DEMAND AI

ISSUE TWO - GLOBAL

THE B2B BUYER CURIOSITY INDEX

What B2B Buyers Are Really Asking

A Demand AI Research Report - Global Edition

Campaigns through October 2026

www.demandai.net

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A Larger, Genuinely Global Dataset

Demand AI sits on a dataset to which no analyst firm, survey vendor, or competitor has access: the actual questions B2B buyers ask an AI content experience while researching a purchase. Every interaction - a click, a suggested question, a typed question - tells us something about buyer intent. This report focuses on the richest layer of that signal: the moments buyers went beyond a click and typed their own words.

This edition draws on **230,315 leads** delivered across **14 markets** spanning NORAM, EMEA, and APAC, surfacing **30,966 English-language organic, spontaneous buyer questions** that reveal what B2B buyers are genuinely curious about - not what a survey asked them to think about.

14

Markets in which Demand AI has delivered leads, spanning NORAM, EMEA, and APAC

230,315

Leads delivered across all 14 markets, yielding 30,966 English-language organic questions

Headline findings: Government-sector buyers ask about security and risk more than any other industry, and the sharpest predictor of what a buyer asks about isn't their industry, it's their seniority: C-Suite buyers ask about ROI and cost roughly 2.4 times more often than Individual Contributors.

Scale and Scope

230,315 leads delivered across **14 markets** spanning NORAM, EMEA, and APAC, generating **340,351 total content interactions**. Every question in this report was typed by a real buyer engaging with content in the moment - not a survey response, not inferred intent, not a third-party panel.

NORAM	EMEA	APAC
1 market	**8 markets**	**5 markets**
US	UK, DE, ES, NL, PL, SE, DXB, ZA	SG, AU, IN, KR, HK

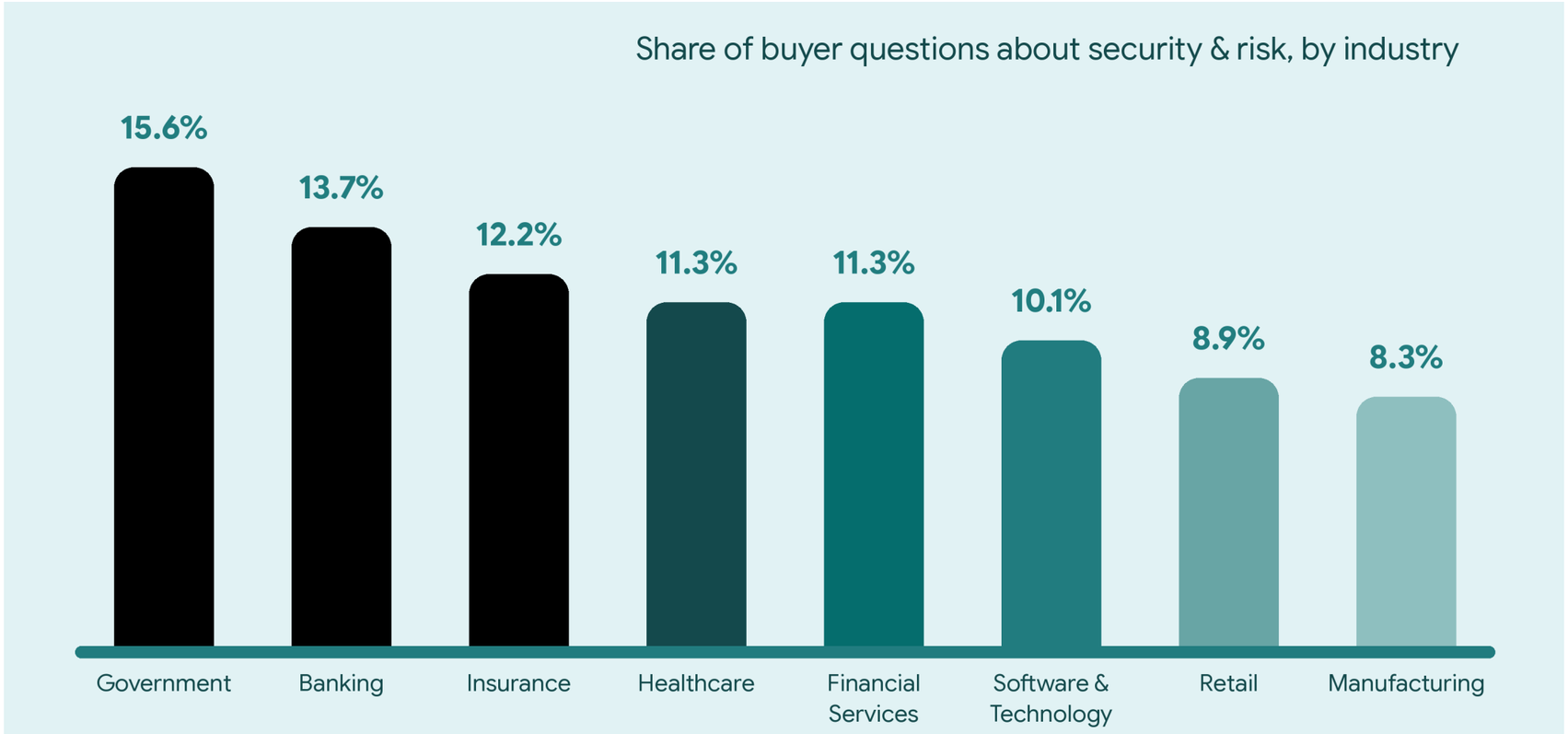
Leads were delivered in every one of these markets. The verbatim questions quoted in this report come from the English-language subset of that engagement, so some markets contribute more of the quoted language than others - the breadth of buyers reached is wider than the examples shown.

