

Cognism 

ABM (ACCOUNT - BASED MARKETING):

Beyond the hype

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What do you know about ABM?

For B2B marketers, the 2020s will be the decade of account-based marketing (ABM). It's already taken the B2B marketing world by storm in recent years. But there's a lot of misinformation out there about ABM, what it entails and what it can do. Some marketers have hailed it as a "magic bullet" which can cure all marketing ills. Others are confused about what it is and how you can get started with it.

The truth is, there's no trick to ABM. It isn't a gimmick or an antidote to every marketing malady. It's a process, just like any other process in B2B marketing. While it can undoubtedly deliver numerous benefits to a business, ABM takes time, skill and lots of hard work.

Over the course of this guide, we're going to take you beyond the hype and provide you with clear, practical advice on how you can add ABM to your marketing efforts, right away. We've assembled a world-class team of ABM experts, who will give you their top tips and advice. We'll give you templates and infographics which you can use in your business today.

So, let's draw back the curtain and find out everything there is to know about ABM for 2020 and beyond!

What is ABM?

HubSpot defines **ABM** as:

"A highly focused business strategy in which a marketing team treats an individual prospect or customer like its very own market. The marketing team can create content, events, and entire campaigns dedicated to the people associated with that account, rather than the industry as a whole."

This is ABM in a nutshell. It's a strategy that focuses on a defined set of key companies (accounts) and personalises campaigns to decision-makers within those organisations.

Who is ABM for?

Account-based marketing will work for any organisation targeting key accounts, but it's a particularly good option for scaling B2B or SaaS companies. This is due to the difference between B2C and B2B marketing. With B2C, you're trying to attract a wide audience of individual consumers with high volume, low value sales. With B2B, you have to market to multiple decision-makers in each company; deals are usually higher in value and lower in volume.

What are the benefits of ABM?

ABM can deliver numerous benefits to a business. Several recent studies have highlighted the advantages of ABM:

- A **study by Demandbase** found that 19% of companies using ABM for at least a year reported more than 30% growth in revenue.
- A **SiriusDecisions survey** found that 91% of marketers using ABM see a larger deal size, with 25% seeing their deal sizes grow by more than 50%.
- **ITSMA** found that companies using ABM saw an 84% rise in reputation score and a 74% improvement in customer relationships.

As well as enhanced ROI, ABM offers two other core benefits. First, it uses resources more efficiently than traditional marketing, by focusing on high-value accounts with targeted content. And second, it helps to develop a shared mindset between sales and marketing, bringing the two teams more closely together.

How to run the perfect ABM campaign

Some companies believe that switching from a conventional marketing strategy over to ABM is difficult. Running your first ABM campaign may be daunting, but it's not an insurmountable challenge. We've identified 10 steps to set up, launch and evaluate the perfect ABM campaign. Plus, we have an all-star cast of ABM specialists who will share their knowledge as we go.

1. Choose the right type of ABM

There are 3 types of ABM:

ONE-TO-ONE	ONE-TO-FEW	ONE-TO-MANY
Picking up a handful of high-value accounts and putting all your budget into targeting them.	Sector-specific - selecting a larger pool of accounts in the same industry.	More like traditional digital marketing, but with more customer-centric messaging.
This works with 1-5 accounts max.	This works with 10-30 accounts max.	30+ accounts.
The highest-value accounts should be targeted with one-to-one.	Target higher-value accounts with one-to-few.	Lower-value accounts are best suited to one-to-many.

How do I choose the right type of ABM?

Deciding which ABM method is right for your business is dependant on several factors, including the nature of your company and the type of accounts you want to target. Important elements to consider are deal size and lifetime value.



TOP TIP

"Run a pilot programme. Probe the market with the one-to-many method. If you get good results, you can ramp up the pilot into one-to-few or one-to-one. You need to know the science behind your ABM operation to help you make informed decisions."

- Owen Steer, ABM Specialist, Punch



TOP TIP

"Start small and get an understanding of what you want to achieve."

- Nick Mason, Founder and CEO, Turtl

2. Align marketing and sales

When salespeople first encounter ABM, it can cause them some anxiety. On the face of it, ABM is asking them to work with fewer leads. What salesperson wants to do that? Yet, ABM can't work properly unless sales are brought fully on board with the process. It's vital that the two departments are aligned around a shared strategy and goals.

