

# Marketing Automation Platform Satisfaction Survey 2018

Are marketing automation solutions still meeting the needs of today's marketer?



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# Introduction

Marketers drive revenue. Yet, according to marketers, marketing automation platform (MAP) vendors are no longer keeping up with their needs, particularly when it comes to reporting. Executives expect marketers to prove their impact on revenue growth, but MAP analytics solutions are failing to provide their customers with the insights required to demonstrate the full value they provide to the business. As a result, MAP vendors themselves are at risk of losing their grip on their customers.

First introduced more than a decade ago, MAP reporting appears to trail the sophisticated needs of today's modern marketer. MAP vendors continue to promote campaign reporting to an audience that demands full revenue reporting. In other words, MAP vendors are providing "first-generation" reporting to second- or even third-generation practitioners.

Top-of-funnel reports like email engagement and isolated campaign performance continue to be necessary, but only for tactical decision making. For MAP vendors to earn the confidence of marketing leadership, they will need to deliver strategic insights, such as comprehensive attribution reporting.

# Key Findings

1. Analytics/Reporting capabilities is the most important feature considered when deciding on a MAP, yet it ranks last in user satisfaction and trails perceived importance.
2. Modern marketers are increasingly accountable for driving revenue, but MAPs are focused on email performance, lead acquisition, and campaign impact -- not post-handoff metrics, such as pipeline created and bookings influenced.
3. Effective database management and good quality data are required to fuel effective marketing operations.
4. The more experienced a marketer is, the more likely they are to be dissatisfied with their marketing automation system's reporting and attribution capabilities.

An abstract network diagram consisting of numerous small black dots (nodes) connected by thin, light gray lines. The connections form a complex, web-like structure that fills the upper half of the image. The background is a solid dark gray.

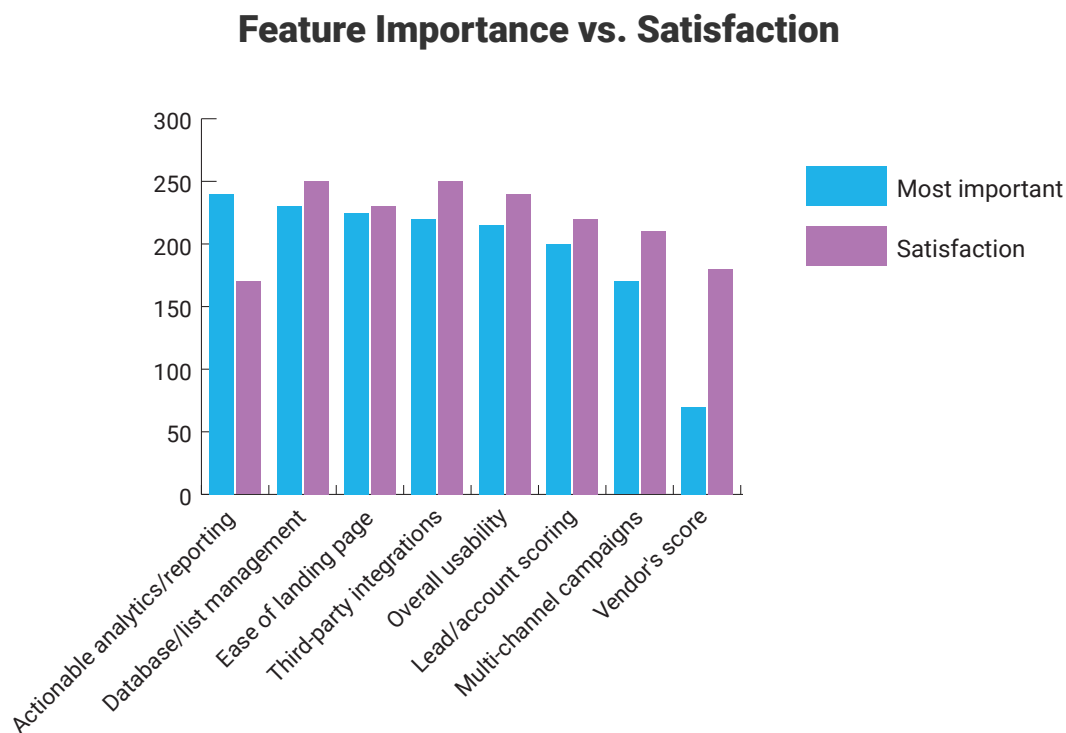
## KEY FINDING #1

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**Analytics/Reporting capabilities is the most important feature considered when deciding on a MAP, yet it ranks last in user satisfaction and trails perceived importance.**

# Key Finding #1

Actionable analytics/reporting is the most important feature considered when deciding on a MAP, but users are least satisfied with it. Across the eight features we surveyed users on, reporting is the only feature where the level of satisfaction trails its perceived importance. MAP vendors are failing to innovate on their reporting capabilities and address user expectations.



