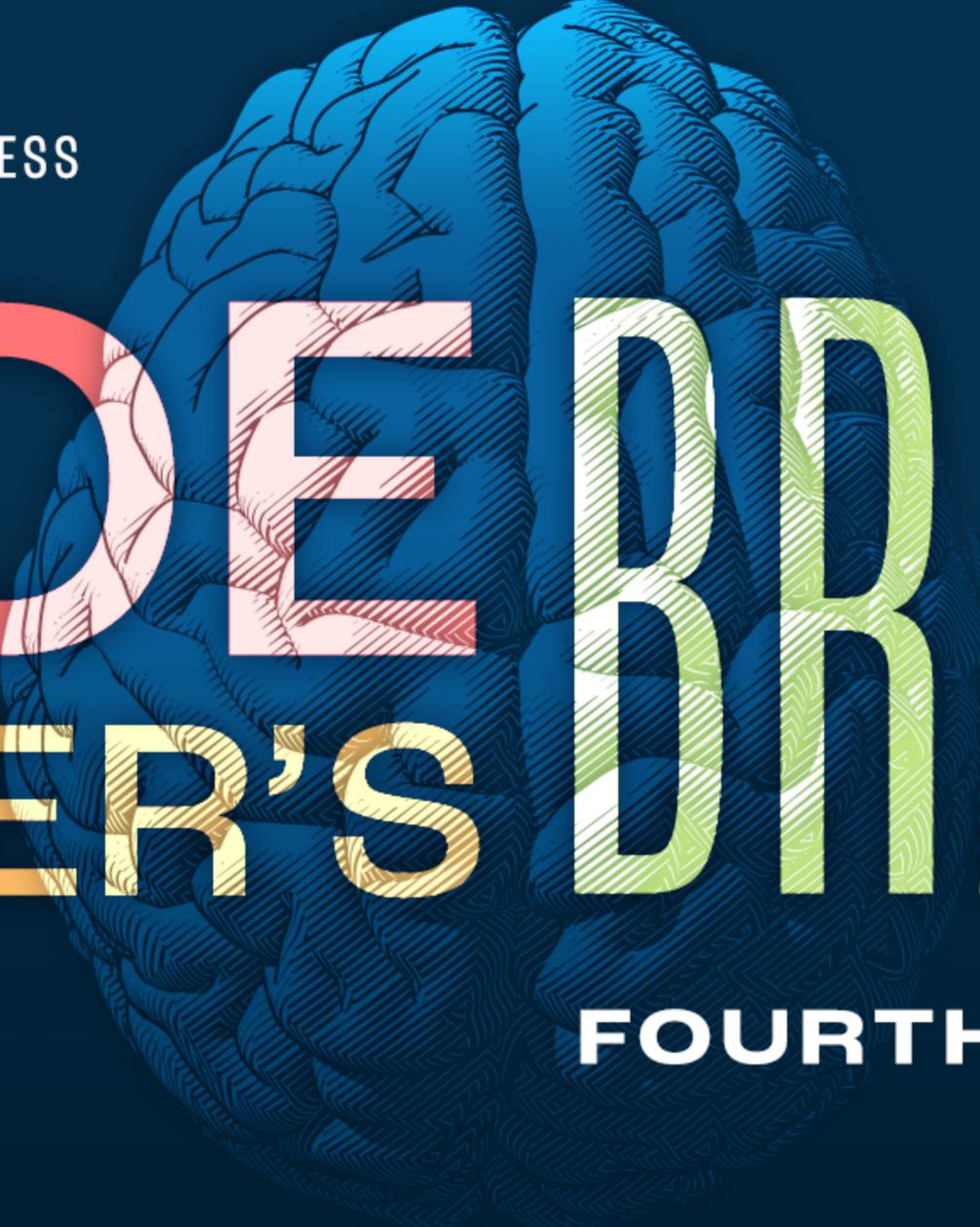


UNDERSTAND YOUR BUYERS | WIN MORE BUSINESS



INSIDERS THE BUYER'S BRAIN

FOURTH EDITION



INSIDE THE BUYER'S BRAIN, FOURTH EDITION: UNDERSTAND YOUR BUYERS. WIN MORE BUSINESS.

Executive Summary

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INTRODUCTION



INTRODUCTION



What many professional services firms are experiencing now is very similar to the conditions described by Charles Dickens in the opening paragraph of his classic, *A Tale of Two Cities*: “It was the best of times, it was the worst of times... it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair.”

2022. Just as the world thought it was getting ahead of the COVID-19 Pandemic and could focus more of its time and money on business, new variants appeared—as did a war in Ukraine, supply chain issues, rising inflation, and talk of a recession. All of these factors affect whether professional services buyers move ahead with, slow down, postpone, or stop some of their spending.

In this period of prolonged uncertainty, business leaders are looking for answers to help them make decisions with greater confidence. Firms that sell professional services need to understand how and why their buyers are behaving differently than in the past. And professional services buyers need to know how to assess service providers’ value *in today’s environment*. In short, **sellers need to know what’s going on inside the buyer’s brain**. In this year’s research we see that having an existing customer relationship makes a difference on many levels. In fact, the most successful firms are spending more time pursuing existing business over new business than they have before. Insights like these show that this research couldn’t have come at a better time.

“The fortunes of tomorrow’s professional services firms may well hinge on the lessons they learn during today’s crisis.”

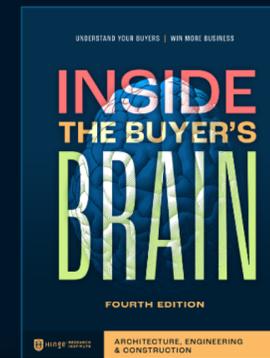
INTRODUCTION

In this executive summary, we explore today's buyers and sellers of professional services. Our study provides an insightful glimpse into an evolving marketplace.

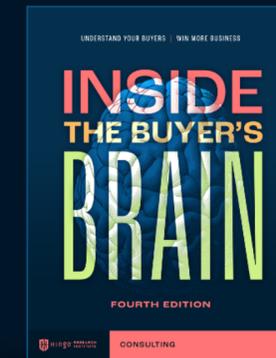
Here are just a few of the themes we've uncovered:

- > Having strong subject matter expertise, relevant experience, and team skills are a must, but having an existing relationship can tip the purchase scale for the buyer
- > Poor customer experience and responsiveness are becoming bigger issues for buyers—and sellers
- > Client willingness to recommend has reached an all-time high
- > Your relevancy is tied to how you handle rapid growth, maintain quality, and respond to regulations

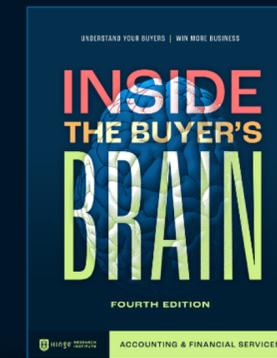
The fortunes of tomorrow available to your firm may well hinge on the answers you learn about the buyer's brain. The marketplace is changing directions and a new buyer's journey is being started as we write these words. This study can help you see what's changing—and how you can swerve to adapt.



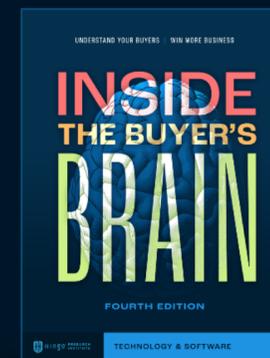
Architecture, Engineering & Construction



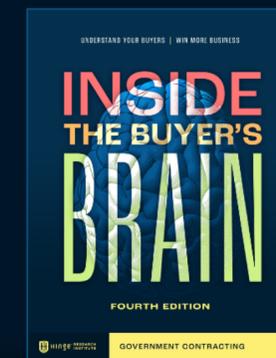
Consulting



Accounting & Financial Services



Technology & Software



Government Contracting

Detailed breakout studies are available for your industry.

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ABOUT THIS STUDY



“WHAT’S INSIDE THE BUYER’S BRAIN?”

To arrive at an answer, we need to ask some salient probing questions first. Here are just a few examples:

- › How well do sellers *really* know their buyers?
- › What are buyers’ key business challenges?
- › How do clients feel about their service providers?
- › How do buyers search for service providers?
- › How do buyers evaluate service providers?

In this study, we answer these and many other important questions. Organizations like yours can use these insights to keep abreast of changing market conditions, anticipate needs and make better decisions, sooner.

Because the answers will change over time, we repeat this research periodically. This is the fourth edition of *Inside the Buyer’s Brain*. First released in 2013, we updated it in 2018 and 2020—and now again in 2022.

HOW TO USE THIS STUDY

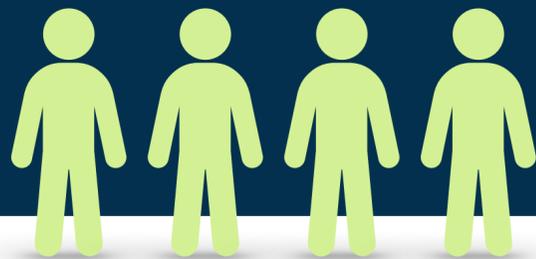
This study contains many findings that a firm like yours could put into action. But it’s not always obvious how to do that. To help you make the most of the data, we’ve included sidebar features titled Put the Data to Work. These explain how to apply the insights to your business—and put abstract data into practice.

ABOUT THIS STUDY



We collected the data for this edition between 2020 and 2022. Using phone interviews and online surveys, we researched more than 1,900 buyers and over 3000 sellers of B2B and professional services. Because the buyers bought services from the sellers, we were able to study both sides of the relationship.

BUYERS = 1,914



SELLERS = 3,160



METHODOLOGY



Questions were of two types:

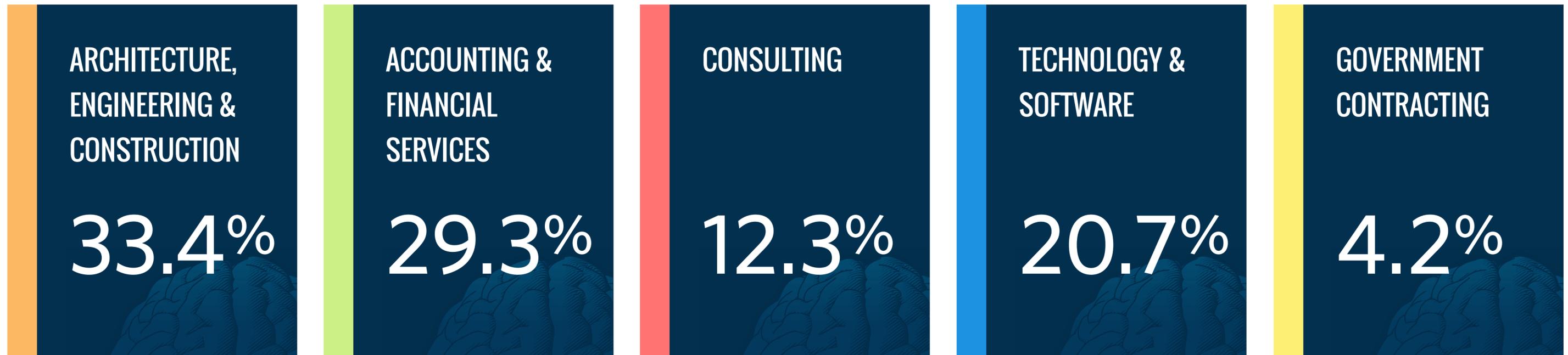
1. **Open ended.** Respondents answered in their own words. Responses were grouped into categories and are displayed as the percentage of respondents that provided a similar answer. Since multiple responses were allowed, the cumulative total of responses can exceed 100%.
2. **0-10 rating scale.** Responses were sorted into three behaviorally meaningful categories.

Rating	Meaning
9 or 10	PROMOTER: Strong endorsement of the behavior or emotion being rated
7 or 8	PASSIVE: Moderate view—may be open to persuasion or influence
6 or Less	DETRACTOR: Rejection of, or dissatisfaction with, the behavior or emotion

SAMPLE COMPOSITION BY INDUSTRY



In addition to reporting on the aggregate data, we also looked at the findings from other angles. This report examines the responses from five major professional services groups:



KEY FINDINGS



ALL PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

HOW WELL DO SELLERS REALLY KNOW THEIR BUYERS?



SELLERS HAVE SOME IMPORTANT DISCONNECTS WITH THEIR BUYERS. THEY TEND TO OVERVALUE THEIR SERVICES AND MISJUDGE CLIENT NEEDS.

