



Marketing2Connect

The Quick Guide to Account-Based Marketing

AN INTRODUCTION FOR B2B MARKETERS



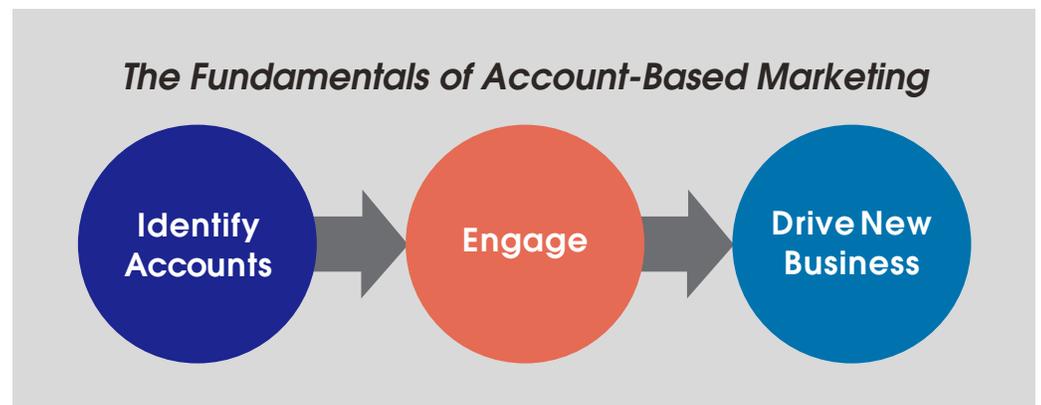
EDUCATE
EMPOWER
ACCELERATE

Account-Based Marketing

One of the biggest challenges in B2B marketing is reaching the accounts with the highest potential and the customers who are the best fit for your products and services.

Instead of wasting precious budget and resources trying to market to a large number of prospects and hoping that a few will be qualified and become customers, companies need to be more strategic. This is where account-based marketing comes into play.

Account-based marketing focuses your sales and marketing on the accounts you value most. You identify and target those accounts, engage them through personalized marketing campaigns, and convert them into new customers.



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Old-Fashioned Sales Strategy + Next-Generation Technology and Automation

Many B2B companies have been doing some form of account-based marketing for decades. Typical marketing has been done through sales teams. Targeting strategic and high-value accounts has long been a part of sales, but landing these accounts has historically been expensive and labor-intensive.

Thankfully, online marketing channels and newer technologies have revolutionized account-based marketing. Now your business can use new tools and strategies to scale up and automate your account-based marketing, strategically aligning your sales and marketing for maximum cost-effectiveness and better sales results.

The Process

1. Identify Your Target Accounts

The first step in account-based marketing is to identify your ideal accounts and develop a list of your ideal targets. These are generally the companies with the highest sales potential and those who are the best fit for your products and services. These may include existing customers, current prospects, or entirely new targets.

The account identification step offers a unique opportunity to align your sales and marketing teams. You can start by having your sales team share a list of key accounts and contacts it is already targeting, and your marketing team may be able to use your customer and sales data, industry trends, and market research to help determine a list of pre-qualified and prioritized accounts and contacts.

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Key Questions

- Who are your best customers?
- Which prospects are the best fit for your products or services?
- What characteristics do they have in common?



Build Role-Based Contact Lists

Understanding the key players at your target accounts is critical. They are the end users, influencers, and decision-makers that stand to benefit from your product or service. They are instrumental to helping you land new business. You need to know who they are, their roles and responsibilities, and the key issues and pain points they face within their organization.

By building role-based contact lists for your target accounts, you can address these individuals on their terms, tailor your messages to their unique needs and concerns, and execute distinct marketing campaigns to help you land their company as a new account.

If you do not have access to contacts who are not already customers or prospects in your sales and marketing, you can hire an outside resource to research new leads and contacts, or you can purchase a contact list based on criteria you specify.

