

2019

Smart Marketing for Engineers®

GETTING THE MOST VALUE FROM
YOUR MARKETING EFFORTS

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Introduction

Today's industrial marketers are tasked with not only understanding the industry's shift towards online and content marketing, but also how to use these new tactics to effectively reach engineers. They need to understand what content engineers consume, why they look for it, and how they find it.

While research exists in the consumer and broad B2B marketing space, there is a gap in taking a deeper dive into this area to educate and inform marketers looking to target highly technical audiences.

Therefore, TREW Marketing and IEEE GlobalSpec partnered to conduct a survey in major regions of the world to learn critical marketing information from technical professionals such as:

- Where and when they seek information for products, services, and technologies.
- The type of content they prefer.
- If vendors' "generosity" with content correlates to their consideration of the vendor in a purchase process.
- How many pages deep they will go in an online search to find what they need.
- If their perception of vendors' websites correlates to their consideration of the vendor in a purchase process.
- What portion of their buying process happens online.
- Their willingness to complete lead forms online, and which fields they're most likely to complete.
- How they use content throughout the buying process.
- When they prefer to speak to a salesperson, and how many interactions they have with them.

Top 10 Findings

1. Engineers' preferred content types are datasheets, case studies, and product/how-to videos.
2. Engineers value online content sources most, primarily vendor websites and search engines.
3. Nearly 50 percent of engineers subscribe to two to three e-newsletters.
4. Over 90 percent of engineers surveyed are more likely to do business with companies that regularly produce new and current content.
5. For the majority of engineers, a company's website has considerable impact on their brand perceptions.
6. The four fields engineers are most likely to complete on a web form are work email address, company, first name and last name.
7. Over 40 percent of engineers expect to be contacted within 24 hours after completing a form on a vendor's website. Younger engineers have even higher expectations, with 82 percent expecting to be contacted within 48 hours.
8. Nearly 60 percent of the buying process happens online for the majority of engineers.
9. During the buying process, engineers are doing many activities online, from early research to vendor qualification and even narrowing down a short list of vendors for consideration.
10. Most engineers have three to four interactions with a vendor before communicating with them directly.

Survey Findings

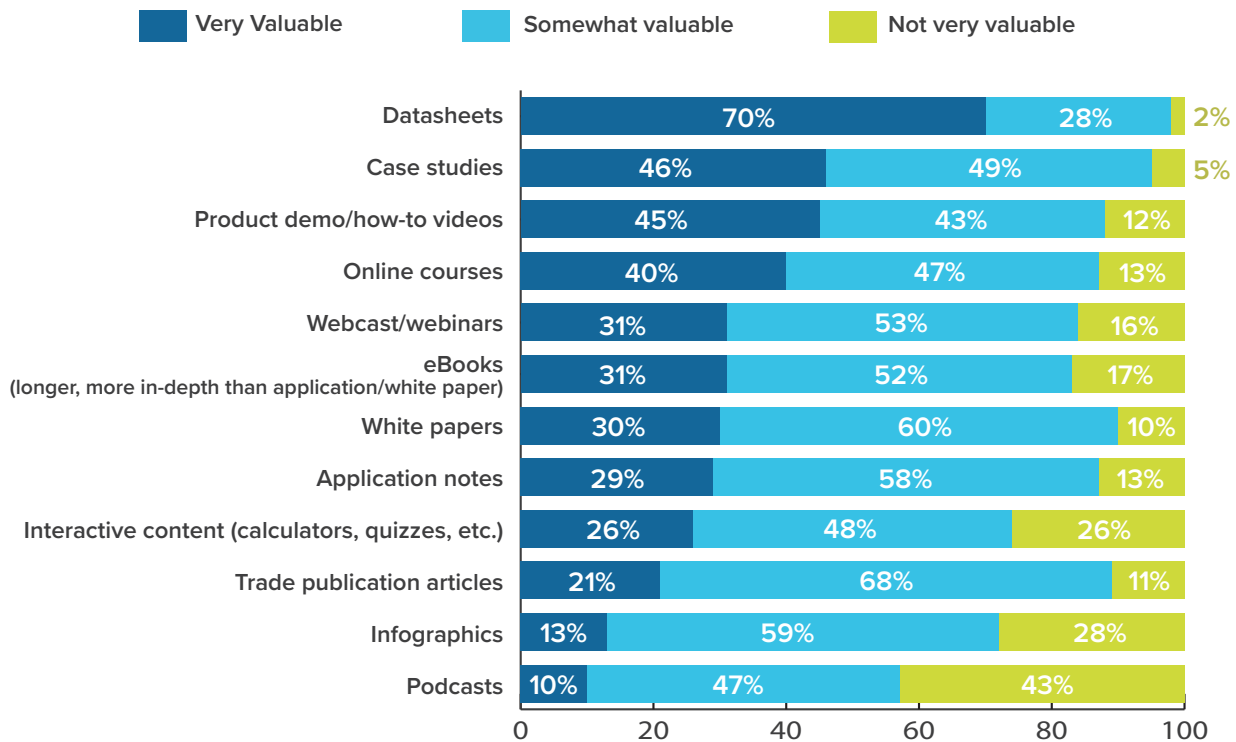
ENGINEERS' CONTENT PREFERENCES

The content type that engineers find most valuable is datasheets, followed by case studies and product demo/how-to videos.

Engineers in South America and India/Asia/Russia place more value on case studies than their peers in the U.S. and Canada.

Engineers under 35 and between 46-55 are more likely to value product demo/how to videos.

How valuable are the following types of content when researching the latest engineering technologies, industry trends and products or services?



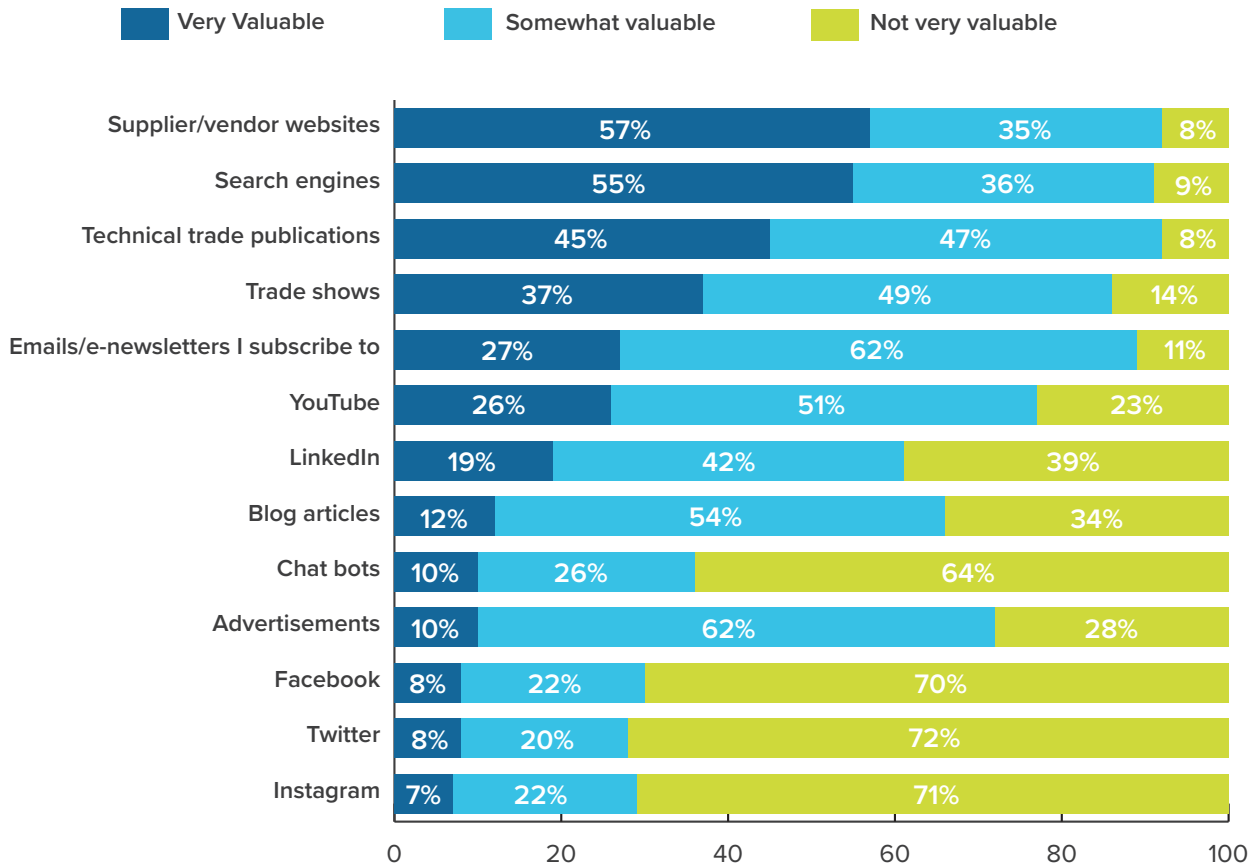
Survey Findings

ENGINEERS' CONTENT PREFERENCES

Engineers' most valued information sources are online — supplier/vendor websites and search engines. It's also interesting to note that while many marketers feel that trade show involvement is declining, engineers do value trade shows and trade publications.

