



Tech market insight
prepared by Rocket Communications

INTRODUCING THE RETRO CIO

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Intro.

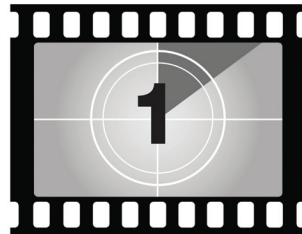
CIOs are complex creatures. Understanding their behaviours and preferences can be a difficult challenge, but a worthwhile one. They face a huge amount of pressure to do more with less, align IT to the business and make technology a competitive advantage, rather than just another function in the company.

Added to this, CIOs are being bombarded with marketing messages left right and centre in today's world of information overload. They are being attacked from every angle by recommendations to buy a product or stay ahead of trends like cloud and big data, as well as invitations to attend trade shows, seminars and networking events.

With so many priorities and so much to take in, as well as the day-to-day running of the IT department and reporting to the board, we decided to find out exactly how, when and in what form CIOs find, consume and digest the information that informs and influences their purchasing decisions.

As a technology specialist agency, Rocket understands how complex and multi-faceted this environment is and wanted to demystify how our clients - the marketing, PR and comms directors of leading technology businesses - should be communicating with their clients: the CIOs of major organisations across the UK.

So, we embarked on Tech Heads...



As a technology specialist agency, we understand how complex and multi-faceted this environment is

CIOs WANT TO GO BACK TO THE OLD SCHOOL

We used the research arm of our marketing services agency, Loudhouse (www.loudhouse.co.uk), to speak to over 250 IT decision makers and identified a growing breed who want to go back to the future as they set about the daunting task of keeping on top of the information they need to do their job, making informed business decisions and surviving an industry changing at unprecedented rates.

Given the worldwide emergence of social media, combined with CIOs inherently being submerged in a high tech world, at the outset of this study we expected to find that these technology leaders focus on new age methods of communication, rather than traditional interaction. But this is not the case.

Rather than become swamped with information, CIOs are turning their backs on constant and unrelenting information overload. With a raft of new pressures and priorities – economic, competitive, technological - many have responded by turning back the clocks and rediscovering well-trodden routes that served them well in the past.

These are the Retro CIOs.

As the term implies, the Retro CIO has sourced information and advice from more traditional channels that experimental IT leaders believed had been consigned to the recycling bin.



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WHO WE TALKED TO

Sectors surveyed from top to bottom:
 Manufacturing (23%), Technology (20%),
 Business services (11%), Financial services
 (11%), Public sector (9%), Retail (6%),
 Hospitality (5%), Creative services (3%),
 Other (12%)

STRETCHED FOR TIME AND EXHAUSTED BY INFORMATION

Time-poor CIOs are so busy they spend just 10 minutes a day researching the products and services vital to their organisations' futures.

CIOs – the vital link between a business' goals and its ability to deliver them – spend a paltry eight minutes a day reading news. That's about the time it takes to fire up your laptop, check your Twitter feed or make a decent cup of tea.

And today's time-pressed CIOs are harking back to the days of direct mail, trade shows and industry magazines as they seek to keep up-to-date on their industries. The percentage relying on direct mail (27%) for information significantly outnumbers those turning to mainstream social media networks (10%), despite the ubiquity of Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.

But technology vendors are grabbing CIOs' attention with their own social media output, with a third of IT bosses surveyed saying they use suppliers' feeds and a similar number admitting it's changed the way they consume news.

Twitter's decision to limit posts on its network to 140 characters would appear to have gone down well with CIOs, 90% of whom prefer their news in bite-sized chunks of 150 words or less. Just one in five is happy tucking into a 2,000-word white paper.



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BUOYED BY BUDGETS BEARING UP

More than half the CIOs surveyed report their budgets are the same or higher than last year, but a sizeable minority (42%) say they're being asked to get by with less than 2011. Exactly the same percentage has more to spend, with one in six (16%) saying budgets are flat.

The fact that almost half have increased budgets means increased spending - on people, products, services and infrastructure - and therefore researching new technologies and platforms is a higher priority than when times are lean and new projects are put on hold.

