



## 2019 Europe Tech Report

The Tech Buying Journey has Evolved:

# What your Customers Need from you Today

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# Businesses Are the Tech They Buy



The pressure on businesses to invest in the right technology at the right time has never been greater. IT buyers must respond to customer expectations, investors' demand for tech-driven growth, and employees' need for trusted tools that boost productivity and morale.

Tech buying decisions now touch almost every member of the business, and a wide-ranging buying committee now plays an active role in influencing them.

These influencers are rapidly changing the tech buying journey - and placing new demands on IT buyers. As a tech marketer, your mission is to help meet those demands.



## Executive Summary



In our fourth year exploring who and what drive new business technology investments, we surveyed close to 2,000 European professionals – across four major European markets – who participated in or influenced the purchase of various hardware or software solutions at their organization within the last three months. Our study reveals a tech buying committee that is always buying - and an evolving set of challenges for IT decision-makers. They must meet different stakeholder needs, satisfy a demand for innovation, yet still ensure that suppliers' support and values align with the business strategy.

# Key Takeaways

- Technology purchasing – from mobile phones for employees to enterprise servers – is a constant in businesses across Europe.
- Technology buyers are more open than ever to shortlisting new vendors. Software buyers are the most open, typically shortlisting a new vendor one-third of the time.
- How do brands make the shortlist? Reviews, Reputation and Recognition - the 3 R's - matter most, even more than cost.
- LinkedIn is the only environment where all three R's are in play, and provides vendors with a platform for engaging the full buying committee at every stage from inspiration to management and renewal.



## The Technology Buying Journey Stages, adapted from Forrester.

Needs Assessment  
Specs/Funding  
Vendor Selection  
Implementation  
Management  
Renewal

## Roles Within the Technology Buying Committee

**Decision-makers:** Select or recommend new technology solutions to purchase and implement

**Influencers:** Provide views and feedback that shape the decision-making process and vendor selection process

**Implementers/Adopters:** Manage, integrate, deploy or drive adoption of new technology

**End-Users:** Leverage tech daily, shape perceptions of needs and provide ongoing feedback

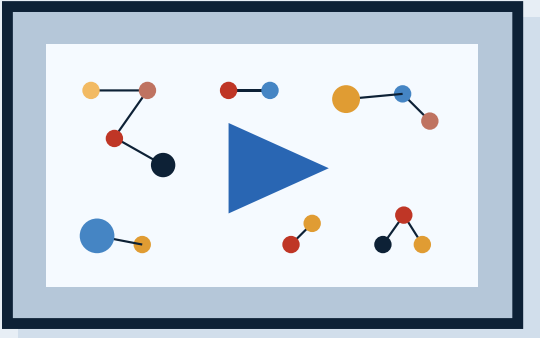
## Functional Involvement by Department

**Decision-Makers:** IT & Engineering, Finance, Business Development, Operations

**Influencers:** Business Development, Accounting, Purchasing, Project Management

**End-Users:** Marketing, Sales, Finance, IT & Engineering, Product Management, Human Resources

**Implementers/Adopters:** IT & Engineering, Project Management, Marketing, Sales, Finance



# Your Guide to the Tech Buyer

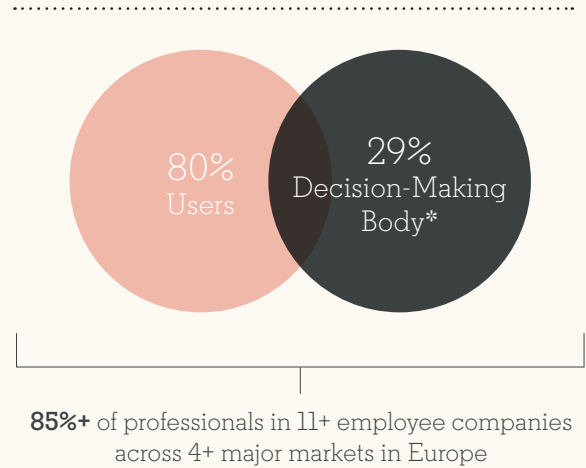
# What Does Today's Journey Look Like?

## Part 1: Who is Impacted?

Four out of five enterprise employees in Europe (roughly 85%) now play a role in tech decision-making, up from three quarters of employees a year ago. Within this buying committee:

- 80% of today's employees are technology end-users and 29% are technology decision-makers.
- Nearly 23% of decision-makers are engaged in buying all four subcategories of technology below.

