COMPETITIVE INTELLIGENCE TRENDS

REPORT 2021

CONTENTS

Part 1

Introduction

PMA **Product Marketing Alliance**

Why is this report important?

Award-winning scholar G. Richard Shell once said: "The first law of business: make the rules, or your rivals will."

However, before you can make the rules to keep your rivals at bay, you need to understand what it is they're doing, why they're doing it, and introduce measures to give you the upper hand.

Competitive intelligence is a critical part of the product marketing function. Not only does it help PMMs identify competitors, the process shapes pricing strategies, flags gaps in the market, and supports companies in identifying new industry and market trends.

These are a select few of many reasons product marketers need to dedicate time, money, and effort to their competitive intelligence efforts. Neglecting the process paves the way for missed opportunities and plays into the hands of your market rivals.

So, in this report, we're lifting the lid on the ins and outs of how competitive intelligence is being utilized within product marketing, how it's being used, and where there's room for improvement.

PMA **Product Marketing
Alliance**

Stuck for time? Check out some of the key findings

1. Most product marketers **(83.5%)** said competitive intelligence is conducted to pinpoint ways in which they can differentiate themselves from their competitors.

2. Most product marketers **(78.6%)** said PMM teams are primarily responsible for competitive intelligence at their company.

3. Nearly 60% of respondents believe CI is influential within their role.

4. We wanted to find out how often PMMs are thoroughly monitoring their competitors, and we were encouraged to find most said they check in on their competitors weekly **(32.9%)**; a slight increase from last year's figure of **29.4%**.

5. Product was the core area of focus for the overwhelming majority of PMMs surveyed **(91.8%)**.

6. Product marketers revealed they focus more on indirect competitors than direct competitors. **36.5%** said they monitor 10 *indirect* competitors, while **17.6%** said they monitor 10 *direct* competitors.

7. Press releases and media mentions were the preferred competitive intelligence sources for **81.2%** of survey respondents.

8. **37.7%** of participants said their company doesn't invest in competitive intelligence.

9. The majority of respondents identified Klue and Google as the most popular tools of choice for competitive intelligence.

10. Only **28.2%** of respondents rated their in-house knowledge sharing with a perfect '10'.
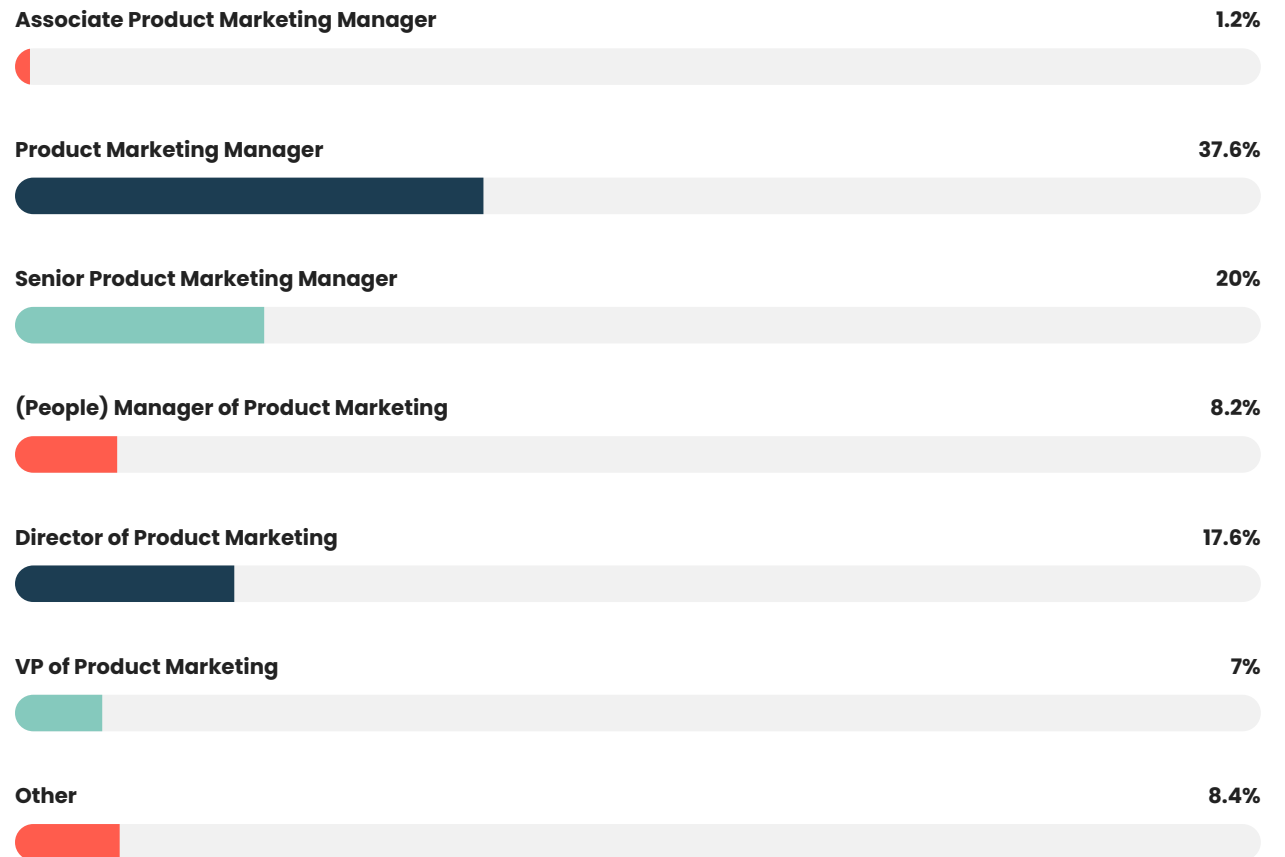
Part 2

An insight into the participants

For this report, we surveyed a total of 200 global product marketers.

An insight into the participants

Job titles

A wide scope of product marketers took part, with respondents ranging from Associate Product Marketing Managers to more experienced VP's of Product Marketing.

The majority of people surveyed were Product Marketing Managers **(37.6%)**, while some fell into the 'Other' category **(8.4%)**. These included a Head of Competitive Intelligence, Business Intelligence Analyst, and Business Development Coordinator.

Associate Product Marketing Manager   **1.2%**

Product Marketing Manager   **37.6%**

Senior Product Marketing Manager   **20%**

(People) Manager of Product Marketing   **8.2%**

Director of Product Marketing   **17.6%**

VP of Product Marketing   **7%**

Other   **8.4%**

PMA Product Marketing Alliance

An insight into the participants

B2B, B2C (or both?)

The overwhelming majority of people surveyed served B2B customers (83.5%), with a small minority (2.4%) saying their company served B2C customers.

Some respondents had their foot in both camps, with **14.1%** saying they support both B2B and B2C customers.

B2C
2.4%

Both
14.1%

What kind of customers do you serve?

B2B
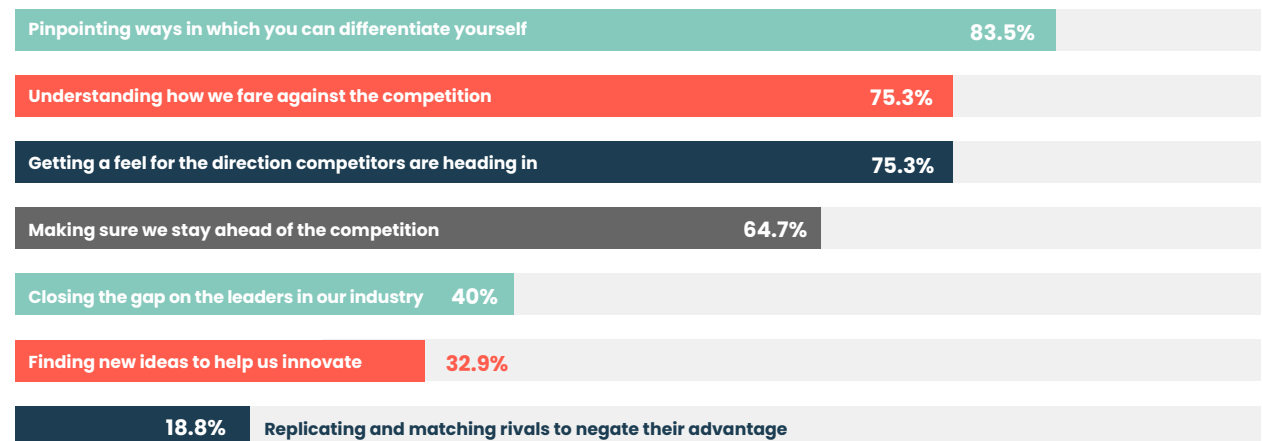**83.5%**
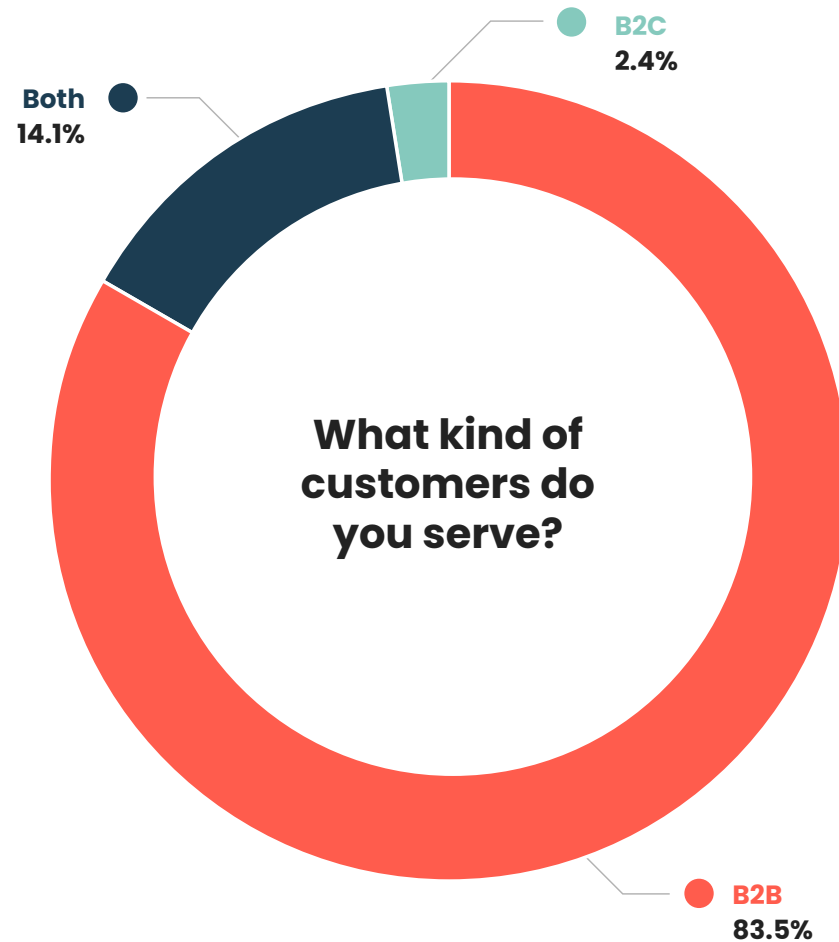
An insight into the participants

