Realm

Designing for ABM at Scale

ABM in the age of disruption report

Introduction

ABM as a strategic, technology driven discipline has seen intense scrutiny and evolution during this age of disruption. A correctly implemented ABM approach combines sales and marketing efforts; engaging people in specific accounts and moving them to action. It's all about working together across the business for successful revenue growth. That has never been more needed by companies under today's pressure to either combat or ride the wave of change.

The last two years have driven radical transformation across all industries, including our beloved B2B Marketing. Alongside a world learning how to implement effective remote working practices and digital experiences, ABM programs are being driven forward too, with company expectations dialled up for success at scale.

We asked senior marketing leaders in 45 medium to large B2B companies - including 8 of the top 20 global B2B brands - how their ABM strategies are set-up to deal with these new expectations and aggressive sales targets.

In this report you will learn about ABM Alignment, Integration, Targeting, Personalization, Data Profiling and Measurement.

At Realm we are built to welcome change. We drive the competitive edge for our clients with their ABM and wider B2B campaign programs, listening, putting people first and building for what matters. Contact us to find out what we can do for you.

Izzie Rivers
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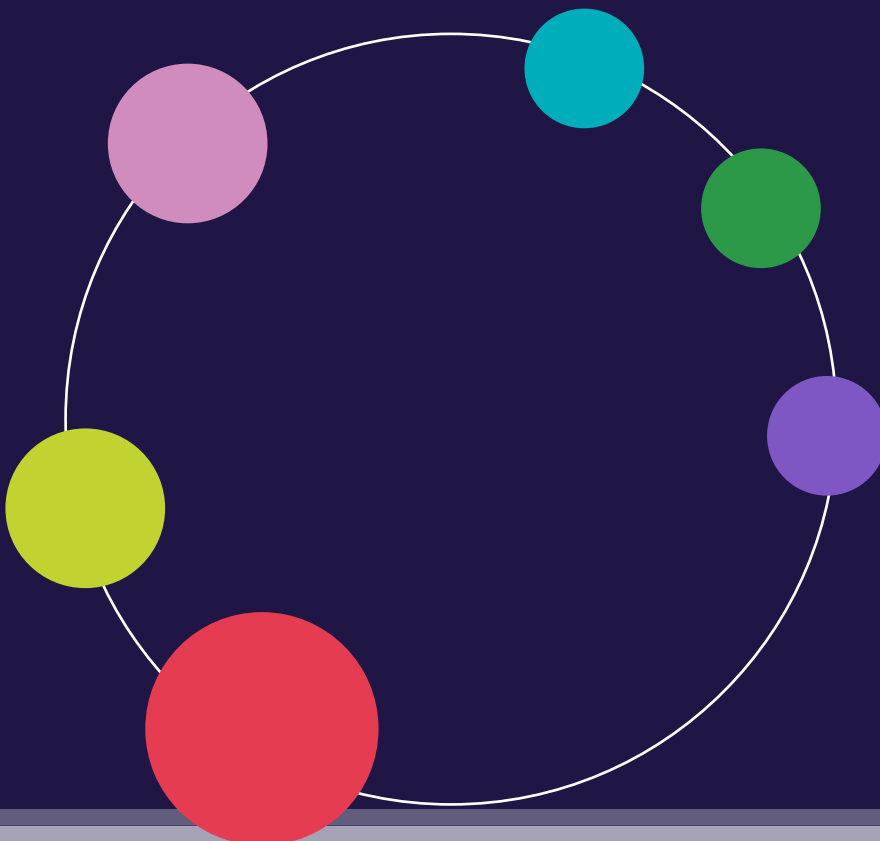
1

Alignment

Account Based Marketing has come a long way in the last ten years, and most B2B Marketers are now deploying ABM in one form or another. Many of these activities were first implemented by individual departments or teams, so there can be many different ABM approaches in the same company. CMOs are now assessing the strategies and technologies that they already have in place, making recommendations to streamline the work, technology and skillsets required to deliver ABM at scale.

Only 29% believe that their ABM efforts are aligned across Business Units.