### New Business Technology Adopters



## Capturing all types of technology purchases

 <p><b>Hardware for End Users</b></p>  <p>Laptops, mobile devices, printers</p> <p><b>Highest awareness:</b> #1 Apple #2 Dell</p>	 <p><b>Software for End Users</b></p>  <p>CRM, analytics, marketing technology</p> <p><b>Highest awareness:</b> #1 Microsoft #2 Adobe</p>	 <p><b>Hardware for Data Centers</b></p>  <p>Network, storage, server</p> <p><b>Highest awareness:</b> #1 Cisco #2 IBM</p>	 <p><b>Software for Data Centers</b></p>  <p>Storage, security, cloud, virtualization</p> <p><b>Highest awareness:</b> #1 Microsoft #2 VMWare</p>
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# The Tech Buying Journey has Evolved: What your customers need from you today

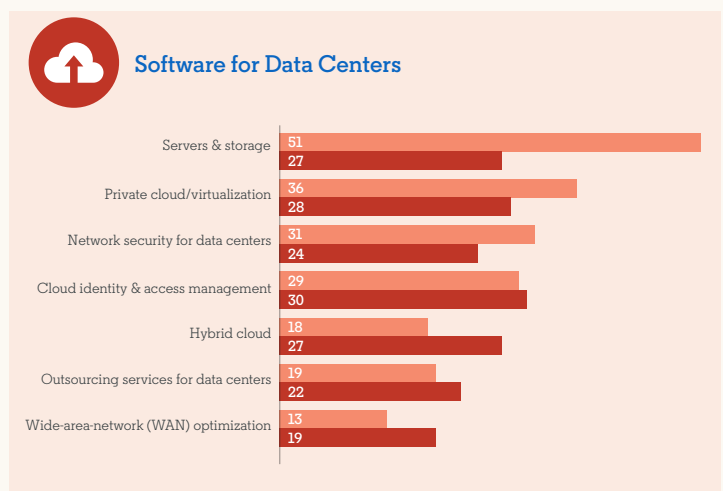
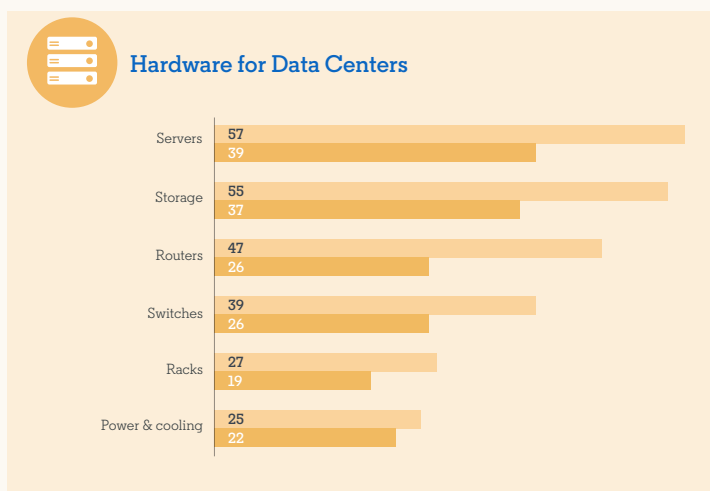
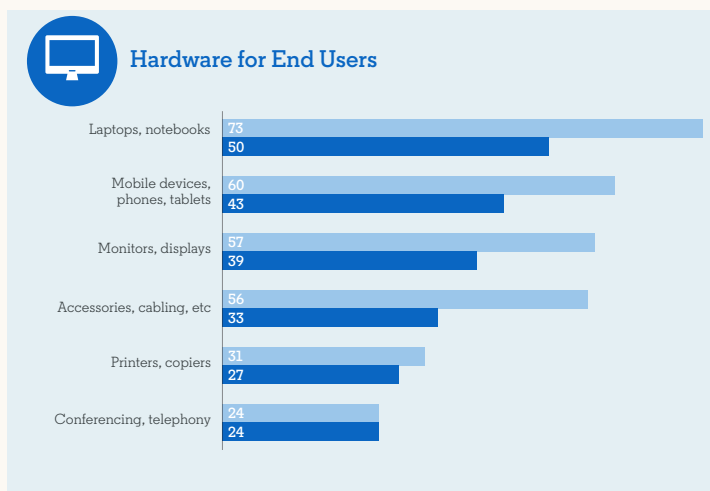
## Part 2: How does the process work?

### Investments Made to Move Business Forward

The tech buying committee is always buying - and that means businesses are always examining their technology options. In any 15-month period, discussions and decisions take place in every IT category.

Technology investments are growing as business requires new solutions to remain successful and productive.

