

What's Working (and What's Not): Accounting Firm Client Acquisition in 2019



Sandi Smith Leyva, CPA



CPE



To qualify: > / 50 minutes / 3 polling

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About today's speaker



Sandi Leyva, CPA

- Practice management and technology trainer since 1993
- Digital marketing: websites, social media, newsletters



Learning Bullets

- Learn the 16 most common places to find new clients
- Discover two areas in marketing that are vastly underutilized by accounting firms
- Learn the average cost of attracting and signing new clients



Learning Bullets

- Discover which marketing materials firms are using to attract prospects
- Learn how many clients firms want to acquire in one year



Sources of New Clients

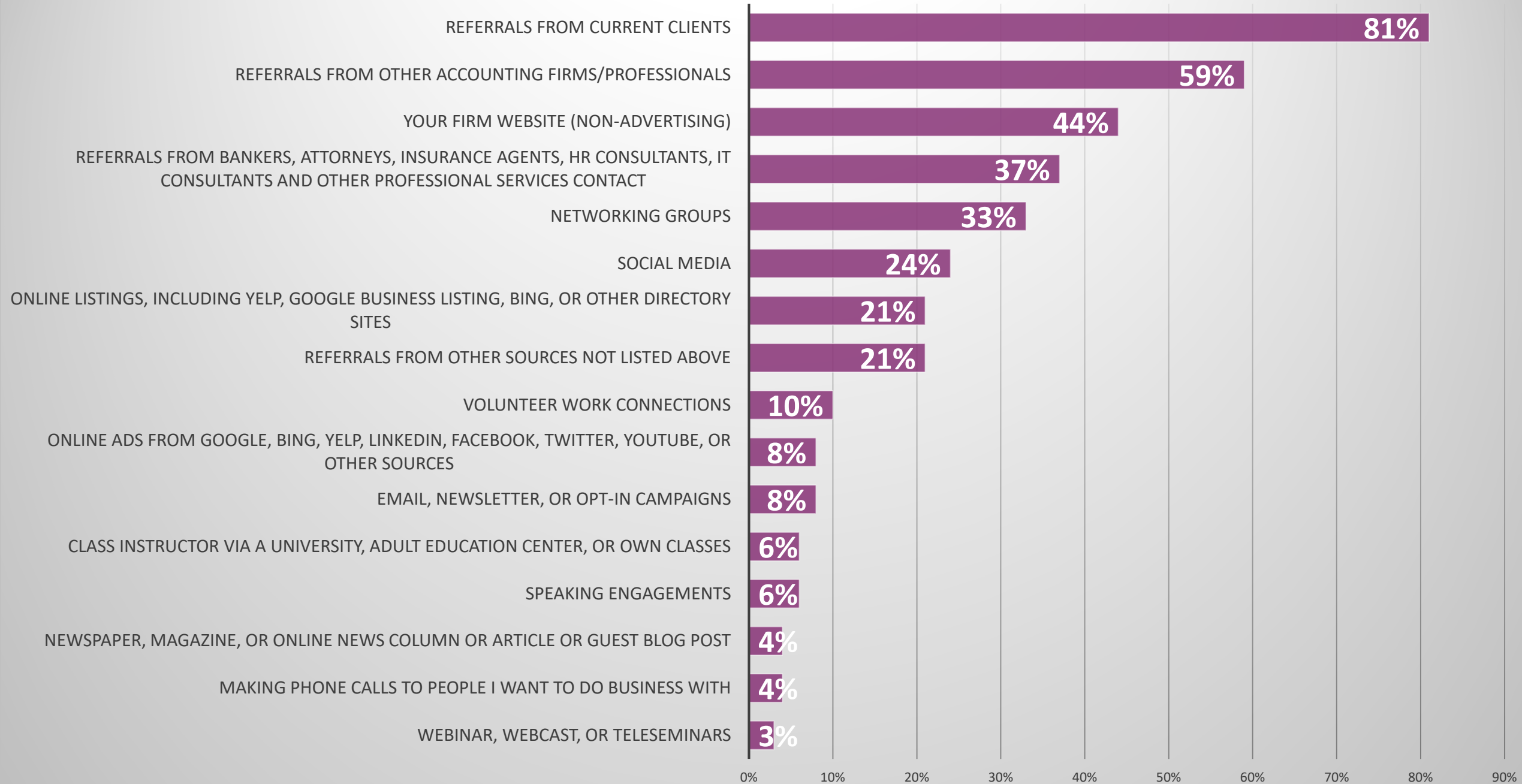




Finding New Clients – Top 5

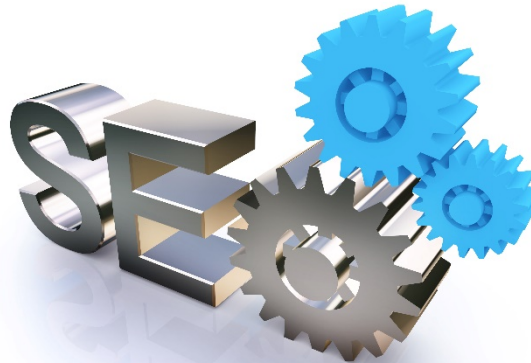
1. Referrals from current clients
2. Referrals from other accounting professionals
3. Firm website
4. Referrals from non-accounting professionals
5. Networking

