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How to Drive Higher Engagement with a Data-Led ABM Strategy

Introduction

Success in account-based marketing (ABM) hinges on a crucial component: data-driven insights.

In today's highly competitive business landscape, you need more than just a great solution to earn buyers' trust. Buying groups are self-guided in their research and only choose solutions they trust and believe in. This independence reduces the number of direct interactions with sales, leaving it up to marketing to deliver content and messaging that speaks directly to the buying group's wish list as they explore solutions. Traditional marketing approaches that rely on mass messaging and generic campaigns are no longer effective in capturing the attention and loyalty of potential customers.

With a strategic approach that focuses on personalized marketing efforts tailored to individual accounts, ABM is the answer to delivering impactful campaigns that build stronger relationships and drive targeted revenue growth. But your efforts will be worthless unless you leverage data at every step of the way.

Why? Because data informs:

- Which **accounts** are most likely to buy
- Which **personas** within the buying committee to engage
- What **content and messaging** is most likely to accelerate conversion

But while data plays a critical role in creating effective ABM strategies, it can be hard to decipher the true signals from the noise. There's a lot of data out there, and it can be a real challenge to figure out how to turn all that data into useful and actionable insights.

Use this guide to amplify your efforts with a systematic approach that combines data-driven insights with personalized outreach efforts. We'll help you understand what data sources you need and how to apply them for smarter strategies that achieve concrete outcomes.

Identify the Right Accounts and Personas with Multiple Data Sources

Do you really know buying groups? You may think you have the golden ticket into the buying committee through one person who downloaded your content, but that's not true.

Gartner confirms there isn't just one person in charge of purchase decisions. B2B buying groups often involve six to ten decision-makers, each armed with their own set of four or five independently gathered pieces of information. The committee members then share and discuss their research to make a purchase decision. It's a collaborative process that ensures everyone's insights are considered, leading to a unified choice. You must engage with all these buying committee members rather than relying on just one lead source to succeed.

Data helps you identify the other buying group members that will decide to purchase a solution so you can account for all decision-makers with your strategy. However, there is no single magic source that instantly reveals this group.

While first-party data—like that collected from a form fill on your site—provides a small snippet of account information, it doesn't always provide a full picture of the account or buyer persona.

Alternatively, relying solely on a single source of third-party data (i.e., data that another provider has provided) to determine buyer intent is equally unreliable. Multiple B2B brands—possibly even your competitors—use the same third-party data to identify in-market accounts. This leads to a differentiation problem with everyone reaching out to the same accounts and personas.

The best approach is to combine your first-party data with third-party data to create a more comprehensive view of the buying committee and their roles within the decision-making process. This knowledge helps you prioritize specific members within trending accounts and deliver personalized content and messaging tailored to their unique needs and interests.

According to Forrester, acquiring varied signal types from multiple sources allows organizations to better validate assumptions, identify buying group members, and triangulate the buying-cycle stage.

Enrich your account understanding by layering three important data sources onto your first-party data

Technographic data

Identifies the technology your accounts are currently using and researching

B2B research data

Insight into product research, content, engagement, and account data to bolster engagement strategy

Historical performance data

Uncovers behavioral insights from key members of buying committees engaging with content

Basic company information gathered from form fills, CRM, and marketing automation platforms

Location, company size, company name, growth rate, industry, revenue

Putting it into practice

Let's walk through a quick step-by-step process for building a target account list with these data sources. In the next section, we'll leverage these sources to understand buying committee personas and create more personalized experiences.

Step 1

Determine your ideal customer profile (ICP)

Examine the qualities and features of your top-performing accounts, such as their industry, company size, location, revenue, technology stack, the customer base they serve, and the roles typically involved in their purchasing decisions. Utilize first-party data available in your CRM, marketing automation system, and sales insights to identify shared characteristics among high-value accounts and develop an ICP.

Step 2

Identify lookalike accounts with third-party systems

Take your ICP and your high-value customers list and apply the same attributes to a third-party data platform. Note the accounts that closely align with your ICP and/or look similar to your high-value customer list.

Step 3

Refine your target account list with the three data sources

Incorporate technographic, B2B research, and historical performance data from your third-party provider to help prioritize the accounts that are showing purchase intent. These accounts are already engaging with your content, searching for topics related to your solution, or may already be in your pipeline as leads or opportunities.