This edition covers all campaigns through October 2026.

Full methodology - including how we distinguish spontaneous questions from suggested prompts - is in the appendix.

HEADLINE FINDING

Security Anxiety Is Not Evenly Distributed



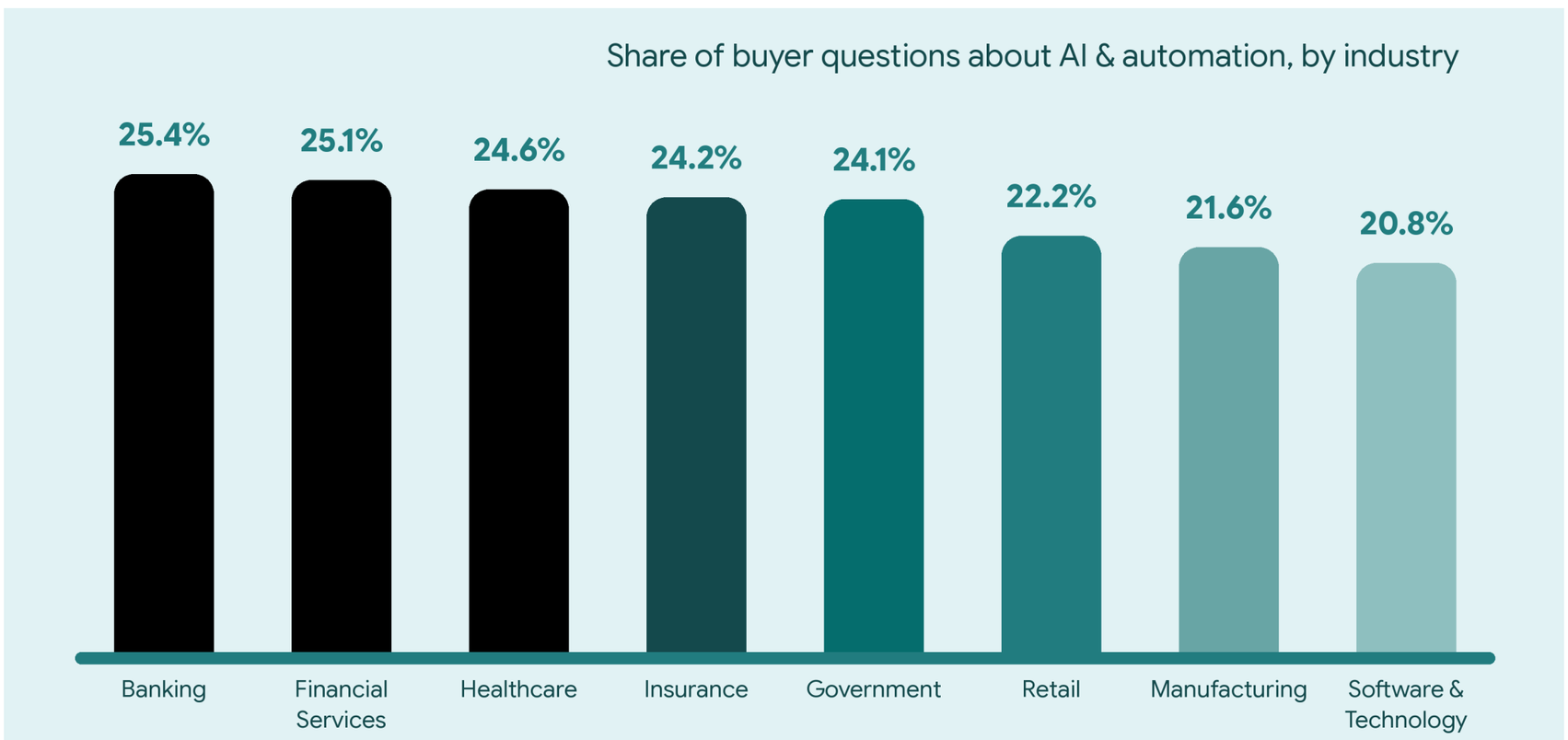
Government buyers ask about security and risk more than any other sector, a pattern that tracks with what you would expect a buyer in that sector to lose sleep over.