Much like ABM itself, alignment can sound like hard work. But numerous organisations around the world have benefitted from having sales and marketing working closely together (some call this approach "smarketing"). Here are some notable success stories:

- SAP introduced an ABM programme with sales and marketing alignment; the result was a **\$27 million increase in new pipeline opportunities**.
- Next Caller grew their revenue by **40% for 16 consecutive months** after implementing a sales and marketing alignment plan.
- Successful smarketing helped SalesLoft close a **\$100k enterprise account**.

How can I get sales to buy into ABM?

Start by asking your sales team some questions:

- How satisfied are you with the leads you're currently getting from marketing?
- Do you always have the content or resources you need for closing a deal?

Most salespeople are frustrated by these two issues: having too many low-quality leads and not having enough useful content. ABM solves these pain points. It involves qualifying leads at the start of the sales cycle, not the end. It encourages sales and marketing to join forces and pinpoint ready-to-buy leads who have a high probability of converting. By doing this, these high-value leads can be targeted with much more focused and relevant content, making a sale even more likely.

The best way to align marketing and sales around ABM is to demonstrate its value; once you have buy-in, agree a timeframe and move onto the next step.



TOP TIP

"If sales don't understand why ABM is happening and the process and steps that a lead has gone through to be classified as a marketing-qualified or sales-qualified lead...then there's no importance placed on it. If sales understand what is happening and why, they're much more likely to jump on those leads and close them. It should be seen as a joint effort to close that lead."

- Joe Birkedale, CEO, Project36



TOP TIP

"Getting buy-in from internal stakeholders, first and foremost, is absolutely essential. Of course you need to secure a budget for your ABM campaign, but make sure you're setting realistic expectations. Be aware that it's a long-term campaign. ABM is not a short-term revenue grab. Avoid the pitfall of failing from the get-go by setting realistic expectations."

- Owen Steer, ABM Specialist, Punch

3. Assemble your ABM team

ABM requires a change in thinking around the way your business markets and sells. When you've proved the value of ABM to your sales team, it's time to start working together much more closely.

Start by assembling an ABM team of people from your business. They will all have different roles but common aims. These could include:



SDRs/sales reps

The inside sales reps that solely focus on outbound prospecting.



MDRs/marketing reps

The sales reps responsible for following up on all marketing demand.

- ✓ **Sales operations**
The people/department responsible for driving efficiency in your sales team.
- ✓ **Marketing operations**
The people/department responsible for driving efficiency in your marketing team.
- ✓ **Campaign marketers**
The people responsible for developing campaigns end-to-end and who are versed in multi-channel marketing.
- ✓ **Content producers**
Content writers, graphic designers, video producers.
- ✓ **Customer success managers**
The people/department responsible for developing customer relationships and promoting retention and loyalty.

Arrange an introductory meeting involving all these stakeholders. Use this time to define your ABM goals (see Section 4) and select the metrics you want to track (see Section 5).

When your ABM campaign is up and running, put regular follow-up meetings in everyone's calendar, so you can measure success together.



TOP TIP

"Have regular meetings between sales, marketing and CS to agree on a plan for each account and see how you can leverage the knowledge you already have in your team."

- Owen Steer, ABM Specialist, Punch

4. Define your ABM goals

If you don't know what your goals are, how will you know when you have achieved success? Giving your ABM team clearly defined goals helps focus their efforts. Think about what you want to accomplish from your new ABM strategy.

Are you using ABM to launch a new product to the market? Perhaps you want to target a new customer segment? Are you looking for new business, or more spend from existing customers?

Use the meetings with your ABM team to agree on the goals of the campaign. Keep the goals in mind as you progress to the next stages.

**TOP TIP**

"When we go about implementing ABM, it's during the discovery phase that we get together with our sales team, senior and junior, and we drill into their existing sales cycle. We understand the steps and phases that exist, the blockers and objections, the timescales they're working with, what's the buying journey like, how long it takes to convert a typical sale from initial inquiry through to conversion. We need to know those things to set KPIs and goals for the campaign."

- Joe Birkedale, CEO, Project36

5. Select the metrics to track

ABM isn't a "quick win" activity. It can take a lot of time before it starts producing results. When you start running an ABM campaign, you'll need to prove to management and the wider business that it's worth the time and expense. The only way you can do this is to monitor your ABM metrics.

