

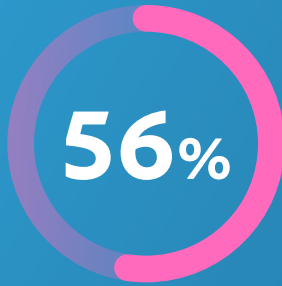
Making metrics *matter*.

Successful account-based marketing starts with the right measurement plan.

We all want meaningful metrics. They're one of our most powerful tools for improving our marketing, our teams, and our influence. But according to Content Marketing Institute, only 35 percent of B2B marketers are actually measuring the results of their efforts, which makes it hard to understand what's working—and harder to prove why marketing is objectively valuable to your organization.

Part of the challenge lies in the historically siloed nature of marketing teams, channels, and initiatives. As Marketing Charts discovered in a recent survey, 52 percent of marketers are still manually pulling data from multiple systems and combining them in a custom spreadsheet to show marketing results.

To be fair, it's not easy to make sense of the ever-increasing touchpoints, channels, and stakeholders coming at us from every angle. This explosion of easily accessible information seems like a dream, but simply having more data doesn't automatically lead to a clearer picture or better results. In fact, Conductor, a leading marketing platform, recently found that 56 percent of marketing executives are "overwhelmed" by the amount of data available to them.



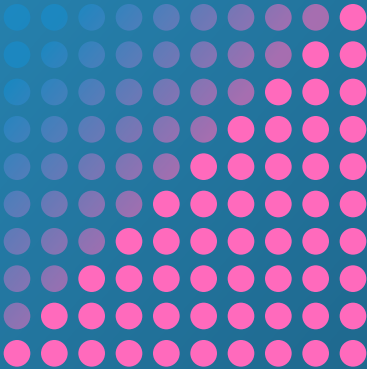
56% of marketing executives say they feel “overwhelmed” by the amount of data available to them.

Source: Conductor

Emerging technology can help you cut through the noise by using AI to automate reporting, identify trends and insights, and even find new audiences while improving communication between marketing and sales. Advanced attribution models offer a more complete picture of marketing performance—and make it possible to run successful account-based marketing (ABM) programs by prioritizing relationships in your highest-opportunity, highest-value accounts. It’s a holistic approach that requires engaging each account, and the individuals on the buying team within an account, in a personalized way throughout the relationship.

Like most strategic initiatives, it takes more than just high-tech tools to pull off ABM. To truly succeed, you need to think differently about which metrics matter.

Traditional inbound-only marketing is primarily focused on short-term goals like increasing registrations, improving clickthrough rates, and generating leads. ABM is the long-term counterpart to revenue growth. Yet only 59 percent of B2B marketers are using individual campaign and channel metrics to measure their ABM programs, according to Demand Gen Report. Even the most evolved organizations have to reset traditional ways of thinking.



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Source: Demand Gen Report

"One of the most difficult aspects of building out our ABM program has been shifting the organizational mindset from leads and funnels to account engagement and account health," says Marissa Dacay, senior director of enterprise demand generation at Adobe. Though difficult, the shift can yield tremendous benefits and provide a much more accurate, actionable indication to sales teams about the state and readiness of each account.

As one revenue team, sales and marketing collaborate on ABM programs to engage, qualify, and nurture accounts. This evolved level of collaboration means marketing metrics should change to reflect the influence and impact marketing activity has on both the account and on the sale.

With ABM, you can identify and aggregate individual leads at the account level in real time. In turn, sales teams get insights they need to develop highly personalized content, and deliver customized messaging to customers throughout their purchase journey.

As you likely know, there are many ways to approach ABM, and the strategy you adopt will depend on your goals, the size of deals you're working on, and your available resources. Similarly, your approach to performance measurement will depend on the type of ABM program you choose to run. Based on our recent interviews with a wide range of B2B marketers, your plan will likely fall into one of three categories: white glove, automated, or hybrid.

Going all in with a *white glove* approach

Focused on high-dollar purchases, DXC Technologies has an ABM program with a highly tailored marketing strategy for each account. We call their approach “white glove,” because they’ve identified a relatively low number of accounts to include in their ABM program and have dedicated ABM employees, working side-by-side with the sales team, to ensure a seamless experience for a small number of accounts (1–10). Programs with this approach are less focused on measuring the costs of their ABM activities and more concerned with demonstrating their value within the accounts, whether by accelerating a deal, expanding a deal, deepening or improving the relationships in the account, or by lifting CSAT metrics.

This may be because these marketers are not concerned with bringing net-new accounts into the funnel, but instead have an existing account base and are working on those accounts. Measurement and reporting reflect this focus by including metrics that gauge the health of an account and of a given opportunity.

