Account Based Advertising:
A critical piece of the ABM puzzle
3 key steps to getting success

In a world where buyers increasingly delay sharing contact details, account based advertising gives marketers the ability to reach companies. Without waiting for them to turn up at their doorstep.

radiate b2b

radiateb2b.com

© 2020 Radiate B2B Limited



Introduction

> **Account-based digital display advertising allows marketers to generate higher clickthrough rates, web engagement and pipeline**
> **- Sirius Decisions**

B2B marketers are seeing increasing acquisition costs thanks to increasing noise in the marketplace from ever increasing amounts of content marketing combined with buyers who are delaying sharing contact information.

This environment is driving the need for scaled account based marketing and account based advertising to solve these challenges.

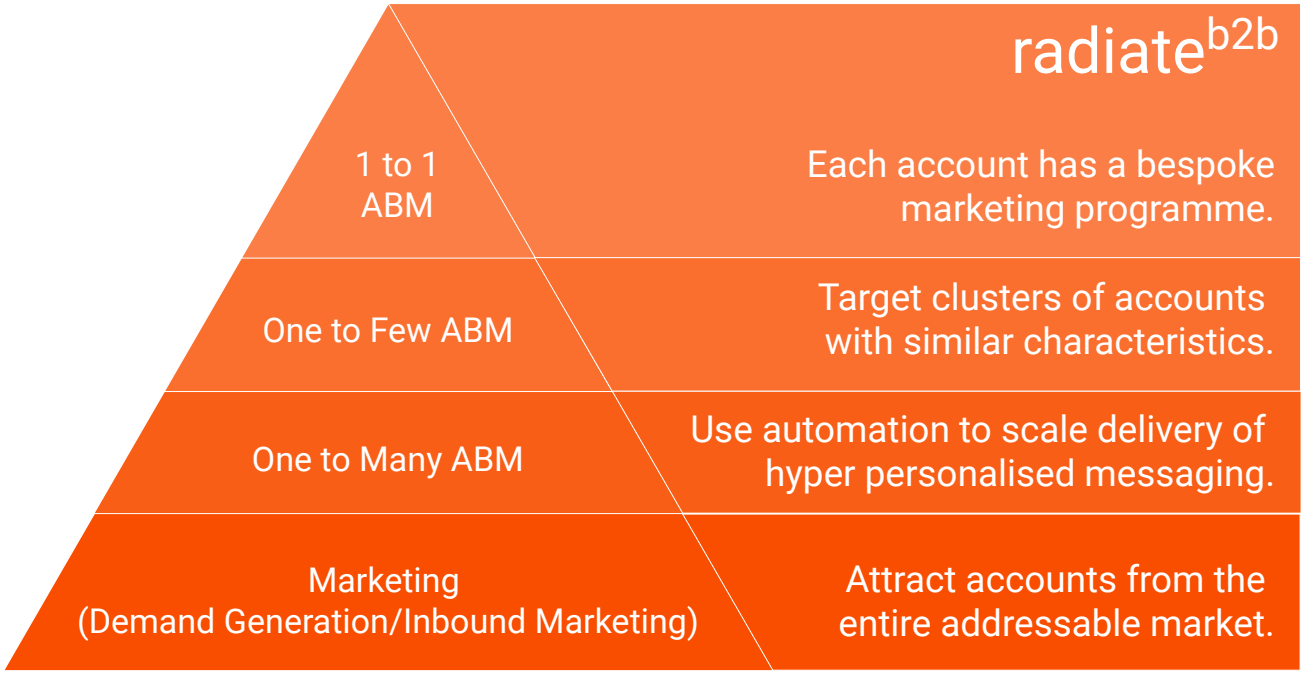
SiriusDecisions describes it as a “key execution requirement for many ABM programs”.

But what is it? Where does it sit within your broader account based marketing program and what should you do to find success?

This whitepaper seeks to answer these three questions.



What is Account Based Marketing?



Account Based Marketing (ABM) is defined as:

"… a strategic approach that combines targeted, insight-led marketing with sales to increase mindshare, strengthen relationships and drive growth in specific new and existing accounts."

Modern Account Based Marketing is combining technology with the traditional ABM strategy of creating a single marketing plan for each account with a scaled approach that allows individual accounts to be identified and grouped into either One-to-Few or One-to-Many ABM strategies (see diagram above), allowing Account Based Marketing to scale.

