



The Cultural Content Report 2025

ONE—FURTHER

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About this report

The Cultural Content Report 2025 examines how performing arts, GLAM (galleries, libraries, archives and museums) and heritage organisations plan, produce and manage digital content.

- The **survey was open in autumn 2025**, gathering submissions from August to November.
- **182 respondents from 165 organisations**. All professionals with responsibility for creating or overseeing content at a cultural organisation.
- Respondents spanned a **mix of organisation sizes**: small organisations (0 to 20 staff): 22 percent, medium organisations (21 to 100 staff): 44 percent and large organisations (101 or more staff): 34 percent.
- Respondents worked **across performing arts, GLAM and heritage** organisations, along with a smaller number from adjacent sector support bodies.
- We asked them **20 questions** about the digital priorities, challenges, practices and ambitions for the coming year.

Building on 2022's findings

This report follows One Further's original Cultural Content Report, published in 2022.

Based on 169 responses from organisations across the UK, the US, Canada, Australia and the rest of Europe, this report found a sector that was ambitious but over-stretched.

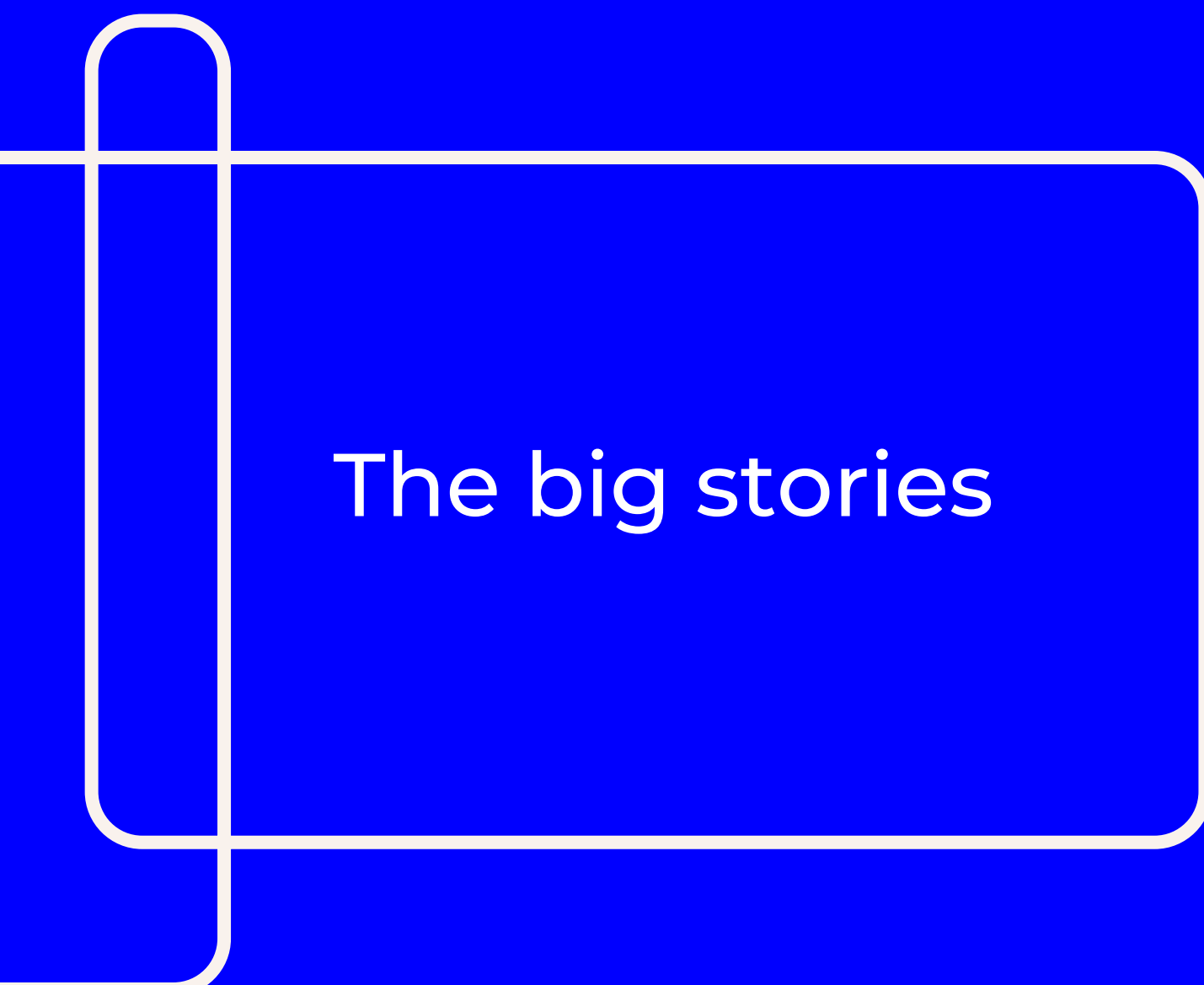


"Digital content teams are being asked to do more with less"

The Cultural Content Report 2022

Post-pandemic, the appetite and potential for digital content had never been greater, but investment and strategy were notably lacking.

Four years on, we were eager to see what's changed.



The big stories

OF

The big stories

1. Time is the biggest challenge

87% of respondents say a lack of time or headspace is what most holds back their content — by far the biggest barrier, well ahead of budget (58%).

2. 77% are using AI

Four in five organisations already use AI for something, even though most still lack a formal AI policy at this stage.

3. We're focused on the short-term

On a 10-point scale, content skews towards time-dependent material (6.6) over evergreen – prioritising the next campaign over content built to keep working long after it's published.

