

Gartner®

Pushing Beyond Enterprise Tech Buyer Regret

Address buying challenges to accelerate
tech sales growth



Buying and selling enterprise technology products and solutions has never been easier, or harder.

The modern enterprise technology customer is more tech savvy, has numerous opportunities and use cases for tech, has access to more options and information than ever before — but often regrets their purchase.

Frustrations are expanding as technology decisions become ever more democratized. Most buyer groups now comprise eight to 15 people. That's a lot of people with often-conflicting objectives and goals, and who all may be disappointed to some degree with the final purchase.

For the sellers of these products, the paradox between more customer power and more regret directly impacts their growth strategies.

Use these actionable insights to tackle regret head-on so you can:

- Accelerate buying cycles
- Reduce friction that can subdue expansion
- Lessen the chances that no decision is made at all
- Build more collaborative relationships with your customers



Hank Barnes
Distinguished VP Analyst

Buyers that cited high regret for an enterprise tech purchase took seven to 10 months longer to buy.

The Extent of Regret Among Enterprise Tech Buyers



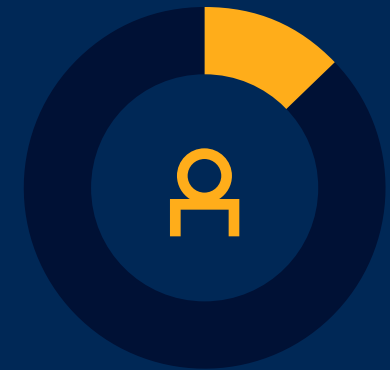
73%

of tech purchasers who have bought but not yet implemented their products/solutions indicated high regret.



56%

of the purchases studied were categorized as high-regret.



Only 13%

of purchases were categorized as no-regret.

Note: High-regret customers felt their expectations were not being met and settled for something less ambitious than they had originally planned. No-regret buyers are those whose expectations are being met and who did not settle.
n = 1,120 of the largest technology purchase decisions made by midsize or larger enterprises
Source: Gartner

Buyer Regret Directly Impacts Sellers

Regret may not paralyze buyers ...

Most people experience levels of regret for any major purchase, but:

- Even when buyers experience regret over tech purchases, they are generally achieving objectives

Even organizations that tend to regret their purchases:

- Still invest in technology
- Are actually more likely to renew subscriptions when they aren't satisfied (believing some solution is better than none)

... but buyer regret has wide-ranging impacts

Customers who regret their purchases:

- Are much more likely to downgrade
- Are less likely to expand
- Are common among buyer groups that fail to reach a decision

Impact on sellers

- Slower growth
- Wasted time and resources
- Longer buying cycles
- Frustrated sales teams

Understanding the behavior of buyers and the drivers of regret can help technology product leaders shorten deal cycles and improve sales effectiveness.

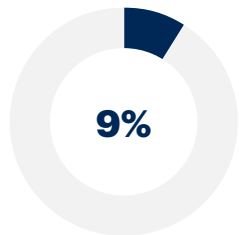
Getting to Know Buyers

High-Regret Buyers More Commonly Display Lax Decision Practices

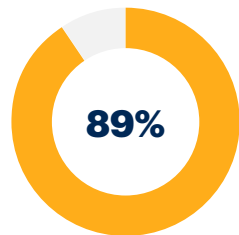
High-regret tech buyers are more likely to do each of the following:

1. Disagree over objectives

Team members have different, often conflicting, objectives for the purchase.



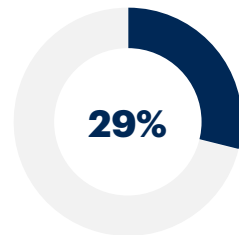
No-regret teams



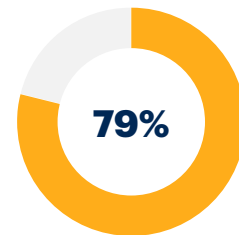
High-regret teams

2. Vacillate and stall

Revisiting of “subdecisions” throughout the buying effort contributed to delays.



