

# Grow Revenue Faster Using Company Surge®

How to use Bombora's Intent data to achieve unmatched precision in sales intelligence



**bombora**

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# Introduction

It seems that every year it's more challenging for sales leaders and professionals. The post-pandemic age has made it essential for you to do a lot more with less – less budget, less patience from management, and less buying power in the market.

But it's also hard for you to do more with *more* – more customer data, more tools to sort through it, and, sadly, more chance of wasting valuable time pursuing the wrong leads.

Meanwhile, consumers' expectation of personalized buying experiences has continued to grow, and there are more personas to appease. Forrester Research found that [buyer groups of more than four people have increased](#) by 16% in just a few years.

Naturally, answers to these questions are more crucial than ever:



How do you prioritize your outreach to leads coming from multiple sources?



Where can you get the account intelligence to personalize messaging for greater conversion and upselling?



How do you reduce customer churn and keep competitors at bay?

Accordingly, the use of Intent data is on the rise, with [over half of B2B leaders now using it](#) for better prospect assessment and lead follow-up.

Lead qualification by sales development reps (SDRs) and business development reps (BDRs) is another common use of Intent data, which points to a larger need for alignment across all teams, including marketing and analytics.

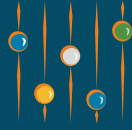
With a shared, robust Intent data strategy, businesses like yours can drive revenue growth with the ability to:

- Recognize which accounts are ready to buy
- Understand the products and services best suited for your target customer
- Reach top prospects before your competition does
- Save your install base accounts before they leave

The success stories of diverse global organizations are plentiful, with [Salesforce itself slashing its sales cycle](#) time by 33% through Intent data.

# What you'll learn

This eBook will walk sales, revenue and sales operations, marketing, and other professionals like you through:



How an Intent data solution can eliminate the everyday challenges of sales prioritization and prospecting



The process of using Intent data to create more concentrated pools of qualified targets closer to buying



Using topic types and clusters to deliver precise messaging to new and existing customers throughout the sales cycle



How to use Intent data to reduce customer churn and increase competitiveness



The potential of Intent data for more upselling, cross-selling, and innovation



Essential criteria when you're exploring an Intent data solution and how you can get started

## What is Intent data, and what makes Bombora different?



### The basics

Intent data (also known as buyer intent) is generated by business users' online content-consumption activities that are aggregated and modeled to provide **insight into which organizations are researching certain product or service categories, and to what extent.**

About **98%** of website visitors are anonymous, so mastering your prospects' wants and needs is fleeting. Intent data synthesizes engagement info from *all* sources to create an actionable guide to garnering more revenue, faster.

- **First-party Intent data** comes from your business's own assets, including backend official site data, and sales and marketing automation platforms.
- **Third-party Intent data** is comprised of both online and offline data from everywhere *outside* of your organization's website, typically from two sources:

**Co-op data** is collected with consent from a group of sites that opt into a data-sharing cooperative. Members install a dedicated tag to determine the content piece's topic – even if that topic does *not* appear as a keyword on the web page.

**Bidstream data** comes from websites via ads and is shared on ad exchanges, relying on on-page keywords to determine content intent. It's collected without regard to user safety and privacy, which risks compliance violations.

With an easy-to-follow lead-scoring model, your business can replace guesswork with precision to focus activities on the 15% of target buyers actually in-market for what you sell.



## Keywords vs. Intent topics

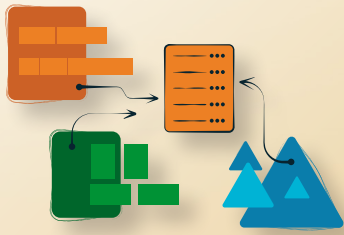
How many times have you burned through your account-based marketing (ABM) budget for only a handful of viable leads that progress?

The reason an Intent data strategy delivers higher gains than a keyword-based one lies in one word: *context*.

