



THE BLUEPRINT:  
**GOING BEYOND TRADITIONAL  
BUSINESS INTENT DATA**

to Drive Meaningful  
Connections

data axle



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## Introduction

In our digital era, data drives decision-making, enabling organizations to connect with their audience more effectively. For advertisers, leveraging intent data has become a critical factor in driving growth and achieving competitive advantage. Business intent data has emerged as a game-changer among various data tools, enabling organizations to identify and engage with in-market buyers.

Intent can mean different things depending on the context, and relying solely on third-party intent signals often leads. This blueprint explores an evolved approach to intent data that integrates multiple dimensions—behavioral, Modeled, and Engaged Intent—with advanced identity resolution techniques. By combining these elements, businesses can achieve more precise targeting, personalized engagement, and faster sales cycles. Drawing from industry research and real-world applications, this paper outlines strategies to rethink how intent is identified and acted upon, creating meaningful connections that drive results.





# Decoding Business Intent Signals

Traditional business intent data focuses on signals from prospects and companies actively exploring or showing interest in specific topics. These signals come from various sources, such as:



## ONLINE SEARCHES

using targeted keywords



## THIRD-PARTY PLATFORMS

that track buyer behaviors across the web

The goal is to identify patterns that suggest a potential customer is “in-market.” However, to get a fuller picture, it’s important to look beyond these traditional signals and consider other indicators of intent.

## Types of Intent Data

1

### First-Party Intent Data:

Collected directly from your owned channels, such as website visits, email engagement, and downloads.

2

### Third-Party Intent Data:

Aggregated from external sources, including publisher networks, review sites, and search behaviors.



## EXPERT INSIGHT

By combining both first- and third-party intent data, you gain a more comprehensive understanding of your audience’s behavior and buying intent.





# The Impact of Intent Data on Business Outcomes



## Better Lead Qualification

According to Gartner, companies using intent data improve lead qualification efficiency by up to 35%. By identifying organizations actively researching specific solutions, intent data empowers businesses to prioritize leads with higher buying intent, resulting in considerable time and resource savings for sales teams.



## Improved Targeting

A study by Aberdeen Group found that businesses using intent data for targeting experienced a 2x increase in email open rates and a 53% higher click-through rate. Intent data enables precise audience segmentation, ensuring tailored marketing campaigns resonate with in-market buyers.



## Personalized Content Marketing

Understanding customer intent allows for the creation of highly relevant content addressing specific pain points and interests. This leads to higher engagement and nurtures trust with potential customers.



## Account-Based Marketing (ABM) Effectiveness

According to Forrester, ABM campaigns leveraging intent data deliver 4x higher ROI compared to those without intent data. Intent data is crucial for identifying key accounts showing buying signals, enabling customized outreach strategies for high-value prospects.



## Faster Sales Cycles

Reaching out to leads already actively researching accelerates the sales process and increases conversions.



## Market Insights

A survey by Demand Gen Report found that nearly 67% of marketers agree that intent data helps them identify and capitalize on new market trends. Analyzing intent data can reveal emerging trends and market dynamics, helping businesses identify new opportunities and remain competitive.



## Competitive Analysis

Monitoring competitor activity through intent data provides insights into positioning and potential market gaps.



# Steps to Harness Intent Signals

## A Holistic Approach to Intent Data



### BEHAVIORAL INTENT

Behavioral intent data provides foundational insights by analyzing digital activities such as website visits, content downloads, and keyword searches. These signals are collected from over 250,000 keywords spanning 12,000 topics and categorized using AI-driven natural language processing (NLP) to enhance relevance and reduce noise. For example, filtering behavioral intent by industry classification allows businesses to focus on sectors most likely to engage.



### MODELED INTENT

Modeled intent uses AI to predict future buying behavior by analyzing historical data and combining it with real-time signals. This predictive capability is crucial for identifying prospects before they reach competitors. By employing continuous learning pipelines, businesses can refine models to adapt to changing market dynamics, ensuring sustained accuracy and relevance.



