

ABM

Unlock the true potential of your business

A guide on how to win, grow, and retain your most important accounts



Making iT happen.

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What is ABM?



The year was 1993, Intel introduced the Pentium family of 32-bit microprocessors, music was being played on a Walkman, and Don Pepper and Martha Rogers published a book titled **'The One to One Future'**.

This book predicted a change of marketing processes and theorised that customers were beginning to look for a more personalised experience when looking to purchase - moving away from the traditional mass marketing approach that focused on the numbers that were contacted.

Pepper and Rogers were not wrong, and they were predicting ABM, an acronym first coined at the turn of the millennium by the Information Technology Services Marketing Association (ITSMA) as they began to introduce it as a strategy.

Fundamentally, ABM is an end-to-end revenue strategy where marketing, sales and customer success focus on the highest propensity accounts across the entire customer lifecycle.

Why? Because of the Pareto Principle. Also known as the '80-20 rule', this theory states that **80% of a company's revenue comes from 20% of its customers.**

With this being the case, that 20% have to be prioritised, and essentially given the VIP treatment, focusing, and nurturing these high-yield customers.



Why

Account Based Marketing (ABM)?



?

Do you want to make buyers **feel special and increase sales?**

?

Do you want to **improve lead conversion?**

?

Do you crave a **hyper-personalised approach** for your high value clients?

If the answer is **YES**, **Account Based Marketing (ABM)** could be the recipe for success that you are looking for.

After all, it has been reported that **revenue can grow by more than 30%** with this powerful marketing strategy (RollWorks).

70%

of marketers now have an active account-based marketing program in place

RollWorks



In order to achieve this, **businesses are required to adopt a data driven account approach** that is targeted and prioritised, running personalised multi-channel marketing tactics at scale, measuring success with revenue-focused metrics, and continuous optimisation.

It is from this approach that highly personalised and creative marketing enables the development of relationships, enhanced reputation, and most importantly – **increased revenue from the most important accounts.**

Through the creation of meaningful segments, and delighting those segments with a personalised approach, buyers will have their demands met and relevant content that is related to their unique business needs.

It is for this reason that ABM marketing is one of the most effective demand generation tactics today,

87% of B2B marketers

reported that their ABM initiatives outperform their other marketing investments in terms of ROI.

