

ON24 WEBINAR BENCHMARKS REPORT 2019



TECHNOLOGY TRENDS



ON24

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EXECUTIVE STATEMENT

With its exponential advancements and impact on all industries, the technology sector is at the forefront of change. Tech companies are the fastest to identify and embrace new ways of working, using them to solve problems and facilitate others' digital transformation.

However, even tech companies face challenges and pitfalls. Ironically, tech has fundamentally changed the buying cycle, creating a need to reassess and redefine how to best connect with and build relationships with customers. These customers now research independently before choosing solutions. Furthermore, security risks and regulatory change in the privacy arena causes both challenges to companies selling tech and the buyers struggling to consider how this impacts what tech they will implement.

But there is good news. Webinars can help technology companies adapt to this new reality by establishing their reputation as thought leaders and trusted partners, supporting pre-sales interactions with consistent and concise messaging, boosting post-sale engagement and incorporating first-hand insights from existing customers through case studies and external endorsements. Webinars can help support marketing efforts and connect with audiences throughout the entire buying cycle, at scale. They can also act as a tool to assist marketing in a compliant fashion.

Buyers increasingly use webinars to assess a vendor's authenticity and suitability to solve real-

world challenges. Top-performing vendors are already using webinars, built on a foundation of engaging content, with great success. A number of studies demonstrate this. B2B Marketing found that the two most effective tactics for tech marketers are content marketing and online events (44 percent each).¹ Demand Gen Report notes that the top two favored content formats for buyers are case studies and webinars.² And the Content Marketing Institute sees that, compared to 2018, nearly two-thirds (64 percent) of technology content marketers have increased their use of audio and visual content, such as webinars.³

To help you create a finely-tuned webinar program, we've analyzed all webinar benchmark data from events produced by technology organizations on our platform in 2018 and looked at how practices used by tech vendors differ from those employed by their peers operating in other industries. We've also looked at how eight key sectors—cybersecurity, computer networking, development, hardware, information technology and services, internet, software and telecom—all use webinars to drive engagement and increase their pipeline.

We hope the insights and recommendations in this report will give you the perspective needed to understand and address today's challenges, helping you build on the content foundations you've already laid and discover new ways to optimize your webinar program.

1. [Global Tech Marketing Trends](#), B2B Marketing/Kingpin
2. [2019 Content Preferences Survey Report](#), Demand Gen Report
3. [Technology Content Marketing 2019: Benchmarks, Budgets and Trends \[PDF\]](#), Content Marketing Institute

METHODOLOGY

ON24, the world's leading webinar platform, compiled the data in this report. The events included in this analysis were selected from a sample of ON24 webinars conducted globally by technology companies in 2018.

-  ON24 measured 28,938 webinars in this analysis.
-  All webinars were held between January and December of 2018.
-  Events represent a cross-section of 587 technology companies.

In addition, those working for technology organizations were surveyed to find out more about how they are using webinars and their effectiveness.

This study examines statistics across a webinar's lifecycle, including webinar promotion and registration metrics, interactivity metrics, audience viewing habits and both live and always-on attendance and conversion metrics. Unless otherwise noted, this study uses the following definitions:

-  **Live webinars**—Audio or video-based events streamed on a specific day and time.
-  **Always-on webinars**—Audio or video-based events attendees can view always-on, including archived live webcasts.
-  **Registrants**—Prospects registered to view an event.
-  **Attendees**—Prospects who registered to view an event and attended that event.

PRE-WEBINAR BENCHMARKS

PROMOTIONAL CYCLE

77% of technology companies believe that webinars help them extend their brand.

Delivering a successful webinar is highly dependent on the strategy behind it. Optimal webinar promotion is achieved through a combination of well-thought-out emails, a longer promotional period of at least two to three weeks and a focus on highlighting benefits tailored to each targeted audience.

Across all webinars produced by technology organizations on our platform, nearly half (47 percent) of registrants sign up at least eight days before the event. This compares to an average of 54 percent across all the sectors included in our annual benchmarks analysis.

Early registrants, who enroll at least 15 days before the event, are more common in the computer networking (31 percent), hardware (27 percent) and software (26 percent) sectors. By comparison, only 14 percent of registrants in the cybersecurity sector enroll at least 15 days before.

Registrants in the telecom sector are most likely to enroll up to one week before—64 percent compared to an average of 53 percent across the entire technology sample.

DISTRIBUTION OF REGISTRATIONS ACROSS PROMOTIONAL CYCLE

Technology Average



PRE-WEBINAR BENCHMARKS: TECHNOLOGY TRENDS

THE BREAKDOWN:



	DAY OF	1-7 DAYS BEFORE	8-14 DAYS BEFORE	MORE THAN 15 DAYS BEFORE
Computer Networking	9%	35%	25%	31%
Cybersecurity	11%	50%	25%	14%
Development	7%	46%	28%	19%
Hardware	8%	46%	19%	27%
Information Technology & Services	12%	37%	29%	22%
Internet	11%	47%	23%	19%
Software	8%	41%	25%	26%
Telecom	29%	35%	16%	20%

ON24 TIP

PUTTING IN THE EXTRA EFFORT WILL PAY OFF TENFOLD.

