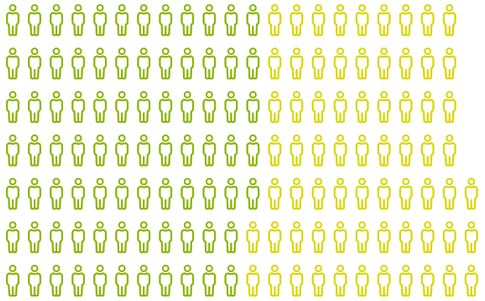
informatech

2023 TRUST IN MARKETING INDEX

# How B2B marketers can fill the trust gap



# Objectives and methodology



**150**
respondents

**68**
C-level or executives

**82**
directors

The Informa Tech 2023 Trust in Marketing Index measures the state of the relationship between marketers and B2B technology buying decision makers.

Informa Tech surveyed 150 total B2B technology buying decision makers (68 at the C-level or executive level of seniority and 82 at the director level) in the United States and United Kingdom in the Summer of 2023 to find out how trust is fostered through:

- Accuracy, clarity and expertise
- Personalization
- Timeliness

The result – a score on a scale of 0 to 100 – is meant to reflect how well the marketing industry has built trust with this important audience.

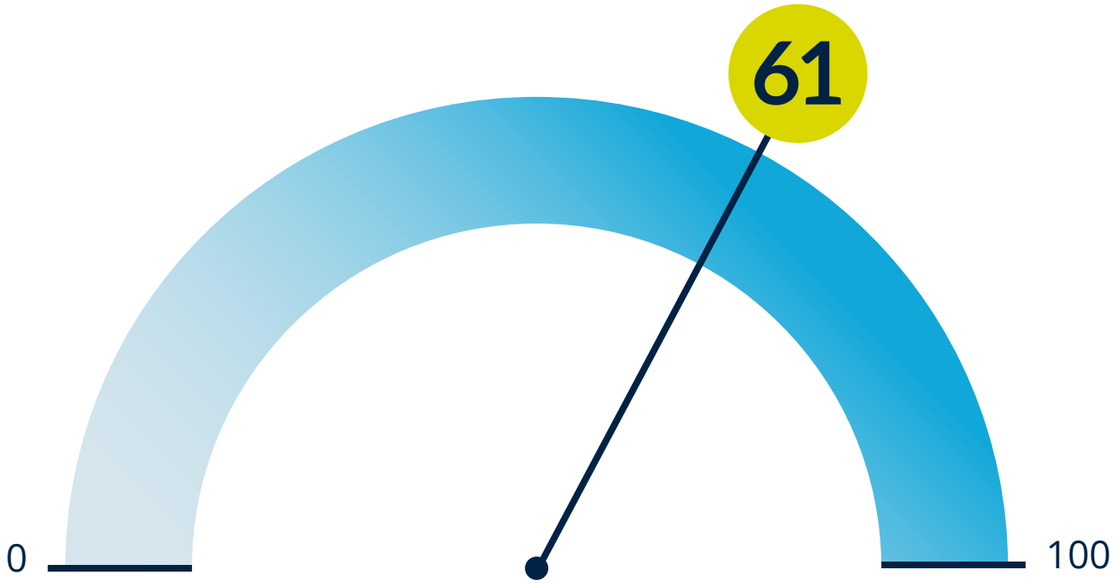
## Index scoring

The survey included five baseline questions with assigned point values for each answer (from 10 for the most optimal answer descending to zero for the least optimal answer). The point totals for each question were then added together, and that number was divided by the total number of responses to each question (excluding any “not sure” responses) to establish each question’s average score. The averages of the five questions were then each weighted at 20% and added together to create the index score, which is on a scale of 0 to 100 and rounded to the nearest whole number. See the appendix for the five index questions and their results.

# The largest barrier to improving trust

## The 2023 Informa Tech Trust in Marketing Index

The inaugural index shows B2B technology buying decision makers' trust in marketers is at a 61 on a scale of 1 to 100, indicating that while there are strong building blocks present, there is still significant work to be done.




The Informa Tech Trust in Marketing Index shows B2B marketers have work to do in several areas – though one in particular stands out.

