

# thechannel

## Survey results

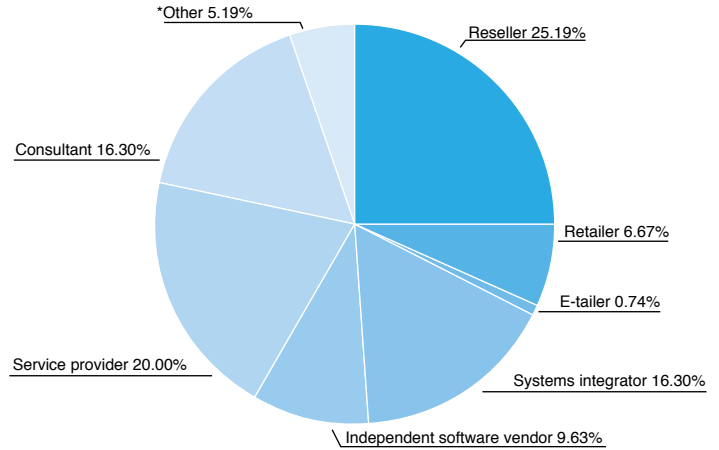
In March 2008 we asked our readers to participate in a special survey. The aim was to determine how they like to interact with ICT distributors in New Zealand, and if they feel those relationships are successful.

The response was overwhelming. This document shows the survey results. We have included only some of the comments received, as many were repetitive and/or inflammatory. Any responses that mentioned distributors specifically by name were removed.

### 1. How would you categorise your business?

\*Other included:

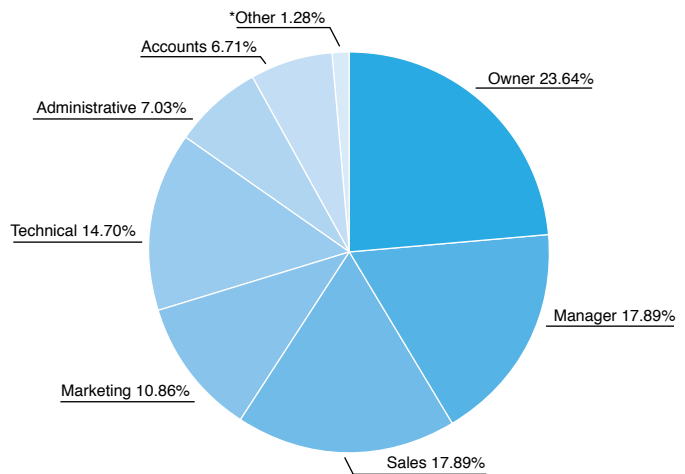
- Vendor
- Publishing
- Retailer, service provider & consultant
- Software development
- Mix of all
- Manufacturer
- Distributor



### 2. What is your role within the business?

\*Other included:

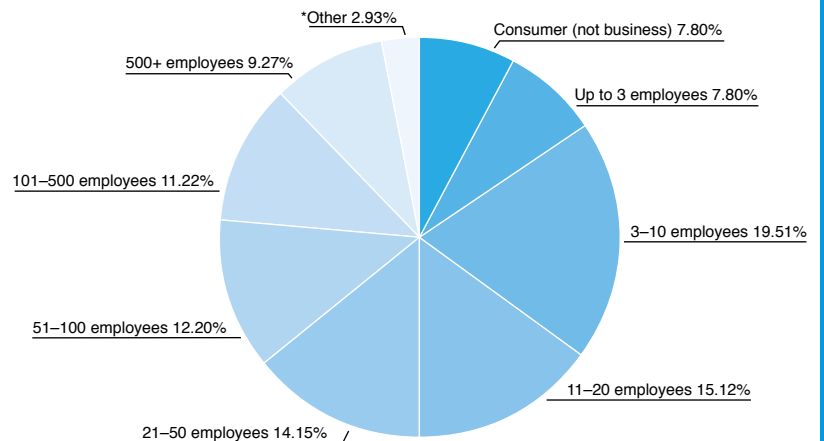
- Product manager
- Buyer



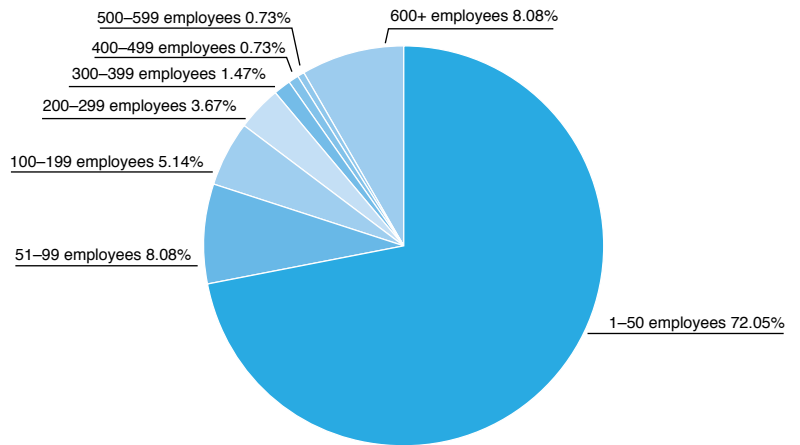
### 3. What is the average size business for which you provide services?

\*Other included:

- Varies 1 - several thousand
- From self employed to Fonterra
- Primarily Govt Organisations
- Varies across NZ
- Consumer and small bussines



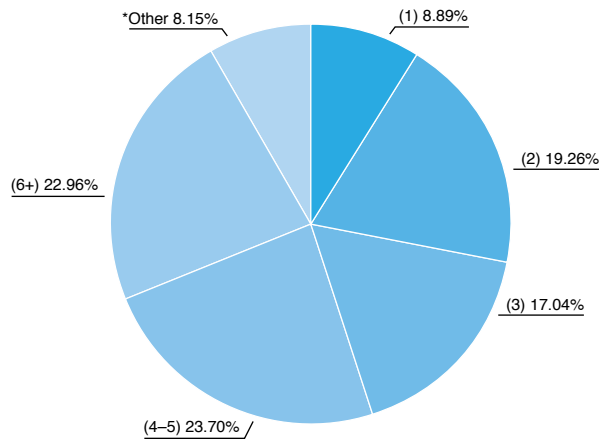
## 4. How many people work in your organisation?



