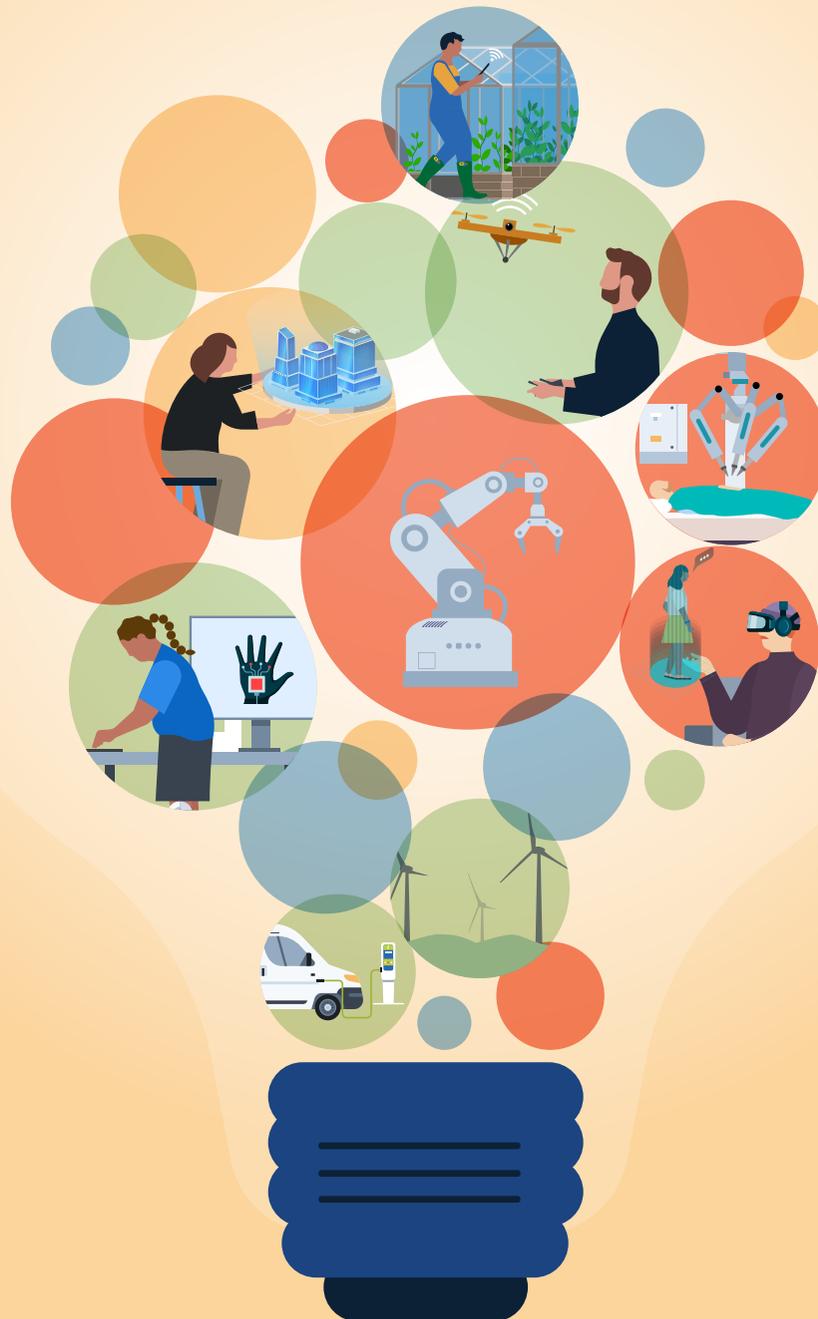


# Brand to Buyer

Building B2B technology brands that shine

A LinkedIn B2B Technology Buyer and Marketer Survey – LATAM 22/23



# Contents

Introduction .....	3
01 Executive summary .....	4
02 Trends uncovered .....	5
03 Seeing inside today's technology buyer world.....	6
04 Technology marketing is adapting to change .....	10
05 Building a brilliant B2B technology brand .....	15
Trend 1: Get creative with your content strategy .....	16
Trend 2: Cheer on branding in its long-term race .....	19
Trend 3: Know that a good employer signals a great brand .....	22
Trend 4: Be where your customers are .....	24
Trend 5: Influence the external influencers .....	26
06 Conclusion .....	27
07 Survey respondents and methodology.....	28

# 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 number of 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 positive 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 marketing professionals in North America, Latin America, Europe, Middle East, Africa and Asia-Pacific.

Of these,  
**25%**  
of respondents were from the LATAM region.

For more details, please see the *Survey respondents and methodology* section on page 28.

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 and visibility have been increasing 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 trends that will help marketers create a stronger B2B technology brand.**



## 02

## Trends uncovered

## TREND 1

**Get creative with your content strategy**

Cutting through means adding imagination.



## TREND 2

**Cheer on branding in its long-term race**

Building a brilliant brand means seeing beyond immediate returns.



## TREND 3

**Know that a good employer signals a great brand**

Getting buyers to buy means demonstrating shared values.



## TREND 4

**Be where your customers are**

Being listened to by buyers means sharing the same destinations.



## TREND 5

**Influence the external influencers**

Having buyers pay attention means having the ear of advocates.



