

Managing Editor

Managing Editor Career Survey Report 2020

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Survey Methodology & Key Findings	2
Who Took The Survey	3
Education	4
Professional Experiences	5
Technology	10
Compensation	12

Introduction

This is not the compensation report we wanted to publish. The COVID-19 pandemic has dramatically reshaped the economic landscape for content marketing along with everything else in our lives.

We know that the data collected in the before times could be meaningless to your career a few months from now. (It certainly wrecked the validity of our analysis.)

However, we are hopeful that our audience of smart, empathic people will overcome the current hardship and build a better future – one that is more just and equitable. It is that struggle for equity that inspired us to collect details on your work lives in the first place. Or rather, details on your former work lives, because so much of work has merged with everyday life as many of us permanently toil in the makeshift day care centers, backyard farms, nursing homes and schools that our homes now double as.

The best way to view this survey is as a snapshot in time. Here's what content marketing careers looked like before the most significant economic challenge since the Great Depression. As things turn around, however slowly, we hope this survey can provide you with the information you need to negotiate a pay raise, consider better ways of doing your job or find a new one that is a better fit for your interests and skills.

Thank you for your participation in this survey. We look forward to helping you, listening to your stories and building a stronger content marketing community together.



Tom Anderson



Mary Ellen Slayter

Survey Methodology

Managing Editor conducted this survey Feb. 17-April 20, 2020, and collected 164 responses. Respondents were required to be 18 or older.

Key Findings



Survey respondents were highly educated and mostly women. They were also overwhelmingly white, which is consistent with the general perception about the field not being very diverse.



Writing, editing and strategy were respondents' favorite job duties. People reported being a lot less excited about budgeting, social media and vendor management.



A majority of respondents manage teams of five people or less, whether it's freelancers or staffers.



More than half of respondents were eligible for a bonus. The median bonus reported was \$6,000 for 2019.



Responses point to a significant gender pay gap — and an even bigger pay differential between B2B content marketers and their B2C peers.

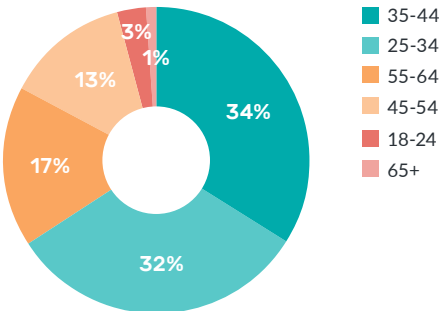
Who Took The Survey

One hundred and forty-five people completed the survey. The typical respondent, if there is such a person, is a midcareer woman with a bachelor's degree in humanities.

But averages don't tell the full story about the people who perform this challenging work.