### ENGAGED INTENT

Engaged intent focuses on first-party interactions, such as responses to email campaigns (aka email exhaust) or activity on customer-owned platforms. By integrating these signals with third-party data, businesses gain deeper insights into buyer behavior and can tailor outreach strategies. This approach is particularly effective in account-based marketing (ABM) scenarios, where engagement data highlights high-value prospects for personalized outreach.



### IDENTITY RESOLUTION

Achieving accurate and actionable insights requires robust identity resolution. Proprietary systems can link disparate signals, including cookies, IP addresses, and email interactions, to create unified profiles. By resolving accounts to specific decision-makers, businesses can target high-intent individuals with precision. This capability underpins the entire intent data framework, enabling seamless integration into omnichannel strategies.

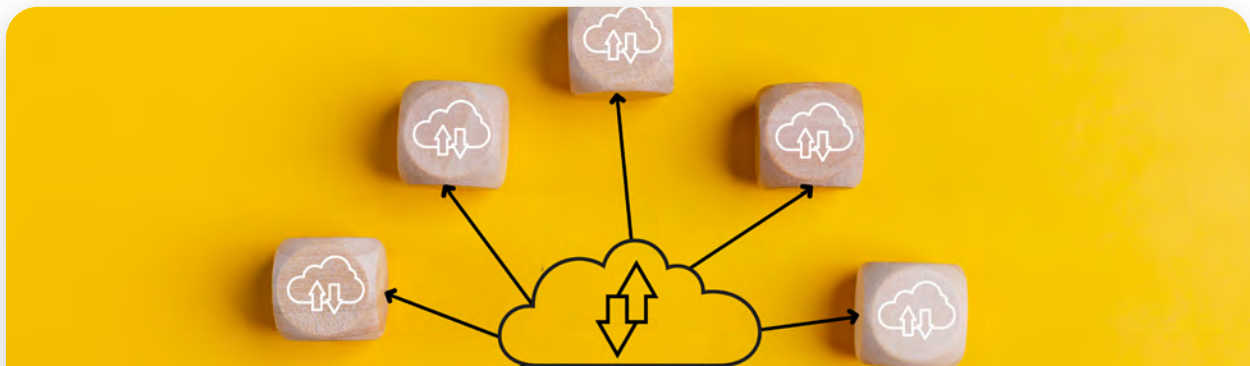


# Your Data in Action

## 1 Establish Clear Objectives

Before diving into intent data, it's essential to clearly define your goals. Establishing these objectives upfront will help ensure you use the data most effectively. Some common goals include:

- **Enhancing lead prioritization:** Focusing on leads that show strong intent and are more likely to convert.
- **Improving campaign targeting:** Using intent data to refine your audience segments and personalize messaging.
- **Accelerating the sales cycle:** Identifying in-market buyers early to reduce the time it takes to close deals.
- **Nurturing campaigns:** Capturing and incorporating early buying signals to engage prospects at the right moment and move them further down the funnel.



### USE CASE

A SaaS company focused on reducing its sales cycle by identifying in-market buyers early. By leveraging intent data, they can pinpoint prospects who are actively researching solutions like theirs, even before those prospects reach out. This allows the sales team to engage earlier, tailor their outreach based on specific pain points, and ultimately shorten the path to conversion.

## 2 Select the Right Data Partner

Partnering with a reliable data provider is crucial to success. Key attributes to consider include:

- **Data accuracy:** Ensure the data is verified and up-to-date.
- **Multi-sourced coverage:** Look for providers that integrate multiple data sources for a holistic view.
- **Privacy compliance:** Confirm adherence to regulations like GDPR and CCPA.



# Your Data in Action

## 3 Integrate Intent Data Across Systems

According to MarTech Advisor, businesses integrating intent data into CRM systems see a 25% increase in sales efficiency. To unlock its full potential, intent data must be integrated into existing systems, including:

- **Customer Relationship Management (CRM):** Prioritize leads and track interactions.
- **Marketing Automation Platforms (MAPs):** Deliver personalized campaigns based on intent signals.
- **Analytics Tools:** Analyze trends and measure ROI.