In contrast to engineers in the U.S./Canada, their peers in South America/Mexico value technical trade publications (54 percent) equally to supplier/vendor websites. Additionally, they value emails/e-newsletters (40 percent) more than trade shows (29 percent). And unlike engineers in both regions, in India/Asia/Russia, engineers' most valued content type is search engines (58 percent).

How valuable are the following sources when seeking information on the latest engineering technologies, industry trends and products or services?



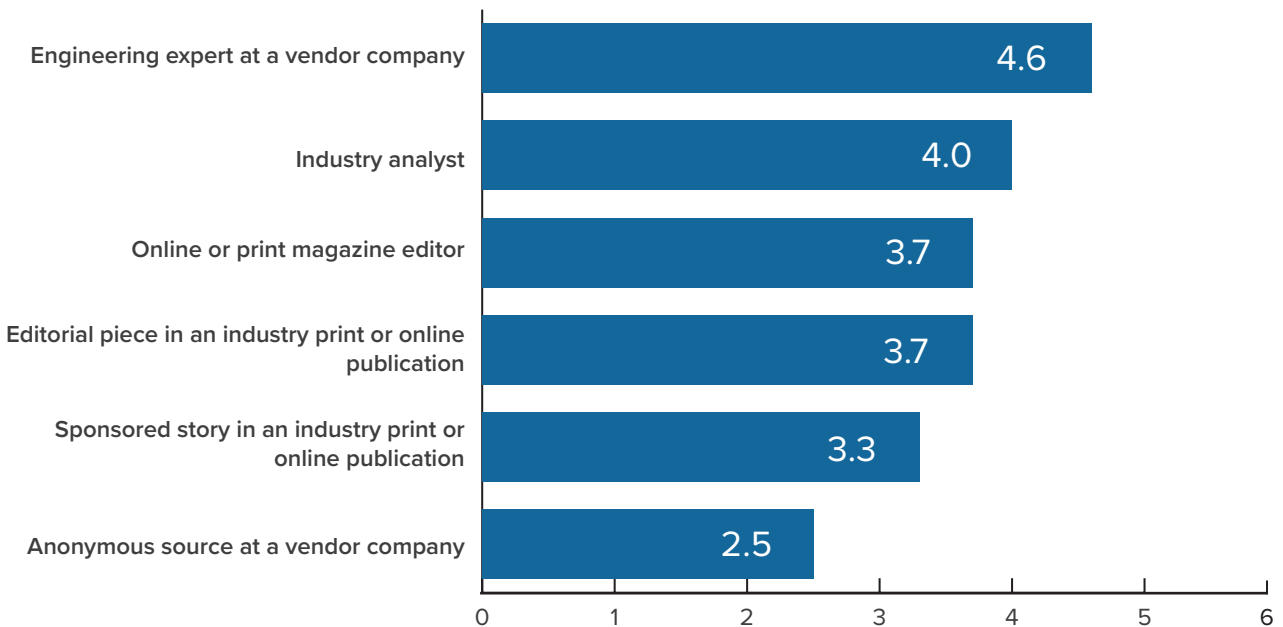
Survey Findings

ENGINEERS' CONTENT PREFERENCES

As previous research has shown, engineers most trust content written by an engineering expert at a vendor company (4.6/6).

The next two most trusted types of content are written by third parties: industry analysts (4/6) and magazine editors (3.7/6).

Rank your level of trust in content that is written or published by the following, where a rank of 6 is your highest level of trust, and a rank of 1 is your lowest.

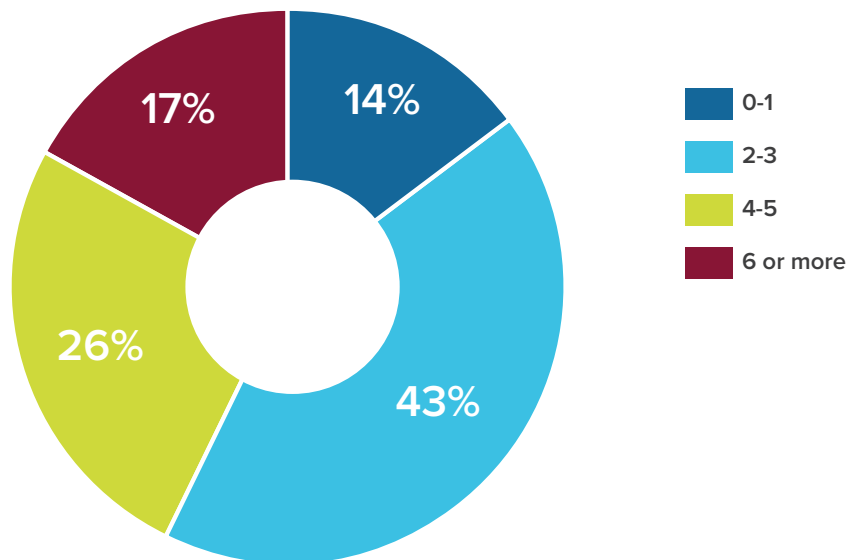


Survey Findings

ENGINEERS' CONTENT PREFERENCES

Most engineers subscribe to two to three newsletters, and 26 percent subscribe to four or more. The younger the engineer, the fewer e-newsletters they subscribe to, with 54 percent of the youngest engineers subscribing to two to three e-newsletters vs. the oldest age group, where 50 percent subscribe to four or more.

How many e-newsletters do you subscribe to?



Survey Findings

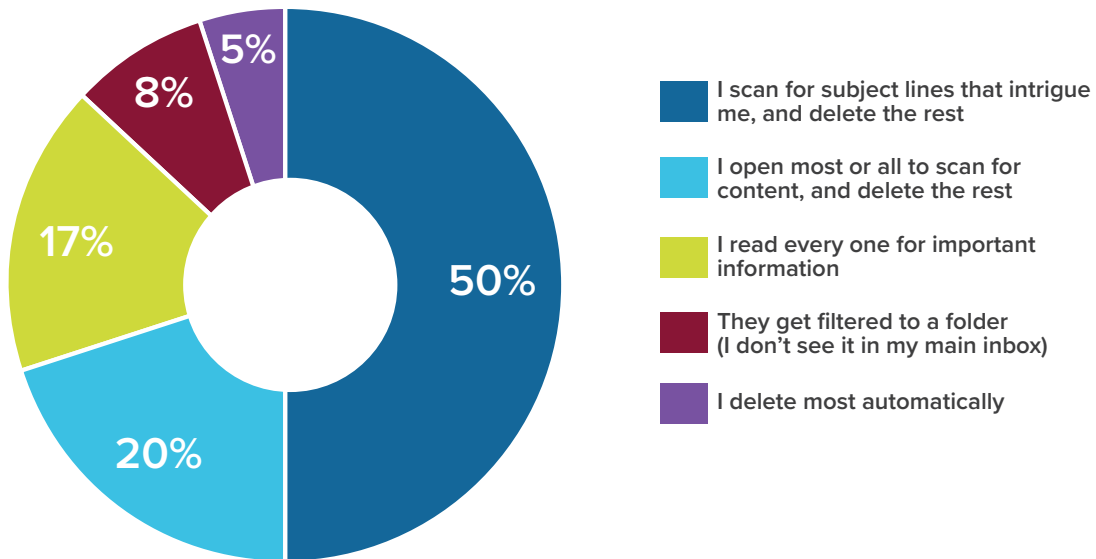
ENGINEERS' CONTENT PREFERENCES

When they receive e-newsletters in their inbox, 50 percent of engineers scan for subject lines that intrigue them and delete the rest. 37 percent open most or all to scan for content or read every one.