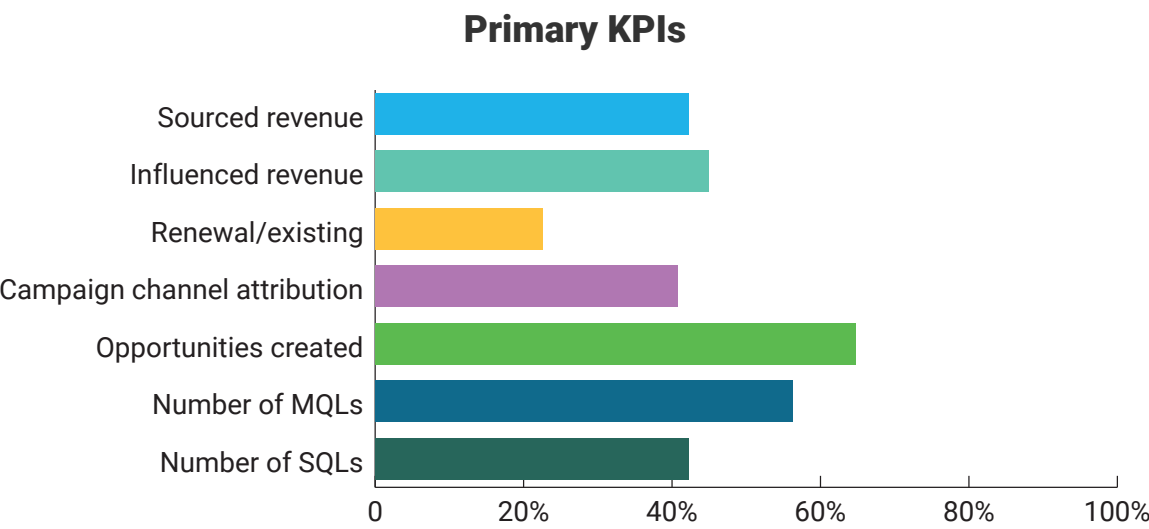
**Survey Question:** What features/capabilities were most important to your organization when you chose your marketing automation vendor?

**Survey Question:** How satisfied are you with your MAP’s features?

# Key Finding #1 (Continued)

The KPI most respondents are measured on is the number of opportunities created, followed by the number of MQLs. Marketers have evolved into at least two different types of practitioners. “First-generation marketers” focus heavily on marketing-controlled metrics, such as top-of-funnel KPIs like lead generation and marketing qualified leads (MQLs). “Second-generation marketers” are expected to deliver value beyond the sales handoff. They are held accountable for influencing opportunity creation. Both groups are represented in this survey response.

Using opportunity creation as the primary KPI shows many marketers have moved into a second-generation focus, which prioritizes revenue creation over top-of-funnel lead generation. This group is currently underserved by MAP vendors who have not yet delivered a compelling bottom-of-funnel reporting solution. As a result, this group of marketers is turning elsewhere for the very type of reporting they expect to receive from their MAP vendor.

