



Making Your **Partner Portal** Work for Your Channel



Partner portal solution providers can provide a complete end-to-end user experience that integrates and unifies all core functions and content.

In this information age any organization selling through the channel needs to rely heavily upon a digital interface – called the partner portal – to connect, communicate and collaborate properly with partners and drive commerce. These are the 4Cs (connect, communicate, collaborate and commerce) that fulfill the purpose of a partner portal's existence. However, most partner portals do not work well, and in this article we will explore why that's the case and what you can do about it.

// If you are looking for a way to make your partner portal work for your channel, then focus on a SaaS provider like ZINFI, whose platform can address mobility, ease of use, personalization, application flow and analytics, in a simple-to-deploy and affordable package. //



1. Mobility

For most partners today, no matter what vertical you belong to, selling through the channel involves accessing the partner portal via your mobile devices, such as smart phones and tablets. Desktop-based access is still common, but mobility is a trend that's definitely on the rise and it won't be going away. Unfortunately, most partner portals are not designed with mobility in mind, and users who try to use the portal from a mobile device are likely to get frustrated.

2. Ease of use

The biggest challenge today is that the typical partner portal tends to work as an aggregator of discrete applications rather than as an integrated, unified tool. Partner portals often function as a gateway that connects multiple applications: documents, assets, lead management, market development funds, marketing tools, sales tools and so on. In many cases, organizations have patched-up a number of discrete tools to perform these functions. The result is a portal that presents a multitude of interfaces and is very difficult to navigate.

3. Personalization

Because of the issues raised above—lack of mobility and ease of use—it can be a huge challenge for partners to find the specific applications and content that they need. The only way to eliminate this challenge is to provide profile based-access where, for example, a partner that is in the healthcare vertical sees only healthcare-related content. Surprisingly, most partner portals today lack this basic capability.

4. Application flow

This is another major issue. When a partner portal has been assembled by combining a variety of stand alone applications for different functions, the flow of information from one application to another tends to get disrupted quite frequently. A chain is only as strong as its weakest link, after all. When data does not flow seamlessly between one application

to another, partners have to constantly switch from one interface to another, which is both confusing and inefficient.

5. Analytics

You cannot improve something if you cannot measure it. This is especially true when it comes to managing the partner base and selling through the channel. When the applications in the partner portal do not work well together, it is almost impossible to run analytics across applications to figure out what is being used by which partners and understand how to improve the user experience. Because of that, many organizations are unable to make their partner portals work better. Instead of constantly evolving through a process of running analytics and reconfiguring to enhance the partner experience and productivity, partner portals tend to stay the same.

I could go on, but these five core problems explain why most partner portals do not work today for the channel. The good news is that these problems can be easily fixed. Partner portal solution providers like **ZINFI** can provide a complete end-to-end user experience that integrates and unifies all core functions and content—including documents, **marketing assets**, **lead management** capabilities, **market development funds**, marketing tools, sales tools, etc.—under a single umbrella at a highly attractive price. Thanks to ever increasing bandwidth, inexpensive storage and ongoing cloud application development, you no longer have to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars to build a partner portal. Today you can procure and deploy solutions like ZINFI's **partner relationship management** (PRM) application for a few thousand dollars a month vs. the tens of thousands it might have cost a few years ago. This more-for-less trend will persist, making it easy for organizations to address the fundamental challenge of making their partner portal actually work for their channel.

If you are looking for a way to making your partner portal work for your channel, then focus on a SaaS provider like ZINFI, whose platform can address mobility, ease of use, personalization, application flow and **analytics**, in a simple-to-deploy and affordable package.



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