In South America/Mexico and India/Asia/Russia, engineers are three times as likely to read every email for important information vs. their peers in the U.S.

Engineers age 36-45 (59 percent) are more likely than other engineers to scan subject lines of e-newsletters that intrigue them and delete the rest, and they are the most likely (9 percent) to delete most messages automatically.

How do e-newsletters behave in your inbox? Consider the ones you subscribe to and trust and check the option that best fits.

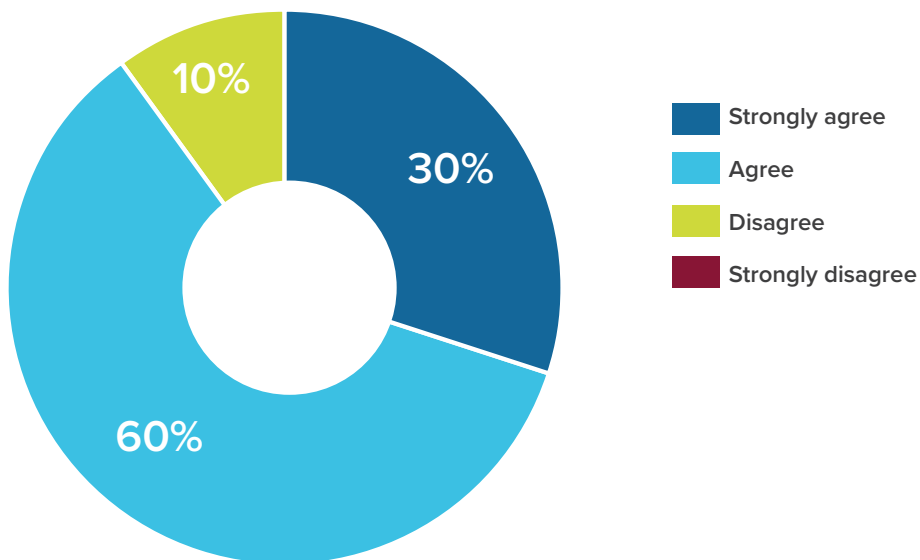


Survey Findings

ENGINEERS' CONTENT PREFERENCES

90 percent of engineers are more likely to do business with companies that regularly produce new and current content. If you've been looking for a sign to invest time and resources into content, this is it.

Agree or disagree: you are more likely to do business with a company that regularly produces new and current content?

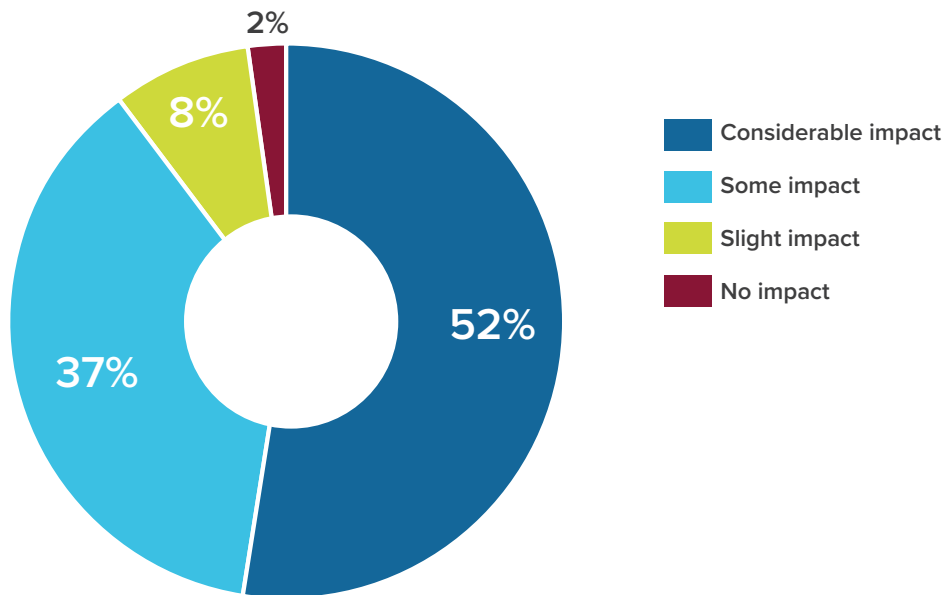


Survey Findings

ENGINEERS' SEARCH AND ONLINE PREFERENCES

For the majority of engineers (52 percent), a company's website has considerable impact on their perceptions of them as a credible, technically competent vendor. 37 percent said the website has some impact.

What impact does a company's website have on your perception of them as a credible, technically competent vendor?



Survey Findings

ENGINEERS' SEARCH AND ONLINE PREFERENCES

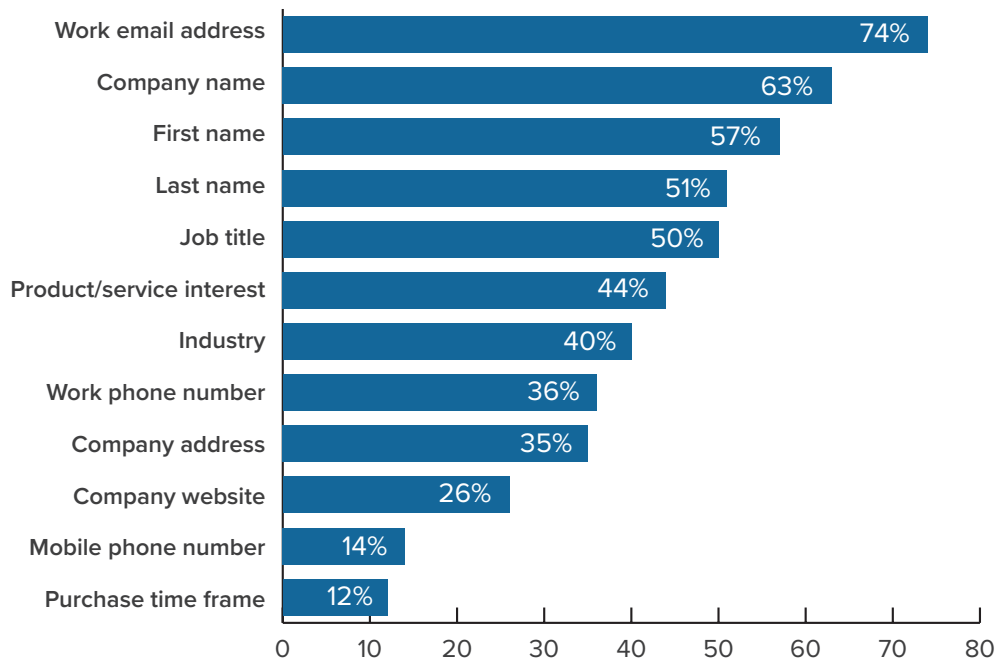
The four form fields engineers are most likely to complete on a company's website are work email address (74 percent), company (63 percent), first name (57 percent) and last name (51 percent). The fields they are least likely to complete are purchase time frame (12 percent) and mobile phone number (14 percent). Overall, engineers in the U.S. are more likely to complete these five form fields than engineers in other regions.

For engineers in India/Asia/Russia, other than work email address (55 percent), the majority are unlikely to complete any other lead form fields.

The majority of engineers across age groups indicate they are likely to complete work email address, company name and first name. The youngest engineers are likely to complete the top five fields, and the older the engineer, the less likely they are to provide their last name.

Engineers at small companies are much less likely to complete company name (51 percent) compared to their peers at larger companies (67 percent).

When completing a form on a website, which of the following fields are you most likely to complete in order to access online content? (Select all that apply.)