The fact that almost half have increased budgets means increased spending

Only 1 in 6 companies is reporting a shrinking IT budget

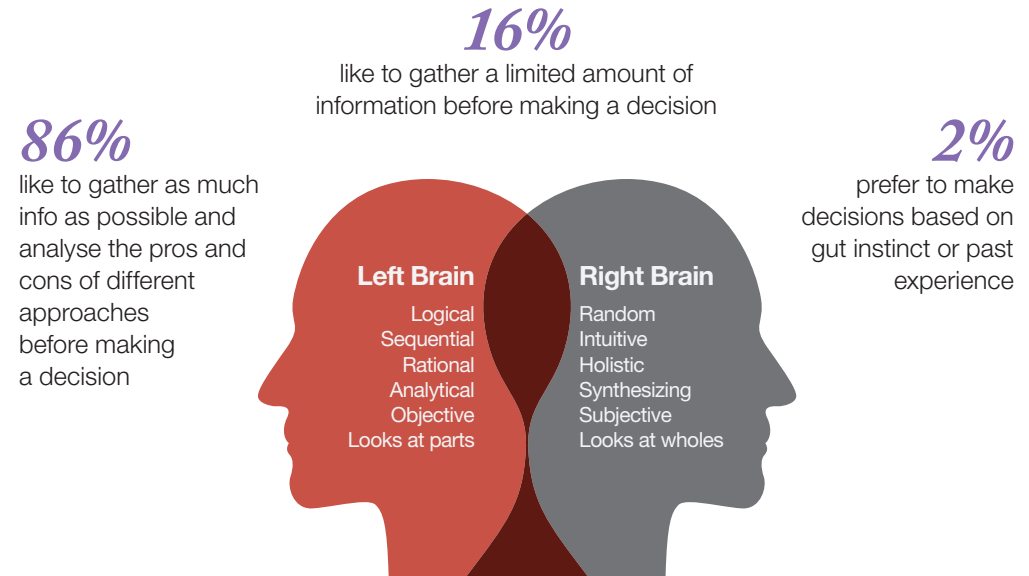
UP - 42%

STATIC - 42%

DOWN - 16%

Budgets more likely to be increasing in companies with 500+ employees (46%) than those with <500 employees (36%)

Which of the following best describes your decision making style when it comes to IT products, services and suppliers?



(90% in companies with 500+ employees / 92% in companies where IT budgets have decreased)

INFORMATION IS POWER

IT leaders take their responsibility seriously and like to weigh up all the available information before making a purchasing decision.

A substantial 86% like to gather as much information as possible when evaluating products, services and suppliers, analysing the pros and cons of different approaches before making a decision. In companies with more than 500 employees, this figure rises to 90% and in companies where IT budgets have decreased, it's even higher: 92%.

This is impressive, casting a question mark over the approach taken by 16% who say they gather only a limited amount of information before making a purchasing decision. One in 50 brave souls doesn't even go to those lengths, relying on gut instinct or past experience.

DON'T JUST RELY ON SOCIAL MEDIA

When it comes to finding information, the Retro CIO is in their element.

OUT have gone Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn - all less influential this year than last - and **IN** have come supplier websites, peer recommendation, webinars, IT publications, trade shows and seminars. All of which are considered more influential than they were in 2011.

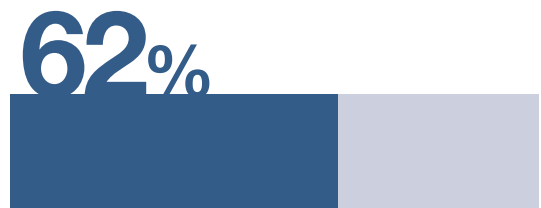
This apparent apathy towards social media is demonstrated by the fact that almost two thirds (62%) of CIOs do not follow or subscribe to social media channels from any vendor. One in three follows existing vendors, with one in seven following new suppliers.



1 in 3 CIOs follows / subscribes to social media from existing vendors (31%)



1 in 7 CIOs follows / subscribes to social media from new vendors (15%)



62% of CIOs do not follow / subscribe to social media from any vendors

INCREASED influence in 2012 DECREASED influence in 2012

Vendor / supplier websites	(42%)	Facebook	(27%)
Friends / associates also working in IT	(39%)	Twitter	(26%)
Webcasts / webinars	(37%)	National press	(24%)
IT publications	(35%)	Broader influencers	(18%)
IT conferences / events / seminars	(34%)	LinkedIn groups	(17%)

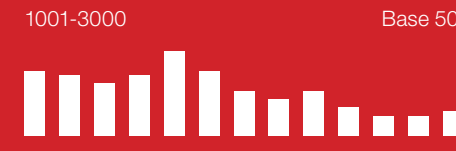
CHOOSE THE RIGHT CHANNELS

Given the plethora of IT publications available, Retro CIOs' reading habits reflect a wider conservatism revealed elsewhere in this research.

The publication that most (40%) turn to for information is the venerable 'Computer Weekly', now in its 46th year of publication. Next on the CIO reading list is the eponymous 'CIO' magazine, tied with 'The Register' and cited by one in three (33%) as their information channel of choice from a list of 13 leading IT publications.

Other stalwarts such as 'IT Pro', 'Computerworld' (both 31%) and 'Computing' (29%) all feature prominently, the latter having decided to go online only recently and drop its print edition.

