



Silicon Valley
Venture Capital Survey
Fourth Quarter 2018

First Look

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Cynthia Clarfield Hess, Mark Leahy and Khang Tran

Background

We analyzed the terms of 234 venture financings closed in the fourth quarter of 2018 by companies headquartered in Silicon Valley. We found that valuation results are at three-year highs, with the software industry recording the strongest valuations. Our data also show a steep decline in the use of multiple liquidation preferences.

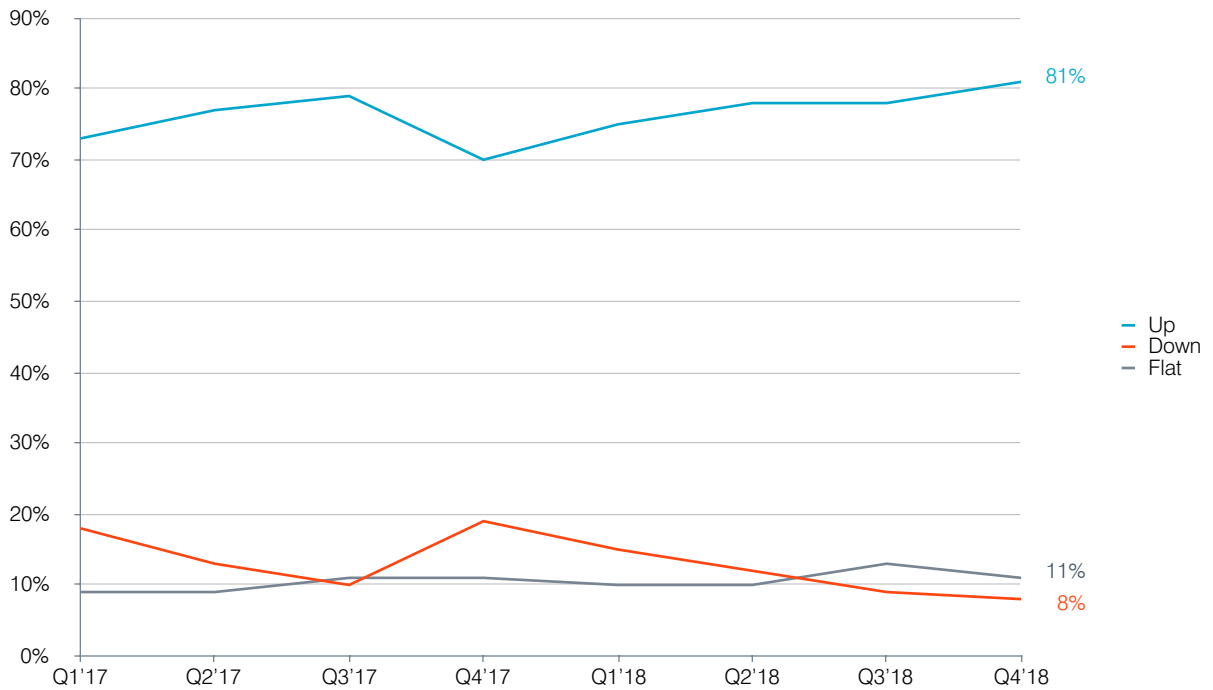
Overview of Fenwick & West Results

Valuation results in the fourth quarter of 2018 improved upon the already strong levels recorded in the prior quarters of the year and are at three-year highs.

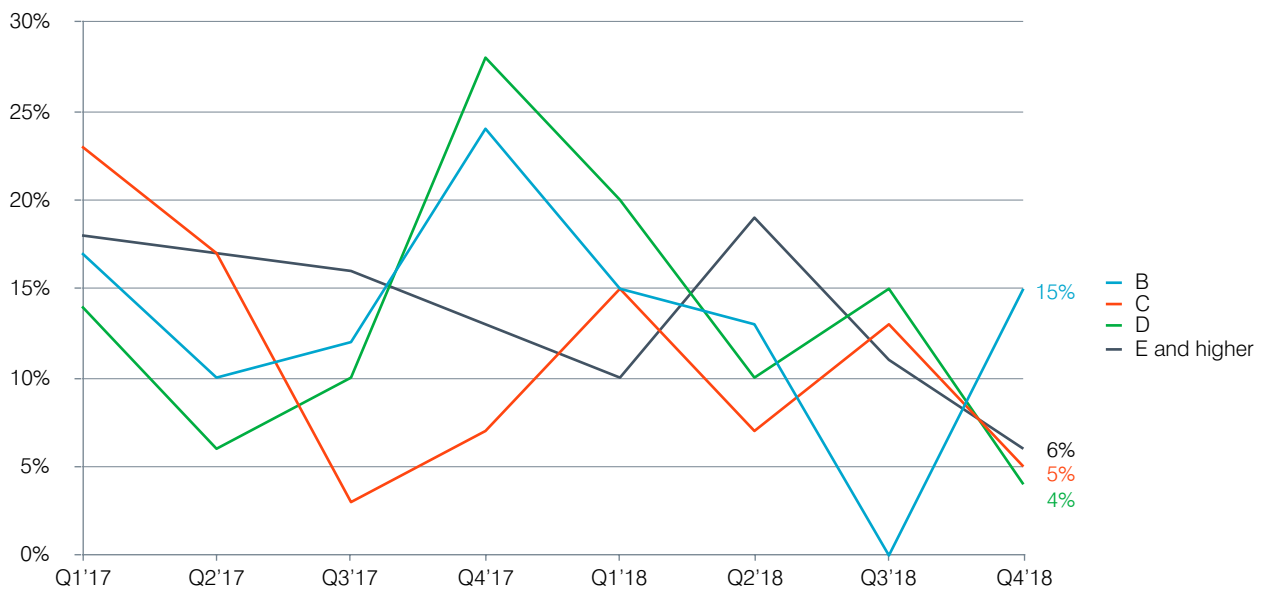
- Up rounds exceeded down rounds 81% to 8%, with 11% flat in Q4 2018, an increase from Q3 when up rounds exceeded down rounds 78% to 9%, with 13% flat.
- The Fenwick & West Venture Capital Barometer™ showed an average price increase in Q4 2018 of 85%, an increase from the 71% recorded in the prior quarter, and the highest average price increase since Q3 2015.
- The median price increase of financings in Q4 2018 was 52%, an increase from the 42% recorded in Q3, and the highest median price increase since Q2 2015.
- Stronger valuation results compared to the prior quarter were recorded across each series of financing.
- The software industry recorded the strongest valuation results in Q4 2018, with an average price increase of 118% and a median price increase of 58%, both significantly higher compared to the prior quarter. The internet/digital media industry recorded the next strongest valuation results in the quarter with an average price increase of 68% and a median price increase of 56% in Q4. In contrast, the life sciences and hardware industries recorded weaker valuation results in Q4 compared to the prior quarter.
- The use of multiple liquidation preferences declined sharply in Q4 2018.

