

# SMB BIZ NOW

## The State of Small Business Marketing in 2025

How SMBs are marketing in  
challenging times — and what  
they need to be successful



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# ***The Lay of the Land: Being a Small Business in 2025***

Supply chain issues, rising prices, and general economic uncertainty. Tech that can research, analyze data, and create content for you in seconds. It can be a confusing landscape to navigate — but it's all part of the new normal for small businesses.

In 2024, our State of Small Business Marketing report found that most SMBs lacked the time, experience, and confidence to create impactful marketing. **This year, they're trying to change that by investing more in their marketing and using new tools.** But they're still not confident on how to make their marketing move the needle.

***Only 18% of SMBs feel “very confident” in their marketing effectiveness — down from 27% in 2024***





More Marketing, More Questions:

# WHAT'S ON SMBs' MINDS?



If you ask small business owners what they're doing to grow in 2025, most will tell you: "More of everything."

They're testing out AI, returning to tried-and-true tactics like email marketing, and putting more time and money into marketing than they have in years. From the outside, it looks like investment and momentum.

Behind the scenes, though, the picture is cloudy. SMBs feel like they're guessing which channels are working and what's actually driving results.

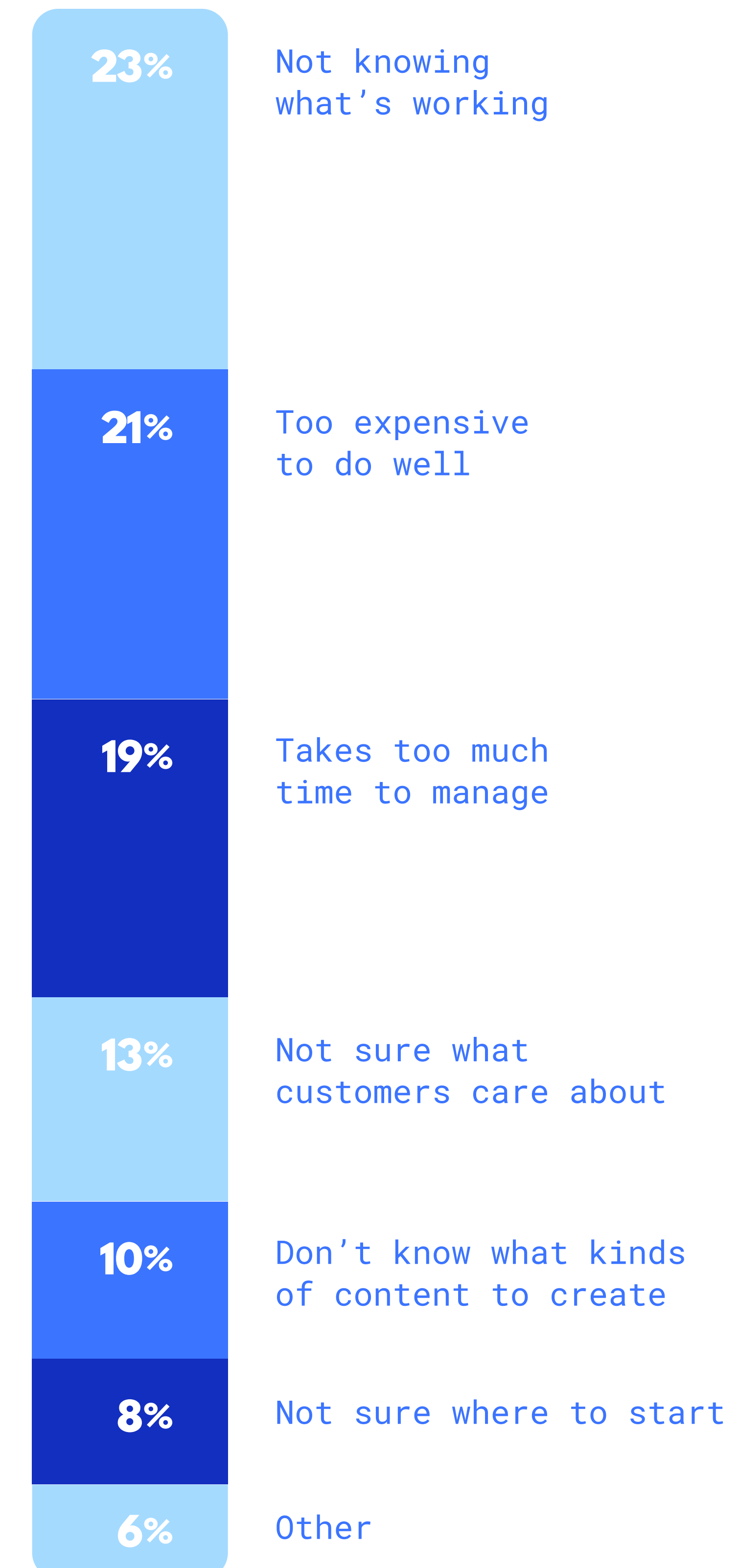
**54% say email is "essential" or "very important" to their success**

**44% say email is their most effective channel (up from 23% in 2024)**

**37% increased their marketing budgets in 2025**

With more customer demand for higher quality experiences — things like more personalized and engaging content — and tightening margins at play, it's harder than ever to feel confident they're reaching customers in the right ways. Small businesses need a clearer understanding of what their customers are responding to in their marketing to give them the confidence to double down on what's working — and let go of what's not.

## WHAT ARE SMBs' BIGGEST FRUSTRATIONS WITH MARKETING RIGHT NOW?





Marketing Under Pressure:

# HOW SMBs ARE CHANGING COURSE



The ripple effects of tariffs, global trade shifts, and beyond haven't left small businesses a lot of breathing room. But that doesn't mean they're sitting still.

Some are adjusting prices, finding new suppliers, and reworking their marketing. Others are trying to be more transparent with customers and show stability while they wait for other changes.

