

# Emerging Technology Analysis: Leveraging Intent Data for Marketing and Demand Generation

**Published:** 11 February 2020 **ID:** G00451392

---

**Analyst(s):** Alan Antin, Todd Berkowitz

Intent data is a key asset for customer acquisition, retention and growth initiatives. Product marketers can use intent data not only to improve targeting of account-based marketing programs and traditional outbound campaigns, but also to better align messaging and content to buyer needs.

## Key Findings

- Third-party intent data is collected across the broader business internet through publishing “co-ops,” and advertising networks and individual websites. Buyer intent is captured through search behavior, content consumption, and even postings and comments.
- Intent data will continue to gain adoption as account-based marketing (ABM) programs grow in popularity as a go-to-market strategy and as additional marketing use cases continue to build traction.
- Technology and service providers (TSPs) leverage third-party intent data and first-party web engagement data for targeting strategies and prospect prioritization. Marketing content is aligned by understanding the intent signals and buyer stage.

## Recommendations

To improve the effectiveness of demand generation and ABM efforts, product marketers should:

- Develop precision targeting by leveraging intent data in order to better understand which buyers are “in-market” and turn them into high-quality leads.
- Research different intent sources and capabilities offered on a stand-alone basis and as part of ABM platforms, and select the tools that best match up to specific needs and marketing use cases.
- Improve content marketing effectiveness with intent data by delivering the right content at the right time, both in initial outreach and as buyer intent signals change throughout the buying process.

## Table of Contents

---

Strategic Planning Assumptions.....	2
Analysis.....	3
Technology Description.....	5
Gartner Definition of Intent Data.....	5
Technology Adoption.....	9
Intent Data Will Continue to Gain Adoption as ABM Programs Grow and End Users Seek to Achieve Greater Campaign Effectiveness.....	9
Pressure for Higher-Quality Leads and Growing Digital Ad Share Will Drive the Need for Targeting Based on Intent Data.....	10
Intent Data Will Inform Content Decision Triggers and Offer Insights Into Buyer Segment Content Needs.....	11
Privacy Concerns and Government Regulation May Inhibit Adoption.....	12
Traditional Practices, a Skills Shortage and Demand for ROI May Slow Usage.....	12
Technology Impact.....	13
Marketers Will Continue to Develop Precision Targeting.....	13
Greater Digital Privacy Will Propel Innovative Solutions.....	13
Actions for the Next Six to 18 Months.....	14
References.....	15
Gartner Recommended Reading.....	15

## List of Tables

---

Table 1. Intent Data Provider Snapshot.....	7
---	---

## List of Figures

---

Figure 1. Buyers Are Seeking Information From Third-Party Sources.....	4
Figure 2. Third-Party Intent Data Sources.....	6
Figure 3. ABM Pipeline Lift.....	10

## Strategic Planning Assumptions

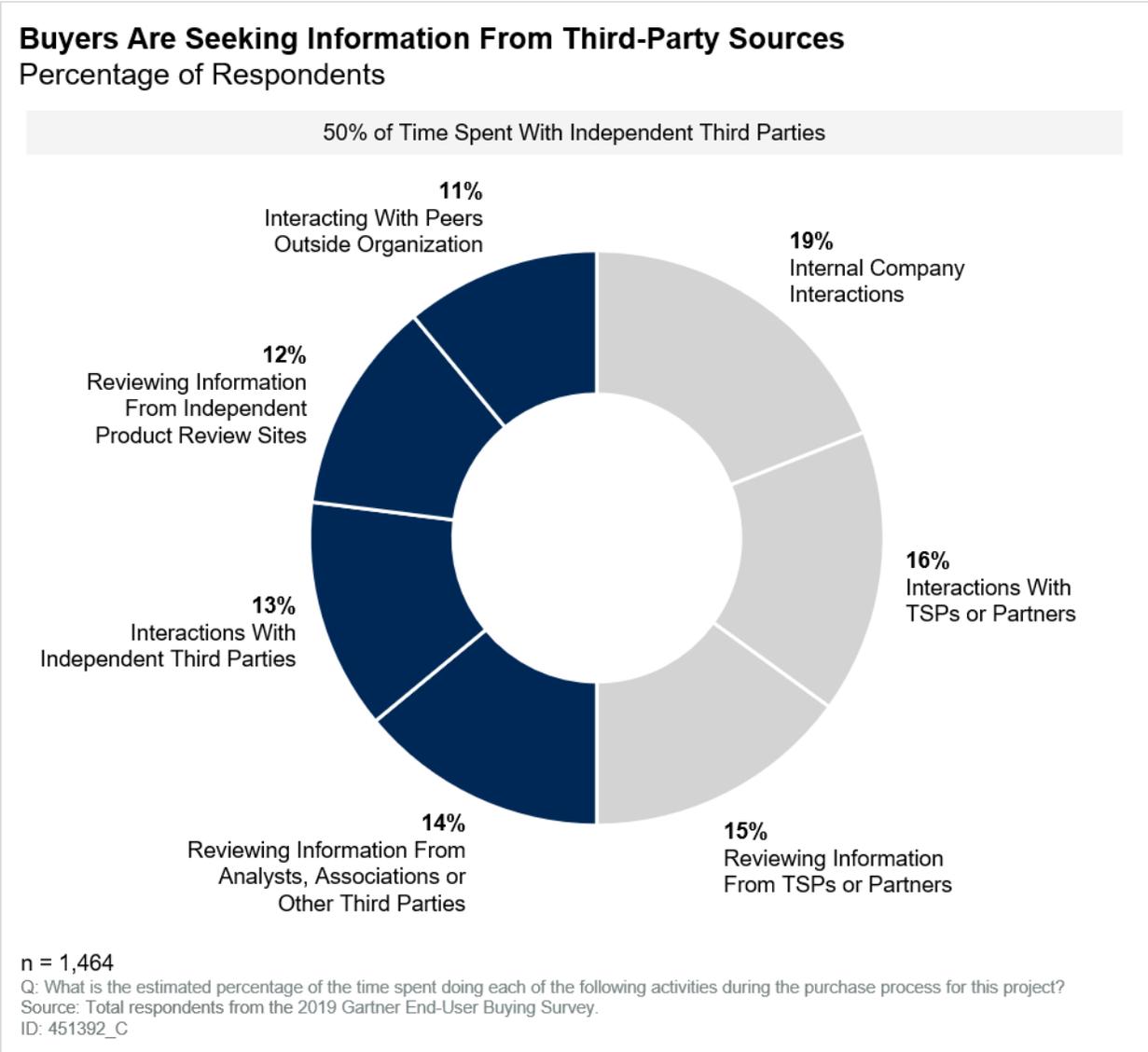
**By the end of 2022, more than 70% of B2B marketers will utilize third-party intent data to target prospects or engage groups of buyers in selected accounts.**

