



DEMANDBASE

**EBOOK**

# HOW TO GET YOUR ENTIRE TEAM TO LIVE AND BREATHE ABM

## INTRODUCTION

Account-Based Marketing (ABM) is no longer a nice to have. It's become critical to a B2B marketer's ability to align with Sales, grow revenue and deliver seamless customer experiences. But ABM means more than just deciding to focus on accounts for a particular campaign or quarter—it requires commitment and collaboration from everyone on your marketing team.

So how exactly do you go about fostering that collaboration? And how do you ensure everyone on your team has everything they need to be successful with ABM?

The first step to getting your team ABM-ready starts with education. In addition to understanding how the strategy works, they'll also need to understand how their individual roles change in an ABM world, and more importantly, how they can work together to knock their ABM initiatives out of the park.

In this eBook, we'll cover the roles that span across a marketing organization, how they fit into an ABM strategy and explore some tactics you can start implementing right away.



**171%**

Companies implementing ABM see a 171% increase in Average Annual Contract Value (TOPO)



**85%**

Of marketers who measure ROI describe ABM as delivering higher returns than any other marketing approach; half of those marketers cite significantly higher returns (ITSMA)

## **MEET THE TEAM**

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## MARKETING LEADERSHIP

ABM isn't as difficult as it looks. In fact, there are several easy ways to get an ABM program off the ground. But whether you're starting small with a specific account segment or are scaling out your strategy, you'll need to get a leadership team in place, which can help you set goals, track progress and measure results.

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“Driving an Account-first approach to marketing has been a fundamental game changer with Sales. My team is able to show tangible marketing impact in the accounts that matter to Sales and provide actionable insights on where to dial up marketing investment. It's no longer a question of “what has marketing done for me lately?” but more “how can marketing do even more of these things to help my sales team exceed their quota?””

*Emma Chalwin  
VP US Marketing, Salesforce*

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“ABM aligns and focuses not just sales and marketing teams but also our technology stack and marketing programs. This enabled Brightcove to develop systematic, and repeatable approaches, which we capture in defined SDR, Marketing, and Analytics play books. ABM has made my role more strategic and measurable.”

*Chris Bondhus  
VP Demand Generation, Brightcove*

# THE GAME PLAN

## BUILD AN ABM LEADERSHIP TEAM

While ABM has a large impact on the broader organization, there are some stakeholders from Sales, Marketing and Operations that play a bigger role. Therefore, it's essential you set up a leadership team—one that includes those key folks—early on to help drive your ABM initiative forward. The ABM leadership team is responsible for selling the value of ABM internally, defining goals and tracking progress along the way. Here's how your ABM leadership team will break out:



### SALES

Bring an understanding of the prospect and customer base and the sales cycle to help inform marketing focus and programs

- Reset expectations with their sales team
- Shift sales territories to match the target account list
- Set baseline numbers—accounts per rep



### MARKETING

Come to the table with a focus on pipeline and revenue objectives

- Determine the main metrics for ABM success
- Re-focus marketing activities
- Align marketing team members



### OPERATIONS

Leverage the data available in different systems to help facilitate alignment and collaboration

- Create models, benchmarks and reporting to align sales and marketing
- Lead target account selection
- Align ABM Leadership

## THE PLAY: START SMALL

While it's ideal to adopt a complete ABM strategy, you can also start with one segment and build your program out from there. The success of smaller ABM initiatives can help drive conversations about broader ABM programs.

## MARKETING OPERATIONS

In the past few years, Marketing Operations has become an essential part of a high performance marketing team. Beyond measuring campaign results and overall marketing impact, Marketing Operations now encompasses several different responsibilities, including planning and onboarding new strategies and technologies such as ABM. Marketing Operations professionals work with key stakeholders from Marketing, Sales and Finance to foster alignment and collaboration and drive ABM initiatives forward.

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“Our clients experience that in the early stages of ABM adoption, the Marketing Operations team often feels the impact most because they’re trying to figure out how to enable the targeting, customization, and reporting capabilities needed to execute. As they operationalize and scale their ABM programs, the biggest impact shifts to figuring out how to best measure results and identify areas for improvement across the board.”

*Nolin LeChasseur  
CMO, Brainrider*

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“The increased focus on Account-Based Marketing at SAP has enabled us to get insights directly from our customers on what will be the most valuable in their relationships with us. Through learning directly from the customer on what is important to them, we can tailor our marketing strategy to meet those needs. This depth of communication improves the customer experience for our top accounts, while enabling marketing with insights to better align to customer needs.”

*Amy Craven  
ABM Program Office Team Lead, SAP*

# THE GAME PLAN

## BUILD YOUR TARGET ACCOUNT LIST

As we've discussed in earlier pages, your ABM Leadership team are the go-to stakeholders that drive your ABM program and foster the collaboration needed from different parts of the organization. In addition to connecting with those stakeholders, you'll also need to work together to create a plan to build your target account. This list will be the basis for all your marketing efforts. So who should be in that list? Your target account can include prospects, customers, partners or a mix of all three. There are several ways to build this list:

- Adopt accounts your sales and marketing teams are already targeting through named accounts or vertical markets
- Take a data-based approach by analyzing a current list of customers, vertical penetration, company size, etc.
- Work with ABM vendors who offer AI-powered account identification

## SET A BASELINE

Once you have your list in place, Marketing Operations will build on that foundation and set goals to work toward. But before you can start setting goals, you'll need to first take an honest look at where you currently stand. You'll want to ask yourself the following questions:

- How many opportunities are being driven or influenced by each channel?
- What percentage of your target account list is engaging with your marketing programs?
- What onsite engagement are you seeing from your target accounts? What pages are they visiting? How engaged are they? Are they downloading gated content?
- How are your marketing programs impacting revenue?
- How fast are you moving opportunities through the funnel?

