Strategic ABM gifting:

a CMO's silver bullet to engage the enterprise

Sendoso

Introduction

In the remote work era, prospects crave humanized experiences more than ever. It's not surprising, then, that **83% of consumers** feel positive about receiving packages. Buyers and customers see specialized gifts from organizations as tokens of appreciation. On the organizational side, gifting accelerates account-based marketing (ABM) efforts and helps build trust. But many enterprise-level execs are neglecting to marry the two powerhouse strategies, resulting in missed opportunities to strengthen relationships with key clients and targets.

Sending gifts is as easy as purchasing a $5 Starbucks eGift card, but scaling isn't. As organizations' sending strategies evolve into physical and direct gifting models, a high level of skill and expertise is required to maintain budgets and ensure return on investment (ROI). With hybrid and remote work models here to stay, building relationships with clients and targets is more important than ever. How can marketing and sales professionals use gifting campaigns effectively to best support ABM?

In this eBook, we'll discuss:

- The best ways to leverage enterprise-level gifting to build stronger relationships with the accounts that matter.
- Why enterprise-level organizations must track sending across multiple departments and credit cards to demonstrate ROI on relationship-building.
- How to elevate sending strategies from holiday specialties to year-round events that celebrate targets' anniversaries, birthdays, personal and professional milestones, and more.
- The importance of starting small and experimenting with gifting before turning to a system to automate time-consuming sending tasks.

> "Our audience is often busy and can be hard to reach, but our direct mail campaigns with Sendoso help us get our message through."
>
> **Katie Downey,** marketing manager, Samsara
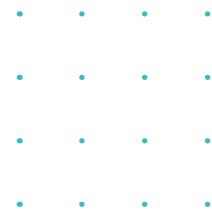
The gifts that keep on giving

When you consider how many emails the average decision-maker receives in a day, it's easy to see why receiving a personalized gift can have a major impact. COVID-19 and the corresponding growth of remote work have made the workplace even more digitized—and email even easier to ignore.

In the **2021 State of Sending Report**, which polled B2B marketers, salespeople, and customer experience (CX) decision-makers:

- 80% agreed that target audiences are fatigued by increased virtual engagement efforts.
- 90% agreed that building a personal or human connection with buyers and customers has become critical to closing sales since March 2020.
- 88% said their engagement strategy had taken a more human-to-human approach since March 2020.

Today more than ever, your prospects are hungering to connect on a human level. Neuroscience shows that tangible materials have a bigger impact on the human brain than digital interactions. At a time when you may not be able to make in-person sales calls or take prospects and customers out to lunch, a physical gift offers a meaningful way to make an impression, build engagement, and cement relationships.

TL;DR

As inboxes remain oversaturated with hundreds of offers and deals per day, organizations can stand out from the crowd by sending physical packages and experiences to hot target accounts and other prospects.
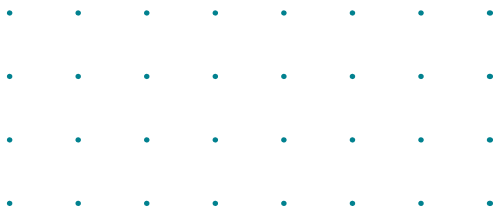
Challenges of enterprise gifting

Traditionally, marketers and sales professionals have managed to gift manually. It can be time-consuming, however, especially at the enterprise level. Marketing and sales teams must handle a variety of moving parts, including:

- Finding and managing vendors
- Sourcing appropriate, memorable gifts
- Developing branded merchandise
- Storing gifts and maintaining adequate inventory
- Packaging, addressing, and shipping gifts
- Confirming delivery and receipt of gifts
- Managing the gift budget and measuring ROI

This manual approach to gifting is challenging to scale and subject to human error, from misaddressed packages to missed opportunities.

The growth of remote and hybrid work in the wake of the pandemic has multiplied the complexity of enterprise gifting. How can you ensure the correct address for a recipient who might be working at home one week and in the office the next?

The sheer size of the enterprise also poses challenges to a successful gifting program. How can you accurately track sending across multiple departments, individuals, and budgets to avoid redundant spending and effectively measure ROI?

