



STATE OF
**B2B CONTENT
CONSUMPTION &
DEMAND REPORT**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 1. Introduction to the Research 3
- 2. The Data Sets 4
- 3. How To Read This Guide 4
- 4. By The People 5
 - a. Behold The Power of the Manager.....6
 - b. The Individual Contributor..... 7
 - c. A Fresh Look At More Job Levels 8
 - d. So Why Are We Still Chasing the C-Level? 10
- 5. Words At Work 11
- 6. By The Company 12
- 7. By The Industry 15
- 8. Observations On Tech & Audience17
- 9. So, What's Next?19
- 10. We Say It All The Time 20
 - a. About Morris Consulting



INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH

03

This report provides B2B marketers with data from thousands of real campaigns over the past 12 months, with insights from consumption activity taking place across the NetLine Corporation Network in the US. Combining two layers of data – that of the in-demand audience and realities of active audience consumption – marketers can derive tactics to assemble a comprehensive content marketing strategy.

Last year, we'll admit – we got so excited with our data, that we served up a solid report of numbers that your team could take back to the fort and dissect for days on end. As data people, we're into that kind of thing.

This year, we raised the bar on the data by doing both – reporting and digesting it for you, providing actionable conclusions from data trends and changes from last year's observations on content consumption and audience engagement. Why? Because content marketing works, but lots of marketers are feeling the heat to crank out content without time spent developing objectives or understanding their target audience. Demand Gen Report published the 2018 Demand Generation Benchmark Survey Report, which surveyed marketers on how they will be measured and which KPIs will influence strategy. 73% of respondents indicated a greater focus on quality of leads over quantity of leads and 53% responded that they intend to expand their content library to drive campaigns. These are key indicators that in 2018, marketers are looking at how to better target and convert with content. The report also speaks to the pressure on marketers to meet revenue-based quotas, with 28% of respondents

operating against them; increasingly, marketers' roles are becoming inextricably tied to the pipeline development and sales functions. Rather than chase prospects with long-form sales messages, the data provided in this report can help you tailor content to reach the right individuals and keep your sales teams as busy as desired.

With so many marketers shifting their focus to content, the competition in the content universe reflects the efficacy of content marketing. Simultaneously, the consumption trends point to an appetite that continues to keep pace with the marketers who are giving chase.

What does that mean for you? With this report, you and your marketing team can formulate a fresh lead generation strategy, founded on campaign and consumption behavior from hundreds of millions of data-points. The takeaways can be applied to a multi-channel strategy as well, helping marketers better understand the professionals perusing their content.

THE DATA SETS

This report gathers anonymous data from campaigns run on the NetLine network in the United States, including a deep dive into all industries well beyond just “Tech”. **Throughout the report, we will contrast the Active Audience, those who consume content on the network but who were not targeted by clients, to the In-Demand audience, or those professionals that our clients are strategically targeting.** Simply put, it’s everyone who consumes business-oriented content, regardless of whether or not they fit a lead profile of a given vendor.

Why do we look at all of these data sets? Ultimately, this data offers valuable insights into the content consumption behaviors and trends of professionals across industries. With this information, marketers can go beyond intuition to develop more concise targeting and optimize content.

HOW TO READ THIS GUIDE

1. “No assembly required.” Go forth and explore! This report is arranged by four main categories – for the data conclusions, jump to the “Takeaway” and navigate in whatever sequence represents your brand’s priorities.

By the People	5
By the Company	12
By the Industries	15
Observations on Tech & Society	17

2. Keep yourself in mind – with each category, ask yourself or ask your team to consider how these trends may or may not be relevant to your objectives. Some questions to consider:

- What types of professionals comprise your target audience/persona and what is their influence over purchasing decisions?
- What does the target company look like: scale of revenue and employee size, geographic footprint?
- Does your target prospect exist across multiple target industries or does your product or service offer horizontal relevance to most industries?
- How does technology and lifestyle profile factor into consumption and content development?

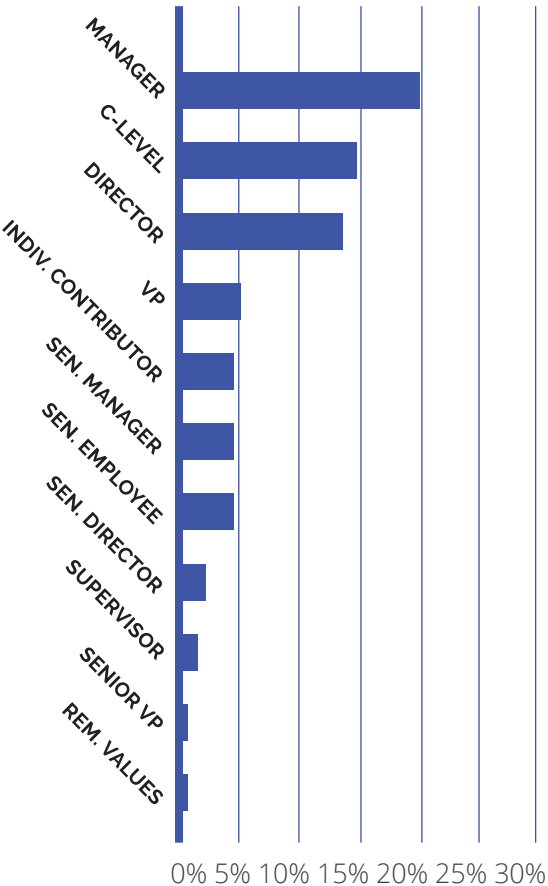


BY THE PEOPLE

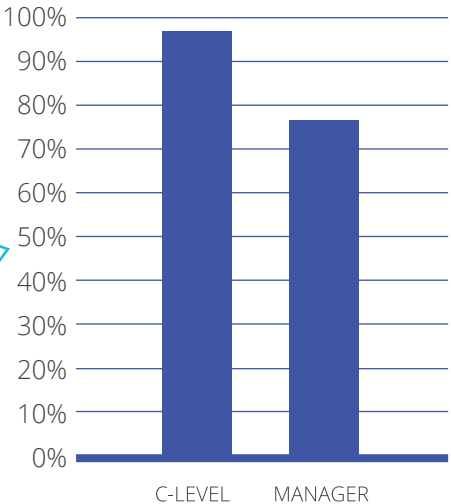
A DEEP DIVE INTO TOP PROFESSIONALS SOUGHT AND SEEKING CONTENT

Behind the numbers are real people – professionals who are seeking professionally enriching content that aids in their various vendor/solution-oriented research initiatives. With so many of us marketers vying for their attention, we must be more strategic than ever to inform and influence.