Tech buyers don't only appreciate content tailored to their specific needs, but have come to expect it. Take the time to craft promotional content that will spark interest, and schedule a series of emails that will gradually build up excitement. IT leaders have started to expand their business strategy responsibilities, so it might be worth highlighting how the webinar will benefit the business as a whole.

BEST DAYS TO SEND PROMOTIONAL EMAILS

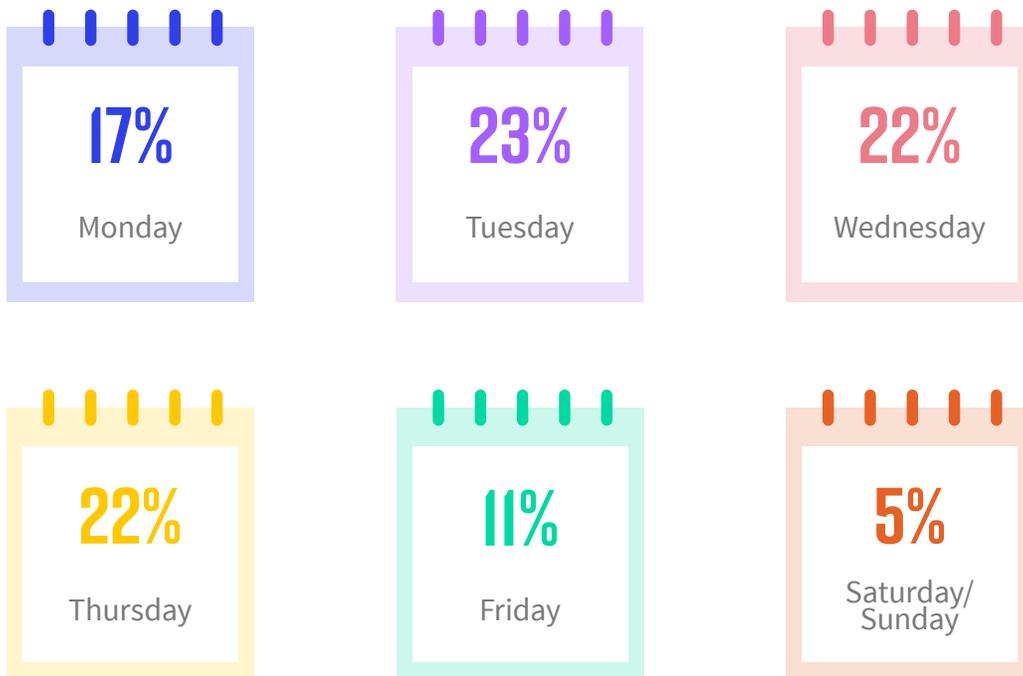
79% of technology companies say that webinars help them reach more leads.

While emails are highly effective at sparking interest and drawing audiences, organizations can easily get caught up in perfecting the content and paying little attention to timing when scheduling their emails. As a rule of thumb, mid-week emails typically perform best and that's also the case in the technology industry. Our analysis shows that emails sent on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday account for over two-thirds (68 percent) of webinar registrations.

It's worth pointing out that in most sectors, mid-week emails are equally or only marginally more successful than those sent early in the week. Emails sent early in the week (Monday or Tuesday) perform best in the computer networking, cybersecurity, hardware, software and telecom sectors, accounting for over two-fifths of registrants.

Emails sent on Wednesday or Thursday are least successful in the hardware sector (38 percent). Thursday performs particularly well in the development sector—30 percent compared to an overall technology average of 22 percent.

Technology Average



PRE-WEBINAR BENCHMARKS: TECHNOLOGY TRENDS

THE BREAKDOWN:

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY/ SUNDAY
Computer Networking	18%	24%	22%	19%	12%	5%
Cybersecurity	16%	27%	22%	21%	10%	4%
Development	16%	20%	19%	30%	10%	5%
Hardware	19%	24%	22%	16%	10%	9%
Information Technology & Services	16%	20%	26%	22%	10%	6%
Internet	15%	18%	25%	23%	11%	8%
Software	19%	22%	21%	20%	12%	6%
Telecom	16%	26%	23%	21%	11%	3%

ON24 TIP

USE DIFFERENT SEND TIMES AND RUN A/B TESTING ON YOUR EMAIL CAMPAIGNS.

As mid-week emails are equally or only marginally more effective than those sent early in the week, it's worth experimenting with different send times to identify which days garner the best response. A/B testing can uncover some useful insights about the times your target audiences are most receptive.

BEST DAYS FOR WEBINAR ATTENDANCE

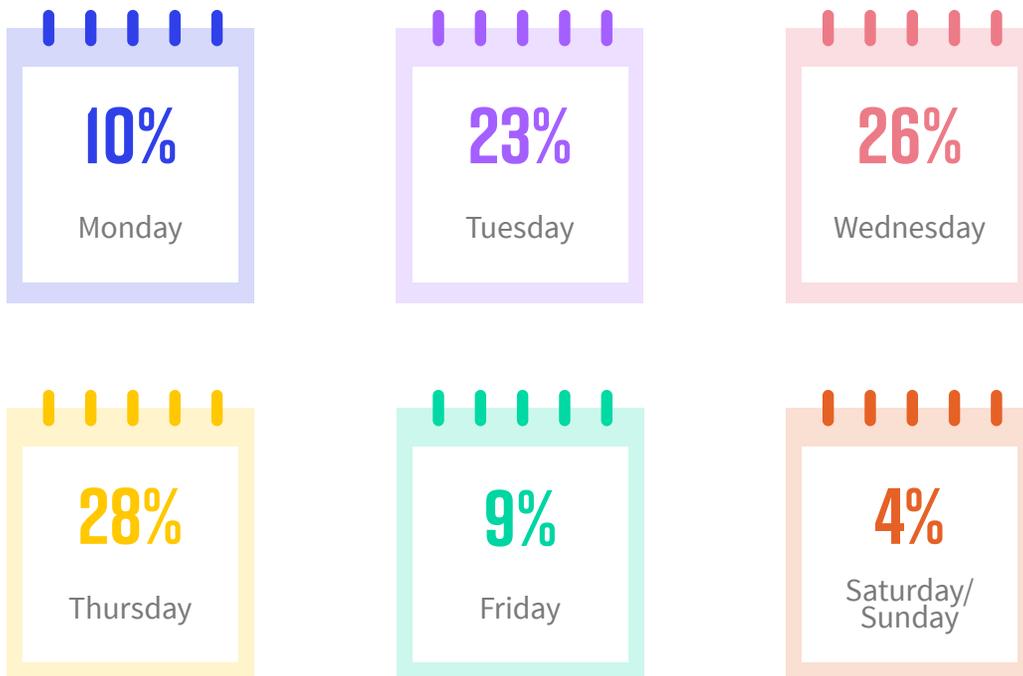
83% of technology companies believe that webinars help them lower their cost per lead.

Mid-week is also the best time to hold a technology webinar, with Wednesday and Thursday accounting for 54 percent of attendees.

Our analysis shows that there is some variance across the eight sectors we examined in more detail. Tuesday is particularly effective in the computer networking and telecom sectors, accounting for nearly a third (31 percent and 28 percent, respectively) of attendees, while Wednesday and Thursday emerged as clear winners in the development sector (63 percent).

DISTRIBUTION OF ATTENDEES BY DAY

Technology Average



PRE-WEBINAR BENCHMARKS: TECHNOLOGY TRENDS

THE BREAKDOWN:

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY/ SUNDAY
Computer Networking	10%	31%	24%	23%	8%	4%
Cybersecurity	10%	23%	31%	26%	8%	2%
Development	7%	15%	30%	33%	9%	6%
Hardware	11%	23%	30%	23%	8%	5%
Information Technology & Services	12%	19%	32%	27%	7%	3%
Internet	10%	18%	27%	27%	10%	8%
Software	10%	23%	27%	28%	9%	3%
Telecom	11%	28%	22%	27%	10%	2%

ON24 TIP

WEDNESDAY AND THURSDAY ARE THE BEST DAYS TO MAXIMIZE LIVE ATTENDANCE RATES.

While mid-week webinars are most likely to attract the highest numbers of live attendees, it's also when most companies (including your competitors!) choose to run their webinars. Tuesday is a popular time in some sectors and might attract a larger audience so it's worth running similar webinars on different days and monitoring engagement levels.

BEST TIME TO RUN WEBINARS

Nearly half (45 percent) of webinars produced by technology organizations are run between 8 a.m. and 1 p.m.

Information technology and services and telecom webinars are most likely to run early in the

morning, between 6 a.m. and 10 a.m. (50 percent and 45 percent, respectively). This compares to an average of 30 percent across the whole industry. Late morning webinars, run between 10 a.m. and 12 p.m., are particularly popular in the cybersecurity, software and internet sectors, accounting for around a third (28 percent, 29 percent and 33 percent, respectively) of attendees.

Technology Average



5%

6 AM



7%

7 AM



9%

8 AM



9%

9 AM



12%

10 AM



10%

11 AM



5%

12 PM



3%

1 PM

PRE-WEBINAR BENCHMARKS: TECHNOLOGY TRENDS

THE BREAKDOWN:



ON24 TIP

FACTOR IN YOUR AUDIENCE'S TIMING PREFERENCES.

Tech buying committees are quite diverse, consisting of IT leaders, department heads and end users, so you need to consider their schedules when trying to identify the most convenient time for them to tune in. If your target audiences are dispersed or travel frequently, you can run simulive webinars at different times.

WEBINAR BENCHMARKS

AVERAGE VIEWING TIME

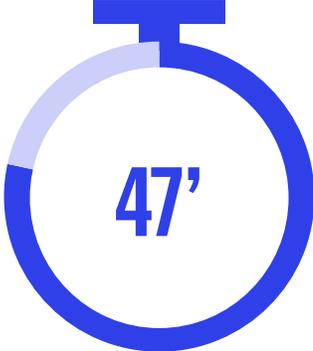
8.8

how technology companies rate, on a scale from 1 to 10, the importance of customizing the webinar console with their own branding.

Our data shows that the average viewing time for technology webinars, including a ten to 15-minute Q&A session, was 47 minutes. Only webinars in the telecom and internet sectors have below-average viewing times (45 and 38 minutes, respectively).

The vast majority (88 percent) of technology organizations using webinars for training say that the typical length of their sessions is one hour. All companies offering continuing education programs say their lessons last at least one hour.

AVERAGE VIEWING TIME IN MINUTES:



Technology Average

WEBINAR BENCHMARKS: TECHNOLOGY TRENDS

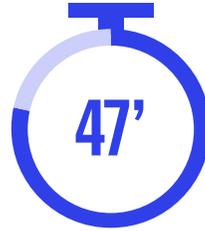
THE BREAKDOWN:



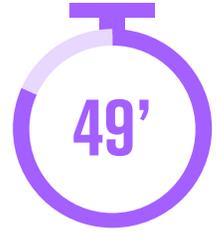
Computer Networking



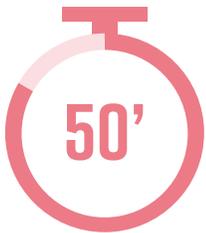
Cybersecurity



Development



Hardware



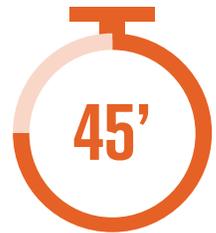
Information Technology & Services



Internet



Software



Telecom

ON24 TIP

THINK IN TERMS OF BUSINESS OUTCOMES, RATHER THAN TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS.

To convey your commitment to your clients' success, your webinar should answer one key question: how can your technology help the audience solve their problems? Think in terms of their desired business outcomes, such as increasing operational efficiency, reducing costs or accelerating growth, and make sure the content you deliver matches their agenda.

REGISTRANT TO ATTENDEE CONVERSION

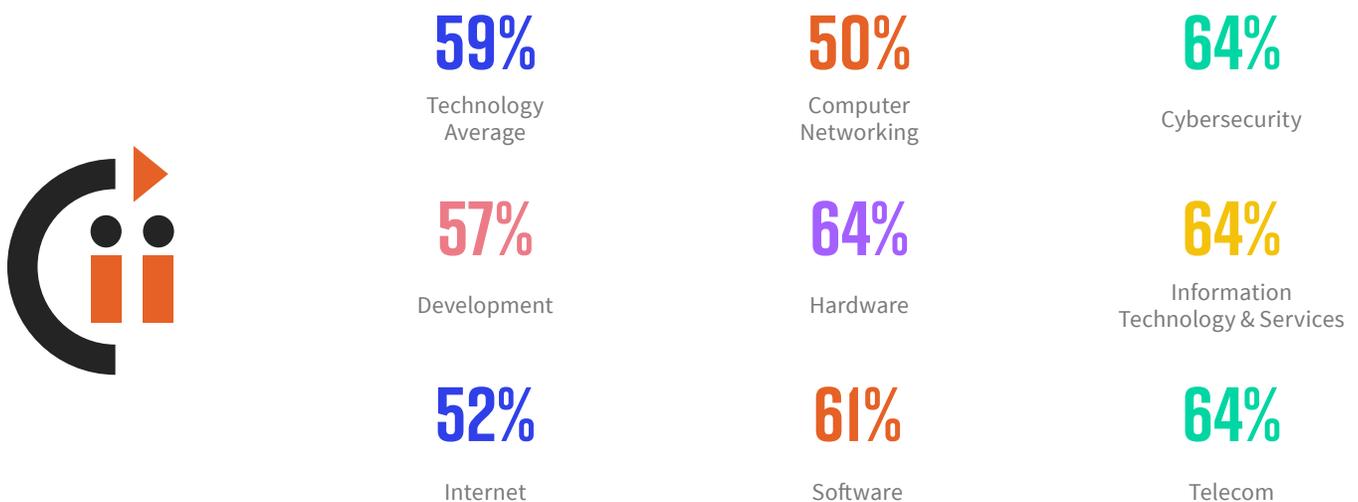
The average registrant to attendee conversion rate across the technology industry was 59 percent, slightly higher than the rate recorded across all the sectors on our platform (55.9 percent). Five out of the eight sectors we examined in more detail had conversion rates over 60 percent.

