Let Modern Search Solutions Be "The Brains" Of Your Enterprise

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Forrester Consulting provides independent and objective research-based consulting to help leaders succeed in their organizations. Ranging in scope from a short strategy session to custom projects, Forrester's Consulting services connect you directly with research analysts who apply expert insight to your specific business challenges. For more information, visit forrester.com/consulting.

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Executive Summary

Enterprise search solutions have evolved well beyond simple keyword search. Modern search solutions are contextual to provide more relevant results and valuable knowledge that can be accessed directly or be embedded in applications. Many enterprises have rediscovered the power of search to boost the knowledge and, therefore, effectiveness of employees who use search to find quick answers or discover new insights.

In May 2016, Mindbreeze commissioned Forrester Consulting to evaluate how organizations access knowledge within their organization using modern search technology to find relevant information and uncover valuable new knowledge. To further explore this trend, Forrester developed a hypothesis that tested the use, value, and challenges of implementing modern enterprise search solutions.

In conducting an in-depth survey of 153 IT decision-makers responsible for enterprise search at their organization, Forrester found that these companies understand the value of search but value solutions that provide less implementation and maintenance effort.

KEY FINDINGS

Forrester's study yielded three key findings:

› **Organizations gain value when they make search accessible across the organization.** As information becomes a larger component of an organization's repertoire, enterprise search enables organizations to gain value from information better than ever. By enabling access of search tools to employees, organizations will notice better productivity and efficiency from their employees.

› **Search appliance tools will lead to low-maintenance, modern search solutions.** Embedded search appliance tools will empower organizations to implement modern search quickly. IT will not have to worry about configuring the solutions or developing new search interfaces, as this will be preconfigured for specific needs.

› **Enterprise search helps boost employees' productivity and helps them serve customers better.** More than 70% of respondents said their employees serve customers better through the use of enterprise search tools, and a further 62% said their employees work faster because they are spending less time finding content.

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Leave No Stone Unturned When It Comes To Enterprise Data

Technology continues to evolve rapidly, enabling organizations to collect massive amounts of data. In a business environment, which is in a constant state of flux, businesses must up the ante by further enriching the organization's information sources.

Data-driven results are being applied to every aspect of the business, and organizations must understand the insights in order to improve their business strategy in an increasingly competitive global market and to make better-informed, and strategic decisions; the demand for knowledge is fueling the growth of big data (see Figure 1).

FIGURE 1
### Organizations Are Able To Use Data For Valuable Insights
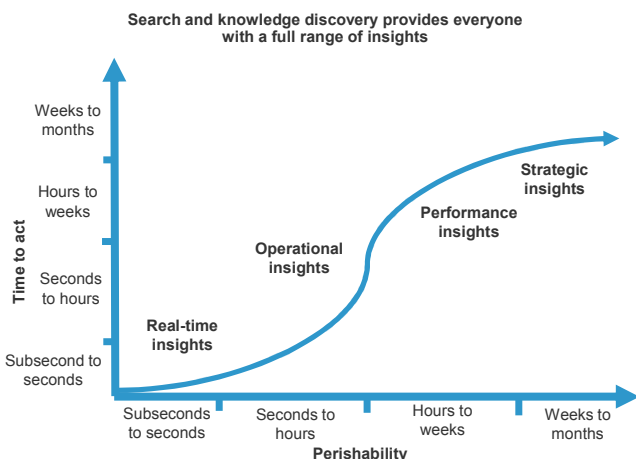
Source: Forrester Research, Inc.

Organizations managing their own data require an easy-to-use, simplified search tool that delves far across and deep into the entire organization, finding the right information whenever users need it. Modern enterprise search delivers lightning-fast retrieval of relevant information from disparate content, databases, and business applications.

Enterprise search bridges the gap between data and the organization's ability to leverage it for customer, operations, performance, and strategic insights (see Figure 2). This means that organizations will be able to better serve

customers, enhance operational efficiency, make workers smarter, and, therefore, add business value.

