



STATE OF SALES ACCELERATION

Demand For Customer Value Leads To Account Mapping & Uncovering Buying Intent

INTRODUCTION

To accelerate sales in 2023, B2B companies must focus more on increasing customer value through storytelling, partnerships and data. Research has found that B2B buyers are between **57% and 70% through their buying journey** before contacting sales, which heightens the need to reach prospects proactively and accurately through different mediums.

"Identifying and targeting prospects most likely to convert comes down to reaching the right audience at the right time with the right messaging," said Jill Brock, Director of Revenue Marketing at **RollWorks**, an account-based marketing (ABM) platform. She continued that the top four methods of uncovering high-intent prospects include:

1. Utilizing an ABM strategy to create an ideal customer profile (ICP);
2. Narrowing down the total addressable market to create a target account list;
3. Leveraging intent signals to identify the best messaging for the prospect; and
4. Using a CRM to execute across channels and measure success along the way.

With modern buyers craving more personalization and privacy, sales teams are tasked with creating a "best of both worlds" approach that blends automation, content, analytics and resources (whether internal or external) to deliver meaningful engagements that increase deal velocity. This report will uncover the top strategies that buyers are most receptive to, with a specific focus on:

- Key strategies for leveraging technology, behavioral signals and storytelling to identify and target prospects most likely to convert;
- Actionable tips for building strong partnerships internally and externally to have relevant conversations at optimal times;
- The importance of communication to identify and target in-market accounts; and
- How to act upon behavioral and intent signals to deliver relevant content to buyers in a palatable way.

TYING CUSTOMER GOALS TO CLIENT STORIES THROUGH ACCOUNT MAPPING

The more educated marketers are about their prospects, the better they can tailor their sales pitch. McKinsey research found that **71% of customers** expect companies to deliver personalized interactions, and 76% get frustrated when they receive robotic outreach.

"It's important to meet prospects where they are on their journey with the right assets across channels," said Brock. "Top-of-funnel prospects will likely respond best to educational content and resources that address a pain point. In contrast, bottom-funnel prospects are ready for a more product-centric approach, such as demos and case studies."

When searching for solutions providers, prospects want to know that their pain points are recognized. This places the onus on marketers to demonstrate an understanding of their needs while organically accelerating the deal.

"The most important question that prospects have is, 'Do you understand me?'" said Michael Davis, Founder of **SpeakingCPR**, a program that helps professionals become better speakers and storytellers. "Whether it's telling a client's success story or sharing other content, it's crucial to convey the emotions and feelings of the client. The goal is to make prospects feel understood and connected, ultimately shortening the process and distinguishing oneself in their field."

To tie stories to the proper accounts, the experts agreed that consistent account mapping practices help prioritize messaging and focus on those most likely to convert. Account mapping is a process that involves researching a company's background, key decisionmakers and goals to understand their needs and how to best meet them. Speaking directly about these goals can help marketers close deals faster, but it requires heavy internal alignment between sales and marketing.

"As the head of marketing and sales operations, I see our sales team as our customers," said Lydia Flocchini, CMO of **SurePoint Technologies**, a provider of financial and practice management software to law firms. "We want them to succeed, and we can only do that by understanding their needs and delivering on them. Enabling and supporting them is key to their success but requires patience. Regular communication with our Chief Revenue Officer is essential to ensure everyone is aligned and thinking strategically about our go-forward plan. By working together in this way, we can create a strong foundation for success and help our sales team thrive."

HOW PITCHBOOK LEVERAGED STRATEGIC ABM TO DRIVE A 170% INCREASE IN OPPORTUNITIES

Seattle-based research firm [PitchBook](#) provides comprehensive data and insights on the evolving financial markets. PitchBook's central, easy-to-use platform provides access to the broadest and most powerful collection of data and insights on venture capital, private equity, mergers and acquisitions and public equity markets, making it top choice for more than 45,000 customers worldwide.

