StackAdapt

B2B Advertising Trends

The Systems and Signals
Powering B2B Growth in 2026

Contents

Introduction

Beyond the Funnel

> B2B buying no longer follows a straight line. Today's buyers discover solutions while scrolling feeds, watching video, reading content, and having internal conversations long before a deal ever enters a formal evaluation cycle. Decisions unfold across channels, stakeholders, and moments often without a clear beginning or end.
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> This shift has fundamentally changed how B2B marketers drive discovery, influence, and growth. Linear funnels, isolated campaigns, and late-stage optimization are no longer enough. Success now depends on how well brands can operate in an always-on decision environment where influence is built early, signals emerge continuously, and buying committees self-direct their journey.
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> We created this report using StackAdapt platform insights alongside industry research to explore how B2B marketing is evolving today and what will define success in 2026. Inside, you'll find how budgets are being allocated, why ecosystem-led strategies are replacing campaign-led thinking, and how programmatic orchestration connects data, creative, partners, and media to influence the full B2B buying journey.

Matt Phillips

SVP, Vertical Sales, StackAdapt

The New B2B: Interconnected, Intelligent, and Always On
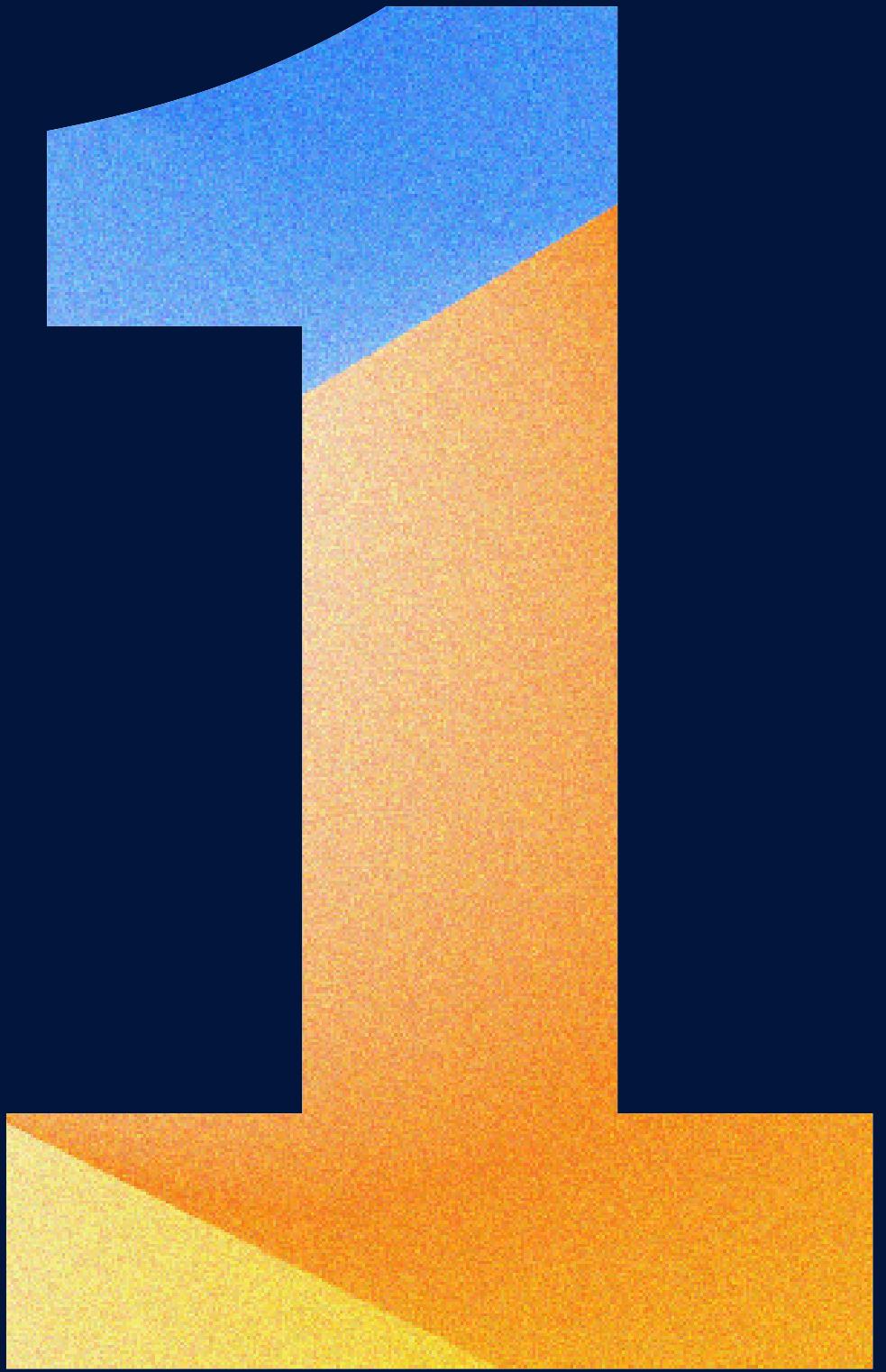
Today's B2B buyers aren't moving through a funnel, they're navigating a dynamic decision ecosystem where discovery happens in-feed, in-stream, in search, across content, and through conversations inside their organizations. Multiple stakeholders enter at different moments. Research is self-directed, attention is fragmented, and influence happens long before a form fill.

