AgileSherpas

kapost

1st

Annual

STATE
OF AGILE
MARKETING
REPORT

THE EVOLUTION OF THE AGILE MARKETING REVOLUTION

Wanna hear something cool? You're reading the 1st Annual State of Agile Marketing Report, and that title isn't an accident.

It's so named because we're committed to doing a second annual State of Agile Marketing survey. And a third. And a fourth. Because we believe Agile marketing is here to stay, and we want to help track its inevitable march across the marketing world.

For our inaugural study, we asked hundreds of marketers whether they consider themselves to be Agile, what made them take the leap into agility, and what good stuff they found on the other side of that change (among many other things). And the results are, in my opinion, striking.

To be honest, when we sent this little survey out into the world I wasn't sure what we'd get back. I've debated with other Agile leaders on how rapidly Agile has been spreading in the world of marketing, and I always seem to be on the optimistic side. Fortunately for marketers everywhere, these results corroborate several earlier studies that put adoption in the 21-30% range 12-18 months ago.

We're now at **37%** adoption, and I couldn't be more excited.

But here's the catch: the Agile marketing revolution is not quite what like we expected. What I see in these numbers is something unique. Our methodologies, practices, maturity levels -- none of it perfectly mirrors our counterparts in the development world. We can learn from them, but we can't follow directly in their footsteps.

And if you ask me, that's just fine. We're marketers. We're quite used to doing things our own way. I can't wait to see what we come up with.

Agile always,

Andrea Fryrear
President and Lead Trainer
AgileSherpas

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The first annual State of Agile Marketing survey shows rapidly growing adoption of Agile principles and practices among marketing teams. Groups practicing some form of Agile marketing were far more likely **(81%)** to be satisfied with the way their department handles work than those using traditional waterfall processes **(44%)** or who handle their work in an ad hoc fashion **(27%)**. Agile marketers also report a higher emphasis on producing quality work than their more traditional counterparts.

Following an Agile transformation, marketers use a wide variety of practices. The most common are user stories **(51%)**, frequent releases **(47%)**, and retrospectives **(43%)**. When it comes to methodologies, no single approach seems sufficient for Agile marketing teams. Relatively few report using Scrum, Kanban, Scrumban, and Lean; the most popular choice **(44%)** is a combination of multiple methodologies.

Agile marketers enjoy a host of benefits from their updated process. The ability to change gears quickly **(55%)**, better visibility into project status **(52%)**, and higher quality work **(47%)** were the three most widely reported.

Marketing teams who have not yet made the switch to Agile report two big barriers: a lack of training or knowledge about Agile approaches **(38%)** and a belief that their current process is working well enough **(26%)**. Despite these hurdles, **30%** of traditional marketing teams are currently considering an Agile experiment, and **14%** are experimenting with Agile in pockets of their department. Nearly two-thirds of traditional marketers **(61%)** report plans to begin an Agile implementation sometime within the next year.

37%
of marketing teams are using an Agile process

44%
of Agile marketers report using a hybrid methodology

61%
of traditional marketers report plans to go Agile within 12 months

Top 3 Benefits of Agility

Change gears quickly
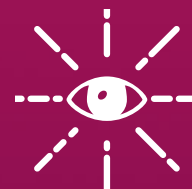
Better project visibility

Higher quality work
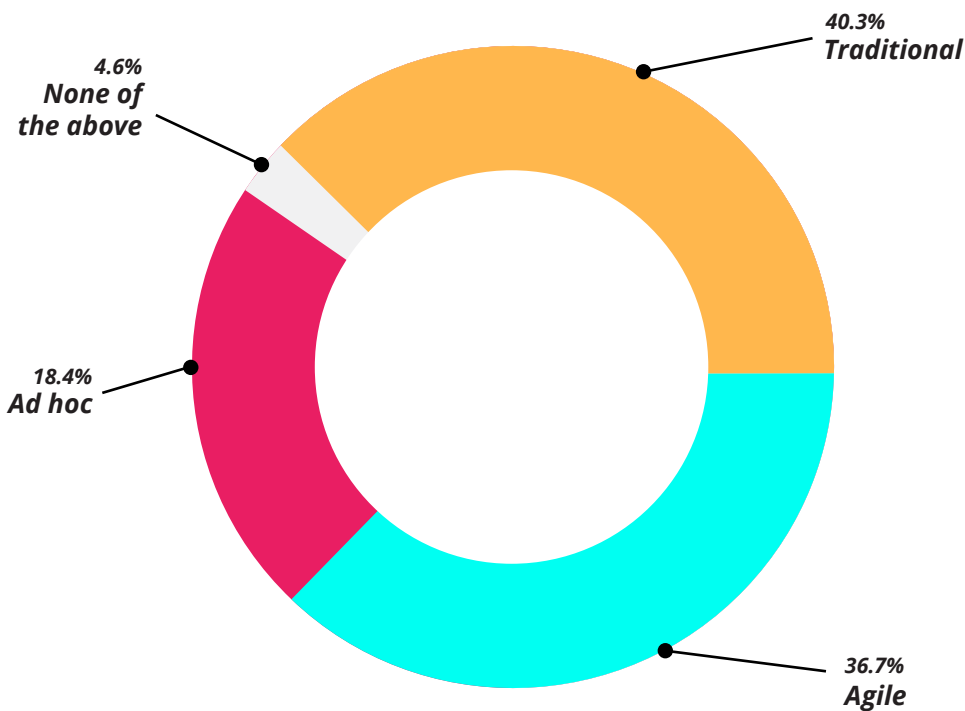
CONTENTS

PROCESS
PRIORITIES
PURPOSE

Which of the following most accurately describes your marketing team's process?