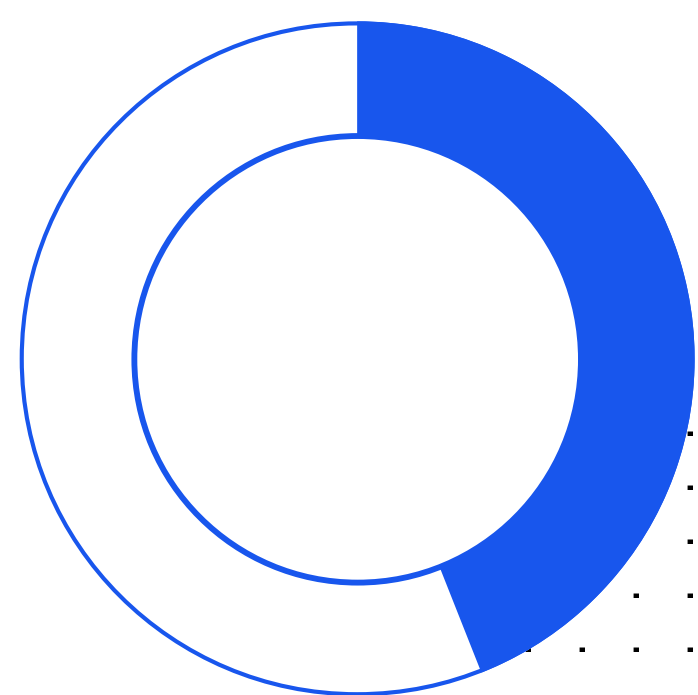
Many say they don't feel fully prepared for what's ahead, but they're doing what SMBs do best: thinking lean, staying nimble, and continuing to move forward.



## ***How tariffs are affecting SMBs***

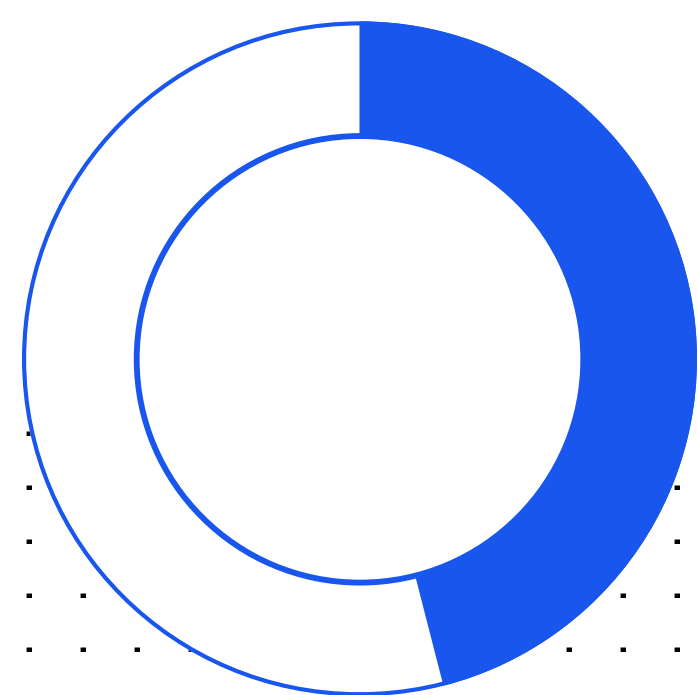
**44%**

cite rising costs as  
their top stressor



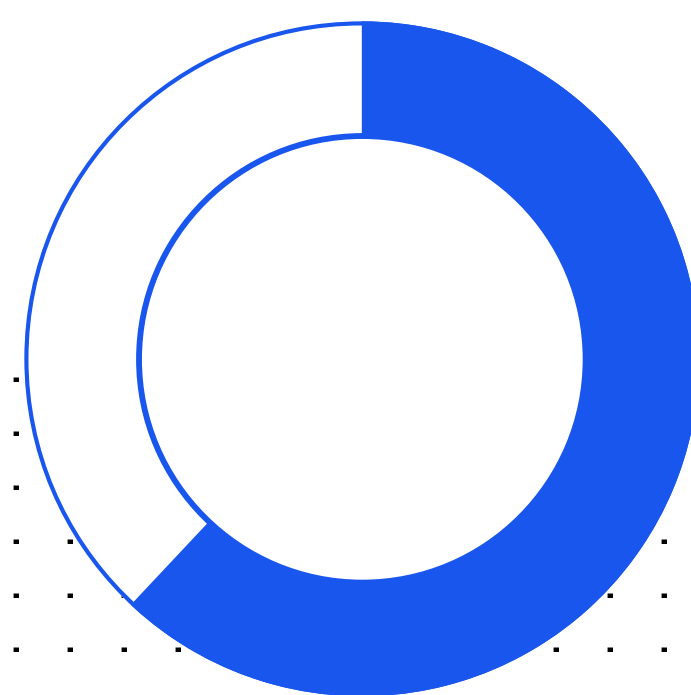
**46%**

have raised prices



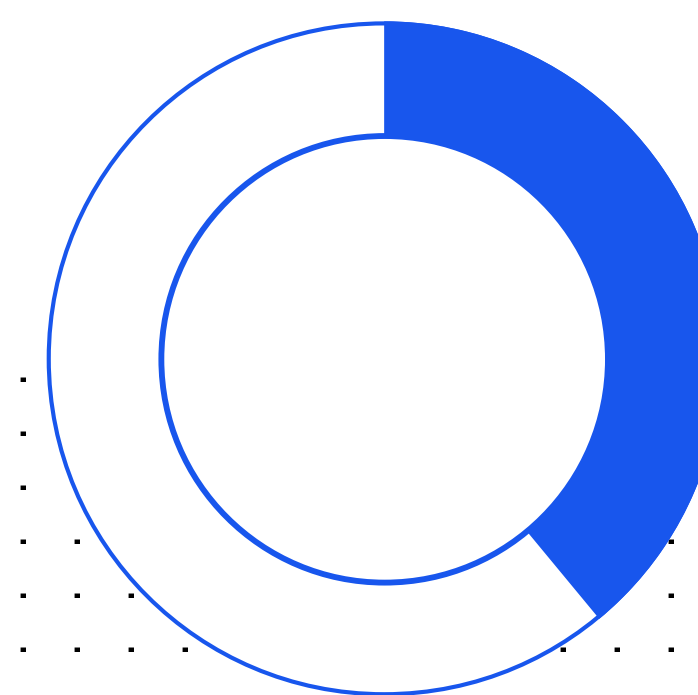
**62%**

say tariffs have impacted their  
sourcing, and another 68% expect  
more disruptions to occur this year



