Research

The New Cybersecurity Demand Reality

Buyer attention is consolidating into fewer, higher-intent moments. Here's where cybersecurity demand is actually won.



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About This Research

Findings on cybersecurity buyer behavior and buying teams come from cybersecurity-specific Informa TechTarget research. Findings on 2026 marketing priorities and channel plans come from our B2B Marketing and Sales Predictions Survey, which covers B2B technology marketers across all sectors, not cybersecurity alone. Full sources and methodology on the back cover.

Executive Summary

Where Cybersecurity Demand is Won

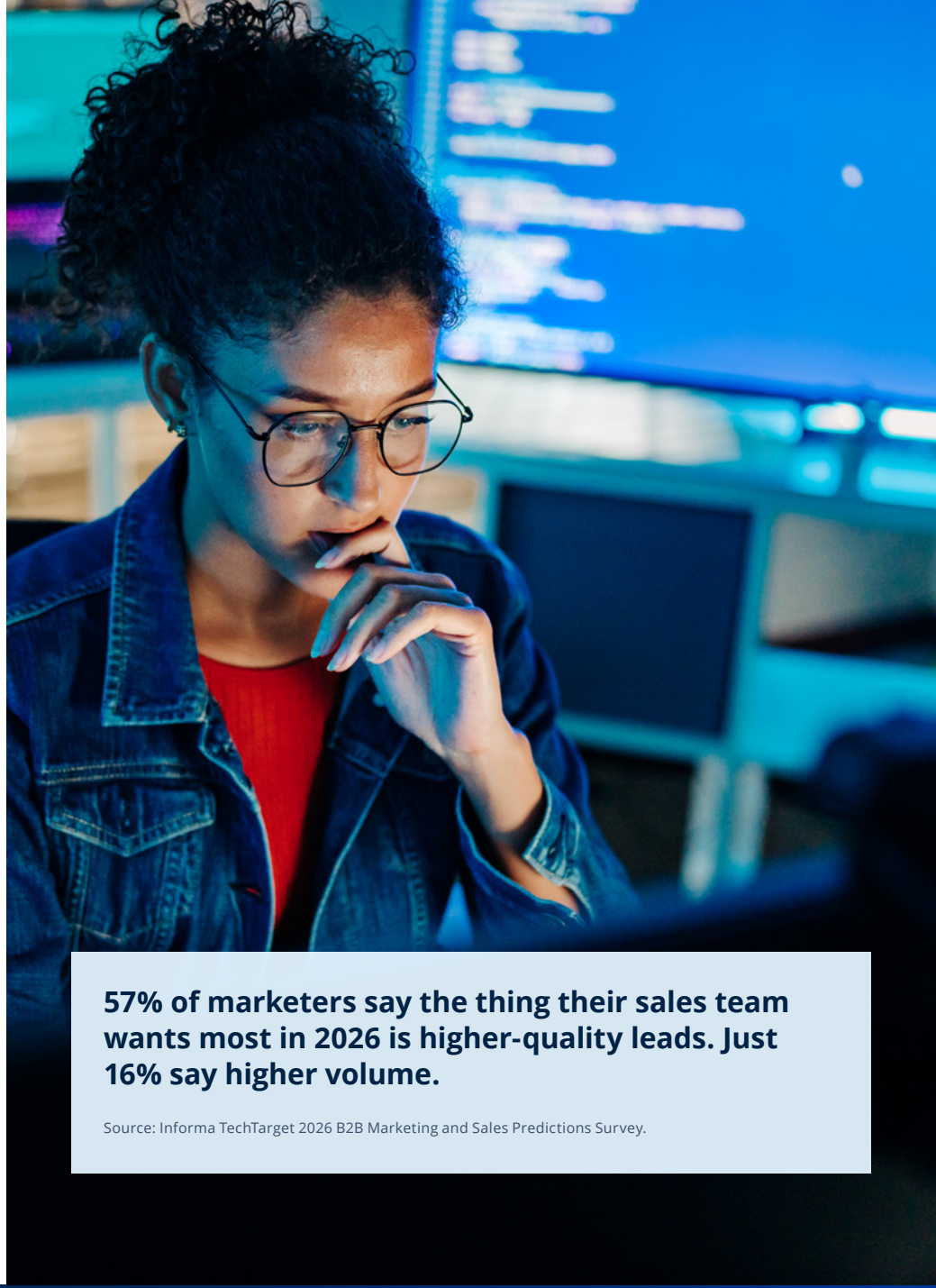
Cybersecurity demand generation is changing. Buying cycles are longer, buying teams are larger, and scrutiny is higher at every stage. The bigger shift is structural: buyer engagement is concentrating in fewer, higher-intent moments.

