

Account Based Marketing Best Practices Report: India, 2018

(A Definitive Guide for Every B2B Marketer)



Research **NXT**
Simplifying the Complex

InsideView[®]

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Executive Summary

State of Account Based Marketing

A B2B typical setup is defined by fewer accounts, big deal sizes, and longer sales cycles. There are multiple stakeholders involved in the buying decision, which makes the whole process very complex. There is a plethora of vendors and tools available in the market which promise to address one or two challenges you are facing. Without a core strategy in place, you will spend most of your time buying the new technology, understanding it, training your team and integrating it with your tech stack.

Enter Account Based Marketing (ABM), which is termed as the next big thing in the Indian B2B marketing space. ABM isn't a "hot new trend." It has been around for a while. What is new, however, is that marketing technology has finally caught up. Emphasis on ABM is growing exponentially as it tightly integrates Sales and Marketing teams and has a potential to make a direct impact on every stakeholder. ABM requires a fundamentally different approach to marketing and sales compared to how traditional demand generation strategies work.

About the Report

Research NXT teamed up with InsideView, a targeting intelligence platform, to study the Indian market and understand ABM's growth and best practices, and how it can have a major impact on your business. In this report, we identified what you need to know to make the most of ABM efforts, and where you can find further opportunities for competitive advantage.

This research was conducted over two months during which we connected with more than 100 Indian B2B marketing leaders, to discuss their views on ABM. This Comprehensive guide details the concept of ABM to simplify the process of its implementation.



Foreword by InsideView



Sesha Rao

MD, India Ops.



We are witnessing major paradigm shifts in the industry today. The “Everything Digital” paradigm is causing profound business transformation. All the business processes are rapidly undergoing significant changes due to technology-fueled transformation. Buyers’ behaviours have changed permanently since they have access to unlimited information. They are not dependent nor looking for knowledge from the sellers anymore. They are making up their minds on what they want to buy BEFORE the seller contacts them.

What does this mean to the organizations? How do they compete in an environment where 70% of the buying decision is already made before sellers get a chance to present their offerings?

Account Based Marketing should be one of the primary marketing strategies for every business-to-business organization today. The industry is rapidly moving away from a volume-based approach to a target-based approach. Businesses achieve revenue success with a well-orchestrated, well-structured and well-executed go-to-market strategy. As the B2B organizations travel over the go-to-market maturity curve, they will find ABM as an essential success factor in their journey. They will also find their revenue growth to be substantially dependent on the implementation of best practices coupled with technology adoption in their ABM strategy.

Finally, ABM is essential, but not enough. Businesses need a well-orchestrated go-to-market strategy that enables executive-level decision making with a view into an organization’s Total Addressable Market with a thorough knowledge of their Ideal Customer Profile. Alignment is needed among the revenue teams, executive management, and execution management so that they can execute flawlessly, measure immediately and fine tune in real time.



Key Takeaways

62%

of Survey participants have already implemented ABM in their marketing strategy.



50%

of those who have not implemented ABM, intend to do it next year.



83%

find ABM to be Extremely or Somewhat effective.



51%

of the respondents optimized their marketing programs for target accounts with ABM.



65%

participants use CRM as part of the ABM Tech Stack.



84%

think building key account map is one of the most important elements for an efficient ABM strategy.



44%

respondents said, to align sales and marketing; both should be collaborated to build a Healthy Pipeline.



Research Methodology

ABM has gained momentum among the Marketers, globally. To understand the current adoption pattern of ABM in the Indian scenario, we connected with marketing and sales experts from the leading B2B brands. We captured their insights through online surveys and one on one interviews.

Industry

- IT / ITES, BPO, Software, Publishing, Market Research

Departments

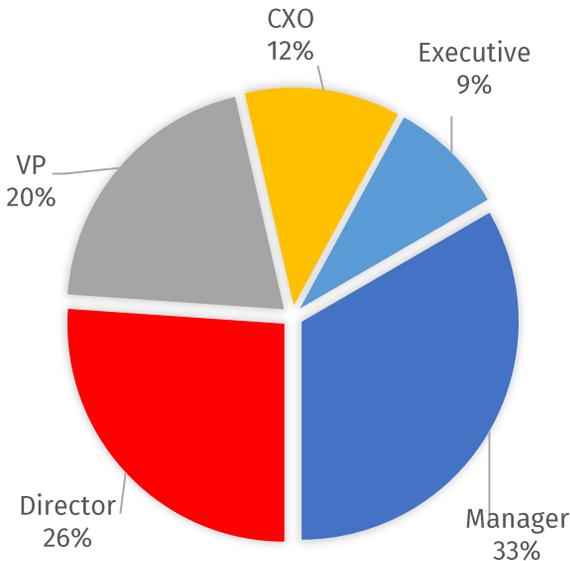
- 82% Marketing
- 18% Sales

Participation

- 100+ Surveys

Participant Profile

Job Title



Role

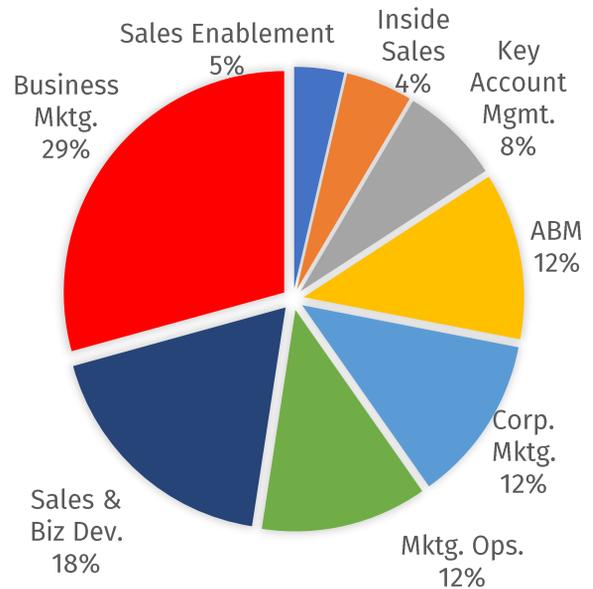


Chart 1 & 2. Survey Participant Profile
Source: Research NXT Survey



ABM, The Need & Indian Scenario



What is Account Based Marketing (ABM)?

In ABM you treat individual accounts as markets in their own right. The approach to engaging with the right stakeholder at these accounts is different from the traditional mass marketing tactics.

ABM has been around for some time, but the reason it is becoming a hot trend is the advancement of Marketing technology which can effectively enable and enhance ABM tactics. Digital ABM technologies power today's successful ABM strategies.

Account-based marketing (ABM) is a strategy of moving a target account towards your goal by delivering focused and personalized programs, messages, and content. The goal could be an initial sale, cross-sell, up-sell, renewal of contract, or even advocacy.

Inbound Vs. Account Based Marketing

ABM is a marketing strategy with a focus on scoring the right leads as opposed to many. ABM picks up right from where Inbound leaves off. For Inbound, marketing team's key focus is on attracting and nurturing as many leads as possible. Their job comes to an end once the prospect enters the sales pipeline. On the other hand, ABM starts with identifying the right account to build a lasting relationship by engaging them with personalized campaigns.

It is not that one is superior to another. The fact is that ABM and inbound are two entirely separate strategies that can be used in parallel within the same organization. ABM works well when your target market is smaller. It is little harder to scale if your company sells to a broader and diverse market of thousands. That's where you would want to use broader inbound strategy.



Evolution of ABM

Early 2000s

- Farming as a role emerging in Sales organizations.

2000 - 2005

- Key Account Management emerged as a well-defined role in leading organizations.
- ITSMA introduces the concept of Account Based Marketing.

