

LeanData



THE STATE OF GO-TO-MARKET EFFICIENCY REPORT: 2026 EDITION



THE STATE OF GO-TO-MARKET EFFICIENCY

How revenue teams are adapting, orchestrating, and accelerating growth in a year defined by AI, buying groups, and signal overload.

After several years of unpredictable markets and shifting buyer behavior, B2B revenue teams are rethinking how they operate.

GTM leaders are focused on improving operational efficiency, consolidating technology, and building processes that match the modern buyer journey.

This survey reflects the perspectives of hundreds of companies on how they plan to execute their go-to-market strategies in 2026 and where they see the greatest opportunities for growth.

Survey conducted in partnership with:

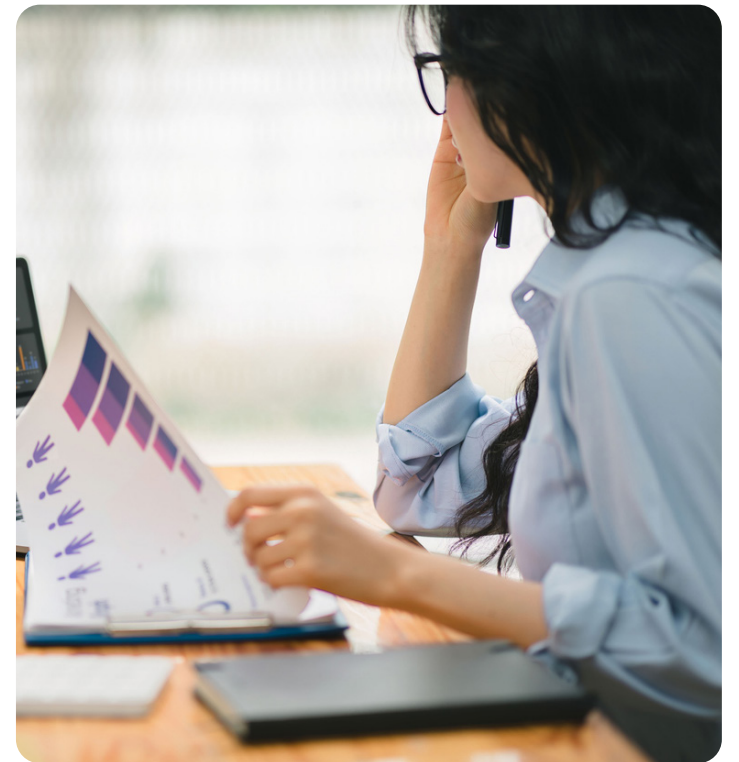


TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION: GTM LEADERSHIP IN A SIGNAL-DRIVEN, BUYER-LED ERA	03	ACCELERATING WORKFLOWS WITH AI	16
Key Findings	05	AI & SDR Functions	16
TODAY’S TOP GTM MOTIONS	07	GO-TO-MARKET EFFICIENCY	18
Opportunity-based Selling	08	Removing Friction	19
B2B CHALLENGES AND PRIORITIES	09	LOOKING FORWARD	21
Revenue Growth	10	DISCLOSURES	22
How Companies Combat Growth Challenges	11		
Other Priorities	12		
MARKETING & SALES ALIGNMENT	13		
Ineffective Lead Management	14		
How Lead Management Solutions Help with Alignment	15		



GTM LEADERSHIP IN A SIGNAL-DRIVEN, BUYER-LED ERA

Over the past several years, B2B companies have navigated unpredictable markets, shifting budgets, and rising expectations from modern buyers. But as we enter 2026, the challenge has changed.

Teams are now operating in a signal-driven GTM world, where buyers leave digital breadcrumbs across dozens of systems, sales cycles expand across buying groups, and AI accelerates the pace of execution.

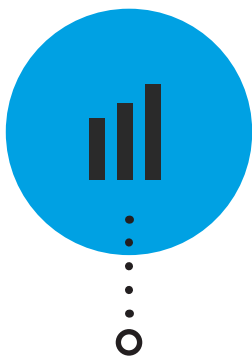
This new environment has forced GTM leaders to rethink not just what motions they run, but how those motions are orchestrated.

The hundreds of leaders represented in this survey reinforce a clear trend: **companies want to align their GTM execution with the actual buyer journey, and they’re restructuring teams, processes, and tech to make it possible.**



33%

of respondents ranked “new tech stack investments” in their top 3 priorities.



17%

growth returned to B2B SaaS after a steady decline the previous year.



20%

of respondents are feeling confident about delivering efficient, predictable growth while the rest range from uncertain to not at all.



Given the current economic climate, it's more challenging to close deals. After the fallout from the growth-at-all-costs mentality, companies are now more cautious with their budgets. People are hesitant to commit to new purchases, especially for something that puts their job on the line. They need to be convinced the investment will deliver immediate and measurable returns. This makes it essential for sellers to clearly demonstrate the value and ROI of our solutions.



Christine Maxey
Director of Revenue Operations
Groq

KEY FINDINGS

» Opportunity-based selling continues to rise.

This shift reflects how buyers actually behave today, **in buying groups**, across multiple channels, and with motion-specific interest. Opportunity-based selling is no longer an experiment. It is becoming the default.

» SDR roles are evolving as AI automates repetitive work.

In some cases, AI is replacing SDRs. In others, it's removing the manual parts of their jobs (qualification, research, timing signals) so teams can focus on higher-value interactions.