## 03



## Seeing inside today's technology buyer world

Technology is a business enabler – the success of any business today depends on its technology. With the technology marketplace getting even more 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 the buyers at the right place, at the right time, with the right message that resonates with their priorities, 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.”*

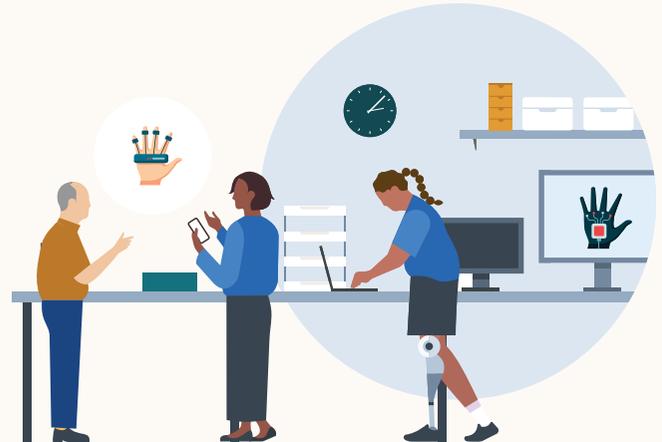


**Alexis Oger**  
Vice President – Regional  
CMO, Dell Technologies

## 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.

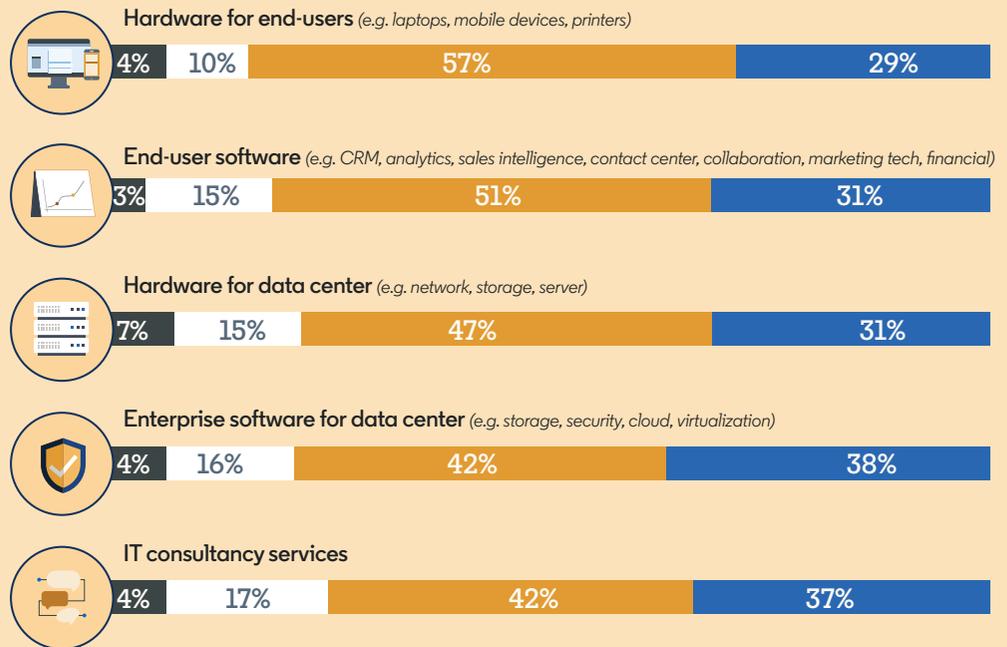
Buying budgets increased across nearly all product categories. The most significant growth occurred in hardware and software for end-users, where 86% and 82% of buyers respectively report an increase.



**Figure 1.**  
Technology 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



Despite challenging market conditions, over half of technology buyers (55%) saw their team headcount increase over the last 12 months, particularly within the Enterprise and mid-market segments.

And while the year ahead is likely to be significantly more challenging, the fact that organizations see technology as a way to get ahead provides grounds for being optimistic that technology spending will prove more resilient than other cost lines.

77%



of LATAM buyers agree that technology investments help drive their organization's growth rather than simply being a cost of doing business.

