

**Profiting
from
Thought
Leadership**

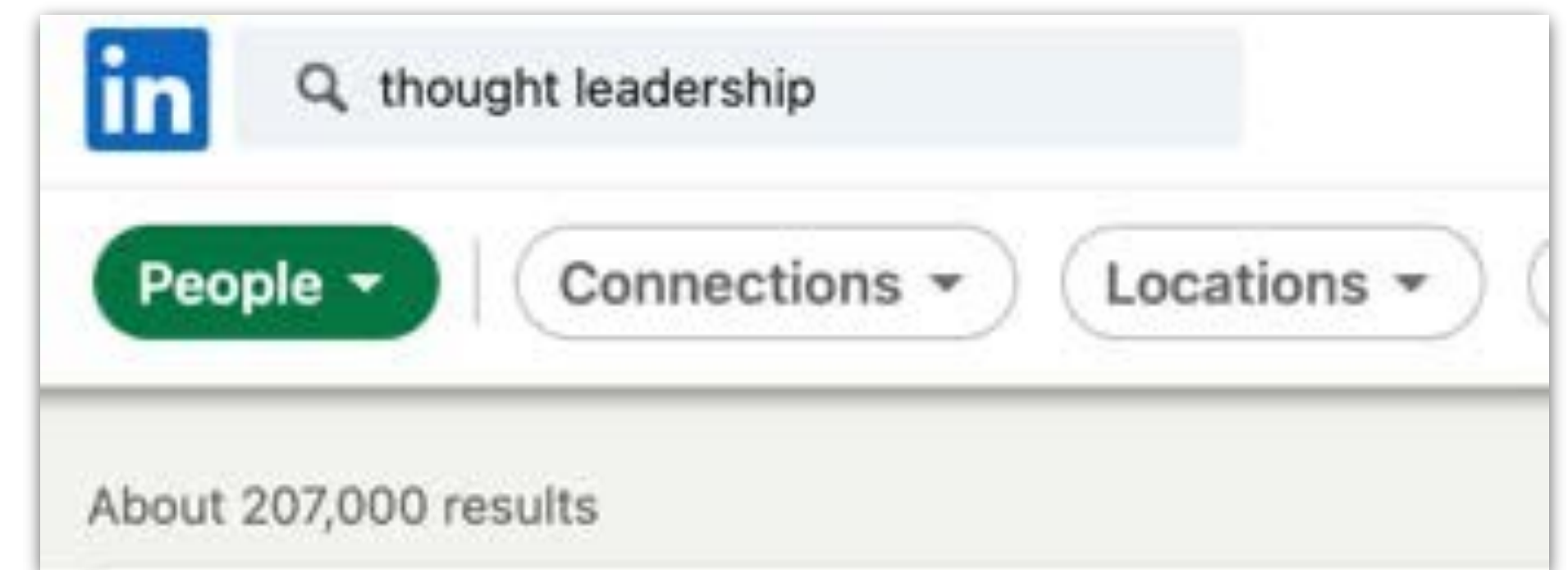
JULY 21, 2022

A Peek at our 2022 Thought Leadership Research

PART 1 — WHY CUSTOMERS NEED THOUGHT LEADERSHIP AND WHAT REALLY MOVES THEM

Thought leadership has become crucial for B2B firms to attract customers

- ▶ Building unique expertise to differentiate commodity services (consulting, IT services, accounting, etc.)
- ▶ Differentiating commodity products (tech, financial, etc.)



Your customers need it and want to see it

69% State thought leadership is extremely or very important

74% Say it's become more important in last five years



- Primary reason: increasing digitization of their industry
- The higher-ranking the executive, the more important it is

What you'll learn today

- ▶ What Executives Think About Thought Leadership
 - ▶ What Your Clients and Prospects Really Want...
 - ▶ About the Conference
- 
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What Executives Think About Thought Leadership

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About the research team



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Partner



Comprehensive thought leadership consulting for B2B and professional services firms.



Thought leadership development and lead generation for professional services and B2B SaaS firms.

