

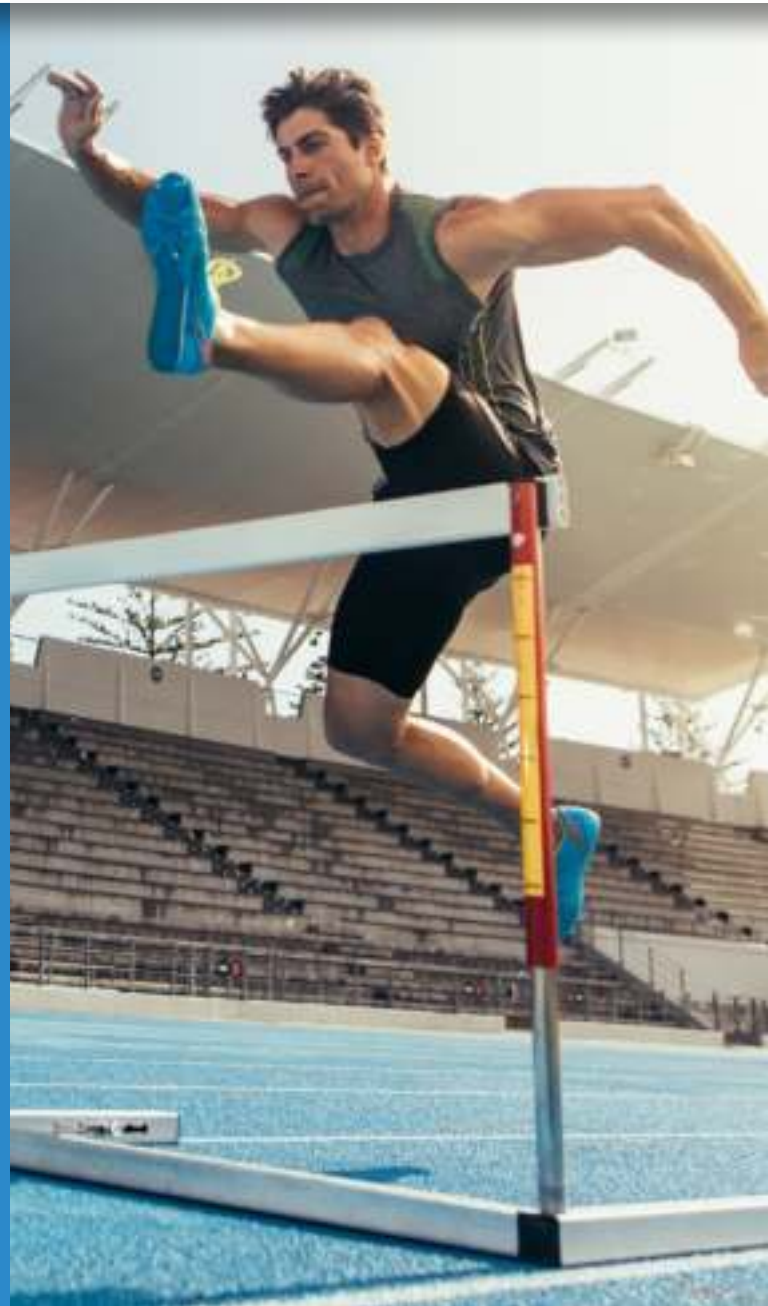
2022

# RSW/US Agency New Business Report

Perspective On The  
Agency New Business  
Environment,  
2022 and Beyond

A Survey Of Agencies  
Conducted By

**RSW/US**  
New Business Solutions for Marketing Agencies



## Table of Contents

2	Table of Contents
3	Introduction
5	Difficulty of Obtaining New Business
9	Satisfaction With New Business Program
10	Dollar Volumes Of New Business in 2022
11	Most Effective Tools At Generating New Business
13	Average “New” New Business Meetings Per Month
14	Average Time Between First Meeting To Close
15	In-House Agency Collaboration
16	Success And Tenure Of New Business Directors
20	Competitive Pitching Frequency
21	Competitive Pitching Frequency, cont’d
22	Prevalence Of Non-Diversified Client Portfolios
23	Efficacy of Sales Outreach
25	New Business Outreach and Sender Reputation
27	New Business Outreach and Intent Data
29	Conclusion

## About Us

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This study was commissioned by RSW/US. RSW/US is an outsourced lead generation/business development firm that exclusively services marketing service firms (of all sizes and types). RSW/US works with over 50 agencies across the U.S., operating as their outsourced sales and marketing team. RSW was founded in 2005.

In 2010, RSW started RSW/AgencySearch. To-date, RSW/AgencySearch has managed over 40 searches for marketers across a range of different categories, helping them find better agencies. The RSW/AgencySearch model is unique to the industry.

The exposure to the agency and the marketer world has armed RSW/US with perspective unmatched in the industry. This perspective is woven throughout this and every survey report.

To learn more about RSW/US, visit [www.rswus.com](http://www.rswus.com).

To learn more about RSW/AgencySearch, visit [www.rswagencysearch.com](http://www.rswagencysearch.com).

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agency site score cards, survey  
reports and eBooks.

### About the Report

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This is the RSW/US 2022 Agency New Business Report: Perspective On The Agency New Business Environment, 2022 and Beyond.

We've fielded this survey since 2010, and in this year's edition we present comparable data that is available across all previous editions, providing insight on trends in key areas over the past ten years. This report is typically heavily downloaded because the answers come from our survey of your agency peers.

This year's survey and the resulting RSW/US 2022 Agency New Business Report see ad agencies, marketing services firms, and PR firms in a different place in 2022; with organic growth slowing and "new" new business tougher to get, agencies have some work to do.

Over 3,000 Agency executives nationwide had the opportunity to participate, and in fielding the survey, we wanted to discern how the challenges and dynamics of agency new business efforts have evolved as we came out of 2021 and progressed through 2022.

Our hope is the key findings and implications of the study presented in this report provide value as you develop your plans for the remainder of 2022 and into 2023.

If you would like to reproduce any of our findings in any format whatsoever, please

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## Difficulty of Obtaining New Business

### We Asked Agencies: How Difficult Is Obtaining New Business, Compared to Last Year?

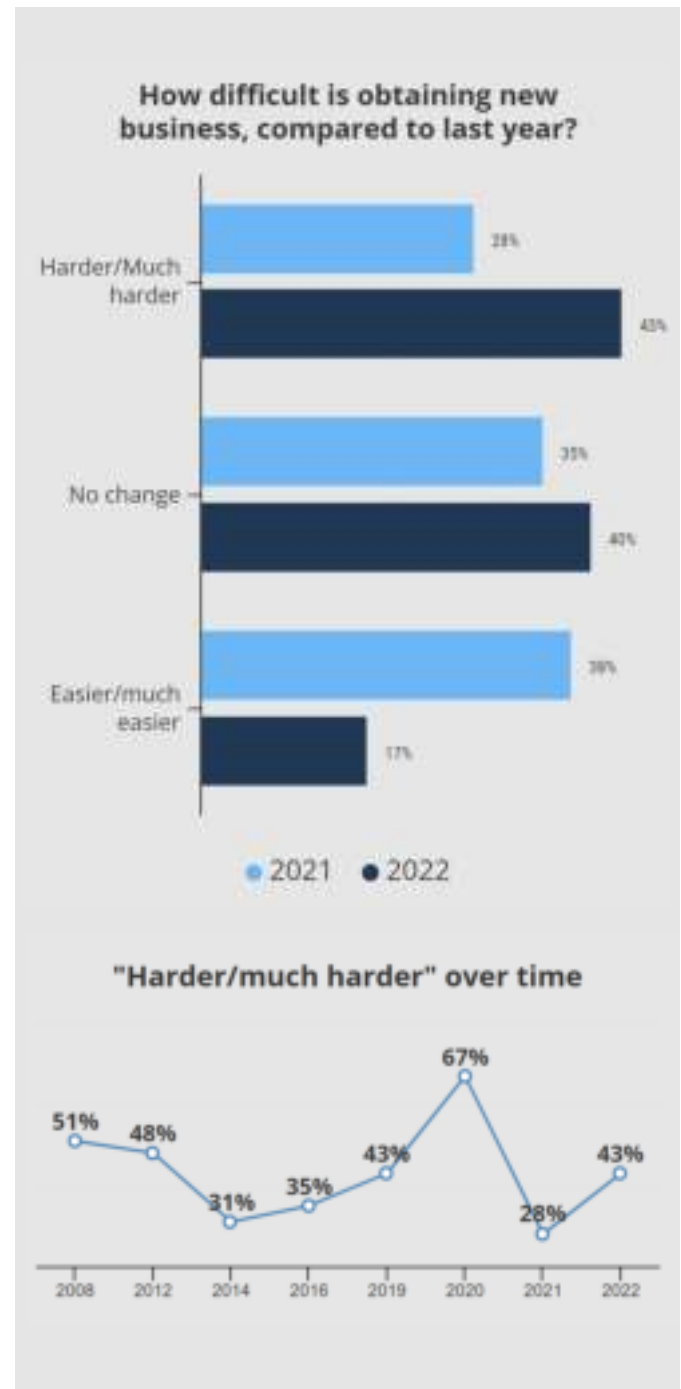
After an unprecedented 2021 survey report, where only 28% of agencies reported obtaining new business (compared to the previous year) as harder or a lot harder, this year we see the cyclical nature of the ad industry rear its head again.

