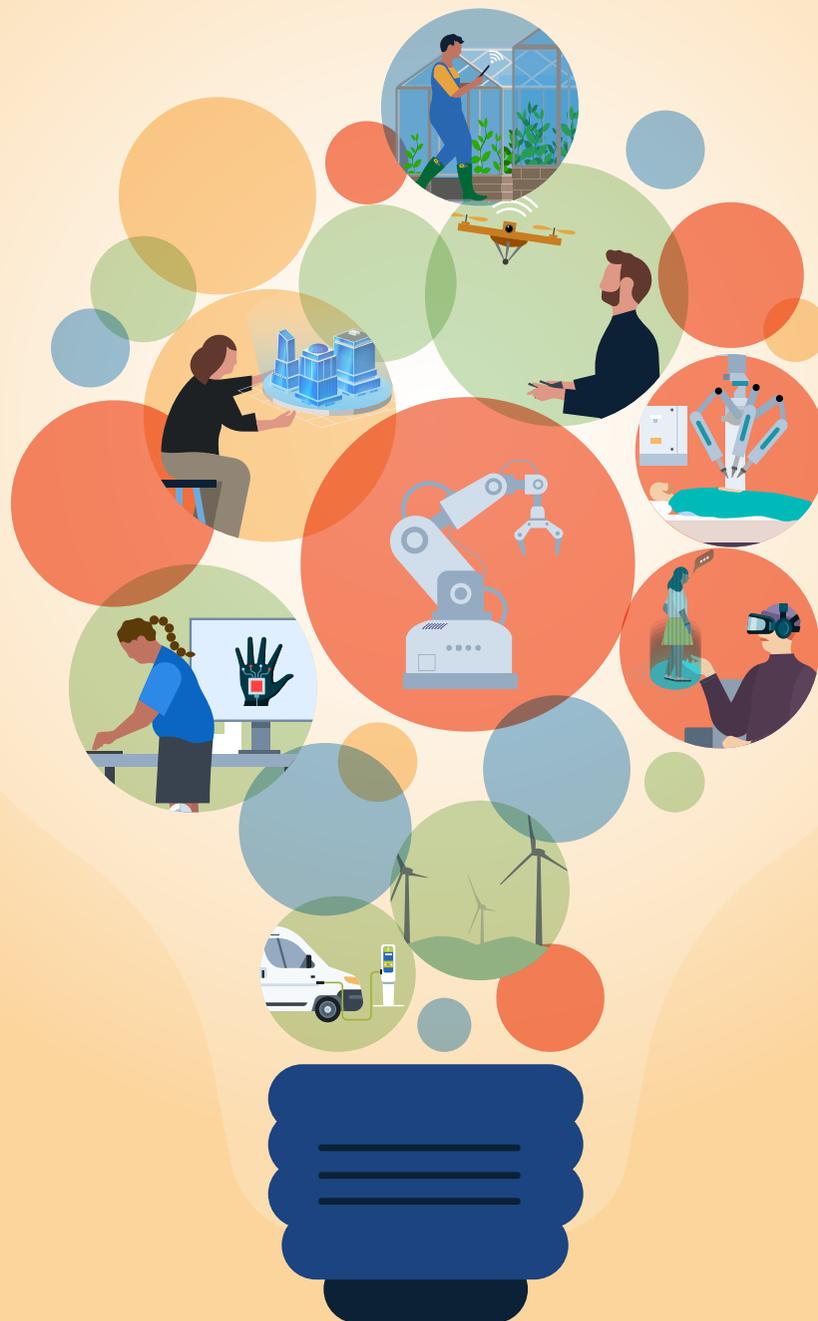


Brand to Buyer

Building B2B technology brands that shine

A LinkedIn B2B Technology and Marketing Buying Survey – APAC 22/23



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B2B marketing. It's got a job to do. It's functional. It's got no business getting creative. Really?

Received wisdom is yesterday's thinking. Just ask B2B buyers. Which is exactly what we've done. We wanted to find out more about whether current B2B technology marketing is hitting the mark with buyers. Does a focus on features and benefits motivate their purchase decisions, or are they looking for something different?

This extensive survey of technology decision makers and marketers certainly revealed a few surprises. While some leading technology companies have captured the imagination of buyers, many are yet to push the creativity button. Marketers have the green light to up their game, build a more engaging brand and take advantage of growth trends in the industry.

That means being more distinctive, more memorable and better understood. Technology marketers need to build brands that are relatable to the ever-broadening spectrum of technology buyers – from the IT department to line-of-business users. Brands that show clearly why investing in their technology can help buyers achieve their strategic goals. Brands that are visible in the places where buyers look for information.

Digital is now mandatory, but the broader mass market vehicles should not be forgotten. This is particularly

relevant when communicating the bigger brand picture and broadening brand appeal.

And marketers shouldn't talk only to prospective customers. It's now just as important to seek out external advocates and ensure that they're kept informed. They've become an increasingly powerful influence in the decision-making process.

A B2B brand can be so much more than the sum of its products. We found that what technology buyers value includes the whole vendor story. This ranges from their capabilities and their people, to their wider corporate values and reputation as an employer. Marketers who demonstrate aligned values can have a positive impact on purchase decisions.

So, we say, why be bound by the traditional, functional view of how B2B marketing should be done? Now's the time to elevate B2B technology brands and their marketing to increase engagement and drive sales.

Welcome to the age of brilliant B2B technology brands.



Jim Habig
VP of Marketing,
LinkedIn Marketing Solutions

Our approach

The LinkedIn B2B Technology Buyer and Marketer survey, in association with B2B International, includes insights from

2,095

technology decision makers (technology buyers) and

2,124

senior client and agency-side marketing professionals (technology marketers) in North America, Latin America, Europe, Middle East, Africa and Asia-Pacific.

Of these,

23%

of respondents were from the APAC region.

For more details, please see the *Survey respondents and methodology* section on page 30.

01



As business' dependence on technology continues to increase exponentially, today's technology buyers find themselves at the center of the corporate stage.

IT is no longer simply a support function. It now underpins the entire business, from digital sales channels to digital supply chains – and all the systems and processes in between.

The fact that IT departments' profile has been growing, means that they've been under enormous pressure to make the right investment choices. And despite recent economic shifts and the prospect of a budget squeeze, technology buyers remain central to many projects that are shaping the enterprise of the future, spanning digital transformation, automation, big data, artificial intelligence and beyond.

This report explores the world of today's technology buyers, the challenges they face, and the opportunities that this presents for technology vendors. It also looks at how technology marketing is evolving to better meet buyers' needs.

The insights we've uncovered will help marketers to build stronger B2B brands through a better understanding of the buyers that they're marketing to. We also shed light on what makes a great B2B technology brand, and what tactics marketers can use to drive their brand to greater success.

Most importantly, it highlights **five key themes that will help marketers create a stronger B2B technology brand.**



02

Themes uncovered

THEME 1

Get creative with your content strategy

Cutting through means adding imagination.



THEME 2

Cheer on branding in its long-term race

Building a brilliant brand means seeing beyond immediate returns.



THEME 3

Know that a good employer signals a great brand

Getting buyers to buy means demonstrating shared values.



THEME 4

Be where your customers are

Being listened to by buyers means sharing the same destinations.



THEME 5

Influence the external influencers

Having buyers pay attention means having the ear of advocates.



03



Seeing inside today's technology buyer world

The success of any business today depends on its technology. With the technology marketplace getting crowded and competitive, the role of the technology buyer is becoming increasingly complicated.

For technology marketers, stepping into the shoes of technology buyers can be extremely helpful. By meeting buyers at the right place, at the right time, with the right message, marketers can build a strong foundation between technology buyers and technology vendors.



