AdRoll

# ACCOUNT-BASED MARKETING:

## A Practical Guide

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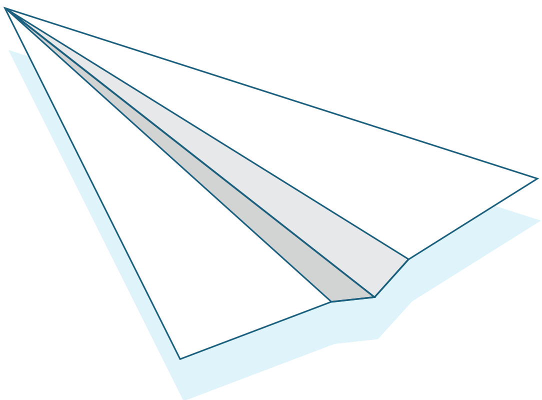

# FOREWORD: ACCOUNT-BASED WINNING

Account-based marketing (ABM) is a combination of people, processes, and technology that, if deployed intelligently, will complement existing marketing programs to close bigger deals more efficiently.

*Account-Based Marketing: A Practical Guide* is your manual to achieving that alignment and running efficient ABM.

We'll provide practical, actionable advice and tips on all aspects of ABM, with a bottom-up approach that asks and answers the question: "How?"

How to set goals and objectives? How to select target accounts and specific roles? How to create a compelling buyer journey and, in turn, align content around it?

We'll then show you, step by step, how to roll out ABM campaigns and, critically, how to structure your CRM and marketing platforms around them. As a performance marketing platform that allows you to collect, analyze, and act on your data at scale, AdRoll is uniquely positioned to demonstrate how you can achieve this.

So, if your company depends on closing long-cycle, multi-stakeholder deals and measurably scaling that activity, then this is the "toolkit" for you.

Let's roll.

**SHANE MURPHY**
VP, Marketing
AdRoll

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AdRoll is a leading performance marketing platform with over 35,000 clients worldwide. Its suite of high-performance tools works across devices, helping businesses attract, convert, and grow their customer base. The company is home to the world's largest opt-in advertiser data co-op, the IntentMap,™ with over 1.2 billion digital profiles. AdRoll's goal is to build the most powerful marketing platform through performance, usability, and openness.

AdRoll is headquartered in San Francisco, with offices in New York, Chicago, Tokyo, London, Dublin, and Sydney. Learn more at www.adroll.com.

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# WHAT IS ACCOUNT-BASED MARKETING, AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

## WHAT IS ACCOUNT-BASED MARKETING?

**Account-based marketing (ABM)** is a structured go-to-market strategy that involves the coordination of the sales and marketing departments to create personalized, targeted marketing campaigns. Instead of covering a broad range of potential customers, ABM focuses resources on a targeted set of accounts that matter most for the business, thereby increasing the likelihood of converting prospects to sales when compared to using lead-focused models alone. As you'll see from our expert quotes, this can help you cut above the noise in the market and land larger deals. In addition, ABM is not just a function of sales and marketing—it works to its full potential when resources across sales, marketing, finance, customer success, and executives are invested in the strategy.

To separate this guide from every other ABM guide out there, we're going beyond just the theory of ABM. Instead, we'll focus on a much more practical approach. This guide is a deep dive into the practice of ABM and teaches you how to set up your ABM campaign from start to finish. As you read, it's important to note that ABM isn't a replacement for your current marketing efforts, but rather an addition to an already successful marketing program. When deployed intelligently, ABM will complement existing programs to close bigger deals more efficiently.

## WHY NOW?

There is no better time for companies to embrace ABM. Digital technologies—such as marketing automation, analytics, and programmatic marketing—have made ABM more scalable.

A study by Demand Metric highlights several key benefits of ABM:

- **Higher ROI**. 97% of practice leaders, marketers, and business development executives said that ABM offered a higher ROI than other marketing methods, with 38% calling it 'much higher.'
- **Greater efficiency**. Time and resources are focused on accounts that have a higher likelihood of generating revenue.
- **Improved alignment**. 70% of ABM users report that their sales and marketing organizations are mostly or completely aligned, compared to 51% of non-ABM users.

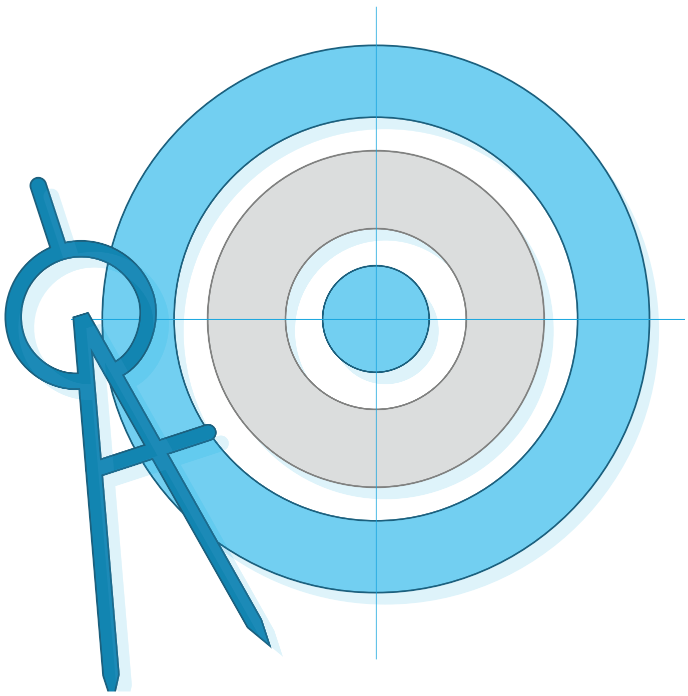
It's not just larger companies that are seeing the benefits of ABM. This study showed that smaller companies—with annual revenue of $24 million or less—are more likely than medium-sized companies to test this approach.

When these figures are combined with the issues of noise, relevance, and increasing complexity, it's clear that ABM provides a streamlined route towards improved sales and marketing success.

## THE STEPS COVERED IN THIS GUIDE

The graphic below shows the steps to ABM that this guide covers. By working through these steps, you will create your own roadmap for implementing ABM in your organization.

- Align sales and marketing
- Set goals and objectives
- Select target accounts
- Create customer journey maps
- Align content to the customer journey
- Structure CRM and marketing automation
- Roll out campaigns
- Grow customer advocacy



## ADVICE FROM THE EXPERTS

'Putting it simply, ABM leads to better customer acquisition, growth, and retention. While not a necessity, ABM offers more "share of wallet" and customer advocacy.'

– *Adam Leslie, Head of UK Sales and Marketing Solutions, Dun & Bradstreet*

'According to Forrester Research, fewer than 1% of leads turn into revenue-generating customers. Traditional lead-based tactics simply don't work anymore because everyone is doing content marketing and employing the same demand gen tactics, and it has all become noise for the buyer.'

– *Kristen Wendel, Director, Marketing Ops, VersionOne*

'If your big deals are 10–20 times bigger than your average deals, you need to concentrate your efforts on elephant hunting. To do that, you need to identify your target accounts and work the entire buying team inside each one. ABM is about selling and marketing the way your big accounts actually buy.'

– *Doug Kessler, Creative Director and Co-Founder, Velocity Partners*

'Using intelligence to build a picture of the decision-making unit (DMU) within an organization, and having real-time information to treat that DMU as a series of individuals as well as a "corporate body" so they can be targeted with tailored communications that drive specific outcomes, is key to successful B2B enterprise business development.'

– *Caroline Hodson, Managing Director, WoolfHodson*

'Account-based revenue efforts can more tightly align objectives, approach, and tactics between sales and marketing, plus work to build consensus among the buyer's internal committee. The result is greater velocity and conversion of your most important deals.'

– *Matt Heinz, President, Heinz Marketing*

'Traditional demand gen methods are good for some potential buyers, but there is almost always a set of people in target companies who will be the best fit for a company's products. To maximize revenue and growth, B2B businesses need to focus coordinated and personalized marketing efforts on that subset of their potential market.'