4. Social media is in flux

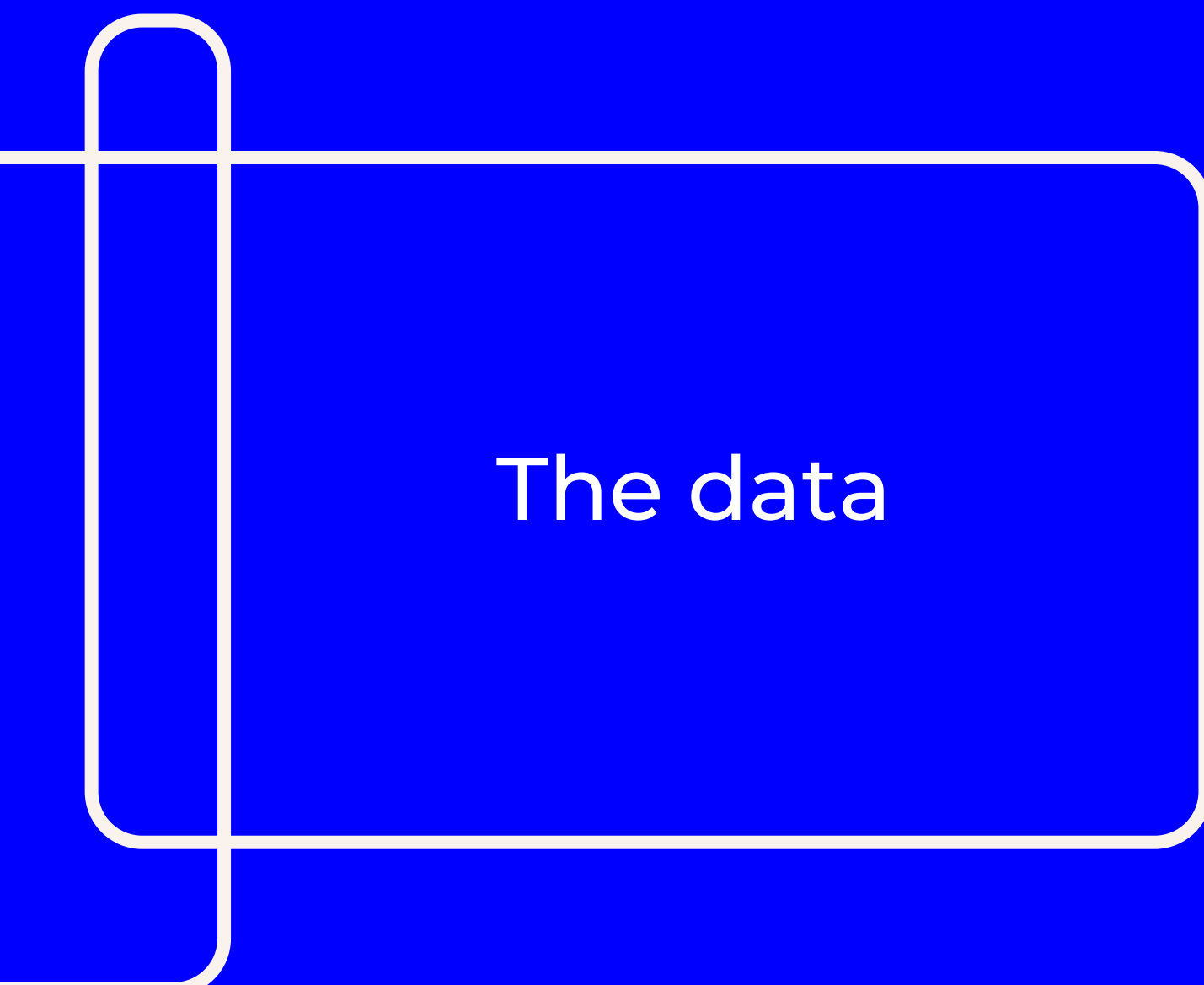
What was once a steady set of platforms for the sector is much more fluid at present. Video channels are clearly on the rise, but how organisations plug the gap left by X is less clear.

5. 69% are exploring monetisation

Seven in ten organisations are exploring at least one way to directly monetise their content – mostly advertising (54%) and sponsorship (32%) – a majority position, not a fringe experiment.

6. Strategy is (still) on the agenda

Just 48% of organisations have a documented content strategy in place – but developing one remains a clear priority for the year ahead.

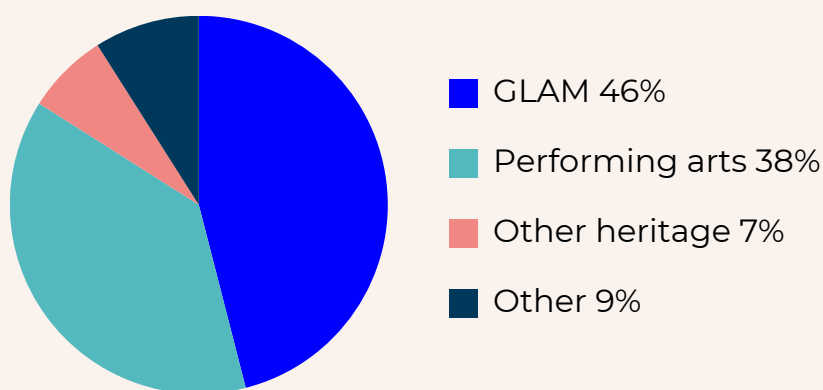


The data

1 About the respondents

Who took part?

Which of the following most closely matches your type of organisation?



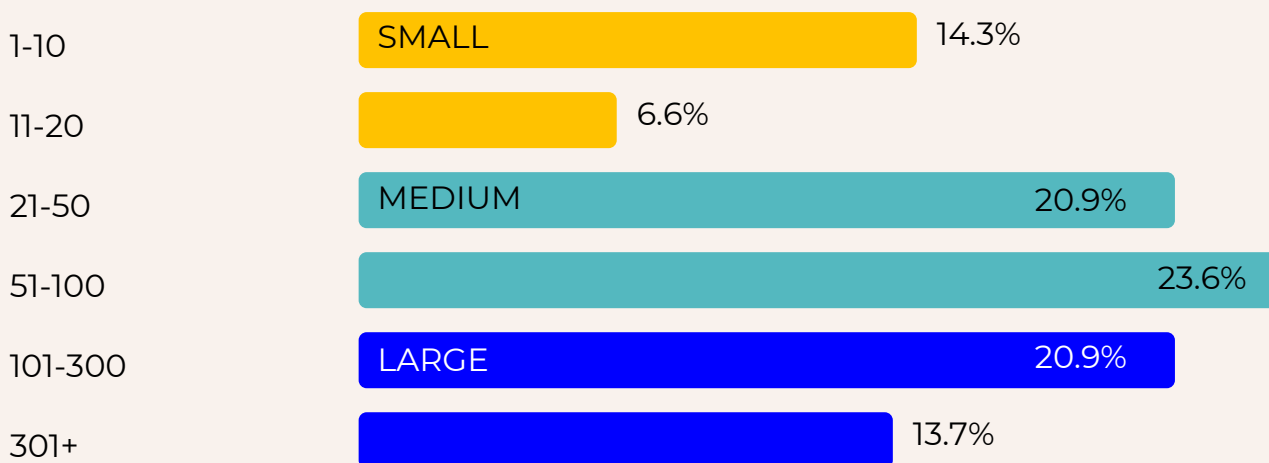
182
responses from
165 organisations

Responses to the survey came from across the UK, USA, Canada, Australia and Ireland, and from a range of organisations. Nearly half the responses came from Galleries, Libraries, Archives and Museums (GLAM), with performing arts respondents close behind at, 38%. The remaining 9% span a wide range of adjacent organisation types, such as sector support bodies and charities.

Small, medium or large?

Respondents range from major national institutions to smaller local organisations – with those in the middle, with 21-100 staff, the largest group.

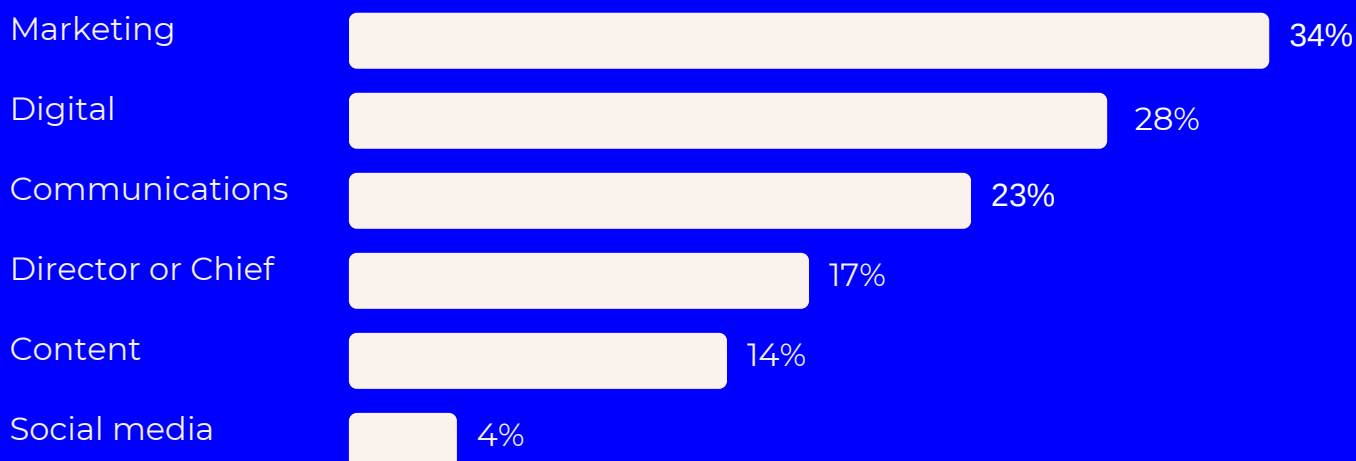
How many people work at your organisation?



