

How B2B Buyers Are Engaging With Your Content [Data]

Let's face it ...

Your content marketing efforts don't mean anything unless your ideal customers engage with your content and take action.

To help you get the most out of your content investments, I've compiled some recent statistics on how B2B buyers are using content throughout the sales cycle.

Drumroll, please!

The B2B Buyer Journey

B2B buying is a team sport.

According to [TechTarget](#), the majority of B2B buying teams have between two and seven members. A significant number of these teams have 10 or more members.

Google matters.

When business buyers are ready to research a purchase, the first thing they do is conduct a web search. According to the Demand Gen Report [2014 B2B Buyer Behavior Survey](#), 46% of business buyers start their research with a web search. Meanwhile 18% of buyers start by visiting a vendor's website and 17% seek a peer recommendation.

B2B buyers require multiple pieces of content.

[Eccolo Media](#) found that 48% of B2B buyers consume two to five pieces of content before making a purchase decision.

Meanwhile, [TechTarget](#) found that 65% of IT buyers require at least four pieces of content to make a vendor shortlist.

The vendor with the best content wins.

In Demand Gen Report's *2014 B2B Buyer Behavior Survey*, 61% of respondents said they selected vendors who delivered a mix of content that was appropriate for each stage of their buying process.

The Most Influential B2B Content

White papers still rule.

The three types of content that B2B technology buyers are most likely to consume are:

1. White papers
2. Product brochures/data sheets
3. Case studies/success stories tied with detailed technology guides/implementation scenarios

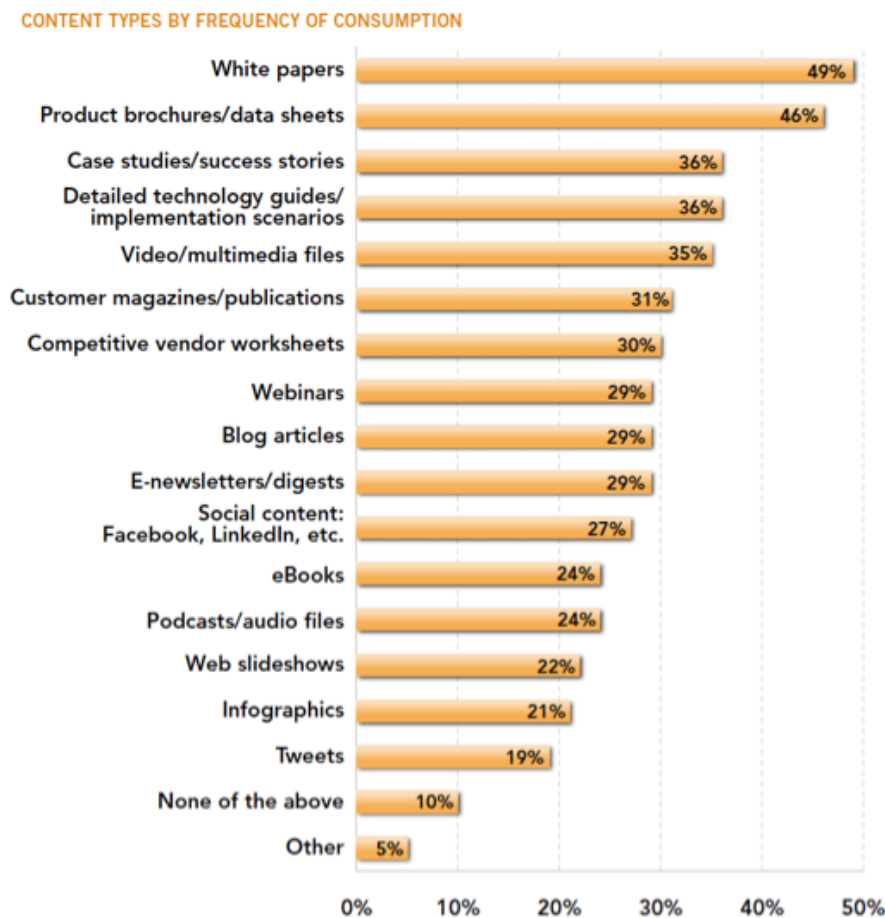
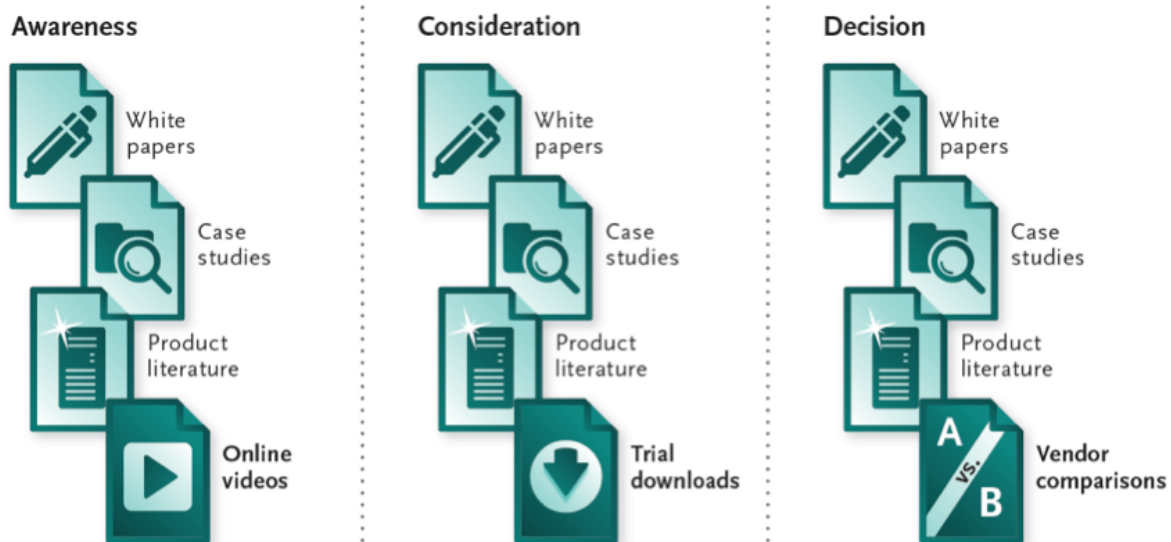


