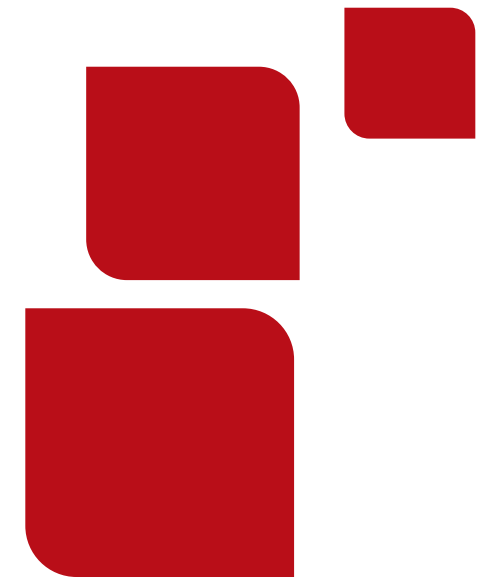


# How to Build a High Performing **ABM PROGRAM?**

A Strategic Insight into the  
Account-Based Marketing



**eBook**



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## INTRODUCTION

The concept of Account-Based Marketing has been around long enough for it not to be categorized as a modern marketing strategy. In fact, if you have been around the B2B marketing space, you would know that it is one of the most effective marketing strategies for B2B marketers. So, what essentially qualifies as ABM, and why do we still have debates surrounding the ABCs of ABM?

At its core, ABM is all about “opportunity creation” by directing your marketing efforts on your existing accounts that are already customers of your products or services. Right from the outset, it looks like a recipe for success, doesn't it? Unfortunately, though, not all ABM campaigns achieve the desired business outcome they set out to achieve. Thus, the debate around the ABCs of ABM. However, despite all those arguments, there's no conclusive evidence that ABM does not work. If anything, it sheds more light on the fact that there is an opportunity to build a more robust, practical, and scalable account-based marketing program.