67%

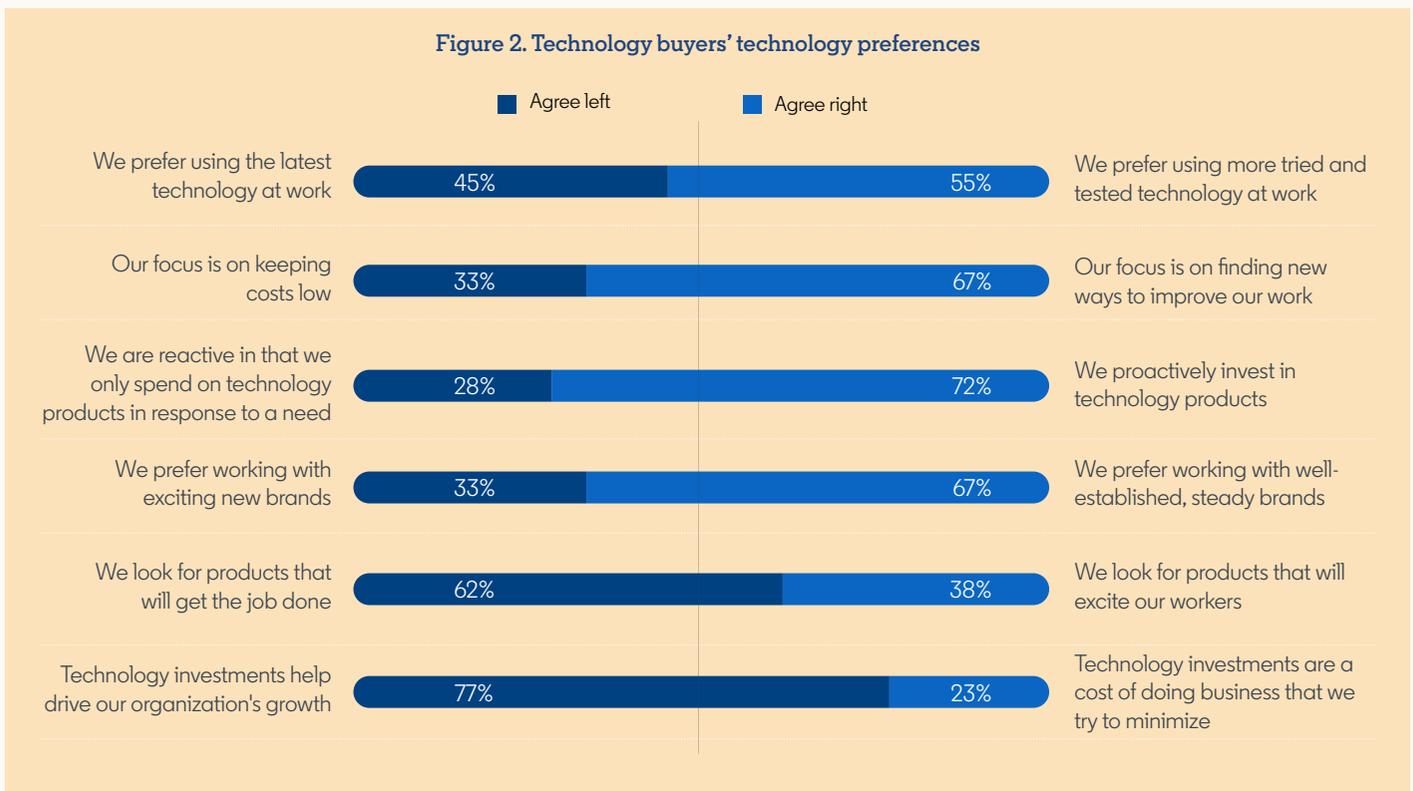


say they are more focused on finding new ways to improve their work than on keeping costs low.

72%



of LATAM buyers proactively invest in technology products, showcasing that they genuinely view technology as an investment in their organization's growth.



Today's technology buyers anticipate that adoption of new technologies will continue to be a strategic priority. This reflects current views of technology as predominantly a potential source of competitive advantage. Such advantage can be achieved through increased operational efficiency, or the delivery of more differentiated customer experiences.

**Cloud-native platforms and high-performance computing** are two areas that feature high on the list of buyers' strategic priorities, highlighted by 35% and 33% respectively. And while AI was also ranked highly in Brazil at 34%, Mexico differed significantly with only 23% considering it a priority.



But the standout, primary driver of technology spending for the year ahead will be **data privacy**. Enhancing data privacy is the number one priority for technology buyers over the next one to two years, highlighted as a strategic priority by 41% of respondents.



## Identifying issues: competition, cost and workforce

**Competitive pressures and cost concerns** rate high on the list of challenges faced by buyers of new technology.

36%



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

35%



say 'Getting the right products and services while keeping our costs low' 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.

68%



say that a shift to remote/hybrid work has had a noticeable impact on how they purchase technology.

33%



say 'Providing our workforce with the most up-to-date technology products and services' is a significant challenge.

**Figure 3. Technology buyer top 4 challenges**

#1

Streamlining our administrative processes

#2

Having the right technology to stay ahead of the market

#3

Getting the right products and services while keeping costs low

#4

Providing our workforce with the most up-to-date technology products and services

Coping with increased levels of employee churn is another major issue. 77% of technology buyers are concerned by their organization's ability to meet existing and emerging internal challenges resulting from staff turnover and changing employee expectations.

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: 'Needing to do more with fewer resources' and 'Decreased productivity'. It's also worth noting that 39% of buyers in LATAM reported difficulties in streamlining administrative processes. This included evaluation and procuring new products and services.

There's a clear and positive take away for B2B vendor marketers here. The more that they can demonstrate to buyers how technology is an enabler – helping businesses do more with less while also maintaining their competitive edge – the more marketers can drive sales.

04



## Technology marketing is adapting to change

The B2B technology market has already been impacted by changes in the buyer landscape, but the marketer landscape is also evolving. In particular, shifts in spending priorities and operating models reflect marketers' moves to better meet 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, which 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. This growth was consistent across all geographies, with the biggest YoY increase seen among vendors of software for data centers.

On average, marketers reported a 16.9% budget increase. The biggest growth seen among agency-side marketers was for vendors of software for data centers, who reported an average 22.5% YoY increase. For client-side marketers this was hardware for data centers at a 24.7% YoY increase.



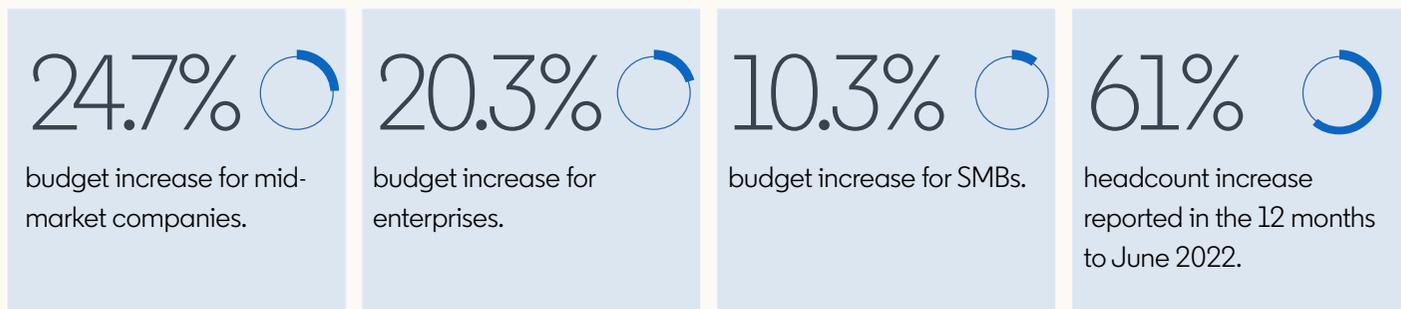
*Even though marketing has been embarking on a digital transition for a decade, the COVID crisis has accelerated not only the digitalisation of marketing, but also its 'premiumisation'. We did in 18 months what would have been done in 10 years. Marketing has evolved from the status of 'adjustment variable' – in reference to the famous advertising cuts in the event of a company's financial loss – to the status of being a 'strategic function' of the company's business. Marketing has become a real lever for growth. Proof of this is the impact of marketing investments on the growth of eCommerce during the pandemic."*



**Jeremy Chapuis**

Director, EMEA Marketing Media Center of Excellence, Lenovo

However, the landscape has now shifted and the trend towards increased budgets looks to be in reverse. This new economic landscape will exacerbate the challenges marketers shared about securing budget in the future, particularly for brand marketing.