- **Keywords** only consider the appearance of an exact phrase on a webpage, so there's a high probability the actual *topic* of a content piece differs from a present keyword like 'social media.'
- **Intent topics** are built using natural language processing models to allow references to 'sharing content' and 'social networking,' for instance, to be included in the analysis for the topic of 'social media.'

To summarize, keywords consider the presence of a word alone, while *Intent topics* consider the *context* – the *actual meaning* – of an article.





## What makes Bombora more effective?

Bombora actually *invented* co-op Intent data, and owns the largest privacy-compliant B2B co-op in the industry:

- Capturing approximately 16 billion average monthly content consumption events
- Gathering from more than 5,000 of the top B2B sites on the web

Forrester stated that Bombora’s Company Surge® methodology has become the de facto industry standard, and called it “a trusted source for both clients and other Intent providers.” Salespeople use Company Surge® for more accurate:

- **Prioritization** – Give attention to the accounts with the most interest
- **Messaging** – Tailor your conversations to top targets’ wants and needs
- **Competitive plays** – See which targets are browsing and convert them now

Fast-growing organizations around the world gain even more sales efficiency when integrating Bombora with their various B2B software and service providers. They’re incorporating Intent data into dashboards, sales workflows, and email drips in leading platforms, including:



“Ten weeks post-launch, we found \$2 million in pipeline that we never knew existed. Two weeks later, we doubled it.”

– Clare Dorrian of SugarCRM,  
who integrated Bombora with Triblio

# Sales prioritization

## Zero in on targets showing the most interest in what you're selling

When's the last time you stared at a list of target accounts – one that cost a lot of money – but had no idea where to start? We bet it was more recent than you'd like to admit.

Struggles with prioritization have always plagued B2B sales teams like yours. Despite the close-rate gains since the rise of ABM, account-based experience (ABX), and other personalized approaches, sales efficiency is still hurt by:

- High quantity of leads without insight into relative *quality*
- Insufficient resources to contact all viable leads before they go 'cold'
- Bias toward first-party data that's only a fraction of the picture – 98% of your website visitors are anonymous
- Lack of knowledge regarding prospects' current sales cycle stage
- Vendor-provided lead lists that are already outdated when received
- Complex dashboards that aren't crafted specifically for what or who your sales team should focus on

Accordingly, most reps end up contacting everyone on the list, which is tantamount to cold-calling circa the 20th century.

Intent data has changed the game for sales teams since it does most of the time-consuming investigative work. Sellers like you can now have a prioritized view of which organizations are researching your product, its solution category, or your direct competitors.



# Important terms to know when using Company Surge®

Armed with Company Surge®, which is powered by Bombora's Data Co-op, you can finally realize the elusive Pareto Principle: spending 80% of your time on the 20% of prospects most likely to buy.

But before we dive into how it works, let's get familiar with Bombora's main Intent data terms:

- **Topic (aka 'Intent topic')** – This is the subject matter or nature of the online content being consumed or researched.
- **Cluster (aka 'Intent topic cluster')** – This is a group of closely related Intent topics that together comprise all facets of your product or service.
- **Surge Score** – This means the intensity of research between a business and a topic, compared to its historical baseline. An account showing buying intent on a topic would score a 60 or higher.
- **Topic count** – This is the number of topics that exhibit a score of 60 or higher on a given account; the higher the topic count, the higher the buying intent.
- **Delta (aka topic delta)** – This is the change in research activity for a topic compared to the previous week. Bombora provides up to 18 months of an account's Intent data.
- **Surge report** – This is a report generated by Company Surge® – usually at the start of each week – that displays your scores, topic counts, deltas, and more in an easily actionable format.

## Steps to score-based success

Once you've gathered your Intent topics, incorporated all other data sources, and partnered with your Bombora rep to understand your approach to Intent, it's time to determine the prospects most worth your time.

