



Score big using Account-Based Marketing

Account-Based Marketing is the answer



Get to the top of the league using ABM

Growing your company's market share, to surpass your competitors and move up the league table, needs an engaged and skilled team. One that is up for the challenge and focussed on hitting those sales targets into the back of the net.

Rather than just winning the game, you want to go for the championship. That means you need a strategy capable of producing a winning streak and a team that is match fit, has the right kit and understands which tactics will deliver results to achieve your growth goals.

We're now operating in a data-driven world where marketers can monitor online behaviour and analyse a monumental amount of data to reach people on a much larger scale but with pinpoint accuracy. This opens up opportunities for companies to develop an account-based strategy where there's great potential to deliver high-value growth opportunities.

Today marketers also have a much larger set of tools at their disposal and a far greater ability to measure outcomes, create sales opportunities and prove ROI.

Now the stars are aligning - the technology exists, the power of marketing is recognised and investment in resources is becoming available. Marketing is also now talking the same language as sales with the ultimate goal to drive revenue. So, it's time for both teams to get cosy and accelerate the timeline it takes to close deals using account-based marketing (ABM).

What is ABM?

Account Based Marketing (ABM) is a multi-touch, multi-channel strategy focussed on identifying, pursuing and nurturing a target number of high-value accounts. The insight you will learn about your prospects in the planning phase, such as their behaviour, likes, dislikes, fear factors and pain points, will help you understand what makes them tick so that you can really personalise your approach - reaching them in the right way at the right time.

Critical to success is marketing and sales having the same end goal and providing input at key stages where both can add value. Think of it as a football match where your marketing mid-fielders and your sales frontline are working together, passing insight and information that helps them both advance and attack the goal.

In terms of your prospects, ABM can accelerate the conversion rate of a sit at home fan (a marketing qualified lead) to a dedicated season ticket holder (a sales qualified lead). The insight your team learns throughout the ABM process will also keep you at the top of the league for longer, having your competitors going for an early bath.

So, if ABM is the right choice, how do you kick it off?

Our team of industrial marketing experts has outlined the success factors to take into account when choosing to move forward with an ABM strategy, sharing our simple yet effective match plan that will get your squad championship ready.

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Build Your Dream Team

A football team doesn't get on the pitch and expect it to be an easy win with the opposition taking a dive and the fans going wild. A win takes planning, skill and expertise as well as lots of training, trying different approaches and tactics. The same is true for high value business growth.

It's time to build your team. There's no room for injuries, risk of warnings or red cards. You need your sales and marketing match fit and working as one team, identifying the targets, passing insight to each other throughout the ABM process and enticing the prospect with information that ends with them signing on the dotted line.

Together, you need to define:

- Expectations
- Goals and KPIs
- The role ABM will play

With this in mind your dream team could include other experienced sales colleagues, key account handlers and marketing specialists for example the person who analyses your website performance and someone who manages your CRM or is responsible for your prospect data. Once in a room, the first question will always be – **'What do we want to accomplish with ABM?'**. The agreed objectives will guide the ABM strategy, so it's important that everyone is on the same page and ready to pitch in.

The core objective of an account-based marketing programme is long-term, high value business growth. This could take a number of forms:

- Entering new markets or targeting new sectors
- Building market share in an existing market
- Getting more value from existing customers

BUILDING YOUR CORE TEAM

The members of your ABM team will vary depending on the size and structure of your company, but at a minimum, it should include leads from your sales, marketing and business development teams.

Below is an example of a dream team:



**Business/Sales
Development
Team Lead**

Responsible for working with marketing team/lead to execute both inbound and outbound efforts within the ABM campaign.



Graphic Designer

Responsible for working with marketing team/lead to develop engaging collateral to support ABM efforts.



Content Manager

Responsible for working with the marketing team/lead to successfully supply content in various forms for every stage of communication.