## 5. How many distributors do you purchase from on a regular (daily or weekly) basis?

**\*Other included:**

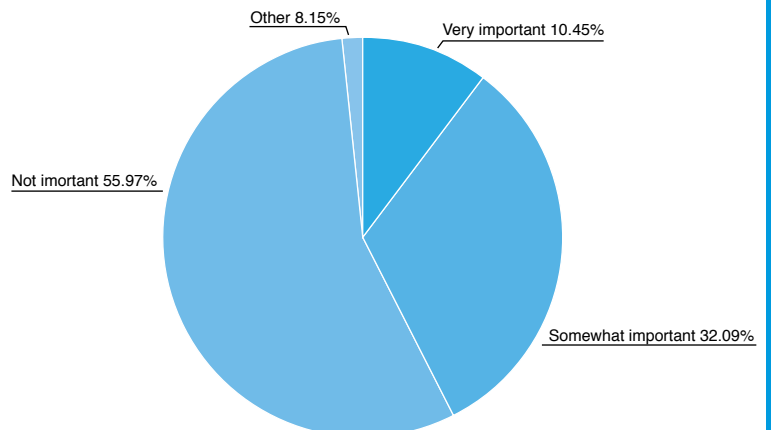
- Irregular monthly basis
- Nothing is regular
- Purchase as needed from the best priced source
- None
- Only purchase from manufacturer
- Monthly basis
- Less than 1



## 6. How much does location/proximity factor into your choice of distributor?

**Further comments:**

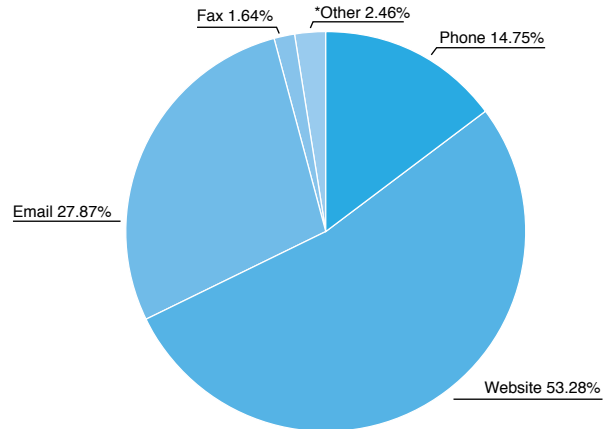
- More important is 1) do they have stock? 2) how soon can they get it to the customer? and 3) what is the price?



## 7. What is your preferred means of interaction/ordering with your distributor?

\*Other included:

- Electronic
- Equal combination of phone, email and on-line web depending on the situation/circumstances.



## 8. What makes a good IT distributor?

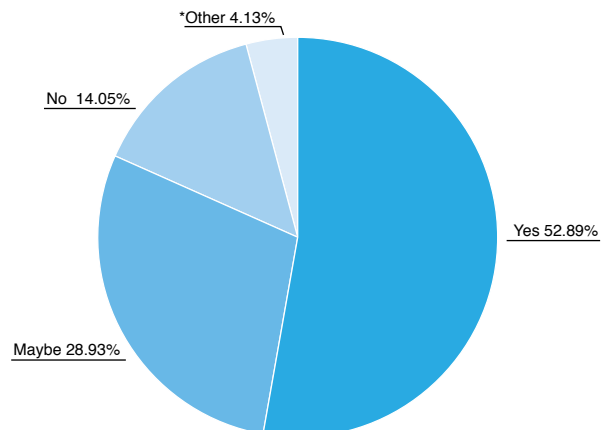
In order of ranking, with 1 being the most important and 12 being the least important

- 1 Stock availability
- 2 Price
- 3 Prompt delivery
- 4 friendly and knowledgeable staff
- 5 Easy online ordering
- 6 Sells my preferred vendor's products
- 7 Good website
- 8 Easy access to information
- 9 Technical support and after-sales support
- 10 Ease of return procedures
- 11 Assistance with sales and/or marketing
- 12 Flexible credit

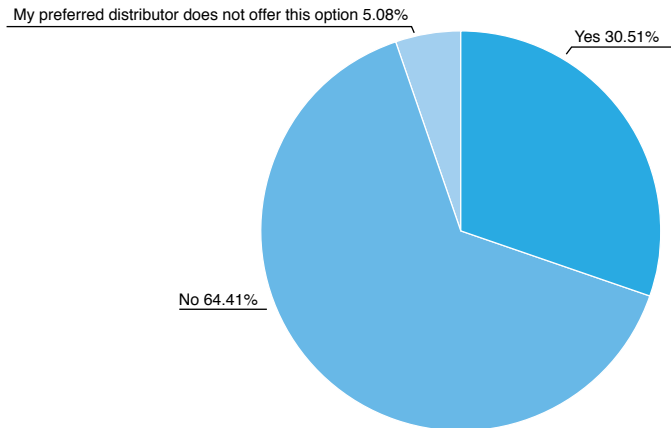
## 9. Are distributors that offer pre-sales and engineering assistance more useful to you than those that simply fulfil orders?

