

# *Account-Based Marketing:* New Trend or Sales Necessity?

The logo for the European Marketing Association (EMA) is located in the bottom right corner. It consists of a white circular arc on the left, followed by the letters "EMA" in a white, stylized, handwritten-style font.

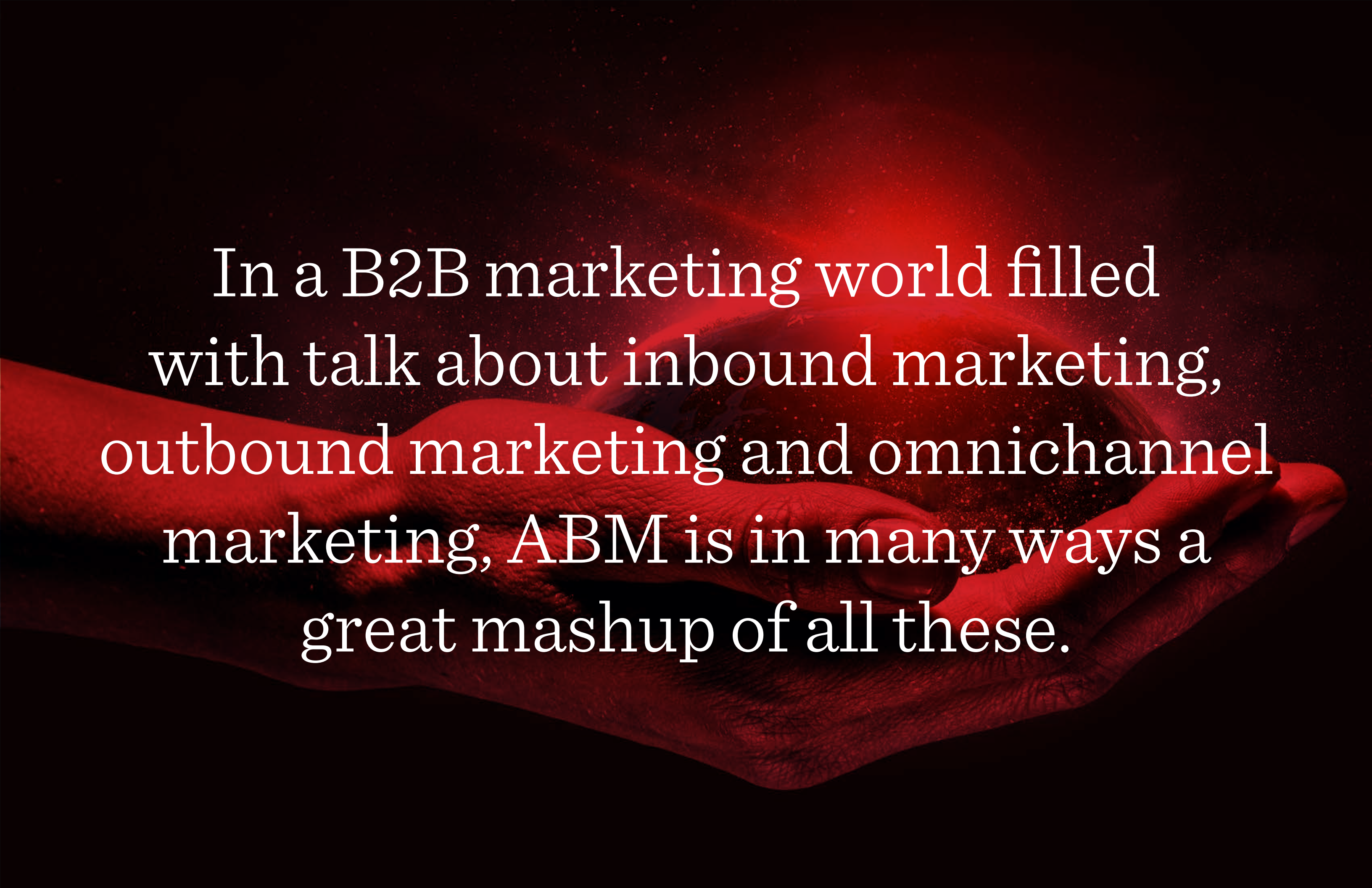
EMA

There is an impression that account-based marketing is a new discipline in B2B marketing.

*But it's been around for a long time.*



why is it  
not again?



In a B2B marketing world filled with talk about inbound marketing, outbound marketing and omnichannel marketing, ABM is in many ways a great mashup of all these.

A woman with long, wavy hair is shown in profile, blowing a dandelion seed head. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent red filter. Several dandelion seeds are captured in mid-air, drifting upwards and to the left. The text is written in a white, elegant script font across the center of the image.

*Advances in marketing and  
advertising technologies have  
breathed new life into ABM.*

# *What is account-based marketing?*

Account-based marketing is a strategic approach to B2B marketing in which an organization targets and markets to specific accounts as markets of one.

