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2025

AI + ABM Trends Report

The top priorities and challenges for CMOs

Introduction

Across the globe, CMOs are under tremendous pressure to demonstrate marketing's impact on pipeline, deal velocity, and sales activity – all while delivering transformative growth.

But with budgets still on the decline, and no plans for additional headcount, many are having to rethink their approach to find more measurable, scalable, and profitable approaches for the future.

For many marketing leaders, this pressure is nothing new; the request to "do more with less" has quickly become a cliche as old as the hills, and their teams have begrudgingly come to expect it as standard.

But the reality is this:
it's never been more challenging to win new business, and keep people engaged:

1

Global growth has stagnated -
a report from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) projects just **3.3%** for 2025 and 2026, **.4%** points below the historical (2000-19) average of **3.7%**

2

Marketing budgets have dropped –
down an average of **15%** in 2024, and now making up just **7.7%** of company revenue[1], continuing a year-on-year trend of "compounding fiscal squeeze" that has persisted since the pandemic.

And just **24%** of CMOs said they had sufficient budget to execute their 2024 marketing strategy[2].

This systematic tightening of budgets has led to deep cuts to personnel, the deprioritization of programs, and operational gaps in important activities.

3

Ever-increasing expectations of buyers have changed the game –
particularly in the realm of personalization, meaning that organizations must take a more nuanced and authentic approach to every prospect and customer interaction, elevating them from disparate moments to connected experiences.

[1] https://www.gartner.com/en/newsroom/press-releases/2024-05-13-gartner-cmo-survey-reveals-marketing-budgets-have-dropped-to-seven-point-seven-percent-of-overall-company-revenue-in-2024
[2] https://www.gartner.com/en/marketing/topics/marketing-budget

Yet despite this mounting pressure to deliver and the seemingly impossible task of turning one into two – technological advancements (artificial intelligence) and the prioritization of more lucrative marketing tactics, like account-based marketing, have empowered CMOs to have an outsized impact, and are quickly solidifying their presence within organizations as means to scale efforts, engage customers, and consistently grow.

AI, for instance, has completely redefined how organizations operate by unlocking the door to two critical components of modern success: efficiency and scale.

Organizations now have access to actionable in-the-moment insights, marketers can surface and analyze specific trends to create more powerful campaigns, sales teams can leverage contextual data across every single touchpoint to meet consumers right when they need to, and with first-party proprietary data, brands can create repositories of contact-level intelligence that informs everything they do.

And this is just the beginning.

As for ABM, it's become the marketing tactic for enterprise organizations looking to connect with their audiences: **90%** have adopted an ABM program, **89%** say they achieve a higher ROI from it versus other marketing efforts, and **80%** of business leaders confirm that consumers spend more (up to **34%** more) when their experience is personalised.

Undoubtedly, experiences are now the most powerful currency – and organizations that get it right by creating and delivering high-quality, compelling, and contextually relevant journeys are the ones that will continue to win.

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Industry highlights – at a glance

AI unlocks new avenues for marketing

62%
see it playing a significant role in their strategy moving forward

60%
use AI between 4-10 hours a week for GTM activities

How are ABMers currently using AI to support campaigns?
(in rank order)

#1 Research

#2 Copywriting

#3 Predictive analytics for account selection/prioritization

#4 Asset creation and/or personalization

#5 Capturing and/or analyzing buying signals

What are the top ranked AI + ABM priorities for leaders over the next 6-12 months?
(in rank order)

#1 Optimization of programs

#2 Measurement and reporting

#3 Website personalization

#4 Asset creation and/or personalization

#5 Automated sales outbound prospecting and nurture

Activating the organization is key for ABM ROI

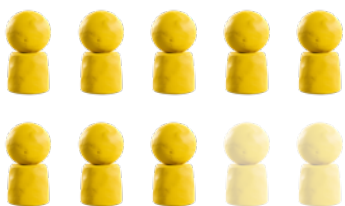**90%**

of organizations
have adopted ABM

89%

rate the ROI of ABM
higher than other
marketing methods

72%

have generated
positive ROI through ABM

Personalization is now table stakes

8/10

are using content
personalization to elevate
their ABM and GTM efforts

61%

have already adopted AI
to support asset creation and/or
content personalization

**Asset creation and/or
personalization**

1 2 3 ④ 5

is one of the **top five
use cases** for AI
over the next 6-12 months

Operational maturity lags behind expectations

36%
have a clearly defined roadmap
or strategy for AI + ABM

41%
of those with more than 6 years
of ABM experience have just reached
the halfway point of maturity (intermediate)

How satisfied are organizations
with their progress in adopting AI
to support ABM activities?