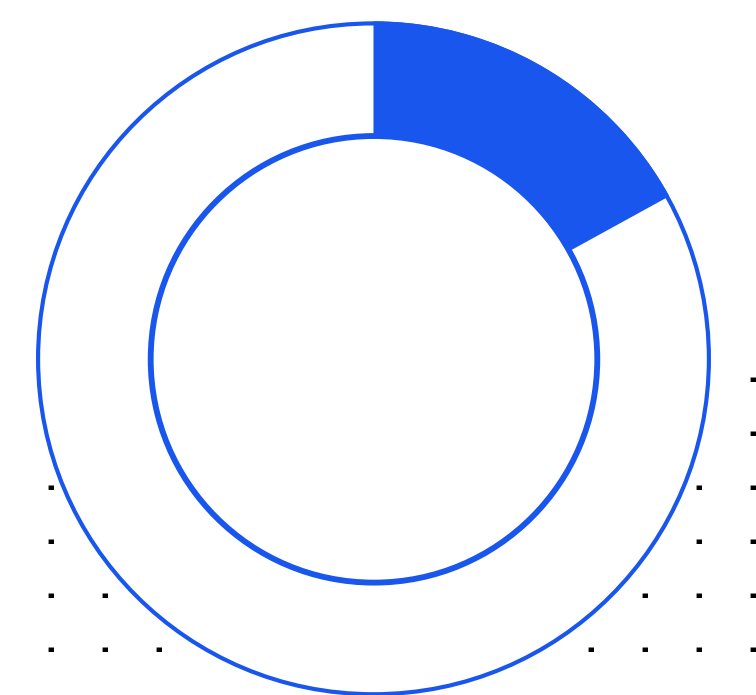
**39%**

have had to find  
new suppliers



**17%**

feel "very prepared" to  
adapt to economic shifts





Trending Tools:  
**SMBs LOVE AI AND VIDEO**



Small businesses are always looking for ways to do more with less, and this year, two major trends stand out: the growing use of AI and video.

### **48% of SMBs are currently using AI in their marketing**

SMBs are using AI to save time and gain marketing know-how. It's helping them write emails, craft social posts, and brainstorm ideas faster. But as their use of AI grows, there is some hesitation about the content it produces.

Video has also become a core part of the SMB marketing mix.

### **78% of small businesses use video in their marketing.**

The most confident marketers use it in multiple ways — from promos and product walk-throughs to testimonials and behind-the-scenes clips. It's helping them connect, build trust, and tell their story in a way that feels relatable and fun.

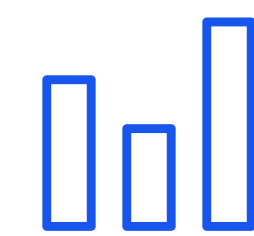
#### WHAT DO SMBs USE AI FOR?

**37%**

Writing emails, subject lines, or social media posts

**29%**

Making images

**25%**

Analyzing data

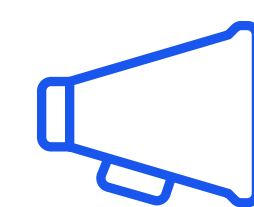
#### WHAT ARE SMBs' CONCERNS ABOUT AI?

**35%**

Data privacy

**31%**

Trust in accuracy and quality

**26%**

Brand voice mismatch



SMB Dispatch:

# WHAT'S GOING ON AROUND THE WORLD



## AUSTRALIA & NEW ZEALAND

### Steady as It Goes

SMBs in ANZ are facing many of the same challenges as their global peers, but they're meeting those challenges with measured action. They're leaning into tools that save time — like AI — while continuing to rely on email as a core channel.