In 2022, 43% of agencies report that obtaining new business (compared to the previous year) is harder or a lot harder than it was in 2021.

Looking at the responses from this question dating back to 2008, 2021 was a high point for many agencies, with only 28% saying it was harder to obtain new business that year. Following the lockdown, budget freezes, and the overall extreme uncertainty of 2020, agencies needed that respite--and thankfully they got it. But as we'll see, business is inevitably becoming harder to acquire again in 2022.

### Implications

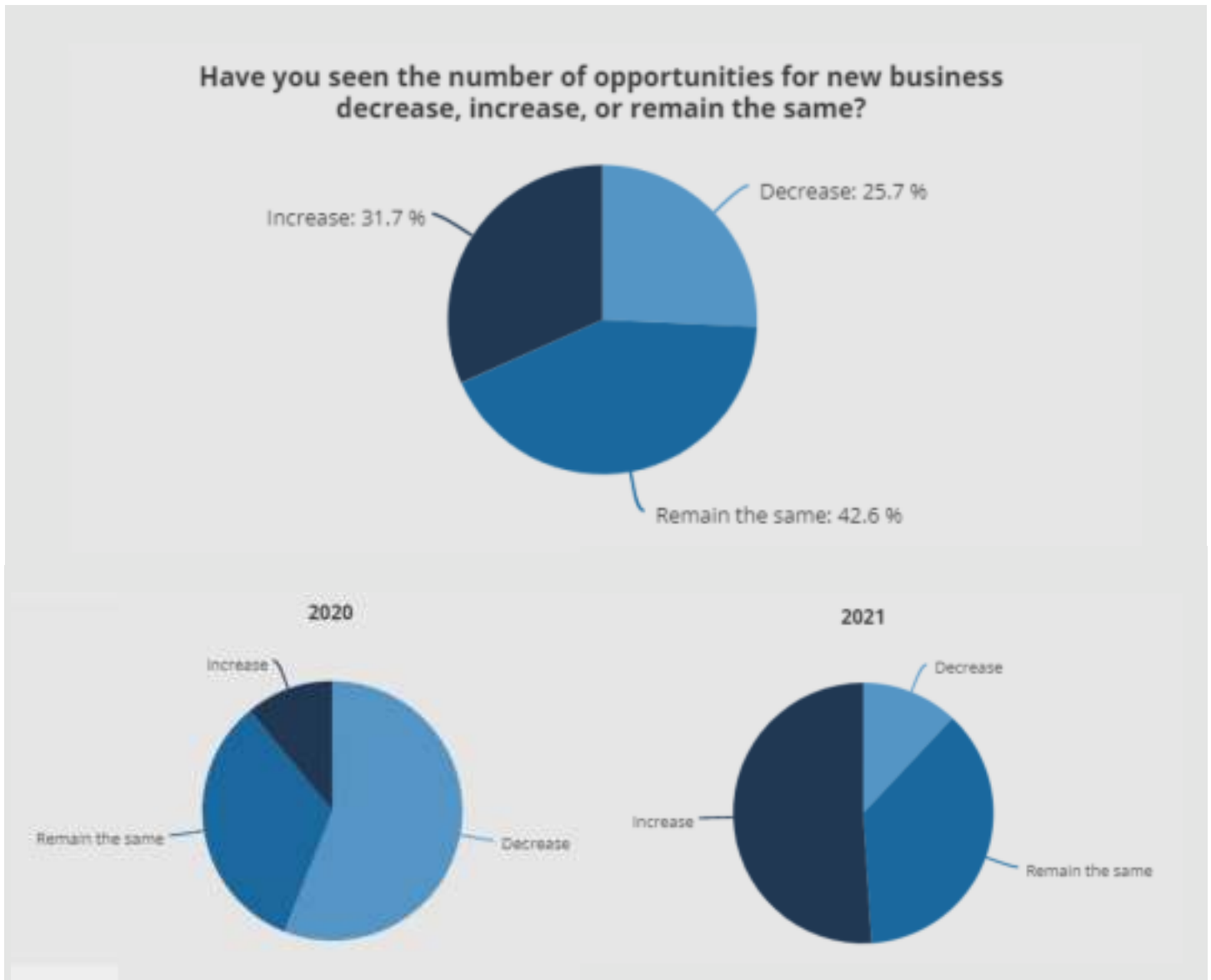
Looking at the data from another angle, only 17% of agencies said it was easier or a lot easier to obtain new business in 2022, versus 38% in 2021.



## Difficulty of Obtaining New Business, cont'd

And in our follow-up question, "Relative to last year, have you seen the number of opportunities for new business decrease, increase, or remain the same?", we saw that 32% of agencies said the number of opportunities for new business increased, versus 51% last year.

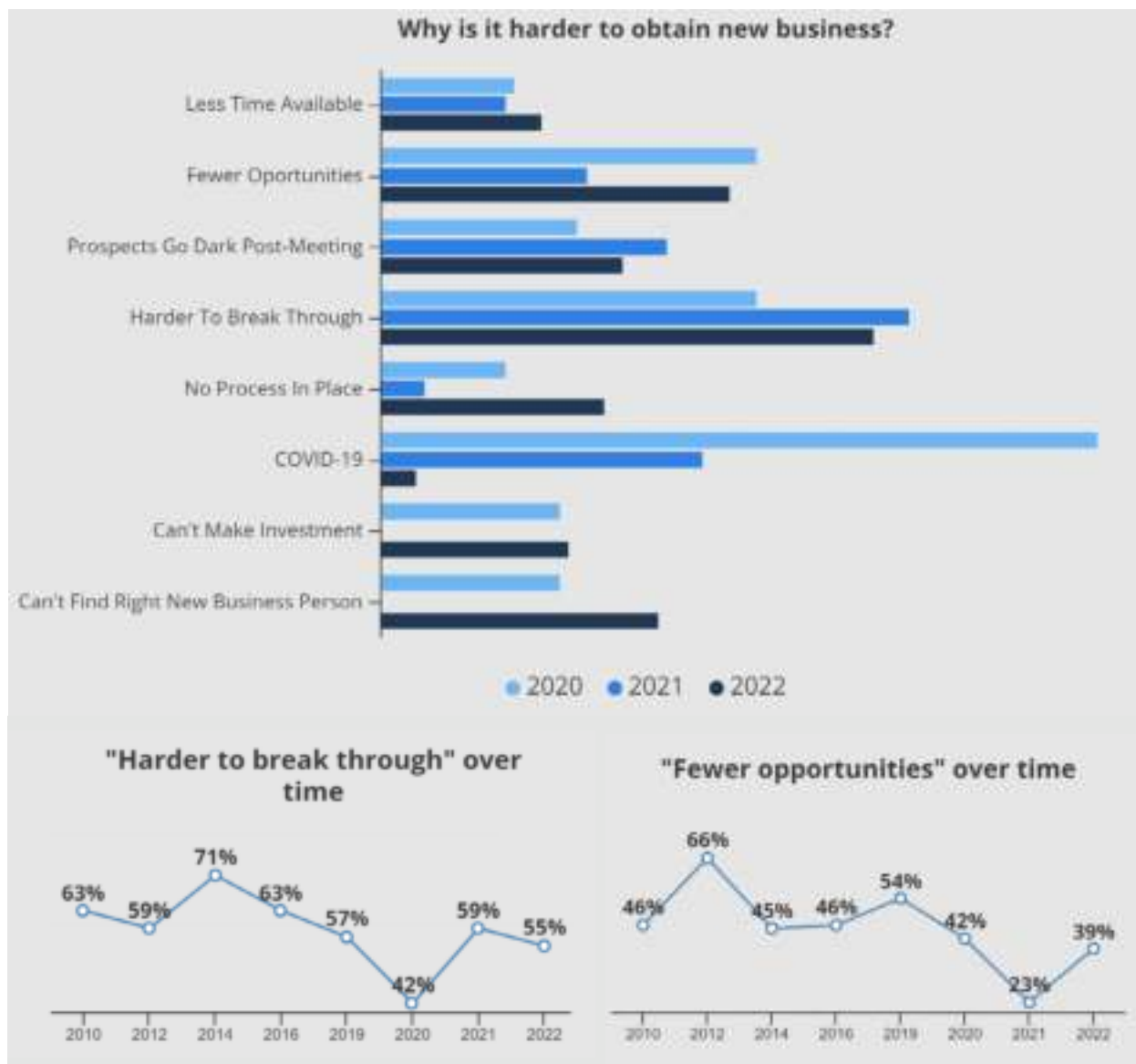
As if agencies weren't already exhausted from managing the pandemic and workforce disruption, the remainder of '22 and '23, with inflation and recession concerns, reaffirms the need for agencies to make sure they have an actual new business strategy in place. The answers to our next question singularly reinforce this.



