

Gartner Magic Quadrant

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

To ensure consistency in our ratings and placements, a formal process to create a Gartner Magic Quadrant is followed. These questions address what we hear most often from end users and vendors about the Gartner process.

Research Processes for Gartner Magic Quadrant

What is the internal approval process for a new Gartner Magic Quadrant?

If an analyst wants to create a new Magic Quadrant, he or she proposes the research as part of a specific research agenda.

The proposal includes:

- The market definition
- Draft inclusion criteria
- Draft evaluation criteria
- Project team and time involved

The proposal goes through several internal levels of review, ending with the Senior Research Board, to ensure that we look across research agendas when we define a new market. Once approved, the new Magic Quadrant is added to the list of planned research on gartner.com. Magic Quadrants are reviewed annually, and the title of the Magic Quadrant, along with its refresh date, is noted on the [planned research list on gartner.com](#).

What is the process for an annual update to a previously published Gartner Magic Quadrant?

To ensure a current reflection of market conditions, an analyst proposes updating the Magic Quadrant as part of the agenda planning for the upcoming year for a specific research area. The update will include changes from the previous year to refine the market definition, vendor inclusion criteria and evaluation criteria, if required. The proposal must be accepted by the agenda manager and the analyst's team manager. No other approvals are needed. No change is needed to the list on gartner.com, unless the update falls beyond the one-year anniversary of the document. If the proposed new market definition, vendor inclusion criteria and evaluation criteria vary beyond the normal evolution of the market, the process for creating a new Magic Quadrant for a new market is followed and the existing Magic Quadrant follows the retirement process.

How do you consolidate two or more previously published Gartner Magic Quadrants?

Analysts who want to consolidate two or more Magic Quadrants are asked to retire the existing research documents and create a proposal for a new one. The proposal process is roughly the same. The new market definition explains why the markets have been consolidated. The Magic Quadrants to be replaced are retired (archived) 12 months from the publish date. The list of planned research on gartner.com will show "retired" for the previously published documents. The consolidated Magic Quadrant is considered new research and listed as "upcoming" research on gartner.com.

What is the process for retiring a previously published Gartner Magic Quadrant? Why would that happen?

Retirement of a Gartner Magic Quadrant follows a clearly defined process. The analyst and relevant agenda manager review whether a Magic Quadrant should be retired. Retirement can be based on decreased client interest in the overall market area or if certain changes to the market have occurred. If a particular Magic Quadrant is a low priority in terms of overall topic coverage, or if client demand for that research has declined, the decision may be to not update the Magic Quadrant. If the decision is made to retire the research, the "Refresh Date" field on gartner.com will say "retired," and the document will be archived a year after its publication date. The lead author will notify all vendors that participated in the now-retired Magic Quadrant that it will no longer be published.

Why doesn't Gartner share specific rating results of vendors?

Magic Quadrant analysts collaborate to evaluate and relatively rate each vendor against each of the weighted criteria that are described within the methodology. The resulting scores are used to generate a Magic Quadrant position rating. Gartner does not provide specific scores because scores are based on not just quantitative elements,

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but qualitative as well, so they are not strictly mathematical calculations. A vendor might earn a relatively high score in Product/Service because the quality, uniqueness and integration of its product/service elements are higher than other vendors', even if it lacks some of the features of other vendors. Generally the rationale behind scoring is explained in the document; one area to look for where a vendor scored particularly high is in its Strengths section; where it scored low is often reflected in the Cautions bullets.

When and how are vendors contacted directly about a Gartner Magic Quadrant?

An analyst sends vendors an email letting them know of the creation of a Magic Quadrant and requesting the appropriate contact to work with through the research process. (If the analyst already knows the contact at a vendor, this step may not be necessary.) Once the contact is confirmed, the analyst sends an email that explains the market definition, inclusion criteria, evaluation criteria and weights, research process and timeline. For a new Magic Quadrant, this initial vendor notification usually occurs 8 to 20 weeks before the planned publication date. This time frame varies based on project complexity. The timing is typically shorter for Magic Quadrants that have been published more than once.

Are vendors contacted if they are dropped from a Gartner Magic Quadrant when it is updated?

Yes, vendors are notified in advance of publication that they will not be represented in the updated research, along with an explanation of why they will not be included. The published document will note that the vendor has been dropped and include a brief explanation of why that vendor no longer meets the inclusion criteria.

Can a vendor "opt in" or "opt out" of a Gartner Magic Quadrant?

Vendors are included in the research only if they meet the market definition and inclusion criteria established by the analyst. If a vendor meets the inclusion criteria, our process requires that it be represented in the Magic Quadrant. If a vendor does not meet the criteria, it will not be included as a participating vendor in the Magic Quadrant.

Vendors therefore cannot choose to either opt in or opt out. However, a vendor may choose not to participate in the process or respond to Research requests for information, in which case the analysts will gather as much current information as possible from publicly available sources and will indicate this in the disclaimer in the published document.

Are analysts required to ask vendors for information when creating a Gartner Magic Quadrant project?

