



Building an ABM Program That Actually Works

Six practical steps to help you build, execute and scale smarter ABM with Priority Engine™



Getting ABM Right

While many B2B pros already use an account-based strategy, ABM sophistication is still in early to mid-stage maturity for most companies. And even as ABM adoption continues to rise, it's still harder than ever for B2B marketers and sellers to successfully

88% of companies plan to spend the same amount of resources or more on ABM in the next 12 months.

– 2022 TechTarget ABM practitioner survey

identify and engage potential buyers and see success from their ABM efforts.

and power the most important elements of their ABM programs and achieve real success.

TechTarget has helped hundreds of technology vendors leverage intent data to create, refine

This guide will detail the six key components of a practical ABM strategy and how TechTarget can help fuel measurable results for your business.



The six components of a practical ABM program

At its core, Account-Based Marketing is about being more efficient with your marketing and sales efforts. But that doesn't happen without tight alignment between both teams. Successful ABM programs require input from sales and marketing leaders, and a coordinated effort across these six areas:

- Selecting target accounts
- Prioritizing target account lists
- Identifying buying team contacts
- Engaging target accounts and prospects
- Enabling sales with account and prospect intelligence
- Measuring ABM success

Account selection

Determining which accounts to include on your target account list can be a make-or-break decision for the success of your ABM strategy. Many companies often make the mistake of building their target account list exclusively based on feedback from the sales team. If you stick to identifying target accounts based on a self-identified list, how do you know they have the intention to buy?

While gathering sales feedback should be an important step in your ABM plan, determining your target account list strictly based on sales feedback can set you up for major issues down the line.

Key considerations before finalizing your ABM list:

- Who is our ideal customer?
- Are marketing and sales aligned on this list?
- Does this ICP limit us from reaching any prospective buyers?
- Is our target account list based on our ICP? If not, why?

Once you've answered these key questions, you can start to leverage data that allows you to target the ideal customers in your market.

Define your list using firmographic & intent data

After you've defined and agreed on your ICP, you'll need a tool to help you identify the accounts in your market that fit that profile.

TechTarget Priority Engine™ gives you the ability to use firmographic, technographic and behavioral data to generate lists of accounts that are currently in-market for your solutions and that match your ICP. You can use these account lists to identify buying team members to engage so you can break in.

You can build account lists based on:

- | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| • Location | Salesforce fields such as: |
| • Installed Technologies | • Annual Revenue |
| • Employees | • Account Rating |
| • Industry | • Account Source |
| • Market Segment | • Account Type |
| • Topic & Vendor Interests | • Billing Address |
| • Sales Rep Territory | • Domain |

Upload Existing Target Lists: You can also upload and mirror your existing target account lists. Priority Engine can identify the actively researching buying team members at your target accounts.

“The number one challenge associated with ABM is knowing if you are targeting the right accounts.”

—2022 TechTarget ABM practitioner survey

Account prioritization

Determining your target account list is an important first step, but from a practical standpoint, it's unreasonable to attempt to engage every target account at once. You need to adopt a methodology to help you prioritize the accounts that will yield the best results.

Just because they are a fit, doesn't mean they have a need

Many companies attempt to prioritize accounts based on factors most important to *them*, like company size or revenue potential. But with this approach, companies end up wasting valuable time and resources trying to break into accounts that may not have a need for their solution right now.

The importance of right-time engagement

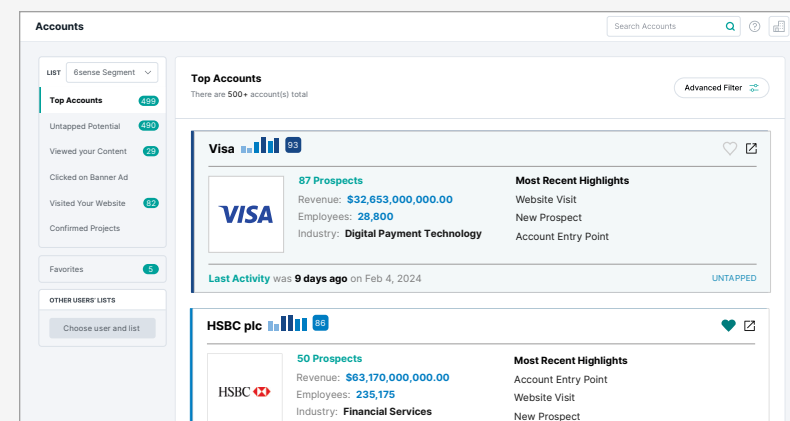
Today's technology buyers have all the power. Sales cycles are almost entirely buyer-led and prospects expect salespeople to engage them on their timeline. To win deals, you need to be able to meet them when they're ready. Leveraging behavioral data that indicates when a prospect is in a buying motion is the most effective way to identify and prioritize accounts with an immediate need.