2020 TOP 3 MISSED OPPORTUNITIES

- > Strategy and planning
- > Technology/data issues
- > Responding to regulatory requirements

2022 TOP 3 MISSED OPPORTUNITIES

- > Finding keeping good people
- > Budget pressures/financial issues
- > Motivating/managing people

2020 TOP 3 MISSED SELECTION CRITERIA

- > Competitive price and better terms
- > Talented staff/team skills
- > Good cultural fit/shared values

2022 TOP 3 MISSED SELECTION CRITERIA

- > Existing relationship
- > Ability to deliver results
- > Knowledge of industry

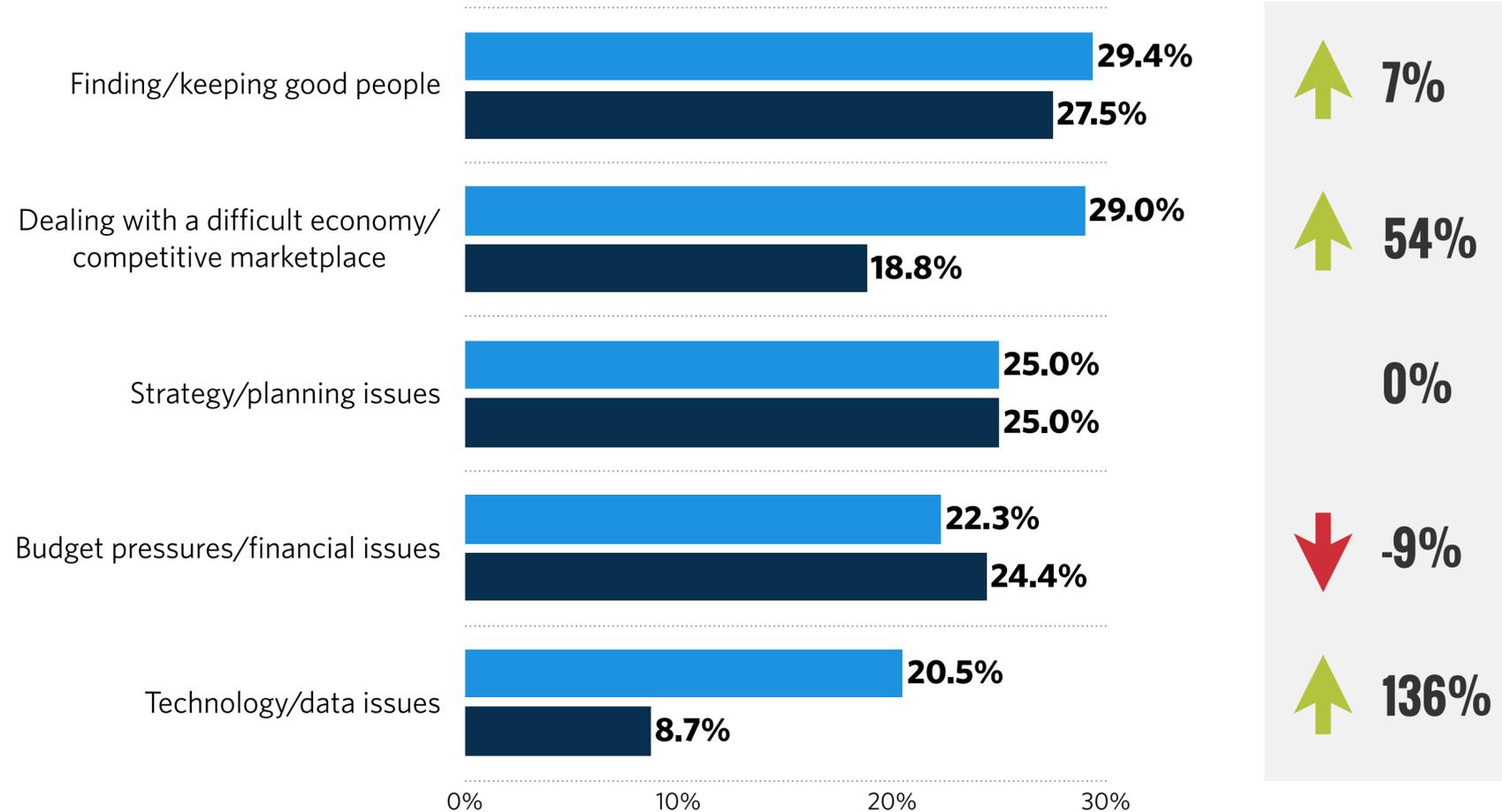
ALL PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

WHAT ARE THE BUYERS' BUSINESS CHALLENGES?



DEALING WITH A DIFFICULT ECONOMY HAS JUMPED TO THE SECOND SPOT IN 2022. “TECHNOLOGY/DATA ISSUES” HAS BECOME AN INCREASINGLY PREVALENT CHALLENGE.

Top 5 Challenges of Professional Services Buyers



“IT modernization. Using the cloud. And also working through the cultural internal issues that result from modernizing, like fear and doubt.”

Product Owner, Government Agency



- > “Dealing with a difficult economy/competitive marketplace” was the #5 challenge for professional services buyers in 2020. Two years later, it has moved up to the #2 spot.
- > Another key change was the impact of “technology/data issues.” This challenge has now moved up to the #5 position—climbing 136%.

PUT THE DATA TO WORK

Seize the moment. Package services or provide terms that will help clients better deal with a difficult economy. Align or acquire expertise around technology and data. These issues are not going away any time soon, and many of your prospects do not have the time, budget, or focus to hire all the internal skills and expertise they need. Show them it is in their best interest to rely on your firm for that expertise.

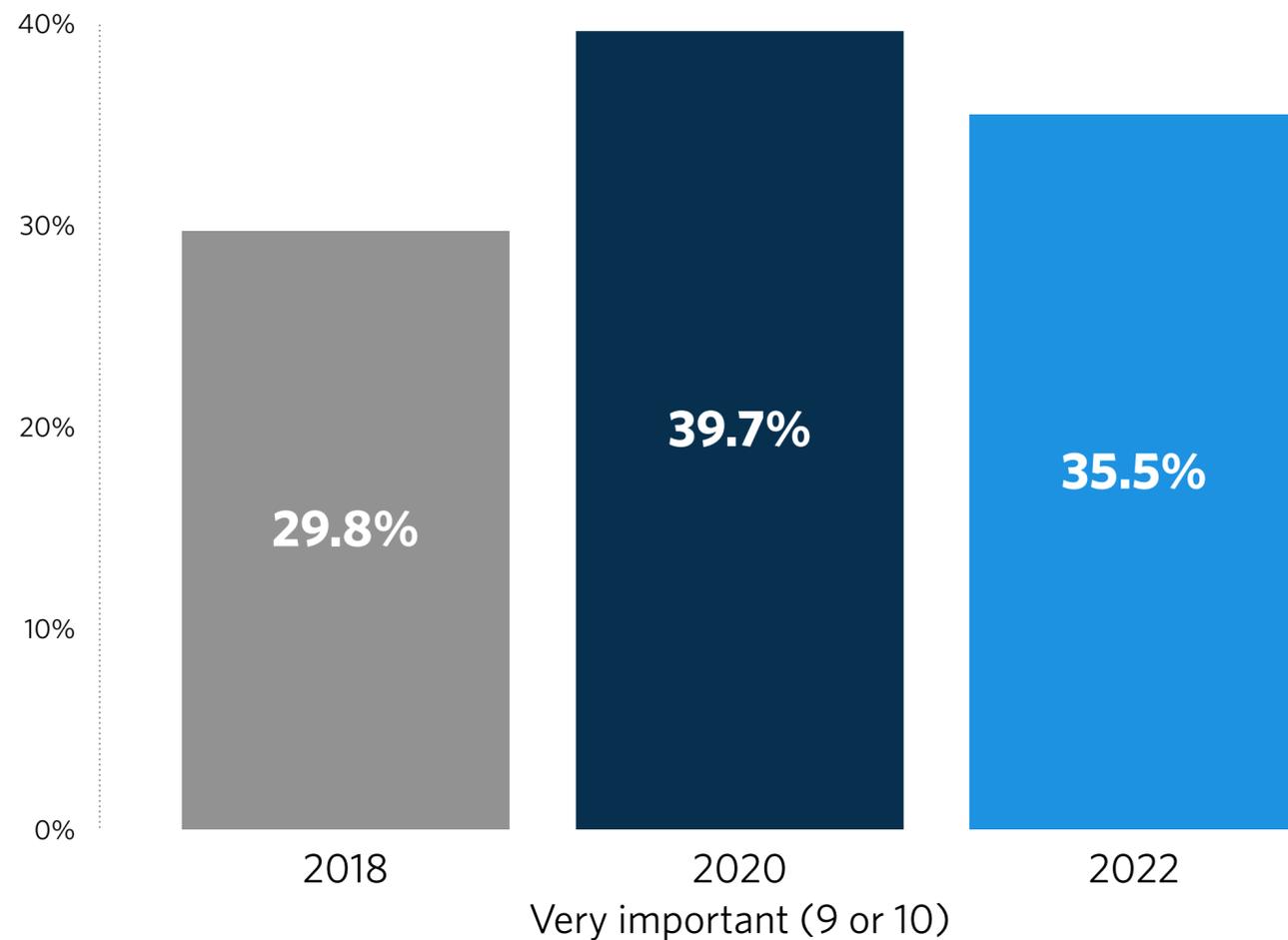
ALL PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

HOW DO CLIENTS FEEL ABOUT THEIR SERVICE PROVIDERS?



RELEVANCY RATINGS HAVE DIPPED SLIGHTLY SINCE 2020

How Important Are the Services Your Firm Provides to Addressing Client Challenges? (0-10 scale)



"Our last firm had poor communication and should have made it clear they couldn't execute properly on the project and they didn't have the staff or expertise."

VP of Innovation, Transportation

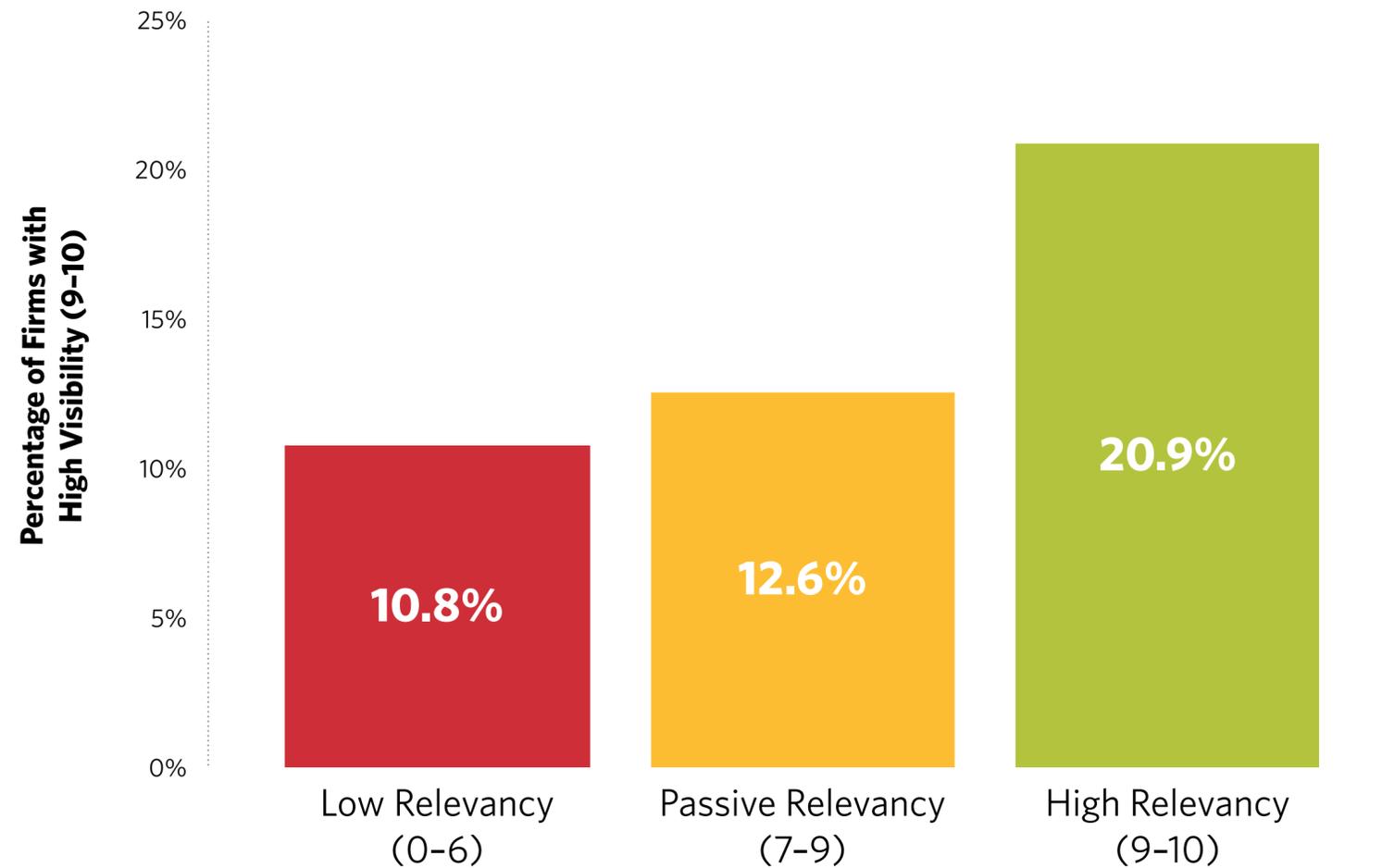
- > Relevancy was on the rise from 19.1% in 2013 to 29.8% in 2018. In 2020, the research shows that relevancy dropped some to 35.5%

PUT THE DATA TO WORK

Relevancy is going to fluctuate depending on client needs, market conditions, and a firm's offerings. For example, during the COVID-19 pandemic, firms that provide solutions that focus on healthcare, supply chain issues, etc. may be seen as more relevant. Now is a great time to step back and honestly assess your firm's expertise, experience, skills, and services to see if there are any gaps that can be addressed to raise your firm's relevancy.