Over the course of my career, marketing has always had one reason to exist – and that is to bring the customer inside the business. None of that's changed – but what has changed is the technology we have available to understand our customers, and the acceleration in the pace of change. As marketing leaders, we have to understand that acceleration. It involves the way humans are, the way that society evolves, and the way that technology is driving that evolution.”



Alexis Oger
Vice President – EMEA
Marketing, Dell Technologies

Organizations view technology as a source of growth

Our research comes off a 12-month period that's seen technology businesses continue to invest in digital transformation and reshape working practices. Technology buyer budgets and headcounts have grown significantly.

Buying budgets increased across nearly all product categories, with the most significant increases occurring in enterprise software for data centers where 82% of buyers report an increase. When comparing SMBs with their bigger Enterprise counterparts, we see some variances in budget. The most drastic being for IT consultancy services, where 49% of Enterprises significantly increased their budget while only 29% of SMBs did the same.

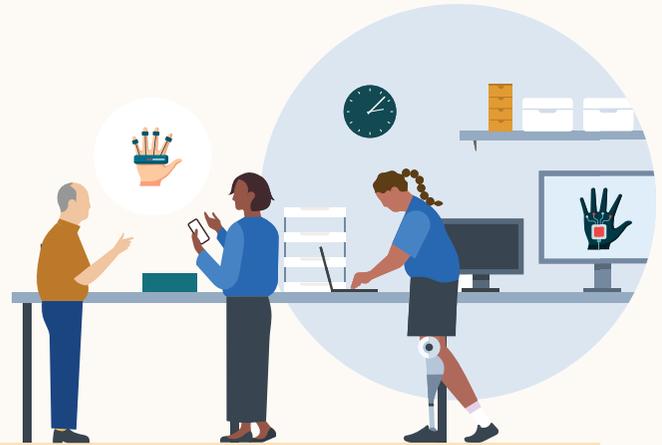
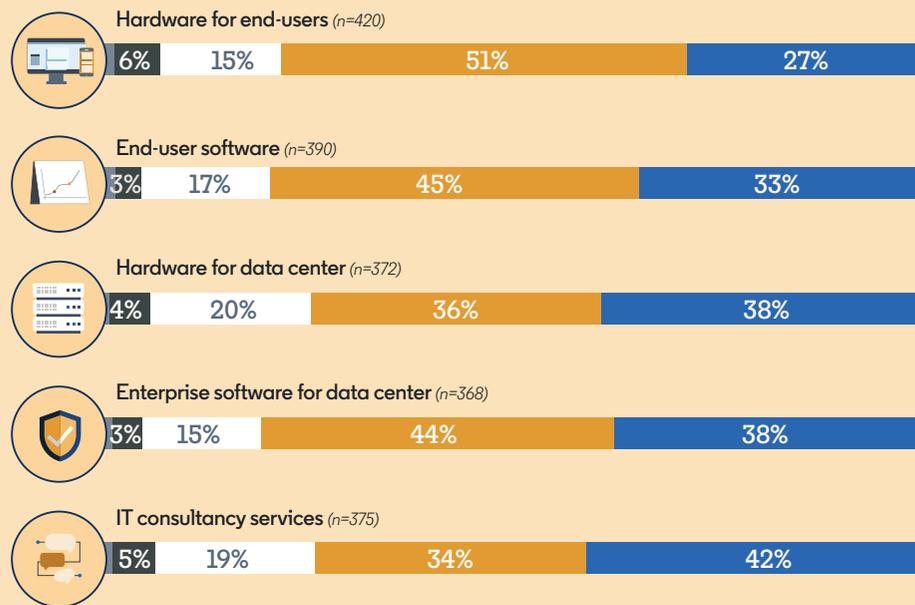


Figure 1.
Tech buying budget

How has your team's technology buying budget changed in the past 12 months for each of the following categories?

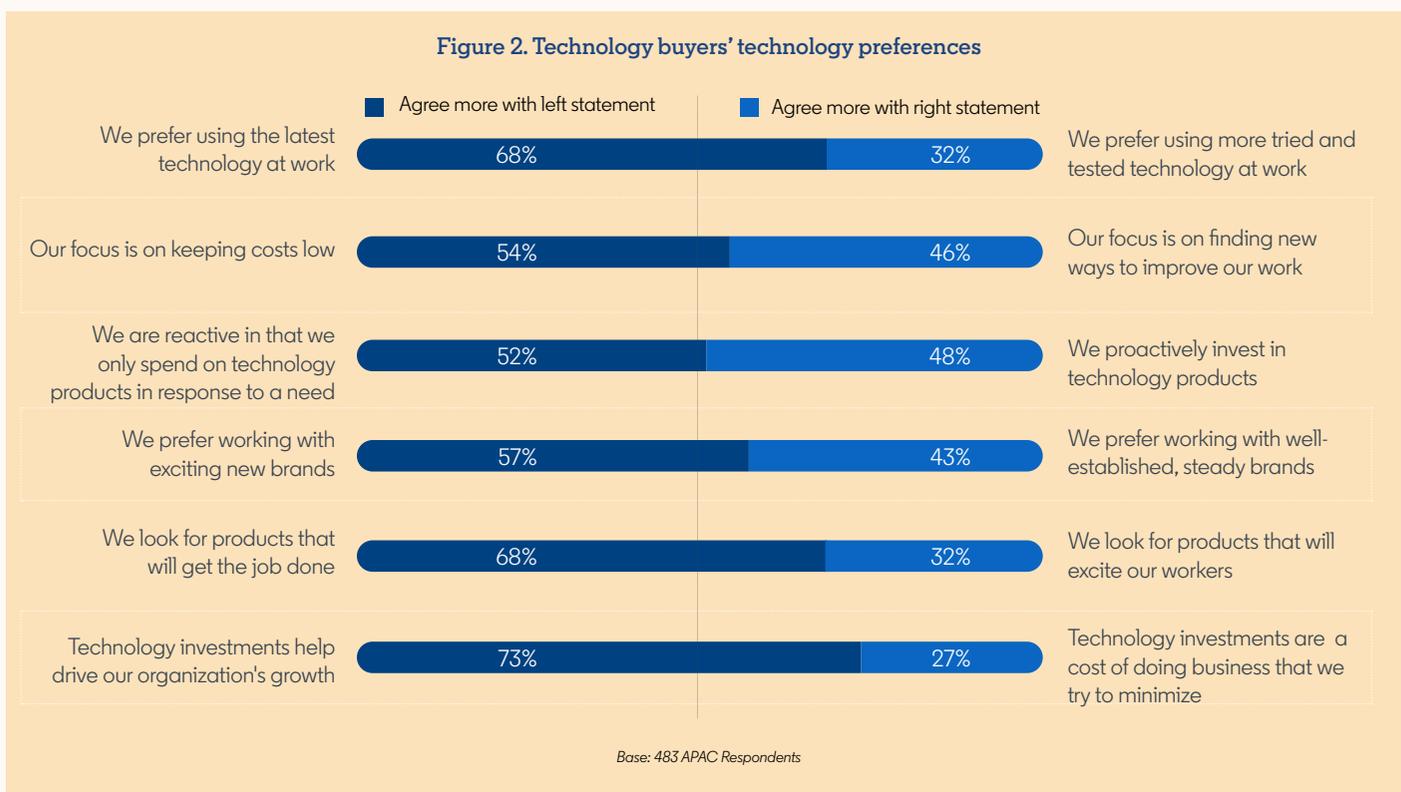
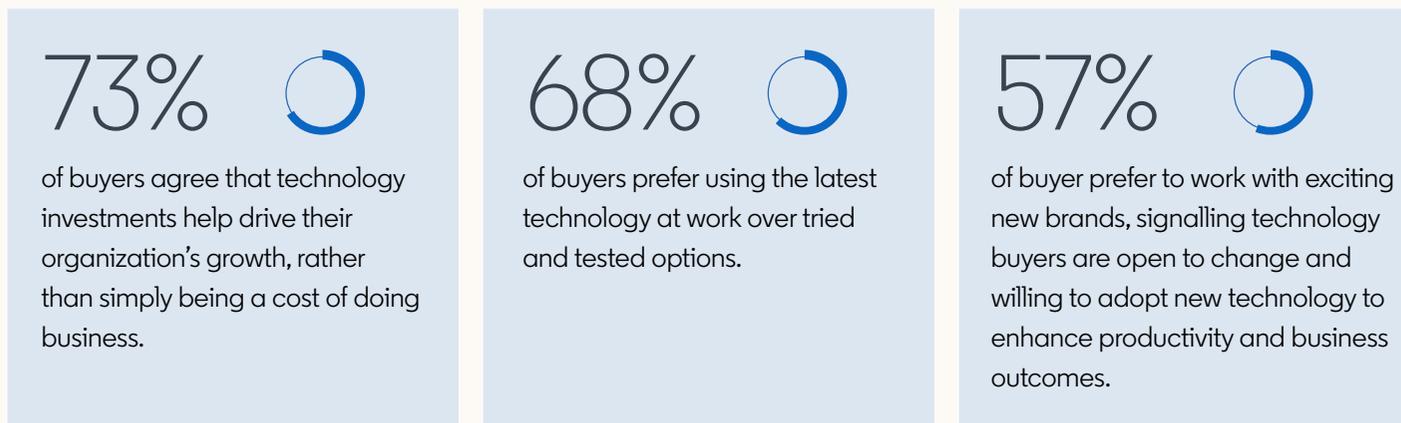
- Significantly increased
- Slightly increased
- No change
- Slightly decreased
- Significantly decreased

