# Account-Based Marketing Isn’t Going Away. Here’s Why.

An ever-changing world requires an agile marketing strategy-one that continues to prove successful, pandemic or not. Here’s why account-based marketing reigns supreme now and well into the future.

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In 2019, George Debb, managing partner at Red Rocket Venture,s extolled the virtues of account-based marketing, writing, “If you are not using ABM marketing techniques today, you probably should reassess your entire B2B sales and marketing strategy and execution efforts.”

Twelve months and one global health crisis later, the statement continues to ring true — and with even more intensity. When Debb wrote the article, “The Rise of Account-Based Marketing,” he couldn’t foresee a future in which in-person meetings, quick conversations over coffee, and industry tradeshows were nonexistent. This future didn’t rely on Zoom calls to communicate services and discuss the reasons a certain product outperforms another. Yet here we are. Adaptation is a must for survival, and account-based marketing is the path B2B companies must take if they want to find success in a virtual world.

## But why the ABM route versus

## traditional marketing strategies?

For starters, ABM brings marketing and sales teams in alignment.

If there’s one idea even the most unfamiliar with ABM will know, it’s this: An account-focused strategy ensures sales and marketing are always on the same page, as it’s a tactic prioritizing a smaller number of high-value deals. ABM runs horizontally and vertically within a company; it involves communicating the company’s common goals, sharing all available customer information, and keeping team members updated as an account move down the sales funnel. A coordinated team results in greater brand awareness and higher average deal size. Even before March 2020, this was understood as a universal marketing truth.

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To take it to a more granular level, many account-based marketing platforms provide reporting dashboards that are easily accessible for everyone from sales executives to the C-suite. When all of your account data is in one place, there isn’t any confusion in campaign performance or marketing spend. As Izzie Rivers, Merkle’s Chief Strategy Officer said at LinkedIn’s 2020 I Heart ABM conference, ABM platforms “build that trust between departments so people can see what’s working, what isn’t, and how to pivot.”

## Resources are limited, use them wisely

The economy continues to swing; stocks fall, rise, then fall again. “Furlough” and “lay off” became a reality for more than 20 million Americans. And marketing budgets have been slashed across the board. But that doesn’t mean business can stop; it simply means money has to be used sensibly to achieve the best

ROI possible.

Account-based marketing is all about efficiency; in fact, 84 percent of companies using ABM report a higher ROI than other marketing strategies. This is something every CFO—from SaaS to transportation to retail—wants to hear. With ABM, every dollar spent can be accounted for. Every targeted account has been vetted to certify it has the potential to bring in a high-value sale. The marketing and sales teams have already done the research on the buying committee for a particular company; they know who's in charge and who will have final signoff on the purchase of a new service or product. They won't make the mistake of spending money directing content toward a CMO who just recently left that company and hasn't updated his or her LinkedIn. And with the right reporting structure, real-time data is delivered to stakeholders, conveying which aspects of the campaign are working and which need to be adjusted based on performance. Account-based marketing campaigns are dynamic—an important trait in a world that changes nearly every day.

## Business is virtual, but strong relationships fuel a longer sales cycle

A virtual world doesn't mean everyone and everything will move quickly and without hindrance. In actuality, it can be quite the opposite. A one-off email requesting to show a 15-minute demo can easily get lost in an inbox; a faceless phone call on a Friday is forgotten by the following Monday. For businesses with longer sales cycles, this is where nurturing high-value accounts is more important than ever.

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Account-based marketing is basically the new “wining and dining.” With this marketing strategy, personalized content is the key to engaging an oftentimes complex buying committee. These are the type of deals that aren’t achieved with one email and one click. They require weeks, sometimes months, of increasing awareness and building a trusted connection between the seller and buyer.

And as an account moves from the general awareness stage (“What does this service provide?”) of the buying cycle to the evaluation stage (“Why is this service the best for my company?”) the channels used and content delivered will differ accordingly. For example, delivering a white paper on the merits of your service in the operations space via email marketing is far more interesting to a Director of Ops than it is for a CEO, who is more likely to engage with a podcast interviewing one of her peers.

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Nothing is stagnant in the B2B marketing world. New platforms are developed, new strategies are created, new channels are used. But if you want to stay flexible and affect real change for both your customers as well as your sales and marketing teams, account-based marketing remains the best option.

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