



Insight Into Account- Based Marketing: Boosting Sales & Marketing To The Next Level

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INTRODUCTION

What is account-based marketing?

In 1906 Italian economist Vilfredo Pareto noted that roughly 80% of effects come from 20% of causes. Fast-forward more than a century to today. Commonly known as the Pareto Principle, it's an axiom of good business management that 80% of sales come from 20% of clients.

Pareto would have loved account-based marketing. That's because in today's hyper-competitive climate it allows companies to target "who matters most" – high-value accounts – and connect with them throughout the entire sales funnel. What's more, they can target decision-makers and influencers within a single account and develop high-touch sales and marketing strategies that appeal directly to them based on their buyer personas.

ABM BACKGROUND

Account-based marketing (ABM) has its roots in the 1990s, when B2C and B2B companies began to realize the need for more personalized marketing. But it wasn't until recent years that it really began to catch on, especially in the B2B space with the shifting emphasis on demand generation and inbound marketing. As businesses become data-rich and with the rise of predictive analytics, more CMOs are viewing it as an important part of their toolkit.

ABM raises the sales and marketing stakes by targeting one company (or one account) and further targets the decision-makers within this account with coordinated and high-touch sales and marketing tactics. It takes mass marketing and targets it to a market of one for that specific message.

According to a recent survey by the Information Technology Services Marketing Association (ITSMA) and the ABM Leadership Alliance, 89% of respondents reported a higher return on investment from ABM than traditional marketing initiatives if their ABM program was in place for more than two years. A vast majority (85%) of companies - even those that have not had an ABM program in place for two years - are still seeing better ROI with ABM.

Benefits of Account-Based Marketing:

- Detailed, enhanced tracking of customer engagement
- More personalized communications with prospects
- More efficient use of marketing resources
- Closer alignment of sales and marketing
- A defined return on investment

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METHODOLOGY



When Coffee + Dunn work with clients we emphasize a few basic steps in the process.

1. Identify key target accounts. While this sounds simple, it's often where success or failure starts. An ABM strategy implicitly is about FOCUS. Getting the management teams in sales, marketing and the business units to agree on the critical few is crucial and, as you can imagine, risky. ABM helps break down siloes that have traditionally existed between sales and marketing – but this requires strong executive sponsorship from sales.

Account-Based Marketing Can:

- Identify and create segments of high-value accounts.
- Identify key stakeholders to reach within each account.
- Create personalized content, such as emails, based on account.
- Generate account-level leads and nurture them through the demand-generation funnel.

Keep in mind that ABM is all about strategy rather than tactics. When you do the hard work up front, gather the insights and work in alignment with sales, you're in a much better position to pick the most appropriate tactics and deliver them in a timely and intentional way to secure the desired outcome.

Identifying key accounts is done by 80/20 with processes for rating strategic accounts. Ask, 'What is the common makeup of organizations that bring in the largest monthly recurring revenue? This can include the company size, revenue, and upsell opportunity for the accounts that yield the highest long-term profits.

The process may likely consist of both quantitative and qualitative research. For example, consider partnering with customer-facing employees in your sales and customer service teams to learn from their experiences.

The information you can gather from employees who work on the front-line with prospects and customers is extremely valuable because of their first-hand knowledge of customers and prospects. First, look for data you have on hand to support your assumptions.

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2. Create an objective account profile. Think of building an individual buyer persona but at the company level. The idea is to flesh out the target company's goals, business pressures and priorities and ultimately map out how they uniquely make buying decisions. A target account is typically quite a large, complex organization, so the buying journey can be intricate.

Learn everything you can about the decision makers and how decisions are made. Some helpful tools can be your own CRM program and social networks like LinkedIn.

3. Build a sales goal plan. Lay out your specific offerings and connect them to regions or buyer groups. Identify the channels and tactics necessary to drive the target results.

A multi-channel, integrated approach is likely to be most effective, reflecting a buyer's need for a variety of interactions, both human and non-human. "It's a myth that buyers prefer their early interactions to only be non-human. The data shows that buyers want a variety of interactions," says Barry Vasudevan of SiriusDecisions.

"A buyer's journey map must capture and reflect variety to effectively engage buyers."

Understanding the full buyer's journey and delivering a rich mix of interactions is essential in order to give them what they want. Also important is understanding where prospects spend their time online and what their state of mind is when they're on social media platforms.

4. Develop a campaign schedule. Plan relevant touches and the associated offers. We cross-review personas, messaging and cadence to make sure we are not overloading then lay out the delivery plan from there. Developing a critical mass of relevant creative and digital content to support the campaign -- content that is specific and relevant to target roles -- is key.

92%

of companies recognize the value of ABM and see the strategy as a 'must have' for B2B Marketing.*

*According to The 2015 State of Account-Based Marketing Study conducted by SiriusDecisions.

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GET READY TO MODERNIZE YOUR CONTENT THINKING



The channels for your AMB campaigns may include:

Email & Direct Mail (Drip Campaigns)

Proactive, outbound email and direct mail to targets

Real-time Web Personalization

Deliver account-specific or industry-specific content on landing pages

Partner Campaigns

Campaigns in collaboration with business partners

Display Advertising

Reach ideal contacts at targeted accounts

Social Media Advertising

Advertising via custom audiences and Google's customer match

5. Deploy and measure. The beauty of ABM is that the campaign can be adjusted as audience reactions to your content are noted and measured. Did our personalized content prove to be engaging? If so, how? Which targets became more engaged and moved down the sales funnel? Measuring results will be easier because, rather than casting a wide net over a faceless audience, you are gauging the reaction of a smaller, more influential set of customers . . . and can draw clearer conclusions on campaign effectiveness.

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DYNAMICS 365 ENHANCED FEATURES



Rich segmentation experience – Enables marketers and business analysts to create segments more easily and efficiently. A host of new business-centric operators make it simpler for users to create detailed audience segments and buyer personas.

Custom analytics – Dynamics 365 collects wide-ranging and detailed information about how contacts interact with your marketing initiatives. Users can build custom analytics to support their organization's specific business processes to drive good decision-making. KPIs, charts and graphs can be embedded right into the app, where marketers need them most.

Social listening for campaigns – Analyzes social media channels to find relevant posts and evaluate user sentiment related to any topic you choose. Then you can place relevant social media analytics right next to the other insights you've collected for any customer journey, account, contact, or other relevant record.

Deep LinkedIn integration – Enables you to better generate leads from professional networks and relationships. New integration features let you run journeys that specify targeting on LinkedIn and leverage resulting interactions for orchestration, scoring and segmentation.

Account-based marketing is not something to be undertaken and invested in simply because it's a hot new trend. Nor is it intended to replace mass marketing initiatives geared toward driving awareness and traffic. Rather, it should be adopted as part of a cohesive demand-generation mix that blends both inbound and outbound tactics. It's the next level in the integration of sales and marketing to high-value accounts.

ABOUT COFFEE + DUNN



Coffee + Dunn is an industry leading connected experience partner uniquely focused on building effective customer engagement through the strong alignment of **technology**, **operations**, and **strategy**.

Our award-winning services enable our clients to drive growth and optimize value. We serve various industries, including financial and B2B professional services, manufacturing, healthcare, education, and not-for-profit and member-based organizations.