THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

A brand-building manifesto

A research report from alan.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

YOUR SECTOR NEEDS YOU

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At first glance, activism and B2B seem like uncomfortable bedfellows: one red-blooded, the other (supposedly) meek and mild. But for today’s B2B leaders, desire for this union is intensifying.

In a survey of 300 UK-based C-suite professionals, we discovered that B2B audiences want to see greater activism. Not in the B2C vogue of tailgating social movements, but in actively shaping their industry: indeed, “playing an active role in defining the sector” was second only to products and services in the most important criteria for being a leading B2B brand.

This theme of leading change was reinforced in other areas of the survey. For instance, when we asked business leaders for the defining characteristics of B2B brands they’re positive about, a “vision for the future of the industry” and “leadership on trends shaping the industry” topped the charts.

This call to arms is invigorating but is unavoidably daunting for an industry traditionally cautious about putting its head above the parapet. However, when 84% want to see B2B companies show greater leadership, the clamour cannot be ignored. Put simply, activism builds brands.

So how can B2B brands be more activist?

Clearly there is no silver bullet and developing a vision for the industry is an involved strategic exercise. Yet our research suggests a route forward: thought leadership.

Intuitively, thought leadership is the perfect vehicle for communicating a vision. However, I believe it can also play an active role in bringing about industry-level change itself. This conviction is strengthened by two results from our research:

01 The primary reason business leaders consume thought leadership is to “challenge [their] understanding”

02 69% of business leaders want B2B brands to take a disruptive position on the state of the industry and offer strong opinions on change (up 10 percentage points from the previous year)

B2B audiences want thought leadership that makes them question the status quo. They want to embrace new ideas and ways of thinking – and align behind brands whose perspectives they can, in effect, ditto.

Unfortunately, our research also showed that most thought leadership is falling short. While the credibility of thought leadership has improved dramatically since we first started tracking in 2017, the majority still feel it’s generally too focused on providing commentary on established trends rather than leading future-focused conversations.

Reversing this trend and making thought leadership a potent tool for “industry activism” must be an urgent priority for B2B brands. After all, if 93% of your audience say thought leadership is important or very important in shaping brand perceptions, it’s a brand-building strategy you can’t ignore.

57%

of respondents think having a role in defining your sector is one of the most important criteria for being a leading B2B brand – second only to products and services (64%)

#1

characteristic for being a thought-leading brand is having a clear vision of the future for the industry

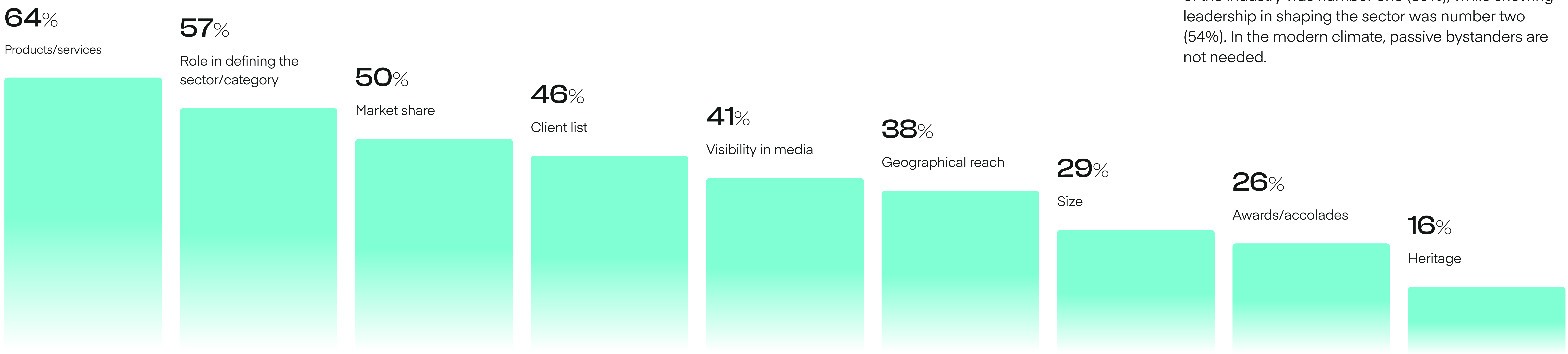
93%

of respondents say thought leadership was either very important (55%) or important (38%) in shaping their perception of a brand

B2B brands need to have a vision

To become a leader, B2B brands need a strong take on the future direction of their sector

Playing a role in defining the sector is now key for leading B2B brands



Q: In your opinion, what are the most important criteria for being a leading B2B brand?

So you want to become a leader ...

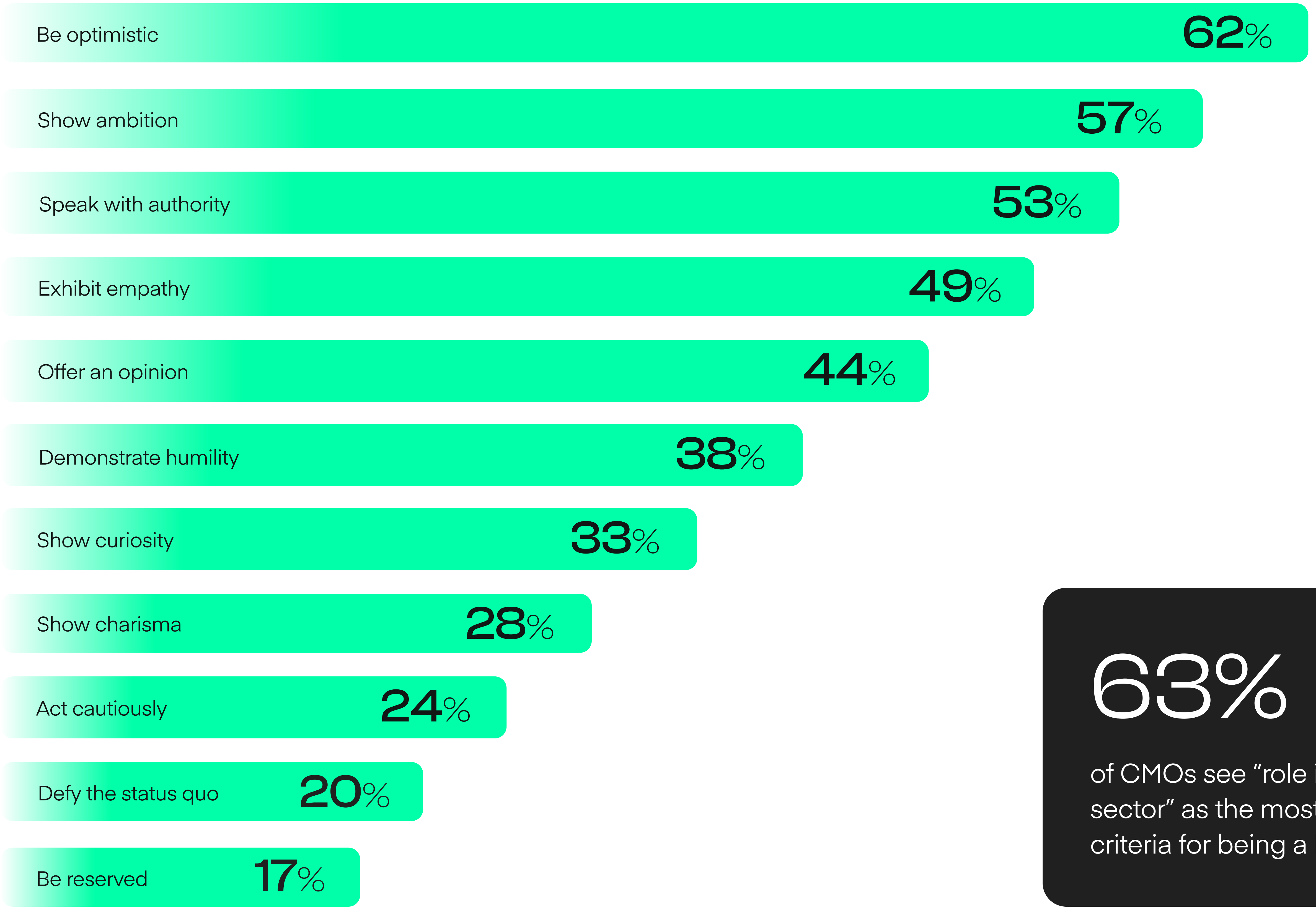
What positions a B2B brand as a leader has changed over time. It used to be that a business could build a reputation – and a brand – on the back of a quality product or service, sheer size and market share. Those with the largest profit margins and a dominant position in their market were automatically bestowed frontrunner status, with others aspiring to reach their level.

The result is a host of sectors where the largest organisations just sit back and play it safe, rarely putting their heads above the parapet to say anything even mildly provocative or attempting to push forward broader conversations. There's simply been no need. Why rock the boat – or the enormous oil tanker – when it's moving along smoothly?

But in these uncertain and complex times, that's no longer enough. B2B audiences are seeking guidance and foresight. We asked respondents to define the most important criteria for being a leading B2B brand. Playing a role in defining a sector (57%) was second only to products and services (64%) in importance. CMOs and CCOs both rated it as the most important criteria. That's above size, market share and geographical reach.

This points to an audience no longer satiated by sector leaders solely innovating through product or service. They actively seek thought leaders: clarity, perspective and bold opinion that informs – and challenges – their thinking. When asked for the characteristics of B2B brands that audiences feel most passionate about, having a vision for the future of the industry was number one (60%), while showing leadership in shaping the sector was number two (54%). In the modern climate, passive bystanders are not needed.

