

The logo for 'duda' is centered in the upper half of the page. It consists of the word 'duda' in a white, lowercase, sans-serif font, enclosed within a solid orange rounded rectangle. The background of the entire slide is a dark blue color with several large, overlapping, semi-transparent circles of varying shades of blue and purple, creating a layered, abstract effect.

duda

STATE OF WEBSITE BUILDING | 2023 AGENCY REPORT

March 2023

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Introduction and Key Findings

Introduction & Methodology

Website building is one of the most popular and profitable services digital agencies offer. According to research, the global website builder software market is expected to reach \$13.6 billion by 2026, growing at a CAGR of 9% from 2019 to 2027 – suggesting that these website building platforms will have an increasingly important role in shaping web design expectations. Interestingly, despite the uncertainty of the current economic climate, rather than experiencing a slowdown in website building, at Duda, we have observed growth among our agency clients. That's likely because websites are a primary source of organic traffic for small businesses, so when their budgets tighten in anticipation of tough times, their websites are among the last thing they'd cut back on. On the contrary: they're more inclined to continue investing in their websites to acquire more customers in a more cost-effective way.

As the provider of a leading professional website-building platform that caters to digital agencies, we wanted to reach out to digital agencies to understand how they choose a website building platform and learn about their biggest pain points, operational challenges and opportunities as we head into a turbulent 2023. We hope this report will provide some useful insights to agencies about what other agencies are focusing on right now, as well as help them identify areas of growth they might be overlooking and operational aspects they may want to improve so that they too can be better prepared for the months ahead (and beyond).

Methodology

To get more insight into current attitudes towards website building software, we commissioned a survey of 420 web pros, comprised of digital agency owners, agency employees and freelancers who offer web design or development as part of their services. This report was administered online by Global Surveyz Research, a global research firm. It is based on responses from agencies ranging between one and 100+ employees across the US, Canada, UK, Germany, France, Belgium, The Netherlands, Brazil and Australia. The respondents were recruited through a global B2B research panel and invited via email to complete the survey, with all responses collected during the second half of 2022. The average amount of time spent on the survey was five minutes and 20 seconds. The answers to the majority of the non-numerical questions were randomized in order to prevent order bias in the answers.

[GlobeNewswire](#), Jan 21, 2021

Key Findings

1 The top pain points in website building are maintenance (28%) and performance (20%)

Website performance – which comprises elements like speed, Core Web Vitals, SEO, etc. – is directly related to driving more business, so it's not surprising it ranked both as a top consideration for agencies when choosing a website building platform (Figure 1), and among the top pain points as well (Figure 2). The leading pain point for agencies in website building is maintenance (due to all of its associated hassles), so understandably, “time-consuming maintenance” is the top barrier (56%) for agencies in building more websites (Figure 4). To overcome these pain points, agencies need to invest in platforms that are particularly strong at addressing performance and maintenance hurdles, to simplify their processes, optimize efficiency and save time.

2 Agencies need to work with more robust solutions to meet the increasing demand for more advanced, transactional, feature-rich websites that help generate revenue for clients

Driving business growth is a top priority for clients (Figure 6) who are increasingly looking for more advanced features like payment capabilities (44%), SEO (40%) and social integration (36%). To cater to this growing demand, agencies are planning to dedicate more resources over the next 12 months towards building more transactional, feature-rich websites, as opposed to ‘brochure’ websites (Figure 9).

3 SEO is seen as a big growth opportunity for larger agencies

SEO contributes to website performance (and by extension to business growth) – so it's no wonder that 40% of respondents ranked it among the most desirable website features (Figure 6). But although large agencies recognize it as their biggest growth opportunity (21%, Figure 5), survey respondents indicated it is a low-priority investment area for them in the coming year, which is somewhat perplexing (and could potentially be interesting to investigate further). Perhaps this represents an opportunity for agencies, however, who by investing more resources in providing SEO either as an additional service or as a more prominent feature of their platform, will position themselves more competitively to attract new clients who are looking for it as part of a more robust website solution.