% of Participants Involved in the Purchase Process



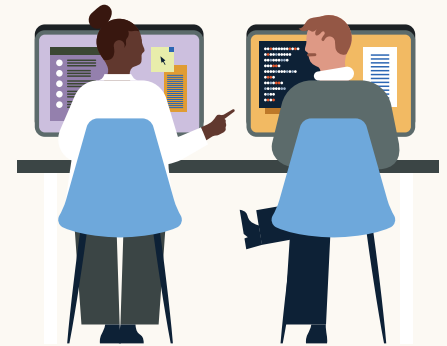
■ ■ ■ ■ Purchased in last 3 months  
■ ■ ■ ■ Considering in next 12 months



# A Quick Turn Around

The buying cycle is turning faster - and time is of the essence. Over the past few years, the process by which European customers research, purchase and implement new technology has accelerated, similar to their global peers.

Not every member of the buying committee is involved at every stage. Their roles as decision-makers and influencers can be switched on and off throughout the process. However, the vast majority are involved in scoping out needs and framing the buying decision.



There is less time to win over hearts and minds of new customers.



The average technology purchase process takes over 2 years.



19 months



29 months



24 months



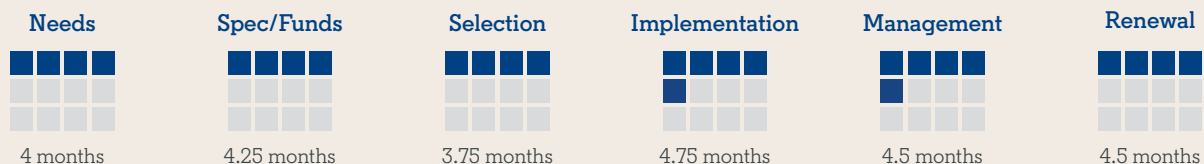
31 months



Time spent researching and purchasing new technology is shrinking.

Less than 3 months and less than 10 hours, respectively.

## Median Months/Stage



### Engaged Directly with Vendors - Last 3 Months

(% buyers among all participating in the stage)

This committee-driven collaboration is evident, but participation activities reveal splits among core and secondary roles. While the majority of buyers participate in the process by speaking with vendors, a smaller cohort leads budget and decision-making authority.

Despite being the shortest stage, Needs has the highest level of involvement for the buying committee, across all technology categories. It's where core and secondary roles come together and has the broadest range of influencers involved.

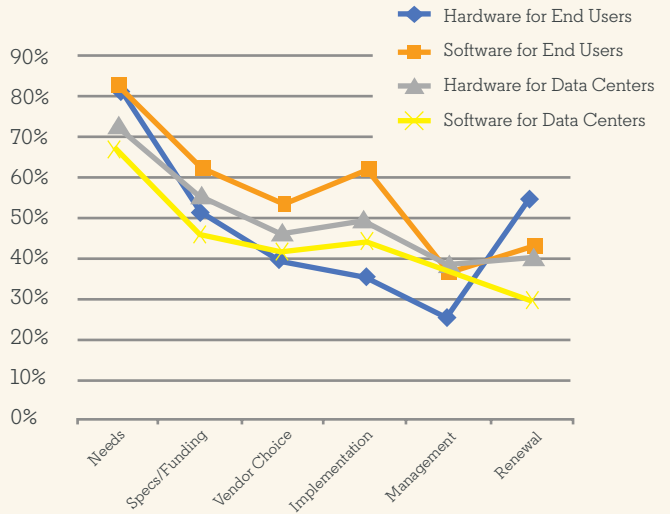
### Engaged Directly with Vendors - Last 3 Months

(% buyers among all participating in the stage)



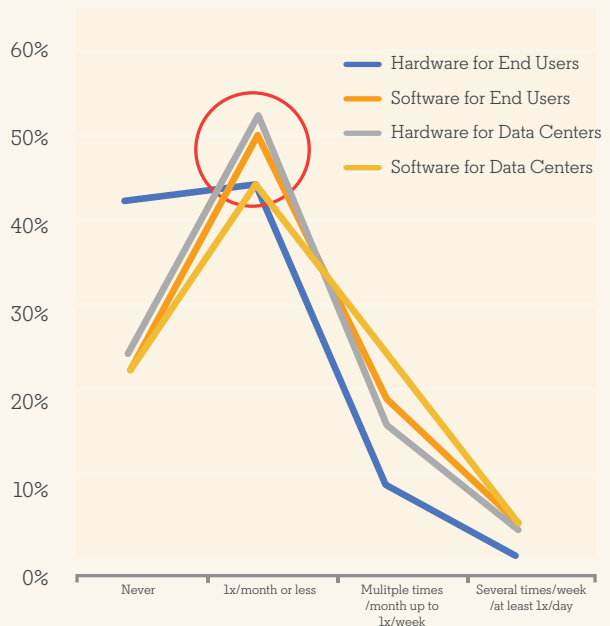
#### The decision-making committee is more involved than ever.