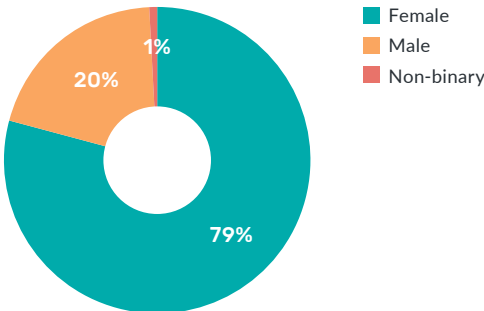
Age

Answered: 164 Skipped: 0



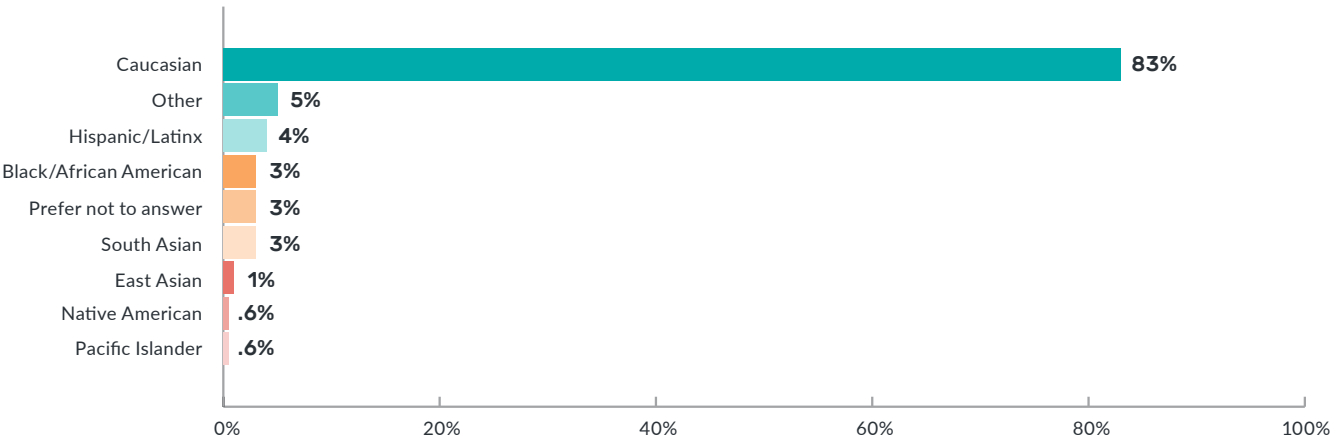
Gender

Answered: 164 Skipped: 0



Ethnicity

Answered: 164 Skipped: 0



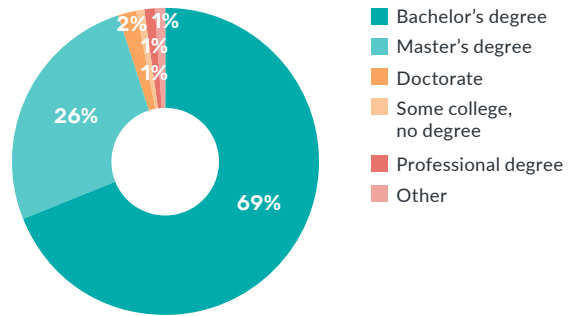
Education

Survey respondents were a highly educated bunch, with many of you holding master's and professional degrees.

Many of you have humanities undergraduate degrees, which is not surprising given how important effective communication and critical thinking are to the field.

Highest degree or level of school completed

Answered: 161 Skipped: 3



What was your undergraduate major in college?



Professional Experiences

Content marketing has yet to coalesce into a predictable set of titles, reflecting a lack of maturity in the field. Among the nine job titles we thought would fit you the best, the most popular was “other” at 28%. While there may be some career progression at larger organizations, content marketers are often a tribe onto themselves.

Editing, writing and content strategy are at the core of what you do. Nearly half of you manage social media and run data analytics. A healthy number of you are involved in brand management, market research and budgeting, which are higher-level functions that can lead to larger roles on the marketing team. Less than 14% of you have a hand in graphic design, which may be an area of opportunity to build skills as visual content becomes more popular.

Content strategy is the most popular part of our job, which is good because it’s also the most valuable to a brand. After that, writing beats editing as a favorite task. Of course, fewer people like budgeting. (What should we expect from a bunch of humanities majors?) This may be another opportunity for growth because the content marketers who master budgets, especially in uncertain economic times, will be in a better position to prove their value to the business.

It doesn’t take a lot of experience in content marketing to consider yourself a veteran in the field, the survey suggests. Respondents considered themselves experienced rather than midcareer, even if they have been in the business for less than 10 years.

You’ve got big career ambitions. A quarter of respondents said they wanted to be chief content officers. Perhaps that’s why you’re working such long hours? More than 60% of respondents said they were putting in 41 hours or more per week.

More than a quarter of you only worked remotely before the pandemic. We expect that percentage to rise significantly in next year’s survey.

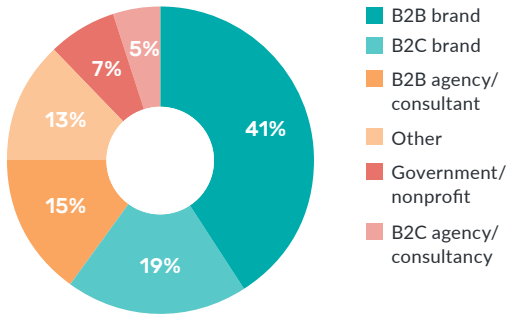


A quarter of respondents said they wanted to be chief content officers.