40.3%
Traditional

4.6%
None of
the above

18.4%
Ad hoc

36.7%
Agile

Traditional
We plan our work in advance using a lot of detail and try to stick as closely as possible to that plan.
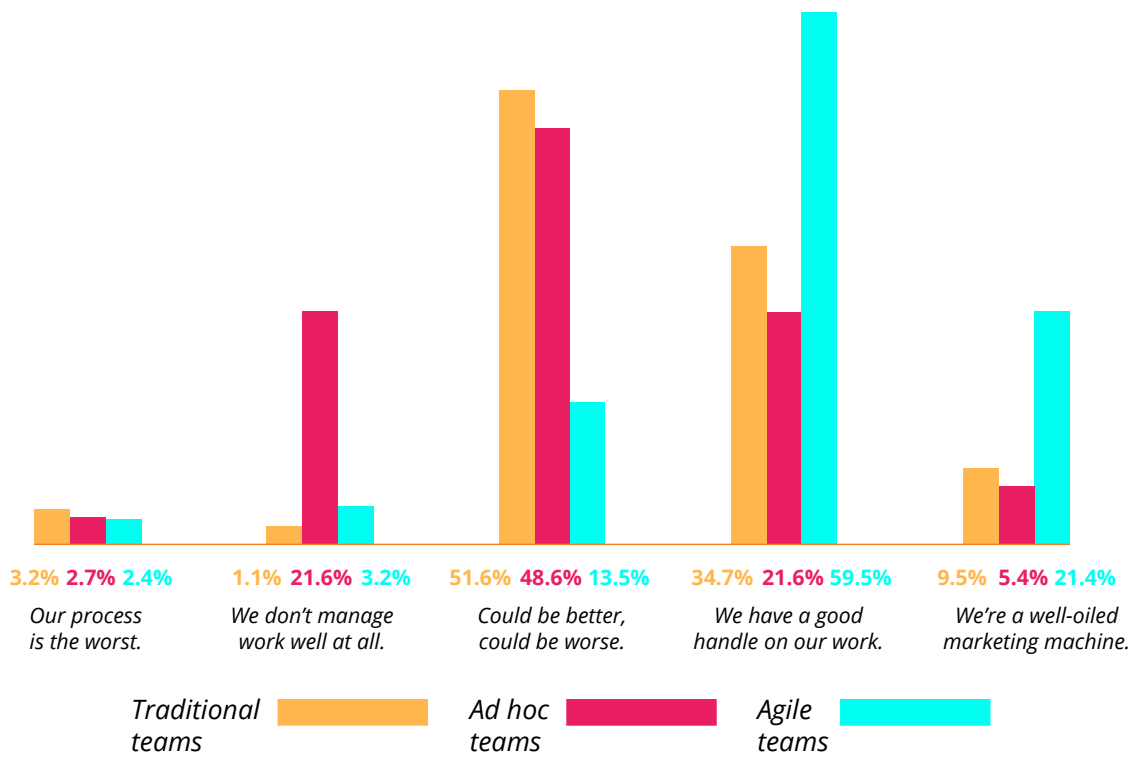
Ad hoc
We don't make long term plans. We work on what seems right from day-to-day and don't have a well-defined process for managing incoming work.

Agile
We use at least some parts of an Agile marketing approach to manage our work, such as daily standups, a back-log, Sprints, kanban board, etc. We have plans, but they're flexible and change often.

How satisfied are you with the way your marketing department currently manages its work?

	Our process is the worst.	We don't manage work well at all.	Could be better, could be worse.	We have a good handle on our work.	We're a well-oiled marketing machine.
Traditional teams	3.2%	1.1%	51.6%	34.7%	9.5%
Ad hoc teams	2.7%	21.6%	48.6%	21.6%	5.4%
Agile teams	2.4%	3.2%	13.5%	59.5%	21.4%

Traditional teams · **Ad hoc teams** · **Agile teams**

80.9% of Agile marketers are satisfied with how their teams manage work, compared to **27%** of ad hoc teams and **44.2%** of traditional teams.

Traditional teams — 44.2%

Ad hoc teams — 27%
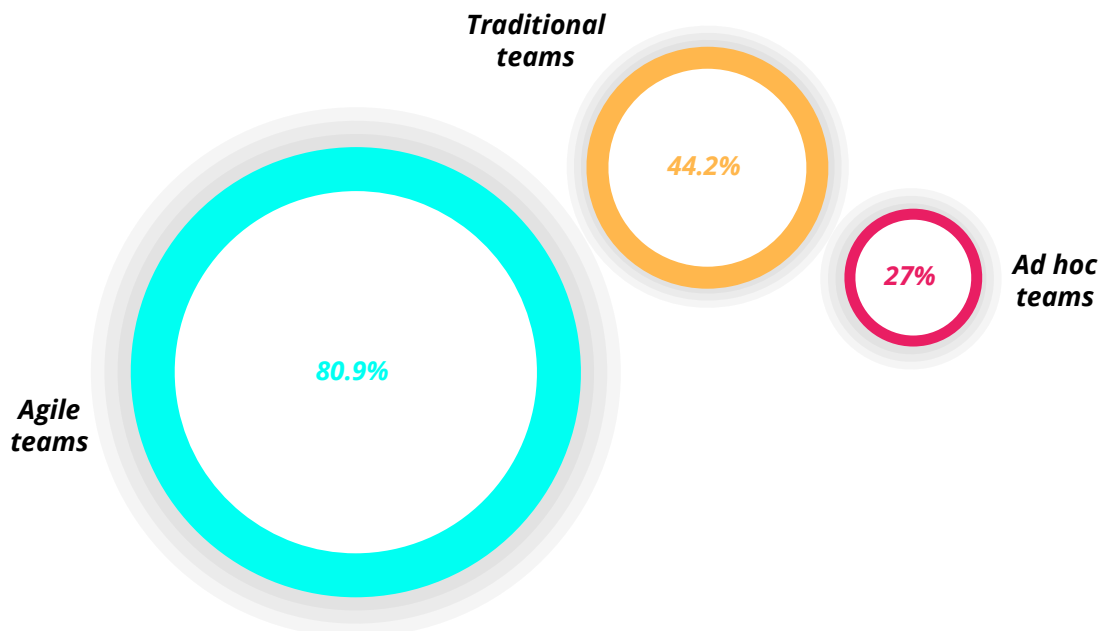
Agile teams — 80.9%

Which of the following is a high priority for your marketing department in 2018?
Check all that apply.

