FOUNDRY

Customer Engagement Study

Insight into the content types and vendor engagement preferences of IT decision-makers as organizations advance their use of technology to improve customer experiences and streamline processes.

Purpose and methodology

Survey goal

To gain a better understanding of the various types and volume of content consumed throughout the purchase process for major technology products and services. It also provides insight into the engagement preferences of IT decision-makers when it comes to technology vendor follow-up and relationships.

Total respondents 843

Collection method Online questionnaire

Number of questions 26

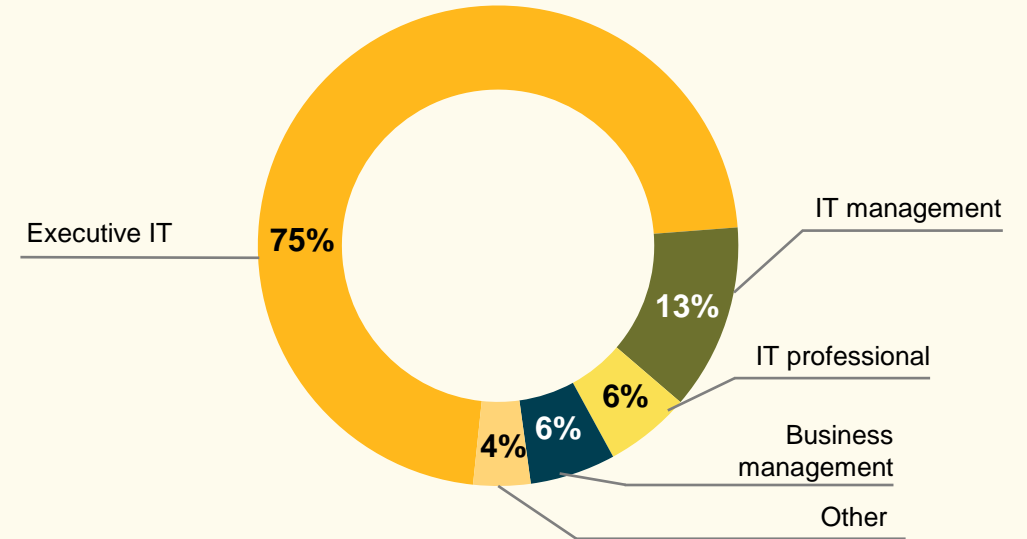**Region**

North America 41%
EMEA 14%
APAC 42%

Audience base CIO, Computerworld, CSO, InfoWorld, and Network World email invitations to audience base.
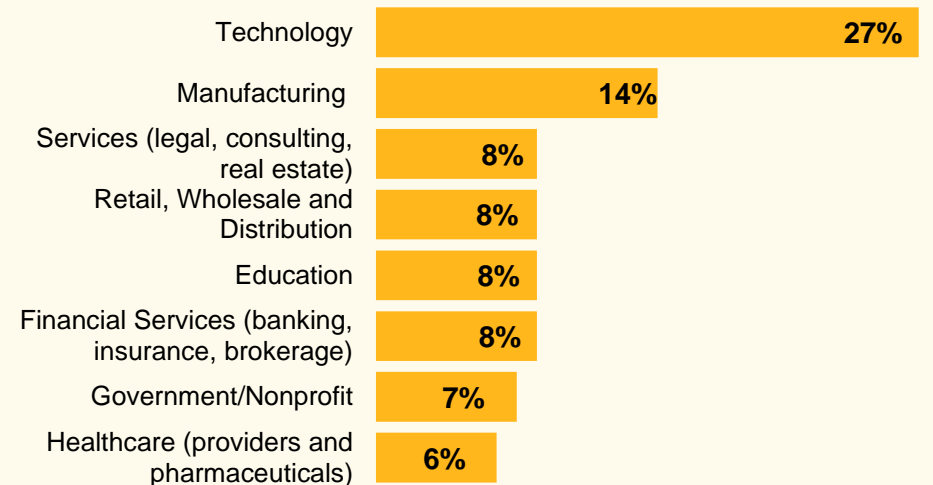
Average company size 14,493

IT leadership All survey respondents are involved in the purchase process for major IT or security products and services.

