

ACCOUNT-BASED MARKETING

The Complete Guide to Account Engagement for ABM

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INTRODUCTION

The Role of Engagement in Account-Based Marketing

Engagement data enables your marketing and sales teams to identify the accounts that are most likely to close and give them a personalized buying experience



It's tough out there for a B2B marketer.

Your sales reps want better leads. Your CFO wants a more predictable revenue forecast. And you want a better way to measure how your marketing efforts are impacting won deals. Meanwhile, you're burning through your marketing budget to get more leads in the funnel, only for your sales team to ignore 90% of them.

Been there.

But it really doesn't have to be that way. Picture a world where your marketing and sales teams work in lockstep to identify the accounts that are most likely to close, and then give them a personalized buying experience. At its core, that's what account-based marketing, or ABM, is all about. No more time wasted prospecting to the wrong people. No more burning through your budget only to generate unqualified leads that don't convert.



The TEAM Framework for ABM

Despite the hype, account-based marketing really isn't that complicated. The TEAM framework is a simple, execution-focused method for aligning marketing and sales to efficiently drive revenue.



The TEAM Framework for ABM

With the TEAM framework, you can revolutionize your buyer's journey. And it begins with ditching the old, lead-based approach, in which marketing hands off MQLs to sales only after certain trigger events (such as a form fill) occur, and moving beyond leads as a core KPI. It requires adopting a new success metric: **engagement**.

In this e-book, we'll look at how to use engagement data to target the right accounts, personalize their buying experiences, and track the success of your efforts.

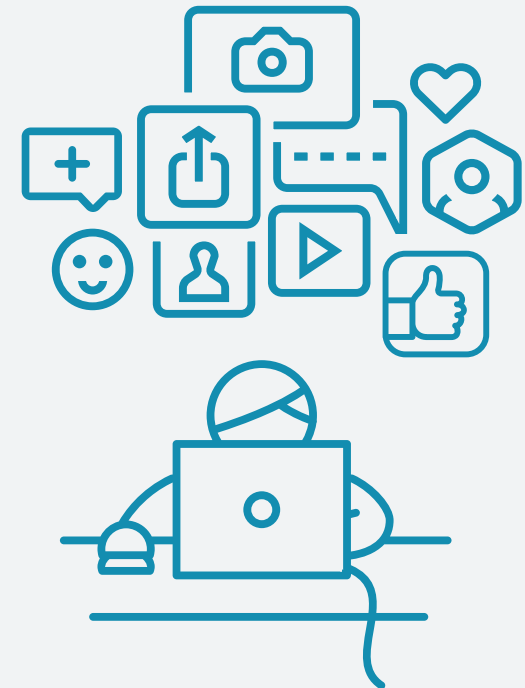
Before we get into the details of how to execute and measure the success of your account-based engagement program, let's first define engagement.



Engagement is any interaction that a someone has with your company, online or offline.

It's simple, but it's powerful. By leveraging engagement data, you can:

- Align your entire revenue team on the same goals.
- Prioritize your hottest target accounts.
- Efficiently allocate limited marketing and sales resources.
- Increase opportunity creation.
- Accelerate pipeline velocity.
- Proactively identify when open opportunities are heating up or cooling off.
- Report on your marketing impact.



According to a survey of B2B researchers commissioned by Google, although 64% of the C-suite have the final authority on purchases, 81% of non-senior staff have a say in purchasing decisions. Keep in mind that the IT, finance, and legal departments are often involved at later stages of the deal as well, especially when you sell to midmarket and enterprise companies. That's why it's so important to get an understanding of the entire buying committee.

If you're only looking at engagement data at the lead or contact level, you could be missing a tremendous opportunity to deepen engagement with other decision-makers. That's why it's crucial to have insight into **account engagement**, which looks at the **behavior from all the stakeholders at each account**.

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Google



Leads vs. Engagement

The Old Way: **Leads**

- **Focused on the individual**
- **Form fill required to track a lead's behavior**
- **Leads were handed off to the sales team while being nurtured separately by marketing**

In the past, a form completion was the simplest and most reliable way to alert your sales team that someone was potentially interested in your solution.

vs.