Category	Percentage
Releasing marketing work more quickly	30.4%
Ability to change gears in response to feedback	35.9%
Producing higher quality work	53.3%
Prioritizing the most important work	44.8%
Increased productivity of marketing teams	39.5%
Better alignment with organizational goals and objectives	44.4%
Increased employee satisfaction and morale	20.3%
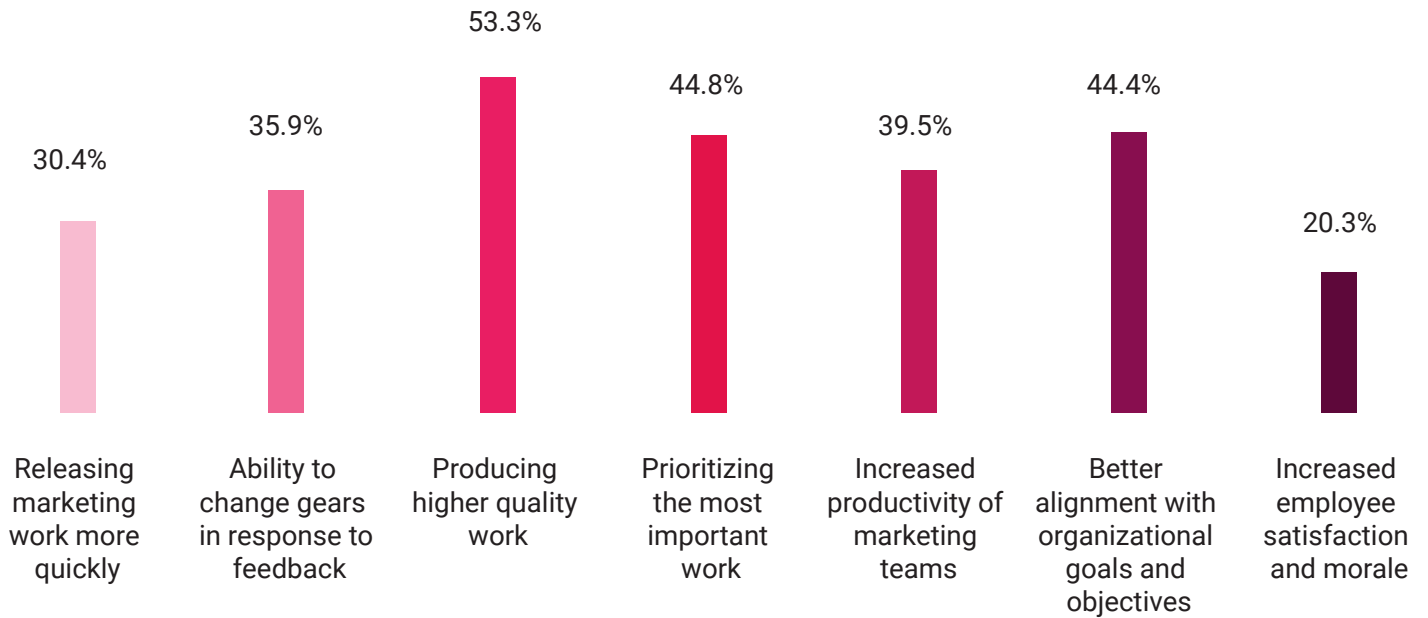
Agility and quality go hand in hand.

Producing higher quality work is a priority for:

- Traditional teams — 46.3%
- Agile teams — 68.3%
- Ad hoc teams — 44.6%
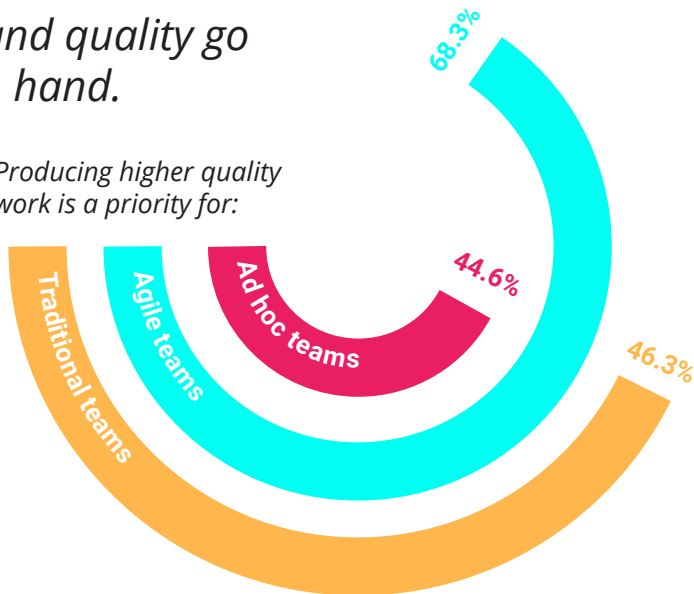
68% of Agile teams place priority on quality work, compared with only **46%** of traditional teams.

Why GO AGILE?

What were the most important reasons for adopting Agile within your marketing department?
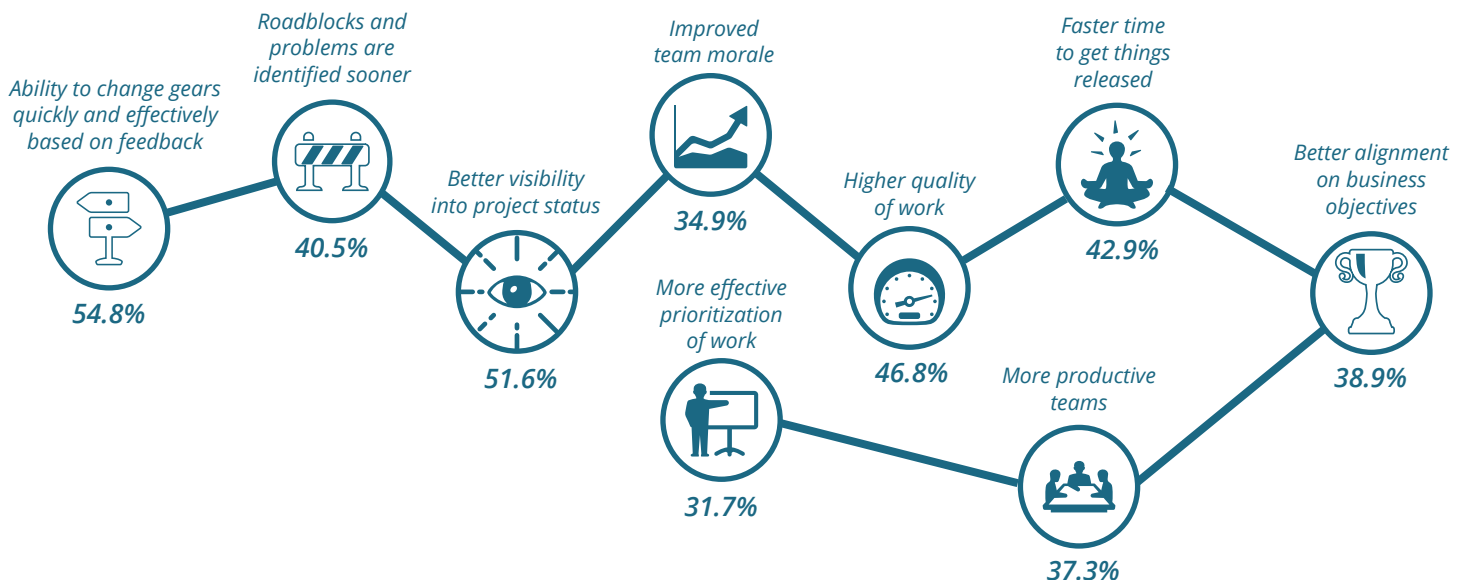**Check all that apply.**