While the metrics you track may vary from campaign to campaign, at Cognism we've found that there are some core metrics that you need to keep your eyes on – especially if you're just starting out with ABM.

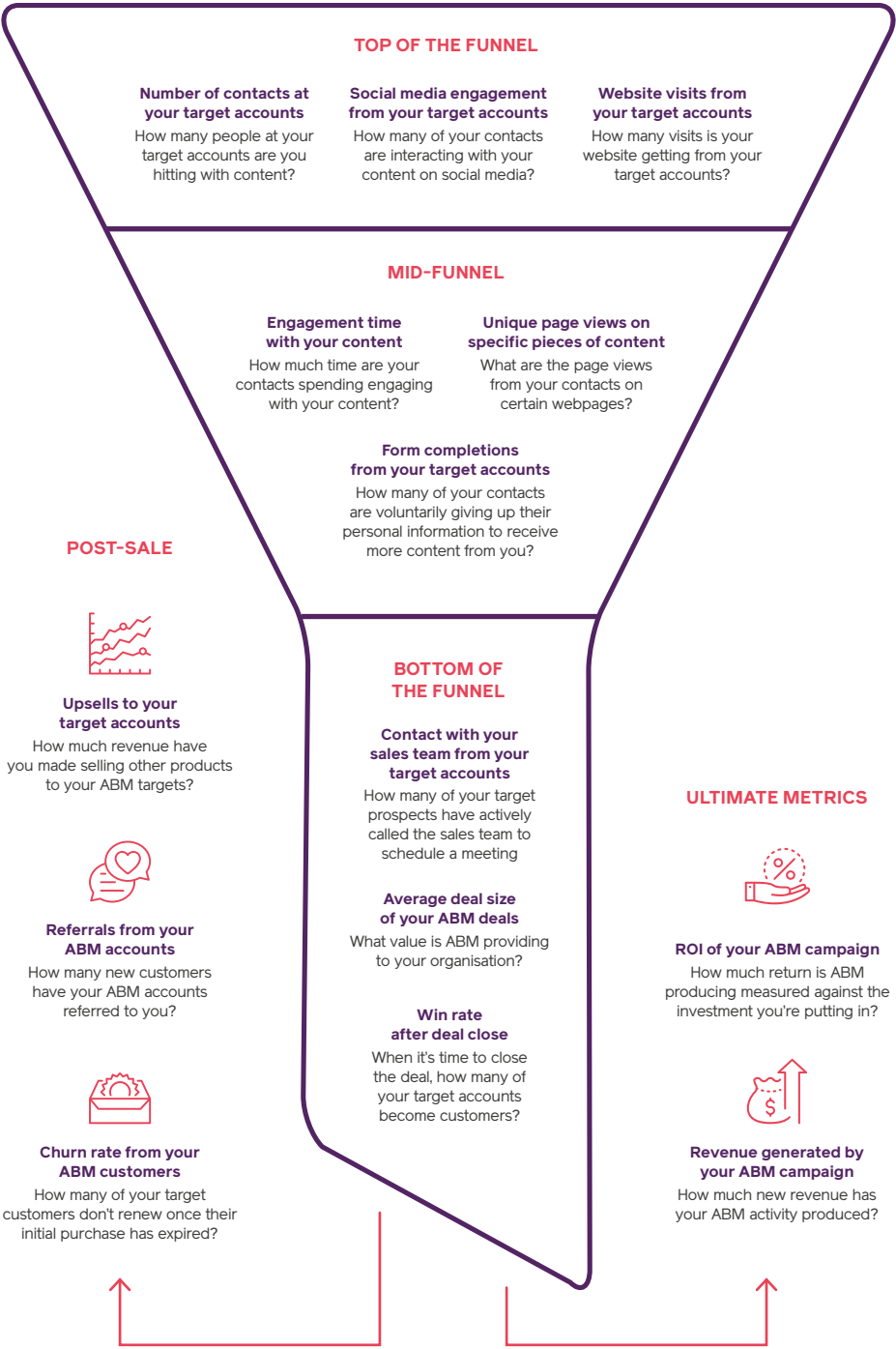
These are the essential metrics to help you get started with ABM.

- ✓ **Agree on the metrics to track** before starting your ABM campaign.
- ✓ **Align sales and marketing** and ensure both teams are fully aware of the metrics they need to monitor.
- ✓ **Be transparent in sharing** the results of your ABM activity as the campaign progresses, so both teams learn together.