LXA



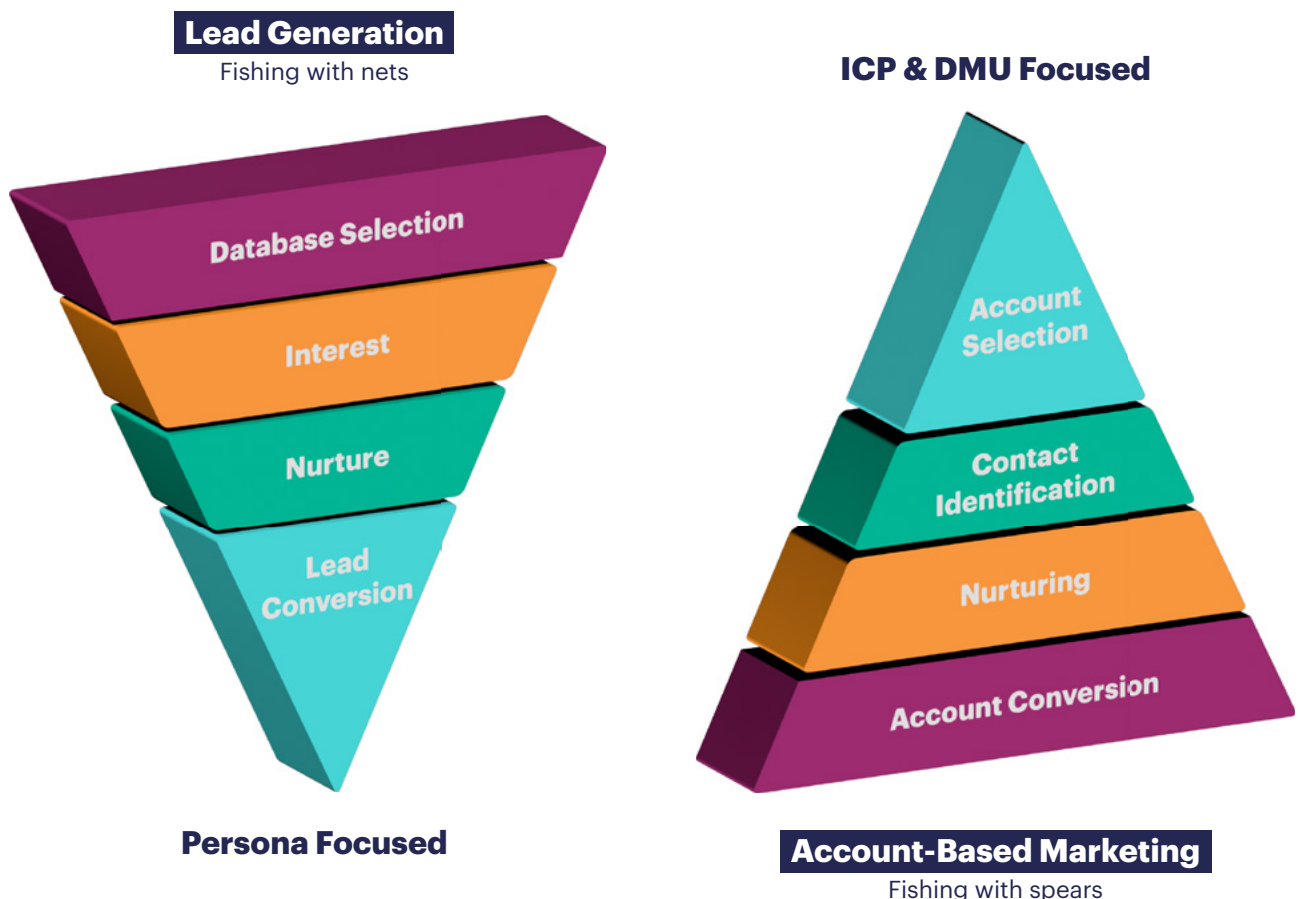
As we mentioned, ABM moves away from traditional marketing values. The turn of the millennium saw a focus on lead generation and attention has now turned to a focused strategy (zero-waste marketing) that engages the accounts you most want to win, grow, and retain. In this sense, **ABM has 'flipped the funnel,' as can be seen in the diagrams below.**

Flipping the funnel aids the development of unique value propositions and personalised account experiences. This is accomplished through prioritised accounts, engaging with them appropriately and provides zero waste.

When it is considered that **53% of marketers spend at least half their marketing budget on lead generation** (Sender), it seems that more businesses require ABM to unleash their true potential.

Just 0.75% of leads generated with traditional marketing processes resulted in revenue.

Spiceworks





ABM is right for you if...



You **sell high value/complex** products or services



Your average deal size is **over £50k**



You're looking to **consolidate your growth**



You target **mid-market and enterprise accounts**



You have **long sale cycles**



You are required to **influence multiple decision makers within businesses**



ABM is not for you if...



You are still at the **product/market fit stage**



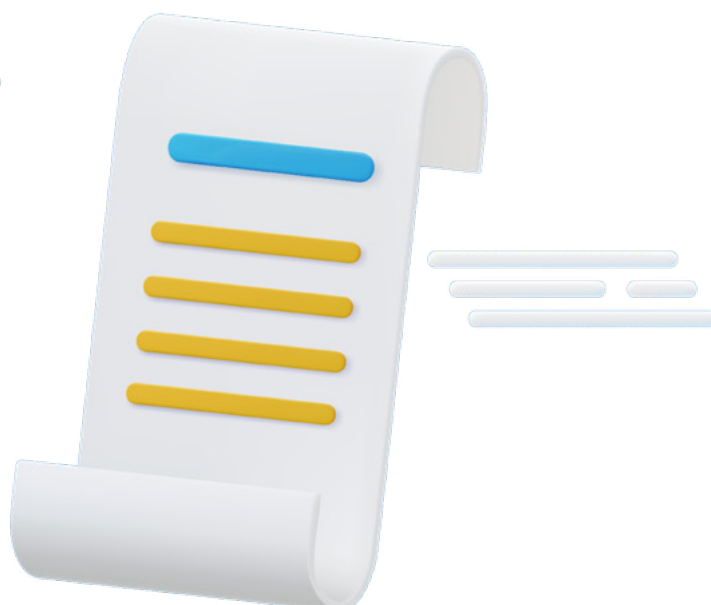
You do not have **internal marketing resources**