B2B growth now depends on whether brands can operate in this always-on, multi-threaded environment not through isolated campaigns, but through interconnected systems that work together to shape demand continuously.

In 2026, the most successful brands won't just run marketing programs, they'll engineer connected ecosystems that unify data, AI, creative, publishers, and platforms into a single adaptive system. Ecosystems that detect intent, learn and adjust in real time, and engage buyers across every surface where decisions are shaped.

Programmatic is the infrastructure that makes this ecosystem possible. It connects fragmented channels into a single, adaptive engine for awareness, engagement, and revenue, enabling marketers to deliver value at every point of discovery, not just at the moment of conversion.

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> **B2B leaders must embrace a more disciplined and evidence-driven approach, prioritizing trust and tangible value for buyers as they head into next year.**
>
> **Sharyn Leaver**
> Chief Research Officer
>
> Source: Forrester's 2026 B2B Marketing, Sales, and Product

What's Changing: From Traditional Pipelines to Adaptive Ecosystems

The traditional B2B model was built on linear motions, siloed tools, and campaign bursts designed to push leads into a pipeline. It relied on static creative, fragmented systems, and moment-in-time activities that no longer reflect how buyers actually make decisions.

The modern B2B model is interconnected and intelligent. It's a system powered by shared signals, adaptive creative, omnichannel activation, and measurement that captures impact across the entire journey.

Today, marketing success depends on how well teams can connect those signals, orchestrate cohesive experiences, and deliver value long before buyers reach a formal evaluation stage.

How B2B Marketers Are Investing in an Always-On Journey

As B2B buyers move fluidly across channels, formats, and research surfaces, marketers are distributing budgets to maintain visibility across the full decision ecosystem. StackAdapt internal data shows how advertisers are balancing channel investment to influence multi-stakeholder journeys and support long buying cycles.

Channel Share of Budget

(Average, YTD 2025)

B2B marketers are investing across a diverse mix of environments to reach buying committees wherever discovery and evaluation occur. These core seven channels account for nearly 100% of programmatic investment (99.84%), underscoring how B2B marketers rely on a consolidated set of environments to reach buying committees across the journey.

