The Rise of Account-Based Marketing



How you can save time and money compared to traditional outbound sales efforts.

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I've witnessed many evolutions in marketing best practices, from the rise of digital- and social media-marketing to automation technologies replacing human tasks. And now there's a new trend that is starting to take off called Account Based Marketing (ABM), and it has the potential to change everything for B2B professionals.

Most B2B marketing campaigns have traditionally been designed to support the B2B sales team, which includes building all internal collateral materials and performing both inbound

“pull” marketing and outbound “push” marketing efforts. The goal has always been to make everyone and anyone that could be interested in your product or service aware of your company. The problem is not all companies in an industry are created equal. You may need to better focus on companies of a certain revenue size that can afford your product or service, or others within a certain geographic region. Otherwise, there may be a lot of wasted effort and spending.

Related: Account Based Marketing Wins the Popular Vote

What Makes ABM Different?

ABM turns the old model upside down. It basically says: You tell me the top specific company accounts you want to target, and we will put a marketing campaign in place that speaks specifically to them, with no wasted marketing outlay and better automated efficiency than a human sales team. This works particularly well for B2B companies with less complex products at lower price points that don’t require in-person selling.

A good ABM campaign does come with a few requirements. First, you need to have a good list of targets to go after. Use a service like Experian, Acxiom, Hoovers, D&B or ZoomInfo to help you find the right specific titles/contacts of individuals who can help maximize success for your business by leveraging their revenue size or geographic location. The key here is targeting specific people, not specific companies.

Once that list is built, now comes the fun part. You can upload those email addresses into your Google advertising account, and if you are a whitelisted emailer, Google will target advertising to as many of those people as they can match in their system, regardless of what websites they may be visiting online (assuming it is part of the Google ad network). You’ll then set up email campaigns and automated nurturing to those exact people, using six-to-seven content

pieces, in addition to utilizing LinkedIn advertising through InMail and promoting via Facebook. etc. Your target contacts won’t be able to miss your messaging, because they will see it all over the internet at multiple times, presumably resulting in increased odds they’ll want to work with you.

Where possible,you should customize your message to that specific user. For example, if you’re selling through multiple channels, ready unique content for each one (e.g., client direct, their agency, different departments, different use cases). You can prepare ABM efforts yourself or work with ABM-focused agencies or technology platforms. Just be sure to do your homework and vet any company before employing their services.

Related: Account-Based Marketing and Inside Sales Are a Match Made in Heaven

The Case Study of Restaurant Furniture Plus

Back in 2018, our company acquired Restaurant Furniture Plus, a seller of furniture to restaurants. The business was 100 percent dependent on Google for leads, meaning they never knew whether the click was going to be a consumer, a single location restaurant, a small chain, a large chain, etc. By employing an ABM strategy, we’ve been better able to target the desired small growing chains we want, no longer wasting money. In the process, average order size has increased, shedding small orders from single locations. The newly refined Restaurant Furniture Plus became more efficient, needing fewer transactions to drive the same revenues. You tell me which marketing route is better for business.

Concluding Thoughts

If you are not using ABM marketing techniques today, you probably should reassess your entire B2B sales and marketing strategy and execution efforts. My guess is, you may be wasting a lot of time and money . It will be very interesting to see how ABM techniques and demand evolve over the coming years, but there is no time like the present to be an early adopter.

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