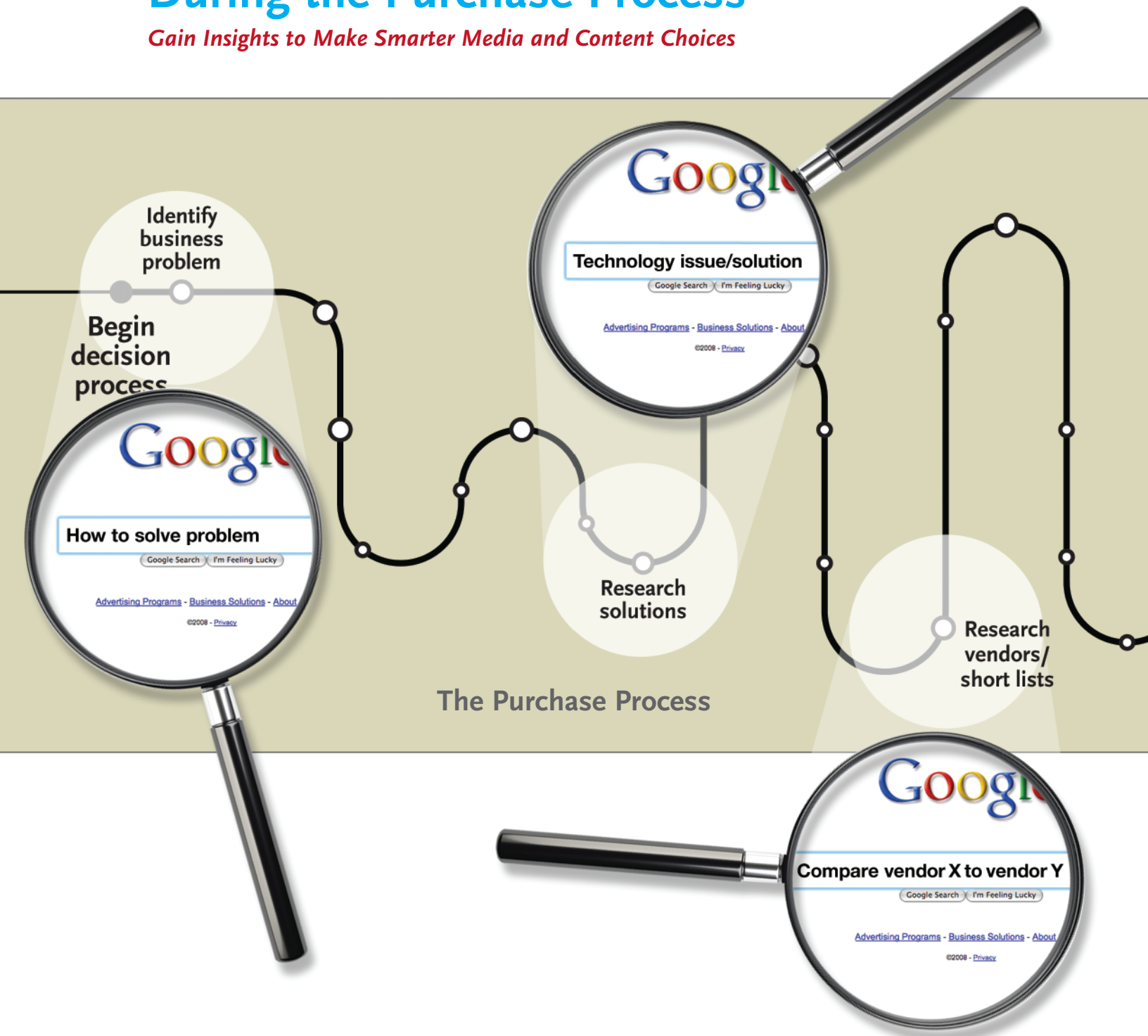Google | **TechTarget** ®
*The IT Media
ROI Experts*

The Google/TechTarget Research Project:
How IT Pros Search Online During the Purchase Process

Gain Insights to Make Smarter Media and Content Choices

Identify business problem

Begin decision process

Google
How to solve problem
(Google Search) (I'm Feeling Lucky)
Advertising Programs - Business Solutions - About
©2008 - Privacy

Google
Technology issue/solution
(Google Search) (I'm Feeling Lucky)
Advertising Programs - Business Solutions - About
©2008 - Privacy

Research solutions

Research vendors/ short lists

The Purchase Process

Google
Compare vendor X to vendor Y
(Google Search) (I'm Feeling Lucky)
Advertising Programs - Business Solutions - About
©2008 - Privacy

The Google/TechTarget Research Project:
How IT Pros Search Online During the Purchase Process
Gain Insights to Make Smarter Media and Content Choices

Table of Contents

Executive Summary and Key Findings

The intention of the Google/TechTarget Research Project is to establish the relationship between search and the various stages of the IT research and purchase process, and to determine the search sites and media types most attractive to IT buyers.

Key Findings

- Search terms differ and specifically reflect various stages of the IT research and purchase process

- Validation of relationship between search and branding and as of this study "lead generation" as well

- Buyer attitudes towards the marketers' lead generation efforts; how and when they want to be contacted

- Utilization of new media: Buyers are highly selective about how they use new media; mobile devices, video and RSS feeds

- Information source preferences: search, IT publisher and vendor sites make the top three

- And, the future of search; as envisioned by IT professionals.

Both Google and TechTarget believe that revealing the mindset of the IT buyer in the context of their purchase process, and aligning this to the key stages of online marketing would put marketers in a better position to make keyword buys, choose content to syndicate, and determine both the optimal selection and scheduling of media and website types. This insight will help marketers more efficiently attract the IT buyer as a target audience with the right media at the right time and in the right mindset.

Understanding the Research and Purchase Process

It's been understood for some time now that the beginning of an IT buyer's process begins with the identification of a business problem in their enterprise. This recognition or "epiphany" sets off a long and often convoluted journey for the buyer; one in which they do not travel alone but, in fact, have several members of their team participating

Executive Summary and Key Findings (continued)

in research, assessing the technology landscape and the competitive set, identifying key vendors and their solutions, trialing vendor solutions and ultimately creating a short list to enable a "team decision" requiring a C-level team member's approval.

Throughout this "buyers' journey" technology marketers have the opportunity to define specific "pain points" that relate to their respective business problems; educate IT professionals on the landscape in general, and then specifically on their own solution; influence prospects toward their brand; lead them to their solution; ultimately capturing them as bonafide leads, and finally to close them as customers.

The Role of Search and Online Marketing

Previous research studies have confirmed that the majority of IT buyers start their journey with online search; however convention has it that what this means for a marketer is that a keyword media plan is the best way to capture the beginning buyer's initial attention and make them aware of any given marketer's solution. Categorically this is considered a branding exercise for the technology marketer and one that search has enabled in that the correct keyword will attract the right buyer and "lead" them to a vendor's website through their results pages, etc.

Our study confirms this is still true; however it also confirms that it doesn't stop there. In fact, technology marketers should be looking more closely at the opportunity a well executed keyword buy has to also capture IT prospects much further along in the buying process.

New "Revelations"

When asked which query word or words are used at various buying stages two key findings emerge.

In the beginning stages of their research buyers are apt to type in two or three keywords vs in later buying stages they will use brief, four to five-word phrases.

Executive Summary and Key Findings (continued)

Specifically, in later stages they will use "compare" and "review" as key search terms with the goal of receiving information related to reviews comparing similar technology solutions.

Implications of a "Desire to Compare"

There are some obvious implications for the IT marketer related to this finding. First and foremost, marketers should be taking an inventory of how many content pieces, i.e., webcasts, white papers, videos, they have available that provide a comparison of their technology to that of their leading competitors.

Attitudinally, marketers must not be averse to any implied risk related to mentioning their competition but should instead take a lead in providing an educated discussion around their technology offering versus their competitor's, and offer this content approach to the buyer in pursuit of a comparative review.

An analysis of TechTarget online campaigns demonstrates that many of the superior performing white papers are ones in which the author compares the solution or blue-print of one provider to that of another.

It then makes sense that an ideal keyword buy will highlight the same phrases survey respondents told us they use, namely "review", "vendor x vs vendor y", "compare vendor or solution x to vendor or solution y".

Another implication is that since buyers are near the end stage of their research process when they use this querying method it is obvious they are not solely good candidates for branding exercises, but rather, they have progressed in their purchase process to the point where they are ready to create a short list of vendors and consequently would entertain being acknowledged as a serious prospect/lead for an enterprise marketer.

Executive Summary and Key Findings (continued)

Marketers should not only entertain using keyword phrases that incorporate "review" or "compare" but also be prepared to have their links presented on results pages ready to offer content on comparative reviews. When a searcher lands on this type of content then additionally the marketer should have registration pages with questions available that focus on identify exactly where the searcher is in their "ready-to-purchase" timeframe.

Another set of survey questions established that "Overall IT professionals are willing to provide their professional contact information later in their technology purchase process when they are ready to make a purchase. They will also provide their contact information if they are receiving editorial, non-vendor information". This finding suggests that search is a logical starting point to both lead generation and for establishing brand awareness.

