Website Optimization Benchmarks for the B2B Marketing Channel

The most challenging obstacles to website marketing optimization success in the year ahead and how B2B marketers plan to overcome them.

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Ascend2 Research Conducted in Partnership with Jackson.

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Website optimization is a continuous improvement process

A website is an essential channel for attracting, engaging and converting customers. Website optimization is the continuous improvement of this channel to successfully achieve your marketing objectives.

But what will be the most challenging obstacles to website optimization success in the year ahead and how will B2B marketers overcome them?

To find out, Ascend2 and Jackson fielded the Website Optimization Survey and completed interviews with marketing professionals from around the world. This edition of the study, *Website Optimization Benchmarks for the B2B Marketing Channel*, represents the views of 182 survey respondents who are dedicated to the business-to-business channel.

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Mike Zeller
VP, Brand Marketing

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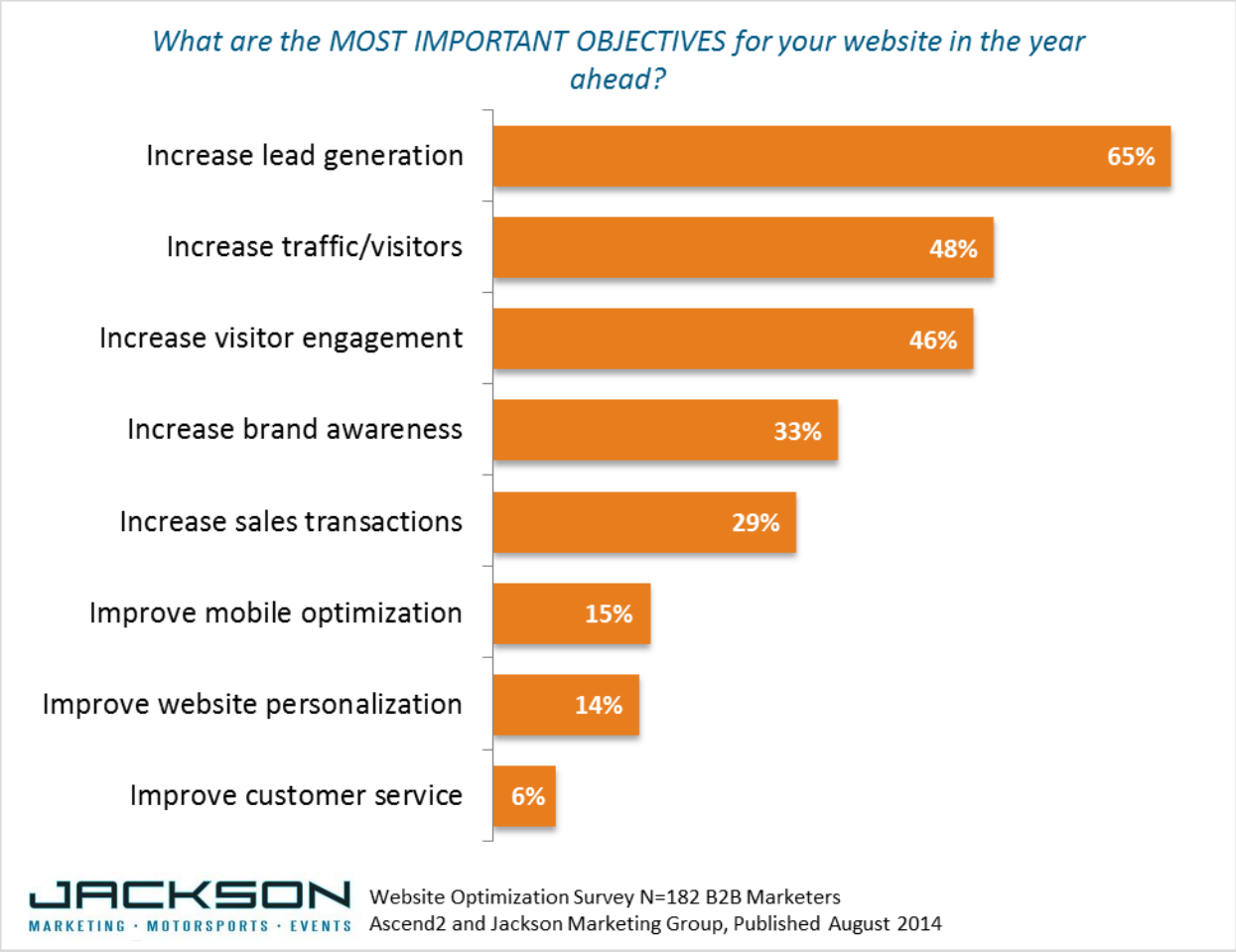
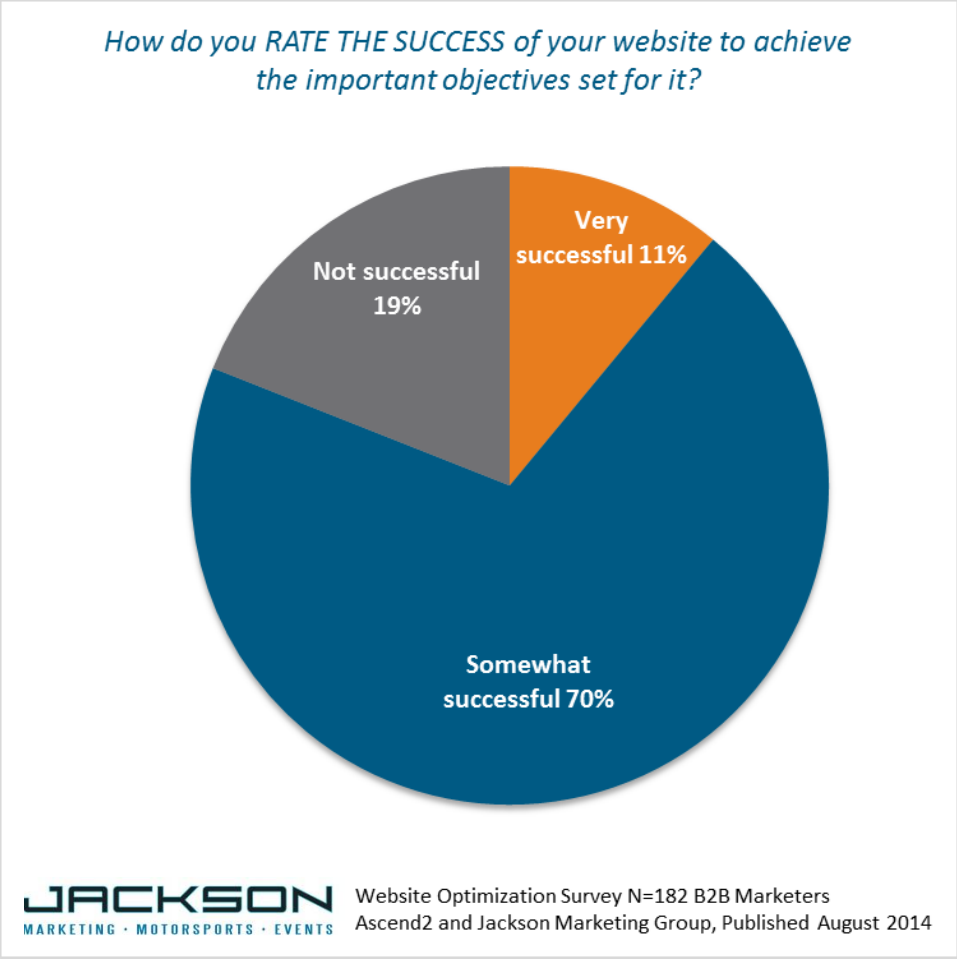
For many B2B companies, their website has become a marketing strategy hub with the objectives of increasing visitor traffic, engagement and, most importantly, leads.



