



State of Software_

MAY
'24



Your finger on the pulse of software.

In many ways, the B2B software market is no different than the economy; it's vast and complex. To understand the state of the economy, we look at indicators like supply, demand, innovation, inflation, and consumer confidence.

With over 160,000 product profiles, 2.5 million verified user reviews, and 90 million annual visitors, G2 has unique insight into the indicators that help better understand the state of B2B software.

This edition of the State of Software zeroes in on key indicators from 2023. To grasp what's driving market shifts, we used AI to analyze buyer sentiment trends. We examined software growth and momentum while using unique G2 AI satisfaction scores to answer the question, "Where is AI having the most impact today?" We delved into traffic, parsing out the segments drawing the most interest. Finally, we dove into value. The pressure is on software vendors to show fast ROI. Our data showed this is easier to deliver in certain parts of the software industry.

On behalf of G2's Market Research team, we're excited to share the latest G2 State of Software. We hope it provides a perspective into not just where B2B software is today, but where it's heading next to position your organization for continued growth.

– **Shaun Bishop**, G2 Market Research





The big picture takeaways



AI categories grew the fastest across all markets, indicating its proliferation and importance.



AI, Security, and IT Management dominated **top-trending markets** for G2 Momentum scores.



Essential business software felt **the growing presence of AI.**



AI-enabled products generally scored higher in “ease of use” and “meets requirements” metrics.



Buyers flocked to Vertical Industry, Marketing, and ERP categories.

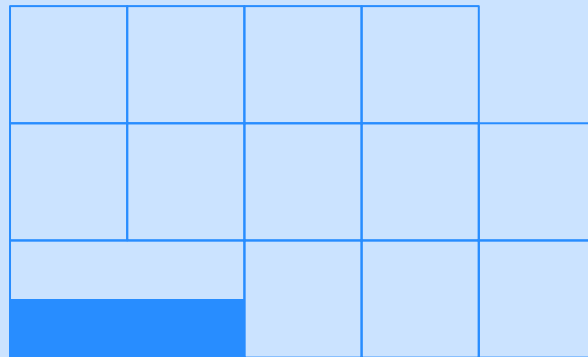


Fastest time to ROI existed in Design, Housing, and Commerce software.



AI fueled software growth

G2 added more than 19,000 new products to its marketplace in 2023, but not all categories grew at an equal rate. We examined which spaces grew the fastest, both in the most recent quarter and during 2023 as a whole.



25

Total AI categories

1,567

Total AI vendors

1,758

Total AI products

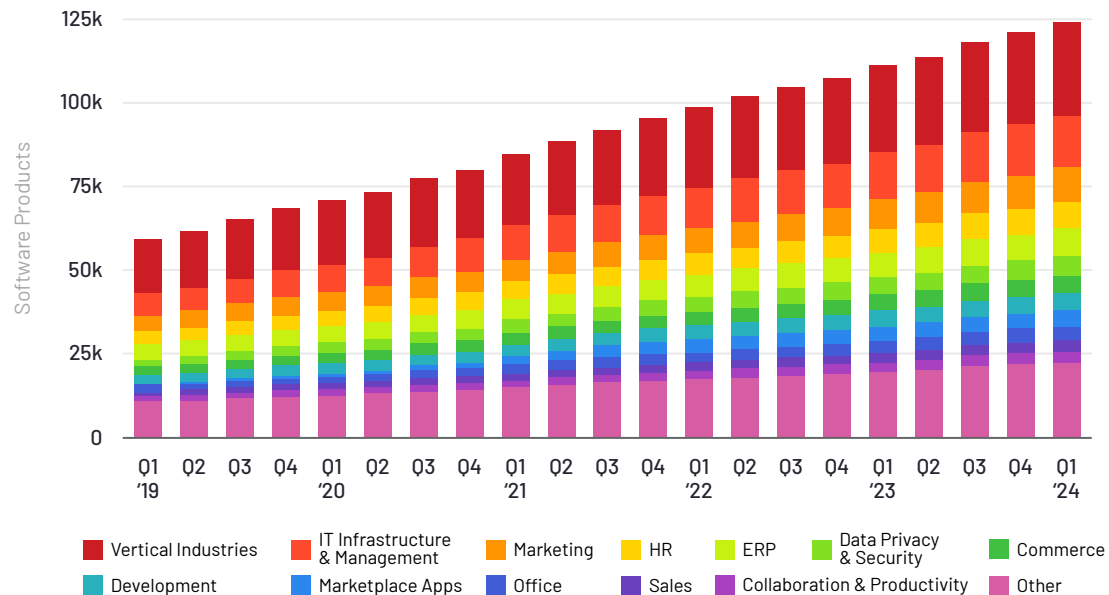
52,153

Total AI reviews



G2's marketplace grew more than 12% in 2023

Number of software listings on the G2 marketplace 2019-2024



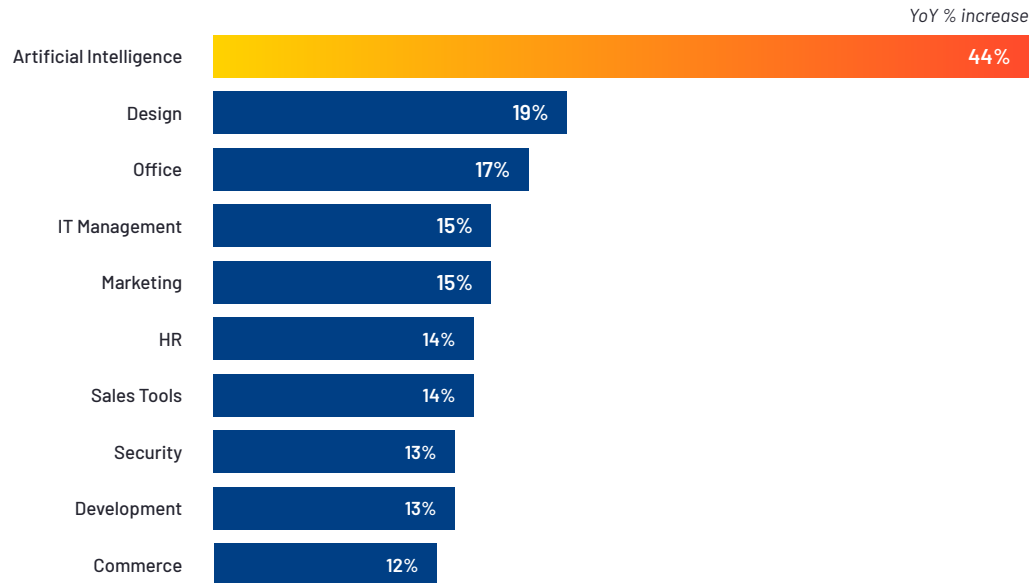
Over the past five years, the software industry has seen explosive growth driven by increased digital reliance across industries, the widespread adoption of cloud computing and SaaS, and notably, leaps in AI and ML.

Software has become a linchpin of modern business, with AI storming onto the scene - driving unparalleled innovation across all categories of software. And the impact of AI continues to widen - G2 reviewers are now evaluating AI features for products in nearly 200 categories spanning these larger markets.



AI led all markets in new product growth for 2023

10 fastest-growing markets, based on new products added



AI ended a breakthrough year maintaining the #1 spot on fastest-growing categories by new product growth in Q4, although its growth slowed since Q3. For 2023 as a whole, AI categories grew an astonishing 44% year-over-year based on new products. That's more than double the growth of the next fastest-growing category.



