Canada Council for the Arts

The Arts in a Digital World

Thematic Report

4. Uses of Data and Return on Investment

Survey Data Report

February 2017

Prepared by

Nordicity

Prepared for

Canada Council for the Arts

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Thematic Report

4. Uses of Data and Return on Investment

Prepared by Nordicity

1. Background

The Canada Council for the Arts' (Canada Council) has undertaken an initiative to understand how artists and arts organizations are adapting to creating, disseminating and making a living from the arts in a digital world. As part of that ongoing investigation, the Canada Council engaged Nordicity to conduct a survey of artists and arts organizations in Canada.

The data presented in this report is principally derived from the results of an online survey administered to Canadian artists and arts organization between May and July of 2016 – with many survey questions referring to respondents' activity in the last year. As they interact with digital technologies in different ways, separate questionnaires were administered to arts organizations and artists.

Overall, the survey gathered responses from 908 arts organizations and 2680 artists. This response represents about 25% of all arts organization and 23% of all (known) artists in Canada. While it is not possible to estimate a margin of error for arts organizations (as they do not adhere to a normal distribution), Nordicity estimates that the sample of artists is accurate to within 2% (19 times of 20).

The results of this research are divided into the following thematic reports:

- **Report 1**: introduces the research methodology and provides an overview of the respondents;
- **Report 2**: outlines respondents' overall use of technology;
- **Report 3**: details how digital tools are used at different stages of the creative process;
- **Report 4**: explores how respondents use data and perceive the return on investment of technology; and,
- **Report 5**: summarizes barriers to adoption and key observations.

Throughout the reports, data is presented with a number of top-line data filters, which are described below:

For arts organizations:	For artists:
▪ Respondents self-identified level of overall comfort with digital technologies as either "high comfort" and "low comfort;"	▪ Respondents self-identified level of overall comfort with digital technologies as either "high comfort" and "low comfort;"
▪ Size of organization is defined in terms of annual operating budget such that organizations with an annual operating budget of more than $250,000 are considered "large," and the remainder are considered "small;"	▪ Career stage categorizes artists practicing for fewer than ten years as "early career" and all others "late career;"
▪ Artistic discipline (where possible).	▪ Artistic discipline (where possible).

2. Uses of Data

This thematic report discusses the use of data in relation to various activities and then examines return on investment for digital technology. This section focuses on how artists use data from sales and dissemination platforms as well as communications data such as website and social media analytics. The following section considers the cost of digital tools, respondents' current satisfaction with investments in technology and their plans for the future.

Survey results indicate that **the majority of arts organizations and artists do not collect sales information**. In terms of communications data, organizations are more likely to collect data than artists and the primary sources of information for both groups are websites and social media. Organizations were also asked about the use of stakeholder feedback and slightly more than half (54%) reported using this information. Across all survey groups and sources of information, **the most common application of data was towards marketing and audience development strategies.**

2.1 Sales and Dissemination Data

Sales and dissemination data refers to information regarding the ability to effect sales using digital technologies and the distribution of artworks online. The survey reveals that **the majority of organizations (59%) and artists (78%) do not collect sales data however those that do, use this information as part of marketing and audience development strategies.**

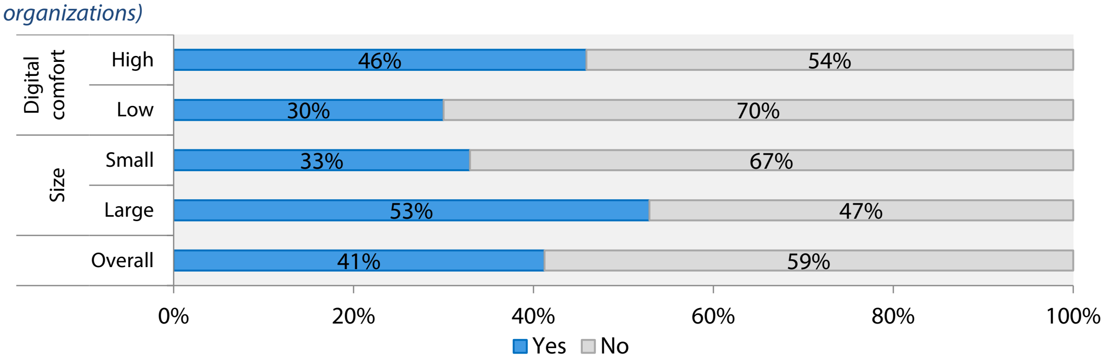
2.1.1 Arts Organizations

Key Findings

- 41% of arts organizations collect sales information.
- The most common use of sales information is for marketing and audience development strategies.
- Organization size has the greatest impact on the use of sales information for performance measurement.

The following chart shows that about four in ten arts organizations collect sales information using digital tools. This practice is considerably more prevalent among the groups with high digital comfort and larger organizations, with about 50% higher rates of doing so among these groups.

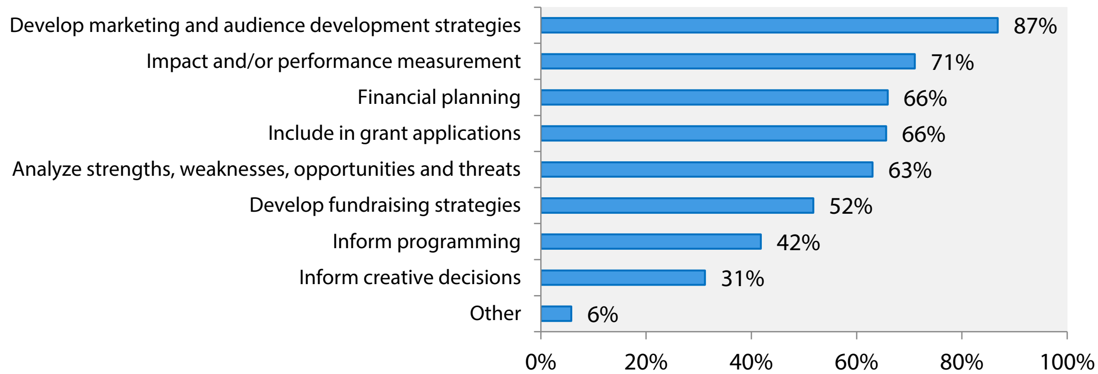
Figure 1: Collection of sales information using digital tools, by digital comfort and organization size (arts organizations)



n=769
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

The figure below shows that organizations most often use this information in develop marketing and audience development strategies, and measure their impact or performance. The use of such data for financial planning, grant applications, and to perform strategic analyses is also widespread, with over 50% of organizations reporting these applications.

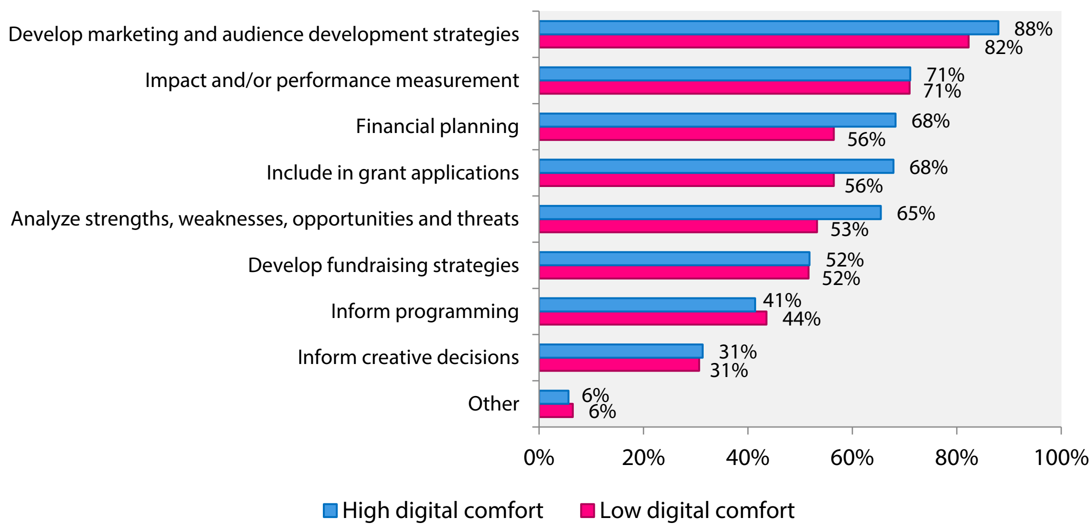
Figure 2: Applications of digital sales/tracking data (arts organizations)



n=311
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

The following chart breaks out the preceding information by digital comfort. While the overall applications of this data are quite similar between the two groups, more digitally comfortable organizations are more likely to employ this information for financial planning, grant applications and strategic planning.

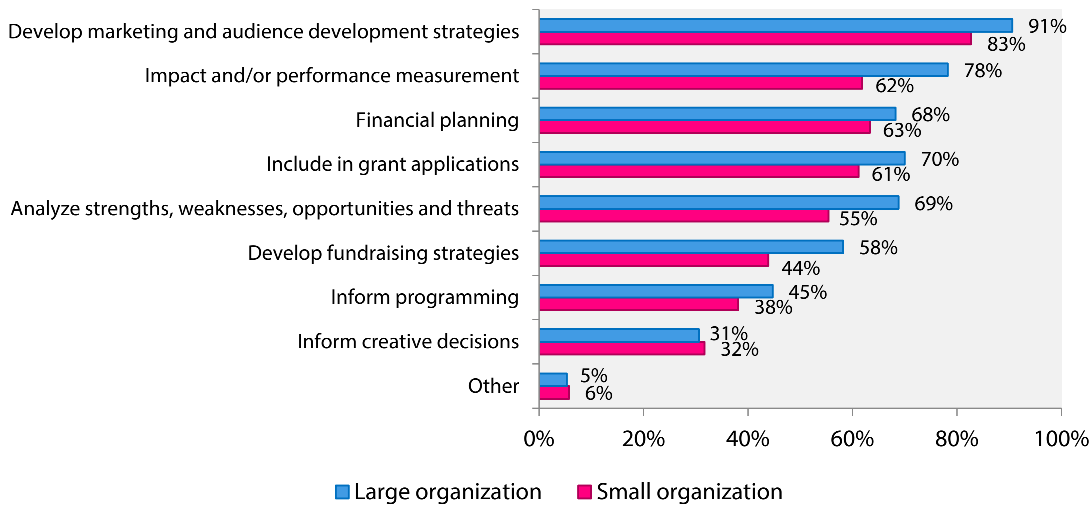
Figure 3: Applications of digital sales/tracking data, by digital comfort (arts organizations)



n=311
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

The following chart shows that large organizations are most distinguishable from their smaller counterparts through their greater use of sales and marketing data to measure their impact and/or performance measurement.

Figure 4: Applications of sales/tracking data, by organization size (arts organizations)



n=311
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

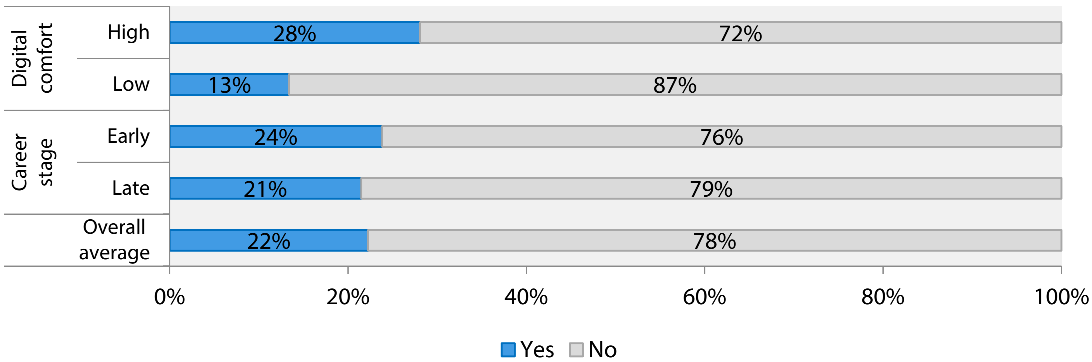
2.1.2 Artists

Key Findings

- Only 22% of artists track online sales data.
- The majority (66%) of artists who track sales data do so for the purpose of marketing and audience development.
- Artists at an earlier stage in their career are more likely to use sales data to inform both creative decisions and financial planning.

The following figure illustrates the percentage of artists who track sales information using digital tools, showing that only about one in five artists (22%) take advantage of this data.

Figure 5: Collection of sales information using digital tools, by digital comfort and career stage (artists)



n=2,336
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

As with other types of digital tools that exhibit low rates of overall usage, artists with a low level of digital comfort tend to have significantly lower usage rates than their more digitally comfortable peers, being less than half as likely to track sales in this way.

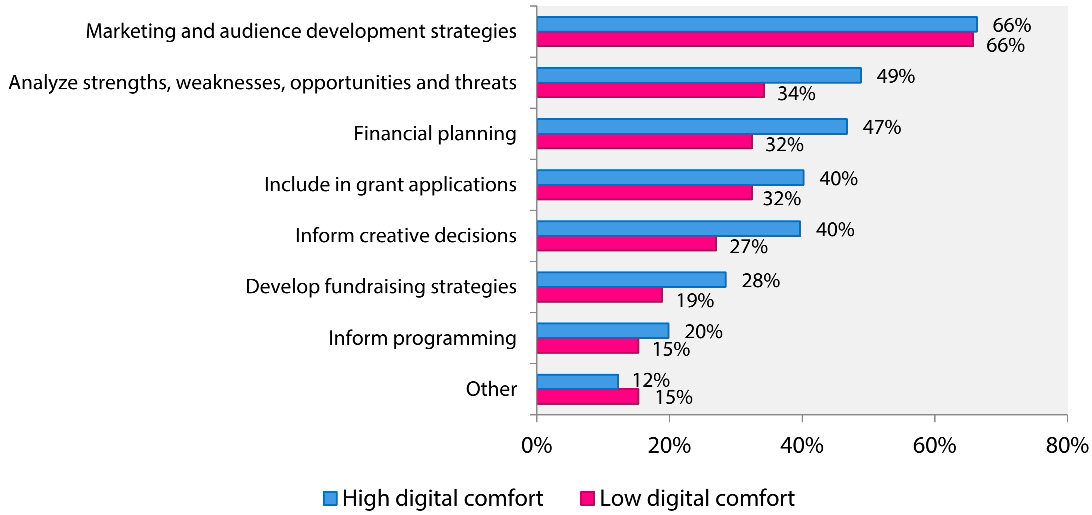
Among the artists that do track sales with digital tools, the following figure shows that about two thirds (66%) do so for marketing and audience development. Other important reasons for tracking sales with digital tools emphasize strategic objectives (i.e. analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, and informing creative/programming decisions), and financial themes (i.e. financial planning, grant applications, and developing fundraising strategies).

Figure 6: Applications of sales/tracking data (artists)

n=494
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

The following chart shows that although relatively few artists use digital tools to track sales overall, those with a low level of digital comfort were almost as likely as their more digitally comfortable peers to do so for the purpose of marketing and audience development. The use of sales data in grant applications is also notable for showing a slightly lower divergence between the two groups.

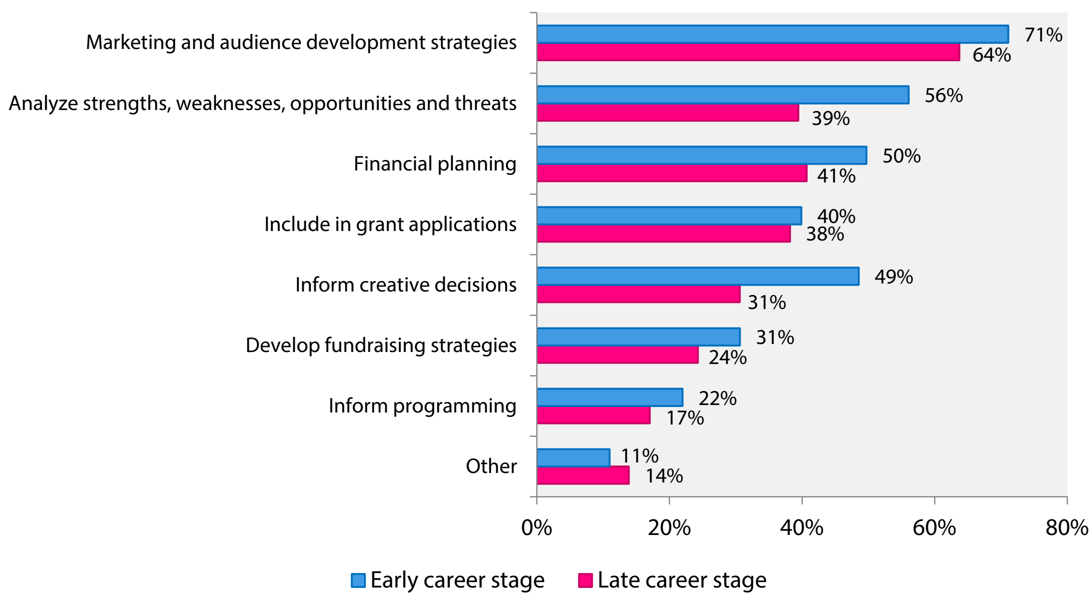
Figure 7: Applications of sales/tracking data, by digital comfort (artists)



n=494
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

The figure below shows notable differences in the usage of digital sales-tracking tools among artists in different stages of their careers.

Figure 8: Applications of sales/tracking data, by career stage (artists)



n=490
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

The most significant divergence between the two groups is in the use of sales information to inform creative decisions, analyze strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, and financial planning. The common theme among these uses of digital tools is that they suggest a more business-like, entrepreneurial mode of thinking among younger artists compared to their more established counterparts.

2.2 Communications Data

Communications refers to the ways that organizations and artists reach new and existing audiences and share information with the public online. Survey respondents were asked about the ways that they use and collect data from their websites, social media accounts and apps. **Results indicate that survey respondents who collect sales data overwhelmingly do so to inform marketing and audience development initiatives.** The primary sources of data are websites and social media, although in both cases organizations are significantly more likely to use this information than individuals.

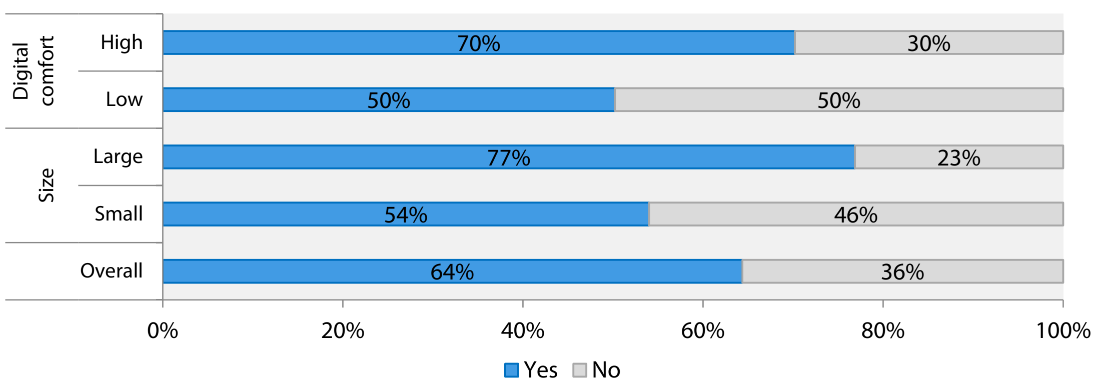
2.2.1 Arts Organizations

Key Findings

- 64% of arts organizations collect website data and 69% collect social media data.
- Marketing and audience development strategies are the most common uses of data from both websites and social media.
- Large organizations use data collected for a wider variety of purposes however small organizations are more likely to use this data to inform creative decisions.

