

PARTNER CAMPAIGNS: 5 STRATEGIES FOR DRIVING PERFORMANCE

Synopsis:

- Why partner campaigns are failing and need to change
- Data insights on partner performance from an expert survey
- 5 strategies for engaging and supporting partners with campaigns suited to their needs

Although built with good intentions, partner marketing campaigns are often neglected or underused, resulting in wasted vendor marketing budgets and poor performance. Therefore, the question asked by many vendors has become: Why bother building campaigns and assets when they are hardly used?

Here are some industry statistics for you:

- Channel Marketing has a significant budget; with 5% of partner revenue usually given back as MDF ([Channel Marketer Report 2020](#))
- 23% of channel salespeople are compensated on MDF use as well as closed revenue ([Forrester 2022](#))
- 64% of vendors allocate more than 50%** of their total marketing budget to partner marketing

Why are partner campaigns failing?

Our [Channel Marketing Audit](#) canvassed our delegates at The [Channel Meet Up](#)—an exclusive group of vendor and channel marketers. The survey reported the following insights:

- How many of your partners are actively marketing?**
 - 67% of vendors answered less than half.
 - 10% of vendors reported that they were unaware of their partners' marketing efforts.
- Do you have good content and assets?**
 - Nearly 80% admitted their partner content and assets were poor and required optimization.
 - In addition, more than 80% said partners did not utilize the campaigns created and shared with them.
- Do you provide marketing funds to your partners?**
 - 80% of vendors provide marketing funds to partners.
 - However, vendors also reported that less than 40% of funds are actually used by partners.

Why are most partners not running vendor campaigns?

High demands on partners

- The effort required to submit proposals to secure funding, the strict guidelines imposed by vendors, and the requirement to report proof of performance is too onerous for most small to mid-sized partners. This combined with low levels of funding contributes to poor incentivization for partners to sign on to do the necessary work, leading to MDF budgets remaining unspent.

White-label campaigns are not effective

- While standard campaigns are efficient to produce for vendors, partners require individual focus and support to deliver results—there is no one-size-fits-all approach. While few partners will run these types of campaigns, many look to sell solutions that are made up of multiple vendor products.

Both of these factors contribute to partners not running vendor campaigns, resulting in vendor marketing funding becoming wasted, impacting their performance and the outcomes they are able to achieve.



5 strategies to engage and support channel partners

#1 Only create custom campaigns for those who will use them



Rather than supplying partners with finished campaigns, provide a variety of collateral pieces that they can leverage as they see fit in their campaigns. After all, most partners are looking for resources they can adjust such as copy blocks and graphics for their marketing.

Flexibility with brand guidelines is not only appreciated by partners but also facilitates their campaigns, and ultimately, their ability to effectively promote. Small inconsistencies with guidelines such as logo positioning are unlikely to be noticed by most customers.

“What matters most is that your solution is top of mind at that partner, and they are promoting you.”

— Sophy Gray, Founder of The Marketing Bee



#2 Gamify campaign kits

Motivate partners to leverage your resources by “gamifying” the process. For example, partners who can provide evidence that they used an asset or copy block, can receive rewards or other incentives. Rewards are most commonly given to sales teams, making this strategy an easy way to stand out and drive partner relationships.



#3 Run secret shopper campaigns

Implementing a “secret shopper” strategy is another way of effectively measuring partner performance with an engaging challenge. Inform partners about this assessment and that those who respond correctly to calls, email inquiries, or online contact requests will be rewarded.

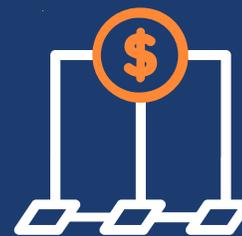
This also serves to determine how well partners understand your solution and whether they have the right responses and assets in place to engage your target customers.



#4 Empower partners with the resources they need

Avoid inserting generic messaging into campaigns to suit as many partners as possible. Most partners do not run single-vendor campaigns on principle or lack the marketing resources to create effective multi-touch campaigns. Instead, ensure that partners have easy access to all of the collateral on your portal they require to run campaigns that drive performance.

Create an open line of communication with partners to field feedback on resources and make optimizations as necessary to empower their campaigns.



#5 Supply your partners with leads

Ideally, vendors should effectively leverage funding to run their own campaigns, complete with tracking, to generate and provide partners with the leads they need. Partners can then be measured and rewarded based on how well they drive lead follow-up and close on the sales opportunities provided to them by vendors.

However, Jacqui Rand, Channel Lead at The Marketing Bee recommends; ***“To do this at scale, and consistently, bring in the experts. They will design the program, provide the reach and scale to deliver leads with full tracking ROI.”***

Be bold, and redistribute unused MDF based on lead generation. Boost performance through evaluation and analysis of programs to glean the data insights you need to run innovative and creative lead generation programs for your partners. Be sure to reach out to partners when necessary for their feedback and to confirm their lead requirements.



How do your partner marketing campaigns stack up in the industry?
Take the audit to find out and receive your personalized response:

[CLICK THE LINK HERE](#) →



The Marketing Bee

About The Marketing Bee

We deliver marketing and channel expertise to tech businesses. Although marketing-as-a-services is not new, our way of delivering is unique, and built on an expert community of professional and experienced freelancers to fulfill requirements.

We work with large enterprises, start-ups, and scale-ups without in-house marketing teams, by providing support with real experts in their fields, to fill the gaps, flexibly and immediately. Clients appreciate the speed at which we can deliver, and our freelancers love the independence without the pressure of managing admin—The Marketing Bee takes care of every aspect of the process for your business.

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