The index indicates that just because marketers know how to effectively drive accurate content marketing to the correct audiences doesn't mean they're giving their target audience what it needs. B2B technology buying decision makers' survey responses demonstrate **the largest barrier to improving trust is getting more value from content – especially the gated content** that requires these buyers to fill out forms that enroll them in a communication loop with a brand.

# The five pillars of trust

## Generalized trust




More than three in five B2B technology buying decision makers say that, in general, they trust a majority or all of what marketers share with them.

## Gated content value




Seventy-one percent of respondents say they're either often or sometimes disappointed in the value of B2B gated content, a clear indicator brands must raise the level of their content quality to drive conversions.

## Personalized trust




Fifty-nine percent of respondents trust all or a majority of the content that B2B marketers they've already shared their data with send to them, slightly lower than the response on generalized trust. However, the survey found other ways in which personalization moved the needle.

## Targeting




Sixty-two percent of B2B technology buyers say overall industry targeting is either good or outstanding, rising to 66% when targeted by brands holding their data. However, for 38% of respondents, generalized targeting still needs to improve.

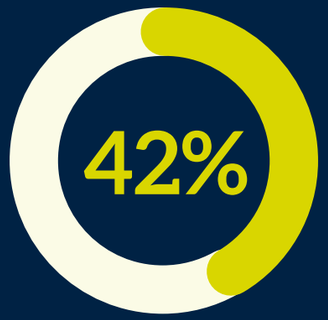
## Timing



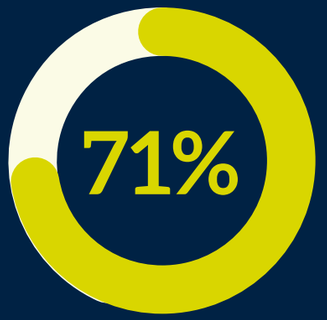

Sixty-four percent of respondents say marketers' timing is good or outstanding. That number rose to 70% when respondents were asked how well brands they'd previously shared data with are doing at sending timely content and offers.

# The negative impact of ‘the same old content’

B2B technology buying decision makers reinforced the message that undifferentiated content brings brands down in the eyes of their target audiences. Addressing this issue could significantly improve future Trust in Marketing Index scores.



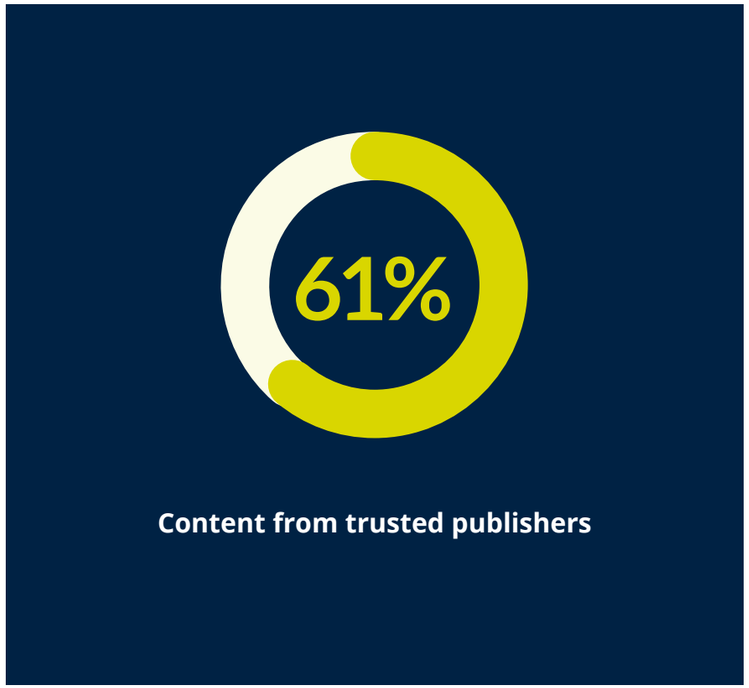

the percentage of respondents who **said “content was too general” when asked to pick the top two reasons they’re most commonly disappointed with B2B content,** the most selected answer to that question.




the percentage of respondents who say they’re **often or sometimes disappointed in the value of B2B gated content**

# What makes B2B content trustworthy?

We asked B2B technology buyers to select up to three qualities that make B2B content trustworthy. These were their top selections.



