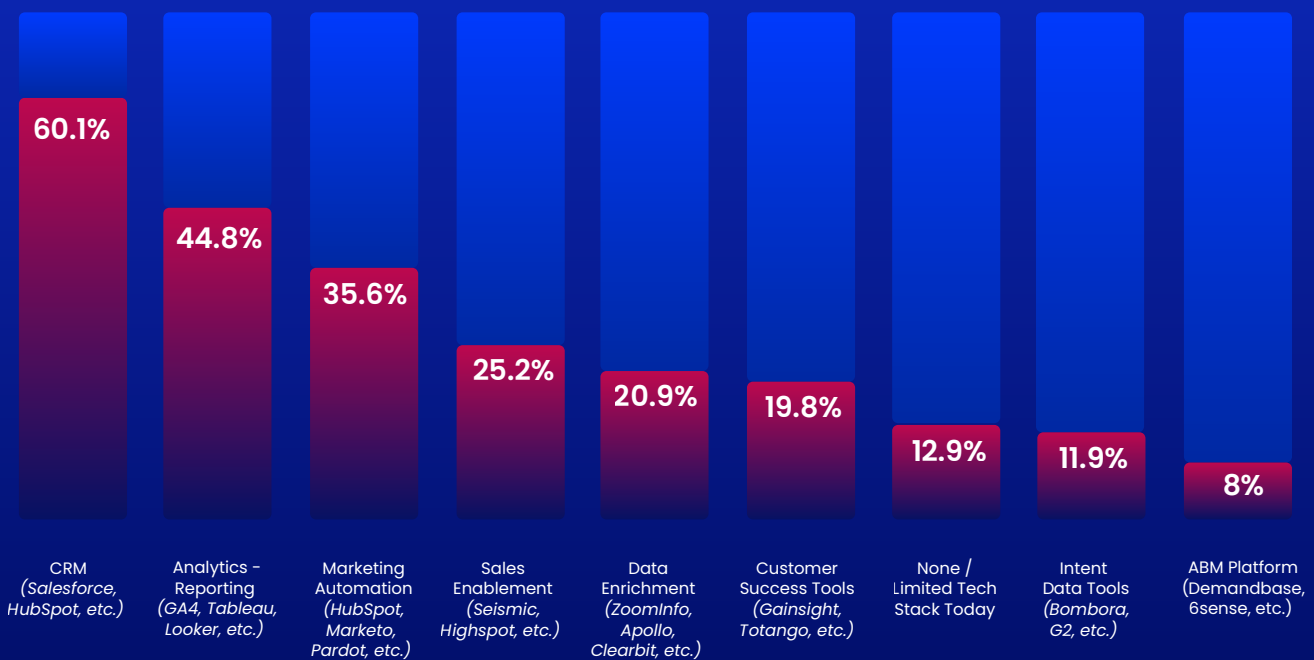


**High-touch channels** (in-person events, customer advocacy, and partnerships) lead alongside **foundational digital engines** (email automation and organic/SEO), highlighting that successful pipeline creation in 2026 still requires a blend of trust-building and scalable reach. While important, pure paid digital channels rank lower, suggesting diminishing returns or greater competition in those areas for many organizations.

## ESSENTIAL GTM TECHNOLOGIES IN USE TODAY

Core infrastructure tools dominate, while more specialized or advanced platforms see lower adoption:

### TOP ESSENTIAL GTM TECHNOLOGIES



While CRM, analytics, and marketing automation form the backbone for most, adoption of intent, ABM, and advanced enrichment tools drops sharply, indicating that many organizations still operate with foundational rather than sophisticated, buyer-intent-driven stacks.