Choose the right data partner that will amplify your account intelligence with unique signals. While most providers have access to the same buyer research and intent data, sources with historical or differentiated data provide an advantage for identifying the right accounts and the best personas to target and engage.

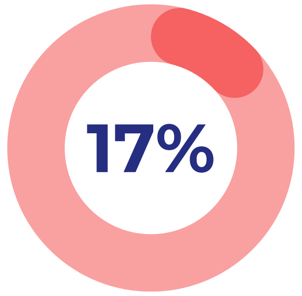
ML Insights, Madison Logic's comprehensive dataset, empowers marketers to effortlessly identify in-market accounts, reach the key personas across the buying committee, and determine the content that drives higher engagement.

ML Insights unifies three key sources of intelligence to create a single score of accounts demonstrating the highest propensity to purchase:

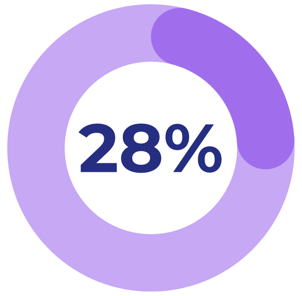
- **Historical Performance:** Madison Logic's proprietary data consisting of 245M monthly multi-channel engagement signals offers unique insights into the buying centers actively engaging with content and advertising relevant to a solution.
- **Install Base:** Technographic data highlights an account's investment in complementary or competitive hardware and software applications.
- **B2B Research:** Third-party intent providing visibility into the accounts consuming web content on specific products or solutions across thousands of websites.

When combined with their first-party data, marketers using ML Insights to fuel their multi-channel, full-funnel ABM strategy see:

Lift in account engagement



Increase in pipeline



Faster pipeline velocity

Personalize the Customer Experience at Each Stage of the Buying Journey

Today's buyers increasingly expect personalized experiences. Research reveals that 80% of buyers are likelier to purchase from brands offering them personalized experiences. And in their "State of the Connected Customer Report," Salesforce found that 52% of customers are more likely to switch brands if their current solution doesn't make an effort to personalize communication to their needs.

Identifying buying groups is the first step. But designing personalized experiences that meet buyer expectations is more than just adding a name to an email. It requires:

- **Curating content and messaging that addresses the buyer's business and emotional needs.**
- **Mapping the delivery of that content and messaging based on where they are in the buyer's journey.**

Why do we map out the experience? Because different members of the buying committee will move through the buyer's journey at different rates. One person might be in the consideration stage while everyone else is still in the awareness stage. But the journey won't conclude until they make that final purchase decision together. Mapping content to where individuals are in the buyer's journey is the most effective way to present them with the content and messaging needed necessary to accelerate the buyer's journey and get them to that decision faster.

You’re not with your buyers all day, so how do you know where they are in the buying journey?

Data helps you understand where decision-makers are in the buyer's journey and their individual needs, preferences, and pain points to choose the content and messaging needed to convert. This level of personalization elevates your ABM efforts and delivers more impactful campaigns by surrounding the entire buying committee with a multi-channel, full-funnel ABM strategy to stay engaged and top-of-mind.

Let's take a closer look at how to leverage a combination of data for better personalization.

Understand account basics with firmographic data

To understand who you’re targeting and personalize your approach, you need to segment your accounts based on similar characteristics. The primary goal of firmographic data is to divide potential accounts into meaningful segments. With a better understanding of an account’s geographical location, size, and operational framework, you can effectively target them with personalized campaigns that empower them to take immediate action.

For instance, if you're aware that a segment of your accounts operates within the healthcare sector and is based on the East Coast, you could tailor your content and outreach to address specific compliance issues or market trends relevant to that region and industry. Likewise, if you know a cluster of accounts are small businesses with fewer than 50 employees and often include the IT manager, you can create dedicated campaigns that focus on solutions geared towards agility and rapid growth with limited resources, rather than large-scale enterprise solutions.

FIRMOGRAPHIC DATA ATTRIBUTES FOR TARGETING

Geographic location(s): Where is the company headquarters located? How many offices do they have and where are they? With proprietary account data covering 130+ countries, ML Insights delivers unmatched global reach and scale.