» Lead management processes remain a top barrier.

In 2026, this will be less about form fills and more about:

- Signal overload
- Fragmented tools
- Inconsistent handoffs
- Disconnected lifecycle data
- Blurred ownership between sales, marketing, and SDR teams

» Leaders expect stronger growth ahead, but only with more coordinated execution.

Optimism is returning, but growth is tied to:

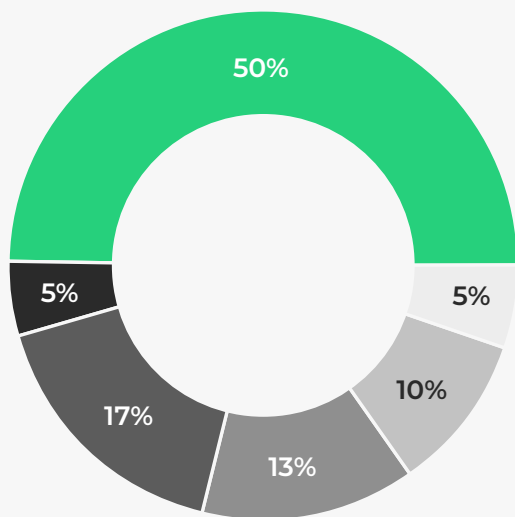
- Orchestration
- Process reliability
- Buying group execution
- Better data foundations
- Tool consolidation

KEY FINDINGS - CONTINUED

A LOOK AT THE SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

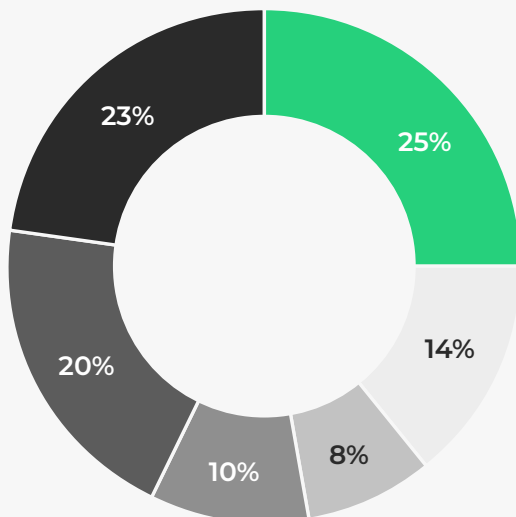
Survey participants consist of 208 professionals with a broad range of titles and seniority levels. The majority of respondents work at companies based in the US, UK, and Canada, with 19% distributed evenly across the globe.

BY INDUSTRY



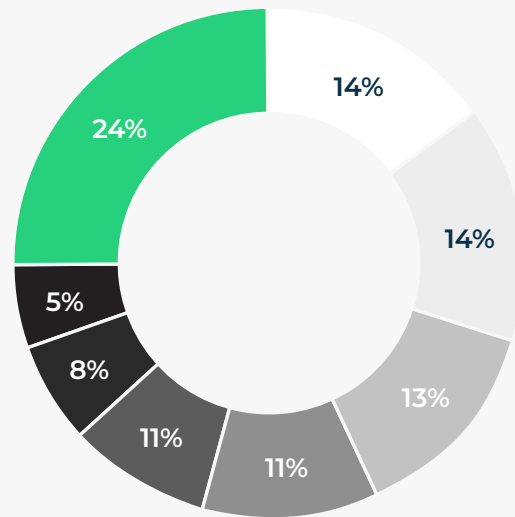
- Computer Software
- Finance and Financials
- Consulting
- Business Services
- Other
- Technology Hardware

BY DEPARTMENT



- Revenue Operations
- Other
- Sales Operations
- Marketing Operations
- Sales
- Marketing

BY ARR



- \$1M - \$10M
- \$100M - \$1B
- \$50M - \$100M
- \$25M - \$50M
- \$500K - \$1M
- >\$1B
- \$10M - \$25M
- <\$500K



TODAY'S TOP GO-TO-MARKET (GTM) MOTIONS

Today's GTM motion mix reflects a shift from channel execution to multi-motion orchestration.

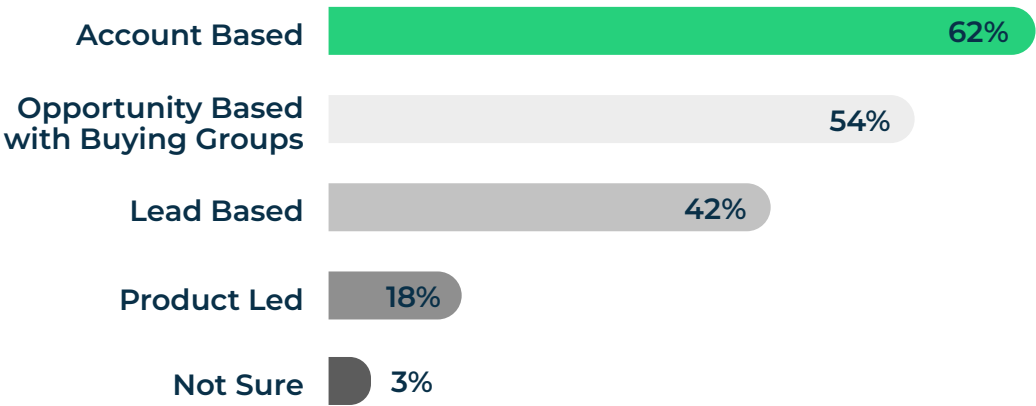
Why this matters in 2026

The adoption rates across ABM, opportunity-based selling, and traditional lead-based processes clearly show that most companies are running several GTM motions in parallel.