REALITY OF LEAD GENERATION



TARGETING EXPECTATIONS



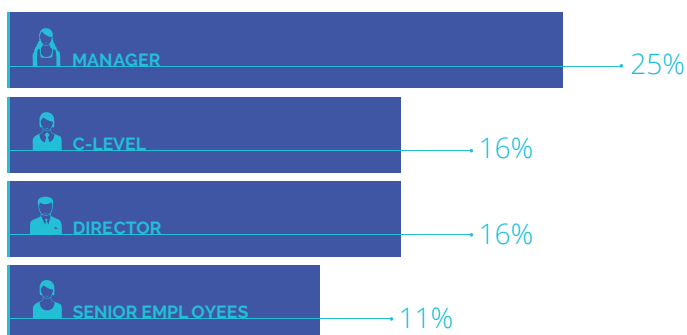
Behold the Power of the Manager



CONSIDER THE INFLUENCER

- Managers comprise 25% of the active audience and are most likely of all job levels to request more than one piece of content.
- They have the bandwidth and demand for content. They also have influence over buying decisions. They are gathering information and skills.
- They are targeted 21% less often than C-level, making them less likely to have competing content in their possession.

MORE THAN ONE CONTENT REQUEST

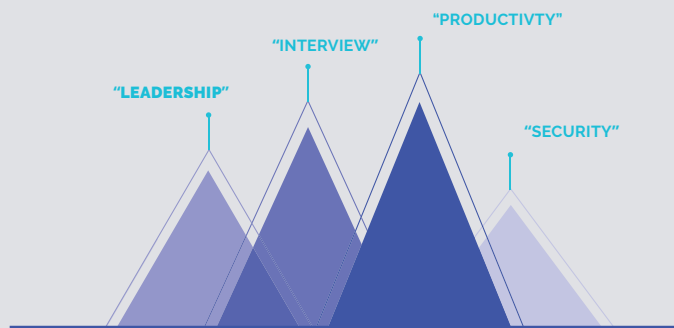


USE WORDS THAT STICK

Though HR was only 10% of the Managers' Job Area, the single most popular content of the previous 12 months carried a "Tips" theme focused on workforce management.

Of all content consumed by Managers in 2017, some additional themes were:

- Best practices in the form of what not to do.
- Productivity, interview best practices, leadership, and security were in the top-ranking genres of content
- eBooks with titles that include: Learn, Train, Lead, Success



CLOSE THE GAP

Managers take the least amount of time to consume requested content, which means an improved follow-up by your sales team can happen within a day or two and the contact will be able to connect better with reps.



SR. MANAGER
- 24h -



MANAGER
- 26h -

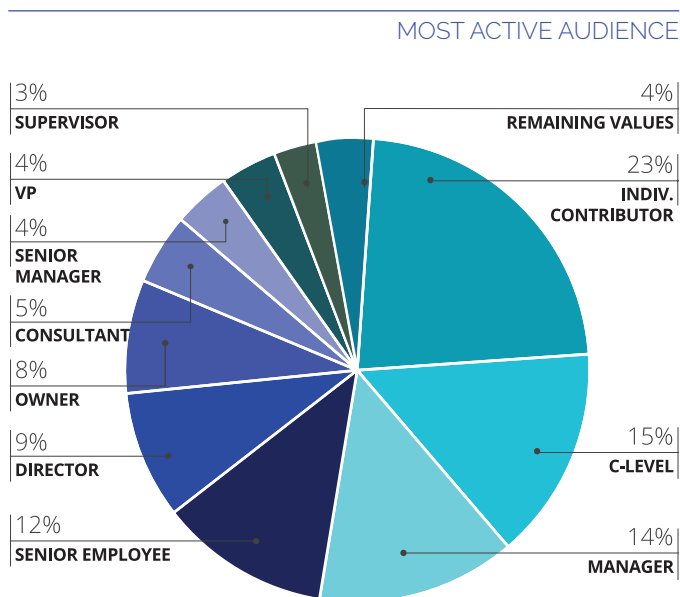


C-LEVEL
- 33h -



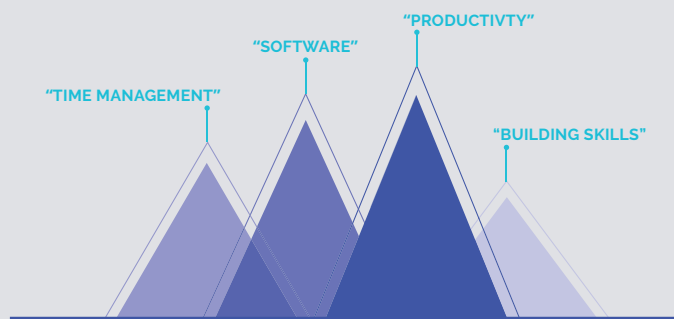
OWNER
- 44h -

The Individual Contributor



CONSIDER THE INFLUENCER

- They are the single largest consumer of content across the market, comprising 25% of all content consumption
- Only comprised 6% of the in-demand audience and only targeted by 28% of campaigns
- Leads processed with this title were predominantly from companies of employee size 5,000 – 9,999, with revenue of \$100 m. – 499.9 million and are in the IT/Computers/ Electronics industry.



USE WORDS THAT STICK

Individual Contributors in companies of 5,000+ employee size are engaging the most with content that concerns productivity, software, time management, and building skill sets.



CLOSE THE GAP

As the most active consumers of content, they're also very busy – this Job Level is #4 on the Consumption Gap ranking (below Consultant, C-level and Executive VP), clocking in at 30.2 hours before consuming requested content. Through humanizing content that aims to resolve their pain-points, marketers can tap into the influence of the Individual Contributor. Combining more streamlined formatting cues with the humanized content can help shorten the time between initial request and consumption of content.



A Fresh Look At More Job Levels

WHO TO REACH AND HOW TO DO IT

THE DIRECTORS

Directors were targeted in 98% of campaigns and exhibited a 16% increase in requesting a second piece of content - particularly those at company size of 100-299. The content concerns workforce related topics for team building or skills development. Directors comprised 19.5% of the in-demand audience last year.

THE VPs & EXECUTIVE VPs

VPs and Executive VPs were:

- Targeted by 98% of campaigns.
- The only Job Level to report a significant decrease in the hours between request and download.
- VPs have shown a 22% increase in additional requests for content, which is the greatest delta of all Job Levels.