## Difficulty of Obtaining New Business, cont'd

### We Asked Agencies: Why Is It Harder To Obtain New Business?

We see a few disparate stats in the answers to our next question. Agencies told us the main reason it's more difficult to obtain new business is that it's harder to break through. Although that's typically the number one reason, it's interesting to note that the percentage of respondents giving that answer dropped from 59% to 55% this year. One would have thought the opposite would be true, given the 15+ point increase in agencies



## Difficulty of Obtaining New Business, cont'd

finding it harder to get new clients.

So agencies are finding it a bit easier to break through to prospects than last year. Looking at the second-highest reason agencies gave, last year it was “prospects that went dark after a first meeting” at 32%; however, that’s not the second highest this year. In fact, that came in fourth, at 27%! So agencies are having a slightly easier time, or doing a better job, with prospects that go dark. Both are good to see, but it doesn’t really jibe with that 15+ point increase in agencies finding it harder to get new clients.

The 2nd and 3rd highest reasons agencies gave for why it’s harder to obtain new business in this year’s survey do coincide with that increase and should give agencies pause. In 2022, 39% of agencies said there are fewer opportunities out there. In 2021 that number was 23%. While not overly alarming, that’s a 16 point increase. The third highest reason was, “can’t find the right person to drive the new business program” at 31%, whereas it was at 0% in 2021. Agencies have always had trouble finding and keeping the right person to drive new business, but that’s quite an increase.

Another stat of note is the percentage of agencies who say they have no process in place: 25% this year versus 5% last year. These last three stats paint a picture of agencies experiencing a fair amount of organic and existing growth, coupled with referrals throughout 2021. To quote our 2021 Agency New Business Report, “the current influx of new business is not coming from actual business development on the part of agencies.” And that looks to have played out for many agencies, who understand there needs to be a balance that includes some manageable form of outbound prospecting for new business.

Within this question was an “other” option, with the opportunity to provide open-ended responses. Given the variety of responses, we wanted to give you a sample from your agency peers as to why it was harder for them to obtain new business:

- Hard to find prospects with significant budgets
- For pitches, Clients are still hiding behind video conference
- Uncertain we are targeting “right fit” prospects and/or it’s harder than ever to break through to them if they are right fit.
- Hard to hire people necessary to build bandwidth to take on new clients
- We’re more sharply focused on ideal client prospects and that takes more time right now to break through.
- Turnover and inexperience on the client side
- Economic uncertainty/headwinds



## Satisfaction With New Business Program

### We Asked Agencies: Are you satisfied with the success of your new business plan/program?

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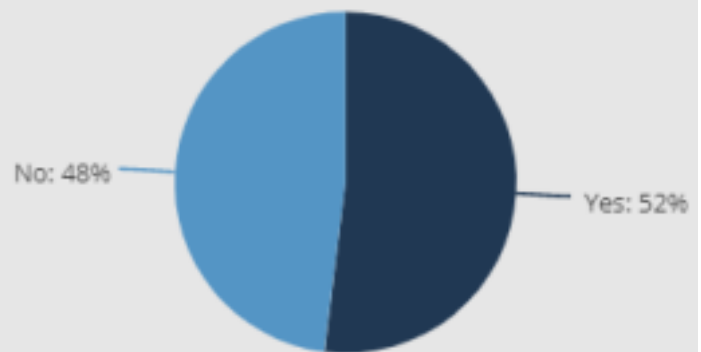
This question always seems to flip flop between yes and no by a very small percentage, with those percentages falling very close to the even mark. This year, the answer was 49% yes and 51% no, last year, it was 52% yes and 48% no. Our RSW agency clients are predominantly small and mid-sized agencies (as were predominantly the takers of this survey), and as the stats have reflected so far in our report, it's incredibly hard to find an individual to drive new business. Which means that process, if there is one, falls to a partner, principal, or owner.

### Implications

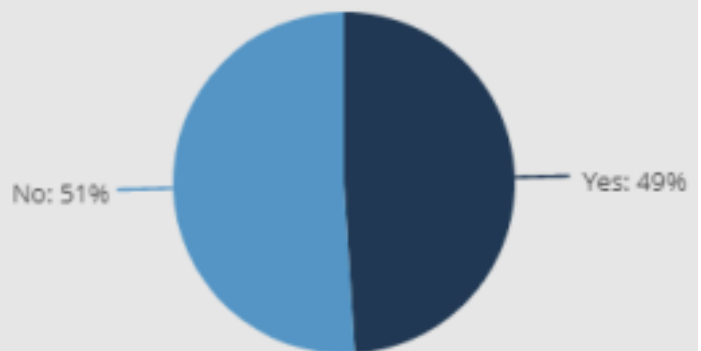
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It's hard to glean a meaningful takeaway from this one stat, as the bigger picture forms once all these responses are considered in aggregate. However, one fact remains evident: that agencies have, for the most part, pushed the formation of a new business process aside for the past two years. To be fair, some were trying to keep it all together, so it had to wait, and others were flush with work, so there wasn't that immediate need. We'll see, and have already seen from our previous responses, that this will need to change.

Are you satisfied with the success of your new business plan/program?  
(2021)



Are you satisfied with the success of your new business plan/program?  
(2022)



## Dollar Volumes Of New Business in 2022

### We Asked Agencies: Relative to last year, have you seen the dollar volume of new business opportunities increase, decrease, or remain the same?

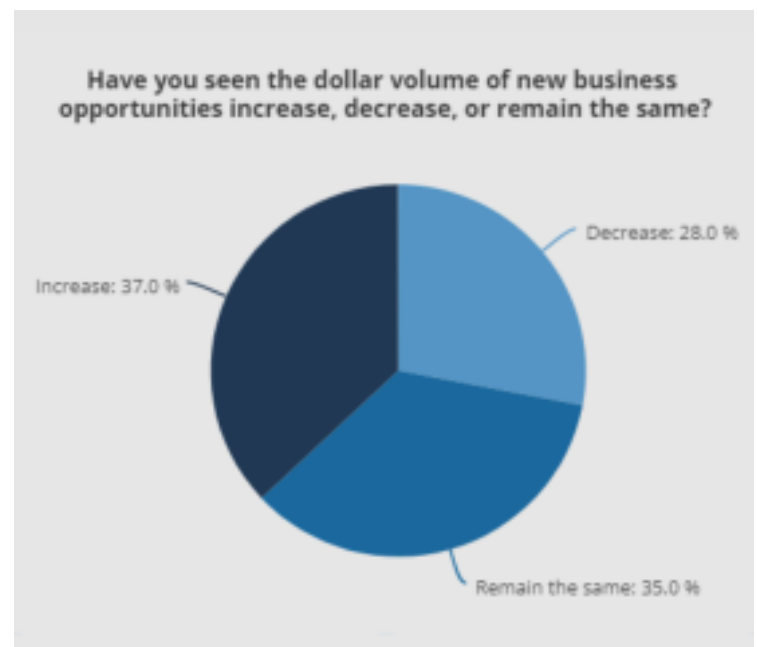
The initial good news is 37% of agencies said it increased, which is always welcome to see. But this stat is overshadowed somewhat by the 28% that said they saw a decrease, and the 35% that said it stayed the same.

### Implications

With 63% of agencies saying new business dollar volume stayed the same or decreased, it's more important than ever that agencies ensure they're going after the right prospects. Per one of the open-ended responses from an agency above, "[we're] uncertain we are targeting 'right fit' prospects." Now is the time to look at your client portfolio:

1. Are you targeting right-size prospects, in terms of revenue?
2. Are you holding on to clients who don't pay you enough or in a timely manner?
3. And lastly, are you charging enough?