FIGURE 2
Search And Knowledge Discovery Provide Contextualized Adaptive Results
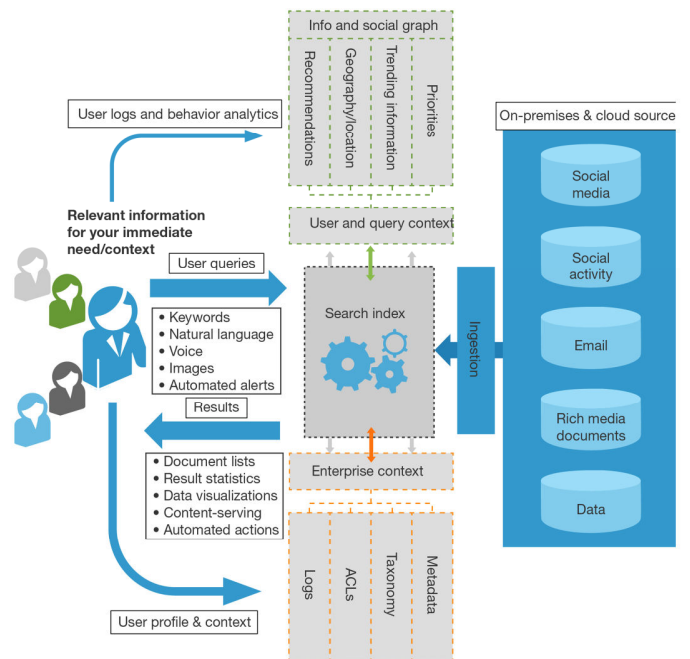
Source: Forrester Research, Inc.

Enterprise Search Serves Multiple Use Cases

Part of understanding why enterprise search plays such a powerful role for organizations is understanding what it's being used for. The survey revealed that enterprise search is being used for a variety of purposes, including (see Figure 3):

› **Information retrieval.** Organizations are increasingly relying on search as the primary means of information retrieval, which is mainly driven by two factors. On the one hand, 64% of respondents said they are using enterprise search for specific business cases, and on the other hand, 60% of employees are using it as a general-purpose search tool and expect the same experience they get when using the internet.

> **Customer service or support.** Just under half (46%) of organizations are using enterprise search for customer services or support that serves up the most relevant troubleshooting procedures and accompanies the answer with related and existing knowledge.

> **Customer eCommerce search.** More than a quarter (27%) of respondents are also using enterprise search for customer eCommerce site search, revealing information needed to index content and serve up specific results.

> **Efficient knowledge management.** Lightweight data integration with an enterprise search-driven data hub reinvigorates the workforce's ability to pull the correct data when they need it.

Organizations are blending various data types into their data-driven competitive strategies (see Figure 4). There are three types of data: structured, semistructured, and unstructured. As the volume of information has increased, users are frequently searching for all types of content to be more productive and efficient.

The study also revealed that users are accessing the exact type of content they need from web content (71%), databases (66%), documents (59%), images, 43%), rich media or video (22%), and audio (20%).

FIGURE 3

Most Search Use Cases Are Business-Specific

"What is your organization's use cases of enterprise search?"

Use case	Percentage
For specific business cases (e.g., legal)	64%
General-purpose search for employees	60%
Customer service or support (e.g., website)	46%
Customer eCommerce site search	27%

Base: 153 IT decision-makers responsible for enterprise search

Source: A commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Mindbreeze, May 2016

FIGURE 4

Enterprises Use Search Technology For Structured, Semistructured, And Unstructured Data

"What types of content is most frequently searched for by users?"