48.4%
Increase innovation

44.4%
Accelerate delivery of campaigns

35.7%
Improve project visibility

64.3%
Improve productivity

23.8%
Better manage distributed teams

26.2%
Enhance predictability of campaign delivery

48.4%
Enhance ability to manage changing priorities

46%
Improve alignment with other teams/business objectives

36.5%
Improve team morale
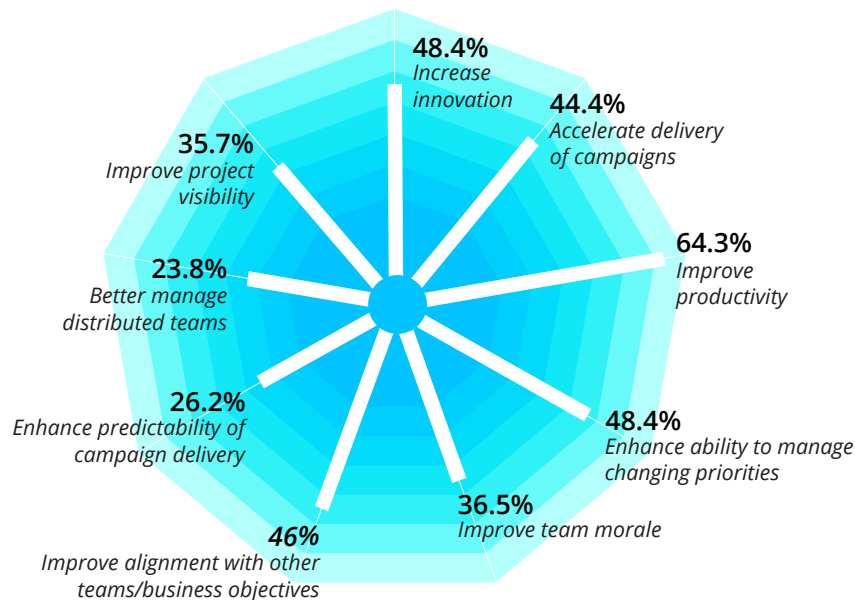
What benefits does your marketing department get from using an Agile process? **Check all that apply.**

Ability to change gears quickly and effectively based on feedback
54.8%

Roadblocks and problems are identified sooner
40.5%

Better visibility into project status
51.6%

Improved team morale
34.9%

More effective prioritization of work
31.7%

Higher quality of work
46.8%

Faster time to get things released
42.9%

More productive teams
37.3%

Better alignment on business objectives
38.9%

AGILE Marketing Teams

How long has your marketing department been practicing Agile?

15.9% — Less than a year

31.7% — 1-2 years

29.8% — 3-5 years

16.7% — 5+ years
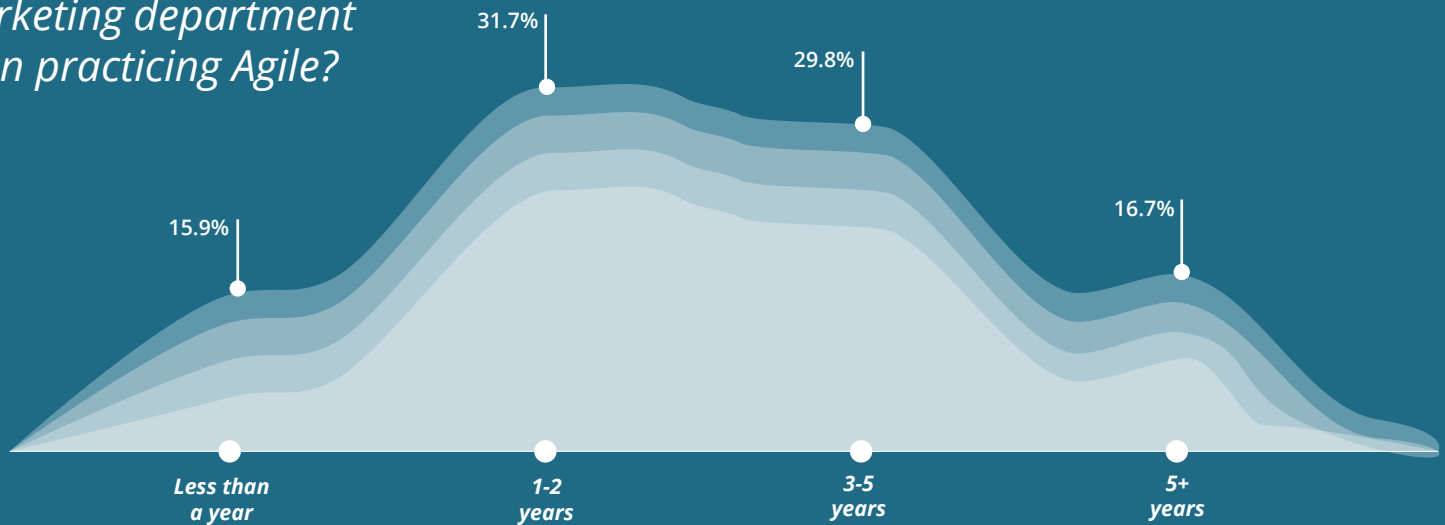
Which of the following have been the most valuable during your adoption of Agile marketing?

