RESEARCH

The B2B buyer report

Tech Edition

An in-depth first party study into buyer behaviour

A 57 page deep dive

Mixology DIGITAL

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Contents

Key summary

The buying group is bigger than you think

Just 24% of IT buyers say 1–2 people are involved in purchase decisions. Most report 3–5, with enterprises often involving 6 or more. Vendors need to equip champions with role-specific content that builds consensus across a wide and varied buying group.

Short windows, complex decisions

70% finalise purchases within 3 months. But buyers aren't rushing; they're racing to make confident decisions in environments full of risk, scrutiny, and competing priorities. For vendors, this means showing value early, reducing friction, and enabling faster internal alignment, especially in larger organisations where timelines stretch but urgency remains.

Pain points are clear

Identifying the right solution (58%) and researching options (51%) are the most challenging parts of the journey, far more so than negotiation or onboarding. Buyers aren't blocked by vendor behaviour; they're bogged down by decision fatigue, internal hurdles, and too much noise.

Trust starts before the first call

72% of IT buyers rely on customer reviews to evaluate vendors, and 63% want to test products through demos or trials. Buyers are forming opinions before sales ever engage, meaning social proof and early-stage experience are critical to making the shortlist.

## Final decision-makers focus on ROI and relationships

While product fit and integration matter across the board, enterprise buyers prioritise measurable ROI and post-sale support. 63% of final decision-makers say support is a major influence in vendor selection.

AI is welcome (if it's useful)

51% of buyers are very likely to trust AI or automation to guide their journey, especially if it enhances relevance. But 42% still want human support. Hybrid experiences that blend automation with expertise are likely to win.

Values shape vendor selection

91% of IT buyers say a brand's stance on sustainability, DEI, or ethical business practices influences their decision. While not always the deciding factor, values play a meaningful role in how vendors are perceived.

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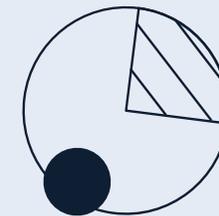
Intro

The last few years have thrown one curveball after another at the B2B industry. With COVID-19 disrupting everything, remote working becoming the norm, and now the rise of AI, a lot has changed.

B2B buying is no longer a simple, linear process. There are more people in the buying unit, more tools to compete against and more opportunities for a sale to slip through your fingers.

Understanding who your buyers are and what they want is more important than ever. Cold outreach and bland product pages just aren't enough anymore.

So, what is the modern IT buyer looking for?

Here's what we found.

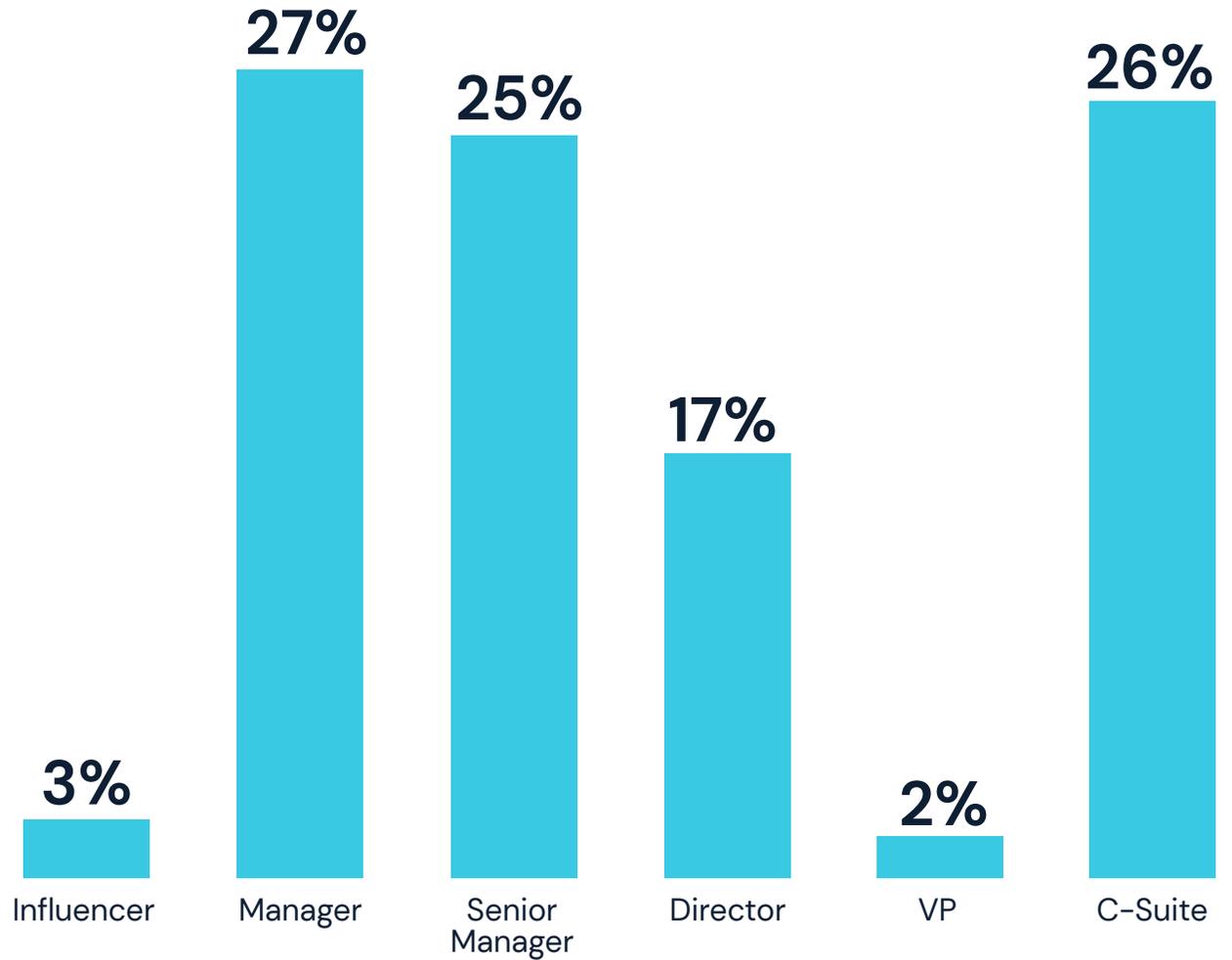**Mixology** DIGITAL

Audience profile

AUDIENCE PROFILE

62 %
38 %

■ B2B   ■ Both B2B and B2C

44 %
56 %

□ UK   ■ USA

What is your level of seniority?

3%	27%	25%	17%	2%	26%
Influencer	Manager	Senior Manager	Director	VP	C-Suite

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Business profile
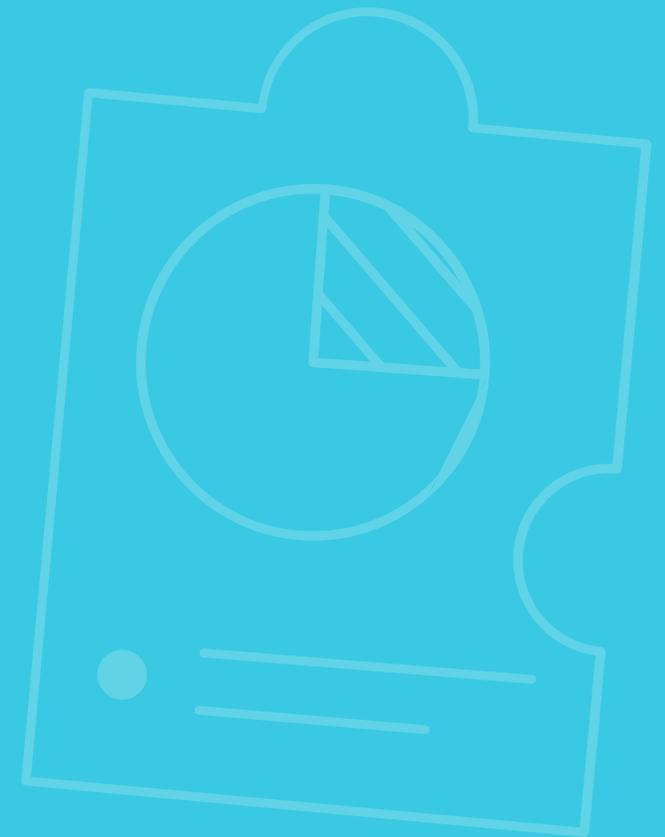
What is your organisation's annual revenue?

15%	37%	25%	23%
Under $10M	$10M–$49M	$50M–$99M	$100M+
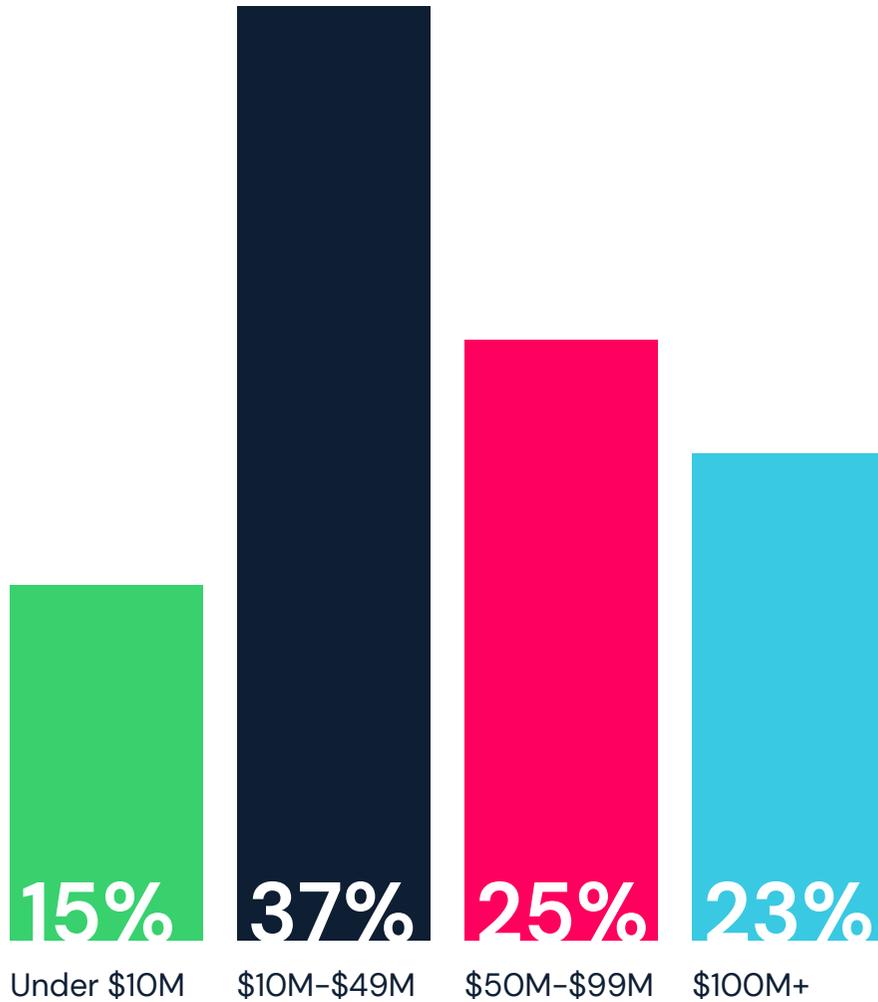
How many employees are there at your organisation?

7%
7%
9%
32%
44%
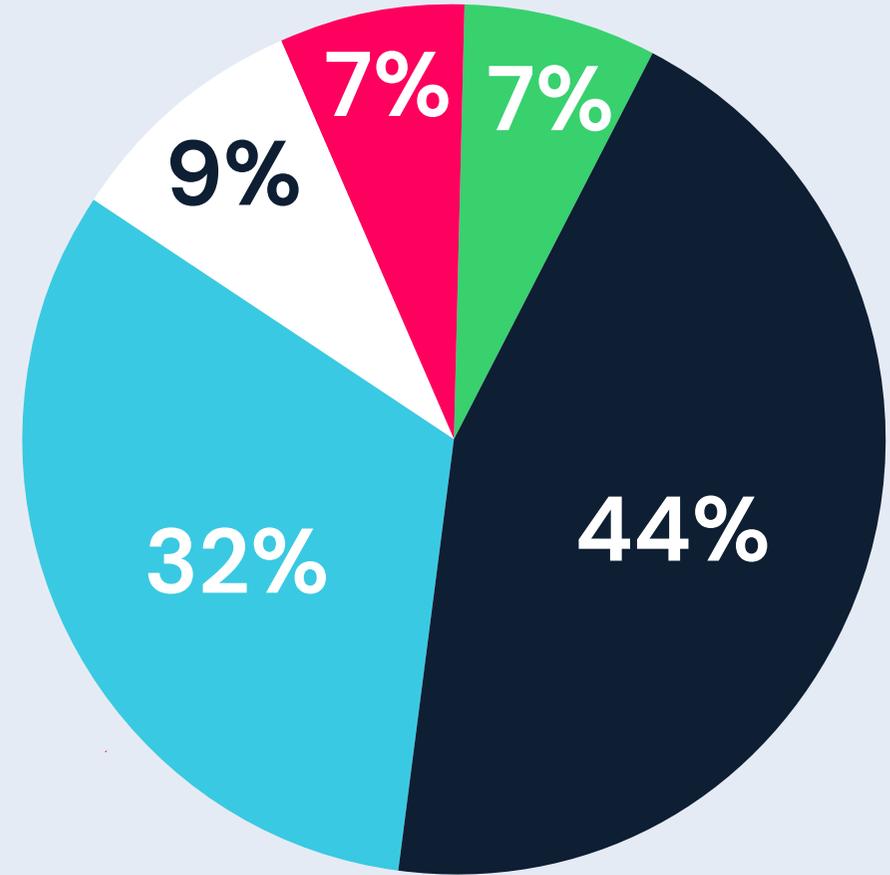
- Less than 100 employees
- 100-999 employees
- 1,000-4,999 employees
- 5,000-9,999 employees
- 10,000+ employees

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Decision-making process

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DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

How many people are involved in the decision-making process for a new vendor/product?

The myth of the lone IT decision-maker doesn't hold up. Just 24% of IT respondents say 1–2 people are involved in the buying process, while most (44%) say it takes 3–5 people to reach a decision, with a further 22% requiring input from 6–10 stakeholders.
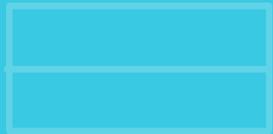
This reinforces the complexity of B2B buying within IT functions, where multiple voices need to be aligned, often spanning procurement, security, architecture, and business leadership.

This means to get buy-in, you need to build consensus. Make sure you have assets that speak to different stakeholder roles: technical deep dives for evaluators, strategic outcomes for influencers, and proof of ROI for final approvers. If you're not tailoring for the group, you risk stalling the deal before it even gets going.

31% of tech buyers say there are more than 6 people in the decision-making process.

24%
1–2 people

44%
3–5 people

22%
6–10 people

9%
More than 10 people

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DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

SIZE COMPARISON

The number of people involved in B2B buying decisions increases significantly with company size. Among businesses with fewer than 100 employees, the majority (91%) involve less than 5 people in the buying process. But in organisations with 10,000+ employees, decision-making is far more distributed; 45% involve 6–10 people, and 27% involve more than 10.

For vendors, this reinforces the need to tailor outreach and content for multiple stakeholders, not just a single buyer persona. Sales and marketing teams must be ready to equip champions with resources that speak to both technical requirements and strategic value across a diverse group of decision-makers.

72% of tech buying groups in businesses with more than 10,000 employees involve 6+ people.

