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7TH ANNUAL

STATE OF AGILE MARKETING

REPORT 2024

CHANGING MINDS BY CHANGING PRACTICES



Andrea Fryrear
CEO and Co-founder
AgileSherpas

"Agility is more about the mindset than it is about a prescribed set of practices."

"You can't just change the way you work; you have to change the way you **think**."

"If Agile frameworks aren't working for you, it's probably a problem with your mindset."

It's impossible to spend time around any kind of agilists without hearing some variation on this theme. But what we're learning in this year's State of Agile Marketing data is that there are some highly tangible, non-mindset things that separate successful Agile marketers from those who are struggling.

When Agile marketing is at its best, it looks like this:

- **Consistent:** teams get the same trainings up front, and then adopt aligned practices and standardized tools
- **Continuous:** new team members get onboarded effectively, and a commitment to "Train the Trainer" ensures that agility is a permanent fixture long after workshops conclude
- **Certified:** while certifications aren't a guarantee that Agile ways of working will stick, they are correlated to better outcomes

And while getting to this level is admittedly more work, it comes with much better outcomes. When you hit all three "C's" you unlock a high likelihood of releasing top quality work quickly, being able to focus on what matters most, and confidently connecting marketing's efforts to business outcomes (among other things).

Mindset certainly matters, but these are visible actions that marketers can start trying now. And if this year's data is any indication, the benefits you get from these early experiments stand a very good chance of changing everyone's minds for you.

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, likely belonging to Andrea Fryrear.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

▶ **THE VAST MAJORITY OF THOSE USING AGILE MARKETING ARE HAVING A POSITIVE EXPERIENCE.**

Agile marketing is considered flexible, efficient, and fast, and most Agile marketing organizations plan to add more teams to their roster.

▶ **MARKETING TEAMS ACTIVELY SUPPORT AND PLAN TO EXPAND THEIR USE OF AGILE.**

86% plan to transition some or all of their marketing teams to Agile. 94% report their organization has supported their Agile marketing team in the past 12 months.

▶ **TRAINING IS BOTH A BARRIER AND A SUCCESS FACTOR FOR TEAMS TRANSITIONING TO AGILE.**

The most valuable types of training include “train the trainer” programs, Agile coaches, Agile certification courses, and the implementation of an Agile project management tool.

▶ **THE TERM “AGILE MARKETING” IS COMMON, BUT IT ISN’T WHAT ALL MARKETERS USE.**

27% of those who use Agile marketing call it something else, but using the official title is correlated with a higher rate of successful adopting Agile ways of working.

▶ **MARKETERS WHO SAY THEY’RE EXTREMELY OR VERY SUCCESSFUL ARE APPROACHING THEIR OPERATIONS DIFFERENTLY**

These agilists train rigorously, use consistent tools and practices, and experiment with their approach to planning (among other things).

▶ **AGILE MARKETING HAS POSITIVE BENEFITS FOR THE ORGANIZATION.**

More than half of Agile marketers reports they’re able to produce high-quality marketing, release work quickly, and prioritize their most important work.

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As Agile marketing matures, we're seeing greater adoption and satisfaction rates. However, training remains the biggest single impediment to continued growth and improvement.

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Marketers are confident in their ability to be proactive and deliver high quality work. But challenges like last-minute requests are still holding them back, indicating that more education and coaching on Agile practices is needed.

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What next steps can you take based on all of this information? Here we provide suggestions for how you can harness this report's key takeaways to improve how your marketing functions.

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To better understand and apply the information in this report, we break down the demographics of those surveyed, how they were surveyed, and other useful information.

IN THE WORDS OF

AGILE MARKETERS

Once again we're happy to see that the vast majority of marketers report having a positive experience with Agile. For every marketer who's had a negative experience there are nearly 42 with a positive one.

When we ask marketers to describe their experiences in their own words, they talk about flexibility, speed, transparency, continuous improvement, and just plain better results.

83%

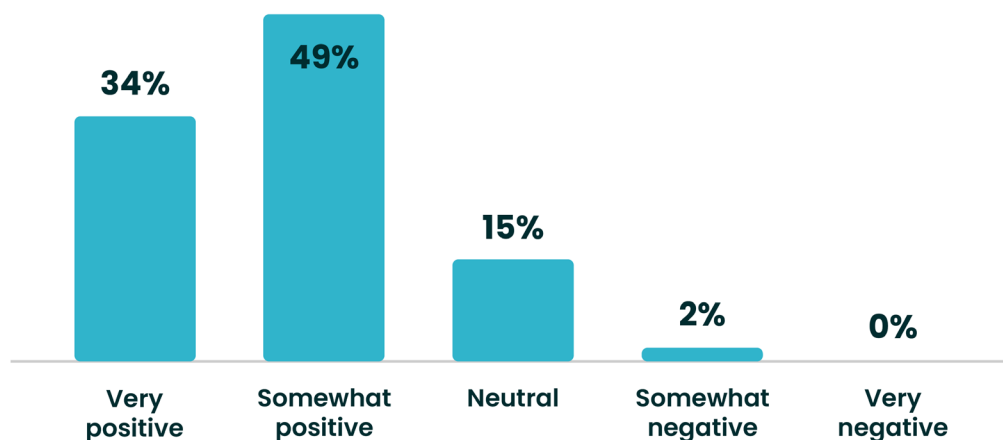
of marketers

reported having a positive experience with Agile, while only 2% reported having a negative experience.

When asking marketers what they think of when they hear "Agile marketing," by far the most common word was

flexibility

How would you describe your personal experience with Agile marketing?



Source: State of Agile Marketing 2024 | AgileSherpas, Agile Marketing Alliance, Tenon

What word do you think of when you hear the term “Agile marketing”?



Source: State of Agile Marketing 2024 | AgileSherpas, Agile Marketing Alliance, Tenon

HOW TEAMS ARE USING AGILE MARKETING

In a world where economic, technological, and social forces are hitting marketers from all sides, Agile's popularity keeps growing.