## 4 Prioritize High-Intent Leads

Intent data is a powerful tool for distinguishing between casual interest and genuine buying intent. By developing (leveraging) a scoring system, businesses can rank leads based on specific behaviors, ensuring they focus their efforts on prospects that are most likely to convert. Key factors to consider when developing an intent scoring model include:

- **Engagement frequency:** How often a lead interacts with your content, such as website visits, email opens, and social media interactions.
- **Types of content consumed:** What content a lead engages with—whether it's blog posts, product demos, case studies, or webinars—can reveal their level of interest and stage in the buyer journey.
- **Buying signals from key accounts:** Signals such as the number of decision-makers involved, the type of content they are consuming, or an uptick in activity from a specific company can indicate strong buying intent.



### USE CASE

A B2B tech company implemented an intent scoring system to prioritize their leads based on the criteria above. By assigning a score to each lead depending on their engagement levels and content preferences, the sales and marketing teams were able to quickly identify which prospects were actively considering a purchase. As a result, the company reduced its lead qualification time by 30%, allowing them to engage with high-intent prospects more quickly and effectively.

# Your Data in Action

## 5 Enhance Targeting and Personalization

The Aberdeen Group found that marketers using intent data experience a 53% higher email open rate. Segment your audience based on their intent signals to deliver hyper-relevant messaging. Examples include:

- **Email campaigns targeting buyers comparing solutions.**
- **Ads tailored to specific industries or decision-makers.**

## 6 Empower Sales Teams

A B2B tech company implemented an intent scoring system to prioritize their leads based on the criteria above. By assigning a score to each lead depending on their engagement levels and content preferences, the sales and marketing teams were able to quickly identify which prospects were actively considering a purchase. As a result, the company reduced its lead qualification time by 30%, allowing them to engage with high-intent prospects more quickly and effectively.

- **Equip sales reps to approach leads with context:** With insights into what content a lead has interacted with or how they've engaged with your brand, sales teams can approach prospects with relevant, personalized messaging that speaks directly to their needs or pain points.
- **Enable timely follow-ups aligned with customer behavior:** Intent data helps sales reps identify when leads are showing heightened interest or entering key stages of the buying journey. This allows for follow-ups that are timely and aligned with the lead's current intent, improving the chances of conversion.



### USE CASE

A cybersecurity firm used intent data to align its sales outreach with the specific interests and behaviors of its prospects. By leveraging insights such as the type of content leads consumed or signals of intent like increased website activity, the sales team was able to tailor their communication and engage at the right time. As a result, the firm improved its win rate by 18%.

## 7 Monitor and Optimize

Continuously measure the effectiveness of your intent-data-driven strategies. Key metrics include:

- **Conversion rates.**
- **Sales cycle duration.**
- **Campaign ROI.**

Use these insights to refine segmentation, outreach strategies, and content development.





## Actionable Insights for Leveraging Intent Data

### Map Intent Across Channels

Understand how prospects interact with your brand across digital and physical touchpoints. Intent signals often vary by channel; for example, search behavior may indicate early interest, while webinar participation signals readiness to buy.

### Filter and Score Intent

Implement a scoring system to differentiate between casual interest and high buying intent. For instance, assign higher scores to accounts showing sustained engagement with product-focused content, such as pricing pages or case studies.

### Integrate Intent Data into Omnichannel Strategies

Combine intent insights with CRM and marketing automation platforms to enable dynamic segmentation and personalized messaging. For example, intent signals from content downloads can trigger tailored email campaigns targeting specific pain points.

### Leverage Generative AI for Predictive Insights

Incorporate generative AI to identify micro-trends in buyer behavior and predict future purchasing decisions. This approach can proactively surface opportunities, enabling teams to act before competitors.

