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# **Digital Marketing and IP**

**(Benchmarking Study 2025)**

**Commissioned by: [weareip](#)**

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## Foreward



Digital marketing in 2025 is best understood as professional visibility and credibility at scale. Buyers rarely rely on referrals alone; they increasingly validate expertise through what they can quickly observe online - profile, positioning, proof and clarity. In the Intellectual Property (IP) sector, this dynamic is amplified: clients often struggle to evaluate IP services before committing to purchase, IP work is technical, and decision-making is frequently influenced by perceived clarity and credibility. Many IP professionals also operate as solo practitioners or in small teams, where fee-earning delivery work naturally takes priority over marketing activities.

This report, *Digital Marketing and IP*, is designed to reflect that reality and represents the first evidence-based analysis **that brings together directional insights from IP professionals on how they currently engage with digital marketing**: what they feel confident doing, where capability gaps remain, which channels they use and perceive as effective, how their websites function as business development assets, what constraints block consistent execution, which client segments are hardest to reach and which aspects of IP services and brand value are hardest to communicate clearly.

The study also has a forward-facing objective. **It aims to support better decisions by IP professionals and firms on where to focus marketing energy, while laying a baseline for future studies on how digital marketing adoption evolves in the IP sector.** It also reflects a broader mission: empowering IP professionals and IP firms to play an active role increasing awareness and uptake of IP rights globally.

Readers are encouraged to use the findings as a practical benchmark rather than a scorecard. **The report is most valuable when it helps IP Professionals prioritise what to improve first** - especially the marketing assets and tactics that can reduce friction for prospects and convert their interest into enquiries.

weareip led the research exercise, including questionnaire design, data collection, analysis and reporting. We extend sincere thanks to the IP professionals who participated. Their inputs help move the profession forward from “IP marketing as an afterthought” to “IP marketing as a professional competence”.

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## Executive summary

Overall, IP professionals emerge as **active participants in digital marketing**, with behaviour centred on high-trust, reputation-led channels rather than aggressive performance advertising. The overall picture is not “non-participation”, but **participation under pressure**: respondents show appetite to improve, yet progress is constrained by time, capability and the need for clearer pathways from visibility to enquiries.

Respondents report being **most confident in credibility-building marketing concepts**, particularly LinkedIn content creation and thought leadership, corporate brand identity, and website optimisation. Confidence is weakest around paid advertising and conversion tools such as Google Ads, live chats and landing pages, suggesting that **many practices are stronger on visibility foundations than on conversion mechanics**.

Marketing capability is also increasingly treated as **baseline professional competence**. Strengthening marketing skills is rated important/very important by 63%, with only 4% viewing it as not important, indicating that many IP professionals see marketing as part of modern practice development - provided it is practical and outcomes-linked.

Client targeting is **multi-segment**, which creates a built-in messaging challenge. Most respondents target SMEs (77%), while substantial shares also target large organisations and IP peers (≈65% each) and startups (60%), implying that a single “one-size-fits-all” proposition risks becoming too generic to convert.

Channel usage and perceived effectiveness reinforce a **trust-led operating model**. LinkedIn is the dominant channel in active use (85%), followed by participation in IP events and conferences (73%) and the website (65%). In channel effectiveness, IP events and conferences lead (73% effective/very effective) followed by LinkedIn (63%). IP Professionals frame the key opportunity as optimising these already-adopted channels and reducing “busy marketing” that creates visibility without conversion.

Websites appear to perform better as **credibility checkpoints than as conversion engines**. Basic functions score stronger (visual appeal 52%; clarity 50% effective/very effective), while many respondents report not offering lead generation tools on websites such as free downloads (50% not offered), online chat (50% not offered) and CRM connection (42% not offered). In parallel, there is clear intent to add conversion features - especially booking (58%), testimonials (54%) and email

capture (50%) - positioning the website as a “trust hub” together with a frictionless next step (lead generation tool).

Perceived complexity of the IP industry **is a central context for the profession**. Two-thirds (67%) agree that IP’s specialised nature, intangible benefits and low public understanding make marketing IP services particularly complex, pointing to a structural challenge that rewards those who can translate expertise into client-friendly clarity and proof rather than simply increasing output volume.

**Marketing execution constraints are predominantly operational**. The leading obstacles are limiting marketing budget (54%) and lack of time (50%), followed by difficulty targeting the right audience (46%) and lack of marketing knowledge/expertise (35%); 20% also cite difficulty finding a marketing agency that understands the IP industry. These results underline the value of a simplified, focused marketing system that can run alongside fee-earning IP work.

When asked which clients are hardest to reach, respondents most often identify international clients (60%) and large national corporations (54%), **indicating that the highest-value segments are also the highest-friction to access**. The interpretation is that these audiences require stronger credibility signals, clearer positioning and evidence-led authority from IP professionals before engagement becomes likely.

The hardest communication challenges for IP professionals are centred on **positioning and differentiation**. Half of respondents cite communicating their unique value proposition (50%) as hardest, and 46% cite differentiation from competitors; around one-third highlight service complexity (33%) and pricing/packages (33%). This suggests that the primary conversion unlock for many practices is not more visibility, but clearer meaning - why this specific IP professional is the right choice.

Looking ahead, planned investment intent is strongly **foundations-first**. The strongest priorities are LinkedIn profile optimisation (71%), creating engaging LinkedIn content (69%), developing a marketing plan/strategy (65%) and optimising the website as a business development asset (63%), while paid LinkedIn advertising shows the lowest appetite (**19%**) and high uncertainty. These results frame a preference by IP professionals to strengthen first compounding credibility and conversion assets, before adopting any paid advertising.

## **Conclusions**

The findings suggest **that IP professionals are not resistant to marketing; rather, marketing participation is shaped by practical constraints and category realities**. The results consistently

indicate that time pressure, limited internal capability and budget limitations restrict consistency, which in turn limits the ability to convert marketing activity into a predictable flow of enquiries.

The channel mix is already aligned with how clients typically discover and validate IP expertise today. **LinkedIn, IP conferences and events, and websites are widely used and are perceived as effective - particularly IP conferences and LinkedIn** - indicating that the primary opportunity lies in improving execution quality, consistency and conversion pathways within the channels already adopted.

A final recurring theme is that the **most difficult marketing problem is not “explaining IP;” but explaining why a specific IP professional or firm is the right choice.** Differentiation and unique value proposition emerge as dominant pain points, reinforced by the broader belief that IP is difficult to market due to its intangible nature and low public understanding.

### **Recommended future digital marketing actions**

First, **establish a lightweight operating model that fits fee-earning realities:** assign clear marketing ownership, adopt a minimum weekly rhythm, and prioritise one primary channel system - most commonly LinkedIn - supported by repeatable content formats and consistent follow-up. This responds directly to the dominant constraint of limited time and the reported uncertainty about where to start.