The Challenge

In early 2020, PitchBook set ambitious sales and revenue targets that demanded a significant increase in the sales team's time and effort. Sales reps were tasked with adopting a more account-based approach to prospecting, intensifying the pressure to identify and engage with high-value prospects. Compounding this challenge were longer sales cycles, necessitating multiple touchpoints to generate opportunities.

Simultaneously, the PitchBook marketing team needed to support the sales team's efforts by generating a substantial increase in lead volume. However, the list of companies that matched PitchBook's ideal customer profile (ICP) was rapidly evolving, and the team struggled to keep up with the constantly changing target customer personas.

The Solution

To solve those challenges, PitchBook turned to [RollWorks](#), an ABM platform. First, PitchBook focused on solving the targeting challenge by layering RollWorks' account scoring on top of its ever-changing ICP to prioritize sales and marketing resources. By doing so, PitchBook was able to optimize sales and marketing resources.



RollWorks' machine learning technology allowed PitchBook to build a custom predictive model that scored a list of 2,000 accounts based on ICP fit. This approach resulted in a highly targeted list of 300 accounts with the highest probability of success, enabling PitchBook to focus its spend and efforts more effectively.

Next, the company integrated RollWorks with Salesforce to deploy personalized programs for accounts at each stage of the funnel. The company executed targeted ABM campaigns on LinkedIn and across the web in sync with the sales team's outreach efforts. This approach set the sales team up for success and resulted in a significant increase in sales and revenue.

The Results

Through the combination of RollWorks, Salesforce, LinkedIn and internal data, the PitchBook team was able to target a dynamically synced list of accounts from Salesforce, find and engage additional best-fit accounts using RollWorks's database and then automate the activation of these newly discovered high-priority accounts on LinkedIn.

The new strategy resulted in a highly impactful alignment of marketing programs with sales priorities. With a data-driven mindset, PitchBook decided to test the delivery of targeted, account-based ads alongside the sales outreach. In only three months, PitchBook saw a:

- 170% increase in opportunities from accounts that received air cover ads;
- 79% increase in website visits by target accounts; and
- 220% increase in accounts actively engaging with their brand.





LEVERAGING STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS & INTEGRATIONS TO ACCELERATE SALES

The experts agreed that companies must work together and form partnerships to provide the most customer value. They noted that best-in-class B2B companies recognize this and strive to integrate their offerings with other companies whenever possible.

"At its core, partnership alliances and other indirect go-to-market (GTM) strategies combine resources from different companies to achieve a common goal," said Asher Mathew, Co-founder of [Partnership Leaders](#), a community for partnerships and alliance leaders. "Despite being viewed as an experimental function in the past, companies can now leverage partnerships to accelerate sales, amplify marketing efforts and help customers realize the value of software or services."

The market indicates that effectively leveraging partnerships is crucial for success in today's business landscape. [Research by Accenture](#) found that more than 90% of company executives and channel leaders expect to increase revenue directly attributed to their partner ecosystems this year. Engaging with the right partners can provide a much-needed boost in sales, customer retention and ROI.

"Sales productivity and pipeline coverage have always been important concepts for direct sales teams, but now it's time to apply that same rigor to indirect channels by examining partner pipeline, quarter capacity and sales velocity," said Mathew. "This isn't a major shift in thinking or change management; it's simply applying existing concepts to a different business motion."

When companies are familiar with their ICP and choose partners that complement it, they can map and create current and potential prospect lists together. Kristine Stewart, Founder of business consultancy [Lexington Group](#), explained that it's helpful to include partners in customer conversations.

"If Partner A identifies a need for another product or service that another partner can provide, it can lead to a three-way conversation to accelerate the process," she explained. "This approach allows skipping steps and adds more value without complexity. Customer success teams may then discuss plans and potential services as the deal closes. Some companies even offer managed services for customer success activities on behalf of their partners."

Once formed, these partnerships can identify gaps in service that can further help both parties stand out from the crowd.

"When leveraging partnerships to go-to-market, integration plays a crucial role in creating new products or bridging gaps between existing ones," said Mathew. "With many points solutions available to improve workflow efficiency, software must be customizable to fit individual preferences and personalities. For example, some prefer outbound, while others excel at inbound leads or customer referrals. With the right software customized to their workflows, businesses can optimize their productivity and succeed in today's market."