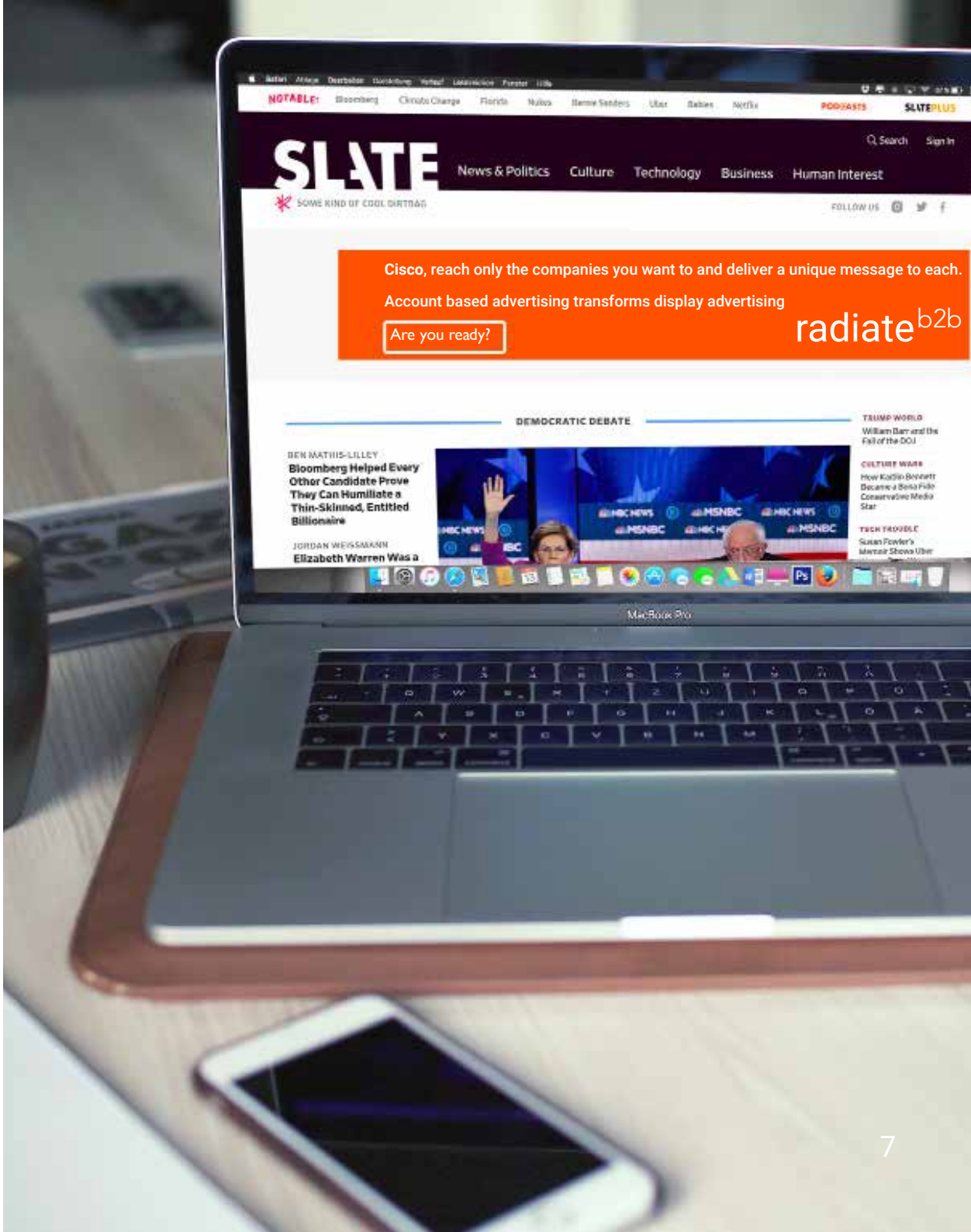
To learn more about these strategies and how accounts move between them, see this article. You may also want to read our Inbound vs ABM whitepaper here.

What is Account Based Advertising?

Account Based Advertising allows you to place advertising across the Internet in front of only the companies you wish to target.

