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Research Report

ABM Maturity

What Sets Advanced Programs Apart

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This report examines the defining characteristics of advanced Account-Based Marketing (ABM) programs and how they differ from those still in early or developing stages. Based on proprietary survey data, desk research, and interviews with subject matter experts, it reveals the maturity markers, operational best practices, and common gaps that separate leaders from the rest.

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- [AI+ABM Inflection Point Report](#) 
- [2025 State of ABM Report: The Rise of Account-Based Go-To-Market](#) 
- [Account-Based GTM Certification Course\(s\)](#) 

I. Setting the Stage: The Promise of ABM Maturity and the Stakes of Falling Short

In the last two decades, ABM has transformed from a niche discipline into an increasingly dominant B2B strategy proven to deliver higher ROI than traditional B2B marketing¹. More than a decade of research from leading analyst firms and B2B research organizations has consistently shown that well-developed ABM programs with sound strategy and effective execution drive significant positive impact on critical business outcomes, including larger deal sizes, improved win rates, and greater return on targeted marketing efforts². These outcomes are harder to achieve through conventional demand generation, which rarely delivers the same value as a mature ABM program³.

Findings from ForgeX's 2025 State of ABM survey reinforce this point. When asked to compare the ROI of their ABM programs to other marketing programs within their organizations, respondents from organizations with an ABM program running for four to six years were significantly more likely to report "much higher" or "somewhat higher" ROI across all four deployment models. While years of running ABM do not automatically translate to maturity, sustained investment should typically strengthen programs. This may help explain why long-standing programs report more consistent ROI. By contrast, respondents with fewer than three years of experience were far more likely to say they were unsure about the ROI of their ABM program.

And yet, our survey data shows that most ABM programs are still relatively early in their lifecycle. The vast majority of respondents reported having only 0–3 years of investment in any deployment model. This indicates that while adoption of ABM is now widespread⁴, many programs are still in their formative stages. Furthermore, many ABM programs plateau, regress, or are even abandoned before they are given a chance to progress toward advanced maturity. As a result, the full promise of ABM remains unrealized in many organizations.

This report, grounded in multidimensional research, explores the traits and practices that distinguish mature ABM programs from their less advanced counterparts while recognizing that there is no single blueprint, milestone, or threshold that definitively marks ABM maturity. Maturity is a relative state that reflects each organization's unique goals, industry dynamics, and available resources. Maturity also looks different depending on the ABM deployment model or combination of models in use, as each is guided by a distinct strategic framework. It evolves over time as capabilities deepen and business priorities shift.

The patterns identified in this report offer a view of what is possible when organizations commit to operationalizing account-based strategies with intention, consistency, and adequate resourcing.

1 *Account-based Marketing. The Definitive Handbook for B2B Marketers.* Bev Burgess

2 <https://momentumitsma.com/global-account-based-marketing-benchmark>

3 <https://www.gartner.com/en/webinar/640361/1416050>

4 <https://www.destinationcrm.com/Articles/CRM-Insights/Insight/ABM-Grows-but-Limits-Persist-168334.aspx>

A clear understanding of what mature ABM looks like provides organizations a vision to build toward. That clarity, in turn, helps teams align more effectively and overcome the barriers that stand in the way of building a durable, successful program.

II. Common Barriers Preventing ABM Programs From Advancing to Maturity

In ForgeX's [2025 State of ABM survey](#), B2B marketers identified the top three obstacles to success in ABM as insufficient budget, a lack of an internal understanding of the deployment models, and a lack of internal alignment on the definition of ABM. Other frequently cited challenges included a lack of sales/marketing alignment, poorly constructed Target Account Lists, and an insufficient or poorly implemented tech stack.

These challenges reflect a recurring pattern: organizations often underestimate what it takes to build and sustain a successful ABM program. In fact, a 2025 study by Sloane Staffing found that while participation in ABM programs is widespread, only 15% of organizations describe their efforts as "well established," with the majority still in early or transitional stages of maturity⁵.

To deliver meaningful value, ABM must be treated as a long-term, strategic approach to go-to-market. Many programs that carry an ABM label fall short because they lack foundational elements, leaving little room for meaningful evolution. Getting started is easy, driving long-term impact is not. While piloting and experimentation is encouraged, truly delivering on the promise of ABM requires sustained execution and progressively more sophisticated orchestration over time.

III. Traits, Capabilities and Practices that Signal Maturity

Maturity in today's ABM landscape is reflected in a set of interconnected traits, capabilities, and practices that fall into three broad categories: *Strategic Clarity and Commitment*, *Precise Program Design and Execution*, and *Insight-Driven Optimization and Performance Management*. These categories serve as reliable markers of maturity that are broadly relevant across ABM programs, even when goals and approaches vary. To that end, this section focuses on maturity signals applicable to ABM as a holistic strategy; traits unique to specific deployment models are explored in the proceeding section.

