ABM & STRATEGIC ACCOUNT RESEARCH

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW & WHERE TO FIND IT...

WHITEPAPER

Sales Team Services

Viewpoint Analysis

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Your key accounts, whether they are existing customers or net new name targets, are a very particular animal. In some cases, the account lead tasked with fostering the relationship will only have one or perhaps a handful of accounts to manage. Marketing plans will be specifically drawn up. Pre-sales resources will be allocated. The company diverts investment, time, and effort to do all it can to either expand the current relationship and spend, or break down the door of that crucial new account.

However, all of the investment can be wasted unless it is paired with an appropriate investment in **understanding the business** that is being targeted. Account Research is absolutely fundamental to success in major accounts - in this whitepaper we discuss the key areas that need to be covered to gain a comprehensive view of the customer, their situation, and your key messaging....and where to find it.

We research and write ABM and Strategic Account Research for a number of technology companies. Here is what we always look to cover and some of the places we advise to look for it:

What do you need to know?

Here are the areas that you really need to know if you are to get the right message to the right individuals:

Company Background

What does the company do? How big are they? Where are they based? When is their financial year-end? And more. It's important to provide the basics as they underpin the rest of the report.

Company Strategy & Latest Developments

What are they aiming to do in the market and how will they do it? How does their strategy impact the products or services that you sell? For example, if you sell data technology, do they talk about data as a strategic imperative? How is the business performing? What risks and opportunities do they talk to? Have there been any recent developments or major acquisitions perhaps?

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Who Do You Need To Market And Sell To?

We suggest breaking this down into a number of different groups. For example, who are the executives - the decision-makers that you need to deliver strategic messages to? Who is the core team that you know will be interested in your product or services? Where are there other teams that are not obvious - but could be extremely interested in what you have to say and what you have to sell?

What Technology Do They Already Use?

As you research the business and as you research the key personnel, try to find out what technology providers they use. This will help the sales team and the marketing team to understand what they will likely need to hear and what will interest them.

Which Partners Are Engaged?

Which of your competitors or partner businesses are coming up in your research? Might they be able to help you? If they are partners, can they provide more information for you? If they are competitors, who are they likely to be connected to, and does this change your marketing and sales messaging?

What Terminology Do They Use?

Do they use any specific terminology - maybe words or phrases that are important to the industry in which they work? Or maybe internal language that they use? For example, some companies have specific words for their employees, and most companies have a range of acronyms that they use. If you can find this through your research, it will obviously be beneficial in your customer communications.

Suggested Messaging

Based on your extensive research - can you tie the information you have gathered with the product or service that your company sells? Can you think about the messaging that you might want to use?

Where To Find It.

So now we know what information you really need to find out, but where do you go and look for it? Here are some of the most important places for your team to do the investigation.

Company Reports

The company report should be your first port of call - and not just the latest one, try looking at the previous two to three years so that you can understand the evolution of the company's strategy and leadership team.

Shareholder Presentations

The shareholder presentations are a great source of information. In these, the company will often outline how they are doing against their strategy and also how they are planning to achieve their goals. They will also explain their plans in much greater detail as they need the shareholders to understand them and to buy into them.

Job Boards

This may not feel like the best place to look for corporate intelligence, but you would be wrong to miss this. In the same way that the company sells to its shareholders through the shareholder presentation, they sell to prospective employees through their job boards and job descriptions.

Web Searches

Perhaps the most obvious place to look - is a Google search. But, don't just stop at Google, try the most popular web search technology as this will bring back different information about your accounts.

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Competitor Sites

If you want to know about recent projects, there is no better place to look than at your competitor's websites. A 'win story' or 'customer reference' will talk to the key people involved in the decision and project, why they did it, where they did it, and what the future plans may look like.

Interviews and Press

Have they issued any press releases? Have they conducted interviews or case studies? Have they presented at trade shows? If so, what did the say? What language did they use?

LinkedIn

LinkedIn can be a fabulous place to look for company intelligence to build your account knowledge. Check the company page, but most importantly, do a full run-through of the employees in the jobs that count for your particular areas of interest.

How Can We Help You?

Viewpoint Analysis (through our Sales Team Services area) research accounts for a number of well-known technology businesses. For more information about how Sales Team Services prepare Account Research and our services in this area, take a look at **www.salesteamservices.com/account-research**

Free Example

If you would like to see an example of a piece of research - so that you can put the theory and practice together, please drop us a note at the following email and we would be happy to send you a full example: **contactus@viewpointanalysis.com**

WHO ARE WE?
SALES TEAM SERVICES....

Sales Team Services is part of Viewpoint Analysis. We are focused upon helping sales teams to understand their customers better.

We offer a range of services for sales and marketing leaders. They include:

- Baseline Service
- Loss Analysis
- Account Research
- Market Research
- Competitor Head-to-Head Comparisons
- Sales Team Analysis
- ABM Company Profiles
- Sales Troubleshooting
- Ideas Generation

Just let us know how we can help.

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