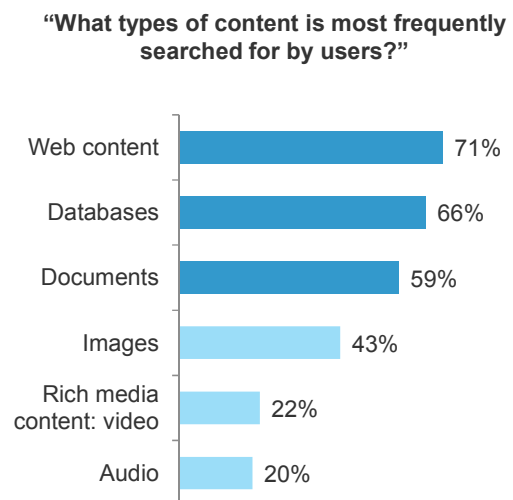| Content type	Percentage
Web content	71%
Databases	66%
Documents	59%
Images	43%
Rich media content: video	22%
Audio	20%

Base: 153 IT decision-makers responsible for enterprise search

Source: A commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Mindbreeze, May 2016
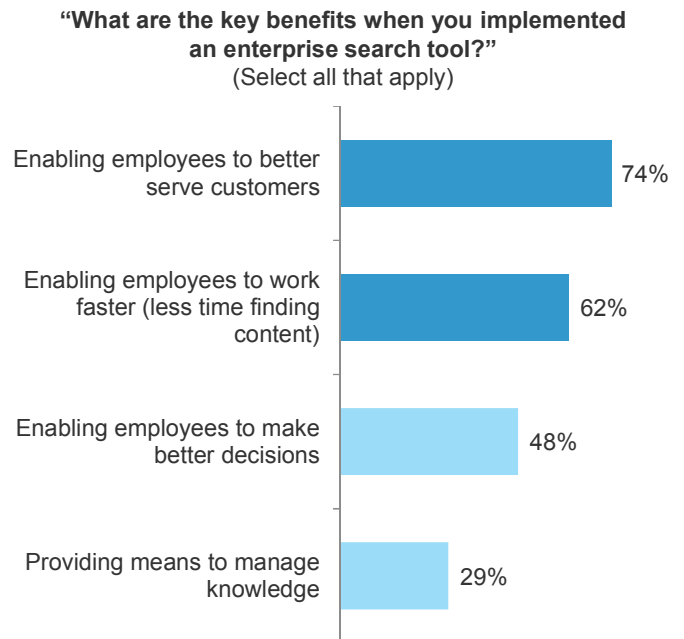
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Use Search Technology To Boost Employee Effectiveness And Customer Experience

Enterprise search tools encompass powerful benefits that optimize the search experience and have a significant impact on knowledge management and overall productivity.

When we asked what the key benefits were when implementing enterprise search, it was revealed that enterprise search tools enable employees to (see Figure 5):

› **Serve customers better.** Seventy-four percent of organizations revealed that employees serve customers better through the use of enterprise search tools, as it enables them to work efficiently.

› **Be more productive.** Effective search tools help organizations to leverage the collective experience of the workforce to share ideas and innovate rather than relying on individual expertise. Sixty-two percent of employees work faster, as they are spending less time finding content.

› **Make better decisions.** Strong information architecture is the result of enterprise search, which enables just under half (48%) of employees to make better decisions. This is because employees build contextual relationships with their content that makes it easier to find what they need.

"What are the key benefits when you implemented an enterprise search tool?"
(Select all that apply)

Enabling employees to better serve customers	74%
Enabling employees to work faster (less time finding content)	62%
Enabling employees to make better decisions	48%
Providing means to manage knowledge	29%

Base: 153 IT decision-makers responsible for enterprise search

Source: A commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Mindbreeze, May 2016

ORGANIZATIONS REQUIRE SECURITY, SCALABILITY, AND ANALYSIS WHEN SELECTING SEARCH TOOLS

The survey revealed that organizations are looking for the following when selecting an enterprise search tool (see Figure 6):

› **Enhanced security.** With much more data than ever flowing in and out of businesses today, 81% of organizations consider enhancing security as an important factor when selecting an enterprise search tool. This comes as no surprise, as just under half of organizations (44%) said they were worried about security breaches.