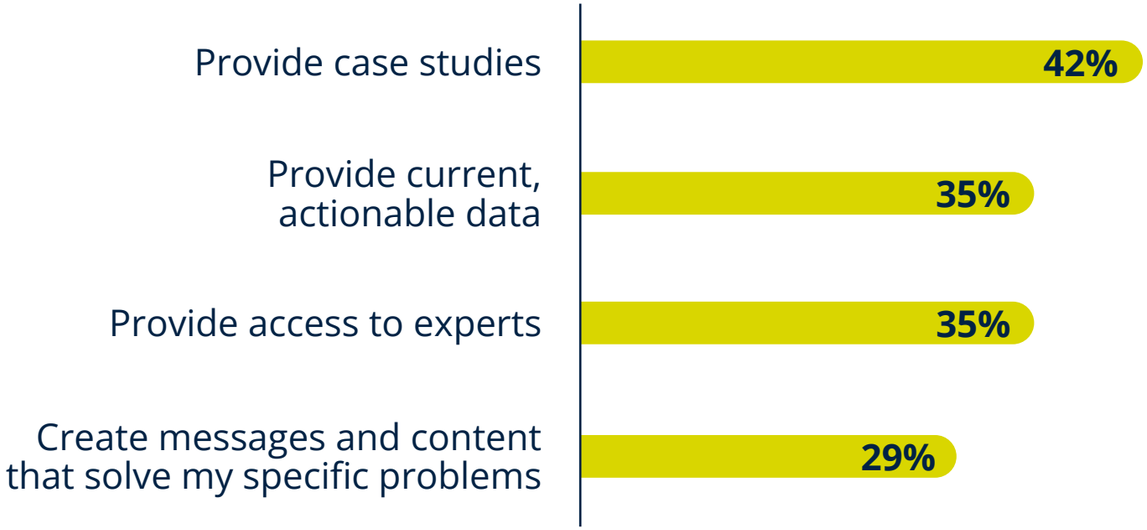






# Trust boosters

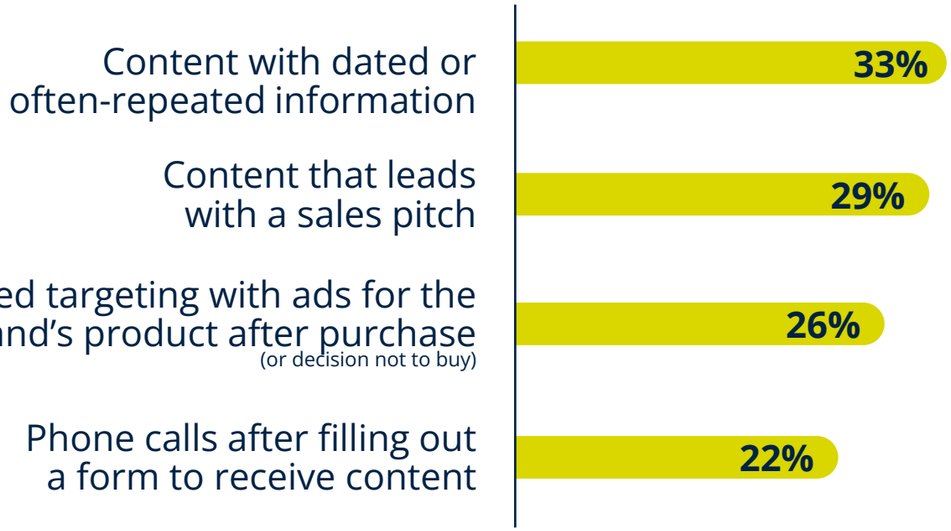
Survey respondents were asked to select up to three approaches B2B marketers can take to build trust with them.
**These were their four top trust-boosting actions:**






# Trust busters

Survey respondents said these are **the top four actions that negatively affected their trust in a B2B brand**.
The percentages reflect the respondents who said the action would “reduce trust” or “completely eliminate trust.”