> **What OWASP benchmarks are relevant to AI security testing?"**
>
> *- a real question typed by a Government buyer*

HEADLINE FINDING

Who's Most Curious About AI?

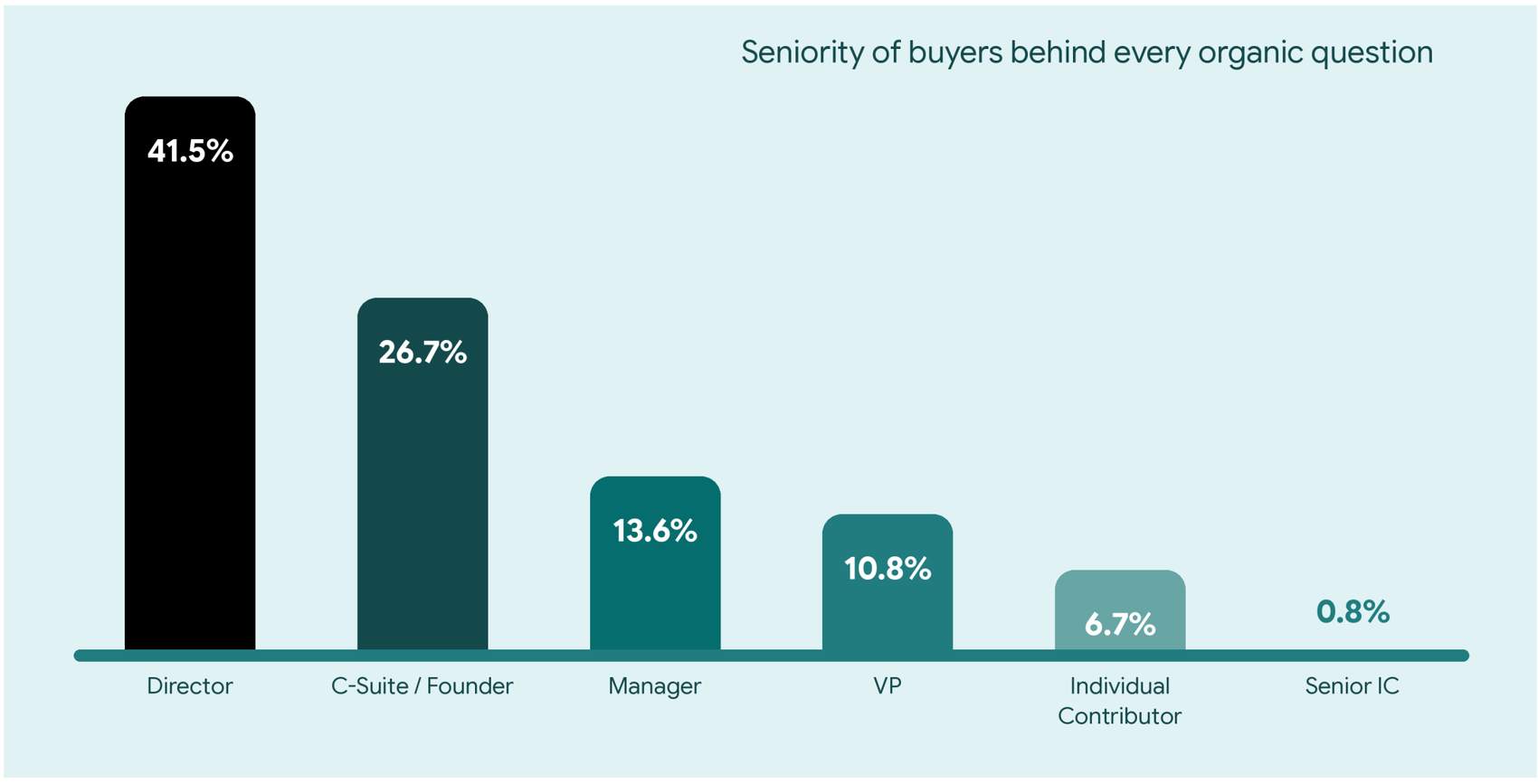
Banking shows the strongest curiosity about AI and automation of any sector.