– *Jason Seeba, VP, Marketing, BloomReach*

'Each company assumes that it can simply send more emails, place more robocalls, and require more cold calls, but this simply results in greater noise and lower response rates. We are so heavily marketed to that only well-targeted messages that speak to the specific needs of high-value prospects can get through.'

– *Michael Levy, Principal, GZ Consulting*

# ALIGN MARKETING, SALES, AND CUSTOMER SUCCESS

ABM is a comprehensive strategy that is only truly effective if all stakeholders work together towards an agreed-upon goal. In fact, one of the major benefits of ABM is creating alignment between sales and marketing. On a broader basis, the alignment has the potential to reach other stakeholders, including customer success and finance teams.

## THE FIVE KEYS TO ALIGNMENT

| | |
|---|---|
| **1. Bring the right parties together** | Aligning marketing and sales is an important attribute of ABM. However, to successfully implement the strategy, other key players such as customer success and solutions consultants, all the way to the top executives in your company, must be involved. |
| **2. Determine the needs of each department** | Using the Stakeholder Checklist on page 10, structure your meetings to gather the necessary information that will help you create a successful ABM process. |
| **3. Standardize definition of terms** | It is important that everyone within the strategic team has a common ground in reference to terminology. Unclear or differing definitions between sales and marketing will cause problems. Use the Top Tips Checklist on page 35. |
| **4. Define goals and objectives** | Defining common goals and objectives ensures that all stakeholders are working towards the same end. It also helps to achieve buy-in by all parties. The company Marketo suggests looking at the sales funnel as one process instead of two to bring sales and marketing together to determine common goals. How to select goals and objectives will be covered in greater detail in the next section. |
| **5. Agree on accountability** | Once goals and objectives have been determined, follow-through and accountability are vital. Successful alignment within ABM depends on everyone doing their part. Regular reviews and reporting can help achieve this. Assign key performance indicators (KPIs) to owners so each department knows what they are responsible for. |

## KEY TERMS AND KPIs

Ideally, you are familiar with terms such as **marketing qualified lead (MQL)**, opportunity stage, and closed won. Those are critical terms to know for demand generation and inbound marketing. In terms of ABM, there are different terms and key performance indicators with which you should familiarize yourself. Here is a list of key terms and KPIs we will be covering throughout the course of this guide. Although this list is not exhaustive, it indicates of the types of KPIs to monitor to judge the performance of your ABM efforts.

### KEY TERMS

**TARGET ACCOUNT**
A discrete list of companies that your business decides are good candidates for your solution. This list is the basis for all additional ABM work.

**IDEAL CUSTOMER PROFILE**
The methodology to describe the makings of an ideal customer. The criteria should pull from firmographics, technographics, and behavioral signals.

**MARKETING QUALIFIED ACCOUNT (MQA)**
Similar to MQLs, but rather than focusing on the individual, the measure is based on whether the account as a whole is engaged and ready to interact with sales.

**ENGAGED ACCOUNT**
Target accounts that are spending time with your company and interacting with your marketing campaigns.

**DECISION-MAKER**
The key prospect at a target account who has the authority to decide whether to use your solution.

**SPHERE OF INFLUENCE**
The prospects who surround your decision-maker and can influence the decision-making process, either in the positive or in the negative.

**ENGAGE TARGET ACCOUNT**
Engagement between your target accounts and company—including interaction with your marketing campaigns.

**ACCOUNT COVERAGE**
The information, contacts, and plans of target accounts.

**ACCOUNT PLAY**
Integrated marketing campaign that weaves online and offline channels to engage your target accounts. Account plays typically involve both marketing and sales teams, as well as multiple players within the organization, to engage the target roles within your accounts.

## KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIs)

### PIPELINE CREATED FROM TARGET ACCOUNTS %

The percentage of your pipeline that came from your target account list. You should monitor this number both by volume of accounts and by dollar figure of the deal. Ideally, the dollar figure coming from your target accounts will be higher.

### TARGET ACCOUNT CLOSES %

The percentage of new customers who came from your target account list.

### TARGET ACCOUNT CLOSES #

The number of converted customers who came from your target account list.

### TARGET ACCOUNT ACTIVATION RATE %

The percentage of accounts on your target account list that are in an active sales cycle.

### MARKETING QUALIFIED ACCOUNTS #

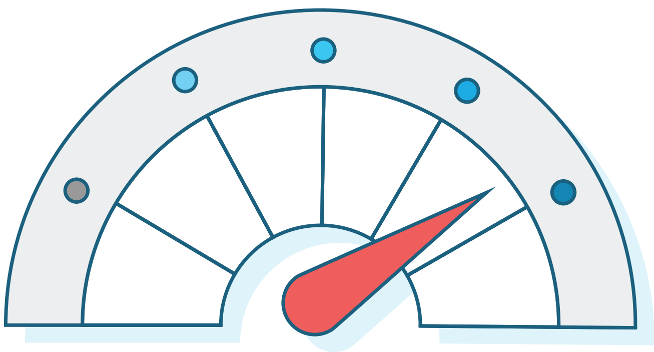
Number of accounts that marketing has activated to be passed to sales.

### MARKETING INFLUENCE ON CLOSED WON %

Percentage of revenue that is touched by a marketing campaign. Ideally, this number is about 50% or more and will inform you of whether your marketing campaigns are actually targeting the accounts that matter for your business.

### PIPELINE VELOCITY

The amount of time it takes target accounts to move through your sales process.



## STAKEHOLDER CHECKLIST

The checklist below covers the information you should seek to gather, document, and get agreement upon in your meetings with various stakeholders—in particular, with sales and customer success teams. Many of these details will be useful even for marketers who won't implement ABM but wish to align more closely with their colleagues.

# ACTION POINTS FOR MEETING

Objectives and details to cover

- ☐ **Identify each revenue line's goal**
  Understand the sales and customer success teams' financial goals for each revenue line. There may be different targets for different products, geographies, and other factors.

- ☐ **Clarify average order values and desired customer lifetime value (LTV)**
  To contribute to overall revenue goals, find out what sales needs to contribute for each new business sale. For customer success, understand the growth required—along with retention and attrition targets—to calculate customer lifetime value.

- ☐ **Confirm desired and existing customers**
  Get a list of target accounts for new and existing accounts from customer success teams. Clarify whether there may be additional buying units or divisions within single companies, and whether these are classed as "new business" or account growth.

- ☐ **Confirm the criteria for other new accounts**
  Create an understanding of the firmographics (e.g., employees, revenues, industries, geographies), technology use (e.g., any tech that if used is an indicator of being a good prospect), current customers, buying signals, and anything else that would highlight an account as being worthy of qualification.

- ☐ **Confirm pipeline conversion metrics**
  Understand the opportunity stages involved and their conversion rates.

- ☐ **Identify typical decision-makers and influencers by job title**
  Figure out "who's who" when it comes to the buying process, and get their job titles.

- ☐ **Detail the buying and upselling process**
  Specify the typical roles each job title plays in the decision-making process.

- ☐ **Identify necessary collateral**
  Determine what sales and customer success teams want and need. Ask for examples of content they have created independently of marketing.

- ☐ **Identify low-value leads**
  Confirm what companies and/or job titles are not worth marketing or selling to. Determine the reasons why, and add criteria to exclude them from your funnel.

- ☐ **List calendars and key dates**
  Find which dates in the sales/marketing year are important (e.g., industry events and reporting periods) or indicate lulls (e.g., public holidays).

- ☐ **Note important workflow considerations**
  List any "must-have" technologies or workflow patterns that need to be factored in (e.g., the use of sales enablement software or marketing automation platforms).

- ☐ **Confirm reporting standards**
  Identify what needs to be reported to whom and by when (e.g., sales forecasts to the finance officer and senior management).

**SUMMARY OF ACTIONS**

1. Gather key members from sales, marketing, customer success, finance, and other departments essential to the ABM process.
2. Determine the needs of each department.
3. Agree on key terms and KPIs, and make sure to understand how these factor into your weighted pipeline and forecasting.
4. Use the Stakeholder Checklist to align all stakeholders in your discussions.
5. Document what you uncover to feed into the rest of your approach.