Job titles

- Executive IT **75%**
- IT management **13%**
- IT professional **6%**
- Business management **6%**
- Other **4%**

Top represented industries

- Technology **27%**
- Manufacturing **14%**
- Services (legal, consulting, real estate) **8%**
- Retail, Wholesale and Distribution **8%**
- Education **8%**
- Financial Services (banking, insurance, brokerage) **8%**
- Government/Nonprofit **7%**
- Healthcare (providers and pharmaceuticals) **6%**

Only

44%

of downloaded work-related content provided ITDMs with value over the past 6-12 months
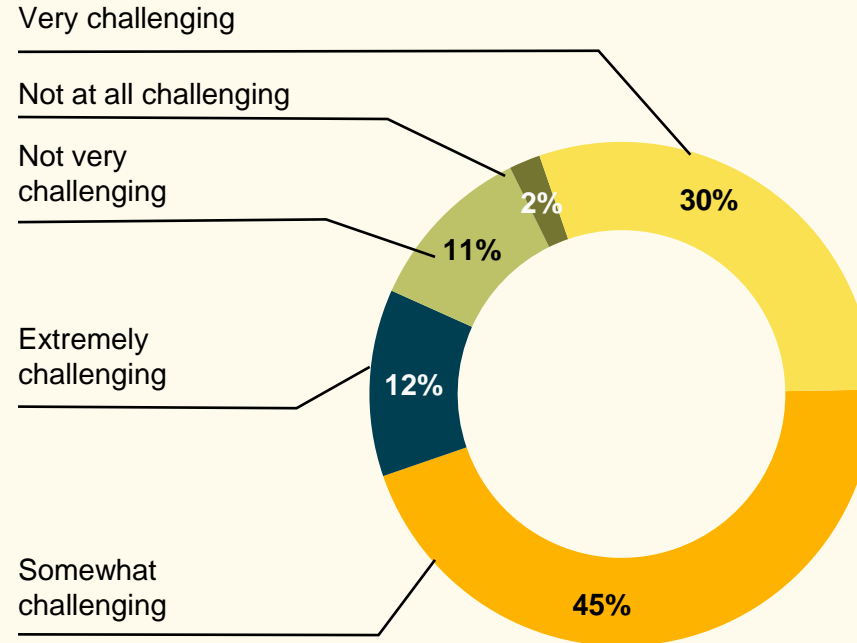

Down from 48% in 2022

Question: Thinking of the work-related content that you have downloaded in the past 6-12 months (e.g., whitepapers, articles, reports, webcasts, podcasts, etc.), how much has ultimately provided you with actionable information?

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Source: Foundry Customer Engagement Survey, 2023

Challenging to find high-quality content

87%

say it is challenging to find high-quality content.

Very challenging

Not at all challenging

Not very challenging

Extremely challenging

Somewhat challenging

- 30%
- 2%
- 11%
- 12%
- 45%

The Challenge

39%	Too much marketing hype/ empty buzzwords
35%	Lack of truly independent, unbiased information
27%	Information is too general
24%	Lack of relevant information
22%	Hesitant to download because I don't want the sales follow-up
22%	Incomplete or inconsistent technical info
21%	Content overload
17%	No visibility into the sources used to create the information
16%	Uncertainty if content is produced by product experts or is AI generated
13%	Too difficult to narrow search to filter for the most relevant content
12%	Too many assets are gated

Question: Generally speaking, how challenging do you feel it is to locate enough high-quality, trusted information on major enterprise IT products and services to make an informed purchase decision with which you are comfortable? **Question:** What makes it challenging to find enough high-quality, trusted information on major enterprise IT products and services?

Source: Foundry Customer Engagement Survey, 2022

Relevant and consistent education is essential

72%

are more likely to consider an IT vendor who educates them through each stage of the decision process

71%

report that if a vendor does not supply educational content during research, it negatively impacts their impression

63%

say that educating non-technical functions within their organization requires more educational resources from vendors

Question: Thinking about your recent tech purchases, please rate your level of agreement with the following statements

In-person experiences being favored for demos, with some exceptions

		North America	EMEA	APAC
In-person demonstration of how the product works	1,000+ **60%** | <1,000 **52%** 56%	53%	55% #1	60% #1
Limited time, full function trial of product	#1 choice for ITDMs at tech companies **60%** 49%	52%	43%	48%
Virtual live demonstration	Enterprise **46%** | SMB **38%** 42%	56% #1	37%	32%
On-demand video/webinar demonstration of product	39%	42%	39%	36%
Non-timed use of product with limited functionality	29%	28%	27%	29%

Question: When evaluating a new product or service, which of the following product demo formats have you received the most value from/helped you make a purchase decision?

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Source: Foundry Customer Engagement Survey, 2023

ITDMs engage with vendors differently depending on generation and firmographic details

		Boomers	Gen X	Millennials	Gen Z
Provide a great customer experience that I want to tell my peers about	48%	52%	53%	41%	36%
Provide timely, relevant content	43%	48%	45%	42%	23%
Provide content that offers "how-to" information	37%	38%	38%	41%	26%
Provide content that can't be obtained easily, so I have inside information to share	37%	33%	40%	39%	35%
Offer information about a cause that my peers and I care about (e.g. STEM)	Enterprise **37%** | SMB **25%** 31%	20%	33%	34%	38%
Incentivize me to share content	24%	18%	24%	31%	22%
Include interactive content (e.g., quick surveys, trivia questions, etc.)	20%	13%	18%	25%	35%
Provide content that stirs an emotional reaction (e.g. taking a stand on a technology issue/debate)	19%	9%	18%	27%	26%
Provide entertaining content (funny videos, etc.)	16%	8%	11%	27%	24%

Question: Which of the following might influence you to share information about an IT vendor with your peers?

