

Channel Marketing Automation



Channel Marketing Automation Helps Raise the Productivity of Partners.

Lately there has been a lot of buzz about **channel management automation**, which comprises partner relationship management, channel marketing automation and channel sales management. However, since this is a relatively new area of business process automation, the definitions are not always clear to channel marketing professionals. In this article we will discuss briefly what **channel marketing automation** is all about and describe the many business benefits it can provide.

// *Channel marketing automation can improve your control over your brand, expand your reach and give you insights into what is working and what is not. It will also have immediate top- and bottomline impact, including the rapid rise of your partner satisfaction and loyalty indexes.* //



// *Through-partner marketing activities is on enabling your partners to build their pipeline by leveraging your marketing assets and programs.*

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Definitions

Channel marketing automation focuses on automating two groups of activities for organizations selling via a channel network. The first group of activities is focused on “marketing to the partners” or what we call “to-partner marketing automation” and the second group of activities focuses on “marketing through the partner” or “through-partner marketing automation.” Let’s review briefly how each of these works.

To-partner marketing automation – The goal for these activities is to recruit, engage and excite partners so that they are aware of a vendor’s programs, policies, people, etc. Here are the areas in which you can deploy channel marketing automation for to-partner marketing activities:

- **Partner recruitment:** If you are trying to **recruit new partners** into your company or existing partners into new programs, you need a set of marketing automation tools to drive these programs. This is where various inbound and outbound marketing activities can be integrated and automated end-to-end to drive results.

- **Partner engagement:** Let’s say you have rolled out a new product or a new program, and you need to **train your partners** to be aware of those programs. You very likely have a learning management system (LMS) in place, but you still need to drive partners to these training session. A channel marketing automation platform can help you do that.
- **Partner management:** If you have an **incentives management** infrastructure in place, from time to time you will roll out special incentives, rewards or other programs. Instead of relying on your direct marketing team to send out communications, having access to a channel marketing automation platform with to-partner marketing automation capabilities gives you the means to seamlessly manage your partner base by integrating your channel marketing automation platform with your incentives management capabilities.

Through-partner marketing automation – The primary focus for through-partner marketing activities is on enabling your partners to build their pipeline by leveraging your marketing assets and programs. The following is a brief summary of how you can deploy channel marketing automation for through-partner marketing activities:

- **Inbound marketing automation:** Most channel partners do not have digital marketing capabilities in place—especially when it comes to optimizing **search marketing** and **social marketing**. This is where integrated (**search, social, syndication**) tools can greatly enhance your partners’ abilities to generate leads from their prospect and customer base.
- **Outbound marketing automation:** While most partners know how to do **telemarketing** or **events**, they rarely take a structured approach to nurturing their installed base or prospects who are in the mid-market and enterprise category and have a long buying cycle. This is where **email marketing** automation with multi-touch drip

campaign capabilities transforms marketing into a process rather than an event.

Core Requirements

In order to drive both to-partner marketing activities and through-partner marketing activities, you will need a robust channel marketing automation platform with at least the following core features:

- **Partner lead management** – This allows you to **distribute leads** to partners; it also allows partners to upload their own records for demand generation activities.
- **Campaign content management** – Using this module you can build “market-through” (end-user facing) **campaigns** using various digital tactics and allow your partners to co-brand and launch quickly.
- **Search marketing management** – This is an integration between your paid ad (like Google AdWords, Facebook, etc.) **search** network and your partner platform for inbound lead generation activities.
- **Social syndication management** – This allows you to **syndicate social** media content via your partner network, where partners can auto-stream or manually customize each feed.
- **Web syndication management** – Using this module you can distribute product and solution **web showcases** via your partner website, amplify your reach and generate leads for your partners.
- **Microsite and landing page management** – Co-branded **microsites** or landing pages are a great way to engage your end buyers through your partner network via multi-touch drip campaigns.
- **Collateral marketing management** – Extend the reach and distribution of your **collateral materials** (datasheets, case studies, posters, direct

mail, etc.) by allowing your partners to quickly co-brand and print them.

- **Event marketing management** – Provide trigger-ready multi-touch **events-in-a-box** that can be quickly co-branded and customized by your partners for their prospect and customer base.
- **Email marketing management** – Multi-touch co-branded **emails** can create the foundation of various integrated campaigns, whether they lead to microsites, events, syndication or call campaigns.
- **Rapid dialer management** – Provide a high-volume **automated dialing** capability to your partners to prospect more efficiently so that they can follow up with their leads to build pipeline.
- **Concierge services management** – Provide a comprehensive pre-package outsourced (**concierge-driven**) demand generation services to your partner base to build their pipeline and generate better ROI.
- **Business intelligence reports** – Run default reports and create custom reports to understand what is working and what needs improvement in your multi-partner demand generation program.

This should give you a sense of the level of end-to-end integration and automation that a channel marketing automation platform can provide by streamlining both market-to and market-through activities. We at ZINFI have been deploying channel marketing automation platforms for Fortune 1000 companies around the world and repeatedly we see rapid return on investment in three to six months, once the platform is deployed in a structured way. Channel marketing automation can improve your control over your brand, expand your reach and give you insights into what is working and what is not. It will also have immediate top- and bottom-line impact, including the rapid rise of your partner satisfaction and loyalty indexes.



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