Measuring what matters

Using measurement to optimize ABM impact

A guide to best practice measurement in ABM that will allow you to *demonstrate value, improve performance, and ensure ABM results.* ABM works, here's how to prove it with measurement.

Agent 3

Foreword

This paper from Agent3 tackles a real dilemma for ABM program leaders everywhere. We all know that ABM works, as anyone who has led a pilot and seen the subsequent leap in demand for ABM across their business will testify. Yet, measuring and communicating the value of ABM investments to the business remains a top challenge. Part of the problem lies in the fact that so few marketers measure return on investment anyway (just 55% according to our latest ABM benchmarking study with the ABM Leadership Alliance in 2019).

Measuring marketing impact has been a perennial problem, beyond ABM. But with ABM, you need a different mindset. It is not a strategy that lends itself to the volume metrics associated with demand generation campaigns – no more MQLs and SQLs please. It's much more refined than that. And, with sales and marketing working in partnership, attribution of value to a single ad, email, meeting or event is a nonsense.

At ITSMA, we look at the impact ABM delivers in three categories of business outcome. First, the increase in number and depth of relationships with buyers and influencers across your priority accounts. Second, the stronger reputation created within those accounts. Third, the increase in long-term, sustainable revenue it helps to generate with those accounts. It's a proven approach that we've tested over many years with our members, and one that we've shared with Agent3 to develop a measurement framework that will help ABM leaders overcome their perennial challenge.

With ABM more important than ever as companies focus in on supporting their most important customers through the pandemic and into the next normal, this paper is both timely and valuable for ABM practitioners everywhere.

Bev Burgess
Senior Vice President and ABM Practice Leader, ITSMA

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Shining a light on ABM measurement.

As part of our commitment to promoting and advancing ABM best practice, we're delighted to present our guide to measurement. Built on evidence-based research from some of our partners, including ITSMA, we present insightful analysis and practical frameworks you can implement in your organization to take any ABM program to the next level.

Measuring and communicating the impact and value of ABM investments is a top challenge for practitioners. ITSMA and other benchmark research repeatedly demonstrate that ABM brings greater ROI than other types of B2B marketing, but the difficult reality is that a great many ABM-ers don't measure return on ABM investments (ROI). According to the ITSMA & ABM Leadership Alliance 2019 ABM Benchmark Study, *Moving to ABM Maturity*, only 55% of programs measured ABM ROI.

This is recognition that ABM measurement is a challenge to get right.

Measurement is hard in normal times. With far more sales and marketing activities happening digitally, especially since the start of the global pandemic, the ABM measurement landscape has become even more chaotic. The need for trustworthy metrics and a reliable framework to fine-tune performance and demonstrate impact has never been greater.

As a longtime leader in ABM strategy, development, management, and measurement, we're shining a light on best practice approaches for ABM measurement. As well as pulling on our own experiences, we've pooled the views and experiences of many of the world's leading ABM thinkers and practitioners, and this paper provides a detailed review of **what to measure, how to build an effective measurement approach, and how best to communicate ABM impact across the organization**.

We present an ABM measurement framework that follows ITSMA's core principles of the "three R's": Reputation, Relationship, and Revenue.

This framework will enable you to:

- Shift from measuring activities and outputs to business outcome-based metrics such as brand preference, executive engagement, and pipeline contribution
- Demonstrate value to the rest of the business
- Accelerate performance improvements
- Scale ABM faster
- Track progress toward achieving strategic business objectives
- Demonstrate your own value as an ABM-er!

The report also outlines the best approaches to implement an ABM measurement framework and communicate your ABM strategy and results from the C-suite down.

The fact is, ABM works. Here's how you can prove it with your own program and team.

Key takeaways from this report

After reading this report you will:

- Understand what makes an appropriate framework for measuring ABM and how to build alignment on your measurement model
- Understand where to invest to make ABM measurement successful
- Discover the KPIs necessary to effectively measure your ABM program
- Discover practical solutions to implementing the "three R's" approach to measurement
- Learn how to develop an ABM measurement dashboard based on the measurement framework
- Learn from leading ABM practitioners how they have succeeded with measurement that aligns with their organization's business strategy

1.0 The measurement challenge

1.1 What is the challenge?

Measuring ABM results has long been a top challenge facing ABM-ers. The ITSMA & ABM Leadership Alliance 2018 ABM Benchmark Study, *Raising the Game with ABM*, revealed measurement as the toughest challenge; the 2019 study had it tied for first place with personalization.

What are the top challenges your organization face in your ABM program(s)?

