Bombora
Intent topic
selection guide

Contents

Intent topic selection – The key to your Intent data strategy

Selecting Intent topics is the foundation to a strong Intent data strategy.

With thousands of Intent topics, Bombora enables you to get a granular understanding of what content your target audience is interested in.

Taking the time to map Intent topics to your marketing and sales strategy will help you:

1. Understand how to best use Intent data for your business

2. Determine which Intent topics to use for specific marketing and sales activities

3. Identify new growth opportunities by using Historic Buyer Journey Analysis insights

This guide deep dives into Intent topics - what they are, how they are derived and how you can best select them - to make the most of Bombora's Company Surge® Intent data.

Company Surge® Intent data identifies which businesses are actively researching products or services signaling buying intent. It indicates when a business is consuming content on an Intent topic significantly more than usual, according to historic data consumption behavior and benchmarks.

Benefits:

Immediately identify highly interested accounts

Understand what Intent topics target accounts are researching

Have context for timely and effective marketing and sales activity

Identify opportunities for cross sell, upsell or risk of churn

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Getting to know Intent topics
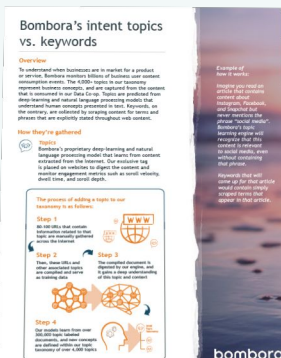
What is an Intent topic?

An Intent topic describes the nature of the online content.

It is derived from deep learning and natural language processing models that understand the content and assign the topic that's most relevant to what the content piece is about.

Q&A:
Is an Intent topic the same as a Keyword?

No. Keywords consider the presence of the word. Intent topics consider the context of the content – regardless of the presence of the word/phrase.

To learn more view the 'Intent topics vs. Keywords info sheet.

How an Intent topic is created

6 - 9 months

1. An Intent topic idea is submitted
A suggestion for an Intent topic is submitted through the topic submission form.

2. Gathering content for context
Every topic submission is considered. To validate the topic, 80 -100 URLs that contain related content is manually gathered from across the Internet.

3. Approved and ready to move
If approved, the topic is assigned a Theme and Category..

Not every topic makes it...
The topic may be rejected because:
- *It's duplicative of another topic*
- *It's too broad or cannot be defined*
- *There is not enough content about it*

4. Training data to fuel the AI brain
The topic and URLs are fed to Bombora's proprietary Topic Classification Engine as training data. This helps the engine establish a deep understanding of the topic and the content related to it.

5. Framing an Intent topic and its context
After the engine has been trained, tests are run to validate that it can accurately classify content against the topic.

6. Building a baseline of behavior
Then a normalized baseline of content consumption activity for the topics is established over a 12-week period. This helps to understand the 'normal' content consumption behavior associated with the topic.

7. Understanding spikes in topic interest
Further monitoring of content consumption activity is done over another three weeks. This is done to understand deviations in content consumption compared to the baseline. This forms the basis of Company Surge® Analytics for the topic.

8. A new Intent topic is admitted
Once this analysis is complete the topic is added to Bombora's taxonomy.

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Strategy for mapping Intent topics

The below is a high-level framework to help map your Intent topics.
You may need to modify this based on your business strategy,
objectives and intended activities.

Mapping your Intent topics to business strategy

Intent topic groups	What should this include?	# of Intent topics	Use case application
Brand/ Products (core)	Topics that are core to your business. Include your brand, products, services and any key functions your business performs.	10-12	All
Competitors/ Partners	Names of your main partners and competitors. This could also include names of their specific products or services.	Dependent on your business strategy	Mid-to-bottom of funnel activity (e.g. Sales enablement, Events management, Lead generation)
Industry/ Vertical	Your primary category/categories of business. Include any strongly associated tandem categories. Also include any capabilities or use cases relevant to your products or services.	4 - 10	Top of funnel activity (e.g. Display advertising, Marketing automation, Sale prioritization)
Persona	List topics that are important to each of your key personas. This can include pain points, business issues or expected outcomes/ results. This selection should be a broad representation against a collective persona.	6 - 12	Top-to-mid funnel activity (e.g. Display advertising, Marketing automation, Sale prioritization)

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Using Intent topic clusters

What you need to know:

An Intent topic cluster is a group of like-minded Intent topics representative of all facets of a product or service.

While it's interesting to monitor content consumption activity for one topic. Building an Intent topic cluster identifies broader interest on related topics, which is more indicative of a trend.

Focus on accounts with increased intent across more topics.

Depending on your business strategy and objectives, the chart to the right gives an example of how you can use Intent topic clusters across your sales and marketing activities.

While there are less accounts interested in 10+ Intent topics, these are the accounts that you should prioritize to contact immediately based on these strong intent signals

With accounts interested in one to five topics, it may be better to engage them with top of funnel content to increase interest and awareness.

Q&A:
Is strong intent in a singular topic indicative of purchase interest?

Not necessarily. For example, if there is interest in the topics, Bombora, this is not indicative of purchase interest.

If there is interest in the topics: 'Bombora', 'Account-Based Marketing', 'Intent data' and 'Intent marketing' – then this is more indicative of purchase interest.

How to use Intent topics clusters
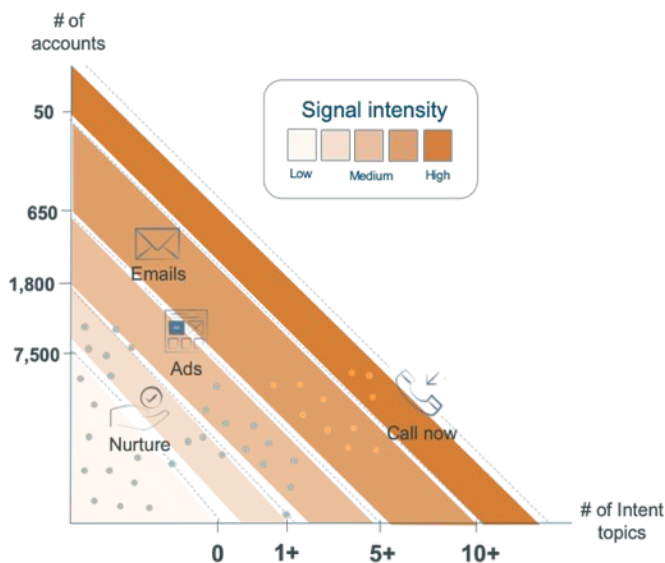
Interest across multiple topics is a strong indicator of intent and highlight accounts ripe for contact.

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How to navigate Bombora's Intent topic taxonomy

Use Bombora's taxonomy to complete your Intent topic mapping.

With close to 12,000+* Intent topics, Bombora's taxonomy allows customers to get granular with mapping to business strategy and across the prospect and customer journey.

Delivered digitally in the Bombora user interface or through a spreadsheet, the taxonomy is best used after you have completed the mapping exercise.

The diagram below is an example of the spreadsheet version of the taxonomy. Filtering by Theme and Category is the easiest way to navigate this document. This example shows Intent topics for the Theme of 'Marketing' and the Category 'Demand Generation'.

Dissecting Bombora's Intent topic taxonomy

'Theme' describes a macro grouping of topics within Bombora taxonomy that fit within a prescribed hierarchy (e.g. Marketing)

'Category' are sub-groups of Intent topics contained within Themes. (e.g. Branding, Campaigns, etc.)

'Description' an explanation of what the Intent topic covers. This is the only place where the Intent topic description can be accessed.

'Topic ID' is the numerical id assigned to each Intent topic.

'Topic Name' the word or phrase synonymous with 'Intent topic'.

* Figure accurate as at Q1 2023

Tools to select Intent topics

Easily access and select Intent topics through Bombora user interface.

- **Manual selection**
  Best to build an initial group of topics, by searching key topics related to your business.

- **Filtering by 'Theme' or 'Category'**
  Best to find topics outside your core group of topics, that are related to your industry or competitors.

- **Topic suggestion tool**
  Best if you have a core group of topics and want additional topics related to these.

- **Direct upload**
  Best if you have pre-selected topics in a CSV format.

Please visit the Customer Resource Center to access integration guides for Bombora products and how to use our Intent topic selection tools.

Find the Intent topics that are most meaningful to your B2B buyers with Historical Buyer Journey Analysis.

Offered to **Bombora customers**, a Historical Buyer Journey Analysis analyzes the topic interest of your closed-won accounts over an 18-month period prior to purchase.

This analysis determines the most relevant Intent topics across the customer journey in relation to your business.

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Frequently asked questions

Where is the most up to date taxonomy?	Bombora's topic taxonomy is available on its website or through this link.
How often do you update your topic taxonomy?	We're continuously evaluating updates and improvements to our taxonomy based on customer and partner requests, and industry trends. We update our topic taxonomy every 1-2 months.
How do you associate content with the topics in your taxonomy?	When a topic is added to the taxonomy, i.e. cloud security, we use machine learning to train our natural language processing (NLP) models using hundreds of relevant content pieces that focus on 'cloud security' to identify the context and patterns associated with that topic. When content is consumed across our Data Co-op, our technology scans the page and scores the relevance and density (i.e. is the topic the focus of the content piece or mentioned briefly) of the content against our topics. Beyond simply scanning for keywords, it also considers the greater context of the page (i.e. content about Facebook is also associated with social media). It then associates the piece of content to all the appropriate topic(s).
How does the topic suggestion tool work in the Bombora user interface?	The topic suggestion tool compares each topic against every other topic to create the similarity score for each topic compared to other topics, based on the following factors: 1. Topic description – How similar are the topic descriptions 2. Topic training data – Score similarity between the training data sets per topic 3. Co-occurrence – Frequency where the two topics are returned for each content URL The topic suggestions are sorted by that score in the resulting list.
What if there is a topic that I want to monitor that is not on the list?	If there are topics that you're interested in that are not included, please submit a topic through the topic submission form with your suggestion, a short description and any related content links.

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Surf's up.
Let's take off.

For more information,
please speak to your Account
Manager or contact us at
sales@bombora.com.

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