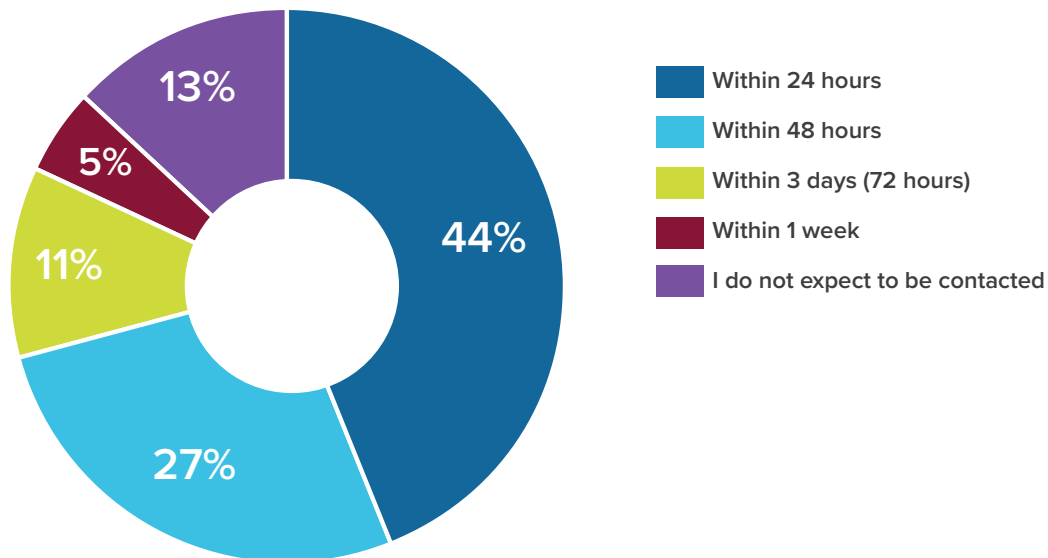
Survey Findings

ENGINEERS' SEARCH AND ONLINE PREFERENCES

44 percent of engineers expect to be contacted by a vendor within 24 hours after completing a form on their website, and 27 percent expect to be contacted within 48 hours.

The youngest (25-35) and oldest (56-65) engineers have the highest expectations for when a vendor should contact them after completing a lead form, with 82 percent and 80 percent, respectively, expecting to hear within 48 hours, compared to 66 percent on average for the middle two age groups.

After completing a form on a vendor's website, how soon do you expect to be contacted by the company to thank you for your interest and offer further, related resources?



Survey Findings

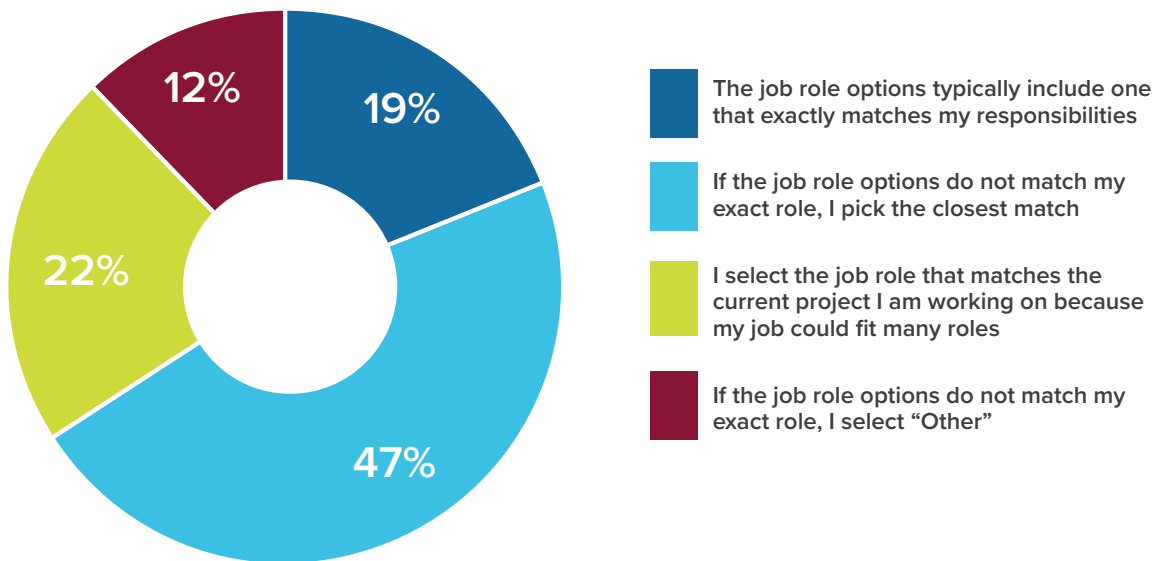
ENGINEERS' SEARCH AND ONLINE PREFERENCES

When completing a form on a vendor's website, most engineers (47 percent) indicate they identify their job role by picking the one that is the closest match if the job role options do not match their exact role. Their next closest selection is to choose the job role that matches the current project they're working on (22 percent) as their job could fit many roles.

The majority of engineers in U.S./Canada (59 percent) indicate they identify their job role by picking the one that is the closest match if the job role options do not match their exact role. Most engineers in South America/Mexico (40 percent) indicate they select the job role that matches their current project. Engineers in India/Asia/Russia are split nearly evenly in how they identify their job role on vendors' web forms.

Engineers at small companies with up to 99 employees (33 percent) are twice as likely as engineers at the largest companies with more than 100 employees (16 percent) to choose the job role that matches the current project they're working on as their job could fit many roles. Engineers at the largest companies are more likely than any other group to pick the closest match.

When completing a form on a vendor's website, how do you identify your job role?



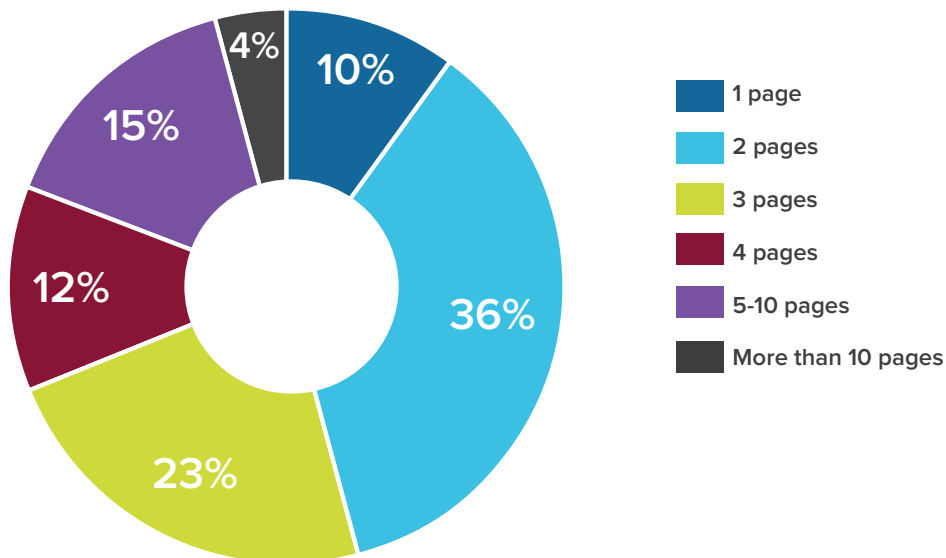
Survey Findings

ENGINEERS' SEARCH AND ONLINE PREFERENCES

Over half of all engineers (54 percent) indicate they go three pages or deeper in their research when using a search engine, and nearly 20 percent will go five or more pages deep.

Looking regionally, there are some interesting differences in search behavior. Engineers in India/Russia/Asia search through the fewest pages, with 52 percent indicating they only go one to two pages deep in their search. South America/Mexico had the most engineers indicate they go more than five pages (32 percent). And in the U.S./Canada, nearly four times more engineers (24 percent) will go four pages or deeper than will stop on page one (7 percent).

When searching for information on a topic using a search engine, how many pages of results are you willing to view before you select one or start your search over?