An ABM marketing budget is often run in a silo, generally by a Brand or Demand Center team. This creates distance with both Field and Sales, fragmenting success metrics at different stages of the funnel. This can make it impossible to measure the real business impact.
The 1/3 of respondents who believe that they are aligned commonly leverage the 12Many, 12Few & 121 framework to link Engagement to Demand.

To what extent do you agree with the statement "Our ABM efforts are aligned across all business units, e.g. Field, Demand Centre and Brand".

14% believe that their ABM approach is globally consistent.

Global fragmentation is now common, as regional marketing and sales teams prioritize to their own target goals. This is further complicated by the existing debate when designing global Target Account Lists. Often markets will overlap the target accounts and set geographical limits for media activation. This means local markets can target companies who are not specifically headquartered in their country. If leads are generated for other regions they must be swiftly and correctly distributed by the BDR leads.

Different data privacy restrictions and database set-ups also dictate ABM implementation design, particularly with regards to EMEA and APAC.
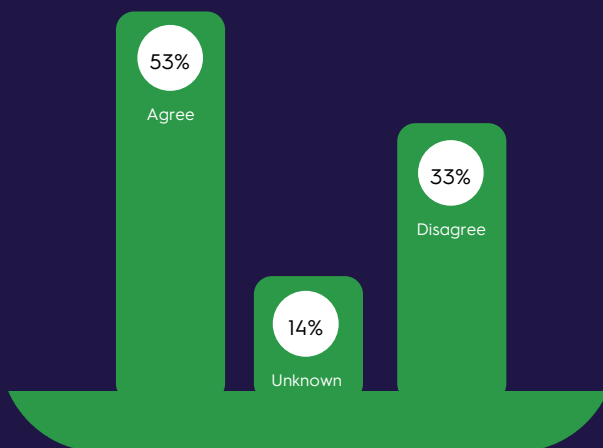
To what extent do you agree with the statement "Our ABM approach is globally consistent".

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2

Integration

ABM is a discipline that works best when all areas of the business are aligned and pulling towards a common goal. After all, true ABM empowers marketing teams to warm up decision makers in the target companies that matter the most to Sales. Prioritization and follow-up are absolutely key to success, and that only happens when Marketing and Sales are working together to streamline the process to closed won business.

53% agree that Sales work with Marketing to define TAL priorities:

30% agree that their ABM activation and CRM platform are integrated to accurately measure results:

53% Agree
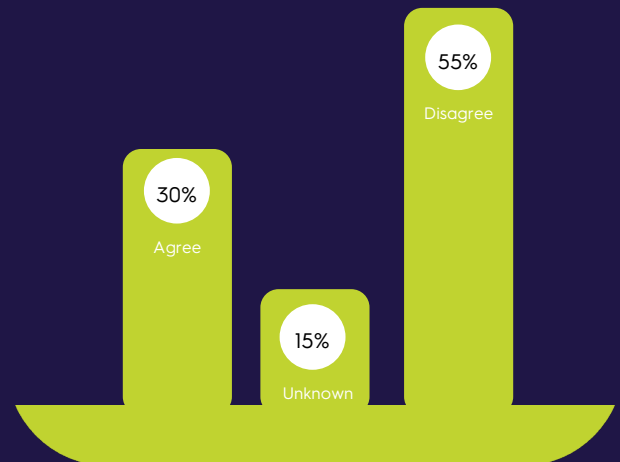
14% Unknown

33% Disagree

To what extent do you agree with the statement "Our Sales team work with us to define our TALs, which are aligned to priority accounts, key areas of growth and RFPs in play".

30% Agree

15% Unknown

55% Disagree

To what extent do you agree with the statement "ABM activation and our CRM platform are integrated to accurately measure pipeline"

Last year we saw this figure at 29%, so there has been a dramatic increase in the number of B2B Marketers building ABM bridges with Sales.

Getting buy-in or direction from your Sales team at the Target Account List stage provides the best opportunity to set out exactly what you're hoping to achieve, and where to aim for. Work with them to prioritize accounts showing "signs of life" by matching their metrics (like live RFPs, or engaged senior contacts) with marketing metrics like intent, MQLs and re-engagements.