It's a must-have for navigating these ongoing challenges.

In 2024 we're seeing more even distribution between traditional Agile frameworks like Kanban and Scrum and more bespoke hybrids. There's also a marked increase in the adoption of many core Agile practices.

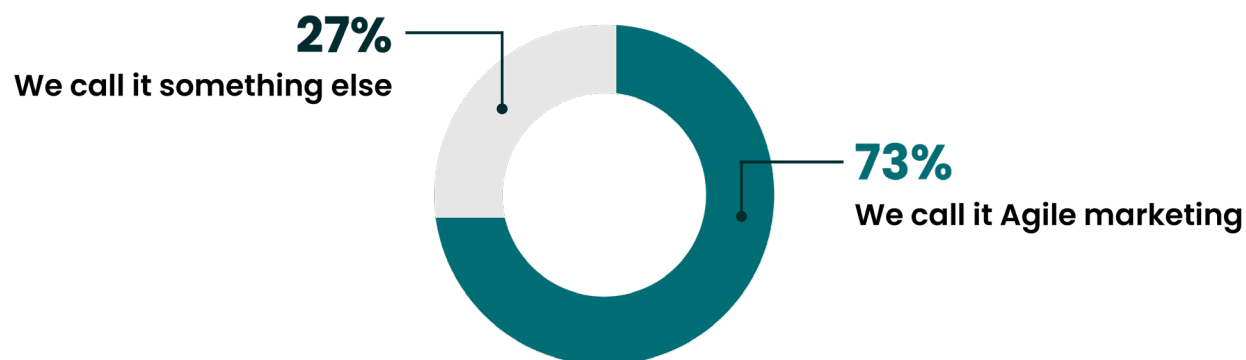
But even as marketers bring traditional agility into their processes, they're not taking advantage of the benefits of complete Agile adoption across all their teams.

For the first time in 7 years, hybrid frameworks are not the most popular among marketers. This may be because more organizations are adopting Agile and feel more comfortable with a preexisting framework.

AGILE IN PRACTICE

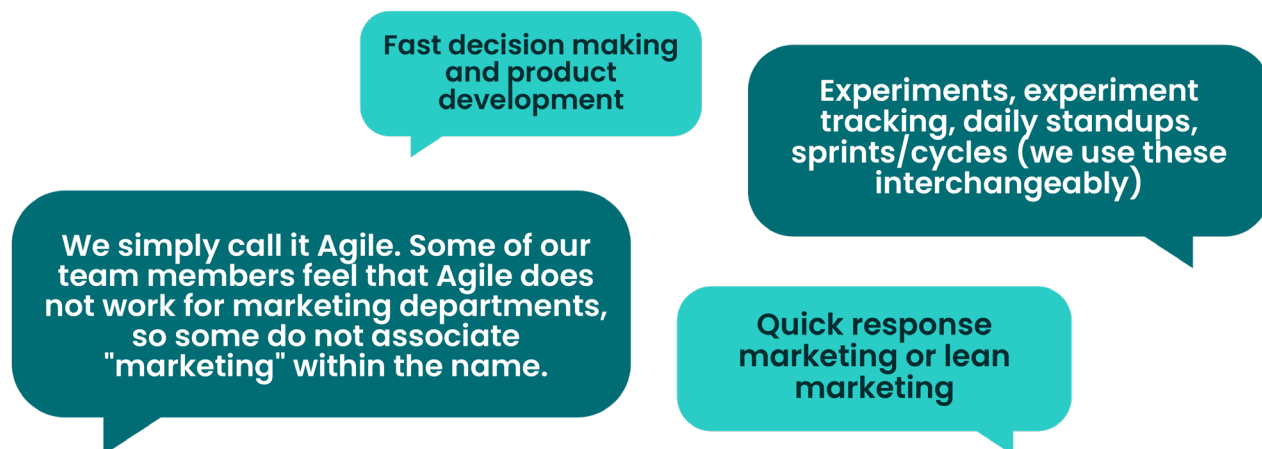
- Marketing functions where all teams are Agile continue to outperform their partially Agile counterparts, yet only 35% are fully Agile today.
- Increasing competition in all its forms is the primary factor pushing organizations towards Agile.
- Marketers aren't making use of the best tools to transform. For example, 74% say coaching is valuable, but only 27% are using it.

Does your marketing team use the term “Agile marketing” or do they call it something else?



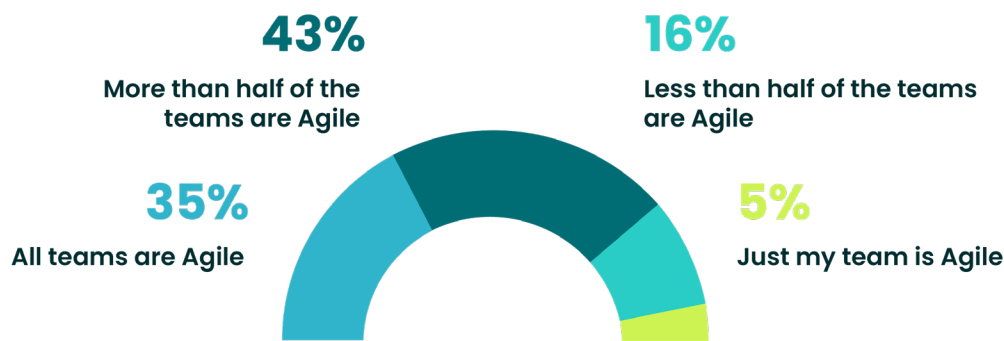
Source: State of Agile Marketing 2024 | AgileSherpas, Agile Marketing Alliance, Tenon

What word or phrase does your team use to describe Agile marketing?



Source: State of Agile Marketing 2024 | AgileSherpas, Agile Marketing Alliance, Tenon

How many of your marketing teams are using Agile marketing?



We've long seen that fully Agile marketing functions outperform those that are only partially Agile, so it's good to see organizations are moving in the right direction.

