MAY 2012

Content Preferences
SURVEY REPORT

DEMAND**Gen**
REPORT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Business executives are increasingly wary of sales messaging, as *The Content Preferences Survey,* conducted by *DemandGen Report,* found that 75% of respondents encourage solution providers creating content to **"curb the sales messaging."** Research findings indicate a need for marketers to reevaluate their content strategies to ensure that prospects understand the value for their business and objectives, rather than resorting to obtrusive, ineffective sales-speak.

To offer recommendations to solution providers creating content, 55% of respondents selected "focus less on product specifications and more on value." The survey also underscored the importance of "trustworthy" content. When asked how their content consumption habits have changed over the last year, 60% of respondents said they place a **higher emphasis on the trustworthiness of the source** creating content.

Despite their busy schedules, business executives take time to share content they find valuable. While email is a primary sharing mechanism, the survey found that more than half **(53%) of executives share content using LinkedIn.**

The white paper still reigns supreme, crowning the list of content types that buyers use to research a business topic or solution at 88%. But more visual formats, such as **webinars (72%)**; **videos (44%)**; and **infographics (38%)** also were cited as emerging formats for research.

The findings also support the need to ungate top-of-funnel content offers such as infographics; however, buyers expect they'll have to share their basic information for certain types of content. A majority (77%) of respondents will share basic information (name, company and email) to access a white paper. Conversely, for resources that are more informal and engaging, executives expect immediate access. Nearly three quarters (74%) of respondents expect to access infographics without registration, while 67% expect to access videos without registration.

The Content Preferences Survey report will guide B2B organizations looking to kick off a new content marketing strategy or improve upon an existing strategy, to support progression of the buyer's journey and enhance demand generation initiatives. Some key topics addressed in the survey include:

- Preferred content formats for potential purchase research
- The emergence of mobilized content
- Time business executives are willing to spend with various content formats

75% of respondents encourage solution providers creating content to "curb the sales messaging."
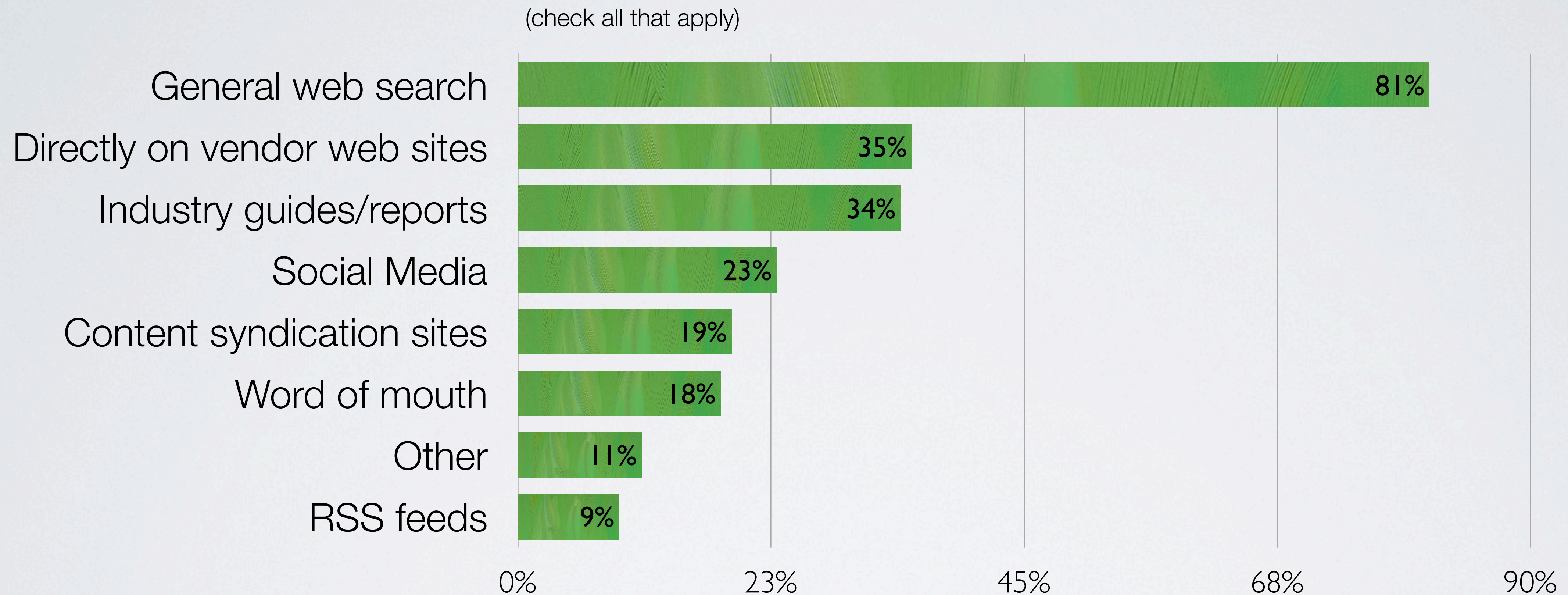
SURVEY RESPONDENT DETAILS