2005 - 2010

- Large organizations started adopting ABM as part of the marketing strategy.
- BEA, Capgemini, Cisco, Deloitte, and Oracle join the ITSMA ABM Council.
- BT and Microsoft join the ITSMA ABM Council /CA and CSC join the ITSMA ABM Council.

2010 - 2015

- Most of the global leaders started adopting ABM.
- There are well defined ABM function within organizations.
- ABM started getting the pie of marketing budget.

2015 onwards

- ITSMA documents the rise of three distinct types of ABM: Strategic ABM, ABM Lite, and Programmatic ABM
- Scott Brinker's MarTech landscape 2018 has 35+ ABM tools.
- Organizations started adding ABM tools to their MarTech stack.



Why do you need ABM?

1

Multiple decision makers & complex process

B2B sales cycles are complex and involve multiple decision makers. Each decision maker would have specific priorities and interest, and ABM's personalized marketing strategy plays a crucial role in this situation.

2

Revenue Growth & increased ROI

ABM helps the organization to generate pipeline and higher revenue with right accounts. More than 80% survey respondents who have implemented ABM in their organization have seen a positive impact on their revenue growth.

3

Sales & Marketing Alignment

Sales and Marketing working in tandem toward a common goal is the need of the hour. With ABM strategy a marketer works with the same mindset of a salesperson – they think of how to generate revenue by driving engagement for accounts with high value and opportunity.

“

I am a huge fan of calendarized ABM program and technology helps me with midcourse corrections and abortions of a particular line of thought.”

”



Satinder Juneja
Head Marketing, LTI



62% of Survey participants have already implemented ABM

ABM is not at the nascent stage in India and is evolving with the advent of Marketing Technology. It complements the Key Account Management, which is one of the core revenue strategies for most of the Indian B2B organizations.

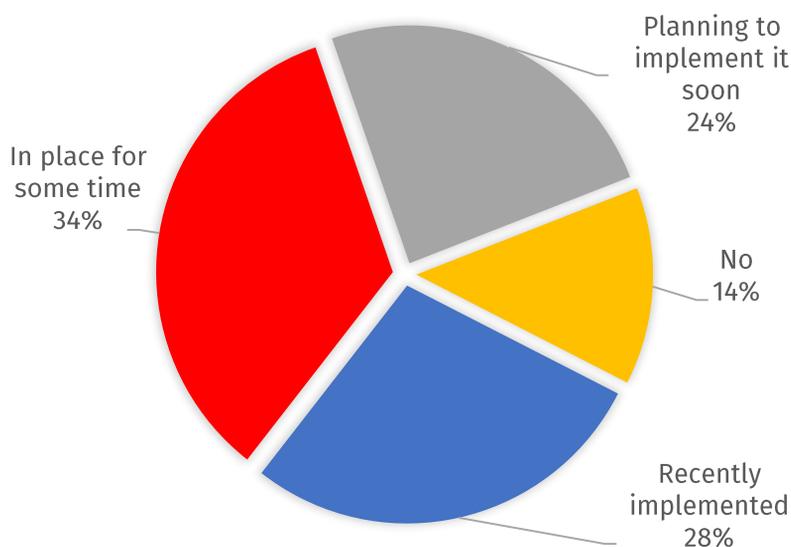


Chart 3. Current use of ABM
Source: Research NXT Survey

The response in chart 3 indicates that in this competitive environment, organizations understand the need to focus and personalize for a significant return on investment and how ABM strategies provide a framework for that focus.

62%

of Survey participants have already implemented ABM in their marketing strategy.

24%

of respondents planning to implement ABM are in the process of evaluating tools.

50%

of the respondents, who said “No” intend to implement ABM next year.



83% of those who implemented ABM, find it effective

By strategically targeting your efforts with ABM, you minimize the efforts of resources on less important prospects. Marketers and collaborating teams, such as sales and customer support can focus their resources efficiently and run programs that are specifically optimized for the target accounts.

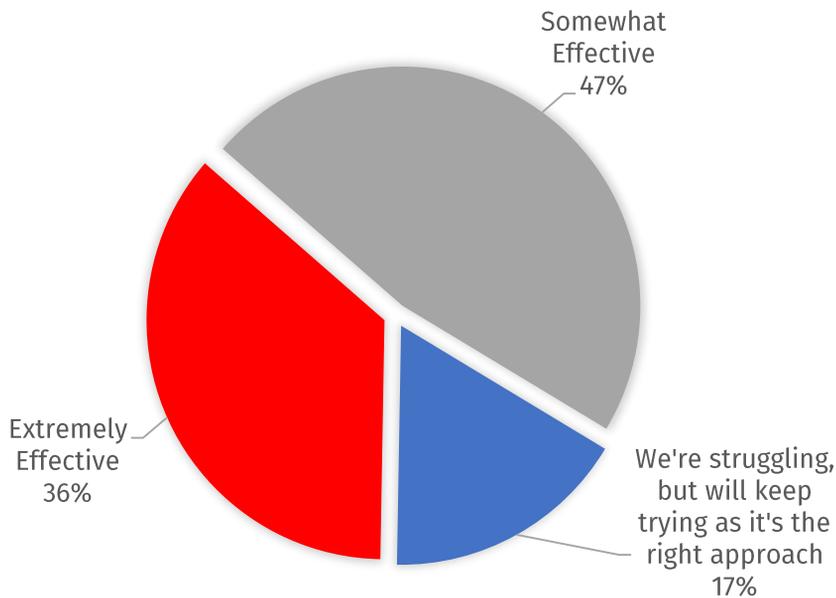


Chart 4. ABM Effectiveness
Source: Research NXT Survey

ABM plays a significant role in retaining and expanding existing client relationships. The Positive impact that ABM is having can be seen in the chart, as none of the respondents felt that ABM is not effective and is not a right approach.

83% of the respondents who has already implemented ABM feel that it is Extremely or Somewhat effective.

17% are struggling with ABM, but still feel that it is the right approach and plan to continue with it.

Here are Top 3 goals of ABM strategy defined by survey respondents

To be able to get approval from their upper management, marketers need more than just theoretical explanations as to how account-based marketing can help them reach the right buyers. They need to have a tactical plan which clearly defines their goals and how ABM is going to help achieve it. We asked marketers to tell us the top three goals of their ABM.

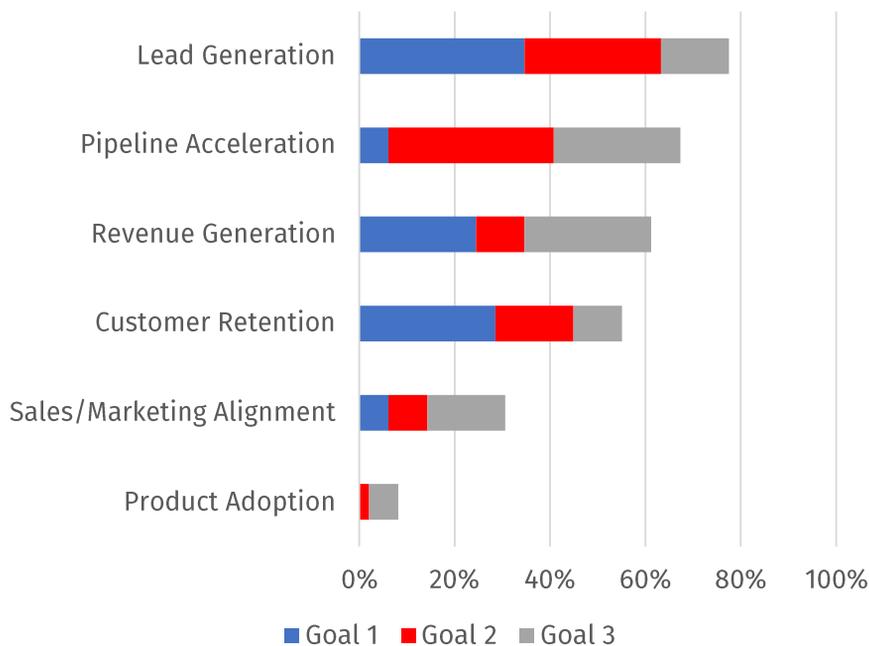


Chart 5. Top ABM Goals
Source: Research NXT Survey

- Lead Generation is the top goal of 34.7% respondents who are either using ABM or are planning to implement in their Marketing Strategy.
- Customer Retention by building relationships with all key stakeholders after the sale is the second top ABM Goal.
- In spite of not rating Pipeline Acceleration as the top goal, most of the respondents have it as their second and third option.



