



# 2023 Digital Trends

B2B Journey Management in Focus



# Introduction

Great customer experiences will always enable brands to build and retain the most profitable B2B customer relationships. But the pace of innovation is putting organizations under pressure to raise the bar, leading them to orchestrate personalized engagements across channels in ways that demonstrate new levels of creativity, empathy, and relevance.

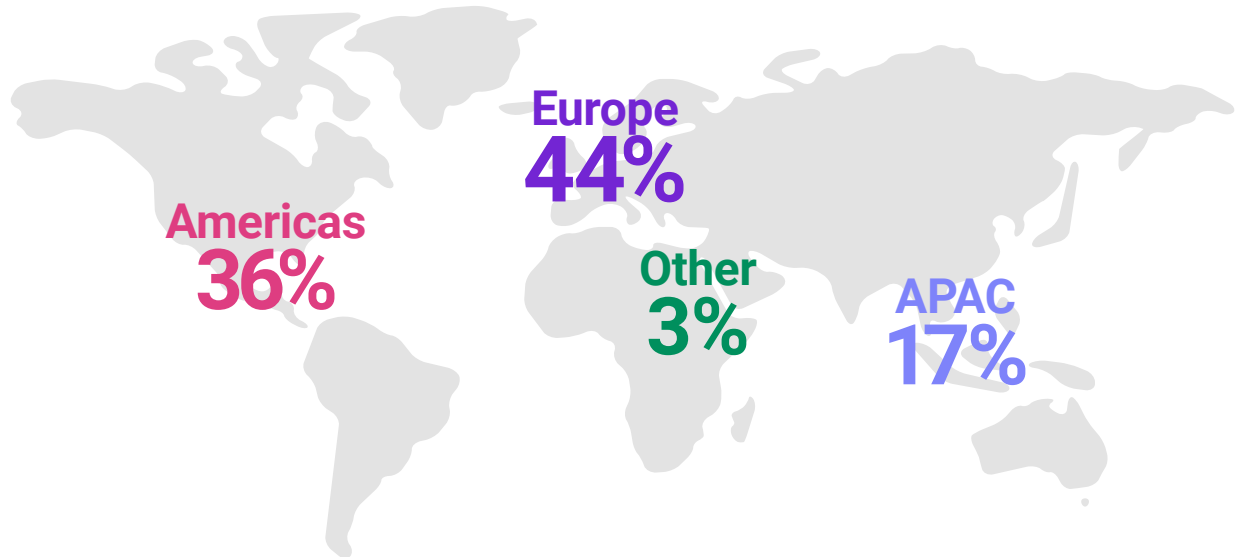
This new series of Adobe reports in partnership with Econsultancy reveals how organizations are looking to crack the code while delivering standout B2B experiences to the right buyers at the right time.

## Demographics

The Econsultancy x Adobe Digital Trends 2023 report captures the views of marketers and CX professionals in agency and client-side organizations around the globe.

[Download the full report here](#)

## Global Reach



This report focuses on the perspectives of **client-side marketers and CX professionals**, including:



**339**

In C-suite / senior leadership positions



**1,383**

Practitioners, e.g., marketing managers, CX managers

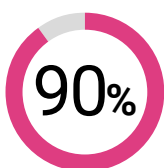
## Creativity comes to the fore

B2B customer journeys are complex, with multiple touchpoints, buyers and channels. But, ultimately, customers are individuals, and their expectations are set by the best omnichannel journeys they experience – whatever the sector.

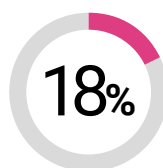
Delivering experiences that surprise and delight demands insight, creativity and time. Almost half (44%)



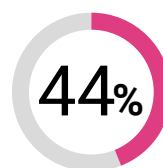
of B2B marketing and CX professionals say they lack the time to be creative. Also, few succeed at mixing data and insights about their customers with creative skills to design standout experiences. Brands need to figure out how to harness the rich sources of data they already hold about their customers, and identify (and replace) the manual processes which are currently slowing them down in order to free up time and resources for more creative tasks.



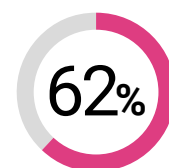
Of senior executives agree that customer expectations are constantly resetting to match their **best omnichannel experiences**.



