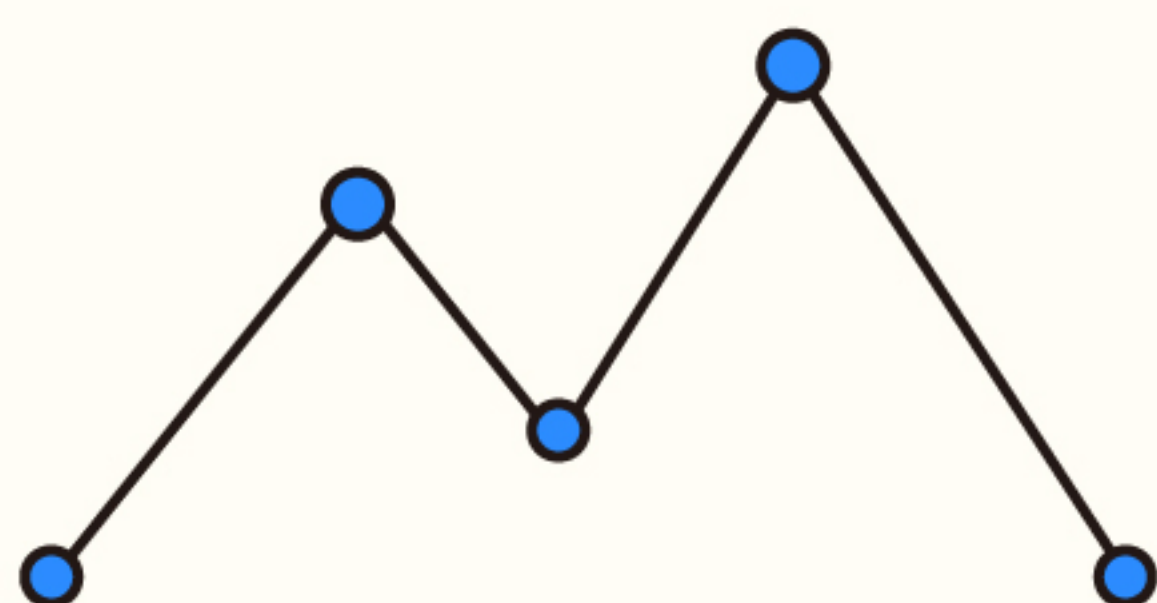
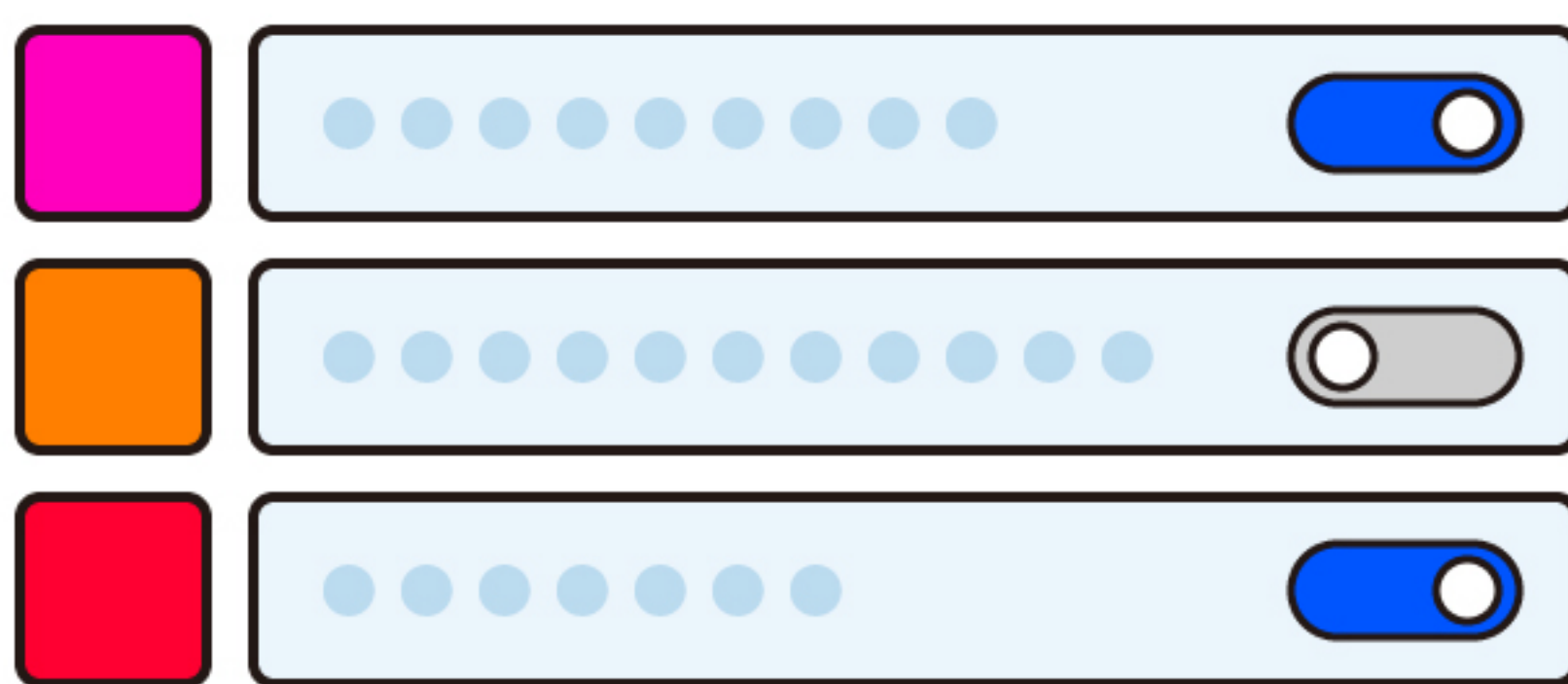


