



# JUMPSTART YOUR ACCOUNT-BASED MARKETING



# WHAT IS ACCOUNT-BASED MARKETING?

Account-based marketing (ABM) can be an effective alternative approach to marketing for many businesses. It's important that marketers consider all the available methods to move the needle and drive revenue for their organization, and select the one that is most suited to their business.

Account-based marketing is, in many ways, the exact opposite of the traditional demand generation approach. Rather than reaching broadly across a large number of organizations, companies that employ an account-based marketing strategy focus their marketing and sales resources on a targeted set of accounts and look to deliver strategic, orchestrated campaigns personalized to those accounts. The accounts that you target with ABM are high-yield, and are often considered a better fit for your products or solutions. These accounts are likely to generate more revenue, and often have other strategic significance, like helping to penetrate new territories or influence a market.

ABM marketers aren't worried about driving a volume of purchase transactions typically, but rather, are focused on a select group of high-value customers. Many companies, particularly those seeking customers in specific industries or large enterprise customers, are better served by targeting specific customers rather than taking a broad-reaching approach to their sales and marketing effort. Maybe you're targeting educational institutions, large financial institutions, veterinarian offices, or any other specific, and identifiable target audience with your products and services. If that's the case, ABM might be the best approach for you too.

# GETTING STARTED WITH ABM

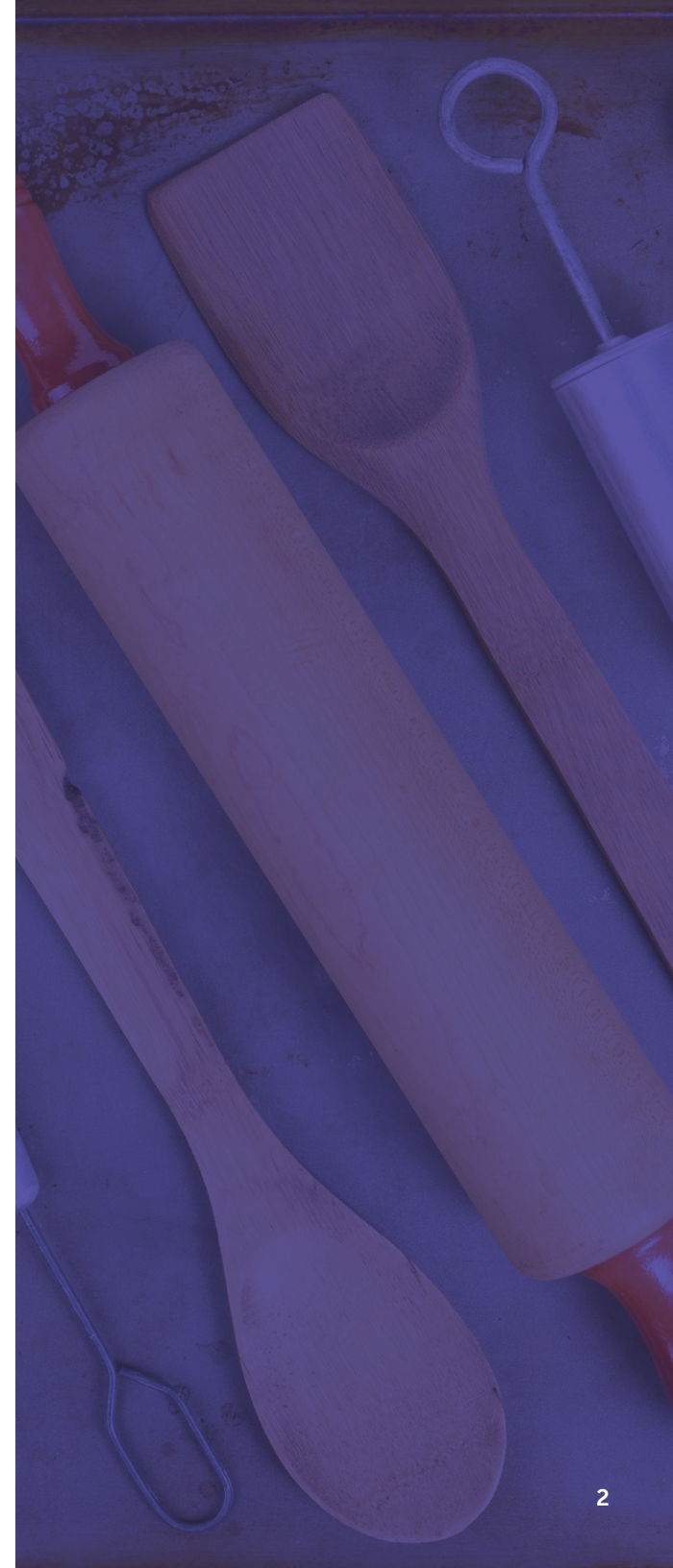
To jumpstart your lean ABM strategy, it's important that you lay the foundation for success—getting your stakeholders' buy-in and identifying your target accounts.

## Get Stakeholder Buy-In

To increase your chances of success, you'll want to get buy-in from key stakeholders. Share your plans for ABM with other departments that should be involved, such as sales and key executives. Make sure you start by educating them about the purpose and benefits of implementing an ABM strategy. Remember, different benefits will resonate with different stakeholders. For example, your sales team will want to understand how ABM will help them close more deals, whereas your CFO will want to understand why investing in ABM will provide greater ROI than your traditional marketing approach. Be sure to tailor your message internally based on the audience.

Additionally, you may want to put together a team that is responsible for the ABM program. For example, define an ABM group manager who is in charge of the campaign and sales people to watch for activity alerts and review account progress.

