

UNDERSTANDING CHANGING BUYER BEHAVIOR: Marketing Priorities for Improving Engagement

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This abbreviated summary highlights some of the most significant findings of ITSMA's *How Buyers Choose Survey, 2017*. A more in-depth analysis can be found in the full report <https://www.itsma.com/research/understanding-changing-buyer-behavior-marketing-priorities-improving-engagement/>

How buyers choose in 2018

- In the connected economy, B2B buyers want to engage with companies that provide **highly tailored ideas and information** oriented to their specific business, industry, role, and situation.
- In response to rising expectations, B2B marketers are moving as fast as possible to integrate the data, tools, and processes required to market to **segments of one**.
- As marketing organizations **transform for the digital future**, however, there remains a gap between near-term potential and current reality.

Source: ITSMA, How Buyers Choose Survey, 2017

How Buyers Choose Survey 2017 | Abbreviated Summary

Marketing with the 4 P's

ITSMA's *2017 How Buyers Choose Survey* digs deep into buyer preferences for content and engagement with providers of business and technology services and solutions.

Based on an extensive survey with more than 400 buyers of high value solutions, this report provides essential data and insight on the challenges and opportunities that B2B marketers face to improve engagement.



Personalized



Proactive



People influenced



Proven

Most important are the new 4 P's of B2B marketing. As marketers transform, they must accelerate investments in customer and market insight to enable increasingly tailored marketing based on priority topics and tactics for each potential buyer and account.

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Personalized: Buyers want innovative ideas focused on their specific issues and needs



Personalized

When you were doing your initial research for your most recent solution purchase, what **three attributes were most important** to you regarding the information you found? (Rank order 1st, 2nd, 3rd) % of respondents (N=417)



Note: Respondents were asked to rank order first three attributes.
Source: ITSMA, How Buyers Choose Survey, 2017

Proactive: New ideas that add value are essential during the initial phase of the buying process



Proactive

89%

of buyers view content, **especially thought leadership**, as critical or important during the early stage of the buying process.

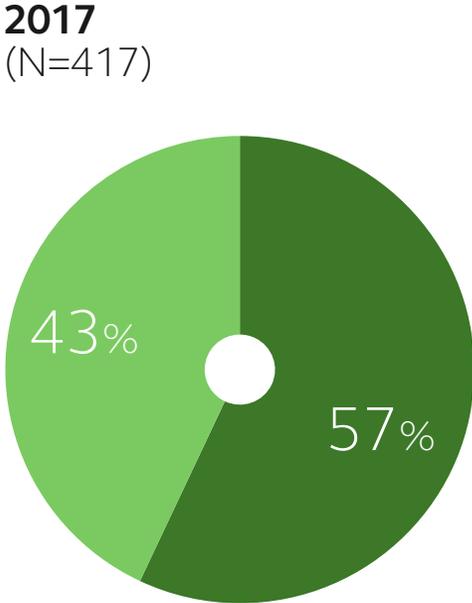
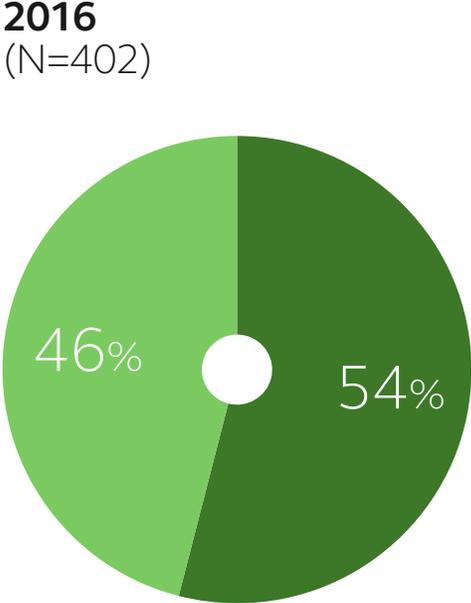
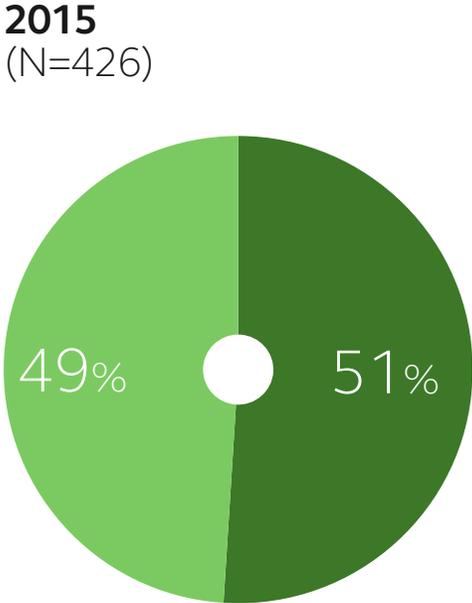
Source: ITSMA, How Buyers Choose Survey, 2017, % of respondents (N=417)

People influenced: Amid the rush to digital, offline time with peers remains essential



People influenced

When you are keeping up with your industry, business insights, and/or technology trends, approximately what percentage of the time do you spend online vs. offline? Mean % of time



- Online**
(internet search/
webinars/social media)
- Offline**
(print publications,
in-person events, meetings,
discussions with peers/
colleagues, etc.)