› **Increased scalability.** As organizations look to grow and meet their business objectives, it's absolutely paramount for organizations to run smoothly, maintain business momentum, and increase employee productivity, and 79% of enterprises want search tools to scale easily.

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› **Search tools that boost management and analysis.** Seventy-seven percent of survey respondents said that management and analysis are also important attributes to have when selecting an enterprise search tool.

FIGURE 6

Security, Scalability, And Analysis Are Key When Selecting An Enterprise Search Tool
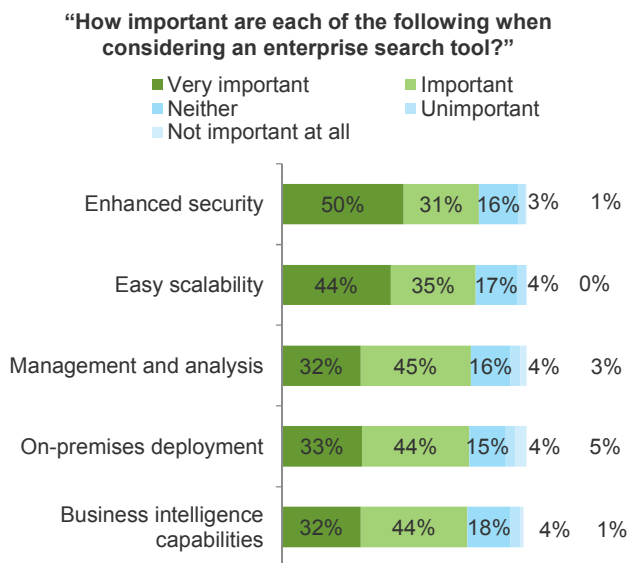
"How important are each of the following when considering an enterprise search tool?"

- ■ Very important
- ■ Important
- ■ Neither
- ■ Unimportant
- ■ Not important at all

	Very important	Important	Neither	Unimportant	Not important at all
Enhanced security	50%	31%	16%	3%	1%
Easy scalability	44%	35%	17%	4%	0%
Management and analysis	32%	45%	16%	4%	3%
On-premises deployment	33%	44%	15%	4%	5%
Business intelligence capabilities	32%	44%	18%	4%	1%

Base: 153 IT decision-makers responsible for enterprise search

Source: A commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Mindbreeze, May 2016

ENTERPRISE SEARCH APPLIANCES MEET NEEDS WITHOUT HIDDEN COSTS

Organizations are driven by the need to gain information advantage, and search solution capabilities are expanding to meet this growing need. However, organizations must be careful when deploying their search solution, since it can affect business efficiency through hidden costs, as (see Figure 7):

› **Configuring new data sources is time-consuming.** Twenty-four percent of survey respondents told us that configuring new data sources was the primary activity when maintaining their search tool, an arduous task that costs the IT team's time management effectiveness. Search solutions with many connectors applied to the business will help organizations overcome this issue.

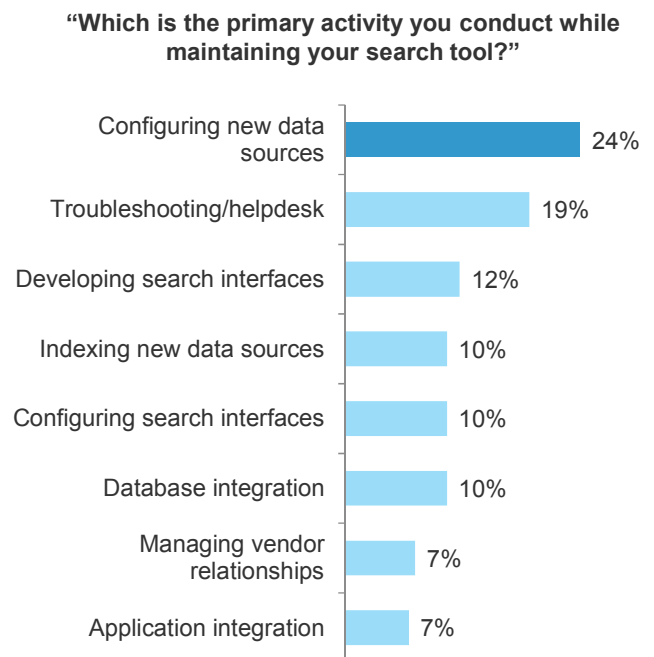› **The power of search is restrained because of troubleshooting.** Users are being hampered by complex interfaces that affect the true power of search. Survey respondents also told us that troubleshooting/helpdesk (19%) was another activity they conducted while maintaining search.