The New Way: **Engagement**

- **Focused on the entire buying committee**
- **No form fill required to track account-level engagement**
- **Marketing and sales work together to drive engagement at every stage of the customer lifecycle**

With account-based technology, it's now easier than ever to make true engagement data actionable and use it to trigger relevant marketing campaigns, sales touches, and customer outreach.





TARGET

Use Engagement Data to Target the Right Accounts

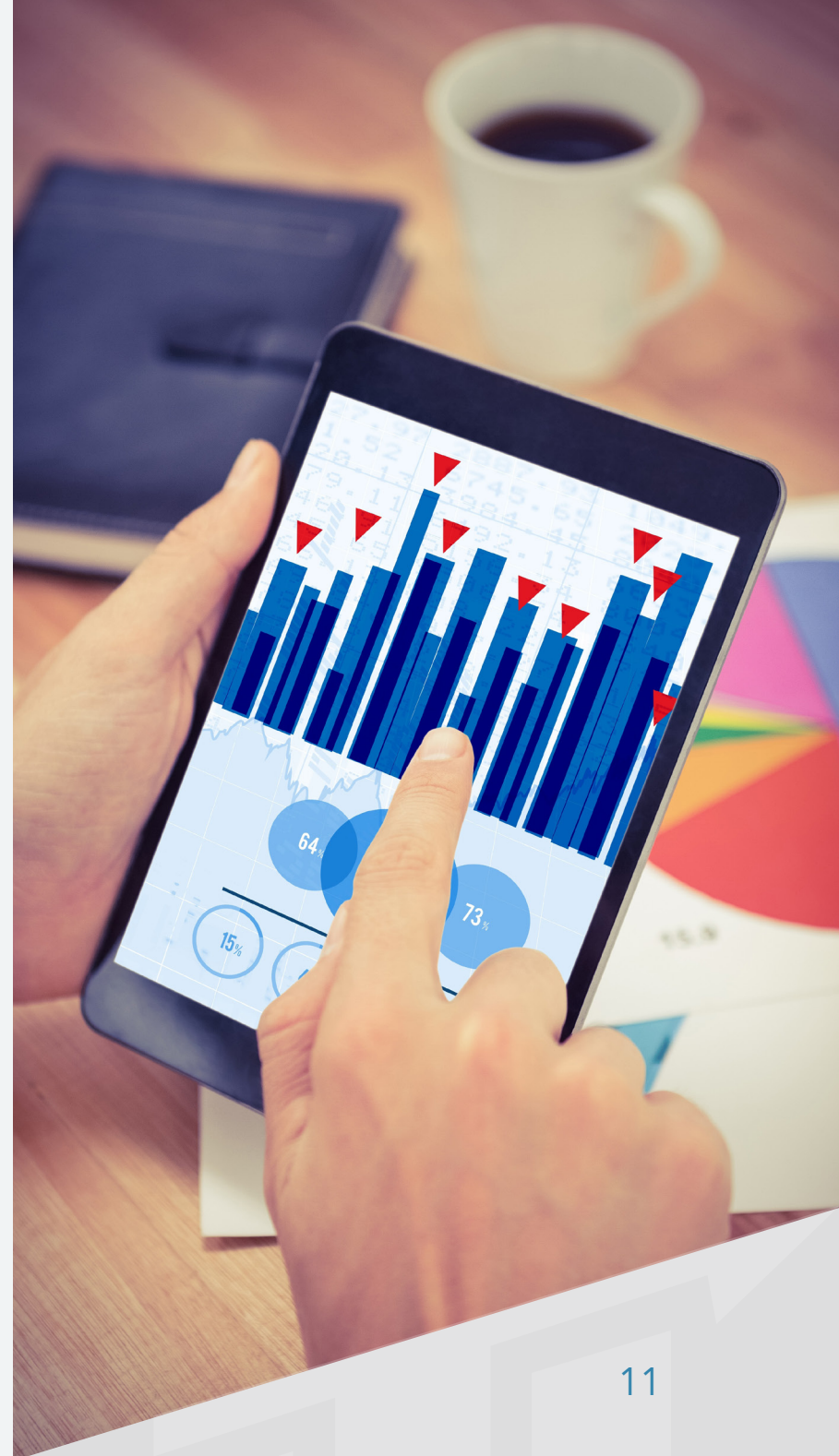
Four key steps to turning engagement from a concept into reality



