



## THE ABM STARTER GUIDE

# 6 STEPS TO OPTIMIZING YOUR ABM CONTACT DATA

Oceanq

# The ABM Starter Guide for Optimizing Contact Data

You've done the heavy lifting to educate your company stakeholders on the benefits of account-based marketing and how it will drive measurable revenue for your organization. Everyone involved in the buying cycle — including sales, marketing, finance and customer success — is aligned, and you have an ABM platform in place to orchestrate all your plays.

But what about your contact data? What will happen when you shine the spotlight on it? In an ABM platform, the data is — and needs to be — front and center. You have a lot riding on these high-profile accounts, and the last thing you need is inaccurate, incomplete or missing contacts holding you back.

However, data quality issues are a struggle for many B2B marketers. In Demand Gen Report's *Database And Contact Acquisition Survey Report*, the majority of B2B organizations (82%) admitted their current

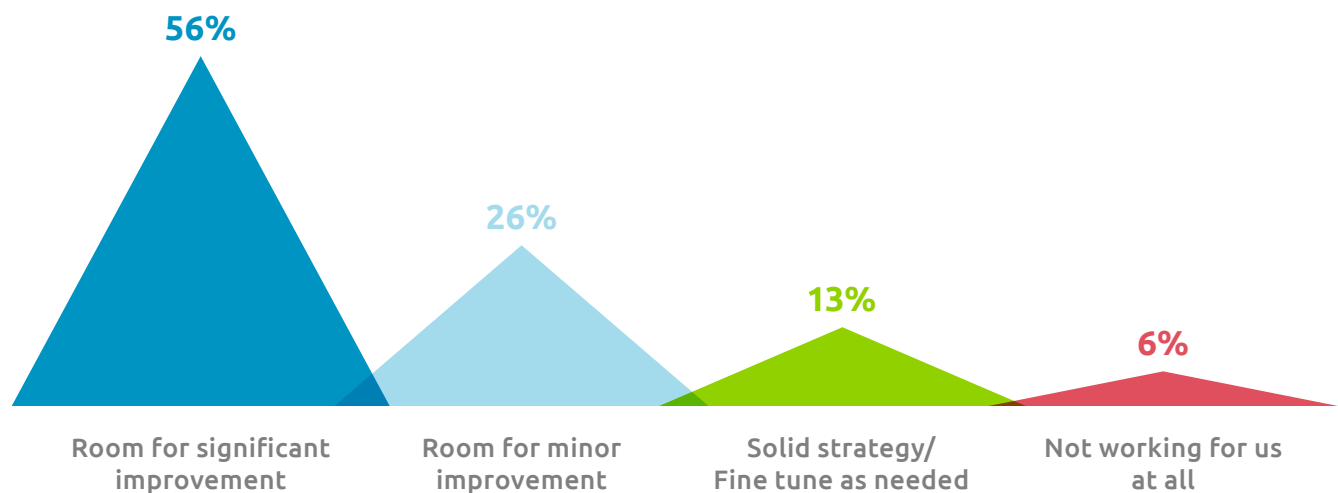
strategies and processes around the contact database need work; in fact, 56% said their current strategy needs "significant improvement."

In fact, more than two-thirds (69%) of respondents said the top challenge to maintaining data quality is old or outdated information. This has been a long-time issue with B2B data, and this latest research confirms that it remains a challenge for marketers.

This data issue needs to be solved before embarking on an ABM initiative. Identifying the right contacts with accurate information within accounts is crucial to sustaining any program. You need a contact data strategy that will help you optimize that information.

