

CONVERSATIONAL ABM PLAYBOOK

6 KEY STRATEGIES TO
ENGAGE AND CONVERT
YOUR TARGET ACCOUNTS



QUALIFIED

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Introduction

There's no doubt about it, Account-Based Marketing (ABM) is on the rise. Every thriving B2B company has an ABM strategy in motion, or plans to launch one soon. However, the ABM playbook is still being defined. What are the best tactics and strategies to engage and convert target accounts?

In this book, we'll focus on Conversational ABM. It's an entirely new way of meeting with your target accounts, and it all happens right on your website. Pretty cool, right? It's a critical piece of the ABM puzzle, one that helps companies provide an exceptional customer experience and boost their ABM pipeline.

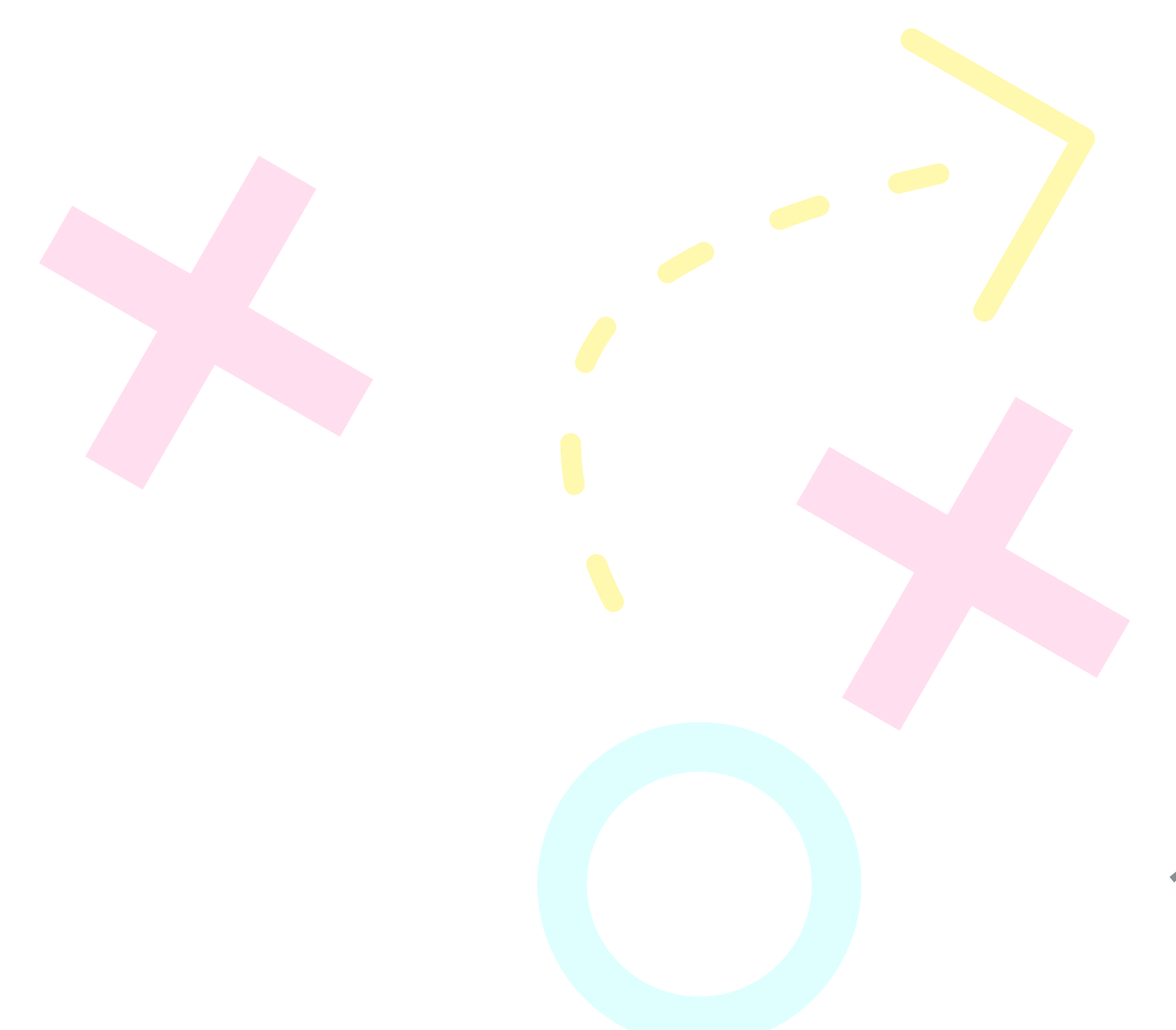
In this book, we'll cover some ABM basics:

- What it is
- The business impact
- A common ABM framework

Then we'll dive into Conversational ABM:

- How to use this channel to engage and convert target accounts
- 6 Conversational ABM plays you need to run
- How to measure Conversational ABM success in Salesforce

You'll uncover powerful statistics and customer validation that will make you want to run, not walk, to launch a Conversational ABM strategy at your company.



WHAT IS



ACCOUNT-

BASED

MARKETING?



Over the past decade, Account-Based Marketing (ABM) has emerged as a must-have strategy for B2B companies. If you're in the B2B space, odds are you've heard about it and your company has prioritized it. So what is ABM?

ABM
DEFINED →

ABM is a B2B strategy that concentrates sales and marketing resources on a clearly defined set of target accounts.

Unlike broad-based marketing, or mass marketing, ABM focuses on selling and marketing at the Account level, rather than at the Lead level. ABM empowers B2B companies to engage and convert specific accounts that are of the most importance to their business.

BROAD-BASED MARKETING



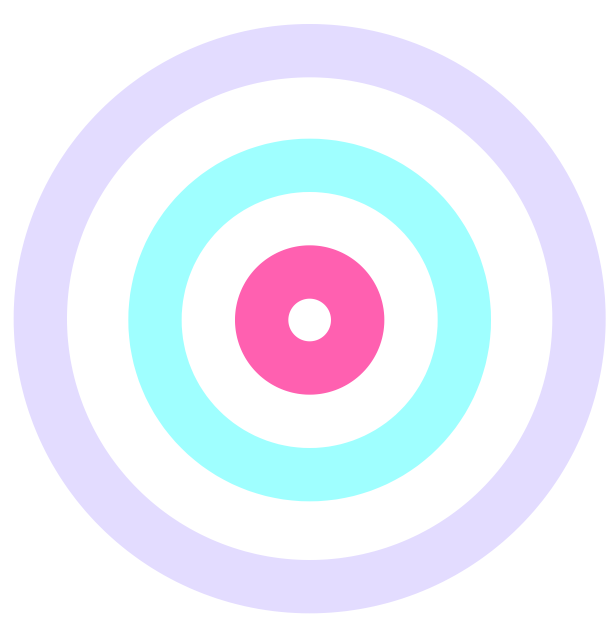
ACCOUNT-BASED MARKETING



ABM is more than just a new set of tools, it's an entirely new strategy that requires well-orchestrated planning, resources, team alignment, and execution.

B2B companies have a wide range of targeting strategies

Let's start with the basics. There's a broad spectrum for how concentrated, or targeted, B2B companies can get with their sales and marketing strategies:



Less Targeted: *"I'll sell to any business who wants our product."*

These companies care about quantity. They want to sell to as many businesses as possible. Oftentimes, their products or services have a lower price point, so it's all about getting in front of the masses. For instance, leading food distributor Sysco sells to restaurant, healthcare, and educational facilities all around the world. They partner with businesses of every size, from small companies to multinational chains.



More Targeted: *"I'll sell to any business that fits certain criteria."*

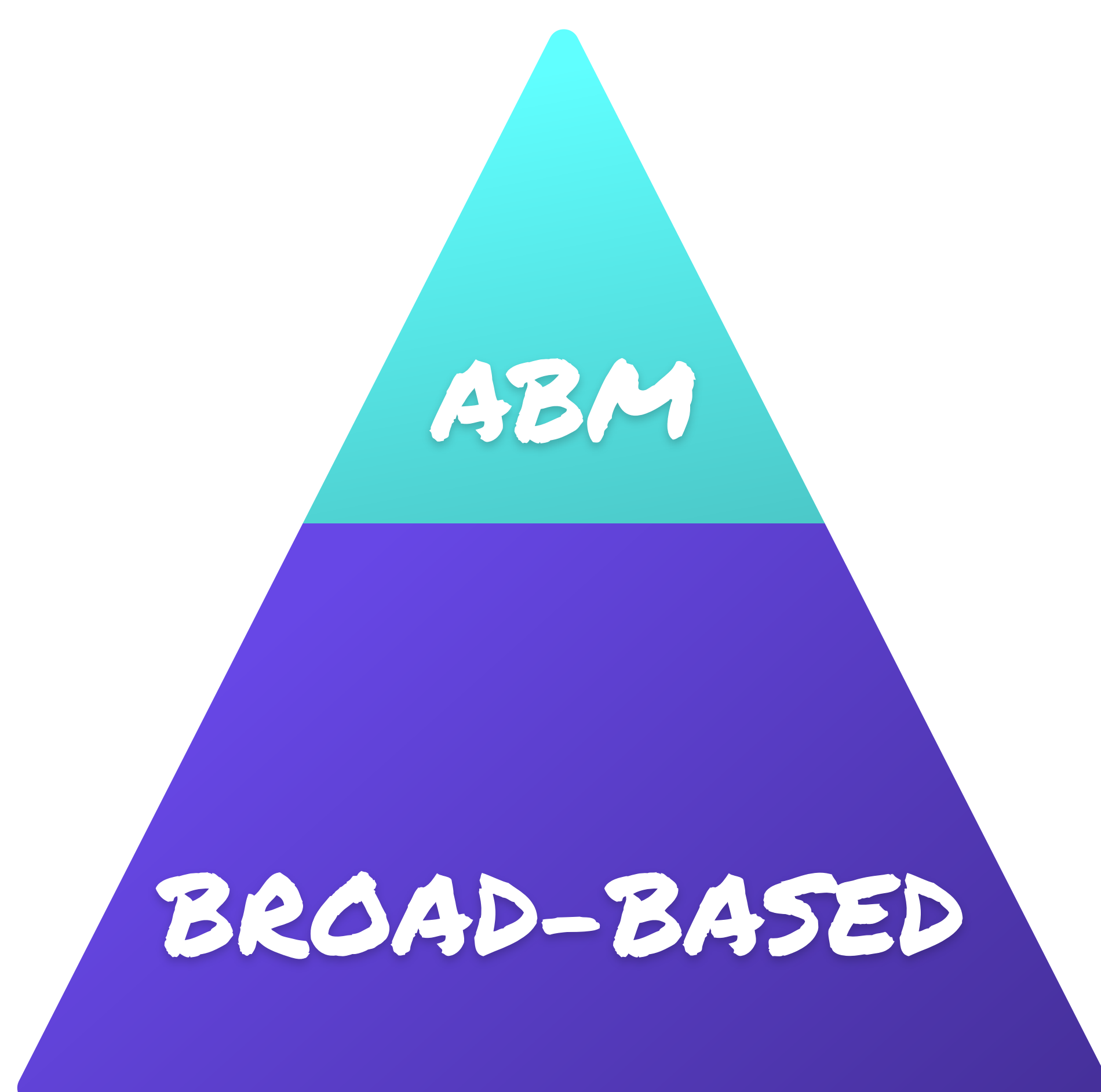
These companies have a defined "Ideal Customer Profile", or ICP. They have a more focused version of who their products or services are built for. They want to engage buyers who meet certain criteria. For instance, CRM powerhouse Salesforce.com knows their solution is a good fit for businesses of a certain size, in a dozen industries, across a set list of countries.

USE ABM
HERE →

Hyper-Targeted: *"I know exactly who my buyer is. I want to sell into this defined list of accounts."*

These companies sell products or services that serve the needs of a narrow set of businesses. Typically these companies have higher price points and longer sales cycles; they care about deal quality and size over quantity. They have a very specific list of accounts that they want to sell to. For instance, cloud computing platform Amazon Web Services (AWS) has a team that is dedicated to selling their premium product into specific accounts.