(from Wikipedia)

*What does that mean?*

Rather than marketing to a target demographic population or vertical market like manufacturing, you target specific companies and, moreover, specific stakeholders/individuals inside those organizations.

# *Individuals.*

*Make special note of that.*

There are three B2B  
marketplace trends driving  
the renewed use of ABM.



# *Customer experience*

Customer experience, or CX, relies upon ABM to grow existing customer business and enhance customer relationships.



# *Microtargeting*

Data and technology allow us to get incredibly targeted with our digital marketing outreach and messaging strategies. ABM is the strategic framework to leverage data and technology to market to companies as individuals.



## *Getting human*

Mass targeting is out. Data and technology allow for customized, tailored marketing conversations with individuals. ABM drives this personal and personalized outreach.



B2B marketers are making an investment in ABM strategy.  
A SiriusDecisions research study indicated that more than 90% of B2B respondents acknowledge account-based marketing as either important or very important.



Another study reported that more than 60% of B2B marketers surveyed said they plan to implement an ABM program within the next year.



Why is that?

Because it works.

According to Altera Group and Marketo, 97% of B2B marketers believe ABM has a somewhat higher or much higher ROI than other marketing initiatives.

84% of B2B marketers say ABM provides significant benefits by retaining and expanding existing client relationships.

65% of B2B marketers say ABM  
provides significant benefits by  
attracting new customers.



So how do we tap  
into that success  
for ourselves?

We see four situations where ABM is most  
useful as a marketing strategy.



## *Identifying your best prospects*

Through data mining and customer matching, hone in on a sweet spot for your product or service to develop a targeted list.



## *Identifying your best prospects*

Profile ideal-target, high-yield customers that are of the right size, in the right geography and have the right infrastructure, and that fit best with your brand's products or services, potential competitors or look-a-like companies.



## *Supporting existing sales targets*

It's likely your business development team has identified a list of accounts they want to pursue: top 20, top 50, top 100, etc.



## *Supporting existing sales targets*

Marketers can support that sales strategy with an account-based marketing program that targets those companies directly.

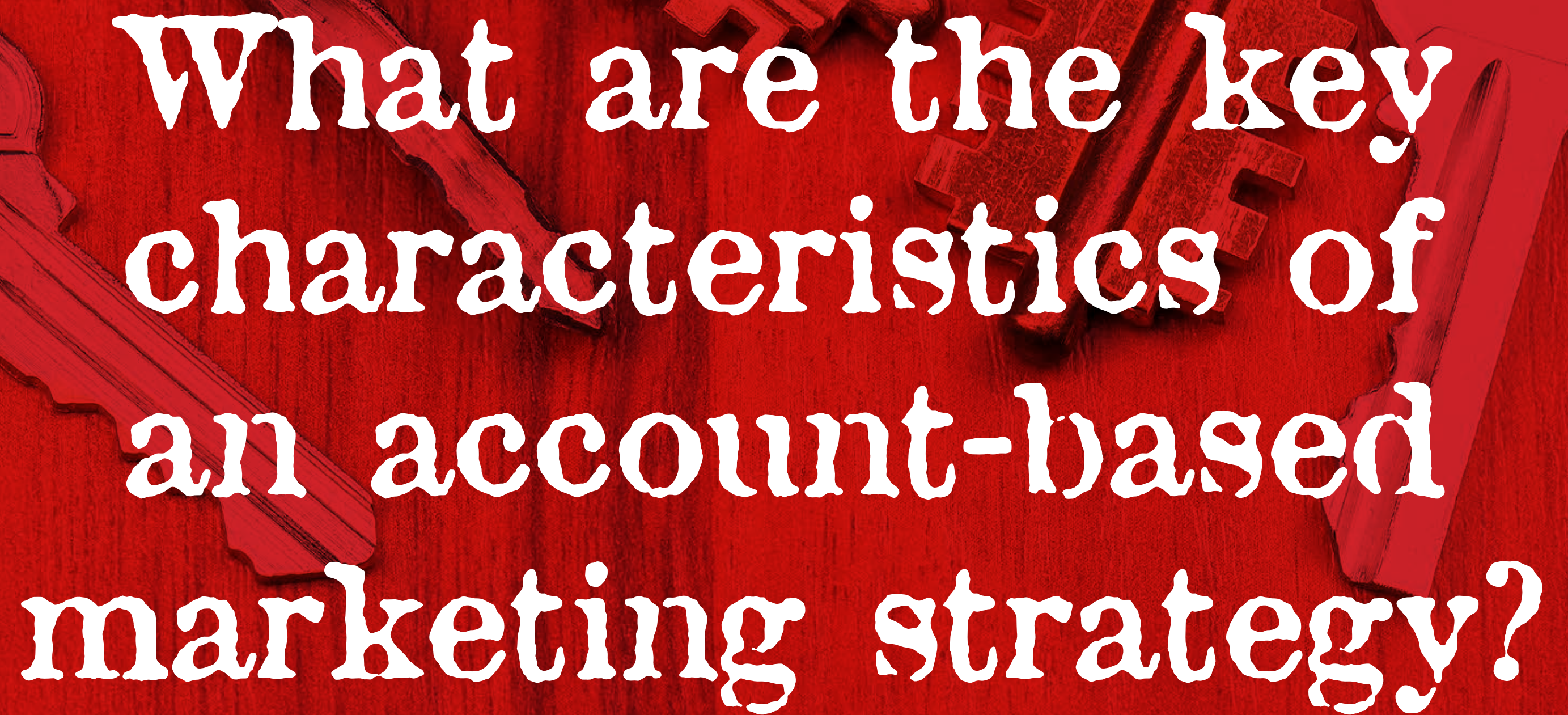


# *Growing existing customer business*

Have a list of core accounts that you're trying to gain further penetration in? Want to win back a past customer? ABM works great.