⁵ <https://www.sloane-staffing.com/the-2025-abx-talent-benchmark-report>

Strategic Clarity and Commitment

- **Executive buy-in.** Executive sponsorship plays a pivotal role in securing adequate resourcing, sustaining cross-functional support, and removing roadblocks. A 2022 joint study by the ABM Leadership Alliance and ITSMA found that 84% of companies with successful ABM programs have strong executive sponsorship⁶. In mature programs, this sponsorship is not a one-time endorsement but an ongoing commitment that champions the program and empowers ABM leaders to execute effectively.
- **An ABM charter.** Mature ABM programs are anchored by a formal charter that defines the program's scope, objectives, stakeholders, and chosen deployment model(s). This foundational document aligns cross-functional teams by clarifying expectations, establishing shared goals, and articulating how ABM will deliver business value. Although a charter is something that should be established in the early stages of implementing an ABM program, many organizations move forward without one, limiting alignment and long-term cohesion. In fact, the [2025 ForgeX State of ABM survey](#) found that only 33% of organizations have a documented ABM charter in place.
- **Embedded cross-functional interlocks.** Research from LinkedIn found that 87% of sales and marketing leaders say collaboration between sales and marketing enables critical business growth⁷. But collaboration is just the foundation. Mature ABM programs move beyond surface-level alignment, which often reflects goodwill and cooperation but lacks the depth needed for consistent impact. Instead, sustained interlocks across functions that create measurable synergies are established. These interlocks build upon shared goals and extend to joint processes, pooled resources, and mutual accountability. For example, when ABM and partner marketing teams collaborate, they can often reach broader audiences, deepen engagement, and realize more cost-effective campaign touchpoints. The 2024 State of Partner Marketing Study from Foundry found that 91 percent of organizations with a formal partner marketing strategy see increased effectiveness and ROI satisfaction⁸. These types of cross-functional interlocks are intentionally sustained through structured planning cycles, integrated performance metrics, shared technology, and clearly defined cross-team processes.
- **Dedicated ABM teams or roles.** Dedicated headcount is almost always a prerequisite for building a fully developed ABM program. Without it, ABM efforts risk remaining in a perpetual pilot phase or becoming a secondary responsibility layered onto existing roles. Encouragingly, 57% of respondents in the [ForgeX 2025 State of ABM survey](#) reported working in organizations with dedicated ABM headcount, and a majority of those organizations plan to further increase that investment. An additional 16% indicated plans to initiate ABM-specific roles or teams. Findings from The Inflexion Group echo this trend, with 40% of organizations reporting

⁶ https://5356237.fs1.hubspotusercontent-na1.net/hubfs/5356237/MomentumITSMAABMLA_ABMSurvey2022_ElevatingABM_Dec2022_Final.pdf

⁷ <https://business.linkedin.com/content/dam/me/business/en-us/marketing-solutions/cx/2020/images/pdfs/moments-of-trust-v4.pdf>

⁸ <https://foundryco.com/news/partner-marketing-success-drives-confidence-and-increased-investment/>

dedicated ABM teams and 58% anticipating headcount growth in the year ahead⁹. These figures suggest growing recognition that ABM requires specialized focus and that mature programs invest accordingly. However, only 3% of respondents in a 2025 Sloane Staffing study said they were “extremely confident” in their team’s current ability to meet ABM-specific talent needs, indicating few organizations have built the talent infrastructure required for maturity¹⁰.

- **Account-Based Strategies are Applied Across the Entirety of GTM Functions.** ABM has become a shared go-to-market strategy embraced across functions. In fact, in a question addressing the extent to which cross-functional teams or functions are influenced by Account-Based Go-To-Market strategies in the [2025 ForgeX State of ABM survey](#)¹¹, not a single respondent¹² said account-based strategies do not influence other core GTM functions. And nearly half indicated that all five functions (Sales, Demand Gen, Product Marketing, Customer Success, and xDRs) are influenced to at least some extent (see Figure 3). Mature ABM programs intentionally champion account-based strategies across the business and enable other functions in their adoption.

⁹ <https://inflexiongroup.com/resources/reorganising-for-abm-trends-in-spend-headcount-and-team-roles/>

¹⁰ <https://www.sloane-staffing.com/the-2025-abx-talent-benchmark-report>

¹¹ <https://research-hub.forgeai.com/research/items/2025-state-of-abm-report-the-rise-of-account-based-go-to-market?fw=90877>

¹² n=116



What I've seen is that mature ABM programs are typically visionary by nature. A seasoned ABM leader is willing to take the lead on initiatives they've never seen done publicly before. You have to look beyond existing benchmarks, case studies, and playbooks—and instead have a perspective about the future and champion bold new ideas.

— Helana Zhang, Head of Global ABM, Regional DG, Partner Marketing, Atlassian



Time is one of the biggest factors [in maturity] because it takes just that. It's an investment. It takes time to build upon and iterate.