Less than 100 employees
- 36%
- 55%
- 9%
- 0%

100–999 employees
- 21%
- 49%
- 21%
- 9%

1,000–4,999 employees
- 25%
- 47%
- 22%
- 6%

5,000–9,999 employees
- 27%
- 33%
- 20%
- 20%

10,000+ employees
- 18%
- 9%
- 45%
- 27%

Legend:
- 1–2 people
- 3–5 people
- 6–10 people
- More than 10 people

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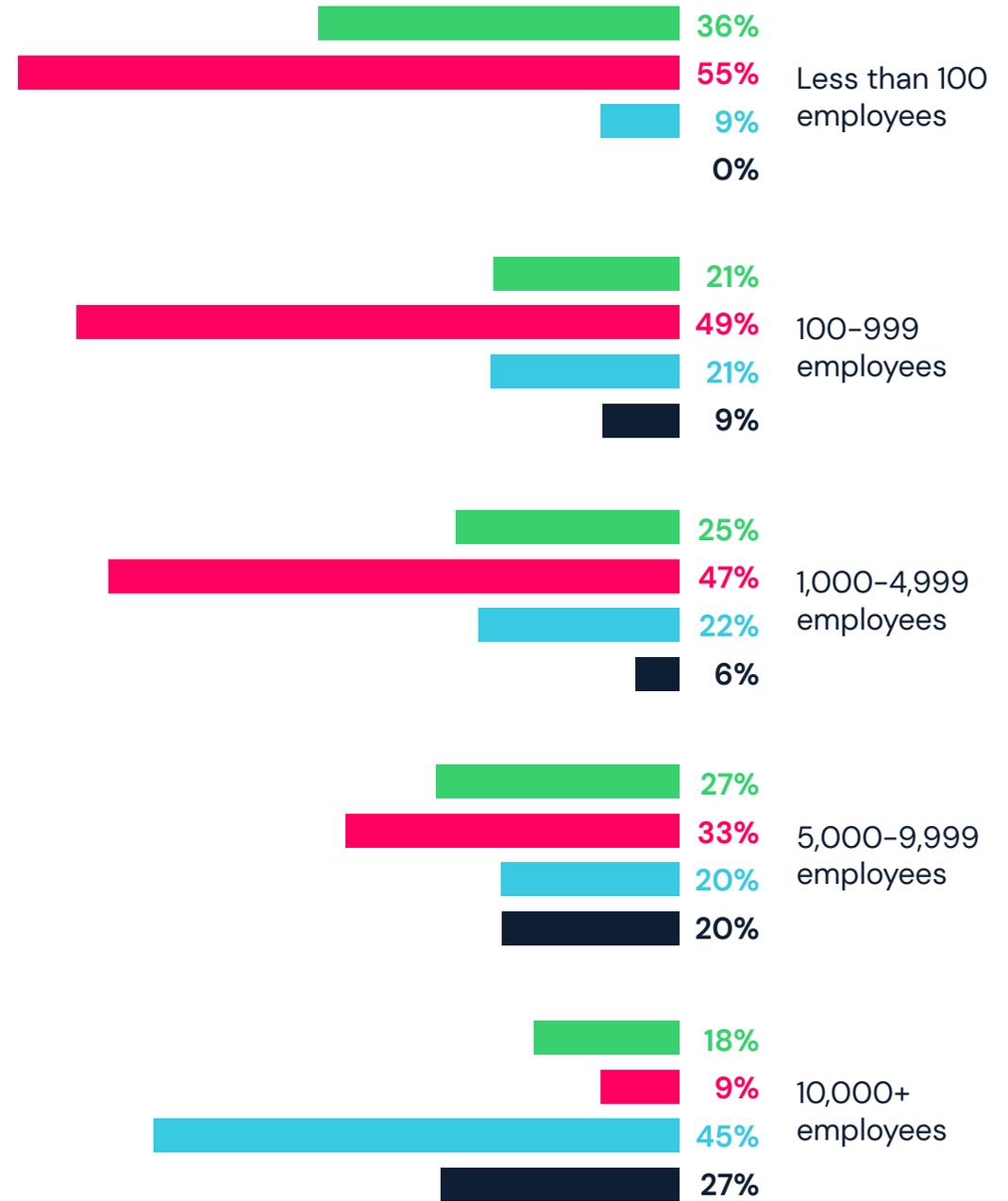
DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

What typically triggers your search for a new solution or vendor? (Select 3)

Growth or scaling needs are the most common reason IT buyers start looking for a new solution, with 61% selecting it as a top trigger. This aligns with the fast-moving nature of technology environments, where infrastructure, platforms, and tools need to keep pace with expanding operations.

A specific business challenge or pain point was close behind (56%), highlighting how often vendors are brought in to help solve clearly defined technical or operational issues.

Interestingly, dissatisfaction with a current vendor (45%) ranked just as high as industry or regulatory changes (also 45%). This suggests that IT buyers are just as likely to be pushed away from a poor experience as they are to be pulled toward innovation or compliance-driven change.

Budgetary shifts (38%) and leadership changes (38%) were also cited by over a third of IT respondents, reinforcing the idea that vendor reviews are often triggered by wider organisational movements, not just internal IT considerations.

56%

A specific business challenge or pain point

38%

Budgetary changes (e.g., cost reduction mandates)

44%

Dissatisfaction with a current vendor or solution

61%

Growth or scaling needs

44%

Industry or regulatory changes

38%

New leadership or strategic direction

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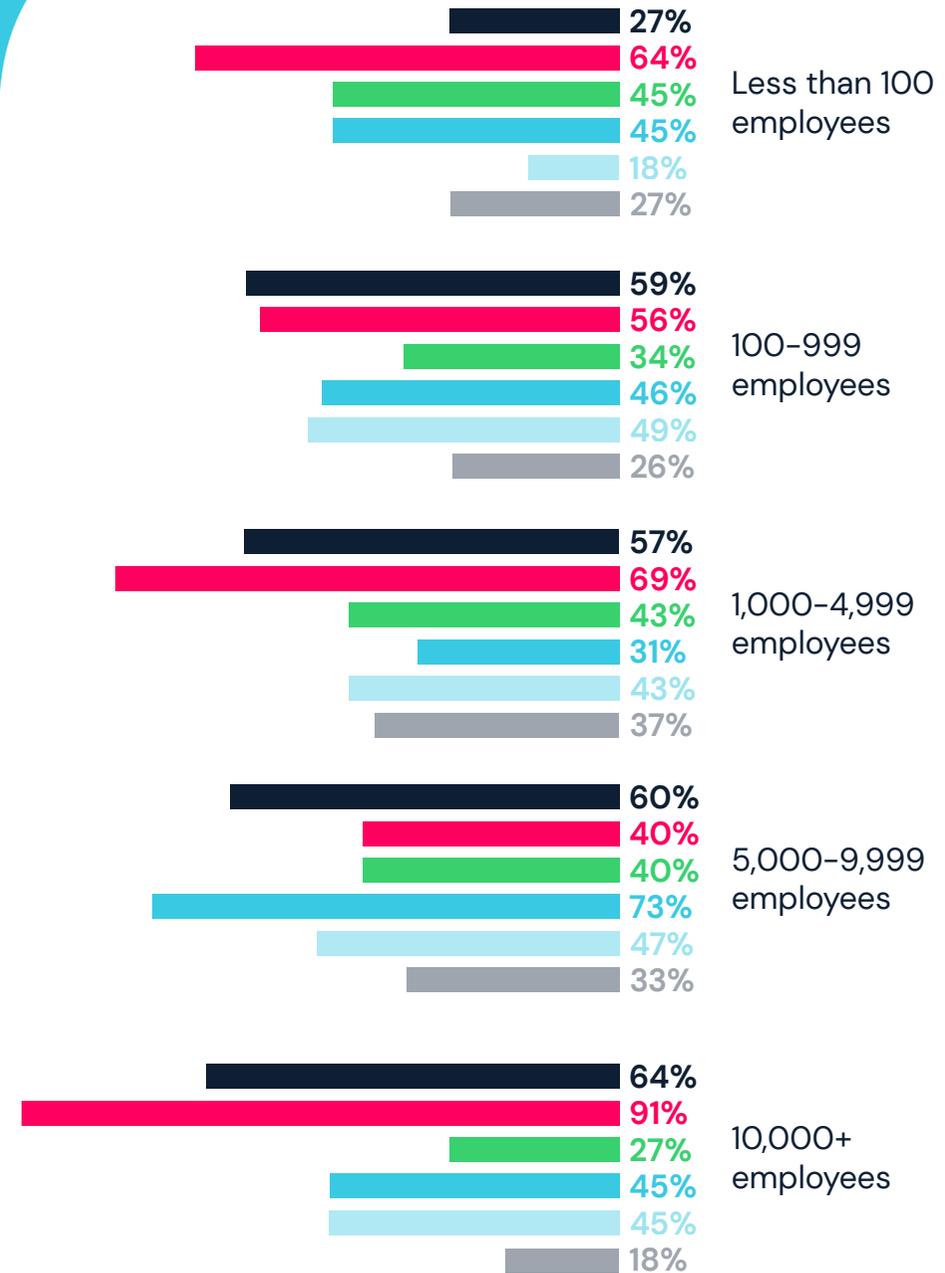
DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

SIZE COMPARISON

While growth or scaling needs are the most common trigger across the board, the reasons behind vendor searches shift notably with company size. Among organisations with 10,000+ employees, 91% cite growth as a key driver—far higher than any other segment—indicating a proactive, future-focused approach to tech buying. In contrast, smaller businesses (under 100 employees) show a more reactive pattern, suggesting that immediate pressures drive decision-making.

Mid-sized companies (100–4,999 employees) appear more challenge-driven: over half cite specific business pain points as a trigger, alongside consistent mentions of vendor dissatisfaction and compliance factors. This group seems to be navigating both growth and operational pain simultaneously.

For vendors, this highlights the importance of tailoring messaging to the organisation's maturity. Enterprises may respond to future-proofing and scalability narratives, while smaller firms may prioritise cost, simplicity, and speed of change.

91% of businesses with more than 10,000 employees cite growth or scaling needs as the biggest trigger for finding a new solution or vendor.

Less than 100 employees
- 27%
- 64%
- 45%
- 45%
- 18%
- 27%

100–999 employees
- 59%
- 56%
- 34%
- 46%
- 49%
- 26%

1,000–4,999 employees
- 57%
- 69%
- 43%
- 31%
- 43%
- 37%

5,000–9,999 employees
- 60%
- 40%
- 40%
- 73%
- 47%
- 33%

10,000+ employees
- 64%
- 91%
- 27%
- 45%
- 45%
- 18%

Legend:
- A specific business challenge or pain point
- Growth or scaling needs
- Budgetary changes (e.g. cost reduction mandates)
- Dissatisfaction with a current vendor or solution
- Industry or regulatory changes
- New leadership or strategic direction

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OVERVIEW

How long does your buying process usually take, from research to final decision?

Only a small minority report long sales cycles, with just 4% saying their buying process takes more than 7 months.

This reinforces the need for timely, relevant content in the early stages of the journey, especially when over 70% of IT buyers are likely to make a decision within 3 months.

For vendors, this window of opportunity is relatively short. Getting onto the shortlist quickly and providing clear, accessible information from the outset could be the difference between being considered or being missed entirely.

71% of tech buyers say their buying cycle is less than 3 months

20% Less than 1 month

51% 1–3 months

25% 4–6 months

3% 7–12 months

1% Over a year

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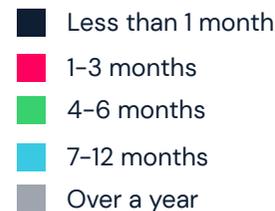
DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

SIZE COMPARISON

The speed of decision-making varies significantly by company size. Smaller businesses move quickly: 90% of buyers in companies with fewer than 100 employees complete their purchase within three months, with nearly half (45%) deciding in under a month.

Mid-sized firms (1,000–4,999 employees) still lean toward shorter timelines; 65% finalise within three months. But as organisations grow larger, the process slows. Among companies with 5,000–9,999 employees, nearly half (47%) take 4–6 months. And in enterprises with more than 10,000 employees, longer timelines are even more common, with over a third falling into the 4–6 month range and 9% reporting a cycle longer than a year.

This pattern reflects increasing complexity in larger businesses; more stakeholders, more scrutiny, and more steps before reaching a decision.

86% of businesses with less than 1,000 employees take less than 3 months to find a new vendor.

Less than 100 employees
- 45%
- 45%
- 9%
- 0%
- 0%

100–999 employees
- 19%
- 63%
- 17%
- 1%
- 0%

1,000–4,999 employees
- 16%
- 49%
- 31%
- 4%
- 0%

5,000–9,999 employees
- 20%
- 27%
- 47%
- 7%
- 0%

10,000+ employees
- 27%
- 18%
- 36%
- 9%
- 9%

Legend:
- Less than 1 month
- 1–3 months
- 4–6 months
- 7–12 months
- Over a year

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OVERVIEW

What stages of the process do you consider the most challenging or time-consuming? (select your top 2)

For IT buyers, the most difficult part of the buying process is identifying the right solution or vendor, according to 58% of respondents. This early-stage bottleneck reflects the sheer volume of vendors competing in the same space, many of which appear similar on the surface. With tech stacks growing more complex and categories increasingly crowded, buyers are overwhelmed with options that sound the same but deliver very different outcomes.

Researching and evaluating options is a close second (51%), reinforcing just how much time and effort goes into the early discovery phase. Buyers aren't just reviewing content or websites—they're cross-referencing reviews, comparing integrations, conducting internal assessments, and trying to validate vendor claims with limited time and team capacity. This isn't helped by vague product messaging or overly technical content that fails to address real-world use cases.

DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

Challenges like budget approval (32%) and internal alignment (28%) reflect another dimension of the struggle: even when buyers find a solution that fits, they face friction getting others on board. This is especially common in larger organisations, where buying groups are bigger, risk thresholds are higher, and financial decisions are more scrutinised.

Notably, negotiation (16%) and onboarding (15%) are far less of a concern, suggesting that buyers don't perceive vendors themselves as the main blocker. Instead, it's the internal burden of researching, validating, and aligning that slows the process. Vendors who can help reduce that load, through clear, relevant content, transparent pricing, and tailored guidance, are more likely to stand out early and stay front of mind throughout the decision.

Identifying the right solution or vendor is the most challenging part of the IT buying process.

