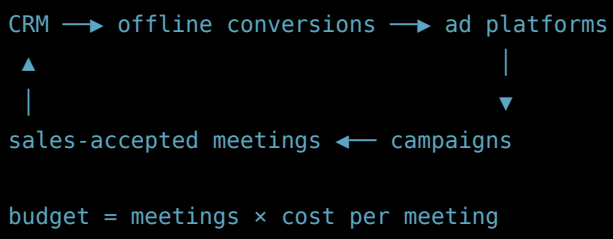
INSIGHTS ABM



INSIGHTS ABM GUIDE · 2026 EDITION

Paid media as a system: B2B ads that report to pipeline

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THE STEPS

01	02	03	04	05	06
Fix tracking	**Give channels a job**	**Budget by cost per meeting**	**Build better offers**	**Optimize weekly**	**Report pipeline**

SHORT ANSWER

B2B paid media works when it is run as one system that reports to pipeline. Send sales-accepted meetings and pipeline from your CRM back to the ad platforms, give each channel a clear job, set budgets from your cost per qualified meeting, and review spend weekly against meetings, not clicks. Ad spend should be paid to the platforms directly and never marked up.

Who this guide is for

This guide is for founders, heads of marketing and demand generation leaders at seed to Series C B2B companies spending, or planning to spend, $5,000 or more a month on ads.

Ads work best inside a coordinated program. Demandbase's State of ABM 2026, based on 1,452 companies, found that companies using four advertising products reached a 58.7% win rate, a 71% lift over companies running none.

How paid media drives visible results

Paid media can produce results a CEO and a board can see within one quarter. It happens when four things are true: ads reach named accounts and roles, every click is tracked to the CRM, sales follows up fast, and budget moves weekly toward what creates meetings.

This is what a well-run B2B paid program typically looks like over its first six months:

PERIOD	WHAT YOU SHOULD SEE	WHAT TO CHECK
Weeks 1–4	Tracking live, campaigns launched, target accounts engaging	Engaged accounts and contacts by role
Weeks 5–8	First paid-sourced sales-accepted meetings	Cost per sales-accepted meeting, a first baseline
Weeks 9–12	Budget concentrated on winning campaigns; cost per meeting falling	Meetings per week and meeting → SQL rate
Months 4–6	Paid-sourced and paid-influenced pipeline you can report	Pipeline by channel; win rate vs non-paid accounts

What makes results visible. A results dashboard should show, on one page, each week's paid-sourced meetings, the cost of each, the pipeline those meetings created, and how that compares with the target from your pipeline model. When leaders can see the line from spend to meetings to pipeline, paid media stops being a cost to cut and becomes a lever to pull.

In practice. At Axoniq, a Series A observability company, Insights ABM ran paid and social execution alongside HubSpot operations while the internal team was being built. The overall program produced more than $1M in qualified pipeline in its first six months. Paid media worked because it was one connected part of the system: targeting, tracking, routing and follow-up.

A worked example (illustrative numbers). A Series A company needs 20 paid-sourced meetings a month. At a planning cost of $500 per sales-accepted meeting, it budgets about $10,000 a month. After eight weeks the team finds LinkedIn produces meetings at $420 and search at $900. It moves 60% of the search budget to LinkedIn, and blended cost per meeting falls toward $500 or lower while meeting volume rises. Your numbers will differ; the method is what matters.

Step 1: Fix tracking before spending more

Ad platforms optimize toward the events you send them. If you send form fills, they find people who fill out forms. If you send sales-accepted meetings, they find people who take meetings.

1. **Install platform tags** through Google Tag Manager: LinkedIn Insight Tag, Google Ads, Reddit and any others you use.
2. **Pass click IDs into the CRM** on every form and booking, so each contact keeps the ad that brought them.
3. **Send offline conversions back** from HubSpot or Salesforce: sales-accepted meeting, SQL and opportunity, with values where possible.
4. **Respect consent:** use a consent banner and Google Consent Mode so tracking follows each visitor's choice.

Step 2: Give each channel a job

Each channel reaches buyers at a different moment. Assign roles instead of running every channel the same way.