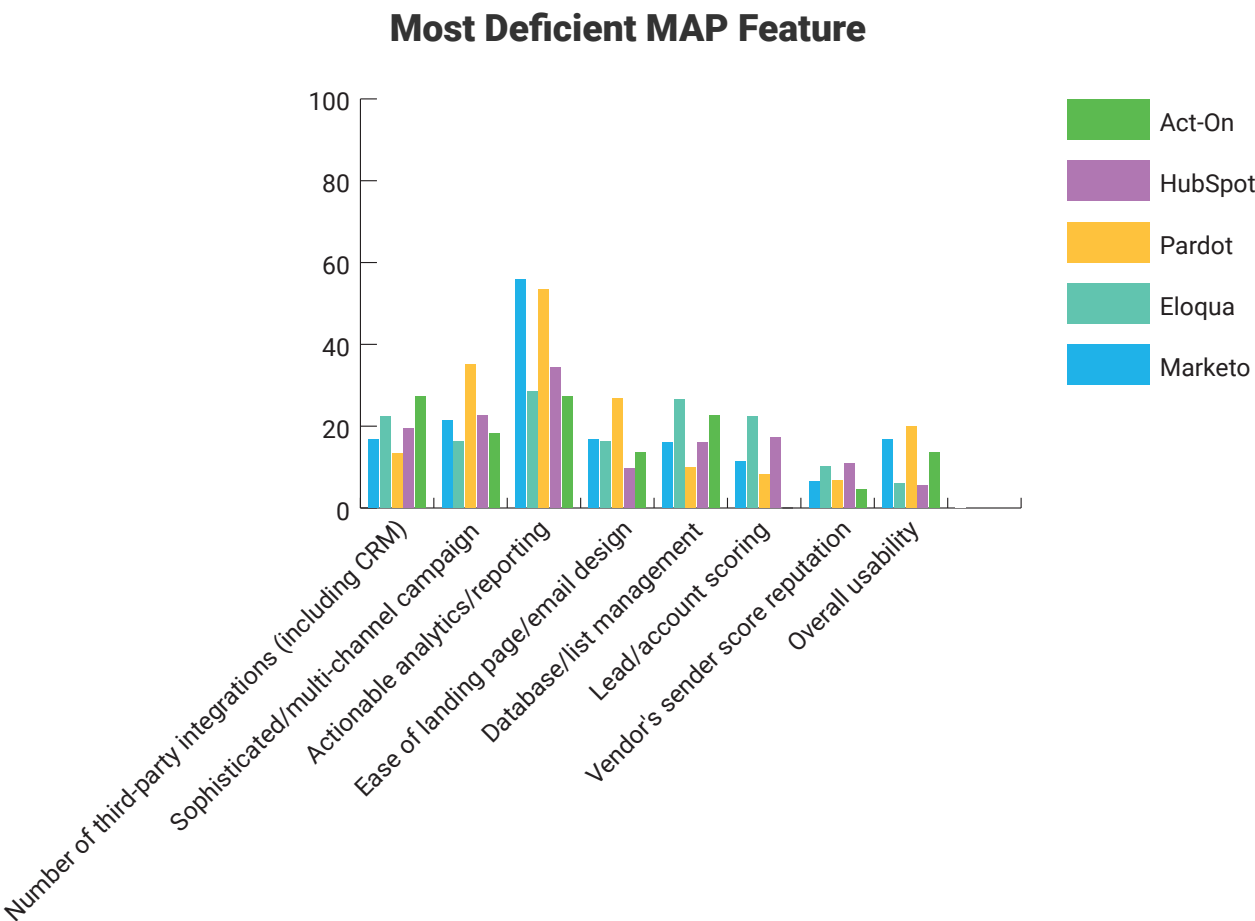


**Survey Question:** What are the primary KPIs you are measured on?

# Key Finding #1 (Continued)

Across all platforms, respondents rated actionable analytics/reporting as the most deficient feature. Given the diaspora of “modern marketing solutions” that MAP vendors must consider incorporating into their platforms, it’s understandable that these organizations have large backlogs of product feature requests. As such, updates and improvements to reporting may get deprioritized behind trendier offerings like account-based marketing (ABM) features. However, our survey finds that actionable analytics / reporting is the most coveted feature of all.

New and popular capabilities may be important for PR purposes, but MAP customers clearly have higher expectations for reporting and analytics. This presents an opportunity for vendors to prioritize improvements and innovate on existing capabilities which meet a fundamental need: analytics that prove revenue impact.

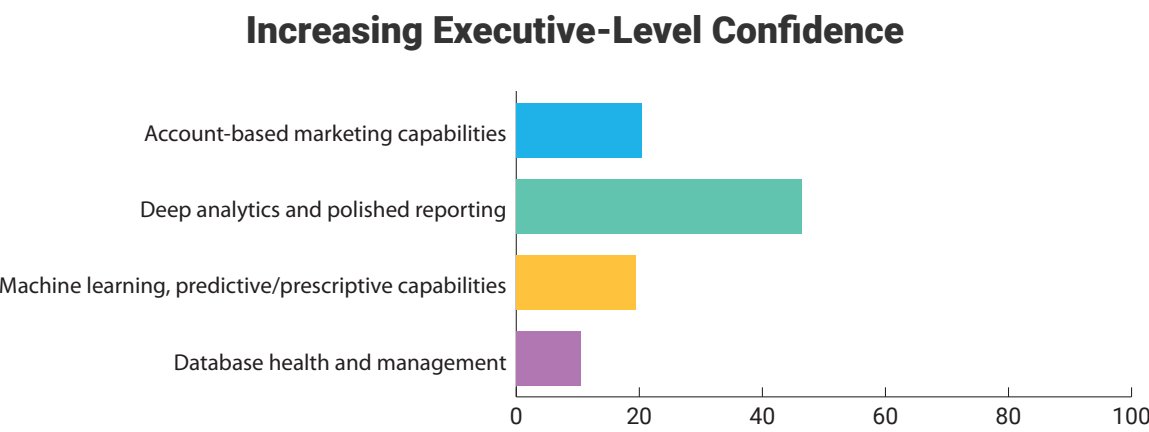


**Survey Question:** What feature/capability is most deficient in your current marketing automation platform?



# Key Finding #1 (Continued)

For years, marketers have reported on activity metrics without connecting them to revenue. Now, we know more marketers are held accountable to revenue results than anything else. Respondents feel deep, comprehensive reporting would increase executive-level confidence in the marketing team—a resounding 2x over the next highest-rated capability. Reporting on revenue requires capabilities that MAP vendors currently lack. Failing to supply advanced, revenue-level reporting creates a vicious cycle for MAP vendors: CMOs don’t log into the system, which limits the perceived value of the overall investment.