While improving mobile optimization rated low as a key objective, recent studies have shown nearly 80% of B2B purchase decision makers are regularly researching purchases (products & services) on their smartphones.

With continued growth in mobile device usage, it has become more critical than ever to have a website that is optimized for mobile users.

Only 11% of B2B companies consider their website "very successful" at achieving important objectives. There is a lot of room for improvement and a need for optimization.

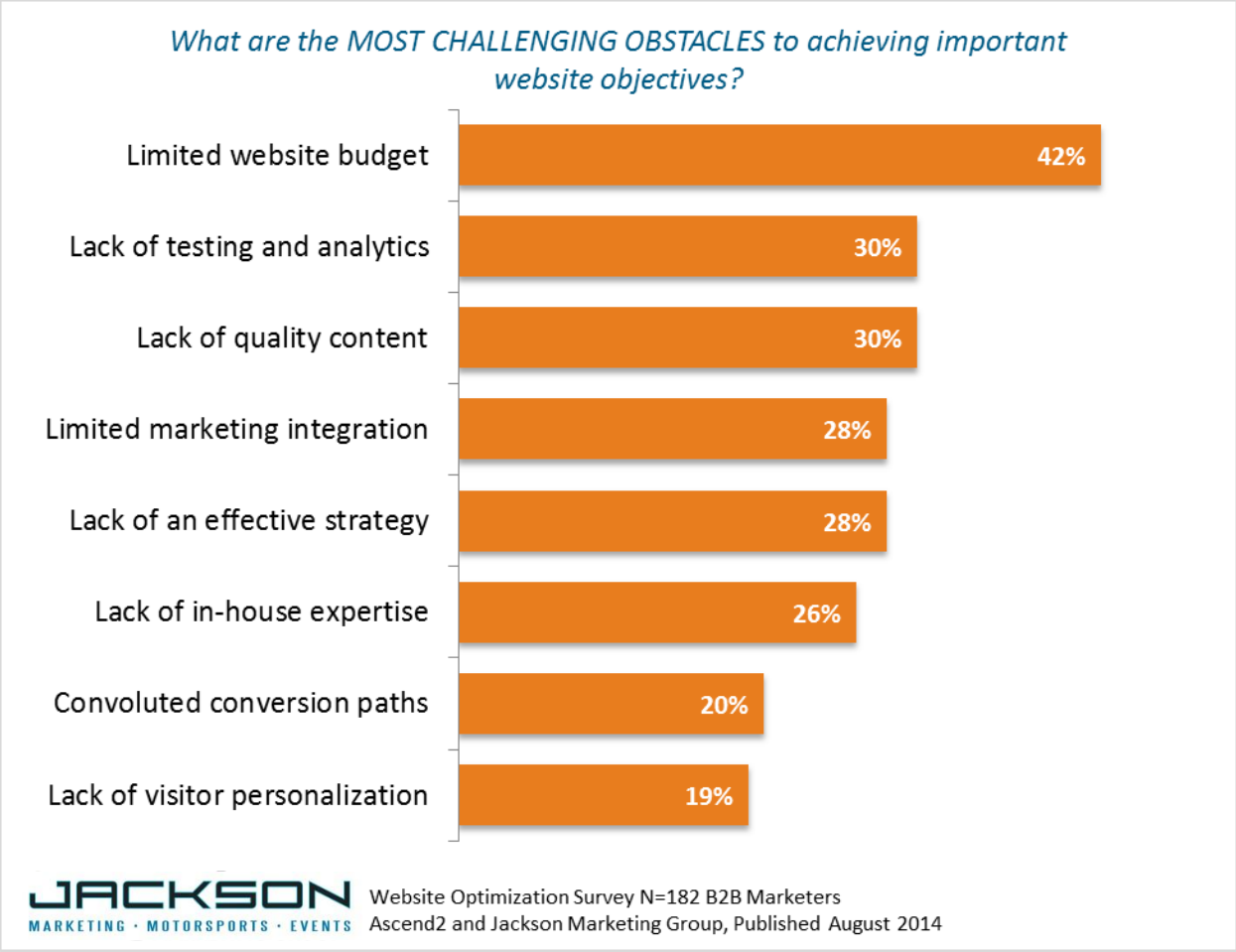


Respondents do not feel their site is working to develop the leads they care most about.