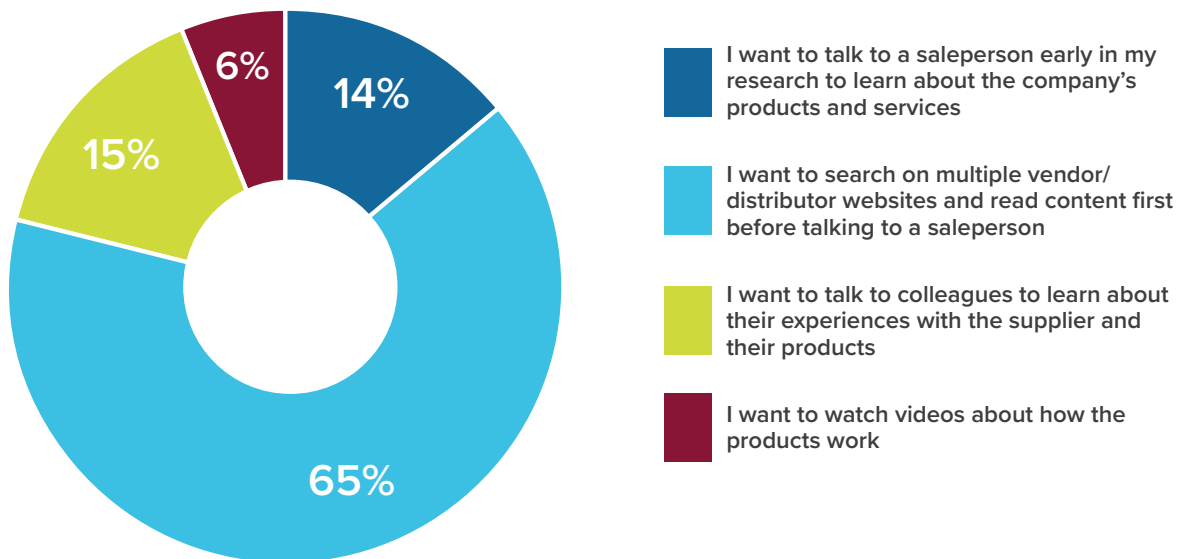


Survey Findings

ENGINEERS' BUYING JOURNEYS

When engineers are in the buying process for a new product or service for work, their top preference is to search on vendor and distributor websites and read content first before talking to a salesperson (65 percent). Only 14 percent prefer to talk to a salesperson early in their research. The oldest engineers have the strongest preference (76 percent) to search on vendor websites before talking to a salesperson. Only three percent of the oldest engineers - the smallest percentage of all age groups – indicate they prefer to watch videos about how products work.

When you are in the buying process for a new product or service for work, which best describes your preference?



Survey Findings

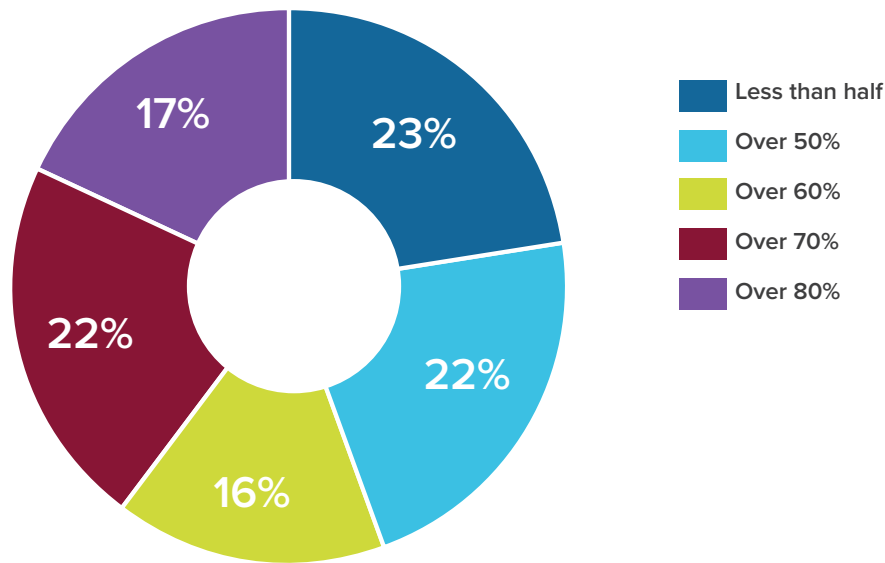
ENGINEERS' BUYING JOURNEYS

For the majority of engineers, nearly 60 percent of the buying process happens online – from early research to the final purchase decision – before they speak to the vendor.

India/Asia/Russia had the most engineers indicate over 70 percent of the buying process happens online (52 percent), while South America/Mexico had the least (28 percent).

Engineers at the largest companies had the highest number (34 percent) indicate less than half the buying process happens online, compared to engineers at smaller companies with less than 1,000 employees (19 percent).

In thinking about the entire buying process for significant purchases you make for work, from early research to the final purchase decision, what percentage of the process happens online before you finally speak to someone at the company?



Survey Findings

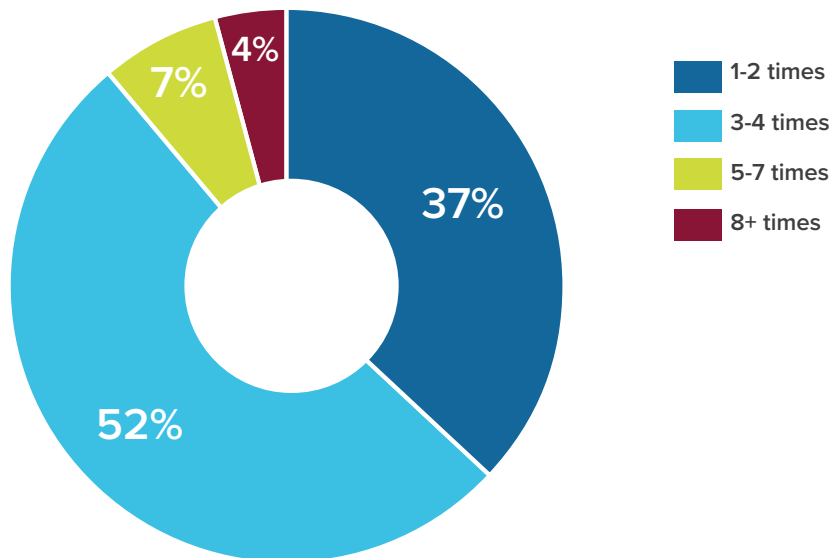
ENGINEERS' BUYING JOURNEYS

52 percent of engineers have an average of three to four interactions with a vendor before communicating with them directly, while 11 percent have five or more interactions. 37 percent have one to two interactions.

Engineers in South America/Mexico have many more interactions with a vendor before communication with them directly, with 74 percent indicating that they have three to four interactions before making contact. In contrast, an average of only 49 percent of engineers in the other regions report the same level of interactions.

Engineers under 45 are more likely (60 percent and 57 percent, respectively) to have three to four interactions with a vendor before communicating with them directly vs. older engineers (51 percent and 49 percent, respectively).

In thinking about your purchase decision process for a significant product or service for work, how many interactions do you typically have with the vendor before communicating directly with the company (e.g., visits to their website, email communication, visiting their trade show booth, attending a webinar, etc.)?