**Survey Question:** *What new marketing automation platform feature or enhanced capability would increase your executive team’s confidence in your marketing team?*



## KEY FINDING #2

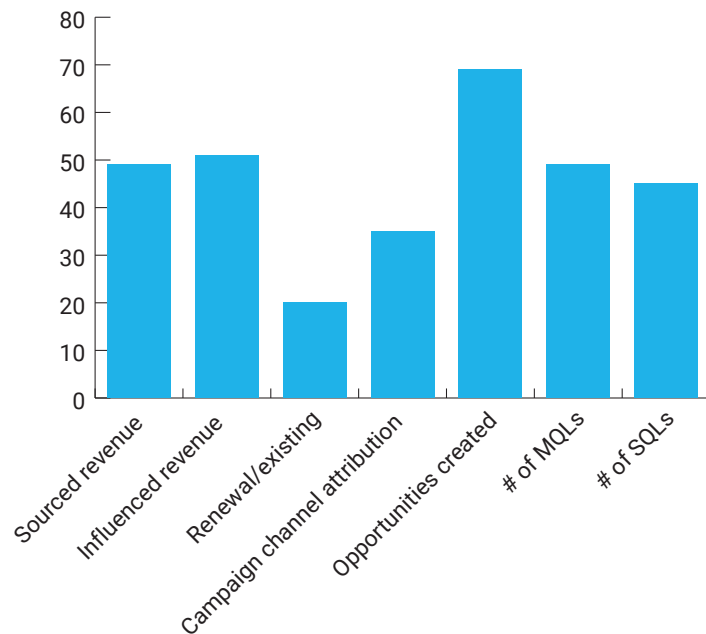
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Modern marketers are increasingly accountable for driving revenue, but MAPs are focused on email performance, lead acquisition, and campaign impact -- not post-handoff metrics, such as pipeline created and bookings influenced.

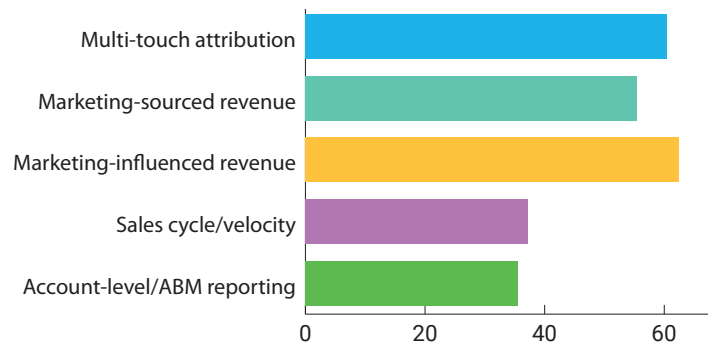
## Key Finding #2

The marketers we surveyed also cited multi-touch attribution as a critical feature. Marketers need to understand how their efforts source and influence revenue, and they need to develop complex attribution models. Because MAP vendors have yet to meet these needs, a niche industry comprised of marketing attribution vendors has emerged, threatening cross-sell opportunities for MAP providers.

### Failed to Meet Expectations vs. Measured KPIs



### Most Important Analytics/Reporting Capabilities



**Survey Question:** Overall, has your marketing automation platform met your expectations?

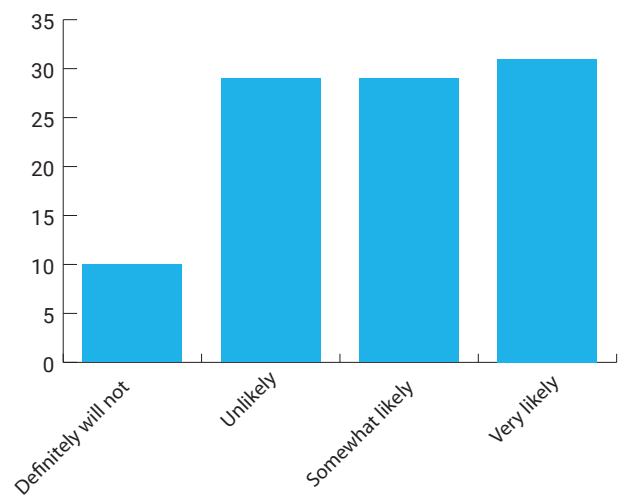
**Survey Question:** What are the primary KPIs you are measured on?

**Survey Question:** Which analytics/reporting capabilities are most important to your organization?

## Key Finding #2 (Continued)

Not surprisingly, the group that indicated their MAP “failed to meet most or all of their expectations” are “likely to replace” their platform in the next 18 months. Replacing a MAP is a time- and labor-intensive process that often redirects resources from marketing programs. This complexity creates a level of “stickiness” for MAP vendors. However, respondents who recognize they will not get what they need from their current tool are planning to churn from their provider, despite the high cost of switching.