Professional Experiences (cont'd.)

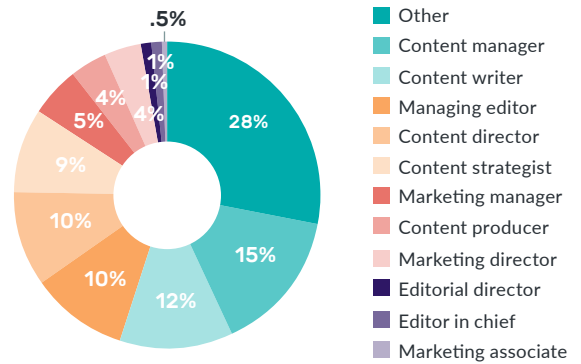
What best describes your current role?

Answered: 155 Skipped: 9



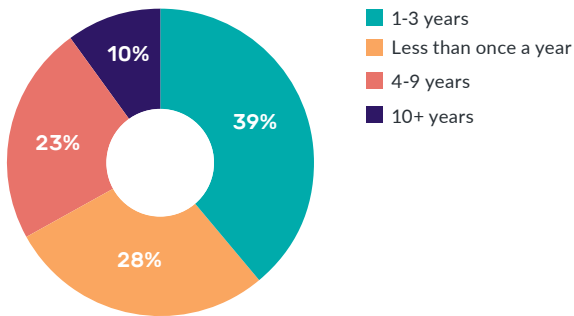
What is your current job title?

Answered: 155 Skipped: 9



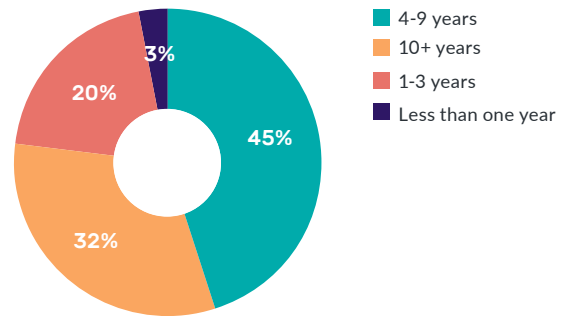
How long have you been in your current role?

Answered: 155 Skipped: 9



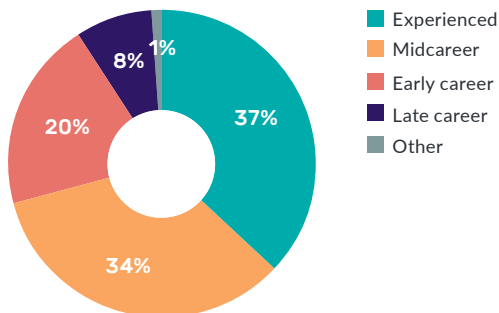
Years worked in content marketing

Answered: 148 Skipped: 16



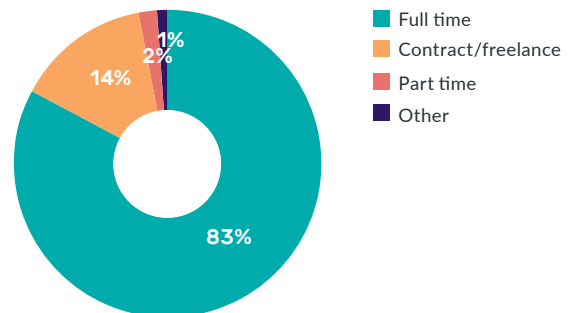
How would you describe your experience in content marketing?

Answered: 148 Skipped: 16



Is your role considered:

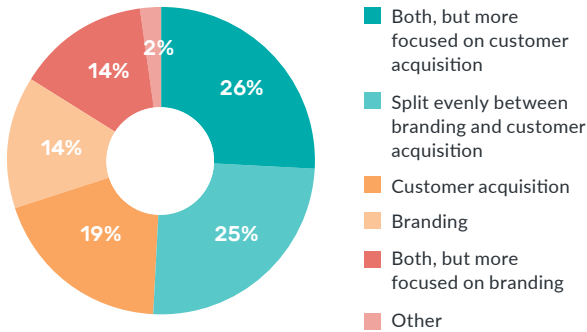
Answered: 155 Skipped: 9



Professional Experiences (cont'd.)