Conclusions

IT buyers are receptive to new media however whereas their interest in video sites and content is apparently on the rise, as well as use of RSS feeds, our data indicates that they are not yet engaged with mobile search practices. The study identifies the nature of their interest and objections in this area, and also confirms that while search sites in general serve the majority of IT researcher needs and goals, there is still room for improvement.

And, perhaps most importantly, the study validates that search serves a dual marketing function—it assists technology marketers with their branding efforts as well as their lead generation efforts, thus making the ROI on search, and IT technology website media buys, much more compelling.

Given the study validated that 97% of our research panel relies on search and the internet for information sources, this suggests search vendors and third party website publishers must pay increased attention to these needs, and leverage the opportunity to further engage IT researchers in the future.

How would you describe your level of involvement in deciding on technology solutions for your organization?

All respondents were part of the decision-making process. More than 30% of IT professionals say they are part of a decision-making team. This emphasizes the idea that a person doing the research, while potentially not the final decision-maker is, however, very important to the research process.

I am a member of the decision-making team
I have strong influence over the decision
I am responsible for making the final decision
I provide technical advice
I recommend products or vendors
I determine the need

10.1%

| 31.1% | 18.9% | 15.8% | 15.7% | | 8.3% |
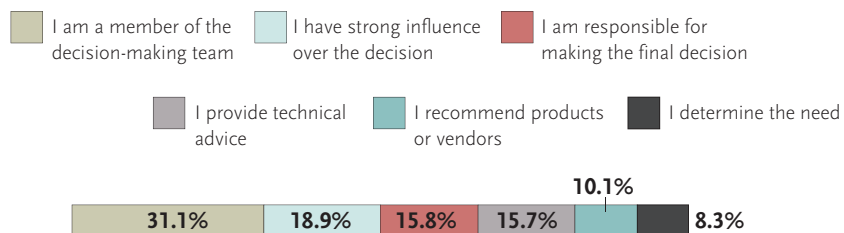
For which of the following technology products or services were you involved in the research or purchase decision making for your organization within the past 12 months?

Over the past year, the products or services that IT professionals were most involved in researching for an enterprise purchase were end-user systems, servers, networking, security and storage.

Category	Percentage
End-user systems (including PC's, laptops, handhelds, thin clients)	45.7%
Servers (including server virtualization)	41.3%
Networking (including LAN, WAN, VoIP)	38.9%
Storage (including backup, SAN, NAS)	35.6%
Business applications (including business intelligence, CRM, ERP)	33.2%
Security	32.9%
Application development tools (including web services, SOA)	31.1%
Systems management	28.9%
Open source software (including Linux)	27.1%
Disaster recovery/business continuity	27.1%
Outside consulting services	26.2%
Telecommunications	25.5%
E-mail systems	24.6%
Data Center	19.4%
Compliance/risk management	14.6%
Have not been involved in the past year	3.1%

For which of the following technology products or services do you plan to be personally involved in researching or purchasing for your organization in the next 12 months?

In the next year, similar to this year, IT professionals are expecting to be involved in the research of end-user systems, servers, networking and security products or services.

End-user systems (including PC's, laptops, handhelds, thin clients)	**38.4%**
Servers (including server virtualization)	**37.7%**
Networking (including LAN, WAN, VoIP)	**33.9%**
Business applications (including business intelligence, CRM, ERP)	**32.4%**
Security	**32.0%**
Storage (including backup, SAN, NAS)	**31.8%**
Application development tools (including web services, SOA)	**29.9%**
Systems management	**29.3%**
Disaster recovery/business continuity	**28.9%**
Open source software (including Linux)	**26.3%**
Outside consulting services	**25.8%**
Telecommunications	**23.8%**
E-mail systems	**20.5%**
Data Center	**20.2%**
Compliance/risk management	**17.6%**
Will not be involved in the upcoming year	**4.3%**

**How often do you use the Internet to learn about technology solutions
for your organization?**

*The majority of IT research is conducted on the web with nearly 97% of IT professionals
validating frequent use of the web to research technology solutions for their organization.*

☐ Always   ☐ Frequently   ☐ Sometimes

68.8%	28.0%	3.2%

How often do you use the following information sources during your purchase and online information gathering process about technology solutions?

The enterprise IT professional uses three sources predominantly: search engines, manufacturer websites and IT publisher websites. Whereas search engine utilization reflects the general trend of increased online use for IT research; search is a critical entry point into online content of various types.

Legend: Always | Frequently | Sometimes | Rarely | Never

Source	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Search engines (Google, Yahoo, MSN)	65.1%	30.8%	3.5%	0.5%	0.1%
Brand or manufacturer websites (IBM, Dell, HP)	21.7%	46.0%	24.6%	6.3%	1.5%
IT publisher websites (TechTarget, InformationWeek, eWeek, E-Commerce Times)	13.2%	41.2%	34.5%	9.2%	1.9%
General technology webistes (CNET, Tom's Hardware, Ars Technica)	10.0%	35.8%	33.7%	14.7%	5.7%
IT-related online libraries (Bitpipe, KnowledgeStorm)	7.7%	28.0%	35.8%	18.9%	9.6%
Industry analyst websites (Forrester, Gartner)	6.8%	24.4%	31.5%	26.2%	11.1%
Blogs, online bulletin boards or special-interest groups (Slashdot, TechCrunch, Techdirt)	6.9%	23.9%	34.8%	23.7%	10.7%
Email newsletters	5.2%	23.4%	38.4%	24.7%	8.2%
Online retailer or reseller website (EBNET, CDW, Avnet)	4.9%	20.7%	31.4%	29.3%	13.7%
General business websites (marketwatch.com, forbes.com)	4.0%	19.2%	34.1%	29.3%	13.3%
Podcasts or webcasts	2.9%	13.6%	31.9%	33.2%	18.5%

Which of the following types of websites do you expect to see displayed in your search results during your purchase and information gathering process about technology solutions?

When using search engines, IT professionals are seeking information from manufacturer websites and IT publisher websites for reviews and third-party expert opinions. The increasing popularity of blogs and online communities most likely relates to the value IT pros have always had for the opinions of their peers, and ranks slightly higher than online reseller and general business sites. Also, online video sites at 19% shows that there is an increasing amount of search users that are expecting to see relevant video content on landing pages as well.

Website type	Percentage
Brand or manufacturer websites (IBM, Dell, HP)	80.9%
IT publisher websites (TechTarget, InformationWeek, eWeek, E-Commerce Times)	76.1%
General technology websies (CNET, Tom's Hardware, Ars, Technica)	69.0%
IT-related online libraries (Bitpipe, KnowledgeStorm)	62.0%
Blogs, online bulletin boards or special-intrest groups (Slashdot, TechCrunch, Techdirt)	46.5%
Online retailer or reseller website (EBNET, CDW, Avnet)	43.7%
General business websites (marketwatch.com, forbes.com)	38.3%
Online video sites (YouTube, Yahoo! Video)	19.0%

Which of the following search sites have you used to find information on technology solutions for your organization in the past 6 months?

Top search sites used in the last six months for identifying enterprise technology solutions are Google, TechTarget, Yahoo!, MSN/Live Search and InformationWeek.

Search Site	Percentage
Google	95.8%
TechTarget (SearchSecurity.com, SearchStorage.com, Whatis.com)	43.8%
Yahoo! Search	35.5.%
MSN Search/Live Search	29.0%
InformationWeek.com	21.8%
InfoWorld.com, NetworkWorld.com	16.3%
Ask.com	15.9%
eWeek.com	14.7%
AOL Search	4.7%
ecommercetimes.com	2.6%
Baidu	1.7%
CUIL	0.8%
Daum	0.7%
Naver	0.5%
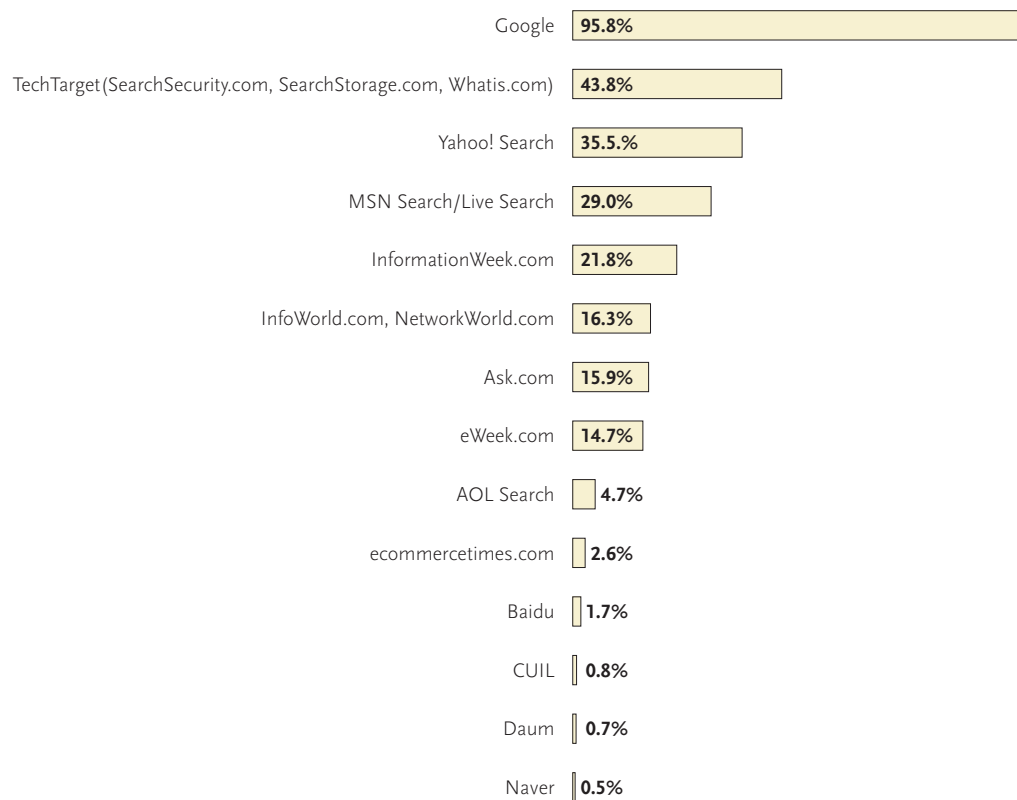
How would you rate the ability of search sites to help you find the information you're looking for on technology solutions?