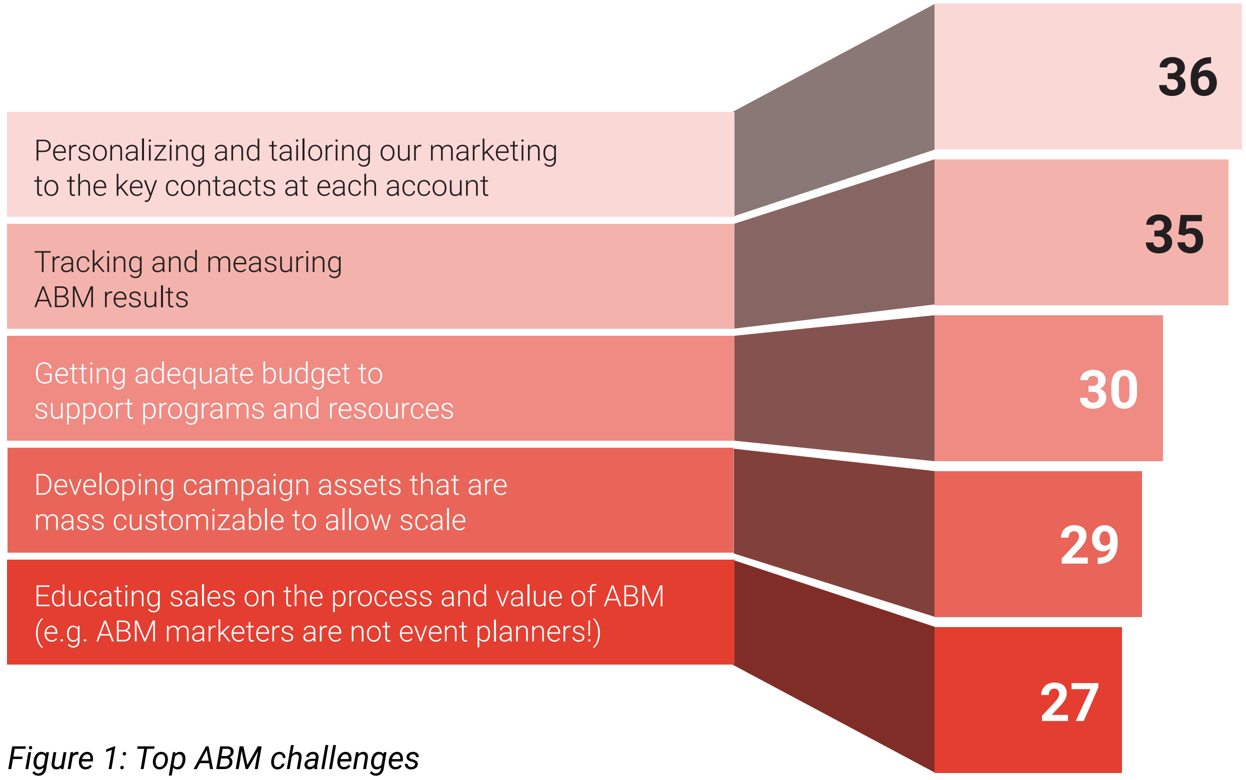

Figure 1: Top ABM challenges

Our significant challenges include:

- Hiring ABM marketers with the right experience, skills, and talent
- Standardizing the approach to ABM across the company (e.g. divisions, BUs, geos)
- Agreeing on the selection of accounts for the program
- Managing an increasingly complex ABM ecosystem (e.g. multiple partners, agencies)
- Justifying the program costs / proving ROI
- Selecting and integrating the martech tools that will best support our ABM programs
- Differentiating ourselves from the competition at the account level
- Keeping up with the demand from the sales team requesting ABM for their accounts
- Getting buy-in from sales account teams
- Retaining ABM marketers in the ABM program

In part, this reflects the broader challenge of measuring any B2B marketing impact. Indeed, another recent ITSMA study found that only 3% of all B2B marketers are able to directly tie all, or nearly all, of their marketing activity to business results.

(Source: ITSMA Measuring What Matters to Improve Marketing Performance, June 2019)

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1.2 Why is measuring ABM so difficult?

There is no simple answer to this. Typically, we see the following challenges within most organizations:

- Aligning ABM metrics and objectives
- Knowing exactly what to measure to demonstrate impact at the right level of ABM maturity
- Interpreting the right data sources at the right time
- Having the right technology, people, processes, and skills for ABM measurement
- ABM being seen as an isolated tactic instead of a strategic growth strategy
- ABM program not given time to mature to deliver business impact
- ABM-ers often try to solve all measurement problems in one go instead of aligning to a roadmap
- Developing the right metrics as part of a developmental journey
- Impatience—sales and marketing teams must be in for the long term. Revenue growth through ABM takes time; therefore, senior leadership expectations must be aligned with reality

As we see it, these challenges fall into three main categories:

Organizational Alignment	Agreeing on what to measure
Data and Analytics	Collecting and analyzing the right data to improve performance and demonstrate impact
Systems and Tools	Building and evolving the right systems to enable continuous improvement and effective communication

Figure 2: ABM measurement is vital but hard (Source: Agent3)

As Figure 2 shows, ABM measurement is vital, but hard. Workflows, teams, and processes need to be identified and aligned.

In short, sales and marketing must be able to link marketing performance metrics to business impact. Reporting must show business impact in terms of customer lifetime value or the contribution to pipeline, or contract value. To do this, more robust measurement is required to demonstrate impact.

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Bev Burgess, author of *A Practitioner's Guide to Account-Based Marketing* and senior vice president and ABM practice lead at ITSMA, emphasizes the first challenge of organizational alignment:

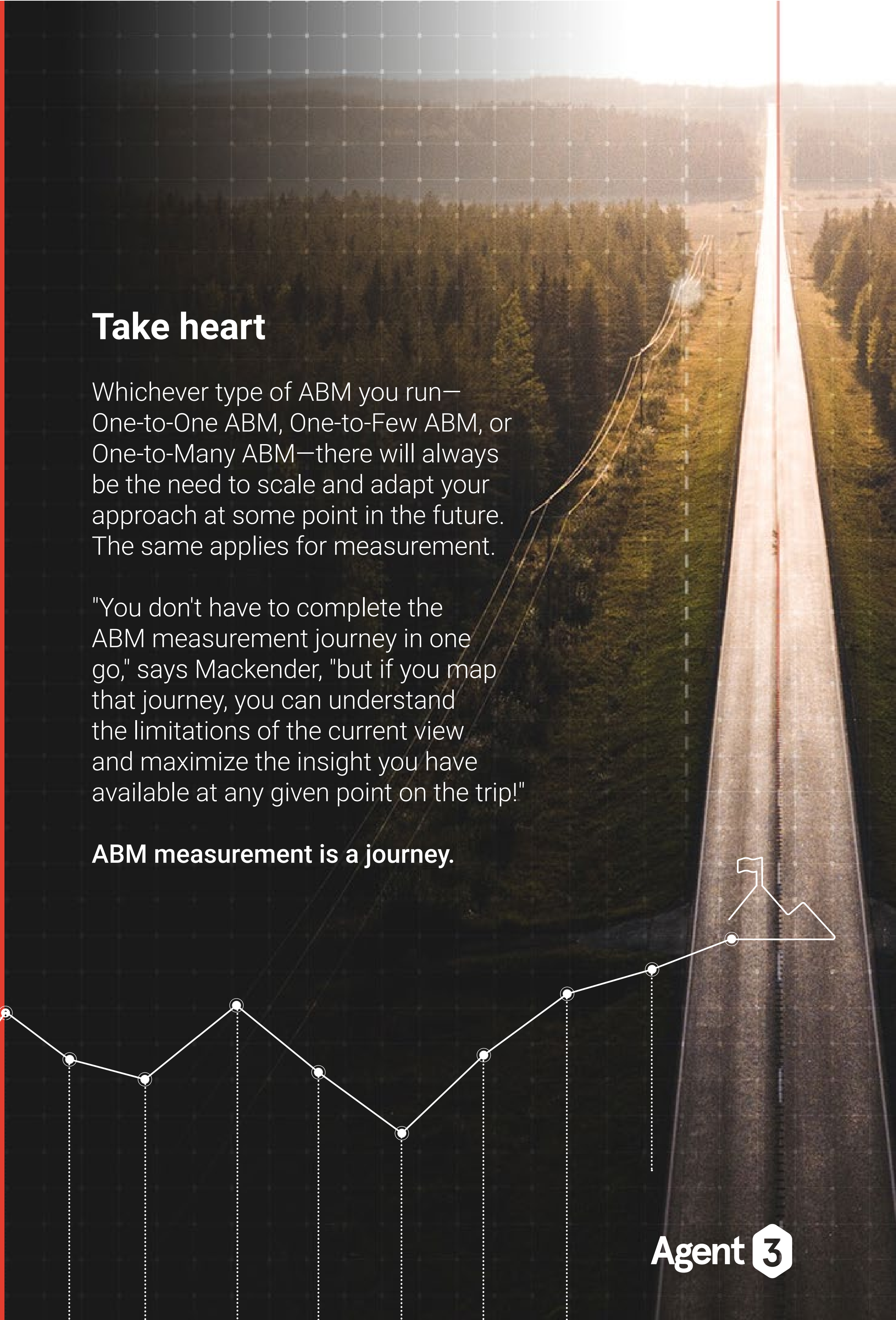
"Firstly, teams need to agree on what's important to measure and align each metric to a business outcome. In some organizations, teams are siloed, which can make this hard, and in others, teams might not have bought into the strategy in the first place. Add to this the challenge that management might not always communicate clearly enough with marketing teams where the focus for the business lies, and you start to see why alignment is crucial. How can marketing teams be expected to support business goals if communication isn't there and goalposts shift for any reason?"

Building on Bev's point, Paul Mackender, CRO, Agent3, highlights the importance of a business-focused approach: "What we need to measure with ABM is more strategic and complex than just simply trying to measure a sale or the attribution of a tactic. It's about driving and measuring business outcomes. Trying to work out how you work together, as an organization, led by sales and marketing, to engage in a planned way with an account or group of accounts."

Mackender goes on to offer more explanation around the other two challenges of data and analytics and systems and tools: "A lot of reporting in organizations is siloed. It's often data -heavy, technical, over-architected and rarely designed from the outset with the (sales and marketing) user in mind, let alone being actionable. We're increasingly seeing systems and tools that are ABM-specific and account centric, but most are generic. You've got to have the right infrastructure and skills to understand what to do."

System issues are limiting organizations' ability to implement and measure ABM fully. It's understandable given legacy investments in MarTech systems—just 29% of companies are using business intelligence and data aggregation to measure and track ABM results by account.

(Source: The ITSMA & ABM Leadership Alliance 2018 ABM Benchmark Study, *Raising the Game with ABM*).



Take heart

Whichever type of ABM you run—One-to-One ABM, One-to-Few ABM, or One-to-Many ABM—there will always be the need to scale and adapt your approach at some point in the future. The same applies for measurement.

"You don't have to complete the ABM measurement journey in one go," says Mackender, "but if you map that journey, you can understand the limitations of the current view and maximize the insight you have available at any given point on the trip!"

ABM measurement is a journey.

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1.3 What is the answer? The "three R's"

The strategic "three R's" of marketing—Reputation, Relationship, and Revenue—provide the best framework to accurately report on an ABM program's impact and uncover key insights. This framework can be applied to all ABM programs and at any stage of the ABM journey. The approach aligns programs to the strategic business outcomes that corporate leadership typically prioritize:

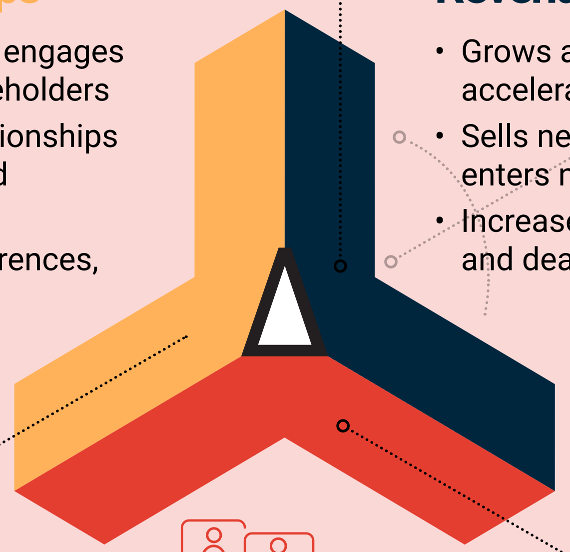
- Strengthening the firm's reputation in the marketplace
- Broadening and deepening critical relationships with customers and influencers
- Accelerating revenue growth

Agent3 and ITSMA recommend the "three R's" for all clients, not just because it moves ABM from revenue contributor to strategic growth driver, but because it's incredibly scalable.

ABM-ers don't necessarily need complex dashboards or real-time data collection to start leveraging this approach. Instead, this framework focuses on what matters most: reporting business outcomes and demonstrating ROI across an entire ABM program.

Relationships

- Identifies and engages with key stakeholders
- Deepens relationships for insight and innovation
- Develops references, referrals, and advocates



Revenue

- Grows and accelerates pipeline
- Sells new offerings and enters new markets
- Increases win rate and deal size

Reputation

- Drives preference with named accounts
- Builds reputation in new markets
- Improves internal credibility

And it works. When a long-term approach is applied, marketers have seen improvement in their ABM strategy from focusing their measurements on these three categories.

