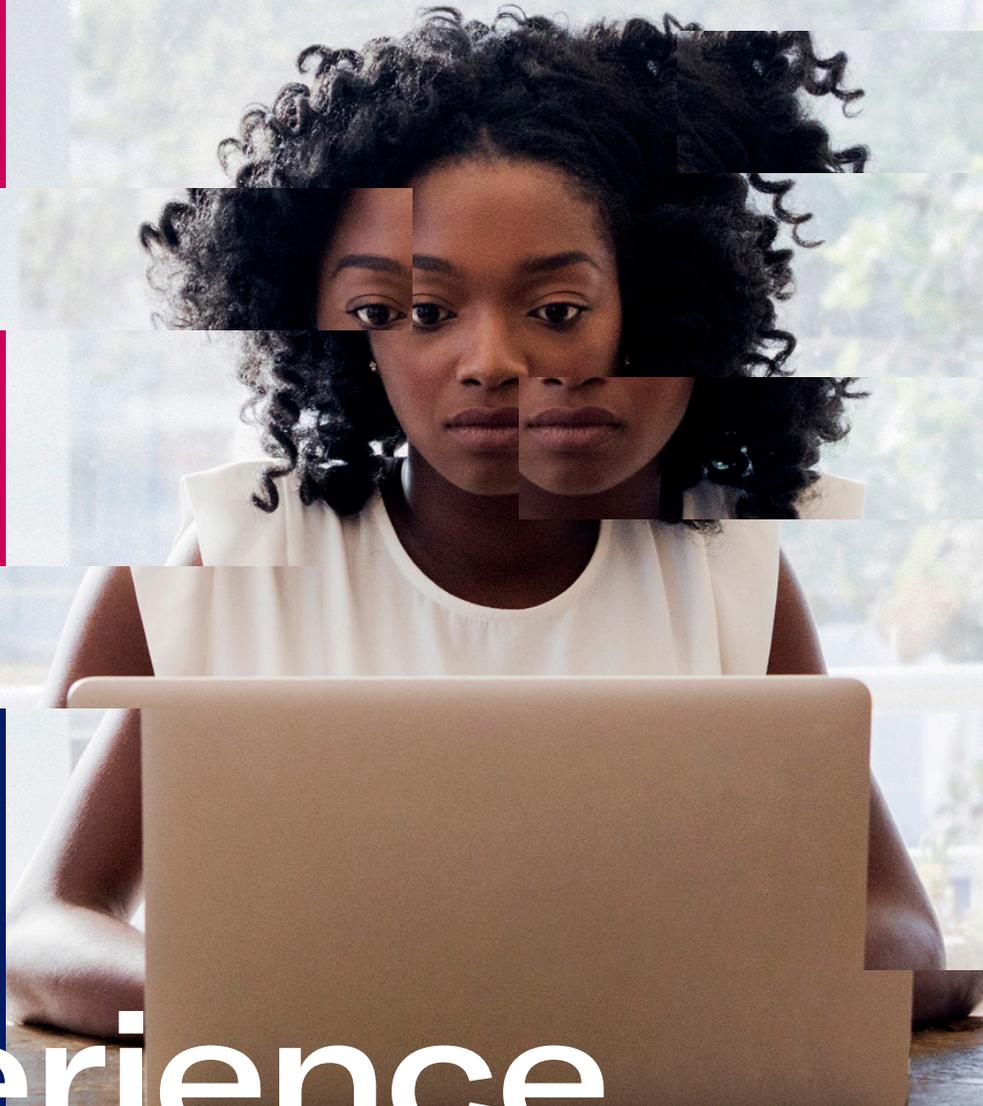


überflip



# The Experience Disconnect

2021 B2B  
Marketing Report

## INTRODUCTION

# Shrinking budgets, growing expectations

With myriad tech and analytics tools at their fingertips, marketers are more in control of the B2B buyer journey than ever before. Unfortunately, there's often a disconnect between the experiences they deliver and what buyers expect. Poorly targeted email blasts fill buyers' inboxes with irrelevant messages, while buyers search in vain for useful content on vendor websites. The result: wasted marketing resources and frustrated buyers.

As marketing budgets shrink—a majority of marketers said their budgets were cut by 20% or more during the pandemic and recession—closing the gap has never been more important.

To understand the sources of the experience disconnect, we surveyed 250 North American B2B buyers about their expectations for the buyer journey. Then, we surveyed 250 North American marketers to see how their responses compared. Our results revealed five key areas where marketers can optimize their approaches to drive stronger results for their marketing programs.