All findings are reported at industry level. No individual client campaigns or company names are identified in this report.

Seniority Changes What Buyers Ask

Every organic question in this dataset is tied to the buyer who typed it - including, where captured, their job title. That lets us go a layer deeper than industry: not just which sector is asking, but how seniority itself shapes what gets asked.



Seniority is inferred from job title text where available (46% of English-language organic questions in this edition).

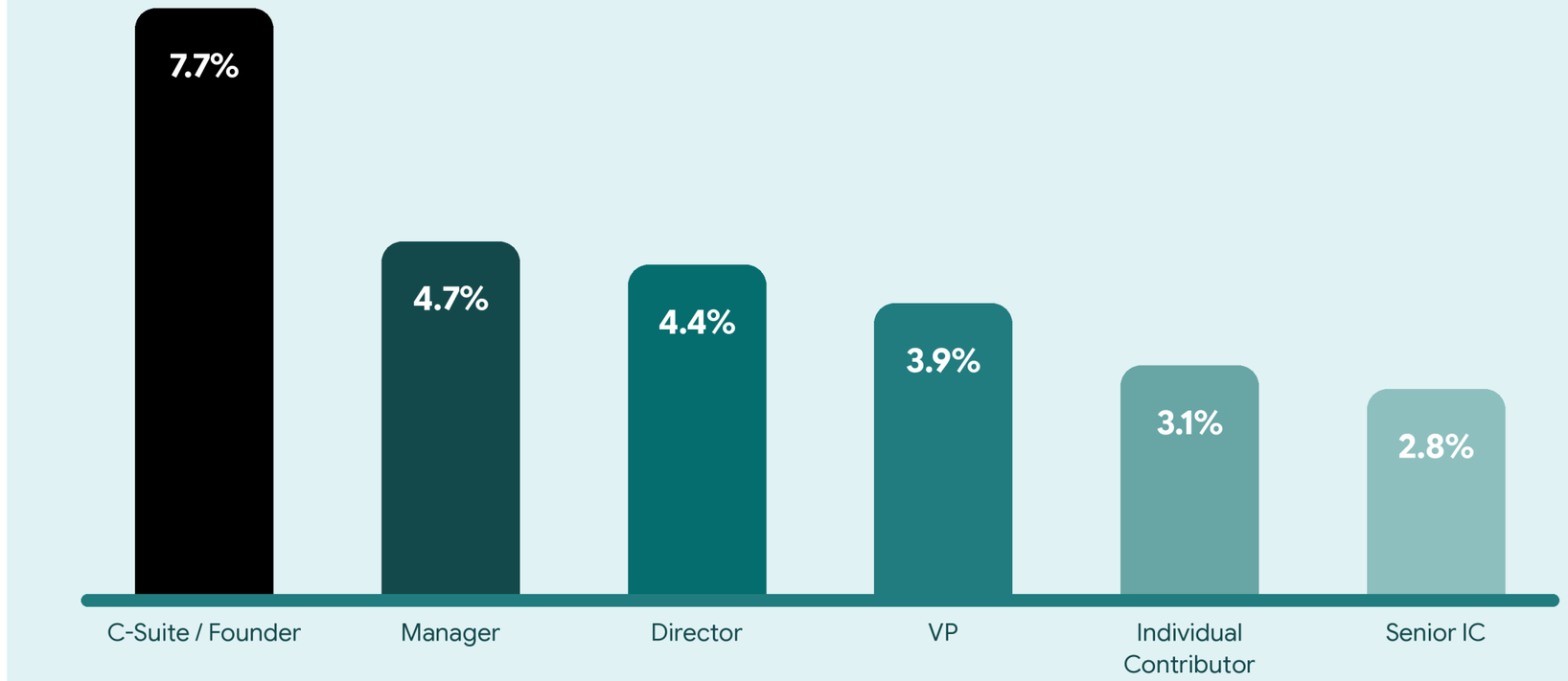
The C-Suite Asks a Different Question

2.4x

C-Suite/Founder buyers ask about ROI & cost