"The metrics may even vary from account to account depending on the account strategy, sales goals, or specific opportunity" says Dorothea Gosling, director of marketing programs, pursuits, and ABM at DXC Technologies. "We may be trying to close a specific deal, build a relationship with a specific individual or group, or improve customer satisfaction, and the metrics will reflect the goal for a specific account."

Hitting cruise control with an *automated* approach

At HP Enterprise, they run a much more transactional ABM program. We call their approach "automated" for obvious reasons. It's a reasonable, technical approach for handling a high volume of accounts.

"We may have 30,000 accounts that we need to segment and categorize based on our interactions and history with them," says Tridib Sardar, the company's marketing analytics and operation manager. "We use AI and look-alike modeling to properly categorize accounts and then our ABM efforts will match the account categorization." Automated ABM programs

provide sales with insights, flags, and real-time information about their accounts, but the information typically only flows from marketing to sales, instead of bidirectionally.

Marketers with automated ABM programs tend to be far more concerned about marketing costs and ROI than their counterparts with white-glove programs, and their metrics reflect that importance. This may be because automated programs rely on more traditional lead generation and customer acquisition tactics. When you choose this program, your measurement plan might include typical channel and campaign reporting tactics but will tie back to a specific account or accounts.

Take the middle of the road with a *hybrid* approach

At Adobe, we've learned to strike a balance by running a hybrid ABM program. It's not overly automated or highly customized. This works because we don't always have the ability to collaborate and strategize with sales on individual accounts. There's simply not enough time in the day.

With a hybrid approach, we can reasonably manage deal sizes and accounts whose scope falls somewhere between automated and white-glove programs.

Hybrid ABM can be a good proving ground for your marketing efforts. When organizations run this type of program, they tend to move closer to one of the extremes and away from the other (for example, taking a more automated and less “customized” approach). Reporting will reflect this preference. For example, Ashley Penn, director of marketing and customer insights at Adobe described Adobe’s ABM vision as “scaling what we have put in place and learned so that we can apply these practices to all of our accounts in all stages.”

ABM metrics: a *comprehensive* view

We interviewed B2B marketers with successful ABM programs to understand how different approaches to ABM call for different measurement tactics. Based on our conversations, we developed a set of baseline metrics to help you as you’re developing a plan to capture the value of—and justify sustained investment in—ABM.

METRIC	WHITE GLOVE	AUTOMATED	HYBRID
AWARENESS OR SENTIMENT			
NPS score	○	○	○
New accounts reached		○	○
Account/sales feedback on ABM teammate and activities	○		
MARKETING OR CAMPAIGN EFFECTIVENESS			
Accounts reached by campaign		○	
Accounts responded to campaign		○	
Accounts engaged by campaign		○	
ACCOUNT PENETRATION			
Account coverage	○	○	○
Level or quality of contact within account	○		
GDPR-compliant contacts	○	○	○
Number of Buying Groups Reached w/in Account	○		
ACCOUNT ENGAGEMENT			
Email, newsletter, direct engagement (open rates, click through rates)	○	○	○
Active custom campaigns/programs	○		○
Active general campaigns/programs	○	○	○
Percentage of active contacts in an account	○		
Clickthrough rate across relevant digital ad formats (LinkedIn, banner ads, geofencing)	○	○	○
Social (selling, maturity, outreach)	○	○	○
Overall website traffic from account (unique visitors, average time on site, file downloads, form submissions, event attendance, etc.)	○	○	○
Changes in account health	○		○
FINANCIAL			
Cost per click (by account and by source)		○	
Cost per marketing qualified account			○
Cost per marketing generated opportunity			○
Net-new opportunities (number of opportunities)		○	○
Net-new opportunities (dollars of total contract value or pipeline)	○		
Renewal revenue protected (against accepted run-off rate)	○		
Average deal size	○	○	○
Pipeline acceleration (against historical averages and current projections)	○		○
Conversion and close rate	○		○
Churn rate and retention rate			○
GENERAL			
Marketing contribution to sales pipeline	○	○	○
ABM program ROI	○	○	○
Pipeline velocity (as influenced by ABM)	○	○	○

Show them the money

As B2B marketers we're often too concerned about familiar metrics, including number of impressions, likes, shares, comments, followers, open rates, views, traffic, time on site, bounce rate, clickthroughs, and downloads. These vanity metrics are too high up the funnel to effectively demonstrate the one metric shared across ABM programs—impact on revenue.

Sales impact, which includes everything from deal size and deal velocity to renewal rate, should be at the core of all ABM activities—as should the bottom line. As DXC's Gosling says, "Keep the concept of business value at the forefront of your ABM activities, both for your clients and your internal team. A lot of 'ABMers' come from field marketing where they had a narrower focus, but in order to succeed in ABM you need to tie actions to measurable business value."

Learn how you can create account-based experiences with Marketo.

[Get details](#)

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