Overall, search sites are doing a good job of helping users find relevant information when seeking a technology solution. However, as useful as search sites are, there is still room for improvement.

| Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor | Terrible |

0.7%

| 25.4% | 59.2% | 14.6% | 0.1% |
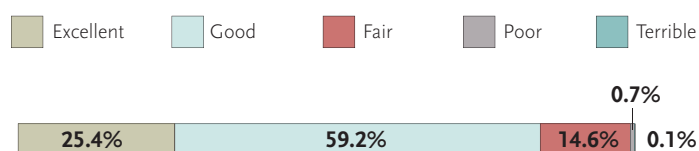
How often do you use search to...

Search is used in a variety of capacities throughout the buying process. Top activities conducted at search sites include researching a problem or technical need, understanding technology product features or specifications, finding product reviews and finding information on a particular service or vendor.

Legend: Always | Frequently | Sometimes | Rarely | Never

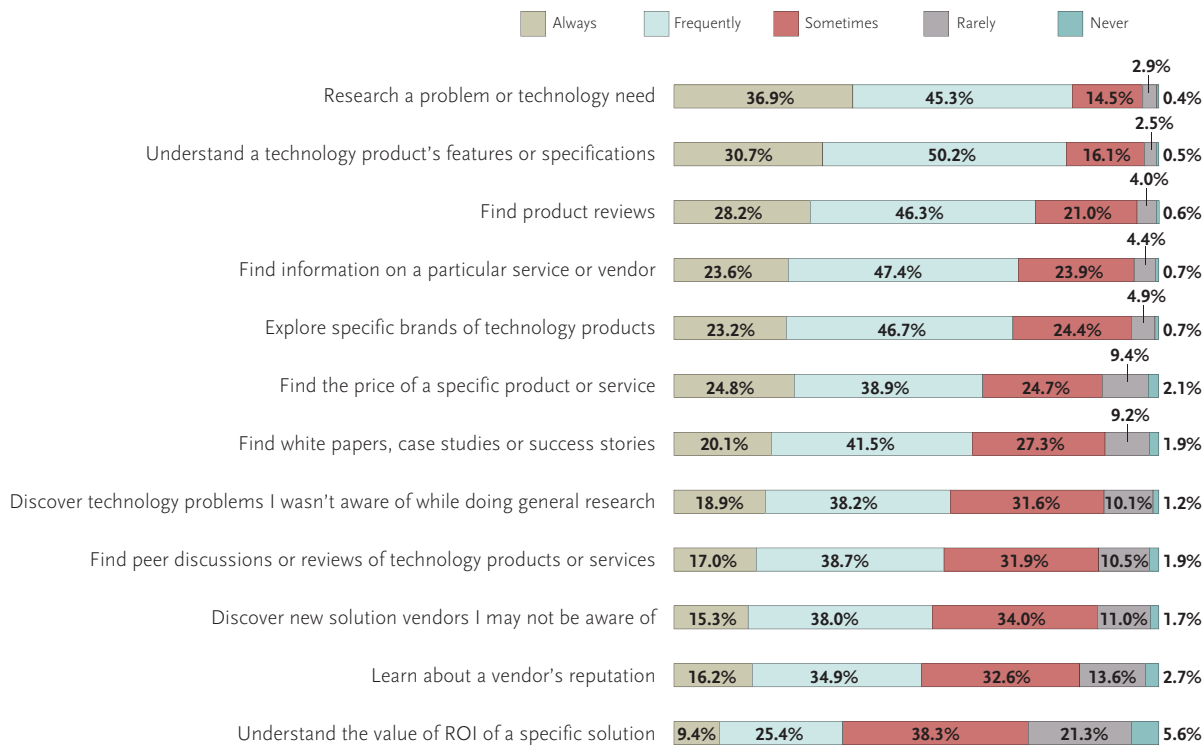| Activity	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Research a problem or technology need	36.9%	45.3%	14.5%	2.9%	0.4%
Understand a technology product's features or specifications	30.7%	50.2%	16.1%	2.5%	0.5%
Find product reviews	28.2%	46.3%	21.0%	4.0%	0.6%
Find information on a particular service or vendor	23.6%	47.4%	23.9%	4.4%	0.7%
Explore specific brands of technology products	23.2%	46.7%	24.4%	4.9%	0.7%
Find the price of a specific product or service	24.8%	38.9%	24.7%	9.4%	2.1%
Find white papers, case studies or success stories	20.1%	41.5%	27.3%	9.2%	1.9%
Discover technology problems I wasn't aware of while doing general research	18.9%	38.2%	31.6%	10.1%	1.2%
Find peer discussions or reviews of technology products or services	17.0%	38.7%	31.9%	10.5%	1.9%
Discover new solution vendors I may not be aware of	15.3%	38.0%	34.0%	11.0%	1.7%
Learn about a vendor's reputation	16.2%	34.9%	32.6%	13.6%	2.7%
Understand the value of ROI of a specific solution	9.4%	25.4%	38.3%	21.3%	5.6%

How often do you use online video sites (e.g., YouTube, Yahoo! Video) during your purchase and online information gathering process about technology solutions?

About 34% of IT professionals report occasionally using online video during purchase and online information gathering; with only 28% saying they never use it. Other research we've done suggests that marketers are not supplying the number of videos necessary to meet IT buyer demand and those that are produced may not be optimized for consumption.

| Always | Frequently | Sometimes | Rarely | Never |

3.2%

| 9.5% | 21.2% | 37.8% | 28.3% |
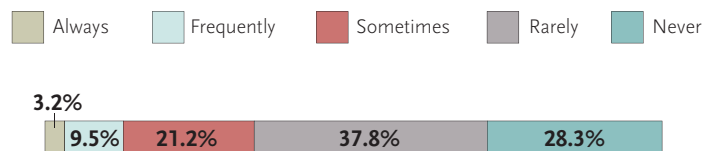
On which of the following sites have you ever watched online videos for your information gathering and research process for your organization's technology solutions?

Top online video sites used for information gathering to identify potential enterprise technology solutions are manufacturer websites, YouTube and search engines. The overall high usage of manufacturer websites speaks to the effectiveness of video as a marketing medium for technology marketers.

Site	Percentage
Brand or manufacturer websites (IBM, Dell, HP)	50.8%
YouTube	42.0%
Search engine (Google, Yahoo!, etc.)	38.8%
Vendor website	34.1%
General technology websites (CNET, Tom's Hardware, Ars, Technica)	30.8%
IT publisher websites(TechTarget, InformationWeek, eWeek, E-Commerce Times)	26.1%
Blogs, online bulletin boards or special-intrest groups (Slashdot, TechCrunch, Techdirt)	25.8%
IT-related online libraries (Bitpipe, KnowledgeStorm)	25.0%
Email newsletter	18.0%
General business website (marketwatch.com, forbes.com)	14.1%
Yahoo! Video	14.1%
Industry analyst websites (Forrester, Gartner)	12.6%
Online retailer or reseller website (EBNET, CBW, Avnet)	11.8%
Myspace or Facebook	9.1%

On which site do you most prefer to watch videos?

Respondents favor consuming video on YouTube and manufacturer websites. This may also reflect a "supply problem" in that other video touch points could see higher rates of use if they were featuring relevant video content more prominently.

YouTube	**19.9%**
Brand or manufacturer websites (IBM, Dell, HP)	**18.9%**
Search engine (Google, Yahoo!, etc.)	**10.9%**
General technology websites (CNET, Tom's Hardware, Ars, Technica)	**9.5%**
Vendor website	**8.8%**
IT publisher websites(TechTarget, InformationWeek, eWeek, E-Commerce Times)	**8.4%**
Blogs, online bulletin boards or special-intrest groups (Slashdot, TechCrunch, Techdirt)	**6.3%**
IT-related online libraries (Bitpipe, KnowledgeStorm)	**6.2%**
Email newsletter	**2.4%**
Industry analyst websites (Forrester, Gartner)	**2.0%**
General business website (marketwatch.com, forbes.com)	**1.4%**
Yahoo! Video	**1.4%**
Myspace or Facebook	**0.9%**
Online retailer or reseller website (EBNET, CBW, Avnet)	**0.7%**

How useful would each of the following types of content be to you in the form of an IT-related video?