## ADVICE FROM THE EXPERTS

'The success I've seen with any outbound marketing strategy ultimately comes down to the necessary outbound sales component. Without sales partnering with marketing to drive that interest, there's no B2B ABM strategy that would be successful.'

— *Lindsay Becker, Senior Marketing Programs Manager, LogMeIn*

'ABM will fail unless it is a joint initiative between sales, business development, marketing, and customer success. Everyone should be aware of what you need to know, but don't already know, about your target audience, so that you can leverage every opportunity to fill in the gaps in your collective knowledge.'

— *Bob Apollo, Founder and Value Selling Expert, Inflexion-Point*

'There needs to be one shared source of information about each target account, be it a spreadsheet, CRM system, or one of the many ABM platforms available. And it needs to be everybody's responsibility to ensure that source is kept up to date.'

— *Tom Gatten, CEO, GrowthIntel*

'Working in silos offers little benefit to the customer or their teams. Businesses that embrace the challenge of integrated sales, marketing, and customer success strategies, as ushered in by the rise of social, understand that working together creates revenue growth and will win out.'

— *Andrew Yates, CEO and Founder, Artesian Solutions*

# SET ABM GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

## INTRODUCTION

As mentioned in the previous section, establishing goals and objectives is a fundamental step towards achieving alignment between departments and, ultimately, successful ABM. Measurable, mutually agreed-upon goals and objectives are what will guide the overall ABM strategy for the business. Creating these goals will therefore take careful consideration by key stakeholders.

## THE PIPELINE-CENTRIC METHOD FOR SETTING GOALS

One method for setting goals is to take a **pipeline-centric approach**. Information gathered at meetings with stakeholders will reveal the revenue targets for each line, as well as the various opportunity stages and their conversion rates (as indicated by the weighted pipeline percentage).

From this, you can work back to the various marketing stages. One factor to consider is how many marketing qualified accounts can be generated for sales—and to agree on what it means to be "marketing qualified." At earlier stages, you can measure accounts to determine engagement (i.e., there are decision-makers engaging in behavior), awareness (i.e., there are site visitors), and coverage (i.e., there are verified contact details).

**We recommend you start here to obtain a big-picture view of your ABM objectives.**

Other ways of setting goals are discussed below and by our expert contributors. These can be complementary to the pipeline-centric method.

## THE ACCOUNT-CENTRIC VIEW OF GOALS

For particularly complex sales, each account needs to be viewed as a market of one. As such, you should consider assigning goals to particular target accounts. We suggest tracking the following metrics:

- **Coverage of decision-making units.** Quantify to what extent you have contact details on the key individuals within the buying process.
- **Engagement per decision-maker / job function.** Use value-similar lead scoring (e.g., assigning weight based on factors such as site visits, email opens and click-throughs, and content downloads) to understand how involved each person is in the buying process.
- **Conversion to sales opportunity.** The percentage of target accounts that convert into opportunities for sales as a result of marketing activity.

### GOALS FOR CUSTOMER SUCCESS

For existing accounts, the goals and objectives will likely be centered around retention and growth, such as the percentage of accounts retained and revenue expansion in terms of increased order values. But the process of determining your goals can still be established in a similar way to the above methods used for new business. For example, are you maintaining coverage of those involved in the ongoing use of your products and services, even as people join and leave the company in question? Are the decision-makers for account renewal and growth engaged? Have any new sales opportunities been created from customer marketing? Given the fact that it's easier to retain an existing customer than it is to win a new one, it should be the case that ABM is used to assist in gaining new business.

### OTHER GOALS AND OBJECTIVES TO TRACK

At a tactical level, look to measure and improve the metrics that indicate the overall effectiveness of your marketing. Traffic to key pages, on-site conversion rates, email metrics (e.g., click-through rate, open rate), and other performance metrics are essential in helping you keep an eye on your progress.

## ABM GOAL CALCULATOR: WORKING BACK FROM THE SALES PIPELINE

Taking this approach will allow you to create ABM goals that are aligned to revenue. The fields in italics represent where you'll need to add figures based on your stakeholder conversations.

| STAGE | AVERAGE NUMBER NEEDED TO GET TO NEXT STAGE* | PERCENTAGE LIKELIHOOD | WEIGHTED VALUE | NUMBER NEEDED (i.e., YOUR KPI) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Total revenue* | - | - | *[Insert revenue goal here]* | - |
| Closed won | *N/A* | 100% | [Insert average order value here] | [Revenue goal / average order value] |
| Contract out | *Number of contracts needed* | [Percentage of contracts that will finally convert to sale] | [Contract out percentage x average order value] | [Revenue goal / weighted value of contract out] |
| Negotiation | *Number of negotiations to get to one contract out* | [Percentage as above / number of negotiations to get to one contract out] | [Negotiation percentage x average order value] | [Revenue goal / weighted value of negotiation] |
| Proposal | *Number of proposals needed to get to negotiation stage* | [Percentage as above / number of proposals needed to get to negotiation stage] | [Proposal out percentage x average order value] | [Revenue goal / weighted value of proposal] |
| Value proposition | *Number of accounts receiving value proposition needed to get to proposal stage* | [Percentage as above / number of accounts receiving value proposition needed to get to proposal stage] | [Value proposition percentage x average order value] | [Revenue goal / weighted value of value proposition] |
| Meeting booked | *Number of booked meetings needed to get to value proposition stage* | [Percentage as above / number of booked meetings needed to get to value proposition stage] | [Meeting booked percentage x average order value] | [Revenue goal / weighted value of meeting booked] |
| Prospecting | *Number of accounts to prospect to book one meeting* | [Percentage as above / number of accounts to prospect to book one meeting] | [Prospecting percentage x average order value] | [Revenue goal / weighted value of prospecting] |
| Sales accepted account | *Same as "Prospecting": indicates handover accepted* | As above | As above | As above |
| (MQA)* | *Number of MQAs needed for sales to accept one* | [Percentage as above / number of MQAs needed for sales to accept one] | [MQA percentage x average order value] | [Revenue goal / weighted value of MQA] |
| Engaged accounts** | *Number of engaged accounts needed to generate one MQA* | [Percentage as above/ number of engaged accounts needed to generate MQA] | [Engaged account percentage x average order value] | [Revenue goal / weighted value of engaged account] |
| Aware accounts** | *Number of aware accounts needed to generate an engaged account* | [Percentage as above / number of aware accounts needed for an engaged account] | [Aware account percentage x average order value] | [Revenue goal / weighted value of aware account] |
| Covered accounts** | *Number of covered accounts needed to generate an aware account* | [Percentage as above / number of covered accounts needed for an aware account] | [Covered account percentage x average order value] | [Revenue goal / weighted value of covered account] |

** Whole numbers not required (e.g., if only one in six fails to convert to the next stage, this would be 1.2).*

***While these typically don't go into weighted pipeline calculations for sales forecasting purposes, percentage likelihoods and weighted values are included here as a way for marketing to set goals.*

## WORKED EXAMPLE OF THE ABM GOAL CALCULATOR

In the example below, a company needs to make $1 million in revenue, with an average order value of $50,000. The average numbers have been taken through the stakeholder meetings. This approach works best when there is a large number of target accounts.

At the very top, it's easy to see that sales needs to close 20 deals. This is straightforward. But by working down, you can see that marketing needs to cover just under 4,500 target accounts, assuming it is responsible for driving 100% of the revenue. Note that this is rarely the case, as sales will carry out a portion of their own work in generating opportunities, so the revenue goal can be adapted accordingly.

