

Email List Strategy

Optimizing Marketing Performance in 2016



Ascend2 research conducted in partnership with Return Path

Table of contents

- Introduction* 3
- List quality is a priority for marketers* 4
- Email list quality is improving* 5
- Email lists are growing* 6
- Tactics used to achieve success* 7
- Barriers to email list strategy success* 8
- Most difficult tactics to execute* 9
- Resources used to execute tactics* 10
- Tactical effectiveness versus difficulty* 11
- About the research partners* 12



Introduction

Email is by far the most prolific business-to-consumer marketing channel. But a successful email program requires a high quality list of engaged subscribers. Consequently, an email list strategy plays an important role in overall marketing performance.

But what are the most significant barriers to the success of an email list strategy, and how are marketers overcoming them? To find out, Return Path, in partnership with Ascend2, fielded the Email List Strategy Survey and completed interviews with 245 marketing influencers from 69 companies, primarily conducting business in the B2C space.

In this report, *Email List Strategy*, we share the opinions of these marketers on topics including:

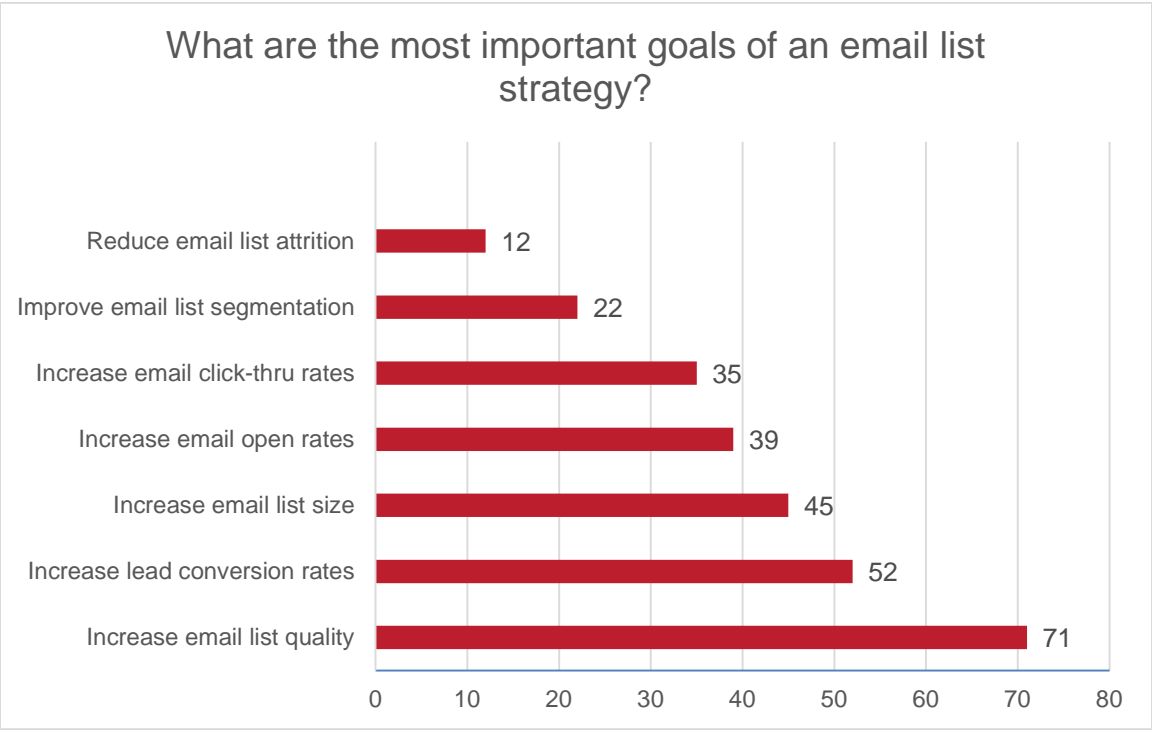
- The importance of quality data
- How email list quality and size are changing
- Tactics used to achieve success
- Barriers to list strategy success
- And more!