What are the main barriers
to adoption for AI in ABM?
(in rank order)

58%
are very or
somewhat
satisfied

42%
are neutral
or unsatisfied

#1   Lack of internal AI expertise

#2   Inadequate training and/or enablement

#3   Poor data quality

#4   Integration challenges

#5   Resistance to change

AI + ABM is the future of sustainable growth

Over the past decade, traditional marketing methods have slowly lost their effectiveness as prospects, wizened and far more digitally savvy, now know where to look, consume content on their own terms, and only engage with organizations when they're ready.

As a result of this paradigm shift, growth stagnation, tightening budgets, and increased customer expectations – every CMO is asking themselves the same question:

"What strategic investments and tools will have the biggest impact on customer engagement across the sales lifecycle, revenue generation, and reducing operational costs at all levels, right now?"

For many, the answer is twofold:
artificial intelligence + account based marketing.

The modern equation for success

Organizations want to scale and innovate on current marketing activities to achieve predictable growth and measurable ROI.

Scale + efficiency = AI
Innovation = Hyper-personalization
Growth + ROI = ABM and ABX

AI meets ABM, the great unlock

AI has quickly moved from an experimental technology to a core, transformational tool for modern marketers, enabling the single-most important function for today's financially and operationally stretched CMOs: scale.

Who is using AI?

All B2B ABMers are using AI in some way shape or form, with the majority (60%) using it between 4-10 hours a week for marketing activity, and 62% of respondents see AI playing a "very significant" role in their ABM strategy moving forward.

Furthermore, research from McKinsey corroborates this, highlighting that 36% of marketers and salespeople are using AI more broadly – the second highest usage amongst all business functions.

How are ABMers currently using AI to support campaigns?
(in rank order)

#1 Research

#2 Copywriting

#3 Predictive analytics for account selection/prioritization

#4 Asset creation and/or personalization

#5 Capturing and/or analyzing buying signals

## What are the top ranked AI + ABM priorities for leaders over the next 6-12 months?
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#3 Website personalization

#4 Asset creation and/or personalization

#5 Automated sales outbound prospecting and nurture

With the myriad of digital channels that marketing teams are responsible for, AI empowers them to do more for their ABM campaigns and experiences with far less.

It also allows for a rerouting of resources to more valuable work while expanding critical capabilities into new territories (e.g. predictive analytics, next-best actions, account intelligence, real-time sentiment signals, account prioritization).

ABM has always represented the epitome of high-quality, meaningful experiences and engagement because of the inherent personalization, however, it has always been difficult to scale because it's mostly manual. AI solves that challenge – and as a result, more and more organizations are increasingly using it as their go-to marketing and sales tactic for growth.

What ABM deployment models are organizations using?

- **11%** Deal-based ABM
- **4%** Other
- **32%** 1:few
- **25%** 1:1
- **28%** 1:many
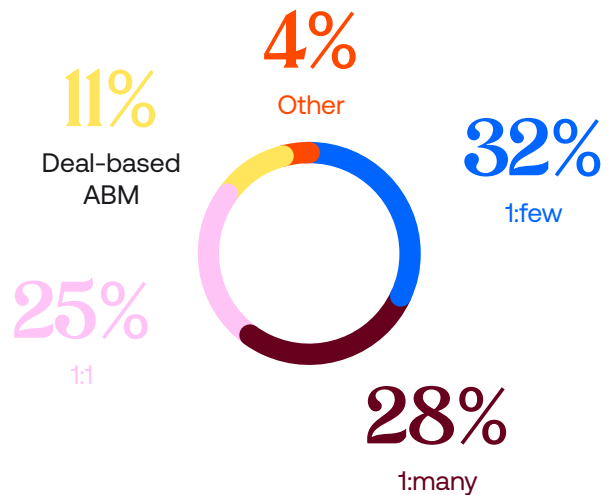
Expert insight

We're seeing the majority of AMBers leveraging AI today for very specific use cases versus actual workflows or agents.

So when you think about the future and where we're going throughout the second half of 2025, it's going to be workflows. We're going to see more and more SaaS companies adopt a workflow architecture that makes it easy for ABMers and GTM teams as a whole to build robust processes.

So rather than one pointed use case or task, it becomes a question of how we implement workflows into actual processes, and then leverage AI-powered agents to manage the workflows and execute the steps.

Davis Potter
CEO
ForgeX

With AI-powered ABM, GTM teams can make more strategic investments on accounts most likely to close, create high-quality content tailored to contacts on that account, and deliver dynamic and seamless 1:1 experiences at scale.

Suddenly, the process of attracting, engaging, and converting target accounts is no longer reactive, but proactive – with AI-powered tools assisting at every stage of the journey.

What's particularly interesting is the **objective analysis of sales insights with AI.** It's entirely possible that, in the future, organizations will have an AI-guided process that involves them importing information about their product and ideal target accounts and the AI tool just generates an objective view of their baseline ICP.