Audiences want positivity, authority and ambition from brands



Q: Thinking about communication and marketing activity, what would you like to see B2B brands do more of?

Ben Melton is global brand, creative and campaigns director at TeamViewer, a leading remote connectivity software company. He has noticed this thirst for knowledge first-hand. "We're being asked by directors, COOs and CEOs for our views on how remote support and connectivity can play a role in the future companies want to build," he says. "They care about that more than the bottom line. They want thought leadership on topics like speed to market productivity, creating the future workplace, attracting staff and bridging the skills gap. Our audiences want a thought partner, not just a technology partner."

Wanted: positivity, ambition – and provocation

If the audience desire for a bold vision is clear, so too is the stance they want from B2B brands. When asked what they wanted brands to do more of, the top three answers were to be optimistic (62%), show ambition (57%), and speak with authority (57%).

The marketing being pumped out – filling up inboxes and LinkedIn feeds – isn't giving people what they need. Leaders are lacking and provocative ideas are seemingly in short supply. In a major study by Edelman and LinkedIn, 71% of decision-makers said that less than half of thought leadership content provided them with sufficient value. That aligns with our own findings: 78% of respondents want B2B brands to have a clear and disruptive position on the state of the industry, and 75% prefer content that takes a bold, contrarian or provocative point of view.

Discomfort, unease, shock, surprise, intrigue. These are the emotions that brands must elicit to cut through.

Brands have an opportunity to stamp their authority on their industry. For TeamViewer, the mission is clear. "We've realised that we're not necessarily disrupting a competitor, we're disrupting a way of working," says Melton. "We've moved away from just discussing how we solve problems for clients today; it's really about how we're shaping where a business and the industry is heading in the future. Sustainability is something we're asked about a lot – we want to lead that conversation within our sector."

63%

of CMOs see "role in defining the sector" as the most important criteria for being a leading brand

Audience desire for brands to take a disruptive position

67% 2022 → **78%** 2023

Q: To what extent do you agree with the following statement:
"I respect brands that aren't scared to have an opinion and take a disruptive position on the industry."

IKEA'S BOLD PLAY

CASE STUDY

Outside the world of B2B, IKEA offers an excellent example of a bold vision brought to life. Its mission is to become climate positive by 2030 while inspiring 1 billion people to live more sustainably via the "Sustainable Everyday" campaign.

That is one lofty goal. To get there, the company has launched a long-term thought leadership initiative around educating customers on tweaking their lifestyle habits. This includes an interactive content hub with a library of advice on everything from reducing energy consumption to taking low-carbon holidays; using KNUFF Theory (Swedish for nudges) across its marketing to encourage small daily behavioural changes; and shifting its comms and website UX to advise consumers to extend the lifespan of IKEA products.

The results

- IKEA won the Best Environmental Cause Campaign at the Purpose Awards 2022, marking the brand out as a sustainability thought leader
- Customers became more aware of sustainability through IKEA's comms, with an increased email open rate of 6%
- Some 65% of recipients engaged further with sustainability, while family perception of the brand's positive impact also increased 3.4% year-on-year
- The KNUFF approach resulted in 48 million sustainable actions. As part of that behavioural shift, 12,000 households switched to sustainable energy, saving 136,200 tonnes of CO_2

Will Sturgeon
Head of Content and Thought Leadership
PWC

The dangers of looking too far ahead

Will Sturgeon is head of content and thought leadership at management consultancy company PwC. Here he offers a cautionary take on why speculation – and looking too far ahead – is not in any B2B brand's interest

There's a growing appetite for thought leadership content, but that appetite has initiated an absolute deluge of material. A lot of it coalesces around the same ideas; there's a real sea of sameness.

"The future" is such an overused term in B2B marketing communications. Almost every B2B brand will have put out a "The future of" report, but the challenges that organisations are working through are so complex and varied that very few will have given the future much thought. Why concern yourself with ten years hence when the next 18 months are going to make or break your organisation?

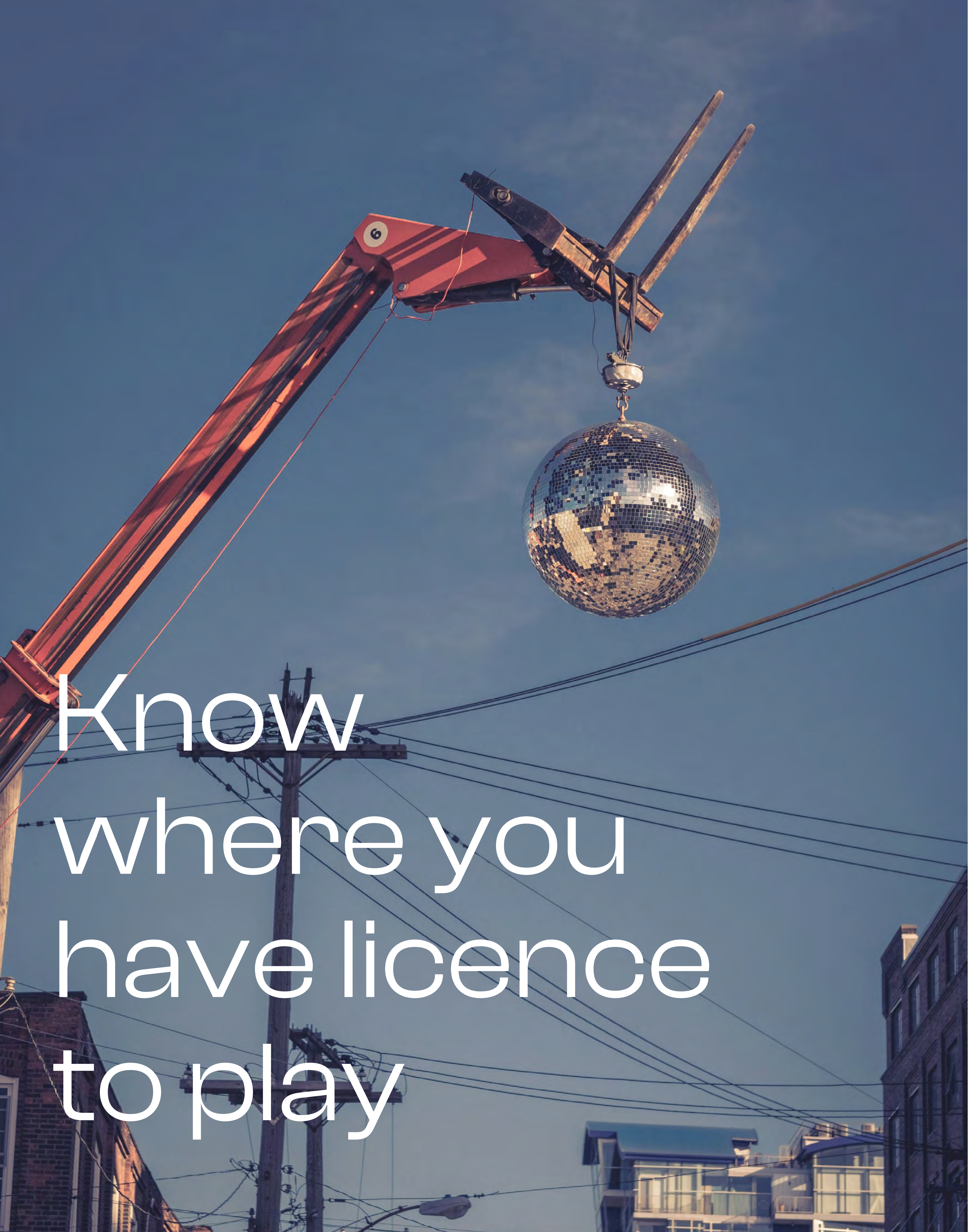
The issue here is determining what's meant by the future. It's far better to tell people: "Here's what you should be doing now and next." Otherwise you run the risk of being overlooked; audiences will think, "I'll worry about the future when I've sorted out the present."

> If you look at the tenure of most C-suite jobs, it's between two and four years. People want to know what's going to make them a success in their role now, and what's going to help them get their next role

That's not to say that forward-looking – and action-orientated – isn't the right approach. It absolutely is. But it must be grounded in a timeframe that's relevant to the challenges people are facing and to the jobs that they're doing.

If you look at the tenure of jobs like CIOs and CCOs, it's on average between two and four years. People want to know what they need to make them a success in their role now, and what is going to help them get the next role, whether internal or external. Very rarely do they consider the foundations they should be laying for what they'll be doing in 20 to 30 years.

It's easy to feel like you're being provocative if you're talking about a far-off date, but you're writing cheques you'll never have to cash. It's far braver to be thought-provoking about what people should be doing now. What should they prioritise? What investments should they make? That feels far braver and more intellectually rigorous than far-off speculation.



Know where you have licence to play

Weighing in on broader issues is only advisable when you have something practical to say

The B2C/B2B difference

Climate change, the cost-of-living crisis, and racial injustice: B2C brands have taken a firm stance on all these topics in recent years, as socio-political, economic and environmental issues have permeated marketing and messaging.

A cynic might say they've had little choice: B2C audiences are demanding it. A survey conducted by marketing agency Kubi Kalloo and Alligator Digital revealed that 59% of consumers believe taking a stance matters. Two thirds of that percentage say they're likely to buy from or boycott a brand based on its social media posts about an issue.

The same doesn't quite apply to B2B audiences. In our survey, when asked what leading B2B brands had in common, "taking a stance on social or political social matters" came bottom of nine options, mentioned by just 21% of respondents. Taking a stance on environmental issues didn't rank much higher (31%). Both were far below having a vision for the sector (60%) and showing leadership on trends impacting the sector (54%).