Feel free to put this research to work in your own marketing strategy. The charts may be used in your blogs or shared on social media, but please be sure to include the proper research credit.



List quality is a priority for marketers

Seventy-one percent of survey respondents said that increasing email list quality is a priority. Improved data quality leads to better deliverability, enabling brands to deliver the right message to the right inbox at the right time.

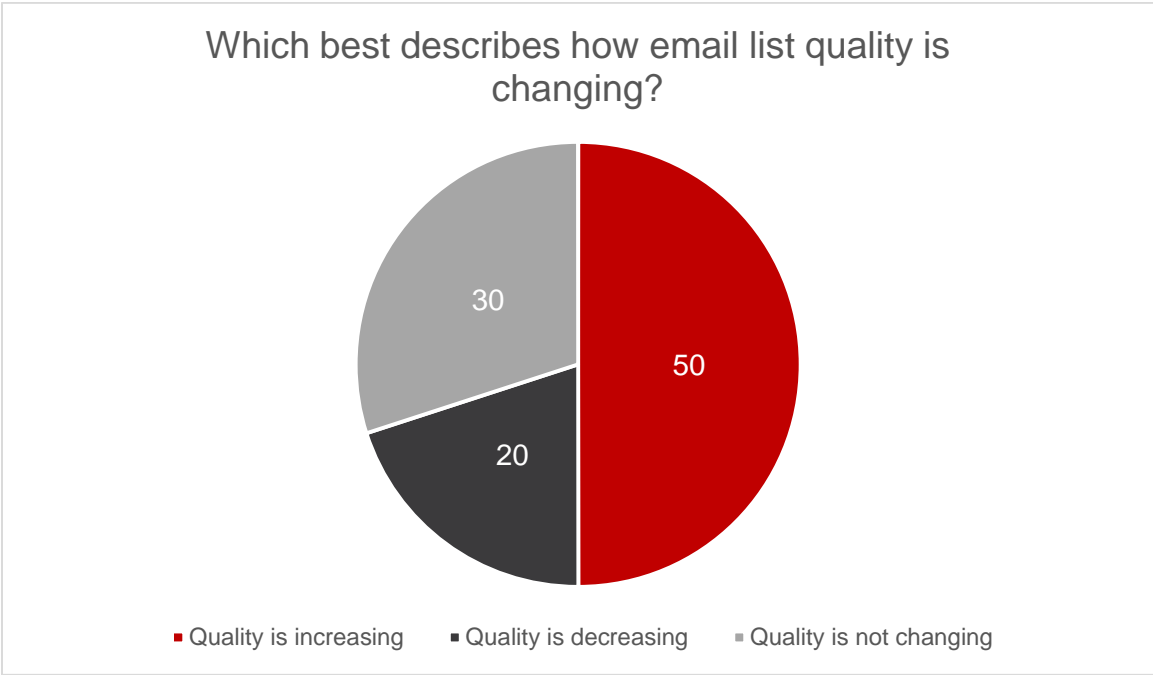


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Email list quality is improving

Judging from our survey results, the focus on increased email list quality is having an impact. Fully half (50 percent) of marketers said their email list quality is increasing, while only 20 percent felt their list quality is decreasing.