69%
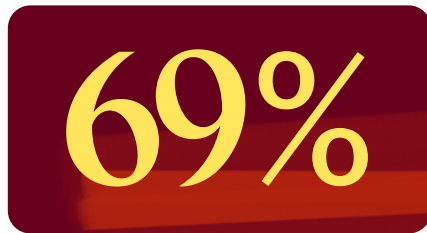
have already adopted AI-powered predictive analytics for account selection, prioritization, and intelligence to support their ABM programs going forward.

From there, it incorporates market trends and challenges to help organizations prioritize specific verticals and use cases, while simultaneously enriching CRM data so teams always have a list of accounts to run with in any circumstance.

Contributor insight

Honing in on the best accounts with minimal effort

"One of our most effective use cases involves using AI for predictive analytics to find the best accounts to target based on buying stage, intent signals, and competitor insights. We use these insights to direct our efforts, along with the sales efforts to spend their time contacting accounts in the right buying stage.

For example, if an account is in awareness, then we don't get our sales team to waste time there since we know those accounts need more warming up. I have 2 use cases for ABM, which are the actual targeting prospects to get them to consider us versus deal acceleration with ABM tactics to move it along faster and increase win rates."

Katie Gray
Global Senior Integrated Marketing Manager
Iterable

AI won't deliver results overnight

Even with the enthusiasm for AI + ABM, leaders should exercise caution. We found that while many are keen to adopt AI to elevate specific aspects of their ABM, a great deal feel that they're not quite ready.

What are the most significant barriers to AI adoption in ABM?
(in rank order)

#1 Lack of internal AI expertise

#2 Data privacy and security concerns

#3 Poor data quality

#4 Inadequate training and enablement

#5 Integration challenges

How prepared are organizations?

have a clearly defined AI roadmap or strategy for ABM

36%

64%

don't have a clearly defined AI roadmap strategy for ABM (or are planning to create one)

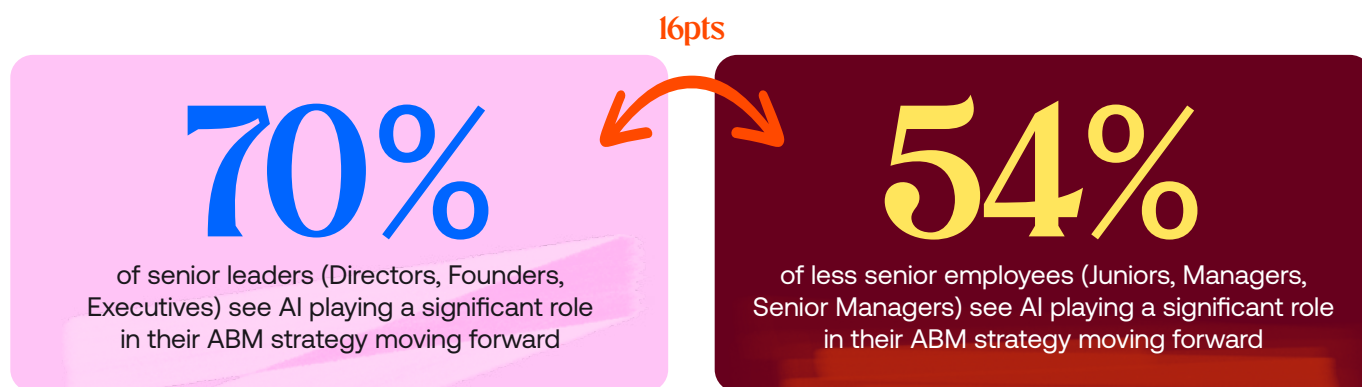are satisfied with their progress adopting AI to support ABM

58%

42%

are neutral or dissatisfied about their progress adopting AI to support ABM

Evidently, there's still a tremendous amount of work to be done before organizations not only feel confident about their ability to implement, leverage, and govern AI, but also unlock its full potential.

Fortunately, organizations are heading in the right direction – while 45% don't have an AI roadmap or strategy for ABM, they do have plans to create one in the next 6-12 months.

16pts

70%

of senior leaders (Directors, Founders, Executives) see AI playing a significant role in their ABM strategy moving forward

54%

of less senior employees (Juniors, Managers, Senior Managers) see AI playing a significant role in their ABM strategy moving forward

What's been incredibly interesting to see is the difference between AI adoption in ABM and AI governance across organizations. For the most part, employees are the ones keen to extract and amplify value -- not necessarily doing more work but doing it far better, and right now.

Leaders, on the other hand, have been incredibly cautious. They see the potential for AI but have yet to crack the code and establish the processes, workflows, and oversight required to make sure things work as they need to. One could argue that leaders view AI as a silver bullet for efficiency and productivity, while employees, those actually using the tools, have experienced the reality.