Without coordinated workflows and shared visibility, these motions often compete instead of complementing each other, contributing to the **nearly 40 percent of GTM leaders who say hitting revenue targets is very challenging**.

Which GTM motions are companies using?

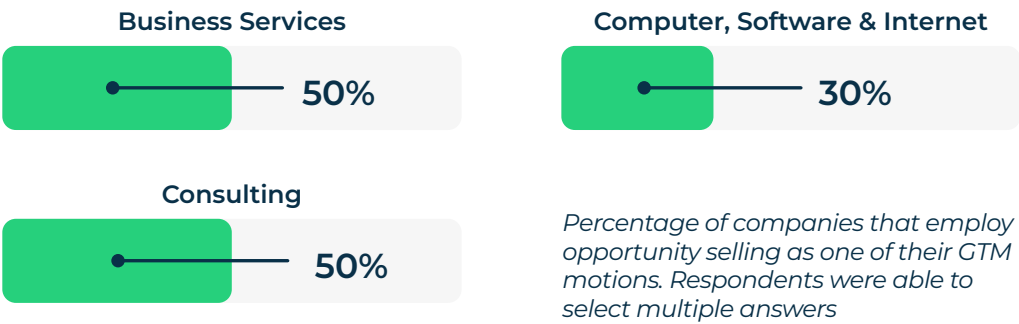
When asked about their active motions, respondents aligned with the broader trends shaping enterprise B2B teams:



Respondents were allowed to choose more than one GTM motion.

Opportunity-Based Selling is now an execution advantage

Opportunity-based selling reflects how enterprise buyers actually make decisions. It is a natural extension of ABM. It accounts for specific solution interest, persona engagement, and dynamic buying groups. It moves companies beyond account-level generalizations toward solution-aligned execution. Further, this strategy gives teams tighter alignment, cleaner handoffs, and improved precision around buyer intent, essentials for modern GTM orchestration.



Implementing an Opportunity-centric Motion can lead to an increase of up to 25% in deal closure rates.

OPPORTUNITY-BASED SELLING: WHAT IT IS & HOW IT WORKS

Opportunity-based selling organizes GTM execution around specific opportunities and the buying groups attached to them, rather than individual leads. It reflects how modern B2B companies actually buy: collaboratively, across roles, and through multiple signals.

A GTM platform supports opportunity-based selling when it can:

- » Identify new inquiries and match them to the correct account
- » Map each signal to the right opportunity
- » Update or build the buying group automatically
- » Trigger coordinated actions across sales and marketing

Many companies now blend product-led and enterprise motions, treating product usage and engagement as additional signals that strengthen opportunity and buying group context.

With multiple motions running in parallel, shared visibility becomes critical. Therefore, when teams lack aligned workflows or unified buyer data, execution becomes inconsistent and revenue processes breakdown.

“Looking to the future of go-to-market (GTM) strategies, I see more and more sellers moving away from Lead-centric processes toward a buying-group motion based in Opportunities. This shift will require GTM platforms that capture buying signals, orchestrate responses across teams, and support the buyer journey end to end. Also, customer needs are constantly evolving so it’s crucial to stay ahead of trends. This means not only developing products that meet and exceed customer expectations but also providing exceptional service.”



Evan Liang
Chief Strategy Officer
LeanData

B2B CHALLENGES AND PRIORITIES

Despite new tools and more signals than ever, revenue teams continue to struggle with core fundamentals:

Meeting Revenue Targets

>> 96%

found it somewhat to very challenging

Generating Sufficient Pipeline

>> 88%

found it somewhat to very challenging

Creating Qualified Opportunities

>> 87%

found it somewhat to very challenging

The majority of respondents struggled not only to attract a high volume of leads (pipeline) but also capture high-quality leads that would convert under effective nurturing.

The common thread:

Most GTM processes are not aligned with how buyers actually buy.

Buyers rarely follow linear journeys today. Instead, they:

- engage across multiple channels
- self-educate extensively
- involve 8-12 internal stakeholders
- expect personalized interactions

Without unified signals or consistent workflows, companies lose critical windows of engagement.



REVENUE GROWTH REMAINS A TOP CONCERN

Growth-related challenges remain the most polarizing. While some organizations doubled down on retention and margin improvement during the slowdown years, many now feel pressure to reignite top-of-funnel activity.

71% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that revenue growth was a challenge.

Why this divergence exists:

- » Some companies are still cleaning up their tech stacks.
- » Some are retooling entire GTM motions around AI.
- » Others are reorganizing functions (SDR → RevOps-owned, MOPs → RevOps consolidations).
- » Expanding buying groups make qualification harder.
- » Teams need better signal integration to prioritize the right accounts.

The most polarizing three metrics:



Pipeline Growth



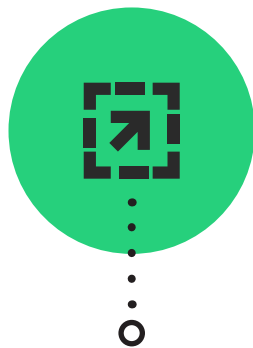
ARR Growth



NRR Growth

HOW COMPANIES COMBAT GROWTH CHALLENGES

Companies are looking to technology to solve deeper operational issues:



30%

of respondents ranked “accelerating digital transformation” as one of their top three priorities.