What are the key  
characteristics of  
an account-based  
marketing strategy?



## *Integration*

There is no one-shot, windfall tactic out there that will cover all the bases; the program must be integrated across multiple channels.



A sample integrated marketing mix could include:

**Content  
marketing**

**Social media  
advertising**

**Event creation**

**Programmatic  
display  
advertising**


**Email marketing**

**Search marketing**



*Highly targeted*

Reaching the right customer at  
the right time.




Identify the companies you  
need to reach **AND** understand  
the individuals and their roles  
within those organizations to  
develop the right messaging.

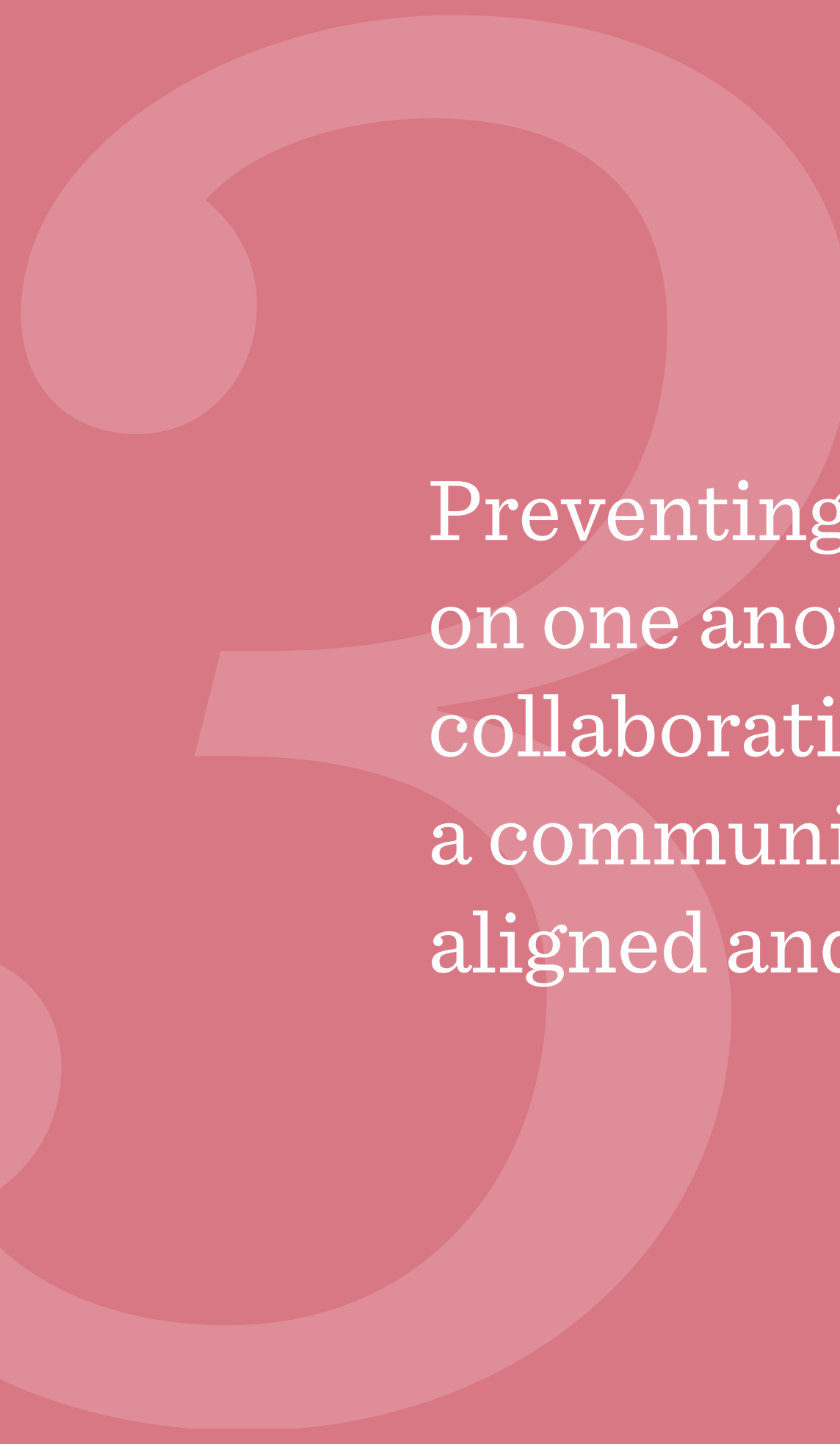


## *High-touch*

Pay attention to both the cadence and number of touchpoints of outreach, as well as the quality of interactions.

