

The B2B branding landscape 2024

An urgent need for differentiation: are most B2B brands getting lost in the crowd?



branded
by
berkeley

enquiries@brandedbyberkeley.com

www.brandedbyberkeley.com



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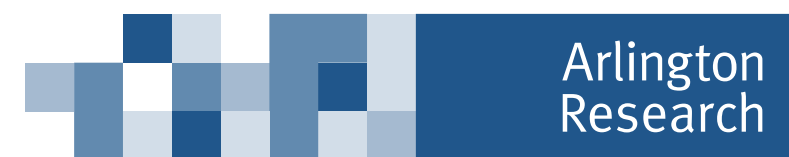
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Executive summary

This research study, conducted by branded by berkeley and Arlington Research, offers critical insights into the current state of B2B branding and identifies key opportunities for differentiation and growth. 200 senior marketing decision makers, from across the UK, US, Germany, and Australia, have provided valuable input on brand perceptions, challenges, priorities, and the role of video content in shaping brand identity.



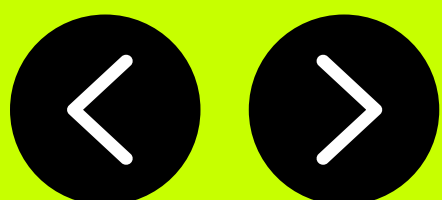
branded by berkeley

We are a full-service creative agency specialising in B2B storytelling. Our team of graphic designers, content creators, website developers, market researchers, PR professionals, and storytellers work together to create comprehensive communications strategies rooted in your brand's unique narrative. We believe that by weaving your story through every aspect of your brand, we can help you achieve greater visibility, engagement and growth.

We believe in the power of story.

Arlington Research

Arlington Research is a full-service international market research company. We help brands around the world use the power of insight to bring their stories to life, and to convert first-hand data into actionable strategies for their businesses. Based in the UK, our experience and expertise spans B2B research, consumer research, and communications and PR research as core service offerings. However, this is just the tip of the iceberg – no matter the story or strategy, we can unlock the insight to take your business forward.



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Executive summary key findings

95%

of decision-makers agree that a strong brand identity is essential for success

87%

agree that branding is extremely influential in their own purchasing decisions

89%

consider video highly important in branding

62%

believe less than half of B2B brands are truly distinctive

89%

utilise market research to shape and monitor their brand

92%

believe poor video can do seriously damage to a brand

84%

find inconsistent messaging annoying, and 92% see a unified vision as essential

83%

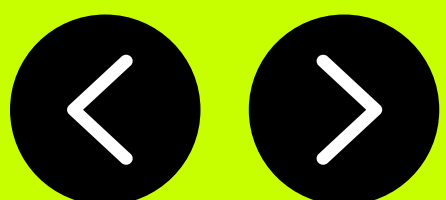
perceive their branding as superior to their competitors

91%

believe their branding significantly influences customer purchasing decisions

38%

cite evolving market trends as one of the biggest branding and design challenges over the next 12 months



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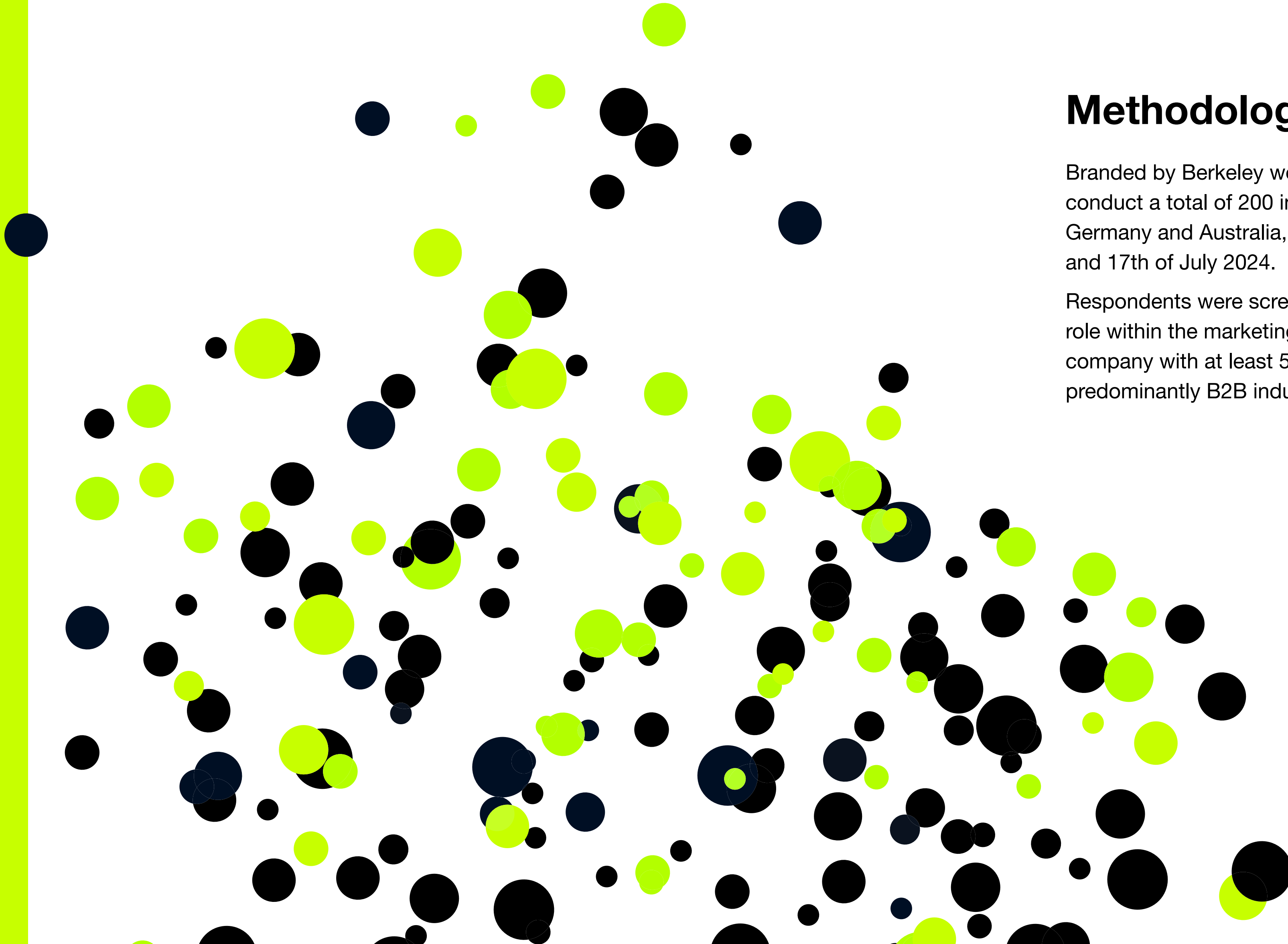
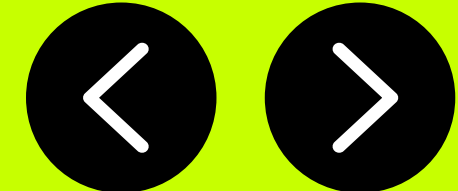
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Methodology

Branded by Berkeley worked alongside Arlington Research to conduct a total of 200 interviews, split evenly between the UK, US, Germany and Australia, with fieldwork taking place between the 5th and 17th of July 2024.

Respondents were screened to ensure they all had a substantial role within the marketing decision-making process, came from a company with at least 50+ employees, and were working within a predominantly B2B industry.

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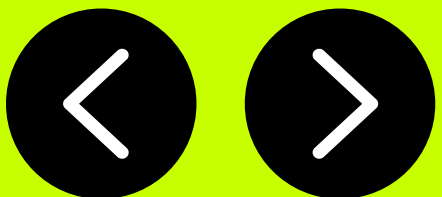
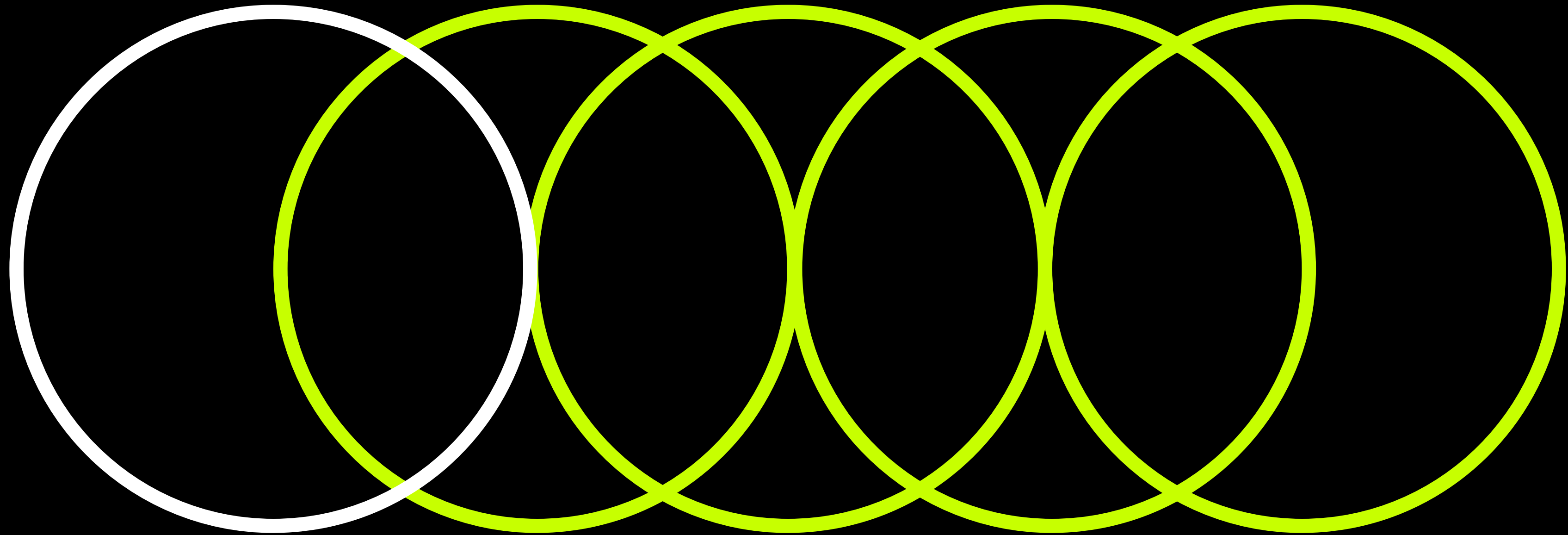
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1 Current branding landscape

A critical asset in need of differentiation



95%

of senior decision-makers agree that a strong brand identity is essential to their company's success

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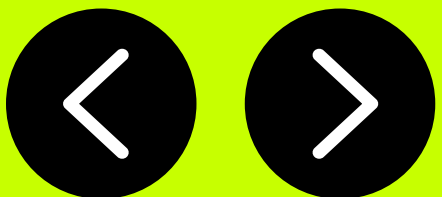
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The critical role of brand identity

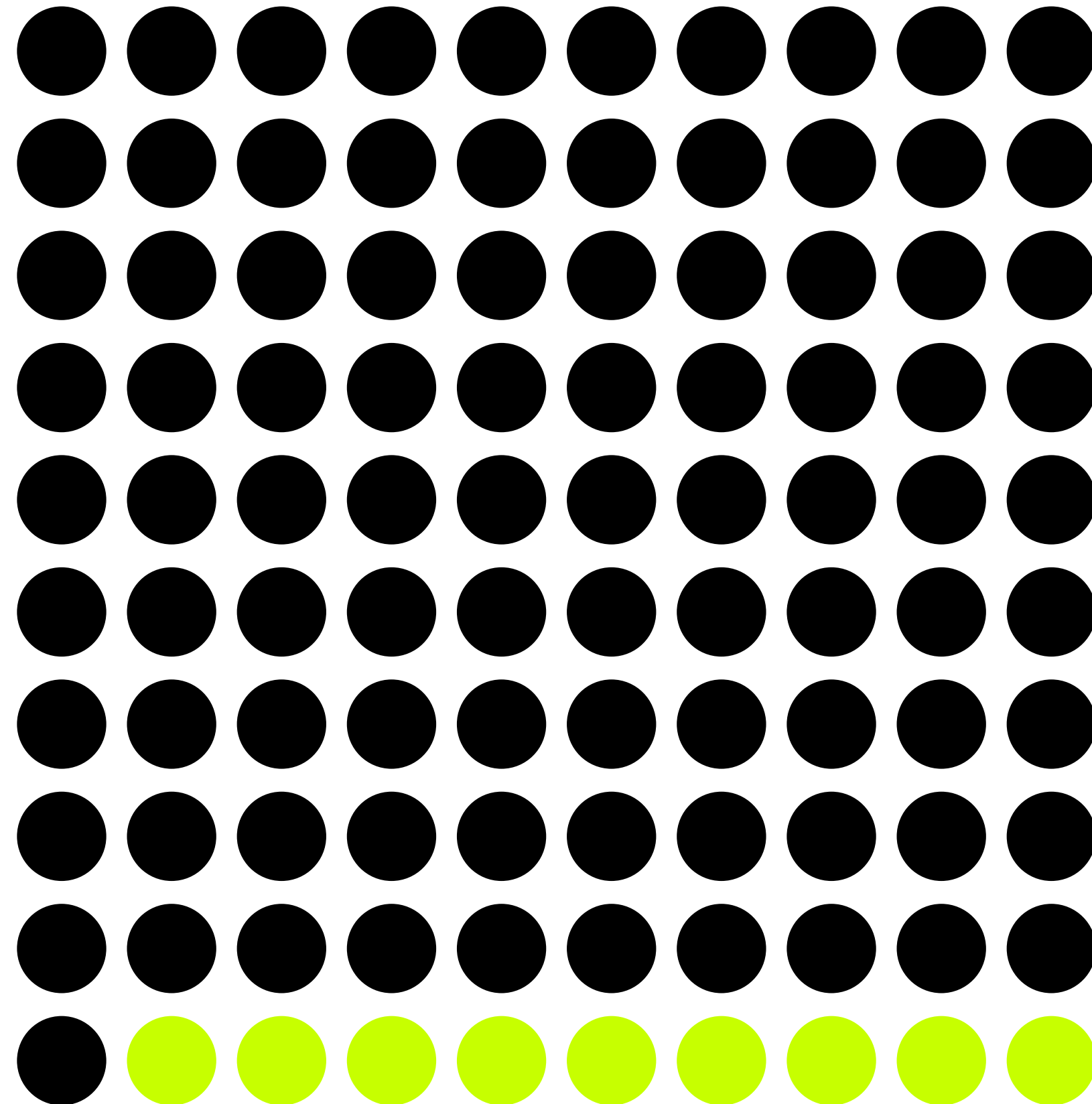
A strong brand identity has become far more than a nice-to-have. To succeed in an increasingly crowded B2B landscape, companies must prioritise brand building as a strategic imperative – investing in developing and maintaining a compelling brand that drives long-term business value.



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91%

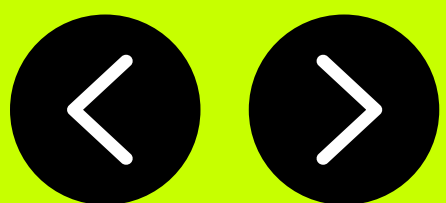
believe their branding has considerable influence over their audience's purchasing decisions



Branding's power in purchasing decisions

This high percentage reveals a strong belief among B2B decision-makers in the power of branding to sway purchasing decisions, with particularly high confidence in the US (98%) and UK (96%).

This underscores the importance of branding as a strategic driver of sales and emphasises the need to maintain a consistent brand experience throughout the customer journey.



89%

of respondents utilise market research to develop and monitor their brand identity

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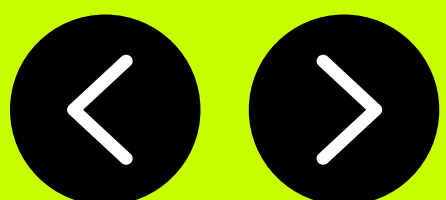
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Market research to guide brand development

The vast majority of decision-makers rely on market research to develop and monitor their brand identity. By focussing on customer perceptions, market trends, and competitive dynamics, brands can make data-driven decisions that help them remain relevant, resonate with their target audience, and support their business goals.



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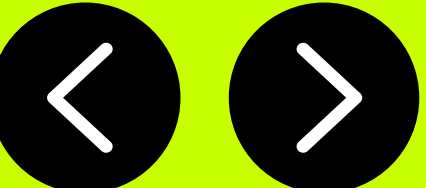
83%

think their branding and
design is better than their
main competitors

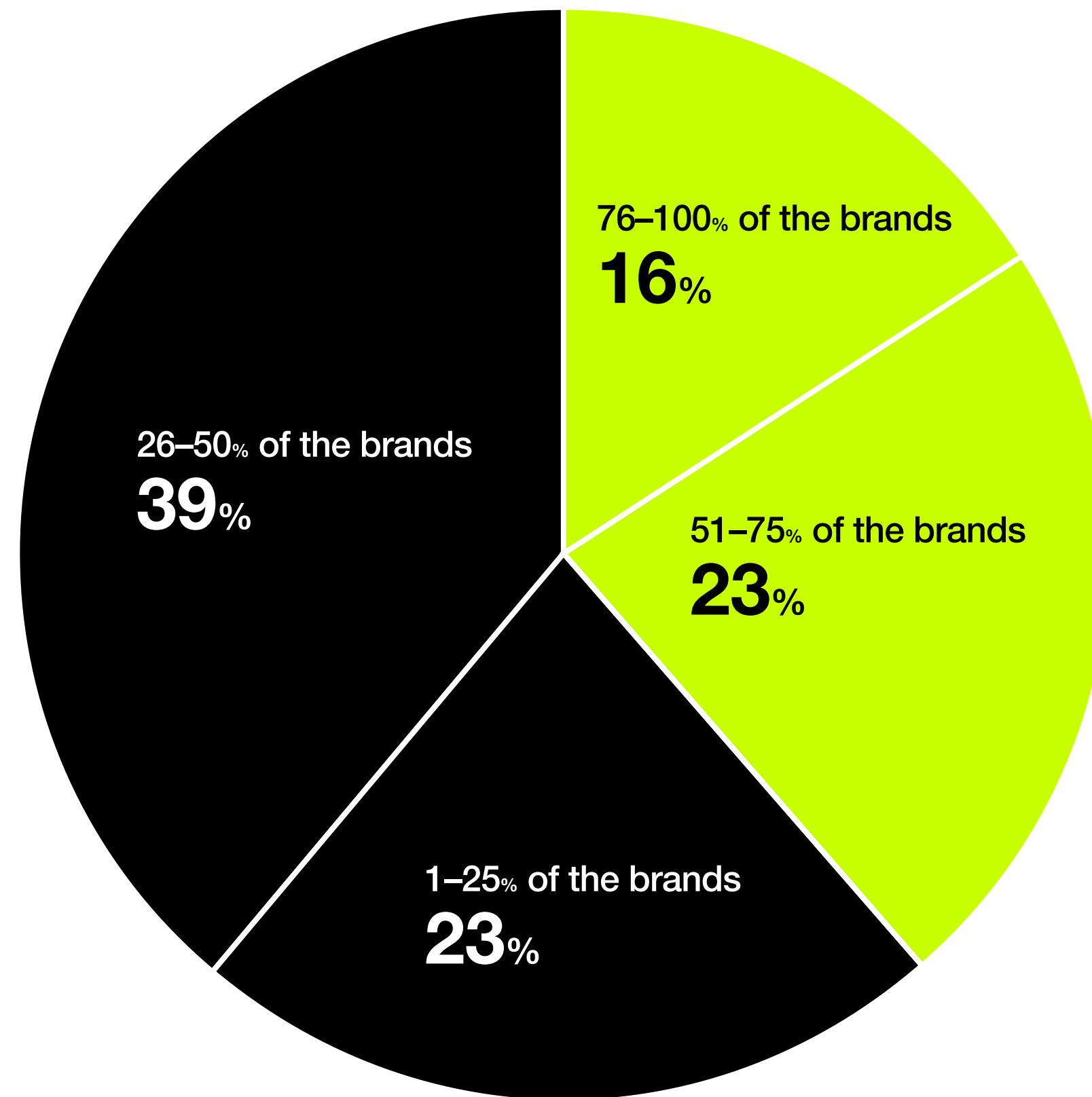
A majority are confident in their own branding

Most decision-makers believe their branding and design surpasses their main competitors, with particularly high confidence in Germany (92%). However, a lower agreement rate in the UK (76%) suggests a more competitive landscape and potential areas for improvement in that market.

Regardless of perceived strengths, companies should prioritise ongoing competitive analysis and continuous improvement to maintain a leading edge.



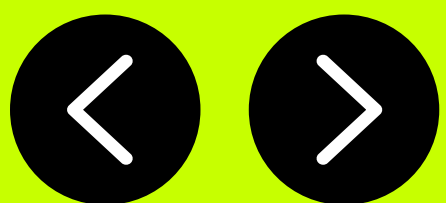
What percentage of B2B brands do you think are truly distinctive?



The opportunity in distinction

There is a perceived lack of distinctiveness in the market, with 62% of respondents believing that less than half of all B2B brands truly stand out. This presents a significant opportunity for companies to invest in developing unique brand identities that differentiate them from their competitors.

By focusing on distinctive brand assets and messaging, companies can enhance recognition, foster brand loyalty, and ultimately drive business growth.