There is a great deal of opportunity for B2B companies to grow their effectiveness as lead generation engines. Particularly as 93% of B2B purchase decision makers say they research their purchases online.

While large companies were less likely than the overall sample to rate their site as "very successful," they were more likely to at least feel their site was "somewhat successful."

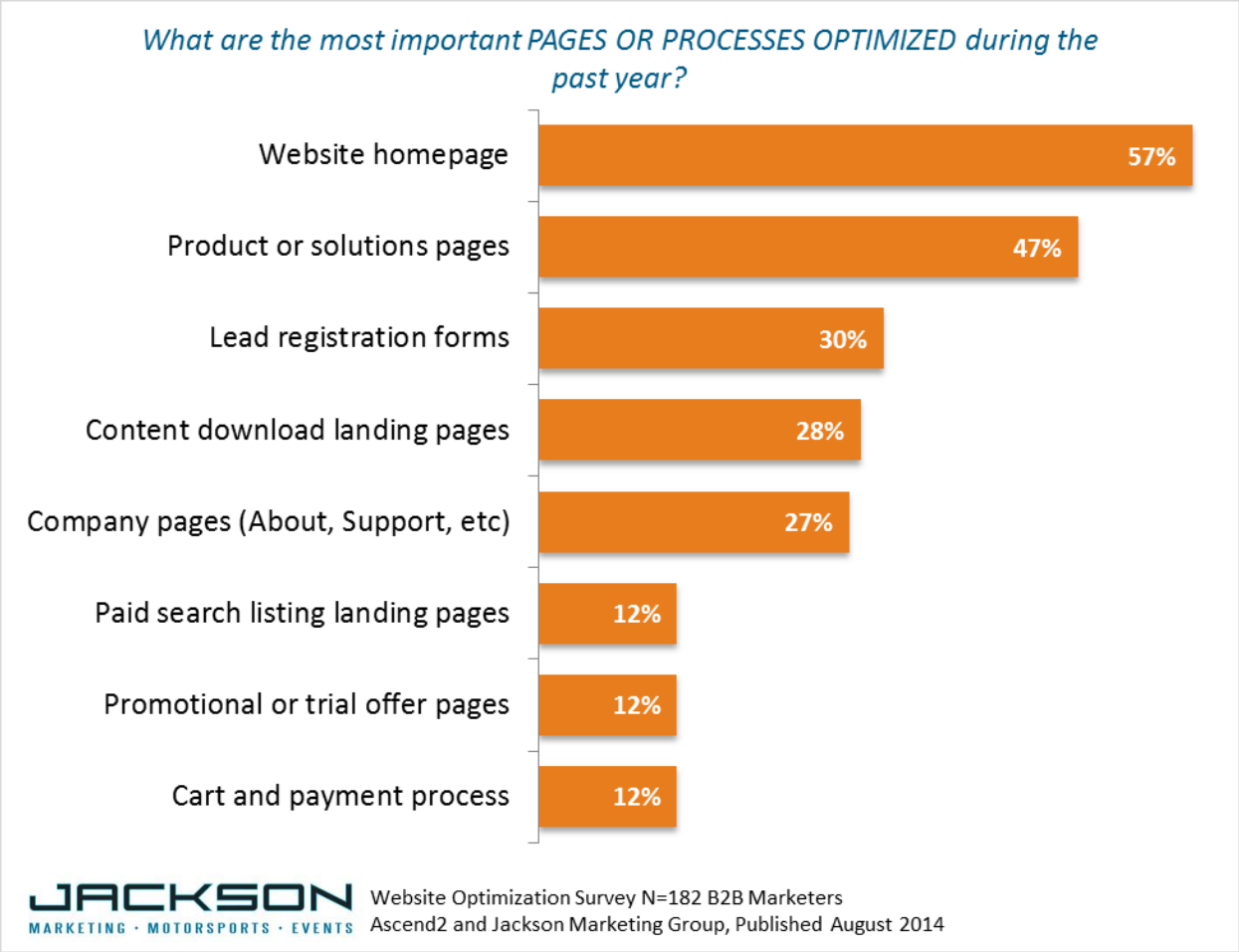
Website optimization is a time-intensive process that requires ongoing testing and analysis. Time is money and a limited budget is the most challenging obstacle.