### Quick tip from the pros: Start small to show how data can make a change.



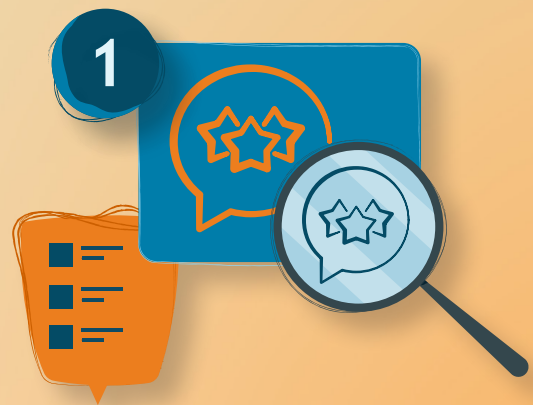
“Starting small” gives you the chance to fail, right? If you're trying to figure something out, and it doesn't work with one person, that budget, time, and processes are with one person,” said Hillary Carpio, Director of ABM at Snowflake. “As opposed to rolling out an ABM program across 100 reps and you get something wrong, it's a much more expensive mistake in a lot of ways.”

“It's going to take time. If you can't accept that, do something else,” said Paul Logue, SVP and Global Head of Insight at SAP. “You're going to get a lot of rejection, and it's not going to be easy.”

## Determine your business's most relevant topic clusters

Meet with your management to explore Bombora's entire topic list to determine which topic clusters would be most beneficial for your team. This will largely depend on your assignment by product, vertical, or territory, as well as 'ownership' by different sales org personas (BDRs, SDRs, etc.).

For example, a sales team at a cybersecurity firm would create separate clusters for topics related to managed services categories, antivirus product types, and known competitors in the same space.



## Generate and view a Company Surge® report



When viewing the report, you'll see an Excel-like grid with columns for the organization name, average score, topic count, and topic delta. Always sort by topic count first, then by average score. The organizations at the top of the list should top your outreach schedule.

Next, look at the delta column to see the largest week-over-week increases in research activity. The accounts with the largest changes – whether plus or minus – should also be priorities.

## Drill down to topic clusters, competitors, and geography

Click into the report to drill down to the topic clusters, then to the topic level. This way, you can see what subject matter is driving the most interest and share relevant resources and messaging in an email or call to the contact.

Lastly, look at the geographic locations of the readers so you can contact them first. This is especially helpful when pursuing globally dispersed businesses.



From here, you and your teammates can choose your channels to start or continue conversations. With prioritization you can trust, you'll soon see higher close rates and shorter sales cycles.

“B2B automation firm [Keyfactor](#) experienced an **84% increase in productivity** per SDR and 100% sales org adoption of Bombora’s Intent data.”

## Target account

### US Navy Intent

Company Name	Topic Name	Metro Area	Metro Score	Metro Score Delta
U.S. Navy	Ethernet Network	Baltimore, MD	74	New
U.S. Navy	Ethernet Networking Solutions	Dallas / Fort Worth, TX	79	New
U.S. Navy	Fixed Wireless	Dallas / Fort Worth, TX	67	New
U.S. Navy	I/O Module	San Diego, CA	83	New
U.S. Navy	I/O Module	Charleston, SC	73	New
U.S. Navy	I/O Module	Washington, DC	73	New
U.S. Navy	I/O Module	Los Angeles, CA	69	New
U.S. Navy	I/O Module	Philadelphia, PA	67	New
U.S. Navy	I/O Module	Raleigh / Durham / Fayetteville, NC	79	New
U.S. Navy	I/O Module	Huntsville / Florence, AL / Decatur	68	New
U.S. Navy	I/O Module	Norfolk / Portsmouth / Newport, VA	67	New
U.S. Navy	Machine Safety	Atlanta, GA	67	New
U.S. Navy	Machine Safety	San Diego, CA	65	New
U.S. Navy	Machine Safety	Washington, DC	69	New
U.S. Navy	Machine Safety	Los Angeles, CA	69	New
U.S. Navy	Machine Safety	Providence, RI / New Bedford, MA	69	New

**Siemens Digital Industries**, a global leader in factory automation, utilized credible Intent data early in the buying journey, to prioritize outreach and reduce telequalification (TQ) costs per sales-accepted lead (SAL) by 99% and shorten sales cycles.