Source: Foundry Customer Engagement Survey, 2023

Preferred event format has switched back to in-person

In-person		Virtual	
One-day conference	**51%**	Training/workshop	**47%**
Dinner meetings/conferences	**45%**	One-day conference	**33%**
One-day tradeshow	**44%**	Roundtable style events	**30%**
Training/workshop	**42%**	Multi-day conference	**27%**
Multi-day conference	**39%**	One-day tradeshow	**23%**

82%
have attended an **in-person** job-related event in the past 6-12 months

77%
have attended a **virtual** job-related event in the past 6-12 months

Question: Have you attended the following types of industry or job-related events in the past 6-12 months, either in-person or virtual?

#1 rule in tech advertising: provide value

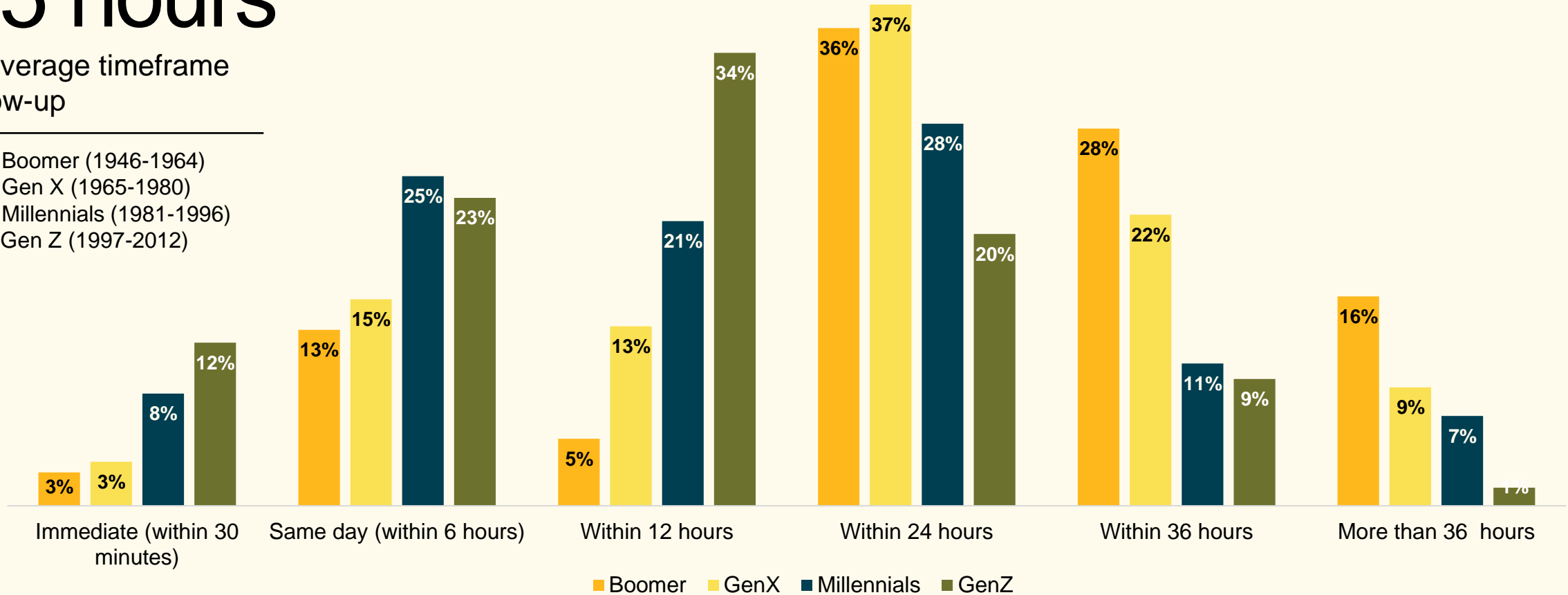|		North America	EMEA	APAC
Addresses our current challenges or business objectives	1,000+ **57%** | <1,000 **46%** 51%	56%	50%	46%
Something I have recently searched for	35%	38%	42%	31%
Comparable to one of my existing products	33%	31%	28%	36%
Informational content advertised	31%	31%	31%	32%
Competitor to a current vendor	27%	23%	24%	31%
About an existing, well-known vendor	22%	22%	22%	22%
Tailored based on my job title	17%	19%	18%	16%
Ad seamlessly fits into my content/user experience	16%	15%	20%	17%
I do not engage with online advertisements	10%	13%	10%	7%

Question: Which of the following factors increase your likelihood of engaging in an ad?