**To ensure your efforts yield revenue, follow this six-step process to confirm that your contact data is ready for ABM.**

## STATE OF DATABASE ACQUISITION STRATEGY



Source: *Database And Contact Acquisition Survey Report*, Demand Gen Report

# Identify Your Target Accounts

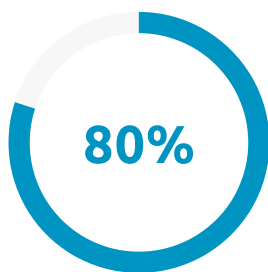
There are a number of approaches that sales and marketing take to establish target accounts. The most common one is based on “firmographic” criteria (i.e., company size and industry), which is often supplemented with additional attributes such as technology installs or buyer intent data.

ABM practitioners are using a mix of data inputs to build and formulate account lists, according to Demand Gen Report’s *2016 ABM Benchmark Survey Report*. Eighty percent of marketers said they are currently using firmographic data, 61% said they are using technographic and 26% said they are using psychographic.

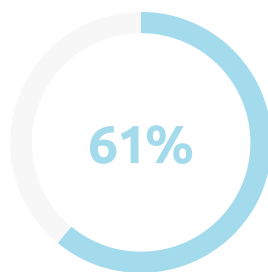
Close to half (45%) are using more advanced predictive models, which use data and pattern recognition to identify the accounts with the highest propensity to buy. Looking ahead to their future plans for expanding or fine-tuning their target account lists, 39% said they planned to use predictive models.

The process marketers leverage to choose which accounts and how many to target will vary from one company to another and by industry, but the common goal is to identify those accounts most likely to buy and less likely to churn.

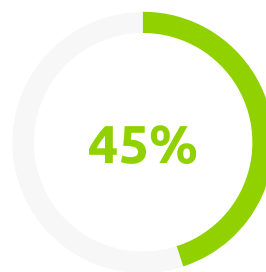
## DATA INPUTS TO ENHANCE ABM



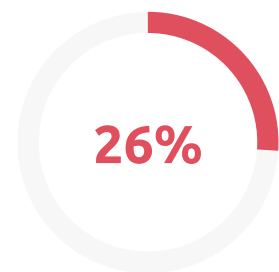
Firmographic



Technographic



Predictive Analytics



Psychographic

# Take Inventory of Your Contacts with a Data Health Check



With the accounts identified, it's time to pull together and assess all of the contacts you have associated with these companies. No matter the number of contacts you have, are you confident the information is accurate? How are you going to deal with fractional records, such as contacts that are missing job title, phone numbers or email addresses? To get a handle on the state of your contact data, a [Data Health Check](#) is a good first step. This free report can provide insight into the accuracy and completeness of your contact data and generate a Data Quality Score, enabling marketers to understand where information gaps and trouble spots exist. The Data Quality Score results will be illustrated with an odometer-style rating system (see graphic below).

**IMPROVING DATA QUALITY IS CRITICAL TO BETTER PERFORMANCE AND REVENUE. THIS ANALYSIS HELPS MARKETERS QUANTIFY THEIR CURRENT DATA CONDITION AND ENABLES A PATH TO IMPROVEMENT.**