Walking the tightrope

This ties in with the way B2B has conventionally done things: keep opinions behind closed doors, don't stir the pot. But in a world where broader issues are intrinsically linked to the way organisations operate, can B2B brands really continue to stick their heads in the sand and keep their mouths shut?

It's a dilemma facing financial services firm IG Group. "Financial services is very much linked to geopolitics," says Tomas Ausra, the company's global institutional marketing manager. "Investors look at how certain geopolitical events might be affecting volatility and how that could impact their allocation of funds," Ausra explains. Politics is shaping the financial services sector and is a topic that audiences demand leadership on.

Companies like IG are on a tightrope: they must provide leadership around the critical issues affecting their sector while trying to avoid any potential backlash and alienating a chunk of their audience. There's also the danger of being seen as jumping on a trend, a fate that has befallen several big B2C brands in recent years.

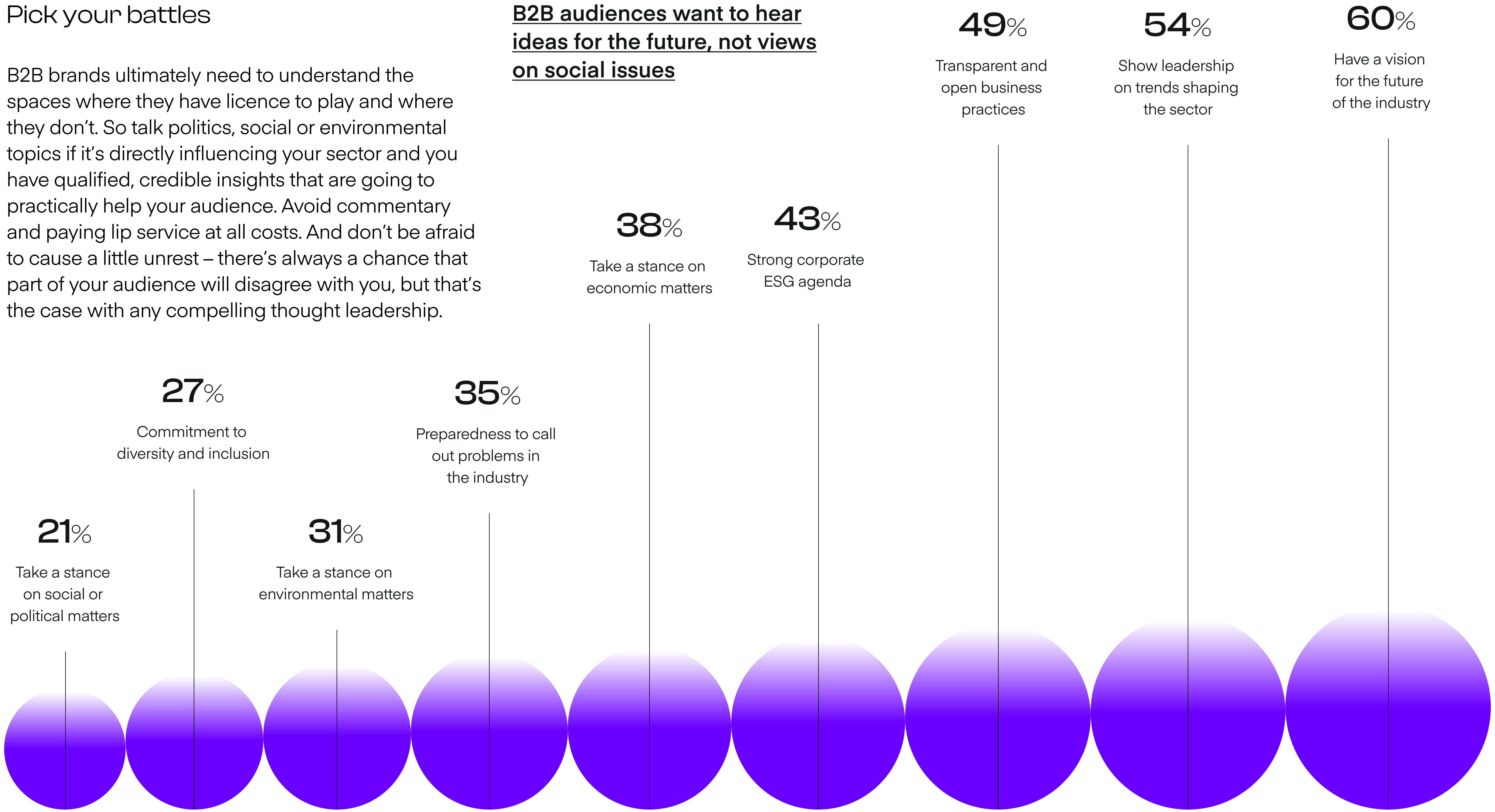
For IG, geopolitics provides an opportunity to offer its audience valuable, forward-looking insights. Its approach is to remain neutral. "We look at these big political shifts and analyse them from our audience's perspective," says Ausra. "What does it mean for them? How do we think it's going to play out over the next 12 to 18 months? What impact will that have on the financial markets? The key point is to be insightful and analytical."

This strategy has been adopted by ServiceNow, a business software company. "The top trends within a sector can be entwined with politics too," says Komal Thadani, the company's EMEA Marketing Director. "As an example, in financial services, banks have to be compliant with certain regulations that might need to be implemented two or three years down the line, like GenAI. There may be certain nuances as part of that [a brand might talk about], like here is what GenAI is or could be, or here are the factors you need to consider when you're building an AI tool."

Pick your battles

B2B brands ultimately need to understand the spaces where they have licence to play and where they don't. So talk politics, social or environmental topics if it's directly influencing your sector and you have qualified, credible insights that are going to practically help your audience. Avoid commentary and paying lip service at all costs. And don't be afraid to cause a little unrest – there's always a chance that part of your audience will disagree with you, but that's the case with any compelling thought leadership.

B2B audiences want to hear ideas for the future, not views on social issues



Q: Thinking of the B2B brands you feel most positively about, what characteristics do they have in common?

A political playbook

Teresha Aird is the co-founder and CMO of Offices.net, an online B2B commercial property brokerage company. For over 20 years she's set out policies around permissible communications. Here, she outlines her playbook for handling those spicier issues

Teresha Aird
Co-Founder and CMO
Offices.net

01 Avoid descending into advocacy

Don't stray from the core function of your B2B business. By all means, use your platform to inform and educate about political issues, but only those affecting only your sector. We enter the fray of political discourse only when the issues directly impact our industry, clients, or operational framework. Pushing a particular agenda can typecast your business going forward, alienate valued business clients, and cause irreversible brand damage if the tide shifts.

02 Like the Swiss, maintain neutrality

If providing your two cents on hot-button issues can't be avoided, always try and aim for a balanced view, and focus primarily on how the political developments impact your industry, ideally without taking sides. This is crucial for keeping discussions professional in this extremely polarised political climate.

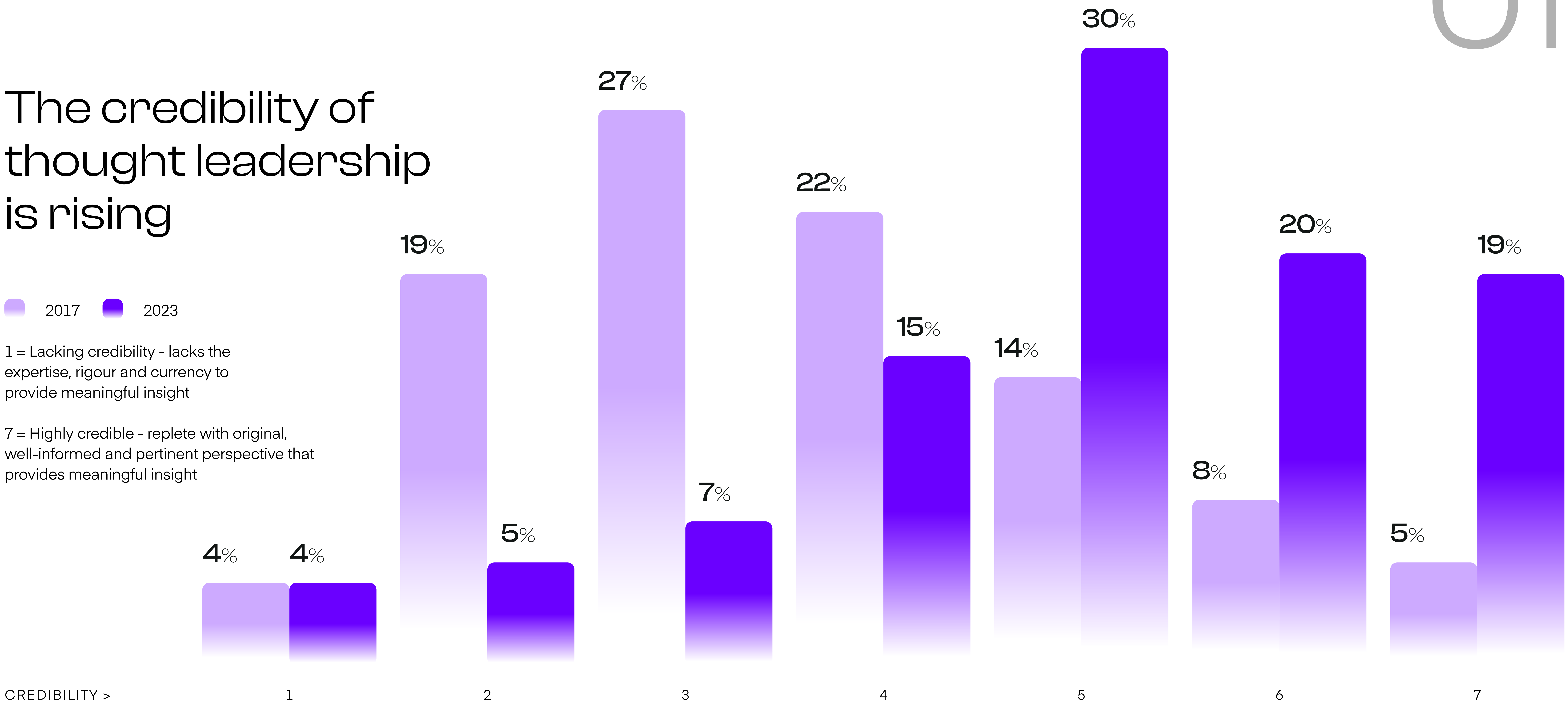
03 Establish clear guidelines

When it comes to external comms, we have explicit guidelines around the appropriateness of political discussions, delineating where and how these conversations can take place. This prevents any potential conflicts with our stakeholders and audience before they have a chance to start.

