



2021 State of

B2B
Demand
Generation
& Content
Trends

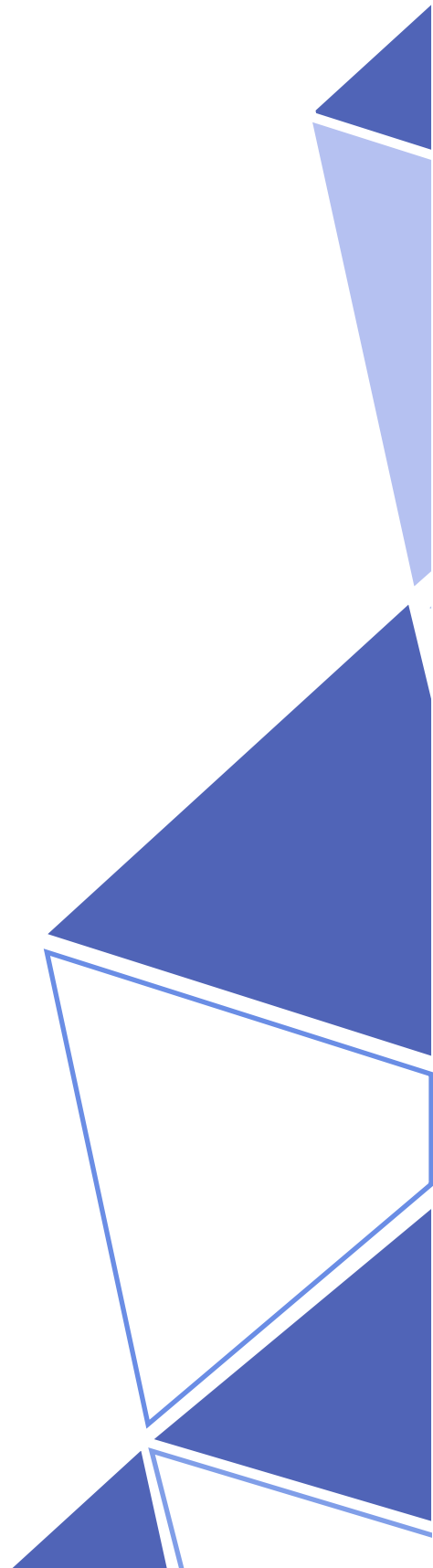
(based on Q3 and Q4 2020 data sets)

01 INTRODUCTION

Let's face it: 2020 has been a year like none other. Due to the coronavirus pandemic and a worldwide shutdown, professionals and executives across various industries have had to stick to finding the information they need through email, digital publications, video, and social media platforms such as LinkedIn. For many B2B marketers and demand generation managers, fighting to get past the noise and be heard by the right audience is a top priority.

Bython's research is highlighted in this report and is based on a sample data set of approximately 200,000 first-party data contacts across the last 6 months of 2020.

The results from July 2020 to December 2020 show the content themes, topics, and categories companies are most interested in and are searching for online. We gathered this information from real engagements (downloads, opens, and clicks) from professionals who work in various B2B industries and research information to combat the multiple challenges they face at work.



While there are certainly challenges that still face many organizations, one clear message that our data shows that while the pandemic has been severe in many ways, it is an opportunity for organizations to rethink strategy and streamline processes. It is also an opportunity for digital marketers to reassess target audiences' needs and pain points and the type of information we put out to meet those needs. In doing so, certain business practices will be eliminated, clarity around processes will be generated, and goals that lead to greater success and profitability become the norm.

Rather than making assumptions and playing guessing games, as you review our findings, we hope you will find the results that content syndication through digital channels can offer and how you can position your organization to leverage data in ways that engage customers and generate new clients within the sales pipeline.

-TOM BUCKLEY
SENIOR DIRECTOR OF SALES
BYTHON MEDIA

Targeting proper job level is critical. First party data and our experience confirms that campaigns should virtually always include manager level positions. The role of the manager, even in larger companies, invariably involves influence at a minimum and decision making at a level that cannot be ignored.

BREAKING DOWN THE DATA

If you have been in marketing for any length of time, you are likely familiar with what first-party data is. The data contained in this report consists of first-party data sources who have agreed to share their contact information in exchange for content from clients that can impact their business goals and outcomes.