— Amber Bogie, Director, Global Marketing, UCC, GoTo

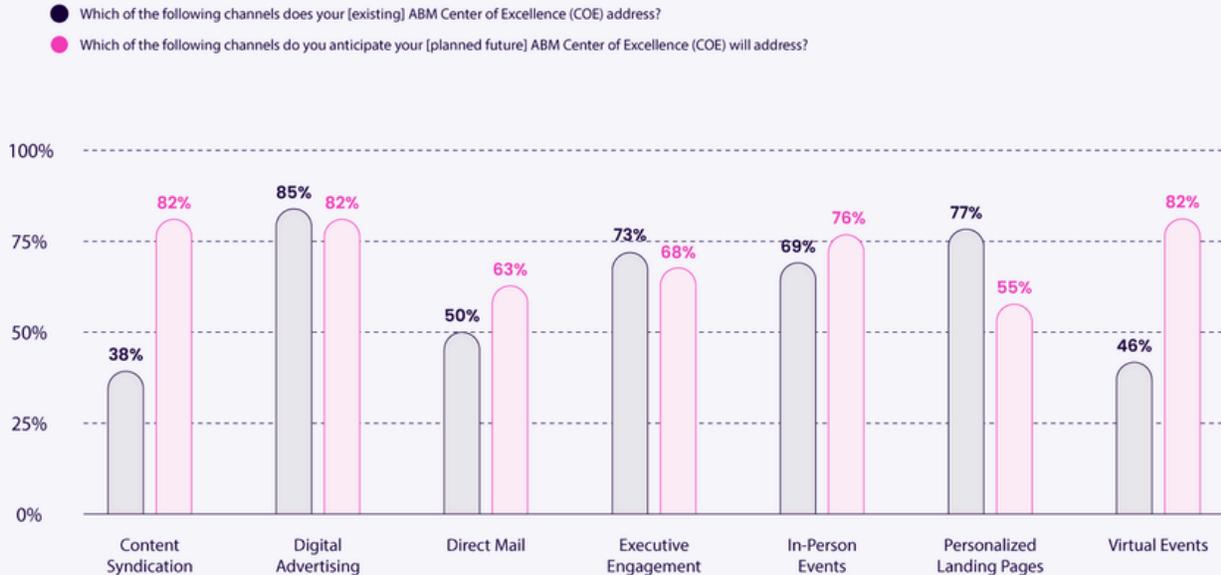
Precise Program Design and Execution

- **A Well-Documented ICP.** Mature ABM programs are grounded in a clearly defined Ideal Customer Profile (ICP) that actively guides account selection, campaign design, and prioritization. These programs revisit and refine their ICP regularly, ensuring it reflects current buying patterns, firmographic and technographic fit, and real-world engagement signals. 40% of respondents in the [2025 State of ABM survey](#) reported having a “very well-defined” ICP. However, 47% reported a “somewhat well-defined” ICP, 10% reported a “somewhat poorly-defined” ICP and 1% reported having a “poorly-defined” ICP.
- **Sophisticated Account Selection and Prioritization.** Accurate and timely account selection and prioritization is a strategic process, critical to directing resources toward the accounts with the highest potential impact while simultaneously actively avoiding investment in poor-fit accounts. This process can be manual and/or done using dedicated technology tools, relying on the use of varied data and insights and cross-functional input from sales and customer success.
- **A Center of Excellence (CoE).** According to the 2025 ForgeX State of ABM survey, only 22% of organizations have a CoE for ABM in place. Yet those that do report more balance and more consistent ROI performance across all ABM deployment models and are more likely to outperform other marketing programs within their organization. Mature programs maintained a centralized CoE, whether it is organized as a team, working group, and/or federated model, to consolidate ABM expertise, standardize best practices, and drive consistency across teams, regions, and lines of business. In larger or more distributed organizations, a well-developed CoE provides governance that supports coordinated execution, resource sharing, and alignment across multiple ABM teams. Furthermore, a mature CoE should provide strategic guidance across the different channels leveraged by ABM programs. However, the 2025 ForgeX State of ABM survey revealed that organizations that plan to establish CoEs expect to support a full range of channels. However, relatively few existing CoEs support key channels such as content syndication and virtual events today (See Figure 1)¹³.

¹³ Note: Percentages reflect responses from a subset of the 2025 State of ABM survey participants: 26 organizations with a CoE in place (current state) and 38 anticipating a CoE in the future (future state).

Figure 1

ABM Centers of Excellence: Current vs. Future Channel Focus



Source: ForgeX 2025 State of ABM survey (118 total respondents)
 n=68

- Team training, enablement and professional development.** ABM-specific training and certifications are viewed as a strategic investment by organizations that understand their role as a springboard to building internal expertise, standardizing approaches, and driving program impact. Research from ITSMA has shown that ABM programs supported by formal training programs outperform those without¹⁴. According to the *ForgeX 2025 State of ABM* survey, 40% of respondents hold ABM-specific certifications, and that number rises to 47% among those in dedicated ABM roles.
- Operationalizing Around Buying Groups.** According to research from LinkedIn¹⁵, the average buying group includes 7 decision-makers, with 12–14 participants being common in enterprise

¹⁴ https://5356237.fs1.hubspotusercontent-na1.net/hubfs/5356237/MomentumITSMAABMLA_ABMSurvey2022_ElevatingABM_Dec2022_Final.pdf

¹⁵ <https://www.linkedin.com/business/sales/blog/b2b-sales/how-to-get-closer-to-the-buying-committee>

technology purchases. Research from Gartner shows that today's buying groups are more complex than ever, with each member of the buying group armed with 4 or 5 pieces of information they've gathered independently with the intent to either support, delay, or even derail a purchase¹⁶. In response, mature ABM programs adopt opportunity-based frameworks rather than lead-centric playbooks, to enable personalized, multi-threaded engagement across all members of the buying group. They also work with Ops teams to ensure the technology tools used for ABM support processes tailored to buying group engagement. For mature programs, operationalizing around buying groups in this manner is a hallmark of high performance. A 2024–2025 study from Forrester Research found that organizations embracing buying groups and signal-based engagement saw a 17x increase in conversion rates and a 4x improvement in win rates¹⁷.