This data shows a tendency at this level to juggle both decision-making authority and involvement with research for making such decisions.

- Taking less time to consume requested content + the top content themes = VPs may be wearing many hats.

With a smaller Consumption Gap, sales can more confidently anticipate that a VP has read content within 26 a hour timeframe (7% faster than last year).

THE OWNERS

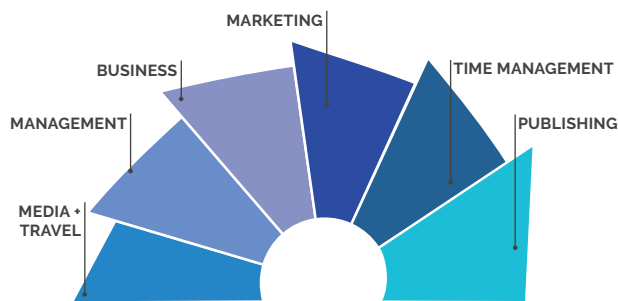
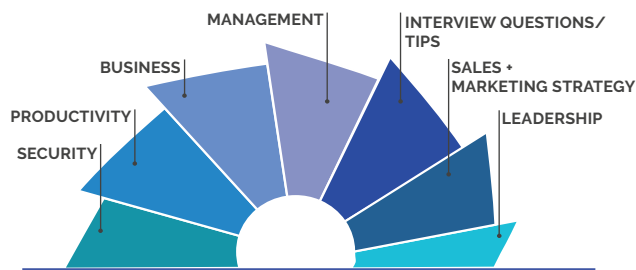
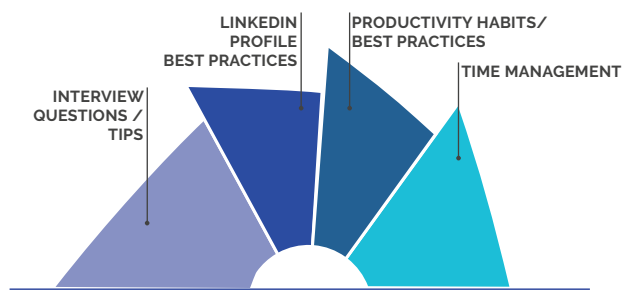
Shake up the allure of targeting owners with the reality of their bandwidth.

- Owners take the longest to download content following a request – 43 hours
- That's on rise, stable increase over last year at 10%.

Despite this lag, they are targeted more than Individual Contributors, with 34% of campaigns targeting Owners compared to 28% targeting Individual Contributors.

Owners' content preferences show their diversity of interests across business topics. As tempting as it is to reach both a contributor-minded individual who also makes decisions for their business, the Consumption Gap shows there are lots of barriers and exclusivity of an Owner's time before pushing through the funnel.

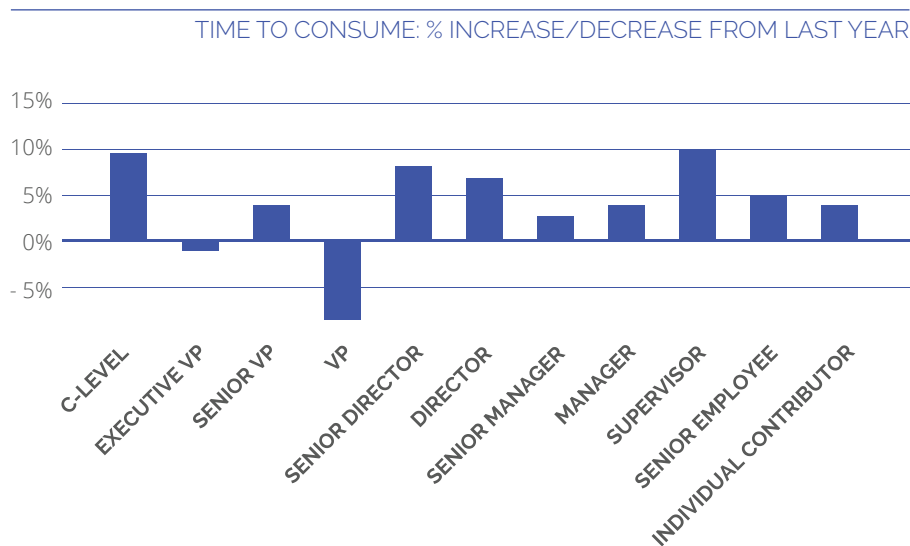
TOP CONTENT THEMES



TAKEAWAY: At enterprise companies, the scale and complexity of the org chart leaves a C-level employee, Executives, Directors and Managers with increasingly less time for follow ups and discovery research. See beyond the C-suite – target influencers in the organization who have the time and vested interest in consuming content that advances the objectives typical of their roles. Clearly the top theme among job levels concerns time management and optimization of productivity. Marketers can appeal to multiple influential Job Levels by serving up content that humanizes the reader's pain points, resonates through humanization, and offers a solution to their needs.

MIND THE GAP

Consumption gap measures the time in hours between the initial request for content, and when the content is actually consumed. Because of the vast amount of content being targeted at professionals and their desire to consume content in the quest for research, marketers should consider the quality of their content relative to the individuals, companies, and industries they're targeting.



What we're seeing in a year-to-year comparison is a trend for all consumers of content to take a few more hours to actually digest a requested piece of content. This chart depicts the percent increase (or decrease) in hours between initial request and consumption from 2016 to 2017. **Check out VPs – they've actually shown a decrease in the amount of time before consuming content.**

So why are we still chasing the C-level?

Ultimately, it's because we believe that they make the final decisions, and for sales, that's fast-tracking your funnel approach. In reality, it's the collective supporting cast that allows the C-Suite professional to make an informed decision oftentimes without doing much of the heavy lifting. But there's a better way to get there.

If C-level professionals are pivotal in your marketing targeting strategy, there may be a better way to get through to them. Here's what we know about C-level from 2017:

- After Managers, C-level is the next most likely to request additional content and their consumption is on the rise at 11% over last year.
- 83% of them are identifying their Job Area as Executive
- Top in-demand industries of C-level leads were in:
 - Computers and Technology Industry
 - Finance
 - Healthcare and Medical
- C-level takes 21% longer to read the content they've downloaded compared to Managers, but there's an appetite that continues to grow.
- What emerges from the data is that **C-level has the best intentions to consume content** but has to make a greater effort to find the time to read it. This presents a challenge to sales teams who are eager to follow up with a decision-maker and reference their content. Part of that consumption gap may be the product of the type of content they request. An eBook is more of a time commitment than a whitepaper, yet that is a popular format among C-level professionals.

