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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

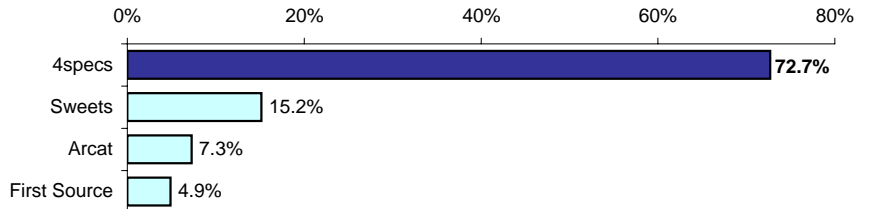
4specs is the Leading Product Research Tool

Comparing only industry-specific Internet resources (4specs, Arcat, First Source, and Sweets), 72.7% of respondents named 4specs as their most frequently utilized product research tool.

Comparing all product research tools—both print and online—specifiers estimated that more of their product research relies on 4specs than any other product research tool.

Industry-Specific Internet Resources

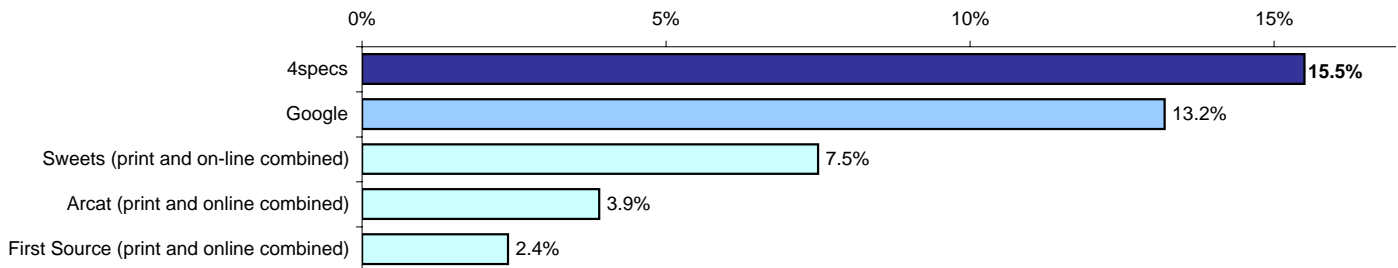
Comparing only 4specs, Arcat, First Source, and Sweets, the percentage of respondents who more frequently began their product research with each of the following resources.



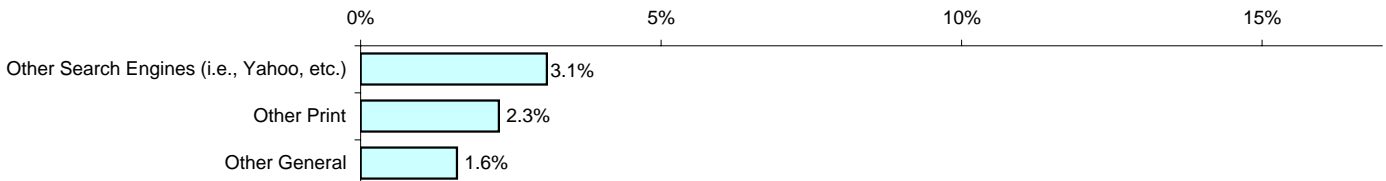
All Product Research Tools (Among 282 Respondents*)

percentage of product research relying on each of the following sources

Product Research Tools



Other Unspecified Research Tools



* Three respondents provided unspecific replies that could not be used for this analysis.

Note: Response rates for other research resources (e.g., product reps and manufacturer's binders) are detailed under **Media Mix** heading on the next page.

Usage survey conducted April–May 2006

4specs' Frequency of Use is Strongest Among the High-Volume Users

Overall, 21.1% of specifiers stated that they use 4specs daily, and 41.4% said they use 4specs weekly or more. However, full-time specifiers (defined as 75% or more time dedicated to specification-related work) relied upon 4specs more frequently than those devoting less than 75% time to specification-related work.