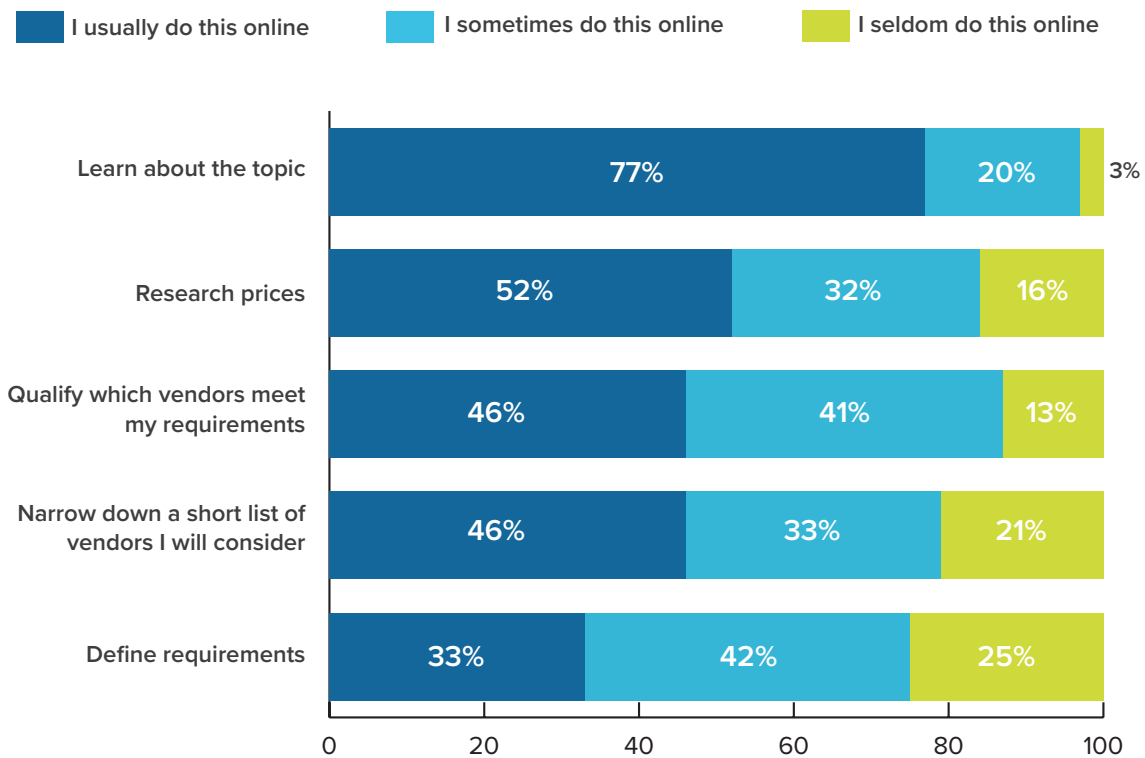


Survey Findings

ENGINEERS' BUYING JOURNEYS

During the buying process, engineers are doing many activities online, from learning about the topic (97 percent), to qualifying which vendors meet requirements (87 percent) and even narrowing down a short list of vendors for consideration (79 percent). Across all possible buying activities, very few engineers (25 percent or less) indicate they seldom did any of these buying activities online.

In thinking about the entire buying process for a significant product or service for work, from early research to the final purchase decision, select how often you do the following activities online.



Survey Findings

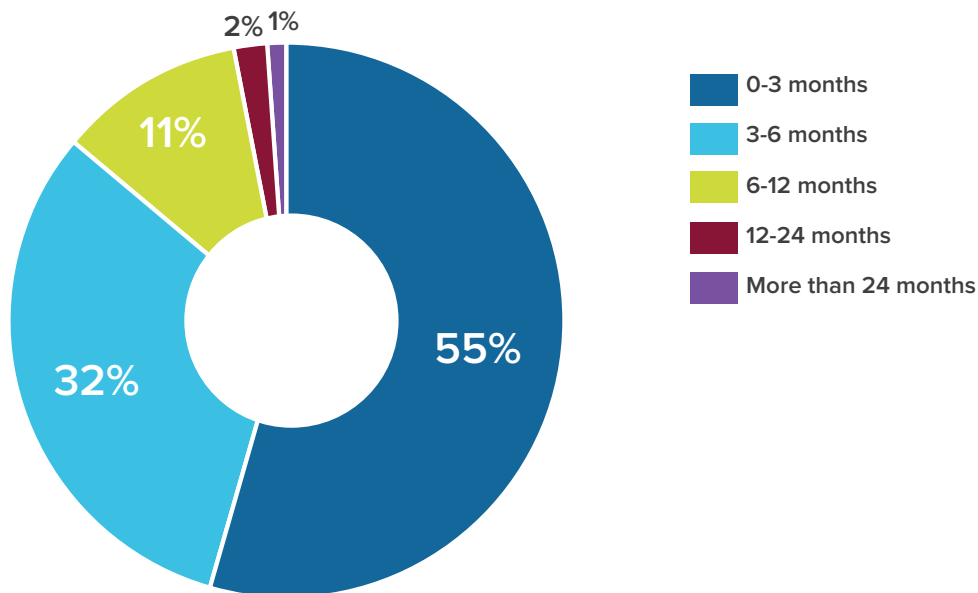
ENGINEERS' BUYING JOURNEYS

The majority of engineers (55 percent) report that the average length of the buying journey is zero to three months. Thirty-two percent say the average purchasing time period is three to six months.

Engineers in the U.S./Canada have the shortest buying cycle, with 50 percent indicating the average time from beginning research to purchase decision is zero to three months vs. 69 percent for their peers in India/Asia/Russia. Similarly, only 34 percent of engineers in the U.S./Canada selected three to six months vs. 43 percent in South America/Mexico.

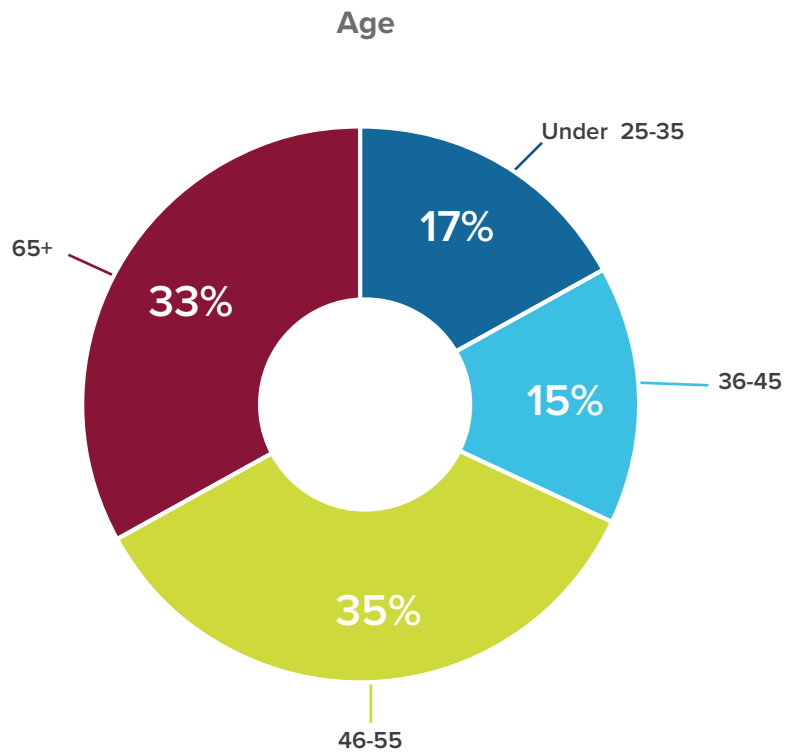
Engineers at smaller companies have slightly shorter buying times, with an average of 63 percent at companies with one to 99 employees selecting zero to three months vs. an average of 47 percent for engineers at companies with 100+ employees.

What is the average time period from when you begin researching a significant product or service for work to when you make a purchase decision?