32%
Budget approval

28%
Gaining internal alignment or stakeholder buy-in

58%
Identifying the right solution or vendor

15%
Implementation / onboarding

16%
Negotiation and contract signing

51%
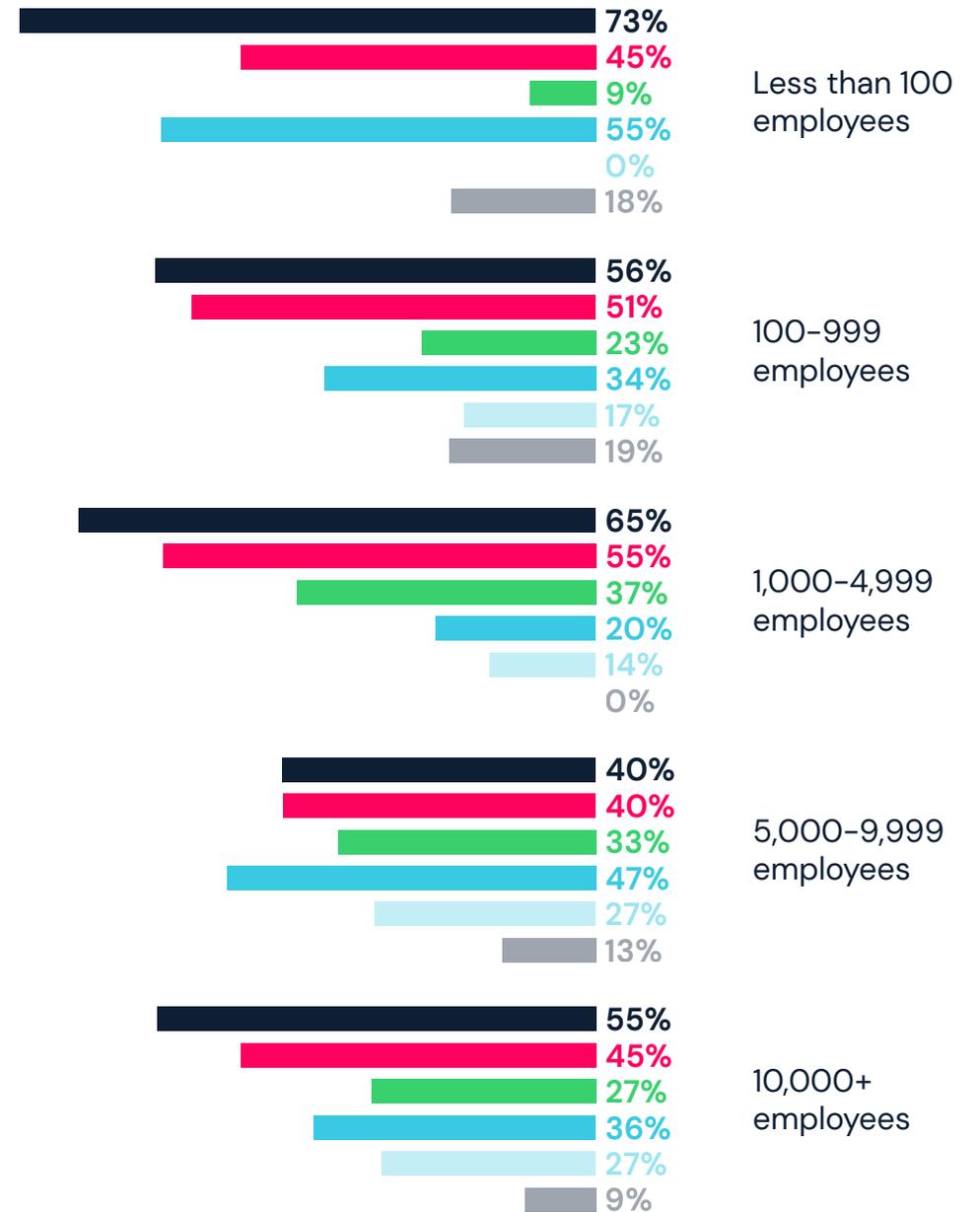Researching and evaluating options

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DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

SIZE COMPARISON

Among companies with fewer than 100 employees, 73% say identifying the right solution or vendor is their biggest challenge, followed by researching and evaluating options (45%) and securing budget approval (55%). With limited internal resources, smaller teams are under pressure to make the right call quickly, often without the luxury of expert evaluation or cross-functional support.

In mid-sized organisations, identifying the right solution remains the top challenge, but gaining internal alignment begins to feature more prominently. As businesses grow, so too does the complexity of the buying group, with stakeholder buy-in and competing priorities slowing the process.

At the enterprise level, the pain shifts noticeably. In companies with 10,000+ employees, the top two blockers are gaining internal alignment (45%) and budget approval (36%). The emphasis here is less about what to buy and more about how to move it forward. With large internal teams, lengthy approval chains, and governance protocols, vendors must support champions with business cases that cut through red tape.

Less than 100 employees
- Identifying the right solution or vendor: 73%
- Researching and evaluating options: 45%
- Gaining internal alignment or stakeholder buy-in: 9%
- Budget approval: 55%
- Negotiation and contract signing: 0%
- Implementation/onboarding: 18%

100–999 employees
- Identifying the right solution or vendor: 56%
- Researching and evaluating options: 51%
- Gaining internal alignment or stakeholder buy-in: 23%
- Budget approval: 34%
- Negotiation and contract signing: 17%
- Implementation/onboarding: 19%

1,000–4,999 employees
- Identifying the right solution or vendor: 65%
- Researching and evaluating options: 55%
- Gaining internal alignment or stakeholder buy-in: 37%
- Budget approval: 20%
- Negotiation and contract signing: 14%
- Implementation/onboarding: 0%

5,000–9,999 employees
- Identifying the right solution or vendor: 40%
- Researching and evaluating options: 40%
- Gaining internal alignment or stakeholder buy-in: 33%
- Budget approval: 47%
- Negotiation and contract signing: 27%
- Implementation/onboarding: 13%

10,000+ employees
- Identifying the right solution or vendor: 55%
- Researching and evaluating options: 45%
- Gaining internal alignment or stakeholder buy-in: 27%
- Budget approval: 36%
- Negotiation and contract signing: 27%
- Implementation/onboarding: 9%

Legend:
- Identifying the right solution or vendor
- Researching and evaluating options
- Gaining internal alignment or stakeholder buy-in
- Budget approval
- Negotiation and contract signing
- Implementation/onboarding

Research and discovery

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OVERVIEW

Where do you typically start your research for solutions?

For IT buyers, 38% say they begin their research with search engines. This suggests that visibility in organic and paid search results remains essential for getting onto the radar early.

Industry events and analyst reports also play a key role, selected by 17% and 16% of respondents respectively. These channels offer a level of trust and depth that's valued during the early exploration phase, especially for more complex or high-stakes solutions.

Vendor websites rank lowest (4%) as a starting point. While important further down the funnel, this highlights that IT buyers rarely begin their journey by going directly to a supplier. Instead, they arrive later, likely after conducting broader research elsewhere.

16%
Analyst reports (e.g. Gartner, Forrester)

17%
Industry events or conferences

15%
LinkedIn or other social media platforms

10%
Peer recommendations

38%
Search engines (e.g. Google, Bing)

4%
Vendor websites

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BUYER ROLE COMPARISON

Those who research and recommend solutions are most likely to begin with analyst reports, with 57% citing this as their starting point — the highest reliance on any single channel across all groups. This suggests a strong preference for expert, third-party validation before diving deeper into vendor materials.

Members of the decision-making team balance independent discovery with peer insight and market commentary; 42% begin with search engines, while 18% turn to analyst reports, 18% attend industry events, and 13% use platforms like LinkedIn.

Final decision-makers take a broader, more relationship-led route. They're the most likely to start with peer recommendations (11%) and industry events (18%), indicating that trust and reputational signals carry more weight at this level than technical content or search visibility. For this group, credibility often comes from who's using a solution, not just what it claims to do.

This shows that the further removed someone is from day-to-day research, the more influence shifts from structured sources to trust-based signals. Tailoring outreach based on role (and how they enter the journey) is essential for meaningful engagement.
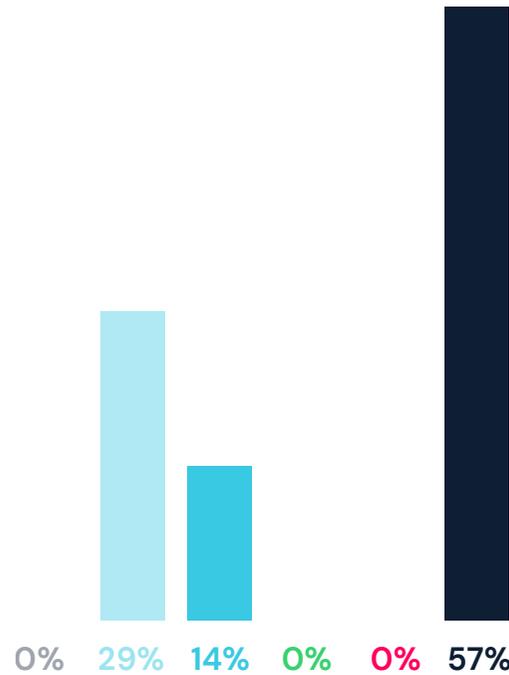
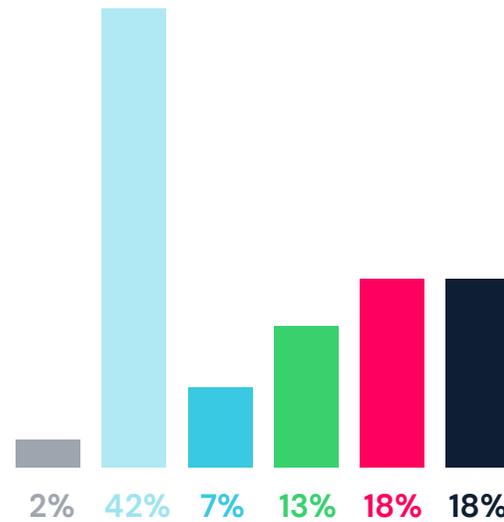**Long form content such as analyst reports are actively sought after by key influencers.**
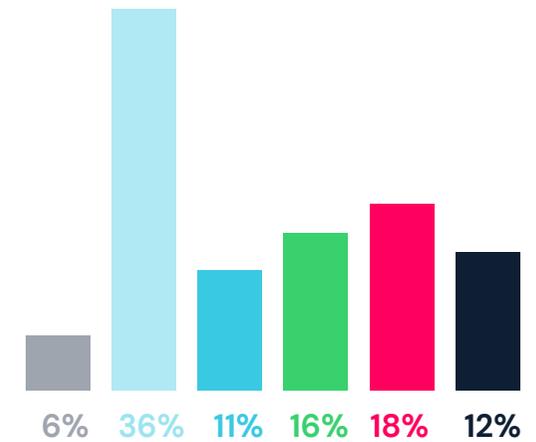
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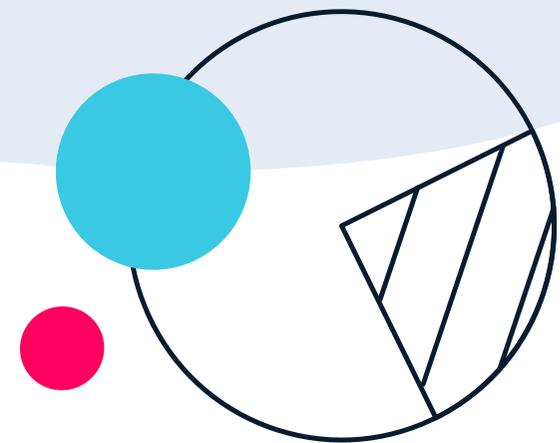
Search engine marketing (SEM) remains a critical strategy for increasing visibility during the research and discovery stage.

I research and recommend solutions, but don't make the final decision

0%   29%   14%   0%   0%   57%

I am part of the decision-making team

2%   42%   7%   13%   18%   18%

I am the final decision-maker

6%   36%   11%   16%   18%   12%

Legend:
- Analyst reports (e.g., Gartner, Forrester)
- Industry events or conferences
- LinkedIn or other social media platforms
- Peer recommendations
- Search engines (e.g., Google, Bing)
- Vendor websites

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OVERVIEW

How do you evaluate potential vendors during the discovery phase? (Select 3)

Customer reviews and testimonials top the list when it comes to evaluating potential vendors, selected by 72% of IT buyers. These social proof points carry weight across the board, helping build trust before direct engagement ever begins.

Product demonstrations or free trials are also key (63%), highlighting the importance of hands-on evaluation. IT buyers want to see how a solution works in practice and whether it integrates with their environment before progressing further.

Case studies and peer recommendations are next (both 51%), showing that IT teams place a strong emphasis on past success and community input when assessing new providers. These elements provide practical context and reassurance around performance, outcomes, and credibility.

Overall, the data shows that trust, proof, and experience shape the way IT buyers form shortlists, often before they've spoken to a sales rep.

51%
Case studies and success stories

27%
Comparison tools or platforms (e.g., G2, Capterra)

72%
Customer reviews and testimonials

63%
Product demonstrations or free trials

51%
Recommendations from peers or colleagues

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What makes you consider a vendor credible and trustworthy?

The top factors influencing trust are industry reputation (35%), high-quality content (29%), and positive customer reviews (25%), suggesting that buyers are drawn to consistent visibility, thought leadership, and peer validation over more formal or curated signals.

To be seen as credible, vendors need to show up with useful, relevant content — and let their reputation and customer experience speak for them.

If B2B buyers aren't considering reputation, they're looking at high-quality content and resources (29%) or positive customer testimonials or reviews (25%).

1%
Certifications or industry awards

29%
High-quality content and resources

25%
Positive customer testimonials or reviews

35%
Reputation in the industry

2%
Strong post-purchase support options

8%
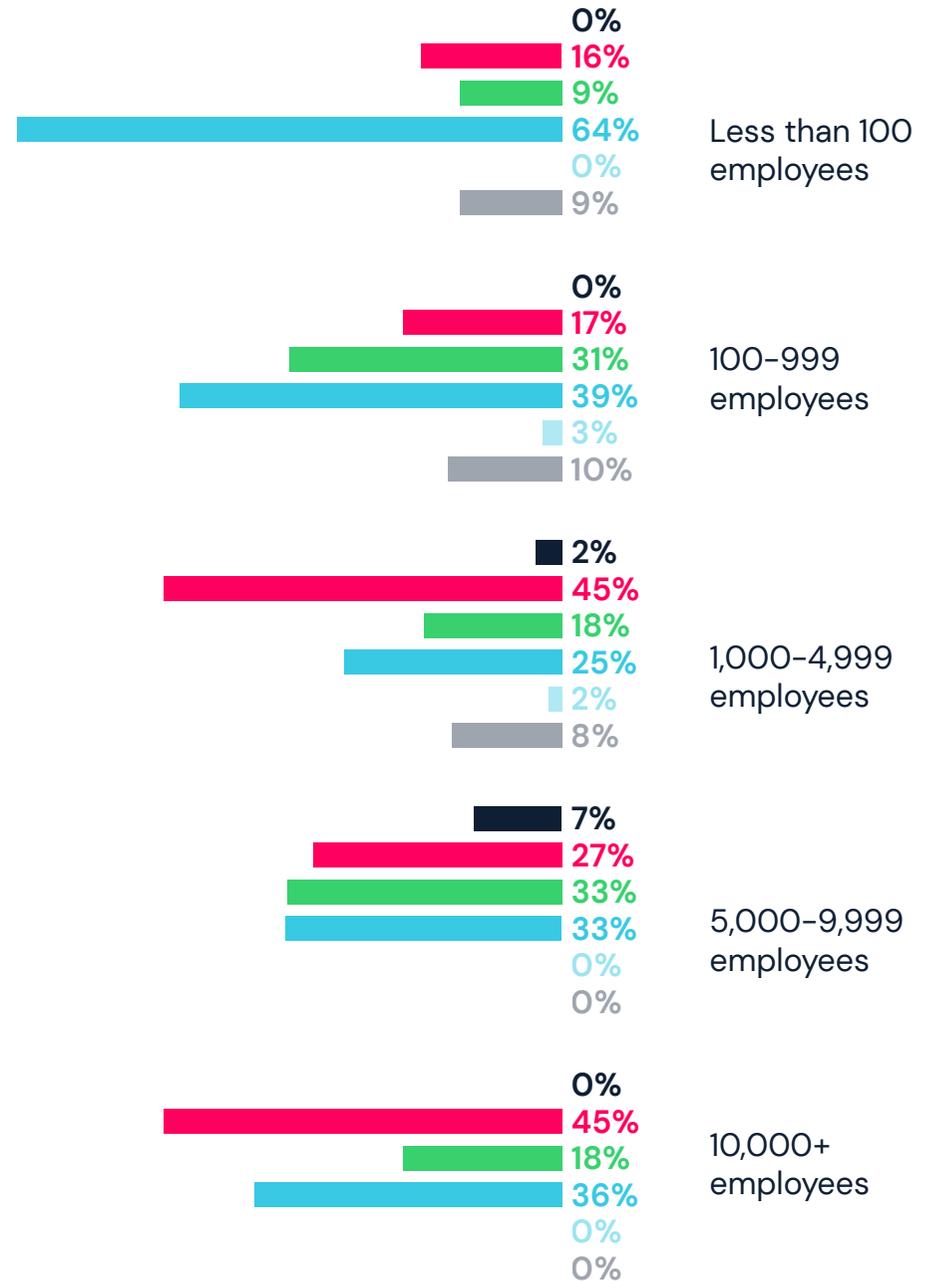Transparent pricing and policies

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SIZE COMPARISON

Perceptions of vendor credibility shift as businesses scale.