You do not have **target enterprise accounts**



You have a **low average deal value**



Frequently asked questions regarding ABM

1

We already do inbound marketing... Why is ABM different?

Compared to traditional inbound marketing, **ABM is highly customised and targeted.** It focuses on the customers who want to be in your funnel – the people who genuinely need your products and services. This means you'll get a better conversion with potential for higher-than-average profit margins compare to conventional inbound marketing.

2

What are the risks involved with ABM?

ABM has a remarkably high success rate. In fact, **76% of marketers saw higher ROI with ABM than any other marketing strategy** (RollWorks).

Compared to inbound marketing, it's less risky due to the targeted approach, but common pitfalls of ABM include selecting the wrong accounts (or too many accounts), not having high quality personalised content, and not having a clearly defined strategy. That's why it's important to partner with a specialist **demand generation agency** with the knowledge and experience in campaign management.

3

How much time and resource needs to be invested?

To get the most value out of an ABM marketing pilot, campaigns should run for a minimum of six months with the resources invested unique to each account.

What is more important is to reiterate is that **87% of B2B marketers reported that ABM outperformed other investments in terms of ROI** (Huble) and that 91% of companies reporting an increase in average deal size.

The **three** ABM programmes

The ITSM recognised a need for ABM to be scalable, developing a model featuring three distinct levels.

Let's take a look at all three of these ABM programmes.

Increase personalisation



3-5 accounts

Clusters of
10-15 accounts

100s of
accounts

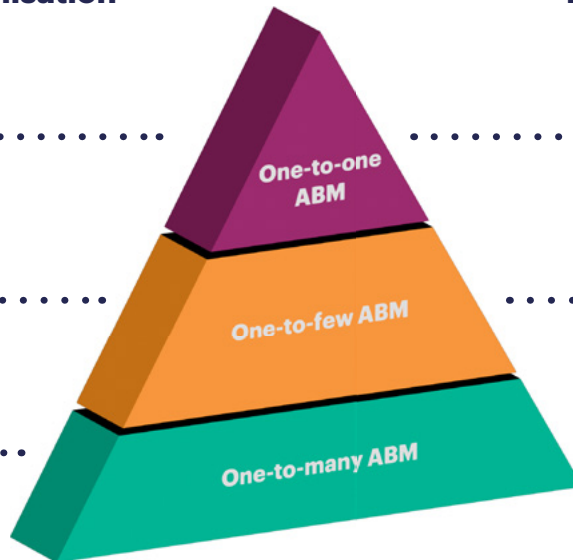
Increase engagement



Target account + person
Known challenges
Know opportunities
High ROI

Target account
Target DMUs

Target account
Target titles
Seniority/function
Industry
Company size



High

Strategic ABM

ABM Light

**Programmatic
ABM**

1: ONE

1: FEW

1: MANY

Low



One-to-many (Programmatic ABM)

This level of ABM aims to drive brand awareness among your Total Addressable Market (TAM) with significantly less narrowing of prospective targets than the other two levels. A key benefit of this approach is that it gives you the ability to prioritise accounts through measuring engagement with your content, promoting relevant businesses through the ABM levels if required.

Newly available technology tools make this approach more personal than previous years and it is more reliant on this than the alternative ABM programmes. Software allows for **targeted email marketing**, ensuring you cut through the noise of a customer's inbox, utilising information you already hold on your customer allowing for tailored messages to specific sets of subscribers.

