



The Impact of COVID-19 on Marketing

Economic Turbulence, Uncertainty, and the Path Forward

Table of Contents

Key Takeaways	3
Impact of COVID-19 on Marketing	5
SEO Surges in Importance	8
Conclusion	11
Survey Breakdown	12

Key Takeaways

In the face of the COVID-19 crisis and economic turbulence, marketers are anticipating lower budgets and higher goals. Investment in digital marketing and SEO are top of mind while marketers gear up to cut back in high cost areas like paid media and reducing headcount.

65%

of marketers anticipate a decrease to their annual marketing budget

86%

of marketers predict that their marketing goals will be harder to reach

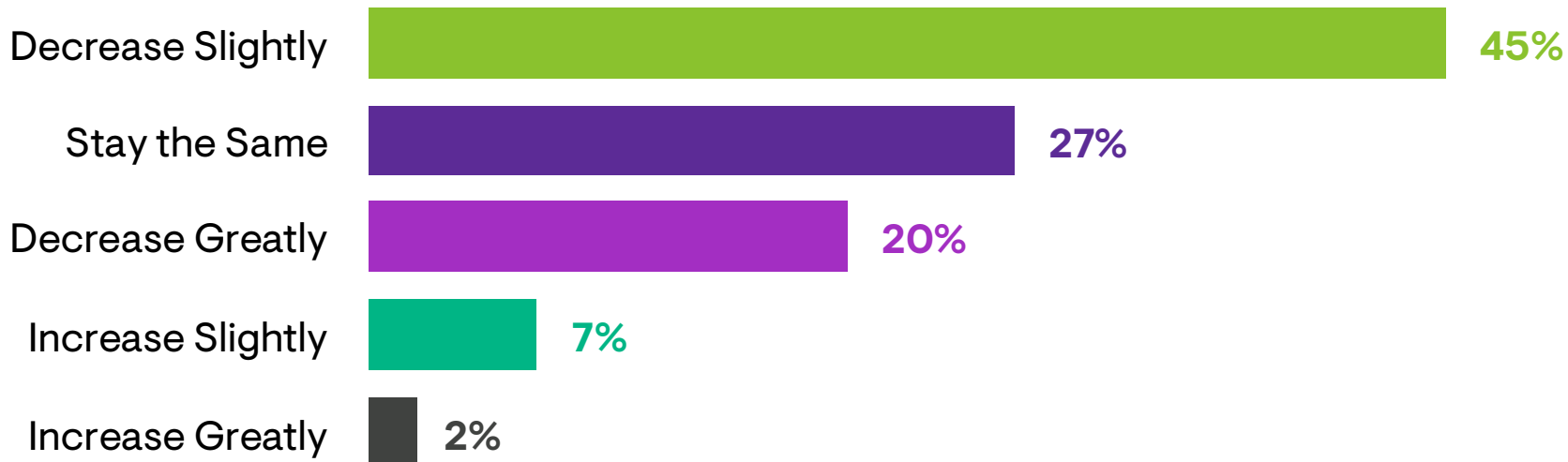
While **decreased budgets** are **marketers top concern**, staff reductions and channel limitations are also top perceived threats to marketing performance

More than half of marketers believe that **SEO is more important** during this time

65% of Marketers Anticipate Decreases to Their Marketing Budget

- 91% predict that their marketing budgets will decrease or stay static

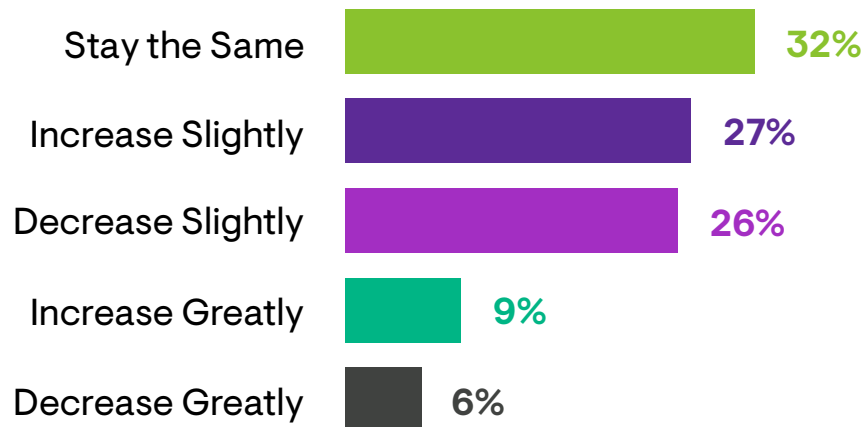
Given the developing situation with COVID-19, what do you anticipate will happen with your marketing budget?