33%

ranked “new tech stack investments” in their top three list.



30%

ranked “tech stack consolidation” in their top three.

To be clear, it’s not about adding more tools. Revenue teams want platforms that orchestrate, not point solutions. And increasingly, they expect those platforms to include AI that improves execution, not just analytics.

Teams now look for solutions that can:

- **Unify signals** across systems and channels
- **Use AI to automate lifecycle execution** based on real buyer behavior
- **Provide cross-functional visibility** for sales, marketing, and customer teams
- **Enrich and normalize data automatically** without IT overhead
- **Predict and prioritize buying signals** so teams act faster
- **Reduce manual effort** and remove the operational burden from ops, IT, and RevOps teams

Revenue leaders want **AI-powered orchestration**, not static workflows. They want platforms that learn, adapt, and guide better decisions as conditions change.



OTHER PRIORITIES: DATA, TECH, AND RESILIENT TEAMS

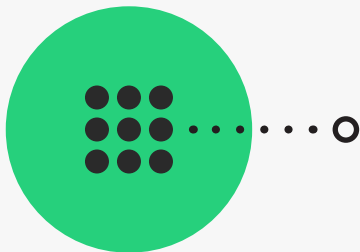
In a crowded buyer landscape, **data hygiene and accuracy have become non-negotiable.**

In fact, 43% of survey respondents rated data hygiene as a high priority. Many companies now recognize clean data as a **competitive advantage.**

Companies want systems that connect data, normalize it and activate it.

Why it matters today:

- AI models amplify bad data.
- Buying group execution fails without accurate associations.
- Sales engagement platforms misfire without correct context.
- Forecasting becomes unreliable without unified signals.



43%

of respondents reported data hygiene to be a high priority

“The only real path from go-to-market bloat to business efficiency is to know your market, your landscape, and buying group thoroughly. For marketing to drive an organization’s position in their market, marketers must weave together disparate intent signals, truly own pipeline orchestration, and partner with sales for opportunity-based selling.”



Maura Ginty
GTM Advisor
Maeve Consulting

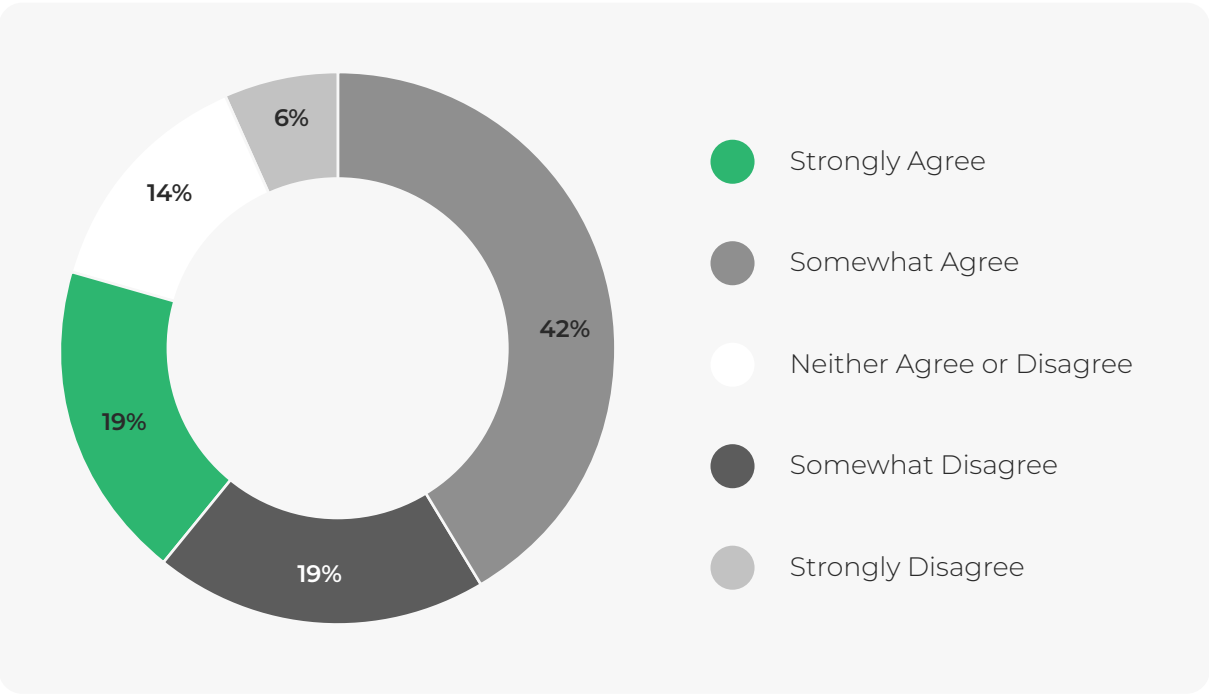
MARKETING AND SALES ALIGNMENT

One of the biggest blockers to growth is misalignment of sales and marketing team priorities and operations. Survey participants were asked if their teams were aligned and how well their systems supported their goals for lead management and conversion.

Nearly 40% of respondents don't believe sales and marketing are aligned.