Motivation for conducting competitive intelligence

While the general purpose of competitive intelligence is to understand your competitors, specific motivations can vary.
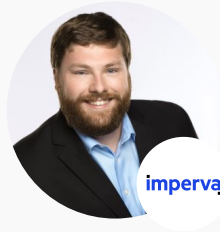
To understand the common motives product marketers have when conducting competitive intelligence, we asked about their main goal when gathering intel on competitors in their respective industries.

Companies need to differentiate themselves in the market, and **83.5%** of respondents earmarked this as their motivation, more than any other category. This represents a continuum from last year's report, in which differentiation was also the core reason.

In addition, three-quarters of PMMs **(75.3%)** said they complete competitive intelligence to understand how they fare against the competition, and to get a feel for the direction their market rivals are heading in.

Pinpointing ways in which you can differentiate yourself	83.5%
Understanding how we fare against the competition	75.3%
Getting a feel for the direction competitors are heading in	75.3%
Making sure we stay ahead of the competition	64.7%
Closing the gap on the leaders in our industry	40%
Finding new ideas to help us innovate	32.9%
Replicating and matching rivals to negate their advantage	18.8%

An insight into the participants

Pat Wall, **Head of Competitive Intelligence at Imperva,** earmarked the role of differentiation within the company:

"Our centralized competitive intel platform and concise differentiation points helps connect the dots between many different teams at Imperva - CI, product, marketing and sales. It's become the primary driver for creating our 'compete culture' and has increased seller confidence significantly."
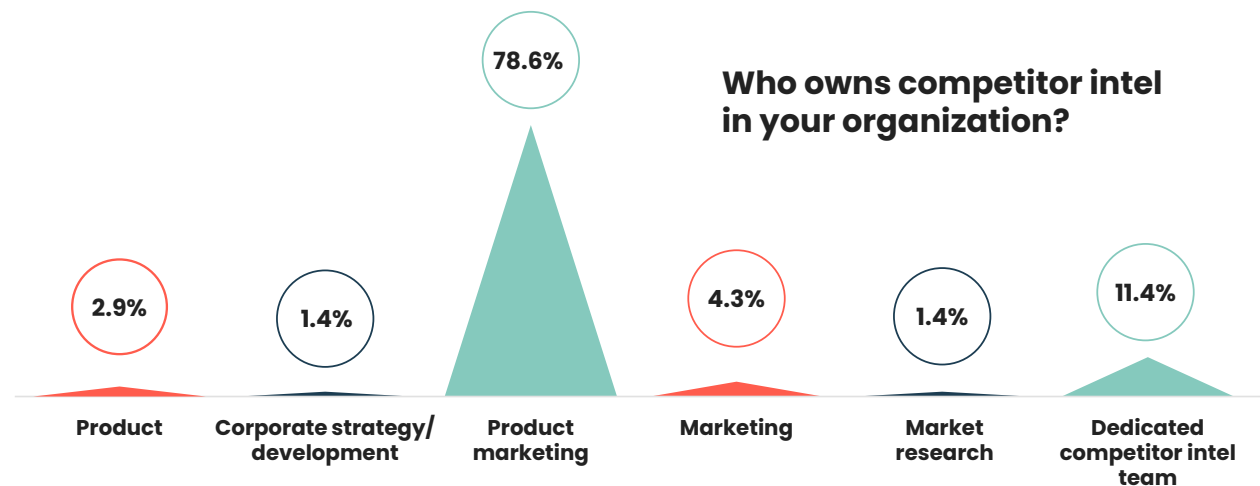
Part 3

Who is responsible for competitive intelligence?

PMA Product Marketing Alliance

Who is responsible for competitive intelligence?

Having established why competitive intelligence is being completed, we wanted to decipher which department owns the process and understand who is responsible in most cases.

Most product marketers surveyed **(78.6%)** indicated that they are responsible for competitive intelligence at their company. The undoubted value of a dedicated CI team is being recognized, with **11.4%** of respondents saying they have a specialist team who own the process.

Who owns competitor intel in your organization?

78.6%					
2.9%	1.4%		4.3%	1.4%	11.4%
Product	Corporate strategy/ development	Product marketing	Marketing	Market research	Dedicated competitor intel team

Adam Houghton, **VP of Success at Klue,** gave an insight into how the company's client success team sync with PMMs across the board, and some of their common findings:

"Our Client Success team works closely with thousands of product marketers across multiple industries and company sizes. There's a common thread we tend to see - understanding how they differ from competitors and where they fit in their market landscape is critical to success - not only for positioning and messaging to empower revenue teams to win, but to help drive product direction and strategy across the organization."
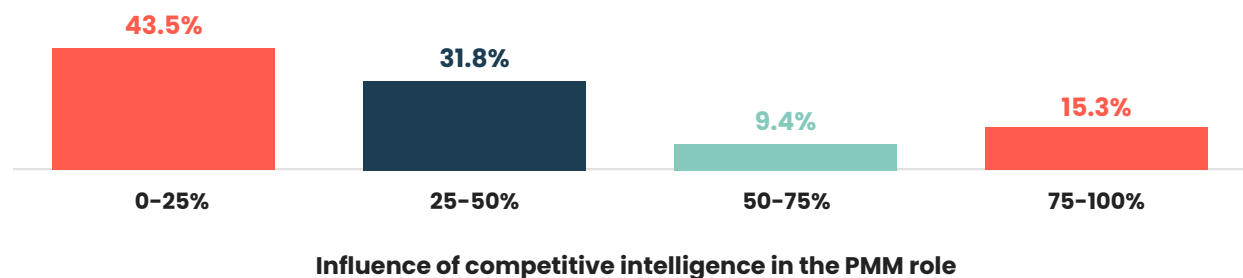
Part 4

How is competitive intelligence executed?

PMA **Product Marketing Alliance**

How is competitive intelligence executed?

What proportion of the PMM role is devoted to competitive intelligence?

With competitive intelligence, the more thorough you are, the more insights you'll gain, and this bodes well for your product.

With this in mind, it was encouraging to see nearly **60%** of respondents believe CI is influential within their role.

43.5% 0-25%
31.8% 25-50%
9.4% 50-75%
15.3% 75-100%

Influence of competitive intelligence in the PMM role

Patty McDonald, Global Solution Marketing Director at Symphony RetailAI, revealed how crowdsourcing intel helped competitive intelligence become more prevalent at her company:

"One of the biggest jumps in our competitive program happened once we crowdsourced collecting intel. It allowed us to gather information at scale and ensured that information wasn't getting stuck within the minds of a few individuals. This provided our Marketing team with the means to strategically own CI."