\*Other included:

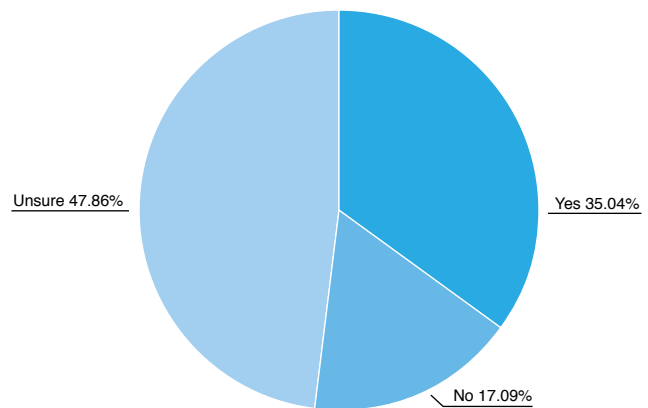
- Product dependant
- We like to be assured that a good technician knows the product well
- This would detract from our value proposition and relegate us to "box mover" status



## 10. Do you currently order services as product codes/SKUs from your distributor?



## 11. If your preferred distributor offered services as product codes/SKUs, would you order this way?

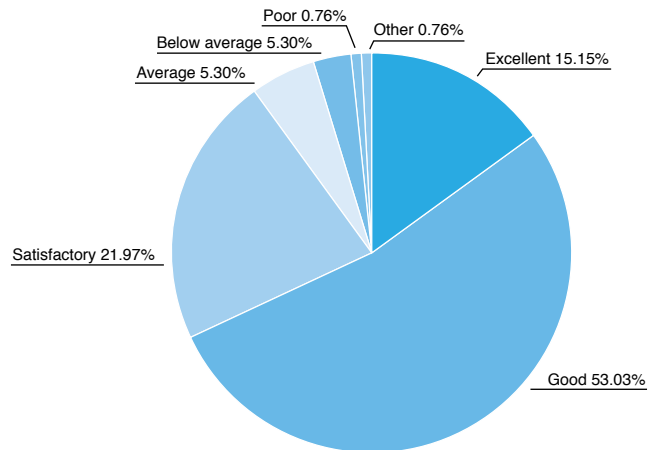


## 12. What service(s) do you order most frequently as a product code or SKU?

### Comments:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Windows Vista to XP downgrade   | <input type="checkbox"/> Ink and toner                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Configure to order              | <input type="checkbox"/> Software, printers and hard drives         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Warranty upgrades               | <input type="checkbox"/> Printer supplies                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> McAfee Total Protection         | <input type="checkbox"/> Divers Group from Ingram                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hardware support                | <input type="checkbox"/> Computer parts                             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Manufacture specific services   | <input type="checkbox"/> Licencing                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Warranty extensions and uplifts | <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile handsets                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Installation                    | <input type="checkbox"/> No Services — We supply them               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Software                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Hardware support and installation services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hardware                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Post sales technical implementation        |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> RAM memory modules                         |

### 13. How would you rate your experience in the last year with your distribution partner(s)?



### 14. How can your experience be improved in the future?

**Comments:**

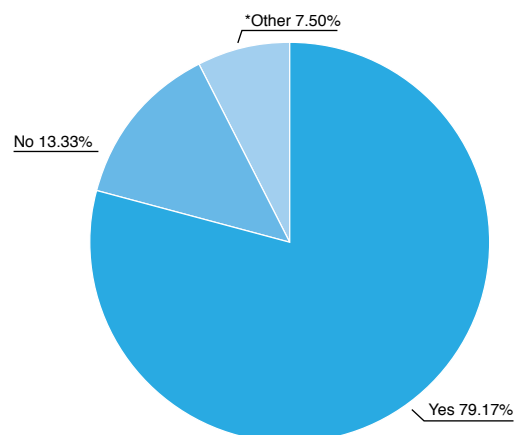
- Not all of them currently offer online ordering
- 1) Effective Account Manager 2) Direct and fast access to Sales staff thru 0800 number — not have to press several numbers to get thru 3) Timely order status information
- Face to face meetings with key partners
- Better account managers who are able to promptly resolve any problems/issues that occur and that can have an adverse impact on our reputation with our customers if they are not resolved promptly - e.g. faulty product, urgent orders, delayed orders
- Better stock levels
- Cristal clear communication between parties and assurance of understanding instructions
- Some distributors need to speed up and simplify RMA. Being able to order online from a easy to navigate website that shows stock numbers and availability

- As I can see the price/product variations
- Improved delivery from courier companies
- More accurate ETA for goods
- Lower delivery costs for some
- Direct phone line to support team for accredited partners
- A regular update of new products on offer
- Increased discount and increased marketing and sales
- More simplified on-line ordering, easier navigation, better searching capabilities of web-sites, less back-orders or frequently requested/sold stock
- Better levels of pre-sales support (particularly technical)
- Better packing of goods being sent
- Knowledge of staff and communication
- Less distributor staff turnover
- Fundamental changes to the way products are marketed and sold
- If they stopped acting like a giant and started caring about their customers
- Increased stock on hand, less back orders
- They could fix the credit card charging facility
- My three main distributors offer excellnt service and support. Addressing issues faster would be my main concern
- Improved web-site ordering experience

### 15. Do you consider yourself loyal to the distributor you interact with the most at this time?

**Other included:**

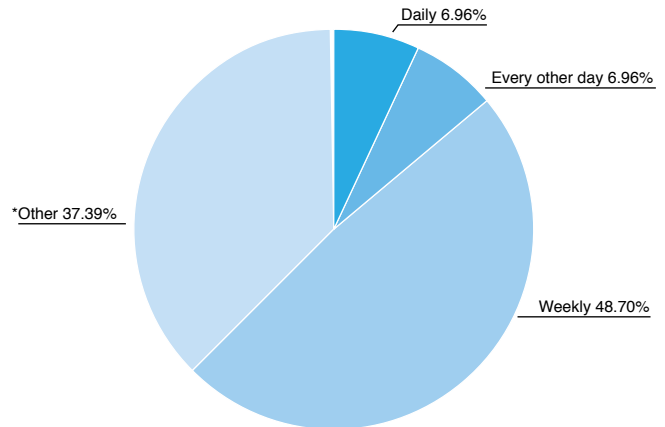
- While they have the best prices and best website
- We use many
- We are in the IT business watching for the best services as well
- If they have what I want at the right price or will match price
- It depends a lot on customers needs, sometimes we have to go elsewhere
- No other option
- Prefer to build a relationship
- I only change distributors for items if I get mucked around or recieve poor service forcing me to change
- While they have the best prices and best website