Second, **strengthen conversion infrastructure so visibility reliably turns into conversations.** The evidence points to high demand for practical conversion tools: sharpen LinkedIn profiles and positioning, build proof assets (testimonials/case examples), and upgrade websites into trust-and-conversion hubs with clear calls-to-action and frictionless next steps such as booking pathways and lead capture.

Third, **apply targeted strategies for the hardest-to-reach segments and the hardest-to-communicate messages.** For international and corporate buyers, invest in authority and credibility signals - segment-specific messaging, evidence-led narratives, and consistent thought leadership - while simultaneously standardising a clear differentiation story that makes “why you” instantly legible to non-experts and reduces IP complexity scepticism.

## 1. Setting the scene: context and rationale

Digital marketing in 2025 is best understood as **professional visibility + trust at scale**. Buyers rarely start with a referral alone nowadays. They validate credibility by searching online: profile, positioning, proof, and clarity. In that sense, marketing is no longer separate from professional practice - it is part of how expertise is assessed.

In the IP sector, this dynamic is amplified:

- Clients often struggle to evaluate IP services before committing to purchase.
- IP work is technical, but client decisions are often driven by perceived clarity and trust.
- Most IP professionals operate either as solo-consultants or in small teams - where delivery of IP work takes priority over marketing activities.

This study reflects that reality. The findings show strong interest in marketing improvement, but also clear friction around time, skills and planning.

Marketing is also used differently depending on the IP professional profile:

- **Partners/owners** often carry responsibility but face time bottlenecks.
- **Solo practitioners** need efficient, repeatable systems that generate credibility without heavy overheads.
- **Associates within IP firms** may have execution capacity but limited mandate or strategy ownership.

The findings in this report are intended to:

- Benchmark current practice: provide a clear baseline of how IP professionals are currently using digital marketing (as a reference point for future studies and comparison).
- Prioritise what to focus on first: help IP professionals and IP firms identify the highest-impact channels and activities to strengthen (rather than spreading effort across too many tactics).
- Improve conversion, not just visibility: support better pathways from awareness to enquiry by clarifying where marketing execution and conversion design can be strengthened (e.g., follow-up, calls-to-action, website lead capture).

The ‘Digital Marketing and IP’ study represents a milestone, as it is one of the first ever published marketing report of its kind, through which we have gathered insights from IP professionals to better explore their engagement with digital marketing: what they use, what they avoid, what they want to learn, ideal client profile, what is currently blocking progress and future services marketing adoption.

## 2. Key facts from the survey process

The findings in this report are based on an online, self-completion questionnaire completed by IP professionals during 2025. In preparation for the fieldwork, **more than 200 IP professionals across different countries were mapped and approached** to participate. **A total of 48 IP professionals completed the questionnaire**, forming the final analytical sample (**n = 48**) as reflected in the results.

Given the final sample size, the methodology is best understood as providing **directional insight rather than precise market metrics**. The findings should therefore be interpreted as **more qualitative than quantitative**, particularly in relation to representativity. That said, the sample was designed with intent: respondents span **different tiers of IP professionals** and a range of **geographic regions**, offering a balanced, multi-perspective view of how IP professionals currently engage with digital marketing and where the most material constraints and opportunities sit.

Throughout the report, base sizes are stated exactly as presented in the results export. Most questions use a base of **n = 48**. Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding, multi-select formats and occasional missing responses. All results are reported in aggregate to preserve respondent anonymity and no personally identifiable information is included.

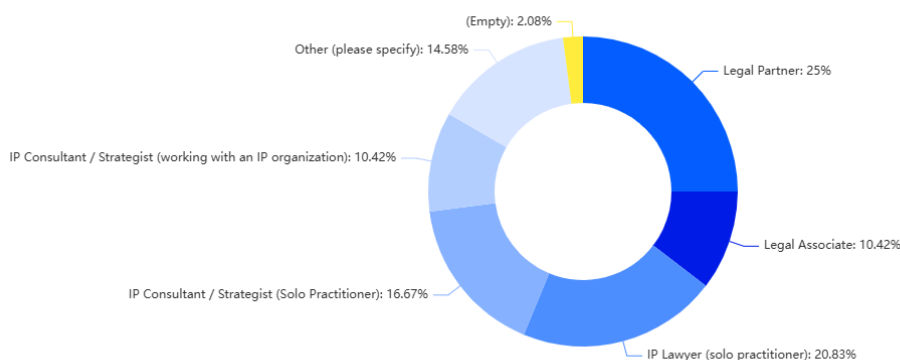
At a high level, the questionnaire was structured to build **a practical view of digital marketing adoption in the IP profession**. It covered respondent profile (role, experience, practice size, and markets served), interest in marketing and learning priorities, current channel usage and perceived effectiveness, desired website conversion features, ideal client profiles, constraints in carrying IP marketing activities, hardest-to-reach client segments, and future marketing spend: services IP professionals plan to adopt.

### 3 Getting to know our IP Professionals

Background information about the respondents participating in the survey is essential to understanding the broader context of this study. It serves to classify respondents and ensure a diverse and representative sample across key demographic and professional criteria.

#### Role Occupied

IP Professionals were grouped according to their role within the firm or own company.



**Figure 1: Audience role**

The above distribution highlights that 55% of the respondents are IP legal lawyers or associates, with a good percentage of these occupying the role of a Partner (25%). 45% of the respondents were IP Consultants / Strategists either working alone or within an IP department.

### Years of Experience

The study findings show that the IP Professionals surveyed are predominantly (almost 50%) with over 16+ years of experience in the IP industry. 25% fall within the 11-15 years range, and roughly 15% are between 6-10 years. Only around 10% are between 0-5 years of experience. Only around 10% are between 0-5 years of experience.