Use real purchase intent data to prioritize accounts

Priority Engine allows you to upload and rank your target account lists based on the real-time research behavior of active, opted-in members of each accounts' buying team.

Know the right time to engage: Timing is extremely important to sales and marketing success. Knowing when accounts are in-market allows you to strike while the iron's hot, giving you the best chance to win the deal. Priority Engine enables you to focus your ABM efforts on the accounts that are most likely to engage based on their real research behavior.

Prioritize your target account list: Priority Engine not only tells you when target accounts are in-market but automatically ranks them each week and provides Account Intent Scores so sellers can easily identify and prioritize the hottest accounts. Every active account is ranked and prioritized based on the recency, relevancy and frequency of research from the account buying team.



Identify the buying team

It may sound counter-intuitive, but one of the most common pitfalls of ABM is being **too** account focused, limiting your ability to find and engage the key buyers at target accounts.

60% of purchases involve 4+ buyers, with an average number of 27 interactions in a successful buy-cycle.

—Forrester

You need to take a “prospect-led” approach to ABM: While it’s true that enterprise technology solutions are sold to companies, ultimately sales are made by talking to people. Knowing who the buying team members are, and what they care about, gives you the best shot at breaking into target accounts and securing meetings.

It’s time to move past persona-based targeting: Assuming a person is part of a buying team strictly based on their role is not the most effective way to prospect anymore. At enterprise companies, there could be hundreds of prospects that fit a specific persona, causing you to waste hours attempting to reach people who don’t care. And more than ever, B2B buyers prefer self-service and anonymous online research to make purchase decisions.

Instead of taking a persona-based approach, consider leveraging behavioral data to uncover the actual people who are expressing interest in the solutions you sell



Take a prospect-led approach based on real behavior

In a TechTarget study, we found that if you contact recently active prospects who are researching technologies related to what you sell, they are **13x more likely to click on email content and 5x more likely to convert** through a phone call compared to cold contacts who are not actively researching your solutions.

Priority Engine connects you to the real members of the buying team who are actively researching solutions in your market, prioritized by recency and relevancy of activity, and provides prospect-level intent details to help you personalize and break in. Sellers can access all this information directly in-tool, or with integrations with their MAP or CRM, making it easy to find and engage the hottest prospects when they are active.

Buying Team See all 31 buying team members		
Joseph Qua	Sr. IT Project Manager	UNTAPPED
Christina Probst	Senior Manager	UNTAPPED
Dale Brink	Lead System Administrator	UNTAPPED

Seeing signals from multiple buying group members has a dramatically higher propensity to buy. —Forrester

“Priority Engine helps us see which accounts from our target account list are actively in-market or engaging with our brand, and who the actual buying team members are within those accounts.”



—Heidi Ramich, Director, Global Marketing Operations & Analytics, VMware Tanzu



Engaging target accounts

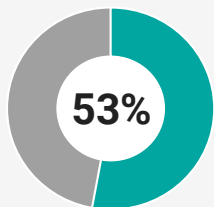
To optimize ABM success, you need to take a coordinated, data-driven approach to engaging accounts. This means your campaigns need to be omni-channel and integrated to win the most deals.

B2B buyers use 10 or more channels to interact with suppliers during their decision journey. –McKinsey

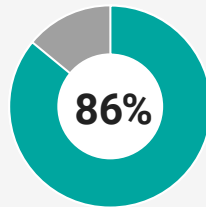
Align your marketing programs: Ensure your email, advertising and other marketing efforts are talking to each other. Fragmented or single-channel delivery of ABM campaigns can limit both your reach and engagement within an account.