In some cases, when you're not sure if you will get corporate sponsorship immediately, but want to demonstrate how effective this strategy can be, you can get started with the steps below, and show your ability to impact accounts positively.



# GETTING STARTED WITH ABM

## Identify Target Accounts

This stage is slightly different for every organization because each company has its own unique targets and different reasons for going after specific companies or verticals. In some organizations, identifying target accounts may be as simple as the CEO or sales directors identifying accounts to pursue, and in others, there may be several factors you use in order to determine your target accounts.

Here are a few strategies you might use when identifying accounts for your ABM campaign:

- **High yield:** Identify top money-makers and big fish. These accounts are likely to result in much larger than average deals for your sales team and generate substantial revenue over the long term.
- **Fit with your product:** Look for companies with business needs that clearly match your solutions, which increases the likelihood they will purchase.
- **Quick wins:** Seek out accounts that typically have a short purchase decision process due to their size or structure.
- **Strategic importance:** You may want to target accounts that align to your company's strategy—for instance, if you're entering a new market or territory. Sometimes acquiring new, big logos is a strategic goal.

- **Competitors:** Target companies using competing products, whether it's to hit your competitors where it hurts, or simply because it's easier to make the switch with already educated users.
- **Territory:** Go after accounts in a specific region of the country to directly support sales. Sales teams are often segmented by territories and have target accounts within each of those territories. Helping sales people generate awareness and build pipeline in their region will make you their best friend.



# GETTING STARTED WITH ABM

To further identify which accounts, or types of accounts, you want to go after, do some research—it will help surface likely targets. These tips will give you some guidance on where to start your research:

- **Talk to sales:** The sales team has great insight into which accounts can be targeted effectively. They may have had conversations with companies that fell through or can give you a better idea of the kinds of accounts to pursue.
- **Review customer relationship management history:** Look in your CRM to discover which companies fit into the high-yield or quick win categories mentioned previously. After identifying enough of each, you can look for commonalities and create a profile of a company likely to generate large deals or, generate a list of names similar to those you already sold to.
- **Discover existing opportunities:** Check your marketing automation platform or CRM to find out whether any of the accounts fitting the profile you're going to target have engaged previously with your brand. For example, if have they downloaded content or frequently visit your blog. Accounts that have already engaged with you in the past may show quicker results once you target them with personalized campaigns.

- **Research competitors:** Look at competitors to source new accounts. Sometimes, identifying your competitor's customers is as easy as reviewing logos on a competitor's website. But other times you may need to get more creative. For example, if you are marketing software, use digital tools like Datanyze, Builtwith, or other resources to identify companies using your competitor's products. Additionally, if you notice that your competitor is doing well with certain types of companies, you may want to consider targeting that profile.



# GETTING STARTED WITH ABM

## Finalize The Account Lists

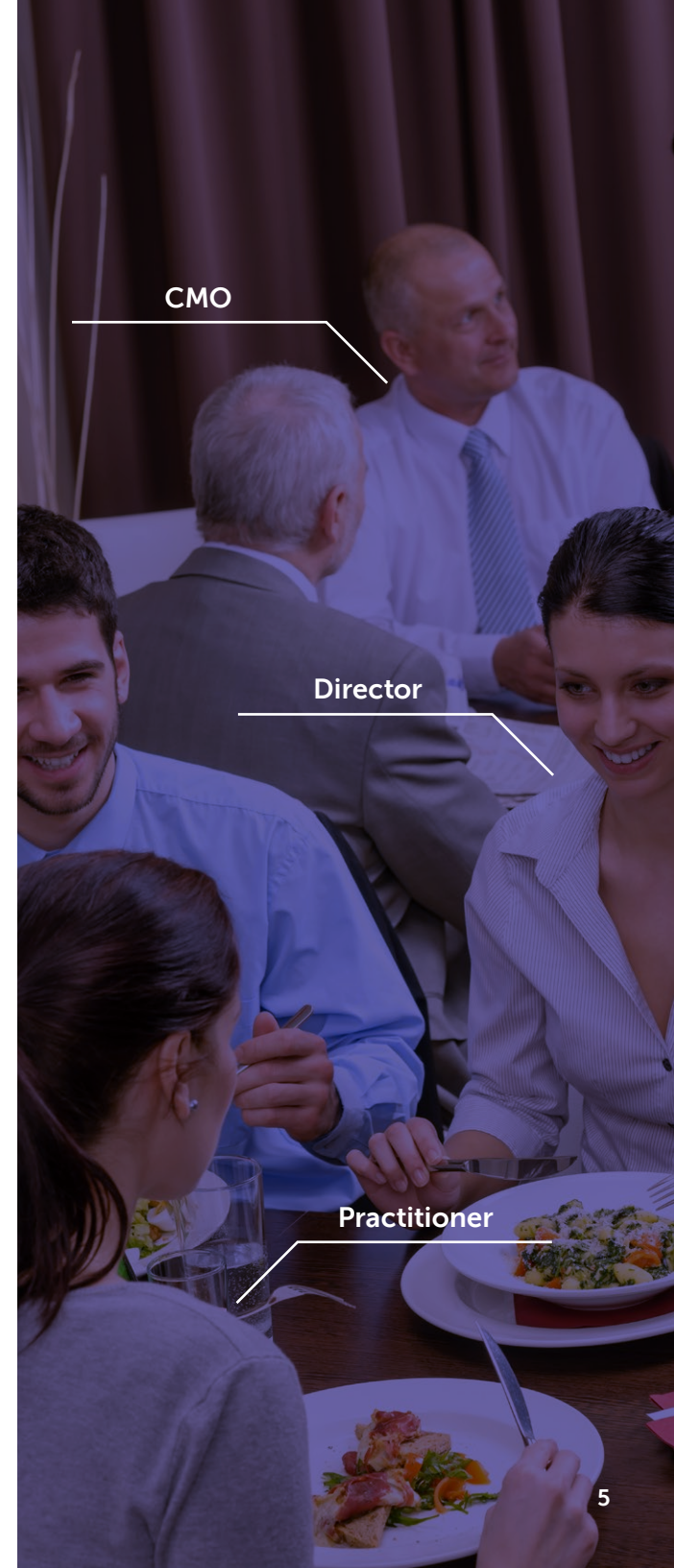
At this point, it's time to narrow down the list and choose exactly which accounts to target. To start, choose two to five lists of potential targets—it's better to focus on fewer lists as you're getting started, so you're able to iterate quickly and identify areas for improvement. This will help you train your organization's ABM muscles to deliver amazing results faster.