AI & Design continued to lead, Office software spiked since Oct '23 report

[Previous report](#), new products added

Rank	Category	YoY growth %
1	Artificial Intelligence	39%
2	Design	17%
3	HR	14%
4	Marketing	14%
5	Security	14%
6	Sales Tools	13%
7	Development	13%
8	Commerce	12%
9	IT Management	12%
10	Analytics Tools & Software	12%

[Current report](#), new products added

Rank	+/- Rank	Category	YoY growth %
1	-	Artificial Intelligence	44% ▲5%
2	-	Design	19% ▲2%
3	N/A*	Office	17% -
4	+5	IT Management	15% ▲3%
5	-1	Marketing	15% ▲1%
6	-3	HR	14% -
7	-1	Sales Tools	14% ▲1%
8	-3	Security	13% ▼1%
9	-2	Development	13% -
10	-2	Commerce	12% -

Source: G2 data, Sep 1, 2022 - Aug 31, 2023

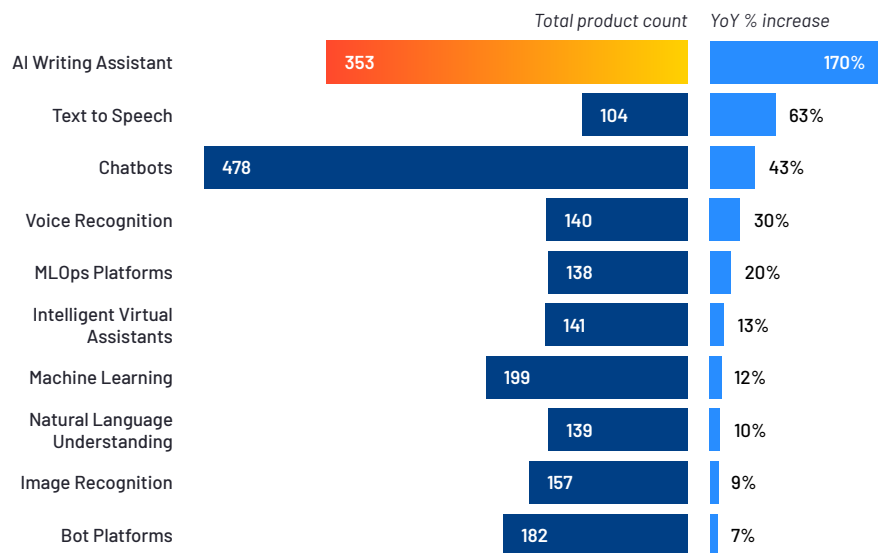
7

*G2 restructured subcategory hierarchy within Office in late '23, removing categories which obscured Office growth. A direct comparison to the Oct report is N/A for this edition.
Source: G2 data, Jan 1 - Dec 31, 2023



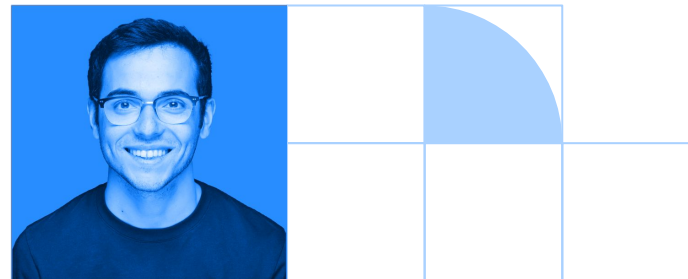
AI Writing Assistants saw largest boost from new products

10 fastest-growing AI categories, based on new products added



There is no shortage of AI products for businesses and more are coming into the market. With easy to plug-in APIs and user friendly AI solutions, there are many ways for AI to help companies solve their issues and succeed. Already one of the largest AI categories, vendors continued to deliver new Chatbot software. But the most growth came from AI Writing Assistants, with reviewers touting the benefits AI has had on their productivity enhancements.

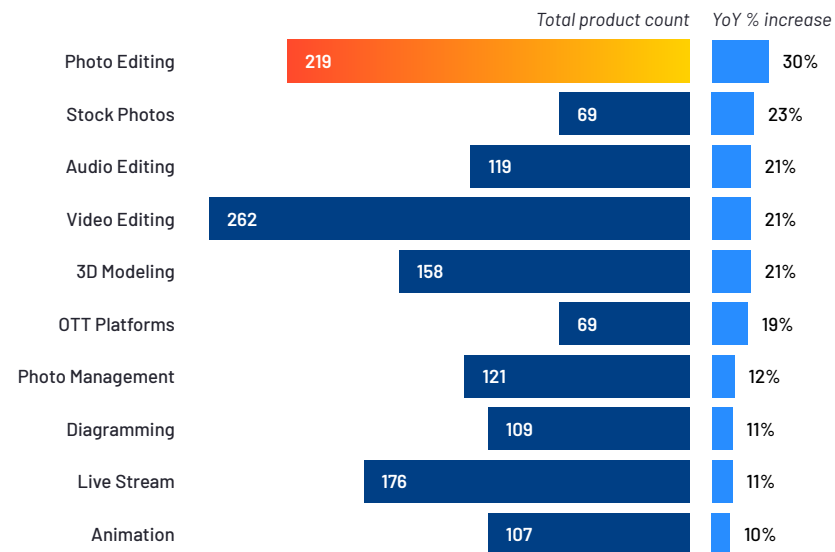
– **Matthew Miller**, *Research Principal*





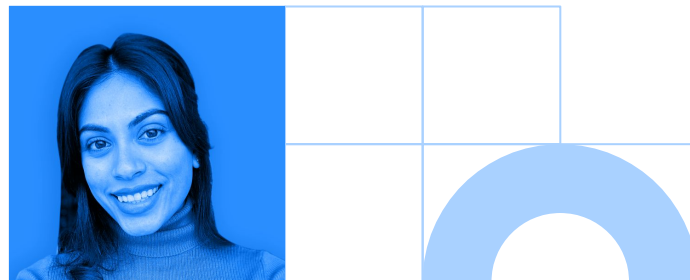
AI-powered Photo Editing led Design market growth

10 fastest-growing Design categories, based on new products added



As e-commerce and digital marketing continue to expand, there is a greater need for design software to create web interfaces, advertisements, and other marketing materials that capture attention and drive sales. AI-enabled design tools from companies like Adobe and Canva accelerate design and drive efficiencies within organizations.

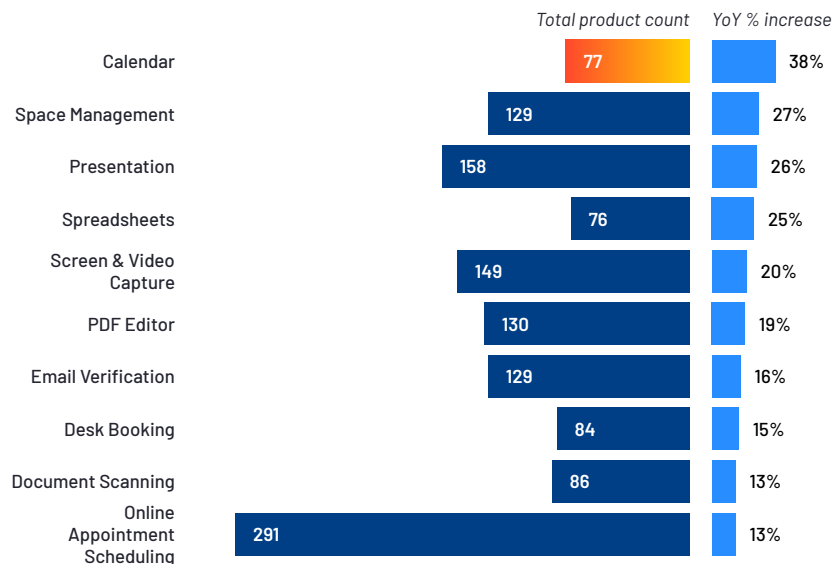
– **Priya Patel**, Sr. Research Analyst





Calendar software led Office categories in growth

10 fastest-growing Office categories, based on new products added



Two trends are driving growth in office categories - automation and simplification. Vendors like Microsoft and Google have pointed to the potential productivity gains by incorporating AI into Office tools. Simple tools to help facilitate meetings outside of company scheduling features become automated and even easier to use, leading to more vendors trying to capitalize on the growing market.

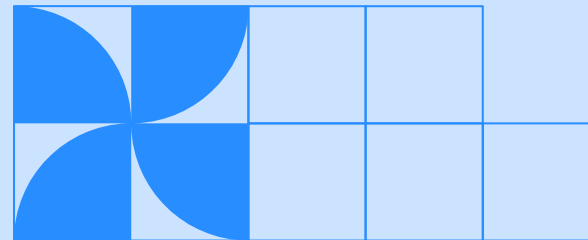
- **Marina Schlosser**, Research Analyst





Trending categories by G2 Momentum score*

According to G2's Momentum score analysis, Artificial Intelligence led all high-level G2 software markets in Momentum score, reflecting AI's incredible growth in 2023. Following AI, Security and IT Management held the strongest Momentum scores in the G2 marketplace.