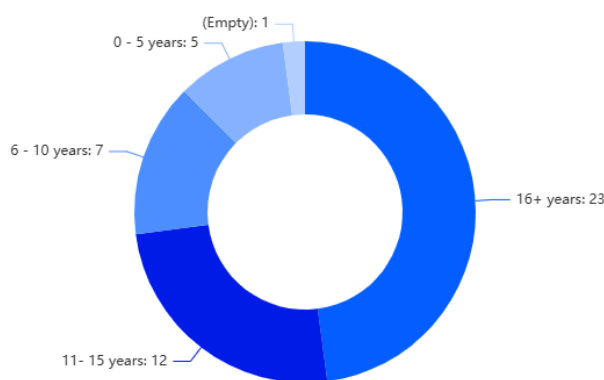


Figure 2: Years of experience distribution

### Why this matters?

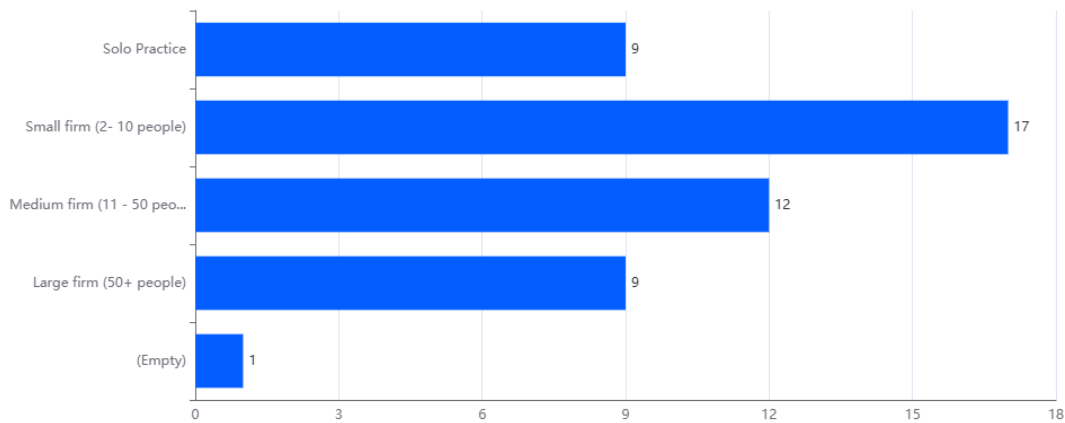
**Experience level is a proxy for confidence, network depth and commercial maturity. It also shapes how IP professionals approach marketing:** senior professionals may have reputational capital and marketing budgets but lower digital adoption. Junior profiles may have higher digital fluency but less authority and marketing finances.

### Firm Size

Respondents were asked to indicate the size of their firm or practice. 25% of the respondents indicated working in a medium IP firm (11-50 people) and around 20% work in large IP firms (50+ people). Around 35% fall within the small IP firm category (2-10 people) and roughly 19% are IP



solo practitioners. These results suggest that the respondent mix may broadly mirror the distribution of firm types in the wider IP market, although this cannot be confirmed from the survey data alone.



**Figure 3: Firm size distribution**

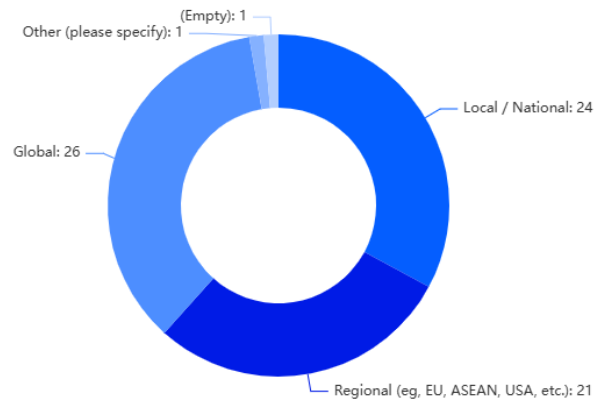
**Why this matters?**

**IP firm size shapes marketing execution capacity and marketing budgets.** For small firms - such as IP solo consultants, the correct marketing ambition is **consistency over complexity** - having at least a minimal content and lead workflow on LinkedIn that runs weekly. For medium IP firms, marketing can be systematised with shared assets, delegated execution and clear accountability. For large firms, the opportunity is alignment: marketing often exists - sometimes outsourced, but effectiveness depends on coherent positioning and partner buy-in.

**Target Markets**

Responses are fairly evenly distributed across the three market scopes. As this was a multi-select question, many respondents appear to serve more than one market level, with some indicating coverage across all three through their firm’s IP activities.





**Figure 4: Target markets**

**Why this matters?**

Market scope influences channel choice, content approach and proof strategy. **Global markets typically require stronger digital credibility, clearer positioning, and more scalable trust-building.** Global-facing IP professionals benefit disproportionately from LinkedIn authority, proof assets, and a clean website conversion path. Mixed-scope practices should avoid generic messaging; the market expects specialism and clear client-fit cues. **Regional/local IP consultants can still win digitally by becoming the “obvious choice” in a niche (industry, service line, or founder segment).**



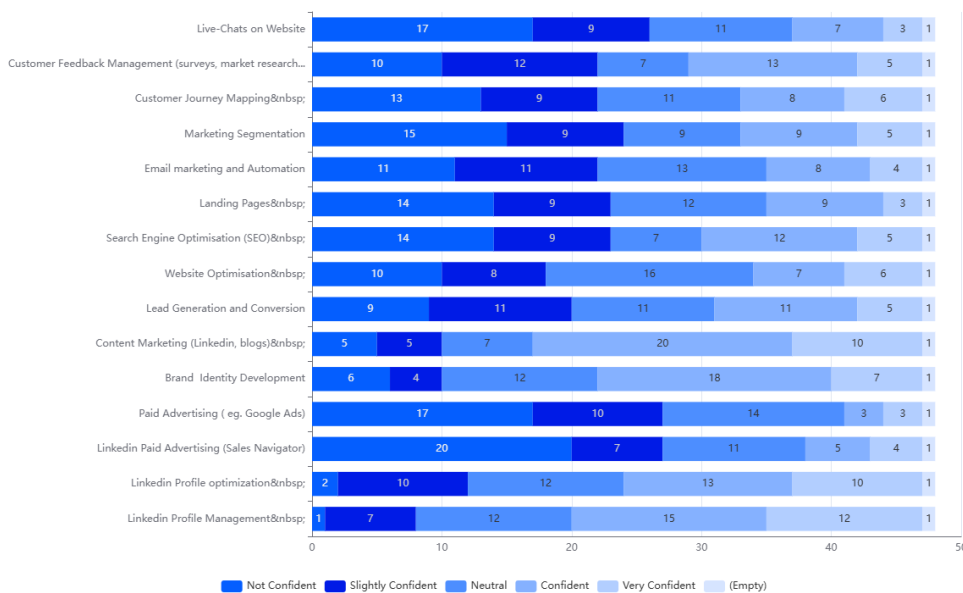
## 4 Level of Marketing Knowledge

This dimension assesses the IP professionals' knowledge of certain marketing concepts / tools and their views about the importance of strengthening their marketing skills in the future.

### 4.1 Marketing Concepts Knowledge

IP Professionals were questioned whether they feel confident with some of the most common marketing concepts, channels and tactics to reach customers, mainly: LinkedIn Content Generation, LinkedIn Thought Leadership, Paid Advertising, Corporate Brand Identity, Website Optimisation, Lead Generation, Search Engine Optimization, Email Marketing, Customer Feedback and Live-Chats.

Examining marketing concepts results reveals that overall respondents to the survey are knowledgeable in almost all channels and tactics mentioned - with the major degree of knowledge with LinkedIn Content Creation, LinkedIn Thought Leadership, Corporate Brand Identity, and Website Optimisation. Knowledge confidence is weakest around Paid Advertising and conversion tools (eg. Google Ads, Live-Chats and Landing Pages).