For ***The Content Preferences Survey***, *DemandGen Report* received responses from about 120 business executives across all revenue streams and in a variety of industry segments, during March and April 2012. The survey, developed to understand the research patterns and content preferences of today's B2B buyer, includes input from business executives in Tech/Enterprise; Telecom; Financial Services; Media/Internet; and Manufacturing. Results were highlighted during a presentation at DemandGen Report's **B2B Content2Conversion Conference**, April 24 in New York City. Click here to access the archived video of the survey recap session.

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Where do you typically begin your search for content addressing business topics and challenges?

(check all that apply)

Category	Percentage
General web search	81%
Directly on vendor web sites	35%
Industry guides/reports	34%
Social Media	23%
Content syndication sites	19%
Word of mouth	18%
Other	11%
RSS feeds	9%

0%   23%   45%   68%   90%

Numbers are approximated and may not total exactly 100%.

Which of the following types of online content have you utilized to research a business topic or potential business solution over the past year?

(check all that apply)

Content type	Percentage
White paper	88%
Webinar	73%
Case study	67%
Blog posts	63%
E-book	51%
Video	44%
Infographic	38%
Interactive presentation	28%
Podcast	18%

0%   23%   45%   68%   90%
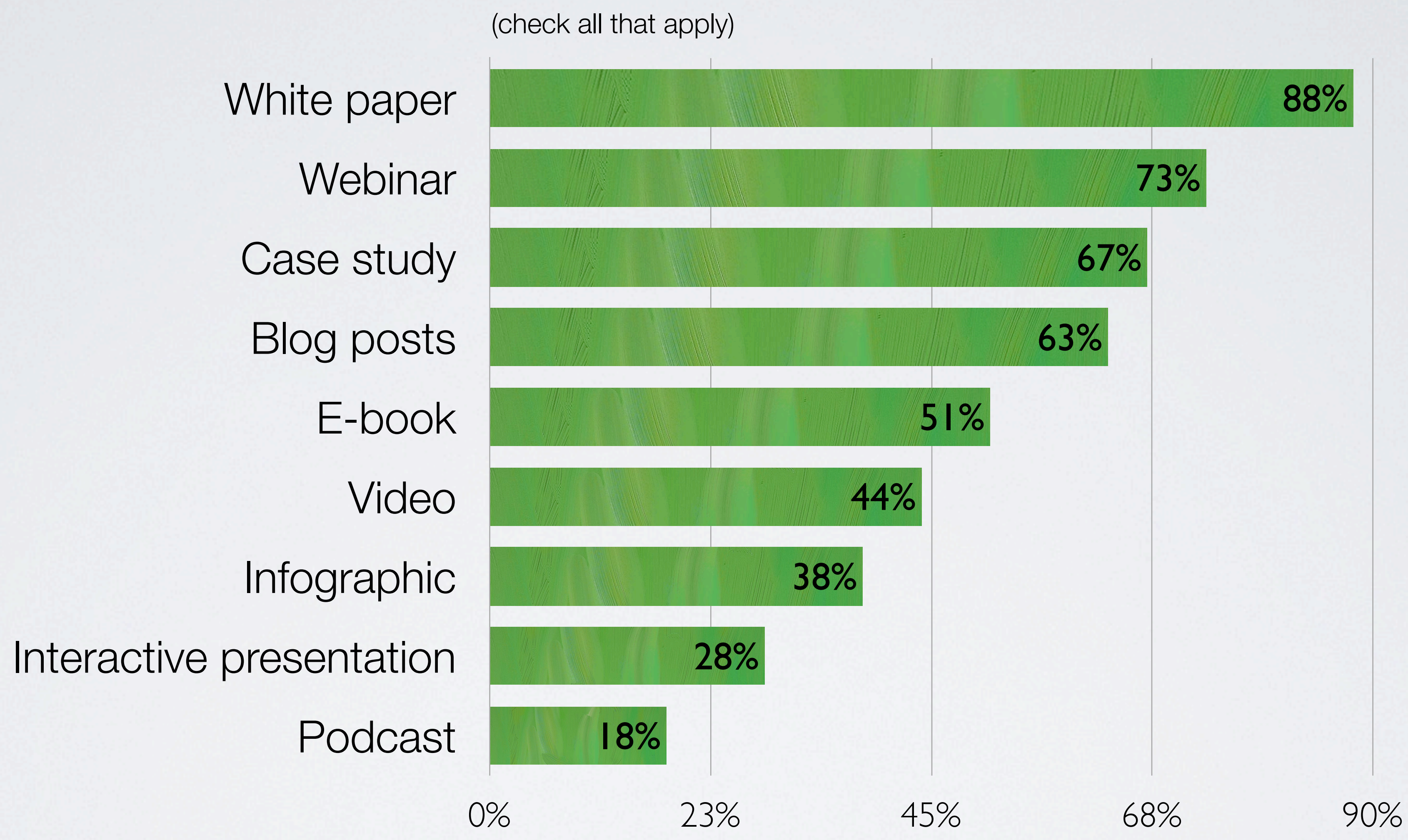
What do you find to be the most valuable online content formats when you are researching a business challenge or looking at potential solutions?