Over the next few years, we'll likely see a balancing act: rather than employees sourcing their own AI tools, organizations will assess and approve specific solutions and allow employees to test and experiment with them to find what delivers the most efficiency for ABM programs.

Expert insight

What worries me is leaning too heavily on AI, and it misinterpreting a customer challenge.

When you spend a lot of time working on a 1:1 account, you start to understand their unique challenges, aspirations, and what you can do for them.

So when you ask an AI writer to summarize a customer's 200-page annual report and pull out the top 10 executive highlights, you have to ask yourself: is the tool extracting and surfacing the right content – and is that what you're expecting?

Joanna Moss
Marketing Director
Salesforce

Your action plan

→ ## Build AI into the core of your ABM strategy

Stop treating AI as a task-based tool. Integrate it into ICP definition, account prioritization, campaign orchestration, and performance measurement.

Mature ABM teams use AI as a horizontal capability — unlocking scalable, data-driven decisions and continuous optimization across the customer lifecycle.

→ ## Prioritize scalable personalization with context, not just content

Combine real-time account signals with persona pain points to create dynamic, hyper-relevant messaging at scale. Invest in tools that enable this without sacrificing quality.

Contextual relevance drives results. Programs doing this see up to 2x lifts in booked meetings and faster pipeline progression.

→ ## Address blockers and build AI literacy across teams

Fix data hygiene, raise AI fluency, and create a shared roadmap. Start with focused pilots like predictive scoring before scaling AI initiatives.

Without strong data, skills, and alignment, AI risks amplifying inefficiencies. Maturity comes from smart, connected use — not just adoption.

Activating the organization is key to ABM ROI

With new technologies and AI providing the means to scale a historically manual process, ABM has quickly become the go-to marketing tactic for organizations across the globe, with 90% having a program in place in 2025.

What are the top operational priorities for organizations using ABM in 2025?
(in rank order)

#1 Driving revenue growth (34%)

#2 Accelerating sales cycles (21%)

#3 Increasing deal size (19%)

How does the ROI of ABM compare to other marketing methods?

89% of respondents rate the ROI of ABM higher than other marketing methods

Teams can now create hundreds of personalized ads and landing pages for individuals and key accounts, generate bespoke website experiences, and deliver truly end-to-end campaigns that are designed to address the clear needs and expectations of prospects.

After all, without scale, ABM is just another marketing campaign. The most effective ABM strategies combine marketing, sales, IT, and financial alignment with C-suite objectives, leadership-backed ICPs, long-term demand creation, and technology that provides the means to multiply every effort.

Involving finance and multithreading deals

While organizations are primarily concerned about sales and marketing alignment for ABM success, Cosby posits that by including finance, teams can not only get a full view of current customer activity, but also a *"decently objective"* view of best fit customers, as told by spreadsheets or another revenue tracking tool.

Finance will come to the conversation with concrete facts, such as who is paying the most, who is achieving success, and who is satisfied with our product or service. Teams can then use these facts to formulate the basis of a more strategic and revenue-driven outlook for new customer acquisition.

Using this as a baseline, marketing and sales complete comprehensive profiles of these customers, including the number of people involved in the deal, the customer's NPS score, the length of the sales cycle and so on. As a result, it becomes much easier to generate tactics and identify lookalike organizations that are likely to become high-paying customers.

Expert insight

ABM has become a massive focus largely because of misunderstanding.

While organizations often talk about how they've succeeded with account-based marketing or generated strong ROI compared to other marketing efforts – the truth is that since 2020, four out of five ABM programs fail.

Everyone is looking for ways to achieve growth more efficiently – and while ABM promises that it's a better way to get to best-fit customers, it only works well when organizations have a robust, repeatable, and scalable framework.

What's also important is knowing when to exclude one-of-a-kind organizations from targeting criteria. These aren't great to build a business around. Sure, they might be great to work with and generate a lot of money, but if you can't find more of them, it doesn't make sense to reorient your business.

When you start your search with profit (e.g. finance), and go through the exercise of finding your highest paying and happiest customers and using that as a baseline, it's no longer an argument between marketing and sales.

Mason Cosby
Founder
Scrappy ABM

Moving from reactive to proactive

One of the most transformational opportunities to unlock ABM ROI is the activation of end-to-end predictive account intelligence and in-the-moment actions with AI.

Whether it's insights buried in sales calls, conversations over email and Slack, through the combination of account intelligence and predictive models, AI-powered models have the capacity to analyze, summarize and deliver contact and account-level insights and trends that would have otherwise stayed buried, or taken far too long to retrieve.