Percent of firms getting clients from this source



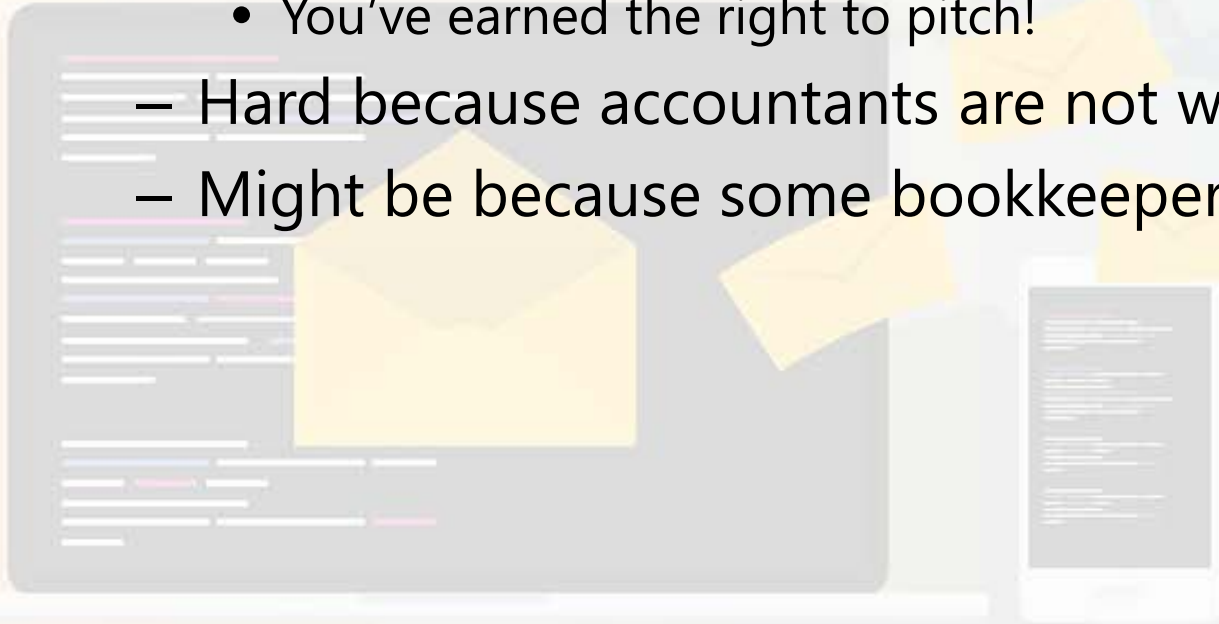
Interdependent Channels

- Some new clients may have heard about you in multiple ways
- Some channels support or feed into others
 - Social should feed into SEO (search engine optimization) and your website
 - Directory listings help SEO as well
 - Speaking engagements feed referrals



Vastly Under-Utilized

- Email marketing
 - You may send a newsletter but you don't pitch
 - You've earned the right to pitch!
 - Hard because accountants are not writers?
 - Might be because some bookkeepers have a smaller number of clients





83 percent of B2B companies use e-newsletters as part of their content marketing program.

Versus 8 percent of accounting firms

A person wearing a grey suit jacket is holding a smartphone in their right hand. The background is a blurred office setting with a window. Overlaid on the image is green text.

**73 percent of millennials
prefer communications from businesses
to come via email.**

>59% of marketers say email is their biggest source of ROI.





**Email marketing is the
king of the marketing kingdom
with a 4400% ROI and \$44 for every \$1 spent.**

You are 6x more likely to get a click-through
from an email campaign than you are from a
tweet.- Campaign Monitor



A close-up photograph of two hands shaking in a firm grip. The hand on the left is wearing a grey suit sleeve, and the hand on the right is wearing a white shirt sleeve. The background is blurred, showing other people in a professional setting.

Email is 40 times more effective at acquiring new customers than Facebook or Twitter. – McKinsey



Email marketing drives more conversions
than any other marketing channel,
including search and social. – Monetate

Lists

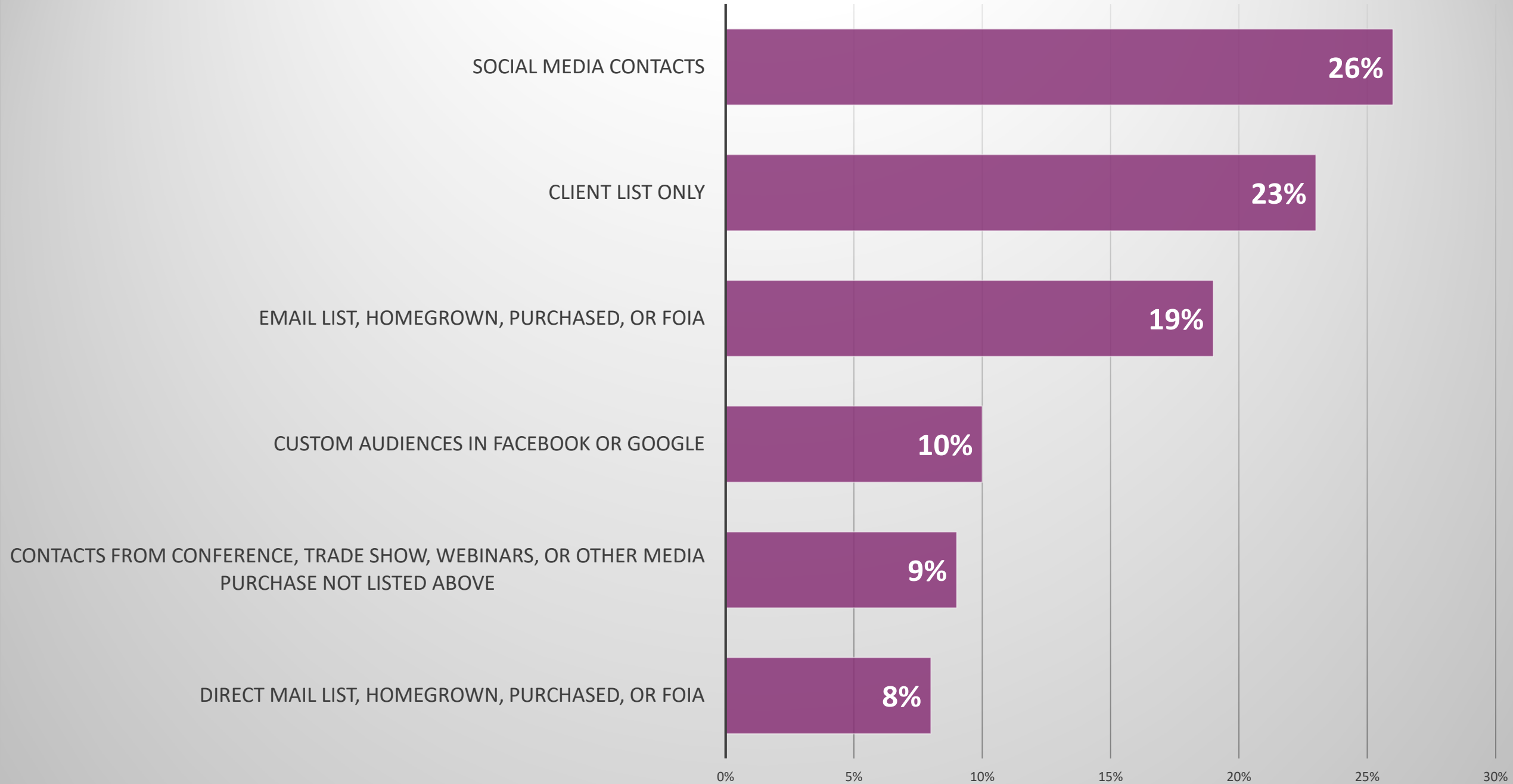


Are You Using Lists?

- Most accountants are not using lists to market, which means they are missing out on one of the most profitable marketing methods, email marketing. On average, email marketing returns \$39 for every \$1 spent. Here are the lists accountants are keeping these days.



Percentage of Firms Using Lists to Market



Building Lists

- Requires a funnel and a lead magnet
- It helps to have marketing automation software
- A lead magnet is valuable content given in exchange for an email address or other personal information
 - 105 Ways to Increase Cash Flow in Your Small Business
 - What Is Cloud Accounting?
 - How to Hire an Accountant
 - Steps to Starting a Business

A black, rounded rectangular button with the word "SUBSCRIBE" in white, bold, uppercase letters. A black hand cursor icon with the index finger pointing up is positioned below the button, as if clicking it.