Companies can take one or more of these targeting approaches. For instance, a company may take a more targeted approach to sell their lower tier product to their ICP, and a hyper targeted approach to sell their premium product to the Fortune 100. In this book, we'll dive into a strategy that supports the hyper-targeted approach: ABM.



96%

...of marketers are doing ABM on top of their existing broad-based marketing programs.

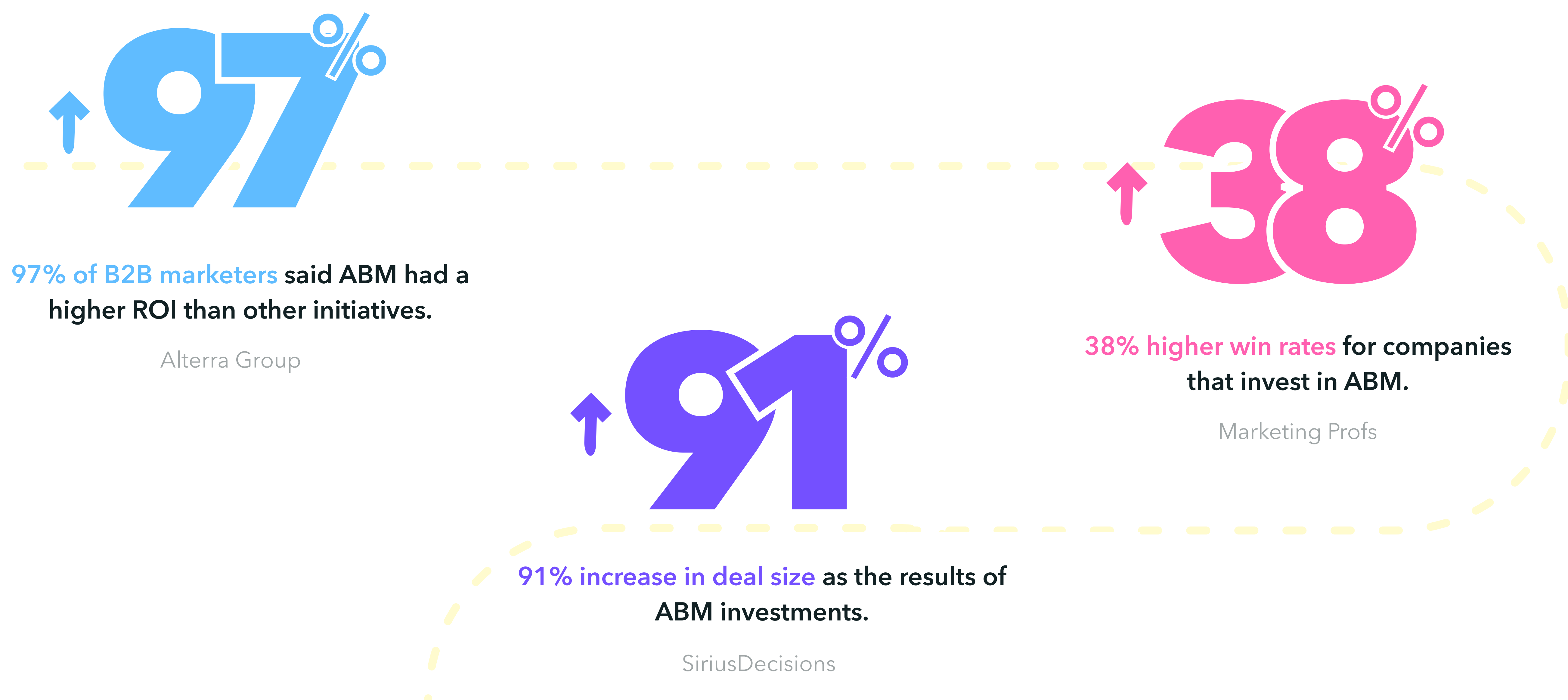
If you're ready to do ABM, you can layer it onto your existing strategy, rather than doing one or the other.

A quick history of ABM

B2B companies have had Target Account Selling (or Account-Based Selling) strategies for many decades. In 1993, Don Peppers and Martha Rogers published *The One-to-One Future*, which emphasized the need to deliver targeted, 1:1 marketing experiences. B2B companies began to adopt this approach, and the phrase “Account-Based Marketing,” or ABM, was officially coined by ITSMA in 2004. Fast-forward to 2020, and ABM has become an unstoppable B2B movement, for good reason.

The business impact of ABM

This business impact of this account-centric approach is undeniable:



With this in mind, it's no surprise that more than 60% of companies plan to launch an ABM-based campaign in the next year, according to Terminus.

HOW TO DO

ACCOUNT-

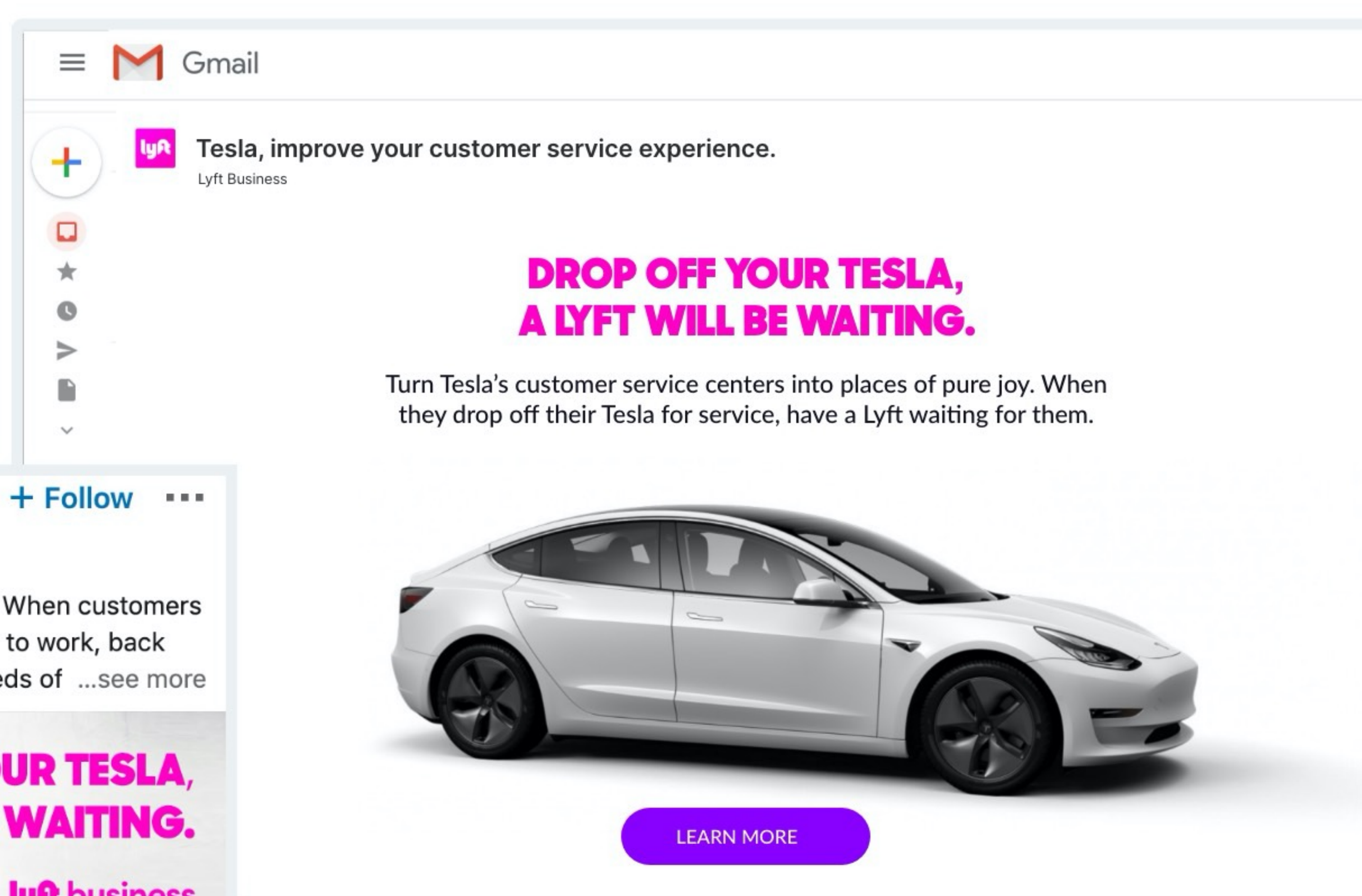
BASED

MARKETING

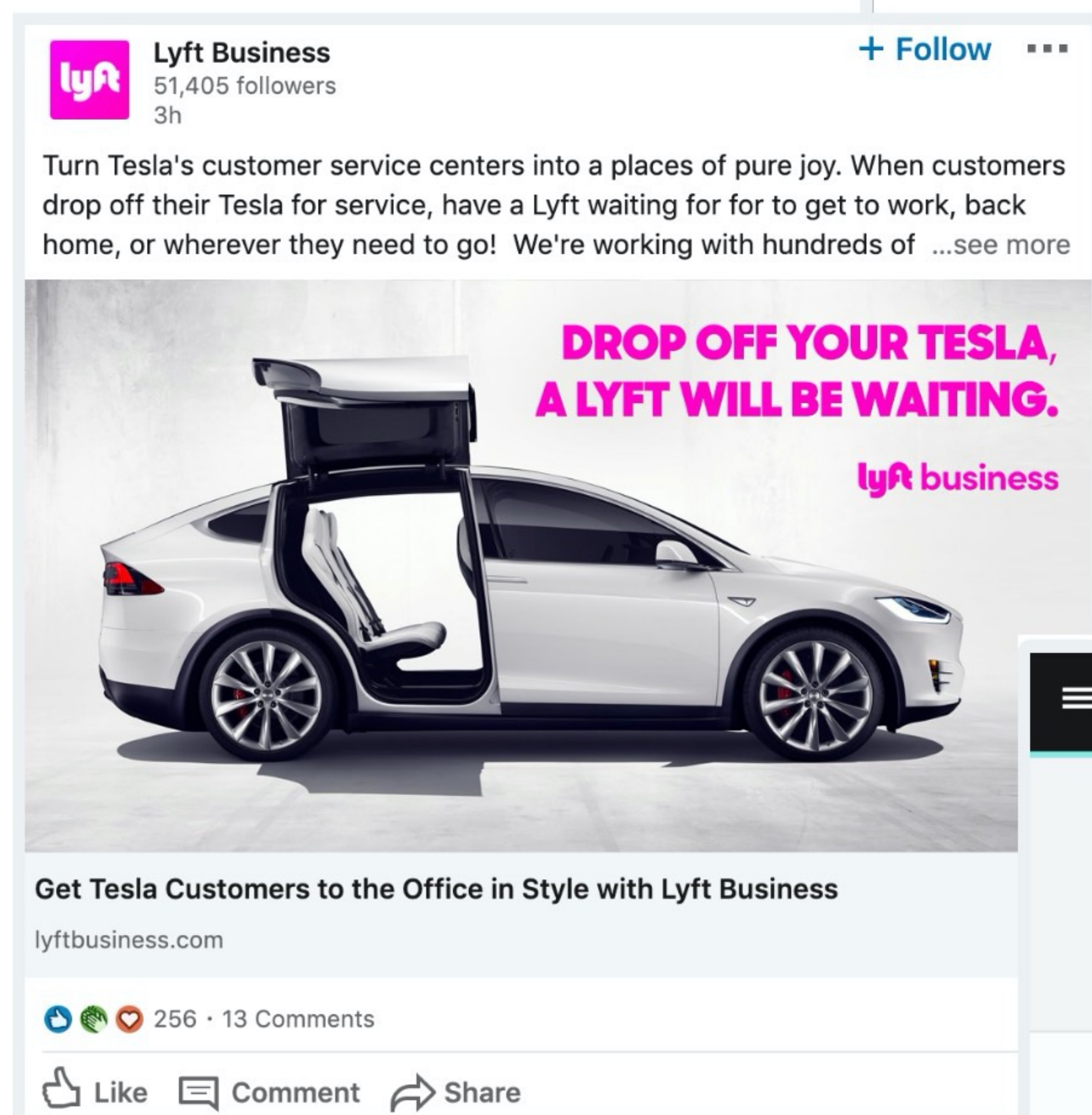
Grab their attention with personalized campaigns

Now that you've identified your list of target accounts and contacts, it's time to pique their interest in your brand and start building a business relationship. This step is all about creating hyper-personalized content and getting it in front of the right people. Target accounts can make up a huge volume of your revenue, it's time to step it up and make these buyers feel like VIPs!