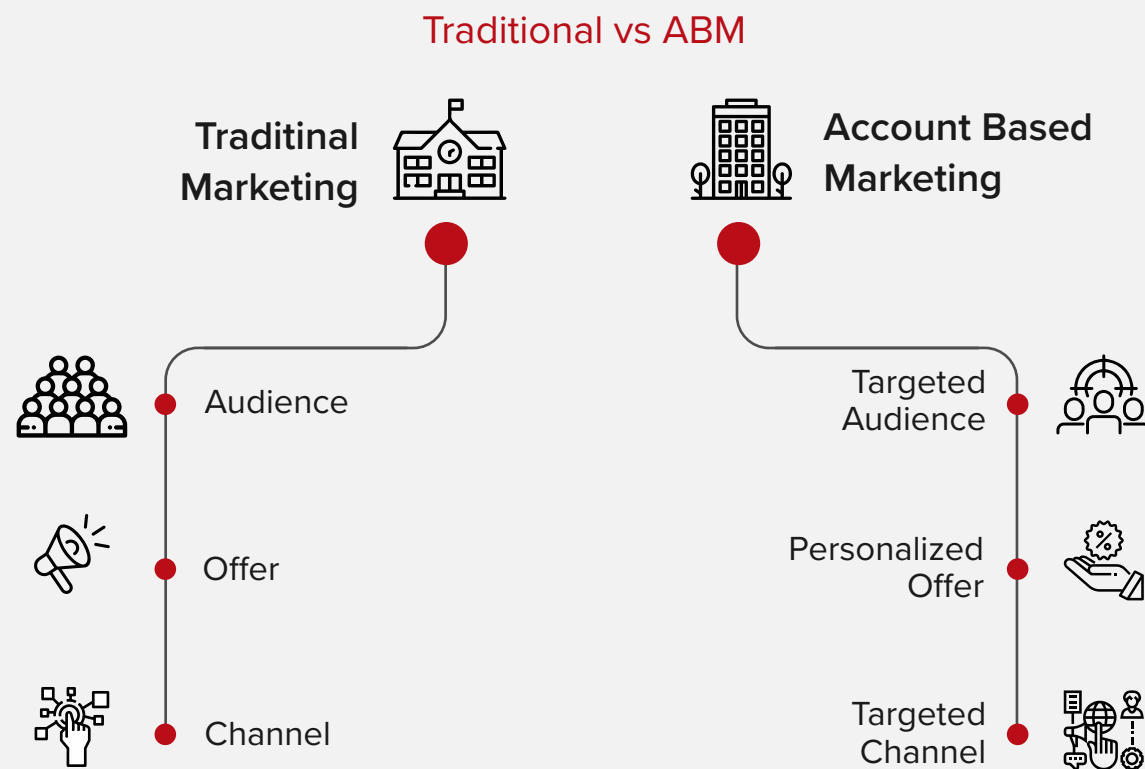


Figure 1: Traditional Marketing vs Account Based Marketing

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65% of B2B buyers prefer to conduct their purchase research online rather than work with a salesperson.

— FORRESTER

A recent survey established that over 70% of B2B marketing teams now have dedicated teams or employees for their ABM programs. Account-based marketing remains one of the most trusted marketing campaigns, with businesses still putting their trust, resources, and capital into their ABM initiatives.

To further strengthen the belief in the account-based marketing program, we have decided to build a step-by-step guide for building a high-performing ABM engine for modern B2B marketers. The eBook will shed light on different aspects of building a successful ABM strategy and various components that contribute to the success of an ABM campaign.

### Key Components of An Account-Based Marketing Program

A successful ABM program results from a cohesive effort by the sales and the marketing team. Each of the two groups has a pivotal role in identifying, prioritizing, and focusing on the below crucial components for the success of the account-based marketing program.

- Identification of target accounts
- Prioritization of targeted account lists
- Identification of buying team contacts
- Initializing engagement with target accounts
- Account intelligence to enable sales