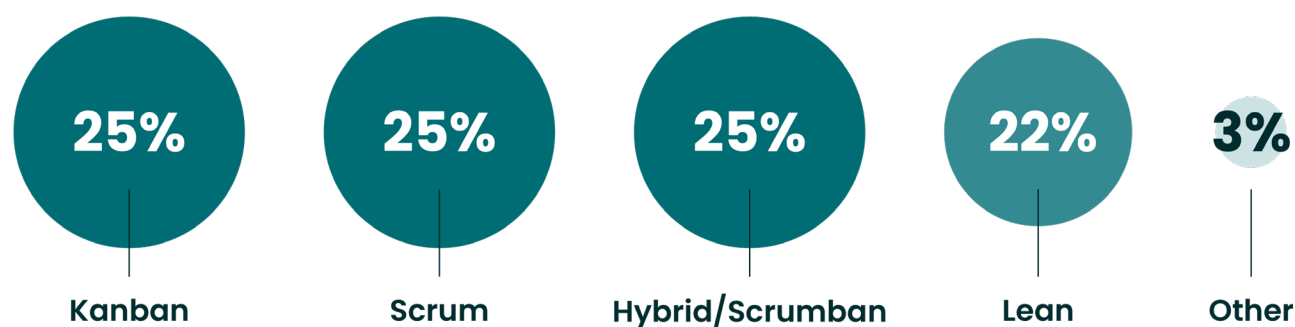
Source: State of Agile Marketing 2024 | AgileSherpas, Agile Marketing Alliance, Tenon

To what extent do you plan to transition additional marketing teams to Agile?



Source: State of Agile Marketing 2024 | AgileSherpas, Agile Marketing Alliance, Tenon

Which Agile framework does your marketing department follow most closely?

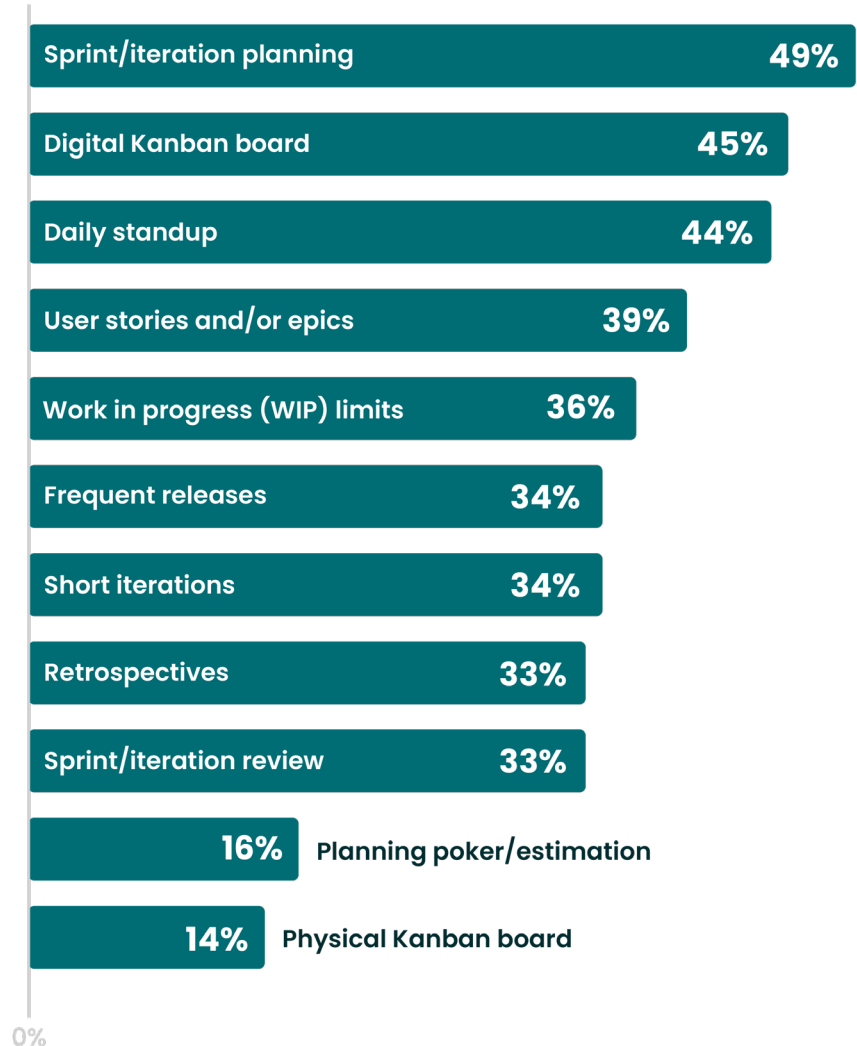


Source: State of Agile Marketing 2024 | AgileSherpas, Agile Marketing Alliance, Tenon

For the first time in 7 years, we were surprised to see that Hybrid Agile frameworks were not the most popular choice.

The popularity of hybrid approaches has usually been driven by their flexibility. However, this also means they create many more opportunities to make mistakes that can hurt the effectiveness of Agile. One reason more marketers may be turning to Kanban, Scrum, and Lean is that they are known quantities. This makes it easier to study how to use them and get them up and running.