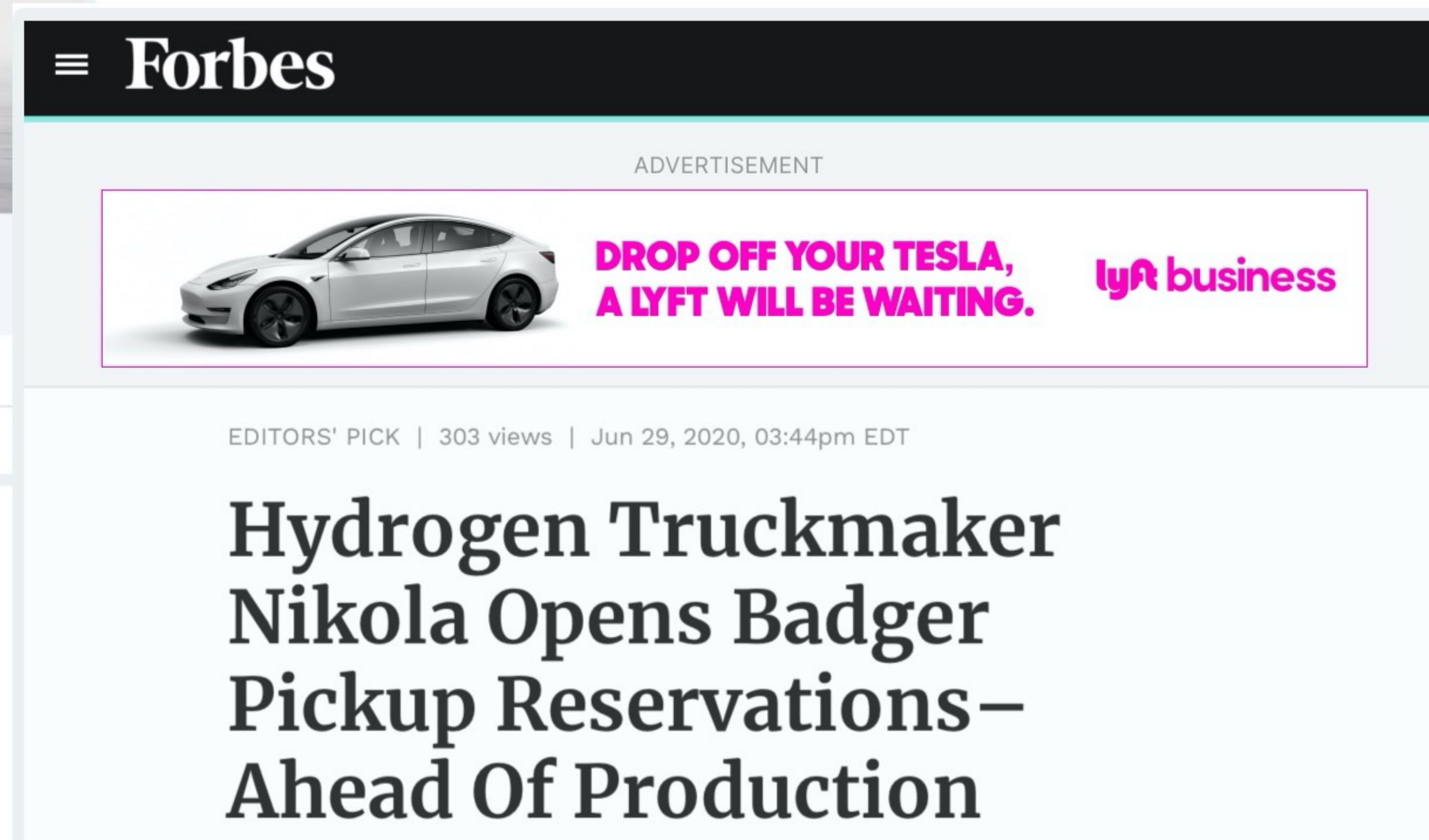
EMAIL CAMPAIGNS



SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGNS



ADVERTISING CAMPAIGNS



Now that you're up to speed on ABM—what it is as well as its potential business impact—let's tackle the most important piece: how to do it.

Launching an ABM program can be overwhelming. The ABM-related technology and literature is seemingly endless. Here's a simple outline of how ABM works.

Identify your target accounts

Create a list of target accounts, or companies, that you want to sell into. This list can be shaped by any of the following firmographic data points, or information about an organization:

- Revenue
- Industry
- Company Size
- Location, etc.







Then you can fold in proprietary intent data provided by ABM platforms to further prioritize these accounts. For example, you may layer in:

- Product interest
- Buying stage
- Profile fit
- Intent score
- Search terms, etc.

Different companies can have different target account criteria, depending on what's important to them.









COMPANIES WITH MORE THAN \$1 Billion Revenue

	Google	\$41B
	Coca-Cola	\$32B
	AT&T	\$181B
	Tesla	\$25B
	General Electric	\$95B
	Allianz	\$145B







COMPANIES WITH MORE THAN 1,000 Employees



	Aramark	215,000
	JP Morgan Chase	252,539
	Apple	137,000
	HCA Healthcare	280,000
	Lowe's	200,000
	Alibaba	101,958



COMPANIES LOCATED IN EMEA

	Volkswagen	Germany
	E.ON	Germany
	ING	Netherlands
	Carrefour	France
	Siemens	Germany
	Tesco	UK

The size of your target account list depends on a few factors, including the size of your Total Addressable Market (TAM), the length of your sales cycle, the size of your sales team, and your average close rates. Depending on these factors, target account lists can range anywhere from hundreds to thousands of accounts.

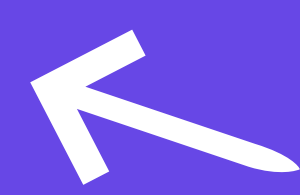
Assemble your ABM stakeholders early on and outline a crystal-clear definition of your target accounts, so that your entire company understands target account criteria and segmentation.

An important thing to note! Your target account list is not just made up of net new logos that you hope to acquire. It could also include existing customer accounts that you aim to grow, oftentimes known as a “land and expand” approach.










PRO TIP...

Because of the high-touch nature of ABM relationship-building, Salesforce recommends no more than 10 target accounts per sales rep.



Dan Darcy
SVP, Global Enablement, Salesforce

After you've identified your target account list, you'll want to make sure they're loaded into Salesforce. Salesforce is the source of truth for all of your prospect, customer, and account data, so it's imperative that it houses all of your ABM target account data also.

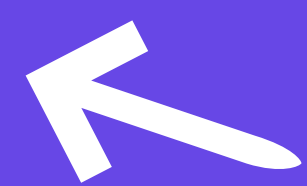
Salesforce Target Account List					
COMPANY	EMPLOYEES	REVENUE	INDUSTRY	ACCOUNT OWNER	
 TESLA	48,800	\$24.6B	Automotive	Samantha Levin	
 Coca-Cola	100,400	\$31.8B	Food & Beverage	Percy Landers	
 Toyota	360,000	\$272.3B	Automotive	Michael Woolins	
 VW	670,000	\$282.9B	Automotive	Carl Covington	
 Amazon	798,000	\$280.5B	Cloud Computing	Beth Deitrich	
 Nike	76,700	\$36.4B	Apparel	Melissa Wong	
 Microsoft	145,000	\$125.8B	Software	Timothy Rank	

Once companies have loaded their target accounts into Salesforce, they can tier them according to priority. For instance, a company may have 1,000 target accounts, and then segment them by revenue band. You could label them by number (Tier 1, 2, and 3), or have a little fun with it and label them by gem type (Diamond, Gold, and Silver accounts). This segmentation will help you prioritize your ABM efforts and account assignments.

The next step after organizing your target account list? Build out a list of role-based contacts who are likely buying committee members and decision makers. According to Knowledge Tree, the average B2B buying committee is made up of 7 to 20 individuals, so your contact list can get pretty robust.

**PRO TIP...**

As marketers, ABM helps you connect the dots within your most important accounts and create revenue opportunities for your sales team.

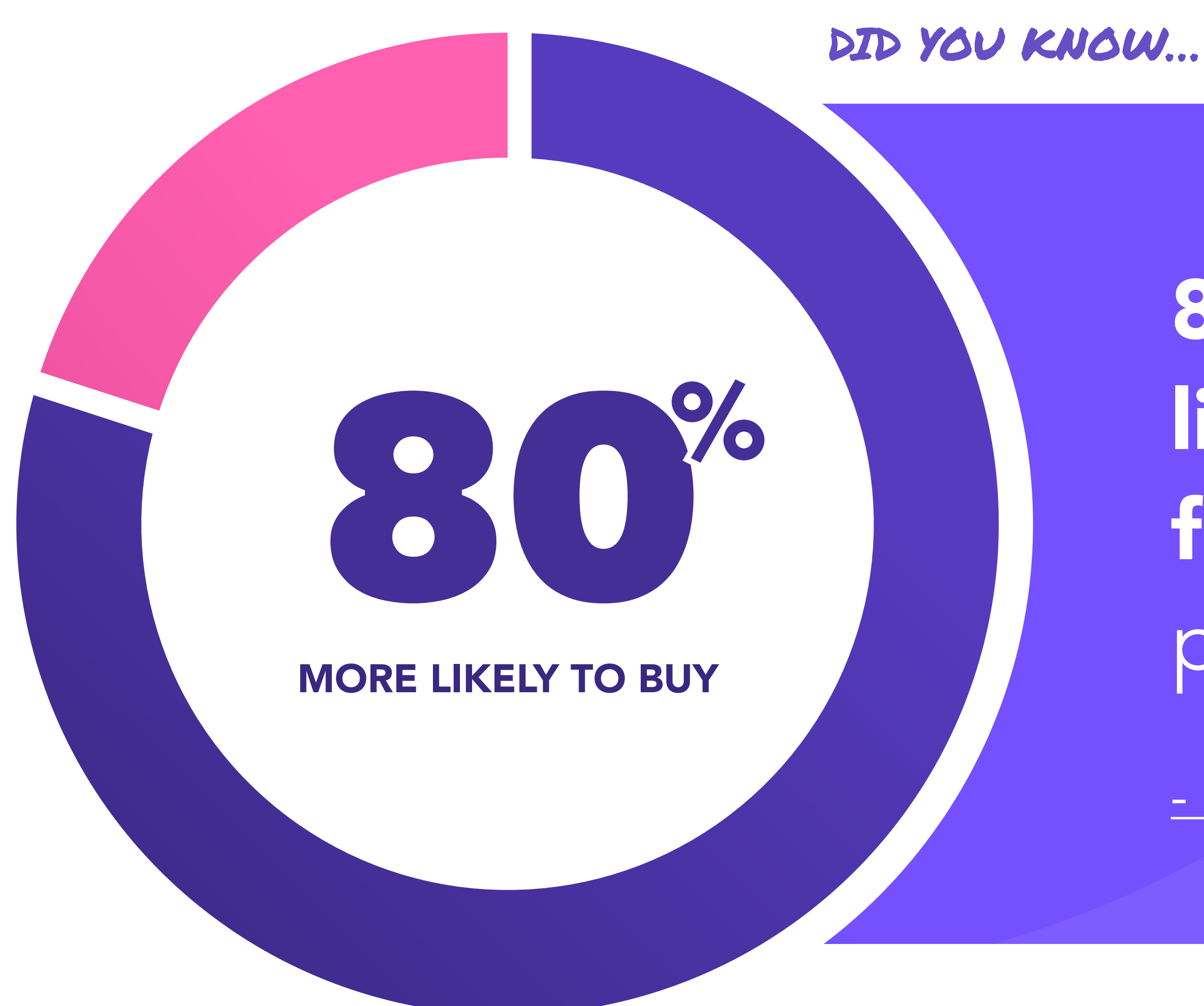


Sara Varni
CMO, Twilio

Catch the attention of your buyers by building out bespoke marketing experiences. Tactics could include:

- Email campaigns
- Social media ads and engagement
- Personalized advertisements
- Custom content
- Field marketing events
- Virtual summits or webinars
- Direct mail campaigns
- Phone calls
- Personal referrals
- Invitations to participate in podcasts

We've even seen companies go big with highway Billboards, high-end gift bags, and custom comic books. Think big and test out different tactics to attract target accounts.