Smaller organisations (fewer than 100 employees) place the most value on reputation in the industry (64%). In businesses with 100–999 employees, reputation still matters (39%), but positive customer testimonials (31%) and transparent pricing (39%) also play a significant role. Trust at this stage is built through both authority and clarity.

Among companies with 1,000–4,999 employees, the focus shifts further toward content quality, with 45% saying high-quality resources shape their view of a vendor's credibility. In enterprises with 10,000+ employees, content (45%) and reputation (36%) remain the dominant credibility drivers. Reviews and pricing still contribute, but no respondents in this group selected certifications, awards, or post-purchase support, suggesting these are now baseline expectations, not differentiators.

Less than 100 employees
- 0%
- 16%
- 9%
- 64%
- 0%
- 9%

100-999 employees
- 0%
- 17%
- 31%
- 39%
- 3%
- 10%

1,000-4,999 employees
- 2%
- 45%
- 18%
- 25%
- 2%
- 8%

5,000-9,999 employees
- 7%
- 27%
- 33%
- 33%
- 0%
- 0%

10,000+ employees
- 0%
- 45%
- 18%
- 36%
- 0%
- 0%

Legend:
- ■ Certifications or industry awards
- ■ High-quality content and resources
- ■ Positive customer testimonials or reviews
- ■ Reputation in the industry
- ■ Strong post-purchase support options
- ■ Transparent pricing and policies

OVERVIEW

How important is personalised content in the research process?

Personalisation isn't just a nice-to-have for IT buyers, it's an expectation. 62% rate personalised content as "extremely important" during the research phase, while a further 31% say it's important.

Buyers want content that speaks directly to their use case, integrates with their environment, and addresses their particular pain points, not just generic assets that apply to anyone in the market.

In a space crowded with overlapping functionality and technical claims, personalisation helps cut through noise. Whether it's tailored messaging by industry, content mapped to job function, or assets aligned to buying stage, relevance is what earns attention.

93% of IT buyers consider personalised content important in the research process.

0%
1 – Not very important

0%
2

7%
3

31%
4

62%
5 – Extremely important

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Content consumption

CONTENT CONSUMPTION

Which type of content influences your decision most?

For IT buyers, case studies and success stories are by far the most influential type of content when making a purchasing decision (43%). This highlights the continued importance of real–world proof, especially in technical fields where buyers want to see evidence of outcomes before committing.

Webinars and video demos come in second (22%), offering a more interactive way to understand a product's functionality and fit. This suggests that IT audiences value opportunities to see solutions in action, particularly when technical validation is needed.

OVERVIEW

Almost half (43%) of IT buyers say case studies and success stories are the most influential type of content.

2%
Blog articles or thought leadership posts

43%
Case studies and success stories

7%
Comparision guides

16%
Pricing or ROI calculators

22%
Webinars and video demos

11%
Whitepapers or research reports

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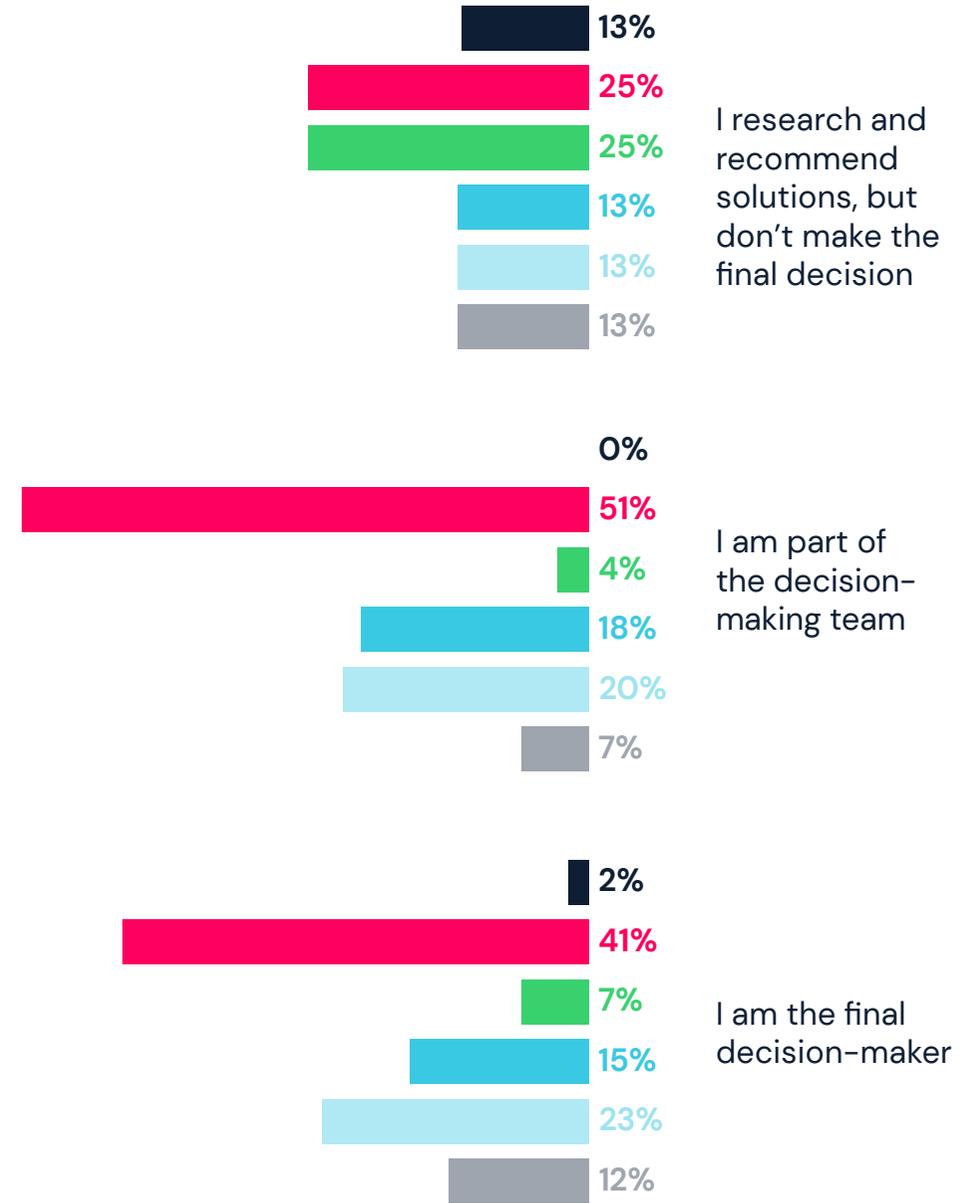DIGITAL

CONTENT CONSUMPTION

BUYER ROLE COMPARISON

While case studies remain the most influential content type overall, their impact differs depending on a buyer's role in the decision-making process.

Those who are part of the decision-making team rely heavily on case studies and success stories (51%).

Final decision-makers also favour case studies (41%) but place more weight on webinars and video demos (23%) compared to other buying roles.

Interestingly, those who research and recommend solutions are the most evenly split across content types. Case studies and comparison guides are tied at 25%, with all other formats—blogs, pricing tools, webinars, and whitepapers—scoring equally at 13%.

For those who research and recommend solutions, a diverse content mix is key, reflecting the wide range of factors they need to assess before making recommendations.

I research and recommend solutions, but don't make the final decision

- 13%
- 25%
- 25%
- 13%
- 13%
- 13%

I am part of the decision-making team

- 0%
- 51%
- 4%
- 18%
- 20%
- 7%

I am the final decision-maker

- 2%
- 41%
- 7%
- 15%
- 23%
- 12%

Legend:

- ■ Blog articles or thought leadership posts
- ■ Case studies and success stories
- ■ Comparison guides
- ■ Pricing or ROI calculators
- ■ Webinars and video demos
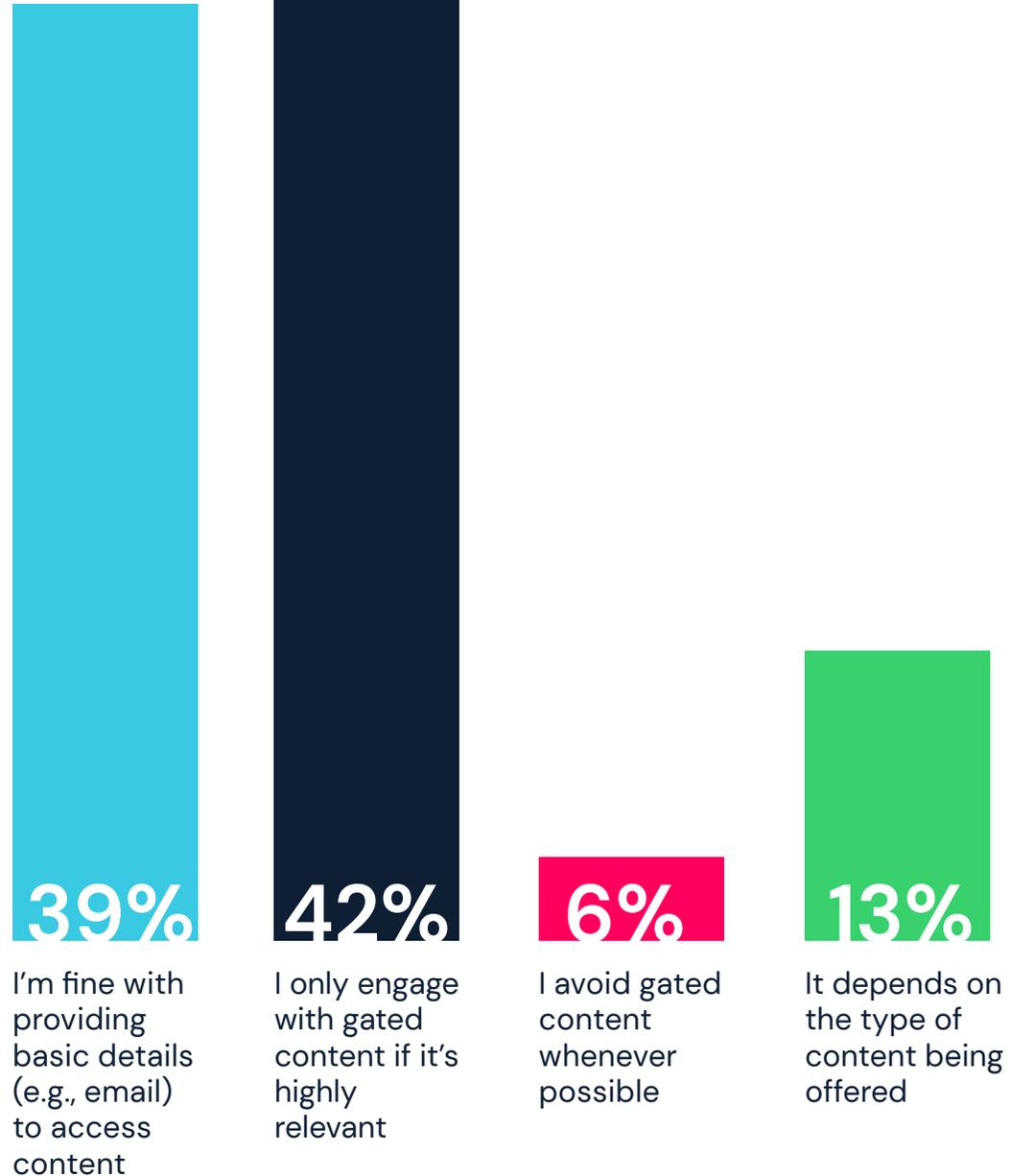- ■ Whitepapers or research reports

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How do you feel about gated content? Does it affect your willingness to engage?

OVERVIEW

Most IT buyers are still willing to engage with gated content, but only if it's worth their time. 42% say they'll fill in a form but only if the content is highly relevant, while 39% are fine with providing basic details such as an email address to access information.

Although gating content isn't a barrier in itself, it does come with strings attached. If the perceived value doesn't match the ask, buyers are quick to disengage.

81% of B2B buyers are happy with accessing gated content, as long as the content is of value.

39%
I'm fine with providing basic details (e.g., email) to access content

42%
I only engage with gated content if it's highly relevant

6%
I avoid gated content whenever possible

13%
It depends on the type of content being offered

Mixology DIGITAL

CONTENT CONSUMPTION

What information do you look for on a vendor's website? (Tick all that apply)

When reviewing a vendor's website, nearly three-quarters (73%) want to see an outline of product features and capabilities, 66% want to see pricing details and 59% want to see industry or role-specific solutions. This reflects a desire to self-educate and validate fit before engaging further.

Case studies and customer stories rank highly at 58%, reinforcing the importance of real-world proof in building confidence. Integration details matter too. 45% want to understand how the solution will plug into existing systems, especially in environments where compatibility is non-negotiable.

Interestingly, only 30% cite contact or support information as essential at this stage.

Today's IT buyers don't want to talk to sales until they're ready, and that means your website needs to work harder as a standalone resource.

58%
Case studies or customer success stories

30%
Contact information and support options

59%
Industry or role-specific solutions

45%
Integration capabilities

69%
Pricing details

73%
Product features and capabilities

Mixology
DIGITAL

How often do you share vendor content with colleagues or decision-makers?

Content doesn't just influence individual buyers, it moves through the buying group. 49% of respondents say they frequently share vendor content with colleagues or other decision-makers. Another 49% share it occasionally.

Only 2% say they rarely share content, reinforcing the idea that buying journeys are collaborative, even in the early stages.

For content to gain traction across a buying group, it needs to be both relevant and easy to share. If it resonates with one stakeholder but doesn't support the needs of others, its impact may stall. The best-performing content is designed with this internal distribution in mind; clear, role-relevant, and tailored for different levels of influence.

Half (49%) of IT buyers will share content frequently with fellow decision-makers.