¹⁶ <https://www.gartner.com/en/sales/insights/b2b-buying-journey#:~:text=Successful%20sales%20organizations%20accommodate%20the,a%20high%2Dquality%20purchasing%20decision>

¹⁷ <https://www.demandbase.com/resources/webinar/b2b-buying-groups-beyond-mqls/>



A lot of companies have buyer persona documentation, but the most mature organizations understand the people behind the personas at a visceral level. They know their persona like a friend, what they think and feel, their tastes, and they can engage with them more creatively. They have phenomenal amounts of information about the individuals within their target accounts and the environment and industry they're operating in.

— Kara Alcamo, Founder & CEO, Alcamo Marketing



We started by looking at industry benchmarks and saw that most organizations were converting MQLs to bookings at under 1%. That prompted us to evaluate our own data, and we found our conversion rate was only slightly better, between 1 and 2%. At that point, we had to ask ourselves why we were investing so heavily in a process that was barely working. We knew there must be a way to improve efficacy. We found it by operationalizing buying groups. Even with just 60 days to stand up the initial program, we saw an early measurable impact. Now, years in, there's no scenario in which we would ever go back.

— Joel Jacob, Director of Marketing Operations, Reltio

Insights-Driven Optimization and Performance Management

- **Account-Centric Measurement and Reporting.** Mature ABM programs invest in infrastructure and reporting processes that reflect the complexity of account-based buying and the long-term nature of ABM outcomes. They define success metrics up front in partnership with cross-functional stakeholders and focus on account-centric indicators such as engagement depth, progression across opportunity stages, and revenue influence. The reporting is then used to inform ongoing optimization, enabling continuous improvement in targeting, content and asset creation, and tactical deployment based on reliable engagement and performance data.
- **Effective Use of Technology, Including AI-Enabled Tools.** According to the 2025 ForgeX State of ABM survey¹⁸, very few organizations plan to reduce their investment in marketing technology (see Figure 2). Separate ForgeX research on the intersection of AI and ABM found that 91% of B2B marketers report adopting AI to support ABM. Meanwhile, a study by Enterprise Strategy Group found that 80% of B2B marketers say AI has “super-charged” their programs, with 83% reporting positive ROI¹⁹. According to recent research from McKinsey, 85% of B2B teams using generative AI report improved pipeline outcomes²⁰. Separate research from SurveyMonkey found that 85% of marketers say AI makes them feel more creative and confident in their work²¹, while data from ActiveCampaign shows marketers are saving an average of 13 hours per week through AI-enabled efficiencies²². These outcomes suggest that mature teams aren’t just using AI – they’re using it to elevate impact across both strategic planning and day-to-day execution. While encouraging, adoption alone is not a marker of maturity. Advanced programs integrate the right tools into day-to-day workflows and continuously optimize them to support scale, precision, and adaptability. Separate studies from McKinsey and Gartner collectively show that mature B2B marketing programs are distinguishable by structured data²³, well-connected data systems, and consistent attribution models²⁴.

18 <https://research-hub.forgeai.com/research/items/2025-state-of-abm-report-the-rise-of-account-based-go-to-market>

19 <https://www.snowflake.com/content/dam/snowflake-site/en/landing-pages/radical-roi-ai/report-gen-ai-research-report.pdf>

20 <https://www.mckinsey.com/capabilities/growth-marketing-and-sales/our-insights/an-unconstrained-future-how-generative-ai-could-reshape-b2b-sales>

21 <https://www.surveymonkey.com/mp/ai-marketing-statistics/>

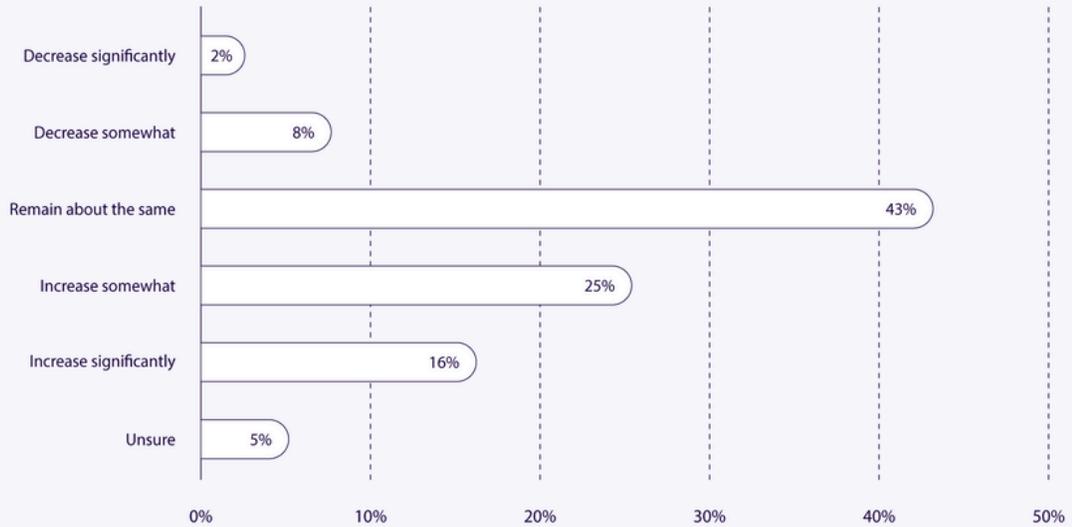
22 <https://www.activecampaign.com/reports/13-hours-back-each-week>

23 <https://www.clickz.com/p/structured-data-is-the-missing-link-in-marketing-decision-making>

24 <https://medium.com/%40tarifabeach/why-b2b-marketers-want-roi-but-dont-always-get-it-db97db7e9fa6>

Figure 2

Please select the option that best reflects your expectation for your organization's estimated budget for 2025 in comparison to 2024 specifically for Account-Based Marketing (ABM) in Marketing Technology.