(Respondents had the option to rank each content option)

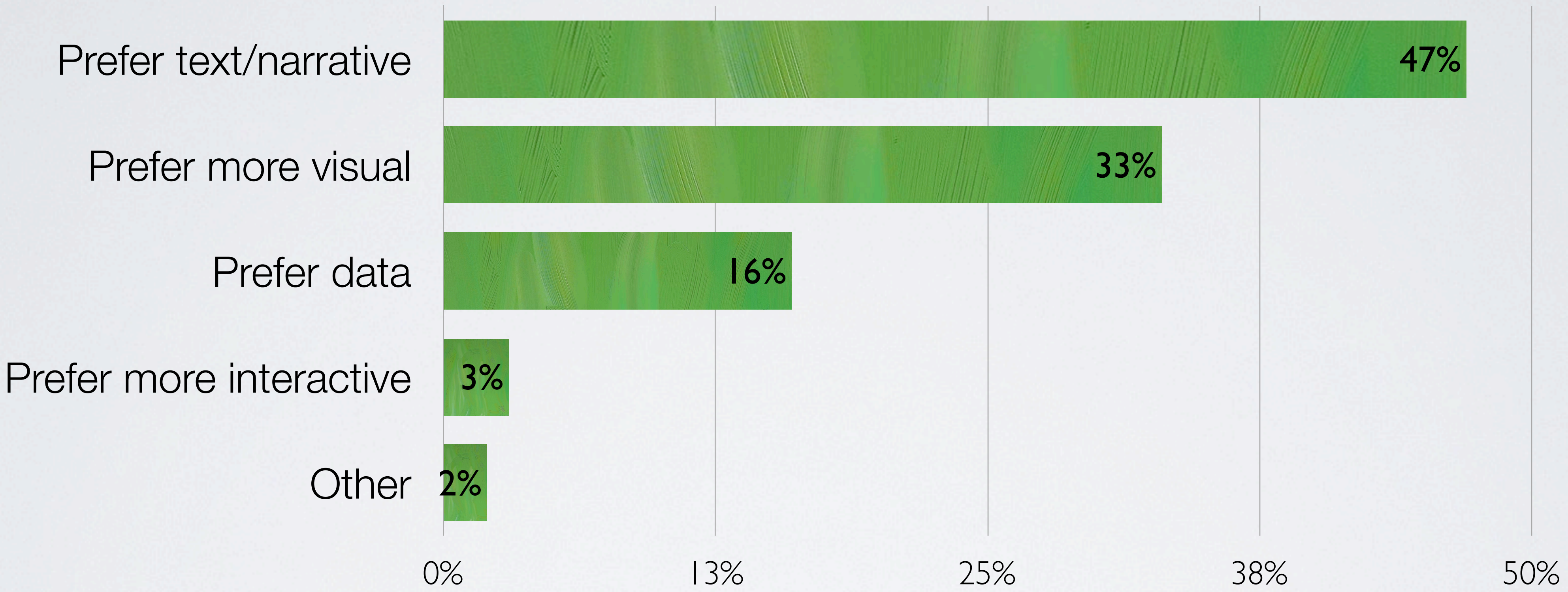|	Most Valuable	Somewhat Valuable	Least Valuable
White paper	**30%**	18%	6%
E-book	**23%**	17%	11%
Webinar	21%	**24%**	8%
Podcast	14%	**21%**	6%
Infographic	14%	**23%**	13%
Case study	**26%**	15%	13%
Video	20%	**24%**	6%
Interactive presentation	**21%**	19%	7%
Blog posts	**22%**	21%	9%

