

The
2024
B2B Buyer
Experience
Report

 6sense

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Summary of Findings

Executive Summary ✨

Our 2024 Buyer Experience Study reveals critical insights into B2B purchasing decisions across North America, Europe, Middle East, and Africa (EMEA), and Asia-Pacific (APAC). Key findings include:

- ★ B2B buyers are nearly **70%** through their purchasing process before engaging with sellers
- ★ Buyers initiate first contact with sellers more than **80%** of the time
- ★ Buyers already have a preferred vendor at the time of first contact more than **80%** of the time
- ★ **85%** of buyers have largely established their purchase requirements before they contact sellers.

Despite small regional variations, the data confirm that B2B buyer behavior is consistent globally. These insights aim to help revenue teams better engage with buyers, improving revenue production practices and outcomes.

To compete effectively, marketers must drive awareness and preference in organizations that resist direct engagement until their choices are already made. Traditional demand generation tactics must give way to integrated strategies that create awareness, build affinity, and secure favorable competitive positioning, leveraging all available buying signals to identify potential buyers and optimize marketing spend.

Summary of Findings

	North America	EMEA	APAC
Point of First Contact Between Buyers and Sellers	68.2%	67.4%	72.4%
Buyer Initiates First Contact	82.9%	80.9%	77.7%
Purchase Requirements set prior to first contact	84.2%	87.6%	81.8%
Buyer contacts the winning vendor first	84.6%	76.2%	82.3%
Buyers hire outside help (analysts/consultants)	70.1%	65.5%	77%
Buying Cycle Length (in months)	11.2	10.2	13.2
Number of vendors considered	4.5	4.11	5.16
Buyers have prior experience with the winning vendor	88.3%	77%	85.5%
Number of buyer-to-seller interactions	845	620	1,300
Number of people on the buying team	10.67	9.76	12.8

Figure 1. To see these figures broken out by industry, deal size, and Business Need, please see the [appendix](#).

Prior Experience with Vendors:

- * Most buyers (90%+) have had prior experience with at least one of the vendors they considered.
 - + North America (93.3%), EMEA (90.5%), APAC (94.0%)
- * Overall, buyers have previously worked with the winning vendor 84% of the time, and with at least one non-winning vendor 45% of the time.

Buying Cycle Length:

- * The average B2B buying cycle lasts 11.5 months with subtle regional differences. The average buying cycle is 11.2 months in North America, 10.2 months in EMEA, and 13.2 months in APAC.
- * These cycles are all statistically different from one another.

The Point of First Contact (POFC) Between Buyers and Sellers:

- * Typical buyers don't reach out to sellers until they are 69% of the way through the buyer's journey. In North America, buyers and sellers make direct contact 68.2% of the way through the buyer's journey; 67.4% in EMEA; 72.4% in APAC.
- * The POFC in APAC is statistically different from EMEA and North America, but there is no reliable difference between EMEA and North America.

The Impact of Prior Vendor Relationships on Buying Processes:

- * In the rare event that buyers have no prior experience with any of the vendors, the point of first contact is notably earlier (63.4% vs. 69.6%).

Who Initiates Contact Between Buyer and Seller: The First Mover Factor

- * Globally, buyers initiate contact with sellers 81% of the time. In North America, buyers initiate contact 82.9% of the time, 80.9% of the time in EMEA, and 77.7% of the time in APAC.
- * A buyer-initiated POFC happens earlier (68.1%) than those initiated by the seller (73.8%).
 - + This is true across all regions
 - + North America - 72.3% vs. 67.4% when buyer initiates.
 - + EMEA - 70.6% vs. 66.5% when buyer initiates.
 - + APAC - 78.5% vs. 71% when buyer initiates.

When Buyers Set Requirements:

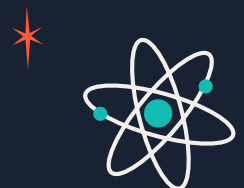
- * The average B2B buying group has their purchase requirements mostly or completely set before engaging sellers 85% of the time.
 - + In APAC, 81.8% of buyers have requirements mostly or completely set before engaging sellers; That number is higher in EMEA (87.7%) and North America (84.3%).

When Buyers Pick Favorites:

- * Buyers spend roughly 70% of their journey identifying a short-list and a favored vendor. • The average buying team evaluates 4.6 vendors. Buyers in APAC evaluate just over five vendors (5.2); Buyers in EMEA evaluate 4.1; Buyers in North America evaluate 4.5 (compared to four for 2023 North America study).
- * In 81% of cases, the buyer has chosen a preferred vendor before talking to sellers.
 - + 76.2% identify a favorite prior to talking to sellers in EMEA, 82.3% in APAC; 84.6% in North America.
- * This indicates that buyers have a preferred vendor prior to engaging with sellers.

Buying Group Sizes:

- * The average buying group is 10 to 11 (10.9) people.
 - + Average buying group size in North America: 10.7; 9.8 in EMEA; 12.8 in APAC.
 - + All statistically different from each other.
- * Buying group size is influenced primarily by the number of vendors evaluated, but also by purchase cost and solution importance.



Interactions Across the Buying Journey:

- * The average buying group member has 17 interactions with each vendor they evaluate. Buyers in EMEA have 16 interactions with each vendor, North American buyers have 18 interactions, and APAC buyers have approximately 20 interactions with each vendor they evaluate.
 - + Collectively, EMEA buying groups have about 626.
 - + North American buying groups have about 845.
 - + APAC buying groups have nearly 1,300.
- * The number of vendors evaluated is the largest driver of interaction volume.

Use of External Resources:

- * Globally, 72% of buyers hire consultants or analyst to help them with their purchasing decision.
 - + In North America, 70.1% of buyers work with consultants or analysts; 65.6% in EMEA; 77% in APAC.
- * Working with consultants or analysts is associated with longer buying cycles (13.6 vs. 6.5 months), higher costs (\$300,001 to \$400,000 vs. \$100,001 to \$200,000), and larger buying groups (12.9 vs. 6.4 people).

Types of Interactions:

- * Buyers engage in a wide variety of activities with vendors, focusing most on the vendor they ultimately buy from.
- * The top five purchase activities that buyers engage in with/regarding the winning vendor are primarily meeting-focused:
 - + In person meetings with vendors
 - + Internal meetings with the buying team
 - + Meet with vendor's physical offices or other locations
 - + Read analyst reports
 - + Meet with analysts/consultants

Early v. Late Engagers:

- * Buyers who engage earlier than the average of 69% of the way through the journey have smaller buying groups (9.4 vs. 12.5 people), evaluate fewer vendors (4.2 vs. 5.0 vendors), and have shorter cycles (9.7 vs. 13.2 months).
- * Late engagers are from faster-growing companies (57% vs. 40% revenue growth) and make larger purchases (between \$200,001 to \$300,000).

Purchase Complexity:

- * The complexity of the buying process is influenced by region, department, industry, and company funding. • We observed higher complexity amongst “Global Teams” or buyers who are in a different region than their company headquarters.
- * Privately Financed companies have less complicated buying processes.
- * Manufacturing organizations have less complicated buying processes.
- * HR and IT departments have more complex buying processes.

Role of Stakeholders:

- * C-Suite
 - + When the C-Suite is involved, buying cycles are shorter, buying groups are smaller, and vendor interactions decrease in APAC and EMEA. These differences were not observed in North America.
 - + C-suites are involved 46.3% of the time in North America, 33.0% of the time in EMEA, and 35.7% of the time in APAC.
- * Legal
 - + Legal is involved 15.9% of the time in North America, 17% of the time in EMEA, and 14.5% of the time in APAC. These differences are not statistically reliable.
 - + The involvement of Legal has little impact on the purchase process across regions.
 - + The only notable difference is that buying cycles tend to be shorter in APAC and their teams tend to contact vendors earlier when Legal is involved.
 - + Teams in EMEA tend to make contact earlier when Legal is involved.
 - + Buyers assess that the contracting process overseen by Legal tends to increase a buyer’s likelihood of buying from the vendor again.

Role of Stakeholders:

- * Purchasing/Procurement
 - + Procurement is involved 43.8% of the time in APAC, 42.1% of the time in EMEA, and 40.1% of the time in North America. These differences are not [statistically reliable](#).
 - + When Procurement is involved, buying cycles are shorter and require fewer interactions with vendors in APAC and North America. Purchasing does not impact buying cycles in EMEA.
 - + Buying groups in APAC and North America are smaller when Procurement is involved.
 - + Procurement's involvement has no influence on when buyers establish their requirements across the three regions we studied.
- * Information Technology (IT)
 - + The involvement of IT generally makes purchases more complex with extended buying cycles, larger buying groups, and a higher number of interactions per person per vendor.
 - + IT is involved 62.4% of the time in APAC, 54.8% of the time in EMEA, and 56.8% of the time in North America.

Decision Drivers:

- * Price and product features are cited as the most important factors influencing why organizations chose their winning vendor with ease of implementation coming in third.

Vendor Personnel Helpfulness:

- * All roles are regarded as reasonably helpful.
- * Across all regions, BDRs are perceived as the least helpful in the purchase process, with this sentiment being particularly pronounced in EMEA.
- * Conversely, Senior Leadership roles are among the highest-rated roles in all regions.

Process Sentiment:

- * Remarkably, over 90% of buyers in each region reported that they are either satisfied or very satisfied with their purchase process.
- * Buyers gave positive ratings for the contract negotiation process, making them more likely to buy from the same vendor again.

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Introduction

Introduction ✨

B2B revenue teams—comprising marketing, sales, and customer success — are designed for a world in which buyers depend on sellers for crucial information when selecting vendor partners. That world has long since disappeared (see, [Gartner B2B Buying Process](#)).

Despite this, B2B organizations still approach buyers as if they are starting from a blank or nearly blank slate when buyers and sellers first engage.

This perspective on the roles of marketing and sales is deeply rooted in B2B history. Before the widespread use of the internet in B2B, buyers relied almost entirely on information received directly from vendor personnel. Although this may seem like ancient history, it was the norm just 25 years ago—within the careers of most B2B leaders.

The reality of modern B2B buying is markedly different. Consistent with earlier findings from a variety of sources

([SiriusDecisions](#)), our [2023 Buyer Experience](#) report shows that initial buyer-seller dialogues consistently occur two-thirds of the way through the buying journey, by which time buyers have largely decided on their preferred vendor.

This year's expanded study, nearly tripling the sample size of last year's study and extending it globally to EMEA and APAC, confirms last year's findings across all key dimensions: during the first two-thirds of their journey, the typical B2B buying group gains consensus on and ranks a shortlist. Only after this is accomplished do they begin contacting vendors—starting with their top choice. Once these interactions begin, buyers rarely change their preferences.

This new understanding of the B2B buying process is a radical shift in our perspective and requires a corresponding rethinking of B2B marketing and sales strategies.

Consider this: If we believe that buyer decision-making starts only after buyers and sellers begin interacting, marketing can justifiably be seen as the junior partner in revenue production, primarily focused on generating those initial conversations. This outdated view is evident in how sales and marketing budgets are handled during market downturns. Companies often slash marketing budgets, expecting sellers to compensate by working harder to initiate conversations, sometimes even increasing sales headcount at the expense of marketing.

However, we now know that by the time sellers speak with buyers, those buyers have already chosen a favorite, and that favorite will win the deal more than 80% of the time. So, does cutting marketing budgets to fund more sellers still seem like a wise strategy?

Instead of cutting marketing budgets in response to an impending downturn, B2B organizations should amplify both brand and demand investments to maximize revenue from in-flight (and soon-to-be in-flight) buying processes that will drive future quarters. Additional selling resources may be necessary to capture this maturing pipeline, but this should be viewed as expanding capacity to boost revenue production, not merely to prevent shortfalls.

There is much to learn from this report, and we hope it helps B2B organizations better serve buyers, improve how and when they engage prospects, and increase the velocity and volume of deals closed.

To jump straight to our discussion of what it all means, [click here](#).

Methods

- 6sense Research surveyed 2,509 recent B2B buyers from diverse industries, job levels, and geographic regions.
- Purchases of at least \$10,000 USD in annual value; the average deal size across participants was 4.6 on our Purchase Cost Scale which is in between the ranges of \$200,001 to \$300,000 and \$300,001-\$400,000 USD.
- Participants were located in three global regions: North America (37.5%), EMEA (29.8%), or APAC (32.8%) during the time of the purchase.
- The corporate headquarters for participants were distributed between four regions: North America (43.7%), APAC (21.6%), EMEA (30.3%), and Latin America (2.6%).
- A small percentage of participants (15.7%) were in a different region from their company headquarters at the time of the purchase. The buying processes for these participants were notably [more complex](#) than for other buyers.
- Participants were from privately funded (31.0%), Private Equity (PE)-backed (25.7%), publicly traded (37.9%), and Venture Capital (VC)-backed companies (5.3%).

START



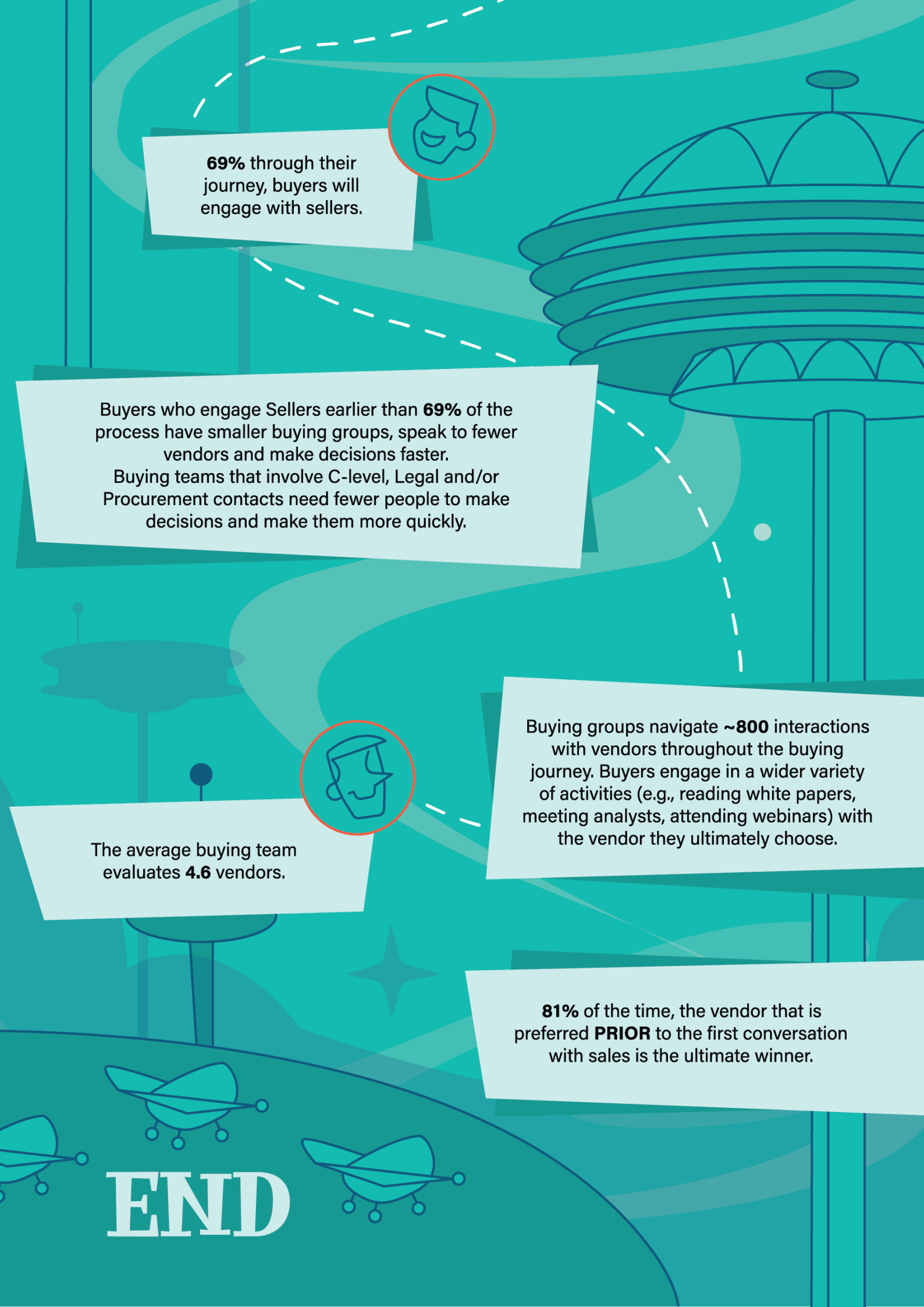
Project approved.
Goals set.
Buying group assigned.