Looking ahead to a potential reversal of the trend 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 31%, the most common issue reported was lack of experience/ talent in the marketing department. This was followed by 28% who cited budget holders being skeptical about the ability of brand marketing to drive growth.

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



*So much more of the selling process is now being driven without the traditional engagement of salespeople. It's driven by self-education and research. Buyers are interacting through technology such as AI chatbots rather than people – and marketing is at the heart of that.”*



**James Whitmore**  
EVP & CMO, NetApp



## Marketing spend is shifting

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

Digital advertising, in particular on social media, is becoming the dominant area of spend. It consumes an increasing proportion of marketing budget from both vendors and agency marketers. This aligns with technology buyers saying that social media and Search engine advertising are now their primary sources for getting information to support their purchases.

# 31%



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

# 29%



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

# 40%



of tech marketers **ranked social media advertising top of all categories** for where they were mainly investing their marketing activities



*Here at LinkedIn, we've seen these patterns play out first-hand. It's encouraging to see our technology customers increase their spend on digital marketing and advertising services – a testament to how crucial it is for B2B brands to continue to invest in strengthening their presence, despite uncertainty. Many tech customers are in the market to reposition their brand and get in front of the conversation on digital transformation."*

**Tom Pepper**

Senior Director, EMEA and LATAM,  
LinkedIn Marketing Solutions

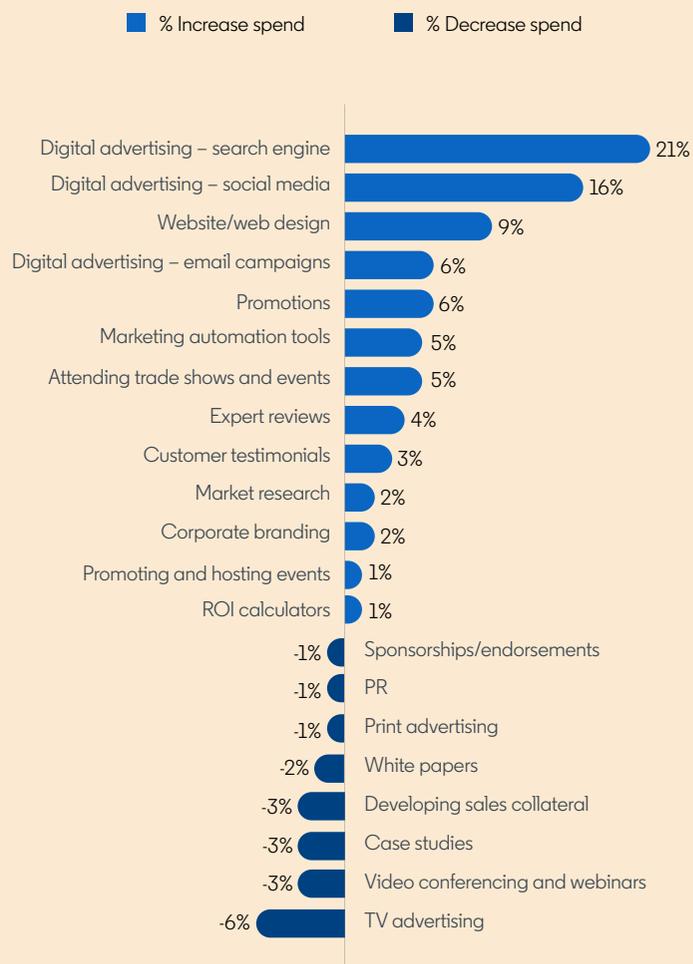


Technology marketers are supporting their increasingly digital activities by upping their use of marketing automation tools. These now account for a growing proportion of marketing budgets. 33% ranked automation tools second out of twenty activities, behind only social media advertising.

And 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 TV advertising (-6%), video conferencing and webinars (-3%), and developing case studies (-3%).



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



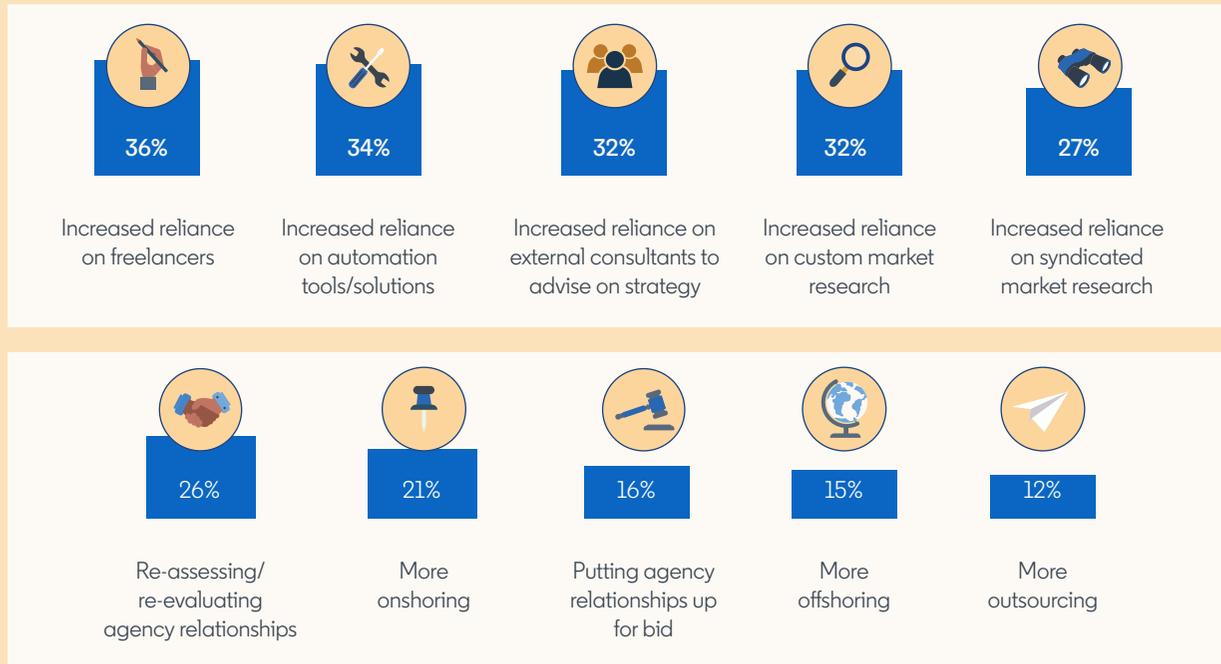
## Operating models are evolving

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

78% of LATAM marketers have increased reliance on outsourced services and manpower, including external consultants, outsources, and freelancers. This is perhaps due in some part to the talent gap identified by technology buyers that was mentioned earlier.