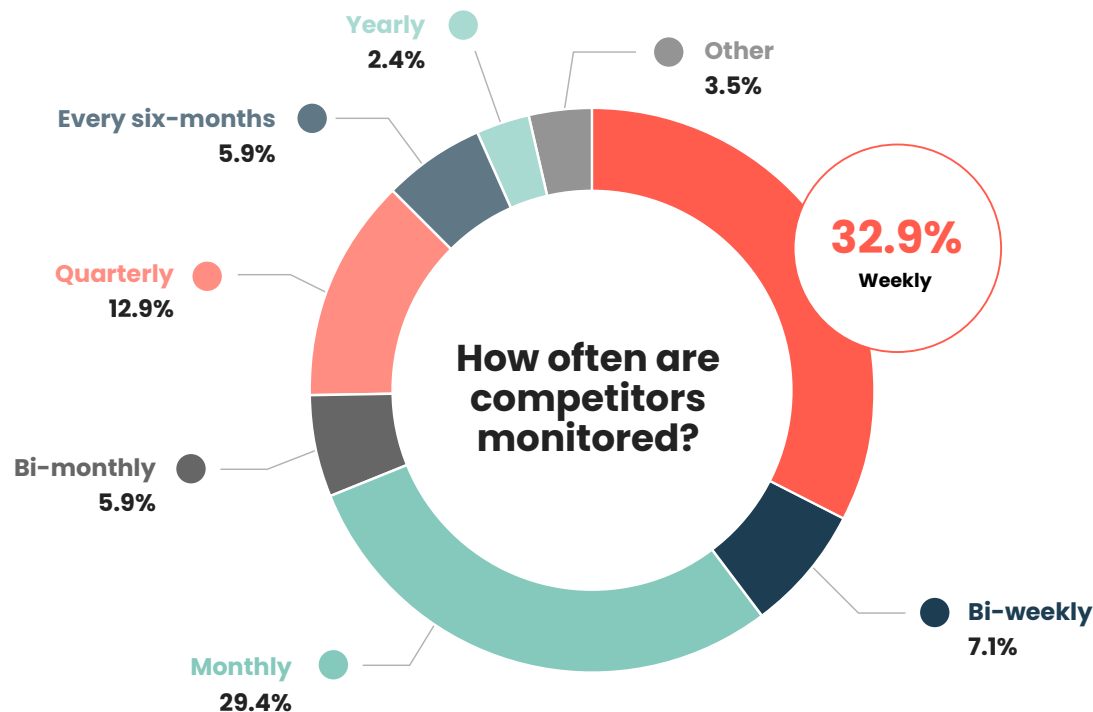# How is competitive intelligence executed?

How often do product marketers monitor competitors?

Since the Competitive Intelligence Trends 2020 report, all signs seem to be pointing to a landscape where the role of the product marketer is reduced - but not lost altogether.

Competitive intelligence in product marketing is still very much alive and kicking, with PMMs using it to reevaluate their pricing strategies, introduce new products, and refine existing features.

We wanted to find out how often PMMs are thoroughly monitoring their competitors, and we were encouraged to find most said they check in on their competitors weekly **(32.9%)**; a slight increase from last year's figure of **29.4%**.

One of the respondents in the 'Other' category indicated they complete competitive intelligence every single day, while at the other end of the spectrum, another said they only do it when it's needed.

Yearly 2.4%

Other 3.5%

Every six-months 5.9%

Quarterly 12.9%

Bi-monthly 5.9%

32.9% Weekly

How often are competitors monitored?

Monthly 29.4%

Bi-weekly 7.1%

How is competitive intelligence executed?

We picked the brains of **Matt Tyrer,** **Head of CI, Data Management & SME at Commvault,** who outlined how automating intel helped keep a tab on up-to-date market trends:

"Having an automated collection and consolidation of intel from a myriad of data sources allows me to stay on top of what's happening in the market, and ensures that I provide the best possible analysis of that information. I send the latest information to the right people at the right time, allowing us to not only react but to be proactive and get ahead."

PMA Product Marketing Alliance

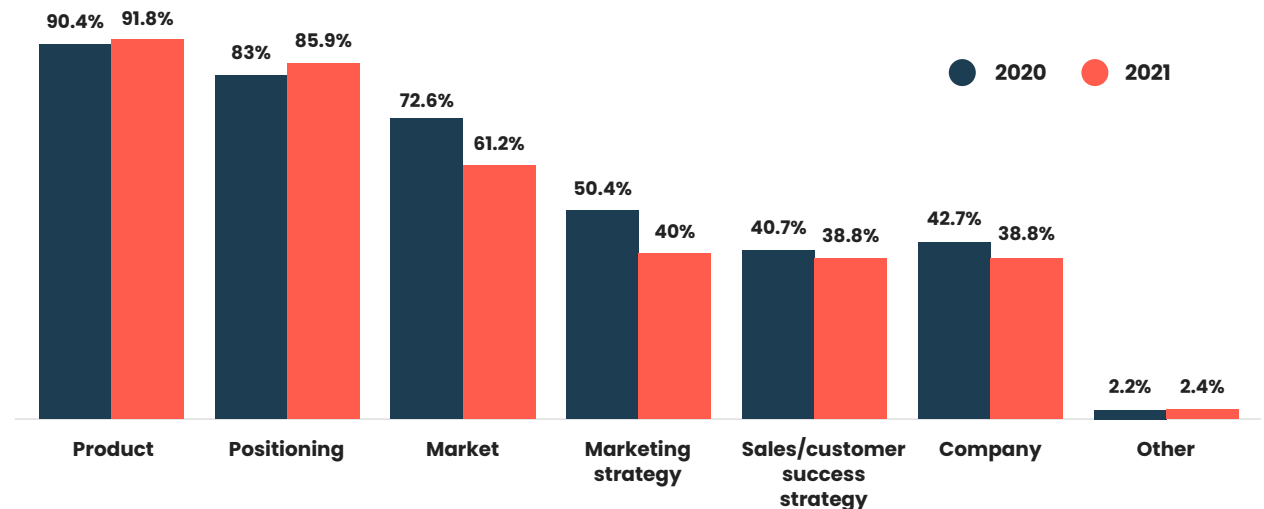# How is competitive intelligence executed?

What are the core areas of focus?

We've said it before, and we'll say it time and again - there's no such thing as a blanket approach when it comes to competitive intelligence; while the activity remains the same in the title, the objective varies from team to team.
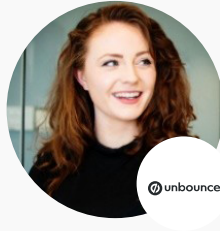
Most of the respondents **(91.8%)** said their aim is to improve their product knowledge, while product positioning was identified as a motivator by **85.9%** of product marketers we spoke with.

This didn't come as too much of a surprise, as this correlates with the trends we found in our 2020 report, in which product and positioning were also the leading areas of focus.

This year's set of statistics appear to suggest competitive intelligence is being used to understand the product, as opposed to the market, with percentages for product and positioning both increasing, albeit marginally, while responses pinpointing market and market strategy as core areas of focus have both decreased by **11.4%** and **10.4%**, respectively.

	Product	Positioning	Market	Marketing strategy	Sales/customer success strategy	Company	Other
2020	90.4%	83%	72.6%	50.4%	40.7%	42.7%	2.2%
2021	91.8%	85.9%	61.2%	40%	38.8%	38.8%	2.4%

.PMA **Product Marketing Alliance**

How is competitive intelligence executed?

Fiona Finn, **Director of Product Marketing at Unbounce,** outlined how her team pay particular attention to differentiation when bringing a new product to market, and why product marketing should be considered a quintessential part of the CI process:

"When we launch a product, we know that differentiation is really important. There's so many new technologies out there, both indirect and direct competitors. That's why product marketing is really part of that ideation process right from the start."

How is competitive intelligence executed?

How often are light spot-checks completed?

The most successful companies are those who continually check in on their competitors, before using their newfound knowledge to adapt their strategies.
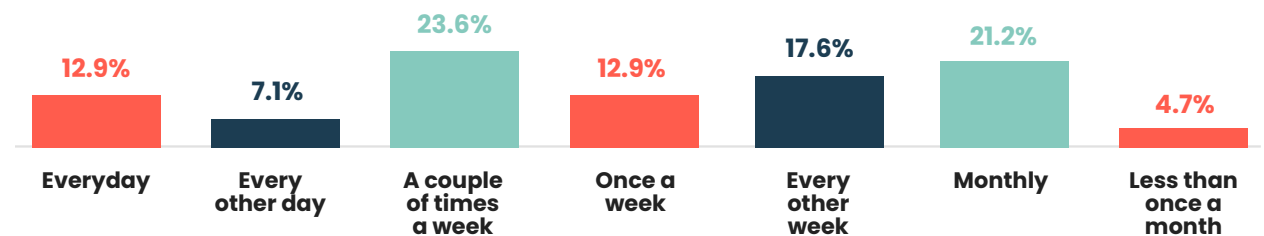
There's a misconception amongst some product marketers that competitive intelligence consists solely of thorough, time-consuming research; this can serve as a deterrent when companies are weighing up the pros and cons, and in many cases, lead to the postponement of CI entirely.

However, light spot-checks are also keeping market contenders at arm's length, and form a crucial part of the competitive intelligence process.

Just below one-quarter of respondents said they complete light spot-checks a couple of times a week **(23.6%)**. This marks a slight increase when compared to 2020's report, in which **19.3%** of product marketers said they did this twice weekly.

Moreover, one-fifth **(21.2%)** indicated light spot-checks take place monthly, a **3.4%** increase.

Spot-check frequency

12.9%	7.1%	23.6%	12.9%	17.6%	21.2%	4.7%
Everyday	Every other day	A couple of times a week	Once a week	Every other week	Monthly	Less than once a month

PMA Product Marketing Alliance

How is competitive intelligence executed?

## Are direct *and* indirect competitors being monitored?

When completing competitive intelligence, it's often assumed that the work stops when you track direct competitors, i.e. someone offering the same product or service within the same market - but this couldn't be further from the truth.

It's also essential to understand the threats posed by indirect competitors because further down the line, they too can become a direct competitor.

So, it was encouraging to see this hasn't escaped the attention of the PMMs we spoke with, with most saying they monitor 10+ indirect competitors **(36.5%)**, a slight increase from last year's figure of **32.9%**.