## DATA QUALITY SCORE

### OVERALL QUALITY RATING



### COMPLETENESS RATING





## DATA ACCURACY

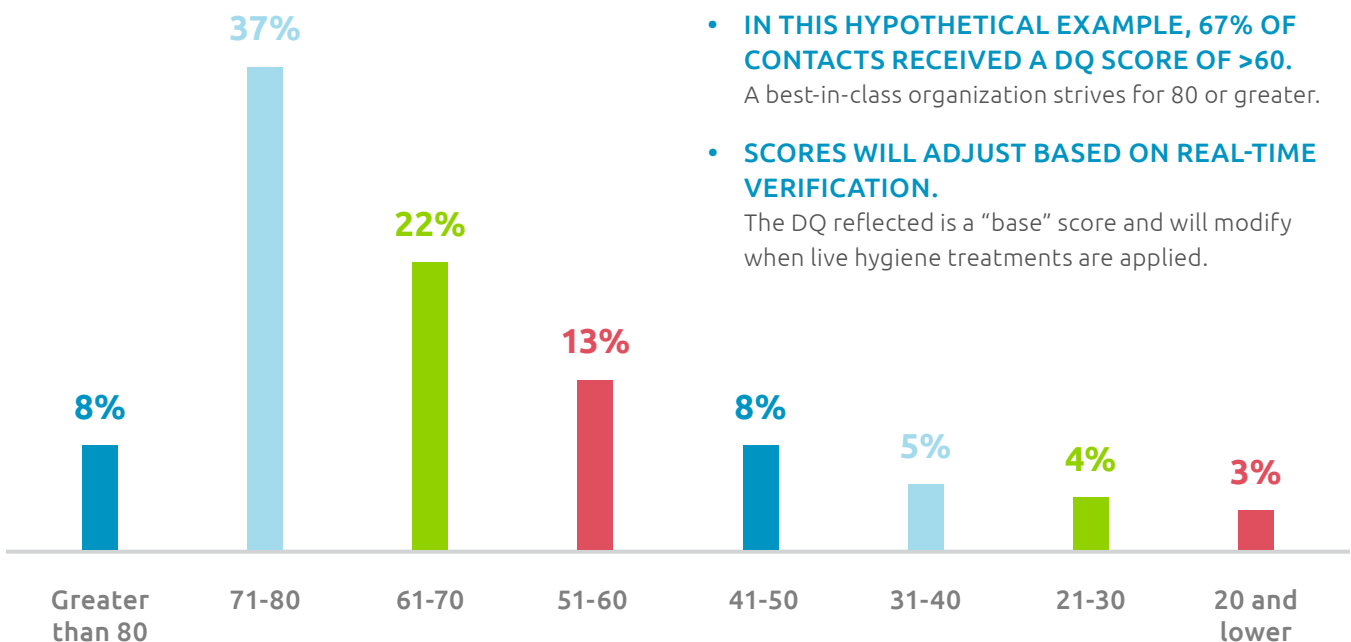
The Data Health Check processes contacts through a Data Quality Model, which reads multiple signals and ranks the contacts on a scale that represents perceived accuracy. The Data Quality Score reveals which contacts are deemed accurate, and which are bad or suspect, so they can be flagged.

## DATA COMPLETENESS

The Data Health Check also assesses the completeness of your data. You'll gain insight into the data points that are missing or incomplete, as well as the ones that can be filled in. The analysis will also profile your contacts to better understand their distribution based on job level, function and account firmographics.

**INCOMPLETE OR INACCURATE DATA PLAYS HAVOC WITH LEAD SCORING, MESSAGE ALIGNMENT AND PREDICTIVE ANALYTICS. WITH 145 MILLION CONTACTS COMBINED WITH RICH SOCIAL DATA, WE DELIVER HIGH MATCH RATES AND ACCURATE DATA. LET'S SEE HOW YOUR DATA STACKS UP.**