Informa TechTarget research shows cybersecurity buyers lean hardest on the environments that let them evaluate and validate — vendor websites, independent media, analyst perspectives, industry events, and virtual programs. Discovery alone rarely moves a vendor forward. Credibility does.

Performance expectations are tightening in parallel. Demand teams are prioritizing lead quality over raw volume, and sales wants opportunities that reflect real evaluation and multi-stakeholder involvement. Pipeline impact is tied to readiness, not reach.

That creates a clear mandate for cybersecurity marketers. Channel strategy has to match how buyers actually research and validate. The programs that intersect structured evaluation, peer input, and internal alignment are the ones that shape shortlists and accelerate opportunities.

Demand is strongest where confidence is formed. Budgets, channel mix, and measurement should follow it there.



57% of marketers say the thing their sales team wants most in 2026 is higher-quality leads. Just 16% say higher volume.

Source: Informa TechTarget 2026 B2B Marketing and Sales Predictions Survey.

Channel Mix

Top Channels Driving Buyer Demand

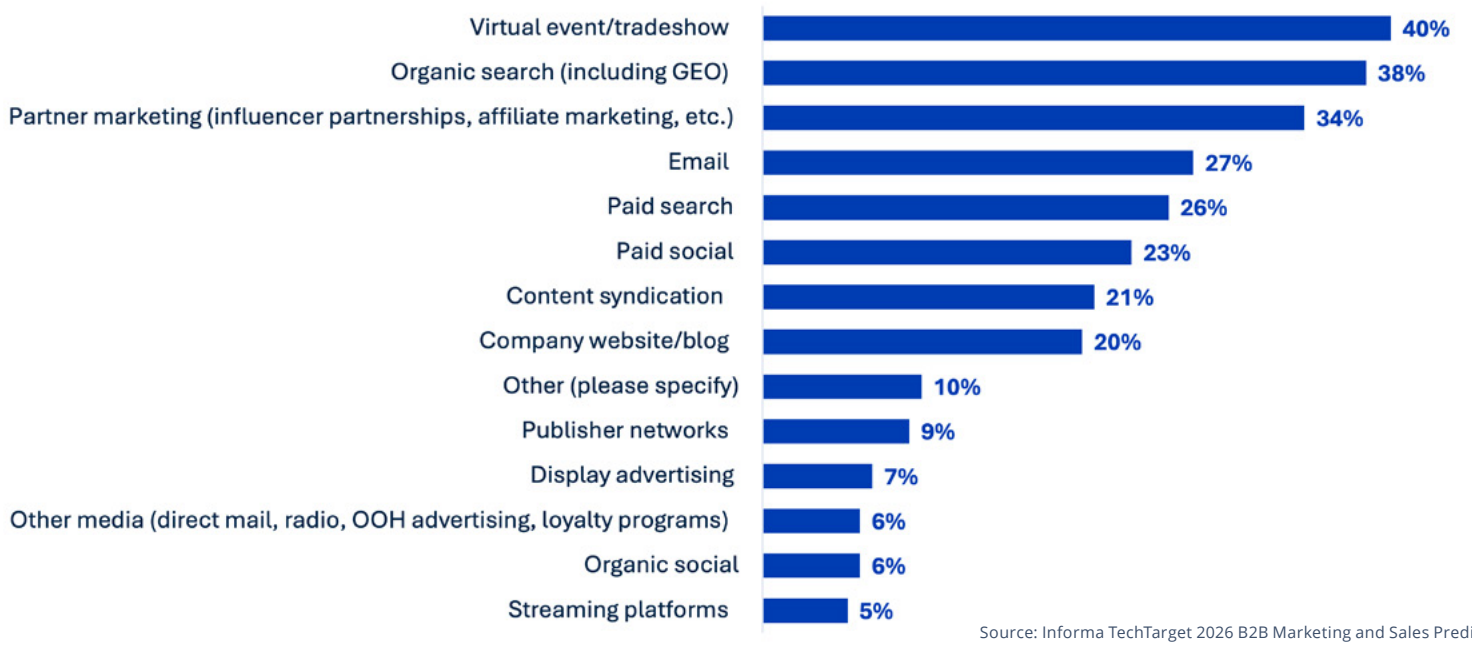
Cybersecurity buying decisions require technical validation, risk review, and input from multiple stakeholders. The demand programs that perform show up where that evaluation is already happening.