While you may have multiple lists and many targets, it's vital to prioritize your lists in order to demonstrate early success and maximize your ABM ROI. Give priority to the account types that are most relevant to you—the accounts where you have a good understanding of the potential buying journey and those that you already have content to support.

Next, if you are using any targeting tools that can engage accounts specifically, such as Marketo Lead Management and Real-Time Personalization, now would be the time to upload the lists of account groups in order to analyze performance and create targeted engagement campaigns across channels.

## Know Your Decision-Makers

Consider the different decision-maker personas within the target organization you are after. This high-level insight will help you create content to target accounts even more effectively, especially during the mid-to-bottom-of-the-funnel stages. While this is a bit more advanced, it's helpful to identify the different decision makers and roles in your target accounts. Even if you don't start with persona-specific targeting at the beginning, understanding the decision-maker personas will help you better understand the account/customer journey that's taking place.



# SET GOALS AND ESTABLISH INITIAL ANALYTICS

Get started by setting goals and analytics now; don't wait until campaigns are running to begin measuring. Set goals before beginning an ABM campaign—once you have a baseline of analytics for each account group, you'll be able to reasonably hypothesize how each campaign will perform.

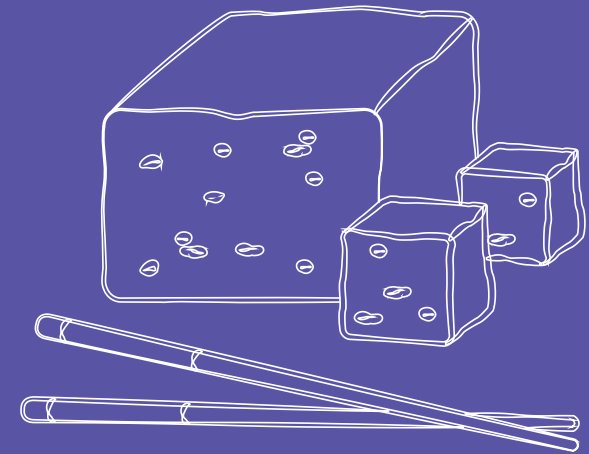
Initial analytics on the activity levels of your target accounts can help you plan and prioritize the rest of the process. For example, low activity from a group of accounts may indicate that you need to focus on generating awareness, while high activity suggests that targeting content to them will further educate them and generate more sales ready leads faster.

## Establish Analytics

The most important reason to establish analytics is because it creates a strong foundation for your ABM program reporting, but here are some additional benefits to setting up analytics first:

- **Get a baseline:** Determine the accounts' levels of interaction with you now so you can gauge future performance. Have they been to your website before or not? If so, have they downloaded or engaged with content? This information lets you know what you can initially expect from the account.

- **Provide value to sales:** Provide TOFU—top-of-funnel—intelligence to the sales team, so they have the information they need to keep an eye on account activity and gauge potential signals from buyers.
- **Get some quick wins:** Use the data to determine which accounts to prioritize. If a targeted account has already shown substantial engagement on your website or with your content, it might be a good idea to tackle that account immediately via sales, or begin the relationship with mid-funnel tactics.



*Provide TOFU—top-of-funnel—intelligence to the sales team, so they have the information they need to keep an eye on account activity.*

# SET GOALS AND ESTABLISH INITIAL ANALYTICS

## Measure Engagement

To understand how your target accounts are performing, one metric that you'll want to track, right from the start, is their engagement. To evaluate and measure the engagement levels of prospects from target accounts, consider tracking the following:

- **Ad views**
- **Visits to site**
- **Multiple visits from same organization**
- **Multiple visitors from same organization**
- **Leads generated**
- **Lead scores**
- **Opportunities**
- **Wins**

## Analytics That Inform

As you set up your reporting and analytics, it's important to see the status and progress of your ABM activities from a high-level program view down to the individual account activities. To do this, you want to have a dashboard that includes three different views—the summary view, the account list view, and the account view.

These views provide different levels of insight into your ABM activities. At a glance, here are the benefits of each view:

### View 1: Target Account Summary

This view shows the progress and health of your ABM efforts across all of your target account categories. It helps you quickly understand the status of your ABM efforts at a glance—from new names all the way to bookings generated.

### View 2: Account List

This view allows you to quickly compare your progress in one account to the progress in other accounts. It's a particularly useful view because it provides a way to visually benchmark your target account groups against each other. A list view allows marketers to quickly identify success in one account group and evaluate if it's an activity or process they can replicate in the others. It also allows marketers to identify and mitigate any issues with an account group.

### View 3: Individual Accounts

This view allows you to track your progress and see the health of your efforts in each specific account. This deep dive helps marketers identify areas for improvement, focus, and more investment. With this view, a marketer can see, at a glance, how an individual account is performing on each benchmark.