# Key account intelligence

## Deliver more personalized messaging throughout the buyer's journey

With more contacts involved in the buying process, knowing what to say and when to move a deal forward is tougher than ever.

And it doesn't help that today's voracious B2B prospects won't wait for you to finally reach their row on a leads list:

- 70-90% of the buyer's research journey is already complete by the time a potential customer contacts you, according to Forrester
- 45% of all prospects start engaging 90 days or more before submitting a contact form online

The precise insight from Intent data, though, gives your sales team an opportunity to reach these contacts much earlier, in a more personalized manner. Sharing a pitch-perfect eBook, case study, or analyst report with a prospect (who may have missed it) can make or break a deal.

While Intent data can inform top- and middle-of-the-funnel activities for marketing, some effective bottom-of-the-funnel uses include:

- Introducing a prospect to a customer advocate who shares some Intent topic clusters (along with an industry and region)
- Using Intent topics indicating business-level financial struggles (think 'liquidity' or 'budget reduction') to share various payment options and compelling ROI info
- Addressing a contact's Intent topic spikes related to complex IT infrastructures by sharing info on integration services or implementation partners

## Faster, more granular segmentation

Studies show that [15% of target buyers are 'in-market'](#) for what you sell, but the trick is to get them to:

- Feel you understand their highly specific pain points
- Believe your product or service will alleviate those challenges
- Know your business is the top choice over the competition
- Engage meaningfully much earlier in their buying cycle

Compounding this challenge is the hyper-personalization B2B buyers expect from all businesses, including yours.

But Intent data allows your account teams and their marketing partners to be more precise and more specialized in all outbound motions, from SDR assessment to ABM and ABX campaigns.

See the grid below for a sample of what's now quickly possible – and scalable – for your business, through Intent data.

Account type	Owner	Outreach ratio	Personalization opportunities via Company Surge®
Strategic accounts	Account Executive (AE)	1 to 1	Create a unique dedicated webinar, curated content kit, or in-person event centered on an account's top topic clusters.
In-market	SDR	1 to few	Split the list into multiple segments based on shared combinations of topic clusters, then use custom call scripts and email templates to turn them into opportunities.
Programmatic	Marketing	1 to many	Extend your budget, get more 'ready' leads, and boost activation rates by applying score criteria to milestones.

Explore our [customer case studies](#) to see the full breadth of Bombora's Intent data effect. The possible benefits for your sales team are endless when your level of personalization makes you stand out to prospects.

# Cold prospecting for net new accounts

While the gains from contact prioritization and personalization are apparent, Intent data can also help your sellers generate new leads on their own.

Let's look at three possible categories of a seller's daily focus:

- Upsell contacts are existing customers who are good candidates to upgrade their current version of a product or buy others from you or a strategic partner.
- Opportunities are leads who have moved past an initial chat toward more substantive sales correspondence centered on a quote or proposal.
- Cold outreach prospects comprise the largest group of the three segments. Sales has had no engagement with these contacts.

No matter whether a BDR, SDR, inside sales rep, or AE 'owns' them, cold outreach contacts are naturally the lowest priority. But Intent data enables your sellers to quickly create actionable lead lists from credible insights.

Follow these steps to warm up your cold prospects:

1

**Determine 'in-market' status** – In Company Surge® or your Bombora-integrated CRM, look at scores across two main topic types to verify they're actively researching:

- Solution topics – Subject matter aligned to your business's offerings or those of partner organizations
- Brand topics – Content pieces with branding of your business and your competitors

Sort by topic count first to see who's most 'sales-ready' based on a score of 60 or higher. Those with higher topic counts have the highest intent to take action.

2

**Learn the personas of those digesting content** – Once you've identified which accounts are in-market for your products or services, discover which teams are actually doing the research by exploring:

- Persona topics – Topics indicating a contact's role, such as 'sales acceleration' or 'data-driven marketing'

3

**Drill down for segment criteria and messaging** – View scores at the topic level for a view inclusive of all three Intent topic types. Now you can see patterns within the account list that organically align to new target segments.