Sales & Marketing Alignment

As we observed in chart 5. Sales & Marketing alignment is not one of the top 3 goals indicated by survey participants. We asked them if their current sales and marketing teams are aligned, and 55% of the participants feel it is fully aligned. One of the primary reason why we are observing a different trend in Indian scenario could be because most of the B2B Indian technology companies are services-centric and Key Account Management constitutes to 60% plus revenues; hence the marketing teams always worked closely with sales for account farming objectives.

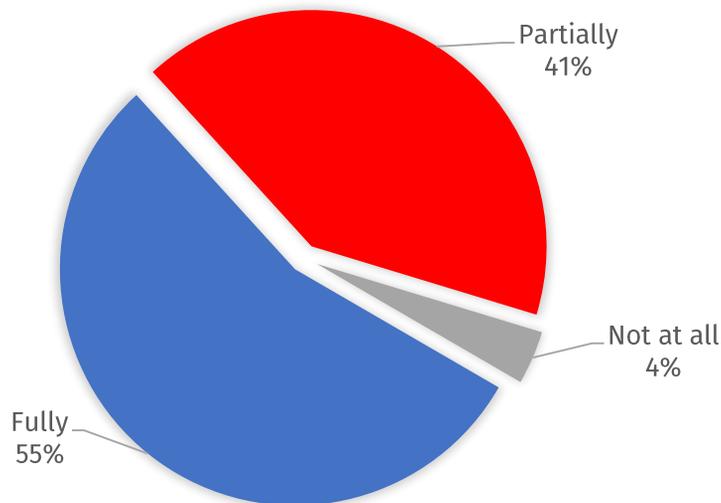


Chart 6. Sales & Marketing Alignment
Source: Research NXT Survey

“ There is a need for common KRA systems, where both Sales and Marketing work towards the same revenue target and that is why I am so much in favor of ABM as it helps to align into one team. ”



Sushant Shetty
Sales Director – India, Epsilon

Case Study – Importance of Sales & Marketing Alignment



Sushant Shetty is the Sales Director, India at Epsilon. Epsilon is a Global leader in offering end to end integrated marketing solutions. Sushant is heading India Sales and is responsible for the India Growth Story.

You have a completely aligned Sales & Marketing team. What challenges did you face while bringing both together?

Marketing is traditional in India, defined by how many events you sponsor and how many PR events have you done, while hardcore numbers drive Sales. There is a need of common KRA systems where both works towards the same revenue target. It is important to have weekly or bi-weekly joint call along with senior management input to ensure where things are going.

What is the checklist a company should have while evaluating technology for their Marketing?

- ✓ Know your most significant need. Unless you know your pain point or your biggest requirement you cannot target that area.
- ✓ Determine your budget and have complete buy-ins from the stakeholders.
- ✓ There should be a realistic timeline for the implementation of the technology.
- ✓ The last one is how do you evaluate the success of implementing the product and presence of evaluation metrics is significant for MarTech success.

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ABM Key Benefits & Challenges



Challenges that ABM can Solve

Lead generation is the engine that drives profits for a B2B organization. It is of utmost importance for an organization to manage and convert it effectively. The traditional lead generation model has been plagued by the problems related to its quality and quantity, and its low return on investment (ROI). Reason for this was that marketers were casting super big nets to get as many leads in their kitty and then let as few as possible slip out before reaching the opportunity stage. With ABM the wide nets used earlier by marketers were substituted by spears to get focused precision while targeting a lead.

You can generate thousands of MQLs by running a campaign, but it is of no use if these leads are not converted to revenue. Bad leads can result in pipeline leakage and a lot of wastage of resources. The reason for bad leads could be:

- *Marketing and Sales team are not on the same page on what defines a qualified lead.*
- *Targeting those people who are not planning to buy your product anytime soon or doesn't need it in future.*
- *Targeting a lead at the wrong time or on the wrong platform can result in an opportunity miss.*
- *Nurturing process of the lead isn't personal enough. A personalized message will always be more impactful than a mass mailer.*

ABM helps you create strategic and orchestrated effort into work, which can make you rise above the clutter of what your competitors are doing to gain attention. ABM assures that all leads are good leads by targeting only those who are more likely to buy your product.



Top Benefits of ABM

1

Penetration into strategic accounts

ABM isn't just about acquiring new target accounts, it's also about retaining and growing them through cross-sell, upsell, and advocacy programs. With new ABM technologies, marketers can focus on building relationships with their customers after the sale to support different objectives.

2

Lead prioritization & higher conversion rates

ABM eliminates unqualified buyers early in the game. This helps Sales and Marketing teams avoid wasting time on wrong companies and focus their efforts completely on the accounts that are most likely to convert. This results in higher ROI while providing less resource wastage and risk.

3

Reach prospects at right time via appropriate channels

Your target accounts are more likely to engage with your content if it is convenient for them. ABM helps to decide right channel for a target account and optimize on it. The channel could be email, social media, google ads or even traditional marketing.



I want to reach out to my prospect with information when they are receptive to it in the channel they frequent.



Ojas Kulkarni
Senior Marketing Professional,
in the IT/ITES industry



Top Benefits of ABM

4

Optimize marketing programs for target accounts

51% of survey respondents agreed that increasing personalized engagement with target accounts is the number one benefit of ABM. Instead of creating blanket messaging for a large audience ABM helps marketers to create more personalized messaging for specific groups of individuals. It's important to create relevant content which provides value for your prospective customer.

5

Align Sales and Marketing teams

ABM is perhaps one of the most effective ways to accomplish this goal. Marketers running ABM programs operate with a mindset which is very similar to a sales guy. They think in terms of accounts and how to target and engage them to generate maximum revenue from them. To get maximum benefits of ABM, sales team should provide feedback and marketing should provide all relevant resources.

“The question is not whether ABM is an option but, how ready you are to leverage it.”



AVP Marketing, at one of the largest Indian IT services Company



Top Benefits of ABM

The growing technologies have enabled marketers to automate and scale their efforts, making it easier to target right accounts. ABM, when implemented with marketing technology, becomes a comprehensive strategy to identify, engage, and retain target lists to achieve optimum results and growth. To get a clearer picture of ABM's potency, let's take a look at the top benefits that survey participants achieved with ABM.



Chart 7. Top ABM Benefits
Source: Research NXT Survey

- 51% of the respondents optimized their marketing programs for target accounts with ABM.
- 18% were able to focus more on their customers along with what's most important for their company.
- ABM benefits may vary according to the requirement and focus of the organization. Service-centric Indian marketing teams always worked closely with sales for account farming objectives. This is the reason why we see the alignment of sales and marketing rated so low.