Even though the majority of respondents at least somewhat agree that sales and marketing are aligned (61%), that leaves a whopping 39% who don't. Here's how they answered questions around alignment and lead management:

"I believe my sales and marketing teams are properly aligned to deliver efficient, predictable growth this year."



Revenue alignment shouldn't be a "nice-to-have" at any organization—it should be a central tenet for your GTM.

Revenue alignment should look like:

- Working towards the same customers in lockstep across sales and marketing
- Shared success metrics
- Constant communication about goal-setting and progress
- Put the interests of the company first



Christian Kletzl
CEO & Co-Founder
UserGems

By leveraging both departments' resources, B2B companies can increase their visibility in the marketplace, boost their revenue, and build customer loyalty.

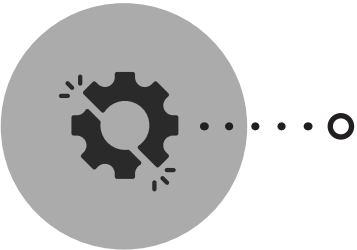
**Sales and Marketing Alignment:
One Target for Better Revenue**
[Cognism](#), June 2025



INEFFECTIVE LEAD MANAGEMENT

Many companies don't have an effective lead management strategy or system in place for reaching their conversion goals.

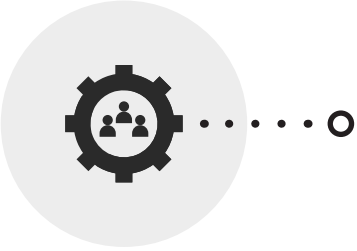
When asked about their current lead management strategies and technology that supports them, a significant percentage of respondents showed little confidence:



13%
believe their current lead management strategy is not at all effective for reaching conversion goals.



20%
don't believe their current lead management system will support their organization's revenue goals in 2024.



25%
don't believe their organization's lead management systems and processes help them deliver an ideal customer experience.

For modern GTM teams, “lead management” means coordinating execution across **leads, contacts, accounts, opportunities, and buying groups**.



HOW LEAD MANAGEMENT SOLUTIONS HELP WITH ALIGNMENT

Giving sales and marketing teams a single view of signals across leads, opportunities, accounts, and buying groups helps teams coordinate execution across the entire buyer journey. It also brings together two functions that traditionally get stuck in silos. When marketing and sales ops dashboards match, both teams can move confidently ahead on top-priority deals.

HERE ARE FIVE WAYS TO IMPROVE ALIGNMENT:

- 1. Intelligent lead delivery:** Use a platform that can assign every lead accurately. Even if your data hygiene isn't perfect, you'll be able to route to the right reps based on dynamic logic and buying signals from the account.
- 2. Converting signals to revenue:** Prioritize the most valuable buyer signals by eliminating manual scoring and qualification. Instead, detect signals across all the platforms that prospects interact with and use the signals to personalize outreach and content.
- 3. Enterprise Salesforce orchestration:** Improve the way you integrate enterprise solutions and automate sales and marketing workflows. Use flexible, no-code tools to connect data and accelerate the sales process through every pipeline stage.
- 4. Enrich lead and opportunity data:** Invest in tools that clean and verify data as it enters your CRM. The best platforms on the market enrich lead, opportunity, and account data with accurate contact details, changes in job roles, buying intent, and more.
- 5. Embrace AI for a seamless handoff:** Engage and convert your most valuable website visitors with live chat, chatbots, and meeting scheduling, all automated and informed by a single view of opportunity and account data.

“Everyone’s ultimate focus should be Customer Lifetime Value (LTV). What is the most efficient and quickest way to get to the highest LTV possible? Which channels support this? How can you align and incentivize teams to prioritize this? What are the precursor goals to getting there? Then for the things that you identify as less efficient you need to form a few hypotheses for how it can improve, then test and measure them a few times. If it improves, great. If it doesn’t you should end it ASAP and move on. During challenging economic times, you can’t waste time trying to fix channels or motions that aren’t giving you the highest LTV returns.”



Chris Boeckelman
VP of Growth Marketing
Qualified

ACCELERATING WORKFLOWS WITH AI

AI has become one of the biggest drivers of workflow acceleration across modern go-to-market teams. What began as experiments with generative copywriting has rapidly evolved into **agentic AI**, where systems can interpret signals, take action, and improve execution across the entire buyer journey.

Teams are applying AI in three major ways:

1. Replacing slow, manual funnel steps

Many companies now use AI agents for first-touch engagement, qualification, and meeting scheduling. These agents interpret buyer intent in real time, respond conversationally, and trigger next steps without waiting on human capacity. GTM leaders reported dramatic reductions in response time and higher conversion from anonymous or early-stage interest.

2. Automating operational complexity

AI is reshaping traditional lead management. Machine learning models predict fit and prioritize buying signals. Agentic AI executes workflow steps that used to require humans: enrichment, scoring, routing, or moving contacts into buying groups. As a result, operations teams can instead focus on strategy instead of maintenance.