41.7% of full-time independent specifiers use 4specs daily and 66.7% use 4specs weekly or more. Likewise, 32.9% of nonindependent specifiers use 4specs daily and 53.9% use 4specs weekly or more.

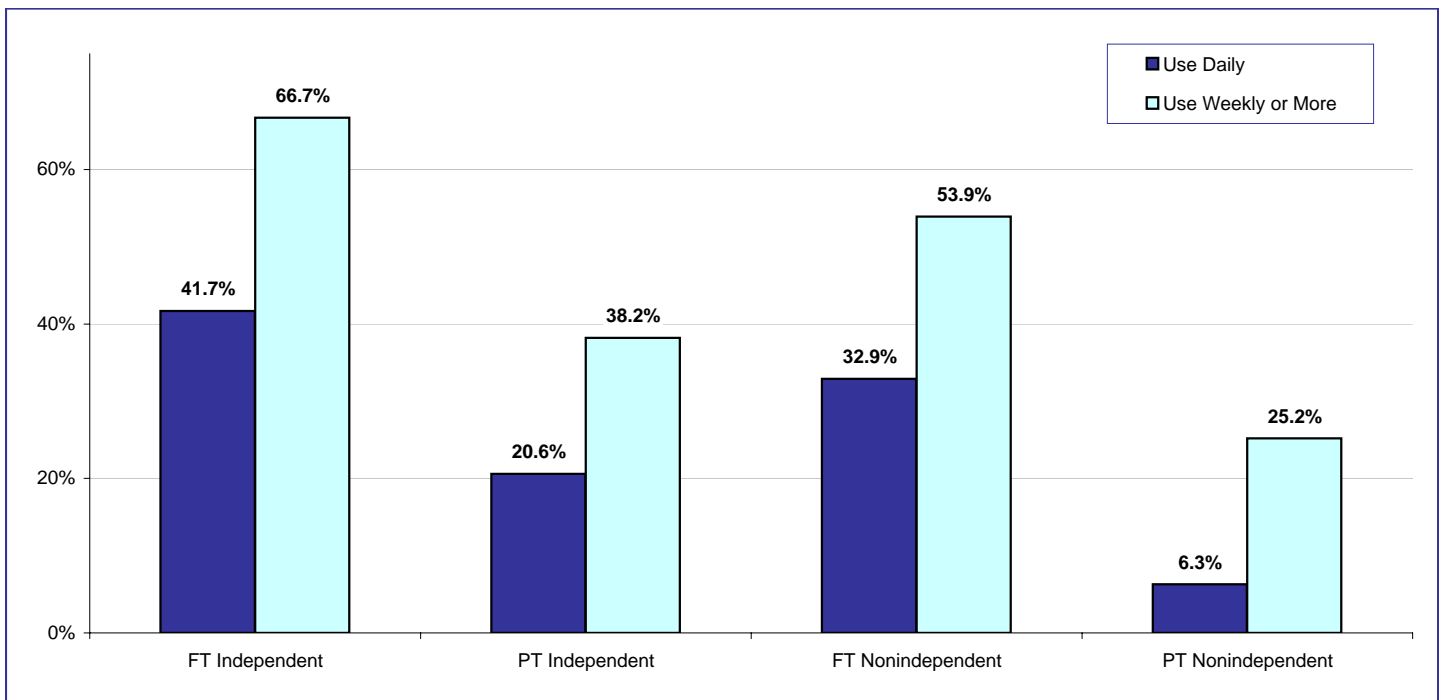
The dollar volume for full-time independent specifiers (\$379 million per year) is more than twice that of other independent specifiers. The dollar volume for full-time nonindependent specifiers' firms (\$450 million per year) is 2.4 times that of other nonindependent specifiers' firms.

Higher-Volume Specifiers Prefer 4specs	Total Respondents**	% Who Use 4specs Daily	% Who Use 4specs at Least Weekly	Number of Projects per Year***	Value of Projects per Year***	Average Project Value
Full-Time Independent Specifiers*	48	41.7%	66.7%	45	\$379 million	\$8.4 million
Part-Time Independent Specifiers	34	20.6%	38.2%	23	\$184 million	\$8.0 million
Full-Time Nonindependent Specifiers*	76	32.9%	53.9%	150	\$450 million	\$3.0 million
Part-Time Nonindependent Specifiers	127	6.3%	25.2%	106	\$185 million	\$1.7 million

* Professionals who spend at least 75% of their time doing specification and product-related research work.

