

# WINNING OVER THE BUYING COMMITTEE

*B2B technology purchases are collective decisions. To win them, marketing campaigns need to be designed for the people—and the interactions—that move a deal forward.*

by Tina Cai

## There is rarely a single buyer in a B2B technology purchase.

A CIO might champion a new platform, only for security to raise concerns. A business leader may see a clear use case until finance questions the economics. Procurement could enter late with requirements that reshape the deal. And people who will never sign a contract can still influence whether the deal closes.

To explore what that complexity means for B2B marketers, TechInformed Marketing Solutions recently hosted a webinar with Liz Wood, Global VP of Demand & Paid Media at MOI. According to Wood, buying groups can have as many as 20 decision-makers, depending on the organization and industry.

Much of what happens between these stakeholders takes place behind closed doors. Marketers can see who engages with a campaign, but they have far less visibility into the conversations that follow—who champions a vendor internally, whose concerns carry the most weight, which objections surface as the group compares options, or why apparent momentum suddenly disappears. This is on top of existing opacity: as we explored in *Where the Funnel Goes Dark*, individual buyers already research and compare largely out of view before any committee forms.<sup>1</sup> Buying committees add another layer—not just what one buyer does alone, but how many negotiate a collective decision.

Both sides feel the friction. In TechInformed's 2025 Voice of the Buyer: The Great Disconnect, 18% of technology buyers and 19% of technology marketers identify stakeholder buy-in as a major obstacle to influencing purchase decisions.<sup>2</sup>

**18%**

of buyers say getting stakeholder buy-in is a major purchasing challenge

**19%**

of marketers say securing buy-in from multiple stakeholders is a major obstacle

Buying committees aren't new to B2B marketers. Buyer maps, persona research, and stakeholder pain points are standard features of sophisticated B2B marketing strategies. But much of the machinery used to turn that knowledge into a campaign—from audience targeting and lead generation to content and measurement—continues to revolve around individual contacts.

As buying groups become larger and more complex, campaigns need to consider how stakeholders participate in a collective decision—who wields the most influence, what kind of evidence each person needs to move forward, and the critical points where one stakeholder can accelerate or block the purchase—to succeed.

# 1. Design around the buying group

The disconnect often begins before a campaign goes live.

B2B campaigns typically define their target audience around a small group of senior titles: the CIO, CTO, CMO or another C-suite executive. But concentrating a campaign around the person with ultimate authority can miss the people informing that person's decision.

“Even if they’re not the person who signs the check or signs the contract—who informs [the signer’s] decision?”

asks Wood. A head of marketing may strongly favor a vendor, for example, only for a security stakeholder to rule it out.

The same tension appears in lead-generation mechanics. Capping the number of leads generated from each company at three may make sense when the objective is maximizing the number of accounts reached. It makes far less sense when a buying group can include nine stakeholders or more. A fourth or fifth engaged contact from the same organization may be precisely the signal marketers should want to see.

| FROM                              | TO                                          |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| Identifying the buyer             | Understanding the buying group              |
| Targeting the decision-maker      | Reaching decision-makers and influencers    |
| Measuring individual engagement   | Building engagement across the account      |
| Delivering a message to a persona | Building relevance across stakeholder needs |
| Converting a lead                 | Building consensus in a collective decision |

A buying committee is a network: each member brings a different mix of priorities, authority and influence, and their views interact as the purchase progresses.

Campaigns therefore need a picture not only of who is involved, but of how those stakeholders interact around the decision. Who is championing the purchase? Whose approval is required? Who will use the technology? Who can introduce a new requirement or objection? And whose support does the champion need to bring others along?

More leads don’t make a buying-group strategy on their own. The goal is to understand—and design for—the collective decision they are trying to make.