› **Extra labor is required for developing and enhancing search solutions.** IT teams will spend time developing search interfaces (12%), indexing new data sources (10%), and configuring search interfaces (10%); these activities are difficult to understand when measuring the quality of the search results obtained.

FIGURE 7

IT Is Forced To Invest Time And Money

"Which is the primary activity you conduct while maintaining your search tool?"

Configuring new data sources	24%
Troubleshooting/helpdesk	19%
Developing search interfaces	12%
Indexing new data sources	10%
Configuring search interfaces	10%
Database integration	10%
Managing vendor relationships	7%
Application integration	7%

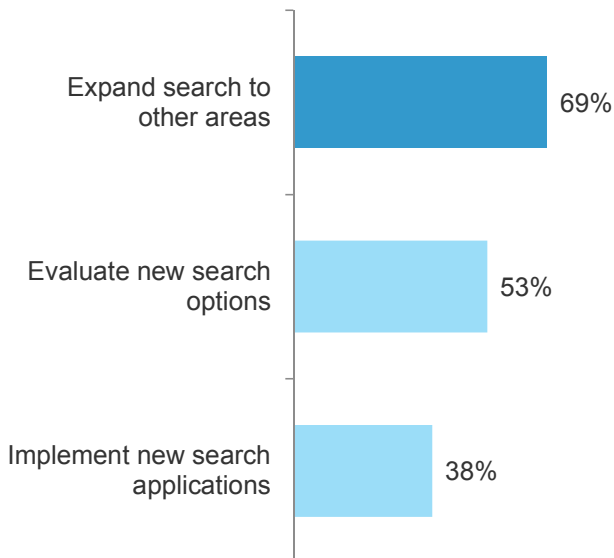Base: 153 IT decision-makers responsible for enterprise search

Source: A commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Mindbreeze, May 2016

The survey revealed that organizations will continue to invest in enterprise search. Sixty-nine percent of the survey respondents told us that they plan to expand search into other areas of the business (see Figure 8). Moreover, the survey also revealed that 69% of respondents are using search appliances as their primary search component across the enterprise as they have total cost of ownership and have the ability for simpler purchasing, deployment,

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scaling, and maintenance processes. Additionally, 53% said they will be evaluating new search options, and 38% said they are looking to implement new search applications.

"What are your plans for search in the future?"

Base: 153 IT decision-makers responsible for enterprise search

Source: A commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Mindbreeze, May 2016

Enterprise Search Can Be Deployed Seamlessly Across Complex Business Environments

Today's enterprise search market offers a variety of deployment options, thus it's important to show how an investment in search technology helps the organization's bottom line. The survey revealed that organizations are deploying their search solutions in a variety of ways (see Figure 9):

› **On-premises installed on company-owned hardware.** This is where the search tool is installed on the company's server and computing infrastructure. The customer is responsible for the security, availability, and overall management of the search tool, enabling more control and empowering the organization to customize the tool as they see fit. Thirty-five percent of respondents revealed their enterprise search solution was deployed in this manner.