## DATA ACCURACY



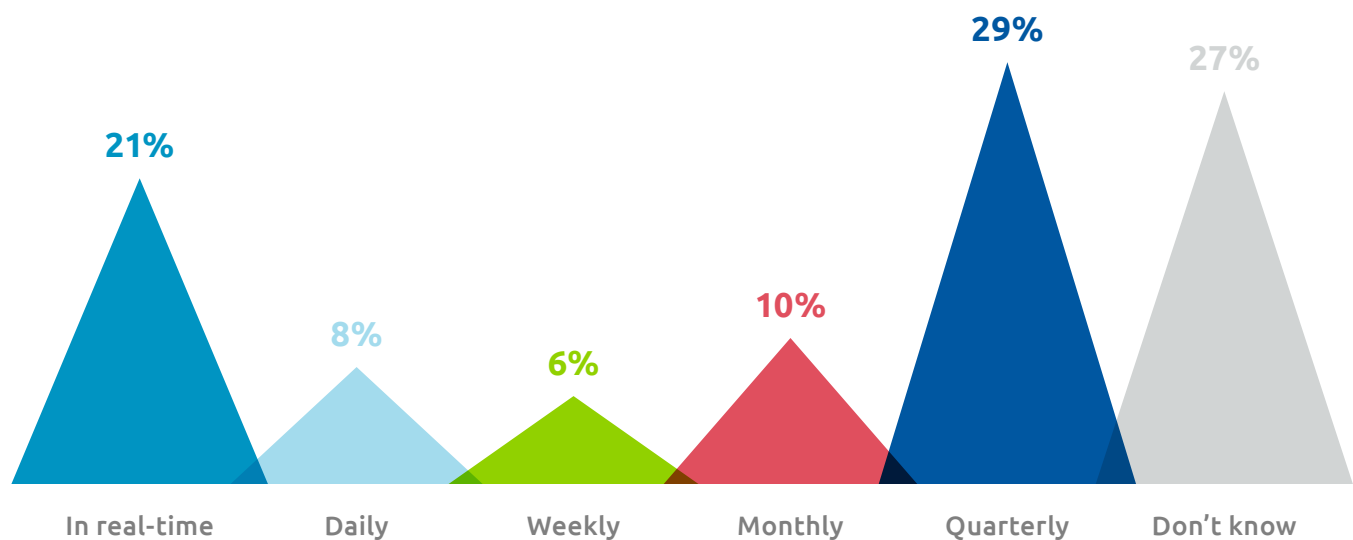
# Cleanse Your Contact Records

Keeping prospect and customer information up-to-date and accurate continues to vex many B2B marketers. Many are simply not performing data cleansing often enough to keep track of their B2B contacts.

With insight from the health check, you can strategically clean up your contact data by following these steps:

1. Consider suppressing contacts that are misaligned to your audience definition. It makes no sense to invest resources and time on contacts that play no role in the buying process.
2. Apply real-time hygiene to the eligible contacts to isolate both bad and problematic data. The data quality scores will recalibrate based on the real-time processing results. Contacts assigned a low quality score may require further vetting or, in cases where their value is marginal, suppression from the account.
3. Fill in missing fields and enrich the data with attributes that provide a more complete view of the contact. Your attention can now be focused on marketing to the highest quality contacts.

## FREQUENCY OF DATA CLEANSING FOR ACCURACY AND DATA QUALITY



Source: Database And Contact Acquisition Survey Report, Demand Gen Report

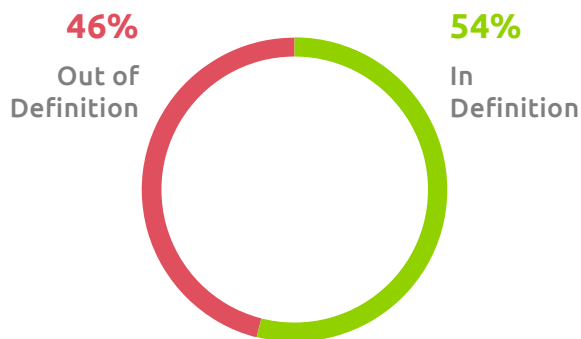
# Size the Addressable Market with a Contact Gap Analysis



Now that your data is clean and complete, you need to map the buying committee, including decision-makers, influencers and end-users, within each account. With a Contact Gap Analysis, you will learn the extent to which your house database contacts align to your audience definition, and you'll gain insight into the ones that you're currently missing. The analysis provides a clear lens into the state of your contact data and the addressable market, as the graphic below illustrates.