Technological integration is running 23 percentage points behind Sales integration. This is often due to legacy CRM and MAP set-ups which require more comprehensive rebuilds to recognise and report on a desired ABM structure.

Strategic planning, activation, tracking, lead upload, marketing automation and CRM systems must be integrated under the same naming conventions. We recommend planning to "next best action" to ensure that your advertising dollars are moving accounts to the next stage of the funnel.

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3

Targeting

62% organize their ABM against the 121, 12Few and 12Many framework.

Do you strategically organize your ABM against the 1-to-1, 1-to-Few and 1-to-Many framework?

ABM programs being run by Marketing are gaining serious traction with Sales. Many brands are leveraging the above framework to better co-ordinate with their BDRs and Sales reps, as it allows prioritization to accounts that show more likelihood of conversion.

On average we see 5-10 accounts chosen for the 121 layer. A team of people will be responsible for calling, nurturing, running events/demonstrations and deploying highly targeted direct marketing tactics.

In 12Few there are usually 250-1,000 accounts identified as priorities. Often these are clustered around key verticals, company size or firmographic make-up. We also most commonly use Install Base targeting profiles in this layer, to look for customers who are more likely to adopt certain products or technologies.

12Many acts as an always-on activation layer to drive engagement to a full target account list of a minimum of 2,000+ companies, most commonly with intelligent intent measurement and whitespace refresh.

72% don't think that they have enough of the right content for Strategic ABM.

Targeting the right accounts and linking up the sales journey is a key piece of the puzzle -but it's nothing without the right content. We've seen vertical specific content increase conversion by over 200%, and the use of case studies and competitive examples drive dramatically lower cost per engagement overall.

Sales enablement, call scripts and email outreach must also be aligned with key topics of interest to increase sales velocity.
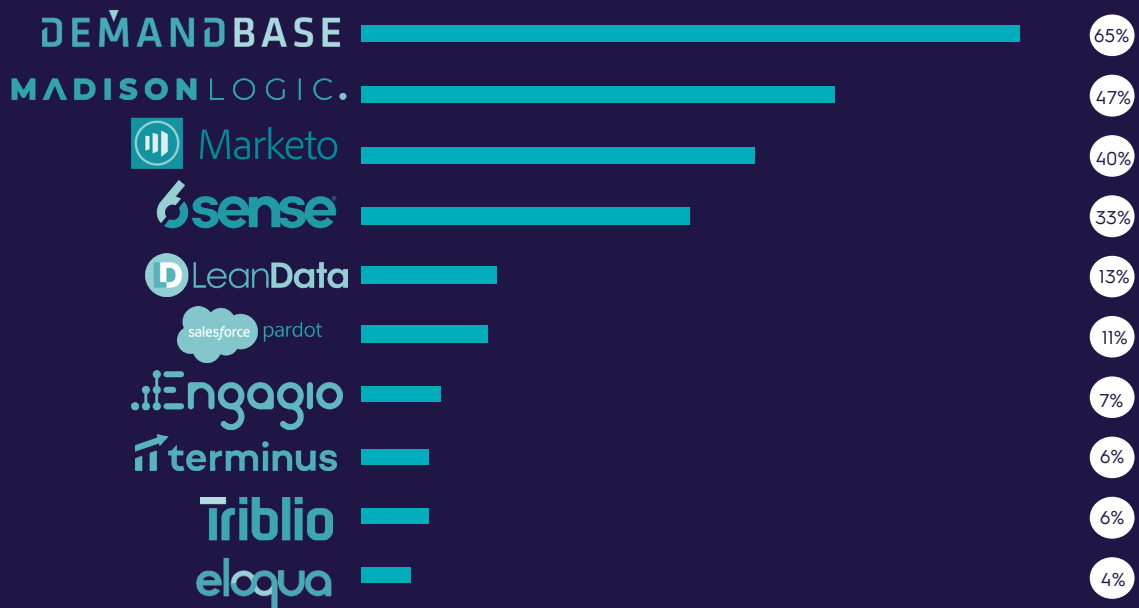

To what extent do you agree with the statement "We have enough of the right content to deliver strategic ABM programs".