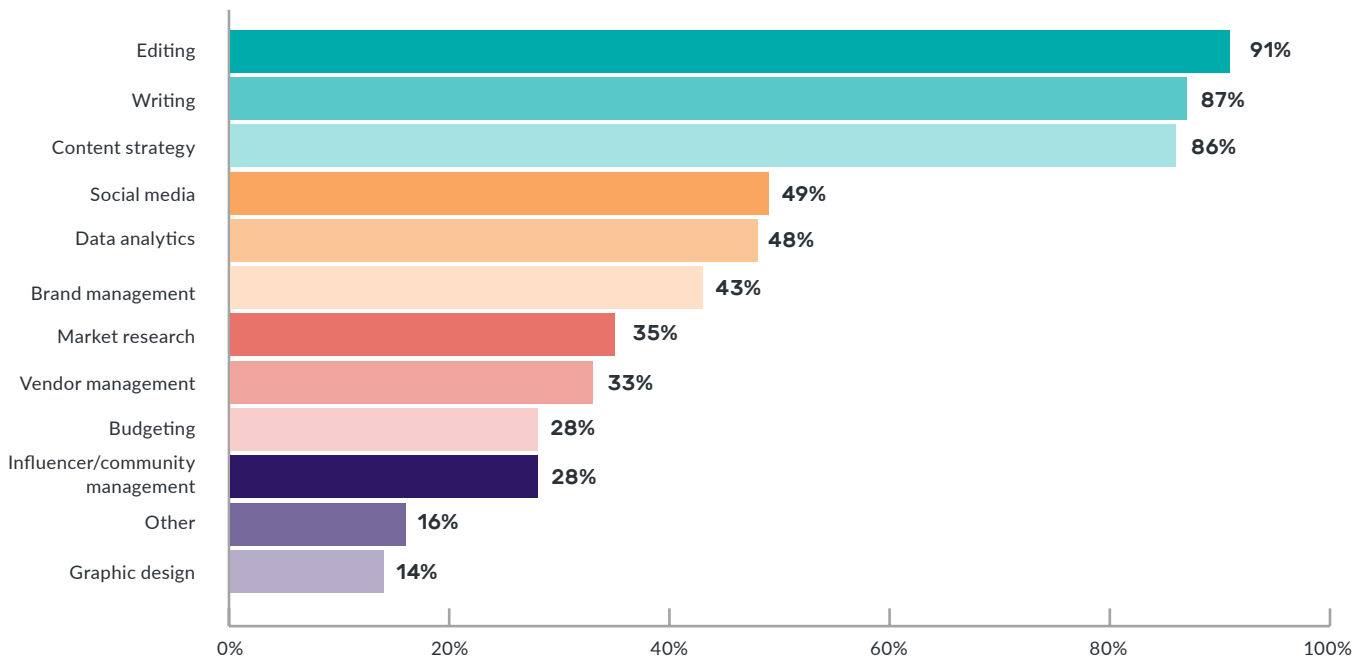
Is your content program more focused on branding or customer acquisition?

Answered: 155 Skipped: 9



What are your job responsibilities?

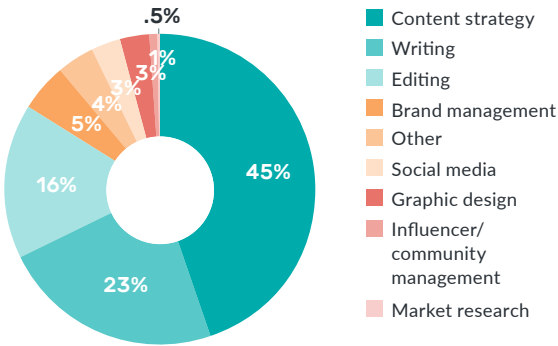
Answered: 155 Skipped: 9



Professional Experiences (cont'd.)