Decision-Maker Engagement with Vendors Directly - Last 3 Months (% among all participating in the stage)



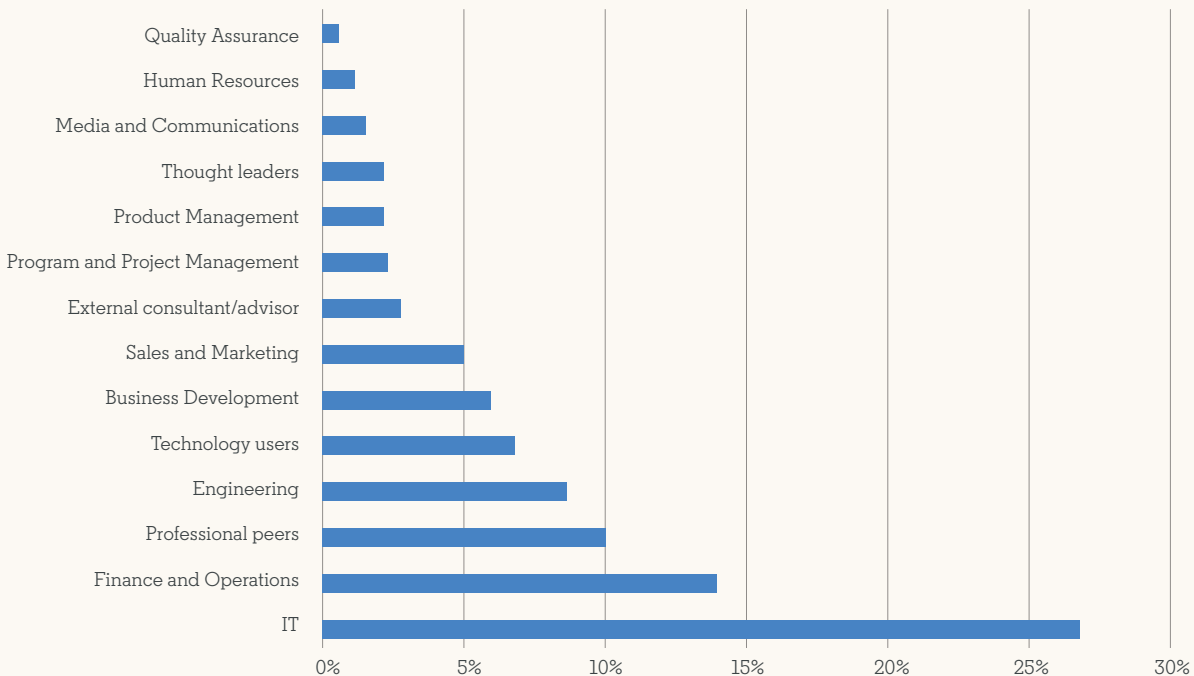
#### Frequency of Engaging with a Technology Vendor Customer Service Representative

% among participants in the category



# Who Shapes Decision Making?

Today's Technology Buying Committee is a diverse group. In our data, we see growth in the number and influence of End User and Finance members.



## Influence by the Numbers

- **80% of technology buyers look outside their own business for guidance on B2B technology solutions** — with reviews, surveys and usage stats from fellow technology users making up 51% of these trusted sources.
- **64.5% of technology buyers in Europe are likely to discuss solutions or vendors with their professional peers, slightly less than buyers globally.**
- Peer-to-peer, influencer, practitioner, colleague and authenticated and verified user reviews are today's primary sources for pre-purchase B2B guidance, education and research.