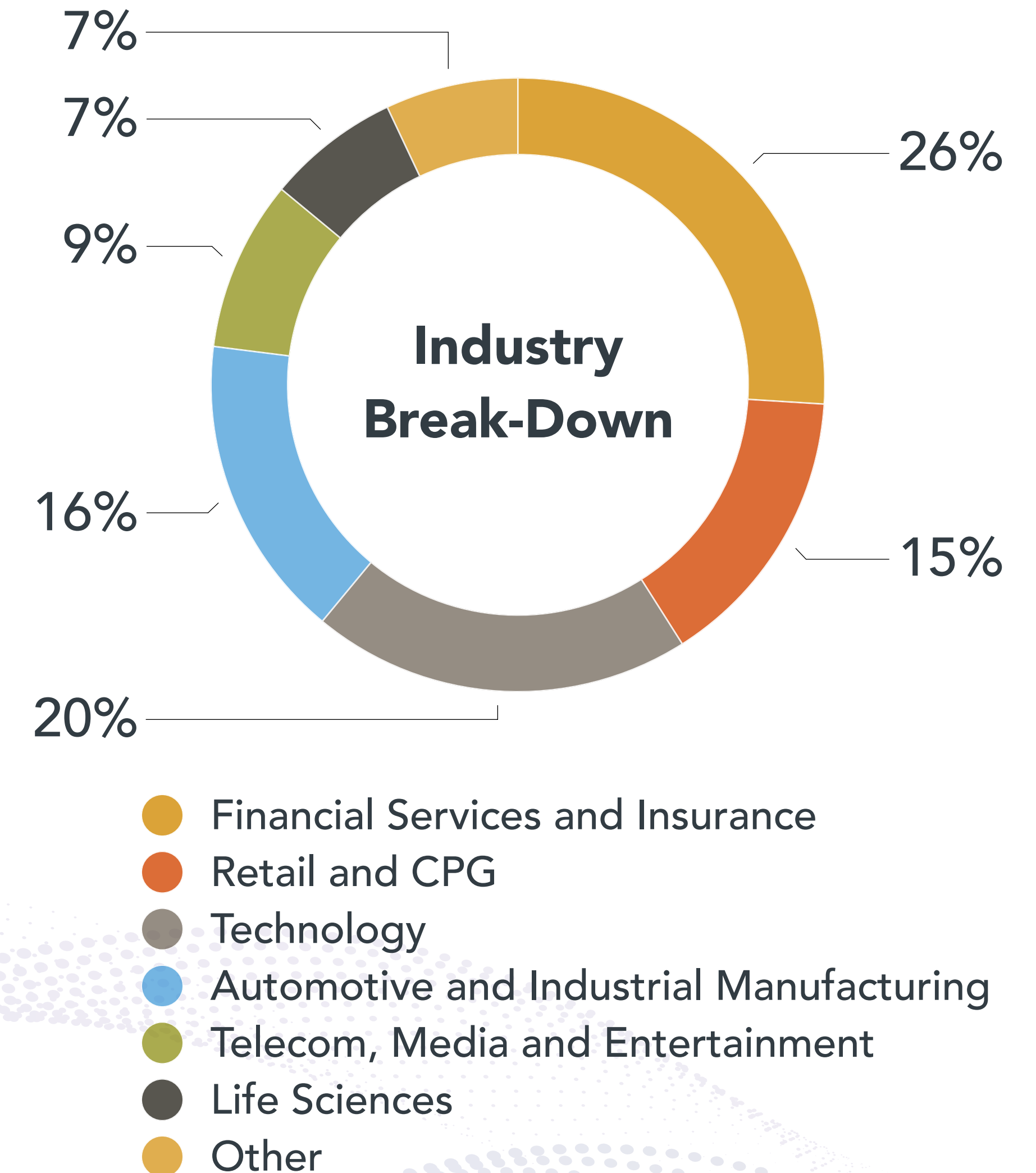