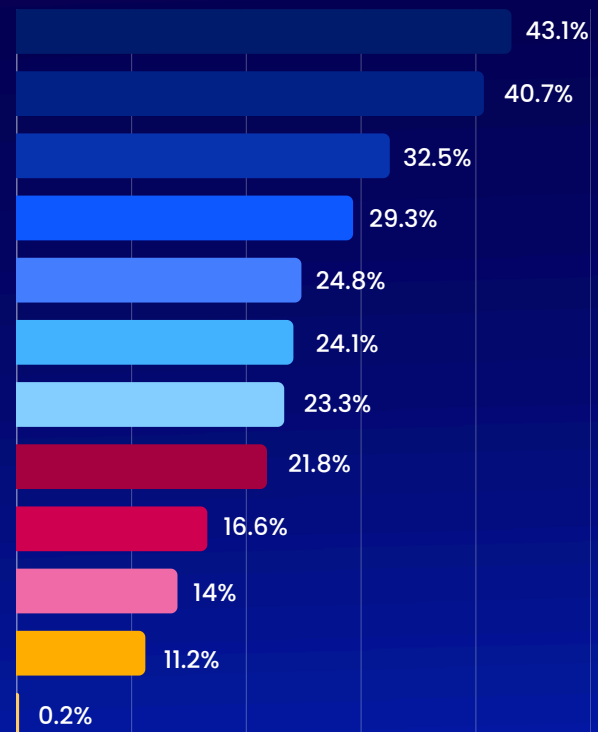
**Nearly 13% report limited or no meaningful tech support**, aligning with earlier findings on measurement and ROI challenges.

## INVESTMENT PRIORITIES TO ENSURE HIGH-QUALITY, COMPETITIVE GTM

Organizations allocate resources across a range of levers to strengthen strategy execution and outcomes.

### WHERE COMPANIES INVEST TO STRENGTHEN GTM

- Market research & customer insights
- Data analytics & forecasting tools
- AI / automation tools
- Competitive intelligence
- Content and messaging development
- Cross-functional alignment workshops (sales / product / marketing / CS)
- Upskilling internal talent (e.g., courses, certifications)
- New technology or platforms (CRM, MAP, ABM)
- GTM training and enablement for teams
- We do not currently invest meaningfully in GTM improvement
- Partnering with a GTM consultancy or agency
- Others



The emphasis on customer/market insights, AI/automation, and competitive intelligence signals a forward-looking focus on intelligence-driven and efficient execution.

Notably, 14% report minimal meaningful investment in GTM improvement, which may contribute to the confidence and maturity gaps identified earlier.

## WHEN GTM COMPLEXITY RISES, EXTERNAL EXPERTISE BOOSTS CONFIDENCE

Nearly 30% of respondents report greater confidence in their GTM strategy when working with an external partner.



That number matters because it surfaces a gap between default behavior and what actually builds strategic confidence. Most organizations default to internal ownership out of familiarity or cost assumptions. But when complexity increases, whether through fragmented ownership, attribution gaps, or segmentation immaturity, structured external support consistently raises the confidence of the teams closest to the problem.

The data does not argue against internal ownership. It argues for knowing when internal ownership alone is not enough.