Conversely, most product marketers surveyed said they monitor 5 direct competitors **(27.1%)**. This appears to suggest there's more of an emphasis on the market activity of indirect competitors, as opposed to direct rivals.
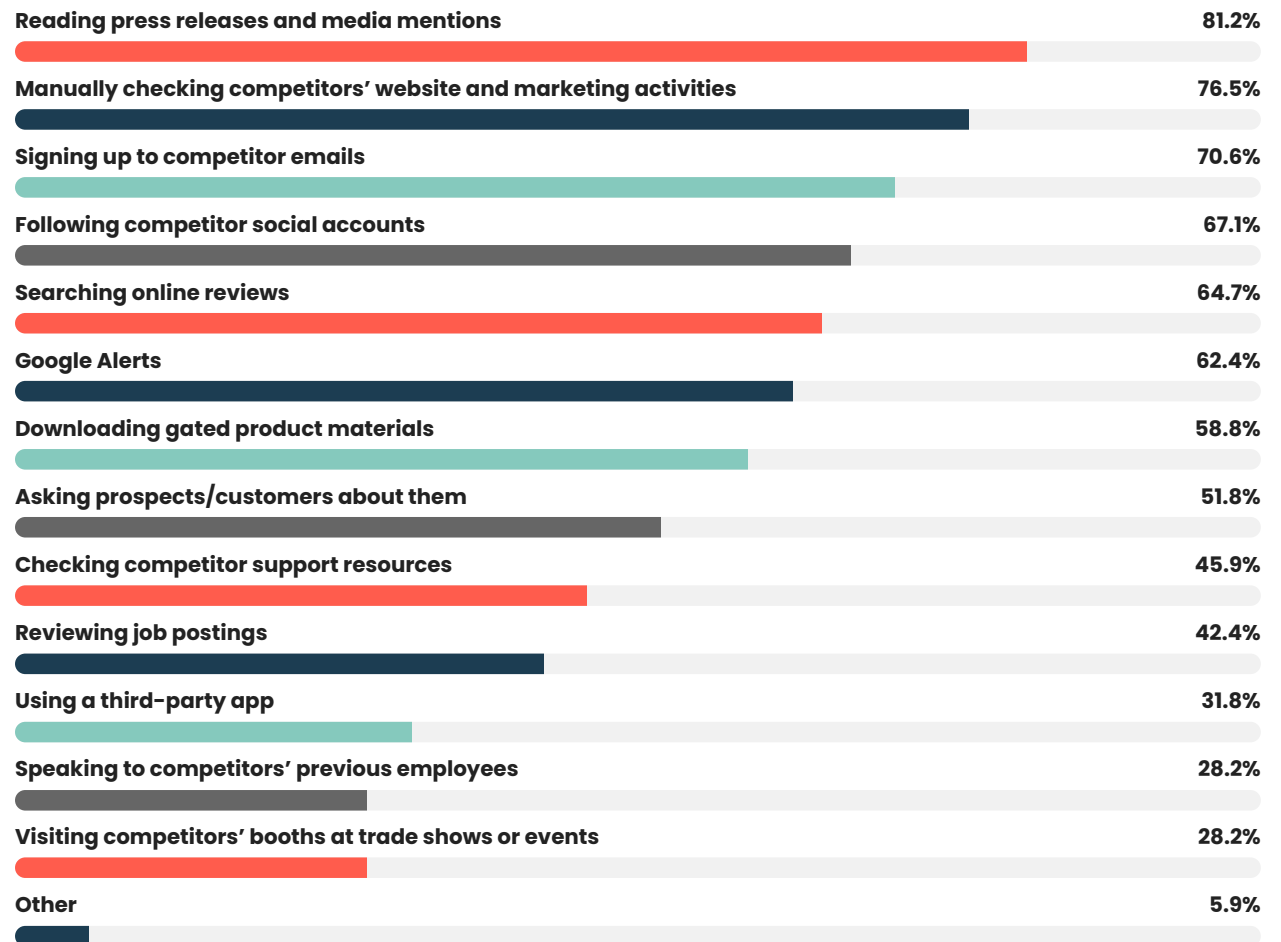
Number of direct competitors monitored

27.1%

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 +
0%	1.2%	8.2%	5.9%	14.1%	27.1%	10.6%	5.9%	8.2%	1.2%	17.6%
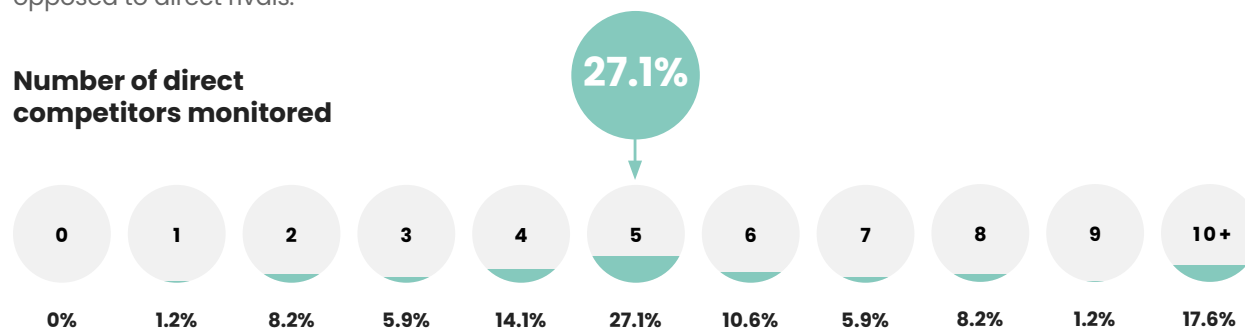
Number of indirect competitors monitored

36.5%

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 +
8.2%	1.2%	7.1%	15.3%	7.1%	12.9%	2.4%	1.2%	8.2%	0%	36.5%
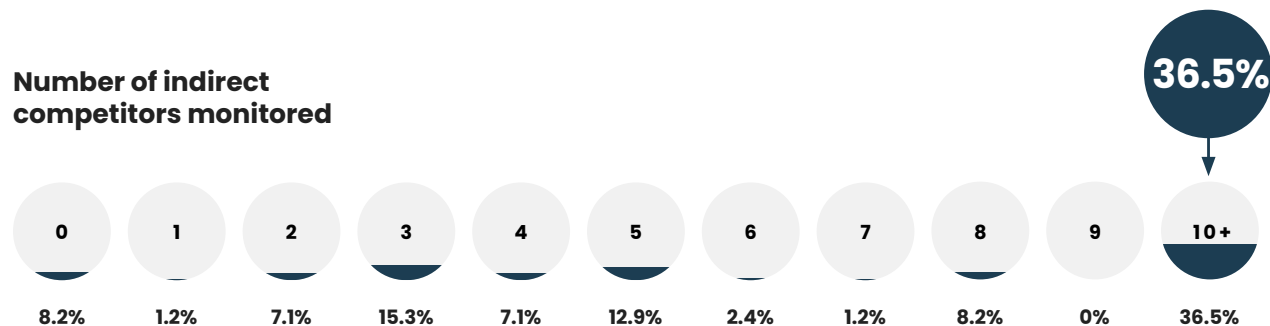
How is competitive intelligence executed?

Preferred competitive intelligence methods

Whether you're focusing on direct or indirect competitors, you need a suitable method to optimize your CI activities. Press releases and media mentions were identified as the most popular sources of information, at **81.2%**, while just over three-quarters of product marketers opted to manually check competitors' websites and marketing activities.

Reading press releases and media mentions — **81.2%**

Manually checking competitors' website and marketing activities — **76.5%**

Signing up to competitor emails — **70.6%**

Following competitor social accounts — **67.1%**

Searching online reviews — **64.7%**

Google Alerts — **62.4%**

Downloading gated product materials — **58.8%**

Asking prospects/customers about them — **51.8%**

Checking competitor support resources — **45.9%**

Reviewing job postings — **42.4%**

Using a third-party app — **31.8%**

Speaking to competitors' previous employees — **28.2%**

Visiting competitors' booths at trade shows or events — **28.2%**

Other — **5.9%**

Product Marketing Alliance

How is competitive intelligence executed?

Tamara Schebel, **VP of Product at Klue,** acknowledged the breadth of CI resources available to product marketers, whilst also highlighting the importance of focusing on the facts that *really* matter:

"There's a ton of publicly available competitive information out there - from the press and media - the challenge is that the time it takes to sift through that noise to find the intel that matters can take away from time spent finding more valuable information from your internal sources like field feedback, recorded sales conversations and win/loss programs. Getting beyond common knowledge about your competitors is critical."

Part 5

How much budget is spent on competitive intelligence?

How much budget is spent on competitive intelligence?

Whether it's an awesome product launch, compelling messaging, or essential sales enablement assets, investment plays an essential role in its success.

Which prompts the million-dollar question: is enough money being spent on competitive intelligence?

We asked our crop of PMM experts how much budget is allocated to competitive intelligence, and it was encouraging to see **62.3%** of respondents said their companies are investing in relevant tools to support the function.