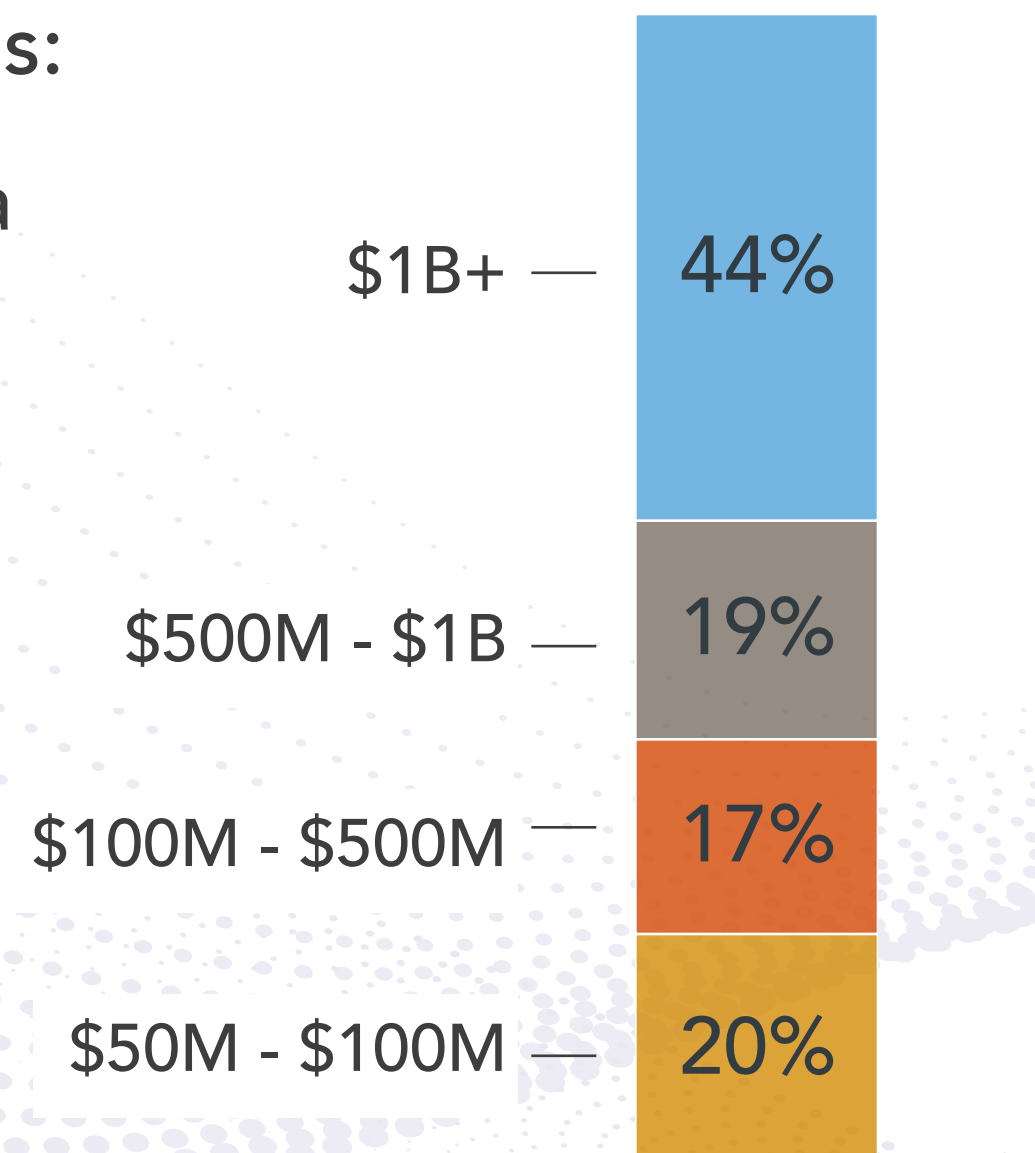


