



BrandGen



STRATAGON

Demystifying Account-Based Marketing:

YES, YOU CAN MAKE IT HAPPEN



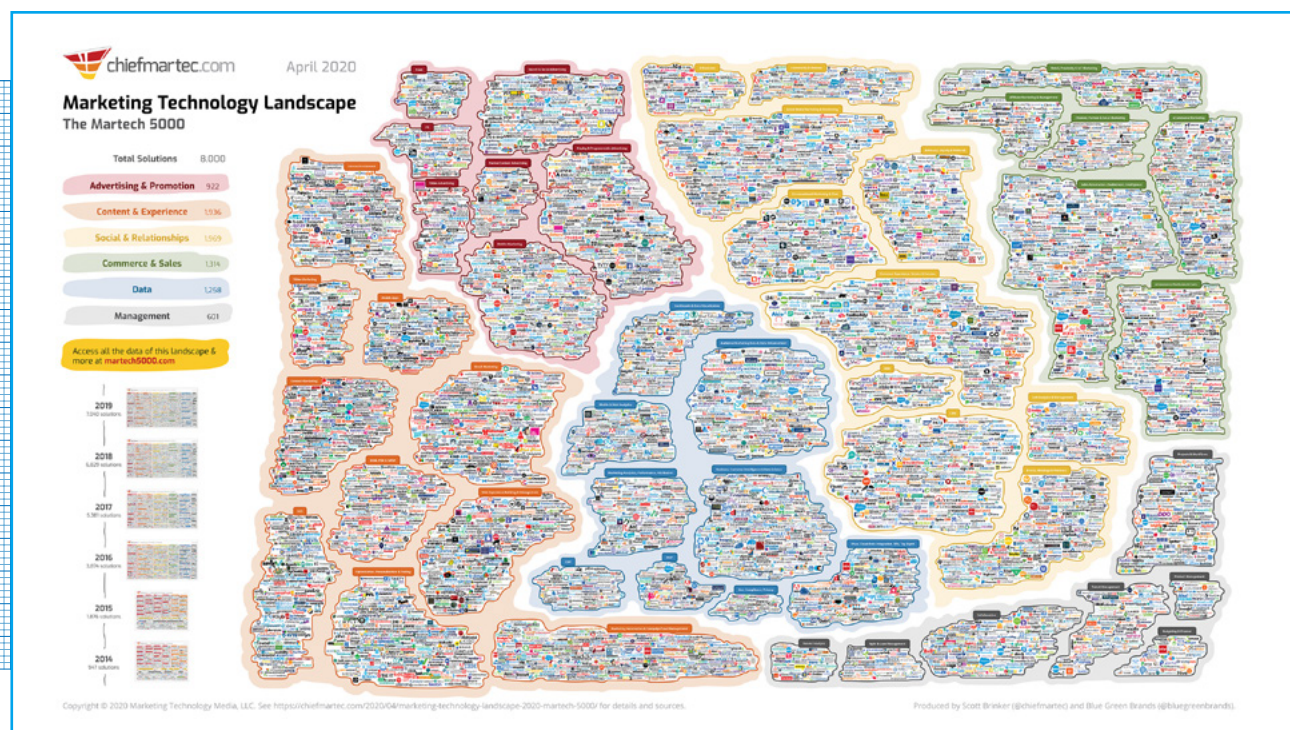
The world of B2B marketing— like everything else—has shifted over the years and the pace of change is only accelerating.

As marketing technology advances at an incredible pace, it's our job as marketers to keep up. No, not just keep up, but stay ahead of the game. Because if we don't, someone else will. It's up to us to keep our companies at the forefront by creating competitive advantage with advanced methodologies and technologies.

So, we often feel as though we're bouncing around in an attempt to know and understand the latest and greatest, when it's quite likely that we're barely scratching the surface of the newest strategies that are changing the game. Why is this so difficult? In part it's because of the proliferation of marketing technologies and solutions.

Chiefmartec.com famously tracks the number of marketing technologies on offer, and represents the marketing technology landscape in the form of company logos. In 2020, the number of marketing solutions increased again, growing 16.2% from 2019, to now over 8,000 logos. If you feel overwhelmed by all of this potential, you're not alone.

One of the most recent trends in B2B marketing that has taken the industry by storm is Account-Based Marketing (ABM).



