

Marketers have a *really* **BIG** data problem

New research from Funnel shows that marketing teams are missing data-fluent people, which is weighing down performance and morale.

Discover all the details, and learn how companies can change course in 2023.

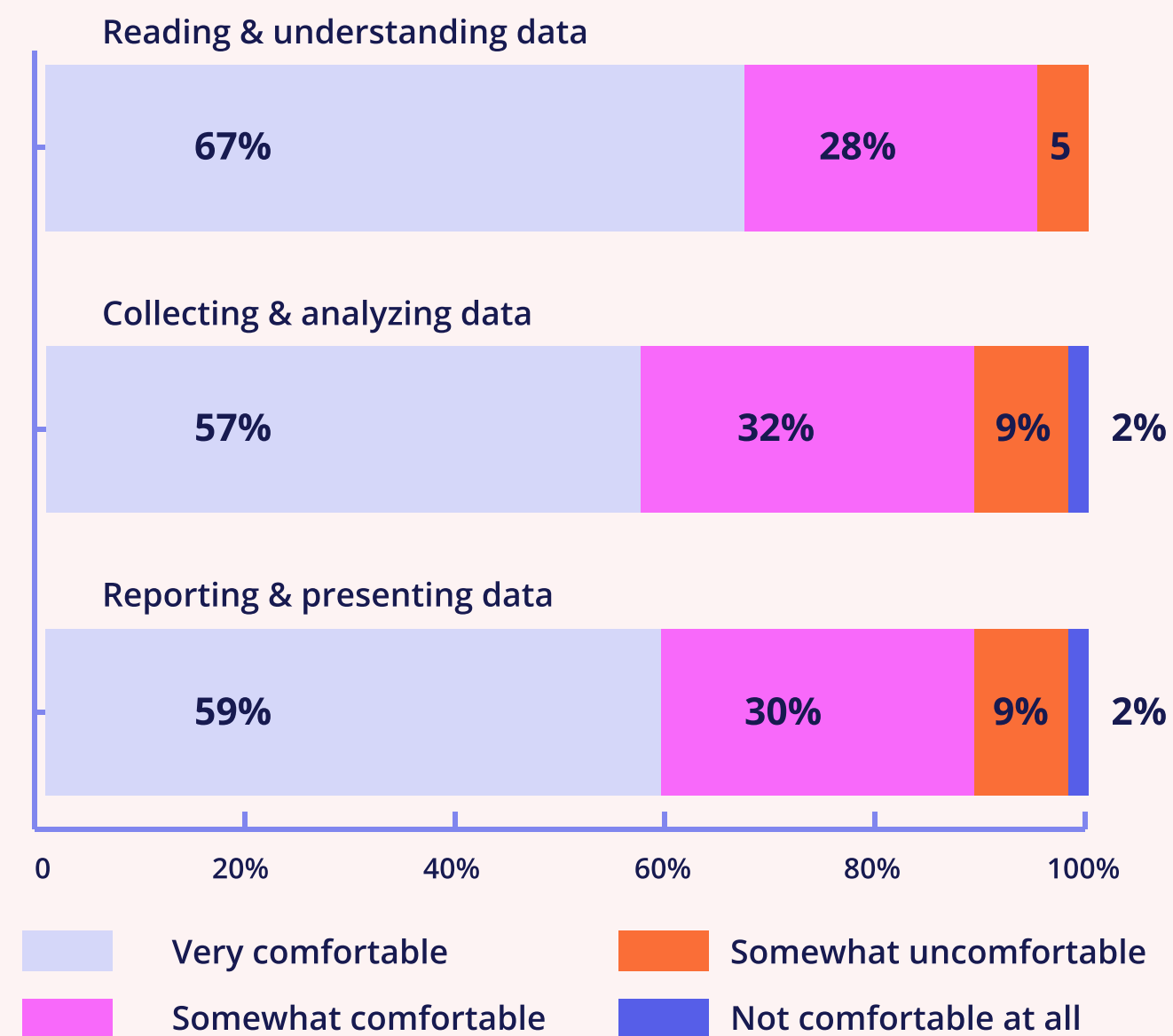


Lots of data *but* too few data people

Most marketers (59%) tell us their teams are “highly data driven,” but a shockingly high number also say they’re not really data people themselves. Curious.