Fenwick & West Data on Valuation

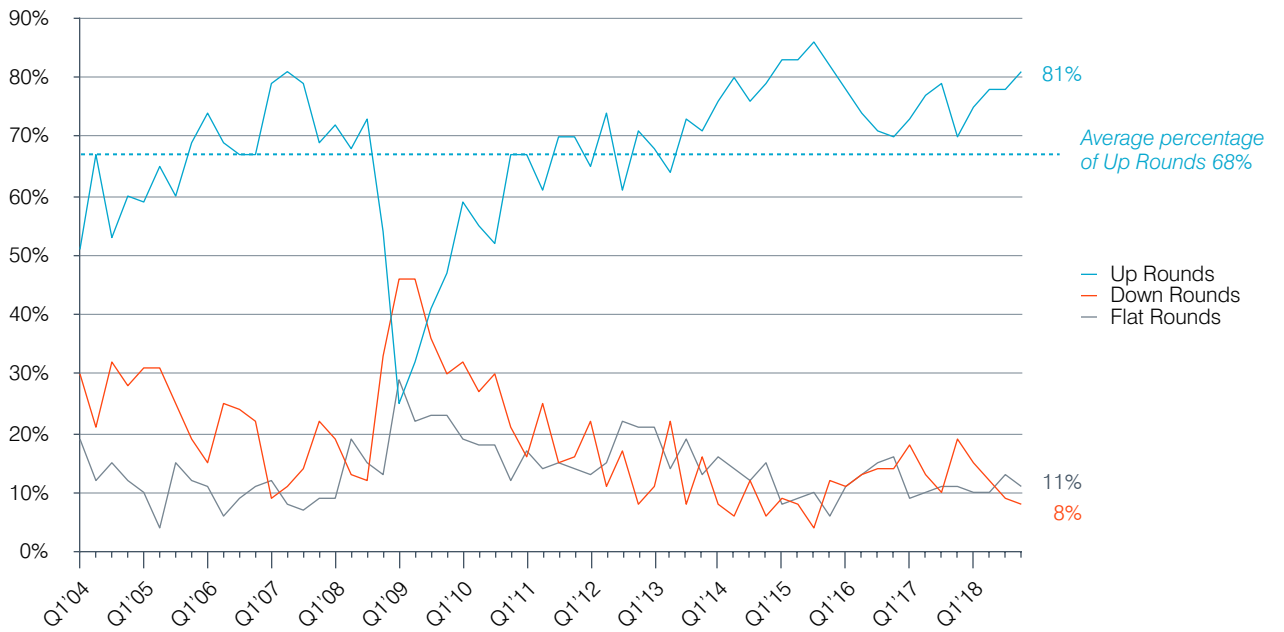
PRICE CHANGE—The direction of price changes for companies receiving financing in a quarter, compared to their prior round of financing.



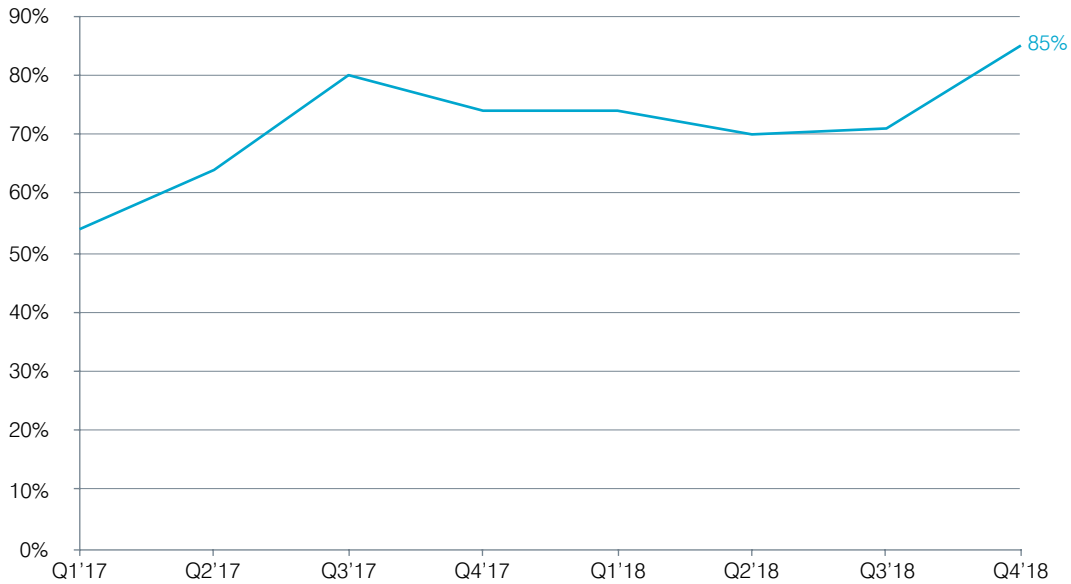
The percentage of **DOWN ROUNDS** by series were as follows:



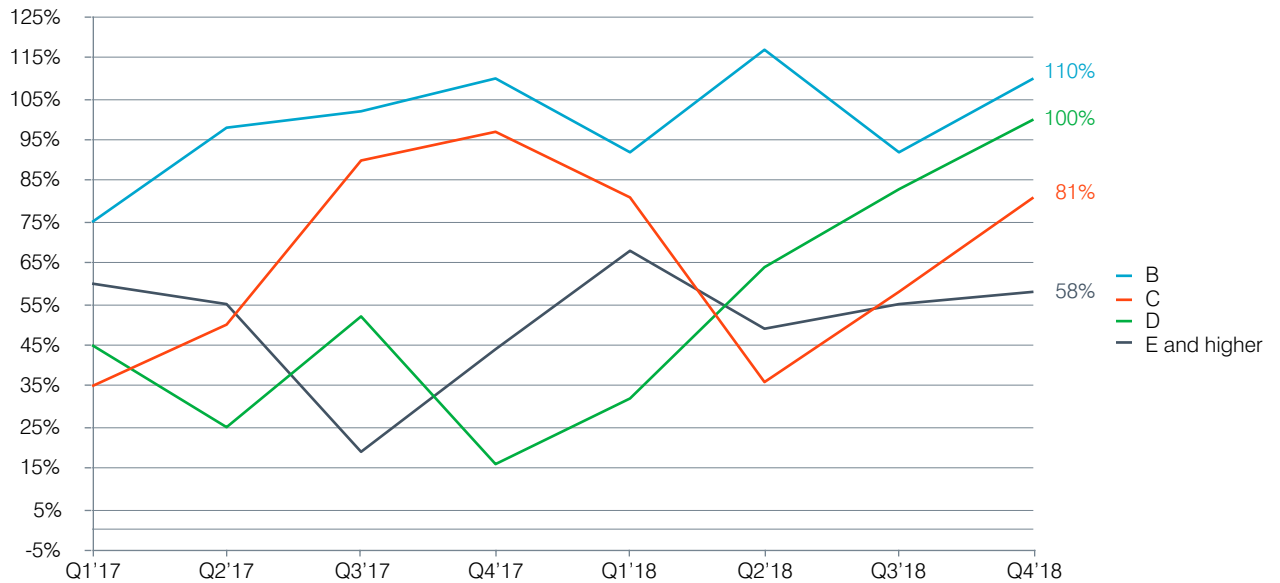
EXPANDED PRICE CHANGE GRAPH—Below is the direction of price changes for each quarter since 2004.



THE FENWICK & WEST VENTURE CAPITAL BAROMETER™ (magnitude of price change) — Below is the *average* percentage change between the price per share at which companies raised funds in a quarter, compared to the price per share at which such companies raised funds in their prior round of financing. In calculating the average, all rounds (up, down and flat) are included, and results are not weighted for the amount raised in a financing.