Source: ForgeX 2025 State of ABM survey (118 total respondents)
n=91

Number of Functions influenced to some extent by Account-Based GTM Strategies (the 5 options provided included: Sales, Demand Gen, Product Marketing, Customer Success, and xDRs)



- 1 Function Influenced (4%)
- 2 Functions Influenced (6%)
- 3 Functions Influenced (19%)
- 4 Functions Influenced (23%)
- 5 Functions Influenced (48%)

Source: ForgeX 2025 State of ABM survey (118 total respondents)
n=115

Figure 3



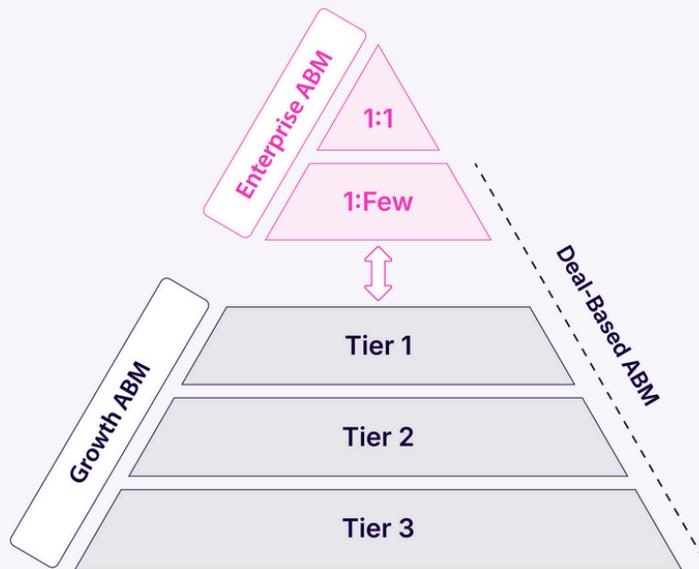
More B2B marketing teams are using AI to do repetitive work so they can focus on bigger-picture goals like refining go-to-market plans, improving product-market fit, and understanding their customers better. But using AI well takes more than speed or automation. In B2B, trust is critical. When teams use AI without clear guardrails or empathy, that trust can erode quickly. People still expect real connection, even as more of the work becomes automated.

— Liza Adams, AI Advisor & Go-to-Market Strategist, GrowthPath Partners

IV. ABM Maturity in Context Across the Deployment Models

While some markers of maturity appear universally, many either manifest differently or, in some cases, are entirely unique to the specific ABM deployment models. Enterprise ABM, Growth ABM, and Deal-Based ABM each require following a distinct strategic framework and therefore have unique resourcing requirements and execution dynamics. When looking at maturity, as with any other dimension of ABM, it is essential to begin with the understanding that ABM is not a monolith. Recognizing what maturity looks like in each deployment model helps organizations advance the right capabilities with precision and evolve their programs more effectively over time.

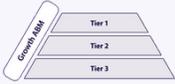
Figure 4



Source: ForgeX Modernized ABM Deployment Models

ABM Deployment Model Definitions

Figure 4

Classification/ Category	Deployment Model	Definition
<p>Enterprise ABM</p> 	<p>1:1 ABM</p>	<p>Highly personalized, strategic engagement with a small number of individual key accounts. Each account is treated as a market-of-one, with a dedicated, multi-touch campaign plan tailored to the account’s unique context, priorities, and buying groups. This approach requires close collaboration with the account’s sales owner(s), custom content development, and a high level of resource commitment per account. Each full-time 1:1 ABM practitioner can cover a maximum of 3-8 accounts at any given time.</p>
	<p>1:Few ABM</p>	<p>Targets small clusters of accounts with shared characteristics (best practice is to cluster accounts based on a common industry sub-vertical). Each cluster typically contains no more than 25 accounts. Each cluster is treated as a market-of-one, with dedicated, multi-touch campaigns tailored to the cluster’s context, shared priorities, and buying groups. Each full-time 1:Few ABM practitioner can cover a maximum of 1-4 account clusters at any given time.</p>
<p>Growth ABM</p> 	<p>1:Many ABM</p>	<p>An always-on ABM approach that leverages automated workflows and is designed for a larger set of target accounts. Accounts are scored, prioritized, and grouped into tiers – with tier 1 accounts receiving more personalization and lower tiers engaged through scalable, programmatic tactics. This model enables broad reach while focusing resources where they can have the greatest impact.</p>
<p>(Applicable to both Enterprise ABM and Growth ABM)</p> 	<p>Deal-Based ABM</p>	<p>Also known as pursuit marketing or Deal Acceleration, this short-term, highly targeted approach supports specific, high-value opportunities already in the sales pipeline. It centers on quickly influencing key decision-makers and stakeholders to accelerate deal progression and close-won outcomes, usually with close sales alignment and agile execution.</p>

Enterprise ABM

Enterprise ABM is a deployment model category that encompasses both 1:1 ABM and 1:Few ABM. According to the 2025 ForgeX State of ABM survey, 66% of organizations practicing ABM leverage one or both of these deployment models. However, our survey data also shows that many of these programs lack core maturity signals. For example, fewer than 40% follow best practice on staffing ratios (e.g., marketer-to-account, marketer-to-account cluster), nearly one third consider generating Marketing Qualified Leads (MQLs) a primary goal, and approximately 54% of respondents identified a lack of sales and marketing alignment as a top challenge.