Using direct mail automation tools, corporate gifting software, or swag management solutions can eliminate some manual labor but don't fully address the challenges today's enterprises face in making the most of gifting. An all-in-one sending platform that integrates into your existing tech stack can help. Such platforms tie together direct mail, corporate gifting, swag management, and personalization while handling the nitty-gritty of sourcing, shipping, tracking, and measuring the ROI of your gifting program.

In today's competitive sales and marketing environment, a sending platform is no longer "nice to have." For enterprise marketers attempting to scale gifting for human connection, it's become a necessity.

TL;DR

Leveraging sending strategies on the enterprise level is easier said than done, however, given obstacles and challenges such as the rise of remote work, accurate tracking of packages and spend, and difficulty scaling campaigns.

How to leverage enterprise-level gifting for results

A coordinated gifting strategy can help your organization generate new business, engage and convert target accounts, accelerate deals, and build relationships. Getting started is fairly easy.

Assess your current processes

Start by considering how to best incorporate a gifting program into your existing marketing and sales efforts. Identify where you are currently using gifting, the processes and solutions you employ, and your existing workflow. What's working and what isn't? What could be improved? You don't need to reinvent the wheel—just fine-tune it.

Start small

Begin by experimenting with gifting before looking for a sending platform to automate time-consuming sending tasks. Pinpoint accounts to target by identifying those that match your ideal customer profile. Start small and build brand awareness by sending things you know everyone will appreciate, such as a handwritten note, an eGift card for an Amazon purchase, or a cup of coffee. Use these initial engagements to learn more about the contacts at your target accounts.

Get buyers' attention

B2B buyers are inundated with emails and notifications all day long, so capturing the recipient's attention is critical. Identify the key stakeholders involved in the decision-making process and combine gifting with clever, "punny" messages to stand out from the crowd. For example, you could send a succulent with a message, "Planting the seed that we should meet."

Samsara's "Let's Meat" campaign is an example of the success of this approach. Samsara, a connected operations platform in San Francisco, sent target accounts a bag of beef jerky in Samsara-branded packaging with a message reading, "Open for a treat inside" and a handwritten note from an ADR, who would follow up the same day to start a conversation. Recipients who agreed to meet received a $50 gift card with the message, "I would have loved to take you out to dinner, but 'let's meat' instead."

"The pun and the emphasis on virtual meetings especially during the pandemic were crucial to the success of the campaign," which helped drive a 250% increase in pipeline sourced from direct mail, explained Katie Downey, marketing manager at Samsara.

Amp up value & personalization

As you move prospects along the buying journey, you can gradually increase the impact of your gifting program by sending higher-value, more personalized gifts. At the beginning of the pandemic, the marketing and sales teams at customer service platform **Zendesk** were seeking a way to accelerate open deals and engage prospects stuck at home. In lieu of in-person events, they sent top contacts who were already in conversations with sales "**At Home Movie Night Kits.**" Designed to create a memorable brand experience, the kits included popcorn, snacks, a movie trivia game, a movie-themed cookbook, and a Zendesk-branded blanket.

Once contacts received the gift, the marketing team sent an Amazon eGift card to rent a movie. Sales reps followed up to ask contacts about their movie night experience. The campaign generated a 2,000% quarter-over-quarter increase in new business pipeline generation from direct mail.

"We automated everything in Sendoso and integrated with our CRM to track each step, from opting in, to starting a send, to delivery," said Miru Natarajan, senior marketing manager of regional operations & programs at Zendesk.

TL;DR

By leveraging a comprehensive sending platform, starting small, and combining physical and virtual experiences, organizations can generate new business, engage and convert target accounts, accelerate deals, and build relationships.

How to use gifting throughout the customer lifecycle

You can incorporate gifting into your ABM strategy at every stage of the customer lifecycle.

Top of the funnel

Use gifting at the top of the sales funnel to break into targeted accounts. Increase lead-to-opportunity conversion rates by targeting the whole buying team:

- Reward prospects with an eGift card in return for attending a webinar, demo, or event.
- Set up a Zoom call with hot prospects and their teams and send a gift card for food delivery from a service like Uber Eats in advance, so lunch is on you.