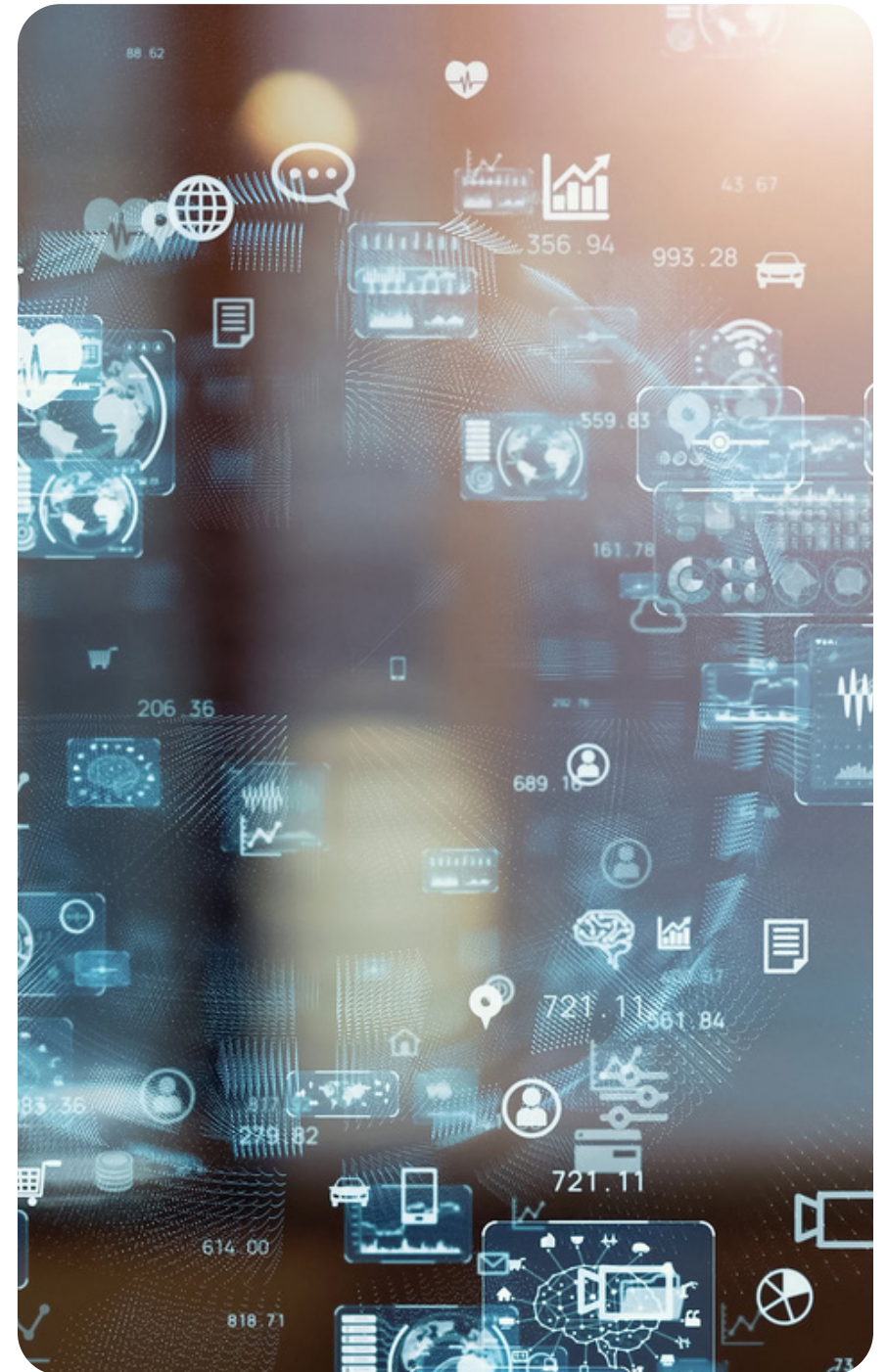
3. Personalizing at scale

AI identifies high-value prospects, enriches incomplete records, and adapts outreach based on behavior. This shifts personalization away from static nurture paths and into continuously updated, signal-driven interactions.

The net effect

AI accelerates workflows by removing bottlenecks: long response times, rigid nurture programs, human triage, data gaps, and tool sprawl. Instead of forcing buyers through slow, predefined steps, AI reads the journey moment to moment and orchestrates the right action automatically.

For many GTM leaders, AI is becoming the connective layer between signals and execution, enabling faster, cleaner, and more adaptable processes across the revenue lifecycle.



AI IS EXPECTED TO REPLACE SDR FUNCTIONS TO SOME DEGREE.

