

Crack the code to effortless partner marketing

A transformative approach to partner marketing in technology channels

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Delivering the best return for available budget from marketing through the channel has always been complex, with limitations for both vendors and partners based around what is financially possible and physically do-able, depending on resource, time and expertise. Challenges like these have been present for many years, often seen as 'just the way it is' or 'this is the way it works'. This leaves the marketplace wide open for a solution to overcome these challenges – a solution that had never seemed plausible before, yet is often very simple.

Fewer than 15% of partners engage in the marketing programmes their vendors deliver.

Channel Marketer Report

Typical marketing challenges: vendors and partners

For a vendor to fund any kind of partner marketing there will be concerns and doubt. Vendors need to spend their marketing development funds on partners that will make the most of the investment.

Is the vendor working with the right partner who understands, advocates and markets their products correctly? Are they capable of doing what they say they will and can they prove the return on investment? Is the funding generating future business demand? Or simply propping up existing business? Uncertainty in channel marketing, it seems, is the only 'certain' for many of the vendors we speak to.

Let's identify the top four marketing challenges we see vendors regularly struggling with:

Vendor challenges



RELIANCE



REACH



RESOURCES



REPORTING

✓ Reliance

The reliance on partners to generate leads for a product, over and above other vendors' products.

✓ Reach

Getting products promoted to the right prospects with the right message at scale and within the preferred timescales.

✓ Resources

Having the people and time to manage market development funds (MDF) and monitor what partners are doing to promote products.

✓ Reporting

Having easy access to real-time data to prove partner marketing is working in order to secure further funding and generate future activity.

Partners also face their own challenges. They are inundated with vendors vying for their attention. They are asked to fund upfront or 'pre-pay' some, or all, of their planned activity. Which vendors provide support to navigate systems? Which provide access to resources that make it easy to deliver campaigns? Who is it a priority to work with?

Partner challenges



UNDERSTANDING



CAPABILITIES



AWARENESS



ACCESS

✓ Understanding

Ensuring the marketing messaging is on brand and correctly conveys the features and benefits of a vendor's product, to the vendor's satisfaction.

✓ Capabilities

Having the marketing knowledge and skills to be able to implement an effective and worthwhile campaign.

✓ Awareness

End users' knowledge of the partner's brand – do buyers know and trust the brand and will they buy products from them?

✓ Access

Keeping up-to-date on the latest marketing techniques and the best platforms to use.

Engagement and funding

With so many partners working in the channel across the world, each with varying degrees of available time and expertise, it can be difficult for a vendor to know which partners are the best match to work with and invest their funding in.

Some partners – for example – may be engaged with a product and fully understand the desired messaging but not have the funding available or the skills to implement a campaign. Or they could be highly proficient in marketing but not engaged with the product. They have the skills and access to funding, but prioritise other vendors' brands.

Knowing which partners to work with – and why – is one side of the coin. Vendor marketing development funds (MDF) are also under pressure. The traditional allocation to partners 'by right' or 'on request' is increasingly hard to come by and the way it is spent is under more scrutiny than ever before.

The alternative - a potentially limitless marketing rebate tied to partner sales – is left unspent as companies are unsure what this funding can be used for to be compliant with financial regulations.

This funding complexity combined with the need for partners with finite funds to pre-pay for marketing campaigns is proving to be a real sticking point in channel marketing.

MDF is still available and in some cases, it is increasing. Vendors can increase the number of partner marketing activities and the return possible from their available funds.

To do so, they need to seek alternative options or they will fail.

Only 12% of partners are implementing a fully integrated, consistent marketing strategy.

The lack of an integrated marketing strategy is only the tip of the iceberg.

