

# 2021 VP/DIRECTOR OUTLOOK



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# FOREWARD

BEFORE I WAS A CEO, I WORKED MY WAY UP THE CORPORATE LADDER INCLUDING ROLES AS BOTH A DIRECTOR AND A VICE PRESIDENT. THOSE JOBS WERE NEVER EASY. NOW, THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC HAS ONLY INCREASED THE LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY.

WE HAVE WITNESSED MORE CHANGE IN MERE WEEKS THAN WE'VE SEEN IN THE PREVIOUS DECADE.

- EXPECTATIONS AND STRESS HAVE NEVER BEEN HIGHER
- ENTIRE INDUSTRIES HAVE TURNED UPSIDE DOWN
- INDIVIDUAL BEHAVIOR HAS RADICALLY SHIFTED

AFTER A CHALLENGING YEAR, AE MARKETING GROUP ASKED 100 US VICE PRESIDENTS AND DIRECTORS WORKING IN NON-PROFIT, HEALTHCARE, B2B, AND B2C INDUSTRIES TO SHARE THEIR 2021 OUTLOOK

WE ASKED QUESTIONS SPECIFIC TO SALES AND MARKETING, MANAGING C-SUITE EXPECTATIONS, KNOWLEDGE SOURCES AND DIGITAL BEHAVIORS.

WE HOPE THESE ANSWERS PROVIDE YOU INSIGHT, COMFORT, AND IDEAS TO BE SUCCESSFUL IN THE YEAR AHEAD.