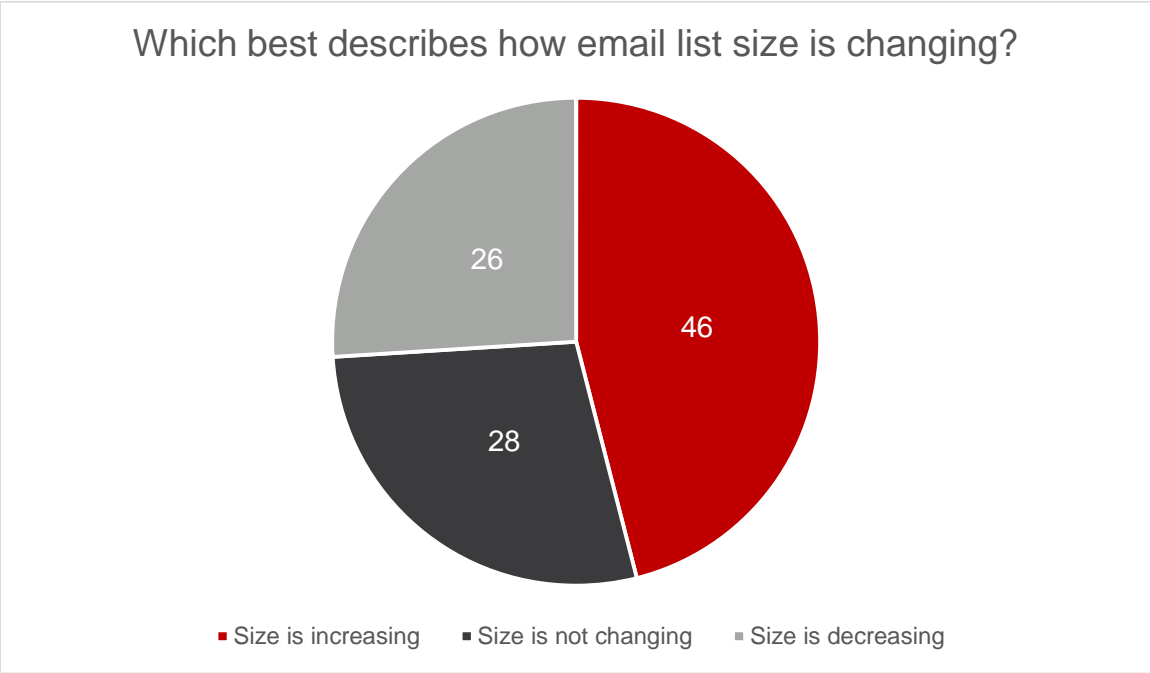


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Email lists are growing

When it comes to the most important email list goals, quality trumps quantity. However, the tactics used in email list strategies are still increasing list size for 46 percent of survey respondents.