The combination of a limited budget and limited in-house expertise makes website optimization of any sort a challenge for many B2B companies.

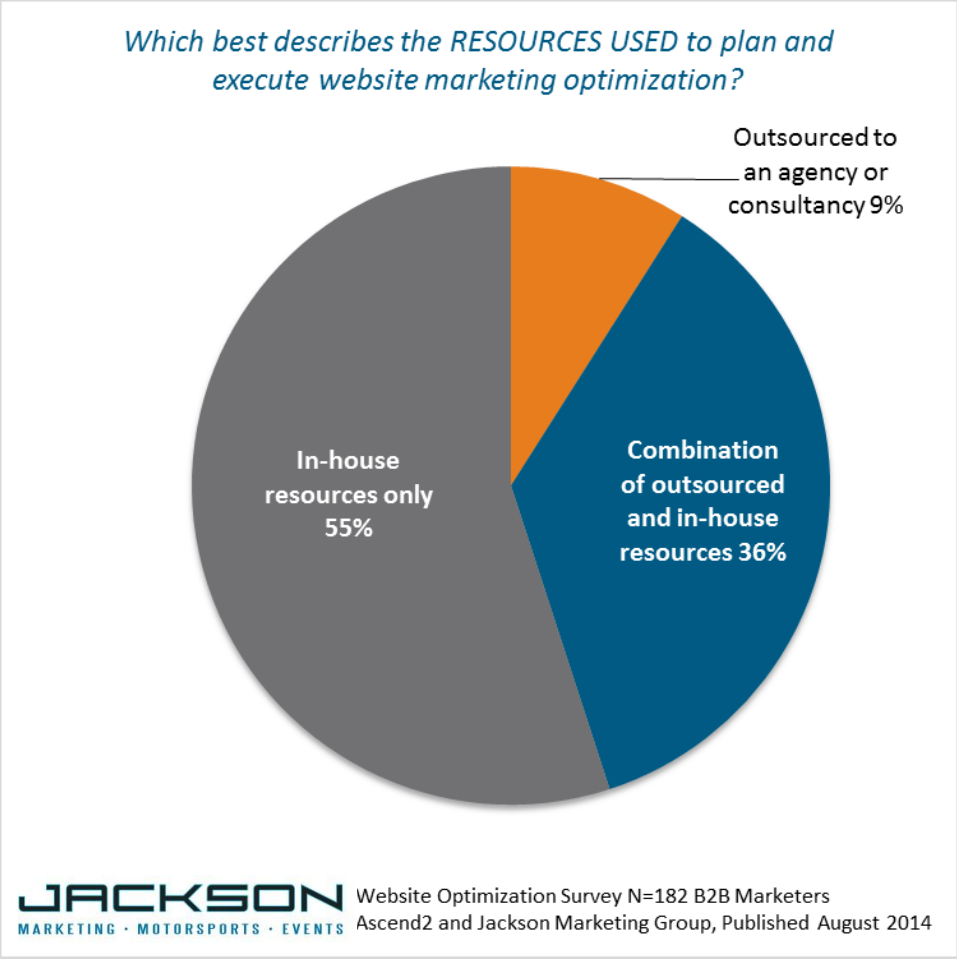
With 30% of respondents listing a lack of quality content as a large obstacle to achieving their objectives, this continues to be a growing challenge as B2B purchase decision makers engage with good content.

The homepage and product or solution pages are the most important to optimize. The purpose is to make the buyer journey and purchase decision path effortless.



Home page and product/solution page optimization is consistent with the objectives most B2B companies set for their websites: providing information for potential customers to learn more and to identify themselves as leads. With the longer-term sales cycle of B2B relationships, promotional offers and shopping carts are less important.