Base: Varies APAC Tech. Buyers



At the same time, over half of technology buyers (59%) saw their team headcount increase over the last 12 months, particularly within the Enterprise segment and the end-user software industry.

The year ahead is likely to be significantly more challenging. But there are grounds for being optimistic that technology spending will prove more resilient than other investments. Organizations now overwhelmingly see technology as a source of growth, rather than merely as an operating cost. They are more focused on finding ways to improve their performance than on keeping costs low.



Today's technology buyers view adoption of new technologies as a strategic priority and a potential source of competitive advantage. New technologies are seen as enhancing innovation, increasing operational efficiency, and delivering a differentiated customer experience.

Cloud-native platforms and cybersecurity are two areas that feature high on the list of buyers' strategic priorities, highlighted by 32% and 31% respectively.




The number one priority for technology buyers over the next one to two years will be **5G**, as highlighted by 33% of respondents.



Identifying issues: competition, cost and workforce

Cost concerns and competitive pressures rate high on the list of challenges faced by buyers when purchasing new technology.

34%



highlighted 'Getting the right products and services while keeping our costs low' as one of their most common challenges.

33%



said 'Having the right technology to stay ahead of the market' is a challenge.

Workforce-related issues also featured strongly.

Following the switch to hybrid working, the need to support employees with the right technology remains front-of-mind.

59%



of buyers said that the shift to remote/hybrid work has had a noticeable impact on how they purchase technology.

35%



buyers cited 'Providing our workforce with the most up-to-date technology products and services' as the most significant challenge.

Coping with increased levels of employee churn is another major issue.

79%

of buyers are concerned by their organization's ability to meet existing and emerging internal challenges resulting from staff turnover and changing employee expectations.



Figure 3. Technology buyer top challenges when purchasing new technology



Base: 483 APAC Respondents

Finding products that are easy to deploy is a significantly greater challenge for technology buyers at small companies, but less so for those at mid-market and enterprise level. This aligns with expectations around the level of IT resourcing in these sizes of organizations.

Buyers also face their own departmental issues. When asked which challenges had the biggest impact on their team's ability to meet its goals and objectives, they highlighted two in particular. 'Employees taking on dramatically new roles and responsibilities' was cited by 49%, and 'Needing to do more with fewer resources' by 39%.

There's a clear and positive takeaway for B2B vendor marketers here. The more that they can demonstrate to buyers how technology increases competitive edge – as well as relieving cost concerns and employee churn while enabling more workforce productivity – the more they can drive sales.

04



Technology marketing is adapting to change

The B2B technology market has already been impacted by changes in the buyer landscape. These include a growing number of diverse internal stakeholders, increased competition for buyer attention, and evolving business priorities.

Correspondingly, the marketers' landscape is also evolving. We can now see clear ways in which marketers can better align their spending priorities with buyers' needs.

Big budgets could be shrinking

The need for technology grew during the pandemic, as it offered the resiliency and competitive edge businesses needed. This led to increased marketing budgets and a growing need for skilled marketing teams. This continued as the industry emerged from the pandemic, with tech marketers reporting significant increases in budgets and headcount in the 12 months to June 2022.

30%

budget increase reported by marketers, on average.

31%

YoY average budget increase reported by software for end users.



42%



average budget increase was reported by marketers in Singapore (42.9%) and India (41.9%).

27%



average budget increase was reported by marketers in Australia and New Zealand.

63%

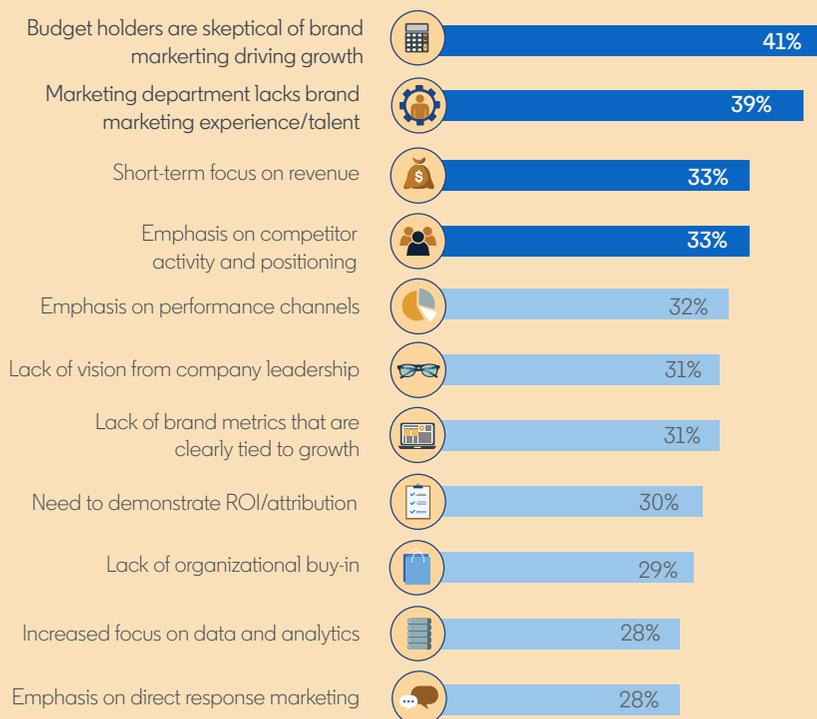


reported a headcount increase in the 12 months to June 2022.

Looking ahead to a potential reversal of the trends towards increased budgets, we asked marketers why they may face challenges in securing budget in the future, particularly for brand marketing. A number of reasons were cited.

At 41%, the most common issue reported was budget holders' skepticism of the ability of brand marketing to drive growth, followed by 39% who cited lack of experience/ talent in the marketing department.

Figure 4. Primary challenges to securing budget for brand marketing investments



Base: 485 APAC Respondents

Spend priorities are shifting

Over the last 12 months, clear shifts in areas of investment have emerged as B2B technology marketers attempt to adapt to changing buyer behaviors.