Use Engagement Data to Target the Right Accounts

One of the most valuable ways to take advantage of engagement data is to use it to **target the right accounts**. There is no clearer signal that an account is interested in your product than when there is a meaningful increase in the number of people from the buying committee engaging with your brand.

So, how do you uncover this information?



There are four key steps to turning engagement from a concept into reality. Make sure you invest in a technology that sets you up for success with all four.



1. Aggregate Engagement at the Account Level

You need to be able to tie individual contacts, leads, and website visitors back to the company they work for. Most legacy technology has been built to track individuals, not accounts. But today, account-based tools make it easy to map leads and web traffic to their respective accounts.

[Learn More](#)



2. Track Known and Unknown Website Visitors

If you want a full, 360-degree view of your target accounts, you can't just track known contacts in your database. It's rarely the senior-level stakeholders who are downloading content and requesting product demos. But since they're central to the decision-making process, you need to track unknown website visitors as well — the visitors who haven't filled out a form and been cooked on your website in the past. You can do this using next-gen reverse IP lookup technology.

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3. Identify Spikes in Engagement

Your marketing and sales teams are drowning in data, and you don't want engagement to become just another data point they don't understand how to take action on. You need to deliver insight into when there are significant increases in engagement from a target account. This is indicated by an account showing a spike in engagement with your brand (versus their own baseline level of engagement) in a given time period.

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4. Define Meaningful Engagement

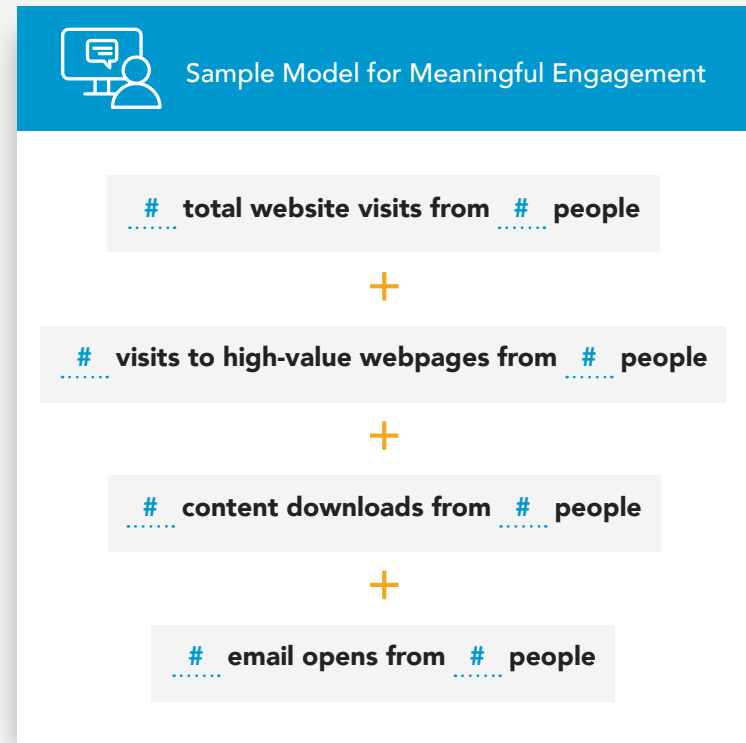
Once you've aggregated this account-level data using your ABM tools, you need to define what meaningful engagement looks like. In other words, what type and volume of engagement qualifies an account as sales-ready?

The criteria for meaningful engagement will be different for every organization, but you can set your own benchmark using the model to the right. We recommend diving into your current open opps' journeys and using their pre-opportunity engagement levels as a baseline.