Key Findings

4 Website building platforms built for professionals are gaining traction in the market and becoming more popular among agencies than the more established open source options

When respondents were asked to rank their top considerations for choosing a website building platform, “Past experience” and “Recommendations” ranked near the bottom (Figure 1). This is interesting since these factors are typically among the decision-makers’ top considerations when choosing a platform. One explanation might be that many agencies currently using an open-source CMS like WordPress are considering using more stable and secure platforms built for professionals. That means they’re more open to exploring other platforms on the market, providing an opportunity for those platforms to disrupt existing solutions if they can demonstrate they’re able to address the agencies’ most pressing website building needs. This could also explain why platforms like Duda and Webflow are gaining traction among agencies.

5 Agencies are looking for website building platforms that offer a wide variety of features to facilitate the increasing sophistication of functionality

When asked to rank their top considerations for choosing a building platform for client websites (Figure 1), none of the 15 options presented to respondents were considered of ‘low’ importance, with all of them scoring at least 3.4 out of five (where one was ‘low’ and five was ‘high’). This means that virtually all aspects are important to agencies in building high-performing websites. A rich website building platform, therefore, needs to include all (if not most) of these features in order to be competitive and develop best-in-class, ‘complete package’ websites. At the very least, it should adequately address the top five considerations, including website performance, price, level of support, variety of templates, and the availability of tools for client management.

Survey Report Findings

Top Considerations for Choosing a Building Platform for Clients' Websites

Unsurprisingly, respondents ranked 'website performance' as their highest consideration in choosing a website building platform (4.1 out of 5)

because it's a top priority for their clients. Many of these clients are small businesses – whose website performance can significantly impact growth – so the better their website performs in terms of speed, Core Web Vitals, SEO, etc., the higher it will rank on Google, giving them a competitive edge. And because it's a top priority for clients, agencies consider it their top goal as well. Other top considerations in choosing a website building platform for client websites included price (4.0) and level of service/support (3.9).

It's also noteworthy that "Tools for client management" ranked among the top

because unlike most of the other options, it's particularly relevant to agencies. Solutions that include client management features like a real-time dashboard, team collaboration, billing, and other dedicated tools, for example, can help to simplify their website building operations.



Figure 1: Top Considerations for Choosing a Building Platform for Clients' Websites.

Biggest Pain Points in Website Building

98% of survey respondents admitted to having pain points in website building

The leading pain points for agencies are website maintenance (28%), website stability or performance (20%), and a complicated website building platform (16%), mostly because of the level of hassle involved not only in building websites but also in the ongoing maintenance involved once the build is done.

We also observed that build times (11%) – typically exacerbated by a variety of manual, repetitive, time-consuming tasks – are a bigger pain point for mid-sized and large agencies (Figure 3) because unlike small agencies who work on fewer projects per year and devote more time to each project, for larger agencies who are building at volume, the efficiency of their build times has a more significant impact on overall operations.

TIP: Your website building platform should be able to eliminate (or minimize) the level of hassle involved in both building and maintaining websites, and streamline the agency’s work

***Question allowed more than one answer and as a result, percentages will add up to more than 100%.**

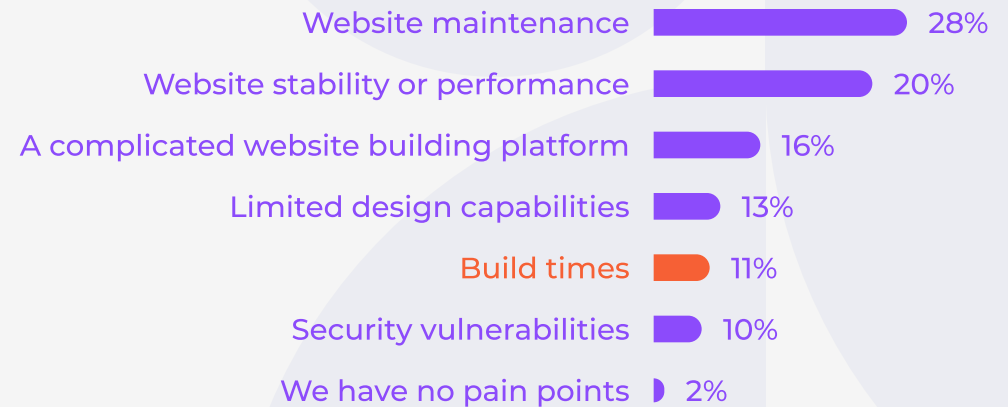


Figure 2: Biggest Pain Points in Website Building



Figure 3: “Build Times” Pain Point by Agency Size

Barriers for Building More Websites

96% of the companies surveyed admitted they have barriers when it comes to building more websites

The top barrier is that website maintenance is too time-consuming (56%), which is consistent with the results we saw in Figure 2, reflecting respondents' biggest pain points.