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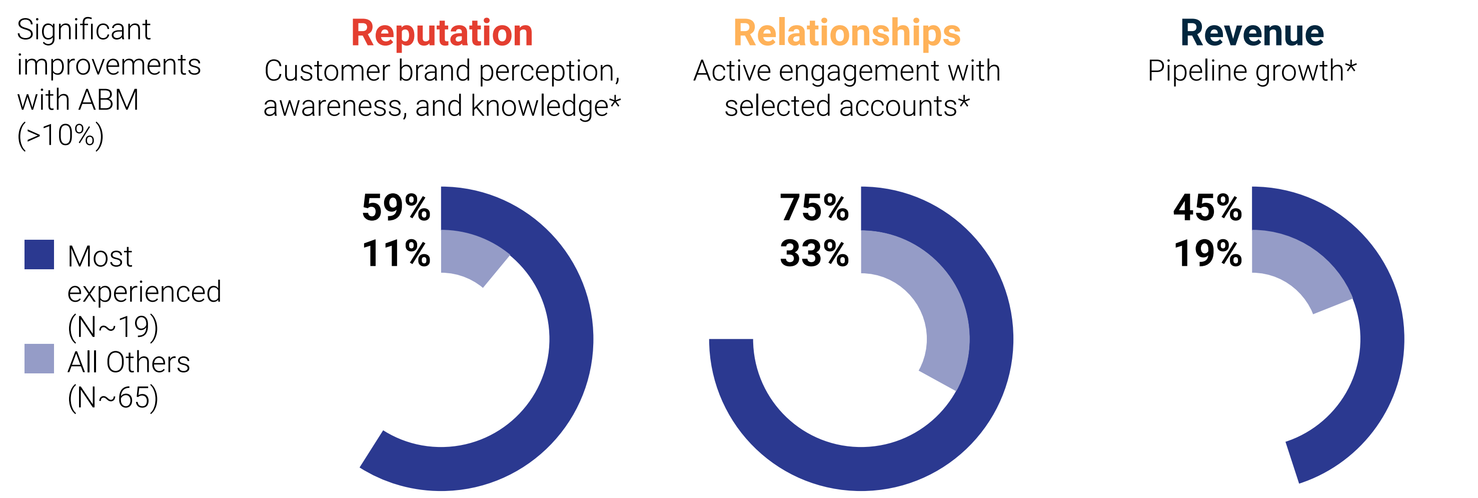
Many marketers appreciate that long-term growth relies on continuous monitoring and constant improvement in the "three R's" of marketing; it's not just about near-term revenue. As illustrated in Figure 3, success comes with patience and planning for the long term. Metrics for measurement must be planned out in the short and mid term in order to report on impacts, while keeping senior leaders on side as the program matures.

Practice patience: Maturity takes time!

Most marketers appreciate that long-term growth relies on constant improvement in the "three R's" of marketing: Reputation, Relationships, and Revenue. Indeed, focusing on the three R's is a core principle of ABM; it's not just about near-term revenue. Understanding how best to move the needle with your most important accounts, however, takes time to develop. The most experienced programs demonstrate much more significant impact across all three.



% of respondents (N~83). *Indicates a statistically significant difference.
Source: ITSMA and ABM Leadership Alliance, 2019 ABM Benchmark Study, October 2019

Figure 3: Majority of marketers report improvement in three categories

1.4 Applying the "Three R's" to ABM over the short, medium and long term

Measuring different types of ABM activity often requires different metrics and data sets. For example, if you are targeting just one or a few top accounts, you might go much deeper into individual account-level progress, perhaps measuring metrics unique to each account. With One-to-Many programs, aggregated metrics across groups of accounts may be more important.

ABM results typically don't happen overnight, especially with programs focused on selling high-value solutions to large, complex enterprise customers. But sales and other leaders are not always so patient! We should also recognize the relationships between the "three R's" and "signals" that hitting certain reputation and relationship milestones are a precursor to revenue targets, which typically take longer to attain. We recommend assigning short-, medium-, and long-term metrics to your "three R's" framework that will demonstrate impact from day one.

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1.5 What do the "three R's" look like in detail?

The "three R's" provide a framework to cover off the core elements of measuring ABM, when combined they provide insight into the performance of an ABM initiative at the programme, campaign, account and stakeholder level.

KPI dashboard	Short term	Medium term	Long term
Reputation	• Sales and account team interaction and satisfaction • Social reach and engagement with target stakeholders	• Brand perception with X stakeholders • More executive meetings • Event attendance	• Invitation to scope projects • X references and advocacy activity • Testimonials, referrals to others
Relationship	• % target stakeholders & lift in engagement • General increase in touchpoints • # executive briefings / innovation centre visits • # senior stakeholder meetings • % post-event survey completion	• Client introduction to target contacts	• Co-creation
Revenue	• Pipeline velocity (win/loss) • Increase in RFP/RFI invitations • Short-Term / Revenue • Assets created to support Sales opportunities	• Pipeline increase (ABM vs. non-ABM) • Revenue growth • Increase deal size and type	• Increase win rate • Portfolio penetration (% sold to account) • Share of wallet (% of customer spend)

Figure 4: Measuring business impact—the "three R's"

There is no such thing as a "typical" ABM program. However, in most situations these metrics, aligned to the "three R's," are most commonly used to measure progress. They should be structured in a way that makes most sense to your organization, deciding which should be positioned within the short-, medium-, and long-term categories. The list above highlights some of the most commonly used metrics within ABM programs aligned to the "three R's" and can be used to lay the foundations for core measurement. Additional metrics relevant to the account or ABM program should of course be layered on top of these to monitor progress and success.

Near-term metrics, for example, could include content engagement: Are the right people reading or viewing your targeted content and continuing to connect? Mid-term could focus on deeper engagement, such as personal meetings or briefings with key decision makers, or participation in innovation workshops. Longer term, of course, can highlight pipeline contribution, acceleration, and wins.

2.0 Putting the "three R's" framework in place

Organizational Alignment

Data and Analytics

Systems and Tools

2.1 Organizational Alignment

Agreeing what to measure

If the "three R's" provide the right framework, identifying and agreeing on what specifically to measure is the first hurdle. It's important all parties trust, and see value in, the metrics and your measurement framework. Education is a critical component of alignment: If senior leadership only wants to see revenue and thinks ABM is a demand-gen program, then no measurement framework or dashboard will help.