You can also see that the weighted value of a covered account is $226. This acts as a useful benchmark in understanding what your ceiling budget should be for account acquisition—and acts as a useful data point in making the case for additional budget.

| | STAGE | AVERAGE NUMBER NEEDED TO GET TO NEXT STAGE | PERCENTAGE LIKELIHOOD | WEIGHTED VALUE | NUMBER NEEDED (i.e., YOUR KPI) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Weighted opportunity stage in CRM | Total revenue | - | - | $1,000,000 | - |
| | Closed won | N/A | 100.0% | $50,000 | 20 |
| | Contract out | 1.25 | 80.0% | $40,000 | 25 |
| | Negotiation | 1.6 | 50.0% | $25,000 | 40 |
| | Proposal | 2 | 25.0% | $12,500 | 80 |
| | Value proposition | 2 | 12.5% | $6,250 | 160 |
| | Meeting booked | 1.2 | 10.4% | $5,208 | 192 |
| | Prospecting | 1.2 | 8.7% | $4,340 | 230 |
| Marketing stages: ABM goals | Sales accepted account | 1.2 | 8.7% | $4,340 | 230 |
| | (MQA) | 1.2 | 7.2% | $3,617 | 276 |
| | Engaged accounts | 4 | 1.8% | $904 | 1,106 |
| | Aware accounts | 2 | 0.9% | $452 | 2,212 |
| | Covered accounts | 2 | 0.5% | $226 | 4,424 |

**SUMMARY OF ACTIONS**

1. Use the input from stakeholder discussions to adapt and complete the ABM Goal Calculator.
2. Make sure goals and objectives are measurable through existing systems—if not, configure your CRM and **marketing automation platforms (MAPs)** as such. More detail on CRM and marketing automation starts on page 30 in this guide.
3. Consider adding further goals:
   - Account-specific goals
   - Customer success goals
   - Tactical goals and metrics (e.g., site traffic to key pages, on-site conversion rates, and email metrics)

## ADVICE FROM THE EXPERTS

'We look at the level of engagement in target accounts. As a leading indicator, we measure the success of our marketing programs based on the number of the right people in target accounts who engage, rather than on raw MQLs.'

— *Jason Seeba, VP, Marketing, BloomReach*

'To do ABM, you've got to track coverage (how much of the target account you're reaching into), awareness metrics (whether target accounts are coming to your site or opting in to emails), and engagement metrics (how much time they are spending with you).

There are some internal indicators to watch too: How much time are your sales and marketing folks spending together every week? How often are you swapping out target accounts for new ones? (Too often means you're probably giving up too soon.)'

— *Doug Kessler, Creative Director and Co-Founder, Velocity Partners*

'The quality of your target database is a critical leading indicator of success. Companies should be clear about what contacts they need to develop, what they need to know about these contacts, and the breadth and depth of their coverage of the target audience in their prospecting database.'

— *Bob Apollo, Founder and Value Selling Expert, Inflexion-Point*

'Businesses should track and score every interaction with each named individual at a target account in order to understand the engagement level of each decision-maker. Everybody will respond differently to different messaging and different channels, so you need to build a picture of the best way to engage each individual (or, more practically for businesses targeting thousands of firms, each 'content persona').'

— *Tom Gatten, CEO, GrowthIntel*

'ABM is about quality, not quantity—outcomes, not outputs. The key metrics that matter include: Financial outcomes such as revenue, deal velocity and conversion rates, opportunity, and pipeline metrics; Engagement: account coverage and decision-making unit completeness, as well as engagement scores across different functionsl; and ROI—level of marketing investment clearly tied back to financial outcomes—defining levels of success across different marketing tactics'

— *Caroline Hodson, Managing Director, WoolfHodson*

# SELECT TARGET ACCOUNTS AND ROLES

## INTRODUCTION

Selecting target accounts is an important step in ABM. Because of the effort and resources that go into ABM, it's vital to choose accounts that have the greatest chance to be successful. The following steps can make the process less complicated and ensure that the chosen accounts will fit with your ABM strategy.

## ESTABLISH CRITERIA FOR TARGET ACCOUNTS

In your meetings with sales and customer success teams, you will be able to establish the criteria and attributes of the target accounts. Accounts should fit within a pre-established set of criteria and characteristics—such as revenue, industry, and location—that the team has determined to be the best fit for their ABM strategy. This is also known as an **ideal customer profile (ICP)**.

There are several methods that can decide which accounts to target:

- **Have sales and customer success teams select accounts to target.** At the most basic level of account selection, sales and customer success teams will be able to give you a list of accounts that they would like to sell to, along with the job titles and roles they are interested in.
- **Use scored data from CRM.** Taking it a step further, you should identify the account attributes, listed by sales, that can be used to score other accounts in your CRM. Accounts should fit into an accepted ideal customer profile. The Target Account Checklist on page 18 provides examples of the data you should look for.
- **Purchase advanced data from a third-party provider.** In the initial stages, your CRM might not have the data you would like in order to score or target accounts. In these circumstances, data providers can be highly useful in augmenting or cleaning your existing data to allow for account selection and qualification.
- **Use predictive analytics.** Often, the same data providers also offer predictive capabilities that allow you to determine accounts (many of which you haven't heard of) that could be a good fit. These providers typically use data sourced from around the web—such as social data, news, job postings, and revenue figures—to identify other accounts that you should consider targeting.

## IDENTIFY THE KEY ROLES

Within the buying process, there will be some key roles who have a degree of influence. Make sure to list these out and gather intel about who they are, as well as their key problems and information needs. This list of target roles will be used to feed into ABM goals, such as coverage, and also to provide the foundations for your customer journey mapping.

This list will be important in terms of making sure you create content and campaigns for the right individuals within your target accounts.

## TARGET ACCOUNT CHECKLIST

The points listed below can be used to determine what you will define as a target account and build an ideal customer profile. You can add these as data fields within your CRM. Not all of these will be relevant, but by working through these factors, you can start to build your list of target accounts.

# ACCOUNT TARGETING CRITERIA

- ☐ **Size by revenue**
  Revenue is a proxy for budgets. As a data point, it can help identify target accounts and screen out those which are unlikely to be able to afford your solution.
- ☐ **Size by employee count**
  Employee count can matter both ways—larger companies provide more potential for those selling on a volume basis but may complicate buying cycles.
- ☐ **Geography or location**
  Depending on your company, you might only sell in a particular region or territory.
- ☐ **Use of technology**
  Technology usage can indicate the maturity level of a given account or whether they are using a rival solution.
- ☐ **Industry**
  Particular industries may have stronger needs for your product or service.
- ☐ **Current customers**
  Current customers can indicate a need for your product or service.
- ☐ **Competitors they might be using**
  Search for case studies and customer lists online to stay up to date on your competitors.
- ☐ **Employee types and job roles**
  Some products and services are only relevant to companies employing particular types of people.
- ☐ **Ownership**
  Selling at a group level can be highly fruitful or open the door for future account expansion.
- ☐ **Timely news**
  Keywords within news or press releases can indicate an event that makes this company a better fit as a target account and help with the personalization of your communications.
- ☐ **Social media use**
  Overall usage plus keywords used can indicate target accounts.

Company data vendors can be particularly helpful in providing lists with pre-populated contact details for you to use, or in enriching your existing data. Many also offer advanced capabilities that can help you discover target accounts, which you may not have been aware of before.

**There are several company data vendors to explore:**

- Artesian Solutions
- BuiltWith® (for segmentation by technology use)
- Bureau van Dijk
- Data.com
- DiscoverOrg
- Dun & Bradstreet
- DueDil
- GrowthIntel
- InsideView
- Lead Forensics
- Owler
- RainKing
- ZoomInfo

## IDEAL CUSTOMER PROFILE EXAMPLE

Below is an example of an ideal customer profile for a company targeting smaller e-commerce companies. Note that the exact values within your systems are likely to be more complex (e.g., you may have to list all countries separately when it comes to geography, or by the number of different industries and industrial classifications), and you may need to make use of exclusionary criteria too.

| CUSTOMER PROFILE TYPE | SMALL TO MID-SIZE E-COMMERCE RETAILERS |
| --- | --- |
| Revenue | $1 million to $20 million |
| Employee count | 10–150 |
| Geography or location | North America or Western Europe |
| Technology or competitors | Shopify or Magento<br>DoubleClick<br>Google Analytics<br>Optimizely |
| Industry | Retail<br>Classifications: (NAICS: 454; SIC: 47.8) |
| Key roles | CEO<br>COO<br>CMO<br>Chief Revenue Officer<br>VP, Digital Marketing<br>VP, E-commerce<br>VP, Engineering |

## SUMMARY OF ACTIONS

1. Work through the four steps in selecting target accounts, using the Target Account Checklist on page 18:
   - Have sales and customer success select accounts to target.
   - Use scored data from your CRM.
   - Purchase advanced data from a third-party provider.
   - Make use of a predictive analytics solution.
2. Identify the key roles.
3. Create ideal customer profiles for a consistent reference point.