"In the future, AI will power always-on, predictive ABM, and move beyond content generation to start driving real-time ABM decision-making. This includes predictive account scoring based on intent, behavior, and fit signals, and AI co-pilots for sales that surface hyper-relevant talking points, content, and outreach suggestions instantly."
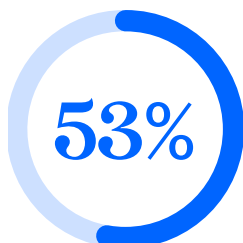
Katya Tarapovskaia,
Head of Marketing Consulting, Co-Founder, YouStellar

How are organizations currently using AI for their ABM programs?
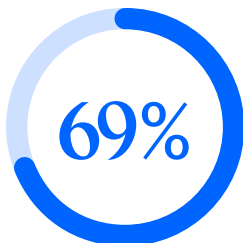
69% are using AI for predictive analytics and account selection

53% are using AI for capturing and analyzing buying signals

What are the most impactful areas for AI to achieve desired outcomes for ABM programs in the future?
(in rank order)

#1 Automated sales prospecting and nurture

#2 Optimization

#3 Marketing email automation

**#4** Next-best action recommendations

#5 Campaign orchestration

From an operational standpoint, this would, for example, empower organizations to proactively identify high-value accounts, anticipate customer churn, accelerate deal velocity, and more.

Furthermore, because the data has been rigorously tested and put through pattern matching and data mining exercises, teams can trust the recommendations and insights to deliver.

With this shift to proactivity comes an increased focus on the experience economy and meeting customers in the moments that matter.

In the world of B2C, brands have already laid the foundations for meaningful and rewarding interactions, after all - a single bad experience could spell disaster.

52%
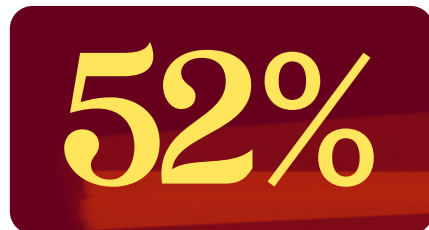
of customers will switch to a competitor after a single unsatisfactory experience (Zendesk)

So while the strategies and tactics might differ, the sentiment remains the same.
For B2B organizations, breaking into target accounts means understanding the nuances of all their ICPs, and leveraging in-the-moment insights to create unique experiences that no one else can.

—
Expert insight

The most successful B2B organizations today recognize that deep customer understanding isn't just about collecting data – it's about transforming that data into meaningful experiences that resonate throughout the entire buyer journey.

While AI offers unprecedented opportunities to scale personalization, we're seeing a critical skills gap where companies collect vast amounts of information but struggle to activate it effectively, often reverting to broader, less effective approaches rather than doing the hard work of building truly relevant, signal-based customer experiences.

Steve Armenti
CEO & Founder
Twelfth Agency

Your
action plan

→ ## Align ABM to financial & customer value

Collaborate with finance and CX to define ideal customers based on profitability, satisfaction, and deal velocity. Use this to guide ICP development and targeting — excluding one-off, unscalable accounts.

Grounding ABM in real business value ensures resources focus on scalable, high-return opportunities, driving better ROI and smarter growth.

→ ## Activate predictive intelligence across teams

Adopt AI-driven predictive analytics, next-best action models, and buying signal detection. Integrate these insights into daily sales, marketing, and customer success workflows like CRM, outbound cadences, and content personalization.

Shifting from reactive to predictive ABM improves engagement timing, sales velocity, and resource efficiency — increasing conversion rates and revenue impact.

→ ## Turn data into actionable personalization

Enable teams to translate account insights into tailored, relevant messaging and experiences. Pair scalable tech like AI-powered content and personalized web journeys with hands-on training to avoid generic execution.

Data is only valuable when it's actionable. Personalization rooted in real-time intelligence drives higher engagement, customer value, and program performance.

Personalization is now table stakes

Whether it's in store or online, customers today want seamless, red carpet experiences with meaningful interactions and highly relevant content. They're tired of generic outreach, and uninformed marketing efforts – 7 in 10 B2B buyers expect personalized interactions, and get frustrated when they don't happen.

8/10

are using content personalization to elevate their ABM and GTM efforts
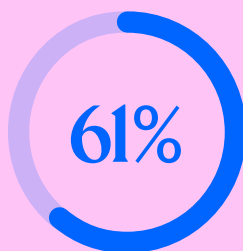
61%

have already adopted AI to support asset creation and/or content personalization

Asset creation and/or personalization

1 2 3 ④ 5

is one of the **top five use cases** for AI over the next 6-12 months

Imagine for a moment personalized journeys for every individual or target account, from custom and relevant advertising and unique landing pages, through to recommendation engines, omnichannel service, chatbots, dynamic pricing and more.

And that's not all – as individuals and/or accounts interact with the content across their journey, GTM leaders get clear insights into what's working well, versus what isn't, and actionable content recommendations for each individual or target account.