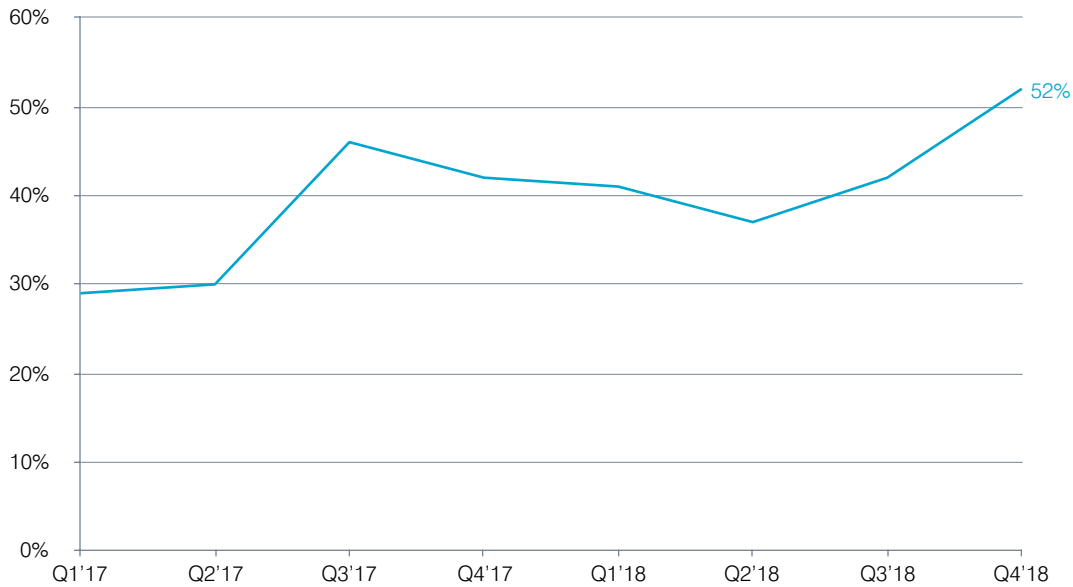
The Barometer results by series are as follows:



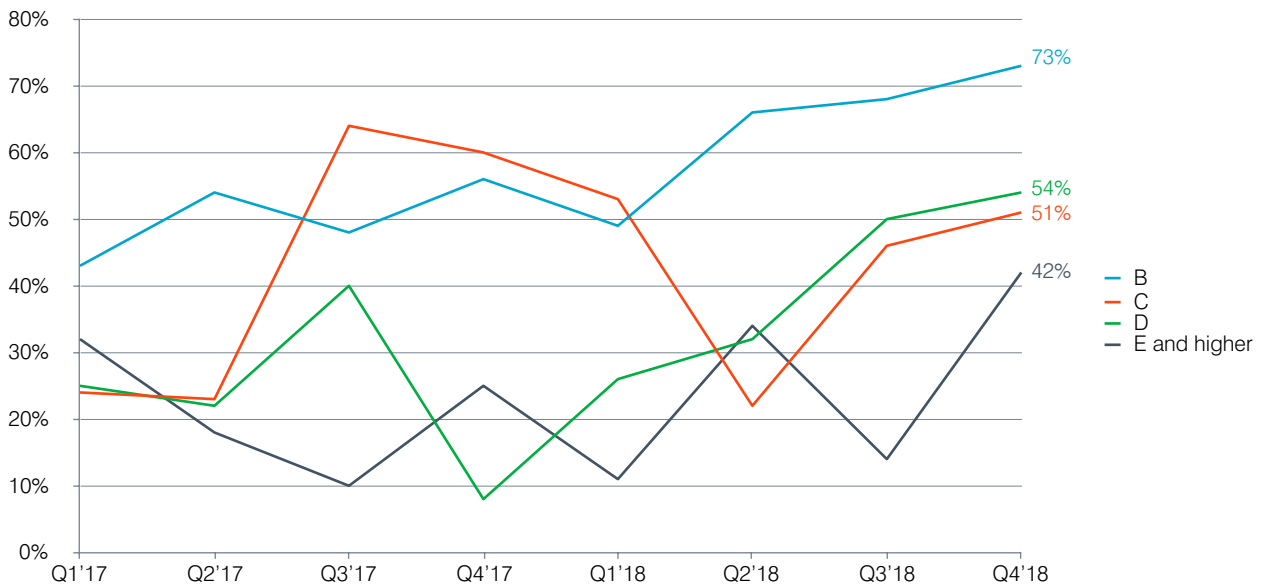
EXPANDED BAROMETER GRAPH — Below is the average percentage price change for each quarter since we began calculating this metric in 2004.



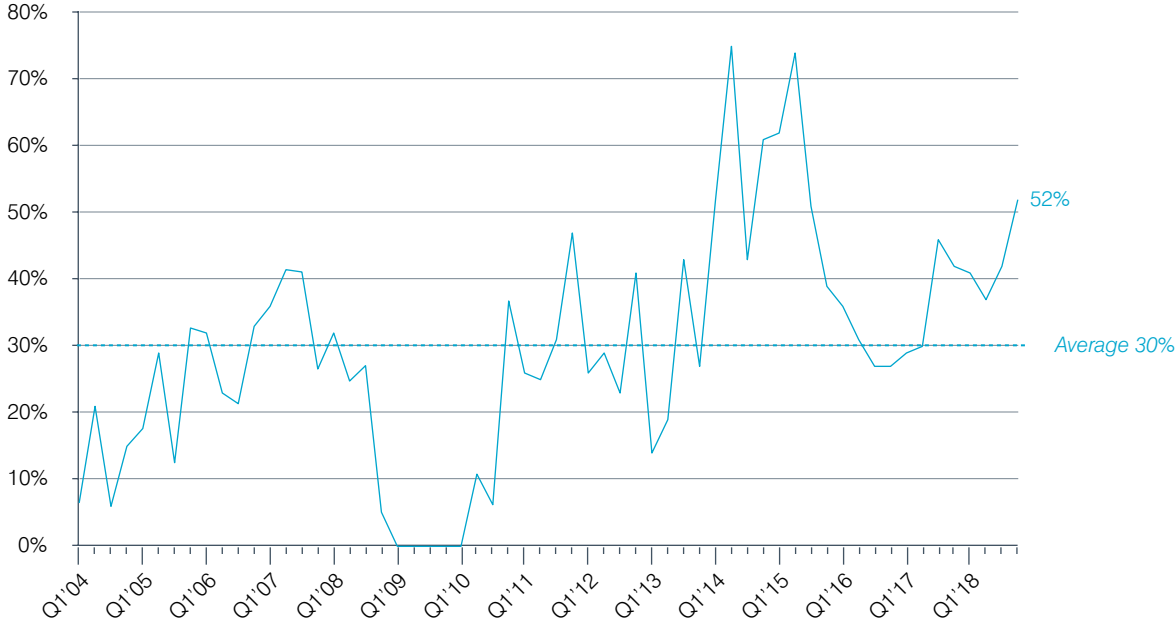
MEDIAN PERCENTAGE PRICE CHANGE—Below is the median percentage change between the price per share at which companies raised funds in a quarter, compared to the price per share at which such companies raised funds in their prior round of financing. In calculating the median, all rounds (up, down and flat) are included, and results are not weighted for the amount raised in the financing. Please note that this is different from the Barometer, which is based on average percentage price change.



MEDIAN PERCENTAGE PRICE CHANGE BY SERIES.



EXPANDED MEDIAN PRICE CHANGE GRAPH— Below is the median percentage price change for each quarter since we began calculating this metric in 2004.