"When leveraging partnerships to go to market, integration plays a crucial role in creating new products or bridging gaps between existing ones."

ASHER MATHEW, PARTNERSHIP LEADERS



USING INTENT, TECHNOGRAPHIC DATA TO UNCOVER THE RIGHT CONNECTIONS

Big data analytics is table stakes in modern business operations because it gives companies insights into customer behavior in near real time. By analyzing large amounts of customer data, businesses can identify patterns that indicate buying habits or preferences, which they can use to craft better messaging and selling strategies or even tailor product offerings to individual customers' needs.

For example, **Okta**, an identity and access management platform, saw **24X in opportunities using intent-based ABM campaigns**, a 2.7X reduction in cost per conversion and a 22% increase in influenced revenue by using intent data to refine their outdated TALs.

"Marketers can use intent signals as messaging indicators during their planning process," said RollWorks' Brock. "Our team uses RollWorks Keyword Intent data and Bombora Surge data to identify the keywords and topics of interest to inform our content decisions. Beyond content, intent data helps us identify accounts to prioritize for our sales teams, which can also use the information and site data to engage the prospect with a customized talk track."

To succeed, all departments must have a unified source of truth and data that everyone understands. Additionally, using that shared data source to build target lists collaboratively is highly valuable, as it ensures alignment between marketing and sales teams and prevents customers from being bombarded with conflicting messages.

“Reviewing campaigns before launch and gathering feedback beforehand is also essential for optimal results,” said Surepoint Technologies’ Flocchini. “Sharing plans upfront and communicating strategies is key to success in any campaign or initiative.”

By analyzing the technologies companies use, businesses can gain insight into their needs and preferences and their level of technological sophistication. Technographic data can also provide valuable competitive intelligence, allowing businesses to stay ahead of industry trends and anticipate the needs of their target markets.

“Several popular products are available, such as Crossbeam, Reveal and PartnerUp (recently acquired by Deluxe),” said Mathew. “Once this initial step is complete, businesses can use data from first-party sources, like marketing automation tools, or third-party sources to create a target account list with attributes of successful customers.”

Ultimately, intent and technographic data can help B2B companies accelerate sales by providing valuable insights into the needs and preferences of potential customers. By analyzing companies’ technologies and online behavior, businesses can better understand what their target audience is looking for and tailor their outreach efforts accordingly.

“Reviewing campaigns before launch and gathering feedback beforehand is also essential for optimal results.”

LYDIA FLOCCHINI, SUREPOINT TECHNOLOGIES



CONCLUSION

If B2B companies want to generate growth in 2023, they must prioritize strategizing customer value through compelling stories, collaborative partnerships and insightful data.

"It's not enough to create a set of assets and hope inbound leads engage," said Brock. "Taking a proactive approach enables you to have more of a push/pull relationship with your prospects. This includes knowing where the prospect is on their buying journey and narrowing it down further to their specific journey stage. From there, you can reach out with personalized content based on where they are and what they're trying to solve for."

The strategies outlined in this report contribute to accelerating B2B sales by helping identify qualified prospects early on and streamlining communication channels between customers and businesses. With the right combination of tactics, organizations can leverage technology to significantly improve their sales performance while providing added value for their customers at every step.



RollWorks offers ambitious B2B companies an account-based platform to align marketing and sales teams and confidently grow revenue. Powered by proprietary data and machine learning, we can help do it all — from identifying your targets to engaging them across channels and measuring revenue impact.

INFO@ROLLWORKS.COM



Demand Gen Report is a targeted online publication that uncovers the strategies and solutions that help companies better align their sales and marketing organizations, and ultimately, drive growth. A key component of the publication's editorial coverage focuses on the sales and marketing automation tools that enable companies to better measure and manage their multichannel demand generation efforts.

201.257.8528

INFO@DEMANDGENREPORT.COM



BY BRIAN ANDERSON, CONTRIBUTING WRITER