FIRMS WITH HIGHER RELEVANCY ARE ALSO MORE VISIBLE

The Impact of Relevancy on Visibility



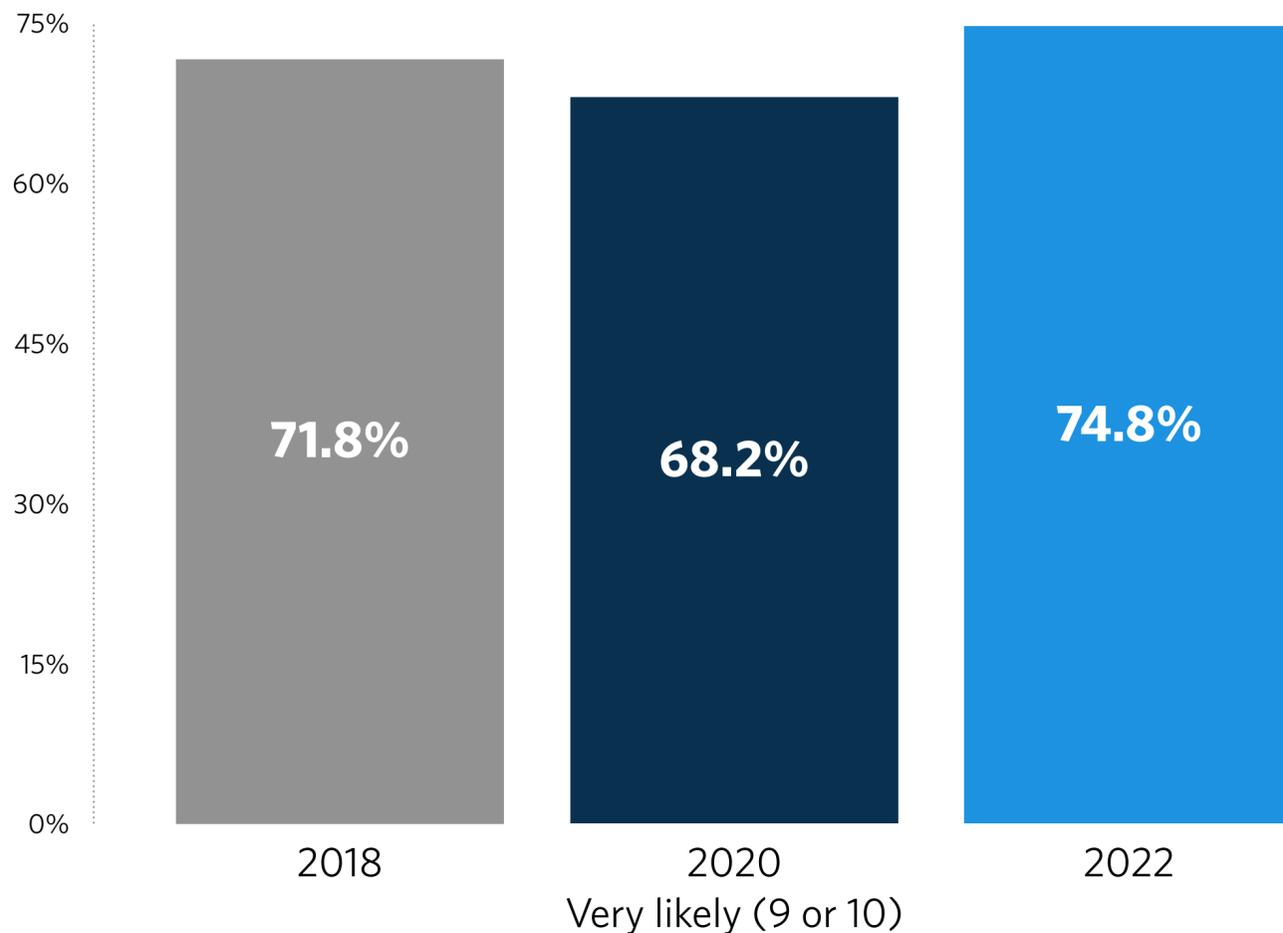
- > The fact that relevancy has slightly dipped since 2020 is not good for many firms. Our research shows that firms that have high relevancy also have higher visibility.
- > Those firms with a high relevancy ranking (9-10) had much more visibility than those firms with low relevancy (0-6)—20.9% versus 10.8%.

PUT THE DATA TO WORK

How many opportunities is your firm missing because you have low visibility among your target audiences? Our research suggests that it might make sense to spend more time developing your firm's relevancy. While there are other ways to increase your firm's visibility, there is a strong data correlation between high relevancy and high visibility.

CLIENTS' WILLINGNESS TO RECOMMEND THEIR CURRENT SERVICE PROVIDER HAS REACHED AN ALL-TIME HIGH IN 2022

How Likely Are Buyers to Recommend Current Service Provider? (0-10 scale)



- > This is an important finding. Just a few years ago, referrals and recommendations were integral parts of sellers' business development plans. Then COVID-19 struck and we started to see a decline in recommendations.
- > One explanation for this current upswing can be credited to sellers' subject matter expertise, experience, staff skills, and existing client relationships. Buyers who benefit from the work of their professional services firms are now comfortable sharing their satisfaction with peers when asked.

PUT THE DATA TO WORK

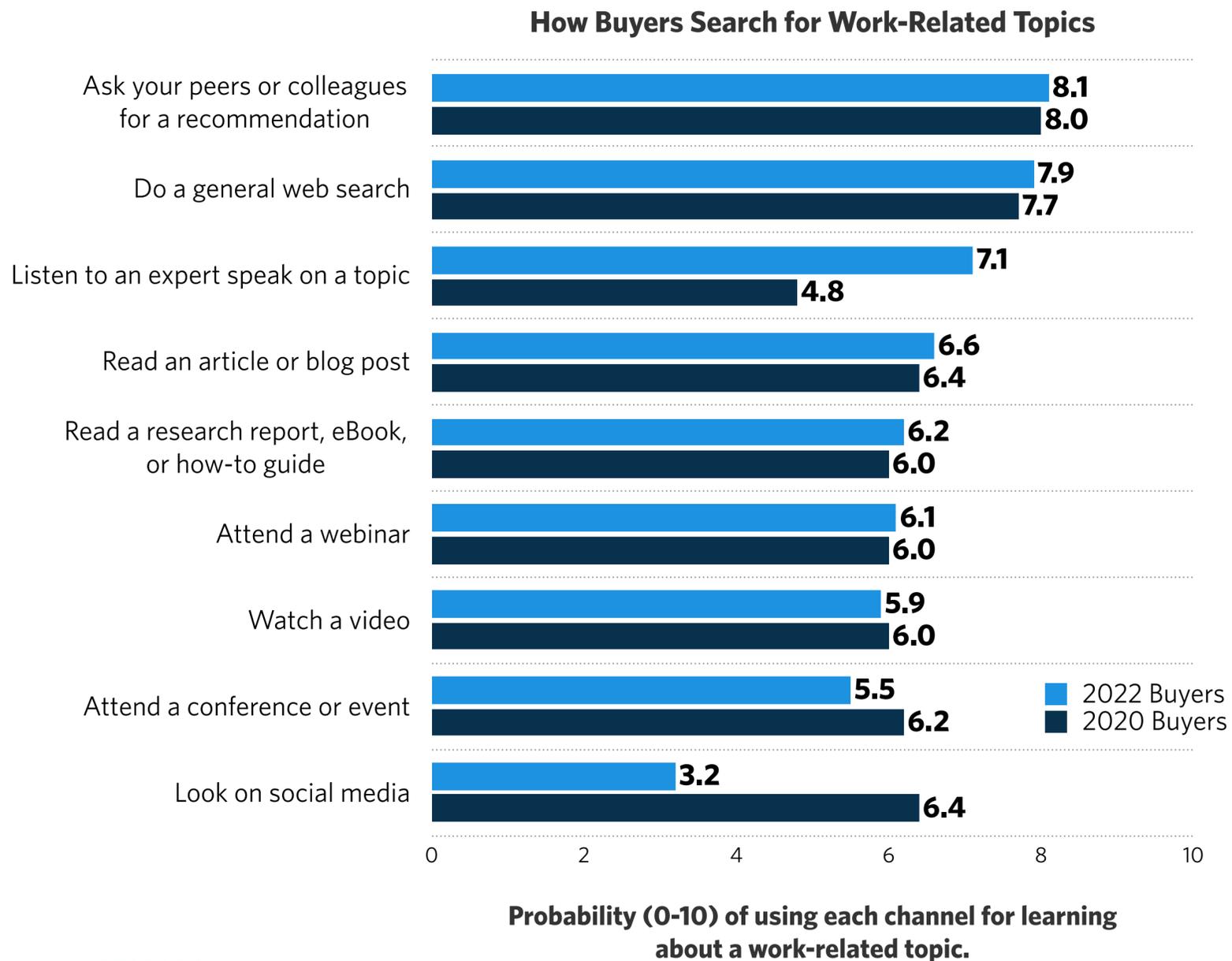
It may be time to re-evaluate your organization's business development (BD) efforts. Most firms put the majority of their BD into the pursuit of new business and clients. The data, however, may suggest that putting more effort into building long-term client relationships could generate more recommendations and referrals. Other research (<https://www.invespcro.com/blog/customer-acquisition-retention/>) shows that pursuing new business can be four to five times more expensive than upselling an existing client.

ALL PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

HOW DO BUYERS SEARCH FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS?



USING CONFERENCES OR USING SOCIAL MEDIA TO SEARCH FOR WORK-RELATED TOPICS HAS DROPPED SUBSTANTIALLY SINCE 2020

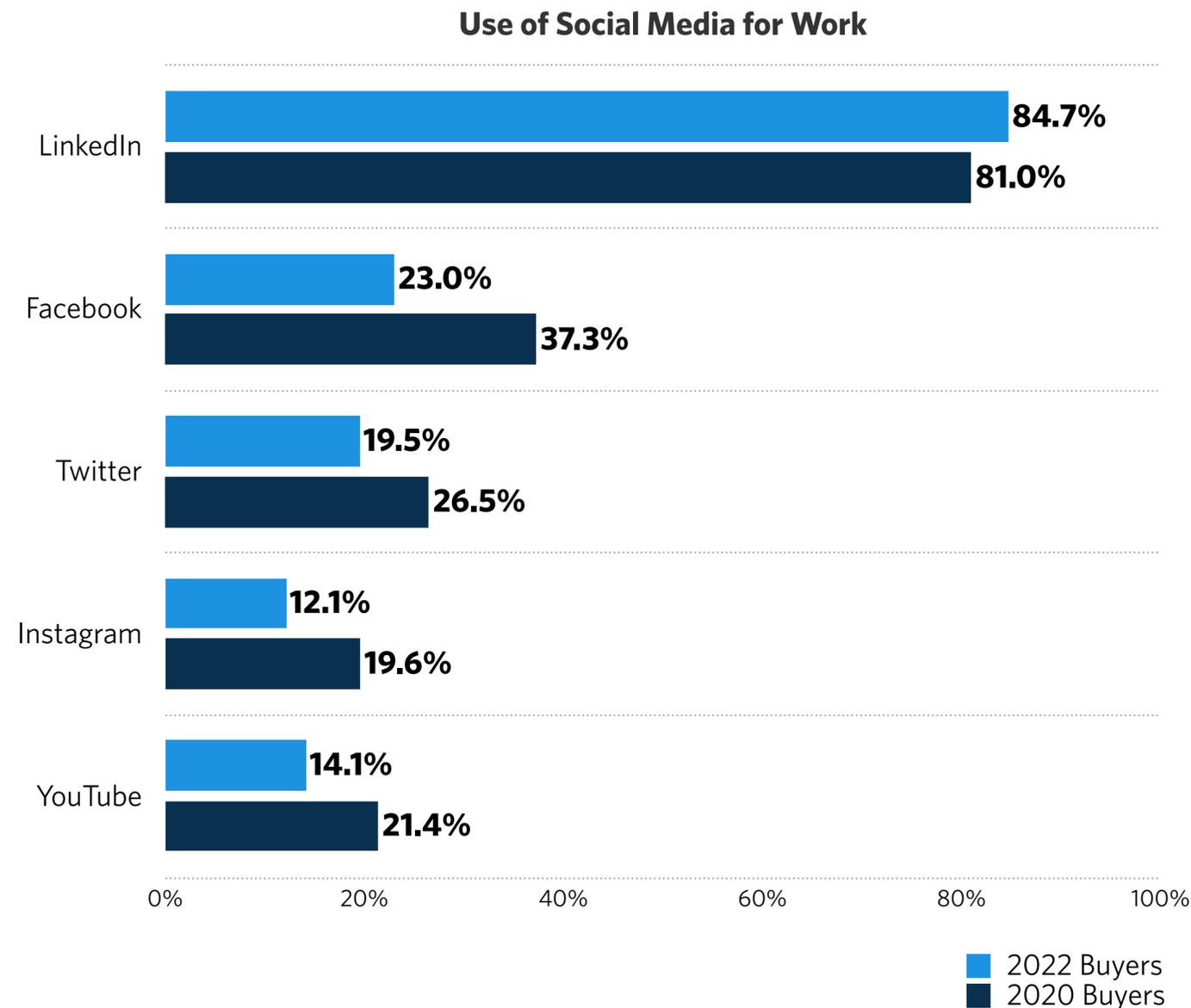


> How buyers search for information on work-related topics has changed in several ways over the last couple of years. While “ask your peers or colleagues for a recommendation” remains the top method, others have fallen in popularity. “Look on social media” has dropped from the #3 method in 2020 to #9 in 2022. “Attend a conference or event” ranked in the top 5 in 2020. In 2022, it sits in eighth position.