RESULTS BY INDUSTRY FOR DIRECTION OF PRICE CHANGES AND AVERAGE AND MEDIAN

PRICE CHANGES — The table below illustrates the direction of price changes, and average and median price change results, for companies receiving financing in this quarter, compared to their previous round, by industry group. Companies receiving Series A financings are excluded as they have no previous rounds to compare.

Industry	Up Rounds	Down Rounds	Flat Rounds	Average Price Change	Median Price Change	Number of Financings
Software	85%	3%	13%	118%	58%	78
Hardware	63%	26%	11%	44%	24%	19
Life Sciences	78%	11%	11%	35%	25%	27
Internet/Digital Media	79%	13%	8%	68%	56%	24
Other	92%	0%	8%	90%	48%	13
Total all Industries	81%	8%	11%	85%	52%	161

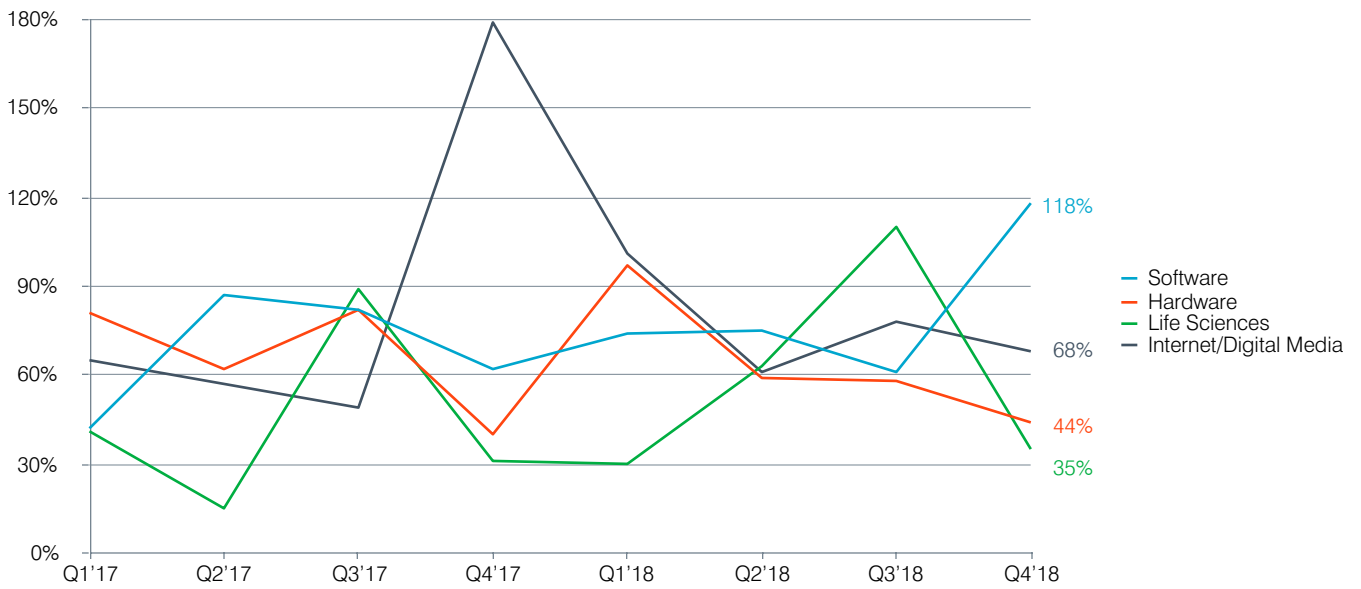
DOWN ROUND RESULTS BY INDUSTRY — The table below illustrates the percentage of “down rounds,” by industry groups, for each of the past eight quarters.

Down Rounds	Q1'17	Q2'17	Q3'17	Q4'17	Q1'18	Q2'18	Q3'18	Q4'18
Software	20%	14%	10%	18%	16%	14%	11%	3%
Hardware	18%	17%	8%	28%	10%	5%	14%	26%
Life Sciences	17%	16%	9%	21%	16%	10%	5%	11%
Internet/Digital Media	24%	11%	8%	14%	17%	16%	5%	13%
Other	0%	8%	15%	13%	0%	16%	5%	0%
Total all Industries	18%	13%	10%	19%	15%	12%	9%	8%

BAROMETER RESULTS BY INDUSTRY—The table below sets forth Barometer results by industry group for each of the last eight quarters.

Industry	Q1'17	Q2'17	Q3'17	Q4'17	Q1'18	Q2'18	Q3'18	Q4'18
Software	42%	87%	82%	62%	74%	75%	61%	118%
Hardware	81%	62%	82%	40%	97%	59%	58%	44%
Life Sciences	41%	15%	89%	31%	30%	63%	110%	35%
Internet/Digital Media	65%	57%	49%	179%	101%	61%	78%	68%
Other	69%	43%	107%	73%	72%	81%	70%	90%
Total all Industries	54%	64%	80%	74%	74%	70%	71%	85%

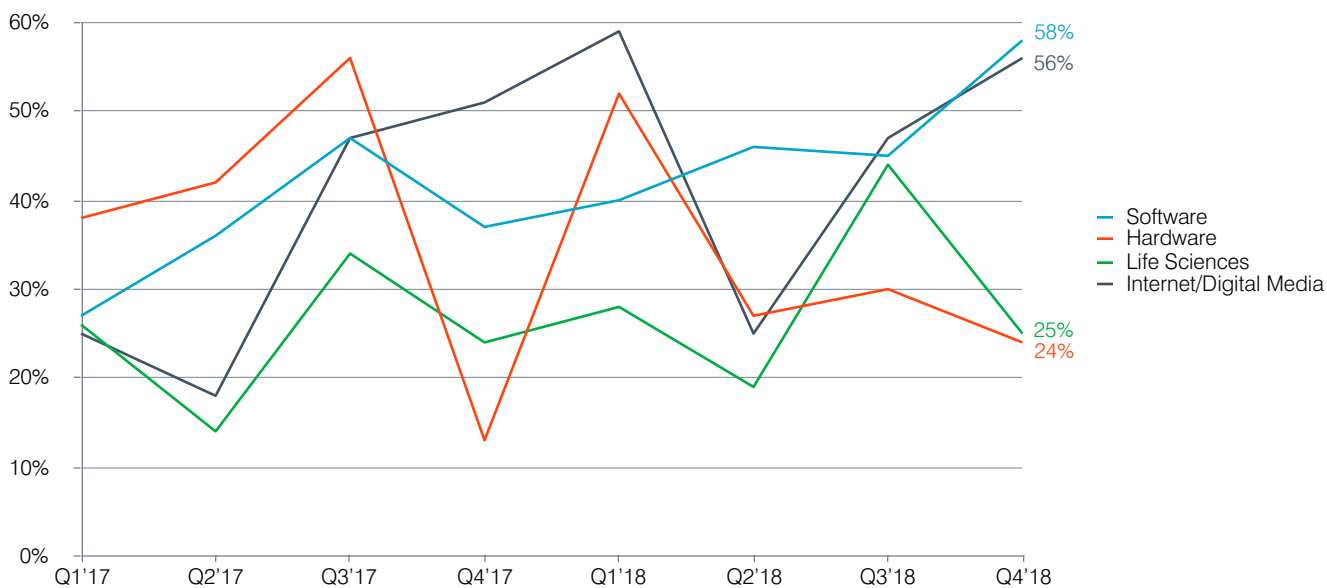
A graphical representation of the above data is below.