## The Tech Buying Journey has Evolved: What your customers need from you today

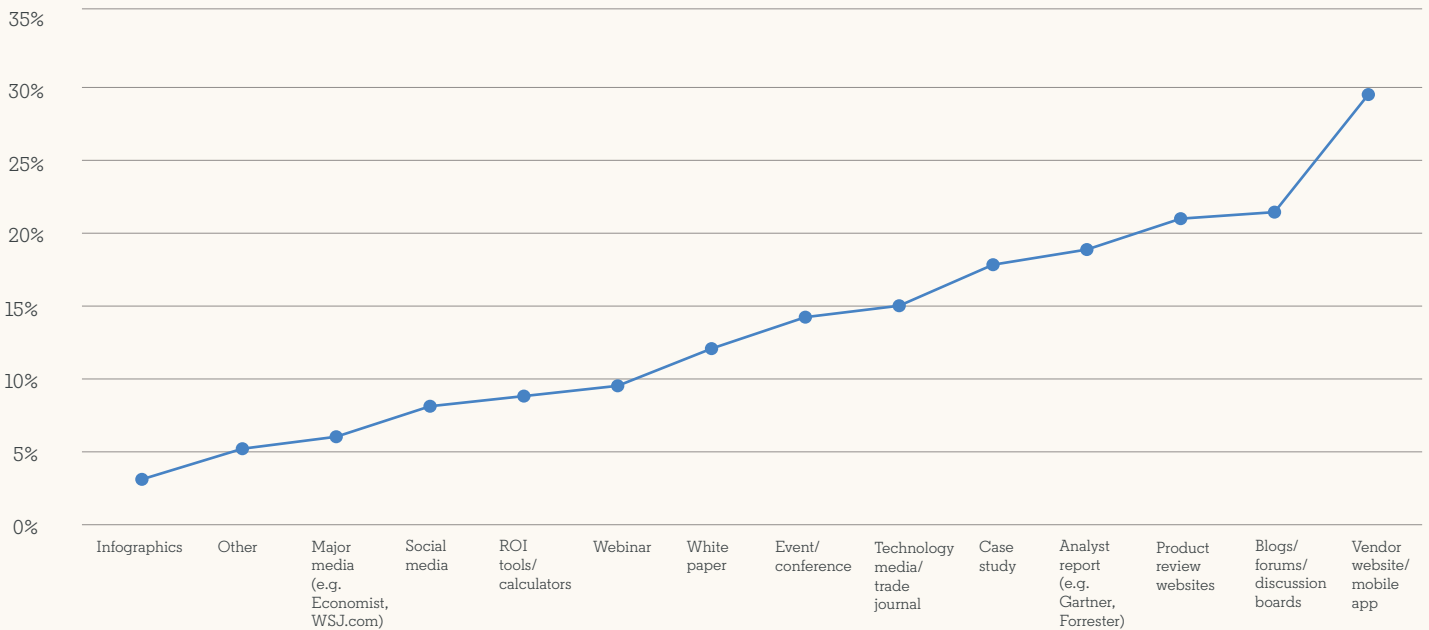
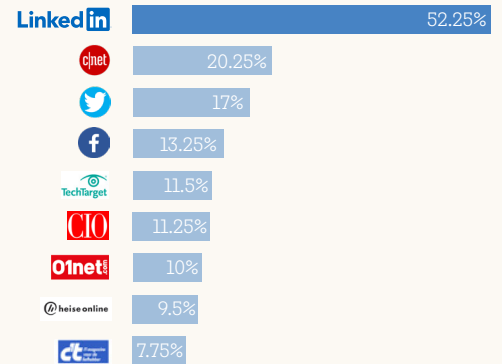
The evolution of the tech buying committee reflects the expansion of influence and decision-making roles within today's modern enterprise. More individuals within the organization are influencing tech purchasing, including End Users having a stronger voice.

Breaking this down, across all departments, IT and Engineering hold the most influence and are also the functions most involved throughout the purchase process. Operations, also referred to as Procurement, is playing an increasingly important role in the Buying Committee as the cost impact of Technology on the business bottom line grows.



**Those researching buying decisions look to LinkedIn as much as they do to a vendor's own website.**

**LinkedIn is seen as more neutral than vendor websites because it's a peer-reviewed, peer-validated resource.**



# What Do Buyers Care About?

In Europe, buyers care more about your reputation and recognition that they do about cost in many cases. This is a big reminder to Technology sellers in Europe – are you communicating your product benefits to your customers?



## Digitally Enabled, Quality Obsessed

### Tech Buyers care about Reputation, Reviews and Recognition

Top reasons vendors make the shortlist (among those considering “new” vendors)



#### Hardware for End Users

- Cost-Price-Value
- Functionality Factors-Works
- Reputation-Reviews-Recognition
- Reliability

Base: n=70



#### Software for End Users

- Reputation-Reviews-Recognition
- Needs-Requirements-Solutions/Understanding of Business
- Cost-Price-Value
- Popularity-market share

Base: n=85



#### Hardware for Data Centers

- Reputation-Reviews-Recognition
- Cost-Price-Value
- Quality
- Communication-Responsiveness-Availability