11 is the average number of people in a buying group. Buying group size is influenced by purchase cost, the solution's importance to the business, and the number of vendors evaluated.

The average buying cycle lasts **11.5** months, with buyers initiating contact with sellers at **8.1** months.

85% of buying teams have their purchase requirements mostly or completely set before engaging vendors.

72% of buyers use consultants or analysts to guide their decision making.



69% through their journey, buyers will engage with sellers.

Buyers who engage Sellers earlier than **69%** of the process have smaller buying groups, speak to fewer vendors and make decisions faster.

Buying teams that involve C-level, Legal and/or Procurement contacts need fewer people to make decisions and make them more quickly.



The average buying team evaluates **4.6** vendors.

Buying groups navigate **~800** interactions with vendors throughout the buying journey. Buyers engage in a wider variety of activities (e.g., reading white papers, meeting analysts, attending webinars) with the vendor they ultimately choose.

81% of the time, the vendor that is preferred **PRIOR** to the first conversation with sales is the ultimate winner.

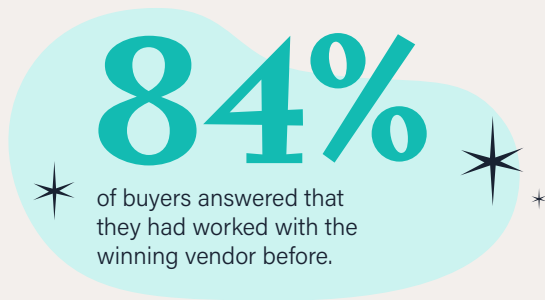
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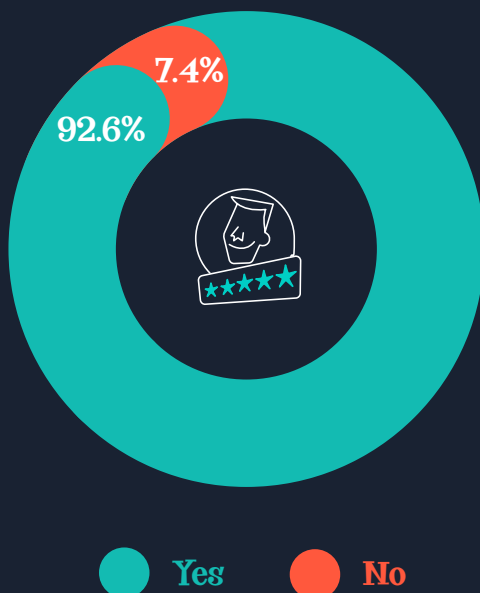
Findings

Prior (Vendor) Experience Matters

A new question in this year's survey asked buyers whether they had previously worked with vendors they evaluated for the purchase in question. Eighty-four percent of buyers answered that they had worked with the winning vendor before. Nearly half of those buyers (36% of all buyers) had also worked with at least one of the other competitors. Perhaps what is most surprising is that only 7.4% of the buyers in our survey had no prior experience with any of the vendors they evaluated.



Did You Have Prior Experience with the Vendors You Evaluated?



Breakdown of "Yes"

84% Winning Vendor Inclusive

48.4%
Yes, only with
the winning vendor

35.6%
Yes, with both the
winning and at least one
non-winning vendor

8.6% Yes, only with a non-winning vendor

The Length of Buying Cycles

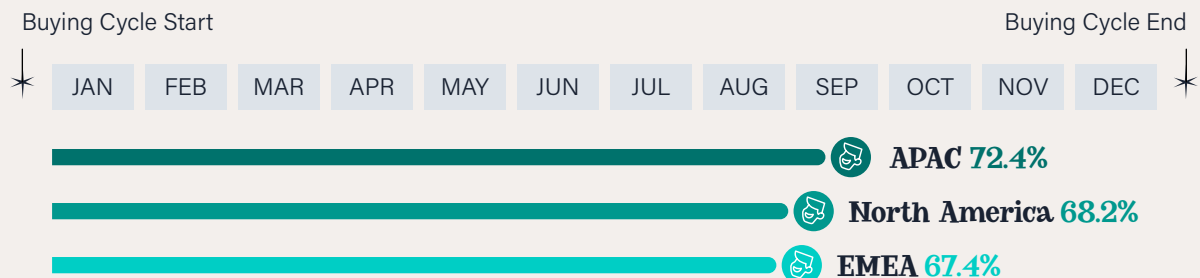
Across regions, the average buying cycle was 11.5 months from the time research began until the time a provider was selected. [Later in the report](#), we examine the factors that tend to increase or decrease the length of a buying cycle.

Buying Cycle Length



The Point of First Contact Constant (POFC)

As we saw in our [North American data last year](#), buyers do not engage with sellers until they are well into their purchase journey. Much research has told us that buyers spend two-thirds of their purchase process conducting independent research with their internal teams. Last year, buyers did not engage with sellers until 69% of the way through their journey. That finding was replicated this year with APAC, EMEA, and North American buyers. Across regions, the average buyer does not directly engage with sellers until 8.1 months into a 11.5-month (69.2%) purchase process.



The only [statistically reliable](#) difference in point of first contact is that APAC buyers reach out later than buyers in EMEA and North America. However, while the difference is statistically reliable, in the real world it amounts to less than a two-week difference in a 13-month buying journey.

Last year, we coined the term “Point of First Contact Constant” to capture the fact that nearly all B2B buyers you ask will report that they engaged with sellers at or around 69% through their buying journey. Similar to our previous research in North America, we discovered that only a handful of the [factors](#) make a reliable difference in when the point of first contact occurs, and even then, the differences are minimal.

Altogether, the factors listed on the next page account for only 6% of the reason why a buying team might reach out before or after the average POFC of 69.2%.



Figure 2: Factors used for building a model to predict the Point of First Contact

While there are some minor differences in POFC when each variable above is examined individually, their collective influence accounts for just 6% of the reason that one buying group engages earlier or later than another, making these differences largely insignificant in practical terms.

Buyers do much of the work of selecting vendor partners on their own, and very little changes that. Detailed tables of the relationship between POFC and each of the variables listed above can be found in the [Annex](#).

Don't Call Me, I'll Call You: Buyers Make the First Move

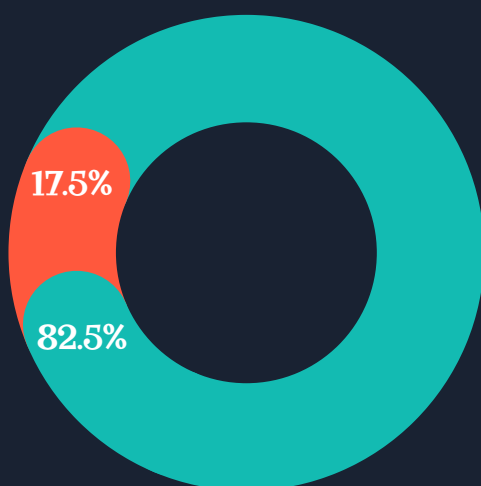
We also asked buyers to indicate whether they initiated first contact with sellers, or if instead the initiative was taken by the seller. [Our prior research](#) in North America found that buyers initiated contact 83% of the time. The current study replicates the fact that buyers indeed control when they engage with sellers. Globally, buyers reported that they initiated contact with sellers 81% of the time.

	North America	EMEA	APAC
Buyer initiated contact	82.9%	80.9%	77.7%
Buyer responded to seller	17.1%	19.1%	22.3%

Similar to how we tested POFC, we entered [all the factors](#) one might expect to be influential on whether the buyer or seller makes the first contact into a Logistic Regression. Taken together, these factors account for a modest 17.5% (Nagelkerke $R^2 = 0.175$) of the [variability](#) in whether a vendor is the first mover rather than the buyer. However, within the model, just a handful of factors do the bulk of the predictive work.

Of the 13 factors in the model, the following 6 explain nearly two thirds (12.7%) of the 17.5% of variability explained by all 13 factors together:

Key Drivers of Who Initiates Contact



● Variability we cannot account for

● Variability Accounted For

Breakdown of Variability Accounted For

2/3 of this Variability Includes:

- + Number of Vendors Evaluated
- + Company Funding
- + Use of External Advisors
- + Industry of Buyer
- + Prior Vendor Relationship
- + Point of First Contact with Seller

Publicly traded and privately financed companies are more likely to initiate first contact than VC- and PE-funded companies. Tech & Software companies are also more likely to initiate first contact than buyers in other industries.

- ★ If vendors make first contact, it happens later in the buying process.
- ★ As buyers evaluate more vendors, they are slightly less likely to initiate first contact.

- ★ If buyers have hired outside help (analysts/consultants), they are slightly less likely to initiate first contact.
- ★ If the buyer has previous experience with a non-winning vendor, they are slightly less likely to initiate first contact.

Overall, the relatively weak predictive power exhibited by this model suggests that buyers largely control when first contact with sellers occurs, and very little changes that. Buyers control when contact is made, and they don't do it until they are ready (the [POFC constant](#)).

“...buyers largely control when first contact with sellers occurs, and very little changes that.”

Factors that Reliably Influence Whether a Buyer or Vendor Initiates Contact

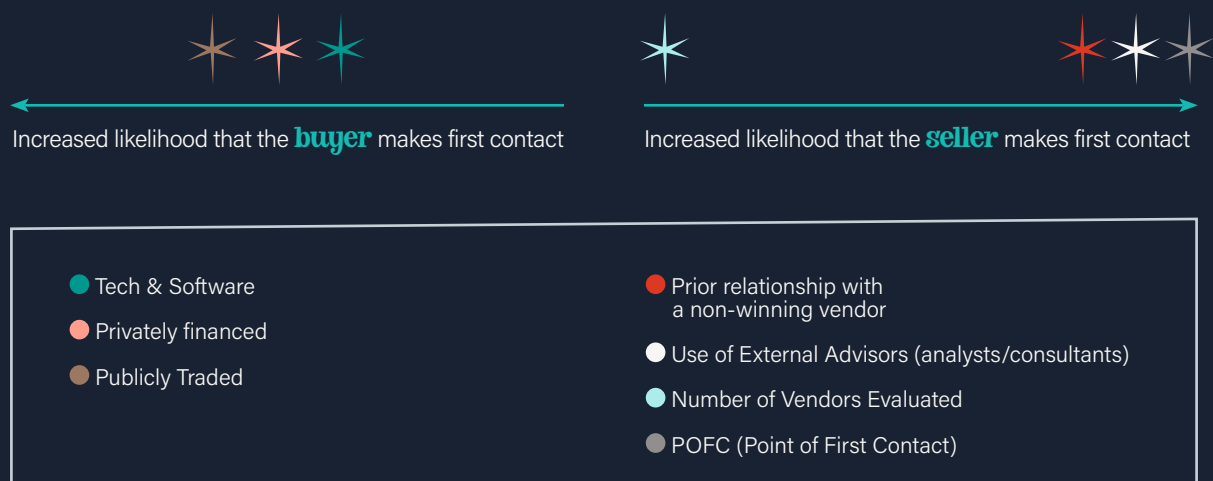


Figure 3. How to read this chart: Factors on the left indicate a higher-than-average likelihood that buyers will initiate contact with vendors. Factors on the right show the few cases where sellers are more likely to succeed in initiating contact. For numeric factors, like the number of vendors considered, an increase (evaluating an additional vendor) raises the chance of sellers initiating contact. For non-numeric factors, such as prior vendor experience, results compare different levels of that factor. For example, a relationship with a non-winning vendor increases buyer response, while a relationship with the winning vendor has no effect.

Buyers Are Already Set In Their Ways at First Contact

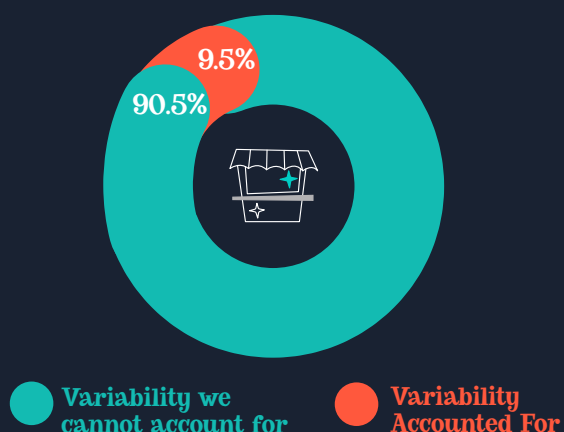
Given that buyers determine when they will engage with sellers and only do so deep into their buying process, we surmised that buying teams might already have established their requirements — and perhaps even chosen frontrunners — by the time they speak with sellers. In our earlier research, this is precisely what we found, with North American buyers in 2023 saying their requirements remained unchanged or changed only slightly 78% of the time. This year, we found an even larger effect across the globe. Buyers in APAC, EMEA, and North America have completely or mostly set their purchase requirements before talking to sellers between 82% and 88% of the time.

	North America	EMEA	APAC
Requirements remained unchanged or changed only slightly	84%	88%	82%
Requirements changed moderately or substantially	16%	12%	18%

Similar to our analysis of the Point of First Contact, we conducted a Logistic Regression analysis, entering each of the factors that might influence whether a buyer has their purchase requirements set at the time of first contact as predictors. Together these factors account for a mere 9.5% (Nagelkerke $R^2 = 0.095$) of the variability in whether a buyer will materially change their requirements after first contact. Of the 13 factors in the model, the following 6 factors account for just over half (5%) of the 9.5% of variability explained by all 13 factors together:

“Buyers in APAC, EMEA, and North America have completely or mostly set their purchase requirements before talking to sellers between 82% and 88% of the time.”

Key Drivers of Establishing Purchase Requirements Prior to Vendor Contact



Breakdown of Variability Accounted For

1/2 of this Variability Includes:

- + Solution Type
- + Business Need
- + Use of External Advisors
- + Industry of Buyer
- + Location of Buyer During Purchase
- + Point of First Contact with Seller

Most of these factors further increased the already high likelihood that the purchase requirements were mostly or fully established. For example, buyers located in EMEA during the time of the purchase are reliably more likely to have their purchase requirements set. Below are the factors that made buyers less likely to have their requirements set at the point of first contact:

- ★ If buyers have hired outside help (analysts/consultants)
- ★ If buyers were purchasing software
- ★ If buyers were replacing existing capabilities or acquiring new business capabilities.