## 16. How often would you like to be contacted via phone, email or fax by your distribution partner(s)?

**\*Other included:**

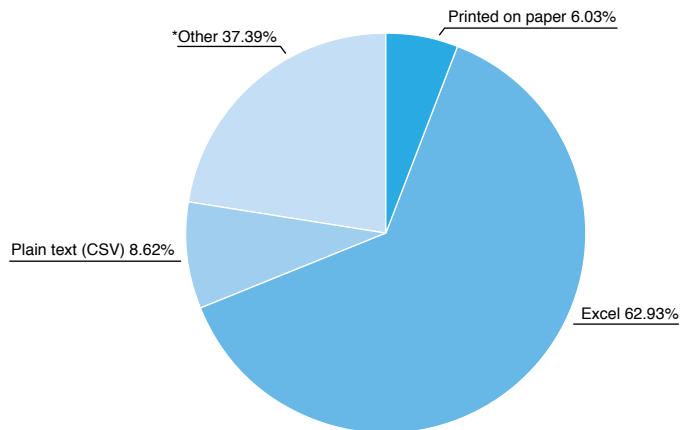
- Monthly
- New product releases or updates
- Daily if anything new
- Only when relevant
- Once a fortnight
- Contact on new offerings
- When they have something constructive to say about an order or delivery
- Never by phone or fax
- Bi-monthly
- As essential info comes to hand
- As required, with type of communicatoin relative to urgency
- Do not need to be contacted



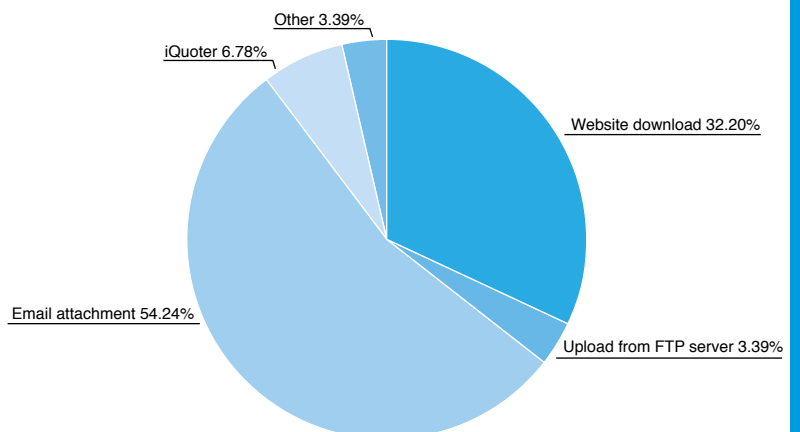
## 17. What is your preferred format for receiving a price list?

**\*Other included:**

- Web based
- Filemaker document
- Email
- Imports into our system
- PDF
- Email, PDF or Excel



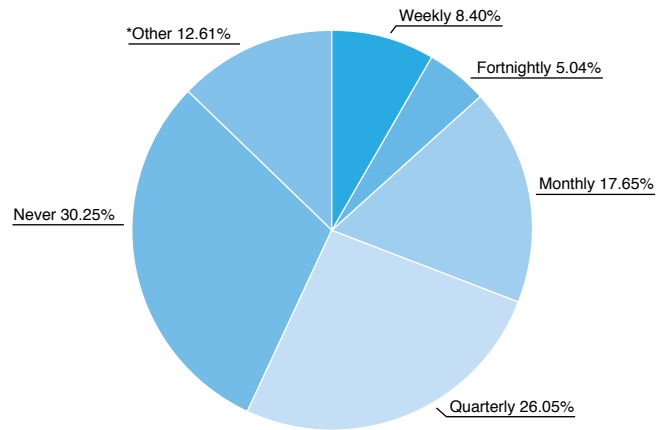
## 18. What is your preferred method for receiving an electronic price list?



## 19. How often do you see a distributor representative?

**\*Other included:**

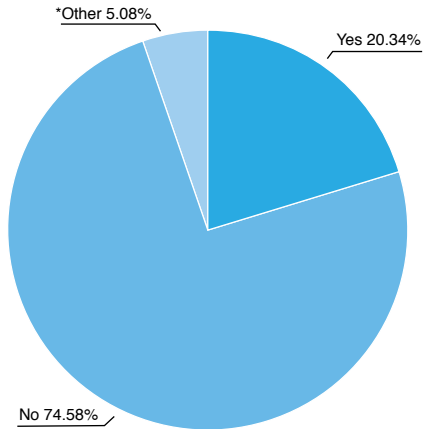
- 1 or 2 times per year
- Only a few monthly - rest quarterly
- Varies from distributor to distributor - some are excellent (every month or 2) some we never see
- When required by me
- Yearly
- Some quarterly, others never
- When they ring and ask, or at a trade show
- Annually
- Infrequently



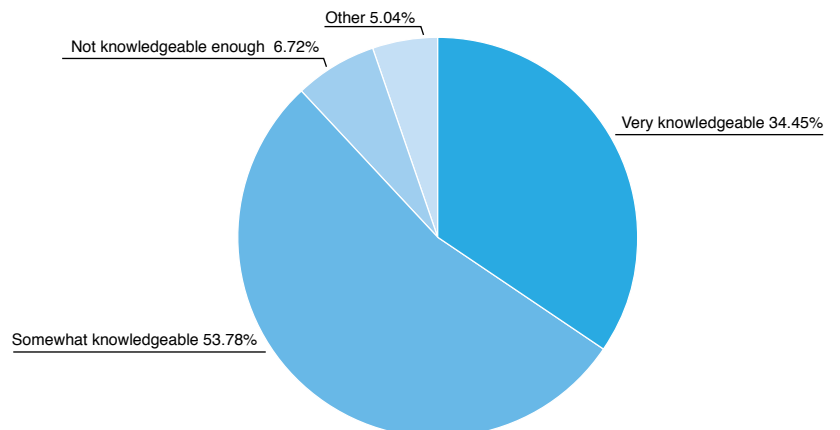
## 20. Would you like to see a distributor representative more frequently?