The following figure shows that the majority of organizations (64%) collect website data. Of the comparison groups identified in this analysis, large organizations do so most frequently, with over three quarters (77%) reporting the collection of website data. The lowest rate of doing so occurs in the group with low digital comfort, in which only half of organizations (50%) collect this data.

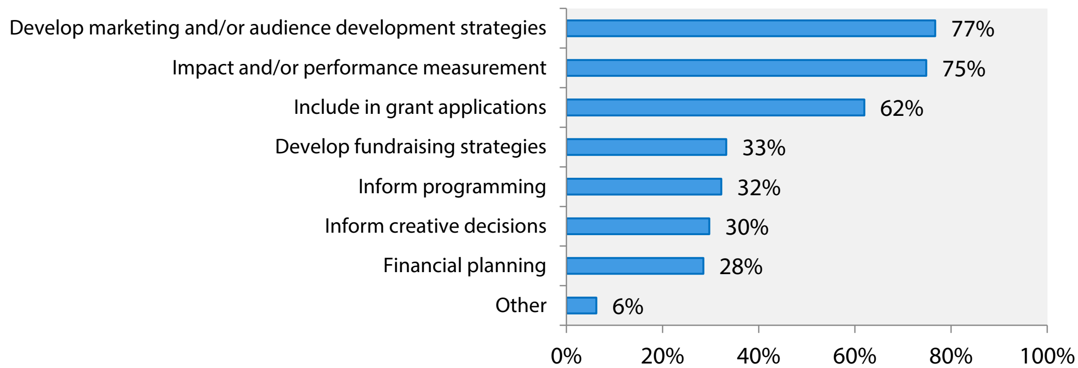
Figure 9: Collection of website data (arts organizations)



n=769
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

The following chart shows that organizations most often collect website data for the purpose of developing marketing and/or audience development strategies and impact or performance measurement, with a significant number reporting its use in grant applications. Unlike digital sales data, other uses of this information are less robust, with less than a third of organizations citing the less prevalent uses.

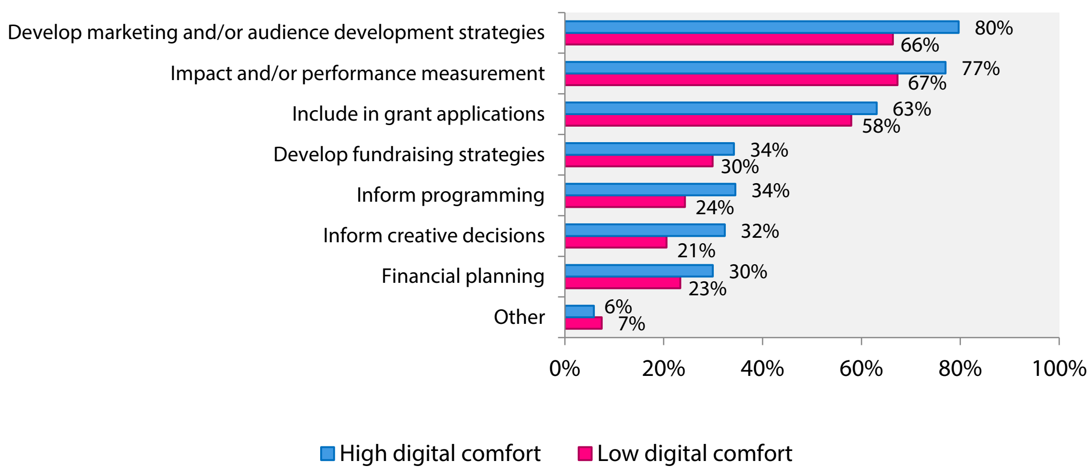
Figure 10: Applications of website data (arts organizations)



n=481
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

The following figure shows the preceding information broken out by digital comfort. While the distribution of responses is quite similar for both groups, the higher rates of usage among organizations with a high level of digital comfort indicate that these organizations make more extensive use of this data.

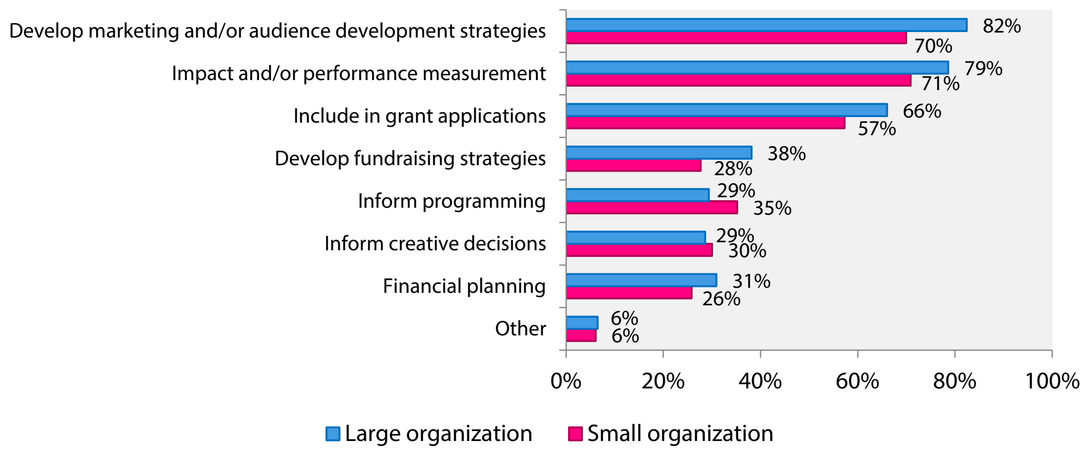
Figure 11: Applications of website data, by digital comfort (arts organizations)



n=481
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

The following figure shows a similar result among organizations of different sizes. Overall, larger organizations tend to make more varied use of the data that they collect.

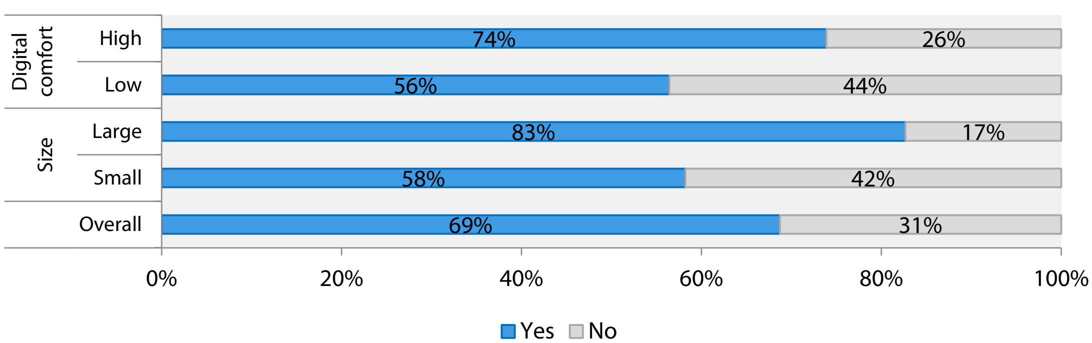
Figure 12: Applications of website data by organization size (arts organizations)



n=481
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

The figure below indicates that a little more than two thirds (69%) of organizations collect data from social media. The prevalence of doing so is considerably higher among organizations with a high level of digital comfort and large organizations.

Figure 13: Collection of social media data (arts organizations)



n=774
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

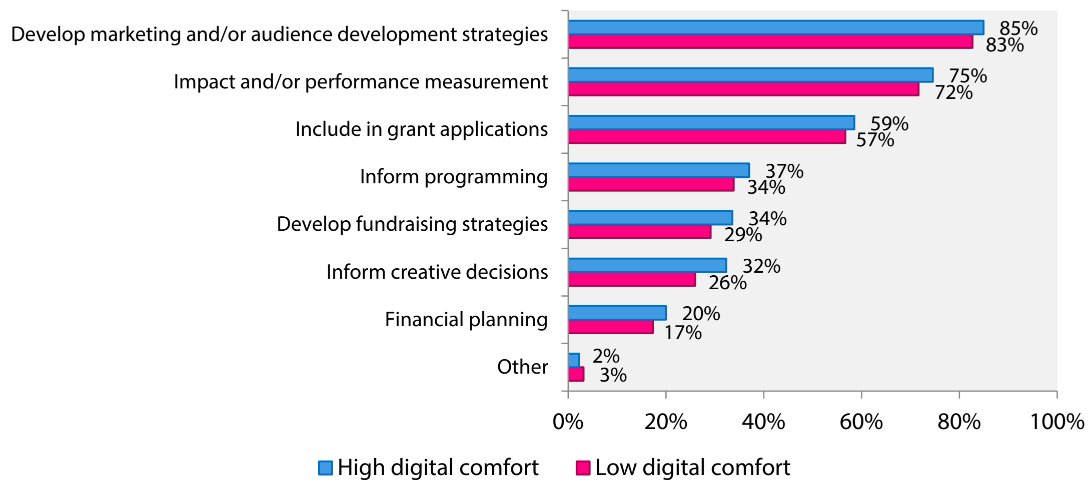
The applications for which arts organizations employ this data is illustrated in the following table. Like sales and website data, social media data is primarily used to develop marketing and audience development strategies, measure performance and include in grant applications.

Figure 14: Applications of social media data (arts organizations)

n=532
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

The following figure shows that uses of social media data are not substantially different for organizations of varying levels of digital comfort. This is perhaps indicative of the relative ease of use of social media platforms in comparison to other digital communications technologies.

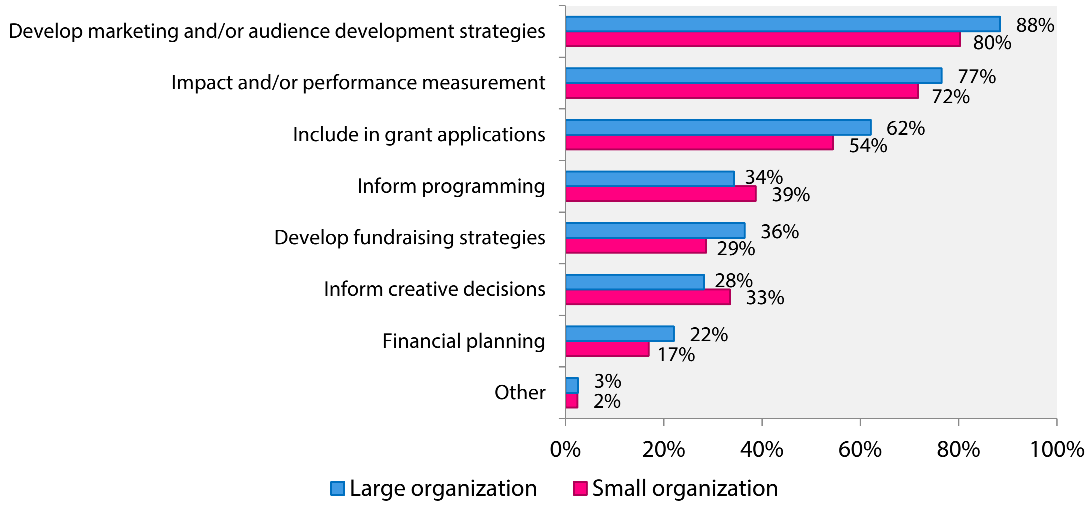
Figure 15: Applications of social media data by digital comfort (arts organizations)



n=532
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

The following figure shows that small organizations are more likely than their larger peers to use data to inform their programming and creative decisions.

Figure 16: Applications of social media data by organization size (arts organizations)



n=532
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

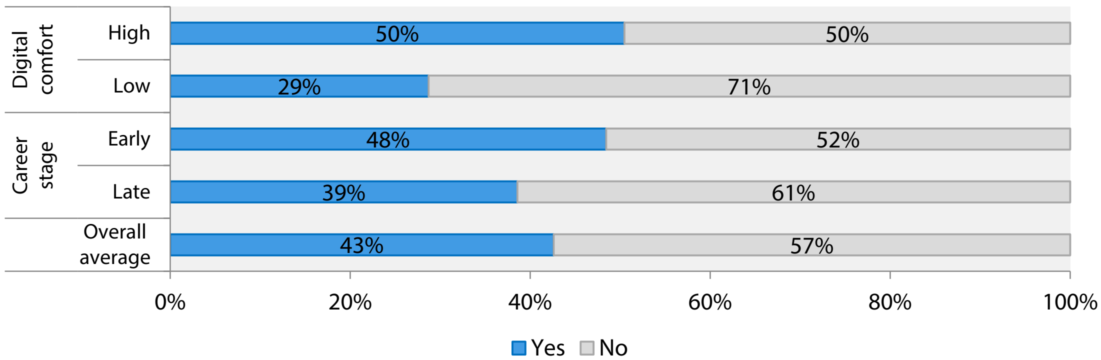
2.2.2 Artists

Key Findings

- Most artists (57%) do not collect communications data from any digital tools.
- Artists who do collect data are most likely to access information from websites (43%), followed by social media (36%).
- Data is most often used to develop marketing and/or audience development strategies.

As the following chart shows, only 43% of artists collect and track website data such as page traffic or other analytics. Artists with high digital comfort or, in the early stages of their careers, are slightly more likely to collect information but even among these groups 50% and 52% respectively do not do so.

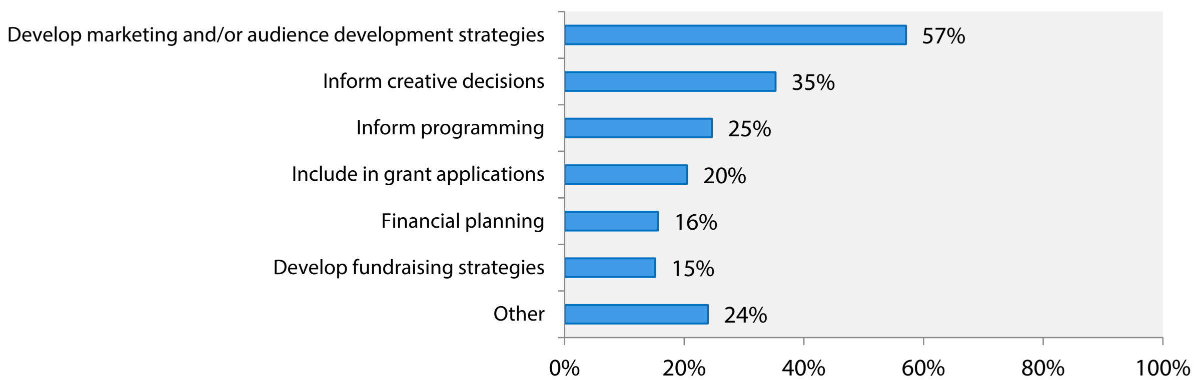
Figure 17: Applications of website data, by digital comfort and career stage (artists)



n=1,802
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

As the following figure shows, those artists who do collect website data primarily use it to develop marketing or audience development strategies. Conversely, website data is least likely to be used for financial planning or fundraising purposes.

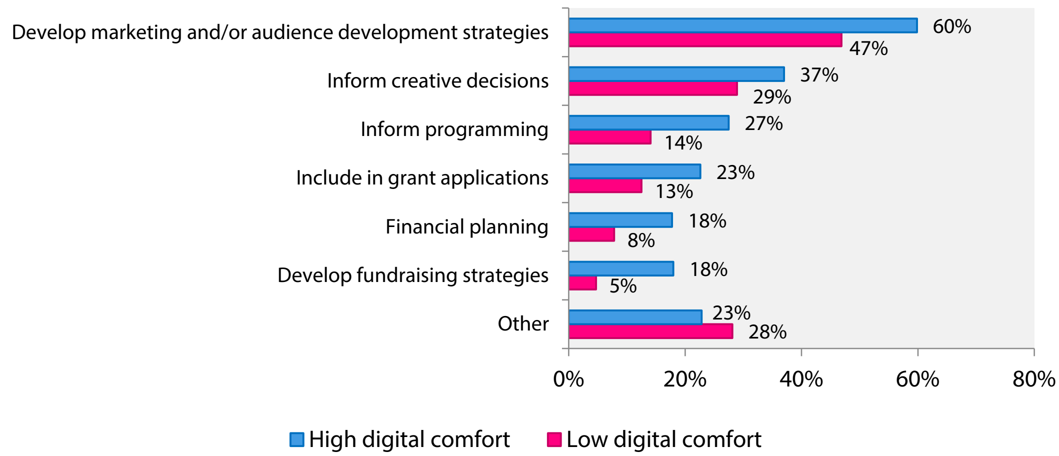
Figure 18: Applications of website data (artists)



n=601
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

The following chart shows the preceding information broken out by artists' level of digital comfort.

Figure 19: Applications of website data, by digital comfort (artists)



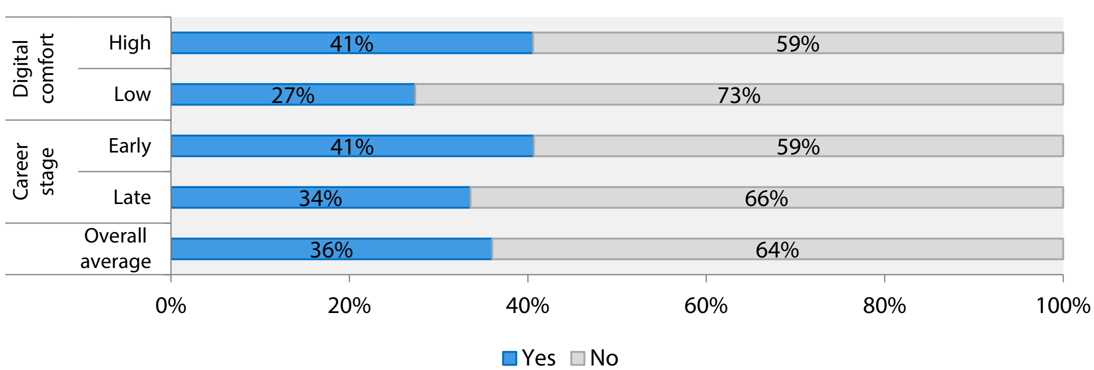
n=601
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

As can be seen above, there is a marked difference in artists' use of data depending on level of digital comfort. The greatest discrepancy appears in the use of website data for the development of fundraising strategies while there are also significant gaps in financial planning and grant applications. This suggests that artists with a higher level of digital comfort are more able to monetize their online presence. Aside from financial concerns, digitally comfortable artists are also almost twice as likely as their less comfortable peers to use website data to inform programming.

When these results are broken down by career stage, late stage artists' use of website data is more reserved than that of early stage artists, except for the purpose of grant applications (and only marginally so for financial planning). Again, it appears that late career stage artists view their websites as less of a promotional medium than their early stage counterparts.

In terms of social media, the chart below shows that the majority of artists (64%) do not collect and track data such as views, likes or follows. This trend is true of artists regardless of level of digital comfort or career stage, confirming that relatively few individuals take advantage of social media data.