We also found that 26% of marketers say they are reassessing their agency relationships.

Figure 6. Marketing activity shifts over the past 12 months



Given the readjustments in preferred marketing mix covered in the previous section, it seems likely that some of this evolution in operating models reflects the changing skillsets 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

# 90%

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

Also, the criterion of 'Employees taking on dramatically new roles and responsibilities' was identified as the issue which has 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 in order 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 compensation and benefits, improving work-life balance, making commitments to diversity, equality and inclusion, and by increasing their positive impact on the community and society.

# 05

## Building a brilliant B2B technology brand



## TREND 1

## Get creative with your content strategy

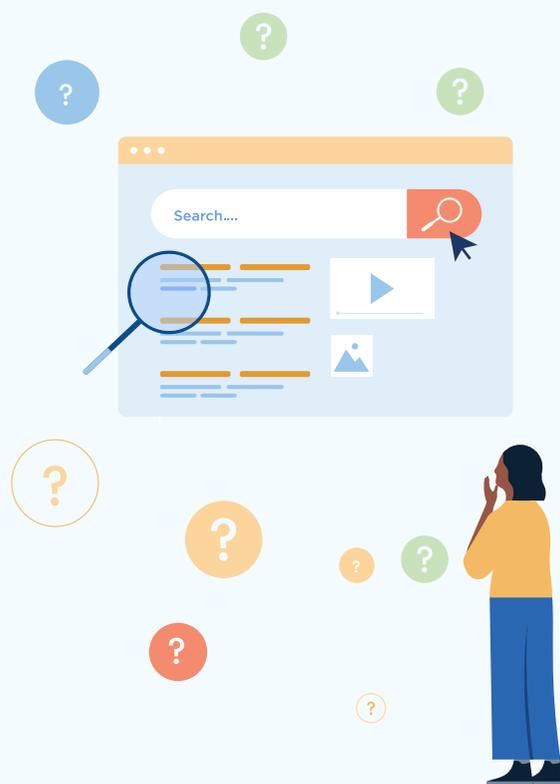


### What buyers expect from technology marketers

**Many buyers feel that technology vendors are not adapting to their changing needs, and are struggling to provide the support that buyers want.**

When asked which buyer needs vendors were having the most trouble addressing, 'Helping fill the gaps left by employee churn' came top of the list. Clearly, buyers want help from technology marketers in demonstrating how they can fill skill gaps and do more with less resources.

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.



# 65%

of LATAM buyers feel that ads are not always appropriately targeting them.

# 1/3

of LATAM buyers don't always understand what B2B ads are trying to sell.

# 66%

of LATAM buyers feel that ads are not always memorable, inspiring (63%) or entertaining (64%).

## Buyers value clarity and useful information

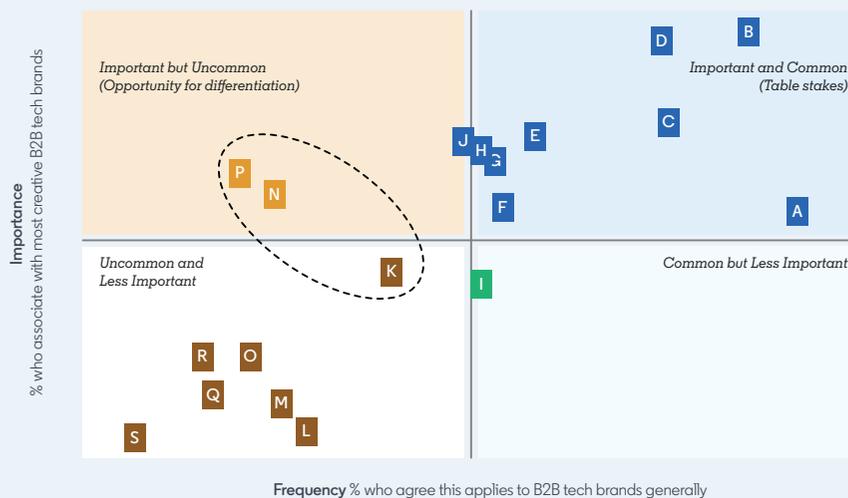
Technology buyers told us in no uncertain terms that content needs to be informative, clear and relevant – and this is where B2B marketers are mostly getting it right. But our research also shows the importance of content that is credible and holds their attention – and here there is some room for improvement. 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 entertaining and inspiring.



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

Attributes in order of importance

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



## Who tops the creative B2B charts?

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, we found an overlap between buyers and marketers. Both chose the same four brands in their top five: Microsoft, Google, Amazon, and IBM.

Buyers cited ‘Attention-grabbing/ different/unique’ as a stand-out value for Microsoft, IBM, and Amazon. Overall, this was the attribute mentioned most commonly 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, Amazon, and IBM.

Clearly, marketers have an opportunity to gain more traction with buyers by appreciating the importance they place on 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**

Head of Global Demand Generation Marketing, Spryker Systems

## Demonstrate the 'why' as well as the 'how'

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



One way 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 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 buyers can do more with fewer resources, how they can help employees take on new roles and responsibilities, and how they can increase productivity, are all issues that are 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.

## TREND 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 to be effective for both short- and long-term goals. Others are thought to be better for driving either one or the other.