Contributor insight

Anticipating needs is the future of ABM

The future of demand generation is shifting from reactive to predictive. It's less about collecting email addresses through gated content and more about recognizing early, often subtle, buying signals—long before a prospect fills out a form.

As companies increasingly expect consumer-like experiences, demand gen teams need to move upstream in the buying journey, intercepting interest before it ever hits a demo request.

Account-Based Marketing (ABM) will be foundational in this shift. Just as B2C marketing has evolved to anticipate consumer needs with hyper-targeted ads based on behavior, B2B marketing will mirror that sophistication—leveraging intent data, product usage patterns, and signals like hiring trends or tech stack changes to proactively engage the right accounts at the right time.

The goal isn't just to generate leads—it's to create trust early, shorten sales cycles, and ultimately deliver a better experience for buyers who increasingly want to feel understood, not prospected.

Devon Malloy
Assembly AI
Senior Growth Manager

But there are warnings against over personalization – while AI-based tools are opening the doors to unique experiences, when everyone starts following the same playbook those efforts inevitably lose their impact.

"Content personalization is what turns strategy into relevance.
It takes our GTM and ABM strategy from only «targeting the right accounts» to speaking an account's language, solving their unique problem, and earning their trust. Personalization builds relevance fast.

In ABM and GTM, we only have seconds to capture attention. Personalized content says: 'We understand your business, your challenges, and we've done our homework.'

Whether it's a personalized value prop, an industry- or account-specific insight, or a use case aligned to a big challenge they're trying to solve to reduce risk, save money, increase operating leverage – relevant content earns higher levels of engagement."

Corey Livingston
SVP/VP Marketing & RevOps, CMO On-Demand

In addition, organizations must also contextual relevance and timing. AI might offer novel ways to augment current ABM practices, but personalization that's not personal will consistently miss the mark. It's more than just adding tokens, or throwing content into an AI-powered interface for customization.

Expert insight

One of our predictions is that as AI continues to embed itself, personalization from a digital perspective will completely transform. For example, unified messages to all of your target account lists, and dynamic targeting based on personas or buying groups, which ultimately drives costs down (because you won't need large teams or agencies).

This will also open up a tremendous amount of budget for more intimate and high-touch activities, such as events or human-to-human experiences. We're also going to see more AI-powered agents doing the heavy lifting – such as research, reviewing websites, and sentiment analysis.

Davis Potter
CEO
ForgeX

The next frontier for personalization: human intelligence

As organizations implement new technologies to support ABM and/or ABX, the real winners will be those who build unique, AI-powered databases for first-party human sentiment data and connect it to lookalike audiences, e.g. the individuals or target accounts they want to win.

Instead of relying on information from third-party platforms like Google, organizations will increasingly use their own customer data to reduce overall costs for ad spend, secure a strategic advantage over late movers (those still relying on third party data), and achieve a deeper understanding of all key individuals and accounts.

These systems of record will capture every interaction across every touchpoint – connected seamlessly to all tools – to create powerful and contextually relevant experiences.

52%

are using AI to capture and analyze buying signals to create more personalized experiences.

The top five most impactful AI + ABM use cases are:
(in rank order)

#1 Automated sales prospecting and nurture

#2 Optimization

#3 Next-best action recommendations

#4 Marketing email automation

#5 Capturing and/or analyzing buying signals

Next-best action recommendations fuelled by AI is viewed as one of the most impactful use cases for ABM and experience design.

At the same time, the insights captured will allow them to make highly accurate inferences about potential behaviors at both the individual and account level at scale, and identify trends across the buyer journey to not just create pathways to conversion that work, but also segment audiences more effectively based on more actionable variables, such as intent data, engagement metrics, and overall behavior.

What we'll eventually see is a landscape governed by automated – but deliberate – hyper-targeted interactions at scale, resulting in deeply personalized experiences that strengthen relationships, build brand advocacy and recall, and help CMOs deliver higher revenue growth, in an increasingly saturated market.

Agentic AI for ABM is on the horizon

Without real-time insights, organizations struggle to keep up with the demands of today and capitalize on buyer intent, subsequently missing out on huge opportunities.

However, over the past few years, AI and first-party data have helped organizations move from reactive and fixed frameworks of operation to more proactive and predictive approaches, helping to uncover meaningful trends and moments that define success.

Now, we're slowly arriving at the next inflexion point for AI + ABM: agentic workflows and agents.

Fuelled by high-quality prompts and learning models, these agentic workflows and agents will essentially ingest huge repositories of information: market forecasts, trends, first-party data, previous engagements, purchase intent, competitor analysis, annual reports, key decision makers, technology stacks, and much more to arrive at clear-cut conclusions about high-priority accounts – and the best ways to engage them.