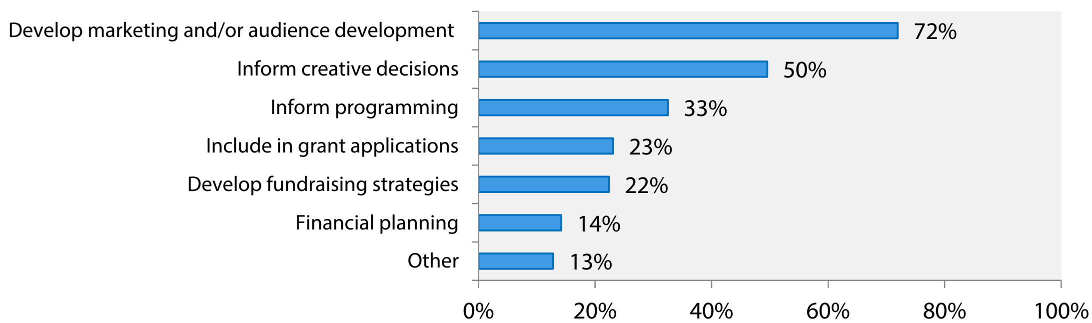
Figure 20: Collection of social media data, by digital comfort and career stage (artists)



n=1,794
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

Of the artists that do collect social media data, the majority are motivated to do so to develop marketing/audience development strategies or inform creative decisions, as illustrated in the figure below. These findings show that data from social media and websites are generally used for the same purposes.

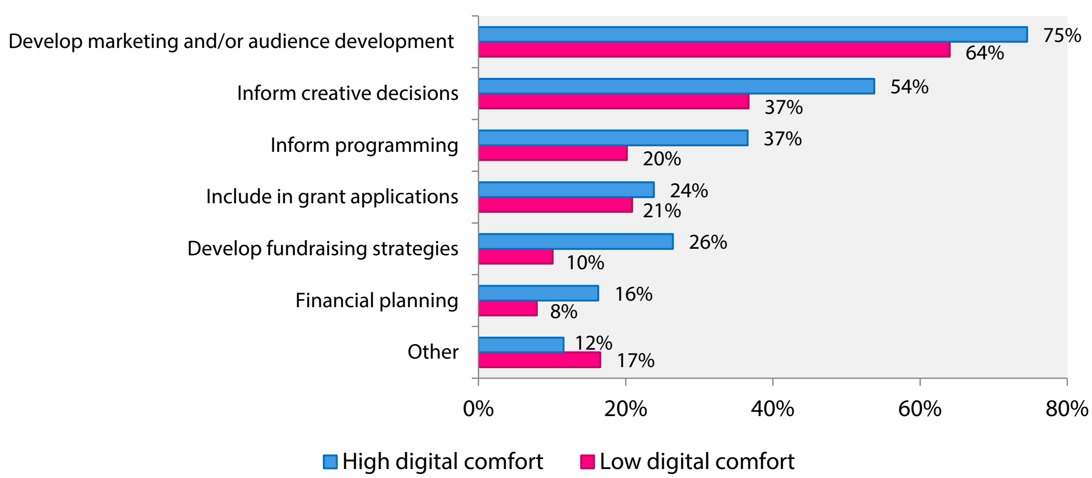
Figure 21: Applications of social media data (artists)



n=563
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

The following figure breaks out the preceding data by artists' level of digital comfort. The uses in which artists with low digital comfort lag the least in comparison to their more digitally comfortable counterparts are developing marketing/audience development strategies and collecting these metrics to include in grant applications.

Figure 22: Applications of social media data, by digital comfort (artists)



n=563
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

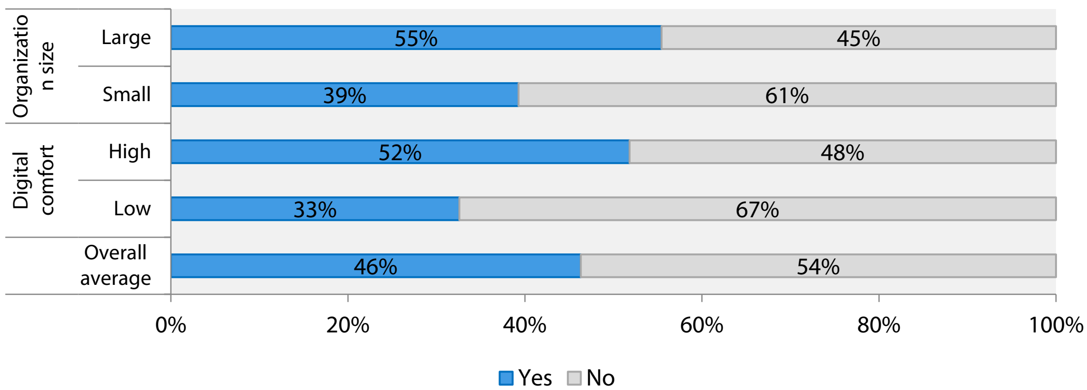
Because level of digital comfort has the greatest impact on fundraising strategies and creatives decisions, this suggests that digitally comfortable artist are better able to take advantage of data to support both artistic and administrative activities.

When compared with early career stage artists, those later in their careers tend to slightly emphasize the use of social media data to inform programming, develop fundraising strategies, and facilitate financial planning. Nonetheless, both groups tend to report similar uses of social media data.

2.3 Management

In addition to their use of sales, dissemination and communications data, organizations were also asked about how they collect and use stakeholder feedback. The following figure shows that **almost half (46%) of arts organizations use digital tools to obtain stakeholder feedback**. This proportion is great for larger organizations, and those with a higher level of digital comfort.

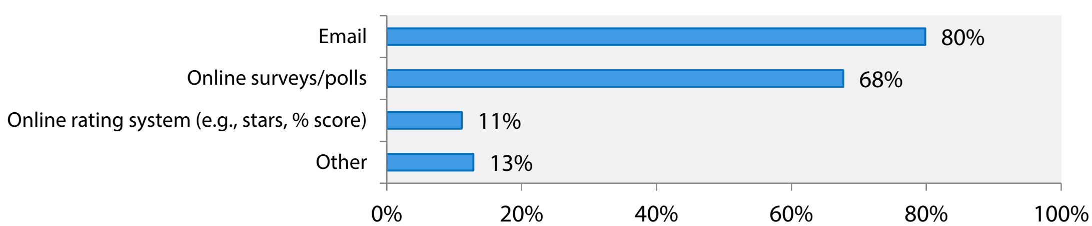
Figure 23: Use of digital tools to obtain stakeholder feedback, by organization size and digital comfort (arts organizations)



n=622
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

The figure below shows that email is the most prevalent digital tool used to collect stakeholder feedback. Online survey and polls are a close second, with online rating systems trailing by a considerable margin.

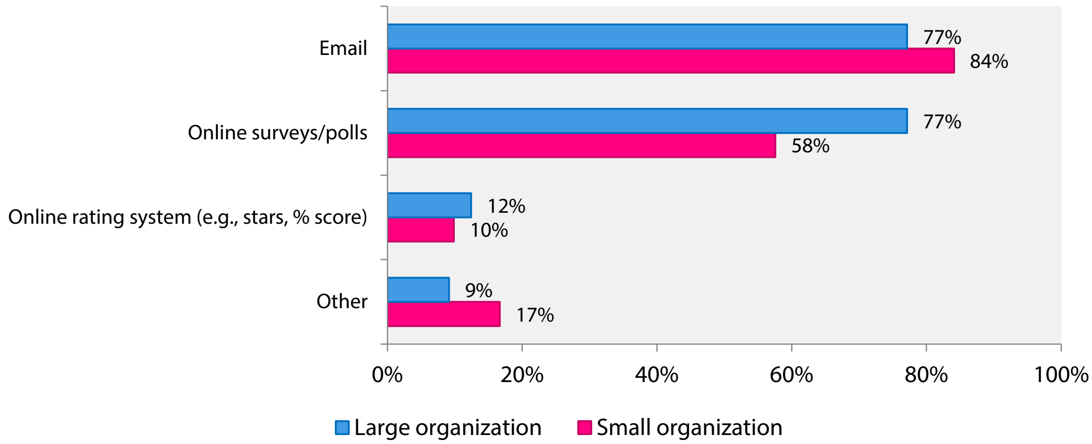
Figure 24: Types of digital tools used to collect stakeholder feedback (arts organizations)



n=230
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

Of these tools, large organizations are equally likely to use email and polls (77% of organizations), whereas small organizations tend to favour the use of email over online polls. Larger organizations' propensity to use more formalized surveys/polls is perhaps evidence of the need for larger organizations to collect and organize feedback from a larger constituency than their smaller counterparts. More digitally comfortable organizations are also more likely to use online surveys/polls, whereas less digitally comfortable organizations are more likely to rely on email.

Figure 25: Types of digital tools used to collect stakeholder feedback, by organization size (arts organizations)



n=229
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

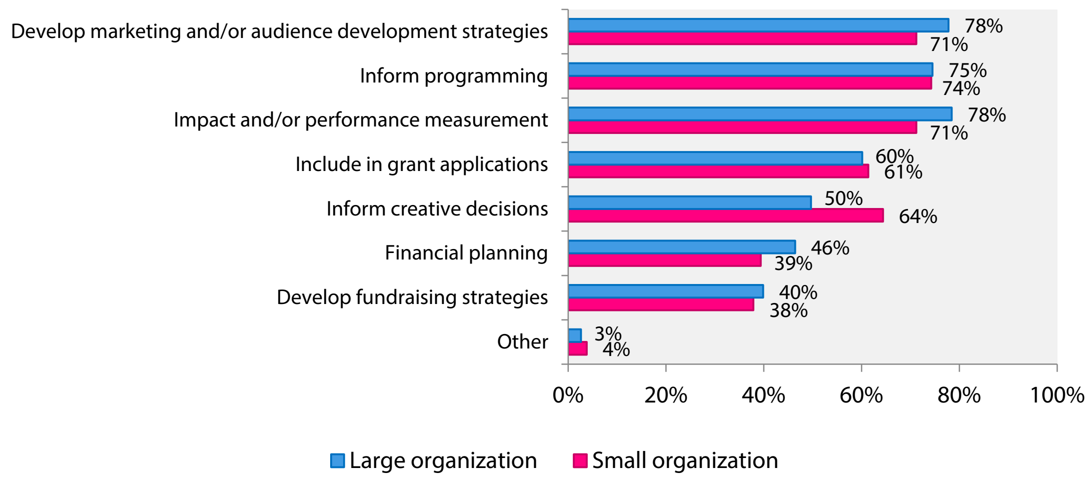
Organizations that collect stakeholder feedback overwhelmingly use this information to develop marketing and/or audience development strategies, inform programming, and conduct impact and/or performance measurement.

Figure 26: Applications of stakeholder feedback (arts organizations)

n=215
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

The following figure shows that these priorities are largely the same for large and small organizations. However, small organizations are considerably more likely to cite the use of stakeholder feedback to inform creative decisions.

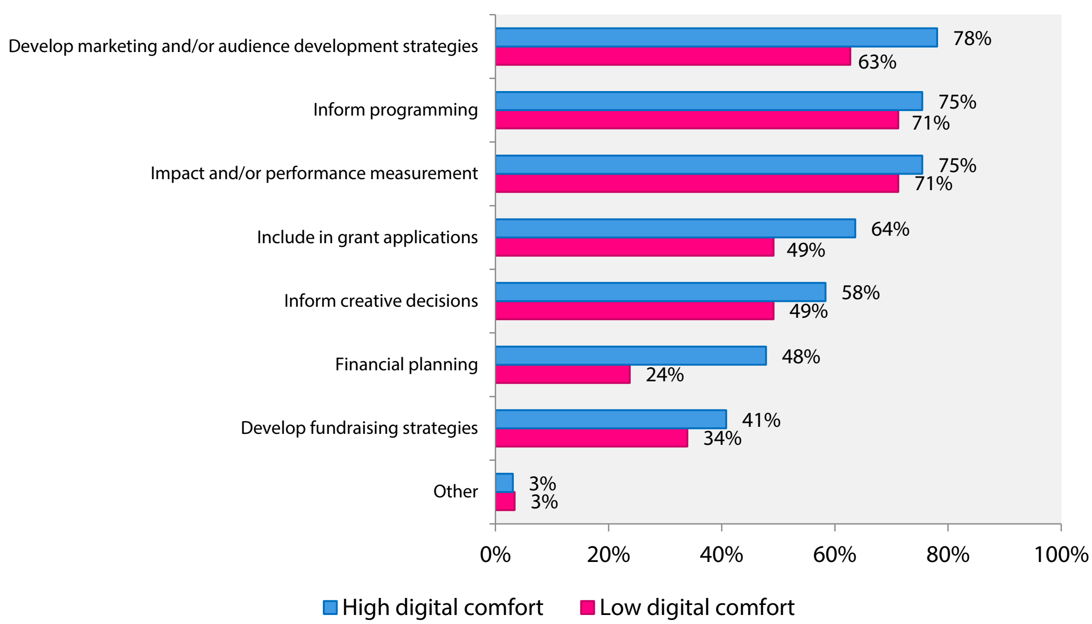
Figure 27: Applications of stakeholder feedback, by organization size (arts organizations)



n=213
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

The following figure shows that digitally comfortable organizations are significantly more likely to use stakeholder feedback to develop marketing and/or audience development strategies. Organizations with a low level of digital comfort are also significantly less likely to use stakeholder feedback for the purpose of financial planning.

Figure 28: Applications of stakeholder feedback, by digital comfort (arts organizations)



n=215
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

2.4 Key Observations

This section provides an overview of the ways that organizations and artists collect and use data from a variety of sources. Both groups are more likely to collect data from websites and social media platforms that online sales tools. Specifically, **while 41% of organizations and 22% of artists collect sales and dissemination data, 64% of organizations and 43% of artists collect website data**. These findings reflect the generally lower use of digital sales tools in comparison to other technologies. As discussed in Thematic Report 3, only a slight majority of organizations (57%) and artists (51%) use online sales platforms.

Regardless of data source or respondent group, **by far the most common use of data is for marketing and audience development strategies**. Although this finding could suggest that organizations and artists prioritize promoting their activities and reaching new groups, it could also mean that survey respondents are less aware of how to use data for other purposes. Despite this shared interest in marketing and audience development, individuals indicated a much more limited use of data than organizations, with lower response rates across the board.

Among organizations, size has a greater impact that level of digital comfort on data use. Specifically, large organizations use the data they collect for a wider range of purposes. For instance, large organizations are more likely than small organizations to use social media data for financial purposes, showing that this group is better able to monetize digital tools.

In addition to sales and communications data, organizations were also asked about their use of stakeholder feedback. Once again, marketing and audience development strategies are the most commonly cited uses for this information. Although responses suggest that small organizations are generally less adept at collecting and using data from sales and communications, they are more likely to use stakeholder feedback to influence creative decisions. This finding could indicate that small organizations are more agile in their programming or that they have a small circle of stakeholders and, by extension, less difficulty analyzing and incorporating feedback. These differences are reinforced by the fact that small organizations are more likely to use email to solicit feedback, while large organizations lead in the use of surveys and polls, two tools that contain analysis functions and are therefore suited to dealing with larger amounts of data.

3. Return on Investment

This section examines return on investment from several perspectives. First, it looks at how much organizations spend on digital technology. Second, it compares the level of satisfaction with investments in digital technologies among organizations and artists. Third, it analyzes survey respondents' plans for future investment in digital technology.

Survey results indicate that arts organizations spend slightly more than a third (37%) of their operating budget on digital tools. Although inter-arts and media arts organizations reported spending almost double what literature and theatre organizations spend, there was also a noticeable trend by organization size with small organizations spending proportionately more on all tools.

Organizations and individuals reported different levels of satisfaction in their investments in digital technology. Of the three areas of artistic practice discussed in Thematic Report 3, **organizations were more satisfied with investments in digital for communications and engagement whereas artists favoured the use of digital for creation, research and production.** Nonetheless, both groups reported significantly lower levels of satisfaction with digital sales and dissemination. As for future investments, **organizations and artists are both most likely to put additional time and resources towards websites.**

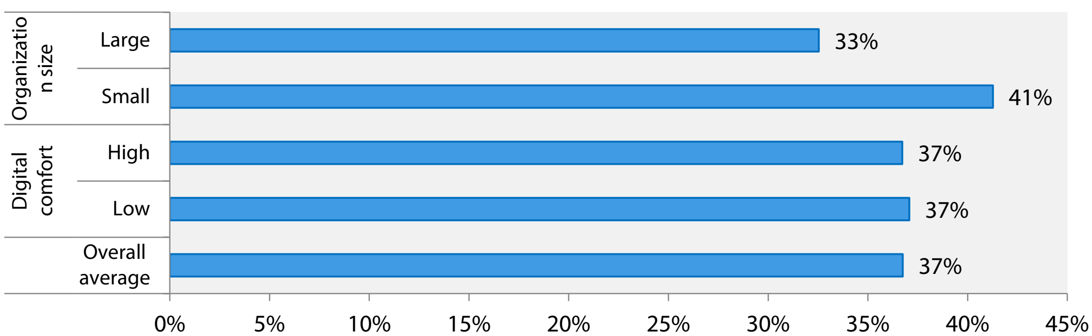
3.1.1 Costs of Digital Tools

Key Findings

- Arts organizations spend on average 37% of their total operating budget on digital technologies.
- Websites and social media were the largest expenditures and account for on average 10.6% of organizations operating budgets.
- Small organizations spent proportionately more than large organizations on all digital tools.

Organizations were asked to indicate what percentage of their total operating budgets were devoted to various digital technologies. The following chart shows that on average organizations spend a little more than a third (37%) of their operating budgets on digital technologies. Smaller organizations spend considerably more of their overall budget on digital technology. There was virtually no difference between organizations with high and low levels of digital comfort.

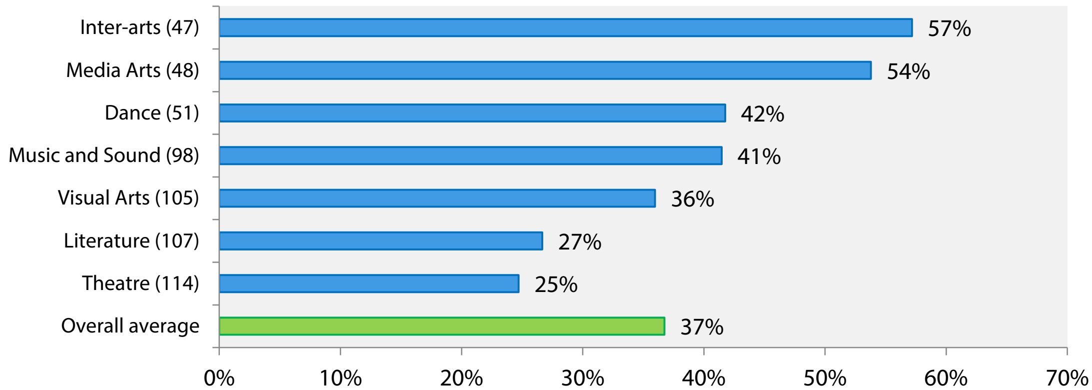
Figure 29: Average percentage of operating budget spent on digital technologies, by organization size and digital comfort (arts organizations)



n=604
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

The following figure shows that inter-arts and media arts spent the most on digital technologies, with these expenditures representing over half of their total operating budget. Literature and theatre spent the least, devoting only 27% and 25% of their operating budgets respectively.