Factors that Reliably Influence Whether a Buyer Has Their Requirements Set



Figure 4. How to read this chart: Factors on the right indicate a higher-than-average likelihood that buyers have mostly or fully established their purchase requirements before contacting sellers. Factors on the left show the few cases where buyers are less likely to have set their requirements. For numeric factors, like POFC, an increase raises the likelihood of buyers establishing their requirements. For example, the more time spent in independent research (POFC), the more likely buyers are to have set their requirements. For non-numeric factors, such as industry, results compare different levels of that factor. Buyers in Manufacturing, for instance, are more likely to have set their requirements than those in other industries, which align with the average.

Buyers pick a winner before talking to sellers

In our survey, we ask buyers whether their first interaction with a provider organization was with the ultimate winner or instead with one of the other providers. Perhaps the most startling finding from our [2023 Buyer Experience Research](#) was that buyers had their first conversations with the ultimate winner 84% of the time.

This finding was validated again this year and across regions with EMEA being just slightly lower at 76%.

	North America	EMEA	APAC
Winner	84.6%	76.2%	82.3%
Other	15.3%	23.8%	17.6%

There are two ways to interpret the fact that most buyers have their first conversations with the ultimate winner.

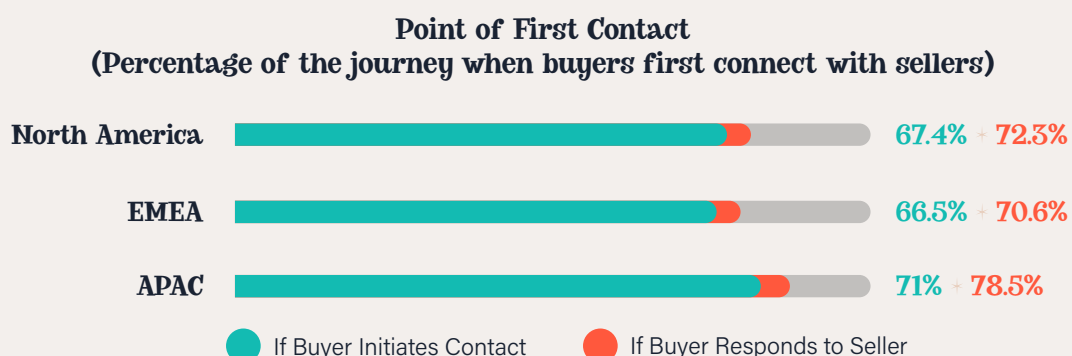
Interpretation 1: By the time buyers reach a point that will eventually be approximately two-thirds of the way through their entire buying journey, they reach out to provider organizations at random. By then, a typical buying team has been collecting and reviewing content for eight months. The group has had hundreds of content interactions, dozens of internal meetings, and is very likely to have engaged with analysts and/ or consultants. They have completely or mostly established their requirements but have not identified a preferred vendor. They decide then to reach out to vendors, beginning with a random vendor from their list. That first conversation is so compelling that they buy from that vendor 81% of the time.

Interpretation 2: Buyers devote nearly 70% of their buying journey to identifying a short-list of potential providers. They review content, have internal meetings and consult with outside resources to establish their requirements and agree on a shortlist and a favored vendor. Only then do they reach out to vendors to confirm that choice, starting with the preferred vendor. They end up buying from the initially preferred vendor 81% of the time.

The most likely explanation for most buying journeys appears to be that buying groups have already established their requirements and chosen a favorite in the race for their business prior to talking to sellers.

Sellers Cannot Blitz Their Way to the Pole Position

The data also tell us that simply hounding buyers before they are ready is very unlikely to produce a positive result. Recall that among the buyers who said that their first interaction with sellers came in response to a seller overture, the POFC was substantially later, not earlier, than it was when buyers initiated the contact.

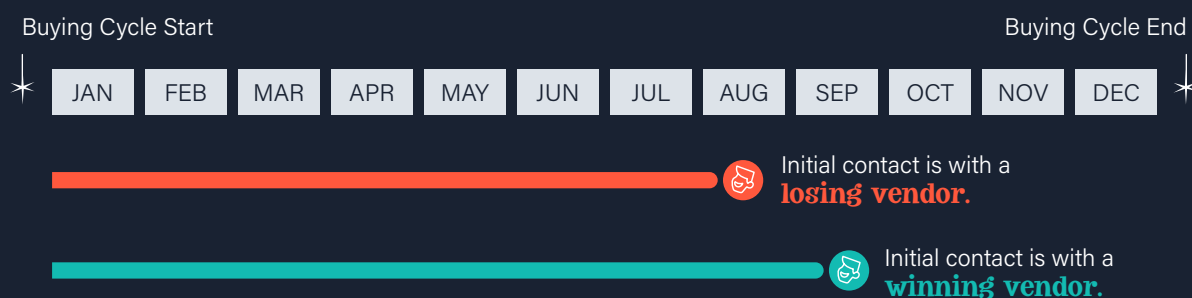


Buyers simply don't respond until they are ready, and if they do respond earlier than approximately 69% of the way through their journey, the data suggest it **is not good news for the organization that reaches them early**: buyers whose first contact happens with a losing vendor generally engage that non-winning vendor before the 69% mark of their journey.

"buyers whose first contact happens with a losing vendor generally engage that non-winning vendor before the 69% mark of their journey."

	POINT OF FIRST CONTACT (POFC)		
	North America	EMEA	APAC
POFC when first contact happens with a losing vendor	60%	64.5%	68.9%
POFC when first contact happens with winning vendor	70.4%	68.8%	73.4%

First conversations with losing vendors happen earlier, not later.



But, providers are not helpless. There are a wide variety of mechanisms through which provider organizations can begin and nurture relationships with decision-makers outside of a selling process.

Pro Tip

Thought-leadership content appropriate to buyer needs and preferences for content consumption is table-stakes. In addition, high-performing organizations are also engaging buyers through a variety of tactics (e.g., subject-matter expert consultations, practitioner communities, educational events) that deliver value to buyers outside of standard selling processes.

Early and Late Engagers Are Different

So far, we have described how buyers rarely engage sellers until they are ready and if they *do* engage early, it's typically not good news for the organization that reaches them. But how about those that do engage early? Are they different from buyers who engage later?

To understand whether there are meaningful differences between early and late engagers, we segmented the participants into those who engaged after

the average POFC of 69% through the journey, and those who engaged before, resulting in the following observations. Early engagers:

- ★ Make smaller purchases
- ★ Tend to have smaller buying groups
- ★ Tend to evaluate fewer vendors
- ★ Have shorter buying cycles

Additionally, Early Engagers are more often from companies with lower revenue growth.

Differences Between Early and Late Engagers Across Regions

	North America		EMEA		APAC	
	Early	Late	Early	Late	Early	Late
Purchase Complexity	-0.1	1.6	-1.8	-0.6	-0.8	3.9
Buying Group Size*	9.5	11.9	9.2	10.5	9.7	15.1
Number of Vendors*	4.3	4.7	3.9	4.3	4.2	5.9
Buying Cycle Length*	9.6	12.8	9.8	10.6	9.8	15.8
Purchase Cost	~\$230,000	~\$270,000	~\$190,000	~\$230,000	~\$220,000	~\$390,000
Revenue Growth	42.7%	60.5%	35.2%	41.2%	42.2%	67%

* Purchase Complexity Factors

Table 1: Purchase Complexity. Purchase complexity is an aggregate measure we created by combining scores for each participant on buying group size, number of vendors evaluated, buying cycle length, and purchase cost. Please see below for a full discussion of the [Purchase Complexity Scale](#). In the Purchase Complexity Scale, a score of 0 indicates an average level of complexity within our survey. Scores above 0 indicate more complexity, and scores below 0 indicate less complexity.

Note: Purchases made in EMEA were less complex in general, thus the differences seen between Early and Late Engagers in EMEA are not as pronounced as they are in North America and APAC.

Interestingly, Late Engagers reported higher satisfaction in APAC (4.6 v 4.4 on our Satisfaction Scale). We did not find this difference in EMEA or North America.

Understanding Buying Groups

For all but the smallest purchases in B2B, the buyer is not an individual but a team of individuals, each with distinct roles in the buying process – a buying group.



Last year, our data showed that buyers in North America work in buying groups of 9.4 individuals. That number has increased by one in North America this year, while buying groups in EMEA and APAC are comparable or larger.

Buying group size globally

10.6

North America

9.8

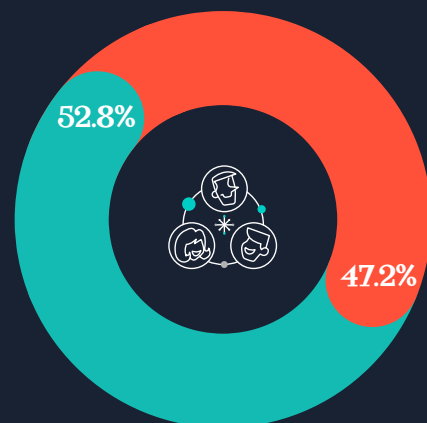
EMEA

12.8

APAC

In our prior research, we found that a variety of factors (company funding type, industry, buyer department, purchase purpose, solution type, company size, etc.) had a statistically reliable but negligible influence on buying group size. However, three of the factors accounted for a combined 52.8% of the reason one buying group was smaller or larger than the average buying group (2023 buying groups were 9.4 people). Those factors were 1) the number of vendors evaluated, 2) purchase cost, and 3) the importance of the solution.

2023 Key Drivers of Buying Group Size



● Variability Accounted For
 ● Variability we cannot account for

Breakdown of Variability Accounted For

- + Number of Vendors Evaluated
- + Purchase Cost
- + Criticality of Purchase

To test our 2024 global data, we entered all the factors one might expect to influence the size of a buying group (listed below) into a regression model. Together, these 13 factors account for 58.4% of the reason why a buying group might be smaller or larger than the average.

- ★ The number of vendors a buying team evaluates
- ★ Revenue band of the buyer
- ★ Cost of the solution
- ★ Business Need
- ★ Solution type
- ★ How important the solution is to the business
- ★ Whether the buying team hired outside help
- ★ Industry of the buyer
- ★ Where the company headquarters are located
- ★ Where buyers were located during the purchase
- ★ Department of the buyer
- ★ Primary user of the buyer
- ★ Company funding

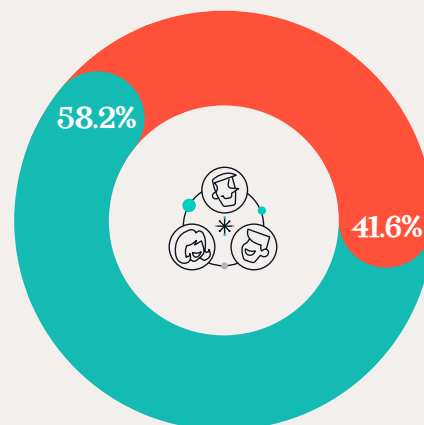
As with last year, only a few factors meaningfully contribute to the model's predictive power. **Purchase cost and the number of vendors buyers evaluate account for nearly all (54.4%) of the 58.4% accounted for by all 13 factors together.** While other factors listed above cause small variations in group size, they are largely negligible. For detailed model metrics, see the [Appendix](#). Ultimately, the primary determinants of buying group size are how big the purchase is and how much work there is to do in the evaluation (number of vendors to evaluate).



“Ultimately, the primary determinants of buying group size are how big the purchase is and how much work there is to do in the evaluation (number of vendors to evaluate).”



2024 Key Drivers of Buying Group Size



Variability
Accounted For



Variability we
cannot account for

Breakdown of Variability Accounted For

54.4% of this Variability is due to:

- ★ Number of Vendors Evaluated
- ★ Purchase Cost

Understanding Buying Cycle Length

As noted earlier, the average buying cycle across all regions is approximately 11 months from the time research begins until the time a provider is selected. Not surprisingly, our participants reported a wide range of buying cycle lengths, from one to 36 months. Understanding what leads to such a wide variety in buying cycle lengths was a central focus of our study.

To begin, many factors that influence the duration of B2B buying cycles are unpredictable, uncontrollable, and often unknown to revenue teams. These factors include intricate relationship dynamics (both personal and corporate) within buying teams and between buying and selling organizations. Other likely factors include unexpected changes in economic and market conditions, the business performance of buying and selling organizations, among many others.

Common but unforeseeable factors – like personnel changes, shifts in offerings and messaging, competitive disruptions, and the performance of team members – further contribute to the unpredictability of B2B buying cycles.

In addition to those, however, are numerous factors that may more readily be measured, anticipated, and in some cases, managed by selling organizations. As in our other analyses, we captured 19 such factors (listed below) and entered them into a regression model to assess how helpful these factors are in predicting the length of the buying cycle. **Altogether, these 19 factors account for nearly two-thirds (65%) of the reason why a buying cycle might be different from the average of 11 months.**



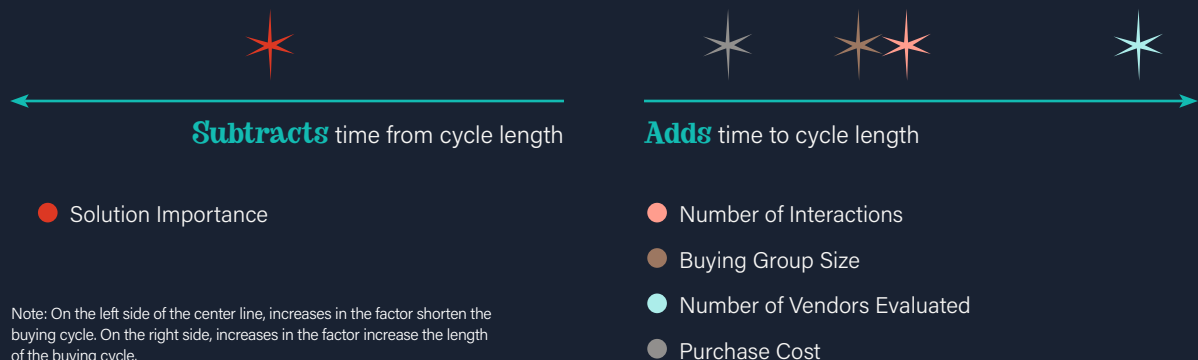
However, as we have seen numerous times before, there are just a handful that reliably contribute to our understanding of what drives the length of buying cycles. Those factors were:



Together, these five factors account for 63.5% of the 65% that all 19 factors together predicted. Taking it a step further, of the five factors listed on the left, **the size of the buying group accounts for 49% of the variability in buying cycle length on its own.** While there are some small variations in cycle length amongst the 19 factors (see the [appendix](#) for detailed tables), the five listed on the left – and especially buying group size – undoubtedly shape the length of the buying cycle.

“... size of the buying group accounts for 49% of the variability in buying cycle length on its own.”