Industry type: What vertical does the company operate in? Does it occupy more than one industry vertical?

Company size: How many employees does it have? Where are those employees located?

Sales and revenue: What is the company's quarterly revenue? What is the annual revenue? Is the company growing, downsizing, or maintaining its current market position?

Improve conversion outcomes with technographic data

On the surface, technographic data offers a view into an account's technology use--but when used effectively it helps shape attention-grabbing campaigns by aligning your solution with a buying group's digital needs. With technology now ubiquitous in our daily lives, the question is no longer if a company embraces technology, it's now where they are in their digital transformation.

Technographic data provides a real advantage in your personalization. Stand out with these use cases for technographic data:

1. **Segmentation:** More accurate data about the technology deployed within the account allows you to segment more granularly. How is the organization using their technical assets? Do they use technology compatible to your solution? The answers to these questions help you design personalized efforts that more effectively engage each segment.

2. **Prioritization:** In an increasingly competitive market, technographic data helps you prioritize accounts by determining when buyers are more likely to spend on new solutions based on their current digital maturity. Is the account currently investing in AI technology? Personalize your content and messaging to focus on how your solution leverages AI to solve their needs.

3. **Competitor Analysis:** Knowing which accounts use competitor tools or services provides opportunities to increase market share by targeting their current customer base. Use this insight to customize content for a competitive displacement campaign that speaks to why your solution is better. Knowing when they purchased a competitor solution lets you know when to run a campaign during the renewal timeframe.

Anticipate buyer needs with historical performance and B2B research data

The more you understand buyers' needs and behaviors, the more effectively you can engage them with compelling content that accelerates their progress through the buyer's journey. While there's no crystal ball in B2B marketing, historical performance and B2B research data provide a unique perspective on the buying centers that are researching and consuming similar content and messaging. This knowledge helps you develop more personalized campaigns that directly cater to buyer interests, experiences, and needs, all while using real-time insights.

Leverage B2B research data to identify the specific product and solution terms used in content that in-market accounts are consuming. B2B review sites and interest-based online communities are popular sources for obtaining this data. Collecting information on the individuals who view this highly specific content provides a powerful signal for understanding where a buyer or buying group stands in their buyer's journey. Moreover, personalization relies on delivering content based on a buyer's mindset and their stage in the buying journey. Access to these insights aids in mapping a personalized and coherent experience for them.

Historical performance data helps you comprehend how frequently target accounts engage across multiple channels and which members of the buying group consume solution-based content. For instance, historical performance data reveals that over four weeks, a director read a best practices guide on cybersecurity, followed by a vice president at the same company reading the same piece of content the next week. Next, the data shows that the CTO at that account consumed the same guide and a product comparison sheet. This information helps you determine where these decision-makers stand in their buyer's journey. In this example, it appears that the buying group is in the decision stage.

Understanding how in-market accounts engage across multiple channels is a key component of a successful ABM strategy.

Madison Logic's industry-leading intent data not only reveals in-market accounts and the best personas to target within them, but also helps you understand which content is most likely to convert these accounts into customers.

With **ML Insights**, our proprietary historical performance data uncovers behavioral insights from targeted buying committee members. This enables you to identify the best time to activate campaigns and the right content and messaging to leverage for the highest impact.

Use this intelligence to:

- Align your content with the trending topics your target audiences are researching
- Build in-depth experiences by tailoring content to funnel stages
- Create consistency across multi-channel engagement and nurture programs

Putting it into practice

Combining data sources and paying attention to specific attributes like job titles and departments helps you profile and map out the day-to-day life of specific personas. A profile of their challenges, roles, and values helps you personalize the content and messaging they need in the buying journey.

Let's say you're selling a project management software solution, and you identify the Director of Project Management role showing intent. Here's how you can profile this individual:

Primary and secondary research tells us:

Director role: 35-40+ years of age; previous experience in projects, manager training.

Role overview: Oversees the work of project managers, and coordinates the resources needed for projects with a defined scope and a start and completion point. Typically skilled in budgeting scheduling. Most likely has a Project Management Professional certification.

Daily focus: Attends meetings with project teams and leads, emails with clients and stakeholders, reviews and monitors budgets and KPIs.