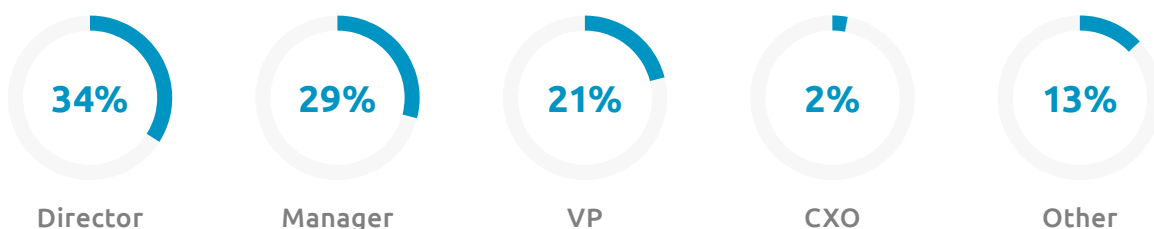
**BEST-IN-CLASS COMPANIES STRIVE FOR MORE THAN 70% OF THEIR CONTACT TO ALIGN TO THEIR AUDIENCE DEFINITION.**

## CONTACT ALIGNMENT / JOB LEVEL ANALYSIS



- In this hypothetical example, 54% of contacts align to the audience definition.
- Best-in-class companies strive for **in definition** to be >70%.
- Contacts **out of definition** should be evaluated to determine fit.

## JOB LEVEL



# CASE STUDY: BRAINSHARK

## Using High-Quality Data to Support Persona Marketing

Brainshark is the leading sales enablement company that helps businesses harness the power of content to drive sales productivity. Thousands of companies — including more than half of the Fortune 100 — rely on Brainshark to improve sales productivity and increase the impact of their sales, marketing and training.

### CHALLENGE

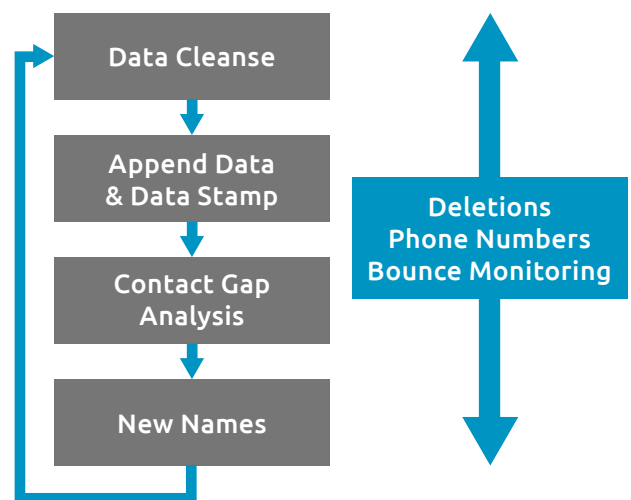
- Identify and remove bad data
- Validate and update contacts (executive move, change in level, function or persona status)
- Understand gaps in the database from both an account and contact standpoint

In the last year, after more than 15 years helping companies improve all types of business communications, Brainshark made a shift to a sales enablement focus and rebranded to demonstrate that commitment to the market. As a result, Brainshark's audience definition changed. This meant that sales and marketing began to collaborate on a targeting exercise to identify the proper buyer personas in strategic industries. With the audience definition in place, the marketing operations group was then tasked to optimize the contact database to support a variety of sales and marketing initiatives. Making the task even more challenging was that it involved data housed in Salesforce and Eloqua, and it needed to be done immediately.



**"OCEANOS HELPED US CREATE AN IMPACTFUL, MEASURABLE AND REPEATABLE PROCESS FOR KEEPING OUR DATABASE HEALTHY. AND WITH THE GAP ANALYSIS, WE HAVE INSIGHT ON WHAT ACCOUNTS OR TERRITORIES ARE MISSING THE TOP PERSONAS."**

- Kate Sarkissian O'Leary  
Senior Manager, Database Marketing,  
**Brainshark**





## SOLUTION

- Process contacts through a Data Health Check and apply recommended treatments
- Enrich contact data with firmographic and social data to improve persona assignment
- Run a Contact Gap Analysis to assist in account identification and contact sourcing

Brainshark collaborated with Oceanos to establish the optimal sequences of tasks. The first step was to run a Data Health Check, which provided key insight into both the quality and completeness of the contact data and assisted in establishing the appropriate hygiene treatments.