Critical Factors Influencing Buying Cycle Length



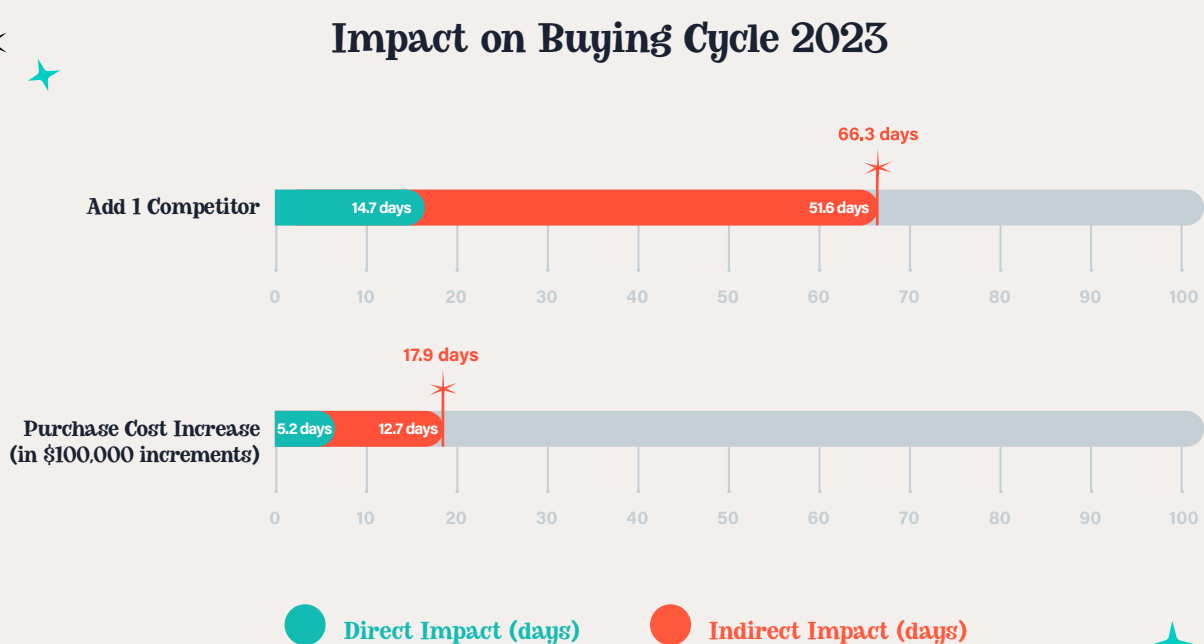
Why Buying Cycles Are So Long: It's Complicated

The five factors that significantly impact buying cycle length (listed in the previous section) raised some interesting questions during our research. Last year, we observed that some of these factors not only had direct influences on buying cycle length but also indirect influences through their tangled influences on one another. For example, solutions that cost more have longer buying cycles. But, companies that make larger purchases also use larger buying groups. Larger buying groups cause buying cycles to be longer, independent of the cost of the solution being evaluated. We tested them again this year and found an astonishingly similar web of influences among the factors and a near-exact impact in terms of the number of days they add to the buying cycle.

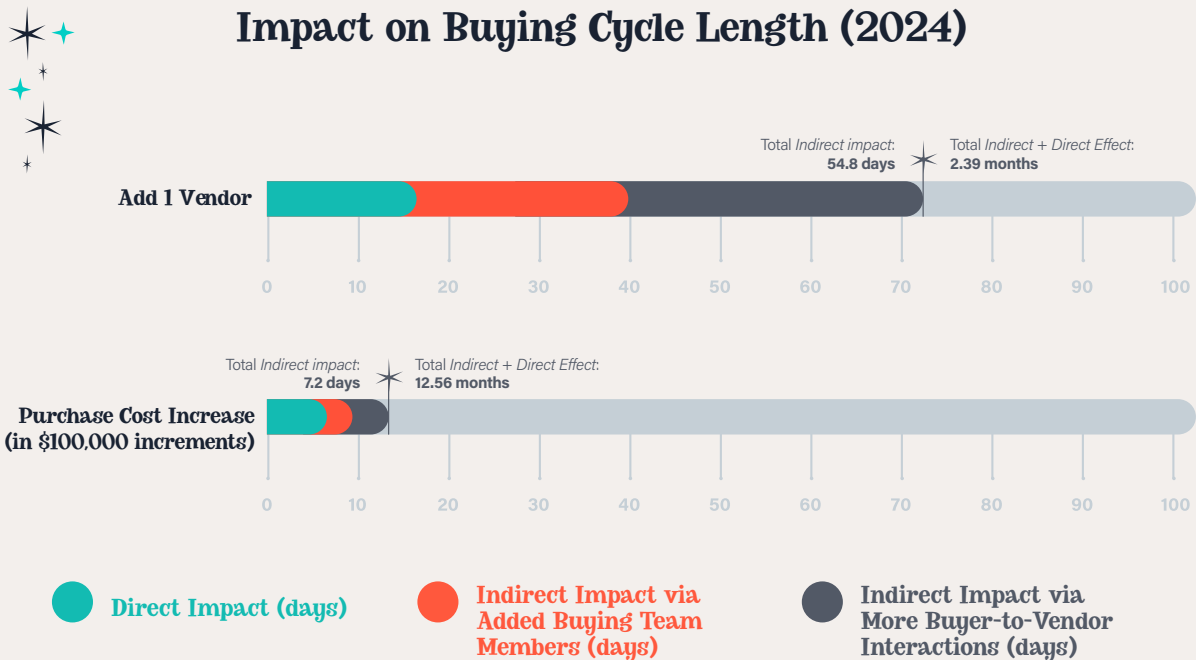
Through [mediation analysis](#), last year we saw that adding a vendor to the evaluation list directly increases the length of a buying cycle by nearly 15 days. Furthermore, when buying groups had more vendors to evaluate they had more interactions with each of the vendors. Plus, as noted above, for each vendor added, companies add someone else to the buying groups, further lengthening the cycle. Thus, **adding a vendor to one's shortlist not only added roughly 15 days to the buying cycle directly, it added nearly 52 days to the buying cycle through its impact on interactions and buying group members, creating a total impact of over 66 days – more than two months – from adding a single vendor over the average of 4.**

Two examples demonstrate these relationships.

- ★ APAC buyers evaluate more vendors (5.2 vs. the overall average of 4.5), and their buying cycles are commensurately longer as a result (13.2 months).
- ★ Conversely, companies in the Manufacturing segment evaluate fewer vendors than average (3.6 versus 4.5), have a shorter cycle length of 8.2 months compared to the overall average of just over 11 months.



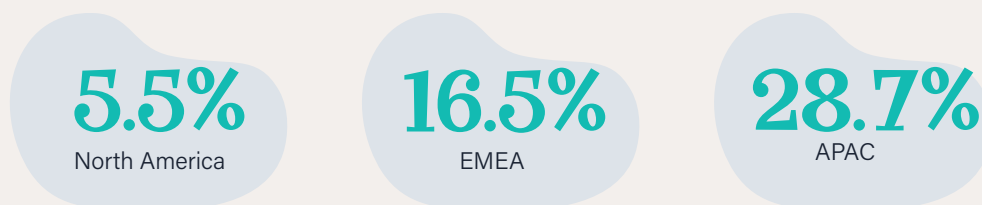
We replicated the analysis this year with nearly identical results.



Global Teams Are Different

In our research this year, we asked buyers both where their company headquarters are located and where they themselves were located during the purchase. Most buyers made their purchases in the same region as their company headquarters, however, 15.7% of participants were buyers working for organizations headquartered in a different region than where they were located.

Percent of Buyers Located in a Different Region Than Their Company Headquarters



Multi-National Buyers

*In the table above, 5.53% of buyers located in North America during their purchase work for companies headquartered outside of North America.

What the data reveal is that when at least one buying group member resides in a different region from the company headquarters (is a multinational team), buying processes are different from when buying groups and headquarters are located in the same region.

While multinational teams make contact with sellers at the same time as other teams (remember that POFC is largely unchanged across most factors), multinational teams differ from domestic teams in that...

- ★ They are from faster growing companies
- ★ Make larger purchases (\$300,001 to \$400,000 vs. \$200,001 to \$300,000)
- ★ Have bigger buying groups (15.2 people vs. 10 people)
- ★ Have longer buying cycles (16 months vs. 11 months)
- ★ Have more interactions with vendors (23.8 interactions vs. 16.1 interactions)
- ★ Consider more vendors (5.7 vendors vs. 4.2 vendors)
- ★ Make more complex purchases (3.8 vs. -.528 on our [Buying Complexity Scale](#))

If your sales team engages with multinational buying teams, you can anticipate a longer and more involved buying process. Teams should use this information to prepare for extended cycles, larger buying groups, and increased vendor interactions that characterize these purchases.

★
“If your sales team engages with multinational buying teams, you can anticipate a longer and more involved buying process.”
★

Phone-A-Friend for B2B Buyers: Buyers Work with Analysts and Consultants

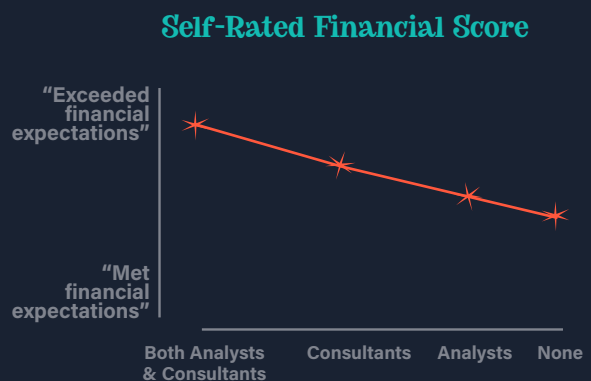
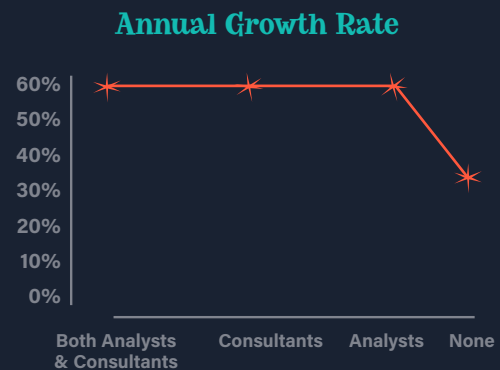
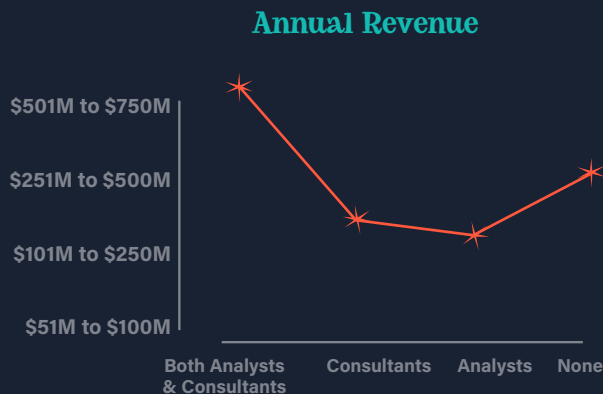
As we have seen, B2B buying groups are large. But they are not the only influences on what an organization buys. Organizations frequently rely on trusted advisors — consultants and industry analysts — for input during their buying process. Across regions, 72% of buyers reported working with either consultants or analysts during their purchase process. Buyers in APAC are the most likely to seek such help.

	North America	EMEA	APAC
Buyers with Analysts/Consultants	70%	65%	77%

Are buyers that use outside help different from others?

First, we examined differences between buyers who hire analysts, consultants, or both. Buyers that don't use external help report lower annual revenue, lower self-reported financial performance ratings, and lower revenue growth over the past year. Those who work with analysts or consultants perform better, but buyers that use both analysts and consultants do even better. Despite these differences, both groups give nearly identical ratings to the importance of the solution being purchased, indicating that hiring help depends more on the organization's financial capacity than on the purchase's importance.

Financial Capacity Appears to Influence Organizations' Decision to Hire Analysts or Consultants



Because the use of analysts, consultants, or both appears to be largely influenced by what organizations can afford, we grouped participants into two categories for the remainder of our analysis: those who used an outside resource and those who did not. Examined this way, there were clear differences between the two groups.

Buying teams that tend to use outside resources also tend to have more **complex purchases** and contact sellers earlier in the buying process (see on the right).

Buying teams that tend to use outside resources also tend to:

1. Consider more vendors (5.1 vendors vs. 3.2 vendors among those that do not hire outside help)
2. Have longer buying cycles (13.5 months vs. 6.4 months among those that do not hire outside help)
3. Purchase more costly solutions (\$301k to \$400k vs. \$101k to \$200k)
4. Have larger buying groups (12.8 people vs. 6.3 people among those who do not hire outside help)
5. Contact sellers earlier (65% vs. 70% of the way through their purchase journey)

Buying teams that are *less* likely to use outside resources also tend to be:

1. Renewing/continuing existing solutions or replacing existing capabilities rather than improving existing capabilities or purchasing new business capabilities
2. Manufacturing companies
3. Purchasing hardware-machinery
4. Privately financed companies

Understanding Buyer-Seller Interactions

As we have seen, buying cycles last anywhere from a month to multiple years, depending largely on how many vendors are being evaluated (average 4.6) and the cost of the solutions in question. We also know that buying teams are approximately 11 members, with the size of the team varying based on the same factors.

Next, we examined what buyers say they are doing throughout their buying journeys, such as:

- ★ How participation varies by role (or doesn't) in the buying process, and,
- ★ How the number of vendors buyers evaluate drives interaction volume.

How Participation Varies by Role (or Doesn't) In the Buying Process

First, we examined the number of interactions buying team members have across regions. APAC buyers are having reliably more interactions with vendors. However, as we have seen earlier in the report (and will further detail in the next section), evaluating more vendors leads to more interactions. APAC buyers evaluate an average of 5.1 vendors, compared to 4.1 vendors in EMEA and 4.5 vendors in North America.

	North America	EMEA	APAC
Number of Interactions Per Person, per vendor	17.6	15.6	19.8
Per Team, per Vendor	186.5	151.3	251.4
Total Interactions	~845	~ 620	~1,300

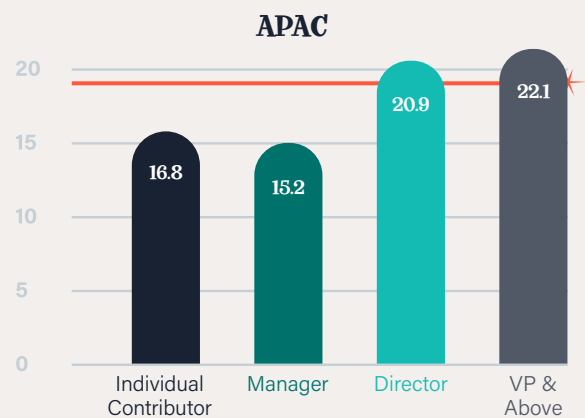
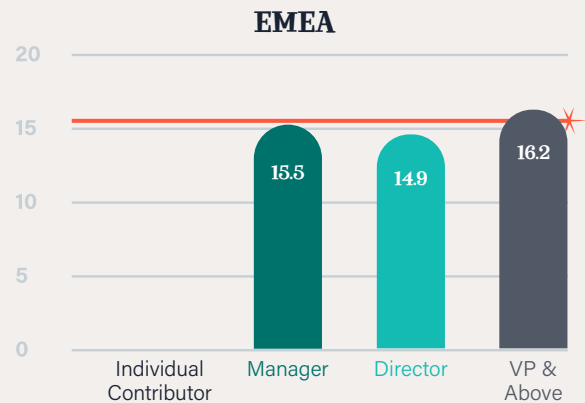
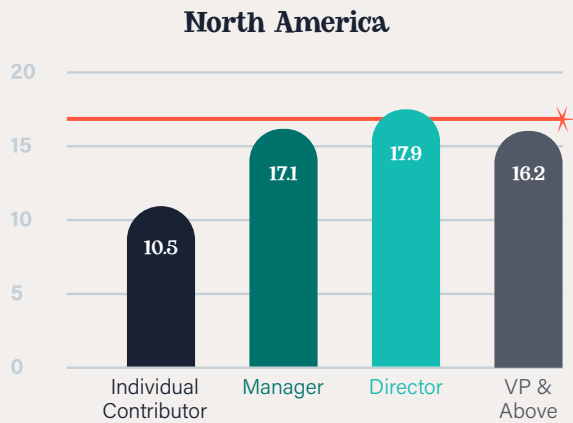
Note: Total Interactions = per person x number of buying team members x number of vendors evaluated

Last year, among our North American respondents, each buying group role had double-digit interactions with each vendor they evaluated. Buying group members in Manager and Director positions reported slightly more total interactions than the overall average.