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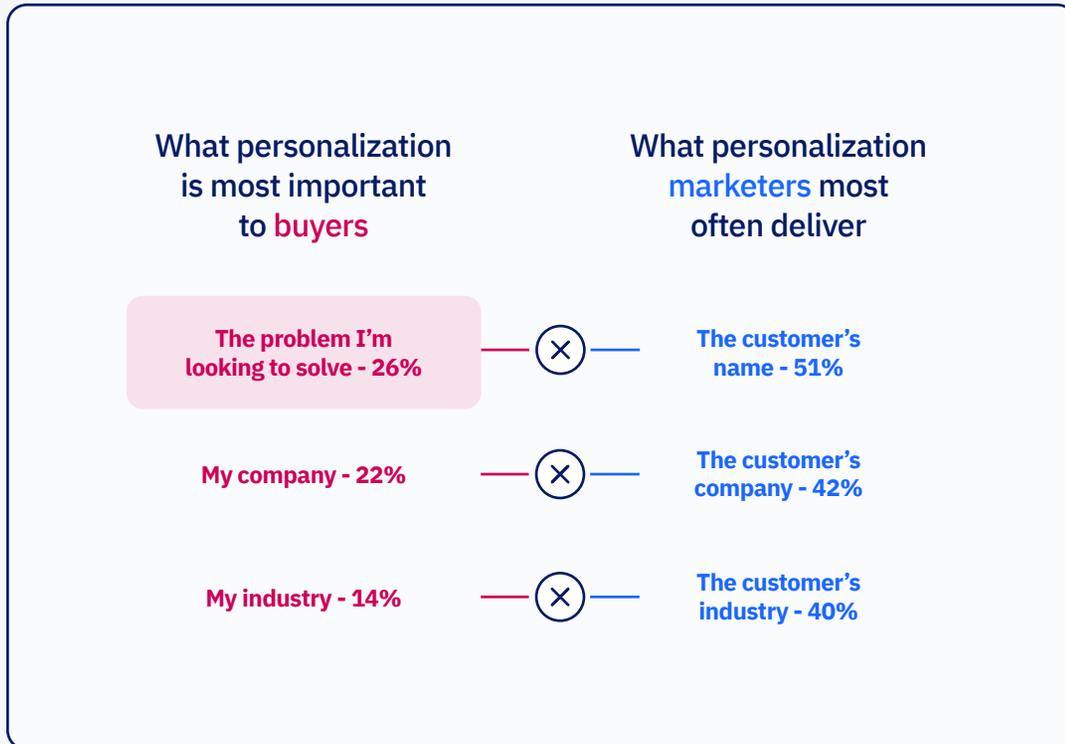




## INSIGHT 1

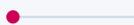
# Marketers are missing a big personalization opportunity

A majority of marketers (52%) rate their companies' ability to personalize content at least a 4 out of 5. However, there's a major mismatch between the personalization buyers want and what marketers deliver. According to buyers, personalization based on "the problem I'm looking to solve" is most important to a great buyer experience. But marketers are most focused on delivering personalization based on basic information, like the customer's name, company, or industry.



## Key takeaway

In their efforts to personalize the buyer experience, many marketers are missing a big opportunity to deliver on the facet that buyers consider most important. While personalization based on a customer's problem is more difficult than pulling their name, company, and industry out of a CRM database, our results show it's worth the effort. But how do you personalize based on problem? Understanding a buyer's pain based on content consumed, persona, industry, intent data, or conversations are just a few ways you can accomplish this.





## INSIGHT 2

# Marketers are prioritizing the wrong content assets

Almost all (97%) B2B buyers engage with more than one piece of content from a vendor after they click through from an email, ad, social media post, etc. Unfortunately, marketers may not be getting as much value out of this engagement as they could.

Marketers over-prioritize long-form written content like whitepapers and ebooks, which are relatively unpopular with buyers. At the same time, they fail to prioritize short and/or interactive content like videos, which buyers find more useful when evaluating vendors.

	User reviews	Product tours	Videos
Content assets buyers find useful	64%	43%	33%
Content assets marketers prioritize	47%	42%	30%



## Key takeaway

Whitepapers and ebooks allow marketers to dive deep on substantive topics—but our research suggests they don't get through to buyers. They're also top-of-funnel content typically used to attract site visitors and generate leads. Consider reallocating your content resources toward product-related short-form or visual content that's quicker and easier to digest—and more useful for nurturing buyers further down the funnel.