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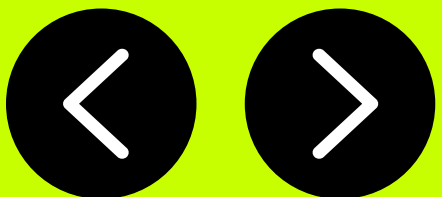
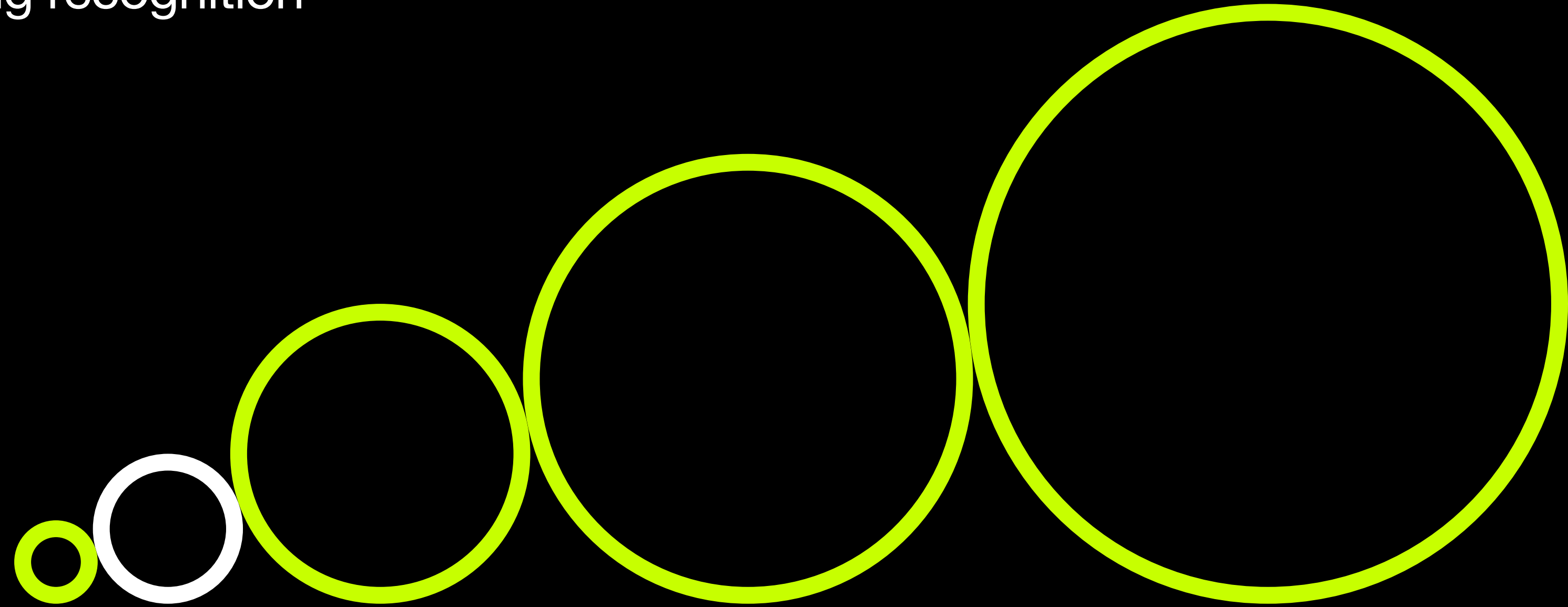
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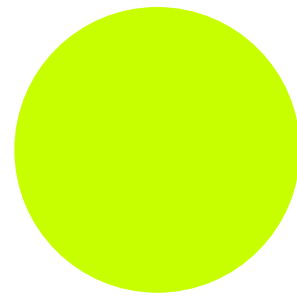
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2 Future-proofing your brand

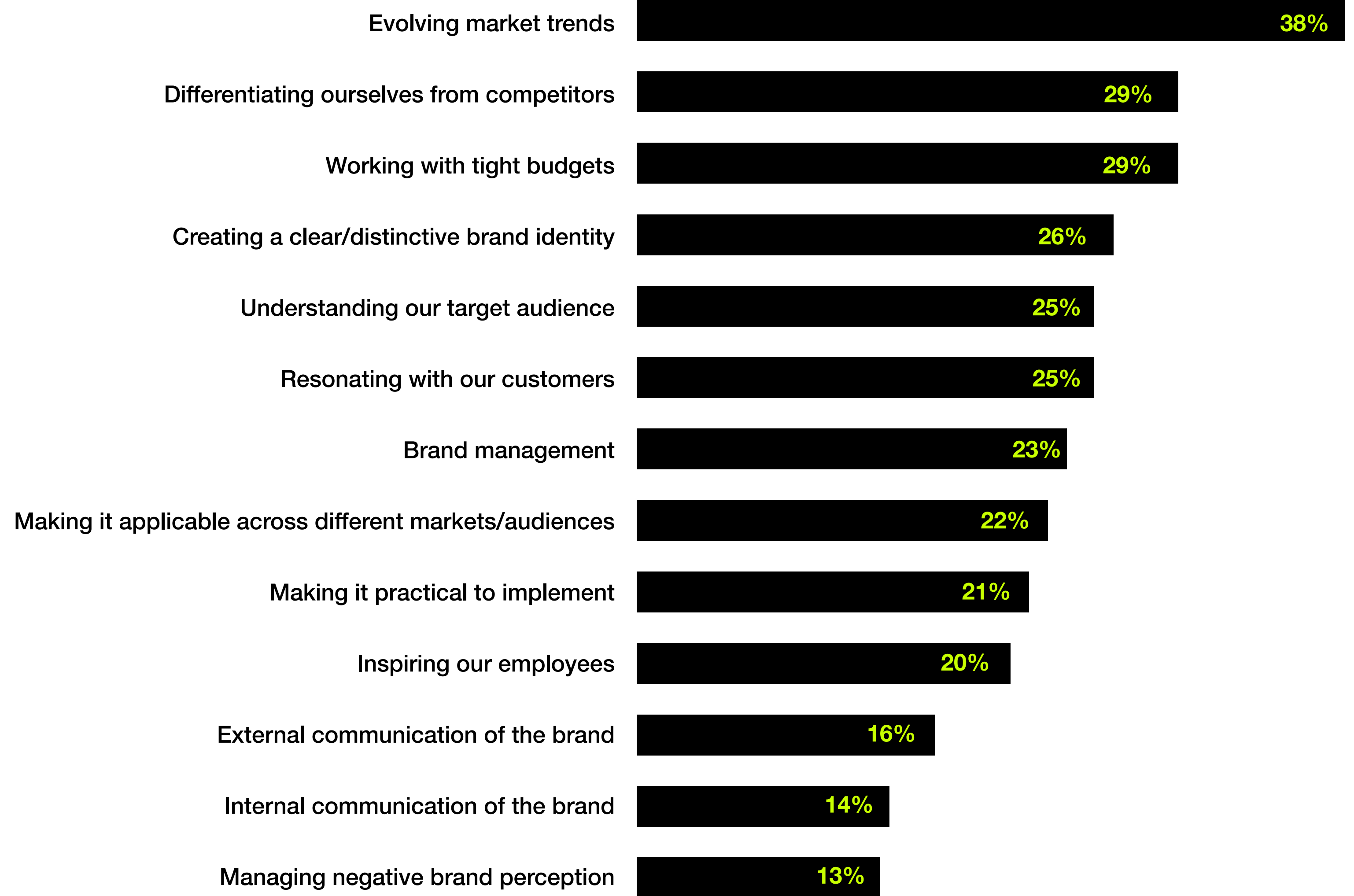
Managing evolving trends and increasing recognition





Global

What are the biggest challenges your company faces in terms of branding and design?



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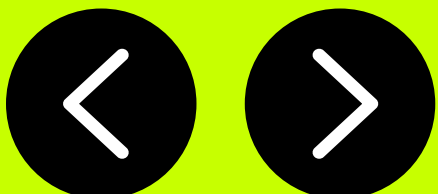
Global

Australia

Germany

United Kingdom

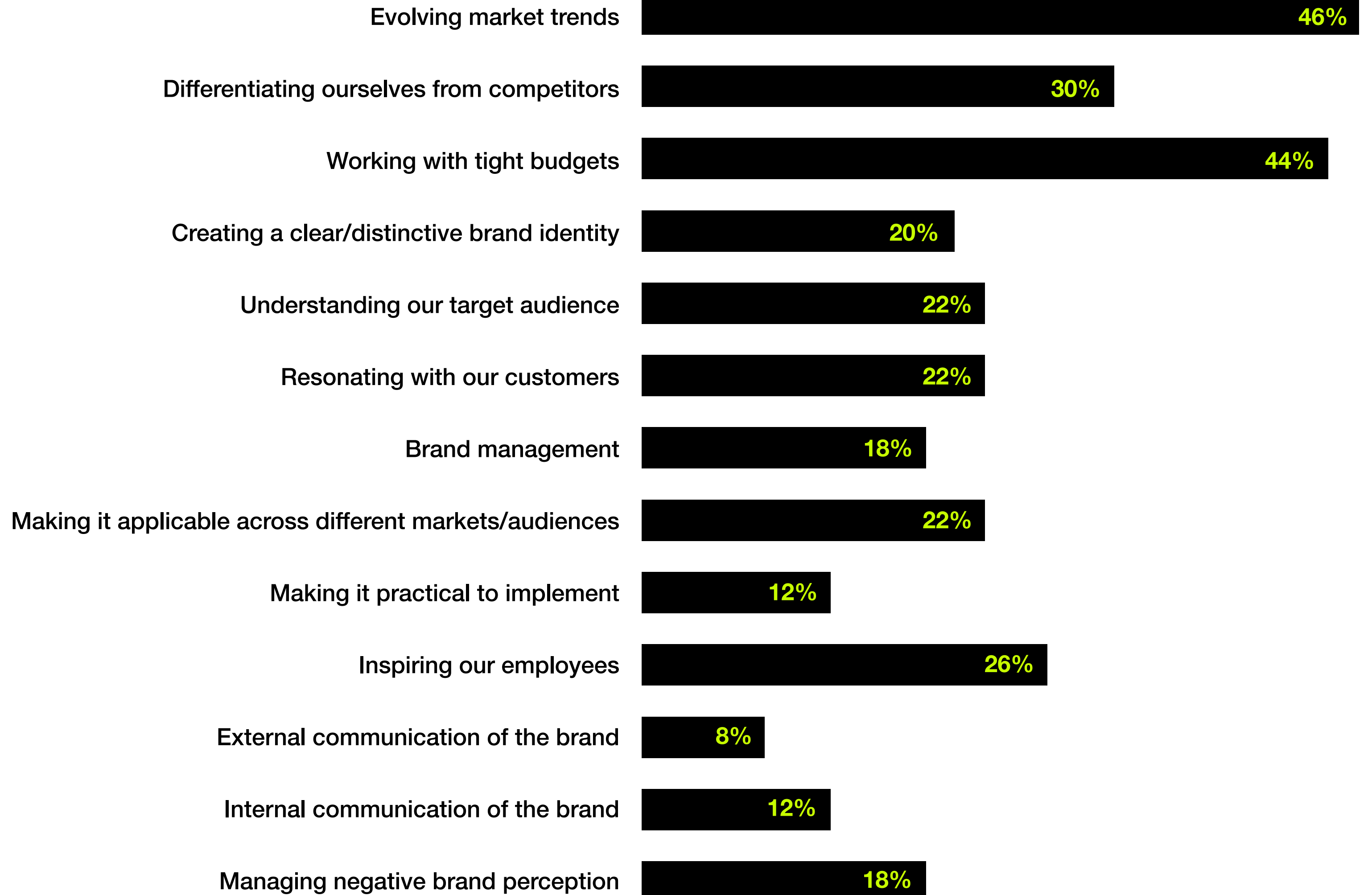
United States



AUS

Australia

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Global

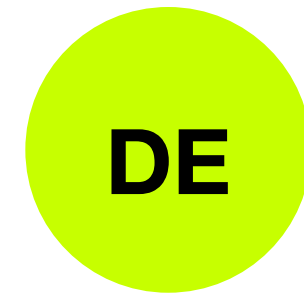
Australia

Germany

United Kingdom

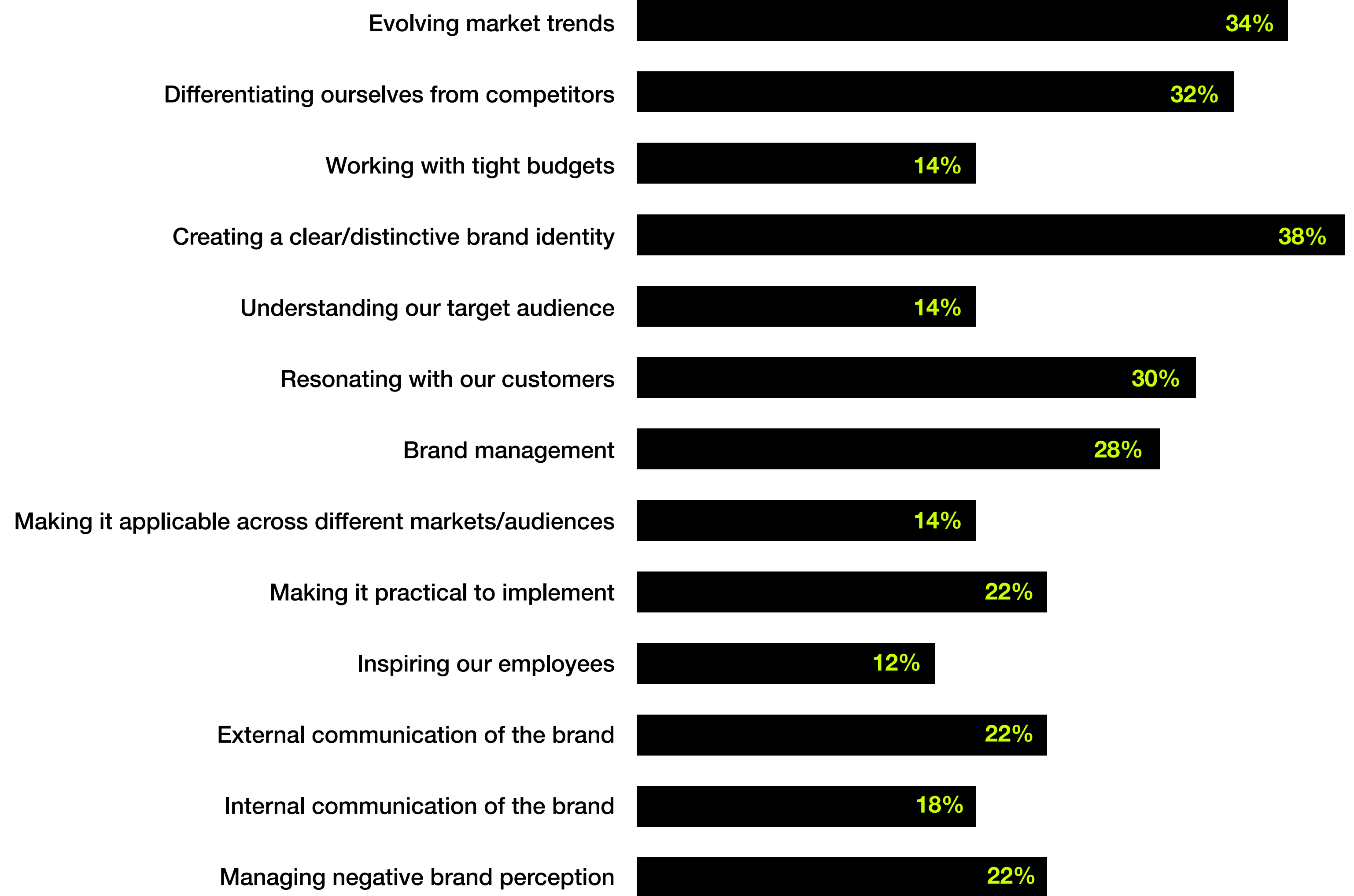
United States





Germany

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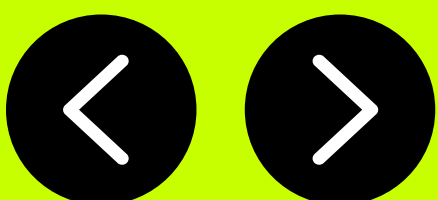
Global

Australia

Germany

United Kingdom

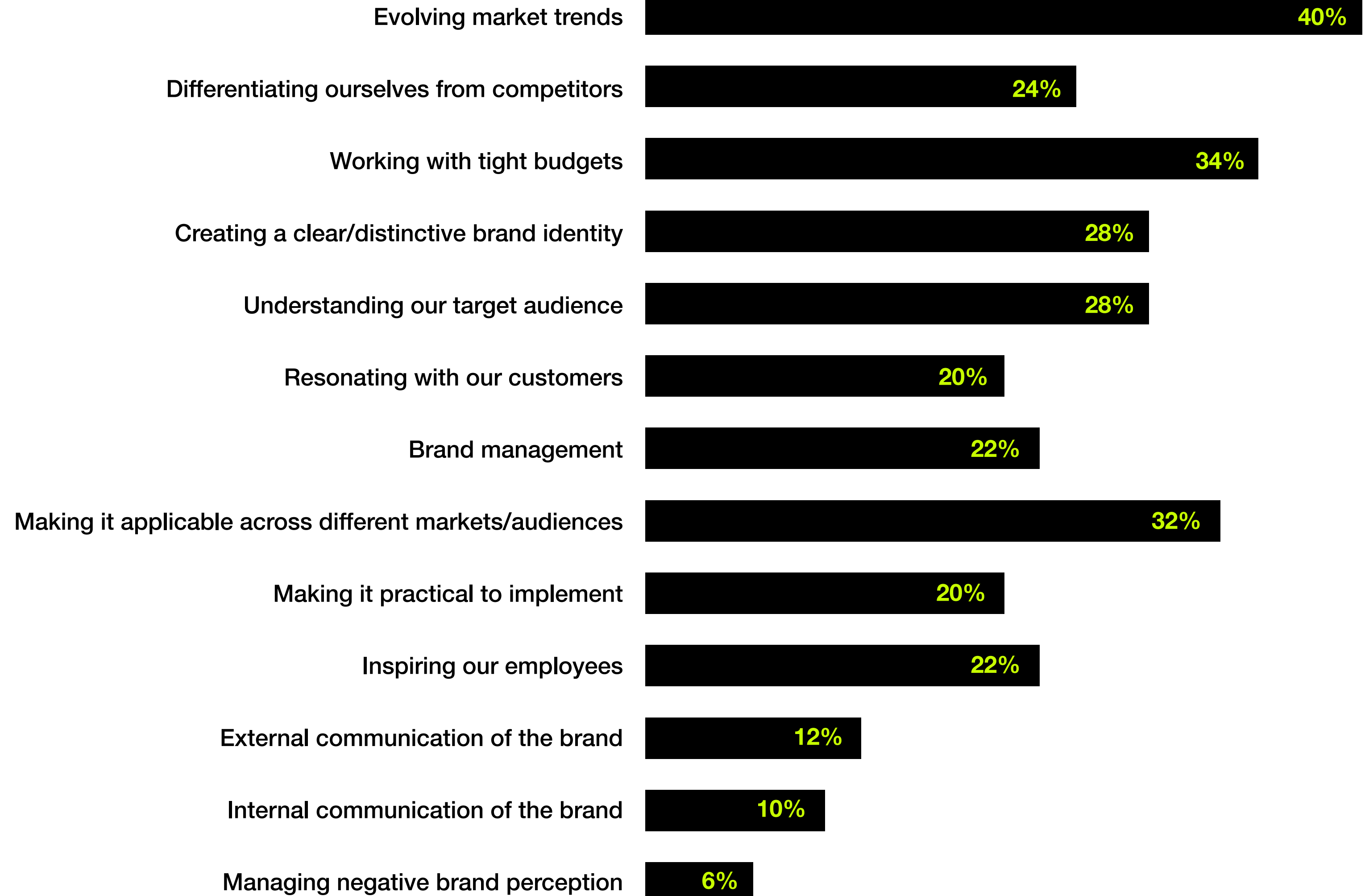
United States



UK

United Kingdom

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Global

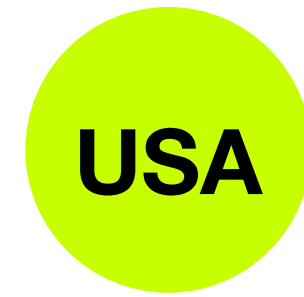
Australia

Germany

United Kingdom

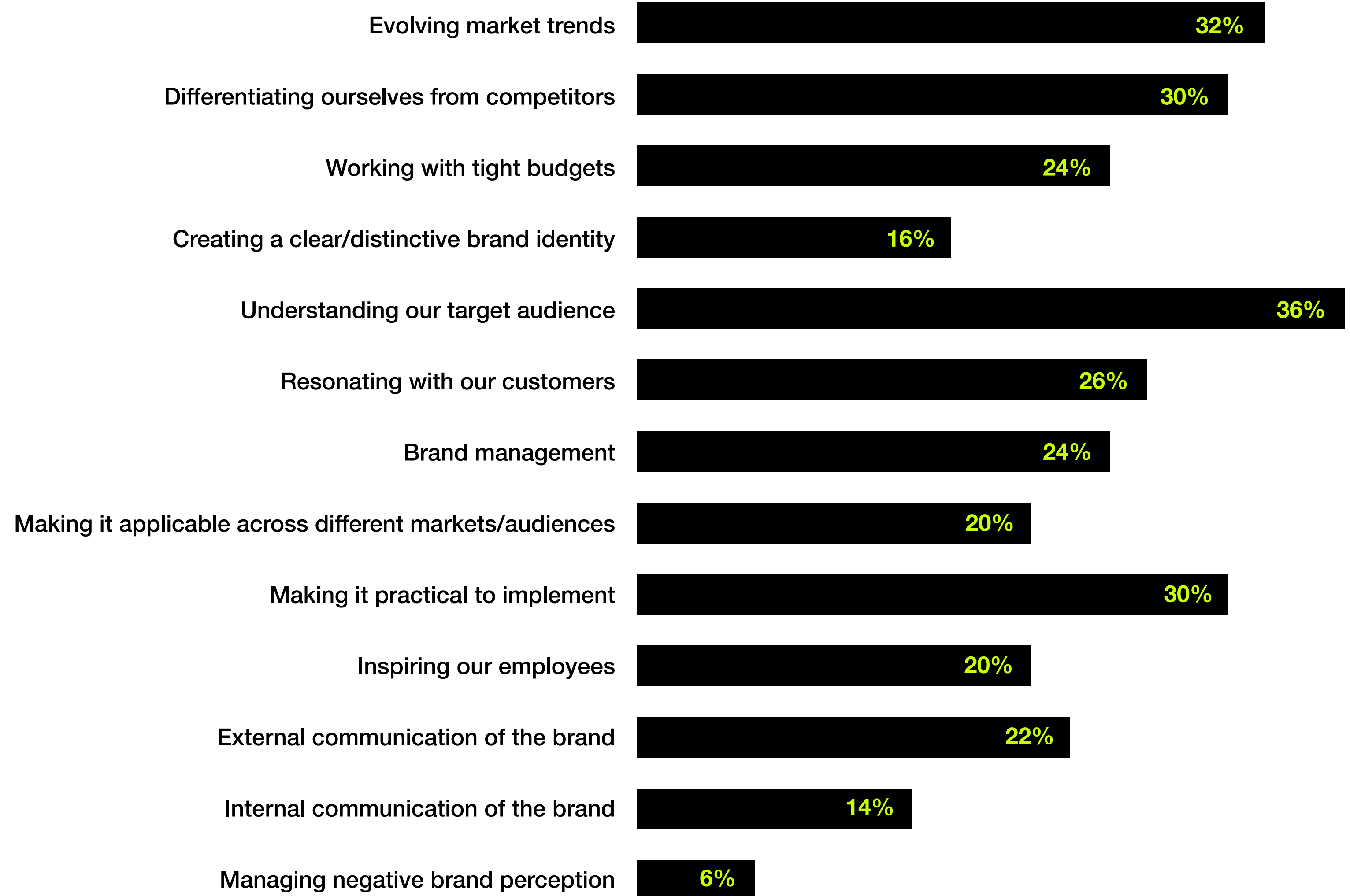
United States





United States

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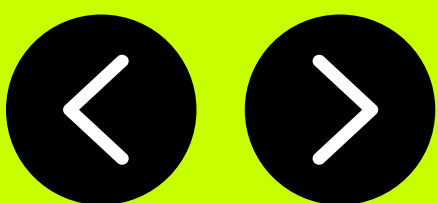
Global