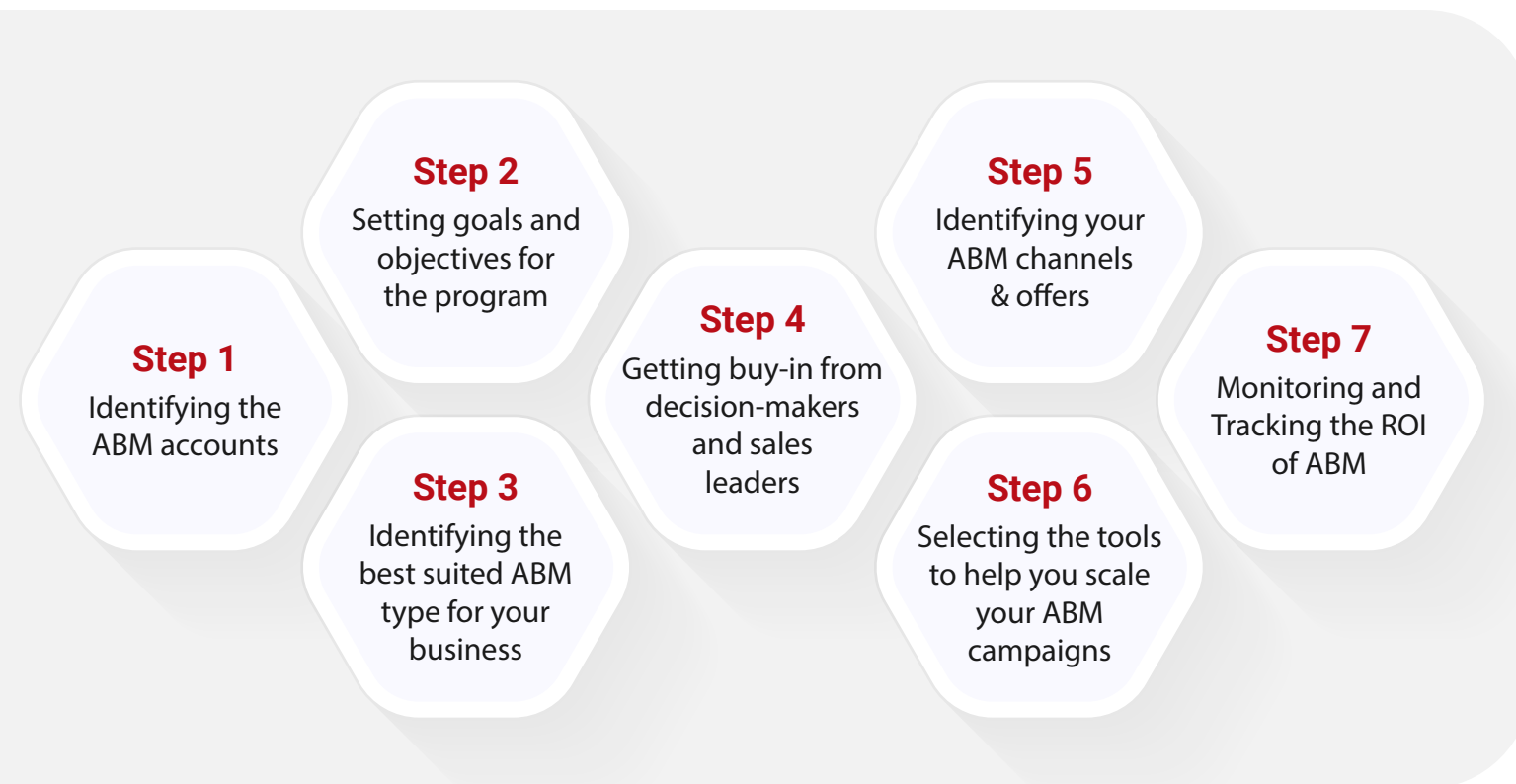
The success of your account-based marketing campaign depends mainly on identifying the target accounts. It could be the decisive factor in the outcome of your program, so you must be very thorough with account identification and consider every possible factor. It is worth mentioning that the sales team should not be the only one selecting the target accounts; collective feedback must be taken and contemplated on.



## BUILDING A HIGH PERFORMING ACCOUNT-BASED MARKETING PROGRAM

Whether you are building your first account-based marketing program or want to improve your existing program, you need to adopt a meticulous approach to yield the desired results. Here, we have listed a step-by-step approach to building a high-performing account-based marketing program. These steps are at the core of every successful account-based marketing program but certainly are not the fixed structure to which every ABM campaign must adhere.

So, based on your business or as the B2B marketing space evolves, we can see some amendments, addition, or even reduction in these steps. However, these are good stepping stones for anyone looking to start their journey into the world of account-based marketing.



Let us go through each of these steps in detail, and by the end of it all, we hope you will be able to create a best-in-class account-based marketing program for your business.

### Step 1: Identifying The Target ABM Accounts

When finalizing your target ABM accounts, you must consider the firmographic, behavioral, and technographic data to identify the list of potential accounts in the market for your products or services. This will give you your Ideal Customer Profile (ICP), which will set your ABM in the right direction.

Here are a few vital considerations to help you build your ICP:

- Define your ideal customer
- Do you have marketing and sales teams in consensus for the selected accounts?
- Is your ICP hindering your reach to any potential customer or prospect?
- Does the target account list match the ICP?

Once you have the answers to all the above, you can start building your ideal customer profile leveraging your data points for your customers in the market. Once you have defined your perfect customer profile (ICP), you can use that information to identify the market accounts that perfectly fit that profile.

You can build your account list based on:



While determining your account list is a good solid step towards building a successful account-based marketing program, it's worth mentioning that it is not the ultimate step. It would be best to remember that targeting all the accounts you have identified is somewhat unreasonable. Hence you need to prioritize your accounts in such a way that your maximum efforts are targeted toward the accounts that will yield maximum ROI.