> "We had tried a direct mailer before Sendoso, but people were hesitant to share their mailing address. Address Confirmation gives them more confidence, helping them understand that their address isn't being shared across other platforms."
>
> **Kimberly Walker**, senior regional marketing associate, Zendesk

Mid-funnel

You know a bit more about your prospects at this point, so your gifts can be more personalized to their interests and needs. Pay attention to your prospects, note what's going on in their lives, and tailor gifts accordingly.

Is a new baby on the way? Send a relaxing spa kit for some self-pampering before the baby arrives. Is your prospect planning a vacation to Hawaii? Branded swag like a beach towel or sun hat gives them a reason to think of you while they relax.

Next time you're Zooming with a prospect, look for clues in their home office environment. Does your prospect love Harry Potter, the Yankees, or English Bulldogs? Ask them about their décor, and you may find gift ideas.

Combine personalization with flexibility. Email a link to an Amazon item you think they'd like plus an eGift card to buy it; if they don't like that product, they can use the gift card for something else.

Bottom of the funnel

Your competition may be emailing and calling the prospect multiple times a day, but a physical gift personalized to the recipient can really stand out: Something as simple as following up with a handwritten note–rather than yet another email–can make a big difference.

Make sure to focus on key decision-makers. Send a group gift to the entire buying team or customize individual gifts to each member–or do both. Don't forget to reward your champions with special gifts.

Post-sale

Gifting shouldn't stop when you close the deal. Gifts show customers how much you value their business, which helps to build lasting relationships. For example, you can:

- Celebrate a customer onboarding with a gift of champagne.
- Send a big box of branded swag to show how excited you are to have them as a customer.
- Use gifts to reward customers for renewals, referrals, and advocacy.
- Start the gift cycle over again by using gifts to upsell existing customers and maximize customer lifetime value.

Elevate your sending strategy

You probably already send gifts for the winter holidays. However, most prospects are inundated with gifts at that time, and many are on vacation. Increase the impact of gifting by making it a year-round practice.

- Send gifts to commemorate prospects' and customers' anniversaries, birthdays, and personal and professional milestones, such as a promotion or new job.
- Send gifts on unusual holidays such as New Years, July 4, or Halloween.
- Send gifts for made-up holidays like Hot Sauce Day, World Compliment Day, or Scrabble Day. Better yet, create your own holiday.

TL;DR

Alright, if you didn't read this one, I highly recommend you go back and soak up the variety of examples provided. But if you're that busy, sending platforms can assist with strategies across the entire marketing funnel, from pre-sale to customer retention.

How a sending platform can help

As you expand your gifting program, a sending platform will be essential to manage sending and track ROI. When selecting a sending program, look for these key features:

- **Easy integration:** Choose a solution that offers direct integration with the customer relationship management (CRM), marketing automation, and sales tools you already use, such as Marketo, Salesforce, HubSpot, Eloqua, Outreach, SalesLoft, Microsoft Dynamics, DemandBase, or Engagio. Your sending platform should be able to use information from your other solutions to trigger sends automatically and should be able to report on the ROI of campaigns in these solutions.

- **Visibility into send status:** Look for a platform that shows you the status of both physical and digital gifts, including when a gift is sent and received, when items are undeliverable, and when eGifts are redeemed. Armed with this data, you can more accurately time your follow-up and next steps.

- **Robust analytics and reporting:** A product with easy-to-use analytics dashboards helps you monitor the metrics that matter, such as open opportunities, closed-won opportunities, and pipeline influenced as well as the ability to measure ROI for specific campaigns. A solution that tracks sending and spending across multiple departments and credit cards can provide more detailed insights.