By the end of 2022, General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and California Consumer Privacy Act (CCPA) consent requirements will have become the de facto best practice for 80% of marketers at global TSPs.

## Analysis

Knowing which companies are “in market” for the type of solution you sell would make life considerably easier for marketers, especially in an established market where there are many buyers researching or actively evaluating solutions. Demand generation and sales development resources could be allocated to targeting those buyers, and content creation efforts could be prioritized toward later in the funnel instead of early-stage education. Unfortunately, the majority of prospective buyers who are in-market for a specific technology solution do not self-identify as such, either because they may not complete forms on vendor websites or they spend the bulk of their time researching elsewhere. Prospects (and even existing customers) anonymously visit third-party and vendor websites, and research competitive vendors and solutions. According to Gartner’s End-User Survey,<sup>1</sup> 50% of their time is spent with independent third parties (see Figure 1). Marketers often do not have visibility into who are these buyers researching solutions.

Figure 1. Buyers Are Seeking Information From Third-Party Sources



As a result of these trends, product marketers must leverage information resources, data application techniques and various data platforms to identify and reach the right individuals at the right time in the buying process.

To achieve optimal performance and maximize campaign outcomes, product marketers are increasingly turning to third-party intent data as one such key resource to assist with revenue generation.

However, many product marketers lack understanding of the main use cases for intent data and best practices to yield the most value from these data assets. This research will provide product marketers with guidance on the technology direction for intent data and will summarize the key factors driving adoption from primary use cases in ABM, demand generation, and content for both inbound lead development and nurture. Additionally, this report will highlight the inhibiting factors for intent data adoption: privacy concerns, marketing practices, a skills shortage and unproven ROI.

## Technology Description

---

### Gartner Definition of Intent Data

Intent data is behavioral information collected about an individual's or company's online activities, combining both topic and context data, to demonstrate what the individual or company will likely do or buy next. Intent data is currently emerging in B2B technology marketing practices and will continue to mature across several key use cases in both traditional demand generation and ABM. The data is used by both product marketing and demand generation teams, as well as sales development teams and even field sellers. As B2B marketing increasingly relies on data for more precise targeting, personalized messaging and agile activation, market forces will continue to propel the evolution of intent data technologies to serve these demands.

An individual searching for information online, visiting a website, reading a blog post, or downloading a case study or white paper is likely expressing an interest in a topic to solve a business need or learn more about a topic. For B2B businesses, intent data tools consider the sites that buyers are visiting to research products or services and the degree of purchase interest they are exhibiting. As B2B buying is a considered or planned purchase, not an impulse buy, with lots of research time invested by prospective buyers, these online interactions can be identified, tracked and used to classify buyer intent.

As noted earlier, the typical buying process involves researching across a number of sites and sources. Buyers often visit vendor websites without making their individual identities known (by filling out a form or providing information to a chatbot). Even when a visit is truly anonymous and the visitor cookie hasn't been matched, it's still generally possible to match the Internet Protocol (IP) address to a known organization, especially for larger companies with their own IP pools. Many CRM lead management solutions include this capability — a standard feature in ABM platforms — and a variety of stand-alone tools offer this capability as well. Many TSPs still don't take full advantage of the anonymous visits to their websites when they develop targeting and prioritization strategies, engage with leads or develop content. When a company visits a website (especially multiple individuals or a single visitor on a repeat basis), it is showing strong signs of being “in-market” and should be prioritized. This “first-party web engagement” information should be a standard part of any TSP marketing playbook.