Top ABM Challenges

1

Budget Constraint

ABM requires a lot of investment in technology. With such investment it is difficult for top management to visualize the objective to complete by marketing to, let's say, 10-20 companies. The budget will always be a constraint unless you prove it to the management that it is effective, and it can work for the company.

2

Finding Key Accounts & Stakeholders

It becomes challenging to build the list of target accounts and their respective key stakeholders, on which your entire ABM strategy will be based. These companies can be segmented based on attributes like Industry, Location, Technology budget, etc.

3

Skill Shortage

Marketing Technology has become a very hot topic in a span of last 5-7 years, due to which there is a lot of demand for the skill to understand the ABM tech stack and implement it efficiently. These skills are in short supply. It becomes critical to carefully consider the skill profile you require for your ABM strategy.



We should pay more and get the right talent for the job. Never get less skilled talent to execute your ABM strategy.



Diptarup Chakraborti
VP Marketing, Zycus



Top ABM Challenges

4

Sales & Marketing Alignment

In this New World, organizations will find themselves on a level playing field; everyone is in learning mode. Sellers will experience success when they change and align with new-age buyers. Their go-to-market strategy will have a structured ABM approach. This requires a perfect alignment between Marketing and Sales teams - common success metrics, clear communication, analyzing techniques and approaches that result in revenue. They need to agree on account selection, messaging, marketing outreach and multiple intermediate-SDR-and-Marketing touch points in the funnel. 44% of survey respondents believe, to align sales and marketing; both should be collaborated to Build a Healthy Pipeline. Chart 8 depicts top ways to align your sales and marketing.



Chart 8. How to Align Sales & Marketing
Source: Research NXT Survey



What are the top 3 challenges of your ABM strategy?

It is clear that ABM is gaining traction with B2B marketers. But challenges mentioned in the previous section like identifying the right account to target and justifying its cost of adoption has made the job little tricky for the Marketers. In our survey, we asked participants to define top 3 challenges they faced while implementing ABM -

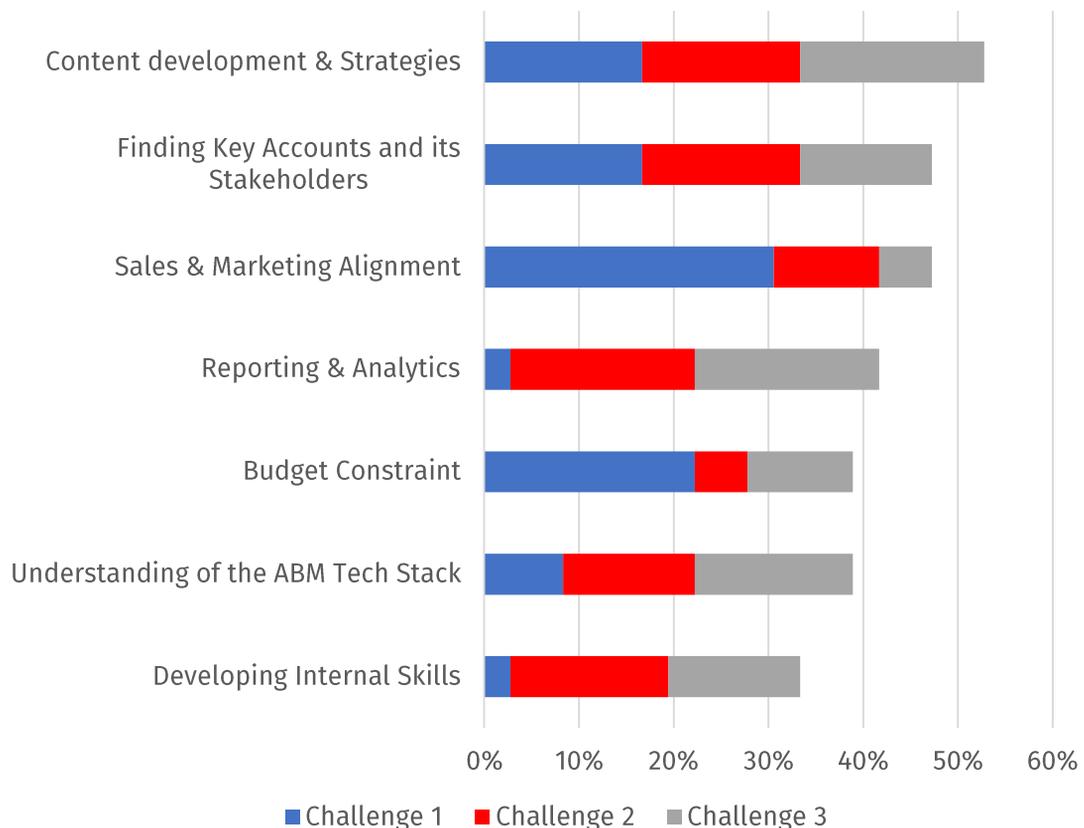


Chart 9. Top ABM Challenges
Source: Research NXT Survey

- More than 30% respondents agreed that aligning sales and marketing is the top challenge that they face while implementing ABM.
- Budget Constraint is another top concern for an account based marketer. ABM is expensive and targets limited accounts, due to these reasons its difficult to prove its ROI to top management.



Case Study – ABM Benefits & Challenges



Satinder Juneja is currently Head-Marketing at LTI (L&T Infotech). He is a senior marketing professional with extensive experience in IT & Telecom industry. Satinder has a solid understanding of B2B Marketing dynamics with exposure to Marketing and Sales Operations, Funnel, and Pipeline.

Can you quote an example where ABM has helped you achieve your target?

In my past organizations, by practicing ABM, we were able to change the way how customer perceived us. From transaction partners, we became more of strategic partners. On the product side we observed that by practicing ABM, we were able to anticipate better certain problem or issues that a customer would face. This helped our customer satisfaction score to improve in a big way.

How has technology played its part in your ABM implementation strategy?

Technology is an enabler and helps you take better decisions. I have used technology across, so it is not just for ABM. For ABM, social media listening and website analytics are huge input and validators. Then there are technologies which help you with personalization. Digital technology can personalize, monitor, measure and have multiple data points to continuously improve your decisions.

What are your top 3 ABM goals and challenges?

Top Goals	Top Challenges
Pipeline Acceleration	Finding Key Accounts and its Stakeholders
Customer Retention	Reporting & Analytics
Revenue Generation	Budget Constraint

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ABM Key Elements & Tech Stack



ABM Key Elements

ABM is an age-old marketing strategy that both sales and marketing teams have pursued separately. Technology has given the whole concept of ABM strategy a complete makeover. It can help in reaching and engaging with prospects in a much coordinated and scalable way.

For the effective implementation of ABM we shortlisted five key elements which an Account based marketer must have in his strategy.

- *Building Key Account Maps*
- *Defining Key Accounts*
- *Personalizing Engagements*
- *Tracking and Measurement*
- *Creating Brand champions (Advocate marketing)*

Whether you're new to ABM or a seasoned professional, having the right tools for each element is critical to success. Having the right ABM solution can be the real difference between a short-lived and a long-term scalable program.

The tools you choose should be able to organize all the key elements of your ABM and allow you to run cross-channel campaigns. Identifying the right tool is as important as have a solution which can integrate with other solutions as needed. Choose and implement a technology that can grow with your organization and its needs.

In the next section, we will define top key elements and list marketing technologies which can help you to implement them.



84% think Building Key Account Maps is the most important element in their ABM

Technologies that support ABM are growing exponentially, helping organizations to scale their ABM strategy. But there is a big gap between companies implementing ABM and those successfully implementing it. That is why it is critical for a marketer to define key elements for their ABM strategy. We asked respondents to rate the importance of key elements of ABM according to their strategy.