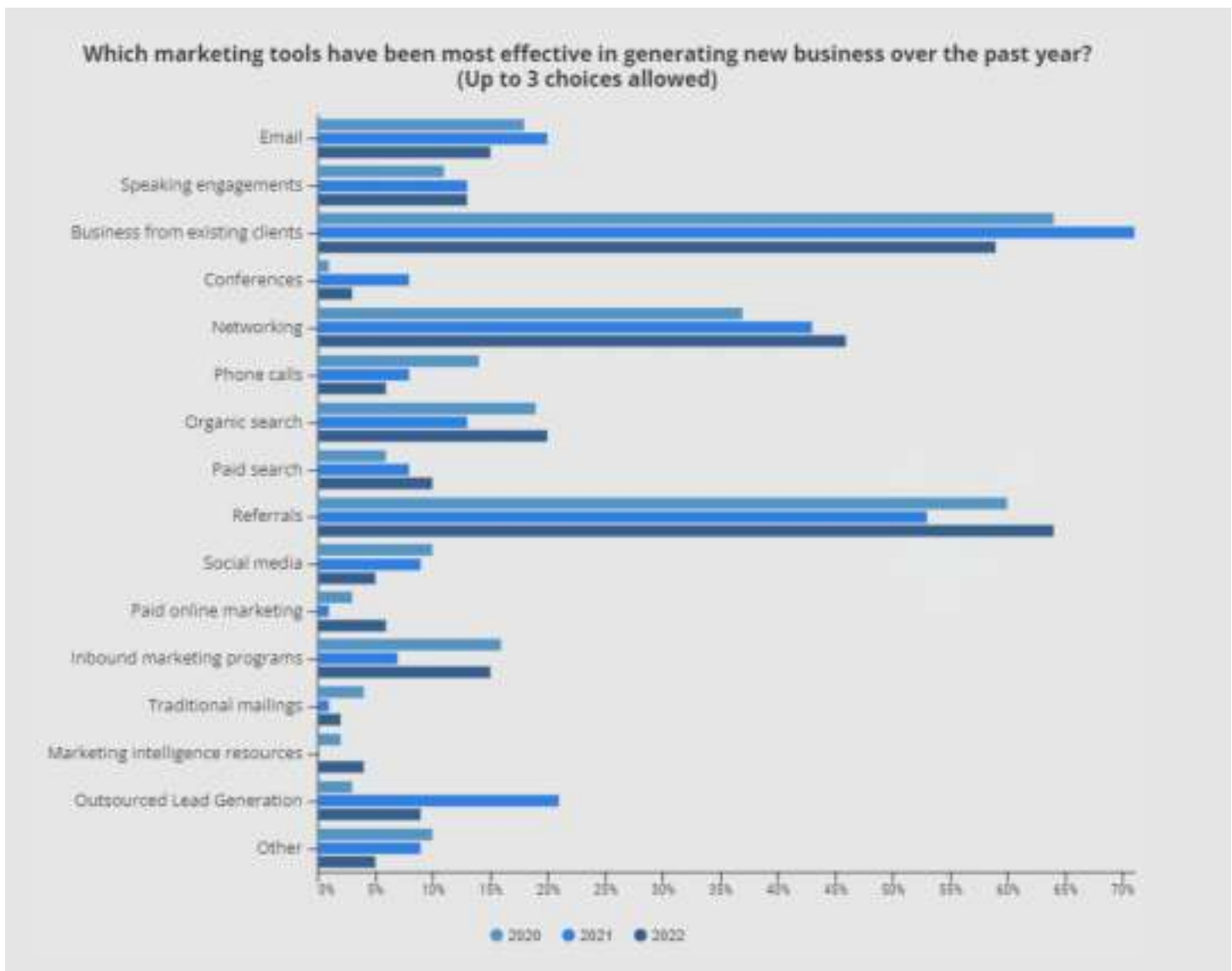
These can all be tough questions to answer, and not so easily remedied typically, but you have to start somewhere, and the first place is the current prospects you're pursuing.



## Most Effective Tools At Generating New Business

### We Asked Agencies: What 3 marketing tools have been most effective at generating new business over the past year?

Continuing the trends from 2021, new business to-date in 2022 has come, not from business development, but from referrals and existing clients. As part of a balanced new business program, both these sources are, of course, fantastic. They should be a part of every agency strategy. But as every agency principal and business development head knows, neither of these are predictable. Let's look at the breakdown.



## Most Effective Tools At Generating New Business, cont'd

### Implications

Unsurprisingly, referrals came in as the number one new business generator. Referrals have always been at or near the top of the results of this question, and as previously stated, it should be a part of every agency strategy. The more interesting result comes from the existing business/organic growth response. In last year's report, with 71% of agencies citing new growth from existing clients, we said, "We see the rise of existing business predominantly driven by stalled or rescheduled work with existing clients as we come out of COVID". Fast forward to 2022, and we can see that organic growth has fallen by 11 points. It's not a huge decrease, but it contributes to the running thread of this report: a fair number of agencies saw clients slow spending in the beginning of '22, work is not coming in as effortlessly as the previous year for agencies (not that bringing new business in from anywhere is ever effortless mind you).

Something else to note is that the order of the top 3 differ from last year's 2021 report. In 2022, Referrals come in at 64.29%, Business from existing clients at 58.93%, and Networking at 46.43%. Per our graph, last year's top 3 came in as "business from existing clients" at 71%, referrals were second at 53%, and networking was third at 43%.

**Organic growth fell by 11%**  
as an effective way to  
generate new business in  
2022.



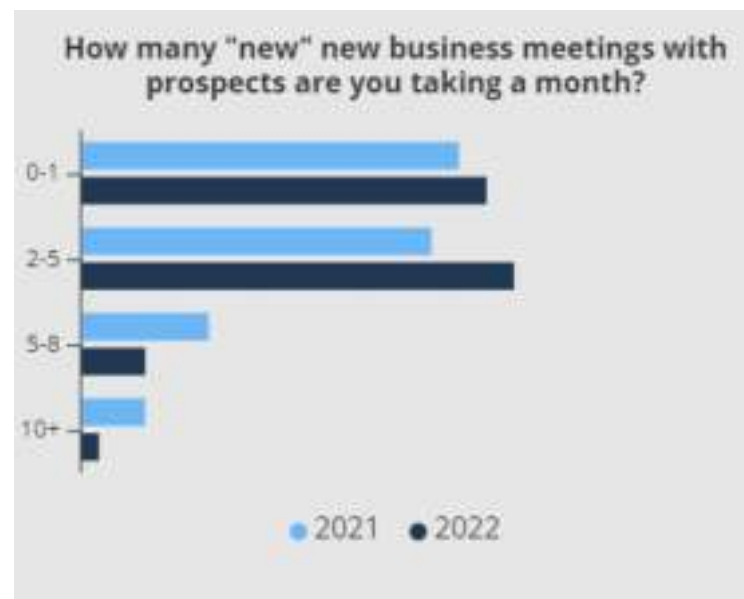
## Average “New” New Business Meetings Per Month

### We Asked Agencies: How many “new” new business meetings with prospects are you taking a month?

44% of agencies reported taking 0-2 prospect meetings per month and 47% reported 2-5 per month. Worth noting: how various agencies categorize “new” is unclear. Referral and networking meetings can be/are technically new meetings, so those may be part of the definition here.

### Implications

These numbers are fairly positive overall for two reasons. First, we see a slight uptick in the 0-2 and 2-5 meetings per month reported over last year, and still see the majority of agencies with 1-3 meetings per month. We would always rather have a client, or any agency, have 1-3 solid meetings a month, versus 10 or more a month where only a few are actually worthwhile. This leads to the second reason 2022 numbers are more positive in nature.



Last year, we saw 14% of agencies report taking 5-8 new business meetings per month, and 7% report 10 or more. This year saw formative drops, with 7% of agencies reporting taking 5-8 new business meetings per month, and 2% reporting 10 or more. While technically a drop in numbers, we see it as a positive. As we said in our 2021 report: “The 7% of agencies reporting 10 or more meetings a month are looking at a significant investment in time on a monthly basis. And with these numbers, you have to ask if the individual taking these meetings has the right mentality walking in.” The reality in 2022 may just be that the responding agencies simply had less time to take new business meetings. But we’ll be optimistic, and attribute the drop as newfound moments of sanity. 10 or more new business meetings a month would not only be difficult to take, in terms of real prep and focus beforehand, but would generally not result in quality opportunities. These types of meetings tend to fall more into the “let’s just see who bites on the hook” category, rather than being part of any real strategy. They rarely result in long-term, beneficial clients for your agency.

## Average Time Between First Meeting To Close

### We Asked Agencies: How long does it take (on average) to move from a 1st meeting to closing a piece of business?

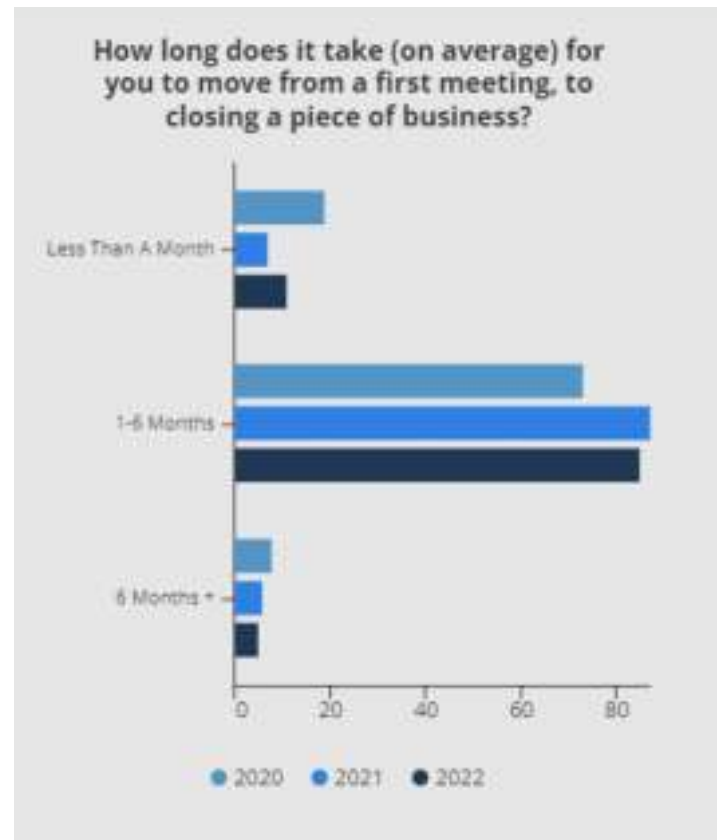
Now in our third year of asking this question, it's a critical touchstone in setting expectations for yourself and your agency's new business program. 85% of agencies tell us the average time it takes to move from a first meeting to close to-date in 2022 is 1-6 months.