**TOP TIP**

"Moving further up in the funnel than revenue and pipeline, which are the ultimate metrics that we're looking for, the thing that we're really interested in is genuine engagement. You need to understand engagement far more deeply than who clicked what and who downloaded what. The thing that we really look for is who's spending time on what particular parts of what particular document."

- Nick Mason, Founder and CEO, Turtl



6. Build your target list

ABM can be an extremely effective way to win bigger deals from more clients in the B2B space. However, it takes a considerable amount of investment, of time and money, for it to work.

For this reason, you need to have a robust plan before you start your ABM operation. You can't run ABM campaigns on an ad hoc basis. Part of your preparation for ABM is building a list of targets. You need to define who you are going to approach before you start.

Follow these steps to help you build your ABM target list.

Step 1: Create your Ideal Customer Profile (ICP)

ABM requires you to get your sales and marketing teams aligned and working together. Once you've done this, you need to run this exercise - creating a profile of your ideal customer, the type of account you will target with ABM.

Unlike traditional forms of marketing, where the net is cast wide in the hopes of catching large volumes of customers, ABM is all about getting hyper-focused and granular. The key to ABM success lies in identifying a small number of high-profile accounts and targeting them with personalised campaigns.

For this to work, you need an Ideal Customer Profile (ICP).

What is ICP?

Your ICP is a comprehensive description of your perfect client. It's the kind of customer that finds massive benefits from your product or service, while also being able to give you enough value in return to make your business profitable.

How do you create an ICP?

Here are the four stages to building your ICP.

1 Identify your super-users

It's likely that your ICP is already a customer of yours. Start by looking at the prospects that convert quickly and your longest-serving customers. Narrow down your customer base until you have a list of 10 super-users - the people who don't just use your product, but the people who love it and get more value out of it than the average user.

2 Interview your super-users

Set up phone calls, Zoom or face-to-face meetings with your 10 super-users. Ask them about their experiences with your product, specifically:



Their buying processes.



Why they purchased.



How they found out about you.



How they're benefitting from your product.

3 Analyse the data

Once you've conducted your interviews and collected the answers, it's time to study the data. Put all the answers together and see what links them. Look for common attributes. Are there any recurring patterns or shared characteristics? The insights you'll gain here are critical for the next step in developing your ICP.

4 Create your ICP template

This final step is where you put it all together. Take all the insights you've gained and build a template of your ideal customer.

Here's an example which we use at Cognism. This has helped us to launch our own ABM campaigns.

COGNISM IDEAL CUSTOMER PROFILE



Industry

B2B Sales, SaaS



Geography

USA



Company Size

50 employees



Budget

\$10,000/month



Buying Process

Reliance on referrals for
buying decisions



Decision Makers

CEO, CRO



Pain Points

Generating high-quality C-suite leads
Automating outbound email campaigns
Increasing sales team productivity



Business Goals

Short term: grow their client base
by 20% over the next 3 months
Long term: raise their next funding
round and expand their sales team



Technologies

Salesforce CRM
SalesLoft
Chili Piper



Attributes

Primary social media channel = LinkedIn
Gaining a reputation as SaaS
industry thought leaders
Uses ABM strategies

**TOP TIP**

"You need to be absolutely clear who your Ideal Customer Profile is. This is something every business should do. It's an incredibly useful exercise even outside of ABM. Who are we not selling to at the moment that we could be selling to? That's a good question to ask."

- Nick Mason, Founder and CEO, Turtl

Step 2: Measure first-party intent

First-party intent (also called engagement) is information from end-user engagement with your brand. This could take the form of:



Event attendees.



Users who have viewed or downloaded content.



People who have filled out online forms.

At this stage of your list-building, you need to gather all this information together. You're looking for anyone who has directly engaged with your brand.

**TOP TIP**

"Once you have all the data, study it. Are any of them in a buying window right now? Have they signalled any intent to buy? Add any users with intent to buy to your target list."

- Owen Steer, ABM Specialist, Punch

Step 3: Measure third-party intent

If first-party intent is all about people who have directly engaged with your brand, third-party intent is about people who could be interested in your company, but may not know about it yet.

You are looking for people who have engaged and shown interest in your industry or sector. These could be:



People viewing competitor websites.