Keep in mind that this is an example of a more complex model for meaningful engagement. There's nothing wrong with keeping it simple and saying that meaningful engagement for you is 10 website visits from 4 people at an account.

By following these steps, you can understand which of your target accounts and inbound accounts will be most receptive to sales outreach. As a result, you can easily prioritize accounts instead of sifting through leads that will never buy from you.

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ENGAGE & ACTIVATE

Engage Accounts and Activate Sales Outreach

Personalize and prioritize your outreach to rapidly increase the velocity of your buyer's journey



Engage Accounts and Activate Sales Outreach

If you're only triggering marketing campaigns or sales handoffs after single activities like content downloads, your number of leads may continue to increase, but your conversions will likely go down.

That's because your teams don't have enough insight to build relevant campaigns that move accounts through a personalized buying process.

However, if you know that a prospect is the right fit, and you're able to glean insight into what they're consuming on your site, you can personalize and prioritize your outreach to rapidly increase the velocity of your buyer's journey.

Or, instead of waiting around to see if an account has ghosted you (after multiple calls, emails, etc.) you can determine from their activity when they've gone cold.

In other words, the entire marketing and sales process becomes more efficient, resulting in:

- An increase in conversations.
- A decrease in answer time because you're hitting accounts at opportune moments.
- The shared KPI of opportunity creation between marketing and sales.
- Visibility into how fast prospects are moving through the sales pipeline.

Let's take a look at how you can use this engagement data to activate the right types of outreach at the right time.



6 Stages of Account Engagement

As important as tracking and measuring account engagement is, it is meaningless if you aren't taking action on those insights. You should have processes in place to trigger actions based on the level of engagement target accounts are showing.

To effectively take action on engagement insights, you should segment account engagement and have specific programs and campaigns for each segment. We suggest using six stages of engagement.



As a marketer, your focus is to progress accounts through the six stages of engagement. You do this by delivering specific programs and campaigns to each segment of engagement.



Monitoring engagement levels is a great way to know if it's time to deploy a high-touch marketing campaign and coordinate with sales on the outreach.

On the flip side, you can also better identify when it's more appropriate to initiate a nurture program to take prospects from engaging with your branded content to interacting with your product content. The goal is to get more members of the buying committee engaging with your brand, and engagement data enables you to do so.

For instance, if there's no engagement, this may indicate you need to deploy awareness campaigns. The buying committee either doesn't know who you are, or does not yet understand your value proposition. In this stage, your high-level thought leadership content is the best place to establish and build credibility and trust.

Once you start tracking engagement levels, you can figure out your conversion rates for accounts with meaningful engagement, and start forecasting and planning based on those numbers.



Triggering Personalized Sales Outreach

When it comes to personalization, sales teams have traditionally relied upon cursory social media research and the data that comes in from form fills to gain more insights on targeted individuals and accounts. But let's face it: Your sales team needs to dig deeper than, "Hey, we have the same alma mater."

This is where account-level engagement insights allow you to power your personalization. With this data, you'll have access to both known and anonymous contact information. You can see intent and engagement data, as well as which accounts are leaning in on specific product or content pages. It's a powerful way to activate sales to reach these accounts, as they now have the perfect message to use when they reach out.

For instance, one of the first things you might analyze is which accounts have visited your site and didn't fill out a form. Which pages did they visit? What content were they searching? How can you better support them with additional, highly relevant content that may address questions they have?

With this approach, you start with the customer in mind. As a result, you'll have higher-quality accounts in the pipeline and be able to give them better buying experiences.



Operationally Aligning Marketing and Sales

So, you've got all this engagement data. You understand how to use it to prioritize accounts and take action. But what does that look like day-to-day? How do you align marketing and sales teams from an operational standpoint? It boils down to two simple components: meeting frequency and the right data.