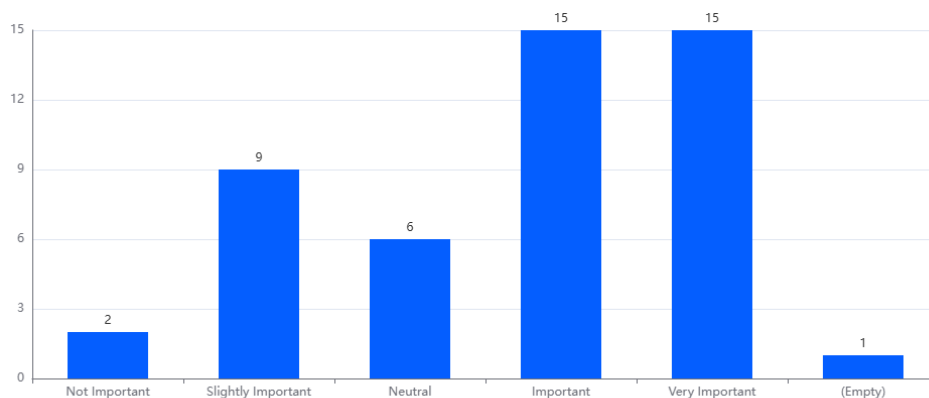
**Figure 5: Level of knowledge in Marketing**

**Why this matters?**

For IP professionals the market feels **more comfortable with credibility-building than with performance marketing mechanics**. This could be due to the fact that LinkedIn content and Thought-Leadership necessitate no or minimum external assistance to be implemented and with less marketing investment compared to other marketing channel. **LinkedIn could also be best-fit channel compared to other marketing channels and tactics available** – due to fact that it is the professional network where prospects interested in IP services can be found, nurtured and converted into actual clients.

**4.2 Importance in Marketing Knowledge training**

Respondents were asked about the importance of strengthening their marketing skills. Importance is a stronger predictor of future behavior than interest alone. 62.5% of the IP professionals rated this as important / very important and only a small amount of respondents view the importance of strengthening their marketing skills as not important (4%).



**Figure 6: Importance of Strengthening Marketing Skills**

**Why this matters?**

For IP professionals, these results indicate that marketing capability is increasingly functioning as a **baseline professional requirement rather than an optional add-on**. As the IP market becomes more visible, digital-first and competitive, the ability to communicate expertise clearly, demonstrate credibility, and attract the right enquiries **is becoming part of standard IP practice** -



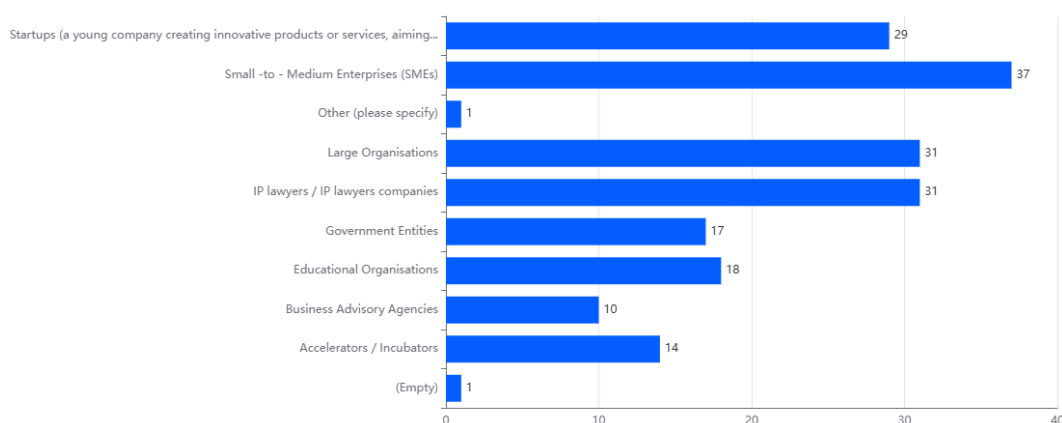
alongside technical competence and client service delivery. Still, a segment of IP Professionals tends to see value in marketing training but lack a path that fits their time reality (the sizable “slightly important” group). Although this segment seems to be ready for better marketing capabilities, the new learned marketing capabilities need not be just creating content for content’s sake - **marketing need be framed as a business capability** since some IP Professionals still need clear models linking marketing activity to client outcomes (neutral is very small).

## 5 Commercial and Business Development Focus

This section clarifies who IP Professionals aim to serve - and that different client type determines channel usage and effectiveness. The role of the website as a lead-generation tool for attracting and converting new clients is also examined.

### 5.1 Ideal Client Profile

77% of the respondents reported Small-to-Medium (SMEs) as their ideal client profile (IPC), followed by approximately 65% of the respondents who equally target “Large Organizations” and “IP lawyers / IP lawyers’ companies” as their IPCs. Accordingly, 60% report they target “Startups” (a young company creating innovative products or services, aiming for rapid growth and market impact) as their IPC. The results that followed as targeted IPCs included “Educational Organizations” (37.5%), “Government Entities” (35%) and Accelerators / Incubators (29%).



**Figure 7: Ideal Client Profiles**

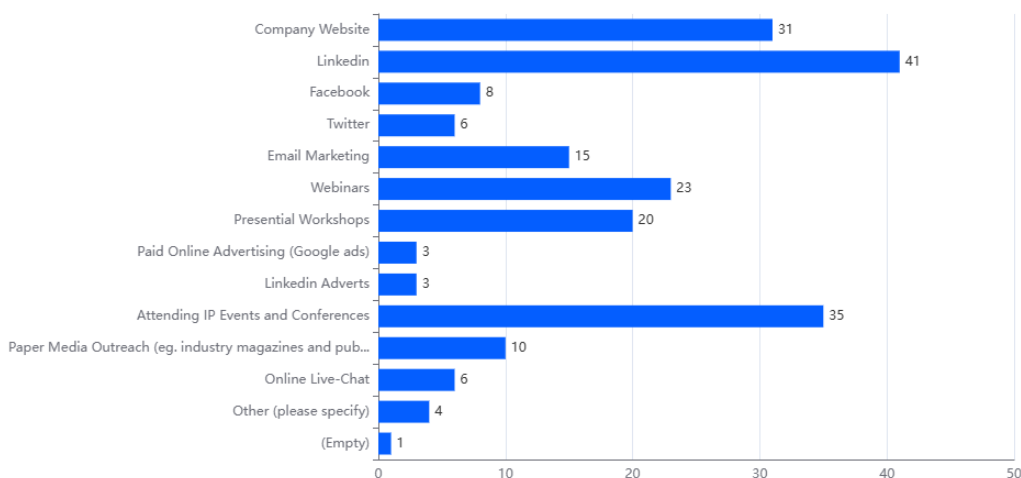
### Why this matters?

