

FEDERAL CONTENT MARKETING REVIEW 2017



Market Connections
Research you can act on.

MerrittGROUP



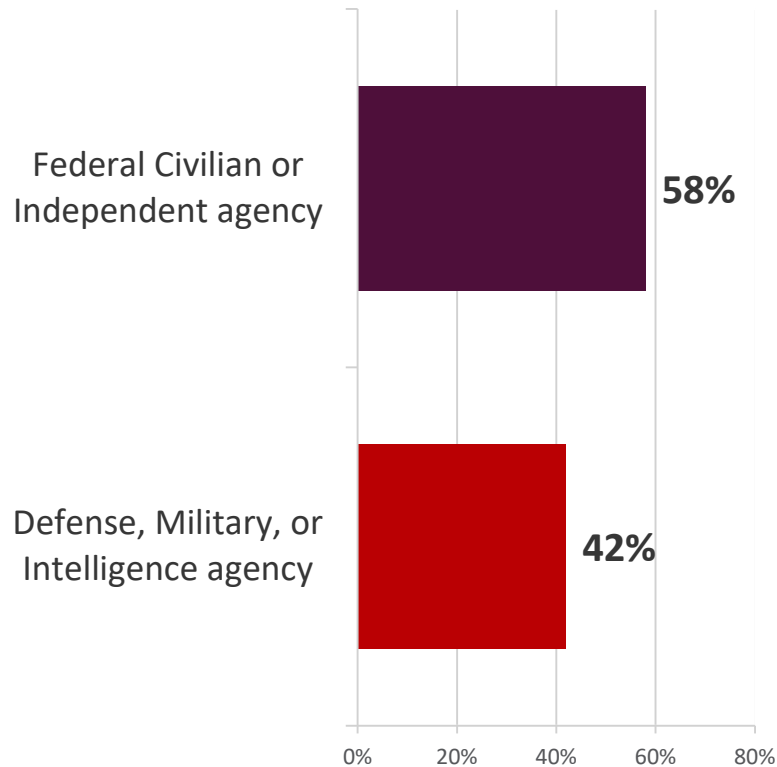
BACKGROUND & OBJECTIVES

- Two online polls conducted March 2017
- 350 respondents: 200 government, 150 contractors
- Identify most influential and valuable content to government decision makers during the procurement process
- Understand how government is obtaining information in current environment
- Pinpoint gaps between what government perceives as valuable and contractor content marketing priorities and strategies

