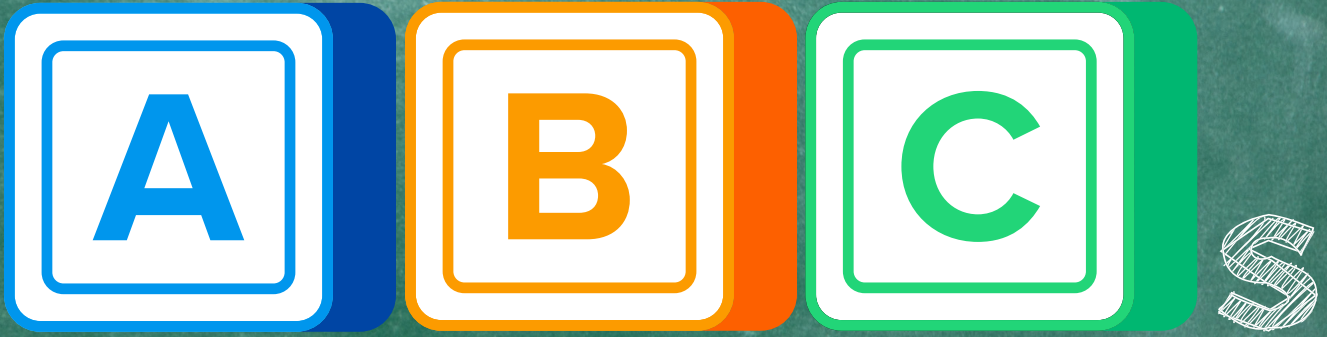


The



of ABM



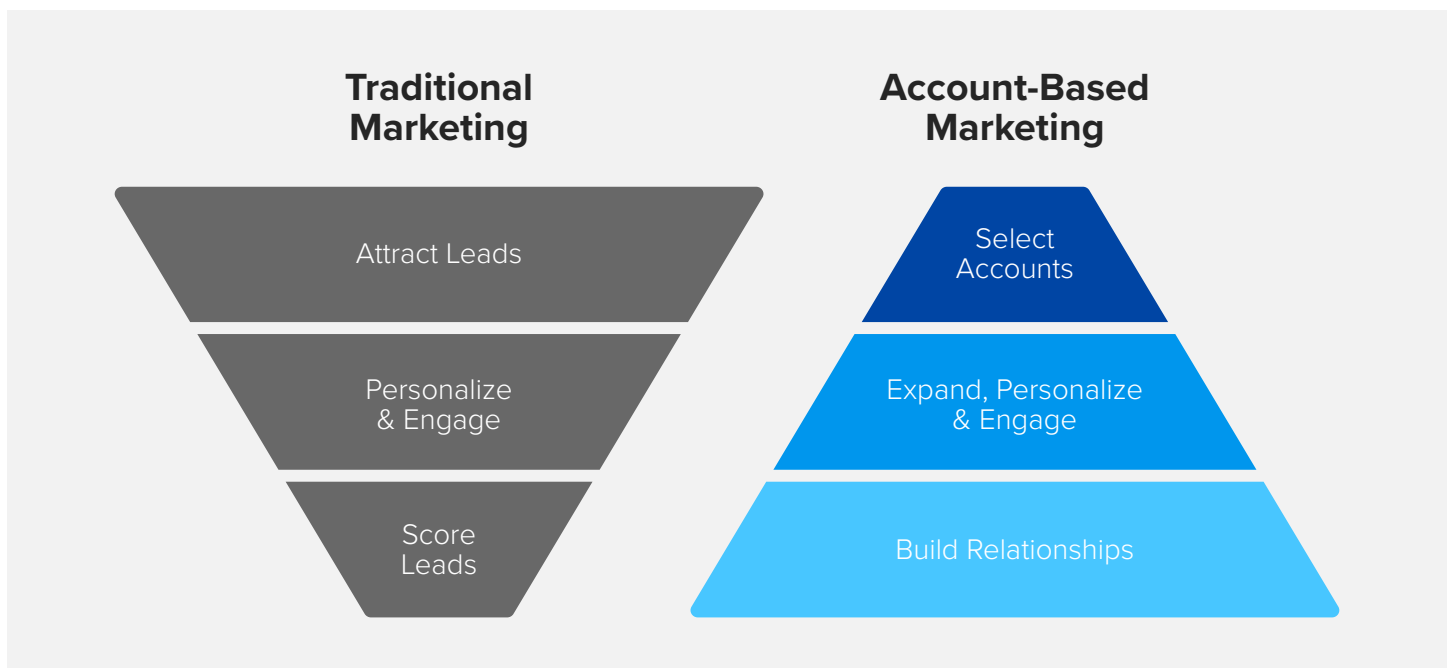
Welcome to ABM 101, your complete guide to account-based marketing! Whether you're just getting started or looking to enhance your existing strategy, this eBook will equip you with insights, tips, and examples to harness the full power of ABM. With a foundational knowledge, plus advanced techniques, you can transform the way your business connects with its most valuable accounts. It's as easy as ABC!