SUBSCRIBE





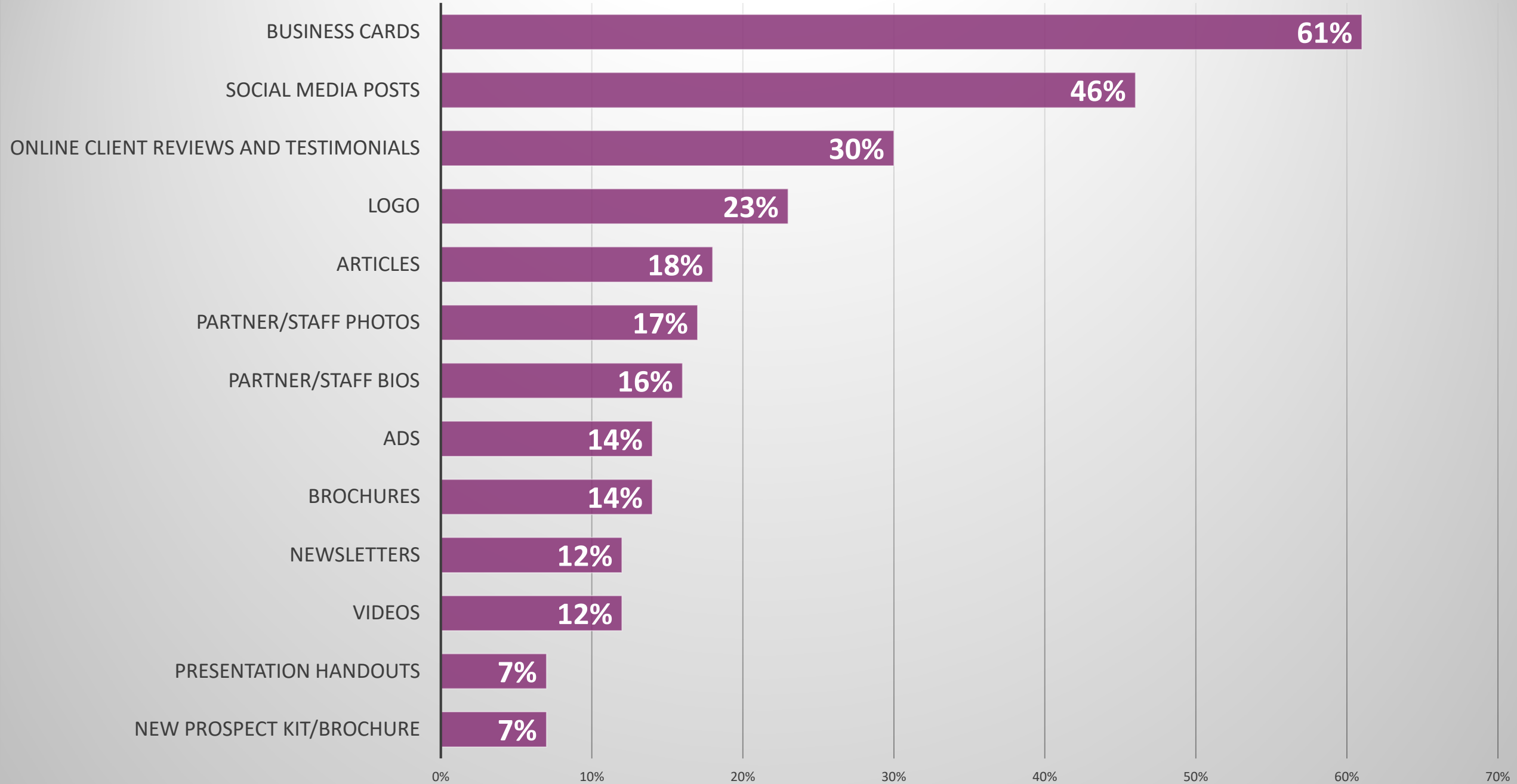
<https://acceleratornewsletters.com/>



Marketing Materials



Percent of Firms Using These Materials



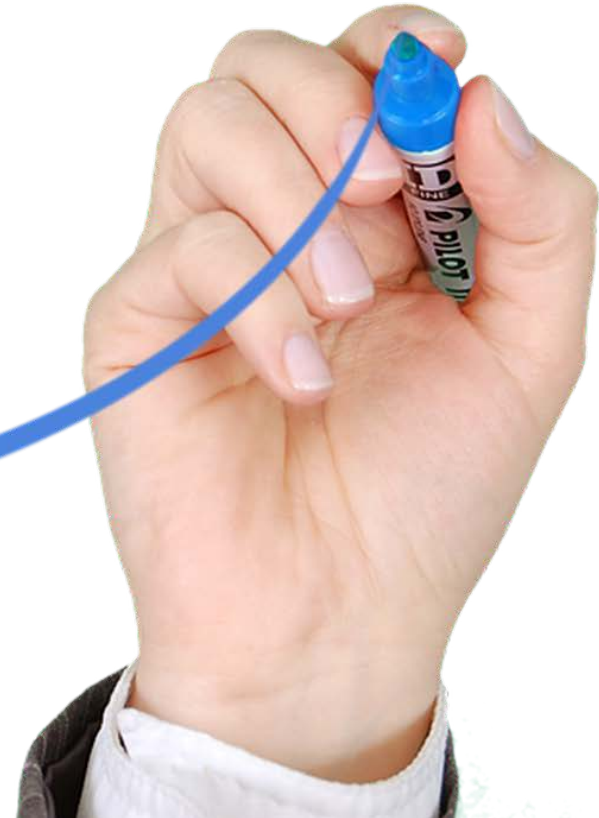
Vastly Under-Utilized

- Online reviews
- Video marketing



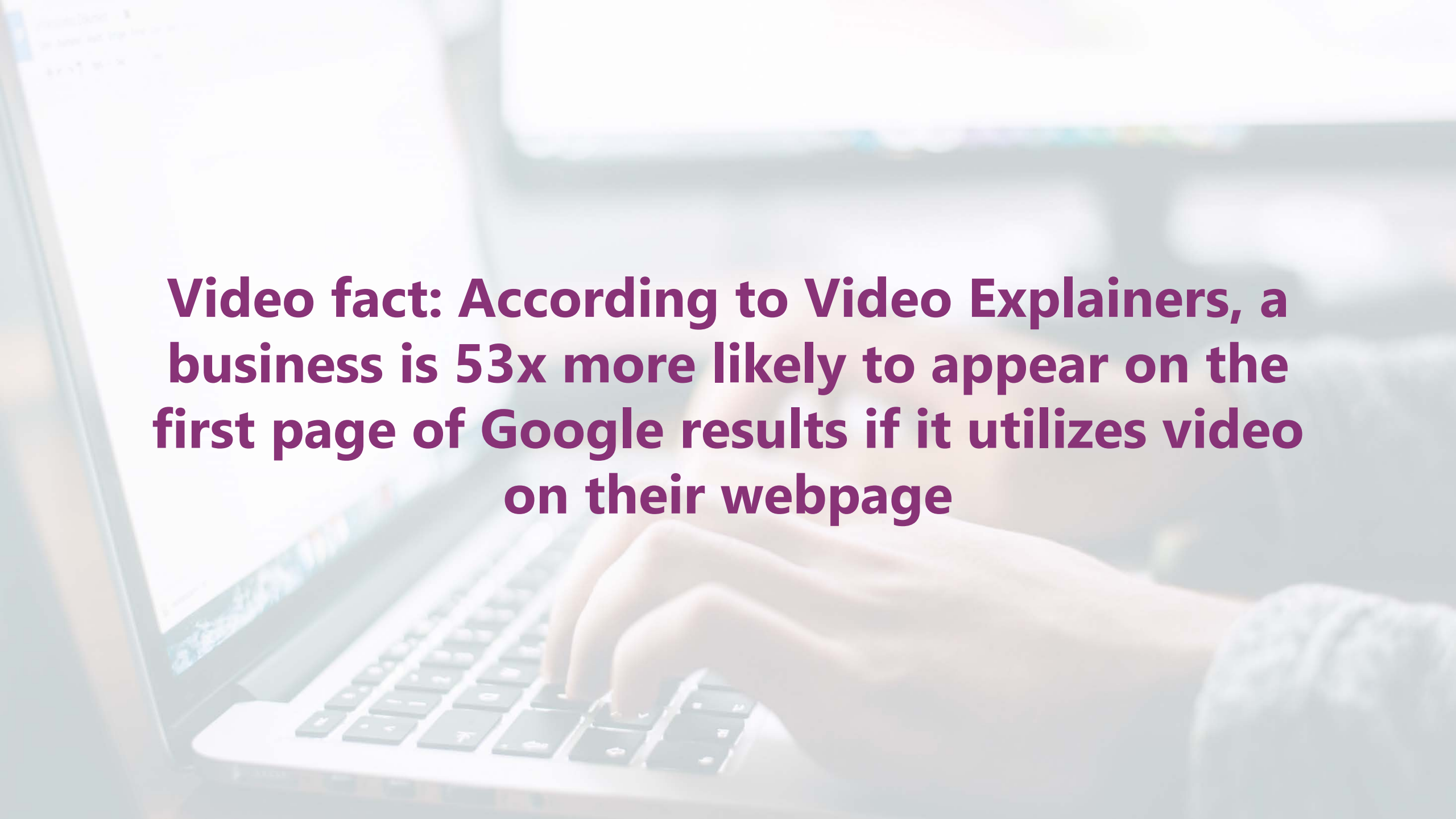
Video fact: Marketers who use video grow
revenue 49% faster than non-video users
(Wordstream)

Revenue



Video fact from Tubular Insights: 64% of consumers purchase after watching branded social videos



A person's hands are shown typing on a laptop keyboard. The background is blurred, showing what appears to be a computer screen and other office equipment. The text is overlaid in a bold, purple font.

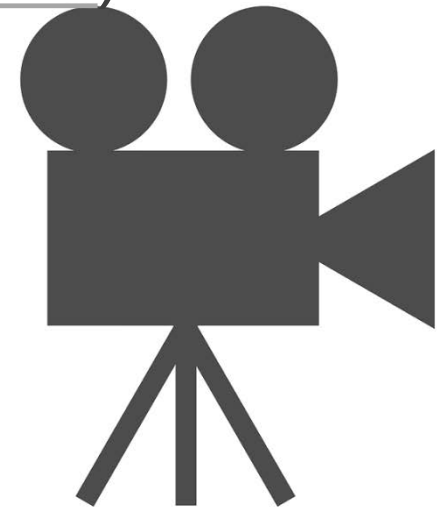
Video fact: According to Video Explainers, a business is 53x more likely to appear on the first page of Google results if it utilizes video on their webpage

A large, light blue 3D box with the Facebook 'f' logo on its front and side faces. Numerous small, light blue thumbs-up icons are floating above the box, suggesting social media engagement.

**Video Fact: Social Video Generates 1200% More
Shares Than Text And Images Combined
(Smallbiztrends)**



Video fact: 80% of Livestream's survey respondents would rather watch live video from a brand than read a blog ([Livestream, 2016](#))



A hand holding a black smartphone. The screen is white and displays a red heart icon. The background is a soft, out-of-focus light blue and white.

Video fact: YouTube is 11.3x Bigger than Facebook in terms of hours viewed, both on the web, and in-app (Venture Beat)

Video Fact: 57% Of Consumers Say That Videos Gave Them More Confidence To Purchase Online (E-tailing)