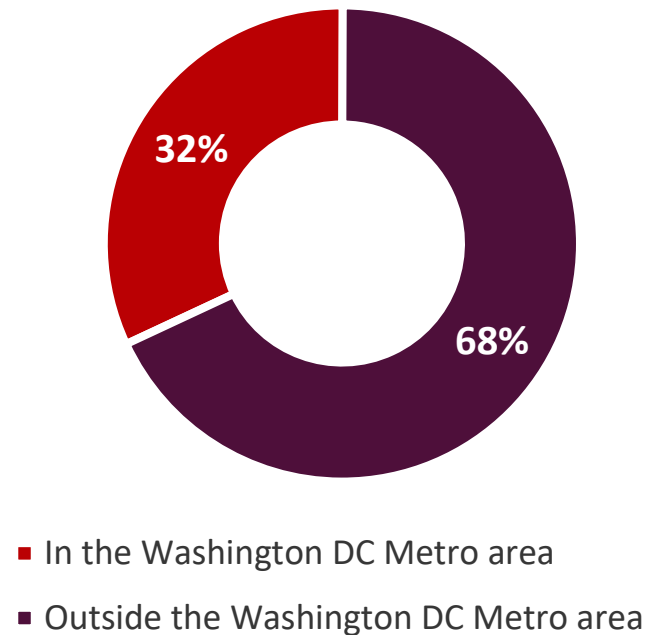
RESPONDENT PROFILE

Government Decision Makers

Agency Type

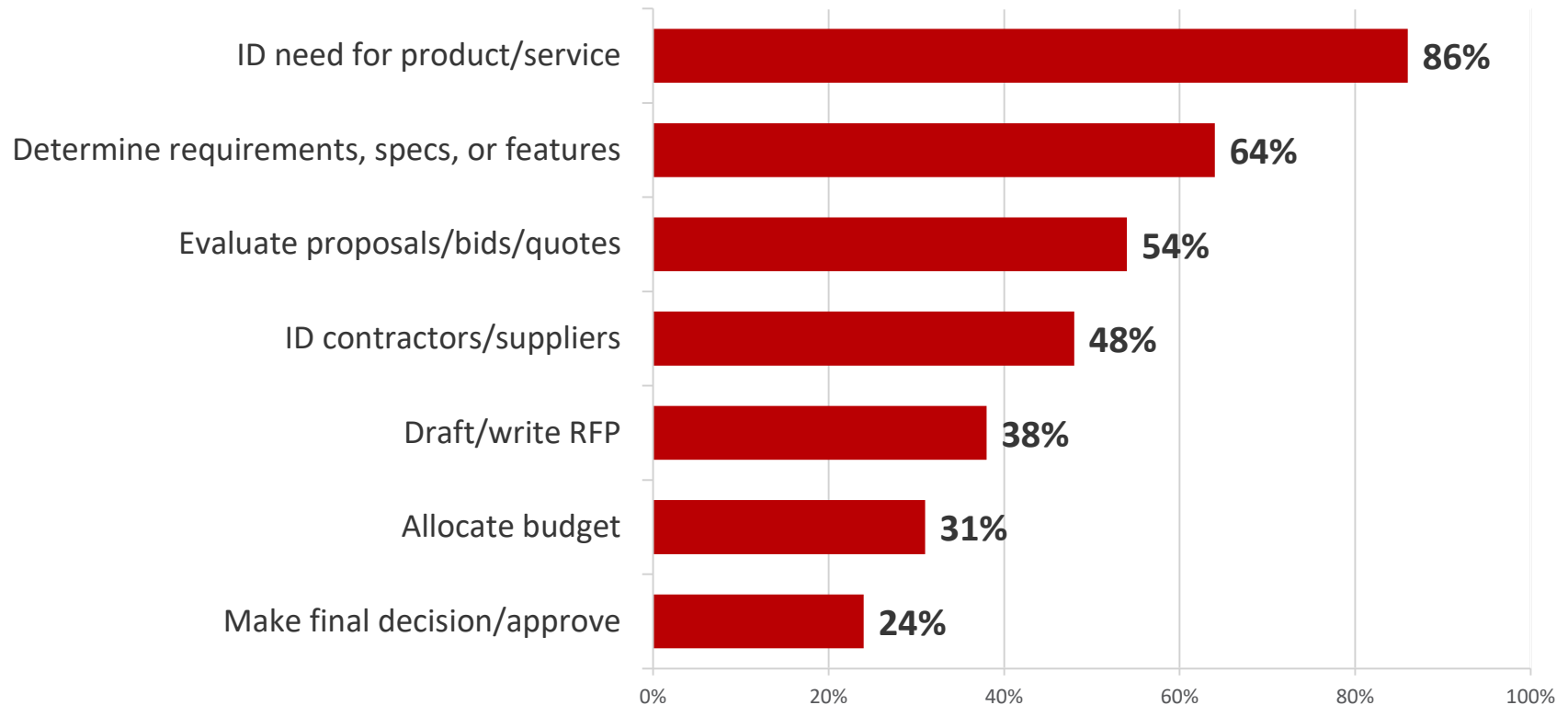


Location



RESPONDENT PROFILE

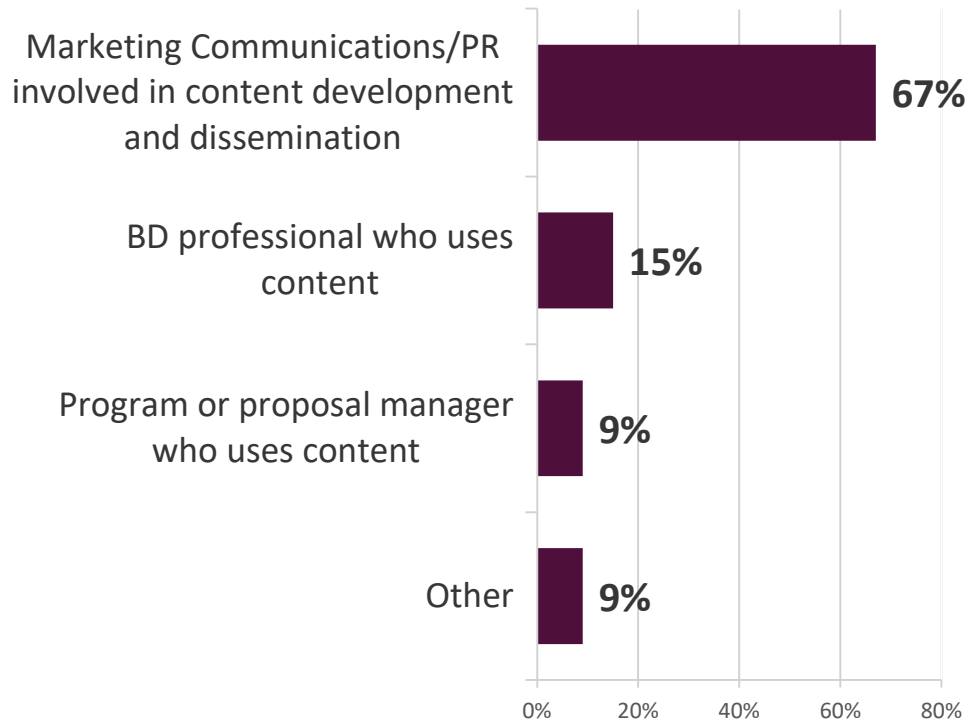
Government Decision Making Involvement



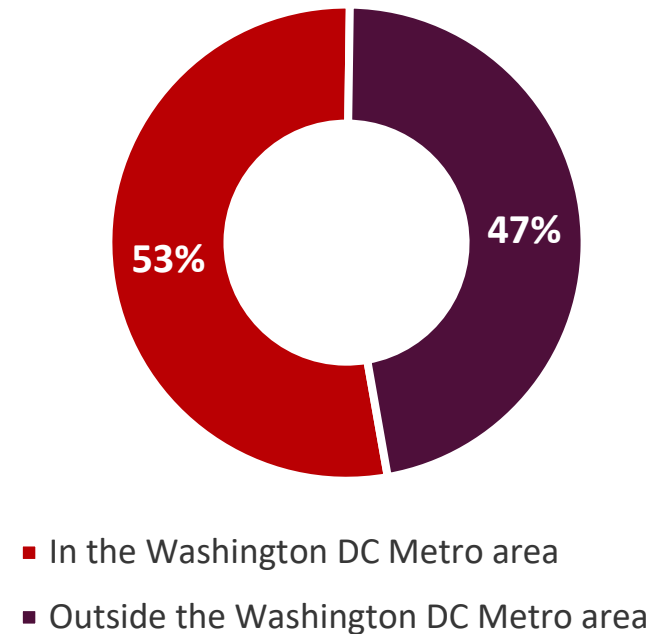
RESPONDENT PROFILE

Contractors