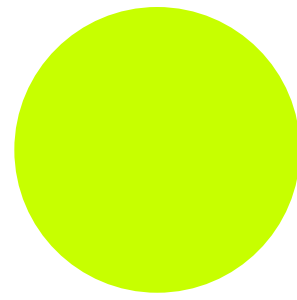
Australia

Germany

United Kingdom

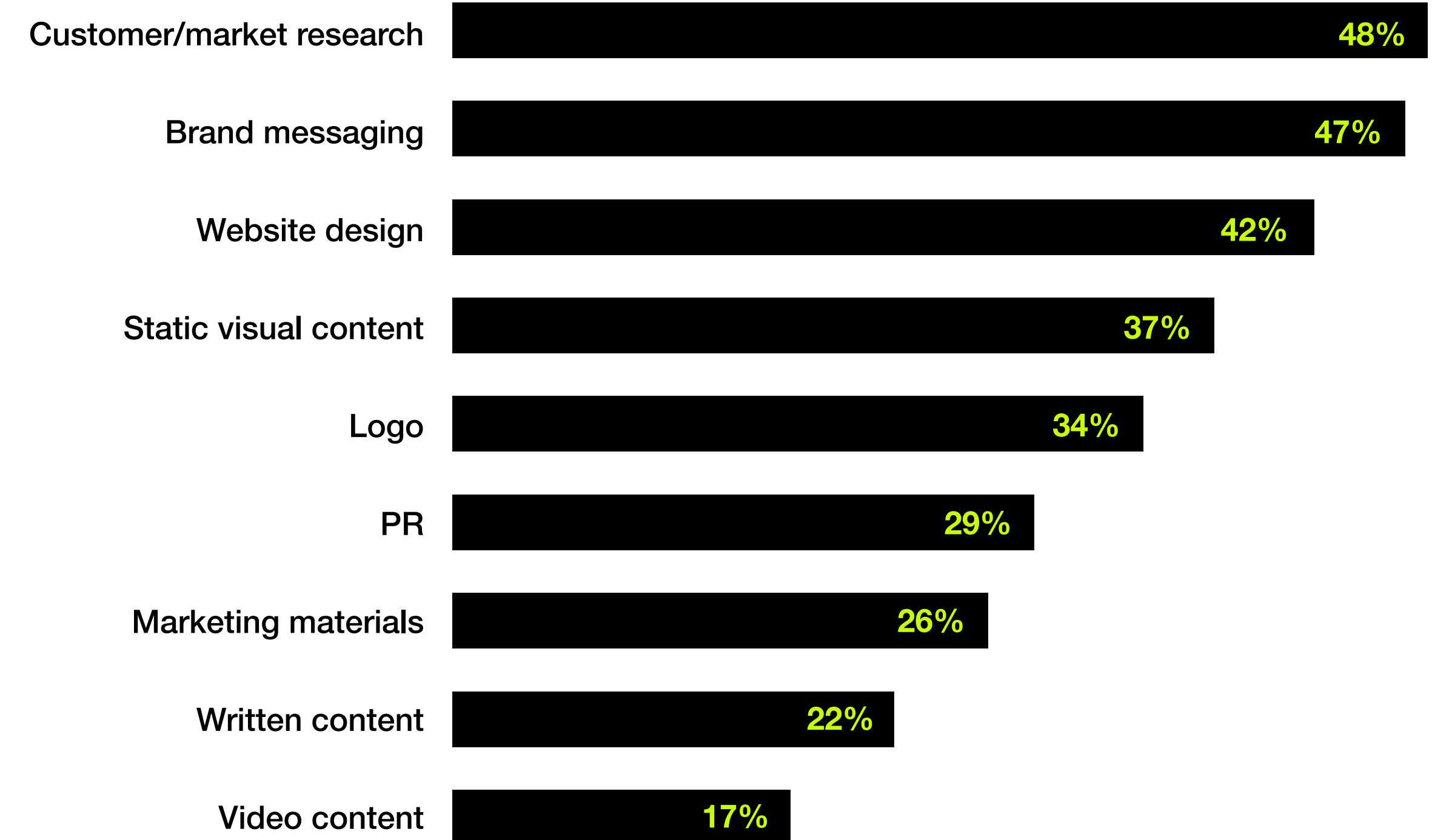
United States





Global

Which of the following elements do you consider most important for your brand?



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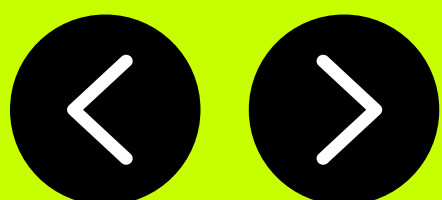
[Global](#)

[Australia](#)

[Germany](#)

[United Kingdom](#)

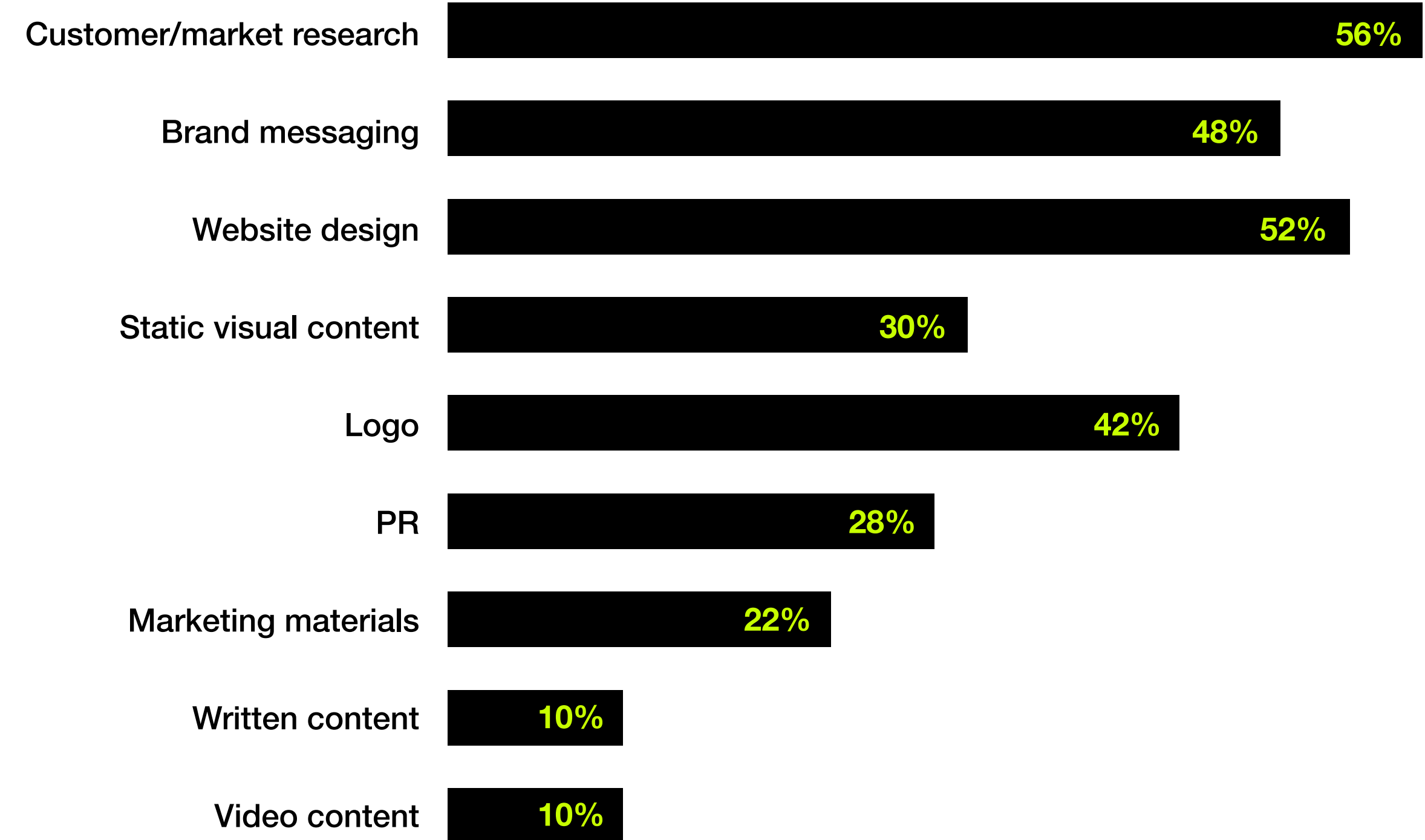
[United States](#)



AUS

Australia

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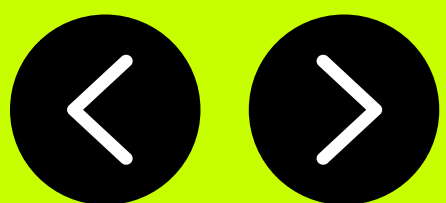
Global

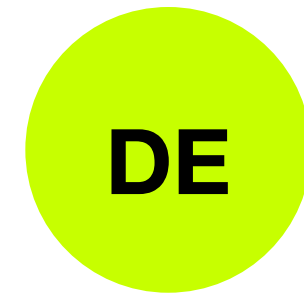
Australia

Germany

United Kingdom

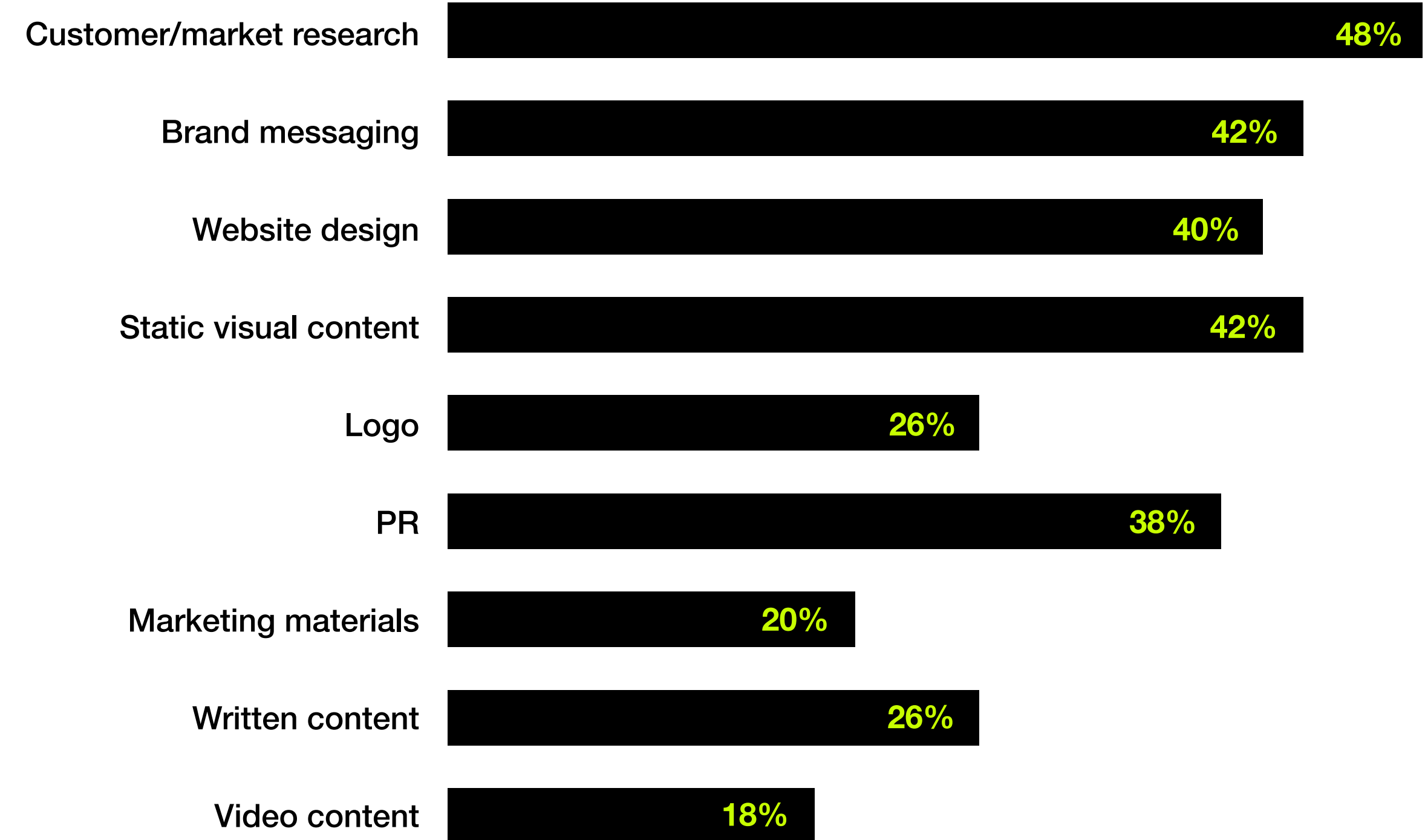
United States





Germany

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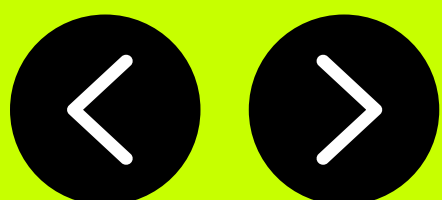
[Global](#)

[Australia](#)

[Germany](#)

[United Kingdom](#)

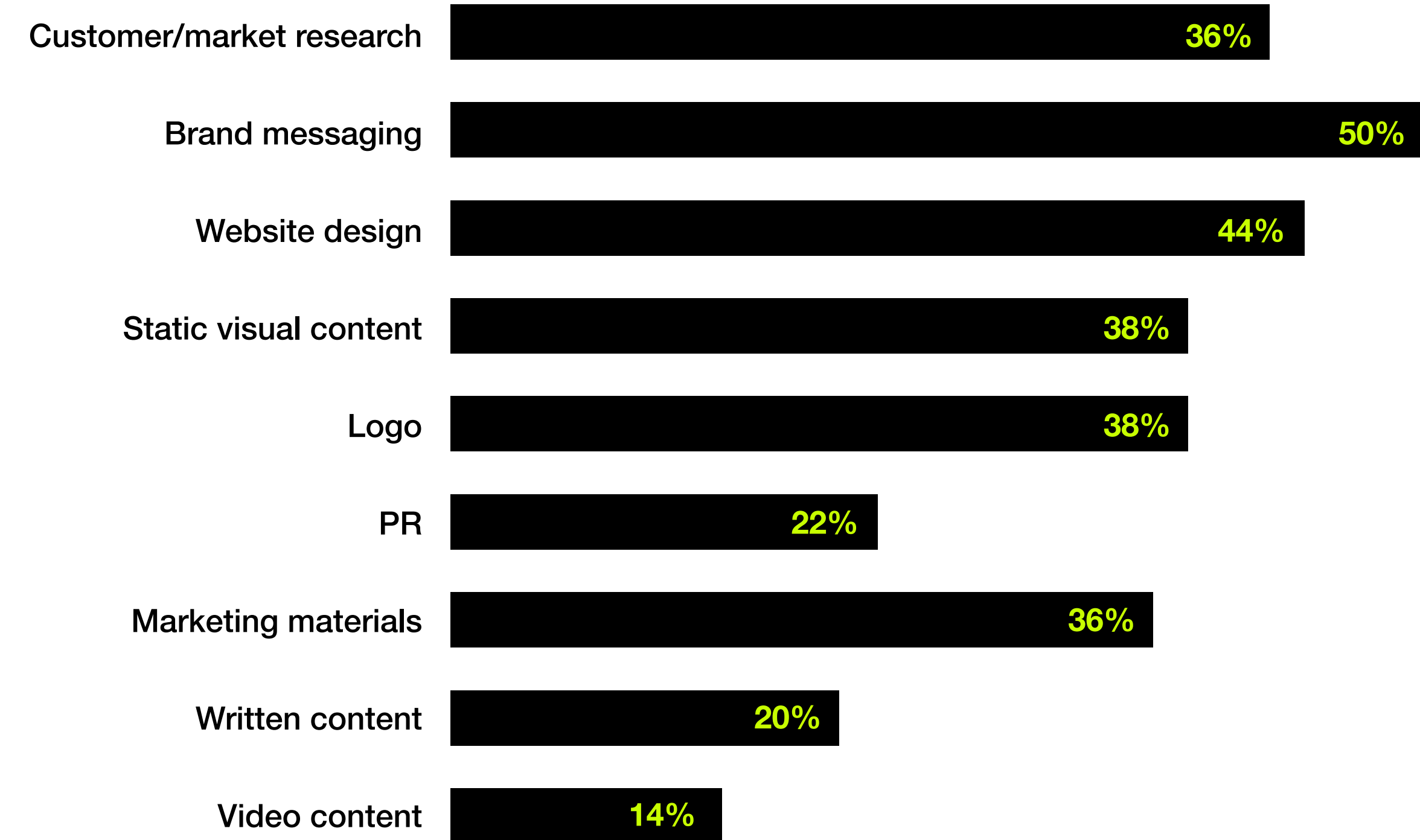
[United States](#)





United Kingdom

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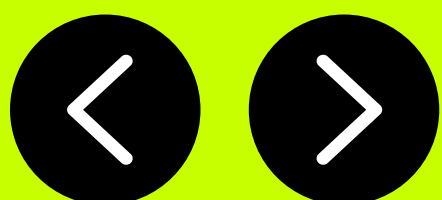
Global