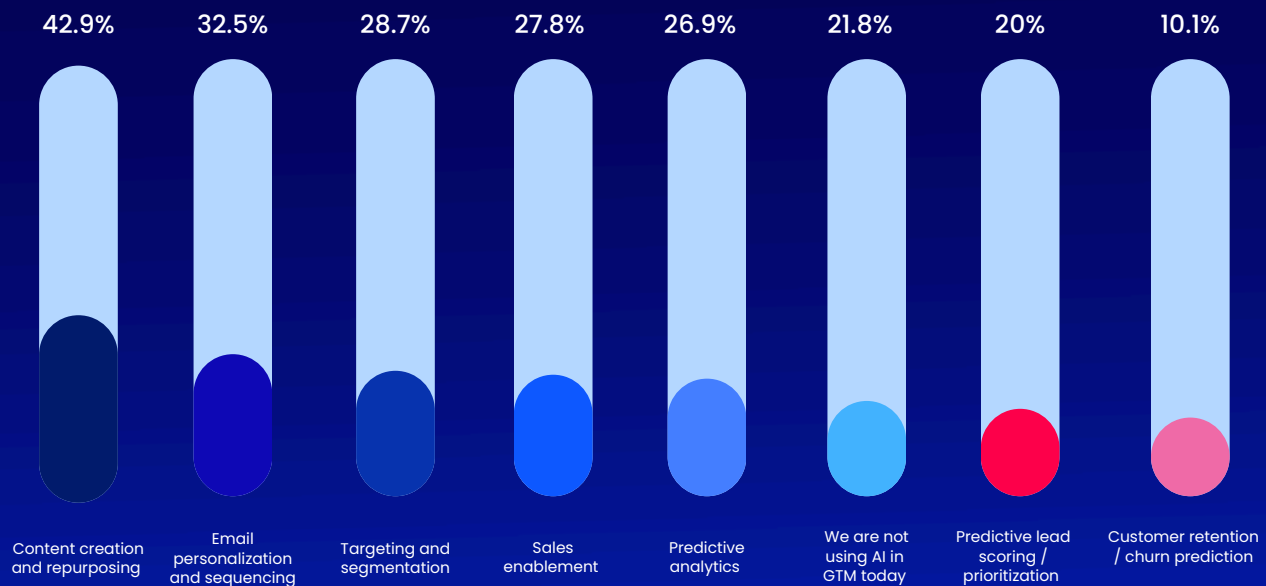
# AI IN GTM

Artificial Intelligence is rapidly reshaping B2B go-to-market functions, moving from experimental use cases to core operational components. This section examines current AI adoption patterns in GTM, the specific applications seeing the highest uptake, and forward-looking expectations for AI's transformative potential over the next 12–24 months.

## CURRENT USE OF AI IN GTM STRATEGIES

Respondents were asked to select all applicable ways AI is currently integrated into their GTM efforts. Adoption is meaningful but still uneven, with content and personalization leading while more advanced predictive applications trail.

### CURRENT APPLICATIONS OF AI IN GTM



While adoption is widespread, more advanced predictive applications remain less mature, reflecting data integration and governance requirements.

## THE FUTURE OF GTM

Looking ahead, optimism is strong: **nearly six in ten respondents (58.4%)** expect **AI-first GTM models** to outperform traditional GTM approaches within the next 12–24 months.

This belief reflects growing confidence that AI can deliver superior pipeline quality, faster velocity, better personalization at scale, and more accurate forecasting, addressing many of the persistent challenges highlighted earlier in this report (e.g., lead quality, long cycles, measurement gaps, and alignment friction).

# 58.4%

## OF RESPONDENTS

anticipate that **AI-first GTM strategies** will deliver stronger results than traditional models within the next 12–24 months