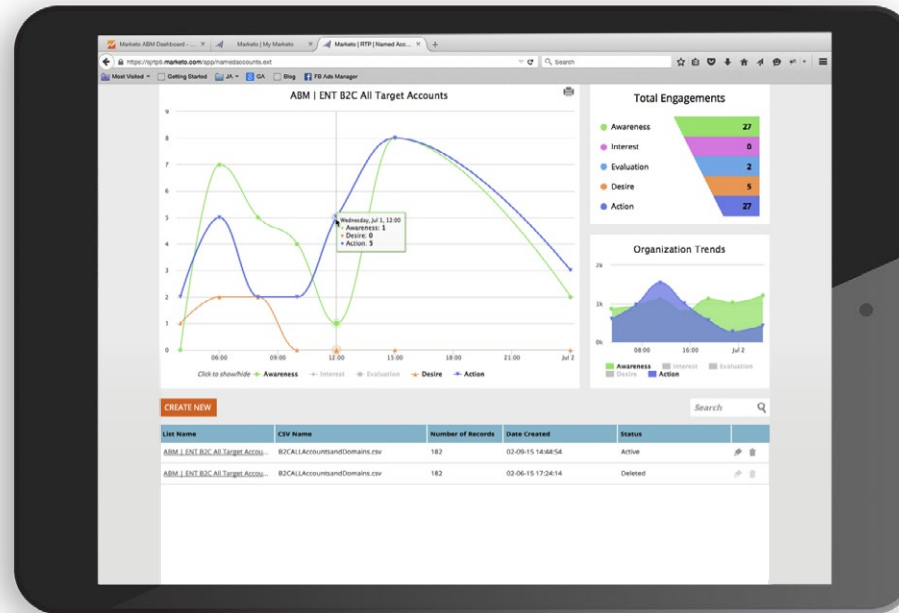


# SET GOALS AND ESTABLISH INITIAL ANALYTICS

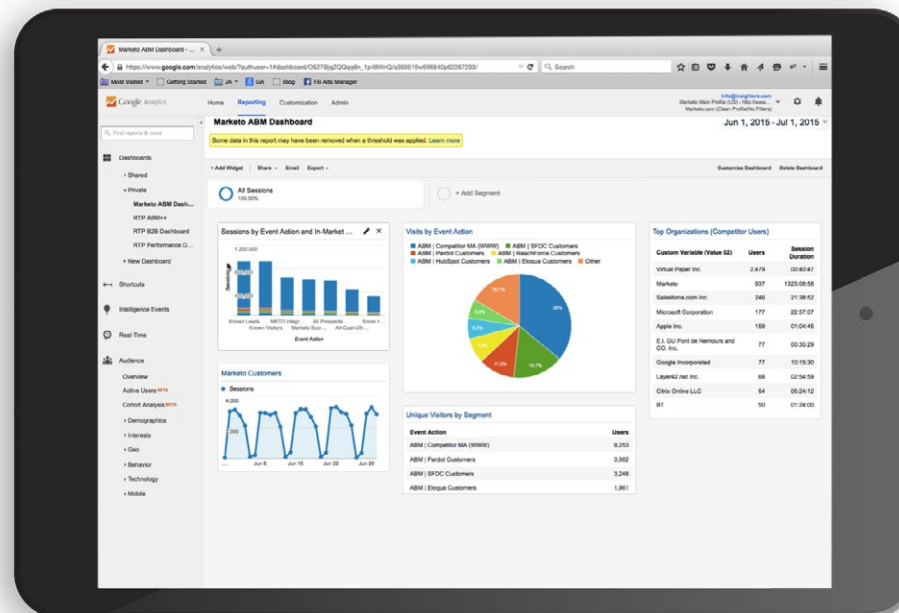
## Analytics that Inform

At Marketo, we implemented a lean ABM program to help us reach our marketing goals, but we needed a way to report our progress and success that was comparable to our traditional demand generation reports. So, in combination with utilizing our marketing automation platform's capabilities to track our ABM activities, we developed a dashboard that includes the three different views necessary to track, report, and optimize our ABM program.

We use this dashboard to help us quickly view our progress and then decide which activities to stop, start, continue, or invest more. Take a look at our dashboard that includes the three views of ABM activities:



*A report from Marketo's Real-Time Personalization (RTP) that measures the engagement level of a specific list of accounts.*



*A report from Google Analytics that uses Marketo to enrich its data on anonymous leads—this dashboard shoes marketers how engaged your target accounts are with you.*

# SET GOALS AND ESTABLISH INITIAL ANALYTICS

To leverage account-based analytics you can either use specific software applications that provide ABM functionality, such as Marketo, more generic analytics platforms such as Google Analytics, or even basic excel spreadsheets like in the examples below.