**Failed to Meet Expectations vs. Likelihood to Replace**

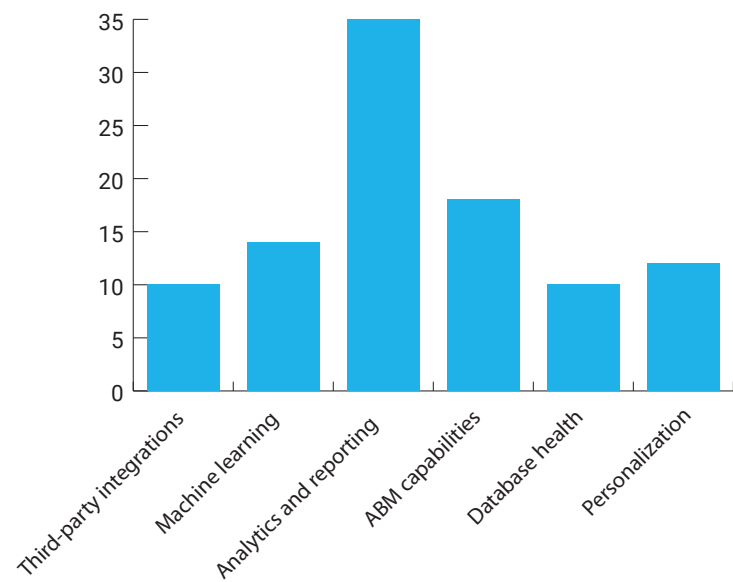


**Survey Question:** *How likely are you to replace your marketing automation vendor within the next 18 months?*

## Key Finding #2 (Continued)

Of the group that indicated their platform has not met their expectations, analytics/reporting is the leading feature respondents would like to add to their MAP – 2x more than the next highest request (ABM capabilities).

### Failed to Meet Expectations vs. Highest-Ranked Feature to Add

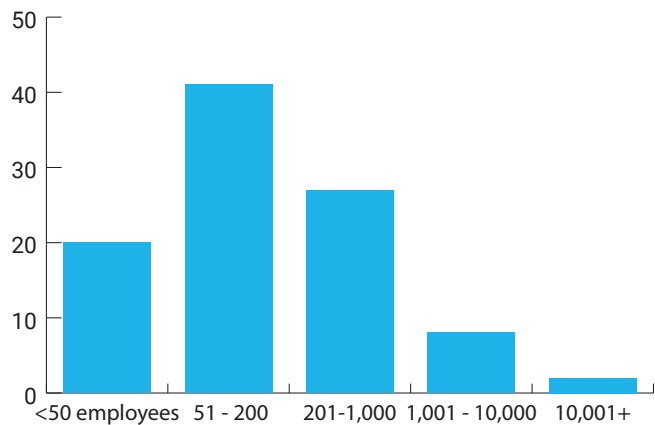


**Survey Question:** *If you could add any feature/capability to your MAP, which would it be?*

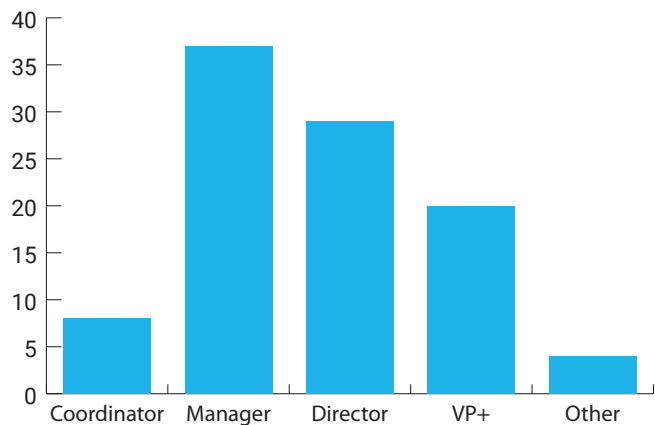
Key Finding #2 (Continued)

Director and manager respondents voiced the highest level of dissatisfaction with their MAP, likely because they are the primary users and thus feel the direct pain of having to deliver the insights asked by executives. Smaller companies may lack resources such as dedicated MAP administrators or analysts, so they need their solution to carry much of the load for important analytics and reporting and overall ease of use.