What devices do you use, and how often, to access business-related content?

(please rate all that apply)

	Rarely	Frequently	More Frequently
Desktop computer	**30%**	7%	29%
Laptop computer	3%	11%	**84%**
Mobile phone	27%	32%	**38%**
Tablet	20%	**26%**	23%

How would you describe your typical content consumption preferences?

(please pick top choice)

Category	Percentage
Prefer text/narrative	47%
Prefer more visual	33%
Prefer data	16%
Prefer more interactive	3%
Other	2%

0%　　13%　　25%　　38%　　50%

Numbers are approximated and may not total exactly 100%.

How have your content consumption habits changed over the past year?

(please check all that apply)

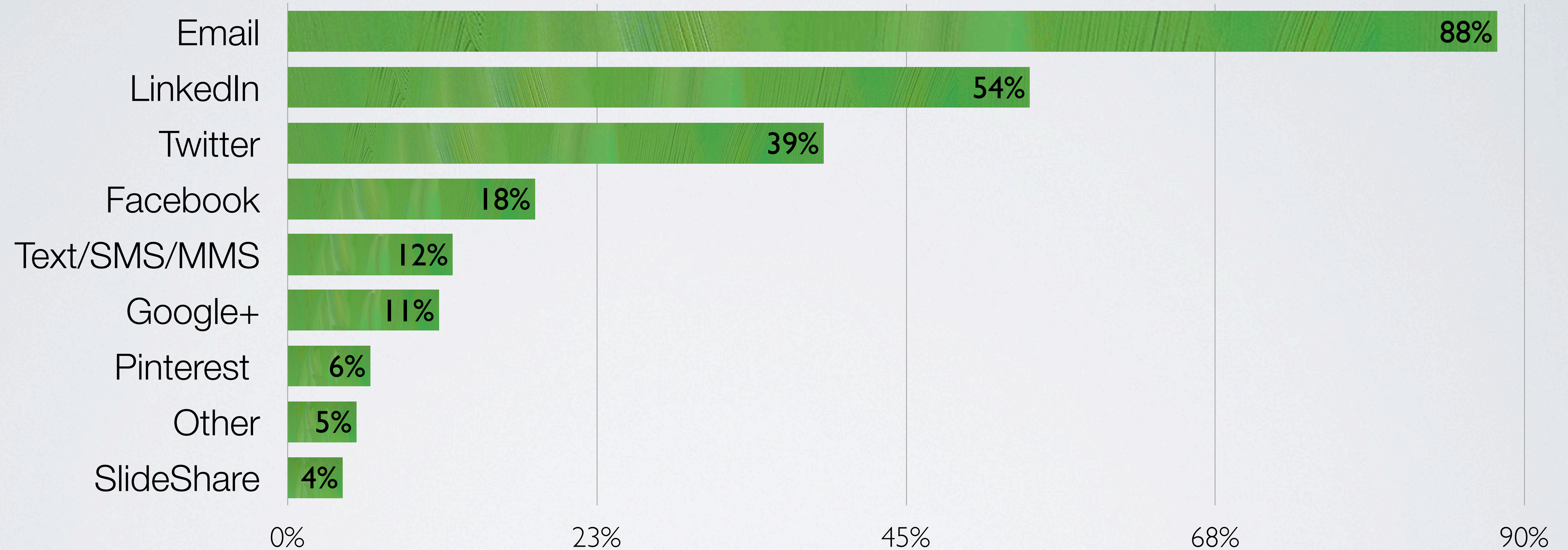| Response	Percentage
I am finding and utilizing more content on the web	68%
I place a higher emphasis on the trustworthiness of the source	60%
I find myself overwhelmed by the amount of content available	39%
I have less time to devote to reading/research	35%
I prefer mobile-optimized content (for access on a tablet or mobile device)	34%
I am willing to consider vendor-created content as trustworthy	32%
I prefer interactive (audio/video) content I can access on demand	28%
I get more of my content through social networks or recommendations	25%