2.4 times more often than Individual Contributors, robustness-checked across every leave-one-out run.

WHO'S ASKING?



C-Suite/Founder buyers are meaningfully more likely to ask about ROI and cost justification than any other level. This held up with the single largest contributing campaign removed, and with each of the top three contributing campaigns removed in turn.

> **How do we measure the ROI of our AI initiatives?"**
>
> *- a real question typed by a C-Suite/Founder buyer*

THEME SPOTLIGHT

The Automation Scepticism Gap

Real, unedited buyer questions from this dataset:

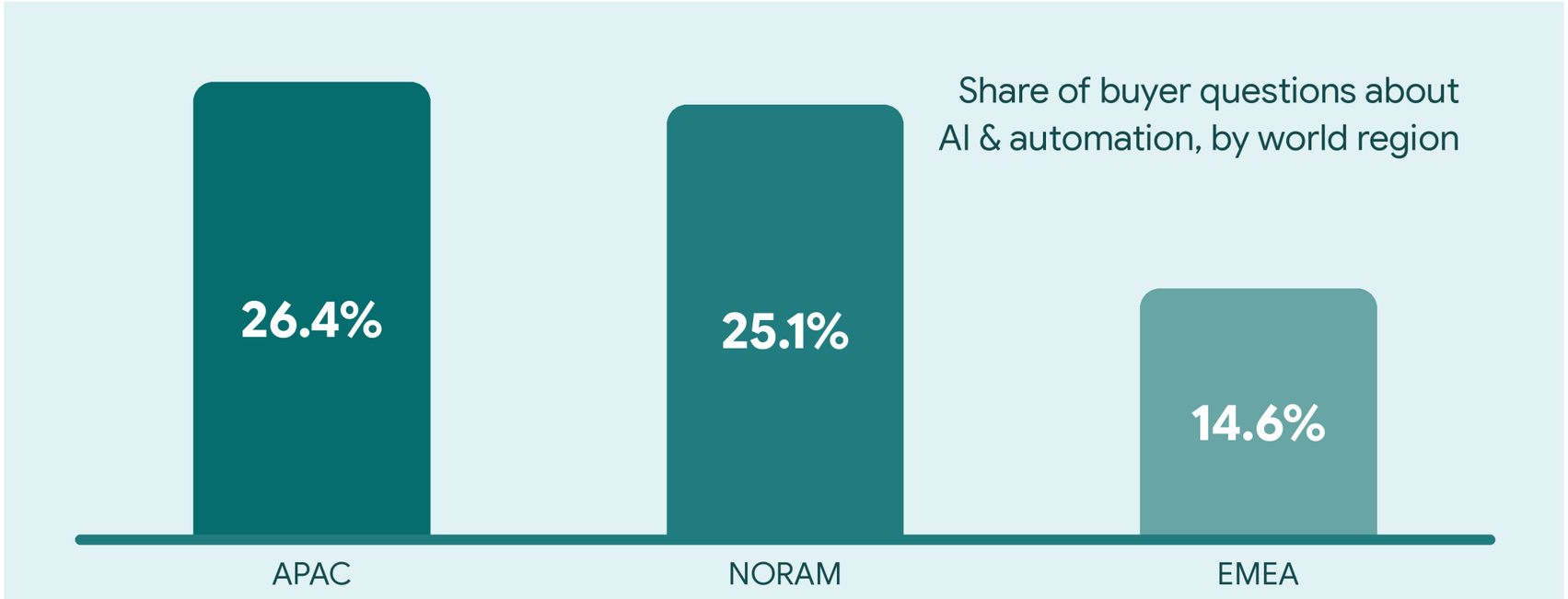
> **Can AI really help us spot struggling students before it's too late?"**
>
> *- a real question typed by a Manager buyer*

