
DEMANDBASE
EXPERT ABM
ALIGNING SALES AND MARKETING
#ExpertABM

INTRODUCTION

As B2B marketers, we've gotten used to this idea that Sales isn't our friend. Sure, sometimes we may agree on a topic or a closed deal, but most of the time, we're just trying to avoid each other in the halls. We all know that this kind of relationship isn't healthy, especially since Sales and Marketing have to work so closely to drive growth for their organizations. But when it comes to challenges like these, it can be hard to smile and make small talk:



50%

of marketing generated leads are ignored by Sales

(MillerPierce)



79%

of marketing leads never convert to sales pipeline

(MarketingSherpa)



40%

of sales time lost prospecting

(CEB)

While we want to improve our relationship with Sales, we're often unsure where to start. In most cases, it requires taking a step back and thinking about the problem from a macro level. This means you'll have to spend some time analyzing your own demand generation strategy and then work with your sales team to implement a new strategy—one that holds you both accountable to the same goals and metrics, or Account-Based Marketing (ABM).

In this eBook, we'll talk about four common areas where the sales and marketing relationship breaks down and how you can fix them. We'll also cover the strategies and tactics you need to implement so you can actually work effectively with Sales on a day-to-day basis.

WE'LL GUIDE YOU THROUGH FOUR KEY COMPONENTS:

1. **THE TARGET ACCOUNT LIST**
2. **METRICS AND GOALS**
3. **CAMPAIGN DEVELOPMENT**
4. **TECHNOLOGY CONSIDERATIONS**



OLD WAY

Sales targets specific accounts, and Marketing focuses on leads.

NEW WAY

Sales and Marketing work together to identify and target a list of accounts.

Marketers have always been under pressure to prove ROI on their efforts and digital marketing has made leads an easy KPI to measure. Unfortunately, leads don't always translate into revenue, which is of course the most important KPI for any business. It's easy to lose sight of this fact, especially when Sales is always asking for more leads.

TO BREAK OUT OF THIS PATTERN, Sales and Marketing teams need to collaborate on a list of target accounts—the companies with the most potential for your business, including customers, prospects and partners or a mix of all three.

THE TARGET ACCOUNT LIST

The first step of bringing Sales and Marketing together is a fundamental one: agreeing on the companies you're going to focus your efforts. While there are many ways to identify those companies, they all include working with Sales.

HERE ARE THREE WAYS YOU CAN BUILD THE LIST.



IDENTIFY NAMED ACCOUNTS

Your sales team is likely working off a list (or several lists) of accounts they'd like to break into. You can use this list as a jumping off point and work together with Sales to update and edit the list.



LOOK AT CURRENT CUSTOMERS

Your future customers look a lot like your current customers. So to build your target account list, you'll need to identify the attributes that are most commonly shared by your current customers. These attributes can include things like industry, revenue, location, technology usage and competition. Based on these, you'll get a clear picture of the types of companies you should be targeting. You can then build a list of companies that share those attributes.



INVEST IN TECHNOLOGY

You can also leverage technology to help you build a more advanced target account list. There are a number of account-identification solutions that can help you define critical attributes, recommend ideal prospects and build a list of pre-ranked, qualified accounts.



OLD WAY

Marketing relies on vanity metrics, meanwhile, Sales focuses on closed revenue.

NEW WAY

Marketing and Sales work together to define a set of metrics that connect to broader business goals.

For too long, B2B marketers have relied on vanity metrics to measure the impact of their efforts.

We've gotten stuck on things like impressions, CPMs, click-through rates, web traffic, unique visitors, net new names, inquiries and conversion rates.

While these metrics are important to measure at a campaign level, they aren't necessarily good indicators of true business impact. **TO TRULY ALIGN SALES AND MARKETING**, both teams will need to be on the same page at every stage of the funnel. And the only way to do that is to grade your performance on metrics that are closely tied to revenue.