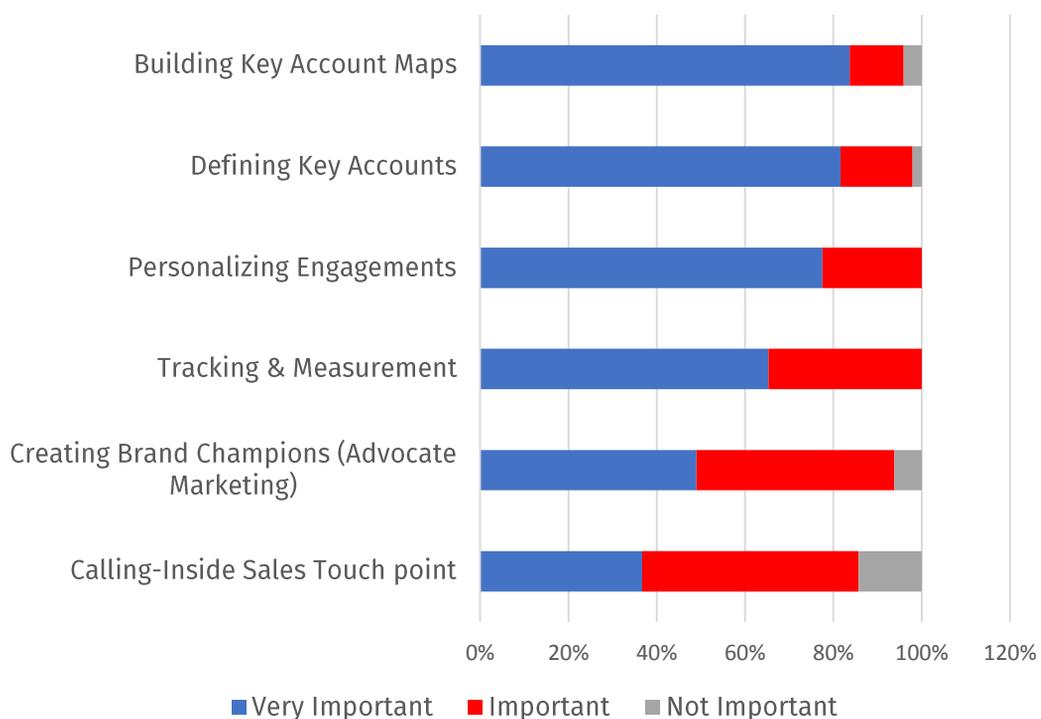


Chart 10. Key Elements
Source: Research NXT Survey

- More than 80% of people who participated in the survey feel that Defining Key Accounts and Building Key Account Maps are very important elements for a successful ABM implementation.
- Reaching out to the key decision makers of the target account with personalized content is very important for 78% respondent's marketing strategy.



ABM – Key Elements

1

Define Key Accounts



The first step is to build your target account list—the companies with the most potential to your business, which can include customers, prospects, partners or a mix of all three. 82% of respondents feel defining key accounts is the most important element of ABM. Chart 11 depicts the key attributes to consider while defining key accounts, according to its importance.

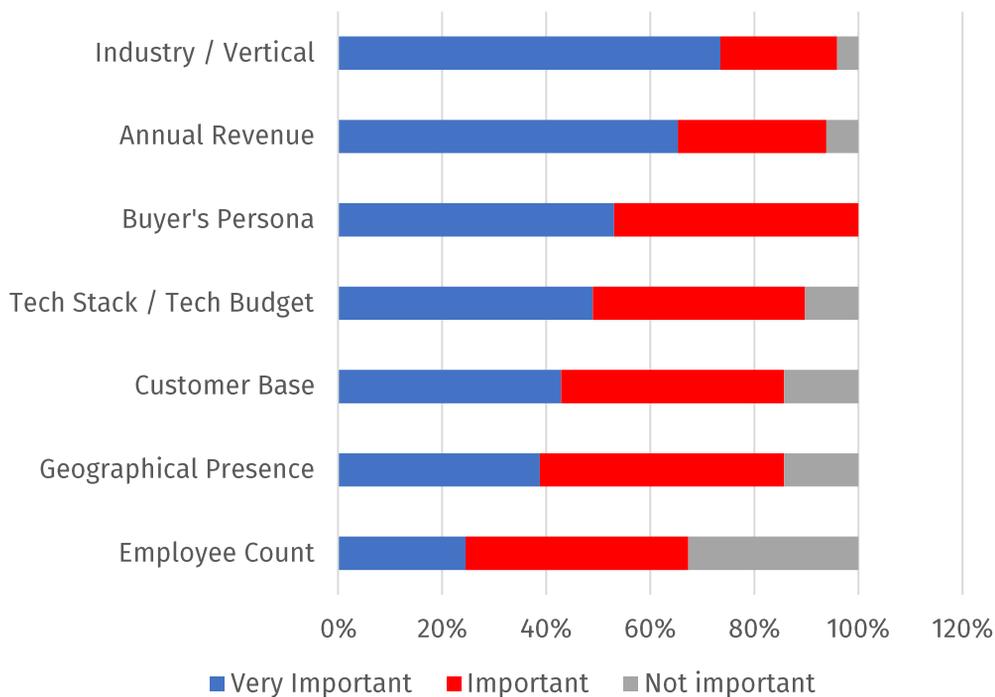


Chart 11 : Key Attributes to Identify Target Accounts
Source: Research NXT

- 73% respondents consider Industry / vertical of a prospect as a very important attribute to consider while creating key target account list.
- Buyer's Persona is important for all the respondents when it comes to the key attribute for defining key accounts.



ABM – Key Elements

2

Building Key Account Maps



84% of survey participants feel building key account map is one of the most important element for an efficient ABM strategy. The focus of ABM is to land and expand, but don't forget that to sell you will have to deal with people within each account. So, ABM is not just about the companies that you're going after. It's also about the personas involved in decision making. The next step should be to know key decision makers, influencers, and buying centres within the target account to create account maps and navigate through accounts.

3

Personalize Engagement



Once the ideal account and its key decision makers are identified, it's time to personalize their experience through engaging and targeted content. You should create compelling and engaging content that delivers value to each stakeholder on the buying side. The audience should prefer the content format and time when it is delivered. Engagement should be planned according to prospect's stage in a sales cycle. In some cases, the content could be a set of value propositions to push the Sales discussion.

“Account Based Marketing has always meant different things to different organizations. It is an extremely interesting space to be in, here's to hoping that ABM adds exponential value to every marketing organization sooner rather than later!”



Ashish Goel
ABM Marketer

ABM – Key Elements

4

Track & Measure



You need an account-focused view of engagement, conversion rates and the ability to connect siloed datasets across the funnel. Understanding your success at all levels will not only help you optimize the marketing activities and engagement, but it ultimately provides sales with the information they need to close the deal. Your KPIs will depend on your business goals and the type of campaign you’re running. We asked marketers to tell us the primary metric that they would use to measure ABM success. More than 30% respondents rate Engagement with their prospects as the primary metric which they use to measure their ABM efforts. All these metrics are interlinked, and a combination of all these are required to measure accurate ABM impact.