For IP professionals, the results underline **the importance of segment-led marketing**. When a target audience spans SMEs (77%), startups (60%), large organisations (65%) and even other IP

professionals (65%) - a single “one-size-fits-all” message will almost always become too generic to convert. **The practical implication is to adopt a modular positioning approach: define clear service lines, state explicitly who each offer is for, and align proof (testimonials, case stories, examples) to the expectations of each segment.** In particular, SMEs and startups tend to respond less to credentials alone and more to clarity and guidance - marketing that explains problems, risks, outcomes and next steps in accessible language is often what builds trust and accelerates enquiries.

## 5.2 Current Marketing Channels Usage

The responses indicate strong focus on LinkedIn and attending IP Events and Conferences as main channels used by respondents at 85% and 73% respectively. 65% indicated their website as main channel of communication to promote themselves followed by webinar production (48%) and giving presental workshops (42%). The less-used channels were Facebook (17%) and Twitter (13%).



**Figure 8: Preferred Marketing Channels**

### Why this matters?

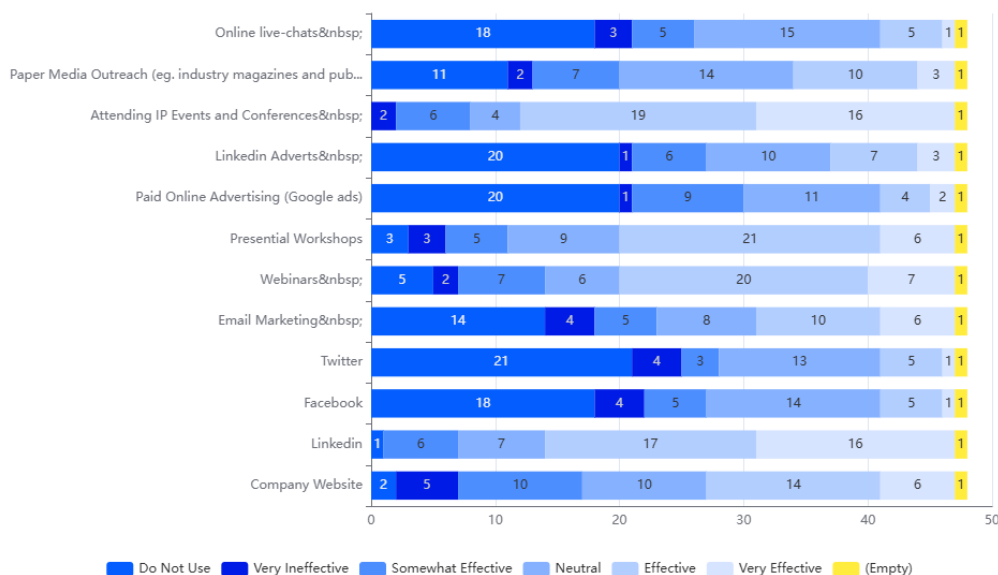
Results show that visibility in the IP sector is being built primarily through trust-led channels, with **LinkedIn acting as the dominant platform for professional presence and events remaining a**



**core driver of reputation and network effects.** At the same time, the limited use of paid advertising suggests that most IP practices are not operating a “performance marketing” model; instead, they rely on credibility, relationships, and professional proof to generate demand. The implication is straightforward: the highest-impact improvements are likely to come from optimising the channels already in use - **sharpening LinkedIn positioning and consistency, turning event participation into reusable content and follow-up, and strengthening website conversion** - while treating paid advertising as a later-stage accelerator once fundamentals are in place.

### 5.3 Effectiveness of Current Marketing Channels

When it comes to reporting which marketing channels are actually working to attract new clients, 73% (Effective and Very Effective) opted for IP Events and Conferences, followed by LinkedIn at 63%. On the other hand, paid ads (on Google and LinkedIn) and some social channels (Twitter and Facebook) remain less trusted for client acquisition in IP.



**Figure 9: Perceived Effectiveness of Marketing Channels**

#### Why this matters?

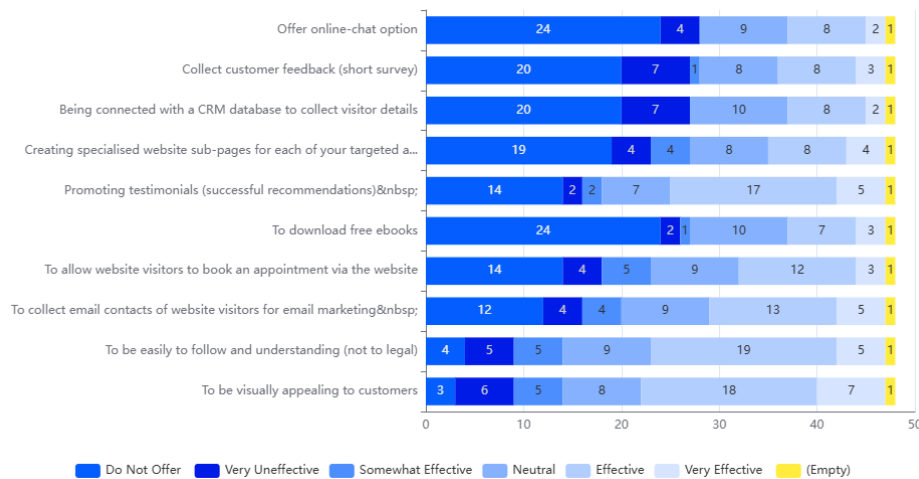
Channel effectiveness matters because it separates marketing activity from marketing impact. Many IP professionals already invest time in several channels, but the commercial value depends

on which channels reliably translate into qualified conversations and ultimately into IP clients. **The channel-effectiveness matrix is especially useful because in practical terms, it directs attention to optimising the channels that already have strong adoption - particularly LinkedIn, IP Conferences and Events, and the website - rather than expanding into new platforms.** It also helps reduce “busy marketing”: effort that creates visibility but does not convert. The results suggest that IP Conferences and Events are perceived as the strongest-performing channel in this sample, with LinkedIn also performing strongly, reinforcing that **the competitive advantage is not simply “being present” but building a structured pathway that converts trust-building activity into enquiries** through clear positioning, credible proof, disciplined follow-up, and frictionless next steps to conversion into IP clients.

### 5.4 Website as a Business Development Tool

#### Website Effectiveness for Lead Generation

Respondents had to evaluate how effective they find their website as a business development tool ie. in attracting leads and converting IP clients - across multiple functions (visual appeal, clarity of content, client email capture, direct appointment booking, free downloads, promoting client testimonials, audience segmented sub-pages, direct feedback collection, online chat, CRM connection). The data indicate that half of the respondents claim that their website is ‘very effective and effective’ in delivering the basic functions ie. visual appeal (52%) and clarity of content information (50%). Still around 20% of the respondents find their website appeal and clarity of content ‘somewhat effective’ and ‘very ineffective’.