POPULAR CONTENT:

In the top ten requested downloads, **eBook** was the leading Content type.

Titles concerned topics such as **time management, leadership, work-life balance, and business-theory.**

Titles with **numbers and lists** were popular, plus mastery-oriented **guides** for software and other skill sets.



**C-LEVEL
HAS THE
BEST INTENTIONS
TO CONSUME
CONTENT BUT
REQUIRES MORE
EFFORT TO READ IT**

TAKEAWAY: Organize content into digestible formats which can be easily viewed on mobile devices. C-level are looking for eBooks but don't have the time – format eBooks to close that consumption gap and keep topics relevant to their interests. Make it simple for them to request more content that establishes a dialogue.



WORDS AT
WORK

TOP WORDS IN THE TOP 100 TITLES DOWNLOADED
BY THE ENTIRE IN-DEMAND AUDIENCE.

BY THE COMPANY

A DEEP DIVE INTO TOP PERSONAS
SOUGHT AND SEEKING CONTENT

UNDERSTANDING THE VALUE OF COMPANY VALUE TARGETING BY EMPLOYEE SIZE & REVENUE

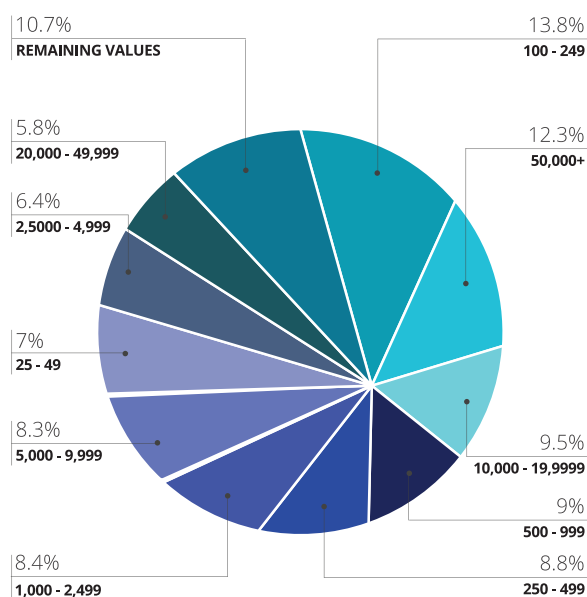
Depending on the product or service, company size can truly make a difference in targeting outcomes. Of the in-demand audience in 2017, companies 100-249 employees were the top targeted size.

When combined with revenue, the top In-Demand company profile was: companies of at least \$5 billion in revenue + 50,000+ employees. However, the 50,000+ company size has decreased its consumption of more than one piece of content by 7%.

Organizations of 10,000+ showed an increase of 46% in additional content but were only targeted by 9.5% of all campaigns.

Comprising 21% of the active audience, Individual Contributors have the demand for content and the bandwidth to consume it within larger company sizes. The larger the organization, the more diverse the structure. By combining these two data points, marketers have a greater likelihood of impacting decision makers by entering through the individual contributor.

% OF IN-DEMAND BY EMPLOYEE SIZE

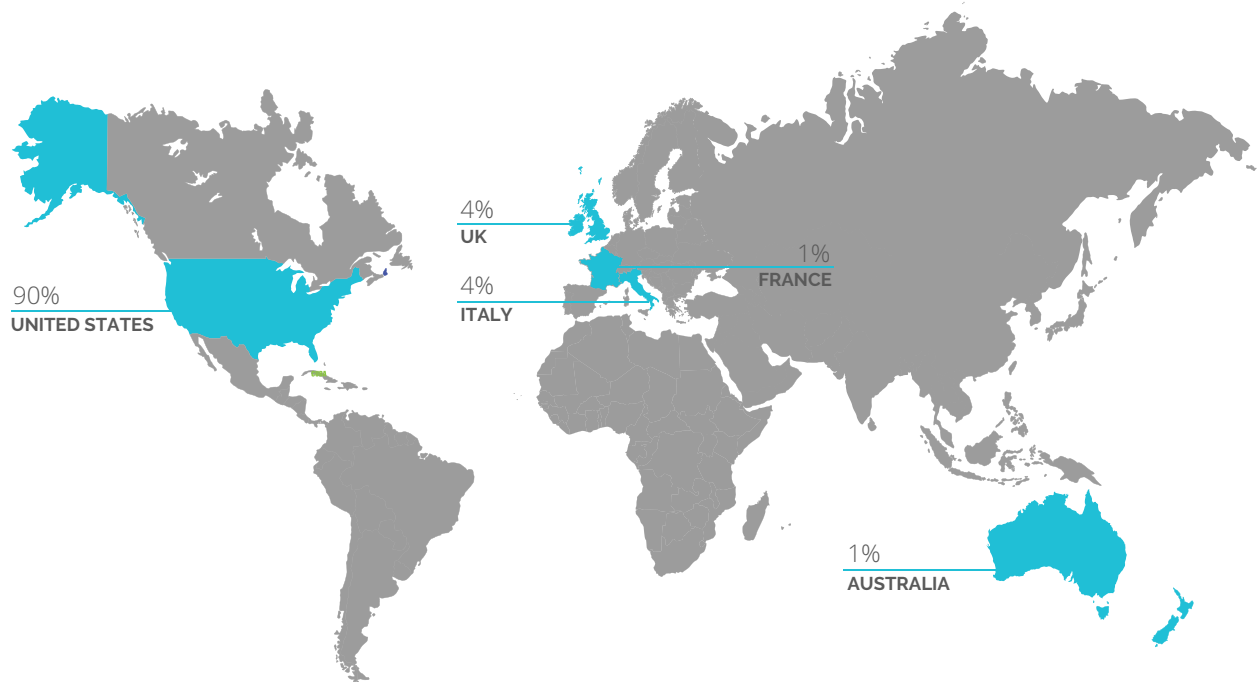


TAKEAWAY: When deploying lead criteria to support your target persona, be cognizant of how content is consumed by employees from companies of varying sizes. With the trending increase in content consumption from companies of 10,000+, there's opportunity to reach professionals in roles below the C-level that can influence buying decisions. Consider the Individual Contributor at a company of 10,000+ and design content that helps them find a solution to solve a problem. At the core, the larger the company, the more influencers will need to be reached with your content in order to deliver a cohesive vision and message across the enterprise.