First-party web engagement data provides an obvious starting point for prioritization. However, many TSPs don't have a sufficient amount of anonymous traffic to rely solely on a fit and first-party web engagement strategy, especially for ABM. There is often a rich set of third-party intent data that

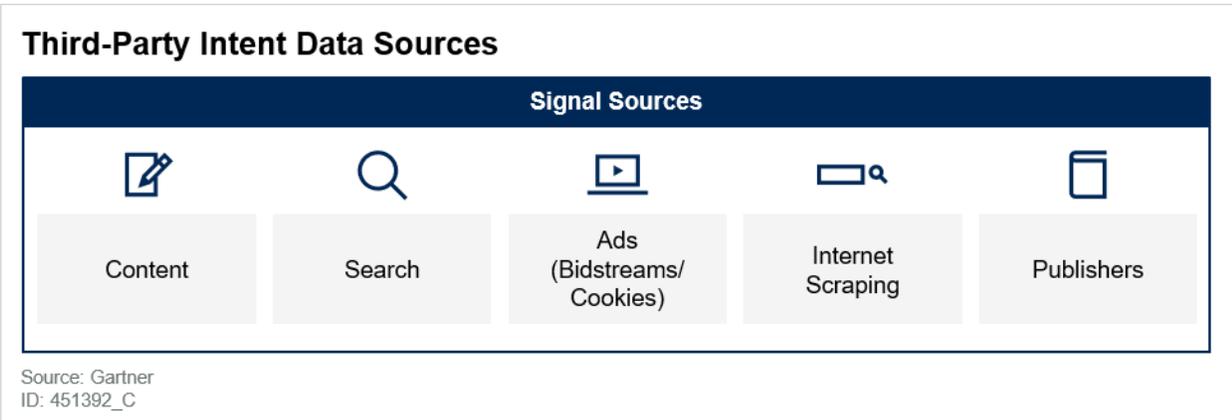
can provide additional insights about accounts that have already been to your website, providing further perspective on visitors.

Third-party intent data is collected across the broader business internet, through publishing co-ops, advertising networks and individual sites. Buyer intent is captured through search, content consumption, and even postings and comments. When the volume of this research is greater in a restricted time period, such as the last 30 days or 90 days, then the intent can be interpreted as greater compared to other time periods.

There are a number of different approaches to collecting intent data and a variety of ways to incorporate that data. Several of the ABM platform vendors have their own proprietary intent capabilities (see “Market Guide for Account-Based Marketing Platforms”), while others resell data from other providers. The ABM providers often layer in a combination of third-party intent and first-party web engagement into their account selection and account engagement models.

Some intent providers gather data from within their own networks (or individual sites), while others gather data from a broader set of sources. Figure 2 highlights the different sources.

Figure 2. Third-Party Intent Data Sources



Some of the intent offerings can be used for a broad set of use cases (demand generation, enriching inbound leads and sales development representative [SDR] prospecting), while others are more focused on specific use cases such as ABM. Table 1 highlights different intent offerings.

Table 1. Intent Data Provider Snapshot

Provider	Solution Name(s)	Description
6sense	6sense Account Based Orchestration Platform	6sense's 3 billion daily unique third-party intent signals are derived from 3 million sites and 6 million companies through direct relationships with publishers and data aggregators. Natural language processing is used to understand the relevance of keywords on a page. Customers choose their own (or use AI-driven-recommended) keywords or clusters. Intent signals are uncovered within the 6sense platform via the 6sense Company Graph, and customers can advertise directly to those accounts with buyer-stage specific messages. 6sense's predictive powered intent data can also be accessed directly within SFA or CRM lead management systems.
Bombora	Company Surge Analytics	Bombora gathers data directly from 3,800 websites that are part of a proprietary B2B Data Co-Op. The dataset monitors more than 3 million domains and 28 billion monthly "consumption events." The solution features a taxonomy of more than 6,700 topics related to B2B products and services, and provides weekly reports of companies that are showing increases in research activity for specific topics. Bombora has direct integrations with Salesforce, LinkedIn and Marketo (an Adobe company). Company Surge Analytics is available stand-alone (from Bombora directly or via the Salesforce Lightning Data Exchange), through various ABM platforms (resold or integrated) and via ZoomInfo.
Demandbase	Demandbase ABM Platform	Demandbase's more than 15 billion daily intent signals are derived through a combination of methods. Demandbase uses bidstream data from advertisers and exchanges through its demand-side advertising platform and uses AI/natural language processing to scour and understand the public business internet. Demandbase matches intent signals against customer-defined keywords, and it considers the frequency, cadence, specificity and other factors, such as negative intent, in identifying in-market accounts or high-intent users. Data is gathered at both the account and individual level, and while only the account-level insights are visible, ads can be shown to the individuals through the Demandbase Targeting Solution. Most customers use Demandbase's intent data directly within the Demandbase ABM Platform or within SFA or CRM lead management systems.
Madison Logic	ML Platform	Madison Logic's ML Data Cloud leverages a Bombora license to understand content consumption across the B2B web, in conjunction with proprietary, multichannel media engagement data to derive its intent signals. Its proprietary identity graph includes a predefined keyword taxonomy of nearly 7,000 B2B specific topics, unified with technographic and firmographic data to identify and prioritize accounts. These data signals can be activated across native advertising and content syndication via the company's ABM platform (called ML Platform) to optimize the outcomes toward B2B marketers' goals. The intent and engagement signals can also be consumed within SFA or CRM lead management systems.
TechTarget	Priority Engine	Priority Engine derives intent data from TechTarget's 140 high-tech-focused, search-optimized websites that draw over 200 million global visitors each year. It tracks research activity at the tech category (more than 10,000 topics), product, feature/function and competitor level (including specific vendor content engagement) from within TechTarget's network of sites. In addition to providing company-level intent data, Priority Engine also provides individual-level insights (GDPR and CCPA-compliant opt-in contacts/information), as well as verified technology project intelligence. Many customers leverage TechTarget's marketing