Rate their organization as expert (8+ out of 10) at **combining deep understanding of the customer with creativity** to design experiences that "wow" customers.



of CX and marketing professionals say **lack of time to be creative** is holding their marketing/CX organization back.



Of senior executives report that their marketing organization has become more efficient, but that **creativity has suffered**.

# The tension between online and offline

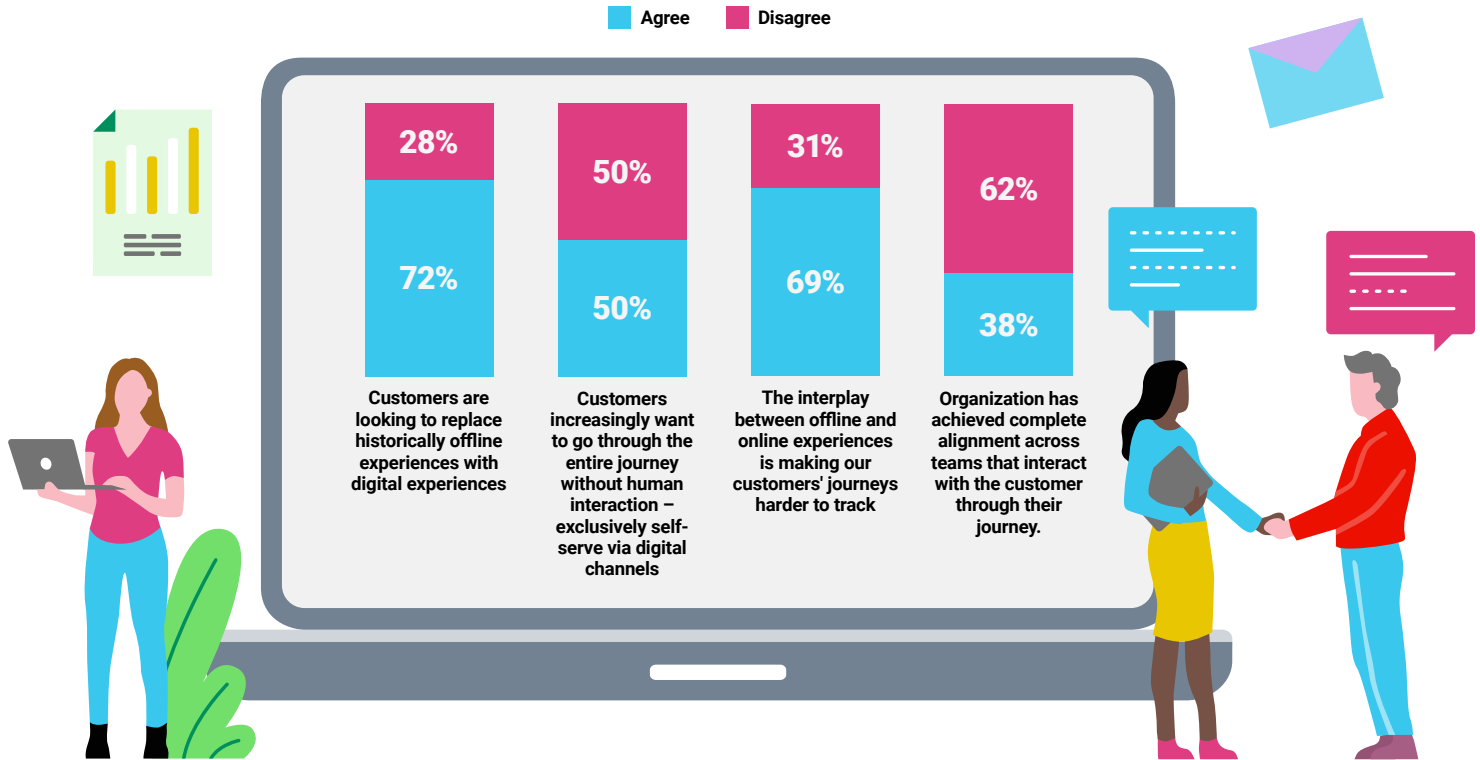
B2B customers increasingly expect experiences that were once offline to be online. The Digital Trends research found that 39% of B2B Tech brands now have self-serve capabilities (such as ecommerce platforms), and 37% are using chatbots to increase engagement.