In **Informa TechTarget's 2026 B2B Marketing and Sales Predictions Survey**, marketers put virtual events and tradeshows first at 40%, followed by organic search at 38% and partner marketing at 34%.

Those channels place vendors in environments where buyers are actively researching, comparing solutions, and seeking third-party validation.

The pattern is consistent: demand is strongest where engagement is structured and credibility is on the line. The channels that deliver are the ones that match how buyers evaluate vendors, not simply how they discover them.

Channels Predicted to Generate the Most Demand in 2026



Source: Informa TechTarget 2026 B2B Marketing and Sales Predictions Survey

What Cyber Buyers Rely On During Evaluation

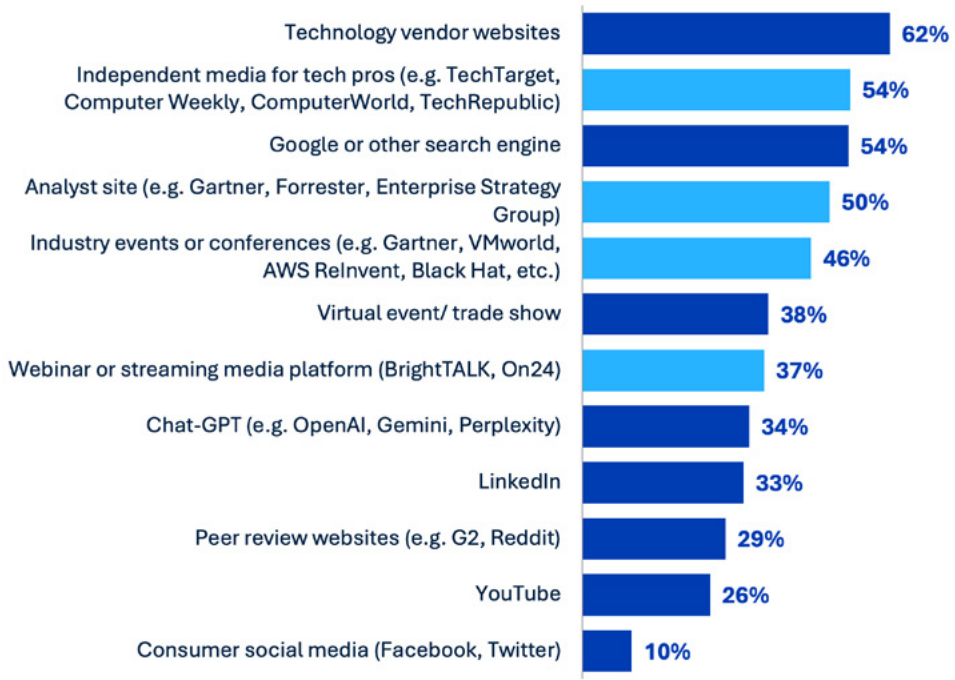
When evaluating cybersecurity solutions, buyers draw on multiple sources to compare claims and reduce risk.