## Digital advertising and brand delivering on both fronts

Social media advertising, corporate branding, and search engine advertising are all in the top four for both short-term and long-term impact, reinforcing their versatility and strategic importance in marketing campaigns of all types.

Email campaigns, marketing automation tools and website/web design all rank significantly higher for short- rather than long-term impact.

Different short-term approaches were favored in various regions. This reflects significant disparities in buyer behaviors and channel adoption across geographies. For example, while marketers in Mexico rate

marketing automation tools as the third most impactful on short-term revenue, it's only ranked 17th out of 21 tested activities in Brazil.

Conversely, market research, ROI calculators, and promoting/hosting events all rank higher for creating long- rather than short-term impact. Interestingly, despite being regarded as having a high long-term impact by 74% of LATAM marketers, ROI calculators were among the least popular sources of information for LATAM buyers.



## What gets measured, gets budget

**The fact that marketers are prioritizing spend on digital activity – particularly social media and search engine advertising – reflects the increased value that they are deriving from these tactics in both the short and long term.**

But here we see an interesting disconnect. While corporate branding is rated highly for delivering both short- and long-term impact, it's well down the list of current spending.

It's only ranked 14th for marketing budget among LATAM marketers, with just 13% having increased corporate branding spend in the past 12 months.

This could be due to the relative difficulty in demonstrating tangible value from brand building activity in order to secure budget, when compared to highly targeted and measurable digital campaigns.



*There's a real difference between the theory of brand building and then the practice of standing in front of the board and being asked to explain how you spent millions of dollars. In theory, there can be recognition that this is a longer-term investment and needs to be measured in a completely different way. In practice, once that campaign starts to run, you will still get questions about the contribution it's making to the pipeline. We've got to be aware of that and make sure that we can point to that contribution. The fact that a brand campaign can now be targeted and you can point to movement within those targeted customers, gives you something to leverage."*



**Paige O'Neill**  
CMO, Sitecore

## Fly the brand flag

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 pursuit of measurable lead generation metrics.

Yet history suggests this would be a mistake. Previous studies have shown that companies who continued to invest in their brand during recessions, were the ones that performed most strongly and were best placed to capitalize when the economy rebounded. It's a phenomenon we explored in LinkedIn's webinar:

[All-Weather Marketing.](#)

# 67%

**of LATAM technology buyers prefer to work with established brands.** This could be due to a variety of factors: proven expertise, greater trust, or strong alignment with brand values.

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



*Everyone understands that you can't just drive demand without upper funnel investments. But at the core of your strategy, you need a very data-driven, ROI-driven argument where you can show that investment X leads to output Z. Once you have that, you're in a better position to make the case for building out the brand infrastructure. But as a marketer, you have to have conviction in arguing for brand budget as well. The numbers won't do the job for you."*



**Kerstin Köder**

Head of Marketing EMEA, SAP

## TREND 3

## Know that a good employer signals a great brand



### The employer brand has never been so important

**Being perceived as a good employer is becoming an important factor in technology purchasing decisions.**

A huge

89%

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

Marketers also believe that employer brand is a factor, with only 6% 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.

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



Career advancement/  
development opportunities  
(52%)



Visionary leadership  
(49%)



Company benefits  
(48%)

It's no secret that strong employer brands attract the best talent, who in turn can deliver on the promise of technical expertise and innovation.

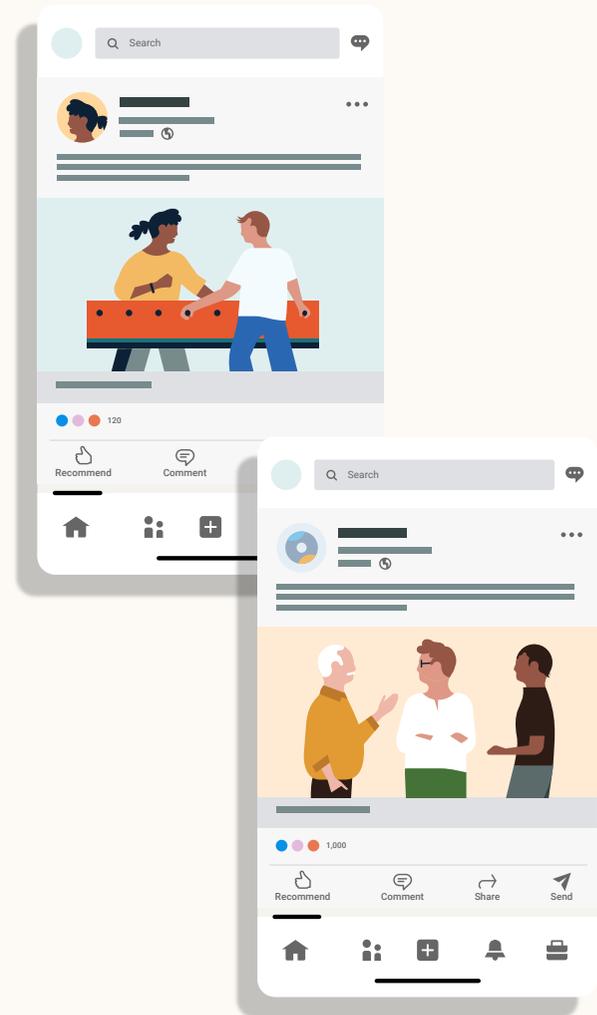
## Engage in employer branding

**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.



*The role of the CMO isn't just about the brand or generating demand. It's about the broader identity behind them, an identity that needs to engage not just customers but the employees a business depends on. That CMO role is expanding, because your identity isn't just a product story – it's a company story."*



**Alexis Oger**

Vice President – Regional CMO,  
Dell Technologies

## TREND 4

## Be where your customers are



## Websites and social media are strongest

As technology has evolved it has become more pervasive. 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 most popular with LATAM technology buyers. Vendor websites and social media such as LinkedIn are the most useful sources of information for technology buyers in LATAM.

The sources most used by LATAM technology buyers to get information are online, with vendor's website and social media topping the list.