** All respondents did not answer all questions.

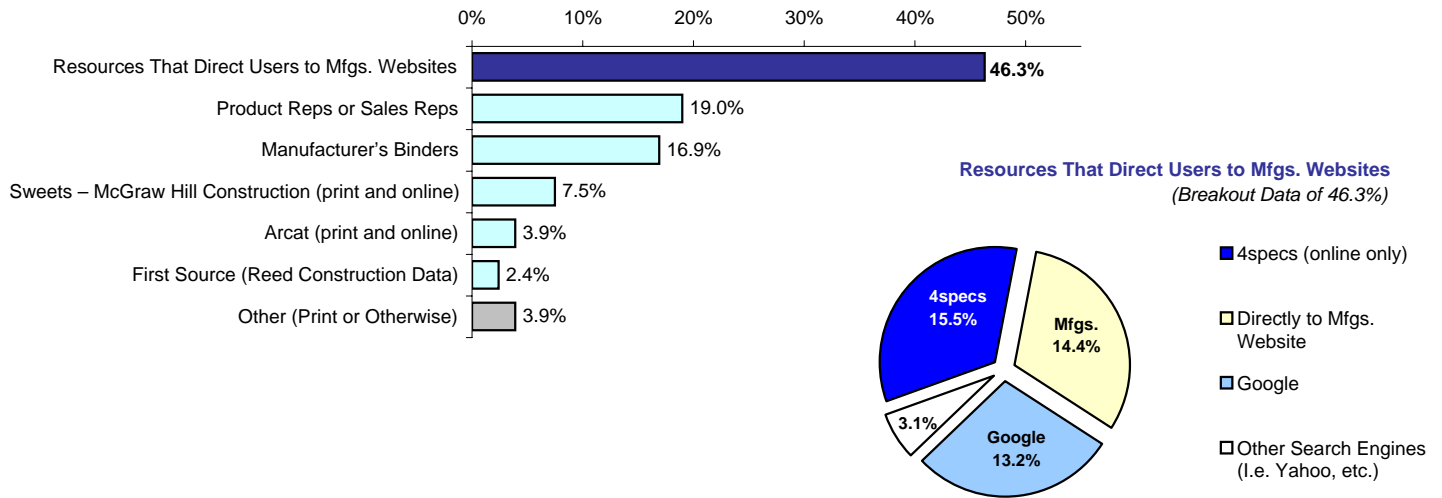
*** For nonindependent specifiers, the number and value of the projects is for their firm as a whole.



Usage survey conducted April–May 2006

Media Mix: Nearly Half of all Product Research Directs Users to Manufacturers' Websites (Among 282 Respondents*)

Nearly half of all product research (46.3%) directs users to manufacturers' websites. 4specs is the most frequently used of those resources aimed at bringing product researchers to websites (15.5% of the total usage) and the third most frequently mentioned resource overall, behind Product Reps or Sales Reps (19.0%) and Manufacturer's Binders (16.9%).



* Three respondents provided unspecific replies that could not be used for this analysis.

Methodology

The independent research firm, Verified Audit Circulation, conducted this telephone survey April 5–May 5, 2006. The population consisted of 1,081 professionals—all CSI (Construction Specifications Institute) Certified Construction Specifiers and members of SCIP (Specification Consultants in Independent Practice). Only 45 SCIP members were not also Certified Construction Specifiers.

A total of 285 surveys (26.4% of the population) were completed for use in this analysis. Percentages for single-response questions are reported to the number of respondents who answered each question, or specific portion of a question, which may vary. Percentages for multiple-response questions are reported to all respondents of that question.

Respondent Demographics

Workload. Independent specifiers were responsible for an average of 36 projects during 2005, totaling \$289.8 million. Nonindependent specifiers' firms were responsible for an average of 122 projects during 2006, totaling \$275.7 million.