The most surprising response to this question was that only 24% of respondents said that “finding clients” was a top barrier to building more websites

Creating new business has typically been one of the most persistent ongoing challenges for agencies, yet despite this, the top barrier was once again ‘overly time-consuming maintenance’. On the bright side, ‘finding clients’ is a challenge that isn’t related to the website building platform itself, so the fact that the biggest barriers for agencies to building more websites are related to technology and processes means that they are also the easiest to correct by choosing the right platform.

***Question allowed more than one answer and as a result, percentages will add up to more than 100%**



Figure 4: Barriers for Building More Websites

Biggest Growth Opportunities for Agencies

Agencies identified SEO (21%), analytics & reporting (19%), and social media marketing (15%) as their biggest growth opportunities

Although all agencies consider SEO to be important, it is seen twice as much 'a bigger growth opportunity for 11-50 employees (42%), compared to all respondents (21%). This is most likely because as agencies start to scale, they find they need to diversify their offering with complementary services (like SEO) to remain competitive and sustain their growth. The second biggest growth opportunity is in analytics and reporting, which makes sense, because as digital assets become more complex, understanding data is becoming increasingly challenging and important to clients, and agencies are thinking about how to leverage this more substantially in their offering.



***Question allowed more than one answer and as a result, percentages will add up to more than 100%**

Figure 5: Biggest Growth Opportunity in The Agency

What Clients See as Top Features

As 'showcase' websites shift from merely talking about a business, 'brochure' style, to actually driving business growth and revenue- **clients are looking for more advanced functionality and feature-rich websites.**

Survey respondents indicated that website features like payments (44%), SEO (40%), and social integration (36%) are the most important to their clients. Other popular feature requests include reservations (35%), online scheduling (33%), accessibility capabilities (32%) and customer reviews (30%).

TIP: As digital assets become more central to how clients run their businesses, agencies need to think about how they can provide more sophisticated solutions, and on finding the right platform to facilitate as many of these requirements as possible.

***Question allowed more than one answer and as a result, percentages will add up to more than 100%**



Figure 6: What Clients See as Top Features

Business's Time Allocated for Building Websites

Digital agencies and web professionals, on average, spend a very big portion of their business's time (54%) on building and maintaining websites.

This was reflected consistently throughout the survey, with respondents ranking build-time 3.7 (out of 5) as a “top consideration for choosing a website building platform” (Figure 1), “complicated website building platforms” as the third-biggest pain point (16%) after “website maintenance” and “website stability performance” (Figure 2), and “overly time-consuming builds” among the top barriers to building more websites (Figure 4).

TIP: It's crucial for agencies to find a platform that can make the process of building and maintaining their clients' websites as efficient as possible.

By focusing on productivity in their website building operation and reducing maintenance time, they can free up more time for business growth.

***Percentages do not add up to 100% due to rounding up of numbers**

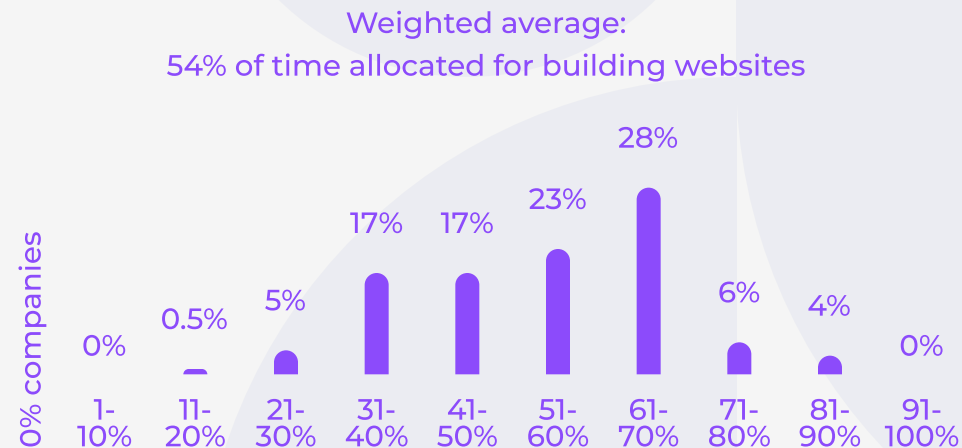


Figure 7:
Business's Time Allocated for Building Websites

Usage of Templates in Building Typical Website for A Client

96% of companies either work with templates or use a mix between templates and starting from scratch.