It is an extremely important marketing method and should not be neglected despite its lack of personability in comparison to one-to-one and one-to-few marketing. It is a way to generate a large number of leads by casting a wide net which runs alongside other campaigns.

Primary examples: Email marketing



The results can certainly be fruitful.
Targeted brand and acquisition messaging
means accounts are

6x more likely to convert

LinkedIn Research

How do I make it work?

It is important to have the right approach to one-to-many marketing. As is the case with all ABM marketing, it is a marathon not a sprint, you may have the urge to immediately provide one-to-many marketing across all platforms, but that can be expensive. Firstly, establish what is the **best platform for your ads** before wasting your marketing budget on overreaching and underdelivering.

You should have an ongoing analysis system in place that measures success in real time, helping to identify the best strategy for you. As you generate more leads, you can then prioritise them, developing them into high-end, devoted, and valuable customers where possible.

Advantages of one-to-many marketing

- ✓ Your message is heard widely.
- ✓ Cost saving due to increased sample size and one-size-fits-all approach.
- ✓ High volumes of sales.

Disadvantages of one-to-many marketing

- ✗ **Profit margins are low** as the product is not unique to the market it is being sent to.
- ✗ **Customer loyalty is low**, resulting in low switching costs.
- ✗ **Competition is high** as the mass market attracts more players.



One-to-few (ABM Lite)



The 'middleman' in the ABM world targets clusters of accounts that have similarities when it comes to drivers or challenges. This is similar to one-to-many marketing, but these clusters are far smaller in nature. Personalisation is increased by making your offering even more relevant to the audience you connect with. You can focus on groups within an industry segment, and you can have a level of targeted content that resonates with the decision-makers.

This process provides greater scalability than one-to-many marketing, whilst requiring less investment. For this reason it is often described as the best of both worlds and an excellent choice for businesses that may have limited resources, or its implementation of ABM is in its infancy.

Primary examples:

In-person events

Email marketing

PPC

How do I make it work?

A holistic approach is required when implementing your one-to-few approach including strategy, content development and the nurturing of accounts.

This is achieved by creating a synergy between marketing and sales. Which accounts to target, how to market them, and the most effective message should be discussed.

In order for a one-to-few marketing programme to be effective, you must also take the opportunity to continually evaluate the method over what is typically a 6-12 month period, ensuring you are targeting the right accounts.



One-to-one (Strategic ABM)



As you will see, we have dedicated a larger amount of this playbook to one-to-one, or strategic, ABM, than the other two levels. This is because the programme focuses on high-value opportunities and fully embraces the 80/20 principle, meaning it's worth around **80% of your business revenue**.

It isn't surprising to hear that people do not want to open emails or texts to see offers and deals that have zero relevance to them and their company, the idea of one-to-one is to do the absolute opposite of this.

There is a sea of forgettable content out there and the goal is to stand far above this.

Maximum levels of personalisation are used with existing customers and known opportunities, highlighting how you can solve the key challenges of the business and show that you are paying attention to their needs.

The aim is to let your high-value organisations know that you are the best solution to their problem.

How do I make it work?

In earnest, you learn your customer's needs, change your approach, and then in some instances customise your products and services to meet the customer's needs.

This method is used for both potential clients as well as existing customers. It is like meeting someone in person and asking how you can directly help ease their pain points and increase their revenue.

It is a similar concept to when you visit a coffee shop, and the barista is already aware of what you would like to drink. You have already established this connection, and it makes you as the customer feel valued and understood — this concept is taking over the world of marketing.

You are looking to encourage your sales force to identify and interact with individual customers in unique ways, rather than just be generally attentive to their requirements.

Yes, it is resource intensive, and it requires a higher level of investment, but it is proven to be the best way to deal with high-end customers during the current economic climate and produces an extremely high ROI.

Primary examples:

Account specific customer content and thought leadership.

Executive-to-executive relationship programme.

If one-to-one marketing is done correctly, you can expect...