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3

Targeting

B2B Marketers are leveraging multiple ABM partners (an average of 2.5 companies per respondent).

DEMANDBASE — 65%

MADISON LOGIC. — 47%

Marketo — 40%

6sense — 33%

LeanData — 13%

salesforce pardot — 11%

Engagio — 7%

terminus — 6%

Triblio — 6%

eloqua — 4%

"Which ABM technology vendors do you currently partner with? Please tick all that apply"

ABM can and should be activated via multiple platforms; including always-on Programmatic, Social and Search efforts. In addition to this, ABM specific companies have designed specific capabilities that can target companies across multiple tactics -prioritizing 1P and 3P intent and behaviors.

Due to a historic fragmented approach to ABM, there are often multiple partners onboarded within an organization – an average of 2.5 from our research. It's not uncommon for these to be used in silos, or not deployed consistently. If a Marketing department has also seen staff changes there may be confusion as to why a piece of technology was chosen in the first place, and unrealistic expectations to what it can achieve.
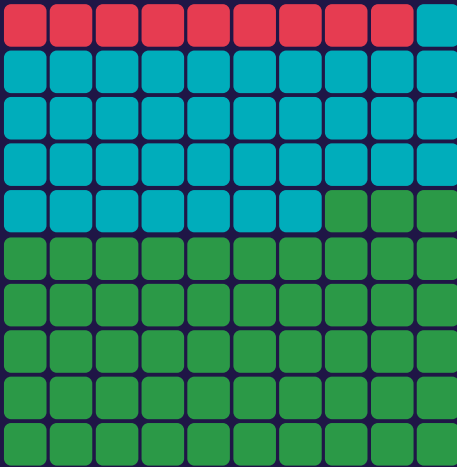
These companies can provide powerful targeting and engagement capabilities when they are leveraged as part of a holistic and considered marketing effort. This is especially true if they bring proprietary targeting or intent data to the table.

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4

Personalization

53% currently deliver personalised ABM journeys:

9% do not deploy any ABM personalization

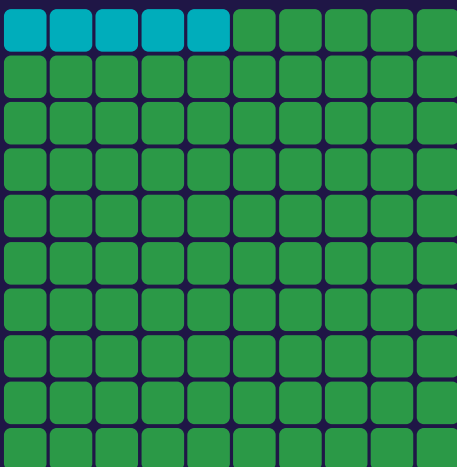**38%** are not sure if they deploy ABM personalization

53% currently deploy some ABM personalization

To what extent do you agree with the statement "We currently leverage our Tech Stack to deliver personalized journeys to key accounts or verticals within our ABM programs"

ABM personalization at scale is an area of rapid development. 53% of our respondents say that they are driving some personalization, compared to only 32% last year.

Targeting by priority verticals remains the most common personalization tactic deployed to date.

95% have the ambition to deliver further personalised journeys:

5% are not sure if they will deploy ABM personalization

95% have the ambition for further ABM personalization

To what extent do you agree with the statement "We have the ambition to leverage our Tech Stack to deliver personalized journeys to key accounts or verticals within our ABM programs".

95% of respondents have far greater ambitions for personalization.

The greatest focus of this is on aligning technologies to create a more considered customer experience across the decision making journey. This is especially true with lead upload, MAP and Salesforce integrations.

Content remains a barrier here too, as Brands look to leverage the ability to have more targeted conversations with opportunities. We see a 90%+ increase in conversions when brands "cut" existing content to be more specific to an identified journey.

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4

Personalization

B2B Marketers are prioritizing an average of 4 priority verticals.