**Sales Administrator/
CRM Manager**

Responsible for keeping the contact information up to date.



Marketing Manager

Responsible for all marketing activities and the software required to execute for the ABM campaign.

What is the Best ABM Approach?

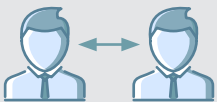
From analysing past performance and understanding the future goals of the business, the sales and marketing team now need to decide what will be the best plan of action to deliver the highest ROI. Whichever ABM strategy is right for your business, the chosen approach will need to be bespoke for the target's needs and appeal to their wants or allay their fears.

There are **four core** ABM approaches to drive you and your team to success.

1. **1:1 ABM**
2. **ABM Lite**
3. **Programmatic ABM**
4. **Bolt-on ABM**

1:1 ABM

1-10 accounts

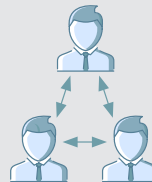


For priority, high-value accounts that require highly personalised communication.

1:1 ABM: This approach to ABM is getting under the skin of your core high-value accounts (usually between 1 – 10). This means having a deep understanding of who you will be speaking too. As this is the case, you can only gain a detailed understanding through extensive research and analysis. From there, taking the learnings and delivering personalised communication through a variety of marketing channels will win you and your team the grand prize you've been looking for.

ABM Lite

10-100 accounts



Grouping target accounts with common values and businesses challenges that require more generalised communication.

ABM Lite: Similar to 1:1, this approach is carefully targeted but encompasses a larger group of prospects that share similar business challenges and have a potential need for your products or services. Research and insight is again essential, while tools such as personalised content, targeted adverts and web site personalisation can be used to build and nurture relationships.

Programmatic ABM

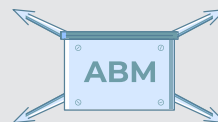
100-1000 accounts



Usually targeting specific market segments that require consistent and engaging communication.

Programmatic ABM: If your organisation is looking to reach a larger audience, but still doesn't want to waste resource then this is the ideal approach. This process involves targeting maybe a few hundred accounts that again, share common traits and business challenges. Programmatic ABM separates itself from other mass marketing techniques as it will still zone in on personalisation but in a more agile way. Using marketing software such as HubSpot can support the agility and reflect the decision-making process within the customer journey.

Bolt-on ABM



When a high-value lead gets qualified, it triggers actions to engage other buying personas from the same company as the lead progresses.

Bolt-on ABM: In the manufacturing sector, buying processes typically involve a number of decision makers and influencers, each of whom may have a different set of challenges or requirements. In common with all ABM techniques, bolt-on ABM uses content created for each persona, delivered through paid, earned, shared or owned channels.

Plan of attack

Once your dream team has decided what strategy is right for your business, it's time for a final team talk and this is where your strikers should take the lead.

The sales team is best placed to identify prospect types and deliver initial insight, learned out on the field from existing customers, to the marketing team. This will then contribute to shaping the buyer personas which marketing will use for deciding what type of content will engage with your audience and how to deliver it to your prospects.

So, your ABM strategy starts with identifying the target accounts that fall under your total addressable market (TAM) and your ideal customer profile (ICP). Your TAM will include all the companies you could sell to, and then your ICP takes it one step further – it's the description of the company that would be the best fit for what you have to offer.

Your ICP should focus on relevant characteristics of your target accounts that will support your marketing team's communication strategy, such as:



Outlining a pre-defined list of accounts means that you'll be able to focus your sales and marketing resources on companies that actually have a chance of becoming customers – so your team won't have to deal with poor-quality leads. In other words, you're collectively taking steps to ensure every MQL becomes a viable SQL. It's a win, win for all!



Get Under the Skin of Potential Prospects

Now time for the pre-match warm up. Your dream team knows what your business target is, they have the right kit, they're working together and have the rest of the squad championing them from the side-line. They know how they're going to play the game and have the insight to tackle any challenge they might encounter.