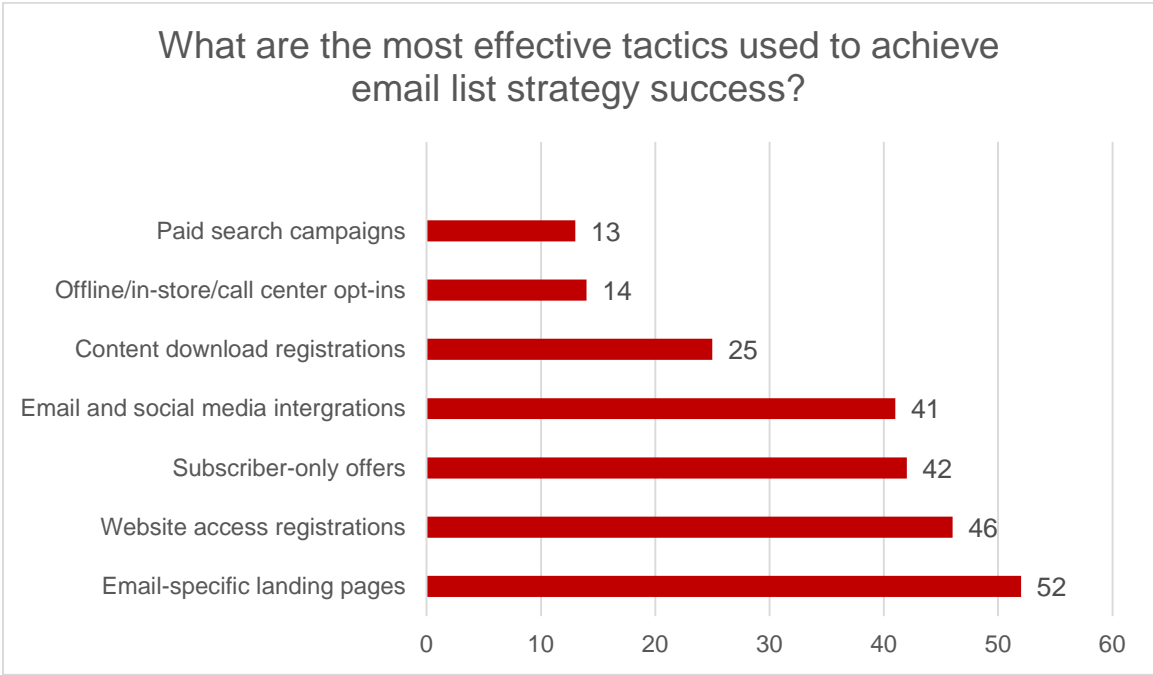


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Tactics used to achieve success

Marketers employ a variety of tactics to improve their email lists. Email-specific landing pages and registration access to website content (i.e., gated content) were reported as the most effective tactics to achieve email list strategy success.

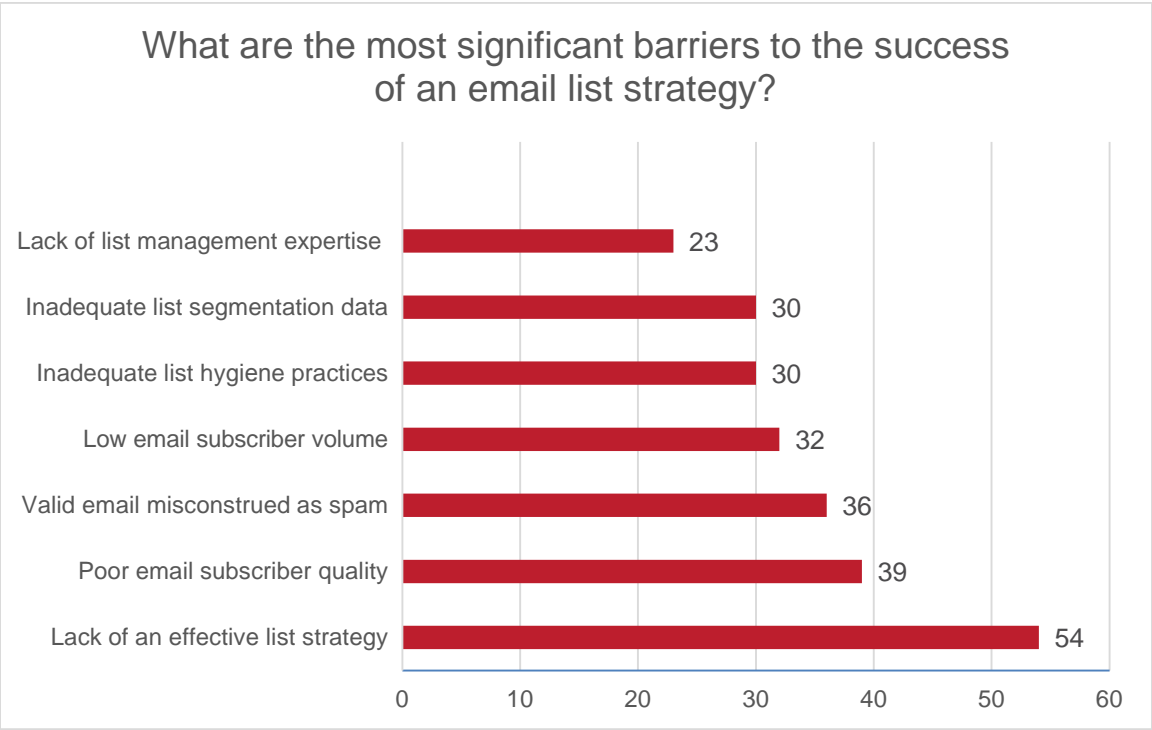


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Barriers to email list strategy success

Building a high quality email list is no easy feat. Lack of an effective email list strategy is a significant barrier to success for 54 percent of survey respondents, and many struggle with subscriber quality and volume.