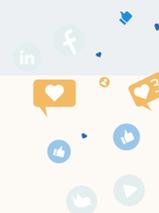
Email campaigns and social media are fast becoming the dominant areas of spend, consuming an increasing proportion of marketing budget from both vendors and agency marketers.

28%



of vendor marketers said they've substantially increased spend on email campaigns over the last 12 months – the most of any category.

24%



of vendor marketers said they substantially increased spend on social media advertising.

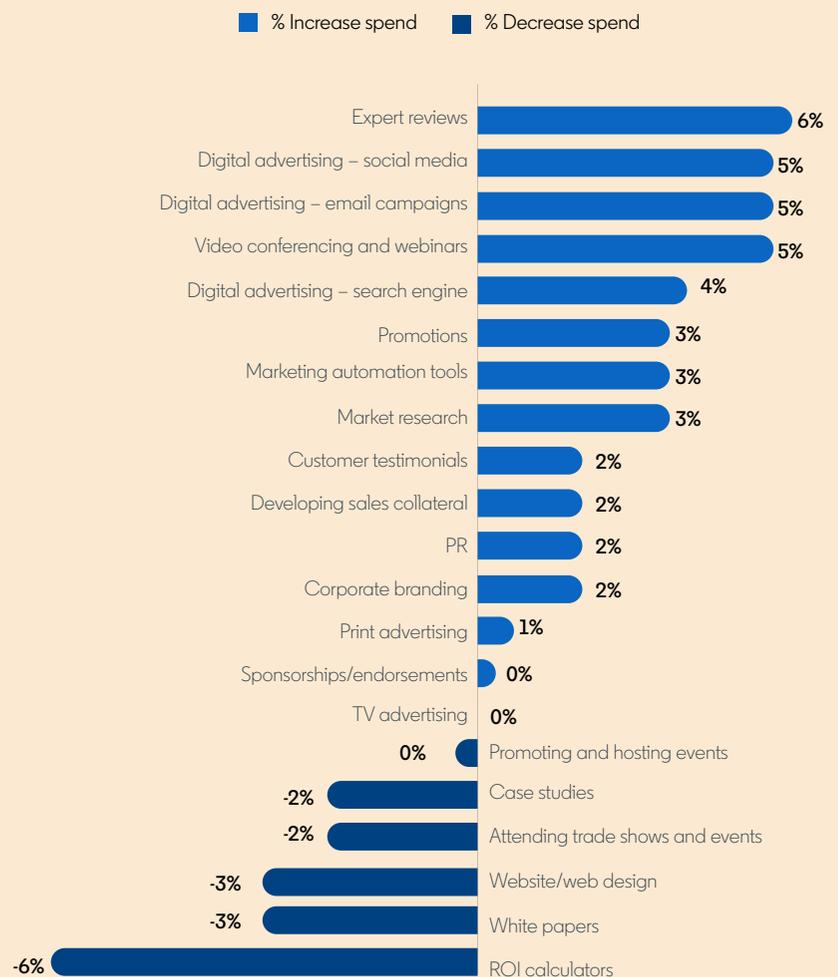
Here we begin to see a disconnect between marketers and buyers. While social media is a top source of information cited by APAC buyers, vendor emails rank lower on their list. Given marketers' spending increase in email activity, there's a worrying lack of alignment.

And when we asked marketers where they were mainly focusing their activities, expert reviews ranked first out of all the spend categories. Social media advertising and marketing automation tools tied for second.

As technology marketers support their increasingly digital activities by upping their use of marketing automation tools, these now account for a growing proportion of marketing budgets. When asked to identify the marketing activities that account for the largest proportion of their budgets, 29% of client-side marketers ranked automation tools in the top 5. This places it second overall, out of twenty activities.

It's no surprise that, while some marketing activities are attracting increased investment, others are inevitably declining. Areas where more marketers reported declining spend than those reporting increases include website/web design (-3%), white papers (-3%), and ROI calculators (-6%).

Figure 5. Marketers' budget spend changes over the past 12 months
Net % increase spend vs. % decrease spend



Base: 315 APAC Client-side Marketers

And here's another interesting lack of alignment. Website and web design is way down the list of budgeted activities for technology marketers, and its share of budget is declining. But vendor websites are ranked as an important source for technology buyers to learn about vendor offerings (ranked joint first along with social media and external consultants).

Operating models are evolving

Marketing operating models and resourcing strategies are also evolving, as evidenced by an increasing reliance on external resources and a re-evaluation of existing agency relationships.

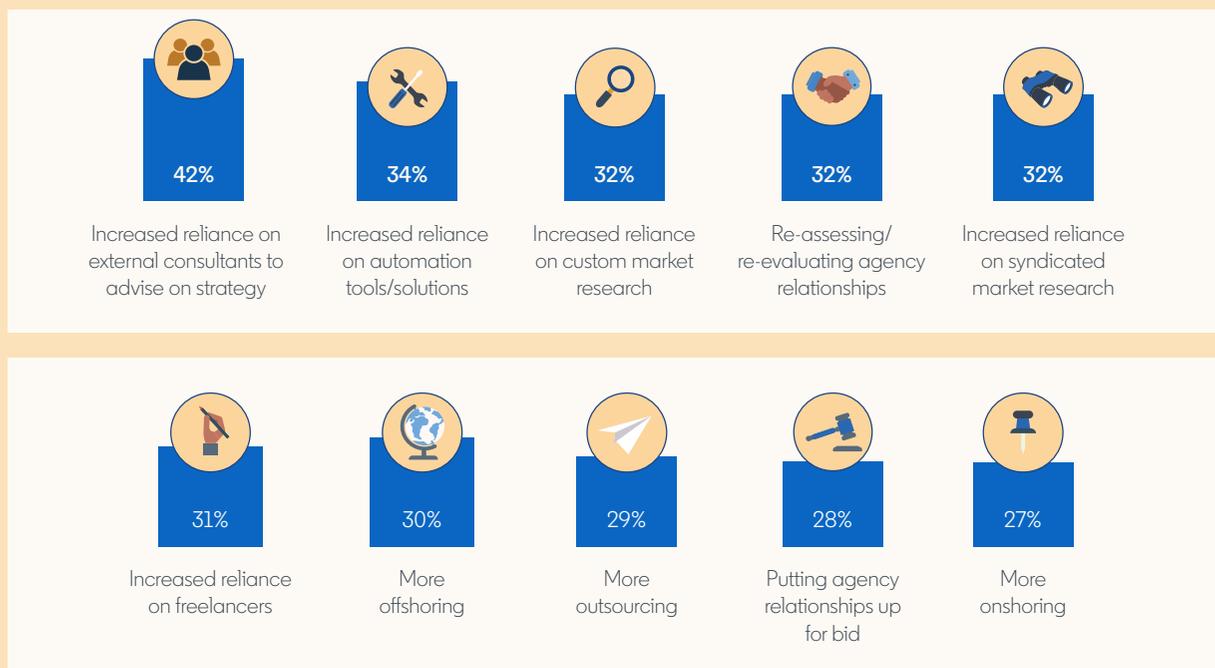


84%

of marketers have increased reliance on outsourced services and manpower.

In the 12 months to June 2022, we found 42% of marketers increased reliance on external consultants to advise on strategy, and 32% of marketers increased reliance on freelancers. We also saw that 32% of marketers say they are reassessing their agency relationships. These marketers are not necessarily looking for entirely new relationships, but are reconsidering or renegotiating their current relationships.