Align your sales outreach with marketing campaigns: Coordinated sales and marketing efforts allow you to influence buyers from multiple angles, increase awareness within an account, and elevate your chances of generating qualified meetings.

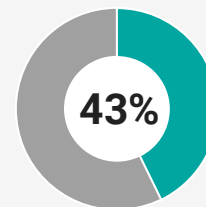
In response to advertising exposure:



of tech buyers responded to the vendor's email.



visited the vendor's website without clicking the ad.



contacted a vendor sales rep without clicking the ad.

Smarter ABM engagement strategies with TechTarget

TechTarget's uniquely coordinated and continuously optimized ABM programs maximize multi-channel engagement from target accounts and buying team contacts when combined with Priority Engine, driving success for both marketing and sales.

Marketing Benefits: Influence more target accounts and make faster progress with your ABM program by leveraging TechTarget's unique data-backed advertising and lead generation programs to take a focused and more efficient approach to engaging key accounts.

Sales Benefits: Improve email response and meeting/opportunity conversion rates by engaging prospects from target accounts who are already familiar with your brand and solutions.

TechTarget solutions fuel a more effective ABM strategy

ABM is only as effective as the data and content that fuels it. TechTarget lays the foundation critical for success to help you maximize your influence and engagement of accounts and prospects via multiple media channels.

- **Priority Engine:** Boost ABM success with direct access to real active buyers at in-market accounts, fueled by TechTarget purchase intent data.
- **Priority Engine Account Intent Feeds:** Identify, influence and convert more in-market accounts with a weekly stream of account data delivered directly into your CRM and systems such as 6sense and Demandbase.
- **Lead Generation:** Educate target accounts with your best, most relevant content, syndicated to prospects most likely to engage with it – on your TAL or in your TAM.
- **Branding:** Increase consideration, email CTRs and pipeline with high-impact display ads, site takeovers and more, deployed across TechTarget's leading B2B technology sites to prospects that meet your ABM ideal customer profiles.
- **Sales-Quality Leads:** Receive confirmed and verified projects straight from the target company. These leads are pre-qualified and instantly ready for sales to follow up with.
- **Content Creation Services:** Generate quality content at scale and serve the right content to the right prospects as they progress through the buyer journey so you can educate target accounts on your brand.



Analyst Services: Expert analysts will advise you on your product and content strategy to ensure your solutions are optimized for your target accounts.

Custom Research: Validate your content and attract the right prospects from your target accounts by incorporating powerful custom research findings around your solutions, target market or industry.



Webinars and Events: Maximize demand across your ABM accounts through a compelling mix of custom videos, webinars and events.

Lead Generation: Leverage your expert content to educate, reach and engage buyers at target accounts.

Channel Engagement: Prioritize buyers from target accounts that engage with your content and pinpoint people ready for sales based on the content they consume.

Enabling sales

If your sales reps aren't equipped to break into key accounts, your ABM program is eventually going to fail. The most common reason for this failure usually has nothing to do with poor salesmanship; it's that reps are calling contacts who do not have a need.

The reps who use Priority Engine to uncover specific insights and use them in their conversations and emails see more success. Those sales reps who are using Priority Engine are the ones who are hitting 100% of their goals.

—Manager, Sales Development, Pure Storage

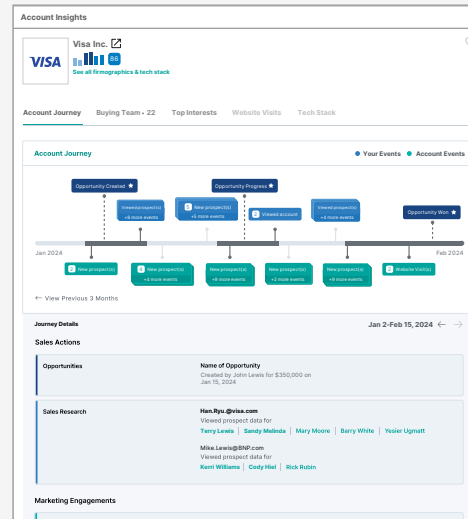
Start by mapping out account buying teams based on relevant research activity. This approach guarantees that your reps are always focusing on prospects who are more likely to listen and buy.

