2023 Information Seeking and Consumption Report

For professionals in Consulting and Professional Services, using content is essential for collaboration and greatly influences market strategy, investment decisions and data privacy protocols. Given the constant pressure around performance and results, the behaviors and attitudes of knowledge workers in Consulting and Professional Services around content use and sharing have shifted over time as they seek to establish a competitive edge in an ever-changing landscape. For many, the transition to hybrid and remote work for has created new dynamics for information sharing including how employees engage and collaborate with published content. The Information Seeking and Consumption Study focused on insights into how people think and behave in the context of copyrighted content consumption, use, and sharing, both within and outside the walls of their organizations, and the impact of remote working. Here’s what we learned:

**Importance of Content**
Professionals in Consulting and Professional Services consider 10 different print or digital publications critical to their job function.

**Types of externally published content used at work**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Type</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trade or business publications</td>
<td>79.1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scholarly journals</td>
<td>72.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email newsletters</td>
<td>67.4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>News</td>
<td>65.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books</td>
<td>53.5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conference proceedings</td>
<td>51.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Blogs</td>
<td>48.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market research</td>
<td>41.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research papers</td>
<td>39.5%</td>
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**The Velocity of Content is Shifting**

The number of people with whom information is shared across professional Consulting and Professional Services environments has increased since 2020, with respondents sharing work-related content 9.3 times per week with 15 other people. Considering that 57% of that content is sourced from external providers such as scientific journals, news sources, and other publications, there is potential for more than 77 instances of unlicensed sharing per employee per week if proper permissions are not in place.

9.3 times per week with **15 other people** (2023)  
VS.  
15.5 times per week with **8 other people** (2020)
Companies are sharing copyright policy more frequently, but employees are still sharing published content. **75% of employees claim to be aware of their company’s copyright policy.** However, according to Outsell’s newest research, employee attitudes and behaviors don’t always align with policy awareness.

**Impact of Remote Work**
The transition to hybrid and remote work in many industries has created new dynamics for information sharing. On average, **23% of respondents in Consulting and Professional Services reported a fully remote work environment** and **63% reported a hybrid environment**, of whom:

- **70%** reported sharing content more often
- **30%** reported sharing with more people

**Methods of Content Sharing**
- **32%** Email attachment
- **18%** Link in an email
- **3%** Shared networks
- **47%** Collaboration tools

**Copyright Awareness and Attitudes**
Companies are sharing copyright policy more frequently, but employees are still sharing published content. **75% of employees claim to be aware of their company’s copyright policy.** However, according to Outsell’s newest research, employee attitudes and behaviors don’t always align with policy awareness.

- **47%** don’t strongly agree that copyright infringement has serious risks and implications
- **81%** believe that sharing is permitted if the information is obtained on the open web or in print
- **56%** feel that the issue of getting permission creates obstacles to sharing information
- **67%** don’t strongly agree that they think about copyright issues before forwarding information

**Why It Matters?**
While the sharing of information with co-workers supports collaboration and drives innovation, the sharing of published information without obtaining the necessary subscriptions, licenses, or permissions also carries enormous potential risk. Ordinary content exchanges that come so naturally in the digital world can increase the risk of copyright infringement, costly lawsuits or settlements, and result in damage to brand reputation.

By taking steps to balance employee reuse of published content with a strong compliance and licensing program, your company can leverage today’s rise in content sharing to help support collaboration and drive innovation.

Access our complete cross-industry report for other global key findings and more information on who we surveyed at copyright.com/outsell.

Source: 2023 Information Seeking and Consumption Study, Outsell, Inc. www.outsellinc.com

**Learn more**
For more information on how to promote collaboration, simplify copyright compliance, and streamline your content workflow, contact us at:

**Organizations in the U.S.**
- [copyright.com/acl](http://copyright.com/acl)
- [solutions@copyright.com](mailto:solutions@copyright.com)

**Organizations outside the U.S.**
- [rightsdirect.com/mcl](http://rightsdirect.com/mcl)
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