PUT THE DATA TO WORK

Buyers should take this opportunity to adapt to changes in sellers’ behavior. For instance, you may want to invest in fewer conference sponsorships or invest less in social media (note, however, that LinkedIn use among buyers remains strong, as you will see on the next page). Reallocate those resources into building your thought leadership—blogging, public speaking, and search engine optimization. Focus more on making your thought leadership relevant and getting it to rank high in Google’s search results.

LINKEDIN IS THE DOMINANT SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNEL USED BY BUYERS. USE OF ALL OTHER SOCIAL CHANNELS IS SIGNIFICANTLY LOWER THAN IN 2020



- > Other than LinkedIn, social media platforms have been used less by buyers in 2022 than in 2020. While LinkedIn leads all social media channels with nearly 85% of respondents using it, the next closest channel is Facebook at 23%. The numbers just go down from there.
- > We believe that buyers want to go deeper with their due diligence and really learn as much as possible about a service or vendor as they evaluate it. More and buyers are turning to peer referrals and recommendations, articles and blogs, research and guides, and expert presentations and webinars to get them up to speed and answer their questions.

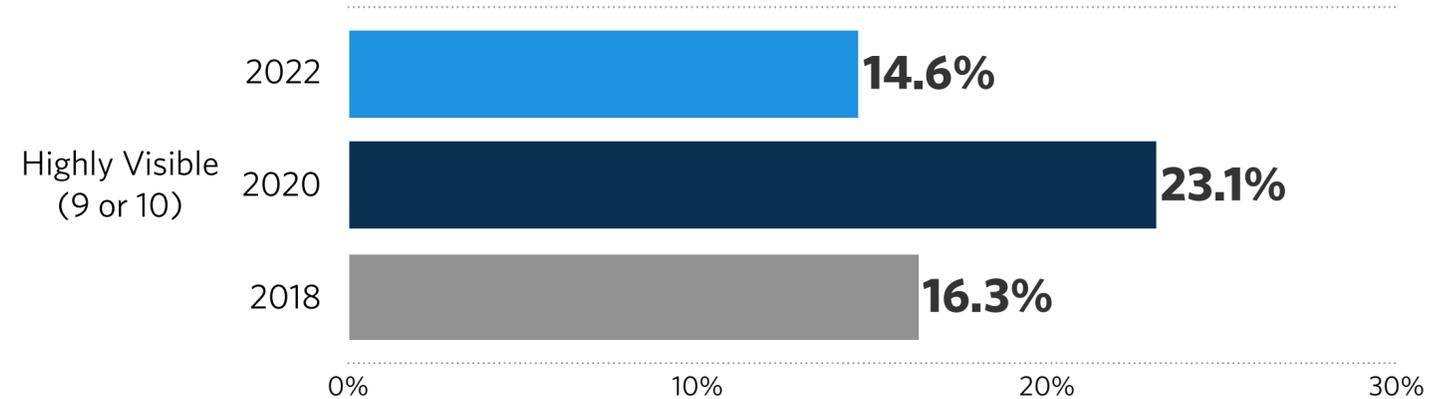
PUT THE DATA TO WORK

Social media can round out your marketing and business development strategies, but you should not consider it the primary channel to generate visibility, leads, or engagement.

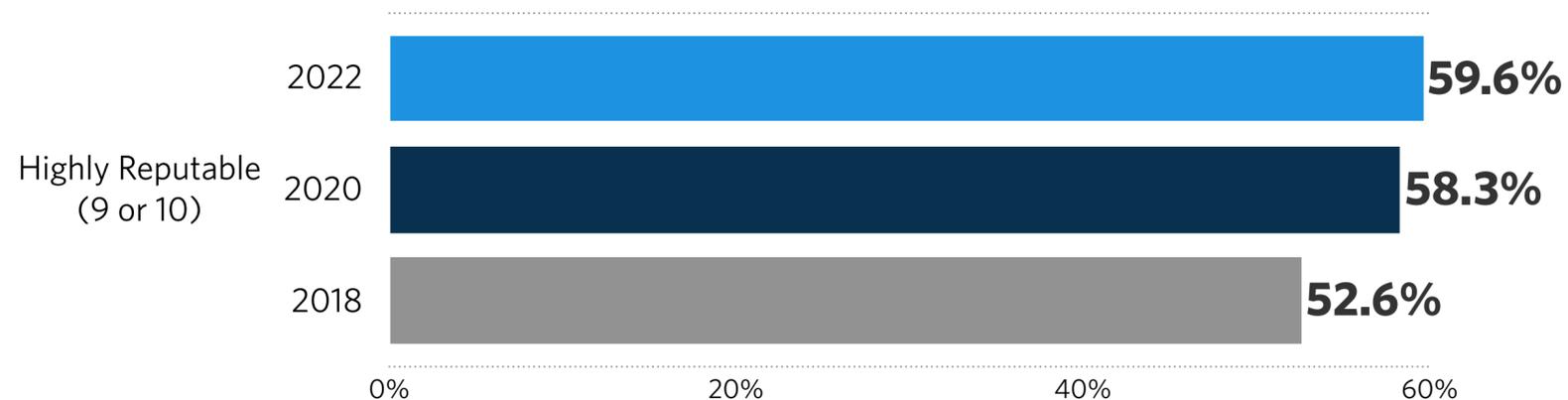
If your team is going to dedicate time to social media, be very selective. As our research shows, most buyers are only using LinkedIn for business. There is a lot you can do with LinkedIn. Try going deep in this channel until you master it.

VISIBILITY RATES ARE AT AN ALL-TIME LOW, WHILE REPUTATION HAS SLIGHTLY IMPROVED SINCE 2020

How Visible Is Your Professional Service Provider in the Marketplace? (0-10 score)



How Good Is Your Professional Service Provider's Reputation? (0-10 score)



- > Visibility and reputation are two considerations that buyers evaluate—especially early in the process. Low visibility may result from a lack of marketing or an increase in competition. Overall professional services firm visibility dropped by 37% from 2020 to 2022. How many conversations is your firm not a part of because it lacks visibility?
- > Visibility alone is not enough; reputation is a critical success factor, as well. Reputations rose slightly from 2020 to 2022.

PUT THE DATA TO WORK

Of the two evaluation considerations, visibility is probably the easiest to control. Some marketing consulting firms even offer programs to help firms raise their visibility and showcase their subject-matter expertise on websites, in articles and blogs, at speaking events, through webinars, in books, and more.

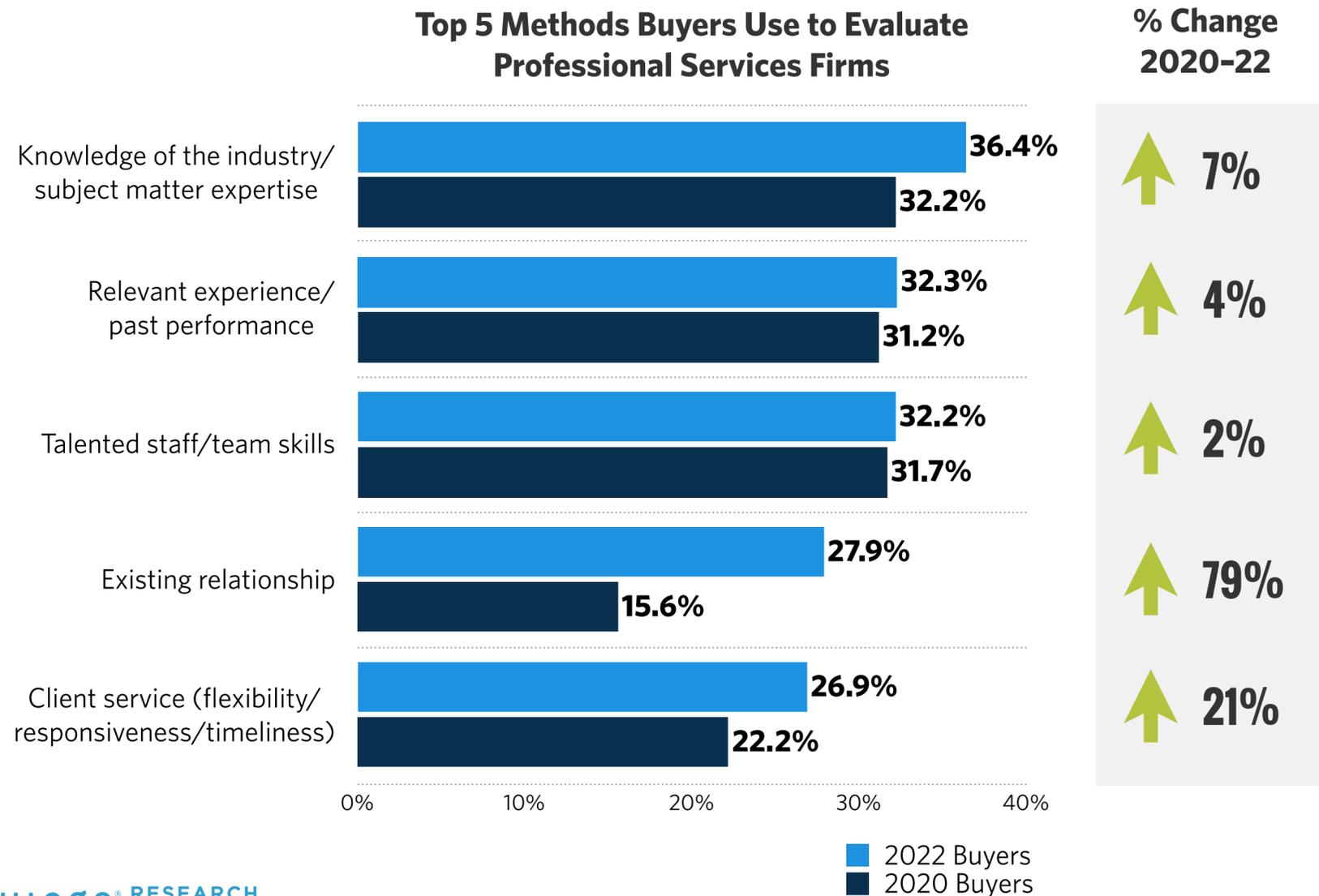
Strong, highly visible thought leadership will not only generate more leads and opportunities for your firm, it can also enhance your reputation.

ALL PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

HOW DO BUYERS EVALUATE SERVICE PROVIDERS?



“EXISTING RELATIONSHIP” HAS CREPT INTO THE TOP 5 SELECTION CRITERIA. CLIENT SERVICE HAS ALSO BECOME SUBSTANTIALLY MORE IMPORTANT



“I admit that I should give our partner more credit because I feel like I underestimated their impact—they really helped me out... more than they had to.”