72% of Marketers Predict Their Marketing Goals Will Stay the Same or Increase

- Despite lowered budgets, 40% say their marketing goals will increase, and 32% anticipate their marketing goals will stay the same.

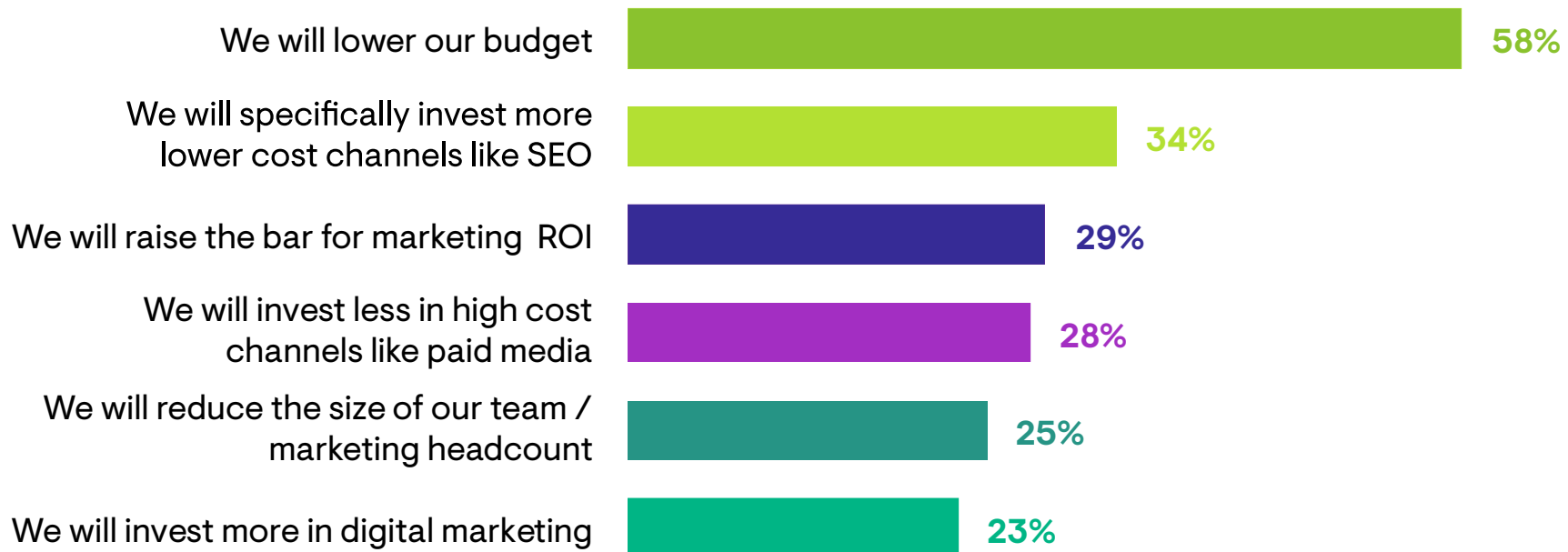
Given the developing situation with COVID-19, do you anticipate your marketing goals will change?