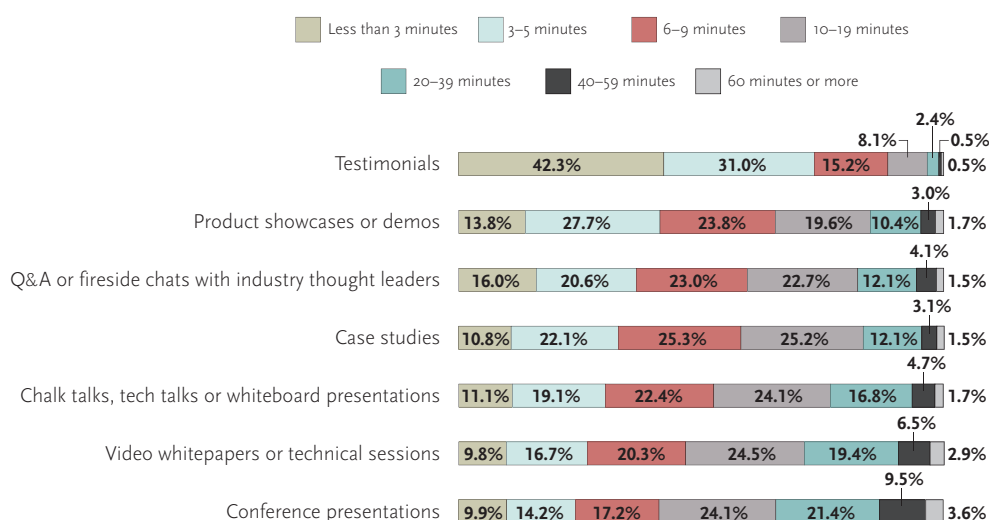*Most respondents found the most valuable video content to be product showcases or demos, video whitepapers or technical sessions, case studies, or chalk talks, tech talks or whiteboard presentations, all of which serve as educational tools.*

Legend: Extremely Useful | Very Useful | Somewhat Useful | Not Very Useful | Not at all Useful

Product showcases or demos: 16.2% | 38.3% | 34.2% | 7.4% | 4.0%

Video whitepapers or technical sessions: 12.3% | 38.9% | 33.1% | 10.6% | 5.2%

Case studies: 11.2% | 36.4% | 36.7% | 10.5% | 5.1%

Chalk talks, tech talks or whiteboard presentations: 9.7% | 36.1% | 38.0% | 10.9% | 5.2%

Conference presentations: 10.5% | 29.8% | 41.2% | 13.6% | 4.9%

Q&A or fireside chats with industry thought leaders: 7.4% | 26.0% | 39.2% | 19.6% | 7.8%

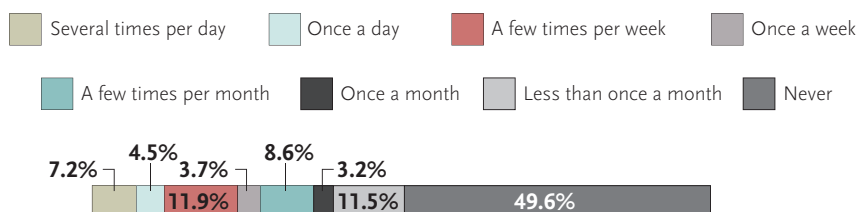**Testimonials**: 5.8% | 20.6% | 37.6% | 25.4% | 10.6%

What do you feel is the appropriate length for each of these types of IT-related videos?

This is relevant guidance for IT video production length, particularly that "testimonial" videos need to be short and conference videos can be quite lengthy. In general less than 10 minutes seems to be ideal for most content. The attention spans for conference and thought leadership materials are slightly longer; up to 20 minutes before audience loses interest.

Legend:
- Less than 3 minutes
- 3–5 minutes
- 6–9 minutes
- 10–19 minutes
- 20–39 minutes
- 40–59 minutes
- 60 minutes or more

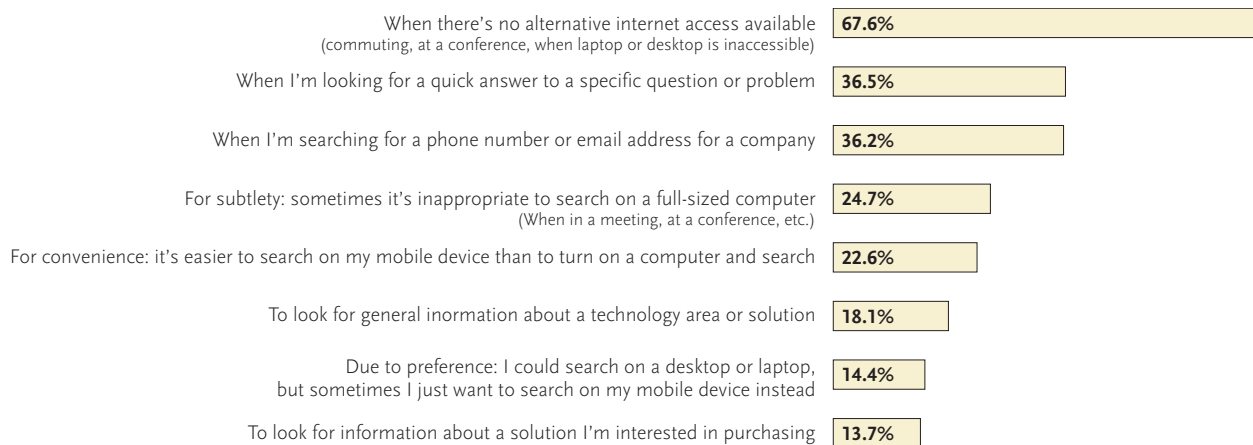| Video type	Less than 3 min	3–5 min	6–9 min	10–19 min	20–39 min	40–59 min	60 min or more
Testimonials	42.3%	31.0%	15.2%	8.1%	2.4%	0.5%	0.5%
Product showcases or demos	13.8%	27.7%	23.8%	19.6%	10.4%	3.0%	1.7%
Q&A or fireside chats with industry thought leaders	16.0%	20.6%	23.0%	22.7%	12.1%	4.1%	1.5%
Case studies	10.8%	22.1%	25.3%	25.2%	12.1%	3.1%	1.5%
Chalk talks, tech talks or whiteboard presentations	11.1%	19.1%	22.4%	24.1%	16.8%	4.7%	1.7%
Video whitepapers or technical sessions	9.8%	16.7%	20.3%	24.5%	19.4%	6.5%	2.9%
Conference presentations	9.9%	14.2%	17.2%	24.1%	21.4%	9.5%	3.6%

How often do you conduct a search related to your professional technology areas of responsibility on a web-enabled mobile device (e.g., Blackberry, iPhone), rather than a desktop or laptop PC?

Technology buyers as a group are not yet using mobile search. Surprisingly, mobile search for professional-related searches are reported to happen more frequently in Europe than North America, with Asia in the lead.
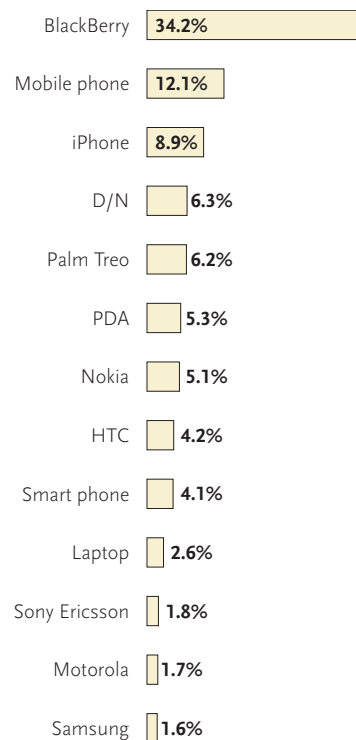
Legend:
- Several times per day
- Once a day
- A few times per week
- Once a week
- A few times per month
- Once a month
- Less than once a month
- Never

7.2% | 4.5% | 3.7% | 8.6% | 3.2%
11.9% | 11.5% | 49.6%

Which of the following statements are true for you? I use my mobile device...

Technology professionals are opportunistic mobile searchers, with two thirds reporting they use their mobile device for professional related searches because there's no alternative Internet access available.
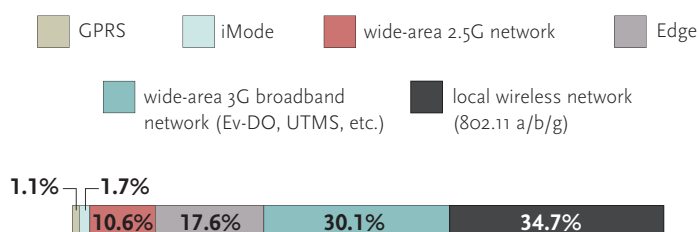
When there's no alternative internet access available (commuting, at a conference, when laptop or desktop is inaccessible)	**67.6%**
When I'm looking for a quick answer to a specific question or problem	**36.5%**
When I'm searching for a phone number or email address for a company	**36.2%**
For subtlety: sometimes it's inappropriate to search on a full-sized computer (When in a meeting, at a conference, etc.)	**24.7%**
For convenience: it's easier to search on my mobile device than to turn on a computer and search	**22.6%**
To look for general inormation about a technology area or solution	**18.1%**
Due to preference: I could search on a desktop or laptop, but sometimes I just want to search on my mobile device instead	**14.4%**
To look for information about a solution I'm interested in purchasing	**13.7%**

When you conduct professional-related searches on a mobile device, what kind of device do you use?