B2B research and historical performance data tells us:

Persona values: Automated tracking of project tasks and timelines, organization of important documents and reports, tools that streamline workflows to help manage projects to be on-time and within budget.

Persona challenges/pain points: Too much information to track, weak communication between teams for projects, difficulty reporting on timelines and progress.

Mapping content to the buyer’s journey

Buyers use many sources besides vendor websites when researching solutions. And if you miss the opportunity to be present where they are, you miss out on key engagement opportunities. Being consistently present and relevant also earns you more opportunities when other providers drop the ball. You want to stick in buyers’ minds as someone who knows their needs and can help solve them through each stage of the buying journey.

Your content and messaging needs to speak to each stage continuously through an always-on, multi-channel strategy. An always-on, multi-channel strategy helps your brand stay top-of-mind and on the shortlist as a potential solution. Pay attention to engagement and intent data to understand what bucket an account falls into during a campaign and target them accordingly by channel. For example, use:

- Display Advertising and CTV to drive brand awareness and re-targeting efforts
- Email as outreach for nurturing programs
- Content Syndication for lead generation
- Social channels like LinkedIn for first-touch and re-targeting campaigns

Joint Google and Bain & Company research on the evolving B2B path to purchase found 90% of buyers ultimately choose a vendor from their day-one list.

This chart outlines your objective and the buyer's mindset at each stage of the buying journey. The suggested assets and content types will help you segment and map out your content to each stage. There is no magic number for content types--it's more about creating that relevant content to buyer needs for that extra level of personalization.

Marketers Objective

Awareness

At this stage, you want to educate potential customers about their problems and the solutions available.

- Expert content
- Analyst reports
- White papers
- eBooks

Consideration

At this stage, you want to provide potential customers with more detailed information about your product or service.

- Display ads
- Social ads
- Events
- Webinars
- Buying guides
- Blog posts
- Demo videos
- Email

Purchase/Decision

At this stage, you want to provide potential customers with all the information they need to make a confident buying decision.

- Comparison sheets
- Case studies
- Product sheets
- Webinars
- White papers
- Native ads

Adoption

At this stage, you want to continue to engage with customers and provide them with the support they need to be successful with your product or service.

- Live demos
- Training/onboarding
- How-to guides
- Webinars
- Trials
- Consultations

Account's Mindset

Do I have a problem and how do I solve it?

Who can help me solve my problem?

Which solution is the best choice to solve my problem?

What can help me make the most out of the solution solving my problem?

Optimize Campaign Strategies in Real-Time

Data-driven personalization strategies must be constantly measured, tested, and optimized for the best results. Given the resource intensity of multi-channel ABM, you can't afford to run a campaign only to review and measure the results at the end. Purchase decisions are long; triaging what went wrong at the end means losing out on time, investment, and most likely a sale. You need an agile approach to your ABM that allows for continuous adjustments as the market shifts.

Paying attention to engagement and pipeline metrics uncovers important campaign optimization opportunities. These insights allow you to take a data-driven approach to optimization that generates more revenue from target accounts, improves the ROI of your marketing efforts, and increases win rates through more relevant and personalized marketing content for your target accounts.

Measure campaigns by objective

When measuring your campaigns by objective, you're gauging how well your efforts align with the specific goals you've set. You gain insights into what's working and what needs adjustment by focusing on the metrics relevant to each objective. This tailored approach allows you to see the impact of your efforts from the perspective of your intended goals, helping you make more informed decisions to optimize your campaign's success. The next page presents three common objectives that marketers have with ABM campaigns. We'll break down the possible engagement and pipeline metrics, the areas of opportunity to adjust, and how you can optimize to better meet your objective.