## Strategic Recommendations for Intent Data

### Invest in Next-Generation Identity Resolution

Persistent IDs across multiple data sources enable businesses to track prospects across channels and refine targeting with unprecedented precision.

### Leverage AI-to-AI Communications

A breakthrough in data integration, AI-to-AI communication allows businesses to optimize marketing and analytics platforms by exchanging predictive insights directly across systems.

### Evolve Data Models for Granular Insights

Enhanced modeling techniques, including ABM accuracy improvements, offer organizations a deeper understanding of intent signals at both individual and organizational levels

## THE FUTURE OF INTENT DATA

As privacy regulations evolve, the reliance on first-party data will grow, prompting businesses to rethink their data strategies. Advances in AI and machine learning will further enhance the ability to identify, score, and act on intent signals in real-time, including the capability to:

- **Predict future buying behaviors.**
- **Automate personalization at scale.**
- **Identify micro-trends in real-time.**

Organizations that adopt a multi-dimensional approach to intent data—integrating Behavioral, Modeled, and Engaged Intent—will be better positioned to navigate these changes and maintain a competitive edge. By shifting focus from standalone intent signals to a more holistic framework, businesses can create deeper connections with buyers, driving sustainable growth and long-term success.

**By shifting focus from standalone intent signals to a more holistic framework, businesses can create deeper connections with buyers, driving sustainable growth and long-term success.**





# Steps to Integrate Intent Data into Your Omnichannel Strategy

## 1 Map the Customer Journey Across Channels

Before integrating intent data, understand the typical journey your customers take across channels. For example:

- **Do they start with a web search and then move to social media for reviews?**
- **Are they influenced by or actively engaging with email campaigns or retargeted ads?**

### EXPERT INSIGHT

Use analytics tools to trace the most common paths and touchpoints in your customer's journey. This data will help you identify key moments of influence and engagement.

## 2 Segment Your Audience Based on Intent Signals

Intent data enables precise segmentation based on buyer behaviors. Group your audience by:

- **Topics they're researching.**
- **Industry or job role.**
- **Buying stage (early research vs. ready to purchase).**

## 3 Personalize Messaging Across Channels

Leverage intent data to deliver personalized messages at each touchpoint:

- **Email campaigns:** Create content based on the specific solutions your audience is exploring.
- **Display ads:** Use dynamic creatives to highlight benefits aligned with the buyer's intent.
- **Social media:** Target intent-driven audiences with tailored posts and sponsored content.
- **Direct mail:** Send personalized mailers featuring use cases or testimonials relevant to the recipient's interests.



### USE CASE

#### Predictive Sales Acceleration

A healthcare technology firm implemented AI-driven intent scoring to prioritize leads across its pipeline. By integrating predictive insights with firmographic and intent signal signals, the company was able to reduce its sales cycle by 35% and achieve a 20% increase in conversion rates.



### USE CASE

#### Omnichannel ABM

Using enhanced audience segmentation powered by identity resolution, a financial services provider launched an omnichannel campaign targeting decision-makers researching "retirement planning." This campaign achieved a 4x ROI through personalized direct mail, social media ads, and dynamic email sequences.



## 4 Use Intent Data to Optimize ABM Campaigns

Account-based marketing (ABM) relies on precise targeting and personalization. Intent data plays a crucial role in refining your ABM by enabling you to:

- **Identify high-value accounts actively signaling intent to purchase**, indicating they are in the research or decision-making stage.
- **Prioritize accounts for personalized outreach**, ensuring that your resources are focused on those most likely to convert.
- **Craft multi-channel campaigns** tailored to decision-makers at target accounts, increasing engagement and relevance.



### USE CASE

An enterprise software company used intent data to identify accounts researching ERP solutions. By targeting these accounts with a coordinated approach – delivering ads, emails, and direct mailers simultaneously – the company achieved a four times return on investment (ROI).