49%
Frequently

49%
Occasionally

2%
Rarely

0%
Never

Mixology DIGITAL
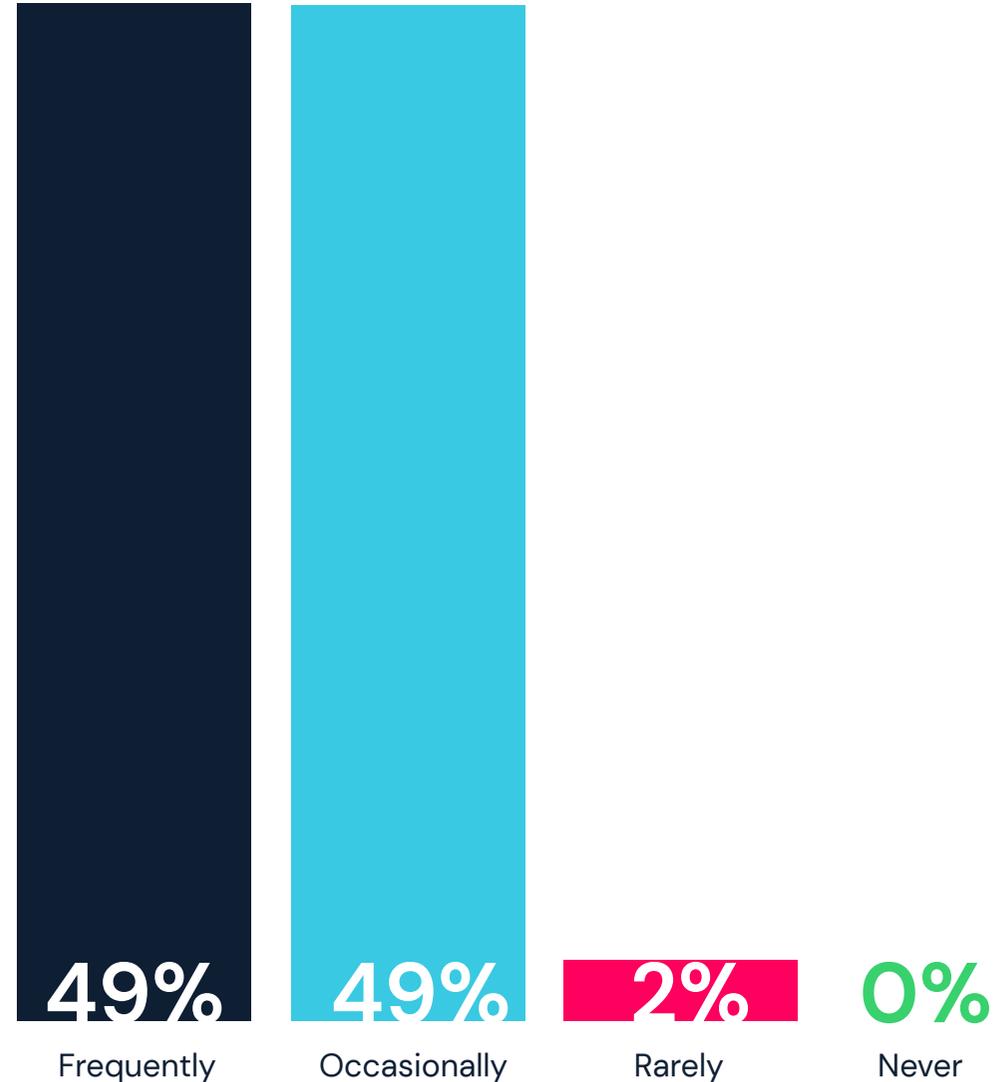
CONTENT CONSUMPTION

How could vendors improve the content they provide during the buying process? (Tick all that apply)

IT buyers are clear on what they want to see more of during the buying process; 64% say vendors should provide more interactive tools such as calculators and self-assessments.

ROI clarity is also a top priority. 59% want content that better demonstrates return, while 58% call for more personalised and relevant information, reinforcing the need for tailored experiences that align with specific pain points or goals.

IT buyers are looking for content that works harder, giving them tools to validate, quantify, and justify decisions in a format that feels useful and role-specific.

64%
Create more interactive tools (e.g. calculators, self-assessments)

46%
Ensure content is concise and easy to consume

58%
Make content more personalised and relevant to my needs

56%
Offer more actionable insights or use cases

59%
Provide clearer ROI data and metrics

Mixology DIGITAL

Vendor engagement

OVERVIEW

What's your preferred way to engage with a vendor for the first time?

The most common starting point is a product demo or trial (30%), showing that IT buyers value hands-on experience. Still, 26% prefer to speak to a sales rep directly, highlighting the ongoing importance of accessible expertise, especially for complex solutions.

Others favour self-directed routes: 20% begin by visiting the website, while 19% are open to gated content early in the process if the value is clear.

Only 6% choose webinars or events, suggesting that live, time-bound formats hold less appeal as a first step.

Buyers want flexible, low-friction entry points, either to test the product themselves or quickly reach someone who can help.

6%
Attend a webinar or event

19%
Download a piece of gated content

30%
Request a product demo or trial

26%
Speak directly to a sales representative

20%
Visit their website and evaluate independently
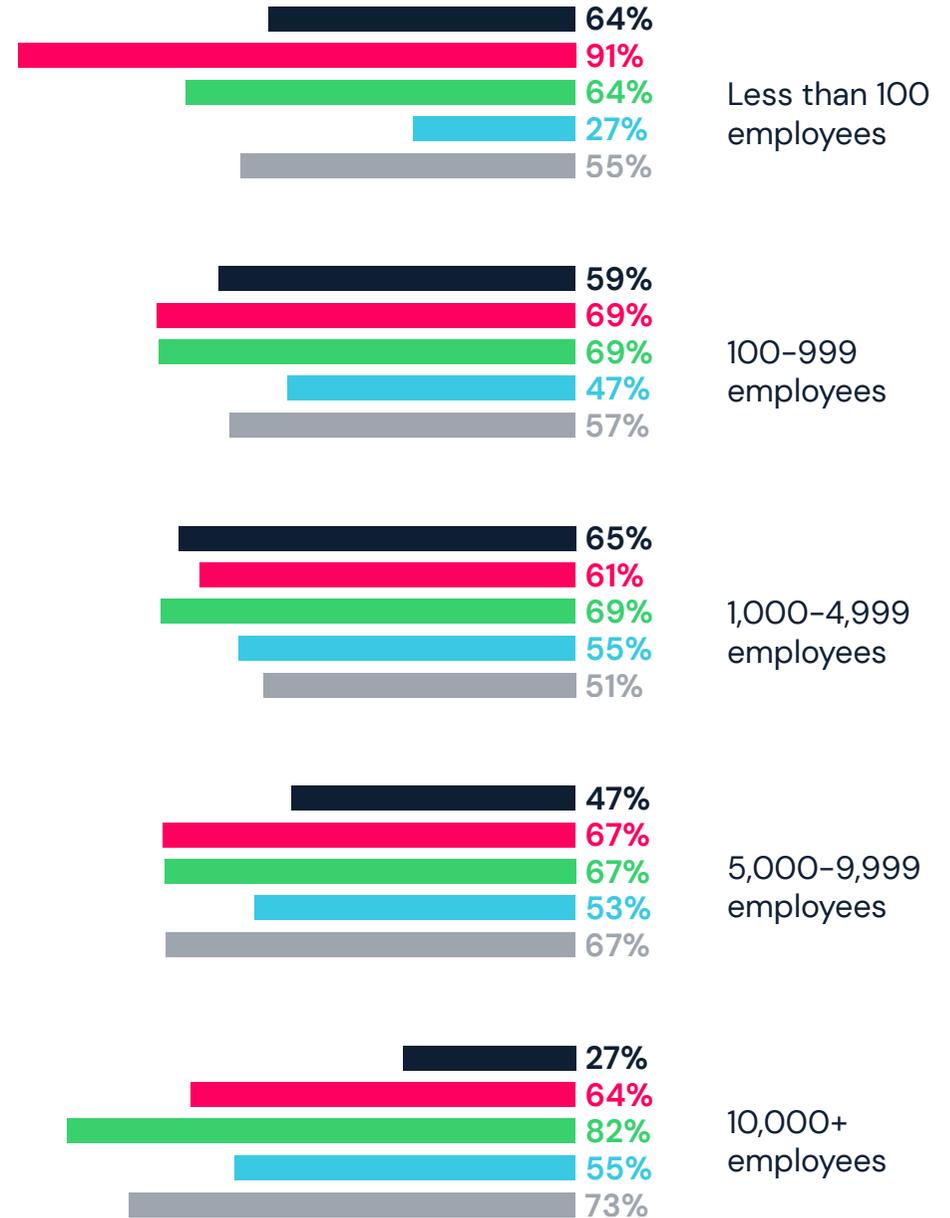
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VENDOR ENGAGEMENT

SIZE COMPARISON

45% of businesses with fewer than 100 employees prefer to start with a product demo or trial, and just 9% want to speak to a sales rep. However, enterprises with more than 10,000 employees are equally split between these two options (36% each), showing a much stronger appetite for direct engagement from the outset.

Meanwhile, mid-sized firms (5,000–9,999) stand out for their preference for self-navigation: one-third (33%) would rather explore a vendor's website independently before taking further action.

The data suggests that vendor engagement varies by company size, so engagement strategies must flex accordingly; from low-touch, product-led tactics for SMBs to relationship-led approaches for large enterprises.

Less than 100 employees
- 64%
- 91%
- 64%
- 27%
- 55%

100–999 employees
- 59%
- 69%
- 69%
- 47%
- 57%

1,000–4,999 employees
- 65%
- 61%
- 69%
- 55%
- 51%

5,000–9,999 employees
- 47%
- 67%
- 67%
- 53%
- 67%

10,000+ employees
- 27%
- 64%
- 82%
- 55%
- 73%

Legend:
- ■ Attend a webinar or event
- ■ Download a piece of gated content
- ■ Request a product demo or trial
- ■ Speak directly to a sales representative
- ■ Visit their website and evaluate independently

Mixology DIGITAL

BUYER ROLE COMPARISON

38% of those who are part of the decision-making team want to see a product demo or trial, suggesting a more hands-on, exploratory mindset. While final decision-makers prefer to speak directly to a sales rep (30%), showing a clear preference for personalised, consultative interaction.

Those who research and recommend solutions equally favour gated content, product demos and evaluating independently (25%), showing how they engage, depending on the content or context at hand.

Together, the data reinforces the need to offer multiple first-touch options that align with both role and level of buying readiness.

I research and recommend solutions, but don't make the final decision
- 13%
- 25%
- 25%
- 13%
- 25%

I am part of the decision-making team
- 9%
- 13%
- 38%
- 18%
- 22%

I am the final decision-maker
- 4%
- 21%
- 27%
- 30%
- 18%

Legend:
- ■ Attend a webinar or event
- ■ Download a piece of gated content
- ■ Request a product demo or trial
- ■ Speak directly to a sales representative
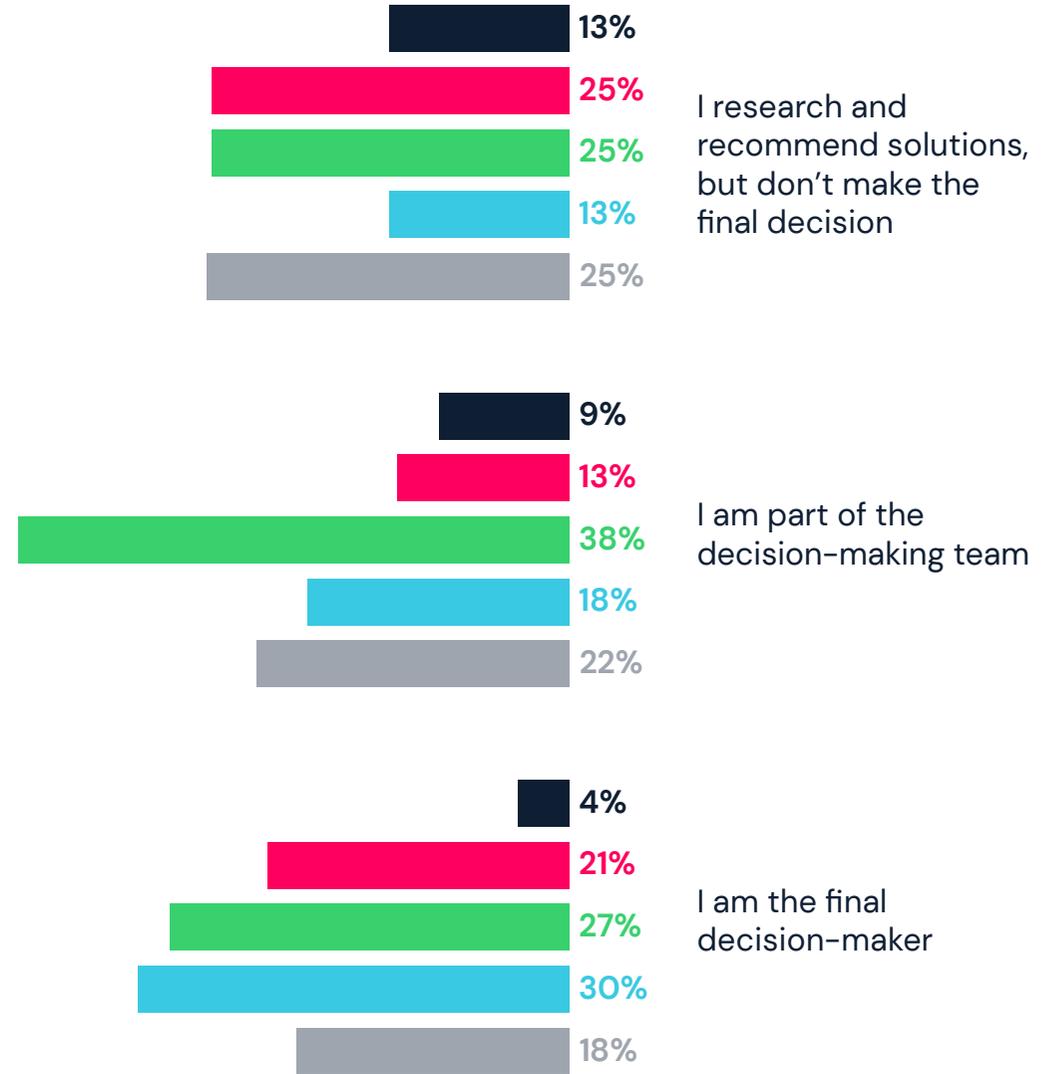- ■ Visit their website and evaluate independently

Mixology DIGITAL

OVERVIEW

What are your top 3 frustrations when interacting with vendors?

For IT buyers, the most common frustration when engaging with vendors is slow response times (69%). Closely behind is lack of clear pricing information (67%), which continues to be a recurring barrier throughout the buying journey. Uncertainty around cost remains a key reason vendors are ruled out early.

Aggressive or overly persistent follow-ups are also a major issue (58%). Combined with poor understanding of business needs (57%) and overly generic communication (49%), these factors highlight a wider concern: many vendors are still prioritising their process over the buyer's experience.

This data reinforces the importance of speed, relevance, and transparency. Misalignment on any one of these can cause friction.

The most common vendor engagement frustration for IT buyers is slow response times (69%).

58%
Aggressive or overly persistent follow-ups

67%
Lack of clear pricing information

49%
Overly generic or irrelevant communication

57%
Poor understanding of my business needs

69%
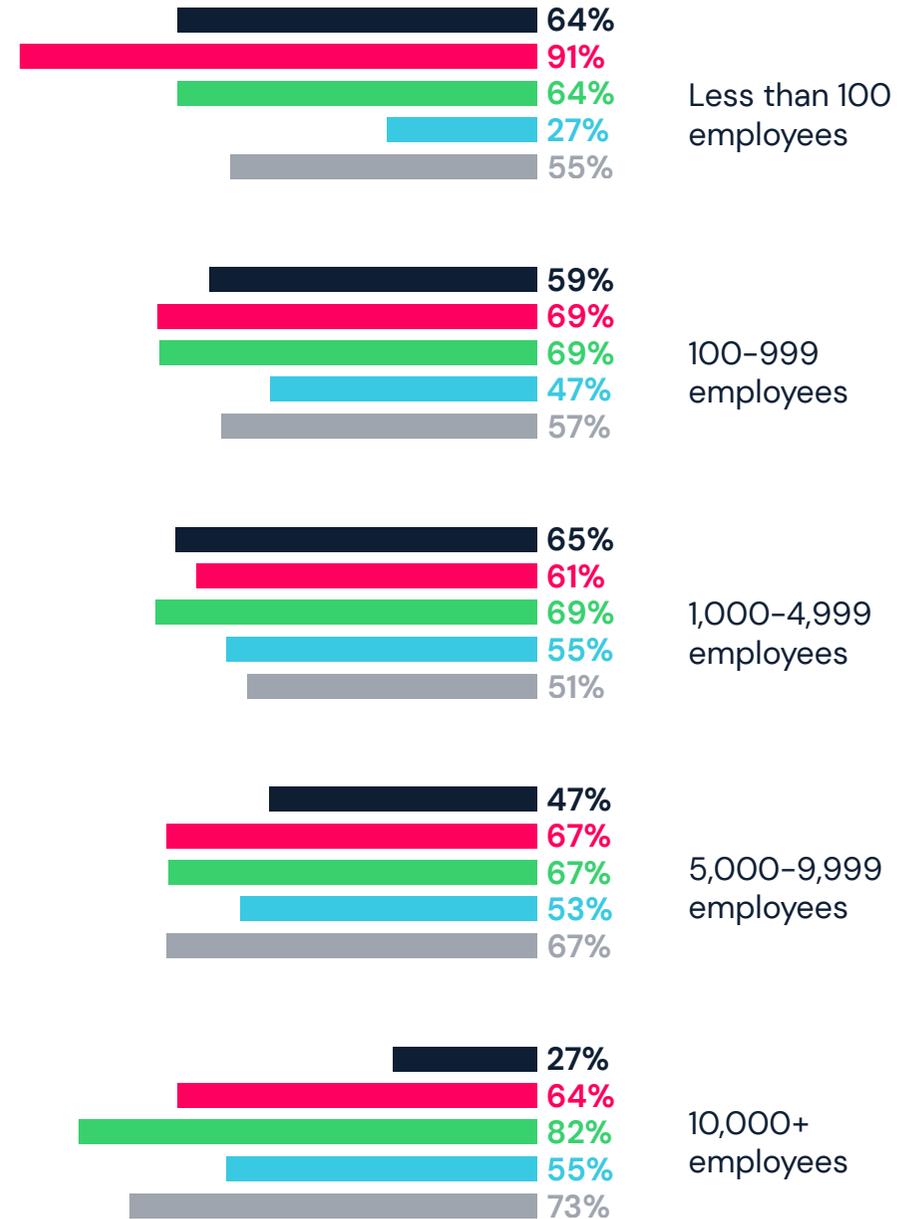Slow response times to inquiries

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DIGITAL

VENDOR ENGAGEMENT

SIZE COMPARISON

Vendor communication remains a major pain point across the board, but the nature of that frustration shifts by company size.