**\*Other included:**

- The quarterly ones, yes
- We would like to see a rep from each distributor on at least a quarterly basis
- It would be good to touch base and hear directly what is available
- Depends on needs at time
- Regular meetings, ad-hoc when required



## 21. How knowledgeable is your account manager?



## 22. How can your distribution partner(s) add more value to your company?

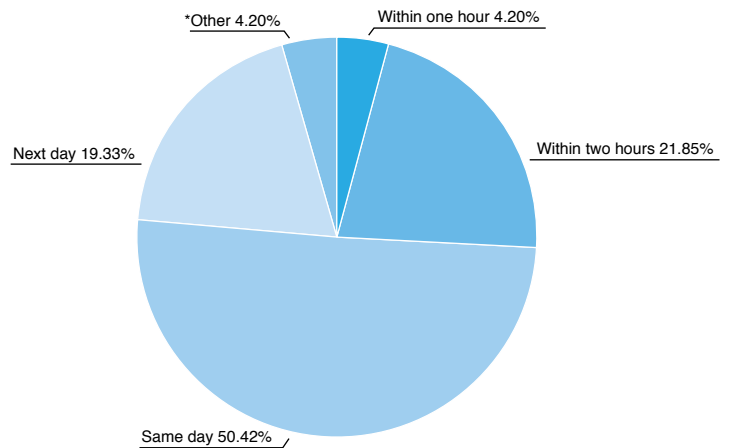
**Comments:**

- Provide 4 sets of prices (i.e.dealer prices inclusive and exclusive of GST and RRP inclusive and exclusive of GST)
- More contact with us
- Proactive technical training on new technologies, and technical briefs on new product models
- More no cost or low cost demo products, newline training workshops but not just in the 3 main centres
- More brochures to give to customers
- Good distribution partner is essential for our business. They are not just adding value to us but they help us survive
- Understand our approach and initiatives to customers. How can what they do for us assist with our propositions to our client base
- Margin!!! Assist in promotion of products available and upcoming releases
- Understanding the dynamics of what we require in order to compete with opposition
- Adding extra services like installation
- Understanding our business and what direct offerings could improve our business
- Be a procurement agent, and not try to move into a value add competitive space
- Working to hold the stock we need at good prices and also work to meet satisfactory services levels every time
- All product sheets as PDFs, that we can attach our own logo and address to
- Help me be unique and make more money
- With better account management and stock on hand
- Better product knowledge and hold more stock
- By paying more attention to what we are doing
- By being helpful with requests and genuinely trying rather than offering lip service
- Reduce pricing so I can sell more
- Proving excellent product information or links to info on the website
- Make the account reps understand the work flows at our end
- My mian distributor works very well within our company's goals and vision
- Recommend products
- Stock, payment, online payment
- Advise more frequently about stock availability

## 23. How much time is acceptable for a quote response?

**\*Other included:**

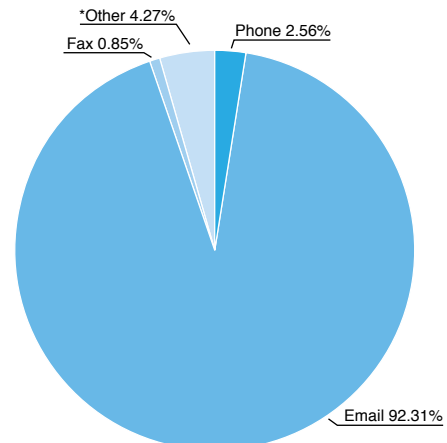
- Four hours
- Would like to see flexibility on agreed delivery
- Depends on detail required
- Depends on urgency of request but standard within 1 working day is acceptable



## 24. What is your preferred method of notification for products going EOL?

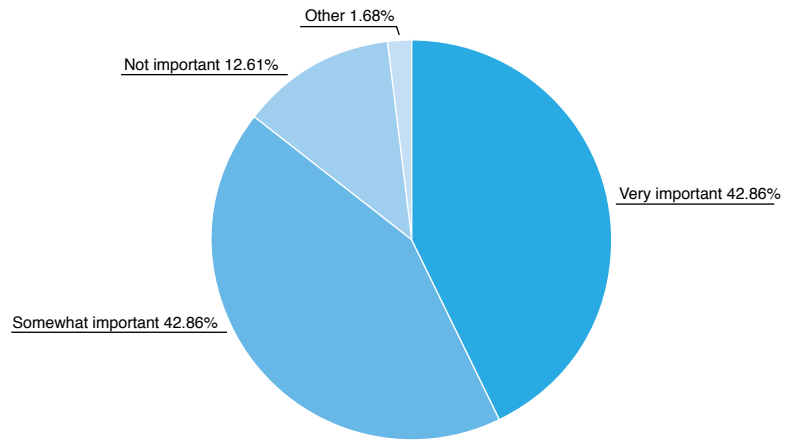
**\*Other included:**

- Web
- Product feeds
- Not required

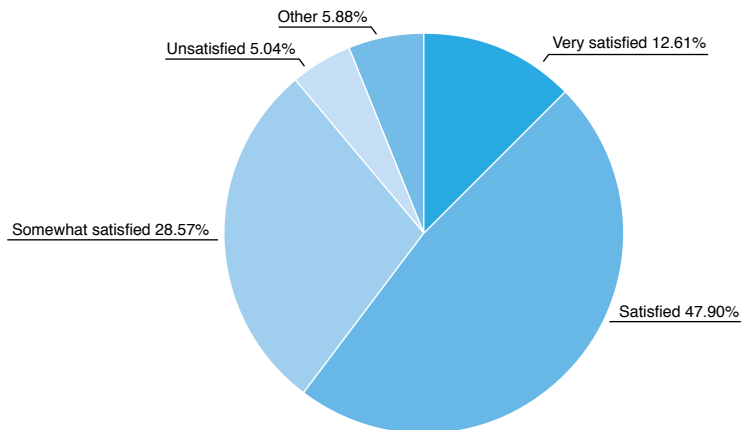




## 25. How important is it that your distributor has qualified pre-sales technical people available to you?



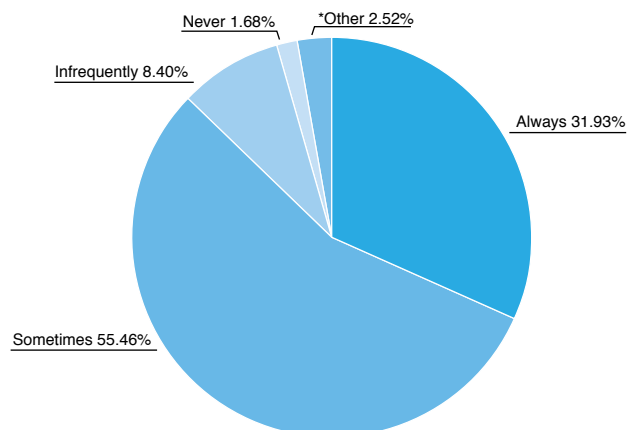
## 26. Are you satisfied with the after-sales support you receive from your distribution partner(s)?



