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The Buying Group Content Engagement Guide

Understanding the internal buying roles and what content motivates their purchasing decisions

The New **Buying Network**

For years, B2B marketers have built campaigns around job titles—the CFO, the IT Director, the HR Manager. But job titles only tell you who someone is, not the role they play in a purchasing decision.

Today's B2B purchases are made by buying networks: complex ecosystems of people both inside and outside the organization who collectively shape the decision.

According to Forrester research, the average enterprise purchase now involves 13 internal stakeholders and nine external influencers, including consultants, analysts, partners, peers, and increasingly, AI-powered tools that influence research and recommendations. In this environment, consensus—not a single decision-maker—is what ultimately moves a deal forward.

At the center of every buying network is the buying group: the internal stakeholders responsible for evaluating solutions, building alignment, and making the final purchase decision. While individuals may hold vastly different job titles across organizations, they typically contribute through one of five buying group roles, each with distinct motivations, priorities, questions, and success criteria.

This distinction is critical. A Chief Operating Officer may act as the Economic Buyer in one purchase and the Champion in another. A Director of Operations may serve as the primary User, while an IT Architect acts as an Influencer focused on technical validation. Understanding buying group roles rather than job titles enables marketers to create content that addresses the needs of every stakeholder involved in reaching consensus.

The most effective marketing strategies don't just target one persona but engage the entire buying network. By understanding the motivations, information needs, and preferred content of each buying group role, marketers can orchestrate more relevant experiences, build alignment across stakeholders, and accelerate opportunities from initial interest to closed business.



Get To Know **The Players and Their Roles**



Champion

Primary Concern:
Business
Value

Questions Asked:

- Will the solution meet our needs?
- Does it help with one of our key initiatives?



Decision-Maker

Primary Concern:
ROI

Questions Asked:

- Will the solution meet our needs?
- Does it help with one of our key initiatives?



Influencer

Primary Concern:
Performance

Questions Asked:

- Is it stable, reliable, and efficient?
- How will it perform?



User

Primary Concern:
Customer
Experience

Questions Asked:

- Will it help me do my job better?
- Will it enable me to achieve my goals?



Ratifier

Primary Concern:
Total Cost of
Ownership

Questions Asked:

- What are the alternatives?
- Can we get it cheaper?

Champion: The Internal Advocate

Primary Goal

Drive change, build consensus, and convince the organization that solving the problem is worth the investment.

Questions They're Asking

- Is this the right solution?
- Can I build a business case?
- How do I convince everyone else?
- Will this help achieve our strategic goals?

Key Insight

Champions participate throughout the buying process and rely heavily on information from vendors and trusted sales relationships to build confidence.

Best Content by Buying Stage

Stage	Content	Why It Works
Awareness	Industry research, thought leadership, benchmark reports, blogs	Helps champions recognize the problem and begin advocating for change
Consideration	Buying guides, webinars, analyst reports, solution overviews	Gives them the language and evidence to educate peers
Evaluation	Customer stories, implementation guides, ROI calculators	Helps them justify the investment internally
Decision	Executive presentations, business case templates, implementation roadmaps	Enables them to "sell" the purchase to leadership
Expansion	Success plans, adoption guides, executive business reviews	Reinforces the champion's credibility and supports future growth

The Bottom Line: Champions need shareable content that helps them influence the rest of the buying group

Decision-Maker: The Business Leader

Primary Goal

Reduce business risk while maximizing strategic value.

What They're Looking For

- ROI
- Strategic Alignment
- Vendor Credibility

Key Insight

Decision-makers become most active during solution selection and focus heavily on business value, financial outcomes, and trusted customer references.

Best Content by Buying Stage

Stage	Content	Why It Works
Awareness	Executive thought leadership, market research, analyst reports, industry benchmark reports	Helps them understand the business impact and urgency for change
Consideration	Executive webinars, business value briefs, solution overviews, competitive landscape reports	Connects potential solutions to strategic business priorities
Evaluation	ROI calculators, customer case studies, executive summaries, total cost of ownership (TCO) analyses	Demonstrates financial value and reduces investment risk
Decision	Business cases, executive presentations, customer references	Builds confidence to secure executive approval
Expansion	Executive business reviews, success dashboards, growth plans	Reinforces value and supports future investment

The Bottom Line: Decision-makers care about outcomes, not features

Influencer: The Trusted Advisor

Primary Goal

Validate that the solution meets technical, operational, or functional requirements.