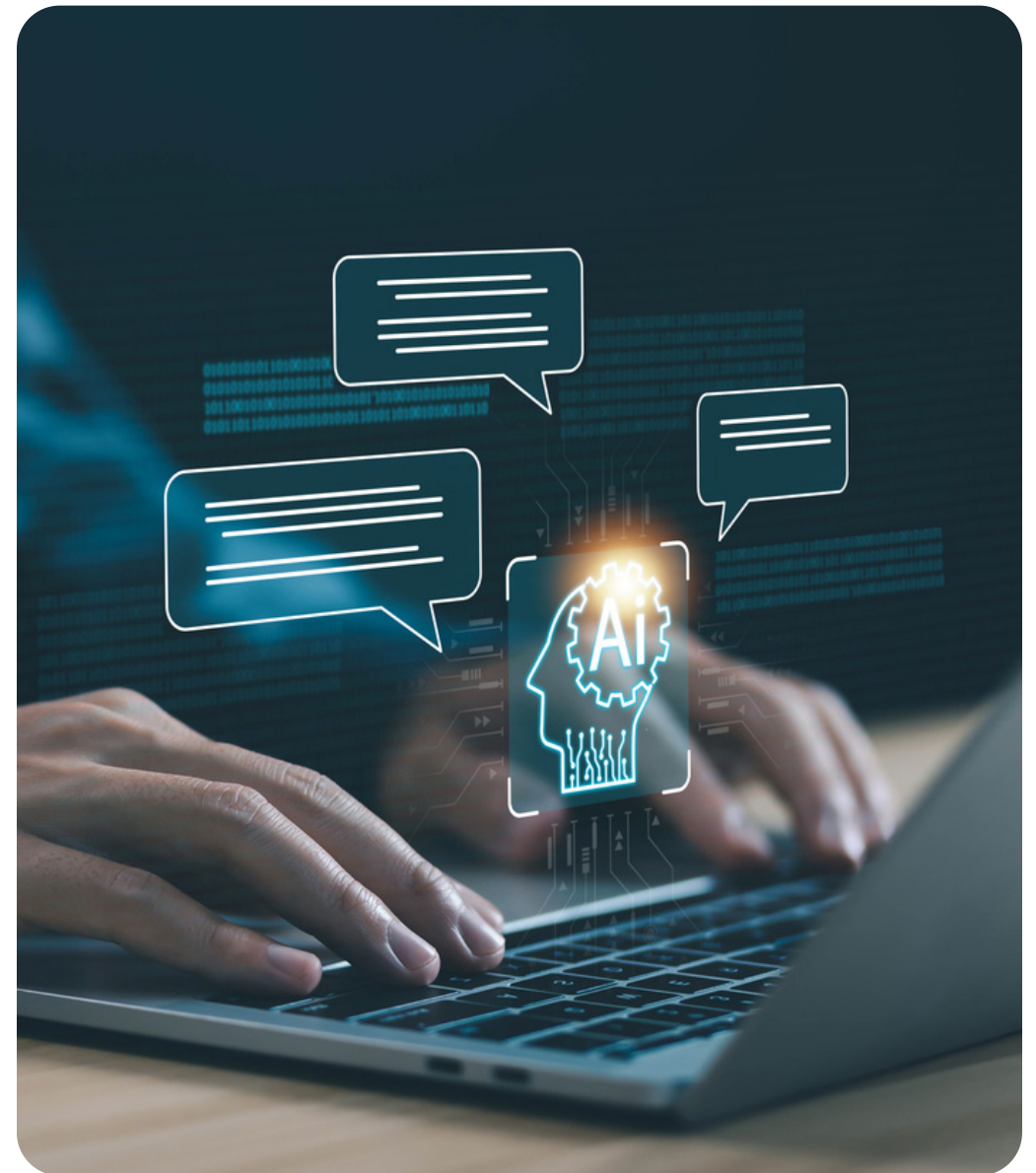
When asked which areas they expect AI to impact the most, respondents ranked “replacing SDR functions” the highest.

The workflows that AI is most likely to transform include:

- » Writing and scheduling email outreach
- » Using chatbots to provide initial information to prospects
- » Scheduling meetings with leads
- » Evaluating the quality and buying intent of each lead
- » Connecting leads to the right accounts and opportunities in a CRM

“There is a general sense among the leaders in sales software that we will end up with fewer, better SDRs, and that the majority of email and follow-up will be done with AI.”

Jason Lemkin
Investor & Founder, SaaStr



GO-TO-MARKET EFFICIENCY

According to survey results, companies are struggling with deals further in the pipeline. While they seemed happy with their speed-to-lead, they rated themselves progressively worse as the deal stage moved toward closed/won.

Respondents rated how long it takes to get to different stages in their pipeline. The farther along in the pipeline, the more they described efficiency as “slower than average”.

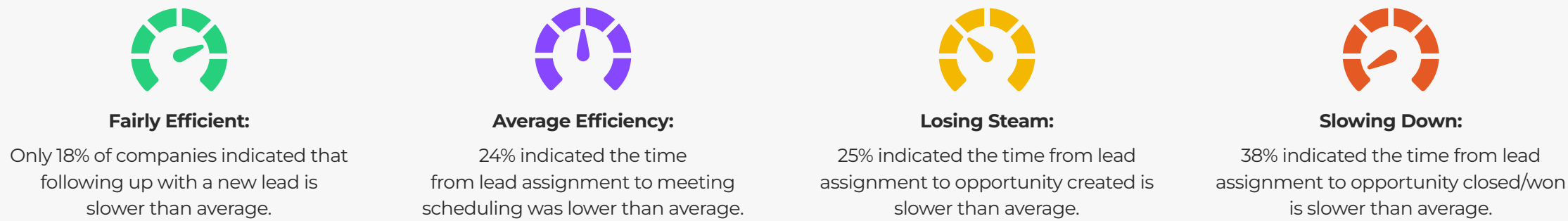


“B2B sales is more complex and competitive than ever. Decision-makers are more informed which means Sellers need to deeply understand their prospects and their businesses. Plus, with economic uncertainties, companies are scrutinizing expenditures more closely. Sales teams must be prepared to clearly articulate the value proposition of their product, be able to demonstrate ROI, and show that their solution closely aligns with the strategic goals of the buyer.”



Brian Birkett
Chief Sales Officer
LeanData

The further along the pipeline, the more companies describe efficiency as “slower than average.”

