

Demand And Account-Based Marketing: Planning Assumptions 2022

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Summary

2022 will be a critical year for demand and account-based marketing (ABM) leaders as they establish new foundations to sustain pipeline momentum in the post-pandemic world — where B2B buyers' expectations of being heard, known, and understood are higher than ever. For demand and ABM leaders, meeting and exceeding buyers' expectations starts with embracing a buying group focus. As one marketing leader we interviewed said, "Until you focus on the entire buying group experience, you are locked into the machine of lead generation instead of creating emotional connections." To help leaders cement their buying group focus in 2022, Forrester has defined the Demand And ABM Momentum Accelerators (see Figure 1). In this report, we identify five sets of actions for accelerating momentum that should be on every demand and ABM leader's agenda for 2022, including ways to embed buying groups in processes, listen to buying signals, engage buying groups, manage opportunities, and better align with sales.

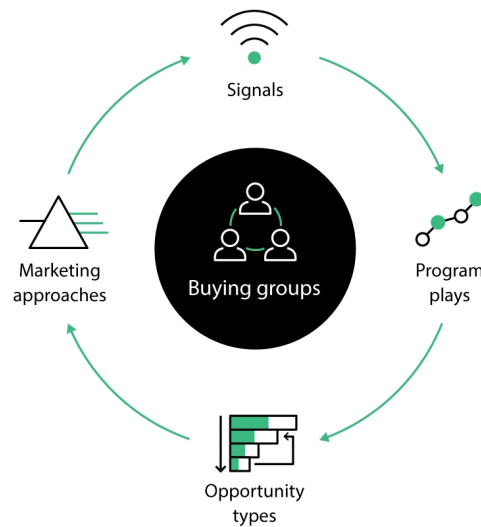
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Figure 1

The Forrester Demand And ABM Momentum Accelerators



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Update Scoring Models and SLAs to Focus on Buying Groups

With more than 94% of B2B buying decisions now being made by a group of three or more and the explosion of marketing and sales technology continuing apace, marketers have greater access to interest and intent signals than ever before (Forrester's 2021 Forrester Revenue Operations and Buying Groups Survey). Scoring models are evolving to incorporate these signals to better prioritize active buying groups and identify true propensity to buy. Marketers should consider account, individual, buying group, and opportunity scores to move opportunities with buying groups attached through the Forrester B2B Revenue Waterfall. Scoring models that do not include these additional signals will continue to prioritize individuals, potentially missing the real opportunity. When passing scored opportunities between teams, service-level agreements (SLAs) must govern the handoff and outline agreed-upon next steps and activation timelines. These SLAs are critical for identifying productive trends, process breakdowns, and opportunities to create efficiencies.

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Recommended Actions

Take the following steps to highlight and monitor buying groups in target accounts that are actively looking for a solution:

- **Identify and connect available signals with an integrated scoring model.** Many solutions in today's B2B marketing tech stack are collecting insights or signals and scoring them for prioritization. Create a scoring model that incorporates these scores, traditional individual interest scores, and human interactions with prospects and customers to determine movement in the waterfall.
- **Update SLAs for passing scored opportunities with buying group members attached.** SLAs should define the opportunity and how it is being passed from team to team at each handoff point within the revenue engine process. An SLA should be in place for every handoff when moving opportunities downstream, closer to close — and for passing back stalled opportunities.

Move From Click-Based Engagement To Real-Time Buyer Enablement

81% of global senior data and analytics decision-makers confirm their organizations are investing in data, analytics, and insights to create differentiated experiences, products, and services that enable empowered buyers and customers ([Forrester Analytics Business Technographics Data And Analytics Survey, 2020](#)). But insights require action. Real-time buyer enablement refers to the shift from selling “at” buyers to enabling buyers to get the information they need in the moment to support their decision-making process. This requires a change in mindset from data collection to signal detection and contextual response to develop an enriched and actionable understanding of the buyer that fuels the revenue engine. This mindset shift is operationalized inside program design, using tactic deployment not to drive clicks but to better understand buyers by engineering tactics as sensors that capture and connect the most relevant signals from buyer behavior and activity.

Recommended Actions

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Take the following steps to sense and respond to buying signals in real time, connecting content, experiences, and interactions to the next best action in the moment:

- **Identify the buying signals that matter most.** Understand the types of signals that are characteristic of buyers as they move through their journey and where to capture these signals. Classify and connect buying signals by organizing them into three broad categories — directed, detected, and derived — to engineer the most effective sensors and inform first-party data strategies.
- **Leverage buying signals in program design.** Use buying signals to target, trigger, and tailor messaging, delivering the next best action across the buying group while training the feedback loop to continuously improve signal response through contextual interaction.