CHANNEL	JOB	BEST FOR
LinkedIn Ads	Reach named buying-committee roles at target accounts	ABM programs, senior B2B buyers
Google search	Capture buyers already searching for your category	Proven categories with search demand
Reddit Ads	Reach technical practitioners in their communities	Developer, DevOps and data audiences
Retargeting (LinkedIn, Google, Meta)	Bring back engaged accounts with proof	Every program with site traffic
YouTube	Explain complex products to buying groups	Series A+ with video assets

Buyers also research through AI tools. Forrester found that 94% of business buyers use AI during their buying process. Paid media should send buyers to pages that also answer their questions clearly, so the same content helps AI answers and ad conversions.

Step 3: Set budgets from cost per meeting

Work backward from the meetings you need, not forward from a spend number.

1. Use the pipeline calculator to find the qualified meetings your revenue target needs each month.
2. Estimate the share of those meetings paid media should create, often 20% to 50%.
3. Multiply by your cost per sales-accepted meeting. If you have no history, plan with $500 and replace it with your own number after 60 days.
4. Hold 10% to 15% of budget for tests.

Example: 20 paid-sourced meetings a month at $500 each needs about $10,000 a month in spend.

Step 4: Build offers buyers want

Gated ebooks produce form fills, not meetings. Offers that create meetings are specific and useful:

- A pipeline or ROI calculator with results shown on the page
- A short audit or assessment with a clear deliverable
- Proof: a named customer result with real numbers
- A comparison page that answers “how is this different from…”

Put every ad's landing page under one rule: one message, one call to action, and proof visible without scrolling.

Step 5: Optimize on a weekly cadence

WHEN	REVIEW	DECISION
Weekly	Cost per sales-accepted meeting by campaign	Shift budget toward campaigns producing meetings
Weekly	Creative performance	Pause losers, launch one or two new tests
Monthly	Pipeline by channel	Rebalance channel budgets
Quarterly	Win rate and deal size by source	Decide which channels to scale

Change one thing at a time, and give campaigns two to three weeks of data before judging them on meetings.

Step 6: Report pipeline, not platform metrics

Platform dashboards report clicks, impressions and platform-attributed conversions. Report instead on:

- Sales-accepted meetings by channel and campaign
- Cost per sales-accepted meeting
- Pipeline and closed revenue sourced and influenced by paid
- Spend as a share of pipeline created

Why we never mark up ad spend

Many agencies charge a percentage of ad spend, which pays them more when budgets rise, whether or not pipeline does. Insights ABM charges a flat management fee by spend band, and clients pay the platforms directly. Clients who want shared risk can choose a performance option paid per sales-accepted meeting.

FAQ

Which B2B ad channel works best? It depends on your buyer. LinkedIn is usually the core channel for reaching senior buying roles, Google search captures existing demand, and Reddit reaches technical practitioners.

What should we optimize ads toward? Sales-accepted meetings, sent back to the ad platforms as offline conversions from your CRM. Form fills alone train platforms to find form-fillers.

How much should a seed or Series A company spend on paid media? Start from the meetings you need. Many early teams begin at $5,000 to $15,000 a month and scale channels that produce meetings at an acceptable cost.

How long before paid media shows results? Expect first meetings within 30 to 60 days of launch, and reliable cost-per-meeting numbers after about 90 days.

How do we know paid media is working? Look at one weekly report: paid-sourced sales-accepted meetings, cost per meeting, and the pipeline those meetings created, compared with the target from your pipeline model.

Why does paid media fail for many B2B companies? Usually because it is optimized toward clicks or form fills, tracking stops at the form, and nobody follows up quickly. Fix those three and the same budget usually produces more meetings.

How does Insights ABM charge for paid media? Paid Media System engagements start from $4,500 a month for two channels, with no percentage-of-spend markup. A performance option pays $500 per sales-accepted meeting above baseline.

Want this built for your team? Insights ABM builds and runs demand engines for seed to Series C B2B companies. Book a 30-minute consult at calendly.com/joe-cantu/30-minute-meeting or email contact@insightsabm.com.