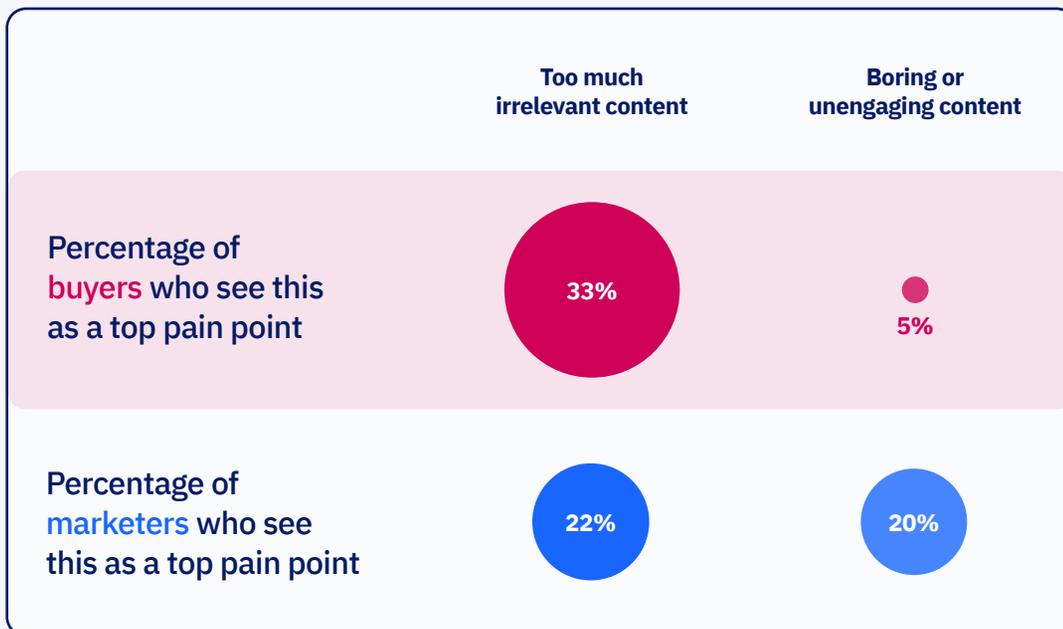


### INSIGHT 3

## Buyers are frustrated with the lack of relevant, useful content in the purchasing process

Buyers and marketers agree that irrelevant content is one of the most frustrating parts of researching a purchasing decision—although marketers don't believe it's as big of a pain point as buyers do. And marketers overestimate buyers' challenges with boring or unengaging content. In fact, 20% of marketers believe that boring or unengaging content is one of buyers' biggest frustrations when researching a purchasing decision. Yet just 5% of buyers say the same.

Beyond the quality of their content, marketers need to focus more on the overall experiences they're delivering. Every piece of content should be packaged and distributed in a way that prioritizes efficiency and relevance, enabling buyers to consume useful information quickly as they research your product.



## Key takeaway

Marketers know irrelevancy is a problem for buyers, but they may underestimate how painful it is. Buyers need help sorting through the overwhelming amount of content that's out there to locate relevant information quickly. While great content is never boring, marketers should focus more energy and resources on creating useful, product-related content and experiences that accelerate the purchase process for prospective customers who are already engaged, rather than content that's fun or entertaining to draw new customers in. Additionally, spending the time to package and deliver content in a way that makes it easy to consume and facilitates the research process (rather than hinders it) can help ease the burden on buyers.





## INSIGHT 4

# Marketers underestimate the importance of content relevancy for buyer engagement

Given that irrelevant content is such a pain point, it's no surprise that relevant content was also buyers' top driver for taking action—such as signing up for a newsletter or filling out a contact form—on a vendor's website or other digital property. By contrast, marketers picked personalized calls-to-action (e.g., an invitation to sign up for a webinar relevant to the buyer's industry) as their top method for getting buyers to take action. Relevant content ranked near the bottom of the list, at #6 out of eight methods.

	Content relevant to buyers' needs	Personalized calls-to-action
What <b>buyers</b> need to take action	61%	32%
How <b>marketers</b> entice buyers to take action	36%	54%



## Key takeaway

Marketers who rely on personalized calls-to-action may be putting the cart before the horse. On websites and digital properties, prioritize surfacing relevant content faster—whether it's through an easy-to-use search function or personalized content recommendations. Buyers may not even need that industry- or account-specific call-to-action to make a decision. You'll be rewarded with higher engagement and more leads, signups, or meeting requests.