This year in North America, the most senior ranks of the organization had slightly fewer interactions than the North American average. Individual contributors had substantially fewer interactions than the current North American average. In APAC, senior roles have more interactions than junior roles, while in EMEA the workload is more evenly distributed across all levels. Nonetheless, across all regions and levels buyers are all having double-digit interactions with each vendor they evaluate.

Average Number of Interactions Per Buying Group Member Across Regions

*Note: the orange bar represents the overall average of buyer-to-seller interactions per region.



In all three regions, **Champions and Financial Ratifiers** have above-average interactions with each vendor, while ultimate decision makers have fewer interactions than their regional averages.

Pro Tip

B2B buying group role definitions:

Champion: A key advocate within the organization who actively promotes a particular vendor or solution, often driving the decision-making process.

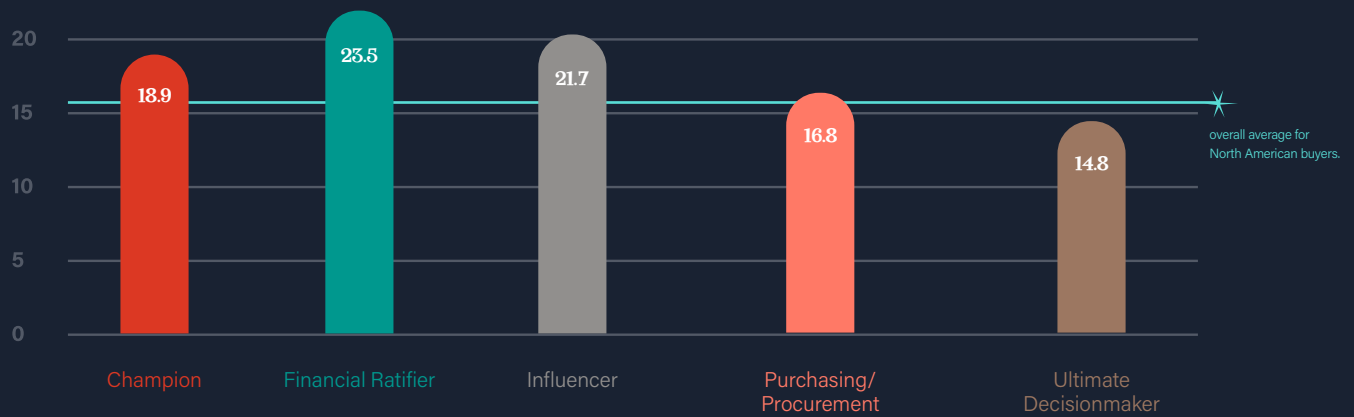
Influencer: A person who, while not making the final decision, significantly impacts the selection process by providing recommendations or expertise.

Financial Ratifier: The individual responsible for approving the budget or financial aspects of a purchase, ensuring alignment with the organization's financial goals.

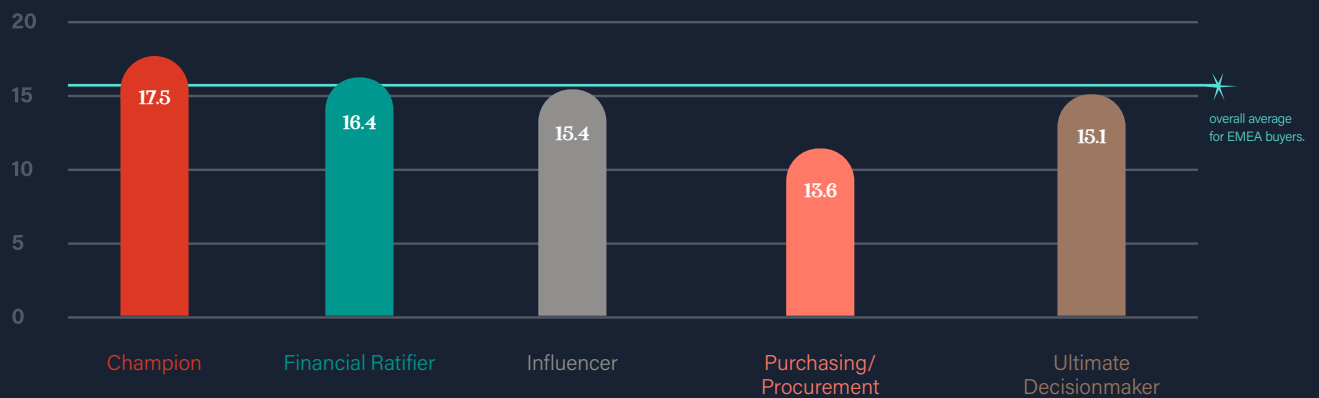
Ultimate Decision Maker: The final authority in the buying process who has the power to approve or reject a purchase decision.

Purchasing/Procurement: The team or individual tasked with managing the purchase process, including vendor negotiations, contracts, and ensuring compliance with procurement policies.

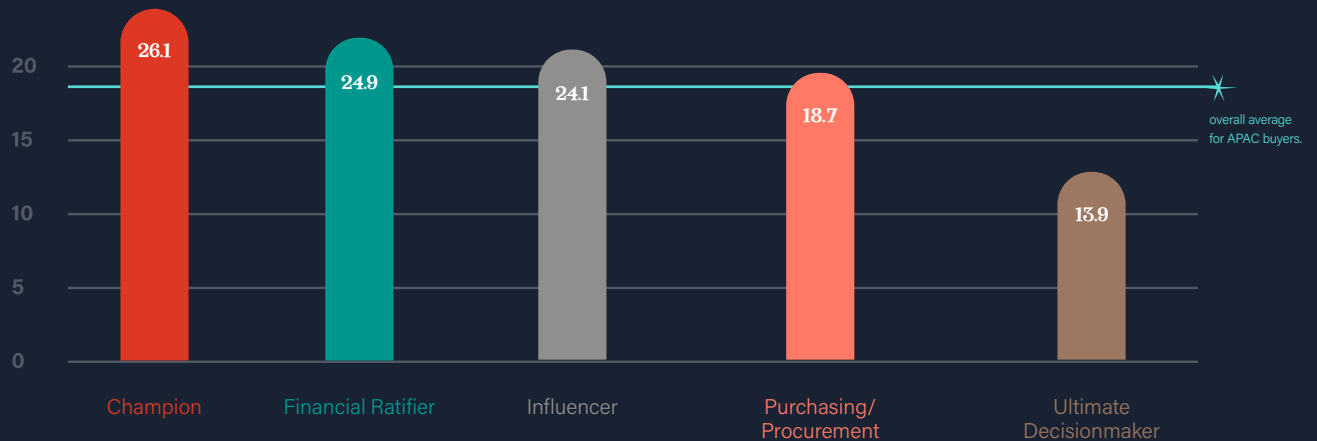
Number of Interactions Per Role in North America



Number of Interactions Per Role in EMEA



Number of Interactions Per Role in APAC



	INTERACTIONS PER PERSON PER VENDOR				
	Champion	Financial Ratifier	Influencer	Purchasing/ Procurement	Ultimate Decisionmaker
Individual Contributor	23.0	10.7	12.8	13.6	7.3
Manger	17.8	20.6	17.8	14.4	14.6
Director	18.7	20.7	20.4	18.0	15.6
VP & Above	21.6	20.8	22.8	16.4	14.3

Vendor Count Drives Interaction Volume

To understand what drives the volume of interactions a buying group member has, we repeated the procedure used earlier for analyzing buying group size and cycle length. We entered the same items as with prior analyses into a [regression](#) model.

Together, all of the factors we measured in our study (Industry, purchase cost, solution type, etc.) accounted for 58.4% of the reason one buying group has more interactions than another. As we have seen in prior analyses, however, most of these factors make just a small contribution to that 58.4%. **Two factors – the number of vendors being evaluated and buying team size – account for nearly all the predictive power of the model.** These factors are responsible for 54.2% of the 58.4% that all 18 factors predict together.

The number of vendors a buying group evaluates influences vendor interactions through two channels, one direct and one indirect. There is a direct influence as evaluating more vendors requires buyers to apply extra scrutiny to each vendor they assess.

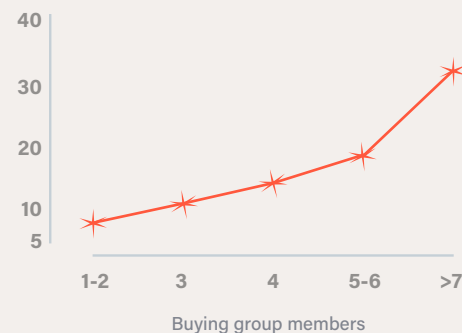
There is an additional indirect influence, as well. In larger buying groups, whether considering more vendors or not, each buying group member tends to have more interactions than members of smaller groups. It may be that when more members are added to the buying group, more points of view are considered, more questions are asked, and more ideas are debated, and this results in each member of the buying group needing to do more homework during the process.

“The number of vendors evaluated and the size of the buying team are the two strongest drivers of the number of interactions that buyers have with sellers”

In fact, more than half of the increase in interactions comes from the indirect impact of expanding the buying team. So, when a company evaluates an additional vendor, it not only results in more meetings and communications with vendors but also prompts larger buying teams to have even more discussions.

Numbers of Vendors Evaluated

Average number of interactions per person per vendor



What types of interactions are buyers having with sellers?

There are two ways we can assess which buying activities buyers find valuable. We can look at which activities they are more likely to do. That gives us some sense. But, the activities buyers engage in are to some extent limited by what is made available to them. The second way to evaluate buyer preference is by asking them to rank the usefulness of each activity they took part in.

When we examined which activities buyers used, we found that each activity was used by between 63% to 82% of buyers. In other words, most buyers used most of the activities. And in fact, it is likely that buyers take advantage of whatever is provided to them, so their choices do not come down to their preference so much as opportunity. The menu is limited.

Unfortunately, when buyers were asked their opinion about each activity they participated in (rated on a scale from 1 to 5 where 5 indicates the highest level of helpfulness), their ratings told a similar story. Buyers' overall ratings ranged from 3.4 to 4.1, indicating that all activities are viewed as generally helpful.

To obtain a comprehensive score that reflects both the percentage of buyers engaging in each buying activity and its respective helpfulness rating, we created a weighted score for each activity. This score is calculated by multiplying the percentage of buyers who engage in the activity by its helpfulness rating. This method ensures that both buyers' behavior and their preferences are accounted for.

Even with this combined score, there were no clear favorites. For example, the activity ranked in first position was a mere .04 higher in score than the activity ranked in second position, a negligible margin.

However, it was possible to group the highest overall ratings, using the weighted ranks. When we do this, we were able to observe a trend in the *type* of activities that buyers prefer. The top five activities all involve direct, person-to-person interactions, whether through meetings with vendors (virtual or in-person), internal discussions with the buying team, or consultations with trusted advisors (analysts/consultants).

Buying Journey Activity	Percent of Respondents Engaging	Weighted Average Rating
In-person meetings with vendors	82.2%	1
Proactively contacting a vendor company for more information	80.3%	2
Virtual meetings with vendors	80.7%	3
Internal Meetings with the Buying Team	82.4%	4
Meet with analysts/consultants	73.7%	5
Consume Vendor Content	77.5%	6
Meet at vendors' physical offices or other locations	74.3%	7
Read analyst reports	74.0%	8
Respond to a sale or SDR email	71.2%	9
Fill in a Form to view vendor content	68.7%	10
Respond to a sale or SDR call	70.7%	11
Attend Industry Events (live, virtual)	66.9%	12
Talk with peers/social media	70.0%	13
Engage in Chat on a Vendor Website	69.7%	13
Read industry publications/web syndicated content	71.3%	15
Visit 3rd party review sites (e.g., G2, TrustRadius)	69.7%	15
Registering for a vendor online event (webinar or similar)	66.7%	17
Click on Vendor Ad	66.1%	17
Attend Vendor-Sponsored Events (e.g., dinner)	65.7%	19
See, but not click on a vendor ad	62.8%	20

Buyer Activities Reveal Bias for Preferred Vendors

In our survey, we asked buyers to indicate which activities they engaged in with the winning vendor and which with the non-winning vendors. Here, we found clear differences.

Even more importantly, we discovered that over the course of the buying process, most buyers focus substantially more attention on the vendor they ultimately buy from than they do on the others. Buyers utilize each of the interaction types between 48% and 64.2% with the winning vendor, but just 17.9% to 39.3% of the time with the losing vendors.

This pattern further supports our earlier conclusion that buyers have established a preferred vendor early in their journey, and much of the journey is devoted to validating their preference rather than critically evaluating alternatives.

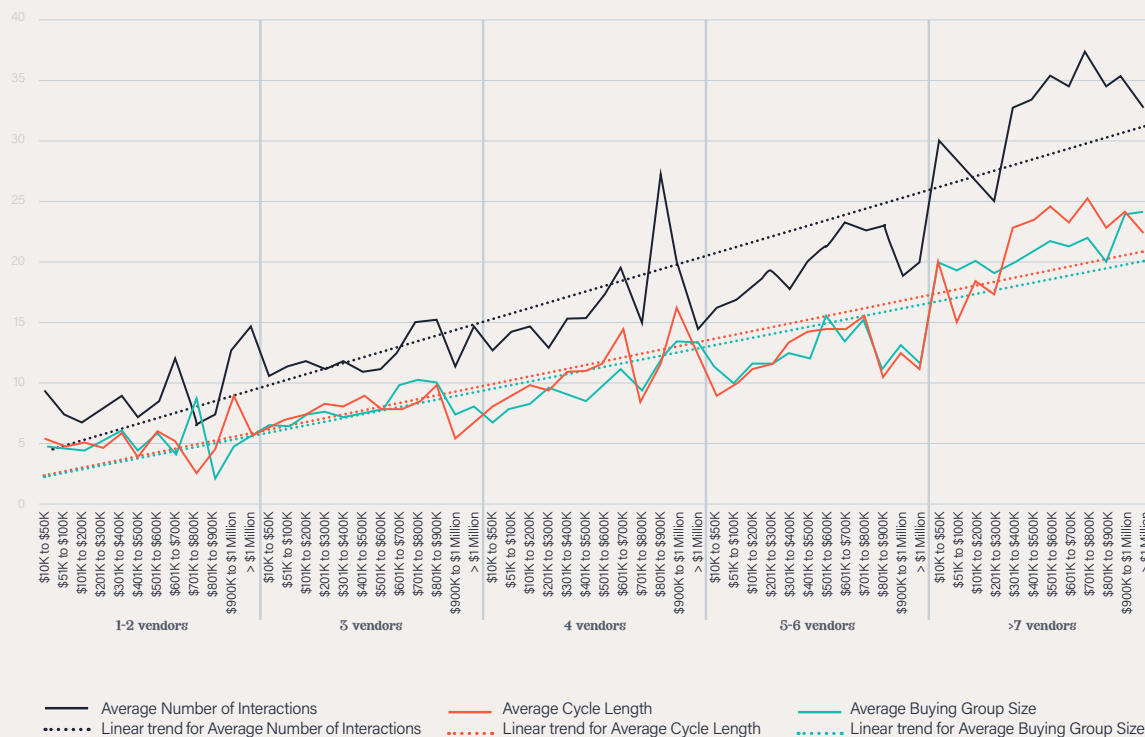
Purchase Complexity

As introduced earlier in this report, our [2023 Buyer Experience Report](#) revealed a tangled web of buying journey factors that have complex, often bi-directional relationships with one another. These factors are:

- * Vendor count
- * Buying cycle length
- * Interaction count
- * Purchase cost
- * Buying group size

Changes in one of these factors tend to lead to predictable changes in the others. For example, adding a vendor to the evaluation list tends to increase the number of buying group members. More vendors to evaluate increases the length of the buying cycle. The need for more interactions per person also increases the cycle length independent of how many vendors are evaluated, but also does through adding more members to the buying group.