38.8%	9.4%	4.7%	4.7%	4.7%	37.7%
0-$50k	$50k-$100k	$100k-$150k	$150k-$200k	$200k+	My company doesn't invest in competitive intelligence

Competitive intelligence budget

PMA **Product Marketing Alliance**
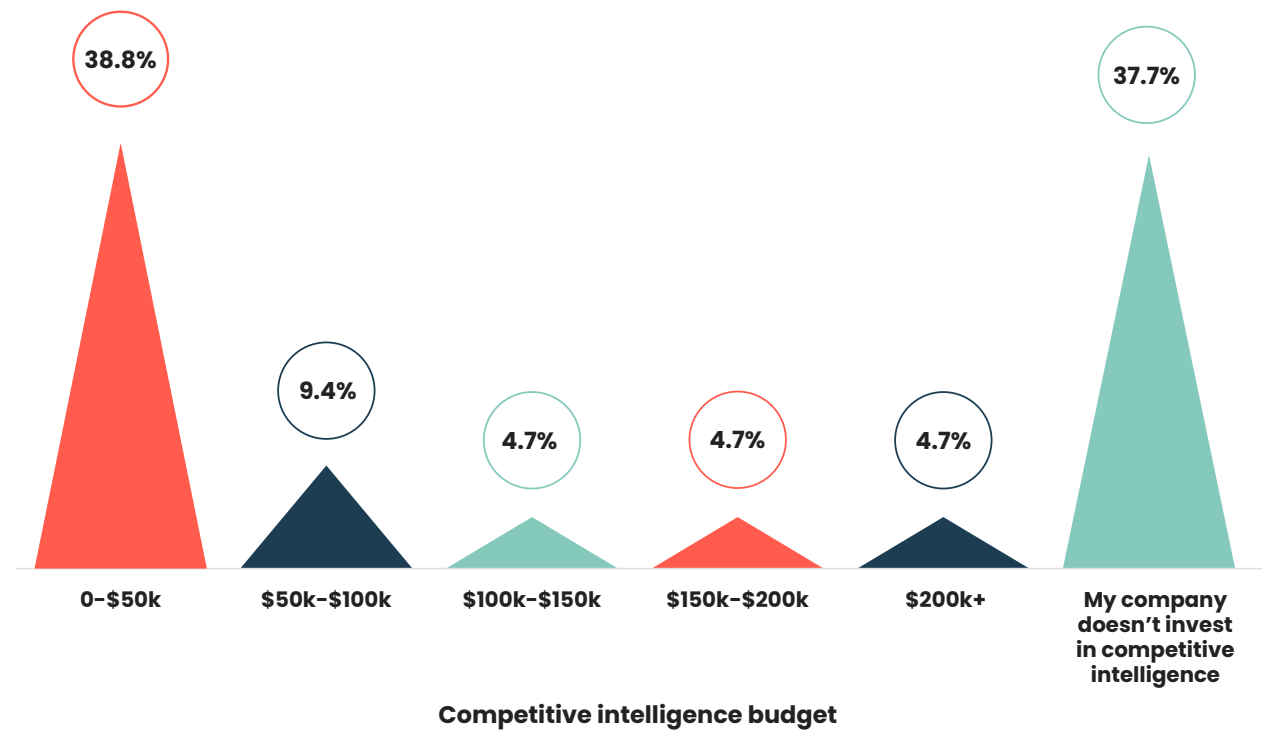
How much budget is spent on competitive intelligence?

Chris Owen, **Director of Product Management at Saviynt,** explained how the company uses existing data to incentivize company executives to invest in a competitive intelligence program:

"The first thing we did at Saviynt was target the Exec team with the concept of a CI program, asking how we can stretch our competitive landscape from 1 to 40.

"By starting with the data we have in Salesforce, and broadening that to the other software areas in which we exist, we were able to predict how much we could increase our win rate by targeting certain competitors. That really incentivized them to move forward with a CI solution."

Part 6

In-house collaboration

In-house collaboration

We asked what skills make a rockstar product marketer, and unsurprisingly, collaboration came out on top, with **78%** of PMMs saying they value collaboration with coworkers above any other attribute.

Collaboration and effective communication go hand in glove with competitive intelligence. You need to work as a team to share insights and make the most of the information at your disposal, otherwise you can miss key insights that could be applied to your strategy.

In an ideal world, product marketing professionals the world over would apply this rationale, but to what extent are PMMs actually doing it?

We asked PMMs to rank how open internal teams are when it comes to knowledge-sharing around competitive intelligence on a scale of 1-10, and this generated an average rating of **6.9**; only **28.2%** of product marketers deemed their in-house knowledge sharing to be worthy of a perfect '10'.

Rating for intel knowledge-sharing

6.9/10

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1.2%	3.5%	5.9%	4.7%	4.7%	12.9%	1.2%	16.5%	14.1%	7.1%	28.2%

PMA **Product Marketing Alliance**
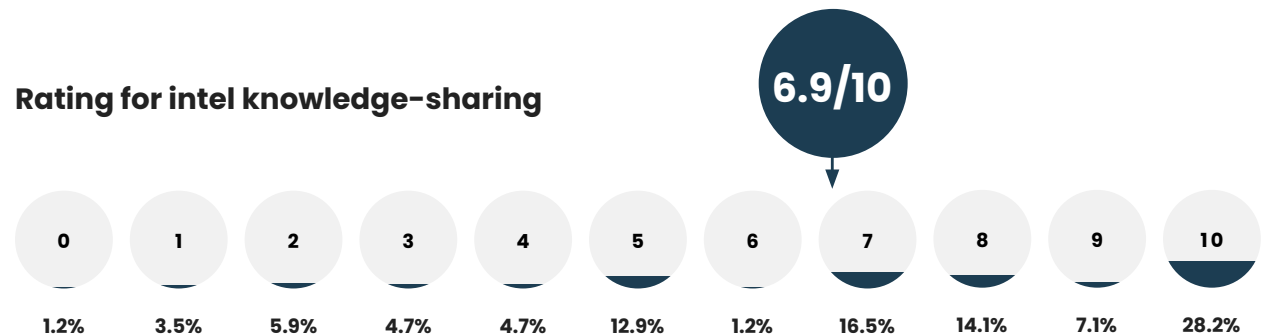
In-house collaboration

How is competitive intelligence sourced internally?

As we mentioned earlier, press releases and media mentions have emerged as the go-to source for product marketers seeking competitive intelligence from external sources.

However, there are a whole host of avenues that can be explored internally to gather knowledge.

Most of the participants we spoke with expressed a preference for gathering information via email **(65.9%)**, while **61.2%** said they have a dedicated Slack channel (or similar).

Encouragingly, the art of conversation isn't dead, with almost half of respondents **(47.1%)** saying they gather intel via 1:1 discussions with their peers; however, it was surprising to see some people say they never collect competitive intelligence internally, albeit just **4.7%** of the survey group.

65.9%	61.2%	47.1%	36.5%	32.9%	21.2%	4.7%	1.2%
Email correspondence	Dedicated Slack channel (or similar)	1:1 conversations	CRM notes	Organized meetings	Surveys	I never get intel from internal sources	Other

PMA **Product Marketing Alliance**
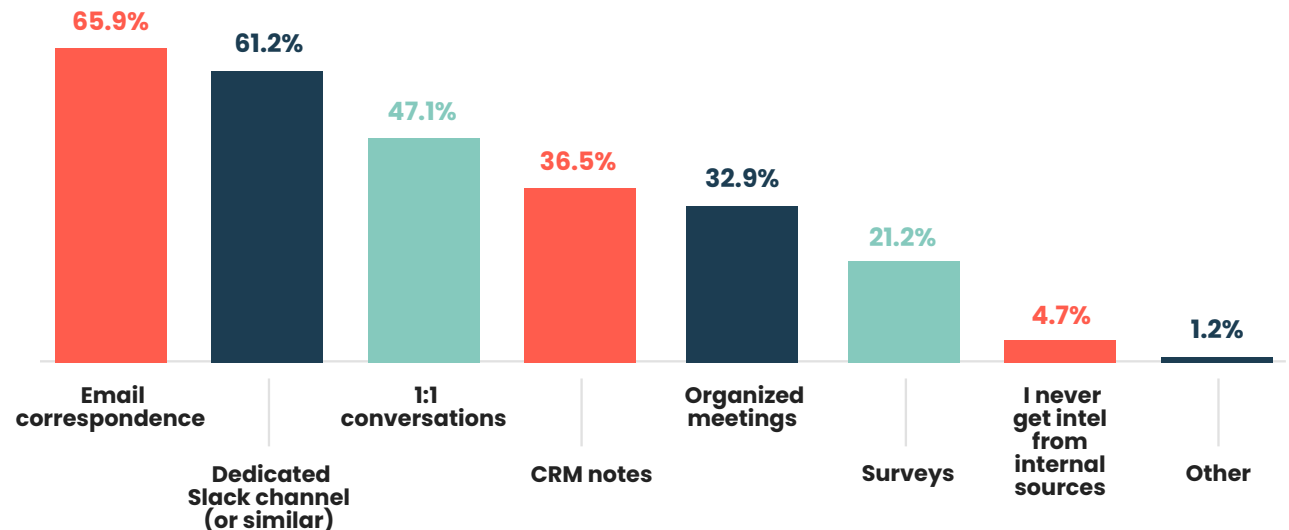
In-house collaboration

Which teams are used to gather competitive intelligence?

There's no doubting the role Product Marketing teams play in the competitive intelligence process. When we asked which teams are consulted when gathering information, **64.7%** of product marketers said they turn to their PMM peers as their first port of call.