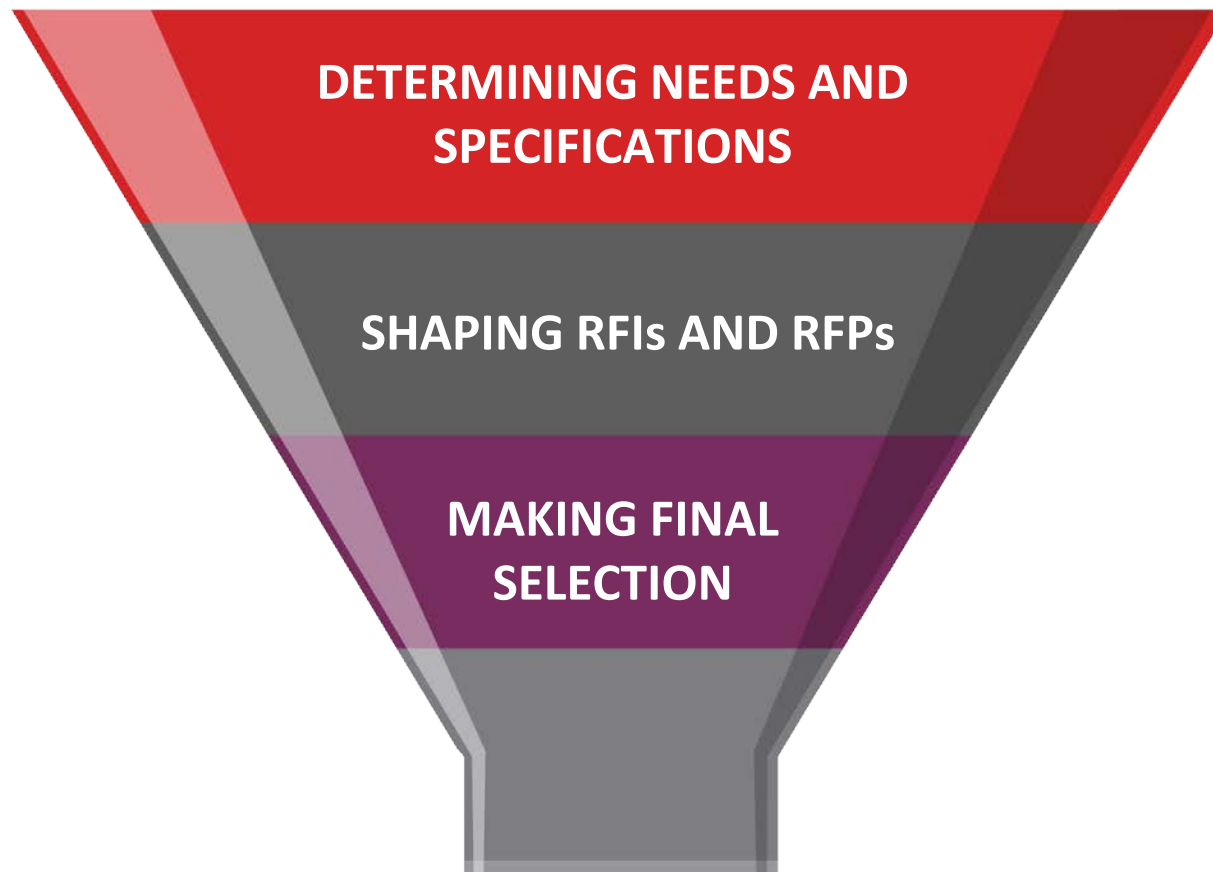
Marketing Communications Involvement



Location

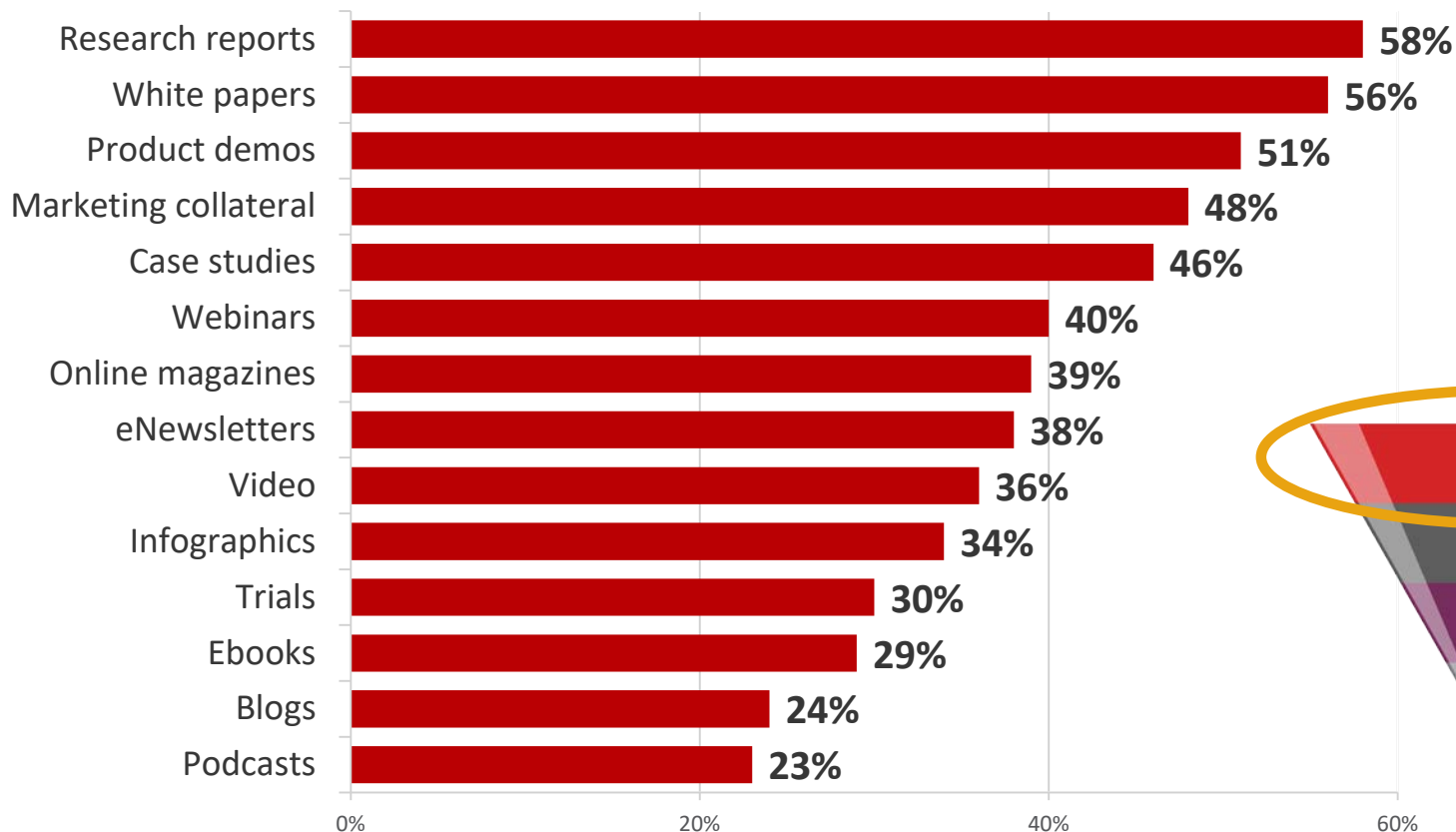


STAGES OF THE BUYING PROCESS



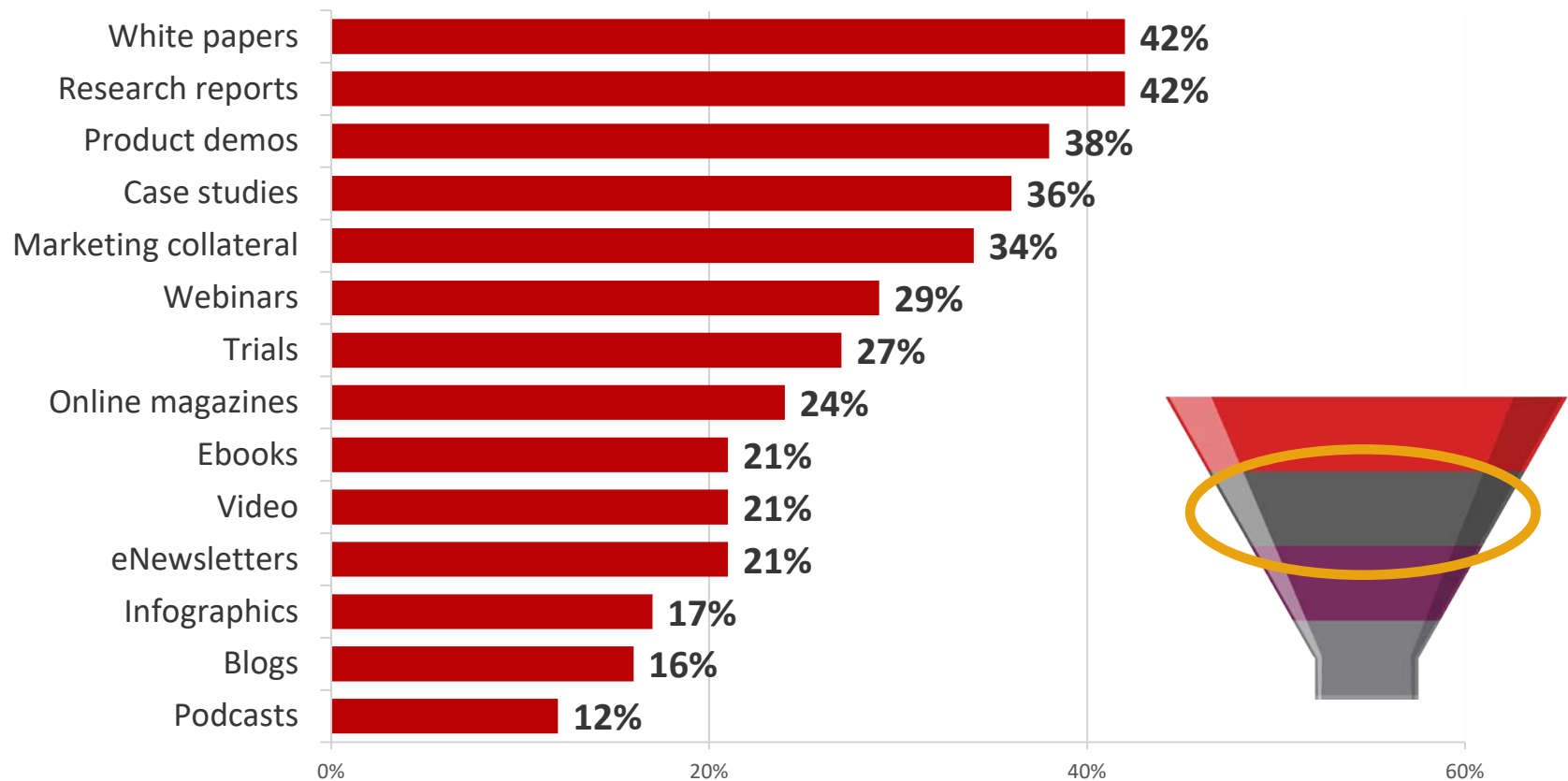
VALUE OF CONTENT DURING BUYING PROCESS

Determining Needs and Specifications: Government



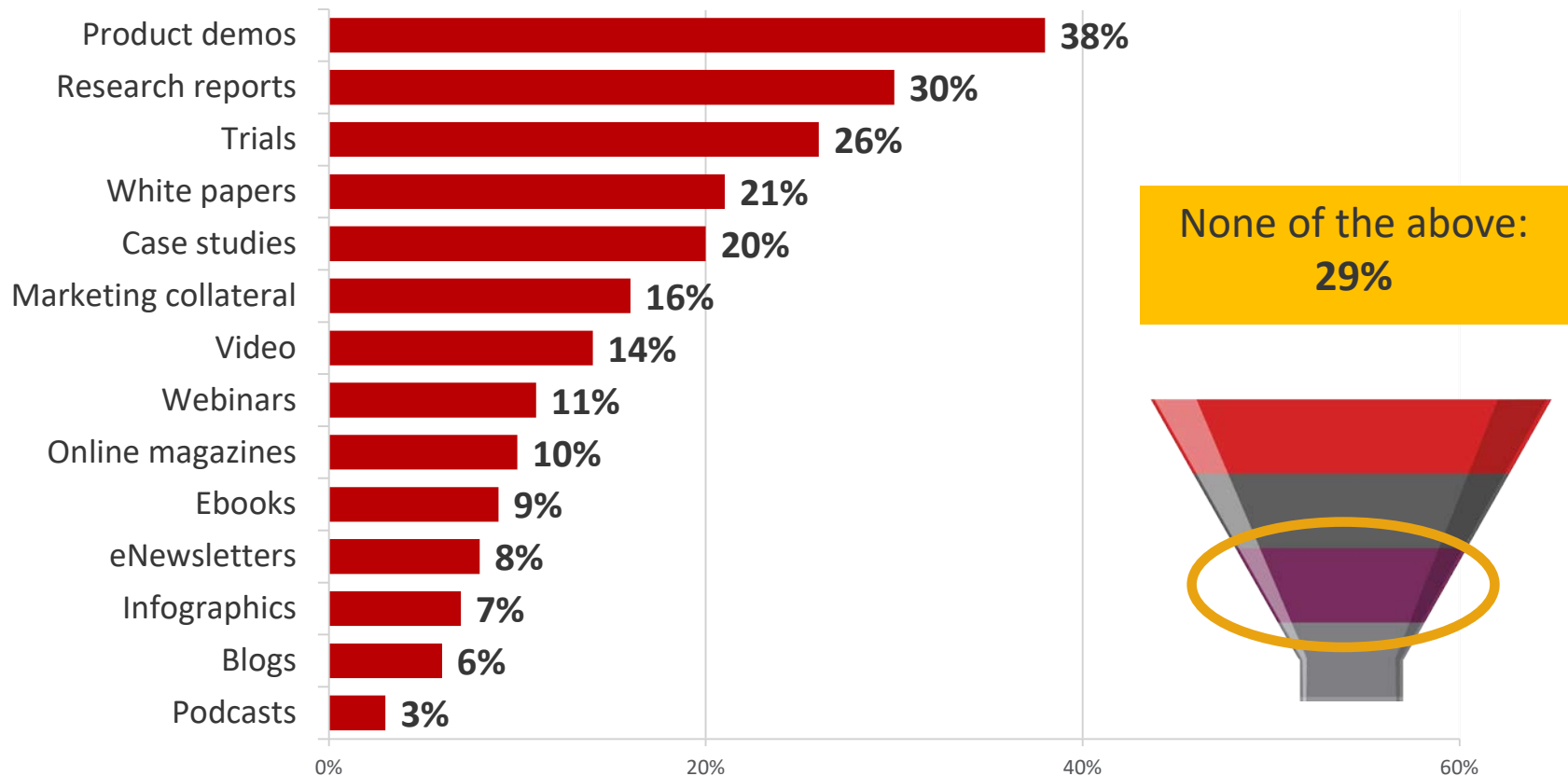