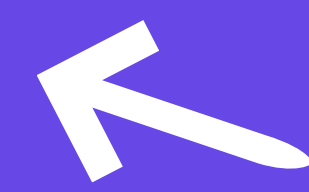
80% of consumers are more likely to make a purchase from a brand that provides personalized experiences.

- Epsilon

In order to effectively infiltrate your target accounts, you'll want to take a multichannel campaign approach. Create a tailored customer journey that serves up specific campaigns and messaging depending on their stage in the funnel. According to a study done by DemandGen Report, 95% of buyers choose a solution provider that provides them with ample content to help navigate through each stage of the buying process.

**PRO TIP...**

The creative side of marketing is what matters. It's the superpower. It's being concise, specific, and reaching the right audience on the right channel at the right time.

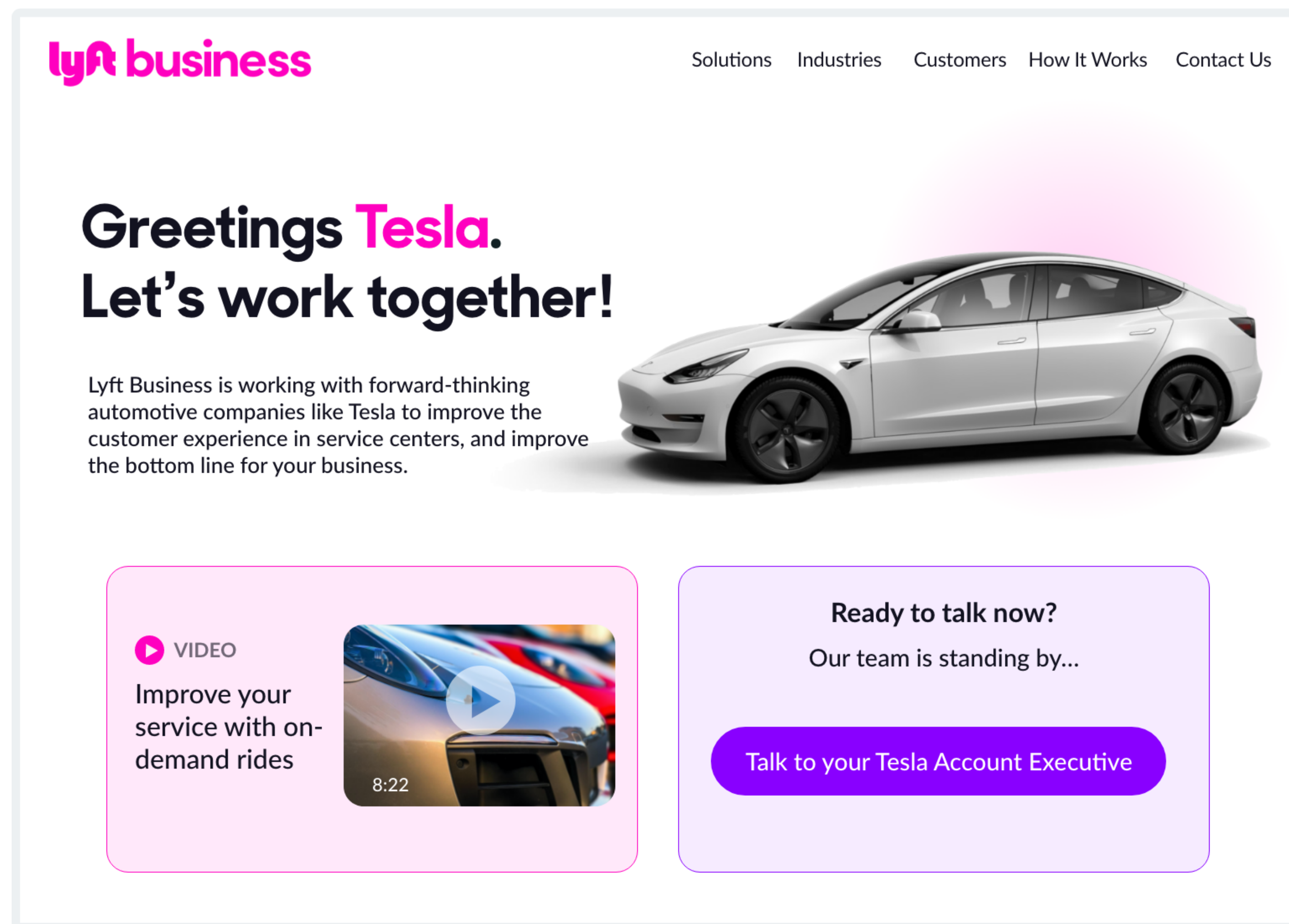


Nate Skinner
CMO, Salesforce Pardot

Greet them with a tailored website experience

Once you've caught the attention of your buyer, and they click through your campaign, it's important to greet them with a completely custom, personalized website experience. A one-size-fits-all homepage will not cut it.

lyftbusiness.com/tesla-abm-landing-page



Today's marketing tools make it easy to build out custom website experiences and landing pages, complete with:

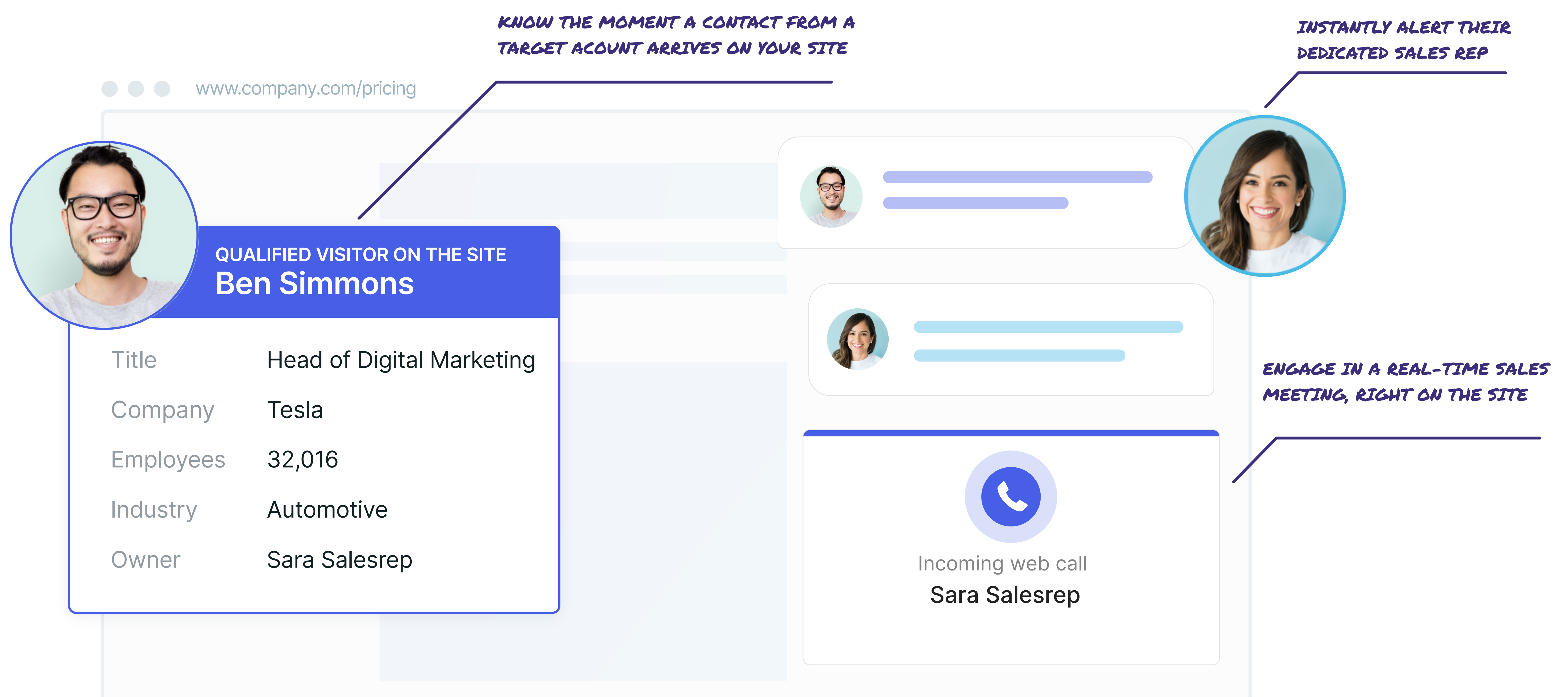
- Personalized messaging
- Video recordings
- Tailored content and CTAs (PDFs, Guides, Blog Posts)

Make sure your website content matches the positioning and aesthetic of your advertisements, helping you deliver a seamless customer experience. By building out engaging, custom website experiences, you can “wow” your prospects and set the stage for a high-quality sales conversation.

Engage and convert target accounts with Conversational ABM

Now for the most important step. Your target buyer has clicked through your marketing campaign and arrived at your doorstep. How do you upgrade them from “intrigued visitor” to “real sales opportunity”? The answer is Conversational ABM.

The concept of Conversational ABM is simple: what if you could instantly connect your team with target accounts the moment they arrive on your site, and have a live sales conversation?



Conversational ABM transforms a quick website visit into a full sales meeting with your most important accounts. Real-time website conversations help sales teams forge new relationships and move deals through the sales cycle. This is an important piece of an end-to-end ABM strategy.



ENGAGE & CONVERT TOP ACCOUNTS WITH CONVERSATIONAL ABM



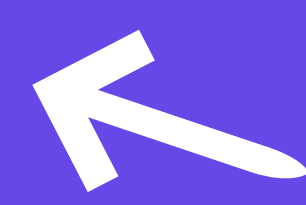
Conversational ABM gives reps more at-bats

If you're playing baseball, you want to step up to the plate as many times as you can. The more at-bats you can get, the higher your chances of hitting the ball and scoring runs for your team. Maybe you'll strike out, maybe you'll hit a foul ball, maybe you'll hit a single or a double. And every once in a while, you'll hit a home run. Conversational ABM is like baseball. It gives your sales teams more at-bats and more chances to connect with target accounts and knock it out of the park.



PRO TIP...

Conversational ABM has been a total home run. When Diamond accounts arrive on our site, a siren goes off, and our sales reps drop everything to engage with them immediately.

