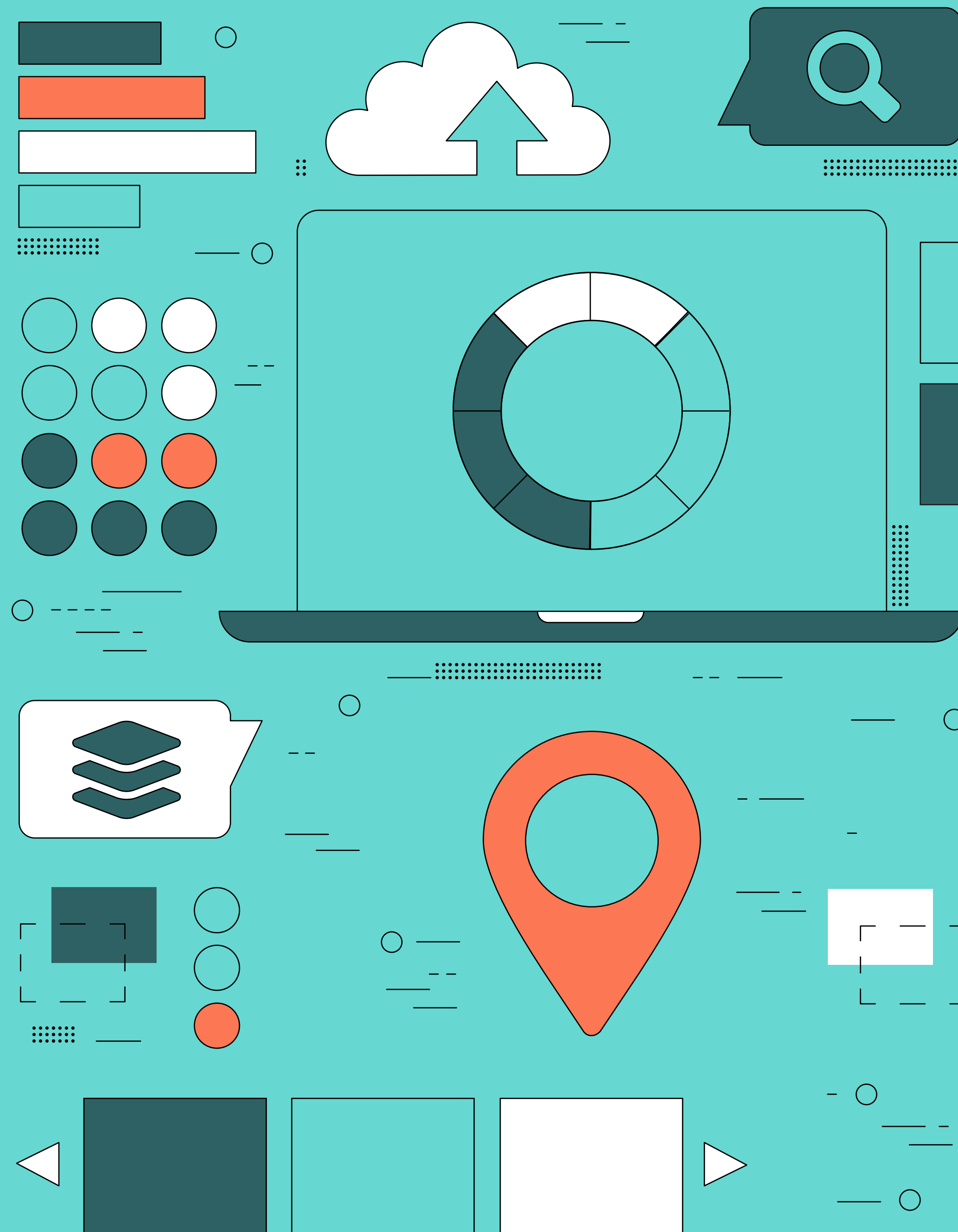
Sales Ops Essentials

Data Management for Account-Based Sales

Optimizing the End-to-End Data Journey in Salesforce



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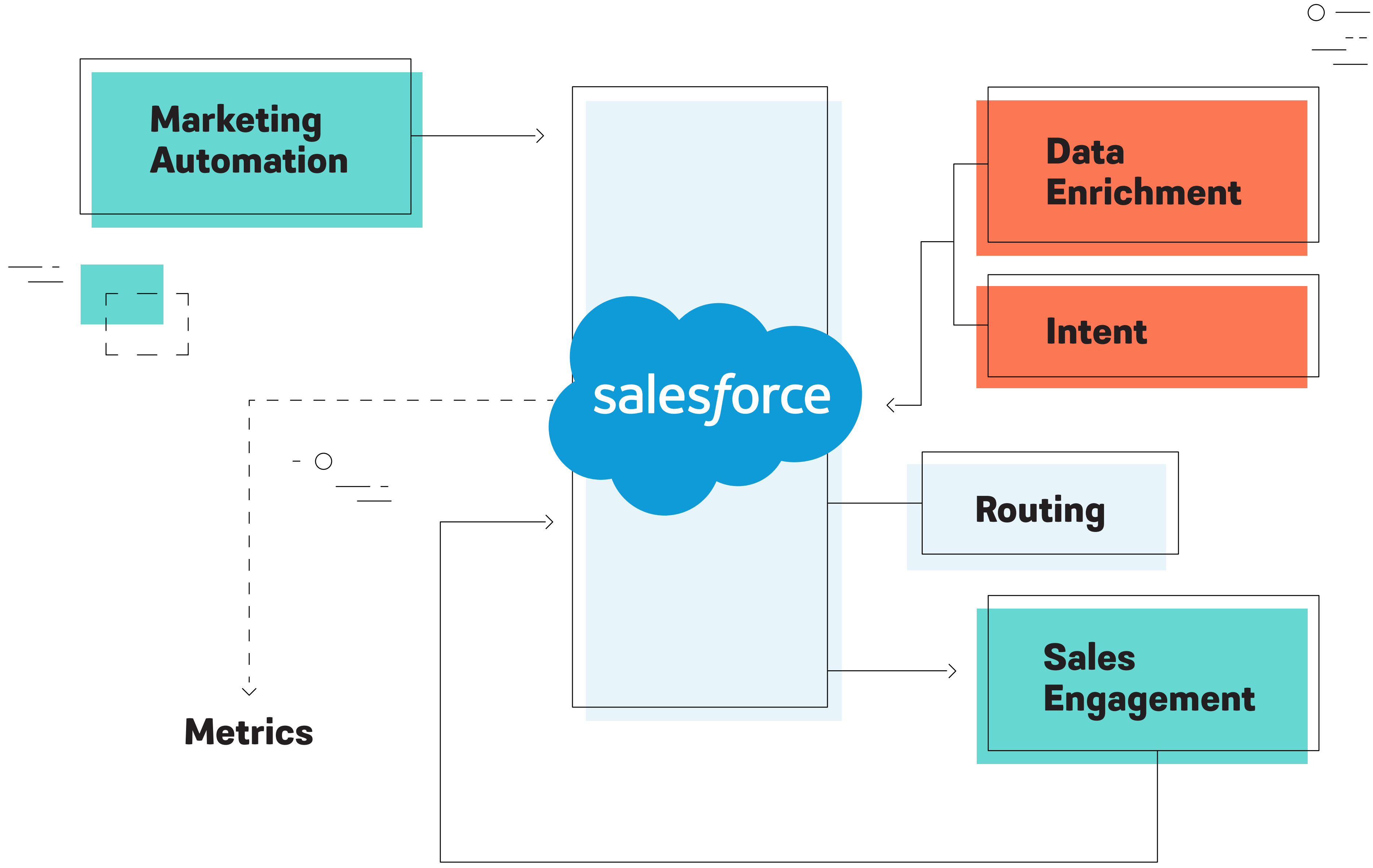


Introduction

Organizations are seeing a 76% increase in ROI with an account-based approach.

TOPO 2019 ACCOUNT BASED BENCHMARK REPORT

Using Salesforce Effectively for Account-Based Sales

Sales has come a long way in recent years. What was once an unstructured environment—with reps chasing a high volume of low-quality leads—is now driven by sophisticated account-based strategy.

In 2019, the sales funnel is highly developed. ICPs are well-defined, and outbound efforts are focused around high-value target accounts. Fortunately, this work is paying off. According to TOPO's 2019 Account Based Benchmark Report, companies are seeing a 76% increase in ROI with account-based vs. traditional go-to-market approaches. Things are looking good.

To support the account-based model, a common outbound tech stack has emerged among SaaS companies (see page 02). A combination of marketing automation, data enrichment, intent, routing, and sales engagement tools means we have more data than ever at our fingertips, and many of our processes can be automated.