* G2's Momentum score plots what's next

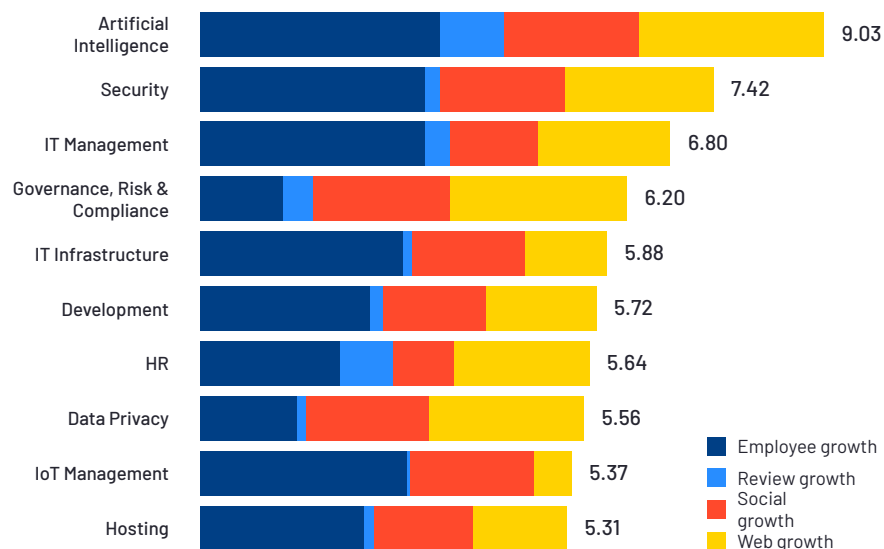
Software isn't ever at a state of rest. G2's proprietary **Momentum score** identifies categories that are on a high-growth trajectory based on YoY growth in user satisfaction scores, employee growth, and digital presence. It's our measure of which software products are hot and trending.

Unlike the category trends reflected in our quarterly **Momentum Grids**®, the State of Software zooms out to the macro level. These scores are unlike traditional rankings that simply position a product or category where it is today. Rather, they chart where they're *headed*.



AI led all markets in G2 Momentum score

Top software markets by G2 Momentum score



AI led all software markets in Momentum, reflecting the AI industry's staggering growth in 2023. Security, IT Management, Governance, Risk & Compliance, and IT Infrastructure rounded out the top 5.

Using generative AI, we analyzed thousands of reviews to better understand buyer sentiment in the leading Momentum categories – AI, Security, and IT Management.

The desire to simplify complex processes and tasks rang through. **“Ease of use”** was the top business concern that users across the three fast-growing markets were seeking to optimize or solve.










When it came to the top three markets, **support** was front-and-center in second place, highlighting the importance of not just the capabilities of a software offering, but also the teams and ecosystem around it to help use the software.

In addition, we saw **collaboration** as a consistent theme in the top three markets, with nearly double the number of reviews mentioning collaborative themes compared with 2022.



Grammarly, Notion, and Simplified led AI products in YoY growth

AI products by G2 Momentum score

Rank	Product name	Main category
1*	 grammarly	AI Writing Assistant
1*	 Notion	Knowledge Base
1*	 Simplified	Display Ad Design
4	 synthesia	Video Editing
5	 Jasper	AI Writing Assistants
6	anyword	AI Writing Assistants
7	 HeyGen	Text to Speech
8	 AISEO	AI Writing Assistants
9	 Writesonic	AI Writing Assistants
10	 QUALIFIED	Conversational Marketing

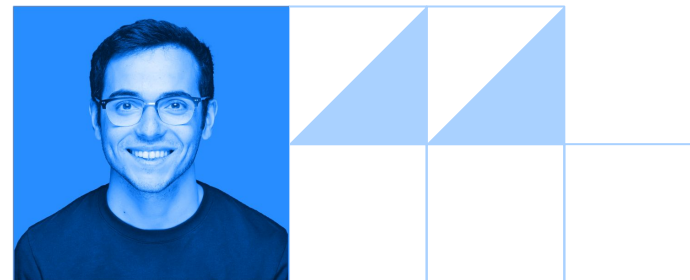
Source: G2 data, Jan 1 - Dec 31, 2023

*Note: The top three products had identical scores and are listed in alphabetical order.



AI momentum surged in 2023 due to ChatGPT's meteoric rise. The result? Businesses will have more options and opportunities to find the right solutions to power their automation and innovation efforts. One of the early impactful applications has been enlisting AI to help write content. This catapulted AI Writing Assistants like Grammarly, Notion, Simplified, and Jasper into the top 5 momentum spots.

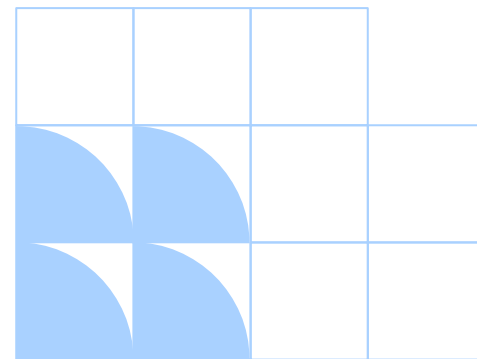
– **Matthew Miller**, *Research Principal*





G2 Momentum scores for Security prove the ever-growing necessity for Cybersecurity in the age of AI

It's easy to get lost in the AI hype, but security momentum still led all other categories in the G2 Marketplace. AI's meteoric growth has only heightened the need for robust cybersecurity measures to safeguard sensitive data and protect the brands and assets of organizations around the globe against increasingly sophisticated digital threats.



116

Total Security categories

2,095

Total Security vendors

3,318

Total Security products











97,430

Total Security reviews



Hoxhunt, JumpCloud, KnowBe4, and NinjaOne earned top Security scores

Security products by G2 Momentum score

Rank	Product name	Main category
1*	 HOXHUNT	Security Awareness Training
1*	 jumpcloud	Cloud Directory Services
1*	 KnowBe4	Security Awareness Training
1*	 ninjaOne	Remote Monitoring & Management (RMM)
5	 ManageEngine	Unified Endpoint Management (UEM)
6	 Scrut Automation	Security Compliance
7	 salesforce platform	Cloud Platform as a Service (PaaS)
8	 sosafe	Security Awareness Training
9	 SPRINTO	Cloud Compliance
10	 WIZ	Cloud Security Posture Management (CSPM)

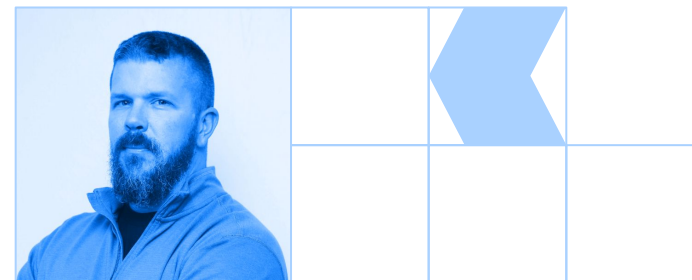
Source: G2 data, Jan 1 - Dec 31, 2023

*Note: The top four products had identical scores and are listed in alphabetical order.



Organizations grapple with an ever-expanding attack surface and an adversary with limitless innovation while simultaneously dealing with the explosion of new technologies. Strategic focus is a requirement for modern enterprises and small businesses. 80% of organizations are actively implementing zero-trust architectures across their organizations. Strategy is finally outpacing shiny technology adoption in cybersecurity at the market level.

– **Dr. Chase Cunningham**, VP of Security Market Research





AI fueled growth & momentum - but isn't moving the needle on satisfaction. Yet.

The revolutionary leaps forward in AI technology over the past year led to massive interest in AI applications like ChatGPT and Stable Diffusion. But AI's influence went much further than standalone applications. It is now infused into a broad spectrum of business software, from performance management systems to customer success platforms.

Last August, G2 started asking reviewers about the AI capabilities of products in nearly 200 different software categories**. We aimed to understand sentiment and satisfaction with AI features of software across the entire G2 taxonomy to answer the question, "Where is AI having an impact?" Reviewers indicated engaging with generative AI functionality in over 2,800 different products spanning the G2 taxonomy.