Analysts are not required to solicit information from vendors when creating a Magic Quadrant. The analyst determines whether he or she has sufficient information through regular contact with vendors and customers in that market to develop the document without this input. Analysts may request information from vendors in the form of a questionnaire or a request for a briefing; often, the content from these requests is used for other research deliverables in addition to the Magic Quadrant. Also, if the vendors supply excessive information, the analyst may choose to use only a limited subset.

Are analysts limited in the number of questions they can ask in their surveys?

No. Analysts are not restricted in the number of questions they can ask in their surveys, but there is suggested guidance that they keep the questions to a minimum and only ask for details that will help to fill in the gaps. For reference surveys, guidance suggests that a typical contributor should be able to complete the survey in about 20 minutes. An analyst may gather response data for use in the Magic Quadrant as part of a larger surveying exercise intended for use in multiple deliverables.

If the analyst does not require specific input from vendors, when are vendors notified that they will be represented in a Gartner Magic Quadrant report?

Vendors that meet the inclusion criteria and market definition are notified at the beginning of a Magic Quadrant project. Analysts send all included vendors an email notifying them of their inclusion. The email includes the market definition, inclusion criteria, evaluation criteria, weightings for each criteria and expected publish date of the research.

Vendors are also sent a copy of the draft content relevant to their company and are asked to check it to ensure accuracy prior to publication; they are given between five and ten business days for this factual review. The review is not an opportunity for the vendor to disagree about placement within a quadrant. Vendor responses back to the analyst need to be in writing. Analysts are encouraged to notify vendors once they have a sense of the approximate date that the draft will be sent for factual review.

What happens if a vendor declines to provide information requested by the analyst?

Analysts work with the information available to them from other sources, including publicly available information, feedback from our client base and industry contacts. The draft Magic Quadrant graphic, along with specific content related to that vendor, is still sent for factual review following the standard process.

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A disclaimer is also added to the document:

<Vendor X> did not respond to requests for supplemental information and/or to review the draft contents of this document. The Gartner analysis is therefore based on other credible sources, including (insert any sources that apply, such as the following):

- Public information
- <Y> discussions with users of this product

Vendor non-participation will not affect their inclusion in the document — that is determined by the inclusion criteria alone.

What assurances do vendors have that vendor-supplied reference will be contacted?

If an analyst asks for and receives vendor-supplied references, he/she is required to contact those references and notify the vendor if he/she is unable to reach any of them.

What opportunity do vendors have to review the Gartner Magic Quadrant before it is published?

Vendors are given between five and ten business days to review relevant draft content, including the complete graphic (for example, with all named “dots” in the Magic Quadrant) and vendor-specific commentary for factual accuracy. If a Magic Quadrant contextualization is created, vendors will be given the opportunity to review the vendor-related content for factual accuracy. In most cases this will occur at the same time as the full Magic Quadrant review process, but in some instances it could be separate.

Vendors review the published Magic Quadrant image only. Client-generated views of the interactive Gartner Magic Quadrant are not relevant to the review process and are not included.

Is the data collection and review process the same for all vendors, even if they are not Gartner clients?

Yes, it is exactly the same. Client status has no bearing on our research processes.

What if a participating vendor disagrees with its position or the analyst’s comments?

The first point of escalation is the analyst who created the research being questioned. Vendors should approach analysts with issues regarding facts, processes, methodologies or opinions expressed in research. The second point of escalation is the analyst’s manager, whose role is to verify that all required methodologies and processes were followed by the analyst(s) and that all Research positions have been appropriately supported. The third is the Office of the Ombudsman.

Is there any attempt to coordinate the timing for a Gartner Magic Quadrant in related topic areas?

No, because of the breadth of coverage of the various topic areas and complexity of the underlying markets, it is not possible to coordinate the related topics between the number of analysts who cover these areas and their other commitments. However, information gathered during the preparation of a Magic Quadrant is often shared across related topic areas.

What is Gartner Magic Quadrant contextualization, and where can I find it?

Magic Quadrant contextualization is an additional perspective added to a Magic Quadrant for a specific industry, company size or geography where market differences that affect strategic planning or technology investment decisions could exist. For each context, analysis is added that provides market differentiators, considerations for selecting a service provider and a list of notable vendors. There are no ratings or comparative analysis provided for the notable vendors.

A Magic Quadrant context analysis can be found on the Interactive Magic Quadrant in the top right of the page under the heading “Additional Perspectives” or at the end of the full document when viewed either as a PDF or in the HTML version.

How do you decide if Gartner Magic Quadrant context will be added to a market?

The key to this decision is based on whether or not market differences exist that could significantly affect decision making for a specific industry, company size or geography.

Where can I find more information about the Gartner Magic Quadrant and other Gartner methodologies on gartner.com?

For more details about methodologies, go to the [Magic Quadrant methodology page](#). Additional information and FAQs about the interactive Magic Quadrant features are available on the [Gartner Magic Quadrant and Critical Capabilities Enhancements page](#).

What do I do if I want to excerpt research or buy reprints of it?

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