› **Hybrid solutions.** As the name suggests, a part of the applications and services are provided by the cloud and the other part through the organization's own computing resources. Hybrid search solutions enable local control of data that may be too sensitive to have on the cloud. More than a quarter of respondents (27%) use a combination of on-premises and cloud.

› **Appliance preconfigured hardware and software.** Search appliances are preconfigured hardware and software that enterprises can unpack, plug in, and use out of the box with minimal configuration to data sources. Developers can build search solutions into all types of applications, and content professionals can easily measure the business impact of search-based applications, because they are built to fit a purpose; 20% of respondents have deployed their search in a preconfigured style.

› **Cloud solutions.** Typically hosted on the technology partner's servers and accessed through a web browser, a cloud solution ensures that the security, management of the system, and updates to the tool are managed by the partner instead of the enterprise itself. Only 18% of respondents said their search was deployed through cloud.

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FIGURE 9

Enterprises Are Deploying Search In A Variety Of Ways

"How is your enterprise search solution deployed?"
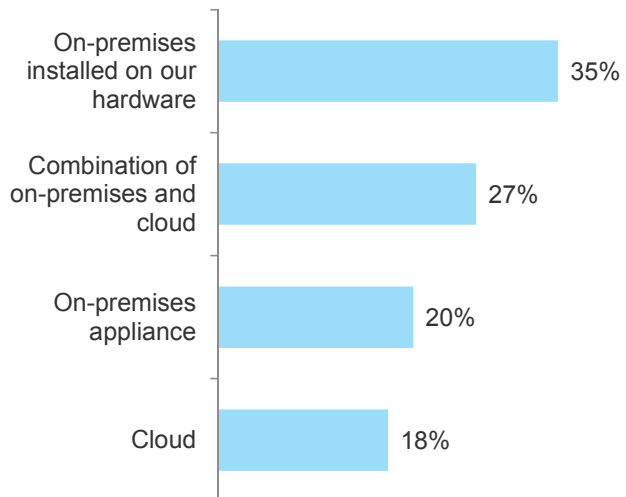
Base: 153 IT decision-makers responsible for enterprise search

Source: A commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Mindbreeze, May 2016