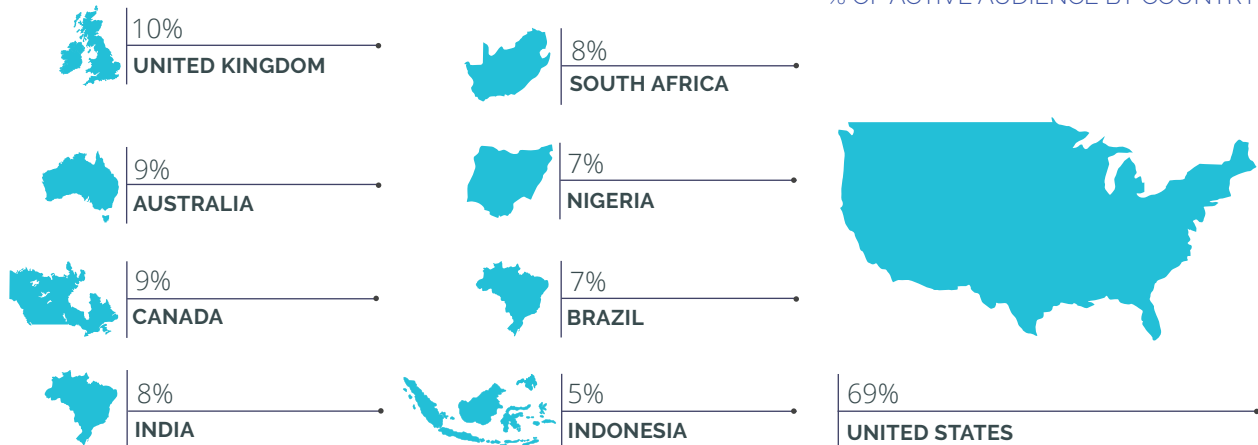
While this report is focused on US campaigns, the targeted active audience can come from around the globe. Based on the campaigns run last year, a clear objective was to generate leads from a US audience. Content consumption has no boundaries—of all submissions globally, 31% are non-US. This shows the global appetite for content.

Comparing the active and in-demand audiences by country, there's a clear propensity for content globally. Clients are purchasing 90% of leads from in-demand audience that reside in the US. However, a significant portion of the audience falls outside of the US, namely India, UK, and Australia.

% OF IN-DEMAND LEADS BY COUNTRY



% OF ACTIVE AUDIENCE BY COUNTRY

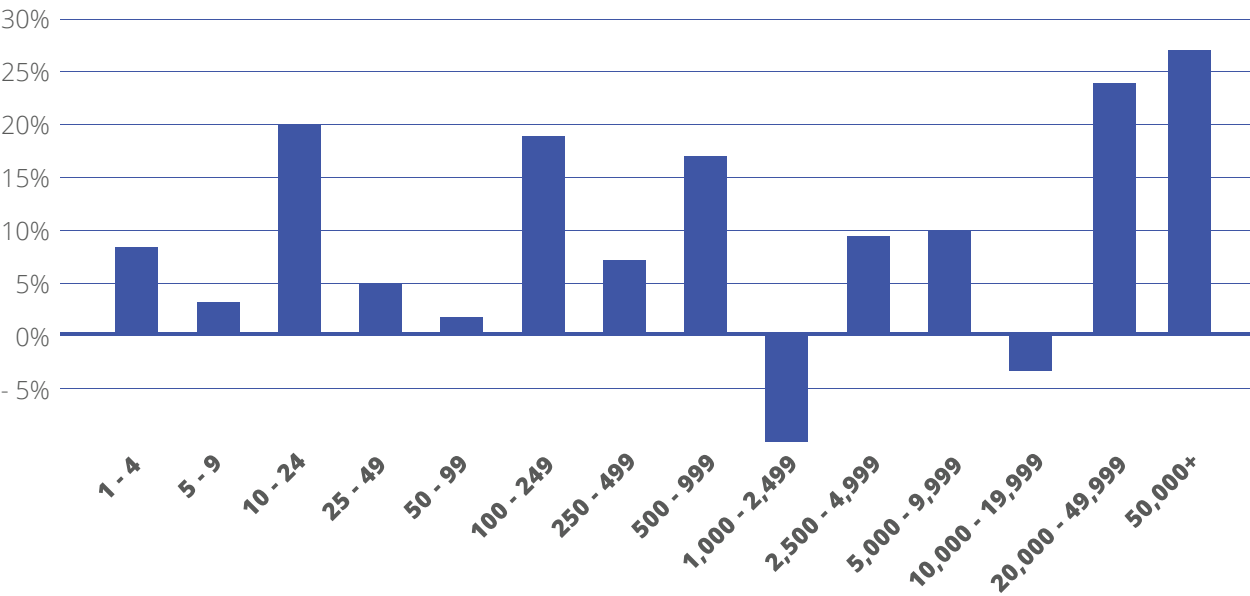


TAKEAWAY: While many organizations strictly conduct business in the US, it might present an opportunity to look at lead generation from a global perspective. It's evident that despite limiters for US-specific leads, there's a footprint globally that consumes content. With a greater understanding of Impressions from an account-level perspective, B2B marketers in global organizations might consider expanding content to target ex-US audiences.

MIND
THE GAP

The consumption gap is the time between a user's initial request to download or receive the content and the point at which they actually open the content to read it. Generally, this number is trending upward and can be evaluated relative to filters. When it comes to the size of the organization, the consumption gap actually decreased for both the 1,000 – 2,499 size and the 10,000 – 19,999 company size. The greatest increase in time to consume content requested over last year was the 50,000+ company size. The enterprise organization may presumably have more buying opportunities, making them an obvious target for marketers. Because of this, they are perhaps inundated by sales messages, while juggling a more complex procurement dynamic, thus forming a more concise palate for content.