Base: n=57



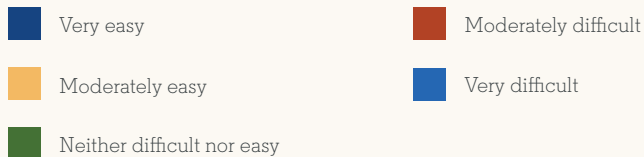
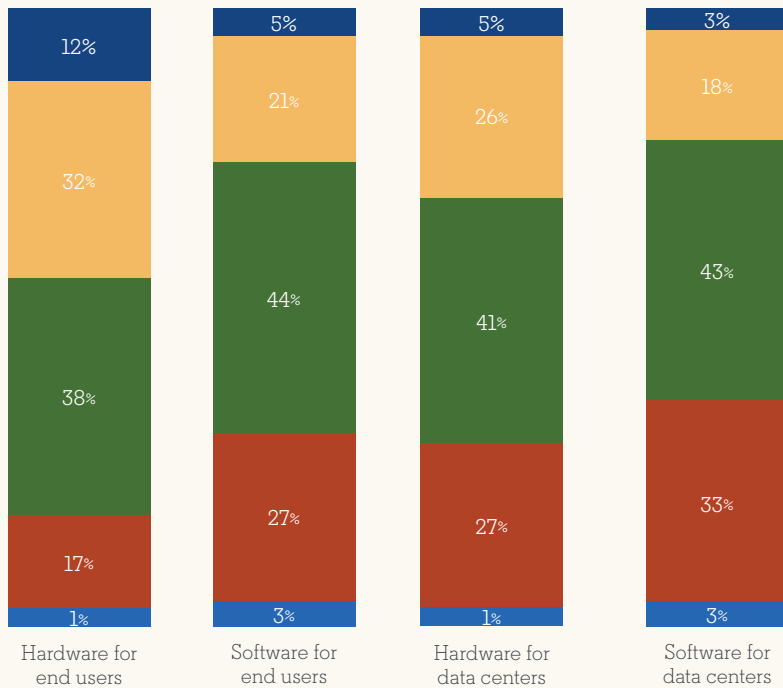
#### Software for Data Centers

- Reputation-Reviews-Recognition
- Cost-Price-Value
- Informative/Information
- Popularity-market share

Base: n=71

# What should you do?

## Ease/Difficulty of Finding Resources



We see here that only a quarter of buyers found it easy to access information. When you are buying technology you need strategic the strategic and implementation information that they need: Does this new piece of tech fit with the existing stack? Does it support growth? How will it be used?

Only 1/4 of buyers found it easy to access information



### Vendor Shortlisting Behavior

Vendor shortlists are more open than ever in Europe with 23% of Hardware for Data Centers, 27% of Software for Data Centers and 33% of Software for End Users buyers shortlisting a new vendor.

- For new technology companies, this represents an incredible opportunity.
- Existing companies need to show they can meet buyers' needs and communicate effectively with the Buying Committee.



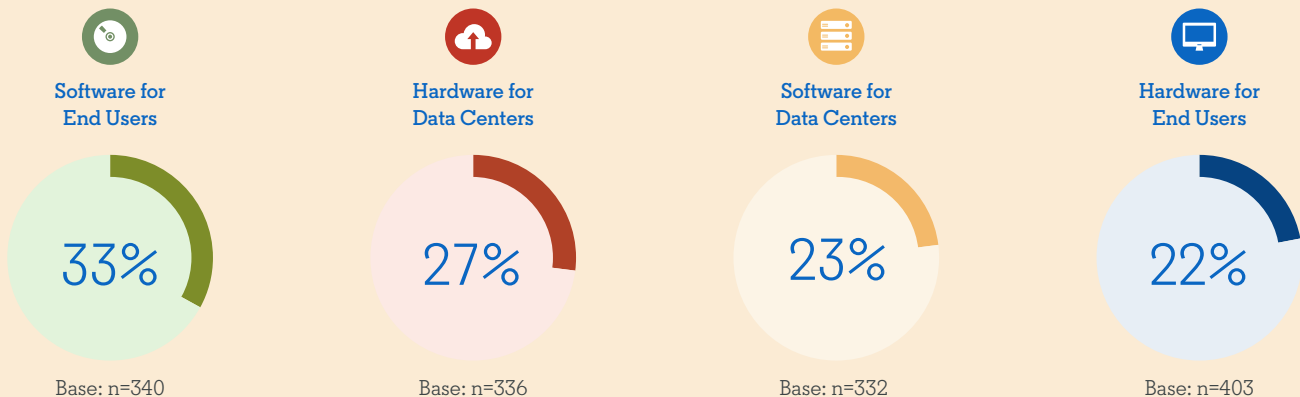
### Community Influenced, Committee Driven

