



The Next Generation Channel Chief: The Evolution of Partnerships and How to Not get Left Behind Videocast

Outstanding Questions & Answers

Question	Answer
1. Who/what program do you suggest best exemplifies - a program that incents/rewards on partner role versus partner type?	<p>James Hodgkinson:</p> <p>In terms of a specific example, we discussed Microsoft on the call but given so few programs are built this way I'm not aware of any others that are referenceable yet as an exemplary example!</p>
2. Orchestration of the ecosystem to solve specific customer problems is key...who will own that?	<p>James Hodgkinson:</p> <p>The ecosystem orchestrator/owner should be the enterprise that has responsibility for supporting and driving its partners in support of customers where their solutions are valued. For example, a tech company like Microsoft should own driving customer adoption and success around Microsoft solutions whereas an aggregator (new world distributor) like Pax8 would take responsibility on orchestrating behavior across multiple vendors and partners who are trying to support common clients.</p> <p>Every enterprise has an ecosystem of some kind and therefore needs to take direct responsibility for helping drive the effectiveness of its stakeholders (customers, partners, employees, investors, influencers etc.)</p>
3. Can you share any data that supports the role of integrations in stickiness that you have quoted?	<p>James Hodgkinson:</p> <p>The best high-level proof is the success of platform companies like Salesforce and HubSpot. The fact that they have created massive economies around their solutions through integrated technologies and solutions that their ecosystem helps build and support is clear evidence of how integrations drive stickiness and success.</p>

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	<p>At a more granular level the huge growth of integrated solutions like Slack and Salesforce, and Tableau and Salesforce (both of which resulted in acquisition by Salesforce) shows that integrations can become significant GTM opportunities.</p>
<p>4. Are there specific reports or research where the integration data is identified as being the number one aspect clients/partners are looking for?</p>	<p>Jay McBain:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 79% of people won't buy a car without Apple Carplay. https://www.cnn.com/2022/07/22/apple-carplay-could-be-a-trojan-horse-into-the-automotive-industry.html Integrations become #1 criteria for MarTech buyers: https://martech.org/martech-replacement-survey-which-features-are-important-to-marketers/ Soon to be HubSpot/Canalys/Partnership Leaders report outlining the same thing for channel tech industry.
<p>5. Does the investment from vendors change in regards to sales/marketing...etc. based on partner type, i.e. wlp or referral partner?</p>	<p>James Hodgkinson:</p> <p>I think that's down to every vendor to weigh understand the different activities undertaken by different partners in and assign relative value to each. The level of investment should be built according to the value and may change and evolve over time. Vendors need to be able to adjust levels of investment in different partner activities at the speed of the business which is why new, more agile programs and operational systems are needed to help support.</p> <p>Jay McBain:</p> <p>As we get better at attributing activity and sharing more data among the ecosystem, vendors will have a never-before view of what activities drive what results and can better spend their dollars to the specific point of value. We are in the early innings of this long baseball game.</p>



6. For someone who is working on building out a new Partner Program what would you say are the 3-5 things we should keep in mind with the channel shift? For both a technology partner program and a channel program. Also trying to determine if what we offer is better suited for one or the other or do we need both. We have current MSP/MSSP's, but we know Integrations will be key for us moving forward.

Christopher Samila:

It is foundationally important to frame to the business the value of partnerships and focus areas during that first year. To the c-suite it can be useful to say that the partnership organization is a "start up within a startup" if you are working for an earlier stage company because this highlights the level of lift needed to get the program truly humming. In many cases we are serving most, if not all, of the departments around the business if we are operating from an ecosystems perspective. We need the support of all these departments, and they need to understand how we are going to support them and their goals. This KPI alignment can be super impactful.

Ensuring you have support from the Product organization to get the APIs for integrations and necessary resourcing internally to build said integrations is vital. This internal alignment with the Product and Engineering side of the business can take up to a year or more to really get oriented correctly because you are battling for what you and your partners need vs resources going towards the core product. This reinforces the importance of that c-suite alignment, so you don't get bogged down too long dealing with this technical infrastructure. Note, iPaaS software solutions can be helpful to get the technical infrastructure for integrations moving faster, but you still need API support and technical documentation built by your own company.

Having a "marketplace strategy" to showcase the integrations and partners is highly valuable as you scale up your program. Think about this from both how it is represented on your marketing website, but also from within the product itself. It's

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substantially easier and cheaper to procure a software solution to host your marketplace versus even two years ago thanks to new tech entering the market like PartnerFleet, PartnerPage, and Morphed. Be careful about the temptation for your own company to take on the burden of building the marketplace because there is a rabbit hole of functionality below the surface.

Having support from Sales leadership to do co-selling well is another area that is vital but also time consuming to get right. Embarking on this valuable business motion is linked to both change management (the people side) and process development. You need Sales leadership support because this directly impacts their KPIs (which helps free up RevOps resources to get the technical plumbing in place), but also the Sales leadership naturally has leverage to reinforce the right behavior for sales team members to collaborate with partners. Ensuring you have equitable co-selling where both partners extract value from the relationship is key and you need that Sales leadership in the boat with you.