Our analysis of this data represents a sample data set of approximately 200,000 first-party buyers across 500+ industries globally with various job roles, job levels, company sizes, and revenue ranges. These individuals fit the profile of those who have requested content on particular topics, themes, and categories from us and those who fit the profile of leads our clients look to generate.

-SITANSHU SINGH
MANAGER OF DATA SERVICES
BYTHON MEDIA

Delivering the types of personalized messages that today's buyers expect throughout their journey requires a robust database filled with accurate, rich insights. Today B2B marketers recognize their databases can no longer be pushed to the back burner and are making strides towards improvement. B2B teams are looking to accelerate their ABM campaigns by gathering deeper insights on buyer intent, challenges and the timeframe for making a decision. While many marketers are still relying on traditional channels for acquisition, it is encouraging to see a growing number of partners with third-party providers for data enrichment, cleansing and maintenance. Continued budget investments also suggest promise for strengthening databases and driving revenue in the coming year.

DEMAND GENERATION CONTENT INSIGHTS

A useful content marketing strategy is not only made up of creating good copy that you know your audience will read but also the intent of your reader and guiding them through the buyer journey to take the desired action. A good example from our analysis is this:

Managers looked for content around the following five topics:

Personalized customer service

Cloud SIEM

Cloud for healthcare operations

Storage services

Artificial intelligence

Directors, on the other hand, were not that far off from Managers and looked for the following topics:

Personalized customer service

Artificial intelligence

Empathy (HR)

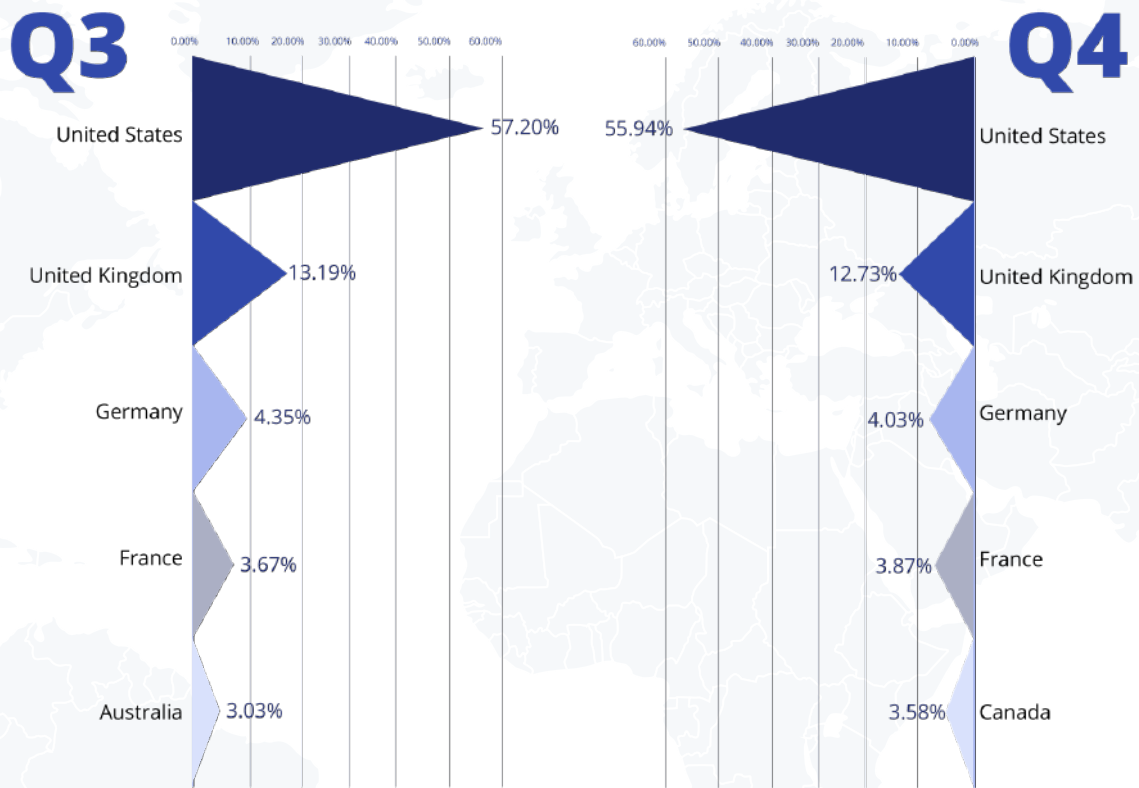
AWS and cloud

Digital disruption

Taking the time to understand your audience's intent and deliver the right content is valuable to the end-user in determining whether to make a buying decision, with whom to make it, and how soon they can make.

