

Creating ABM Synergy

Sales and marketing teams working together is crucial for account based marketing success

Account based marketing is one of the hottest marketing tactics today. But to be successful, you really need to practice account based *marketing and sales*.

"You have to work with your sales team—if you try to start ABM in isolation, you will fail," says Adam von Reyn, vice president, growth marketing, at sales performance analytics company InsightSquared.

InsightSquared moved toward a hybrid strategy of inbound tactics and ABM over the last year, says von Reyn, who spoke at Hubspot's annual Inbound conference in Boston recently.

When the company, which works with Engagio to implement ABM, started its first ABM campaign, it tripped up. Marketing didn't vet the list it used with the sales team first, and consequently went after accounts that sales knew wouldn't buy, or may have been legitimate opportunities, but not for this particular campaign.



"At every single stage, work with your sales team," he says.

All marketers have been in a situation where they have spent time and energy generating what they thought were high quality leads, only to hand them off to sales and get crickets in response.

"We need to all speak the same language and figure out what resonated with the individuals we are targeting," said Peter Garza, vice president, marketing of healthcare tech applications provider In Touch Health, during a presentation at B2B LeadsCon. "What sales really cares about is the quality of leads and opportunities they can take across the finish line."

DO THE WORK

Garza noted that at a previous company his team did a campaign that resulted in 300 leads. Marketing did its best to qualify the leads but there was zero follow-up from sales. Why? It turned out the leads were organizations that sales didn't have confidence in that they would have funding to buy. "We realized that we needed to filter targeted accounts with sales and figure out who fits the profile of who they want to target," he said. "Do the hard work up front, so when you generate a lead it resonates with your sales team."

"ABM is not about talking to companies instead of individuals. It is about relationships," says Lauren Goldstein, partner, Revelry Agency, who spoke at this summer's B2B LeadsCon. "And as B2B marketers we need to demonstrate value in those relationships in a highly targeted way."

To figure out if ABM makes sense for your orga-

Continued on page 2

3 KEY ABM CAPABILITIES

1. TARGET MANAGEMENT

Collaborate with your sales team and review your customer relationship management (CRM) history for high-yield and quick win companies. Whatever your criteria are, your solution should help you to quickly identify existing opportunities from accounts in your database that fit your 'ideal profile.'

A team should be able to segment these accounts into lists based on a number of factors such as industry, company size, geographic location and more, and score them based on factors like firmographics, cumulative behaviors, or even predictive capabilities. Make sure you can import your lists from your CRM, define them as a specific audience, and modify them at any time.

Also consider segmentation and scoring opportunities, so you can prioritize accounts, leveraging existing lead scores and other historical data.

2. CROSS-CHANNEL PERSONALIZED ENGAGEMENT

In ABM, it is essential to engage the right people from high-value accounts at multiple touch points throughout the buying journey, with multiple messages in multiple channels.

However, considering that multiple people have to formally sign off on each B2B purchase, stakeholders in any purchasing decision can come from a variety of roles, teams

and locations. And, each decision maker may have unique needs requiring different messaging and content. You need to be able to deliver personalized, coherent campaigns to your target accounts across multiple channels, to track engagement levels for each decision-maker and then share this data with sales.

3. RESULTS ANALYSIS

Marketers need to be able to provide real-time, actionable, and intelligent KPIs to reveal exactly how each target account or group of accounts is progressing. You should be able to easily view previous and current marketing activities for each account, as well as a score that indicates the status of each one. In addition, make sure you can track any interesting or meaningful events that marketing and sales should be aware of, such as downloading a late-stage piece of content or an account stakeholder scheduling a demo.

Both marketing and sales should have full visibility into how accounts are engaging with personalized content and which content is most successful. A sales-focused dashboard can make it easy for teams to work together to identify high-value accounts from a particular list, decision makers who should be prioritized, and hot leads based on certain engagement behaviors.—*Mike Telem, vice president, product marketing, Marketo*

Continued from page 1

nization, first look at whether you have a highly defined list of targeted accounts that your sale team is interested in closing, she says. Then, examine whether you have individuals within each of those accounts that you really want to go after.

"Everyone has got their base of prospects that they are nurturing," says Goldstein. "How do you take those prospects who are stuck in your funnel after engaging with a piece of content online or with your company at an event and get them to move? How can you grow and expand your footprint with your key customers."