MEDIAN PERCENTAGE PRICE CHANGE RESULTS BY INDUSTRY — The table below illustrates the median percentage price change results by industry group for each of the last eight quarters. Please note that this is different than the Barometer, which is based on average percentage price change.

Median % Price Change	Q1'17	Q2'17	Q3'17	Q4'17	Q1'18	Q2'18	Q3'18	Q4'18
Software	27%	36%	47%	37%	40%	46%	45%	58%
Hardware	38%	42%	56%	13%	52%	27%	30%	24%
Life Sciences	26%	14%	34%	24%	28%	19%	44%	25%
Internet/Digital Media	25%	18%	47%	51%	59%	25%	47%	56%
Other	59%	44%	18%	63%	35%	53%	37%	48%
Total all Industries	29%	30%	46%	42%	41%	37%	42%	52%

A graphical representation of the above data is below.

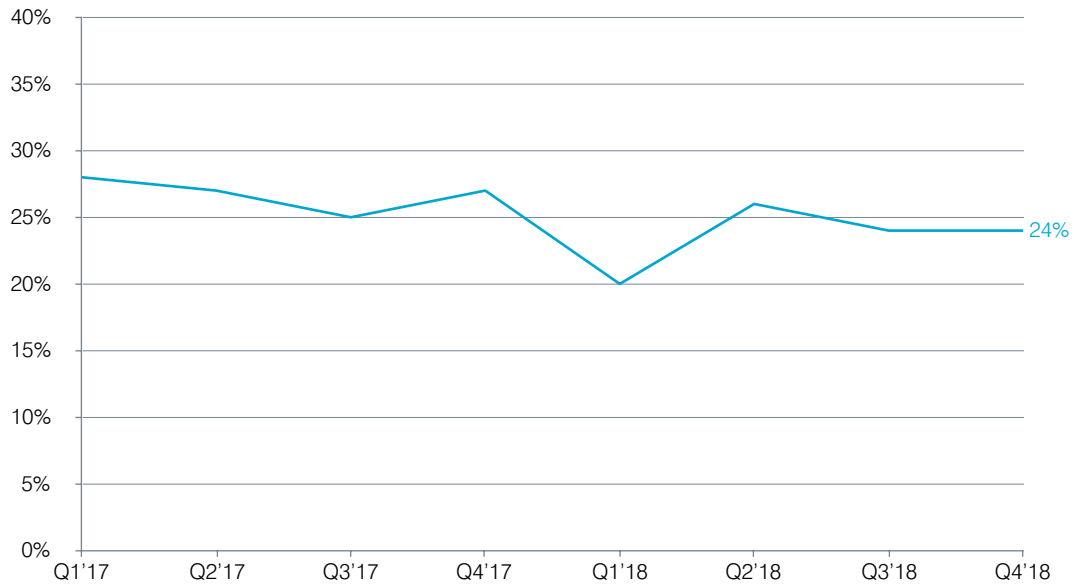


FINANCING ROUND—This quarter’s financings broke down by series according to the chart below.

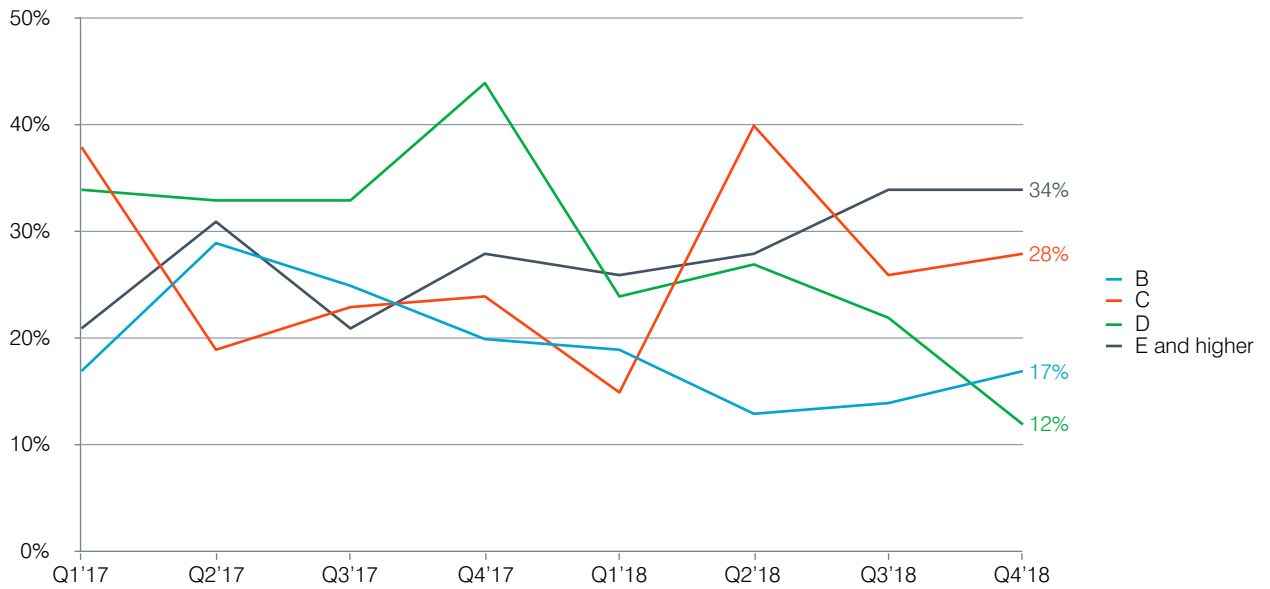
Series	Q1'17	Q2'17	Q3'17	Q4'17	Q1'18	Q2'18	Q3'18	Q4'18
Series A	29%	28%	27%	29%	25%	24%	27%	31%
Series B	18%	23%	32%	26%	27%	24%	20%	20%
Series C	20%	23%	19%	15%	21%	19%	18%	18%
Series D	15%	9%	11%	13%	13%	13%	13%	11%
Series E and Higher	17%	17%	10%	17%	16%	19%	22%	20%

Fenwick & West Data on Legal Terms

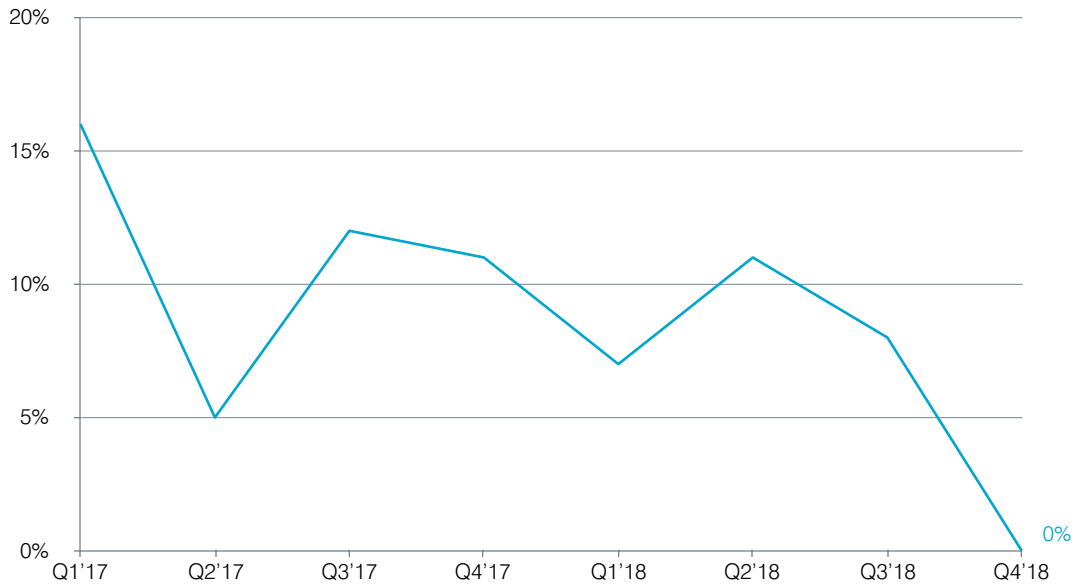
LIQUIDATION PREFERENCE — Senior liquidation preferences were used in the following percentages of financings.