In a Recession, Over ⅓ of Marketers Would Increase Investments in Low-Cost Channels Like SEO

- 58% of marketers say they would lower their budgets
- 34% will increase investment in low cost channels like SEO

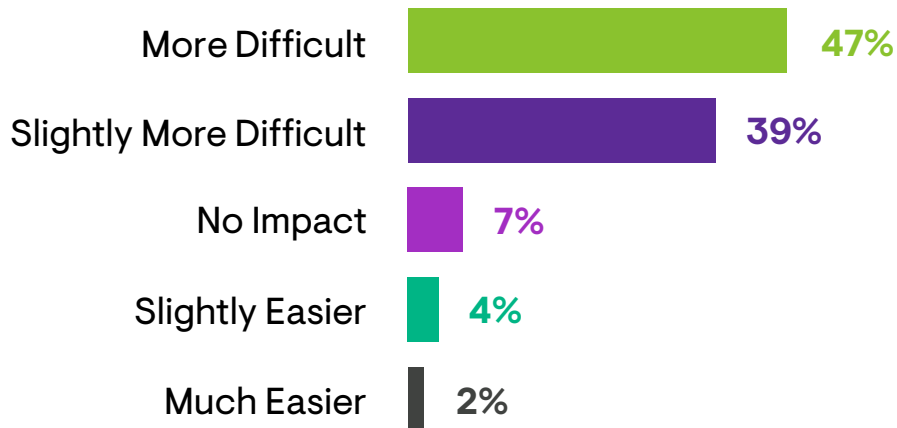
How would a global recession impact your marketing strategy?



86% of Marketers Predict Achieving Their Goals Will Become More Difficult

- Meanwhile, 47% of marketers say goals will be much more difficult to achieve, and 39% say they will be slightly more difficult.

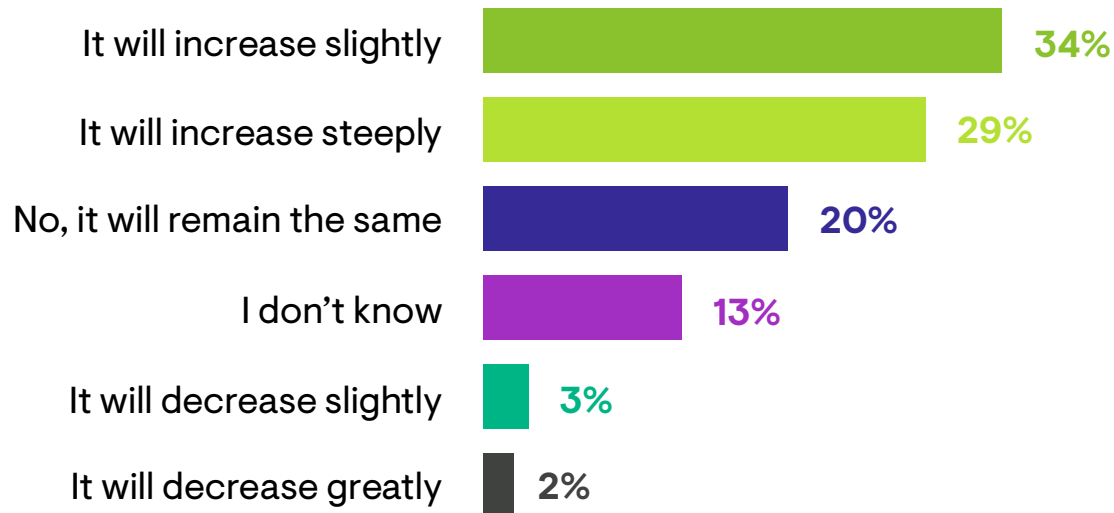
Will the coronavirus (COVID-19) situation make your company's ability to achieve your annual marketing goals easier or more difficult?



