



The Definitive Guide - Account Based Marketing



THE WORLD'S B2B AGENCY

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# I. Introduction

Account-based marketing is essentially, a marketing technique borne out of necessity. It is primarily used by B2B companies to **maximise their marketing efforts with their existing customer base**—and is a technique that has continuously proven to be extremely effective.

ABM has been around for many years, but it's seeing a rise in renewed interest lately. This is in direct correlation with the rise of marketing technologies like **marketing automation, targeted display advertisements** or other digital tools that help make ABM much more effective.

However, ABM is much more than the technologies that make it simpler and more cost effective to implement. It needs in-depth strategic planning and guidance from marketers in order for it to be effective for your business.

There isn't a one-size-fits-all ABM strategy that can be applied to all scenarios or organisations. However, what you do have, is a specific set of steps that you can follow in order to develop an ABM strategy that works for your organisation, and that is what this e-book will discuss.



## II. So what exactly is it?

Account-Based Marketing (ABM) is a marketing technique that's about identifying, and targeting with personalised messages the accounts that matter the most to your organisation's goals. It's designed to focus on, attract (clients and prospects) engage, convert, and measure the progress of your campaigns.

According to DemandBase, one of the world's premier marketing agencies:



**71%**

**B2B organisations** are interested in ABM, are testing it, or already using it.



**96%**

**B2B marketers** who've used ABM report a positive impact on their marketing's success.

This points to ABM becoming the default marketing technique that companies use first before anything else. Thanks to its incredibly attractive ROI, marketers are attempting to use ABM on all the accounts their companies care about, regardless of size or vertical.

This is because based on the **Pareto principle** (the 80-20 rule which is the core of ABM), nearly 80% of sales comes from 20% of your customer base—customers you're targeting with ABM. These customers require (and sometimes even demand) your understanding of their business, and provide them with tailored solutions.

Instead of targeting a wide range of customers hovering at the top of the funnel, you target these companies that have the potential to yield the best results. This ensures your effort-to-yield ratio is as attractive as your ROI.



### III. Is it right for you?

The answer to this question is almost always an unequivocal **"YES."** It's what we consider a necessity, that B2B organisations need to start using right away.

And even then, there are certain scenarios for which ABM is the perfect solution.

#### You definitely need ABM when:



You have solutions and products of high value or deep complexity



You need to cross-sell or upsell to your existing customer base

While ABM has proven itself to be **effective with high ROI**, marketers still need to keep themselves up to date on the latest trends, and be mindful of what their customers need, in order to keep their ABM strategy effective. And for ABM to do its work, organisations should be **aligned internally**.

Your sales teams and your marketing teams should work as one. This means the messaging from them has to be organised and carefully choreographed to be identical from the first to the last touch.

While ABM's concept is straightforward—identify important accounts, and sell personalised messages accordingly—pulling it off requires some effort on your part. **Follow these five steps to ensure a successful campaign.**

## IV. Account Selection

This is the first and perhaps the most important step as it sets the pace for the rest of the campaign. You can start by building a target list, comprising companies with the most potential to your business.

Here are four methods which can help you compile your target list, and arranged in terms of priority, and quality of leads generated:

- 1 Manual selection between marketing and sales**  
This method requires the alignment of both teams, and can be difficult due to their differences in agenda. However, the results are highly desirable on a company-wide scale.
- 2 'Look alike' selection**  
When you go with the 'look alike' selection method, you're able to find similar accounts based on their location, company size and industry for more marketing targets.
- 3 Predictive selection**  
Predictive selection allows for the discovery of similar accounts, but uses highly advanced predictive analytics tools like Mintigo, EverString and Leadspice.
- 4 Rules-based segmentation in marketing automation**  
Using this method, you are then able to segment your targets according to their industry, company size and industry, using information collected from marketing automation tools.



**The people in this list can include customers, partners, prospects, and mix of all three categories**

Here, you're essentially flipping the traditional sales funnel around. Instead of casting a wide net, you focus with pinpoint accuracy on the right people in target accounts.

According to Marketo, you are now:



Identifying



Expanding



Engaging



Advocating

This helps to

- ✓ Increase your pipeline
- ✓ Improve sales and marketing alignment
- ✓ Generating more qualified leads.





## V. Analysis

Next, conduct further analysis to identify your accounts by:

- ▶ Industry
- ▶ Revenue (or size),
- ▶ Current use of your products
- ▶ If they're even worth the effort

Once you're done here, you go on to analyse the stakeholders that are important to your campaign.

Acquire data about these people through your **existing sales** and **marketing database**, through **top-of-the-funnel (TOFU) campaigns** or **databases from third-party agencies**.