**Figure 10: Website Effectiveness Matrix**

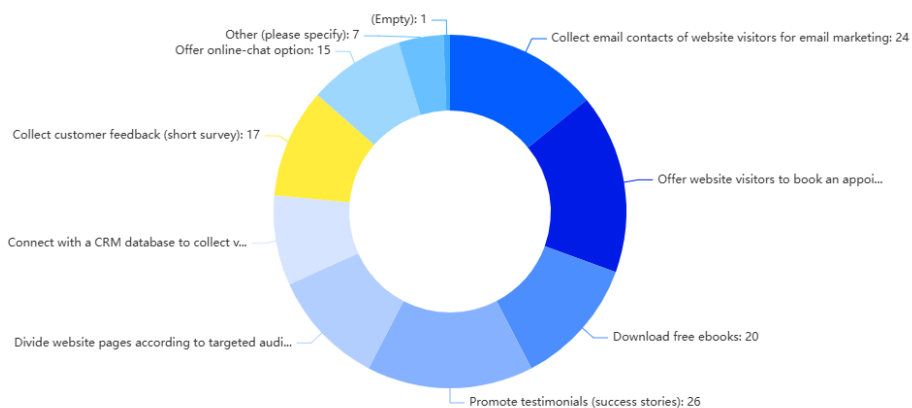
With regards to specific tools or tactics that can enable a website to be used specifically as a business development asset (eg. client email capture, direct appointment booking, free downloads, promoting testimonials, audience segmented sub-pages, direct feedback collection, online chat, CRM connection), the “effective” and “very effective” business development assets offered on a website were found to be - promoting client testimonials (45%), ‘client email capture’ (37%), ‘direct appointment booking’ facility (31%), and creating ‘audience segmented sub-pages’ (25%). Still, a staggering amount of the respondents indicated not offering such tools on their website - promoting client testimonials (30%), ‘client email capture’ (25%), ‘direct appointment booking’ facility (30%), free downloads (50%), creating ‘audience segmented sub-pages’ (40%), direct feedback collection (42%), online chat (50%), and CRM connection (42%).

### Why this matters?

For most IP professionals, the website is the primary credibility checkpoint once a potential client has discovered the IP consultancy / firm services - whether through LinkedIn, referrals, events, or a direct search. The findings indicate that **a significant share of respondents (one third) do not use their website as a lead-generation tool at all**. Another one-third of the respondents indicated only achieving “somewhat effective” and “neutral” performance which typically signals **a site that exists but is not designed to convert interest into enquiries**. In practice, if LinkedIn is generating discovery and initial trust for IP professionals, **the website must “close the loop”** by reinforcing credibility and making the next step obvious and frictionless (for example, a clear call-to-action and a straightforward way to book or request an initial 1-on-1 consultation).

### Website Conversion / Lead-Generation Interest

Respondents believe that lead-generation tools are important tools for IP websites. More than half of the respondents picked three main tools that they would be interested to offer on their websites mainly: ‘direct appointment booking’ facility (58%), promoting client testimonials (54%), and ‘client email capture’ (50%). Furthermore, high scores were also attained by the intention of offering free downloads (42%), ‘audience segmented sub-pages’ (38%), direct feedback collection (35%), and offering an online chat (31%). Usage and integration of a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system is desired (29%) but trails behind the conversion basic tools.



**Figure 10: Desired Lead Generation Website Features**

**Why this matters?**

IP professionals have indicated a huge interest in offering lead-generation tools on their website. These results enforce the idea how IP professionals believe a modern website should function in practice: not as a static “online brochure,” but **as a conversion system that captures demand and builds trust at the moment a prospective client is deciding whether to engage**. The responses highlight a clear gap between what many websites currently deliver and what respondents want them to deliver - particularly around credibility and lead capture. **The strongest priorities cluster around conversion upgrades such as booking and discovery pathways, proof assets (testimonials and case studies), and lead capture mechanisms, signaling that the profession increasingly evaluates a website by its ability to turn interest into a first conversation.** The results also show that **audience segmentation is becoming more important**, which aligns with the reality that many practices serve multiple client types and therefore need clearer, tailored pathways. In short, **the website is being positioned as a “trust hub” where clarity, evidence, and a low-friction next step work together** to reduce perceived risk and make it easy for the right clients to take action.

## 6 Constraints in carrying Marketing Activities

This section explores some of the main obstacles IP professionals face in marketing their IP services and products.

### 6.1 Perceived Complexity of Marketing IP Services

Two-thirds of respondents (67%) agreed that the specialised nature of IP law - combined with its intangible benefits and the general lack of public understanding of IP - makes the marketing of IP services particularly complex. By contrast, 17% disagreed, indicating that a minority do not view these factors as a significant barrier to marketing. A further 15% of the respondents selected “Do not know”.

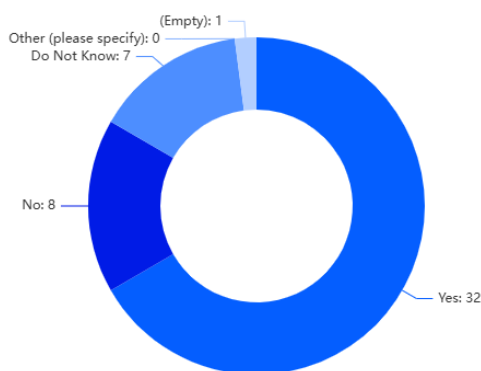


Figure 11: Complexity of IP Marketing

#### Why this matters?

With complexity emerging as a dominant perception, the results suggest that IP marketing challenges stem primarily from the nature of IP - intangibility and low public understanding - more than from a short-term lack of marketing skills of IP professionals. In that context, success depends less on the volume of activity (“more posting”) and more on **making an IP professional’s value legible to non-experts**. If most of the profession experiences IP marketing as complex, the

competitive edge goes to **those who can turn specialist expertise into client-friendly messaging and credible proof: clearly explaining “what you do”, “why it matters commercially”, and “what changes after a client works with you”**. In practice, this usually means **building a strong “translation layer”** (plain-language explanations, examples, FAQs), strengthening proof (testimonials, case stories, outcomes), and using consistent, credibility-led communication across high-trust channels such as LinkedIn and the website.

### 6.2 Challenges in Carrying Marketing Communications

When it comes to challenges faced by IP professionals to carry out marketing activities, 54% of the respondents highlighted the issue of “limiting marketing budget” followed by “no time available” (50%). Slightly less than half of the respondents indicated having “difficulty targeting the right audience” (46%) and 35% highlighted the “lack of marketing knowledge/expertise” as marketing obstacles. Interestingly, 15% of respondents reported that marketing communications are less of a challenge for them, as they primarily prioritise referrals and networking to attract new clients. When it comes to the challenge of “finding the right marketing agency to work with that understands the IP industry”, 20% of the respondents reported this as a meaningful issue.