Marketers continue to prioritize the programmatic environments that deliver broad reach, stakeholder coverage, and measurable contribution to pipeline influence:

Channel	Share
Display	50.89%
CTV	19.6%
Native	11.68%
Video	9.27%
Audio	4.18%
DOOH	3.35%
OTT	0.87%
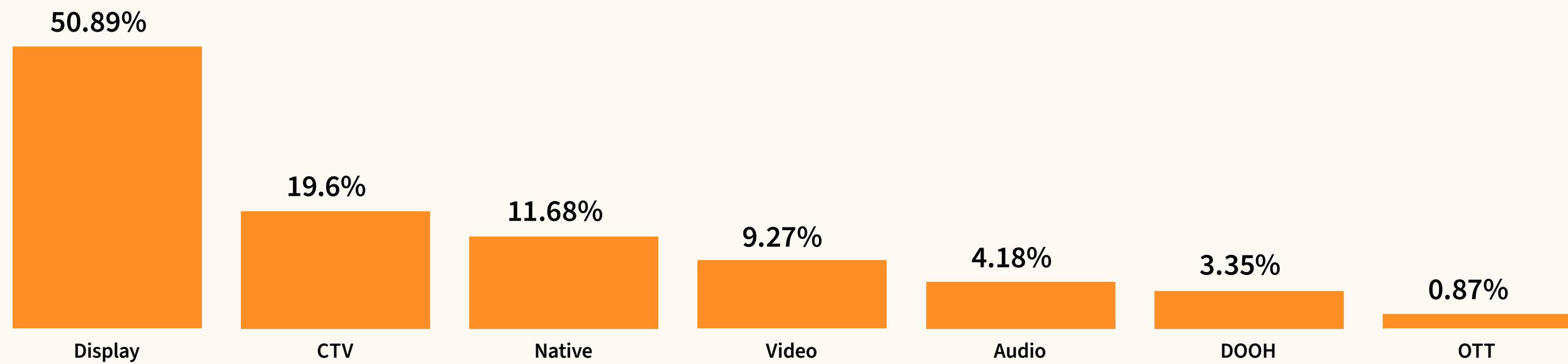
Source: StackAdapt Internal Platform Data, B2B Advertisers, 2025

In 2025, B2B advertisers leaned into a full-funnel, omnichannel strategy designed to influence stakeholders early and sustain visibility throughout long consideration windows.

Display and CTV dominate the mix (over 70% combined), pairing scalable reach with premium storytelling and the ability to engage multiple roles within a buying committee.

Supporting channels, including Video, Native, DOOH, Audio, and OTT, provide mid-funnel reinforcement and contextual relevance, helping marketers stay present during the research and consensus-building phases of complex B2B decisions.

This distribution highlights a clear trend: B2B marketers are prioritizing omnichannel ecosystems that show up wherever buyers browse, learn, compare, and evaluate.

The Five Trends Reshaping B2B in 2026

The forces shaping B2B growth are not isolated trends. They are interconnected shifts redefining how demand is created, measured, and sustained. Together, they explain why traditional playbooks are breaking down, and what marketers must do next.

TREND 1

The Rise of Connected Go-to-Market Systems

B2B organizations are moving beyond fragmented martech stacks toward fully connected systems where marketing, sales, product, and partner data work together.

Cross-funnel measurement remains the biggest obstacle to this shift — 44% of U.S. marketers cite it as their top challenge, more than any other barrier (StackAdapt Survey).

As a result, integration is becoming a core competitive advantage, enabling shared intelligence, stronger alignment, and more consistent buyer experiences across long, complex journeys — ultimately transforming how brands reach, influence, and convert buying committees.

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Technology leaders face a pivotal year in 2026, where disruption, innovation, and risk are expanding at unprecedented speed.

Source: Gartner, Technology Predictions 2026

Why it matters:

Connected systems enable shared intelligence across teams, improving targeting, alignment, personalization, and measurable influence across long buying cycles.

*In **2026**, connected go-to-market systems are a competitive differentiator for B2B organizations, enabling faster revenue execution and better buyer engagement.*

Source: Gartner, Technology & Marketing Predictions 2026

TREND 2

AI-Driven Orchestration Powers the Next Era

AI is transforming B2B go-to-market from manual planning to dynamic orchestration, connecting real-time behavior, intent signals, and creative to deliver the right message at the right moment. As a result, programmatic platforms are evolving into intelligent operating systems for growth, where data, creative, and optimization work together continuously.