Which roles responded?

A range of roles took part, most commonly from Marketing or Digital teams

What's your job title?



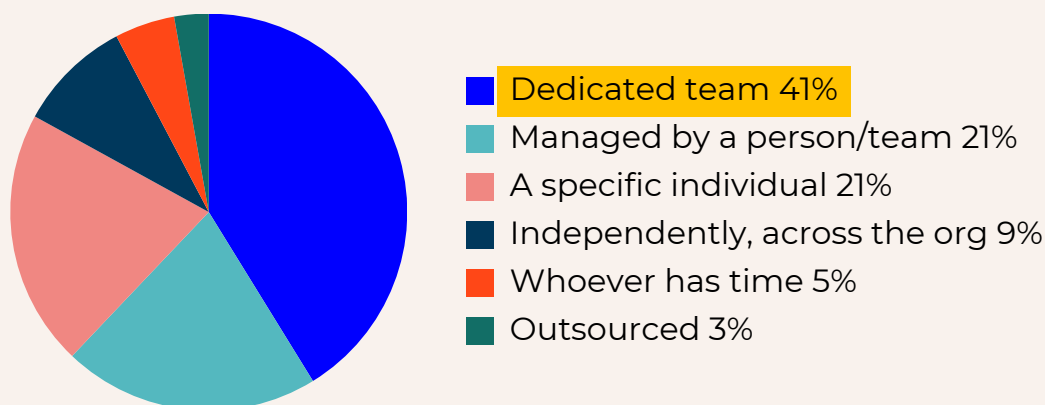
2 Planning and production

Since 2022, an increase in dedicated content roles suggests growing digital maturity and understanding of content's value in the sector.

But planning and time remain key barriers to success. The rise and rise of video is a key contributor, alongside the ongoing challenge of internal processes and politics.

Who produces content?

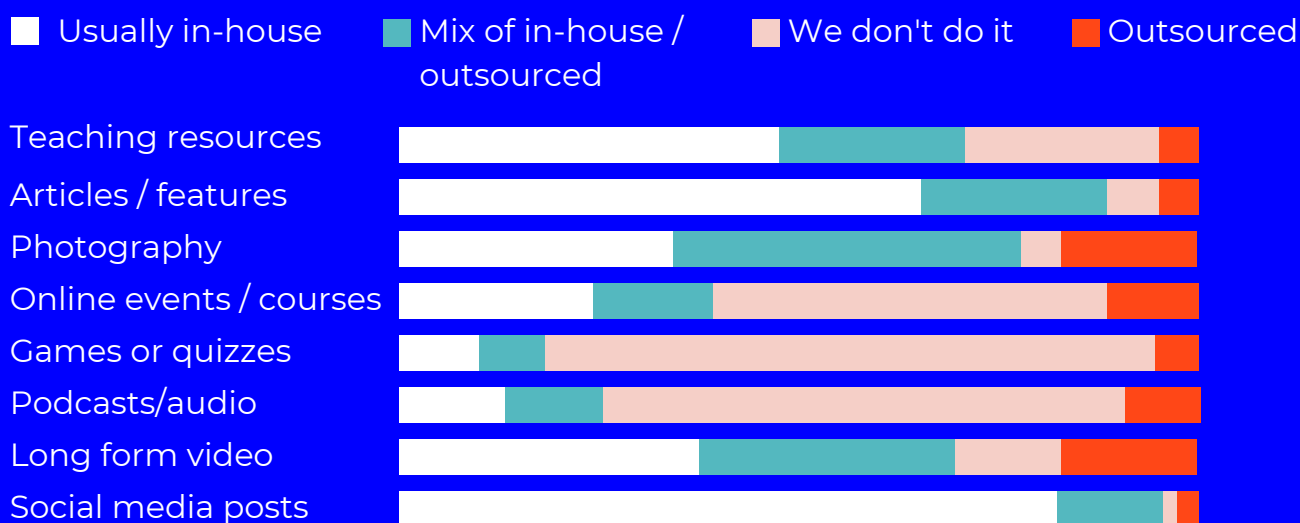
41% of organisations now have a dedicated team producing digital content – up from 17% in 2022. Together, 83% of organisations now have a dedicated team, a person or team coordinating others' contributions or a single named individual creating content. Naturally, large and medium organisations are most likely to have dedicated teams.



What do you create?

Articles and social posts are the most common types, while photography and video are the most outsourced.

Which of these do you make and which (if any) are outsourced?



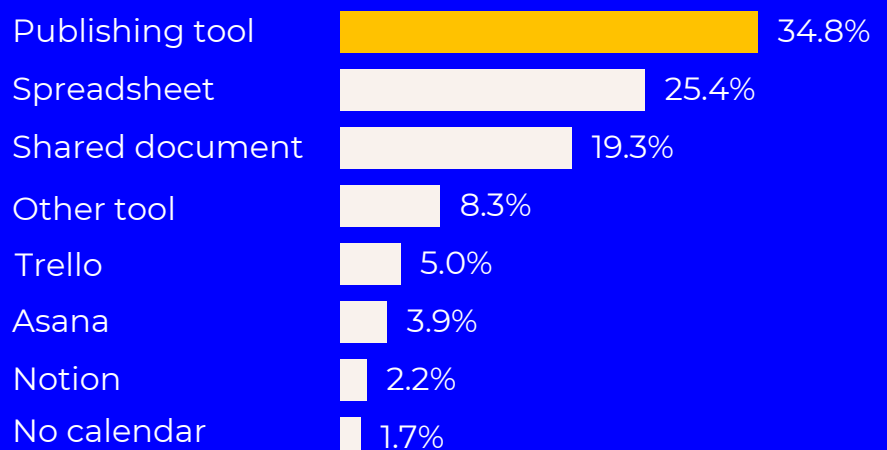
How is content planned?

We asked how far ahead organisations are working. Half of respondents said they work with a loose plan that often changes, while just 18% plan well in advance. On a par with 2022, this suggests the sector is still often operating reactively rather than strategically.