## 5 Align Marketing and Sales Efforts

Ensure your sales team is equipped with actionable intent insights to complement your omnichannel efforts. These insights help sales teams engage with prospects more effectively by providing them with valuable information, such as:

- **Keywords and topics of interest:** Understand what prospects are searching for and what topics are capturing their attention, allowing sales to tailor conversations to their needs.
- **Content engagement patterns:** Helps sales teams prioritize leads based on their level of engagement.
- **Preferred communication channels:** Knowing communication preferences ensures outreach is both relevant and timely.



### TIP

Schedule regular alignment meetings to discuss how intent data is driving engagement across channels.

## 6 Measure and Refine

Track the performance of your intent-driven omnichannel campaigns. Key metrics include:

- **Engagement rates (email opens, ad clicks, etc.).**
- **Conversion rates.**
- **Sales cycle duration.**

Use these insights to refine audience segments, messaging, and channel strategies.



## REAL-WORLD SUCCESS STORY: B2B Lead Generation Example

A technology services company aimed to improve lead qualification and accelerate its sales cycle. By integrating Behavioral, Modeled, and Engaged Intent data into their CRM, they identified accounts researching key topics, such as “cloud security” and “digital transformation.” The addition of intent scoring allowed the sales team to prioritize high-value leads, cutting the qualification time by 30%.

### KEY METRICS:

**25%**

increase in  
conversion rates.

**40%**

reduction in  
time spent on  
unqualified leads.

**Enhanced ROI**

from targeted advertising  
campaigns.

### LESSONS LEARNED:

1

Combining first- and third-party data provides a more complete view of buyer intent.

2

Intent scoring ensures resources are allocated to the most promising opportunities.

3

Continuous refinement of data models improves long-term performance.



# How to Spot Intent Using Business Intent Signals

Spotting intent through data requires a strategic approach to uncover and interpret key behaviors that signal interest in your products or services. Here is how to effectively identify and leverage intent signals.

## Increased Content Engagement

When a prospect's engagement spikes, it is a strong indicator that they're actively considering your product or service. Monitoring these behaviors can provide valuable insights into where they are in their buyer journey. Some key actions to look out for include:

- **Repeated visits to your website:** A prospect who returns multiple times is showing increased interest, especially if they are exploring different areas of your site.
- **Downloading resources like whitepapers or case studies:** These are typically high-value assets that prospects engage with when they are looking to gather more detailed information before deciding.
- **Spending more time on high-value pages, such as pricing or product features:** When a lead spends extended periods on pages that are crucial to the purchasing decision—like pricing, product features, or demo requests—it is a clear signal that they are seriously evaluating their options.



### EXAMPLE

Consider a visitor who first reads your blog post on “Choosing the Right CRM” and then downloads a comparison guide between various CRM solutions. This behavior strongly suggests that the prospect is not only researching different CRM options but also evaluating how your solution stacks up against competitors.

## Keyword Search Behavior

Tracking keyword searches related to your offerings provides valuable insights. Keywords reveal what prospects are actively researching, helping you align your outreach with their needs.



### EXAMPLE

If your target audience is searching for “cloud security solutions,” it is a clear sign they are exploring options in that space.

## Engagement with Competitors

Monitoring activity around competitors can highlight prospects who are actively evaluating solutions. Signals include visiting competitors' websites, engaging with their content, or interacting with comparison tools.

### EXPERT INSIGHT

Use this insight to position your solution's unique benefits.





## Industry-Specific Activity Trends

Certain industries exhibit predictable patterns of intent. For example, a surge in searches for “predictive analytics” in the retail sector during Q4 might indicate preparation for the holiday season.



### EXAMPLE

An uptick in downloads of supply chain optimization resources could signal growing demand in manufacturing.

## Social Media Interactions

Engagement on social media platforms, such as liking, sharing, or commenting on relevant posts, can reveal intent. Monitoring these signals allows for timely, personalized outreach.



### EXAMPLE

A prospect who comments on a LinkedIn post about AI in marketing may be exploring automation tools.