With ABM programs, the primary stakeholders of sales, marketing, and executive leadership need to be comfortable with the approach. When working within strategic marketing, all groups' individual metrics must contribute toward the same overarching goal.

The metrics you track within your measurement framework need to be both trusted and understood by your executive leadership, while reflecting the important role of the sales team and all contributing teams.

Step one is understanding the existing metrics that matter most to each group. There are often similarities between the metrics that different teams care about, each with distinct and somewhat different focus areas as well. The most common drivers and focus areas we see are:

- **Executive leadership:** Revenue growth, profitability, brand position, new product or solution development, customer satisfaction and loyalty
- **Sales:** Contacts, conversion, pipeline (key stakeholder) meetings, opportunities created, new leads
- **Marketing:** Velocity and quality of engagement, new key stakeholder relationships, account coverage

Despite a difference in focus, metrics will naturally overlap as all teams unite over shared commercial objectives. Aligning metrics to the "three R's" brings order and focus on a macro level to all functions.

Give your stakeholders a forum for discussion. With a greater shift towards remote working, sales teams, for example, should be granted greater ability to interrogate and contribute extra data to reports, which enhances the organization's view on status and progress within an ABM program.

Celebrating and sharing success is an often overlooked way to enhance alignment between stakeholders. Using the "three R's" as a vehicle to share wins that are relevant to different teams will help pique interest in the impact of the ABM program. The "three R's" are not focused around marketing metrics, meaning everyone in the organization should be able to interpret and understand the data, and more specifically, how measures relate to their role. Marketers therefore need short-term wins, something that Tamara Marx, ABM manager, ServiceNow, agrees with wholeheartedly.

"It may appear to be vanity, but it's education to the marketing leadership or extended leadership at your company," she says, "about the value you can create as a team that may not be created elsewhere in your organization because there hasn't been a focus on it in the past, or a need for it."

As mentioned earlier, ABM is a journey, and not all alignment issues can be solved up front. Keeping all teams up to date with interim successes in key areas relating to measurement helps to keep stakeholders engaged. It's far better to share metrics and account-specific insight more frequently, even informally over the phone or email if need be, than to share the bigger wins across longer intervals where potential opportunity has waned. For example, if sales shares newly created key contacts within an account to marketing, in return, live data such as topic-level behavioral intent (from the B2B web or web intent) can be shared to develop a more contextual and personalized approach to sales material. While this is one specific example, sharing data between stakeholders against the needs and progression of the account is fundamental to measurement success and alignment. All teams should share the same overarching commercial goal, but to align teams and "glue" them together, they must understand each other's perspective and contribution to the measurement puzzle.

Success around alignment will depend on the following:

- Forming an aligned go-to-market team
- Empowering all teams to make swift decisions
- Responsive knowledge-sharing around accounts

Sales teams cannot assume that what their accounts need is correct from one month to the next. The sharing of account-centric insight is critical to ensure conversations reflect true aspirations and pain points.

With a greater increase in online sales and marketing activities such as conferences, sales meetings, internal meetings, and town hall meetings, there will be far more data to feed into ABM measurement. Sales is likely to lean on marketing more than ever before to understand key insight and impact from new digital activities.

2.2 Data and Analytics

Collecting and analyzing the right data to improve performance and demonstrate impact

Data and analytics are the lifeblood of ABM measurement. They allow rapid evaluation and insight for ABM-ers to see what's working, what's not, and what needs to change. The challenge is that the necessary data includes different types (qualitative and quantitative, structured and unstructured) and often sits in different organizational silos, and can be overly architected, not entered in real time, or often not entered anywhere at all.

As Burgess notes, "Measuring ABM means tracking how you've engaged with different types of people in different types of accounts—how you've moved the relationships, how you've shifted perceptions, how you've opened and advanced opportunities Now that we have introduced the "three R's" approach for measurement, you'll understand why data points need to align to the three pillars of reputation, relationship, and revenue to ensure that metrics relate to the key growth drivers behind each.

A good ABM measurement framework, based on the core principles of the "three R's," captures both quantitative and qualitative data.

"Real ABM measurement maximizes the data contained in digital activity," says Mackender, "but also caters for the significant amount of offline engagement that forms key parts of ABM programs. That offline-related data is often qualitative and unstructured but can be just as important."

Valerie Beaulieu, chief marketing officer, Microsoft US, gives an example of the difference in data her team encounters: "Anecdotal feedback will mostly stem from the relationships we're able to develop that the sales team would not be able to develop. And so, when we're able to open the door to new groups or teams in our customers or prospects that the sellers were not having access to, this is a success for us. This is not quantitative but qualitative."

Not all mission-critical information has to come from systems and tools. Are all interactions and pivotal moments between your sales teams and customers documented in your CRM? Almost certainly not. The key thing is that ABM measurement makes it possible to capture and track valuable insight that will propel your ABM strategy forward. We often look to data first when it comes to KPIs and measurement, but setting up mechanics across the "soft data points" can be rocket fuel for recording success against the "three R's."

Ultimately, the way in which ABM-ers can capture information stems from the relationship between the marketing and sales teams. This works best when both teams can see the value they bring when the insight they share is put into practice. If marketers and sales teams can work together to strengthen anecdotal information with hard data points, both teams are winning.

Some data will be readily available and will require no additional work to shape in a way that can be shared with the organization. However, some data is certainly more difficult to monitor and document than other data. For example, "strengthening relationships with key stakeholders" is likely a key metric for any ABM program. Collecting the data will require defining what relationship strength is to your organization and how this relates to sales and marketing—a perfect discussion point to help bring the two functions together.

ABM measurement case study - A leading IT services vendor

Agent3 consulted with a global IT services vendor to support the delivery of an ABM Dashboard aligned to the ITSMA's "three R's" framework. Through collaboration with their data team, Agent3 was able to explore a variety of data sources advising on best practice transformation into measurement categories within each of the "three R's": Reputation, Relationship, and Revenue. This dual-purpose, account-centric approach facilitated a greatly simplified series of views to support the discovery of at-a-glance and detailed account-level insights, derived from business data and tied to business outcomes.