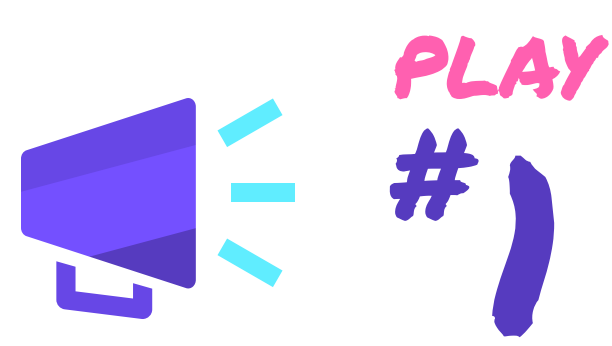


Scott Holden
CMO, ThoughtSpot

Companies who do Conversational ABM see a big business impact:

- 10X more conversations with target accounts
- 64% more meetings booked with target accounts

The must-have Conversational ABM plays



Know when someone from a target account is on your site

Remember how we talked about housing all of your target account data in Salesforce? By having that information stored in one place, your Conversational ABM platform can quickly reference that target account list and know anytime someone from a target account arrives on your site. There are two scenarios here.



KNOWN PERSON IS ON THE SITE

Leah Adams: ABM Account

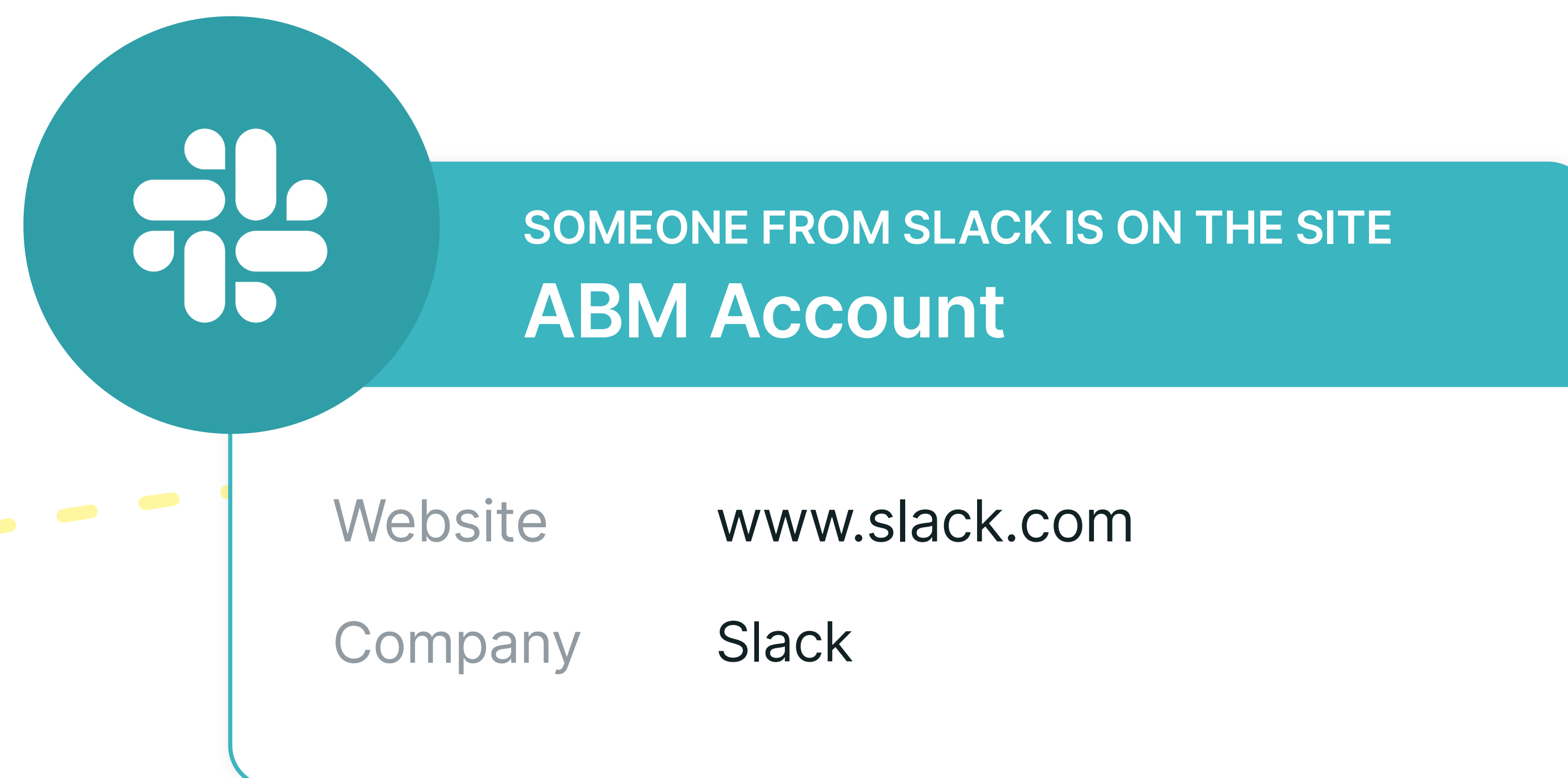
Email ladams@slack.com

Company Slack

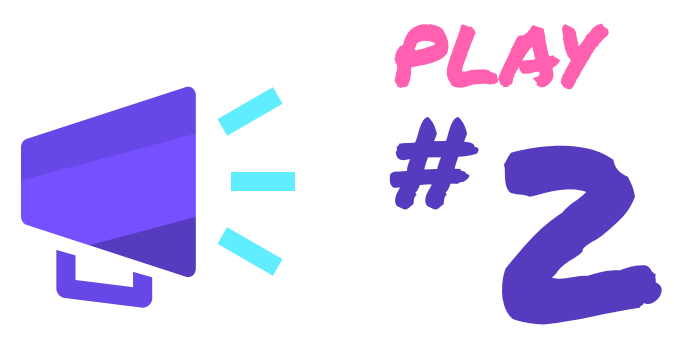
SCENARIO 1

A known contact from a target account arrives on your site.

In this scenario, you know exactly who a website visitor is: their name, role, company, etc. A visitor becomes known if they have ever filled out a form, clicked through an email campaign, or provided their information during a website conversation. Every time they return to your site, since they are cookied, you instantly know exactly who they are.

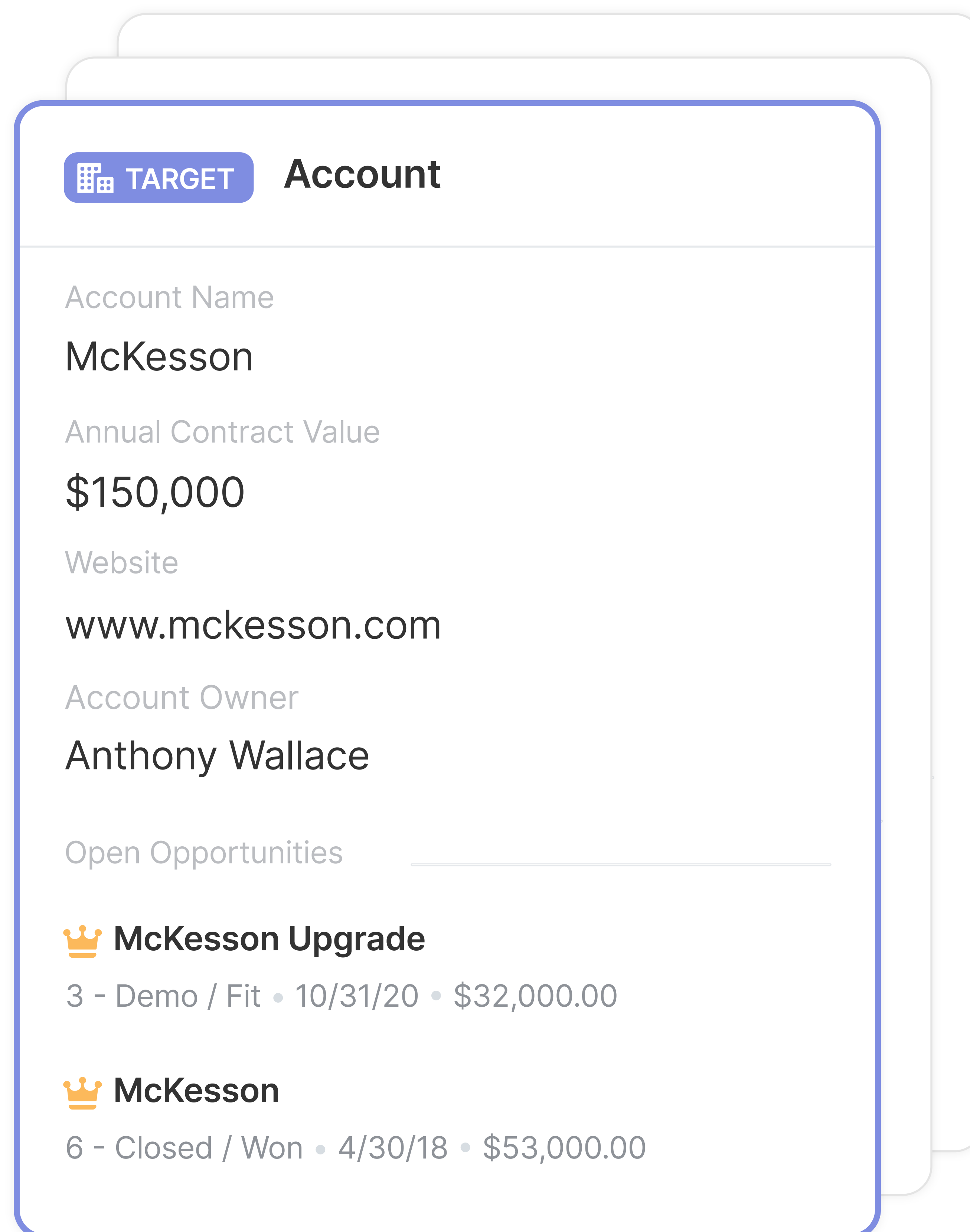
**SCENARIO 2****An unknown contact from a target account arrives on your site.**

Even if you don't know exactly who a website visitor is, you will still know when someone who works for one of your target accounts is on the site. We call this target account matching, and it's achieved using a technique called "fuzzy matching." Your Conversational ABM platform automatically pulls in the visitors' website domain, and does a quick lookup of your Salesforce target account list, to see if there's a match. Then your Conversational ABM platform instantly recognizes if this visitor works for a target account.



Instantly see all of their ABM account data

Because your Conversational ABM platform hooks into other systems, you get a complete picture of your website visitors.

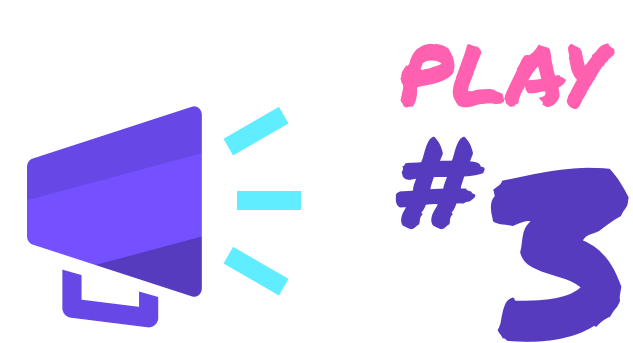


You can pull in whichever data points are of the most interest to your sales team. Common data points to surface would be:

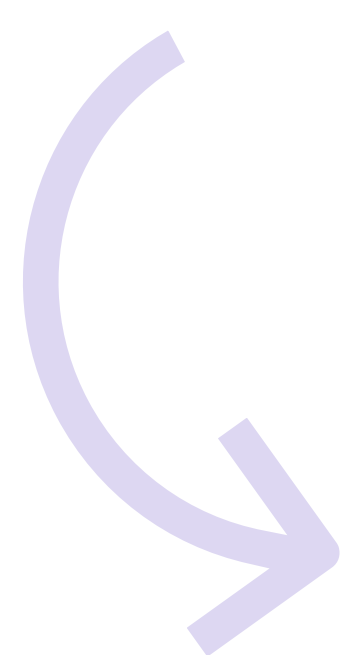
- **Visitor Data:** If a visitor is a known contact, surface their name, title, and email address.
- **Company Data:** Pull in important firmographic data like company name, industry, employee count, headquarter location, and annual revenue. Data enrichment platforms like Clearbit, Demandbase, or 6sense can automatically surface this information solely based on a website visitors' IP address.