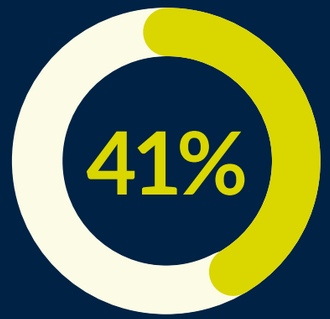




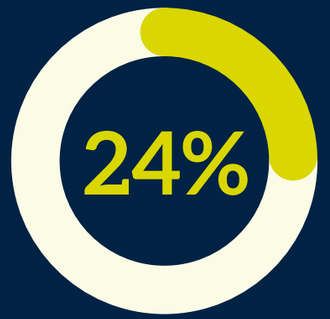

# Marketing behaviors that positively and negatively affect buying relationships




the percentage of respondents who **said seeing "content about a brand's DEI or ESG efforts" was likely to "increase trust" or "slightly increase trust"** when asked how much seeing certain marketing actions would affect their trust in a B2B brand.




the percentage of respondents who **had been incorrectly targeted or spammed who said they wouldn't buy a product from the offending brand.**




the percentage of respondents who had been incorrectly targeted or spammed **who said they weren't sure if the offending brand would have a pathway to a future deal with them.**

# Personalization, trust and brand affinity

Personalized content may not solve the quality gap, but respondents indicated it boosts trust in other ways. Here's what B2B technology buying decision makers said when asked to choose the **top three benefits of receiving personalized B2B content:**



# Treating the brand as a newsroom (even if it's not)

B2B technology buying decision makers read industry newsletters and partner websites nearly as much as they read B2B news publications and social media. The survey responses indicate best-in-class marketing organizations can therefore act strategically to increase content production knowing that content will be viewed. **Survey respondents said they regularly engaged with these channels:**



# The state of data-for-insights exchanges

Ninety-five percent of B2B technology buying decision makers say they recognize the importance of marketers having their correct personal data in order to prioritize communications appropriately. A majority (57%) of those respondents even say it's "very important" marketers have that data. However, they also have significant concerns. Here are the **three top concerns that stop respondents from sharing their data** in exchange for receiving a piece of high-quality B2B content:

**46%**

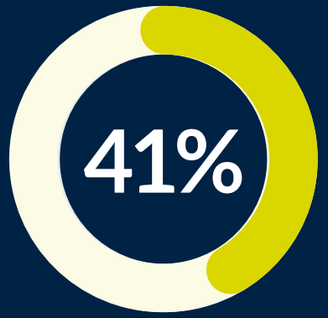
**are unsure of how the brand will use and protect their data**

**43%**

**say there are too many form fields required**

**43%**

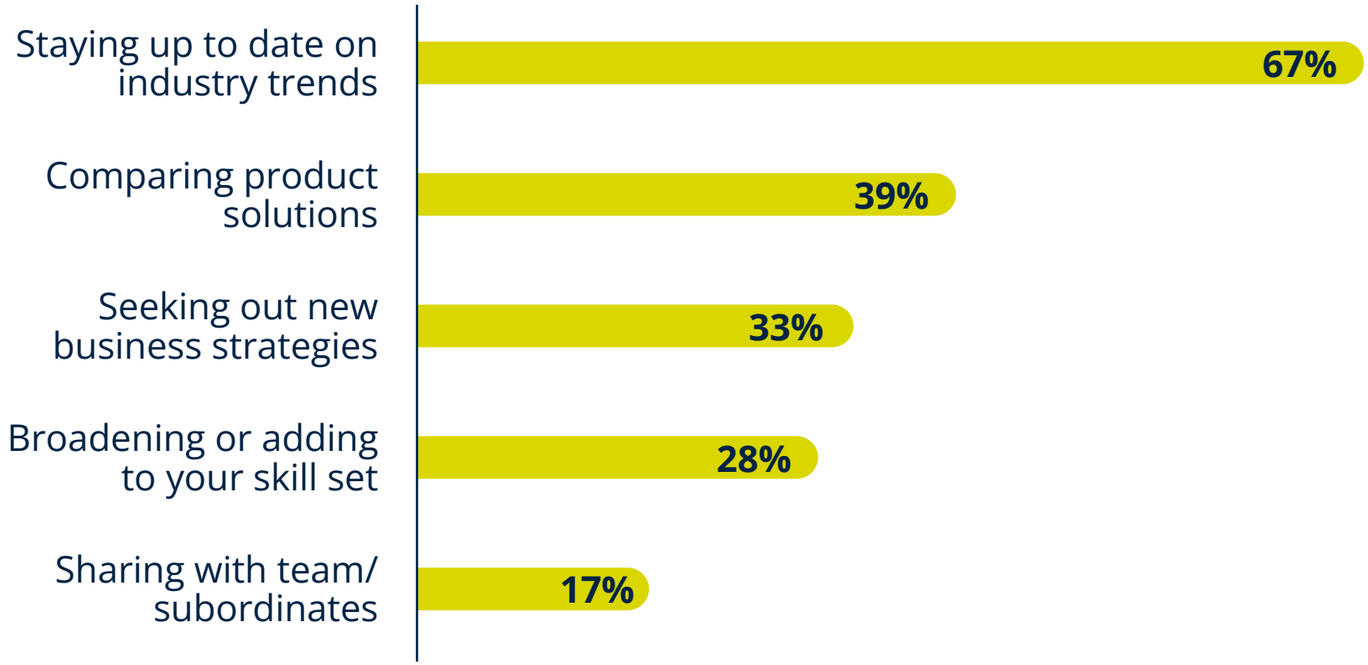
**say they're unable to verify the reputation of the company**