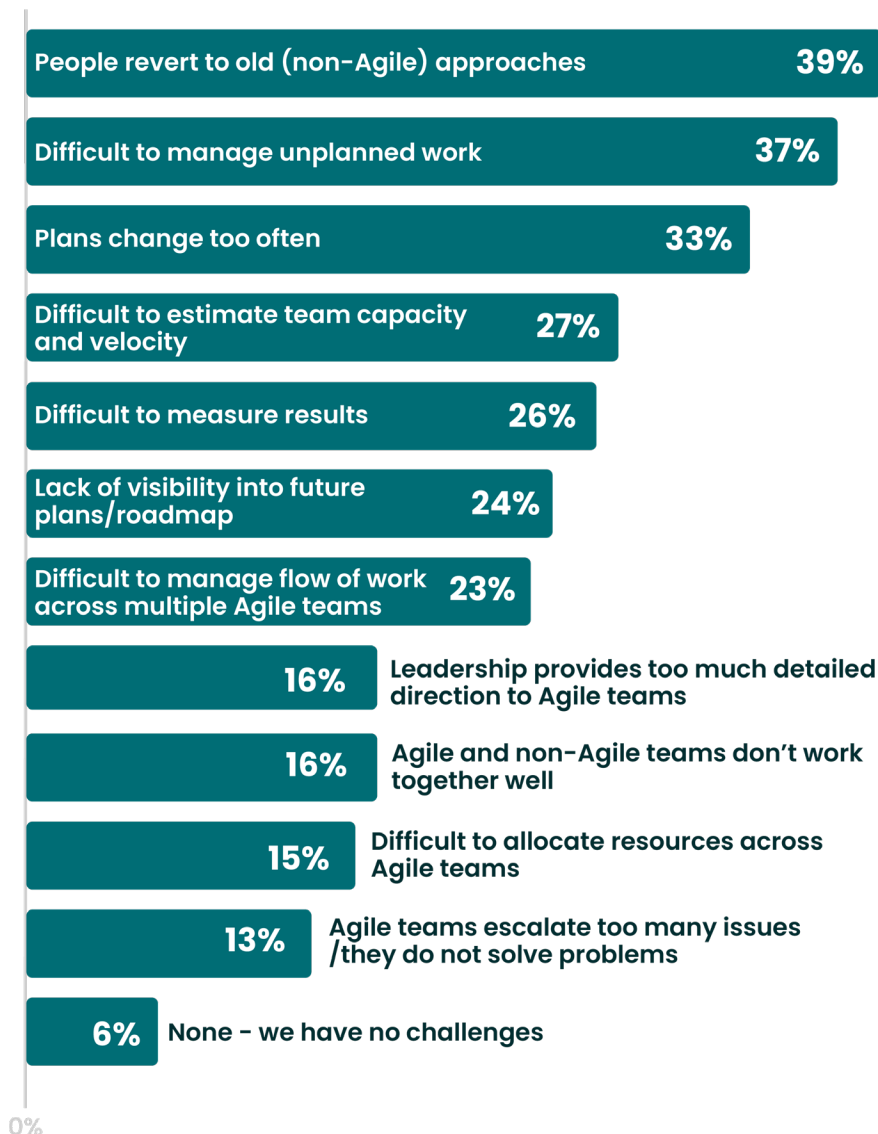
Which Agile techniques and practices does your marketing department use?



Source: State of Agile Marketing 2024
AgileSherpas, Agile Marketing Alliance, Tenon

Nearly all of these rates are markedly higher than last year, showing that more Agile marketing teams are getting value from adopting Agile practices.

What challenges, if any, has your team experienced as a result of using Agile?



Source: State of Agile Marketing 2024
AgileSherpas, Agile Marketing Alliance, Tenon



Preventing a reversion to non-Agile approaches begins with a strong Agile mindset. Investing in building this mindset first will help keep your team on track and appreciative of why things are done a specific way.

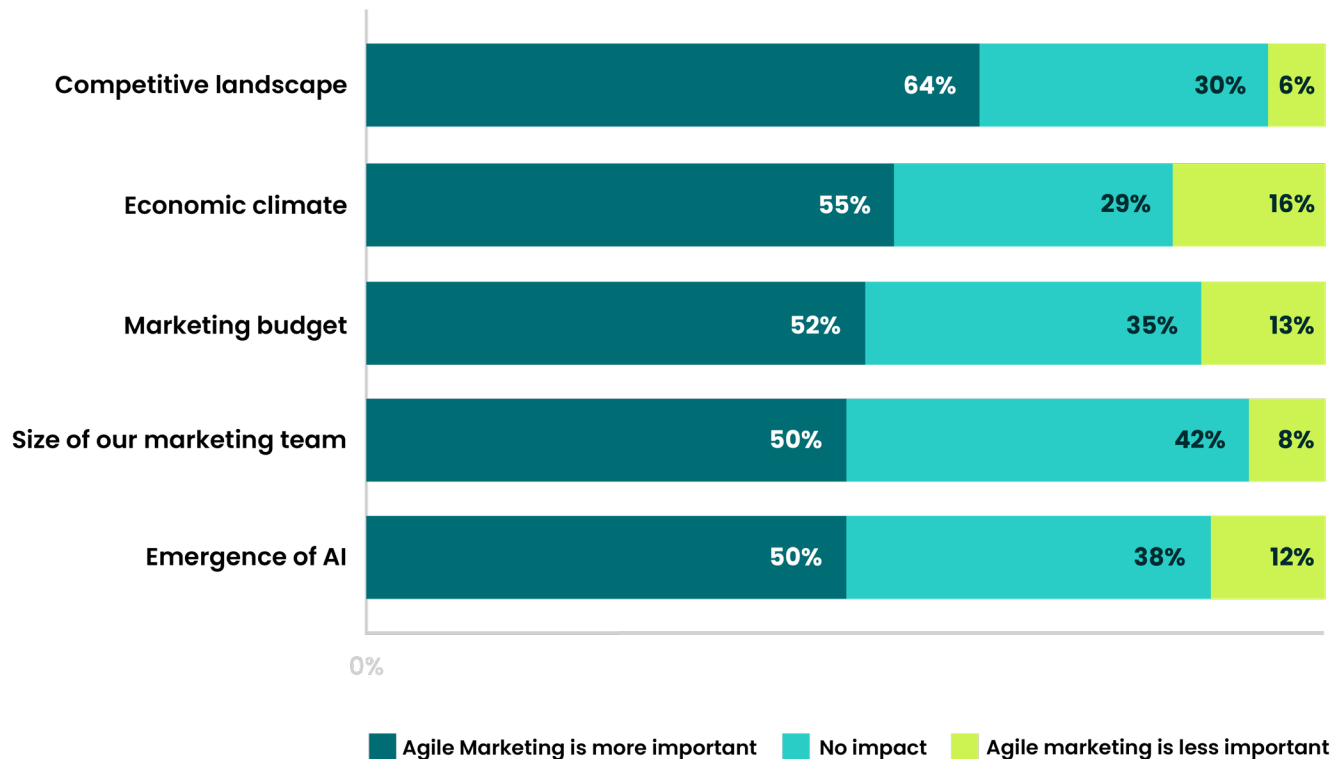


Managing unplanned work can be tackled first by empowering Agile team leads to push back on work that's outside of scope or wasn't in a planned sprint. It can also be helpful to work with stakeholders to help them understand these processes and how/when it's appropriate to request work.