Figure 8. Most useful source of information for technology buyers



It's also worth noting that some of the least popular sources of information for LATAM buyers include news articles and press releases, ROI calculators, and TV ads. **Marketers may be well advised to pause for thought before devoting large chunks of their budget to the next high-profile TV campaign.**

## Don't ignore paid search and testimonials

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 to 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 also a case for vendors to increase investment in website design, customer testimonials, and developing targeted relationships with external consultants and industry experts.

Figure 9. Where buyers go for information on technology brands

	 BUYERS <i>Base: 266</i>	 CLIENT-SIDE MARKETERS <i>Base: 191</i>	 AGENCY-SIDE MARKETERS <i>Base: 60</i>
Vendor website/Website/Web design	1 <sup>st</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	9 <sup>th</sup>
Social media (e.g. LinkedIn)/ Digital advertising – social media	2 <sup>nd</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup>	7 <sup>th</sup>
External IT consultants, integrators, VARs/MSPs	3 <sup>rd</sup>	N/A	N/A
Industry expert reviews/Expert reviews	4 <sup>th</sup>	17 <sup>th</sup>	19 <sup>th</sup>
Search engine/ Digital advertising – search engine	5 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>
Emails from vendors' contacts	6 <sup>th</sup>	N/A	N/A
Customer testimonials	7 <sup>th</sup>	12 <sup>th</sup>	8 <sup>th</sup>
Online events and webinars	8 <sup>th</sup>	19 <sup>th</sup>	9 <sup>th</sup>
Vendor presentations/Pitches Developing sales collateral	9 <sup>th</sup>	14 <sup>th</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Automated emails from vendor/ Digital advertising – email campaigns	10 <sup>th</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>
Case studies	11 <sup>th</sup>	9 <sup>th</sup>	20 <sup>th</sup>
In-person events and conferences/ Attending trade shows and events	12 <sup>th</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>
New articles and press releases/PR	13 <sup>th</sup>	21 <sup>st</sup>	21 <sup>st</sup>
White papers	14 <sup>th</sup>	20 <sup>th</sup>	17 <sup>th</sup>
ROI calculators	15 <sup>th</sup>	18 <sup>th</sup>	17 <sup>th</sup>
TV advertising	16 <sup>th</sup>	9 <sup>th</sup>	9 <sup>th</sup>

## TREND 5

## Influence the external influencers



### External advisors are filling the marketing gap

# 45%

**of buyers cited external IT consultants, integrators and channel partners as a very popular information source. It was ranked as the third most used source of information.**

IT contacts specifically have a higher preference for external IT consultants as the most useful source of information.

The same applies to industry expert reviews, which are ranked as the fourth most used source of information by technology buyers (41%), but are placed way down the budget priority list by technology marketers in 17th place.

For technology marketers, these findings are a major signpost for directing top-of-funnel approaches to attracting buyers. They reinforce the learnings from LinkedIn's 2021 ['The Age of Agility'](#) report, which highlighted the trend of the 'anonymous buyer'. Buyers want to be anonymous for the majority of their buying journey and will thoroughly research a company – using the vendor's website and other third-party sources – before reaching out to the sales team.

### Keep advocates in the know

Given the importance to buyers of external advisors (consultants, systems integrators, and channel partners) and industry experts – particularly in categories such as end-user software and data center software – it's essential that marketers have the right channel and influencer programs in place. They 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 also clearly communicate the value that the vendor can create for and with their partners.

**And it's not just paid advisors who should be marketed to.** Any existing user of a product or service 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 the key to becoming and remaining a winning B2B technology brand.

## Five key trends for marketers to accelerate growth with a breakout brand

### TREND 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.

### TREND 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.

### TREND 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.

### TREND 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.

### TREND 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 517 respondents in the LATAM 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\*

266  
surveys completed



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

Technology marketers

251  
surveys completed



\*To qualify, technology buyers must have researched, evaluated, bought, implemented, or renewed a new technology solution from one or more of the following categories: hardware for end users, software for end users, hardware for data centers, software for data centers.