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## VI. Plan ABM workflow

After your data has been processed, come up with a lead score. This involves ranking your potential prospects according to the business perceived value each lead has.

**The resulting score will determine the receiving function your lead will get in order of priority.**

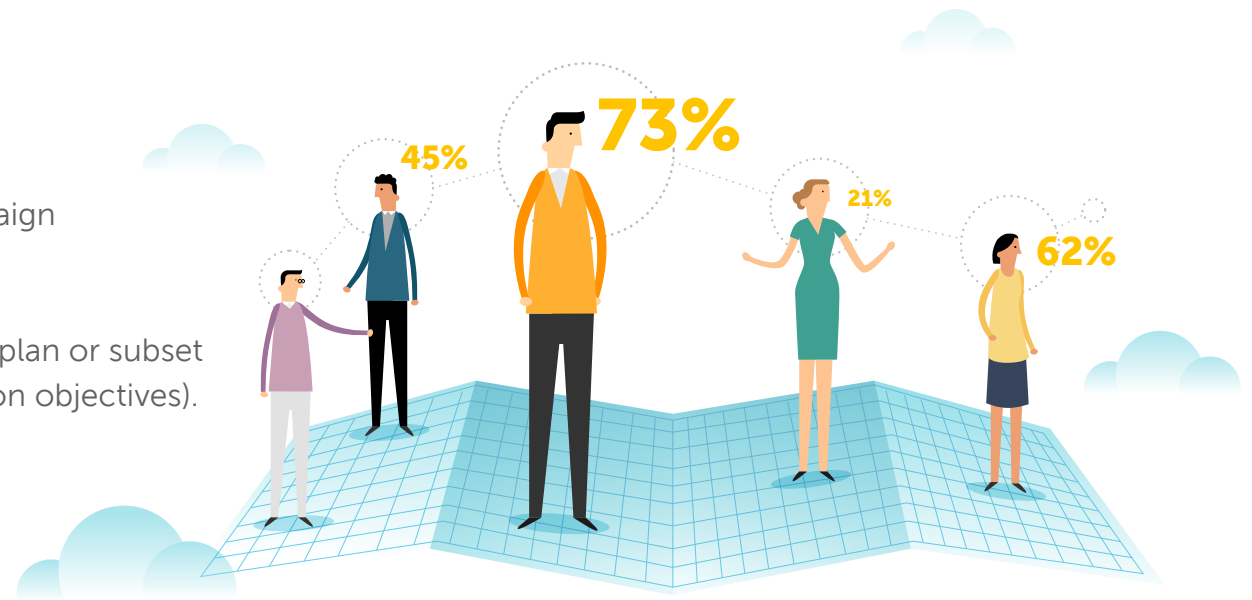
**High ranking prospects** should receive **direct contact** from the sales team, while **low ranking prospects** will **get a phone call** from your tele-prospecting team.

Following that, strategise on how you want to reach your prospects, by coming up with a workflow:

- ▶ Communication blueprint
- ▶ Touchpoint map

With a concise workflow, you can:

- ▶ Understand more about the campaign
- ▶ Discover gaps
- ▶ Figure out the key CTAs
- ▶ Decide destinations for the whole plan or subset (E.g. by audience or communication objectives).



## VII. Content and messaging

This is the meat of the ABM campaign. **Your content.**

Develop account specific messaging (personalised content), based on:

- ▶ Needs
- ▶ Competitive advantage
- ▶ Positioning strategy
- ▶ USPs of your clients.

At this point, conducting a content audit will minimize the amount of work necessary.

**Stock-checking** and **identifying usable existing content** for specific accounts saves you both time, and money.



This step is easily done by **mapping content with target personas and channels** (selected during workflow planning and procurement process stages).



Once you've identified reusable content, you'll be able to find the gaps that require content to fill—content that's **fresh, repurposed** or **curated** from other sources.



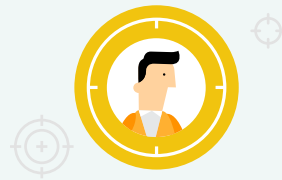
## VIII. Activation

Once the content is ready, you can deploy it according to your strategic workflow.

It can be on an account specific microsite, or a site segment development.



**Follow up with account specific email campaigns** to known contacts, and perhaps a LinkedIn InMail campaign for unknown contacts.



For unidentified leads and prospects, **rely on targeted display advertisements** (Google Display Network, Twitter, Facebook) to reach them.



To get better mileage out of your campaigns, you can conduct account specific nurturing, through **digital content nurturing**, or **account specific workshops** or **breakfast briefings**.