Smaller companies are disproportionately affected by pricing opacity: a staggering 91% of businesses with fewer than 100 employees cite a lack of clear pricing as a top frustration. Meanwhile, enterprise buyers (10,000+ employees) are far more concerned with vendor responsiveness (82%) and understanding of their business needs (73%), highlighting the importance of tailored, strategic engagement at scale.

Interestingly, aggressive follow-ups are a turn-off across all segments, but especially in mid-sized firms (1,000–4,999), where 65% cite it as a top issue, suggesting that persistence without relevance quickly becomes a dealbreaker.

Less than 100 employees
- Aggressive or overly persistent follow-ups: 64%
- Lack of clear pricing information: 91%
- Slow response times to inquiries: 64%
- Overly generic or irrelevant communication: 27%
- Poor understanding of my business needs: 55%

100–999 employees
- Aggressive or overly persistent follow-ups: 59%
- Lack of clear pricing information: 69%
- Slow response times to inquiries: 69%
- Overly generic or irrelevant communication: 47%
- Poor understanding of my business needs: 57%

1,000–4,999 employees
- Aggressive or overly persistent follow-ups: 65%
- Lack of clear pricing information: 61%
- Slow response times to inquiries: 69%
- Overly generic or irrelevant communication: 55%
- Poor understanding of my business needs: 51%

5,000–9,999 employees
- Aggressive or overly persistent follow-ups: 47%
- Lack of clear pricing information: 67%
- Slow response times to inquiries: 67%
- Overly generic or irrelevant communication: 53%
- Poor understanding of my business needs: 67%

10,000+ employees
- Aggressive or overly persistent follow-ups: 27%
- Lack of clear pricing information: 64%
- Slow response times to inquiries: 82%
- Overly generic or irrelevant communication: 55%
- Poor understanding of my business needs: 73%

Legend:
- Aggressive or overly persistent follow-ups
- Lack of clear pricing information
- Slow response times to inquiries
- Overly generic or irrelevant communication
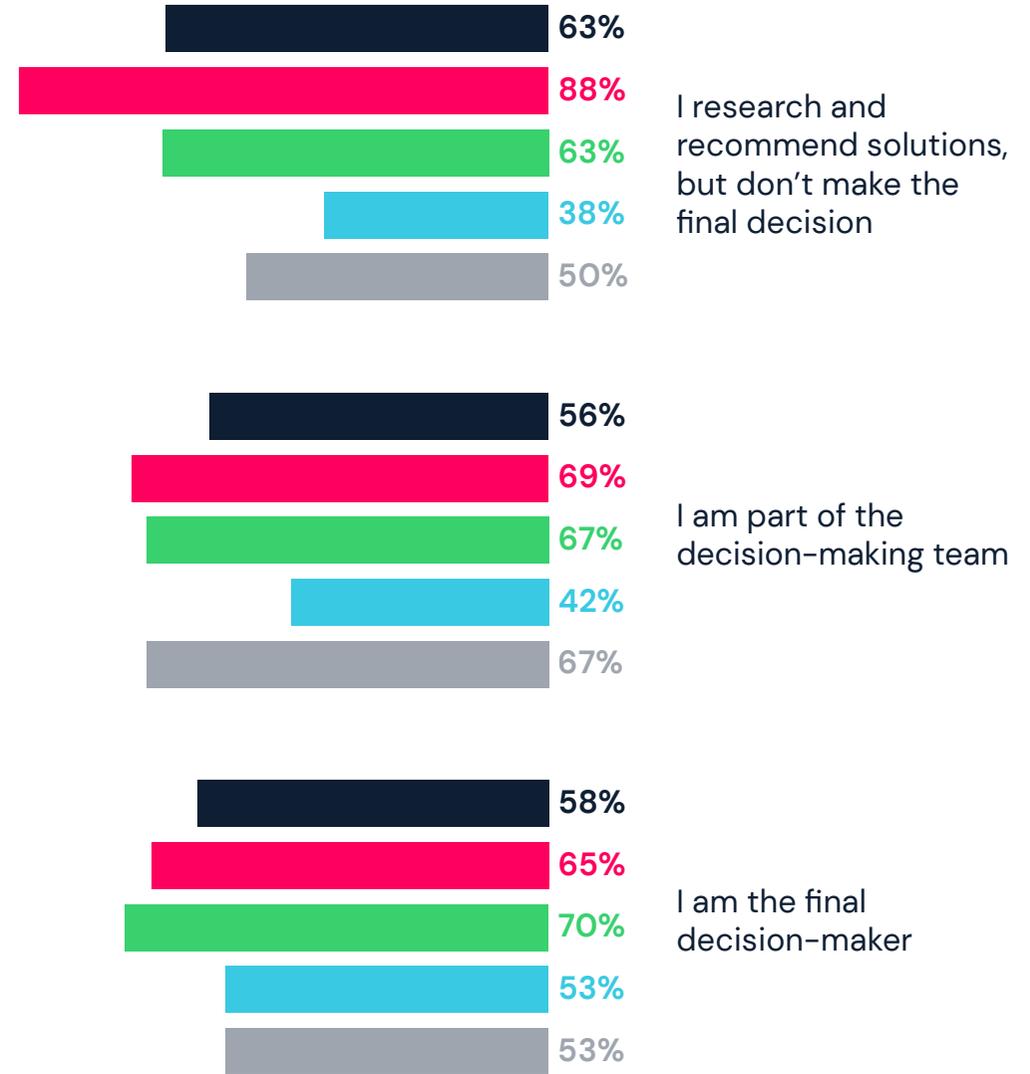- Poor understanding of my business needs

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BUYER ROLE COMPARISON

Frustrations shift slightly depending on a buyer's role in the process, but certain themes remain consistent. For those who research and recommend solutions, a lack of clear pricing information is by far the biggest blocker (88%), followed by slow response times (63%) and aggressive follow-ups (63%). This group is looking for efficiency and clarity from the outset.

Decision-making team members are more concerned with relevance and understanding. 67% cite poor understanding of their needs, while 67% also report frustration with slow responses, highlighting the importance of tailored engagement and timely support at this mid-funnel stage.

Final decision-makers echo these concerns. Slow response times (70%) and lack of clear pricing (65%) top their list, while 53% are equally frustrated by overly generic messaging and poor vendor understanding. For this group, vendors must be able to clearly articulate value and speak to the organisation's context.

I research and recommend solutions, but don't make the final decision
- 63%
- 88%
- 63%
- 38%
- 50%

I am part of the decision-making team
- 56%
- 69%
- 67%
- 42%
- 67%

I am the final decision-maker
- 58%
- 65%
- 70%
- 53%
- 53%

Legend:
- ■ Aggressive or overly persistent follow-ups
- ■ Lack of clear pricing information
- ■ Slow response times to inquiries
- ■ Overly generic or irrelevant communication
- ■ Poor understanding of my business needs

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Decision drivers

DECISION DRIVERS

OVERVIEW
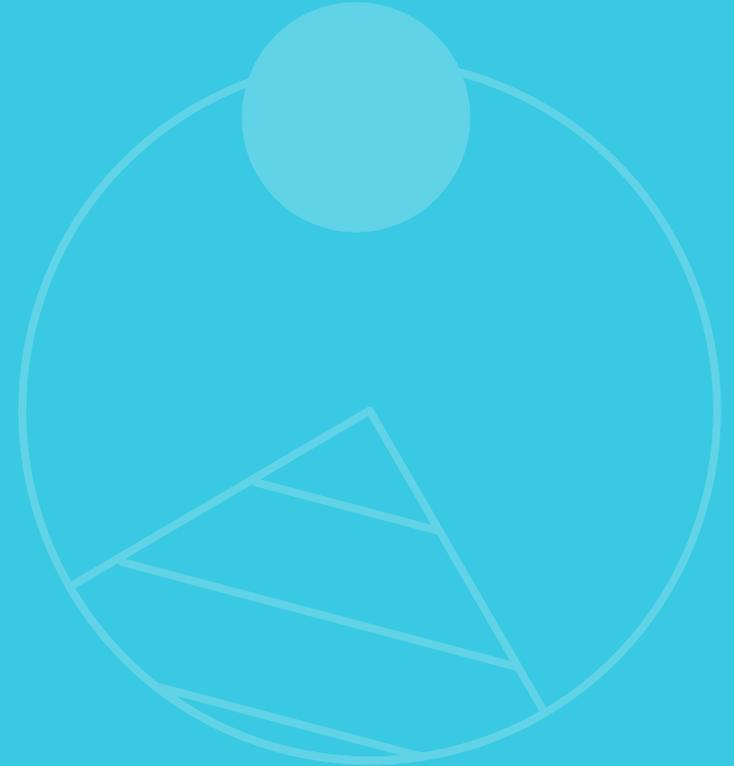
What are the top 3 factors that influence your final decisions?

When it comes to making a final decision, IT buyers are focused on functionality, compatibility, and value.

Product features and capabilities top the list, influencing 65% of respondents. It's a clear sign that solutions need to meet both technical and operational requirements, if the product doesn't deliver, nothing else matters.

Integration or compatibility with existing tools is a close second (64%), highlighting how critical it is for new solutions to slot seamlessly into existing infrastructure.

Price or ROI comes third (56%), reinforcing the need for financial transparency and measurable value. Buyers aren't just looking for the lowest price, they're weighing outcomes against investment.

50%
Customer service and support options

64%
Integration or compatibility with existing tools

14%
Peer recommendations or reviews

56%
Price or ROI

65%
Product features and capabilities

51%
Reputation and trustworthiness

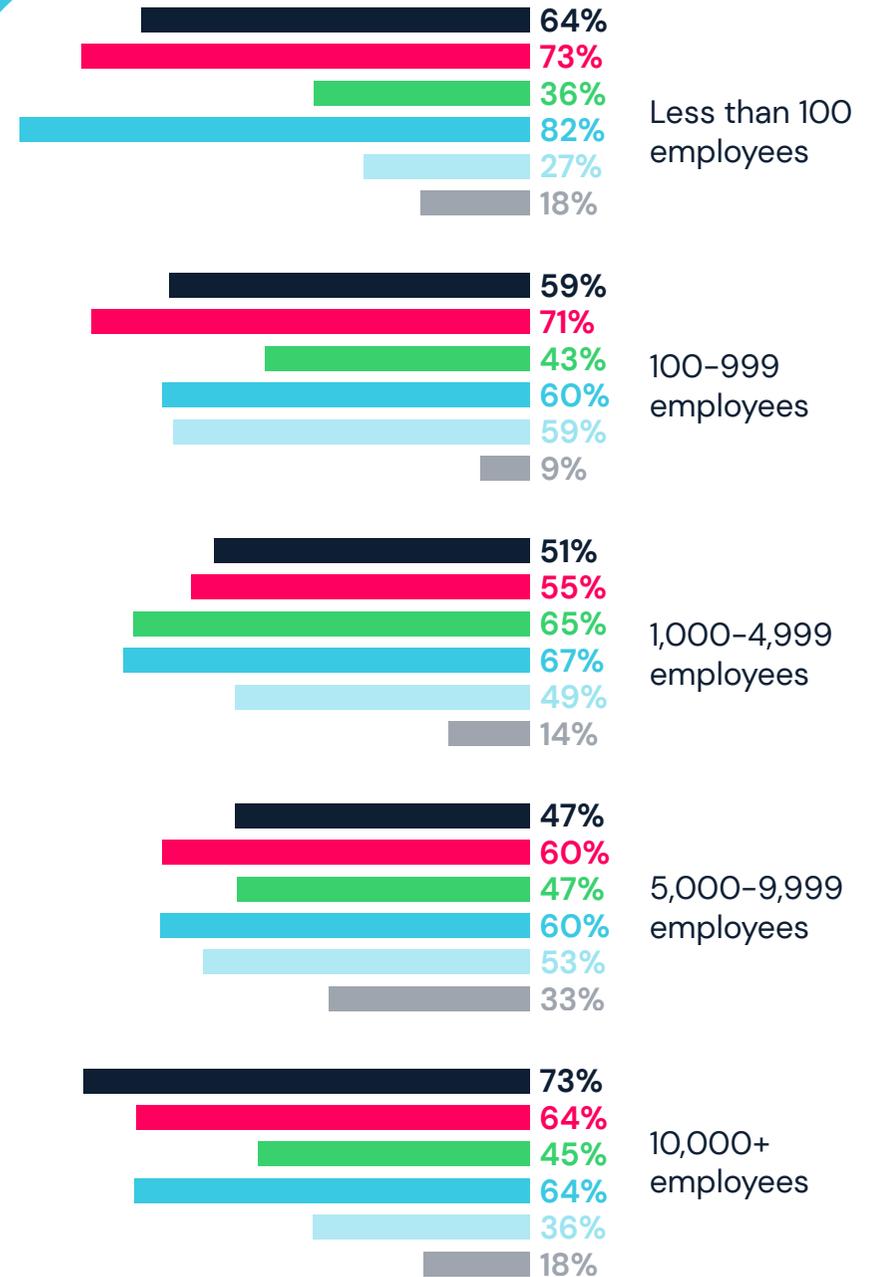**Mixology DIGITAL**

DECISION DRIVERS

SIZE COMPARISON

Product capability, compatibility and cost are universal decision drivers, but their weight shifts by business size.

For smaller businesses (under 100 employees), integration tops the list at 82%, followed closely by product features (73%) and ROI (64%). With limited resources, these buyers are laser-focused on fit and value; if it doesn't work out of the box and justify the spend, it's out.

Among companies with 1,000–4,999 employees, reputation (49%) and customer service (47%) rise in importance, nearly matching product and integration. At this size, buyers are balancing performance with vendor reliability; they need to trust the solution and the team behind it.

In the enterprise segment (10,000+), ROI takes the lead at 73%, signalling that strategic investment decisions are under pressure to deliver measurable value. Product and integration remain close behind (both 64%), but softer factors like peer recommendations (18%) drop even further.

The overall picture shows that while functionality and compatibility are non-negotiable, trust signals and long-term value play a growing role as companies scale.