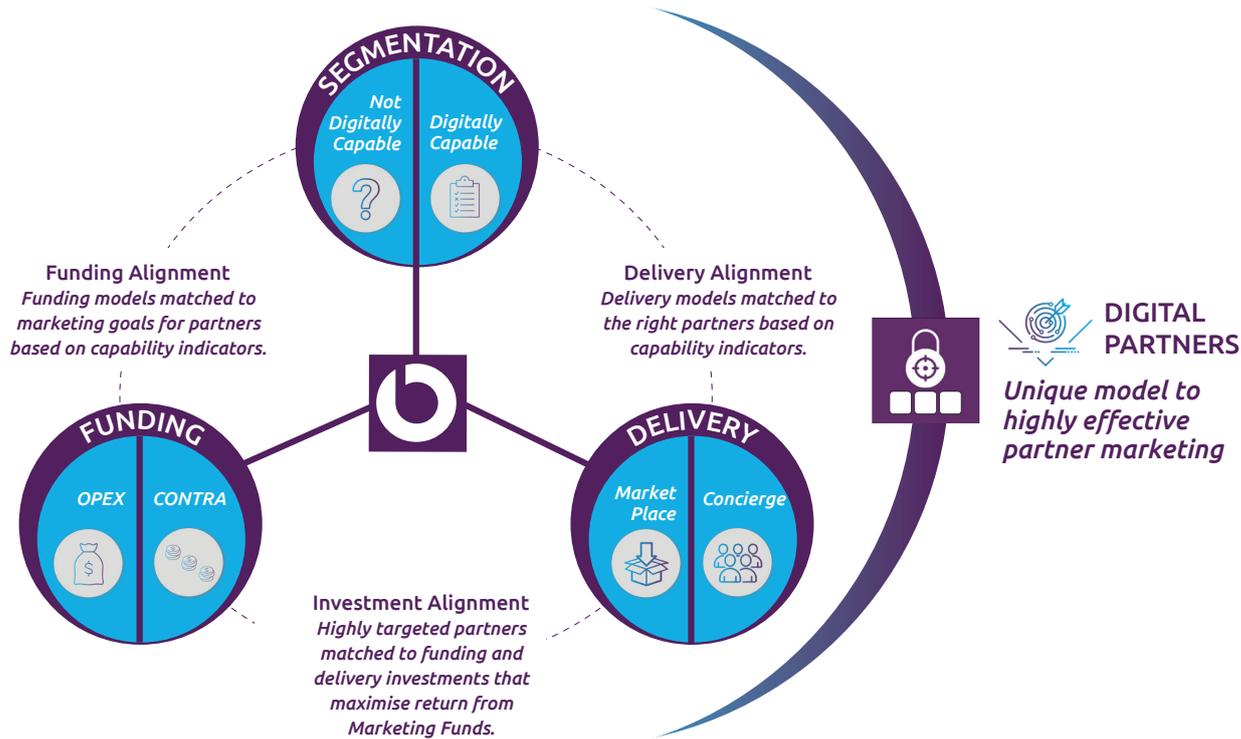
AFV 2019 State of Partner Marketing

Turning partner marketing from full effort to effortless

We have a simple solution to the complex marketing challenges within the channel. We have acknowledged the needs of our vendor customers and identified their requirements. As a result we have a solution that we believe is acceptable and attractive for both vendors and their partners.

We can now make marketing expenditure work effectively for all parties and take away the pain surrounding funding complexity. This solution cracks the code to partner marketing. It solves the marketing dilemma that has been ongoing for many years.

Digital Partners: A unique model



Digital Partners: Cracking the code to partner marketing

Get started: Segmentation first

We acknowledge that all partners are at different stages of their digital marketing transformation and understanding. Before any decisions are made around funding and delivery, it is important that the right partners are chosen to work with, based on multiple factors: from their marketing expertise to their likelihood of being successful with selling a solution according to key business traits, offerings and strategies. This segmentation service forms a key part of our offering and once the best partners are identified for a vendor to work with (whether they are new or existing contacts) the funding and delivery decisions can begin.

Moving on: Funding and delivery

Segmentation is only the first part of the equation. Understanding the interplay between Segmentation: who gets the money, Funding: what money is available and how to get to partners and Delivery: where partner to go to access and use funds effectively is different for every vendor. Our understanding of this triangle of factors and our expertise in partner marketing delivery presents a unique model to solve this unique challenge for every vendor. In essence:

- ✓ We have taken cash out of the equation, removing the need to pre-pay for marketing services
- ✓ We manage the entire funding process on behalf of partners
- ✓ We provide Marketplace packages for the fastest start for digitally capable partners
- ✓ We offer Virtual Marketing Managers that train partners, gain mindshare and manage campaigns on the partner's behalf

The impact

So alongside vendors being sure they are investing their time and energy in working with the right partners, they no longer have to search around for funding for their campaigns, or compete for partner resource to promote their products.

Our approach cracks the code to effortless partner marketing and is a new innovation for channel marketing. Put simply, you:

- ✓ Target the right partners based on their digital capabilities with the tools and resources they need to drive more digital demand
- ✓ Remove the reliance on partners to drive and prove marketing activity
- ✓ Maximise the return from the funding available
- ✓ Recover attention lost to competing vendors

Are you seeking ways to overcome typical challenges in the channel?
Find out more about how we help:

[Book your Discover Session today](#)

[Let's get started](#)

About bChannels

We're uniquely placed to help you take your partners' digital marketing capabilities to a new level. That's why – as part of our portfolio of services for technology vendors – we've created Digital Partners: the structured and scalable way to transform your partners' digital presence.

Using Intelligent Index, Digital Partners provides insight into your channel partners' digital marketing capabilities. Partners who are currently unable to drive digital marketing lead-generation will now be able to run more campaigns and amplify awareness of your brand – generating measurable ROI from marketing investment.

bChannels is experienced in providing digital marketing support for leading technology vendors including Cisco, Veritas, SAP, Xerox, NetApp and Unify. We provide multi-lingual support in over 18-languages from our centres of excellence in EMEA, Americas and APAC. Our Alliance relationships provide concierge support with seven of the top PRM providers.