Flexibility is a key benefit of Agile, but when plans change too often it can be very disruptive. Try implementing a quarterly planning cycle and then breaking work up into sprints. Then, you have set times when it's okay to adjust your plans without it feeling chaotic.

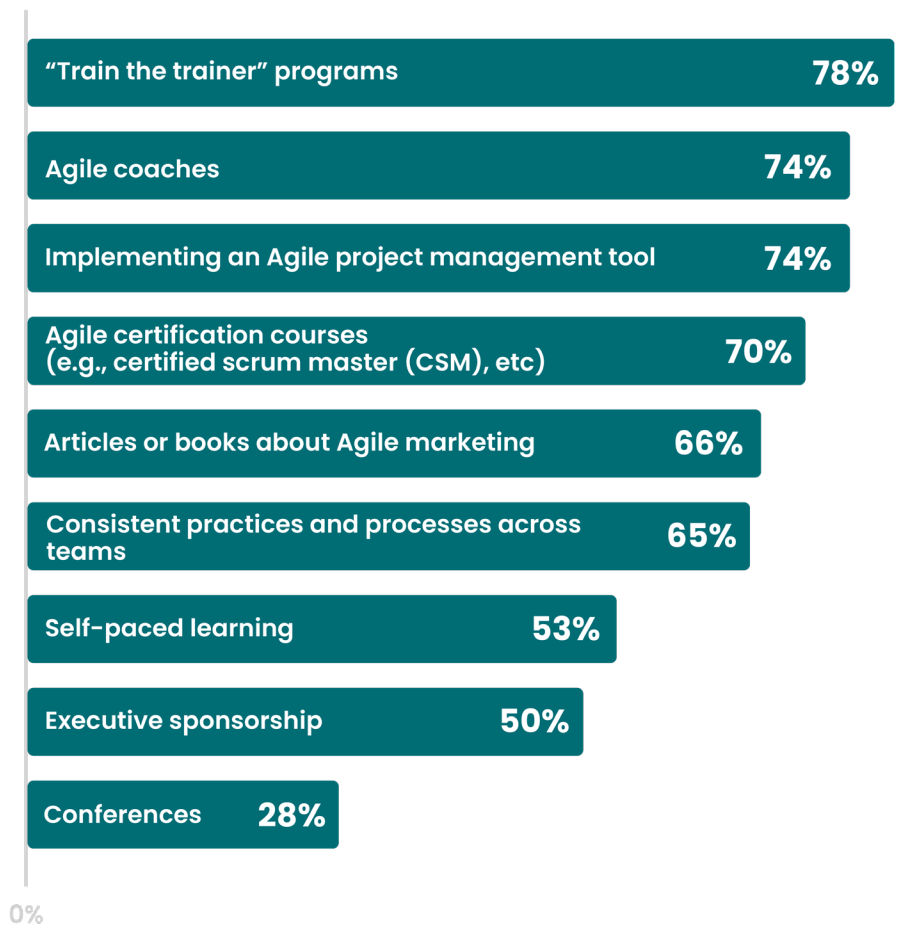
What impact, if any, do the following factors have on your organization's use of Agile marketing?



Source: State of Agile Marketing 2024 | AgileSherpas, Agile Marketing Alliance, Tenon

Increasing competitive pressure, whether from other businesses, the economy at large, technology, or other functions within the business is making Agile more valuable than ever.

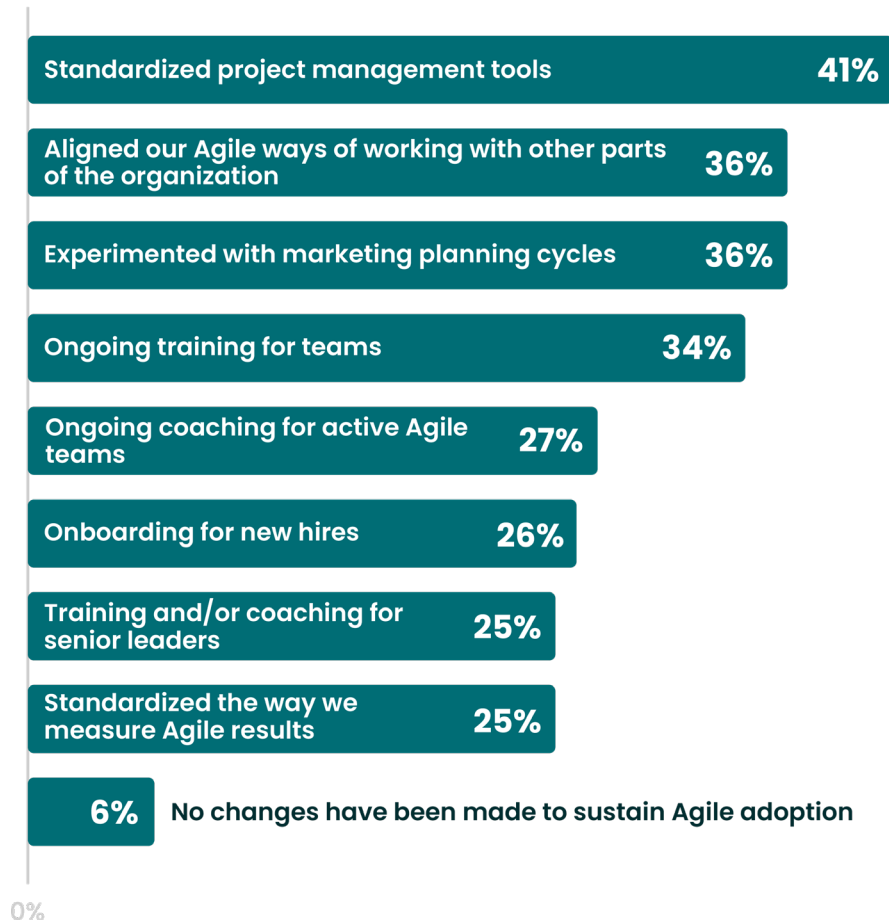
Which of these were valuable when you adopted Agile marketing?