What this means is that marketers and salespeople will spend significantly less time trying to identify best-fit customers, and more time enhancing the experiences they deliver at every touchpoint. Aided by AI, organizations will have substantially more resources to personalize at scale and find new ways of breaking into target accounts.

Contributor insight

Experience-led approaches will win out

ABM is evolving from a marketing-led initiative into a holistic, cross-functional strategy focused on delivering personalized experiences across the entire customer lifecycle.

We're seeing a shift toward Account-Based Experience (ABX), where sales, marketing, and customer success align around high-value accounts to drive engagement, retention, and expansion.

Advances in AI and data integration are enabling more scalable, hyper-personalized outreach, while tighter alignment with RevOps ensures shared accountability and clearer attribution. ABM is no longer just about acquisition – it's about building long-term, revenue-generating relationships.

Sarah Foote
Marketing Consultant
Fractional CMO

Your action plan

→ **Think ABX first, not ABM**

As buying journeys grow more complex, delivering value across the entire lifecycle – not just at the top of the funnel – is critical. The evolution toward Account-Based Experience (ABX) means organizations must think beyond marketing and align all go-to-market motions.

Build cross-functional pods around high-value accounts – bringing together marketing, sales, CS, and RevOps, define shared success metrics tied to revenue impact, not vanity metrics like MQLs, and use customer insights to shape **ongoing engagement,** not just acquisition. Think expansion and retention from day one.

→ **Prioritise first-party signals**

By capturing data points like behavior, engagement, interaction, and more from customers directly, organizations can refine their personalization and targeting to consistently deliver experiences that resonate.

→ **Predict and delight**

With AI-powered predictive analytics, understanding things like prospect/customer engagement at scale and overall sentiment becomes much easier. Teams can extract insights, trends, and opportunities from every touchpoint (e.g. sales calls, customer catch-ups, content engagement) to accelerate deals.

Operational maturity lags behind expectations

One of the biggest challenges for organizations looking to win with AI + ABM is achieving operational maturity.

It's important to note that maturity does not refer to the choice of method (e.g. 1:1, 1:few, 1:many, deal-based) but rather that sales, marketing, and finance have developed robust, repeatable AI + ABM frameworks that consistently deliver value.

Indeed, for operationally mature organizations, ABM has become less of a process and more of a culture that's ingrained in everything it does. Unfortunately, just under a third of respondents (27.8%) are at the starting line, and just under half (41.7%) are at the "halfway" stage.

What's also interesting to note from our findings is that organizations that consider their ABM programs more "mature" (6+ years using ABM) are also more likely to have a clearly defined AI + ABM roadmap (47%).
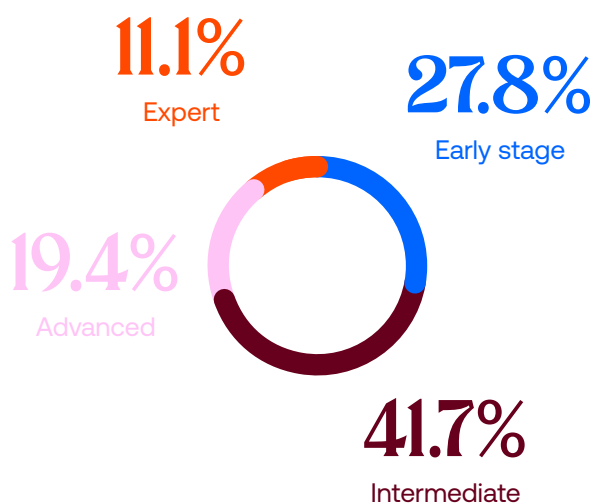
36%
of organizations have a clearly defined roadmap or strategy for AI (overall)

47%
of organizations that have used ABM for 6+ years have a clearly defined AI roadmap

How would you rate your organization's ABM maturity level?

11.1%
Expert

27.8%
Early stage

19.4%
Advanced

41.7%
Intermediate

Top-ranked barriers for AI in ABM
(in rank order)

#1 Lack of internal AI expertise

#2 Inadequate training and/or enablement

#3 Poor data quality

#4 Integration challenges

#5 Resistance to change

How satisfied are you with your organization's progress in adopting AI to support ABM activities?

are very or somewhat satisfied

58%

42%

are neutral or unsatisfied

There's still room for growth – even among "experts"

Of course, ABM is an evolving discipline – even among those who have been doing ABM for 3-5 years, just 27% consider themselves "advanced" (optimized and scaled programs), and 9% "experts (leading and innovating).

For those who have been doing ABM for 6+ years, 15% consider themselves "advanced", and 15% "experts".

There is, evidently, room for growth; and perhaps the answer lies in research from ForgeX's State of ABM report, which highlights that even in operationally mature organizations, just 33% have an ABM charter, and 22% have a centre of excellence.