ABM SCORECARD- SUMMARY VIEW										
Target Group	Aggregate Engagement Score	Aggregate Engagement Score	New Names Identified	New Leads Engaged	Director Level Leads Engaged	# of Live Meetings Generated	New Meetings (Above Director)	Opps Created	Pipeline Created	Bookings Generated
Target Group 1	High									
Target Group 2	Low									
Target Group 3	Medium									
Total										
ABM SCORECARD- ACCOUNT LIST VIEW										
Target Group	Aggregate Engagement Score	Aggregate Engagement Score	New Names Identified	New Leads Engaged	Director Level Leads Engaged	# of Live Meetings Generated	New Meetings (Above Director)	Opps Created	Pipeline Created	Bookings Generated
Company 1	Low									
Company 2	Medium									
Company 3	High									
Company 4	Low									
Company 5	High									
Company 6	Medium									
B2B										
Company 7	High									
Company 8	Low									
B2C										
Company 9	High									
Company 10	Medium									

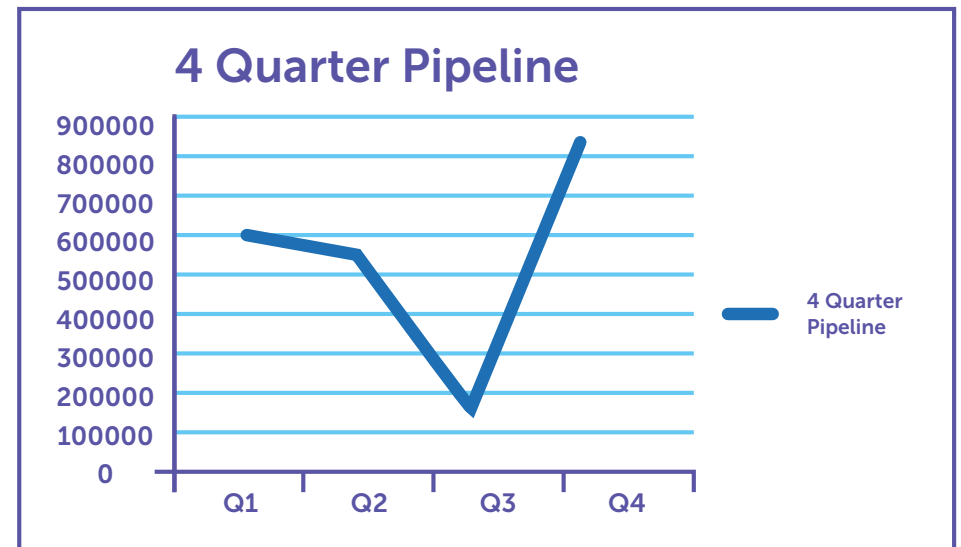
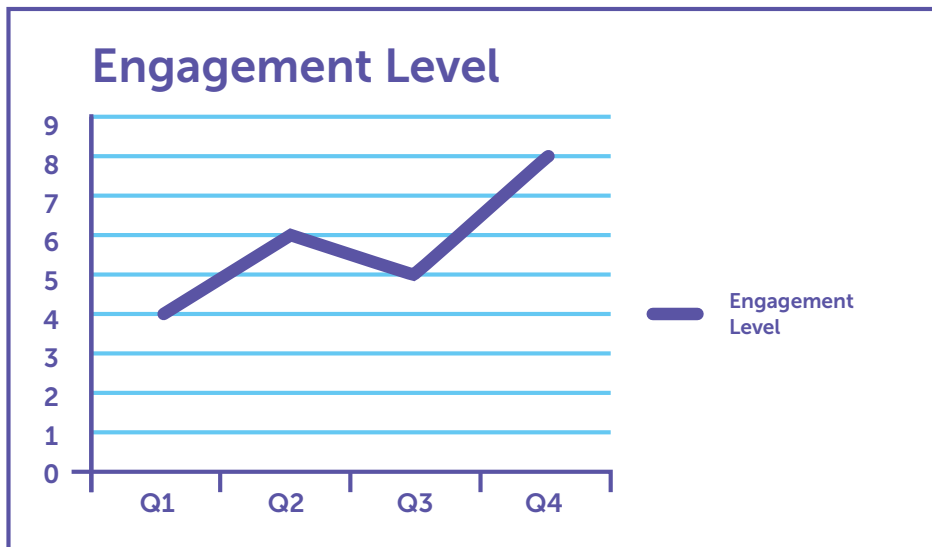
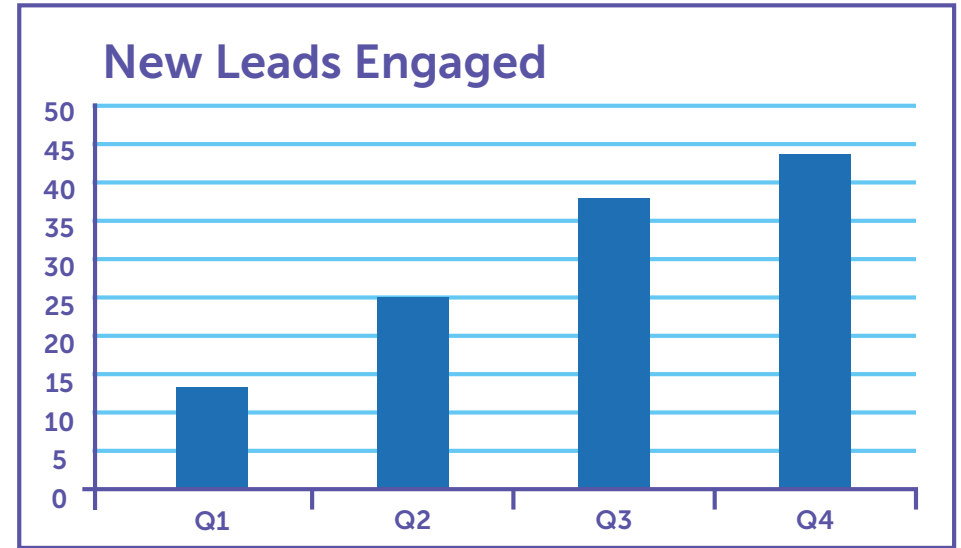
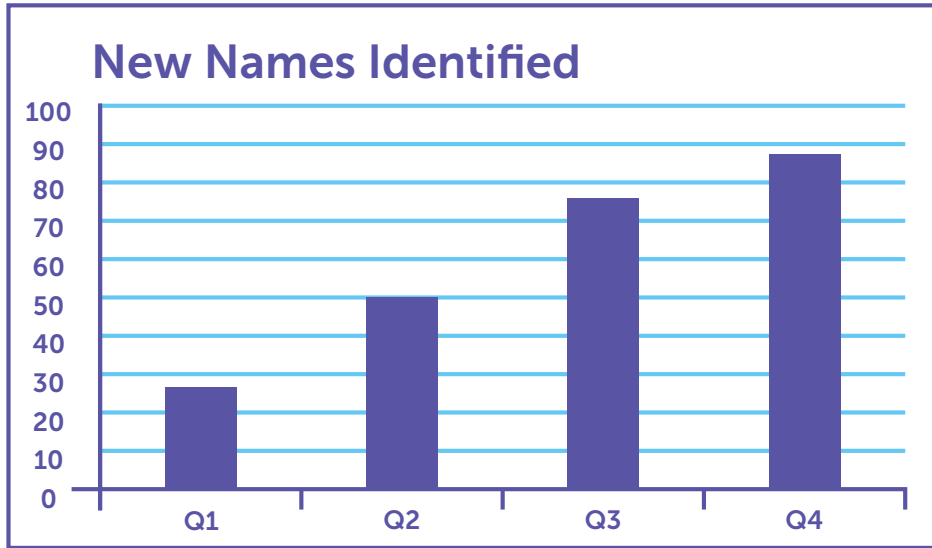
This image shows two helpful ABM dashboards. These report your progress in 2 ways:

1) A Summary View, which shows progress and health of your ABM efforts across all of your target account categories.

2) An Account List View, so you can quickly compare your progress in one account vs. other accounts.

# SET GOALS AND ESTABLISH INITIAL ANALYTICS

## ABM SCORECARD- ACCOUNT OVERVIEW



An Account view so you can see the health of your efforts in one specific account.

# PLAN CAMPAIGNS

Now that you've identified your targets, set up analytics, and gained a baseline for each account's activity, it's time to really get into the meat of your campaigns. What content will you use and when? What channels will you use to reach your target accounts?

## Create a Journey Matrix

Because you've researched each account's previous relationship with your brand (if any), you can plan out the ideal or typical customer journey for each one. Collaborate with sales to gain more insight into how this journey looks. Then, create a chart that outlines what content to use in each phase of the journey. Each customer journey looks different based on the initial analytics and history. A company that has never been to your website needs more top-of-funnel (TOFU) targeting than a brand that has engaged with your content before. If they have already visited your website several times, you may want to start at a different point—for instance, with a series of email campaigns followed up with sales calls.

The most effective way to plan your ABM campaigns is to lay out a customer journey matrix for each group. This matrix follows the typical sales cycle:

- **Awareness**
- **Interest**
- **Evaluation**
- **Desire**
- **Action**

## How Long Does It Take To Plan an ABM Campaign?

*The length of time that goes into planning an ABM campaign depends on several factors, including the scope of your campaigns and the individual customer journey. In most organizations building a lean ABM program will take about one quarter, and in the second quarter you will start to achieve results.*

*Planning your ABM campaign is different that the length of time the campaign will run. For that length of time, each company will have unique expectations for how long each campaign will last and what it will entail. The further into the sales cycle accounts are at the start of the campaign, the more quickly the process will go. However, if the accounts you are going after aren't aware of your brand, it will take longer to drive them down the sales cycle. It's also important to consider potential setbacks that affect duration, such as a lack of relevant content and the time needed to create or revamp that content.*

# PLAN CAMPAIGNS

## Customer Journey Matrix

In this example, you'll see a customer journey matrix that shows the different types of activities and content that you can offer as a customer moves through her journey from awareness to action.

CAMPAIGN PROGRAM MATRIX Example- Vertical Customer Journey				
Segment Asset/Type	Awareness	Interest	Evaluation	Commitment
Higher Education	Empowering Higher Education Relationship Management: It All Starts with Marketing  Frost & Sullivan Paper	Enrollment, Engagement, Donation: How Higher Education Can Improve Its Grades With Marketing Automation  Ebook	UC Irvine Case Study: Drive Enrollment and Engagement  Case Study	Marketing Nation Community & Purple Select Advocacy Program  Community & Advocacy Program