The vast majority of respondents (88%) indicated they use a mix of templates and custom design when building client websites, with templates more often used for recurring needs like eCommerce, memberships, portfolios, etc.

TIP: As customers' needs become more sophisticated, a more personalized approach is needed to deliver a solution that makes the most sense for each individual client. So, **building on a platform that can do both, i.e., use templates but also be flexible enough to allow for customization – is something that agencies should prioritize in order to meet increasingly sophisticated client expectations and stay competitive.**

***Percentages do not add up to 100% due to rounding up of numbers**

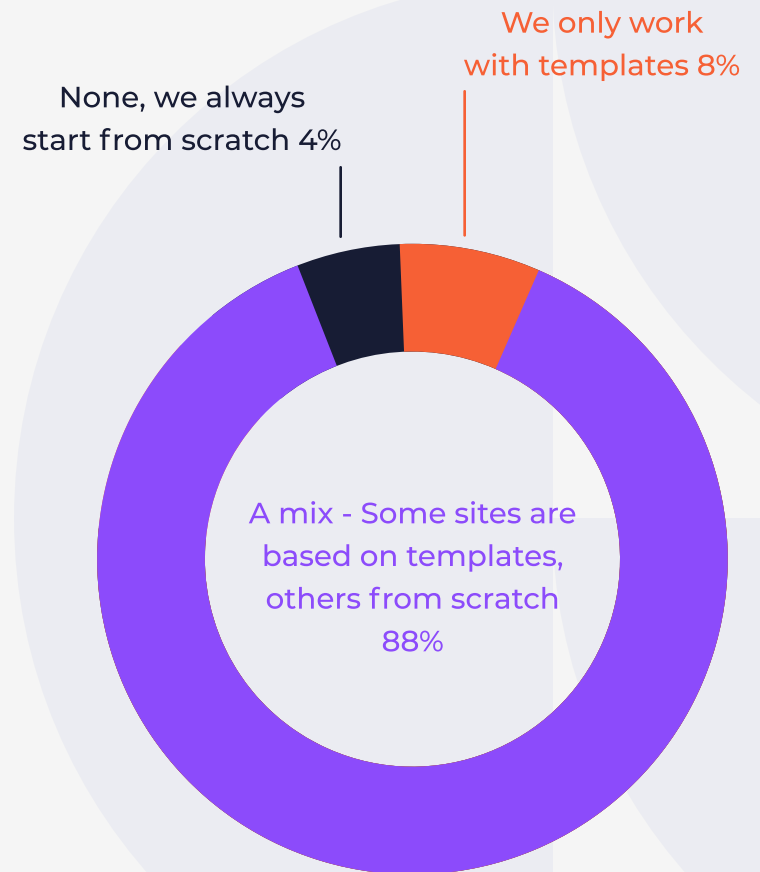


Figure 8: Usage of Templates in Building Typical Website for A Client

Main Areas of Growth, Next 12 Months

When asked about which areas of growth they plan to devote more resources to over the next 12 months, survey respondents ranked “building more complex, feature-rich websites” (23%) and “higher conversion rate” (20%) as their top priorities.

Once again, this is consistent with their overall attitude to website building, which is shifting to accommodate the demand for more advanced, transactional and feature-rich websites that help clients drive revenue and generate growth.

Agencies should be aligning or adapting their business to be able to meet the shifting client demand more efficiently, and according to the respondents’ indication of which areas of growth they’re planning to devote more resources to over the next year, it seems that they are.