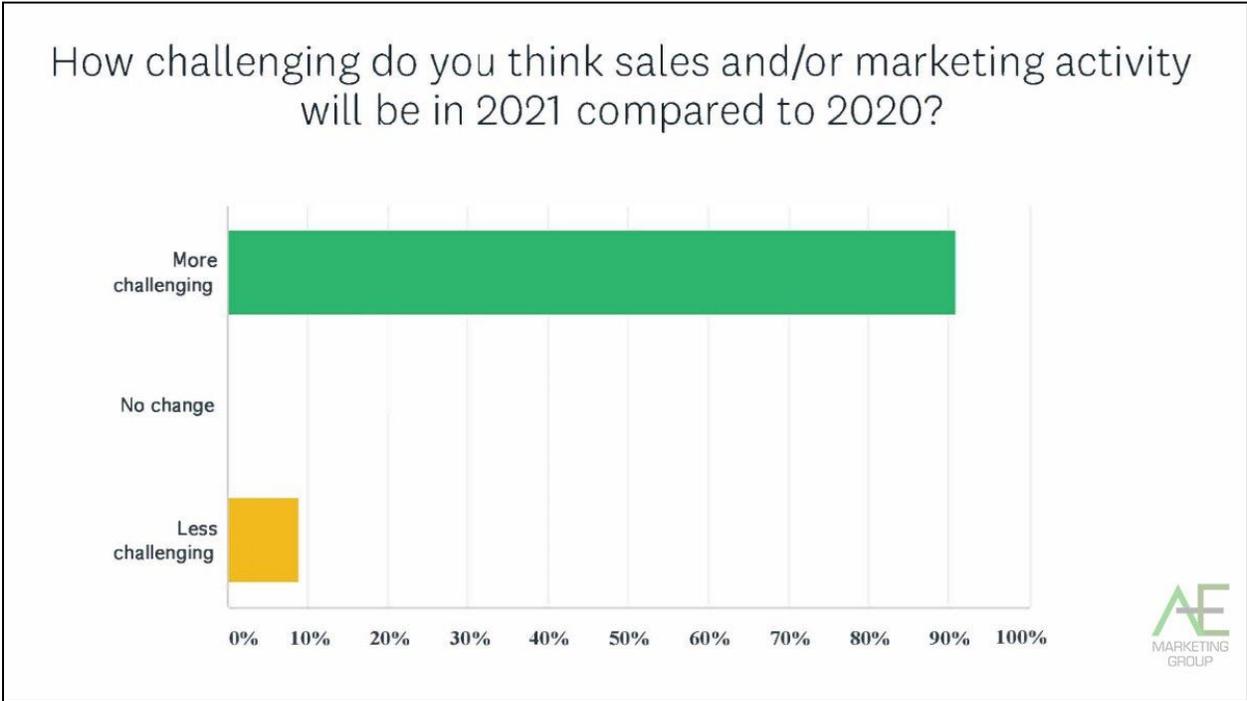


BRIAN WALKER  
AE MARKETING GROUP CEO  
3X INC5000 FOUNDER  
BRAND LAB SERIES™ HOST

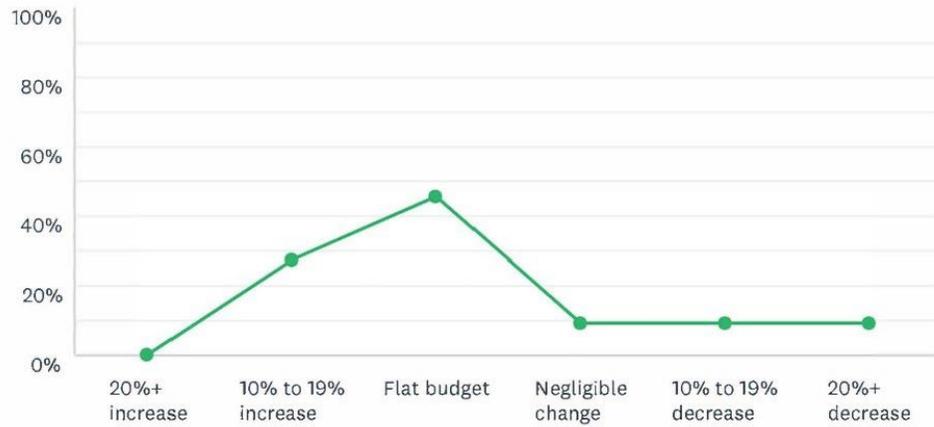
# SALES AND MARKETING

DURING 2020, CORONAVIRUS ACCELERATED MORE CHANGE IN MERE WEEKS THAN WAS SEEN IN THE PRIOR DECADE FOR BOTH INDIVIDUALS AND BUSINESSES. ENTIRE BUYER PERSONAS AND JOURNEY MAPS BECAME OBSOLETE.

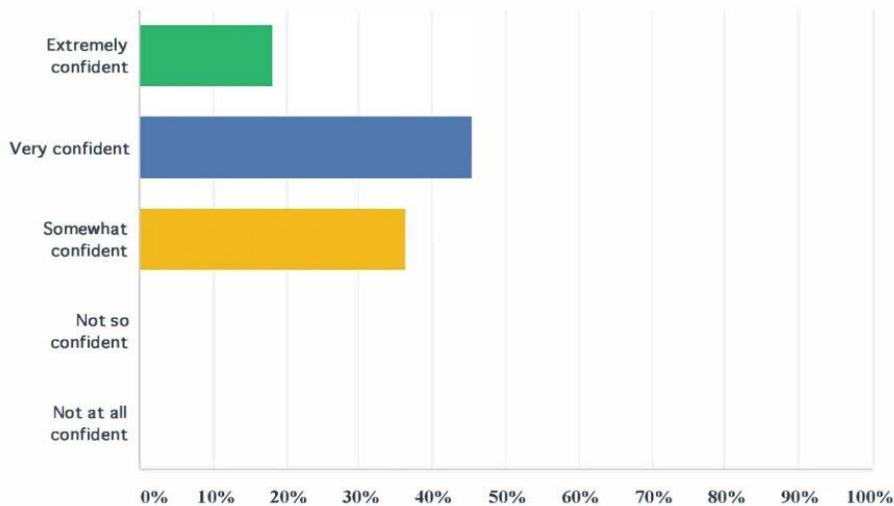
AS A RESULT OF THESE SHIFTS, DO VP/DIRECTOR-LEVEL EMPLOYEES ANTICIPATE MORE CHALLENGES FOR MARKETING AND SALES IN 2021? ARE THERE BUDGET IMPLICATIONS? ARE THEY ADAPTING MARKETING TO MEET CHANGING BUYER NEEDS?