In Informa TechTarget's 2025 Media Consumption Study (cybersecurity cut), 62% of cybersecurity buyers said they relied on technology vendor websites. Independent media and search engines follow at 54% each, and analyst sites at 50%. Industry events are cited by 46%, virtual events by 38%, and webinars by 37%.

Evaluation rarely happens in one place. Buyers move between vendor content, independent analysis, search, and event-based engagement as they narrow options and validate decisions. Vendors that show up consistently across those environments are the ones that shape consideration.

Most Relied-Upon Resources for Cybersecurity Purchases Over the Past Year

Question text: In the past year, which of the following have **you relied upon in order to research/evaluate a specific tech purchase** for your organization? (Choose all that apply)



Source: Informa TechTarget 2025 Media Consumption Study (cut by cybersecurity, n = 833)

Lead Quality is the Top Demand Priority

The goals Demand Generation teams set reflect the complexity of cybersecurity buying.

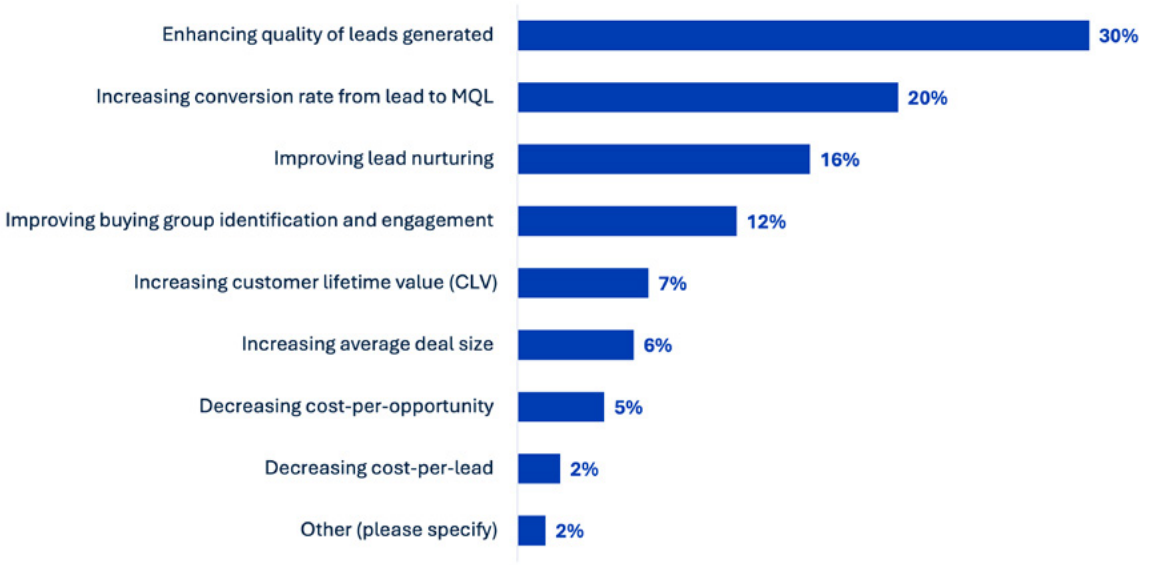
In our **2026 Predictions Survey**, 30% of respondents named improving lead quality as their top demand goal — the largest single response. Increasing lead-to-MQL conversion follows at 20%, improving lead nurturing at 16%, and stronger buying group identification and engagement at 12%. Just 2% chose decreasing cost per lead.

Those priorities mirror how cybersecurity purchases unfold. Early research involves technical stakeholders; later stages bring executive oversight and cross-functional review. High-volume engagement alone is unlikely to move that process.

Demand performance is increasingly judged on whether engagement signals active evaluation and buying group involvement — not on contact acquisition.

Top Demand Generation Priorities for 2026

Survey question: What demand generation goal do you anticipate your organization to be most focused on in 2026?



Source: Informa TechTarget 2026 B2B Marketing and Sales Predictions Survey

Events

Events Accelerate High-Intent Evaluation

Cybersecurity buying decisions advance when stakeholders engage directly, ask detailed questions, and validate claims across roles. In-person industry events compress that evaluation into a matter of days.

Event ROI research reinforces the dynamic. Lead volume fluctuates, but reported lead quality and influenced pipeline hold up, even inside complex sales cycles.

The impact is not tied to traffic. Structured engagement — scheduled meetings, targeted account conversations, and curated interactions — surfaces far higher-intent signals than passive booth exposure.

That's why events like **Black Hat** carry weight with cybersecurity practitioners. They put vendors in front of decision-makers, validate solutions through real conversation, and surface the high-intent opportunities that feed pipeline.



70–75% of exhibitors reported or expected positive ROI from RSAC 2024.

Source: **Cybersecurity Marketing Society Event ROI Report.**

High-Intent Engagement Leads to Sales Conversations

Sales conversations are rarely triggered by awareness. They follow validation, education, and shortlist formation.

Familiarity still leads: 49% of cybersecurity buyers say having worked with a vendor before makes them more likely to take a meeting, and 41% say the vendor was already on their shortlist. Engagement signals rank right behind. 39% point to attending a vendor's webinar or virtual event, 39% to positive feedback from a peer or analyst, and 37% to feeling educated by the vendor's content.

Buyers engage when they feel informed, confident, and internally aligned. Demand programs that intersect those behaviors are the ones that generate opportunities that move.

This is where measurable progression begins.

Key Factors That Trigger Buyers to Take a Call or Meeting from a Sales Rep

Question text: Which of the following factors will **increase the likelihood of you taking a call** or meeting with a vendor sales rep? (Choose all that apply)



Source: Informa TechTarget 2025 Media Consumption Study (cut by cybersecurity, n = 688)

Virtual Engagement Extends Evaluation and Progression

High-intent engagement is not confined to physical rooms. Virtual programs generate measurable downstream action.

Webinars are not a side channel. 74% of cybersecurity buyers watch webinars or videos often or every time they evaluate a vendor.

After viewing a relevant webinar or video, 64% visit the vendor's website and 55% download additional resources. 29% request a demo from sales, 22% are more likely to add the vendor to a shortlist, and 21% accept an email or call from a rep. Only 2% take no action at all.

Those are evaluation behaviors, not passive interest. When content is technical, specific, and tied to real use cases, virtual engagement surfaces readiness and internal discussion at scale.

Virtual programs do not replace in-person engagement; they extend it. **BrightTALK Summits** — including the Cloud Architecture Security Summit and the CISO Summit — give practitioners a focused venue for expert insight on complex problems, and give vendors a credible place to demonstrate depth.

Buyers Are More Likely to Engage with You After Viewing Your Webinar

Question text: Which of the following **actions are you likely to take** after viewing a relevant vendor webinar or video? (Choose all that apply)



Source: Informa TechTarget 2025 Media Consumption Study (cut by cybersecurity, n = 801

Pipeline Expectations Have Shifted

Cybersecurity sales leadership is not asking for more names. It's asking for more readiness.

In a selective buying climate, not every interaction carries equal weight. Engagement is concentrating in the few moments that signal real evaluation and internal alignment.

In the 2026 Predictions Survey, 57% of marketers said the thing their sales team wants most from demand generation is higher-quality leads. Just 16% said higher volume.

That reflects how cybersecurity purchases unfold. Buying groups are layered, evaluation is rigorous, and shortlists form before formal sales engagement begins. Opportunities that enter the pipeline after meaningful evaluation are the ones that advance.

Performance is increasingly measured by opportunity progression and deal velocity, not contact acquisition.

Top Sales Priorities for 2026

Survey question:
Out of the following choices, what do you think your sales team wants most from your demand generation team in 2026?



Source: Informa TechTarget 2026 B2B Marketing and Sales Predictions Survey

Playbook

A High-Intent Cybersecurity Demand Playbook

Design for evaluation, not just awareness

Research is layered and cross-functional. Build programs that help technical and business stakeholders validate claims early, not just discover vendors.

Align engagement with how buying groups operate

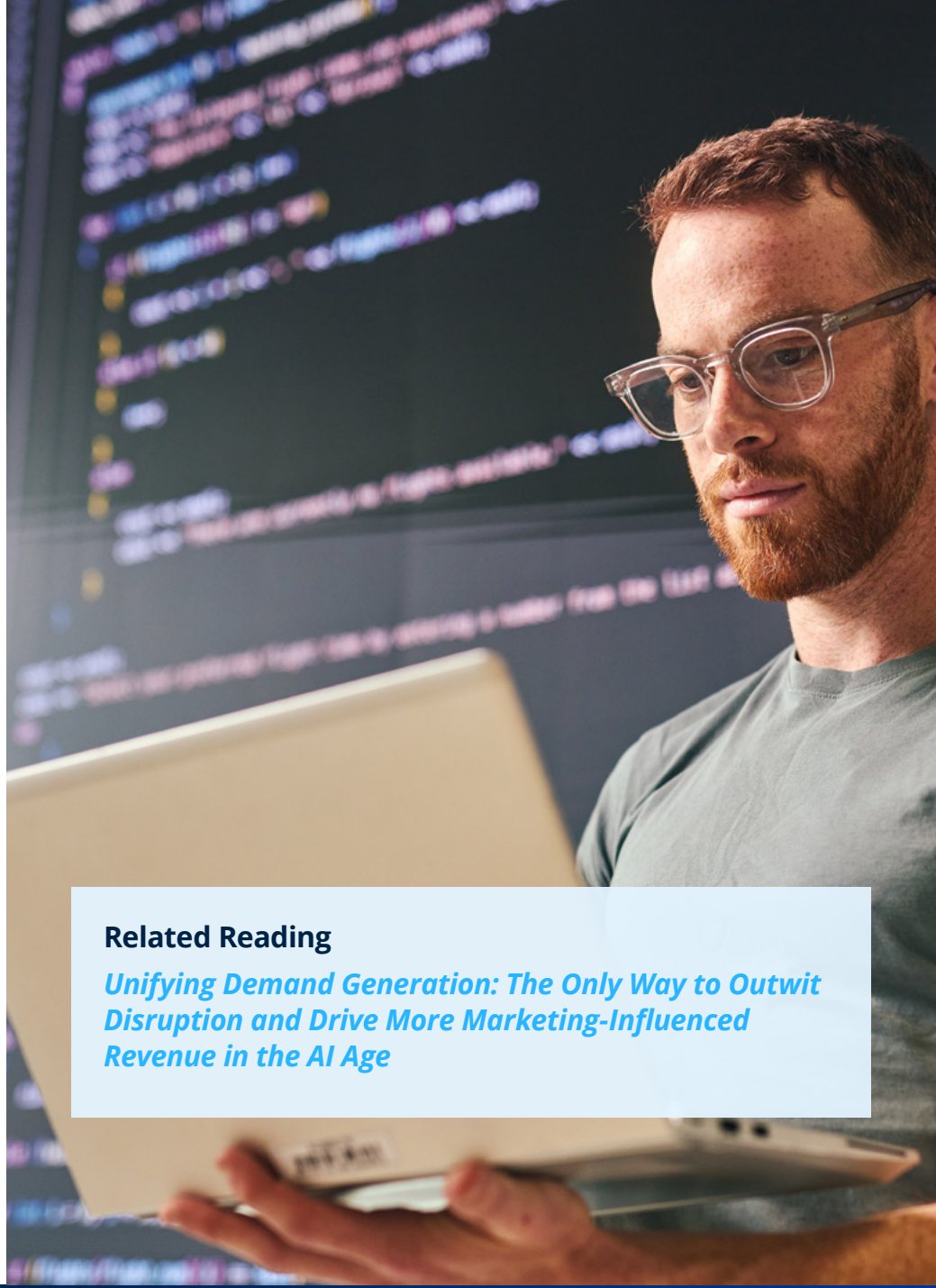
Research rarely happens in isolation. Buyers move between vendor content, independent media, analyst perspectives, events, and peer input. Demand programs perform better when they anticipate that movement instead of leaning on a single channel.