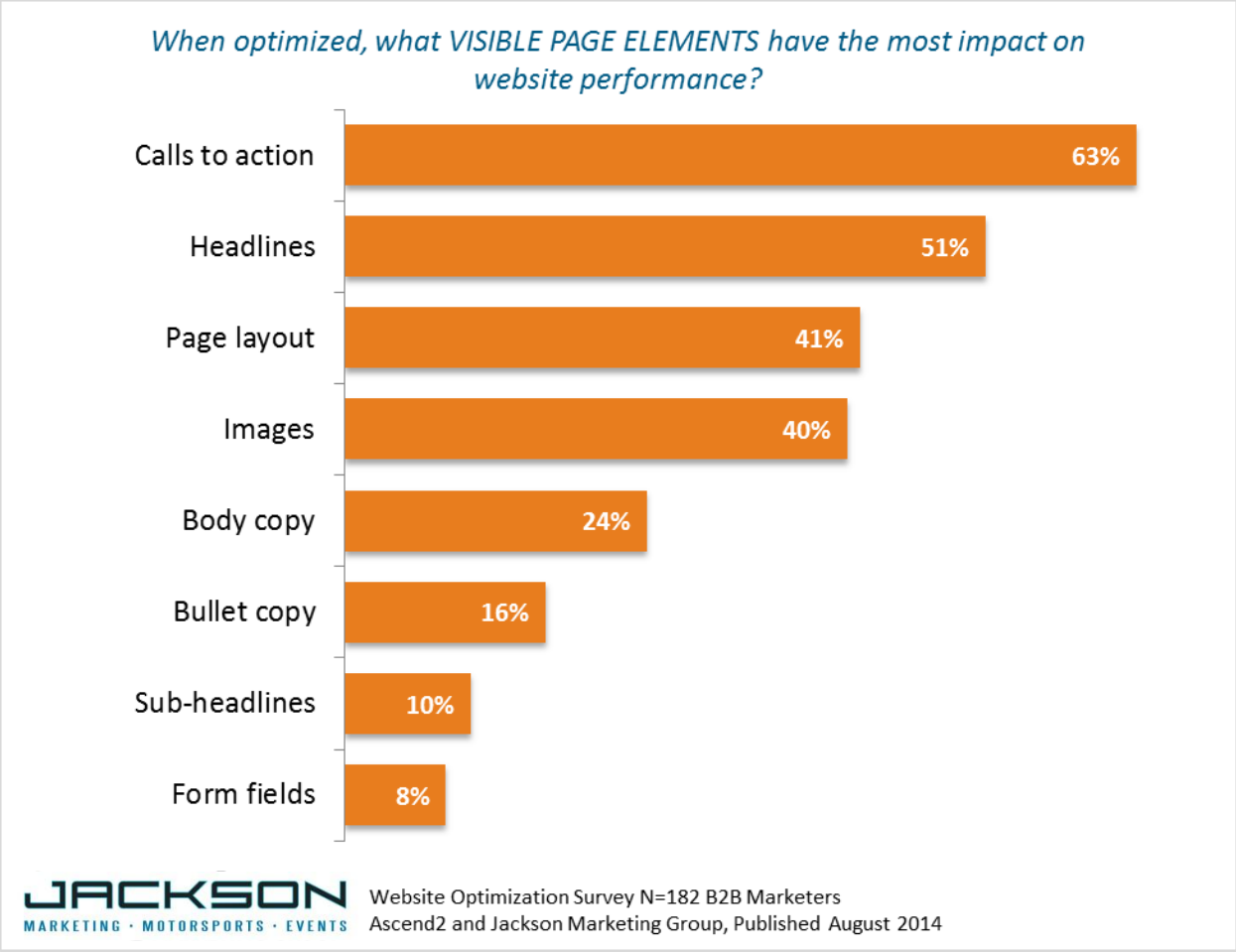
45% of companies outsource all or part of their website optimization planning and execution, gaining valuable expertise not found internally to improve performance.



With companies reporting limited budget as their largest obstacle to achieving their website objectives, it is not a surprise that more than half of respondents are trying to utilize only in-house resources, though nearly 1/3 of respondents noted a lack of in-house expertise as one of their most challenging obstacles.

Enterprise-size B2B companies are significantly more likely to use a combination of out-sourced and in-house resources than smaller B2B companies, indicating that as more resources become available B2B companies tend to look outside to subject-matter experts for assistance.