**To learn how to start using ABM with AdRoll today, check out the AdRoll Guide to Account-Based Marketing here.**

## ADVICE FROM THE EXPERTS

'Selecting target accounts is a science and requires taking into account tens of thousands of pieces of data to find the accounts that are a fit. Marketers today are very savvy and data-driven, but none of us can process 20,000 pieces of data, and certainly not for thousands of accounts.'

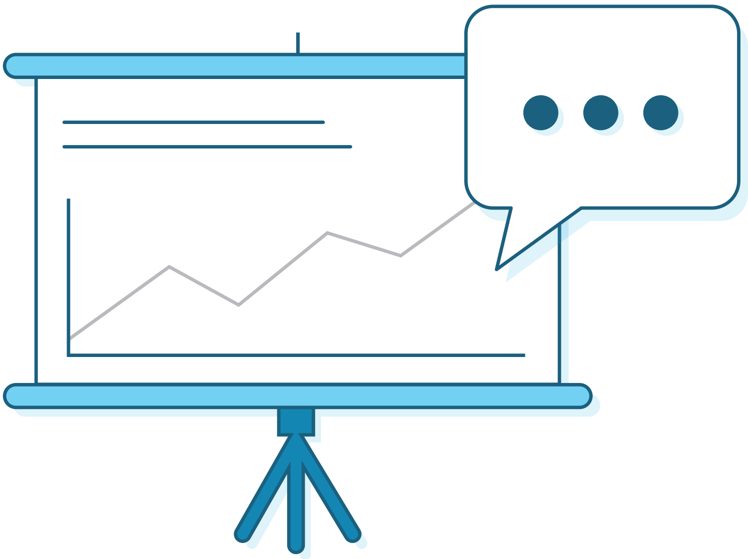
— *Kristen Wendel, Director, Marketing Ops, VersionOne*

'Look for enrichment vendors that provide industry-specific variables. For example, tech firms want to know vendors and products in use, job skills, job responsibilities, tech spend, etc. If you have employed social monitoring or social selling, then company and contact social links are also important.'

— *Michael Levy, Principal, GZ Consulting*

'While ABM has been around awhile now, it has only been allowed to flourish due to new technologies in the market that enable it. These new solutions include tools for market and customer segmentation, identification of 'look-alike prospects,' campaign tools, and B2B analytics tools, but even more advanced is technology to search and transform unstructured web and news data into clear, account-based alerts for the marketer and salesperson.'

— *Adam Leslie, Head of UK Sales and Marketing Solutions, Dun & Bradstreet*



# CREATE CUSTOMER JOURNEY MAPS

## INTRODUCTION

Once the lists of target accounts have been finalized, creating a customer journey map is the next step. A customer journey map is a detailed framework that describes each step a customer takes through the purchasing process. Sales and marketing programs benefit greatly from carefully thought-out customer journey maps, which effectively inform channel planning and content.

## MAKE A CUSTOMER JOURNEY MAP FOR EACH ROLE

Understanding your audience is a key factor in being able to create customized content for an account. Each target account will have different types of audiences. According to CEB, "the average B2B decision-making group includes 5.4 buyers" marketing teams need to work with sales to get a true understanding of the stakeholders involved in each account. That way, messaging and content can be tailored accurately.

Account profiling will help focus efforts on the proper divisions and decision-makers within the company. Identifying these key individuals is an important part of creating an account profile. Getting to know their needs through research, and tapping the knowledge of the sales force, will focus content and other sales and marketing efforts. Further, it is advisable to look at how these individuals access information.

## STEPS TO CREATING A CUSTOMER JOURNEY MAP

Once the account profile is completed, the next step is defining the stages of the journey. A customer journey map should be created from the customer's perspective. Each account's journey map will look different, depending on their history with your company and where they are within the sales funnel. The next page provides a "canvas" framework to enable you to plot out the details needed at the pre-sales stages (i.e., awareness and consideration), purchasing stage, and post-sale stages (i.e., onboarding and evangelizing):

- **Print the canvas out in large format.** To assist in getting ideas from the wider team, put a large version of the canvas on a wall and have Post-its or cards available to fill in the details. Aim for quantity at the first stage.
- **Build out a "human" picture with the personal details.** To give your customer journey maps a personal touch, add descriptions of who each person will be—their name, job title, and what makes them tick (e.g., the aspects of their job they enjoy the most). Use a photo if you have one.
- **Detail their workflow.** What activities do they do on a day-to-day basis? What pains or inconveniences do they encounter (e.g., spending too much time on reporting or stuck in meetings)? What gains would they like to achieve? And who do they influence in the target account?
- **Work through each stage of the buying process.** Move from awareness to evangelizing. Fill out the map as you go. What questions will they have? What actions do they need to take? What will your company need to do? What key messages and proof points will be delivered? What publications, influencers, and information do they rely on? And what formats and content types do they use for each stage? The example uses an e-commerce CEO buying conversion rate software.

## CUSTOMER JOURNEY MAPPING CANVAS

Key account type: Midsize e-commerce retailer
Date created: Month/Year

| PERSONA | AWARENESS | CONSIDERATION | PURCHASE | ONBOARDING | EVANGELIZING |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Name and job title description* | | | | | |
| **WORKFLOW** | | | | | |
| *Activities* | *Key buyer questions/concerns* | | | | |
| *Pains* | *Actions you need the customer to take* | | | | |
| *Desired gains* | *Actions the customer needs you to take* | | | | |
| *Influences* | *Key messages and proof points to deliver* | | | | |
| | *Influencers, publications, and information sources the customer uses* | | | | |
| | *Formats and content types* | | | | |

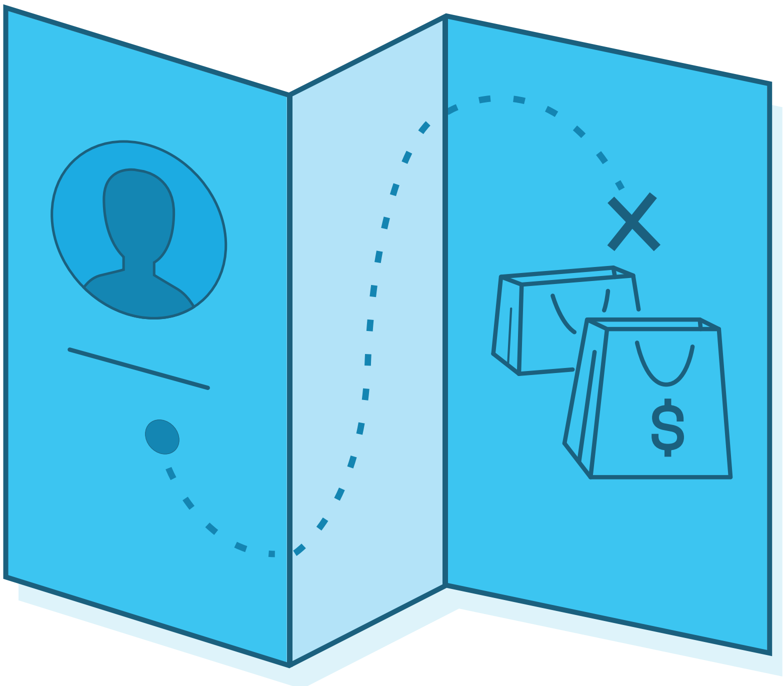
## CUSTOMER JOURNEY MAPPING CANVAS

Key account type: Midsize e-commerce retailer
Date created: Month/Year

| PERSONA | AWARENESS | CONSIDERATION | PURCHASE | ONBOARDING | EVANGELIZING |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Edward<br>CEO<br>Leads the company | What's the benchmark for conversion? | What tech can increase conversion rate? | What makes the supplier better then the rest? | How do I put the conversion rate on our dashboard? | What can I send to my friend to recommend the product? |
| **WORKFLOW** | Visit the site and download benchmark report | Download a buyer's guide | Review the case studies | Connect systems to dashboard | Refer a customer |
| • Reviews progress<br>• Sets strategy<br>• Meets investors | Provide useful content on the site | Proactively contact and offer to answer questions | Offer clear value statements and differentiators | Provide help center and / or support | Provide useful content for referrals |
| • Too much email<br>• Poor visibility on KPIs | Most companies lag in conversion | Our product improves conversion | There is a clear ROI with minimal risk | Getting started is easier | We offer incentives for referrals |
| • Monitor progress<br>• Increase revenue<br>• Inspire employees | Forbes, LinkedIn, Econsultancy | G2 Crowd, Forrester Wave, peer group (his CEO friends) | VP, Finance and VP, Engineering | Online help desk | Twitter, LinkedIn |
| • Product team<br>• VP, Marketing | Blogs, business books, newsletters | Analyst reports | ROI calculators | Video, how-to guides | Social posts, case studies |