- **Salesforce CRM Data:** Instantly see all relevant information from Salesforce. In addition to showing Contact and Account data, you can show any Opportunity data. Show any open opportunities as well as relevant details like stage, amount, and close date.
- **Marketing Automation Data:** Understand which marketing campaigns they've engaged with as well as their lead score and grade, fueled by Marketing Automation platforms like Salesforce Pardot or Marketo. This indicates their familiarity with your brand and content.
- **ABM Intent Data:** ABM platforms like DemandBase and 6sense have proprietary intent data that signal where someone is in a buying cycle. These signals could include things like buying stage, intent score, profile fit, and so on.

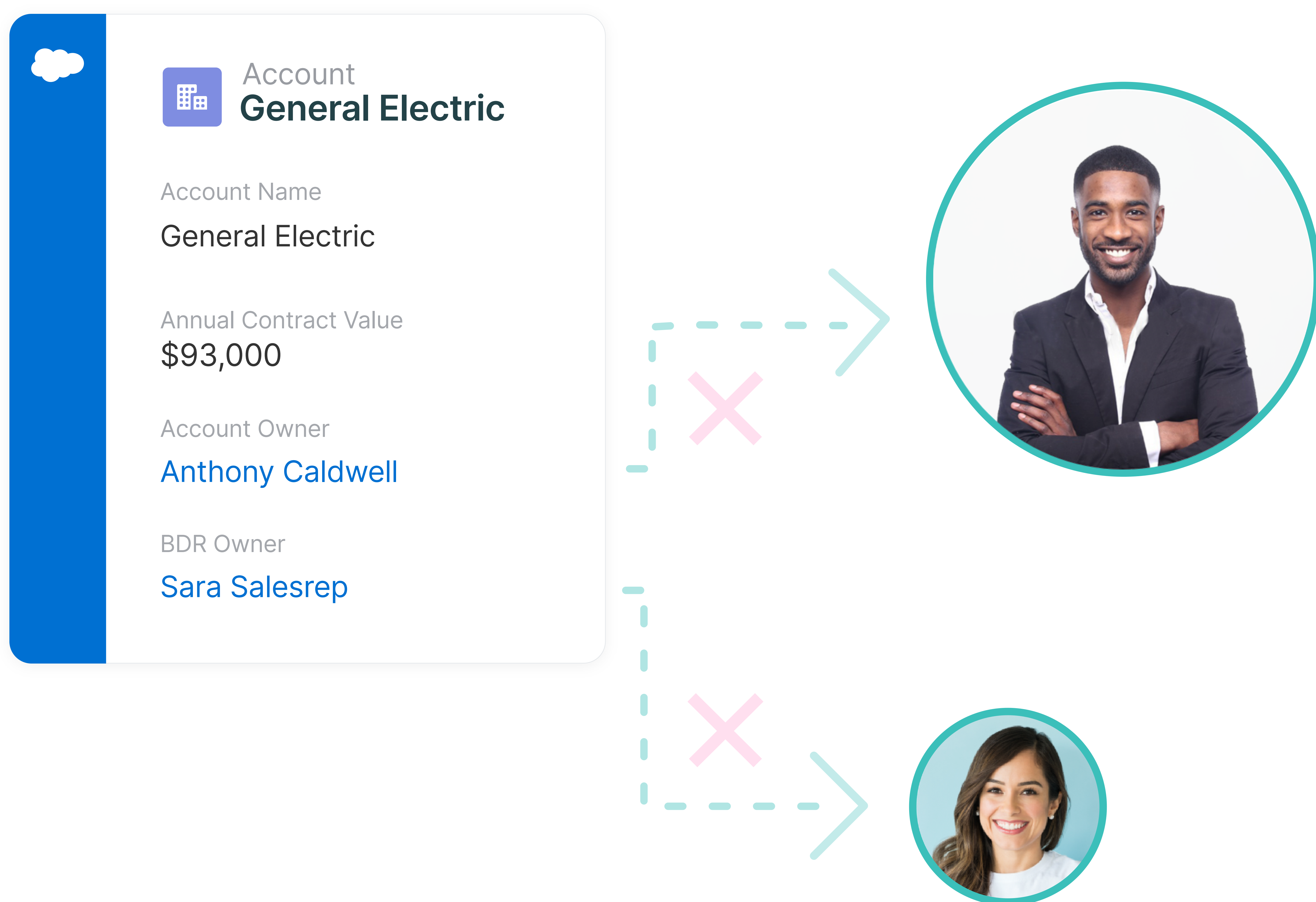
By giving your sales team all of this information, you're setting them up for success. They have complete context about a visitor and an account, so they can deliver a hyper-personalized website conversation.



Route conversations to the right sales reps

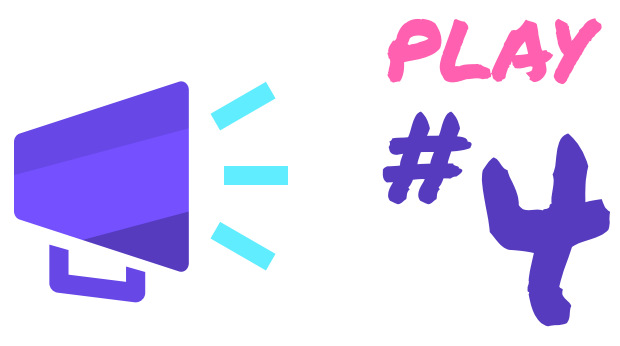


Next up, it's time to think about how you route visitors from target accounts when they arrive on your site. When it comes to ABM, B2B companies have very clear ownership rules around target accounts. Proper routing ensures that sales reps are connected with accounts they care about most.



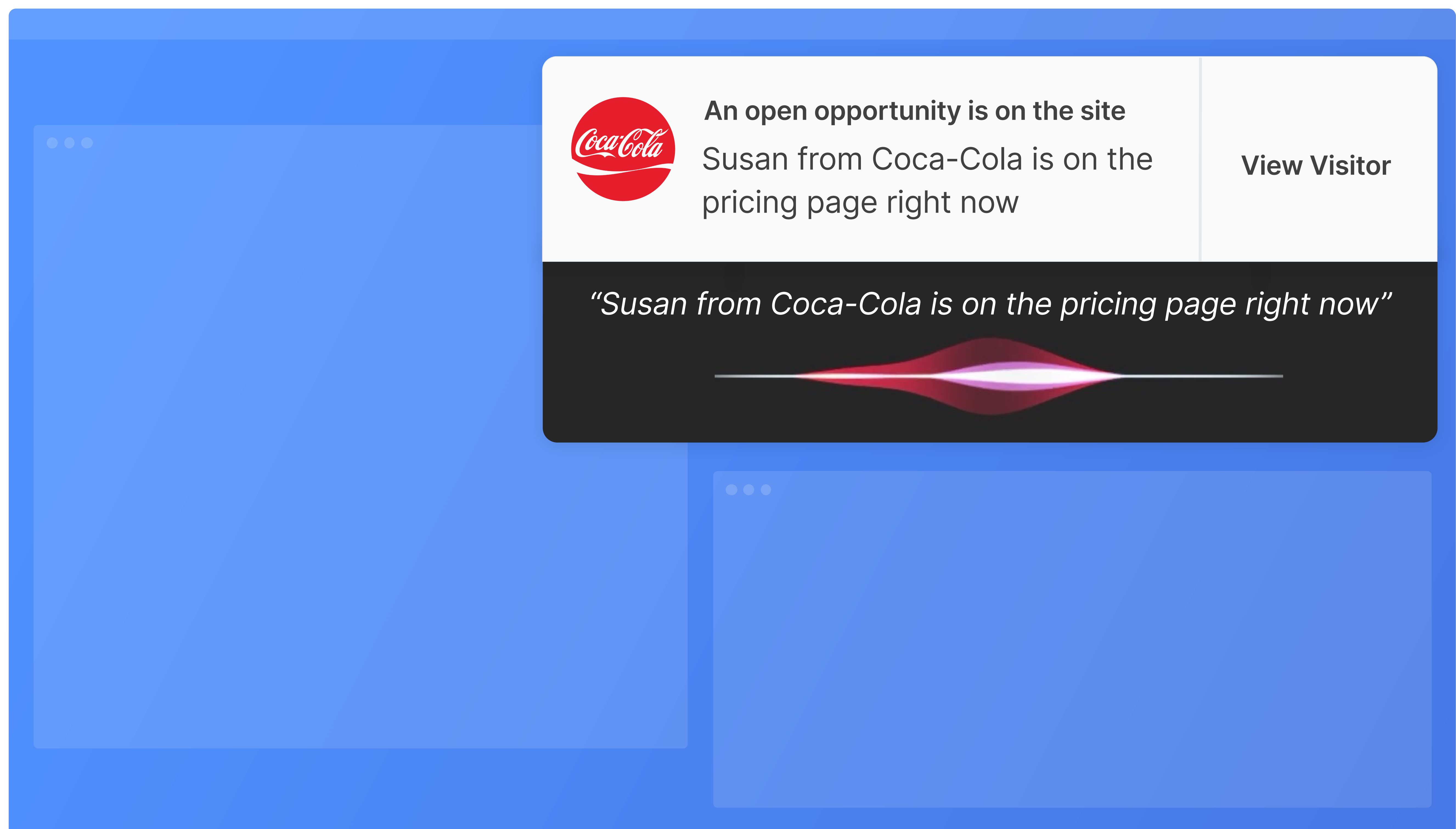
Typically, a quota-carrying Account Executive (AE) will “own” an account, and they will have supporting Business Development Reps (BDRs) or Sales Development Reps (SDRs) who help them “work” an account.

Salesforce is the gift that keeps on giving. Because you house all of your target account data in Salesforce, including sales owner(s), your Conversational ABM platform can do a quick lookup of target account ownership, and route conversations accordingly.



Sound the alarm with alerts and notifications

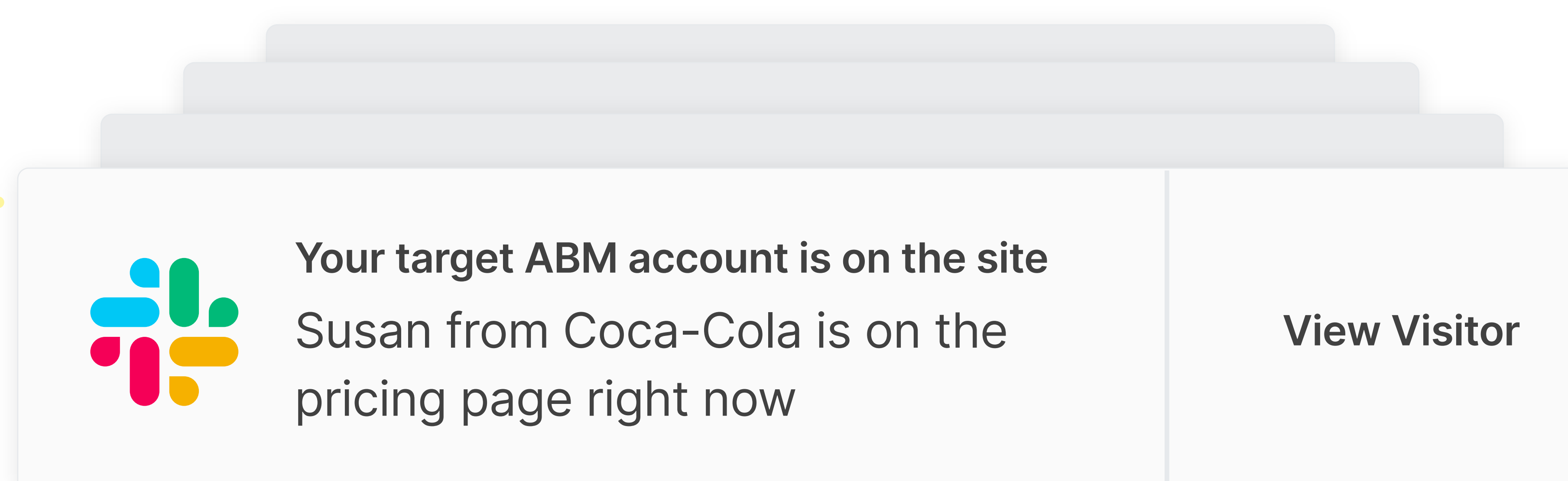
Your SDRs and BDRs are at their computers, actively working target accounts. They're logging emails and phone calls in an attempt to make contact. They want to swing the bat every chance they get. They will drop everything to engage with a target account immediately when they are on the site.



