

Account-Based Marketing in B2B markets: Conceptualization, key drivers and outcomes

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Abstract

Account-based marketing (ABM) has become a central marketing approach in B2B markets. Despite its notable importance for B2B practitioners, the knowledge about ABM remains limited to consultancy white-papers and the academic research on this topic is virtually non-existent. While interesting, the extant ABM definitions are lacking justification and they are partly overlapping with other marketing concepts, making it difficult to critically understand what ABM is and how and when firms should leverage the concept in B2B markets. Hence, the purpose of this study is to conceptualize ABM and explore its key activities, drivers, and outcomes. To attain this goal, we leverage an inductive, theories-in-use (TIU) research approach and interview managers in multiple B2B industries. The study findings make three novel contributions. First, we define the ABM based on qualitative data analysis and uncover its key elements. Second, we provide novel insights into how ABM differs from other close constructs as well as identify its key antecedents and outcomes. Third, we contribute to the B2B marketing literature by explaining how modern B2B marketing works in close collaboration with sales in the context of large customer accounts.

Subject Areas: *Business-to-Business Marketing, Promotion*

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