- ✓ Improved marketing and sales alignment
- ✓ Maximised relevance among high-value accounts
- ✓ Consistent delivery of customer experiences
- ✓ Measurable return on investment
- ✓ A streamlined sales process
- ✓ Expanded business through improved customer relationships



The importance of sales and marketing synergy with one-to-one marketing



85% of marketers

reported a 10% increase in revenue while 19% reported more than 30% revenue growth

RollWorks

.....

80% of marketers

say ABM improves customer lifetime value

WifiTalents

This is only achieved through the unison by which the sales and marketing teams work.

Once relationships have been built with key contacts, it is a necessity to engage everyone that is involved in the buying decision – the marketing-sales alignment needs to be strong to achieve this. This should be a seamless process between the lead being acquired and the final sales. This is accomplished through bridging the middle ground and allowing the marketing teams to acquire leads that sales can execute.

While there are numerous ways to identify accounts, the crucial factor is that marketing and sales are in agreement on which accounts to target. According to HubSpot Academy professor Kyle Jepson,

“If your marketer is targeting one list of companies, and your salespeople are working a different list, you’re going to end up with an account-based mess.”

However, if this is achieved you can expect some tremendous results.



Five important aspects of implementing ABM

1 Select the best accounts

Consider the following...

- Who are you most likely to be able to sell to?
- What existing accounts are most likely to make purchases with you?
- Are they within an industry you have typically executed substantial amounts of sales with?
- Are they portraying behaviour that makes them likely to buy?

This will provide you with your **ICP (Ideal Customer Profile)** which can also be called your TAM or TAL (Target Account List).

2 Know your market

You may think you know your customers well, in terms of their industry, company size and annual revenue but executing ABM goes further than this. You should delve into their business, understand their tech stack, get to know their buying committee, and understand **where they are on their buying journey**.

3 Engage the right way

The main power of ABM is the heightened engagement it offers with your customers. Understanding the ICP unlocks increased understanding, allowing you to create compelling, emotive, and personalised content to the right channel in a timely manner. Whether it be direct mail, BDR cadence, to website experience – you can **personalise** this in terms of **account, persona, and crucially, timing**.



4 Collaborate with sales

We've already dedicated a section to this, but the point cannot be stressed enough. A huge benefit of ABM is tightening the **partnership between marketing and sales** and bridging this divide is the key to turning leads into sales.

Providing the sales team with context and insights will allow them to know why, how, and when to engage with customers. The days of leads "thrown over the wall" should be in the past.

5 Track insight

By tracking principal factors that affect deal velocity and pipeline acceleration, you unlock the potential of opening **a new pool of prospects**.

Look at new accounts and personas that have engaged as well as opportunity and account win rates to open doors that you didn't even know existed.



The step-by-step guide to ABM from start to finish

With all of the above considered, we have broken down ABM and it's **three levels into an eight-step process:**

1 Confirm the market you are looking to descend on

- **First things first, you need to establish your Ideal Customer Profile (ICP).**
You can only do this once you have also recognised what products or services you are trying to increase the sales growth of.
- **When you have established this, you should:**
 - Match this against your current customer base
 - Analyse customer data (technographic and firmographic)
 - Establish your most profitable customers
 - Utilise external data (e.g., industry reports)
 - Discuss this with C-suite as well as the sales and customer success dept
 - Create your ICP

Do not be afraid to kick things off by going with your gut.

After all, you probably already have a good idea of what accounts will respond well to ABM.