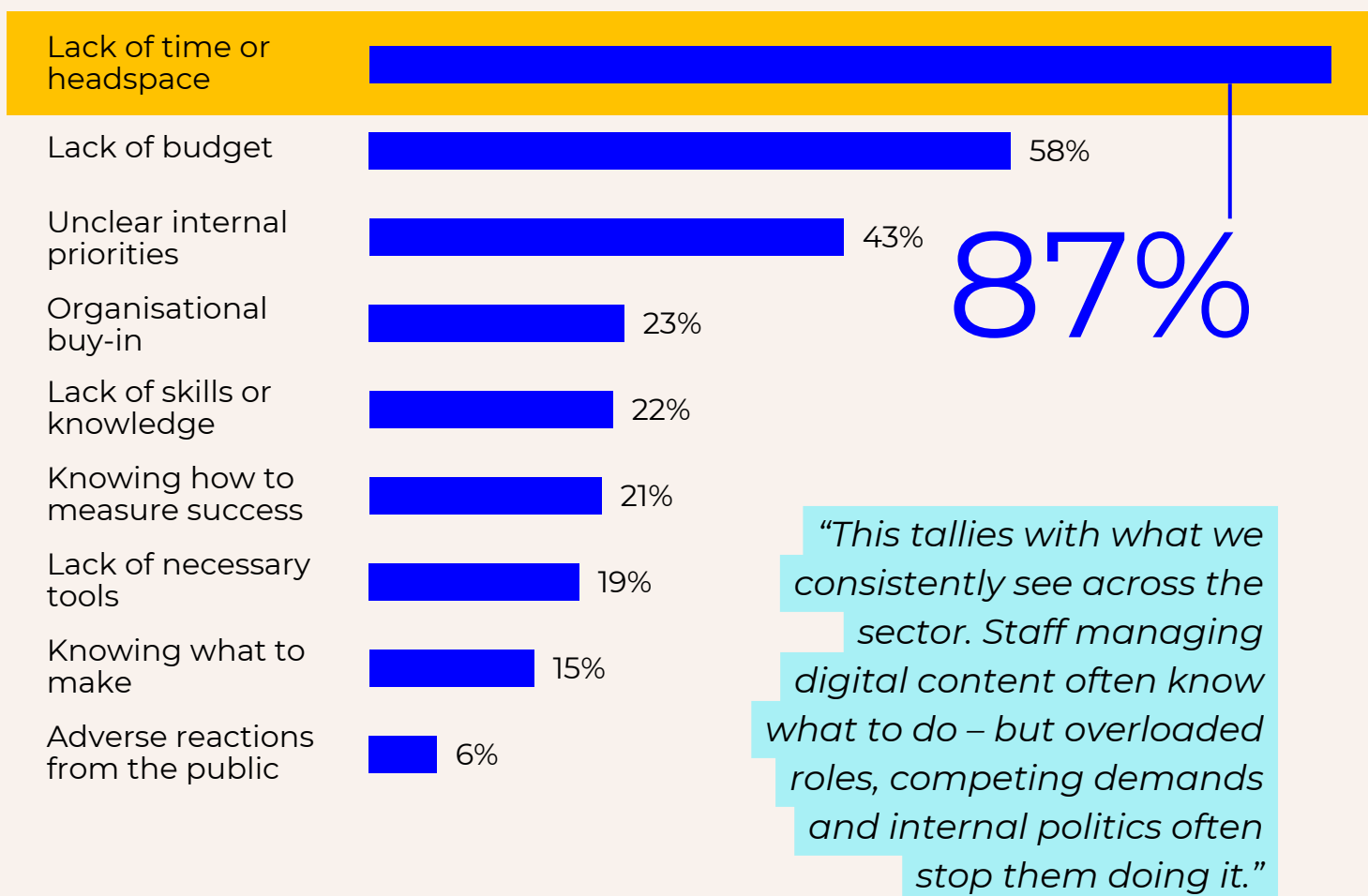
What do you use to plan your content calendar?

Most plan straight into a publishing tool, such as Sprout, or use a shared document or spreadsheet.



As in 2022, lack of time or headspace remains the biggest barrier to success

What hampers your ability to produce digital content?



Louise Cohen, Senior Digital Content Strategist

What takes up more time than you'd like?

Four themes emerge in the responses here – and often they appear in combination, building a picture of the same issues (headspace, lack of planning, short-term focus) that we see elsewhere in the report.

1. **Creating video** – the most mentioned task; particularly editing
2. **Internal processes** – sign-off, internal conversations, etc.
3. **Scheduling or posting mechanics** – getting content out
4. **Strategy and reporting** – more on this in the next section.

“Filming and editing. We have a very talented content creator but with the volume of day to day work we can't utilise her strengths to the fullest.”

“Internal conversations about difficult topics. Also all the emails and meetings many of which seem unnecessary”

“Physically building content in the CMS”

“Acquiring approved video content from artists.”

“Chasing people down to create/record the content they say they want to create”

“Short-form video editing”

“Continuing to trial new format types, with reflections from those informing our monthly content planning, and increasing the informality behind our content”.

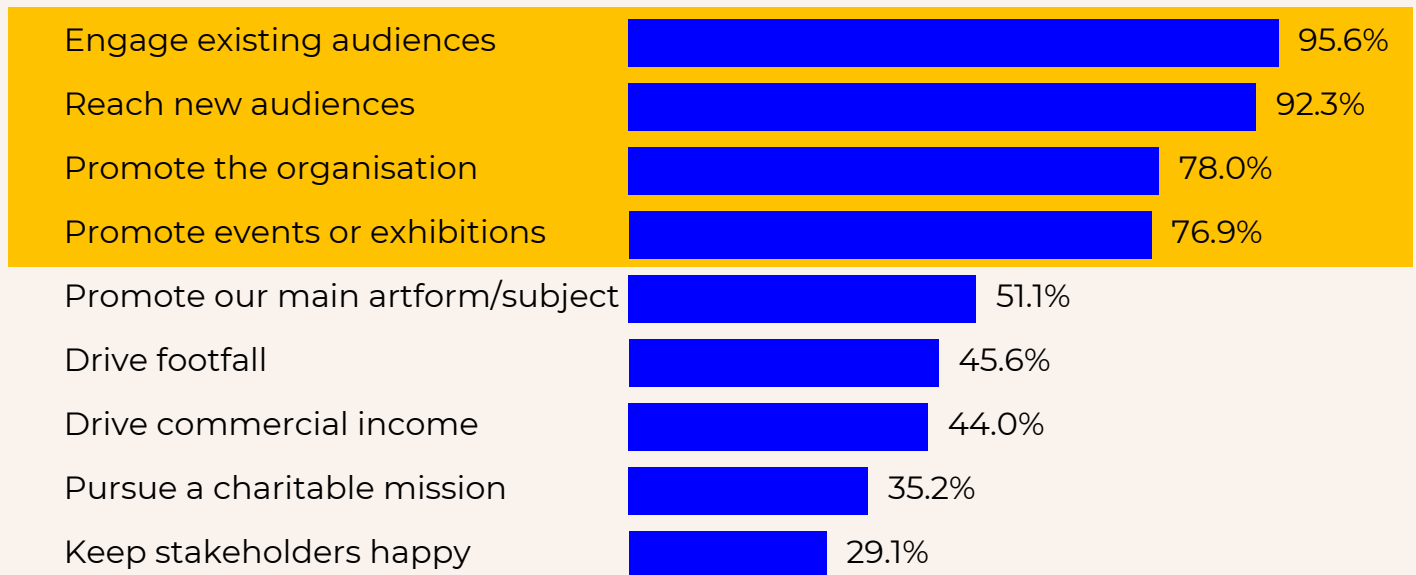
3 Content strategy

Here, there's good news. We see a sector that now recognises the value of strategy for content work. The bad news is, we still struggle to prioritise it.

Promotion and audience engagement compete as the top content goal, and time-dependent work now takes precedence over evergreen. On the upside, developing strategy remains a common ambition for the coming year.