BY COUNTRY

The United States dominated content consumption channels by 56% in Q3 and 55% in Q4. The United Kingdom followed far behind with 13% in Q3 and a slight dip to 12% in Q4. Germany came in third with France and Canada rounding out the top five in both quarters.

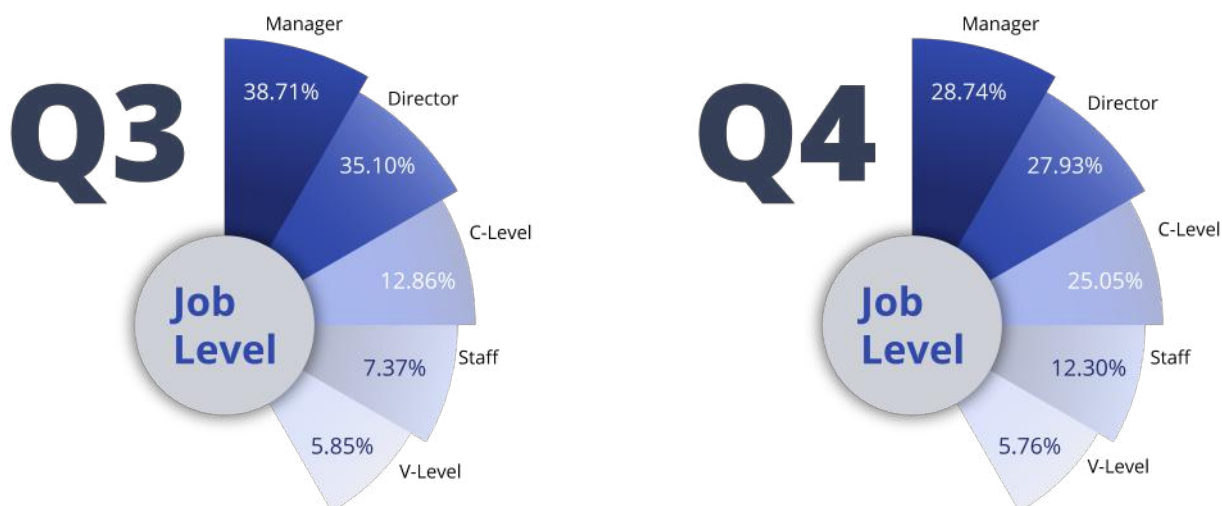


The United States dominated content consumption channels by 56% in Q3 and 55% in Q4.

BY JOB LEVEL

When it comes to job level, 38% of managers consumed content in Q3 with directors coming in second at 35%. In Q4, the job levels switched and dipped slightly with 28% of directors consuming content from demand generation efforts followed by 27% of managers doing the same.

There are long-running myths about the mid-level manager, but in 2020, many managers and directors have had to make a lot more decisions than ever. Content consumption levels suggest the importance of targeting these individuals since many have a good deal of influence to make some of those decisions that matter. Marketers should be cognizant of this fact especially when it comes to nurturing these types of prospects.



Coming back to the analysis, C-level executives, staff members, and VP-level executives rounded out the top five in terms of job levels in both Q3 and Q4, respectively.

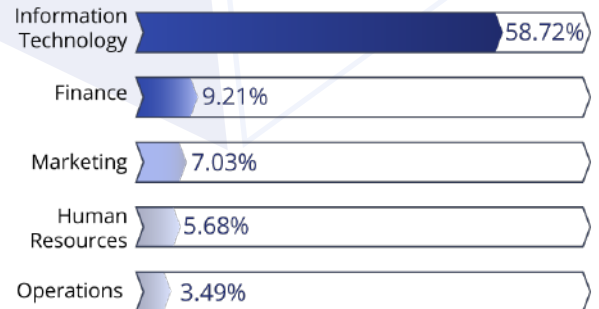
BY JOB ROLE

In Q3, 58% of those who held a job role within information technology consumed related content. Finance roles came in a far second with 9% of finance professionals consuming content. As many companies switched to a remote work or hybrid work style, leaders had to figure out things like WFH security while also keeping or pivoting their organizations to lean and supple working operations.