### Implications

To provide perspective, in 2020, that number was 73%, and in 2021 it was 87%, so not much change year-over-year. That's in keeping with what we see for agencies generally and with our own clients. There are firms who by definition have a shorter sales cycle, but on average, ad agencies should walk into first meetings knowing there will need to be multiple follow-up touchpoints.

And that's where so many agencies fall down: lack of follow-up. Prospects going dark is an ongoing concern, and of course it happens, but worse is when an agency goes dark on their prospect. As strange as that may sound, it happens too often, because agencies give up when the process starts to get tough or takes longer than they had allotted in their head.

One way agencies can help themselves is by creating a 4-6 touch cadence template, including messaging and potential content that can be used as follow-up over a course of weeks/months to reinforce your expertise. You, of course, can't use the exact same template with each prospect, but you'll be able to use a fair amount of it. This way you won't have to reinvent the wheel with every piece of prospect follow up.



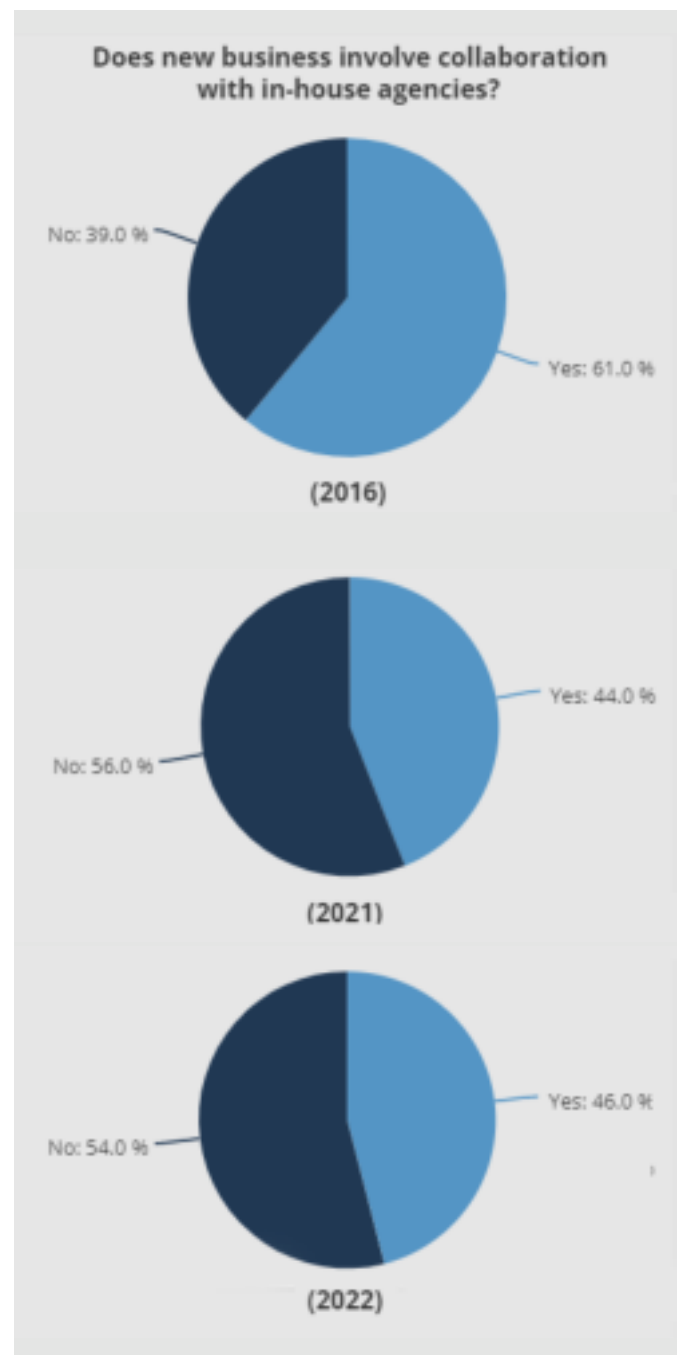
## In-House Agency Collaboration

### We Asked Agencies: Thinking about the new business you have won over the past year, does it involve collaboration with in-house agencies?

As in previous years, we asked agencies if the new business won over the past year involved collaboration with in-house agencies. Last year we saw the lowest level to answer “Yes” since 2016, at 44%, and in 2022, it’s 46%, now the second lowest level since 2016. Yet, still almost half of all the work won in 2022 involved in-house agencies, per our agency survey respondents.

### Implications

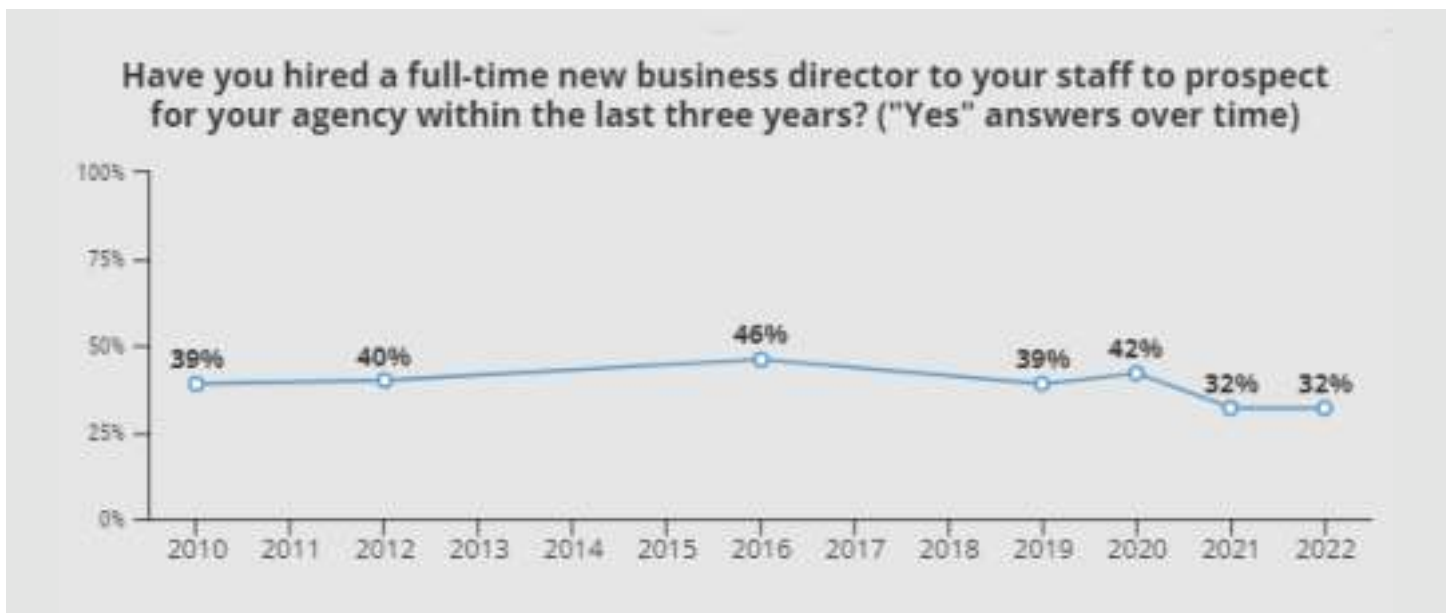
So from a new business development perspective, you need to anticipate you’ll have to collaborate at some point with in-house folks. Agencies are getting used to this as an ongoing way of business life, and the successful ones learn how to balance collaborating with in-house teams against proving the value of their stand-alone capabilities. We’ve seen a handful of case studies, (although not a lot) for example, from agencies that show how they worked successfully and effectively with an in-house team. If you have a good story to tell that shows how your firm found success with an in-house team, get it into a case study!



## Success And Tenure Of New Business Directors

### We Asked Agencies: Have you hired a full-time new business hunter/director/manager (as part of your staff) to prospect for leads for your agency in the past three years?

In last year's survey report, hiring for the new business director position at an agency fell to its lowest level since we started this survey in 2010, with just 32% of agencies hiring a new business director in the past 3 years. And this year that number is, once again, at 32%. Why do we think this is?



### Implications

Part of the explanation is the fact that new business directors at agencies last 18 months on average. This has held true for many years, so it's simply always been difficult to hire for and retain that position.

But why does 2022 tie 2021 for the lowest level (again) since we started tracking data in 2010? Even though we see the need starting to rise, potentially, with less work coming in from existing clients, and new business getting harder to come by, agencies still haven't had a pressing need (to-date) in 2022 to hire for the role. Referrals are still a strong factor, and many agencies have been burned, or made the wrong hire for the role in the past. And with the Great Resignation and hiring at a premium into 2022, agencies have it tough.