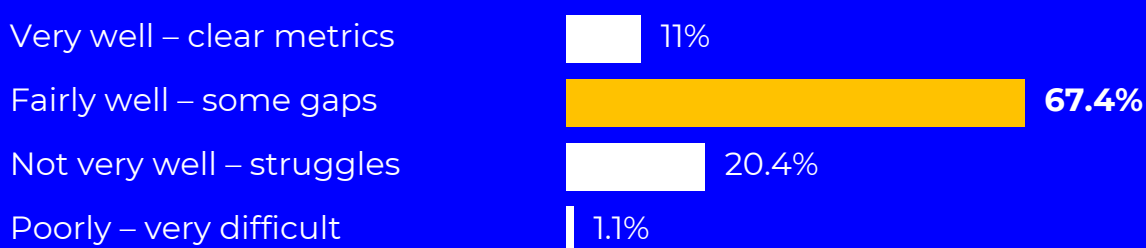
What are you trying to achieve?

Most organisations are trying to engage new and existing audiences, as well as promoting the organisation and its events. Interestingly, pursuing a mission is among the lowest responses, at 35%.



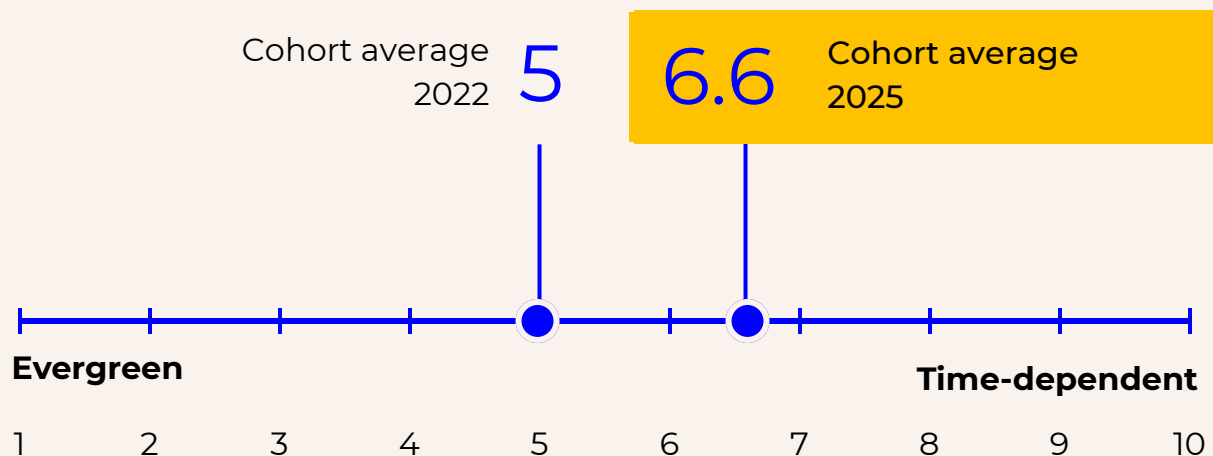
How well can you demonstrate impact to stakeholders?

Most respondents feel able to convey content's impact – although only 11% feel very confident about it. However, a later question reveals that only 42% have Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in place, suggesting there is room for more systematic measuring.



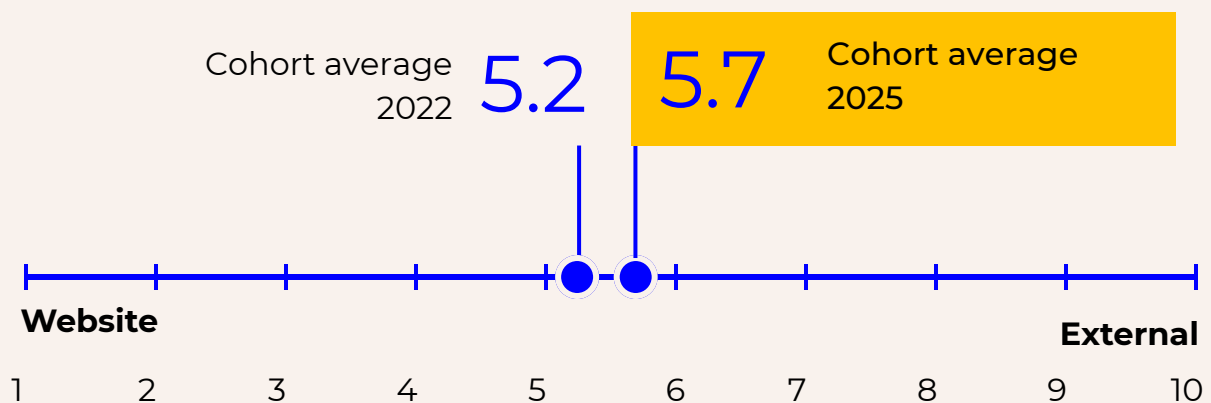
What's the balance: evergreen vs time-dependent content?

In 2022, time was roughly split between investment in long-term content, and that which has an immediate hook, such as an exhibition or production to promote. Since then, we can see focus has shifted towards the short-term – chiming with what we saw about reactive planning.



...and website content vs external platform content?

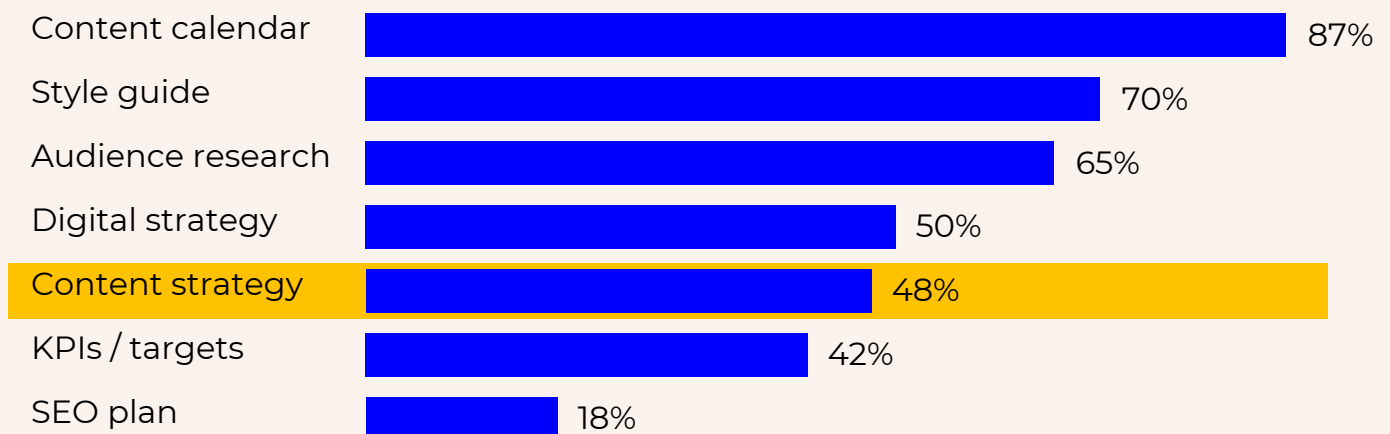
This figure remains closer to the 2022 figure, with just a slight shift towards third-party platforms – which might be due to the rise of social video and more organisations joining TikTok, or other factors.



More than 50% of organisations don't have a content strategy – but it's on the agenda

Which tools do you have in place?