**Figure 12: Top Marketing Challenges**

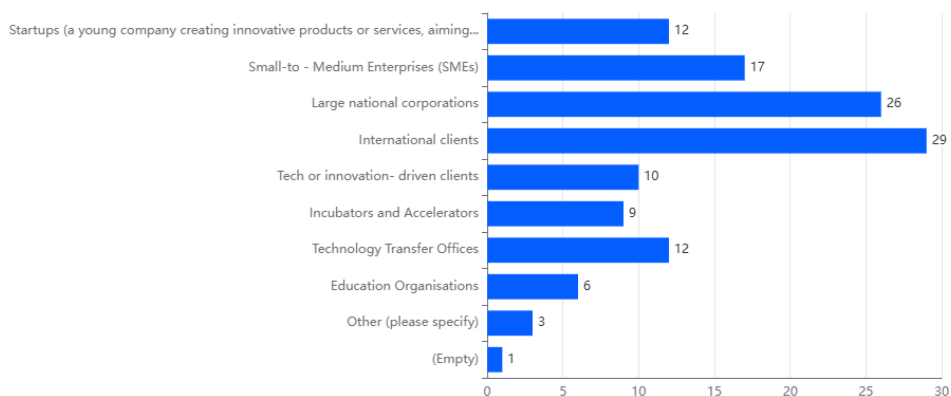
#### Why this matters?

IP professionals indicated that the main barriers are not a lack of belief in marketing, but **the operational realities of professional services: limited time, limited budget, and the challenge**

**of reaching the right audience efficiently.** Importantly, capability and confidence gaps also play a significant role; many respondents signal that even with motivation, **marketing stalls when there is no clear, workable method for what to do, how to do it, and how to measure whether it is working.** In practical terms, these findings point to a clear implication for IP professionals: **progress is most likely when marketing is simplified into a focused system** - prioritising one or two priority audiences, executing consistently on a primary channel (often LinkedIn), building basic proof assets, and implementing a clear call-to-action and follow-up routine - rather than trying to run broad, complex marketing activity alongside fee-earning legal work.

### 6.3 Hardest-To-Reach Clients

A clear majority of respondents reported that international clients are the hardest segment to reach selected by 60% of the respondents. This was closely followed by large national corporations, cited by 54%. By comparison, SMEs were identified as difficult to reach by 35%, while startups and Technology Transfer Offices (TTOs) were each selected by 25%. Finally, tech/innovation-driven clients and incubators / accelerators were reported as hard to reach by approximately 20% of the respondents.



**Figure 13: Hardest IP Segments**

### Why this matters?

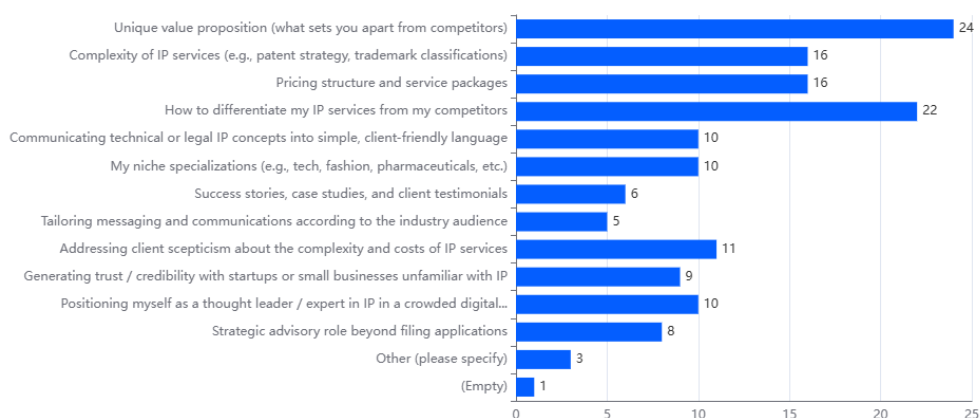
Marketing and business development effort is most likely to stall where positioning and credibility signals are not strongest. The results show that the hardest segments to reach are international clients and large corporate buyers, which is consistent with how high-value professional services



are typically purchased: these audiences face more choice, higher perceived risk, and more complex decision-making so they rely heavily on evidence, clarity, and trusted authority before engaging. By comparison, SMEs and startups appear more accessible, but they remain challenging, often because they require clearer education-led messaging and practical reassurance. For IP professionals, the implication is that enterprise and international targeting cannot be approached with generic visibility activity; it requires a credibility-driven approach built around proof narratives (case stories, testimonials, outcomes), consistent thought leadership that demonstrates judgement, and clear, segment-specific messaging that reduces uncertainty and makes it obvious why you are the right fit.

### 6.4 Hard-to-Explain Elements of IP Services and Brand Value

Half of respondents (50%) reported that the hardest aspect of their brand or service to communicate is their unique value proposition (USP) - in other words, what clearly sets them apart from competing IP providers. Closely related, 46% indicated that how to differentiate their IP services from competitors is a key challenge. Beyond differentiation, around one-third of respondents pointed to the inherent difficulty of explaining the complexity of IP services (33%) and communicating pricing structures and service packages (33%). 23% said they struggle with addressing client skepticism about complexity and costs of IP services. Around one-fifth of respondents identified challenges linked to digital visibility and communication clarity, including simplifying technical/legal concepts into client-friendly language (21%), explaining niche specialisations (21%) and positioning themselves as a thought leader/expert in a crowded digital space (e.g. LinkedIn) (21%). In addition, 18% noted difficulty in building trust with startups/SMEs unfamiliar with IP, while 17% found it challenging to communicate their strategic advisory role beyond filing applications.



**Figure 14: Hardest Communication Aspects of IP Brand and Service Elements**

### Why this matters?

Positioning is the primary pain point for IP professionals. The results show that respondents struggle most to communicate their unique value proposition and nearly as many with differentiation. This indicates the biggest communication challenge is not explaining IP generally - it's explaining why this *specific IP professional* is the right choice. This suggests that the most urgent messaging work for many IP professionals is **not more visibility, but clearer meaning**. If the audience cannot quickly grasp what makes you distinct, they default to comparing by credentials, geography, or price - or they postpone the decision entirely. The data indicates that **a strong, client-friendly articulation of “why you” (UVP + differentiation) is the central unlock**, and it needs to be expressed in language that non-IP audiences can absorb in seconds.