Among those without a CoE, almost half (46%) have no plans to establish one, highlighting a "missed opportunity to centralize strategy and governance".

In the absence of such practices, it becomes significantly more difficult for CMOs to accurately measure and justify investment in ABM – damaging the brand through inconsistent messaging, and making scaling activities (even with AI) a real challenge.

Fortunately, many organizations are aware of their shortcomings, and have implemented robust practices to reassess current platforms and point solutions, as well as prioritized new tools to help streamline ABM efforts.

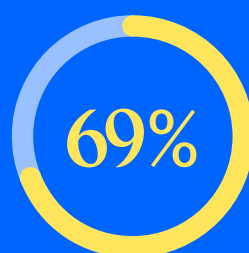## Rebuilding technology stacks (ForgeX)

81%

are reassessing their current ABM platforms and/or point solutions

41%
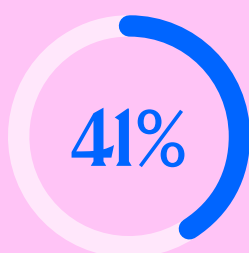
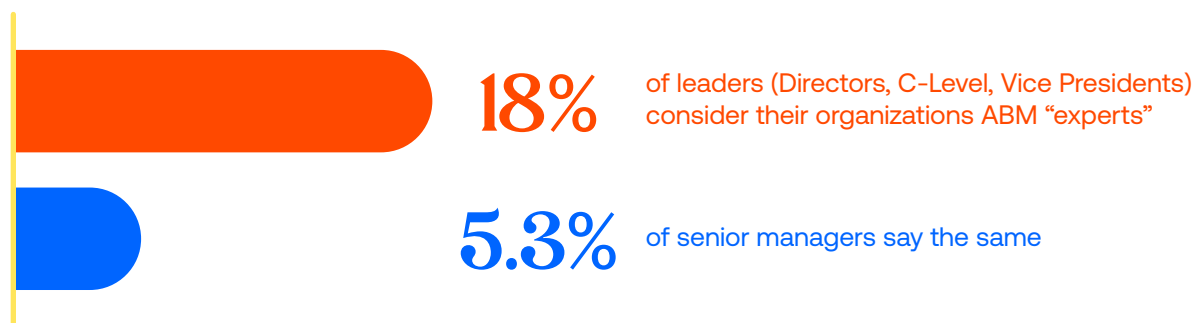plan to overhaul their ABM platforms and/or point solutions within 24 months

Focusing on account intelligence

69%

have adopted AI-powered capabilities for predictive analytics and account selection and/or prioritization

Gaps emerge between technologies, leaders, and employees

We also found that there's a gap between expectation and reality when it comes to how leaders and employees view their organization's ABM maturity.

18% of leaders (Directors, C-Level, Vice Presidents) consider their organizations ABM "experts"

5.3% of senior managers say the same

While the gap isn't incredibly pronounced, it highlights the discord between what's perceived at the top, versus what's actually happening on the ground with the practitioners of ABM.

This has been a longstanding narrative across all functions – throughout the middle organization, employees are actively driving new tactics and implementing new technologies (e.g. AI), rushing ahead with gusto but without any real support. At the same time, it seems that leaders aren't close enough to these developments to truly understand their impact, something that needs rectifying if organizations are to operate seamlessly.

So as well as acquiring new technologies, activating them effectively across the organization – through training, advocacy, and best practices – is key to building confidence and optimizing use.

Expert insight

The evolution of AI in ABM comes with a clear maturity curve. Organizations just starting should focus on solving one specific challenge rather than attempting wholesale transformation overnight.

However, the most sophisticated marketing teams understand that AI isn't just a point solution but a horizontal capability that should permeate their entire stack and operating model, fundamentally transforming how they approach data, targeting, orchestration, and content creation across the full customer lifecycle.

Steve Armenti
CEO & Founder
Twelfth Agency

Your action plan

→ ## Develop a clear ABM charter & Centre of Excellence (CoE)
Without a centralized strategy and governance model, ABM programs risk inconsistency, making it harder to scale, measure ROI, or secure leadership buy-in. A CoE ensures alignment, shared best practices, and long-term program resilience.

→ ## Prioritize AI training & change enablement
AI adoption isn't just a technology challenge — it's a people challenge.
Without adequate training and advocacy, new tools go underutilized, AI roadmaps stall, and the gap between leadership perception and practitioner reality widens.

→ ## Regularly audit and optimize the tech stack
Legacy tools and fragmented data limit the effectiveness of ABM. Routine tech stack reviews keep platforms AI-ready, eliminate redundancy, and ensure teams can act on clean, actionable account intelligence to drive growth.

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Empower your marketing and sales teams to create personalized 1:1 experiences that drive engagement across every touchpoint and accelerate deals from first click to closed-won.

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