Leverage. Independent specifiers provided specification-related work for an average of 14 firms over the past 12 months. Nonindependent specifiers provided specification-related support to an average of 60 other design professionals: 38 architects, 20 engineers, and 2 others.

4specs Background

Now in its 11th year, 4specs.com is a free Internet-only library service for design professionals—commercial architects, engineers, specifiers, contractors, and others—seeking specified construction product information. 13,000 product manufacturers and industry associations are listed at no cost, with more than 600 advertisers.

In 2005, 4specs hosted 1.12 million user sessions and made 1.7 million (daily unduplicated) referrals to manufacturer and industry association websites. 4specs currently (2006) hosts an average of 4,000–5,000 user sessions per work day. Because of the strategic role they play in product selection, specifiers are a vital audience for 4specs. Nevertheless, the 1,081 specifiers represented by this study likely comprise fewer than 16% of 4specs' "active" user base (those who click through to websites).

Additional Reports

PDF copies of this report can be downloaded from www.4specs.com/2006survey.html.

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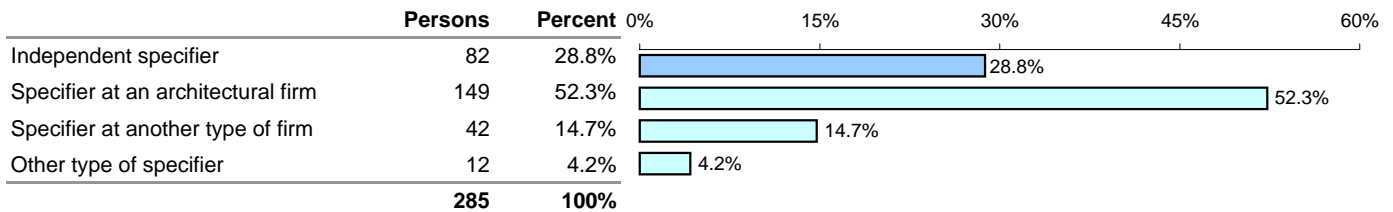
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Survey Specifics

The independent research firm, Verified Audit Circulation, conducted this telephone survey April 5–May 5, 2006. A total of 285 surveys (26.4% of the population) were completed for use in this analysis. Percentages for single-response questions are reported to the number of respondents who answered each question, or specific portion of a question, which may vary. Percentages for multiple-response questions are reported to all respondents of that question.

Primary Employment or Role



Percentage of Working Time Spent Doing Specification and Product-Related Research Work

Percentage Range	Persons	Percent
1–9 percent	9	3.2%
10–19 percent	40	14.0%
20–29 percent	38	13.3%
30–39 percent	25	8.8%
40–49 percent	10	3.5%
50–59 percent	25	8.8%
60–69 percent	8	2.8%
70–79 percent	18	6.3%
80–89 percent	22	7.7%
90–99 percent	27	9.5%
100 percent	63	22.1%
Total	285	100%

Number of Architectural Firms Provided with Specification and Product-Related Research Assistance in the Past 12 Months

Number of Firms	Persons	Percent
0 firms	1	1.2%
1–5 firms	27	32.9%
6–10 firms	21	25.6%
11–15 firms	13	15.9%
16–20 firms	11	13.4%
21–30 firms	2	2.4%
31–40 firms	2	2.4%
41–50 firms	3	3.7%
51–60 firms	0	0.0%
61–99 firms	0	0.0%
100 + firms	2	2.4%
Total	82	100%

Avg. percent of time spent:	56.8%	Average number of firms:	14
Median percentage range:	50–59 percent	Median range of firms:	6–10 firms

Usage survey conducted April–May 2006

Projects You Were Responsible for in 2005
asked of all independent specifiers

Number of Projects	Persons	Percent
1–19 projects	36	48.6%
20–39 projects	15	20.3%
40–59 projects	12	16.2%
60–79 projects	3	4.1%
80–99 projects	2	2.7%
100–149 projects	3	4.1%
150–199 projects	1	1.4%
200+ projects	2	2.7%
Total	74	100%
Declined	8	
Total Respondents	82	