KPI dashboard	Short term	Medium term	Long term
Reputation	• Sales and account team satisfaction	• Sales and account team satisfaction • Brand perception with # stakeholders	• Sales and account team satisfaction • Brand perception with # stakeholders
Relationships	• Coverage: # new targeted contacts • Executive engagements	• Coverage: # new targeted contacts • % lift in Executive engagement • % lift in engagement with targeted contacts	• % lift in Executive engagement • % lift in engagement with targeted contacts • Executive Council
Revenue	• ID # new play	• $XM pipeline	• $XM pipeline • $YM revenue • X New / Net New Logo

Figure 5: KPIs used to support an IT service vendor's program (Source: Agent3)

Skills and resources for analyzing data for optimization

What about skills? The core skills required for measuring ABM programs are broad—a mix of digital and marketing, communications, and data analytics. A fundamental part of ABM analysis is to follow accounts as they progress through the entire journey. That means careful monitoring and analysis of systems and technologies as they move through the buyer's journey.

A recommendation from a measurement framework is only as reliable as the data on which it is based. With almost infinite data repositories at sales and marketing's fingertips, it's necessary to approach analysis with caution and to question everything. An incorrect judgement has the potential to drastically undermine sales and marketing alignment.

With growing data sets in ABM programs and increasingly sophisticated and automated analytics, there is an increasing need for analytical skills within teams to ensure good measurement.

According to ITSMA research (Figure 6), 82% of organizations will increase skills through internal training of existing marketers. 62% are investing in data and analytics, so should you build a retraining program into your framework to fill gaps in skills capabilities?

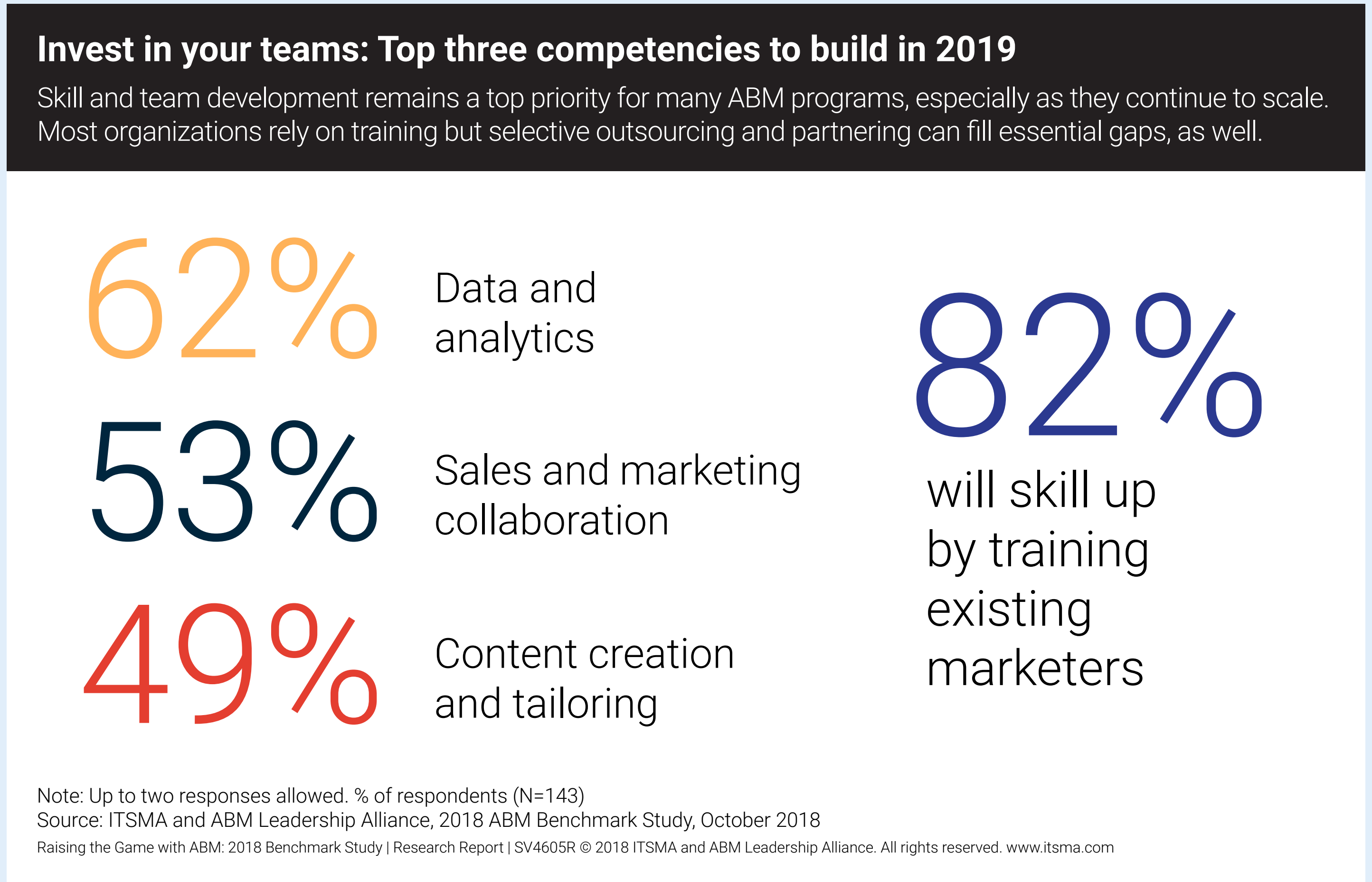

Figure 6: Top skills to develop (source ITSMA)

2.3 Systems and Tools

Building and evolving the right systems to enable continuous improvement and effective communication

"Most of the finely honed measurement systems that we have for overall SAP marketing don't apply to our ABM work."

Eric Martin, VP Marketing, SAP North America.

So, what about systems and tools? What infrastructure do you need to build around your systems for ABM measurement? Can you build a fit-for-purpose dashboard based on current systems?