## Step 2: Setting Goals and Objectives for the Program

Every marketing campaign needs specific goals and objectives to be successful and effective. ABM is no different. Having said that, your goals and objectives need to be realistic and must be agreed upon with the stakeholders.

You can start by having an overarching goal to measure the program's success; you can include KPIs to help you keep track. For example, increasing engagement & building a pipeline can be the overarching goals for your program; you can then attach specific KPIs to those goals to help you keep track of your success.

Here is an example of goal setting and objectives for an effective ABM program.

KPIs	Goal	Achievement	% to Goal
Get contacts added to identified accounts	"X"	"X"	"X" %
Get "X" meetings scheduled	"X" Meetings	"X" Meetings	"X" %
Hold "X" meetings	"X" Meetings	"X" Meetings	"X" %
Convert "X" % meetings into opportunities	"X" Opportunities	"X" Opportunities	"X" %
Generate \$Y Pipeline	\$X Generated	\$X Generated	"X" %
Close \$Y Revenue	\$X Closed	\$X Closed	"X" %

Figure 2: Goals & Objectives For ABM

Some of the other useful metrics you can track include:



Grow senior executive engagement



Grow Market Qualified Account engagement (MQAs)



Increase average deal size



Shorten the sales cycle

## Step 3: Identifying The Best Suited ABM Type For Your Business

Like any other marketing practice, account-based marketing has evolved over the years. While the traditional in its true essence remains the dominant strategy for most modern marketers, the evolution has resulted in the emergence of different ABM types.

Traditional account-based marketing can further be categorized into three different subsets:

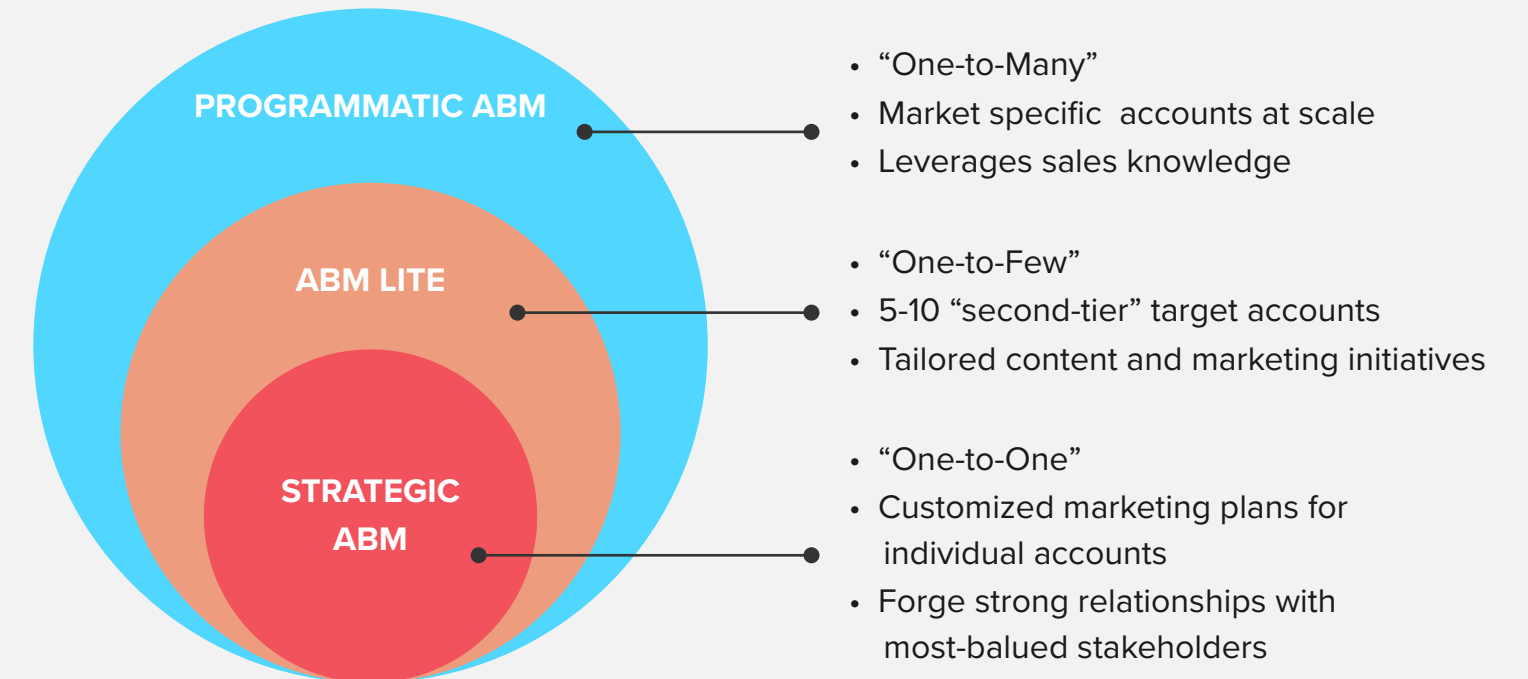


Figure 3: The Three Types of ABM

### Strategic ABM (One-to-One)

Strategic ABM, simply put, is the "traditional" account-based marketing. It requires a particular approach for the ABM campaigns, as they are hyper-personalized and focused on individual accounts. Strategic ABM also requires more investment compared to the other types of ABM. However, it also gives the highest ROI.

The critical components of strategic ABM are:

- Hyper-customized marketing leveraging the insights shared by the sales team
- Personalized relationship forging with the stakeholders of respective accounts
- Hyper-targeted marketing engagement to understand the business issues of your targeted accounts

## ABM Lite (One-to-Few)

ABM Lite does have the critical principles of Strategic ABM at its core. However, it waters them down a tad. ABM Lite focuses on the accounts that are commonly tagged “second-tier” within the organization and are clubbed with similar accounts. The success of ABM lite predominantly depends on the sales team's data.

For the success of ABM Lite, it's imperative to know:

- The accounts that can be clubbed together and need to be targeted
- The content and marketing campaigns that need to be created to target the identified account groups
- The key pain points for the identified accounts

## Programmatic ABM (One-to-Many)

The birth of Programmatic ABM (One-to-Many) can easily be attributed to the advancements in new technologies and the tools available to modern digital marketers. Programmatic ABM requires the marketing teams to work with sales teams to identify accounts (100s – 1000s) and devise creative ways to engage with them. While it requires heavy analysis of audience and targeting, thanks to the technology, it can be accomplished even by smaller teams.

- Use of technology for hyper-personalized campaigns targeted at specified accounts at scale
- Heavy focus on horizontal markets and vertical markets

## Step 4: Getting Buy-in from Decision Makers and Sales Leaders

A successful ABM program is as much about the targeted accounts and prospects as it is about the internal reports & stakeholders. All your sales leaders and decision-makers have a huge role in your ABM campaigns. They will help you identify –

- Who: The individuals in each of the accounts that you can reach
- When: The ideal time when you can approach these accounts/individuals
- Where: The most appropriate channel to reach out to these accounts/individuals

The sales leaders and decision-makers from whom you need the buy-in for your account-based marketing are the gatekeepers of your ABM program. Indeed, they will not form the core of your ABM team, but their contribution certainly will guarantee the success of your program.

**Some of the roles that you target to get the necessary buy-in to include:**

- Chief Marketing Officer (CMO)/Head of Marketing
- Chief Sales Officer (CSO)
- Chief Finance Officer (CFO)

As a B2B marketer, you must get these stakeholders on the same page and run your ABM strategy through them. It will help you articulate your goal with the ABM program in a more structured manner.