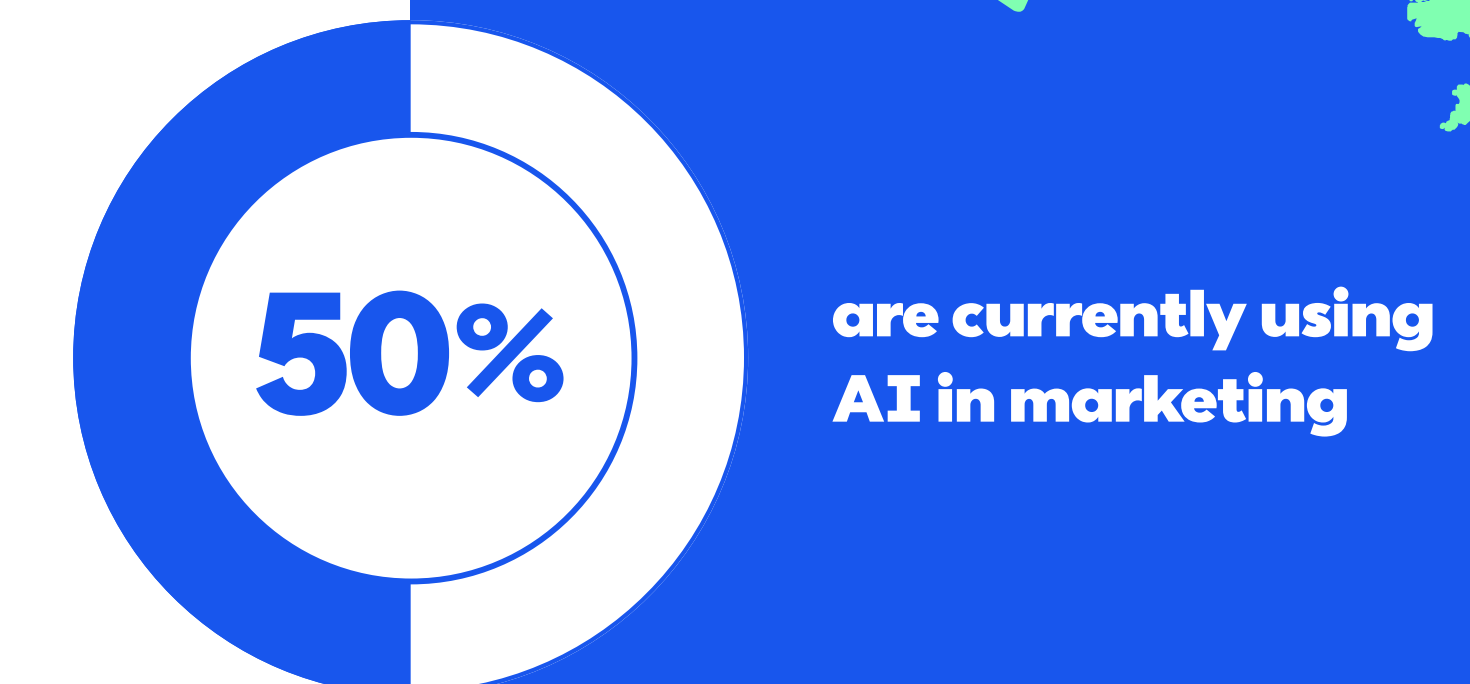
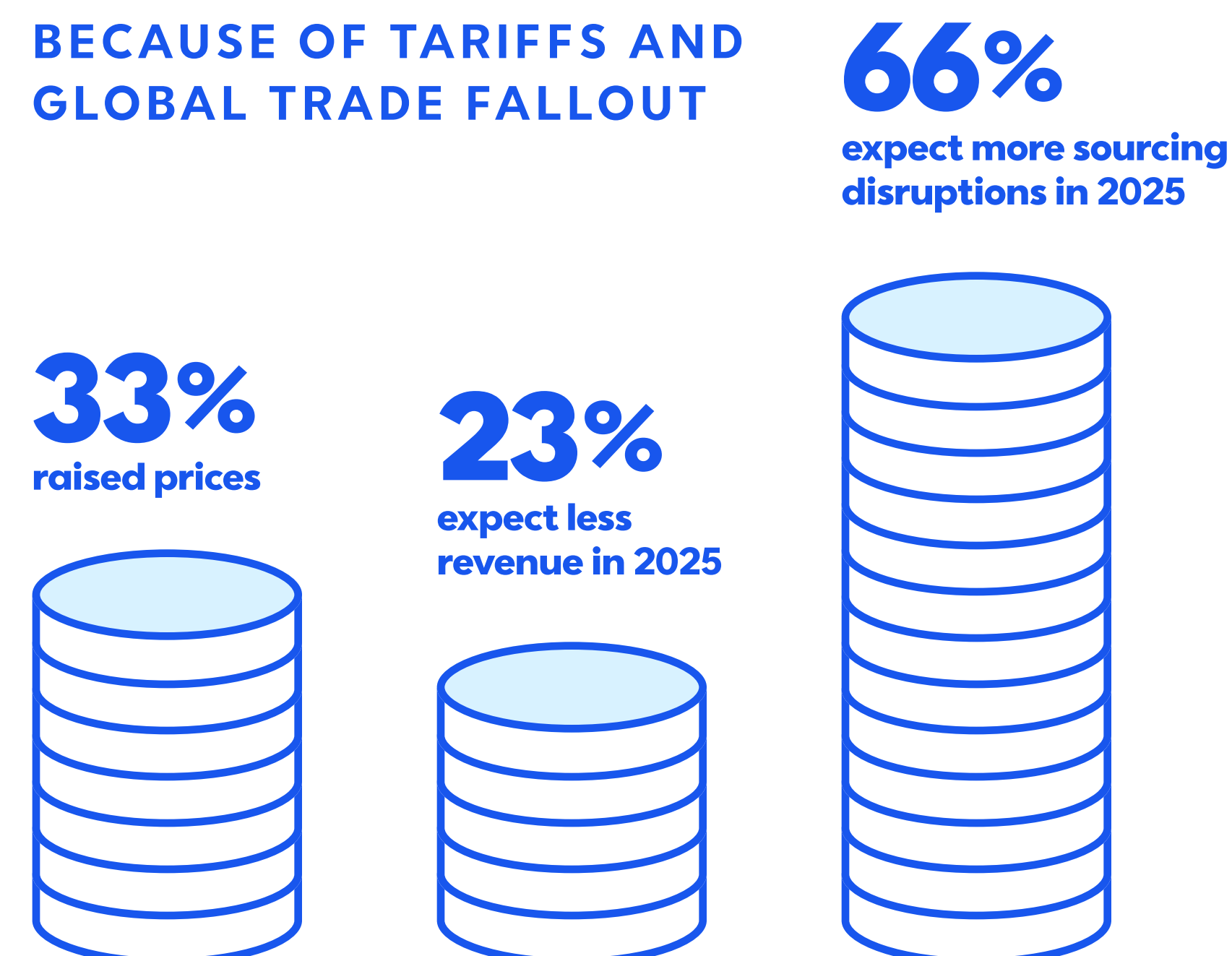
Only **19% of ANZ respondents say that economic changes have been good for business, but 67% of ANZ respondents feel confident in the economy** as they look toward the rest of 2025. In fact, of all the regions surveyed, they have the most confidence in their economy.

Many have still raised prices or adjusted expectations, but they report less economic disruption than other regions.