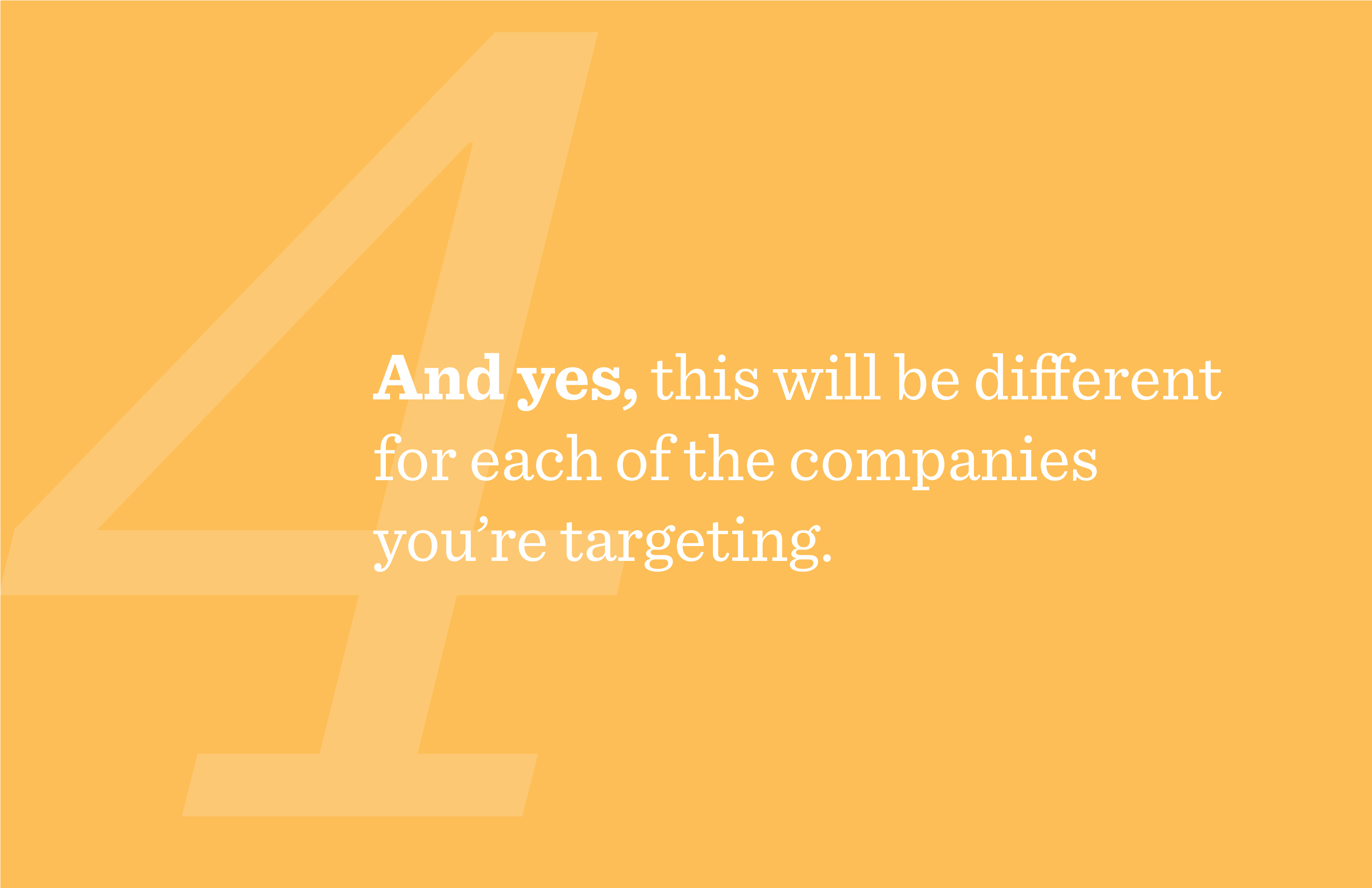


ABM programs involve several touchpoints from both the marketing and the sales teams.



Preventing touchpoints from stepping on one another through coordination and collaboration with sales is critical to ensure a communications strategy is cohesive, aligned and achieves maximum impact.



A large, stylized number 4 is positioned on the left side of the slide, rendered in a light orange color that matches the background. The text is centered to the right of the number.

**And yes,** this will be different  
for each of the companies  
you're targeting.



Beyond what to do  
and why to do it,  
what are the benefits  
of an ABM program?