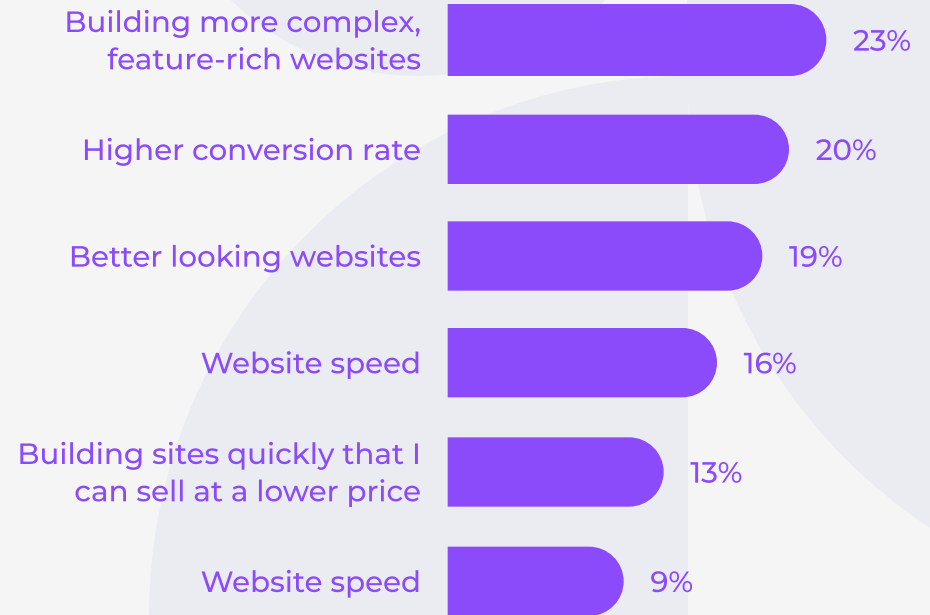


Figure 9: Main Areas Planned for Increased Resource Allocation

Web Building Platform Tools in Use (and Plans)

The top website building platforms used by agencies are Wix (64%), Squarespace (63%) and WordPress (61%), and the top platforms in consideration for use are Webflow (46%) and Duda (41%).

Although the top platforms in use were predictably among the biggest and most established in the market, it is interesting to note that a fairly high proportion of agencies are considering professionally-oriented players like Webflow (46%) and Duda (41%), because it suggests they are looking to potentially use something other than the 'obvious' choices.

If those choices were already 'ticking all the boxes' on agencies' website building requirements, the activity around 'considering to use' other platforms that are gaining traction in the market wouldn't be as significant as indicated in Figure 10.

TIP: Agencies currently using the more well-known website building platforms but still battling challenges around build- time, maintenance, performance (including security and stability) and limited feature options – should consider exploring more robust and professional platforms that may tick more boxes and help them achieve more.

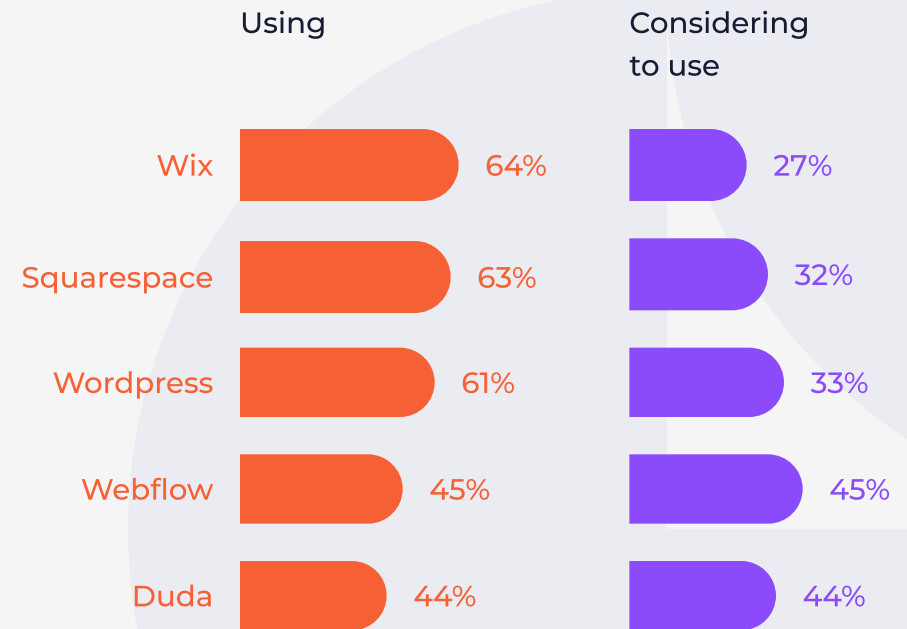


Figure 10: Web Building Platform Tools in Use (and Plans)