HOW TO POWER THE NEXT WAVE OF DIGITAL MARKETING

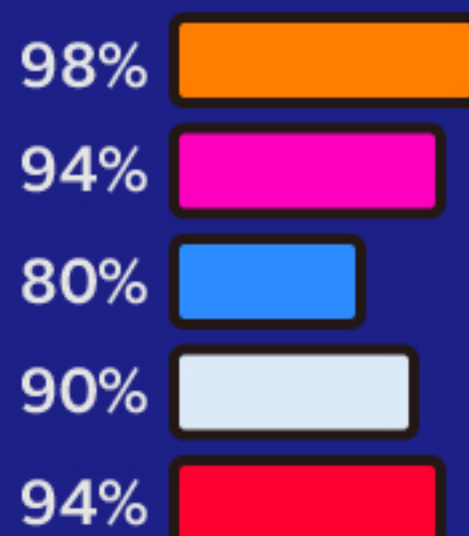
The Definitive Guide to Ad Operations

Fuel Your Future Digital Marketing Campaigns

AdOps



Graph



Adriel E-Book Series
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How It All Came About



Gone are the days when advertising operations (AdOps) were perceived as a fancy term for putting a static piece of ad creative into an interface. Thanks to the explosion of big data, which coincided with the fast rise of various ad networks, the role of AdOps has come to encompass different aspects of advertising, from data management and omnichannel marketing to cross-team collaboration.

In the chapters to follow, we'll take a deep dive into how AdOps has evolved from a monotonous step of the sales funnel to a hallmark of all agile marketing practices.

"An innovator needs to know the basics and the foundation of what Ad Ops are. From there, one can know that easy to use reporting is not only a time-saver, but also eliminates challenges around human error."
- Marshall Massey, Head of Audience and Programmatic Solutions at Thomson Reuters

Evolution of AdOps

The origins of AdOps can be traced back to the dot-com bubble that erupted towards the latter half of the 90s. Implementing media management software on a larger scale drove businesses to fuse traditionally siloed development and operations teams together across the entire application lifecycle (hence the name DevOps).

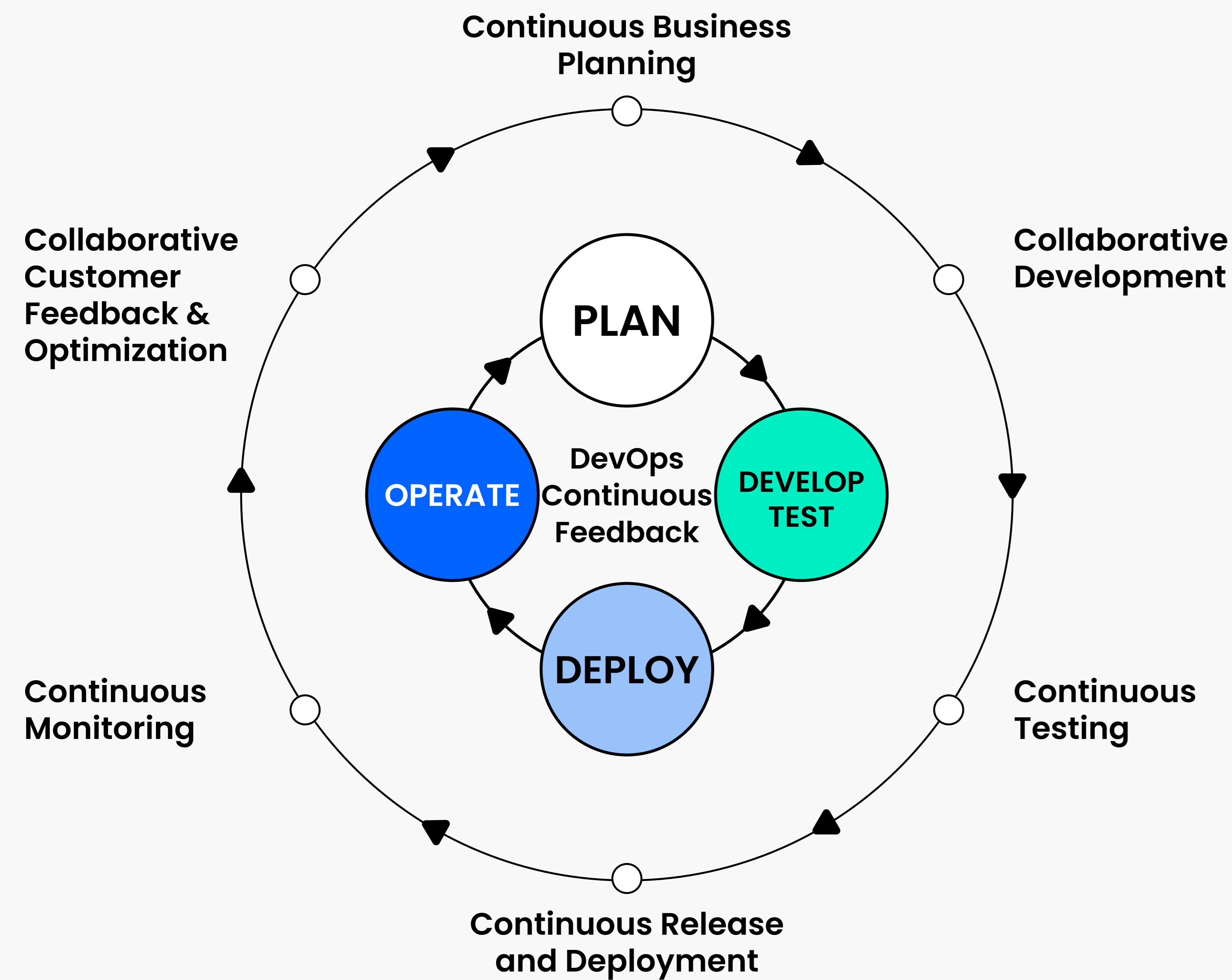
The resulting successes stemming from the broad deployment of DevOps spoke volumes about the importance of working as a cohesive whole. The first ones to capitalize on the potential of adopting such agile principles were web developers who sought new ways to address the changing needs of leads who land on their websites.