The top ones are Tech, FinServ, Retail and Manufacturing.
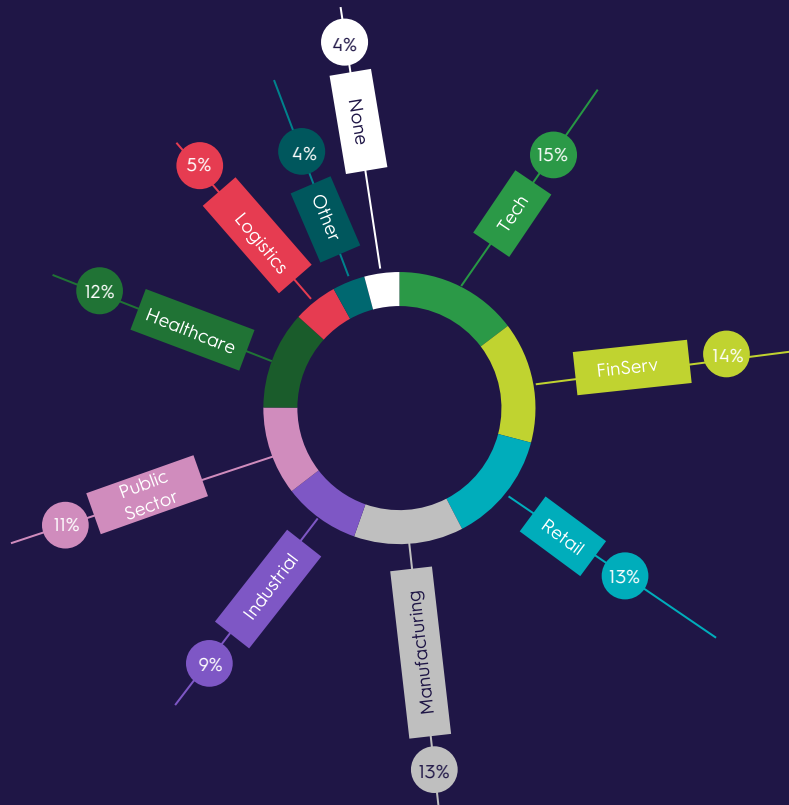
Which Industry verticals do you currently activate ABM against? (Please tick all that apply)

The top identified verticals often comprise a mix of the largest sectors in a given economy and those who are seeing the most transformation over the last year, with acceleration in cloud and remote customer and staff behaviors.

There are some differences on a regional basis of course; Public Sector is more of a priority in markets like Germany, and Healthcare becomes a priority in the United States.

Large Enterprise or Corporate sized accounts are top of the TAL wishlist, and this also directs the vertical choices. Competition is already rife with this approach, and getting to the accounts showing signs of relevant life in each of these categories is mandatory for account conversion.

4

Personalization

Most popular technology partners to deliver ABM personalization:

Partner	Percentage
None	25%
Adobe Target	40%
Optimize 360	25%
Marketo Engage	25%
DRIFT	20%
Path Factory	10%
salesforce marketing cloud	10%
Optimizely	5%
folloze	5%
SITECORE	4%
DEMANDBASE	4%
eloqua	4%
zoominfo	3%
Outreach	2%
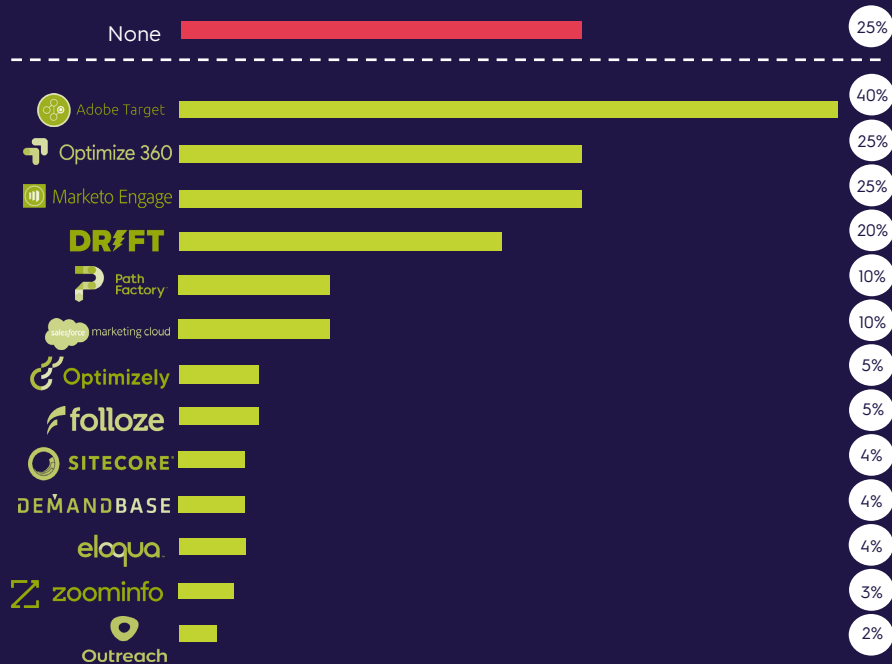
Please indicate which technology partners you currently use to deliver ABM personalization (tick all that apply):