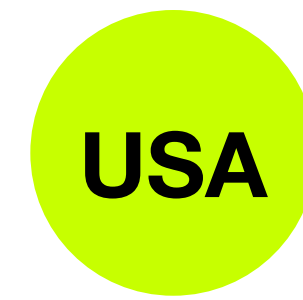
Australia

Germany

United Kingdom

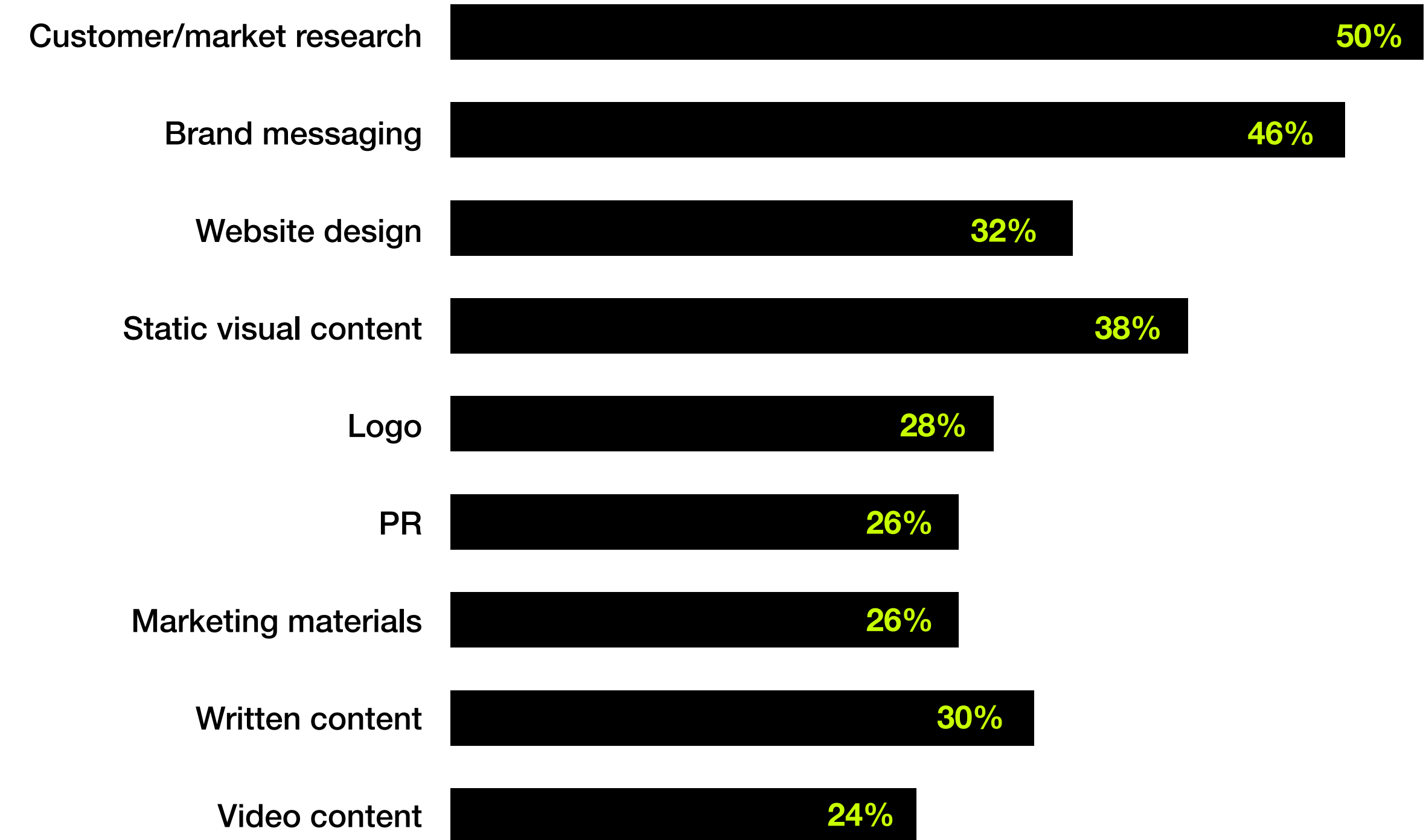
United States





United States

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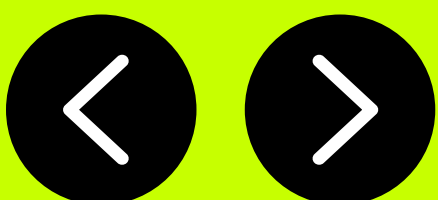
Global

Australia

Germany

United Kingdom

United States



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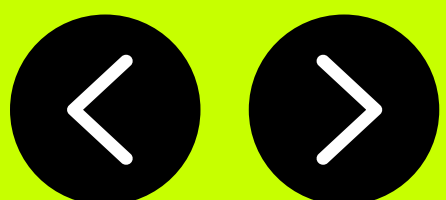
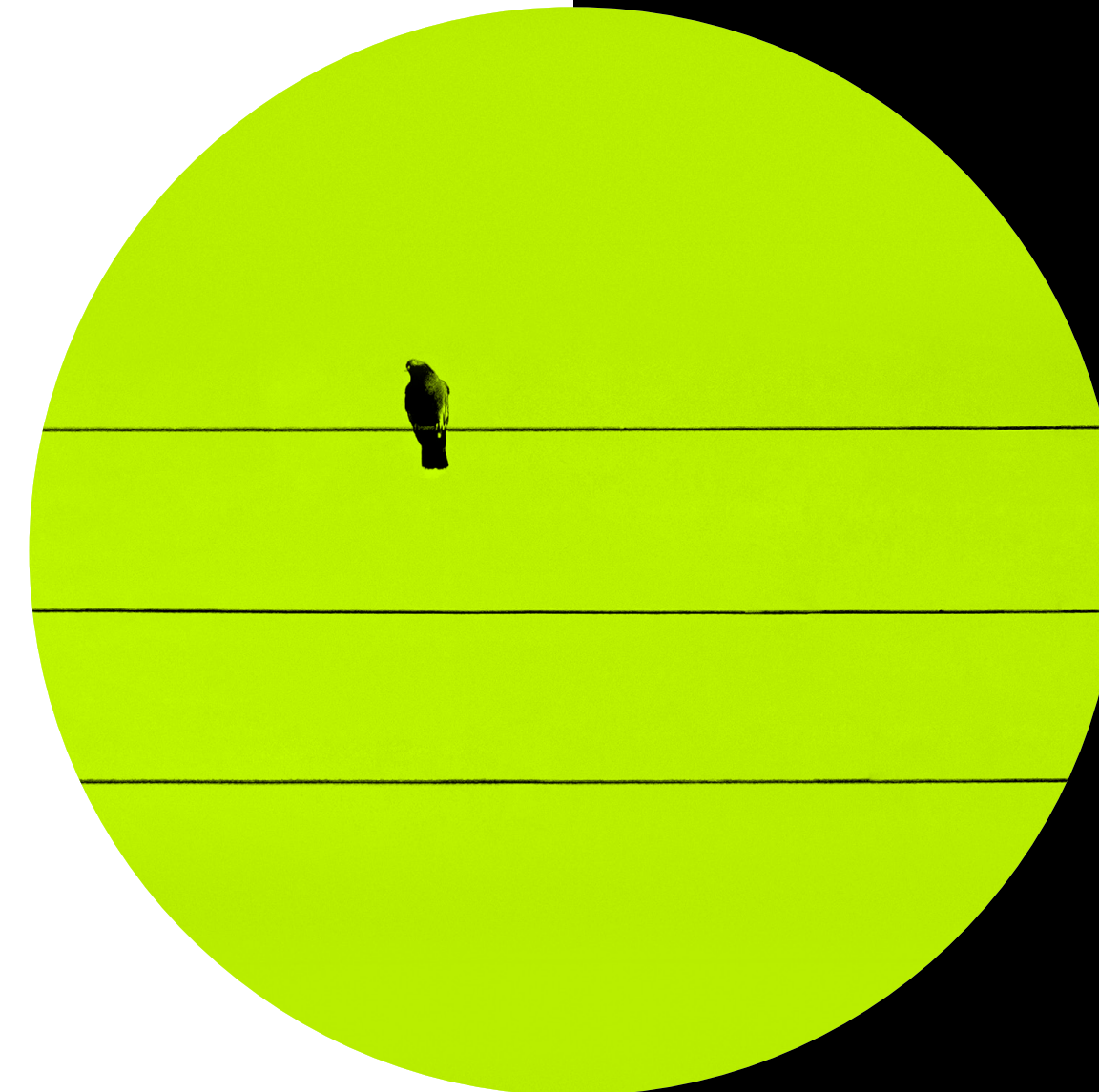
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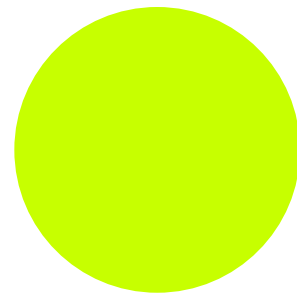
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Evolving trends, managing budgets and informed brand messaging

While budgets remain a key challenge for senior decision-makers, particularly in the UK and Australia, it is evolving market trends that are proving to be the biggest concern – re-enforcing the need for brands to stay agile and adaptable in response to dynamic market conditions.

The rapid evolution of the B2B market may also be influencing the top priorities for decision-makers, increasing the need for deeper insights into customers' changing behaviour to help inform their brand messaging.





Global

When was the last time your company refreshed or changed its branding?

Within the last two years

26%

2–5 years ago

39%

5–10 years ago

24%

10+ years ago

9%

Never

2%

I don't know

2%

The need for adaptive brands

With the majority of companies having refreshed their branding within the last five years, there appears to be a clear recognition of the need to adapt brand identities in response to today's fast-paced business environment.

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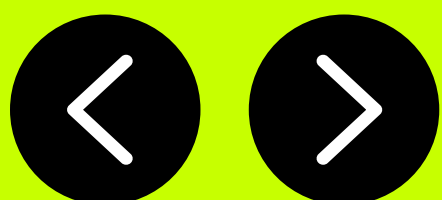
Global

Australia

Germany

United Kingdom

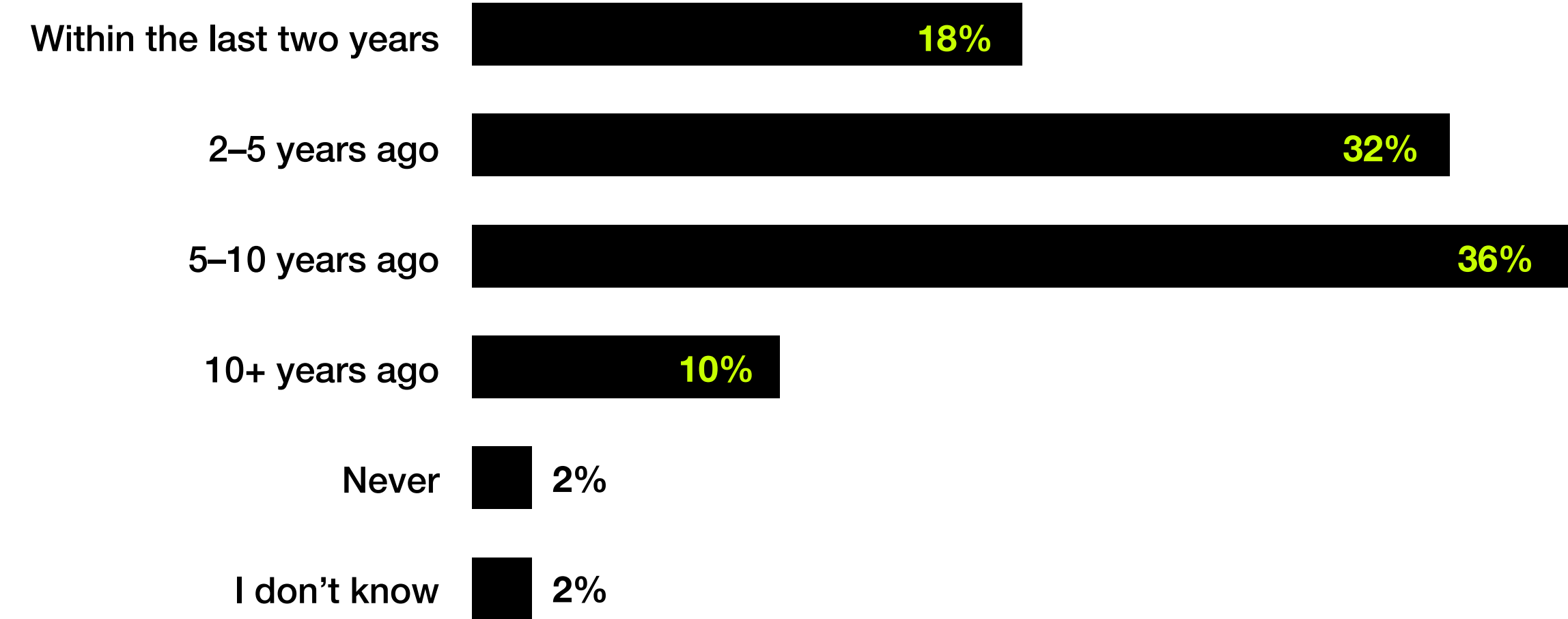
United States



AUS

Australia

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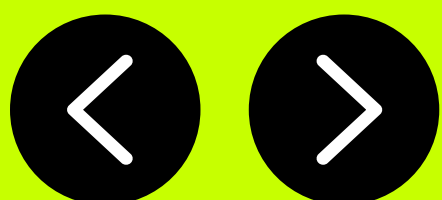
Global

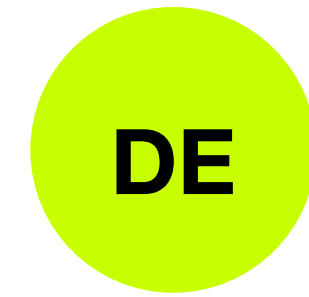
Australia

Germany

United Kingdom

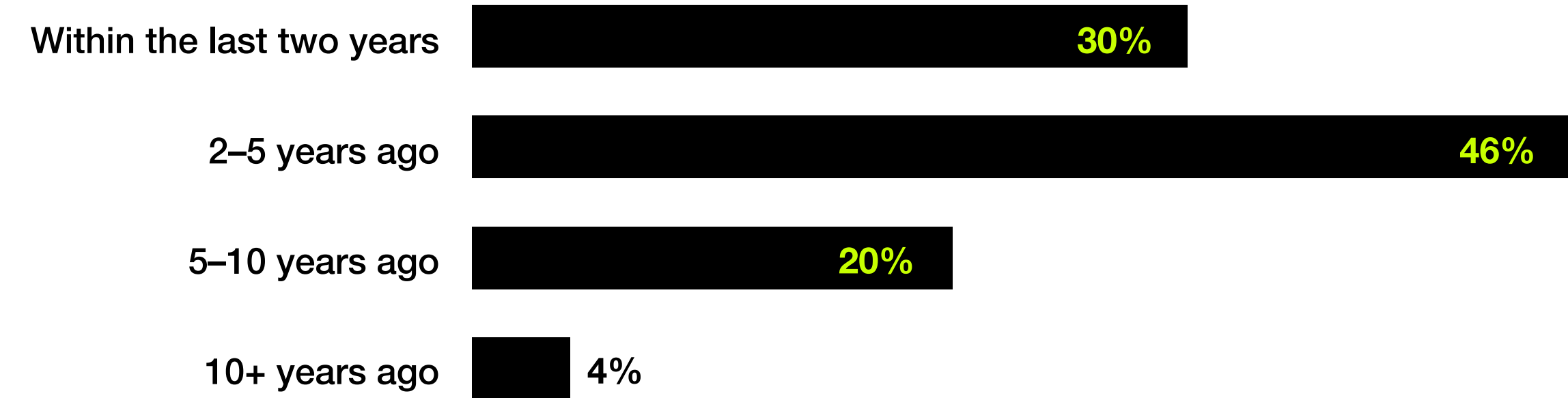
United States





Germany

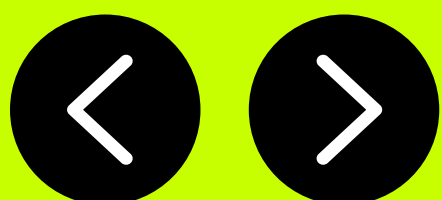
When was the last time your company refreshed or changed its branding?



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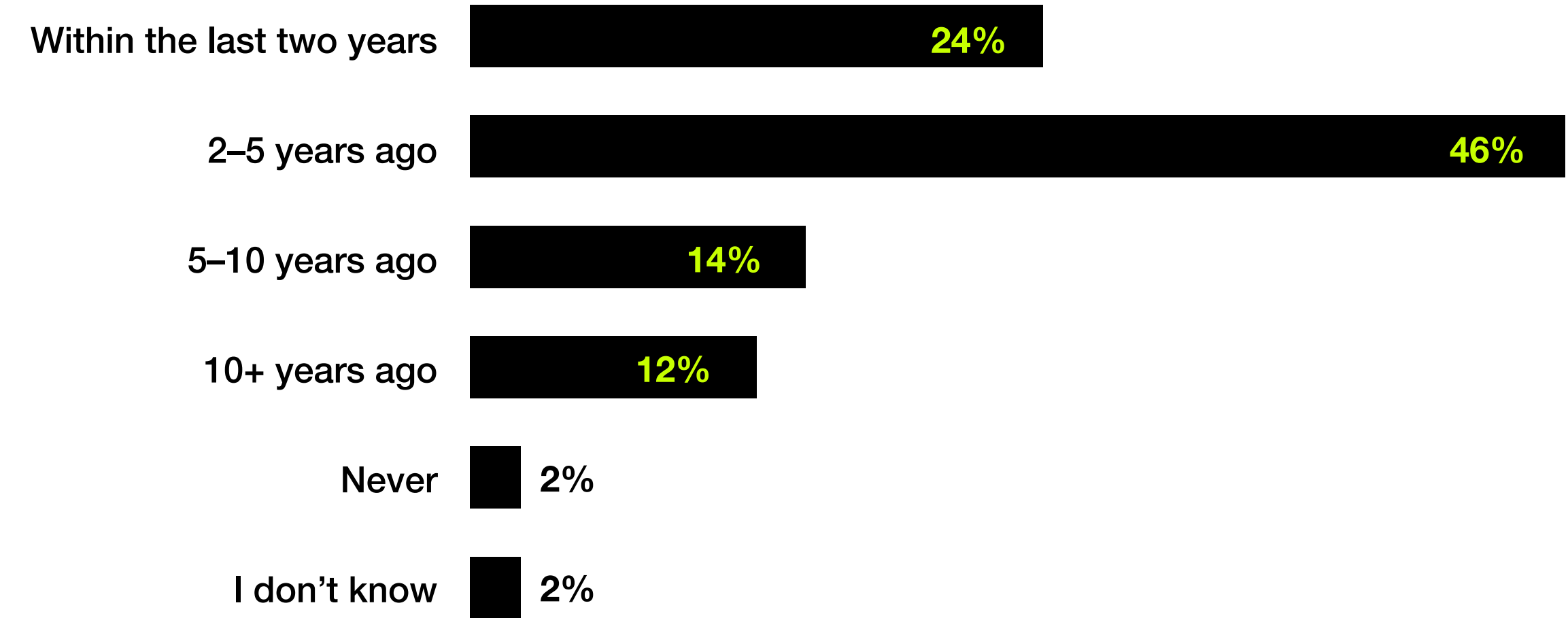
- Global
- Australia
- Germany
- United Kingdom
- United States





United Kingdom

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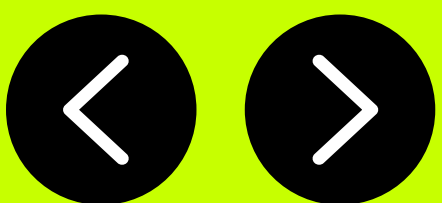
Global

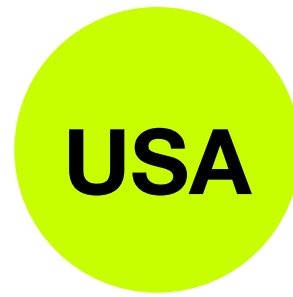
Australia

Germany

United Kingdom

United States





United States

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32%

2–5 years ago

30%

5–10 years ago

24%

10+ years ago

10%

Never

2%

I don't know

2%

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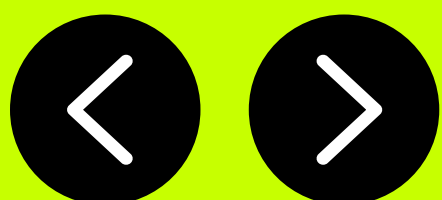
Global

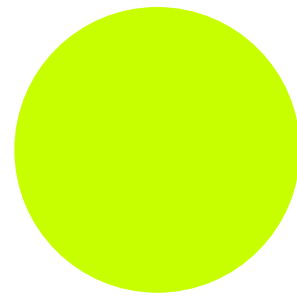
Australia

Germany

United Kingdom

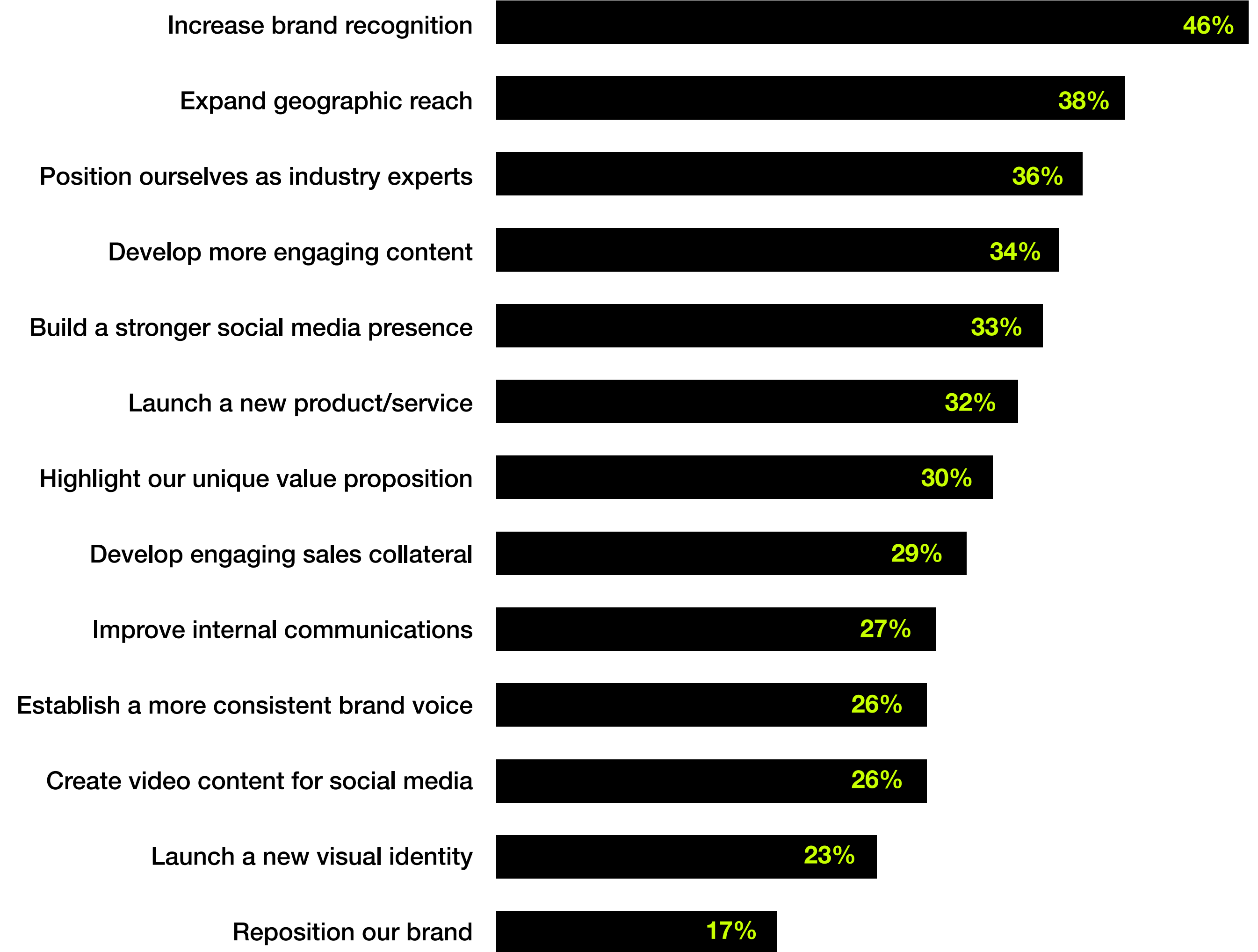
United States





Global

What are your company's primary branding, content, and design goals for the next 12 months?