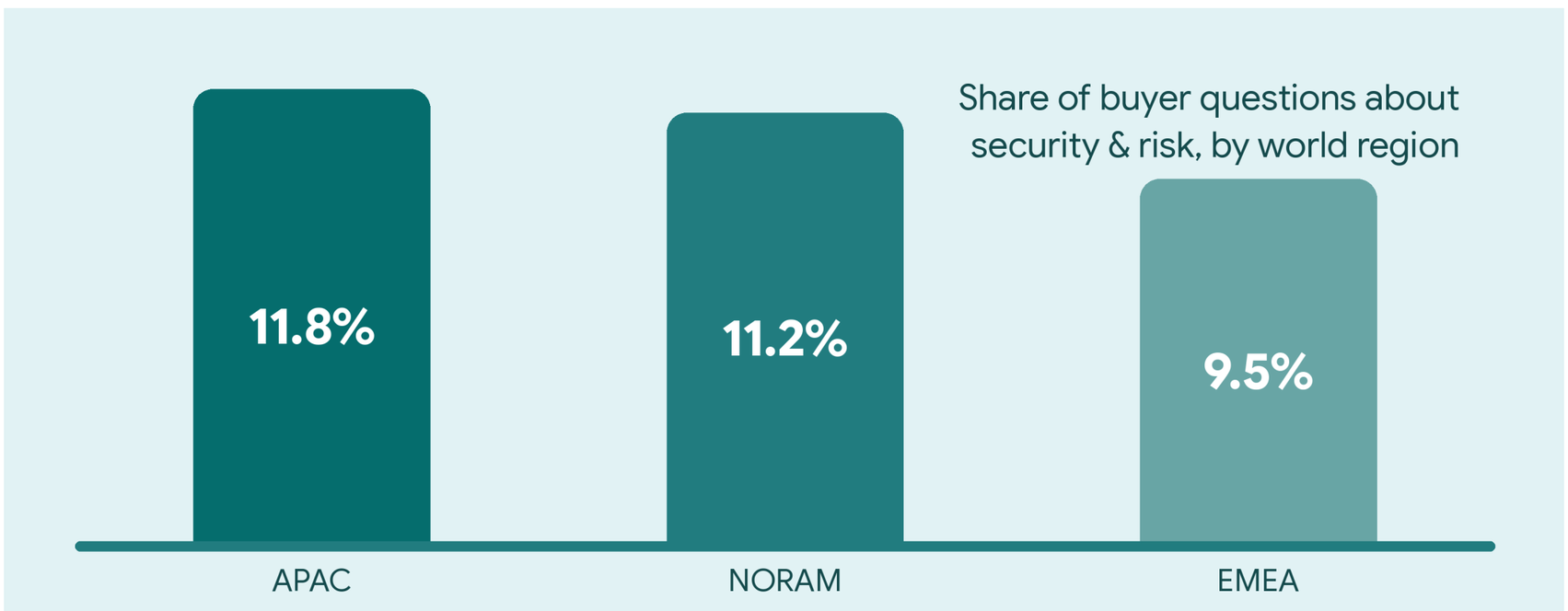
> **What does an AI prospecting agent actually do?"**
>
> *- a real question typed by a Software & Technology buyer*

Across sectors, a recurring pattern: buyers aren't asking "how do I automate more" - they're asking "how do I know the automation I already have is actually working." That's a subtly different, more sceptical posture than most vendor messaging assumes, and it shows up consistently enough across industries to be a genuine market signal.