the percentage of combined **C-level and executive-level B2B technology buyer respondents who say they exchange their data for gated B2B insights an average of once a month or more.**

# Why decision makers engage with content

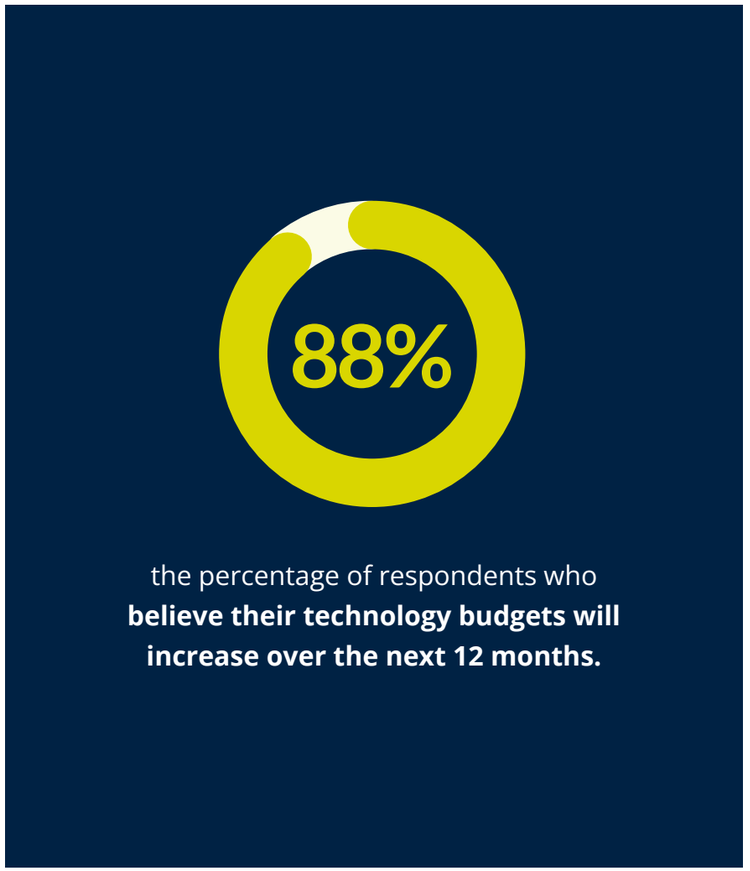
B2B technology buying decision makers were asked to choose **their top two reasons for engaging with B2B content**. The top answer was definitive, and shines an even brighter light on the need to improve content quality and differentiation.



# From findings to action: How to improve

The Trust in Marketing Index is especially relevant because of the state of the B2B technology buying market. Despite a year of economic uncertainty, 88% of the B2B technology buying decision makers who were surveyed believe their technology budgets will increase over the next 12 months. That includes 56% of combined C-level and executive respondents who predict their technology budgets will “increase significantly.”

So how does the industry collectively improve to capture those budgets and boost the Trust in Marketing Index score in 2024?






# From findings to action: How to improve

## Build flagship content on original insights

Instead of turning to desk research and often-shared facts for your next gated whitepaper, **try commissioning research and tapping into your zero- and first-party data to create content that differentiates your brand.** Then, once you have those original insights, engage with thought leaders who can share either deep knowledge or highly relevant anecdotal experiences in your field. Add their perspective and spread the word.