Once you know where you stand with your current marketing and sales efforts, you can work with the ABM leadership team and start to make those important decisions about where to go next and where to focus your efforts.

## THE PLAY: DEFINE ABM GOALS

After you've established a baseline, you can work with key stakeholders from Sales, Marketing and Finance to set goals for your ABM program. When it comes to ABM measurement, there are two types of indicators: leading and lagging. Leading indicators are the more proximate measures that can help you determine the effectiveness of your campaigns, like downloads, MQLs and conversions. While leading indicators play an important role in determining the health of your campaigns, you'll want to measure your ABM program with lagging metrics—which are tied to business outcomes and include pipeline, close rates, Annual Contract Value (ACV) and funnel velocity.

## DEMAND GENERATION

In most companies, Demand Generation is synonymous with lead generation. Typically, demand gen marketers spend a majority of their time and money running top-of-funnel blanket campaigns that target a wide audience and generate a great volume of leads. In an ABM world, this mentality shifts dramatically, and we see a focus on accounts, rather than leads. As a result, demand generation marketers are more aligned with Sales, their programs see more success and they start using their budgets more effectively.



“All parts of the marketing organization have changed with our shift to ABM. The biggest has to be demand generation / growth team. They've gone from scale to impact, have a whole new set of stakeholders weighing in on their work, and measurement models have changed (though still based on revenue).”

*Dave Rigotti*  
*VP Marketing, Bizible*

Over the next few sections, we'll walk through some common programs demand generation marketers run and share how they change under an ABM umbrella.

## SPONSORED EVENTS & TRADESHOWS

Most demand generation marketers feel like they do too many events. And yet, when they're called upon to trim their roster, suddenly, every event seems important for one reason or another. Whether it's because there's history, an executive expressed interest or a competitor will be there, fear of missing out kicks in almost immediately. And that's just on the marketing side. Add in specific requests from the Sales team, and you could end up with a different event every week.

ABM can help provide some structure to your event marketing strategy and give you a framework, based on relevant metrics, for determining what events to sponsor—and how much to invest. By being more strategic about your event planning, you can increase ROI (and decrease the number of branded sunglasses you order every year).



“Employing ABM to our event strategy has been important in driving results including demand creation and pipeline acceleration. Using an ABM-based approach for event marketing like the registration drive, setting meetings with our sales team, dinner invites and all other engagement points has improved our efficiency and pipeline quality. Finally, partnering on events has been a huge part of how ABM has been successful for us — by working with our partners to fill events with a better together story, we’ve been able to drive higher engagement.”

*Kristen Alexander  
VP Marketing, Certain*

# THE GAME PLAN

At a high level, here's how you can start thinking about your events strategy:

- Look at your previous year's events and identify which ones produced the most pipeline. What made those events successful?
- What percentage of attendees are on your target account list? For any event you're considering sponsoring, ask for last year's attendee list and run that up against your target account list. If crossover is low, that might be a good reason to move that specific event from the "maybe" to the "no" list. After all, why sponsor events that attract only a small portion of your target account list.
- What other factors contribute to your most successful events? A particular sponsorship level? A speaking slot? An ancillary event like an Executive Briefing or a client dinner? You'll probably come to the conclusion that some of the events you've done in the past don't make the cut, whereas some of the events that do meet your criteria cost a little more to execute well.

This framework should give you concrete criteria by which to evaluate new opportunities and help you build a compelling case to re-distribute your budget from less valuable events to those with greater ROI.

## THE PLAY: MAKING THE MOST OUT OF A SPONSORED EVENT

As you start to think about your next event, here are a few ways you can increase your presence and drive ROI:

- Use your booth as a catchall for companies that currently aren't on your target account list.
- Host ancillary events, like customer or prospect dinners, to extend your event presence and increase opportunities and offerings within your current customers.
- Arm your SDR team with speaking points from each event activity to ensure personalized, engaging follow-up to your target accounts.
- Leverage your partner ecosystem. Teaming up with partners can make your limited budget stretch further than what you could do on your own. Consider asking partners to co-sponsor a party or a big ticket item with the request that they promote the event to their database. This is a win on two fronts: you not only strengthen partner relationships but you also expand your ability to reach your target accounts with joint programs and wider outreach.

## **WEBINARS**

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Webinars are an integral part of a traditional demand generation strategy, focused on educating the market and driving leads. But a majority of the effort around webinars is centered around driving large registration numbers and ensuring Marketing hits their lead number. Meanwhile, Sales is left sifting through the massive piles of leads, looking for diamonds in the rough. In an ABM world, this gap between Sales and Marketing starts to close, as webinars become more focused on your target account list.

## **THE GAME PLAN**

With an ABM strategy in place, the way you think about webinars begins to shift, which results in higher performance and lower costs. While you can still cast a wide net with your webinar production, in an ABM world, Sales focuses their follow-up with leads from your target account list. This gives Sales the ability to prioritize their outreach and reach and engage the companies they care about.