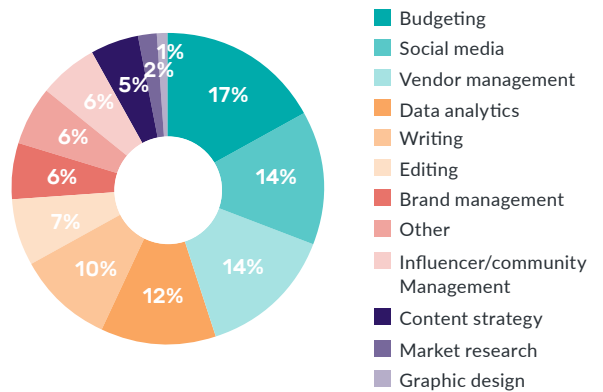
Favorite job responsibility

Answered: 155 Skipped: 9



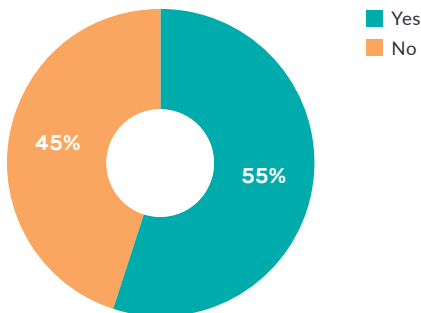
Least favorite job responsibility

Answered: 155 Skipped: 9



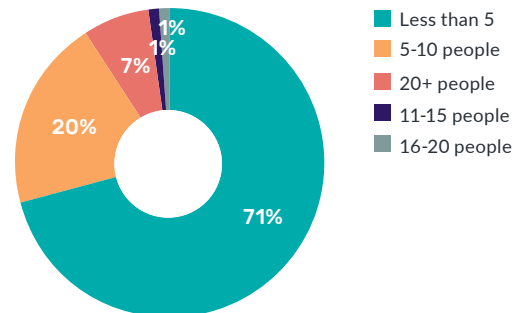
Do you manage other staff?

Answered: 155 Skipped: 9



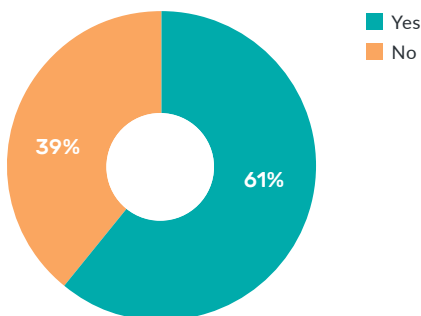
How big is your staff/team?

Answered: 71 Skipped: 93



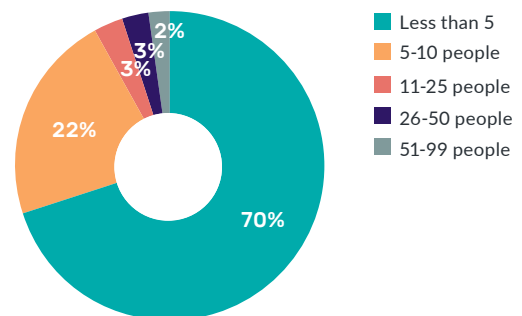
Do you manage freelancers?

Answered: 155 Skipped: 9



How many people are on your freelance team?

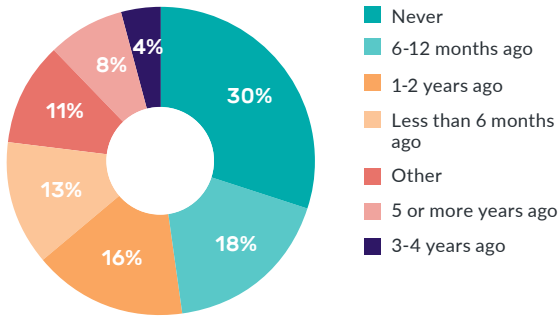
Answered: 94 Skipped: 70



Professional Experiences (cont'd.)

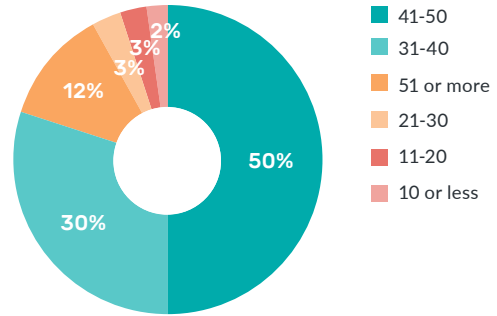
When was the last time you received a promotion?