Figure 5



Source: ForgeX 2025 State of ABM survey

In fact, at 54%, misalignment between sales and marketing was more frequently cited as a challenge than with other deployment models. This is despite Enterprise ABM inherently depending on close collaboration between the two functions. This high level of strategic cross-functional alignment and collaboration is critical to achieve precise execution of highly personalized, multi-channel campaigns tailored to individual accounts or account clusters.

Mature Enterprise ABM programs typically exhibit the following characteristics:

- **Rigorous Account Selection:** Sophisticated processes for selecting accounts or clusters to admit to the program are employed. We advise leveraging research-backed scoring and

prioritization models (e.g., the F.I.R.E. model²⁵). These models consider strategic fit, intent data and other buying signals, relationships, in-market recency, and engagement levels to ensure efforts are focused on accounts offering the most opportunity. This reduces waste and increases impact.

- **Dedicated Resourcing:** Enterprise ABM Practitioners should be assigned to a small number of accounts or clusters. Best practice is to assign no more than 3–8 accounts per full-time marketer for 1:1 ABM or 1–4 account clusters per full-time marketer for 1:Few ABM. However, in ForgeX's 2025 State of ABM survey, 41% of respondents running 1:1 ABM assigned more than 8 accounts per full-time marketer, while 59% of respondents running 1:Few ABM assigned more than 4 account clusters per full-time marketer, suggesting that many programs have yet to address staffing in Enterprise ABM appropriately. Additionally, 58% of respondents running 1:Few ABM reported having more than 25 accounts in at least one of their clusters, a volume that typically undermines the ability to deliver meaningful, cluster-specific customization.
- **Robust Engagement Plans:** Each account or cluster has a tailored, insight-driven engagement plan developed in collaboration with sales. These engagement plans are built around achieving narrow account- or cluster-specific goals and typically call for engagement across multiple channels. Mature programs do not simply create these plans to sit idle. They execute against them continuously and treat them as living documents that are regularly revised as new insights are gathered or goals shift.
- **Custom Content:** Teams are equipped to create or adapt account- or cluster-specific content and campaign assets relatively quickly, often through a mix of manual and tech-driven approaches.
- **Structured, Deep Collaboration with Sales:** Mature programs operate with clearly defined workflows, often anchored by account plans created by Sales and shared with Marketing supported through frequent communication and regular working sessions. Sales plays an active role in both planning and execution of marketing campaigns.
- **Long-Term Investment in Named Accounts and/or Account Clusters:** Accounts and/or account clusters are rarely added midstream. Selection is deliberate and stable, allowing campaigns to play out over time. Ideally, the majority of accounts and/or account clusters will remain in the program for the long term, ideally multiple years.
- **Tailored Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):** The KPIs most B2B marketers are familiar with are designed for broad-reaching, high-scale marketing. In contrast, mature Enterprise ABM programs rely on KPIs that focus at the account- or cluster-level, measuring progress toward goals specific to an individual account (for 1:1 ABM) or a defined account group (for 1:Few ABM). This is reflected in metrics such as depth of engagement, percent of the buying group engaged, relationship progression, and influence on opportunity development.

²⁵ <https://www.demandgenreport.com/demanding-views/how-to-use-fit-intent-recency-engagement-f-i-r-e-for-go-to-market-strategies/5265/>

- **Acceptance of the Relatively Heavy Reliance on Manual Processes:** Technology plays an important and growing enabling role in Enterprise ABM, long known for being heavily dependent on manual processes. Research from ForgeX shows that AI-enabled tools in particular are starting to reduce the manual lift in areas like account research and copywriting, freeing up the marketing practitioner's time to focus on creative and collaborative workstreams²⁶. Mature programs embrace technology for applicable use cases while recognizing that technology tools are not a silver bullet. They cannot replace the hands-on effort required to build long-term relationships with key internal stakeholders nor manage every step in planning and executing deeply customized, multi-threaded engagement to influence the entirety of ever-changing, increasingly complex buying committees²⁷.

Growth ABM

Growth ABM is built for scale. Maturity in this model is therefore measured by the sophistication of account segmentation, the orchestration of scalable campaigns, and the operational rigor behind them. All of these measures depend largely on technology tools to reach advanced maturity. AI-enabled tools are now allowing for far greater efficiency and scale. However, just 19% percent of respondents in ForgeX's recent AI+ABM survey²⁸ said that their organization currently has an AI roadmap for ABM in place, suggesting a significant gap in maturity in this area. Mature Growth ABM programs often rely on dynamic account tiering, rule-based program enrollment, and integrated data sources to ensure the right accounts receive the right level of engagement. AI is playing an increasingly important role here, from enabling predictive insights to powering decision logic for program workflows. Marketing operations is a critical partner in this model, helping to build and maintain the infrastructure that supports responsive, data-driven execution at scale.