## Are you planning to increase or decrease investments in 2021 external marketing efforts?



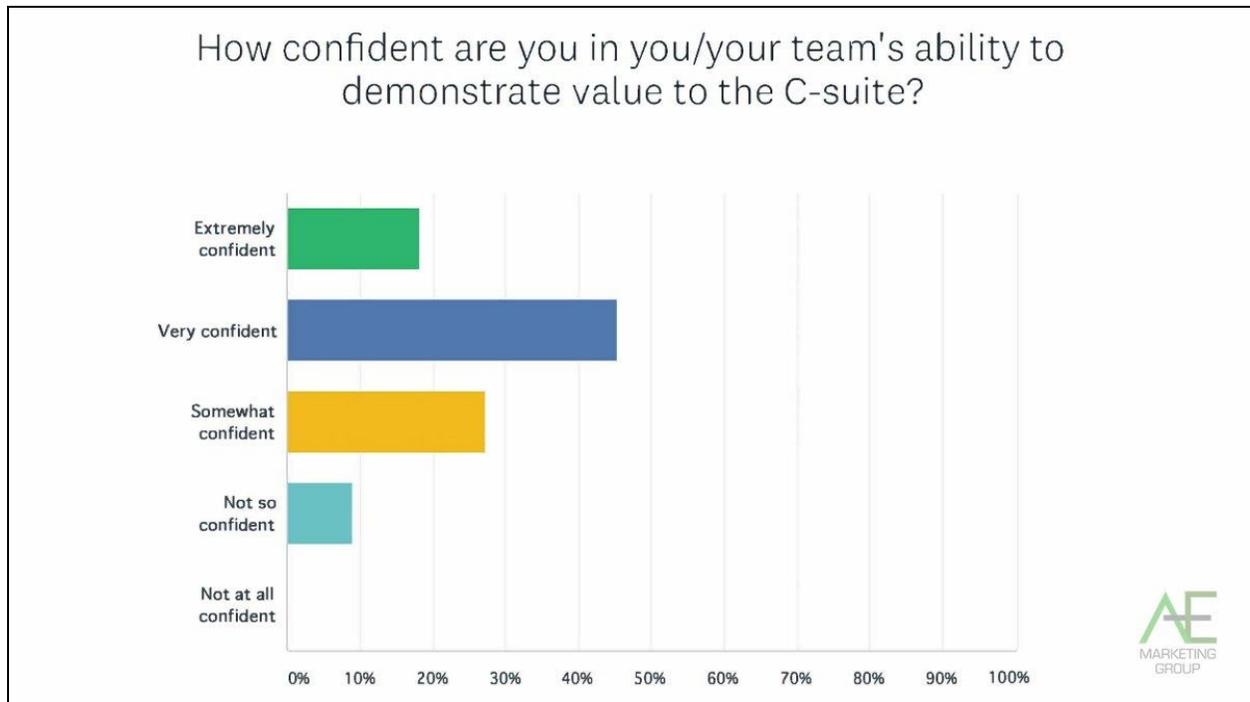
## How confident are you in you/your team's ability to speak to customers' changing needs in your marketing materials?