A group of hands holding glasses of beer, overlaid with a red filter and white text. The text reads: 

**EMA has a philosophy called  
Brand as Friend.®**

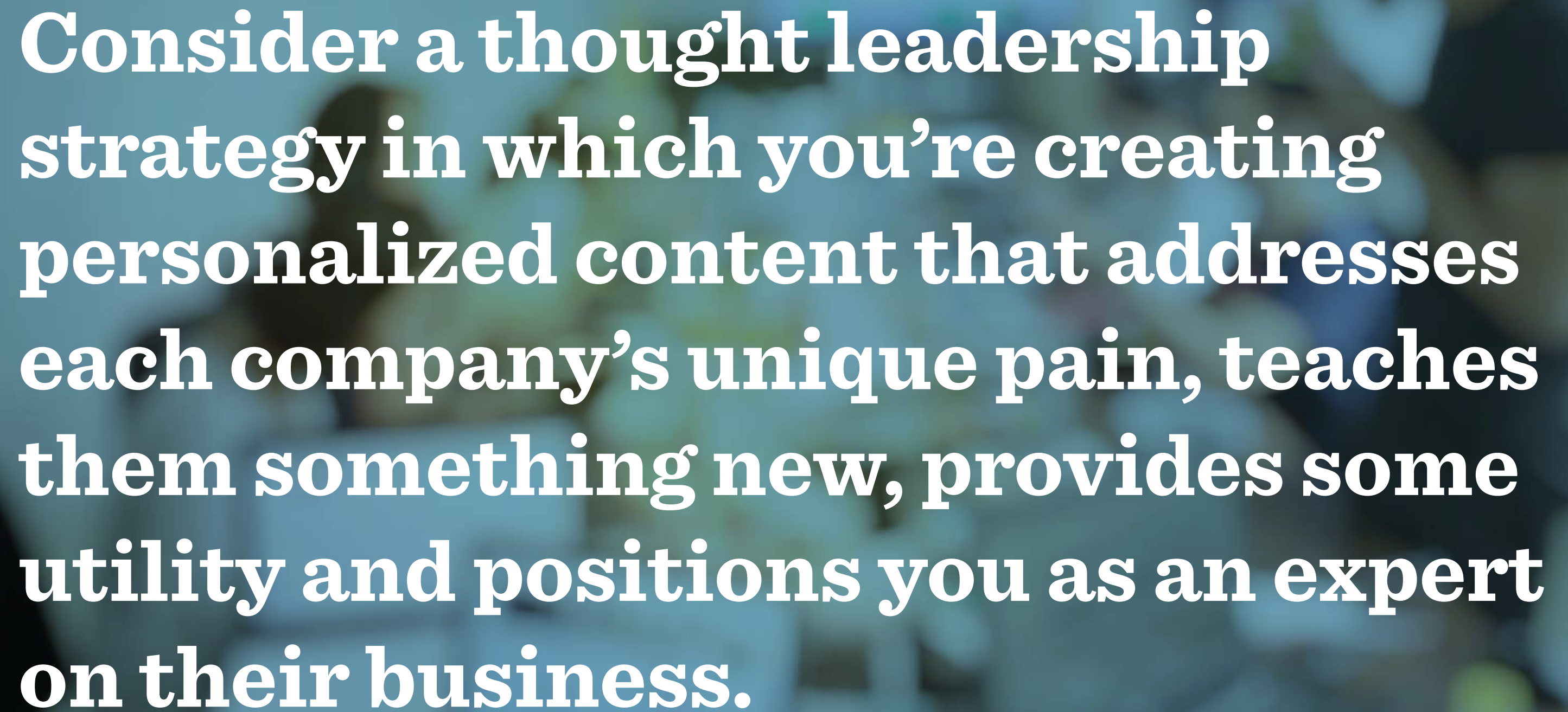
A group of hands clinking glasses in a toast, overlaid with a red filter and white text.

Everything that we do in terms of executing marketing communications strategies and tactics for our clients embodies the principles of Brand as Friend, which we use to build affection, relevance and trust to strengthen the relationship between our clients' brands and their customers.