Answered: 153 Skipped: 11



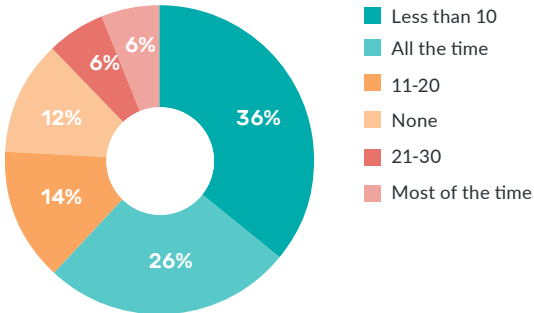
How many hours in a typical week do you work?

Answered: 153 Skipped: 11



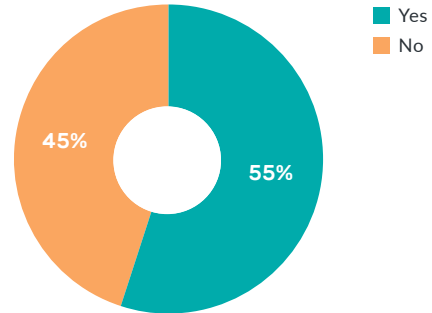
How many hours in a typical week do you work remotely?

Answered: 153 Skipped: 11



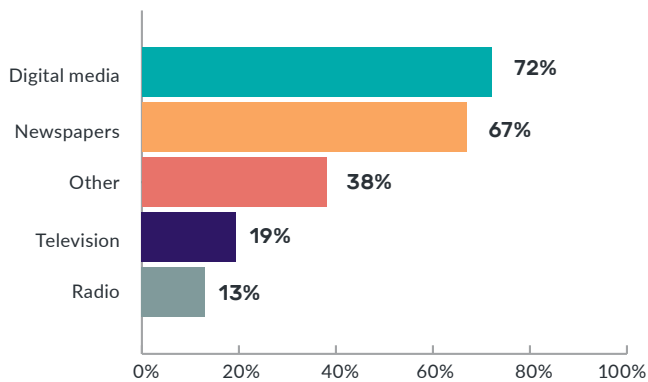
Have you ever worked in traditional journalism?

Answered: 148 Skipped: 16



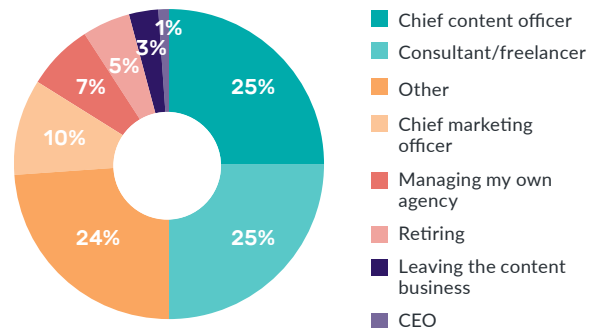
When types of media organization have you worked in?

Answered: 67 Skipped: 97



Where do you see yourself in 5 years?

Answered: 148 Skipped: 16



Technology

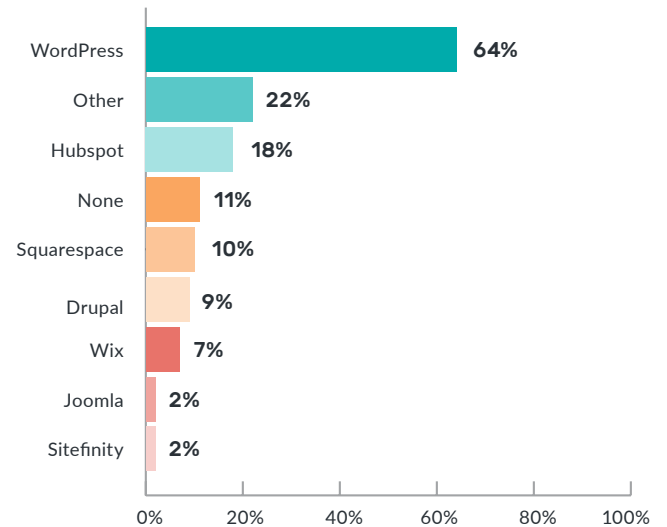
Content marketing is as much about technology as it is about writing in 2020.