ACCOUNT-BASED MARKETING / əˈkəʊnt beɪst mɑːrkədiŋ / noun

In a world where a majority of marketing methods cast wide nets, hoping to catch potential customers, account-based marketing (ABM) takes a different approach. ABM is a strategy that builds **meaningful relationships with individuals who have been identified as high-value accounts** and prospects through tailor-made marketing initiatives. The goal of ABM is to create personalized experiences based on an individual's pain points, needs, and goals, enhancing engagement, brand perception, and long-term loyalty. By fostering genuine connections with your high-value accounts, ABM positions you as a trusted advisor, breaking through the noise of a saturated market.

ABM is not a one-off campaign but a long-term strategy that requires consistent communication. It allows your brand to maintain visibility, seize opportunities, and stay ahead in a competitive industry. Successful ABM also requires **seamless collaboration between marketing and sales teams**, creating a unified front and enabling tailored pitches that resonate with targeted accounts. Overall, an effective ABM campaign is meant to propel business growth more efficiently.



Numbers to Know



67%
of brands use ABM as part
of their marketing strategy.

Source: HubSpot

On average, companies
using ABM see an
84%
increase in pipeline growth.

Source: Forbes

When compared to
other marketing
strategies, ABM delivers

97%
higher ROI.

Source: MarTech Alliance

Companies that have fully implemented
ABM strategies credit

79% & 73%
of their new business
opportunities to ABM
of their total revenue
to ABM.

Source: HubSpot

ABM efforts warrant a

20%

higher average deal size
than traditional demand
generation programs.



Source: Gartner

Overall,
80%
of marketers say ABM
increases the customer
lifecycle value.

Source: Demand Gen Report

Chapter 1

APPROACH



ABM has emerged as a highly effective strategy for businesses aiming to target high-value accounts. But what exactly are “high-value accounts”? These are specific companies or organizations that have the potential to bring in significant revenue or strategic value to your business. Identifying these accounts, and the target individuals within those accounts, is a critical first step in any successful ABM strategy. In this chapter, we’ll explore the approach to identifying such accounts and how to maximize your marketing efforts when reaching them.

DETERMINE YOUR BUSINESS OBJECTIVES

The first step in this approach is to clarify your business objectives. **Are you looking to increase revenue, expand into new markets, or perhaps target specific industries?** By identifying the specific goals you want to achieve with an ABM campaign, you can better determine which accounts to target and how to reach them, aligning your strategy and focus on the right accounts.

PRO TIP

Align sales and marketing teams by fostering strong collaboration. Shared goals, open communication, and joint strategies between these two teams are crucial for ABM success.

DATA, DATA, DATA!

Data is your best friend when it comes to defining high-value accounts. Leveraging historical data from your customer relationship management (CRM) system and past marketing campaigns can provide valuable insights. **Look for patterns and trends among accounts** that have consistently generated high revenue, demonstrated long-term loyalty, or closely aligned with your ideal customer profile.

First-party data, obtained through your CRM system, offers insights into customer behavior, preferences, and needs. Additionally, third-party data, which includes external sources like demographics, industry trends, and competitor analysis, can provide a broader market context and help **identify opportunities** for targeting new high-value accounts. All data, however, is only useful if you know how to utilize it effectively.



KEY CRITERIA FOR HIGH-VALUE ACCOUNTS

The process of identifying these pivotal accounts involves more than just a cursory glance. It requires a deep understanding and analysis of various factors that will allow you to hone in on the accounts that provide significant **revenue opportunities, align well with your ideal customer characteristics, and show promising engagement levels**, thereby increasing your likelihood of conversion. Here are a few key factors you should evaluate when assessing potential accounts and targets for your ABM campaign:

Annual Contract Value (ACV):

Evaluate the potential annual contract value of each account. Identify accounts with a higher ACV that represent significant revenue opportunities for your business. Consider factors such as recurring revenue, upsell potential, and the overall lifetime value of the account.