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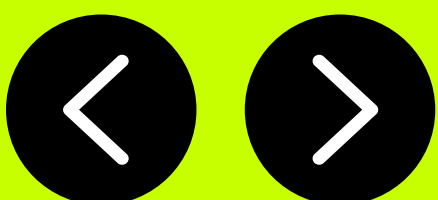
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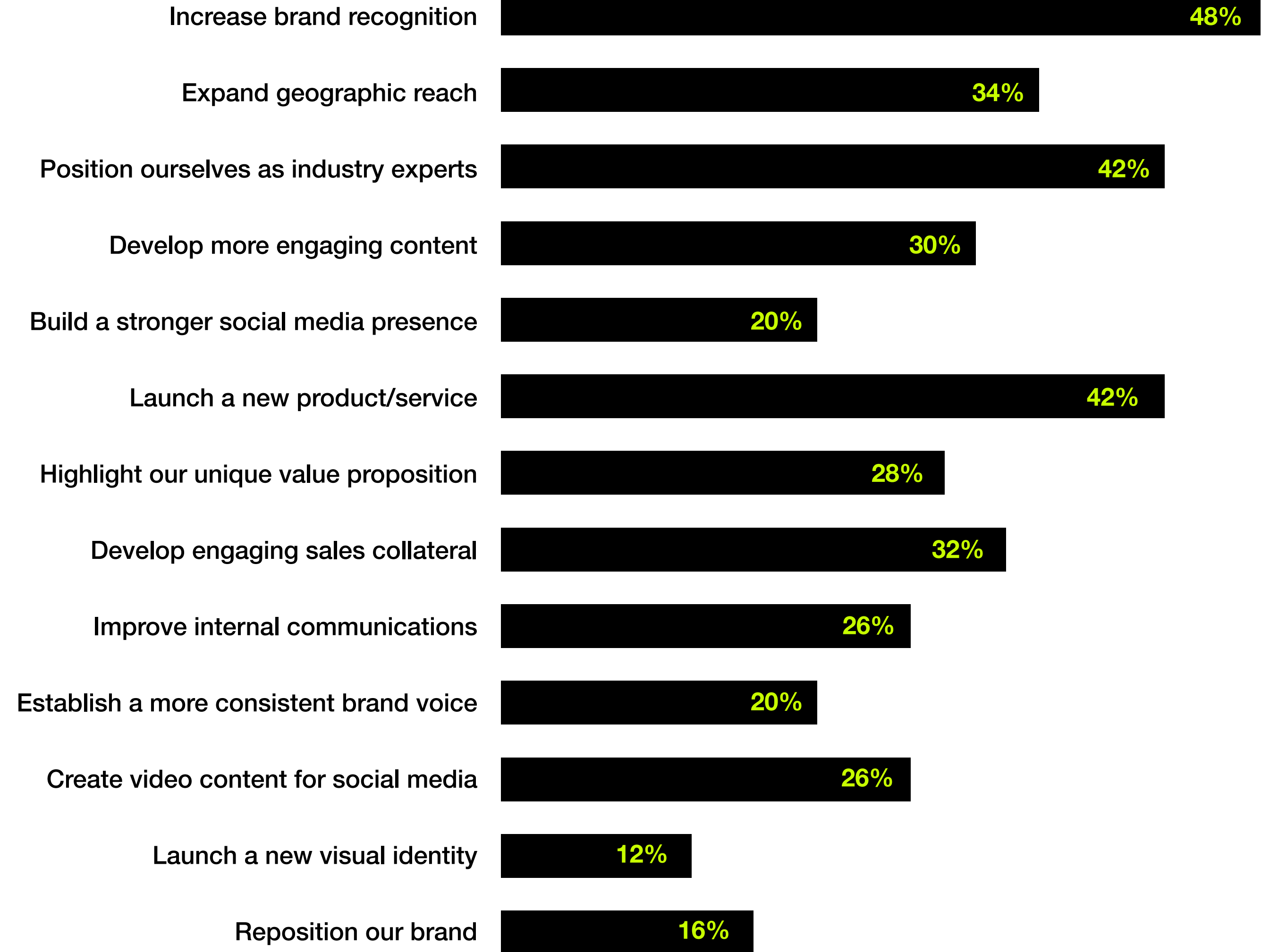
[United States](#)



AUS

Australia

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Australia

Germany

United Kingdom

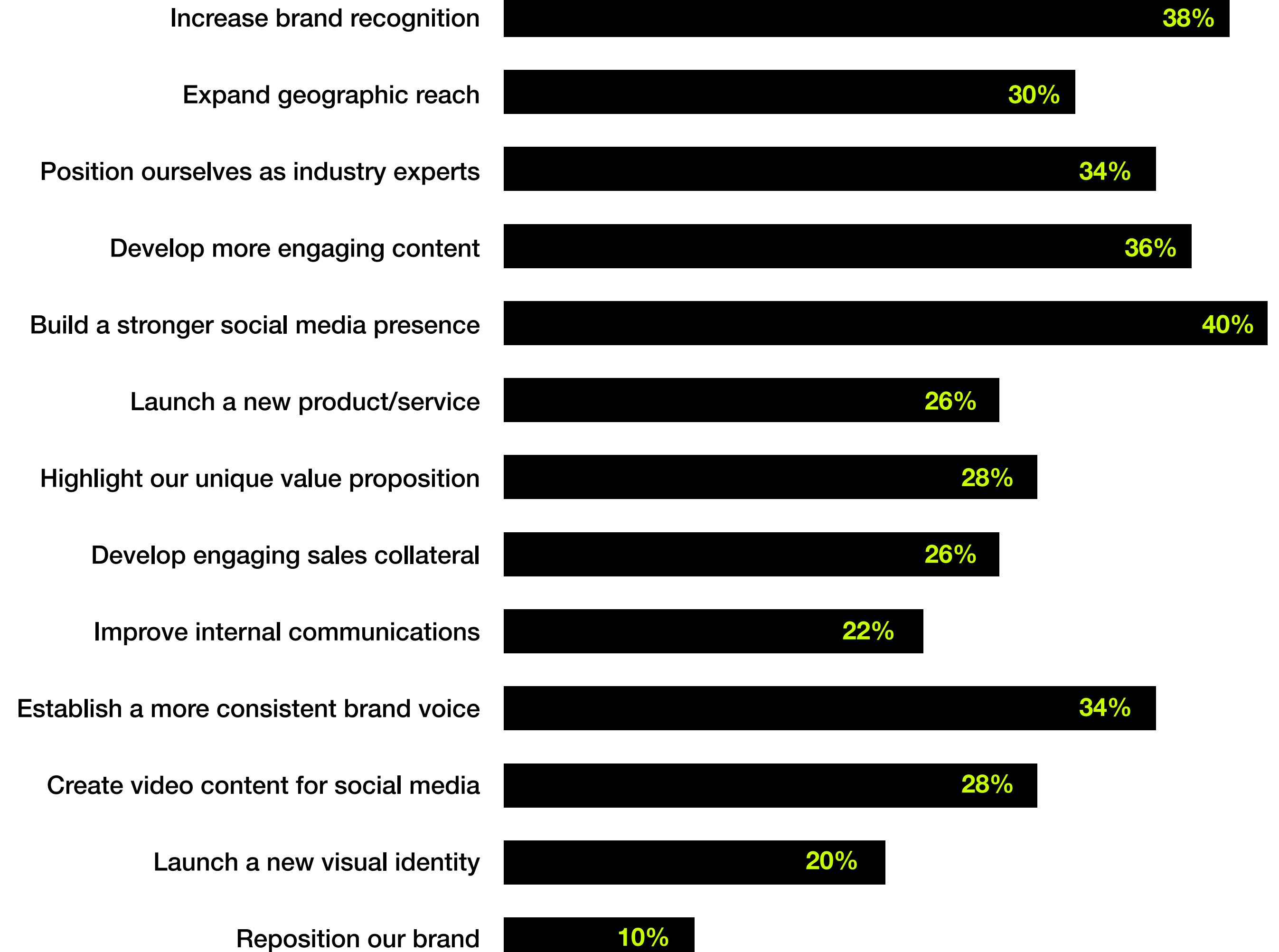
United States



DE

Germany

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Australia

Germany

United Kingdom

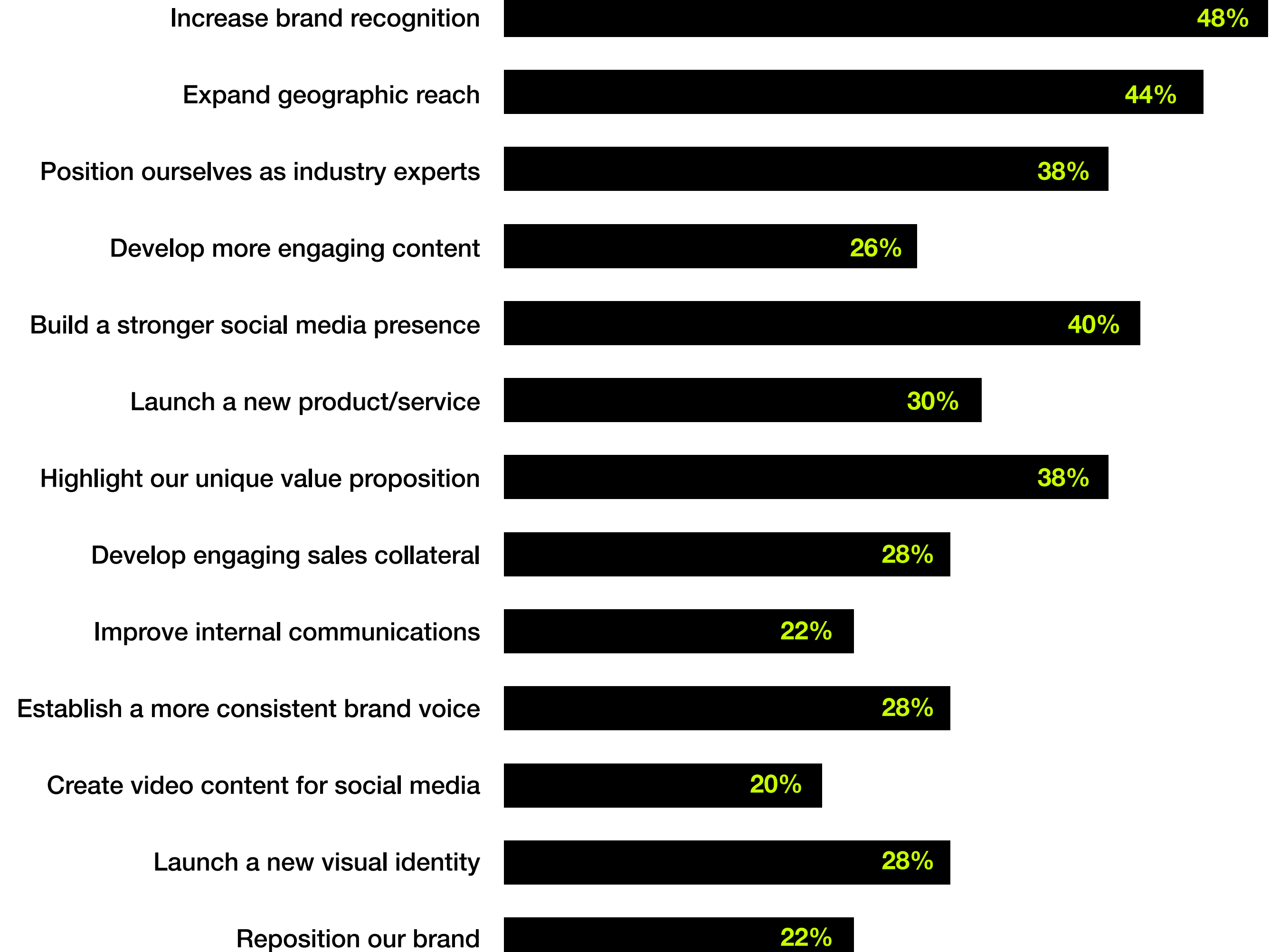
United States



UK

United Kingdom

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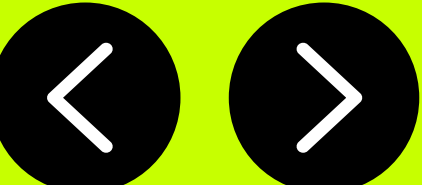
Global

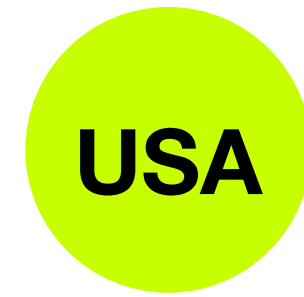
Australia

Germany

United Kingdom

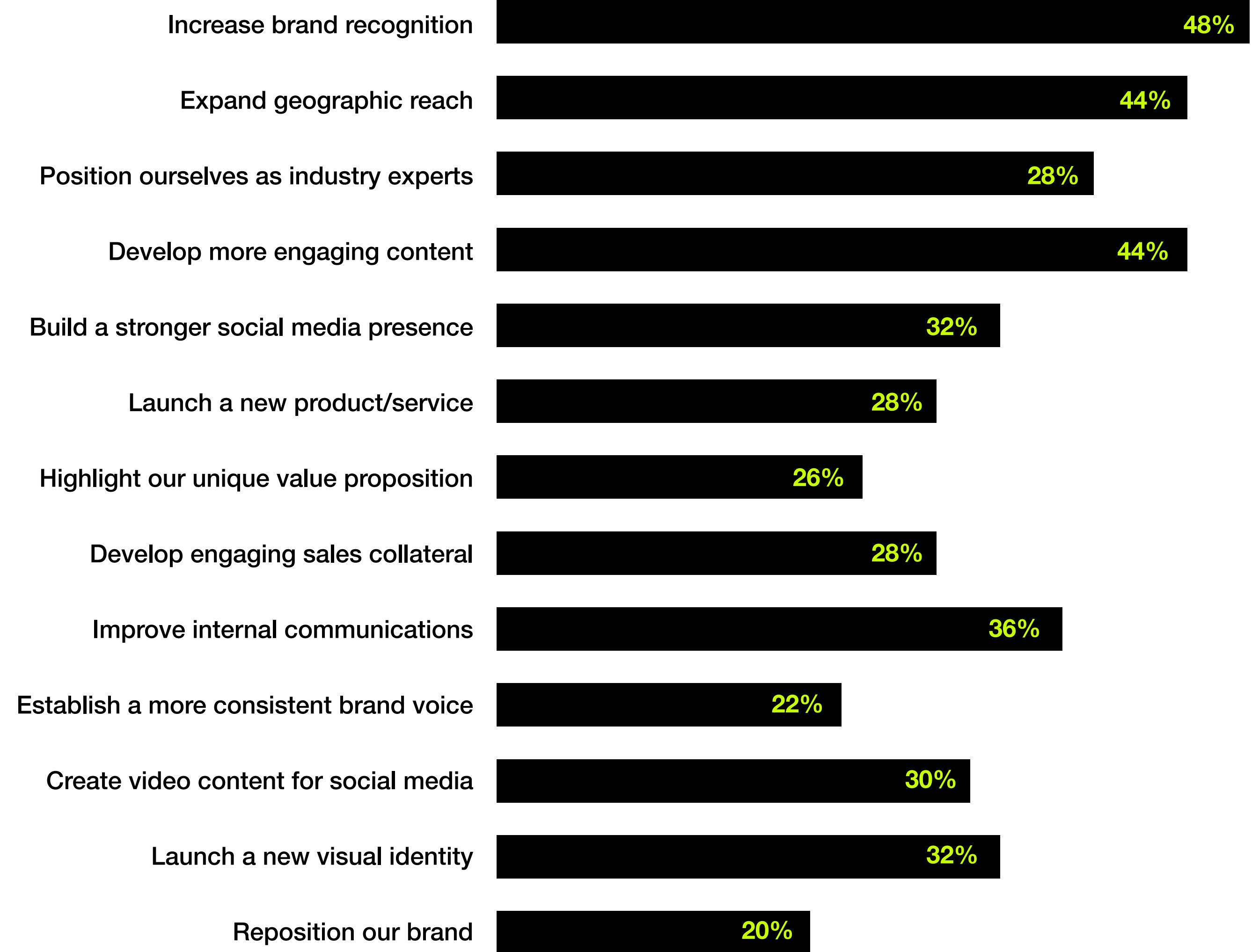
United States





United States

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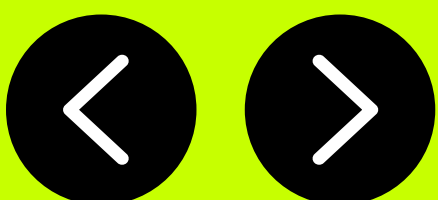
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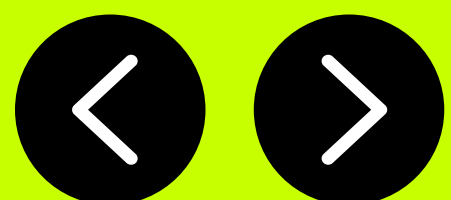
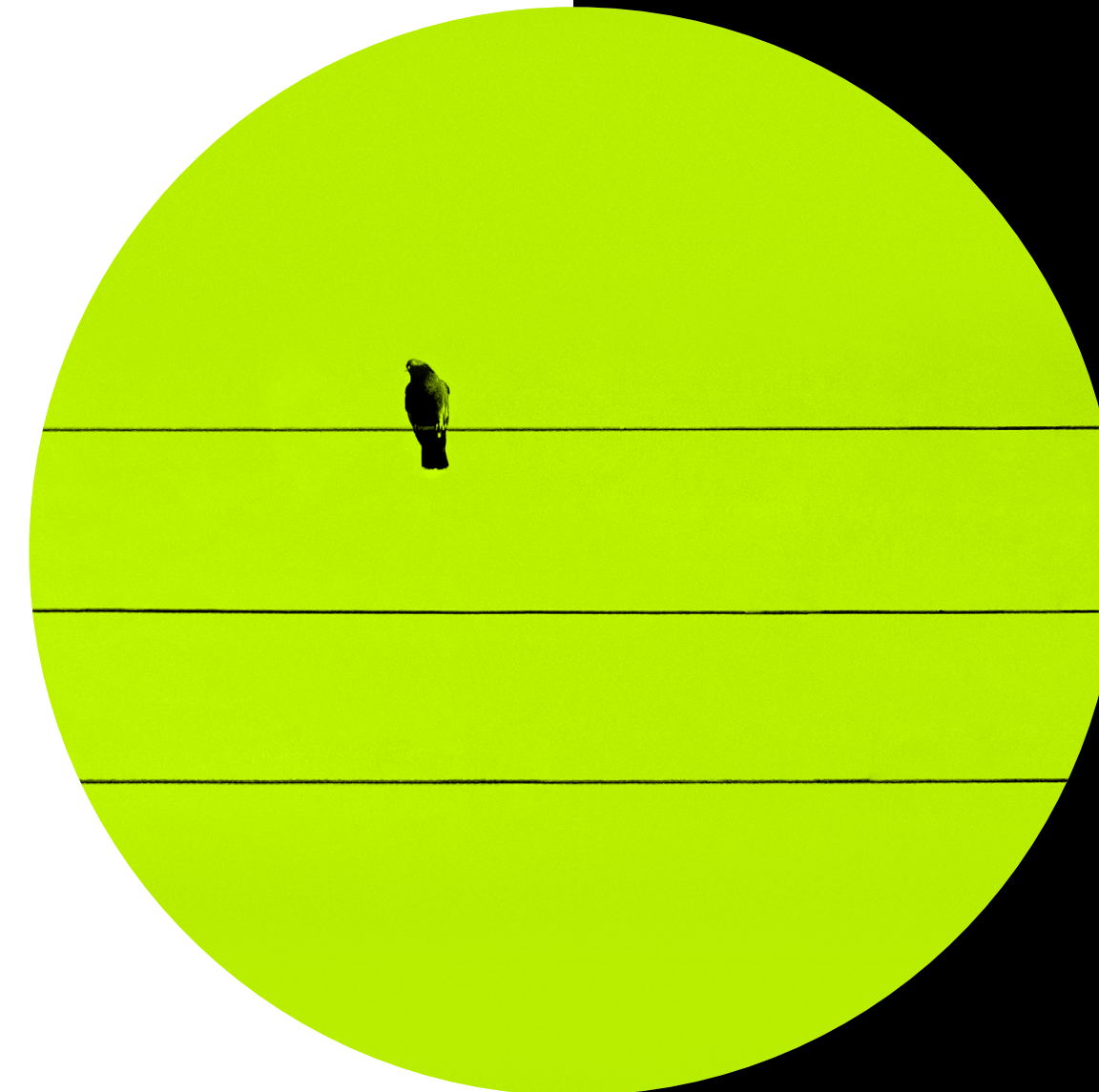
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Using branding, design and content to raise awareness

B2B companies are predominantly focused on increasing brand recognition and expanding their reach in the next 12 months.

