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Concentrating Investment Drives Stronger Business Returns, According to Most Marketers

But Only 1 in 5 Report Allocating Most of their Resources Accordingly

Toronto, ON, September 30, 2026 – Nine in ten (91%) senior marketers surveyed across the U.S and Canada agree that concentrating investment behind fewer priorities drives stronger business returns, according to a new Ipsos survey for Bensimon Byrne. Additionally, 95% agree that their current marketing plan reflects that belief. However, only 21% report that 80% or more of their marketing budget went to initiatives aligned with business priorities, while only 19% report that more than three quarters of their marketing team's initiatives over the last 12 months were directed toward advancing those priorities.

Too Many Priorities and Not Enough Focus?

Nearly eight in ten marketers surveyed (79%) report actively prioritizing all or most of their defined business objectives. Almost two-thirds (64%) say that greater focus on fewer priorities would have improved results.

Growth Strategies Start with Reach

When asked what is most likely to happen first when their marketing team needs to accelerate growth, marketers most frequently ranked increasing media spend/reach first (32%), followed by expanding into new audiences or segments (17%). Fewer selected going deeper with their existing core audience (16%) as the first action. Separately, 94% agree that concentrating on a primary target audience improves effectiveness.

Most Marketers Surveyed Report Comfort with Strategic Trade-Offs

Ninety-three percent of marketers surveyed say they are very or somewhat comfortable with the trade-off involved in committing to a strategy and saying no to credible alternatives and audiences. However, 60% say an existing priority is only sometimes (44%), rarely (14%), or never (2%) stopped or deprioritized when a new marketing priority is added. When asked what would most increase their confidence in saying no to credible alternatives, 45% selected stronger performance data tying focus to results, 39% selected greater confidence in strategic positioning, and 38% selected clearer, agreed-upon success metrics.





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Clarity Exists Amid Competing Demands

Among marketers surveyed, 96% agree that their organization is clear on its primary target audience, while 91% agree that their organization is clear on its most important objective. Despite this reported clarity, respondents identified several barriers to creating a clear marketing strategy, including rapidly changing market conditions (48%) and multiple growth opportunities competing for attention (41%).

Leaders Differ in Willingness to Say No

Comfort with making strategic trade-offs differs by organizational level. Seven in ten vice presidents surveyed (70%) report being very comfortable saying no to credible alternatives and audiences, compared with 43% of C-suite respondents and 52% of directors.

About the Study

These findings are from a quantitative study conducted by Ipsos on behalf of Bensimon Byrne among 212 marketing decision-makers in Canada (n=104) and the United States (n=108). It was fielded between August 7 to 13th, 2026. Participants were responsible for strategic marketing decisions and represented a range of industries, organization sizes, experience levels, and audience types. Findings are unweighted and reflect the opinions of survey respondents only.

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