The account-based model adds a layer of complexity to your CRM.

The account-based model also adds a layer of complexity to CRM systems in particular. Because of this impact on processes and data, many companies struggle to generate metrics in Salesforce that can effectively shape how they work.

In this paper, we follow the complete data journey within Salesforce, from inbound lead to closed deal. We explore data management practices that consider the full account-based life cycle, and reveal how to use Salesforce more effectively for account-based sales.

Make Your Sales Data Work For You

A few years ago, the main barrier to effective reporting was manually generating the data required to populate reports. Now, with a constant stream of account data available from enrichment tools, intent tools, sales engagement tools, and more, the problem has shifted.

Despite the high volume of quality data syncing to Salesforce, many sales operations professionals still feel like Salesforce is "a mess." This is usually the result of disconnected processes and poor tool integration. In this situation, it's difficult to get the metrics required to gauge the success of an account-based program.

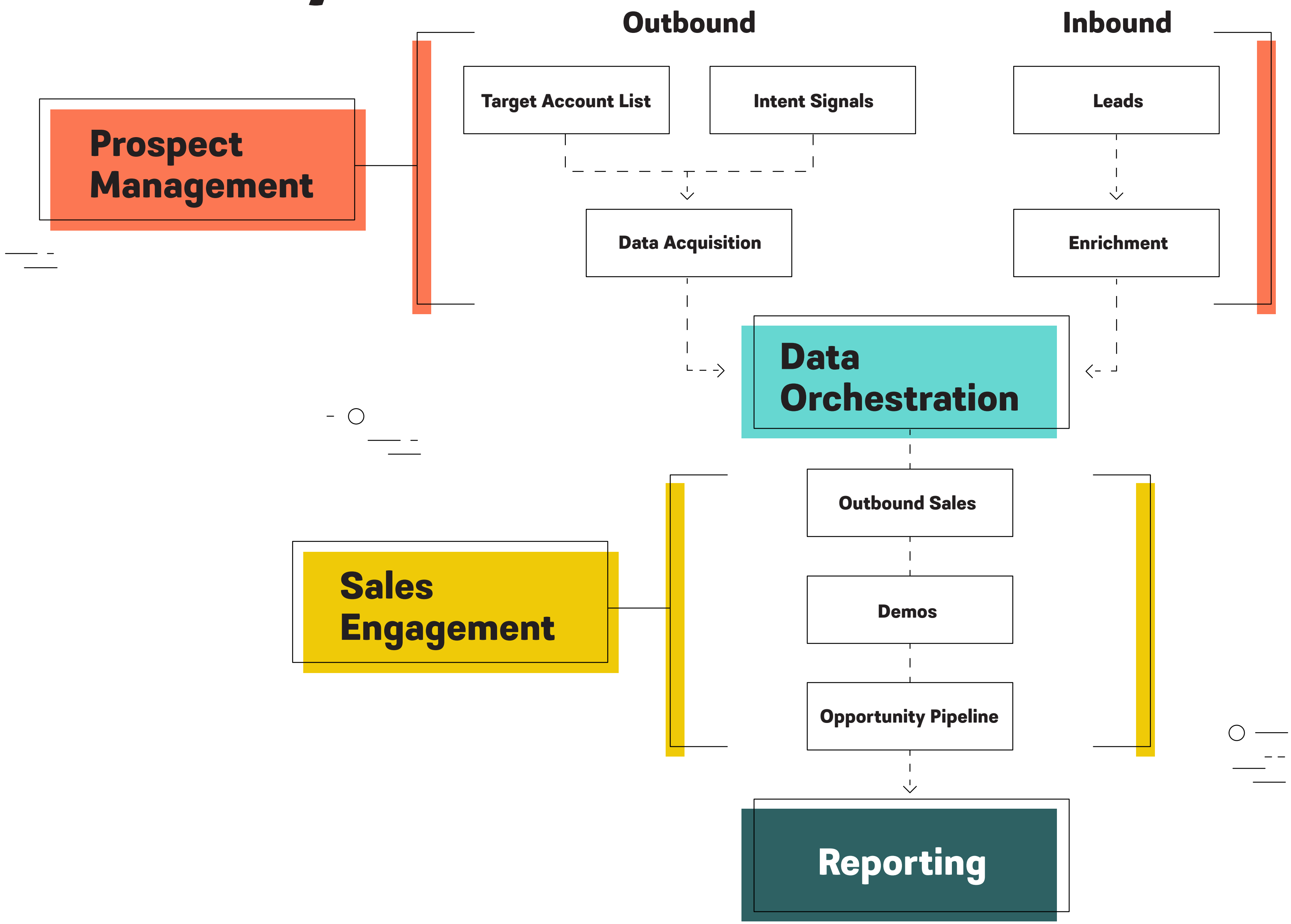
Many sales operations professionals feel like Salesforce is "a mess."