THE STATE OF THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

Credibility and trust have increased, but problems endure around thought leadership. Opportunity exists for brands that can offer stimulation – but that requires real imagination

The credibility of thought leadership is rising



Q: In general, how credible do you find most thought leadership you encounter?

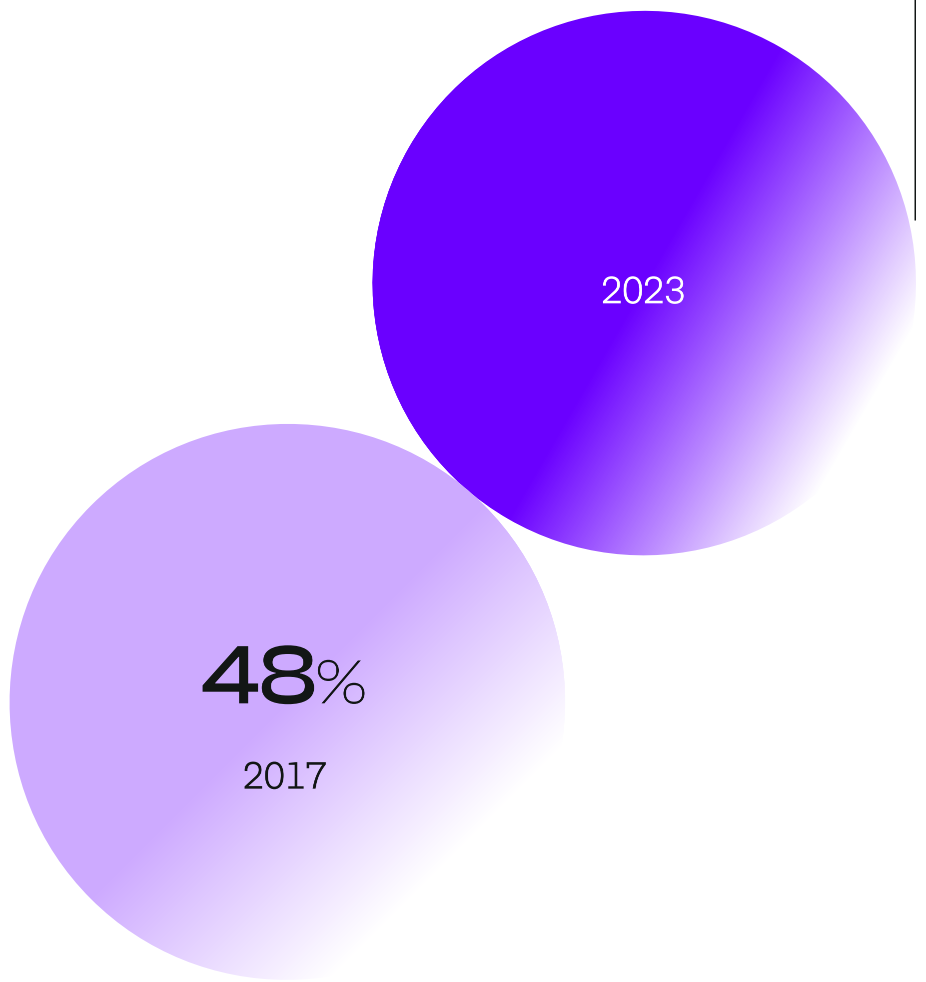
But the same old problems persist

Despite the rise in credibility, content is still falling short in the same old areas

It's too self-serving

46%

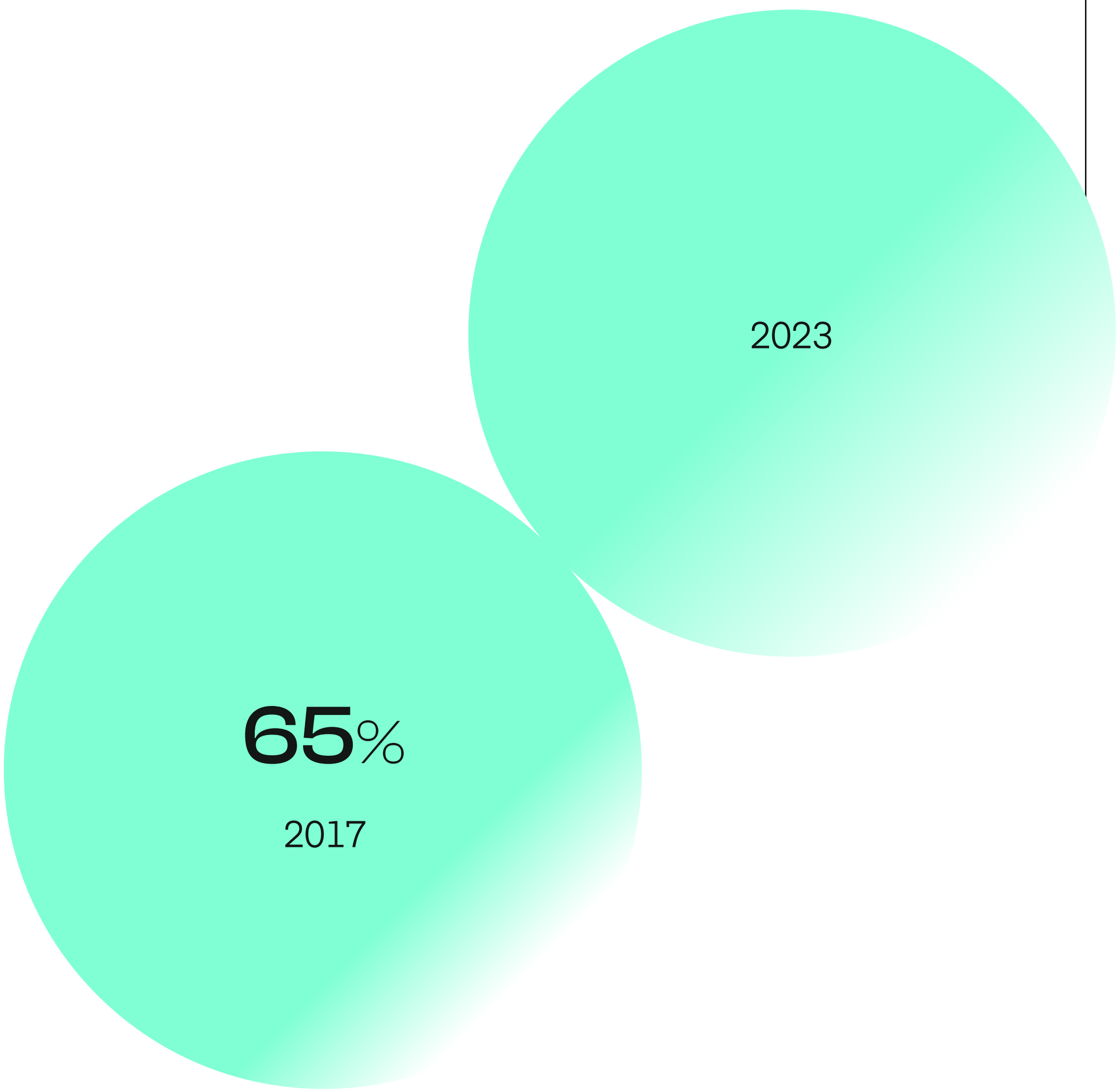
distrust most content by brands because it's too self-serving (versus 48% in 2017)



It doesn't add to the conversation

67%

think branded content simply provides commentary on established trends rather than creating new conversations (65% in 2017)