## Build the case backwards

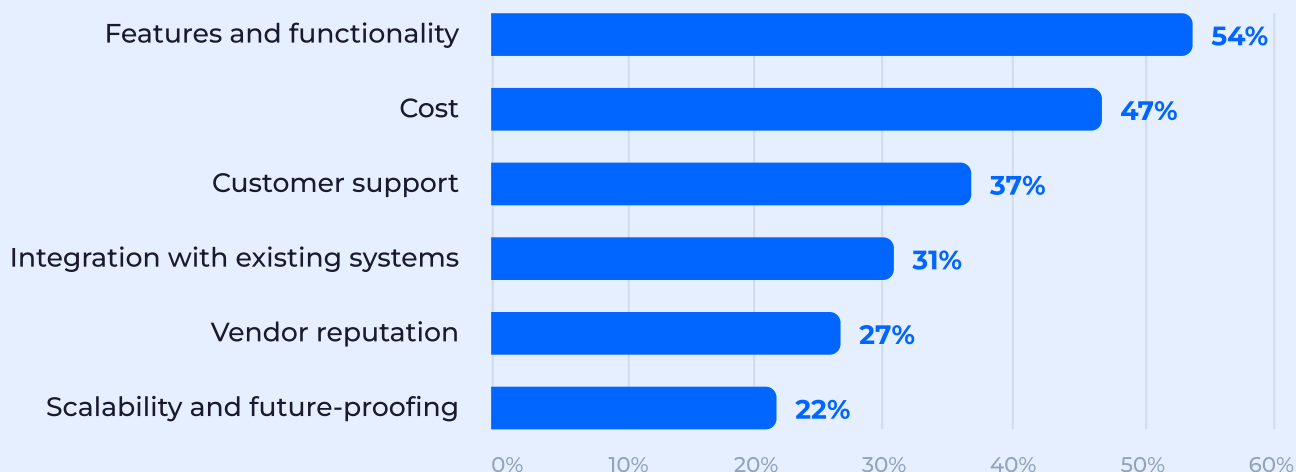
Many enterprise marketers already have detailed buying-group intelligence; they know that a CFO approaches a purchase differently from a CMO, CIO or CTO. Yet that understanding often gets lost in the execution.

“Content is rarely available or built with each of those committee members in mind,”

says Wood. For example, even after mapping different stakeholders and what matters to them, the campaign may still offer everyone the same generic category e-book.

Technology buyers don't evaluate vendors against a single definition of value. Features have to work. Economics have to make sense. Systems have to integrate. Support has to be credible. The vendor and brand must be trusted.

### Buyers: Which factors are most important to you when selecting a technology product?



Techninformed Voice of the Buyer Survey · N=2,000 · Fielded October 2024 · Multiple responses permitted

A single campaign proposition can still hold the campaign together. The challenge is giving different stakeholders the proof they need to evaluate that proposition from their own vantage point.

Marketers can start at the end—with the buying decision—then work backwards. Identify the questions that have to be answered for the purchase to move forward. Then consider which stakeholders are most likely to raise, investigate or influence those questions—and make sure the campaign gives them credible evidence to work with.

That could mean leading with a product demonstration for someone evaluating functionality, detailed integration evidence for a technical stakeholder, pricing and ROI evidence for someone scrutinizing the economics, or customer proof for someone assessing the vendor. The aim isn't to create a separate campaign for every committee member. It's to make the overall case strong enough to withstand scrutiny from all of them.

Persona research pays off only when those distinctions survive execution. The campaign should translate what marketers know about the buying group into meaningful differences in the evidence each stakeholder encounters.

## Equip buyers to build consensus

The job of B2B content isn't just to persuade the person reading it. It's to help that person persuade the rest of the buying committee.