Cycle Length, Buying Group Size, & Number of Buyer-to-Seller Interactions Increases as Purchase Cost and Number of Vendors Evaluated Increases



Note: In the chart above, the number of interactions, the buying cycle length, and the buying group size, all increase as the number of vendors evaluated increases. Within the set of accounts evaluating the same number of vendors, increasing price drives each of the three factors higher.

In addition to being deeply interrelated, these factors all appeared to point to a broader characteristic of B2B purchases: their complexity. To test this hunch, we conducted an [Exploratory Factor Analysis](#) entering the five variables given above. The analysis results suggested that four of the factors vary together and can be combined. However, purchase cost increases or decreases independently from the other factors, and so did not fit together with the others.

We labeled the factor that resulted from combining the four variables the Buying Complexity Scale, comprising vendor count, interaction count, buying group size, and buying cycle length for each participant.

Next, we examined the data to determine if there were characteristics of buying teams, companies, or types of purchases that tended to lead to more complex cycles.

In the charts below, a factor with a score that is below zero is less complex than the average purchase, while those with figures above zero are more complex than the overall average. Numbers displayed in bold print indicate statistically reliable differences.

Factors Related to Purchase Complexity

Buyer-Seller Contact Timing	
Early Engagers	- 0.143
Late Engagers	+ 0.230

Industry:	
Business Services	+ 0.171
Financial Services	+ 0.177
Manufacturing	- 0.348
Professional Services	+ 0.085
Tech & Software	+ 0.175

Company Growth State	
No Growth	- 0.336
Growing	+ 0.063

Region	
APAC	+ 0.260
EMEA	- 0.123
Americas	+ 0.021

Funding Type	
Private Equity-Backed	+ 0.124
Privately Financed	- 0.138
Publicly Traded	+ 0.113
Venture Capital-Backed	+ 0.235

Solution Type	
Hardware-Machinery	- 0.300
Services	+ 0.201
Software	+ 0.146

Outside Help	
No	- 0.530
Yes	+ 0.284

Multinational Buyers	
No	- 0.029
Yes	+ 0.398

Buying Department:	
Supply Chain	- 0.356
Executive/Admin	- 0.276
Purchasing/Procurement	- 0.245
Strategy/Planning	- 0.183
Service & Support	- 0.126
Board of Directors	- 0.115
Operations	- 0.068
Sales	- 0.032
Marketing	- 0.008
Engineering	- 0.003
Accounting/Finance	+ 0.117
Customer Success	+ 0.121
Marketing Operations	+ 0.135
IT	+ 0.158
Human Resources	+ 0.448

Business Need	
Improve Existing Capabilities	- 0.044
New Capability	+ 0.365
Renew/Continue Existing Capabilities	- 0.037
Replace Existing Capabilities	- 0.049

Legal Involved	
No	- 0.054
Yes	- 0.005

Purchasing/Procurement Involved	
No	+ 0.182
Yes	- 0.146

C-suite Involved	
No	+ 0.140
Yes	- 0.140

IT Involved	
No	- 0.151
Yes	+ 0.188

We included all the factors that showed statistically reliable differences in purchase complexity (listed below) in a regression model, which collectively accounted for a moderate 31.2% of why a purchase might be more or less complex than average.

From the resulting model, we removed low-contributing factors (partial correlation below .12), resulting in a final model that accounts for a moderate 27.2% of the variability in purchase complexity. This result shows that although some factors can predict more complex purchases, there are many other influences on purchase complexity that our study didn't capture.

Factors Influencing Buying Complexity



Impact of Key Roles on the Buying Journey

The data show that the involvement of various key organizational roles—C-Suite, Legal, Purchasing/Procurement, and Information Technology (IT) — impacts the B2B purchase process, with their effects differing across regions.

Overall, C-Suite involvement tends to simplify the buying process in APAC and EMEA, while having no reliable effect in North America. Legal involvement has minimal impact overall but does influence early vendor contact in APAC and EMEA. Procurement involvement reduces complexity in APAC and North America, shortening cycles and decreasing interactions. Conversely, IT involvement generally increases complexity, extending cycles and enlarging buying groups across all regions.

C-Suite +

Impact	North America	APAC	EMEA
Change Requirements			
Complexity of Purchases		Less complex ↓	Less complex ↓
Buying Cycle (months)		10.3 vs. 14.9 ↓	8.7 vs. 10.9 ↓
Buying Group Size		9.9 vs. 14.3 ↓	8.6 vs. 10.3 ↓
Interactions with Vendors		Fewer ↓	Fewer ↓
POFC			

When the C-Suite is involved, buying cycles are shorter, buying groups are smaller, and vendor interactions decrease in APAC and EMEA, while no reliable impact is observed in North America. The C-suite was involved in 46.3% of purchases in North America, 33% in EMEA, and 35.7% in APAC.

Legal +

Impact	North America	APAC	EMEA
Change Requirements			
Complexity of Purchases			
Buying Cycle (months)		10.8 vs. 13.6 ↓	
Buying Group Size			
Interactions with Vendors			
POFC		Earlier ↓ (66% vs. 73.5%)	Earlier ↓ (61.7% vs. 68.5%)

Surprisingly, the involvement of Legal has little impact on the purchase process across regions. The only notable difference is that buying cycles tend to be shorter in APAC and their teams tend to contact vendors earlier. Teams in EMEA with Legal involvement also tend to make contact earlier. Otherwise, the involvement of Legal makes minimal impact. Legal was involved in 15.9% of purchases in North America, 17% in EMEA, and 14.5% in APAC.

 = No Impact

Purchasing/Procurement +

Impact	North America	APAC	EMEA
Change Requirements			
Complexity of Purchases	Lower ↓	Lower ↓	
Buying Cycle (months)	9.4 vs. 12.5 ↓	10.4 vs. 15.5 ↓	
Buying Group Size	9.4 vs. 11.5 ↓	10.4 vs. 14.5 ↓	
Interactions with Vendors	15.5 vs. 19.0 ↓	15.1 vs. 23.6 ↓	
POFC	Earlier ↓ (64.4% vs. 70.8%)	Earlier ↓ (88.3% vs. 75.7%)	

Procurement involvement results in shorter buying cycles and fewer interactions with vendors in APAC and North America but has no impact in EMEA. It also reduces the size of buying groups in APAC and North America, with no influence on the likelihood of setting requirements across all regions. Purchasing/Procurement was involved in 40.1% of purchases in North America, 42.1% in EMEA, and 43.8% in APAC.

IT +

Impact	North America	APAC	EMEA
Change Requirements			
Complexity of Purchases	Higher ↑	Higher ↑	Higher ↑
Buying Cycle (months)		15.3 vs. 9.8 ↑	11.2 vs. 9.0 ↑
Buying Group Size	11.6 vs. 9.5 ↑	4.5 vs. 9.8 ↑	11.2 vs. 8.0 ↑
Interactions with Vendors		22.7 vs. 14.9 ↑	16.8 vs. 14.1 ↑
POFC			

The involvement of IT generally makes purchases more complex with extended buying cycles, larger buying groups, and a higher number of interactions per person per vendor. In APAC, 62.4% of purchases involved IT, compared to 54.8% in EMEA and 56.8% in North America.

 = No Impact

Decision Drivers

This year, we asked buyers about the most influential drivers behind their organization's selection of the winning vendor. While there were subtle variations across individual rankings by region, these variations are small and, in practical terms, meaningless when examining each individual decision driver. What became clear, instead, is that there are groups of decision drivers that are consistently ranked highest, in the middle, and lowest, and buyers across regions agree on these groupings. We have categorized these as Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3, reflecting the collective agreement on their importance rather than focusing on the minor differences within each tier. Buyers rank Price, Product/Solution Features, and Ease of Implementation and Use as most important.

Tier 1

- + Price
- + Product/Solution Features
- + Ease of Implementation and use

Tier 2

- + Vendor Reputation/Brand
- + Customer Service/Support
- + Previous Experience with Vendor
- + Domain Expertise

Tier 3

- + Case Studies/Success Stories
- + Analysts/Consultants' Input
- + Thought Leadership
- + Customer Advocacy/Referrals

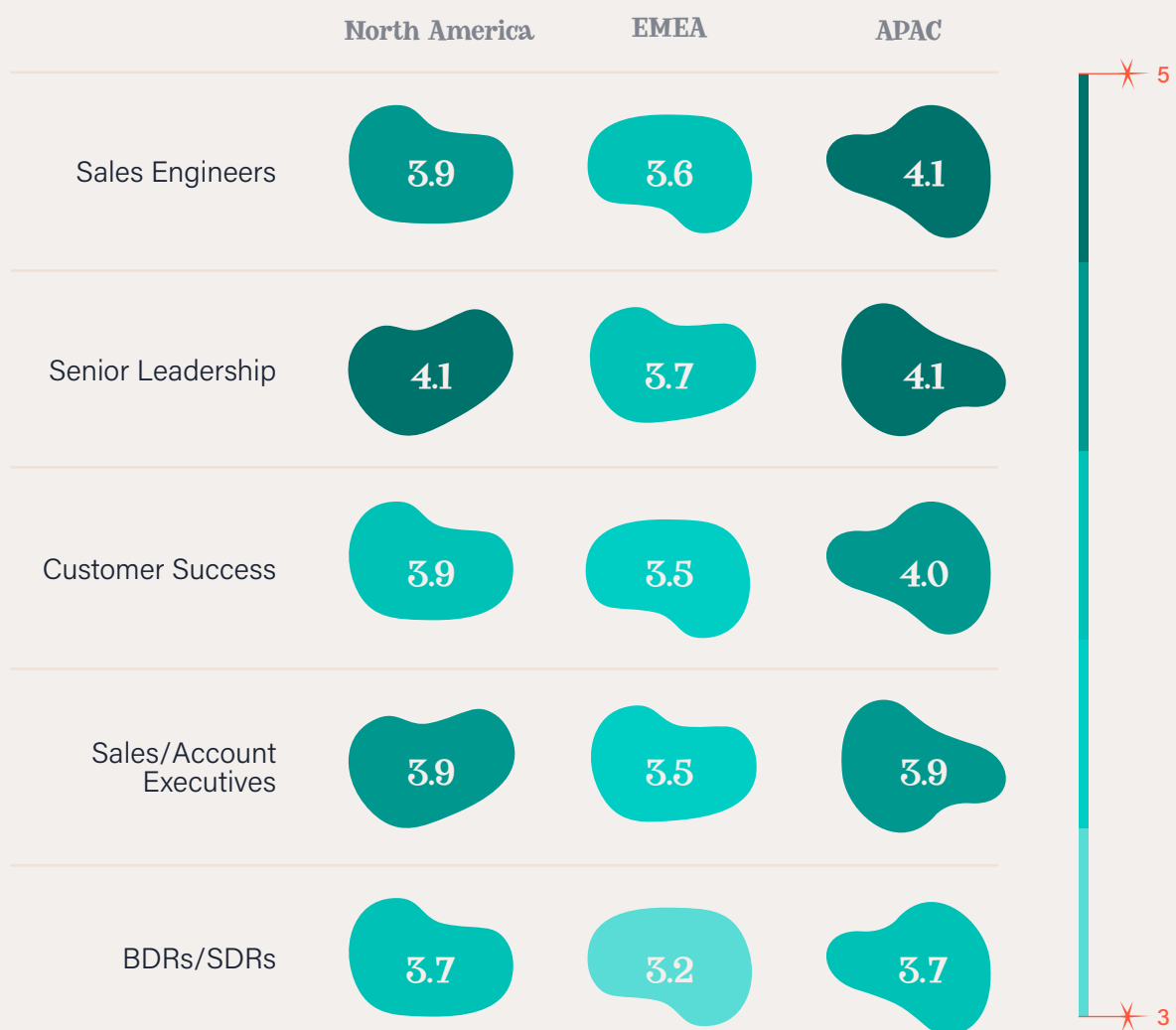
How Buyers Rate Vendor Personnel for Helpfulness

The last 30% of a buying process involves interactions with people from provider organizations. And, while favorites have largely been chosen by the time this occurs, few deals are completed until vendors have been fully vetted, and relationships built (or not).

We asked buyers to rate which sales roles from vendor organizations were most helpful to their purchase process.

While buyers in EMEA tend to be more reserved in their ratings compared to those in APAC and North America, all buyers rate all vendor roles as helpful, with little difference between the most and least helpful. On a scale from 1 to 5 where 5 represents the highest level of helpfulness, ratings ranged from 3.7 to 4.1 in APAC, 3.2 to 3.6 in EMEA, and 3.6 to 3.9 in North America – all within less than one point on the scale. Although there is a slight tendency for buyers to prefer those in Senior Leadership roles, this preference is minimal in practical terms.

Seller Helpfulness Ratings Heatmap (Out Of 5)



How Do Buyers Feel About The Process

A clear lesson from the present research is that buying groups expend significant effort across many months to make their purchases. They spend most of their purchase journey independently researching solutions and, as a buying group, have anywhere from 620 (EMEA) to 1,300 (APAC) interactions with vendors alone throughout the process. And, it is estimated that this represents less than 20% of their total research effort ([Gartner](#)).

To understand whether buyers feel that the process was time well-spent, we asked buyers to reflect on their entire purchase journey and rate their experience on a scale from 1 (dissatisfied) to 5 (very satisfied). **Remarkably, over 90% of buyers in each region reported that they are either satisfied or very satisfied with their purchase process.** While buying is undoubtedly an arduous process, most buyers find their experience worth the effort.

Buyers' Overall Satisfaction with Their Purchase Journey

	North America	EMEA	APAC
Satisfied/Very Satisfied	91%	91%	96%
Neutral	7%	8%	3%
Dissatisfied	2%	1%	1%

The Contracting Process

In addition to rating their overall experience, we asked buyers to evaluate the contracting phase of the purchase process, including the terms and conditions, and payment terms for the purchase. Here, we asked buyers to note whether these parts of the process made them more or less likely to buy from that vendor in the future. Buyers answered on a scale from "much less likely" to "much more likely".

Across regions, most buyers in North America and APAC reported that the contracting process made them more likely to buy from the vendor again, with North America and APAC having a slightly higher positive response compared to EMEA. EMEA buyers, however, were more likely to indicate that the contracting process made no difference to their future purchasing decisions. In all regions, a small minority of buyers felt that the contracting process made them less likely to purchase from the vendor again.

The Impact of the Contracting Process on the Likelihood of Future Purchases

	North America	EMEA	APAC
More or Much More Likely	74%	64%	73%
Made No difference	21%	28%	18%
Less or Much Less Likely	5%	8%	9%

Implications

Implications

The current research unequivocally confirms the findings of our [2023 Buyer Experience Report](#). While buyer behavior can differ in a nuanced way across regions, buying groups and their behavior are remarkably consistent across the globe and, now, across the two years of our research.

Buyers spend over two-thirds of their purchase process conducting independent research with their internal teams. The first contact is made between 68% and 72% of the way through a 10 to 13-month buying journey, depending on the buyer's region. When they do engage, they reach out first to the vendor that ultimately wins the business 77.7% to 82.9% of the time. When they do so, they have completely or mostly set their requirements between 81.8% to 87.6% of the time.

The Two-Phase B2B Buying Process

The clear take-away from the research is that across the globe, B2B buying processes have two distinct phases.