Ideal Customer Profile (ICP):

Develop an ideal customer profile that outlines the characteristics of your most successful customers. Assess how well each potential account aligns with your ICP. Look for similarities in industry, company size, revenue, location, or any other relevant attributes that indicate a good fit.

Engagement and Interest:

Analyze the level of engagement and interest demonstrated by prospective accounts. Consider metrics such as website visits, content downloads, and interactions with your brand. Identify accounts that have shown a genuine interest in your products or services, indicating a higher likelihood of conversion.

By defining specific criteria and analyzing both historical and current data, you can pinpoint the accounts with the highest potential for success. In the next chapter, we will explore strategies for engaging and building relationships with these high-value accounts, ensuring a personalized and effective ABM approach.

PRO TIP

Develop an account scoring system to objectively measure the value and potential of each target. This scoring system will help prioritize accounts and allocate resources effectively.



NARROW YOUR INDIVIDUAL TARGETS

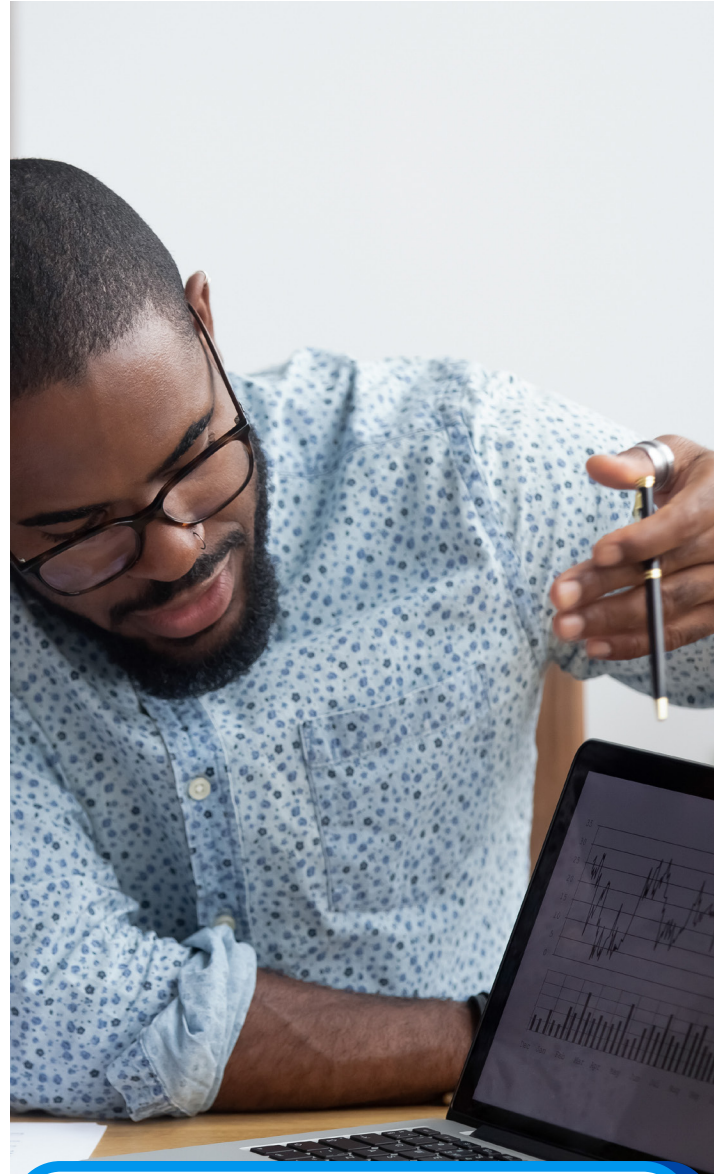
In order to determine your individual targets within each account, **group your high-value accounts based on common value criteria and attributes**, such as industry, revenue, location, or company size. This grouping process will depend on your specific business objectives and can help you tailor your marketing efforts more effectively.

After grouping, delve deeper into the specific attributes and behaviors that matter most to your business. Determine which attributes align with your offerings and which are going to be irrelevant when envisioning the ideal customer profile. This granular approach will help you narrow your focus and allocate resources efficiently.

Visitors to your website are a goldmine of potential leads. They already know about your product or service and might be on the brink of making a purchase decision. Prioritize engaging with these warm leads to convert them into loyal customers before your competitors swoop in.