It's not pushing their intellectual buttons

27%

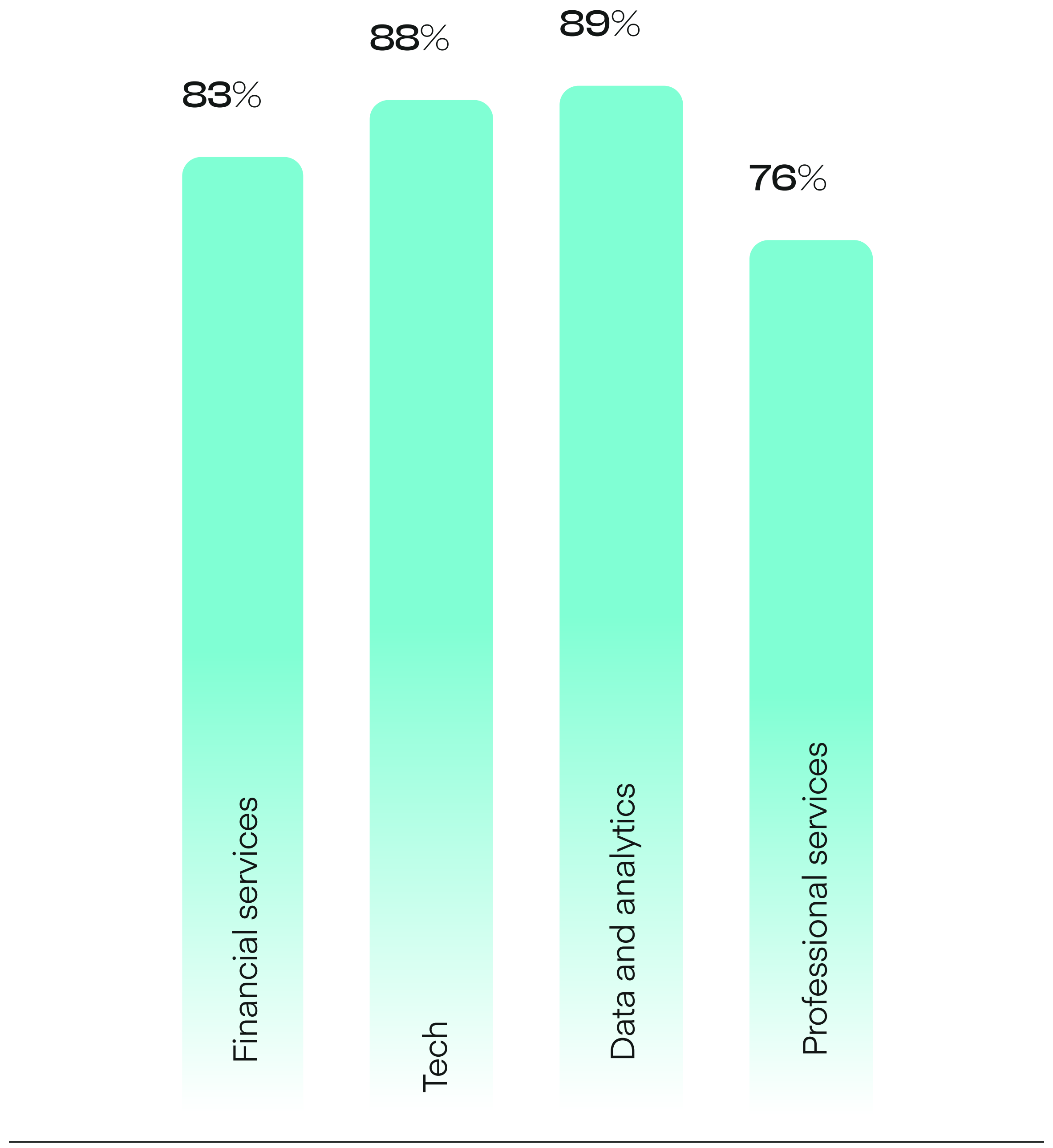
don't feel intellectually challenged by thought leadership from B2B brands

03

Wanted: provocation and stimulation

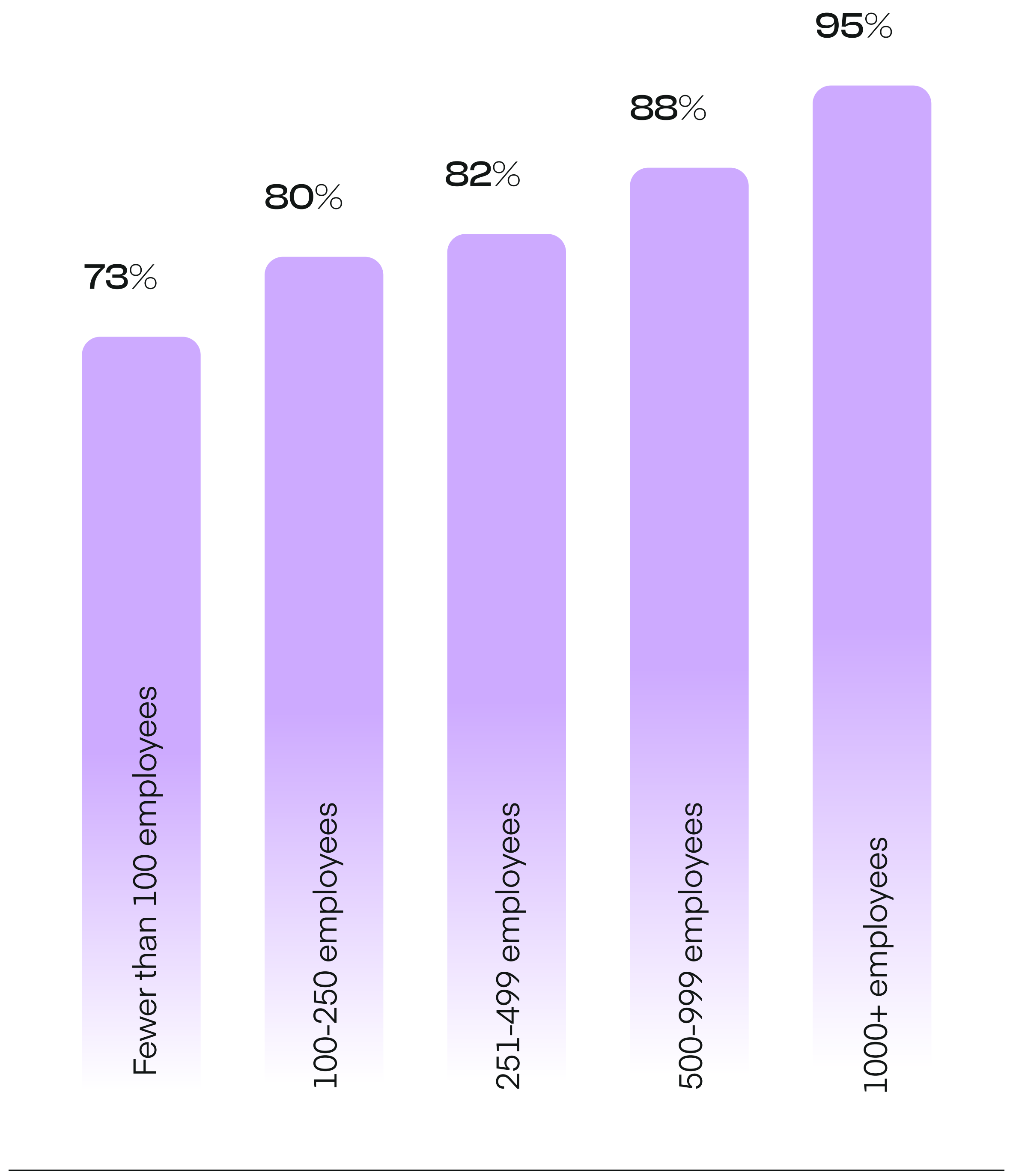
The good news is that it's pretty evident what audiences want brands to do: offer bold and disruptive opinions in original and captivating ways. Sounds easy enough

Across all sectors, audiences want greater leadership on the trends impacting their sector



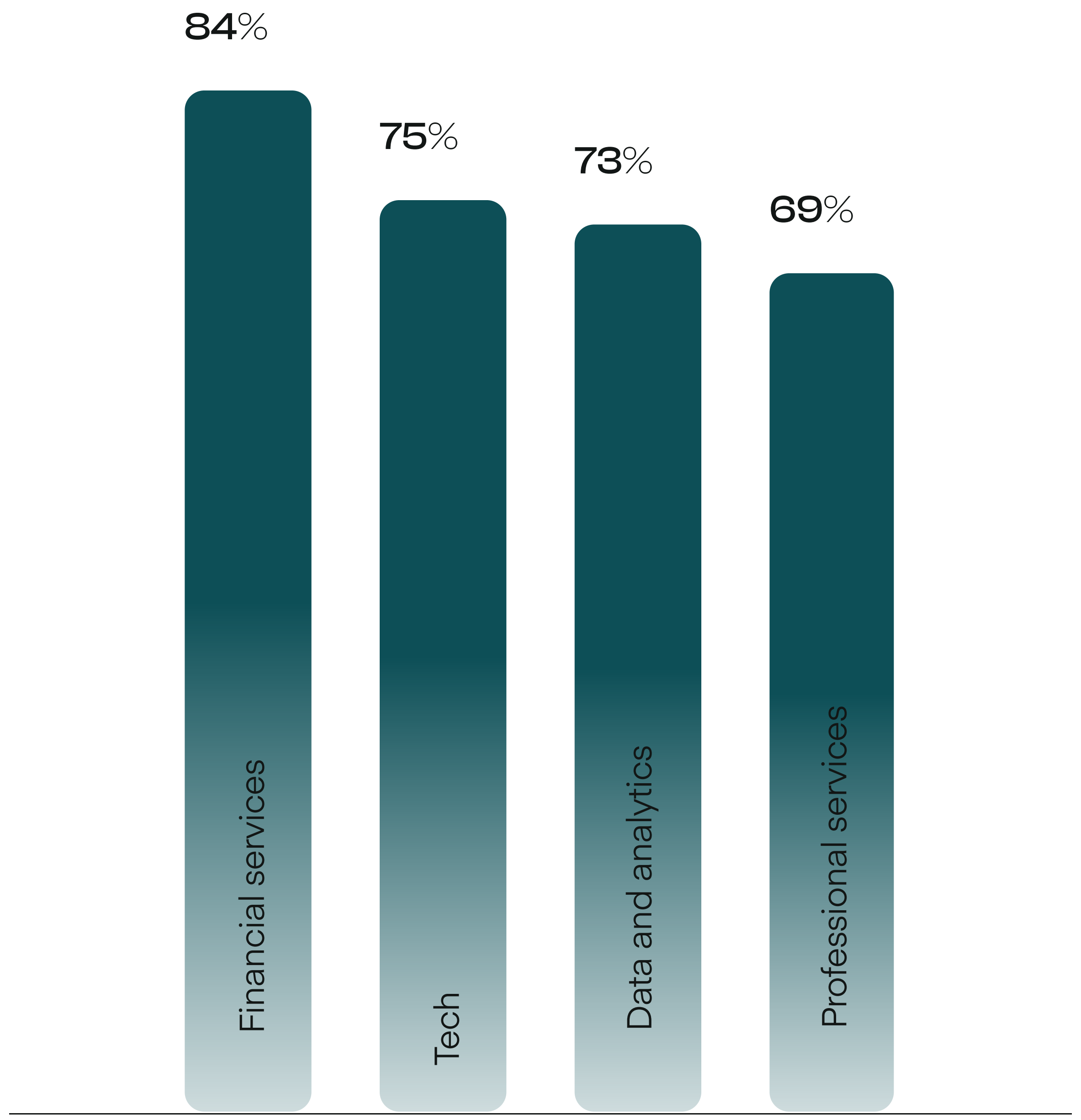
"I would like B2B companies to show greater leadership on trends impacting the sector": Agree