While UK businesses prioritise building a stronger social media presence, Australian companies are more focused on the launch of new products and services. The US and Germany however both lean more towards prioritising the development of engaging content.



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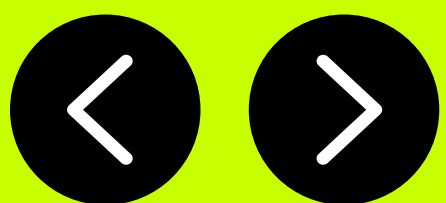
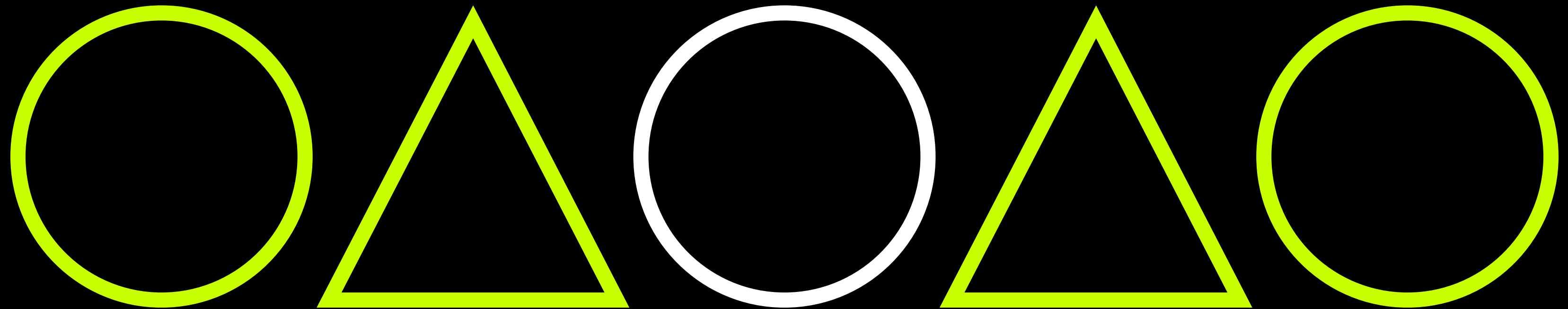
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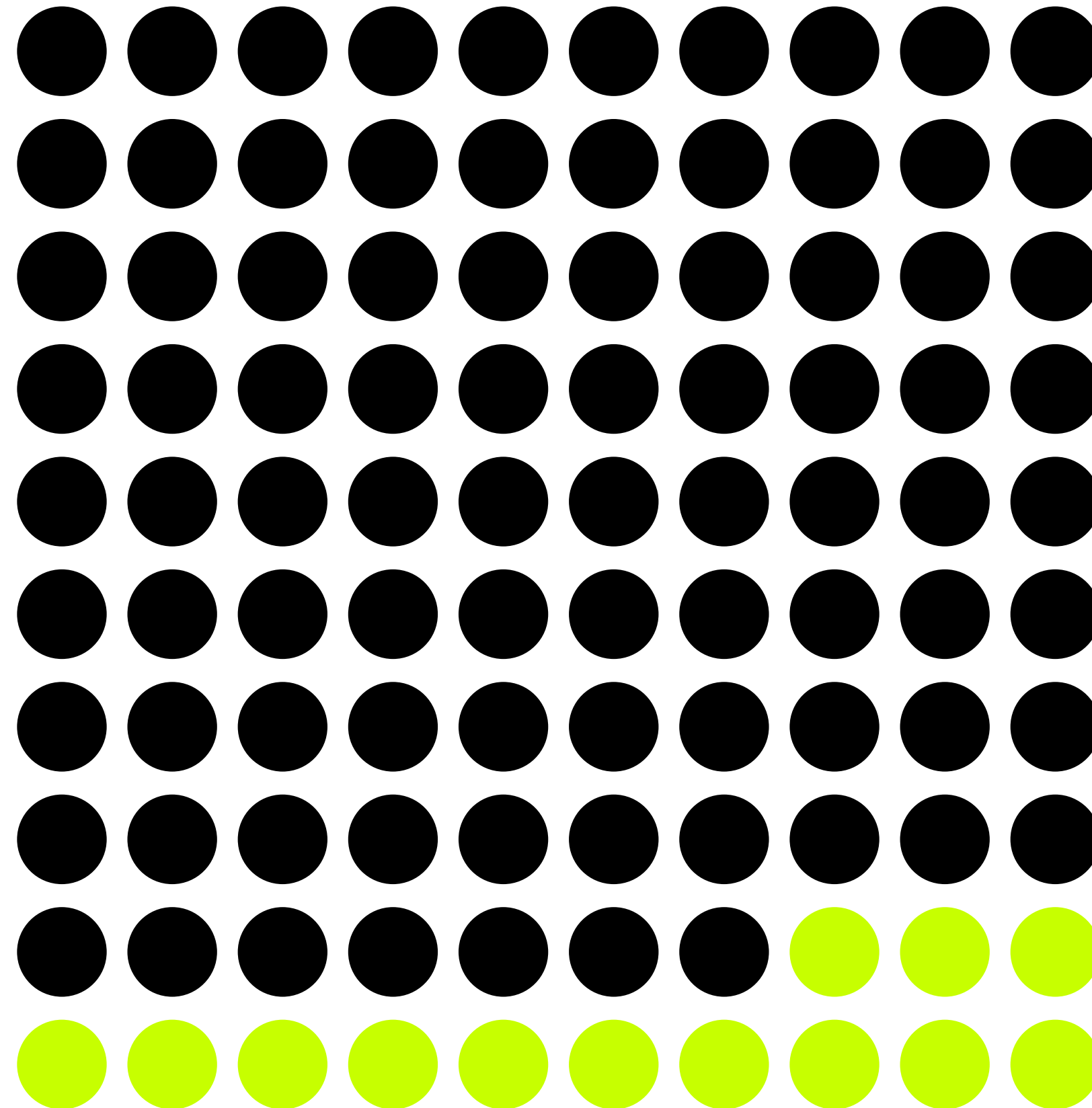
3 Consistency is key

B2B branding's influence on senior decision-makers



87%

of decision makers agree that branding and design are extremely influential in their company's purchasing decisions



The influence of brand and design on decision-makers

Senior decision-makers don't just see importance in their own branding, they are also aware of the impact other companies branding can have on their decisions.

Brand and design are more than aesthetic considerations; they are strategic factors that influence the perception of a company's credibility, value proposition, and overall fit for their needs.

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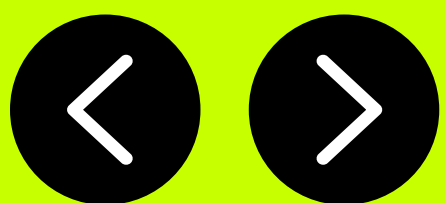
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84%

agree that inconsistent messaging is highly annoying to them as a customer

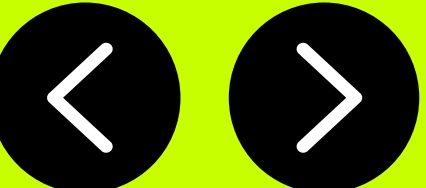
92%

view a unified vision from branding and PR as being essential to create the right brand message

The importance of a unified brand message

There is a clear mandate here for B2B brands: deliver a consistent and unified message across all channels and touchpoints. Inconsistent messaging not only frustrates decision-makers but also erodes their trust in your brand's credibility.

Conversely, a cohesive brand message, amplified through both branding and PR efforts, is seen as essential for establishing a strong brand identity and resonating with your target audience.



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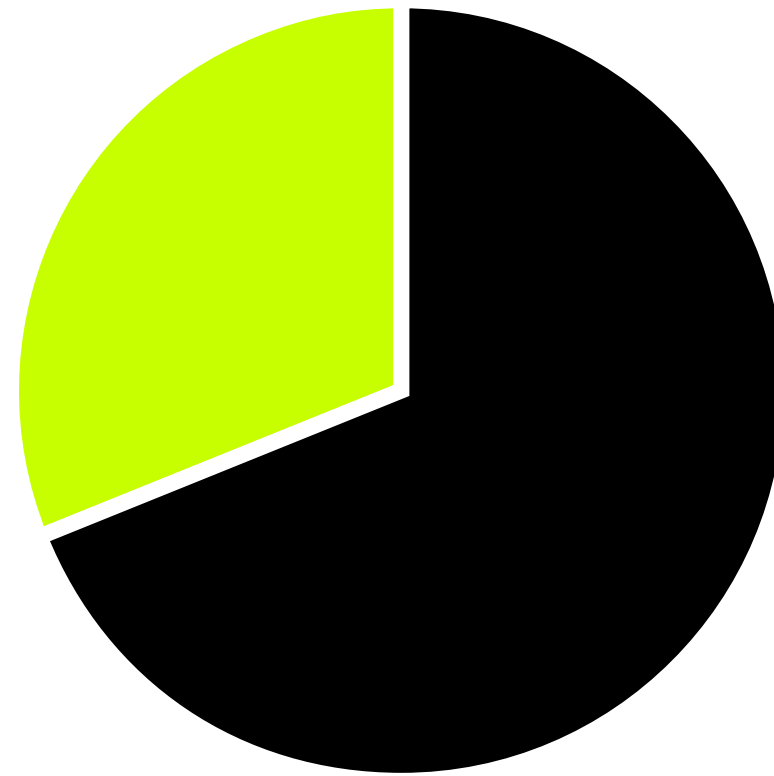
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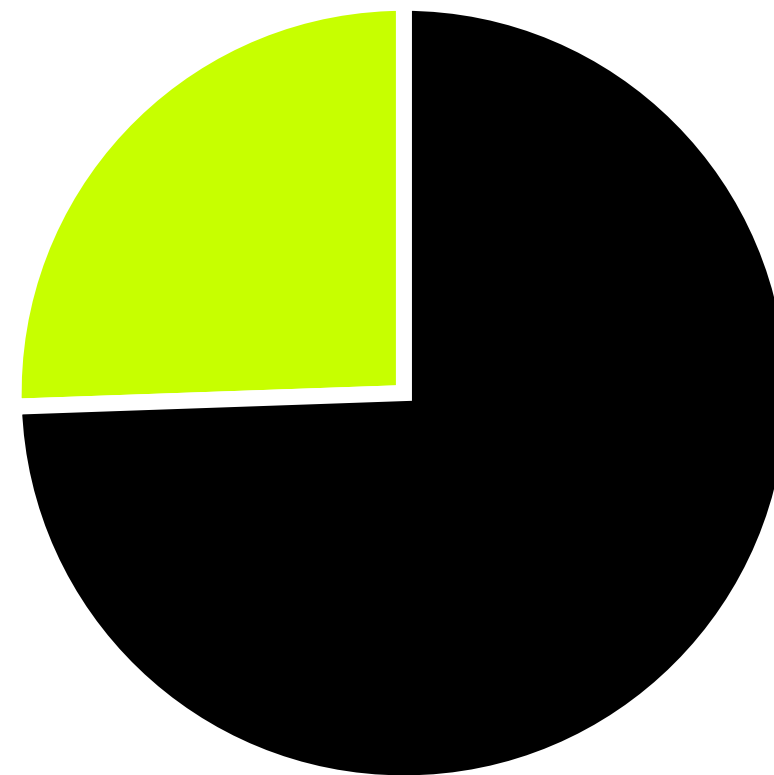
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69%

feel their company could perform better if they invested more into branding and design

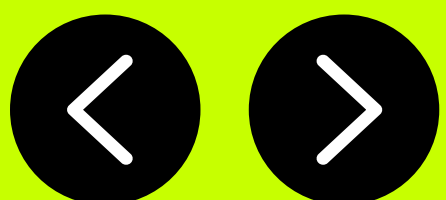


67%

believe their company would benefit from a rebrand or brand refresh

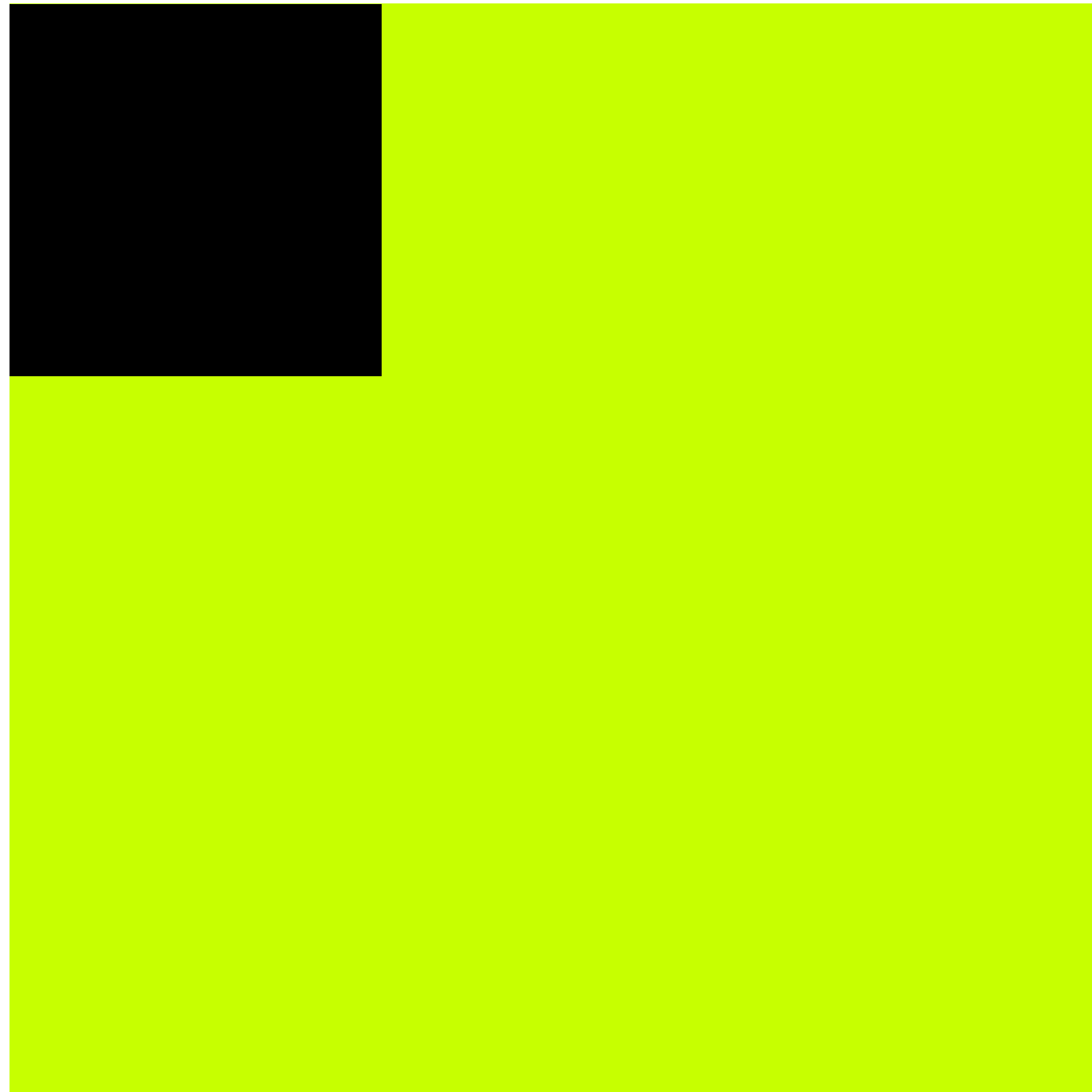
The value of brand investment

A clear majority of decision-makers perceive a direct correlation between brand and design efforts and improved business outcomes. The substantial interest in rebranding and brand refreshes also supports the notion that brands need to evolve to stay relevant and competitive in a rapidly changing market.



34%

of decision-makers don't feel qualified to make an informed decision on commissioning branding services



Bridging the knowledge gap in branding services

With over a third of B2B decision-makers not feeling qualified to make an informed decision, there appears to be a knowledge gap when it comes to evaluating and commissioning branding services. This lack of confidence can lead to hesitation, delays, and misguided decisions that can negatively impact business growth.

Branding and design agencies can help by creating informative content that demystifies the branding process, explains the value proposition of different branding services, and provides practical guidance for selecting the right agency or consultant.

Additionally, a focus on proving ROI with real-world examples of successful branding projects can further instil confidence in your expertise and the value of your services.

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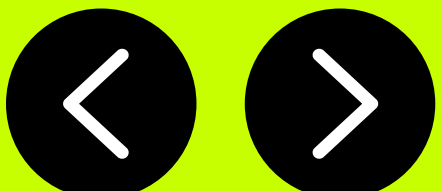
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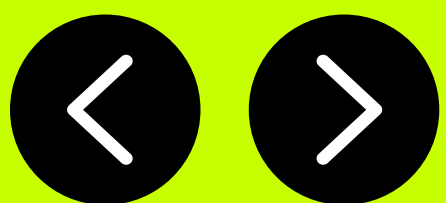
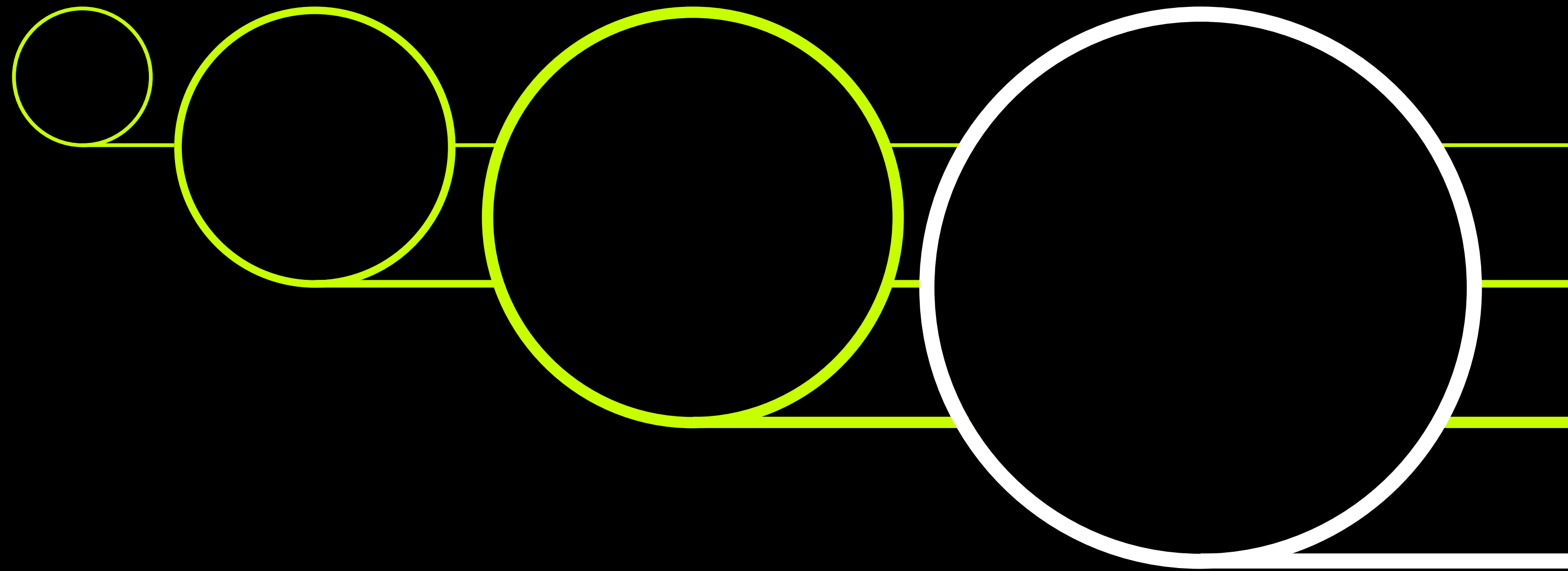
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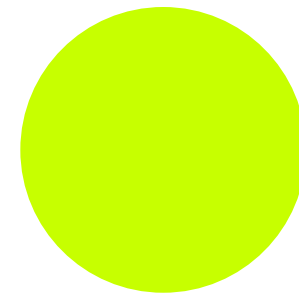
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4 Video's role in B2B branding

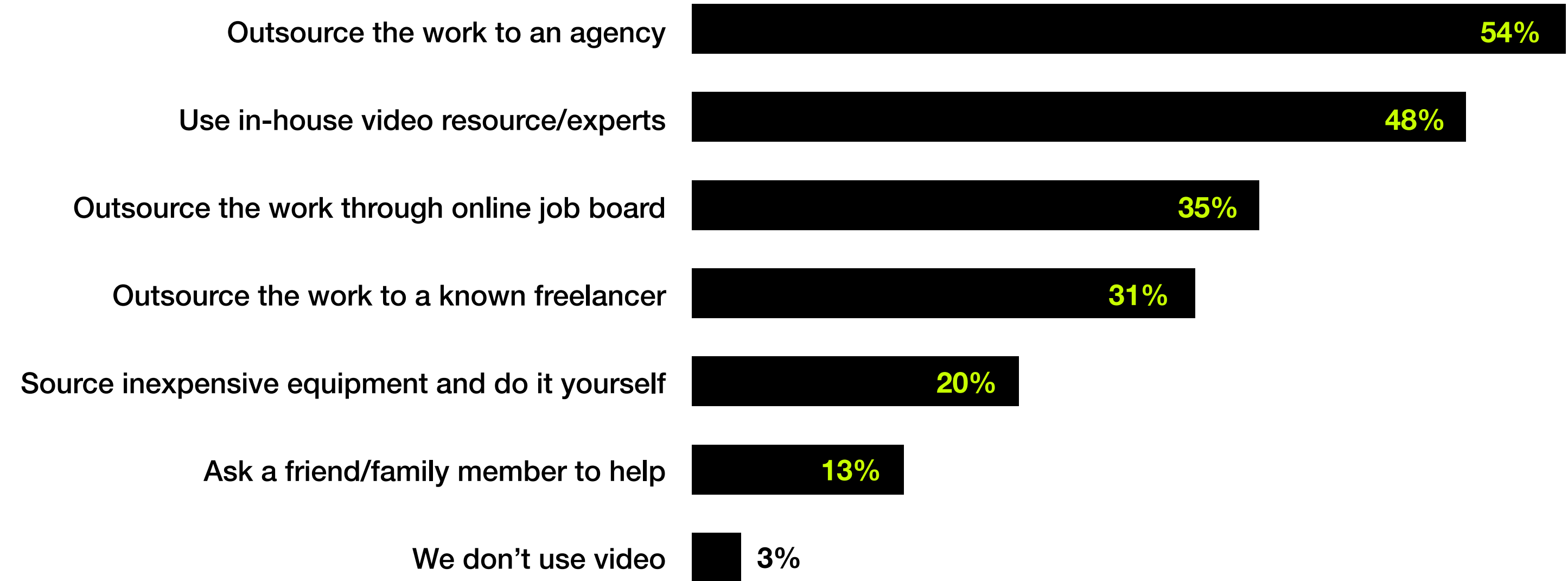
Balancing quality, agility and brand perception





Global

When producing video content within your business, do you...?