0%   18%   35%   53%   70%

I am most likely to share the following types of content with my colleagues:

(please check all that apply)

Content type	Percentage
White paper	70%
Case study	56%
Blog posts	48%
Webinar	40%
Video	39%
E-book	37%
Infographic	37%
Interactive presentation	21%
Podcast	10%
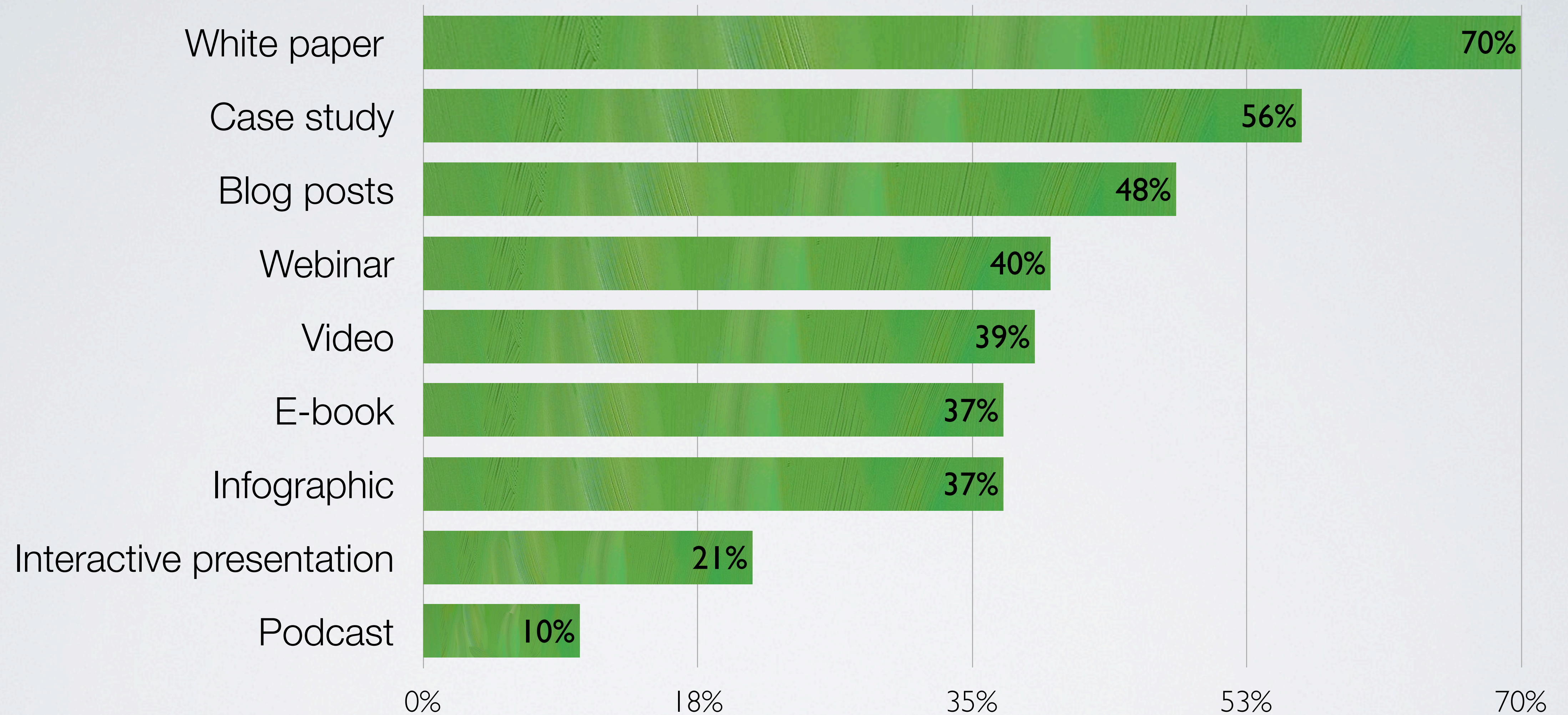
I share content most frequently using:

Platform	Percentage
Email	88%
LinkedIn	54%
Twitter	39%
Facebook	18%
Text/SMS/MMS	12%
Google+	11%
Pinterest	6%
Other	5%
SlideShare	4%

0%   23%   45%   68%   90%

How would you like to see vendor content delivered/structured on their web sites so that content is easy to navigate and most useful for you?
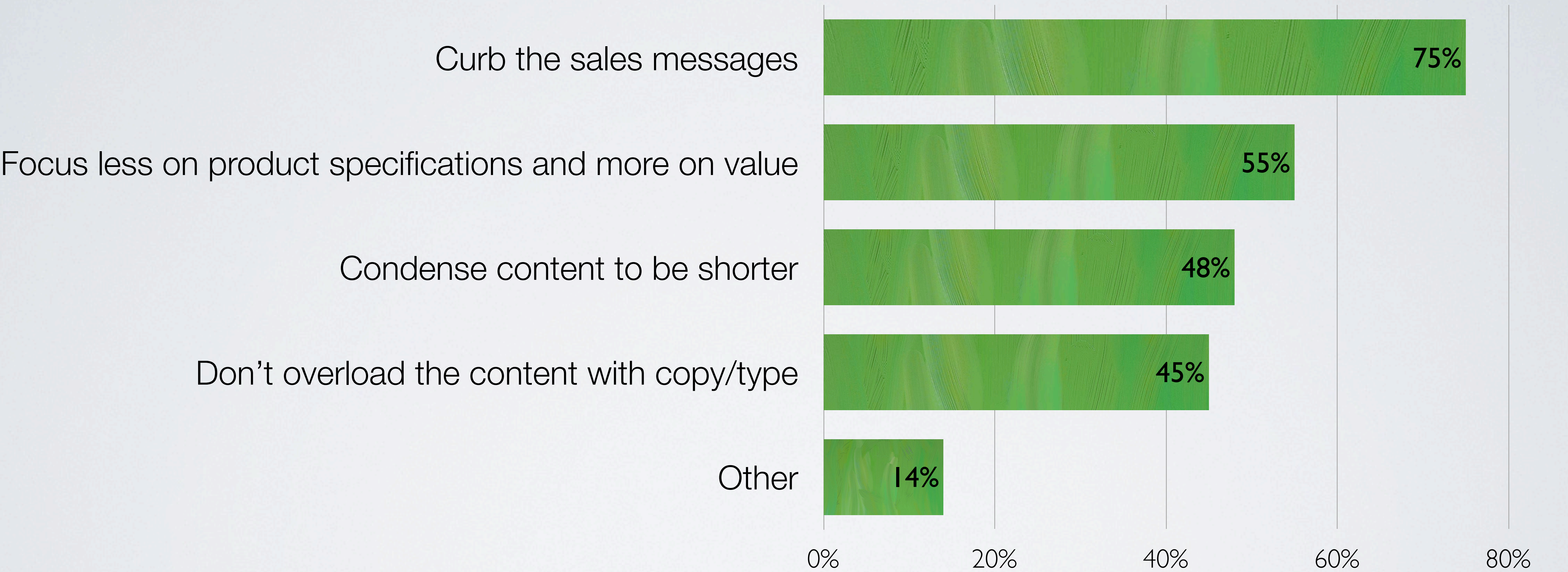
(please check all that apply)

By business role — 46%
By industry — 42%
By vertical — 33%
All of the above — 31%
By location — 3%

