

 ACCOUNT-BASED MARKETING
BENCHMARK SURVEY

As ABM & Demand Gen Converge, Orgs Focus On Data Enrichment & Retention Plays

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Executive Summary

There's a divide in the B2B marketing space surrounding account-based marketing (ABM): While some argue it's still firmly in its **buzzword days**, our latest research suggests it's a critical component of overall marketing strategies. According to the "2024 Account-Based Marketing Benchmark Survey," 67% of practitioners currently utilize an ABM strategy — and an additional 26% plan to add one, with the bulk of that number hoping to pilot a strategy within the next year.

Notably, the research found that the line between ABM and demand generation is blurrier than ever — while the two used to co-exist in siloes, nearly half of the respondents (47%) noted that they integrated their demand gen and ABM processes to streamline marketing efforts. However, 26% prioritize traditional demand gen over ABM, while 23% put a stronger emphasis on ABM.

Although ABM was once seen as a hyper-targeted, sales-driven strategy and demand generation was the broader awareness builder, the two have started to intermingle to the point where it's hard to tell where one ends and the other begins.

With this overlap driving more targeted strategies, increased data reliance and a focus on more strategic ABM, this survey report will unpack:



The shift toward a 1:1-focused account model to generate better, more targeted engagement;



The new content formats and messaging practitioners are leveraging to better engage target accounts and increase relevance;



How budget and resource constraints are spurring teams to prioritize expanding existing accounts instead of generating net-new contacts; and



Why more businesses are onboarding new data solutions and third-party data providers to enrich and augment existing account lists.

Scaling Existing Efforts & Focusing On 1:1 Targeting **Amidst Budget Constraints**

Perhaps the best exemplification of a blended approach is seen through the marked uptick in strategic, large-account model strategies: While 49% of respondents in 2024 indicated they practice 1:1 ABM, just 37% said the same in 2023. Given demand generation's wide net and ABM's power to zero in on high-value accounts, it makes sense that leveraging the strategies in tandem is driving the shift toward targeted engagement.

But beyond 1:1 initiatives, practitioners also focused on:

A named account, 1:few model

46%

A programmatic, 1:many approach

45%

Using their current tech stack to target certain accounts

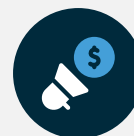
37%

A dedicated ABM platform

33%

Regarding volume and numbers, 46% of practitioners noted they currently target up to 50 accounts. From there, there was an even split: 26% said they target between 51 and 500 accounts, and the same percent noted they target more than 1,000 accounts.

Despite having the right models and technologies in place, there are still a series of challenges ABM practitioners face. The primary issue is the increasing sparsity of budget and resources, as:



45%

of practitioners in 2024 pointed to lack of budget as an issue, while only 34% in 2023 considered it a hurdle.

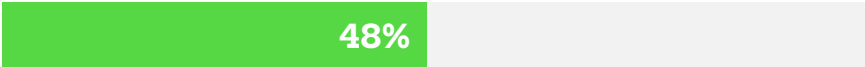


44%

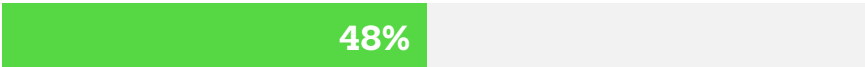
indicated lack of internal resources was impacting their efforts, while only 37% felt the same in 2023.

Given the dwindling amount of means, subsequent challenges included:

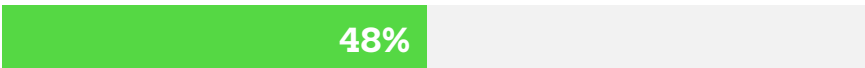
Personalization at scale toward target accounts



Scaling existing ABM efforts



Proving ROI/Attribution



Sales and marketing alignment



Most notably, only 37% of folks in 2023 found scaling existing ABM efforts challenging, which reveals new layers of complexity as teams strive to expand their personalized strategies across a broader set of accounts. Keeping that custom touch intact demands more

resources, while handling data in real-time often stretches current systems. With these challenges underscoring the need for smarter ABM tools, the key technologies marketers are investing in include:

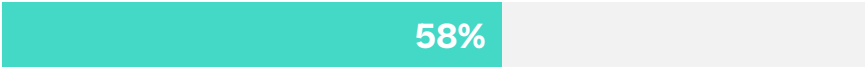
Customer relationship management system



Marketing automation platform



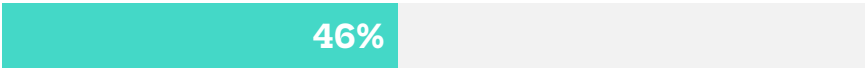
Intent monitoring tools



Measurement and reporting tools



Account-based advertising tools



While it didn't crack the top five, there was a surge in data and augmentation tool adoption, skyrocketing by 10% year-over-year. This indicates a shift toward precision targeting, as layering intent and behavioral insights enable ABM teams to prioritize high-value accounts with tailored messaging. As part of that precision-targeting, the adoption of web and content personalization tools also rose, to the tune of 12% year-over-year.