#### BIGGEST CHALLENGES WITH EMAIL MARKETING



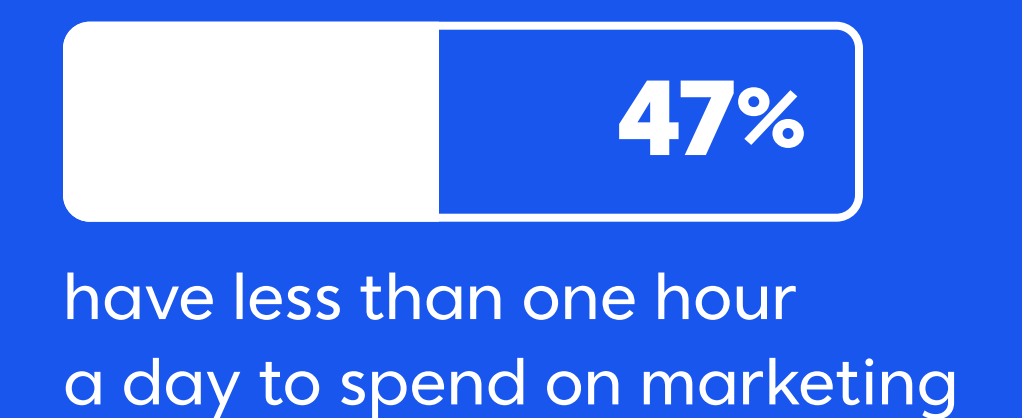
#### BECAUSE OF TARIFFS AND GLOBAL TRADE FALLOUT



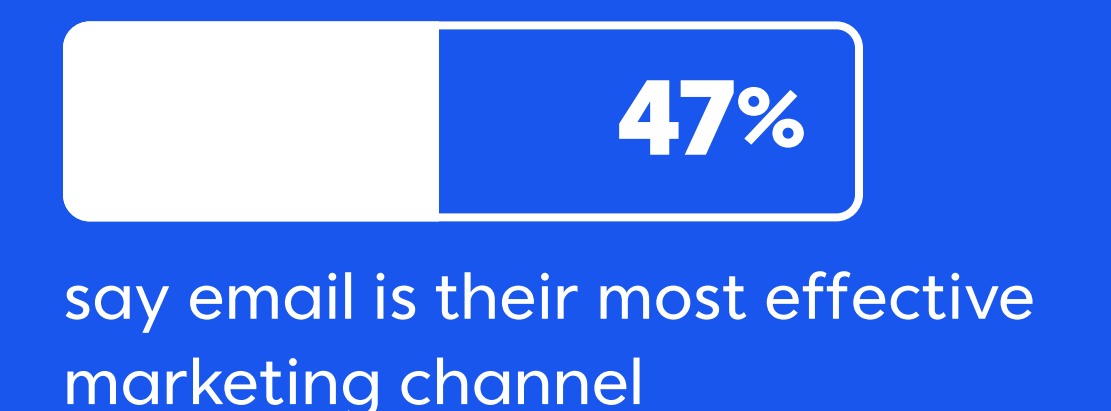
#### Confidence level



#### Time for marketing



#### Impact of email





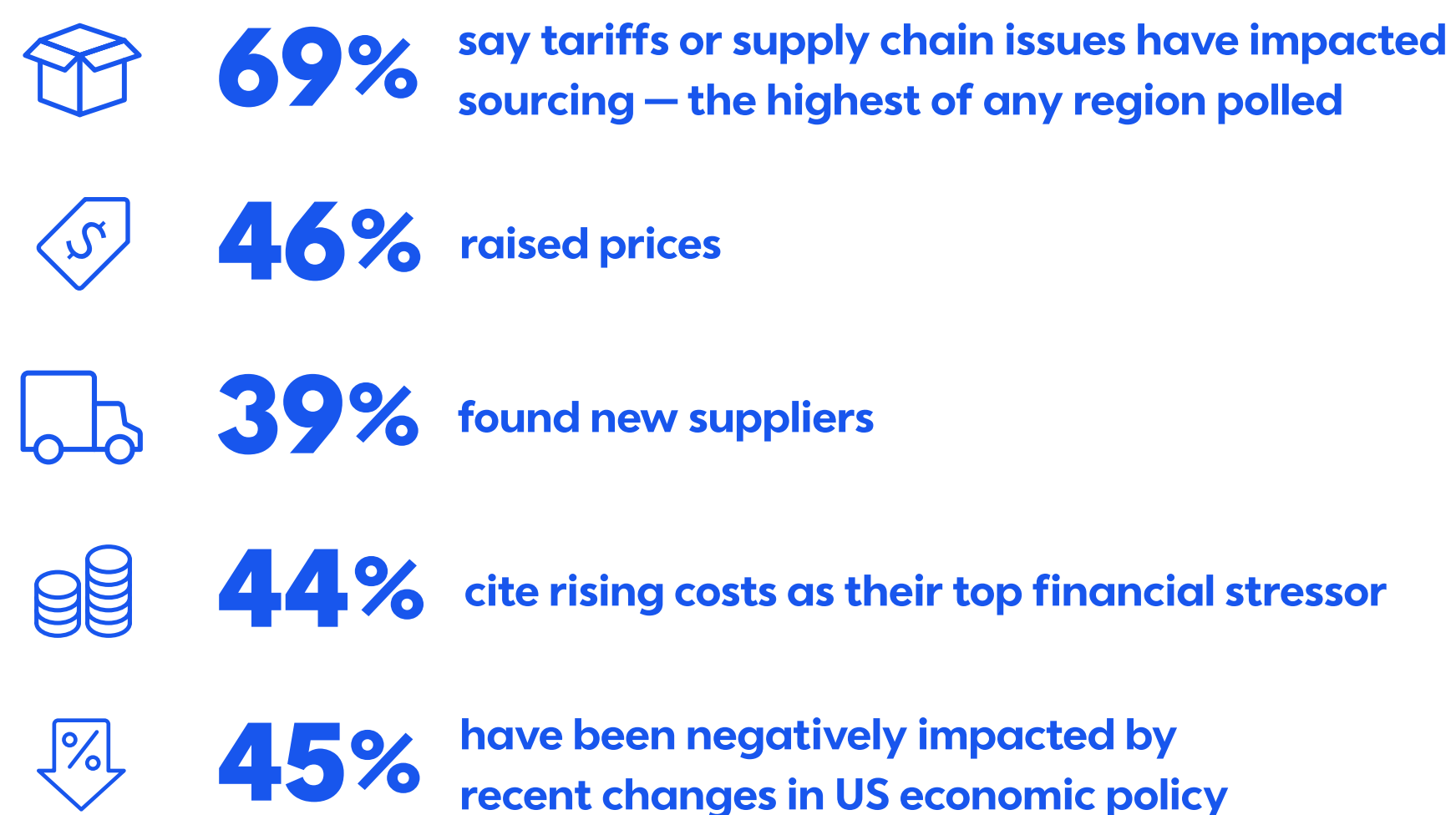
## CANADA

### The "Buy Canadian" Campaign Becomes a Movement

Small businesses in Canada are feeling the effects of shifts in global trade more directly than most — and it's changing how they approach their marketing. Many are making adjustments to pricing or spend, while others are choosing consistency, focusing instead on connection and visibility.

A nationwide marketing movement is also changing the game. The “Buy Canadian” campaign is helping SMBs stay afloat and even grow. **45% of Canadian SMBs say their local identity or sourcing is central to their brand strategy**, and **47% expect enthusiasm for buying Canadian-made goods and services to increase in the next year**. They're capitalizing on this by leaning into AI tools and video content to stay present for customers even when resources are tight.