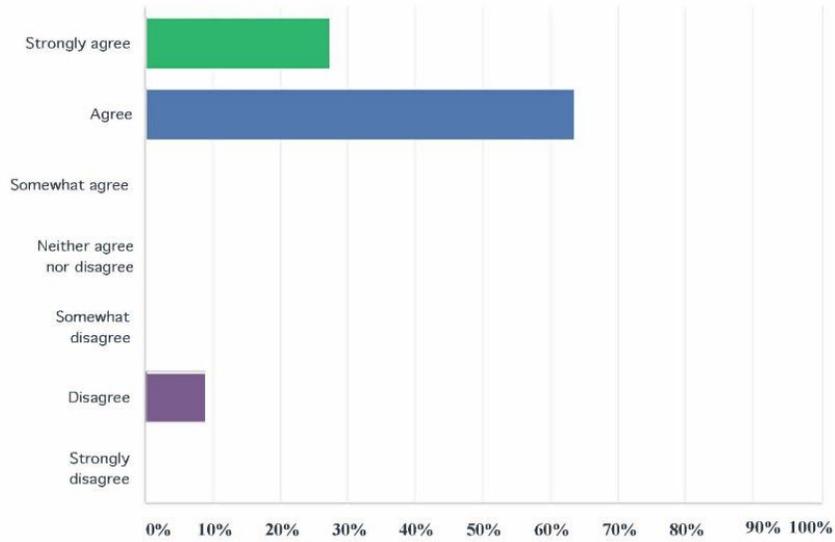
# MANAGING THE C-SUITE

IT IS NOT JUST BUYER NEEDS THAT VPS AND DIRECTORS NEED TO CONSIDER. MANAGING EXPECTATIONS TO ENSURE THAT SALES AND MARKETING ARE ALIGNED WITH ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS IS CRITICAL TO ESTABLISHING CREDIBILITY WITH THE C-SUITE.

BUT, HOW CONFIDENT ARE VPS AND DIRECTORS IN THEIR ABILITY TO DEMONSTRATE THE NECESSARY VALUE TO THE C-SUITE?



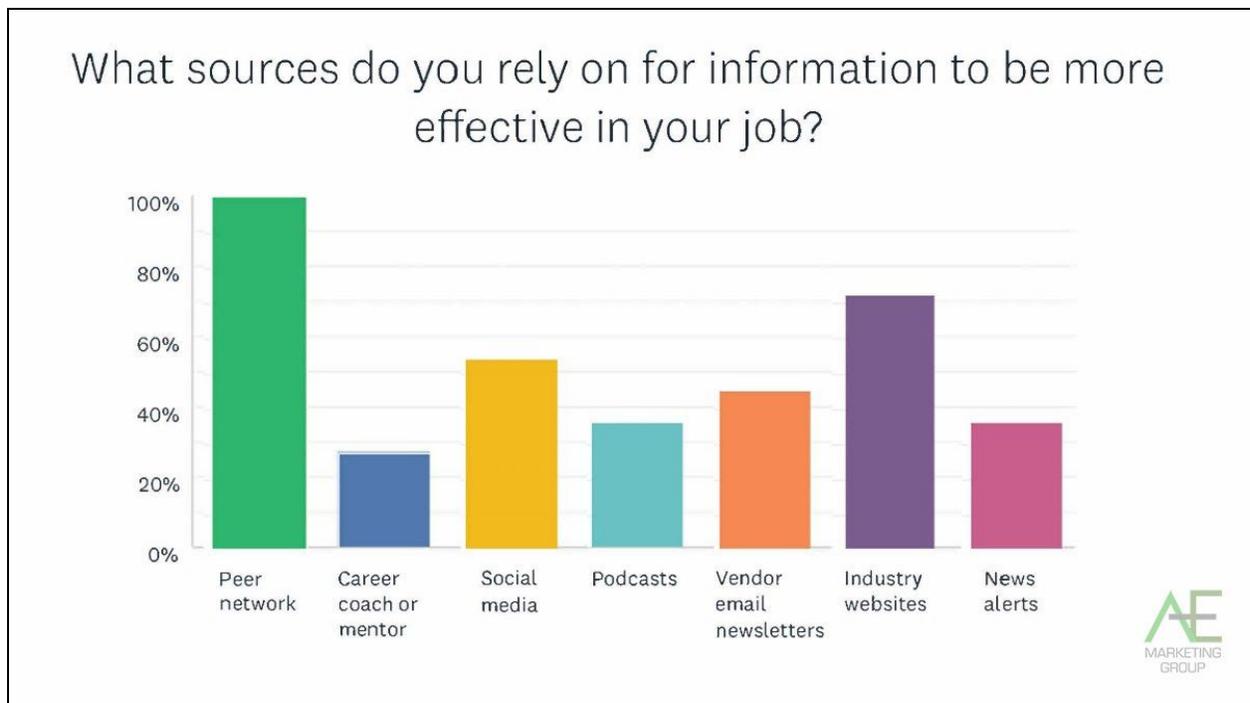
To what extent do you agree with this statement: "My team's current reporting metrics and frequency align with C-suite goals and expectations"?