The performance impact is already measurable.*

Together, these gains illustrate how AI accelerates learning, refines audiences, and scales relevance — delivering speed and consistency without replacing strategy.

*Source: The State of Programmatic Advertising 2026, StackAdapt

StackAdapt platform data shows that when advertisers apply AI across targeting and creative optimization:

2X **ROAS**
when using 1st-party data or AI-based contextual targeting vs. third-party targeting

32% **Higher CTR**
with dynamic creative optimization (DCO)

56% **Lower CPC**
when creative adapts in real time

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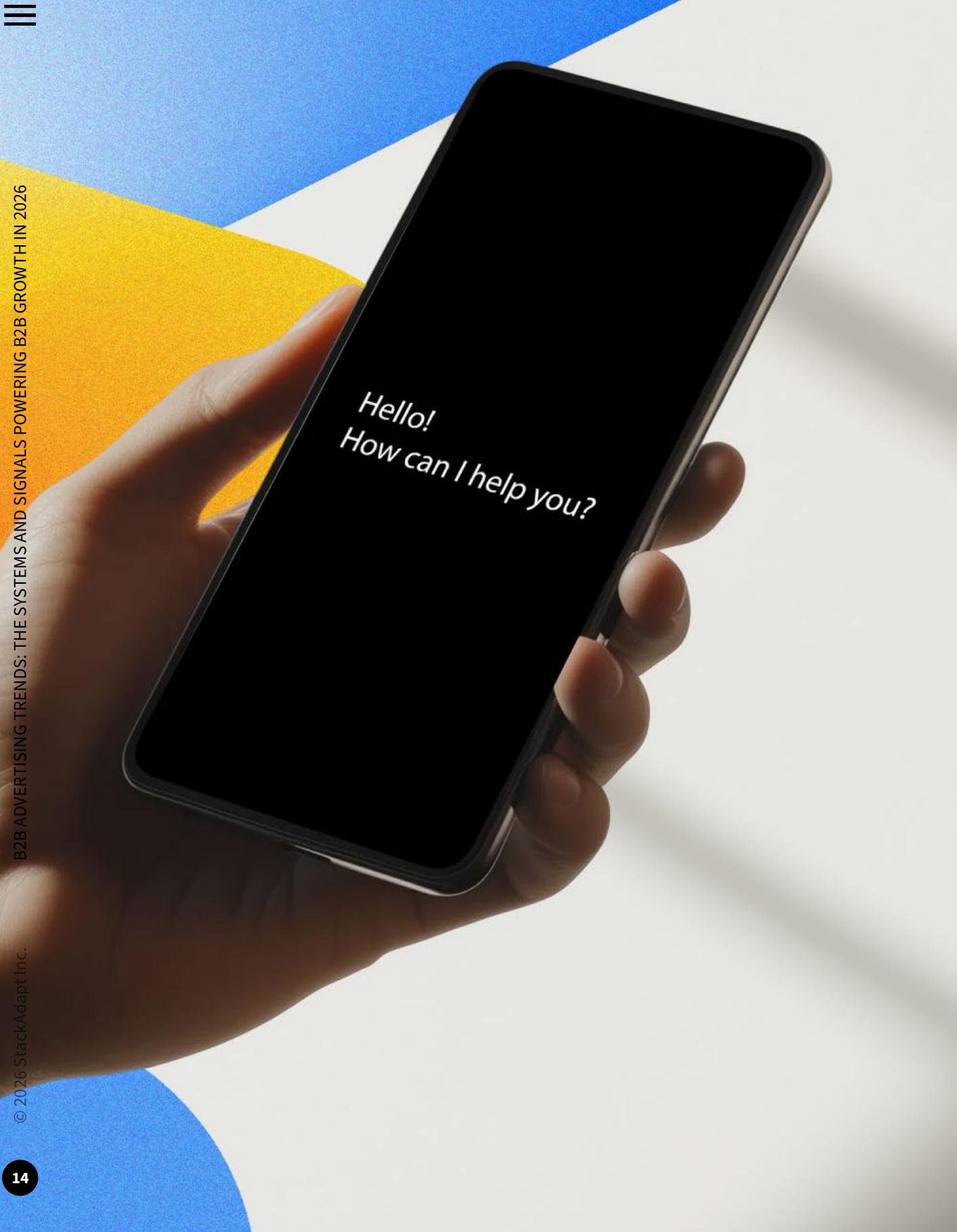
Why it matters:

AI helps marketers navigate non-linear buying journeys by adjusting copy, creative, audiences, and sequencing instantly, increasing relevance, efficiency, and pipeline velocity.

*In **2026**, AI-driven optimization is a core driver of programmatic decision-making.*

Source: eMarketer, Programmatic Advertising (Insider Intelligence)

Hello!
How can I help you?

TREND 3

Shift to Shared-Value Data Partnerships

Signal loss and privacy shifts are reshaping B2B data strategy. To stay precise and relevant, brands are combining **1st-party, contextual, and partner data** to build a more resilient view of buying committees.

01 **First-party data** anchors targeting and measurement in trusted account relationships.

02 **Contextual data** enables real-time relevance without relying on identifiers.

03 **Partner data** expands reach and fills insight gaps across the ecosystem.

Together, these signals create a privacy-safe foundation for stronger intent modeling, smarter orchestration, and more effective activation across the B2B journey.

> "
> Forrester's 2026 predictions emphasize that leaders must shift from hype and experimentation to pragmatic, value-driven execution grounded in measurable outcomes.

Source: Forrester, Predictions 2026: The Race To Trust And Value

Why it matters:

Shared data ecosystems help fill gaps left by disappearing identifiers, enabling more accurate account targeting, better intent prediction, and more resilient measurement frameworks.

*In **2026**, most B2B marketers will rely on 1st-party data to power account-based targeting and personalization.*

Source: Salesforce, State of Marketing Report (9th Edition)

TREND 4

Programmatic-Powered Partner Ecosystems

B2B growth is shifting from isolated demand generation to interconnected partner ecosystems — where platforms, publishers, data providers, and technology partners collaborate to drive demand together.

Programmatic is the infrastructure that makes these ecosystems work at scale, connecting partner stacks, data signals, and media environments into a coordinated, measurable system. Rather than replacing partnerships, it activates them — enabling shared audiences, aligned messaging, and unified measurement across the buying journey.

Why it matters:

Growth advantage comes from how well marketers orchestrate ecosystems, not individual channels. Programmatic provides the infrastructure to connect partners, amplify signals, and translate collaboration into sustained business impact.

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The future of B2B growth will be built by ecosystems, not enterprises.

Source: Forrester, Predictions 2026

*Top-performing B2B marketers are **4×** more likely to consolidate over half of their tech stack — and **22%** more likely to attribute improved ROI to consolidated platforms.*

Source: The State of Programmatic Advertising 2026, StackAdapt

TREND 5

Measurement Becomes a System, Not a Snapshot

With long buying cycles and multi-stakeholder journeys, single-touch attribution no longer captures true impact. Measurement must operate as a system by capturing awareness, engagement, intent, influence, and revenue across the entire ecosystem.

Why it matters:

System-level measurement validates the full influence of marketing — not just late-stage actions — helping teams optimize ecosystems, justify investment, and improve collaboration with sales.

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In 2026, measurement will shift toward demonstrating influence across the full buyer journey, not just last-touch outcomes.

Source: Forrester, Predictions 2026

*To succeed this year, **B2B** leaders must focus on proving value and impact across the buyer journey.*

Source: Forrester, Predictions 2026

The Advertising Ecosystem Mandate

B2B buyers now move through interconnected networks of channels, stakeholders, and signals. Visibility alone isn't enough.