But there's still a long way to go before the B2B journey becomes fully online, and half of brands don't believe their customers are yet ready

for an end-to-end digital journey. That means the vast majority of organizations are currently playing in a mixed environment, with all of the complexity that brings. It is, therefore, not surprising that 69% say the interplay between online and offline experiences is making customers' journeys harder to track. And, in many cases (62%), that's made more complicated by a lack of proper alignment between different teams like sales and marketing.

## To what extent do you disagree or agree with the following statements?

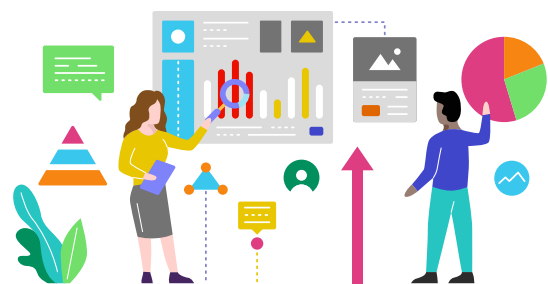
■ Agree ■ Disagree



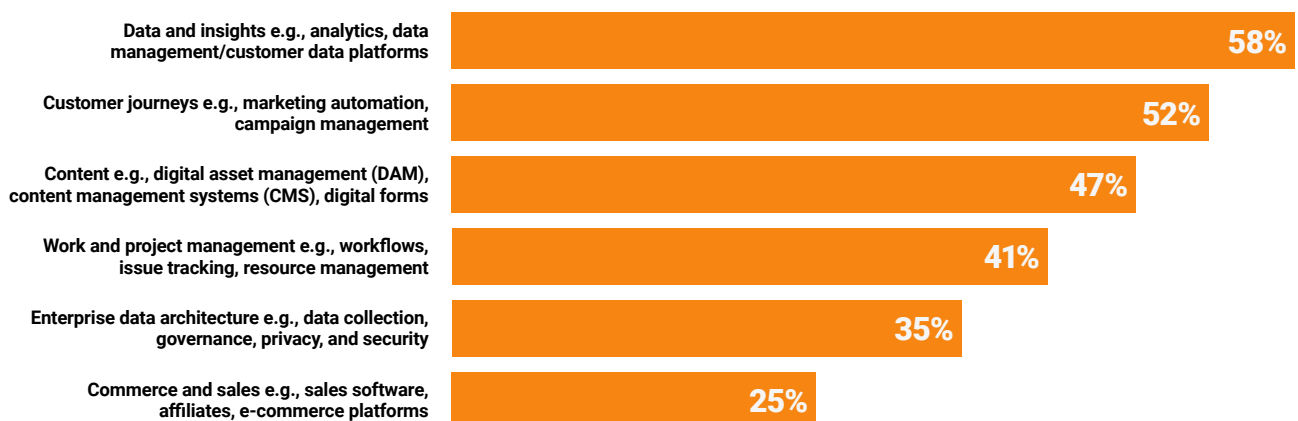
## Putting the customer at the center

Customer-centric organizations are also data-centric, and it's therefore encouraging to see that B2B brands are investing in solutions that will corral and make sense of the information they have about their customer.

Data & Insights are the top priority (cited by 58%), and customer journeys come close behind (52%). Given the complexity of journeys and the interplay between online and offline channels referenced earlier, organizations are focused on marketing automation to deliver the right messaging in the right context to individual buyers at scale.