Users searching for specific terms on search engines.

How can you find these people? First, define a set of keywords that are relevant to your industry. Be careful with these keywords - they must be relevant.

Draw up a list of around 250 keywords. Always double-check your list to make sure the terms you're using aren't bringing in irrelevant search results.



TOP TIP

"Use tools that will find people who are searching online for your keywords. Add these people to your ABM target list. This is a good option for smaller companies with low inbound volume."

- Owen Steer, ABM Specialist, Punch

Step 4: Order your target list

Now you have a list of people, it's time to put them in the order in which you're going to target them. You can use all three of the methods we've talked about - but be scientific. Don't just go after the biggest or most famous companies - look for targets that are the best fit for your offering.

You should also prioritise the accounts that have a strong intent to buy. Use your alignment meetings to decide which accounts you want to target and the type of ABM you'll need to deploy.



TOP TIP

"ABM is not just multi-channel marketing, it's best practice marketing. But there's more to it than just using multiple channels. It's about treating the accounts you're going after as markets in their own right. There's no better resource for a marketer to learn more about accounts than their own internal sales team and customer success team."

- Owen Steer, ABM Specialist, Punch

7. Create personalised content

With ABM, you have to create content that resonates with every individual decision-maker inside your target account. The more personal you can get, the better. Ideally, you want to create one-off content, addressing their specific needs.

Here's how to create personalised content for ABM.

Step 1: Identify the Decision-Making Unit (DMU)

Once you've developed your ICP, you can use it to inform the next stage – creating lists of the ideal customers you want to target. Then, when you've built your target lists, go even deeper. Identify the Decision-Making Unit (DMU) inside your target company. The DMU is a group of people who have influence over purchasing decisions.

ABM is a highly-personalised play – you'll need granular intelligence on every member of the DMU. Find out everything you can about them. Connect with them on LinkedIn. Conduct online research.

Think about the messaging that would make an impression on them – individually, not collectively. What are the motivating factors for everyone who would have an input into purchasing your product? How can you reach them with the kind of messaging that will make them want to buy?

Step 2: Define their pain points











Work out individual pain points for everyone in the DMU. For example – are they looking to reduce costs? Save time? Grow their sales? Streamline their existing processes?

Interview the salespeople who are interacting with the DMU. Sales reps work at the coalface of business every day and the information they pick up during their qualification and discovery calls can be invaluable to the account-based marketer. Use their insights to define the prospects' pain points – and then use the pain points to inspire and influence the content you'll create.

Step 3: Choose the right medium

On average, there are 7 to 8 influencers involved in every business decision. Each influencer is different, so it stands to reason that they will all respond to content in different ways. Some people respond better to different types of content than others.

And in today's modern marketing world, there is a wide range of content types to choose from. Popular formats include:

 Blogs	 Videos
 Case studies	 Whitepapers and guides
 Webinars	 Podcasts
 Letters and direct mail	 Templates
 Checklists	 Reports

With so many options available, how can you be certain you're choosing the right one?

Again, ask your sales team. They'll know from experience what resonates most with different types of buyers. Aligning marketing with sales is the surest route to achieving success with ABM.

Step 4: Select the right channels

Just as important as knowing what types of content to produce is knowing where to promote them. Go back to your ICP – where are your targets spending their time online? What social media channels do they most often engage with?

Do your research. Check your own social media channels and email campaigns. Where are you seeing engagement from your target accounts and others like them? Study your data and make decisions based on it.

When activating your content, tailor and customise your messaging for each prospect. Personalisation is the key to ABM engagement.

Step 5: Timing is everything

Successful ABM campaigns contain multiple steps, involving numerous channels and content types.

The more senior the decision-maker, the shorter your content must be in the first step. Senior decision-makers will have no time in their day to consume long-form content. It's only later, at the decision stage of the buyer's journey, that they'll have time for long content. Build up to that point by delivering smaller pieces of content at regular intervals.



TOP TIP

"Personalisation is the difference between ABM working or not working. But the personalisation has to be meaningful. It really comes down to who you're going after, in terms of the type of business sector they're in, the type of person you're looking for, and that will help you determine which tactics to use."

- Nick Mason, Founder and CEO, Turtl



TOP TIP

"Keep the engagement going. You need to provide the prospect with valuable content at every stage of their journey with your brand."