Failed to Meet Expectations vs. Organization Size



Failed to Meet Expectations vs. Job Role



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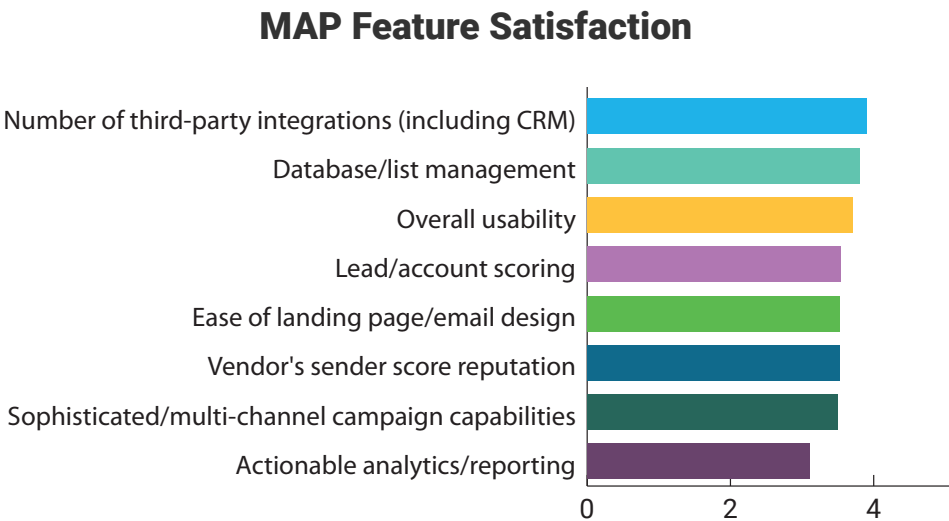
### KEY FINDING #3

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Effective database management and good quality data are required to fuel effective marketing operations.

# Key Finding #3

MAPs appear to be meeting users’ expectations in regard to database and list management. Clean, accurate, and organized data is the fuel that powers effective marketing operations. Reliable data is made possible by third-party integrations and database/list management, both of which top the list of features with the highest levels of user satisfaction.

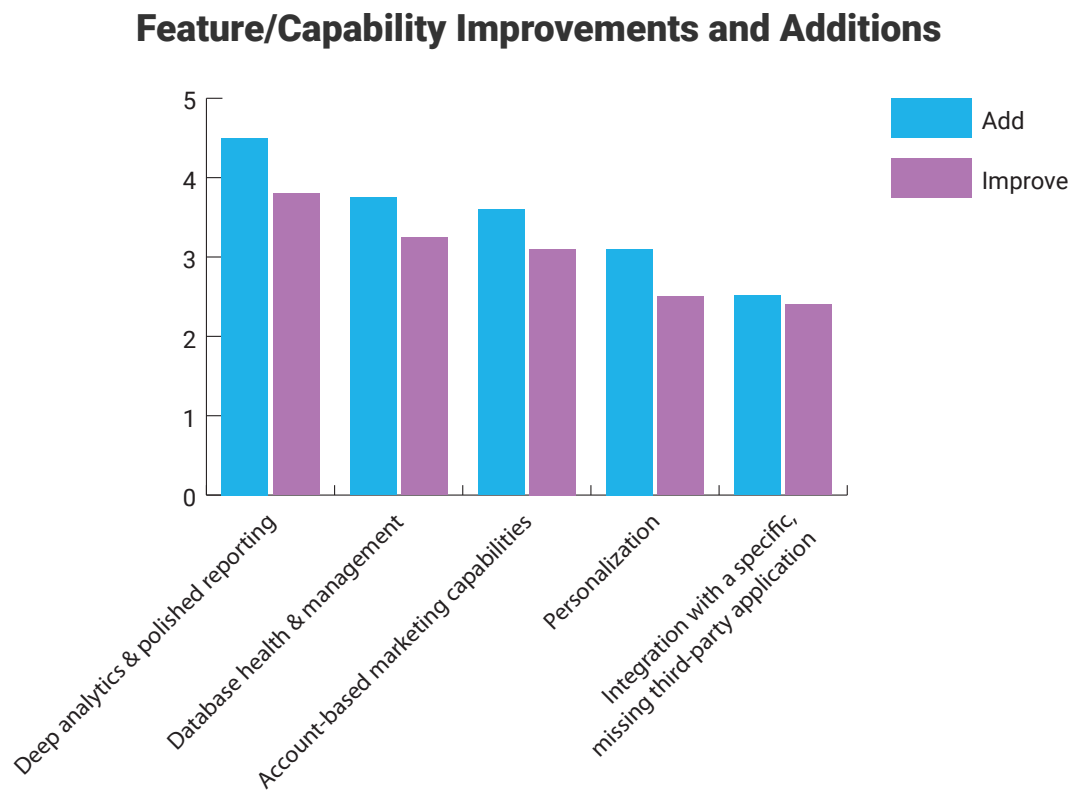


**Survey Question:** *How satisfied are you with your marketing automation platform’s features?*



### Key Finding #3 (Continued)

Respondents also indicated a desire to add or improve database health and management capabilities to their MAP. However, unlike reporting/analytics, marketers are not dissatisfied with their MAP vendor’s database features, suggesting that this is an “evergreen” need given that data is a decaying asset.



**Survey Question:** If you could add any feature/capability to your MAP, which would it be?  
**Survey Question:** If you could improve any feature/capability in your MAP, which would it be?

An abstract graphic consisting of a dense network of black dots (nodes) connected by thin black lines (edges), forming a complex web-like structure that fills the upper half of the page. The background is a solid dark gray.