Figure 6. Marketing activity shifts over the past 12 months

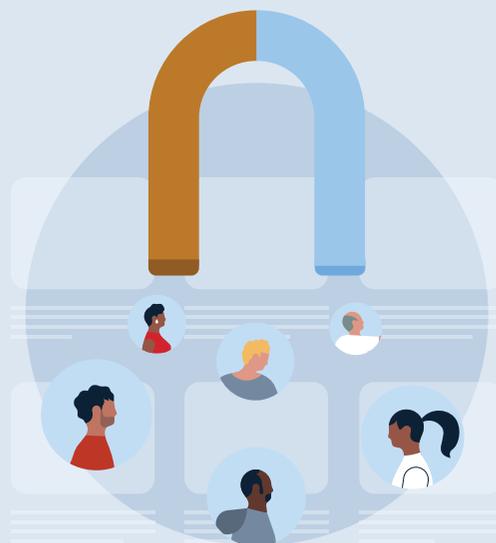


Base: 368 APAC Client-side Marketers

Given the readjustments in the preferred marketing mix covered in the previous section, it seems likely that some of this evolution in operating models reflects the changing skill sets that marketers need to execute their strategies. But it could also reflect the challenges they face given the high rates of staff turnover over the last couple of years.

A massive
97%

of marketers say they are concerned about their organization's ability to meet the internal challenges arising from employee churn and changing employee expectations.



Also, the criteria of 'Employees taking on dramatically new roles and responsibilities' and 'More time and resources spent on training' were identified as the issues which have the biggest impact on their team's ability to meet its goals and objectives.

With so much uncertainty surrounding employee numbers and duties, and the need to quickly adapt skill sets as marketing technology develops, marketing departments need to keep an open mind towards

the way they operate to continue to hit their goals. As employees seek newer challenges, further investment in upskilling can help retain valuable talent.

In fact, we can already see technology vendors starting to take action. The most popular ways they have been improving employee workplaces are through increasing career advancement opportunities, reducing working hours, and making commitments to diversity, equality, and inclusion.



05

Building a brilliant B2B technology brand



THEME 1

Get creative with your content strategy

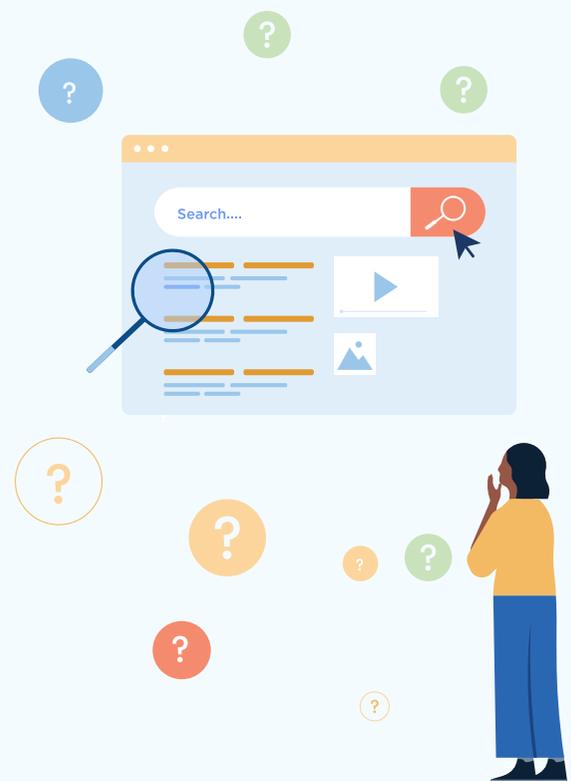


What buyers expect from technology marketers

Many buyers feel that the technology vendors' marketing messages are not appropriately targeted and do not demonstrate how they will solve buyers' problems.

The biggest challenge facing technology buyers is 'Providing our workforce with the most up-to-date technology products and services'. With abundant choices in the marketplace, they would clearly benefit from marketing that speaks to their challenges and addresses their needs.

Buyers also don't seem hugely impressed with vendors' marketing efforts. When questioned about whether vendor marketing was answering their questions or providing compelling messages, technology buyers are generally underwhelmed.



70%

of buyers feel that B2B advertising is too vague to be relevant to their business.

53%

of buyers feel that ads do not always have a clear message.

52%

of buyers who feel that ads are not always useful and informative.

For technology marketers, this should ring alarm bells that much of their advertising doesn't seem to be helpful enough to decision makers and buyers.



Like many B2B technology brands, this year we had huge growth targets and limited budget. We knew we couldn't just rely on paid media to hit these targets, we had to get creative. So we partnered with Hardhat and produced our award-winning campaign: [Next Time, DocuSign](#). We saw results almost immediately, and the campaign impacted both top- and bottom-of-funnel metrics. We saw 3.7m views (and counting), a 44% increase in web traffic quarter on quarter, and 21,000 new DocuSign accounts. On LinkedIn, we saw 2.79x higher CTR than the industry benchmark and a 27% video completion rate, which is over 3.5x greater than the LinkedIn industry benchmark. We truly believe investment in brand today is an investment in sales tomorrow.”



Andrea Dixon

Head of Marketing – Asia-Pacific, DocuSign

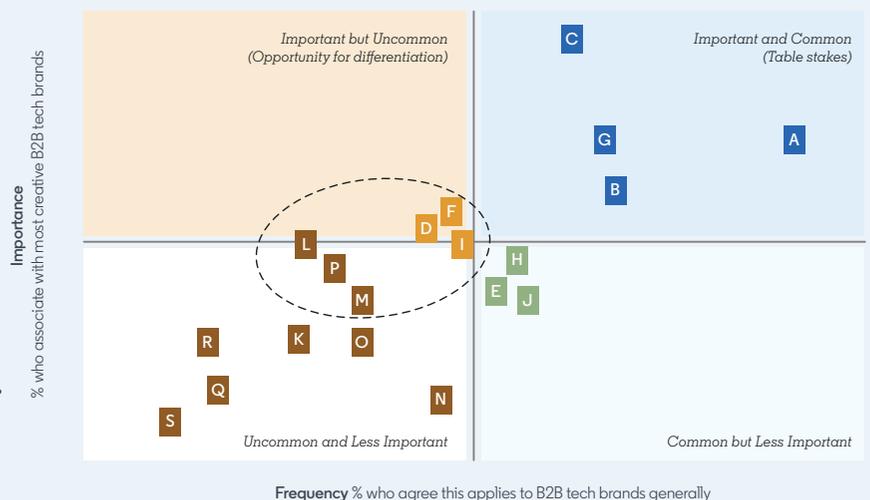
Buyers value clarity and useful information

Technology buyers told us that content needs to be informative and clear – and this is where B2B marketers are mostly getting it right. But our research also shows the importance of content being relevant and credible – and here there is some room for improvement. It's also significant to note that, while factual and clear information is undoubtedly important, it will not make brands stand out. B2B marketers need to elevate their brand by offering something more attention-grabbing that really speaks to buyers' needs.

Figure 7.
Importance vs. prevalence of attributes for unlocking marketing creativity

Attributes in order of importance

A	Understand what ads are trying to sell	K	Can remember the brand name of the advertiser after
B	Ads are useful/informative	L	Ads demonstrate how their solutions will solve my organization's problems
C	Ads have a clear message	M	Ads set up the right expectations for how organization experiences the product
D	Ads are relevant to me	N	Share ads with other people on the buying committee
E	Can recognize the brand running the ad	O	Ads are appropriately targeted towards me
F	Ads deliver a credible message	P	Ads are memorable
G	Ads catch and hold my attention	Q	Can identify the protagonists in ads
H	Ads demonstrate a good understanding of organization's problems	R	Ads are entertaining
I	Ads are inspiring	S	Other people on the buying committee have shared ads with me
J	The buying committee talks about ads seen when making purchase decisions		



Who tops the creative B2B charts?