Provider	Solution Name(s)	Description
		services to syndicate content or advertise directly to the accounts and individuals showing intent signals. Priority Engine integrates with major marketing automation and CRM platforms.
True Influence	IntentBase (data feed) and InsightBase (SaaS solution)	True Influence gathers signals through the bidstream and cookie stream of ads running through its advertising network, and the demand generation programs it runs on behalf of customers, as well as through natural language scraping of the broader internet. Their taxonomy includes 6,500 topics, and customers can request customized topics to be added. True Influence provides account- (including locations within the United States), persona- and contact-level intent, as well as verified contact and account information from its database. Customers can leverage the IntentBase data feed and also engage with those accounts and individuals through True Influence's DisplayBase solution. The IntentBase intent information can be delivered as a feed to integrate with SFA and CRM lead management systems or viewed through True Influence's InsightBase solution.
AI = artificial intelligence SFA = sales force automation		

Source: Gartner (February 2020)

When considering which intent solution to choose, product marketers should consider the following criteria:

- Are you looking for an intent solution that is included with a broader ABM platform or to use on a stand-alone basis to support both ABM and other use cases?
- Are you looking for intent signals specific to a geography (like the United States) or globally?
- Does the buying team (both decision makers and influencers) consist largely of people within IT or technology functions or also include other line-of-business roles?
- Does your category clearly fit within a provider's taxonomy, or are you better off matching at the keyword (topic) level instead?
- How do you expect users (marketing, sales development and sales) to consume the intent data?
- What kind of intent-related alerts do you plan to provide sales and sales development representatives?
- How important is it to get intent signals in near real time versus weekly batch updates?

The ecosystem that supports first-party and third-party data is a convergence of various enabling technologies: search technology based on keywords via voice or text, access to web content via browsers, and identity technologies like cookies and reverse IP lookups. Intent data technology is shaped in part by how these supporting technologies are evolving. For instance, as digital privacy and consent management technology changes, blockchain as a supporting technology will play more of a role in the ecosystem. In addition, developments in digital privacy, from government

regulations and self-imposed policies, will alter how cookies are deployed and managed across ad tech systems.