#### KEY FINDING #4

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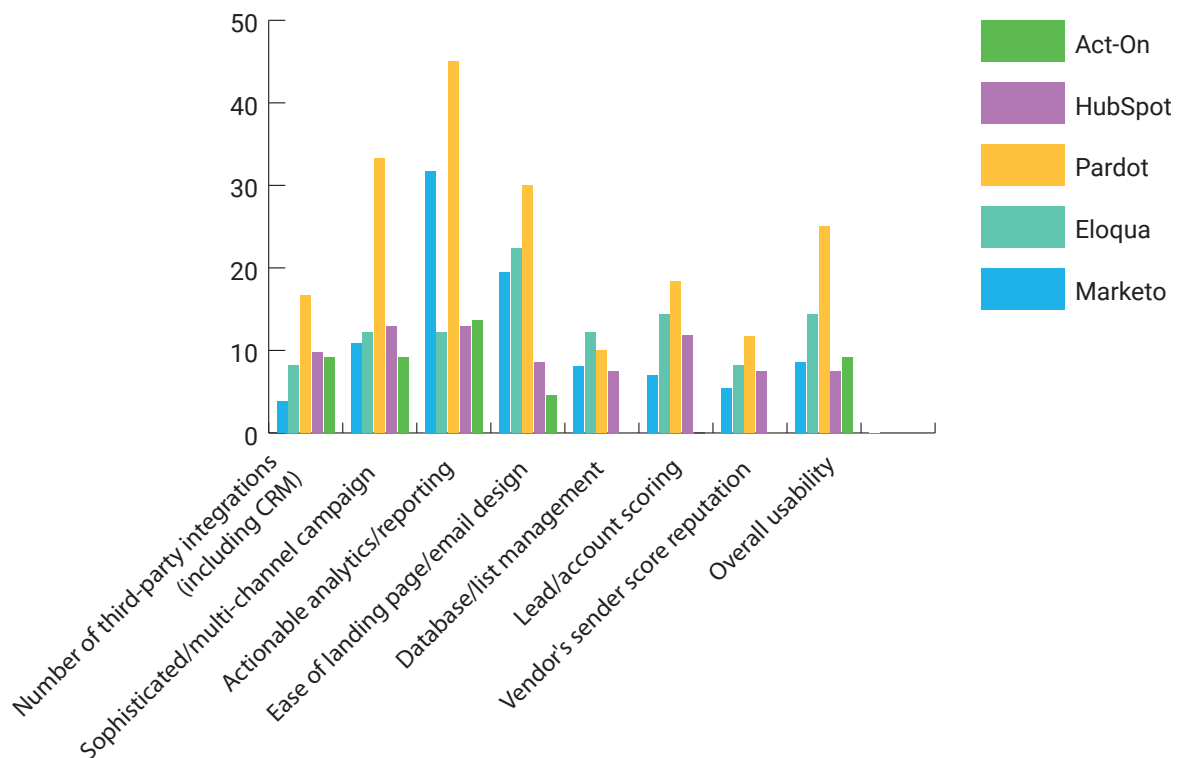
The more experienced a marketer is, the more likely they are to be dissatisfied with their marketing automation system's reporting and attribution capabilities.

## Key Finding #4

Reporting is the greatest source of pain for users of all but one marketing automation system (Oracle Eloqua):

- Marketo users are most dissatisfied with analytics/reporting capabilities.
- Pardot users are most dissatisfied with analytics/reporting capabilities.
- HubSpot users are most dissatisfied with analytics/reporting capabilities.
- Act-On users are most dissatisfied with analytics/reporting capabilities.
- Oracle Eloqua users feel the most pain around ease of landing page and email design, though they ranked analytics/reporting capabilities as the feature they'd most like to improve.

**Dissatisfaction with Features**



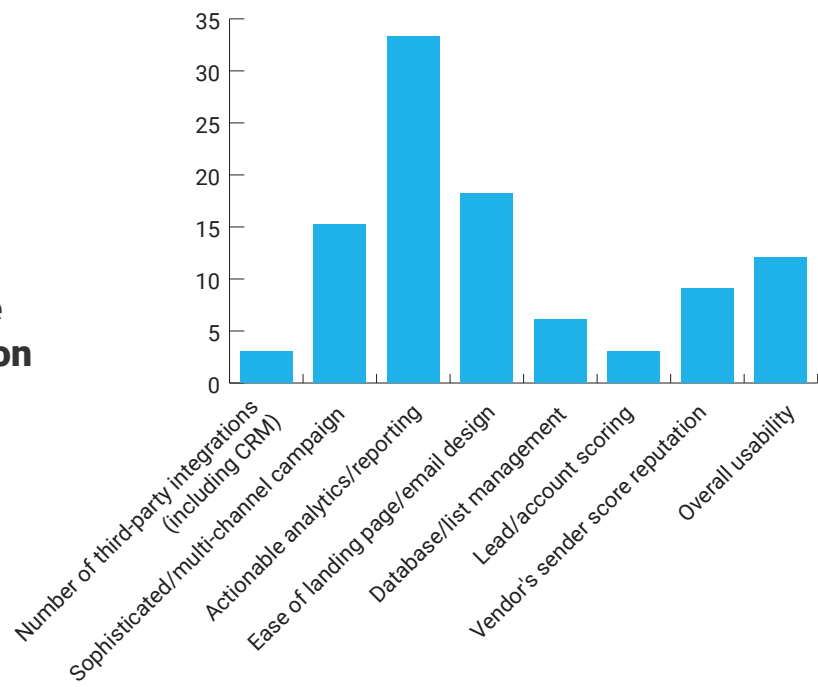
**Survey Question:** How satisfied are you with your MAP's features?