The majority of searches are done on mobile devices that deliver a web experience that has been specifically adapted for smaller form factor browsers. In particular, those with mobile sites should test them on Blackberry, iPhone, Palm and Nokia. Over 250 different devices were mentioned by the technology professionals.
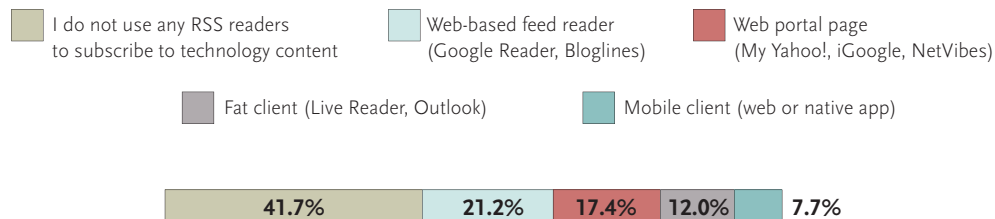
Device	Percentage
BlackBerry	34.2%
Mobile phone	12.1%
iPhone	8.9%
D/N	6.3%
Palm Treo	6.2%
PDA	5.3%
Nokia	5.1%
HTC	4.2%
Smart phone	4.1%
Laptop	2.6%
Sony Ericsson	1.8%
Motorola	1.7%
Samsung	1.6%

When using a mobile device for a professional-related search, what kind of wireless network do you primarily use?

IT professionals most commonly use Wi-Fi networks and 3G wide area broadband networks with their mobile devices. As availability of high speed wireless networks increases, we can expect increased use of mobile devices.


GPRS iMode wide-area 2.5G network Edge

wide-area 3G broadband network (Ev-DO, UTMS, etc.) local wireless network (802.11 a/b/g)

1.1% 1.7%

| 10.6% | 17.6% | 30.1% | 34.7% |

Which of the following RSS readers do you use to subscribe to or read about technology industry content?

The most frequently used RSS readers are web-based feed readers (Google Reader, Bloglines, etc.) and portal pages (My Yahoo!, iGoogle, NetVibes, etc.). However more than 40% of technology professionals still do not use any form of RSS readers.

☐ I do not use any RSS readers
to subscribe to technology content

☐ Web-based feed reader
(Google Reader, Bloglines)

☐ Web portal page
(My Yahoo!, iGoogle, NetVibes)

☐ Fat client (Live Reader, Outlook)

☐ Mobile client (web or native app)

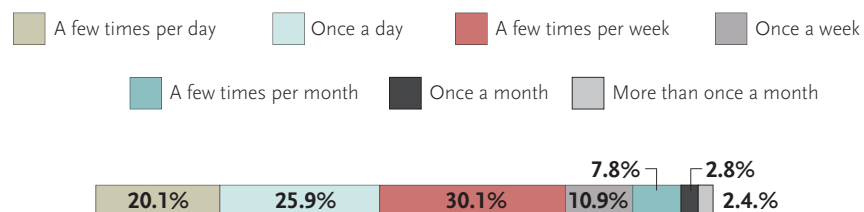| 41.7% | 21.2% | 17.4% | 12.0% | | 7.7% |

Approximately how many tech-related feeds do you subscribe to?

Most IT professionals are fairly selective about which feeds they subscribe to. About 3/4 of RSS feed users subscribe to 1-10 technology related feeds.
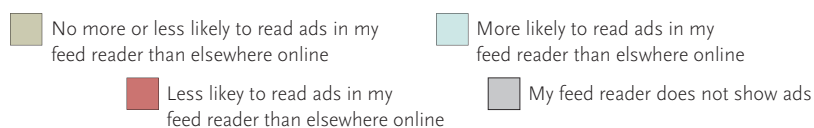
- 1–10
- 11–20
- 21–49
- 50 or more

5.6%

73.7%	18.8%		2.0%
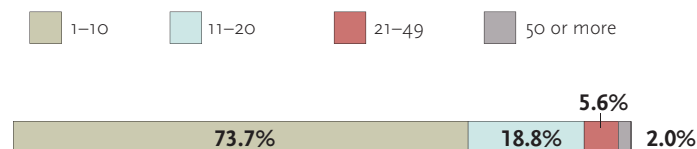
On average, how often do you read your tech-related feeds?

Most check RSS feeds less frequently than email; but nearly 90% of RSS users check them at least once a week.

- A few times per day
- Once a day
- A few times per week
- Once a week
- A few times per month
- Once a month
- More than once a month

7.8% ⌐   ⌐ **2.8%**

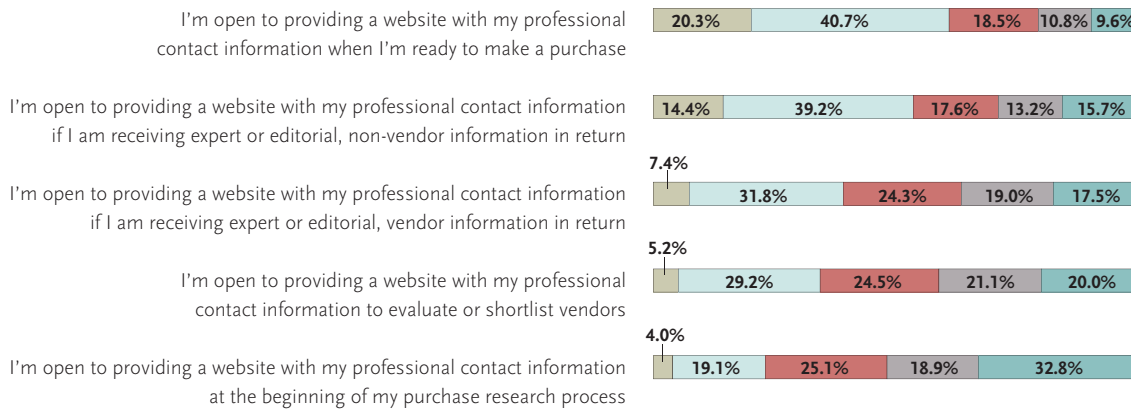| 20.1%	25.9%	30.1%	10.9%			2.4.%

Which of the following statements are true for you?

Compared to other places advertisers might consider placement, feed ads may be less likely to be read by about a third of RSS users.

- No more or less likely to read ads in my feed reader than elsewhere online
- More likely to read ads in my feed reader than elswhere online
- Less likey to read ads in my feed reader than elsewhere online
- My feed reader does not show ads

| 31.7% | 29.8% | 22.7% | 15.9% |

At times, IT-related websites ask visitors to register and share their professional contact information in order to access specific content. How much do you agree with each of the following statements?

Overall IT professionals are willing to provide their professional contact information later in their technology purchase process when they are ready to make a purchase. They will also provide their contact information if they are receiving editorial, non-vendor information. This finding suggests that search is a logical tee-up to lead generation as it is for establishing brand awareness.
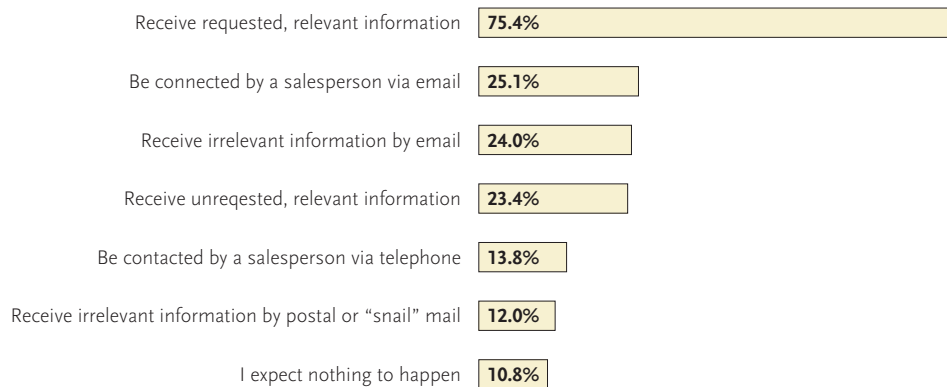
Strongly Agree   Agree   Neither Agree nor Disagree   Disagree   Strongly Disagree

I'm open to providing a website with my professional contact information when I'm ready to make a purchase
| 20.3% | 40.7% | 18.5% | 10.8% | 9.6% |

I'm open to providing a website with my professional contact information if I am receiving expert or editorial, non-vendor information in return
| 14.4% | 39.2% | 17.6% | 13.2% | 15.7% |

