

10 FOLD

AI-First, Buyer-Ready: the New Era of B2B Content Marketing

Part II
AI Solutions

September 2025

WHERE WE STARTED & WHAT'S NEXT

In Part One of **AI-First, Buyer-Ready: Inside the New Era of B2B Content Marketing in 2025**, we uncovered the growing pressure on marketers to do more with less. Content volume is tripling, but budgets are barely budging. AI has become a foundational tool—not a job killer—and most teams are navigating this new era with a mix of in-house talent and agency support. Yet challenges persist; maintaining brand voice, proving ROI, keeping up with trends, and scaling personalization remain stubborn obstacles.

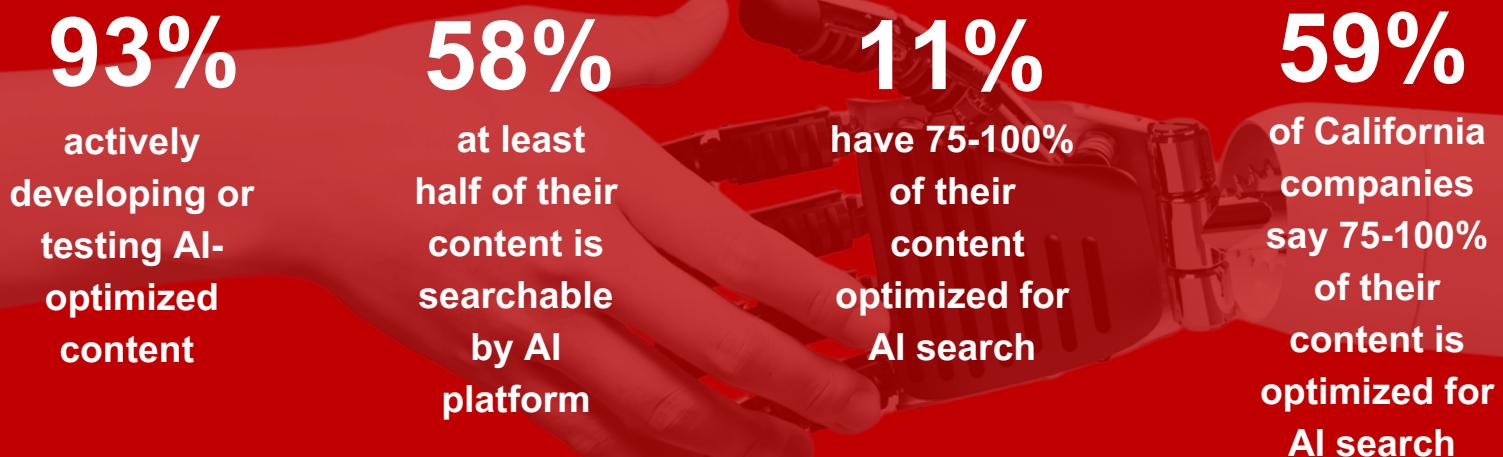
In this follow-up, we'll explore how marketers are tackling those challenges head-on. You'll discover the specific strategies, tools, and processes that top-performing teams are using to make their content programs smarter, more efficient, and more discoverable in a world driven by AI. From GEO execution to performance measurement and platform prioritization, this is where strategy turns into action.

THE DISCOVERY DIVIDE: MARKETING FOR GOOGLE WHILE BUILDING FOR AI

When asked what success looks like, marketers pointed to **discoverability**. Enhancing GEO (Generative Engine Optimization) performance was the top definition of content success (35%), slightly edging out brand awareness (34%) and SEO performance (29%).

And marketers are backing that up with action:

GEO Optimization Stages



10Fold Research, 2025

The US companies (in particular California companies) and companies in the UK, (96% each), lead the way in AI searchable content followed by France (93%) and Germany trailing at 83%.

To improve AI discovery, the methods were evenly distributed and **most appear to be trying multiple approaches with over 49% using at least one of the following:**