VALUE OF CONTENT DURING BUYING PROCESS

Shaping RFIs and RFPs: Government



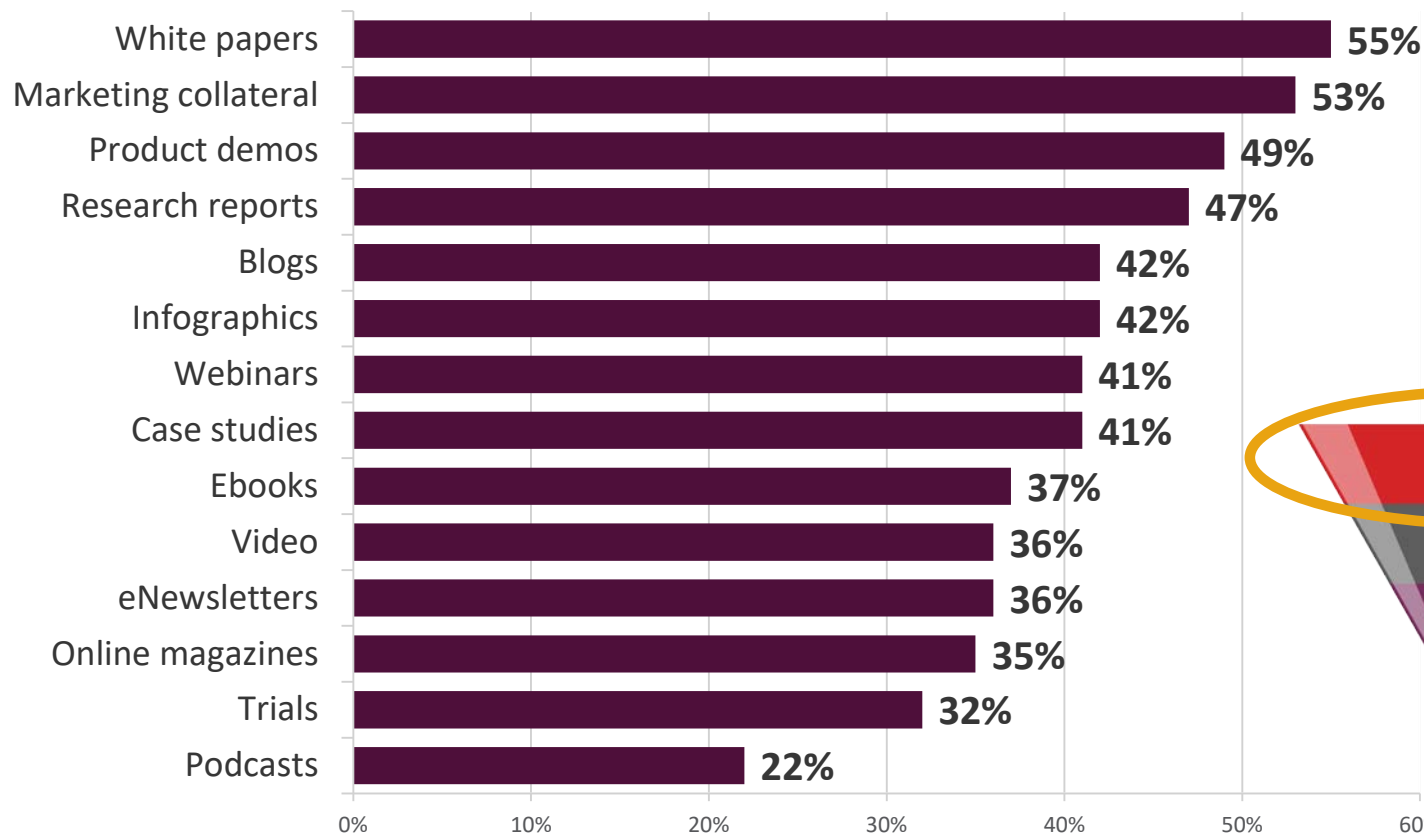
VALUE OF CONTENT DURING BUYING PROCESS

Making Final Selection of Provider or Source: Government



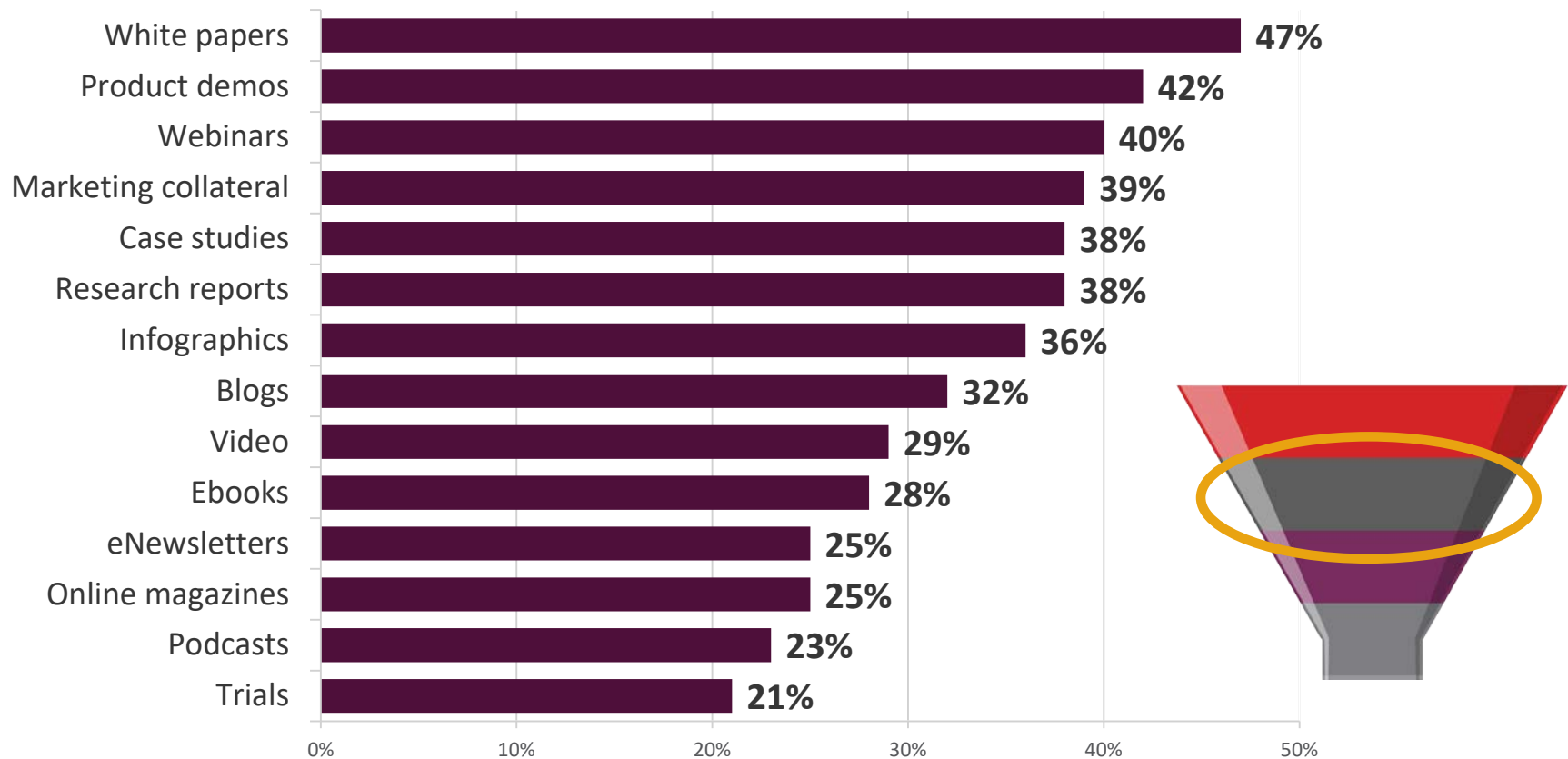
CONTENT PRIORITIES

Determining Needs and Specifications: Contractors