Webinars used for communication purposes recorded the highest conversion rates across most of the sectors we looked at, the only exception being the internet sector (25 percent). Training

webinars had the highest conversion rates in the cybersecurity and internet sectors.

Our survey data showed that the majority (61 percent) of technology organizations personalize their webinars. The most common use cases are targeting specific verticals (76 percent) and engaging targeted accounts by giving tailored product demonstrations (51 percent) or sharing best practices (49 percent). The vast majority (86 percent) reach out to multiple audiences with one webinar.

AVERAGE WEBINAR CONVERSION RATE FOR WEBINARS WITH MORE THAN 100 ATTENDEES:



WEBINAR BENCHMARKS: TECHNOLOGY TRENDS

THE BREAKDOWN:



COMMUNICATIONS



TRAINING/LEARNING



MARKETING



CONTINUING EDUCATION

	COMMUNICATIONS	TRAINING/LEARNING	MARKETING	CONTINUING EDUCATION
Technology Average	79%	56%	44%	53%
Computer Networking	92%	61%	45%	N/A
Cybersecurity	86%	74%	45%	N/A
Development	N/A	31%	49%	N/A
Hardware	91%	60%	59%	N/A
Information Technology & Services	89%	62%	47%	38%
Internet	25%	72%	42%	74%
Software	88%	53%	43%	59%
Telecom	77%	46%	50%	50%

ON24 TIP

FOCUS ON BECOMING A TRUSTED SOURCE OF INFORMATION TO SUPPORT YOUR ABM PROGRAMS.

By featuring cross-funnel content for each target segment, such as customized demos or sector-specific customer success stories, webinars can be utilized in segmented nurture streams, targeted ad programs or distributed with custom landing pages.

AVERAGE ATTENDEE RATE

Only a quarter (26 percent) of webinars delivered by technology organizations attract at least 100 attendees, compared to a third across all sectors.

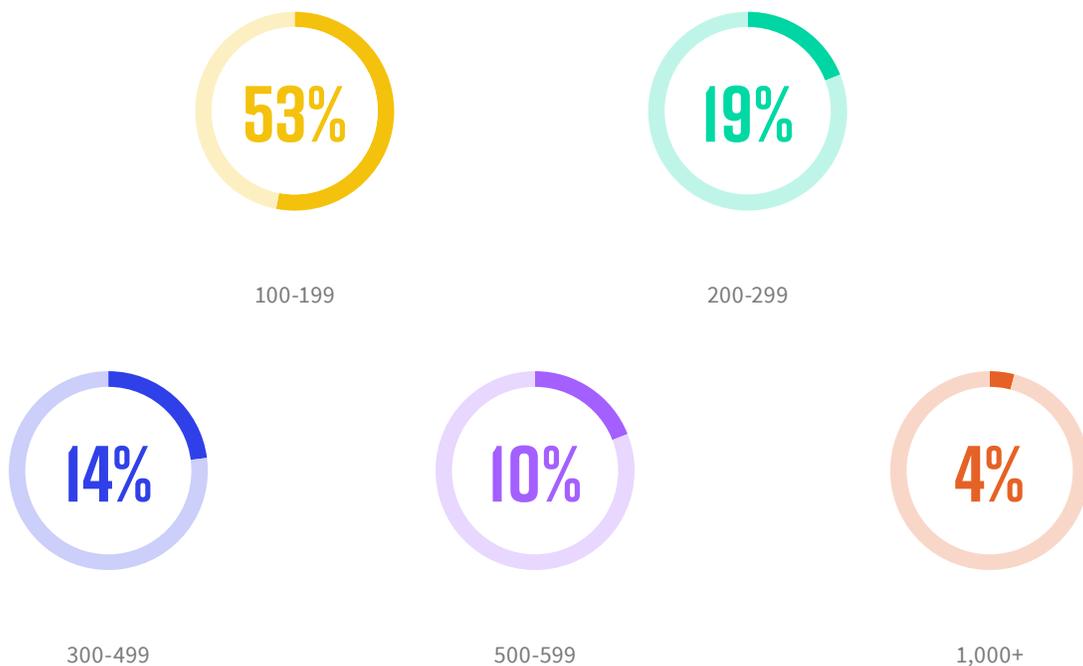
Looking at the distribution by size for webinars with at least 100 attendees reveals that the vast majority (86 percent) of webinars produced in the computer networking sector attract under 300 attendees, compared to a technology

average of 72 percent. It's also worth noting that all development webinars attract under 200 attendees.