## Technology Adoption

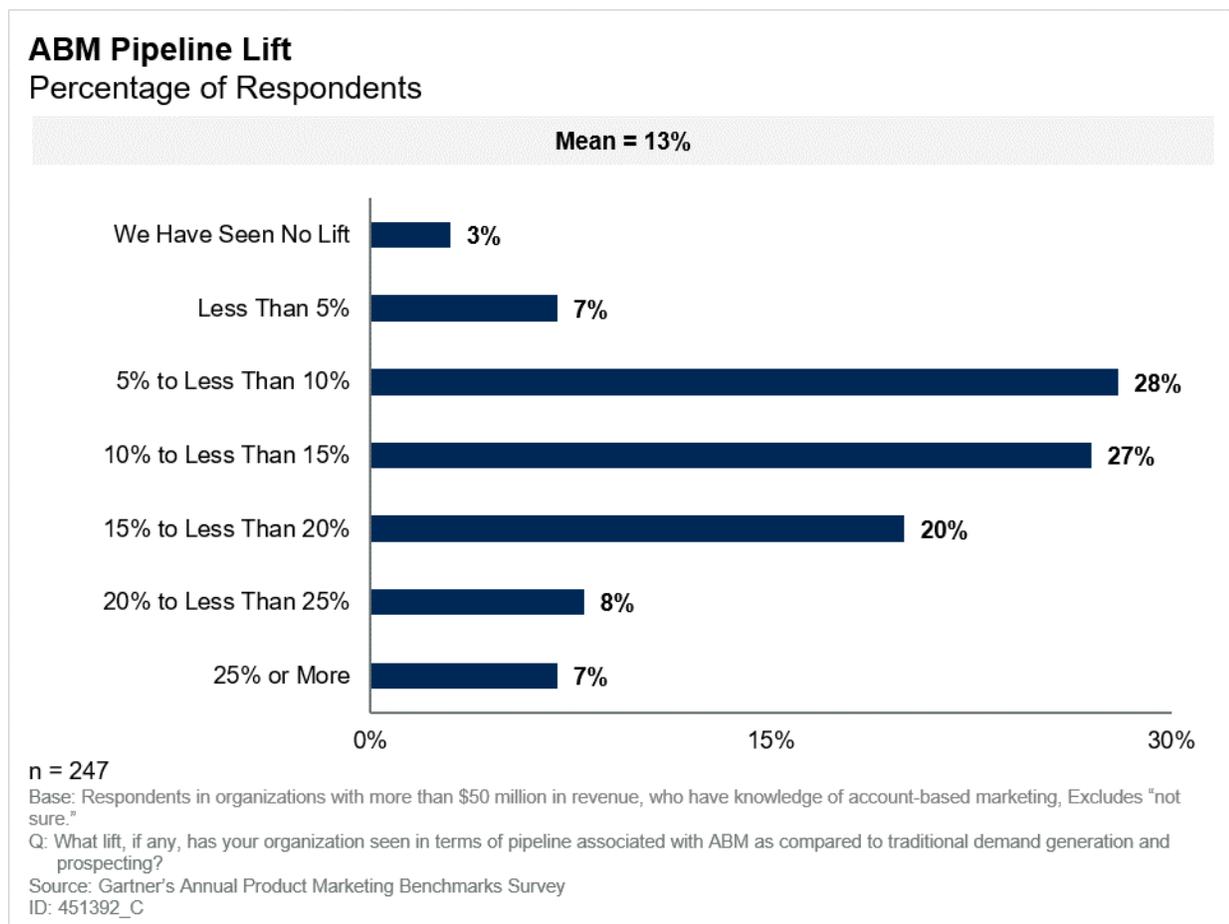
---

### Intent Data Will Continue to Gain Adoption as ABM Programs Grow and End Users Seek to Achieve Greater Campaign Effectiveness

Intent data is a key ingredient for ABM programs and as ABM gains more traction as a go-to-market strategy, market forces will drive further advances in this technology ecosystem. According to a 2019 Gartner Survey of 282 people with marketing responsibility at TSPs with more than \$50 million in revenue (and familiarity with their company's ABM programs), nearly 91% said their company had deployed or piloted ABM programs in at least one country. Furthermore, nearly 7% of additional respondents indicated their company was planning to run a program in the future.<sup>2</sup> The same survey found that the average pipeline lift associated with an ABM program is at 13%, with 35% of respondents reporting pipeline lifts of 15% or greater (see Figure 3).

In the same survey, the average ABM program targeted more than 1,000 accounts, a number that is hard to manage absent the use of an ABM platform. In fact, the survey found that 77% of respondents were using at least one ABM platform. Given the continued frequency of ABM platform discussions during client inquiries and the large number of TSP companies moving from pilots to scaled ABM programs, the use of intent data to enhance these programs will likely continue to grow.

Figure 3. ABM Pipeline Lift



Nearly every ABM platform includes either proprietary or OEM intent data or has out-of-the-box integrations with Bombora or other providers. And several of the larger ABM platform providers are leading with intent data capabilities in their marketing and sales messaging, causing more clients to bring up intent data early in their conversations with Gartner analysts during inquiries.

### Pressure for Higher-Quality Leads and Growing Digital Ad Share Will Drive the Need for Targeting Based on Intent Data

Intent data is also playing a big role in traditional demand generation and prospecting efforts. Demand generation professionals and SDRs are under pressure to drive leads through top-of-the-funnel demand generation initiatives and improve conversion rates through subsequent stages of the funnel. This imperative is a driving force for the continued innovation in marketing operations that seek best practices for improving demand generation effectiveness. Over the last 20 years, micro and precision targeting via digital channels has in part shifted advertising practices and moved a large share of resources to digital media. To illustrate the change, [eMarketer](#) predicted that in 2019, digital advertising spend for the U.S. market will overtake traditional advertising spend for the first time, with 54.2% of the total spend going to digital advertising versus 45.8% of total spend

going to traditional media. The ability for marketers to leverage better targeting methods is one of the factors for this shift to digital advertising, along with growing digital media consumption. Individuals are also spending more time on the digital channels, 6.3 hours per day in 2018, up from 4.9 hours per day five years ago and more than double the rate 10 years ago (2.7 hours per day in 2008).<sup>3</sup>

The desire for more effective demand generation has already driven further adoption of audience data sources for improved targeting (see “Tech Go-to-Market: Leverage Target Audience Data to Improve Segmentation and Demand Generation Efforts”), including intent. Popular data intelligence for sales solutions such as ZoomInfo include Bombora data in some of its packages, while Dun & Bradstreet Audience Targeting uses Lattice Engines. TSP clients are actively using intent data to prioritize companies to target in social advertising platforms, such as LinkedIn and Facebook. SDRs are using intent data to prioritize targets within their own outreach. Intent data is even becoming more common for scoring inbound leads, with intent data being easily accessible through Salesforce’s Einstein Lead Scoring and several intent providers having direct integration with CRM lead management systems.