Demographics

Country, Employment Status, Services Offered & Role

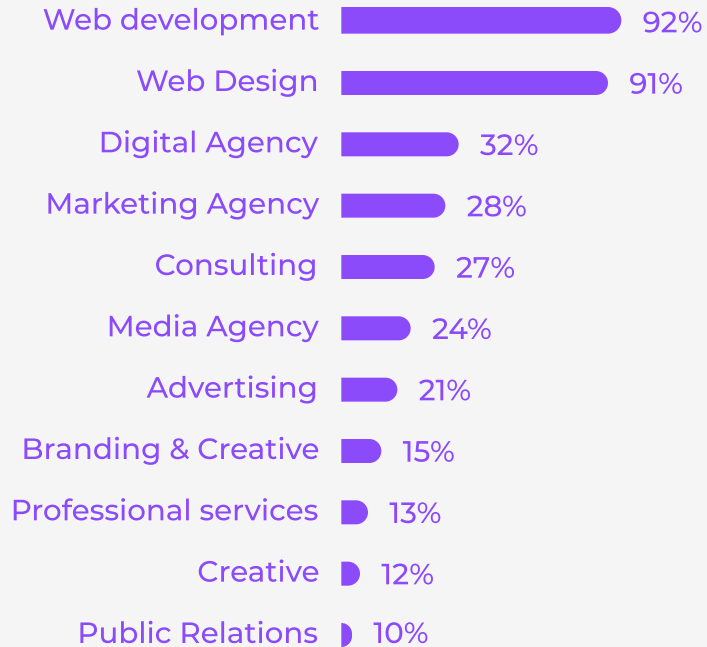


Figure 11: Services Offered

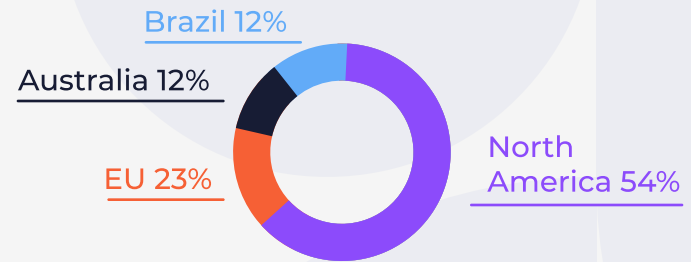


Figure 12: Country



Figure 13: Employment Status

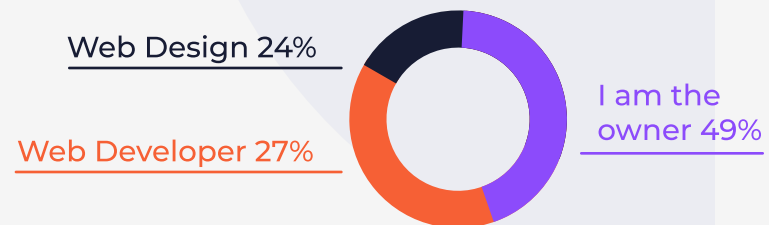


Figure 14: Role

Main Industries Served, Company Size & Web Building Tools in Use

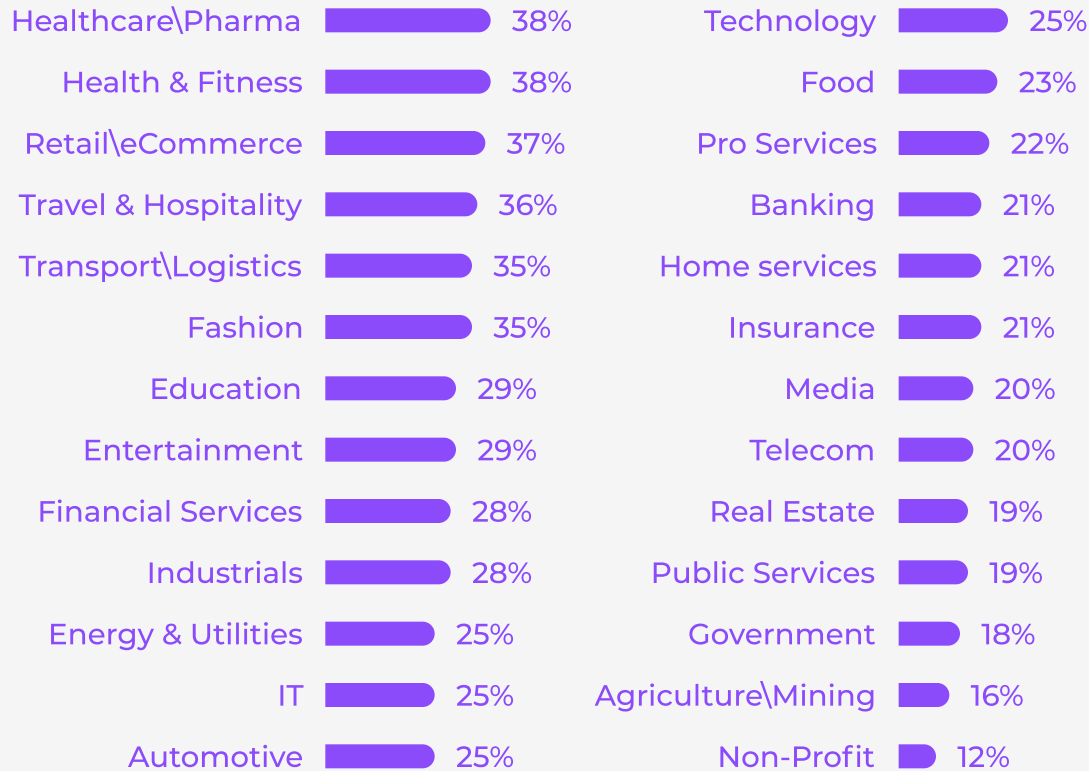


Figure 15: Main Industries Served

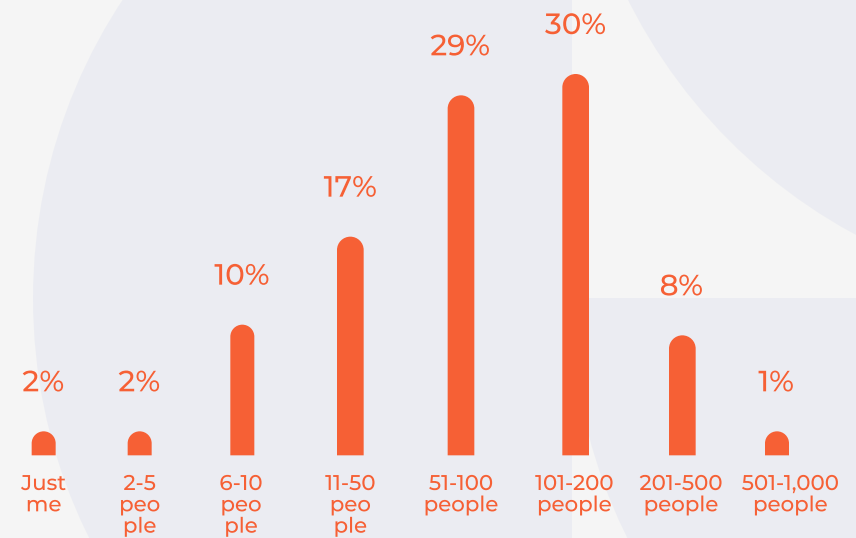


Figure 16: Company Size

About Duda

Duda's low-code/no-code website-building platform enables agencies to create pixel-perfect, top-performing websites for their clients while cutting build times by half.

Since launching in 2010, one million paying sites have been built on Duda by over 20,000 agencies and web pros. Duda's award-winning platform provides agencies with scalable team collaboration and client management tools, helping them to reach higher productivity and unprecedented growth. Headquartered in the US with offices in Canada, Israel, and Brazil, Duda has raised more than \$100 million in funding to date.

[Start a Free Trial](#)

For more information, please visit us:

