

Decision-maker study 2025

Management Summary

Part 5 of the study series

"IT decision-making processes in the age of digitalization"

IT decision-making processes in the age of digitalization

IT decision-making processes
in the age of digitalization

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Who is involved and how are
they integrated into the
decision-making process?

Are there significant
differences depending on
company size?



The **fifth part of this study series** deals with decision-making processes in companies and shows who is involved and how. In this wave of research, just five years after the last survey, topics have changed and, in our view, company size plays a greater role. We have therefore taken a differentiated look at the results and present a few excerpts in this management summary.

ICT decision-makers can be found in different areas of the company, depending on the size of the company. The right sources and types of information can be used to address them specifically.

The topics that decision-makers will find on their agenda over the next five years have been set. Artificial intelligence applications have triggered a disruptive development with consequences that are difficult to predict and have led to an enormous acceleration of all processes in companies – from work organization and personnel development to product development, automation processes, and security issues.

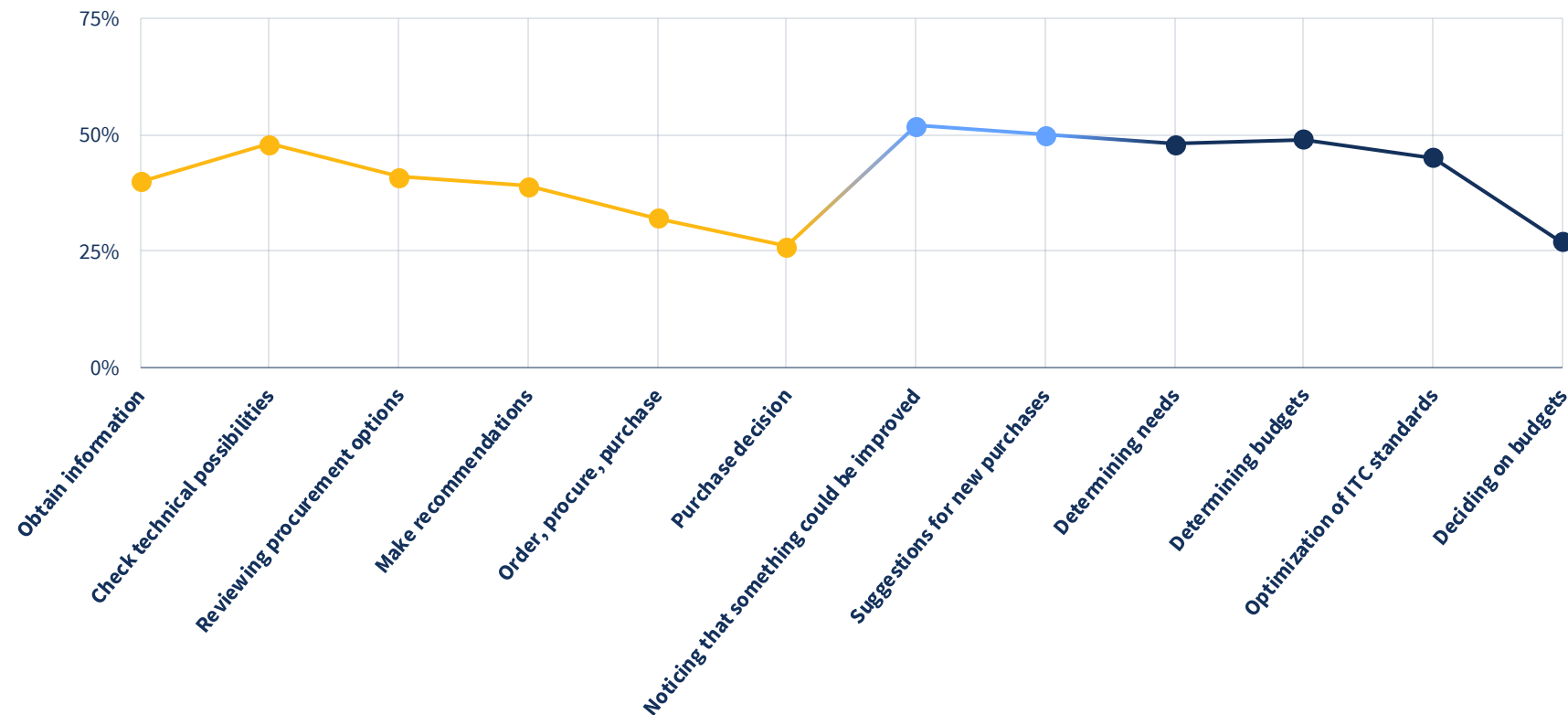
You are invited to join us for a personal conversation to go into detail and gain valuable knowledge.

The decision-making process

IT decision-making processes
in the age of digitalization

When decisions about investments or purchases in the ICT area are made in your company/organization, how are you personally involved, even if only in an advisory capacity?

According to the overall



Most of the decision-makers surveyed play an active role, particularly in identifying potential for optimization and initiating purchases. They are also involved in specific planning and budgeting processes.

Budget decisions and final purchasing decisions are less pronounced; in addition to "personal" involvement, the "team" plays a greater role here.

Basis: 504 companies, multiple responses

Which topics will be relevant for companies over the next five years?

Artificial intelligence

Automation

Cybersecurity

Cloud computing

Digitalization

Data security

Skills shortage

Sustainability

New technologies

Market development

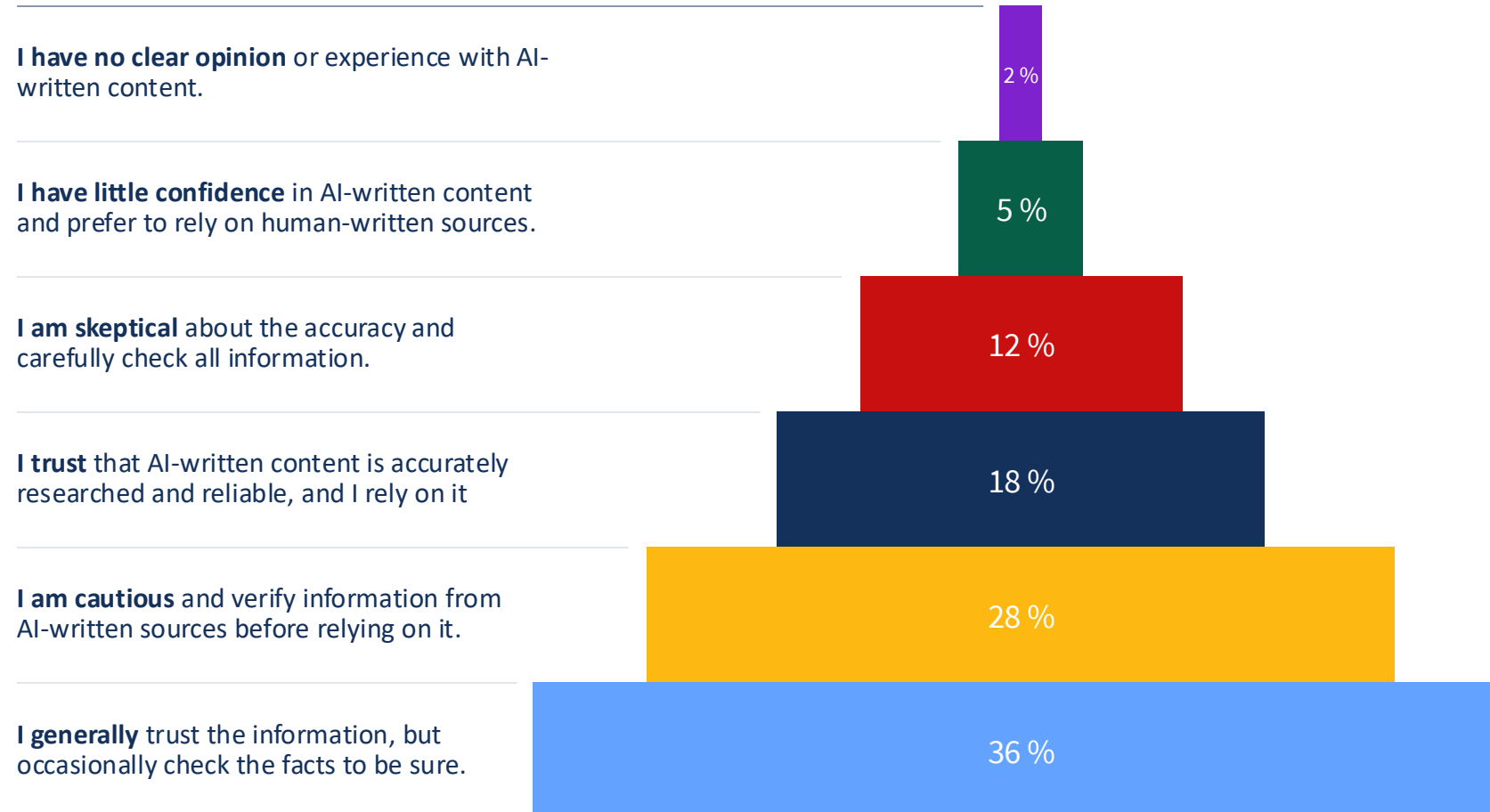
Artificial intelligence is the top issue, with the highest rating (23%). It is seen as the key to efficiency.

Due to growing concerns about cyberattacks, **cybersecurity** remains one of the top issues for everyone.

Digitalization and the integration of **cloud solutions** also remain key issues, especially for **larger companies**.

Small businesses, on the other hand, more frequently mentioned **skills shortages** and sales growth.

AI as an information generator from the perspective of decision-makers: How strong is trust in AI-written content?



Basis: 504 companies

AI-generated content in IT media

In focus: articles, white papers, blogs, etc. – there is a **fundamental openness** and **growing trust** in AI-generated content (over 50%), but the majority of decision-makers use the content with **critical awareness** and **factual verification** – caution/skepticism/fact-checking are most pronounced at the departmental level among IT staff/IT experts: This underscores the need for **transparency**, **traceability**, and **quality assurance** in AI-supported information provision.

The top 5 selection criteria

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What criteria are important for shortlisting a brand or IT provider?



From a holistic perspective, the **choice of provider** is **largely performance- and service-oriented**, while price plays a comparatively "subordinate" role.

Sustainability: With growing social relevance, **ecological and social responsibility** are selection criteria for 28%.

The selection criteria

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What makes a brand or IT provider shortlisted?

By company size



Basis: 504 companies, multiple responses

Small businesses primarily choose providers based on price and recommendations, while larger companies increasingly rely on comprehensive service, contract, and licensing models, as well as technological innovation, to meet the requirements of their complex IT infrastructure.

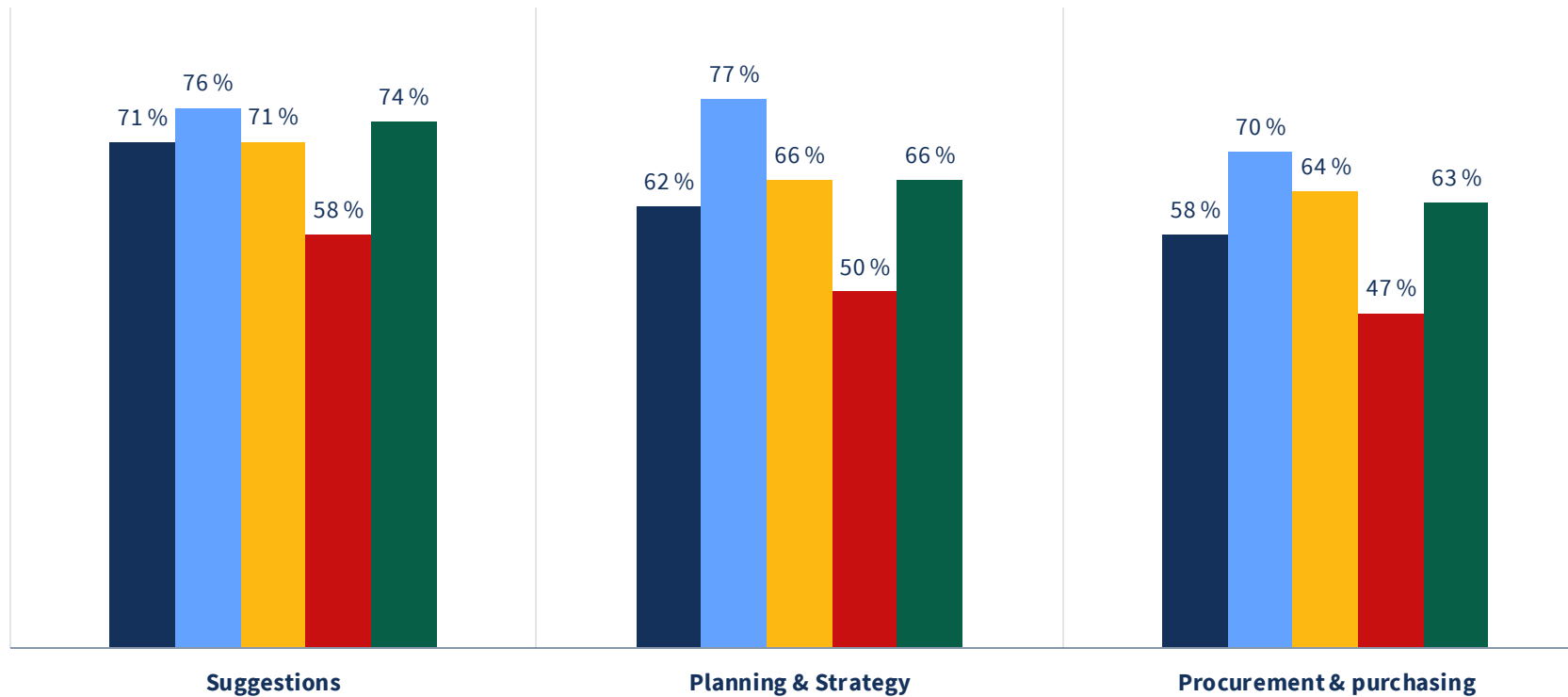
The larger the company, the greater the interest in technological leadership and sustainability.

Sources of information

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How decision-makers obtain information: Sources of information used in the customer journey Total

■ Editorial sources ■ Manufacturer information ■ Partner/Channel Information ■ Social Media ■ Events



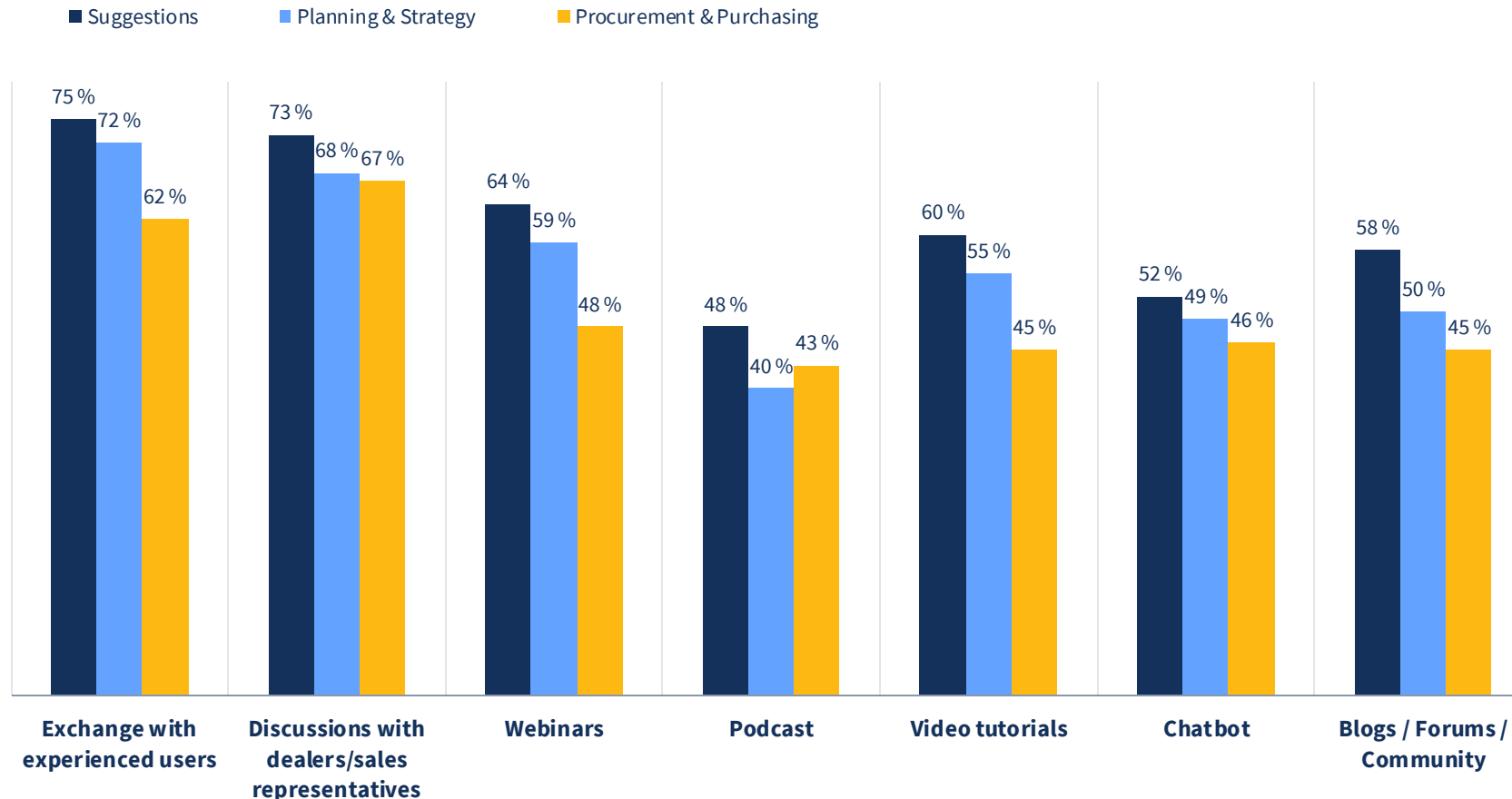
All sources that provide broad inspiration and initial ideas serve **as inspiration**. Planning is usually more fact-driven, with a focus on feasibility and details.

Social media is used both to form opinions and to make final decisions. With values of over 50%, 50%, and just under 50%, it now plays a **significant role** in the customer journey.

Basis: 504 companies, multiple responses

How do decision-makers obtain information: What type of communication do they use to gather information during the customer journey?

By total



In addition to traditional sources, other types of information are crucial:

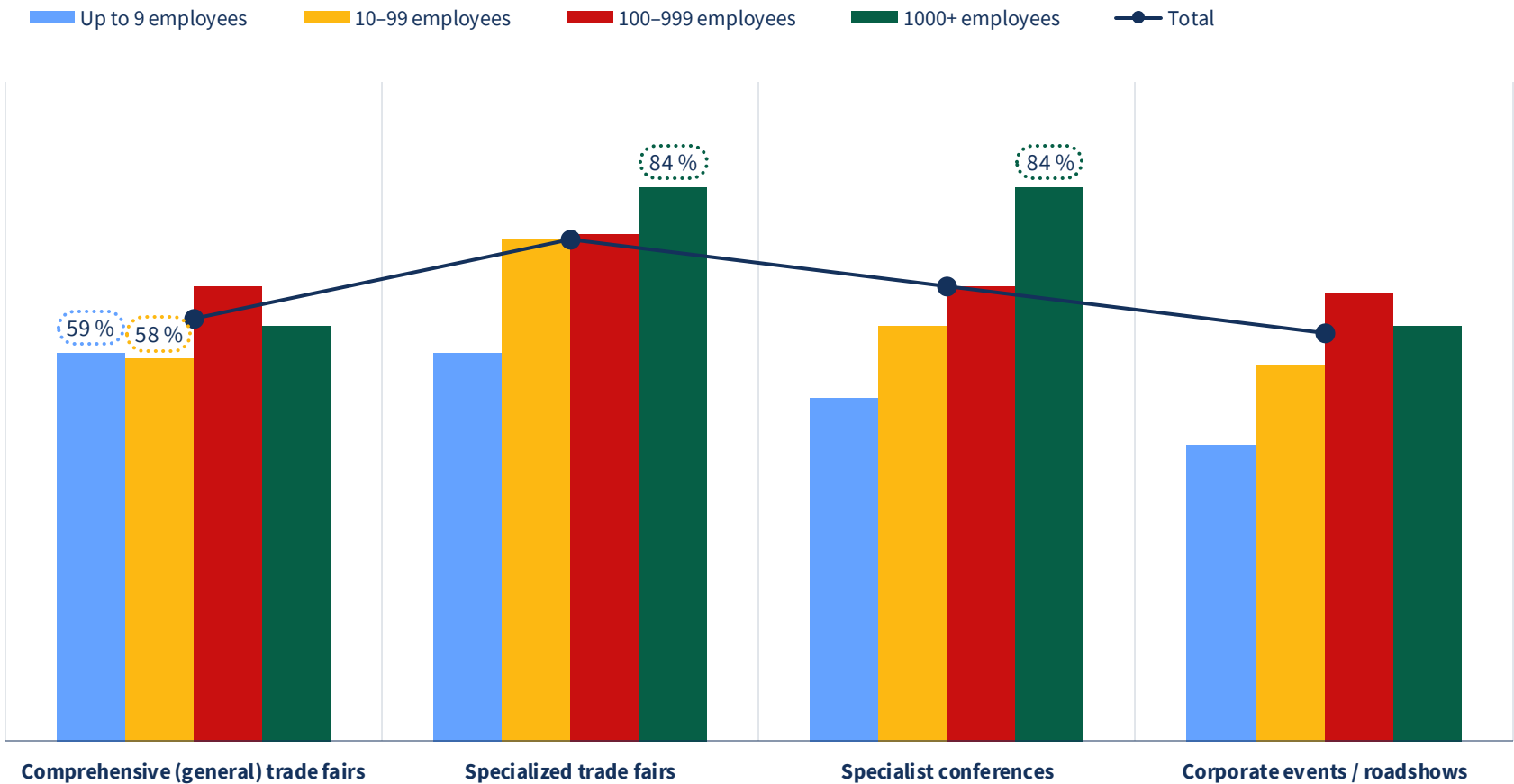
Communicative sources

Discussions with experienced users and retailers have the strongest impact in all phases of the customer journey and form the primary basis of information. Digital formats primarily stimulate and provide additional support.

Research sources

Technical articles, white papers/e-books, newsletters, infographics, case studies, studies, and brochures expand the research. Particularly in-depth formats such as technical articles and studies carry greater weight, while infographics, newsletters, and brochures are helpful additions.

How important is the use of events and trade fairs for decision-makers? By size class



Basis: 504 companies, mentions with "Very relevant" and "Relevant"

As **companies grow in size**, the importance of **presence formats** such as trade fairs, congresses, and roadshows increases significantly.

While **smaller companies** mainly rely on general trade fairs, larger companies clearly prefer more targeted, in-depth formats, especially trade-specific fairs and conferences.

The formats can be either in-person or hybrid.

Key Facts



All respondents have influence on the decision-making process. The involvement of decision-makers in review and budget processes increases with the size of the company.

Decision-makers in small businesses tend to be involved in the entire process, from identifying needs to budget responsibility.



When **selecting IT providers**, larger companies place particular emphasis on comprehensive services, technological leadership, and reliable warranty and support offerings.

Small businesses tend to select providers based on price and recommendations.



While all **sources of information** are used in the inspiration phase, in the other two phases, information tends to be sought directly from the manufacturer.

Social media is now widely used to form opinions, but also plays a role in planning and procurement, albeit to a lesser extent.



Face-to-face events (trade fairs, congresses) continue to be very important.

While **larger companies** prioritize targeted formats such as trade fairs and conferences, **smaller companies** prefer more broadly focused events.

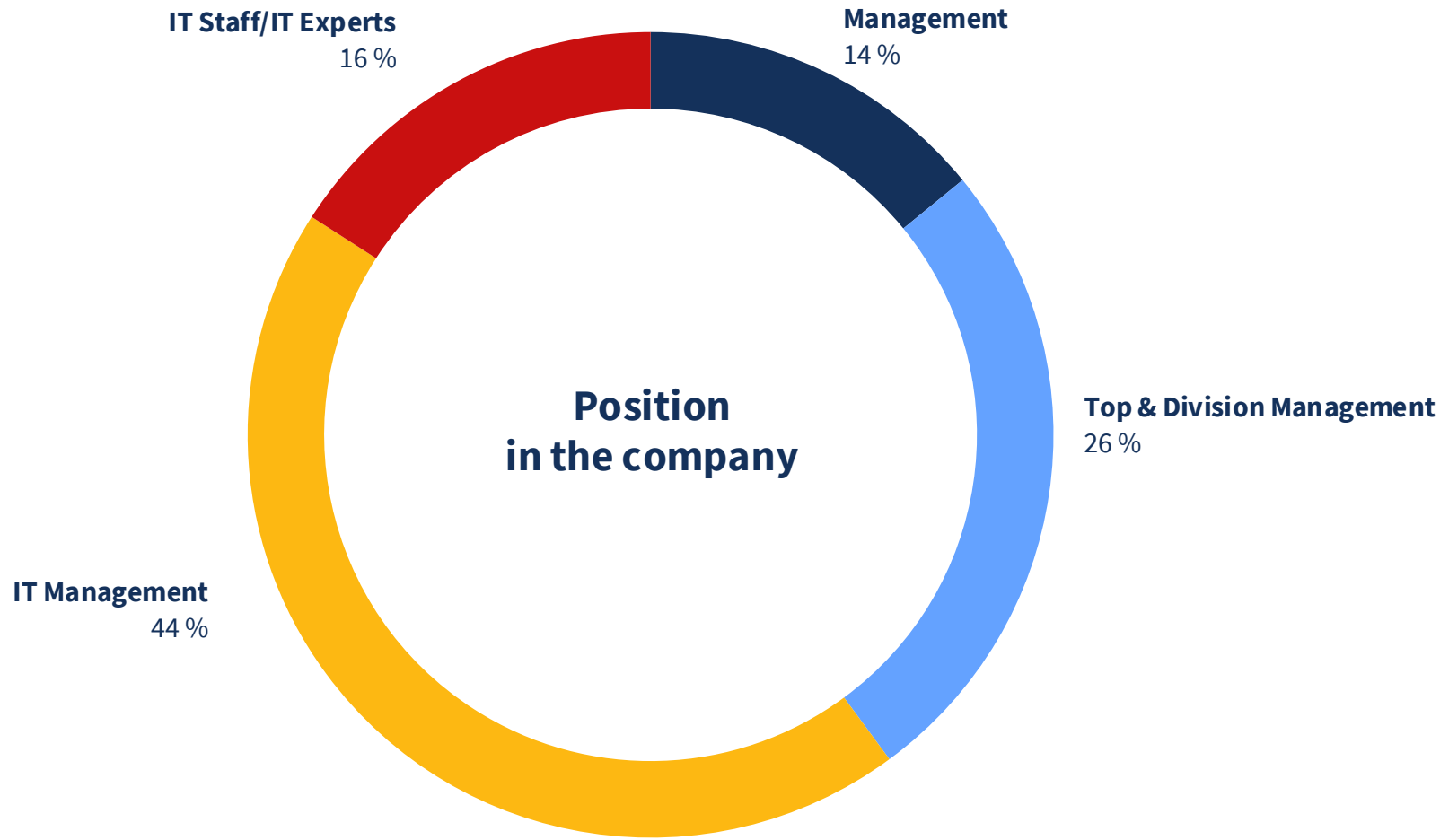


Provider websites and search engines remain key online sources – but AI platforms are catching up and increasingly establishing themselves as equivalent **research tools**.

There is openness toward AI-generated content, but the majority are critical and question or review the content.



Over the next five years, companies will focus heavily on artificial intelligence to increase their efficiency. Cybersecurity and data security **will also remain a key focus**. In addition, the shortage of skilled workers is another central issue that companies will have to address.



Method

Techconsult GmbH Kassel surveyed **504 people** who were previously selected from a **national panel of 120,000 people**.

The selection of respondents was based on a screening process to determine whether the individuals were **involved in the IT decision-making process** within their company or for companies, **at least in an advisory capacity**. The online survey was conducted in May 2025.

Since 2017, the market researchers have been analyzing the process of IT purchasing decisions in companies for heise media since 2017.

Basis: 504 companies

*Multiple answers possible, as IT skills are complementary and many professionals have expertise in several of these areas at the same time.

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Do you have questions and want to know more?

Ask us – we will be happy to present the
complete study to you.

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