One of the biggest challenges is agreeing upon metrics to measure ABM success, says Jon Miller, co-founder/CEO of ABM software firm Engagio.

Delving into account based marketing takes sales and marketing teams into a pond where there are a smaller set of fish, but the fish are bigger, he notes. It's like fishing with spears rather than nets—the number of leads generated will go down, but the quality goes up.

"Companies need to measure more in terms of quality and depth of relationships," says Miller. "You need to think in terms of account based everything, and the whole company needs to be

in agreement, particularly if you are executing large deals in a very defined market."

BY THE NUMBERS

The metrics of ABM need to differ from those of traditional lead gen programs because deals with larger accounts typically take longer to close. And there's also the reality that the companies you are courting with ABM tactics might not have active projects at the moment.

There are five key metrics Miller suggests marketers should consider when gauging the success of their ABM initiatives:

- **Coverage:** Do you have the right data/information/contacts for your named accounts?
- **Awareness:** What percentage of accounts have interacted with you in a specified time period?
- **Engagement:** Time is a great proxy here, he says. For example, someone might interact with an email for a minute or a webinar for 30. Adding up the time spent with your brand can help determine engagement. This metric in particular resonates with sales people in determining the likelihood of an account to purchase, much more than something more generic like scoring.

Continued on page 3

Continued from page 2

THE KEY INGREDIENT

WHY DATA IS ESSENTIAL TO THE SECRET SAUCE OF ABM

Regardless of your ABM approach, targeted, clean, accurate, and shared account and contact data is required to make ABM work at all, let alone work well. If you don't have good data on your contacts, you won't know who works at the same accounts and if they're the right personas. If you don't have good account-level data, you won't know which accounts are the best targets.

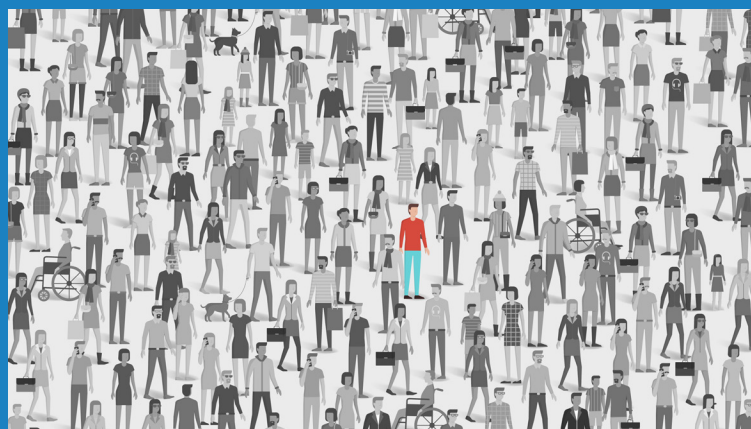
But that's just the tip of the iceberg. To effectively score accounts, you need accurate account-level data, such as revenues and employee counts. You can't really rely on contacts to know and enter that data into a web form. (Do you know the exact revenue and employee count of your own company off the top of your head?) These numbers change at least quarterly, so it's hard for anyone to keep up. Plus we all know more fields on a web form means lower conversions, so it's a double whammy: you can't fully trust the data you get and you can't ask for more data.

However, you need complete and accurate data to run an effective ABM program. To hone in on the best accounts you need firmographics (headquarters location, employees, financials, etc.). To target on relevancy and urgency to boost engagement you need insights (profitability, news, events, launches, etc.).

ACCURATE CONNECTIONS

At many companies, marketing passes leads to sales, and sales prioritizes follow-up based on the lead score, which is typically measured on things like emails opened and assets downloaded. So if one person from AT&T downloads an ebook from your site, you give that lead, say, five points. If 10 people from AT&T download an ebook from your site, you give them all the same 5 points, all as individual leads and without considering the broad interest from the entire AT&T account. Instead of seeing a hot lead in AT&T as an account, you have 10 not-so-interesting individual leads.

While typical lead scoring generally doesn't consider the attributes of the whole account, such as the number of employees who downloaded that ebook, ABM puts everything in the context of the account. Furthermore, account-level insights beyond simple firmographics can signal relevancy and urgency, such as recent financial performance, a corporate reorganization, or a new product launch. Adding insights at the account level brings an extra layer of intelligence that helps



you engage at the right time and with the right contacts.