Global research and analytics firm.

Demographics: Who took this survey?

- ▶ 152 “consumers” of thought leadership completed the entire survey.
 - 3,500+ executives answered a handful of “omnibus” questions.
- ▶ Headquarters Locations:
 - 50% North America
 - 18% Europe
 - 30% Asia-Pacific
 - 2% Other

Revenue Break-Down

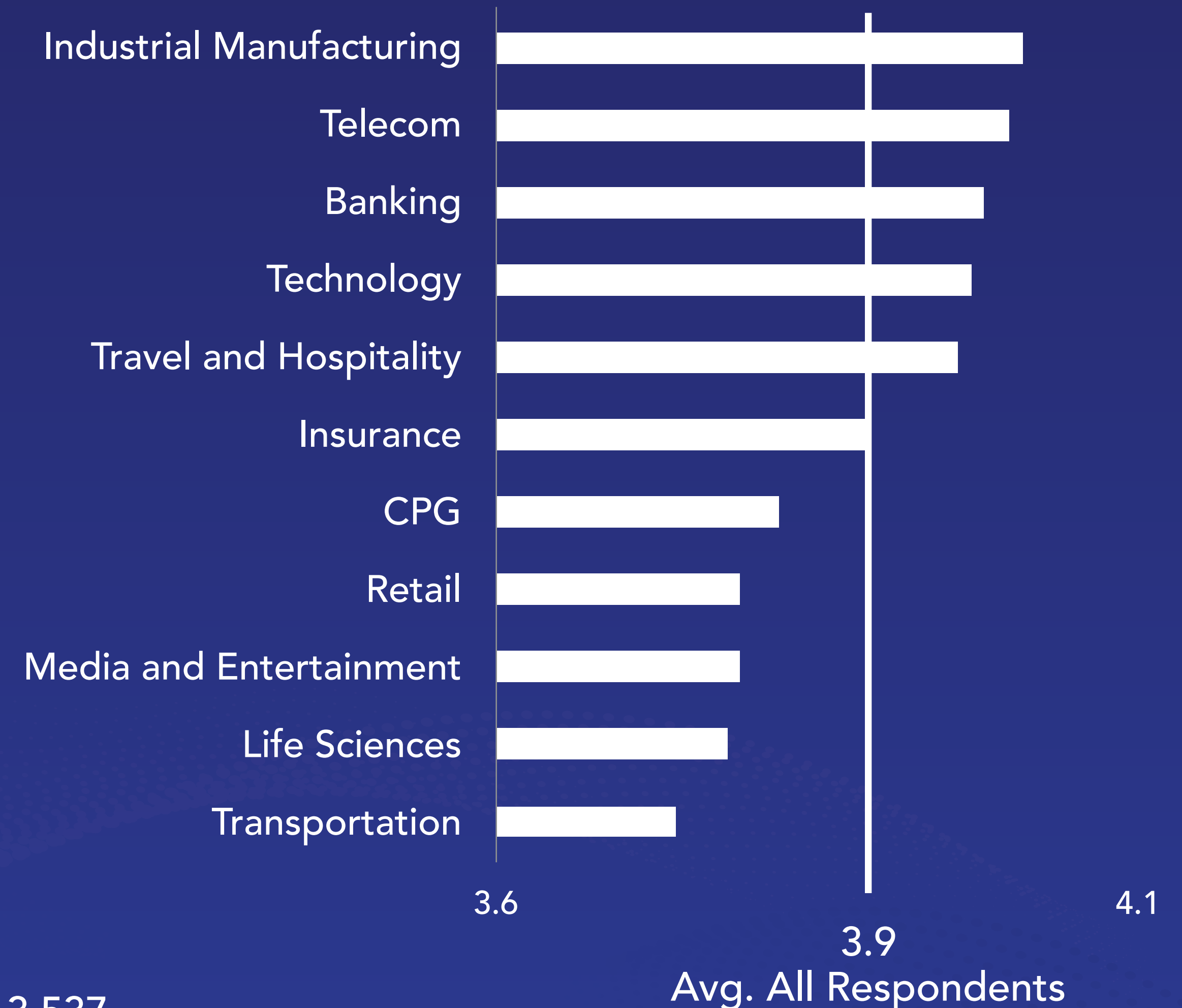


Insight 1

Thought leadership helps bewildered customers create coherence out of complexity

- ▶ On a range of 1 to 5, where 4 = very important, executives rated the importance of thought leadership as 3.9.
- ▶ Industry averages ranged from a low of 3.74 in Transportation to a high of 4.01 in Industrial Manufacturing.

Executives largely see thought leadership as very important.