What’s more, one in three marketers say they aren’t very comfortable reading and understanding data. The share is even higher for skills like analyzing, reporting and presenting.

How comfortable are you working with data in the following areas? (%)



What about the people who work in data-rich jobs, like performance marketers, analysts, and media buyers? Is their data fluency any better?

Yes, but not as high as you’d expect. In that group, 36% say they’re not very comfortable reading and understanding data, and 41% say they’re not very comfortable collecting, analyzing, reporting and presenting data.



RIGHT NOW, I'M THE ONLY ONE IN THE COMPANY SKILLED ENOUGH TO TAKE CARE OF EVERY STEP IN THE PROCESS: CONNECTING, TRANSFORMING AND OUTPUTTING DATA IN COMPREHENSIVE DASHBOARDS.

- Marketing generalist at a mid-sized company

3 in 4 marketing leaders say improving their team's data skills is a high priority in 2023.

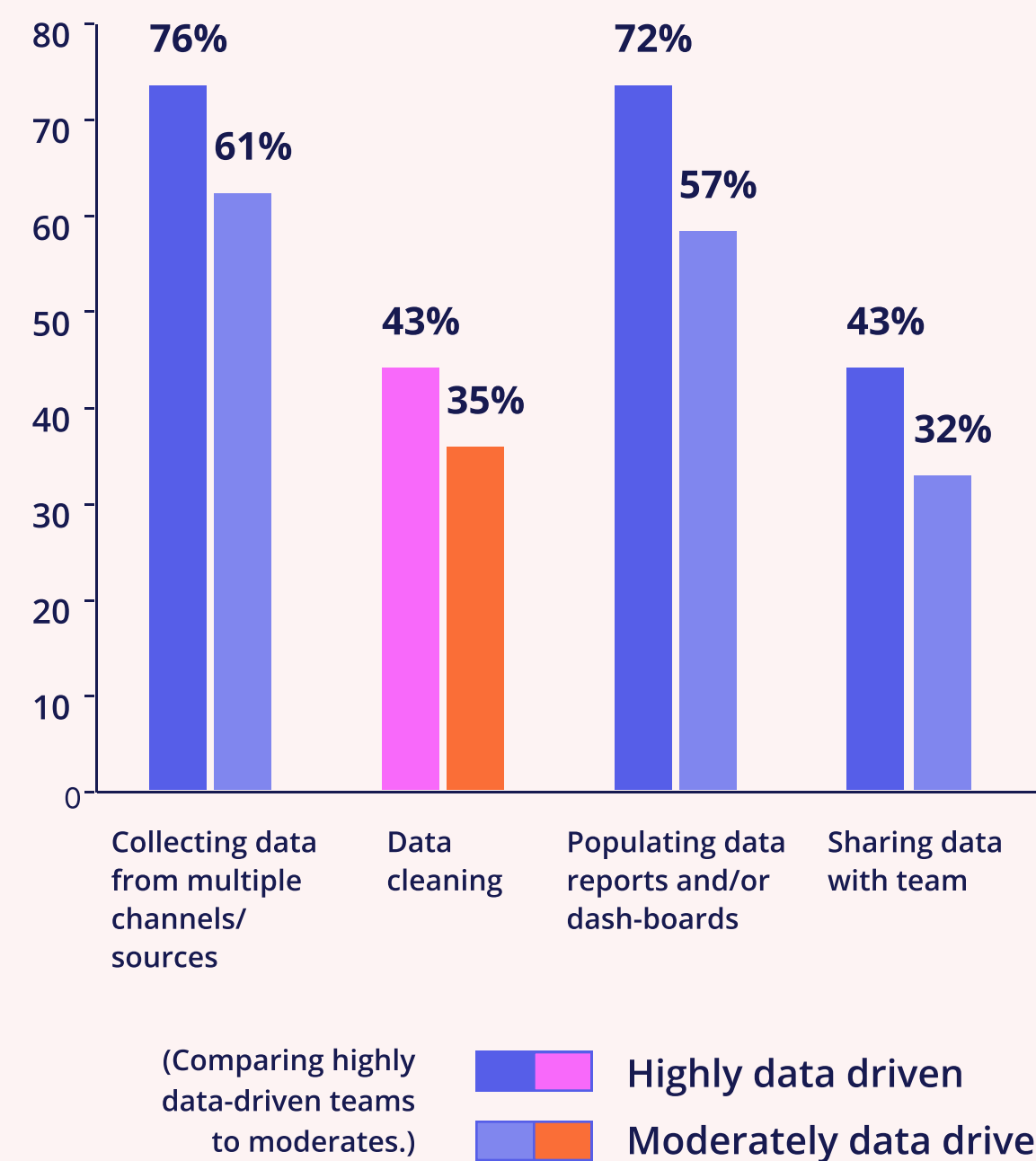
To be fair, it's not only a people problem