Insights on an individual contact, such as what you can glean from their Facebook and Twitter updates, are what makes social selling such a hot—and proven—tactic. With ABM, you're looking for the same types of insights but at the account level.

ACCESS FOR ALL

Having great data in your marketing automation tool means little if sales uses different data in their CRM system. Sure, you can personalize emails and market to whole accounts more easily, but then when you pass that wonderful lead to sales, it breaks down. Maybe their data shows the account's revenue at \$460 million, not the true \$546 million that would put them into the hands of your "enterprise" sales team. Or, maybe their data shows a lead as a manager, not the director-level she was promoted to last year, so they don't bother calling on her as a decision maker.

If sales and marketing are working off of different data, your chances of success diminish significantly because you'll disagree on which accounts to target and why. You're also not able to create a consistent message across marketing and sales, not able to target the right contacts, and not able to engage based on accurate, relevant, and current insights.

In order to put your data to use, however, your teams need easy access. Marketing and sales have to work together to tie news, insights, contact details and account firmographics together to be precise, relevant and effective in their targeting. —Tracy Eiler, CMO, InsideView

- **Reach:** Are your efforts connecting with the right people at the right accounts?
- **Impact:** Are your marketing initiatives actually helping to close deals. For example, if you throw a cocktail party, who attended? Did accounts that had attendees at the event close sooner or at a higher rate?

Both sales and marketing have to be in alignment when it comes to ABM, says Miller. Sales

should own the account selection process, but marketing can and should support them by bring data to the table to help create buyer personas to help sales choose the accounts to target. Of course, remember that sales might also choose account to target with ABM because of reasons that aren't necessarily quantifiable by data, such as long standing personal relationships.

In traditional marketing, you go to individuals

Continued on page 4



The magazine was mailed to key influencers with a personalized letter.

Continued from page 3

and try to understand who engages. With ABM, you're trying to understand the collective behavior of the account, said InTouch Health's Garza. "Look for indicators and try to have a holistic perspective for each account."

For ABM success, you need to help sales expand the number of leads within each account, and then use personas to engage with each one in the right way, he said. Marketers should look at site engagement metrics and be proactive about creating content and campaigns that will resuscitate accounts that are stalled. Content that resonates often focuses on pain points felt by influencers in your target accounts.

PERSONAL CONNECTIONS

A number of tactics are used in InsightSquared's ABM strategy, including personalized one-on-one emails sent from the sales reps to individuals at target accounts, says von Reyn. "You need to surround accounts in the sales cycle—a key factor is that there are key decision makers at every point."

Targeted direct mail is also used further down the cycle, when higher spending can be justified. To get attention, some accounts were sent a case of energy drinks branded with the company logo, to help fuel decision making. As the drinks were passed around the office, it created a viral element

within targeted accounts, as people around the office started talking about the brand when they read the label.

In another effort, InsightSquared branded socks were sent to accounts that seemed to be getting cold feet in the decision making process. "We told them that our software showed they had been sitting at a [particular stage in the funnel] for a while," he says. "It was a great way to drive interest and conversation."

At Xerox, the company wanted to look at things differently than their competitors, notes Jeannine Rossignol, vice president, marketing, Xerox Corp.'s HR Services. Because everyone was talking about challenges, Xerox decided to focus on the positive in client communications.

As part of an ABM and overall demand gen initiative to better connect with current clients, Rossignol's team sat down with sales people and talked about what they were hearing from their accounts, the tools they were using now and what they wanted to achieve.

As part of the ABM process, Xerox sent individuals at target accounts a bonsai tree with a handwritten note, saying that sometimes people forget to say thank you, and that they wanted to cultivate a better relationship. The note directed recipients to a personalized microsite, which highlighted the solutions they currently had, and what the next logical steps might be based on those solutions and what Xerox knew about the account. Content to support this like videos and whitepapers was featured on the site.

Xerox also created a magazine highlighting positive aspects, Chief Optimist, which was sent to key accounts with a personalized letter. After a successful rollout, versions of the magazine were targeted to different industry segment such as healthcare and high tech, supported by targeted emails, landing pages and content.



Beth Negus Viveiros
Managing Editor, Chief Marketer
bnegus@accessintel.com
@CMBethNegus

ABOUT CHIEF MARKETER

Chief Marketer charts the customer journey from acquisition and engagement through conversion and retention. We offer data-driven intelligence, actionable insights, inspiring case studies and the latest on technology trends so marketers can improve their campaigns and increase ROI.