In 2026, growth depends on building ecosystems that are:

01 **Connected**
through unified signals across platforms, teams, and partners

02 **Intelligent**
through AI-driven adaptation of messaging and sequencing

03 **Collaborative**
through shared data and partner ecosystems that expand reach

04 **Measurable**
across long, non-linear cycles

This isn't a channel strategy or a traditional full-funnel approach. It's a system-level operating model for growth.

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> **Forrester predicts that future B2B growth will be driven by ecosystem-based go-to-market models rather than individual enterprises.**
>
> Source: Forrester, 2026

Programmatic as the Operating System of B2B Growth
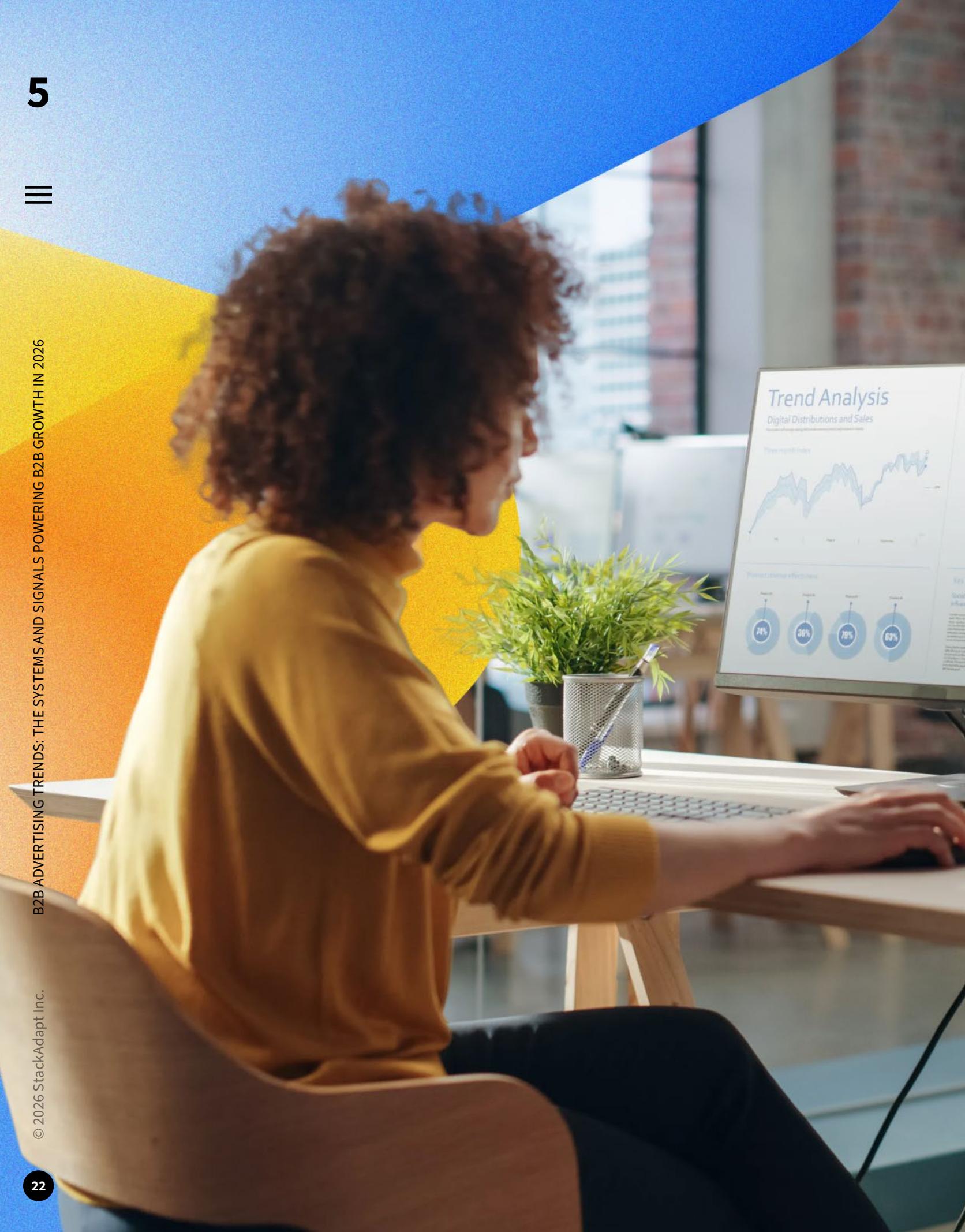
Programmatic is what turns ecosystem strategy into execution. Rather than operating as a channel or a funnel tactic, it functions above the funnel, unifying channels, signals, AI, and creative into a single system that adapts continuously to buyer behavior across long, non-linear deal cycles.