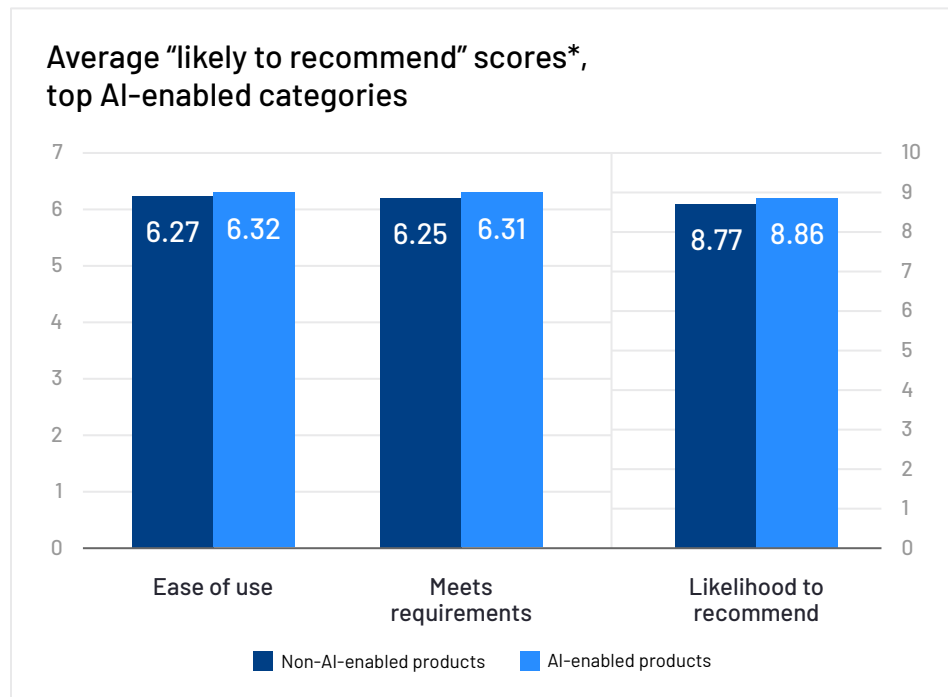
What have we learned from their experience?

- CRM, Email Marketing, SEO Tools, and Project Management had the largest number of products containing AI functionality.
- Of categories containing AI features, CRM had the most products with AI functionality (125 products) followed by Email Marketing (107 products) and SEO Tools (98 products).
- For top AI-enabled categories, reviewers were generally more likely to recommend AI-enabled products compared to their non-AI-enabled counterparts.
- AI-enabled products generally scored higher on "ease of use" and "meets requirements" questions.

**AI-enabled means a product received at least three reviews in 2023 in which the reviewer evaluated the product's AI functionality via G2's AI-specific feature questions.



AI-enabled products reviewed *slightly* higher in top AI spaces



AI-enabled products in these categories scored only slightly higher with users on a number of metrics: ease of use, meets requirements, and likelihood to recommend. Given the newness of these generative AI capabilities, we're not surprised. It will take time for customers to widely adopt solutions with AI capabilities and see their impact. The timeline for widespread adoption will vary greatly depending on the industry, especially where trust, accuracy, and ethical considerations play critical roles in highly regulated industries.

G2 scoring methodology

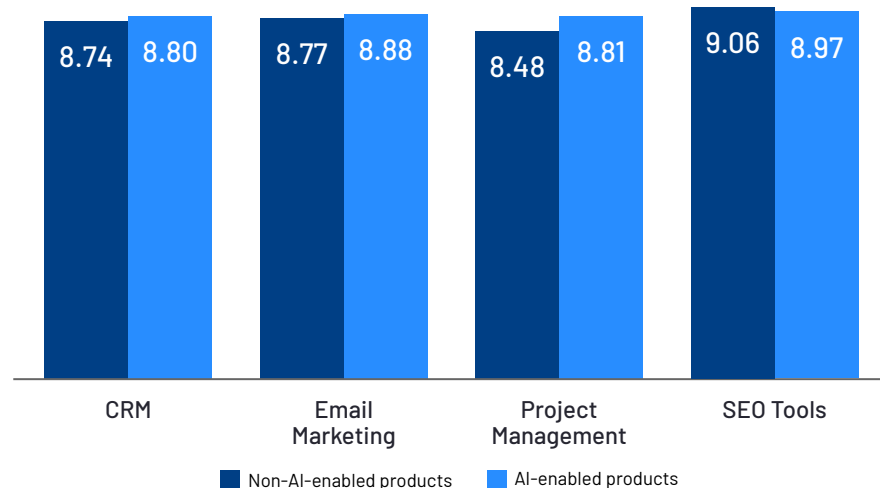
Every review gathers insights into Customer Experience based on the role of a reviewer. Two of these include "Meets requirements" which addresses the basic effectiveness of the solution and "Ease of Use" to probe at the difficulty of using a product. In addition, we ask reviewers the foundational NPS question, "How likely is it that you would recommend this product to a friend or colleague?"

*"Ease of use" & "Meets requirements" scored 1-7, "Likelihood to recommend" scored 1-10
Source: G2 data, Jan 1 - Dec 31, 2023



Buyers were only *slightly* more likely to recommend AI-enabled CRM, Email Marketing, & Project Management tools

Average “likely to recommend” scores, top AI-enabled categories



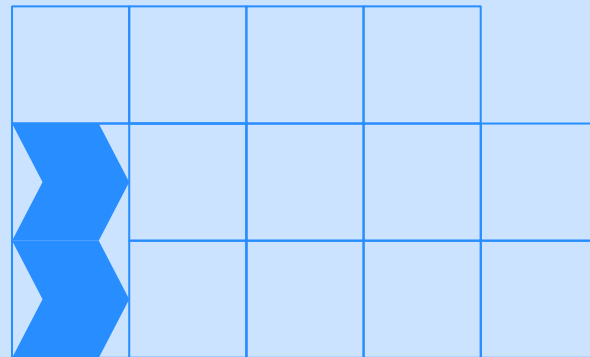
However, that trend wasn't true for all the top AI-enabled categories. While buyers were more likely to recommend AI-enabled products in CRM, Email Marketing, and Project Management, those same products in the SEO Tools category actually scored slightly lower on likely to recommend compared to their non-AI-enabled counterparts.



Vertically-focused software and established categories still dominated buyer traffic

More than 90 million people—including employees at all Fortune 500 companies—use G2 annually to find the software and services their organizations depend on. We examined which categories are getting the most attention from buyers.

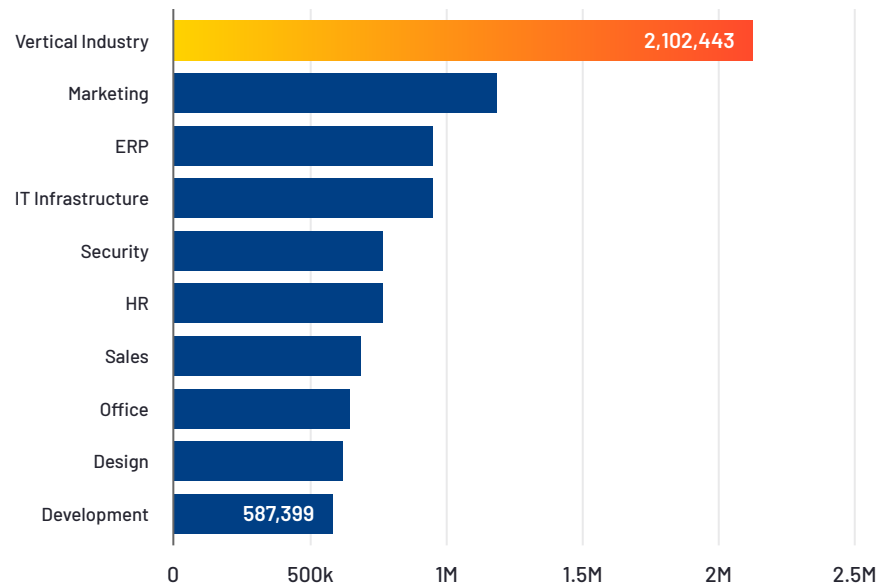
While some long-established categories like Marketing Automation and ERP Systems received strong traffic numbers, buyers also showed significant interest in vertically focused software solutions.





More than 2M buyers shopped for Vertical market software

Unique pageviews of G2 categories



Vertical industry categories received the highest cumulative traffic from G2 users. Critical sectors like healthcare, education, government, and nonprofit require specialized solutions to meet their unique needs. G2's extensive vertical taxonomy allows buyers to find the best solutions that drive results.