The advertising, at least with the Radiate B2B platform, can be personalised to an individual or group of accounts allowing you to incorporate it into one-to-one, one-to-few or one-to-many account based marketing strategies.

The nature of the channel means that you are also able to tailor the messaging based on where the target company sits within your sales and marketing pipeline. This allows you to reach an account before you have any contact with them and then can adjust once there is contact, as they move through the sales funnel and after close.



3 steps to successfully adopting account based advertising.

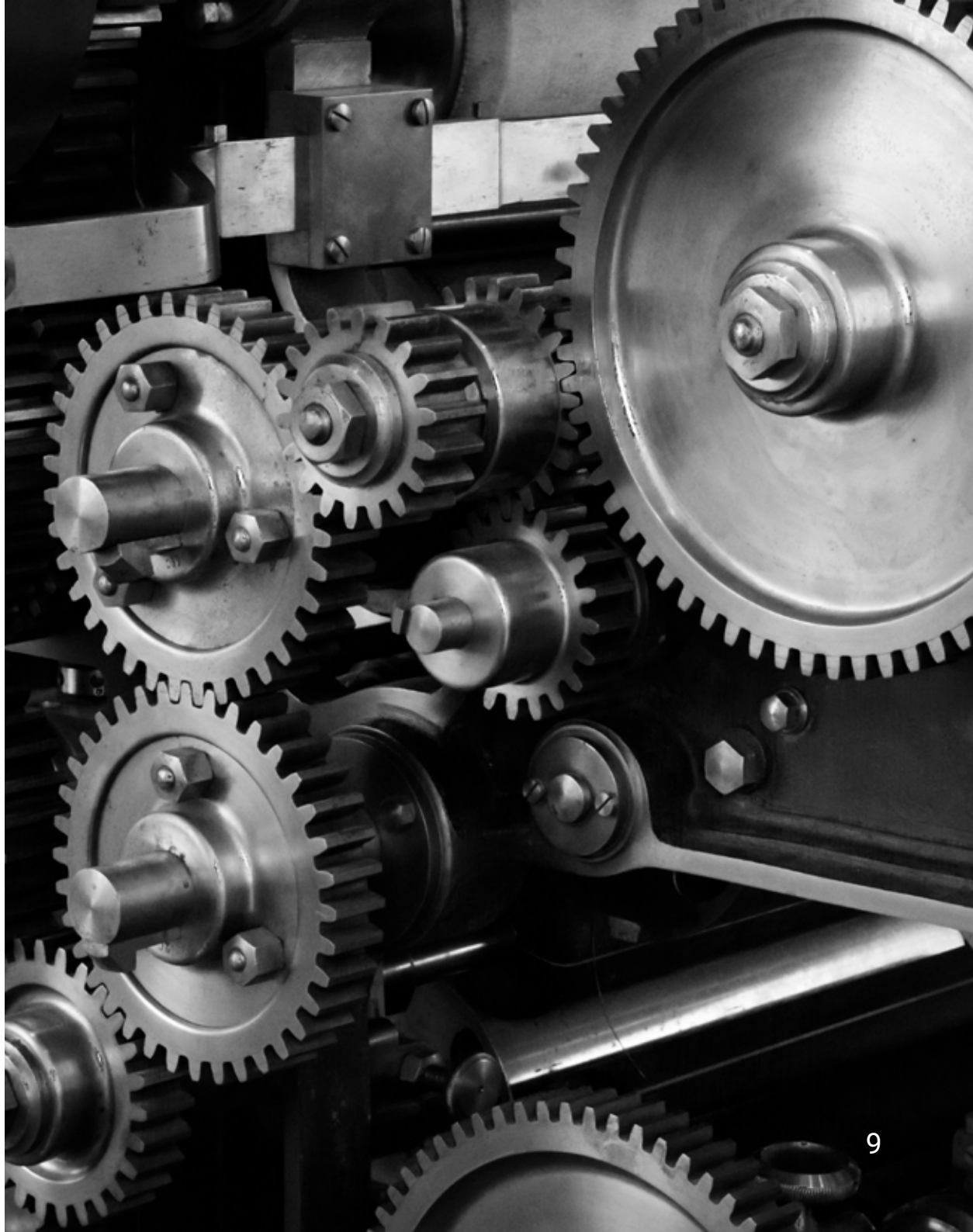
Based on our own experiences, there are three major foundations to a successful account based advertising program.