Estimated Total Value of Projects
asked of all independent specifiers

Value of Projects	Persons	Percent
\$1–25 million	12	25.0%
\$26–50 million	8	16.7%
\$51–100 million	9	18.8%
\$101–200 million	4	8.3%
\$201–300 million	5	10.4%
\$301–500 million	5	10.4%
\$501–999 million	1	2.1%
\$1 billion or more	4	8.3%
	48	100%
Declined	32	
Total Respondents*	80	

Avg. number of projects:	36
Median range of products:	20–39 projects

Average value of projects:	\$289,791,667
Median range range value:	\$51–100 million

* Note: The top value of \$30 billion and low value of \$2 million were removed from the study to account for the potential of a misleading average.

Projects Firm was Responsible for in 2005
asked of all nonindependent specifiers

Number of Projects	Persons	Percent
1–19 projects	20	12.2%
20–39 projects	39	23.8%
40–59 projects	29	17.7%
60–79 projects	12	7.3%
80–99 projects	2	1.2%
100–149 projects	25	15.2%
150–199 projects	7	4.3%
200–299 projects	13	7.9%
300–399 projects	7	4.3%
400–999 projects	7	4.3%
1,000 or more	3	1.8%
Total	164	100%
Declined	39	
Total Respondents	203	

Estimated Total Value of Firm's Projects
asked of all nonindependent specifiers

Value of Projects	Persons	Percent
\$1–25 million	31	27.9%
\$26–50 million	13	11.7%
\$51–100 million	29	26.1%
\$101–200 million	13	11.7%
\$201–300 million	4	3.6%
\$301–500 million	8	7.2%
\$501–999 million	3	2.7%
\$1 billion or more	10	9.0%
	111	100%
Declined	92	
Total Respondents	203	

Avg. number of projects:	122
Median range of products:	40–59 projects

Average value of projects:	\$275,743,243
Median range range value:	\$51–100 million

Usage survey conducted April–May 2006

Design Professionals for Which Specification-Related Support was Provided

Average Number of Professionals		Among This Number of Respondents	
Architects:	38	203	<i>This question was asked of all nonindependent specifiers.</i>
Engineers:	20	203	
Others:	2	203	

Internet, Print, and Other Resources – percentage of product research relying on each of the following sources

Percentage of Resources Relied Upon		Total Respondents:	285
Internet	53.1%		
Print Resources	26.2%		
Product Reps or Sales Reps	19.0%		
Other	1.6%		
Total	100%		

Print Resources – percentage of product research from each of following sources

Percentage of Product Research from Source		Total Respondents:	283
Manufacturers Binders	60.9%	<i>Two respondents provided unspecific replies.</i>	
Sweets (McGraw Hill Construction)	16.5%		
ARCAT	5.4%		
First Source (Reed Construction Data)	4.5%		
Other	12.8%		
Total	100%		

Internet Resources – percentage of product research from each of the following sources

Percentage of Product Research from Source		Total Respondents:	282
4specs.com	25.6%	<i>Three respondents provided unspecific replies.</i>	
Sweets.com (McGraw Hill Construction)	6.6%		
ARCAT.com	4.2%		
Firstsourceonl.com (Reed Construction Data)	2.5%		
Google	23.5%		
Other Search Engines (i.e. Yahoo, etc.)	7.2%		
Directly to Manufacturer Websites	30.4%		
Total	100%		

Usage survey conducted April–May 2006

Frequency of Use for Product Research

Not surprisingly, frequency of use of product research tools is substantially higher for full-time specifiers. The following tables break out frequency of use for 1) all respondents, 2) full-time independent specifiers, 3) full-time nonindependent specifiers, 4) part-time independent specifiers, and 5) part-time nonindependent specifiers. 4specs frequency of use is highest among full-time independent specifiers (41.7% daily, 66.7% weekly or more), and full-time nonindependent specifiers (32.9% daily, 53.9% weekly or more).