The bigger the company, the more that leadership is demanded



"I would like B2B companies to show greater leadership on trends impacting the sector": Agree

Financial services audiences in particular want audacity

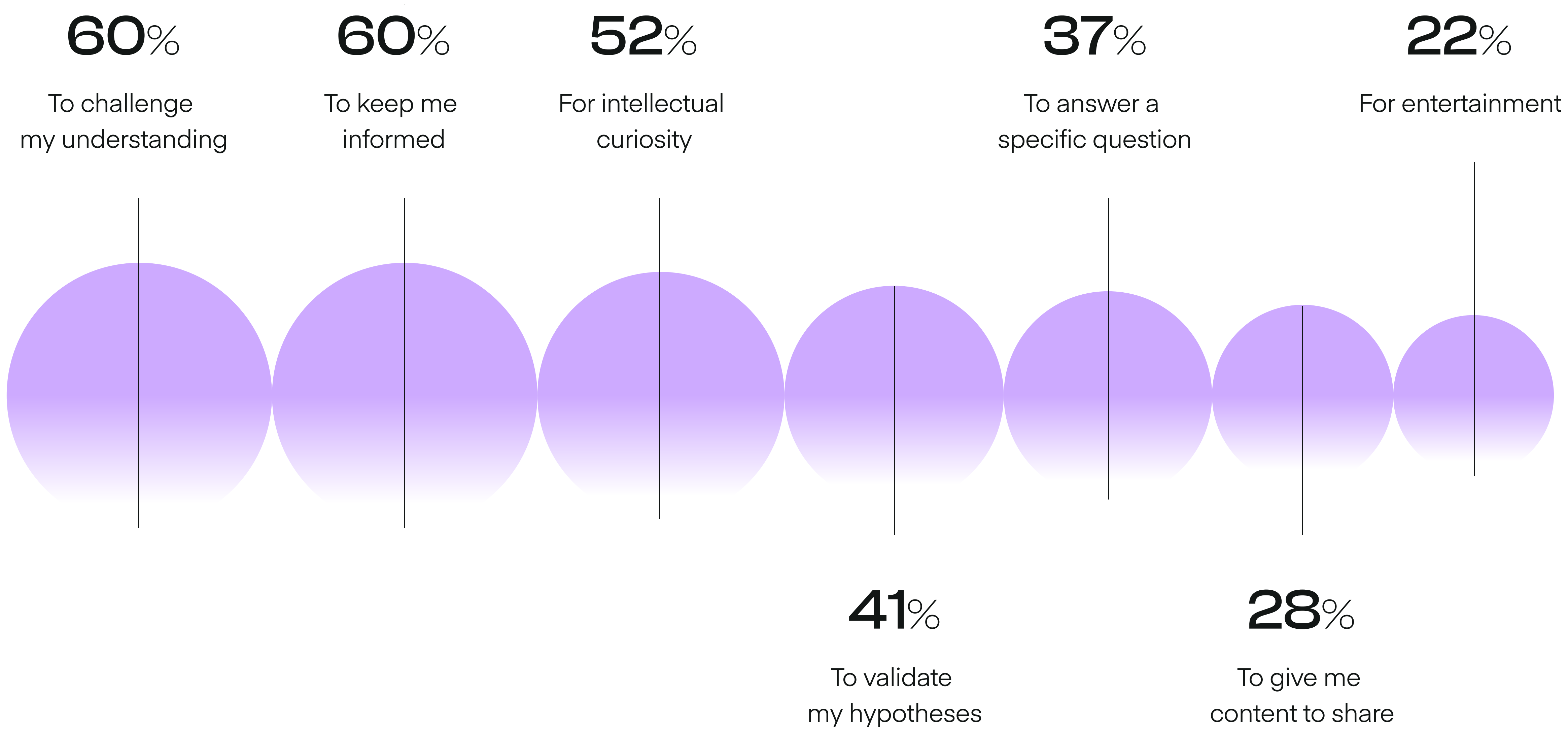


"I prefer content that takes bold, contrarian or even provocative points-of-view": Agree

Forget short-term activation

Audiences increasingly seek long-term educators who will challenge them intellectually

People are looking to be challenged and kept informed



Q: Why do you typically consume thought leadership? Rank 1/2/3

Back in the halcyon days of marketing, thought leadership was all about short-term activation. A business would create a report, a white paper or some other type of bespoke content, gate it behind data capture forms, and use it to generate leads. The ultimate goal was to push decision-makers towards conversion. As we said, halcyon days.

This wasn't so long ago. In 2017, our research revealed the top two reasons for B2B audiences to consume thought leadership: first, when they needed confidence or reassurance that they were making the right decision on who they were buying from; and second, when they were evaluating or comparing the expertise of specific brands or businesses. Thought leadership directly influenced buying decisions in a pretty big way.

Well, times have changed. In our latest research, the top two reasons for consumption are "to keep me informed" (60%) and "to challenge my understanding" (60%). Audiences today want to further their own knowledge and insight into trends affecting their sector and what brands think lies ahead. Indeed, other reasons that rank highly are "for intellectual curiosity" (52%) and "to validate my hypotheses" (41%). In other words, they're looking for brands to act as educators and informers.

Marketers ain't buying

If brands think thought leadership will generate immediate calls to their sales team, disappointment lies in store. When it comes to direct actions after reading thought leadership, only 25% of decision-makers said they'd "purchased products or services from the producing brand or business" in a six-month period – the lowest of any action.

This speaks to a wider shift in buying patterns that has been underway for some time. Firstly, not that many B2B buyers are looking to buy in the current climate. Oft-quoted research from the Ehrenberg-Bass Institute from 2021 showed that while 95% of marketers expected to see significant sales within the first two weeks of a campaign, only 5% of B2B buyers were actively in the market to buy. It doesn't take a maths degree to work out the disparity there.

Secondly, B2B purchasing decisions rely on far more rigour and research than before. In an FT study, 86% of respondents said their organisation was increasing the level of rigour applied to sourcing partners. Research by Gartner, meanwhile, shows that only 17% of the buying process is spent talking to potential suppliers; the majority of time is dedicated to online and offline research. Thought leadership plays a part in getting on a decision-maker's radar and building brand salience, but it's unlikely to be the critical factor in clinching that sale.

Becoming a brand others look to

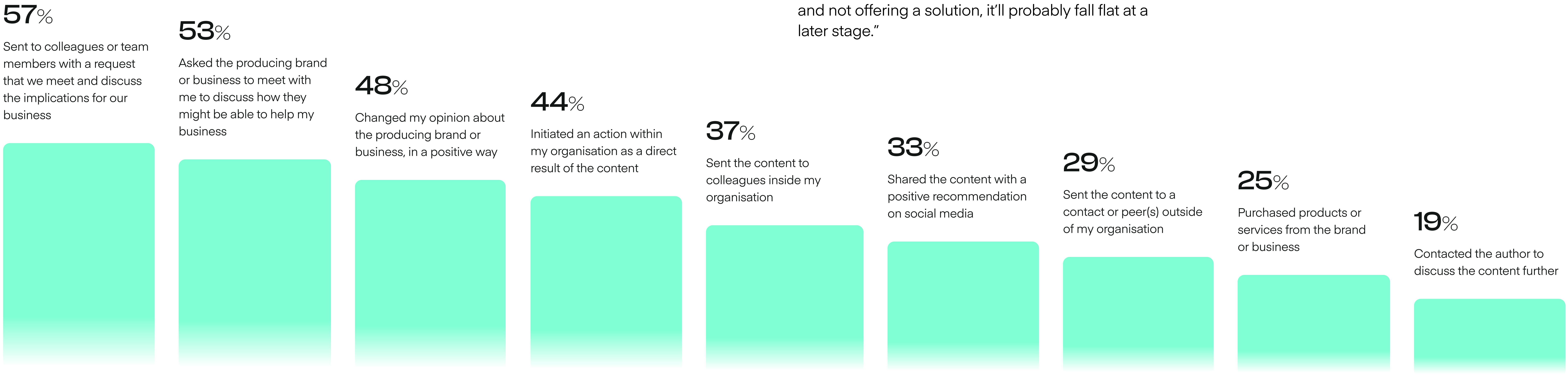
However, our research illustrates that compelling thought leadership still provokes tangible, positive actions. That includes sending content on to colleagues for further discussion (57%); asking the producing brand to discuss how they might be able to help (53%); changing opinions in a positive way (48%); and initiating an action within an organisation (44%). All these actions explicitly strengthen the brand's standing at a personal or broader organisational level.