Expect AI-first to outperform

41.6%

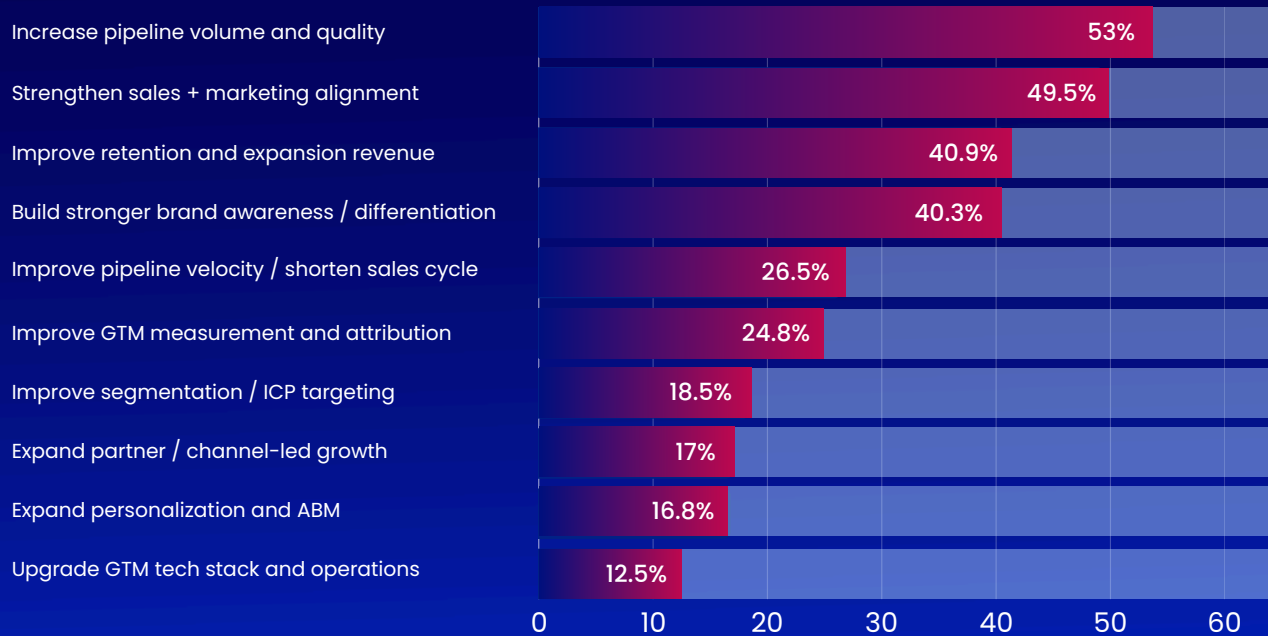
58.4%

Neutral or disagree

## TOP GTM PRIORITIES OVER THE NEXT 12–24 MONTHS

When asked to select up to two top priorities for the coming period, respondents focused on foundational revenue drivers and alignment.

## TOP GTM PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT 12-24 MONTHS



These priorities align closely with AI's highest-value applications and reflect a shift toward intelligence-driven revenue orchestration.

## CONCLUSION

The 2026 State of B2B Go-to-Market landscape reflects a discipline evolving toward greater accountability, integration, and technological sophistication.

While many organizations have made progress in alignment and AI adoption, persistent gaps in ownership clarity, segmentation maturity, attribution rigor, and KPI governance continue to limit performance.

For marketing leaders, the path forward is clear:

- 1 Establish explicit GTM ownership**, whether centralized under a CRO, CMO, or rigorously co-owned with defined accountability, to eliminate the “no one owns it” or “everyone owns it vaguely” trap.
- 2 Close the alignment gap** through shared KPIs, regular cross-functional rituals, and joint success metrics that reward collective pipeline health over siloed activity.
- 3 Prioritize pipeline quality and velocity** by advancing segmentation, intent-driven targeting, behavior-based personalization, and predictive scoring to shorten cycles and raise win rates.
- 4 Build rigorous ROI visibility**, investing in cleaner attribution, closed-loop reporting, and experimentation discipline to eliminate the ~24% average “dark” budget and prove contribution across brand and performance.
- 5 Accelerate intentional AI integration**, moving beyond content generation into predictive analytics, lead prioritization, dynamic sequencing, and forecasting to compound gains across the revenue engine.
- 6 Balance foundational and forward-looking investments**, deepening buyer and competitive insights while selectively layering advanced tools (intent, ABM, AI) onto strong CRM/analytics cores.

The companies that act decisively on these fronts in 2026–2027 will not only close today’s performance gaps, but they will also redefine what effective, scalable, and predictable B2B GTM looks like in an AI-augmented era.

## METHODOLOGY

The 2026 State of B2B Go-to-Market (GTM) Strategy report is based on a quantitative survey of 511 B2B professionals across the United States and the United Kingdom, conducted via the Prolific research platform.

Respondents represent a cross-section of revenue-generating and strategic roles involved in the development, execution, and measurement of Go-to-Market (GTM) strategy. Data was collected in February 2026, and all results are reported in aggregate



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