CEO, Construction



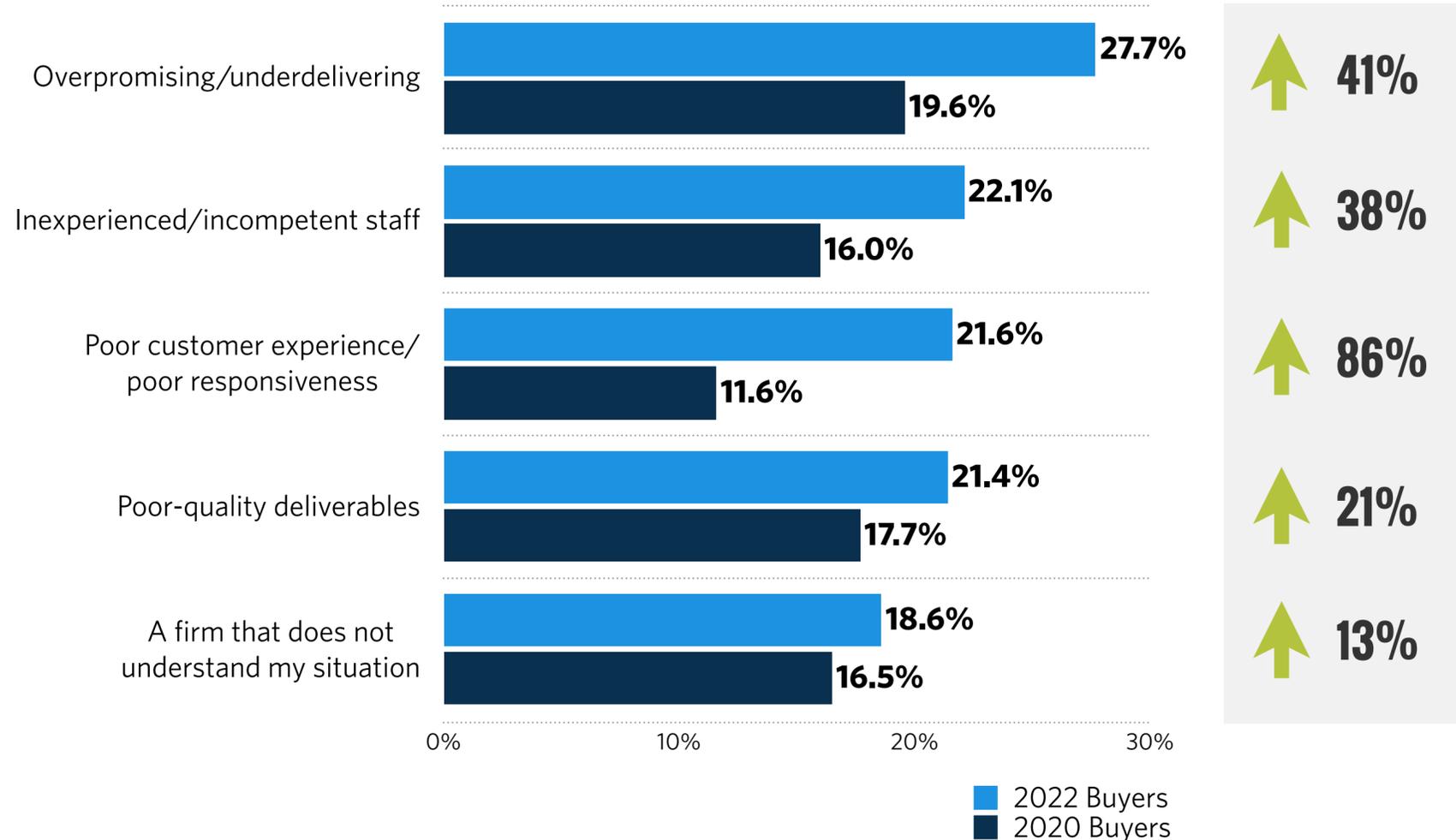
- > While several of the top-5 methods used to evaluate professional services firms stayed pretty much the same from 2020 to 2022, we noticed a significant jump in “existing relationship,” rising from 15.6% in 2020 to 27.9% in 2022. That is a huge 79% increase.
- > In 2022, having an existing relationship is not enough. Buyers are also looking for firms that provide flexibility, responsiveness, and timely delivery. The increase for this selection criteria was more than the combined percentage change of the other four on the list.

PUT THE DATA TO WORK

For firms interested in growth, take note that buyers value an “existing relationship” more than ever. Several factors may drive this rise. For instance, clients may be more comfortable working with partners they already know. In addition, continuing an existing relationship may feel less risky. Now is a good time to assess your business development efforts and see if it makes sense to dedicate more time to building existing relationships versus pursuing new business.

INEXPERIENCED STAFF AND POOR CUSTOMER SERVICE HAVE BECOME BIGGER CONCERNS IN 2022

Top 5 Concerns When Selecting Professional Services Firms



“Overpromising and underdelivering contracting for one thing and receiving something different. Talent swap out—contract for a certain set of skills, or a person, and that person gets swapped out. So, not the capability, or the team, you expected. Consistency in service.”

Global Head of Talent, Consulting Client

- > This list raises a red flag, and sellers should take heed. Four of the top five buyers' concerns have risen by 20% or more.
- > While most of these issues, such as overpromising/underdelivering and inexperienced staff, may not be factors in selecting a professional services firm, they are critical factors when it comes to building long-term relationships.
- > Of all these concerns, poor customer experience rose the most, soaring 86%, from 11.6% in 2020 to 21.6% in 2022.

PUT THE DATA TO WORK

All five of these service-related issues appear to be on the rise. But how do determine if you firm is adequately addressing these concerns?

One of the easiest ways to track customer experience, customer perception, and customer satisfaction is to conduct client surveys a few times over the course of the year. Then see how you stack up on these issues.

WHAT TIPS THE SCALE WHEN SELECTING A FIRM? “EXISTING RELATIONSHIP” HAS CLIMBED TO THE TOP OF THE LIST

2022 TOP 5 DECIDING FACTORS (SCALE TIPPERS) FOR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES FIRMS

1. Existing relationship
2. Relevant experience/past performance
3. Talented staff/team skills
4. Knowledge of the industry/subject matter expertise
5. Client service (flexibility/responsiveness/timeliness)

2020 TOP 5 DECIDING FACTORS (SCALE TIPPERS) FOR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES FIRMS

1. Talented staff/team skills
2. Relevant experience/past performance
3. Existing relationship
4. Knowledge of the industry/subject matter expertise
5. Good cultural fit

- > What’s most important when actually selecting a professional services firm? While four of the five top factors that tip the scale are on both the 2020 and 2022 lists, the order has changed. “Existing relationship” has risen from the #3 position to #1, while “talented staff/team skills” has fallen from the top slot to #3. “Good cultural fit” has been replaced by “client service” in the fifth spot.

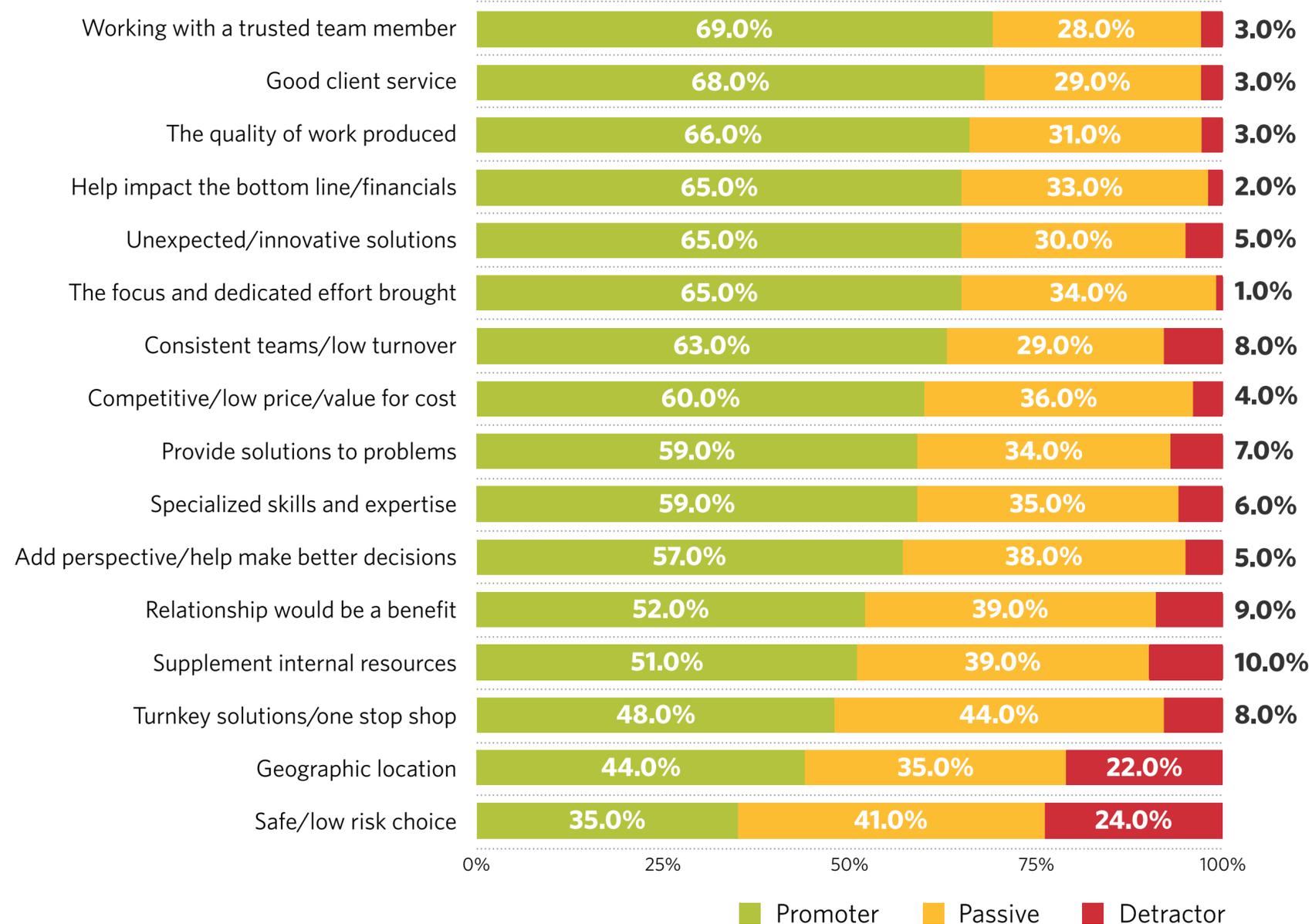
PUT THE DATA TO WORK

Sellers, as you plan for changes in buyers’ behaviors, consider making expanding existing relationships a bigger part of your marketing and business development strategy.

You can use videos, case stories, social media, and blog posts to share experiences clients’ have had with your firm. Ask them to talk about your firm’s customer service, excellent reputation, expertise and other benefits.

WORKING WITH TRUSTED TEAM MEMBERS AND GOOD CLIENT SERVICE YIELD THE HIGHEST VALUE RATINGS

What is the Overall Value that Your Professional Service Provider Offers to Your Firm? (0-10)



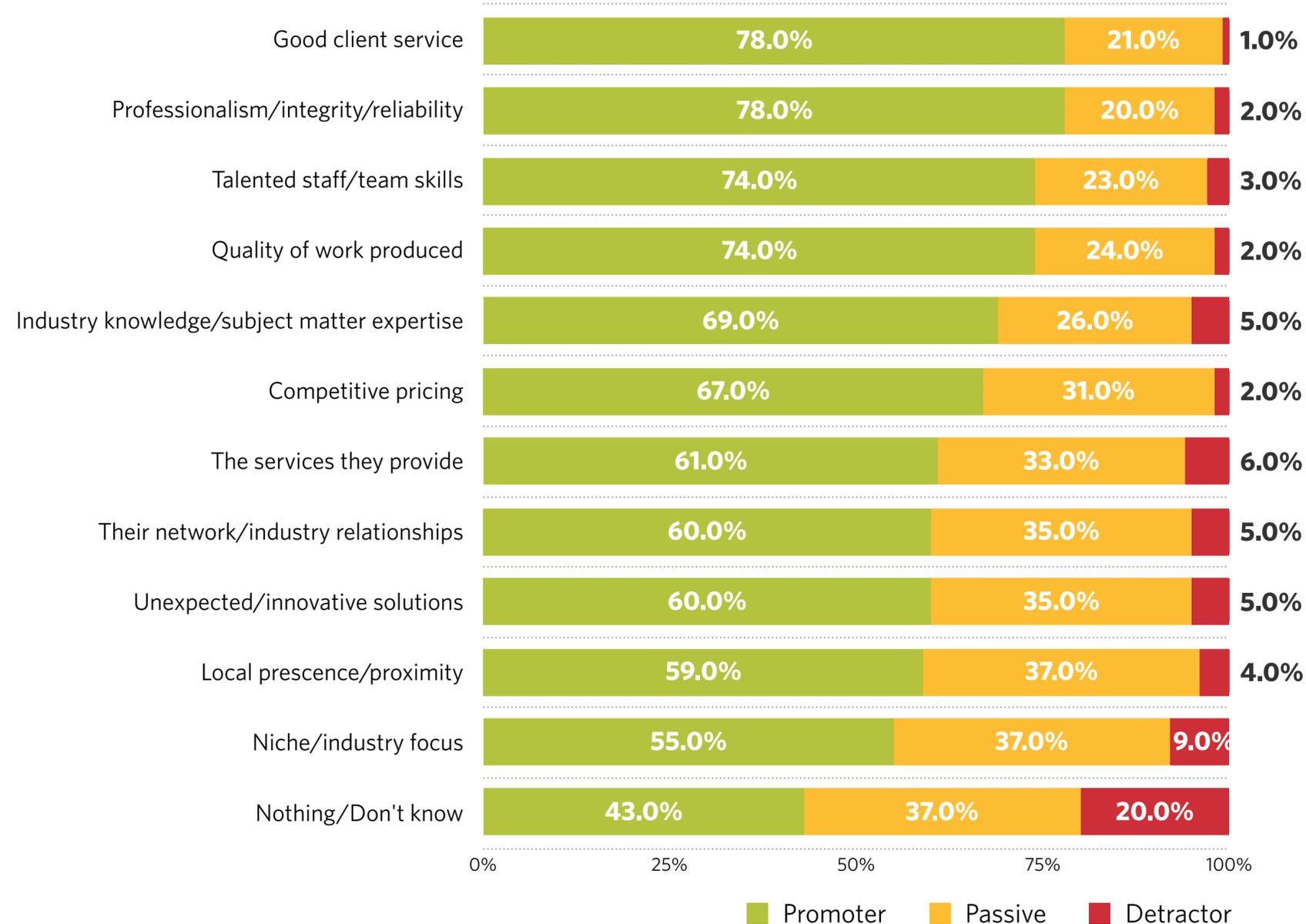
- > What drives value with buyers? According to our research, the top three components are: working with a trusted team member (69%), good client service (68%), and the quality of work produced (66%).
- > Notice that “competitive/low price” (60%) sits in the middle of the list and “safe/low risk choice” (35%) is at the bottom. Many firms believe these are key drivers of perceived value, when in fact they are not.