**Survey Question:** If you could add any feature/capability to your MAP, which would it be?

## Key Finding #4 (Continued)

Advanced MAP users (those with 7+ years experience) cite actionable analytics/reporting and sophisticated/multi-channel attribution as two of the three features with which they are least satisfied. This dissatisfaction is likely rooted in accountability: Senior marketers report to the executive team and possibly the board of directors. Reporting and attribution are essential to prove one’s value to a leadership team.

**Most Experience  
vs. Dissatisfaction  
Feature Ranking**



**Survey Question:** How many years of experience do you have with your MAP?

**Survey Question:** How satisfied are you with your MAP’s features?

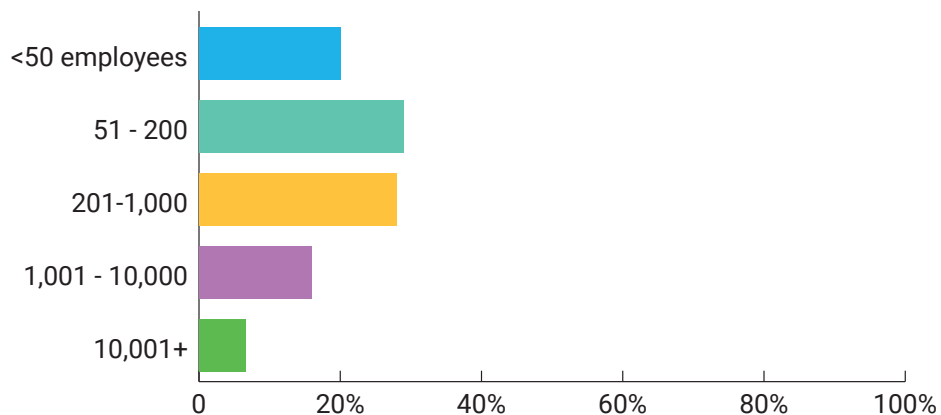
# Conclusion

Two classes of marketers have emerged: first-generation marketers who report on top-of-funnel metrics, and second-generation marketers who report on revenue impact. MAP reporting is failing to meet users' needs, especially those who are measured on revenue impact. This shortcoming normally would create a high risk for churn, but four out of five MAP vendors share the same deficiency: analytics and reporting. There's simply no other MAP to for these marketers to turn to. The first MAP vendor to solve revenue reporting will enjoy an enormous competitive advantage.

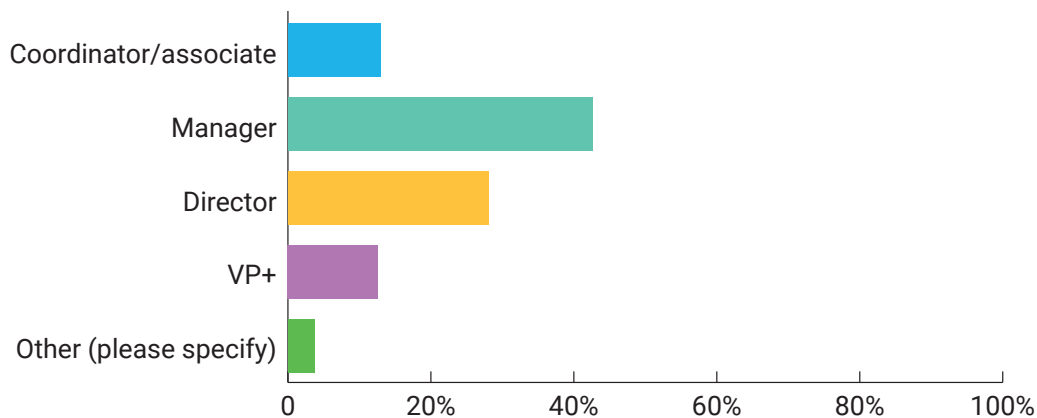
# Methodology

To better understand what marketing automation users feel their platforms are missing, we conducted a survey over 11 days in October 2017. The responses came from 410 marketing and sales professionals who use Act-On, HubSpot, Marketo, Oracle Eloqua, or Pardot. Survey respondents represented multiple industries and ranged in size from SMB organizations to large enterprises.

## How many employees work for your organization?



## What is your position level within your organization?





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