So, if technology buyers are not enamored with vendors' marketing efforts, what does it take to impress them? When we asked buyers the open-ended question of which B2B technology brands have the most creative approach, it's interesting to note that there's an overlap between buyers and marketers. Both groups placed Google, Amazon, and Microsoft as being ahead of the field in their choice of the top five brands.

For marketers, the key question is why buyers ranked these brands so highly? What can marketers learn about brand attributes that appeal to buyers?

Buyers cited 'Creative-risk taking and novelty' and 'Leveraging brand power and popularity' as stand-out values for three of their top five brands: Amazon, Microsoft and IBM. Overall, these were the attributes mentioned the most by buyers as their reason for giving a brand a high ranking.

Buyers also cited 'Speaks to customer needs/experience' as a significant factor in the success of Google and Amazon.

Clearly, marketers have an opportunity to gain more traction with buyers by appreciating the importance they place on brand popularity, engagement and innovation when evaluating suppliers.



We shouldn't forget that B2B buyers are only humans at the end of the day. They don't want to be bored with dry content, they want to be entertained. From our experience, we can stick out with more creative promotional material, but overall, there are great B2B companies to get inspired by. We have a dedicated channel in our team in which everybody posts their findings."



Britta Kristin Agel
Director of Global Demand
Generation Marketing, Spryker

Demonstrate the ‘why’ as well as the ‘how’

While clear, factual, product-based content is undoubtedly important to technology buyers, creating a strong B2B brand also requires something more distinctive. And there are ways that technology brands can deliver content strategies that are not only relevant and helpful, but also creative.



One way to do this is through including data-driven thought leadership as part of a successful marketing strategy. It’s an approach that gives marketers the opportunity to offer distinctive points of view, setting vendors apart from their competitors. At the same time, it enables marketers to offer useful insights to target buyers and build vendor credibility.



We have also seen the value that buyers place on vendors being able to talk to their needs. Making content more relevant and engaging can be achieved by moving on from simply talking about the amazing features of a vendor solution. Marketers need to tell stories that give buyers a reason to care. They need to link the vendor proposition to the issues – both organizational and individual – that keep buyers up at night. The ‘why’ matters as much as the ‘what’.



Our survey suggests that talking about how products and solutions can help buyers equip their employees to beat the competition – while also keeping costs at a minimum – is likely to capture attention.

Investing in innovative data-driven thought leadership, and more targeted sector or persona-specific messaging are important opportunities for marketers to increase perceived relevance.

THEME 2

Cheer on branding in its long-term race



Short-term impacts versus longer-term value

When evaluating the effectiveness of different marketing tactics on sales and revenue performance, some are considered effective for both short- and long-term goals. Others are thought to be better for driving either one or the other.

Corporate branding delivering on both fronts

For marketers, tactics such as testimonials, PR, sales collateral, and corporate branding are ranked equally in terms of the value they provide across the short and long term. This clearly reinforces the versatility and strategic importance of these activities in marketing campaigns of all types.

But we did find a mixed view of corporate branding across the region. While Australia/New Zealand ranked it as more important in the short term, India and Singapore considered it more impactful in the long term.

Digital marketing tactics – including website, email campaigns, and social media advertising – were all ranked higher for impact on short-term sales performance (80% of marketers). Sponsorship also fell into this category, with a slight bias towards short-term value.

Different short-term approaches, however, were favored in various regions. This reflects slight variations in buyer behaviors and channel adoption across geographies. For example, while marketers in India rated sponsorships and web/website design as the two most impactful short-term tactics (both at 97%), marketers in Australia/New Zealand favored digital advertising (email campaigns and social media at 78%), and Singapore marketers preferred customer testimonials and print advertising (both at 88%).

Conversely, market research, search engine and print were ranked top for long-term impact on growth, with 82% of marketers citing them as having significant impact. But this was not universal. While Indian marketers put promoting and hosting events at the top when it comes to long-term impact on growth, marketers in Singapore ranked video conferencing and white papers highest. And corporate branding was ranked higher in Singapore and India than in Australia/New Zealand for long term impact on growth.



What gets measured, gets budget

Marketers are increasing spend on digital tactics, particularly social media and email campaigns which are amongst the approaches that have seen the highest spend growth. This confirms that they are prioritizing the tactics that they believe create short-term value.

Interestingly, expert reviews saw the highest level of spending increase by APAC marketers, despite being ranked very low by marketers for both short- and long-term value compared to other tactics.

And while corporate branding is seen as a tactic that creates value across both the short and long term, it is only seeing a 2% increase in spend. This imbalance between a high perceived value and a rather small increase in investment could be due to the relative difficulty in demonstrating tangible value from brand building activity.

Compared to highly targeted and measurable digital campaigns, it can be difficult to secure budget for brand building.



As our business scales across key geographies, and as the needs of our customers across their digital, engineering, and cloud journeys grow, we're growing our investment in brand building.

Our business has seen amazing recognition from industry analysts, and we want to proudly tell that story across digital channels. We see a huge business opportunity for a clear, focused message about the value, passion, and progress HCLTech brings to clients. An optimized brand and digital strategy will spark that opportunity."



Dan MacAvoy

VP Digital Marketing, Product
and Revenue Ops, HCLTech

Fly the brand flag

57%

of technology buyers prefer to work with exciting new brands.

This could be due to their preference for using the latest technology to help drive organizational growth. If so, it underlines the importance of building a strong brand reputation for being innovative and exciting in order to appeal to buyers in this region.

Finances are likely to get tighter for many B2B technology companies over the next one to two years. Marketing budgets will inevitably come under pressure. There'll be a strong temptation to sacrifice activities such as brand building in favor of measurable lead generation metrics.

Yet history suggests this would be a mistake. In fact, our past research has shown that companies who continued to invest in their brand during recessions are the ones that win market share and are best placed to capitalize when the economy rebounded. It's a phenomenon we explored in LinkedIn's webinar: [All Weather Marketing](#).

The clear take away is that marketing leaders need to be evangelists during this period, educating other senior colleagues on the long-term value of brand investments. Marketers need to resist the pressure to slash spending on activities that don't have an immediate measurable impact on pipeline.



We believe in a year-on-year increase in brand building investment across the organization. This is because Whatfix is creating a new category altogether. We are looking at this opportunity as a long-term strategy to create a category, own it, and lead it."



Reetesh Pandey
Associate Director, Demand
Generation, Whatfix

THEME 3

Know that a good employer signals a great brand



The employer brand has never been so important

Another interesting finding from our survey is the fact that being perceived as a good employer is becoming an important factor in technology purchasing decisions.

A huge

91% 

of technology buyers say that working with B2B technology brands that have a very positive perception as an employer is important to them.

We found that factors influencing a buyer's perception of a vendor as an employer include:



Work-life balance
(44%)



Career advancement/
development
opportunities
(42%)



Positive impact on
community/
society
(37%)

Marketers also believe that an employer brand is a factor, with only 9% saying that being perceived as a great place to work would have no impact on a buyer.

This all suggests that buyers are looking beyond just features, pricing and service when selecting vendors. They are considering whether a vendor's values align with their own. It may also reflect buyers' desire for continuity of relationships with their suppliers, and concerns over staff churn impacting service levels. Which may in turn imply buyers' preference for working with companies who are more likely to also have similar brand values.

As strong employer brands attract the best talent – people who can deliver on the promise of technical expertise and innovation – it further showcases their commitment to instill confidence in customers.