Once the contacts were clean and complete, Oceanos took inventory to better understand the contacts present and the ones missing at each account. This was accomplished by running a Contact Gap Analysis, which identified the percentage of contacts that aligned to the new audience definition, along with the greenfield, or net new contacts, that were available for sourcing. The gap results anchored the contact discovery to find the key contacts missing within each target account.

## RESULTS

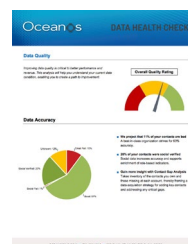
- **45%** contacts social verified
- **95K** outdated contacts flagged
- **30K** job title appended or updated
- **12,675** contacts and mapped to personas

The one-two punch of a Data Health Check followed with a Contact Gap Analysis provided clear visibility and accelerated the decision-making around both data hygiene and discovery.

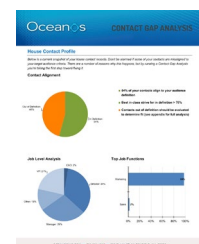
The Data Health Check armed Brainshark with valuable insight since the contacts were routed through a series of hygiene treatments that included email verification and social screening. The email verification not only isolated undeliverable emails, but also 675 high-risk contacts (likely spam traps, Do Not Email, etc.). The social screen identified incremental bad contacts representing 13.1% of the database, meaning these contacts passed email verification, but social intelligence signaled they were no longer employed at the company on client record.

The Contact Gap Analysis served to be even more valuable, since it was utilized in two ways. First, it pinpointed approximately 1,000 accounts where neither Brainshark or Oceanos could identify a single contact. These accounts were sidelined and manually reviewed and over 80% of them were deemed invalid (i.e. out of business, duplicate company, and subsidiary). This served to trim the name account list. Second, the gap results yielded that just under 40% of the contacts met the conditions of the new audience definition. It also uncovered the gaps, or the contacts missing based on level, function and sub function, at each account.

By using a Contact Gap Analysis, Oceanos designed a contact acquisition strategy to identify the most strategic contacts across the named accounts. These contacts were sourced, cleansed, enriched and delivered to the marketing operations group for persona mapping and import. And then it was just a series of rinse and repeat.



DATA HEALTH CHECK



CONTACT GAP ANALYSIS

# Design a Contact Acquisition Strategy

With an understanding of the gaps within your database, a contact discovery strategy is implemented to close the most important gaps first. Serving as a hub for contact data, Oceanos manages more than 145 million contact records. This volume enables our List Optimizer™ solution to search deep within a named account. Our expertise lies in leveraging your audience definition to find the best contacts for you with a high level of accuracy. The result is a more complete view of the buying committee within each key account.

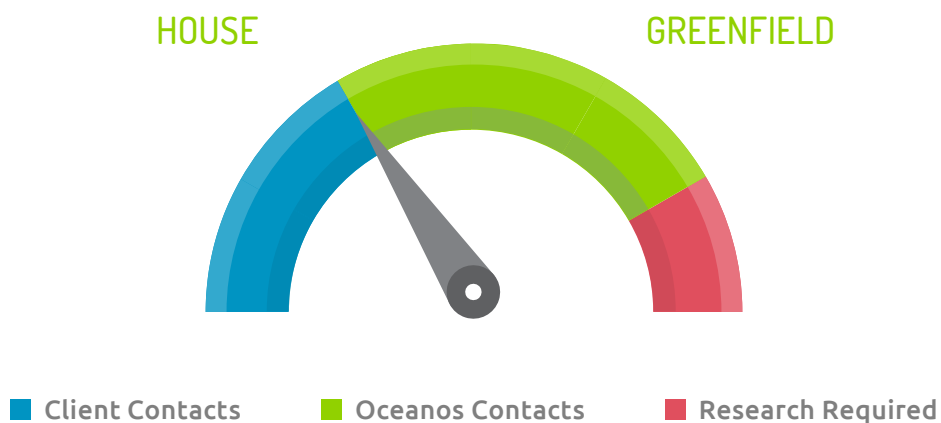
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## ADDRESSABLE MARKET ANALYSIS