However, having multiple teams on hand can provide PMMs with invaluable information - and we wanted to find out which non-PMM options are being used the most.

An overwhelming majority of product marketers **(92.9%)** said they liaise with internal Sales teams, while Product were also identified as a popular source of information, at **84.7%**.

One takeaway we found to be particularly encouraging was that **77.6%** said they discuss competitive intelligence with company Executives & Leadership teams. This represents a significant increase from last year, when **45.6%** of PMMs indicated they seek support from senior figures.

92.9% Sales

84.7% Product

77.6% Executives/leadership

74.1% Marketing

63.5% Customer success

32.9% Corporate strategy

20% Engineering

14.1% Finance

1.2% Other

PMA **Product Marketing Alliance**
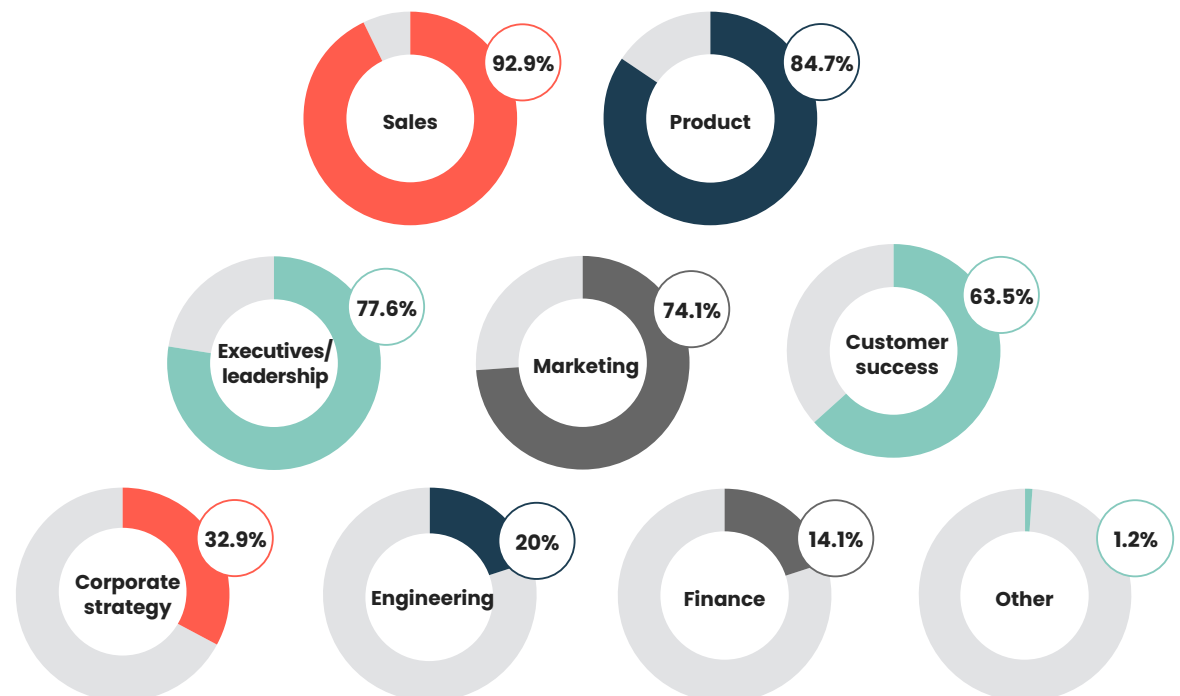
In-house collaboration

How is competitive intelligence shared internally?

You can be armed with a wealth of knowledge, but if you're not sharing it effectively, the benefits won't come to fruition.

Sharing intel the right way is just as important as collecting information in the first place, so we wanted to understand how product marketers are distributing their findings with their colleagues.

Over half **(52.9%)** expressed a preference for doing this in-person, on a team-by-team basis.

Email was also identified as a popular option, with **34.1%** sending segmented emails, while **31.8%** send a blanket email to all relevant teams.

Some of the PMMs we spoke with **(23.5%)** also said they share information in-person to relevant teams at the same time.

● 2021 ● 2020

	In-person on a team-by-team basis	Segmented emails to each relevant team	A blanket email to all relevant teams	In-person to all relevant teams at the same time	Other
2021	52.9%	34.1%	31.8%	23.5%	12.9%
2020	19.3%	34.1%	25.2%	19.3%	25.2%

PMA Product Marketing Alliance
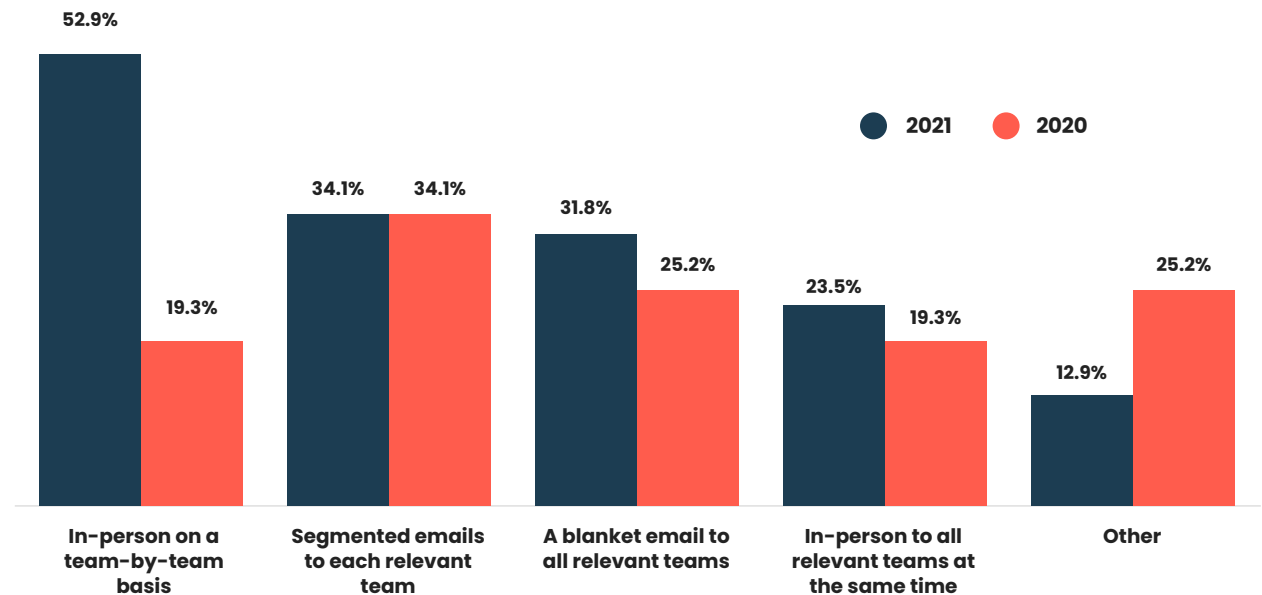
In-house collaboration

"Our methods depend on the audience; sometimes we share information on presentations, sales enablement training material, while other times, findings are used on battlecards."

Silvia Kiely Frucci, Director of Product Marketing at Castor

"We add them to the knowledge base of our competitive intelligence."

Brittany Gaither, Product Marketing Manager at Benchling

"Competitive intelligence is shared in a dedicated Slack channel."

Andrew McCotter-Bicknell, (People) Product Marketing Manager at ZoomInfo

"We have an ongoing document that's updated periodically with relevant competitor information."

Jada Gale, Product Marketing Manager at FreeWill

PMA **Product Marketing Alliance**

In-house collaboration
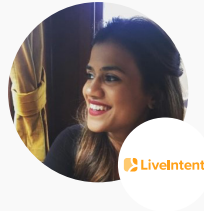
"We use Highspot to publish our findings so that everyone across the company can access it."

Renu Jinturkar, **Senior Product Marketing Manager at LiveIntent**

"We use Slack channels and a Salesforce integration."

Shane Robbins, **Director of Product Marketing at HeadLight**

In-house collaboration

Which teams do product marketers share their findings with?

Having established which methods are being used to share findings, we asked product marketers which teams they're sharing their information with most frequently.

The majority of respondents **(82.4%)** said they share their knowledge with Sales teams, while just over half **(52.9% and 51.8%)** communicate with Product and Customer Success, respectively.