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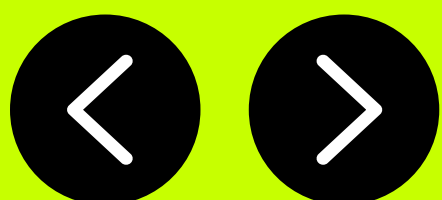
Global

Australia

Germany

United Kingdom

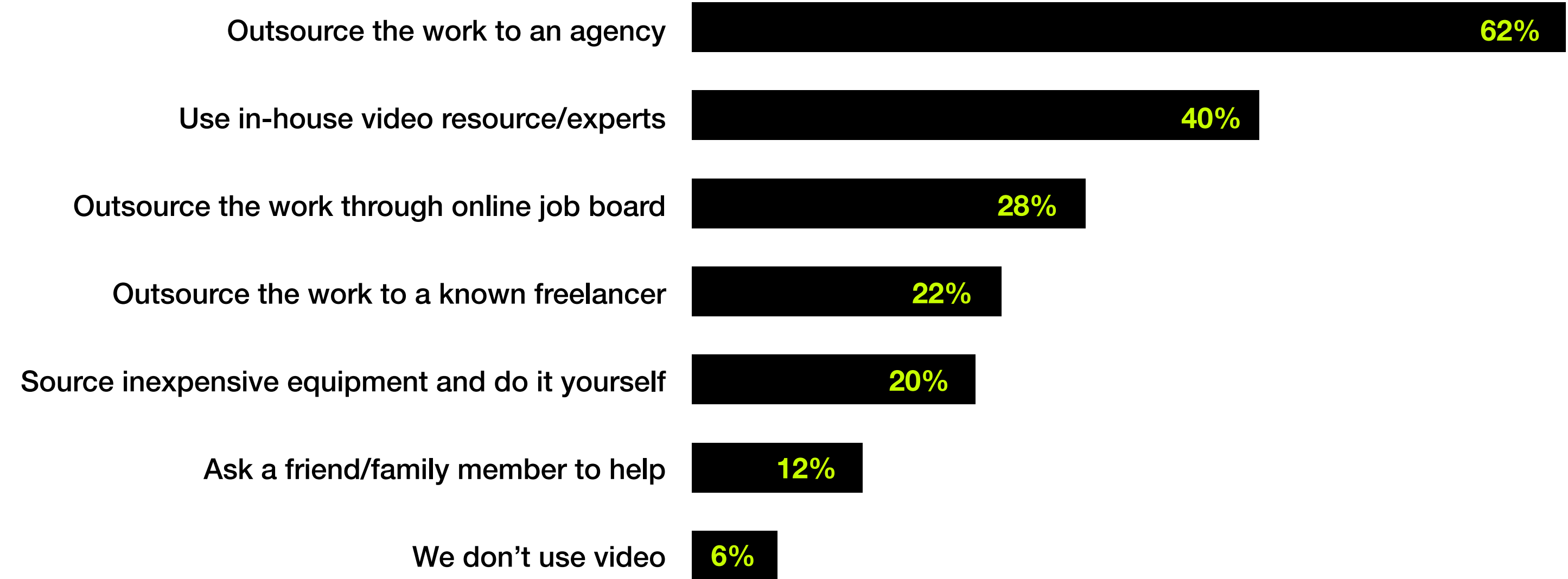
United States



AUS

Australia

When producing video content within your business, do you...?



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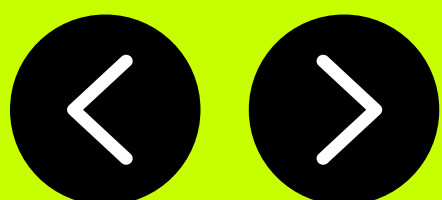
Global

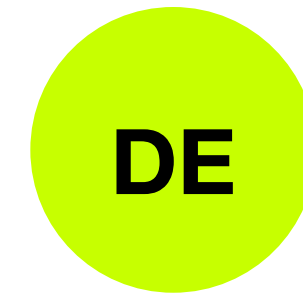
Australia

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United Kingdom

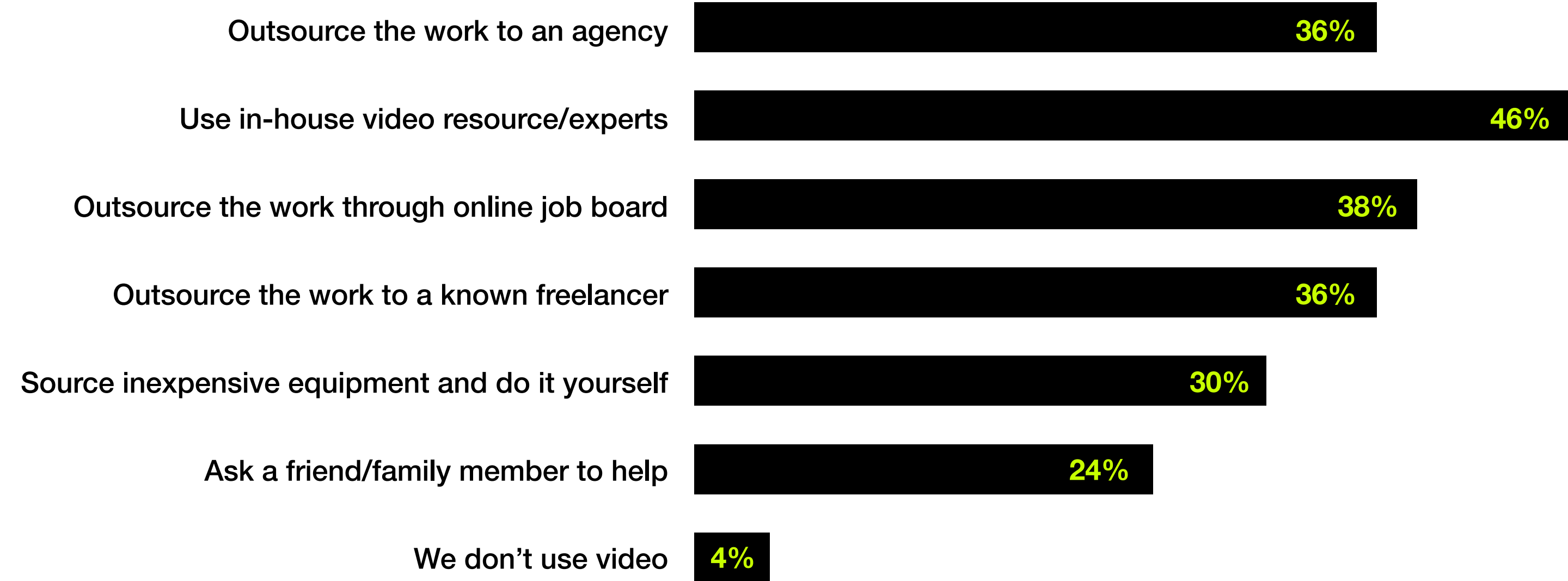
United States





Germany

When producing video content within your business, do you...?



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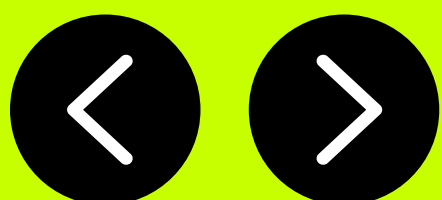
Global

Australia

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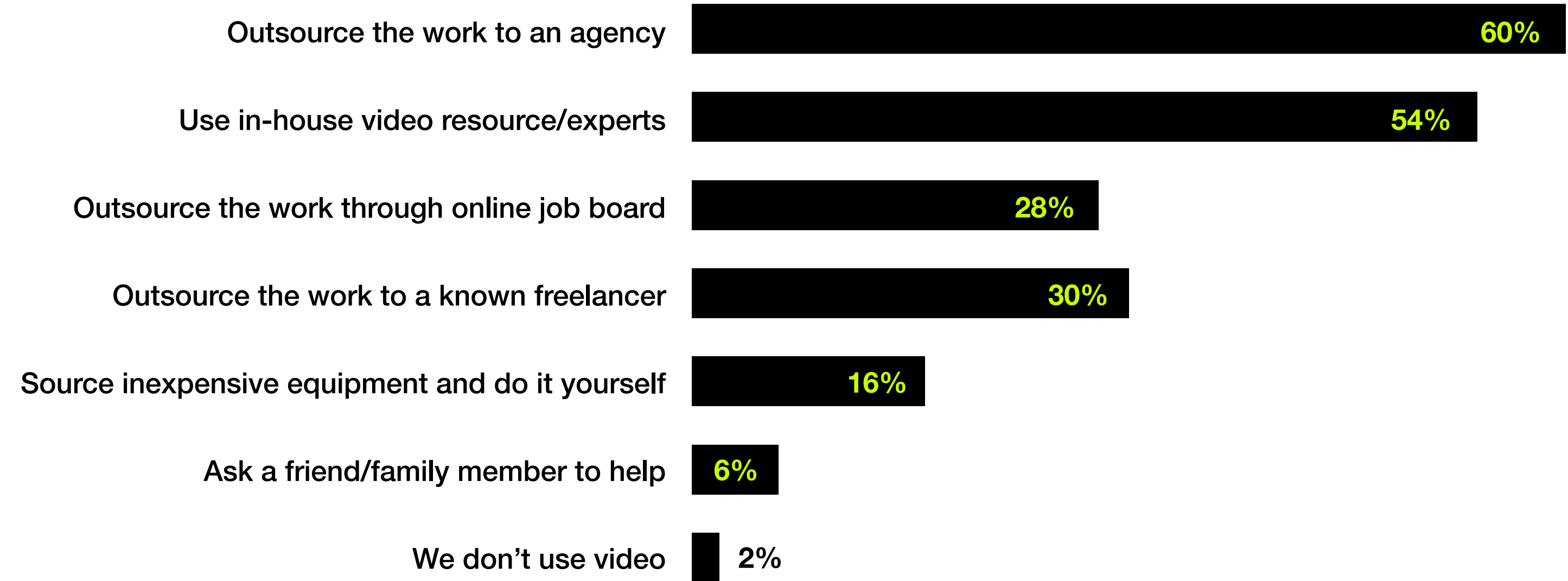
United States





United Kingdom

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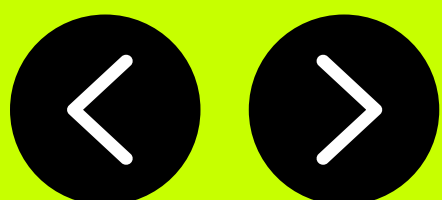
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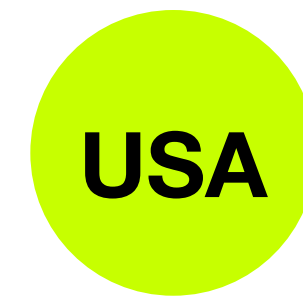
Australia

Germany

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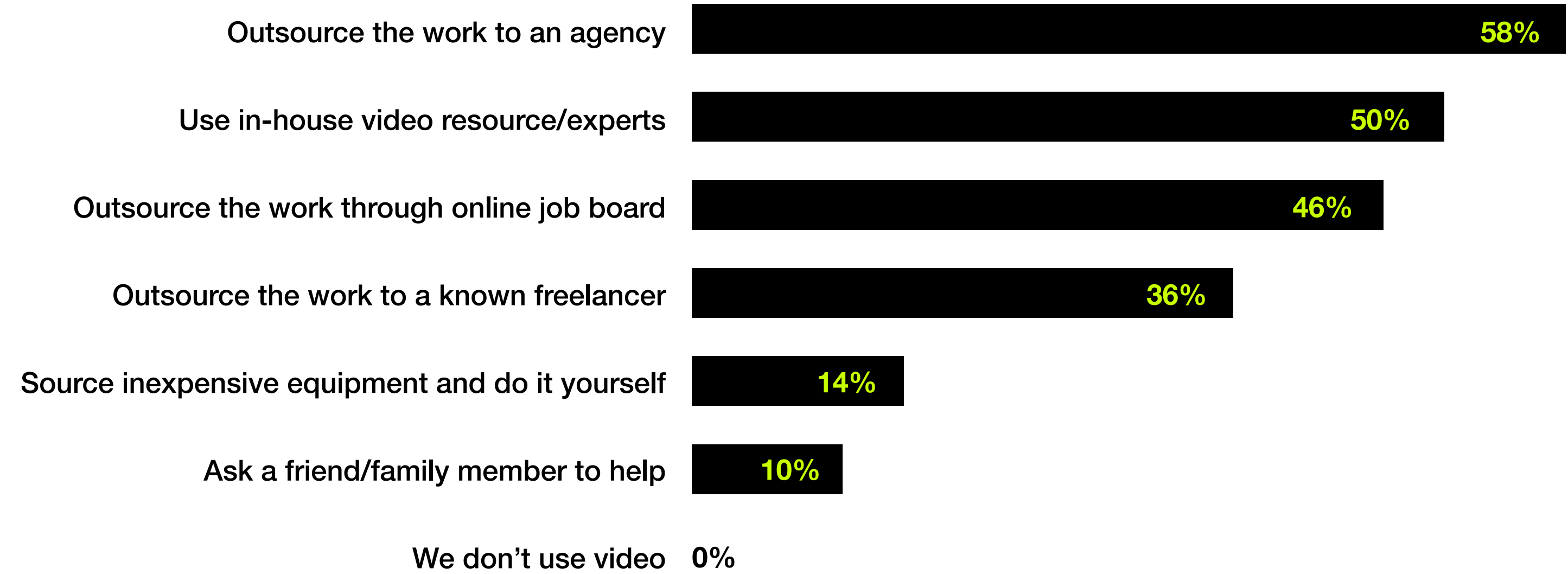
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United States

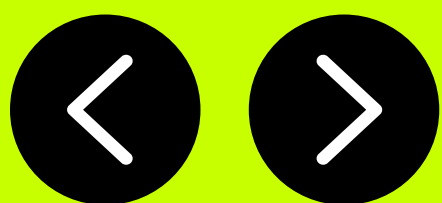
When producing video content within your business, do you...?

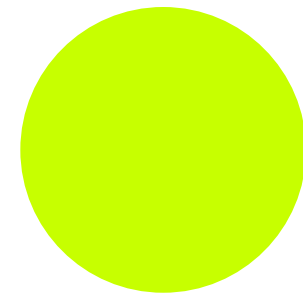


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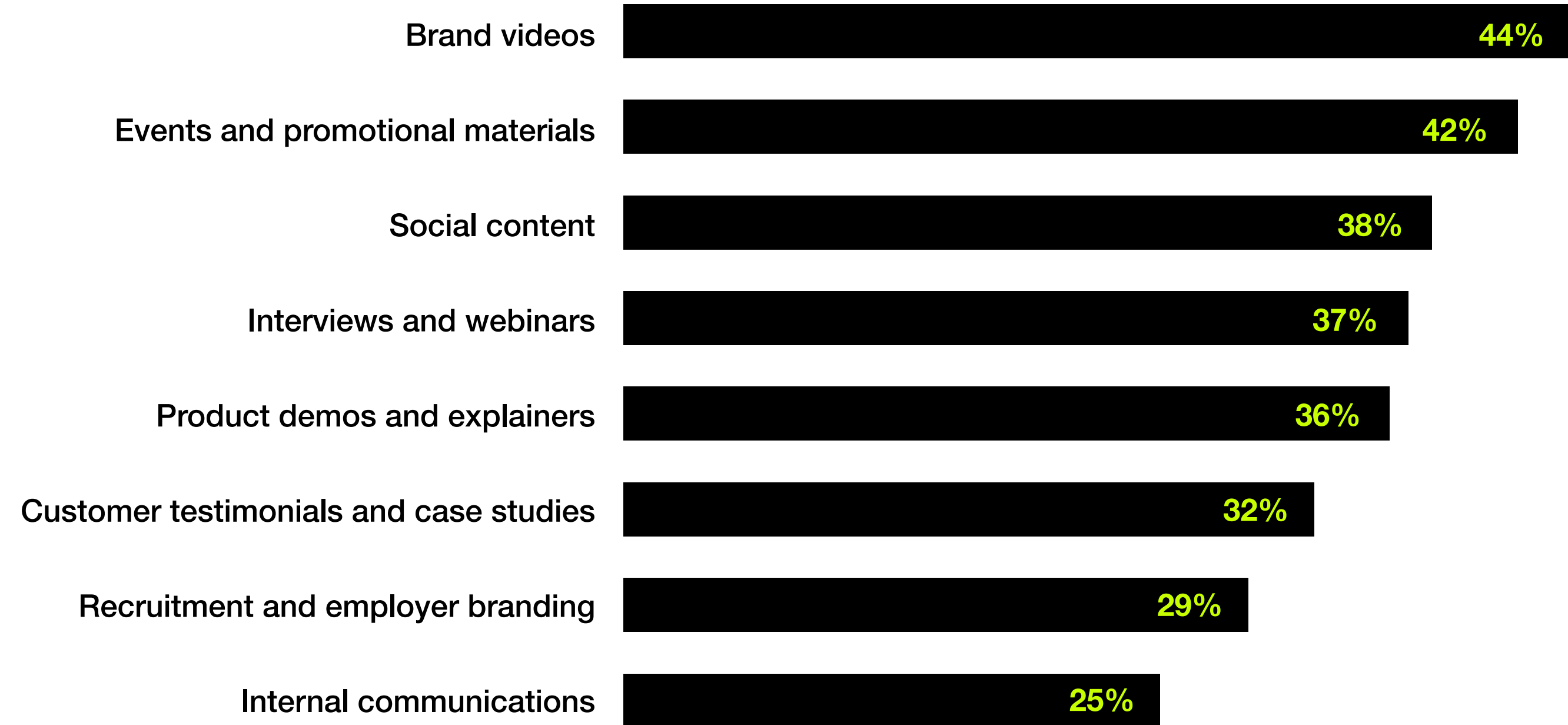
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- Germany
- United Kingdom
- United States





Global

What types of video work do you use external support for?