0% 13% 25% 38% 50%
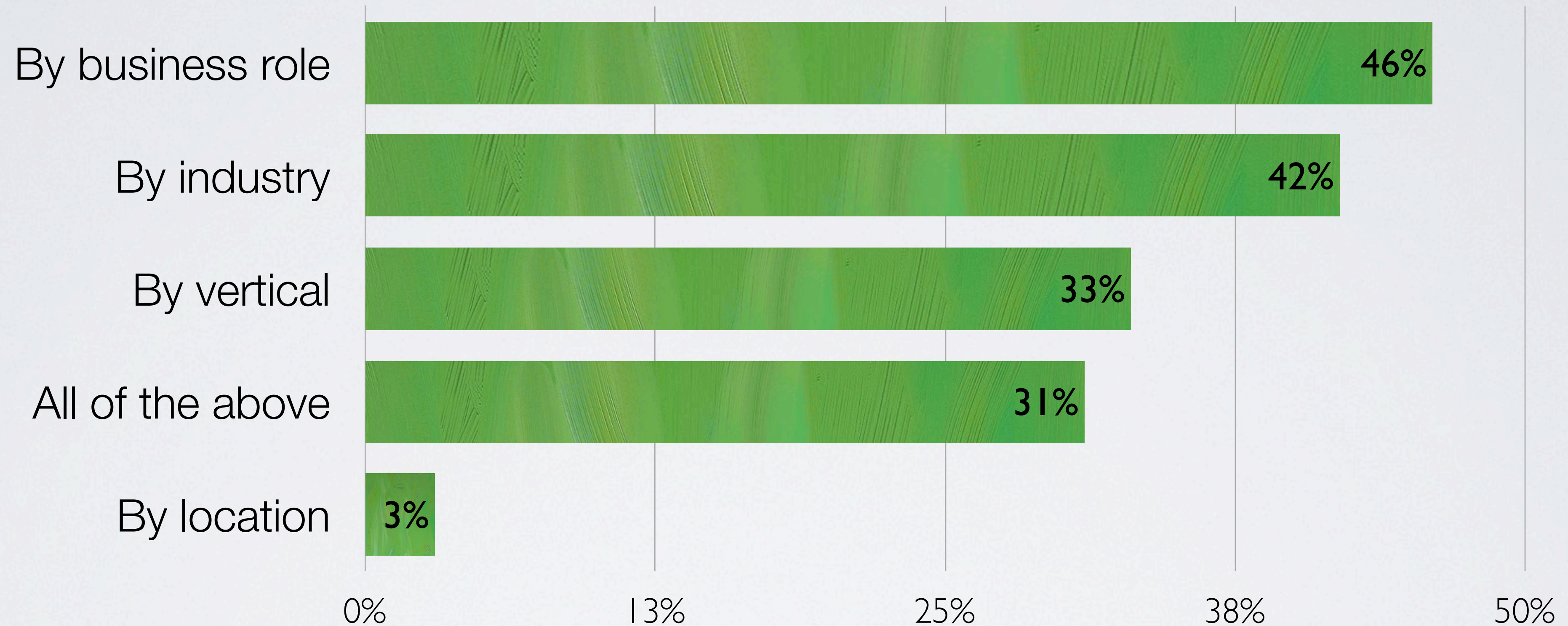
How much time do you typically spend reviewing content in the following formats?
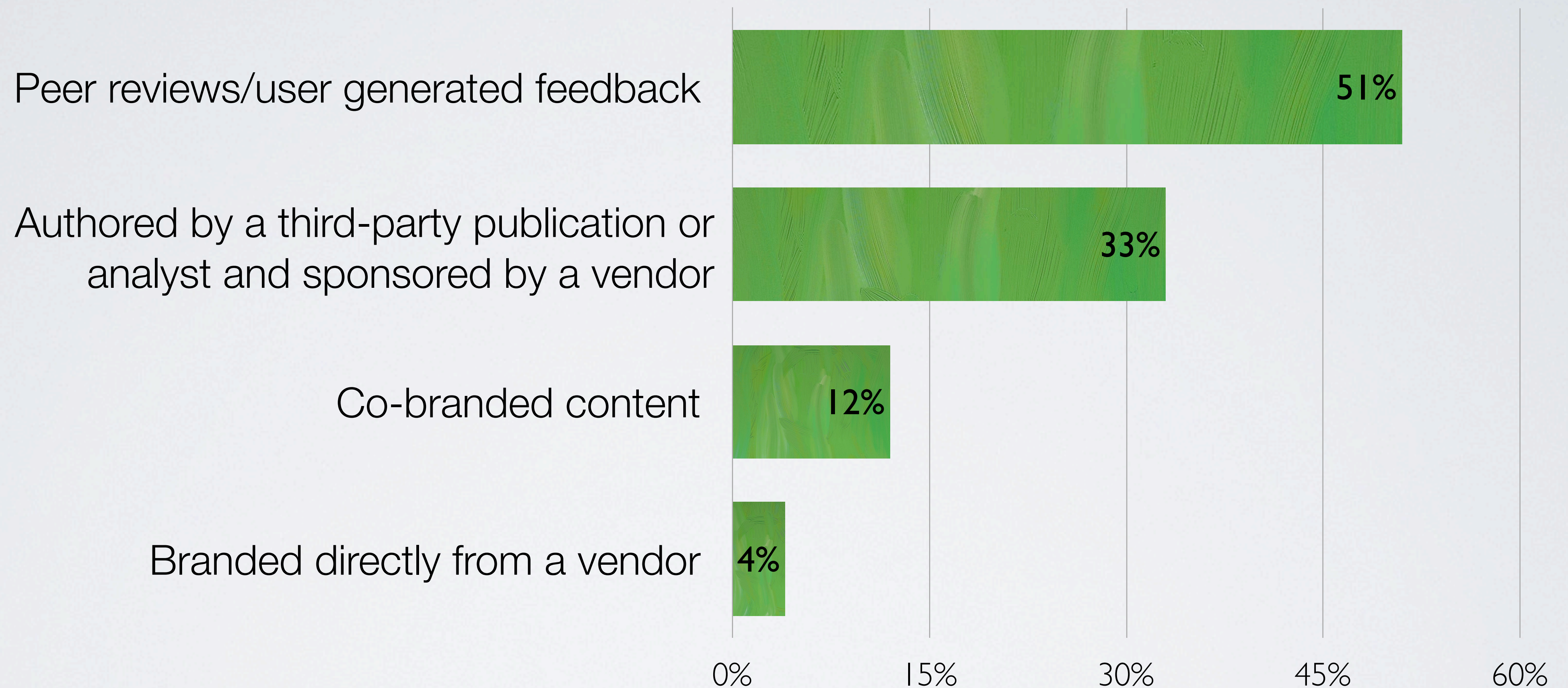
(please check all that apply)