METRICS AND GOALS

"Metrics tied to business goals" sounds great in theory. But what does that mean in practice? The list below is a good jumping off point:

ABM METRIC	WHAT YOU'LL LEARN
 **Lift**	Lift is an engagement metric that tells you if the accounts on your list are engaging with things like your website, advertising and content.
 **Marketing Opportunities**	You've always measured opportunities, but with ABM, you'll want to know marketing's individual contribution in relation to Sales.
 **Annual Contract Value (ACV)**	Annual Contract Value is a metric that's typically tracked by sales teams. Now with ABM, you'll want to know how much ACV resulted from direct marketing sources.
 **Close Rates**	One goal of ABM is focus on accounts that are right for your business, so you'll want to track if your win rate and see not only if it's increasing, but how it looks across sales teams, verticals and geographies.
 **Funnel Velocity**	With this metric, you'll be able to understand how quickly you're moving opportunities through the funnel.
 **Retention and Upsell**	Since ABM focuses on customers, not just prospects, you'll want to measure your impact on growing and retaining your current customers.



OLD WAY

Marketing runs a campaign; Sales gets a list of contacts to follow-up.

NEW WAY

Sales and Marketing work together to create multi-touch, hyper-targeted campaigns.

When Marketing decides to run a campaign, we all get into a room and decide very important things like messaging. There's only one problem with this approach—Sales gets left out of the loop. And when that happens, the entire campaign suffers.

WITH ABM, SALES ACTUALLY GETS TO HAVE A SAY, RIGHT FROM THE BEGINNING, so both teams can work together to determine the audience and a cadence for follow-up.

CAMPAIGN DEVELOPMENT

Not only do you want to agree with Sales on goals, you want them to be on board with the activities you're doing to hit those goals. Getting Sales involved at the campaign level not only helps with overall alignment, it can provide some very useful insight. While every B2B company has their own set of unique programs, here's a taste of how some of them will change when Sales gets to be involved:



EVENTS AND FIELD MARKETING

If you're a B2B company, events and field marketing probably play a major role in your demand gen strategy. With ABM, you'll still run events and field marketing campaigns, you'll just have a more focused, strategic approach. By partnering with your sales team, you can determine which regions and cities need the most attention, and focus your event strategy on the accounts that matter the most.



WEBINARS AND DIRECT MAIL

Webinars and Direct Mail are an important part of a healthy demand generation strategy. But both of these tactics are broad and cater to a wide audience. With an ABM strategy, you'll find that webinars and direct mail can be even more effective if you work with Sales to build a focused and strategic list.



ADVERTISING

While traditional B2B advertising tends to cast a wide net, under an ABM umbrella, you'll narrow your advertising approach by working with Sales to identify and target specific, priority accounts. In this way, you'll not only be more effecient with your resources, but the traffic coming to your site will be of a higher quality. Furthermore, you'll be able to share metrics like account lift and engagement with Sales, so they can prioritize follow-up.



CONTENT CREATION

Marketers pride themselves on their creativity and ability to deliver messages that resonate, but more often than not, Sales is left out of the conversation. Working with your sales team identify key pain points your prospects and customers face, will make your content more relevant and more engaging to your target audience.

CAMPAIGN DEVELOPMENT: DEMANDBASE CASE STUDY

All the different areas we've covered so far are important individually, but real success happens when you pull them all together. At Demandbase, we've experience that first hand, because we not only talk about ABM all the time, we also practice it ourselves. Here's an example of a real-live campaign we ran including our SDR team from the beginning.

THE SET-UP:

We wanted to help move the needle on a subset of our target account list. We knew direct mail could be effective, but would require coordination and multiple touches from both Sales and Marketing.

THE CAMPAIGN:

We started by working with Sales to build a list of 200 accounts, and we nurtured them with five key components: emails, a customized landing page, Account-Based Advertising, a Direct Mail piece and personalized follow-ups from our SDR team.



THE RESULT:

After three months of nurturing these accounts, we saw:



180% ROI

&



2 CLOSED DEALS

THE TAKEAWAY:

Working with our SDR team didn't just lead to better execution on our end, it also created a more connected experience for all the accounts involved.



OLD WAY

Marketing has their technology; Sales has theirs.

NEW WAY

Marketing and Sales invest in technology that plays well together.

While we're all big fans of buying technology to automate processes and make our teams more efficient, we often don't realize how each tool impacts the broader strategy.

So when you introduce a new tool that doesn't work effectively with your current stack, your sales and marketing processes suffer.