While two thirds of organisations have done audience research, less than half have a content strategy in place. This sits alongside a wider toolkit that's better populated at the tactical end (90% have a content calendar, 70% a style guide) than the strategic end (48% content strategy, 50% digital strategy). However, when we arrive at the 'Looking ahead' section of this report, we see that there is good awareness around strategy, and an ambition to develop it

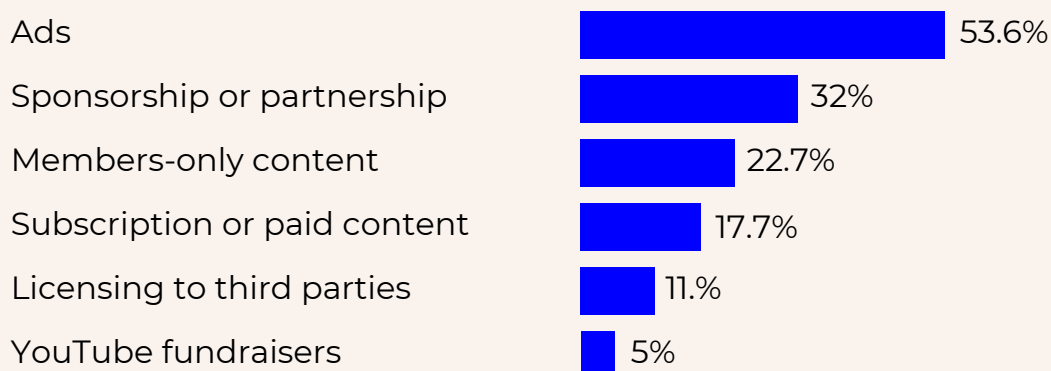


Are you exploring ways to monetise your digital content?

69%

of respondents are exploring at least one route to monetise their content

If yes, which routes?



A new question for 2025, and we can see that direct monetisation is no longer a fringe activity: most are exploring it in some capacity, most commonly through advertising and sponsorship or partnership deals.

Subscription and membership models sit further down the list, which is understandable given that this comes with complex considerations for arts organisations. But we may well see this smaller proportion increase over time, with several examples of subscription content successfully established in the sector.

"Ads top the list, but most cultural organisations don't have the traffic to make them pay. The best routes build on what makes your content distinctive, like sponsorship, membership and licensing. The organisations that do well here will be the ones that treat monetisation as part of their audience strategy. Paid content can work when people already value what you publish and trust you to keep delivering it."

Chris Unitt, Director

4 Social media

Here we can see social media in a state of transition. Organisations are shifting channels and shifting focus – with the rise of video again a key theme.

That opportunity brings the issues we've seen around production and resourcing, and the mood around social reflects that challenge.

How has your approach to social media evolved in the past year?

64%

**have left at least one
channel in the past year**

58%

**are making
more video**

Which other changes?



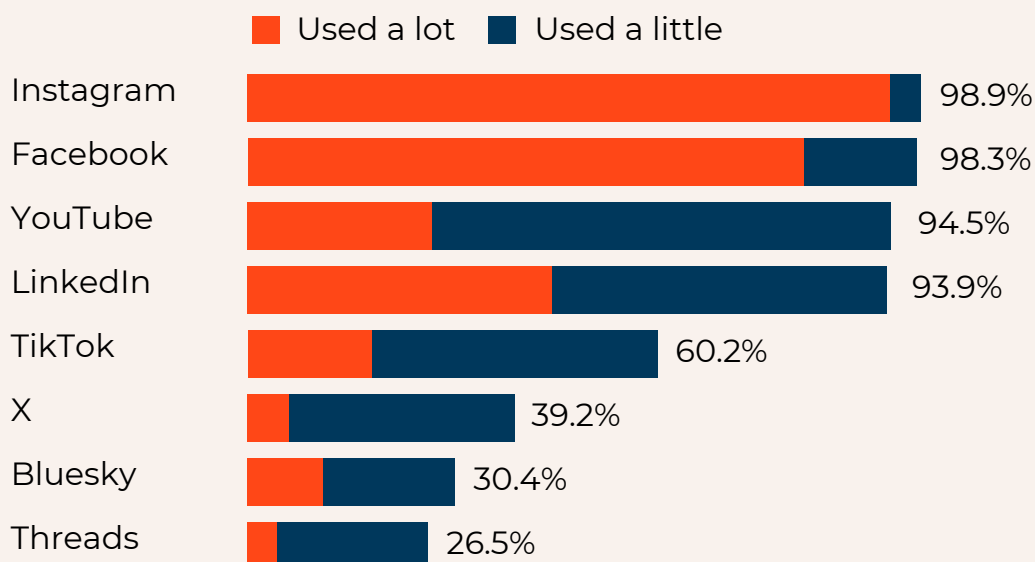
The figures here suggest a state of flux for social media. The 64% who have left a channel in the past year very likely reflects the exodus from X – while 58% suggests TikTok take-up (which we'll see in the next section), as well as more emphasis on YouTube and video within other social channels.

We can also see a substantial portion working on their tactics and strategy, with 39% focusing on schedule and 35% working on strategy.

X is out, TikTok is in. But Instagram still runs social

Which social channels does your organisation use regularly?

Ranked by % of organisations using each channel at all

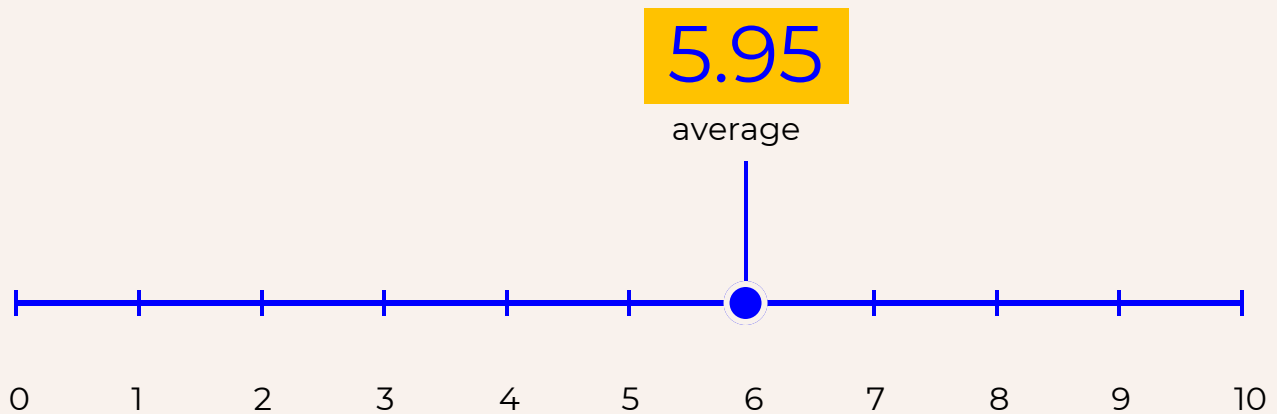


Instagram and Facebook use is now near-universal, with Instagram particularly dominant – 95% using it “a lot”. YouTube and LinkedIn are also on the up, with almost everyone using them to some degree – but clearly secondary in priority. It’s interesting to see 60% now on TikTok, albeit a good portion potentially toe-dipping rather than fully committing at this stage.

Meanwhile, only 6% now use X a lot, although a further 33% still use it “a little” – perhaps nervous to make the leap to leave. Bluesky and Threads are in use by a smaller minority, likely by some organisations experimenting with these text-based platforms as a potential replacement for X. We’ve seen great examples of organisations building strong engagement on both platforms – but clearly the jury is still out on whether one will emerge as a default successor to X.

How are you feeling about social media generally (1-10)?