### **ENGAGE EARLY AND QUICKLY**

The key to effective Sales follow-up actually starts before the webinar even happens. You'll want your sales reps to engage with your target accounts early on by providing them access to the real-time registration list in your CRM system. By taking this approach, you can expect to generate about 30% of total opportunities from a webinar program before the actual webinar date. In other words, if you wait until after the webinar to initiate follow-up, you're leaving opportunities on the table.

In addition to providing access to the real-time list, arm your sales team with relevant messaging that ties back to the webinar content. If necessary, script their follow up emails to make it easy for them to take action.

### **DON'T IGNORE NO-SHOWS**

Make a point about not ignoring no-shows from your target accounts. They're just as valuable as attendees when it comes to conversion to opportunity. Also, make a point to send no-shows the on-demand replay. And for both no-shows and attendees, arm the sales team with "deep links" to the most interesting portions of the webinar, so folks don't have to sit back for a whole hour to watch the webinar from start to finish. In addition to deep linking pieces of the webinar, you'll also want to send out calendar holds to your sales team, so they can set aside time to focus on outreach right away.

## **CONSIDER RUNNING AN IN-HOUSE WEBINAR**

In addition to running external webinars, you can also bring your webinar production in-house. Since you're targeting accounts, you can get access to the contact list before the webinar even happens, which is great for two reasons, one, you can tailor the content to the needs of your target account list and two, Sales can begin outreach right away, well before the webinar happens. In-house production also gives you the ability to control the content—you can focus your webinar on thought leadership, customer stories or product demos.

## **INVEST IN A HOSTING PLATFORM**

There are quite a few vendors out there that offer webinar hosting capabilities. If you're shopping around for a platform, it might help to attend a few webinars yourself, so you can experience the pros and cons of several platforms first-hand.

## **DON'T PITCH YOUR PRODUCT**

Nobody wants to attend a webinar that's basically a product pitch disguised as thought leadership. Therefore, it's important you provide value with every webinar you create. To ensure this happens, you'll need to have a good understanding of your target accounts, including their needs and challenges. Once you understand what topics your audience cares about, you can start to build out your webinar plan.

If you can, work with your customer success team to recruit customer speakers to help credibility. Having your customers vouch for your brand and product can help increase interest for your offerings.

A quick side note here: now, some marketers may not have the bandwidth to produce their own webinars. If that's the case for your team, you'll need to make sure you promote your webinar program to your target accounts and that you track if individual registrations were generated by your promotion vs the publisher. This way you'll be able to understand the true value of that particular publisher. If you find the value mostly in the production column, then you may want to consider contractors for production or you can shop for webinars based on their production processes as opposed to the publisher's audience.

## **THE PLAY: ADD AN EXTERNAL PUSH**

If you've run an in-house webinar that's seen significant success, you might want to consider promoting it externally. You can create an advertising campaign to promote the on-demand webinar or work with an external publisher to send out promotions about your on-demand webinar (note, this strategy also works for upcoming in-house webinars).

## **DIRECT MAIL**

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A couple of years ago, direct mail was one of the best kept secrets in B2B marketing. Very few people were doing it, and those who were, saw great results. Now it's become more mainstream, but marketers are still struggling to figure out the right formula to make the tactic work for them. That's due in large part to the fact that their direct mail campaigns have primarily been one-off initiatives and haven't been connected to a broader strategy. With ABM, your direct mail campaigns get the structure and account framework they need to drive success for your organization.

## **THE GAME PLAN**

### **CREATE A TARGET ACCOUNT LIST FOR YOUR DIRECT MAIL CAMPAIGN**

Direct mail tends to be an expensive marketing channel, so it's important to ensure every piece you send out makes an impact. You'll need to work closely with individual Sales reps to identify the right accounts and the right stakeholders at those companies. Are they decision-makers? Influencers? Or high-level executives? The more information you get about these stakeholders, the better.

### **TIER YOUR DIRECT MAIL EFFORTS**

Many companies take a blended ABM approach, combining high-value accounts with mid and lower level accounts. If you decide to go this route, your direct mail strategy should reflect this segmentation. You can send more expensive mailers, like iPads or tablets, to higher-tier accounts, while sending out low-cost mailers, like Starbucks gift cards, to lower level accounts.

### **PERSONALIZE DIRECT MAIL PACKAGES FOR TARGET ACCOUNTS**

Depending on who your audience is, you can personalize your packages to best fit the needs and wants of your target accounts. If you're looking to break into a new account with direct mail, you might want to send out collateral that showcases your mission and product. Or if an account is currently in pipeline, you might want to send out packages to the decision-makers involved to tip them over the edge.

### **WORK WITH SALES TO BUILD MESSAGING PRE AND POST PACKAGE DROP**

Once you've built a list and direct mailer Sales is excited about, you can work together to create messaging and follow-up emails. At Demandbase, our marketing team builds out email templates our sales team can use to start the conversation before the package is delivered and after to help nurture accounts. You can take it a step further by sending out calendar reminders, which include all of the necessary information, such as Salesforce campaigns, links to email templates and campaign rollout materials, to ensure that Sales follows-up.