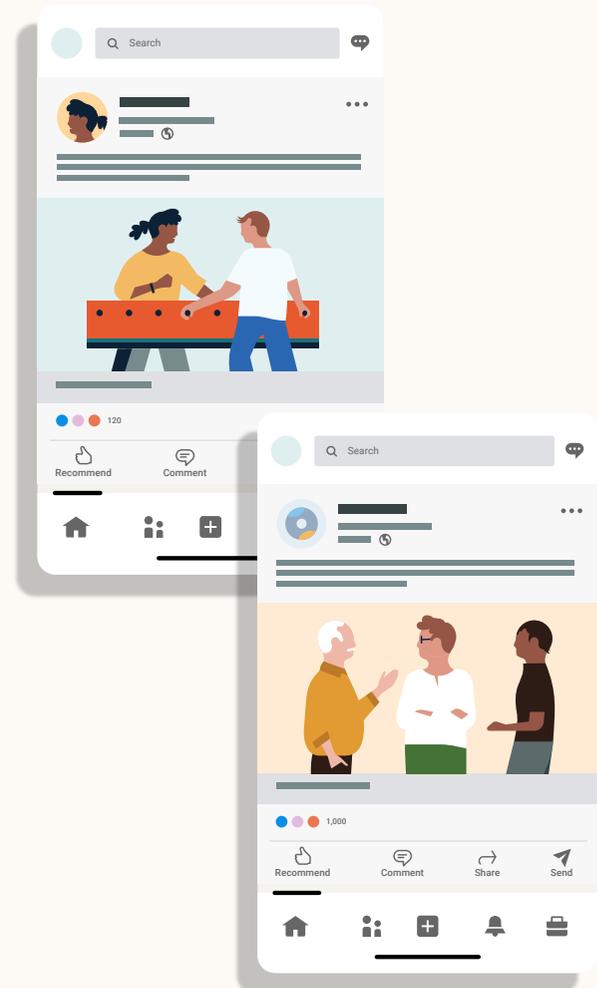
Engage in employer branding

Vendors who invest in their employer brand can not only attract top talent (a vital issue as firms cope with changing employee needs), but can also directly and positively influence buying decisions.

Marketers need to take an active role in shaping and promoting their employer brand, rather than seeing it as an issue for the HR department.

Creating a unified brand narrative, which encompasses employees as well as customers, is an important starting point.

And when promoting their employer brand – whether by showcasing employee welfare programmes or highlighting innovative working practices – marketers should also think about the audience. It's not just prospective and current employees that need to be reached, **it's also prospects, customers and influencers.**



Our employer brand is a vital part of how we tell the HCLTech story. With more than 200,000 employees worldwide, delivering for some of the biggest brands, the way we treat our people directly influences the work we do for clients, and how they see our value. That's why a major part of our new brand launch will push our employee value proposition to the forefront of marketing. We want to be the employer of choice in the technology space, so that clients benefit from the massive talent driving HCLTech."



Dan MacAvoy

VP Digital Marketing, Product and Revenue Ops, HCLTech

THEME 4

Be where your customers are



Websites and social media are strongest

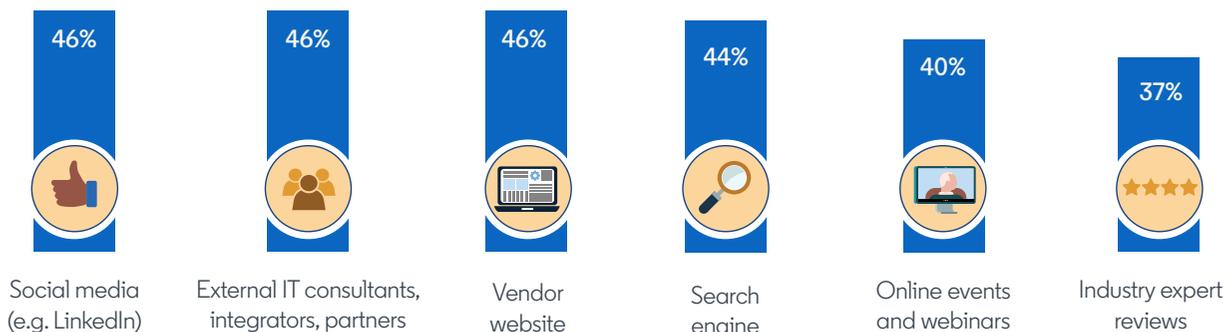
As technology has evolved it has become more ubiquitous. Entry barriers for technology adoption are lower and everyone has more choice. To continue engaging with buyers, vendors need an always-on marketing strategy.

One area where vendor marketers can up their game is in making sure their information is in the right place to be easily found by prospective customers.

Unsurprisingly, online sources are the most popular. Social media such as LinkedIn, vendor websites, and search engines are now among the most commonly used information source overall by APAC technology buyers.

And buyers – particularly in Australia, New Zealand and Singapore – ranked vendor websites as their top pick of the most useful sources of information.

Figure 8. Most used sources of information for technology buyers



It's also worth noting that some of the least popular sources of information for buyers include white papers, ROI calculators, and TV ads. Marketers may be well advised to pause for thought before devoting large chunks of their budget on media that fail to impress technology buyers, such as high-profile TV campaigns.

Don't ignore vendor websites

When looking at where to spend their budgets, it's important that marketers align with buyer behaviors. If we compare where buyers say they go for information, with where marketers are investing, we can see opportunities to optimize spend. Continuing to prioritize social media advertising and paid search makes perfect sense based on the data. But there's a case for vendors to increase investment in website design and developing targeted relationships with external IT consultants.

Figure 9.
Where buyers go for information on technology brands

	 BUYERS <i>Base: 483</i>	 CLIENT-SIDE MARKETERS <i>Base: 368</i>	 AGENCY-SIDE MARKETERS <i>Base: 117</i>
Social media (e.g. LinkedIn)/ Digital advertising – social media	1 st	2 nd	9 th
External IT consultants, integrators, partners	2 nd	N/A	N/A
Vendor website/Website/Web design	3 rd	10 th	5 th
Search engine/ Digital advertising – search engine	4 th	5 th	9 th
Online events and webinars	5 th	7 th	9 th
Industry expert reviews/expert reviews	6 th	1 st	2 nd
Emails from vendors contacts	7 th	N/A	N/A
Case studies	8 th	12 th	7 th
Automated emails from vendor/ Digital advertising – email campaigns	9 th	13 th	3 rd
In-person events and conferences/ attending trade shows and events	10 th	7 th	13 th
Vendor presentations/Pitches/ Developing sales collateral	11 th	3 rd	9 th
Customer testimonials	12 th	5 th	7 th
News articles and press releases/PR	13 th	14 th	4 th
TV advertising	14 th	4 th	1 st
ROI calculators	15 th	10 th	5 th
White papers	16 th	7 th	13 th



You've got to make sure that you're top of mind for your target audiences. If you were doing a brand campaign in the past, you used to think automatically of TV and airport billboards. But the technology available today means that we're able to be much more targeted. LinkedIn, for example, enables us to really filter down who we are trying to reach with our branding. That's made branding a more relevant option for smaller B2B companies than it ever has been."



Paige O'Neill
CMO, Sitecore

THEME 5

Influence the external influencers



External advisors are filling the marketing gap

For many technology buyers, external IT advisors (consultants, integrators, and channel partners) are also a very popular information source. They share the same ranking for most used source of information, as cited by 46% of buyers.

54%

of enterprise buyers have a higher preference for external IT advisors the most useful source of information.

We see a similar trend when assessing what are considered to be the most useful sources of information. The greatest proportion of buyers (34%) rate external IT consultants, integrators, and channel partners as the most valuable.

This shows how technology buyers can remain anonymous for much of their buying journey as they will often thoroughly research a company -using other third-party sources- before reaching out to a sales team.

Keep advocates in the know

External advisors (consultants, systems integrators and channel partners) are important to buyers, particularly in categories such as end-user software and data center software. So, it's essential that marketers have the right channel and influencer programs in place. Marketers can gain real traction by ensuring that the people who have the ear of buyers are well-informed about the vendor's proposition.

