Case Study

How the VMware Tanzu® Team Fueled their ABM Program to Generate 34x ROI using Priority Engine™

An interview with tech marketing innovator Heidi Ramich, Director, Global Marketing Operations & Analytics at VMware Tanzu

VMware Tanzu products can help developers modernize their applications and infrastructure to deliver better software to production. Heidi manages the Marketing Operations team to execute data-driven strategies for the **VMware Tanzu** business unit.

What challenges was the VMware Tanzu team facing that led you to Priority Engine?

Our organization has been transitioning to an account-centric Marketing and Sales approach over the last two years. During this shift, we recognized that we needed a solution to help us identify active, in-market accounts from our target account list and the individual buying team members of those accounts. We wanted a platform that could provide insights into those accounts and their research activity to inform our account-based marketing (ABM) efforts. These insights would also enable our BDRs and Sales team to have more solutions-oriented conversations with buying team members about their organization's specific business challenges and how VMware solutions can help solve those challenges.

How do you use Priority Engine to fuel your ABM strategy?

We use Priority Engine to access stronger intent signals at our target ABM accounts and better understand buying team engagements. Priority Engine helps us see which accounts from our target account list are actively in-market or engaging with

34x
ROI generated

Challenge
The VMware Tanzu team needed a solution to enhance their ABM program and generate more MQAs (Marketing-Qualified Accounts) from their list of target accounts that have a high propensity to buy.

Solution
The VMware Tanzu team uses Priority Engine to determine its most active target accounts, identify the most active prospects at those accounts, and uncover insights to drive more personalized and data-driven Marketing and Sales outreach.

Results
The VMware Tanzu team generated more MQAs and had more productive conversations with buying team members, resulting in a 34x ROI.

our brand, and who the actual buying team members are within those accounts. The engagement data from Priority Engine is the driver for determining which nurture stream the individual buying team members will be assigned to for further scoring and qualification.

However, we aren't just focusing on individual leads; we are focusing on the account. In Salesforce, this is made of up leads and contacts, so it is very important that we don't only focus on lead records for pipeline generation. The VMware Tanzu team is taking an account-centric approach to all these activities by layering in industry messaging for ABM accounts and driving engagement of the buying team. We leverage Priority Engine to identify account-clustering signals, which occur when there are numerous engagements from multiple personas (people) at an account. The engagement signals from Priority Engine help us identify the best accounts to focus on and better understand their business challenges so we can conduct more productive Marketing and Sales outreach. These signals also contribute to our method of scoring MQAs (marketing-qualified accounts) because if multiple people from an account are engaging with solution-related content, then that is a stronger signal of purchase intent.

How does Priority Engine influence your ABM email nurture strategy?

Priority Engine is essential to filling the top of our funnel with potential buying team members we have identified as "high intent." Once they have entered our funnel, we first test their engagement with a light marketing campaign based on the account's top interests, as identified in Priority Engine. Once the prospect engages with that initial outreach, we enroll them in a nurture stream. We set up automated nurture campaigns in Marketo for the different products we are promoting, using keywords and Priority Engine top interests to drive each campaign. Depending on how a prospect engages with the content in the nurture stream, points are added to their lead score, and they get pushed farther down the funnel.

We continue to nurture and use our lead-scoring model for these prospects. However, this process is no longer about identifying an MQL; we look for an overall clustering of an account's buying team activity to identify an MQA. Our goal is to generate pipeline using MQAs to better identify "in-market" accounts. Seeing multiple personas engaging around a solution or product helps us better understand the buying team so we can drive engagements with that account. Our preliminary results

> "Priority Engine helps us see which accounts from our target list are actively in-market or engaging with our brand, and who the actual buying team members are within those accounts."

—Heidi Ramich, Director, Global Marketing Operations & Analytics, VMware Tanzu

show a positive correlation for pipeline creation when multiple buying team members are engaged in the account over a 2-to-6-month timeframe.

How do you leverage the data from Priority Engine in your account-centric approach to Marketing and Sales?

We leverage the insights from Priority Engine to optimize our interactions and data-driven strategies across multiple channels. We like to say that our strategy is "inbound informing outbound;" we analyze inbound engagement data to inform our outbound Marketing and Sales efforts. It is important to understand the mid- and bottom-of-funnel content that works to engage personas. Focusing on top-of-funnel content to add a "known name" to the database is rarely the content that drives deeper engagement. Not only does Priority Engine give us visibility into the engagements of multiple buying team members at our target accounts, but it helps us truly understand those engagements, along with Marketo Measure for attribution to drive results.

Additionally, Priority Engine helps our Sales team better connect with the right people that make up the solution-buying team at our target accounts. The insights from the tool empower our BDRs to have more personalized and productive conversations and determine the best mix of VMware products to solve the account's key challenges. Focusing on accounts with clusters of activity also helps our BDRs and Sales team prioritize their outreach to the accounts showing the strongest intent signals.

Priority Engine, as a key component of our martech stack, has also helped our organization to significantly

improve Marketing and Sales alignment. Again, "inbound account informs outbound" applies – Marketing will share inbound campaign insights with the Sales team so they can prioritize their outbound conversations to drive sales meetings and pipeline velocity.

Tell us about your tech stack and how you've set up those tools to support your ABM strategy.

Our tech stack has been integral to our ABX program. The flow of account insights and engagement data between all the tools in our tech stack is centered around Marketo, Salesforce, and Demandbase One. We've automated our process to ensure the data transitions and marketing campaigns are always on. This automation has been critical to our success, because if you can't see the data throughout the process, then you can't truly understand it and make it actionable. Also, Marketo Measure (Bizible) is critical for marketing attribution and ROI calculation. We can better understand the campaigns and channels that work best to drive deeper funnel engagement and create pipeline in a cost-effective manner.

The flow of data between the tools in our tech stack begins with intent data from Priority Engine, internal sources, and third-party sources. We run multi-channel campaigns to engage individual buying team members from target accounts, using nurture streams and triggered content that aligns with their top interests. We score leads, contacts, and accounts, and identify priority buying team members from target accounts in Salesforce.

My team then compiles and delivers engagement insights to our BDR and Sales team. We are aligned to provide better information about which accounts are engaging and trending, which helps them prioritize which accounts to go after. By integrating Priority Engine with Salesforce, BDRs can access Priority Engine insights directly in Salesforce and use these insights to tailor their outreach. We found that following up on every MQL was not what was most effective; rather, we've developed methods for inbound activity to prioritize outbound outreach and pipeline creation.

What results have you seen from using Priority Engine to enhance your ABM program?

Our investment in Priority Engine resulted in a 34x ROI. The prospects from Priority Engine are high quality and the tool helps us create pipeline by identifying in-market accounts with proven purchase intent. The intent data is helping us refine our messaging and better understand solution-buying teams. We are getting more qualified prospects interested in Tanzu solutions from Priority Engine.

The intent data from Priority Engine also helps us deliver the right message to the right buying team member at the right time on their preferred channel. This enables us to focus on those important mid-funnel and bottom-of-funnel strategies. We are better aligned with Sales' goal of creating pipeline and nurturing account relationships that deliver results for our customers. Overall, I've been delighted with our program results.

Tell us about your experience working with Informa TechTarget.

The [Informa] TechTarget team helps us understand the intent data from our prospects and how we can best leverage that data. They have been wonderful. Our internal Demand Gen team is great and partners with our [Informa] TechTarget team so they can utilize all the value that Priority Engine delivers to an ABM approach.

Thanks to Heidi for sharing this success story with us.

Heidi Ramich
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