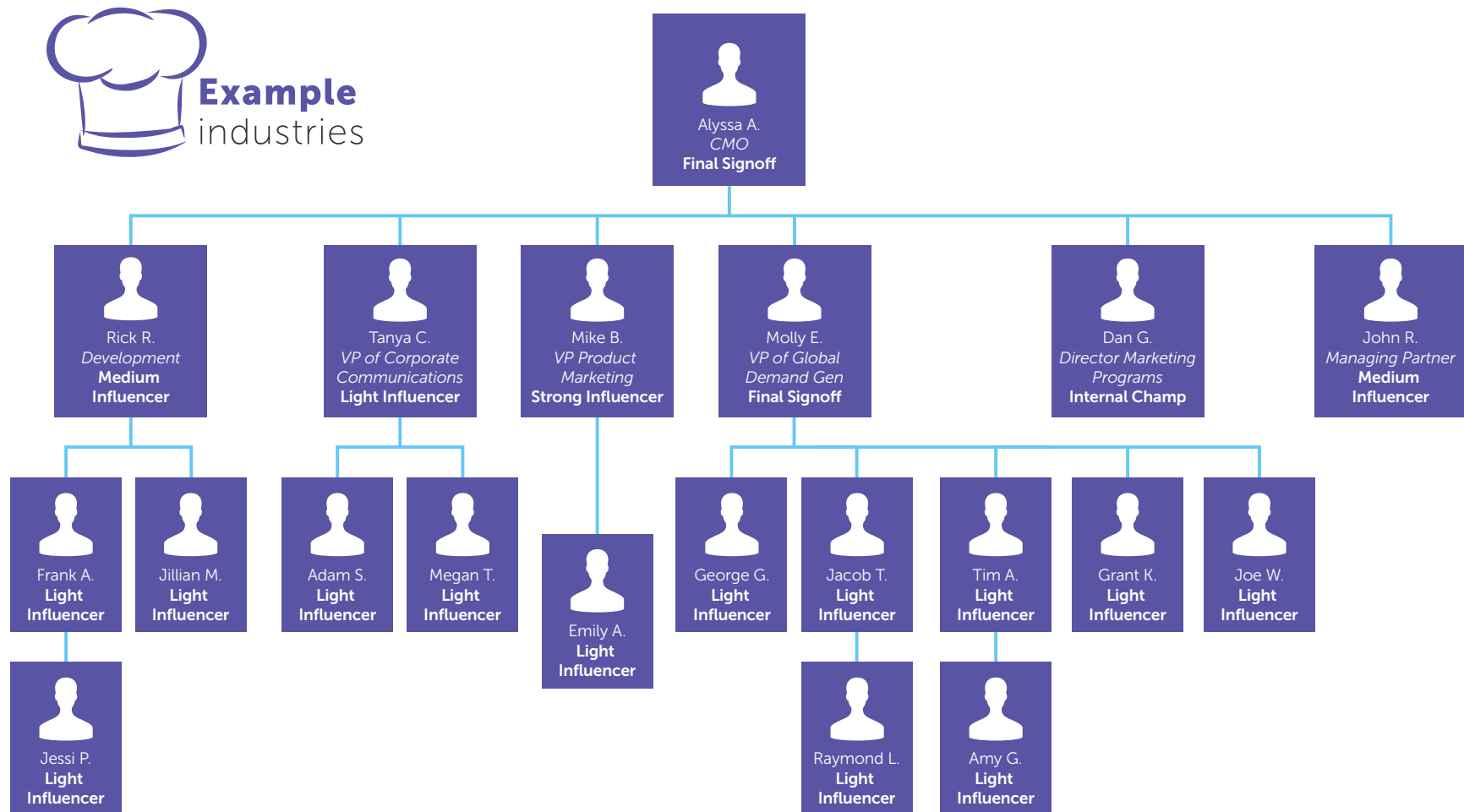
*This matrix is filled in with the Marketo higher education ABM example. It shows how to match appropriate content to each stage of the customer journey for a target group.*

# PLAN CAMPAIGNS

## Understand Your Account Profiles

Understanding the different members of your target accounts' team, and how their roles affect or influence the decision-making process, can help contribute to ABM success. Map your target account's organization to help

you understand who and how to target each team member with relevant content. Here is an example of a map that you may want to create as a part of your process:



# PLAN CAMPAIGNS

## Choose Content

According to MarketingSherpa, **82%** of prospects value content made for their specific industries, and **67%** say the same of content created for their specific job functions. When content is targeted to customers based on where they are in the buyer's cycle, the results are even better. For example, generic content about marketing automation may be interesting to a Healthcare CMO, but it is likely more interesting if it's tailored to her industry. By the same token, content targeted at that CMO should have an executive tone and messaging that's appropriate for her, whereas her team-member, a marketing specialist may be interested in a more practical "how-to" piece of content that's still targeted to the same industry.

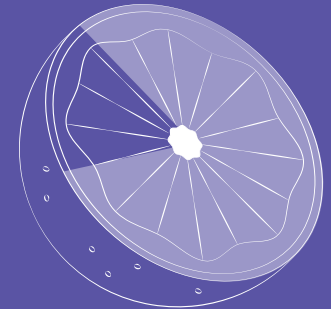
Once you have outlined the journey for each account, choose content for each stage. This part is vital for interacting with buyers and creating relationships. Use a mix of marketing assets, like ebooks, infographics, videos, and more to inform these prospects and keep them engaged.

Each stage of the sales cycle should include at least one asset. We recommend using multiple assets so you can conduct A/B testing during the campaign. This allows you to learn which content is appropriate for each stage and each account group, so you can apply this knowledge to your next campaign and improve the engagement results.

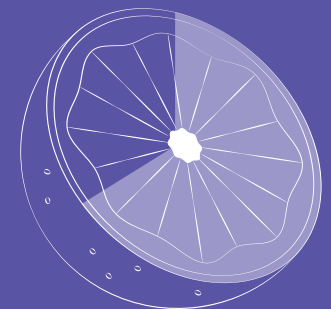
Some platforms, like Marketo's, will leverage A/B testing to optimize the content that is displayed. Also, check to be sure you have enough content relevant to the groups you're targeting. If not, you will need to create more, which could delay your start date. Try to start with the groups you have the content for.

## ABM Content Tip:

*Content for each ABM group doesn't have to be all that different, you can offer the same case study, ebook, or video to different groups while slightly changing the call-to-action to make it more appealing and effective.*



**82%** of prospects value content made for their specific industries.



**67%** say the same of content created for their specific job functions.

# PLAN CAMPAIGNS

## Define Channels

Once your content is mapped, you need to determine which channels to use to reach each account. You should eventually use a combination of web, email, ads, social, and events—but you don't have to start with them all initially. Have content picked out that is appropriate for each channel or simply think how to use the same content in different channels.