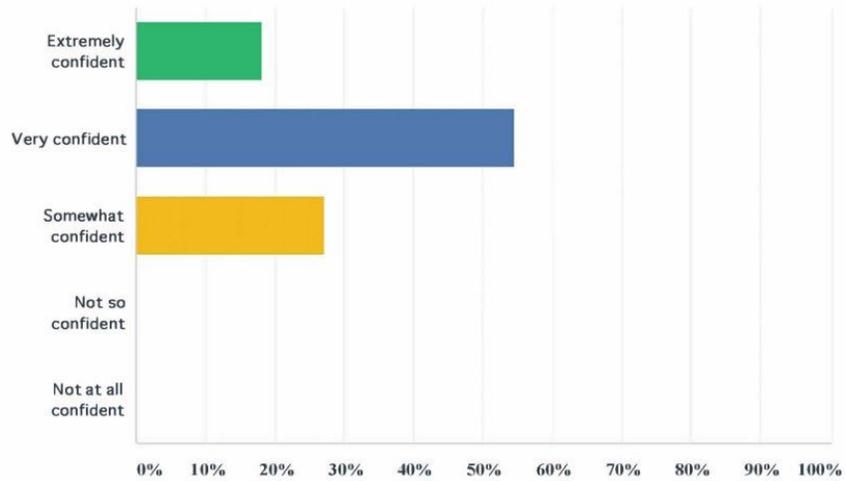
# KNOWLEDGE SOURCES

AS CHANGING BUYER BEHAVIORS BECOME LASTING HABITS, 2021 WILL BRING NEW CHALLENGES TO VPS AND DIRECTORS WORKING IN MARKETING AND SALES.

TO DO SO, WHERE DO THESE INDIVIDUALS TURN FOR INFORMATION, AND HOW CONFIDENT ARE THEY IN REMOTE VENDOR SUPPORT?