- Joe Birkedale, CEO, Project36

8. Launch your ABM campaign












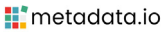



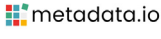













Preparation over. It's time to get ABMing! Start distributing the content you've created to the people you have chosen.

When your content is being sent out, ask your sales reps to start making inroads into your target accounts. Make calls, set up meetings and demos. If your content is good and well-dispersed, your buyers will already know who you are. You know the interest they have in your product. You see the solution you provide for them. It's time to move them through your customer journey.

What tech can improve my ABM campaign?

You can use technology to enhance the effectiveness of your ABM campaign; it's not essential, but it can help!

Here is a list of technologies you can use to implement ABM:

INTELLIGENCE	MANAGEMENT	EXECUTION	REPORTING
 Cognism	 Cognism	 Turtl	 Google Analytics
 Marketo	 LinkedIn	 Sendoso	 Adobe Analytics
 adapt	 vidyard	 terminus	 LeanData
 InsideView	 zoom	 Engagio	 Marketo
 act-on	 agora pulse	 DEMANDBASE	 terminus
 infer	 HubSpot	 metadata.io	 Engagio
 TechTarget Priority Engine	 LinkedIn Marketing Solutions	 sense	 bizible <small>a Marketo company</small>
 RollWorks	 Marketo	 alyce	 metadata.io
 EVERSTRING	 groove	 Printfection	 DEMANDBASE
 bombora	 CONNECT LEADER	 Überflip	 sense
 PipeCandy	 OPENPRISE	 ON24	 Triblio
 JABMO	 Full Circle INSIGHTS	 Sigstr	 radiate <small>b2b</small>
 Kwanzoo	 LIFT IQ	 Hushly	

**TOP TIP**

"You can absolutely do ABM without technology. Don't rush into making decisions for a tech stack when you're trying to learn and implement ABM."

- Owen Steer, ABM Specialist, Punch

How can I tell what tech is best for me?

The ABM industry is booming; currently it has the **highest return on investment** of any B2B marketing tactic. There are a wealth of agencies and tools out there that promise to take your ABM campaigns to the next level. But, with so much choice available, it's harder than ever to pick the right one for your business.

We asked **Joe Birkedale**, founder and CEO of **Project36**, and **Owen Steer**, ABM Specialist at **Punch**, for their advice. As seasoned marketers with a record of delivering complex ABM strategies for their clients, they are uniquely placed to offer their insights into the top 10 questions you need to ask your ABM vendor. Their tips will help you when it comes to defining your ABM goals and making a sensible buying decision.

1. "What does success or failure look like?"

**JOE SAID:**

"Asking this question first of all is a very good option! Before you start with ABM, you need to determine what you're looking to get out of it. What's your perfect end result? What are you hoping to achieve? Bear in mind that ABM is not a silver bullet. It normally takes a lot of time and effort before you see success. A good ABM vendor will seek to outline the end goal first, then describe the steps you need to take to get there."

2. "What metrics will you be tracking?"



OWEN SAID:

"You definitely need to set the correct KPIs before you launch an ABM campaign. All stakeholders need to be fully aligned on these metrics. Think about the following: what does success look like? Who is responsible for achieving these metrics? Who and how will you be measuring results?"

"This conversation should involve marketing, sales, customer success, and of course, your ABM vendor."

"Remember that ABM is a long-term initiative, so you may have to agree on short-term metrics that showcase early signs of success, while you wait for the long-term benefits to kick in."

3. "How many accounts can you realistically target?"



JOE SAID:

"You need to be realistic with what ABM can achieve, what you can handle and how far your budgets can reach. Start small, always. Prove the model and then scale. If you scale up too soon, you'll drown in data and the campaign will stumble."

"Most clients aim for 1-to-Few ABM, which is typically 20 accounts with approximately 5 decision-makers in each."

4. "Of those accounts, which ones would be best to target?"



OWEN SAID:

"Committing to ABM means focusing your resources on accounts that have a higher propensity of converting into business. Best-practice account selection is absolutely vital to ensure you're mitigating the inherent risk of targeting fewer accounts."

"At Punch, we start by drilling down into a client's data and building an Ideal Customer Profile (ICP). We use this ICP to develop a list of accounts that are a good fit for your proposition. This is called your Total Addressable Market (TAM)."