We expect the continued desire to improve targeting via data-driven digital solutions to further fuel adoption of intent data technology and methods. Product marketers responsible for demand generation initiatives, such as outbound digital advertising, email marketing and even analog direct mail, will seek to continue to drive effectiveness by improving their targeting capabilities.

### Intent Data Will Inform Content Decision Triggers and Offer Insights Into Buyer Segment Content Needs

Intent data is also driving decisions that go beyond targeting and scoring. Providing content to support the buyer’s research at various stages of the buying cycle is central to convert opportunities through the marketing funnel. By leveraging intent data, marketers can more effectively personalize the content and messaging based on the context of where the individuals or accounts are in the buying cycle and what actions they have been taking or not taking.

For instance, if a group of buyers have shown recent signs of buyer intent but have not opened a campaign email in more than six months, then marketers should choose to run a reengagement campaign and message to this audience. A reengagement message will be more relevant for this audience compared with a group of buyers who are showing intent and have also been actively engaging with email opens or campaign click-throughs. When detecting signals that buyers are closer to deal conversion, a marketer should run a campaign with content about solution implementation, client success support or other types of late funnel content (see “Developing Content That Drives Conversion Throughout the Buying Journey”). By knowing which part of the audience has progressed to later stages in the buying cycle, a marketer can focus on providing content to illustrate the postsales experience after they become a customer.

For those buyers who are still in the exploring or evaluation phase of the buying process, the content and campaign messaging can be appropriately directed to serve that audience. For example, if a group of healthcare providers have been viewing several case studies about healthcare implementations, then a campaign tailored to the industry needs can be launched

specifically with messaging for healthcare buyers. It may be an ad campaign with healthcare messaging or an email nurture campaign. However, in either case, the content decision is dictated by the intent signals: What particular content has the accounts recently viewed, and what is the relevant industry focus? Intent data technology enables marketers to understand what these accounts are doing on third-party websites and what are they doing on the marketer's own website. By identifying the patterns in content consumption, it is possible to trigger a relevant message that relates to the appropriate phase of the buying cycle and offering the message at a time when buying interest signals are evident.

### Privacy Concerns and Government Regulation May Inhibit Adoption

The advancement of intent data and related applications face headwinds from privacy advocates, government regulators and browser vendors that are changing approaches to online data collection. While marketers have relied on website cookies for 25 years to track online behavior, concerns about privacy in online advertising and search technology are having an impact, and we are seeing a shift in practices. For instance, smart cookie-blocking technology like Apple's Intelligent Tracking Prevention (ITP) and Firefox's Enhanced Tracking Protection (ETP) now block third-party cookies by default. Both ITP and ETP block third-party cookies by preventing them from being stored in the browser.

The leading web browser, Google's Chrome, is also offering users an opt-in version for blocking or deleting cookies. However, since Google's business relies on collecting user data, we expect that changes to tracking technology that it initiates will likely be tempered with the desire to continue to personalize experiences to users based on needs and interests. Similarly, most ad tech and martech platforms use cookies for targeting, retargeting, display advertising and behavioral marketing. These platforms also have a stake in connecting relevant messages to the right audience.

To protect against privacy concerns, we expect new forms of online tracking to gain adoption. Regulations like GDPR and CCPA are changing the way third-party tracking cookies are deployed and contact information is collected. Overt acceptance of tracking cookies and email opt-in requests that require a positive action on the part of the user increase permission but add challenges to collecting data (see "Tech Go-to-Market: Post-GDPR Strategies for Lead Generation").

To meet these challenges, we expect there will be more applications of blockchain technology in identity and consent management systems such as with providers like Trunomi, Faktor, uPort and Resulticks (see "Innovation Insight for Blockchain in Marketing: Identity and Consent"). The blockchain technology opens a new way toward decentralized consent management. These innovative consent management tools will allow marketers responsible for digital engagement to obtain and subsequently administer consent for personal data from visitors in a manner compliant with applicable laws. Company IP-level intent data should not have the same challenges here with GDPR or CCPA compliance because of its anonymous qualities.

### Traditional Practices, a Skills Shortage and Demand for ROI May Slow Usage

Marketers must learn how to source and then apply intent data to run successful demand generation and ABM programs. To do so, they must overcome the traditional practices in their

organizations to advance what they are doing and how they are proceeding. Potentially, this means changing the marketing technology stack, building stronger alignment between sales and marketing, securing management buy-in, and taking a risk on methods that are unproven in their organizations. Undoing traditional practices is often an inhibiting factor in the adoption of new technology and methods.

Because the use of intent data is still an emerging arena, the skills needed to plan and manage the related practices can be difficult to find. For instance, there may not be many marketers with experience running ABM programs that use intent data. Also, for those organizations looking for experienced ABM leaders, they may find it difficult to identify marketers with the skills needed to leverage the ABM platforms and/or who have achieved results in practice.

Investing in intent data technology will also require proving the ROI for ABM use cases. While ABM programs have promising pipeline lift results, tracking and reporting ROI remain challenges. In other use cases, marketers will be looking to quantify the ROI to justify the expense, and so intent data adoption may be hampered until program value is well-documented.