n = 3,537

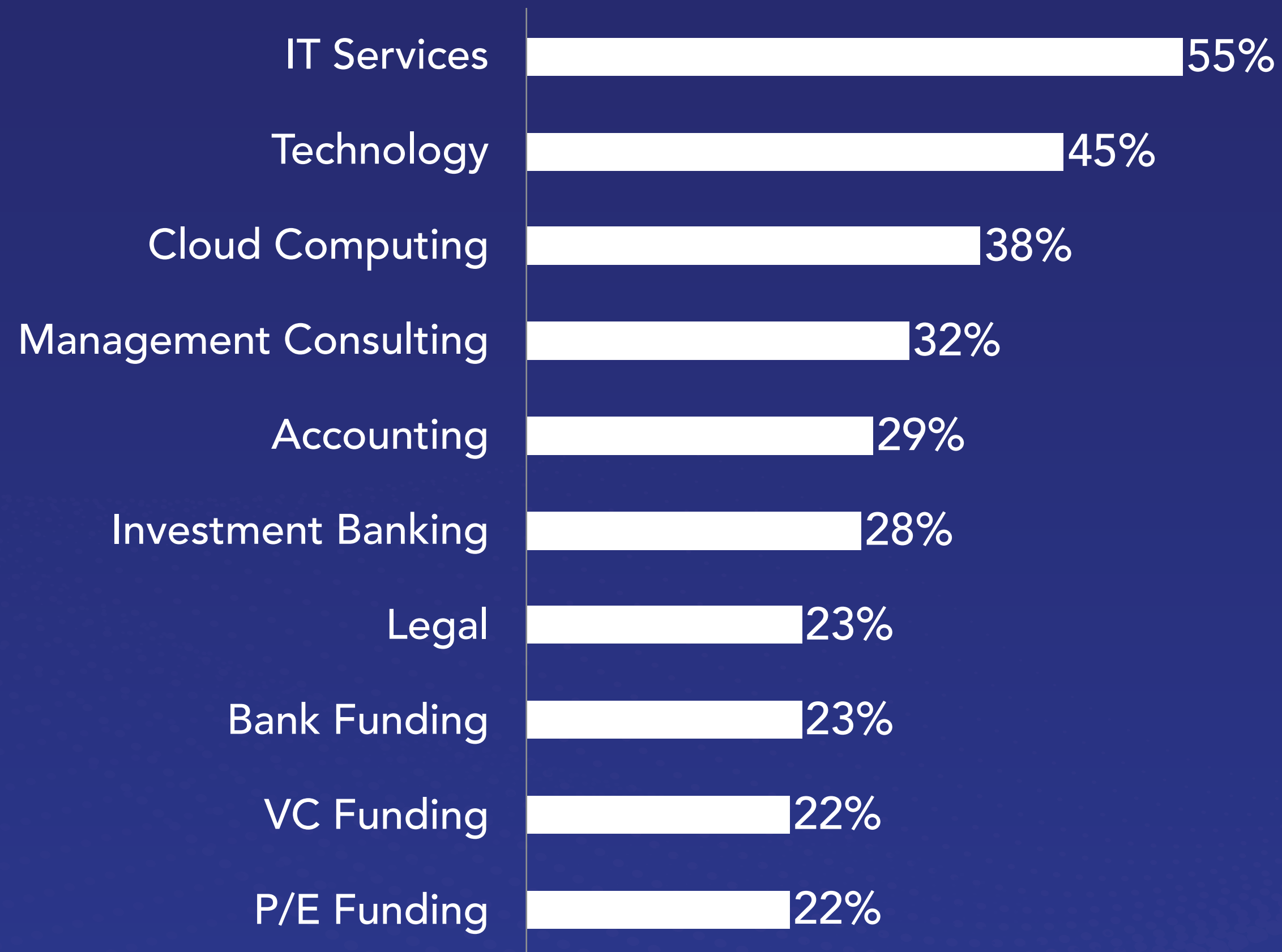
Insight 2

Executives use thought leadership to identify warning signs and determine how to solve problems.



n = 152

Percentage of organizations that
use thought leadership to inform
various types of purchase
decisions



n = 152

Insight 3

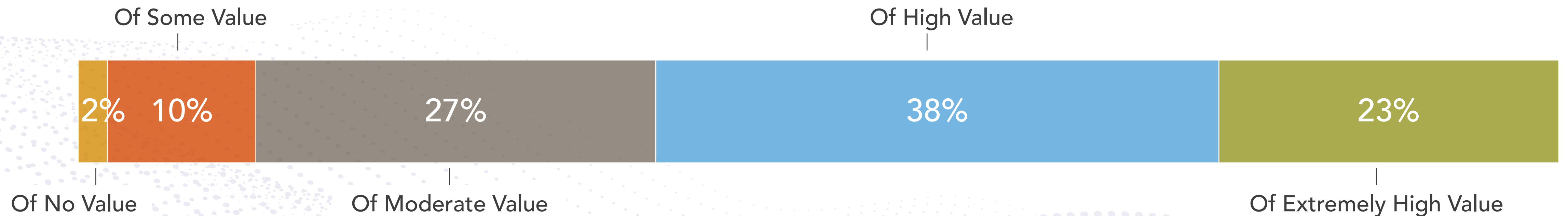
**They're not using it to make
purchase decisions as much as
you would think.**

- ▶ It is used most frequently for technology-based decisions.
- ▶ That said, 74% of executives say it has become more important over the last 5 years
 - Only 3% say it's less important

Insight 4

Many are not using thought leadership because it's simply not valuable enough.