I'm open to providing a website with my professional contact information if I am receiving expert or editorial, vendor information in return
| 7.4% | 31.8% | 24.3% | 19.0% | 17.5% |

I'm open to providing a website with my professional contact information to evaluate or shortlist vendors
| 5.2% | 29.2% | 24.5% | 21.1% | 20.0% |

I'm open to providing a website with my professional contact information at the beginning of my purchase research process
| 4.0% | 19.1% | 25.1% | 18.9% | 32.8% |

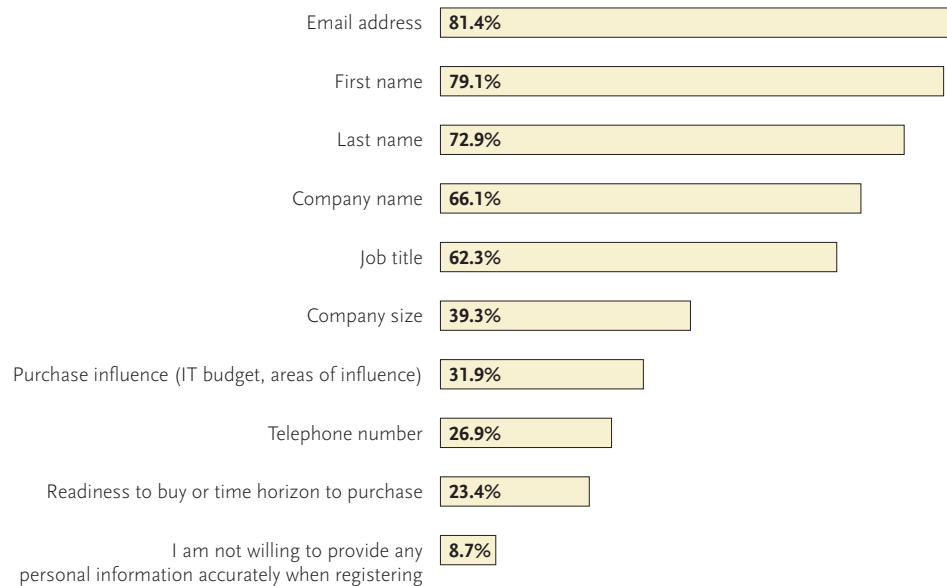## Once you have registered on an IT-related website, do you expect to...

About 75% of IT professionals expect to receive requested, relevant information after registering on an IT-related website. Furthermore, about 25% expect they'll get an email follow up from a salesperson. However, 24% expect they'll also get sent irrelevant information by email; subscribed to lists or content they don't want. Part of the reason why technology professionals are reluctant to register may be that they expect sales and marketing teams to be more aggressive in re-contacting them than they'd prefer.

This addresses the relationship of lead generation to syndication and partnerships in making the act of registration feel like it will not lead to unwanted vendor phone calls and emails. Unless the content and registration offer speak to the end stage prospects, which are ready to engage with a vendor.

Receive requested, relevant information	**75.4%**
Be connected by a salesperson via email	**25.1%**
Receive irrelevant information by email	**24.0%**
Receive unreqested, relevant information	**23.4%**
Be contacted by a salesperson via telephone	**13.8%**
Receive irrelevant information by postal or "snail" mail	**12.0%**
I expect nothing to happen	**10.8%**

Which of the following information are you willing to provide accurately when registering at an IT-related website?

Nearly 80% of IT professionals are willing to share their email address and first name accurately when registering. Accuracy drops to about 66% with company name and title. There's then a steep drop in accuracy with company size and purchase influence. And, only about 25% claim to leave accurate telephone numbers and time horizons to purchase. This validates that although prospects may be receptive to being identified, this does not preclude that they are ready to be contacted.

Email address	**81.4%**
First name	**79.1%**
Last name	**72.9%**
Company name	**66.1%**
Job title	**62.3%**
Company size	**39.3%**
Purchase influence (IT budget, areas of influence)	**31.9%**
Telephone number	**26.9%**
Readiness to buy or time horizon to purchase	**23.4%**
I am not willing to provide any personal information accurately when registering	**8.7%**

Please type in the words or phrases that you would search for at each identified stage of your buying process.
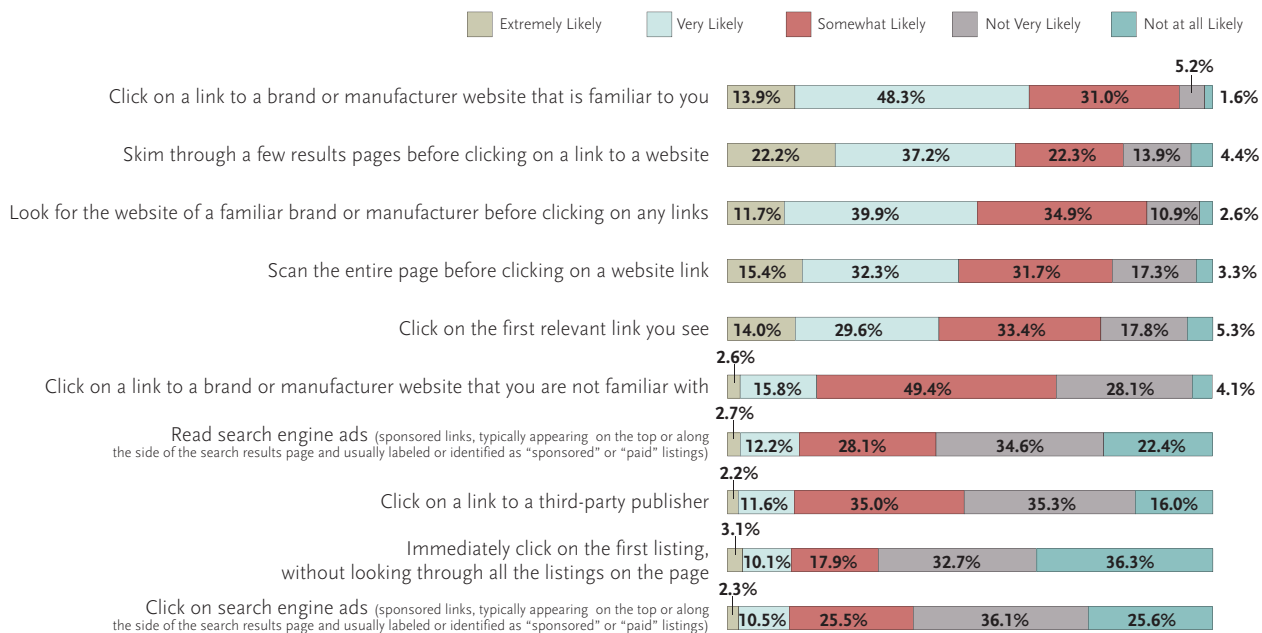
When IT professionals are in the beginning stages of their research (awareness stage) and are searching for problem identification they use query terms including "problem," "issue," or "troubleshooting." At this stage the query terms have a shorter average length of just over 3 words. As the IT professionals move into their consideration stage, the query length remains the same, but they focus on brand terms. Finally, in their decision making stage, IT professionals use longer query terms focusing on "comparison" or "review" phrases. This last finding reinforces how important it is that marketers' content be differentiated so to relate to the specific stage the prospect is in relative to their buying process.

	Awareness Stage (Problem identification/ Technical research)	Consideration Stage (Vendor Research)	Decision Stage (Vendor comparison)
problem/issue/troubleshooting	22.6%	11.6%	5.0%
"solution"	11.2%	18.5%	18.0%
brand phrases	14.1%	30.3%	43.0%
comparison/review phrases	1.7%	2.9%	52.0%
white papers/document	1.5%	0.5%	1.0%
how-to	3.7%	1.3%	1.0%
average query length	3.2 words	3.2 words	3.8 words

How likely are you to take the following actions once your search engine results are displayed?
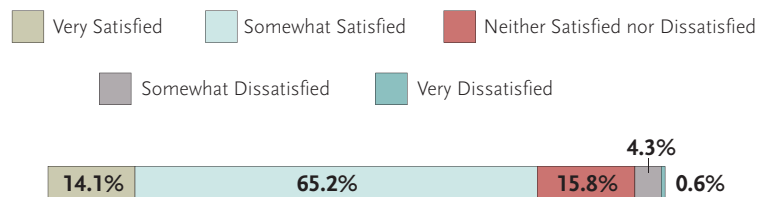
There is a significant differential in click willingness based on brand recognition. Almost 80% of IT professionals will scan the whole page before clicking a link, which suggests that only after scanning through the links will a searcher judge whether a particular link is highly relevant.

There is also preference for known brands. People will still click links of unfamiliar brands; but the data suggests that strong brands will benefit from increased click volume on results pages.