External Agile consultants or trainers	26.2%
Consistent practices and processes across teams	48.4%
External classes or workshops	33.3%
Implementing an Agile project management tool	42.1%
Online training and webinars	43.7%
Company-provided training program	24.6%
Executive sponsorship	19.8%
Internal Agile coaches	23.0%
Internal Agile support team	19.0%
Other	1.6%
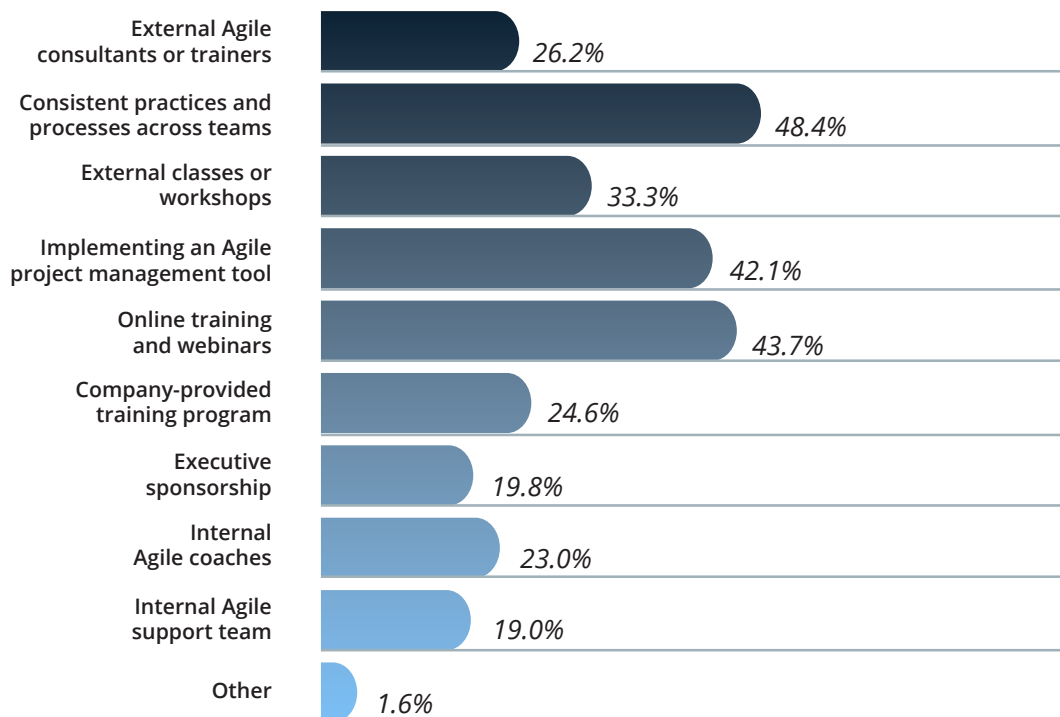
Which Agile methodology to you follow most closely?

- **Scrumban** 10.7%
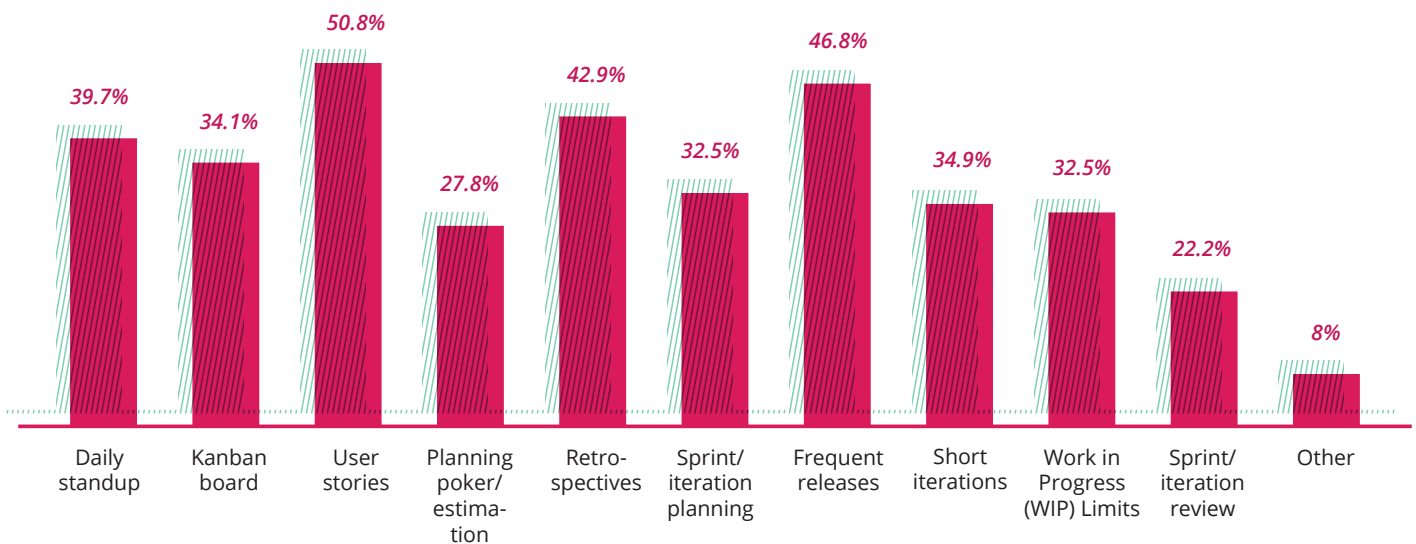- **Kanban** 12.7%
- **Scrum** 17.9%
- **Lean** 12.7%
- **Hybrid (multiple methodologies)** 44%
- **Other** 2%

Agile Marketers

are not content to use a single methodology. Most respondents **(44%)** have combined one or more existing methodologies to create their own system.

What Agile techniques and practices does your marketing department use?
Check all that apply.

Technique	Percentage
Daily standup	39.7%
Kanban board	34.1%
User stories	50.8%
Planning poker/estimation	27.8%
Retrospectives	42.9%
Sprint/iteration planning	32.5%
Frequent releases	46.8%
Short iterations	34.9%
Work in Progress (WIP) Limits	32.5%
Sprint/iteration review	22.2%
Other	8%

AGILE
ON THE RISE

A 2016 study conducted by Wrike reported that **21%** of marketers were "using an Agile approach to manage our work today," and a similar 2016 survey from Workfront found that **30%** were using Agile. The average of those two data points is **25.5%**. Our 2018 study indicates solid growth in Agile adoption, with **36.7%** of our respondents calling themselves Agile.