## What will your organization's top three technology priorities be in 2023?



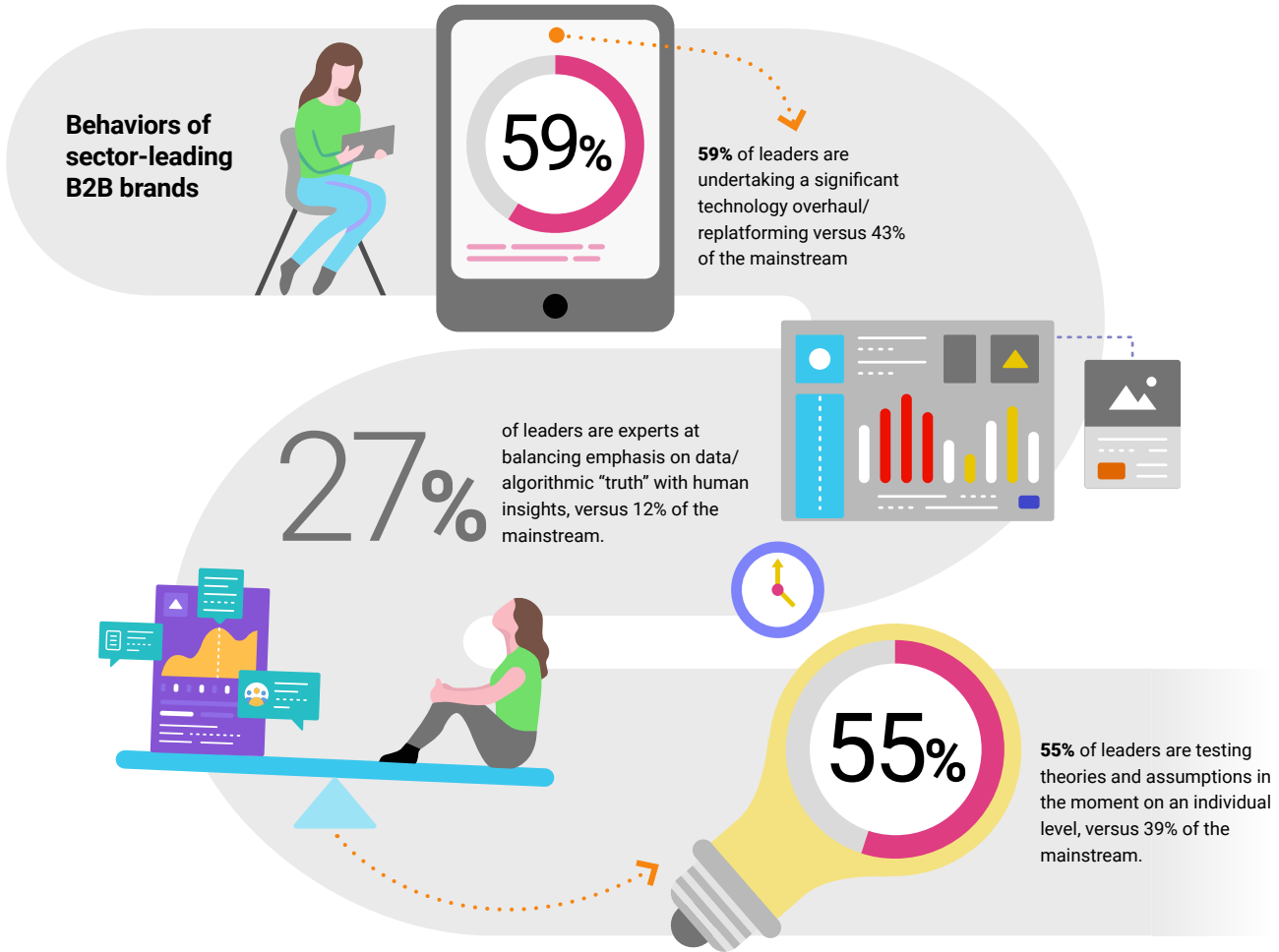
# The recipe for B2B success in 2023

Market-leading B2B organizations – those that outperformed their sector in 2022 – exhibit different behaviors and approaches than average and under-performers (the mainstream).

Sector leaders are actively investing in their capabilities to create a foundation for delivering on customer journey expectations in 2023, with 59% planning a significant technology overhaul or replatforming in 2023, compared to 43% of their mainstream peers.

All of which will empower and enable organizations to deliver more creative, empathetic experiences and to pull ahead further. As illustrated below, leaders are more than twice as likely to be experts at balancing emphasis on data/algorithmic "truth" with human insights.

And, to keep up with those ever-changing customer expectations, they are much more likely to be able to test theories and assumptions in-the-moment on an individual level (55% compared to 39% of the mainstream).



## Automation front and center

More complex marketing landscapes will require marketing teams to evolve and adapt.

With demand outstripping supply for key skills in many regions of the world, while firms in the tech and other sectors rein in hiring in light of unpredictable economic headwinds, automation will come to the fore.