**SUMMARY OF ACTIONS**

1. Identify the key roles at your target accounts to decide what customer journey maps to create.
2. Print out a large version of the canvas so your team can fill it in collaboratively. Have Post-its or cards ready, and aim for quantity over quality at the first stage.
3. Build a human picture of the person. Remember, this is a creative exercise—feel free to use humor at the first stage.
4. Detail their workflow—their day-to-day activities, pains, desired gains, and who they influence within the company.
5. Work through each stage of the buying process and fill out the map.



# ALIGN CONTENT TO CUSTOMER JOURNEYS

## INTRODUCTION

Timing is everything when it comes to supplying content in any marketing effort—specifically with ABM. Because ABM focuses on a targeted set of accounts with a concentrated effort by several departments, reaching an account at the correct time is vital.

## USE CUSTOMER JOURNEY MAP AS A GUIDE

While customers value customized content when making buying decisions, this type of content can go to waste if it's not delivered at the right time in the customer journey. Taking the time to determine where the target account is in the customer journey ensures that your well-constructed content hits its target at just the right time.

## PRIORITIZE YOUR CONTENT CREATION

Content should be planned and assigned with the customer journey stages, established ABM strategy goals and objectives, and target audiences in mind. Before creating new content, it's best to identify whether content already exists that can be repurposed and personalized for a customer's journey.

Careful planning should be in place to prevent the same piece of content being used more than once with the same account. A calendar is essential, as it will be very difficult (if not impossible) to create all the content at once for each role and for every buying stage.

## PLAN ABM CONTENT

Many tools exist to help with planning and creating a content calendar—from project management tools, such as Asana and Trello, to dedicated solutions built just for this purpose.

There are several options that can be used as header fields for your calendar planning:

- Buyer role and / or target account
- Content theme
- Call to action
- Content title
- Format
- Delivery date
- Person responsible
- Other assets needed
- Other promotional activity
- Tracking to use (e.g., Google Analytics UTM parameters)

## EXAMPLE OF CONTENT PLANNING

The table below shows how you can scope out the content you will create. Again, the example used is similar to that of the customer journey map (i.e., an e-commerce retailer who could benefit from CRO software).

| BUYER ROLE | CEO | CMO | MARKETING MANAGER |
|---|---|---|---|
| Stage | Awareness | Consideration | Onboarding |
| Content theme | Conversion rate benchmarks | Choosing CRO software | How-to Guide on software |
| Call to action | Download the report and measure your performance | Download the Buyer's Guide | Install on site and use training videos |
| Content title(s) | CRO Benchmark Report | CRO Buyer's Guide | The Beginner's Guide to Using Our Software |
| Format | PDF | PDF | Online help desk and videos |
| Delivery date | Sep-17 | Oct-17 | Nov-17 |
| Person responsible | Marketing agency | Analyst house | Product marketing manager |
| Assets needed | Data from VP, Engineering | Finalized report with license for lead generation | Recorded videos with Chief Product Officer |
| Supporting activity | Blogs, paid social posts, feature in the newsletter. Advertising at target companies based on domains | Webinars, explanatory video, product demos | Onboarding email series |
| Tracking | Downloads, MQLs, Source/ Medium/Campaign tracking in Google Analytics | Opportunities (meetings booked) | Monthly active days |

## SUMMARY OF ACTIONS

1. Collate your customer journey maps to get an understanding of the content you should create.
2. Prioritize the content by customer stage and account opportunity, and look for holes in your existing content.
3. Work through the field headings to plan what content you will create.
4. Put the details into your project management systems—Trello, Asana, or even just a shared marketing spreadsheet.

# ROLL OUT ACCOUNT-BASED CAMPAIGNS

## INTRODUCTION

As with every step in an ABM strategy, rolling out a campaign takes planning and collaboration between marketing, sales, and customer success. A successful campaign will encompass a combination of both outbound and inbound methods, across multiple channels, with content targeted toward different stakeholders throughout the customer journey.

Not every individual within your target account will engage in the same channels of information. While some will happily visit a website, watch a video, or participate in social media, others consume their information in more conventional ways—such as through direct mail or face-to-face interaction. It takes a systematic approach to deliver appropriate content to multiple channels and engage the right people.

One approach is to utilize the inverted lead funnel. By focusing on the flow from the top of the funnel, content can be presented to the appropriate person at the right time, channel, and stage of the funnel. This will create a better understanding of when sales can take the lead in engaging with the targeted stakeholder.

## EMPLOY TOOLS TO STAY ON TARGET

Reaching your target account and supplying relevant content—at just the right time in the customer journey—can be tricky. This is especially true when it comes to personalizing on digital channels (e.g., your company website, where visitor information is often anonymous). Before rolling out any campaign, it is advisable that companies have the right technological tools at their disposal.

Marketing automation, real-time personalization, and predictive scoring alleviate some of the difficulties that occur during campaign planning and execution. **Real-time personalization** can help you discover where accounts are coming from. It identifies which company or industry a visitor is from and allows you to present them with personalized industry or account-related content.

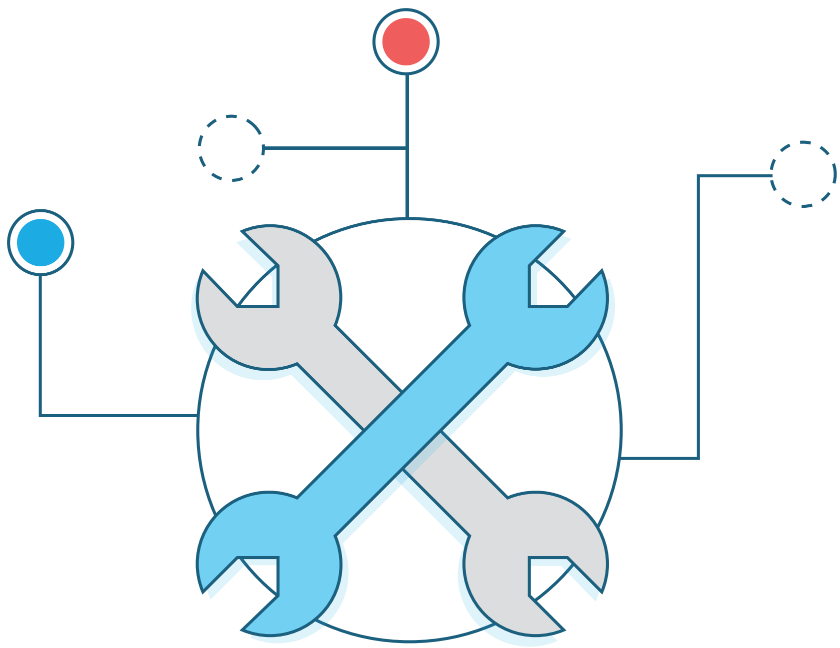
Predictive scoring tools predict what an account will do next. With this kind of knowledge, sales and marketing representatives can provide content that is relevant and timed to coincide with its place in the cycle. Meanwhile, **marketing automation** tools help gauge whether a campaign is proceeding as expected and allow you to map each of your customers' journeys.