To tie the whole campaign together you can use highly specialised tools in:



Project management  
**(Basecamp)**



Reporting  
**(Tableau)**



Analytics  
**(Google Analytics)**



SharpSpring

Optimisation  
**(SharpSpring)**

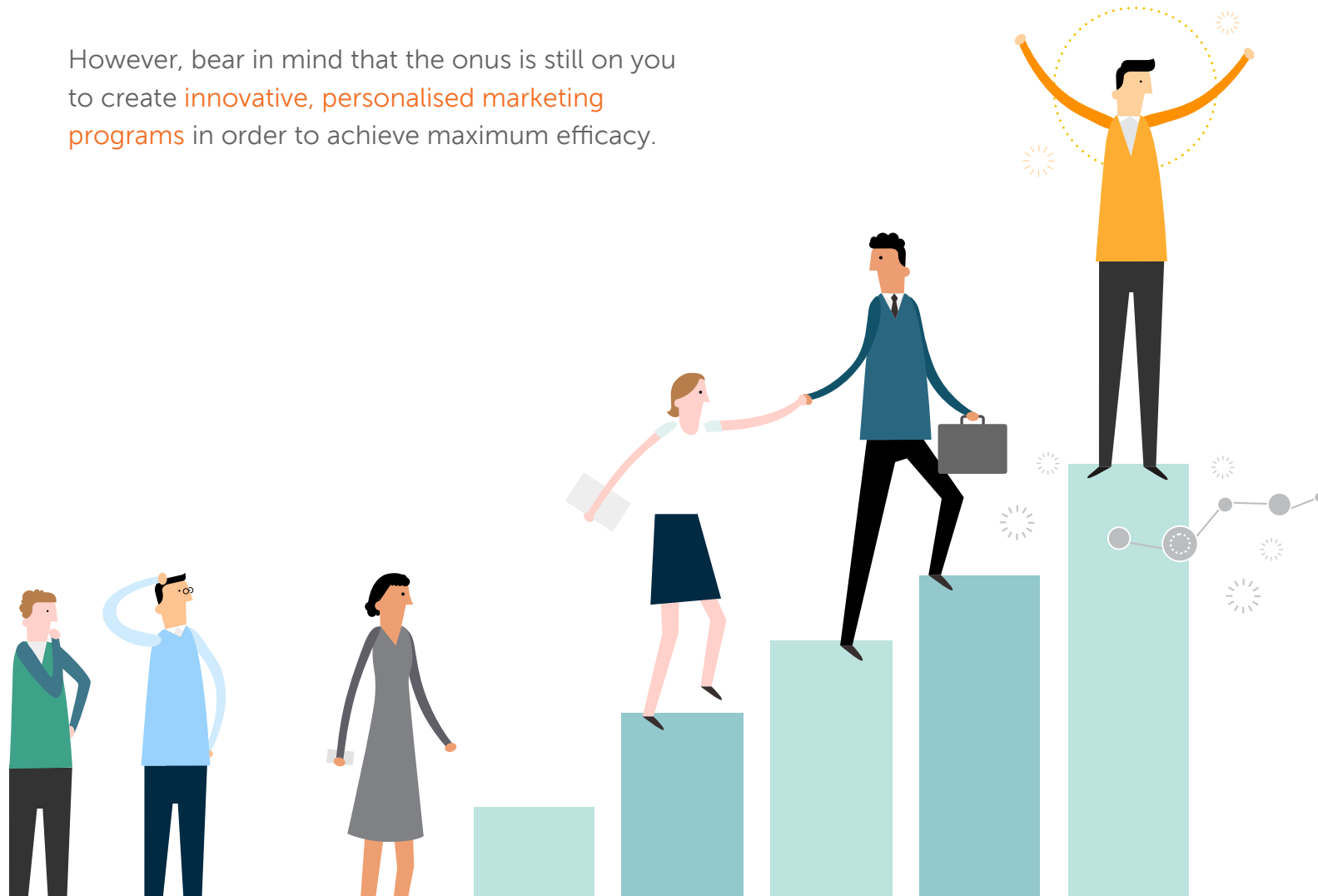
With judicious use of these tools, coupled with a strict adherence to your plan, you'll be able to target your potential leads and prospects with pinpoint accuracy, leading to **higher conversion rates, and better ROI.**



## IX. Conclusion: Benefits of ABM

With all these processes and tools at your disposal, there's really **no better time than now** to start experimenting with ABM, so you can see for yourself the incredible improvement that this technique will bring to your marketing campaigns.

However, bear in mind that the onus is still on you to create **innovative, personalised marketing programs** in order to achieve maximum efficacy.





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