

7 Secrets to Success in Business-to-Business Telemarketing with Channel Partners

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1. Create a Channel Partner Profile

Because it's crucial to find the right channel partner, you should establish a clear profile of the selection criteria for the ideal partner. With this spelled out you can create an assessment form for prospective partners which enables you to separate the wheat from the chaff quickly and effectively. This profile assessment might include questions on the following:

- Ability to meet sales targets
- Company and staff longevity
- Financial positioning
- Territory leadership (geographical segmentation)
- Competitors
- References
- Strategy
- Capacity to bring a new product in market
- Customer Service
- Technical Support

2. Recruit Them Right

There are two scenarios for recruiting channel partners. One is to ask each person on your sales and marketing teams to take some responsibility in recruiting new channel partners. However, because they are likely running at full speed already, this task is likely to get pushed to the side. Also, if they do spend time on it, there is an opportunity cost for projects that are pushed down on the priority list.

An alternative is to outsource the task to a business-to-business telemarketing company that selects and nurtures the channel partners. This strategy can maximize success because a telemarketing company is able to guide the entire process from the first contact through the start of partner negotiations.

3. Appoint a Channel Champion

Someone, usually from sales or marketing, needs to take full responsibility for your channel partners program. With a channel manager to direct the initiative, the partner is more likely to:

- Work faster and more effectively to generate results.
- Become immersed in your company's strategy and strive towards shared key performance indicators.
- Understand and reinforce the company's marketing message.

4. Understand Your Partners Inside Out

Make sure you understand your partners before you give to them the go to the market. Ask these questions and more:

- What level of effort is your prospective partner putting into various technologies?
- How strong are their relationships with the customers you want to reach?
- What geographical area do they serve?
- How effective are their marketing initiatives?
- What is their reputation in the market?
- How does their sales process work?
- How does their service complement yours?
- What is their level of industry expertise?
- What are their annual sales?

5. Check the Numbers

Not all partners are created equal. Therefore, it's crucial to analyze performance and develop strategies to improve results as required. Create

an assessment for each partner to:

- **Monitor sales improvements** over time.
- **Evaluate marketing costs** and calculate the return on co-marketing activities.
- **Measure customer satisfaction.**

6. Track Your Leads

Your channel manager must track all leads, opportunities and sales from each partner using Customer Relationship Management (CRM) software. Managing the details of sales analytics can be a demanding task; however, it does not have to be done internally. Some companies opt for a relationship with a service company that helps with lead follow-up, distribution, measurement, and reporting.

The benefits? With a minimal investment, the channel manager can support partners effectively and assure leads don't leak from the sales pipeline.

7. Support Your Partners

It's a two-way street. If you want results, you need to support your partners with sales training, lead generation tools, webinars, sales materials and more.

To launch a successful channel partner program you need to have a systematic process. You may not want to scale up all these functions internally. To ramp up your program more quickly and effectively, you can outsource some functions to a business to business channel development company that has the systems in place to communicate effectively with your partners and won't drop the ball when it comes to follow up.

For a free consultation on how to use business-to-business telemarketing to boost your sales, call us now at +1 718-709-0800 (Americas) / +39 06-978446-60 (EMEA).

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