FIGURE 5: Which vendor collateral types have you consumed to evaluate a technology purchase in the last 6 months?

Source: [Eccolo Media 2014 B2B Technology Content Survey](#)

TechTarget's findings were similar. The following chart shows the types of content that IT buyers prefer during different stages of the sales cycle:



Source: [2014 TechTarget Media Consumption Research Brief](#).

B2B buyers rely on case studies.

A [hawkeye study](#) found that case studies and testimonials are important throughout the B2B buying process. Seventy-one percent of B2B buyers in the awareness stage and 77% in the evaluation stage cited that testimonials and case studies are the most influential types of content.

Peer recommendations are becoming more important.

The Demand Gen Report [2014 B2B Buyer Behavior Survey](#) found that more business buyers (53%) are relying on peer recommendations when they make a purchase. This number has increased from 19% in 2012.

Marketers aren't giving technology buyers the right content.

According to Spiceworks, there's a huge gap between the information that technology buyers want and what information marketers are providing. For example, 92% of IT pros use targeted forums and communities to research products, although only 61% of technology marketers invest in these channels. Meanwhile, 95% of technology marketers invest in social media, while only 23% of IT buyers use it to engage with brands.

What IT Buyers Use vs. What Tech Marketers Invest In

	Marketing content	IT buyer*	Marketer*
Largest Disconnect	Social networks (Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter)	23%	95%
	IT forums	92%	61%
	Free product trials	89%	62%
	Case studies/ROI studies	69%	87%
	White papers	69%	85%
	Articles	91%	80%

Source: Spiceworks, [How to Win Friends and Influence IT Professionals](#)

How B2B Buyers Use Social Media When Making a Purchase

Yes, your buyers use social media to research you. According to [IDG](#), 86% of IT buyers use social networks and content in their purchase decisions. They are most likely to use social media in the general education stage of their buying process.

LinkedIn is the top B2B social network.

[Demand Gen Report](#) found that LinkedIn is the No. 1 network for senior executives who want to connect via social media, whereas blogs are the top social medium for non-executives.

Recommendations from peers rule on social.

According to [hawkeye](#), the most influential type of social content is relevant posts from peers and colleagues, followed by information about new products and solutions.

Most Influential Social Media Content:



Q4: "Please indicate which of the following social media content is most helpful when searching for solutions and products."

Source: [hawkeye](#), "3 keys to B2B success"

How B2B Buyers Are Using Mobile

B2B buyers consume all types of content on mobile devices.

According to [Eccolo Media](#), 71% of B2B technology buyers check out vendor content on mobile devices. They're using mobile devices to consume at least 16 different types of marketing content.

Optimizing your website for mobile is a must.

[IDG](#) found that the top three things that business buyers do when researching products on their mobile devices are:

1. Visit vendor websites for product information.
2. Compare prices and products.
3. Read feature articles about trends and strategies.

Do you need help creating compelling content that motivates readers to take action?

Contact me at 647-342-4921 or rachel@freshperspectivewriting.com to discuss your content and copywriting goals.

For more B2B marketing tips, trends and best practices, check out the [Fresh Marketing Blog](#).