Appendix

RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS AND METHODOLOGY

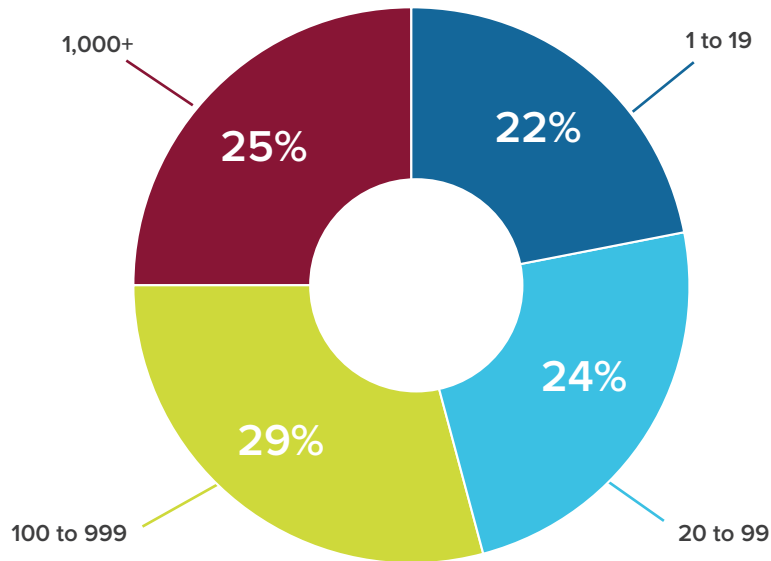


Appendix

RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS AND METHODOLOGY

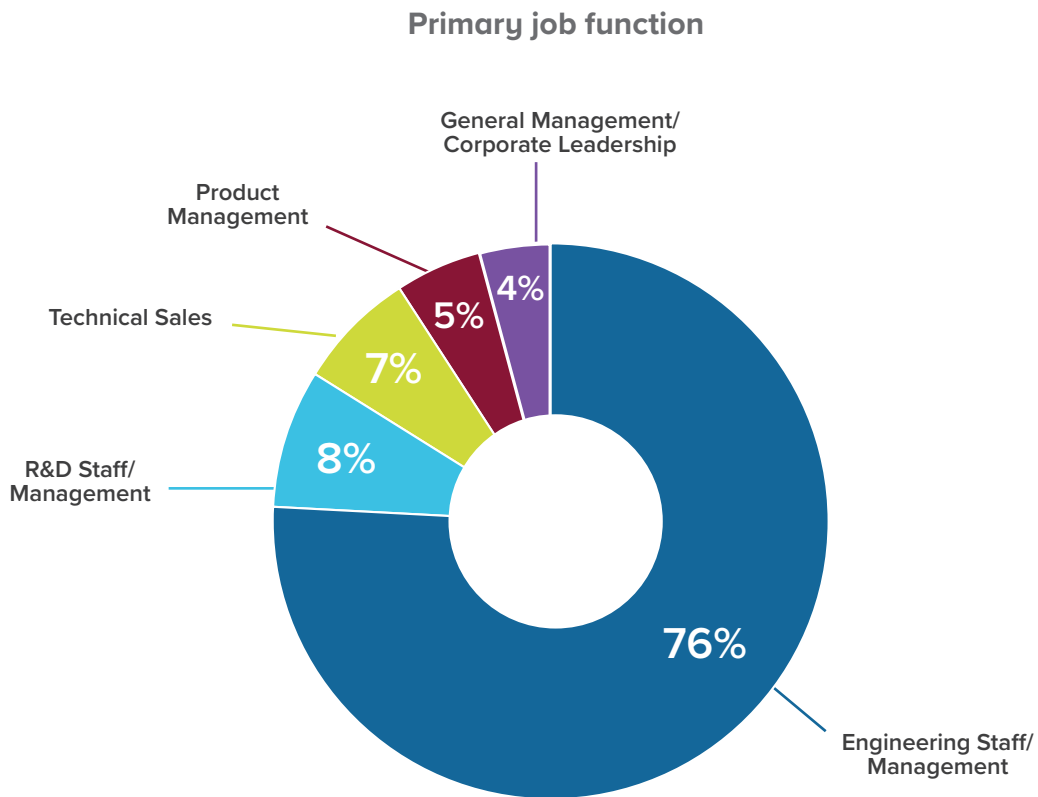
50 percent of the companies surveyed were small companies under 100 employees, 25 percent were mid-size companies with 100-1,000 employees, and 25 percent were large companies with over 1,000 employees.

Company size by number of employees



Appendix

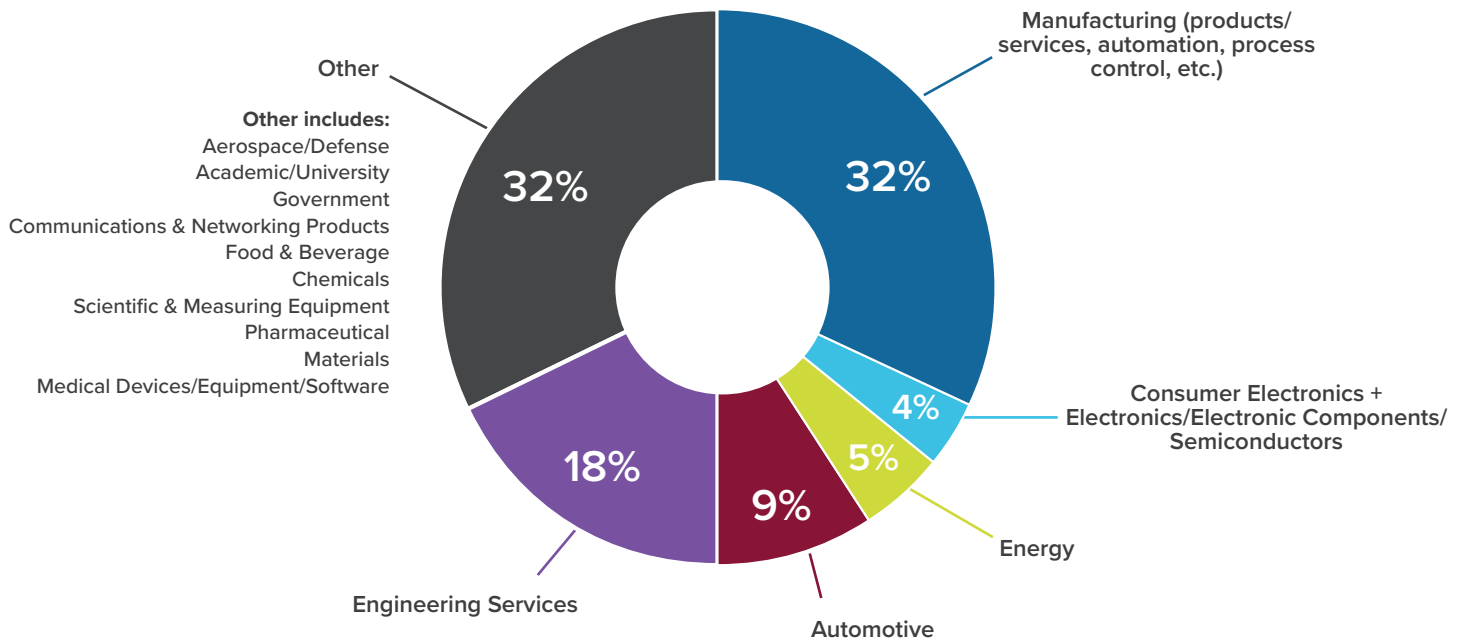
RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS AND METHODOLOGY