- **Address confirmation tools:** Help ensure timely delivery with a solution that allows recipients to confirm or change their address before you send your gift. Whether your recipient is working from home or the office, you can feel confident that your package will land in the right place, eliminating wasted spend.
- **Flexible sending options:** Your sending platform should enable one-to-one, one-to-few, and one-to-many use cases so you can send gifts to an individual, a buying group, or a larger audience such as webinar or event attendees. It should also support different types of gifts, such as sending eGift cards or handwritten notes, mailing physical gifts, or combining the physical and virtual worlds with a virtual wine tasting or other activity.
- **Wide selection:** Some sending solutions limit you to a small number of vendors or a narrow selection of products. That can mean ho-hum gifts that fail to make an impression. To ensure creative and memorable gifts, look for a platform that works with an extensive network of vendors to offer a wide variety of options for branded swag and unique gifts, including the ability to create custom gift boxes.
- **Worldwide fulfillment:** Your business isn't limited to U.S. borders, so why should your gifting program be? A GDPR-compliant vendor with international shipping capabilities and preferred relationships with shipping carriers gives you the power to surprise and delight prospects around the globe.

"It's less about the actual gift, and more about what it means coming from the person who sent it."

Katie Downey, marketing manager, Samsara

- **Warehousing and inventory management:** To free your marketing and sales staff from the tedious tasks of storing, packing, and addressing gifts and swag, look for a sending solution that includes warehousing, inventory management, and fulfillment. A vendor that offers a real-time view of inventory and alerts when items are running low can help ensure you always have what you need.
- **Robust support:** Need help coming up with new ideas for your gifting campaign? An experienced sending solution vendor can help. Choose a vendor that can work with you to brainstorm creative ideas or source unique gifts and share best practices for common gifting use cases.
- **Scalability and spending controls:** Your spending platform must be able to scale with your business while providing control over spending. Look for a solution that lets you create teams, set budgets and allowances for individuals or teams, and allows management to pre-approve spending.

TL;DR

A comprehensive gifting platform will provide scalability and spending controls, robust support, warehousing and inventory management, worldwide fulfillment, flexible spending options, and much more.

Power up ABM with a gifting program

Still wondering what a sending platform can do for your sales and marketing efforts? The marketing team at Talkdesk, a cloud-based contact software solution, spent 12 hours a week coordinating direct mail campaigns. It was a laborious process—from collecting addresses to packing and sending boxes, tracking delivery status, monitoring follow-up, and hand-writing notes.

Using the Sendoso sending platform, **Talkdesk took a new approach**. The company targeted 150 people in Tier 1 and Tier 2 accounts as well as cold leads with handwritten notes. It gave the sales team the option to send coffee eGift cards and personalized gifts from Sendoso's Amazon integration. Sendoso's Salesforce integration enabled SDRs to follow up in a highly coordinated way. This personalized outreach from sales built $2.4M+ in the pipeline—and saved 12 hours of manual labor per week.

Gifts have the power to engage prospects, fast-track the sales cycle, and deepen customer relationships. But trying to manage an enterprise gifting program manually can leave opportunities on the table. The right sending platform can automate, streamline, and enhance your enterprise gifting program, giving your marketing and sales teams more time to spend on what matters: building a human connection.

> "We automated everything in Sendoso and integrated with our CRM to track each step, from opting in, to starting a send, to delivery. Then, we pulled that information into Eloqua, where we could automate the e-gift email instead of manually uploading a list. That's all worked really well."
>
> **Miru Natarajan**, senior marketing manager of regional operations & programs, Zendesk

Like hot-sauce, sending goes well with everything.

Sendoso

Sendoso, the leading Sending Platform, helps companies stand out by giving them new ways to engage with customers throughout the buyer's journey. By integrating digital and physical sending strategies, companies can increase the effectiveness of their existing go-to-market programs and improve their relationships with customers. With a global marketplace of highly curated vendors (over 30,000 gift options), seamless integrations with popular marketing & sales tools (including Salesforce, Marketo, Outreach, HubSpot and many others), trusted by over 900 companies, with dedicated logistics and supply chain operations worldwide, Sendoso serves is an essential part of successful demand generation, account-based, and customer experience programs. Founded in 2016, Sendoso is backed by $152M in venture funding and has a global footprint, with a presence in North America, Europe, and Asia Pacific.

Learn more at **sendoso.com.**

DEMAND GEN® REPORT

Demand Gen Report is a targeted online publication that uncovers the strategies and solutions that help companies better align their sales and marketing organizations, and ultimately, drive growth. A key component of the publication's editorial coverage focuses on the sales and marketing automation tools that enable companies to better measure and manage their multi-channel demand generation efforts.

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