What They’re Looking For

- Independent Validation
- Ease of Implementation
- Product Differentiation

Key Insight

Influencers often shape the buying decision before sales is ever involved, relying on external advice from analysts, peers, and industry experts.

Best Content by Buying Stage

Stage	Content	Why It Works
Awareness	Industry blogs, PR coverage, analyst research, podcasts	Establishes credibility through trusted third-party voices
Consideration	Product comparisons, technical webinars, buying guides	Helps evaluate technical fit and differentiate solutions
Evaluation	Product documentation, security resources, integration guides	Provides the technical information needed to validate the solution
Decision	Customer references, analyst evaluations, implementation plans	Confirms the solution meets technical and operational requirements
Expansion	Product updates, communities, advanced webinars	Encourages continued engagement and product advocacy

The Bottom Line: Build visibility where they already seek trusted advice.

User: The Daily Practioner

Primary Goal

Determine whether the solution will improve productivity and simplify daily work.

Questions They're Asking

- Will this make my job easier?
- Is it easy to learn?
- How quickly can I see value?
- Will my team actually use it?

Key Insight

Users become especially important during evaluation and after purchase because their feedback often influences both the buying decision and long-term adoption.

Best Content by Buying Stage

Stage	Content	Why It Works
Awareness	Educational blogs, videos, industry tips, problem-focused content	Helps them recognize challenges and opportunities for improvement
Consideration	Product tours, demos, feature overviews	Shows how the solution improves day-to-day work
Evaluation	Hands-on demonstrations, tutorials, free trials, use case guides	Builds confidence through hands-on experience
Decision	Onboarding previews, training plans, customer stories	Demonstrates how quickly users can achieve success
Expansion	Best practice guides, certifications, customer communities	Drives adoption, deeper engagement, and long-term product value

The Bottom Line: Users become your biggest advocates when they experience value quickly.

Ratifier: The Risk Manager

Primary Goal

Ensure the purchase meets financial, legal, and organizational requirements.

What They Need

- Low Risk
- Predictable Pricing
- Contract Clarity
- Procurement Confidence

Key Insight

Ratifiers are often in procurement, finance, or legal. They typically engage late in the buying process but can influence discussions earlier by establishing cost and compliance expectations.

Best Content by Buying Stage

Stage	Content	Why It Works
Awareness	Vendor credentials, compliance certifications, corporate information	Establishes trust and organizational credibility
Consideration	Procurement FAQs, security documentation, privacy policies	Addresses common risk and procurement concerns early
Evaluation	Pricing guides, SLAs, implementation plans, legal documentation	Provides transparency needed for due diligence
Decision	Contract summaries, procurement checklists, customer references	Simplifies approval and purchasing decisions by removing uncertainty
Expansion	Renewal plans, support metrics, governance reviews	Reinforces confidence and supports long-term partnerships

The Bottom Line: Ratifiers don’t need more marketing; they need fewer unanswered questions.

Bringing It All Together

One of the biggest mistakes marketers make is creating a single asset and expecting it to persuade an entire buying group. In reality, every stakeholder evaluates a purchase through a different lens.

Buying Role	Primary Question	Content That Resonates
Champion	How do I build support?	Research, business cases, webinars, executive decks
Decision-Maker	Is this worth the investment?	ROI studies, customer stories, analyst reports
Influencer	Is this credible and technically sound?	Comparisons, PR, reviews, technical documentation
User	Will this improve my work?	Demos, tutorials, product tours, how-to guides
Ratifier	Is this a smart, low-risk purchase?	Pricing, compliance, procurement resources

A New Way to Think About Content

Instead of planning one campaign around a single persona, think of every major asset as supporting a buying group. For example:

Research Report • Champion: Uses it to build urgency • Decision-Maker: Looks for business impact and benchmarks • Influencer: Evaluates credibility and market trends	Webinar • Champion: Learns how to lead internal conversations • User: Understands day-to-day value • Influencer: Assesses the organization's expertise	Case Study • Decision-Maker: Validates ROI • Champion: Shares success with peers • Ratifier: Confirms implementation and risk
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