## Success And Tenure Of New Business Directors, cont'd

However, similar to some of the trends we've seen change so far in this report, hiring is also seeing some changes. Per eMarketer, "Advertising and public relations lost 2,400 jobs in May (2022) despite an overall increase in US employment. The May employment loss was the first monthly decrease in advertising jobs this year. Moreover, it was the first employment decrease since November 2020, a sign that the advertising boom brought on by the pandemic is slowing down."<sup>1</sup>

The number of agencies reporting their last new business hire was "very to somewhat successful" dropped from **60% in 2021 to 41% in 2022.**

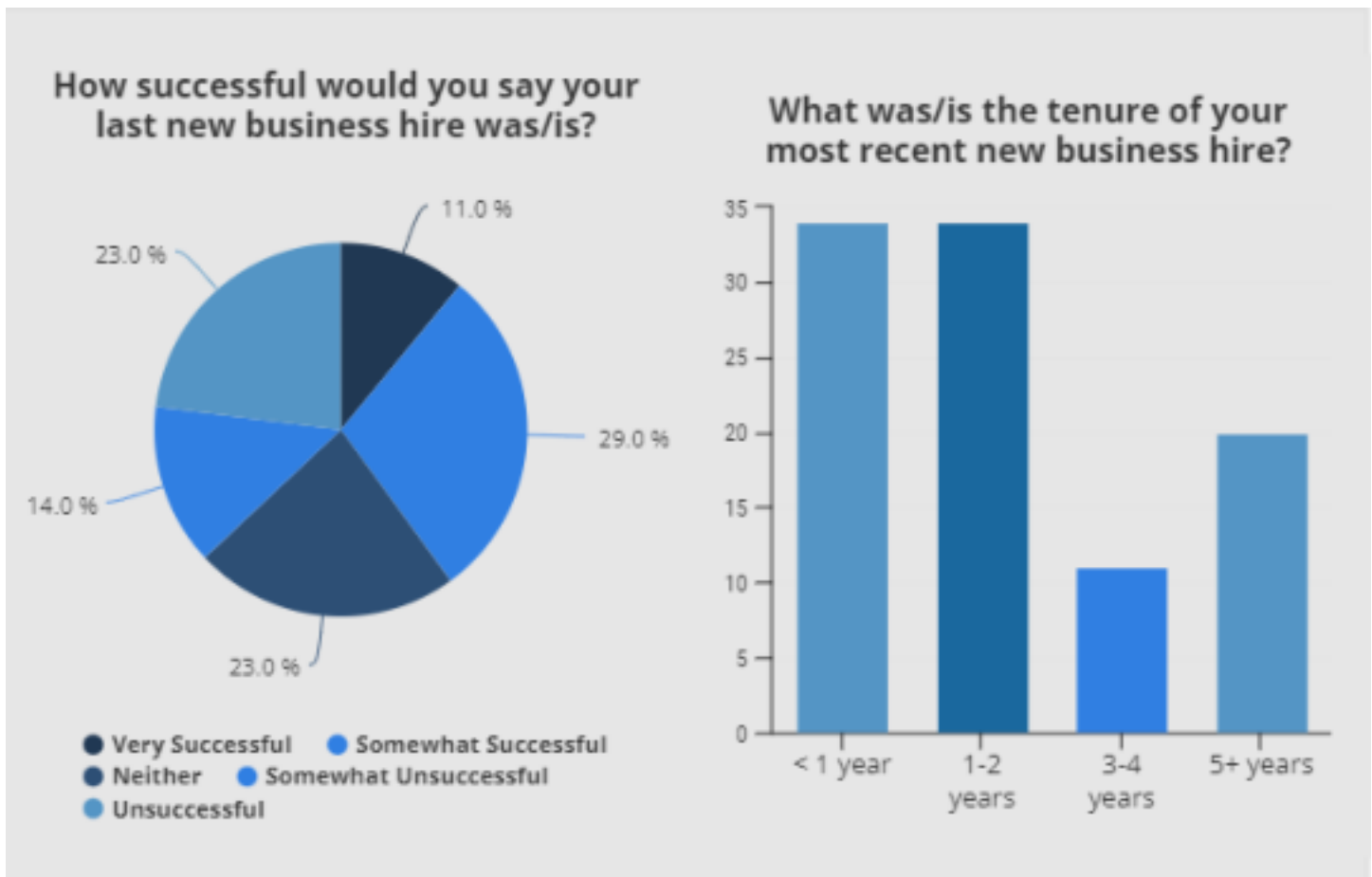


<sup>1</sup> <https://www.insiderintelligence.com/content/ad-industry-layoffs-are-on-the-way>

## Success And Tenure Of New Business Directors, cont'd

### We Asked Agencies: How successful would you say your last new business hire was/is?

Last year saw an improvement from 57 to 60% of agencies reporting their last new business hire was very to somewhat successful. This year that number fell to 41%! Another surprising stat in this year's survey is an 18 point drop in agencies seeing a 1-2 year new business director tenure, from 52% in 2021 to 34% in 2022.

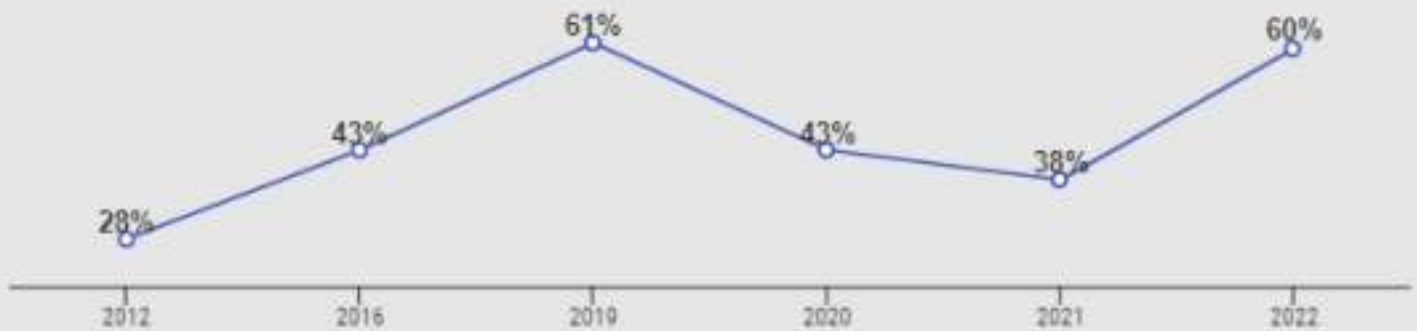


## Success And Tenure Of New Business Directors, cont'd

### Implications

The picture also becomes a bit more dour when comparing the percentages of those business directors who agencies said were somewhat to not-at-all successful: in 2021 it was 26%, in 2022 it's 36%. Another sizeable jump. With numbers like these (excluding the improved 1-year increase mentioned above) it's not surprising agencies aren't racing to fill the business director position. Looking back to the previous question, hiring has been difficult, and has to play a part in this. Some of this, with all love toward agencies (they are our clients after all) has to be placed in the agency's lap. Did they have realistic expectations around the whole process, especially around closing business (remember the 1 to 6 month average we previously discussed)? Did they have discussions around what the process was going to look like if that new business director was hired? Was there a process? All fair questions, but at the end, as we've established, hiring for the position really is difficult. It can be done internally, with the right (and manageable) plan in place, or there are outsourced options (yes, like RSW) available. One bright spot on the horizon: if hiring loosens up over the next year these numbers could easily improve.

