



4 Four ways to motivate your channel sales

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The channel sales process typically involves promoting products and services through the channel partners and paying them when they make a sale. Where you might usually rely on a direct sales force, using a channel to market can pay off big for you. But, along with a possible big return, it can also provide big value for your buyers in the form of independent industry experts.

So what is the best way to maximize your channel and help you hit your sales numbers? Here are four ways you can motivate your channel sales to help deliver results.

Leveraging a channel... Let others help you

1.

Make sure your current marketing and sales collateral is up-to-date and easy to digest.

To most effectively utilize your sales channel, you need to make sure they have all the tools they will need to be advocates for your brand. Sales kits for your teams, marketing material for your end users... the most current and understandable information must be available.

Sales tools:

Sales training collateral can speed up growth and ensure your channel partners can intuitively communicate the value proposition of your products and services. Collateral can include competition comparisons, webinars, sales playbooks, customer testimonials and case studies.

Marketing tools:

Marketing helps to secure leads for channel sales. Specific marketing collateral helps to build awareness, but also gives the ability to control the brand message. These are key for manufacturers and vendors in the channel space.

2.

Incentives, rewards and recognition help... so use them.

Incentive programs are essential for your sales channel audience. High-value awards will inspire your partners to give you the incremental effort you require. And while many channel sales partners have rewards and incentive programs, it is best to make sure yours are set up correctly to give you the most bang for your buck.

One of the first essentials for channel sales incentive programs are clearly outlined metrics. There needs to be an accurate and agreed upon evaluation of the potential for each sales channel. Understanding the number of possible customers, customer size, revenue potential, etc., are all key in setting up incentive programs.





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Making sure the rewards are a fit is also critical. While cash has been a standard motivator, non-monetary awards have been proven to drive incremental revenue at a lower cost than cash. It is key to the success of your incentive/rewards program to ensure communications, tracking, reporting and analytics are set up correctly and understood by all partners in channel sales.

3.

Have you communicated? You have? **Do some more.**

The sales channel is a noisy channel, with many messages vying for top billing and attention. Proper communication can help cut through the static of a busy sales channel. Many factors are at play and can cause difficulty in cross-channel communication. These factors range from consistency of message, availability of audience, or even confusion on the point of contact. Add to the fact that there are multiple stakeholders in channel sales, and while they all generally want the same thing, different organizations represent different perspectives. This can sometimes lead to inconsistent messaging at each stage of the channel.

Similar to when building your incentive and rewards programs, communication should be crystal clear within your channels. Partners should know who they can contact for specific issues. And these key contacts should understand and be a knowledge source for all communication. Also, encourage cross-channel communication with your partners. You can offer this to your distributor's prospects as a means to help and not a way to take away business. Look for clarity and ease of understanding when putting together your sales channel communications. Other types of communication help can include technical support and offering to answer client questions when closing a deal.

4.

Cross sell and upsell.

Less is sometimes more. Or better said, put quality over quantity. When looking to help improve your partners to increase sales, focus on improving your existing relationships before going out to attract new ones. Look for ways to make your current partners more effective at selling your services.

An example of how to best do this is when you order fast food. When a fast-food worker asks if you'd like to 'super-size' your order, or add fries, a similar technique can be used for add-on sales with your partners. Over time, incremental sales pay off huge at fiscal-end. Ask what you can upsell to your partners that will help you both in the long run.

Channel sales partnerships require time and effort to be truly maximized and are much easier to sell to than starting from scratch.



4 Four ways to **motivate your channel sales**

Key takeaways

By building the proper groundwork, along with giving the proper time and attention, you can maximize your indirect channel sales partners' output.

Here's a recap of our four strategies to increase channel sales:

- **Provide all stakeholders with current, easy-to-digest sales and marketing tools.**
- **Make sure your incentives and rewards are optimized to properly engage and drive the incremental effort/revenue needed to get your results.**
- **Make your communications simple and easy, and communicate often.**
- **Grow your current relationships with your partners prior to going to a new audience.**

BI WORLDWIDE is a leader in inspiring and motivating sales and channel audiences to help drive incremental revenue for organizations.

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