2

Channel your focus and resources

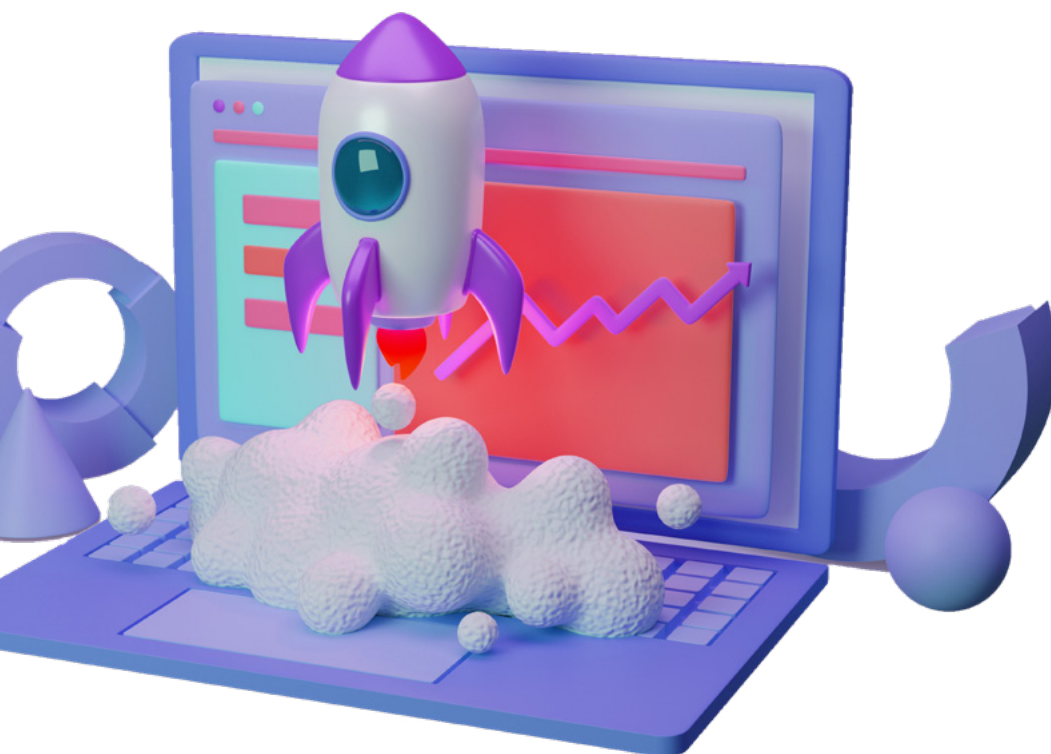
- **This is a crucial part of the puzzle — funnelling your accounts down so you can select the correct ones.**
 - Compile your TAM
 - Prioritise them in terms of their match to your ICP
 - Categorise them into the three ABM programmes
- **Tools including CRM, marketing automation and external firm demographics** are helpful at this stage. It is at this point you should absolutely collaborate with your sales team. They can provide important insights into suitable targets and help refine the list you have compiled.

3

Delve further into your customers

- **It is now all about understanding those accounts you've targeted.** Gaining an awareness of their industry as well as current and future market conditions are crucial. You should choose to combine publicly available data along with account and industry commissioned reports. This will establish a clear picture of your customers and the sphere within which they are working.
- **The result will be a powerful value proposition and messaging strategy.**





4 Launch your value proposition to market

- • • **It's time to take your value proposition to market.**

This is the foundation of any ABM strategy. It is what allows you to tap into businesses you are trying to sell to in a personalised, topical, and engaging way.

- Focus on how you can help your customer
- Understand their pain points and challenges
- Identify how you are different from the rest
- Devise a statement of intent that speaks to the customer
- Be powerful and persuasive

5 Develop your three-tiered strategy

- • • **You are now at the point where you can ideate your strategy across the three ABM programmes.**

The data that you have at your disposal, including account and buyer data, should dictate your tactics, channels, and assets.

6 Design unique account experience

- **Now is the time** to devise a plan that will cut through the noise and have a meaningful impact on each account in question. This is done by designing a unique experience that is created by data and insights which dictate strategy.

Step six is an opportunity to create unique, emotive, and powerful connections with accounts, both online and offline.

7 Execute the campaign

- **Ensure you orchestrate your ABM campaigns across relevant parties, channels, and tactics.**

Furthermore, it is also helpful to build dashboards that can be shared within your business, aiding visibility, transparency, and support.



8 Analyse and adapt

- Providing steps 1-7 have been executed appropriately, it is now time to **measure the success of your ABM strategy**. In defining success, it is handy to have early, mid and late-stage KPI's. The '3R's' model can be a valuable tool to use. Assessing revenue, relationships, and reputation will tell a true tale.