Mean 5.95, median 6, out of 181 answers



0 = very negative → 10 = very positive

Perhaps reflecting the challenges we've seen earlier in the report, the sector's mood on social media isn't wildly enthusiastic, sitting just positive of neutral. Almost half (47%) score 7 or higher, but a meaningful fifth (21%) score 4 or below, so this isn't a settled picture. That matches the reshuffling of channels and formats we've seen, and the opportunity and challenge of video content.

5 AI and technology

It's clear that the cultural sector is adopting AI as part of its practices – more for internal processes than creating public-facing content at this stage.

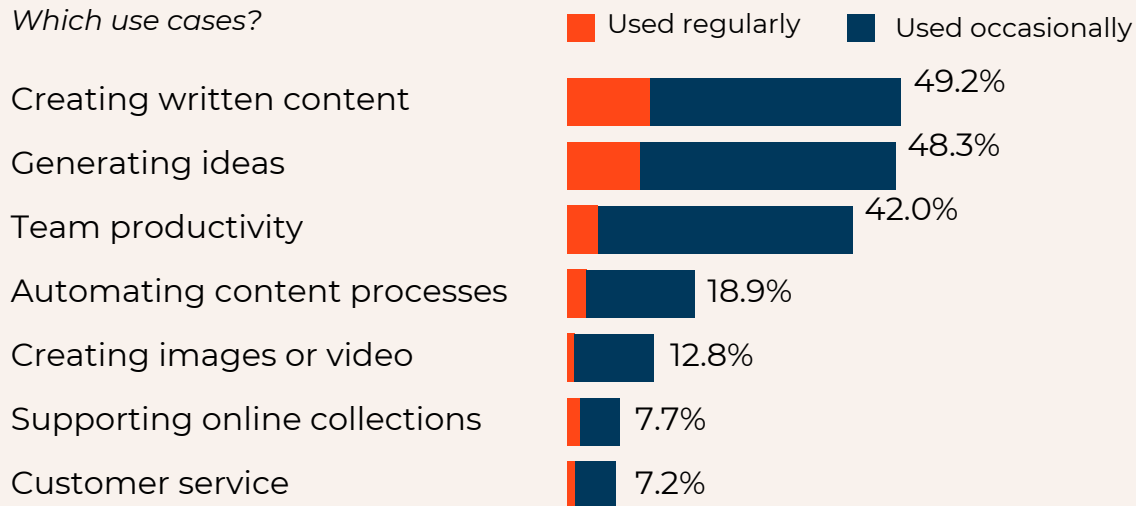
But those practices are largely yet to be formalised, and we're likely to see usage change as that happens.

Are you currently using AI?

77%

of respondents use AI for at least one part of their content work

Which use cases?



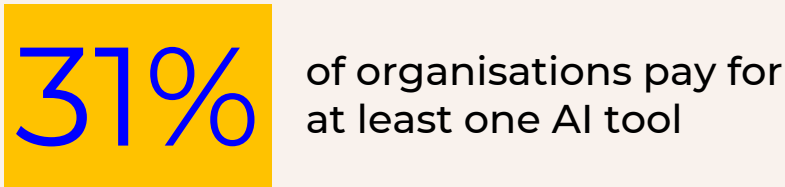
It's clear that AI is now a part of most cultural organisations' working patterns. Almost 80% have used it in some capacity, and almost half (49%) have used it to create written content – although currently it's mostly occasional use.

We can also see teams introducing it to support under-the-hood processes, such as brainstorming, note-taking, and summarising, which have the potential to alleviate the pressures we've seen earlier in the report.

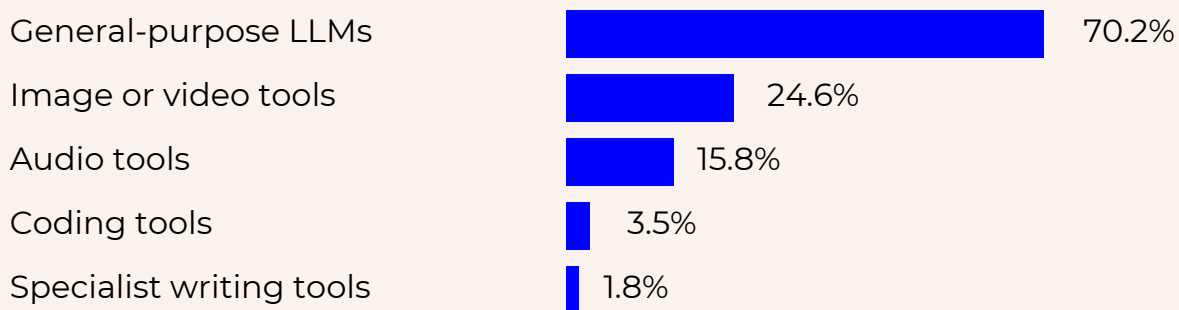
But to temper that picture of widespread adoption, it's worth noting that *regular* (not just occasional) use is much rarer: only 20% use AI regularly for any purpose at all. Aside from creating text, uses closer to the audience (supporting collections, customer service) remain marginal (7-8%), as does image or video generation (13%).

Do you pay for AI tools?

(outside of those bundled with Teams, Google Workspace, etc)



Which tools do they pay for? (of the 57 who pay for something)



Around a third of organisations are paying for an AI tool, beyond what's bundled into Microsoft or Google workspace subscriptions.

For the majority of those, that means a general-purpose tool (70% of paying organisations pay for ChatGPT, Claude or similar).

Paid image/video tools (25%) and audio tools (16%) trail well behind, and coding or specialist writing tools are rare (under 4% each) – consistent with low usage in these areas at present (see previous page).

"If two-thirds of organisations aren't paying for AI, that means a lot of staff must be using free versions or personal accounts. That brings up some awkward questions about data protection and governance. And of course, paying for a tool is the easy part. The organisations getting the most from AI will be the ones that invest time in training their staff and finding the most effective ways to use them."

Chris Unitt, Director

AI use is growing faster than the governance around it

Do you have an AI policy?



Only 1 in 10 organisations (10%) has a finished AI policy in place. What's more notable is that 67% of those who answered "No" also said that they are already using AI in some capacity. We can see attempts to address this lag, however, with 46% of respondents in the process of creating an AI usage policy.

"Content teams using AI is inevitable, and its swift uptake is understandable. Busy teams may well have a better sense of how AI can benefit their work than senior leadership, which, particularly in larger organisations, can be slow to mobilise on policy. But content teams would be safer and more productive if they could operate transparently and collaboratively within a set of agreed uses. Digital and content teams may need to instigate these conversations, and should certainly have a formative voice in them."