TIME TO CONSUME: % INCREASE/DECREASE FROM LAST YEAR - BY ORGANIZATION SIZE



BY THE INDUSTRY

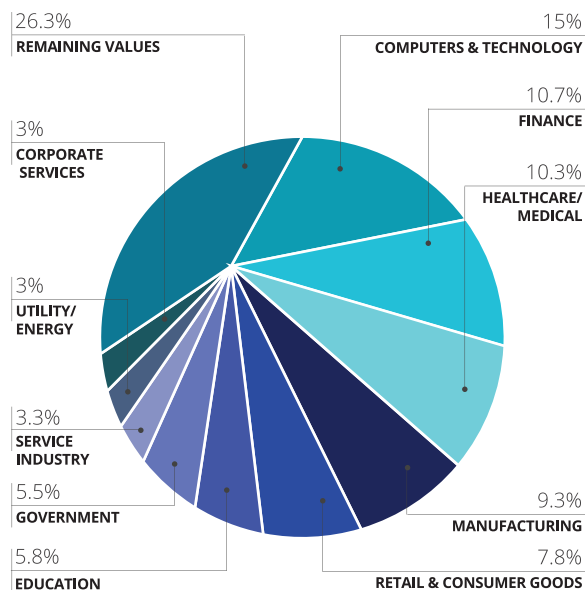
Of the leads processed in 2017, the only industry to show a decrease in days between content requests is Agriculture, at 8% less time before the next piece of content is requested. Companies operating within the Computers and Tech industry with 5,000+ employees were targeted the most in 2017.

Finance industry was the second most targeted industry and consumed content 15% faster than other industries. Telecommunications logged the largest delta and fastest turnaround to consume requested content – taking 19% less time than last year.

TAKEAWAY: Biotech and Pharma was the fourth most targeted industry and exhibited the greatest increase in consumption gap at 72%. What you can do to combat competition: make info easy to share. According to CMI, 82% of influencers share info via email when researching a purchasing decision.

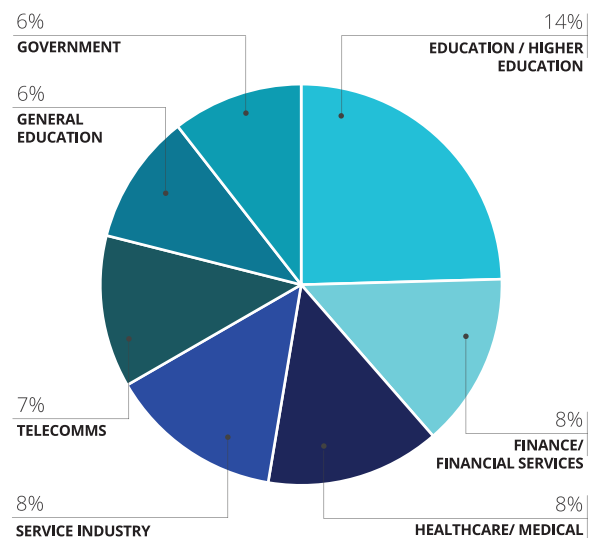
purchasing process after word of mouth, and original research made up 74% of influence on purchasing decisions. Buyers are doing a lot of leg work before they ever speak with someone in your organization. This research combined with the active audience data also shows not only the weight of content on decision making, but that this approach is pervasive across industries. Professionals in the Education/Higher Education, Financial Services, Healthcare/Medical, and the Service Industry categories comprise sizable portions of the active audience which indicates the appetite across industries other than the IT/Technology space.

COMPANY MAIN INDUSTRY



Many industries are increasingly relying on long-form content to educate themselves during the purchasing process. According to 2017 research conducted by Content Marketing Institute, 81% of respondents conduct research before bringing vendors into the

OTHER LEADING INDUSTRIES IN THE ACTIVE AUDIENCE

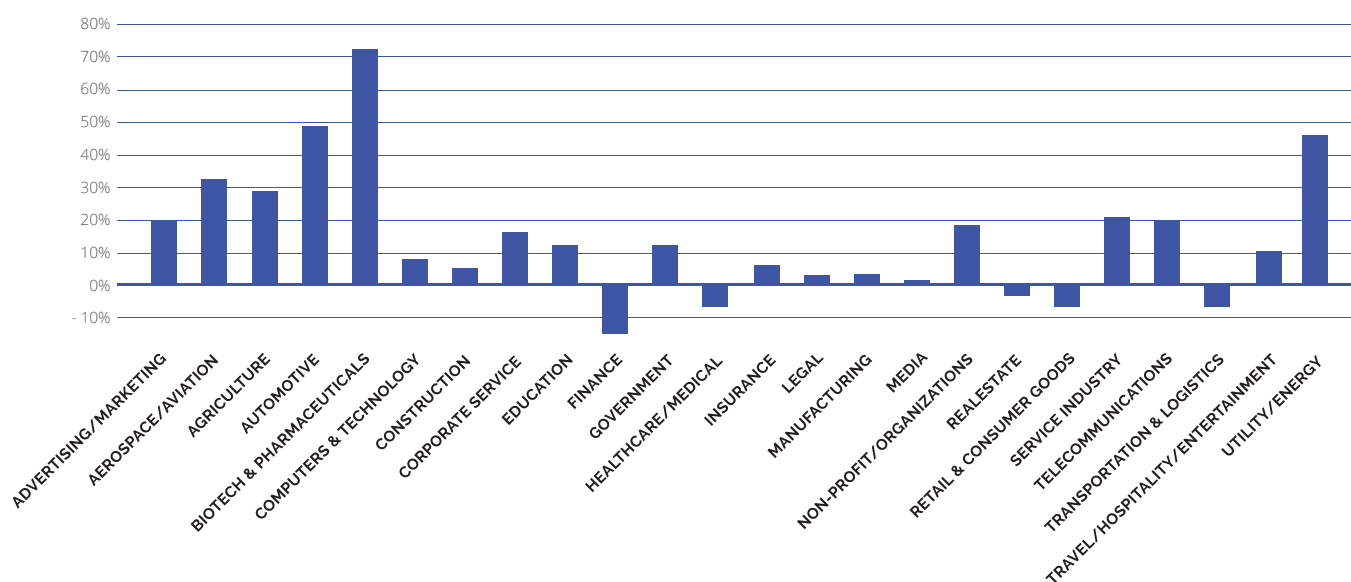


MIND THE GAP

The consumption gap can be evaluated by industry as well – taking a look at the data, it's clear that professionals in Biotech and Pharma take the most time before consuming content they've requested. Finance reported the least amount of time at less than a day to

consume content. This industry has emerged in our data sets as being both in demand, active consumers with the most voracious appetite for content in terms of time to consume and volume of requests.

TIME TO CONSUME: % INCREASE/DECREASE FROM LAST YEAR - BY INDUSTRY



PITFALLS OF IN-DEMAND AUDIENCE

There is a clear disparity in targeting by Job Level and their company profiles – for example, in the Job Level profiles, Managers at company revenue \$100 million+, 100-249 employee size are the top targeted audience.