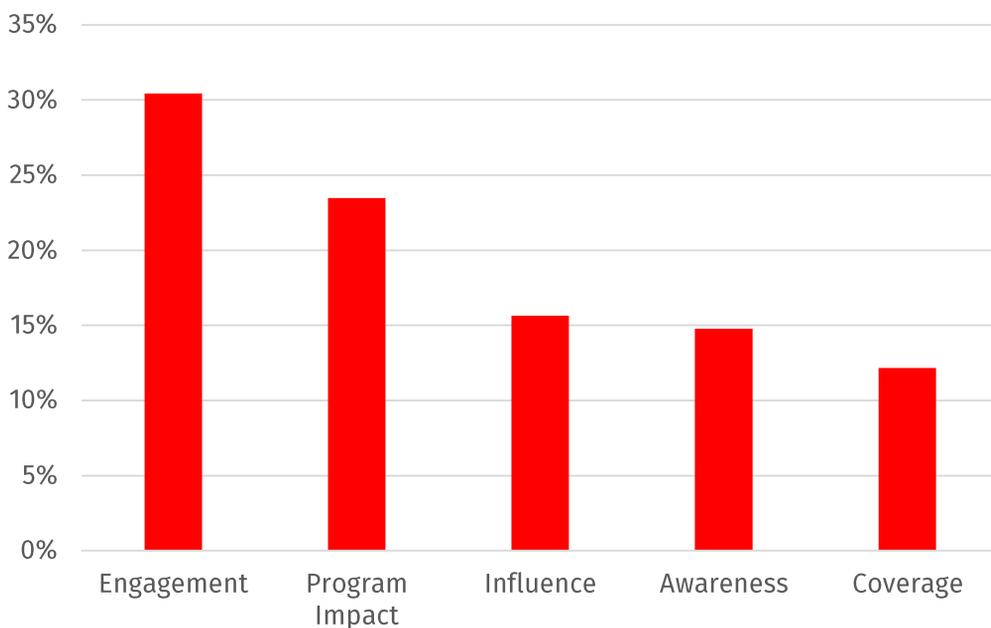


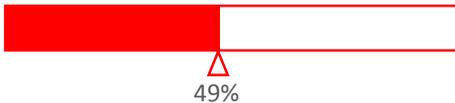
Chart 12 : Primary Metric to measure ABM Success
Source: Research NXT



ABM – Key Elements

5

Make them your champions



Creating a lasting relationship with your prospect/customers is important. Your customers can become your brand advocates/champions with the right ABM strategy. These champions have the ability to connect you with the top decision maker, the person who controls the budget and has the authority to take the final purchasing decision. 49% and 44% respondents have rated this element as very important and important respectively.

6

Calling-Inside Sales Touch Point



Inside Sales touch point is one of the essential processes an organization can build to deliver a seamless, efficient revenue machine. In recent times, this function is transforming into an SDR (Sales Development Rep) role, where the touch points are multiple and are totally aligned to marketing campaigns. Spread over a few weeks, the ABM campaigns are interspersed with Marketing and SDR touchpoints. By calling and sending emails, the team identifies, connects with, and qualifies leads which are in sync with the target account list. The qualified lead is then passed on to a sales team who takes over for the rest of the sales process.



65% participants use CRM as part of the ABM Tech Stack

In a country like India where there are so much competition and very high number of target customers, marketing technology helps to remove the clutter in the marketing process. It helps you to map your prospect's digital persona and target them with behaviour-based messaging. The companies who participated in the survey have a mix of different tools in their ABM tech stack. CRM for managing leads and Marketing automation for personalization tops the chart with 65% and 61% respectively.

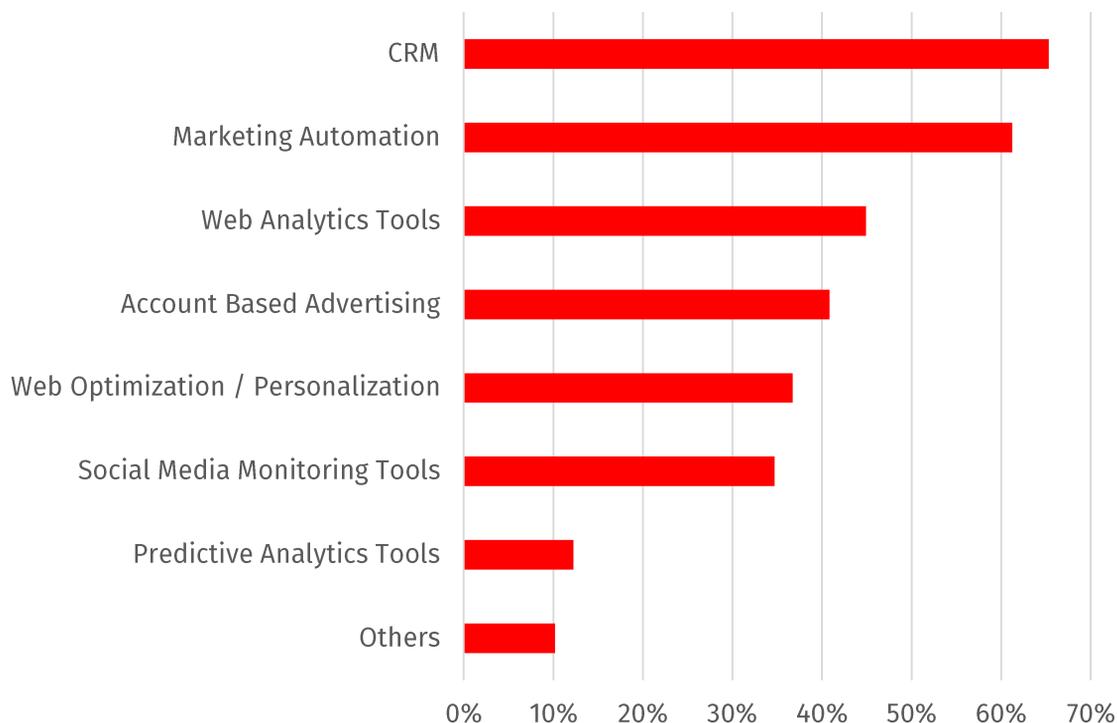


Chart 13. Tools for ABM
Source: Research NXT Survey

While speaking to marketers we realized that Larger companies would have better clarity and understanding of the need for the infrastructure in next 2 to 3 years, as they have more matured pipeline. To understand better, we asked respondents to define their ABM tech stack. In the next section, we list the technology Indian B2B Marketers are using for each key element of their ABM strategy.