To engage these influencers, marketers also need to make sure that, as well as articulating the vendor's proposition to buyers, influencers can clearly communicate the value that the vendor can create for and with their partners.

And it's not just paid advisors and partners who should be marketed to. Any existing user of a product, service or solution can become an important advocate, exerting a big influence on the decision-making processes of their peers. To stay front-of-mind, it's vital that vendors find these advocates, encourage them, and keep them informed about products. This can be achieved via advocacy programs or user forums, where top users get privileged access to new features before general release in return for their feedback and support.

06

Building successful B2B technology brands

The technology buyers' landscape is always changing, but one thing remains clear: buyers will always be looking for better technology to support their business.

How B2B vendor marketers appeal to technology buyers ahead of the competition – through standing out from the crowd and telling the right stories on the right channels – is key to becoming and remaining a winning B2B technology brand.

Five key lessons for marketers to accelerate brands from basic to brilliant



THEME 1

Get creative with your content strategy

Understanding the evolving challenges that buyers face has always mattered. But today, achieving impact means not just speaking to those challenges. It also means speaking to them creatively.



THEME 2

Cheer on branding in its long-term race

A common misconception persists that branding cannot be easily measured, relegating its position in the pecking order for budget allocation. It's time for branding to rise up the ladder – marketers need to sing its praises as a driver of long-term success.



THEME 3

Know that a good employer signals a great brand

A great brand is built from the inside out. Buyers know and value this. Marketers need to evaluate how technology buyers perceive their employer branding – it's now an important factor in their decision to buy.



THEME 4

Be where your customers are

Alignment is essential. It's no good shouting about innovative solutions if buyers aren't there to listen. Ensuring marketing messages get heard means being where decision makers go for information.



THEME 5

Influence the external influencers

One key destination that buyers head to is outside advisors. Marketers need to get their propositions in front of those who can help advocate on their behalf.

07

Survey respondents and methodology

The data for this report was collected through an online survey administered to 968 respondents in the APAC region. The survey fieldwork was conducted by B2B International during May and June of 2022.

The survey sample was distributed across two different groups, as indicated below:

Technology purchase decision makers
(technology buyers).

Technology buyers

483

surveys completed



Professionals engaged in marketing of technology brands and services on both the client and agency-side (technology marketers).

Technology marketers

485

surveys completed



Geographic spread

Buyers:

36%
India

26%
Australia/
New Zealand

13%
Sing-
apore

25%
Other
APAC

Marketers:

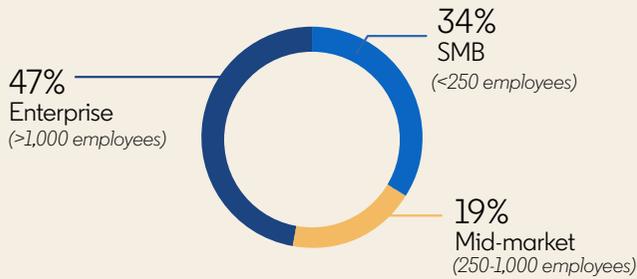
14%
India

78%
Australia/New Zealand

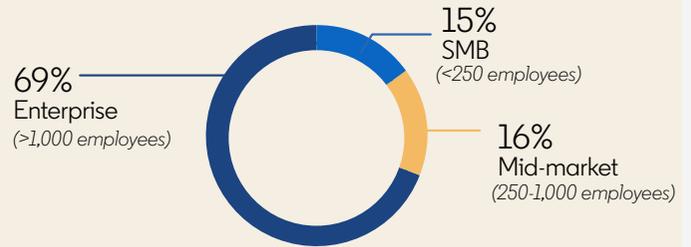
8%
Singapore

Business size

Buyers:

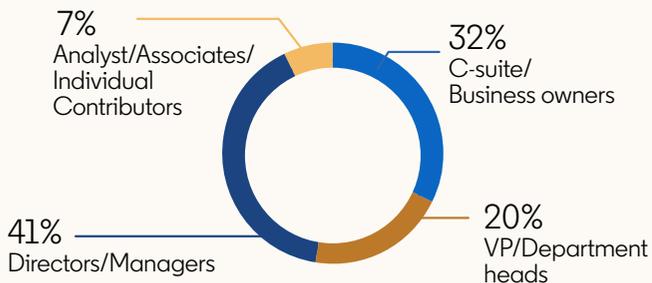


Marketers:

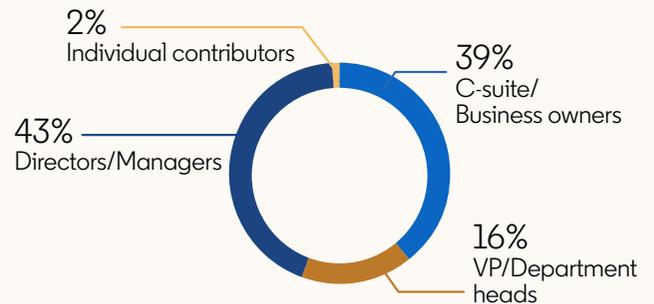


Level of seniority

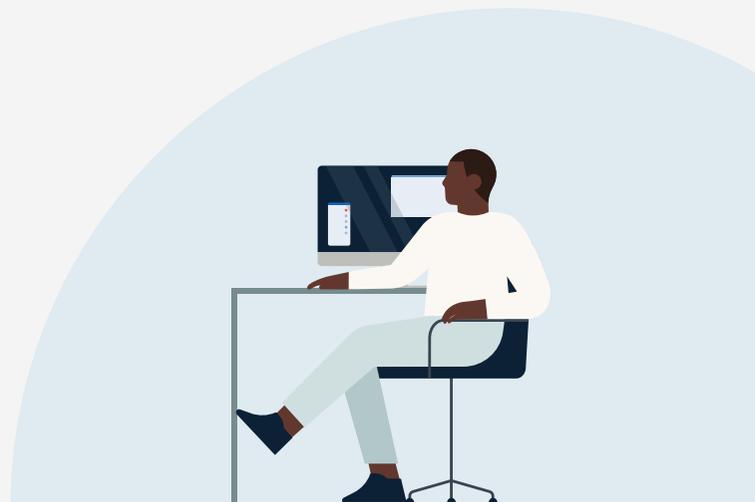
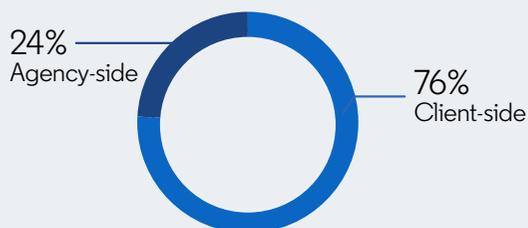
Buyers:



Marketers:



Technology marketer types



Brand to Buyer

Building B2B tech brands that shine

How can LinkedIn help technology marketers

There is a tremendous opportunity ahead for B2B marketers to leverage creativity, bold messaging, and customer empathy. B2B is evolving, rewiring the way we live, work, shop, and consume. B2B is growing. B2B is receiving massive investments. And more than ever now, B2B is showing up on LinkedIn, not because we have the world's largest professional audience, but because we have the data, tools and solutions allowing B2B brands to reach them in a meaningful way. At LinkedIn, we are committed to keeping pace with your needs. We understand and respect the B2B world you evolve in, and how could we not? We were built for B2B.

For additional technology marketing resources, visit lnkd.in/techhub

About B2B International

B2B International is a global, full-service market research firm dedicated to researching business-to-business markets. We help clients to make smarter decisions driven by exclusive insights, empowering them to grow.

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