Leveraging Data Enrichment Providers & Solutions To **Augment Account Targeting**

The key component to account-based marketing is, well, the accounts. When asked about how they think about the accounts in their ABM program, respondents said:

We have a strong handle on our ICP but have room to improve coverage

46%

Sales and marketing agree/are aligned on our ICP and we have strong coverage of our target accounts

43%

We are using intent data tools to identify/predict new accounts or industries we should be targeting

33%

We are still trying to define and strengthen our grasp on our ICP

28%

The most interesting caveat that emerges year-over-year is that despite indicating struggles with sales and marketing alignment, respondents always double down a few questions later that sales and marketing are aligned on their ICPs. This suggests some sort

of reactive or selective alignment, as sales and marketing can only come together effectively for high-priority accounts but lack broader cohesion across the board.

For the moments when sales and marketing do come together, it appears that marketing is deferring to sales' judgment, as 84% of respondents said they focus on sales-team selected accounts. From there, teams are then focusing on a blend of data sources, which include:

Firmographic

76%

Behavioral/intent signals

67%

Technographic

58%

Predictive

34%

With that data in hand, practitioners are augmenting their contact account lists to optimize reach and campaigns. While 86% perform manual, internal research to augment account profiles, other practitioners noted they enhance their data lists by working with:

A data provider to identify target roles and titles



A data provider to add richer fields/info on existing contacts



A solution provider to add intelligence and insights on key accounts



The focus on third-party data indicates that businesses want a competitive edge to enable their teams to refine targeting, prioritize accounts with greater confidence and build stronger, data-backed strategies. By tapping into external data sources, they're aiming to enrich their account profiles with insights beyond their internal database that reveal new, high-potential prospects.



Tapping Into Interactive In-Person & Digital Experiences To Build Relationships

With the technology in place and target accounts identified, the survey then shifted its focus to content assets and outreach strategies. When asked about the type of messaging or content leveraged in ABM outreach, the respondents said:

Targeted content tailored to specific industries

69%

Targeted content based on account challenges/needs

67%

Targeted content tailored to specific roles

59%

Templated versions of generic content with some customization

53%

Personalized/custom content for each account

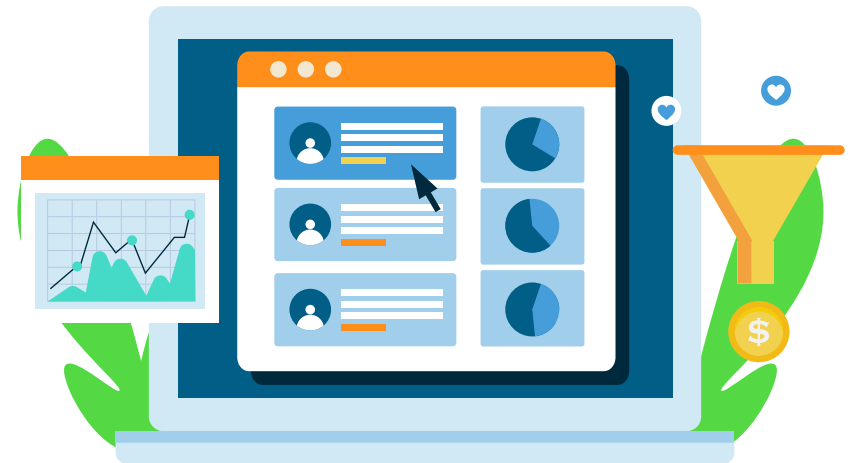
48%

In an era of tightening purse strings, it's clear that accounts are focused on the technical side of solutions and only looking to invest in proven claims. To meet that demand for tangible information, case studies were the No. 1 asset to share with accounts, followed closely by guides/E-books. Beyond that, practitioners prioritized:

Articles and blogs

Whitepapers

Research



Beyond static formats and assets, practitioners were also focused on diversifying their assets to provide an experiential, face-to-face element. When asked about the types of experiences they're offering accounts, marketers said:

Sales meeting invitations



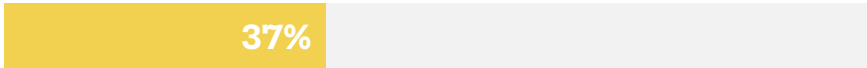
Targeted executive event invitations



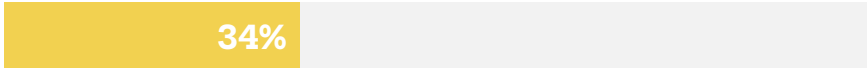
Video content



Promotional item giveaways



Influencer and advocate-related content



Influencer content skyrocketed year-over-year, as just 20% of respondents prioritized it in 2023. This further indicates a desire to stop pushing promotional messaging and instead focus on tactical, first-hand accounts to drive product adoption and sales.