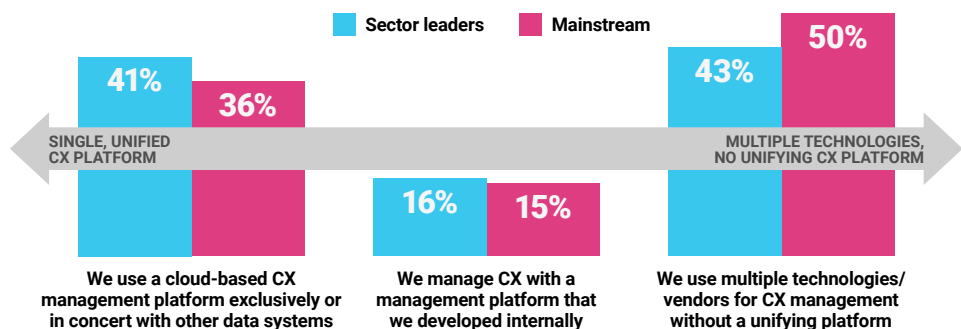
B2B organizations will move towards a mantra of *doing more with less*,



refocusing on strategically tapping their internal talents and leveraging systems to scale meaningful customer journeys.

Indeed, according to our research, B2B sector leaders are five percentage points more likely than their mainstream counterparts to use cloud-based CX management systems. By comparison, mainstream organizations are more likely to use multiple technologies and vendors without a unified platform.

Which of the following best describes your organization's approach to customer experience technology?



## Conclusion

Customer journeys are becoming ever more complex. Marketing interactions are increasingly digital, sales organizations far less so, meaning content and experiences must be delivered consistently across a web of interconnected channels.

Add to this the trend towards more contextual and predictive personalization based on multiple data sources and insights, and intelligent technology is a must.

Not surprising, then, that putting in place technology to manage customer journeys is high on the agenda for 2023. Implemented well, this can reduce effort and help synchronize and personalize customer journeys, leaving marketing and CX professionals more time to spend on bringing creativity and sparkle to the equation.

## Explore Adobe's B2B and journey management solutions

Learn more about our [B2B marketing solutions](#) that enable you to deliver showstopping experiences at all stages of the customer journey!



## Case Study: IBM

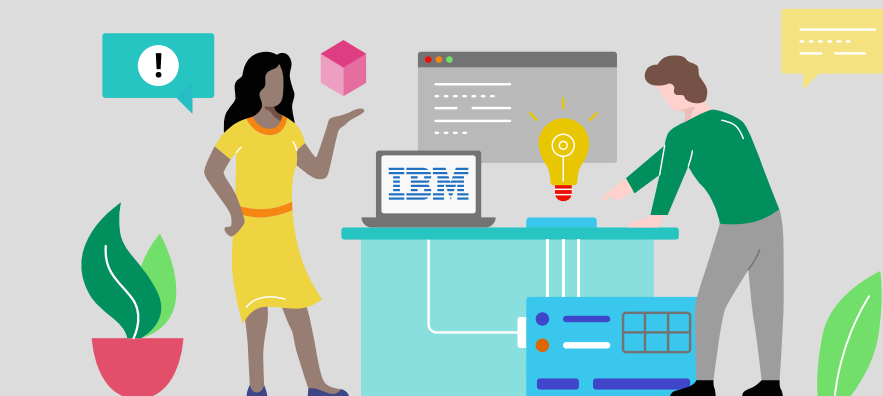
Email had always been a main channel for IBM to reach its customers. But the experience they historically delivered customers was less than ideal. To help solve this, IBM implemented Adobe Marketo Engage, this time building the technology around IBM's customers and their experiences.

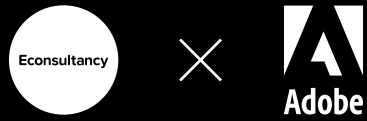
The team is now focused on five major stories — security, modernization, transformation, prediction, and automation — that will shape the IBM brand moving forward. They've consolidated the 2,800 campaigns that IBM used to run down to a core 100 campaigns highlighting these 5 stories.

- Consolidated from 40+ to 5 unified marketing technology platforms.
- Tested messaging in everything from content and headlines to nurture campaigns.
- Moved to account-based marketing to act on 150 million interactions.
- Increased email click rate response by 112%.

"Adobe Marketo Engage is such a foundational element of the change we're driving. It's the beginning of a new culture, and one of my proudest moments last year."

**Ari Sheinkin,**  
Vice President of Global Experience Engine, IBM





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