Provide sales reps with behavioral intelligence that can be used to personalize email outreach and have more meaningful conversations that will turn into quality meetings.



Intent-based insights that help reps get more meetings

Priority Engine gives your reps all the data they need to confidently find and close in-market accounts. Not only does Priority Engine connect sales with the right prospects, but it also provides rich behavioral insights about them at the prospect level, meaning every contact who is actively researching will have key details about what they individually are interested in. In addition, Priority Engine provides the technologies they're interested in, the vendors they're considering and the products they have installed.



Sales reps can access these insights directly in Priority Engine or Salesforce to:

- Personalize emails and scripts with messages that are relevant to buyer needs
- Capture a prospect's attention in the vital first seconds of a call
- Improve email and voicemail response rates
- Generate more qualified meetings and pipeline

“TechTarget Priority Engine provides useful insights and accurate contact information that I haven't been able to find using other prospecting tools. Priority Engine is critical to help me better connect with prospects and break in at target accounts.”



—Molly Price, Sr. Business Development Representative, ReliaQuest



Measuring ABM success

No ABM plan is complete without a way to measure the impact of your program on your target account list. Most of the time, the key points of measurement are pipeline and closed-won deals. While those are certainly valuable success metrics, it's also important to measure leading indicators of ABM success, including how you're impacting every stage of an account's buying journey.

Measure pipeline & closed-won deals: At the end of the day, if you're not generating real revenue from your account-based strategy, you're not succeeding. It's important to review the deals you've won, determine what worked and refine your program to set you up for future success.

Measure influence: A common pitfall of ABM measurement is only looking at pipeline. To understand the true impact of your ABM programs, you need to also understand exactly how you influenced key buyers, including how many contacts from your target accounts are engaging with your website, ads, emails and sales team.

Common ABM metrics that TechTarget customers monitor:

- Influenced pipeline
- ROI
- Target account coverage
- Sales cycle length
- Pipeline velocity

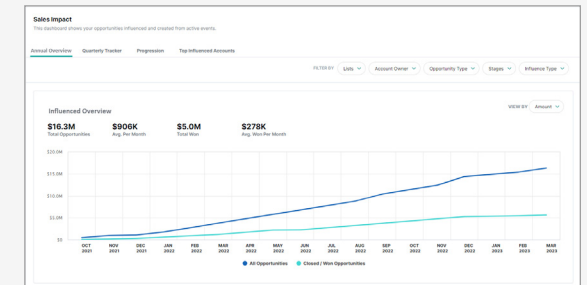


Know how you're influencing pipeline with the Opportunity Dashboard

Priority Engine gives you access to an Opportunity Dashboard that allows you to easily evaluate how your Sales and Marketing efforts influence and accelerate opportunities from creation to close.

With the Opportunity Dashboard, you can:

- Visualize and track the value of your annual TechTarget influenced opportunities
- Track opportunity influence over time
- Stay up-to-date with recent opportunities
- Analyze top opportunities and influence factors



Using the **Opportunity Dashboard** to drill down into deal insights allows you to better isolate the factors that led to the most wins, so you can optimize your programs to close more deals and quantify ROI on your TechTarget investment.

“By monitoring and measuring marketing attribution and ROI, we can better understand the campaigns and channels that work best to drive deeper funnel engagement and create pipeline in a cost-effective manner.”

—Heidi Ramich, Director, Global Marketing Operations & Analytics, VMware Tanzu

About TechTarget

TechTarget (Nasdaq: TTGT) is the global leader in purchase intent-driven marketing and sales services that deliver business impact for enterprise technology companies. By creating abundant, high-quality editorial content across more than 150 highly targeted technology-specific websites and 1,125 channels, TechTarget attracts and nurtures communities of technology buyers researching their companies' information technology needs. By understanding these buyers' content consumption behaviors, TechTarget creates the purchase intent insights that fuel efficient and effective marketing and sales activities for clients around the world.

TechTarget has offices in Boston, London, Munich, New York, Paris, Singapore and Sydney.

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