And lest we forget, driving profitability is intrinsically linked to building a brand. ServiceNow's Thadani is adamant on this point. "There is still the endgame of profitability at the end of the day – it can't purely be about brand building," she says. "You need to start to create that market for any new product; thought leadership gets people to think about this. But if a company is only talking about something and not offering a solution, it'll probably fall flat at a later stage."

B2B brands need to approach this with their eyes wide open: the limited, transactional nature of thought leadership content is firmly a thing of the past. Marketers are already well aware of this – in our survey, building trust and loyalty (54%) and strengthening brand and reputation (50%) were their two primary reasons for commissioning thought leadership.

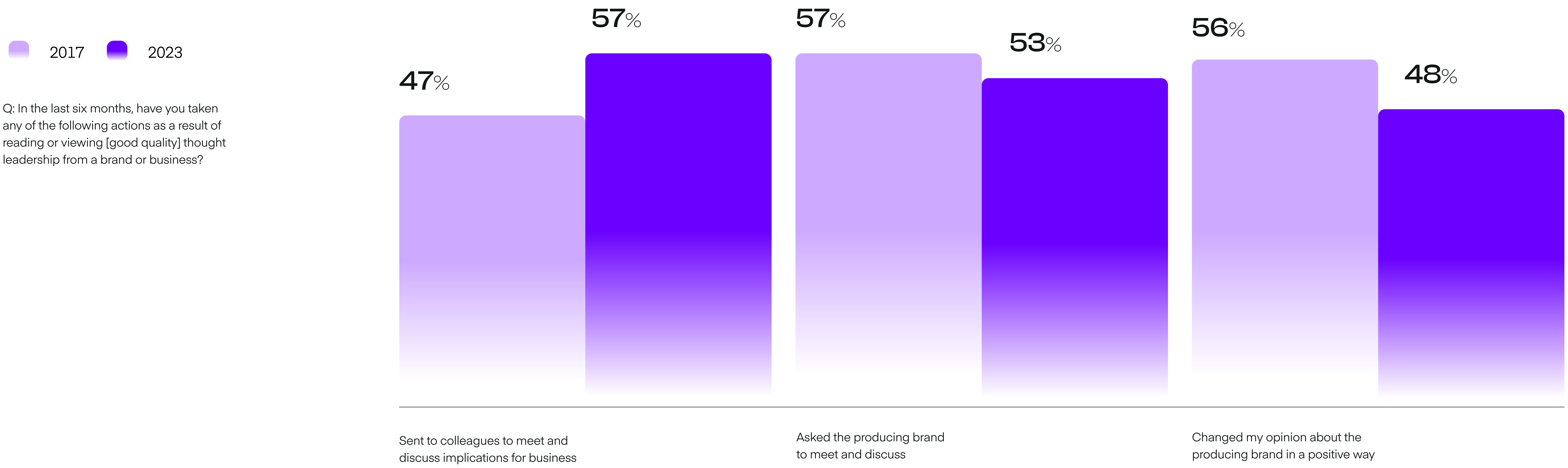
For thought leadership to have the appropriate time to take effect, it will be crucial to manage expectations across the C-suite. The priority must be on building a relationship – and trust – with an audience over time. This will mean that when buyers are in the buying mood, the brand they've been relying upon for intellectual invigoration will be front of mind.

Good thought leadership provokes positive actions



Q: In the last six months, have you taken any of the following actions as a result of reading or viewing [good quality] thought leadership from a brand or business?

People are taking less direct actions after consuming thought leadership



Q: In the last six months, have you taken any of the following actions as a result of reading or viewing [good quality] thought leadership from a brand or business?

Proprietary data remains king

As GenAI permeates content, original and insightful evidence is even more essential

In case you hadn't noticed, there is a lot of bad B2B content out there right now. After the pandemic-inspired surge in output, GenAI is quickly becoming a dominant factor in content production. In our survey, most respondents (70%) believe AI can produce credible content, while 64% view GenAI – in some guise – as the future of thought leadership.

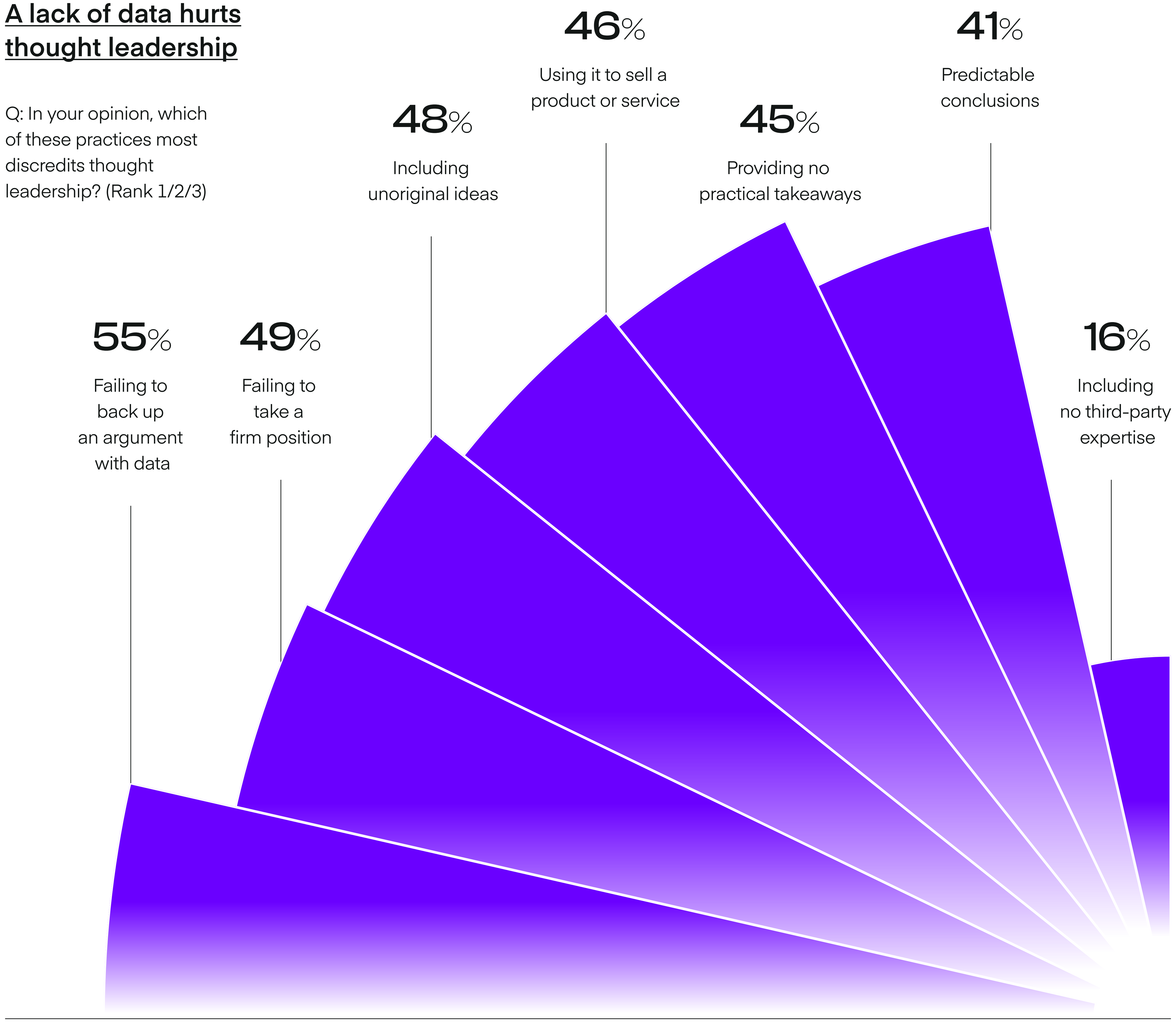
For B2B brands that want to emerge as leaders, it has rarely been harder to provide a point of differentiation, separate themselves from the crowd and avoid falling into that sea of sameness. That's especially true with increasingly discerning audiences. When asked what discredits thought leadership, half of respondents (55%) pointed to a lack of data to back up commentary, followed by a failure to take a firm position (49%) and including unoriginal ideas (48%).

Bold, strong opinion counts for little without the evidence to back it up. That's where proprietary and rigorous quantitative and qualitative data comes in. When respondents were asked what was most effective in changing their minds, opinion from a recognised subject expert (51%) and market data (44%) came out on top, with industry case studies (40%) not far behind. Knowledgeable audiences see through fluff and speculation – what they seek is proper, illuminating evidence.

To get hold of that compelling data, businesses must hone in on specific trends, perspectives and insights that aren't being discussed elsewhere. Quantitative data derived from surveys, questionnaires and third-party research needs to be rigorous and driven by compelling hypotheses that provide tensions and contradictions. And it needs to be supported by expertise and perspective from those with actual experience and credibility. That's the only way to give legitimacy to those provocative viewpoints.