Source: State of Agile Marketing 2024
AgileSherpas, Agile Marketing Alliance, Tenon

Once again we're seeing a huge gap between how useful various types of Agile support are and how often they are actually used. This remains a place where organizations can unlock far more value.

How has your organization supported your Agile marketing team in the past 12 months?



Source: State of Agile Marketing 2024
AgileSherpas, Agile Marketing Alliance, Tenon



If you'd like to standardize your project management tool, you can check out the powerful and robust software built by [Tenon](https://tenonhq.com).



If you'd like to connect with other Agile marketers to better understand how they tackle their toughest challenges, join the [Agile Marketing Alliance](https://agilemarketingalliance.com).

THE AGILE MARKETING EXPERIENCE

As Agile marketing matures and more organizations make the switch, we're seeing less concentration at the early stages of the Agile journey. That's natural, because with 98% of Agile marketing implementations being rated as successful, most people don't want to go back once they've spent time using this new way of working.

But even as Agile marketers continue to report an increased ability to work effectively, some anchors are weighing them down. A lack of tailored training and limited executive support are the top culprits this year.

THIS YEAR

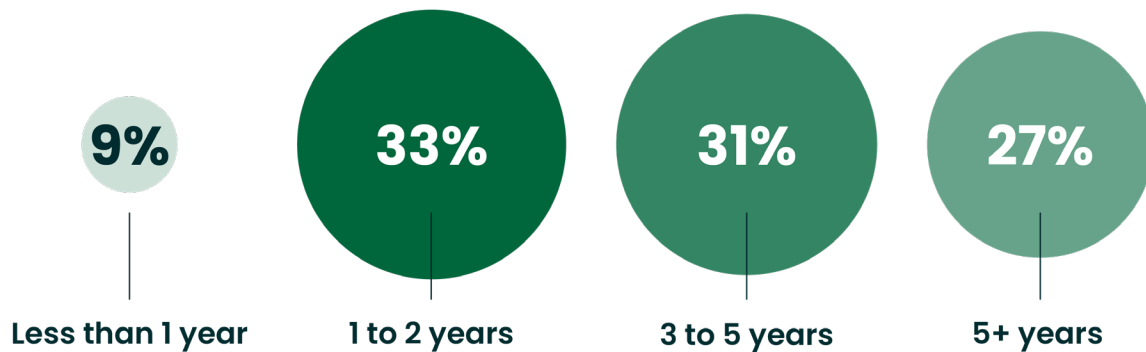
- Marketers are going Agile to do better work faster, but also to improve communication with both their stakeholders and other marketers.
- Agile helps marketers increase speed without sacrificing quality or work-life balance.
- The single biggest impediment to fully implementing Agile is a lack of training.

98%

of marketers

rate their Agile marketing
implementation as
successful.

How long has your marketing department been practicing Agile?



Source: State of Agile Marketing 2024 | AgileSherpas, Agile Marketing Alliance, Tenon

Why is your marketing department using Agile marketing?

To have a clear vision and a well-defined backlog that helps different people pick up important projects. We're a lot more efficient like this.

It seems like if you stand still too long the ground crumbles beneath you. Our campaigns have a better chance of success if we're ready to respond to whatever comes up.

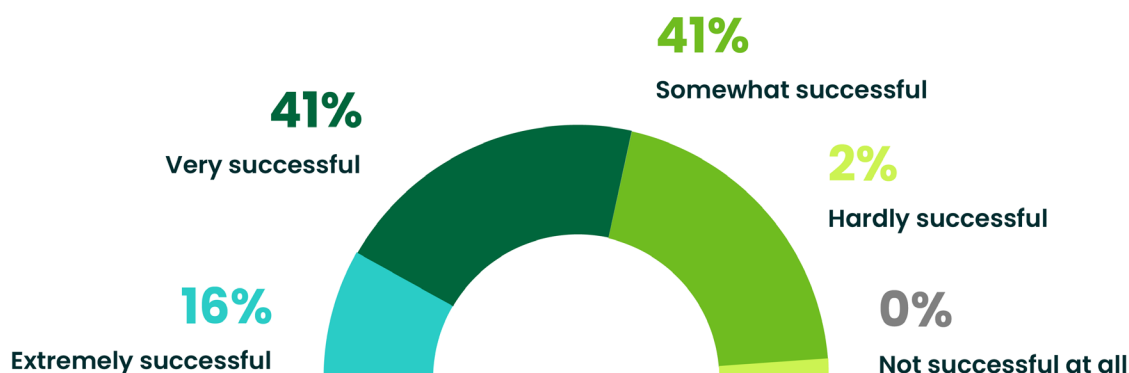
We're trying to solve our heavy intake of work and our tendency to do too many things at once. Agile helps us limit our focus and truly accomplish more.

We need to stay ahead of the curve. Agile lets us be proactive, flexible, and adapt to new situations.

Source: State of Agile Marketing 2024 | AgileSherpas, Agile Marketing Alliance, Tenon

These responses have been edited for brevity and clarity.

How successfully has Agile been implemented in your marketing team?



Source: State of Agile Marketing 2024 | AgileSherpas, Agile Marketing Alliance, Tenon

98% marketers say their Agile implementation was successful.