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2. Select Your Channels

Digital Advertising

With advances in online advertising, digital technology, and ad networks, advertising campaigns can now be targeted to highly specific audiences based on keywords, geography, and sometimes even the account level. You can also personalize ad content for particular industries, job titles, and job functions, giving you the best chance to attract, engage, and convert your ideal accounts.

Retargeting

If your targeted accounts or contacts engage with your content and campaigns, but that first engagement does not turn into inquiries or leads, retargeting allows you to reconnect with your target and drive them into your sales funnel later.

For example, you can configure your digital ads to continue being served to visitors who come to your website or landing pages but move on to other websites or social media channels. Your advertising can continue to reach them days and even weeks or months later if desired. This keeps your brand and messages in front of your target audience, giving you further chances to drive prospects to visit to your landing pages, make an inquiry, and get into your sales funnel.

Social Media

Social networks, such as LinkedIn, have become important and effective channels for B2B marketers. By placing digital ads, posting and sharing content, engaging in online conversations, and sponsoring blog posts targeted for delivery to specific industries and job titles, you have an opportunity to reach a very specific B2B audience and your ideal customers.

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Direct Marketing

Traditional direct marketing, which includes direct mailers and sales emails, still has a place in contemporary marketing. Precision targeting and personalized messaging make direct mail and sales emails highly effective for account-based marketing. Such messages can be configured to offer free white papers, webinars, eBooks, or other content. These free offers can help you drive visits to your landing pages, where visitors can download your content in exchange for sharing their contact information, which can be forwarded to your sales team as a lead.

Email Marketing

Another highly effective and efficient account-based marketing channel is email. This can take the form of personalized sales emails distributed to CEOs or other key figures in a company. Additionally, multiple emails can be part of nurturing campaigns designed to move your target accounts through your sales funnel.

For example, you may execute a campaign that drives prospects to a landing page where they can sign up for a free weekly newsletter, a white paper, or a webinar. Once they sign up, you can send an email newsletter each week, or you can send other marketing emails with links to useful content, special offers, free demonstrations, or expert consultation.

With marketing automation, you can configure and schedule nurturing campaigns to happen automatically, minimizing your costs and the resources required to execute your marketing campaign.

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Other Channels

The right channels are often specific to the industry, accounts, and contacts you want to reach. Thus, there may be other marketing channels that are ideal for your campaigns.

The key is to understand your accounts and how potential customers engage content and messages relevant to their industry. Find out where they go to seek information about how to meet their business challenges or the products and services they use. Identify the channels your target consumers use, and use that knowledge to more effectively reach them. Choose the options that give you the best chance for engagement and conversion.

3. Develop Your Messaging

To attract, engage, and convert your target accounts and key contacts, you will need marketing messages and content. This can take many forms—from digital ads or marketing emails to white papers, case studies, webinars, and eBooks.

A key component of all your campaigns will be landing pages. These are web pages customized to engage your target accounts with personalized messages, offers, and free content. Landing pages also contain a fillable form to capture sales lead information from your visitors.

To download your content, visitors must complete the form and share their contact information. They receive immediate access to your content, and, in exchange, you get a pre-qualified lead that can be forwarded to your sales team or integrated into your nurturing campaigns or other account-based marketing efforts.

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Examples of B2B Marketing



Digital Ads



Direct Mail



Emails



White Papers



Case Studies



Webinars



eBooks

Do Not Reinvent the Wheel

Presumably you are already engaging in B2B marketing, so you may already have content available for inspiration, repurposing, and personalization. You may simply need to revise and update a particular piece so it speaks more readily to the unique needs of your target accounts. You may also want to tweak the content, design, or style to suit a particular industry, account, or role within a target organization.

Rather than focusing on reaching as many people as possible and delivering broad-based and generic content, you will be tailoring and personalizing your messages and content to your most valuable accounts.

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Personalize Your Content

To successfully attract and engage your audience, you need to personalize your content and offers so they speak to the roles and responsibilities of your key contacts, their business challenges, and their preferences for certain types and formats of content.