## Personalization that moves the needle

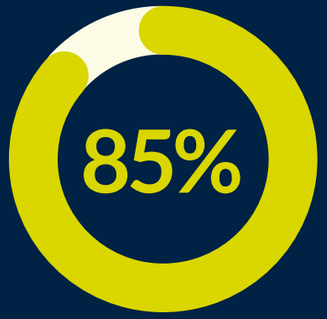
Convenience and comfort are extremely important in any buyer journey, but especially one that's likely to be self-serve until the final steps. And since the surveyed B2B technology buying decision makers have established that personalized communications boost brand affinity, **consider building a content series that makes the buyer journey easier** – without overtly pitching your product – and inserting that series into your account based marketing communications. Also, continue to use intent data to refine your targeting, as you're going to be held to high standards by buyers regardless of your actions.



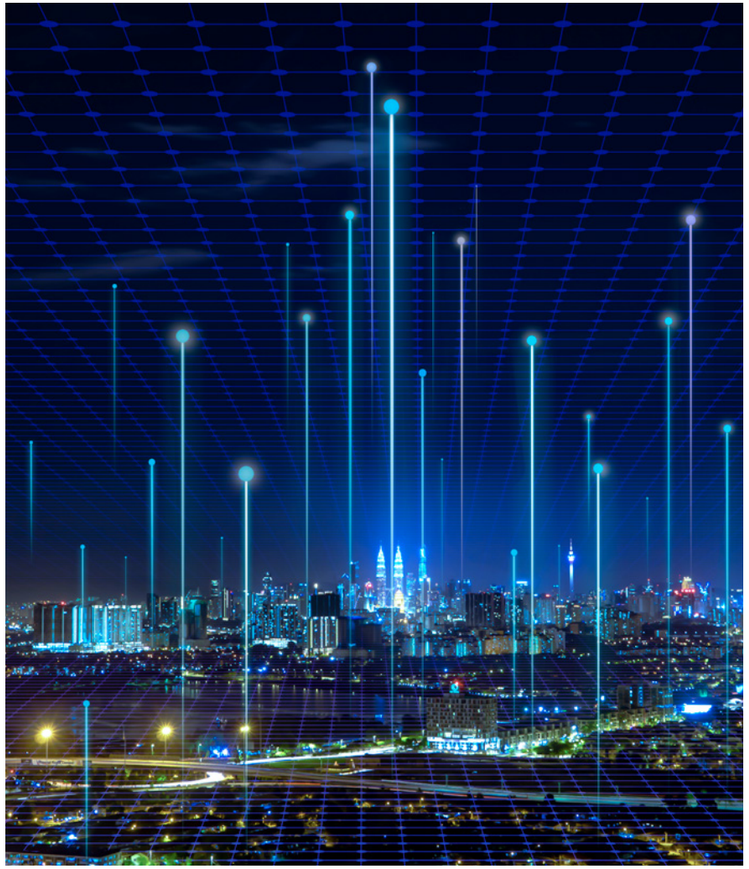
# From findings to action: How to improve

## Mirror trusted B2B news outlets

Every marketer would love to add headcount. But assuming that's not an option, **atomizing the original insights from your flagship content is the next best action for satisfying the array of content B2B technology buyers crave.** Your best insights shouldn't live forever behind a paywall. Instead, they should make their way onto your social feeds in the form of share graphics. They should be featured in the news section of your website as blog posts. And they should be incorporated on your YouTube page as tutorials or industry conversations. Beyond atomization, developing a guest columnist network that addresses niche industry topics or investing in syndicated content packages that allow you to share the latest news from top publishers will also make your content operation stand out.



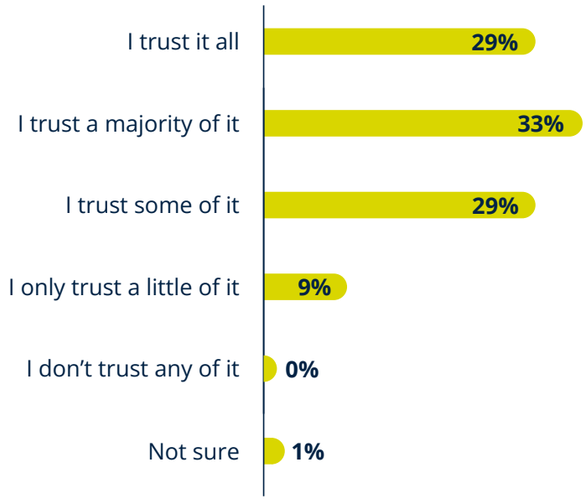

the percentage of respondents who **believe high-quality B2B thought leadership content improves the perception of a brand.**