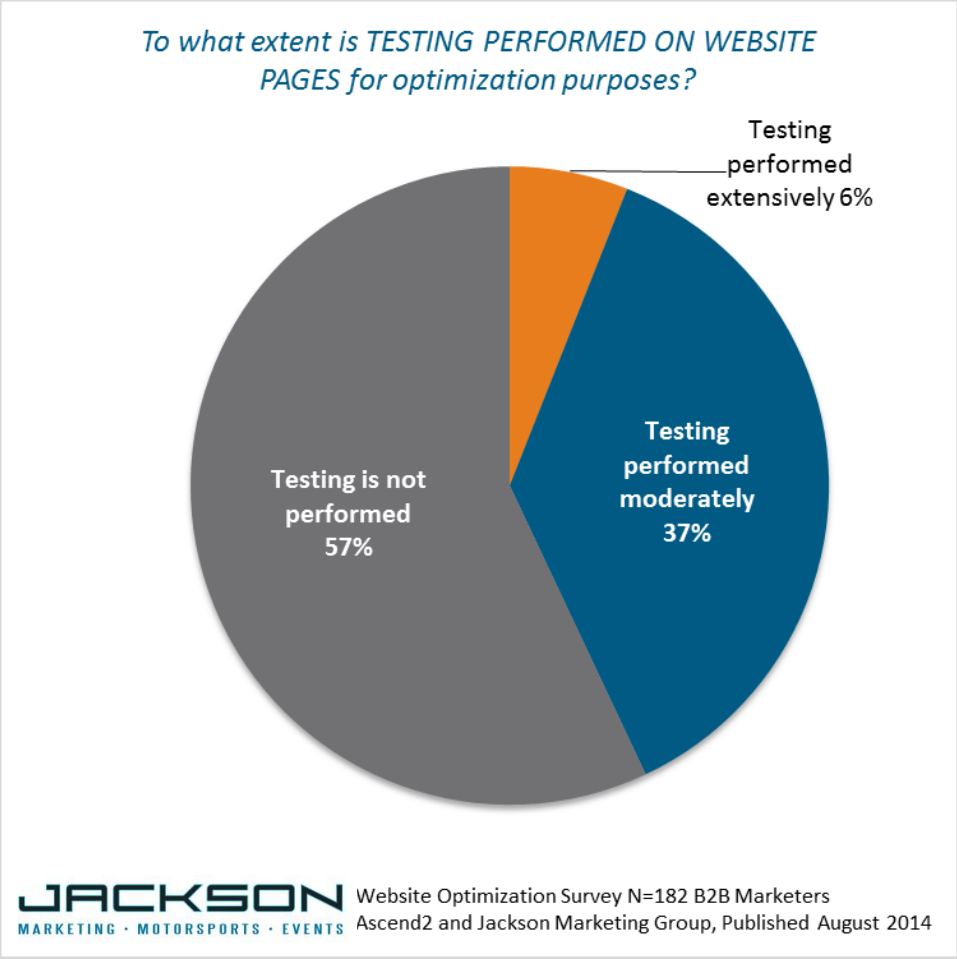
As important as the call to action is, optimizing the form fields to be completed as part of the call to action is a missed opportunity for most B2B companies.



It is interesting to note that while nearly half of the respondents listed product and solution pages as the most important pages to optimize, they rated the elements that most commonly make up the majority of those pages, body copy and bulleted copy, as some of the least impactful factors in site performance.

This stresses the importance of focusing on the most impactful pages on the site and ensuring that calls to action, headlines, images and overall page layout are optimized on all pages.

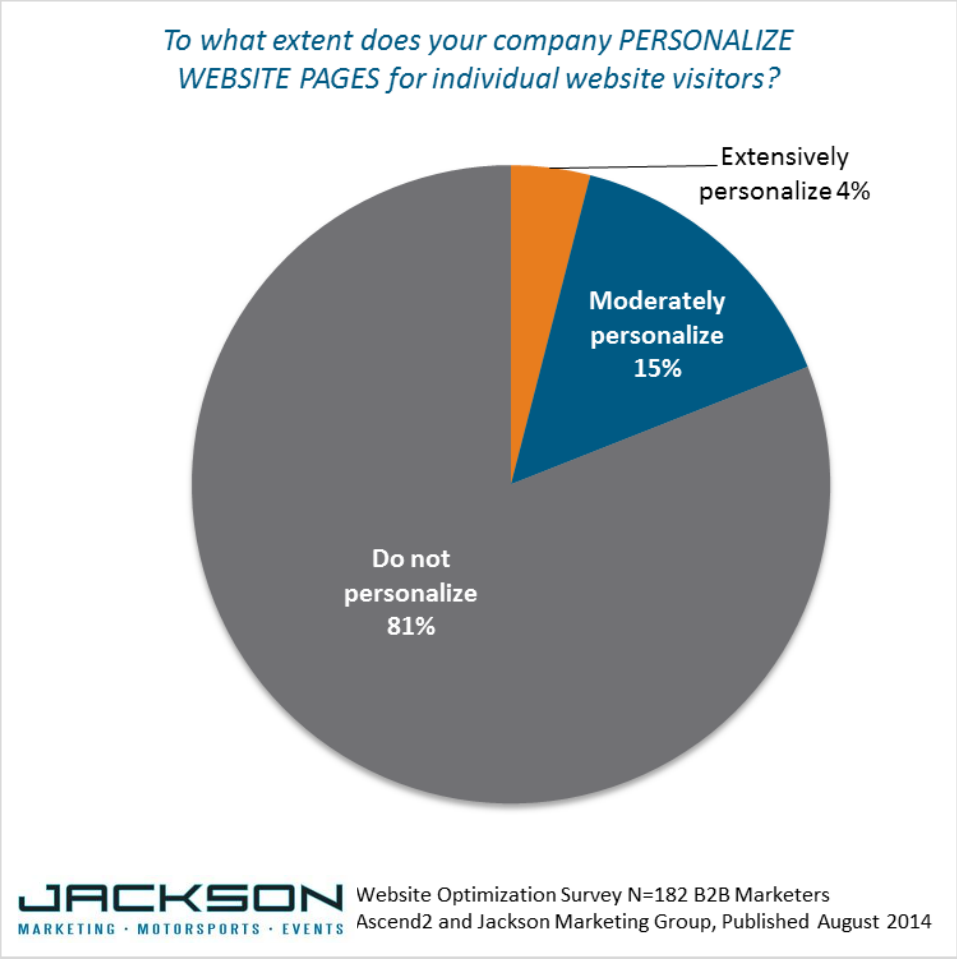
Testing is the only way to validate how well optimization is performing. And 43% are testing their website pages and page elements for optimization purposes.