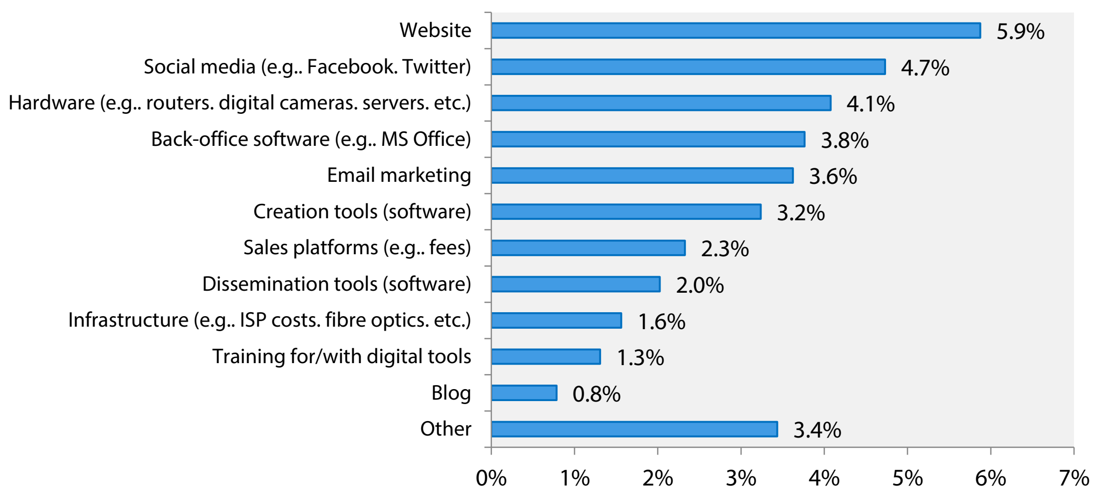
Figure 30: Average percentage of operating budget spent on digital technologies, by discipline (arts organizations)



n=570
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

The following chart shows that websites and social media were, on average, the most significant expenditure for arts organizations, representing 10.6% of organizations' operating budgets in combination.

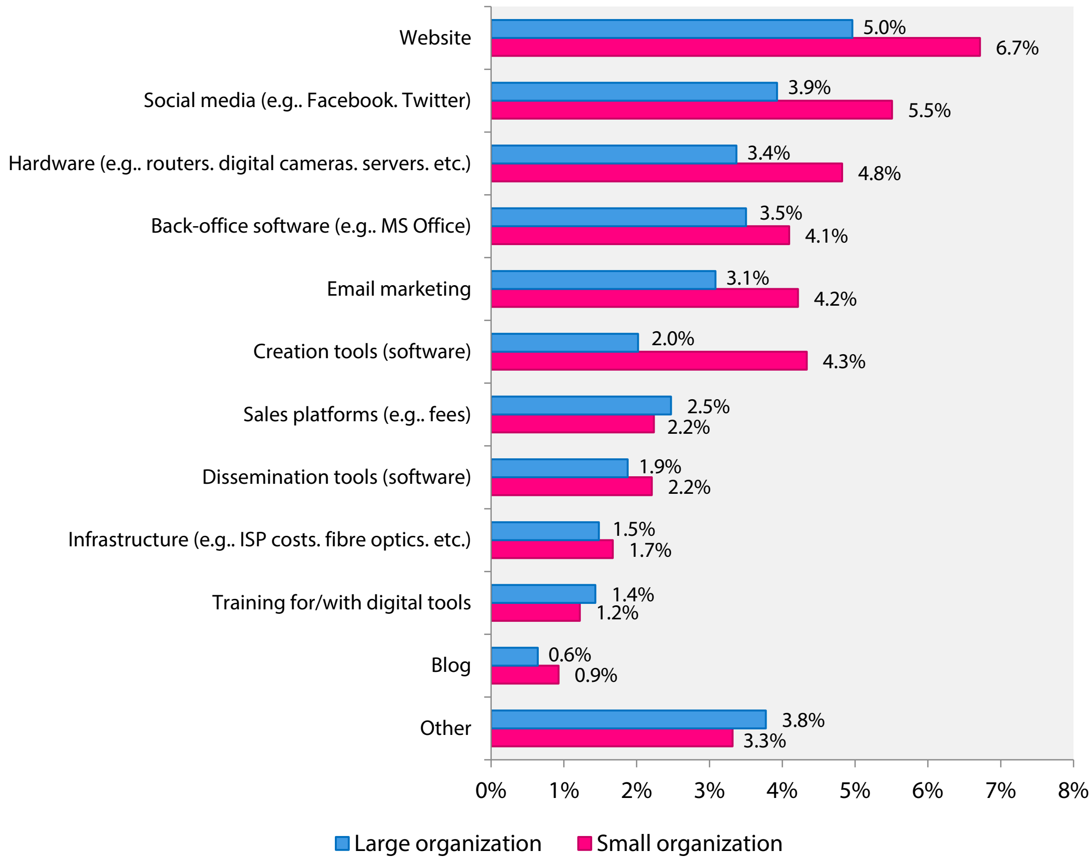
Figure 31: Average percentage of operating budget spent on digital technologies, by type of technology (arts organizations)



n=604
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

The following chart shows that small organizations spend proportionately more on virtually all types of digital technology than their larger counterparts.

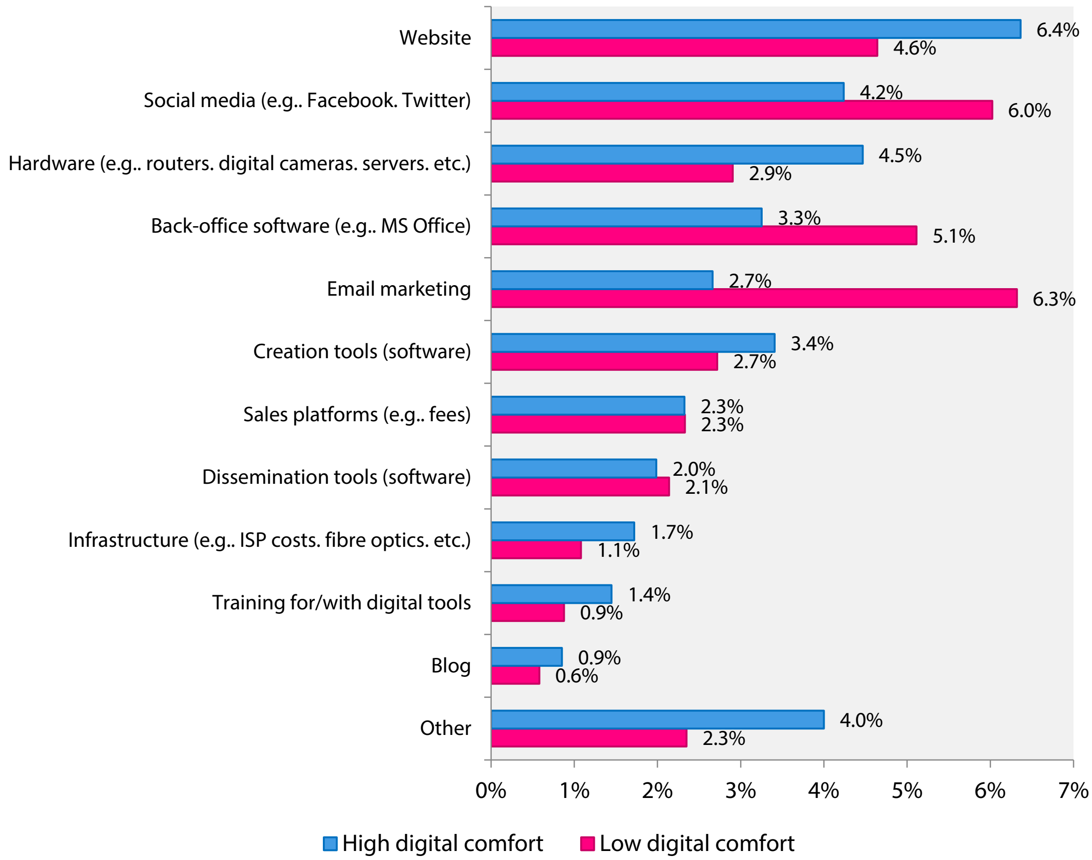
Figure 32: Average percentage of operating budget spent on digital technologies, by organization size and type of technology (arts organizations)



n=597
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

As illustrated in the chart below, organizations with a low level of digital comfort spend significantly more on a few types of digital technology. In particular, email marketing, back office and social media.

Figure 33: Average percentage of operating budget spent on digital technologies, by digital comfort and type of technology (arts organizations)



n=604
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

3.2 Satisfaction

Organizations and individuals were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with investments of both time and resources across a range of digital tools. Organizations were most satisfied with investments in email newsletters while individuals were most satisfied with apps. **Social media was the area of investment with the second-highest level of satisfaction for both groups.** In contrast, apps had one of the lowest levels of satisfaction for organizations.

High digital comfort members of both groups reported higher levels of satisfaction. Early career stage artists were also more satisfied in their investments in digital technology across the board. There was little variation between large and small organizations for social media or websites whereas large organizations were significantly more satisfied with apps and small organizations were more satisfied with blogs.

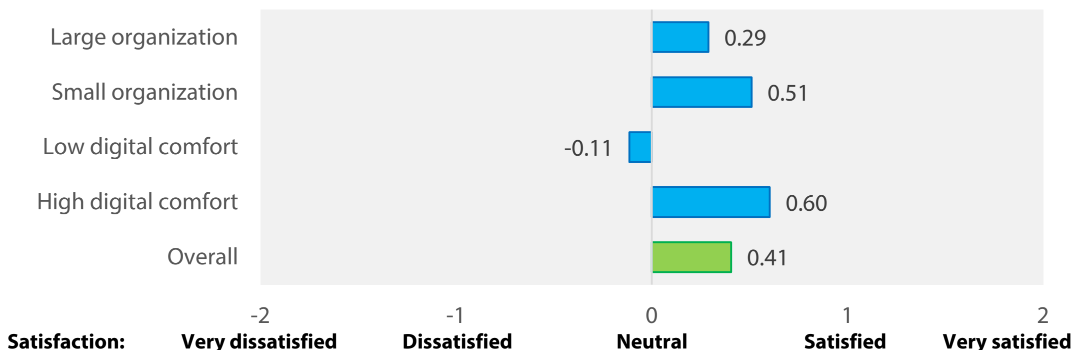
3.2.1 Arts organizations

Key Findings

- Arts organizations reported the highest levels of satisfaction with investments in email newsletters, social media and overall digital communications and engagement.
- Crowdfunding had the lowest level of satisfaction across all disciplines.
- Literature organizations were almost twice as satisfied in their websites as dance organizations and also indicated the highest level of satisfaction in their investments in social media.

The following figure shows that organizations are, on average, modestly satisfied with their investment of time and resources into digital creation and production tools. In contrast to the average for all organizations, those with a low level of digital comfort reported a negative experience overall, in contrast to the high levels reported by their more digitally comfortable counterparts. Large organizations are also notable for having a lower level of satisfaction in this regard.

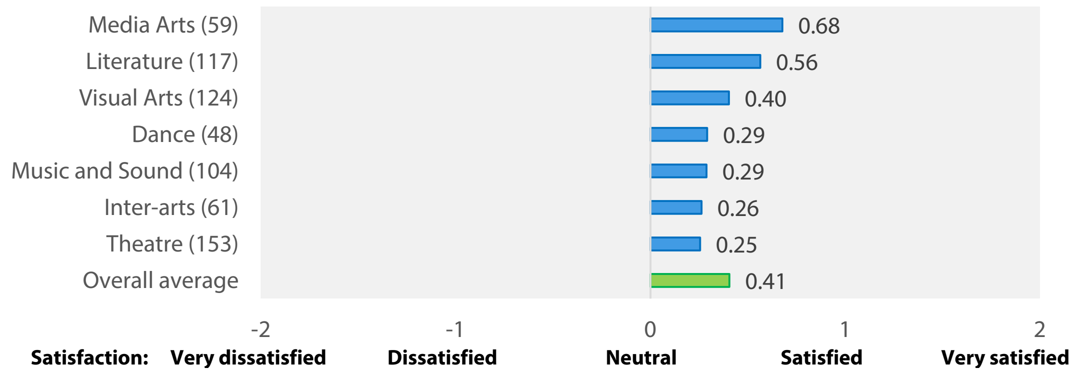
Figure 34: Average satisfaction with investment in digital creation and production tools, by organization size and digital comfort (arts organizations)



n=705
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

The following figure shows that media arts, literature, and visual arts had the most positive experience with digital creation and production tools. The four disciplines reporting the lowest scores (with fairly similar scores) included music and sound and inter-arts, both of which are disciplines that rely heavily on tools of this sort.

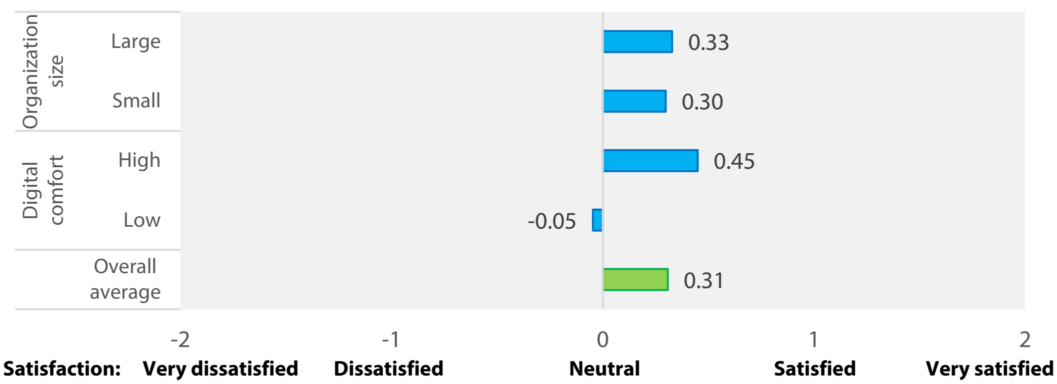
Figure 35: Average satisfaction with investment in digital creation and production tools, by discipline (arts organizations)



n=666
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

The following figure shows that, on average, organizations were satisfied with their investment in digital dissemination and sales tools. This result was significantly lower for organizations with a low level of digital comfort, however. These organizations averaged a slightly dissatisfied response.

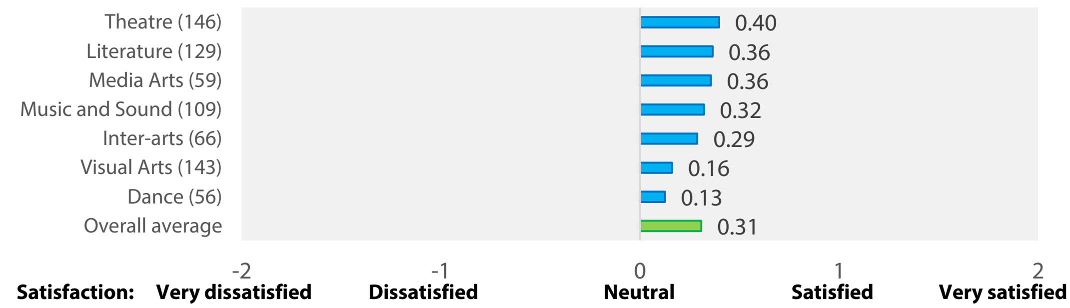
Figure 36: Average satisfaction with investment in digital dissemination and sales tools, by organization size and digital comfort (arts organizations)



n=748
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

As the chart below illustrates, there was less variation between different disciplines than that observed in the breakout by digital comfort. Considerably lower levels of satisfaction are evident among visual arts and dance organizations.

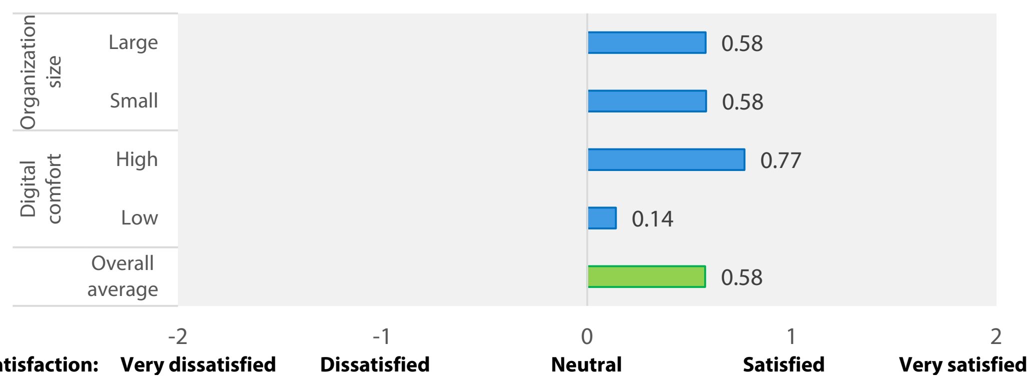
Figure 37: Average satisfaction with investment in digital dissemination and sales tools, by discipline (arts organizations)



n=708
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

The following figure shows that most organizations are generally quite satisfied with their investment of time and resources in digital communications and engagement.

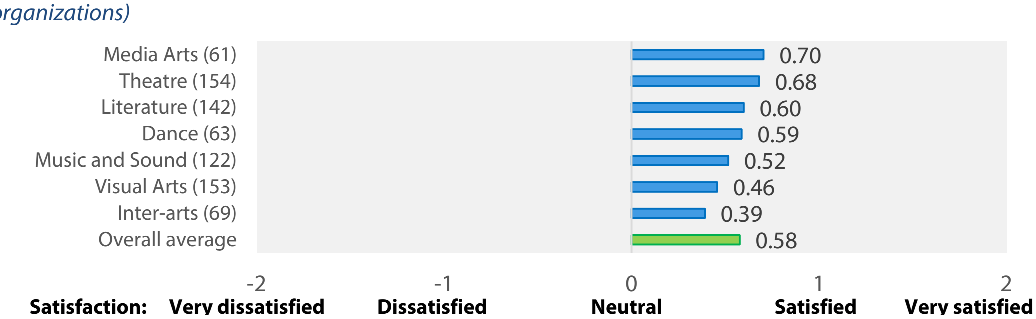
Figure 38: Average satisfaction with investment in digital communications and engagement, by organization size and digital comfort (arts organizations)



n=772
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

The following chart shows that media arts and theatre organizations reported the greatest satisfaction with respect to digital communications and engagement, whereas visual arts and inter-arts organizations tended to be much less satisfied.