#### HOW TARIFFS ARE AFFECTING CANADIAN SMBs



#### 40% OF CANADIAN SMBs ARE USING AI



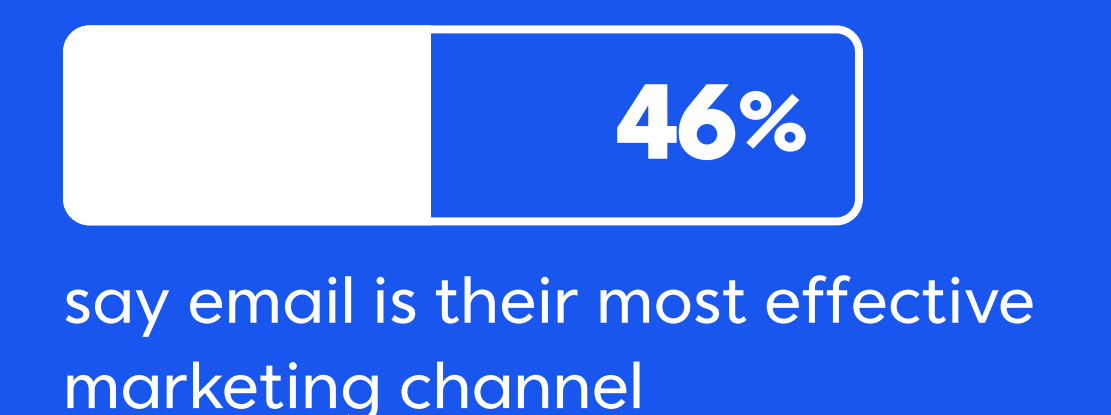
#### Confidence level



#### Time for marketing



#### Impact of email

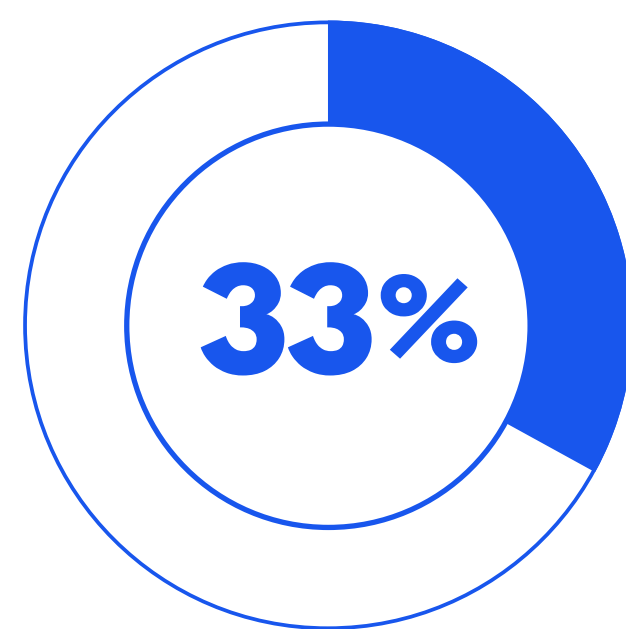




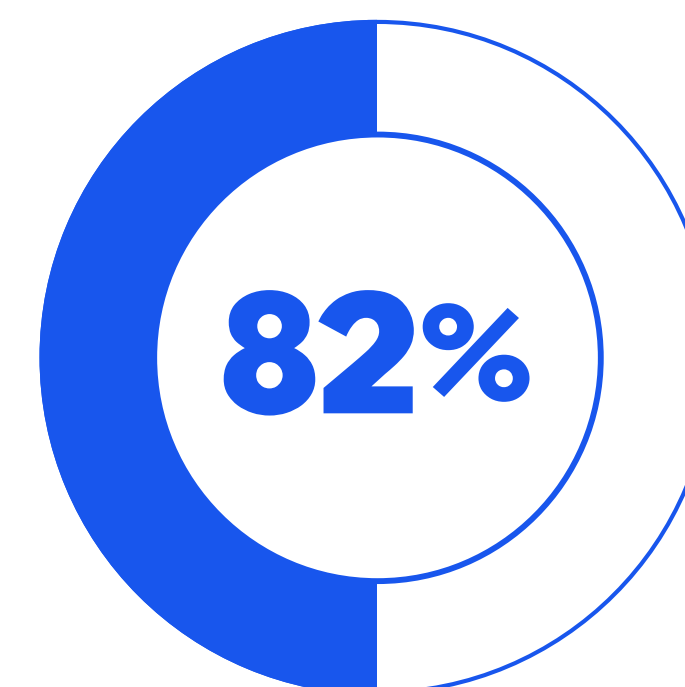
## UNITED KINGDOM

### More Momentum Than Most

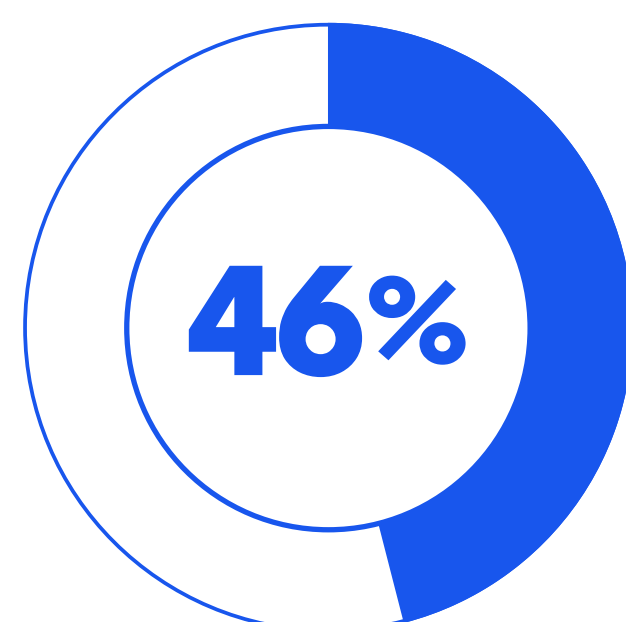
Small businesses in the U.K. are moving through 2025 with a clear intent to grow. They're more confident in their marketing than their SMB peers in other regions. Yet, they're using many of the same tactics: tapping into new tech tools, increasing marketing spend, and refining their messaging to better connect with customers. What stands out in the U.K. SMB world? A culture of experimentation: They keep testing, learning, and evolving.



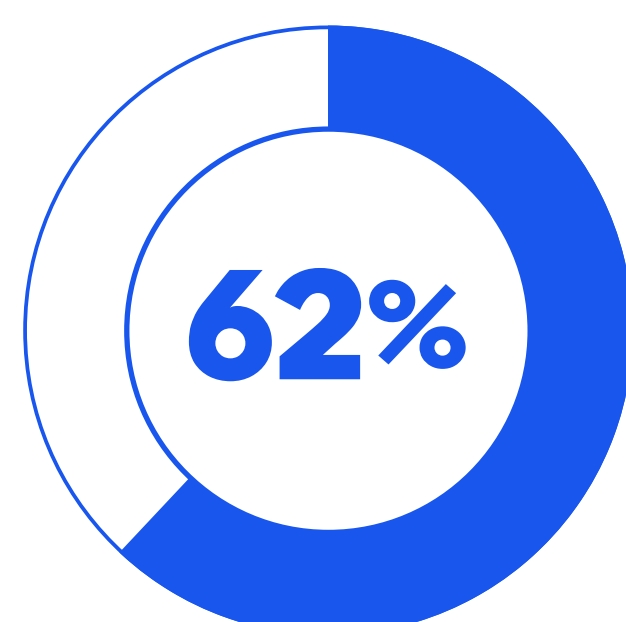
have felt a positive impact from recent global economic events — the highest among any nation polled



are currently using video in their marketing

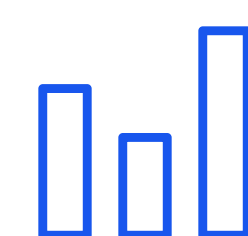


are increasing marketing spend in response to economic conditions — the highest of all countries polled