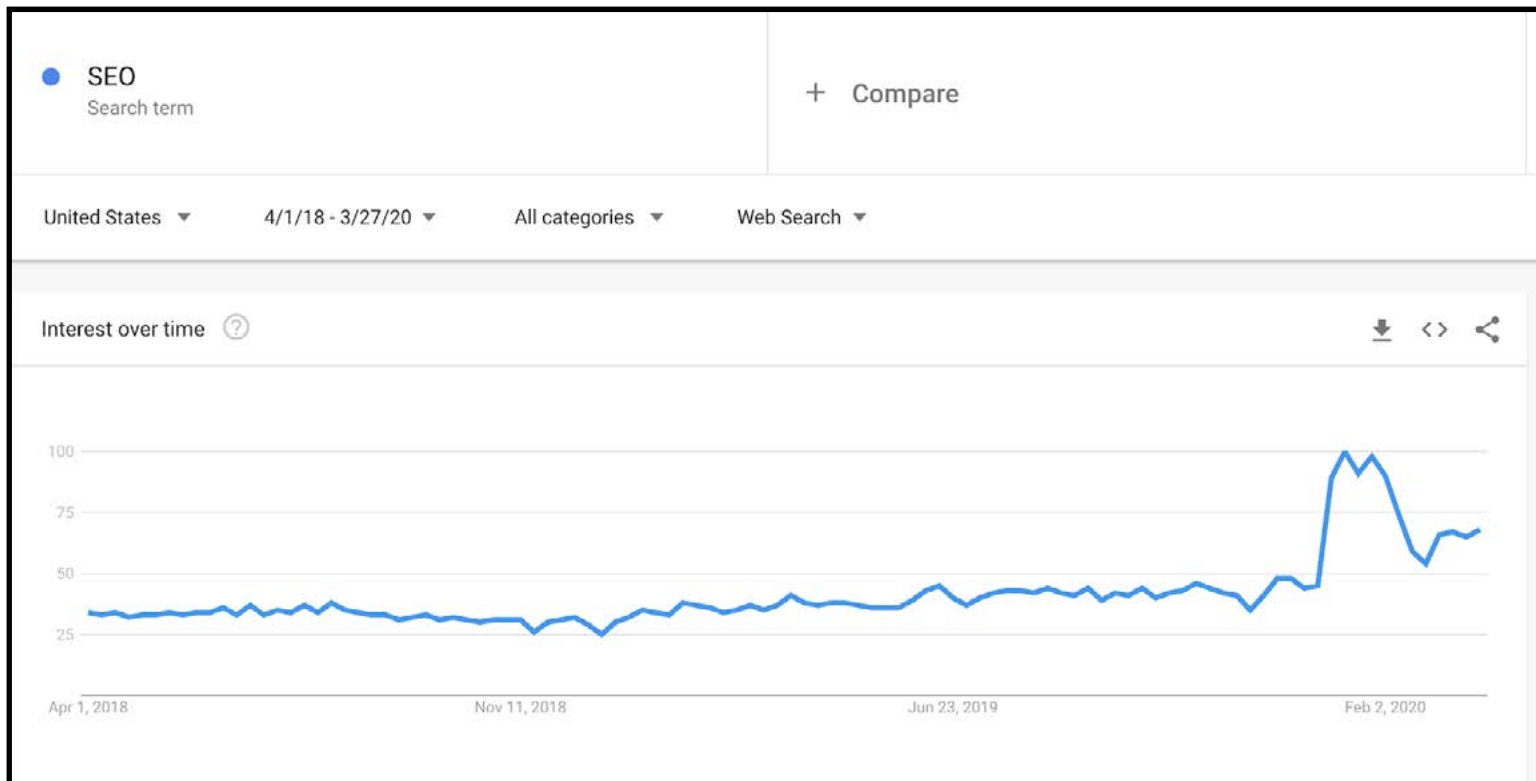
63% of Marketers Predict SEO Will Become More Important During This Time

- In contrast, 4% of marketers claim SEO will decrease in importance

Will SEO be more or less important during this time?