At the other end of the scale, attendance rates in the internet and telecom sectors are particularly high, with a fifth (20 percent and 23 percent, respectively) of webinars attracting at least 500 attendees.

DISTRIBUTION OF WEBINARS BY SIZE, AS A PERCENTAGE OF WEBINARS WITH AT LEAST 100 LIVE ATTENDEES:

Technology Average



WEBINAR BENCHMARKS: TECHNOLOGY TRENDS

THE BREAKDOWN:

	100-199	200-299	300-499	500-599	+1,000
Computer Networking	59%	27%	9%	5%	0%
Cybersecurity	50%	27%	17%	5%	1%
Development	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Hardware	68%	18%	14%	0%	0%
Information Technology & Services	56%	18%	12%	10%	4%
Internet	46%	19%	15%	15%	5%
Software	57%	19%	13%	8%	3%
Telecom	42%	18%	17%	15%	8%

ON24 TIP

BRING YOUR TECHNOLOGY TO LIFE WITH CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORIES.

Tech buyers research the vendors on their shortlist intensively and are looking for the reassurance provided by case studies and peer recommendations. Customer success stories are an important factor in establishing trust. Don't know where to start? Experiment with inviting customers to share their success stories and best practice tips by hosting a panel discussion or opening up a Q&A session.

INTEGRATION OF ENGAGEMENT TOOLS

53% of technology organizations say it's 'extremely important' to have access to engagement insights.

Incorporating interactive elements and fostering engagement is an area technology companies are doing fairly well at. Two-thirds (67 percent) of technology companies say they build webinars with interactivity in mind, and rate their interactivity as 3.1 on a five-point scale, on-par with the all-sector average.

Our analysis shows that the development sector is leading the pack utilizing all the engagement tools and exhibiting above-average usage.

As is the case in other sectors, the questions and answers widget is the most popular tool, with three in four (75 percent) technology organizations using it. This is unsurprising as our survey revealed that seven in ten companies claim that

Q&A widgets have driven the highest level of engagement in their webinars.

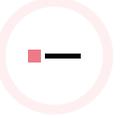
Social widgets are particularly popular in the technology industry, with around a third of organizations integrating them into their webinars, compared to a quarter of companies across all sectors. The development (95 percent), computer networking (53 percent) and hardware (39 percent) are most likely to employ social widgets during their webinars.

On average, tech buyers download five assets during the research process⁴, making the resource list widget an important tool for technology organizations to deploy. The same sectors that excel with social widget usage are leading the pack in using resource lists, development (84 percent), computer networking (74 percent) and hardware (72 percent).

4. 2018 Customer Engagement, IDG

WEBINAR BENCHMARKS: TECHNOLOGY TRENDS

AVERAGE PROPORTION OF WEBINARS INTEGRATING ENGAGEMENT TOOLS:

	 Q&A	 SURVEYS	 SOCIAL	 GROUP CHAT	 POLLING	 RESOURCES FOR DOWNLOAD
Technology Average	75%	30%	30%	10%	15%	61%
Computer Networking	92%	28%	53%	0%	11%	74%
Cybersecurity	89%	33%	3%	1%	9%	72%
Development	90%	35%	95%	37%	45%	84%
Hardware	68%	39%	39%	15%	8%	62%
Information Technology & Services	77%	31%	22%	12%	15%	54%
Internet	69%	30%	16%	1%	10%	50%
Software	63%	36%	24%	5%	18%	54%
Telecom	63%	25%	10%	1%	10%	44%

ON24 TIP

ENGAGEMENT IS KEY IN GETTING TECH BUYERS ON BOARD.

With so many tech vendors vying for attention and a deluge of technology overwhelming buyers, playing the numbers game when it comes to leads is not feasible. Use all the tools at your disposal to focus your efforts on fostering engagement and keeping the conversation going, both during and after the webinar. Take your program to the next level by using engagement insights to inform targeted or one-to-one account-based actions.

INTEGRATION OF VIDEO

73% of technology companies use video for product demos.

Technology organizations rate the importance of video integration as an 8 on a ten-point scale, only slightly higher than the average recorded across all sectors on our platform (7.8). Forty percent of webinars delivered by technology companies in 2018 featured video to some extent, compared to an average of 38 percent across all sectors.

When survey respondents working in the technology sector were asked what was holding them back, there was no single issue standing out. Around two-fifths (44 percent) mentioned they don't have the necessary resources or time for video production, while the same proportion claimed they don't need video in their webinars.