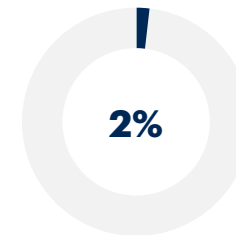
No-regret teams



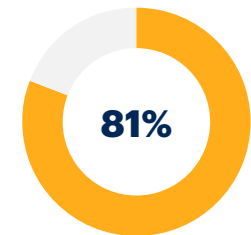
High-regret teams

3. Face more challenges with occasional decision makers

Occasional decision makers frequently overrule the buying team.






No-regret teams



High-regret teams

Getting to Know Buyers

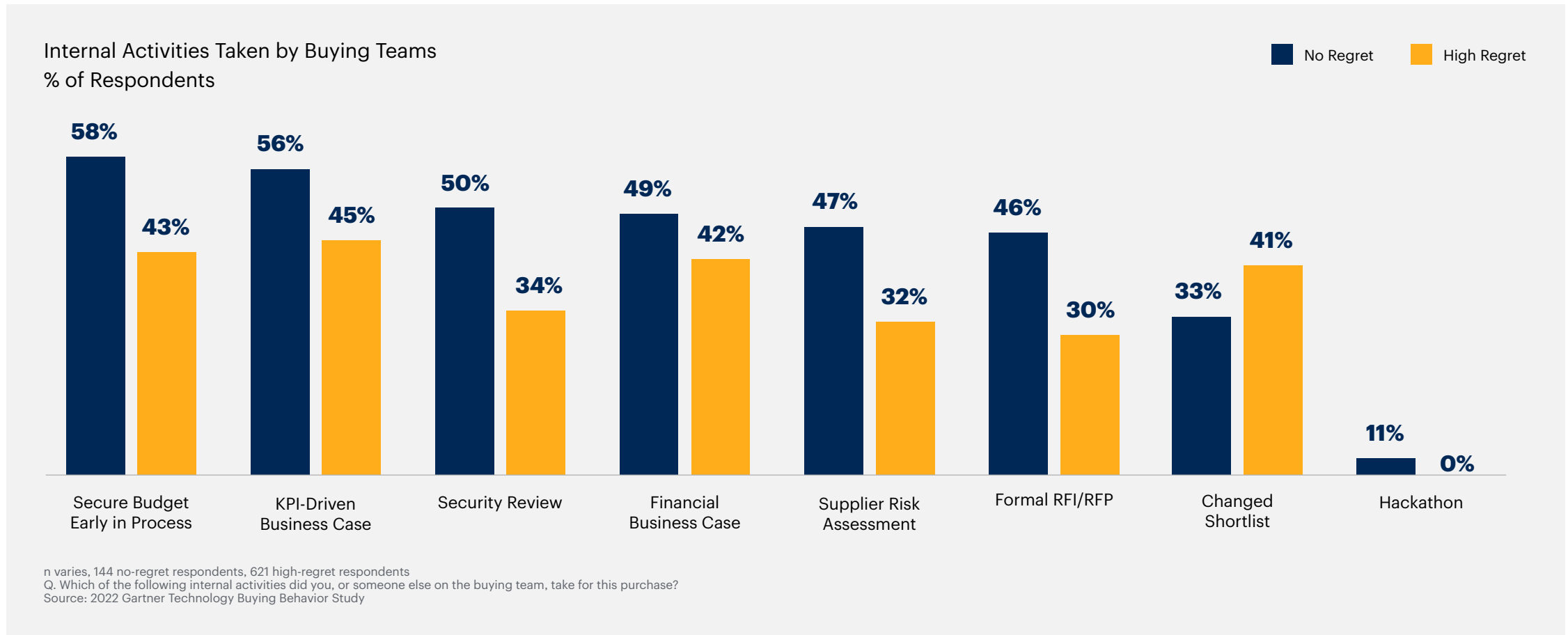
No-Regret Buyers Do Three Things Differently

Characteristic	What sellers need to know
<p>More thorough</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depth of engagement is a strong signal of decision speed and effectiveness. • Make sure to track engagement and offer activities and content to test and support it.
<p>More focused</p> 	<p>Differentiate yourself as the winning provider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Display a thorough understanding of the customer’s situation. • Show expertise in their industry.
<p>More disciplined</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verify the core value proposition required by the buyer team. • Provide specific product or implementation details promptly. • Find ways to appeal to each individual on the buying team uniquely. • Reinforce and reiterate how your product or solution meets their needs throughout the buying effort and in every customer interaction.