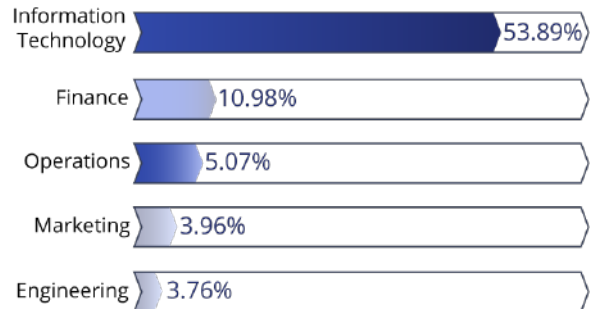
Additionally, coming off significant regulations such as GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) implementation, marketers spent a good deal of time trying to acquire quality leads through the most efficient and effective means possible. Amidst a pandemic with millions of people working from home and many other distractions, B2B marketers have had to find ways to capture and maintain the attention of their audiences. Access to first-party data helps to make that possible.

Professionals in marketing, human resources and operations rounded out the top five when it came to related content. In Q4, information technology related roles retain the topmost position with finance coming in a slightly higher at 10%. Operations, marketing, and engineering rounded out the top five for Q4, knocking out human resources as it drew closer to the end of the year.

Q3 Job Role



Q4 Job Role



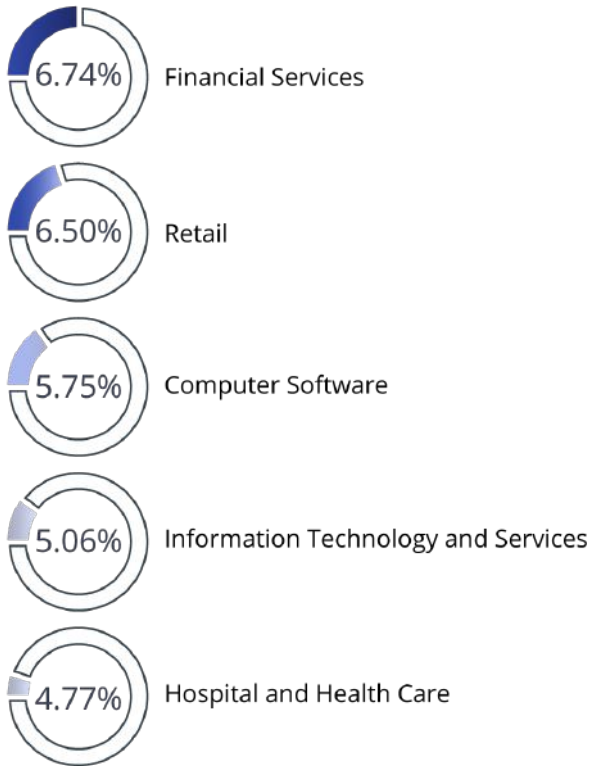
Danni White

Director of Content Strategy
Bython Media

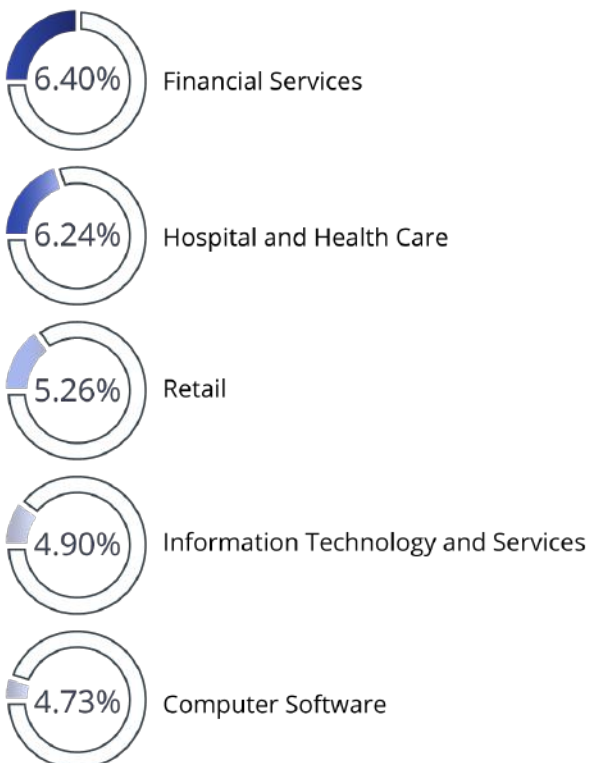
Technology is consistently evolving and one of the most difficult things for people to do is change. This data shows that companies are doing the necessary work to not only ensure their business survives but also that it thrives in the new normal. WFH and remote workers will likely never go away and technology will be what keeps us connected.