Legend: Extremely Likely | Very Likely | Somewhat Likely | Not Very Likely | Not at all Likely

| Action	Extremely Likely	Very Likely	Somewhat Likely	Not Very Likely	Not at all Likely
Click on a link to a brand or manufacturer website that is familiar to you	13.9%	48.3%	31.0%	5.2%	1.6%
Skim through a few results pages before clicking on a link to a website	22.2%	37.2%	22.3%	13.9%	4.4%
Look for the website of a familiar brand or manufacturer before clicking on any links	11.7%	39.9%	34.9%	10.9%	2.6%
Scan the entire page before clicking on a website link	15.4%	32.3%	31.7%	17.3%	3.3%
Click on the first relevant link you see	14.0%	29.6%	33.4%	17.8%	5.3%
Click on a link to a brand or manufacturer website that you are not familiar with	2.6%	15.8%	49.4%	28.1%	4.1%
Read search engine ads (sponsored links, typically appearing on the top or along the side of the search results page and usually labeled or identified as "sponsored" or "paid" listings)	2.7%	12.2%	28.1%	34.6%	22.4%
Click on a link to a third-party publisher	2.2%	11.6%	35.0%	35.3%	16.0%
Immediately click on the first listing, without looking through all the listings on the page	3.1%	10.1%	17.9%	32.7%	36.3%
Click on search engine ads (sponsored links, typically appearing on the top or along the side of the search results page and usually labeled or identified as "sponsored" or "paid" listings)	2.3%	10.5%	25.5%	36.1%	25.6%

Thinking about when you search for technology solutions information, generally how satisfied are you with the information found on the first results page?

Nearly 65% of IT professionals are very satisfied with the information found on the first results page. However, there is still room for improvement with first-page satisfaction and relevance.

- Very Satisfied
- Somewhat Satisfied
- Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied
- Somewhat Dissatisfied
- Very Dissatisfied

14.1%	65.2%	15.8%	4.3%	0.6%

Approximately how many pages of results listings do you typically click through before conducting a new search?

Nearly 95% of IT professionals search beyond the first page of results. Being on the first page may generate the most traffic - but relevance is what truly matters to technology buyers. They seem to be a more thoughtful and persistent group willing to spend more time before the click, deciding what's relevant in order to save time after the click.
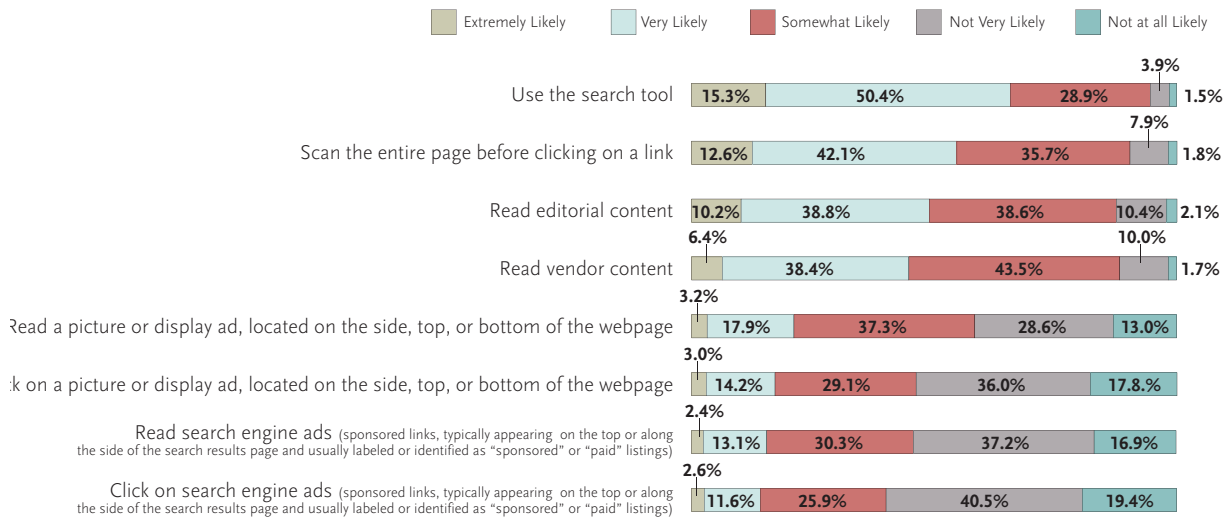
- 1
- 2–3
- 4–5
- 7–9
- 10 or more

5.8%	53.4%	28.3%	6.4%	6.1%
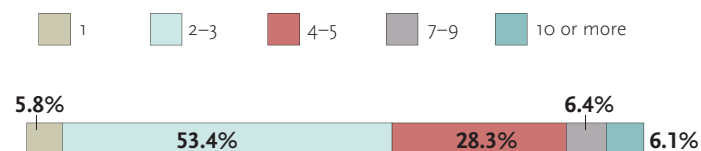
Overall, how would you rate the technology publisher's ability to help you find the information you're looking for?

Overall, information technology publishers are doing a good job at helping IT professionals find information on technology solutions. However, there is still room for improvement for the IT publisher websites.
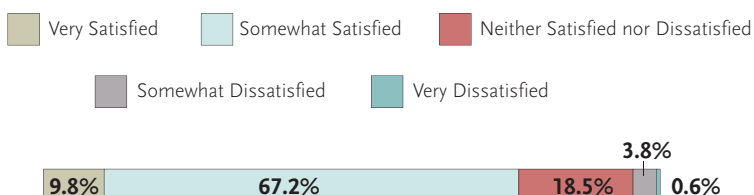
| Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor | Terrible |

7.5%   2.4%

| 58.1% | 31.4% | 0.6% |
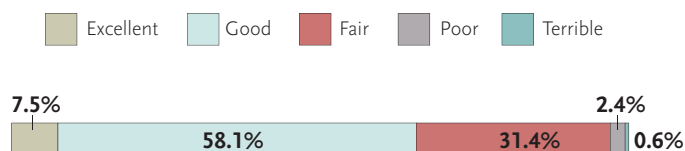
How likely are you to take the following actions on a technology publisher's website?

IT professionals indicated that they have a very strong interest in the search capabilities within the publisher websites. Also, almost 90% of IT professionals will scan the whole page before clicking a link, again indicating that only after scanning through the links will a researcher judge whether a particular link is relevant. Technology professionals indicated that they are also visiting publisher websites to read unbiased vendor and editorial content.

Legend: Extremely Likely | Very Likely | Somewhat Likely | Not Very Likely | Not at all Likely

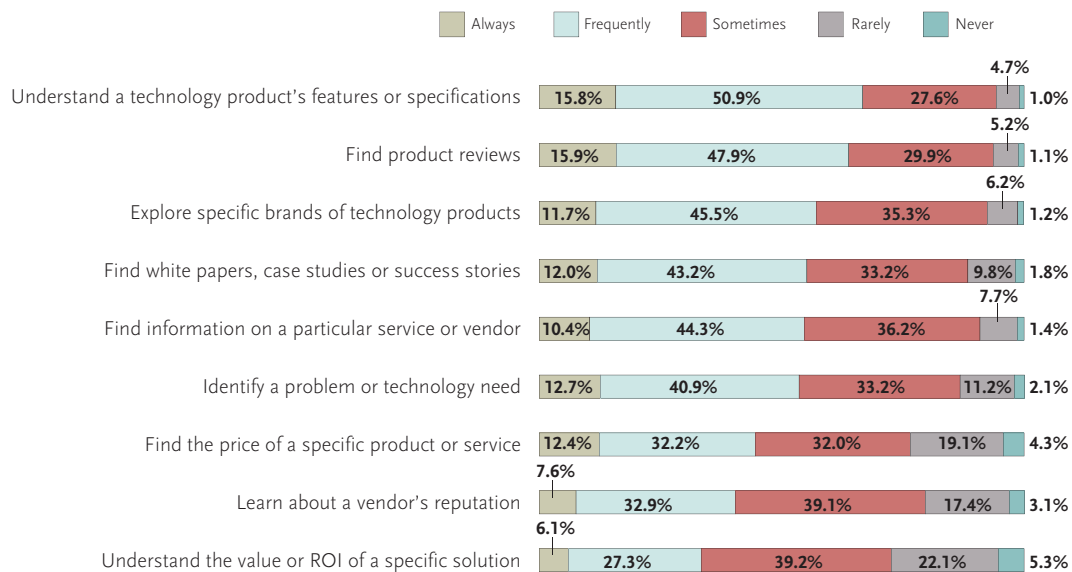| Action	Extremely Likely	Very Likely	Somewhat Likely	Not Very Likely	Not at all Likely
Use the search tool	15.3%	50.4%	28.9%	3.9%	1.5%
Scan the entire page before clicking on a link	12.6%	42.1%	35.7%	7.9%	1.8%
Read editorial content	10.2%	38.8%	38.6%	10.4%	2.1%
Read vendor content	6.4%	38.4%	43.5%	10.0%	1.7%
Read a picture or display ad, located on the side, top, or bottom of the webpage	3.2%	17.9%	37.3%	28.6%	13.0%
Click on a picture or display ad, located on the side, top, or bottom of the webpage	3.0%	14.2%	29.1%	36.0%	17.8%
Read search engine ads (sponsored links, typically appearing on the top or along the side of the search results page and usually labeled or identified as "sponsored" or "paid" listings)	2.4%	13.1%	30.3%	37.2%	16.9%
Click on search engine ads (sponsored links, typically appearing on the top or along the side of the search results page and usually labeled or identified as "sponsored" or "paid" listings)	2.6%	11.6%	25.9%	40.5%	19.4%

Thinking about when you search for technology solutions information on technology publishers' websites, generally how satisfied are you with the information found on the results page?