## 27. Do you find vendor/distributor events (roadshows, product launches/updates, conferences, etc) useful?

### \*Other included:

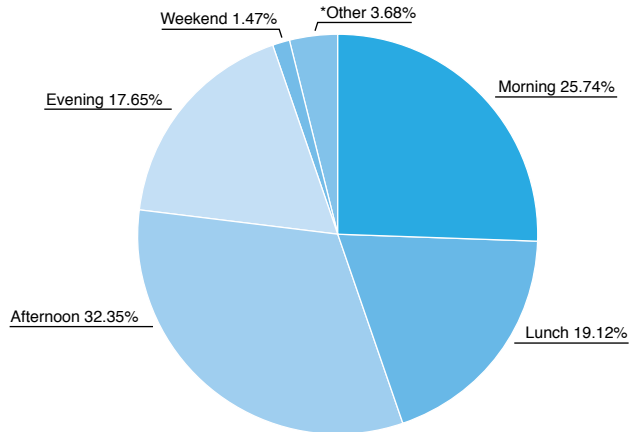
- They would be very useful if we could get to them. They need to hold them in more widespread locations
- Great place to meet discuss and share experiences
- Sometimes too long, difficult to set aside more than a couple of hours for sessions



## 28. When is the best time for a vendor/distributor event?

**\*Other included:**

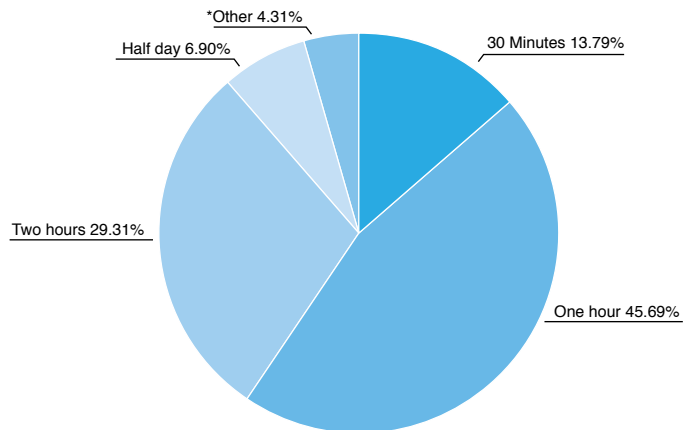
- Any time
- On demand
- Any time if brief, or onsite
- Parking is generally a MAJOR problem



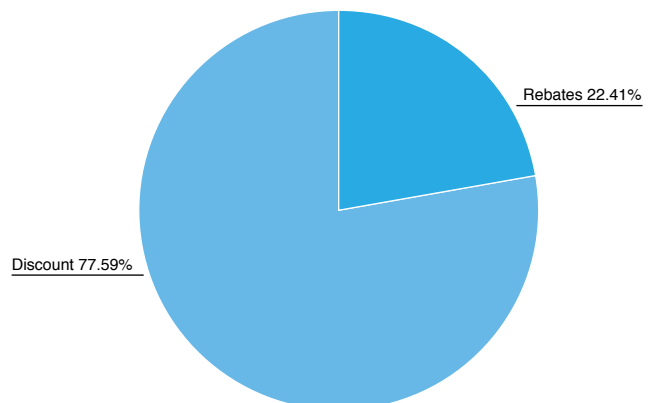
## 29. What is the appropriate amount of time for a product update session?

**\*Other included:**

- Depends on number of products and ability of presenter
- 1 hour — half day depending on nature of product



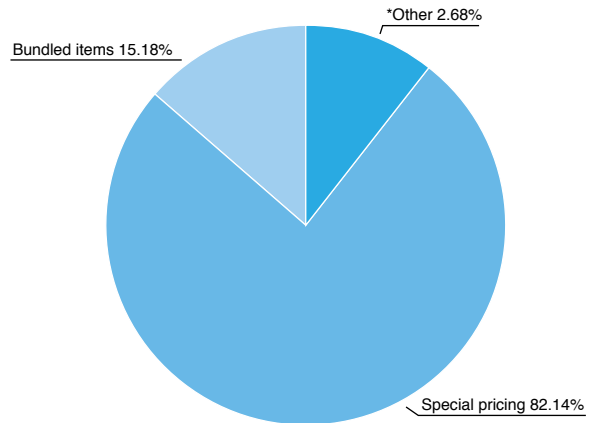
## 30. Do you prefer rebates or an upfront discount on invoice cost?



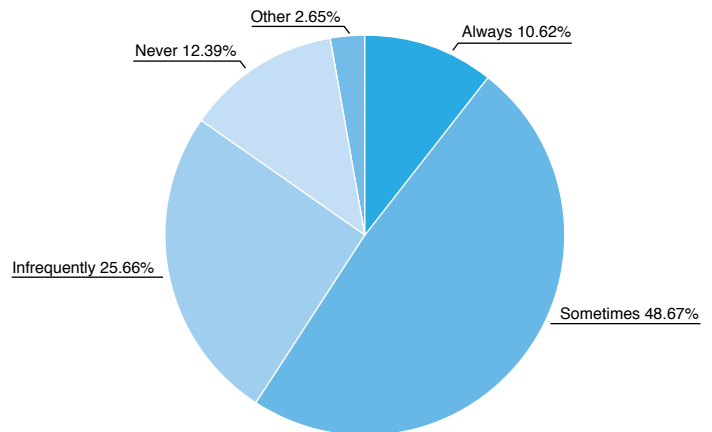
## 31. Do you prefer special pricing or bundled items?