Marketing knows how many and what type of prospects to target and is confident that the sales team is ready to shoot and score once your prospects have engaged with content and moved from an **MQL** to an **SQL** – but there's still work to be done.

It's prospect research time.

Your marketing team needs to know how prospects like to receive information, what key industry issues they face, challenges and opportunities they are seeking answers for or talking about and who they're already engaging with.

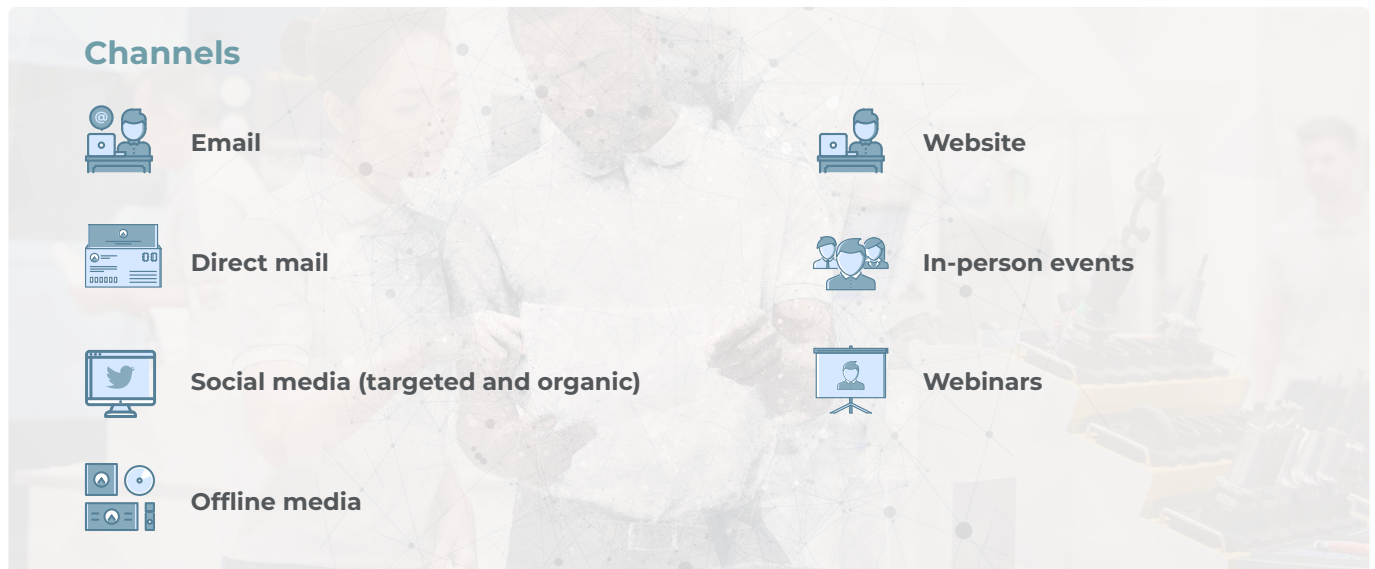
This is largely the marketing team's role while conducting desk research, but any insight your wider squad can provide them with from customer meetings or industry networking events will be invaluable. This research will determine the channels marketing will use, the assets they will create and the issues and opportunities they will address through powerful content designed to reach out to, and influence, your prospects.