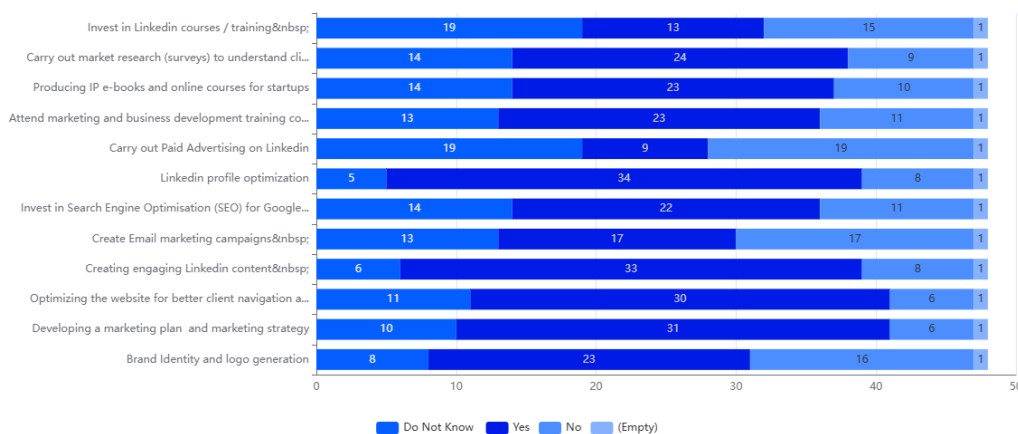
The findings also show that clients often hesitate because IP feels both **complex and costly**, and those two perceptions reinforce each other. Practically, this means that simplifying explanations is only part of the job. You also need a transparent way to frame pricing and packages (what's included, what outcomes it enables, what risk it reduces), plus a set of standard responses to common objections. For IP professionals targeting SMEs/startups and international or larger buyers, **credibility is earned through clarity + proof + a confident advisory stance, not technical detail alone**.

## 7 Future Marketing Spend: Services IP Professionals Plan to Adopt

This section clarifies the marketing services and tactics IP professionals would like to explore in the next 1-2 years to achieve sustainable growth for their IP practice.

### Marketing Activities IP Professionals Will Invest Next 1 -2 Years

The strongest stated investment intent reported by respondents centers on LinkedIn and positioning assets: 71% indicate they would invest in LinkedIn profile optimisation and 69% would invest in creating engaging LinkedIn content. This is followed closely by strategic and website improvements, with 65% intending to invest in developing a marketing plan and strategy and 63% in optimising their website for better navigation and client acquisition. Half of respondents (50%) would invest in carrying out market research to better understand client profiles, while 48% would invest in corporate brand identity/logo development, attending marketing and business development training and producing IP-focused e-books or online courses for startups. Email marketing campaigns split evenly, with 35% indicating “Yes” and another 35% indicating “No.” Paid advertising on LinkedIn shows the lowest appetite overall, with only 19% indicating they would invest, while 40% say “No” and an equal 40% (19) say “Do Not Know.”



**Figure 15: Planned Marketing services**

### Why this matters?

The results indicate that most IP professionals see near-term marketing ROI coming **from getting the fundamentals right: a clear LinkedIn presence (profile + content), a defined marketing strategy, and a website that supports conversion.** These are “compounding” assets - once they are improved, every referral, event, and online touchpoint performs better. The low appetite for paid advertising is also telling: many practitioners appear to view paid LinkedIn as a later-stage lever, best used once positioning is sharp, proof is visible, and the website can convert traffic into meetings. The uncertainty around SEO, client profile market research, and training suggests that many IP professionals would benefit from clear prioritisation and practical implementation pathways - what to do first, what to do next, and how to keep it sustainable alongside fee-earning legal work.

## **8 Conclusions and recommended future actions**

### **Conclusions**

IP professionals are already participating in digital marketing, but execution is constrained by practical capacity limits. Limited time, limited internal capability, and constrained budgets reduce consistency, which often results in intermittent marketing activity rather than sustained programmes that compound over time.

At the same time, marketing skills are increasingly viewed as baseline professional capability. Respondents' interest in enhancing marketing knowledge and their assessment of training as important indicate that marketing is being recognised as part of modern practice development, rather than a peripheral or optional activity.

High-trust channels dominate current behaviour and optimisation appears to be the primary opportunity. LinkedIn, professional IP Conferences and websites are the most used channels, with IP Conferences and LinkedIn also perceived as the most effective. This pattern suggests that performance gains are more likely to come from improving execution quality, positioning and structured follow-up within existing channels than from expanding into additional platforms.

The reports findings suggest that, the website is also underused as a conversion asset despite clear demand for conversion features. Respondents' interest in booking pathways, testimonials/case studies and lead capture mechanisms signals a growing expectation that websites should reduce friction into first contact and strengthen credibility at key decision points - rather than functioning only as a static presence.

IP marketing complexity is widely perceived as structural. The majority view that IP's intangibility and low public understanding make marketing complex reinforces that success depends on translation, simplification and proof that makes value easier to evaluate - rather than simply increasing output volume.

Reaching high-value buyers requires stronger credibility signals and more segmented messaging. International and large corporate clients are reported as the hardest audiences to access, implying that generic messaging and sporadic activity are unlikely to be effective; these segments typically require clearer authority positioning and stronger evidence before engagement.

In this context, differentiation remains a central communication gap. IP professionals most commonly struggle to articulate unique value proposition and differentiation, alongside complexity and pricing, suggesting many IP professionals and firms would benefit from clearer positioning frameworks and more client-friendly packaging that reduces uncertainty.

Finally, future investment intent is foundations-first. Respondents prioritise LinkedIn profile optimisation, LinkedIn content, marketing strategy and website optimisation, while paid advertising ranks low and carries higher uncertainty. This indicates that the market expects the strongest near-term returns from strengthening credibility and conversion infrastructure before adopting performance-led advertising approaches.

## **Recommended future digital marketing actions**

Before increasing marketing output, **IP professionals should strengthen positioning and messaging clarity.** Clarifying the unique value proposition, differentiation, and “who it’s for” statements improves the efficiency of every activity that follows - content, outreach, referrals, event participation and website visits - because prospects can more quickly understand fit and relevance.

A practical operating model is to **adopt a LinkedIn-first approach** supported by repeatable formats. LinkedIn is widely used and perceived as effective to reach clients, so treating the LinkedIn profile as core infrastructure and using consistent, reusable content formats reduces effort while sustaining professional visibility and credibility over time.

**Websites should be upgraded from “presence” to “conversion hub.”** Priority should be given to frictionless booking pathways, clear calls-to-action, visible proof assets and lead capture mechanisms. Where practices serve multiple client segments, segmented pages and tailored pathways should be introduced to reduce confusion and improve conversion.

**Proof should be developed early and deployed systematically.** Testimonials, short case examples and success narratives reduce perceived risk for prospective clients and increase confidence at key decision points. When integrated across LinkedIn, proposals and the website, proof assets help accelerate the transition from interest to first conversation.

**Conferences participation should be systematised into post-event conversion.** Conferences and events are perceived as highly effective, but commercial return depends on what happens after the event. Structured pre-event outreach, disciplined follow-up, and clear booking or consultation pathways help translate networking into qualified discussions rather than leaving outcomes to chance.

For international and large corporate clients, **a targeted credibility-led approach is required.** These segments involve higher decision complexity and risk sensitivity, so messaging and authority assets should be tailored - using segment-specific narratives, proof, and thought leadership that demonstrates judgement and relevance.

Finally, advanced tactics such as **paid advertising and complex automation should be sequenced only after foundations are working reliably.** Given low intent and higher uncertainty around paid channels, these tools are best treated as later-stage accelerators once positioning is clear, proof is established and conversion pathways are operational and measurable.