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ABM – Drive Sales with Account-based Marketing

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Account-based marketing is growing. The numbers prove it.

- 62 % of marketers have seen a positive impact since adopting ABM
- 80 % of marketers state that ABM improves customer lifetime values
- 86 % of marketers report that ABM boosts win rates
- 41 % increase in ABM budgets
- 57 % of marketing pros target 1,000 accounts or under with ABM
- 87 % of account-based marketers say ABM initiatives outperform other marketing investments

Here's why.

With the marketing noise getting louder every day, B2B marketers face the very real threat of not being heard. To avoid wasting time and resources, many have replaced a general approach to one that more efficiently targets accounts who are more likely to pay attention to communications because they actually need your product and have the budget for it.

Account-based marketing (ABM) ensures that efforts are more focused, personalized, and likely to win conversions.



ABM Addresses the Top Five Challenges B2B Marketers Face

The ABM approach eliminates five of the most common obstacles marketers face when focusing on high-opportunity, high-value accounts.

- 1. Sales and marketing working in silos** – ABM transforms a linear lead-generating process – from marketing to sales – to one in which the teams work in tandem, leads flow both ways, and responsibility for generating revenue and ROI is jointly owned. This closes the gaping communication and workflow divides that separate the sales and marketing teams, streamlining processes and enhancing workplace morale.
- 2. Message lost in cluttered inbox** – Too much technology, competition, and information results in too much noise. Casting a too wide net to catch customers may result in your message getting lost. Adopting ABM lets you focus on fewer but more valuable accounts and create more targeted, more personalized, more likely-to-be-read messages.
- 3. Lack of personalization** – Generic, impersonal messages get the expected result – zero. Today’s customers want more than product information – they want your message to address their questions, concerns, and pain points with real solutions. Only ABM, which targets specific individuals within accounts, can provide this level of personalization.
- 4. More but not better leads** – It’s the old quality over quantity conundrum. With ABM, no one has wasted time, squandered efforts, made wrong guesses – or created languishing leads. Identify your highest-value accounts, pinpoint target-worthy individuals within them, send relevant and tailored-to-their needs messaging, and watch your qualified leads – and ROI – grow.
- 5. Lack of customer data** – Without data, you really cannot anticipate or respond to prospects’ needs. ABM, which brings together sales and marketing, lets you mine such information and achieve true personalization. Create targeted messaging with customer information gleaned from marketing; get prospects’ response to your messaging via customer feedback derived from sales.

ABM Aligns Marketing and Sales

Many marketing and sales teams work in silos, each with its own processes, workflows, culture. In many organizations, never the twain shall meet. The results – fewer qualified leads, lost sales and revenues, disjointed and incoherent efforts leading to poor customer impressions, and wasted time and resources.

When you adopt ABM, siloed structures no longer work. It can no longer be “marketing brings in leads and sales makes the close.” ABM requires that marketing and sales be on the same page.

Barriers to Alignment	How ABM Bridges the Gap
Getting sales to agree to work with fewer leads	Generate more qualified leads, with both marketing and sales working toward the same goal, needing each other to succeed
Lack of accountability	Collaboration is key. Clarifying each team’s responsibilities ensures accountability and facilitates the cooperation and teamwork needed to perform ABM tasks, from pinpointing key accounts to developing the right content.
Lack of communication	For ABM to work, what sales knows, marketing must also know and vice versa. Joint meetings enable both teams to get information, feedback, and updates together, not separately.
Inconsistency	ABM success demands consistency in definitions, criteria for target accounts, and data infrastructure that connects individuals within target accounts to the correct companies and avoids improper scoring.
Different success yardsticks	With ABM, sales and marketing must set common goals, create mutually beneficial strategies, and solve problems together. Deploying a unified be

Alignment

- Promotes a cohesive, shared customer intelligence for higher conversion rates
- Leads to truly personalized content and outreach that makes prospects feel special
- Gives a holistic view of the buyer's journey, instead of through disjointed sales and marketing funnels
- Enables shared ownership of lead capturing, improving conversion rates
- Ensures that buyer personas match up to the audience being targeted
- Results in shorter sales cycles, simplified workflows, and increased revenues
- Generates better-handled leads and more satisfying customer experiences
- Increase ROI through better conversion rates and customer acquisition and retention

In short, ABM captures the most profitable, high-value accounts only with both sales and marketing working together.