1. Sales and Marketing Alignment

2. Smart account Insight

3. Content

Read on to understand how to get these aspects right the first time.



1. Sales and Marketing Alignment

Sales and Marketing alignment is as critical in account based advertising as it is in account based marketing.

In some ways it is even more critical as communication flow between the inside sales team and marketing is imperative to driving the best results and preventing budget being wasted on targeted accounts.



> Now we actually spend time sitting together and working out what represents a really high quality lead. So while we might be passing on fewer leads, they're much better quality and more likely to turn into a customer at the end. The extra work is worth it.



Matt Tonkin
Senior Digital Marketer
Superior Glove

There are three things to consider:

1. Selecting accounts

Whilst marketing should lead this effort, understanding which accounts sales would prefer to target and where they sit in the pipeline is an important part of the process. Having sales drive account selection often leads to a small percentage being high quality and the rest a random selection of filler accounts so communication is a critical part of this process.

Understanding how to scale account selection over time is also important as when accounts are removed, they should often be replaced with new accounts to continue to drive pipeline for the inside sales team.

2. Process
Before a programme is active, setting out processes with the inside sales team about when accounts should stop being targeted, or when they should be upgraded or downgraded helps to accelerate the decision making process.

3. Agree on messaging for each company or cluster of companies based on their position in the pipeline.

Involving sales early and gaining their buy-in to the programme is a key first ingredient.



2. Smart Account Insight

Insight about target companies is critical to an account based marketing programme. Without it, your messaging is generic and unlikely to stand out from your competitors.

It is easy however to fall for the hype surrounding account based marketing today and think that you need to understand every account inside out before deciding whether to include them in your account based marketing programmes. This is folly.



Gathering insight is an expensive process. As accounts move through different milestones, increased research should be actioned.

More often than not, firmographic, technographic and potentially intent data alongside predicted annual contract values (ACV) can provide sufficient information to make a decision for or against selection inside an account based advertising campaign.



As the account engages, this should trigger increased stakeholder and account research, gradually increasing as the account moves through the pipeline.

The initial research may also suggest whether an account will move from a cost effective one-to-many campaign into a one-to-few or one-to-one ABM programme over time.



3. Content

Content clearly plays a key part of any advertising campaign.

A common mistake we see is treating the messaging in a similar way to a search campaign. Unless you are specifically targeting companies that you know to be in the buying process this is not the best approach.

The majority of people at targeted companies will come indirectly to your website instead of directly clicking. We typically expect 20-30% of new companies targeted to visit each quarter - the highest we have ever seen has been 78%.



On average, website engagement is at least 3x higher than when account based advertising is not present.

This uplift is not just present on the website, but across other marketing channels.

Unsurprisingly, given the increased brand awareness, *we see increased SEO and PPC traffic - one SaaS client saw a 41% uplift in the former and a 21% uplift in the latter.*

Perhaps more suprisingly, there was also an uplift in the performance of email marketing and social media.



Research by LinkedIn (see here) found that there is a correlation between a brand's share of voice and its rate of growth. With account based advertising it is possible to do this with specific companies, allowing you to be the largest share at a much lower overall cost.

In a recent case study, we saw that accounts were twice as likely to close and would move through the pipeline faster.

Creative should therefore focus on key themes that highlight your benefits for accounts who are desirable but pre-pipeline or have significant value such as relevant research content to communicate leadership within the space.



Conclusion

Account Based Advertising allows you to cut through the noise and directly reach your buyers at specific companies.

By doing so, you are able to identify companies who are at the earliest stage of the buying phase and influence the entire buying process.

Iterating on your account selection based on feedback from inside sales results in an increasingly efficient account based advertising programme.

When combined with campaigns which are increasingly tailored based on position in the entire pipeline (including the nurture phase) and potential average contract values, account based advertising drives engagement and accelerates opportunities through the pipeline.

Finally, experimenting with creative and designing it based on where a prospect sits within the pipeline will allow for increased brand awareness around key messaging and ensure the target account is fully aware of your benefits.



To find out more about how account based advertising works contact us now.

radiate b2b

Email: hello@radiateb2b.com
Telephone: +44 20 389 321 70

4th Floor, Franklin Building,
124 Goswell Road, London, EC1V 7DP