Less than 100 employees
- 64%
- 73%
- 36%
- 82%
- 27%
- 18%

100–999 employees
- 59%
- 71%
- 43%
- 60%
- 59%
- 9%

1,000–4,999 employees
- 51%
- 55%
- 65%
- 67%
- 49%
- 14%

5,000–9,999 employees
- 47%
- 60%
- 47%
- 60%
- 53%
- 33%

10,000+ employees
- 73%
- 64%
- 45%
- 64%
- 36%
- 18%

Legend:
- Price or ROI
- Product features and capabilities
- Customer service and support options
- Integration or compatibility with existing tools
- Reputation and trustworthiness
- Peer recommendations or reviews

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How important is peer validation (e.g. reviews, case studies, word of mouth) in your decision-making process?

Peer validation—through reviews, testimonials, or word-of-mouth—remains a significant influence in the decision-making process for IT buyers.

Across the board, 94% consider it important, with 61% rating it 'extremely important'. This highlights the enduring value of third-party endorsement, particularly in a market saturated with similar offerings and marketing claims.
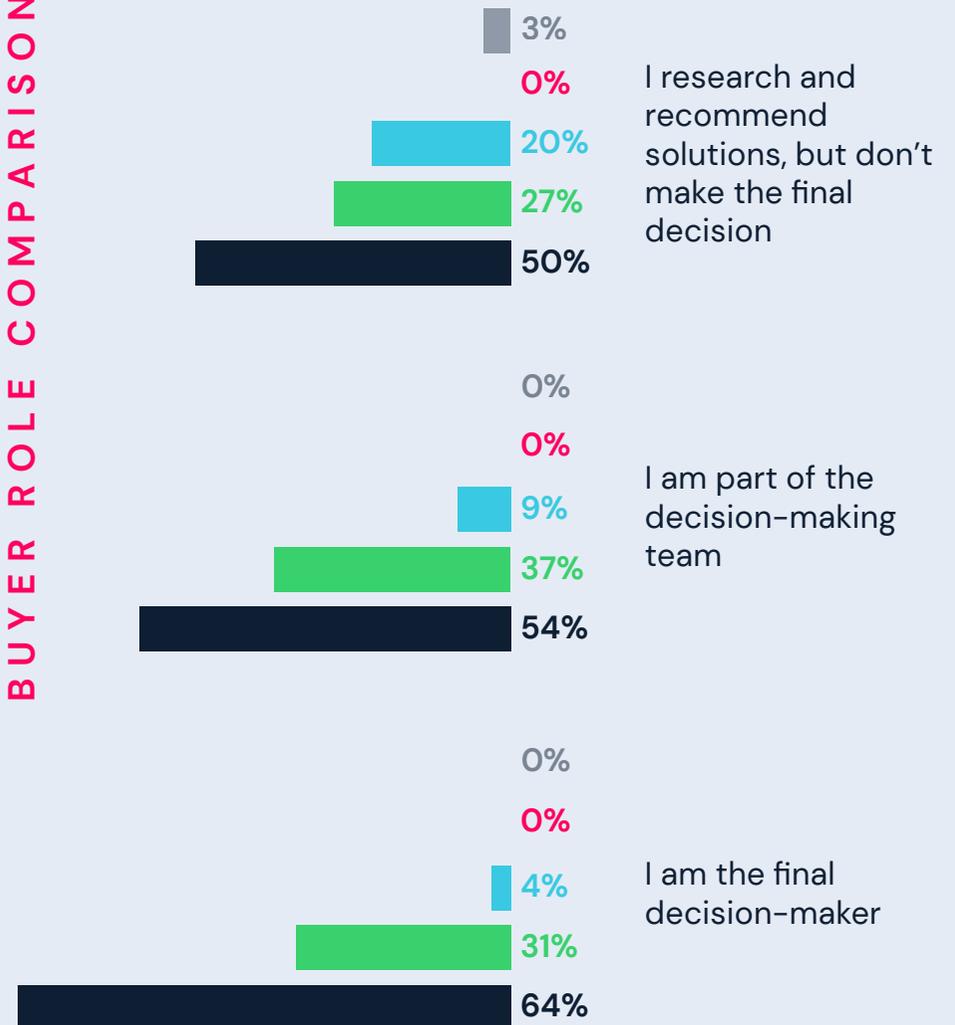
OVERVIEW

0%	0%	6%	33%	61%
1 - Not very important	2	3	4	5 - Extremely important
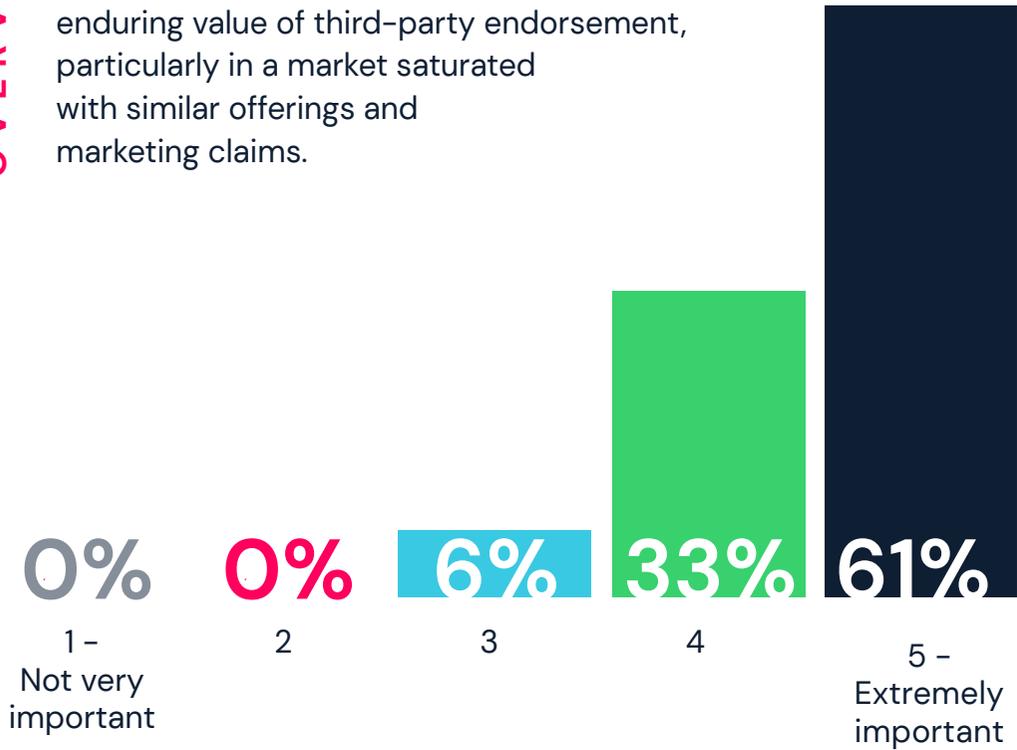
(By decision maker)

However, the impact of peer validation varies depending on the buyer's role. Among final decision-makers, 64% rate peer validation as extremely important—more than any other group. It plays a key role in building confidence and mitigating perceived risk at the point of purchase.

BUYER ROLE COMPARISON

I research and recommend solutions, but don't make the final decision
- 3%
- 0%
- 20%
- 27%
- 50%

I am part of the decision-making team
- 0%
- 0%
- 9%
- 37%
- 54%

I am the final decision-maker
- 0%
- 0%
- 4%
- 31%
- 64%

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OVERVIEW

How do you feel about pricing transparency during the buying journey?

For IT buyers, there's no room for ambiguity when it comes to pricing. A staggering 74% expect clear and detailed pricing upfront, making transparency not just a preference but a baseline requirement.

Only 23% are comfortable discussing pricing later in the process, and a mere 3% are willing to accept vague pricing if the solution is high quality. That's a firm signal to marketers: holding pricing cards too close to your chest risks losing technical buyers before the conversation even begins.

74% of IT buyers expect clear and detailed pricing upfront.

3%
I don't mind vague pricing if the solution is high quality

74%
I expect clear and detailed pricing upfront

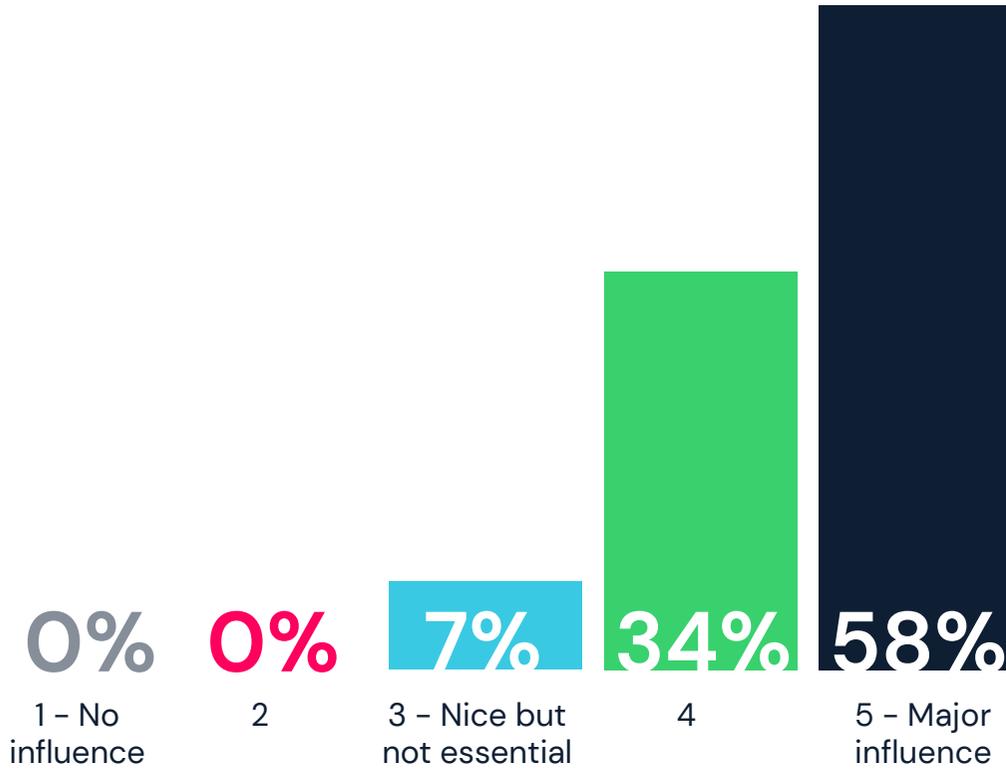**23%**
I'm comfortable discussing pricing later in the process
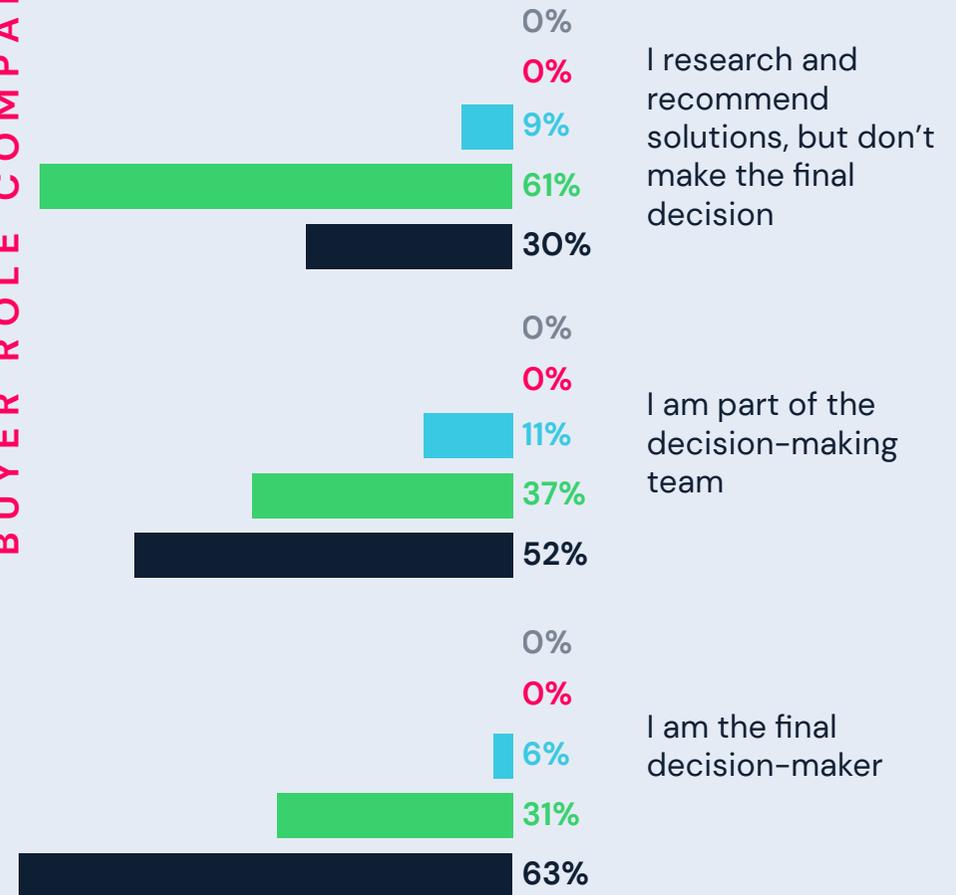
Mixology DIGITAL
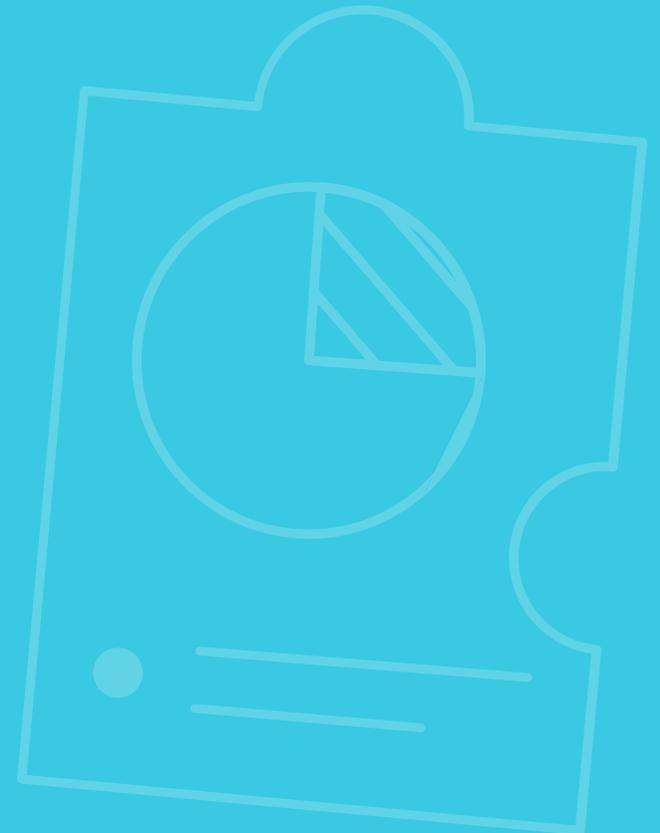
(By decision maker)

Only 30% of those who research and recommend solutions say post-purchase support is a major influence. But that jumps to 52% among decision-making team members and peaks at 63% for final decision-makers.

This reinforces that while researchers may prioritise features and functionality, those with sign-off authority are focused on long-term fit, including the relationship beyond the sale. Vendors who can prove ongoing support and partnership are more likely to earn executive buy-in.

OVERVIEW

How much influence does post-purchase support or relationship management have on your decision to choose a vendor?

Over half of IT buyers (58%) say post-purchase support or relationship management has a major influence on their decision to choose a vendor. An additional 34% rate it as a strong consideration.

0%
1 – No influence

0%
2

7%
3 – Nice but not essential

34%
4

58%
5 – Major influence

BUYER ROLE COMPARISON

0%
0%
9%
61%
30%
I research and recommend solutions, but don't make the final decision

0%
0%
11%
37%
52%
I am part of the decision-making team

0%
0%
6%
31%
63%
I am the final decision-maker

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Barriers to conversion

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How could vendors improve the content they provide during the buying process? (Tick all that apply)

OVERVIEW

When asked what deters them during the buying journey, IT buyers didn't hold back. The top offender? Overpromising and underdelivering (35%). A clear warning that exaggerated claims without follow-through are a fast track to lost trust.