A lack of data hurts thought leadership

Q: In your opinion, which of these practices most discredits thought leadership? (Rank 1/2/3)



Don't forget your own expertise

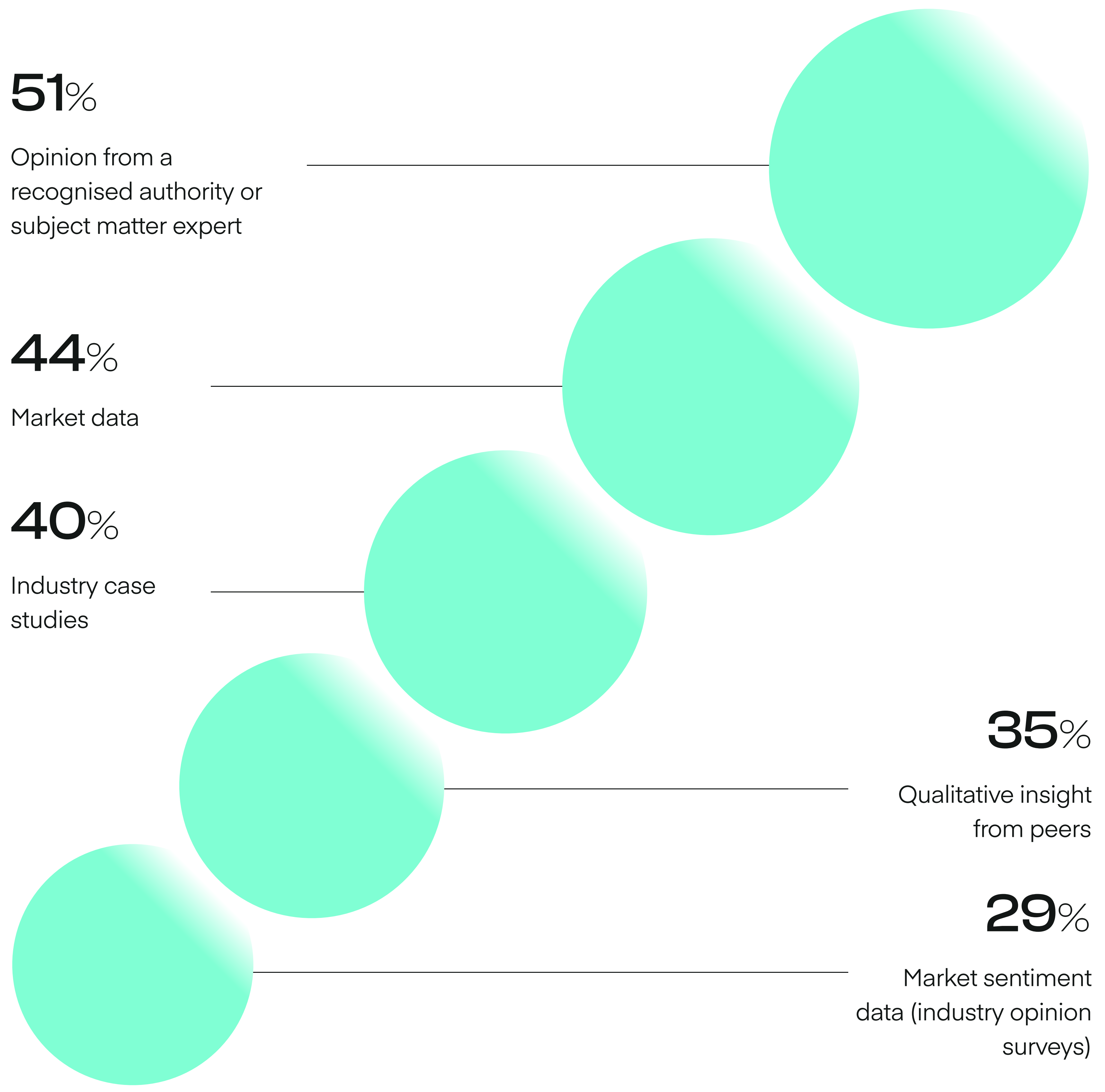
While quantitative research done right is certainly a worthwhile endeavour, B2B brands shouldn't delegate too much to the thoughts of others. That risks forgetting why an audience is reading their stuff in the first place.

"Lots of organisations commission research and assume that fits the bill. Their audience might be able to cherry-pick some stats and drop them into a presentation, but you need to complement the quantitative data with qualitative commentary around it," says Will Sturgeon, head of content and thought leadership at PwC. "You need to provide the 'so what.'"

That's also the view of Barney O'Kelly, head of digital marketing at Alix-Partners. "Surveys are a staple and it can be very useful to have your own data, but don't lose your own experience and expertise within that. What you think on the topic is most commercially valuable and relevant to clients."

> "What you think on the topic is most commercially valuable and relevant to clients"

Subject-matter expertise changes minds



Q: Within the context of thought leadership content, what is most effective at changing your mind?

Creativity cuts through

Those willing to take risks with their storytelling will be rewarded

The science of storytelling

The year is 1988 and a glorious morning sun is rising over San Francisco's Golden Gate Bridge. In the distance, Walt Stack, an 80-year-old man wearing nothing but a pair of shorts, socks and running trainers is jogging alongside a steady stream of passing traffic. He waves as drivers beep their horns in admiration. "I run 17 miles every morning," he says. "People ask me how I keep my teeth from chattering in the winter time. I leave them in my locker."

That was the story told in Nike's first ever "Just Do It" advert. Their agency, Wieden+Kennedy, used an emotional hook to inspire Americans to pull on their Nike trainers and hit the road, regardless of their age, fitness levels or demographic. The 30-second advert asked a simple question: "If Walt can do it, why can't I?"

Soon after it aired, Nike and the agency began receiving calls and letters from both elite athletes and ordinary Americans that had been inspired by the ad. It was a key moment in building the Nike brand.

The science of storytelling provides B2B brands with the same opportunities, if they're willing to actually take some risks. In a major LinkedIn study, more than two thirds (69%) of marketers agreed that B2B purchasing decisions are just as emotionally driven as B2C. Whether B2B brands accept it or not, they're competing in a wider attention economy. A distinctive vision needs to be met with storytelling creativity and imagination.

B2B's creative block

But there's a problem: the status quo in B2B creative. A cursory look at most content reflects this truth: poorly designed white papers regurgitating stuff everyone already knows; product-centric blog posts; uninspired microsites featuring a few dull case studies.

Audiences want more. Our research shows that 82% of respondents would like to see more imaginative ways of delivering thought leadership: over a third strongly agree with this sentiment. Those that keep on playing it safe in how they present and tell their story will remain firmly stuck in the homogenised pack.

That would be a mistake. A recent Inspire study shows that "Inspiring" brands are five times more likely to be a B2B buyer's first choice, and more than twice as likely to be remembered when buyers are in the market. Right now, however, B2B brands aren't hitting this benchmark. When we asked our audience which statement best describes a leading brand in their sector, less than half (49%) said "they are top of mind." The majority would only be able to recall or recognise them, a pretty damning indictment that shows the leading brands simply aren't achieving brand salience on the necessary scale. Investing in the way an opinion or a vision is brought to life cannot simply be a "nice-to-have" afterthought.

82%

say they would like to see thought leadership delivered in more imaginative ways

"I would like to see more imaginative ways of delivering B2B thought leadership": Strongly agree or agree

49%

of the audience describe the leading B2B brands as top of mind

Q: Thinking of the top brands in this sector, which statement best describes how easily you would be able to identify them?

> "When thought leadership is developed by committee, all the hard edges are taken off. That's where you end up with a consensus view – and that's never interesting"

Barney O'Kelly
Head of Digital Marketing
AlixPartners

THE CREATIVITY CHECKLIST

01 Simple, killer hooks that resonate

02 A strong personality in TOV – maybe even some humour

03 Slick data visualisation

04 A distinct and cohesive visual identity

05 Storytelling techniques – like character development, analogies and conflict and resolution

06 Interactive formats like quizzes, polls or challenges

DREAM SCENARIO

So what should thought leadership look like going forward? We asked the experts for their tips

Keep it real

"Offer realistic thought leadership, rather than purely positive commentary. Marketers should ask themselves one question – how can I make sure what I'm saying is useful to my audience?"

Tomas Ausra
Global Institutional Marketing Manager
IG Group

Collaborate with competitors

"I'd love to see more collaboration between brands and their audiences and with their rivals. If brands sit down and discuss where the industry is going they can paint a more accurate picture of their industry's future and where they may have some shared aims."

Ben Melton
Global Brand, Creative & Campaigns Director
TeamViewer

Lean into individual voices

"I like a person with something interesting to say. And it doesn't necessarily have to be about a business topic – it can be about an individual's beliefs, values or sense of hinterland. I want to know someone's philosophical position rather than just a data-focused piece."

Barney O'Kelly
Head of Digital Marketing
AlixPartners

Leverage your platforms

"Promote that content through multiple forums, whether it's blogs, whether it's at an event, whether it's webinars, whether it's a paid digital campaign. Manifest and promote that content throughout multiple platforms."

Komal Thadani
EMEA Marketing Director
ServiceNow

Research methodology & demographics

The research was conducted in November 2023 using a combination of telephone interviews and online questionnaires of UK-based B2B business leaders by an independent fieldwork team. Analysis was performed by Market Research Society (MRS)-certified analysts in the alan. research and intelligence division

Sectors

Financial Services

75

- Insurance
- Banking and payments
- Investment services

Technology

75

- Software and services
- Hardware and equipment

Data and analytics

75

Professional services

75

- Law firms
- Accountancy and audit
- Management consultancy

Job titles

54	CMO/Marketing Director
56	CFO/Finance Director
54	CIO/CTO/IT Director/Tech Director
46	CCO/Commercial Director
47	COO/Director of Operations
43	CEO

Company headcount

51	Fewer than 100 employees
61	100 - 250 employees
60	251 - 499 employees
66	500 - 999 employees
62	1,000+ employees

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Provoke change