Source: ITSMA, How Buyers Choose Survey, 2017

Proven: Buyers prioritize providers with accessible experts and third-party validation



Proven

Most effective proof points:

- Subject matter experts who are available for conversations, meetings, and workshops
- Third-party validation
- Proof of concept
- Customer case studies
- Knowledgeable salespeople
- Referrals from peers and colleagues

Less effective proof points:

- Global presence
- Online customer reviews (social proof)
- Robust website
- A client list consisting of Fortune 1000 companies
- Interviews and articles in the general, business, and trade press/media
- Industry awards

Source: ITSMA, How Buyers Choose Survey, 2017, % of respondents (N=417)



SAP **personalizes** content and campaigns based on uses industry, account, and individual buyer insights



Results

- Pipeline growth and acceleration
- Closed business
- Increased C-level engagement
- Improved marketing and sales alignment



Cognizant takes a **proactive** approach by prioritizing collaborative innovation



Results

- Digital innovation spaces in four major cities globally
- Integrated teams to develop and prototype solutions
- Acceleration of new digital business



IBM uses **people influence** with client-originated content



Results

- Client-originated articles, videos, and presentations out-performs other IBM content
- Client participation improves relationships and increased satisfaction with IBM



Unisys **proves value** with client advocates and case studies



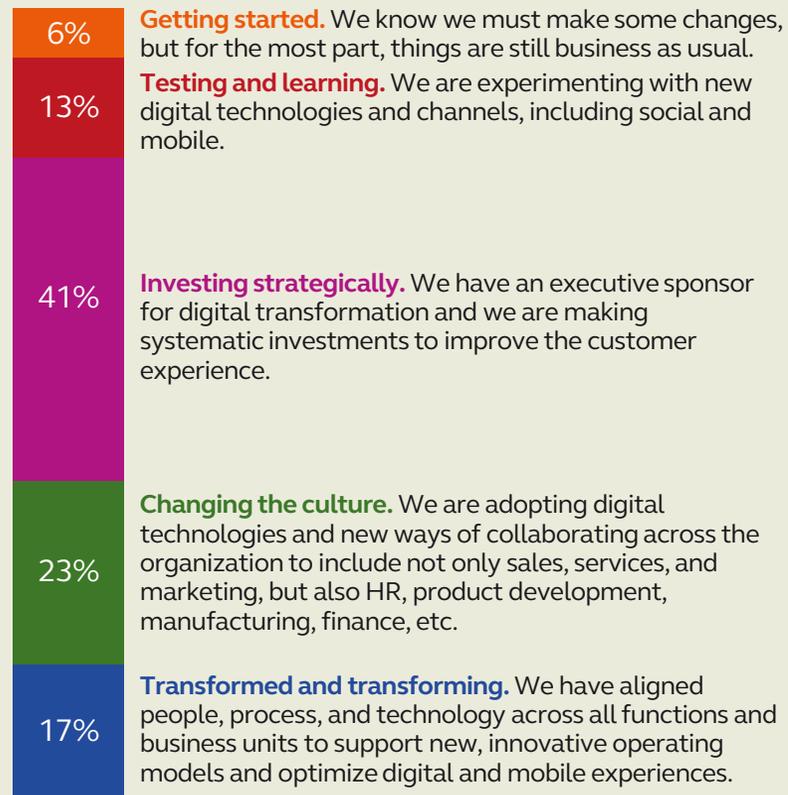
Results

- Closed-loop client feedback process to accelerate satisfaction, loyalty, and advocacy
- 100+ companies are advocating for Unisys, half publicly with attribution

Additional research highlights:

Status of digital transformation

How would you characterize the current status of digital transformation at your company?
% of respondents (N=417)



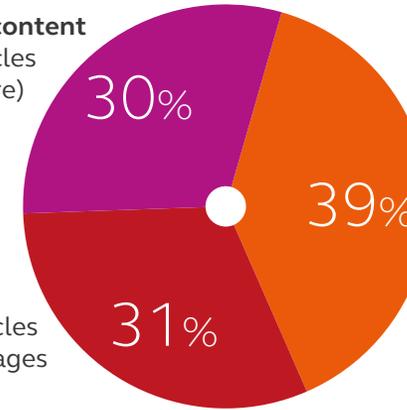
Source: ITSMA, How Buyers Choose Survey, 2017

Content length preferences

Approximately what percentage of your time do you spend consuming content of varying lengths?
% of time
(N=417)

Deep-dive, long-form content
(e.g., white papers/articles that are 8 pages or more)

Medium-form content
(e.g., white papers/articles that are more than 3 pages but less than 8 pages)



Short-form content
(e.g., bite-sized summaries, infographics, white papers/articles that are 3 pages or less)