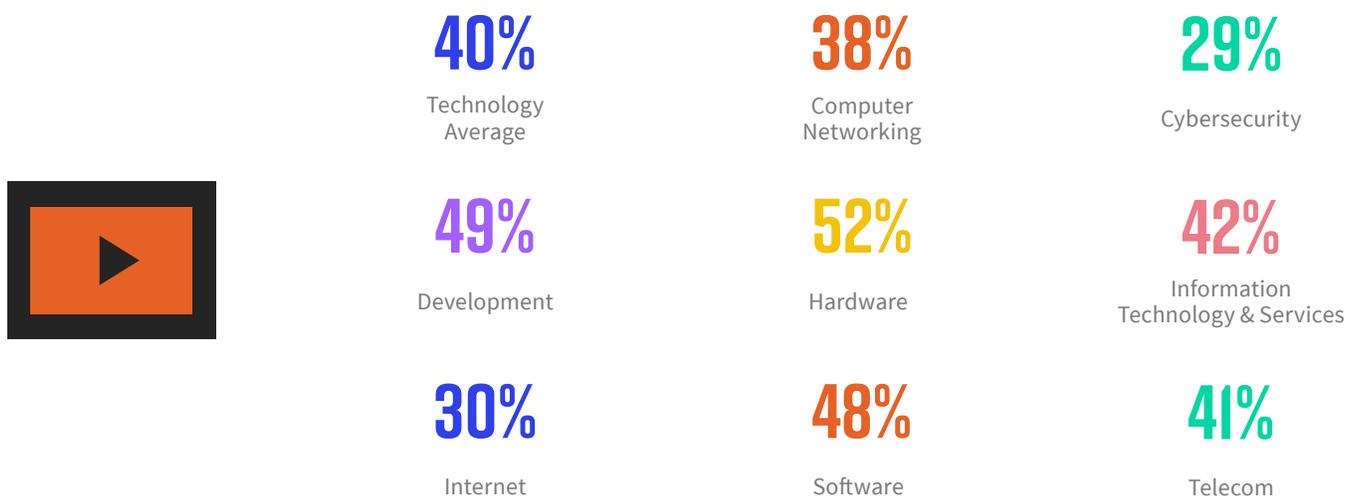
This is a short-sighted view as video is a proven medium for boosting attendee engagement and

effectively communicating brand messages to content-hungry tech audiences. The vast majority (95 percent) of tech buyers watch technology-related video content, most often to evaluate products and services (84 percent) but also when determining business needs (72 percent), defining technical requirements (77 percent) or recommending and selecting vendors (68 percent).⁵ Lower-funnel buyers typically prefer video case studies and demos, while those who are at the start of their research process are most likely to be interested in white papers, analyst research and sector-specific content.

While the hardware and development sectors are leading the charge, with around half (52 percent and 49 percent, respectively) of webinars incorporating video, less than a third of webinars in the internet and cybersecurity sectors (30 percent and 29 percent, respectively) make use of video. None of the webinars run in the software sector incorporated video.

5. 2017 Customer Engagement, IDG

Average proportion of webinars integrating video:



ON24 TIP

DECISION-MAKERS CONSIDER VIDEO PRODUCT DEMOS HIGHLY BENEFICIAL.

Both IT leaders and line-of-business professionals have a keen interest in guided walk-throughs as they show your technology in action. They are particularly effective when targeting those closer to the final decision-making stage but shorter product demonstrations, tailored to business needs, can be used throughout the entire buyer journey.

POST-WEBINAR BENCHMARKS

ALWAYS-ON VIEWING

Many organizations put a premium on live audiences yet the majority of tech buyers like to tune in at their convenience. Over half (51 percent) of decision-makers prefer to watch a recorded version of a webcast compared to just a fifth (22 percent) who watch live.⁶

With tech buyers increasingly expecting vendors to provide detailed information specific to their needs, always-on webinars play a key role in nurturing campaigns as they can be mapped to the buyer's journey. Setting up an on-demand multimedia content hub allows organizations to extend viewership, get deeper insights into their target audiences, easily repurpose the content they produce and remain top of mind as leads progress towards conversion.

Encouragingly, all organizations in the technology industry offer their continuing education programs both live and on demand. Three-quarters (75 percent) of companies using webinars for training purposes make them available both live and on demand.