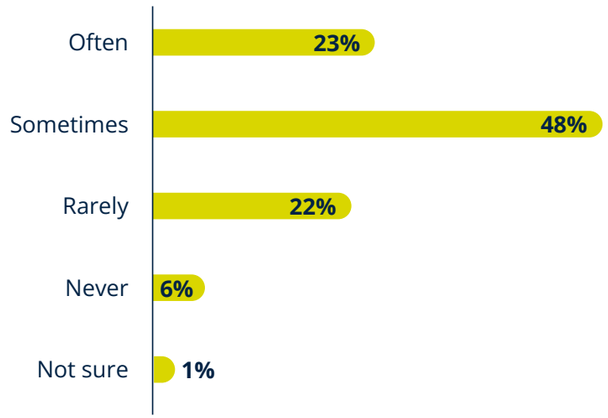
# Appendix

The following five questions were combined to create the score for the 2023 Trust in Marketing Index:

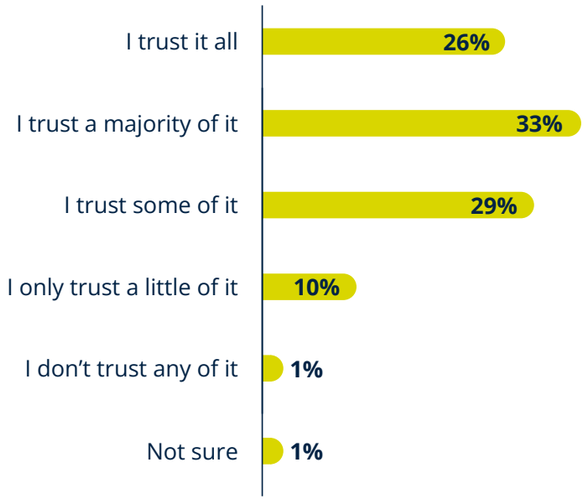
In general, how much do you trust the information marketers provide in B2B content?




How often are you disappointed with the value of B2B gated content (i.e. - content you received after entering your information in a form)?




Personalization: How much do you trust personalized content (recommendations, targeted emails, etc.) from B2B marketers you've already shared your data with?

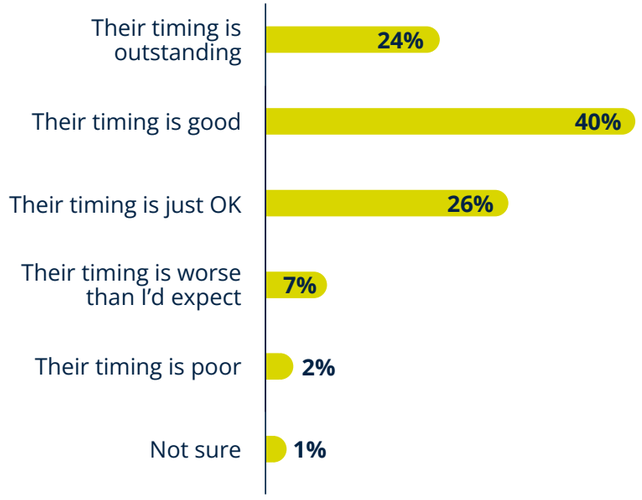


# Appendix

General targeting: How good of a job are all B2B brands doing in general when targeting you with content and offers?




General timing: How good of a job are all B2B brands in general doing when it comes to sending content and offers at the right time?



# About Informa Tech

## Informa Tech

www.informatech.com

Informa Tech is a leading provider of market insight and market access to the global business technology community.

Through in-depth expertise and an engaged audience community, Informa Tech helps business professionals make better technology decisions and marketers reach the most powerful tech buyers and influencers in the world.

Across its portfolio of over 100+ trusted brands, Informa Tech has over 1000 industry experts, including over 400 research analysts and consultants in global research group Omdia, and a monthly audience reach of over 125 million.

With deep understanding of global markets, audiences, and a powerful ecosystem of fully permissioned first-party data, Informa Tech delivers high-performing digital marketing services across every step of the buyer journey, helping marketers to build long-term relationships with their targeted customers.

Learn more