Of course, sales and marketing alignment is easier said than done. The following illustrates the five barriers to alignment and how ABM bridges the gaps:

Sales and Marketing Alignment Tips for ABM Managers:

- Schedule regular, joint meetings to coordinate activities.
- Communicate marketing's value to sales, such as reduces sales' time and effort in acquiring customers, and sales' importance to marketing, like providing details about what customers say and think.
- Define each team's individual tasks and shared responsibilities.
- Ensure both teams agree on critical issues.
- Demand consistent and joint ownership of messaging.
- Maintain transparency in results and continually discuss what's working and how to improve what isn't.

[Get Our Guide to Building Stronger ABM Alignment with Marketing and Sales](#)

ABM Complements Inbound

At first glance, they seem like opposites. ABM or account-based marketing – advantageous for companies that sell expensive, enterprise-wide solutions – focuses on decision makers within specific enterprises and engages and nurtures them with personalized communication. Inbound marketing – beneficial for business with less expensive offerings – takes a more expansive approach, attracting the right kind of traffic – those most likely to buy your product – by providing content that helps them find answers to solution-related questions and then slowly drawing them toward your brand.

ABM and inbound approaches are synergistic; it's not either-or. For both, you need a comprehensive, detailed understanding of your prospects and pain points to deliver just the right type of content via the most appropriate media channels. In both strategies, customization is key, and every content piece must be exactly tailored to the needs and desires of each customer. Moreover, both ABM and inbound share the same goal: customer buy-in and retention.

Enhance Business Results with a Combined Approach

- Build two pathways, instead of just one, to appeal to and capture top prospects
- Benefit from two complementary approaches. Use inbound when you want to set the groundwork for attracting the right prospects; deploy ABM when you want to accelerate sales by targeting the highest-value customers.
- Make content work double time: Inbound content can generate leads, while ABM – once it targets a specific audience – can personalize and tailor-fit the content.
- Expand your group of prospects, ensuring that you don't miss any business-building opportunities

ABM Content Focuses on High-Value Targets' Buyer's Journey

Content plays a key role in account-based marketing. Complementing inbound marketing, which focuses on attracting prospects to the brand over time, ABM content cultivates pre-targeted leads and addresses their pain points throughout the sales process. The key: Synchronise content to the high-value target's stage in the buyer's journey.



In the **Awareness** stage, the buyer learns about a problem or challenge she needs to address. With ABM, the content goal is to provide knowledge and information about the issue, challenge, or pain point. This can be achieved with thought leadership content delivered via blog posts, e-books, white papers, or infographics, or a combination.

In the **Consideration** phase, the buyer investigates various solutions to the problem. Your ABM content should offer the buyer reasons to select your solution among all the other options. Create educational content like case studies, webinars, analyst reports, video testimonials, industry data, etc. to help the client reach your objective.

In the **Purchase** stage, the buyer decides to adopt your solution. Provide guidance in how to best use or deploy your product or service. It's time for tactical content such as how-to-resources, including online tutorials, implementation guides, and product demos.

During **Upsell**, you'll find that a great first experience by your customer generates interest in your other products. With the goal of providing information on related offerings, create and deliver fact sheets, whitepapers, webinars, e-books, new feature updates, podcasts, and the like.

The final stage of the buyer’s journey – **Product Champion** – is when the buyer endorses your product or service to others. Provide shareable information, such as customer testimonials, expert interviews, video clips, whitepapers, case studies, and promotional social media content.

[Download Our Guide to ABM Content](#)



Please get in touch if you'd like to learn how K2 Global Communications can make your ABM efforts more effective:

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