Multiple personalization partners are leveraged, an average of 3 companies per Brand

One quarter of all respondents do not currently utilize a specific technology partner to deliver ABM personalization. The remaining 75% most commonly leverage a few different technologies. This suggests personalization is currently normalized on a campaign by campaign basis.

Landing pages can be crafted in different environments depending upon specific campaign needs, and lead management practices can vary widely too. Agility is certainly a benefit in the short term, ensuring that "hot" opportunities are given the most efficient journey to sale.

However B2B Marketers and (CMOs in particular) are quite rightly beginning to focus on the longer term view. Data management and re-engagement practices are vital for longer term relationships with decision makers. Brands that get this right will be perfectly positioned to win in the cookiless future.

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5

Data Profiling

72% of B2B Marketers either don't have an ABM technology provider profiling their 1P account data at all, or are not aware that they do.
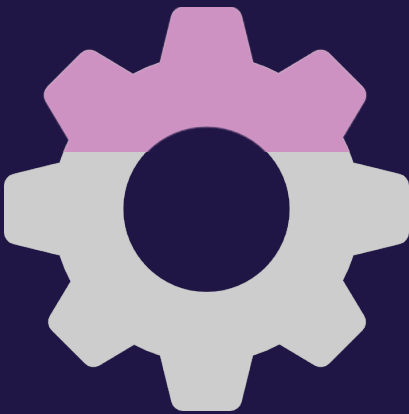
Nearly 3/4 of our Brands do not specifically profile their existing data through an ABM lens. To be specific, they are not analyzing known vs. unknown contacts within their target accounts, or how valuable those interactions are. This means that they are unable to rely on their MAP and CRM systems to flag accounts which may be closer to conversion. They remain dependent upon Sales to do this on a more manual basis.

Of those that do, only 4 technology companies have spontaneous recall.

There are of course many ABM brands who promote data analytics as a core service – however, in the purposes of this research only 4 brand names were recalled at all, and of those Salesforce was the most recognised, being a core part of the existing stack.

This suggests that most data projects are relatively new, and remain ongoing. This will be a core competitive differentiator over the next 12 month period, particularly with key region data protection laws limiting reliance on 3P data and external PII.