TAKEAWAY: With the consumption gap widening across industries, particularly in Biotech and Pharma and Finance, it's evident that more marketers are expanding into content syndication strategies. With greater competition and a larger window in which to lose the attention of the targeted professional, content should be competitively concise, valuable and actionable. Pharma and Biotech may be particularly worthy of evaluating content style given the staggering 72% increase in consumption gap. Marketers should scrutinize their content as to its message value and whether or not it's "more of the same" for these industry professionals.

INDUSTRY TRENDS

When it comes to consumption, organizations within the Financial industry and with company revenues of \$100-4.99 million are a leading in-demand profile across the marketplace. Consumption for the Finance industry is also reflecting an increased consumption gap of a 20%. Perhaps due to the competitive increase in focusing on the vertical, professionals are struggling to efficiently consume the content they are requesting due to competitive noise. This presents marketers with an opportunity to evaluate the efficiency and relevance of their content to ensure it aligns with the needs and profiles of Finance professionals.

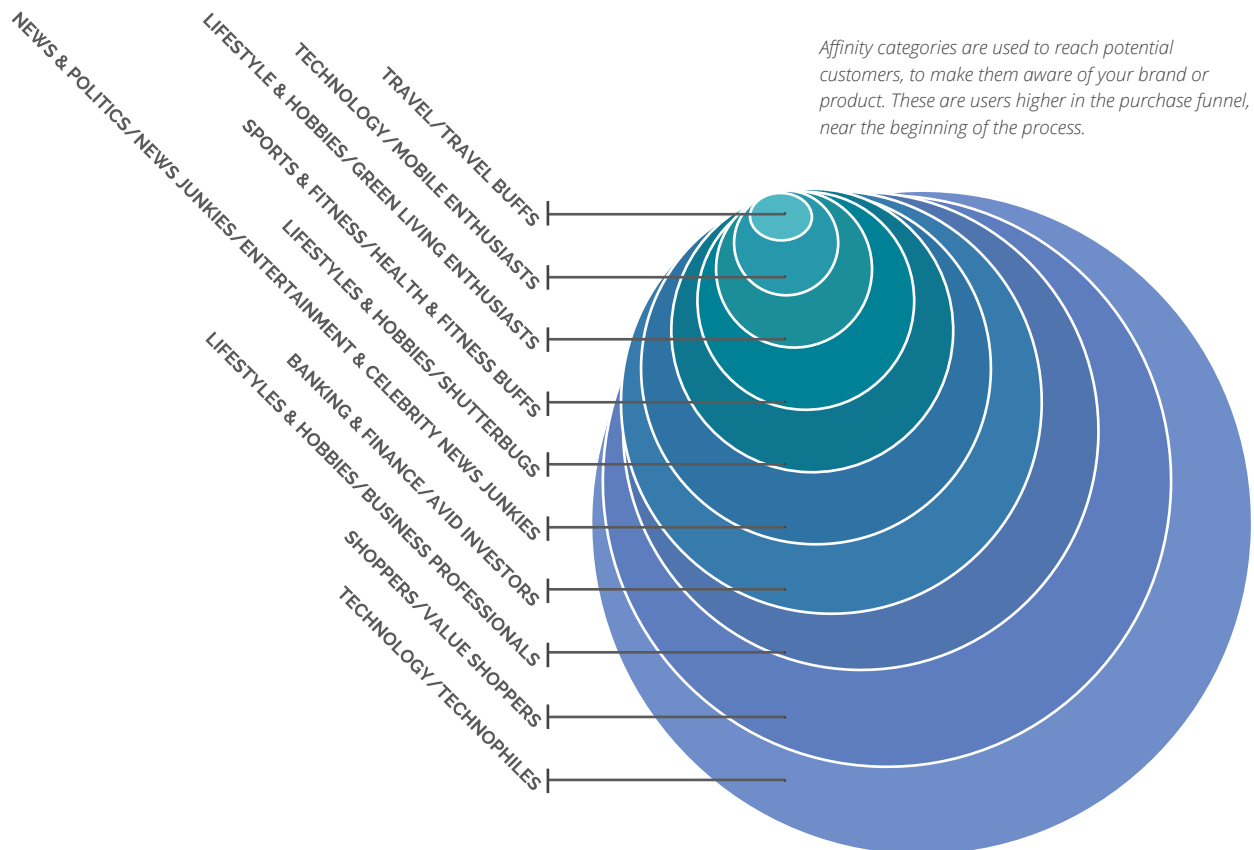
OBSERVATIONS ON TECH & AUDIENCE

USER INSIGHTS

These are the high-level data points on visitors across our network as they source and consume professionally oriented long-form content. Note the consistency among categories like Technology and the data from the active audience. This data can be used to draw industry-targeting information and expand reach. It can also be

used to fine-tune the “Voice” you deliver via your content marketing narratives. Knowing that a significant % of your target persona are also health conscious (for example) could easily translate into subliminal and literal content narratives to explore.