Selecting the shortlist: decision criteria

When deciding which solution providers to include on your shortlist, which criteria were “table stakes,” meaning they are must-haves but don’t differentiate one solution provider from another, and which are the deciding factors? % of respondents (N=417)



Methodology and demographics

Web-Based Survey



September 2017



Respondents were from six countries/regions:

- United States
- United Kingdom
- France
- Germany
- Nordics
- Benelux

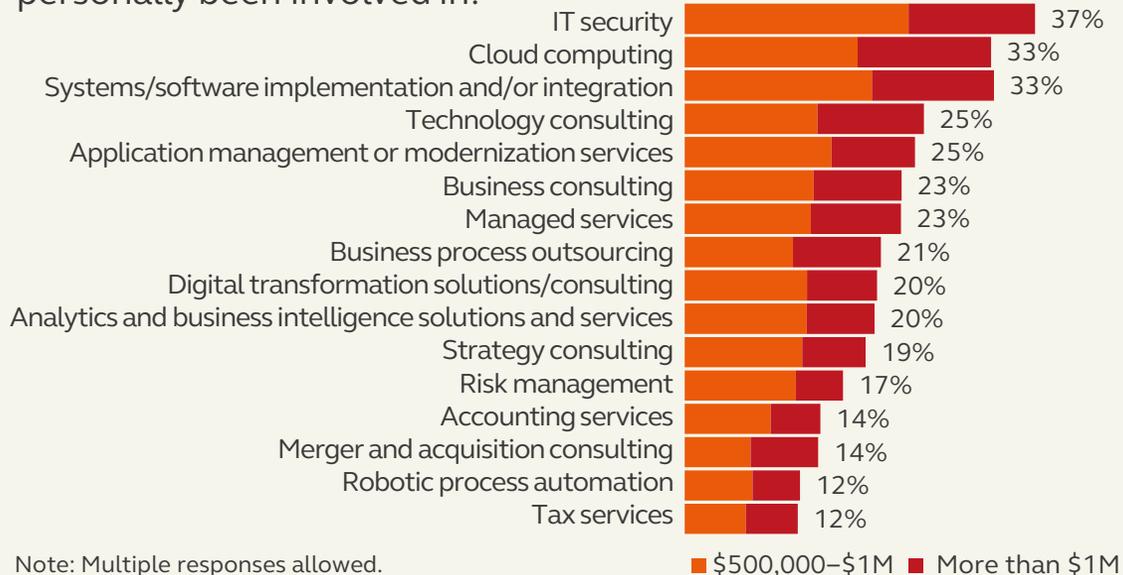


417 Survey respondents



Six types of data analysis:
By solution type, country/region, role, title, company size, and industry

Which of the following types of solution purchases have you personally been involved in?

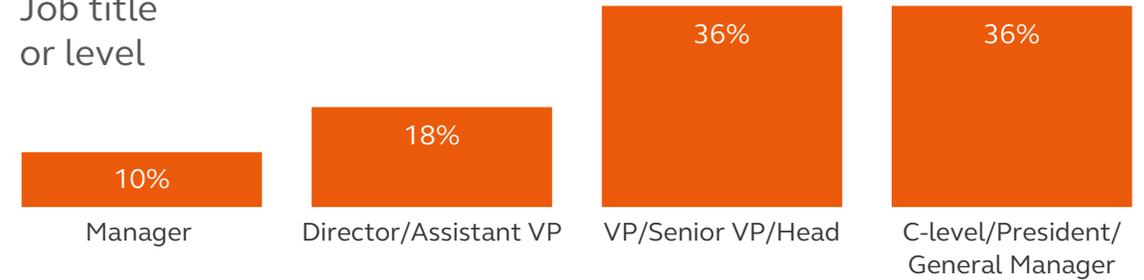


Note: Multiple responses allowed.

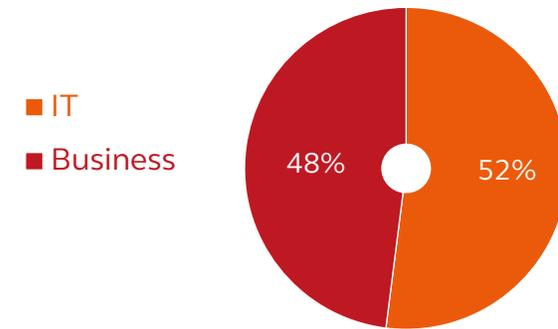
Source: ITSMA, How Buyers Choose Survey, 2017

Which of the following best describes your ...

Job title or level



Job role



Approximately, what is your company's annual revenue (or operating budget if government)?



Want to learn more?

Here's what is included in the full study:

	Slide
Executive summary	3
Methodology and respondent demographics	33
Detailed findings	41
Crosstabs	66
By solution type	66
By country	88
By job role	114
By title	138
By size of company	162
By industry	183

The report is available for no additional fee to current ITSMA members and for sale at non-member prices to all others.
<https://www.itsma.com/research/understanding-changing-buyer-behavior-marketing-priorities-improving-engagement/>



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