**Some of the vital points that you can discuss with the stakeholders include:**

- The objective of the ABM program
- The roadmaps for success
- The Goals and KPIs for the program
- The campaigns that will be part of your ABM campaign
- The individuals involved in your ABM campaigns and their possible roles
- The budget for the program

## Step 5: Identifying your ABM Channels & Offers

Once you have the buy-in from the vital stakeholders for your ABM program, it's time to give the final shape to your campaigns. In doing so, you will identify the channels and offers you will be leveraging to reach your targeted accounts. Now, earlier, we learned the three types of ABM programs you can leverage based on your requirement. So, it is worth mentioning that the channel and offer you select will largely depend on the type of ABM program you are running.

Here are some of the ABM channels you can leverage to target your accounts. You can further assign these channels to the type of accounts or the ABM program you will leverage them for.



It is worth mentioning that each of these campaigns will require unique content/collateral pieces that will have to be created, keeping the targeted accounts at the epicenter of each of those pieces. So, you must do a thorough content audit to identify and unearth the topics most relevant to your targeted accounts and the personas within those accounts. The more varied content you create, the better it will be for your campaigns. So, do not limit your content creation up to blogs & articles; you can explore landing pages, videos, podcasts, email copies, webinars, Etc.

## Step 6: Selecting the Tools to Help you Scale your ABM Campaigns

The marketing tools are as crucial as having a well-thought-out strategy for the success of an ABM program. In a recent survey, the three most prominent categories of tools that B2B marketers heavily relied upon for the success of their ABM campaigns included –

- CRM
- Marketing Automation
- Social Media

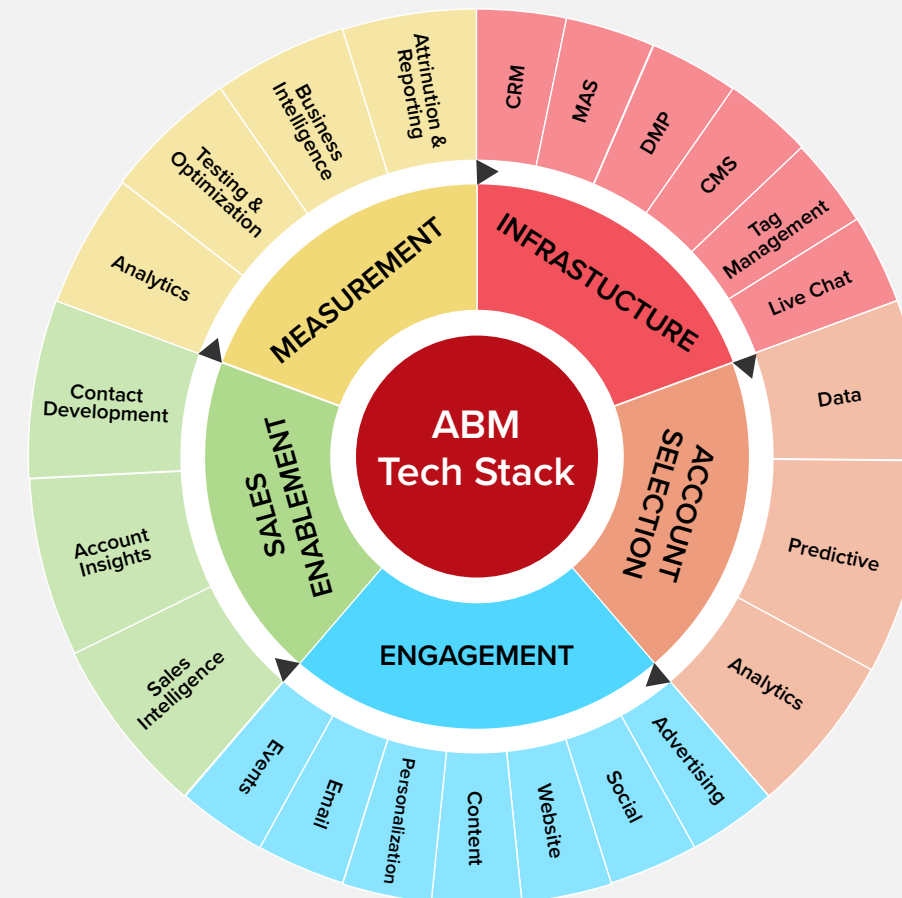


Figure 4: ABM Tech Stack

Now, these are rather broad categories of tools that modern marketers rely upon, and within each of those categories, you will find a hoard of tools that will meet your campaign requirement. You need to identify the best-suited one that falls under your budget.