How the Three Regions Compare

While the findings above hold globally, there is real variation by world region worth surfacing - a data point in its own right, distinct from the industry and seniority findings above.





The real contrast is EMEA at the bottom. APAC and NORAM sit close together on AI and automation (26.4% and 25.1%) and on security and risk (11.8% and 11.2%), while EMEA trails on both (14.6% and 9.5%) - most sharply on AI and automation, where EMEA buyers ask at a little over half the rate of the other two regions. This is a pattern worth watching over coming editions as the regional datasets mature further. Standalone editions for NORAM, EMEA, and APAC accompany this global report, each with its own region-specific findings.

Restated Against Edition 1

This section sets Edition 2 beside Edition 1. It is a restatement rather than a trend line: Edition 1's published figures are compared with the same measures recomputed on Edition 2's larger dataset, using whole-word theme matching.

A restatement answers whether last quarter's published conclusion still reads the same way today, not whether buyer behaviour has genuinely moved, so no row in this table should be read as a confirmed trend. Quarter-on-quarter movement across matched campaigns can be measured from the next edition onward.

Metric	Edition 1 (published)	Edition 2 (recomputed)	Status
Security/risk share by industry	18.6% (Government)	15.6% (Government)	**Holds**
AI/automation share by industry	29.6% (Financial Services)	25.4% (Banking)	**Changed**
AI/automation share by world region	31.6% (APAC)	26.4% (APAC)	**Holds**
Security/risk share by world region	15.1% (APAC)	11.8% (APAC)	**Holds**
Seniority mix (share of organic questions)	39.6% (Director)	41.5% (Director)	**Holds**
ROI/cost share by seniority	8.3% (C-Suite/Founder)	7.7% (C-Suite/Founder)	**Holds**

One published conclusion changed: Financial Services led the world on AI and automation curiosity in Edition 1. On Edition 2's larger dataset, Banking now edges ahead of Financial Services by three-tenths of a percentage point. That gap is close enough that it should be read as a ranking shift worth watching, not a confirmed change in buyer behaviour.

APPENDIX

Methodology

Every lead interacting with sponsored content through Demand AI's AI-powered content experience can engage in a few ways: typing their own question, clicking a suggested question, or requesting a summary. All of these are signals of engagement and interest. This report focuses specifically on the questions buyers typed themselves - the most spontaneous and revealing layer of that signal, though not the only one we track.

We classify a question as organic ("human-typed") when its exact text is unique, or when it differs from any other prompt in the same campaign by even one character. A question is classified as a suggested/pre-populated prompt when the exact same text recurs across two or more distinct leads in the same campaign (three or more for very short strings, to guard against coincidental short phrasing). This is a deterministic reconstruction based on how the platform's suggested-prompt buttons work, not a statistical estimate.

Themes are matched with case-insensitive, whole-word regular expressions, a stricter method than Edition 1's substring matching; all Edition 1 comparisons in this report were recomputed under this edition's method for a like-for-like restatement. Seniority is inferred from job title text where available, in the order Vice President, C-Suite/Founder, Director, Manager, Senior Individual Contributor, then Individual Contributor by default. Industry is inferred from the free-text industry field, mapped to eight fixed categories; leads outside those categories, or with no industry recorded, are excluded from industry-level findings only.

Every finding in this report is checked for robustness: the pattern must hold with the single largest contributing campaign removed, and with each of the top three contributing campaigns removed in turn, and the 95% confidence intervals for the two groups being compared must not overlap. A finding that fails any of these checks is reported as such rather than headlined.

APPENDIX

Coverage and Comparability

Market coverage is measured at lead level: a market is counted when Demand AI has delivered leads in it. Verbatim analysis is measured at question level and is restricted to English-language organic questions. A market in which buyers typed mainly in another language therefore counts toward the lead and interaction totals in this report while contributing fewer of the quoted examples. Questions typed in other languages are not included in the theme, industry or seniority analysis.

The Edition 1 figures shown in this report are the figures printed in Edition 1, set against the same measures recomputed on Edition 2's larger dataset using whole-word theme matching. This is a like-for-like restatement, not a quarter-on-quarter trend line; true quarter-on-quarter movement can be measured from the next edition onward.

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