When it comes to deploying that content and getting it in front of accounts, practitioners' channels du jour included:

In-person events



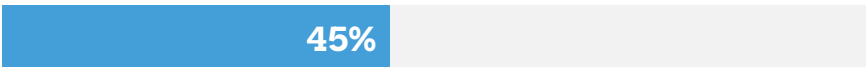
Account-based advertising



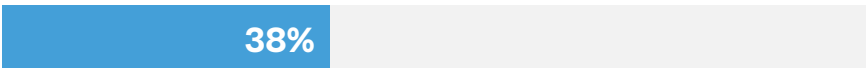
Outbound tele-prospecting



Personalized website content

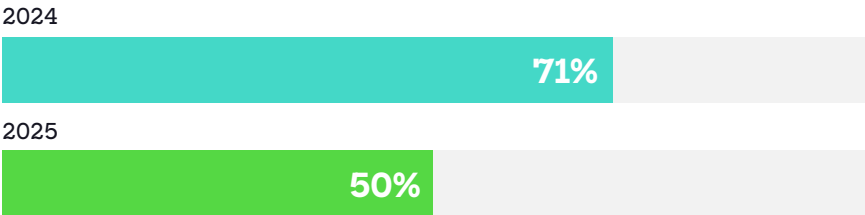


Custom resource center

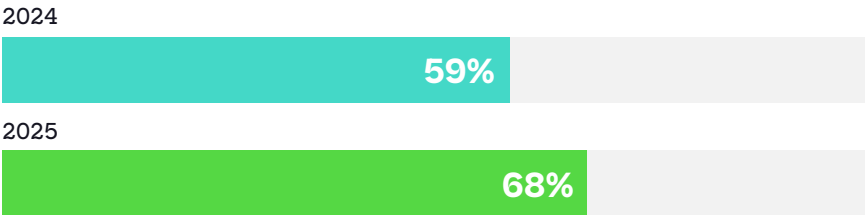


The budgetary/resource restrictions were most evident on the measurement side, as measurement metrics experienced dramatic shifts year-over-year. For example:

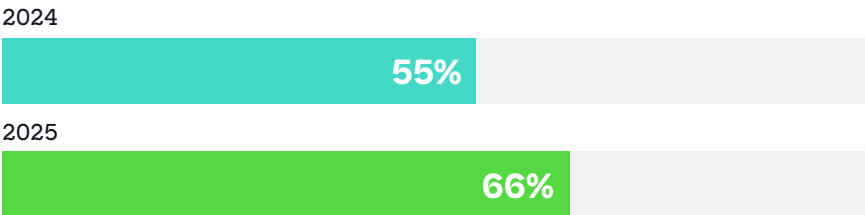
Pipeline contribution



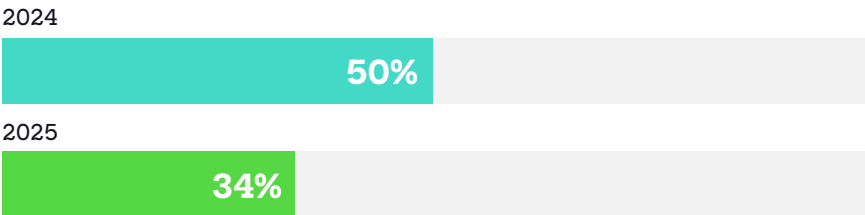
Net-new account engagements



Qualified leads



Annual recurring revenue



With budgets under increased scrutiny, there's a renewed and urgent focus on pipeline contribution as ABM practitioners work to maintain their campaigns' effectiveness and resource allocation. As a result, the emphasis has shifted from acquiring new accounts and generating qualified leads to prioritizing retention over acquisition. This strategic pivot reflects the need to strengthen existing relationships and drive sustained value, ensuring that current accounts continue to deliver long-term growth despite tighter budgets.

When it comes to refreshing account lists to make changes, additions or reprioritize, the most common cadence was quarterly, as indicated by 45% of respondents. Additionally, 26% of practitioners refreshed their account lists monthly.

Conclusion

Overall, more than two-thirds (67%) of respondents indicated that their ABM efforts are meeting or exceeding their expectations, with key benefits that include:

Better sales and marketing alignment

60%

A more efficient use of marketing resources

53%

Building stronger, more trustworthy relationships

50%

A more streamlined customer acquisition process

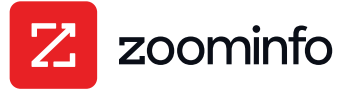
29%

Better reporting potential

26%

Amidst economic headwinds, tightening budgets and general feelings of uncertainty, practitioners are doubling down on existing ABM campaigns and scaling existing programs to drive measurable returns. As the onus shifts toward creating highly targeted and personalized campaigns, third-party data providers are growing in importance as practitioners generate customized, relevant content for their target accounts.





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Demand Gen Report is a targeted online publication that uncovers the strategies and solutions that help companies better align their sales and marketing organizations, and ultimately, drive growth. A key component of the publication's editorial coverage focuses on the sales and marketing automation tools that enable companies to better measure and manage their multi-channel demand generation efforts.

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