<https://acceleratorvideos.com/>



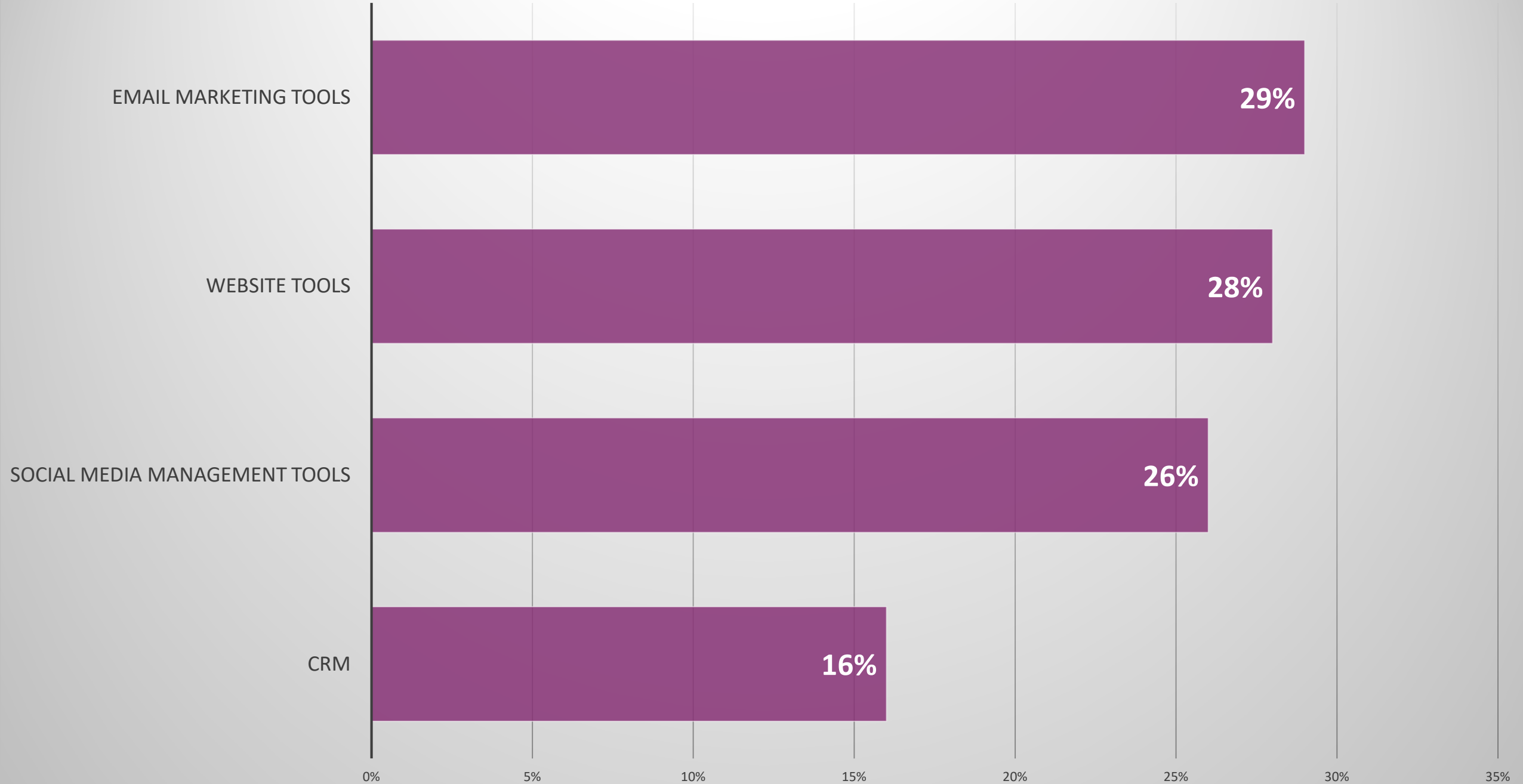
Marketing Technology



Marketing Technology

- While most accountants are gaining valuable skills in accounting and tax technology, only a few are using technology effectively in their business's marketing function.

Percent of Firms Using Marketing Tools



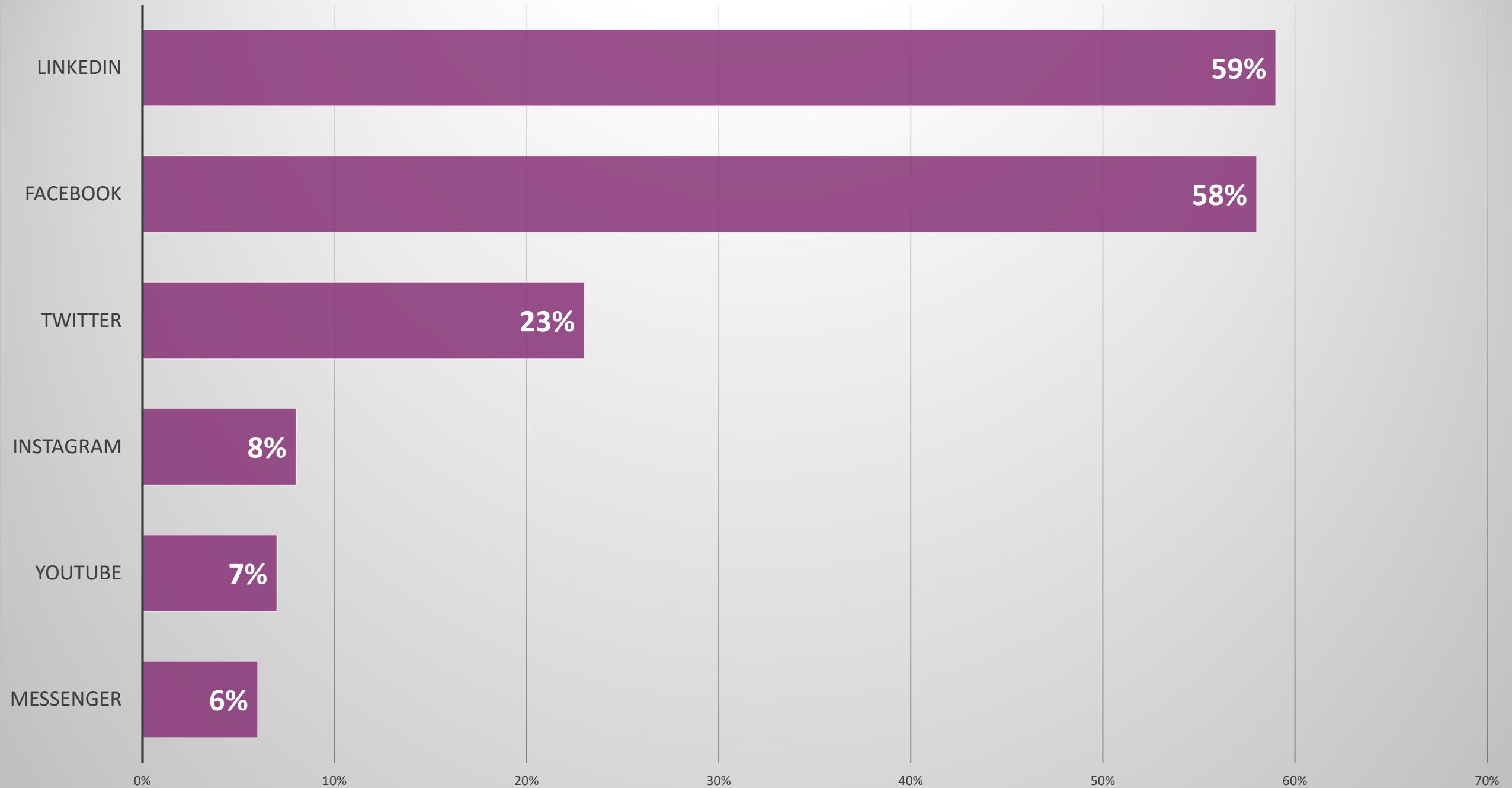
Social Media



Social Media

- We asked accountants what social media platform they have an active presence on.
- 24% of firms get clients from social media