While respondents provided their thoughts on what elements of the site were most impactful regarding site performance, nearly 60% are not testing their site to determine what elements are truly the most impactful and what is and is not working.

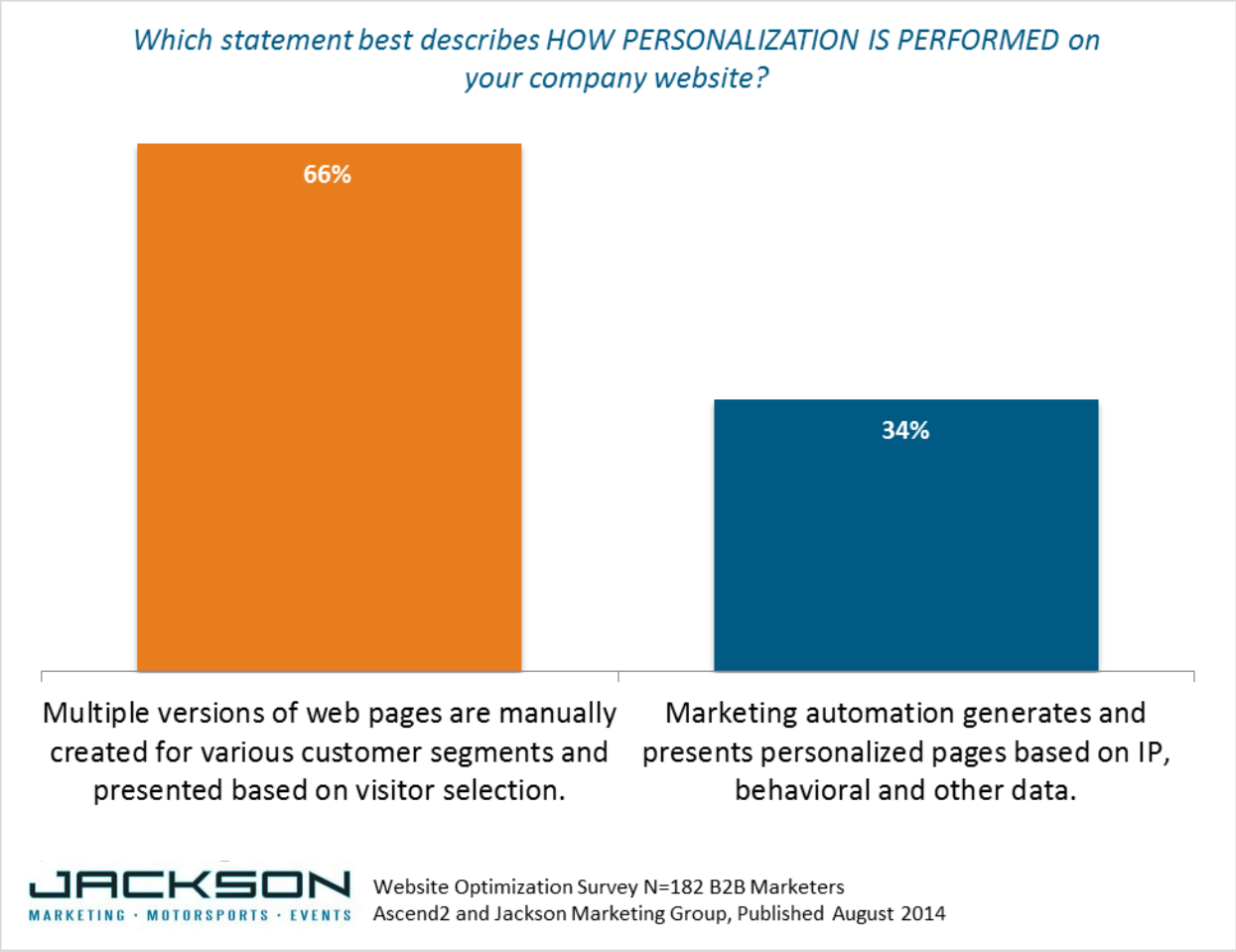
The size of the company directly relates to how much testing is reported, with large companies reporting significantly more testing at the moderate level.

Increasing visitor engagement is a top objective, and personalization is a proven method for increasing visitor engagement. Yet, only 19% of companies are doing it.



Enterprise companies are a little more likely to have at least moderately personalized websites compared to B2B companies overall.

Of the B2B companies personalizing web pages, 66% are using manual methods while 34% employ software to perform personalization automatically.