The Marketing Technology Landscape 8,000 – Courtesy ChiefMartec.com

If you've been striving to make ABM work in your organization or agency, this guide is for you. Its purpose is to demystify the secrets of account-based marketing and make it obtainable for companies of any size, and to help you get momentum.

READY TO DIVE INTO ABM? Let's do this.

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What is ABM?

Account-Based Marketing turns lead generation as we've known it on its head. Every B2B marketing practitioner is aware of the funnel and the buyer's journey as important frameworks to plan marketing activities. In fact, Inbound Marketing is a way to implement a funnel-based strategy whereby you produce content to attract visitors to your website (the top of the funnel), convert that visit into a lead with a premium content offer (middle of the funnel) and nurture the lead until they become a customer (the bottom of funnel).

Although best practices using this model would be to design your content strategy to attract just the right visitors into your system, the truth is that any company might find your website and become a lead, whether or not they're a good fit for your business.

With Account-Based Marketing, you're doing things differently, and standing the traditional funnel on its head. You're not waiting for companies to show up; you're actively reaching out to them. And it's not any old company, but a short list of companies that map to your ideal customer profile or ICP. This surgical approach to demand generation has a number of advantages as we'll learn about later.

The History of ABM

While there's growing interest in ABM to drive revenue in B2B companies, the truth is that the core tenet of ABM has been practiced at times well before the buzzword was recently coined.

For instance, you can imagine way back when a local service company wanting to win the largest company in town as a customer. They might have identified people in that company, perhaps by buying names from a list broker, and made their approach by mailing these company employees a letter.

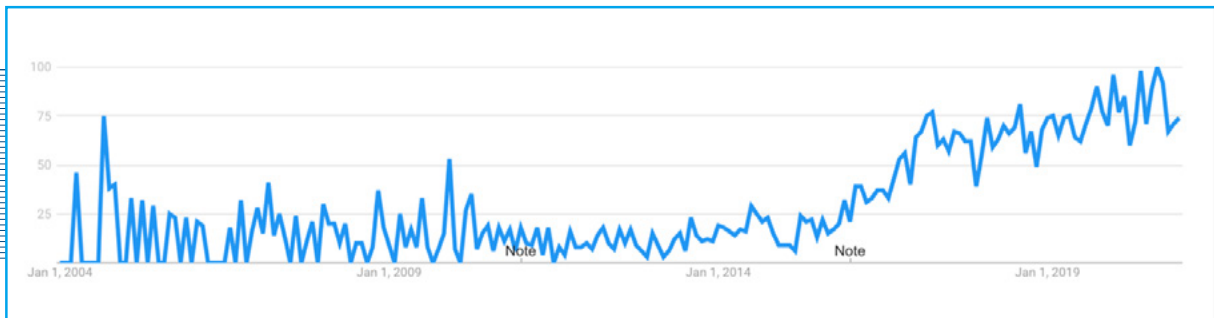
**YOU'RE NOT WAITING FOR COMPANIES TO SHOW UP;
You're actively reaching
out to them.**



Why Increasing Interest in ABM Now?

Why then the acceleration in interest in ABM of late? The acceleration in interest in ABM is a direct result of the ability to use technology to make the implementation of ABM efficient and effective. While it was possible to operate an ABM strategy in the past, it was a cumbersome, labor intensive process.

GoogleTrends report of "Account-Based Marketing" shows an acceleration in search interest starting around 2015, as the technologies to enable ABM as a specific strategy proliferated.



Google Trends, "Account Based Marketing" from 2004-2019

Technology has now put the ability to execute an ABM strategy across multiple marketing channels, into the hands of any company.

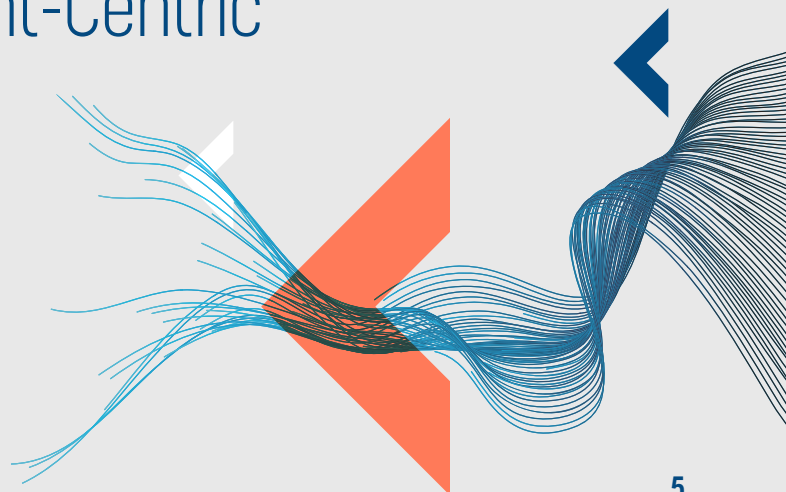
Yes, that means that now ABM strategy can scale even smaller than it used to due to new technology platforms that make it easier to access and implement.