Percent of Accounting Firms on These Social Platforms



Vastly Under-Utilized

- YouTube
- Instagram



New Client Acquisition Costs



Cost to Hire One New Client

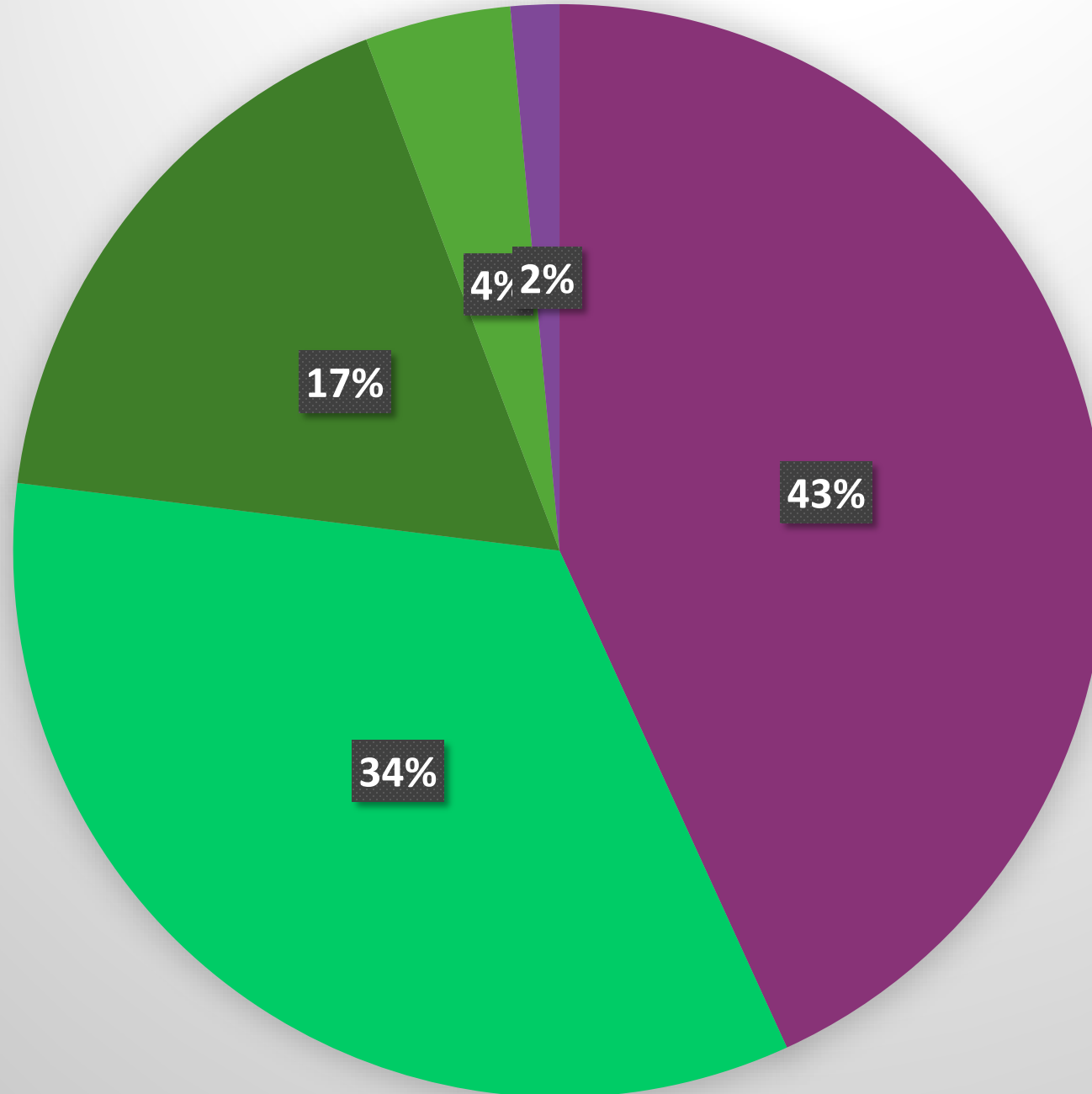


- How much does it cost to acquire one new client in your firm?
Not everyone knew. Here are the results of that question.

\$\$\$?



Average Cost to Acquire One New Client



- I don't know
- Less than \$100
- \$101 - \$500
- \$501 - \$1,000
- \$1,001 - \$3,000

Computing CAC

- $\text{Total marketing costs for year} / \text{Total new clients acquired during year} = \text{CAC}$



Confidence in Marketing Skills & Results



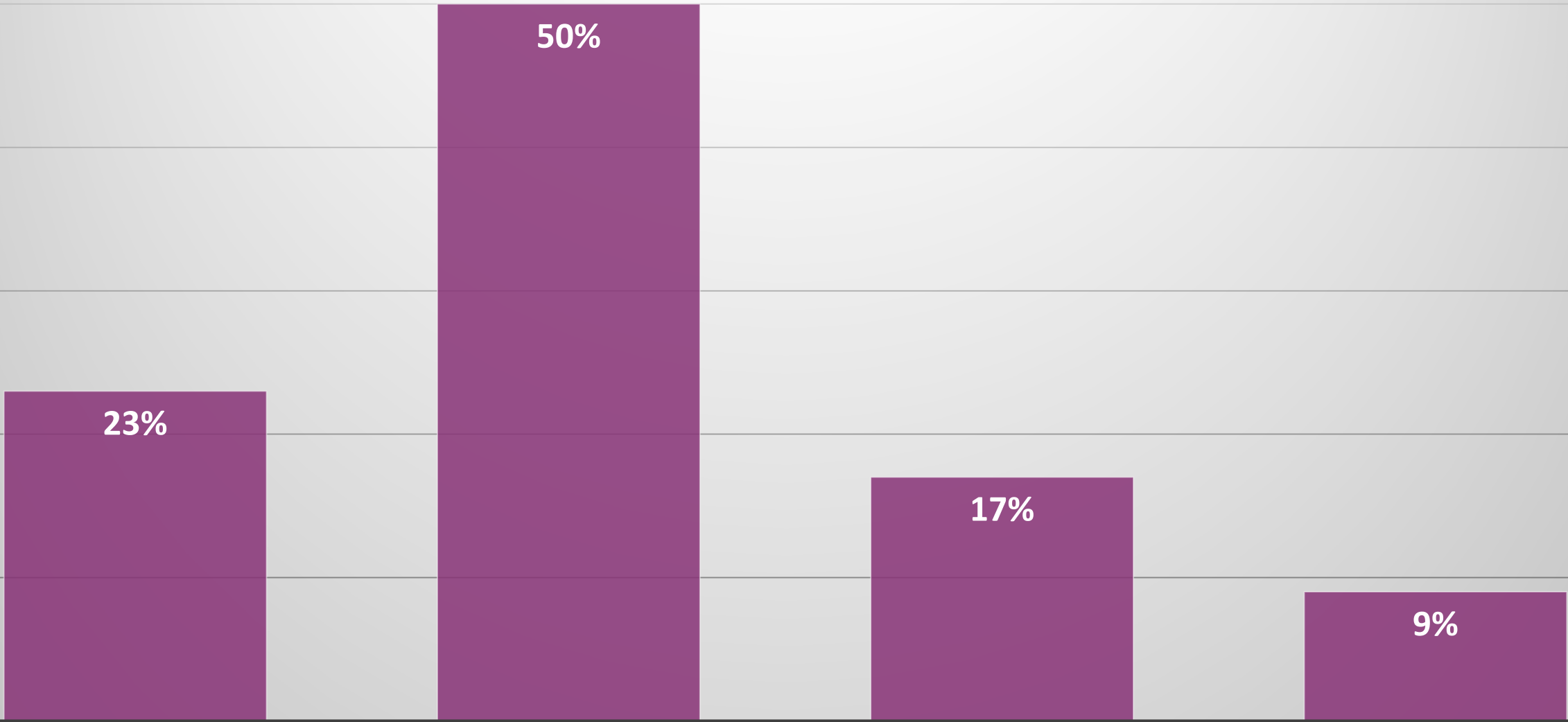
Skills Confidence

- Accountants are brilliant and numbers, deadlines, taxes, and accounting rules. But they are not known for their marketing prowess, even though it's an important business skill. Here's how accountants felt about their marketing skills.