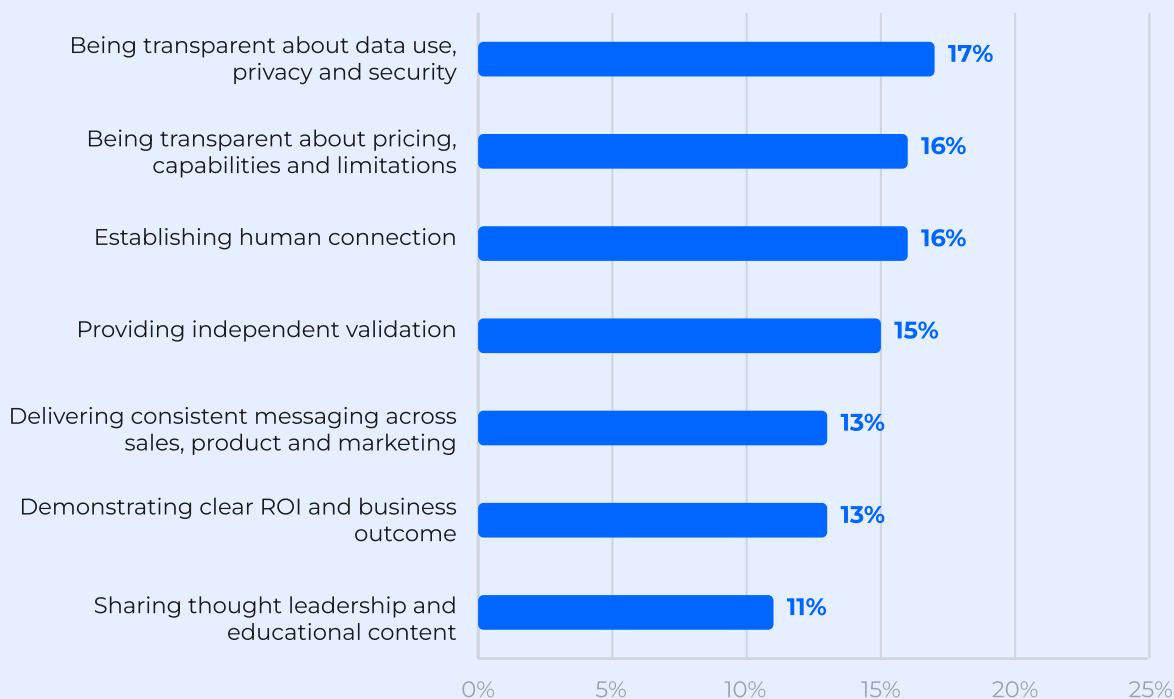
A buyer rarely consumes an asset, reaches a personal verdict, then makes the purchase. What they've learned travels into conversations with colleagues. Claims are questioned. Alternatives are compared. Costs are scrutinized. New requirements emerge.

That makes transferability an important quality of buying-group content. The most useful asset isn't necessarily the one that makes the strongest pitch. It's one that gives a stakeholder credible evidence they can carry into the next conversation.

And that evidence has to earn trust. As we explored in *Proving the Invisible Power of Brand*, familiarity and credibility accumulate across interactions, often well before a buyer is ready to purchase.<sup>3</sup> In a buying committee, that accumulated trust has to hold up as the vendor is discussed, questioned, and evaluated by people with different priorities.

The latest Voice of the Buyer report bears this out from the marketer's side: surveying 600 senior technology marketers, it found that buyer trust depends on multiple factors rather than any single one

### When it comes to building trust with potential buyers, which factor matters most?



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For content intended to travel through a buying committee, several of those trust signals take on importance. Transparent pricing and capabilities give buyers information they can take into internal discussions without having to fill in the gaps themselves. Independent validation gives a champion evidence from beyond the vendor. Clear ROI and business outcomes help translate a product proposition into an organizational case. And consistent messaging matters when committee members encounter the vendor through different content, teams, and touchpoints.

Marketers can judge content against a second standard. Alongside “Will this make my audience engage?” ask: “Will this help them make the case internally?”

Is the evidence easy to find and verify? Can a chart or proof point stand on its own when dropped into an internal presentation? Does the content anticipate the questions a colleague might ask? Can a champion easily share the relevant information without asking everyone else to read a 20-page report?

Content designed this way has a life beyond the original interaction. It can travel into an email, a meeting, a business case, or a presentation—and influence stakeholders the campaign may never reach directly.

4.

## Design for how decisions get made

Buying-group maps and persona research have given marketers a much richer picture of who participates in B2B technology purchases. The next step is making campaign execution match that picture.

That means understanding engagement across an account, translating audience knowledge into stakeholder-relevant evidence, and creating content buyers can use as they work through a purchase with colleagues, even when those conversations happen beyond marketers' view. B2B buying has become a group decision. It's time for campaign design to catch up.



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