How valuable thought leadership has been in helping organizations choose which firm to use to solve a business problem in the last 5 years.



n = 3,537

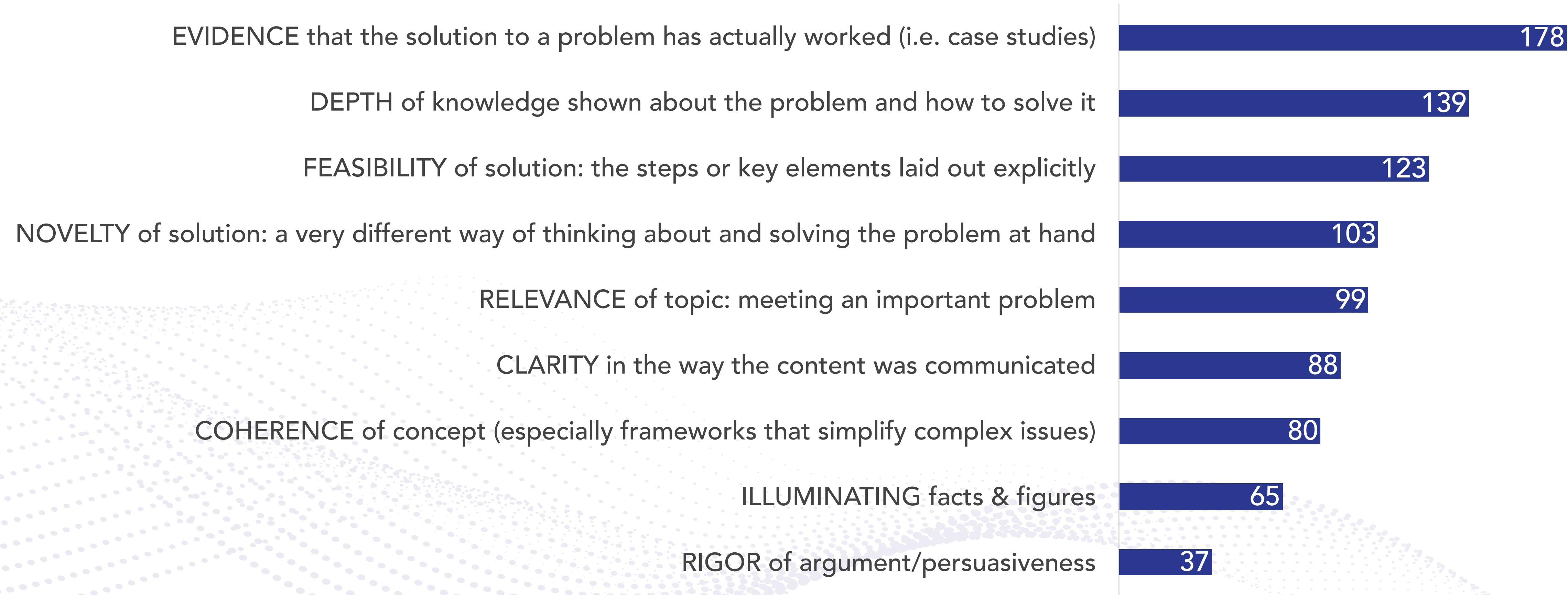
**What Your Clients and
Prospects Really Want...**

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Insight 5

Executives want evidence, depth, and feasibility.

What Executives Say are the 3 Most Important Criteria in Thought Leadership



n = 152

Note: Respondents were asked to rank order 3 criteria from a list of 9. Those responses were weighted by rank.

Without providing the *evidence* your solution works, you're asking them to trust you.

► Why evidence is important to your clients

- Company fortunes can ride on choosing the right firm
- Careers can be on the line



... what a mining company spent on an enterprise system that its employees largely shunned

► Why evidence is hard for you to get

- Clients don't want to admit they needed help
- Clients don't care about your careers (only theirs)



If you don't show *depth* of knowledge, they'll assume you don't have it

► Why it matters

- Mitigates client risk — Showing them extensive depth of your company's expertise gives them more confidence in you
- Those with a veneer of expertise run out of gas quickly

► Why it can be hard to show

- Arbitrary limits on lengths of articles and research reports
- The longer it is, the more difficult it is to make it compelling

If you haven't demonstrated the *feasibility* of your solution, they'll assume it's infeasible.