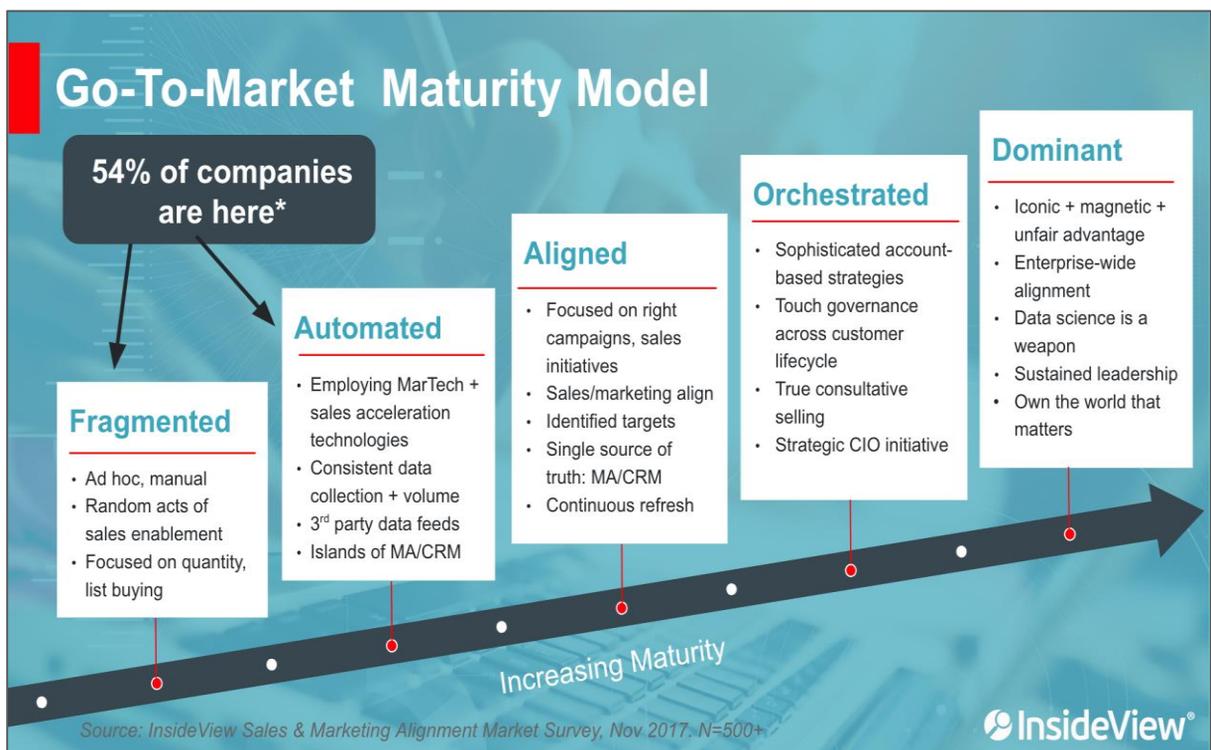
ABM Tech Stack - Indian Scenario

<p>Defining Key Accounts</p>	
<p>Building Key Account Maps</p>	
<p>Personalizing Engagement</p>	
<p>Tracking & Measurement</p>	
<p>Creating Champions</p>	



B2B MarTech Stack w.r.t Go-To-Market Maturity

In 2017, InsideView conducted research on a global level to understand how the growth of marketing tech stack of an organization is related to its different stages in Go-To-Market Maturity model. The study concluded that there are 54% companies which fall within Fragmented and Automated stages and there is plenty of opportunities to outpace your competition by moving to more mature stages. All the stages are defined in the following infographic



- **Fragmented:** Sales and marketing teams are operating independently. Data across CRM and marketing automation systems is largely siloed, preventing teams from seeing one holistic view of the customer. Customer data is managed manually and cleaned on an ad-hoc basis. The emphasis is placed on volume of data, not quality of data.

B2B MarTech Stack w.r.t Go-To-Market Maturity

- **Automated:** Sales and marketing teams have minimally-aligned orchestration. Some efforts have been made to execute automated data initiatives, including sourcing data from third parties (i.e. CRM data provider). However, there is no formal data strategy in place to ensure its accuracy.
- **Aligned:** Sales and marketing partner closely to define market targets and measure success using the same KPIs. CRM and Marketing Automation tools are synchronized, delivering a more consistent view of the customer for both teams. Data within these systems are updated and managed in real time.
- **Orchestrated:** Sales and marketing work strategically to build advanced go-to-market campaigns and execute them in tandem. Custom interactions are made visible across both teams, allowing for a clean, cohesive customer journey. Software integrations are seamless and often supported by IT or data teams.
- **Dominant:** Company culture is centred around delivering a 360-degree view of the customer, and data alignment penetrates all departments of the organization. Customer insights are surfaced through advanced AI, and business decisions are made based on extensive knowledge of target markets.

“Massive amounts of Data make predictive analytics indispensable in determining account selection, contact coverage and message personalization.”



Sesha Rao
MD – India Ops,
InsideView

Case Study – Leverage technology for ABM



Ojas Kulkarni is a senior Sales and Marketing professional with more than 15 years of experience in the outsourcing industry. He is currently working with a leading global Business Process Management company, and drives demand generation programs globally.

How are you building the ABM stack in your organization?

We are trying to evaluate various platforms which can help us and also developing technology in-house to reach the objective. We are attempting to build the customer journey map. We have developed an application which can capture all the internal marketing activities like emails or newsletter campaigns, digital/social promotions, etc and combine it with the existing stack of analytics tools to build a journey map for the prospective customer.

At what stage a marketer should start evaluating ABM?

While planning to implement ABM it doesn't matter what size of the market you are targeting as long as your ABM objective is clear. ABM should be done for large ticket deals irrespective of the size of your company. I would use ABM for the top 20 percent deals and for the rest, I would go for a traditional marketing strategy. Somebody should look at ABM when they have close to 60 percent of technology stack either developed or acquired or subscribed because technology plays a significant role in an ABM strategy.

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ABM Best Practices & Trends



Checklist - To consider while planning ABM for you organization

Any organization big or small can implement ABM. It is less about the size of your business but more about your business model. That is why it is critical to know if you actually require it. We created a checklist which can help you evaluate whether ABM is the right strategy for your business model. If any of the following matches with your current business scenario then you should implement ABM strategy.

- ✓ Your average sales cycle is lengthy and lasts three or more months
- ✓ Your sales cycle often involves multiple decision makers.
- ✓ Your usual deal size is big and it contributes the major chunk to your annual target.
- ✓ You want to increase the lifetime value of your existing customers through upsell and cross sell.
- ✓ You have target accounts with distinctive characteristics that have the potential to earn more revenue.
- ✓ Your Sales and Marketing team feels that its high time that both come together to make a bigger impact and have a common strategic focus.
- ✓ Your organization is focused on expanding into new territory or segment, new geographical area, or want to target competitors existing customers.



Checklist - To consider while implementing ABM for your organization

An ABM strategy centres around target accounts, to successfully market and sell to those target accounts, there are different activities that must occur. If you're considering implementing an ABM strategy or you want to take your ABM strategy to the next level, there are best practices that you should address, which will help define your strategy. We'll list them for you here

- ✓ Get buy-in from the senior management, they need to believe in your ABM programme and allocate resources.
- ✓ Your ABM strategy should not be static and should evolve along with the evolution of your customers. It needs to be reviewed on a timely basis and fine-tuned.
- ✓ You should have clear metrics to define your key accounts.
- ✓ Gain insights on your target accounts and keep track of activities like M&A, new initiatives, new deals, expiring contracts, awards, event, etc.
- ✓ Create personalized content for each target accounts based on account and competitor insights.
- ✓ You should also have a well-defined technology roadmap and have at least 60% of the technology stack in place before you execute your first ABM campaign.
- ✓ Have a skilled team in place to manage and execute your ABM strategy.



Case Study - Best Practices to implement ABM



Diptarup Chakraborti is the Vice President – Marketing with Zycus, heading its global marketing and product marketing function for its SaaS-based software products. He is a digital marketing expert with over eight years of experience in using digital, social and marketing automation platforms and tools to drive marketing ROI.

How do you go about defining your key accounts to target?

The first segmentation which we do is shortlist companies with revenue above \$200 million. Then we have geographical segmentation in which we do not include Latin America or African countries, as we have observed technology maturity level is low, and its adoption is also very less. Once these broad categorizations happen we map the customers into specific segments. There are multiple filters, and we evaluate about 20 parameters to define target accounts.

Do you any ABM best practices for your industry?

- ✓ You cannot have a static plan and it should be reviewed quarterly.
- ✓ Get as much knowledge about your customers as you can.
- ✓ The third is to know what your competitor is doing.
- ✓ Last is don't restrict yourself to your industry. Try to gauge information from other industries as well.