About 80% of IT professionals are satisfied with the information found on the results page of a search done on an IT publisher website.

Very Satisfied   Somewhat Satisfied   Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied

Somewhat Dissatisfied   Very Dissatisfied

| 9.8% | 67.2% | 18.5% | 3.8% | 0.6% |

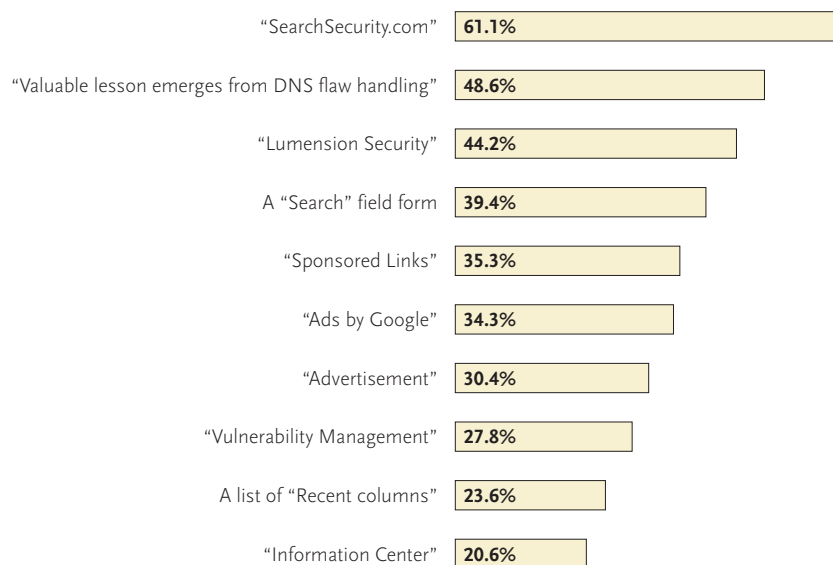## How often do you use technology publisher websites to...

Technology professionals are using IT publisher websites to look into product specifications and reviews, brand discovery and manufacturer comparison. Note that expectations and comparisons of brands logically relate to previous findings of queries using "review" and "comparison" key words.

Legend: Always | Frequently | Sometimes | Rarely | Never

Activity	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Understand a technology product's features or specifications	15.8%	50.9%	27.6%	4.7%	1.0%
Find product reviews	15.9%	47.9%	29.9%	5.2%	1.1%
Explore specific brands of technology products	11.7%	45.5%	35.3%	6.2%	1.2%
Find white papers, case studies or success stories	12.0%	43.2%	33.2%	9.8%	1.8%
Find information on a particular service or vendor	10.4%	44.3%	36.2%	7.7%	1.4%
Identify a problem or technology need	12.7%	40.9%	33.2%	11.2%	2.1%
Find the price of a specific product or service	12.4%	32.2%	32.0%	19.1%	4.3%
Learn about a vendor's reputation	7.6%	32.9%	39.1%	17.4%	3.1%
Understand the value or ROI of a specific solution	6.1%	27.3%	39.2%	22.1%	5.3%

Respondents were shown a full web page with original TechTarget content, then asked to proceed to the next survey page.
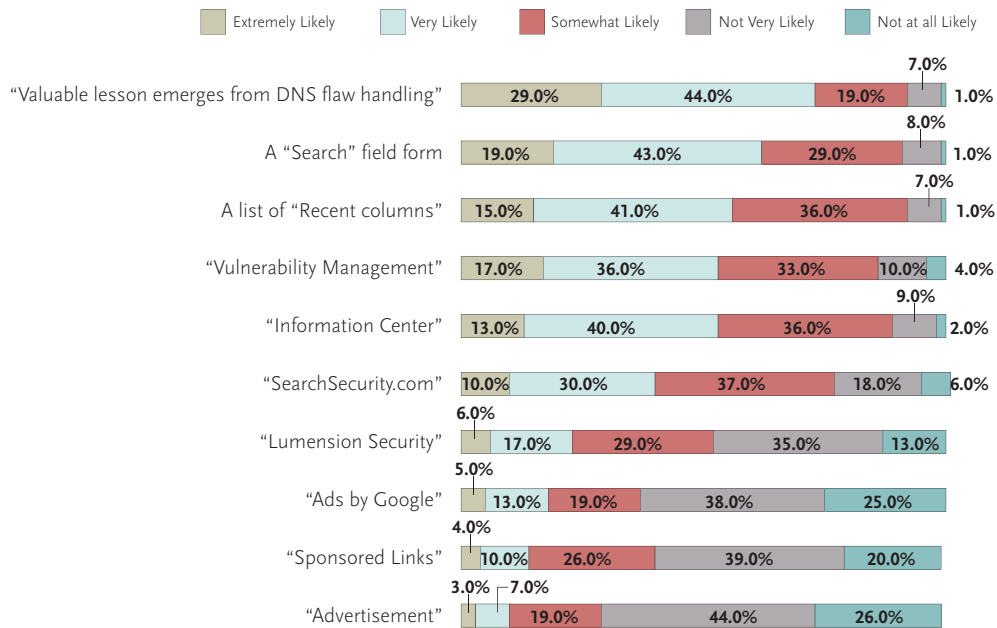
Which of the following words or phrases, if any, do you recall seeing?

Once an IT professional has clicked on a search result, they are more likely to recall the heading or title of the webpage that they have landed on, the title of the editorial column to which the result forwarded them, and the sponsor that has banner ads located on that final results page.

"SearchSecurity.com"	**61.1%**
"Valuable lesson emerges from DNS flaw handling"	**48.6%**
"Lumension Security"	**44.2%**
A "Search" field form	**39.4%**
"Sponsored Links"	**35.3%**
"Ads by Google"	**34.3%**
"Advertisement"	**30.4%**
"Vulnerability Management"	**27.8%**
A list of "Recent columns"	**23.6%**
"Information Center"	**20.6%**

How likely are you to click on the following?

Again, once an IT professional has clicked on a search result, they are more likely to click on the title of the editorial column to which the result forwarded them, a search field form, or the list of recent columns.

Legend: Extremely Likely | Very Likely | Somewhat Likely | Not Very Likely | Not at all Likely

"Valuable lesson emerges from DNS flaw handling" — 29.0% | 44.0% | 19.0% | 7.0% | 1.0%

A "Search" field form — 19.0% | 43.0% | 29.0% | 8.0% | 1.0%

A list of "Recent columns" — 15.0% | 41.0% | 36.0% | 7.0% | 1.0%

"Vulnerability Management" — 17.0% | 36.0% | 33.0% | 10.0% | 4.0%

"Information Center" — 13.0% | 40.0% | 36.0% | 9.0% | 2.0%

"SearchSecurity.com" — 10.0% | 30.0% | 37.0% | 18.0% | 6.0%

"Lumension Security" — 6.0% | 17.0% | 29.0% | 35.0% | 13.0%

"Ads by Google" — 5.0% | 13.0% | 19.0% | 38.0% | 25.0%

"Sponsored Links" — 4.0% | 10.0% | 26.0% | 39.0% | 20.0%

"Advertisement" — 3.0% | 7.0% | 19.0% | 44.0% | 26.0%

IT Professional Respondent Profile

- **All are involved in the decision making process.**

- **Size of respondent audience: 2,232 members of the TechTarget IT Research Panel**

- **Geographic distribution:**

  North America: 53.00% (1183)

  Europe: 18.55% (414)

  Asia: 17.79% (397)

  Pacific: 5.02% (112)

  South America: 2.55% (57)

  Africa: 1.61% (36)

  Middle East: 1.48% (33)

- **Technical Titles: 79.12% vs. Business Titles: 20.87%**

- **Company Size: Most are from companies with less than 50 employees, or 1,000 to 5,000 employees**

  Average company size is 500-999

About TechTarget

TechTarget, a leading online Information Technology (IT) media company, provides IT companies with ROI-focused marketing programs to generate leads, shorten sales cycles, and grow revenues. With its network of over 50 technology-specific Web sites and over 6.6 million registered members, TechTarget is a primary Web destination for IT professionals researching which products to purchase. The company is also a leading provider of independent, peer and vendor content, a leading distributor of white papers, and a leading producer of vendor-sponsored Webcasts and Podcasts for the IT market. Its Web sites are complemented by numerous invitation-only events and two magazines. TechTarget provides proven lead generation and branding programs to over 1,100 advertisers including Cisco, Dell, EMC, HP, IBM, Intel, Microsoft, SAP and Symantec.

About Google

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and make it universally accessible and useful. Google operates what is widely recognized as the world's largest search engine, and also provides a variety of useful business services. Google designed its AdWords™ service to help businesses and organizations efficiently reach a qualified audience on Google and its network of partner websites. Hundreds of thousands of businesses worldwide use AdWords to acquire customers, launch products, and achieve their brand goals using targeted text, image, and rich media ads priced on a cost-per-click (CPC) or cost-per-impression (CPM) basis. With its controls, reporting, and auction-based bidding system, AdWords is designed for marketers who value flexibility and measurable, efficient results. More information about AdWords is available online at
http://adwords.google.com

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