## Tools and Technologies to Spot Intent

Spotting intent through data requires a strategic approach to uncover and interpret key behaviors that signal interest in your products or services. Here's how to effectively identify and leverage intent signals.



### **INTENT DATA PLATFORMS:**

Tools like Bombora, 6sense, and Demandbase aggregate and analyze third-party intent signals.



### **WEBSITE ANALYTICS:**

Platforms like Google Analytics and Hotjar provide insights into visitor behavior on your site.



### **CRM AND MARKETING AUTOMATION:**

Tools like HubSpot and Marketo integrate intent data into customer profiles, enabling actionable insights.

## How to Act on Intent Signals.

### Prioritize Leads

Use intent data to score and prioritize leads based on their activity and buying signals. Focus your efforts on high-intent prospects to maximize ROI.

### Personalize Outreach

Align your messaging with the specific interests and behaviors of your audience. Personalization increases engagement and drives conversions.

### **EXPERT INSIGHT**

Send an email featuring case studies relevant to the keywords they've searched for.

### Inform Sales Teams

Equip your sales team with real-time insights from intent data. This enables them to craft more relevant pitches and address buyer needs effectively.

### Optimize Campaigns

Analyze intent data trends to refine your marketing strategies. Adjust content, ads, and targeting to better align with audience needs.

## Our **Top 20** Intent Topics

(out of over 8000 offered by Data Axle)



3D Printing

Advertising Solutions



Backup and Recovery

Building Security



Business Credit Cards

Career Development



Cloud Providers

Commercial Loans



Cyber Security

Energy Management

Fleet Management



HR Technology

Internet Service



Machine Learning

Mobile Application UI



Payroll Services

Sales Enablement



Small Business Solutions

Web Site Hosting



Electronic Medical Record

Spotting intent through business intent data is an essential skill for modern marketers. By identifying key signals and leveraging advanced tools, you can gain a competitive edge and create meaningful connections with in-market buyers. Start by integrating intent data into your workflows, monitor behaviors closely, and refine your strategies to meet your audience's needs.

# The Data Axle Difference: Enhancements to Intent Data Strategy

Selecting the correct partner can make or break the success of your marketing programs and we are here to help. This is what makes our business intent data stand out from the crowd:

## 1 Augmented Intelligence Framework

Intent data is enriched through AI, creating predictive models that combine real-time signals with historical trends. This innovation enables a proactive approach, allowing businesses to identify “Generative Leads”—prospects likely to emerge based on AI-driven insights before they even demonstrate explicit intent.

## 2 Four-Dimensional Data Quality

Data accuracy, recency, granularity, and predictive modeling are optimized through a combination of AI processes and human validation. Over twenty-five million annual validation calls ensure data reliability, which is vital for precise lead qualification.

## 3 Liquid Data Integration

A strong data infrastructure supports seamless integration into marketing and sales ecosystems. This real-time flow of data, facilitated by APIs and martech platforms/stacks allows marketers to act on intent signals immediately, reducing delays and inefficiencies

## Conclusion

Adopting business intent signal solutions is not just a marketing or sales decision—it is a strategic investment in the future of your organization. By leveraging intent signals, you can create meaningful connections with prospects, outpace competitors, and drive sustainable growth.

By following this roadmap—from defining objectives to optimizing strategies—organizations can unlock the full potential of intent data – which is about transforming how you connect with your audience. creating impactful, personalized experiences that resonate with their audience. By aligning your efforts with real-time buyer intent, you can create meaningful interactions that drive results. Start small, iterate based on insights, and watch your marketing strategy become more precise and impactful. Contact us if you're ready to get started.

# data axle

### ABOUT DATA AXLE:

Data Axle is a leader in data solutions that drive meaningful connections between companies and people. We harness data, AI, and technology to create authentic, personalized experiences to improve our clients' business performance. Recognized for delivering innovative B2B and B2C solutions and exceptional service for more than five decades, our global team is dedicated to helping businesses and nonprofits of all sizes thrive. Visit [www.data-axle.com](http://www.data-axle.com) to learn more.

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