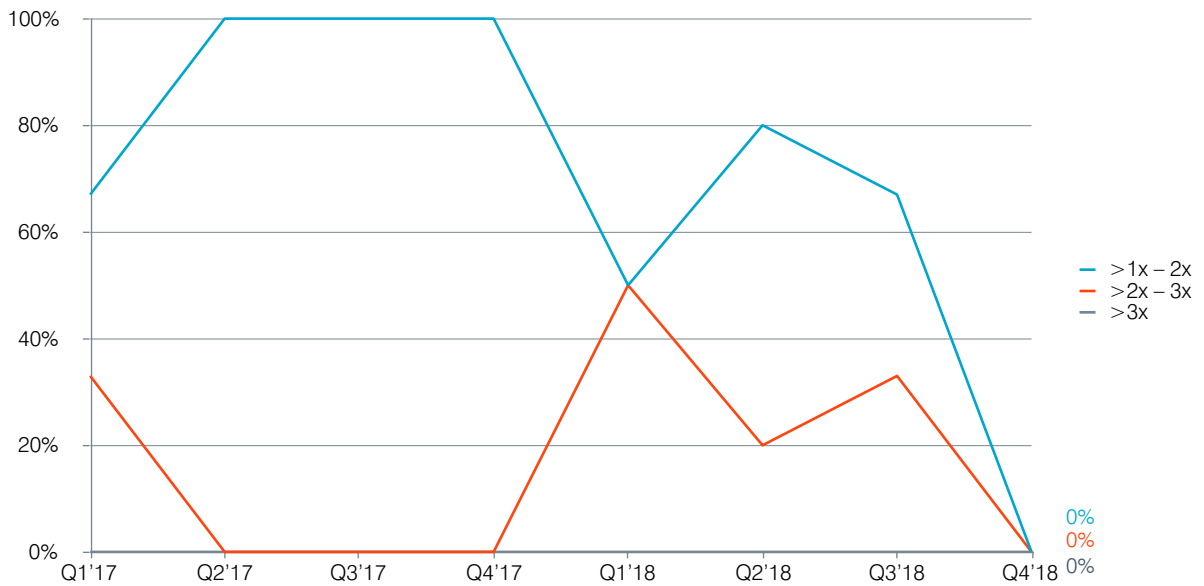
The percentage of senior liquidation preference by series was as follows:



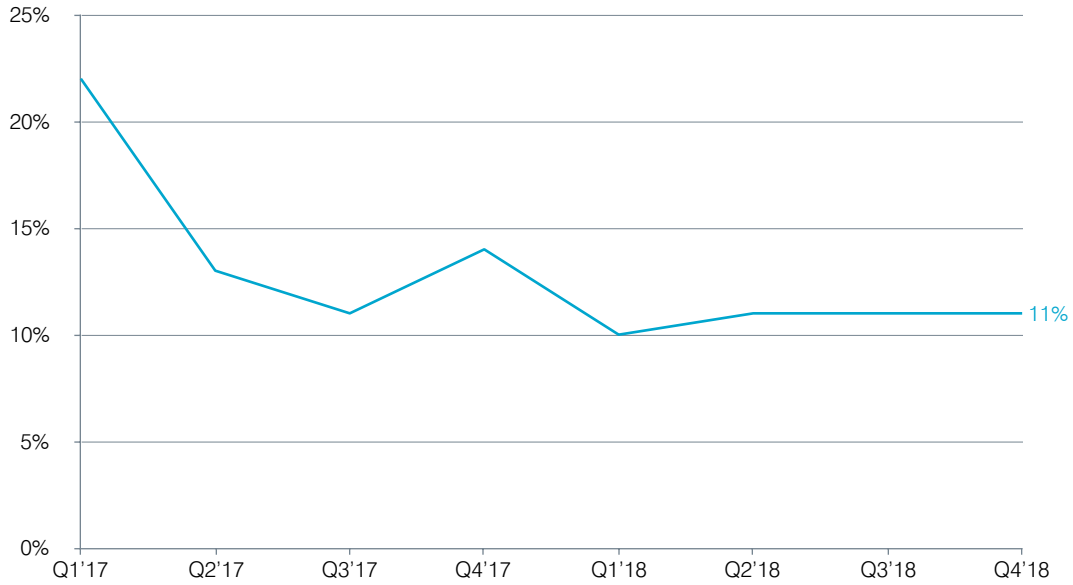
MULTIPLE LIQUIDATION PREFERENCES — The percentage of senior liquidation preferences that were multiple liquidation preferences was as follows:



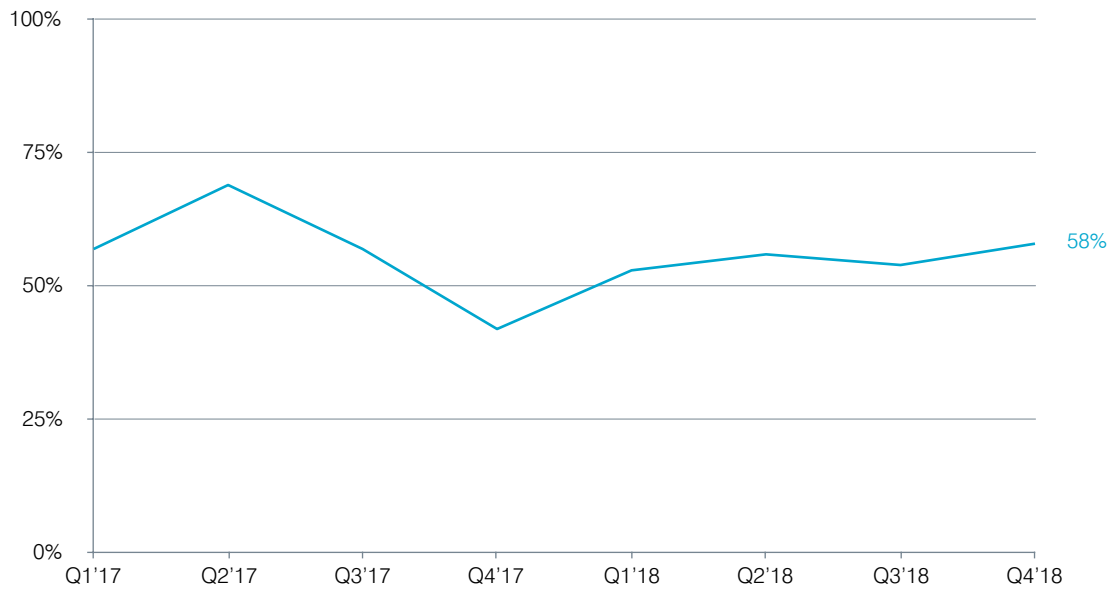
Of the senior liquidation preferences that were a multiple preference, the ranges of the multiples broke down as follows:



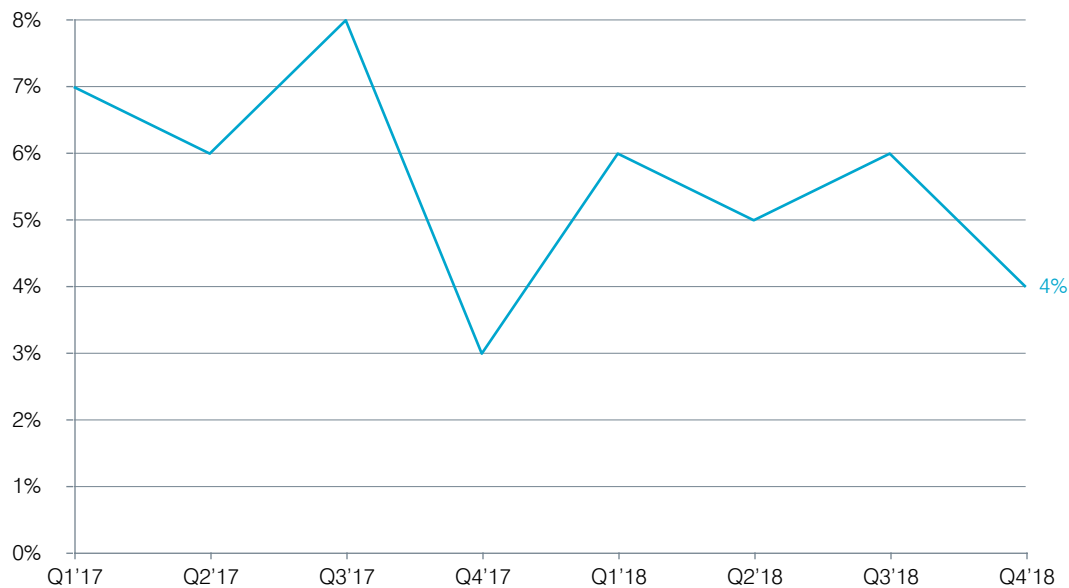
PARTICIPATION IN LIQUIDATION — The percentages of financings that provided for participation were as follows:



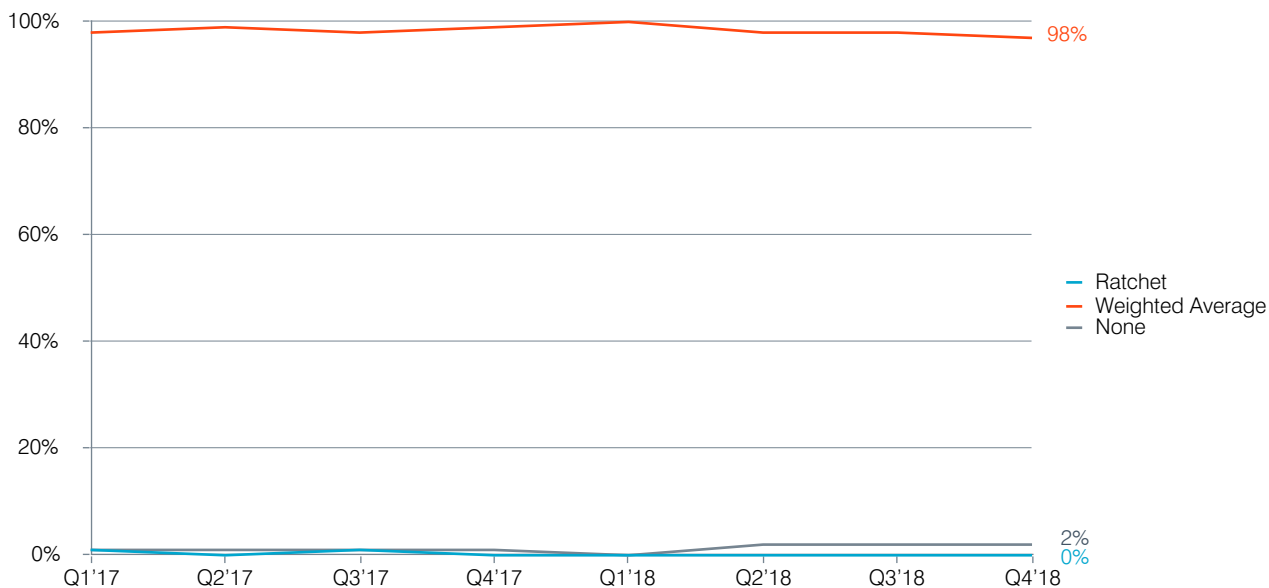
Of the financings that had participation, the percentages that were not capped were as follows:



CUMULATIVE DIVIDENDS – Cumulative dividends were provided for in the following percentages of financings:

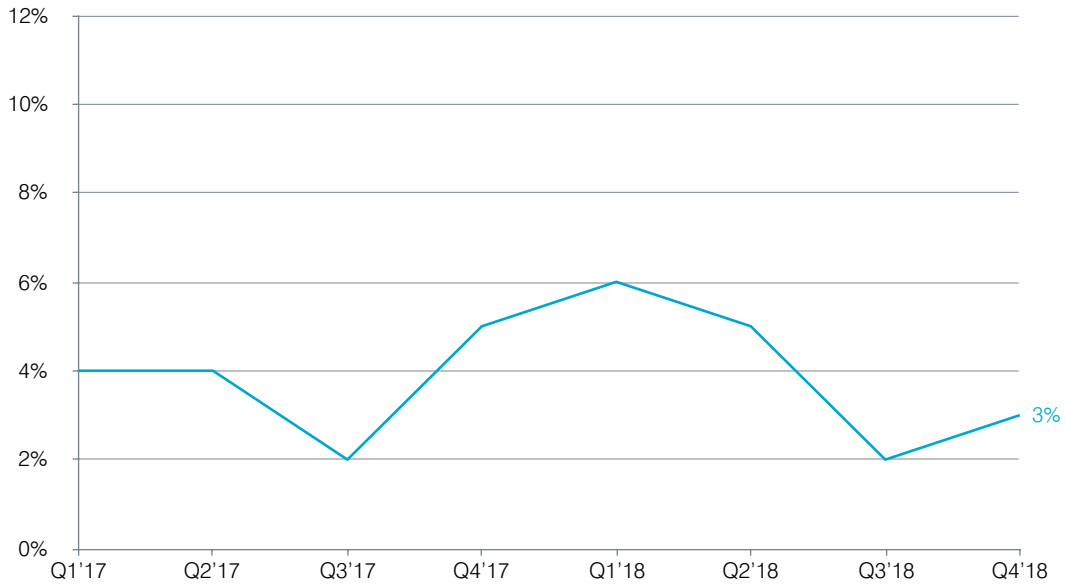


ANTIDILUTION PROVISIONS –The uses of (non-IPO) antidilution provisions in the financings were as follows:

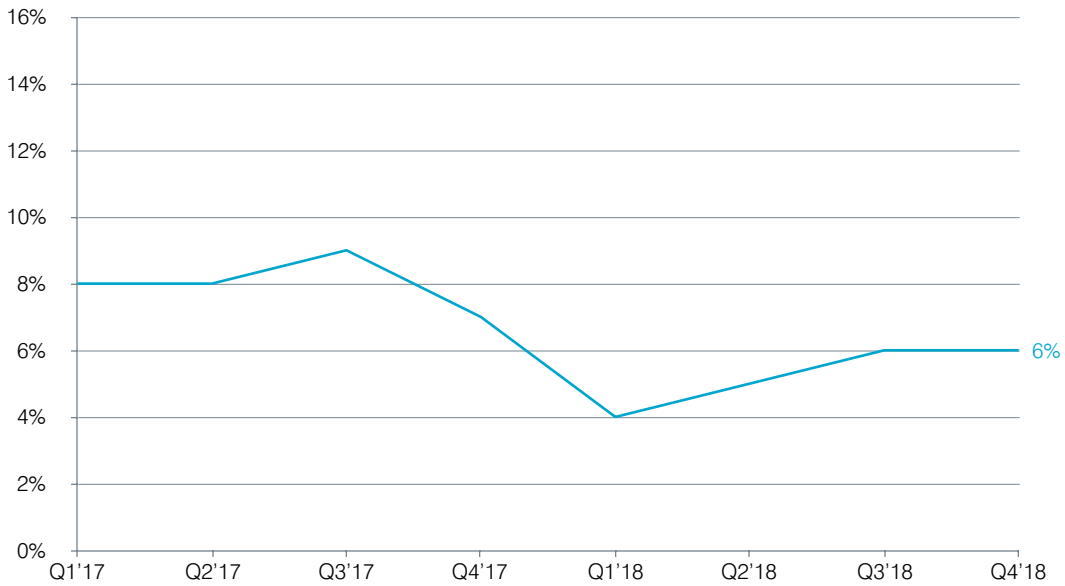


Please note that the chart above only applies to non-IPO anti-dilution provisions. In other words, the chart refers to anti-dilution provisions that protect the investor against a future venture financing at a price below what the investor paid. The chart does not include anti-dilution provisions designed to protect against an IPO at a price below the price paid by the venture investor (e.g., an IPO ratchet), because those provisions are generally only negotiated/included in very late-stage, high-value deals. We believe it would not be useful to provide a percentage of all financings that have IPO anti-dilution provisions, because it will provide a result that is artificially low. An analysis of IPO anti-dilution provisions is included in our Unicorn Survey, which by its nature is focused on late-stage, high-value deals.

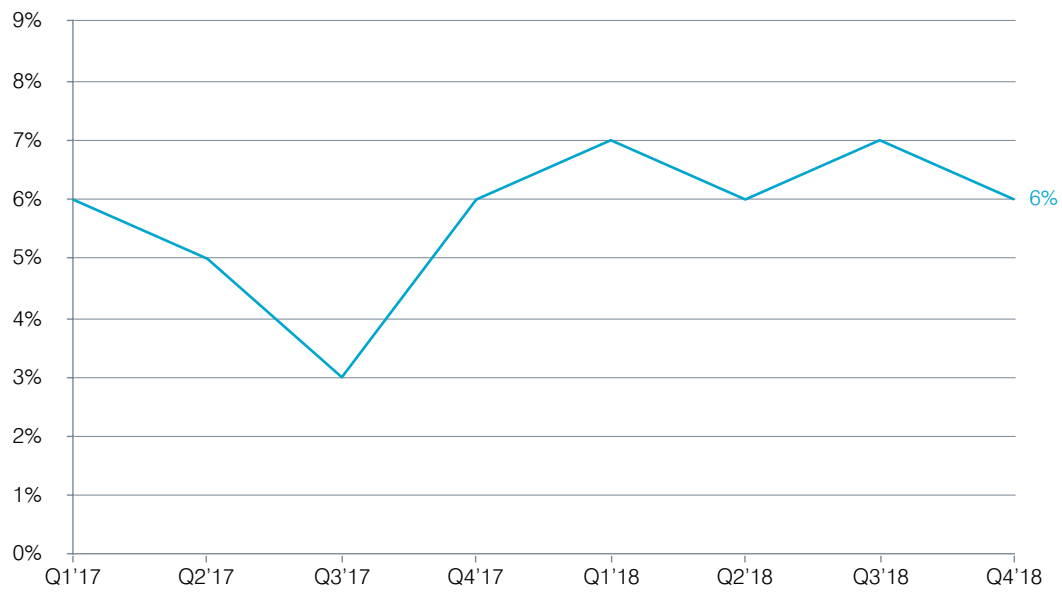
PAY-TO-PLAY PROVISIONS – The percentages of financings having pay-to-play provisions were as follows:



REDEMPTION – The percentages of financings providing for mandatory redemption or redemption at the option of the investor were as follows:



CORPORATE REORGANIZATIONS – The percentages of post-Series A financings involving a corporate reorganization (i.e. reverse splits or conversion of shares into another series or classes of shares) were as follows:



About our Survey

The Fenwick & West Venture Capital Survey has been published quarterly since the first quarter of 2002. Its goal is to provide information to the global entrepreneurial and venture community on the terms of venture financings in Silicon Valley.

The survey is available to all, without charge, by signing up at www.fenwick.com/vcsurvey/sign-up. We are pleased to be a source of information to entrepreneurs, investors, educators, students, journalists and government officials.

Our analysis of Silicon Valley financings is based on independent data collection performed by our lawyers and paralegals, and is not skewed toward or overly representative of financings in which our firm is involved. We believe that this approach, compared to only reporting on deals handled by a specific firm, provides a more statistically valid and larger dataset.

For purposes of determining whether a company is based in “Silicon Valley” we use the area code of the corporate headquarters. The area codes included are 650, 408, 415, 510, 925, 916, 707, 831 and 209.

Note on Methodology

When interpreting the Barometer results please bear in mind that the results reflect the average price increase of companies raising money in a given quarter compared to their prior round of financing, which was on average about 18 months prior. By definition the Barometer does not include companies that do not do follow-on financings (which may be because they went out of business, were acquired or went public). Accordingly we believe that our results are most valuable for identifying trends in the venture environment, as opposed to calculating absolute venture returns. Please also note that our calculations are not “dollar weighted,” i.e. all venture rounds are treated equally, regardless of size.

About the Authors



[Cynthia Clarfield Hess](#) is Co-Chair of Fenwick's Startup and Venture Capital Group. In her 25 plus years as a corporate attorney, Cindy has counseled technology companies on a broad range of corporate transactional matters, from formation matters and venture capital financings to mergers and acquisitions and public offerings, representing both companies and underwriters. She has worked with a wide range of high-technology clients—from established technology stalwarts to emerging companies developing disruptive technologies, which include some of the hottest and most innovative companies in the mobile, SaaS and social media spaces.



[Mark Leahy](#), Co-Chair of Fenwick's Startup and Venture Capital Group and a seasoned advisor to technology companies on a broad range of corporate transactional matters, focuses on providing legal solutions that advance his clients' business objectives. His practice focuses on venture capital financings, corporate governance, mergers and acquisitions, and public offerings. His expertise spans a wide range of technologies, including software, semiconductor, internet/e-commerce, and data management and storage.



[Khang Tran](#) supports the firm's knowledge management efforts by collecting and sharing knowledge and expertise across the firm, which in turn, is leveraged to improve the quality of legal services to the firm's clients.

Contact/Sign Up Information

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