Let's say a business has six spiking persona topics, with four of them related to human resources (HR) and two of them finance-based. Since HR topics double those of finance, you should prioritize the former.

4

**Find similar accounts**, then nurture their HR contacts through direct emails and social DMs reflecting:

- HR-specific, attention-grabbing messaging starting with the subject line
- An offer or call to action that addresses their top solution Intent topics
- Specialized terminology that establishes your credibility with HR
- Competitive differentiation to help you outshine other businesses that appear in the account's brand Intent topics

Then, use the outreach results (and/or cross-reference the segment with a relevant ideal customer profile) to establish a formula to apply to other persona topic clusters. If a certain combination of solution, brand, and persona Intent topics yielded campaign success, it's a perfect starting point for other segments.

ABM software provider [Triblio had a 28% increase in its account executive close rate](#) due to Company Surge®.



## The efficiency of a unified sales experience

With fickle budgets being the norm, revenue operations managers know the challenges of justifying a new sales platform. But is there a day-to-day downside to adding another tool to a seller's stack?

The answer may surprise you. [Harvard Business Review](#) found that 'context switching':

- Makes workers more stressed, slower, and less focused
- Wastes four hours a week due to users 'reorienting' after toggling – equaling 9% of annual work time

Company Surge® [works 'out of the box' to integrate](#) with leading CRMs and sales platforms so you can keep working within the same user interfaces (UIs) of tools like:



Visit our [integrations page](#), then learn how [Bombora Expansion Packages](#) enable additional Intent data access within your existing workflows.

# Churn reduction

## Proactively monitor customers and address concerns today

With sales having a harder time closing net new deals, it's easy to forget just how vital *retaining* those customers is for any B2B business. But the numbers don't lie.

According to Harvard Business Review, retaining existing customers can be **5-25%** less expensive than attracting new ones. And Bain & Company found that a **5%** boost in customer retention leads to a more than **25%** profit increase.

Similar to a prospect's journey, an unhappy install base customer commonly begins researching months before they loop you in – no matter how healthy their relationship with your AE or customer success manager (CSM) may seem.

Intent data lets AEs, account managers, and CSMs discover and address dissatisfaction *before* it grows into the worst kind of intent – to start shopping around for your replacement.

## Monitoring 'churn signals'

As discussed, there are three main Intent topic types to analyze in a Bombora's Company Surge® report: solution, brand, and persona topics.

While each bucket is important, brand topics are vital to any Intent-powered retention strategy, because it shows consumption of specific organizations' content, including that of your competitors.

Follow these steps with Company Surge® in conjunction with your CRM or sales platform:

1

**Investigate closed lost data for attrition trends** – Run a report of closed lost deals over a period of time (at least one full quarter), then determine any common research patterns and trends of accounts who ended their engagements.

Maybe the majority of these accounts showed similar spikes in certain combinations of solution topics and brand topics. Also note if they share a time range (such as starting to spike two to four months before renewal time) or any spikes in other relevant topics, such as 'ending a procurement contract.'

2

**Apply ‘churn signals’ to accounts in pre-renewal cycles** – Define a ‘churn signal,’ or a set of criteria for at-risk accounts, based on the Intent topics patterns you found. Then apply it to a report of install base customers currently in the pre-renewal process with CSMs and others.

You’ll have a detailed view of which accounts may not renew, other providers they’re considering, and the topics they’re most concerned about.

A global B2B financial services business slashed customer churn by 10% by using Bombora’s Intent data to monitor if customers were actively researching a competitor.

– Study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Bombora

3

**Build into existing workflows for early detection** – No matter which CRM and sales systems Company Surge® is integrated with, you can create custom reports and alerts that tell you when an account starts showing a ‘churn signal.’

Use these reports to launch new automated nurture campaigns, CSM outreach plans, or targeted 1:1 email streams. And your team can use Bombora’s Intent data to create and maintain an ‘enterprise health score’ system in your customer success platform.

