



eBook

5 Signals your messaging isn't winning in 2026

And the data gaps putting your strategy at risk



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Signal 1

Your sales team keeps creating their own decks

Why it matters: When reps go rogue, it's often not rebellion, it's survival. If your messaging isn't helping them win, they'll build their own.

IDC research underscores the risk of this misalignment. For example, the [Worldwide SMB Cybersecurity Outlook, 2025](#) shows that SMB buyers prioritize cybersecurity solutions tailored to their specific industry pain points, not one-size-fits-all narratives.

Meanwhile, our [2025 CIO Sentiment Survey](#) reveals a growing focus among IT leaders on organizational design and talent alignment, signaling that successful vendors are already refining their stories to match buyer expectations.

Fix it: IDC delivers go-to-market evidence that connects what your buyers want with what your team needs to say. Align messaging to real buyer priorities using IDC's [Spending Guides](#), which offer detailed insights into IT budget allocations across industries and technologies. This data helps sales teams understand buyer priorities and align their messaging with where investments are being made.



Signal 2

You're saying too much to everyone

Why it matters: Generic messaging is invisible messaging. Trying to speak to everyone dilutes your impact on the audiences that matter most.

Let's focus on SMBs as one case. They prioritize solutions that resonate with their unique challenges and roles. In fact, IDC's persona insights, specifically those from the [SMB IT Buying Committee](#), show that different roles—CIOs, CSOs, and CFOs—have distinct priorities depending on company size and industry. For example, SMB CIOs focus on scalability, while CSOs prioritize data security.

Fix it: Use IDC's persona insights to zero in on what each segment actually cares about. We help you [match the message to the moment](#), and make it resonate.

25% of SMB respondents to IDC's Worldwide SMB Survey (February 2025) highlight the importance of tailored communication to address specific needs.



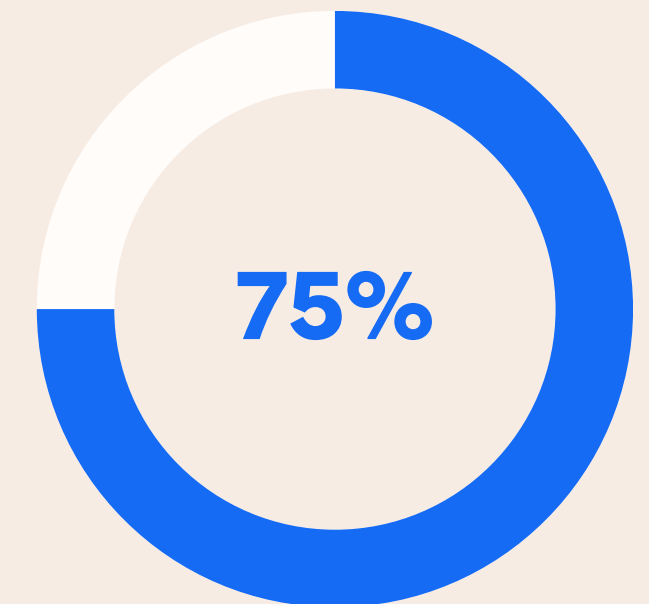
Signal 3

You're always reacting to competitors; not leading

Why it matters: If you're constantly reacting instead of leading, your message feels outdated, fast. [IDC's FutureScape: Worldwide IT Industry 2025 Predictions](#) highlights the importance of anticipating market shifts to stay ahead of competitors. One key prediction: **by 2026, 75% of G1000 organizations will adopt value-based AI economics models that factor in tech acquisition costs, productivity, decision-making, and innovation.** Those that don't risk missing new ROI benchmarks and falling out of competitive contention.

This prediction underscores the urgency for organizations to proactively integrate AI-driven strategies into their messaging and operations. Failure to do so risks falling behind competitors who are already leveraging AI to drive innovation and ROI.

Fix it: From market shifts to tech trends, IDC helps you anticipate what's next. Our [Trackers](#) and [Black Book](#) forecasts show you where the market is headed, so you can speak with foresight, not hindsight. IDC MarketScape reports assess vendor positioning and competitive dynamics, offering insights into how your competitors are messaging and positioning themselves. Use this data to refine your narrative and stay ahead.



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Signal 4

Analyst reports don't match your narrative


Why it matters: When analyst commentary contradicts your messaging, it creates friction in the buyer journey, and credibility takes a hit.

IDC's recent research reveals that C-suite executives now play a growing role in vendor selection, and they increasingly rely on third-party validation, such as analyst reports, to make high-stakes decisions. When analyst commentary contradicts vendor messaging, it creates friction in the buyer journey, undermines trust, and risks disqualification. Buyers expect tight alignment between vendor narratives and analyst insights to ensure credibility and confidence in their decision-making process.

If your analyst narrative isn't reinforcing your pitch, you're not just misaligned, you're at risk of being disqualified.

Fix it: Spending guides from IDC provide detailed insights into IT budget allocations across industries and technologies. These insights help ensure your messaging reflects the priorities analysts are citing in their reports.

Sources: 2025 IT Flexible Consumption Procurement Models Survey and The State of Adoption of Embedded Analytics



44% of IT decision-makers and line-of-business leaders cited "trusted brand alignment" as a critical factor in vendor selection.

Source: IDC's SaaS Path Survey, 2025



Signal 5

Internal teams can't agree on the story

Why it matters: When strategy, marketing, and sales tell different versions of the story, buyers lose trust, and deals lose momentum.

For example, nearly one-third of digital-native companies expect “much greater improvements” across technical, business, and economic dimensions. They want partners who bring expertise—like seasoned developers and solution architects—not just products.

If your internal teams aren't aligned, your value won't land. Disjointed narratives signal disorganization. Unified narratives aren't just a branding exercise; they're a revenue strategy.

Fix it: IDC creates a shared, evidence-based view of where markets, buyers, and budgets are headed. Trackers deliver real-time market data on technology spending, adoption trends, and competitive positioning. This data ensures that strategy, marketing, and sales teams are working from the same evidence-based insights.

Sources: [Digital-Native Businesses Seek Significant Improvements in Key Areas of Their Tech Partnerships](#)



Nearly one-third of digital-native companies expect “much greater improvements” across technical, business, and economic dimensions.



If your messaging isn't driving pipeline or showing up in analyst reports, it's not just a messaging issue—it's a data issue.

IDC brings the trusted tech intelligence that connects buyers, markets, and messages, so you can move forward with confidence.

Build your next move with evidence, not guesswork. Your 2026 plan is only as strong as the data behind it.

Connect with an IDC expert today.

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