## MEASURE AND ITERATE

While direct mail is an offline tactic, you'll still want to measure its impact the same way you measure all of your other ABM campaigns, with metrics that are tied to revenue:

**1 SCHEDULED MEETINGS**

**2 MEETINGS AND PHONE CALLS COMPLETED**

**3 PIPELINE AND CLOSED REVENUE**

## THE PLAY: MAKE DIRECT MAIL A PART OF AN INTEGRATED CAMPAIGN

You can extend the power of your direct mail campaigns by folding them into broader initiatives:

- Set up a customized landing page with a similar theme and include it as a call-to-action in your direct mailer
- Deliver retargeted ads that reference the direct mail send after it's been received
- Make social sharing a component of your direct mail campaign
- Connect direct mailers to other initiatives like webinars, eBooks, podcasts and company announcements

By viewing your direct mail campaigns as broader ABM initiatives, they'll not only have a longer life, but Sales will also have multiple opportunities for outreach, which will ensure their success breaking into key accounts.

## ADVERTISING

Display advertising is often thought of as a top-of-the-funnel tactic, focused on driving awareness and generating a large number of leads. But under an ABM umbrella, marketers start to think more strategically about their advertising campaigns. Instead of advertising to the entire world, advertising campaigns become more narrow and only target a specific set of accounts. Most B2B marketers who run Account-Based Advertising campaigns find they make a bigger impact with the tactic, while reducing the amount they spend on advertising.

## THE GAME PLAN

### IDENTIFY CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

B2B advertising is not a standalone endeavor. Not only does it need to be integrated into your overall marketing programs at a strategic level, it also needs to ladder up to broader business goals. Every advertising campaign you run should help support a larger company objective. Here are some questions you can use to identify key corporate objectives:

- Do you have a long list of customers you need to renew?
- Are you launching a new product, which needs buzz and awareness?
- Do you need more web traffic from your target accounts?

Advertising can help support all of these initiatives, and by connecting advertising to company objectives, you'll have a clear view into measuring the success of your campaigns.

### DEFINE SEGMENTS

In addition to understanding company goals, you'll want to define segments for your advertising campaigns. Some common segments for B2B companies include target accounts, at-risk customers, customers you're looking to upsell and partners.

## BUILD MESSAGING AND CREATIVE THAT ALIGNS

Different segments will require different creative and messaging. For example, if your goal is to drive Q2 renewals, you'll want the creative and messaging for that particular to be customized for your customers. You can continue this experience by linking ad creative to your website, so users are guided through a connected experience.

## PRACTICE SMART MEASUREMENT

Traditionally, when marketers negotiate, plan and purchase ad campaigns, CPM (cost per thousand impressions) and CTR (click-thru rates) are critical metrics. But implicit in these metrics is the assumption that impressions and clicks lead to purchases and new customers, which as we all know, isn't the case in the B2B world, given its long and complex sales cycle. It really doesn't matter how many impressions or clicks you get, if they aren't from the right people. Instead, you'll want to measure whether an advertising campaign resulted in lift onto your website, and from there, how many accounts engaged with your website and then converted into pipeline.

## THE PLAY: RUN A PERSONALIZED ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN

Targeting a specific company is a good first step, but B2B marketers can up-level their advertising game by adding personalization in the mix. Work with an account-based advertising vendor to personalize ad creative to by industry, vertical or company name.

### COMPANY PERSONALIZATION

**Health Pointe**

could see 3X  
the shared savings

know what  
athenahealth  
knows

SEE HOW

### INDUSTRY PERSONALIZATION

Is your Media & Entertainment industry  
only using lonely BIM?

BUILD YOUR PROFIT MARGINS  
WITH CLOUD COLLABORATION

AUTODESK.

## FIELD MARKETING

Field marketing takes on different meanings at different companies. For some, it's the regional events team. For others, it's a "spot treatment" function, designed to help sales reps with light pipelines or the target account team, which works with sales teams on the most valuable accounts. Whatever role it falls under at your company, with an ABM strategy, the field marketing team can be a proactive business partner to your sales team.



“With ABM, Field Marketing has transformed from a reactive, spot treatment sort of tactic to a proactive machine tightly aligned with Sales. We focus on the cities with the highest concentration of our target accounts, with a close partnership with Sales, easily defined KPIs, and upwards of 75% conversion of engaged accounts to pipeline opportunities.”

*Jessica Fewless*  
VP, ABM Strategy, Field & Channel Marketing



“Focusing my efforts on getting our brand message in front of a smaller list of key accounts — rather than the general public or blanket personas — has resulted in a noticeable amount of time saved, better allocation of event spend and a clearer way to pinpoint pipeline results from our efforts. I can evaluate event participation faster and can advocate for our field marketing dollars to go towards tactics that will help gain traction with the right accounts.”