\*Other included:

- Depends on the item: computer & LCD bundles are good
- Both



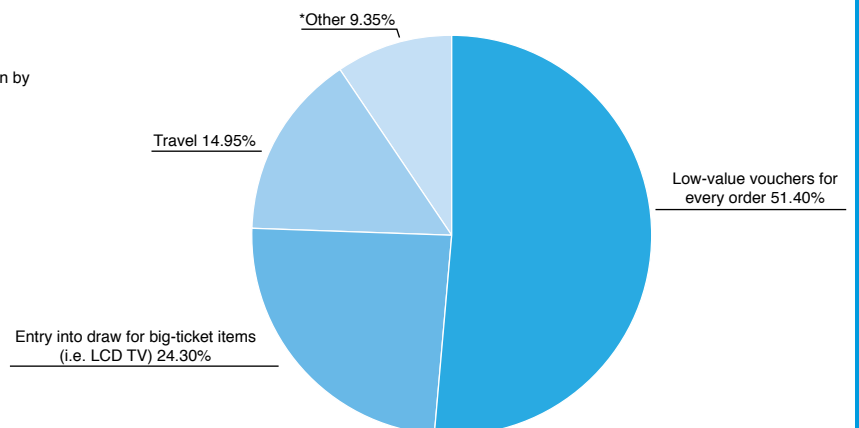
## 32. Do sales incentives affect or change your buying behaviour?



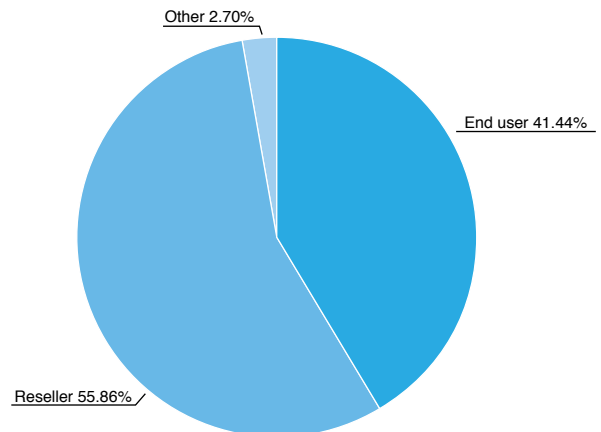
## 33. What kind of promotion do you prefer?

\*Other included:

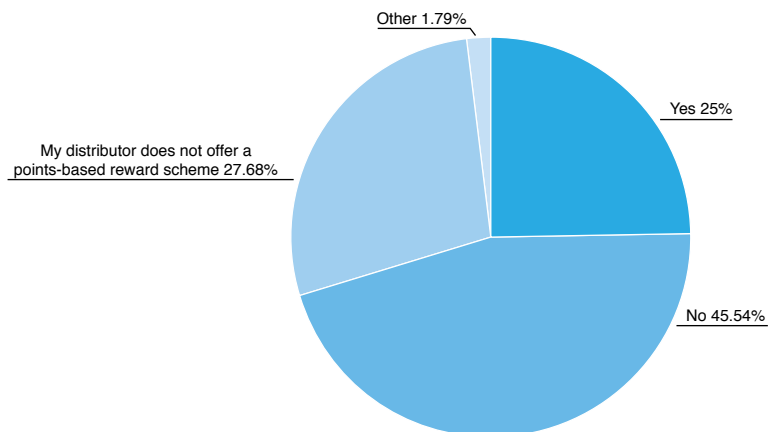
- Product discount/special
- None, the technology should sell itself. Selling behavior should not be driven by incentive, rather by customer need and best fit
- Additional item
- Free accessories
- No preference



### 34. Do you prefer redemption offers (cashback, accessories, etc) be redeemed by the end user or the reseller?



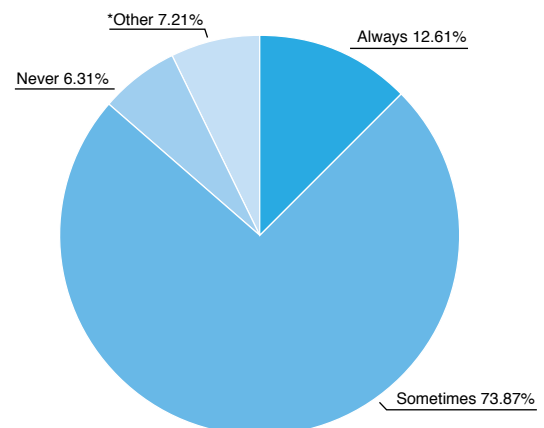
### 35. Do you participate in points-based reward schemes from your preferred distributor(s)?



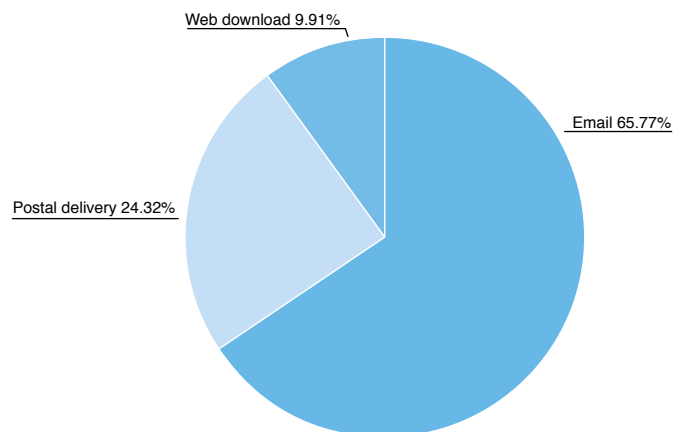
### 36. Do you find marketing or promotional material sent by your distribution partner(s) to be useful?