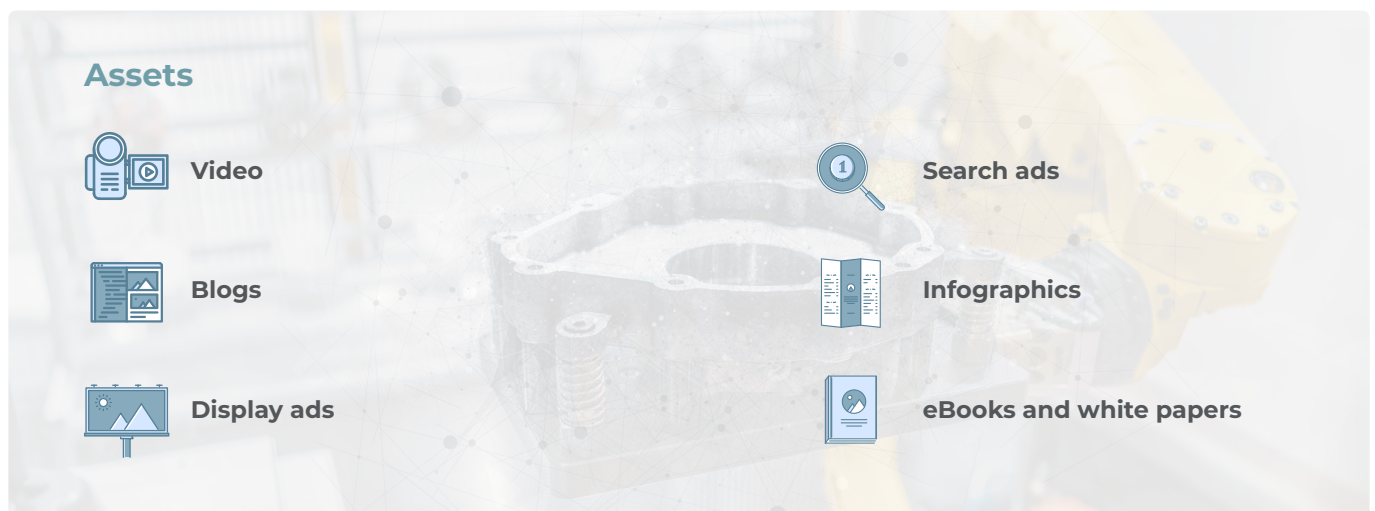
How to Communicate to Your List

It's almost time to kick-off, this is where marketing steps up a gear to create insightful content and decide how to get it in front of prospects.

There are many options and approaches for delivering information to your prospects. The most common within the manufacturing sector tend to be:



From the research that the marketing team has already conducted, they will know the best communication channels to use to reach your targets. Then, it's time for them to create hyper-personalised content and/or messaging that will resonate with your prospects. This could take the form of any, or all, of the following assets:



It's important that you have faith in the marketing team at this stage. It will take time to engage and influence your prospects but, once they've shown an interest, marketing will nurture them so that when they're passed forward to the sales team, they'll be ready to make a decision. Using our footballing analogy, this is the equivalent of marketing dribbling the ball before crossing to sales so that they can take a shot at goal.



Closing the deal

Prospects need to find you. Marketing efforts will work hard to generate brand awareness and engage decision-makers within your target accounts, setting the stage for more effective sales conversations. Through branding, messaging and content creation your prospects will be exposed to your organisation and the USPs it has and hopefully show an interest. Then it's over to sales.

Once your prospect has engaged with your marketing team's efforts, it's time for the sales team to step in to convert those hard-won SQLs. They'll have a wealth of insight generated from the marketing team's efforts which they can use to line-up their shot with the prospect over the phone, via one-to-one emails, LinkedIn Inmails or during face-to-face meetings.

Although this part of the process is down to the sales team, it doesn't mean the responsibility of a marketer stops. By monitoring data throughout the programme, ongoing marketing efforts allow you to stay agile and adapt conversations as more information on the behaviour and interests of your prospects is uncovered.

Don't forget to keep checking on the state of play and offering encouragement to your team from the dugout.