HOW TO READ THIS CHART:

Respondents were first asked to rate their professional service provider’s overall value on a 0-10 scale. This was followed by an open-ended question about what specific value or benefits they received. Their answers, shown on the Y-axis, are correlated with respondents’ ratings to show what percentage citing that benefit were promoters (9 or 10 rating), passive (7 or 8 rating), and detractors (0-6 rating).

CLIENT SERVICE, PROFESSIONALISM AND TALENTED STAFF ARE CRITICAL FOR HIGH REPUTATION RATINGS

How Good Is Your Professional Service Provider's Reputation? (0-10)



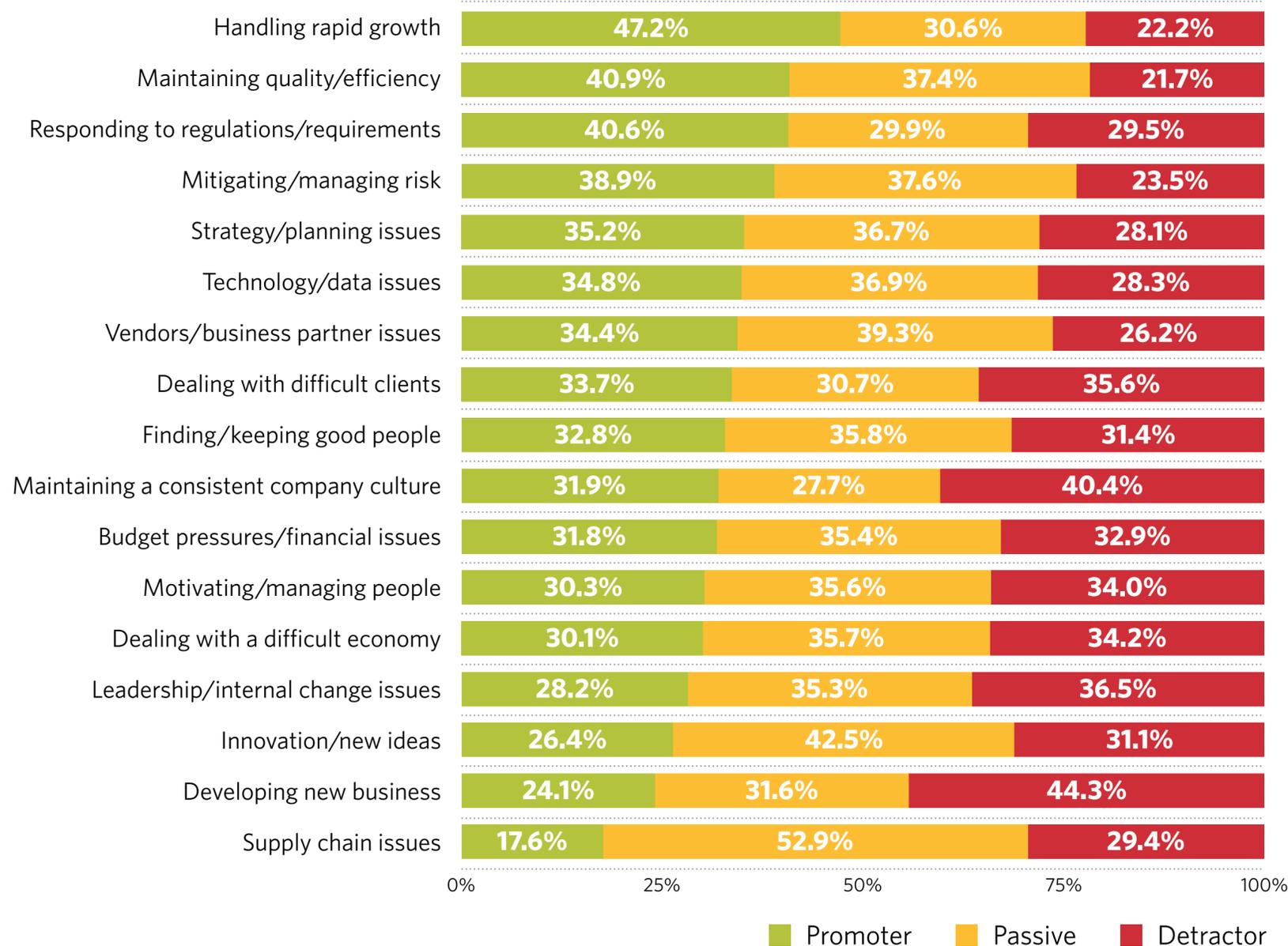
- > How can your firm improve or maintain its reputation? Clients care most about good client service (78%), reliability (78%), team skills (74%), and quality of work produced (74%).
- > Interestingly, in this year's research, "niche/industry focus" did not play a significant role in reputation ratings—finishing near the bottom of the list at 55%. However, 92% of the study participants gave focus a 7-10 rating, so this is still an important factor—and a powerful tool for positioning your business.

HOW TO READ THIS CHART:

Respondents were first asked to rate their professional service provider's reputation on a 0-10 scale. This was followed by an open-ended question about what they are known for. Their answers, shown on the Y-axis, are correlated with respondents' ratings to show what percentage citing that characteristic were promoters (9 or 10 rating), passive (7 or 8 rating), and detractors (0-6 rating).

HANDLING RAPID GROWTH, MAINTAINING QUALITY, AND RESPONDING TO REGULATIONS RECEIVED HIGH RELEVANCY RATINGS

How Important Are the Services Your Firm Provides to Addressing Client Challenges? (0-10)



- > What are your clients' top challenges? And how well is your firm equipped to address them? While these priorities can vary greatly from one industry to another, we noticed a number of challenges that crossed all industries.
- > Top all-industry challenges include handling rapid growth (47%), maintaining quality (41%), and responding to regulations (41%). Note: some of these challenges may rank very differently when isolated by industry (see our individual industry reports for details).

HOW TO READ THIS CHART:

Respondents were first asked to identify their top challenges. They were then asked to rate, on a 0-10 scale, how important their professional service provider was to addressing those challenges. Their answers, shown on the Y-axis, are correlated with respondents' ratings to show what percentage citing each challenge were promoters (9 or 10 rating), passive (7 or 8 rating), and detractors (0-6 rating).

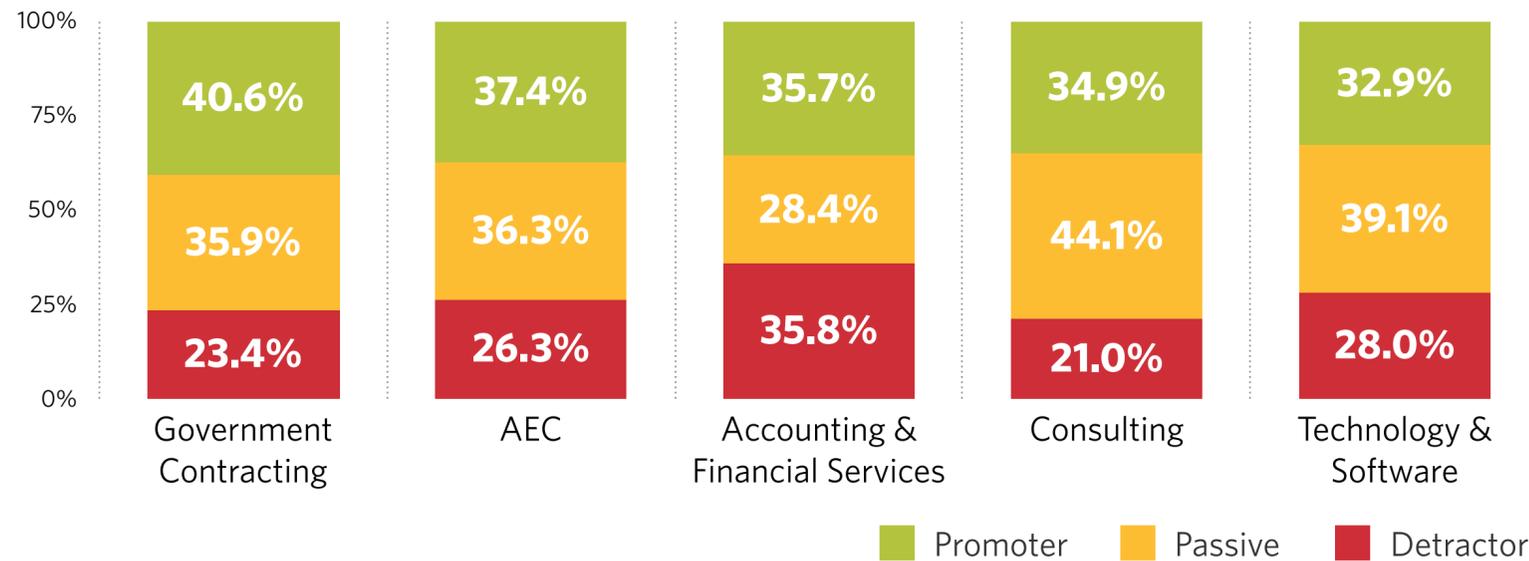
ALL PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

HOW DOES YOUR INDUSTRY COMPARE?

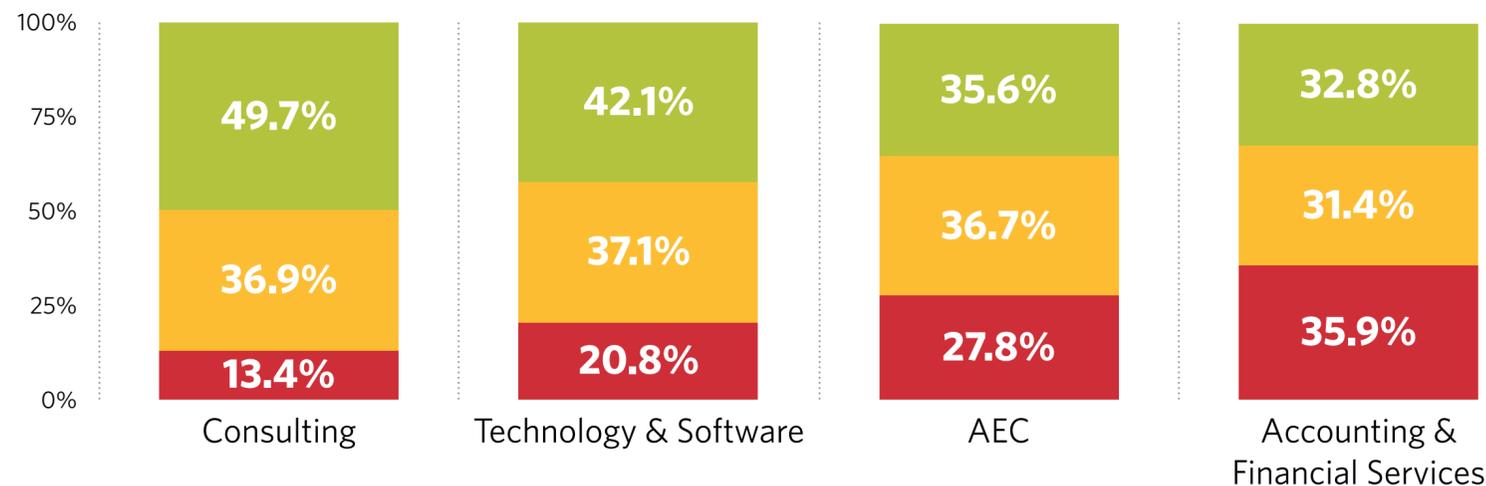


AEC AND ACCOUNTING & FINANCE FIRMS HAVE GROWN IN RELEVANCY OVER THE PAST TWO YEARS

2022: How Important Are the Services Your Firm Provides to Addressing Client Challenges? (0-10 scale)



2020: How Important Are the Services Your Firm Provides to Addressing Client Challenges? (0-10 scale)



- > How important are your services to solving your clients' challenges? The answer to that question gives you a measure of your firm's relevancy, which is critical to closing new business and re-engaging existing clients.
- > From 2020 to 2022, relevancy has risen in the architecture, engineering, and construction (AEC) and accounting & financial services industries. Meanwhile, relevancy has declined sharply in the technology & software and consulting industries.