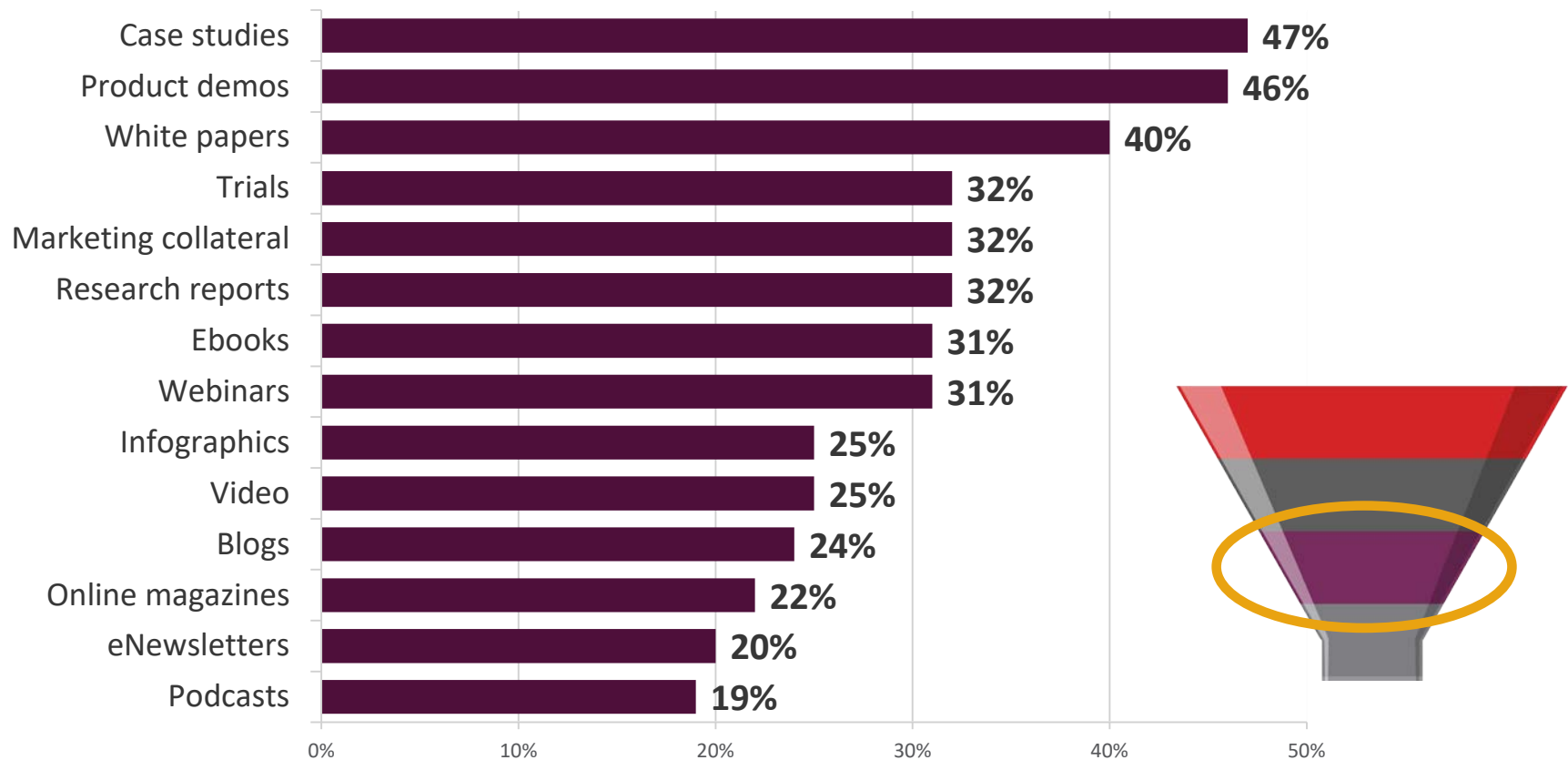
CONTENT PRIORITIES

Shaping RFIs and RFPs: Contractors



CONTENT PRIORITIES

Making Final Selection of Provider or Source: Contractors



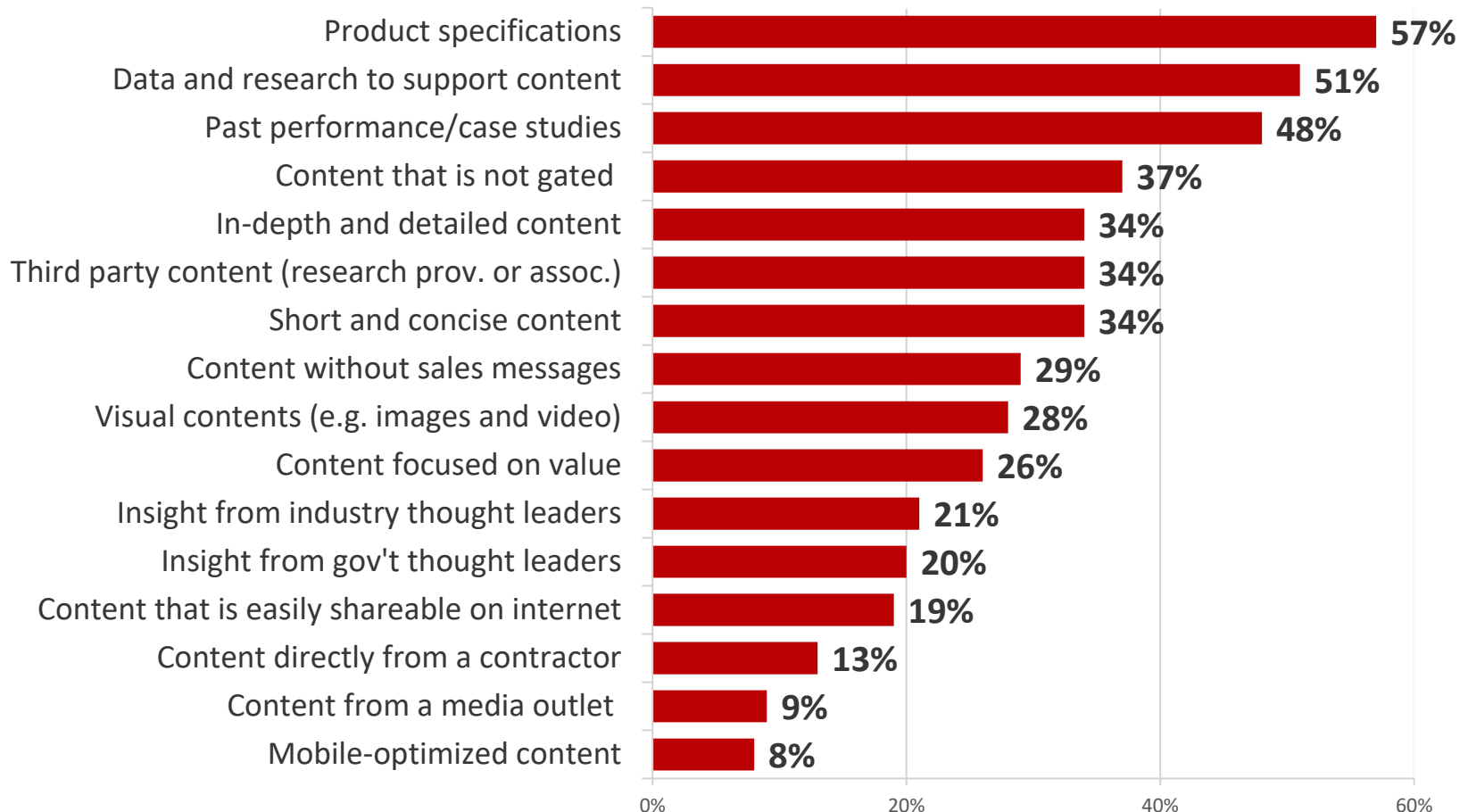


IMPORTANT CONTENT FEATURES



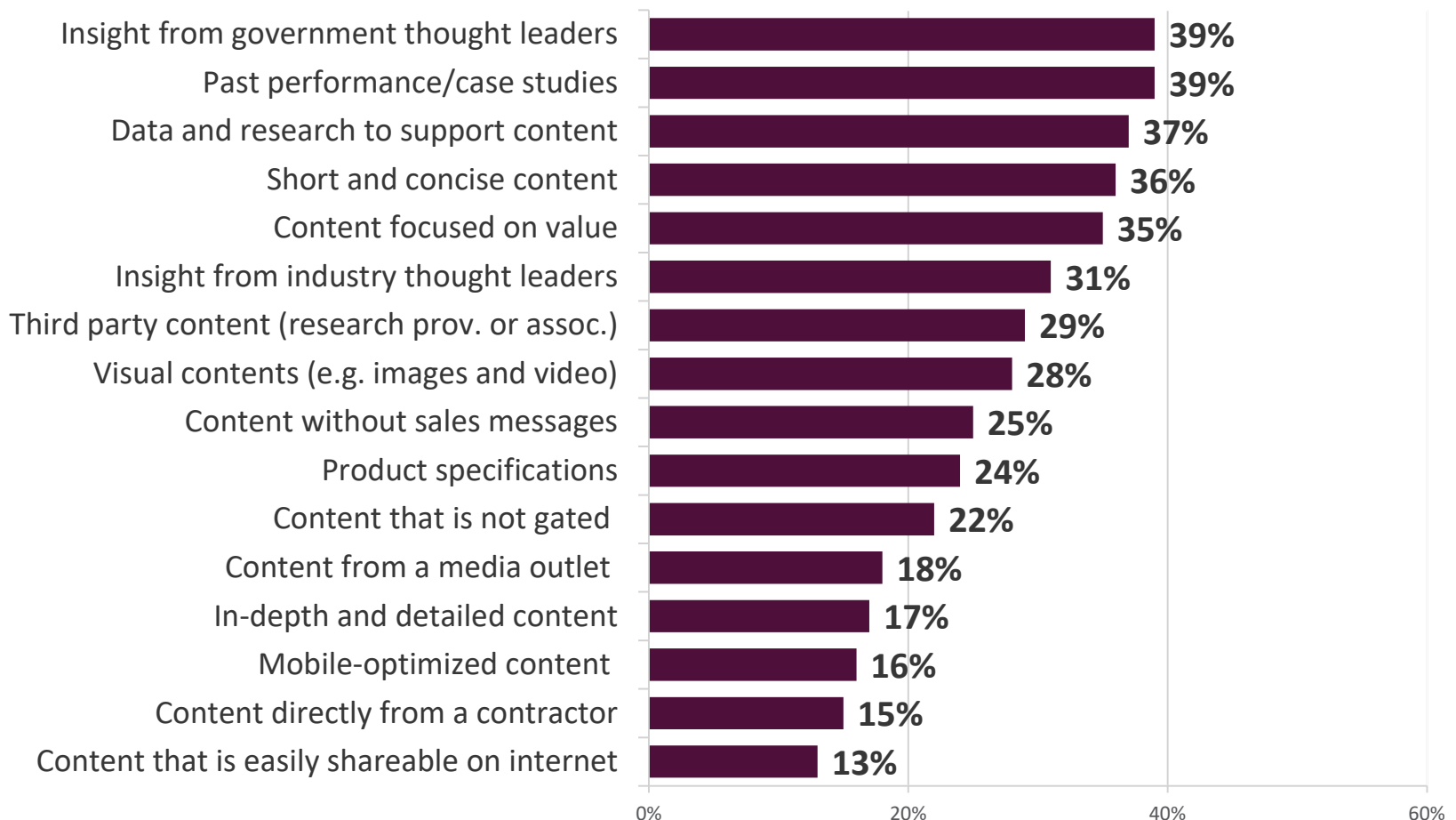
IMPORTANT CONTENT FEATURES