feel confident in the economy for the rest of 2025

#### 56% OF UK SMBs ARE USING AI



**27%**  
for analyzing data



**26%**  
for writing emails and social posts



**19%**  
for creating visuals

#### Confidence level



feel "very confident" in their marketing effectiveness

#### Time for marketing



have less than one hour a day to spend on marketing

#### Impact of email



say email is their most effective marketing channel



## UNITED STATES

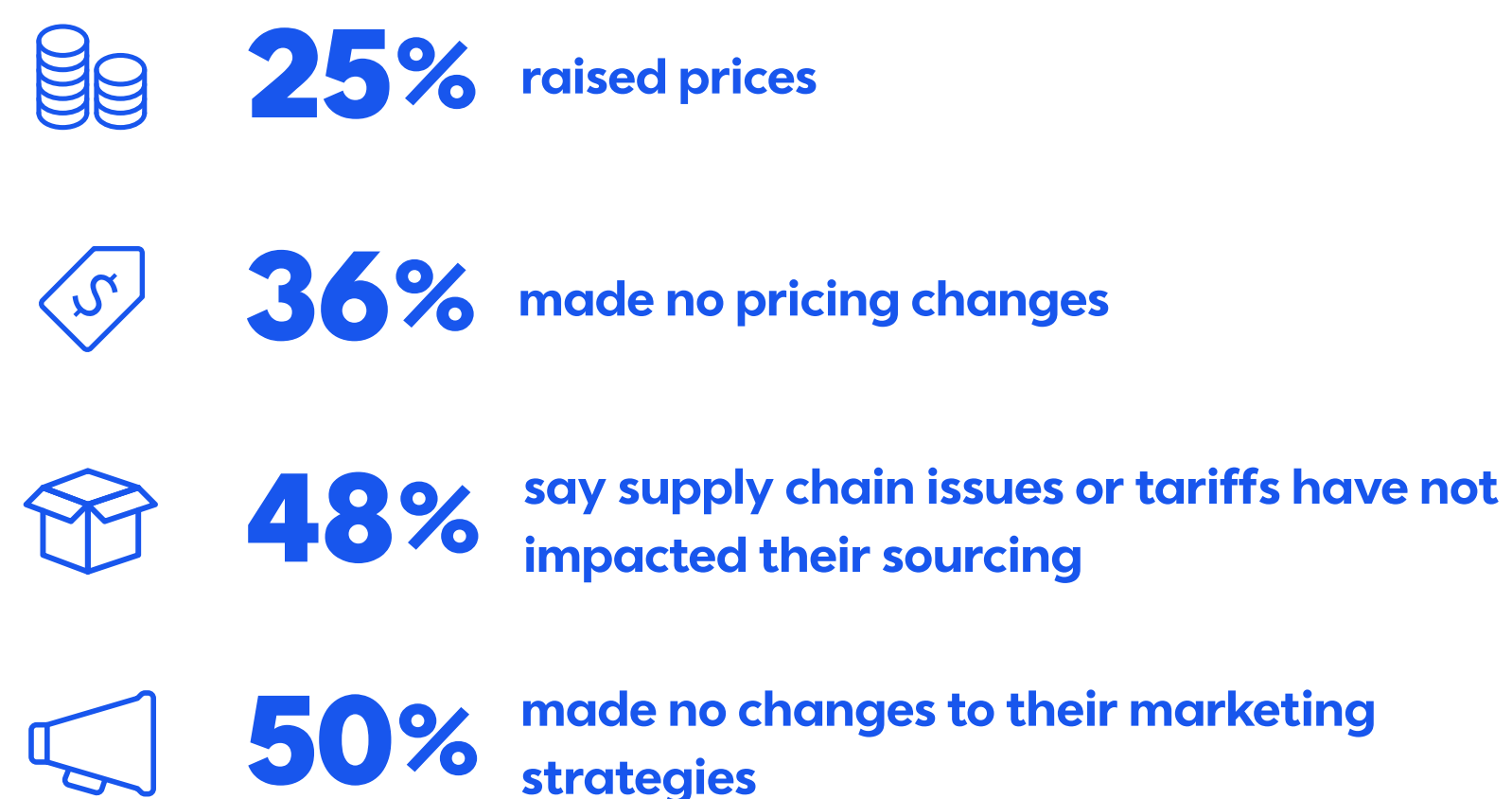
### Controlling What They Can

U.S. small businesses are feeling the pressure — from rising costs to tighter margins — but their response isn't panic or overcorrection. It's control.

**They're sticking with familiar tools like email**, using video when they can, and taking a measured approach to AI. Many have made small, strategic shifts — raising prices, adjusting expectations — but half haven't touched their marketing budgets. Not because they're stuck, but because they're betting on consistency.

This isn't the fastest-moving market, but it's one of the most intentional. **U.S. SMBs aren't chasing what's new** — they're investing in what they know, refining what they can, and holding the line until the path forward is just a little bit clearer.

#### HOW US SMBs ARE RESPONDING TO THE ECONOMY



#### 37% OF US SMBs ARE USING AI



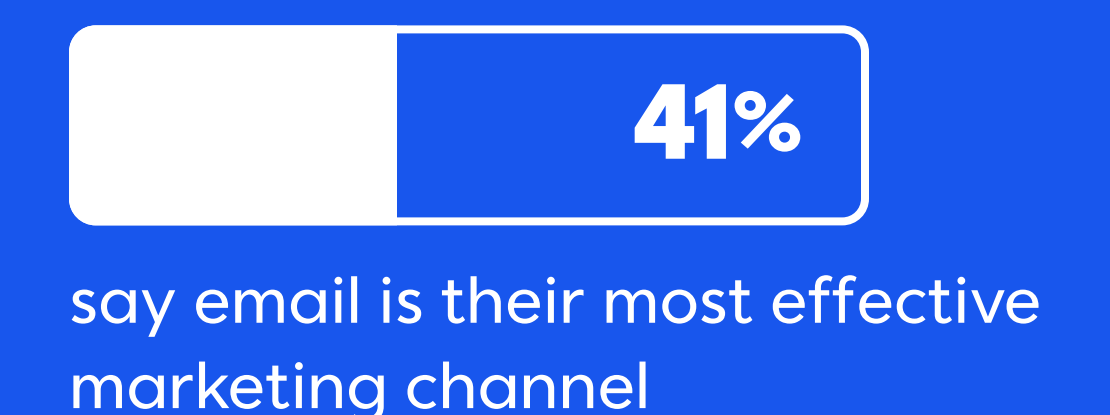
#### Confidence level



#### Time for marketing



#### Impact of email





# What SMBs Need Next

Small businesses are investing more in marketing than ever – and becoming more resourceful in how they get the job done. They're testing new tools, leaning into channels customers respond to, and adjusting their strategies in response to economic pressure and shifting customer behavior.