In the Selection Phase, which comprises the first 70% of the buying journey, buying groups form, collect and evaluate information, and ultimately build a consensus short list of potential partners, with a favorite at the top of that short list.

In the Validation Phase, which comprises the final 30% of a buying journey, buying groups validate their consensus choice by reaching out to the short-listed providers to arrange demonstrations, validate their understanding of capabilities, clear up remaining questions, and ultimately to execute the purchase.

For most B2B revenue professionals, whether in marketing, sales, or customer success, this is a radically different view of how purchase decisions are made, and of the role of marketing and sales in enabling buyer decisions.



The Role of Sellers

To be clear, one should not conclude that sellers have no role in creating buyer preference. Where sellers have established relationships of trust with potential buyers in advance of a buying cycle, that must certainly give that brand a substantial advantage during the Selection Phase. Effective B2B sellers have always focused first on building relationships with buyers by demonstrating their ability to provide value. And the fact that buying group members will not engage until the Validation Phase does not mean that they are immune to the influence of helpful, buyer-focused communications.

In addition, we found that buyers have prior experience with at least one of the vendors they are evaluating 90% of the time. In this light, sellers and other vendor personnel who build lasting relationships with customers and prospects are likely to be important drivers of buyer preference.

However, this research clearly shows that organizations must invest in people, systems, and processes that will allow them to detect and engage in-market buying groups while those journeys are in their earliest stages and before members of those buying groups will engage in a dialogue with sellers. While we do not yet know precisely when a vendor is placed atop the ultimate shortlist, we know for certain that it happens before the first buyer-seller conversation.

This research highlights the need for organizations to understand their buyer's needs, and to create content and experiences that answer every critical buying group question, and which buying group members can consume on their own. Crucially, that content must be made available in as frictionless and consumable a manner possible.

Effective B2B sellers have always focused first on building relationships with buyers by demonstrating their ability to provide value.

The MQL Timing Problem

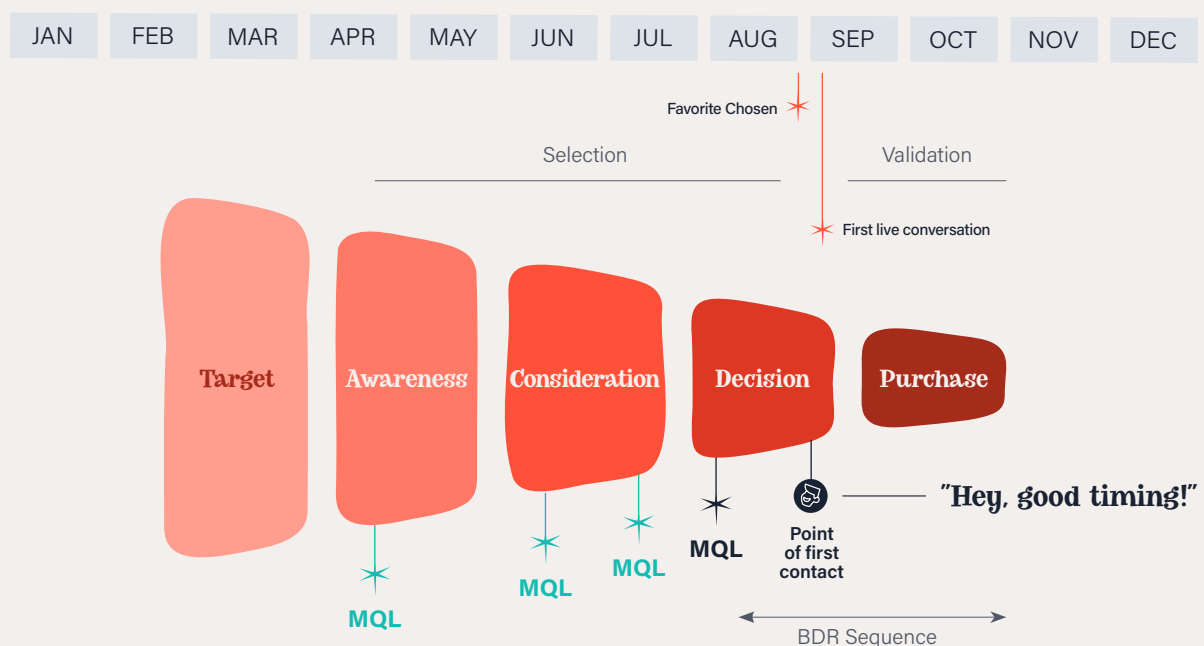
Further, we must revisit our understanding of the form-fill lead. For organizations that still require visitors to complete forms to access valuable content, early buying-stage visitors will of necessity fill out the form to access the content as part of their research. As a result, many of these early-stage visitors will become leads and MQLs that are delivered for follow-up by BDR/SDR teams.

As these early-stage buying group members fill out obligatory forms to access content they need to inform their solution research, they become the fuel for BDR outreach cadences. BDRs attempt to reach these 'leads' with an average of 15-20 contact attempts across multiple channels (see our [2024 State of the BDR Report](#)). These cadences typically last from four to six weeks.

Here is the timing problem. We know that in a typical buying journey, buyers will engage only in month 8 of the 11-month journey. Even if the typical BDR cadence lasted for two full months, that means that any lead that is received and pursued in months one through five of the buying journey is doomed to failure. When the lead is received and the cadence run and ended before month eight, that lead will become dead, disqualified, or no response, even while that buying group is in the throes of its evaluation.

Our lead quality problem has really been a lead timing problem. But the lead timing problem cannot be fixed through lead scoring. The only way to fix the lead timing problem is to look for and evaluate buying group signals. Buying group signals (e.g., third-party intent, anonymous website traffic) are the signals that tell us whether a buying group has been in-market for a week, a month, or many months. Only when we understand this can we understand how to prioritize which prospects our sellers should pay attention to, and which marketing should continue to nurture.

The MQL Timing Problem



Confidence with Replication

Finally, we recognize that these findings, which present a vision of the B2B buying journey that is in many ways very different from how it has previously been conceived – in particular, that buyers choose a favorite for the business prior to talking to sales and then rarely budge from that choice once demos and sales discussions begin – is difficult for many to accept. And, we also recognize that seeing one survey study, even one with a relatively strong sample size of over 930 responses, may not be entirely convincing for B2B professionals whose livelihoods are intertwined with the B2B buying process.

But we hope that with this year's report - which adds more than 2,500 more responses from across the globe and which replicates last year's findings very closely - will lay to rest doubts about whether these findings reflect the reality of B2B buying. More than 3,400 B2B buyers from all organizational levels, functions, company sizes, geographies and more have told us what their buying experiences have been like. And they have been consistent in their message: buyers will engage sellers only after they have done enough due diligence to arrive at a consensus shortlist and have chosen a favorite. Once they have reached that consensus, the deal is that frontrunning provider's to lose.

Now that we know buyers pick a winner in that first 70% of the buying journey, the question for marketers and sellers is simply this: how do your marketing and selling processes need to change to ensure you are at the top of the shortlist when the point of first contact arrives?

Methods

Our study included 2,509 B2B buyers across three geographic regions: North America, Europe, Middle East, and Africa (EMEA), and Asia-Pacific (APAC). Participants were located in North America (37.46%), EMEA (29.77%), or APAC (32.76%) during their purchase. Notably, 15% of our sample consisted of buyers working for organizations headquartered in a different region than where they were located. For instance, 2.64% of participants had company headquarters in Latin America, although none of them were in Latin America during their purchase process.

To qualify for the survey, participants must have bought at least \$10,000USD in annualized value within the last 24 months (the average respondent participated in such a purchase process 8.44 months prior to taking the survey). The average annualized deal size across participants was 4.58 on our Purchase Cost Scale which is in between the ranges of \$200,001 to \$300,000 and \$300,001-\$400,000 USD. The buyers who participated in our survey come from companies that experienced an average of 48.4% revenue growth over the past twelve months. The participants in our survey represent companies of various funding types, including privately funded (31.03%), Private Equity (PE)-backed (25.70%), publicly traded (37.92%), and Venture Capital (VC)-backed companies (5.33%).

Buyers from Tech & Software companies were the most represented, followed by a relatively even distribution across Professional Services, Business Services, Manufacturing, and Financial Services. Four percent of respondents held individual contributor roles, while the remaining participants had a more evenly spread range of titles, from managers to senior executives.

Level Distribution

By Location During Purchase

Org Level	North America	EMEA	APAC
Individual Contributor	0%	0%	4.17%
Manager	30.88%	38.86%	26.65%
Director	12.99%	19.97%	17.00%
VP and above	56.12%	41.16%	52.16%

Company Headquarters Distribution

Org Level	North America	EMEA	APAC	Latin America
Individual Contributor	.28%	.398%	4.44%	0%
Manager	30.79%	37.79%	27.99%	20.63%
Director	14.43%	20.15%	15.83%	6.34%
VP and above	54.47%	41.64%	51.73%	73.01%

Industry Distribution

By Location During Purchase

Industry	North America	EMEA	APAC
Business Services	15.53%	14.11%	13.78%
Financial Services	17.68%	15%	15.45%
Manufacturing	14.73%	16.17%	18.03%
Professional Services	15.30%	21.32%	20.15%
Tech & Software	36.73%	33.38%	32.57%

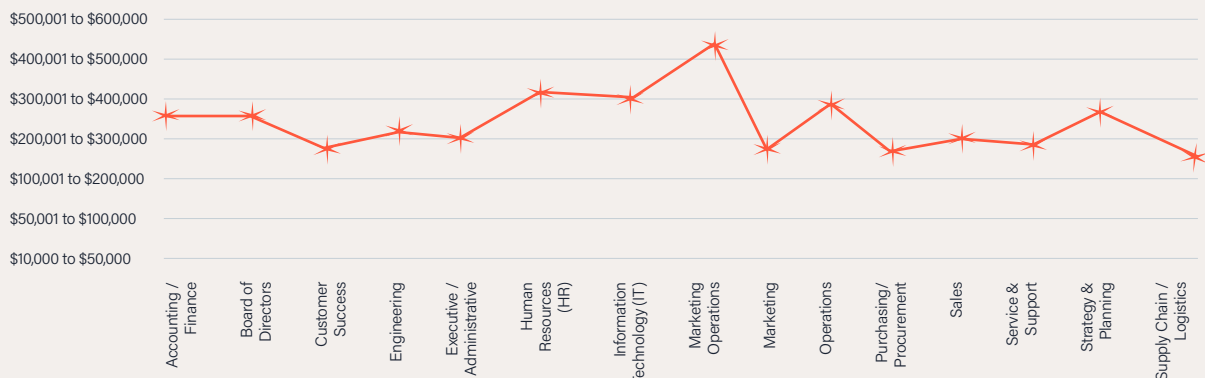
Company Funding Distribution

By Location During Purchase

Funding Structure	North America	EMEA	APAC
Private Equity (PE)- Backed	23.72%	25.16%	28.96%
Privately Financed	35.53%	31.99%	23.91%
Publicly Traded	34.68%	38.55%	41.64%
Venture Capital (VC) - Backed	6.06%	4.28%	5.47%

Purchase Cost by Department of Buyer

Average Solution Cost by Department of Buyer



Multinational Buyers

How to read this chart:

- ★ **By Company Headquarters:** 14.6% of employees whose companies are headquartered in North America work outside of North America.
- ★ **By Location During Purchase:** 5.53% of employees located in North America during their purchase work for companies headquartered outside of North America.

Region	By Company Headquarters	By Location During Purchase
North America	14.6%	5.53%
APAC	4.63%	28.67%
EMEA	17.78%	16.46%
Latin America	100%	No one was location in Latin America during the purchase.

The background is a solid teal color. It features several abstract, overlapping shapes in lighter shades of teal and blue, primarily concentrated in the lower half of the image. Scattered throughout are various star and dot motifs: a small dark star in the top left, a four-pointed star in the top right, a small grey dot in the upper right, a larger grey dot in the center, a small grey star in the lower left, a large white star in the lower left, a dark star in the lower right, and a small red star in the bottom right.

Appendix

Summary Statistics by Business Need

	Point of First Contact Between Buyers and Sellers	Buyer Initiates First Contact	Purchase Requirements set prior to first contact	Buyer contacts the winning vendor first	Buyers hire outside help (analysts/consultants)	Buying Cycle Length (months)	Number of vendors considered	Buyers have prior experience with the winning vendor	Number of buyer-to-seller interactions	Number of people on the buying team
Improve Existing Capabilities	68.4%	80.7%	86.7%	79.7%	70.1%	10.7	4.3	82.8%	726	10.3
New Business Capabilities	71.1%	80.7%	81.3%	87.4%	81.2%	14.1	5.3	85.8%	1,531	13.5
Renew/Continue Existing Solution	69.5%	81.8%	85.3%	86.9%	59.8%	10.4	4.4	91.4%	742	9.8
Replace Existing Capabilities	67.7%	80.2%	79.7%	75%	61.1%	10.9	4.2	82.0%	707	10.2

Summary Statistics by Industry

	Point of First Contact Between Buyers and Sellers	Buyer Initiates First Contact	Purchase Requirements set prior to first contact	Buyer contacts the winning vendor first	Buyers hire outside help (analysts/consultants)	Buying Cycle Length (months)	Number of vendors considered	Buyers have prior experience with the winning vendor	Number of buyer-to-seller interactions	Number of people on the buying team
Business Services	67%	75%	81%	81%	78%	12.5	4.7	80.4%	1,112	12.2
Financial Services	67%	78%	81%	84%	73%	12.6	4.8	88.8%	1,109	12.1
Manufacturing	65%	87%	89%	81%	56%	8.2	3.6	85.1%	350	7.4
Professional Services	71%	80%	87%	75%	70%	12.1	4.7	77.1%	925	11.0
Tech & Software	72%	81%	83%	84%	80%	12.4	4.9	89.2%	1,123	12.2

Summary Statistics by Deal Size

	Point of First Contact Between Buyers and Sellers	Buyer Initiates First Contact	Purchase Requirements set prior to first contact	Buyer contacts the winning vendor first	Buyers hire outside help (analysts/consultants)	Buying Cycle Length (months)	Number of vendors considered	Buyers have prior experience with the winning vendor	Number of buyer-to-seller interactions	Number of people on the buying team
\$100,000 or less	68%	85%	89%	78%	53%	7.9	3.7	81%	386	7.9
\$100,001 to \$300,000	67%	83%	84%	78%	68%	9.6	4.1	83%	577	9.7
\$300,001 to \$500,000	72%	82%	83%	86%	84%	13.4	4.9	85%	1,104	11.8
\$500,001 to \$700,000	70%	73%	81%	83%	90%	16	5.5	89%	1,925	14.9
\$700,001 to \$1,000,000	71%	71%	79%	88%	91.5%	17.4	6.2	87%	2,721	16.2
More than \$1 million	72%	78%	78%	80%	65%	12.7	5.1	86%	1,421	13.6

The Point of First Contact

POFC by the Number of Vendors Evaluated

Vendors Considered	North America	EMEA	APAC
1-2	75.5%	70.2%	64.9%
3	62.8%	67.9%	70.6%
4	62.2%	63.3%	66.0%
5-6	68.2%	64.9%	69.4%
>7	73.0%	71.0%	81.2%

POFC by Solution Importance

Solution Importance	North America	EMEA	APAC
Non-essential	53.9%	72.5%	67.8%
Somewhat Important	61.2%	67.3%	73.0%
Important	63.3%	66.9%	74.8%
Very Important	71.8%	66.1%	72.7%
Essential	68.0%	69.5%	70.1%