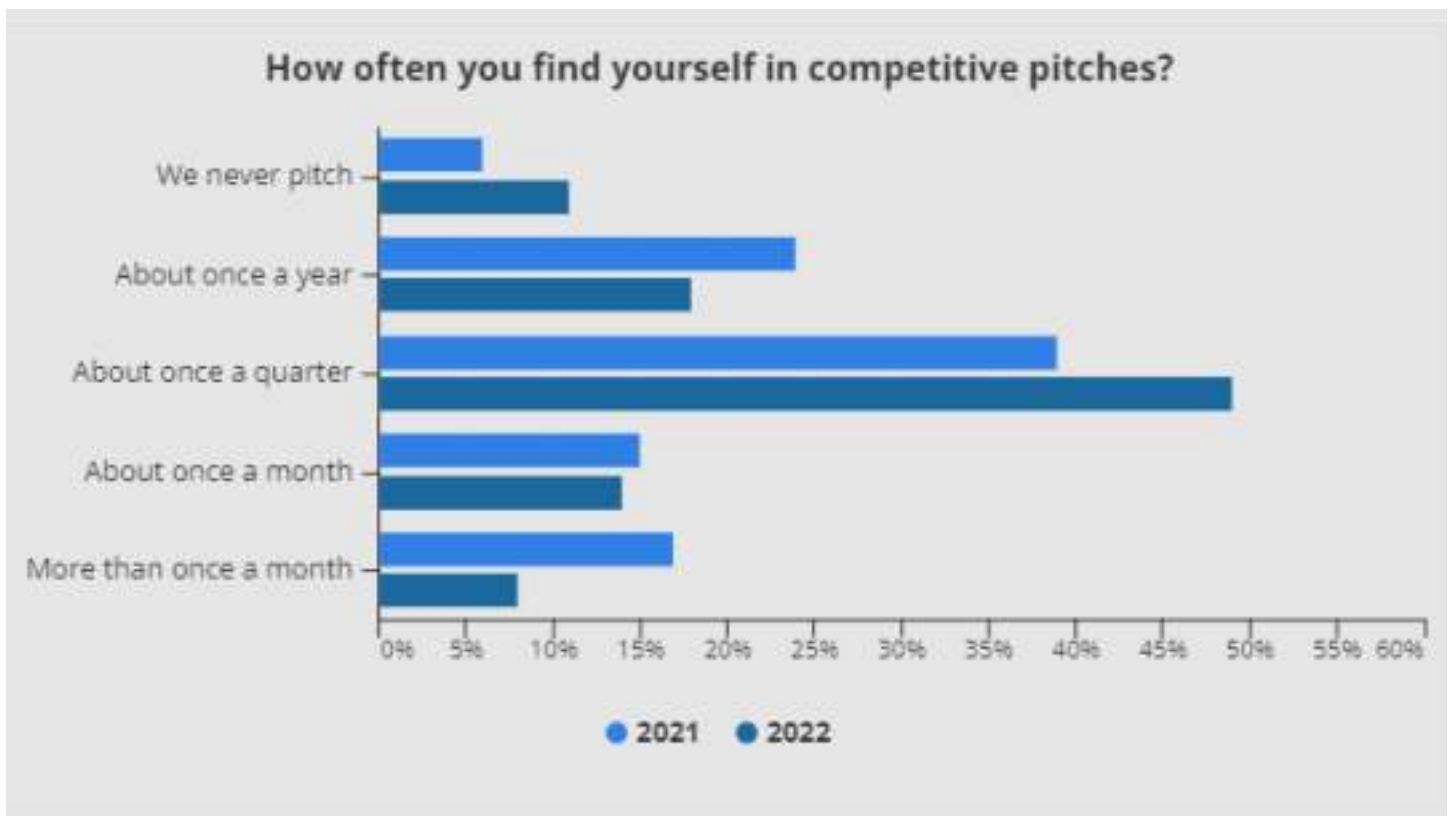
"Unsuccessful", "Somewhat Unsuccessful", and "Neither Successful Nor Unsuccessful" Responses Over Time



## Competitive Pitching Frequency

### We Asked Agencies: Which best describes how often you find yourself in competitive pitches?

For some outside perspective to set the overall tone, from Adweek, “A recent Provoke Insights study in the U.S. suggested 11% of agency professionals are involved in a pitch every week, and more than half pitch 10 times per year or more.”



### Implications

Compared to last year’s responses, it looks like agencies have slowed the pace a bit, ideally becoming more selective in the process. 6% of agencies said they never pitch in 2021, and that number rose to 11% in 2022. Along those lines, 18% said they pitch once a year, versus 24% in 2021. Then we see a notable increase, with 49% saying they pitch once a quarter, versus only 39% in 2021, but we end on a bright note, with only 8% reporting they pitch more than once a month, versus 17% in 2021.

## Competitive Pitching Frequency, cont'd

Talking with agencies as we have for our seventeen years in business, the ultimate goal for many is to never pitch. Certainly some thrive on it, and have it down to a science, but the goal, and the goal for us as we're representing our RSW agency clients, is to bypass a pitch and find opportunities. It doesn't always happen of course, which means agencies need to have a plan for the pitch, but the beautiful thing about having a business development process is you tend to have more control over whether you have to pitch or not.

**There was a notable increase in competitive pitches in 2022.**

**49%**

of agencies reported pitching once a quarter in 2022.

**VS**

**39%**

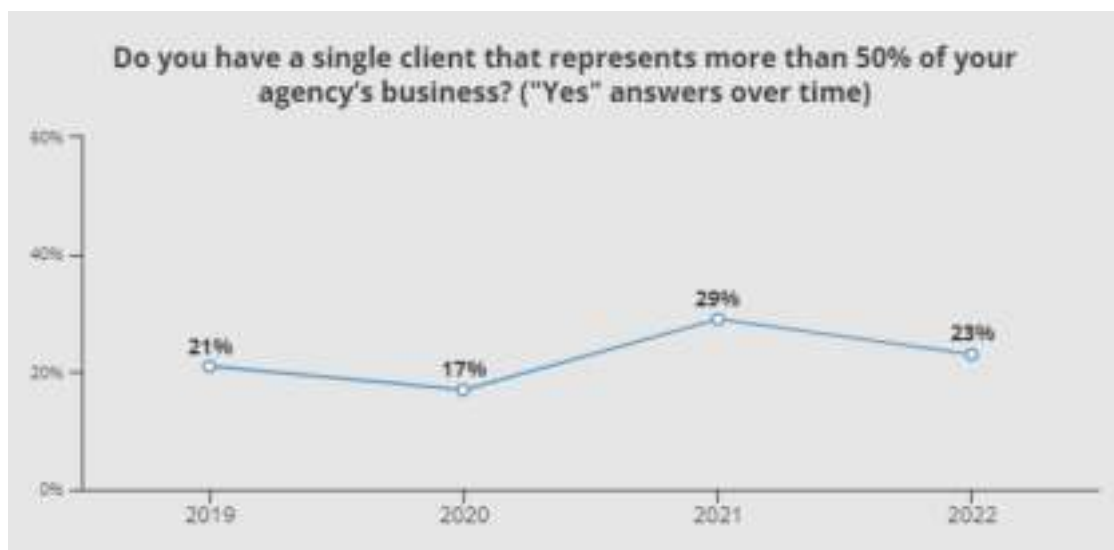
of agencies reported pitching once a quarter in 2021.



## Prevalence Of Non-Diversified Client Portfolios

### We Asked Agencies: Do you have a single client that represents more than 50% of your agency's business?

Good to see this percentage go in the right direction in 2022. Per our graph, the percentage of agencies that said yes in 2020 (17%) rose to 29% in 2021. In 2022, that has dropped to 23% of agencies who say they have a single client that represents more than 50% of the agency's business



### Implications

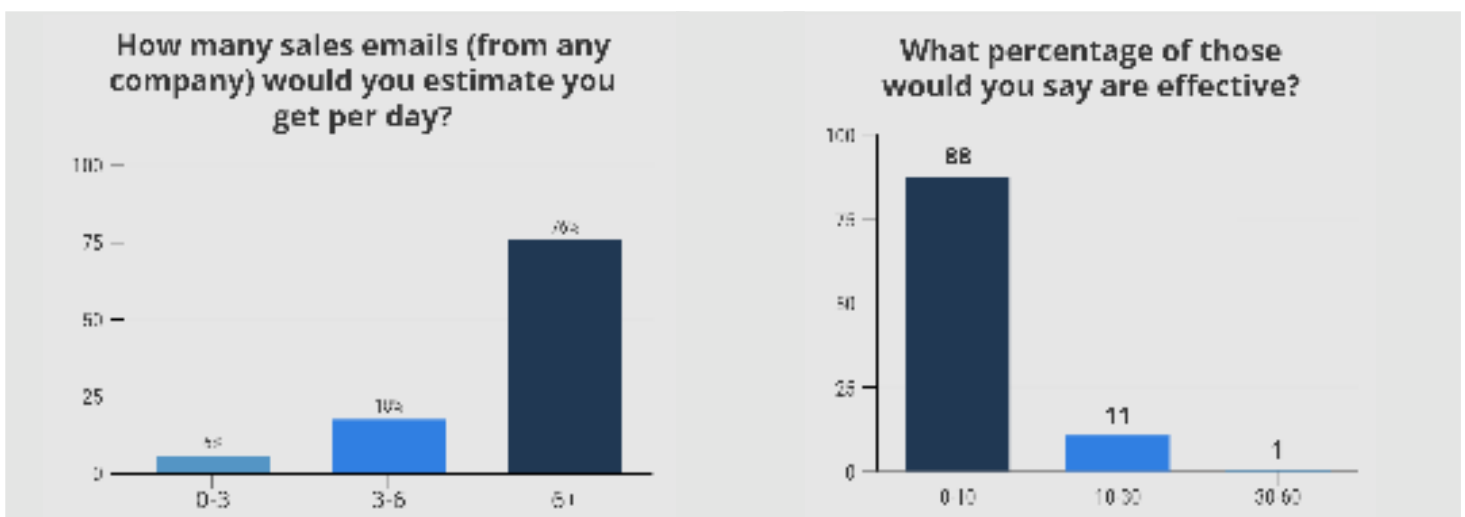
While not a huge drop, from our conversations, we've heard agencies tell us they've made it a priority in 2022 to avoid the gorilla client situation. We talked about it in our previous report: "With so much volatility in '20 and '21, many agencies had no choice but to take work where and when they could. So it was easy, and often necessary, to take more work from that gorilla client."

The only, or main way, to avoid the situation for your firm, is to diversify your portfolio, and you have to do that through "new", new business. Referrals and networking will help get you there, as we've seen in this report, but agencies will have to take on more true business development in the back half of 2022 to set themselves up in a better position entering the new year.