Sales	Product	Customer Success	Executives/ Leadership	Marketing	Corporate Strategy	Engineering
82.4%	52.9%	51.8%	45.9%	30.6%	18.8%	5.9%
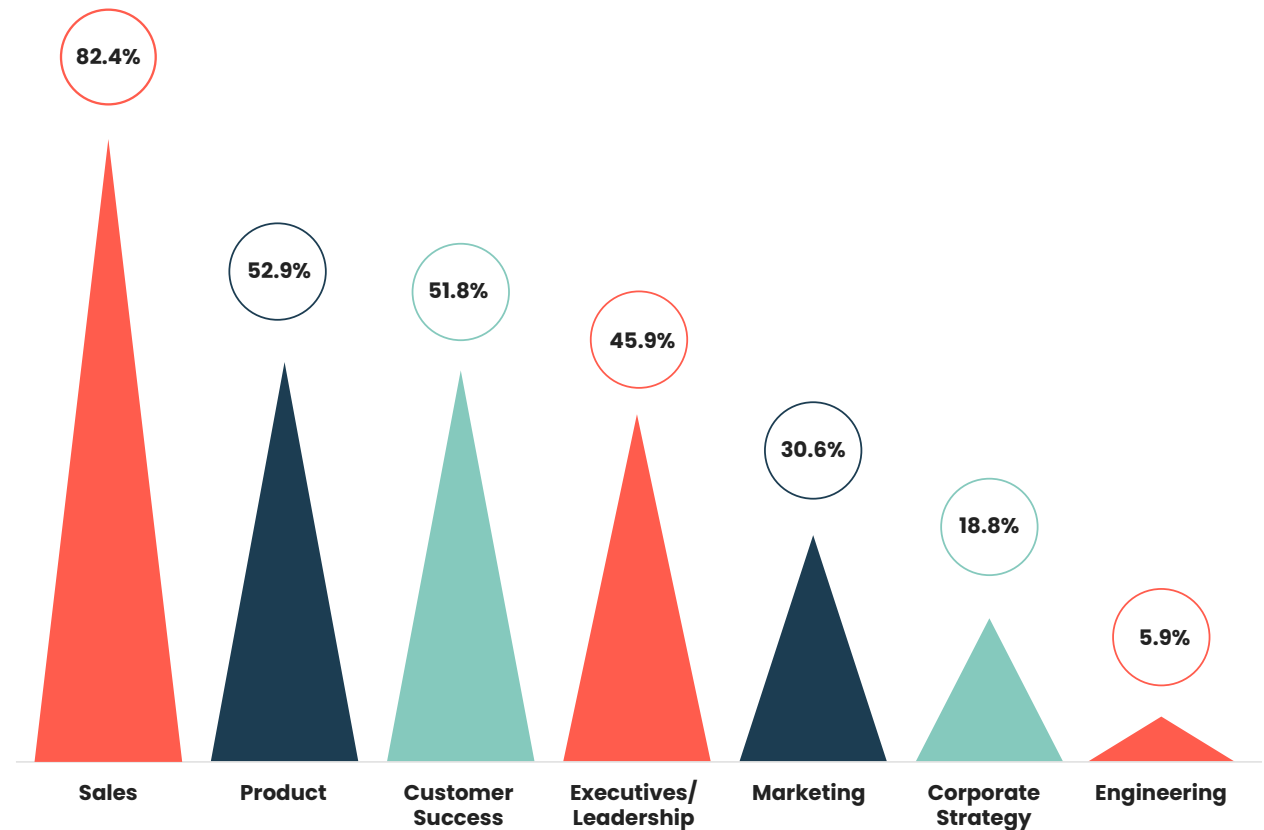
Part 7

Competitive intelligence challenges

Competitive intelligence challenges

Anything worth having doesn't land in our lap; there are always challenges you need to overcome to reap the rewards.

Competitive intelligence falls under this umbrella. Product marketers can sometimes be faced with challenges en-route to unlock CI's undoubted benefits.

So, what exactly are some of the obstacles faced by members of the PMM community?

> *"We have no budget and insufficient time to do it all manually. There are so many internal requirements for different information."*

> *"There's a lack of information available, and Sales are overly focused on feature comparisons versus positioning, which is far more important."*

> *"There's never enough time to communicate information with other departments."*

> *"Private companies don't disclose their financials, so it's hard to get an insight into their performance."*

> *"We struggle to get enough information about competitors' marketing strategies."*

> *"Our team's biggest challenge is choosing when to communicate an update to other teams. We keep our competitor pages up-to-date as we come across new content, and we work to reevaluate our positioning each quarter. But that rarely aligns with the timing that various sales teams need updated information. If they have similar alerts set up or if they're asked about a recent update while out in the market, they can sometimes be caught off guard if they haven't checked in on the latest comp intel. Keeping internal teams aware of the latest information is our biggest challenge."*

Competitive intelligence challenges

"In the AdTech industry, your competitors can be your frenemies. So it is sometimes difficult to pick out your exact competitors."

"There are too many methods and tools you need to apply to gather the same information."

"We have to handle a large volume of information, and try to make sense of what matters."

"Some companies describe their services inaccurately and misrepresent their solutions."

"We don't have dedicated resources for competitive intelligence, so it's often deprioritized."

"Most products in our domain don't have a trial option. We need to book a demo to see the product, so the only information is what we get from the websites or customers."

"Timeliness and predicting what competitors will do next, and understanding their long term strategy and focus, is challenging."

PMA Product Marketing Alliance

Competitive intelligence challenges

Identifying competitor price points

Implementing a suitable pricing strategy is a fundamental part of success. If your product is grossly overpriced, you'll scare potential customers away, while setting a price that's too low could lead to a perceived lack of quality.

Competitive intelligence is often used to understand how much similar companies are charging for their product and/or services - but what do product marketers do if this information isn't readily available?

"We have Sales ask prospects whenever there is a competitive proposal."

"We use a variety of methods: we ask prospects/customers, conduct win-loss interviews, or dig for price lists published by channel partners."

"Our most reliable pricing information comes from our customers. If they've recently come to us from a competitor or have hired team members that used to work for a competitor, they tend to be willing to discuss how we compare. We also sometimes tap former employees of our competitors."

"We tend to lean on Sales and customers if we have old contracts. Alternatively, we search for the information if contracts are publically available."

"I gather field intelligence from my Sales team or Customer Success Managers."

"Most of the time, I talk to customers who have used their products before, complete a secret shopping exercise, or talk to competitors directly."

"We've found it useful to survey our sellers to see if they have pricing that was shared with them. Otherwise, we ask vendor partners if they have that info."

PMA Product Marketing Alliance

Competitive intelligence challenges

"Listening to Sales calls (via Gong) and hearing prospective customers mention pricing tends to provide us with the information we need."

"We hired a lot from our competitors so I ask them but also I use documentation I find online and in our internal channels."

"We don't actively seek out this information but we do get an idea from migrating customers and prospective buyers evaluating our product along with our competitors."

"Depending on the product, we buy it directly. Otherwise, we speak with customers, partners, and analysts."

"We learn through win/loss interviews."

"I ask their current customers who are speaking with our Sales team."

"Necessary information can be found in past closed won/lost deals stored in the CRM, while review sites (customer reviews specifically) can be a great source, as are win-loss calls."

Part 8
Tips and tools

Tips and tools

Sometimes, the best way to learn is by gathering advice from people who've been there, done it, and got the t-shirt.

So, we asked product marketers well-versed in the art of competitive intelligence for their top tips on how to get the job done with aplomb - here's what they said:

"Collaborate with all the other departments who have access to vital information."

Karen Bamford, Director of Product Marketing at Zivver

"Take marketing material with a grain of salt. Unless you see their product in action, don't believe the hype."

Katy Martin, Product Marketing Manager at Lacework

"Start with understanding why someone bought your product instead of the product offered by the competition."

Aastha Trivedi, Senior Product Marketing Manager at VWO

"Do not overlook true social listening, even in B2B."

Davin Galbraith, Head of Competitive Intelligence at Sprinklr

"Network a lot and up your social listening skills."

Jacqueline Basil, Senior Product Marketing Manager at AlgoSec

Tips and tools

"Everyone in the company is very reactive about CI but it requires a level of discipline and practice to turn down the temperature on it."

Julian Dunn, Director of Product Marketing at PagerDuty

PagerDuty

"Competitive intelligence is one of the most important aspects of sales enablement. You might want to pay special attention to it - networking with the product dev and Sales teams is the best way to know the product innovations of your competitors."

Suchismita Roy, Senior Product Marketing Manager at SWZD

SWZD
SPICEWORKS ZIFF DAVIS

"Understanding win/loss analysis is the first step in completing great competitive intelligence."

Sara Kingsley, Director of Product Marketing at Securonix

SECURONIX

*"Use your tech stack to gather market signals from the competition."*

Anaud Ganpaul, Director of Product Marketing at Achievers

Achievers

Tips and tools

"I think competitive intel is just as much about understanding what customers value as it is about knowing what the competitor does. You might identify a product gap with your tool vs your competitors, but understanding what needs this fills for the customer is essential."

Brittany Gaither, Product Marketing Manager at Benchling
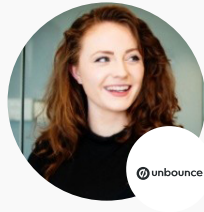
"Integrate competitive intelligence into your day-to-day through automations as best as possible."

Fiona Finn, Director of Product Marketing at Unbounce
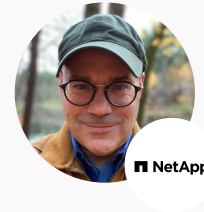
"Gain executive leadership sponsorship of top competitors and priorities."

Jason Gaudreau, Business Intelligence Analyst at NetApp

"It is really easy to get caught in a feature parity race, especially if you're not the leader in your space. But hold fast to what you offer to your customers and focus your competitive research on understanding what will make you better instead of more similar to your competitors."

Jessica Muñoz, VP of Product Marketing at Liveintent

PMA Product Marketing Alliance

Tips and tools

"If you're in the B2B space and struggling to find pricing, don't forget to check government supplier directories, which (depending on your country) have to be made public."

Matt Salter, Product Marketing Manager at photoSentinel

"Checking job descriptions can be a great resource for what a competitor is planning to do as well as backend platforms that they may use."

Marrika Zapiler, Director of Product Marketing at Audacy

"Collaborate across the organization - competitive intelligence is everyone's job."

Dee Houchen, VP of Product Marketing at Signavio

"Start a Slack channel and use it as a hub to share information between all departments. It's a game-changer."