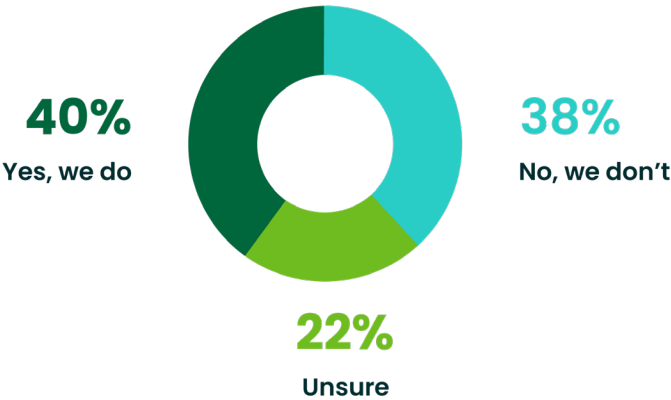
What Agile marketers do differently than their peers:

- ▶ Use the term “Agile marketing”
- ▶ Use physical Kanban board
- ▶ Use Agile certification courses
- ▶ Use “Train the Trainer” programs
- ▶ Use consistent practices and processes
- ▶ Have ongoing training for teams
- ▶ Offer onboarding for new hires
- ▶ Use standardized project management tools
- ▶ Experiment with marketing planning cycles

How their results are better than their peers. They are more likely to report they:

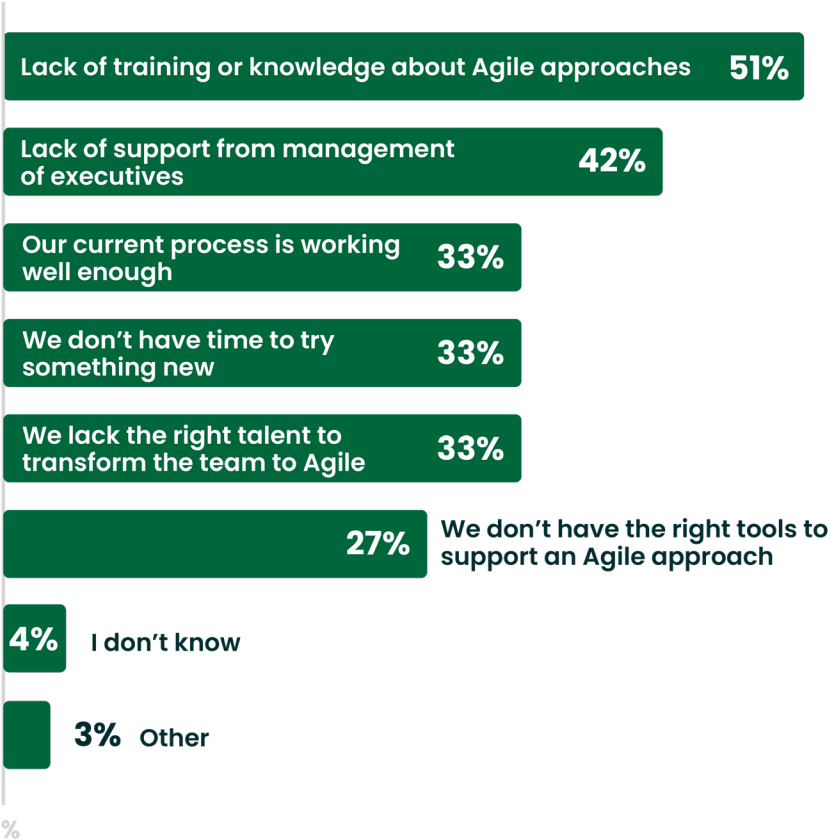
- ▶ Release work more quickly
- ▶ Produce higher-quality marketing
- ▶ Prioritize the most important work
- ▶ Accurately predict when projects will be complete
- ▶ Feel energized about their work
- ▶ Prove the impact marketing has on business goals

Does your marketing department plan to implement Agile marketing?



Source: State of Agile Marketing 2024 | AgileSherpas, Agile Marketing Alliance, Tenon

What is preventing your marketing department from fully implementing an Agile approach?



Source: State of Agile Marketing 2024
AgileSherpas, Agile Marketing Alliance, Tenon

MARKETING BUDGETS AND PRIORITIES

Customer expectations are rising in 2024, and Agile marketers aren't immune from that pressure. Many report that they've changed their processes to try and be more customer centric.

Agility also improves prioritization, but that doesn't make Agile marketers immune to last minute requests. These remain a challenge for marketers regardless of their operational approach.

By far the biggest challenge marketers face is last-minute requests. This may be tied to insufficient training for marketing leaders on how to push back on and avoid such requests.

- Marketers were most confident about producing high-quality work (60%) and least confident about predicting when it will be done (40%).
- Most Agile marketers reported that their teams were streamlined, proactive, collaborative, and well-run.
- A surprising number of marketers reported increased budgets despite broader industry trends in the opposite direction.

Which of the following will be a high priority for your marketing department in 2024?

Source: State of Agile Marketing 2024
AgileSherpas, Agile Marketing Alliance, Tenon



Which of these things can your marketing team do well?

While marketers overall are confident that they can produce high-quality work, they're far less confident they can tell you when it'll be done.

Source: State of Agile Marketing 2024
AgileSherpas, Agile Marketing Alliance, Tenon

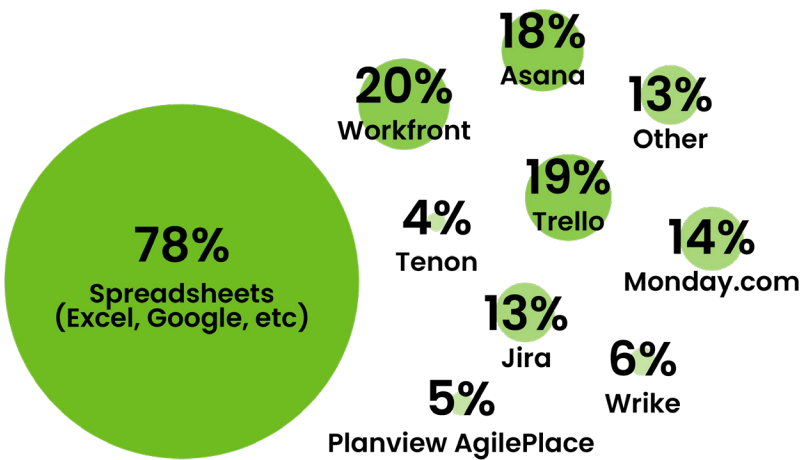


What challenges do you have with your current marketing approach?

