



HOW TO GET IN FRONT OF  
**CISOs and Security  
Professionals in  
the Age of AI**

# How to Reach Security Leaders in the Age of AI

Cybersecurity marketing is evolving rapidly. Traditional strategies like building credibility, nurturing trust, and offering clear value propositions still matter—but they're no longer enough.

In today's AI-driven environment, these elements must be elevated to meet the expectations of buyers operating in a high-noise, high-risk world.

CISOs are inundated with AI-personalized outreach and inflated promises. But what they're really seeking is clarity and credibility. They want to understand not just the technology, but the people and integrity behind it.

For marketers, this raises the bar. AI offers reach and precision, but to earn attention and trust, brands must lead with transparency and genuine insight.



# The New State of Cybersecurity Marketing

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Security leaders are more skeptical and self-sufficient than ever. Most B2B buyers complete 69% of their journey before engaging a vendor, and 92% begin with a preferred vendor in mind.

They do their homework quietly—using search engines, review sites, and now AI-driven chat tools. In fact, over half of tech buyers now use chatbots as their primary research tool.

This means most of the buyer journey happens in the “dark funnel”—unseen by vendors. To compete, your brand must be present early, consistently, and credibly. That requires alignment between marketing and sales, cohesive messaging, and a focus on long-term brand preference.

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# What the CISO Buyer Journey Looks Like Today

The buying process is no longer linear. CISOs engage with content, peers, and platforms long before they talk to a sales rep. Here's what the journey typically includes:



## Awareness → Education

CISOs start by consuming content on threats, compliance, or board concerns, not vendor messaging.



## Consideration → Peer Validation

Case studies, independent research, and peer opinions carry more weight than promotional claims.



## Evaluation → Trust

Buyers want high-value, relevant insights backed by real-world examples and third-party validation.



## Decision → Risk Reduction

CISOs assess how your offering reduces risk, supports board KPIs, and fits into the broader tech stack.



## Renewal → Strategic Partnership

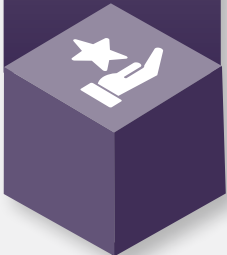
Vendors that deliver beyond features—through strategic guidance and ongoing value—are the ones that last.

**Marketing strategies need to align with this journey with education-first content, social proof, and ongoing value delivery.**

# Winning Strategies to Reach CISOs & Tech Buyers

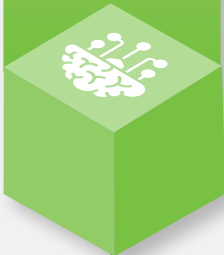
To build credibility and stand out in today's crowded cybersecurity landscape, focus on these strategic pillars:

**Lead with business value**



Address operational, regulatory, and reputational risks—not just product capabilities.

**Use AI intentionally**



Personalization and insights are helpful. But avoid over-automating what should be authentic.

**Build third-party credibility**



Analyst validation, peer stories, and media coverage build trust faster than brand claims.

**Elevate your digital presence**



Your online footprint matters. A clear, helpful, and consistent experience is expected.

**Prioritize trust and transparency**



Ethics, data privacy, and clear positioning can be differentiators.

**Play the long game**



Few CISOs are actively buying at any given time. Your goal is to be top of mind when they are.

# Channels That Convert

## CONTENT MARKETING

Illuminating the Dark Funnel

Content is your best chance to shape early thinking—before buyers ever identify themselves.

### + KEYS TO SUCCESS

- Create content for every stage of the journey
- Blend deep insights with snackable, searchable formats
- Optimize for SEO and local relevance
- Use AI to guide topics, but keep human voices front and center
- Build a flywheel—repurpose content across formats and channels
- Distribute through your social networks and internal champions

### - AVOID

- Content written for search engines instead of people
- Inconsistent messaging across formats
- Gating everything
- Tracking vanity metrics over pipeline influence
- Letting content go stale

## EVENTS

Engage, Don't Just Appear

Events still matter—but passive booths don't cut it.

### + KEYS TO SUCCESS

- Create interactive or expert-led formats
- Repurpose sessions into video clips, blogs, or tip sheets
- Use event data to refine follow-up
- Co-host with complementary brands or analysts
- Focus on speaking engagements over exhibit space

### - AVOID

- Leading with a pitch
- Paying for exposure without a plan
- Measuring only signups, not outcomes

## PARTNERSHIPS & ALLIANCES

Build Reach Through Credibility

Strong partners amplify your reach and credibility.

### + KEYS TO SUCCESS

- Align go-to-market efforts
- Co-create thought leadership content
- Define joint goals and track real business impact

### - AVOID

- Focusing on logo count over partner performance
- Poor partner enablement
- Letting relationships drift without engagement

# Channels That Convert *(continued)*

## CUSTOMER ADVOCACY

Let Clients Tell the Story

Your customers are your strongest marketing asset.

### + KEYS TO SUCCESS

- Capture their language and metrics
- Develop reward and recognition programs
- Use feedback to refine your messaging and offerings

### - AVOID

- Forcing canned testimonials
- Overpromising results
- Losing touch post-sale

## EDITORIAL & PR

Third-Party Proof Still Wins

Press and thought leadership help shape perception at scale.

### + KEYS TO SUCCESS

- Build editor relationships, not just lists
- Share data-rich, actionable stories
- Coordinate PR with broader campaigns

### - AVOID

- Overuse of jargon or self-promotion
- Mass pitching
- Ignoring industry trades or niche publications

## ANALYST RELATIONS

Expand Your Influence

Analysts inform buyer decisions. Be part of the conversation.

### + KEYS TO SUCCESS

- Offer meaningful insight—not sales decks
- Stay on message across briefings
- Keep engagement consistent

### - AVOID

- Treating briefings as marketing opportunities
- Inconsistency in positioning
- One-and-done engagements

## INFLUENCERS & PRACTITIONER VOICES

Speak Through Those Who Lead

Micro-influencers and respected voices in security circles can shape the narrative.

### + KEYS TO SUCCESS

- Partner with experts—not just personalities
- Co-create formats that show insight
- Focus on engagement, not impressions

### - AVOID

- Treating influencer posts like paid ads
- Over-engineering authenticity
- One-off, disconnected partnerships

## Final Thought

Reaching CISOs in today's AI-saturated environment requires more than good tech or clever ads. It demands a coordinated, strategic approach rooted in credibility, insight, and real connection. AI may have changed the game, but trust and value still win.

If you're reevaluating how to market to security decision-makers, let's talk.

[Contact us to start the conversation](#)



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