Think of it as identifying the exact accounts you want to win, the people you need to speak with, the conversations you need to have, and the offers you need to make to win a sale. Take these considerations into account and tailor your messaging accordingly.

Factors in Personalization



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A/B TESTING

To hone your efforts, you can conduct A/B tests to assess the effectiveness of multiple versions of ads and content, as well as different layouts and designs, landing pages, formats, headlines, and talking points. Once you determine which versions perform best, you can apply those elements in your future account-based marketing.

4. Execute Your Campaigns

Once you have a list of target accounts and contacts and personalized content, it is time to execute your campaigns. You may need to turn on your digital ads, distribute marketing emails, mail direct mail pieces, and otherwise manage the ongoing distribution of your campaigns and content through various marketing channels.

If you have an internal marketing team to manage the process, your marketing staff will typically handle these responsibilities. Otherwise, you may want to consider a third-party agency or resource that can manage your campaigns and the ongoing activity to ensure success.

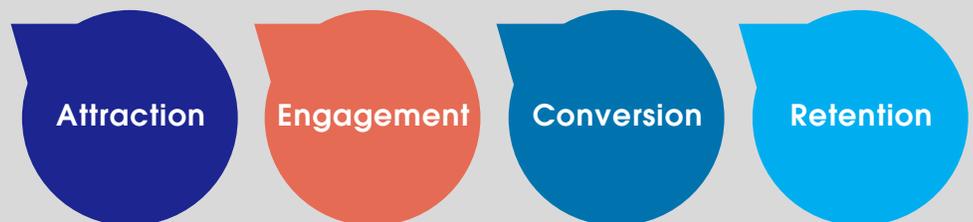
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5. Measure Your Results

Measurement should happen at every stage of your account-based marketing—from campaign distribution to engagement, click-throughs, downloads, and inquiries. As targets become prospects and move through your sales funnel, you can also measure your total opportunities, pipeline, closing rates, sales revenue, retention, and repeat business.

For example, you can track the number of marketing emails you send, how many are successfully delivered, how many are opened, how many generate clicks to your landing pages, and how many of these visits lead to content downloads and inquiries. With proper integration of your marketing analytics with your CRM or other internal sales system, you can even track this activity further, all the way through your pipeline to the final sale and the revenue for your business.

The metrics of your measurement can be sorted into several simple categories.



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Learn and Apply Best Practices

Based on your results, you will learn important lessons about your target accounts, key contacts, and the performance of your campaigns and content. You can use these insights to refine your future account-based marketing.

Through measurement, analysis, and continuous improvement, you can create increasingly effective campaigns and messages that will turn your initial successes into a recipe for high-performance marketing.

6. Land Your New Accounts

This is the best part! With successful targeting, engagement, and conversion, you can land high-value and ideal accounts that drive sales results and growth for your business.

By aligning your sales and marketing and then targeting, planning, and executing strategically, you will generate highly qualified leads for your sales team with greater efficiency and effectiveness than ever before.

These will be accounts with the greatest potential and the best fit for your products and services. As your sales team closes these new opportunities, you will earn major wins for your business.

Along the way, you will measure results and gather insights and intelligence that will drive future improvements in your account-based marketing. In turn, this continual improvement process will help you build on your success and generate greater sales and growth moving forward.

With successful targeting, engagement, and conversion, you can land high-value and ideal accounts that drive sales results and growth for your business.

Get Started With Account-Based Marketing

Marketing2Connect offers leading expertise in account-based marketing to help your company deliver high-impact marketing campaigns and connect with your ideal customers.

Our team of experts has a wealth of marketing experience across a wide array of industries, and we tailor our solutions to speak directly to your business model and goals.

We can work with you to align your sales, marketing, and lead generation in a comprehensive account-based marketing program that will attract high-value clients that are the best fit for your business.

CONTACT US TODAY



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