## Geographic spread

### Buyers:

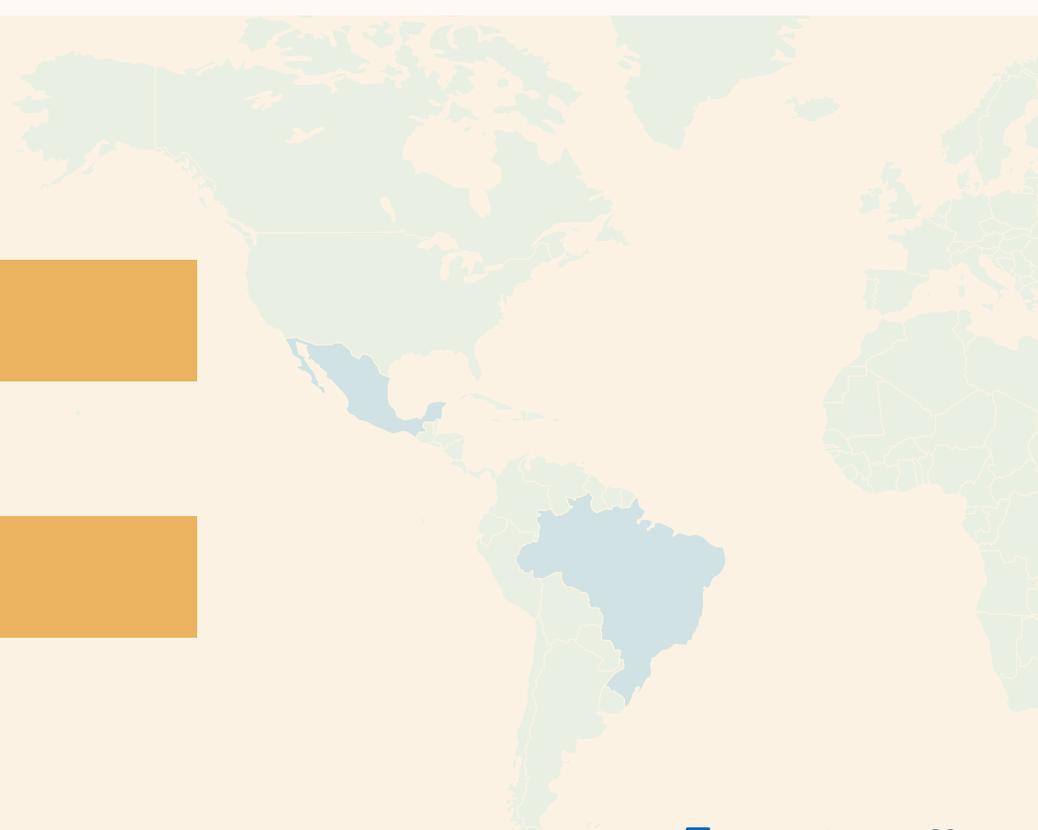
50%  
Brazil

50%  
Mexico

### Marketers:

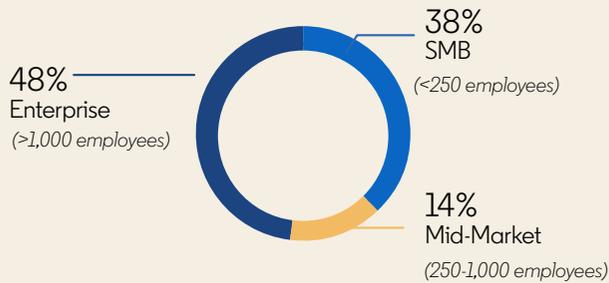
50%  
Brazil

50%  
Mexico

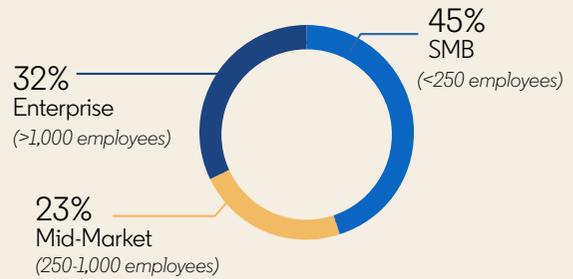


## Business size

### Buyers:

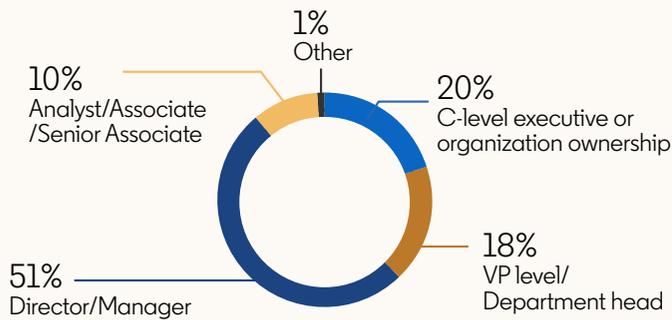


### Marketers:

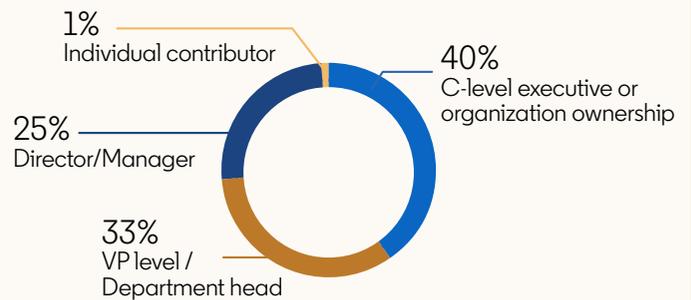


## Level of seniority

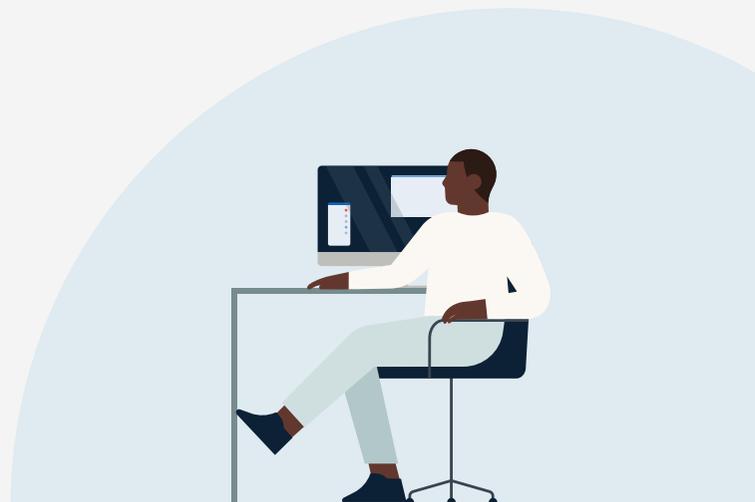
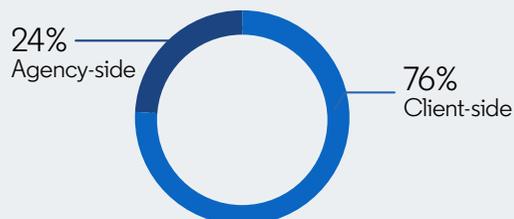
### Buyers:



### Marketers:



## Technology marketer types



# Brand to Buyer

Building B2B technology brands that shine

## How LinkedIn can 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 tech marketing resources, visit [lnkd.in/techhub](https://lnkd.in/techhub)

### About B2B International

B2B International is a global, full-service market research firm dedicated to researching business-to-business markets. They help clients to make smarter decisions driven by exclusive insights, empowering them to grow. They are part of Merkle B2B; the world's leading, purpose-built end-to-end B2B agency, bringing together the best B2B capabilities and competencies to architect modern-day customer experiences.

For more information, contact B2B International at [info@b2binternational.com](mailto:info@b2binternational.com) or visit [www.b2binternational.com](http://www.b2binternational.com).