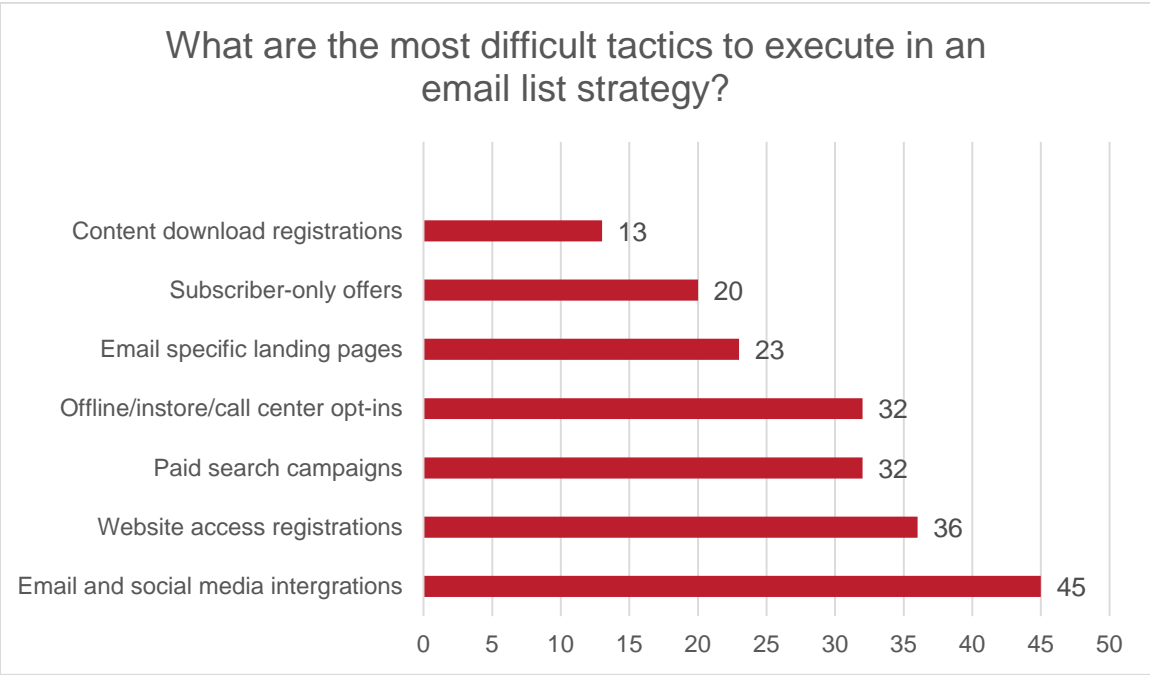


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Most difficult tactics to execute

Integrating email and social media is a challenge for 45 percent of marketers. The two channels are often managed in different parts of a marketing organization, making it difficult to coordinate efforts across channels.