Publications from left to right: Computer Weekly, CIO, Register, Computerworld, IT Pro, Computing, ZDNet, Information Age, Techworld, Tech Target, V3, TechWeekEurope, Computer Business Review



Financial Services

1. Register 44%
2. Information Age 36%
3. CIO 32%



Manufacturing

1. Computer Weekly 56%
2. Computer World 40%
3. ZD Net 32%



Retail, distribution & transport

1. IT Pro 44%
2. CIO 36%
3. Register 36%



Other commercial sector

1. Computer Weekly 48%
2. Computer World 40%
3. CIO 36%



outro.

GETTING THE RETRO CIO TO BUY

There's no doubt that when it comes to making a purchasing decision, the Retro CIO relies heavily on vendor websites and face-to-face meetings for information. He or she is all about real-world contact and steers away from virtual relationships and Twitter talk.

Eight in 10 (81%) put supplier websites in their top three most trusted information sources, with vendor contact (76%) and online news sites (56%) also featuring as important for driving for buying decisions.

Direct mail, social media and advertising are all way down the preference pecking order, identified by around one in five (22%) of CIOs as important for the big IT decisions.



More than eight in 10 put supplier websites in their top three most trusted information sources

The rise of the Retro CIO is a sign of the times.

Under pressure and intense scrutiny, it is understandable that busy professionals should resort to tried and tested habits and familiar behaviours. There's something comforting and reassuring about harking back to the old days.

We all do it.

And there's no point ignoring it. As communications professionals, it's our job to meet the challenges our Tech Heads research has uncovered.

CIOs don't want to beat around the bush: they want their information short, to the point and from an authoritative source. They aren't in the mood to experiment, so social media is not a top priority or the be all and end all: it's part of the multi-channel mix.

They are spending on average eight minutes a day catching up on industry and supplier news and developments, so sending them your 5,000-word treaty on storage infrastructure might not hit the mark. 140 characters is much more like it.

That's not to say Retro CIOs cut corners. Far from it: they research suppliers thoroughly when making buying decisions, using established sources to guide and inform them. Supplier websites are a clear favourite, so these need to be well-designed, packed with great, easy-to-read content.

With 58% of CIOs having the same or more money to spend this year than last, isn't it worth tapping into the Retro CIO?



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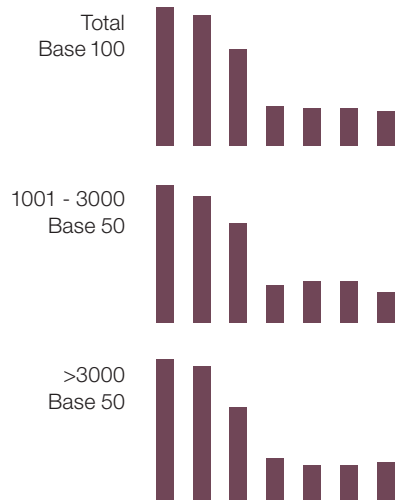
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Platforms from left to right: Vendor websites, Personal contact, Online, Direct mail, Print media, Social media, Advertising

cio. ■

The only constant in our lives is change -
Ed Zedlewski, CIO, Eduserv (www.eduserv.org.uk)

This is particularly true in the life of a CIO, with the birth of social and rich media presenting a vast volume of information about vendors, partners, customers and the ever-changing IT landscape itself. Making procurement decisions with this information has simultaneously become easier and more difficult; easier with the higher volumes of information more readily available, more difficult with the higher ratios of noise to genuinely useful information.

The CIO community has undoubtedly had to become savvier about how it gathers and processes information. Being smart about how I source information has been increasingly important over the last few years - listening to a vendor or media podcast in the car in the morning or evening has become a regular occurrence now, and a valuable source of information.

This is certainly not the only change. I have less time for day-long events and conferences, making short meetings, webinars and concise analysis reports essential. I rarely have time to consume a 2,000 word white paper, much as I would like to.

This trend is also making us harder to please; with the plethora of vendors producing quality equipment and solutions, we can afford to be choosy - if I do not get the technical information I need in a first sales meeting, there is unlikely to be a second. This is mirrored in the media I consume - I have no time for verbose, empty reporting.

CIOs today are time-poor, frequently mobile and overloaded with information. It is absolutely key for the media, other influencers, vendors and partners to provide relevant content over the most appropriate channel if they wish to gain our attention, trust and spend.



Making procurement decisions with this information has simultaneously become easier and more difficult

Sorry
WE'RE
CLOSED



TECH HEADS

rocket.

For more information about how Rocket can help you connect and communicate with your audiences, please contact us at

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