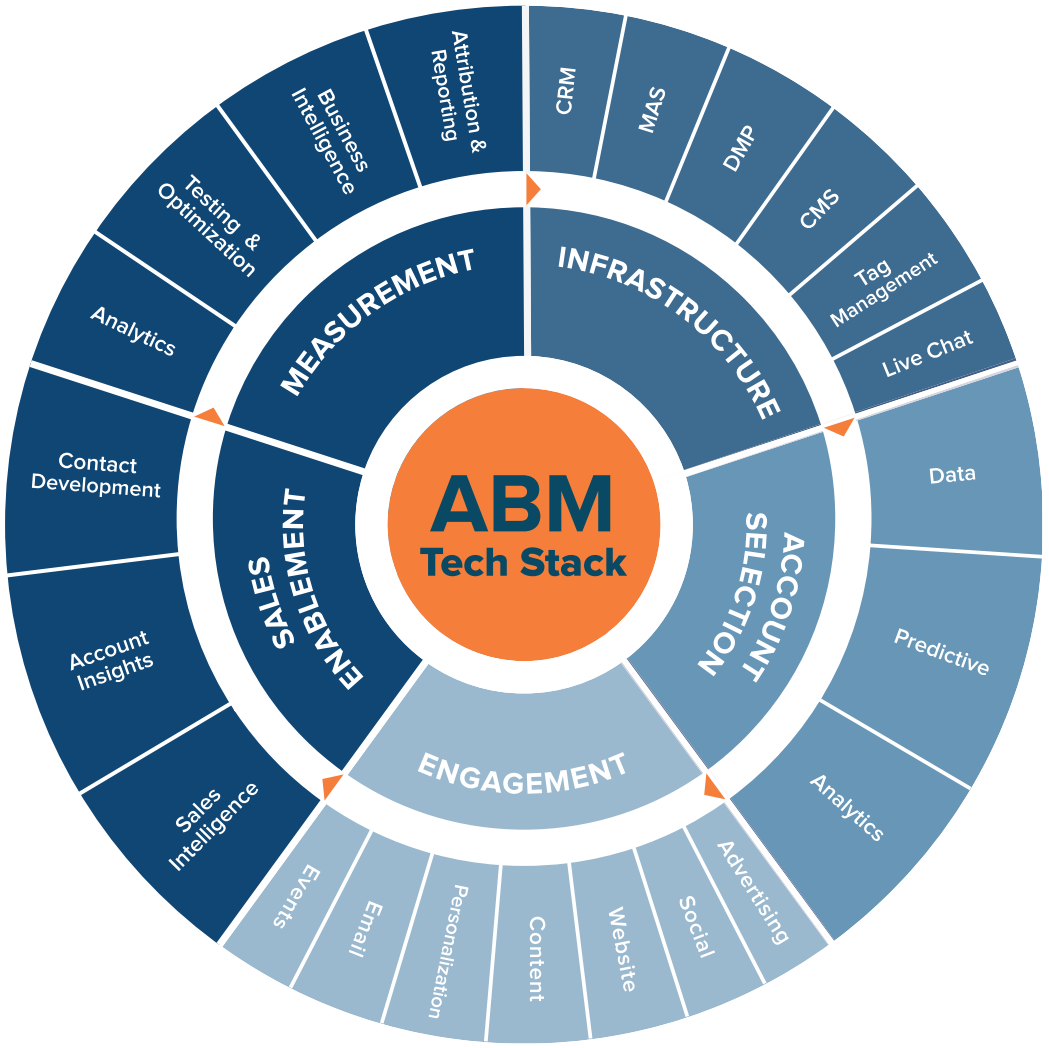
WITH ABM, SALES AND MARKETING HAVE A COMMON GOAL, and can implement technology that helps them market and sell across the entire funnel, in unison.