But with well-structured processes, a solid framework in Salesforce, and effective tool integration, it is possible to generate most of the metrics you need from within your CRM.

As the famous quote says, "What gets measured gets managed." With this in mind, let the data journey begin...

Getting data into Salesforce is easy. But we need to streamline how we use this data.

The Account-Based Data Journey



The Account-Based Data Journey

Prospect Management

Managing Outbound Prospects

Identify & Track Your Target Accounts

The point of account-based sales is to target a small number of accounts with the best revenue potential—namely those that fit your total addressable market (TAM).

When it comes to identifying priority prospects for account-based sales, the key is to build your target account list into every stage of your lead prioritziation model.

A common way to identify high-value target accounts is to calculate a score, usually called a fit score, based on TAM metrics and indicators like intent and engagement.

Fit score and target account status should be clearly demarcated on the account record in Salesforce, with a view to account-based reporting.
It's also good practice to date stamp the account record with the date first targeted, which will enable more accurate conversion metrics at the reporting stage.

Fit score and target account status should be clearly defined.

Use Intent Tools with Care

In addition to the TAM, intent tools are a popular source for identifying high-value accounts. Intent tools tend to be procured by marketing, but sales is typically responsible for taking action based on the intent signals that come through.

The real-time information that these tools provide can be invaluable if the information translates into an actionable process that can be measured and monitored. But too often, intent score becomes just another field that gets ignored.

Intent shouldn't just be another field that gets ignored.

At most companies using such tools, a sales reps is alerted via email when one of their accounts shows intent. But unless intent is baked into your account prioritization model and CRM processes, it will be easy for reps to miss or bypass these accounts.

If you want to prove the value of these expensive tools, you'll need to develop a CRM-based process to measure intent-specific conversions.

Architectural Considerations for Inbound

Use the Lead Object to Keep Accounts Clean

Salesforce's account object is sacred ground in account-based sales. Not all inbound prospects go to sales, so it's important to have a place outside of the account to stage inbound data. This step will prevent low-quality data and spam from populating the account object.

When you want to simplify your processes, it can be tempting to bypass Salesforce's lead object. But in addition to letting sales' key object fill up with bad data, skipping leads can result in duplicate and unqualified accounts being assigned to sales. In other words, doing so can waste time and muddy your system of record.

If used properly, the lead object can function as a triage system for your data, ensuring you have as much of the TAM account data on your lead as possible before a decision is made about how (and whether) it's assigned.

If you use the lead object, you can enrich, de-dupe, audit, and score records there before populating accounts and assigning leads to reps.

Prioritize Target Accounts in the Lead Score

For account-based models, you'll need to formulate your lead score in favor of leads at target accounts so that your highest-value prospects are the first to be assigned.

Set Assignment Rules for Multiple Objects

The lead, contact, and account objects* can all contain important prospects for sales. You'll need to consider this in your assignment model to ensure that no valuable prospect slips through the cracks.

*Going forward, we'll refer to leads, contacts, and accounts being targeted by sales as "prospects."

Don't let your account object fill up with spam and junk data from inbound.

The Account-Based Data Journey

Data Orchestration

Getting Prospects to the Right Reps

Once you've established the basic architecture for identifying priority companies and individuals within your CRM, it's time to build back-end processes that will tell your sales reps when to take action.

While it's common to concieve of this process as inbound lead assignment, in an account-based model, routing inbound leads from your marketing automation software is only one piece of the puzzle.

It's helpful to view assignment more holistically because, in reality, you'll be assigning prospects that are qualified based on a range of buying signals: inbound demo requests, prospect activity, demonstration of intent, high-fit TAM information, and more.

Assignment is about more than just handling inbound leads.

You'll need to design an assignment engine that accounts for each type of qualified prospect, and if you want to scale, you'll also need to automate.