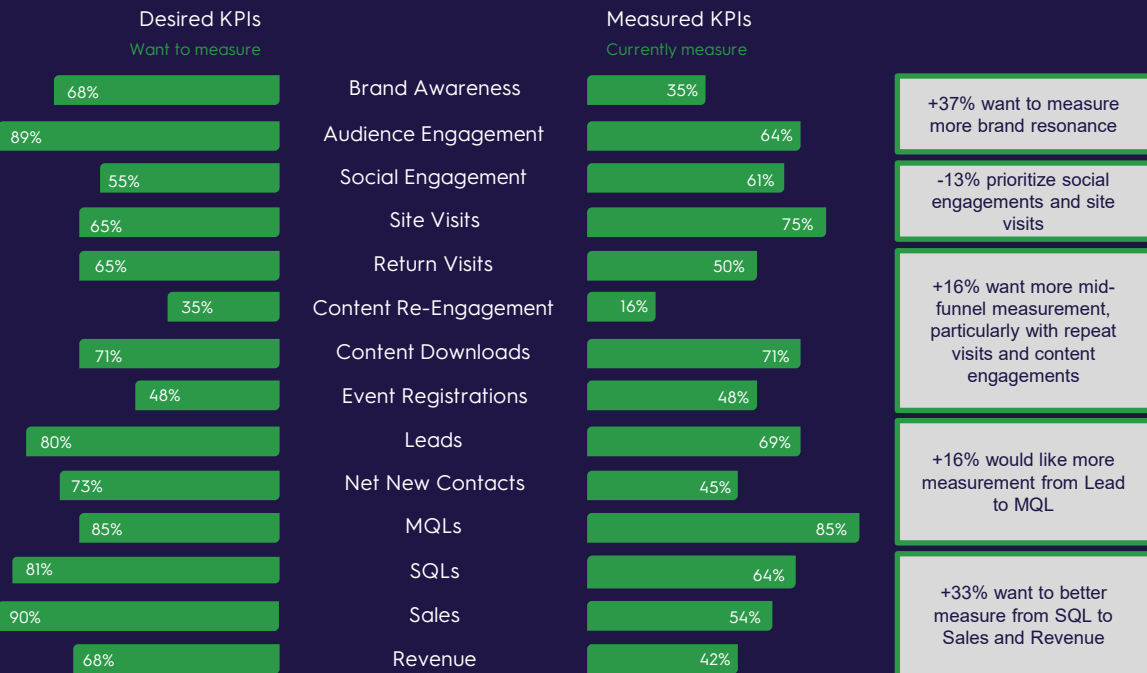|	
35%	salesforce
22%	6sense
21%	D&B
5%	HONCH
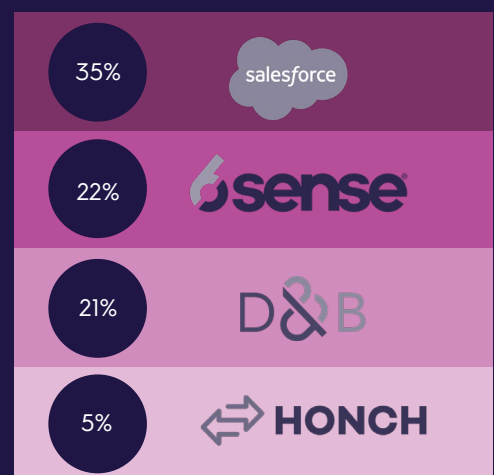
Do you currently work with a technology partner to analyze your existing database, in order to profile your 1st Party account data by stage of the buying cycle? If YES, which technology partner do you use?

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6

Measurement

There is a 20% gap between desired ABM KPIs, and those actually being measured. This increases to 33% at the bottom of the funnel.

Desired KPIs *Want to measure*		Measured KPIs *Currently measure*	
68%	Brand Awareness	35%	+37% want to measure more brand resonance
89%	Audience Engagement	64%	
55%	Social Engagement	61%	-13% prioritize social engagements and site visits
65%	Site Visits	75%	
65%	Return Visits	50%	+16% want more mid-funnel measurement, particularly with repeat visits and content engagements
35%	Content Re-Engagement	16%	
71%	Content Downloads	71%	
48%	Event Registrations	48%	
80%	Leads	69%	+16% would like more measurement from Lead to MQL
73%	Net New Contacts	45%	
85%	MQLs	85%	
81%	SQLs	64%	+33% want to better measure from SQL to Sales and Revenue
90%	Sales	54%	
68%	Revenue	42%	

Please indicate your desired KPIs (tick all that apply) AND Please indicate the KPIs which you currently actively measure (tick all that apply)

B2B Marketers are often challenged to align full-funnel KPIs against ABM at Scale. This highlights the strategic gap between the desirable metrics which they would like to measure, and those which they can currently measure.