Use Demand Program Plays To Engage And Move Buying Group Members

B2B organizations rely on demand programs' ability to influence buying group members and thereby get new opportunities into the B2B Revenue Waterfall and move existing opportunities through the waterfall. Demand marketers have access to data, processes, and technology that can support buying group needs and complex B2B purchase dynamics like never before. Demand program plays are variations of programs that support demand objectives and target individual buying group members. Creating demand program plays is a scalable and repeatable process to help marketers refine how they engage and enable all members of the buying group.

Recommended Actions

Take the following steps to select and design the right program plays to engage and move members of buying groups:

- **Outline all needed program plays to capture buying group members and drive engagement.** To support the movement of an opportunity through the waterfall, each program has an objective (activate, validate, or accelerate) and each program

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objective has multiple program plays that support the program objectives.

- **Define program rules to design program plays.** Demand programs continue to engage individual buying group members using known persona attributes and account demographics but should also be designed with buying group context. When designing program plays, demand marketers need program rules to provide the structure. By clearly defining and documenting entry, treatment, and exit rules for each program play, demand marketers can design, execute, optimize, and measure programs in a scalable, consistent way.

Better Understand The Opportunities That Drive Revenue

Many marketing organizations take a siloed view of how to invest in both programs and processes to drive revenue, with the primary perspective being the goal of driving revenue from new opportunities (acquisition) from new customers. This results in a shortsighted view of how marketing and demand can affect the organization's total revenue, leading to revenue shortfalls and inefficiencies. Most of B2B organizations' total revenue comes from a mix of new and existing customers spanning a variety of acquisition, cross-sell, upsell, and retention opportunity types (see [It Takes All \[Opportunity\] Types](#)). Each of these opportunity types converts to won deals differently and requires well-defined processes, integrated campaigns, and programs. Campaigns to drive revenue should blend demand programs with reputation and customer engagement programs to support these revenue objectives. In addition, the roles and responsibilities of marketing, revenue development reps, and sales teams in the process also vary by opportunity type. The correct emphasis of these programs and resources is determined by the mix of opportunity types and the contribution weight of each opportunity type toward total revenue.

Recommended Actions

Take the following steps to optimize alignment of programs and resources with revenue goals:

- **Determine the required mix of opportunity types.** Marketing leaders should align with sales to determine the mix and contribution of opportunity types to support the

organization's revenue goals (see [The Variety Of Revenue Opportunities That Shapes B2B Revenue Engine Performance](#)).

- **Define how opportunity types are managed.** Marketing and sales should clearly define the roles and responsibilities of the team (marketing, revenue development reps, and sales) in the process of managing each opportunity type.

Determine The Right Mix Of Marketing Approaches

Marketers are getting savvier in how they work with sales, often building parallel coverage for target groups of named accounts or segments, each with an opportunity type and projected value. Every patch of accounts warrants a different marketing approach, ranging from high-touch ABM to broad-based demand marketing (see [Matching Marketing Approach To Sales Strategy](#)). Because marketing approaches vary widely in their scalability, requirements, and investment levels, leaders should be thoughtful and data-driven in their marketing approach decisions so that they can capture the full value of known or projected opportunities — and apply resources wisely, commensurate with revenue potential.

Recommended Actions

Take the following steps to apply optimal marketing approaches and resources against accounts and opportunities:

- **Understand marketing approaches.** Become familiar with the four marketing approaches that are available for demand planning: large-account marketing, named-account marketing, vertical/industry-account marketing, and demand marketing (see [An Introduction To The Demand Spectrum](#)). Understand the implications of each approach, especially in the areas of content customization, insights, and marketing and sales collaboration.
- **Map marketing approaches.** Partner with sales operations to map target groups of accounts or segments, with each group having an opportunity type and projected value. Focus on the highest-value account groups or segments and determine which marketing approach is the best fit for each. Develop a one-page roll-up of the demand strategy, which can be used to quickly communicate the selected

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marketing approaches and other related elements (e.g., budget, timeline, requirements).

Supplemental Material

Survey Methodology

Forrester's 2021 Revenue Operations And Buying Groups Survey was fielded in February 2021. The online survey yielded a total of 318 respondents in B2B or B2B2C organizations across Asia Pacific, EMEA, Latin America, and North America: 236 responses came from Qualtrics, which fielded the survey on behalf of Forrester; 74 responses came from Forrester clients; and eight responses came from social efforts on LinkedIn. Respondents were manager-level or above in operations roles in the departments of revenue operations, customer experience/customer success, finance, sales, and marketing. Quotas were used to control completes by job role, revenue, industry, and geography. The survey asked about the state and vision of aligned operations in B2B organizations as well as the organization's operations capabilities. The Qualtrics survey respondent incentives included points redeemable for gift certificates; Forrester respondents received a copy of the survey results.

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