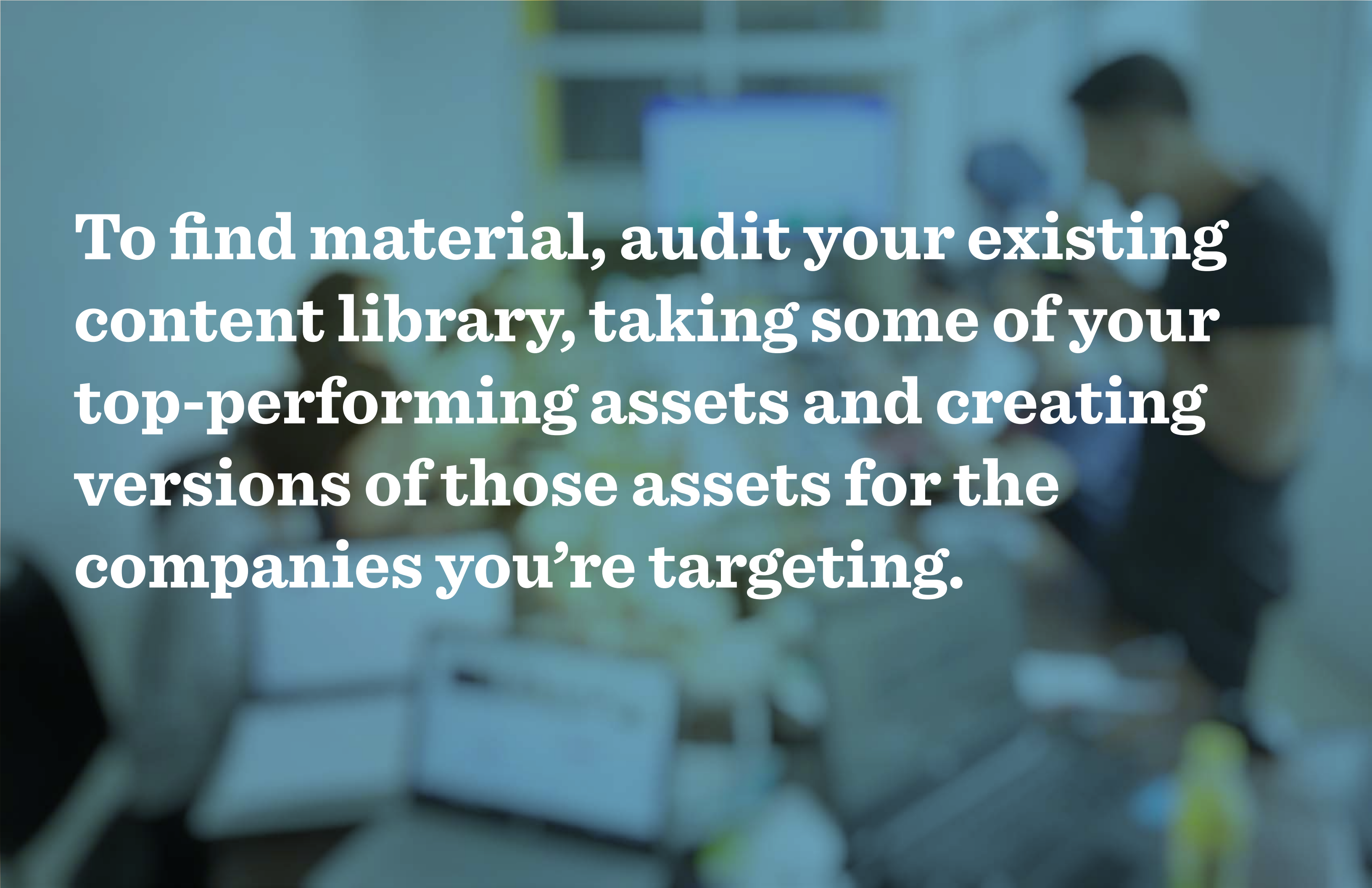
*Similarly, ABM builds*  
**affection, relevance and trust**  
*between the brand and  
the customer.*

Tactics:

*Affection*

A blurred background image showing a group of people in a meeting or office setting. They are gathered around a table, looking at laptops and documents. The image is out of focus, with a blueish tint.

**Consider a thought leadership strategy in which you're creating personalized content that addresses each company's unique pain, teaches them something new, provides some utility and positions you as an expert on their business.**



**To find material, audit your existing content library, taking some of your top-performing assets and creating versions of those assets for the companies you're targeting.**

Are there specifics about their industry, products or services, their strategic business initiatives, even their competitors that you know about that can be leveraged for that customization?


Do you know where your  
prospect may be in the  
buying cycle?

**Company-specific micro-events are a great tactic for driving affection. Host executive dinners or team luncheons, create onsite seminars or networking events, or bring in a guest speaker.**

**Use direct mail—good old-fashioned postal mail can be extremely effective in getting an introduction with your high-potential prospects.**

Tactics:

*Relevance*

A background image showing a crowd of people with their hands raised in the air, overlaid with a red gradient. The text is white and centered.

ABM screams relevance, all but  
embodying the marketing adage of  
delivering the right message to the  
right audience at the right time.  
***Relevance = trust.***



Start with finding the right audience; audience targeting online is incredibly advanced. Try:

**IP-targeting for display advertising**

**Personalized retargeting**

**Facebook custom audiences**

**Twitter-tailored audiences**

Twitter-tailored  
audiences can be  
built in three ways.

***First,*** advertisers can input a list of Twitter handles to which they wish to advertise.

***Second,*** advertisers can add a Twitter tag to their website and retarget those viewers with Twitter ads.

***Third,*** if you have a mobile app, you can retarget app users.

## **LinkedIn company and email targeting**

Among the plethora of targeting methods available for LinkedIn ads, the platform enables company-specific targeting. Media managers can identify company accounts on LinkedIn and serve ads to the key influencers at those companies.



## Customer match advertising through Google AdWords

AdWords relies on email addresses to create custom lists. When an individual from a target company is signed into their Google account, AdWords will serve them search ads, Gmail ads and YouTube ads, resulting in hyper-targeted ad touches.