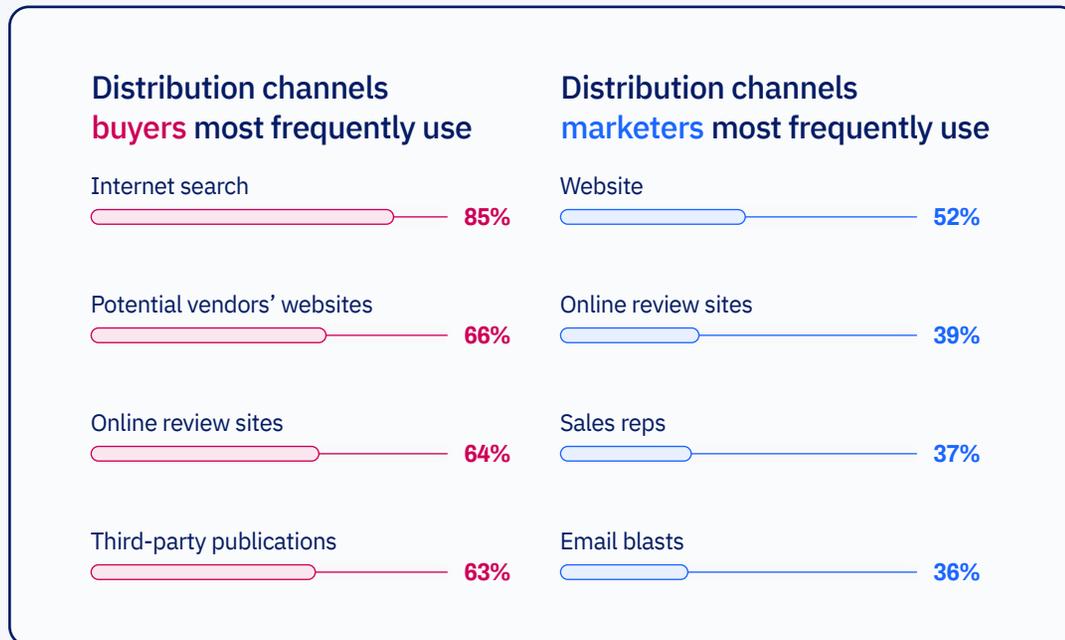




## INSIGHT 5

# Marketers should aim to educate, not sell

With budgets tight due to the pandemic, buyers are unlikely to purchase unless it's something they really need right now. That means marketing efforts focused on actively pushing sales may fall flat: Clicking through on online ads, social media posts and email blasts were the three least popular ways for buyers to research a purchase decision. Instead, buyers are overwhelmingly (85%) taking to internet search to find useful, educational information that doesn't come with a sales pitch. Two-thirds (66%) were also willing to explore a vendor's website to find the information they need.



## Key takeaway

Marketers will find more success right now if they educate buyers rather than pushing them to make a purchase. As our other results show, useful, relevant content pushes buyers down the sales funnel effectively on its own. While marketers need to keep campaigns running, they should not lean so heavily on pushing marketing messages out and instead draw buyers in with the right content and experiences. Now more than ever, marketers need to set buyers up to discover relevant content independently, at their own pace, instead of solely relying on campaigns like email blasts for content distribution.



## CONCLUSION

# Building a better buyer experience

The experiences marketers deliver aren't living up to B2B buyers' expectations, but the gap isn't insurmountable. Marketers can overcome the experience disconnect by:

- **Personalizing based on buyers' problems, not just basic data like name and company**
- **Prioritizing shortform, visual content and engaging experiences that buyers can digest quickly**
- **Surfacing highly relevant content that aims to educate on your product more than sell**

Closing the experience disconnect aligns with marketers' broader goals. Despite budget cuts, less than a quarter (23%) said reducing costs/streamlining operations was a top strategic priority. Instead, marketers are focused on improving customer experience, acquisition, and retention. Building a better buyer experience will support all three of these goals—and set your company up to build deep, lasting relationships with your customers.

## Methodology

### Buyers survey:

Uberflip surveyed 250 American and Canadian B2B buyers in early July 2020. All respondents were full-time employees at the manager level or above, working at companies with \$50m or more in annual revenue.

### Marketers survey:

Uberflip surveyed 250 American and Canadian marketers at the manager level or above in mid-July 2020.

## About Uberflip

Uberflip is a content experience platform that empowers marketing and sales to create engaging, relevant content destinations quickly for every campaign, audience, and stage of the customer journey. Marketers use our platform to scale how they incorporate content into every touchpoint and remove friction from the customer journey by surfacing the right content at the right time.

For more information, visit [uberflip.com](https://uberflip.com) and follow Uberflip on [LinkedIn](#) and [Twitter](#).