ABM REQUIRES A CULTURE CHANGE

Changing Your Company's Mindset from Lead-Centric to Account-Centric

If you want to be successful with ABM, it's time to change how marketing and sales think and interact when it comes to approaching ABM-driven revenue growth.

Here's the typical way it goes: marketing teams run campaigns, sales teams run deals. Do they ever intersect? Rarely. Should they? DEFINITELY.



Marketing tends to think in terms of “leads,” which are buyers moving through the pipeline until they’re ready to be passed on to sales. However, in B2B buying cycles, the buyers are typically part of a team of multiple people weighing in on a decision. The bigger the deal, the more people weighing in. After all, it’s called “business to business,” not “lead to lead.” This often makes demand generation hit a wall, because marketing and sales teams don’t know which direction they should be running to chase down the right decision maker.

Guess what? You don’t have to run in only one direction. You actually can chase multiple decision makers within one account at the same time. Are you starting to feel tension release in your chest? We hope so.

Here’s where we flip the funnel and make you stretch the boundaries a bit.

Marketers: you have to stop thinking about leads. A lead-centric approach puts a misleading focus on individuals who might not be the right decision makers. Plus, if you hand off the wrong leads to salespeople, it can be frustrating for both parties. On the other hand, account-centric marketing enables marketing and sales teams to align their focus and understand shared goals, which allows everyone to become more efficient and organized. Instead of focusing on single “leads,” your organization will transform their mindset to focus on accounts as a whole and how individuals fit and influence the decision-making process within each account.



**ACCOUNT-CENTRIC MARKETING
ENABLES MARKETING AND
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**align their focus
and understand
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HERE’S HOW ACCOUNT-CENTRIC MARKETING HELPS:

- Unifies marketing and sales processes
- Tracks level of engagement throughout the life of an account
- Fills the funnel with prospects that are associated with an account as a whole
- Coordinates interactions and delivers consistent messaging to the entire account as they move through the funnel
- Creates a complete picture of an account and maps out decision makers within it to educate buyers and increase the likelihood of closing the deal

Salespeople typically know the roles that influence the sale the most, but they have a difficult time reaching the C-suite and the purchasing director at the same time.

Although it's important to think about accounts as a whole, it's also imperative to realize that each individual within the account has different goals and pain points as they approach the buying decision. Therefore, your marketing and sales teams need to understand the context of each role, its relationship to other roles within the account, and how your messaging affects all of those roles and the ultimate purchasing decision. You're never just selling to an individual.

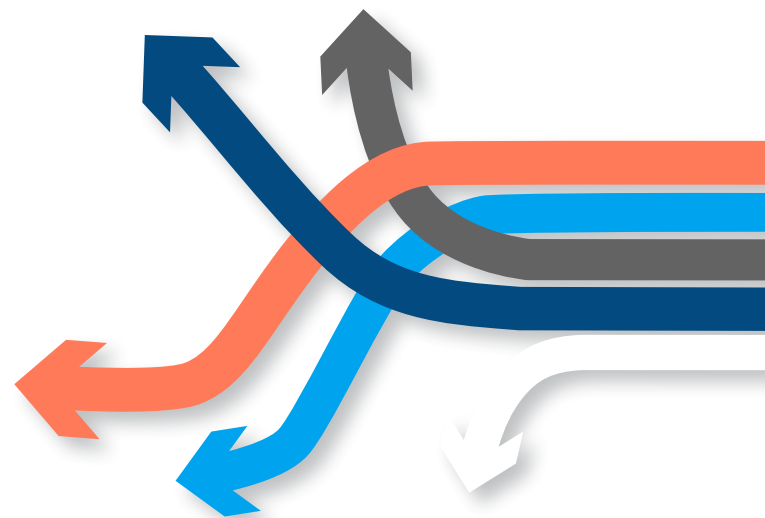
Is account-based marketing starting to become clearer? Keep going.