## The vendor selection process is more open than ever.

% Shortlisted a "New" Vendor

Most open

Most competitive



### Some Gains are Being Made by Non-Incumbents in Europe

- **Hardware for End Users:** Lenovo, Apple and Microsoft are gaining ground.
- **Software for End Users:** Salesforce is gaining substantial ground, more distantly followed by Workday.
- **Hardware for Data Centers:** Dell EMC, Cisco and IBM have emerged as key players.
- **Software for Data Centers:** VMWare and Red Hat are capturing new mindshare.

# Taking Action with These Insights





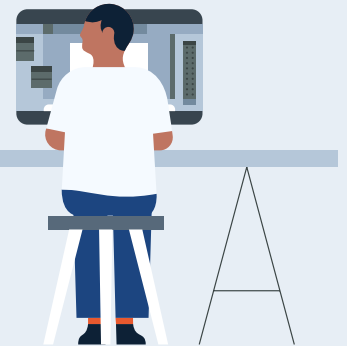
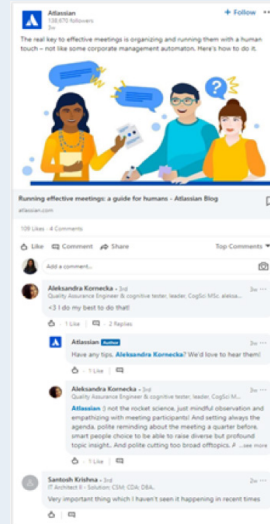
## The Tech Buying Journey has Evolved: What your customers need from you today

### The Technology Marketer's Challenge.

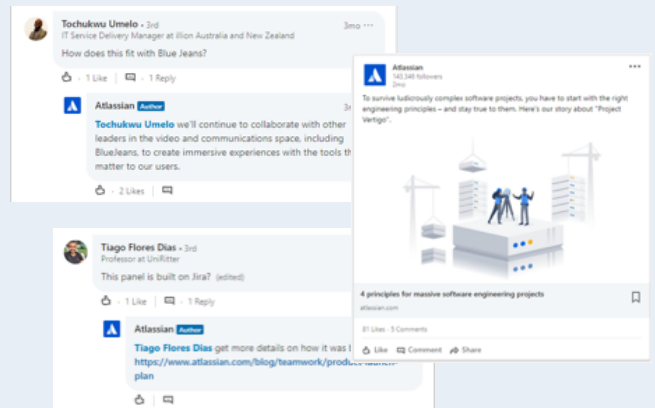
In developing this research initiative and subsequent insights, we are well aware of what today's marketers of technology are up against. Many of the challenges are external — because the technology buying process has long been a complicated one. But there are also internal ones. Maybe your roadblocks are organizational silos at your own company. Perhaps the competition to interact with your customer across many platforms is resulting in less meaningful audience connections. It could be that your organization is suffering from tools, data management and reporting overload. Likely, it's a combination of all of these challenges!

### But there is good news.

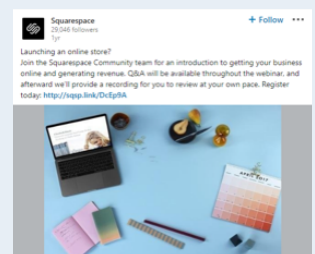
- It's clear what technology buyers want. They are looking for strategic communication where you demonstrate how your tech fits into their existing stack, how it impacts their day-to-day business operations and how your tech will impact their bottom line.
- They want you to help them formulate their needs, but feel engagement at this stage is lacking.
- The Buying Committee is diverse. IT remains king but end-users are growing in importance, as is finance/procurement.
- To target them, technology companies are increasingly using LinkedIn to connect to technology communities, share awareness-raising content across the buying committee, and demonstrate responsiveness and service levels. This is now setting the standard for engagement.
- The Buying Committee is always buying. Are you ready with the right technology investment information, in the right places?