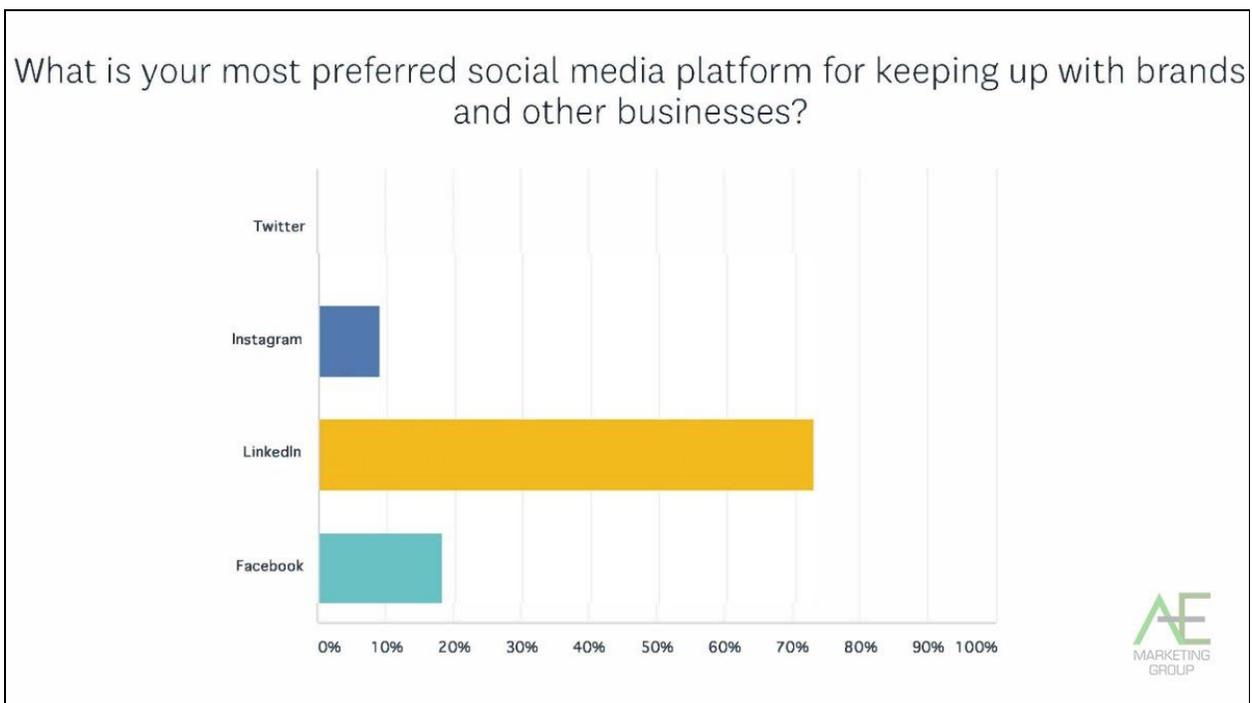


How confident would you be in working with a vendor that fills your team's knowledge and/or skill gaps entirely remotely?

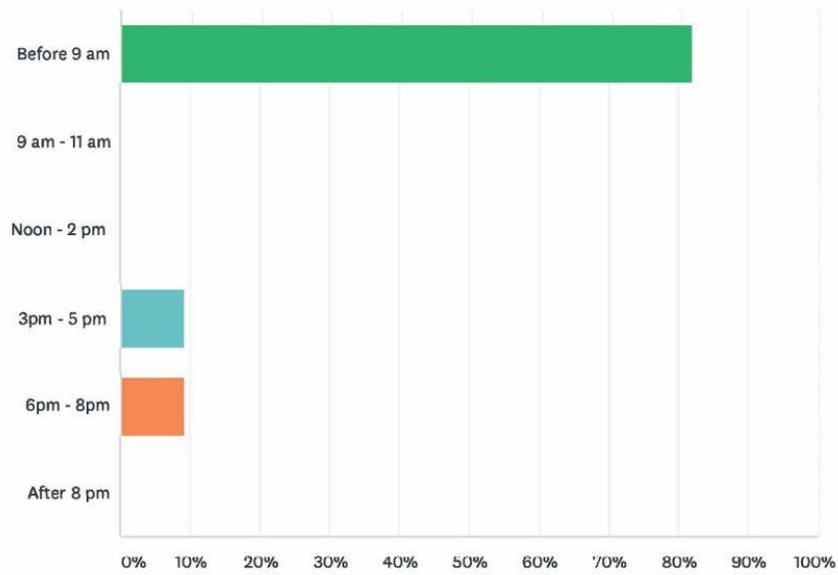


# DIGITAL BEHAVIOR

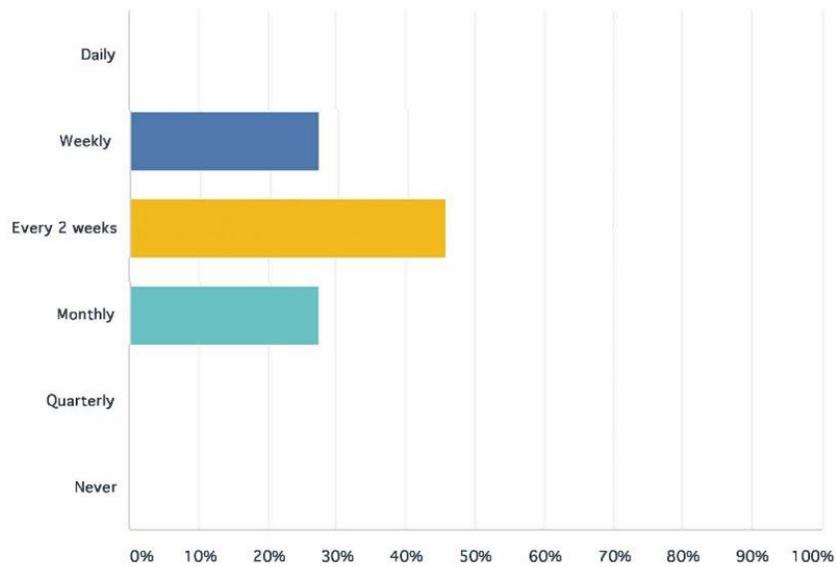
AS SALES CONTINUE TO SHIFT AWAY FROM FACE-TO-FACE INTERACTIONS AND TOWARD DIGITAL EXPERIENCES, IT IS IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND VICE PRESIDENTS' AND DIRECTORS' PREFERENCES AND HABITS WHEN IT COMES TO SOCIAL MEDIA AND EMAIL MARKETING.