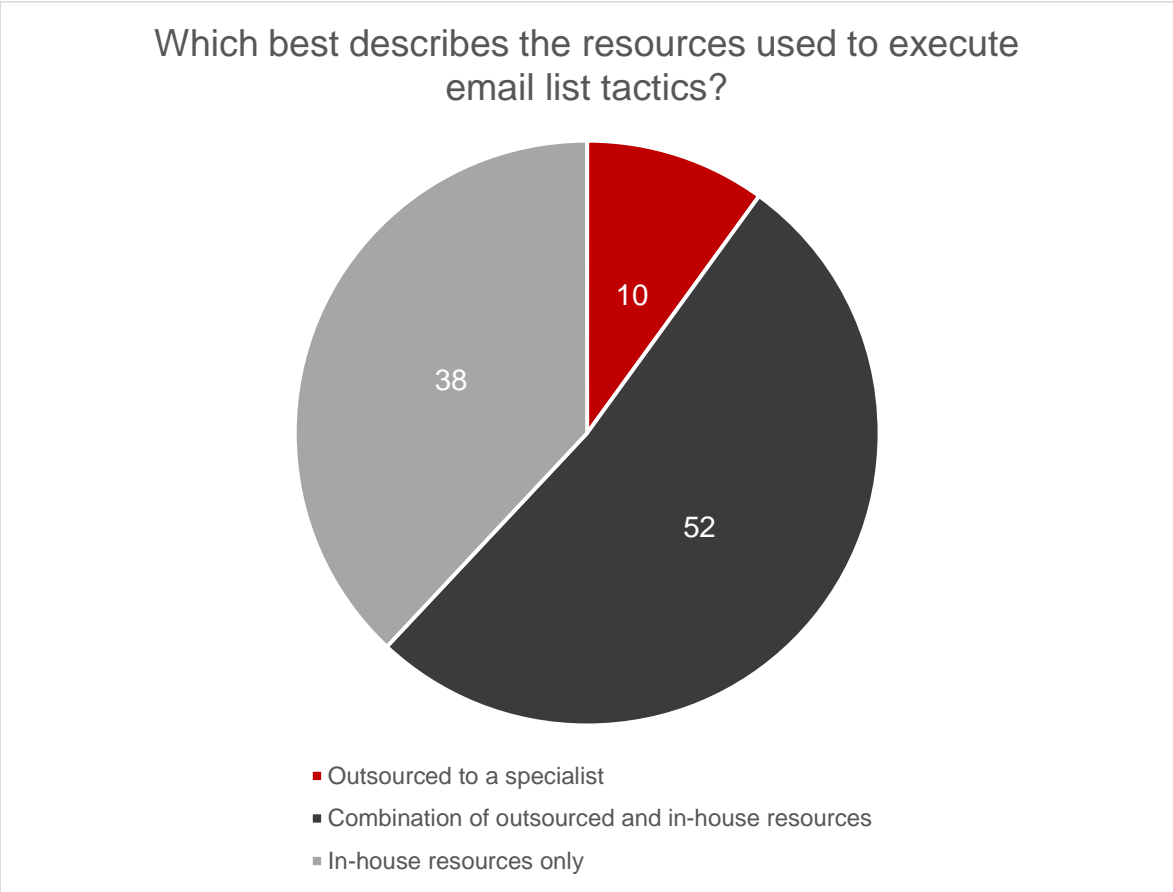


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Resources used to execute tactics

The degree of tactical difficulty often determines the executional resources required. This is why 62 percent of marketers say they outsource the execution of all or part of their email list tactics.