**63 percent of operations teams saw improvements in both quality and frequency of software deployments after implementing DevOps*

Applying the same logic did wonders for web developers. As a testament, the web-dev market blew up with the emergence of no-code platforms like WordPress, Webflow, or Pantheon, and the term web operations (WebOps) was coined shortly thereafter.

**84 percent of businesses have turned to low-code and API-enabled platforms and saw a reduced strain on IT resources, increased speed-to-market, and creation of new offerings*

Standards practices ecosystem

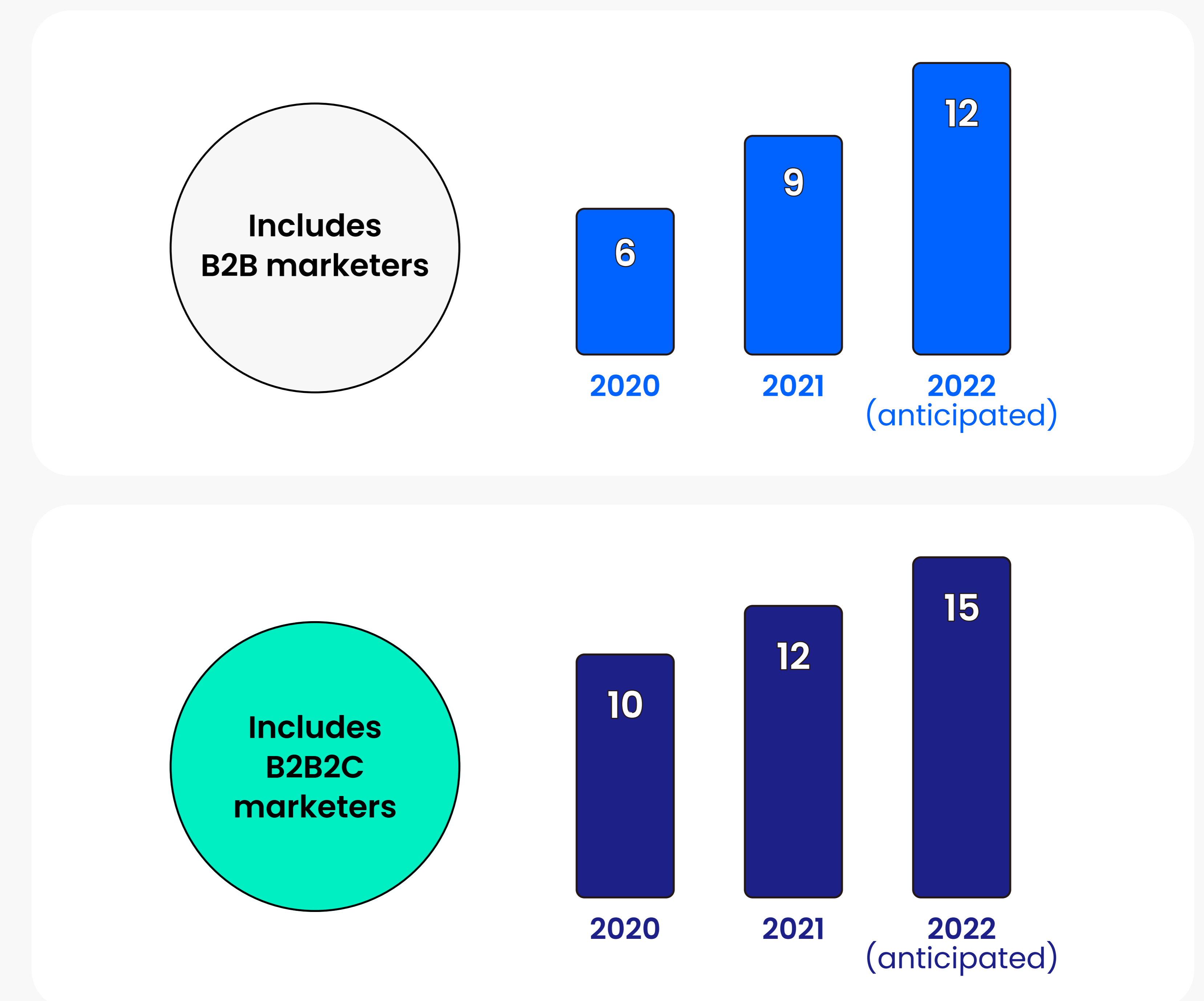


The momentum behind better cross-team collaboration didn't stop there. It kept at a steady pace as forward-thinking advertisers too hopped on the agility bandwagon.