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Key Recommendations

Finding a needle in a haystack has never been easier. The technology advances of big data have changed the way enterprises access content. Businesses will have access to data that was previously hidden or hard to find. They now have access to insights across performance, customers, strategies, and operations. Search has quickly emerged as the key to unlocking a plethora of invaluable information, increasing productivity, and, ultimately, raising your business IQ.
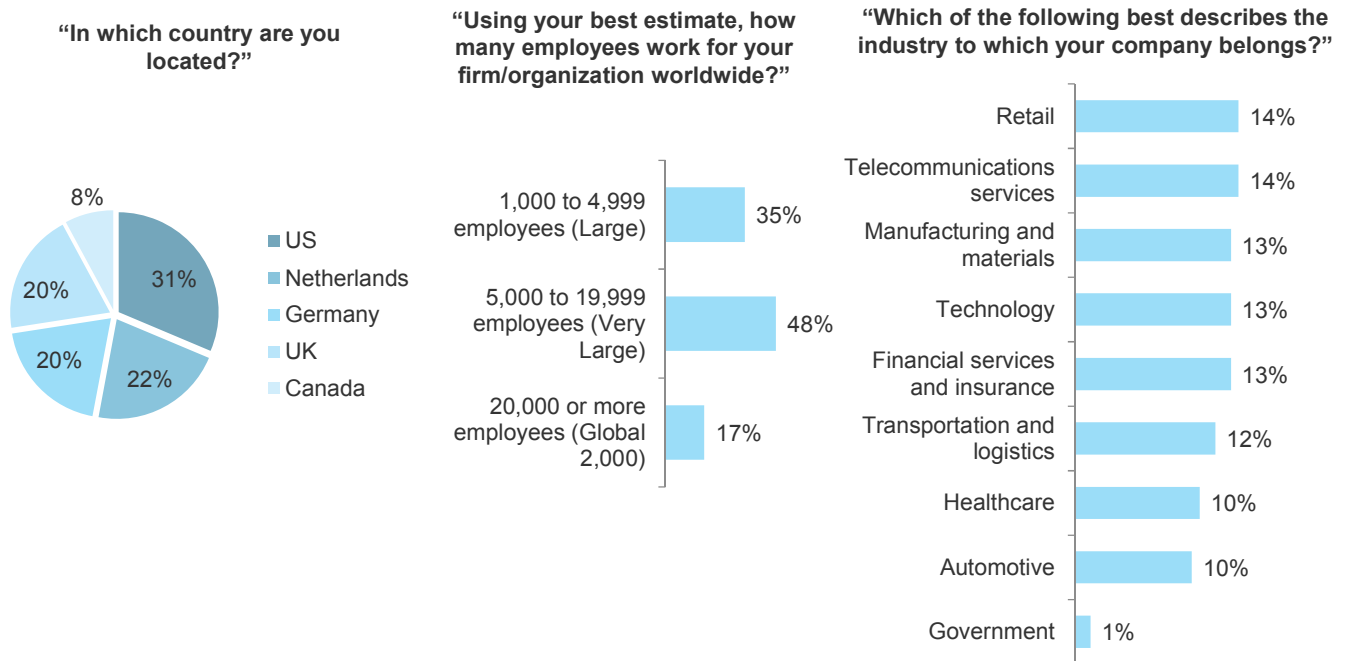
› **Make search ubiquitous.** Enterprise search has become a business-critical application for knowledge workers to find the content/information they need to do their jobs effectively, and it ultimately raises the business IQ. Enterprise search finds unstructured content traditionally housed in file shares, and finds unstructured data and translates that into natural language. Data-driven applications can drive and embed ubiquitous search, which can reduce lag and pushes for analytical visualization of data.

› **Deploy low-maintenance modern search solutions.** Too often, organizations approach search as a one-size-fits-all, point-and-shoot solution. By implementing a search appliance, customized for specific objectives, organizations will be able to obtain results quickly and efficiently while maintaining search over a longer period of time.

› **Securely ingest and index as many data sources as possible.** Eighty percent of respondents want enhanced security when implementing search. Once diverse content from across the enterprise is centrally indexed, organizations will be able to create a specific, focused application for business needs.

› **Embed search in applications.** By embedding search into applications, users will experience enhanced visualization and real-time interactive reporting. Employees will have access to collaborative efforts with web search and mobile search, and new product interfaces reflect exciting innovations in how technology picks up and interprets the user's needs.

Appendix A: Methodology

In this study, Forrester conducted an online survey of 153 IT decision-makers responsible for enterprise search at their organizations in the US, Canada, the UK, Netherlands, and Germany to evaluate how search is being used. Survey participants included decision-makers in IT technology and executives. Questions provided to the participants asked how users access enterprise search, their use cases, types of content most frequently searched for, how search is managed, key challenges, and benefits. The study began in May 2016 and was completed in June 2016.

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Appendix B: Demographics/Data

FIGURE 10
Survey Demographics

"In which country are you located?"

- US 31%
- Netherlands 22%
- Germany 20%
- UK 20%
- Canada 8%

"Using your best estimate, how many employees work for your firm/organization worldwide?"

1,000 to 4,999 employees (Large)	35%
5,000 to 19,999 employees (Very Large)	48%
20,000 or more employees (Global 2,000)	17%

"Which of the following best describes the industry to which your company belongs?"

Retail	14%
Telecommunications services	14%
Manufacturing and materials	13%
Technology	13%
Financial services and insurance	13%
Transportation and logistics	12%
Healthcare	10%
Automotive	10%
Government	1%

Base: 153 IT decision-makers responsible for enterprise search

Source: A commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Mindbreeze, May 2016

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