

The Four Stages of Partner Enablement

Enabling, educating and empowering
channel partners: why solution enablement
toolkits matter

Background

Few facts hold fast in the face of change. Technology is not only shaping how we run organizations, but also generating entirely new areas for savvy businesses leaders to establish dominance, and flourish.

But, there remains one obvious exception—a truth that has stared down generations of sales and marketing teams:

Nobody wants to be sold to.

The mediums may change, the volume may fluctuate and the quality of content may wax or wane, but the enduring reality is that human beings do not enjoy the prospect of being thought of as prospects.

Technology has made an impact on this attitude, increasing the familiarity your customers have with easily accessible information. According to a comScore report published by TechCrunch, mobile browsing is expected to overtake desktop Internet usage in 2014.

This means your prospects can have all the product specs, use cases and price ranges they need displayed on a mobile phone, in seconds.

So, where does that leave your channel marketing?

***“...mobile browsing
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- comScore

Challenge

Basically, all your efforts to develop a dominant marketing relationship based on leading your followers have worn away. You are no longer the sole source of truth on any topic—the power of information has shifted to the prospect—and you now have to re-think your marketing strategy.

If channel marketing is no longer about leading prospects to buy your solutions based on authority and information availability, what options remain available to you?

Firstly, successful sales reps can add value to the purchase decision by making it as streamlined as possible. This shifts the focus away from giving prospects data that your market research dictates they should know, in favour of a consultative approach that delivers details they want to know.

Not only does this mean that you need to understand your prospect very well, your channel marketing partners now need to demonstrate expertise—by fielding a broad range of questions, and giving real-world examples—that guides prospects toward solutions that suit their needs.

This is where sales enablement comes into its own.

“...your channel marketing partners now need to demonstrate expertise”

Sales Enablement

Sales enablement is the process of aligning your channel partners’ marketing, sales and technical practices with your solutions. It happens when you provide them with product education as well as insights into prospect motivations and behavior across a specified range of organizations and territories.

These insights, organized into an actionable Go-to-Market strategy, complete with guides on how to execute that strategy, help them to generate and effectively measure the results.

Product Education



Prospect Motivations and Behaviors



Go-to-Market Strategy

Successful partner enablement is achieved in four stages:



Before sending your channel partners out into the marketing wilderness, help them to understand what they are selling. Sales teams need recognition as trusted experts in the field. They need to know your solution inside and out. Essentially, channel partners need to demonstrate extensive understanding of the products and solutions they're selling—and know how to position them effectively for their prospects.

The average salesperson spends 7 hours per week looking for information to prepare for sales calls.¹

So give your channel partners an edge and save them time by providing them with professional training and certification modules, data sheets, support and licensing guides, and opportunity calculators.



After undertaking your in-depth training and demonstrating their understanding of the associated materials, the next step for your channel partners is to set up and execute demand generation campaigns. Again, this is not a standalone exercise—

they need your support to develop a compelling message that motivates their prospects.

And, you need them to adhere to your branding and marketing guidelines. To successfully promote your solutions, your channel partners need enterprise-grade tools to reach out to and communicate effectively with potential customers—tools that make it easy to measure and act on the results.

67% of respondents in BtoB Magazine's 2012 lead generation survey indicated that a lack of resources was an obstacle in their lead generation effectiveness².

By providing your channel partners with the right tools, you will not only improve their demand generation efforts, but save them time and resources. These tools include professional digital campaigns, personalized emails, co-branded direct mail, social media messaging, and other powerful communications platforms that:

effectively advertise your solutions.

¹ Forrester Research and IDC Sales Advisory Service

² BtoB Magazine 2012 Lead Generation: A Fundamental Flourishes in the Digital Era



Having successfully set up and executed professional Go-to Market strategies related to your solutions, your channel marketing partners will now receive lots of leads from interested prospects. Unfortunately, according to MarketingSherpa,

79% of all marketing leads never convert to sales.

In a survey conducted by Forrester Research,

only 34% of technology sales executives indicated that the salespeople they speak with are able to provide relevant materials³

This is why you must provide your partners with in-depth solution support documentation, demonstration tools and other resources that effectively sell your solution.

Give your channel partners the best chance of success-

with comprehensive sales positioning guides, comprehensive call scripts, detailed white papers, co-branded presentations, current case studies, automated ROI calculators and SOW templates.



This is it. Most of the hard work is done. Your channel partners have closed several sales. It's now time for your partners to provide your solutions to the customer (née prospect). While the sales journey is nearly over,

this is no time for complacency.

Here you give them everything they need to deliver customer satisfaction. At this point, channel partners don't need a different breed of marketing material. Instead of promoting key benefits,

your channel partners need materials that focus on helping the customer get the best possible use from their purchase.

Along with all the necessary licensing documentation, providing overview documents and technical presentations outlining solution components and their requirements can be very useful.

Partner Marketing Enablement from Soup to Nuts

Sound like a lot to organize? You bet. But there's a simple way to give your channel partners all the education, training, support and resources they need. A one-stop-shop that helps your channel partners understand your solution, work with prospects and close larger deals more often.

Consider giving your partners access to Solution Enablement Toolkits (SETs).

These easy-to-use toolkits provide your partners with everything they need to develop their Go-to-Market strategy right through to delivering your solution to their new customers.

Each toolkit contains a comprehensive range of internal, partner-facing, and customer-facing assets. SET content is organized and presented in a structured format to reflect the best-practice solutions development methodology identified in the Learn/Promote/Sell/Deliver stages.

What benefits can I expect from SETs?

For your channel partners, SETs make all the difference between generating leads and turning those leads into revenue. SETs help your channel partners:

Differentiate product offerings

your partners can define how each solution can help individual prospects based on their needs.

Accelerate growth

strengthen your channel partners' ability to close larger deals more often.

Build competitive advantages

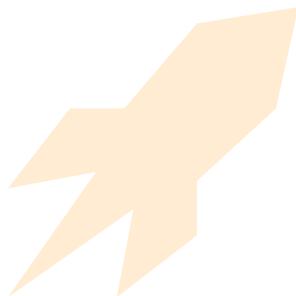
an established channel partner relationship makes it hard for competitors to enter a market segment.

Educate all tiers of the organization

sales don't happen in an information vacuum, and SETs make it easy to understand and sell your solutions.

Reporting

built-in metrics keep track of partner engagement, and can be used to measure and improve content formats.



Why Elastic Grid?

Developing SETs for your channel partners is a valuable investment that can turn around channel sales and

deliver better revenue from larger sales, more often.

Clients work with our professional team because we have years of experience delivering quality partner enablement toolkits for them. We'd be pleased to work with you too. Elastic Grid is the only demand generation organization offering a suite of industry best-practice sales enablement solutions designed from the ground up to

educate, enable, and empower your channel partners.

We specialize in designing and developing professional SET templates for repeatable use that can

give your partners the knowledge and resources they need

to understand your solutions, drive demand and close deals.



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