**To learn how to start using ABM with AdRoll today, check out the AdRoll Guide to Account-Based Marketing here.**

## EXAMPLES OF CAMPAIGNS TO RUN

When first rolling out ABM campaigns, starting small can result in quick wins that will help guide larger campaigns in the future. You can use the examples below to start running ABM today:

- **Launch prospecting ad campaigns.** Upload your own CRM data to an advertising platform. From there, specify additional domains you wish to target in order to increase awareness and generate leads. Use your content calendar to better understand when you should run your prospecting campaigns.
- **Host invite-only events (e.g., CMO dinners).** Run local campaigns to get your brand in front of key contacts at your target accounts and increase their chances of attending these events in person.
- **Retarget lapsed contacts at target accounts.** Use retargeting to reactivate individuals who have stopped visiting your site. This will help bring them back into your sales funnel.
- **Cross-sell to current high-value accounts.** Target current contacts using only a portion of your product suite, or a lower tier or functionality, with ads to prove the value of using more products or higher-end offerings.
- **Upsell to new departments at your current accounts.** Find new contacts in different departments using a combination of firmographic and domain targeting that can help nurture a higher LTV for your current key accounts.



# ABM CAMPAIGN CHECKLIST

Use the checklist below to ensure your campaign is off to the right start.

- ☐ **What accounts will be targeted?**
  - Named accounts
  - Target web domains
  - IP addresses
  - Geography
  - 'Look-alike' criteria
- ☐ **What message will be delivered?**
  - Creative formats and assets
  - Channels to use
  - Landing pages
  - Collateral or content to be viewed, or downloaded on page, or distributed by direct mail
  - Personalization / dynamic elements to be used
- ☐ **When will the message be delivered?**
  - Timing
  - Over what period
- ☐ **How will success vs. investment be measured?**
  - Budget
  - Desired outcome
  - Key metrics (e.g., number of marketing qualified accounts, marketing assist on sales percentage, target activation rate percentage, number of closed target accounts)
- ☐ **What is the follow-up?**
  - Automated emails
  - Handover to sales
- ☐ **Are there emails that can be used?**
  - Onboard emails onto an advertising platform
- ☐ **Are there any other (re)targeting options?**
- ☐ **Have sales and customer success been consulted?**
- ☐ **Check that the campaign will not interfere with existing planned activities or outreach.**

**SUMMARY OF ACTIONS**

1. Review your content calendar as part of your plan to roll out account-based campaigns.
2. Identify the quick wins as part of a test-and-learn approach.
3. Use the ABM Campaign Checklist on page 28 to make sure you've covered all the bases in your campaign.
4. Onboard your CRM data to make the best use of advertising platforms on the market.

## ADVICE FROM THE EXPERTS

'A common mistake that I see companies making with display is just having one campaign running for all accounts, and they set it and forget it. If your ads aren't cool, personalized, and relevant to the audience, your display program won't be successful.'

– *Kristen Wendel, Director, Marketing Ops, VersionOne*

'Email is clearly critical—and it works best if it's highly targeted and synchronized with your display and web personalization.'

– *Doug Kessler, Creative Director and Co-Founder, Velocity Partners*

'You've got to intrigue your target audience and give them a reason to want to engage with you. Issue-based materials are far more effective as offers than product- or company-centric pieces.'

– *Bob Apollo, Founder and Value Selling Expert, Inflexion-Point*

'If a prospect knows they are one of the 20 people you've identified as the best fit for your product (instead of spamming the universe), they are much more likely to take notice. That also means your SDRs need to take the time to understand prospects, not only at the account level but on a personal level as well.'

– *Jason Seeba, VP, Marketing, BloomReach*

# STRUCTURE YOUR CRM AND MARKETING AUTOMATION SYSTEMS

## INTRODUCTION

While accounts are standard entities within CRM systems, this doesn't mean they are ready to support account-based marketing out of the box—particularly given that most MAPs tend to focus on leads and contacts.

As such, you will need to ensure that both your CRM and MAP (or, if you don't have marketing automation, your email service provider) contain the right fields to enable you to segment and target your efforts accordingly.

In addition, you will need to make sure the right rules and flows are in place so that there are smooth handovers between marketing, sales, and customer success.

Your CRM can also be used for reporting functionality based on the data contained within it. But you may also find you need an additional third-party tool to track the metrics that you need to measure your ABM success.

## ESTABLISH LEADS AND CONTACTS TO ACCOUNT ASSIGNMENT RULES

You can assign leads and contacts to accounts by tracking their email domain addresses. You can do this by creating rules within your CRM based on email domain. (Pro tip: consider using validation on your online contact information form to accept only company email addresses and reject addresses using free domains such as gmail.com or yahoo.com.) However, having the respondent type a company name in the form could create inconsistencies with data if there are mistakes. It's important to double-check the form for any errors or inaccuracies.

## CONSIDER LEAD SCORING AS PART OF AN ACCOUNT QUALIFICATION PROCESS

If you are using MQAs as a metric or method, lead scoring can be used as part of the process. An example of this might be engagement with your website, such as content downloads or visits to specific URLs (high-value pricing pages or pages that may indicate a high buying signal). Other examples are email opens and click-throughs, event attendance or registration, and webinar views.

## CREATE FIELDS AND VALUES TO INDICATE HANDOVER STATUS AND COMPLIANCE TO SERVICE-LEVEL AGREEMENTS (SLAs)

All stakeholders should meet and agree on which point accounts are to be passed over from marketing to sales, and then from sales to customer success. This process needs to be reflected in the CRM for accurate reporting, effective automation, and successful ABM.

**To learn how to start using ABM with AdRoll today, check out the AdRoll Guide to Account-Based Marketing here.**

## KEY DATA FIELDS CHECKLISTS

You should consider including the following fields within your CRM and/or marketing automation platforms in order to drive your ABM efforts and measure success.

The lists below are not exhaustive, nor will every field be critical to ABM success. Some of the more obvious ones (e.g., first name, last name, and telephone number) have been omitted.

# FIELDS TO USE AT THE LEAD/CONTACT LEVEL

- ☐ **Job title**
  Target content to specific roles (as planned with your customer journey map).
- ☐ **Lead score**
  Target leads close to qualification to maximize MQLs.This is also a vital component within marketing automation systems.
- ☐ **Lead source**
  Identify which campaigns are most effective.
- ☐ **Account**
  Connect individuals to accounts as part of your ABM strategy.
- ☐ **Last activity date/time**
  Assess each prospect's "freshness." This Can be useful when combined with retargeting to reactivate lapsed prospects.
- ☐ **Social media profiles**
  Feed social data into CRM and allow for targeting on social platforms.

# FIELDS TO USE AT THE ACCOUNT LEVEL

- ☐ **Accepted/rejected as sales accepted account**
  Identify which ABM efforts have been useful and which haven't been. Rejected accounts can be analyzed to decide what exclusionary criteria can be applied in the future.
- ☐ **Account owner**
  Allow marketing to deliver automated messages that are personalized by account owners (useful when re-engaging accounts).
- ☐ **Account coverage score**
  Segment accounts with poor coverage from those that are well covered for specific ABM campaigns.
- ☐ **Firmographic criteria**
  - **Company size (revenue)**
  - **Company size (employee count)**
  - **Industry and/or industry classification (e.g., SIC, NAICS)**

  Target creative and campaigns specific to various company types, leading to more personalized communications with greater impact.
- ☐ **Technographic criteria**
  - **On-site technology**

  Target competitors' clients or use technology to indicate maturity (i.e., readiness or need for your solution).
- ☐ **Social media handles**
  Feed social data into CRM and allow for targeting on social platforms.

**SUMMARY OF ACTIONS**

1. Establish lead and contact to account assignment rules.
2. Consider lead scoring as an element of your account qualification process.
3. Create fields and values to indicate handover status and compliance to service-level agreements (SLAs)

## ADVICE FROM THE EXPERTS

'Instead of delivering a one-size-fits-all content marketing campaign to every user on the mailing list, marketers can now use ABM to send personalized marketing communications to the 20% of customers who create 80% of revenue.'

— *Andrew Yates, CEO, Artesian Solutions*

'Technology is maturing with us marketers, and I believe there is tremendous opportunity that comes with it. AdRoll is a great example here, where I've seen great value from using the technology and services before there was any mention of a defined ABM component implemented into the platform.'