Government



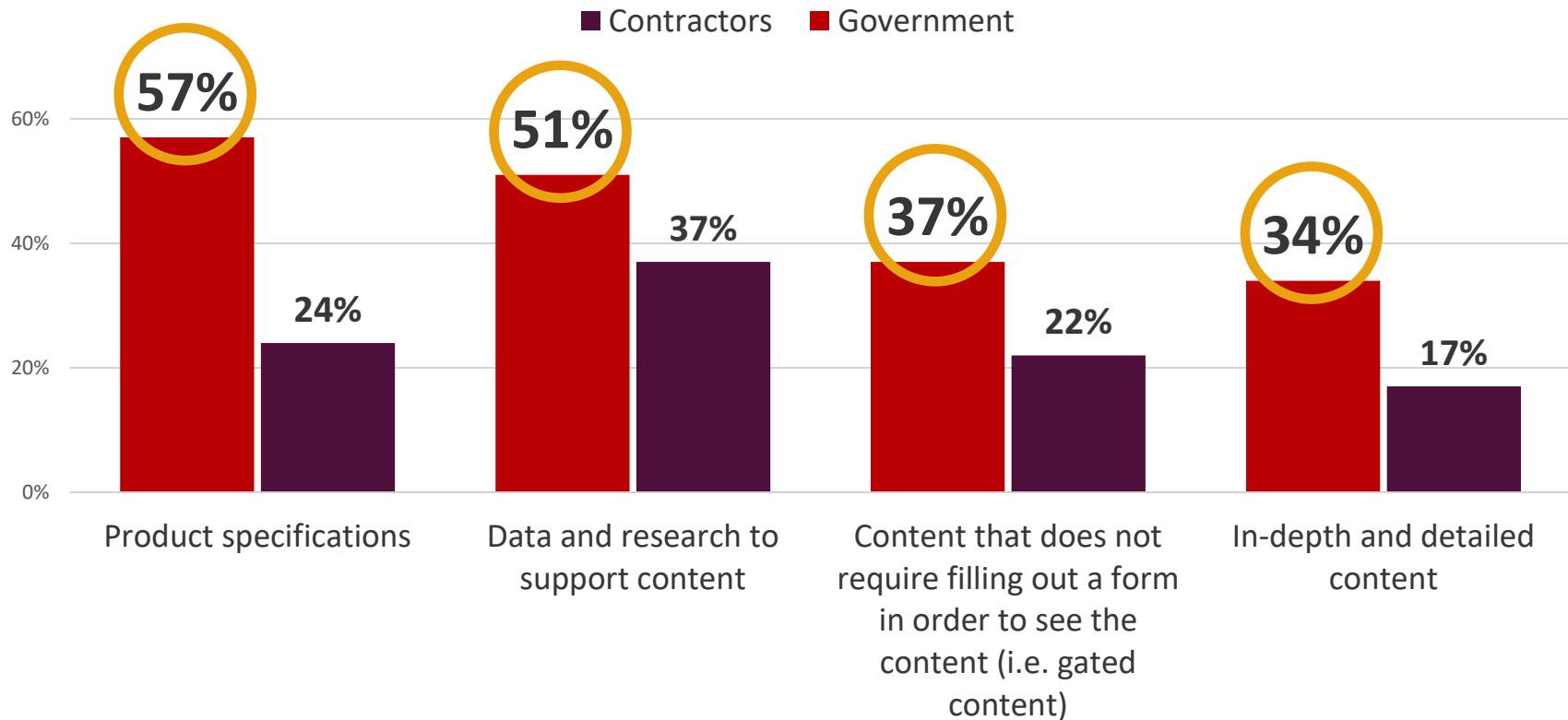
PERCEIVED IMPORTANT CONTENT FEATURES

Contractors



IMPORTANT CONTENT FEATURES GAPS

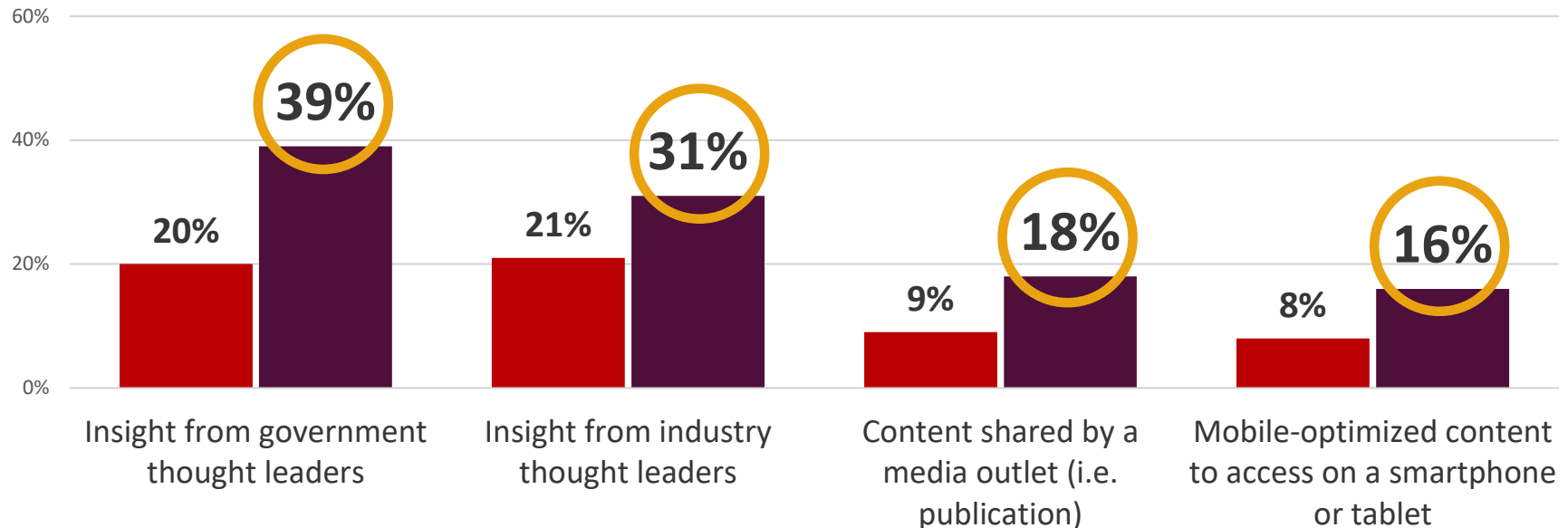
Significant Gaps Between Government and Contractor Perceptions of Important Content Features



IMPORTANT CONTENT FEATURES GAPS (CONT.)