Measure signals of evaluation

Website revisits, demo requests, shortlist inclusion, and meeting acceptance reflect forward motion. Raw contact counts do not. As pipeline expectations shift, the metrics that matter are the ones that show progression and internal alignment.

Support internal decision-making

Effective content does more than explain features. It helps teams compare options, document rationale, and justify decisions across technical and business stakeholders.



Related Reading

Unifying Demand Generation: The Only Way to Outwit Disruption and Drive More Marketing-Influenced Revenue in the AI Age

Pitfalls

Common Demand Pitfalls

Confusing reach with credibility

High visibility does not automatically translate into shortlist inclusion.

Treating events as volume exercises

Without strategic engagement, badge scans rarely convert into meaningful opportunities.

Overemphasizing features

Technical sophistication alone does not reduce perceived risk.

Waiting to build trust

By the time procurement or executive approval begins, credibility has already shaped the field.



Related Reading

How Cybersecurity Buyers Decide Which Vendors to Trust

What's Next

Building a High-Intent Cybersecurity Demand Ecosystem

Cybersecurity demand is increasingly shaped by environments that support validation, cross-functional alignment, and measurable progression.

Buyers move between vendor research, independent media, analyst insight, peer input, in-person events, and structured virtual engagement as they narrow options. Shortlists form early, sales conversations follow evaluation, and pipeline impact reflects readiness rather than reach.

Delivering against that reality takes more than isolated tactics. It takes coordinated environments that align with how cybersecurity teams research and decide.

Informa TechTarget's cybersecurity portfolio is built for that model: trusted editorial and independent research, buying group intelligence and data activation, industry-leading in-person events, and structured virtual programs designed to surface evaluation signals.

When channel strategy mirrors buyer behavior, pipeline impact becomes measurable, defensible, and repeatable.



Interested in learning more?

Talk to an Informa TechTarget expert today about your cybersecurity needs.

Research Methodology and Sources

This eBook draws on two Informa TechTarget studies and one third-party source.

Cybersecurity-specific research

2025 Media Consumption Study, cybersecurity cut — buyer reliance on information sources (n = 833), factors that trigger a sales conversation (n = 688), and actions taken after viewing a vendor webinar (n = 801).

Cross-sector research

2026 B2B Marketing and Sales Predictions Survey — demand generation priorities, channel expectations and sales priorities for the year ahead (n = [500]). This study surveys B2B technology marketers across all sectors and is not cut to cybersecurity. It is cited here as a view of where B2B demand generation is heading, not as a measure of cybersecurity marketers specifically.

Third-party research

Cybersecurity Marketing Society Event ROI Report — exhibitor ROI from RSAC 2024.

About Informa TechTarget

Informa TechTarget is a leading global B2B intelligence, media, and marketing services company, purpose-built to be an Indispensable Partner to the tech and vertical industry sectors. We help audiences find the information and insights they need to succeed professionally; and we help our clients identify growth opportunities, build brand trust, engage with in-market buyers, and impact revenue. Our unique business model combines market and competitive intelligence services, trusted industry journalism, the world's largest B2B audience engagement ecosystem, and a full-scope AI-ready integrated marketing offering that unifies brand, content, and demand—all underpinned by our award-winning proprietary data and intelligence.

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