21%

21% indicated using an Agile approach (2016 study by Wrike)

30%

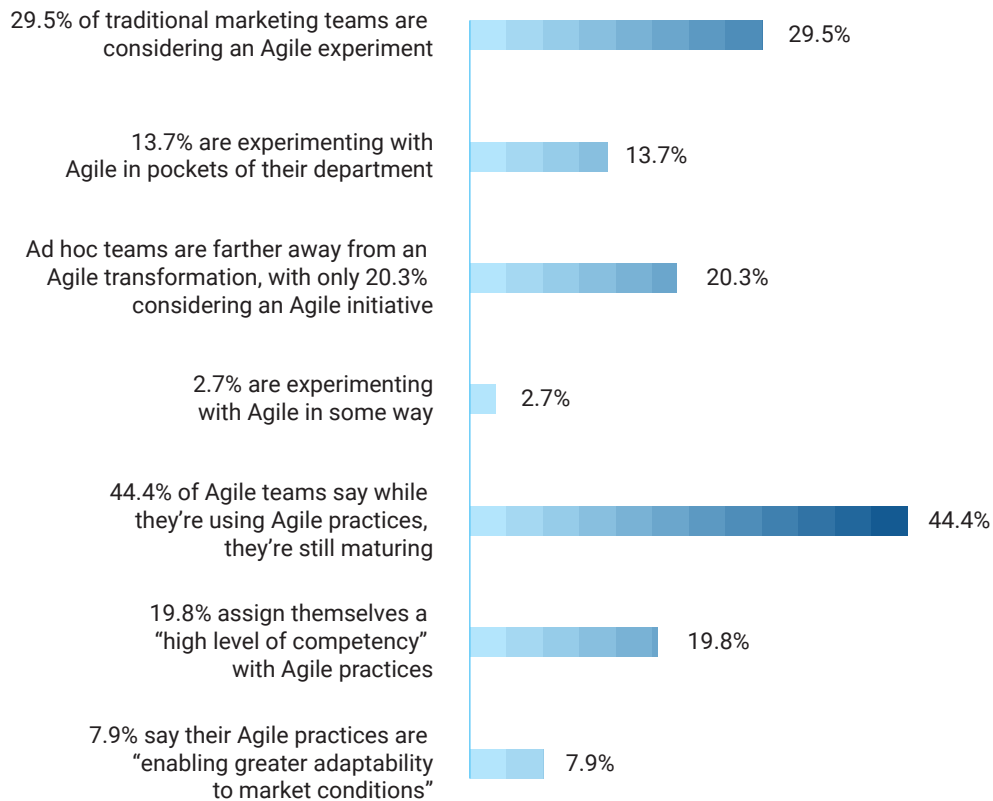30% indicated using an Agile approach (2016 study by Workfront)

25.5%
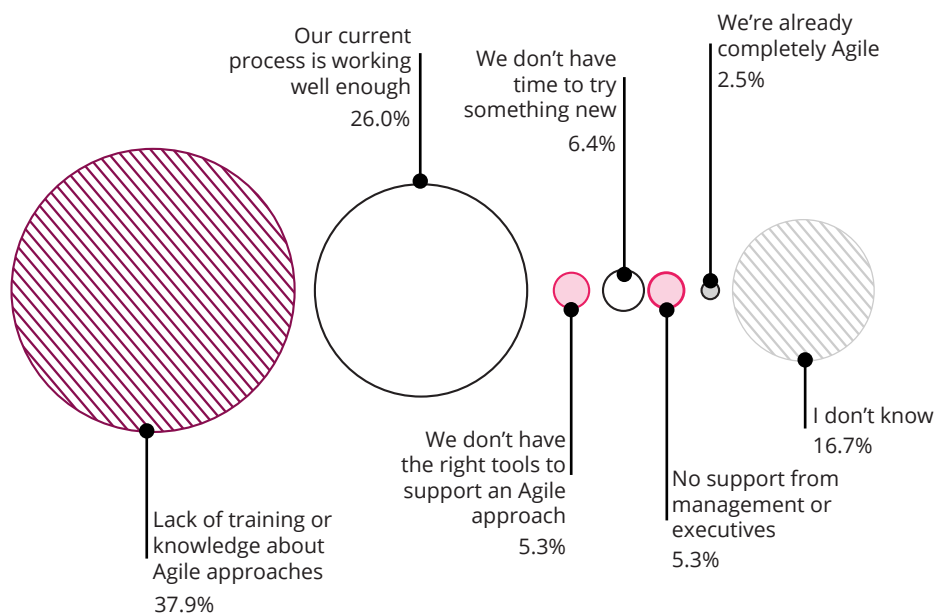
25.5% represents the average of those two data points