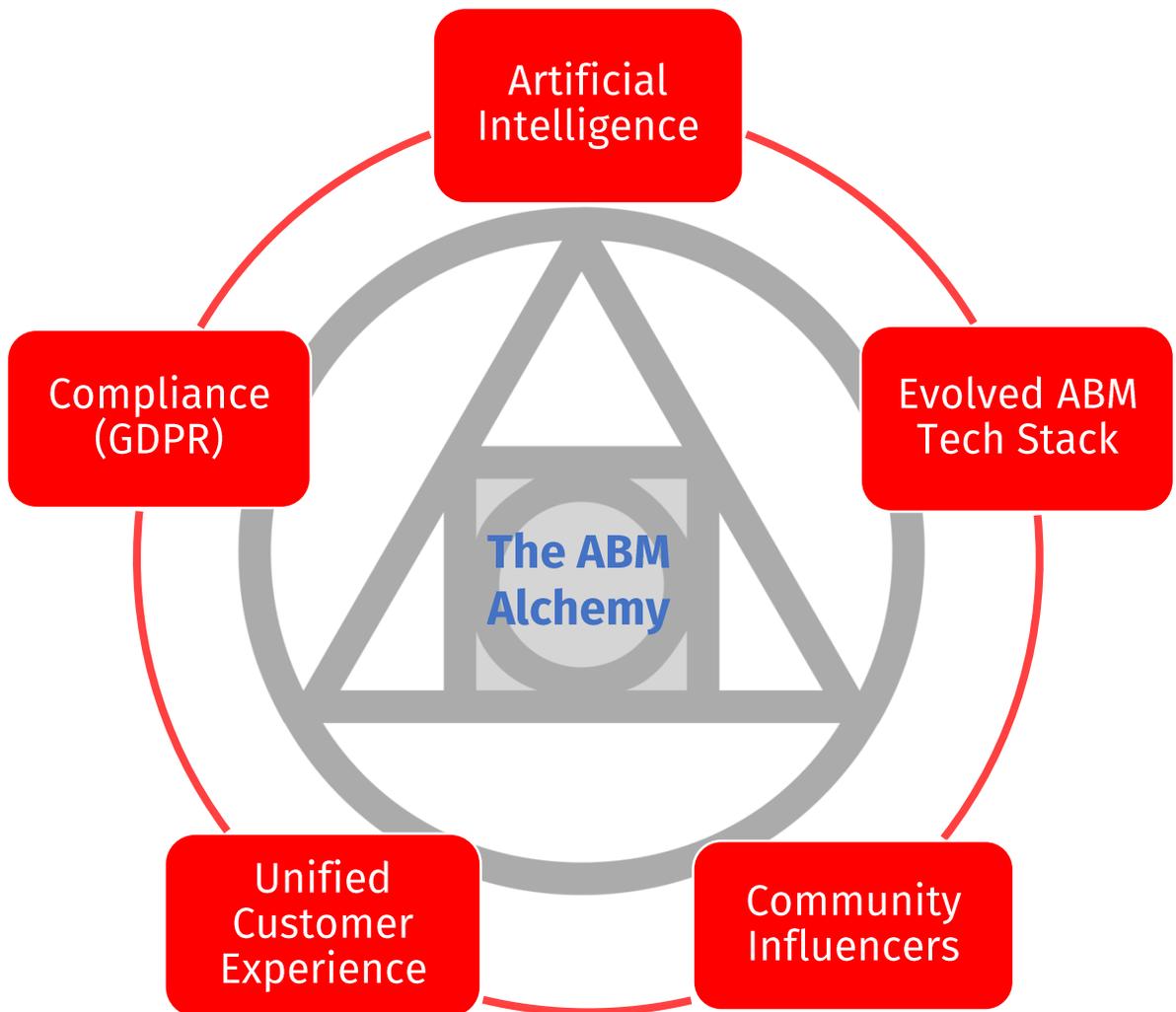
What should a marketer avoid while implementing an ABM strategy?

- One should not go for a marketing automation tool without having a proper understanding of it.
- Do not have a program without defining a clear goal.
- Do not have an ABM strategy without having a skilled team to manage and execute it.

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The ABM Alchemy: Top five Trends



ABM continues to evolve as the most effective lead generation strategy and as B2B marketers are refining their approach, trends have begun to emerge that are shaping the future of ABM. We've identified five key ABM trends that redefine B2B Marketing; if you haven't already incorporated these practices into your ABM strategy, it's a good time to think about doing so.

The ABM Alchemy: Top five Trends

1

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Enabled ABM

As tech stacks evolve for Marketing workflows, AI technologies – specifically Machine Learning, will be pivotal in steering future strategies, deriving actionable intelligence from social signals and intent data. And those ABM programs will nearly be impossible without Systems of record – read CRM, MA, and SFA. Below are some use cases outlining how AI will transform ABM.

- **Refined intelligence on prospects:** Generation of a ‘target list’ will grow in implementation complexity. With AI, marketers will understand their Ideal Customer Profile at a granular level. Smart marketers will identify adjacent market segments, figure the white spaces by using signals from the news, business insights, coverage in social channels and more. This will expand their Total Addressable Market and enable them to identify precise and additional opportunities.
- **Personalized Website Content:** AI will instantly learn and identify relevant content for each visitor based on their previous visits or real-time interactions. AI-based content management platforms would create profiles of interest on individual accounts and show the most relevant content on the website. This will have a powerful impact on the lifetime value of the customer. Content presented on external sites would also be optimized with AI.
- **Automated personalized messaging:** As the reach of ABM grows, it becomes difficult to maintain a personal relationship with each customer. AI can identify patterns and insights that humans would not typically find. Once it understands the motivations behind customer’s actions, an AI-based marketing automation solution with psychographics would be able to develop more personalized marketing messages without any human intervention.



The ABM Alchemy: Top five Trends

2

Much evolved and refined ABM Tech stack

Over a couple of years, the technology landscape has evolved exponentially. Now we see more than 7k+ tools which are available in the market. With the movement of tech-savvy people into the senior management roles, we see much smarter and refined tech stacks in organizations. Marketers look for tools tailored to their pain points and which can be easily integrated with their already existing tools. New technologies are allowing marketers to integrate video seamlessly into their ABM campaigns, creating far more effective and targeted campaigns.

3

Communities to influence buying decisions

Influencer marketing is one of the most effective and quickest ways of reaching out with your brand message. Influencers have dominated the most of the ABM discussions in 2017. In coming years we will see brands building digital communities and social groups to create a network of influence to drive purchasing decisions. The conversations in these groups will be used by account based marketers to understand their customers and develop their strategy.

“

Now with AI and marketing automation, marketers can have intimate customer understanding and thus create personalized offerings for their target audience. ”

”



Rajdeep Singh

Assistant Director - Brand, at one of the big 4 professional services firm



The ABM Alchemy: Top five Trends

4 Increasing focus on B2B Unified Customer Experience

There are more ways than ever for an organization to reach their desired audience. B2B marketers know that providing a consistent customer experience improves marketing impact. Despite knowing how important it is to their success, channel and device fragmentation have historically prevented marketers from delivering coordinated, consistent customer experiences. Recent advances in Programmatic ABM are now bringing the vision of a unified customer experience within reach. With AI powering customized content across email, social media, website and more, give marketers opportunity to create a multi-channel personalized experience.

5 GDPR will be good for ABM

Europe's new data and privacy rules clarify the individual rights to the personal data collected by companies for targeted advertising. It governs the way an organization collects, secures and uses the personal data for business use. If we go through UK's ICO website we understand that it encourages the concept of the legitimate interest of an individual. If you can prove that your messages are relevant and it is a value-add to the people whom you are targeting then you are covered under GDPR for use of individual data. Here the growth of ABM is evident, as in it all communications are relevant to the individual's need and their role. It also discourages the bombardment of emails with superficial personalization.



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- Altizon Systems Pvt Ltd
- Aricent Technologies Ltd
- Bentley Systems Incorporated
- Beroe Inc.
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