When job roles and job levels were compared, information technology roles took most of the top five positions for content consumers with IT managers and directors swapping positions by remaining first and second.

Q3 Industry



Q4 Industry



BY INDUSTRY

While job roles and levels were consistent with information technology related content, when it comes to industry, the financial services industry took the top position with 6% of financial services professionals searching and viewing finance related information.

Not surprisingly, as online shopping also increased in 2020, 6% of professionals in the retail industry also consumed content. Computer software, IT services, and healthcare rounded out the top five for Q3. Q4 was similar in that financial services professionals consumed the most content. Retail dropped to third with healthcare taking 6% in second place.

One thing that is important to note is that as the length of the buying process increases to multiple people within various departments in an organization, your content is likely to be distributed and seen by all the people involved. Similarly, using headlines, titles, and headers that match the needs and grab the attention of a wide range of people can be critical in making your product or service memorable to prospects.

As online shopping also **increased** in 2020, 6% of professionals in the **retail industry** also **consumed content**.

CONTENT THEMES, CATEGORIES AND TOPICS

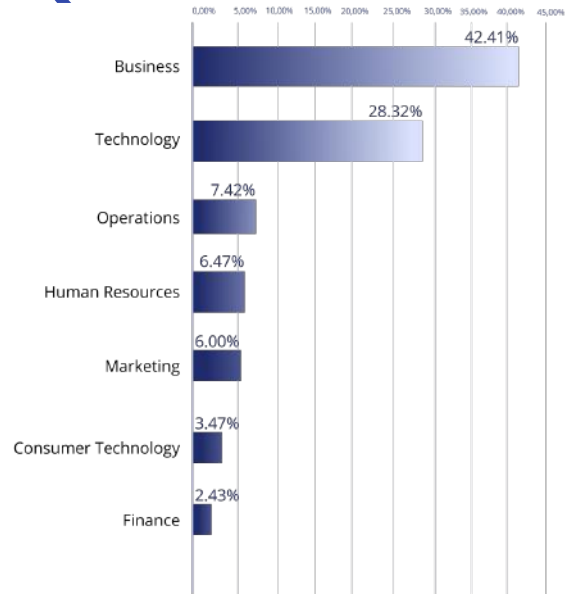
09

Between July and September 2020, digital transformation was the key topic focus of many companies when searching for new content with 37% of business professionals looking for ways to rethink their current processes. According to the 2020 Connectivity Benchmark Report by MuleSoft, 82% of organizations are holding their technology teams accountable for delivering connected customer experiences. On top of that, IT projects are expected to grow by 40%. Integration and innovation are two of the top challenges with digital transformation within most organizations, but it turns out that most are looking for ways to meet these challenges with the most efficiency as possible.

Back to the analysis, artificial intelligence took the lead in terms of topics from October to December 2020 with 12%. Cloud-related topics such as cloud strategy and cloud applications as well as top technologies such as SAP and AWS took several spots in the last three months of 2020 as well. Since technology is continuously making progress and improvements, these topics will likely continue to be searched for well throughout 2021.