SDRs and BDRs

Sound the alarm! Setup in-app notifications, voice alerts, and Slack alerts to drive immediate action inside of your Conversational ABM platform.

On the other hand, your AEs are oftentimes busy closing business, either on a call or on the road, and not available to hop into your Conversational ABM platform for a live discussion. Your AEs who own target accounts will want to know that their target account was on your site because it demonstrates buying intent. It's a signal that this account is thinking about your company and they're potentially interested in your products or services.



Alerts for AEs

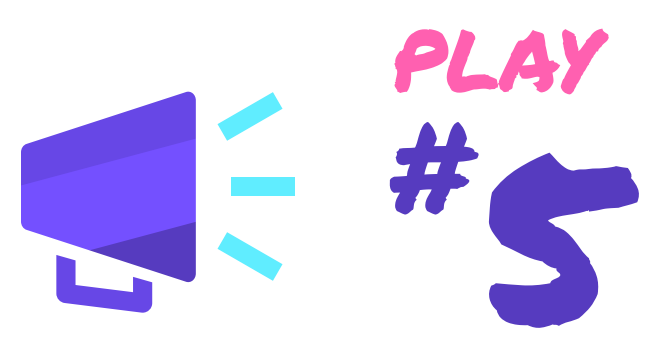
Send your AEs email and Slack alerts, notifying them that their target account is on the site. No immediate action is needed on their part.



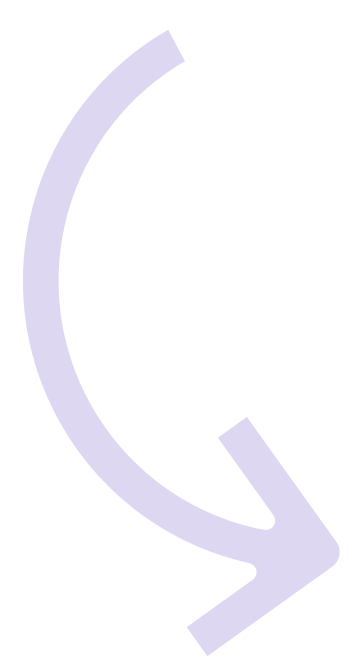
PRO TIP...

As an SDR or BDR, you have to take advantage of this channel. Conversational ABM has become a must-have in my sales toolkit. I'm having 10X more conversations with my target accounts.

Haley Romstad
Business Development Rep, ThoughtSpot



Intelligently engage with VIPs



This is the magic moment. One of your target accounts is on the site and it's time to roll out the red carpet. Don't just sit back and wait for them to fill out a form or chat with you.

Give your visitor a few seconds to orient themselves with your site, and then put your best foot forward. Here are some best practices for engaging with target accounts:



Sara Salesrep

Welcome, Alisha! I'm Sara, Apple's dedicated Account Executive. I've been working with your teammate Chris. How can I help you today?



Alisha Reynolds

Hi Sara, thanks! Chris and I are hoping to talk to you about pricing if you have time.



Incoming web call
Sara Salesrep

Book at 30 minute meeting

Today ▶

1:00pm

1:30pm

2:30pm

3:00pm



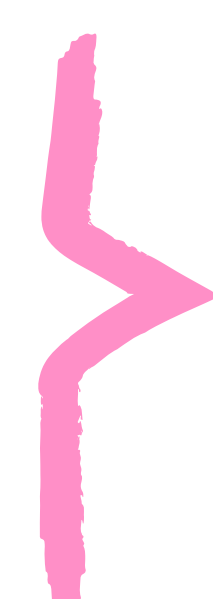
Greet your visitor by name



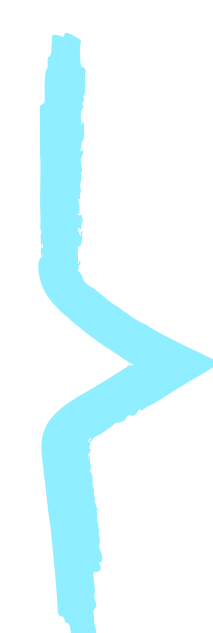
Introduce yourself as their dedicated sales representative



Reference their company and/or teammates that you've worked with to show them you're familiar with their account.



When the time is right, upgrade the live chat to a phone call for a quality conversation.

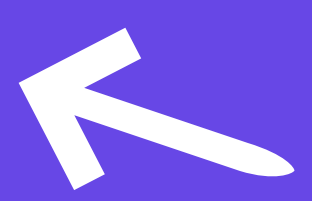


Invite your contact to book a meeting, within the context of your website conversation, to lock in next steps.

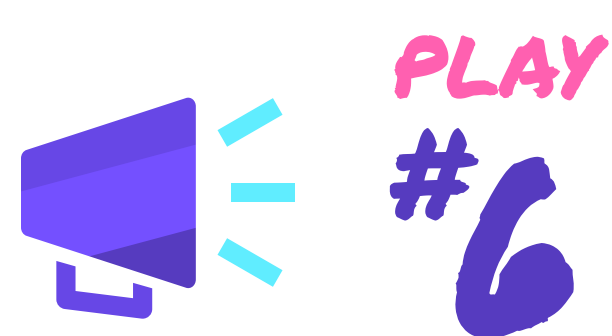
These ingredients will position you as a helpful, available concierge and make it clear that this isn't a one-size-fits-all website chatbot. Most importantly, it will increase your chances of engaging and converting your most important contacts.

**PRO TIP...**

Qualified.com is flexible and configurable for a variety of use cases including supporting our ABM efforts. Implementation is quick and easy.



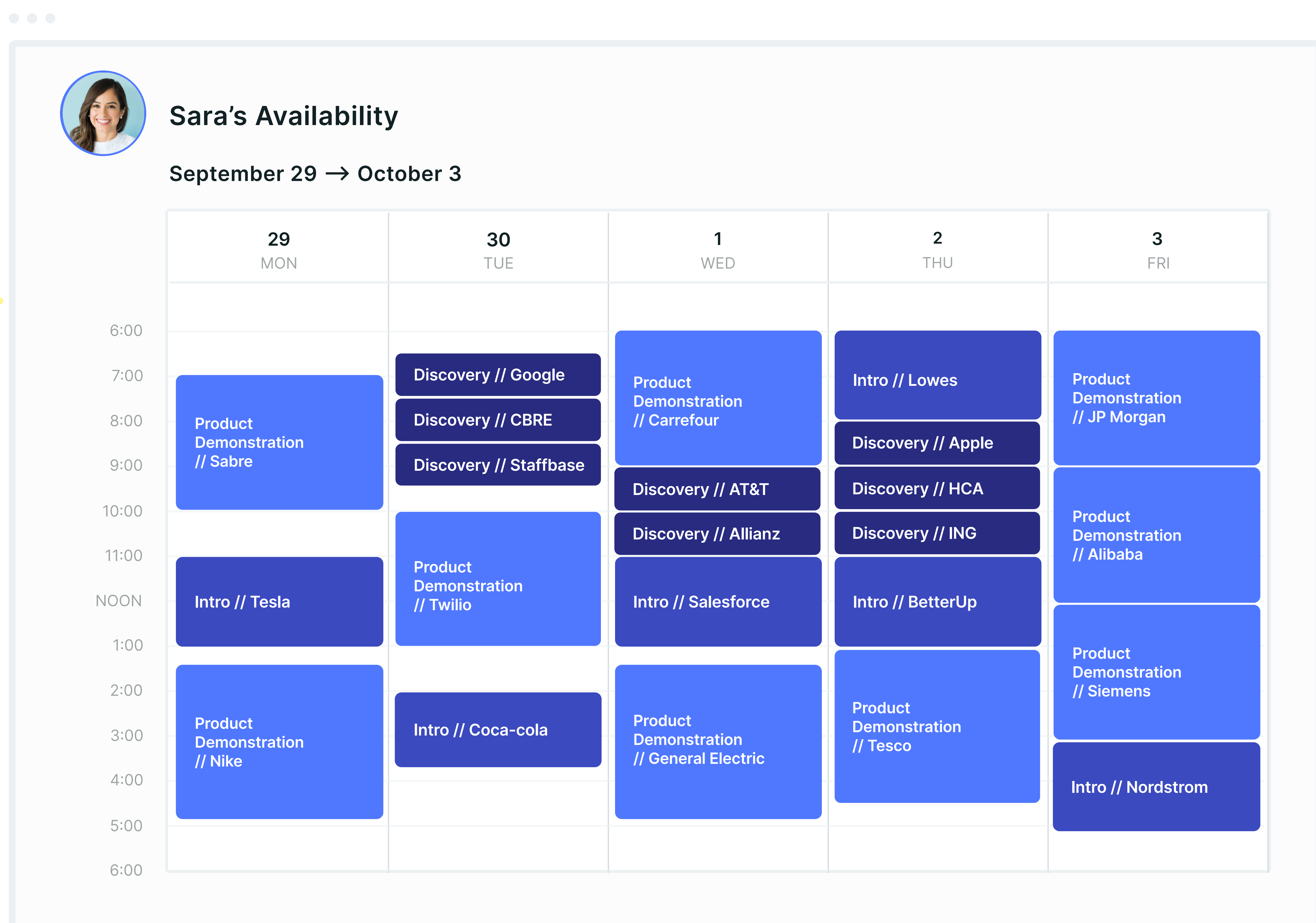
MaryJane Craig
Marketing Director, Datis



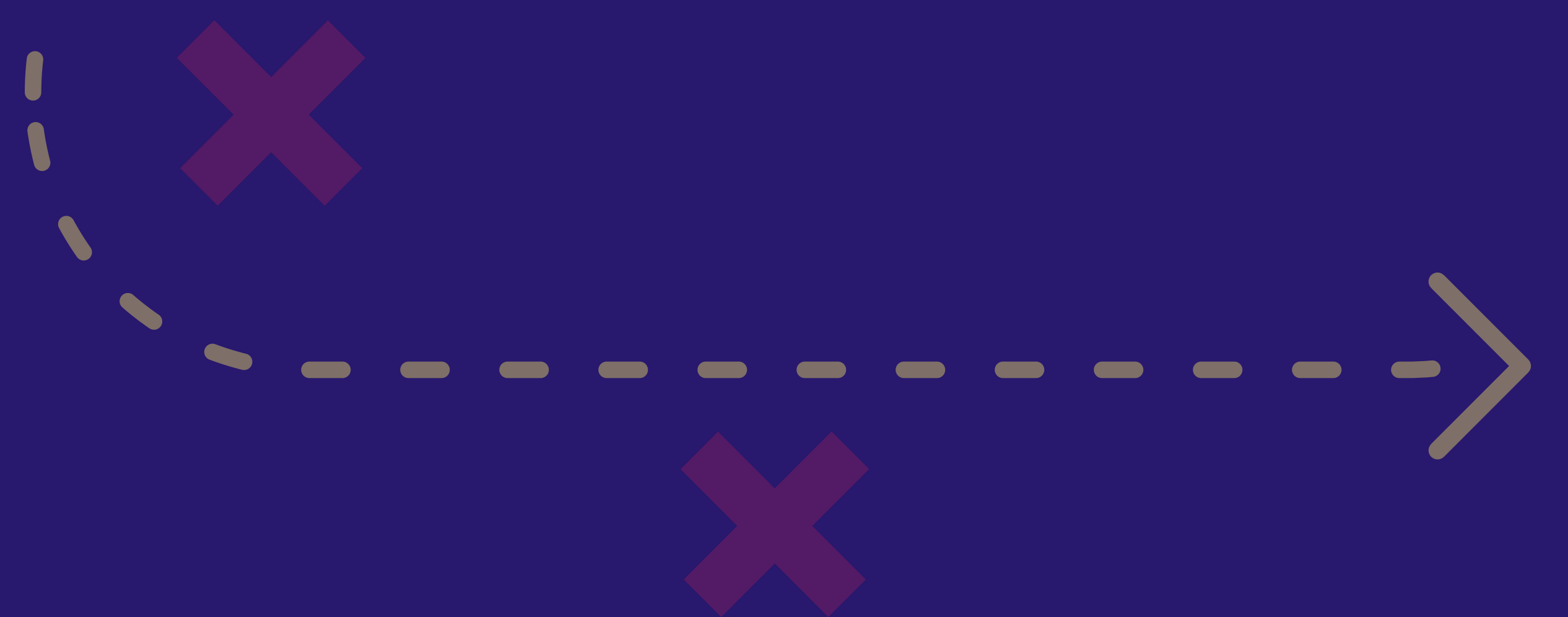
Connect with target accounts around the clock

So what happens at night or on the weekends when your sales reps are offline? It's important that you have a strategy in place for target accounts who arrive on your site, no matter the time or day.