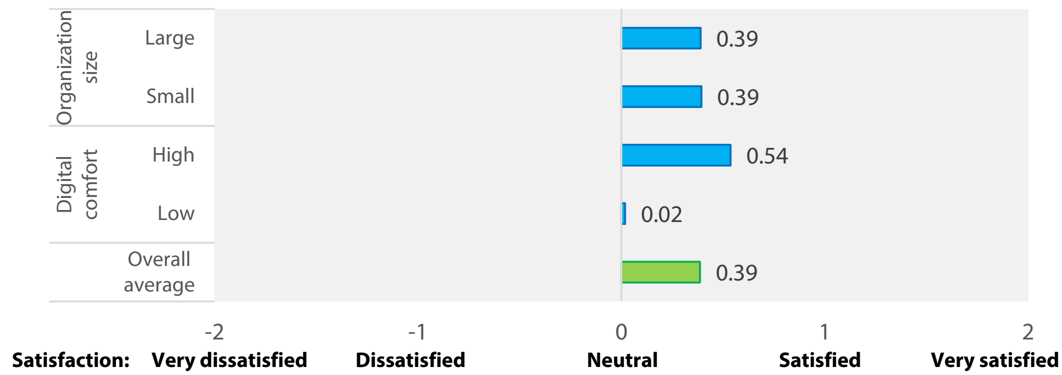
Figure 39: Average satisfaction with investment in digital communications and engagement, by discipline (arts organizations)



n=764
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

The following figure shows that most organizations are modestly satisfied with their investment of time and resources into their website. The only exception to this observation is organizations with a low level of digital comfort.

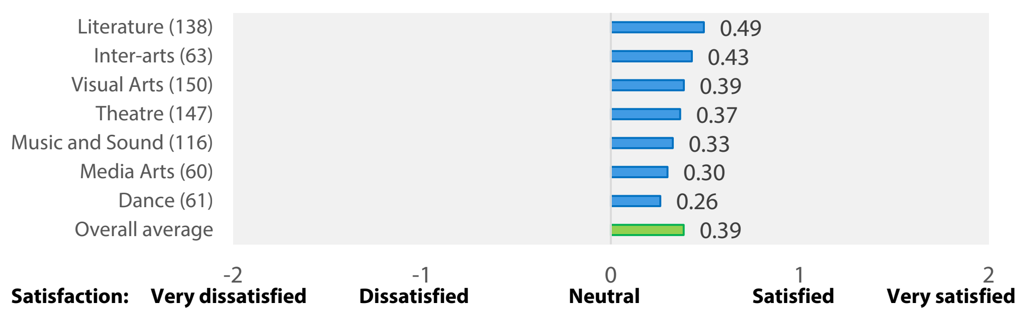
Figure 40: Average satisfaction with investment in website, by organization size and digital comfort (arts organizations)



n=772
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

The following chart shows that literature and inter-arts organizations tended to be more satisfied with their investment of time and resources into their website. Media arts and dance organizations were modestly less satisfied on the other end of the satisfaction spectrum.

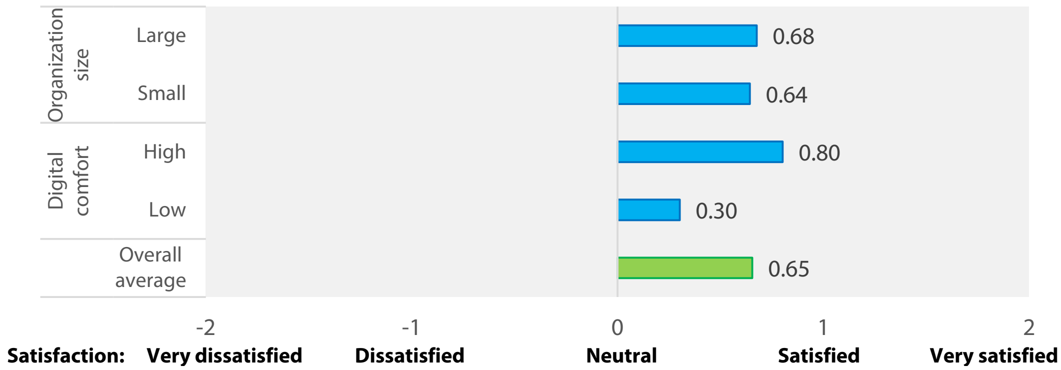
Figure 41: Average satisfaction with investment in website, by discipline (arts organizations)



n=735
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

As the figure below shows, organizations are generally satisfied with their investment of time and resources into their social media presence.

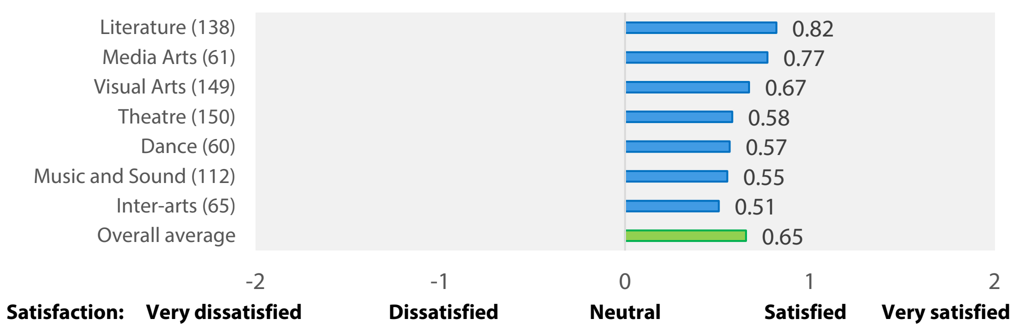
Figure 42: Average satisfaction with investment in social media, by organization size and digital comfort (arts organizations)



n=773
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

The following figure shows that literature and media arts organizations were the most satisfied with their investment of time and resources into social media. Music and sound and inter-arts organizations were the least satisfied with social media.

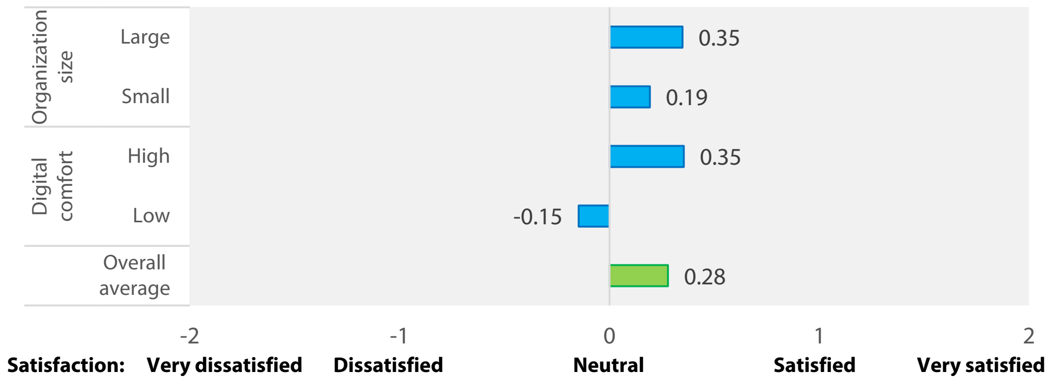
Figure 43: Average satisfaction with investment in social media, by discipline (arts organizations)



n=735
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

The following figure shows that organizations are largely neutral in terms of their satisfaction with apps. Organizations with a low level of digital comfort, in particular, indicated a mildly unsatisfying experience investing in apps, on average.

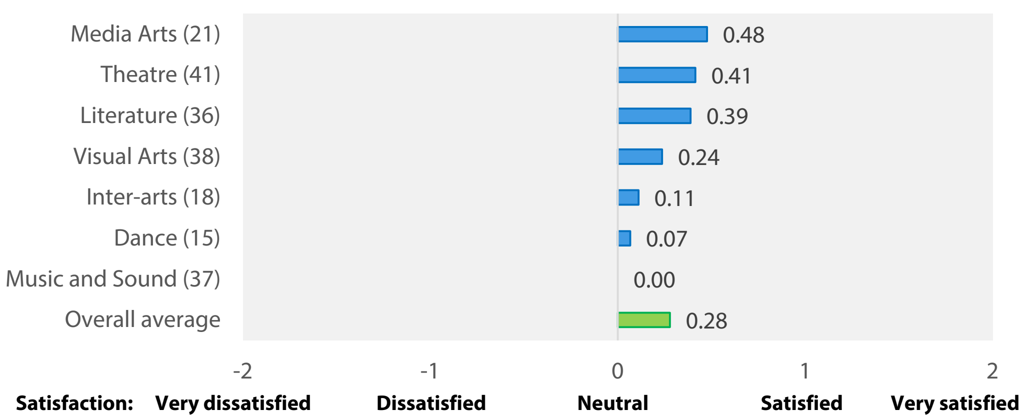
Figure 44: Average satisfaction with investment in apps, by organization size and digital comfort (arts organizations)



n=563
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

The following chart shows that media arts and theatre organizations were the most satisfied with their investment of time and resources into apps. Music and sound organizations reported a neutral level of satisfaction. Overall, the average level of satisfaction was lower for apps than it was for other types of technology that organizations used. This finding is consistent with the low level of use of apps in general, as discussed in Thematic Report 3.

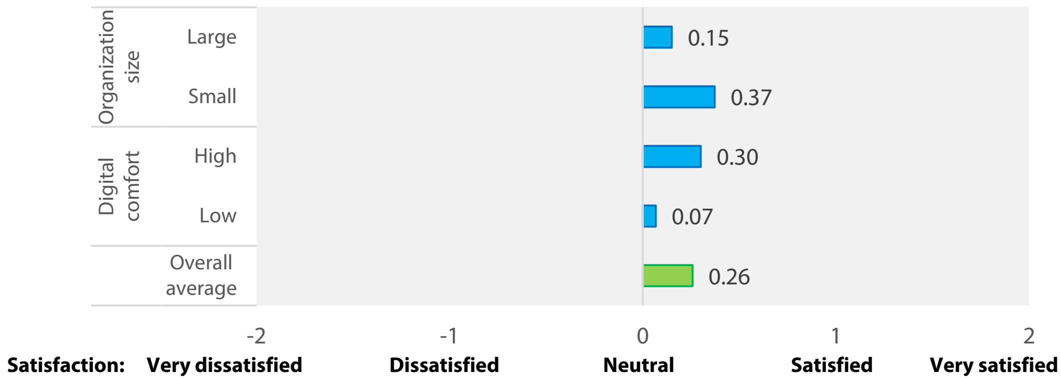
Figure 45: Average satisfaction with investment in apps, by discipline (arts organizations)



n=206
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

The following figure shows that the average organization had a modestly positive experience with their investment in blogs.

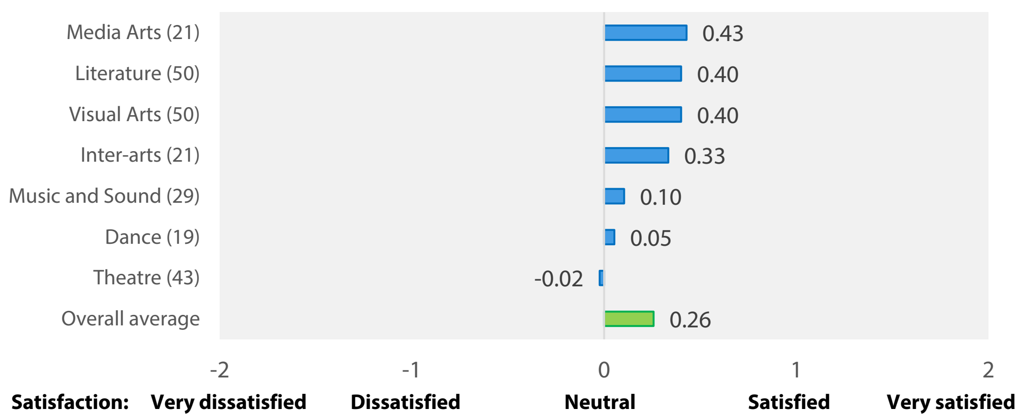
Figure 46: Average satisfaction with investment in blog, by organization size and digital comfort (arts organizations)



n=245
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

As the following figure illustrates, media arts, literature, visual arts and inter-arts organizations generally reported a reasonable level of satisfaction with their investment in blogs. Music and sound, dance, and theatre were significantly lower, however, the range of responses to blogs was still narrow. This discrepancy may reflect the tendency for the more satisfied disciplines to focus on and document their creative process, whereas for less satisfied disciplines process is more difficult to share in a blog format or less aesthetically pleasing compared to the finished product.

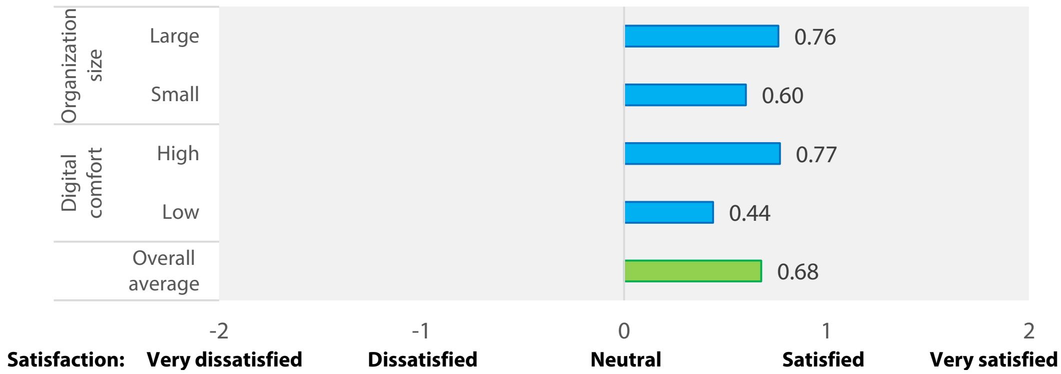
Figure 47: Average satisfaction with investment in blog, by discipline (arts organizations)



n=233
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

The following figure shows that large organizations are somewhat more likely than their smaller counterparts to be satisfied with their investment of time and resources in email newsletters. In this case, there was little variation by discipline.

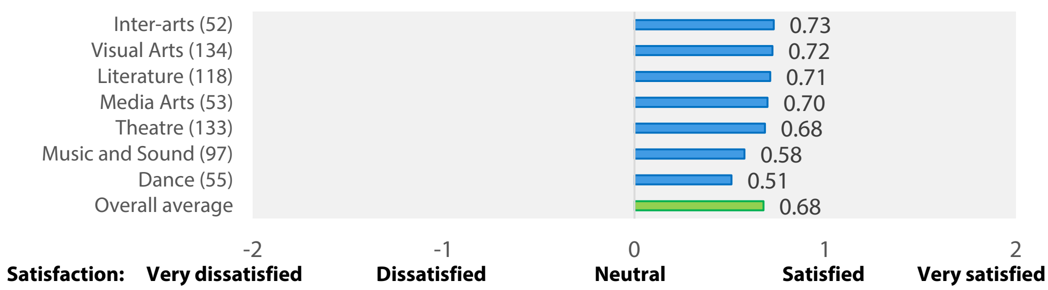
Figure 48: Average satisfaction with investment in email newsletter, by organization size and digital comfort (arts organizations)



n=671
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

The chart below shows that inter-arts, visual arts, and literature practitioners tend to report the highest level of satisfaction with their investment of time and resources into email newsletters.

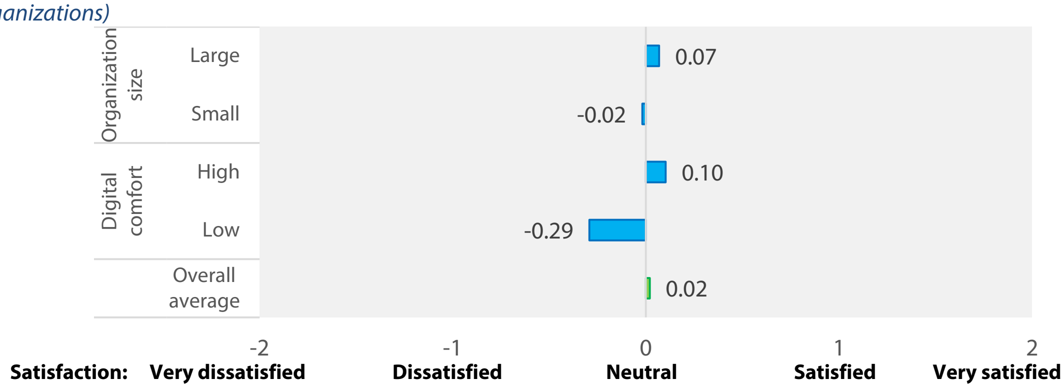
Figure 49: Average satisfaction with investment in email newsletter, by discipline (arts organizations)



n=642
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

The figure below shows that organizations had relatively neutral responses with respect to their investment of time and resources in crowdfunding. Organizations with a low level of digital comfort had the least satisfying experience.

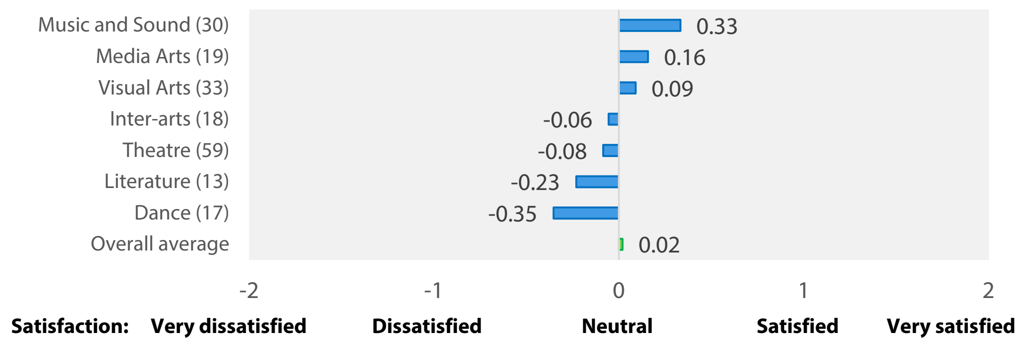
Figure 50: Average satisfaction with investment in crowdfunding, by organization size and digital comfort (arts organizations)



n=197
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

The following figure shows that there was a wider range of satisfaction reported with respect to organizations' investment of time and resources into crowdfunding. While music and sound tends towards more dissatisfied responses for other technologies, this discipline led the pack for crowdfunding. Conversely, dance and literature were notable for their low level of satisfaction with crowdfunding. As with the discussion of blogs, it may be that some art forms are a more natural fit for crowdfunding than others. For instance, while musicians can release sample tracks to generate interest in a project, it may be more difficult for a dancer to share the preliminary phases of their creative process for fundraising purposes.

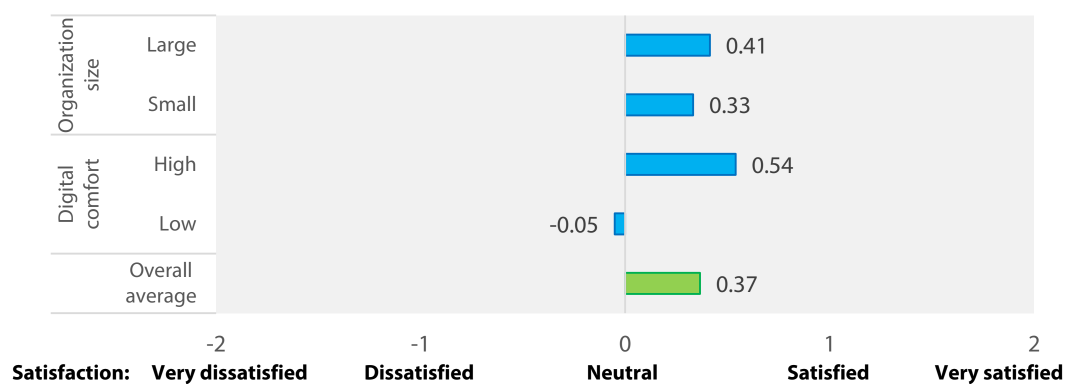
Figure 51: Average satisfaction with investment in crowdfunding, by discipline (arts organizations)



n=189
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

The following figure shows that organizations generally had a positive experience with their investment in digital management tools. The sole exception, organizations with a low level of digital comfort, had a very slightly negative satisfaction with digital management tools, on average.