### What time of day do you most often check social media?



### What is your preferred frequency of receiving vendor email newsletters?



# TAKEAWAYS

CORONAVIRUS HAS BEEN A MASSIVE CHANGE ACCELERANT IN 2020.

WITH INDIVIDUAL BEHAVIOR CONTINUING TO SHIFT AND EVOLVE, VICE PRESIDENTS AND DIRECTORS ANTICIPATE A TOUGH YEAR-AHEAD FOR MARKETING AND SALES.

VICE PRESIDENTS AND DIRECTORS WHO ARE ABLE TO SPEAK TO CONSUMERS CHANGING NEEDS IN MARKETING MATERIALS, INTEGRATE SALES AND MARKETING TO CONVERT LEADS, AND DEMONSTRATE VALUE ON ALIGNED GOALS TO THE C-SUITE WILL BE WELL-POSITIONED IN THIS NEW (AND OFTEN VIRTUAL) REALITY.

NOW MORE THAN EVER, LOOKING AT YOUR BRAND THROUGH AN ENTERPRISE LENS (PRE-PURCHASE, PURCHASE, POST-PURCHASE) IS CRITICAL TO UNDERSTANDING HOW TO HELP BUYERS/CONSUMERS.

THIS WILL LEAD TO INCREASED VALUE AND LOYALTY AFTER COVID-19.

WE HOPE YOU ENJOYED THE 2021 VP/DIRECTOR OUTLOOK – THANK YOU.

## FURTHER READING

[2021 C-SUITE OUTLOOK](#)

[COVID KILLED YOUR BUYER PERSONA AND CUSTOMER JOURNEY MAP](#)

[FUNDRAISING IMMUNITY: NONPROFITS MUST PIVOT DURING COVID19](#)

[CHALLENGER BRANDS FACE NEW CHALLENGES AMIDST CORONAVIRUS](#)

# METHODOLOGY

## THE 2021 VP/DIRECTOR OUTLOOK

RESPONDENTS TO THIS SURVEY ARE VICE PRESIDENTS OR DIRECTORS WITH WHOM WE HAVE CONNECTED OVER THE YEARS, INCLUDING CUSTOMERS, BRAND LAB SERIES™ PODCAST GUESTS, AND MORE.

THE DATA SET INCLUDES VICE PRESIDENTS AND DIRECTORS WORKING IN NON-PROFIT, HEALTHCARE, B2B, AND B2C INDUSTRIES THROUGHOUT THE UNITED STATES.

RESPONSES WERE GATHERED IN OCTOBER – NOVEMBER 2020.

THIS IS A SURVEY OF INDIVIDUALS, NOT COMPANIES. NO INDIVIDUAL WAS INCENTIVIZED FOR HIS/HER PARTICIPATION.

DATA WAS CAPTURED USING A 16-QUESTION SURVEY CREATED WITH SURVEY MONKEY.

## ABOUT AE MARKETING GROUP

AE MARKETING GROUP ADVISES BUSINESSES AROUND THE WORLD ON STRATEGY, DESIGN, BRAND, AND CO-CREATION.

WE HELP EXECUTIVES ENSURE THEIR COMPANY'S BRAND IS ALIGNED ACROSS ENTERPRISE TOUCHPOINTS (PRE-PURCHASE, PURCHASE, POST-PURCHASE), WHICH LEADS TO IMPROVED REVENUE AND CUSTOMER LOYALTY.

AE MARKETING GROUP IS A 3X INC.5000 WINNER, HAS BEEN FEATURED BY FORBES, GOLDMAN SACHS, ADAGE, AND MORE.

IN 2018, THE ACADEMY OF INTERACTIVE AND VISUAL ARTS NAMED AE MARKETING GROUP'S BRAND LAB SERIES™ PODCAST, THE TOP BUSINESS, AND TECHNOLOGY PODCAST OF THE YEAR.

LEARN MORE AT [AEMARKETINGGROUP.COM](https://aemarketinggroup.com)