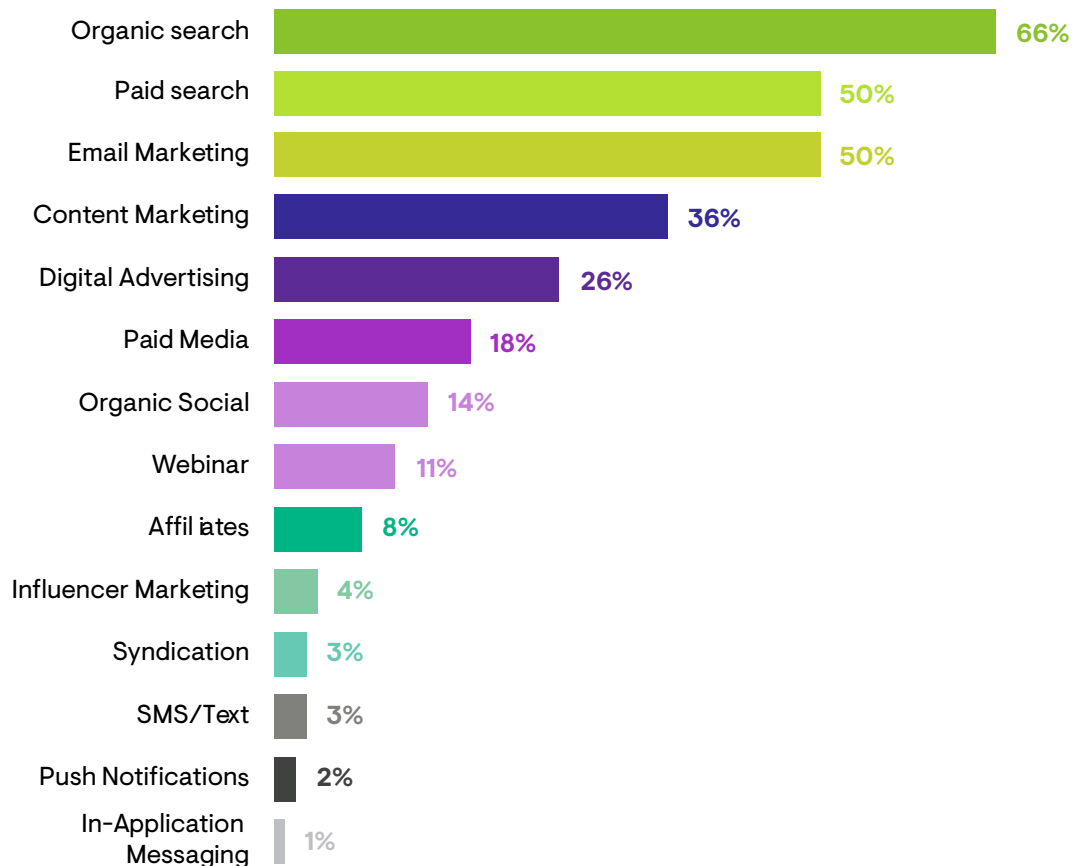


Google corroborates the rising importance of search marketing, showing an increase in searches for “SEO.”



66% of marketers report that SEO was a top performing channel the previous year.

What were your top performing online channels in 2019?

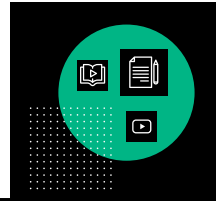


Conclusions



Marketers will reduce overall spend while increasing investments in low cost/high ROI channels like SEO.

Forrester estimates spending \$1.3 million on organic search gives an organization an equivalent value to spending \$12 million on ad placements. ([Forrester](#))



Companies will turn to digital content for brand building.

According to prior research, consumers are 131% more likely to buy from a brand immediately after they consume early-stage, educational content.

65% of consumers feel a brand is more trustworthy immediately after they read a piece of educational content from that brand. ([Conductor](#))



SEO will be moved in-house to cut costly agency retainers.

Marketers are moving SEO in house, and nearly $\frac{2}{3}$ of marketers already manage it internally. ([Forrester](#))

Survey Breakdown

This survey had 317 respondents in these primary sectors: B2B (24%), Retail (12%), Healthcare (11%), Media (10%). The remaining 43% were distributed across travel and hospitality, consumer technology, financial services, insurance, automotive, ecommerce-only, manufacturing and other industries.

Seniority

CMOS	10%
VPs	7%
Directors	18%
Managers	40%
Other executives	4%
Non executives	22%

Core Area of Oversight

Digital Marketing	42%
Content Marketing	24%
Search Marketing	13%
Other	21%

Location

North America	88%
Europe	5%
Other	7%



Conductor is an SEO and content technology company with a mission to help companies help their customers. Marketers use Conductor's software and services to acquire customers by creating and optimizing content so that it gets found online. Conductor also offers a suite of services and support, including site audits, site migrations, content strategy, and more. Conductor was named a Leader in the Forrester Wave for SEO platforms and is rated #1 on TrustRadius and G2Crowd by enterprise marketers. Their forward-thinking customers include global and emerging enterprise brands like Citibank, Salesforce, Visa, ClassPass, and Casper.

For more information, visit conductor.com.