Both the top and the bottom of the funnel are priorities for brands. In a hyper-competitive B2B world, strong brand visibility and resonance is essential to providing a fertile environment for engagement and sales. There is currently a 37% gap here, with Marketers keen to understand more about brand awareness and audience engagement with their content.

The bottom of the funnel is also facing increased scrutiny. SQLs through to Closed Won metrics are often black boxed, or siloed in legacy CRM set-ups. 33% of Marketers want better measurement through to conversion for ABM.

Interestingly, Marketers seem to be more comfortable in the mid-funnel range, with 16% wanting to see more performance visibility there. Indeed KPIs like social interactions and overall site visits are taking a back seat to more valuable content interaction metrics, with no respondents reporting a gap in measurement.

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6

Measurement

71% utilize one hero technology platform as the single source of truth for measurement.

salesforce
48%

Marketo
An Adobe Company
15%

Power BI
14%

salesforce pardot
13%

Adobe
6%

DOMO
4%
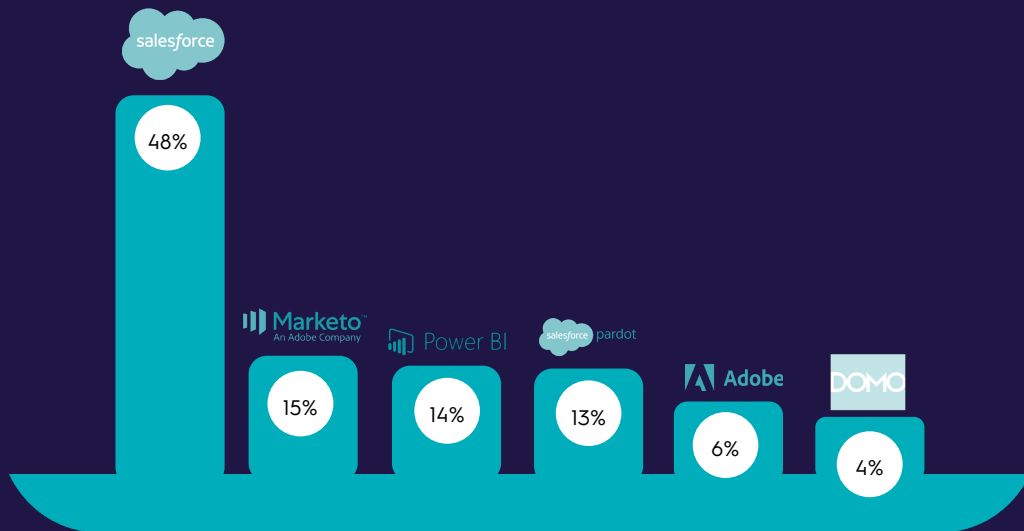
What platform do you leverage as your single source of truth for measurement?

Investment in measurement technologies and analytics skillsets drives increased performance transparency, which in turn empowers more granular KPI measurement.

Given the amount of platforms in play to deliver the customer experience (this includes everything from websites to social channels and demand programs) it has become vital for Brands to gain business clarity from multiple performance actions.

Successful Brands do this by nominating their single source of truth for performance, and aligning supplementary metrics alongside core goals as levers to affect business outcomes. This aids all stakeholders in the marketing process, driving all parties in the same direction and allowing for fast decisions to be implemented at scale.

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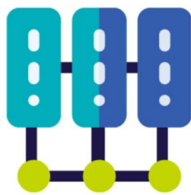# How we can help:

Strategy & Planning

ABM Architecture

1:Many

1:Few

1:1
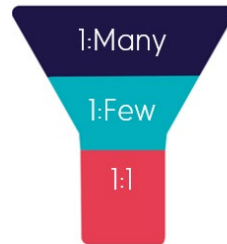
Media Activation

Audience Intelligence

Data & Technology

Demand Generation

We are purpose built for an age of change and agility. To learn more about how we build and transform ABM programs for our global clients please contact:

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izzie.rivers@realmb2b.com

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WELCOME CHANGE