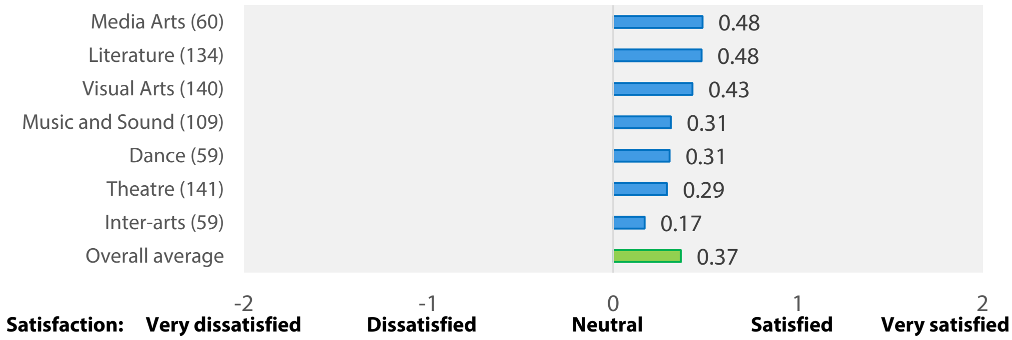
Figure 52: Average satisfaction with investment in digital management tools, by organization size and digital comfort (arts organizations)



n=738
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

The following figure shows that media arts and literature were the disciplines reporting the highest level of satisfaction with their investment of time and resources into digital management tools. Inter-arts was notable for its much lower level of satisfaction with these tools.

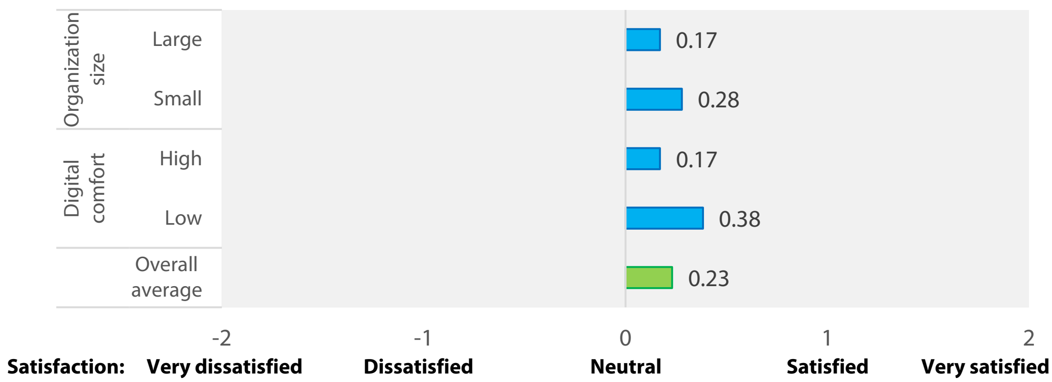
Figure 53: Average satisfaction with investment in digital management tools, by discipline (arts organizations)



n=702
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

Overall, organizations had a slightly positive experience with the digital provision of services, as illustrated in the following chart.

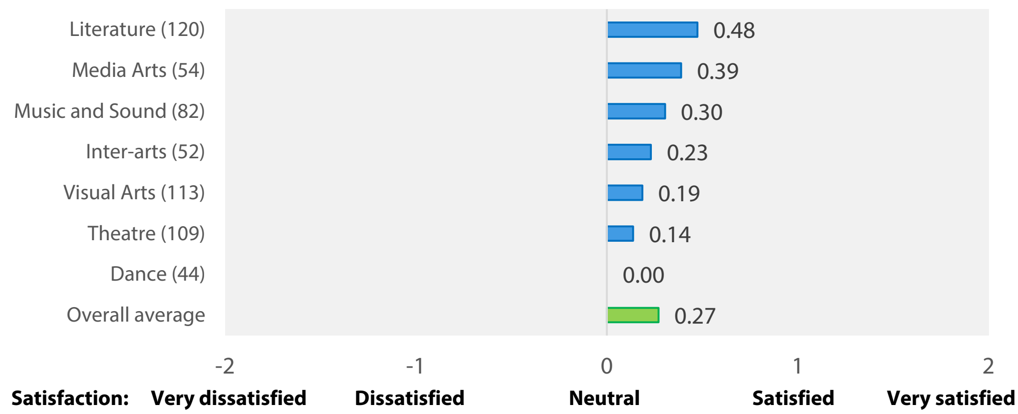
Figure 54: Average satisfaction with investment in digital provision of services, by organization size and digital comfort (arts organizations)



n=194
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

As the following chart illustrates, literature and media arts tended to be the most satisfied with their investment of time and resources into the digital provision of services. Theatre and dance, on the other hand, were much less satisfied with their digital implementation of services.

Figure 55: Average satisfaction with investment in digital provision of services, by discipline (arts organizations)



n=574
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

3.2.2 Artists

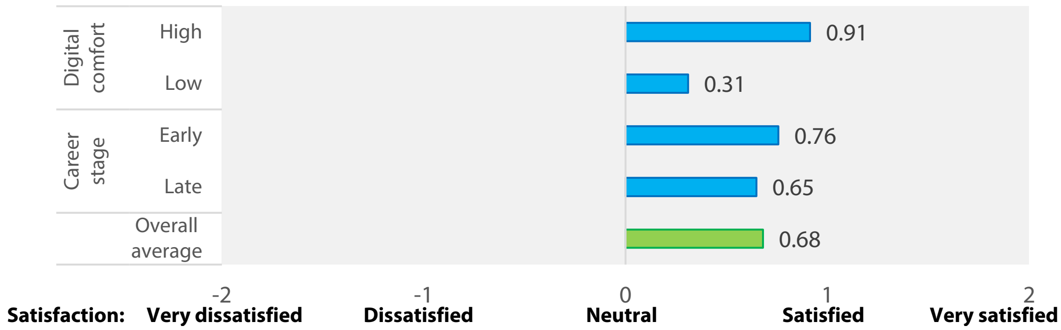
Key Findings

- Artists are generally satisfied with their allocation of time and resources towards digital technology.
- Artists reported the highest level of satisfaction for investments in apps and social media.

  In contrast, artists indicated a largely neutral opinion of digital dissemination and sales systems. This finding is consistent with the low level of use of this technology.

The figure below shows that there is considerable variation between artists' level of satisfaction with digital creation tools, depending on their level of digital comfort. There was little difference between respondents in different stages of their careers.

Figure 56: Average satisfaction with digital creation tools, by digital comfort and career stage (artists)

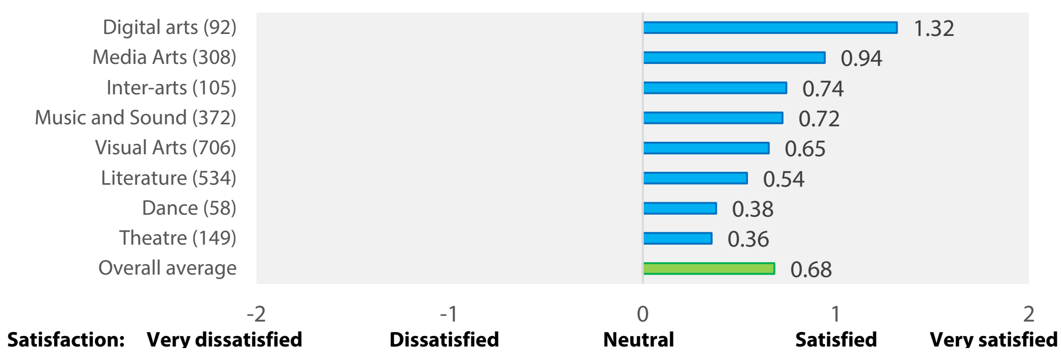


n=2,345
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

An equal proportion of artists at early and late stages in their careers indicate that they are very satisfied with investments in digital creation tools.

The following figure shows that digital arts, media arts, and inter-arts artists report the greatest satisfaction with their investment of time and resources into digital creation tools. On the other hand, theatre, dance and literature practitioners rated their satisfaction with digital tools the lowest.

Figure 57: Average satisfaction with digital creation tools, by discipline (artists)

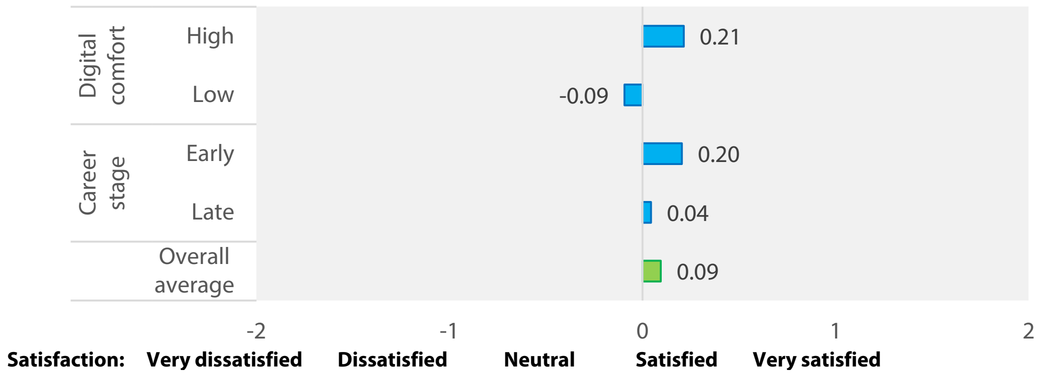


n=2,324
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

These findings suggest that artists whose primary medium resides on digital platforms are more likely to be satisfied with these technologies. Conversely, disciplines such as theatre, dance and literature, which report lower satisfaction, tend to employ digital technologies in a supporting function that is not critical to the medium.

The following chart shows that artists generally have a neutral opinion of digital dissemination and sales systems. This finding is reinforced by the distribution of responses to this question, to which 58% of respondents gave a "neutral" response. These results are consistent with the fact that only 52% of artists use online payment systems, as discussed in Thematic Report 3.

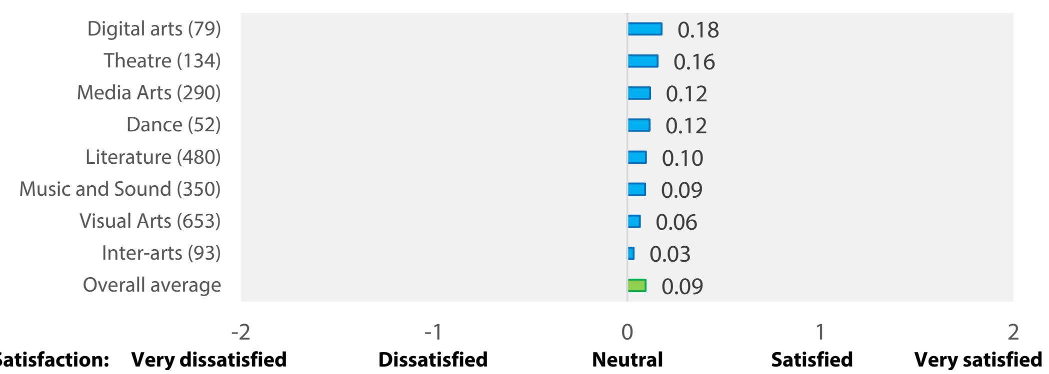
Figure 58: Average satisfaction with investment in digital dissemination and sales, by digital comfort and career stage (artists)



n=2,146
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

The following figure breaks this information out by discipline, showing that digital arts, theatre and media arts reported the highest satisfaction with their investment of time and resources into digital dissemination and sales.

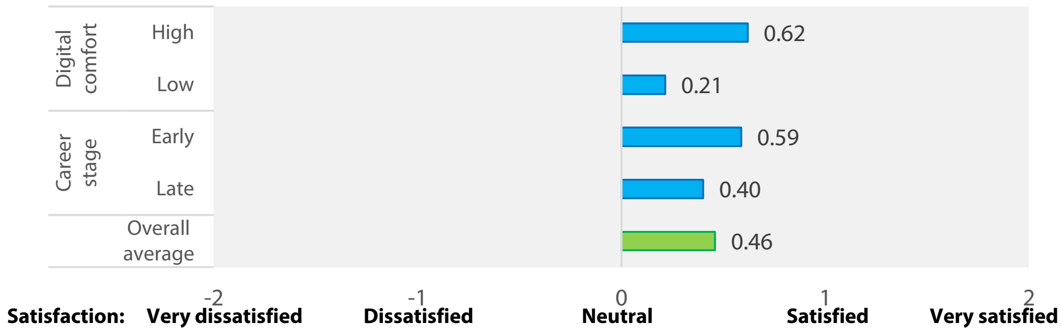
Figure 59: Average satisfaction with investment in digital dissemination and sales, by discipline (artists)



n=2,131
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

The following chart shows that artists with a higher level of digital comfort and those in an earlier stage of their careers report a higher level of satisfaction with their investment of time and resources into digital communications and engagement. Artists at an early career stage also reported above-average levels of satisfaction.

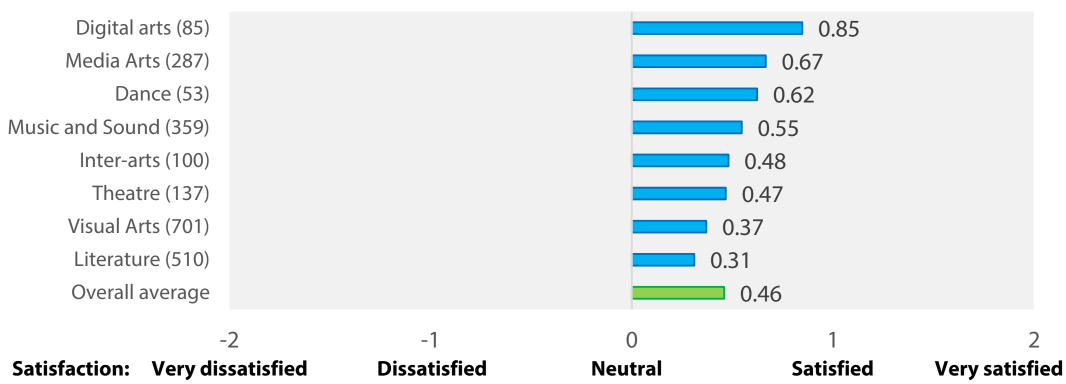
Figure 60: Average satisfaction with investment in digital communications and engagement, by digital comfort and career stage (artists)



n=2,252
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

The figure below shows that the disciplines with the highest level of satisfaction with their investment of time and resources into digital communications and engagement were digital arts, media arts, and dance.

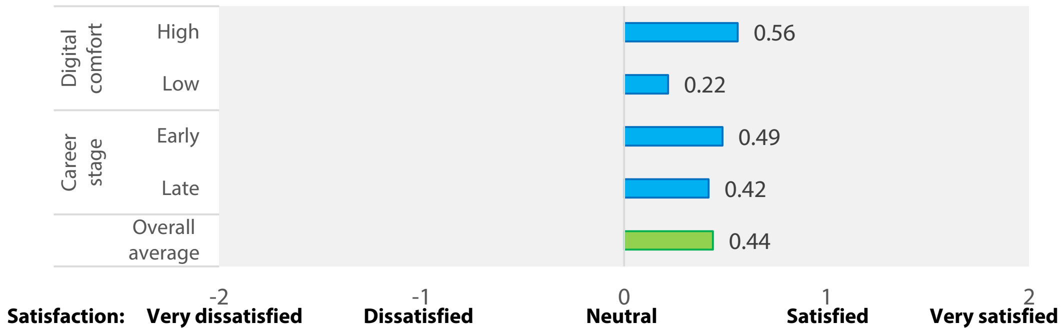
Figure 61: Average satisfaction with investment in digital communications and engagement, by discipline (artists)



n=2,232
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

In terms of the investment of time and resources into websites, the chart below shows that, on average, artists are satisfied.

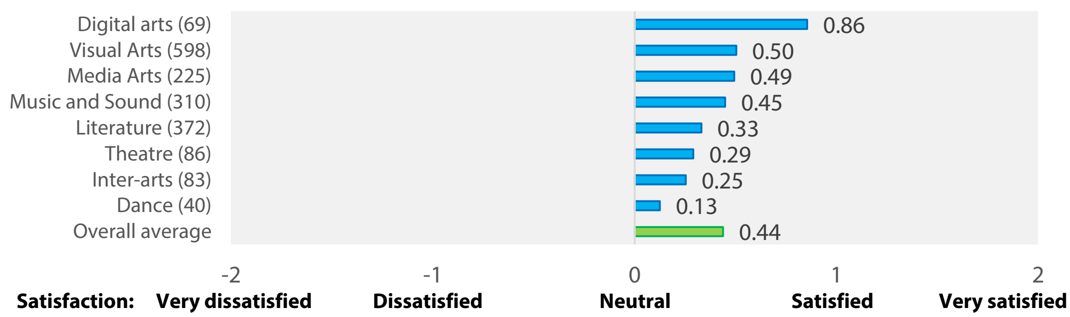
Figure 62: Average satisfaction with investment into website, by digital comfort and career stage (artists)



n=1,799
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

The following chart shows that digital, visual, and media artists reported the highest level of satisfaction with their investment of time and resources into their website.

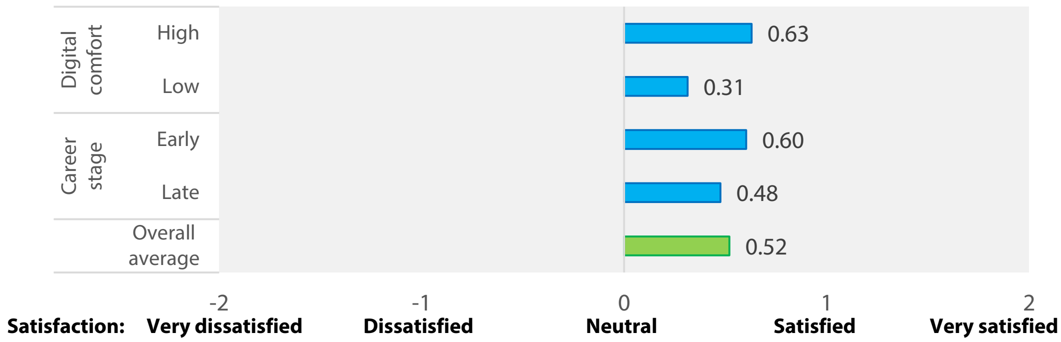
Figure 63: Average satisfaction with investment into website, by discipline (artists)



n=1,783
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

The following chart indicates that artists generally have a positive level of satisfaction with regards to their investment of time and resources into social media. However, artists with a high level of digital comfort are more than twice as satisfied as their less comfortable peers. This discrepancy is also seen with artists at different stages of their careers, although it is less pronounced.