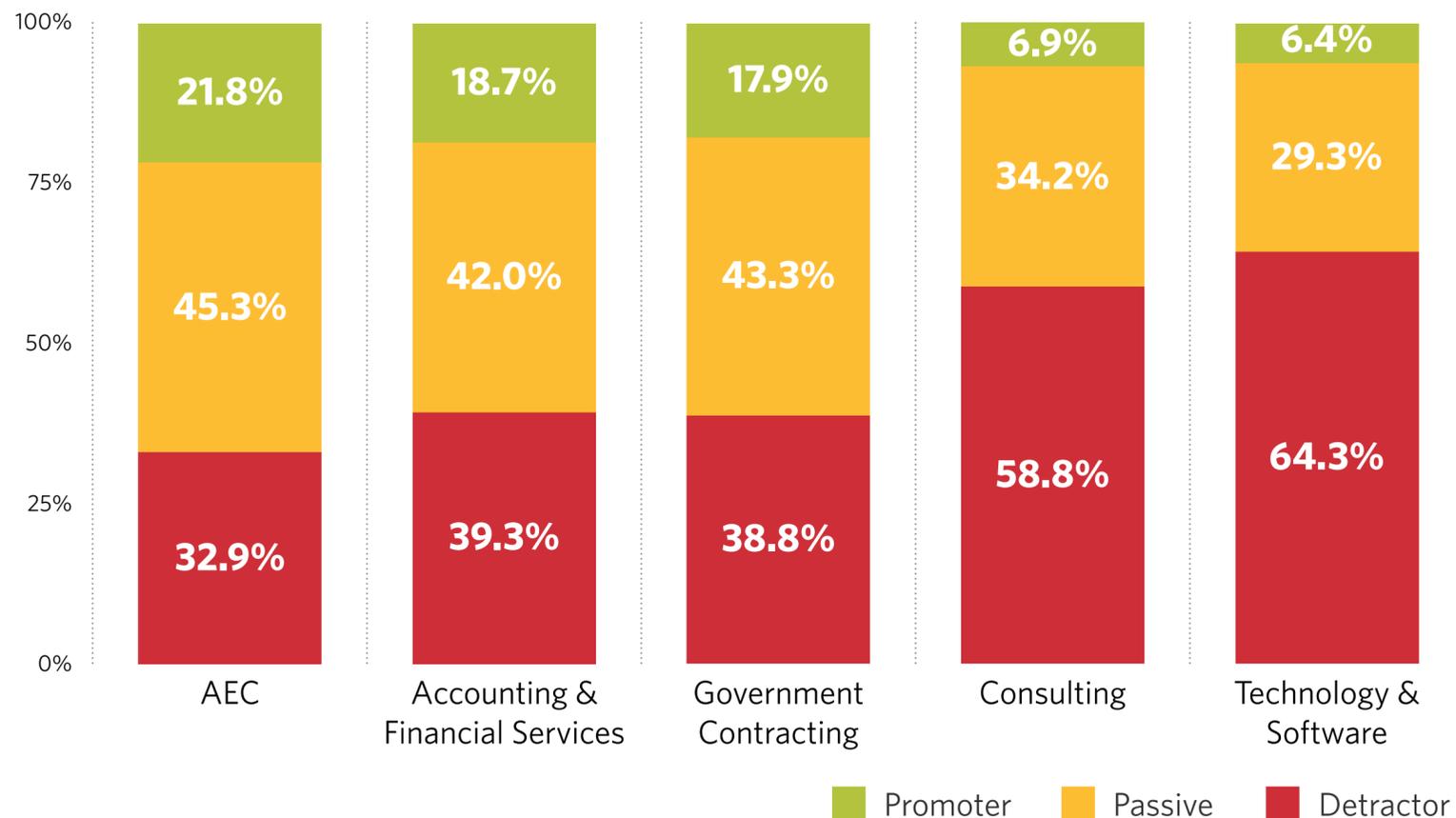
PUT THE DATA TO WORK

Do not assume that your clients understand the full impact of your services. You have to educate them throughout your entire relationship with them.

Also, do you really know how relevant your clients think you are? How does your firm's performance compare with your industry as a whole. You can use these numbers as benchmarks. It is a great way to stay on top of your relevancy, gauge improvement, and adapt when necessary.

TECHNOLOGY & SOFTWARE AND CONSULTING FIRMS ARE FAR BEHIND OTHER INDUSTRIES IN VISIBILITY

How Visible Is Your Professional Service Provider in the Marketplace? (0-10)



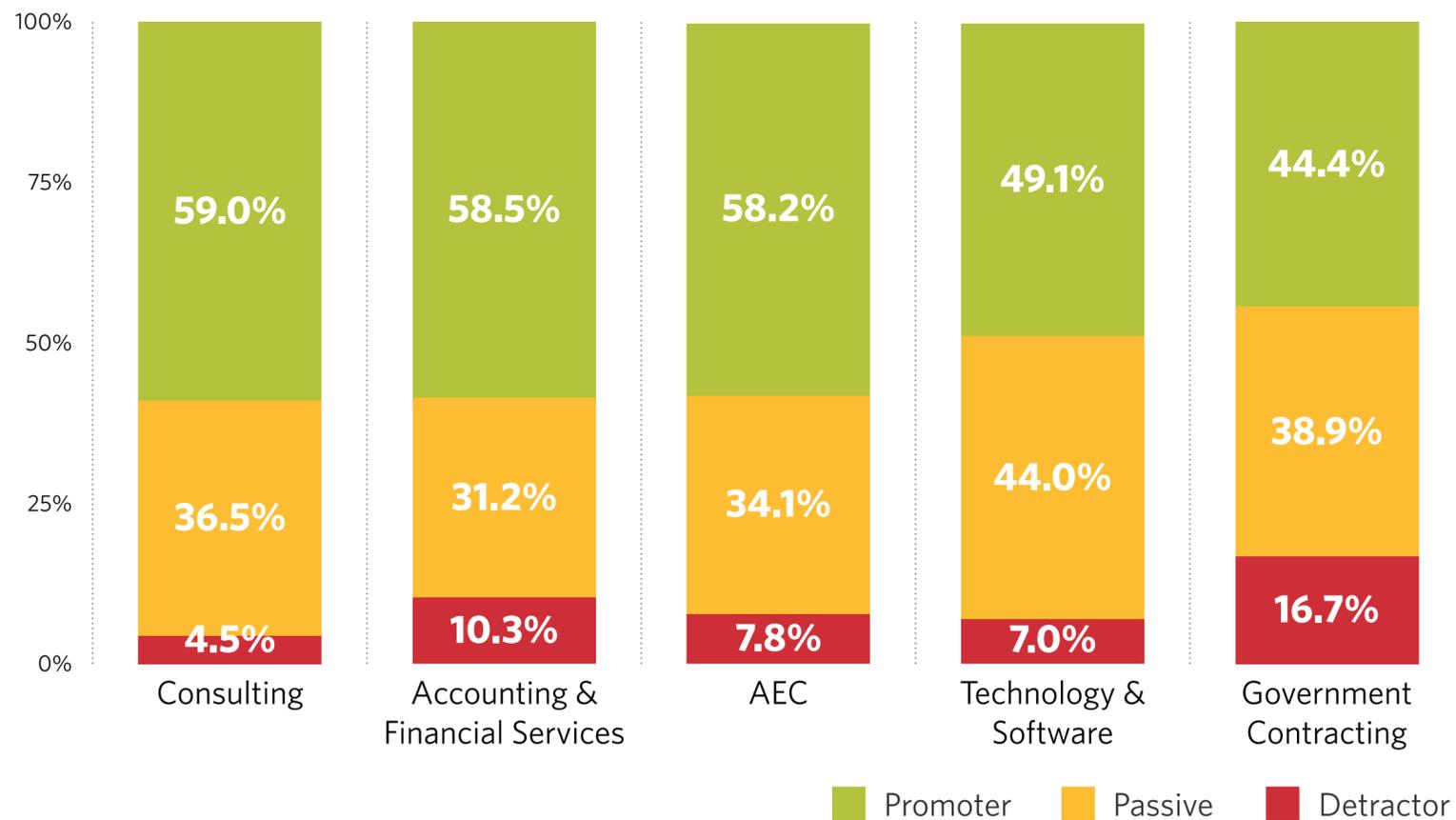
- > While visibility is relatively low across all industries, it is particularly weak in the consulting and technology & software industries, at 6.9% and 6.4% respectively (percent of clients giving a visibility rating of 9 or 10).
- > Much of this lack of visibility may be attributed to the number of new companies and firms entering these two industries every month.

PUT THE DATA TO WORK

To rise above the competitive noise, low-visibility firms have to make raising their profile a priority. One way to raise visibility is to commit to a public relations (PR) and outreach program in which you showcase your firm's subject matter expertise in articles, podcast interviews, webinar presentations, and more. Too many sellers neglect PR, then wonder why they do not have the visibility they want. PR should be part of every integrated marketing plan.

CONSULTING FIRMS RECEIVE THE HIGHEST VALUE RATINGS, WHILE GOVCON FIRMS RECEIVE THE LOWEST

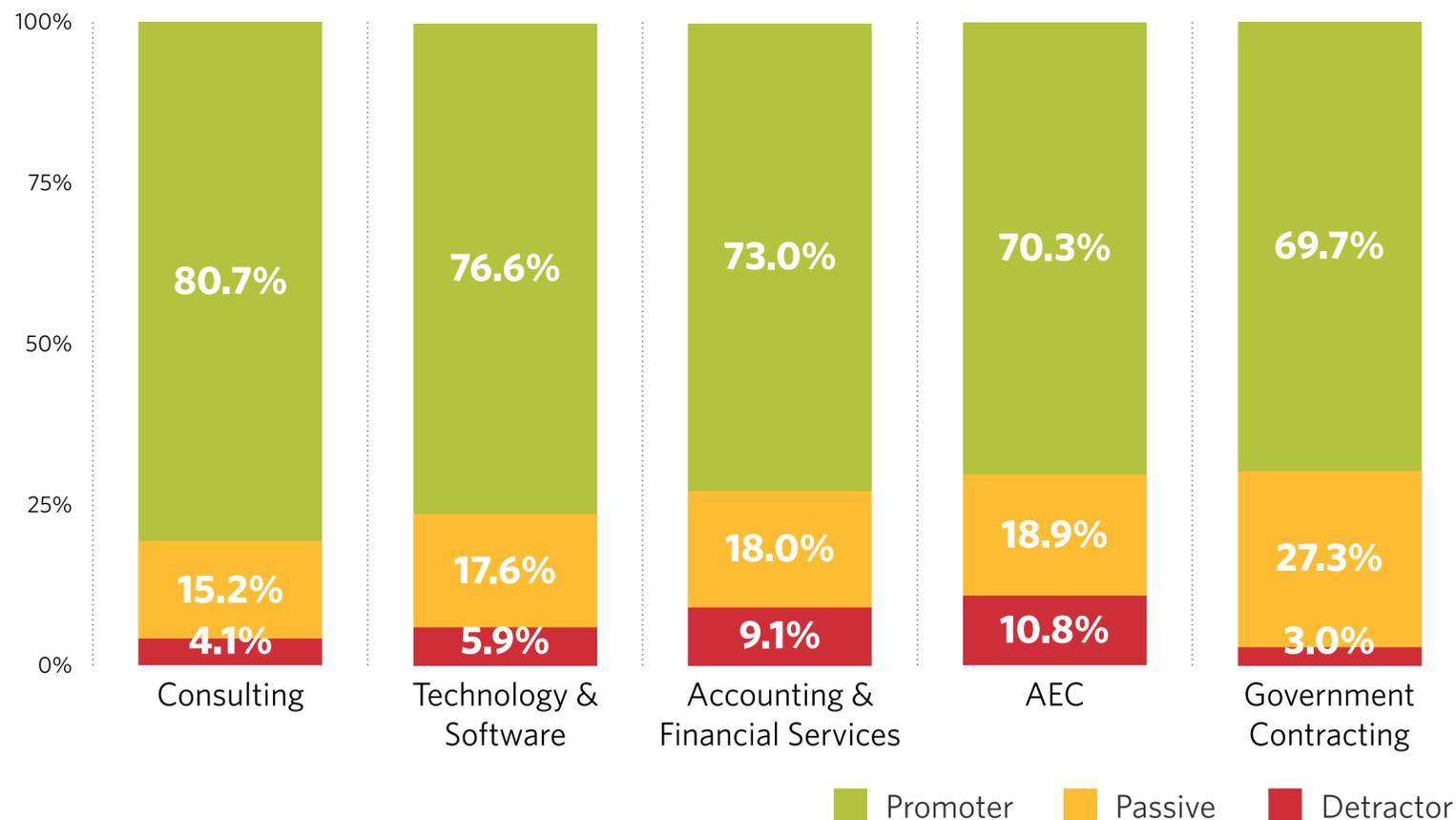
What is the Overall Value that Your Professional Service Provider Offers to Your Firm? (0-10)



- > Consulting, accounting & financial, and architecture, engineering & construction buyers feel they get the most value from their firms compared to the other industries in our study.
- > Government contractors ranked last, with only 44.4% of their buyers giving them the highest rating (9 or 10). This might be a great opportunity to listen to your buyers and make some changes.