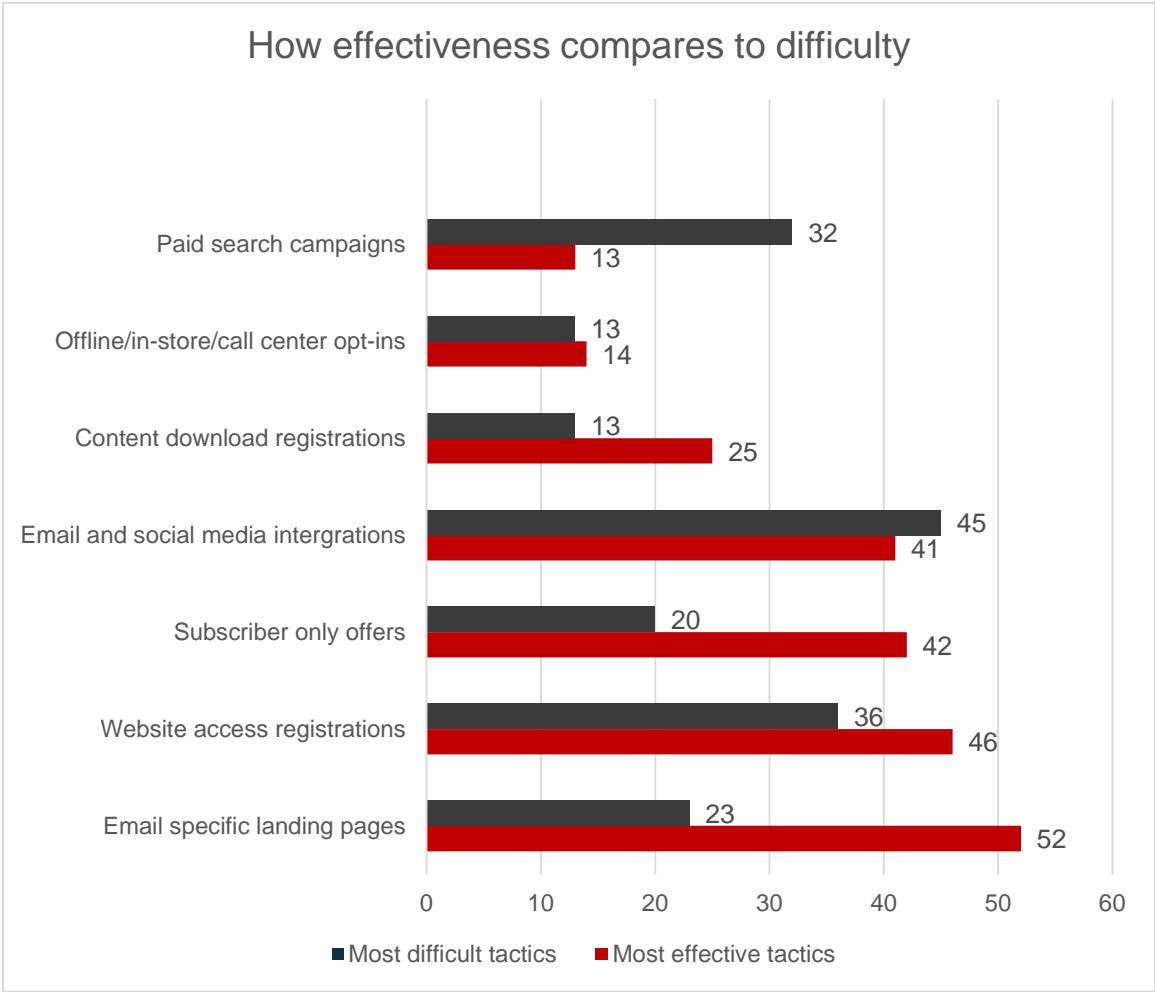


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Tactical effectiveness versus difficulty

Email-specific landing pages and exclusive subscriber offers are reported as being extremely effective, especially relative to the difficulty of execution. Striking the right balance between effectiveness and difficulty can lead to a more successful email list strategy.



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About the research partners



Return Path analyzes the world's largest collection of email data to show businesses how to stay connected to their audiences, strengthen their customer engagement, and protect their brands from fraud. Our data solutions help analysts understand consumer behavior and market trends. We help mailbox providers and security providers around the world deliver great user experiences and build trust in email by ensuring that wanted messages reach the inbox while spam and abuse don't. Learn more at ReturnPath.com



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Methodology

Ascend2 benchmarks the performance of popular digital marketing practices using a standardized questionnaire and proprietary 3-Minute Survey format.

This survey was conducted online from a panel of more than 50,000 professionals. The following are represented in this report:

Role in the Company

| | |
|-------------------------|-----|
| Owner / Partner / CXO | 39% |
| VP / Director / Manager | 39% |
| Non-Management | 22% |

Number of Employees

| | |
|---------------|-----|
| More than 500 | 23% |
| 50 to 500 | 25% |
| Fewer than 50 | 52% |

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