Measure a Decrease in Sales Rep Response Times with Matching & Routing Tools

Responding quickly to qualified prospects is critical to staying competitive in any SaaS market. Slow response times will drop your conversion rate, and can easily result in losing business to your competitors. But, logistically, it can be tough to achieve speed in an account-based model.

Most companies are working with a range of prospect types (see buying signals discussed on page 10) and complex territories, which can necessitate dozens of routing decisions before an incoming prospect gets assigned.

At scale, manually handling these routing decisions is simply unmanageable. This is why routing tools are becoming the status quo for getting leads to the right reps quickly. Not only do routing tools help reps respond faster, but they also allow you to accurately measure response times across your team.

A good lead routing tool will handle functions like lead-to-account matching, auto-conversion, de-duplication, custom routing for multiple objects, round robin assignment, user management, and more.

At scale, manually handling routing decisions is simply unmanageable.

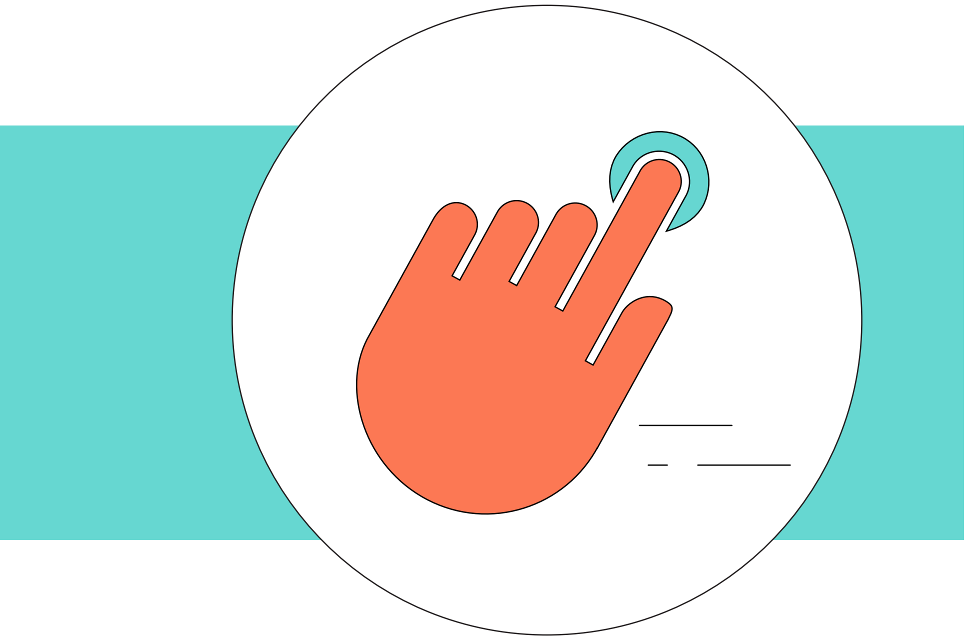
Automate Accountability with SLAs

An effective way to ensure that sales reps follow up with leads in a timely manner is to create a service level agreement (SLA) in Salesforce.

An SLA can be applied at any point in your assignment model to create a time-bound horizon for sales rep follow-up. Once an SLA is in place, managers can easily oversee SLA fulfillment at the click of a button within Salesforce.

Hand-Off Models at a Glance

When a sales rep books a demo, it usually serves as a hand-off point to the person taking over the sale. It's important to have a solid process in place that tells the sales rep exactly who the booked demo should be assigned to. Automating this process with a rules engine will remove subjectivity from the equation and ensure fairness in your ownership model. Most organizations use one of two hand-off models at the demo stage.



The Quarterback Model

In this common model, the contact record and account record for a prospect are assigned simultaneously (usually based on a round robin or territory model) to a sales rep and account executive respectively.

Once the demo is booked, the sales rep will then hand off the contact to the account executive who already owns the associated account.

Alternative Models

Sometimes, the account record remains unassigned while the sales rep works the contact. In these cases, the sales rep will usually hand off both the contact and its account to an account executive when the demo is booked. This typically happens using a round robin or territory assignment engine.

In either model, the account executive will typically qualify the demo—which serves as a gatekeeping function for sales rep performance and compensation reports.