While there's an abundance of systems and tools available, selecting and implementing the right infrastructure is clearly paramount to success. Not only does it require the support of multiple parties, but you may run into data compliance and security issues, as well as training for those using the new systems.

It is worth assessing whether you can get the insight and data you need from existing systems, rather than investing in new systems and tools. For example, is everyone using your CRM to the best of their abilities? Do people need more training first before buying new tools? Would a package upgrade or marketplace add-on be all that’s required to unlock the ability to report to a higher level?

Summarizing system integrations challenges in measurement, Dan Sands, CTO, Agent3, explains, "Challenges around systems alignment typically spans technical, with data living in different systems, data not having common keys (a value with which to join them together), disparate ownership and challenging access considerations, where individual stakeholders have to be engaged and their requirements met to unlock the data. Finally, compliance and security considerations are always the final and often the most complicated hurdle."

How to set up your systems for measurement

Every team should periodically audit and assess all tools and systems in accordance to the value they bring to the overall ABM program. Can the data itself and, by extension, the metrics they provide align to the "three R's"?

Once all tools and systems are identified, Agent3 recommends categorizing each by type within a matrix. In order to help with this assessment, the use case and application of each should be worked through with the sales and marketing team.

If tools provide no clear benefit to the measurement framework, it provides an opportunity for these to be culled.

To categorize the systems and tools, Agent3 recommends the following categories, as used in its ABM Dashboard Blueprint Assessment:

- Anecdotal
- CRM
- Digital External
- Digital Internal
- Marketing Automation
- Polling External
- Polling Internal

This process will identify gaps in your technology needed to fulfill a complete measurement framework. Without going into the detail and split between internal and external systems, drawing out the most appropriate metrics could be vague or broad at best, or at worst, overlooked altogether.

As part of this exercise to map out your systems, it's necessary to determine who is the owner of each and how difficult extracting that data will be. With the right permissions to a system, data could be easily extracted for analysis. More often than not, however, complex systems such as Salesforce, Marketo, and Google Analytics will require certified expertise to ensure you have the data you need. Involving the system owners in the process from the start will not only help with overall alignment, but ensure the data will be reliable and ready during the ABM program.

While there are many surveys on the MarTech landscape, Agent3 and ITSMA commonly see the following systems used within ABM programs.

Digital Internal (Dint)	Digital External (Dext)	Polling Internal (Pint)	Polling External (Pext)	CRM (CRM)	Anecdotal (Anec)	Marketing Automation (MA)
Account score	Google Analytics	Qualtrics	Qualtrics	Salesforce	Google Sheets	Marketo
Account Engagement score	Adobe Analytics	Survey Gizmo	Survey Gizmo	MS Dynamics	Google Docs	Eloqua
NPS	Demandbase	Survey Monkey	Survey Monkey	Sugar CRM	Call Logs	HubSpot
Web Intent	IBM Digital Analytics	MailChimp	MailChimp	Copper	CRM Opp Notes	Pardot
	NetSuite	Fluid Surveys	Fluid Surveys	HubSpot	Slack	ExactTarget
	LinkedIn	Smart Surveys	Smart Surveys	SAP		MailChimp
	Facebook	Google Forms	Google Forms	Insightly		
	Twitter			Zoho		
	YouTube					
	Vimeo					
	Google Adwords					
	Instagram					
	Uberflip					
	Bit.ly					
	B2B Intent					
	Folloze					

While most names will be familiar and obviously categorized, some could help become a starting point if you identify gaps in your systems.

Some data cannot be collected automatically, however. An area where organizations of all sizes struggle is in collating and assessing anecdotal feedback in a way that contributes insight relevant to the "three R's." In our experience, we find the best way to do this is to collate this type of feedback in a spreadsheet, programmatically model the sentiment into a comparable score, and then use this to assess feedback at the account level. Systems don't have to be integrated into a wider reporting model for it to count—use whichever format achieves the desired output, then scale if required. For example, Agent3 has seen clients use simple internal polling apps such as SurveyMonkey to extract the necessary data for wider analysis and usage.

Building attribution and measurement into an ABM framework from the start is crucial, but understandably challenging. While technology will go some way to easing this pain—ITSMA research reveals that 61% of companies expect to use AI for account insight and 43% for measuring ABM and attribution—for the moment at least, there is still some manual work to do.

Not all data can be relied upon 100%. Data should always be treated with caution and leverage solutions that can classify and screen out ISPs and provide cookie and API matching to help get to the true audience.

3.0 Scaling ABM through measurement

3.1 How good measurement helps you scale ABM

A good measurement framework that follows the core ABM principles of the "three R's" will enable you to demonstrate value and accelerate performance improvements, and make it easier to scale ABM. A reliable and appropriate system infrastructure gives you the ability to scale measurement as your ABM program matures. Reporting on metrics that align to the "three R's" is scalable in itself, and as the needs and maturity of your ABM program increase, your team will be able to easily spot areas to invest and grow.

The rapid growth of ABM means that companies are constantly launching new programs, and a great many organizations have had years of ABM experience and moved far beyond the early stages of development. It is important to align your measurement framework to the sophistication and capabilities of your organization, building a foundation for future scaling and your program's maturity.

The organizations who have scaled ABM measurement effectively are typically those that have really invested in the three areas we highlight in this report: organizational alignment, data and analytics, and systems and tools.

3.2 Developing your ABM measurement dashboard

ABM should work in harmony across all marketing activities, and this requires central organization and control. Organizations need to build an infrastructure that enables easy sharing of key insights at an account and program level, then bring it to life through an easy to understand dashboard.

Sandra Mantin, ABM senior program data analyst, Red Hat, agrees it can be difficult to know what to use. "You really need a consolidated stack so you don't have to deploy gazillions of tools," she says. "One of the things that we're going to try and do with our dashboards because we're moving closer to Tableau is to make them consumable and actionable."

Agent3 considers there to be four types of ABM dashboard to deploy, depending on where you are within your ABM journey. Building dashboards of course relies on skills and resource availability, but most of all it must fit in with your current workflow.

For Valerie Beaulieu at Microsoft, it is experience, built up from pilot schemes and projects, that has led the business to develop its infrastructure and then build a dashboard to make it happen.