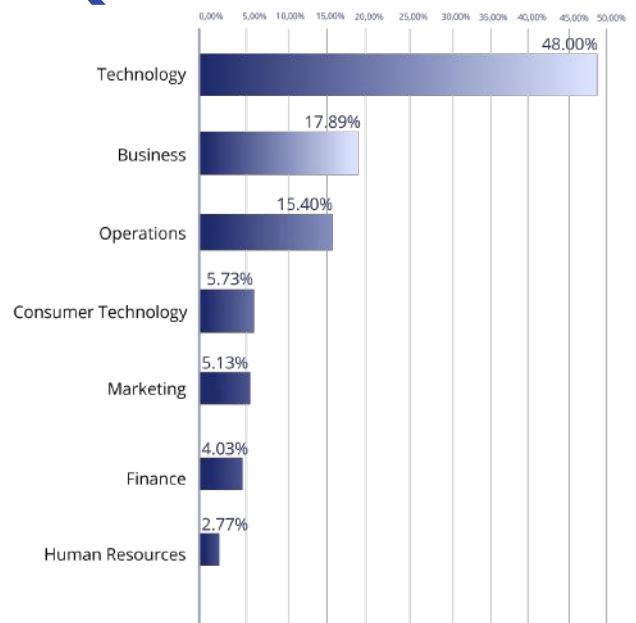
Q3

TOP 7 Themes



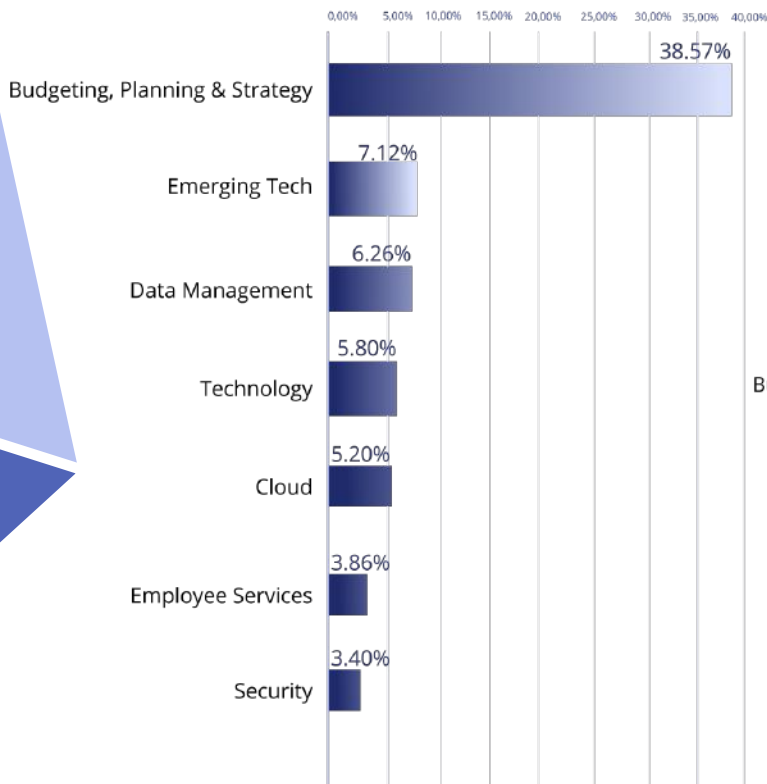
Q4

TOP 7 Themes

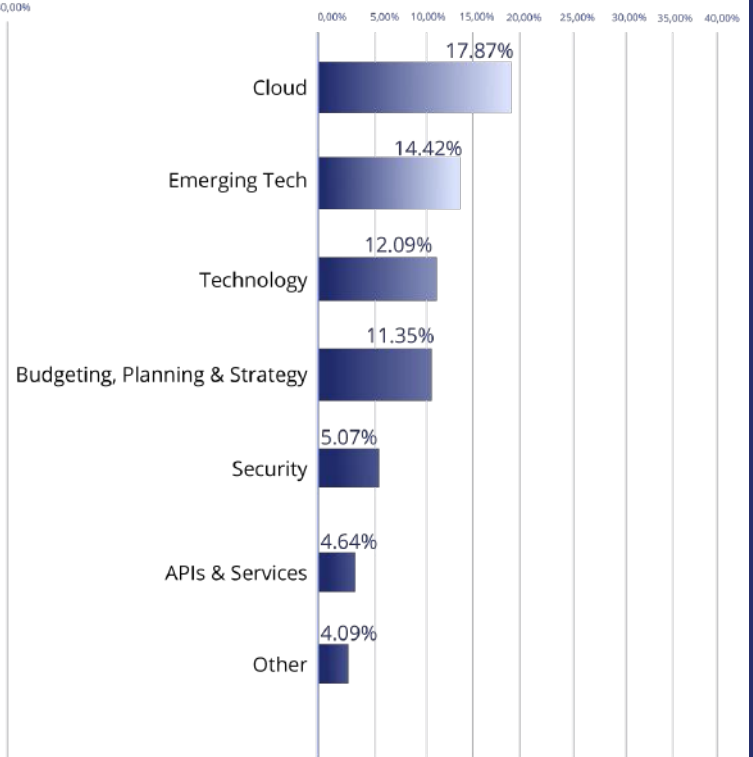


Professionals in IT even marketers in IT companies must stay up to date on the challenges that exist along with new tools and technologies that exist or are being created to meet those challenges. While cloud topics were an emerging category in Q4, budgeting, planning and strategy related categories of content were the most consumed in Q3, with 17% and 38% of prospects consuming content, respectively. Business and technology were two consistent themes throughout the latter half of 2020 as well.