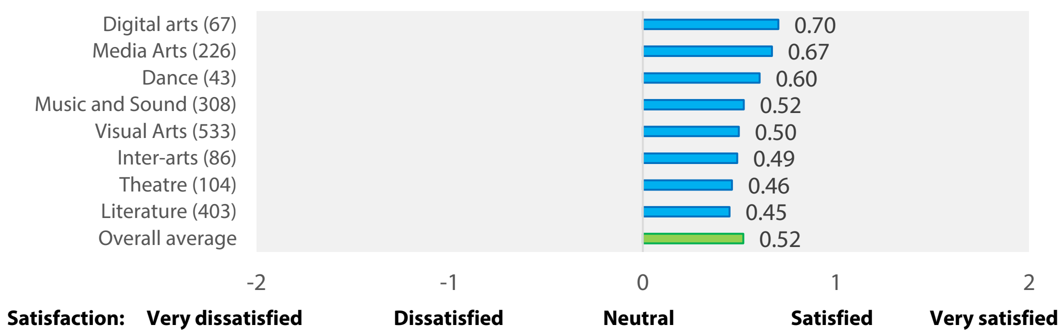
Figure 64: Average satisfaction with investment in social media, by digital comfort and career stage (artists)



n=1,793
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

The following figure shows that artists across disciplines are generally satisfied with the time and resources that they invested in social media. Although there is a slightly more favourable response among digital arts, media arts, and dance, there is little variation across disciplines overall.

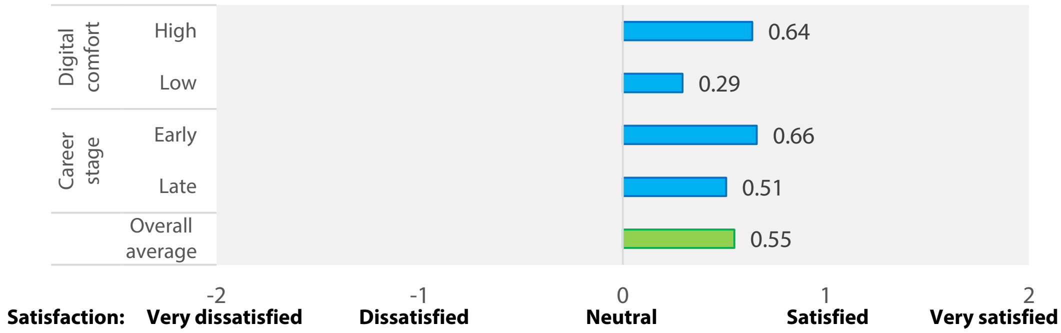
Figure 65: Average satisfaction with investment in social media, by discipline (artists)



n=1,770
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

As the chart below illustrates, artists in the early stage of their careers are more likely to be satisfied with their investment in apps. Note, however, that each of the groups below have very different expectations of the medium and may be registering satisfaction to different criteria (as described in previously).

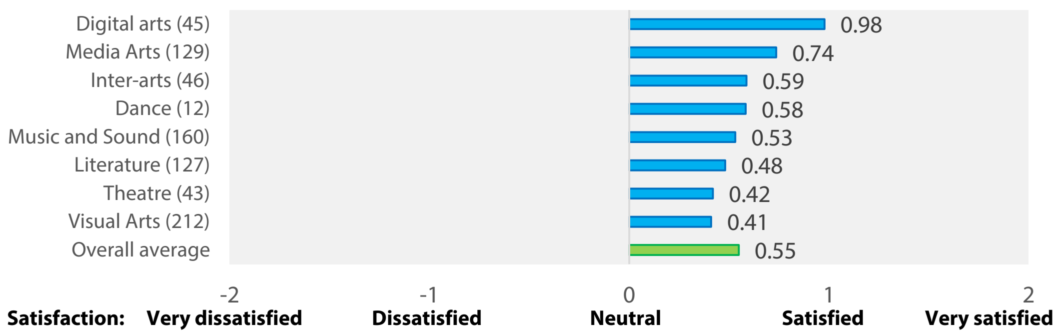
Figure 66: Average satisfaction with investment in apps, by digital comfort and career stage (artists)



n=796
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

The following figure shows that artists that practice digital arts, media arts, and inter-arts disciplines are the most likely to be satisfied with their investment of time and resources into apps.

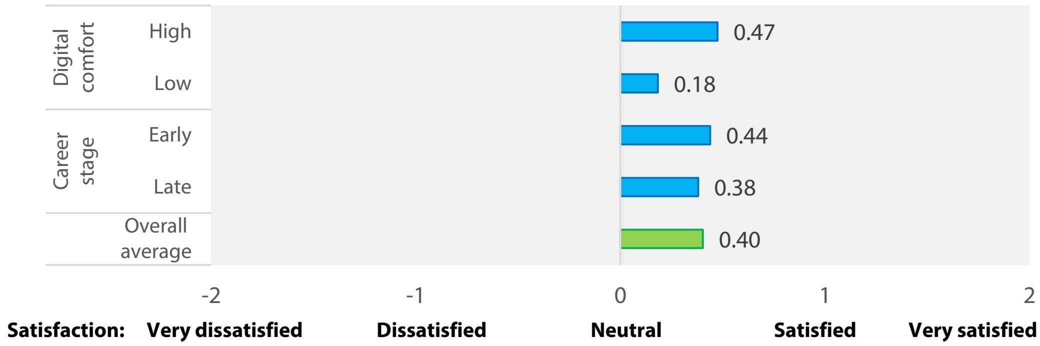
Figure 67: Average satisfaction with investment in apps, by discipline (artists)



n=774
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

The following table shows that artists' satisfaction with their investment of time and resources into their blog is generally positive. The satisfaction among artists with a low level of digital comfort was considerably lower than in other categories.

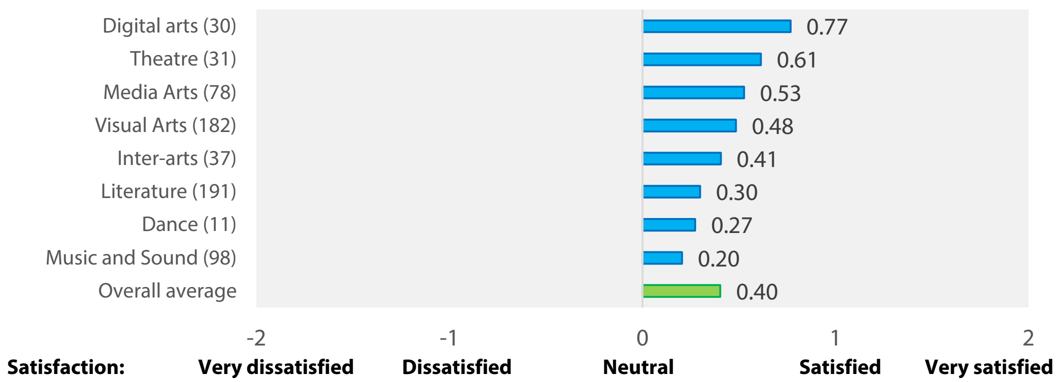
Figure 68: Average satisfaction with investment in blogs, by organization size and digital comfort (artists)



n=782
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

The following figure shows that artists working in digital arts, theatre and media arts reported the highest levels of satisfaction with their investment of time and resources into their blogs. Although literature artists had the highest overall use of blogs, they were among the lowest, in terms of reported satisfaction.

Figure 69: Average satisfaction with investment in blog, by discipline (artists)



n=658
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

3.3 Investments in the Future

In addition to satisfaction, organizations and individuals were also asked about their plans to invest in digital technology in the future. **According to survey results, organizations and artists are most likely to invest further in websites.** Similarly, both groups are least likely to put time and money towards email newsletters. In contrast, crowdfunding reveals divergent priorities for individuals and organizations. **The majority (55%) of artists plan to invest in crowdfunding while only 43% of organizations plan to do so.** Moreover, whereas there was very little variation in interest in crowdfunding by level of digital comfort or careers stage among artists, small organizations were almost twice as likely as large organizations to foresee future investment in this area.

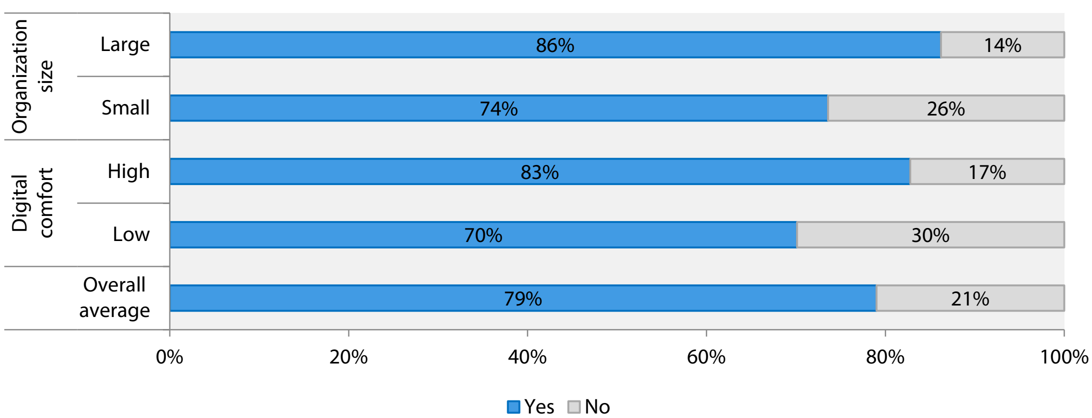
Arts organizations

Key Findings

- Organization size has the greatest impact on likelihood to invest in digital technology in the near future. The greatest discrepancy is seen in crowdfunding, such that large organizations are almost twice as likely as small organizations to increase their investment.
- A clear majority of organizations indicate plans to invest in websites, social media and digital management tools.
- Of all the digital technologies, organizations are least likely to anticipate investments in email newsletters.

The following figure shows that large organizations are more predisposed to invest time and resources into digital communications and engagement than their smaller peers. Moreover, those organizations with a higher level of digital comfort also plan to invest more into these technologies, although at a lower rate than large organizations.

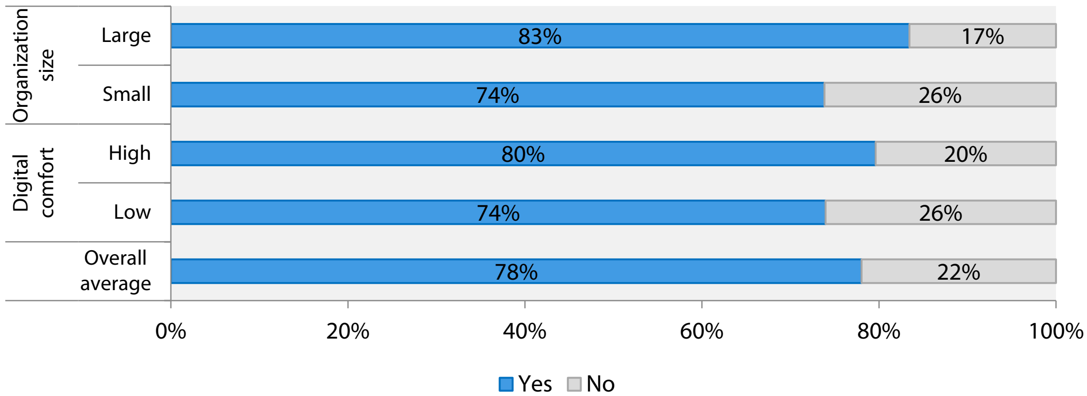
Figure 70: Plans to invest more in digital communications and engagement, by organization size and digital comfort (arts organizations)



n=805
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

The following figure shows that over three quarters of organizations plan to invest more time and resources into their websites in the near future. Large organizations are more likely to report plans to invest in their website.

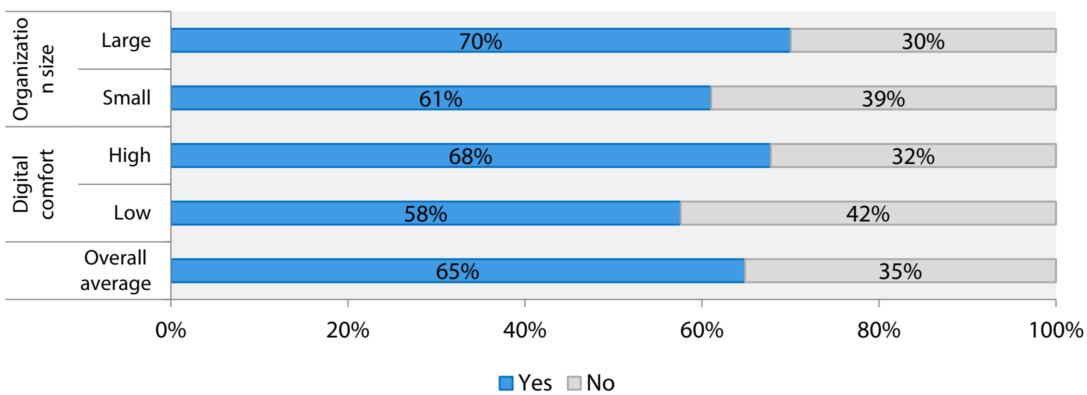
Figure 71: Plans to invest more in website, by organization size and digital comfort (arts organizations)



n=765
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

The figure below shows that almost two thirds of organizations (65%) plan to invest more time and resources into their social media presence.

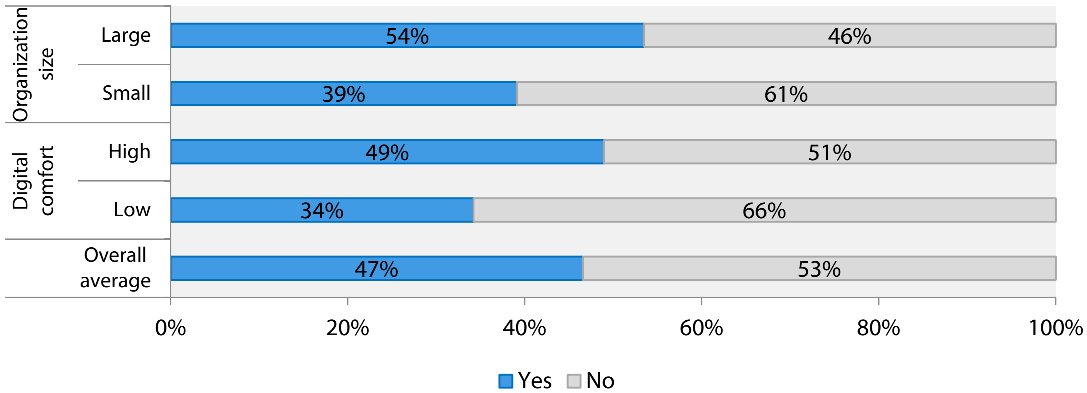
Figure 72: Plans to invest more in social media, by organization size and digital comfort (arts organizations)



n=771
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

The following figure shows that large organizations and those with a high level of digital comfort are considerably more likely to invest more in apps in the future. Overall, almost half (47%) of organizations are planning to increase their investment of time and resources into apps in the future.

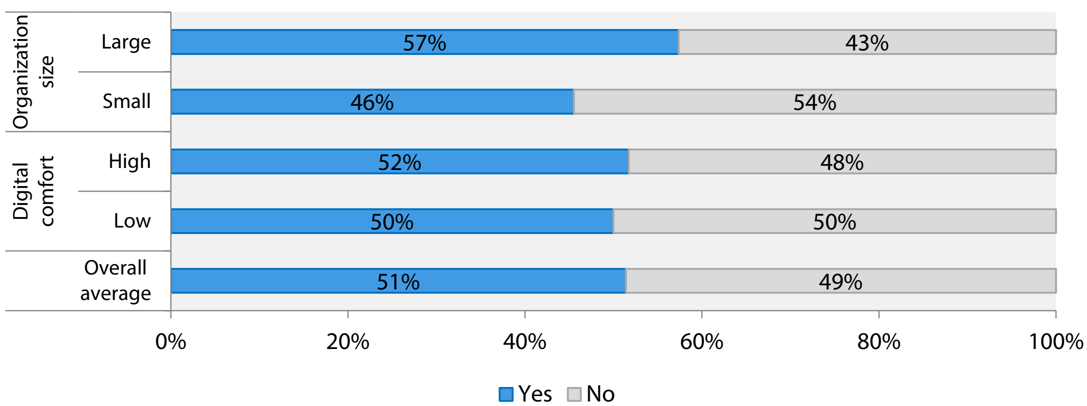
Figure 73: Plans to invest more in apps, by organization size and digital comfort (arts organizations)



n=234
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

The following figure shows that there is relatively low variation between organizations' plans to invest more in blogs, either on the basis of either organization size or digital comfort. About half of organizations (51%) plan to increase their investment of time and resources into blogs.

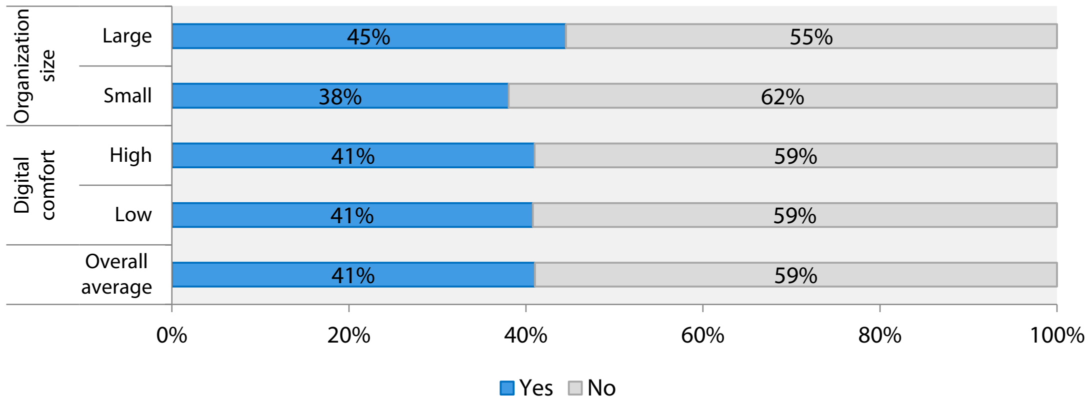
Figure 74: Plans to invest more in blogs, by organization size and digital comfort (arts organizations)



n=249
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

The following chart shows that about four in ten organizations (41%) plan to increase their investment of time and resources into email newsletters in the future. Large organizations are slightly more likely to do so, with 45% reporting plans to invest more.

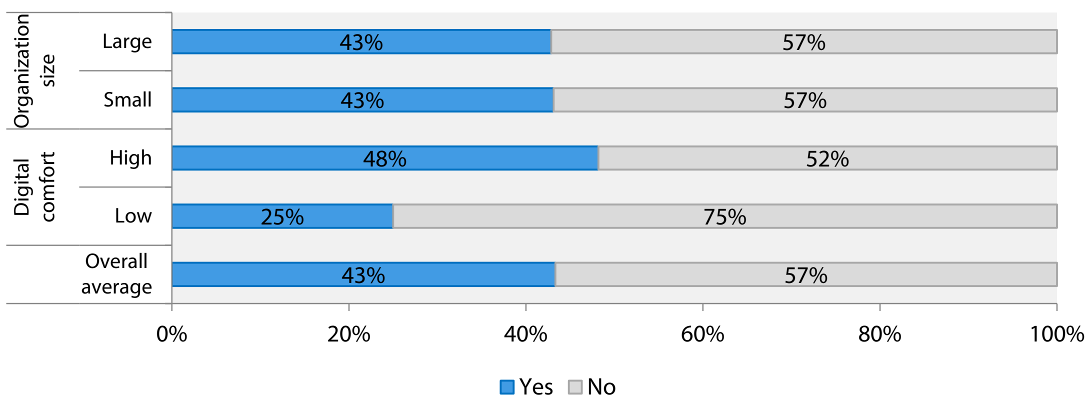
Figure 75: Plans to invest more in email newsletter, by organization size and digital comfort (arts organizations)



n=668
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

The following figure shows that organizations with a high level of digital comfort are almost twice as likely as their less digitally comfortable counterparts to increase their investment of time and resources into crowdfunding in the future. In contrast to findings for other digital tools, organization size does not seem to affect the appeal of crowdfunding.