*Kent Martin*  
Field Marketing Manager, Certain

# THE GAME PLAN

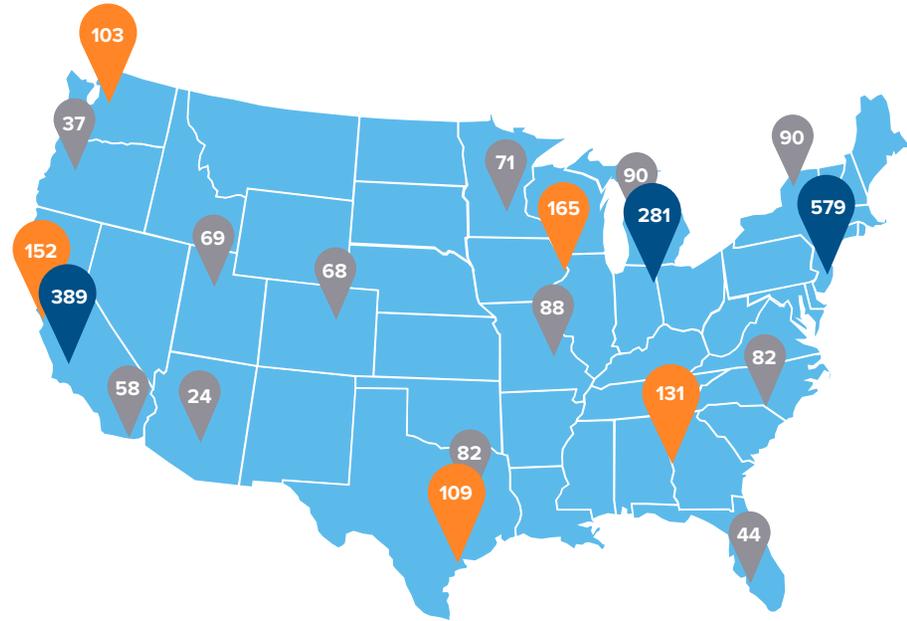
## ESTABLISH TERRITORIES

Start by mapping your target account list around the United States and other relevant territories. Then find the areas of greatest concentration (hint, they're usually major metro areas).

## IDENTIFY KEY CITIES AND ACCOUNTS

Next, based on your budget and headcount, determine how many cities you can reasonably cover.

If you have the bandwidth, you can add in a strategic account focus, with tailored plans to add marketing support to close the biggest opportunities for the company or support expansion within existing clients.



## BUILD YOUR STRATEGY

After you've identified the key territories you want to focus on, you can start to build programs in partnership with your sales team that satisfy the need for pipeline generation. With time, field marketing will become a consistent presence within these cities, running programs to provide momentum. When new sales reps come onboard, field marketing is there to help (since they already know the territory, the accounts in play, the pipeline and have programs on deck to help them ramp quickly).

## THE PLAY: RUN A SEGMENTED FIELD MARKETING PROGRAM

In addition to driving new pipeline, Field Marketing also plays an integral role in accelerating the pace of existing pipeline opportunities. You'll need to work with your Account Executives to do a quarterly audit of their current accounts and identify their top accounts. Field marketers can divvy up these accounts up and run a series of programs, from Account-Based Advertising and digital nurtures to direct mail and in-person events. Finally, you'll want to create Field Marketing specific dashboards to track the progress of the accounts over time.

## **PARTNER MARKETING**

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Very few businesses succeed without the help of a partner. Whether the partners sell, market, consult, collaborate or influence, they can help to scale a company's reach and ultimately drive revenue. That being said, not all partners are created equal. Rather than cast a wide net to lure a large quantity of partners, the key is to focus on high quality partners and form a symbiotic relationship with them to achieve mutual goals. As you look to develop a partner attraction campaign, an ABM approach can help you focus on the partners who will add the most value.

## **THE GAME PLAN**

### **CREATE A TARGET ACCOUNT LIST**

Drawing upon the same principles you used to build your target account list, bring together key stakeholders from both Marketing and Sales and discuss key criteria for ideal partners and match accounts that fit the bill.

### **IDENTIFY INDIVIDUAL TITLES**

After you've built a list of target accounts, you'll need to identify partnership decision makers within those accounts. In most cases, there will be two or more decision makers involved in the partnership process.

### **CHOOSE CAMPAIGN COMPONENTS TO ATTRACT AND ENGAGE NEW PARTNERS**

This step will look similar to the demand generation marketers out there. You'll want to use the same programs you use to engage new prospects—including a mix of online and offline tactics, from direct mail to Account-Based Advertising.

## THE PLAY: RUN A COORDINATED PARTNER CAMPAIGN

After you've engaged and signed on new partners, you'll want to work together to create a joint ABM strategy and build programs to drive collective revenue. While the process will look different from program to program, there some basic steps you'll both follow:

### CRAFT YOUR STORY

Before you start planning your campaign, ensure you and your partner have a solid story. If they're your partner, chances are, the story already exists. Work together to flesh out the story and build a case for why it's relevant to the accounts you're targeting.

### BUILD A JOINT TARGET ACCOUNT LIST

Forewarning, this step may require good faith on both parties. But in the end, it's definitely worth it and has far reaching benefits for your sales team—well beyond the joint campaign. Start by listing your target accounts in a shared doc to compare and contrast overlap. There a few things to keep in mind here:

- 1 Your customers may be on your partner's target account list and vice versa. This is important to ensuring a strong mix of prospects & customers. More importantly though, it outlines your mutual customers—they should be top of your list!
- 2 Your competitors may be on your partner's target account list. In order to ensure a valuable campaign for both parties, you'll need to disqualify competitors and non-viable accounts.
- 3 Align your reps. In your shared doc, list the Account Executive and/or Customer Success Manager. Broker the introduction between your Sales teams. Not only can they align on outreach but they can also build a mutually beneficial relationship in the future. After disqualifying, comparing and editing, you should have a joint target account list.

### COORDINATE YOUR OUTREACH

Once you've established your target account list, you can start to coordinate your outreach efforts. Depending on the level of your audience, you'll need to decide between generic company outreach or more personalized Sales/Customer Success and Executive invitations. If the audience is mostly executives, your event should personally invite mutual customers and top prospects.

## CONTENT MARKETING

Content marketing is an incredibly effective way to raise awareness about your brand, all while driving engagement and conversions. But traditional content marketing involves a lot of guesswork—you need to make assumptions about your audience and piece together a rough understanding of their challenges. As organizations make the move to ABM, they find that they no longer have to rely on guesses and assumptions. Instead, they can use their target account list as their guiding point and build content around their target accounts needs.