## Technology Impact

---

### Marketers Will Continue to Develop Precision Targeting

To secure and maintain a competitive position, companies must go to market with the most efficient and effective promotional and awareness building practices. Targeting, as a marketing practice, is a vital capability for companies, as it determines where to direct marketing and selling resources. Due in part to digital tracking capabilities, state-of-the-art targeting practices will continue to accelerate in the era of intent data technology.

Precision targeting with intent data enables marketers to better identify quality leads and cultivate those accounts that are further along in the buying journey. Based on content consumption behavior that is observed and matched to specific companies, and topics and technologies of interest, marketers can effectively know who is in-market for a particular technology solution. By using intent data in this way, it is possible to understand what companies are most actively researching your products and/or your competitors. This knowledge is powerful and a competitive advantage to those who are able harness it.

We expect that intent data technology will continue to grow in adoption and will impact how companies target their audiences and allocate resources. Better targeting will also power more relevant and personalized messaging, and will provide the ability to offer relevant content and campaigns at the right time and sequence in the buying process.

### Greater Digital Privacy Will Propel Innovative Solutions

The business climate is increasing for digital privacy regulation and greater online user privacy protections. Government bodies, political leaders and privacy rights groups have specifically highlighted the major ad platforms (e.g., Google and Facebook) as examples of where user data is exploited and needs to be regulated. To that end, we expect a GDPR spillover effect globally, as

other non-EU regions change privacy regulations and adopt rules similar to GDPR. One example of this is the CCPA, which went into effect on 1 January 2020, and other states in the U.S. are considering similar rules.

At the same time, there are counterbalancing forces that support the ongoing existence of digital tracking and targeted advertising. One of the significant forces is the digital advertising industry itself: \$283.4 billion was spent on digital ads globally in 2018, according to [eMarketer](#). The digital ad business is the supply side of the formula, but another important force is the demand side or the user experience. There are efficiency and value in seeing relevant messages and content on topics of interest through effective targeting. These natural forces will continue to propel the market forward, and these competing needs will spur innovative solutions around privacy. Gartner believes there is a need for the coexistence of digital data privacy rights and protections, along with the need for digital ad platforms and marketers to understand user behaviors and preferences.

The reality of these counterbalancing forces will propel innovative solutions to come to market in the ad technology world and intent data technology. This may take the form of distributed consent management systems built on secure blockchain technology or other technologies that have not yet emerged.

### Actions for the Next Six to 18 Months

If your company is not yet using intent data, the first action is to determine if the time is right to revamp marketing practices to incorporate the use of intent data resources. Companies must assess readiness by evaluating the primary use cases and determining the costs and benefits of adopting intent data. The next question in assessing readiness is to gauge what resources will be needed in terms of new skills, and a budget for any technology, consultants or platform providers.

Another preparation step is organizational alignment: What stakeholders must be informed and aligned to the plans? Is it the entire executive management team, or more select departments like finance that will govern over budget approvals, and sales that is the primary internal customer for pipeline health and growth initiatives? Whether it is for a pilot program, or a more comprehensive change in strategy, internal sharing and communication of plans is a critical step.

Over the next six to 18 months, product marketers evaluating intent data should consider the following actions:

- **Develop a strategy for building intent capability on your company website.** Regularly report on and analyze the buyer enablement content on your company website: case studies, white papers, campaign landing pages, ROI calculator, and key product pages. This content should be available to support early-stage buyer needs in exploring and evaluating a solution. Agree on the key pages on the website and include them in web traffic reports to focus on the trends surrounding content consumption. Some traffic reports include the most frequently visited pages or top 10 visited pages. However, it is important to identify and call out the priority content assets to measure so that it is included in reporting — even if it is not the “most frequent” or among the top pages visited.

- **Refine list of topics and keywords.** Use a keyword planning tool to understand the topics being researched in your market. This will help to clarify what buyers are looking for on search engines and the magnitude of the search volume (i.e., relative frequency). If you have a digital agency managing your search engine optimization (SEO) or search engine marketing (SEM) programs, the development of the keyword list and strategy should have already been completed, and you can access the deliverable. If it is not completed, start with a list of important, relevant topics on your business. Fill in the topic categories with a wider range of keywords. Check the terms in Keyword Planner, free in Google Ads, or other similar tools via paid services, to understand the buyer research behavior.

Use the results of the keyword research to refine and develop website content. If your website is light on important topics, develop and enhance the indexable and searchable content. To build a robust list of topics and keywords, collaborate across the marketing and sales teams with contributors who are closest to customers and understand the key buying questions and needs.

- **Investigate three or more third-party intent data providers.** Evaluate capabilities, and see if there is a use case to put into action immediately, or consider a pilot program. If the resources and implications require more lead time to activate a plan, then build these actions into your next planning cycle and marketing budget. Also, look for intent data partnerships across existing data intelligence vendors you may already have, such as ZoomInfo, which uses Bombora. This prevents multiple contract agreements.

If ABM is the use case selected, planning time will be needed, as you should not jump in without first preparing the organization (see “Plan, Build and Manage a Successful Account-Based Marketing Program”).

