



**The Event  
Marketing Playbook:  
ABM Strategy**

Events represent one of your biggest marketing expenditures and if executed well, they can also deliver some of the highest returns to the business. To help you maximize the ROI from your events, this playbook pulls together B2B event marketing best practices specific for your mobile strategy—complete with specific recommendations, tactics and more to streamline execution and improve results.

## How to Use This Playbook

Look for these icons to get ideas to help you take your specific event type to the next level.



Conferences



Field Events



Summits and Tradeshows



*This playbook is part of [The Event Marketing Playbook](#)—a full guide highlighting 8 key event strategies to get you where you want to be faster.*

## Account-Based Marketing Strategy

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To execute account-based marketing (ABM) well, you need sales and marketing to align on the accounts you want to bring to the business and then join forces to turn those prospects into customers. While ABM touches several teams, departments and activities within organizations, events as a marketing channel play a particularly significant role. In fact, if you're leaving events out of your ABM strategy, you're missing a fundamental opportunity to move the needle for the business. Events provide sales and marketing teams with key insights that can help establish and deepen relationships with prospects and customers.



**Here are three ways to ensure your events are optimized for your ABM program. Within this playbook, we will cover additional strategy areas, such as content and engagement, that support your ABM program.**

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*Events are the channel that brings Marketing and Sales teams together*

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– Kristen Alexander  
CMO of Certain

## Keep Your Sales And Marketing Teams Aligned

When it comes to events, marketing and sales teams need to work together to determine which accounts you're trying to get in front of and where they are in the buying journey. This will influence the actions you take before, during and after the event.



A great way to get in front of prospects and customers during an event is by hosting a party or activity that requires registration. This lets you capture top-of-funnel contact information that marketing and sales can use to determine if the person registering is from a company on your target account list. It also can help you find “lookalike” accounts, or accounts that match the profile of your target accounts. Based on the discovery of who will attend, sales and marketing can determine strategic ways to engage with those contacts. For example:

- ▶ Marketing can automate email invites and reach out via social media to offer a product demo or technical one-on-one
- ▶ Sales can then send a personalized invite for the deep dive session



The key here is that sales and marketing are talking with each other throughout the process. The two groups need to work together to determine which accounts you're trying to get in front of during the event, what type of meetings or demos to offer and how you're going to follow up with them after the event.

# 2

## Use Intent Signals To Personalize The Experience

*How many times have you attended an event where a company follows up with you and treats you like one of 2,000 attendees who all did the same thing?*

**Chances are that this has happened more than once, and it's a missed opportunity for the company.**



*There's a big difference between a prospect who goes to your website and downloads a white paper or e-book and a prospect who registers for a two-day event, books a hotel and flight and signs up for multiple sessions. The latter prospect is clearly very interested. They're showing high-intent signals and giving you face time, which is more valuable than any other time that they're spending.*

If you can capture that information and understand what they're doing during the event and then tie that information to your ABM strategy, you can be more strategic in your approach.

By having a better understanding of where they are in the buying cycle and what they might want next, you can provide a more tailored experience to prospects and customers, which is going to make any communication with them more powerful. This enables your team to move the needle forward and accelerate the opportunity.

# 3

## Incorporate Partners Into Your Event Strategy

Partners can play a key role in how events tie back to your ABM program because they can help you get access to your target accounts.



*For example, if your company is hosting a party or event, or you're attending one that your partners will also attend, there may be an opportunity to get in front of new prospects. With a well-crafted co-marketing story and an overlapping target account list, trusted partners can share resources and take advantage of a wider network of relationships. Additionally, your partner may have customers on your target account list and vice versa, and each may broker valuable introductions.*

The more marketers capture data about target accounts at events and feed that data into their ABM strategy, the more they contribute to a refined cycle where they can continue providing experiences that are increasingly personalized. The information gathered at events shouldn't just provide sales and marketing teams with insights that can bolster current outreach efforts, it can and should shape future touch points from both teams.



*Reprinted from the blog of the Account-Based Marketing Leadership Alliance. You can view the full article [here](#). For more information on the Account-Based Marketing Leadership Alliance, visit <https://www.abmleadershipalliance.com/>*

# ABM - Take it to the Next Level

## ABM for Events

The biggest learning point in applying an ABM strategy for events is how to support the efforts and share across sales and marketing. Both sales and marketing can work together to engage an account and move opportunities down the funnel.

SALES   SDR   MARKETING



Invite customers and strategic accounts

Set up meetings for sales with prospects

Set up an exclusive event (like a dinner or fun activity) and invite new prospects from target accounts



Make key customers feel great by delivering them a personalized gift as token of appreciation.

Memorize/keep track of target account prospects attending the event and walk the floor or be on alert for opportunities to chat with them. Extra points if you come prepared with account research!

Facilitate spur of the moment demos with target accounts by setting up a private area for sales. Have someone nearby to track activity and insights so potential deals don't get lost post-event.



Send personalized email to prospects who have completed demos with relevant content and request for discovery call

Send personalized email to prospects attended event with relevant content and request for demo with Sales

Deliver all leads any insights to sales on prospects that was collected during event and split by target account



Conferences



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**PERSONALIZED EMAIL INVITES FROM MARKETING AND SALES**

In our experience, prospects and customers are more likely to respond to direct, personal invites than automated marketing emails. Using CRM tools and notes from previous communications will help establish relationship continuity. A solid invite strategy will combine both personalized individual invitations to specific contacts with automated emails to larger prospect lists. Once your attendees have registered, you might want to begin to release content bit-by-bit leading up to the event via confirmation and reminder emails.



**LEAD QUALITY NOT QUANTITY**

Gone are the days of being solely concerned with attendee numbers or amount of lead scans you've captured.

The volume of attendees shouldn't be prized above the quality of leads. An account-based model will be focused on lead quality rather than quantity. Make sure you are attracting and engaging with the right attendee roles from the right accounts at your events.





MARKETING AND SALES MEET TO REVIEW TARGET ACCOUNT LIST AND PREFERRED TITLES FOR THE EVENT

- ▶ Well before the event, marketing and sales teams should meet to **discuss the specific target accounts** within the chosen geographic area that everyone will focus on.
- ▶ Likewise, the team should **review specific titles** within those accounts that will be the ideal attendees.
- ▶ **Prioritize titles that are most likely to be decision makers on a sale**, but also consider whether you want to open the event up to affiliated titles that may help introduce you or influence the decision making within a target account.

Marketing and sales should work together to enrich the target attendee list – even if you are contending with missing contact data, chances are you know someone who knows someone who can help you reach the right person to invite. Sales, marketing and partners can work together to identify first and second degree contacts they have within target accounts. Alternatively, a number of third party services specialize in database enrichment, and those tools may be worth investing in as well.

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Use of the power of events combined with ABM for building relationships with your key target audiences and driving key business results.

## About the Authors



Certain is the leading enterprise event automation platform that helps data-driven marketers and event professionals integrate rich buying signals and attendee insights into cross-channel marketing campaigns to improve sales and marketing results. Certain partners with hundreds of companies across tens of thousands of events with millions of attendees. Headquartered in San Francisco, with offices in Chapel Hill, NC, Europe and Asia Pacific, Certain serves enterprises across tens of thousands of events with millions of attendees to deliver flawless events.

Visit Certain on the web at [www.certain.com](http://www.certain.com) and follow us on Twitter [@Certain](https://twitter.com/Certain)



Every day at Heinz Marketing brings a new adventure in the world of B2B sales and marketing. We are innovators at heart, and not afraid to challenge convention in order to deliver the results our customers need. We are passionate about what we do and strive to promote outcomes rather than just focus on activities.

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