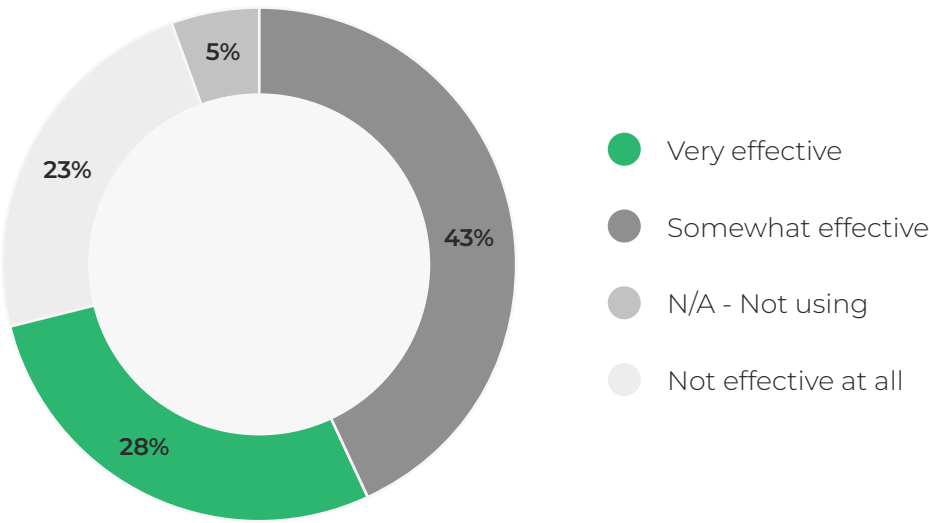


REMOVING FRICTION

Scheduling automation is extremely effective for removing friction in the sales cycle.

According to our results, only about 60% of respondents are using a scheduling automation tool. Of those who do however, **93% find it effective** in reducing friction in the sales cycle.

How effective do you find a scheduling tool in reducing friction?



How can companies achieve faster conversions at each stage?

It's incredibly important to be able to deliver the right leads to the right reps at the right time. Companies with efficiency gaps can lean on solutions that automate the process of following up with leads and getting them scheduled for a call with the sales team.

This includes things like:

- » Enriching lead, account, and opportunity records with additional context and details automatically
- » Sending tailored content and following up after events like webinars
- » Identifying champions and power users within your prospect or customer base
- » Using AI chatbots to engage users on your website and in your products



The timing and coordination of follow up on leads is critical. For example, Prospects are 60x more likely to convert if a webinar includes marketing materials afterward. You can really give your sales team an advantage with integrations that capture engagement and insight about buying intent.



Roberto Ortiz
Co-Founder & CEO
Welcome

LOOKING FORWARD

The next era of go-to-market will reward companies that can align strategy, data, and execution around how buyers actually move through their journeys. The survey results show clear momentum toward opportunity-based motions, signal-driven engagement, and deeper coordination across revenue teams. But the biggest shift underway is the rise of **AI-powered GTM orchestration**.

AI is reshaping workflows. GTM leaders are using AI to interpret buyer signals, prioritize actions, automate qualification and handoffs, and eliminate friction across the lifecycle. These capabilities reduce the burden on Ops and IT teams while improving consistency, accuracy, and speed.

Based on the findings in this report and insights from modern GTM teams, companies preparing for 2026 and beyond should focus on:

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Adopting AI that accelerates buyer-facing and operational workflows
2. Strengthening opportunity-based selling with dynamic buying groups
3. Improving alignment across marketing, sales, and customer teams
4. Investing in data quality and signal unification
5. Selecting scalable, orchestration-ready platforms over isolated point tools
6. Building lead and opportunity management strategies that match how buyers actually buy

Organizations that embrace these six recommendations will be best positioned to achieve efficient growth, higher revenue performance, and stronger customer outcomes in the years ahead.



RECOMMENDED RESOURCES



EBOOK

Signal-Driven Go-to-Market Execution:
How to Turn Buyer Signals into Revenue



DEMO

LeanData Demo in 100 Seconds



CASE STUDY

Rocket Software Increases Marketing
Qualified Lead Velocity by 75%

Disclosures

LeanData, in partnership with Cognism, Modern Sales Pros, Qualified, UserGems, and Welcome conducted this research with the explicit permission and approval by all survey and research participants. The material contained herein is based on sources considered to be reliable; however, LeanData and partners do not guarantee or warrant the accuracy or completeness of information.

This report is for informational purposes only.

GET STARTED TODAY

Visit [LeanData.com](https://leandata.com) to learn more about LeanData's Intelligent GTM Orchestration solutions for Automated Scheduling, Matching, Routing and Engagement, or visit us on [AppExchange](#).

REQUEST A DEMO

Why LeanData?

LeanData helps B2B enterprises fuel efficient growth by aligning marketing, sales, and customer service execution with the buyer journey. Our Intelligent GTM Orchestration platform acts as the connective tissue across the revenue lifecycle, integrating and normalizing buyer data, automating signal-driven workflows, and delivering AI-powered insights. The result is faster, cleaner execution and the ability to adapt GTM motions with agility without coding. More than 1,000 leading companies and a community of 5,000+ OpsStars rely on LeanData to achieve speed to lead, higher conversions, accelerated pipeline, and predictable growth by turning buyer signals into coordinated action.