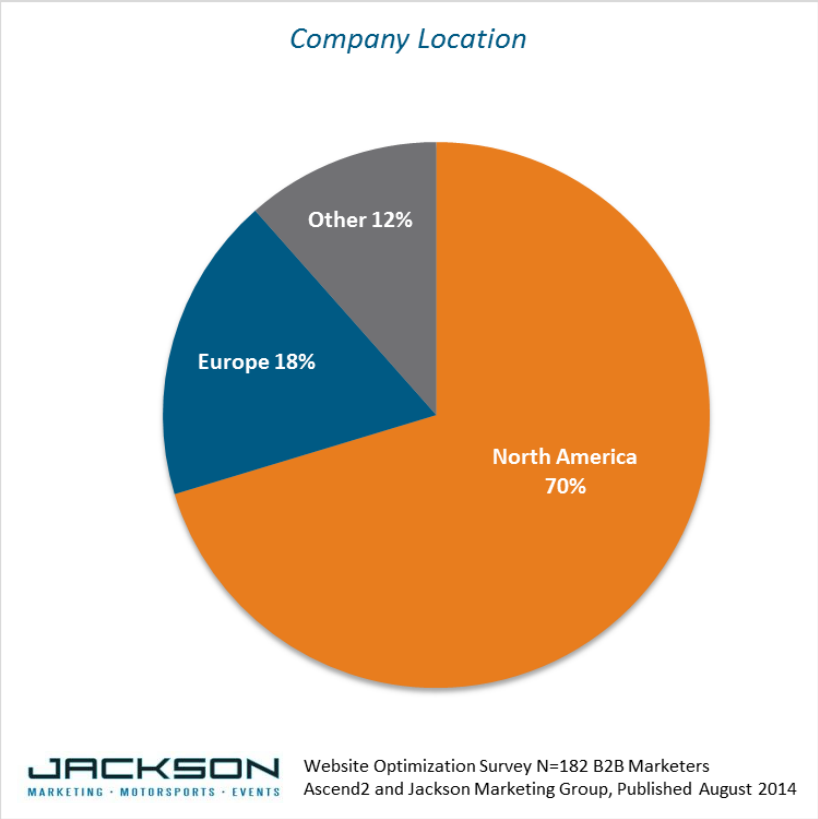


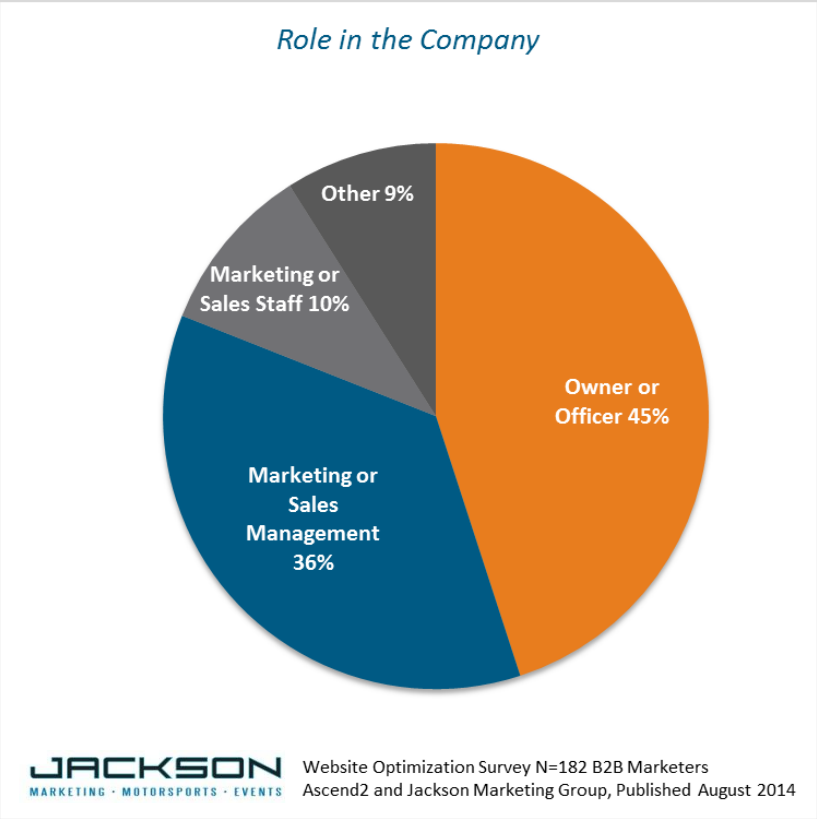
Since 81% of respondents were not personalizing their site at all, that means less than 10% are using any automation to personalize their site currently. This provides a great opportunity for many B2B companies to implement the personalization feature that can directly impact the most important B2B website goal: lead generation.

Research methodology

Ascend2 Research Surveys are conducted online from a panel of more than 50,000 U.S. and international business, marketing and sales decision makers and practitioners representing a range of contact roles, company types, sizes and geographic regions. The questionnaire used is standardized to incorporate these methodologies across all studies while maintaining our proven 3-Minute Survey format. Survey findings are examined in a quantitative context by experienced analysts and reported objectively.

Survey demographics for the B2B marketing segment





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If It's Important to You, It's Important to Us.

Jackson is a fully integrated marketing communications agency, with more than 100 passionate, curious, excited minds at your disposal. Our mission is to create effective, strategically sound marketing campaigns and programs that get noticed and help build your brand.

Learn more visit our website at JacksonMG.com

Ascend2

Research-Based Demand Generation for Marketing Solution Providers.

Marketing agencies, marketing software and data companies partner with Ascend2 to provide research-based demand generation. Our Research Partner Programs are transparent–spotlighting your brand and the interests of your market.

Learn more about Ascend2 at Ascend2.com