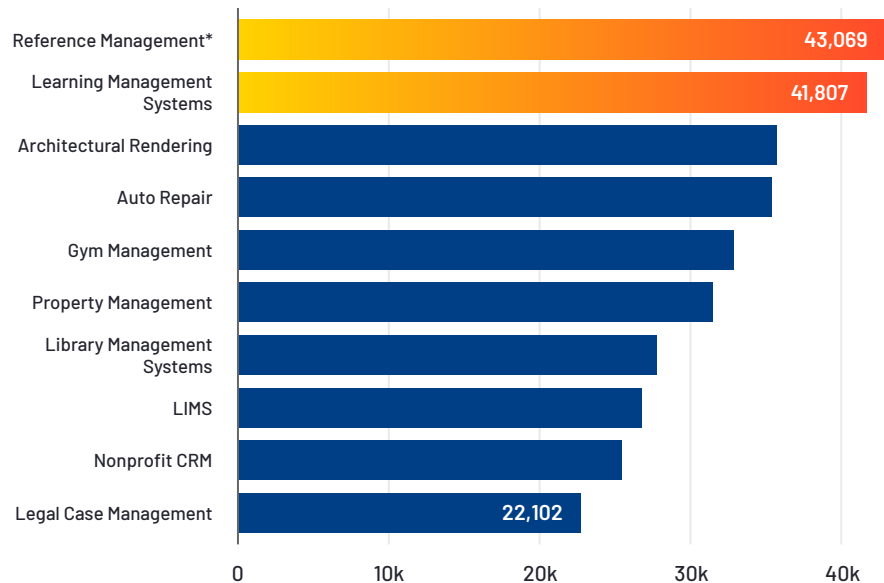
– **Dominick Duda**, Sr. Research Analyst





Education categories topped most-visited Vertical software spaces

Unique pageviews of top Vertical Industry categories



As Vertical categories cater to the exact needs of buyers, it is no surprise that education software categories are among the top-visited for the market. Education software such as Learning Management Systems (LMS) allows users to develop and hone their skills through online learning, course content, and assessments. Software users seek reliable software and solutions that will enable them to grow and advance.

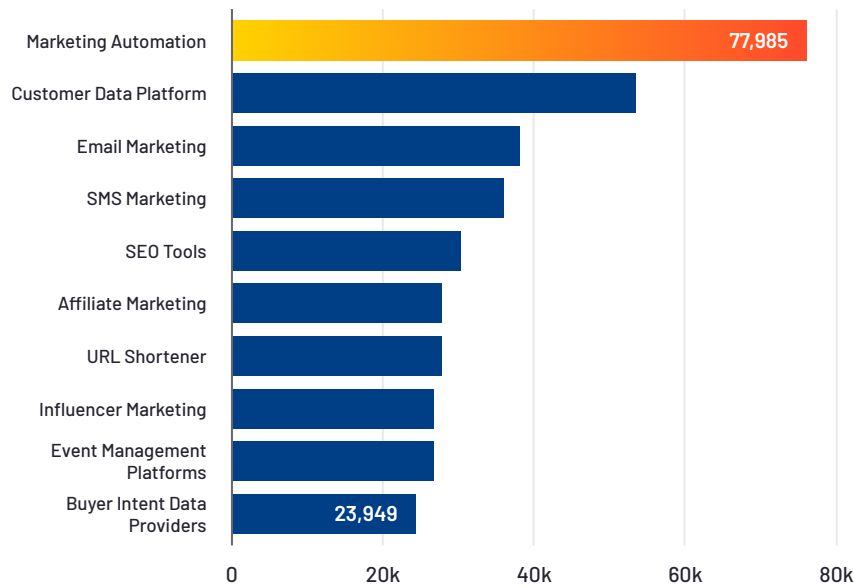
- **JaKayla D. Lathon**, *Research Analyst*





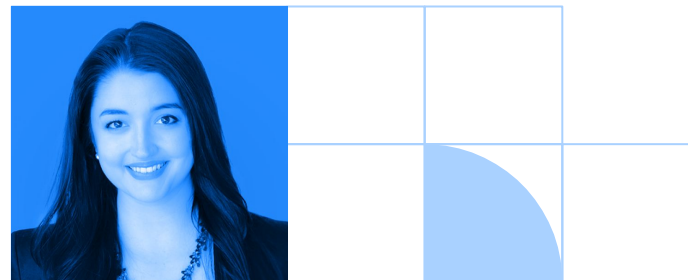
Marketing Automation led Marketing categories in traffic

Unique pageviews of top Marketing categories



Marketing Automation is a cornerstone of any digital marketing strategy across all markets. A leader in the Marketing categories in number of products as well as traffic is consistent with its commonality in the market.

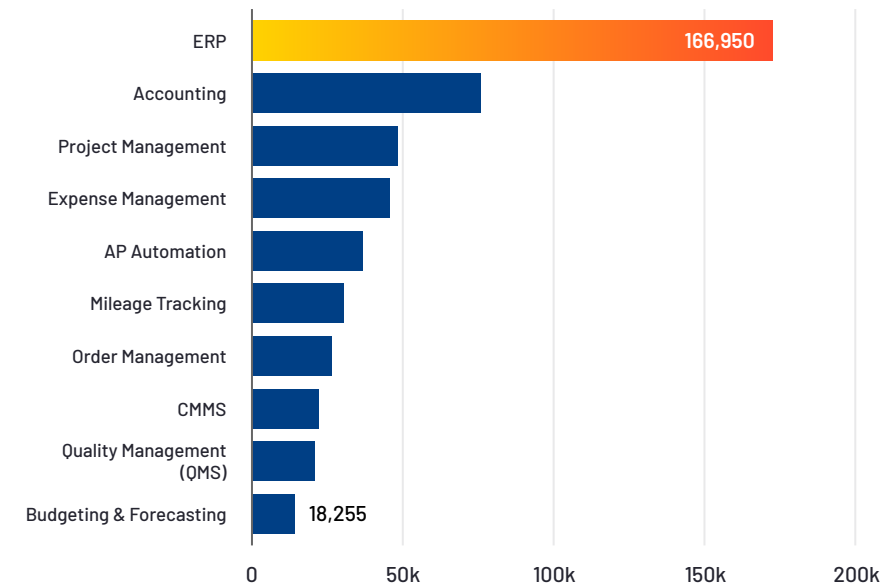
- **Victoria Blackwell**, *Research Principal*





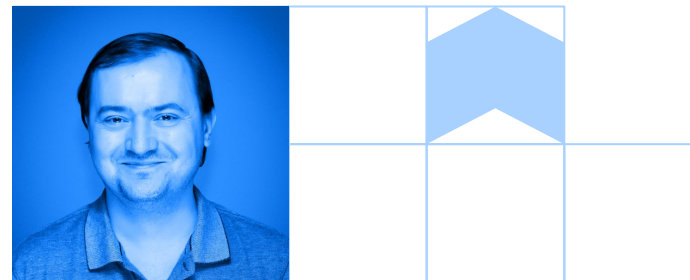
ERP Systems saw more than twice as many buyers as other ERP categories

Unique pageviews of top ERP categories



ERP remains the central data and operations management repository in many companies of all sizes. Since ERP vendors took longer to fully embrace the cloud than other markets like CRM or HR, interest in ERP systems has increased significantly in recent years. Also, many buyers tried to replace ERP with a mix of software solutions such as Project Management and Accounting. However, they ended up realizing that ERP is still the best option for the entire organization.











– **Gabriel Gheorghiu**, *Research Principal*





Fueled by AI, Blender was the top-visited product in Vertical markets

Most-visited Vertical industry product profiles

Rank	Product name	Main category
1	 blender	Architectural Renderings
2	 PROCORE	Construction Project Management
3	 TradingView	Brokerage Trading Platforms
4	 D5 RENDER	Architectural Renderings
5	 coursera	Online Course Providers
6	 duolingo	Language Learning
7	 CANVAS	Learning Management Systems (LMS)
8	 PLURALSIGHT Skills	Technical Skills Development
9	 kvCORE	Real Estate Activities Management
10	 floorplanner	Architectural Rendering

Source: G2 data, Jan 1 - Dec 31, 2023

List eligibility based on product main category being within the high-level parent



Among this list, Blender and D5 Render are both popular, free-to-use 3D design products that utilize cutting edge AI tools either natively or via integrations. This makes them extremely accessible to a variety of design professionals, and might indicate that price and AI capabilities are top of mind as buyers search for the right software to support their design workflows. Elsewhere, we can see LMS and online course platforms are popular as workers look to upskill amid a volatile job market.