Enter Chatbots. When someone from a target account arrives on your site, you can automatically greet them with a tailored message. Then invite them to book a meeting with their dedicated sales rep, right from the website. By using Chatbots to supplement your live chat strategies, you'll be able to engage and convert target accounts around the clock.

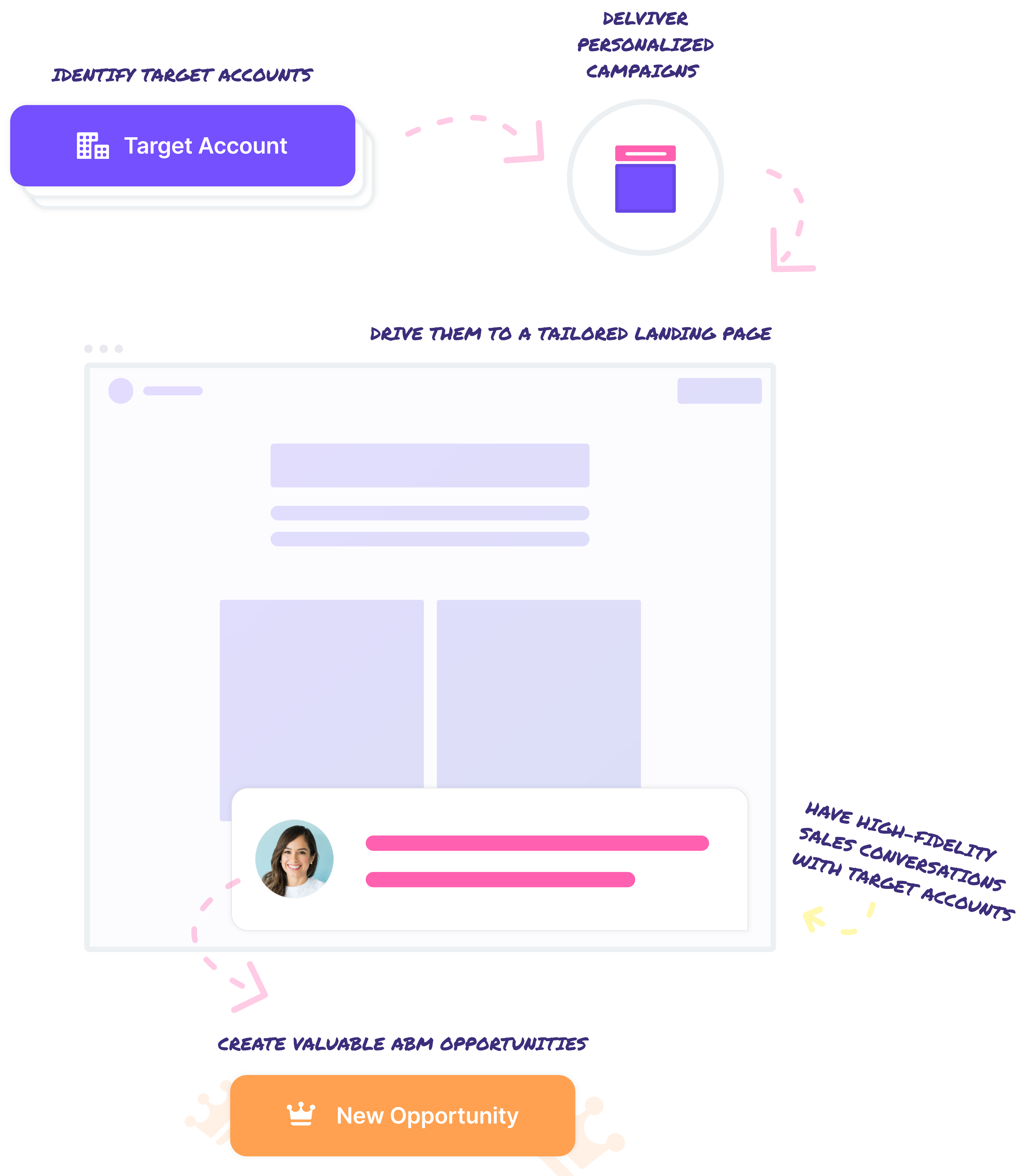


MEASURING CONVERSATIONAL ABM SUCCESS



The benefits of Conversational ABM

We've just outlined a new framework for converting target accounts:



There are three main benefits of this Conversational ABM approach:

- **Your sales team gets more at-bats.** They've just unlocked a whole new channel for sales conversations. Now they can engage more contacts at target accounts.
- **Your business generates more ABM pipeline and revenue.** By connecting with more contacts, you can create more sales opportunities and progress deals through the funnel. You'll make faster inroads into accounts, and deal cycles will shorten.
- **Your VIP customers receive an unforgettable experience.** Decision makers at top accounts get a white-glove sales experience that will positively impact their perception of your business and increase their likelihood to purchase.

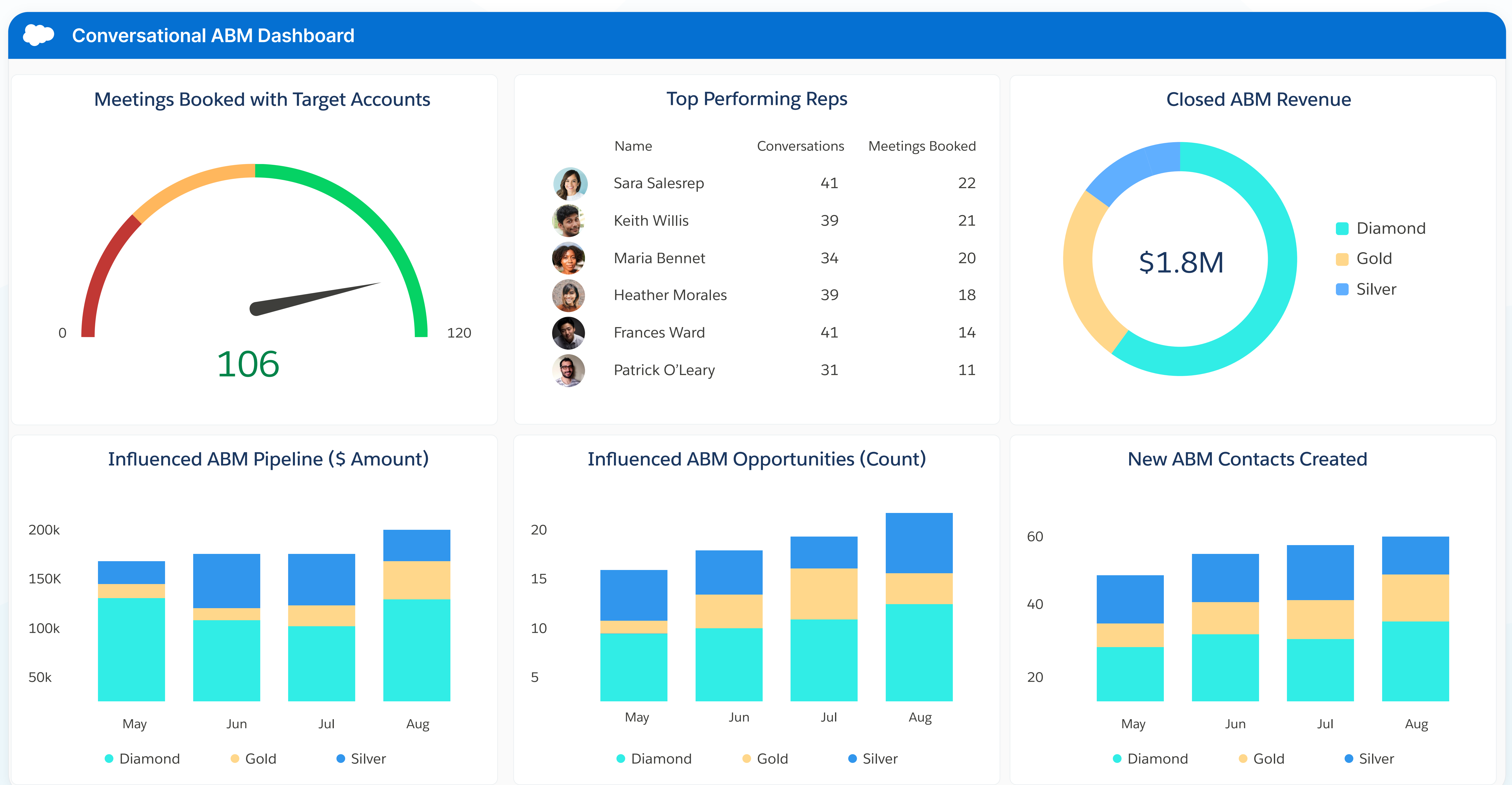
DID YOU KNOW...

Companies that implement ABM
have reported an **84% bump in
reputation and 74% improvement
in customer relationships.**

- ITSMA

Analyzing performance inside of Salesforce

Last, but most definitely not least, let's talk about how you showcase these benefits from a reporting standpoint. Salesforce is the source of truth for your marketing and sales performance, which includes your ABM metrics. It's critical that you report on the success of your Conversational ABM program with Salesforce Reports and Dashboards.



There are several benefits to viewing the data inside of Salesforce:

- Conversational ABM data lives alongside all of your other ABM performance metrics
- You can drill into specific Accounts, Opportunities, and Contacts
- You can drill into an entire website conversation from Salesforce, much like a DVR recording, if you're curious about the specifics of a conversation.

Here are key metrics that you'll want to track to understand the success of your Conversational ABM program:

- Engagement (Conversations) with Existing Contacts
- Engagement (Conversations) with New Contacts
- New Contacts Created (Number Count)
- Meetings Booked (Number Count)
- Influenced ABM Opportunities (Dollar Amount)
- Influenced ABM Opportunities (Number Count)
- Sales Rep Activity Leaderboard

It's time to run the Conversational ABM playbook

To recap, we just broke down our Conversational ABM playbook into 6 easy plays:

1. Know when someone from a target account is on your site
2. See all of their ABM account data in real time
3. Route conversations to the right reps
4. Sound the alarm with alerts and notifications
5. Intelligently engage VIPs
6. Connect with target accounts around the clock

Now it's time to put it to use. Your target accounts are on your site right now, waiting to talk to you. Go get 'em!



PRO TIP...

If you're doing Account-Based Marketing, Conversational ABM is a total game changer.



Ariel Kelman
CMO, Amazon Web Services

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