	Less than 5 minutes	Between 5 and 10 minutes	Between 10 and 20 minutes	Between 20 and 30 minutes	Between 30 and 60 minutes	More than an hour
White paper	9%	26%	**30%**	13%	6%	3%
E-book	14%	**21%**	17%	12%	11%	8%
Webinar	9%	7%	16%	25%	**36%**	2%
Podcast	**16%**	**16%**	12%	9%	7%	0%
Infographic	**41%**	25%	11%	2%	1%	0%
Case study	13%	31%	**30%**	12%	10%	1%
Video	31%	**40%**	13%	8%	2%	0%
Interactive presentation	11%	**24%**	19%	14%	10%	1%
Blog posts	30%	**35%**	19%	1%	3%	2%

What general recommendations would you make to solution providers who are creating content resources about business issues?

(please check all that apply)

Recommendation	Percentage
Curb the sales messages	75%
Focus less on product specifications and more on value	55%
Condense content to be shorter	48%
Don't overload the content with copy/type	45%
Other	14%

Which of the following types of content do you give more credence to?

Peer reviews/user generated feedback — **51%**

Authored by a third-party publication or analyst and sponsored by a vendor — **33%**

Co-branded content — **12%**

Branded directly from a vendor — **4%**

0% — 15% — 30% — 45% — 60%

ABOUT DEMANDGEN REPORT

DemandGen Report (DGR) is a targeted e-media publication spotlighting the strategies and solutions that help Business-to-Business (B2B) companies better align sales, marketing and disparate teams to support growth and drive revenue. DGR content and news coverage focuses on the sales and marketing automation tools that enable companies to better measure and manage multichannel demand generation efforts. DemandGen Report is the only information source directly focused on this rapidly emerging business discipline.

www.demandgenreport.com