<i>All Respondents</i>	<i>Persons</i>	Daily	<i>2-3x/wk</i>	<i>Weekly</i>	<i>2-3x/mo</i>	<i>Monthly</i>	<i>< Than Mon.</i>	<i>Never</i>	Weekly or More
4specs.com	285	21.1%	8.4%	11.9%	1.8%	6.7%	2.8%	47.4%	41.4%
Sweets.com	285	2.1%	4.6%	11.6%	1.4%	8.8%	2.8%	68.8%	18.2%
ARCAT.com	285	2.5%	2.5%	6.7%	1.1%	9.5%	3.9%	74.0%	11.6%
FirstSource.com	285	1.1%	2.1%	3.9%	2.5%	7.7%	2.5%	80.4%	7.0%
Google	285	33.0%	7.4%	13.3%	1.1%	5.6%	2.1%	37.5%	53.7%
Other Search Sites	285	8.4%	2.5%	4.9%	1.1%	2.5%	4.2%	76.5%	15.8%

<i>FT Indep. Specifiers</i>	<i>Persons</i>	Daily	<i>2-3x/wk</i>	<i>Weekly</i>	<i>2-3x/mo</i>	<i>Monthly</i>	<i>< Than Mon.</i>	<i>Never</i>	Weekly or More
4specs.com	48	41.7%	6.3%	18.8%	2.1%	4.2%	0.0%	27.1%	66.7%
Sweets.com	48	2.1%	0.0%	20.8%	0.0%	12.5%	4.2%	60.4%	22.9%
ARCAT.com	48	4.2%	0.0%	10.4%	2.1%	10.4%	4.2%	68.8%	14.6%
FirstSource.com	48	2.1%	2.1%	8.3%	2.1%	6.3%	0.0%	79.2%	12.5%
Google	48	31.3%	2.1%	16.7%	2.1%	10.4%	2.1%	35.4%	50.0%
Other Search Sites	48	4.2%	4.2%	4.2%	2.1%	4.2%	2.1%	79.2%	12.5%

<i>FT Nonindep. Specifiers</i>	<i>Persons</i>	Daily	<i>2-3x/wk</i>	<i>Weekly</i>	<i>2-3x/mo</i>	<i>Monthly</i>	<i>< Than Mon.</i>	<i>Never</i>	Weekly or More
4specs.com	76	32.9%	10.5%	10.5%	0.0%	7.9%	5.3%	32.9%	53.9%
Sweets.com	76	1.3%	3.9%	11.8%	0.0%	5.3%	2.6%	75.0%	17.1%
ARCAT.com	76	2.6%	0.0%	3.9%	0.0%	7.9%	5.3%	80.3%	6.6%
FirstSource.com	76	0.0%	0.0%	1.3%	1.3%	9.2%	6.6%	81.6%	1.3%
Google	76	36.8%	6.6%	13.2%	0.0%	2.6%	3.9%	36.8%	56.6%
Other Search Sites	76	14.5%	0.0%	9.2%	0.0%	1.3%	2.6%	72.4%	23.7%

<i>PT Indep. Specifiers</i>	<i>Persons</i>	Daily	<i>2-3x/wk</i>	<i>Weekly</i>	<i>2-3x/mo</i>	<i>Monthly</i>	<i>< Than Mon.</i>	<i>Never</i>	Weekly or More
4specs.com	34	20.6%	2.9%	14.7%	0.0%	11.8%	0.0%	50.0%	38.2%
Sweets.com	34	2.9%	0.0%	14.7%	0.0%	17.6%	0.0%	64.7%	17.6%
ARCAT.com	34	5.9%	2.9%	8.8%	0.0%	17.6%	0.0%	64.7%	17.6%
FirstSource.com	34	2.9%	0.0%	5.9%	2.9%	8.8%	0.0%	79.4%	8.8%
Google	34	44.1%	2.9%	14.7%	0.0%	8.8%	0.0%	29.4%	61.8%
Other Search Sites	34	5.9%	2.9%	2.9%	0.0%	0.0%	2.9%	85.3%	11.8%