Q3 TOP 7 Categories

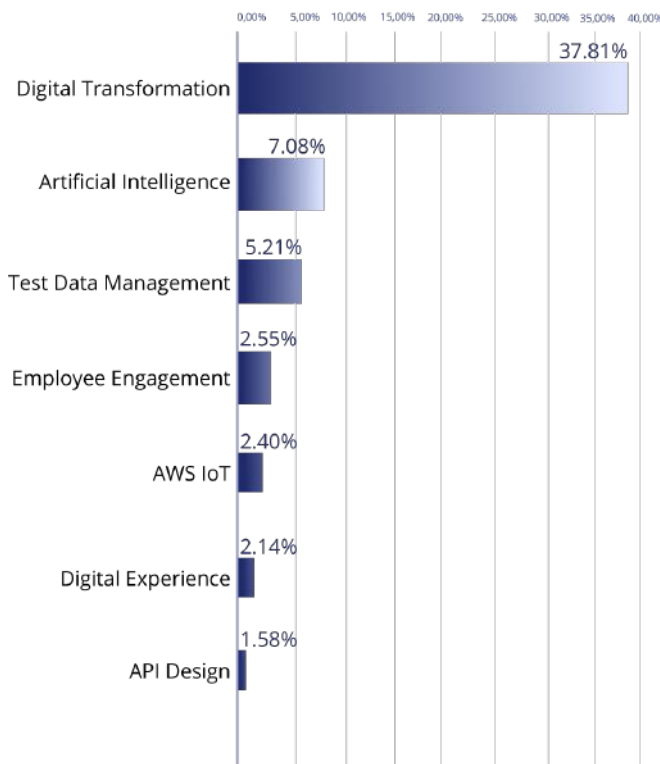


Q4 TOP 7 Categories

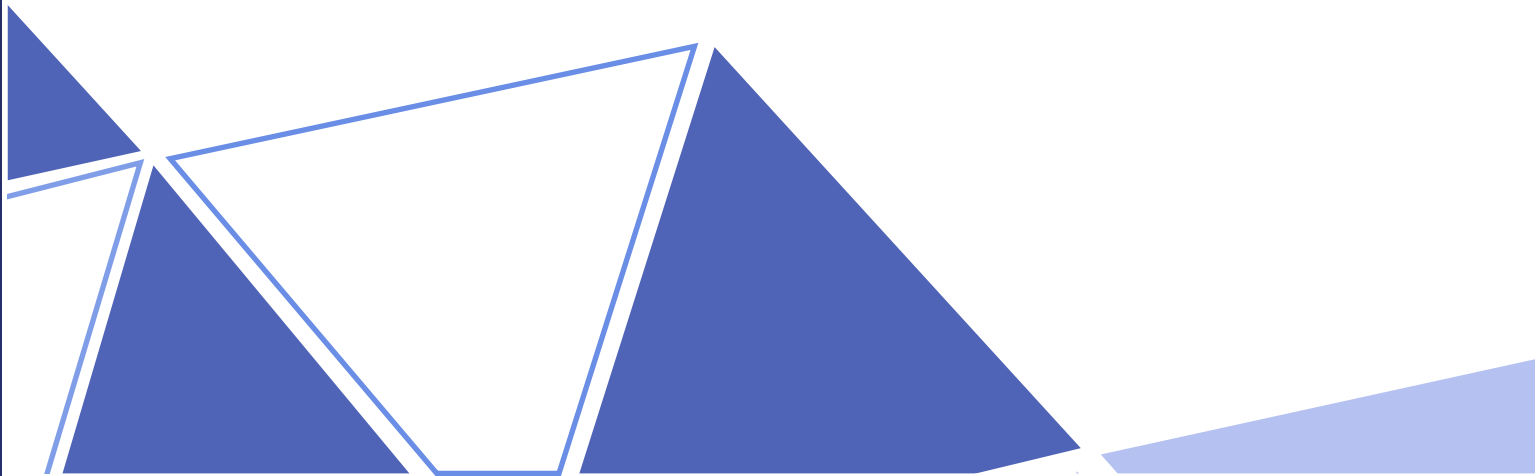
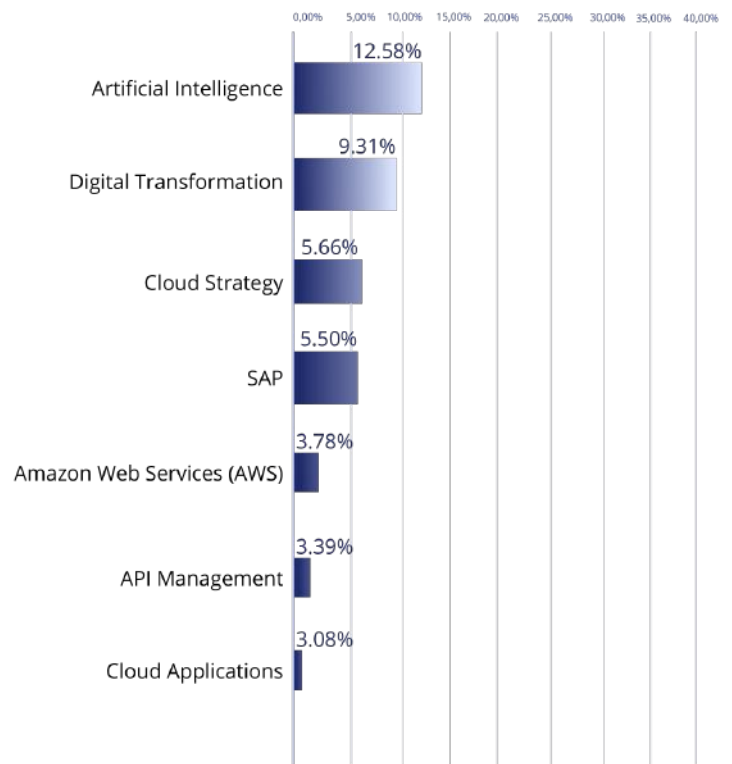


Doing business in the pandemic has pushed the plans and strategy of many companies ahead by several years especially in terms of digital transformation, artificial intelligence, and employee engagement. Data management, IoT, and APIs had their moments of interest from prospects as well.

Q3 TOP 7 Topics



Q4 TOP 7 Topics



METHODOLOGY

We developed this report according to results from six months of demand generation activities for clients targeting select audiences within Bython's database of 48 million contacts. Data collected such as intent and interest, opens, click through rates, and verified downloads are recorded and used in this study.

Exploring the practices of users digitally helps us to understand what clients are interested in most and least, what industries are seeing the most improvement and those requiring room for improvement, and the themes, topics and categories that are most consumed.



If you wish to see the raw data from which this report has been compiled, please email your name, phone number, company name and email address to sales@bython.com

ABOUT BYTHON MEDIA

Ready to position your company for greater success in demand generation in 2021?

Bython Media provides a range of demand generation, content syndication, and technology services, allowing them to deliver value, insights, and results to clients. With the right mix of data, technology, and marketing, we help you to build strong relationships with prospects, build scalable demand generation programs, and improve engagement among increasingly digital B2B audiences. Contact us today to see how.

www.Bython.com
sales@bython.com



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