Knowledge of Marketing



NOT KNOWLEDGEABLE AT ALL MODERATELY KNOWLEDGEABLE COMFORTABLY KNOWLEDGEABLE VERY KNOWLEDGEABLE

Results Confidence

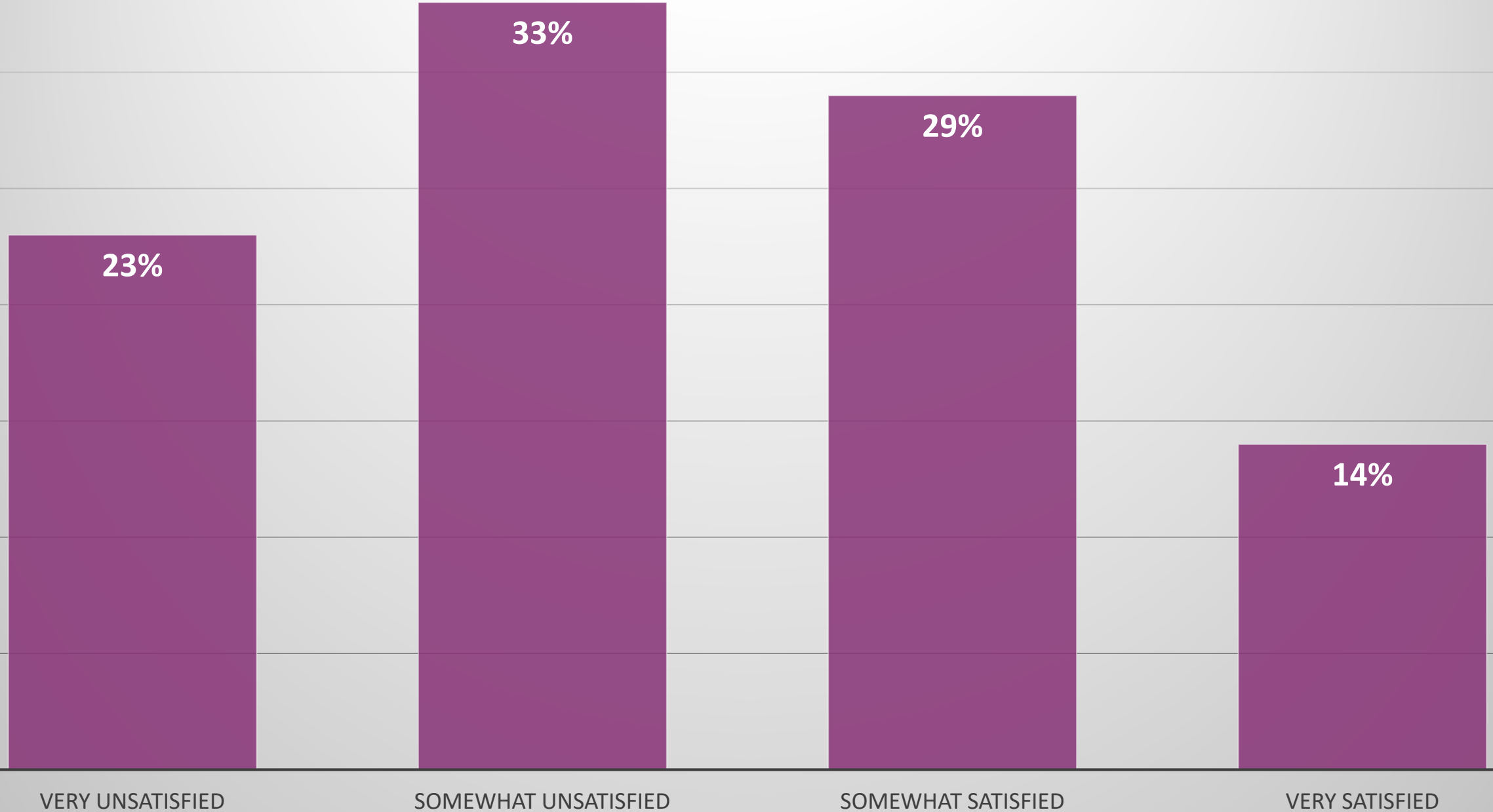
- And here's how accountants felt about their marketing results – a little less confident with their results than with their skills. Hmm.

An orange plastic clip is attached to the top of a yellow sticky note.

Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Very Good	<input type="checkbox"/>
Good	<input type="checkbox"/>
Average	<input type="checkbox"/>
Poor	<input type="checkbox"/>