A 12-month ABM to-do list



Now that we have seen the steps that are required to launch an ABM programme, below you will find a 12 month timeline. In some instances this can take longer, so **do not feel under pressure to rush things.**

1-3 months

Strategise, plan, and build

- ☐ **Launch** ABM programme
- ☐ Define your **Ideal Customer Profile (ICP)**
- ☐ Commission **insight reports**
- ☐ Build and prioritise **your account list into three tiers**
- ☐ Construct the **value proposition**
- ☐ Plan a **content strategy**
- ☐ Develop a **creative experience**
- ☐ **Integrate learnings** from ABM programme
-
-
-
-

4-6 months

Launch the plan

- ☐ Launch **'always-on'** One-to-many programmes
- ☐ Launch **one-to-few accounts** (around 15 accounts)
- ☐ Think about **one-to-one strategies** for the most valuable clients
- ☐ Construct **reporting dashboards**
- ☐ **Optimise** the campaigns
-
-
-
-
-



to-do list cont.



Now that we have seen the steps that are required to launch an ABM programme, below you will find a 12 month timeline. In some instances this can take longer, so do not feel under pressure to rush things.

7-9 months

Review and optimise

Analyse and optimise 'Always on' one-to-many programme

Revisit **account insights**

11

Choose second phase of accounts to be used in one-to-few programme

Elevate appropriate accounts from one-to-many to one-to-few programmes

Begin enrolment of accounts into one-to-one programme

- • • •

9-12 months

Review and optimise

7

Conduct **another analysis** of campaigns

11

Review **account insights**

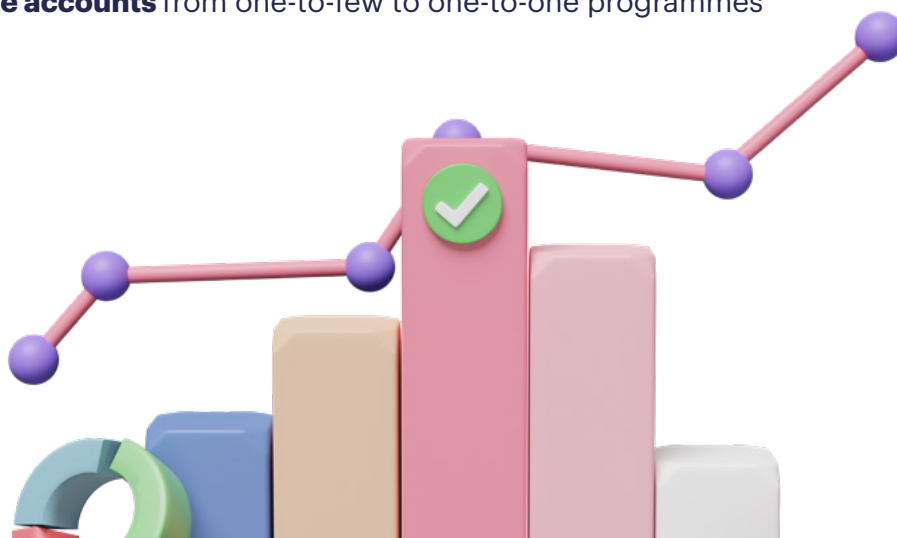
9

Select next phase of enrolments into one-to-few and one-to-one programmes

11

Elevate appropriate accounts from one-to-few to one-to-one programmes

- • • • •



Personalised content.

**Attention to detail.
ABM wins buyers' hearts.**

Account based marketing creates meaningful segments, then delights those segments with a personalised approach. With more buyers demanding content that is relevant to them and their business needs, **ABM marketing** is one of the most effective **demand generation** tactics today.

With years of experience supporting clients in the tech sector – including vendors, resellers and distributors – ResourceiT is the leading **account based marketing** agency to partner with. We'll help you create winning campaigns to grow your leads, increase deal size and shorten your sales cycle.

If you're looking for a trusted demand generation agency and B2B content marketing consultants with tech industry knowledge, have a chat with ResourceiT.

Thank you

We look forward to working with you

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resourceit.net**