## **Consider real-time personalization**

Drive prospects to a landing page that houses custom content delivered through IP match. When the individual hits the landing page, the IP of the company he or she is visiting from is identified, and you can tailor the content on the landing page to them.

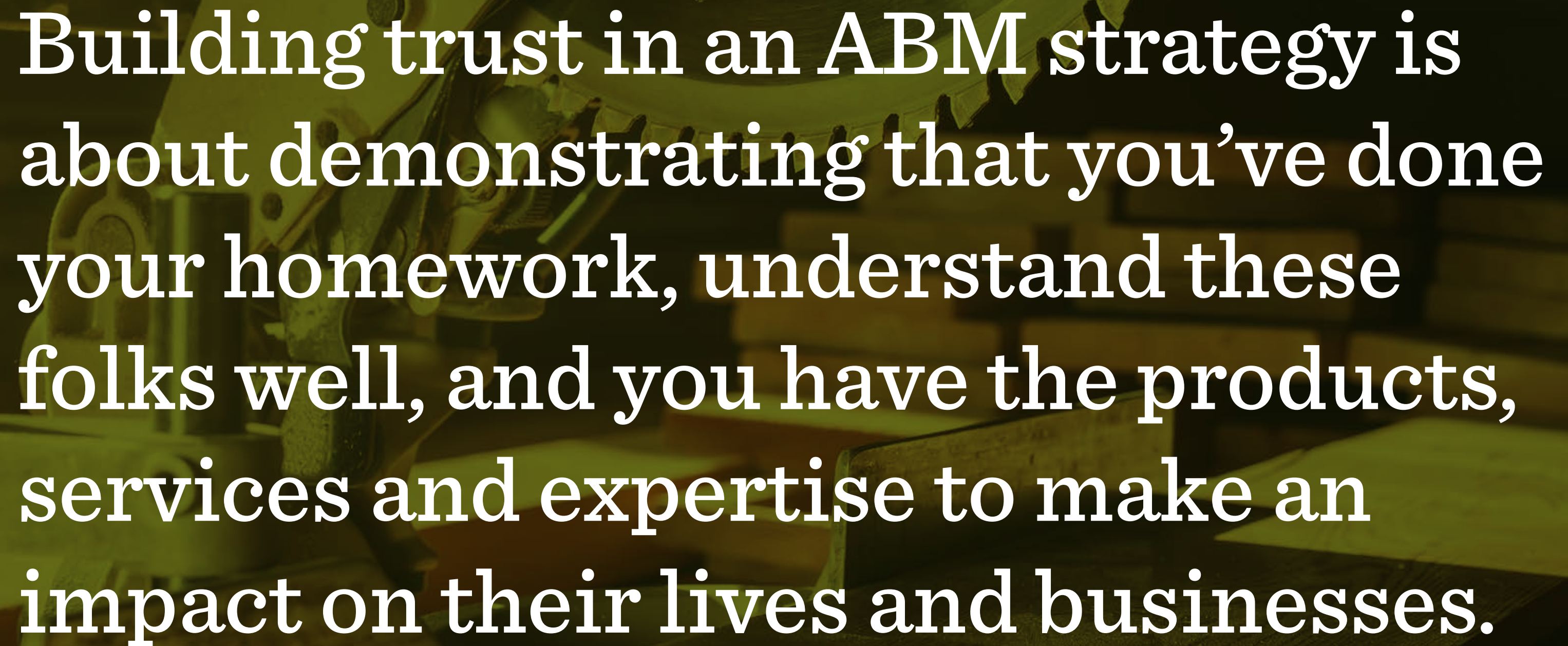
This can range from overtly identifying their name or company in the page content to taking a subtle approach and serving up white papers, ebooks, case studies, images and other content that would be most relevant to them based on where they work.



**By employing a marketing automation platform, you can gate select personalized assets, collect information, opt prospects in to receive further communications from you, and start a trust-building email nurture program to keep the conversation and friendship-building going.**

Tactics:

*Trust*



Building trust in an ABM strategy is about demonstrating that you've done your homework, understand these folks well, and you have the products, services and expertise to make an impact on their lives and businesses.



**You can deliver on building trust through email marketing, lead nurturing and content.**

Maintain a steady drumbeat of content delivery that demonstrates you are a thought leader and expert, that you understand their unique situation and challenges, and that you are the the right partner for them.

***And let's not forget our friends  
on the sales team.***

They are on the front lines, and at this stage of the process, they must have an active role in trust-building, so when the prospect decides to buy, they feel 100% confident in their decision to choose you.



How do we make this all happen and what is the  
process for getting there?

**Try these five easy steps:**

# 1

Identify the target company accounts:  
high-opportunity/yield look-a-likes of your best customers, those that are an ideal fit for your products or services, maybe even a competitor's customers.

# 2

Once you've identified your target account list, build out your ABM strategy and marketing mix.

# 3

Choose tactics that build affection, relevance and trust  
and that are integrated and multichannel.