Significant Gaps Between Government and Contractor Perceptions of Important Content Features

■ Contractors ■ Government



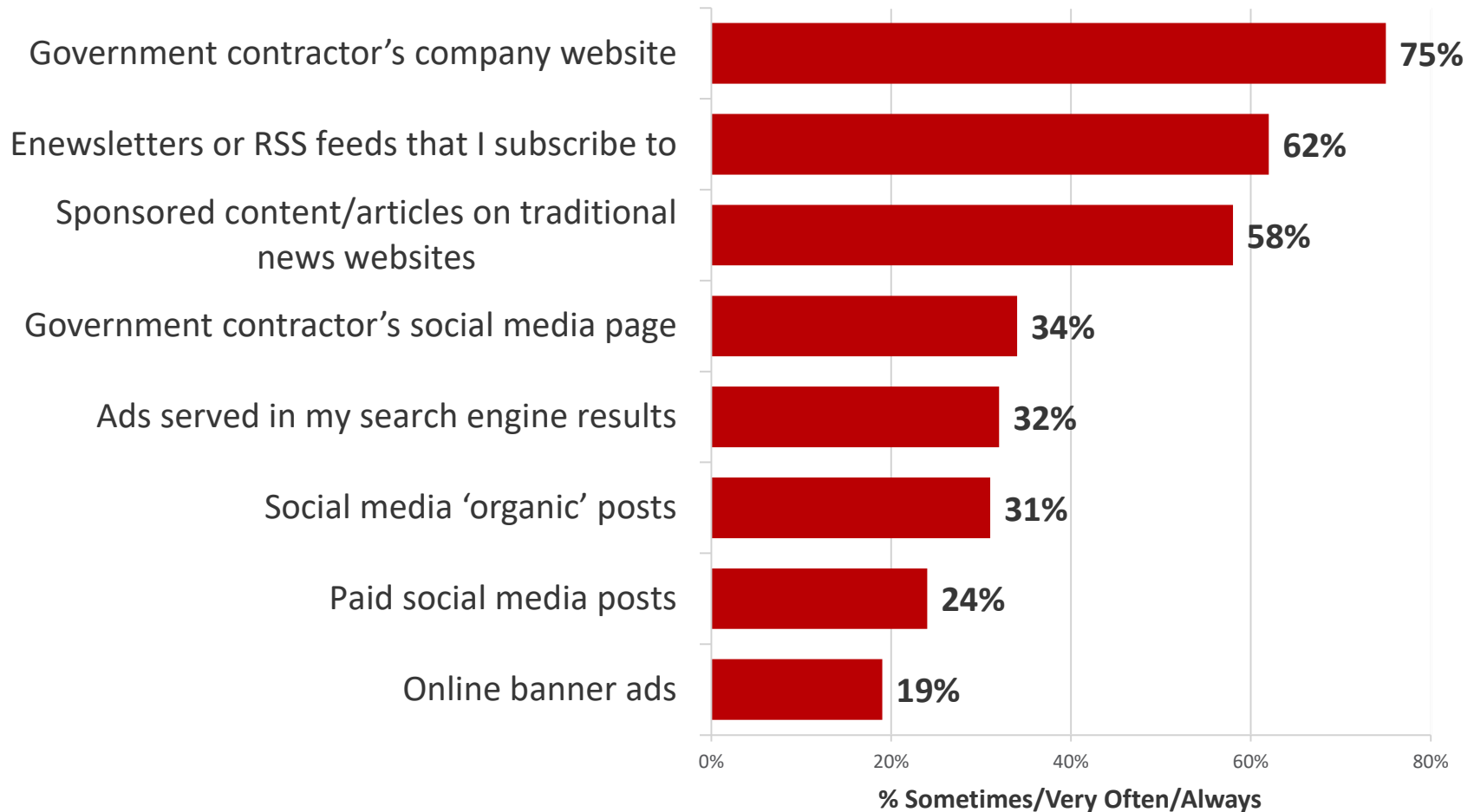


LEVERAGING ONLINE CHANNELS



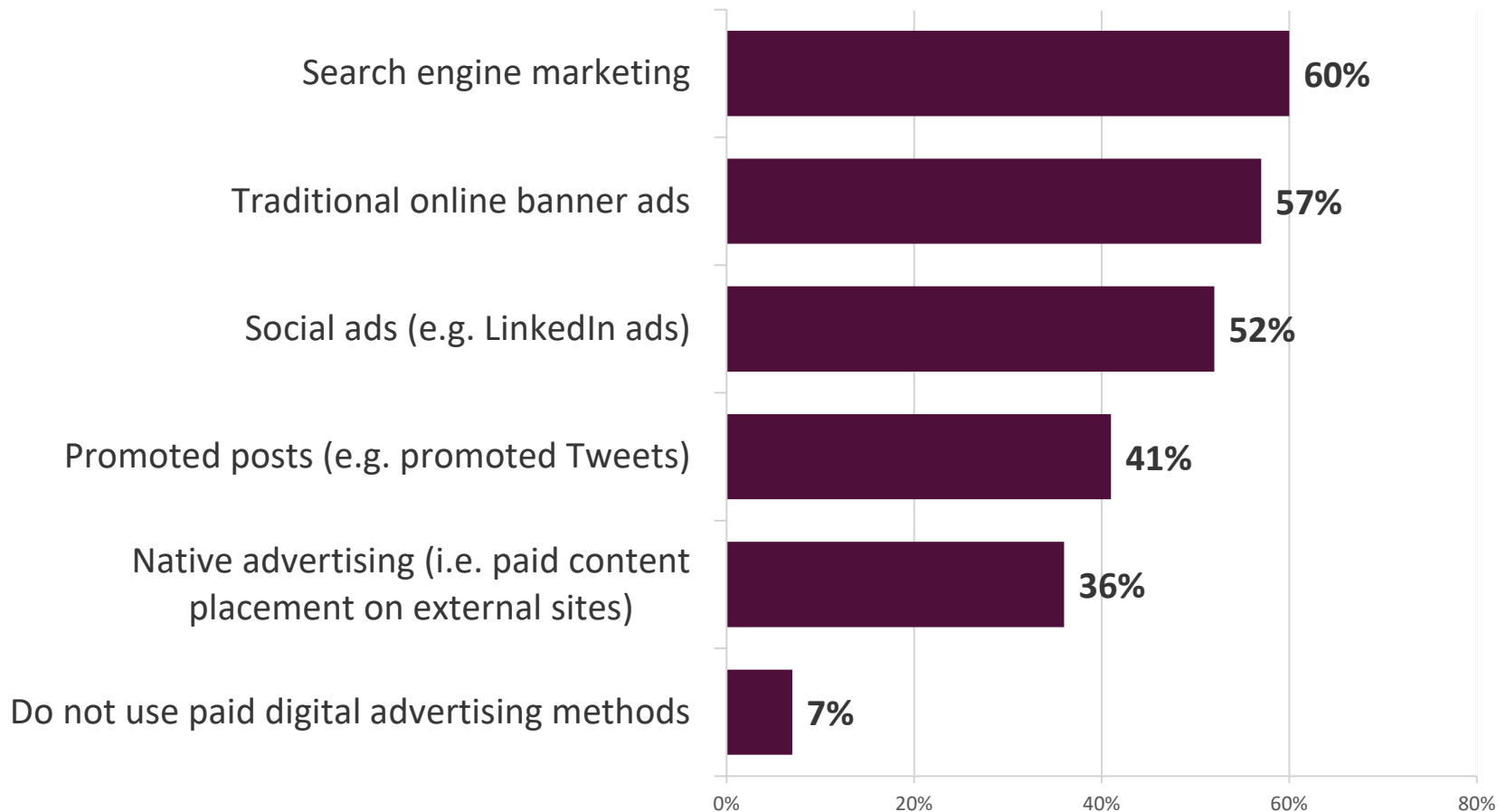
FREQUENTLY REVIEWED CONTENT TYPES

Work-Related Purchases: Government



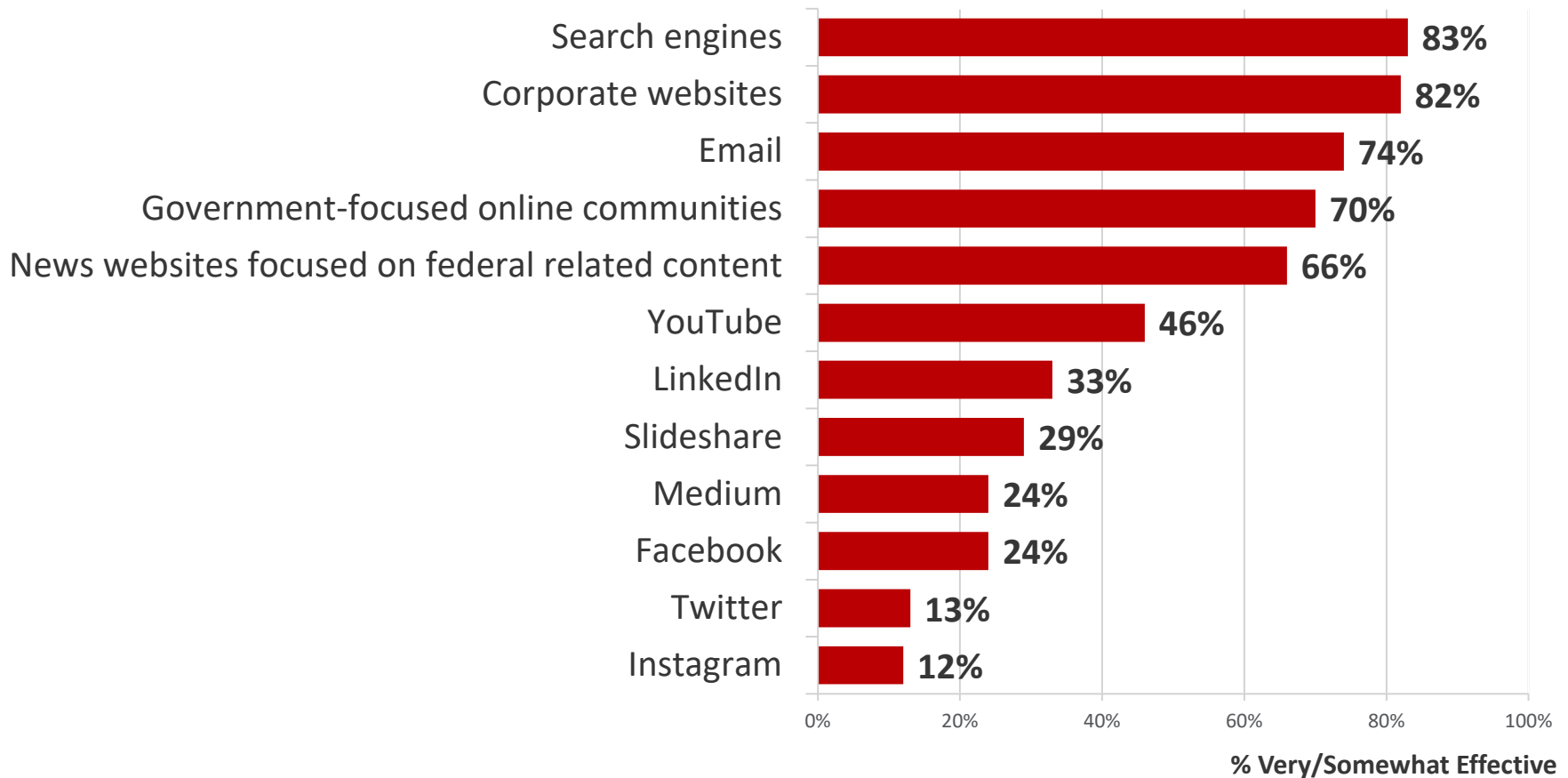
PAID DIGITAL ADVERTISING METHODS USED

Contractors



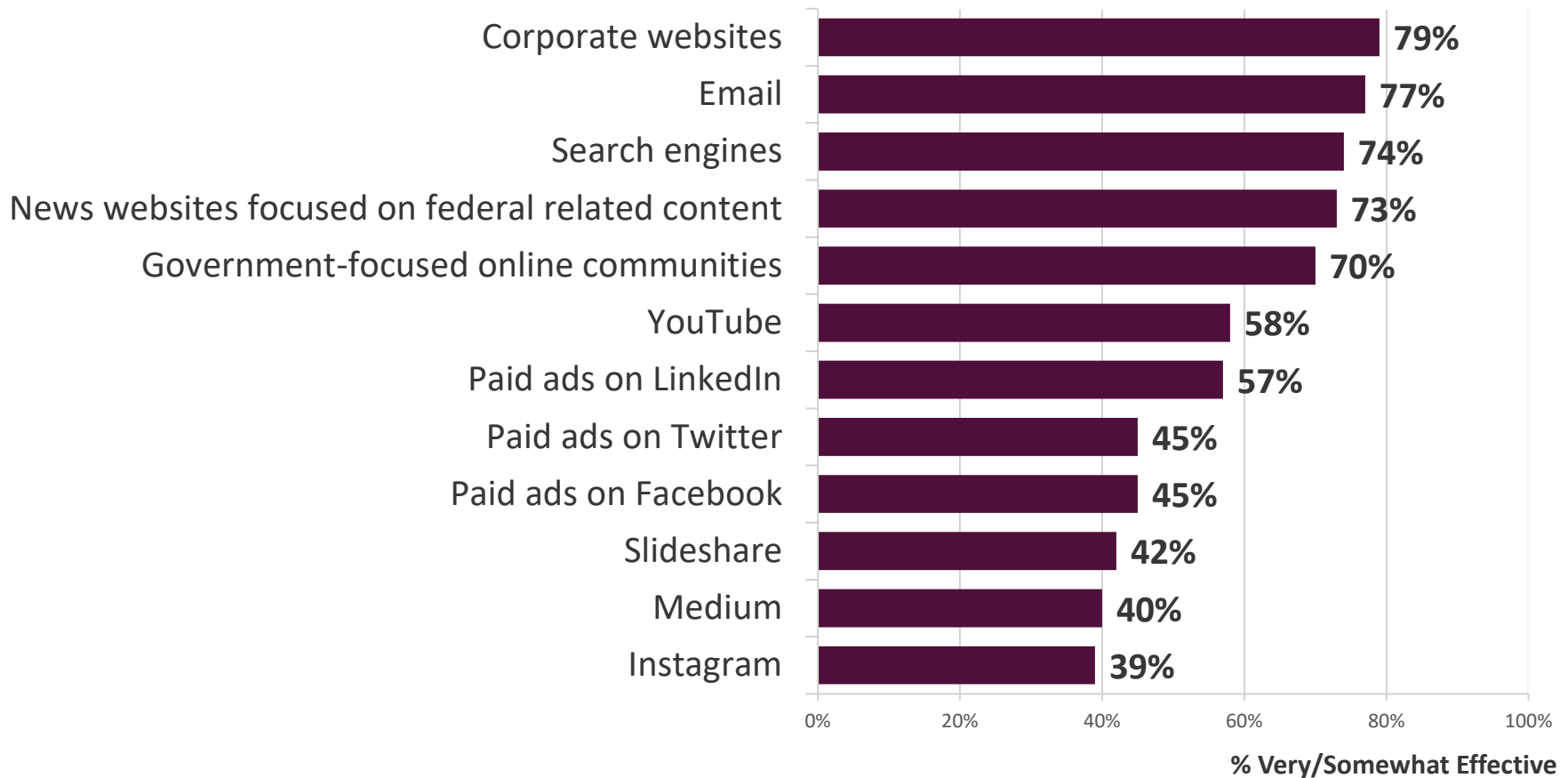
MOST EFFECTIVE CHANNELS

Government



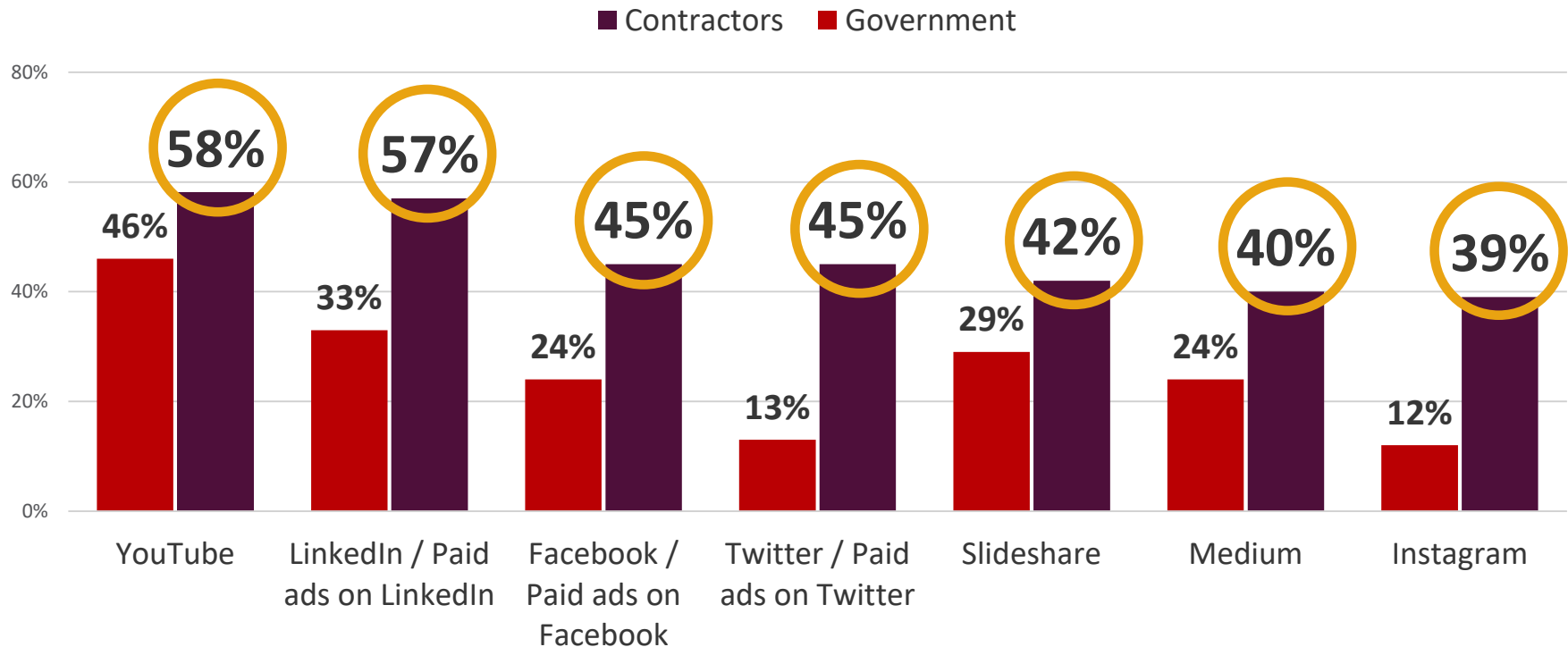
PERCEIVED MOST EFFECTIVE CHANNELS

Contractors



GAPS IN PERCEPTION OF EFFECTIVE CHANNELS

Significant Gaps Between Government and Contractor Perceptions of Effective Channels