"Once you have your TAM, it's time to use intent data to identify which accounts are showing the best signals for having a need or entering a buying window. The accounts that are showing the highest intent to buy are the accounts that you need to prioritise with ABM!"

5. "How much will it cost?"



JOE SAID:

"It's vital to stress that ABM is a long-term strategy. It's best placed to work with complex services or solutions that have a high degree of customisation, high cost and typically long implementation timescales."

"ABM is not usually suitable for high-volume, low-value products or services. Expect the costs to reflect the volume of research, data, insight, strategy and the playbook the campaign requires."

6. "How quickly can I expect to see ROI?"



OWEN SAID:

"Similar to question 5, this question is all about managing expectations. ABM isn't a short-term cash grab. It's good to get everyone thinking long-term. You have to set yourself realistic expectations around achieving ROI. For example, if your current sales cycle is 12 months then you shouldn't come into ABM expecting to win business within the first 6 months. That doesn't mean you won't, though!"

7. "How long will the campaign take?"



JOE SAID:

"The answer is - it will vary dramatically based on the product, service or solution being offered. Look at your existing sales cycle. If, for example, it normally takes 12 months from enquiry to order, then expect something broadly similar."

"ABM should have numerous KPIs for tracking success. Time to first order can be one of those metrics and ABM can shorten the sales cycle, but it will need time to run before it can be evolved and tweaked."

8. "How will you manage communications with our sales team?"



OWEN SAID:

"Although the conversation to develop an ABM programme tends to start with marketing, the first topic of conversation is always the most effective way to align with sales."

"Here at Punch, we invite sales, customer success and marketing to attend a series of strategic workshops during the setup process. This ensures that all stakeholders are aligned."

"Fast-forward to campaign execution and we'll put in the diary weekly catch-ups about how well the campaign is going, and monthly reviews where we can share insights and ideas for improvement."

9. "What systems/tech will you use?"



JOE SAID:

"ABM doesn't need a sophisticated tech stack. A spreadsheet and good data are really all you need at the start. My advice to my clients is: don't go mad on the tech! As an ABM agency, we often spend a lot of time unpicking our customers' tech stacks. They can become overly complex and convoluted, and can actually slow you down in the early stages. Get your ABM campaigning right from an operational level first, then add in tech later."

10. "How long will the setup take?"



OWEN SAID:

"I always say that ABM is 80% setup, 20% execution. There are no strict guidelines for how long it takes to work through the strategic setup of your ABM programme...but you will notice that due diligence in getting the setup right in the beginning will be reflected in your success."












9. Track ABM engagement

When your ABM campaign is up and running, you can't just sit back and relax. ABM's guiding principle is to build and maintain deep and meaningful relationships with your target accounts.

To measure success in growing those relationships, you'll have to track engagement.

What is ABM engagement?

ABM engagement is any interaction a prospect has with your ABM activity. There are two types of engagement:







DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT	PHYSICAL ENGAGEMENT
<p>This includes any online interactions from your prospects. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opening an email Visiting your website Downloading a piece of content Reading a piece of content Filling out a survey or form Signing up to a newsletter or mailing list	<p>This includes all real-world interactions from your prospects. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Onsite visits or event attendance Phone calls Direct mail SMS Demo attendance

How to track ABM engagement

At Cognism, we regularly help our customers to run targeted ABM campaigns. We encourage them to track the engagement they have with their prospects by using the following template:

ABM TEMPLATE FOR TRACKING ENGAGEMENT					
Activity Date	Prospect Name	Prospect Title	Account Name	Engagement Type	Engagement Score

KEY

	Activity Date	The date on which each engagement happened
	Prospect Name	The prospect's full name
	Prospect Title	The prospect's job title (e.g., Director, Manager, CEO)
	Account Name	The prospect's company
	Engagement Type	The type of engagement (e.g., prospecting call, scheduled demo, event attendance)
	Engagement Score	Give each engagement a mark out of ten, based on the value generated from the engagement

We've found this template to be a useful way of tracking ABM engagement over time. Not only does it list each engagement on a day-by-day basis, but it also shows how each interaction feeds into the success of the entire campaign.

TOP TIP #1

Our advice is to keep your eye on the engagement score. Before you start your ABM campaign, define your goals and set engagement scores against each goal.

For example, a prospect answering an email could be a score of 5, while booking a demo could be a score of 8. Add up all the engagement scores to see how well each campaign is doing in relation to others.