36.7%

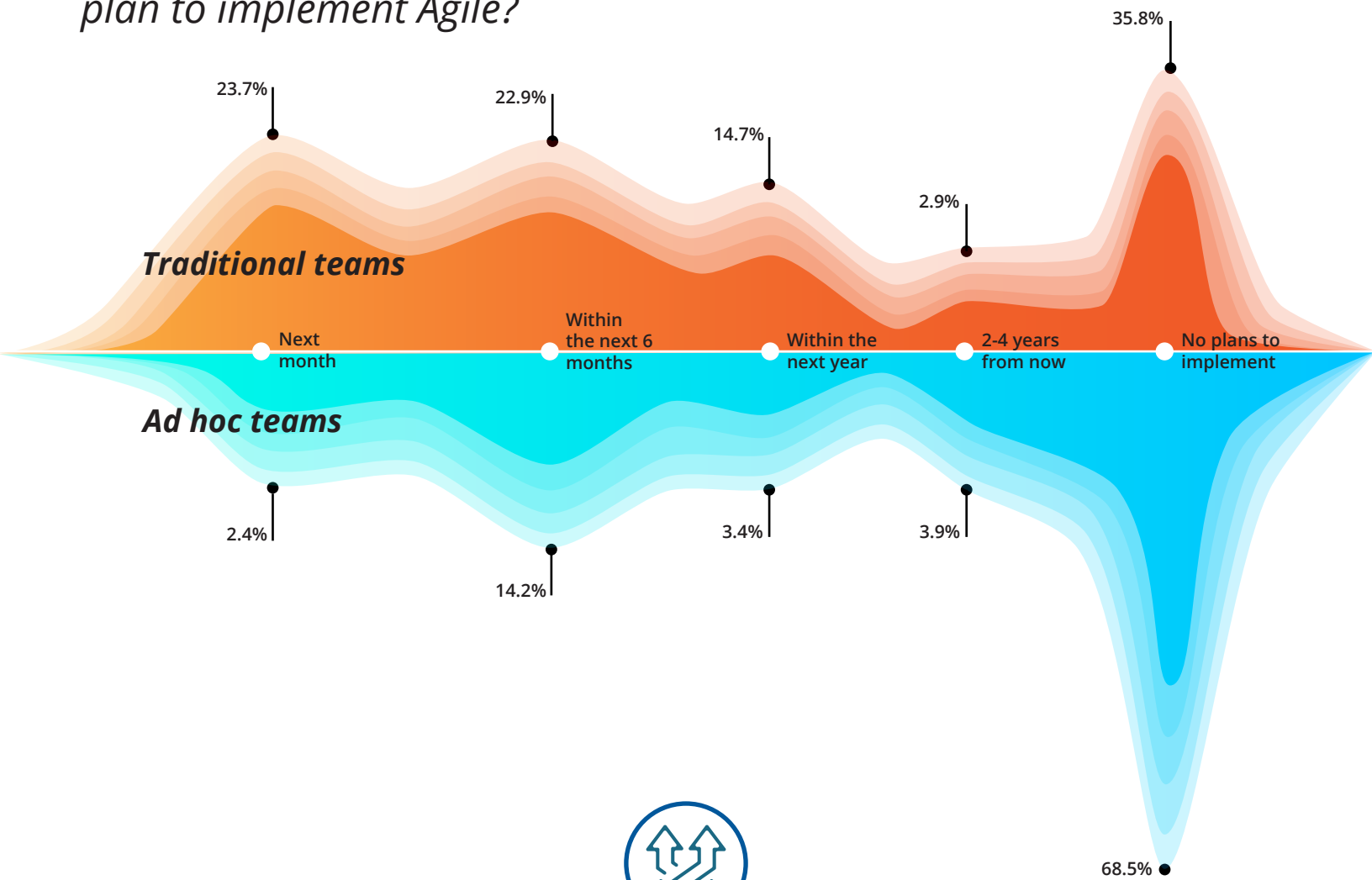36.7% of our respondents referred to themselves as Agile

How would you rate your marketing department's Agile maturity?

29.5% of traditional marketing teams are considering an Agile experiment — **29.5%**

13.7% are experimenting with Agile in pockets of their department — **13.7%**

Ad hoc teams are farther away from an Agile transformation, with only 20.3% considering an Agile initiative — **20.3%**

2.7% are experimenting with Agile in some way — **2.7%**

44.4% of Agile teams say while they're using Agile practices, they're still maturing — **44.4%**

19.8% assign themselves a "high level of competency" with Agile practices — **19.8%**

7.9% say their Agile practices are "enabling greater adaptability to market conditions" — **7.9%**

What is the biggest barrier preventing your marketing department from more completely implementing an Agile approach?

Our current process is working well enough
26.0%

We don't have time to try something new
6.4%

We're already completely Agile
2.5%

Lack of training or knowledge about Agile approaches
37.9%

We don't have the right tools to support an Agile approach
5.3%

No support from management or executives
5.3%

I don't know
16.7%

When does your marketing department plan to implement Agile?

23.7%

22.9%

14.7%

2.9%

35.8%

Traditional teams

Next month

Within the next 6 months

Within the next year

2-4 years from now

No plans to implement

Ad hoc teams

2.4%

14.2%

3.4%

3.9%

68.5%

Time to Make a Change

61.3% of traditional marketing teams have plans to start down the Agile path within the next 12 months, while 35.8% have no plans to go Agile any time soon.
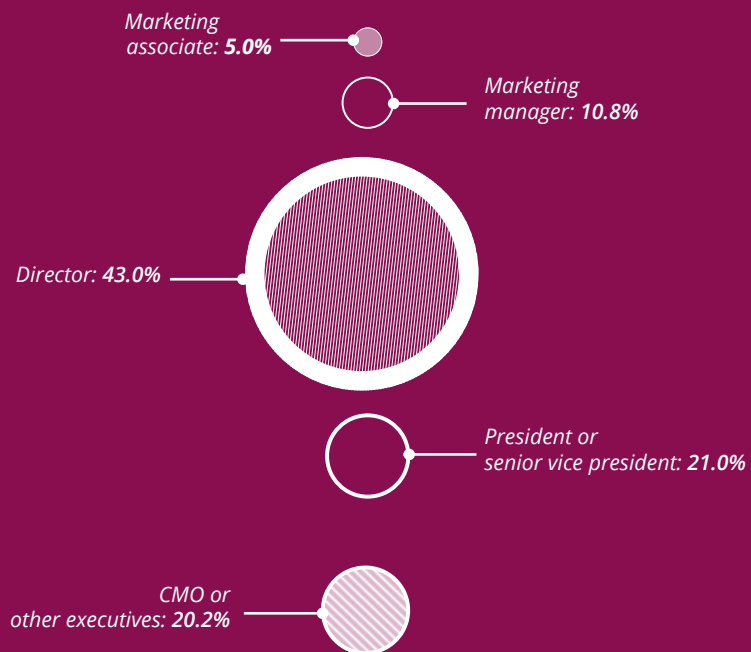
On the other hand, only 27.6% of ad hoc teams are planning Agile transformations in the next year, with 68.5% reporting their teams don't plan to to change their approach.
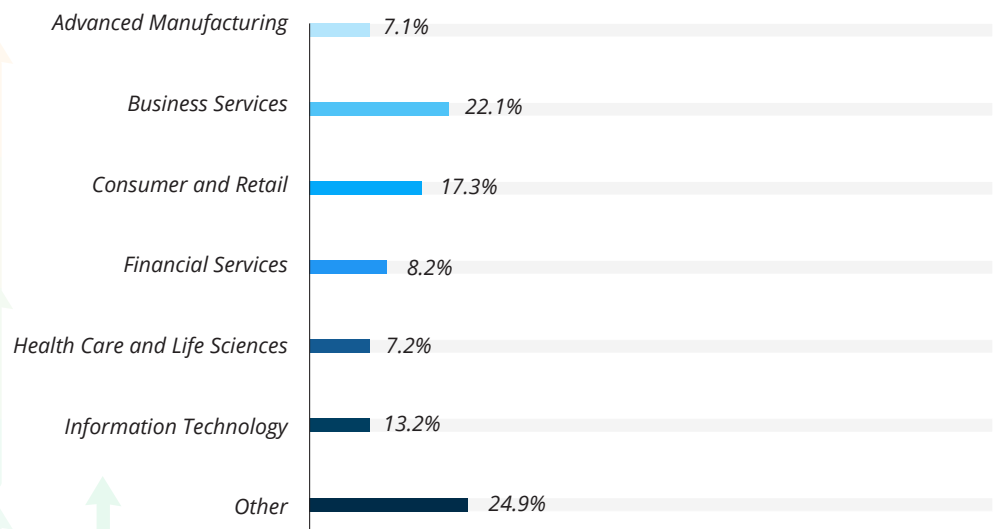
METHODOLOGY/
Demographics