Mature Growth ABM programs typically exhibit the following characteristics:

- **Tech-Enabled Account Scoring and Prioritization.** Mature Growth ABM programs use technology tools to automatically and dynamically score and prioritize accounts. Most ABM platforms and several point solutions offer out-of-the-box functionality for account scoring, prioritization, and tiering. Customizing these tools and integrating them with proprietary data sources significantly improves accuracy and outcomes. Best-in-class implementations are able to ingest and interpret at least three distinct sources of intent data, alongside first-party behavioral and engagement signals, to determine which accounts receive which level of engagement. This ensures focus and operational efficiency across a large and diverse TAL. According to 2023 research from Foundry²⁹, 91% of ABM programs use intent data/scoring to prioritize their accounts. Mature programs leverage at least 3 intent data sources to minimize the impact of false negative and false positive signals.

²⁶ <https://research-hub.forgeai.com/the-ai-abm-inflection-point-report>

²⁷ <https://corporatevisions.com/blog/b2b-buying-behavior-statistics-trends>

²⁸ <https://research-hub.forgeai.com/the-ai-abm-inflection-point-report/>

²⁹ <https://foundryco.com/news/95-of-tech-marketers-expect-an-increase-in-their-abm-budgets-over-the-next-year/>

- **Consistent Delivery of Relevant Digital Touchpoints at Scale.** Mature Growth ABM programs demonstrate operational discipline in orchestrating data-triggered, multi-tier campaigns that deliver relevant messaging across digital channels such as programmatic advertising, paid social, and display retargeting. These campaigns are aligned to account tiers and stages of the buying journey, often activated by a combination of buying signals. Mature programs ensure that outreach is timely and meaningful, avoiding generic messaging in favor of content tailored to each account's context and buying readiness. All of this is achieved at scale.
- **Ability to Modularize Content.** Mature Growth ABM programs structure content in a modular way, tagging core elements by applicability to groups such as personas, industry verticals, accounts in specific buying stages, and account tiers. This enables the responsive and impactful assembly of tailored content for account segments without the overhead of creating net-new assets for every campaign. The most mature organizations operationalize this through content management systems and personalization tools that automate the assembly and distribution of modular components automatically, delivering relevance at scale while maintaining efficiency.
- **Highly Automated, Yet Personalized Nurture and Trigger-Based Outreach.** Mature programs build outreach workflows that are orchestrated using automation platforms that respond to buying signals and account behavior. Best-in-class programs often include dynamic nurture streams, SDR alerts, or campaign enrollment logic that ensures timely and consistent engagement without overloading internal teams.
- **Data-Driven Use of The Full-Range of Buying Signals.** Mature programs integrate and act on buying signals across all four data types: zero-party (volunteered), first-party (observed), second-party (shared by partners), and third-party (aggregated from external sources).
- **Automated, Integrated Tier-Level Analytics and Optimization.** Mature Growth ABM programs rely on scalable reporting systems that deliver visibility across the entire TAL, typically organized by tiers. Dashboards track reach, engagement, funnel progression, and influenced pipeline at the tier- and account-level, enabling operational teams to quickly identify what's working, pause or adjust underperforming tactics, and continuously improve programs at scale.
- **Highly Scaled Omnichannel Coordination.** In mature Growth ABM programs, outreach across digital and offline channels is deliberately sequenced and aligned to buying stage, data signals, and tier-specific goals. Campaign workflows are built to coordinate paid media, email, direct mail, SDRs, webinars, and events in a cohesive way, supported by automation and integrated systems that ensure consistency and reduce duplication across the TAL.
- **Automated Rules-Based Tiering of Accounts.** Program workflows are designed to automatically enroll accounts into tiers based on predefined logic.
- **A Seamless Interlock with Marketing Operations (MOPs).** Marketing operations is a critical enabler of mature Growth ABM programs, managing system logic, maintaining data flows,

and ensuring the integrity of dashboards and enrollment rules. MOPs teams also play a central role in adapting programs in response to performance insights or changing business priorities.

Deal-Based ABM

Deal-Based ABM is typically reactive, triggered by the receipt of a high-value request for quote, qualified request from sales in anticipation of a request for quote, and/or well-vetted buying signals. As such, maturity in this model hinges on the ability to anticipate or respond to the right deals at the right time by moving quickly, maintaining relevance, and working in close coordination with the sales account team. This requires both budget fluidity and operational agility. According to research from the Inflexion Group, the average campaign spend is approximately 1% of the deal value³⁰. Yet, according to the 2025 ForgeX State of ABM survey, 95% of respondents running a Deal-Based ABM program cited insufficient budget as a top challenge, underscoring that larger allocations may be necessary.

When properly resourced and executed, Deal-Based ABM becomes a high-impact lever for pipeline acceleration and late-stage influence.