– Dominick Duda, Sr. Research Analyst





HubSpot topped list of most-visited Marketing products

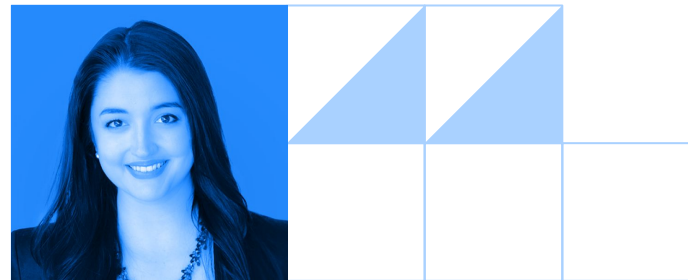
Most-visited Marketing product profiles

Rank	Product name	Main category
1	 HubSpot Marketing Hub	Marketing Automation
2	 SEMRUSH	SEO Tools
3	 Hootsuite	Social Media Management
4	 Birdeye	Online Reputation Management
5	 sproutsocial	Social Media Suites
6	 ActiveCampaign > for Marketing	Marketing Automation
7	 bitly	URL Shortener
8	 RocketReach	Lead Intelligence
9	 Insider	Mobile Marketing
10	 klaviyo	Marketing Automation



Since Marketing Automation is one of the most popular categories within the Marketing taxonomy on G2, it's representation yet again remains strong. With its lucrative capabilities and strong presence, it proves that if you have any tool in your arsenal it should be Marketing Automation.











- **Victoria Blackwell**, *Research Principal*





TallyPrime topped the list of most-visited ERP product profiles

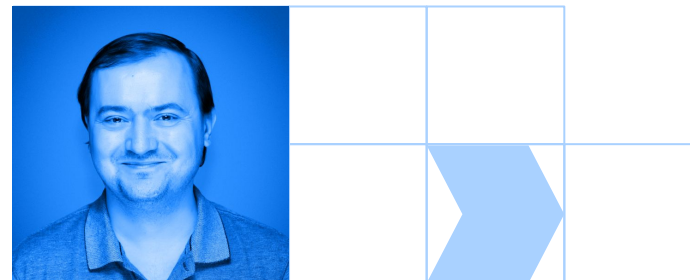
Most-visited ERP product profiles

Rank	Product name	Main category
1	 TallyPrime	Discrete ERP
2	 NETSUITE	ERP Systems
3	 asana	Project Collaboration
4	 sage Intacct	Accounting
5	 SAP Concur	Expense Management
6	 ramp	Spend Management
7	 NAVAN	Travel Management
8	 INTUIT quickbooks	Accounting
9	 Expensify	Expense Management
10	 odoo	ERP Systems



SaaS solutions for SMBs were the most popular across multiple categories, from ERP and accounting to project and spend management. The cloud is now mainstream, and software has been democratized by making it more accessible to SMBs. Complex software isn't for the enterprise anymore. Also, these products provide 'light' and often free versions, which makes them popular amongst small businesses.

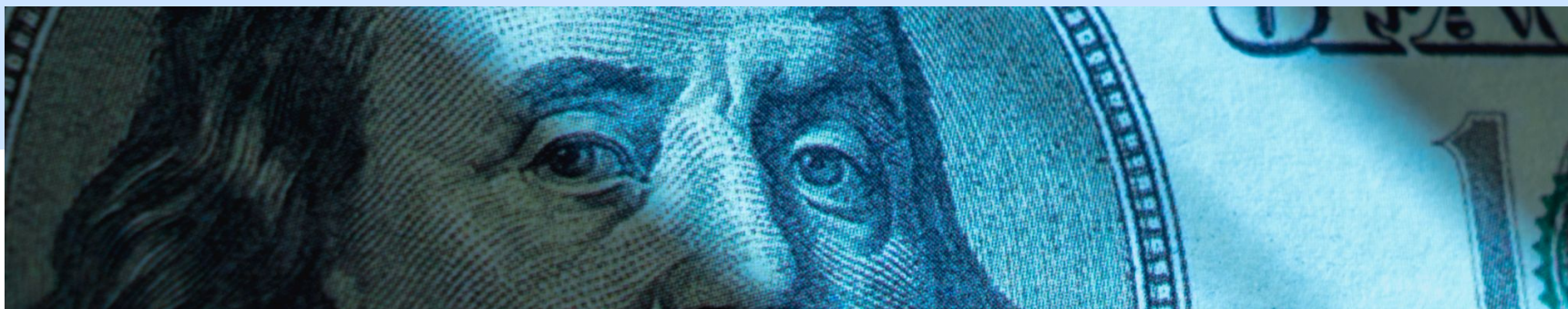
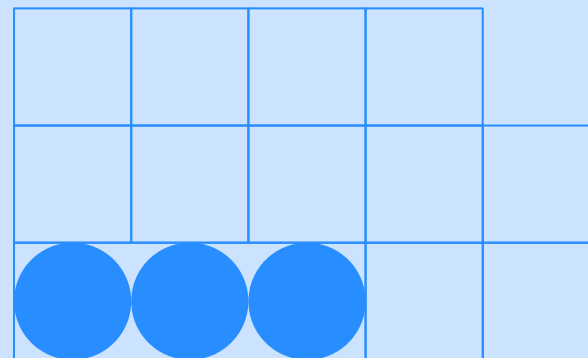
– **Gabriel Gheorghiu**, *Research Principal*





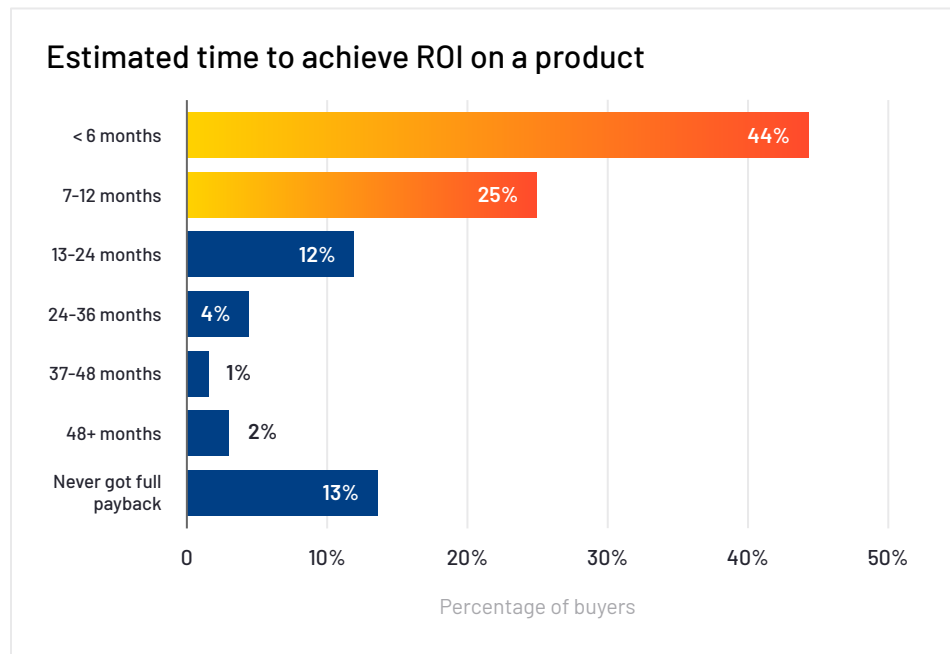
Time to ROI

As we turned the page on a challenging year for the tech industry, it's more important than ever that software sellers prove the value of their product to win, serve, and retain customers. We looked at data across all of G2 (2,100+ categories) to understand where buyers are finding the most value today.





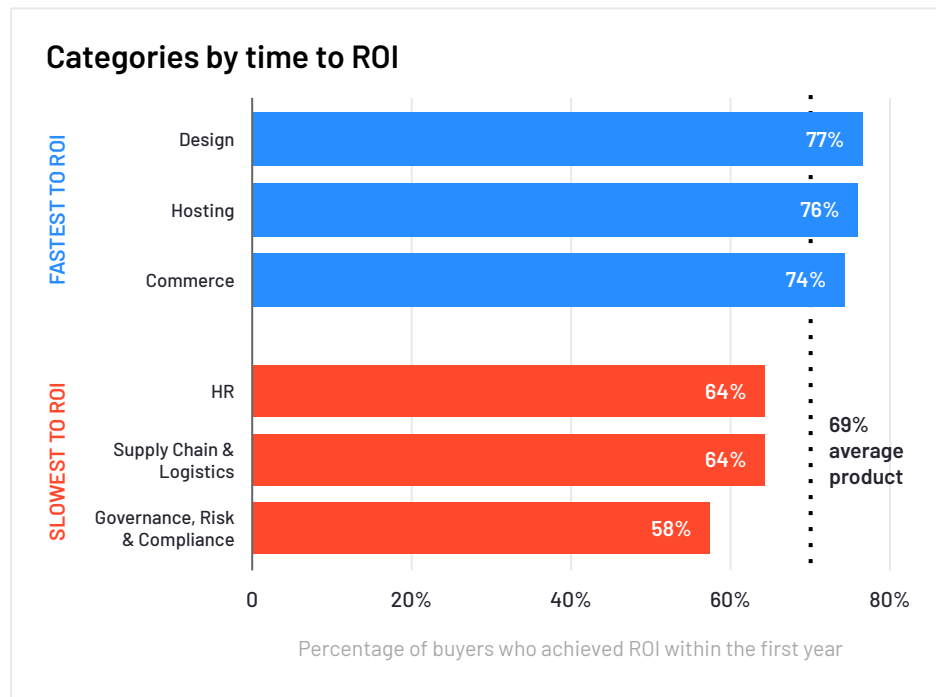
More than two-thirds of G2 software buyers reported a return on investment in less than a year



Businesses are facing pressures to show results – and are urging vendors to not just tell them how their offerings can drive value, but show them. G2's Software Buyer Behavior Research revealed that buyers want to see quick value with >50% of respondents expressing the desire to realize ROI within 6 months. However, reviewers indicated they're falling short as just 44% reported seeing ROI within 6 months.