Appendix

RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS AND METHODOLOGY

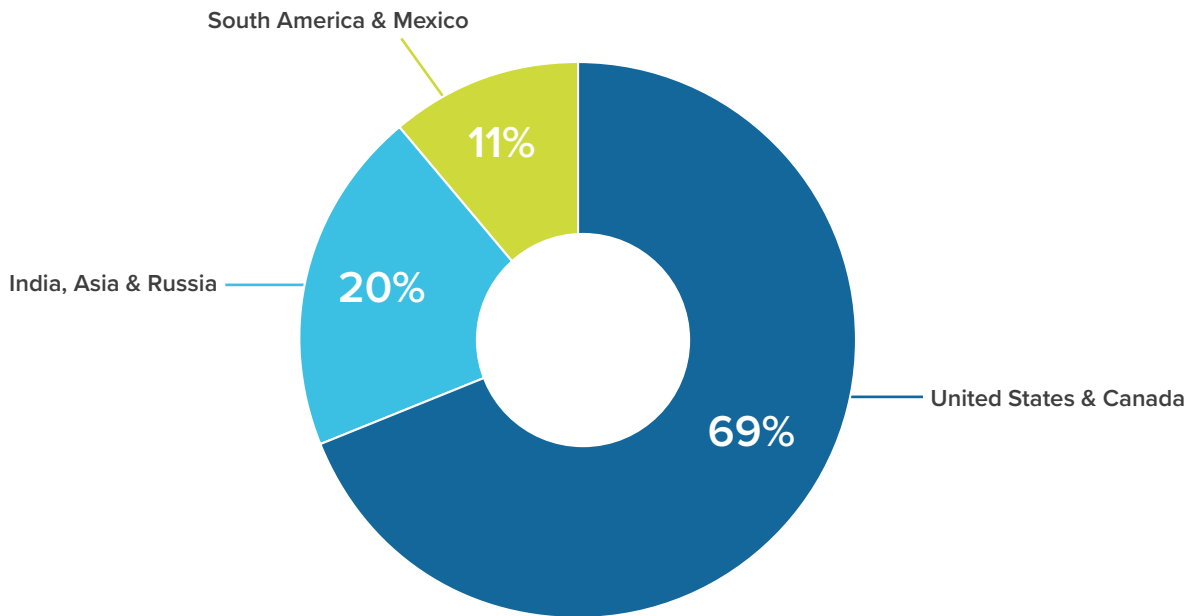
Company's primary industry



Appendix

RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS AND METHODOLOGY

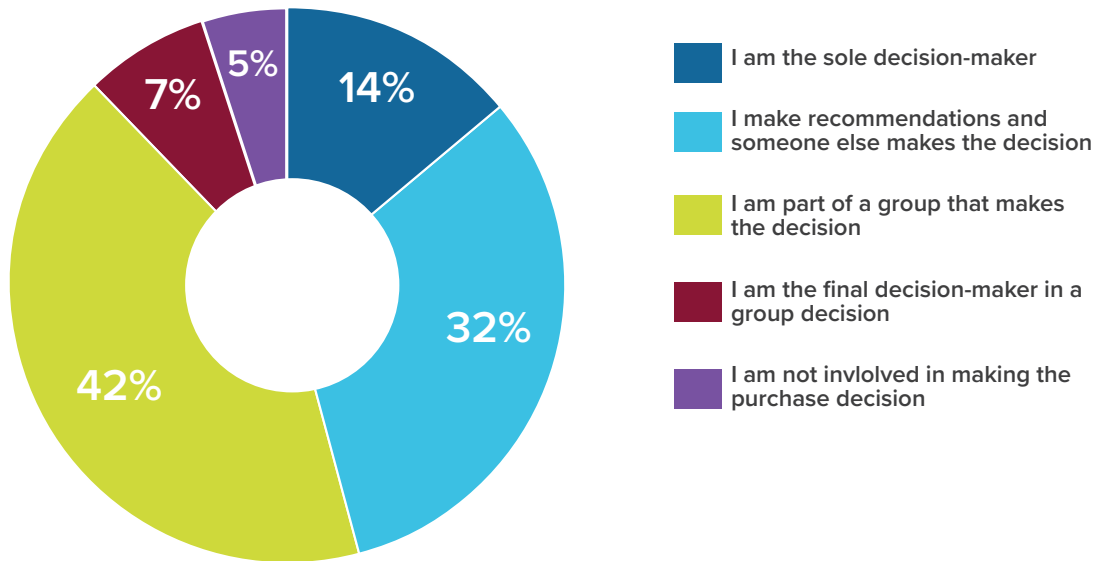
Geographic location



Appendix

RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS AND METHODOLOGY

Which of the following statements best describes your role in making a significant purchase (hardware, software, services) for your department or organization?



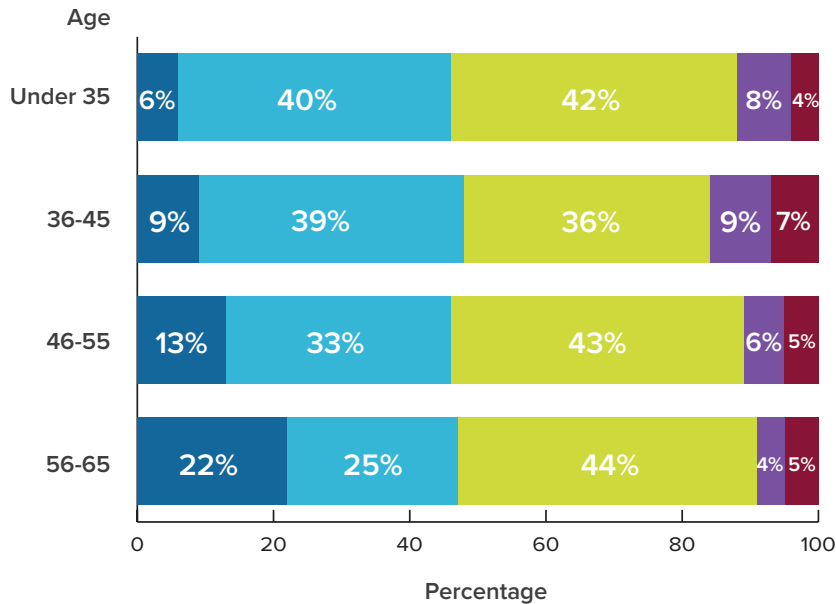
Appendix

RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS AND METHODOLOGY

The oldest engineers, age 56-65, were the most likely (22 percent) to be the sole decision maker vs. the youngest engineers age 25-35 (six percent).

Which of the following statements best describes your role in making a significant purchase (hardware, software, services) for your department or organization?

- I am the sole decision-maker
- I am the final decision-maker in a group decision
- I make recommendations and someone else makes the decision
- I am not involved in making the purchase decision
- I am part of a group that makes the decision



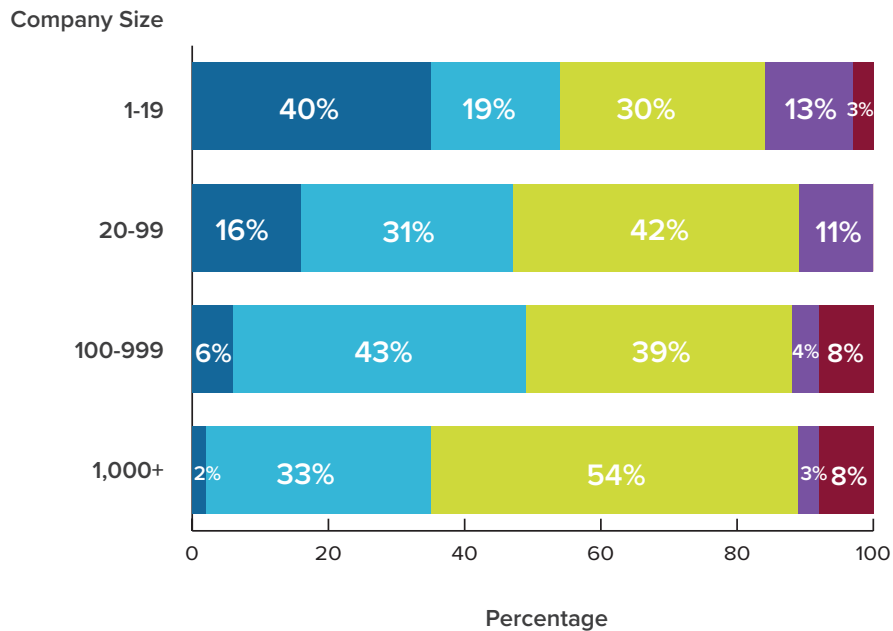
Appendix

RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS AND METHODOLOGY

Engineers at companies with 1,000+ employees are the most likely (55 percent) to be part of a group that makes a decision while their peers at the smallest companies are the most likely to be the sole decision maker (35 percent).

Which of the following statements best describes your role in making a significant purchase (hardware, software, services) for your department or organization?

- I am the sole decision-maker
- I make recommendations and someone else makes the decision
- I am part of a group that makes the decision
- I am the final decision-maker in a group decision
- I am not involved in making the purchase decision



Research Methodology

METHODOLOGY AND SAMPLE

Survey recipients were chosen from the IEEE GlobalSpec database. Respondents were sent an email asking to participate in an eight to nine minute survey, with a link to the online survey questionnaire. The survey was further promoted via company publications, social media, partners and websites.

- Data was collected in July 2018
- Incentive: respondents were entered into a drawing for three \$100 gift cards
- The survey was targeted to technical professionals only across global regions. A total of 354 completed surveys were included in the final data sample after removing disqualifying responses. Due to poor response from Europe and the Middle East/Africa, analysis of these regions were not included in this year's report.

About IEEE GlobalSpec

IEEE GlobalSpec is a provider of data-driven industrial marketing solutions designed to help companies promote their products and grow their businesses.

Our audience of engineers and technical professionals relies on the IEEE GlobalSpec family of brands as a trusted resource for content, community and engagement at all stages of the research, design and purchasing process.

We deliver deep industry intelligence, customized marketing programs and measurable campaign performance.

For more information about IEEE GlobalSpec, visit www.globalspec.com/advertising.

About TREW Marketing

TREW Marketing, headquartered in Austin, Texas, is a full-service marketing firm uniquely serving B2B companies in North America and Europe that target technical markets. With extensive research and deep experience in the embedded, control and automation, test and measurement, and technology industries, TREW Marketing provides full-service marketing services from strategic marketing planning and brand positioning and messaging to content marketing, web redesign, and ongoing execution services that help customers efficiently and effectively achieve their business goals. For teams looking to do marketing in-house, TREW senior staff lead onsite marketing workshops customized to each company's specific needs.



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