Additionally, **track intent data to identify prospects who are actively considering a purchase**. Prioritizing accounts showing high intent allows you to capitalize on opportunities with a high likelihood of conversion. However, don't ignore low intent targets; by getting in front of them early on, you have the chance to build awareness and loyalty, preventing competitors from seizing the opportunity.

Once you've gathered and analyzed your data and determined your high-value accounts, it doesn't stop there. Within each targeted account, there is a network of decision-makers and influencers. Pinpointing these key individuals is essential to tailor your messaging and engage with the right people. A multi-dimensional approach to account targeting ensures that you're addressing the needs and concerns of all stakeholders involved in the purchasing decision.



PRO TIP

Don't forget about your current clients! Company data such as purchase history and survey responses can provide insights on how to strengthen the relationship and discover additional opportunities.



ABM in Action

What does an ABM approach look like in reality? Let's say your company, Events Pro, offers event coordination to hotels on a contract basis. You want to start allocating some of your marketing efforts towards ABM. To start, you look through your current client data and discover that you consistently generate the most revenue from small hotels located in large cities. You also notice that none of your clients generating low revenue advertise their event space on their website. Based on this pattern, you decide to target small hotels in large cities that clearly advertise their event space on their website.

HIGH-VALUE CHECKLIST



Aligns closely with your ideal client profile (ICP)



Consistently generates high revenue



Has shown long-term loyalty



Account has High Annual Contract Value (ACV)



Account has upsell potential



Demonstrates interest and engagement

NOTE: Accounts don't need to meet every criteria to be considered high-value, but they should meet a majority of them.



ABM in Action

After conducting thorough ABM research for Events Pro, the hotel SleepInn is revealed as a potential client. SleepInn meets every criterion, but intent data tells you they do not intend to purchase your event coordination services right now. In fact, they're already using services from your competitor. However, SleepInn has a parking problem since their overflow parking lot was recently reconstructed into a city park. You know that your competitor has a poor track record when working with small hotels, so you anticipate that this new parking issue will soon start to highlight your competitor's weaknesses. To capitalize on this opportunity, you put SleepInn on your list to target.

Chapter 2

BUYER-FOCUSED CONTENT



The essence of a successful ABM campaign lies in its ability to deliver personalized, buyer-focused content. This approach moves away from the standard one-size-fits-all marketing strategies and instead focuses on building relationships with clients by addressing their specific challenges and pain points. In this chapter, we delve into the strategic process of creating such content, starting with the art of crafting tailored messages.

DIG DEEP

To create personalized content, research each target account's background, challenges, and current situation. Ask pivotal questions like, **"What are their biggest pain points as a company and where can we offer assistance?"** The sweet spot is when the answer to both of these questions overlap – and that's where you should focus your content.

For existing clients, analyze company data to identify areas where they might be struggling and what tools you can offer. For non-clients, **leverage intent data to track their interactions** with your website and social media. This gives you the ability to create content that addresses things like layoffs, promotions, leadership, lead generation struggles, marketing success (or lack thereof), ROI, ad campaign troubleshooting, and more. Having this data reveals their interests and preferences, providing valuable insight into what they might be interested in learning more about or what they need help with.

The research you conduct will help fuel the types of content needed to reach your targets on a personalized level, **creating a unique customer experience**. Therefore, the more information you gather, the better. As a result, when it comes time to make a purchasing decision, all stakeholders will be convinced of the value of your product/service.





TAILOR CONTENT

Personalized content isn't just a nicety; it's an imperative that can significantly influence the success of your campaign. Remember, purchasing decisions are usually made by a team, so crafting content that resonates requires a nuanced understanding of each person's position both in the company and in the purchasing process. In addition, your target profiles are on diverse journeys, each at a distinct stage of the buying process.

For accounts showing high intent to purchase, focus on solution-driven content with clear Calls-to-Action (CTAs) that guide them to your website, backed by compelling case studies, success stories, and ROI data. **Engaging in timely and relevant conversations** with these high-intent targets increases the likelihood of conversion.

On the flip side, accounts displaying little intent or constrained budgets are likely seeking thought leadership resources. **Educate them about the challenges they face** and how they can overcome them without an immediate investment in your products or services. By tailoring your content to meet your target accounts precisely where they are in their buying journey, you not only capture their attention but also provide the guidance and solutions they need, fostering a more meaningful connection.