Louise Cohen, Senior Content Strategist

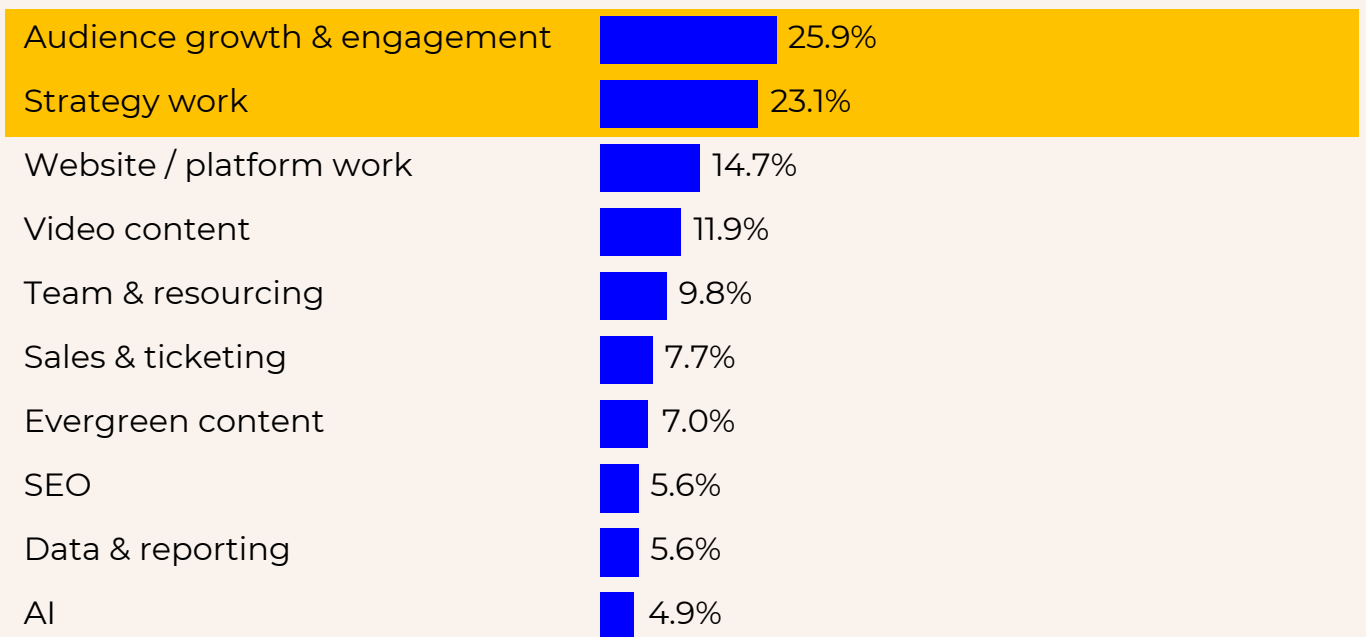
6 Looking ahead

With many teams working more reactively than they'd like, the key ambitions for the period ahead make sense: focus on audiences, implement strategy.

The final question, offering content professionals an imaginary £10k to spend, confirms that need, and the challenges to actually doing it.

What are you most focused on for the year ahead?

Looking ahead, around half the cohort is working on audience growth or strategy development. We've included a few of the responses below.



Base: 143 answered (noticeably more respondents skipped this question than others).

"Now that I have a bit more mental headspace, creating a social media strategy"

Improving digital and social strategy, and diversifying our use of different platforms to mitigate over-reliance on Meta"

"Content audits to support (digital) storytelling"

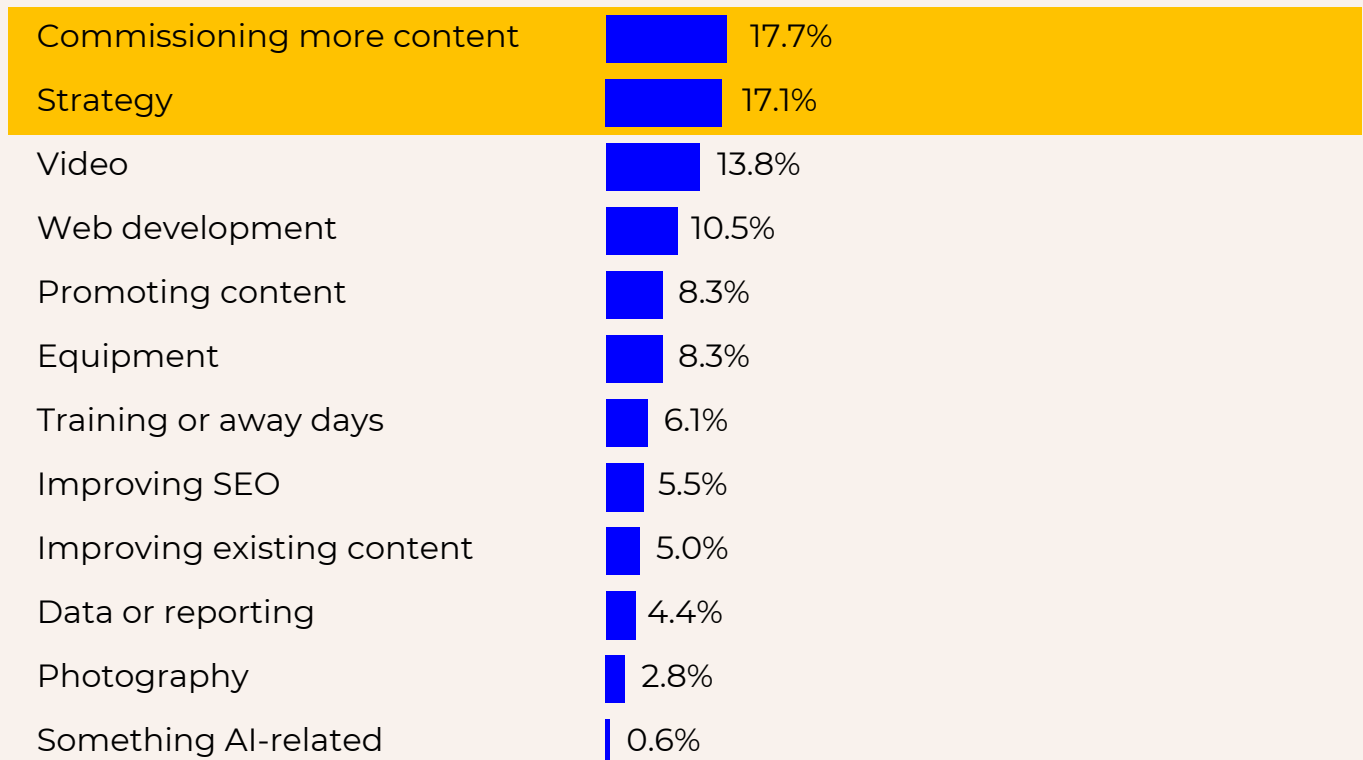
"Implementing our audience engagement framework that seeks to gauge content success by segmenting by audiences by motivation and mission."

"Communicating a refreshed strategy, highlighting the value / success of our content"

"Involving staff across the Business in creating more content."

If you were gifted £10k, what would you spend it on?

Given a free £10k, we can see organisations splitting across a range of provided options. But interestingly, the two most common – more content, and strategy – add to the picture of a sector that wants to be more strategic, but is struggling to meet daily demands.



Base: 181 answered

“This one really encapsulates the issue. What teams want most is more content, and strategy – and it’s the competition between these two things that keeps them in deadlock. The drum beat of demands and production squeezes out strategy work – but strategy helps control that pipeline, explain decision-making to stakeholders and makes space for creativity and better, data-informed work. I really empathise with how hard it is to carve out the time, but it’s great to see a good chunk of the sector focused on this for the year ahead.”

Louise Cohen, Senior Content Strategist

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One Further is a digital consultancy that helps cultural organisations understand and better serve the needs of their online audiences.

We take the guesswork out of digital.

We do that using website analytics, usability research, search engine optimisation, Google Ad Grant management and content strategy.

Our clients include the British Museum, Royal Academy of Arts, Royal Museums Greenwich, Royal Shakespeare Company, Tate and the V&A.

If you think we might be able to help you, get in touch at onefurther.com.

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