The Pathways to AI Discovery

METADATA
AND
TAGGING



OPTIMIZING
FOR
FEATURED
SNIPPETS



EXPERT-
AUTHORED
CONTENT



STRUCTURING
FOR NATURAL
LANGUAGE
QUERIES



PARTNERING
WITH GEO
CONSULTANTS



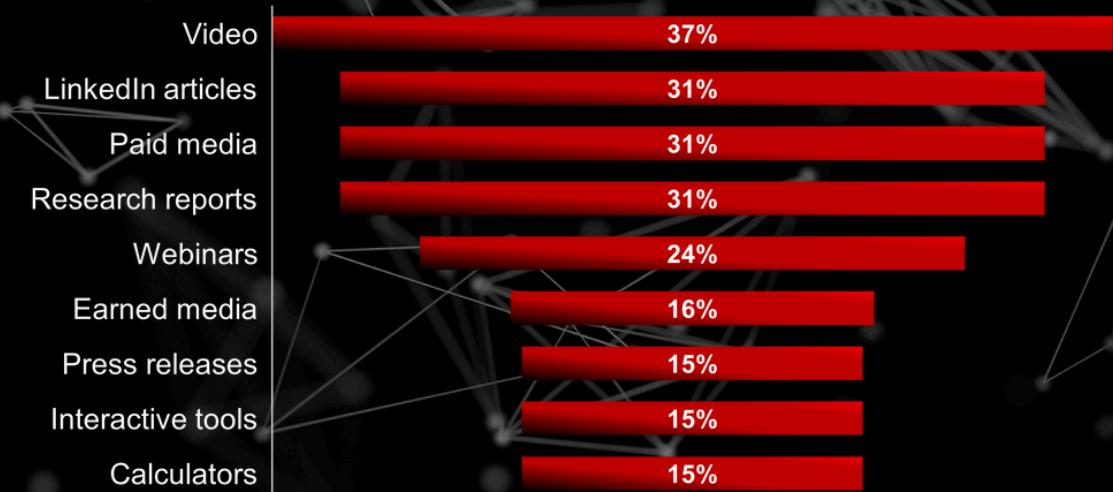
Still, traditional platforms aren't dead. **65% still distribute content via Google and other browsers**, even as **56% also use AI-native platforms** like ChatGPT and Perplexity.

This reflects a need for duality: optimizing content for AI discovery while still aligning with traditional SEO and Google Analytics. **California companies are most likely (61%) to use metadata and tagging strategies to support AI-searchability**

MAKING CONTENT FINDABLE, CLICKABLE, AND CREDIBLE: WHICH CONTENT GETS DISCOVERED

Where do today's qualified prospects first hear about your company? The #1 answer in 2025: **social media (46%)**. But right behind it? **AI search platforms (34%)**. That's ahead of organic search (30%), email marketing (29%), and paid media (25%)—a clear sign that discovery is shifting fast.

Top Lead-generating Content Formats



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Others formats - blogs, podcasts, survey reports, press releases, white papers, and case studies, all used by at least 12% of respondents

Snackable. Shareable. Searchable. That's the new B2B content recipe.

PLATFORMS THAT PERFORM



Google,
Microsoft, Safari



ChatGPT, Perplexity,
AI-native platforms



YouTube



LinkedIn



X



Forums



Industry - Specific
Forums



Other

10Fold Research, 2025

When asked which platforms were part of their content distribution strategy, 65% of marketers chose traditional browsers but nearly as many (56%) chose AI tools such as ChatGPT, Perplexity and AI-native platforms. Social platforms (led by YouTube) were also used by more than one-third of the respondents.

GEO IS THE PRIORITY. BUT SALES AND GOOGLE STILL HOLDS THE PURSE STRINGS.

Despite nearly universal adoption of AI-optimized content, marketers still heavily rely on Google Analytics and website metrics to prove content efficacy. GEO performance may be the vision, but traditional KPIs like SQLs and Google metrics still drive decisions for many of today's buyers. Top measurement methods:

Proving Content Efficacy

37%

Sales-accepted leads

35%

Google/website
analytics

32%

Marketing-accepted
leads

32%

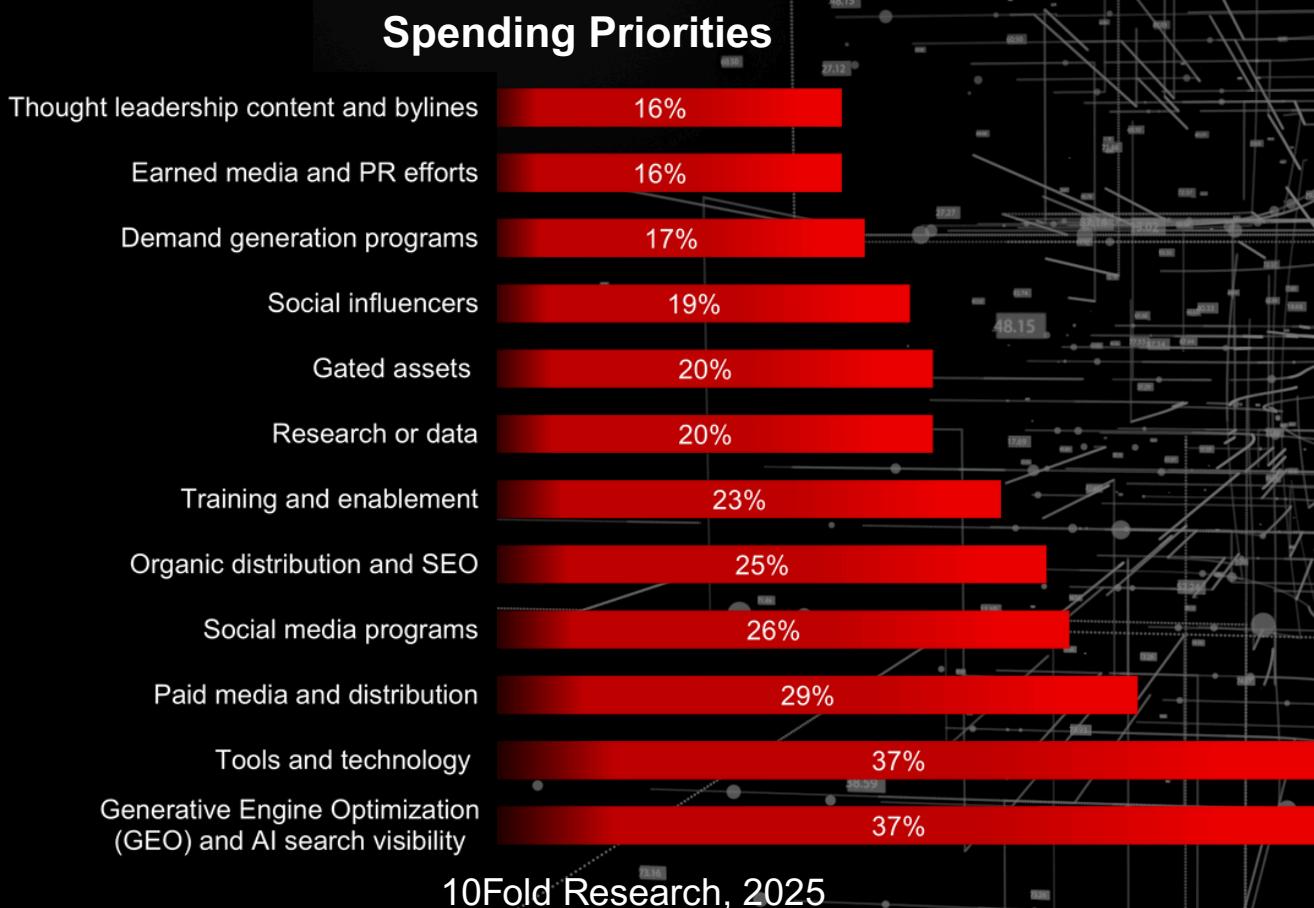
GEO performance
analytics

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California companies were most likely to evaluate content success based on the content's ability to "enhance GEO performance" rather than the majority of other geographies that ranked sales leads as their top measurement criteria. The lack of clarity on measurement is where strategy often breaks down. Many brands are building content for tomorrow's AI-first world but reporting results like it's still 2020.

SPENDING SMARTER, WITH AN EYE TOWARDS SHORT- AND LONG-TERM SUCCESS.

Content investment priorities reflect a distinctive shift – as the majority of these marketers' budgets go towards preparing to deliver AI-powered and AI-findable content. Marketers were evenly **split on where they are focusing their budget between investing in GEO and AI search visibility and the tools and technology** required for the shift to AI-focused content (both categories earned 37%).



However, many are still concerned about immediate results – and there seems to be room in budgets to distribute content. Specifically, nearly 30% of marketers are prioritizing budget spend on paid content distribution and one quarter of marketers are investing in improving organic SEO and distributing content through social media.

KEY TAKEAWAYS FOR THE 2025 CONTENT PLAYBOOK, PART II

In 2025, content success hinges on discoverability - and marketers are evolving fast to meet AI's rising influence while still juggling traditional metrics. Here's how they're adapting:

- AI search is now the second most common source of qualified leads, right behind social media - outpacing organic search, email, and paid media.
- GEO (Generative Engine Optimization) is becoming a top priority, with marketers optimizing content using metadata, featured snippets, and natural language structures.
- 93% of marketers are already developing or testing AI-optimized content, and over half have made the majority of their content searchable by AI platforms.
- Tools and tech tied with GEO for top content investments (37% each)—showing the shift toward building smarter, AI-aware content engines.
- Google still dominates content measurement, but forward-thinking teams are layering in GEO performance analytics to capture tomorrow's impact.
- Marketers are still investing in amplification, with nearly 30% prioritizing paid content distribution and 25% focused on social and organic reach.

Want to know how your content strategy stacks up? Let's talk.

