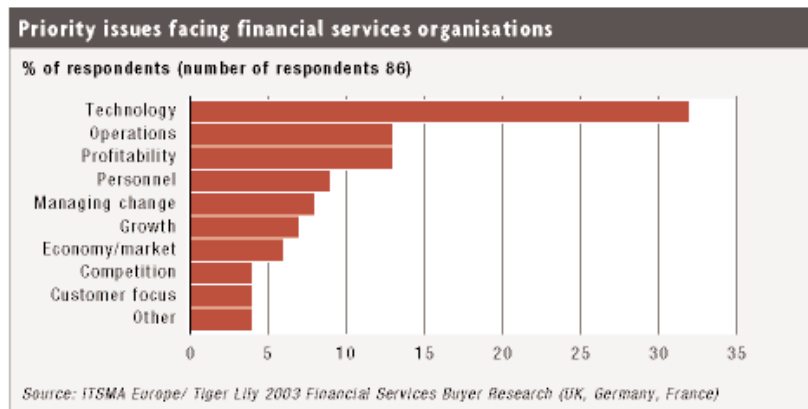


IT statistics: Sales mismatch with financial services sector

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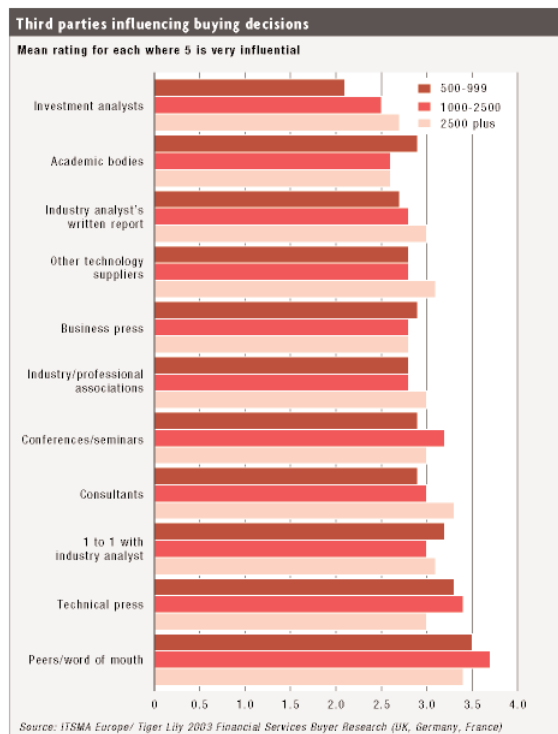
Recent research with European financial services organisations has revealed that despite technology being named as the number one short term issue facing senior business and IT management, technology companies are failing to connect with their European customers.

The IT Services Marketing Association (ITSMA) together with Tiger Lily, an independent analyst relations specialist, interviewed senior business and IT managers, representing financial services organisations in the UK, Germany, and France. Results show that a fundamental mismatch exists between the techniques IT companies use to define and explore the issues facing their customers, and the techniques customers feel have the most impact.



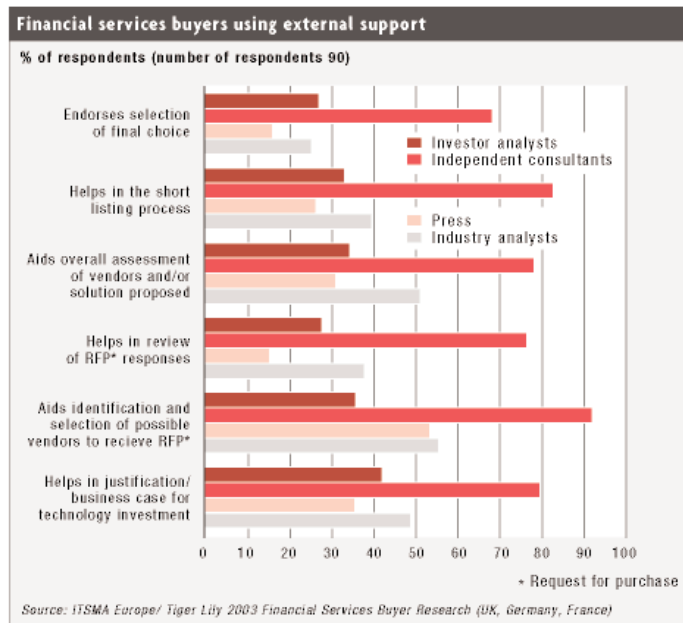
A more personal approach is needed from IT suppliers. Buyers were asked to talk through the activities that suppliers of technology-based business solutions had used recently to demonstrate both an understanding of their issues and an ability to help them deal with those issues. Buyers responses revealed that the same broad mix of techniques is relied upon by most IT suppliers, with white papers and seminars the most used (both at 67 per cent).

Yet only half of buyers felt that these techniques had a high influence on their decisions. By contrast, 84 per cent of buyers in these companies said they are significantly influenced by more personal communications, such as a personalised analysis of their issues and the likely impact on their business. However, only 48 per cent had received such a service.



Instead, the heads of financial service companies continue to turn to other independent sources for help with their technology decisions, including peer recommendation, one-on-one conversations with industry analysts, the technical and business press, independent consultants, and even investment analysts. Independent consultants are the most extensively used to advise on each stage of the IT decision-making process.

Industry analysts also play a role, albeit to a lesser extent. The rationale for using these sources is revealing: buyers view consultants as unbiased experts who save time and money, and value industry analysts for their deep knowledge and real independence from IT suppliers.



Overall, there was a remarkable degree of agreement across all three countries, although German companies consider themselves the most innovative in using IT, while British management considers itself the most conservative. French decision makers prefer case studies and Germans dislike being directed to websites for information.

For further information: visit www.itsma.com/research/fseu or contact Bev Burgess, Managing Director, ITSMA Europe (bburgess@itsma.com Telephone +44 (0) 1892 523060) or Gerry Davies, Director, Tiger Lily Telephone +44 (0) 1344 887645. The report costs £1250 and is available from ITSMA Europe.