Always-On Viewing Time

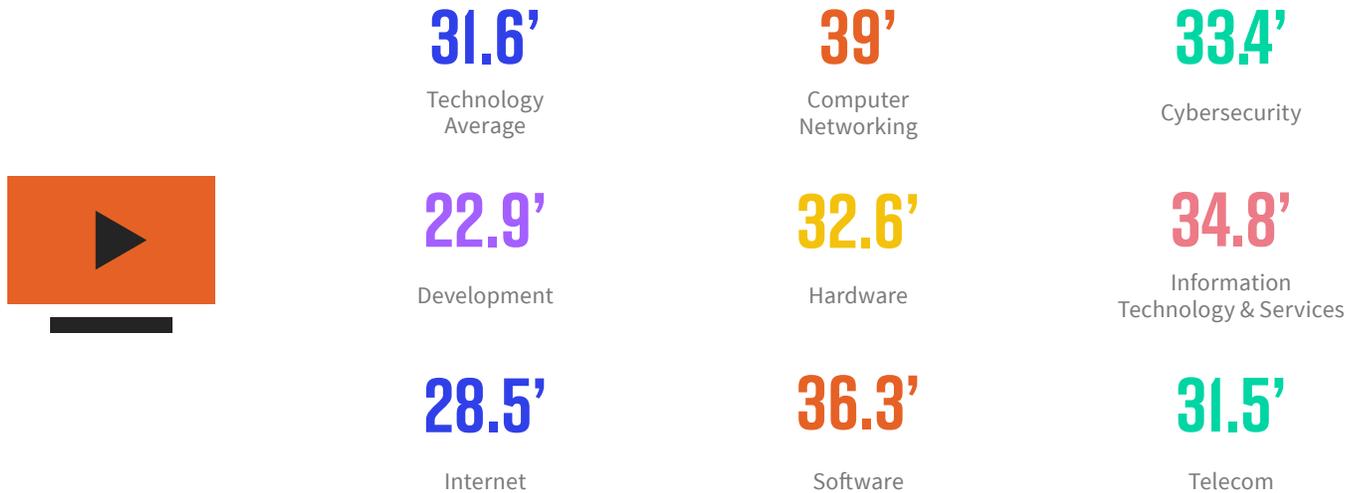
The average always-on viewing time for webinars produced by technology companies is 31.6 minutes, significantly lower than an average of 47 minutes across all the sectors on our platform. Viewing times for always-on webinars are higher in the computer networking and software sectors (39 and 36.3 minutes, respectively), while development webinars record the lowest viewing times (22.9 minutes).

The average number of always-on attendees is typically less than half the average number of live attendees in many of the sectors included in our annual benchmarks analysis and this is also the case in the technology industry (44 always-on attendees compared to 105 live attendees).

6. [2018 Customer Engagement](#), IDG

POST-WEBINAR BENCHMARKS: TECHNOLOGY TRENDS

Average always-on viewing time in minutes:



ON24 TIP

USE ALWAYS-ON WEBINARS TO MEET TECH BUYERS AT THE RIGHT TIME.

The appetite for advisory content is higher than ever as tech audiences are on the lookout for more detailed information at those crucial moments during the vendor evaluation and selection process, or when they are seeking internal validation and support. Always-on webinars enable you to be present at every key stage of the buying process and use various types of content to shape their decisions.

CONCLUSION

The average engagement score for all webinars produced by technology companies on our platform was 4. With nearly 19,000 hours of content watched in 2018 and 30 questions asked per webinar, it's not surprising that software is the only sector with above-average engagement scores across all webinar types.

Webinars used for training purposes have above-average engagement sectors in six out of the eight sectors included in our analysis. While only four sectors use webinars for their continuing education programs, engagement scores are quite high. Webinars in the internet sector have the highest engagement scores for both training and continuing education.

While tech buyers have become quite skeptical of content provided by vendors, increasingly doubting its authenticity and utility, they deem

content that is customized to their specific needs as highly valuable and are actively seeking it. Technology organizations need to redefine their marketing and sales strategy to ensure that the customer and their needs become the focal points. Demonstrating an in-depth understanding of their customers' business problems, and establishing the technology's suitability in the context of those specific problems, has become a key differentiator.

When done well, webinars can completely transform the way technology companies approach prospects and existing customers. Vendors on our platform rate the importance of webinars to their digital communications as 4.3 on a five-point scale, compared to an average of 3.1 across all sectors. They have made significant strides in revamping their webinar programs to accelerate their pipeline and nurture leads, and are now reaping the rewards. We're excited to support them throughout their transformation journey, in a dynamic market characterized by high growth and rapid change.

CONCLUSION: TECHNOLOGY TRENDS

Average ON24 engagement score per webinar type:

	 MARKETING	 COMMUNICATIONS	 TRAINING	 CONTINUING EDUCATION
Technology Average	4.1	4.3	3.9	4.6
Computer Networking	4.8	3.4	4.4	N/A
Cybersecurity	4	4.3	4.7	N/A
Development	3.5	N/A	3.1	N/A
Hardware	4.6	4.8	2.9	N/A
Information Technology & Services	4	4.9	4.8	3.1
Internet	3.5	3.9	5.4	6.2
Software	4.2	4.4	4.3	4.8
Telecom	4.1	3.8	4.1	4.5