Buyers found swiftest time to ROI with design software



Design products on G2 experience the fastest time to ROI. Traditionally, Design tools were created as point solutions to address a specific end user challenge. While Design software providers are beginning to include multiple functionalities to address end to end workflows, point solutions remain prevalent. They typically cost less and solve a narrow scope of work, which leads to a quicker return on investment.

– Priya Patel, Sr. Research Analyst

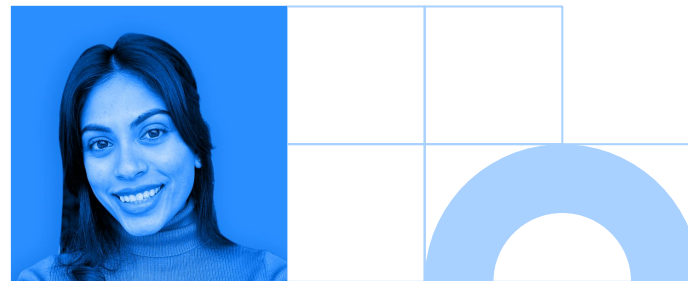
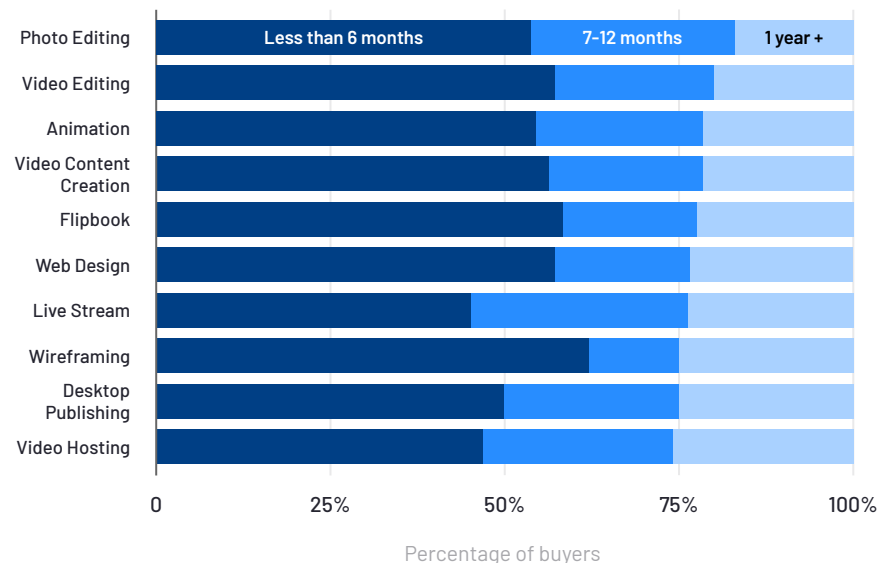




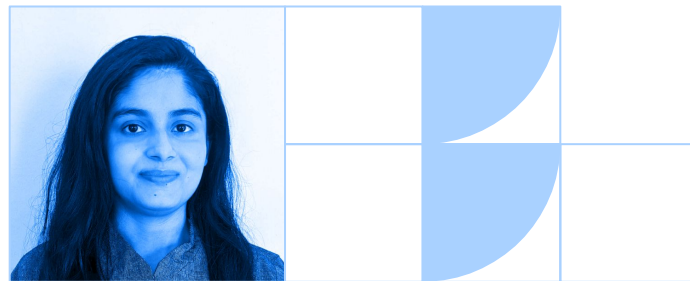
Photo Editing software led Design categories in time to ROI

Design categories with the fastest time to ROI



Design products on G2 typically have quicker go-live times than other software products, because of the higher ratio of point solutions to platform solutions. Design point solutions tend to be simpler, being used by a limited number of users and having a relatively shallow learning curve. Without the need to integrate design tools with existing infrastructure or to implement the tool across multiple teams, buyers of design products tend to go live well before 1 year - and this accelerates the ability to realize value.

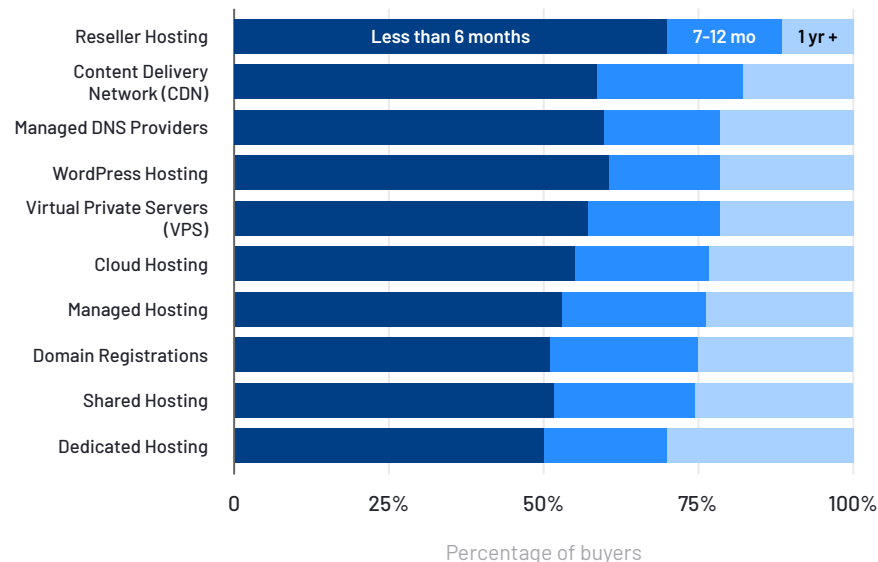
- **Shalaka Joshi**, Research Analyst





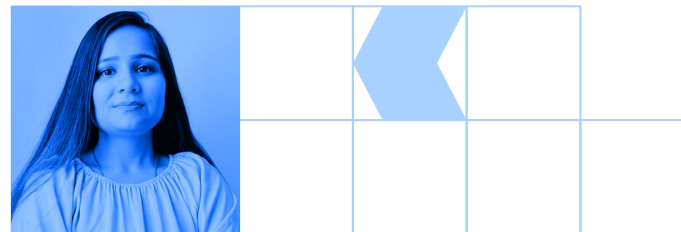
Reseller Hosting software led Hosting categories in time to ROI

Hosting categories with the fastest time to ROI



Compared to other Hosting categories, Reseller Hosting users achieve the fastest ROI due to lower initial costs and the ability to bundle hosting with value-added services like website design and SEO. With the hosting provider managing the infrastructure and automated tools simplifying tasks from billing to setup, resellers can scale their operations and boost profitability with minimal extra efforts. Resellers targeting niche industries can customize marketing strategies to enhance client engagement, leading to higher conversion rates and quicker ROI.

- **Anindita Sengupta**, Sr. Research Analyst



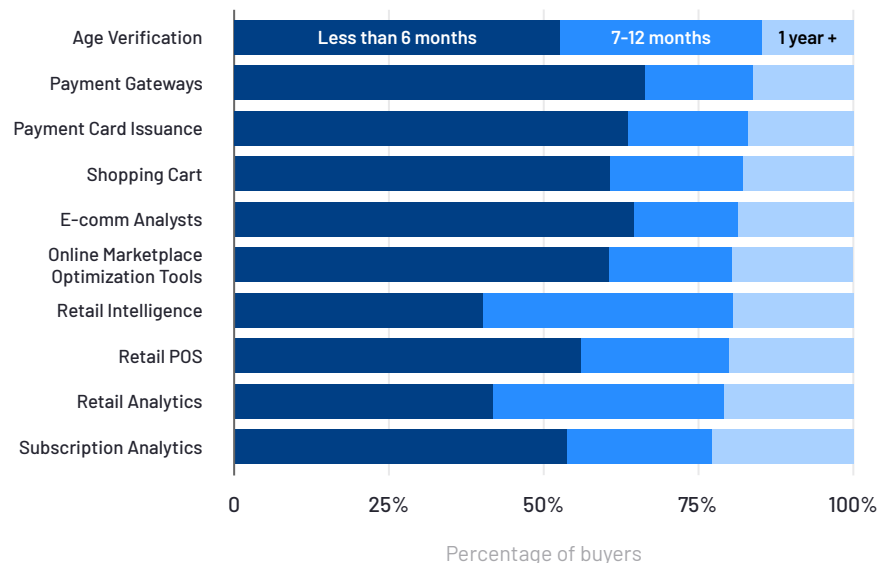
Source: G2 data, Jan 1 - Dec 31, 2023

Note: List includes categories that received at least 40 reviews with ROI ratings in 2023.