“An ABM world means my team and I can no longer just run broad-based, top of funnel marketing programs and have mediocre meetings falls out the other side. We need to narrow the beam. We’ve invested in understanding what our best customers look like so we can be more selective about who we target and what we pass to our BDRs. We’re looking beyond demographics and behavior, and we’re starting to include firmographics, technographics, and identifying known and anonymous visitors from key accounts who are really engaging with our content.”

*Elle Woulfe  
VP Marketing, LookBookHQ*

## THE GAME PLAN

### DO YOUR RESEARCH

Good content starts with a deep understanding of your audience. Who are you targeting? What are their needs? What challenges are they currently facing? How do they consume content? The great thing about creating content in an ABM world is the fact that much of this research already exists and can act as a strong foundation for your content efforts. You’ll want build upon this foundation and create a content strategy that addresses your target accounts needs and interests.

## AUDIT YOUR EXISTING CONTENT

When it comes to ABM, there's this common misconception that you need to create new content for each one of your target accounts. While you will create new content, given the fact that the needs and challenges of your target accounts will change over time, there's no need to start from scratch. In most cases, you probably already have a lot of content that's relevant. A content audit can help surface those pieces, help you understand where there are gaps and prioritize what you need to create.

## CREATE A CONTENT PLAN

After your content audit, you should have a good idea about what exists and what you need to create. Work with the rest of the marketing organization to prioritize themes and build big rock pieces, which can then be repurposed by the rest of the marketing organization.

## BUILD A DISTRIBUTION PLAN

Content creation is only half of the equation. The other half is distribution—you'll need to ensure your content gets into the hands of your target accounts. There are several ways to promote your content directly to your list:

- **Send out database promotions to specific companies**
- **Run a targeted content syndication campaign**
- **Build messaging for Sales Development and encourage they use your content for follow-ups and cold emails**
- **Social promotion**

## THE PLAY: PERSONALIZE CONTENT FOR A KEY VERTICAL

You can take the content you currently have—whether it's a white paper, infographic or eBook—and tailor it to fit a key vertical, such as Financial Services or Manufacturing. You'll just need to tweak the copy that introduces the piece, craft a more compelling call-to-action and add relevant imagery to the landing page. For example, you can take the latest eBook your content team just produced and tailor it to serve the healthcare industry. By adding healthcare terminology, highlighting your current healthcare customers and swapping out graphics for relevant industry imagery, you can transition the piece to fit the needs of your healthcare website visitors.

## SOCIAL MEDIA

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Social media isn't just about scheduling posts and sharing viral content. Its power extends well beyond a few tweets and LinkedIn updates—and when paired with the right strategy and technology, it has the potential to drive impactful value to your company's bottom line. Under an ABM umbrella, social media programs become more focused and proving each channel's value becomes an easier feat.



“ABM has helped significantly narrow the focus of social campaigns to align them with other ABM activities. By behaving in a far more tailored, focused fashion, ABM helps us to understand and reach our audience with precision.”

*Chris Penn  
VP, Shift Communications*

## THE GAME PLAN

### MONITOR TARGET ACCOUNT ACTIVITY

Your target account list will be the starting point for your account-based social efforts. Identify brand profiles and key stakeholders from the companies on your list and start monitoring their activity across your existing social channels. By simply following your accounts across social media, you can uncover a wealth of information and answer questions like:

- What types of content are they interested in?
- Do they share blog content, third-party articles or eBooks?
- What events and conferences do they attend?
- Which brands do they love?
- How do they interact with their customers?

Beyond monitoring account activity, you can also use social media to answer questions, respond to comments and start a dialogue with your company. From there, you can deliver all of these insights to Sales, which they can use to build relevant, engaging follow-ups. For example, if someone at one of your target accounts tweets out an interesting article about your industry, you can pass this information along to a sales rep, who can provide a unique perspective or additional resources.

## MOVE CONVERSATIONS OFFLINE

The conversations you have on social media can be the start of more important conversations about your industry, company and products. In addition to measuring your social efforts with traditional metrics like followers, favorites, likes, retweets, shares and mentions, you'll also want to track more robust indicators, including:

- Target account interactions
- Number of phone calls
- Meetings generated

## THE PLAY: INCREASE EVENT ATTENDANCE WITH TARGETED SOCIAL PROMOTION

At Demandbase, our Field Marketing and Sales teams work closely to leverage social tools to research key contacts within a target account before we launch a campaign. We've found that in addition to getting likes, retweets and comments, we also get the ability to walk into a meeting knowing a little bit more about our target accounts—whether it's their favorite sports team, a concert they just attended or a new restaurant they tried. This type of personal outreach makes the difference for our teams and it results in engagement and better conversations at the event.

## WEB MARKETING

As B2B marketers, the website is one of our most important channels. But unlike the rest of our marketing mix, we don't have the most control over the experience our audience has when they land on our homepage. In fact, every visitor that ends up on our website is looking for something entirely different than the next visitor. In an ABM world, this starts to change, as marketers gain a deeper understanding about the types of segments and companies visiting their website. Ultimately, ABM gives marketers the ability to control the messages on their websites and effectively reach all the decision-makers and influencers at a specific company.