ABM in Action

Remember, if you're sending out the same generalized messaging used in your day-to-day marketing, you're losing ABM's intended impact. Adapt your content to meet high-value accounts where they are. For example, one of your other target hotels for Events Pro is called HomeAway. It's a franchise, but recent road construction is making it difficult to get to one location's main entrance. You could emphasize the importance of advertising the space so potential customers know they're there while simultaneously highlighting how Events Pro can help with marketing efforts. You could also promote the importance of having clear directions on the website, plus inform them that Events Pro covers important details like giving guests directions and hiring extra reception during events. Another topic to target them with is the importance of a consistent quality experience across locations while mentioning how Events Pro trains contract personnel for a uniform, high-quality experience in every city.



FIND BALANCE

Striking a balance between addressing pain points and showcasing products or services is a delicate art. While it's essential to speak to your targets' needs, it doesn't mean you should ignore your products or services entirely. Your content should **seamlessly weave together the narrative** of empathy for their challenge and how your product/service provides a solution.

MEASURE AND ADAPT

ABM is a continuous process, so it's important to consistently measure the effectiveness of your personalized content and adapt based on the data and feedback received. **Track engagement metrics, conversion rates, and content impact on the buyer's journey.** Conduct regular research into your high-value accounts' industries to ensure you're knowledgeable of current events and potential opportunities. Incorporate these learnings into future content strategies to ensure messages remain relevant and compelling for your targeted individuals.

In short, buyer-focused content is the backbone of a successful ABM strategy, **but if you're sending generalized messaging, you'll lose the impact of ABM.** By crafting personalized, tailored messages that address specific pain points and leveraging intent data to gauge interest, you make meaningful connections with your target accounts that will ultimately lead to more impactful results for both you and your clients.

PRO TIP

Leverage technology and automation. Invest in ABM tools and platforms to streamline processes, automate repetitive tasks, and gain insights into account behavior. Automation can enhance efficiency and allow for more personalized interactions at scale.

Chapter 3

CHANNELS



Now that you know what topics to cover, you'll need to decide how to best connect with your target accounts. Leverage data to see what content they engage with the most and where they are most active. Choosing the right channels is critical for campaign success.



Email is the most traditional channel for ABM. It's one of the most direct forms of communication available to marketers, and it's very easy to personalize the content. The only problem is that most decision-makers are bombarded with emails on a daily basis. So, it can be hard to stand out as something worth reading. However, don't pass up incorporating email into your strategy because of this. Instead, make sure your ABM strategy uses other channels to supplement an email campaign.



Display advertising can reach prospects on mobile, tablets and computers with static, video, or interactive options. You can target devices within a set geographic area with location targeting and geofencing. That means you can show display ads at a company headquarters, or a trade show, or even a specific room in a conference center. This can be very helpful in your ABM strategy when you're looking to reach multiple employees from a specific business.



Social media is often thought of as a B2C channel. But the decision-makers you're trying to reach are most likely on social media (especially LinkedIn). And the great thing for ABM is that they have provided a lot of data to these social media platforms. This means you can be very specific about who you want to see your paid ads. You can also use social media to nurture a direct relationship with your prospects. Share and comment on their content (but don't overdo it).



Search Engine Marketing (SEM) or Pay-Per-Click campaigns are great for ABM's hypertargeting. Google has features like "Customer Match" that let you go beyond simple keyword searches. Make sure you have two per page to catch their attention.

From there, retargeting website bouncers is just as important in your ABM strategy as it is with your inbound efforts. Not many website visitors will convert the first time, even if they show a high intent to purchase. Retarget the bounces so they have a higher chance of returning to the site and converting. Or finding information they may have missed the first time.



ABM in Action

Imagine Mary is a decision-maker at the hotel chain HomeAway, which you've determined to be a high-value account for your company, EventsPro. Mary spends a majority of her day on social media, as well as surfing the Web, reading content relevant to both her personal life and her profession. She spends about 1% of her time conducting searches — a mere fraction of the time that she spends actually reading content. This is typical of most people who conduct quick searches and click results driving them to another site. The takeaway for marketers is that social media marketing is the best avenue for reaching Mary with targeted advertising, especially the platforms she engages with the most. However, while this should be your main area of focus, remember to create various touchpoints across all her digital interactions.



6%
Online Shopping

Run a display ad campaign with strategic headlines & CTAs to keep her event planning goals top-of-mind even while she's doing her personal shopping.