## *Extend Your Personalization Across Channels*

*Make your target accounts' digital ads more personal with a tool that connects your digital advertising insights to your marketing automation platform. Marketo's own Ad Bridge links Marketo's marketing insights with Facebook, Google, LinkedIn, and more. This helps marketers more effectively target audiences based on who they are, their stage in the buyer journey, and their individual behavior over time to deliver more personalized digital ads.*



# PLAN CAMPAIGNS

## Put It Together

Finally, put all of the stages together so you have a detailed roadmap of the customer journey for each group of target accounts. This roadmap includes content for each stage, as well as which channel you should use to target the account. For example, a campaign for one ABM segment might start with generating awareness via ads, which would be followed up by a site visit and the opportunity to download the latest ebook written specifically for that segment's industry.

## Customer Journey Matrix Worksheet

Now that we've covered how to create your Customer Journey Matrix, use this worksheet to map your Customer Journeys, and the channels and content that support them.

CAMPAIGN PROGRAM MATRIX Example- Vertical Customer Journey			
Account Group Asset/Type	Awareness	Consideration	Decision
Account Group 1	Channel Content Type		
Account Group 2			
Account Group 3			

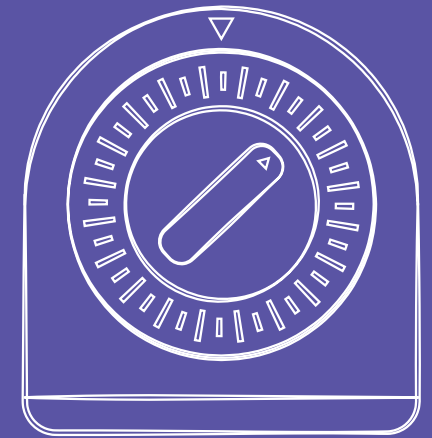
# IMPLEMENT CAMPAIGNS

Now that you've completed all the hard work of researching and planning, it's time to execute your campaigns. When it comes to implementing ABM, timing is everything. Without a combination of timing and relevance, the right targets will never see your content. Once you've outlined when and where each content asset goes, you have to nail the timing.

According to research from Microsoft, you have only **10 seconds** to demonstrate value when a visitor lands on your site. Show targeted content in real-time to drive accounts down the sales funnel. As soon as prospects click through to your site, they should see a personalized experience with targeted calls-to-action that present the right content, at the right time. This is where having the right tools can come in handy.

## Useful Tools for ABM Implementation

You don't necessarily need extra tools to accomplish ABM. However, some tools are very helpful and will make your ABM campaigns more efficient. Tools like a marketing automation platform that facilitates real-time website and display ad personalization is enormously helpful in order to identify, target, and engage prospects to effectively lead them through the sales cycle. You might think of these tools as ingredients that can improve the quality of the project, but won't alter the essence of the recipe.



---

*According to research from Microsoft, you have only **10 seconds** to demonstrate value when a visitor lands on your site.*

# IMPLEMENT CAMPAIGNS

## Useful Tools for ABM Implementation (Continued)

**Marketing Automation:** A marketing automation platform helps you see clearly how your campaigns are performing and keep all of the data contained in one place. With marketing automation you can map out customer journeys for different ABM segments.

Additionally, you also need a way to manage your target account lists, a place where you can upload, edit, and review ABM performance and sync this data to existing analytics tools like Google analytics.

**Real-Time Personalization:** Personalization tools use various methods to help you identify the accounts people are coming from, and whether they are known or anonymous. With this information, it's much easier to personalize the message (content, calls-to-action, etc.) to your target accounts across channels like web, email, and ads.

**Predictive Scoring Tools:** Predictive scoring tools use statistical models that often consider the demographics, firmographics, and past activity of an account in order to predict what the account's next action will be. These tools then use that information to trigger an automated activity. This can be powerful when you are working to send your targeted accounts timely and relevant materials in order to accelerate them toward purchase. These tools may also

help in the account selection process by highlighting accounts similar to those you had success with.

**Ad Tech Tools:** Ad technology, especially ad technology that connects to your marketing automation platform, makes digital advertising more personal by combining the insights of the advertising platform (Facebook, LinkedIn, Google) with the data from your marketing automation platform. This tailored experience offers your targeted accounts uniquely specific advertising that supports their journey.

**Sales Intelligence Tools:** Sales intelligence tools augment the information that you have about an account, helping make the data more complete. These types of tools often link with your CRM or marketing automation platform. Using a sales intelligence tool can help you by giving you more information to work with, and therefore, use as you tailor your communications for your target accounts.



---

*A marketing automation platform helps you see clearly how your campaigns are performing and keep all of the data contained in one place.*



Marketo (NASDAQ: MKTO) provides the leading marketing software and solutions designed to help marketers master the art and science of digital marketing. Through a unique combination of innovation and expertise, Marketo is focused solely on helping marketers keep pace in an ever-changing digital world. Spanning today's digital, social, mobile and offline channels, Marketo's Engagement Marketing Platform powers a set of breakthrough applications to help marketers tackle all aspects of digital marketing from the planning and orchestration of marketing activities to the delivery of personalized interactions that can be optimized in realtime. Marketo's applications are known for their ease-of-use, and are complemented by the Marketing Nation®, a thriving network of 400 third-party solutions through our LaunchPoint® ecosystem and over 50,000 marketers who share and learn from each other to grow their collective marketing expertise. The result for modern marketers is unprecedented agility and superior results. Headquartered in San Mateo, CA with offices in Europe, Australia and Japan, Marketo serves as a strategic marketing partner to more than 3,400 large enterprises and fast-growing small companies across a wide variety of industries. For more information, visit [marketo.com](http://marketo.com).