Most marketing and sales teams meet on a quarterly basis to assess what worked and what didn't and to discuss upcoming initiatives. However, this meeting frequency leaves a lot of missed opportunities on the table. If you're like most organizations, these quarterly meetings are great for achieving alignment on overarching campaigns, but not for aligning on detailed tactical initiatives. Instead, marketing and sales tend to go off and operate in their own silos until the next quarter.

Instead, hold on to your formal quarterly meetings, while also bookmarking time each week to align with one another. Quick daily sync-ups are also beneficial. This cadence will allow your marketing and sales teams to feel like — and operate as — one cohesive team. It will make a world of difference in how you approach and convert accounts.





MEASURE

Measure and Report on Account Engagement

Prove the success of your overall marketing programs to your leadership team



Measure and Report on Account Engagement

Proving Marketing's Impact with Engagement Data

You've got a ton of engagement data at your fingertips. You can use it to target best-fit accounts, prioritize the ones that are most likely to close, and personalize your outreach. But what about proving the success of your overall marketing programs to your leadership team?

First, be sure all stakeholders — from the marketing and sales team to the executive leadership — are aligned on what success looks like. Establish goals then build benchmarks and KPIs around those.

One thing we did at Terminus when we retooled our ABM program was to redefine what account-based success looked like. It was no longer about leads, but about defining meaningful engagement, understand account-level insights, and moving target accounts through the six stages of engagement.

When you present your ABM strategy to the leadership team, make the case for how internal alignment and engagement has the potential to blow the cap off revenue and growth numbers. In fact, Sirius Decisions found that B2B organizations with collaborative marketing and sales teams achieved 24% faster revenue growth over three years compared to their less-aligned counterparts.

"Data and reporting is the only way we have been able to prove our use case, gain credibility with sales, and promote mindshare at the executive level."



Lindsay Becker,
Supervisor of Corporate Marketing
at LogMeIn



Must-Track Engagement KPIs

Now, on to the metrics that you leadership and sales teams really care about. Which specific engagement metrics should you track?

- **Engagement rate:** The % of target accounts engaged in any capacity
- **Rate of meaningful engagement:** The % of accounts engaged at your agreed-upon meaningful engagement threshold
- **Deanonymization rate:** The % of unknown website visitors from best-fit accounts that you've converted to contacts over a given time period
- **Account penetration rate:** The # of target personas engaged per account
- **Time from first touch to meaningful engagement:** How long it takes to convert accounts from first touch (including anonymous web visits) to a meaningful level of engagement



Building an Account-Based Marketing Scorecard

The marketing and sales relationship has segued from operating in silos to working in lock-step toward the same goals. Using engagement metrics allows collaborating teams to close the right deals, bring in more revenue, and swiftly feed the sales pipeline. Sales is no longer waiting for marketing to turn over leads, which — without the use of engagement metrics — are often dead ends.

Now you can measure success and report to the C-suite as one team using the following scorecard.

	Target	Engage				Activate			Measure		
	Total Accounts	Engaged	% Engaged	MQA	% MQA	Opps Created	Opp Value	% with Opp	Closed Won	Closed Won Value	% Closed Won
North America - Product Line B	100	63	85%	50	79%	24	\$1.8M	48%	10	\$650K	75%
Top 500 Tier 1 Accounts	500	240	60%	169	70%	47	\$1.6M	28%	12	\$480K	60%
Top Accounts East Coast	1,500	428	44%	267	62%	32	\$702K	12%	7	\$210K	50%

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Conclusion

To achieve a well-oiled ABM machine, marketing and sales must continually work together as one team to prioritize and engage targeted “best-fit” accounts. An aligned and engagement-driven ABM program will:

- Shorten the sales cycle/increase pipeline velocity.
- Allow for a more efficient use of the marketing budget.
- Significantly improve the buying experience.
- Gain buy-in and demonstrate ROI to all stakeholders.

Just remember, ABM is not a set-it-and-forget-it strategy and there’s no one-size-fits-all approach that will work across the board. It’s about defining (and possibly rethinking) success metrics, and iterating based on engagement and sales insights data.

Terminus is here to support. For more ABM strategy tips and tools, head over to our [Resources Hub](#).