CONSULTING CLIENTS ARE THE MOST WILLING TO REFER THEIR FIRMS TO OTHERS

How Likely Are Buyers to Recommend Current Service Provider? (0-10)



- > In the professional services, recommendations and referrals are highly valued. In fact, some firms make referrals the centerpiece of their marketing strategy. This chart shows what percentage of clients in each industry have made, or are willing to make, a referral.
- > Our research shows that the consulting industry is in the strongest position, with more than 80% of clients indicating that they would give a recommendation. Other industries are not far behind, but the architecture, engineering & construction and govcon industries lag the others.

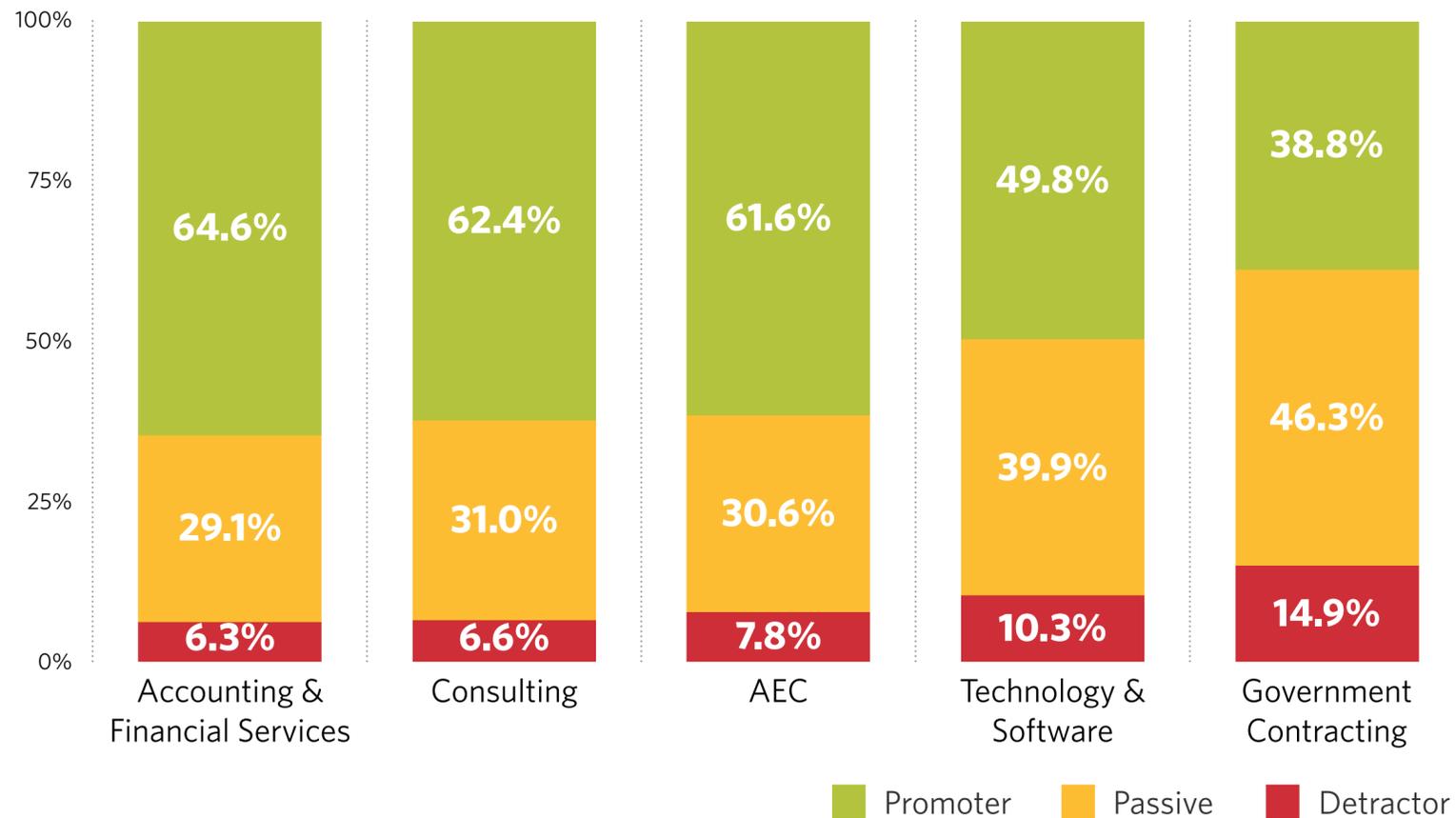
PUT THE DATA TO WORK

Never take a high willingness to recommend for granted. This mindset can change at any time, especially if you haven't worked with a client in a while. At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, for instance, many industries experienced a significant drop in referrals. And over the past ten years, we have noticed a steady decline in the rate of referrals.

To understand how likely your clients are to refer you, you may want to survey your clients on a regular basis. That way, you can adjust your marketing strategy appropriately—and before it's too late.

ACCOUNTING & FINANCIAL SERVICES RECEIVED THE HIGHEST REPUTATION SCORES WHILE GOVCON AND TECHNOLOGY LAGGED

How Good Is Your Professional Service Provider's Reputation? (0-10)



- > When it comes to perceived reputation, we are seeing trends in our research similar to those related to perceived value. Three industries are clustered between 61.6% and 64.6% (accounting & financial services, consulting, and architecture, engineering & construction).
- > After that, there is a noticeable drop in reputation scores to 49.8% and 38.8% (technology & software and govcon, respectively).
- > Govcon received the lowest industry scores in perceived value, client willingness to recommend, and perceived reputation.

PUT THE DATA TO WORK

Warren Buffet once said, "It takes 20 years to build a reputation and five minutes to ruin it."

Reputation matters. Firms with strong positive reputations are seen as providing more value, have more loyal clients, and attract better job candidates. High-reputation firms also often have a higher market value than their peers.

Reputation is perception, not reality—so be proactive and measure it.

CONCLUSION



CONCLUSION



WAS IT THE BEST OF TIMES? OR THE WORST OF TIMES?

It really depends on what industry you are in. In some industries, reputation, value, and relevance are rising. In others, they are in decline. But there are lessons in this study for everyone.

We believe the findings in this research can equip sellers to make adjustments in their marketing programs with confidence—and achieve their goals.

THE DATA TELLS THE STORY

Since our last study two years ago, buyer behaviors have changed, many of which we highlight in our research findings. Ignore them at your own risk.

- > **Existing Relationships Matter.** Many buyers prefer to stay with their current firms. If you understand your buyers' challenges and expectations, you can position your firm to deliver long-term value. Sellers have the opportunity to refocus some of their business development resources on providing a better client experience and higher value deliverables.

- > **Talent Acquisition and Retention Are Still Major Issues.** Buyers of professional services struggle to hire the talent they need, so professional services firms may be able to provide the skills and experience they need to keep things moving forward. Firms need to keep abreast of buyers' skill deficits and fill the gaps wherever their services line up with their clients' needs.
- > **Social Media Is Not Having the Impact it Once Did.** Professional services buyers seem to be looking for answers to their business problems in expert presentations, articles and research—and are relying less on the panoply of social media outlets available to them. LinkedIn was the only social media channel to grow over the last two years.
- > **Visibility Is at an All-Time Low.** Many firms are missing huge opportunities for revenue and growth because they are not on buyers' radars. Visibility can be improved with the right strategy and marketing program.

Whether you are experiencing good times or bad, you have an opportunity to raise your visibility and grow your business by simply listening to your clients.

OTHER WAYS TO USE THIS RESEARCH

In these unprecedented times, trust is at an all-time low. But research like this study can help you establish trust—and build powerful preference for your firm in the marketplace.

USING RESEARCH AS PART OF A CONTENT MARKETING PROGRAM IS ONE OF THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAYS TO ENGAGE YOUR AUDIENCE, DEMONSTRATE YOUR EXPERTISE AND RELEVANCE, AND BUILD CRITICAL TRUST.

When you license and disseminate our research to your audience, you position your firm as a source of authoritative educational content. You become a reliable resource for valuable information. And when your readers are ready to buy services, your firm is likely to be the one they think of first.

HOW LICENSING WORKS

The Hinge Research Institute collaborates with many organizations like yours to license its research studies. You can license this study, including your industry's breakout report, and make it available to your prospective clients. But that's not all. You'll also be able to use data from the research in a wide variety of media—in blog posts, webinars, and social media, for instance—to create a steady stream of new content and spark conversations. The possibilities are endless.

To learn more about licensing this study,
contact the Hinge Research Institute today!

[CONTACT NOW](#)

ABOUT HINGE



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Hinge is the leading research-based branding and marketing firm for professional services.

Our ongoing research into over 30,000 professional services firms and buyers of their services is changing the way firms go to market.

Hinge is made up of three divisions:

Hinge Marketing, our consulting arm, helps businesses build gorgeous visual brands, deliver powerful marketing programs, and achieve exceptional growth.

Hinge Research Institute, our research arm, studies the professional services industry and equips organizations that want to reach and engage this audience with compelling research-based content.

Hinge University, our online learning platform, teaches high-growth, high-visibility strategies and techniques to marketers, business developers, and professionals across the globe.



www.hingemarketing.com

ABOUT HINGE RESEARCH INSTITUTE



The Hinge Research Institute, a division of Hinge, has a two-part mission:

1. To study high-growth professional services firms and their clients.

We collect data and analyze marketplace trends to discover why some firms grow much faster than average and reap greater profits. We share this knowledge so that every professional services firm can prosper.

2. To help organizations engage their professional services audience.

We do this in a variety of ways, such as:

Creating custom research:

Commission a piece of research once and repurpose it many times in blogs, webinars, articles, social media posts, and more.

Licensing existing research:

License our existing research in the form of studies, books, and guides—at a fraction of the price of custom research.

Co-brand a webinar:

Co-present a webinar with one of our research analysts and reach Hinge’s database of over 60,000 professionals. Get engagement like never before.



We invite you to explore our full library of research reports, books, and other publications at: www.hingemarketing.com/library

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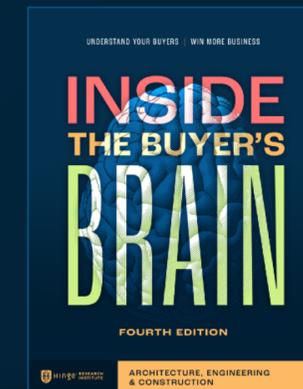
PURCHASE THE STUDY FOR YOUR INDUSTRY

To get detailed information about buyer behavior in **your** industry, be sure to purchase the relevant breakout study. Get critical insights into your prospects and competitors—and practical, actionable advice you can start using today.

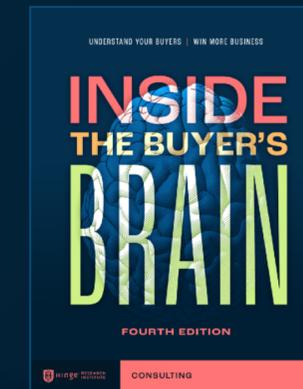
Here are just some of the things you will get:

- › Dozens of illuminating charts and tables
- › Insights into your industry's buyers and sellers of services
- › How to interpret the data—and how to use it to grow your firm
- › How buyer preferences and trends have changed over time
- › And much, much more!

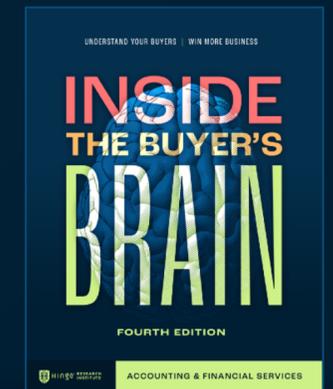
This is the **only** resource where you will find this valuable information. Buy and download your copy today!



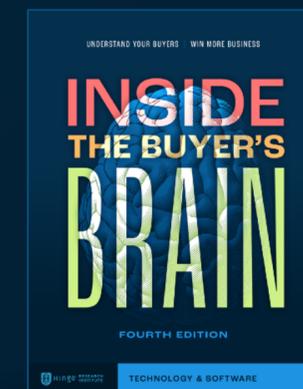
Architecture, Engineering & Construction



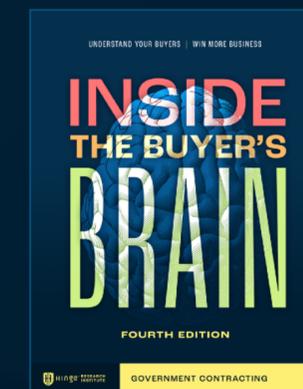
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THANK YOU