The problem? Many SMBs still aren't sure what's working, how to track success, or how to get more from their efforts. That uncertainty – especially in the face of rising costs and limited time – is keeping confidence low, even when effort is high.

What they need now is guidance, support, and tools that are built for the way they actually work.

That's where Constant Contact comes in. Whether it's helping businesses make sense of their marketing activities, be more productive and creative with an assist from AI, or connect with customers in more human ways, Constant Contact gives SMBs the chance to get more out of their marketing, so they can move confidently toward success.







## STUDY METHODOLOGY

Research for [Constant Contact's Small Business Now](#) report was conducted in Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States, and results were aggregated to determine global trends. It includes insights from more than 2,500 small business decision-makers in those regions. All statistics are representative of their associated demographics. The survey was conducted by [Ascend2 Research](#) in June 2025.

## CONSTANT CONTACT

Constant Contact makes digital marketing easy and effective for small businesses and nonprofits around the world. Whether just starting out or managing complex multi-channel campaigns, businesses benefit from our powerful SaaS platform that delivers a simplified, time-saving marketing experience and better results. With cutting-edge technology, best-in-class deliverability, and award-winning customer support, we help small businesses stand tall.

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## ASCEND2

Companies partner with Ascend2 to create original research from survey conceptualization through report and content creation to media outreach. Ascend2 helps companies fuel marketing content, generate leads, and engage prospects to drive demand through the middle of the funnel.

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