Payment Gateways software led Commerce categories in ROI

Commerce categories with the fastest time to ROI



With increased awareness of secure digital transactions in the e-commerce ecosystem, investing in a good payment gateway has become more crucial than ever before. More than 65% of the users of payment gateway software have witnessed ROI in less than 6 months. A majority of the credit goes to AI shaping the payment gateway market in the fintech industry. It signals a growing adoption of gateway software and holds a bright future for the vendors.

- **Subhransu Sahu**, Sr. Research Analyst



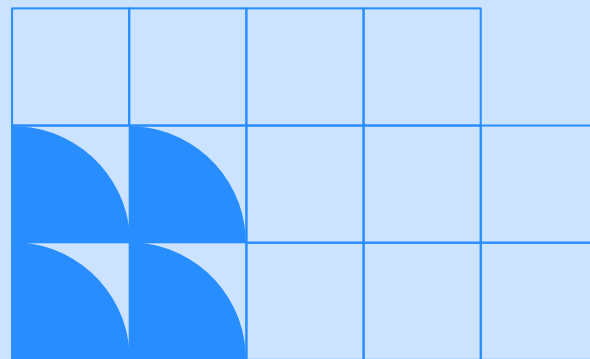
Source: G2 data, Jan 1 - Dec 31, 2023

Note: List includes categories that received at least 40 reviews with ROI ratings in 2023.



Methodology

G2's State of Software report examines trends from its B2B software marketplace, based on proprietary data across 2.5 million+ trusted reviews, 160,000+ products and services, 2,000+ categories, and 90 million annual visitors. Insights are based on G2 data collected between Jan. 1, 2023 and Dec. 31, 2023, unless otherwise noted, to reflect trends over the past year observed on G2.



Report authors include:

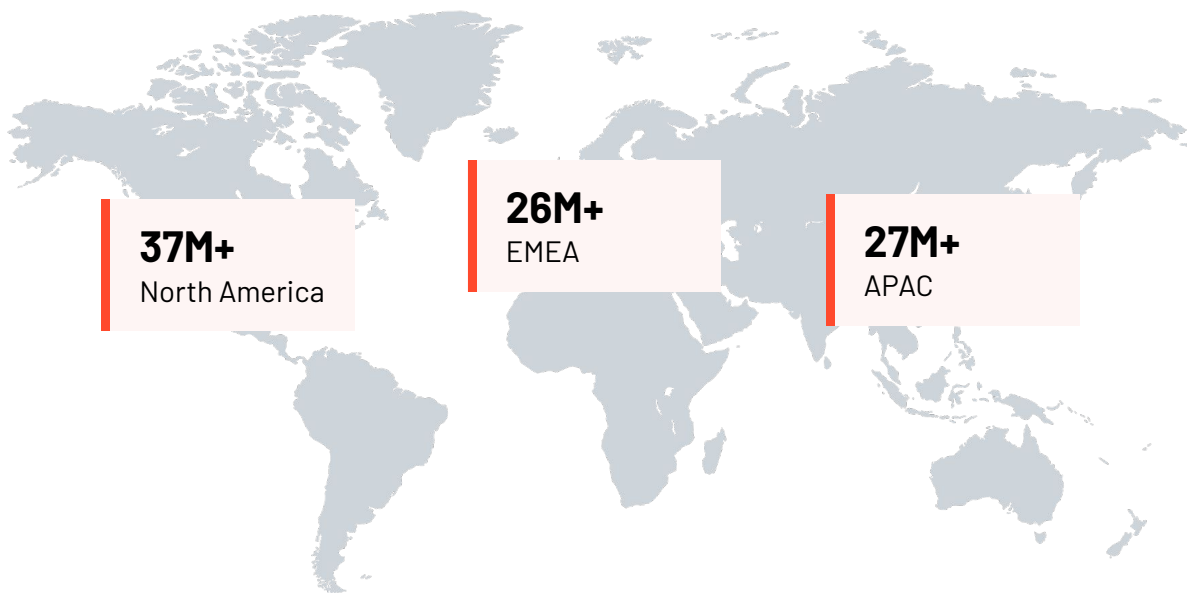
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G2.com Marketplace activity yields unparalleled insight into the dynamics shaping B2B software and services



90M+ Global annual software buyers

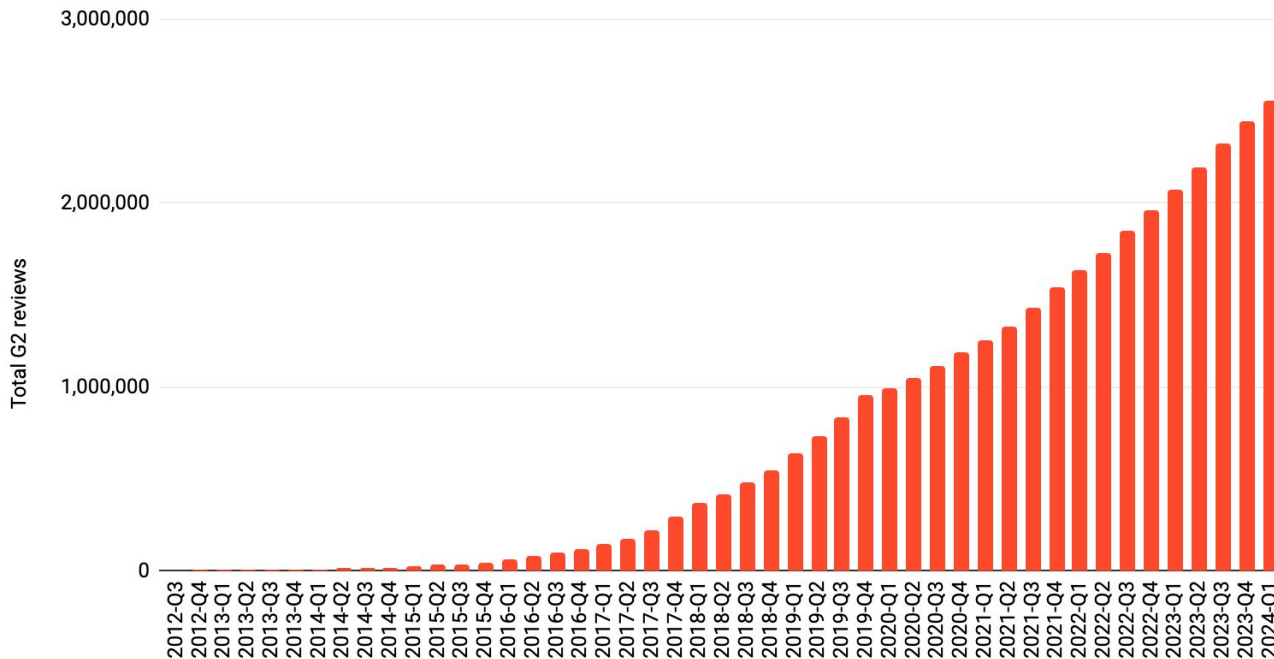
160K+ Products & services

2.1K+ Categories

2.5M+ Authenticated B2B user reviews



G2 offers buyers valuable insight into the real experience of their peers with over 2.5 million B2B software and services reviews



G2 is the world's largest and most trusted software marketplace. More than 90 million people annually – including employees at all Fortune 500 companies – use G2 to make smarter software decisions based on authentic peer reviews. Thousands of software and services companies of all sizes partner with G2 to build their reputation and grow their business – including Salesforce, HubSpot, Zoom, and Adobe.

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What's next

Stay tuned for future editions of the State of Software report. Please let us know what you liked from this report or would like to see in the future by emailing research@g2.com.

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