4

**‘Read their minds’ and disrupt competitors** – No matter who in your sales org contacts the potential defectors, you should lead with precise messaging and resolutions to help solve their Intent-verified challenges.

Since you’ll know which competing products and organizations they’re researching, you can share or customize the most potent competitive tools, from battlecards and feature comparisons to an introduction to a customer advocate who *left* a competitor to deploy *your* product.

Armed with insights from Company Surge®, you can avoid the dreaded ‘how’s it going’ correspondence, and they’ll never know how you delivered the right value at the perfect time.

# Upsell and cross-sell

## Use Intent data to expand a customer's footprint

In tough macroeconomic climates, B2B organizations like yours understandably double down on white space sales efforts. It's hard to argue with an install-base focus amid dwindling buying power in the market:

- It costs more than five times as much to acquire a new customer than to upsell an existing one
- About 50% of customers are more likely to purchase from you again and spend 31% more

Intent data is a powerful engine to help you get closer to potential upsell and cross-sell opportunities than ever before.

Follow these steps to better white space selling:

- 1 **Look at the spiking topic of your install base** – In Company Surge® or your CRM, view the spiking topic – across all Intent topic categories – of an existing customer.
- 2 **Note any revelatory spikes** – As you know, brand topics can alert you to a customer researching a competitor, while solution topics reveal interest in a product or service area.
- 3 **Map Intent insights to internal or ecosystem offerings** – If a customer is researching a certain set of capabilities, chances are one of your strategic partners offers a corresponding solution, even if you don't.

By referring a customer to a trusted vendor, their trust in your organization as a valuable business advisor is fortified – as is your bond with the partner.

Just as with external sales motions, Intent data provides great efficiency gains in upselling and cross-selling. Here are just a handful of Intent-driven possibilities to boost your conversion and deepen customer loyalty:

- Offer extended free trials of deluxe versions to freemium and lower-tier customers who've shown intent but are hesitant to upgrade.
- Create urgency with a limited-time discount offer to your customers with high Intent deltas for solution topics.
- Drive innovation by suggesting frequently researched solutions you *don't* yet offer to product management for inclusion in the product roadmap.
- Build a responsive community strategy based on the Intent topic clusters most common among your customers. Offer exclusive early access to new functionality relevant to their research to make them stick around.
- Reduce frustration and churn potential through a dedicated strategy (partnering with customer success) to better train customers researching the products they already own for usage instructions.

# Getting started

Congratulations on completing this eBook! You should now understand how using Bombora's Intent data:

- Increases your sales effectiveness and improves strategy
- Makes your targeting and personalization more accurate
- Gives your sales teams a competitive advantage
- Reduces your customer churn
- Enables better and more white space opportunities

To help you find the right Intent data provider for your business, we encourage you to take these next steps:



Read [10 questions to ask B2B Intent data providers](#), a helpful resource to ensure there are no surprises when considering a certain Intent product.



Click the links in this eBook and [visit our website](#) to learn more about how Bombora's Company Surge® has helped sales teams like yours.



Mail to [sales@bombora.com](mailto:sales@bombora.com) to receive a free Intent data report for your organization. You'll be amazed at the insights we uncover.

# About Bombora

Bombora tells businesses which accounts are researching their products and services. With this understanding, sales and marketing teams can be more relevant and consistent and improve performance across all activities. This Intent-driven approach revolutionizes the way businesses market and sell to other businesses through transparent data built on an ecosystem of quality, collaboration, and innovation. With direct integrations with dozens of leading data and media-buying platforms, Bombora is building a world in which business buyers value sales and marketing for its relevance, timeliness, and accuracy.

To learn more, visit [bombora.com](https://bombora.com)

The graphic features a large, stylized blue wave shape that curves across the bottom of the page. Inside the wave, there is a sequence of white binary digits (0s and 1s) arranged in a curved path. The Bombora logo is positioned in the bottom right corner of the page.

**bombora**<sup>®</sup>