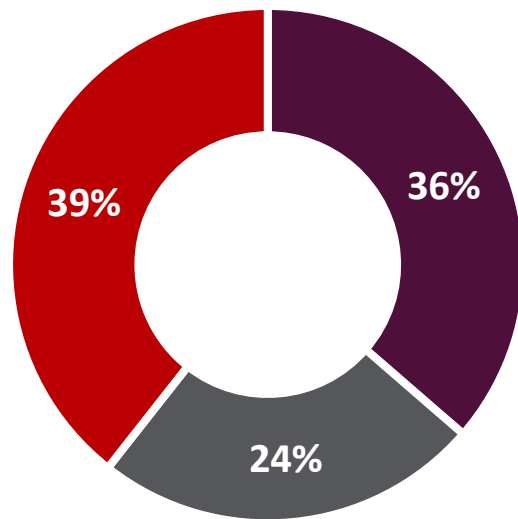
BARRIERS & PERSONAL DEVICE USAGE



PERSONALLY-OWNED DEVICE USE

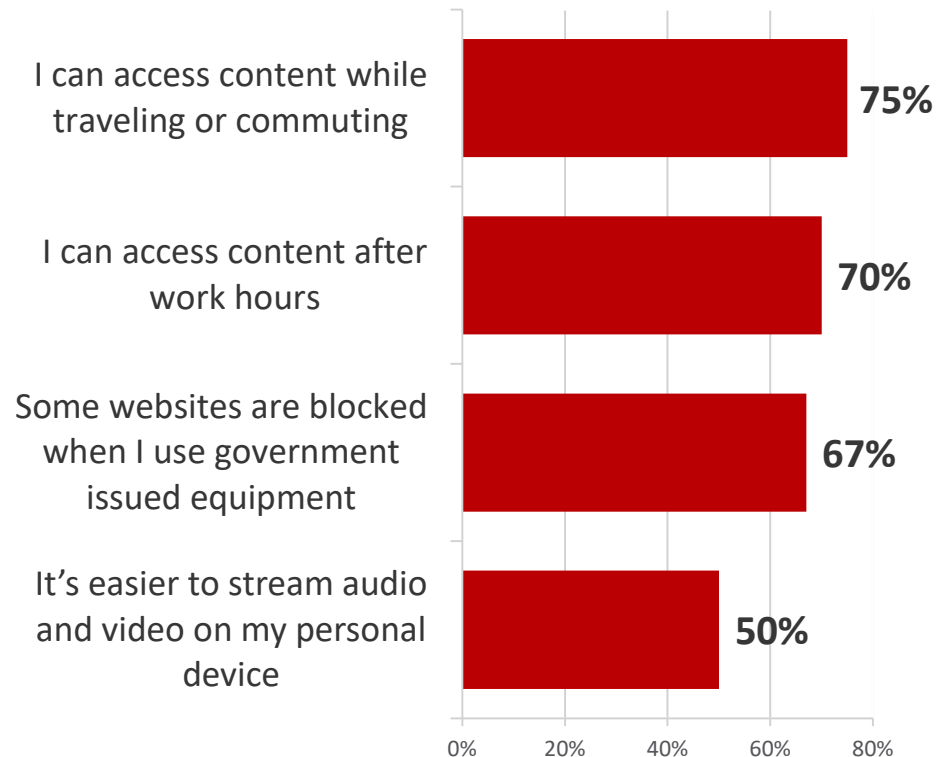
Government

Frequency of Using a Personally-Owned Device to Access Content



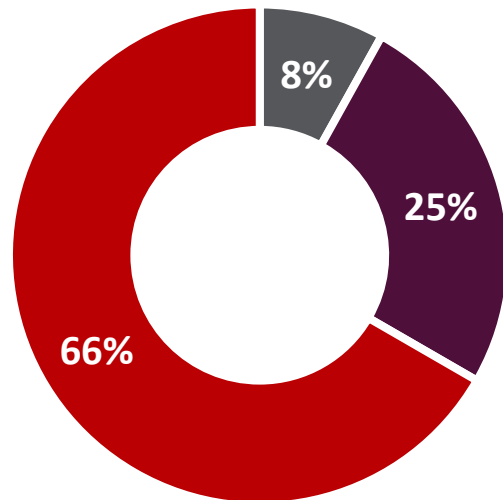
■ Rarely/Never ■ Sometimes ■ Very often/Always

Reasons for Using a Personally-Owned Device to Access Content



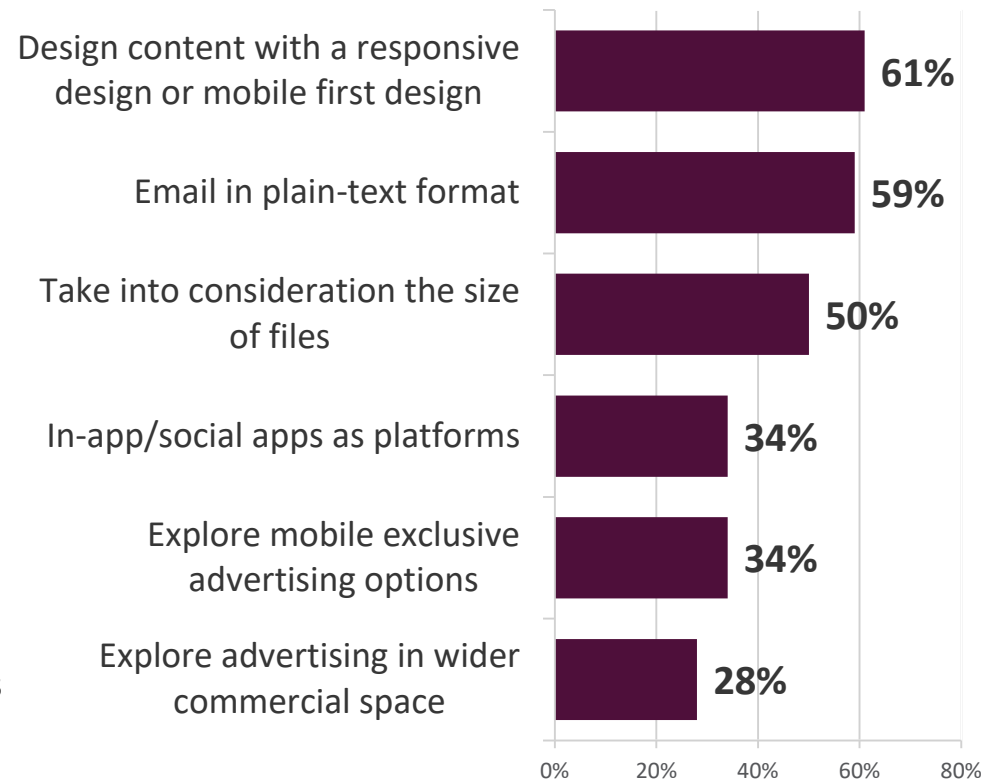
CONSIDERATION OF BARRIERS IN GOVERNMENT Contractors

Considers the Barriers Government Faces When Accessing Digital Content



■ Rarely/Never ■ Sometimes ■ Very often/Always

Activities to Ensure Government Can Access Contractor Content





ASK YOURSELF?



KEY TAKEAWAYS

DO I KNOW THE STAGE AND KNOW THE PERSON? IF YES, EDUCATE THEN DEMONSTRATE.

- Early in the process, spread yourself broadly, educating about the problem AND the solution. Use research reports, white papers and case studies to identify problems that maybe the client didn't even realize existed. Use them to plant key specifications in the RFI/RFP. Don't be afraid of detail.
- Always be ready with well-planned and executed product demos and trials. There are consistently 25-30% of the individuals throughout the government procurement process that believe product demos and trials are extremely valuable, HOWEVER, these are most influential later in the process.
- Once the proposal is submitted, you've missed the boat – Nothing else will be read.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

ARE YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA EFFORTS THE END GAME, OR THE BEGINNING? YOUR CUSTOMERS ARE REALLY “SEARCHING” FOR SOMETHING IN BETWEEN.

- Contractors tend to have an inflated sense of the importance of social media as a marketing and communication tool, while federal workers may not completely grasp the extent to which they are being influenced. It's a fine balance.
- Placing your eggs in the social media basket as a delivery mechanism for your value may not hit everyone you need, but it may help you stay in front of your customer.
- Websites and SEO are still key resources for government decision makers. You can't rely on your commercial websites to completely connect with the government buyer. If you can, customize and tailor it. If you can't, microsites and public sector solution landing pages may still be a path you can go down to have impact. Your social media site doesn't have the same impact.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

DO YOU HAVE A *COMMUTERS@WORK™* STRATEGY? NOT ALL RESEARCH (AND INFLUENCE) OCCURS BETWEEN 9-5 PM.

- Nearly two-thirds of government decision makers are using their personal devices to access content for work. Sometimes, it's all they have during their commute. Sometimes, it's because it's easier to get certain types of content.
- 40% of ALL decision makers are accessing work content on their personal devices while commuting or traveling. Are you where they are?
- Is your content accessible to these individuals? Optimized for mobile review? Snackable? Able to infiltrate their personal social media feeds?
- Don't forget, though, about the other 60%. Your content still needs to penetrate through the government networks.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

ARE YOU USING CONTENT AND CHANNELS THAT INSTILL TRUST? AWARENESS OPENS THE DOOR, TRUST CLOSES THE DEAL.

- Trust comes when each party involved works with the belief that the other has the other person's best interest in mind (and not their own). You need to develop the "*No Kidding*" discussions.
- Are you hiding anything and everything behind registrations?
- Do your messages speak of their issues and not solely your solutions? Let them know what is possible.
- Are you leveraging research and information that comes from unbiased, third parties without a dog in the fight? (i.e. associations, certification groups, research analysts – those without a stake in the final sale)
- The target customer has to believe you are in this for them, and not just you.



Market Connections

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