The Account-Based
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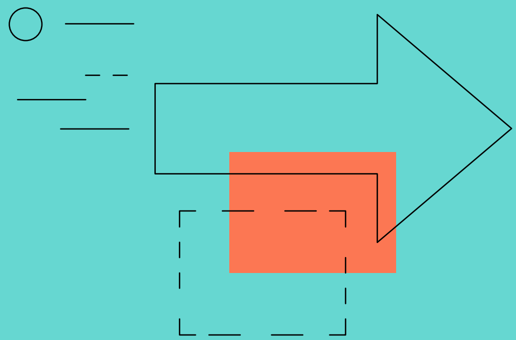
Sales Engagement

Measuring Outbound Activity



“SDR outbound is the most important tactic used by account based organizations.”

TOPO 2019 ACCOUNT BASED BENCHMARK REPORT

For most SaaS companies, the goal of outbound is to book demos. Therefore, access to outbound metrics that clearly show how a rep has managed to move a prospect from first-touch to demo is critical.

Sales engagement platforms have quickly become the essential mechanism for sales reps to conduct and track outbound activity. These platforms do a great job at providing volume-style metrics: for example, the number of connects, calls, replies, and clicks that happen. This is how many sales teams today measure outbound—but these numbers don’t tell the whole story.

Volume metrics alone don’t explain how your sales reps are getting prospects to the demo.

Companies that are doing a great job with account-based sales take a few extra steps to generate high-quality account engagement and conversion reports. This means using sales engagement platforms more like marketing automation software, and moving towards campaign- and cohort-style metrics to measure outbound.

This approach is more difficult to do within sales engagement platforms, as most do not integrate natively with campaigns in Salesforce. But it is well worth the effort of customizing your Salesforce/sales engagement integration to get a more nuanced picture of how your outbound campaigns—and your reps—are performing.

Sales Qualification & Pipeline Metrics

The opportunity pipeline is where the science of outbound ends and the art of selling takes over. It's where salespeople work their magic to turn prospects into customers.

As mysterious as this process may be, it's important to quantify your sales pipeline in order to generate the conversion metrics you need. This means designing your pipeline stages to reflect the areas you want to report on later (see page 17 for sample conversion metrics).

Quantify your sales pipeline now if you want to generate conversion metrics later.

It's particularly important to build a home in your opportunity pipeline and in Salesforce for measuring and tracking qualification.

Sales qualification methodologies like BANT, CHAMP, MEDDICC and others can be converted to a series of custom fields on the opportunity according to your unique needs.

This is especially important at the demo stage, because sales rep compensation and performance is often measured based on qualified demos booked.

Key Opportunity Fields

While fields on the opportunity are largely subjective, there are a few key fields that everyone should consider implementing.

- **Opportunity Created By**
- **Opportunity Created By Role***
- **Opportunity Create Date**
- **Opportunity Stage Dates****
- **Primary Campaign**
- **Primary Lead Source**
- **Related Campaigns*****

* For example, marketing, sales, etc.
**This allows you to measure things like days in stage, average time between stages, and more
***If you are using campaigns to track outbound

The Account-Based Data Journey

Reporting

Account-Based Conversion Metrics

Once you have established demarcation points and a consistent process for your data throughout its journey from lead to closed sale, you'll be in good shape to generate the conversion metrics shown in this table.

Salesforce	Metrics	Examples
Target Accounts	• # of Targets	• 200 targets September 1
Inbound/Outbound	• Coverage rate (based on touchpoint count of >5)	• 146 accounts (73% coverage)
Demo (Event or Opportunity)	• Demos booked • Demos completed • Target account conversions	• 36 demo's booked (18% conversion) • 28 demo's completed (14% conversion)
Qualified Opportunities	• Qualified opportunities past stage 0 • Conversion from demo	• 18 qualified opportunities • 9% total conversion rate • 50% from booked demos • 65% from completed demos

Outbound Sales Reports

If you have customized your sales engagement tool integration and are working with campaigns to track your outbound sequences, you will be able to leverage the following report types within Salesforce.

Account with Outbound Campaign Reports

With the help of a rollup wizard tool, you can create a range of sales attribution reports based on the outbound activity from your sales sequences—including multi-touch, last touch, and first touch attribution reports.

Accounts with Activity & Meeting Information

This report type can give you the big picture on which accounts are being worked most, which aren't being worked enough, and the breakdown of outbound activities on these accounts.

Outbound Campaigns with Activity Reports

With a bit of automation relating a task or event to its most recent campaign, you can report on campaigns with activities. This will provide detailed insight into follow-up activity on key outbound campaigns.

Questions?
Let us know.

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