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APPENDIX- DEMOGRAPHICS

Geographies Surveyed

France – 19%

Germany – 19%

UK – 25%

USA – 38%



US Breakout

California – 52%

Florida – 5%

Massachusetts – 3%

New York – 19%

Texas – 7%

Other – 14%

France

Ile de France - 76%

Other – 24%

UK

Greater London – 88%

Southeast England – 9%

Other – 3%

Germany

Bavaria – 23%

Berlin – 47%

Hamburg – 12%

Other – 18%

Other Demographics:

1. All were full-time employees of the companies they responded for.

2. Title Breakdown:

Owner – 8%

C-Level Executive – 25%

Director/Head of Dept. – 31%

Senior Management – 24%

Middle Management – 12%



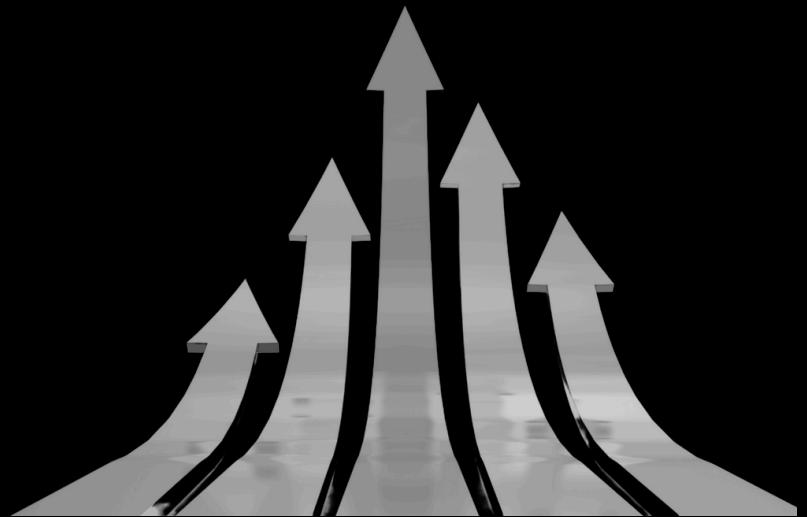
3. 100% were responsible for Marketing and Communications

DEMOGRAPHICS CONTINUED

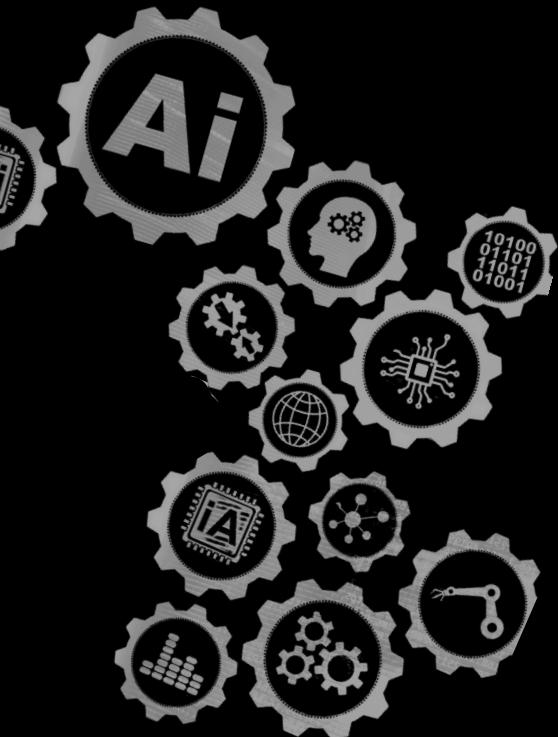
4. Most were privately held companies

Private – 86%

Publicly Traded – 14%



5. The largest industry sectors responding were Enterprise Technology / Software solution (15%), an AI/Generative AI Solution, (12%), Fintech (11%), cybersecurity (10%) and healthtech (9%).



Enterprise Technology / Software - 15%

AI / Generative AI - 12%

Fintech - 11%

Cybersecurity / Privacy - 10%

Health tech - 9%

IoT / Industry 4.0 / Supply Chain / Edge Computing - 8%

Big Data / Data Analytics - 7%

Energy / Electricity, Oil, and Natural gas - 7%

Application Development / DevOps - 6%

Networking - 6%

Supply chain and logistics technology - 5%

Cloud infrastructure - 3%

Web3 - 3%

Storage - 1%

DEMOGRAPHICS CONTINUED

6. From a size, as measured by employee numbers, the largest group was the 501-1000 employee base. Although 251 to 500 was a close second (23%) followed by 101-250.

10 to 25 Employees - 0%
11 - 100 Employees - 11%
101 - 250 Employees - 19%
251 – 500 Employees - 23%
501 - 1000 Employees - 28%
1001+ Employees - 20%



7. Measuring size by revenue, the largest category were companies generating \$100M to 499.9M (22%).



Less than \$1M - 0%
\$1M - \$4.9M - 12%
\$5M - \$9.9M - 10%
\$10M - \$49.9M - 16%
\$50M - \$99.9M - 12%
\$100M - \$499.9M - 22%
\$500M - \$999.9M - 15%
\$1B - \$4.9B - 12%
More than \$5B - 3%