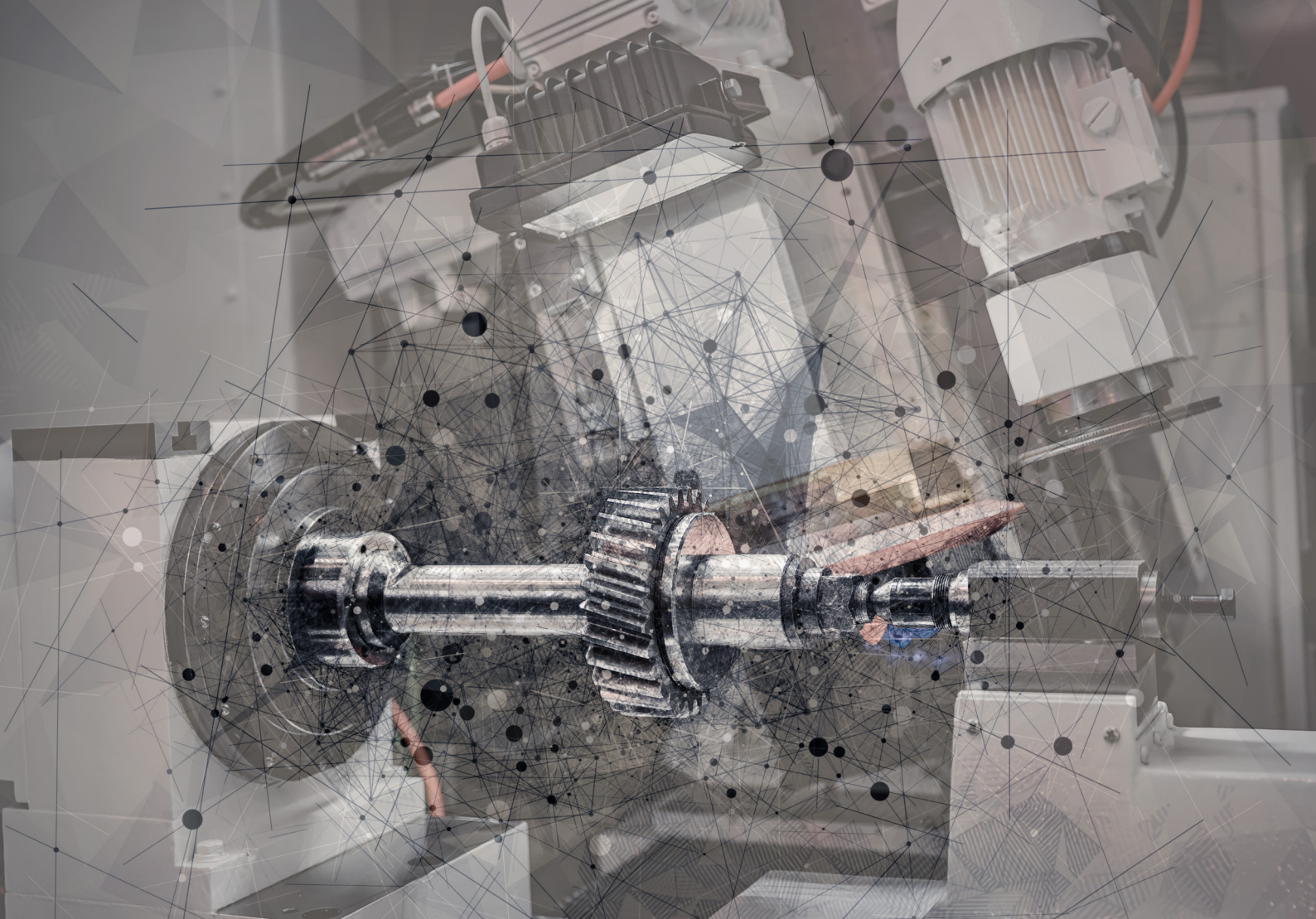
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In Summary

ABM is a powerful strategy that helps manufacturers score big, high value business through a hyper-personalised approach - targeting, acquiring and retaining best-fit accounts.

Still not sure if ABM is for you? Let's chat about your current situation and what would be the best route forward.





For advice, insight and a results driven approach to your marketing communications please get in touch.

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