<i>PT Nonindep. Specifiers</i>	<i>Persons</i>	Daily	<i>2-3x/wk</i>	<i>Weekly</i>	<i>2-3x/mo</i>	<i>Monthly</i>	<i>< Than Mon.</i>	<i>Never</i>	Weekly or More
4specs.com	127	6.3%	9.4%	9.4%	3.1%	5.5%	3.1%	63.0%	25.2%
Sweets.com	127	2.4%	7.9%	7.1%	3.1%	7.1%	3.1%	69.3%	17.3%
ARCAT.com	127	0.8%	4.7%	6.3%	1.6%	7.9%	3.9%	74.8%	11.8%
FirstSource.com	127	0.8%	3.9%	3.1%	3.1%	7.1%	1.6%	80.3%	7.9%
Google	127	28.3%	11.0%	11.8%	1.6%	4.7%	1.6%	40.9%	51.2%
Other Search Sites	127	7.1%	3.1%	3.1%	1.6%	3.1%	6.3%	75.6%	13.4%

Usage survey conducted April–May 2006

Rating the 4SPECS Product Directory

Score = average score on a 5-point scale, with 1 being Don't Agree at All and 5 being Agree Very Much

- 1 Information and links are accurate and well classified
- 2 The directory is complete
- 3 The directory is easy to use and quick
- 4 I find what I need when I am sent to the manufacturers websites

Code	Persons	Score	Don't Agree at All			Agree Very Much			N/A
			1	2	3	4	5		
1	147	4.52	0.0%	0.4%	4.2%	15.1%	31.9%	48.4%	
2	146	3.91	0.4%	3.2%	10.5%	23.9%	13.3%	48.8%	
3	147	4.50	0.0%	0.7%	3.9%	15.8%	31.2%	48.4%	
4	147	3.62	1.4%	4.2%	17.9%	17.2%	10.9%	48.4%	

All Persons
285

Rating the ARCAT Product Directory

Score = average score on a 5-point scale, with 1 being Don't Agree at All and 5 being Agree Very Much

- 1 Information and links are accurate and well classified
- 2 The directory is complete
- 3 The directory is easy to use and quick
- 4 The proprietary product specs developed by ARCAT are very useful
- 5 The ARCAT product pages are very useful
- 6 I find what I need when I am sent to the manufacturers websites

Code	Persons	Score	Don't Agree at All			Agree Very Much			N/A
			1	2	3	4	5		
1	66	3.92	0.4%	1.1%	5.3%	9.8%	6.7%	76.8%	
2	66	3.53	0.4%	1.8%	9.1%	9.1%	2.8%	76.8%	
3	66	3.91	0.0%	1.1%	6.3%	9.5%	6.3%	76.8%	
4	64	3.58	0.4%	2.8%	7.0%	8.1%	4.2%	77.5%	
5	66	3.65	0.4%	1.4%	7.4%	10.9%	3.2%	76.8%	
6	66	3.50	0.4%	2.5%	9.5%	7.0%	3.9%	76.8%	

All Persons
285

Rating the FIRSTSOURCE (Reed Construction Data) Product Directory

Score = average score on a 5-point scale, with 1 being Don't Agree at All and 5 being Agree Very Much

- 1 Information and links are accurate and well classified
- 2 The directory is complete
- 3 The directory is easy to use and quick
- 4 Proprietary product specs devpd. by FIRSTSOURCE are very useful
- 5 The FIRSTSOURCE product pages are very useful
- 6 I find what I need when I am sent to the manufacturers websites

Code	Persons	Score	Don't Agree at All			Agree Very Much			N/A
			1	2	3	4	5		
1	50	3.88	0.7%	0.4%	4.6%	6.7%	5.3%	82.5%	
2	50	3.62	0.4%	1.1%	6.3%	7.0%	2.8%	82.5%	
3	50	3.84	0.4%	0.7%	4.9%	7.0%	4.6%	82.5%	
4	48	3.48	0.7%	2.1%	5.3%	6.0%	2.8%	83.2%	
5	49	3.55	0.4%	1.8%	5.6%	7.0%	2.5%	82.8%	
6	50	3.48	1.1%	0.4%	7.4%	6.7%	2.1%	82.5%	

All Persons
285

Usage survey conducted April–May 2006

Rating the SWEETS (McGraw Hill Construction) Product Directory

Score = average score on a 5-point scale, with 1 being Don't Agree at All and 5 being Agree Very Much

- | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|
| 1 | Information and links are accurate and well classified | 4 | The proprietary product specs developed by SWEETS are very useful |
| 2 | The directory is complete | 5 | The SWEETS product pages are very useful |
| 3 | The directory is easy to use and quick | 6 | I find what I need when I am sent to the manufacturers websites |

Code	Persons	Score	Don't Agree at All			Agree Very Much			N/A	All Persons 285
			1	2	3	4	5			
1	83	3.82	1.1%	2.1%	5.3%	13.3%	7.4%	70.9%		
2	82	3.57	2.1%	1.1%	9.5%	10.5%	5.6%	71.2%		
3	82	3.66	1.8%	1.8%	7.4%	11.6%	6.3%	71.2%		
4	81	3.37	2.8%	2.8%	8.4%	9.8%	4.6%	71.6%		
5	81	3.64	2.1%	0.7%	8.4%	11.2%	6.0%	71.6%		
6	83	3.49	2.5%	1.8%	9.1%	10.5%	5.3%	70.9%		

Frequency of Actions Taken Due to Product Research on 4specs.com (asked of 4specs.com users only)

- | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|
| 1 | Validated a product's information in your specifications | 3 | Incorporated a new product into a specification |
| 2 | Searched for a new supplier | 4 | Updated your master specification |

Code	Persons	Weekly or More	Daily	2-3x/wk	Weekly	Biweekly	Monthly	Seldom	Never	N/A
1	150	64.7%	20.7%	7.3%	36.7%	4.7%	16.7%	10.0%	1.3%	2.7%
2	150	45.3%	6.0%	8.0%	31.3%	10.0%	22.7%	14.0%	4.7%	3.3%
3	150	34.7%	9.3%	2.0%	23.3%	9.3%	38.0%	14.0%	2.0%	2.0%
4	150	23.3%	6.0%	2.0%	15.3%	3.3%	37.3%	17.3%	13.3%	5.3%

Number of Times Respondent Did Each of the Following (asked of 4specs.com users only)

Note: For items 2–5, one respondent did not properly answer the question.

In the products directory and listings, how often have you...

- | | | | |
|---|---------------------------------|-------------|---|
| 1 | Sought product information: | 14.8 | Average number of times in last 30 days among 150 respondents |
| 2 | Visited a manufacturer website: | 17.4 | Average number of times in last 30 days among 149 respondents |
| 3 | Contacted a manufacturer: | 5.8 | Average number of times in last 30 days among 149 respondents |

In the discussion forum, how often have you...

- | | | | |
|---|--|------------|---|
| 4 | Asked a question on the discussion forum: | 1.3 | Average number of times in last 30 days among 149 respondents |
| 5 | Responded to a question on the discussion forum: | 2.0 | Average number of times in last 30 days among 149 respondents |
| 6 | Browsed or read the discussion forum: | 5.6 | Average number of times in last 30 days among 150 respondents |

Usage survey conducted April–May 2006

Usefulness of Changes to 4specs (asked of 4specs.com users only)

Score = average score on a 5-point scale, with 1 being Don't Agree at All and 5 being Agree Very Much

- 1 Providing links directly to specifications on the manufacturers' websites.
- 2 Providing information about new product releases

Code	Persons	Score	Don't Agree at All			Agree Very Much			N/A
			1	2	3	4	5		
1	148	4.24	3.3%	4.0%	16.0%	17.3%	58.0%	1.3%	
2	145	3.55	4.7%	10.7%	32.0%	25.3%	24.0%	3.3%	

All Persons
150

Reasons for Not Using 4specs.com (asked of 4specs.com nonusers only)

Score is the average rating from 1–5 of respondents ("Persons") that were not N/A

	Persons	Percent	
I was not aware of 4specs	54	40.0%	
I prefer using another online source for spec related info	53	39.3%	
Actually used it and did not find it useful	12	8.9%	
I do not use the Internet for product research	6	4.4%	
I just don't use it or find it useful	4	3.0%	
Other	6	4.4%	
	135	100%	