Survey respondents reported using a variety of tools to perform their jobs, including project management, content scheduling platforms, marketing automation and other standalone apps.

One area that lags: interactive content. Uberflip leads the pack, but with less than 7% of you using the platform in the past 12 months, it's clear that market is still wide open.

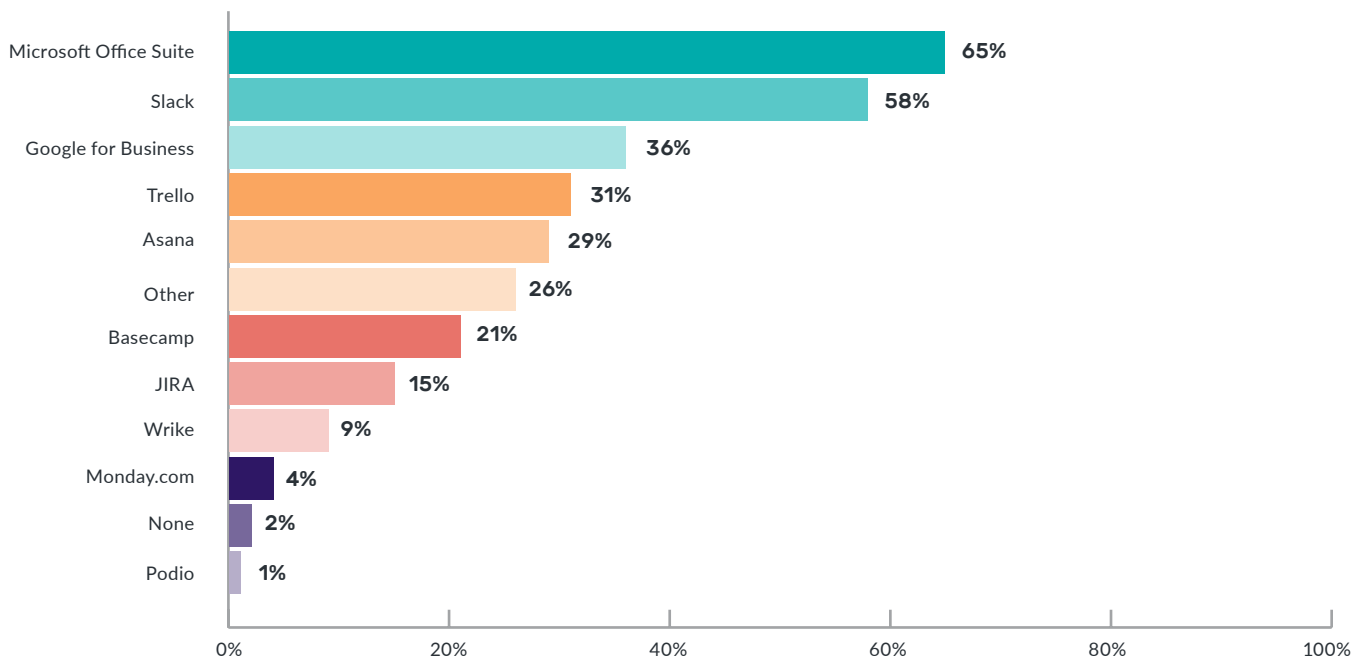
Which of the following content management systems have you used in the past 12 months?

Answered: 149 Skipped: 15



Which of the following project management tools/platforms have you used in your work in the past 12 months?

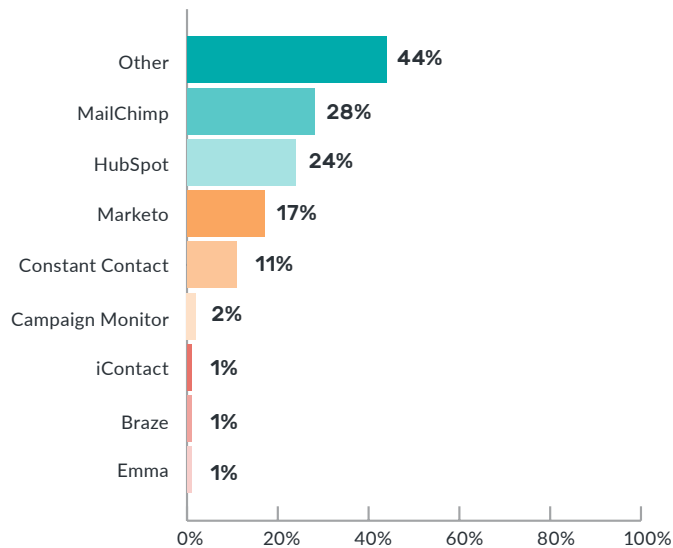
Answered: 149 Skipped: 15



Technology (cont'd.)

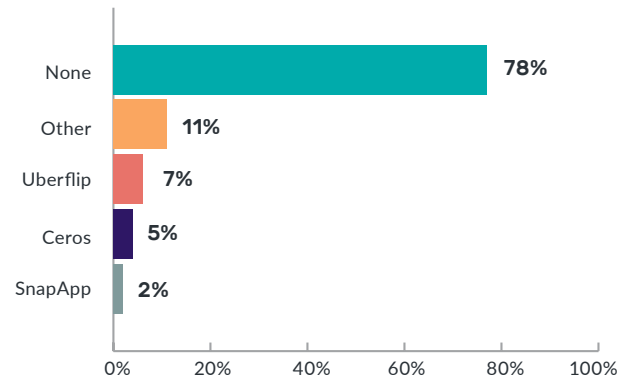
Which of the following tools/platforms have you used to send marketing emails in the past 12 months?

Answered: 149 Skipped: 15



Which of the following tools/platforms have you used to create interactive content in the past 12 months?

Answered: 149 Skipped: 15



Compensation

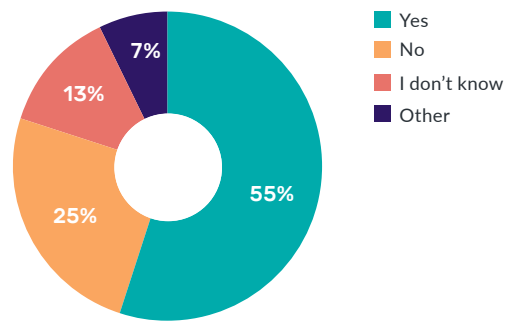
Now let's talk money — with the caveat that our sample size was limited and these numbers are pre-pandemic.

Compensation data was the most variable part of our survey data, by far. The range of variation among respondents — even those with similar job titles and levels of experience — was vast.

Our survey did find a gender pay gap, with men making roughly \$10,000 more annually than women. But there was another gap that was even bigger: between B2B agencies and brands and B2C agencies and brands. The median salary of B2B content marketers is \$14,000 higher than the median salary of their B2C peers.

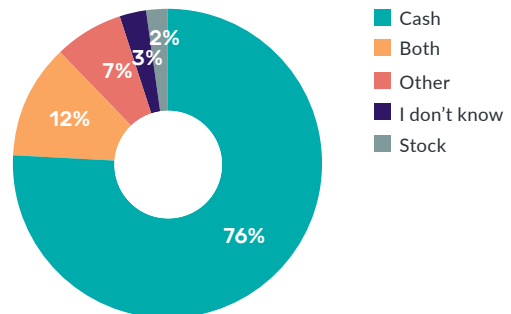
Is your current role eligible for a bonus?

Answered: 147 Skipped: 17



Is that bonus cash, stock or both?

Answered: 91 Skipped: 73



About Managing Editor

Managing Editor magazine was created to celebrate and support the most important role in content marketing today: the managing editor.

We know you wear a lot of hats — writer, editor, designer, business strategist, enterprise tech buyer, content therapist — and our mission is to give you the inspiration and career advice you need to succeed in this amazing, complex role.

Managing Editor is nurtured and loved by the team at Rep Cap, a content marketing agency that specializes in helping B2B companies create and execute their own thought leadership and brand publishing strategies.

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Managing Editor