Another 32% say vendors focus too much on product features rather than addressing core business needs. For this audience, it's not about bells and whistles, it's about problem-solving and practical impact.

Interestingly, fewer respondents pointed to issues like complex language (15%) or failure to prove ROI (9%). This may reflect IT buyers' comfort with technical detail so long as it's matched with relevance and clarity.

Overpromising and underdelivering is the number one mistake made by vendors.

9%

Failing to demonstrate ROI clearly

32%

Focusing too much on features instead of my business needs

8%

Not being responsive to inquiries or concerns

35%

Overpromising and underdelivering

15%

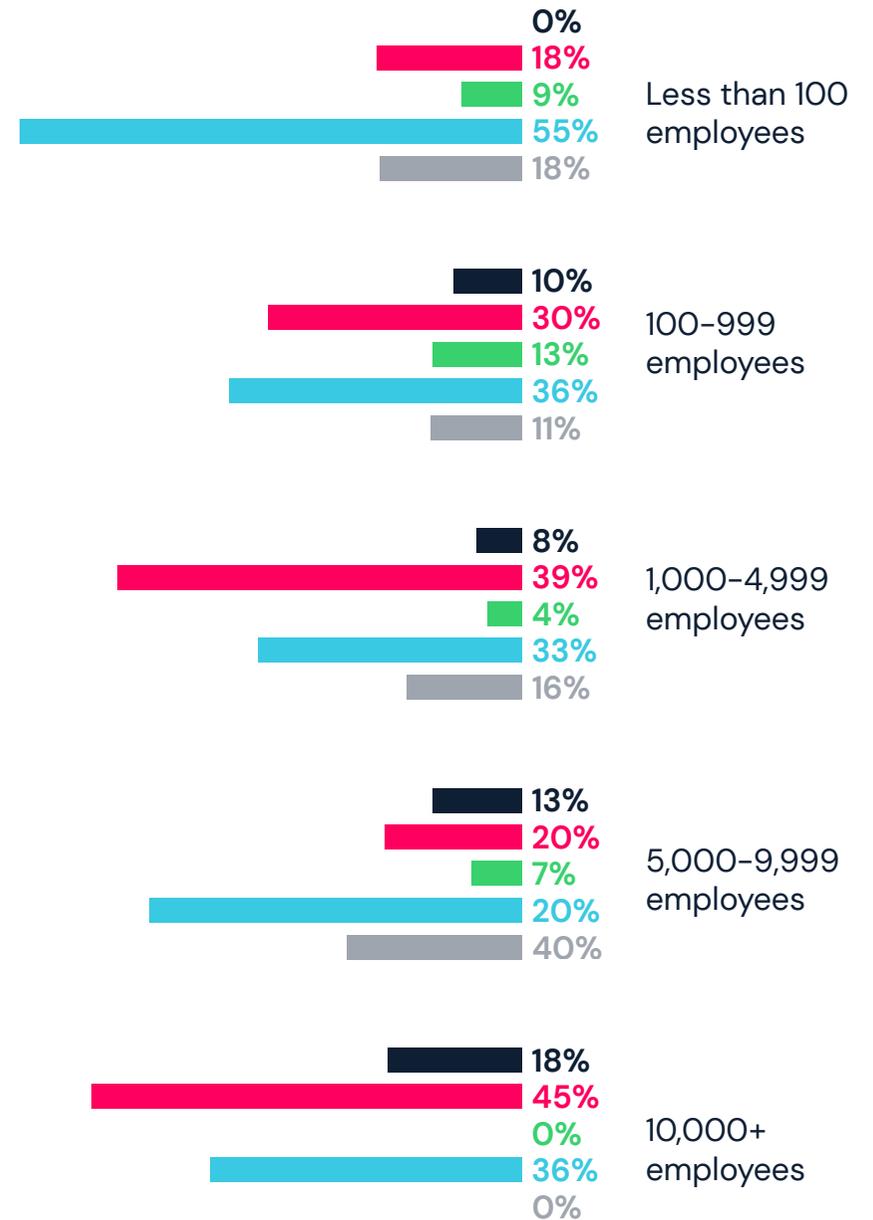Using overly complex or technical language

Mixology DIGITAL

BARRIERS TO CONVERSION

SIZE COMPARISON

For companies with less than 100 employees, overpromising and underdelivering is by far the most frustrating issue, cited by 55%. It suggests that smaller teams—often with leaner budgets and fewer safety nets—can't afford to take chances on big claims that don't come through.

Mid-sized companies still place high importance on vendors delivering what they say they will (36% in companies with 100–999 employees and 33% in companies with 1,000–4,999 employees), but another concern rises: too much focus on features over business needs (30% and 39% respectively). These organisations likely expect a deeper level of solution fit, not just capability showcase.

Among the largest firms (10,000+ employees), expectations are even higher. 45% cite a lack of business-centric communication, and 36% still call out overpromising, but interestingly, none cite responsiveness or overly technical language as major frustrations. These enterprise teams may be more accustomed to complexity and delays, but not to misaligned value.

Less than 100 employees
- 0%
- 18%
- 9%
- 55%
- 18%

100–999 employees
- 10%
- 30%
- 13%
- 36%
- 11%

1,000–4,999 employees
- 8%
- 39%
- 4%
- 33%
- 16%

5,000–9,999 employees
- 13%
- 20%
- 7%
- 20%
- 40%

10,000+ employees
- 18%
- 45%
- 0%
- 36%
- 0%

Legend:
- Failing to demonstrate ROI clearly
- Focusing too much on features instead of my business needs
- Not being responsive to inquiries or concerns
- Overpromising and underdelivering
- Using overly complex or technical language

Mixology DIGITAL

BARRIERS TO CONVERSION

OVERVIEW

How could vendors make the buying process easier for you?

34% want clearer pricing and packaging, 23% said they want more personalised recommendations, and 22% wish vendors would speed up and simplify the proposal process. The ask is simple: understand my needs, cut the admin, and help me make a decision.

If your sales process is slow, unclear, or one-size-fits-all, you're not making life easier for buyers, you're making it harder to say yes.

Only 6% of IT buyers said vendors should include a trial or risk-free option, suggesting that access isn't the barrier, clarity is.

15%
Communicate more frequently and effectively

6%
Include a trial or risk-free option

34%
Offer clearer pricing or packaging options

23%
Provide more personalised recommendations

22%
Simplify and speed up the proposal process

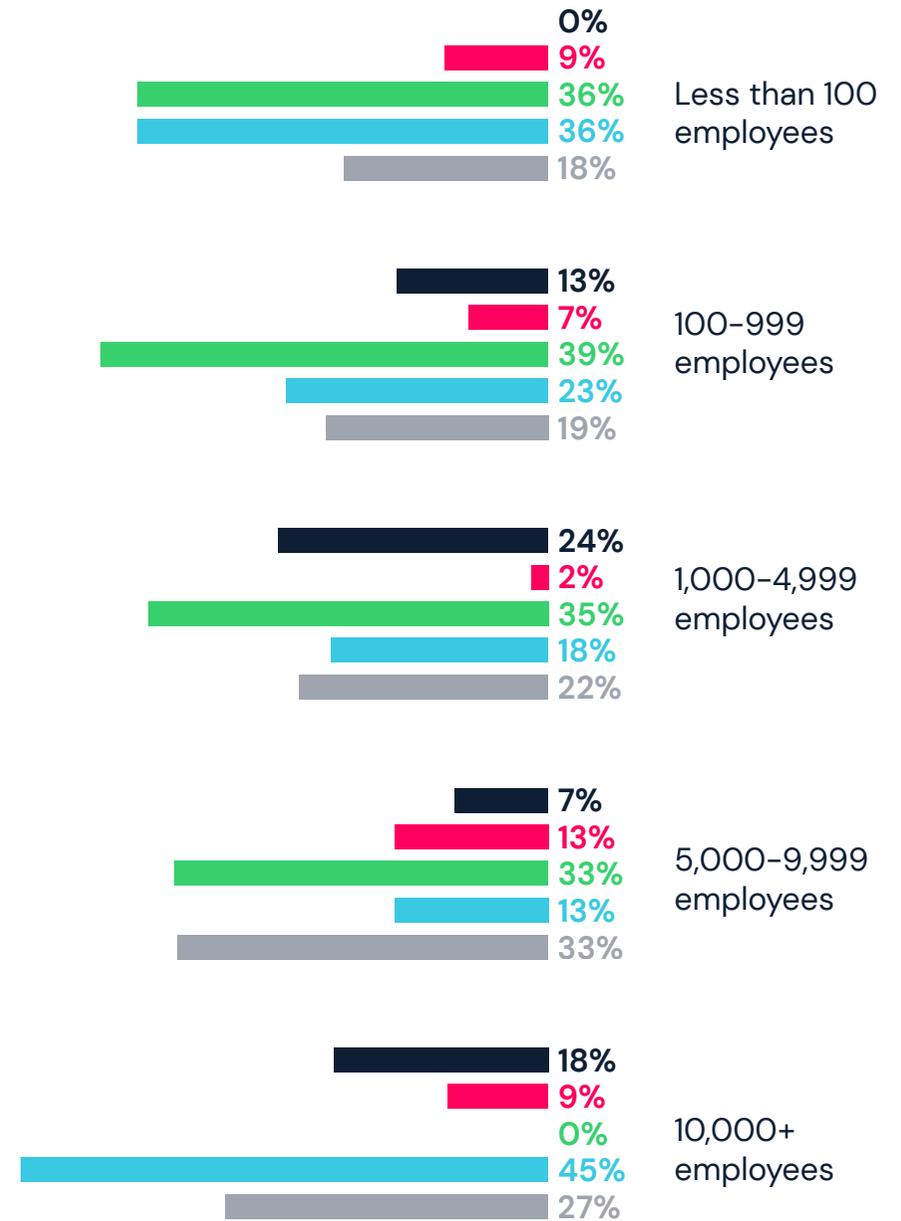**Mixology** DIGITAL

BARRIERS TO CONVERSION

SIZE COMPARISON

Pricing clarity is a consistent demand across all segments, but beyond that, buyer needs shift noticeably as company size increases.

Smaller companies (under 1,000 employees) prioritise clearer packaging and more personalised recommendations, likely reflecting a need for guidance and reassurance when internal resources are limited.

In contrast, mid-sized firms (1,000–4,999) want vendors to simplify and speed up the proposal process (22%) and communicate more effectively (24%). At this scale, buyers are looking for efficiency and responsiveness, not just persuasion.

Enterprise companies with more than 10,000+ employees want more personalised recommendations (45%), far more than any other group. They're not asking vendors to move faster or talk more; they're asking them to show up with tailored, informed solutions that prove they understand the business from the outset.

Less than 100 employees
- 0%
- 9%
- 36%
- 36%
- 18%

100–999 employees
- 13%
- 7%
- 39%
- 23%
- 19%

1,000–4,999 employees
- 24%
- 2%
- 35%
- 18%
- 22%

5,000–9,999 employees
- 7%
- 13%
- 33%
- 13%
- 33%

10,000+ employees
- 18%
- 9%
- 0%
- 45%
- 27%

Legend:
- Communicate more frequently and effectively
- Include a trial or risk-free option
- Offer clearer pricing or packaging options
- Provide more personalised recommendations
- Simplify and speed up the proposal process

Mixology DIGITAL

Emerging trends

Mixology
DIGITAL
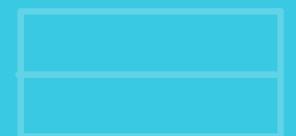
How has your buying process changed in the past 2 years? (Tick all that apply)

Buyers are becoming more self-sufficient and strategic. Nearly two-thirds (62%) now rely more heavily on digital research and tools, signalling a clear shift towards independent exploration before engaging with vendors.

At the same time, buying decisions are becoming more collaborative. 50% said they involve more stakeholders than before. This reflects not only the growing complexity of B2B purchases but also a need to build consensus internally.

Almost half of respondents (49%) have shifted their focus from cost to ROI, highlighting the need for clear, measurable outcomes.

50%

I involve more stakeholders in the process

62%

I rely more on digital research and tools

49%

I've shifted to focusing on ROI and value over price

21%

My process hasn't changed significantly

Mixology DIGITAL

How likely are you to trust AI or automated tools in guiding you through a buying journey?

Over half of buyers (51%) say they're very likely to trust AI or automation if it's relevant to their needs — a clear vote of confidence in intelligent tools that streamline decision-making.

However, 42% still prefer human guidance, even if they're open to automation. This suggests that while AI can support the journey, it shouldn't replace the personal element entirely.

Only 7% avoid using AI outright, indicating that for most buyers, the opportunity lies in balance; blending relevance and efficiency with reassurance and expertise.

93% of IT buyers said they trust AI and automated tools to help with the buying process.

51%
Very likely—I trust AI as long as it's relevant

42%
Somewhat likely—I'm open to it, but I prefer human guidance

1%
Not likely at all

6%
Not very likely—I don't rely on AI for these decisions

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How much does sustainability or a brand's values influence your decisions?

Sustainability and ethical brand values are not fringe concerns; they're shaping decision-making for the majority of IT buyers. Over half (53%) say these factors are a major consideration, while another 38% acknowledge them as important, though not a top priority.

Only a small proportion (10%) are indifferent or dismissive, reinforcing that for most buyers, alignment on values isn't just a nice-to-have; it's a meaningful part of vendor evaluation. Brands that ignore ESG, DEI, or ethical positioning risk falling out of favour, even when other criteria are met.

53% of IT buyers say that sustainability and brand values significantly influence purchasing decisions.

53%
A significant influence—it's a major consideration for me

38%
Some influence—it's a factor, but not a top priority

4%
Little to no influence

6%
Neutral—I'm indifferent about sustainability or values

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5 key takeaways for B2B tech vendors

1. Buyers are researching earlier — and longer

Insight: Tech buyers start their journey well before they engage with sales, often spending months exploring options. They want educational and trusted content at the research stage.

Action: Diversify content syndication across email and programmatic ads to boost the chance of early-stage buyers discovering your thought leadership before they shortlist vendors.

2. Relevance beats reach

Insight: Buyers tune out generic campaigns. They engage with content that's role-specific, industry-relevant, and aligned to their stage in the journey.

Action: Use intent-led segmentation and targeting to achieve relevance at scale, aligning content and channels to buyer roles, information needs, and journey stages.

3. Intent signals accelerate pipeline

Insight: Buying committees leave digital breadcrumbs — webinar sign-ups, keyword searches, and content downloads — that reveal purchase intent. Vendors who act on these signals move prospects faster through the funnel.

Action: Activate intent-backed targeting across channels to engage buyers when their interest peaks, guiding them seamlessly from mid-funnel research into sales conversations.

4. Trust is the new differentiator

Insight: Buyers want proof and authenticity. They're wary of overpromises and expect clear, data-backed insights.

Action: Deliver deep campaign intelligence alongside sales-ready leads who've already engaged with your content. This empowers go-to-market teams to personalise follow-up, build credibility, and earn buyer trust.

5. Multichannel consistency wins attention

Insight: No single channel moves the needle. Buyers consume across formats — from LinkedIn posts to podcasts, CTV, and case study PDFs. Consistency across touchpoints signals authority.

Action: Run integrated syndication programmes that combine programmatic (video, audio, display), Solus email, and intent-led email marketing. Weekly reporting ensures optimisation across channels to maximise impact.

Learn how we support vendors to translate this insight into high performing campaigns.

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Methodology

This report is based on original research conducted by Mixology Digital in 2025, drawing on survey responses from 511 B2B buyers involved in researching, recommending, or approving new products and services. Of these respondents just under a third work within IT functions. Their responses form the basis of this Tech Edition.

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