## Efficacy of Sales Outreach

### We Asked Agencies: How many sales emails (from any company) would you estimate you get per day? And what percentage of those would you say are effective?

Per the graphs below, agencies responded with 76% saying they get more than 6 sales emails a day, and a whopping 88% said 0-10% of those were actually effective.



### Implications

The days of bloated, overused, and ineffective sales emails and email blasts are waning. (As they should be). Because they are ineffective, but also because they're deleterious to your sender reputation (see more on this in our next section). Not to mention the kinds of deliverability issues any company doing this is likely to ultimately face. I'm sure as you're reading this, these stats come as no surprise.

The amount of sales emails we individually receive at RSW is easily 10 a day, if not more, and it boggles the mind how the majority of these salespeople (if in fact they are people, and not bots) think these emails will have any impact or success. It's not to say email blasts, for example, should never be used — if done sparingly and effectively, and if they provide some kind of value and your prospect recognizes that value, they can be an effective tool for ongoing awareness.

## Efficacy of Sales Outreach, cont'd

It's a principle we follow at RSW with our own new business directors as we represent our clients. We show prospects we've done even a little bit of homework on their business. First, by speaking their language (the vertical they play in), and by employing our tech stack to glean helpful and pertinent information. Of course, it can be harder for small and mid-size firms to employ that kind of tech stack, but there are many no-cost ways (like LinkedIn and Google for example) for you to find out enough about their business to make that email meaningful for your prospect.

### The onslaught of emails continues.

**76%** of agencies told us they get 6+ sales emails a day.

Out of those agencies, **88%** said less than 10% of those emails were effective.





## New Business Outreach and Sender Reputation

### We Asked Agencies: Specific to email and your outreach, do you monitor your agency's sender reputation?

In the interest of clarity, sender reputation is defined as “. . . a score that an Internet Service Provider (ISP) assigns to an organization that sends email. It's a crucial component of your email deliverability. The higher the score, the more likely an ISP will deliver emails to the inboxes of recipients on their network”. Sender reputation is becoming incredibly important to any business development email outreach effort, and it can't be ignored. It's good to see that a full 40% of agencies in our survey responded with yes, but it still leaves more than half of agencies out there who aren't monitoring their sender reputation or may not be aware of how to do it.



### Implications

With the average user receiving 120 emails per day not including spam messages, our inboxes are a mess, littered with promotions, reminders, and sales reps looking for 15 minutes of our time (Per our previous section). When you consider the danger of malicious links and phishing scams, it's only logical that the big internet service providers (ISPs) as well as individual organization are clamping down on email communications, both from large volume senders as well as from peer-to-peer.

It's also understandable that many agencies aren't up to speed on the hurdles ISPs have started putting in place. Unless the agency is large enough to employ an in-house IT crew, the task of ensuring that email sending adheres to best practices will fall to an outside vendor, an employee wearing the IT hat or the principal themselves.

This is further complicated by the fact that "sender reputation" is a bit of a misnomer. A better term would be the plural, "sender reputations" because the various players grade

## New Business Outreach and Sender Reputation, cont'd

your domain using their own criteria, which may only partially overlap. For example, the Google Postmaster tool, will grade your domain reputation on a scale from high down to bad. However, this rating only tells you how likely an email is to reach a Gmail user and not a Microsoft email user or worse still someone at an organization that uses email security software like Proofpoint or Barracuda.

Despite the obstacles, email is still a vital prospecting tool. Prospects can and do open sales emails and sometimes they even read them! There are several things that an agency can do to increase their email deliverability: ensuring that their domain is not on a blacklist, keeping SPF and DKIM records up to date, utilizing domain warming services to increase positive engagement signals, providing clear unsubscribe options, following email sending best practices, crafting emails that prioritize value, and so on. Not to mention that a solid agency new business plan shouldn't rely on email alone and instead leverage phone, social media, and yes, even direct mail.

**For more content to help your  
firm drive new business,**



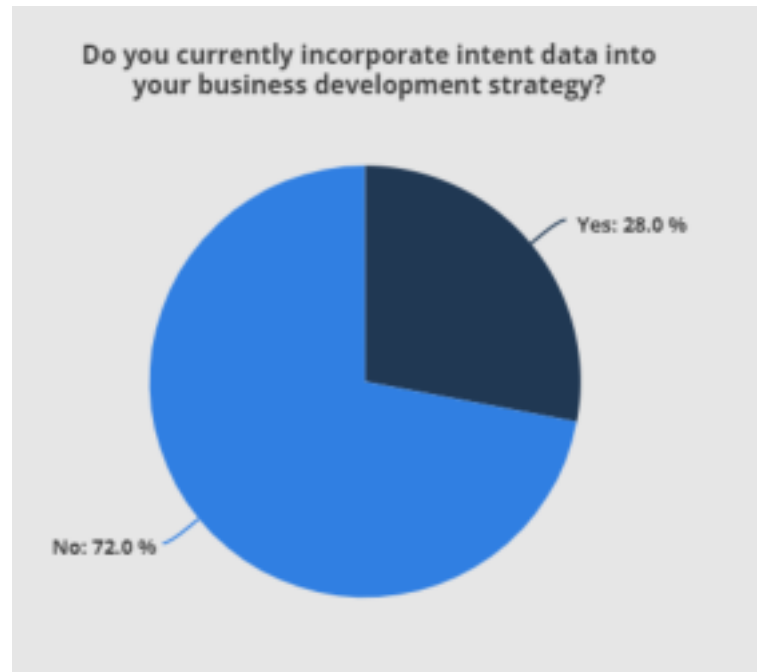
check out the “Resources” drop  
down on our website for video,  
agency site score cards, survey  
reports and eBooks.

## New Business Outreach and Intent Data

### We Asked Agencies: Do you currently incorporate intent data into your business development strategy?

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While less immediately important than the sender reputation discussion in our previous section, intent data is becoming more prevalent in the business development world. We initially asked about it in our 2021 report, and very few agencies were aware of how it's used. With 72% reporting they do not incorporate it, it's worth exploring. As in our previous section, we'll provide a definition initially, specific to business development: Intent data's primary goal, as the name suggests, is to reveal prospects' intent. Furthermore, organizations and businesses can discover in-market buyers and the product or solutions they are searching for by understanding prospects' intent.



### Implications

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Intent tracking is still a relatively new tool which only started making a splash in the last 5 years or so. Now there are numerous platforms offering standalone intent tracking or bundling it with other online research tools. Intent tracking relies on a very simple concept: most B2B buyers prefer to do online research before making a purchasing decision. That research could involve simple Google searches, downloading white papers, reading blogs or white papers, and attending webinars – all of which leaves behind digital behavioral markers that intent platforms can track, collate, interpret, and analyze over time to pinpoint buyers that might be looking for specific products and services at a particular time.

This helps sellers get to the who, what, where, and when of prospecting.

## New Business Outreach and Intent Data, cont'd

On the surface, intent tracking promises to help with all three. However, it's still early days for this technology and the price-tag can be high. Also, an intent platform can only provide intel and point your agency new business process in the right direction. If your agency new business process is weak or non-existent, you could be spending money and effort on intel and leads you're not equipped to capitalize on. Some agencies might be better served waiting for the technology to mature or finding a clear slot for it in their business development machine before adding this tool to their tech stack, but if you're not aware, it's an ongoing trend we feel your firm should be aware of and monitor.

### 3 challenges that agency new business professionals commonly face are:

- Choosing the right targets
- Developing the right messaging
- Reaching out at the right time



## Conclusion

As we pointed out in our intro, agencies have some work to do on the new business side of things.

So far in 2022, we've seen it's been harder to obtain new business (with a return to pre-pandemic levels), a relative drop in new business opportunities, and that breaking through to prospects is still named as one of the biggest challenges to gaining new business.

And we see agencies relying primarily on referrals and business from existing clients as their ongoing new business strategy. We've stated in the past that both these should play a role in your new business strategy, absolutely, but an outbound and inbound strategy will inevitably need to play a part.

What we hear anecdotally, and see in this report, is how little agencies are using outbound tools. The general feeling around new business is it's a bit of a new world post-pandemic, that tools like the phone and email are less effective, for example.

The good news is that's simply not true. It is true that more employees are working from home post-pandemic and for many agencies they feel those individuals can't be reached.

With the onslaught of ineffective messaging we all see from so many salespeople, as evidenced from our report, it's no wonder firms feel this way.

The good news: with focused and strategic messaging to the right prospects, coupled with multiple forms of outreach, you can break through to your prospects. And yes, you will need to inform yourself on some of the topics discussed in our report, like sender reputation, email deliverability, and intent data, but you don't have to invest large sums of money to track and stay on top of these.

Yes, it's harder in 2022 to obtain new business, but that's not a new trend, it's simply been a bit easier the last two years. You can add an outbound and inbound component to your referral and existing growth strategy by first, making sure you focus your messaging and your outreach, and then starting with a targeted group of prospects, a small group initially that you can then grow over time.