# 4

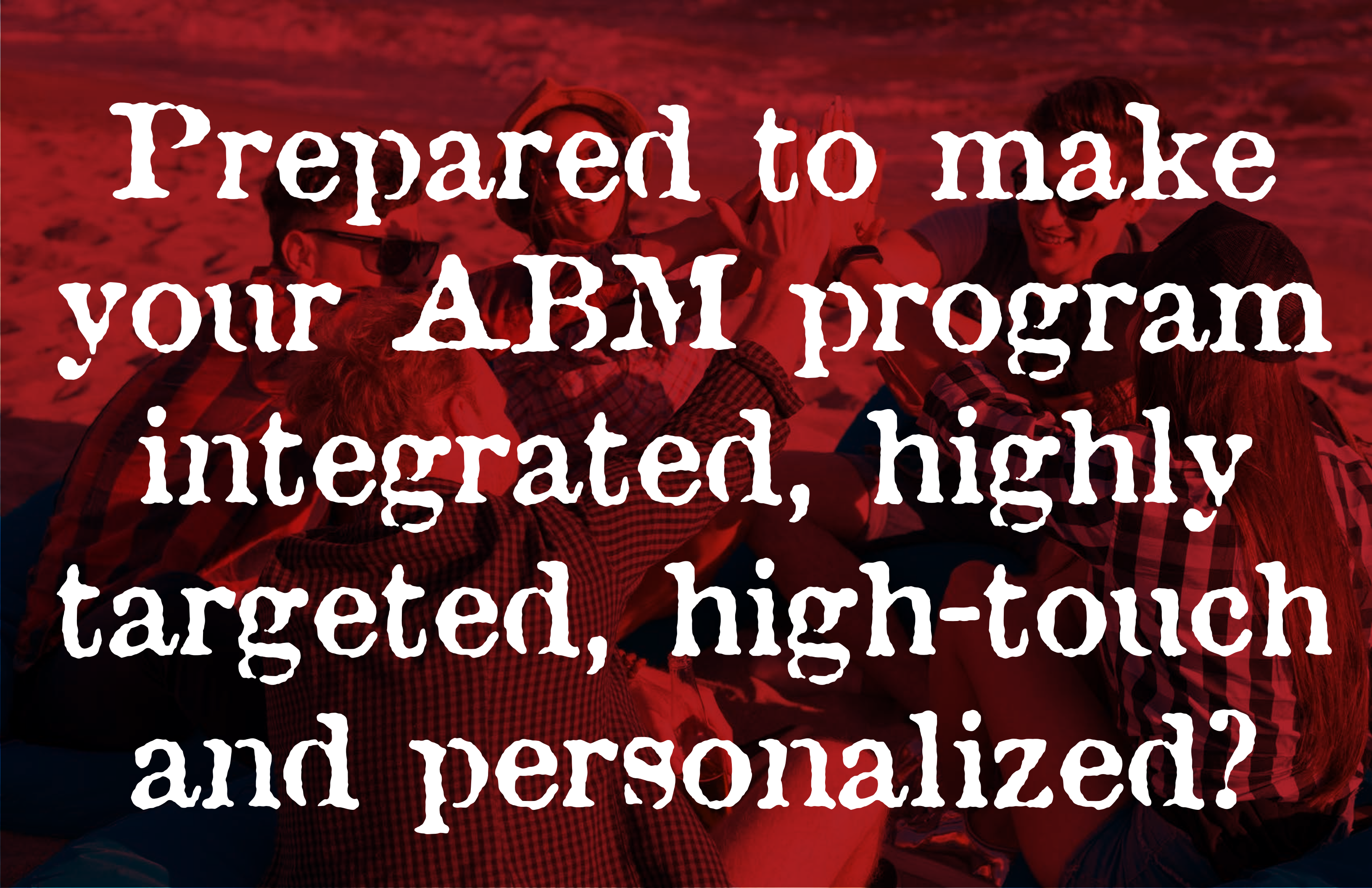
Build out your content library and sales and marketing materials so they are personalized to your target accounts based on specifics you know about them.

# 5

Launch your campaigns, measure effectiveness, optimize, course correct in market and build on success from there.

A man and a woman are high-fiving in a meeting room. The man is on the left, wearing a light blue shirt, and the woman is on the right, wearing a dark blue zip-up jacket over a white t-shirt. They are both smiling and looking at each other. The background is a blurred office environment with other people and desks. The entire image has a semi-transparent red overlay.

Ready for  
account-based  
marketing?



Prepared to make  
your ABM program  
integrated, highly  
targeted, high-touch  
and personalized?

A group of people, mostly young adults, are shown from the chest down, with their hands clasped together in a circle. They are wearing various casual clothing, including plaid shirts and jeans. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent red filter. The text is written in a white, serif font, centered over the image.

Committed to leveraging  
ABM to build affection,  
relevance and trust  
with your high-potential  
prospects?

Then you're good to go.  
Good luck!

For guidance, perspective or marketing strategy to help your  
account-based marketing program succeed, contact EMA.

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