Let's not blame it all on missing data skills. There are plenty of problems to go around like complexity, data silos, incomplete technology solutions, and more.

We discovered that marketers spend too much time on low-value, repetitive work, and too little on high-value knowledge work.

Manual data cleaning slows down marketers

Q: Which parts of the data collection / reporting process are automated?



In fact, 55 percent of marketing managers told us they spend too much time on data maintenance. Or as one person told us, "I'm stuck in a perpetual hamster wheel of sourcing, cleaning, and reporting. My company pays me to THINK, but I honestly do very little of that."



DATA CLEANUP / MAINTENANCE TAKES 80% OF OUR TIME – THAT'S JUST MANAGING THE DAY-TO-DAY. WE SPEND SO MUCH TIME ON DATA HYGIENE THAT IT STANDS IN THE WAY OF SURFACING CLEAR AND ACTIONABLE BUSINESS-LEVEL INSIGHTS.

- Marketing generalist at a mid-sized company

Top 3 challenges for marketing teams:

1. Data fragmentation (51%)
2. Data gaps (51%)
3. Dirty data (45%)

Rethinking what “data-driven” means for 2023

Marketers have two critical mandates for 2023: reducing data “friction” (i.e., all the things that make data hard to access, aggregate, analyze and report), and developing greater data literacy across the marketing team. We know it’s not easy, but every journey begins with a first step.



Here’s how
to get started:

Identify points of friction:

Take inventory of your organization’s points of data friction, then plan to address some of these in 2023. For some organizations, this means investing in a platform that can aggregate data from disparate sources. For others, some work will be needed to reduce silos and improve data quality.



DO TODAY:

Target one significant point of data friction to eliminate in the next 12 months.

Upskill:

Offer training in Excel and Google Sheets (think: clean, calculate, pivot, automate, chart and graph, etc.). But don’t stop there. Give employees the power to think critically: question data, contextualize it, and convincingly present it to others. Just because someone can build a dashboard does not mean they can think critically about the information.



DO TODAY:

Set 2023 data knowledge goals for each member of the team.

Work smarter, not harder

Automate:

Take people out of the data-hygiene process where possible. Pair your investments in automation technology with investments in data management — things like integrating data sources, breaking down organizational data silos, and designing clear, consistent performance dashboards. (And don't forget to practice good data hygiene, for example by using UTM naming conventions – a powerful way to track users across channels.) The end goal is to devote more time to open-ended data exploration and less time to low-value data tidying tasks.



DO TODAY:

Evaluate your data management / automation tech stack by asking whether you can reduce the number of tools you use.

Empower:

When your team spends less time on data wrangling (e.g. cleaning, organizing, visualizing), they'll have more time for higher-value activities like testing, experimenting, and optimizing. Just be sure open-ended experimentation has some parameters. For example, consider in advance the amount of time different exercises require versus the value of what you'll learn.



DO TODAY:

Brainstorm areas worth investigating and optimizing, then create a testing plan for the quarter based on data and industry trends.