**\*Other included:**

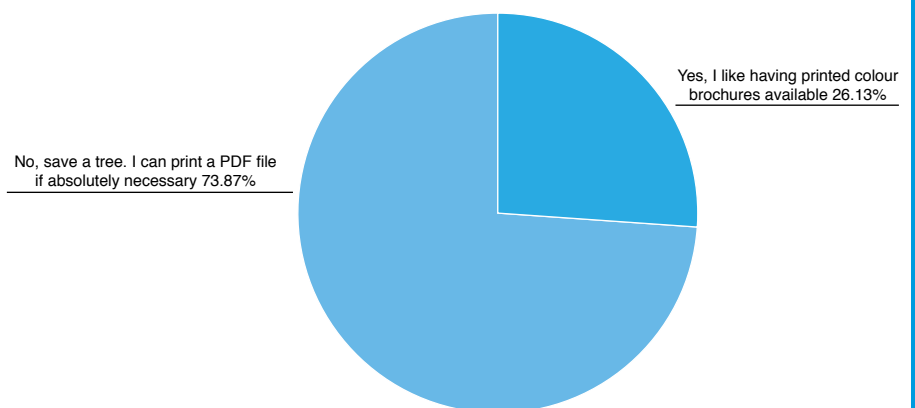
- Prices must be RRP so we can use them to show our customers
- Not all distributors send this
- Better to look online as print is outdated too fast
- Hardly get any
- Preferred by email, content has long life-cycle
- Often too much paper sent



## 37. What is your preferred method of delivery for marketing or promotional material?



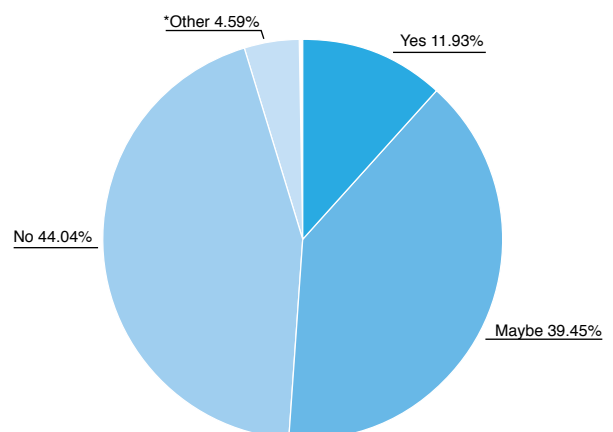
## 38. Are paper brochures important to your job/business?



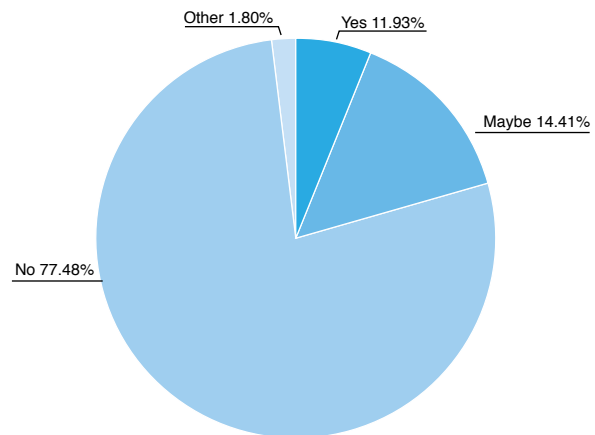
## 39. Would you pick one supplier over another if one was carbon emissions neutral?

### \*Other included:

- Depend on cost
- Global warming is a panic promoting fallacy!!!
- They would have to prove so, yes
- Price talks



## 40. Do you find it a conflict of interest if your supplier distributes two or more competing products?



## 41. What is the most difficult thing about dealing with your preferred distributors/suppliers?

### Comments:

- No online pricing/ordering
- 1) Sales staff who mumble, speak too quickly, or have a strong foreign accent. 2) Stock unavailable, or availability unsure 3) Logon timing out
- Lack of account management when we have problems. Strong account management will influence our decision as to who to deal with
- Not always able to get to the best person for the particular requirement in a timely manner
- Prompt delivery, backorder management
- Getting service/technical support
- Unable to contact some at certain times
- Stock availability
- When you have to contact 5 people in 1 company to get a simple answer
- Products change so quickly
- The lack of ownership, handballing, not following things up
- Finding the right products at right price
- Getting technical information
- Returns
- Ensuring we stay on target. At times a passionate pre-sales may endure themselves too much at one time upon you
- The size of discount
- Some supplier websites only search on the whole product code/word and not a part code/word
- Pushing one of two competing products to us all the time when we prefer the other competing product, and they know that
- Do not know enough about the products they represent
- Lack of communication around deliveries and allowing incorrect order configurations to be processed
- 1) Ability to track orders 2) Identifying when stock is available - ETAs that are pushed out week-by-week
- Their staff turnover
- No channel competition, so poor margins
- I believe a lot depends on your account manager. A bad pick is bad for business; a good pick is good for business
- Good information online availability
- Service always takes a back seat. I think that if distributors were as proactive on servicing faulty products as there are trying to get you to purchase their stock then end users would be a lot happier and service levels would go up dramatically
- Online payment and payment options

## 42. What do you appreciate most about your preferred distributors/suppliers?

### Comments:

- After sales support
- Good prices, dealer & RRP prices, order status and backorder info readily available
- Relationship, trust, professionalism
- Always available, always up to date, always willing to help "create a solution" for a client
- Up to date pricing/stock levels
- We can discuss situations calmly and reach a result pleasing both parties
- When we have a dedicated resource
- Effort to answer questions
- If they are prepared to go the extra mile for you, need face to face contact to achieve this
- Product updates & good pricing
- Variety of product
- Phone back promptly
- Efficiency and accommodation of my requirements
- Their genuineness to assist
- Friendliness
- Easy to do business with and understand our business
- Fast delivery times
- Being able to ring after 5pm and get hold of someone
- Vendor response
- Ease of ordering
- They know who pays their wages - us!
- They usually just process the orders without bothering us too much
- A feeling of partnership built on trust and honesty
- Effort put into resolving issues
- Personalised service and recognition of loyalty to reseller and individual
- Great website
- Consistent order fulfillments