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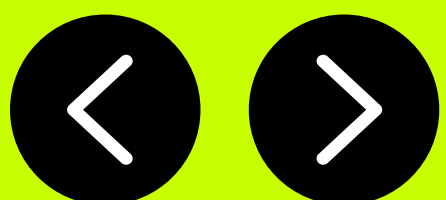
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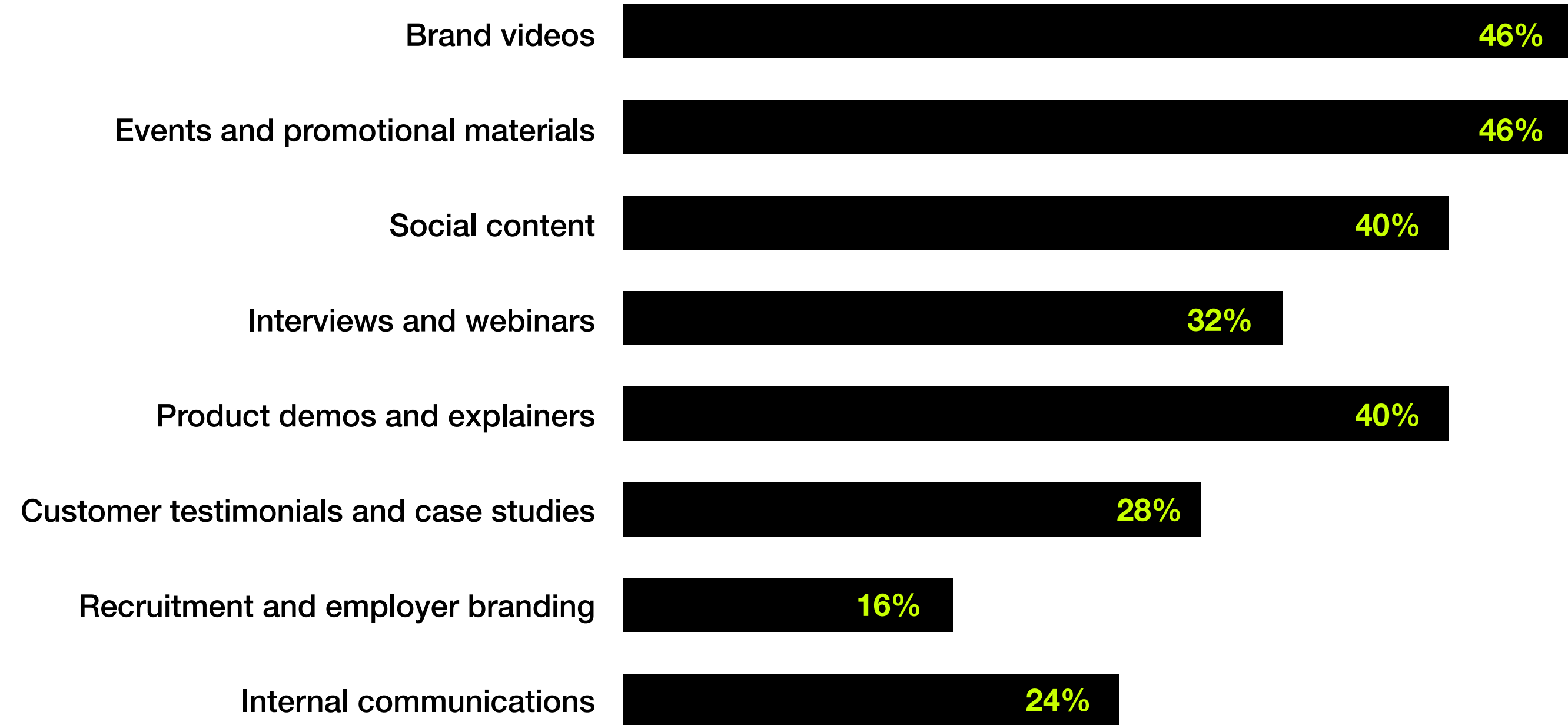
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AUS

Australia

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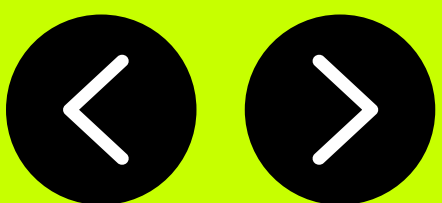
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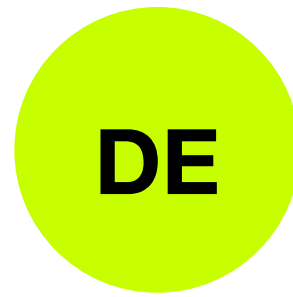
Australia

Germany

United Kingdom

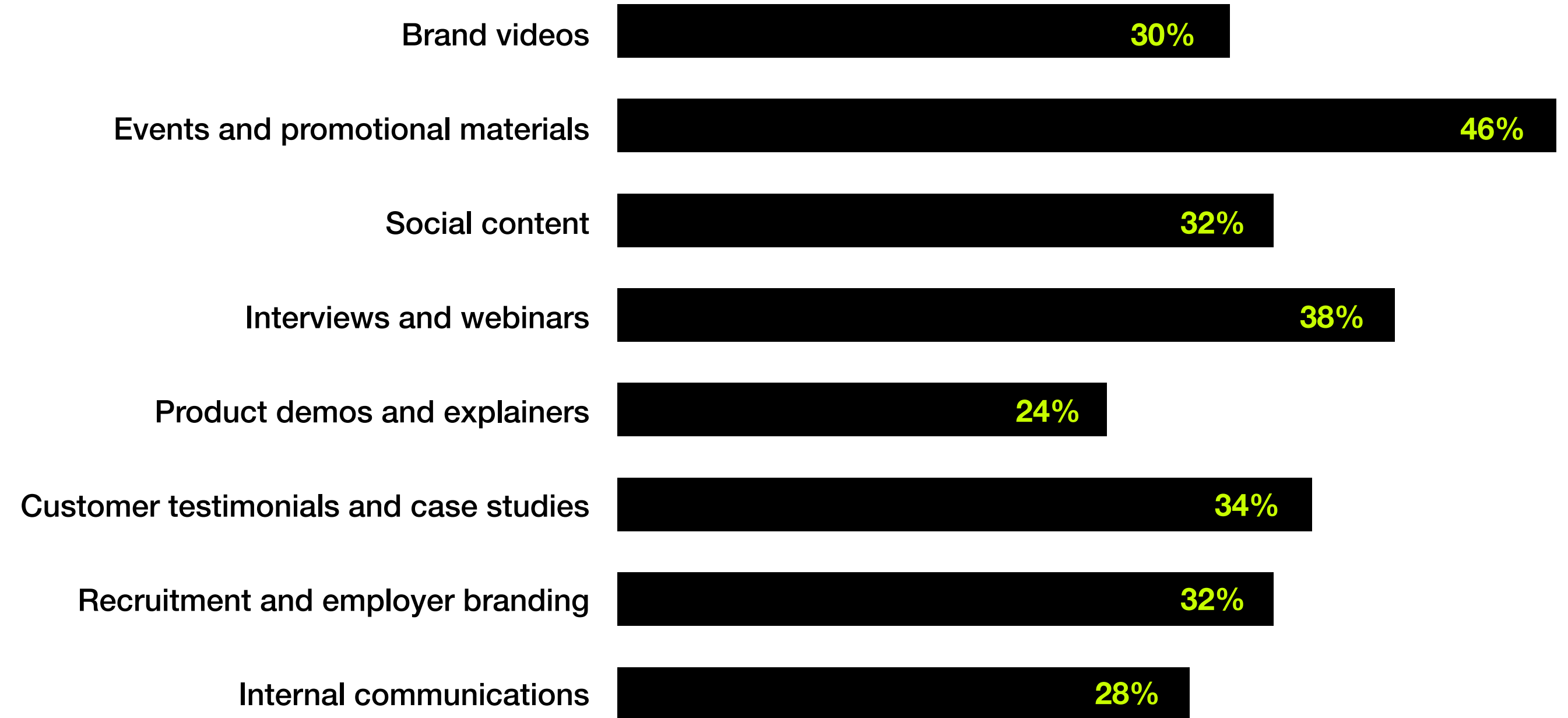
United States





Germany

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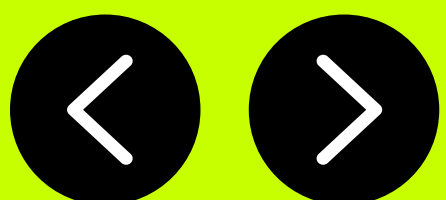
Global

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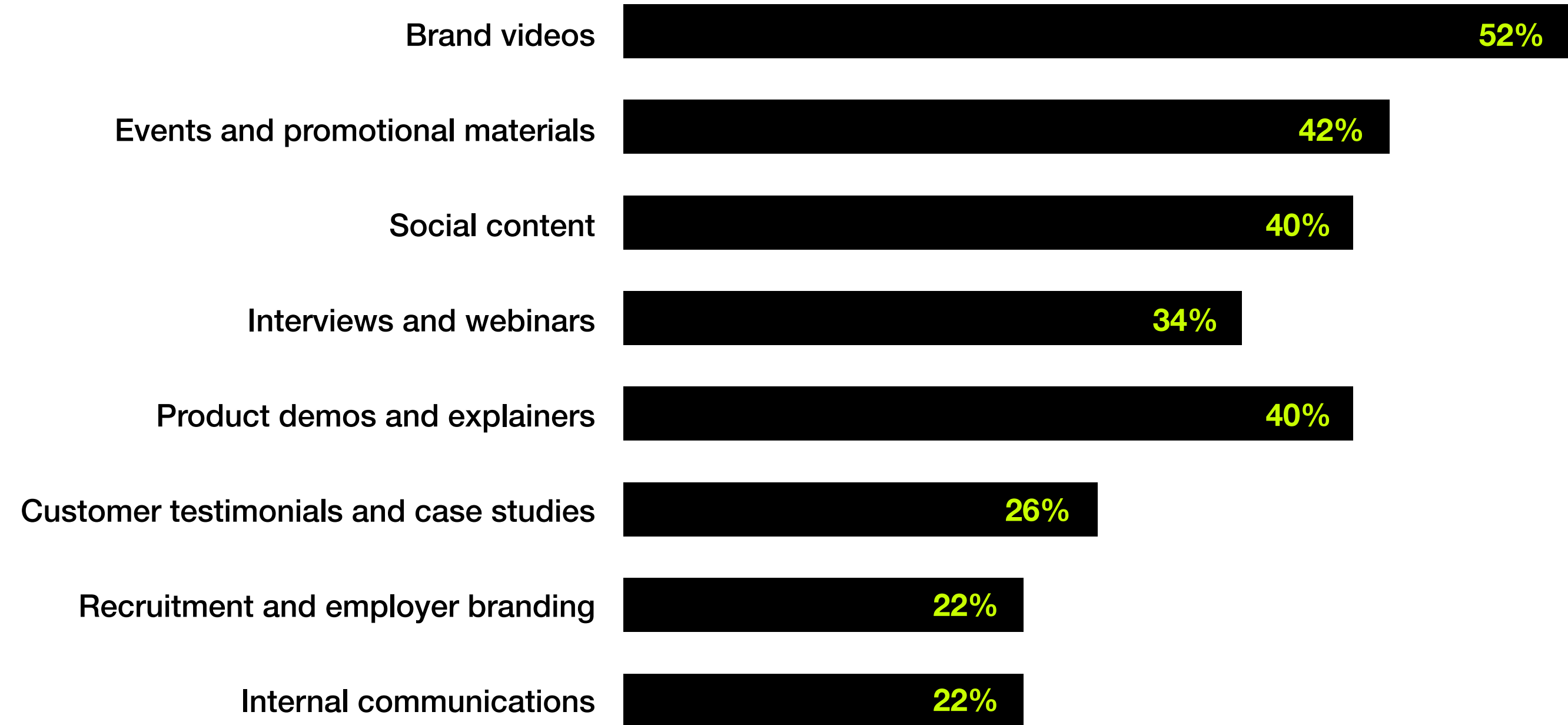
United States





United Kingdom

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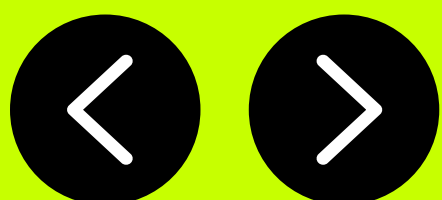
Global

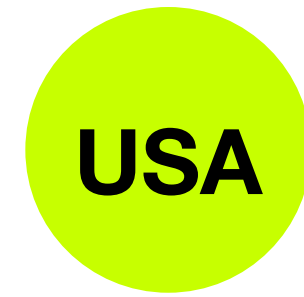
Australia

Germany

United Kingdom

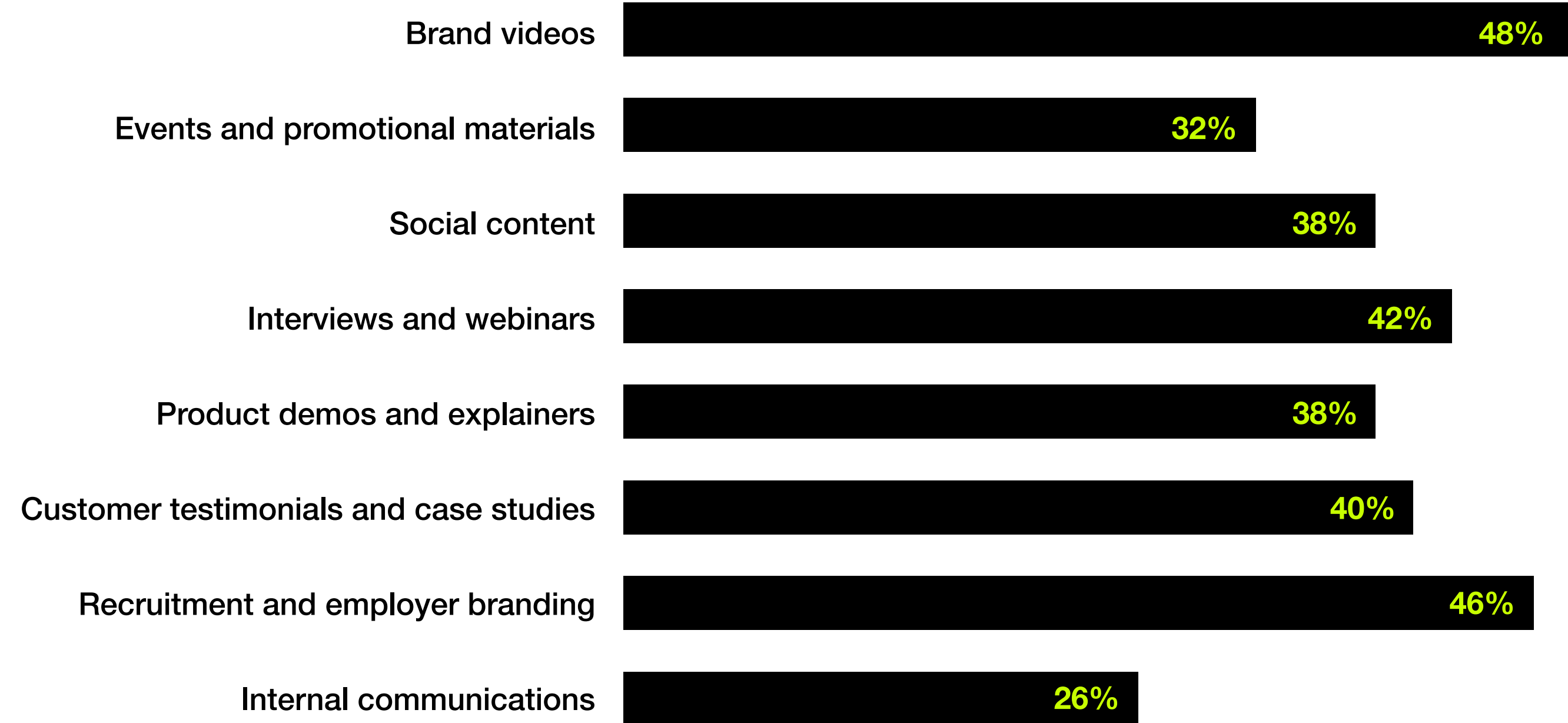
United States





United States

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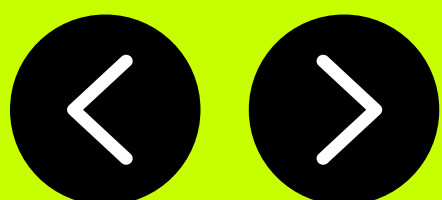
Global

Australia

Germany

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Video's impact on brand perception

While high-quality video is viewed as a critical component of a successful brand strategy, poor video execution can have severe consequences, damaging brand reputation and deterring potential customers.

92%

of senior decision-makers agree that bad video content can do serious damage to a brand

88%

would think twice about using a brand that shared poor quality video content

89%

of those using video content in their business feel it is a highly important aspect of their brand strategy



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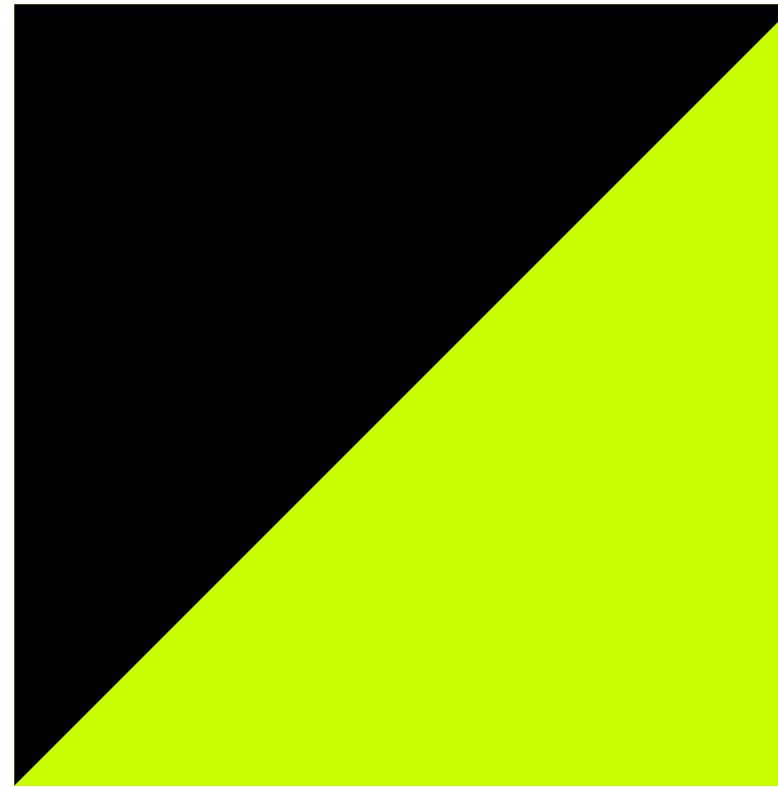
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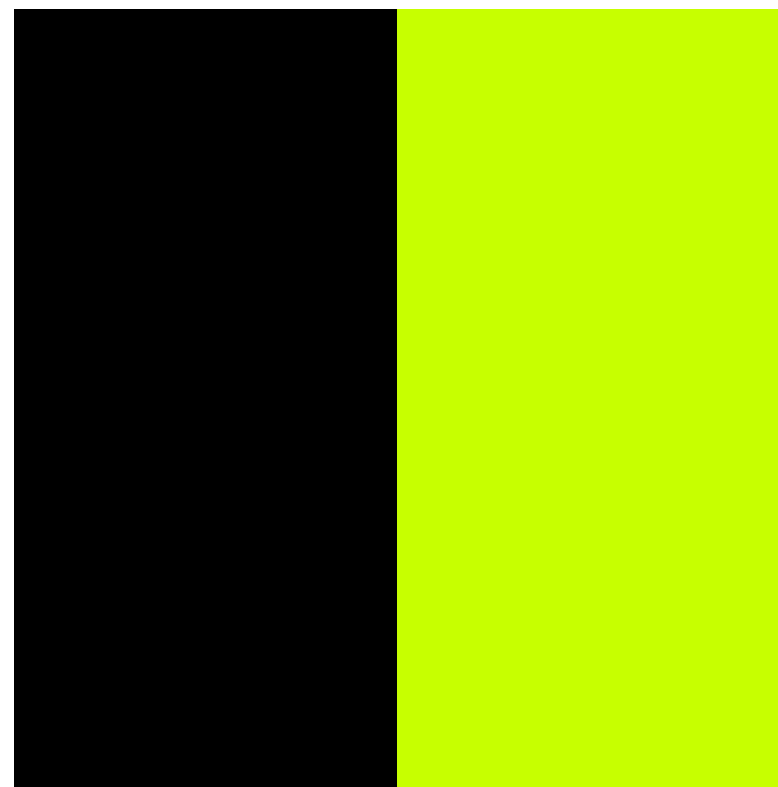
4 Video's role in B2B branding >

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50%

agree that a quick-and-easy video is acceptable these days, even if it doesn't look professional



49%

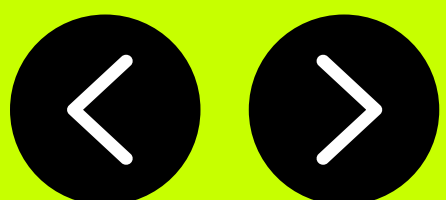
agree that using an external production company is not as important as it used to be

The rise of quick-and-easy video content

While the previous data highlights the importance of high-quality video when evaluating a brand, these findings suggest a growing acceptance of quick-and-easy video content, even if it lacks professional polish.

Additionally, there seems to be a diminishing reliance on external production companies, indicating a potential shift towards in-house video creation or the use of readily available tools and platforms.

This can be attributed to a recognition that different types of video content serve distinct purposes. While polished, high-production-value videos are essential for showcasing brand professionalism and expertise, quick and easy videos can be effective for timely communication, behind-the-scenes glimpses, or social media engagement.



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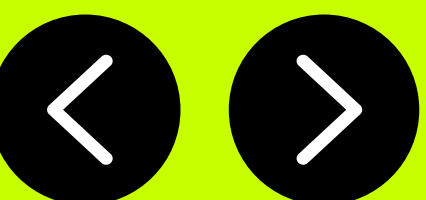
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Key takeaways and actionable insights for B2B branding

This comprehensive study, conducted in partnership with Arlington Research, paints a vivid picture of the modern B2B branding landscape. It highlights both the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead, providing organisations with several actionable insights that can aid their brand development:

- **Prioritise distinction:** The majority of B2B brands are perceived as lacking distinctiveness. Invest in crafting a unique brand identity that resonates with your audience and sets you apart.
- **Maintain consistency:** Inconsistent messaging is a major pain point. Ensure you maintain a cohesive brand message across all channels and touchpoints.
- **Seek guidance from the experts:** Many decision-makers lack confidence in commissioning branding services. Find the right agencies that can guide you and help maximise your branding ROI.
- **Don't cut corners with video:** High-quality video is crucial for brand perception. Poor video content can seriously harm your reputation.
- **Stay agile and adaptable:** The B2B landscape is evolving rapidly. Continuously monitor market trends and adapt your brand strategy accordingly.

By embracing these insights and taking decisive action, you can elevate your brand, engage your target audience, and achieve sustainable growth in the ever-changing B2B arena. The future of B2B branding is bright for those who dare to be different, consistent, and customer centric.

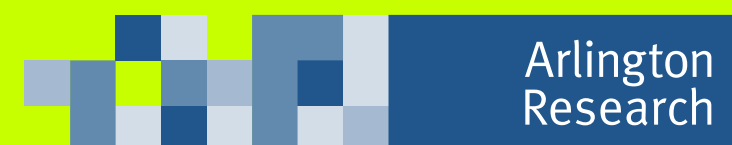


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Ready to unlock the full potential of your B2B brand?

Contact us for a personalised consultation and learn how we can turn your brand's story into a digital experience that truly resonates with your audience.

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Arlington
Research

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enquiries@arlingtonresearch.global