- ▶ A "Guinea Pig" approach appeals to very few
- ▶ Even if you have it, your experts may not want to "give it away"

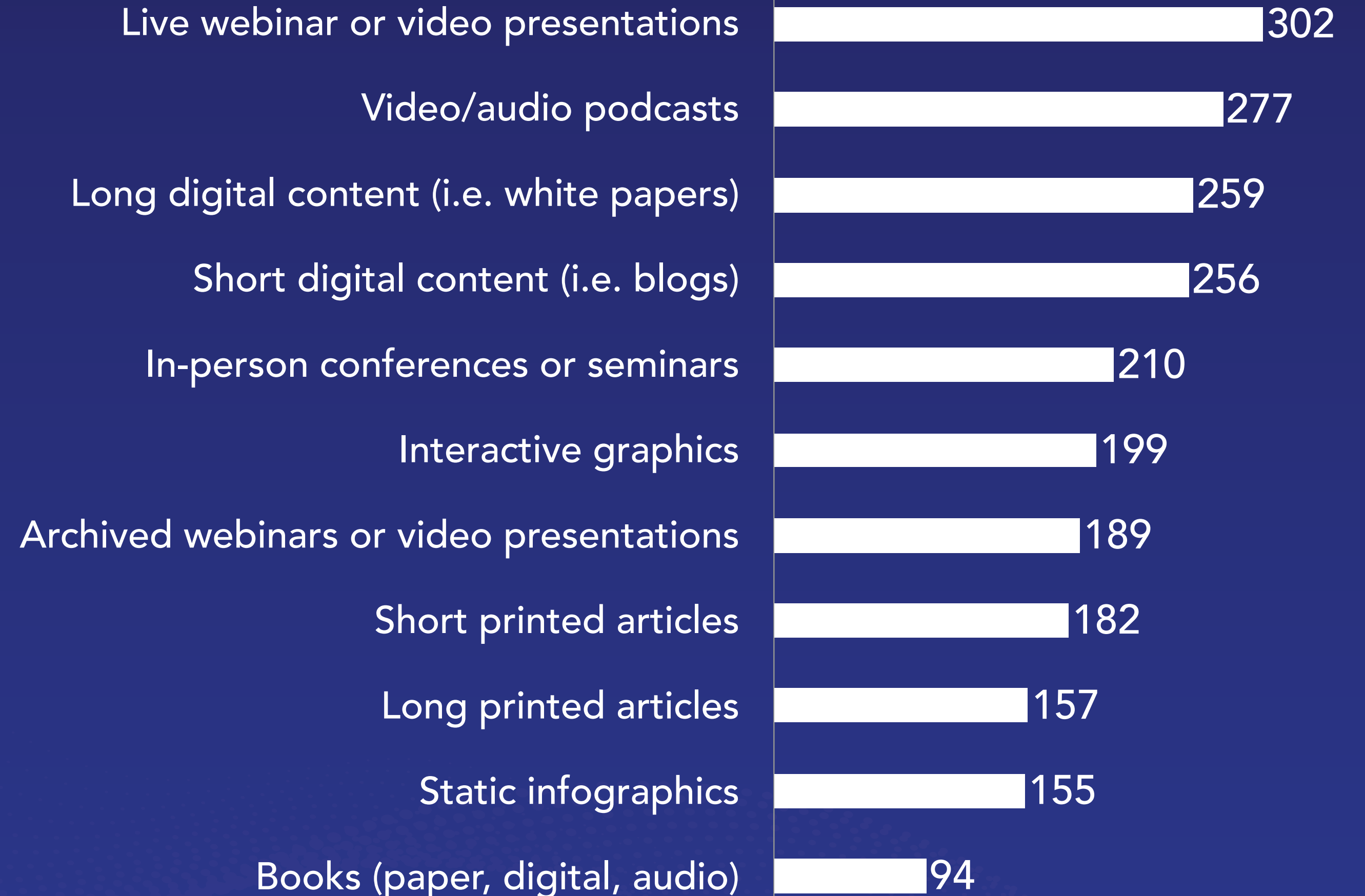


Insight 6

It's become a more digital, "lean back" world.

- ▶ Executives prefer digital channels over analog ones
 - They prefer live webinars and podcasts over in-person programs.
- ▶ But, long- and short-form written content is equally valued.
 - "Keep it short, always" is bad advice.

How Executives Prefer to Consume Thought Leadership



n = 152

Note: Respondents were asked to rank order 3 formats from a list of 11. Those responses were weighted by rank.