"It's hard to have a dashboard if you don't know what you are trying to achieve," she says, "but we now know and we can compare our progress to the targets, looking at customer engagement, intensity, on which kind of topics. We can then be pretty precise on how engaged or disengaged customers are. So we're able to frame the conversation to anchor the conversation on some metrics."

Microsoft

Agent3

The four types of ABM dashboard

Level 1:

At this stage it's recommended that you focus on proving the immediate value of ABM and its impact on pipeline. Typically this involves measurement of NPS from an internal system, MQLs from marketing automation, and quality SALs from the CRM. The output is delivered in a structured, easy-to-share, static ABM dashboard report, on a monthly cadence.

Level 2:

Building on the previous stage, we continue with the static ABM dashboard report, but over a slightly longer time frame; this may still be part of a pilot. At this stage we're looking to provide a bit more rigor around the "three R's" and will likely look to layer in data from sales' usage of marketing assets, collated account team feedback, client anecdotal feedback, and interim KPIs. Essentially, we're looking to build a business case for expanding the ABM program, and typically we see performance of accounts in this report compared to non-ABM accounts.

Level 3:

As the organization evolves, we need an approach to measure output and outcome-based metrics across each of the "three R's." We're looking for concrete evidence of increased revenue, higher brand awareness, and greater client satisfaction as a result of the ABM program. To support this we see organizations opting for an interactive, single-view ABM dashboard. This enables metrics to be tracked and reported on at the account, cluster, or group level as well as program levels. KPIs such as win rate, deal size, and velocity are tracked to compare ABM program results with non-ABM accounts. All of this is viewable within dynamic views in a self-serve dashboard, exportable into a report for circulation within an organization.

Level 4:

The objective for any organization practicing ABM is to reach this stage where outcome-based and predictive metrics support the measurement of long-term business impacting metrics. This approach is typically embedded across the organization and requires multiple views of data to be accessible to varying seniorities across these functions. To facilitate this sophisticated approach, and to support complex measurement requirements, we recommend an advanced, interactive, multi-view ABM dashboard. This ensures varying requirements can be satisfied at the account, cluster, group, and program level.

3.3 Security and compliance

Within any organization, when dealing with large amounts of customer and prospect data, security and compliance should be fundamental building blocks of all systems.

It will always be outside the scope of a measurement project or solution to address fundamental security or compliance challenges within a business. It is, however, always in scope for such projects to build on, maintain, or even enhance what is in place.

There are a few key principles we can follow:

- Budget for security and compliance
- Identify the rules already set up in your organization
- Establish roles and responsibilities for your measurement project
- Clearly grade and mark the sensitivity of data sets
- Build and integrate using a "least permissions possible" basis
- Use only the data that you need
- Use secure authentication
- Use the maximum practical security
- Think about manual data transfer and educate
- Store data security
- Blow the whistle
- QA and test

Agent 3

ABM Measurement Case Study

CONDUENT

Driving Business Results through Performance Marketing in ABM

ITSMA Marketing Excellence Awards Winner 2019

The challenge

Conduent needed to transform their marketing function to take a performance marketing approach using tools, analytics, and new processes. In order to accurately measure marketing initiatives within their ABM program against pipeline and revenue, they knew they had to transform from "data novices" to "data ninjas".

The approach

Conduent's team had to become comfortable navigating their CRM and MarTech systems to move from "I think this program made a difference" to "I know this program had an impact and here's why." Conduent especially found challenges in releasing data that previously existed in silos. Conduent built a foundation for real change through repetition in weekly reviews and celebrating wins where they could draw a definitive connection between pipeline or revenue and a marketing tactic.

Measuring integrated marketing campaigns that include program elements such as rich content, social media, paid search, and industry events across the campaign life cycle required a well-thought-out MarTech stack that was closely integrated with sales systems.

In particular, Conduent developed a stronger approach within these four areas:

Website – track and capture visitors

Marketo – automate lead and campaign management

Salesforce – ensure lead attribution, campaign tagging, and sales intelligence

Domo – automate, aggregate, analyze, and adjust

The results

Connecting these technologies together allowed Conduent to illustrate the clear value of the ABM function across the entire company. In particular, partnering with Domo and its agile platform allowed individuals to have access to both holistic and business unit-specific visualizations with the ability to drill down into channel, tactic, and campaign-level results.

As a result of this shift in measurement, Conduent has achieved the following:

- Greater analysis of progression of leads from prospect to clients
- Enabled far greater collaboration with sales by demonstrating the tight correlation between marketing's efforts and the sales funnel
- Establishing workflows for attribution and automation using integrated platforms and dashboards
- Increased all metrics year-on-year
- Impressed the C-suite by demonstrating value against revenue and pipeline

Conclusion

"There's no doubt that ABM measurement is complex. As an industry we're moving away from simply measuring tactics to measuring business outcomes that are driven by sales and marketing. With the right measurement framework that aligns to the core principles of the "three R's," a new type of measurement is possible. Measurement that is trusted by leadership, gains the buy-in from the whole organization, and delivers on business goals."

Paul Mackender, CRO, Agent3

With no one-size-fits-all approach to ABM strategy and measurement, it is up to you, the marketer, to use the "what" and "how" presented in this paper to develop a bespoke measurement framework that delivers the business outcomes expected of ABM today. A framework that measures outcome-based metrics that align to the "three R's" is proven to demonstrate the value of ABM to the rest of the business, scale ABM easier, and show progress against the key business goals set out (not to mention demonstrate your own value as an ABM-er).

But it takes commitment to overcome any challenges in organizational alignment, data and analytics, and systems and tools, which prevents seamless integration and information sharing that is vital in measurement.

It's important to remember that ABM measurement is a journey.

As Mackender says, "You don't have to complete the ABM measurement journey in one go, but if you map that journey, you can understand the limitations of the current view and maximize the insight you have available at any given point on the trip!"
ABM works, and now you can prove it as you find your own path to measurement excellence.

To discuss or request more information about ITSMA approved ABM Measurement Framework, please contact **measurement@agent3.com**

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