*The 1st Annual State of Agile Marketing Study was conducted in December 2017. It was produced by AgileSherpas and sponsored by Kapost. The study was conducted via online survey and includes responses from **693 marketers**, most of whom **(96.4%)** were based in the United States. Responses from non-marketers were excluded from survey results. Respondents represent a wide variety of company sizes, industries, and marketing specializations.*

Which role below best describes your current (or most recent) position?

Marketing associate: **5.0%**

Marketing manager: **10.8%**

Director: **43.0%**

President or senior vice president: **21.0%**

CMO or other executives: **20.2%**

Which of the following most closely describes the industry you work in?

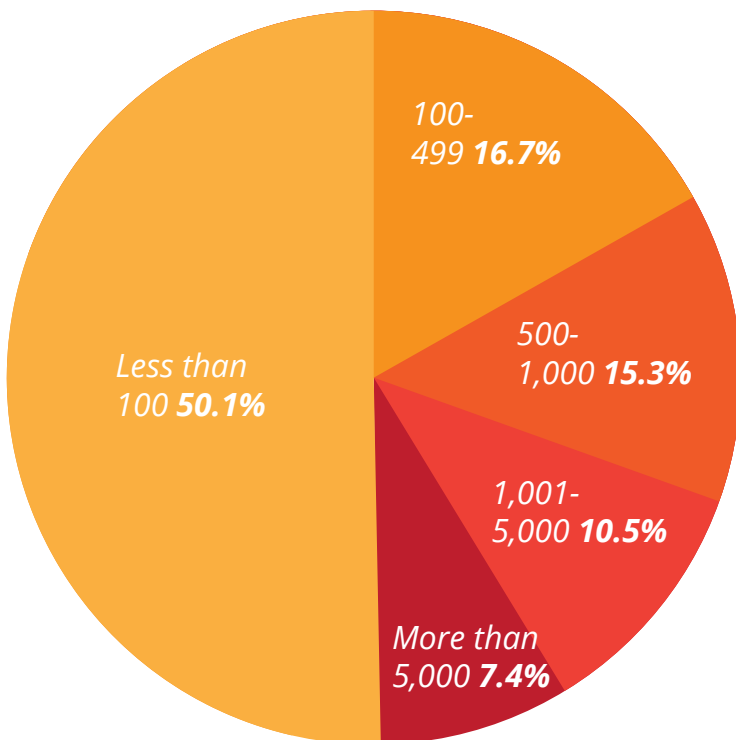| Industry	Percentage
Advanced Manufacturing	7.1%
Business Services	22.1%
Consumer and Retail	17.3%
Financial Services	8.2%
Health Care and Life Sciences	7.2%
Information Technology	13.2%
Other	24.9%

Would you classify your organization as primarily B2B or B2C?

B2B
25.5 %

B2C
27.6 %

MIX OF BOTH
46.9 %

How many employees are in your entire company?

- 100-499 **16.7%**
- 500-1,000 **15.3%**
- Less than 100 **50.1%**
- 1,001-5,000 **10.5%**
- More than 5,000 **7.4%**

How many total employees, including freelancers, are in your company's marketing organization?
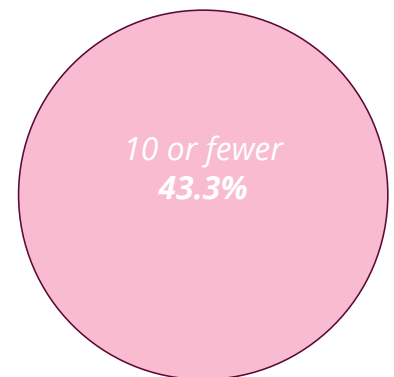
- 10 or fewer **43.3%**
- 11-20 **12.3%**
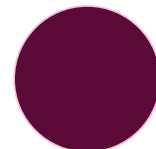- 21-30 **8.8%**
- 31-50 **11.5%**
- 51-70 **6.8%**
- More than 70: **17.3%**

AgileSherpas and Kapost thank everyone who took the time to complete this survey, as well as the team at SurveyGizmo for helping to make this project possible.

AgileSherpas is the leading global Agile marketing training and consulting organization focused on helping cutting-edge marketers get better results by applying an Agile mindset to their process. Co-founded by Andrea Fryrear and Peter Martin, AgileSherpas offers public workshops, online learning, customized private training, and coaching to marketing teams of all sizes, from Fortune 100 brands to startups.

Visit agilesherpas.com to take the first steps on your own Agile journey.

Kapost is content marketing software that helps marketers and content creation professionals organize their content marketing efforts into a structured business process. Unlike complicated project management tools, Kapost specializes in the ideation, production, distribution and analysis of content marketing activities so brands can deliver relevant content to their audience which helps build trust and revenue.

Kapost also operates the Content Marketeer, a source for all things content marketing. Here you'll find case studies, how-to's and best practices from leading personalities in content marketing. Visit marketeer.kapost.com to learn more.