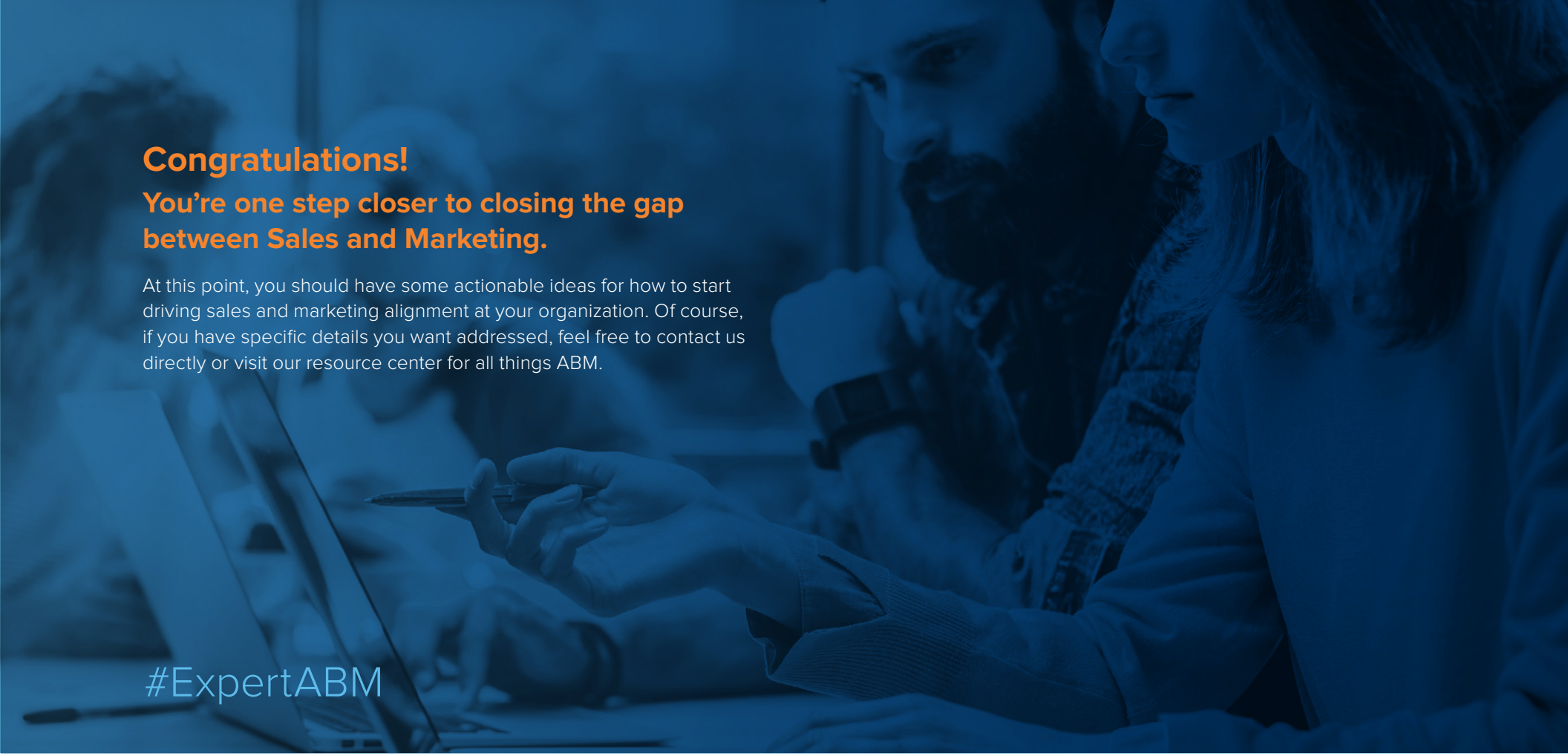
BUILDING A SALES AND MARKETING TECH STACK

With all the tools out there, choosing the right technology can be a difficult task, so we recommend you start by evaluating your current process, identifying problems and opportunities, then purchasing technology to help you execute on your plan.

The ABM Tech Stack to the right will give you some options to consider as you start to build out your technology strategy for ABM:

As you can see, the marketing and sales technology exist side by side and are equally important parts of a larger technology stack. That means they need to work well together to support the overall ABM strategy. Knowing how everything fits together also makes it easier to vet new technologies as they come along.





Congratulations!

You're one step closer to closing the gap between Sales and Marketing.

At this point, you should have some actionable ideas for how to start driving sales and marketing alignment at your organization. Of course, if you have specific details you want addressed, feel free to contact us directly or visit our resource center for all things ABM.

#ExpertABM

DEMANDBASE

Demandbase is the leader in Account-Based Marketing. We are the only company that can help B2B marketers accurately target specific accounts in real time, with patented IP technology, and then engage those accounts across the web with advertising, website personalization and sales conversion solutions. With the Demandbase B2B Marketing Cloud, companies can accelerate revenue growth by marketing across the full marketing and sales funnels to accounts with the most potential.

www.demandbase.com