Some tools might have a steep learning curve, which can overwhelm your team. However, dedicating some time and effort towards training on those tools could set you up for success in the foreseeable future. Remember, technology does have and will have a huge role to play in the future in marketing; if you're not already preparing for it or are staying updated, you run the risk of getting left behind.



## Step 7: Monitoring and Tracking the ROI of ABM

Whether you are doing account-based marketing manually using the traditional in-person methodologies or are leveraging advanced martech tools to execute your campaigns, you need to monitor and track each of your campaigns for effectiveness or ROI.

UTMs should be your best friend as a marketer, especially if most of your marketing activities or campaigns are online. Whether you are running email campaigns or dedicated social media campaigns, UTMs will help you track the effectiveness of all your channels, messaging, and offers attached to them. UTMs can also track the activities across your website and how your prospects engage with it.

In addition to UTMs, several other marketing automation tools will generate daily, weekly, or monthly reports for all your campaign for you to analyze and make tweaks as and when needed. You even can optimize your campaigns in real-time anytime you feel that there is a need for optimization.

Without proper success metrics and parameters associated with your campaigns, it's like swimming blindly; no matter how much effort you put in, you will never get anywhere. So, make sure that you are monitoring and tracking each of your ABM campaigns for effectiveness.

## BENEFITS OF SUCCESSFUL ACCOUNT BASED MARKETING

Depending upon the objectives and goals you've set for your ABM program, the benefits of successful account-based marketing can be different for different businesses. However, there are certain benefits that every business, irrespective of its nature of it, can expect from its ABM efforts. These benefits include:

- **Increased ROI:** Account-Based Marketing is a focused marketing program. Thus the spending in each campaign is also focused as opposed to broad-scale spending. This targeting spending automatically translates into increased ROI, as it minimizes wasteful expenditures.
- **Sales & Marketing Alignment:** Almost in every organization, sales & marketing are relatively independent entities. It creates a void between the two, which houses several untapped opportunities. But with dedicated tailored campaigns, businesses can tap on these opportunities and result in a beneficial alignment between the sales and marketing functions.
- **Deeper Client Connections:** Building a more profound and meaningful relationship with the clients has been the key to success for many modern businesses. The more you look after your clients, the higher the chances they retain you as a vendor. And ABM is centered around personalization and treating each account with absolute care. So, it not only forges deep client relationships but also pays dividends throughout the campaign.
- **Efficiency:** ABM eases the burden of budgeting and time from both sales and marketing teams. It shortens the sales cycle by targeting the key accounts and closing the deals faster, making the entire process much more efficient.
- **Exclusivity:** The goal of every marketing campaign ever has been to be exclusive. With ABM, you are exclusive right from day 1, thanks to your intimate understanding of your accounts, strategies, and goals, making it the ultimate exclusive campaign.





## FINAL THOUGHTS

What the future holds for B2B marketing and marketers needs to be seen, thanks to the enormous advancements in the space of martech. For now, it is safe to say that account-based marketing remains one of the modern marketers' most effective marketing strategies.

If you still have not explored the ABM avenue, there is no better time than now for you to engage in ABM. As we mentioned in the ebook, the world of ABM is vast, and depending upon your business need, you can try one or more aspects of ABM that best suit your business needs. If you still have some queries or are willing to embark upon your ABM journey, we will be happy to help you get started. Just write to us at: [marketing@datamaticsbpm.com](mailto:marketing@datamaticsbpm.com), and we will set you on the course to a successful ABM journey.





# THANK YOU

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With over 200K hours of research and consulting support delivered to a client base spread over 30+ countries, we address the B2B demand generation requirements of our client base with utmost precision.