- **Pilot an outbound campaign using intent data.** Contract with and utilize a third-party intent data resource, and develop a campaign that dynamically targets buyers that are actively researching solutions in your market. For instance, look at those buyers in-market that are showing a high research interest in your competitors. Run an email and call campaign against these accounts that highlights your competitive advantage in the market. Measure campaign effectiveness to assess program ROI.

## References

“Hype Cycle for CRM Sales Technology, 2019”

“Hype Cycle for Digital Marketing and Advertising, 2019”

“Hype Cycle for Identity and Access Management Technologies, 2019”

## Gartner Recommended Reading

*Some documents may not be available as part of your current Gartner subscription.*

“Plan, Build and Manage a Successful Account-Based Marketing Program”

“Market Guide for Account-Based Marketing Platforms”

“Market Guide for Data Intelligence Solutions for Sales”

“Tech Go-to-Market: Leverage Target Audience Data to Improve Segmentation and Demand Generation Efforts”

“How to Plan for Privacy’s Impact on Targeted Advertising”

“Innovation Insight for Blockchain in Marketing: Identity and Consent”

“Blockchain: The Dawn of Decentralized Identity”

### Evidence

The analysis and advice provided in this document are built from constant scanning of the market, as well as from the analysts’ experience and ongoing interactions with technology providers. We used a range of sources to feed our perspective on the topics discussed in this document:

- Gartner customer inquiry and conversations
- Discussions between Gartner analysts with expertise in the key technologies
- Previous analysis of related technologies

<sup>1</sup> Gartner’s 2019 End-User Buying Behavior Survey:

Results presented are based on a Gartner study conducted to further understand the buying process for enterprise technology. The research was conducted online from February through April 2019 among respondents located in the U.S., Canada, the U.K. and Germany.

Respondents in organizations with more than 100 employees and \$50 million in revenue were surveyed, and 1,464 respondents were involved in large-scale\* technology purchases in one of the following seven categories:

- Application software (on-premises or cloud)
- Infrastructure software (on-premises or cloud)
- Data center hardware
- Security (hardware, software or services)
- IT outsourcing/managed services
- Professional services (related to technology strategy or implementation)
- Communications services

Respondents were asked about the purchase process, including general awareness generation and what factors impact purchase decisions.

The results of this study are representative of the respondent base and not necessarily the market as a whole.

\*For the purposes of this survey, “large-scale” IT purchase decisions were defined as follows:

- For organizations with less than \$1 billion in revenue, the minimum contract value of the purchase needed to be \$25,000 (or local currency equivalent).
- For organizations with \$1 billion or more in revenue, the minimum contract value of the purchase needed to be \$50,000 (or local currency equivalent).

The survey was developed collaboratively by a team of Gartner analysts, and it was reviewed, tested and administered by Gartner’s Research Data and Analytics team.

<sup>2</sup> Gartner’s Annual Product Marketing Benchmarks Survey:

The results presented are based on the TSP Marketing Benchmarks Survey, conducted online from August through October 2019, among 506 respondents in the U.S. and Canada (n = 378) and the U.K. (n = 128).

Participating organizations were TSPs with annual revenue of \$10 million or more and primary product offerings for software, services and hardware (for the U.S. only).

Respondents were required to have one of the following primary job functions/roles:

- CEO/president/founder
- Demand/lead generation
- Marketing leadership
- Sales leadership
- Web/digital social marketing
- Marketing operations/analytics

They were also required to have knowledge of the marketing budget and spend for the company or business unit and knowledge of the marketing campaign/programs tactics.

At the country level, quotas were established to guarantee a good distribution in terms of product offering and company size (revenue).

The survey was developed collaboratively by a team of Gartner analysts, and it was reviewed, tested and administered by Gartner’s Research Data and Analytics team.

<sup>3</sup> [“Here’s Mary Meeker’s 2019 Internet Trends Report,”](#) TechCrunch.

**GARTNER HEADQUARTERS****Corporate Headquarters**

56 Top Gallant Road  
Stamford, CT 06902-7700  
USA  
+1 203 964 0096

**Regional Headquarters**

AUSTRALIA  
BRAZIL  
JAPAN  
UNITED KINGDOM

For a complete list of worldwide locations,  
visit <http://www.gartner.com/technology/about.jsp>

---

© 2020 Gartner, Inc. and/or its affiliates. All rights reserved. Gartner is a registered trademark of Gartner, Inc. and its affiliates. This publication may not be reproduced or distributed in any form without Gartner's prior written permission. It consists of the opinions of Gartner's research organization, which should not be construed as statements of fact. While the information contained in this publication has been obtained from sources believed to be reliable, Gartner disclaims all warranties as to the accuracy, completeness or adequacy of such information. Although Gartner research may address legal and financial issues, Gartner does not provide legal or investment advice and its research should not be construed or used as such. Your access and use of this publication are governed by [Gartner Usage Policy](#). Gartner prides itself on its reputation for independence and objectivity. Its research is produced independently by its research organization without input or influence from any third party. For further information, see "[Guiding Principles on Independence and Objectivity](#)."