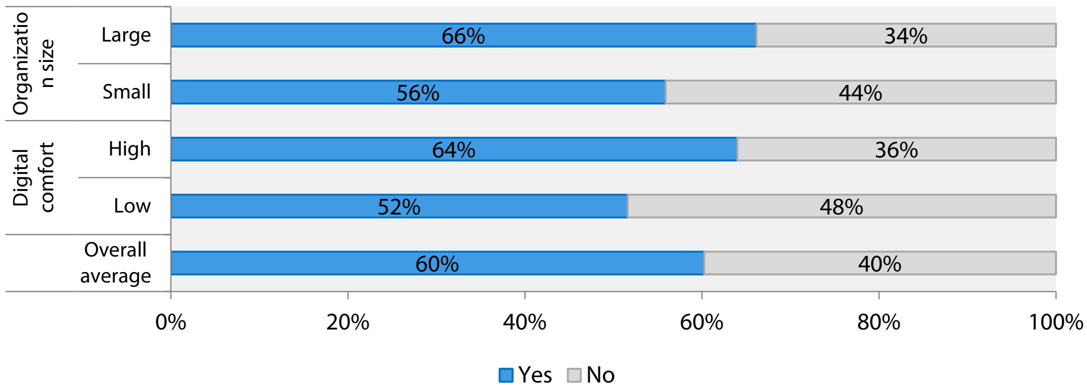
Figure 76: Plans to invest more in crowdfunding, by organization size and digital comfort (arts organizations)



n=210
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

A solid majority (60%) of organizations plan to increase their investment of time and resources into digital management tools in the future. Almost two thirds of large organizations (66%) plan to do so.

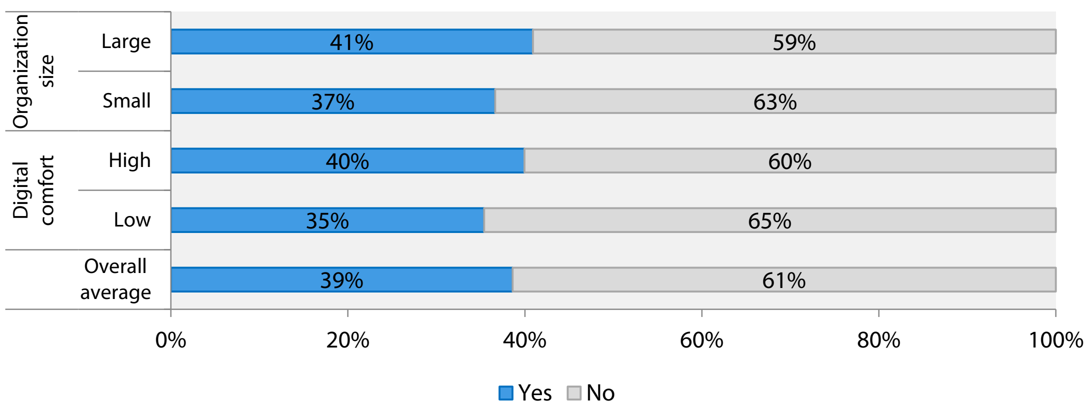
Figure 77: Plans to invest more in digital management tools, by organization size and digital comfort (arts organizations)



n=742
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

The following figure shows that about four in ten organizations (39%) plan to invest more time and resources into digital service provision in the future.

Figure 78: Plans to invest more in digital service provision, by organization size and digital comfort (arts organizations)



n=606
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

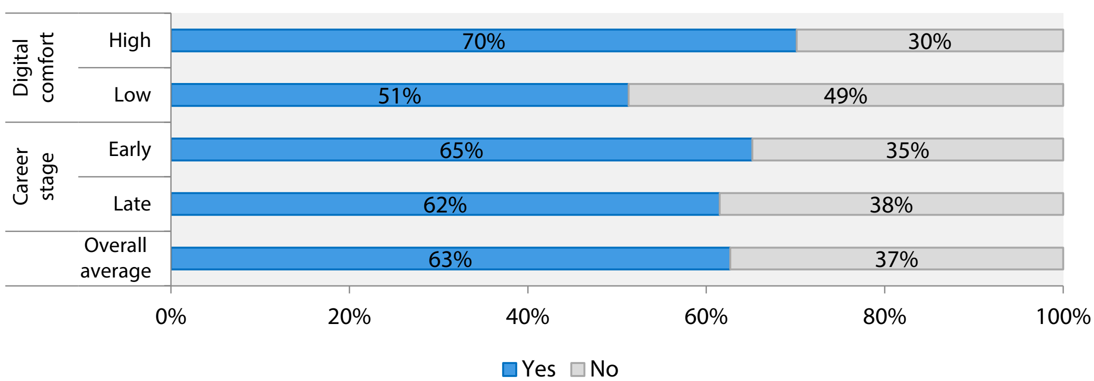
3.3.1 Artists

Key Findings

- 63% of artists plan to invest more in digital communications and engagement, across various tools.
- On average, the greatest proportion (71%) of artists plan to invest more in websites.
- Email newsletters are the digital tool least likely to receive additional investment, with only 44% of artists indicating such plans.
- Among all tools, the greatest discrepancy by level of digital comfort is observed in investments in dissemination platforms: while 61% of artists with a high level of comfort indicated intentions to invest further, only 40% of their less comfortable peers did so.

The following chart shows that the majority of artists plan to increase their investment in digital communications and engagement. The fact that even 51% of artists with low levels of digital comfort plan to invest more suggests widespread recognition of this application of technology.

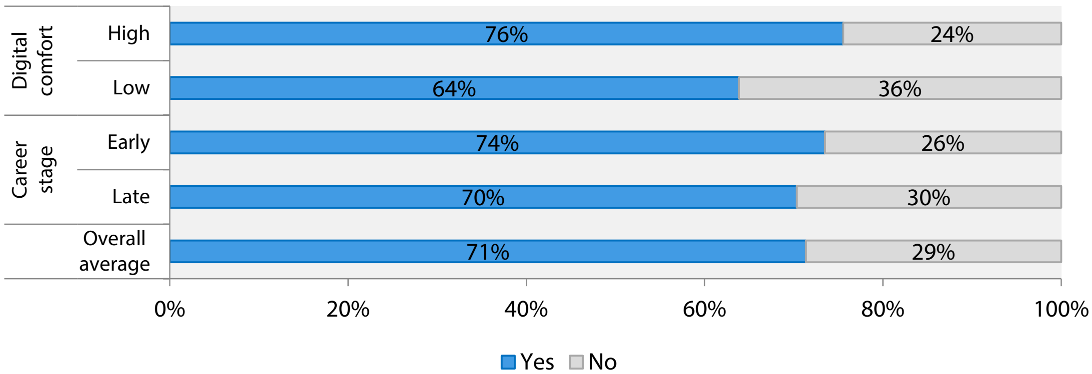
Figure 79: Plans to invest in digital communications and engagement, by digital comfort and career stage (artists)



n=2,251
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

The chart below shows that 71% of artists plan to increase investment in websites. Once again, these findings include a clear majority (64%) of artists with a low level of digital comfort. The focus on website investment also echoes the importance of websites for all organizations, as discussed in Thematic Report 3.

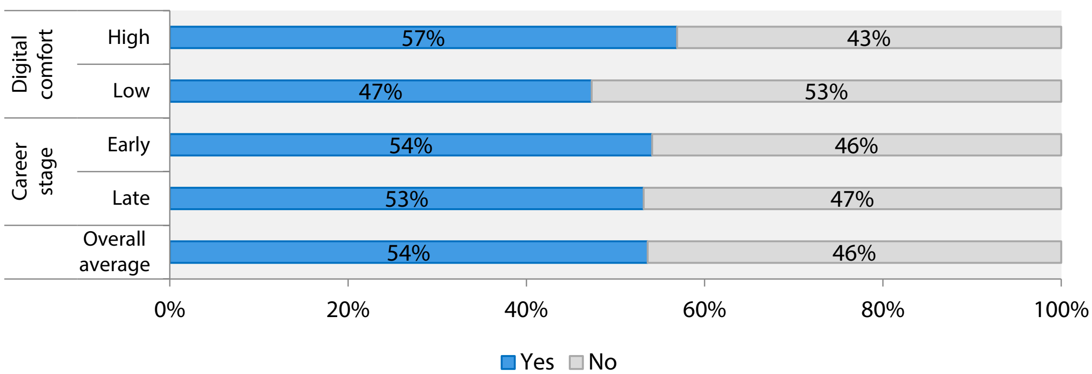
Figure 80: Plans to invest more in website, by digital comfort and career stage (artists)



n=523
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

The following figure shows that a slight majority of artists (54%) who are active on social media plan to increase their investment of time and resources into these platforms in the future.

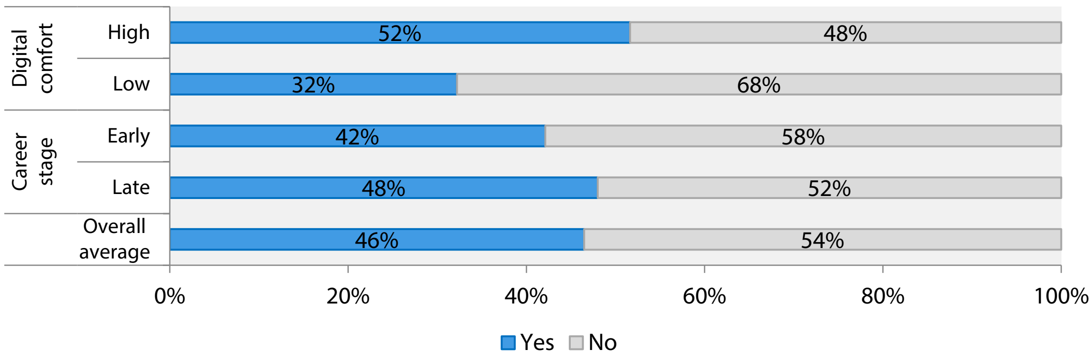
Figure 81: Plans for more investment in social media, by digital comfort and career stage (artists)



n=1,793
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

The following figure shows that 46% of artists who use apps plan to invest more time and resources into apps in the future.

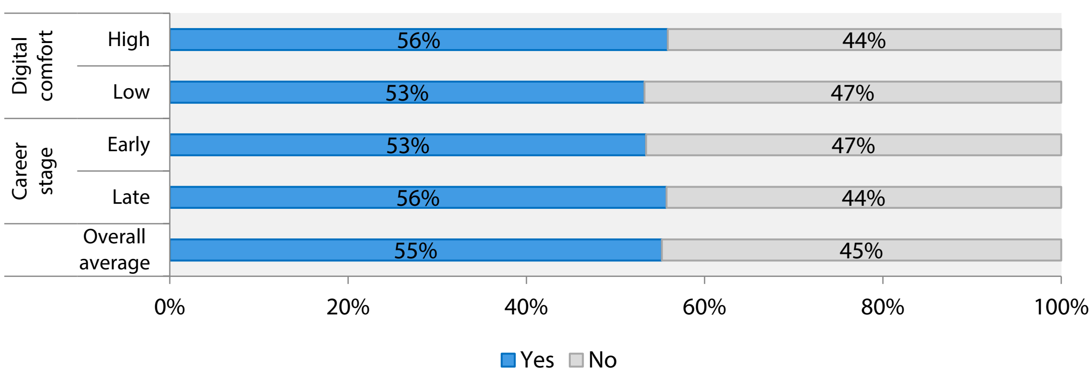
Figure 82: Plans to invest more in apps, by digital comfort and career stage (artists)



n=796
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

The following figure shows that the majority of artists (55%) who use blogs also have plans to invest more time and resources into their blog in the future. Unlike other digital technologies, there is very little difference between the responses given by the digital comfort and career stage groups.

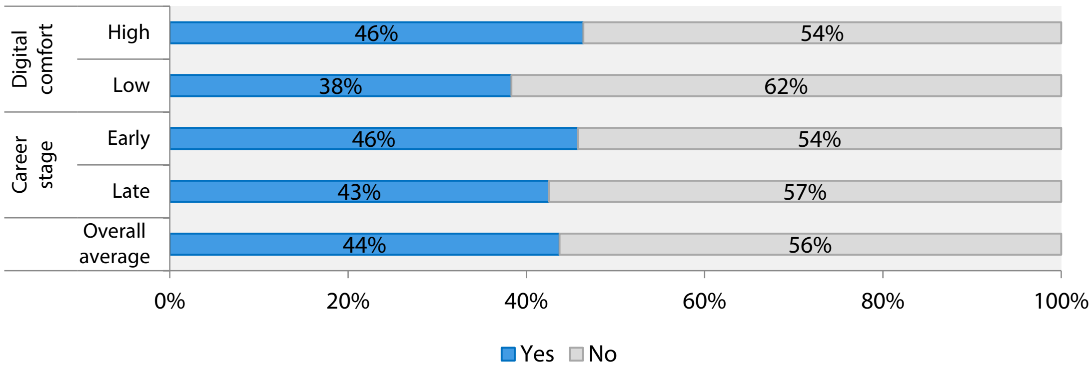
Figure 83: Plans to invest more in blogs, by digital comfort and career stage (artists)



n=672
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

As the following chart shows, only 44% of artists using email newsletters plan to invest more in this digital tool in the future.

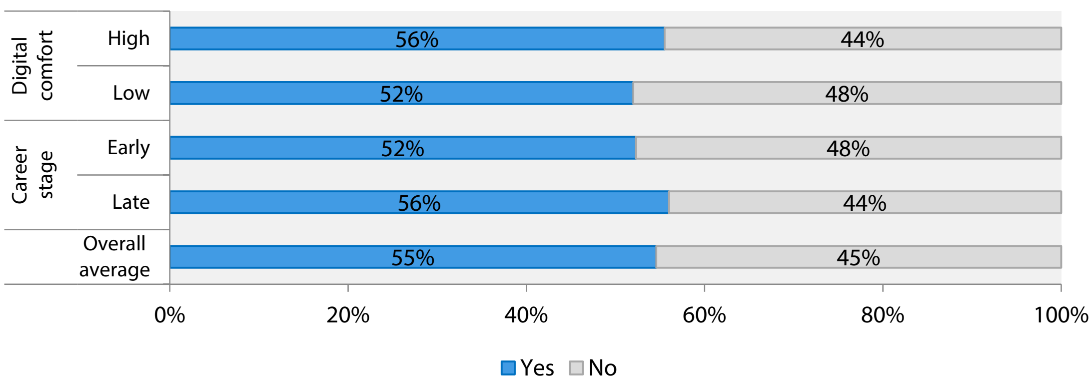
Figure 84: Plans to invest more in email newsletters, by digital comfort and career stage (artists)



n=844
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

The following chart illustrates that the majority (55%) of artists plan to invest more in crowdfunding. Because there is little variation by level of digital comfort or career stage, this finding establishes the importance of crowdfunding for all artists.

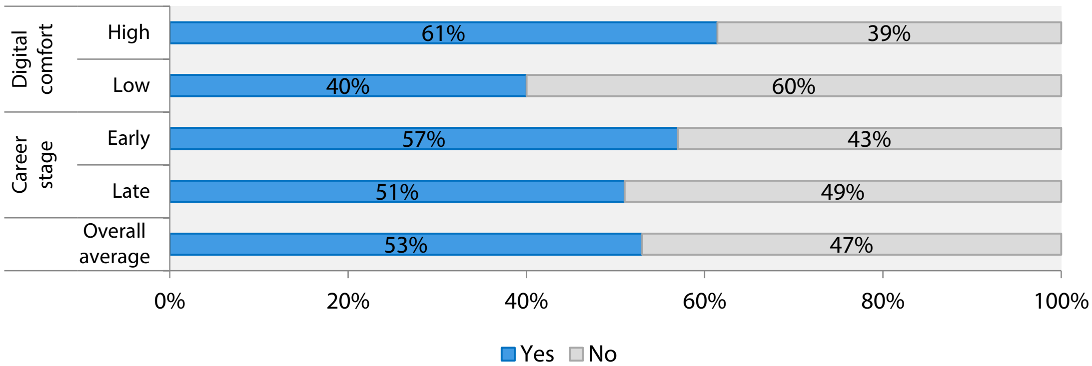
Figure 85: Plans to invest more in crowdfunding, by digital comfort and career stage (artists)



n=284
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

The following figure shows that slightly more than half of artists (53%) plan to increase their investment of time and resources into digital dissemination systems. This plan is true for a significantly greater share of digitally comfortable artists.

Figure 86: Plans for investment in sales and dissemination systems, by digital comfort and career stage (artists)



n=2,259
source: Nordicity Arts in a Digital World survey (2016)

3.4 Key Observations

This section summarizes the relationship between cost, satisfaction and plans for future investment in digital technologies observed in the survey results. Organizations reported on the cost of digital tools and revealed that, **on average, just over one third (37%) of their total operating budgets goes towards technology**. To be more specific, an average 10.6% of operating budgets is spent on websites and social media combined. **Although smaller organizations spent proportionately more on digital tools than large organizations, they were also more likely to anticipate future investments in technology**. This trend suggests that digital tools are even more important for small organizations, perhaps enabling them to amplify their impact despite a small staff team or lack of bricks and mortar space.

The costs and benefits of websites for all respondents are seen in data about satisfaction with and plans to invest in this tool. **Organizations and artists generally reported high levels of satisfaction with websites and both also indicated future investment in this tool**. This finding reinforces the importance of websites for creation, research and production among both groups, as discussed in Thematic Report 3. In effect, most survey respondents feel they are already using their websites effectively; however, they are also convinced that websites will continue to inform all aspects of their practices and so, by extension, they could make even better use of this technology.

In several instances, there is a correlation between low levels of satisfaction and plans for future investment. Organizations indicated low satisfaction with digital management tools, which is also one of their top three areas of planned investment. Similarly, artists identified low satisfaction with blogs and digital dissemination tools but more than half intend to invest more in these technologies. These findings suggest that **both organizations and artists see increased investments as a way to improve satisfaction with digital tools.**

In addition, the digital tools with the highest levels of satisfaction are not the most commonly used technologies. Among organizations, email newsletters had the highest level of satisfaction yet use of this tool is less prevalent than either social media or websites. For artists, only 38% of artists indicated using apps yet this tool is associated with the highest level of satisfaction. Taken together, these findings indicate that respondents who adopt lesser-used technologies are able to take full advantage of them. However, it is worth emphasizing that not all – indeed, in the case of artists, less than half – of respondents incorporate these digital tools such as email newsletters and apps into their creative activities. The intersection of adoption and satisfaction points towards issues of professional development and the pace of technological change, which are discussed in the following thematic reports on return on investment and barriers.