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## **Insights and Analytics Functions Are Centralized and Highly Rated in Both Large and Small Agencies**

*Second ARF Organizational Benchmark report reveals the similarities and differences between large and small agencies*

**New York, NY (April 23, 2020)** – The ARF (Advertising Research Foundation) today released the second report of its first annual Organizational Benchmark Study. The report features findings from a survey of agency staff on their views around research and insights across a variety of issues from department structure to stakeholder satisfaction.

According to the report, large and small agencies are equally likely to have centralized or primarily centralized structures of their insights and analytics functions (about 63%), with the rest having a decentralized structure. However, agencies with centralized data science and analytics departments express greater satisfaction with those departments than agencies with decentralized departments, though overall, they tend to value their departments' capabilities.

"Generally, satisfaction and stakeholder value are positive," said Paul Donato, chief research officer, the ARF. "That said, small agency executives who responded to the survey were less confident in their departments' ability to integrate multiple datasets, while large agencies were less confident in their ability to convert data into actionable business recommendations."

Additional insights from the ARF report include:

- When evaluating the ROI of research, large agency respondents report sales and efficiency as the most important KPIs (48% sales, 48% efficiency), while small agencies report sales and brand lift as the most important KPIs (59% sales, 47% brand lift).
- About half of agencies are spending about the same as last year on market research and data science (45%), while 38% say they will be spending somewhat or significantly more than last year.
- Agencies of both sizes find that advanced analytics, data visualizations and basic analytics skills are the most important skills needed for hiring *now*. For *future* hiring, sought after skills for large and small agencies tend to differ – however, advanced analytics (69%) and data visualization (64%) remain the top two skills.

- For both large and small agencies, the leading *tools* used to analyze data are Python (59%) and R (56%). Media analytics (77%), attribution (65%), marketing mix modeling (56%) and geo-location data (56%) analytics are the most heavily relied on *techniques*.

The agency report is the second of a five-part series from a survey conducted in 2019, with subsequent benchmark reports focusing on research, media companies, and consultancies to be released throughout 2020. The ARF's first report, centered on advertisers, was released in March 2020.

In addition to this research, the ARF will offer its members an ongoing service to conduct a custom, detailed review of their respective companies, to provide a comparison with the overall benchmark report results.

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### **About the ARF**

Founded more than 80 years ago, the ARF is dedicated to creating, curating, and sharing objective, industry-level advertising research to enable members to make a true impact on their advertising and build marketing leadership within their organizations. It has more than 400 members from leading brand advertisers, agencies, research firms and media-tech companies. For more information, visit [www.thearf.org](http://www.thearf.org).