A host of factors prompted these marketers to explore the opportunities laying before agile practices. The rapid growth of social media and other internet-based platforms, shifting ad dollars from broadcast mediums to digital channels, and ever-growing datasets on campaign performance and customer behavior played a part.

Customer Data is plentiful, but using it remains Tricky

Average Number of Data Sources Used



Extending the concept of multidisciplinary teams helped marketers embrace the methods and technologies necessary to rise above these challenges. But the resources required to build and maintain an agile workforce discouraged many from following suit.

"66 percent of marketers agree on the importance of data analytics and 63 percent agree that data literacy is important. However, about half of survey respondents have teams with a skillset that is at par or below expectations, leaving room for improvement." – [Gartner Research on Survey Analysis](#)

AdTech Stack

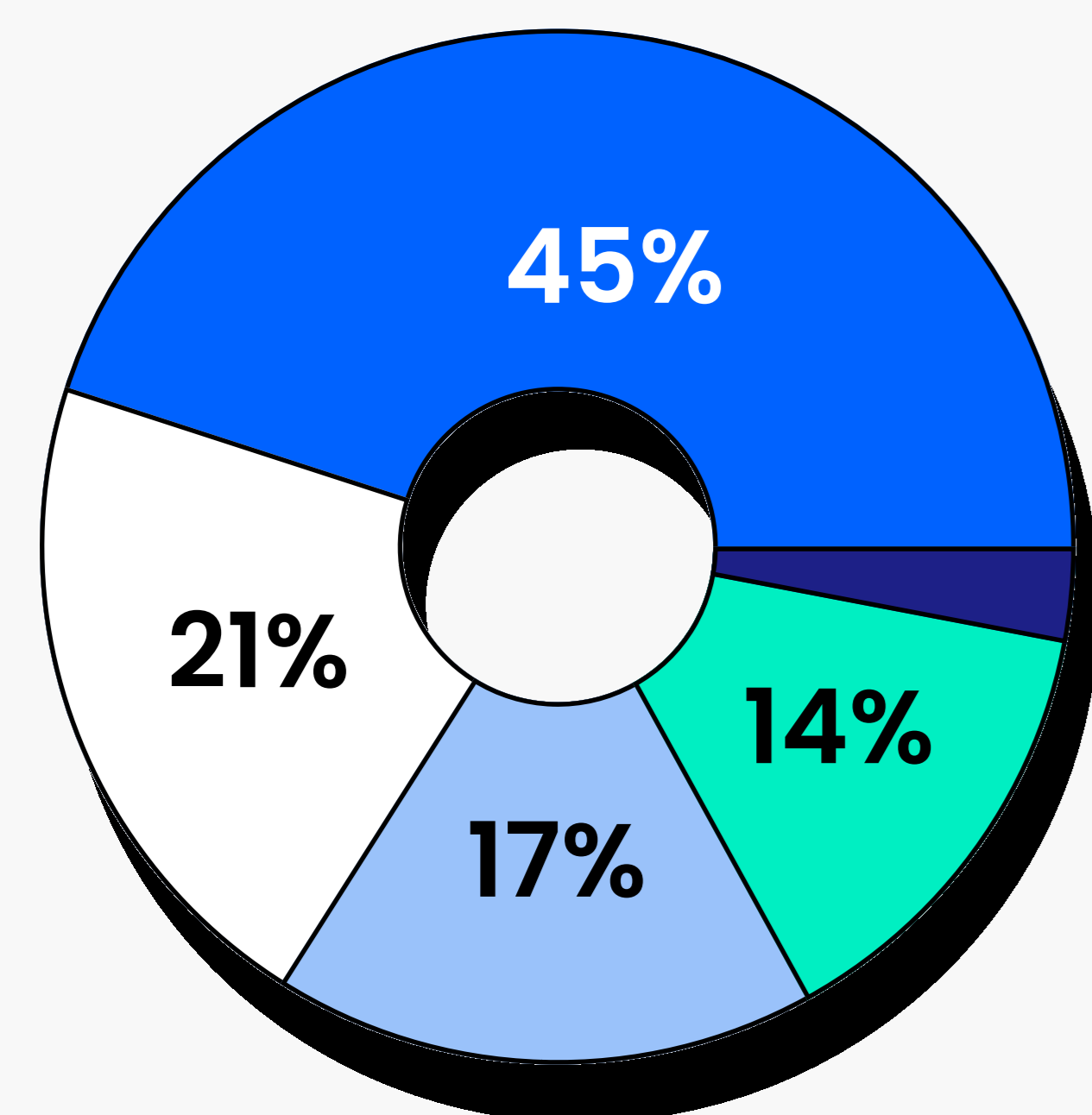
Times have changed. As of 2020, nearly [70](#) percent of businesses have taken programmatic advertising in-house while revamping conventional marketing teams, and the efforts to adopt AdOps continue to pick up more steam.

The lingering effects of the pandemic have also added urgency to this trend. Persistent shortfalls in ad budgets and the rapid transition to remote work spotlighted the need for more intelligent workflows.

But because changing the status quo can be confusing and challenging, manual tasks are still prevalent in most agencies.

Luckily, there are a handful of instruments marketers can leverage to implement automation at scale. The following is a list of different types of automation tools and their uses.

How has the COVID-19 Pandemic impacted your plans for Agile marketing adoption?

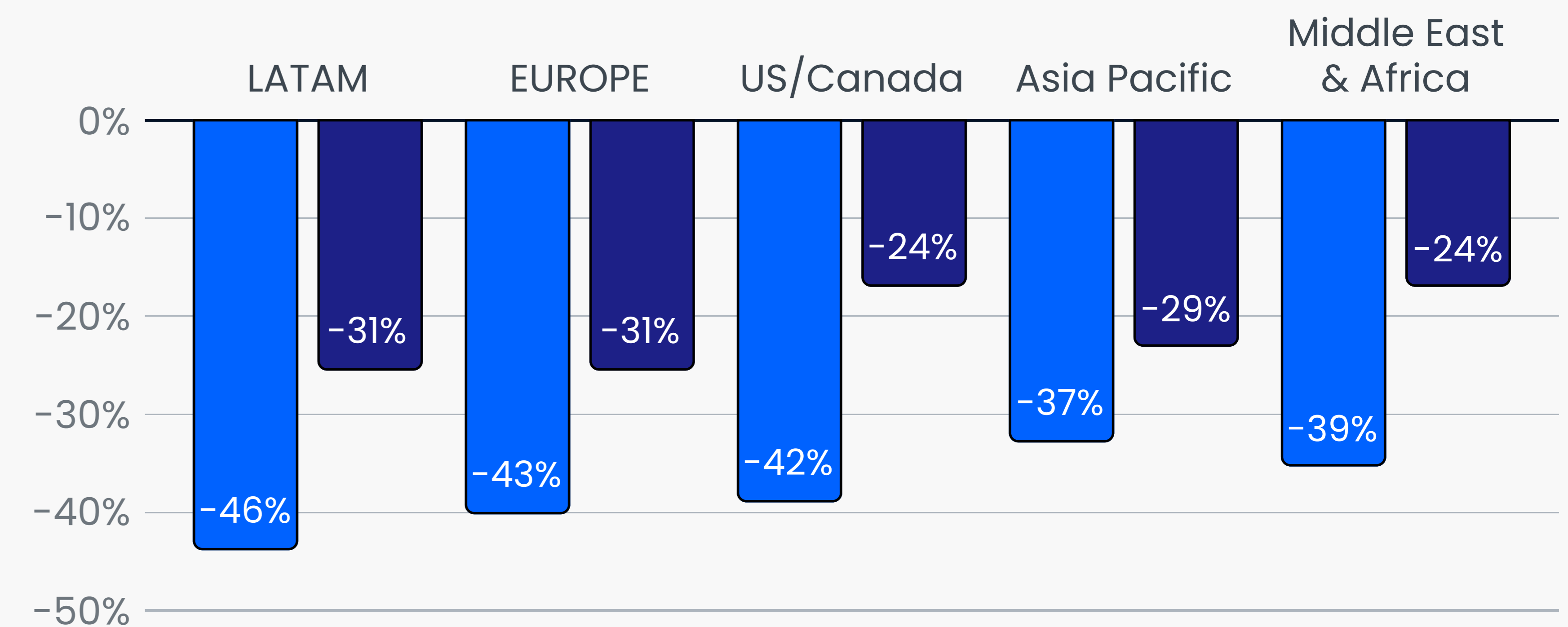


- 3% It has greatly delayed our plans
- 14% It has greatly delayed our plans
- 17% It has greatly accelerated our plans
- 21% It has slightly accelerated our plans
- 45% No impact

n=282

source : State of Agile Marketing 2021 | AgileSherpas and Forrester

Decreased average media budget due to coronavirus during 1st half and full year of 2020, by region



• **Release date** : May 2020 • **Survey time period** : April 22 to 28, 2020
 • **Number of respondents** : 38 companies • **Region** : Worldwide

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Data Pipeline

Pipelines serve a singular, critical purpose. They transport data from disparate sources to a designated database. While pipeline tools can support a wide array of activities from CRM and sales to marketing and customer service, they lack the functional variety to stand alone as a unique solution.

Data Warehouse

At the end of the pipeline awaits a warehouse. It's where data finds home for storage and future analysis.

The main grounds for businesses to consider implementing a warehouse is its capacity to consolidate large volumes of historical data from multiple sources, which can't be found in transactional databases.

That's not to say warehouses come without a drawback. As effective as they can be for storage purposes, warehouses typically don't support mixed file formats and require a helping hand from engineers to clean up and unify the data into a single structure.

Data Visualization

The data has gone through the pipeline and landed in a warehouse. Fantastic. All there's left is to make sense of the data. Because, as you may know, raw data is pretty much meaningless on its own.

Enter visualization.

Designed to turn data into intelligible graphics in the form of charts, diagrams, maps, and more, visualization tools provide the much-needed context to connect the dots between disparate data points.

Business Intelligence (BI)

BI tools are known to be the cream of the crop when it comes to data analytics technology. From collection and processing to visualization, BI tools go the whole nine yards to transform unstructured data into actionable insights.

If you're looking for an all-around solution that combines all three of the tools above, BI tools are your choice.

Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

Organic traffic is arguably the most important factor for brand building. But in a world full of shady digital marketing tactics, ranking on search engines is no cakewalk.

Well, unless you have access to a reliable SEO tool, that is.

SEO is a multifaceted process that consists of different elements such as competitive and keyword research, content creation, and link building. Adopting the right SEO tool will go far to overcome the hurdles preventing you from ranking higher and open up new opportunities to drive visibility.

Content Management Systems (CMS)

Building an eye-catching website packed with unique content is a prerequisite for SEO success. But if it weren't for CMS, you'd have to rely on developers and designers to roll out your editorial strategy instead of letting your content manager handle the work.

Needless to say, setting up a website from scratch is a great accomplishment in itself. Yet there's more to CMS. Namely, most CMS platforms offer a broad range of ready-made templates to streamline the customization of your website and a centralized dashboard to facilitate content management across different channels at once.

Pay-Per-Click (PPC) Management

Conducting a series of split tests to see which ads are worth being scaled was once the holy grail of running a profitable PPC campaign. Now, however, there are many more moving parts in the world of big data and market research.

That's what makes PPC management worth looking into. From customer profiling and demographic targeting to keyword planning and automated bidding, these tools leverage data-driven algorithms to put your PPC campaigns on autopilot.

Customer Relationship Management (CRM)

You have access to a rich treasure chest of knowledge on customer relations. Would you be at all tempted to unlock its secrets?

Well, of course, you would. These sparkling jewels of knowledge will allow you to deliver the right message to the right audience at the right time to drive awareness, engagement, and conversion.

So, no matter where your business stands, bringing CRM into your tech stack is invaluable as it aggregates and organizes the myriad pieces of data customers leave behind as they move across different touchpoints in their sales journey.

Social Listening Tools

If CRM was explicitly designed for social media, it'd look much like a social listening tool.

In essence, social listening tools keep close tabs on everything and anything concerning your business, from direct mentions, customer feedback, relevant hashtags, and industry trends.

Having access to all this data allows you to develop highly targeted campaigns by taking out the guesswork on your followers' needs while putting your brand front and center of industry-shaping discussions.

CHAPTER 4

A Hybrid Approach

Cultivating a high-performing in-house AdOps unit is less of a challenge with the growing accessibility to adtech. Still, the burden of recruiting and onboarding qualified specialists who can manage various parts of the tech stack might be too much of a heavy lift, particularly for startups and SMEs working with a limited budget.

What companies can do instead is tap into third parties that specialize in staying on top of the latest technologies and trends. Their services come at a fraction of the cost it requires to maintain a team of full-time employees. Outsourcing can also yield the much-needed bandwidth for in-house teams to focus on big-picture initiatives that drive their bottom line.

That's not to say the right plan of attack is to leave everything in the hands of agencies. Certain tasks like customer relationship and social media management are often better kept in-house, and it's a good rule of thumb to have an AdOps expert in-house to streamline coordination and evaluate the work of outsourced teams.

The key is to find the right balance where agencies act virtually as an extension of in-house staff working toward a mutually beneficial outcome.

Understanding AdOps

Broadly speaking, ad operations refer to processes that support the management and optimization of advertisements through different digital mediums such as ad servers, networks, SSPs, and DMPs. But that's a loose definition that fails to register all the different hats AdOps specialist is forced to wear every day.

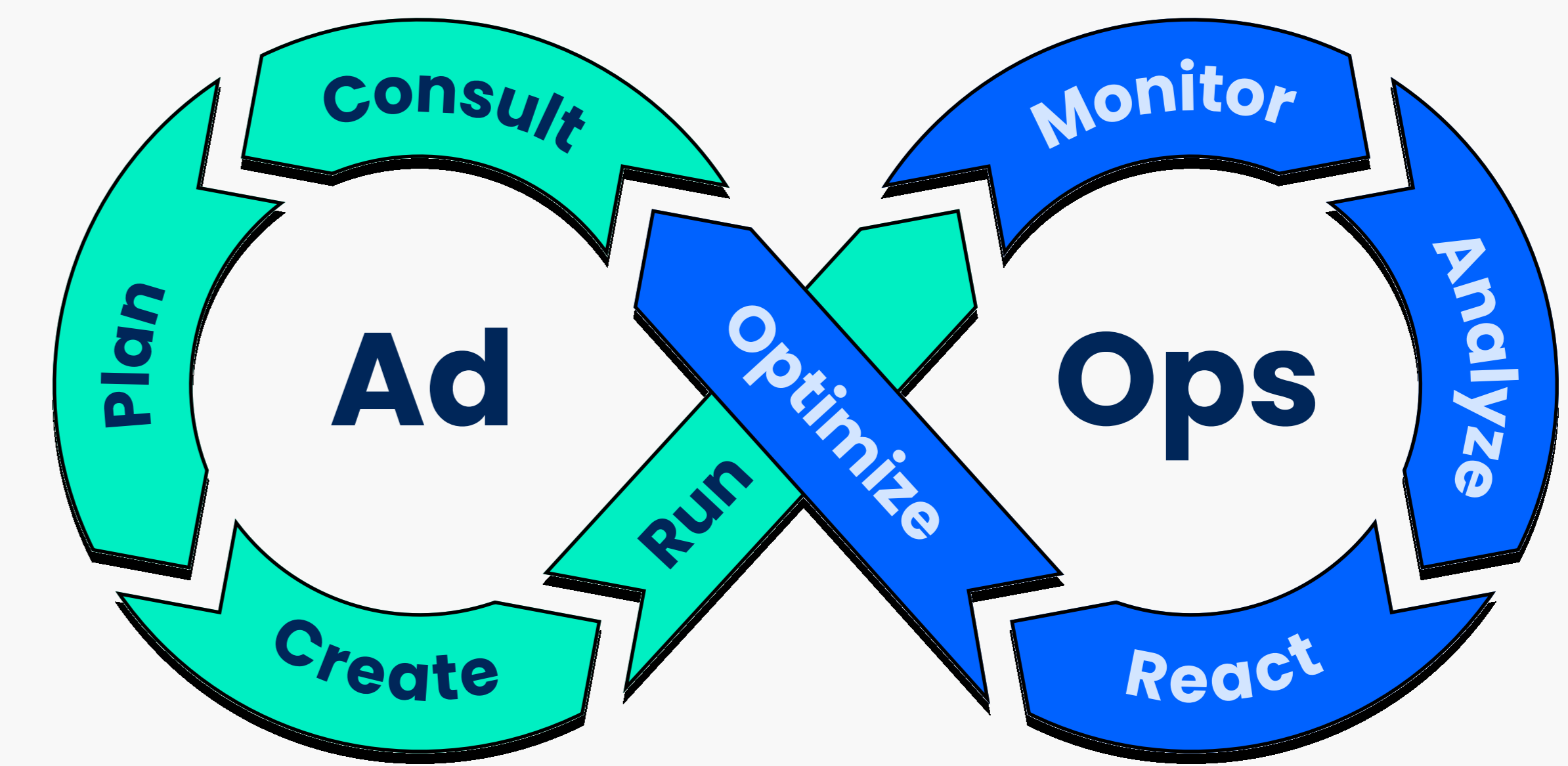
So let's unpack its meaning a little more by brushing over some of their key responsibilities:

Planning

A successful ad campaign only comes after establishing a clear and detailed outline of what it's trying to accomplish and how. Plus, having a well-thought-out baseline plan makes the execution much more effortless.

Trafficking

Once a strategic roadmap is in place, the next phase is bringing that plan to life. Trafficking is all about developing compelling creatives and placing them tactfully across ad exchanges and servers to generate quality traffic that leads to conversion.



Scheduling

Timing is everything. An overused cliché perhaps, but it surely rings true within the context of marketing. Launching campaigns at certain times on a given day of the week when the cost per conversion tends to be lower can make all the difference in getting the ads across the target audience.

Data Management

Every holistic marketing strategy is data-driven. From benchmarking KPIs against campaign objectives to tracking top-line growth, AdOps teams are responsible for overseeing data and providing insight.

Reporting

After collecting and processing data from disparate sources, AdOps will distribute reports across departments to help make sense of different performance stats and other key metrics.

Optimization

Figuring out what could be done to reduce wasted impressions while maximizing the ROAS of the high-performing creatives demands a thorough combing through of different marketing KPIs.

But it's well worth the effort, with [86](#) percent of marketers having seen a noticeable rise in ROIs after personalizing their campaigns.

Yield Management

AdOps teams are always on the lookout for opportunities to maximize revenue. Rechanneling ad spend from losing ads to high-performing ones, building a robust marketing mix, and bidding on ad exchanges in real-time are all tactics AdOps employ to bring in more money.

To sum it all up, we can expect a typical workday of an AdOps manager to look as follows:

- 1 Fix a cup (or two) of extra strong coffee.
- 2 Catch up on emails to ensure everything is smooth running.
- 3 While keeping a close eye out for incoming work requests.
- 4 Hop on calls with customers and vendors.
- 5 Run an SEO audit and update creatives accordingly.
- 6 Grab a quick bite.
- 7 Review a bulky stack of analytics reports to pinpoint pain points in ongoing campaigns and other marketing initiatives.
- 8 Cross-reference the findings with targeting options and share the results with other teams to come up with enhanced strategies that could bring in additional revenue.
- 9 Check for any lingering tasks to make sure nothing fell through the cracks.
- 10 Wrap up and head out for a drink (or two).

Why Invest in AdOps?

Put yourself in the shoes of a marketing manager tasked with fine-tuning the performance of ongoing campaigns. The first thing you'd want to do is derive actionable insights from contextualized data. The last thing you'd want is to get there by having to pull spreadsheets from each channel and manually comb through thousands of data points.

Not only is the manual process of managing data unnecessarily time-consuming, it's inherently prone to human error and inconsistencies that can put the entire initiative in jeopardy.

That's where AdOps come into play. By setting up an automated end-to-end system that brings disparate data sources together, AdOps can effectively stamp out the need for single-platform sign-ins and redundant ad hoc activities while mitigating the risk for slip-ups and suboptimal output.

"When programmatic merges with native and is fueled by data and a transparent, objective framework, everyone wins."

- John Battelle, Chairman at Svorn Holdings

If that's not enough, keep in mind that AdOps is a gift that keeps on giving. There's just so much you could gain from bringing AdOps in-house.

Let us paint you a picture. You take the initiative to dig into an AdOps tool and successfully incorporate it into the workflow. Immediately the whole team sees an uptick in productivity, resulting in improved performance and higher profits. Your boss takes notice and that coveted promotion is now yours.

Industry-Shaping Trends

So far, we've covered how AdOps evolved into its current state. But a year from now, we might be talking about a whole new ballgame.

That's because the digital advertising landscape is under constant change. And AdOps teams must keep up with the pace of innovation by staying on top of the latest trends and tools.

Wonder how that goes down in practice? Take a gander at the list of industry-shaping trends below to get a better picture.

First-Party Data

What do device identifiers and third-party cookies have in common? One is a thing of the past, and the latter will soon become one.

Make no mistake. Targeting without third-party data has proven to be a difficult puzzle to solve. Nonetheless, AdOps teams have been making strides around privacy challenges by cultivating a walled garden of their own that keeps first-party data at their fingertips.

Multichannel Marketing

"Just 20 percent of existing customers are accountable for 80 percent of a company's future revenue." - [Gartner](#)

Growing privacy concerns and the subsequent complications in behavioral advertising have made customer acquisition infinitely harder. Ever since, the limelight has been drifting towards retention.

The recent [resurgence](#) in multichannel marketing stands as a testament. AdOps teams have been embracing multichannel strategies to double down on driving user engagement and brand loyalty.

Whitelabel Marketing

Being a specialist in a single field is no longer enough. Businesses nowadays want the complex universe of their digital marketing needs seamlessly managed under one roof.

Unfortunately, not all agencies have what it takes to transform into a one-stop shop. The challenges of acquiring the necessary skill sets are often too significant in terms of experience, money, and time.

Smart agencies have mitigated the risk of becoming obsolete by partnering with whitelabel alliances. Agencies can now tap into outside help to handle the heavy lifting that comes with scaling their offerings and services.

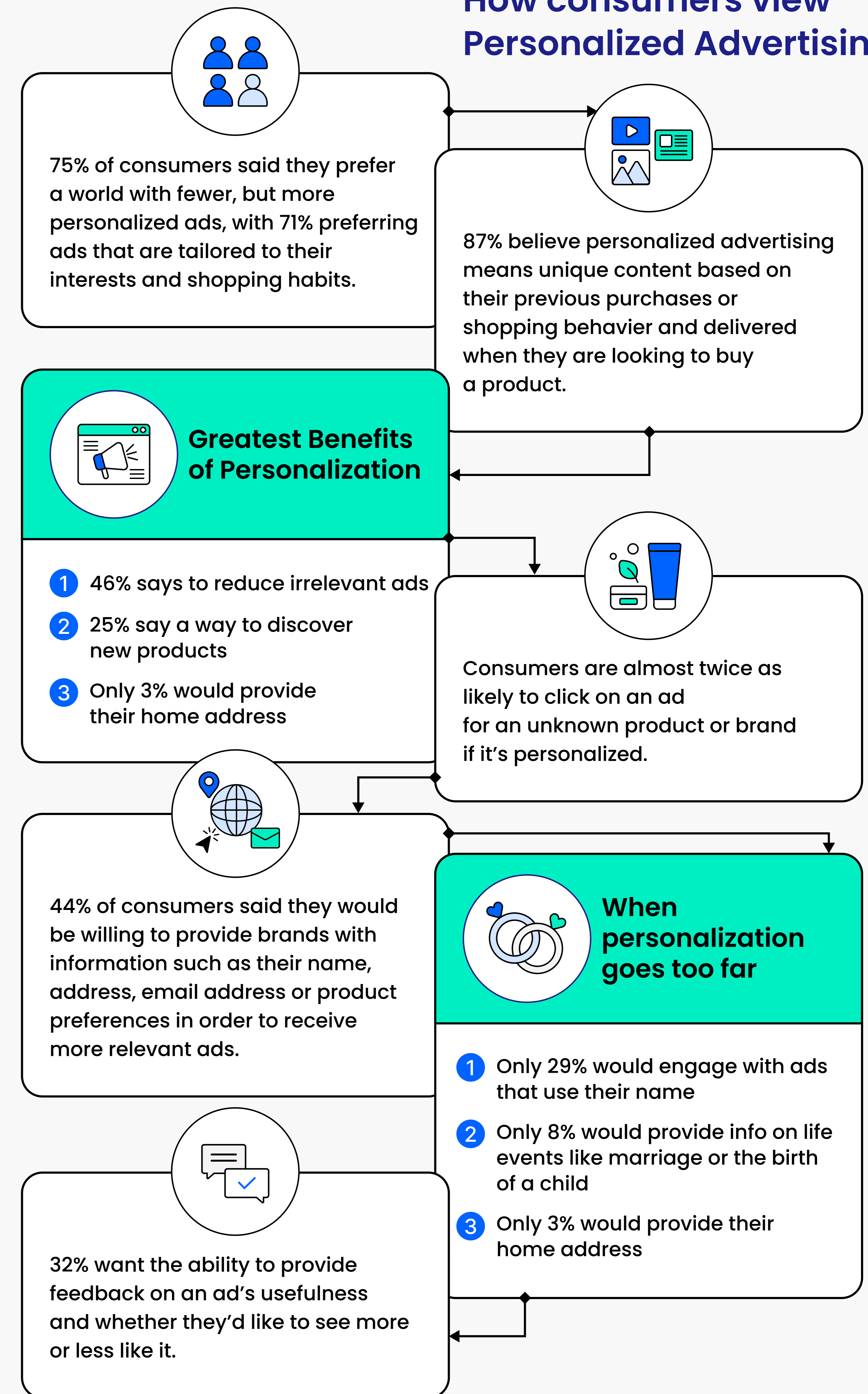
Final Words

The importance of delivering relevant ads to the right audience at the right time has never been so prominent. But the complexity of managing the systems and processes governing smooth marketing operations is growing by the day.

That's precisely why investing in AdOps has become a must. Without automating outdated manual workflows, marketers will be left in the dust under a stack of data streams, spreadsheets, and siloed systems.

With that, we end our beginner's guide to AdOps. If you're interested in learning more, head on over to www.adriel.com/en/demo to book a time with one of our solutions consultants. Together, we'll come up with actionable steps you can take to help your team make time for what truly matters - whether that's productivity, strategy, or simply life.

How consumers view Personalized Advertising



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