Andrew McCotter-Bicknell, (People) Manager of Product Marketing at ZoomInfo

"Getting the information is not the #1 challenge. Rather, it is getting the insights to the people respective and getting the information read."

Jan-Eike Rosenthal, Product Marketing Manager at COYO

PMA Product Marketing Alliance

Tips and tools

"If the market is overcrowded, align your main efforts to monitor your main competitors in the space you want to emerge and the one considered by your mid-market customers (80-20 rule) so you can see the emerging trends and ensure you're not getting lost in the data noise."

Silvia Kiely Frucci, Director of Product Marketing at Castor

"Lean on everyone within the org. ProdMar is a primary R&R for competitive intelligence but everyone can contribute."

Katie Tankersley,
(People) Manager of Product Marketing at Outbrain

"Use your prospects! They have more info on your competitors and will be happy to share things like pricing insights because it helps them get a better deal."

Jada Gale,
Product Marketing Manager at FreeWill

"Prioritize your attention to who you compete with most. There is likely a small handful of your competitive space that make up the majority of your competitive sales scenarios. Spend the majority of your time on those.

"If you can understand how you differentiate against who you compete against most, you'll have a better understanding of how you differentiate as the market evolves and new threats emerge."

Matt Powell, Product Marketing Manager at Docebo

PMA **Product Marketing Alliance**

Tips and tools

"Sign up for demos with them (under a dummy account) or free trials! Nothing beats getting to use their product or hear their pitch."

Mitch Comstock, Product Marketing Manager at LeadIQ

"Don't focus so much on competition that you lose the plot on what made you unique in the first place."

Alicia Carney, Head of Product Marketing at Lune

"Focus on the issues that will help your leaders make the important decisions and deliver differentiated value to your customers."

August Jackson, Director of Product Marketing at Deltek

"Read their blog and social media posts. It's often enough to keep aware of what they're adding, where they're headed, and how you can differentiate yourselves."

Sai Anand, Product Marketing Manager at Zoho Corporation

Tips and tools

"Create a competitor map and focus on your core competitors to cut out the noise generated by those who don't pose a direct threat to the business."

Jamie Wallis, Product Marketing Manager at Gearset

"Stay on top of competition based not only on products but importantly on their financial standing and quarterly earnings calls and reports, leadership changes and Intel on the key leaders and their past success strategies at other companies and news and events and interviews that reveal their vision."

Seema Kathuria, Senior Product Marketing Manager at Duo Security

Competitor intel tips

Recommended competitive intelligence tools

With so much on the line when it comes to conducting competitive intelligence, the slightest error can create opportunities for your rivals to benefit at your expense.

As highlighted in the Product Marketing Tools of Choice, there are plenty of competitive intelligence tools available to prevent this.

The majority of respondents identified Klue and Google as the most popular tools of choice, while Crayon also emerged as a go-to option, a small proportion of respondents said they prefer to conduct their work manually.

Top 10 competitive intelligence tools

None (N/A)

klue

Google

CRAYON

GONG

Google Alerts

Gartner peerinsights™

semrush

slack

CHORUS
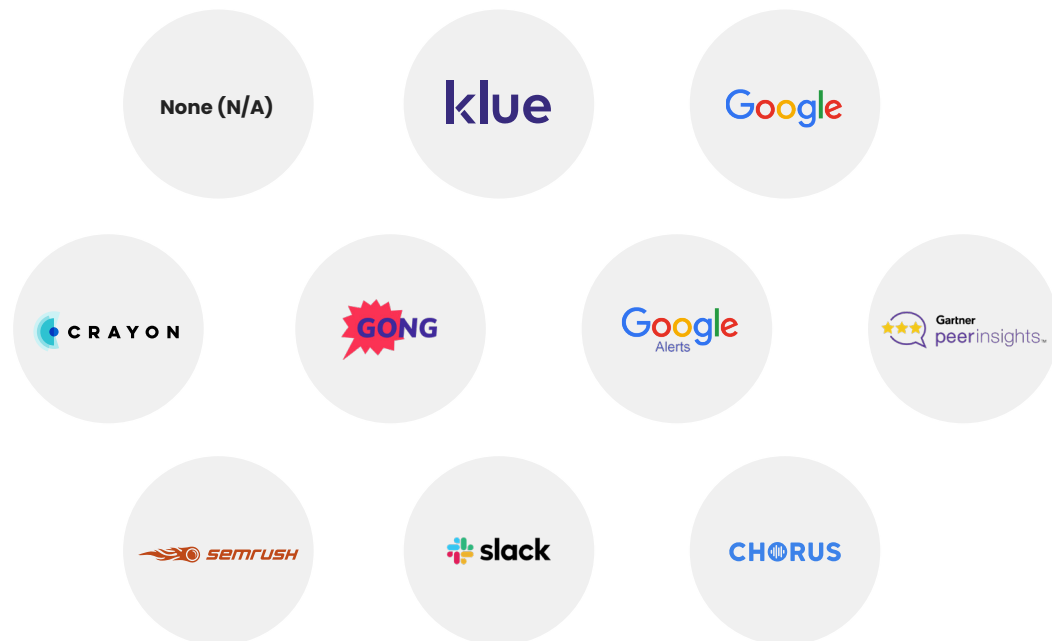
Part 9
Conclusion

Conclusion

Competitive intelligence plays a fundamental role in the success of any product; it's a critical element of product marketing that fully warranted our attention, to establish how it's being used across the industry.

In many instances, we found ourselves giving Product Marketing teams a figurative pat on the back, with many respondents highlighting a willingness at their companies to invest in CI. Meanwhile, product marketers aren't losing sight of the importance of tracking direct and indirect competition.

However, this report has flagged areas for improvement. For example, it was somewhat perplexing to see as many as **12.9%** of Product marketers still aren't using tools to make their lives easier and improve the overall quality of competitive intelligence at their company. While some benefits can be attributed to completing tasks manually, automating the process with dedicated tools reduces the risk of inaccuracies in your intel.

Nonetheless, while there's room for improvement, the issues flagged can be easily rectified.

Conclusion

Richard King, **Founder of PMA,** gave his reaction to the findings from this year's report:

"There's no doubting the importance of competitive intelligence; every product marketer worth their salt needs to understand the intricacies of the area, and apply it within their company, hence why we've explored the topic in such depth.

"It was encouraging to see 62.3% of product marketers who took part in the survey said their company is budgeting for competitive intelligence - this is a positive trend that has to continue.

"The fact PMM teams are being given the responsibility of owning competitive intelligence is fantastic to see. It's indicative that the value PMMs bring to the table is continuing to be recognized.

"On the whole, there are signs of progression, not regression, and I'm excited to see further developments in the next installment."

PMA Product Marketing Alliance
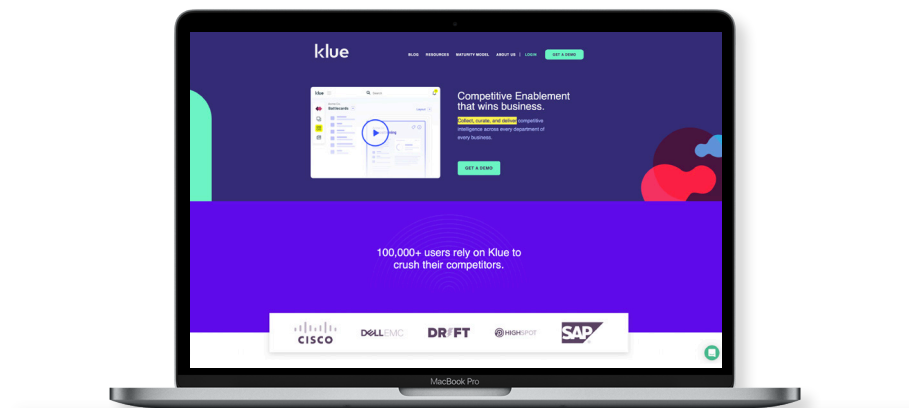
A special thank you

Sponsor

Klue is an AI-powered Competitive Enablement platform designed to help product marketers collect, curate, and deliver actionable competitor insights to empower revenue teams to win more business.

The tool enables enterprise sales teams to win more business by providing dynamic insights about competitors and uniquely brings together external competitive intel and internal knowledge from your team in the field. This makes it easy for Sales to access the information wherever they are.

Built by product marketers to give organizations the advantage in every competitive environment., Klue obsesses about your competition so you don't have to.

To learn more about Klue, visit **www.klue.com**

klue

PMA Product Marketing Alliance

A special thank you

Contributors

Lawrence Chapman

Copywriter

Lawrence is our Copywriter here at PMA who loves crafting content to keep readers informed, entertained, and enthralled. He's always open to feedback and would be thrilled to hear from you!

Richard King

Founder of Product Marketing Alliance

Rich is the Founder of Product Marketing Alliance and is endlessly thinking of ideas to help elevate the PMM role. He's responsible for what happens next with the community and if you've got ideas you think can help, he's happy to listen!

Bryony Pearce

Head of Content

Bryony's our Head of Content and you'll find her behind most of PMA's content and products. She's always hanging out in our Slack community and if you've got any feedback, she'd love to hear it!

Jon Sayer

Graphic Designer

Jon is our graphic designer and looks at all our design requirements. He's responsible for the layout and visual elements in this report and is always happy to hear your thoughts!