POFC by Purchase Role

Purchase Role	North America	EMEA	APAC
Champion	66.9%	68.8%	71.3%
Financial Ratifier	66.2%	63.0%	73.8%
Influencer	68.6%	63.5%	73.5%
Purchasing/Procurement	66.4%	71.1%	72.8%
Ultimate Decisionmaker	69.3%	68.7%	72.0%

POFC by Whether the Organization Hired Analysts or Consultants

Outside Help or Not	North America	EMEA	APAC
None	65.9%	65.5%	65.0%
Analysts/Consultants	69.2%	68.3%	74.7%

POFC by Company Headquarters

Company Headquarter Location	North America	EMEA	APAC
Asia Pacific	55.0%	61.6%	70.5%
EMEA	63.3%	67.9%	76.2%
Latin America	81.1%	66.5%	82.8%
North America	68.4%	64.4%	76.1%

POFC by Prior Experiences

Prior Experience or Not	North America	EMEA	APAC
No Relationship	65.2%	62.6%	62.4%
Prior Experience With at Least One Vendor Considered	68.4%	67.9%	73.1%

POFC by Who Initiates Contact

Who Initiates Contact	North America	EMEA	APAC
Buyer	67.4%	66.5%	71.0%
Vendor	72.3%	70.6%	78.5%

POFC by Business Need

Business Need	North America	EMEA	APAC
Improve existing capabilities	67.2%	66.2%	72.5%
New business capabilities	69.4%	71.7%	75.3%
Renew/ Continue Existing Solution	70.8%	69.3%	67.7%
Replace existing capabilities	69.3%	65.3%	67.8%

POFC by Solution Type

Solution Type	North America	EMEA	APAC
Hardware-Machinery	66.2%	67.2%	69.3%
Services	66.6%	66.6%	75.2%
Software	70.2%	68.1%	72.4%

POFC by Company Funding

Funding Type	North America	EMEA	APAC
Private Equity (PE)-backed	68.4%	66.9%	71.9%
Privately financed	68.1%	65.6%	71.6%
Publicly traded	69.6%	68.7%	73.6%
Venture Capital (VC)-backed	60.2%	71.6%	70.5%

POFC by Industry

Industry	North America	EMEA	APAC
Business Services	68.6%	63.9%	67.4%
Financial Services	65.0%	64.7%	73.2%
Manufacturing	63.4%	64.4%	68.2%
Professional Services	68.8%	68.4%	74.7%
Technology & Software	72.0%	68.4%	75.1%

POFC by Department of the Buyer

Department of the Buyer	North America	EMEA	APAC
Accounting/Finance	67.4%	63.8%	74.7%
Board of Directors	65.6%	68.7%	65.6%
Customer Success	62.0%	65.1%	67.7%
Engineering	61.7%	66.9%	71.8%
Executive/Administrative	63.0%	65.4%	65.9%
Human Resources (HR)	69.3%	74.1%	78.6%
Information Technology (IT)	71.4%	69.7%	75.5%
Marketing Operations	60.5%	72.2%	68.3%
Marketing	59.4%	68.4%	61.7%

Operations	72.9%	65.0%	72.3%
Purchasing/Procurement	66.0%	67.9%	65.6%
Sales	53.2%	59.5%	70.0%
Service & Support	59.7%	60.6%	76.9%
Strategy & Planning	62.5%	73.5%	66.7%
Supply Chain/Logistics	61.9%	64.7%	60.4%

POFC by Primary User of the Solution

Primary User of the Solution	North America	EMEA	APAC
Accounting/Finance	66.7%	63.2%	75.4%
Customer Success	62.0%	65.1%	67.7%
Engineering	61.7%	66.9%	71.8%
Executive/Administrative	66.5%	67.3%	67.9%
Human Resources (HR)	69.3%	74.1%	78.6%
Information Technology	71.4%	69.7%	75.5%
Manufacturing	65.6%	68.7%	65.6%
Marketing Operations	60.5%	72.2%	68.3%
Marketing	59.4%	68.4%	61.7%
Operations	74.7%	63.2%	74.5%
Purchasing/Procurement	66.0%	67.9%	65.6%
Sales	53.2%	59.5%	70.0%
Service & Support	59.7%	60.6%	76.9%
Supply Chain/Logistics	61.9%	64.7%	60.4%

Don't Call Me, I'll Call You – Who Initiates Buyer-Seller Contact

Who Initiated Contact by Number of Vendors Considered

Vendors Considered	North America		EMEA		APAC	
	Vendor	Buyer	Vendor	Buyer	Vendor	Buyer
1-2	13.939 %	86.061 %	12.950 %	87.050 %	7.229 %	92.771 %
3	9.135 %	90.865 %	13.527 %	86.473 %	13.423 %	86.577 %
4	18.831 %	81.169 %	20.000 %	80.000 %	14.444 %	85.556 %
5-6	22.222 %	77.778 %	22.378 %	77.622 %	23.729 %	76.271 %
>7	21.990 %	78.010 %	33.333 %	66.667 %	36.364 %	63.636 %

Who Initiated Contact by Type of Company Funding

Company Funding	North America		EMEA		APAC	
	Vendor	Buyer	Vendor	Buyer	Vendor	Buyer
PE-Backed	24.074 %	75.926 %	26.667 %	73.333 %	33.333 %	66.667 %
Privately Financed	13.272 %	86.728 %	10.965 %	89.035 %	22.368 %	77.632 %
Publicly Traded	15.756 %	84.244 %	20.430 %	79.570 %	14.130 %	85.870 %
VC-Backed	19.643 %	80.357 %	22.581 %	77.419 %	24.324 %	75.676 %

Who Initiated Contact by Hiring Outside Help (Analysts/Consultants) or Not

	North America		EMEA		APAC	
	Vendor	Buyer	Vendor	Buyer	Vendor	Buyer
Hired Outside Help	20.807 %	79.193 %	23.890 %	76.110 %	26.654 %	73.346 %
No Outside Help	7.985 %	92.015 %	9.796 %	90.204 %	6.849 %	93.151 %

Who Initiated Contact by Industry

Industry	North America		EMEA		APAC	
	Vendor	Buyer	Vendor	Buyer	Vendor	Buyer
Business Services	20.000 %	80.000 %	30.526 %	69.474 %	27.059 %	72.941 %
Financial Services	19.048 %	80.952 %	22.105 %	77.895 %	26.733 %	73.267 %
Manufacturing	15.200 %	84.800 %	8.571 %	91.429 %	15.517 %	84.483 %
Professional Services	15.504 %	84.496 %	15.672 %	84.328 %	29.508 %	70.492 %
Tech & Software	17.834 %	82.166 %	21.778 %	78.222 %	17.703 %	82.297 %

Who Initiated Contact by Having Prior Experience with Vendors Evaluated

Prior experience	North America		EMEA		APAC	
	Vendor	Buyer	Vendor	Buyer	Vendor	Buyer
None	17.241 %	82.759 %	12.308 %	87.692 %	10.811 %	89.189 %
Only with a non-winning vendor	31.111 %	68.889 %	41.414 %	58.586 %	53.571 %	46.429 %
Only with the winning vendor	17.136 %	82.864 %	15.723 %	84.277 %	20.000 %	80.000 %
Both	15.344 %	84.656 %	16.102 %	83.898 %	19.802 %	80.198 %

Oh, I Already Know What I Want – Purchase Requirements Are Largely Set

Purchase Requirements Set or Not by Whether the buyer hired outside help

	North America		EMEA		APAC	
	Changed	Set	Changed	Set	Changed	Set
Hired Outside Help	18.513 %	81.487 %	13.701 %	86.299 %	20.000 %	80.000 %
No Outside Help	9.253 %	90.747 %	9.728 %	90.272 %	12.102 %	87.898 %

Purchase Requirements Set or Not by Industry

Industry	North America		EMEA		APAC	
	Changed	Set	Changed	Set	Changed	Set
Business Services	21.898 %	78.102 %	9.375 %	90.625 %	23.333 %	76.667 %
Financial Services	23.077 %	76.923 %	11.765 %	88.235 %	18.627 %	81.373 %
Manufacturing	13.846 %	86.154 %	8.182 %	91.818 %	11.111 %	88.889 %
Professional Services	14.074 %	85.926 %	13.194 %	86.806 %	11.628 %	88.372 %
Tech & Software	12.963 %	87.037 %	15.419 %	84.581 %	23.944 %	76.056 %

Purchase Requirements Set or Not by Location During Purchase

North America		EMEA		APAC	
Changed	Set	Changed	Set	Changed	Set
15.37%	84.6%	12.3%	87.6%	18.1%	81.8%

Purchase Requirements Set or Not by The Type of Solution Purchased

Solution Type	North America		EMEA		APAC	
	Changed	Set	Changed	Set	Changed	Set
Hardware/ Machinery	9.664 %	90.336 %	8.451 %	91.549 %	14.394 %	85.606 %
Services	17.241 %	82.759 %	13.839 %	86.161 %	15.657 %	84.343 %
Software	17.910 %	82.090 %	14.381 %	85.619 %	21.221 %	78.779 %

Purchase Requirements Set or Not by Business Need

Solution Type	North America		EMEA		APAC	
	Changed	Set	Changed	Set	Changed	Set
Improve Existing Capabilities	13.124 %	86.876 %	11.159 %	88.841 %	15.803 %	84.197 %
New Business Capabilities	17.588 %	82.412 %	13.235 %	86.765 %	23.889 %	76.111 %
Renew/Continue Existing Solution	16.176 %	83.824 %	9.091 %	90.909 %	19.512 %	80.488 %
Replace Existing Capabilities	23.485 %	76.515 %	19.101 %	80.899 %	16.000 %	84.000 %

Understanding Buying Groups – The Number of Individuals on Buying Teams

Buying Group Size by Business Need

Business Need	North America	EMEA	APAC
Improve existing capabilities	10.007	9.322	12.044
New business capabilities	13.693	11.772	14.685
Renew/ Continue Existing Solution	10.441	7.945	11.39
Replace existing capabilities	8.97	10.112	12.493

Buying Group Size by Solution Type

Solution Type	North America	EMEA	APAC
Hardware-Machinery	7.462	7.357	10.167
Services	12.024	11.018	13.397
Software	11.637	10.686	13.584

Buying Group Size by Industry

Industry	North America	EMEA	APAC
Business Services	10.715	12.615	14.3
Financial Services	12.372	10.451	13.657
Manufacturing	6.923	7.364	8.153
Professional Services	8.741	9.25	15.333
Technology & Software	12.667	10.546	13.338

Buying Group Size by Company Funding

Company Funding	North America	EMEA	APAC
Private Equity-backed	10.933	10.809	13.378
Privately financed	9.74	7.87	10.462
Publicly traded	11.273	10.556	13.5
VC-backed	11.702	10.531	13.368

Buying Group Size by Number of Vendors Considered

Vendors Considered	North America	EMEA	APAC
1-2	4.351	5.472	4.348
3	7.336	7.3	6.556
4	8.162	8.872	9.347
5-6	12.249	11.959	12.315

Buying Group Size by Hiring Outside Help (Analysts/Consults) Or Not

Hired Help or Not	North America	EMEA	APAC
Did Not Hire Help	6.523	6.191	6.433
Hired Help	12.443	11.638	14.641

Buying Group Size by The Primary User of the Solution

Primary User of the Solution	North America	EMEA	APAC
Accounting/Finance	12.387	8.845	12.486
Customer Success	15.071	9.583	9
Engineering	11.583	8.349	16.5
Executive/Administrative	9.296	9.063	9.507
Human Resources (HR)	12.069	11.842	20.313
Information Technology	10.6	10.821	15.094
Manufacturing	8.306	9.852	9.886
Marketing Operations	10.083	12.182	8.167
Marketing	12.071	11.464	8.704
Operations	11.124	9.258	10.321
Purchasing/Procurement	8.974	8.429	7.875
Sales	10.5	11.636	6.333
Service & Support	8.143	8.636	11.556
Supply Chain/Logistics	7.875	5	11.11

Understanding Buying Cycle Length – Months Spent in the Buyer’s Journey

Buying Cycle Length (Months) by The Primary User of the Solution

Primary User of the Solution	North America	EMEA	APAC
Accounting/Finance	14.072	10.718	12.59
Customer Success	12	14.75	10.429
Engineering	13.583	9	13.938
Executive/Administrative	10.457	8.859	7.928
Human Resources (HR)	12.793	14.053	22.313
Information Technology	10.776	10.556	16.357
Manufacturing	9.551	10.667	9.864
Marketing Operations	11.083	12.182	12.333
Marketing	11.964	10.286	9.593
Operations	11.921	10.355	11.107
Purchasing/Procurement	10.303	8.964	7.3
Sales	9.313	7.364	7.333
Service & Support	7.714	10.273	9.889
Supply Chain/Logistics	7.375	4.917	11.556

Buying Cycle Length (Months) by Solution Type

Solution Type	North America	EMEA	APAC
Hardware-Machinery	7.618	7.798	9.379
Services	12.779	11.871	14.206
Software	12.381	10.739	14.346

Buying Cycle Length (Months) by Business Need

Business Need	North America	EMEA	APAC
Improve existing capabilities	10.383	9.779	12.518
New business capabilities	14.477	11.904	15.337
Renew/ Continue Existing Solution	12.235	7.964	10.756
Replace existing capabilities	9.417	11.202	13.187

Buying Cycle Length (Months) by The Number of Vendors Evaluated

Vendors Considered	North America	EMEA	APAC
1-2	4.813	5.41	5.18
3	6.834	8.111	6.725
4	9.925	9.797	10
5-6	12.264	12.291	10.831
>7	22.13	18.75	23.671

Buying Cycle Length (Months) by Hiring Outside Help (Analysts/Consults) Or Not

Hired Help or Not	North America	EMEA	APAC
Did Not Hire Help	6.416	6.358	6.669
Hired Help	13.308	12.223	15.192

Buying Cycle Length (Months) by Industry

Industry	North America	EMEA	APAC
Business Services	10.971	13.688	13.7
Financial Services	12.609	10.745	14.784
Manufacturing	8.446	8.291	8.068
Professional Services	10.252	9.576	16.667
Technology & Software	12.941	10.674	13.54

Buying Cycle Length (Months) by Company Funding

Company Funding	North America	EMEA	APAC
Private Equity-backed	11.794	10.447	14.284
Privately financed	10.237	8.462	10.861
Publicly traded	11.776	11.417	13.692
VC-backed	12.018	10.781	14.079

Phone-A-Friend for B2B Buyers – When Buyers Work with Analysts/Consultants

Whether the Organization Hired Outside Help (Analysts/Consultants) or Not by Business Need

Business Need	North America		EMEA		APAC	
	No Help	Help	No Help	Help	No Help	Help
Improve Existing Capabilities	30.869 %	69.131 %	34.120 %	65.880 %	23.575 %	76.425 %
New Business Capabilities	18.593 %	81.407 %	25.000 %	75.000 %	14.365 %	85.635 %
Renew/Continue Existing Solution	30.882 %	69.118 %	56.364 %	43.636 %	34.146 %	65.854 %
Replace Existing Capabilities	42.424 %	57.576 %	37.079 %	62.921 %	34.667 %	65.333 %

Whether the Organization Hired Outside Help (Analysts/Consultants) or Not by Business Need

Solution Type	North America		EMEA		APAC	
	No Help	Help	No Help	Help	No Help	Help
Hardware-Machinery	46.218 %	53.782 %	49.296 %	50.704 %	41.667 %	58.333 %
Services	23.793 %	76.207 %	26.786 %	73.214 %	22.111 %	77.889 %
Software	23.383 %	76.617 %	28.094 %	71.906 %	15.116 %	84.884 %