**Engage with your target IT decision makers. Show them what service levels they can expect from you. Drive them to your website and provide them with the right resources – how does your Tech integrate? What is your customer service like?**



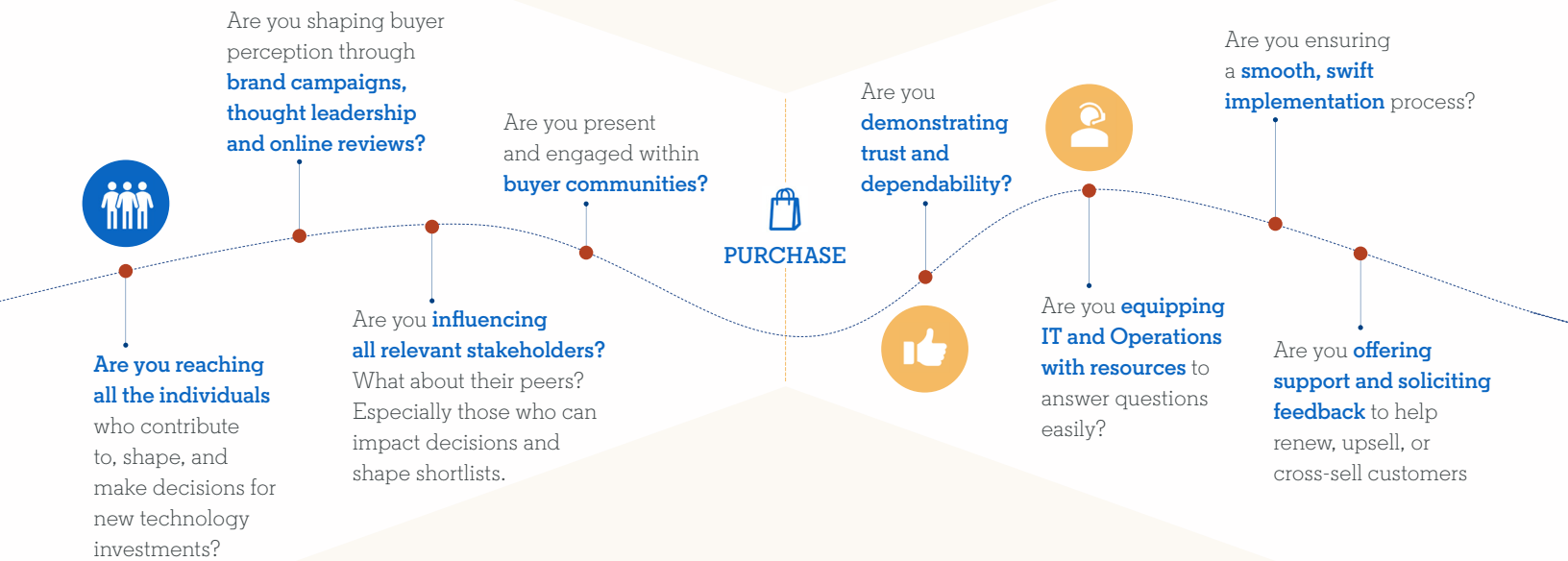
**Offer end-users ways to learn more about your functionality.**



# Are You Part of the New Tech Buying Journey?



Follow these guidelines to help win over new buyers and gain the loyalty and support of existing customers.



**Extra Credit:**

- How is thought leadership helping to enhance your brand's reputation and exposure to business decision-makers?
- Are you enabling a successful customer journey?
- Are you measuring customer lifetime value versus focusing on pre-sale metrics?

**Company Size (Employees):**

11-1000 employees | 50%

1000-10,000 employees | 21%

10,000+ employees | 29%

**Seniority Level:** Senior IC/Manager+**Countries Represented:**US, Canada, Great Britain, Netherlands,  
France, Germany, China, India, Australia,  
New Zealand, Singapore, Brazil and Mexico**Fielding Date:** August 2018**Survey Length:** 24 questions**Margin of Error:**

Total sample: +/- 1.3%

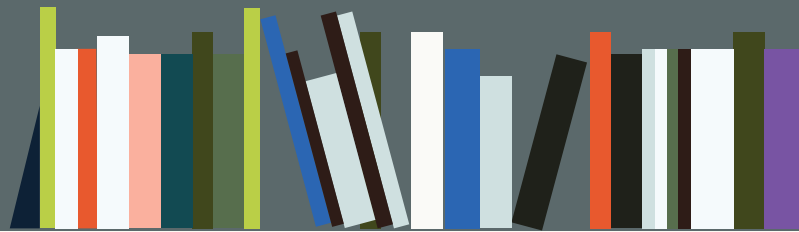
Sub-category ranges: +/- 2.5%

**Geography Spread:**

21% NAMER; 33% Europe;

36% APAC; 11% LATAM

# Methodology



The findings outlined in this report are powered by insights gathered from 13,817 global professionals who researched, purchased, implemented, managed, renewed or influenced a hardware or software purchase at their organization within the last 3 months. 5,241 of these individuals bought, implemented, managed, or renewed these business technologies.

**Linked in**