

**THE  
LATEST  
THINKING in:  
THROUGH  
PARTNER  
MARKETING**

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Jenn Reed, VP Channel Marketing  
at Channel Maven Consulting, presented  
emerging strategies in Through-Partner  
Marketing at Channel Focus North America 2016.

This e-book summarizes her insights:



Through-Partner Marketing relies on the Vendors' ability to align their value proposition with the Partners' business goals and empower them to execute their own effective marketing initiatives.

Jenn Reed,  
Vice President  
Channel Marketing



# Channel Partners are Not Aligned with Value Propositions of Vendors

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## Through-Partner Marketing can Help Vendors and Partners Align

To understand why the percentage of aligned Partners is low, we first need to understand that every Vendor-Partner relationship is unique and that each Partner organization is its own business. They operate differently and have different challenges, strengths and strategies. That truth means no single Partner Program will work for every Partner. Therefore, Through-Partner Marketing Programs created in a flexible, modular fashion where Partners can choose the pieces that fit their growth strategy work best.

Today's Partners face their own business challenges, from operations to human resources to sales and marketing. Add to this, program requirements and an overwhelming volume of communication and Partners feel bombarded. In the face of all that noise, Partners lose focus on the value proposition of their Vendors and worse, they often disconnect from the Vendors' Through-Partner Marketing Programs. The snowball effect caused by that disconnect eventually slows growth for both organizations.

In order to stay top-of-mind and help Partners drive demand, Vendors need to take responsibility for educating and enabling their Partners.



[3 Ways Vendors can Improve Channel Partner Relationships:  
Insights from The Channel Maven Team](#)

Vendors need to ensure their Partners have the right tools for the job while keeping in mind the rapidly changing landscape.

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## 5 Ways Through-Partner Marketing has Shifted

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Technology and buying journeys continue to transform the way we do business. Therefore, the list of “must-have” capabilities needed for effective execution of Through-Partner Marketing initiatives has also changed.

**Modern requirements for Partners to sustain growth include:**

1. Strategic websites
2. Professional presence
3. Online engagement
4. Target mapping
5. Focused campaigns





# STRATEGIC WEBSITES

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The average person's attention span is roughly eight seconds; a statistic that continues to shrink. If a Partners' website doesn't engage a visitor within about five seconds, they leave. Where do they go? Right - to the competitor.

Websites are critical for Partner demand generation, that's obvious. But how many Partners actually plan a website that is strategically positioned to funnel leads? Good question. The answer is, less than you might think.

Vendors need to up the ante on their Through-Partner Marketing game by helping Partners build and deploy strategic websites; sites engineered to engage, inform and pull leads in.



Once considered an online 'business card,' your Partners' websites are now the #1 tool for building authority.

-McNall Mason Director of Digital Strategy  
Channel Maven Consulting

Do your Partners' websites provide the best user experience and give their buyers the information they want?

**READ THIS:** [Simple Website Fixes to help Partners Drive Demand](#)



# PROFESSIONAL PRESENCE

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We live in an always on, highly connected world in which technology has completely changed the way we interact with each other and the companies we buy products from. This means that from a marketing perspective, a Partners' highly polished online presence is a must-have.

Over 91% of people making B2B purchasing decisions in the IT sector use some form of online research. Simply put, not having a comprehensive, far-reaching online presence equates to missing opportunities.

Vendors can help Partners solve this problem and education is the first step. Take the time to teach Partners to fully develop their online presence by starting with an online property assessment meant to identify gaps and then help Partners close those gaps.



For Partners, the most common objection to developing a truly effective digital footprint is the fear it will be time consuming, too complex and not sustainable.

-Heather K. Margolis CEO and Founder  
Channel Maven Consulting

Building a digital footprint is multi-faceted, but it's not complex, and doesn't have to be time consuming.

**READ THIS:** [5 Ways to Improve your Partners' Digital Footprint](#)



# ONLINE ENGAGEMENT

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Technology is a major player in the evolution of sales and marketing techniques as we continue to move away from a traditional sales model toward a relationship cultivating approach. Social networking and other digital communication platforms are driving this change; buying signals take place online and the buyer often initiates the conversations... when **they** are ready.

**The larger a Partner's online network, the more sales opportunities exist.  
So, why do most Partners only reach about 3% of their potential network?**

It's two-fold: 1) they haven't made the investment in connecting with a larger network and 2) connecting with an online audience is only part of the equation. Listening and sharing are **the** precursors to engaging and converting.



The Vendor-Partner relationship changes when Partners no longer have to lead with the Vendor's brand.

-Debbie Kane VP Client Strategy  
Channel Maven Consulting

Today's Partners work with anywhere from 5 to 25 Vendors. Information overload isn't a stretch – it's the norm.

**READ THIS:** [Communicating to Partners Without Bombarding Them](#)



# TARGET MAPPING

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Target mapping is helping Partners work smarter to find the **right** prospects. It starts with following influencers and top-level executives on LinkedIn and Twitter and understanding them and knowing how to turn them into a lead.

Building awareness with potential prospects entails responding and engaging with them on social media. For example, when an influencer publishes a post, use it as an opportunity to craft a personalized response sent to their inbox. In this way it is not a sales email; but rather a conversation starter meant to strategically open conversations and build trust.

Vendors can assist Partners in becoming more effective at target mapping by creating simple guides or organizing an event focused on teaching Partners how to use available technology for this purpose.



To succeed, understanding that it's no longer about the Partner-Vendor relationship is key.

-Brad Rolf VP Client Engagement  
Channel Maven Consulting

Social selling for Channel enablement is when Vendors and Partners use social platforms to assert themselves as industry thought leaders.

**WATCH THIS:** [Social Selling for Channel Enablement](#)





# FOCUSED CAMPAIGNS

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Sending unsolicited emails to a random list results in very low open rates. In fact, 90% of people involved in B2B purchasing decisions say they never open unsolicited sales emails at all.

Instead of simply providing a “campaign in a box” for Partners, take it an extra step, provide them with engaging email copy— to show them the process for optimal success. Or teach them integrated marketing strategy for using content and social media to generate leads.



Vendors that help drive joint sales and add value are the ones turning more of the 80% of Partners into the 20% that generate most of the revenue through their Channel.

-Jenn Reed VP Channel Marketing  
Channel Maven Consulting

Blogging is one tactic that works in a long term Through-Partner Marketing strategy.

**READ THIS:** [Why Blogging is Key for Partner Marketing Strategy](#)

# CONCLUSION

Through-Partner Marketing relies on the Vendors' ability to align their value proposition with the Partners' business goals and empowering them to execute their own effective marketing initiatives.

The end result is scripted growth for Partners who then pay in spades when they keep you top-of-mind as they sell your solutions.



## ABOUT JENN REED

VP Channel Marketing

Jenn's IT and UC channel experience runs the gamut from sales to product to marketing to channel marketing; for some of the largest communications manufacturers.

Jenn has the intuitive ability to roll-out successful marketing campaigns that drive sales while building long-term relationships with Vendors, Partners and end users.



## About **Channel Maven Consulting**

Based in Boulder, Colorado with folks sprinkled across the country, our team of seasoned marketing and sales professionals bring an unsurpassed level of expertise to The Channel. Add to that a level of passion noted by clients as “off the charts” and you’ve got a great team to work with!



# We help you **drive** more business through The **Channel**