Putting it into practice

Optimize to Accelerate Deal Velocity and Conversions

- **Pipeline metrics to measure:** Conversion rates, average deal cycle time
- **Engagement metrics to measure:** Touch points with sales, interactions with content, interactions from key decision-makers/influencers
- **Opportunities for optimization:** Low number of touch points with sales, declining or no interactions with content over a specific period, low engagement from influencers
- **Solutions:**
  - Adjust the timing of communication
  - Utilize multi-channel outreach and promotion to encourage engagement
  - Reformat content as long and short-form for more distribution options
  - Repurpose existing content to align with specific persona needs

Optimize to Drive More Brand Awareness

- **Pipeline metrics to measure:** Volume of accounts over a period of time
- **Engagement metrics to measure:** Impressions, search volumes, social shares, engagement from target accounts
- **Opportunities for optimization:** Low impressions and reach, stagnant or decreasing search volume, limited social shares, low engagement from target accounts
- **Solutions:**
  - Create strong, appealing, highly visual content
  - Expand content formats and types
  - Collaborate with partners/influencers
  - Run more display advertising and CTV campaigns with higher bids

Optimize to Increase Deal Sizes

- **Pipeline metrics to measure:** Average deal size, the volume of accounts qualified as opportunities in pipeline
- **Engagement metrics to measure:** Touch points with sales, number of interactions with outreach efforts, content downloads by opportunity accounts
- **Opportunities for optimization:** Limited or no interactions from outreach, low engagement with sales, declining deal sizes, low conversion rates from target accounts into qualified opportunities
- **Solutions:**
  - Refine messaging
  - Unify messaging and value proposition through a loser alignment with marketing and sales
  - Adjust targeting to where accounts are most active
  - Personalize outreach to personas based on intent and persona profiles

By closely observing engagement metrics, you can gauge whether your messaging is resonating effectively. Simultaneously, the scrutiny of pipeline data uncovers enhancement avenues that ensure a seamless buying journey.

The interplay between pipeline and engagement metrics offers a comprehensive view of progress, fostering informed decisions. With a better understanding of how accounts and buying committee members experience your brand, you can work back through their journey to find improvements more easily.

AgentSync Accelerates the Sales Cycle with a Data-Driven ABM Strategy

AgentSync, an insurance digital infrastructure solution provider, aims to differentiate itself by providing customers with the best experience and leading the conversation through compelling thought leadership content. Recognizing that its target audience wasn't finding its content organically, the marketing team needed a strategy to ensure they reached the right accounts and decision-makers on the right channels at the right time.

Motivated by the opportunity to improve AgentSync's targeting and engagement of key accounts, the team worked with Madison Logic to implement a data-driven, multi-channel ABM approach to zero in on the accounts that matter and be more purposeful with their content and messaging strategy.

"I would absolutely recommend Madison Logic to any organization that has a hard-to-find ICP. It's really great for us to use multiple channels to be where our audience is, as opposed to waiting for our audience to come to us."

- Rachel Simon, Senior Manager of Demand Generation at AgentSync

Here's how they did it:

- **Identify and target:** The AgentSync team combined the powerful intent datasets through ML Insights with their own first-party data from HubSpot to fill in the gaps of their own parameters and identify target accounts based on their ideal customer profile.
- **Personalize and engage:** Through a multi-channel approach that includes ABM Content Syndication, ABM Display Advertising, and ABM Social Advertising with LinkedIn, the team connects with target accounts using the most relevant content. This approach allows them to influence their target audience before they enter the sales pipeline, resulting in stronger opportunities and relationships.
- **Measure and optimize:** AgentSync uses the ML Platform to understand account-level activity and key information about their target accounts, like job titles, job descriptions, and personas that download and engage with content. The deep dive that Madison Logic provides into intent topics helps the team understand what's resonating with their audience to make better-informed decisions for campaign and content optimization.

Using ML Insights data and a multi-channel, full-funnel strategy, AgentSync achieved:

116% ROI on ABM efforts | **$9.6 million** in pipeline value

Fuel Your ABM Strategies with Data

In today's fast-paced B2B market, where personalized experiences matter the most to buyers, data-driven insights are the backbone of ABM. Throughout this guide, we've seen that ABM's success is all about tapping into different data sources to identify accounts, personalize the experience, and optimize campaigns for the strongest impact.

As buying teams grow and purchase behaviors continue to evolve, having a data-driven plan is critical for success. The days of guessing and following hunches are gone; personalization today requires smarter decisions based on reliable buyer insights.

At Madison Logic, we pride ourselves on our innovative multi-channel ABM approach powered by industry-leading data. We help marketers get started with data-driven strategies that help them target, engage, and optimize campaigns and drive success in their ABM endeavors.

Visit www.madisonlogic.com to learn more.