Mature Deal-Based ABM programs typically exhibit the following characteristics:

- **Strategic Qualification and Early Involvement.** Mature programs see sales and marketing teams align on clear, predefined criteria for identifying which opportunities warrant ABM support. This way, the marketing team is engaged early, allowing sufficient time to shape differentiated value propositions, define win themes, and build multichannel plans that influence outcomes.
- **Embedded Partnership with Sales Deal Teams Once a Deal is Being Pursued.** Mature programs ensure the marketing team is deeply embedded into the deal pursuit team, allowing for ongoing collaboration, alignment, and swift execution. Furthermore, a mature Deal-Based ABM team is equipped to support a wide range of sales objectives, tailoring strategies and tactics to all key milestones in the deal pursuit process in alignment with each opportunity's unique context, including:
 - Accelerating deal velocity
 - Expanding deal size
 - Breaking into a closed-off or changing buying group
 - Combating competitive threats or objectives
 - Reigniting a stalled or previously lost opportunity
 - Demonstrating the ability to adhere to specific vendor requirements
- **Ability to Deliver Purpose-Built Experiences to Accelerate and Expand Deals.** Mature

³⁰ <https://inflexiongroup.com/resources/are-you-planning-to-use-pursuit-marketing-next-year/>

programs identify and engage the full buying committee using high-touch, experience-based tactics such as innovation workshops, executive roundtables or panel discussions, lunch & learns, and dimensional direct mail. These interactions are designed to strengthen relationships, reinforce value propositions, and address stakeholder-specific priorities and objections.

- **Governance to Avoid Channel Conflict and Outreach Redundancy.** Mature programs carefully synchronize with other marketing functions, such as demand generation and field marketing, to prevent message conflict, channel fatigue, or redundant outreach.
- **Outcome-Based, Deal-Specific Measurement.** Mature programs have mechanisms to measure marketing's influence on deal progression, win rates, deal velocity, and deal size, even when supporting a small volume of high-stakes opportunities.

According to our 2025 State of ABM survey, Deal-Based ABM is still a relatively new initiative for most organizations, with investments concentrated in the past 0–3 years. With most organizations still in the early stages, examples of fully-mature ABM programs using this deployment model may still be rare.

Employing Multiple Deployment Models Simultaneously

Using multiple deployment models in parallel is often a signal of greater maturity, as it enables organizations to more efficiently allocate resources and support differing business goals concurrently—reserving 1:1 ABM for strategic accounts with multiple large and complex deals to pursue, 1:Few ABM for high-potential account clusters, Growth ABM for broader coverage of the TAL, and Deal-Based ABM for in-pipeline opportunities that require targeted support to progress or close. Keep in mind, while certain practices or resources from one ABM deployment model can sometimes be adapted for use in another, such as repurposing an account-specific engagement plan for a relevant 1:Few cluster or applying sub-vertical clusters as segments in a 1:Many program, the models themselves are not designed to be blended. Doing so risks diluting the strategies and undermining the distinct purpose of each approach.

The most effective and most mature ABM programs incorporate multiple deployment models simultaneously. In the 2025 ForgeX State of ABM survey, 81% of organizations practicing ABM leverage 2 or more deployment models simultaneously³¹. The data also showed that respondents leveraging multiple deployment were more likely to report ABM delivering higher ROI when compared to other marketing programs, relative to those using only one model.

³¹ This data comes from the ForgeX 2025 State of ABM survey. Respondents were asked to specify how many years their organization has been investing in 1:1, 1:Few, 1:Many, and/or Deal-based ABM. Out of a total of 118 survey respondents, for 1:1 ABM n=50, for 1:Few ABM n=62, for 1:Many ABM n=68, and for Deal-based ABM n=38.



If you want to scale and have a best-in-class program, then I would encourage you to connect with other practitioners in the field. The ABM community is extremely positive and supportive. So I'd recommend proactively connecting with peers and other leaders and asking for their perspective.

— Laura Matthews, Director Global Account-Based Marketing, UiPath

V. Research Methodology

This report was created using multidimensional research process that includes:

Survey Research

The report draws from a body of ForgeX existing survey research on the trends and maturity in ABM, including our 2025 State of ABM survey of 118 B2B marketing professionals and our 2025 AI+ABM survey of 115 B2B marketing professionals.

Desk Research

A review of secondary research from credible sources was conducted in order to assess trends and complement existing survey research.

Subject Matters Expert Interviews

Interviews with subject matter experts were conducted to gain qualitative insights from practitioners and consultants on the frontlines of ABM.

About ForgeX

✓ Who We Are

A B2B analyst firm specializing in Account-Based Go-to-Market (GTM) strategies.

We Spend Our Time: Conducting rigorous primary research, benchmarking performance, and advising GTM teams on how to win with precision, speed and scale.

Our Research Shows: Companies that operationalize an account-based strategy across the entire GTM lifecycle and enable it with AI consistently outperform those that do not.

✓ How We Accomplish This

Research, Frameworks, Models and Tools

We develop in-depth research, cutting-edge frameworks, and models to guide GTM strategies.

Benchmarking Data

Our database allows performance comparisons against industry standards and best practices.

Technology & Agency Landscapes

We map the technology and agency landscape to help select the best partners and tools.

Advisory, Training & Enablement

We offer specialized training, workshops, certification programs, and personalized guidance sessions to enhance your team's skills and knowledge.

Events

We host events that facilitate learning, networking, and collaboration among industry leaders and innovators.

Community Membership

We offer a private Slack community exclusively for GTM leaders and practitioners.



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