“Modern digital marketing platforms like Adobe Experience Manager coupled with technologies like Demandbase allow us to target segments with relevant offers driving dramatic increases in conversions, leads and opportunities from our organic traffic. Because there are limits to the growth of your web traffic you need to optimize how you take advantage of that traffic.”

*Sean Browne  
Digital Marketing Consultant*

## THE GAME PLAN

### SEGMENT YOUR AUDIENCE

Website personalization is most effective when it's focused on a select group of people. You should focus your content and personalization on the companies and groups of accounts that matter most to your business. This could be a list of top prospect accounts fed to you by your sales team, a specific industry/vertical, current customers up for renewal or upsell/cross-sell opportunities or any other account-based segment. Once you've built out your segments, you can build personalization strategies based on needs of those segments. Your personalization strategy should include messaging specific to each particular segment that will resonate with them but also help you achieve business goals.

## SET A BASELINE

Before you can start optimizing your website for target segments, you'll need to measure a baseline of your current website. Here are a few metrics to guide your efforts:

<b>ARE THE RIGHT ACCOUNTS COMING TO YOUR SITE?</b>	<b>ARE THE RIGHT ACCOUNTS FINDING VALUE IN YOUR CONTENT?</b>	<b>ARE THE RIGHT ACCOUNTS TAKING THE DESIRED ACTIONS?</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Number of targeted companies on site</li><li>• Lift</li><li>• Sessions</li><li>• Bounce rate</li><li>• Sessions by channel/campaign</li><li>• Inbound clicks</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Time on site/page</li><li>• Avg. pages per session</li><li>• Avg. session duration</li><li>• Video starts</li><li>• Product page views</li><li>• Video completions</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Site goal completions</li><li>• Form completions</li><li>• Form page views from target company</li><li>• Sales chat initiations</li></ul>

## CRAFT THE RIGHT MESSAGES FOR EACH SEGMENT

Use an analytics application that can give you data on the companies that are actually visiting your website. From there, you'll want to understand the pages they're visiting and then make decisions about the pages you want to personalize. Once you've identified the pages you want to personalize, you can start to identify the content and messaging that's relevant. Something to remember here, you don't need an extensive library of content to be successful, instead, you can repurpose existing content and tweak the copy that introduces the piece and switch up imagery to deliver a more customized experience for your target accounts.

## THE PLAY: PERSONALIZE YOUR HOMEPAGE

Work with a personalization vendor to build a plan to optimize your homepage. Personalization tools draw on demographic and contextual data and give you ability to change up hero images and headlines based on accounts and verticals. You can even take it a step further and personalize customer logos based on that particular site visitor's industry.

Measure the impact of your new experience by testing the new homepage against the old one. A/B testing tools give you the ability to deliver a 50-50 split experience, where half your homepage visitors see the new personalized version, while the other half see the non-personalized version.

## CUSTOMER MARKETING

Whenever there's a conversation about ABM, it's usually in the context of driving new business. But while ABM is the go-to strategy for marketers looking to acquire net new logos, it can also be an effective way to deepen relationships with existing customers, increase overall engagement, drive upsell and cross revenue. In fact, according to data from TOPO and the ABM Leadership Alliance, a majority of companies surveyed cited customers as the key focus of their ABM efforts.



“Leveraging ABM for customer marketing has given us the ability to create customer-centric experiences and personalize our marketing to meet the ever-evolving needs of our customers.”

*Becky Higgins*  
*Senior Customer Marketing Manager, Demandbase*

# THE GAME PLAN

## SEGMENT YOUR CUSTOMER LIST

The great thing about using your ABM initiative for customer growth is that your target account list is already pre-built and ready to be segmented. Depending on the size of your list and the programs you're looking to run, you'll want to work closely with the stakeholders you've identified and segment your current customers into smaller groups. Common segments include: customers up for quarterly renewals, at-risk customers, upsell customers, advocates and demographics, including industry and geography.

## RUN PROGRAMS

After you've identified a specific customer segment to target, you'll want to work in lock-step with the rest of your marketing organization to pull together relevant programs and content to address that specific segment's needs. For example, if you're looking to upsell customers on a new product, you might want to work with your product marketing team to pull together some relevant content on why your solution addresses their particular needs. From there, you can enable your stakeholders and ensure they have the tools they need to support your initiatives.

## MEASURE YOUR EFFORTS

Measure your customer ABM efforts the same way you measure your demand generation efforts, with metrics that are tied closely to revenue, including pipeline (upsell opportunities), close rates, win/loss rates, Annual Contract Value (ACV) and funnel velocity.

While not necessarily tied to revenue, engagement also plays a crucial role in customer marketing. Understanding which events drive high attendance, which emails drive opens and clicks and which accounts are most engaged can help lead to better segmentation and identification of customer advocates.

## THE PLAY: LAND AND EXPAND WITH ACCOUNT-BASED ADVERTISING

Run quarterly advertising campaigns focused on driving quarterly renewals. Since you and customers already have a personal relationship, it's important that the ads you run are part of a conversation and include creative and copy that's custom tailored for them.

In addition to targeting customers up for renewal, you can also extend your advertising efforts to reach other business units at that particular target account. Many large companies have separate divisions within their organization, each one with their own marketing budgets. You can use your success with a current division to promote further product adoption across the organization. By advertising to those individual business units, you can further expand your company's existing footprint.

## SALES ENABLEMENT

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Sales and marketing alignment is key to the success of your ABM strategy. But alignment means more than just agreeing to focus on accounts and metrics. True alignment requires a close partnership between Marketing and Sales on everything from campaign development to messaging and measurement. With tight alignment, campaigns will become more successful, and Sales will have everything they need to knock their numbers out of the park.



