



When most people think of marketing, what they're really thinking of is conventional marketing: an approach that begins by generating as much attention as possible and narrowing down to potential leads based on that. This approach is the most common today. And it certainly works to a degree. But in more recent years, a different strategy has begun to make itself known: account-based marketing (ABM). Let's look a little closer at both.

Conventional Marketing Funnel



Account-Based Marketing Funnel



Conventional Marketing Funnel

Conventional marketing starts by casting a wide net and trying to get your products and services in front of as many people as possible. From there, marketers narrow the audience down to potentially interested people. [Nurturing](#) begins through automated emails, personalized offers, and similar methods. Finally, sales joins the process downstream to turn these interested targets into conversions.

Sales then reports back to marketing on which [leads](#) were good and which didn't work out, and marketing can [alter their future plans](#) accordingly.

In practice, conventional marketing means spending a lot of time mass-producing content and showing it to everybody without knowing for sure if they'll be interested. Sales isn't involved until the nurture stage or later. And of course, because you're starting with such a huge group of only potentially interested people, not every lead will be a success.

Account-Based Marketing Funnel

Account-based marketing takes the [conventional marketing funnel](#) and flips it on its head. Marketing and sales have a partnership from the beginning in ABM as both work together to identify and focus on their target audience. They grow the list of potential clients through careful research. Once they have a completed list, the nurturing and personalized marketing campaigns begin. Any leads that don't work out are crossed off the list. Meanwhile, every target that responds with interest or conversion stays on as a future opportunity.

In practice, account-based marketing involves sales from the very beginning so [nurture](#) begins early. This also allows marketing to produce targeted materials for a specific audience rather than generic advertisements. The process also produces far fewer leads to track and nurture. Since both sales and marketing can focus their attention on a small group instead of trying to please a massive audience, they are more likely to [win leads](#) and gain long-term customer relationships.

ABM's Advantages Over Conventional Marketing Methods

So why can ABM lead to more successful campaigns than conventional marketing? There are several key reasons. First: as stated above, both sales and [marketing](#) can target key accounts through ABM, resulting in more personalized (and thus more effective) marketing. Second: sales is involved from the very beginning, not just marketing, so everyone's in the loop from the start.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly: ABM builds on demand that already exists. **Conventional marketing focuses on generating demand. Account-based marketing focuses on locating demand and meeting it.**

The Current State of Account-Based Marketing

For now, most companies stick to conventional marketing as the default method. Most businesses start out trying to “read the room”, so casting a wide net seems like the better option. Some may hire a consultant to narrow down the client base. But even with a consultant’s help, it’s very rare for a business to start with account-based marketing right off the bat.

But ABM is gaining some traction. Its proven methods and increased lead production certainly earn attention. As customer and company behavior alike continues to evolve, account-based marketing is expected to become the norm over the next decade.

Conclusion

Which is better: conventional marketing or account-based marketing? That’s arguably the wrong question. Both have their place. [Sales and marketing teams](#) should take the time to consider a variety of factors before drastically changing their advertising strategy. But if your company can spare the resources, account-based marketing holds a great deal of promise.

Interested in how you can identify targets and follow up with them easily? [Get in touch with our team of marketing experts today](#) to learn more.