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**IN THIS HYPOTHETICAL EXAMPLE, HOUSE CONTACTS COVER APPROXIMATELY 26% OF THE ADDRESSABLE MARKET.**

# Implement a Continual Contact Data Strategy



To increase ABM success, it's imperative that your contact data management strategy is ongoing. You need to maintain a quality standard for your house data, while simultaneously seeking "greenfield" contacts within each target account.

This is one area where some marketers are falling short, according to the *Database Marketing and Contact Acquisition Survey Report*.

Part of the challenge is that marketers are simply not performing data cleansing often enough to keep track of their B2B contacts. Twenty-nine percent of B2B marketer respondents said they only do so on a quarterly basis, and 27% said they don't even know how often their data is cleansed. A smaller percentage (10%) conduct data cleansing on a monthly basis, and 6% do so weekly.

One-fifth (21%) of B2B marketers are ahead of the curve when it comes to data accuracy; this segment indicated they are updating/cleaning their data in real-time.

With the data being a major pillar of ABM success, select a data partner that not only provides the contacts, but also delivers advisory services to ensure that you're optimizing your contact data.

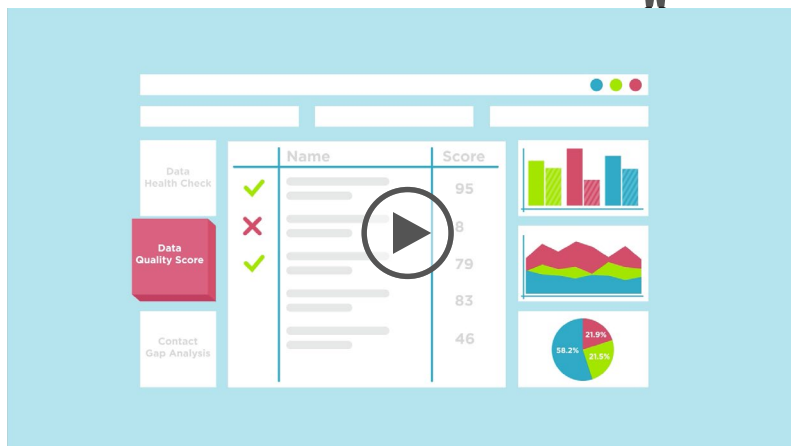
**YOU NEED TO MAINTAIN A QUALITY STANDARD FOR YOUR HOUSE DATA, WHILE SIMULTANEOUSLY SEEKING "GREENFIELD" CONTACTS WITHIN EACH TARGET ACCOUNT.**

# Conclusion

Optimizing contact data for account-based marketing initiatives is a process, and continuing that strategy and maintaining high-quality contact data is crucial.

Accurate, complete data will be a differentiator in any marketer's ABM program, and the payoff will make it a worthwhile pursuit. Data will always be in flux, and running these data analyses regularly will enable you to view the state of your contact database before degradation can occur. It will also ensure you are closing the most important gaps first.

By performing the Data Health Check and Contact Gap Analysis, you will assure your contact data is aligned for continued success with ABM.



**CHECK OUT THIS BRIEF VIDEO FOR MORE INFO ABOUT YOUR FREE DATA HEALTH CHECK AND CONTACT GAP ANALYSIS TODAY.**



## WANT TO LEARN MORE?

We design data management strategies that empower sales and marketing performance. We cleanse and enrich your data and help you find the key contacts missing within each account. The result is a wider top funnel that accelerates lead generation and revenue.

We not only have the data, but we wrap professional expertise with technology to produce unique solutions and deliver better results. We solve your data challenges so you can focus on generating marketing-attributed revenue.

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