“As you start to think about investing in ABM technology, you’ll want to keep the needs of both Sales and Marketing in mind. If you have multiple point solutions that don’t integrate intelligently, it can create unneeded complexity or holes in your sales and marketing strategy. Instead, look for vendors that offer end-to-end ABM solutions that span across the entire sales and marketing funnel.”

*Brandee Sanders  
Director of Digital Marketing and Analytics, Blackline*

## THE GAME PLAN

### SET UP COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

In addition to regular meetings with Sales, you’ll also want to set up a system of communication. This can include monthly content newsletters, weekly campaign prioritization emails or microsites, which can help your Sales teams prioritize follow-up with their target accounts. At Demandbase, we send out weekly emails, calendar invites, and pre/post campaign enablement emails, and house all program details on the Marketing Center (our microsite), which help our sales team tier and prioritize outreach to the accounts in their region.

## **DELIVER CAMPAIGN MATERIALS**

Sales enablement should be a part of your campaign workflow. With each campaign you run, you'll want to build in sales-specific messaging to help your sales development team understand the details of that specific program, including the target accounts involved, goals and measurement, as well as follow up guidance, messaging and templates.

## **ANALYZE QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE AND PIPELINE**

Work with Marketing Operations to build a set of performance reporting dashboards. These will be reviewed by the ABM Leadership Team on a regular basis and will act as the single source of truth for the success of both Marketing and Sales when it comes to engaging and converting target accounts.

## **THE PLAY: FIELD IDEAS FROM SALES**

In any high functioning marketing team, there's no shortage of good ideas (or puns for that matter). But every once in awhile, we find ourselves reaching for the same programs or relying on the same old campaigns to generate new business. In situations like these, it can be helpful to reach across the aisle and field ideas from our sales counterparts.

At Demandbase, we hold a quarterly competition with our SDR team to drum up ideas and interest for new campaigns. Because our SDR team works closely with our prospects and customers, they have a strong understanding of their needs and can provide detailed information about target account needs and challenges. As a result, the ideas that flow in are always relevant and exciting.

# WORKING TOGETHER: RUNNING AN INTEGRATED ABM CAMPAIGN

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## STEP 1: UNDERSTAND YOUR AUDIENCE

A well planned ABM campaign starts with your target account list. You'll need to work closely with Marketing Leadership and Marketing Operations to determine if your campaign is geared to the broader group or focused on key segments. Based on the audience you select, you'll want to spend time understanding their needs and building messaging and programs that resonate.

## STEP 2: DESIGNATE A CAMPAIGN OWNER

While the integrated campaign will require collaboration and coordination from everyone on your marketing team, you'll need to assign ownership to one single campaign owner. They'll be on the hook for setting up regular meetings, checking in with individual stakeholders to ensure progress and measuring and reporting results as the campaign comes to a close.

## STEP 3: COORDINATE A SET OF PROGRAMS

This step will require the most collaboration from across the organization. Demand Generation, Content, Social Media, Field, Partner, Customer and Web Marketing will need to work together to determine the right mix of programs to execute as part of the broader campaign. Regardless of what channels your campaign includes, you'll need to meet on a regular basis and brainstorm how the various programs fit together.

## STEP 4: INITIATE SALES TEAM FOLLOW-UPS

Successful integration requires you to work closely with your entire sales team. From ideation to campaign deployment, you'll need to ensure Sales is looped in and understands both the messaging and individual campaign components.

## STEP 5: MEASURE RESULTS

Perhaps the most important part of any integrated campaign is ensuring you have the right attribution methods in place to measure the impact of each individual program. Marketing Operations will play a crucial role in setting up those methods and communicating results across the marketing team and will need to work with stakeholders from Demand Generation, Field, Partner, Customer, Web, Content and Social Media Marketing to ensure programs and efforts are measured effectively.

# BECOME AN ABM EXPERT AT YOUR COMPANY

Demandbase offers two ABM Certification courses online that you and your team can take in the convenience of your home or office. An Expert-level course is also offered in select cities throughout the year.

## **FOUNDATIONS ABM CERTIFICATION**

Learn the importance of Account-Based Marketing and gain how-to tips that'll get you started on the path to success.

## **ADVANCED ABM CERTIFICATION**

Get best practices on topics including sales & marketing alignment, target account list development, metrics and budgeting.

Register now: [www.demandbase.com/cert](http://www.demandbase.com/cert)

**ABM**  
CERTIFIED  
STRATEGIST

## CONCLUSION

Now that you have a good understanding of how roles and responsibilities change, Demandbase can help coach you through the next phase of your ABM journey. Visit [www.demandbase.com](http://www.demandbase.com) to learn more.

## DEMANDBASE

Demandbase is a leader in Account-Based Marketing (ABM). The company offers the only Artificial Intelligence-enabled, comprehensive ABM platform that spans Advertising, Marketing, Sales and Analytics. Enterprise leaders and high-growth companies such as Accenture, Adobe, DocuSign, GE, Salesforce and others use Demandbase to drive their ABM strategy and maximize their marketing performance. The company was named a Gartner Cool Vendor for Tech Go-To Market in 2016. For more information, please visit [www.demandbase.com](http://www.demandbase.com) or follow the company on Twitter [@Demandbase](https://twitter.com/Demandbase).