Satisfaction with Marketing Results



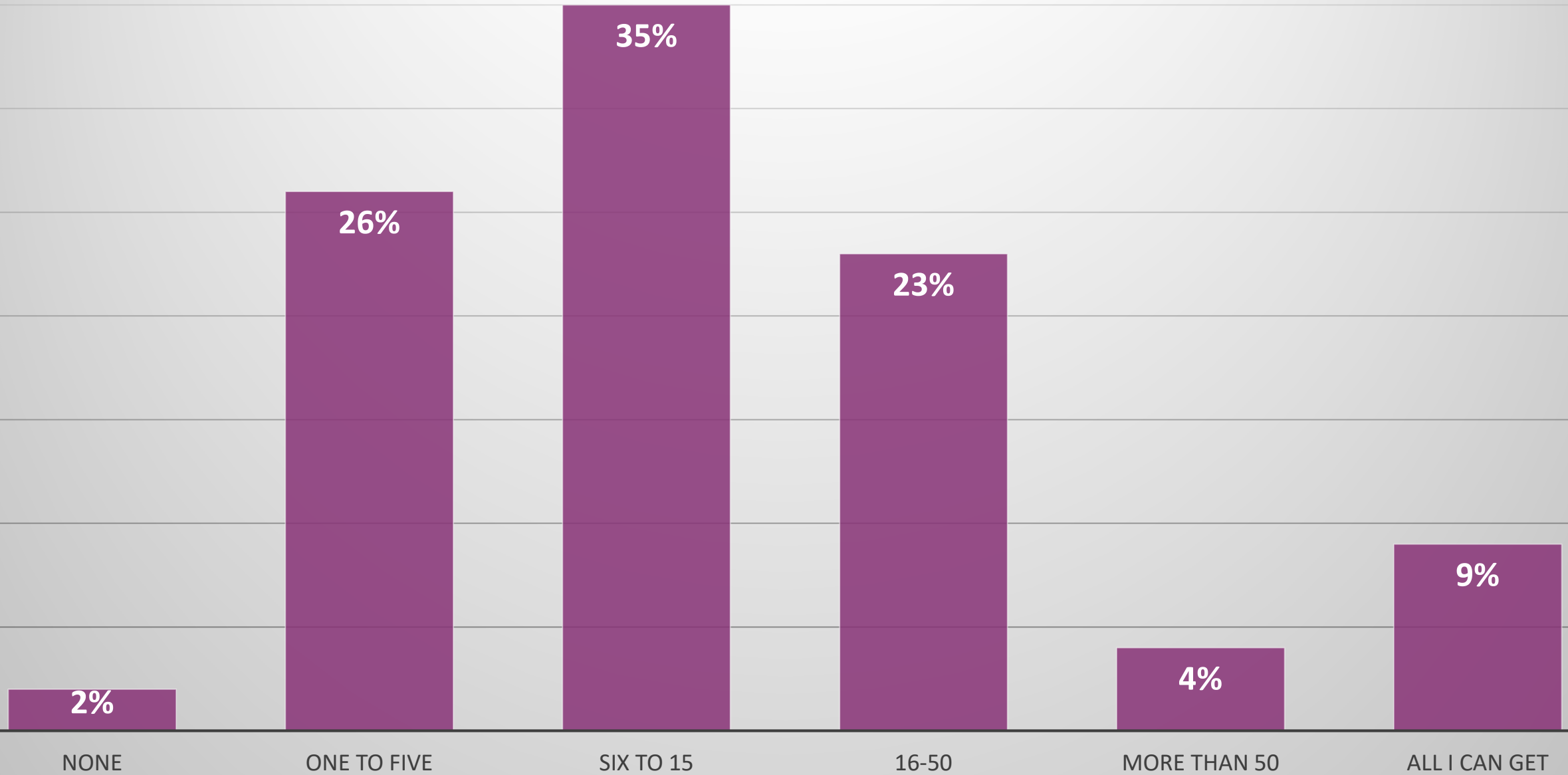
Number of New Clients Needed Each Year



Client Acquisition Volume

- How many clients do accountants want to acquire over the next year? The most common answer was six to 15.

Number of Desired New Clients Over One Year

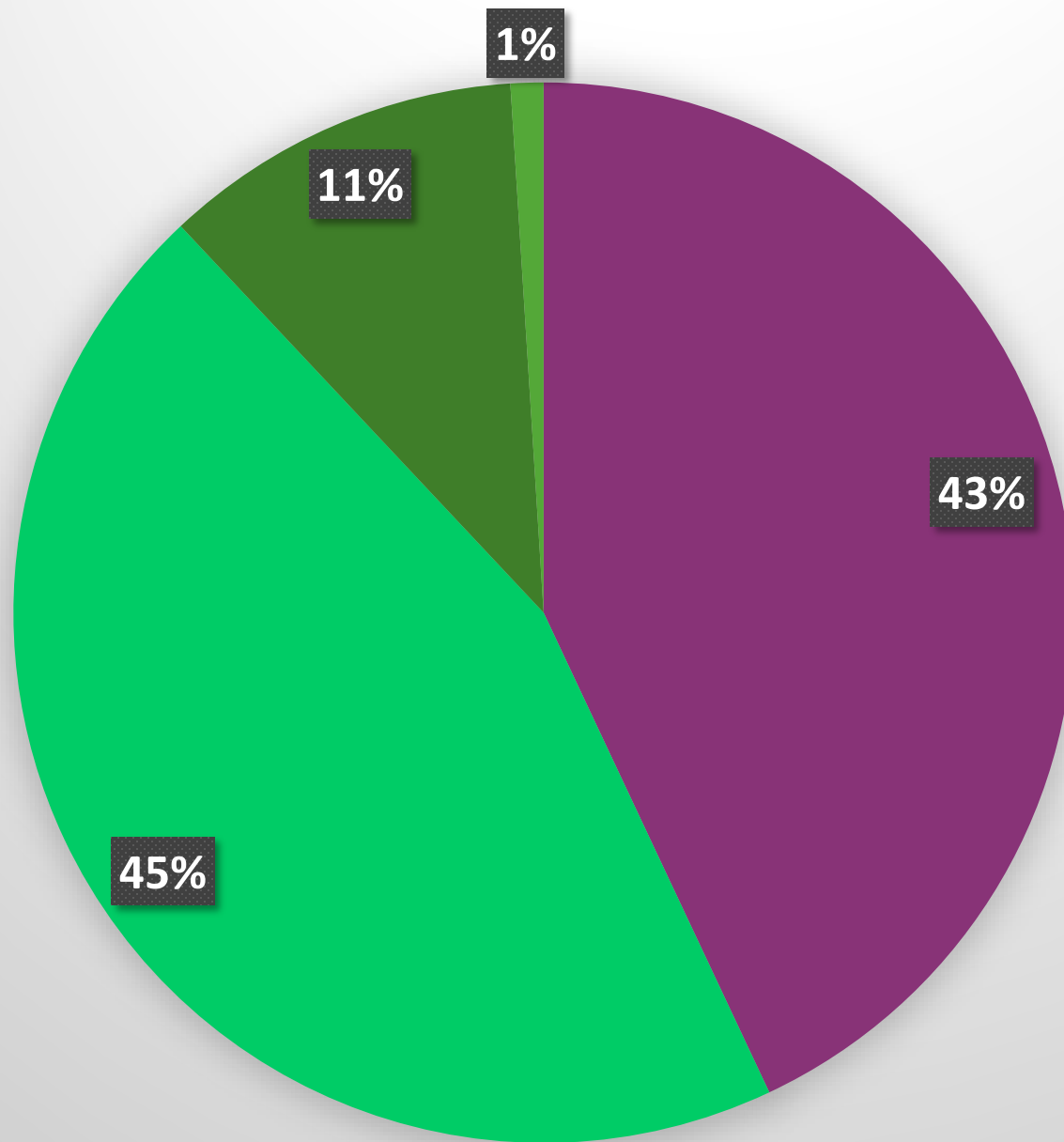


Demographic Data

Most of the firms that answered this survey were small firms with five employees or fewer.



Size of Firm



- Solo
- Two to Five
- Six to 15
- Over 15

Summary

- It's still relatively easy to acquire new clients in established accounting and tax firms. Most firms rely heavily on referrals from clients and other accounting professionals to acquire the bulk of their clients, keeping marketing costs extremely low.



Summary

- A small minority of accountants, roughly 10 percent, are using more modern marketing methods while a slightly larger number are using methods that are dated but must still be working for their desired client base.



Take Our Survey



<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/rnewclients>

Closes Friday, October 10, 2019



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Resources and Services



- CPA Trendlines
 - <https://cpatrendlines.com/shop/>
- Accountant's Accelerator
 - <https://acceleratorwebsites.com/>