Only 9% of no-regret buyers cite frequent disagreements over the objectives for their tech purchase.

Getting to Know Buyers

No-Regret Buying Teams More Often Undertake a Range of Internal Activities



Getting to Know Buyers

Tech Buying Regret Can Be Linked to Buyer Type

Gartner research surfaced seven different buyer profiles that make technology decisions in different ways. While no single combination of approaches guarantees success, those lacking regret are more likely to view technology more strategically and are more comfortable with change.

No-regret buyer types

View technology strategically and are most likely to follow rigorous decision practices and put in the effort to make confident decisions.

Three such profiles contribute to 70% of the no-regret buyers in the survey, despite being only 35% of the sample.

High-regret buyer types

Lack consensus and discipline in decision making, lack clarity in internal processes, resist change or take a tactical view of technology.

Four such profiles account for 73% of all high-regret buyers in the survey.

Key take-aways for sellers

Using signals about buyer types can help you identify as early as possible those buying teams likely to be regretful.

By anticipating and executing how and when to manage, optimize or avoid potential high-regret buyers, you can avoid the pitfalls of longer sales cycles or deals that fail to complete.





Next Steps for Sellers to Reduce Tech Buying Regret

Relentlessly put the customer at the center of your business.

	1. Target your best-fit customers	2. Focus on the whole process	3. Focus on the whole product
Goal	Put the bulk of resources and focus on customers that best fit your offerings.	Understand and target the right customers and take ownership of your customer’s buying challenges.	Think beyond the core product or service offering and surround it with partnerships, programs and tools to reduce risk and make a purchase decision simpler.
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an enterprise persona that defines the characteristics of the target organizations (not the individuals within those organizations). • Assess market stage and Enterprise Technology Adoption (ETA) Profiles that incorporate ideal customer profiles. • Adjust content and programs to capture purchase intent and prepare customers for change. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify where your prospects struggle. • Provide them with targeted assistance to build confidence. • Help prospects to prioritize and clarify their objectives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand your whole-product thinking to better address risk and operations in more complex scenarios. • Don’t force customers to combine product and service purchases to address their value scenarios.
Key Step	<p>Tune messaging Create messages that appeal to the attitudes of your best-fit customers.</p>	<p>Buyer and change enablement Create content, tools and programs that help buyers follow an optimized path and build confidence in their decision process, and present best practices.</p>	<p>Change enablement You and your customers iterate your value proposition together, and you help buyers build confidence in their ability to execute the change that will result from the solutions they choose.</p>
Outcome	Best-fit customers are more likely to engage and accelerate deal cycles.	You help prospects build more robust decision processes so they can choose your products and services confidently and effectively.	You, your customers and your entire ecosystem work to achieve maximum impact from tech investments with minimal regret and frustration.

Actionable, objective insight

Explore these additional complimentary resources and tools for high tech leaders:

 <p>Webinar Crossing the New Chasm: The Dynamics of Cross-Functional B2B Buying Decisions Adapt to how your buyers approach technology decisions.</p> <p>Watch Now</p>	 <p>Research Top Trends for Tech Providers for 2022 Discover the top 10 trends impacting tech and service providers.</p> <p>Download Now</p>	 <p>Webinar How the Best Tech Companies Engage Buyers and Drive Growth Better target your buyers to drive growth.</p> <p>Watch Now</p>	 <p>Infographic How Do Pessimist Technology Buyers Behave? Discover insights to optimize your product offerings.</p> <p>Download Now</p>
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