The Advantages of Account-Based Marketing

Account-based marketing is a way to align marketing and sales efforts to personalize pipeline activities and target multiple decision makers within ideal accounts.

OUR DEFINITION OF ABM HIGHLIGHTS THE IMPORTANCE OF ITS:

- Effectiveness in B2B environments
- Coordination of marketing and sales processes [also called "smarketing"]
- Personalization in content and messaging
- Ability to target individual decision makers while influencing the account as a whole



Account-based marketing takes a lot of strategic planning, yet it is highly effective when adopted by marketing and sales teams. It brings in best practices of inbound and outbound processes to reach target accounts.

Benefits of ABM

The benefits of ABM are obvious once you begin putting it into practice, so let's clarify the top five, alphabetically:

A Aligning Marketing and Sales

Unifying the efforts of marketing and sales teams is a huge win in B2B processes. It allows for collaboration and a seamless experience for prospects and customers in the pipeline.

B Bigger Wins

ABM enables buy-in from an entire team of decision makers, which allows for increased engagement, and in turn, larger deals. With the right tools, you can easily track ROI and attribute wins to the associated activities to continually improve processes.

C Close Rates

With ABM practices in place, approaches become aligned and deals tend to close at higher rates than traditional marketing and sales strategies. It accelerates the buying cycle because ABM actively targets all decision makers, while keeping gatekeepers and blockers in check throughout the process.

D Delivering Consistency

Although ABM can be a long process, it allows you to deliver a consistent, personalized experience for target accounts and the individual roles within those accounts. Consistent experiences facilitate a way for customers to build trust through relevant messaging as they move through the pipeline.

E Efficiency & Expansion

You should always begin with the accounts that have the highest potential to be ideal clients for your organization, which empowers you to waste no time in focusing all efforts on best fit accounts that you can then expand through trusted relationships.

Account-Based EVERYTHING

NOT JUST MARKETING

Hopefully by now, you understand that ABM covers more than just marketing. We've covered the alignment of sales and marketing, or smarketing, but it's important to expand it even more than that wherever possible.

B2B experts have found that ABM is most effective in companies where its practices are adopted throughout all revenue-generating disciplines in the organization.

You must move away from a siloed approach to marketing! The more you can create a collaborative approach to make ABM a strategic business initiative across the company or agency, the more efficient and effective it will be.

Think of it as creating a new type of ABM to move the organization forward – to keep the acronym going – creating Account-Based Momentum or having an Account-Based Mindset!

THE NEW ABM IN PRACTICE WILL INVOLVE AREAS LIKE:



Whatever you decide to call it, start educating your internal departments about the importance of ABM to be on the path for exponential growth.

Why Should You Implement ABM?

We get it: ABM can feel overwhelming. As you have seen, it's been unobtainable for many companies due to the strategy, resources, and tech needed to make it happen.

But the times are changing— and ABM just makes sense.

- **ABM isn't going anywhere**

The longer you wait to jump in, the more advanced it will become. Don't wait until it's too late.

- **ABM is steeped in strategy**

You're not just throwing messages out there hoping the right decision makers will see them; your campaigns will be backed by research and personalization.

- **ABM is scalable**

Yes, it can grow with you as you go—you can focus on a small number of accounts or invest in larger numbers as needed. advanced it will become. Don't wait until it's too late.

CONCLUSION: BREAKING NEWS

ABM is (finally) accessible to all!

It's your turn to put the account-based mindset into practice so that you can gain that account-based momentum we all need.

To get into the nitty gritty, you'll need some approaches and tactics to get into campaign building.

Now that you're up to speed on what ABM can do, check out this working guide to learn how to successfully set up and run an ABM campaign.

DOWNLOAD OUR WORKBOOK:

Success in ABM Campaign Planning



About BrandGen

BrandGen.io is a self-service digital ABM advertising platform that enables B2B firms and their marketing partners to accelerate sales and drive revenue growth through targeted, cost-effective advertising campaigns. BrandGen.io builds your brand over the length of your sales cycle while helping you to generate demand at targeted accounts. BrandGen.io is future-proof in that we anticipated the demise of the 3rd party cookie and have developed solutions that enable you to directly reach the buying group at companies that should be your next customers even as 3rd party cookies are deprecated. The tool is designed to make setting up advertising campaigns a breeze, and it's deeply integrated with the HubSpot marketing PaaS to help you to create your leading-edge ABM technology stack.

We get it—ABM is complicated, but you can make it happen with BrandGen.
Watch our demo to learn more.



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