In this model, awareness, consideration, and conversion are not separate stages to be planned independently. They operate together as part of one connected system, guided by real-time signals and orchestrated dynamically as buying committees move in and out of evaluation.

What programmatic enables:

01 Activation of account-level and intent-based signals

02 Adaptive, personalized creative across channels

03 Connect brand-building efforts to pipeline influence and opportunity creation

04 Sequenced messaging across stakeholders

05 Measurement across awareness, engagement, influence, and revenue

Programmatic becomes the connective infrastructure that powers the modern B2B ecosystem — responsive, measurable, and designed to influence buying committees across the entire journey, not just at individual funnel stages.

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> In B2B, growth doesn't come from optimizing individual stages of the funnel, it comes from orchestrating the entire system. Programmatic is what makes that orchestration possible.

Matt Phillips
StackAdapt

Winning Beyond the Funnel

B2B growth in 2026 won't be driven by better campaigns or tighter funnels. It will be driven by systems that operate continuously, adapt intelligently, and influence buyers long before demand becomes visible.

The brands that win will:

01   **Build ecosystems, not campaigns**

02   **Invest early to shape future demand**

03   **Orchestrate buying committees, not stages**

04   **Measure influence as a system, not a moment**

Beyond the funnel, growth becomes durable, measurable, and scalable, because it's engineered, not improvised.

Ready to Build Your B2B Growth Ecosystem?

StackAdapt helps B2B marketers move beyond isolated campaigns and into fully connected, programmatic ecosystems that drive influence across the entire buying journey.

With StackAdapt you can activate intent and account-level signals at scale, orchestrate omnichannel experiences from a single platform, use AI to adapt creative, targeting and sequencing in real time, and measure impact across awareness, engagement, and pipeline. Talk to our team to see how programmatic can become the operating system for your B2B growth.

→ *Explore StackAdapt's B2B Advertising Solutions*

Methodology

B2B Advertising Trends combines proprietary survey research with StackAdapt platform data to provide a comprehensive
view of how marketers are evolving their strategies for the year ahead. The quantitative survey, conducted in partnership with Ascend2, gathered responses from 484 senior marketing professionals across the US, Canada, and the UK. Respondents included brand-side marketers (64%) and agency leaders (36%), all at manager level or above, representing organizations with annual marketing budgets of $5 million USD or more.

Questions explored marketing and advertising performance, budget direction, omnichannel maturity, AI adoption, technology integration, and measurement priorities.
The findings were then cross-analyzed against StackAdapt's own platform performance and usage data—spanning campaign spend, channel mix, feature adoption, and creative production trends—to uncover where marketer sentiment aligns with real-world behavior.

StackAdapt

StackAdapt is the leading AI advertising and orchestration platform marketers rely on to drive brand growth and revenue. Built entirely in-house with an easy-to-use interface, StackAdapt unifies programmatic and owned channels—including CTV, DOOH, display, native, audio, email, and more—into one seamless experience. The platform makes it easy to find the right audience, personalize creative, run campaigns, optimize, and measure results in one place. Trusted by the most forward-thinking brands and agencies, StackAdapt combines speed of innovation, deep vertical expertise, and partnership that powers real business growth.

For further information, visit stackadapt.com.