Source: State of Agile Marketing 2024
AgileSherpas, Agile Marketing Alliance, Tenon



Which tools do you use to manage your marketing tasks and projects?



"As the demands on marketing grow increasingly complex, it's vital to transition to unified and scalable solutions that can adapt and support marketing's ever-changing needs."

Ben Person
CEO, Tenon

Source: State of Agile Marketing 2024 | AgileSherpas, Agile Marketing Alliance, Tenon

WHERE TO GO FROM HERE

Step 1 Leverage This Data

All the steps we've outlined here are easier if you can build genuine support for Agile within your teams and organizations. Try leveraging these survey results showing how often Agile transitions are successful (98%), how many marketers have a positive experience with Agile (83%), and all the ways Agile teams perform better than their peers.

Step 3 Figure Out What Practices Work for You


From daily standups and sprints to planning poker and WIP limits, there's a wide world of Agile practices you can leverage. But it's telling that none of these practices is used by a majority of Agile marketing teams. So take the time to figure out which will work for you, ideally with the help of an experienced coach.

Step 2 Get the Right Support

With the two biggest impediments to getting the full benefits of Agile being a lack of training and of executive support, it's vital to identify what type of support you might be lacking. Getting the right support is key to Agile success, so don't assume you can manage without it.

Step 4 Iterate and Improve

Avoid the mistake of thinking "well, we've perfected Agile so no need to continue to change" because that's just not the reality. Marketing is always evolving and the way you practice Agile will always need to evolve alongside it. So even if you're happy with where you are now, use the data in this report to consider how you can be prepared for the next big change coming your way.

Click here to kickstart your climb to better ways of working 



ASSESS

Understand what's holding you back. Prioritize effort and goals for a focused change journey.



EDUCATE

Eliminate missteps with a shared understanding around modern ways of working.



APPLY

Put new learnings into practice and start reaping the rewards ASAP.



ITERATE

Re-administer the assessment, and re-prioritize the next phase of education and application.



EXPAND

Repeat Educate and Apply stages to expand new ways of working across the marketing function.



SUSTAIN

Protect your investment by equipping internal resources to sustain the changes you've made.

DEMOGRAPHICS & METHODOLOGY

The 7th annual State of Agile Marketing is published by AgileSherpas. This survey of 381 marketers worldwide was fielded in January through March 2024 via email and social media from AgileSherpas as well as a panel of marketers.

What region do you live in?

North America	64%
Latin America	14%
Europe	12%
APAC	10%

How many years have you worked in marketing?

5 years or fewer	47%
6 to 10 years	24%
11 to 15 years	14%
Over 15 years	15%

Which role below best describes your current marketing position?

Associate/individual contributor	46%
Manager	27%
Director	9%
Vice president/senior vice president	2%
CMO or other executive	7%
Business owner/general manager	2%
Other	7%

Approximately how many employees does your organization have worldwide?

1-199 employees	26%
200-4,999 employees	37%
5,000-9,999 employees	13%
More than 10,000 employees	13%

Which of the following most closely describes the industry you work in?

Consumer and retail	19%
Media and entertainment	16%
Manufacturing	12%
Business services	12%
Information technology	8%
Financial services	7%
Healthcare and life sciences	6%
Other	20%

What best describes your company focus?

Business-to-consumer (B2C)	36%
Business-to-business (B2B)	23%
Mix of B2B and B2C	19%
Business-to-business-to-consumer	14%
Nonprofit	6%
Government	2%

What is the estimated annual revenue for your company?

Under 1 million	10%
1 million to 9.9 million	31%
10 million to 99.9 million	22%
100 million to 499.9 million	14%
500 million to 999.9 million	8%
1 billion+	15%

State of Agile Marketing 2024 | AgileSherpas, Agile Marketing Alliance, Tenon

ABOUT AgileSherpas

AgileSherpas is the world's leading Agile training, consulting, and coaching organization for marketers and other non-technical teams. We guide marketing departments, and those around them, toward high performance by translating successful Agile practices to work outside of software development.

Our highly-trained coaches take enterprise marketing organizations from zero to Agile in less than 18 months using the Marketing Agility Ascension®, our proprietary transformation model proven with over three thousand marketers at dozens of enterprises.

This journey blends AgileSherpas' coaching and consulting expertise with certifications from the International Consortium for Agile (ICAgile) and best-in-class asynchronous elearning solutions, so every member of the transforming organization can access the right knowledge at the right time and in the right format.

Visit AgileSherpas.com to start your own ascent toward marketing agility.

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Tenon, a cutting-edge marketing solution built on the ServiceNow platform, revolutionizes the way enterprise marketing teams plan and execute their initiatives at scale. With a laser focus on the needs of marketers, Tenon offers swift and efficient automation of manual tasks involved in campaign planning, execution, and measurement. With Tenon, enterprise marketing teams gain a powerful ally in achieving their marketing objectives, enabling them to work smarter, more efficiently, and with greater impact. Visit TenonHQ.com to learn more.



Founded in 2022, the Agile Marketing Alliance brings together a global community of people who are passionate about Agile marketing to learn, share, and grow together so that they can be better marketers, advance their careers, and rediscover the joy of marketing. They further their mission through events, community building, and knowledge sharing, serving as the "front door" for the Agile marketing community. Learn more at AgileMarketingAlliance.com.