TOP TIP #2

Another quick trick is to track your engagement scores in Excel or Google Sheets. There's no need to shell out on expensive reporting solutions when you're just starting with ABM.

What can I do with this data?

The insights you'll gain from measuring engagement can be invaluable to the continued success of your ABM efforts. Here are some questions to get you thinking:

***Are certain days of the week more popular for engagement than others?***

Do you find that you get a higher number of engagements on certain days than others? Are certain engagement types more popular on specific days?

The answers to these questions will tell you when are the best times for launching your ABM activities. They'll inform your ABM campaign schedule and help you to maximise engagement from your prospects.

***How do individual prospects engage with your company?***

As we've said, ABM works when it's highly-personalised and relevant to each prospect. Look out for patterns in their behaviour. Do they engage with certain channels but not others? Do they usually respond at certain times of the day? Are there particular messages or engagement types that they respond best to?

TOP TIP #3

Use the information to get even more personalised. Double down on what works and build a campaign that's laser-focused on the prospect and his or her needs.



How well are each engagement types performing?

ABM is a multi-channel undertaking. You have to interact regularly with your potential buyers across a number of different channels and media. It's the only way to keep that meaningful relationship going.

TOP TIP #4

Find out which engagement types work best for each prospect. Then you'll know which engagement types you need to concentrate on. Use the template we've provided above to keep track of this.



The secret of ABM engagement

ABM engagement is about time. It's the same with any purchasing decision you make in any walk of life - the more time you spend in a shop, for instance, the more likely you are to buy something. So it is with B2B buyers. The more time they spend interacting with your company, the more interest they're showing in buying from you.

Tracking engagement is the vital first step in measuring the success of ABM. It's simple to understand, easy to track, and can give you some useful insights early on. Simplify the process even further by making use of our tracking template.



TOP TIP

"As campaigns are going, part of the alignment process needs to be making sure that any insights and information regarding genuine engagement are filtered down to sales. Make sure that those real-time metrics are being transparently shared across the company so that you're making the most of what you're learning."

- Owen Steer, ABM Specialist, Punch

10. Evaluate and iterate

Starting with ABM can be a trial and error process. However, one of the best things about ABM is that it creates a great deal of data. Study your data while your campaign is live. If you're using tech, then take a look at its reporting functions or features.

If you're running ABM tech-free, then monitor engagement rates, especially digital engagement. You'll be able to tell after a short while what kinds of messages are resonating and what are not.

Also, keep up with your sales alignment meetings! Ask your sales reps what lines of enquiry are working better than others. If something is working well, double down on it. If something else is failing, switch it out. Use A/B testing to hone your ABM strategy to perfection.



TOP TIP

"However long your stages of delivery for ABM are, the final step should be: measure, learn, optimise and repeat. It's not a set and forget program. ABM is a living, breathing thing, so it will change. It takes time. If you want revenue tomorrow, ABM is not the program for you."

- Joe Birkedale, CEO, Project36

ABM: does it work?

Guides are all well and good; but does ABM actually work in practice? We can tell you that it does! Here's a recent example that produced outstanding results.

The cupcake campaign



Cognism uses **Reachdesk** across our entire commercial team, from SDRs sending personalised notes to open doors, sales reps delivering content and gift boxes to accelerate deals and customer success sending cupcakes to leads who were ghosting.

The cupcake campaign was a perfect illustration of ABM in action. It was an account-based campaign, starting with a list of target buyers and the messaging which resonated with each of them. The cupcakes were delivered and the outcome was exceptional - response rates were 80% when the campaign target was 20%!

Will ABM work for me?

Our advice is simply: you won't know until you try! Follow the steps we've outlined and always measure the results as you go. Share your successes with us - you can reach us on the following social media platforms:



Also, be sure to bookmark the **Cognism blog**! We'll be sharing more ABM knowledge throughout 2020. See you there!

Contact Cognism today

Did you know that Cognism is the perfect choice for the account-based B2B marketer? Using our platform, you can:

- Develop personas of your ideal customers and quickly build target lists of B2B leads.
- Drill down into your target accounts and discover an accurate list of decision-makers and their contact details.
- Deploy highly-focused, multi-step and automated outbound campaigns to engage and follow-up with them.

Want to see our all-in-one B2B prospecting solution in action? Register for your free demo today!



Request your demo now