— *Lindsay Becker, Senior Marketing Programs Manager, LogMeIn*

'Over the past few years, we've seen a steady blossoming of ABM capabilities, both in the more generic marketing automation and CRM systems and in the emergence of specialized ABM platforms. And we've also seen increased account intelligence in platforms like LinkedIn and the specialized information providers. Taken together, it's become progressively easier to identify more of the right sorts of contacts and to monitor their levels of interest and engagement.'

— *Bob Apollo, Founder and Value Selling Expert, Inflexion-Point*

# USE ADVOCACY TO GROW THE BUSINESS FURTHER

## INTRODUCTION

Marketing's job does not end once a target account has been won. The focus changes from winning the account to retaining it and growing it further. Marketing must now align with customer success to provide the means for creating customer satisfaction and capitalizing on that satisfaction.

## MARKETING'S ROLE IN CUSTOMER SUCCESS

Nurturing your customer relationship beyond the initial purchase stage helps to build customer loyalty. In return, internal advocates will sing the praises of your services throughout the company and increase the potential for account retention and growth.

Marketing's role in retaining and upselling is complex enough to warrant a guide in itself. However, there are two ways to get delighted customers to advocate for new business sales.

## OBTAIN CASE STUDIES

A case study is a way to share your customer's experience with other potential target accounts, as well as to gain insights into how your services are working for your current customers. You can gather the data for the case study by sending a couple of personalized emails to customers you know will be good advocates for your service.

Approach your chosen customers with an email asking them to participate in creating customer success stories. It's important to highlight the benefits (e.g., increased profile) they would receive as a result of their participation. Once a customer has agreed, send another email with the questions—the simpler, the better. When posing your questions, keeping in mind the mnemonic **SOAR** (situation, objective, action, and result) will get you the information you need without taking up too much of your customer's time. The answers can be worked into an informative case study and published across several channels.

## BUILD PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships can be a bit trickier to obtain. However, it is possible to ask some of your most satisfied customers to work with you to promote your service. In some cases, individuals may be willing to participate in video testimonials or even speak on your behalf at industry events.

The prerequisite for effective partnerships is to have a good relationship with your customer. But perks—such as attendance at dinners, speaking opportunities abroad, and increased individual profiles—can also incentivize them to contribute to your efforts.

**SUMMARY OF ACTIONS**

1. Review your list of customers with your customer success team to identify potential advocates.
2. Contact customers to seek information for case studies.
3. Build partnerships to gain active advocates for your ongoing marketing activities.

## ADVICE FROM THE EXPERTS

'It's easy to do a few basic things and say, "We're doing ABM". But if you don't commit to doing the real thing, the returns may not be there, and you're likely to give up too soon. If big deals matter to your business, invest some time in really learning what best-practice ABM looks like. Then get senior sales and marketing leaders to drive this sucker.'

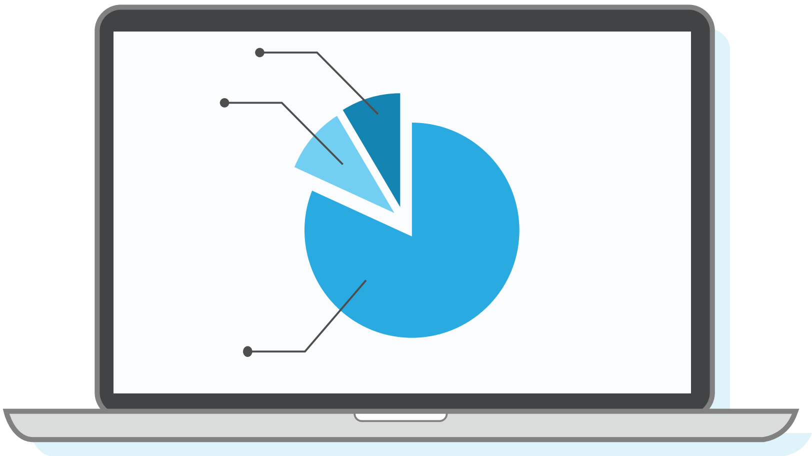
— *Doug Kessler, Creative Director and Co-Founder, Velocity Partners*

'In summary, ABM must be a multidisciplinary team effort. If it remains primarily a marketing initiative, it has no chance of fully realizing its potential.'

— *Bob Apollo, Founder and Value Selling Expert, Inflexion-Point*

'Content marketers will find themselves in demand with outbound as well as inbound teams as businesses realize that, in ABM, a single well-researched, beautifully written, and highly personalized email to a sweet-spot target can be just as—if not more—important to their revenue as a newsletter to 10 thousand subscribers.'

— *Tom Gatten, CEO, GrowthIntel*



# TOP TIPS CHECKLIST

Each of the previous sections contains actions to take as part of putting ABM in place at your company.

Below is a summary of how to implement an ABM strategy within your company.

## ☐ Align sales and marketing.

- ☐ Gather key members from sales, marketing, customer success, finance, and other departments essential to the ABM process.
- ☐ Determine the needs of each department.
- ☐ Agree on key terms and KPIs, and make sure to understand how these factor into your weighted pipeline and forecasting.
- ☐ Use the Stakeholder Checklist on page 10 to align all stakeholders in your discussions.
- ☐ Document what you uncover to feed into the rest of your approach.

## ☐ Set up measurable goals and objectives.

- ☐ Use the input from stakeholder discussions to adapt and complete the ABM Goal Calculator on page 14.
- ☐ Make sure goals and objectives are measurable through existing systems—if not, configure your CRM and marketing automation platforms as such.
- ☐ Make sure to add further goals:
  - Account-specific goals
  - Customer success goals
  - Tactical goals and metrics (e.g., site traffic to key pages, on-site conversion rates, and email metrics)

## ☐ Select target accounts and key roles.

- ☐ Work through the four steps in selecting target accounts, using the Target Account Checklist on page 18:
  - Have sales and customer success select accounts to target.
  - Use scored data from your CRM.
  - Purchase advanced data from a third-party provider.
  - Make use of a predictive analytics solution.
- ☐ Identify the key roles.
- ☐ Create ideal customer profiles as a common reference point.

## ☐ Create a customer journey map on page 22 for each account.

- ☐ Identify the key roles at your target accounts to decide what customer journey maps to create.
- ☐ Print out a large version of the canvas so your team can fill it in collaboratively. Have Post-its or cards ready, and aim for quantity over quality at the first stage.
- ☐ Build a human picture of the person. Remember, this is a creative exercise—feel free to use humour at the first stage.
- ☐ Detail their workflow—their day-to-day activities, pains, desired gains, and whom they influence within the company.
- ☐ Work through each stage of the buying process and fill out the map.

## ☐ Align content to the customer journey.

- ☐ Collate your customer journey maps on page 22 to get an understanding of the content you could create.
- ☐ Prioritize the content by customer stage and account opportunity, and look for holes in your existing content.
- ☐ Work through the field headings to plan what content you will create.
- ☐ Put the details into your project management systems—Trello, Asana, or even just a shared marketing spreadsheet.

## ☐ Roll out account-based campaigns.

- ☐ Review your content calendar as part of your plan to roll out account-based campaigns.
- ☐ Identify the quick wins as part of a test-and-learn approach.
- ☐ Use the ABM Campaign Checklist on page 28 to make sure you've covered all the bases in your campaign.
- ☐ Onboard your CRM data to make the best use the of advertising platforms on the market.

## ☐ Structure your CRM and marketing automation systems.

- ☐ Consider lead scoring as an element within your account qualification process.
- ☐ Review your CRM systems to ensure that you have the right fields and data in place to run the desired campaigns and for end-to-end campaign measurement.

## ☐ Use advocacy to grow the business.

- ☐ Review your list of customers with your customer success team to identify potential advocates.
- ☐ Contact customers to seek information for case studies.
- ☐ Build partnerships to gain active advocates for your ongoing marketing activities.

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**To learn how to start using ABM with AdRoll today, check out the AdRoll Guide to Account-Based Marketing here.**