1% 
Search

Run a paid search campaign for keywords like, "event planner," "event management," etc.



19%
Surf Video

Run a video ad campaign detailing the services EventsPro offers.

28% 
Surf Social Media

Here, you can utilize organic posts, boosted and promoted posts, ads, and influencer marketing. Since this is where Mary spends a majority of her time you'll want to employ most or all of these tactics.

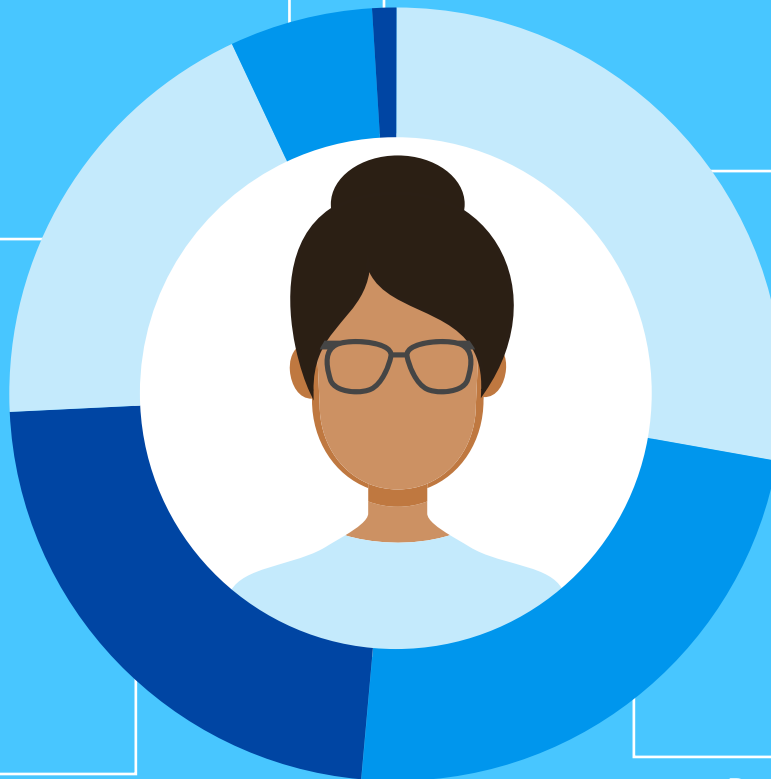


23%
Surf Content

If you're running display ads, they should also appear while Mary scrolls through content for both work-related and personal topics.

24% 
Email

Deploy marketing emails with strategic subject lines and exclusive offers.





PRO TIP

Utilize multi-channel campaigns by engaging your target accounts through various channels simultaneously. A multi-channel approach increases the chances of reaching and resonating with key targets.

TIMING

Keep in mind that timing is a critical aspect of a successful ABM campaign. Tracking the social media activities of your target accounts can reveal when they are most active. This will help you **time your posts and engagement accordingly**. For international or geographically dispersed target accounts, time zone tracking ensures that your communications reach them at the most convenient times. This will increase the likelihood of a positive response. When it comes to email, sending messages during workday hours, considering the recipient's time zone, can significantly impact open and response rates.

MEASURING SUCCESS

Beware of the microwave mentality when it comes to ABM campaigns. This approach is an investment that requires time, patience, and continual optimization, but the results are well worth it. According to [ABM Leadership Alliance](#), marketers just starting to experiment with ABM, reported revenue growth of 17%, but for those who had more developed ABM strategies, they recorded 43% revenue growth. So, don't be discouraged if you don't notice an immediate impact. Give it time and keep being persistent and consistent with your efforts.



ABM in Action

Returning to our example with Events Pro and the high-value account HomeAway, let's say the decision-makers and stakeholders include the current part-time event coordinator, the hotel manager, and the company owner. So, you use geofencing to target the hotel's corporate office with display ads in order to reach the event coordinator and hotel manager. On LinkedIn, you begin to interact with the company owner. At the same time, you run an SEM campaign with Customer Match for several terms, including "Events Pro" and "event coordination companies." You then follow up with personalized emails to each individual to encourage them to move into the consideration stage following your brand awareness tactics.



CONCLUSION

Account-based marketing doesn't have to be complicated. By breaking it down to its basic components (A-B-C), you have a simple framework to start targeting key accounts and building deeper relationships with ideal customers. Embracing ABM as part of your marketing strategy will not only maximize return on investment but position your business for long-term success.