TOP 10 ACTIVE AUDIENCES

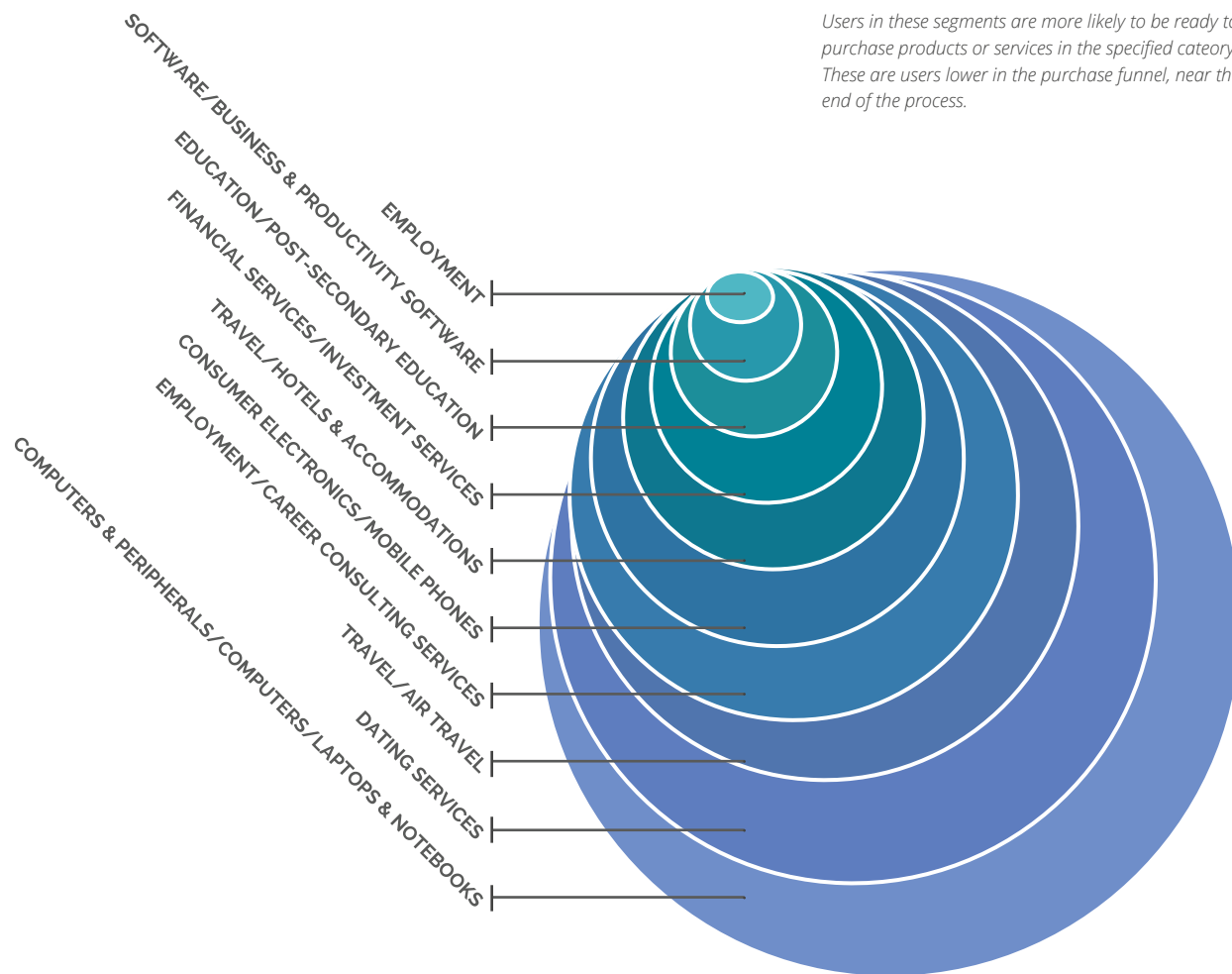


TAKEAWAY: 30% of visitors used mobile devices, of which 27.4% used Apple iPhone, followed by iPads, and Microsoft Windows Tablets. AMP and responsive pages are increasingly important for user experience with long-form content.

2017 VISITORS IN-MARKET SEGMENT ALIGNMENT ACROSS THE NETLINE NETWORK

TOP 10 IN-MARKET AUDIENCES

Users in these segments are more likely to be ready to purchase products or services in the specified category. These are users lower in the purchase funnel, near the end of the process.



TAKEAWAY: Humanize, humanize, humanize: B2B marketers can easily overlook the humans behind the consumption of their content – while professional concerns are the focus, content that speaks to the person behind the decision-making can have the ability to capture and convert. Story-telling and disruptive content can start from understanding the types of professionals in the market and speaking to their interests.

SO, WHAT'S NEXT?

19

TYING IT TOGETHER AND
PUTTING DATA TO WORK

Morals Of The Story

TIME IS **PRECIOUS**

What's clear from our data is that consumption is on the rise and more professionals are relying on content to use products or services and making decisions about them. What's slightly ironic is that they're also interested in content about productivity and time management; as themes across all professional cohorts, its popularity is a reflection of the exclusivity of their attention span. Developing content that makes things faster, easier, or more worthwhile can go a long way for the busy professional at enterprise companies and startups alike. Knowing what we do about this exclusivity of attention span, B2B marketers can do their part by focusing on quality over quantity – filling the competitive space with impactful content that is digestible and does not impact the cluttered landscape of content that your prospects may find themselves in. Make it easy for them to be interested in content and find time to enjoy it.

INDUSTRY **TARGETING**

With so much content being funneled to Managers and C-level, industry and sub-industry targeting can convert more of the exact leads you need. With most campaigns blanketing all industry filters (24 out of 25 industries) there is an opportunity for marketers to drill down, capture and convert.

THE WORLD IS **CHANGING**

Professionals are relying on content to make decisions and solve problems – that much has been evident for years. Content that talks about your brand and its value prop is a thing of the past. Content syndication for lead generation answers questions, while delivering the flavor and value prop for your products or services. With the economic climate and changing geopolitical landscape, more B2B marketers will find themselves asking questions about how to relate to their audiences and stay compliant with regulations. By fully understanding who your audience is and what they're doing, your brand can use data to leverage and build meaningful relationships.

WE SAY IT **ALL THE TIME**

WE'RE DEMOCRATIZING LEAD GENERATION

When marketers are armed with data and the ability to exert control over their content marketing strategy, great things can happen. With ample levels of control over your target audience, and the freedom to scale the flow of your leads, democratizing lead gen takes the hot air out of industry vapor and helps marketers get more done.

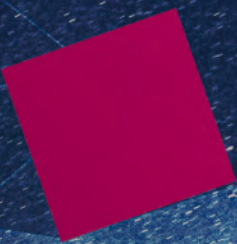
This report is a piece of the culture around our vision to democratize lead generation. Leveraging a CPL model, marketers have inherently more control over their budget and the outcomes of their campaigns. This report data can help marketers design campaigns that deliver real ROI instead of impressions, while improving the quality of your leads.

It's your time, marketers – no more sifting through empty promises borne of martech philosophy. Go forth with this data and amplify your voice in the content universe!

“

**DEMOCRATIZING
LEAD GEN MEANS
ANY SIZE COMPANY
CAN HAVE A VOICE IN
THE INCREASINGLY
COMPETITIVE
CONTENT UNIVERSE.**

”



MORRIS CONSULTING, società inglese con sedi a Londra e a Roma, è una consulting boutique specializzata in consulenza strategica, marketing e comunicazione e accelerazione di Start Up.

MORRIS CONSULTING Italia

via del porto fluviale 9

00154 Roma, Italia

+39.06.40049047

join@morrisconsulting.eu

www.morrisconsulting.eu