



What should your PRM **software**
connect to?



There are few examples of subsystems PRM software may need to connect to. Let's discuss...

As a provider of PRM software, we get asked this question all the time. PRM stands for partner relationship management, which is an important component of channel management. It doesn't matter what kind of partner network you have—whether it consists of resellers, VARs, system integrators, agents, wholesalers or distributors—at the end of the day you need some kind of **software** to efficiently manage your partner base. In this article, we will explore what other kinds of subsystems partner relationship management software typically connects to.

// Single sign-on (SSO) is a classic way for PRM software to connect to such subsystems and pass on user identities from one system to another, but if there is also an actual data flow required between these various subsystems, then it is essential that vendors make sure any PRM software that they are considering investing in has very strong connection management capabilities. //



The purpose of PRM software is to provide a seamless digital interface that a vendor selling through the channel can leverage to connect, communicate and collaborate with partners to drive commerce. We like to think of these activities—connect, communicate, collaborate and commerce—as the 4 Cs, which together comprise the primary purpose of the software. It is essential for a vendor to use PRM software as a channel performance management tool and thereby ensure that these four activities are optimally addressed.

Any state-of-the-art **PRM software**, like ZINFI's own partner relationship management software solution, should allow a vendor to connect to various subsystems. These subsystems may range from **marketing automation** to **sales automation** to sales performance management. The following are some examples of subsystems to which PRM software typically connects:

1. Web portals

Depending on the size and complexity of the organization, a vendor may have some legacy products or portals that require connecting to. This is especially common among large organizations with annual revenues exceeding a billion dollars. For smaller, fast-growing and early-stage organizations, this may be less of an issue because they are not likely to have a lot of existing legacy infrastructure.

2. Learning management system (LMSs)

Any state-of-the-art PRM software, like the one provided by ZINFI, will have its own built-in **LMS system** but, again, depending on the vendor's existing infrastructure, the PRM software may have to connect to a set of existing LMS applications.

3. Lead management systems

The **lead management system** is a core capability of any PRM software, but if a vendor has legacy systems or if part of the PRM workflow needs to take place within the vendor's existing CRM system, then the PRM software will need

to easily connect to one or more CRM-related subsystems.

4. Incentives management systems

While all PRM software today needs to provide a solid **incentives management** capability, if a vendor has an existing incentives management system that cannot be turned off instantly, or if some of the capabilities need to remain functional for a period of time, the PRM software will need to connect to this system as well.

These are just a few examples of subsystems PRM software may need to connect to. Single sign-on (SSO) is a classic way for PRM software to connect to such subsystems and pass on user identities from one system to another, but if there is also actual data flow required between these various subsystems, then it is essential that vendors make sure any PRM software that they are considering investing in has very strong connection management capabilities.

We often hear complaints from organizations who have hastily selected Partner Relationship Management software without doing thorough due diligence. Many tell us that after installation they end up incurring various professional services fees tied to add-ons, moves and changes required to ensure that data flows readily between different systems. This is where ZINFI's dynamic connection management capabilities, tied to its core CRM architecture, can make a big difference for customers. These capabilities not only make the data flow seamlessly and securely, but also allow dynamic changes without imposing any significant maintenance costs for the customer over the usage lifecycle of the PRM software.

If you are in the market for Partner Relationship Management software, you should certainly look for all the standard functionalities and capabilities that state-of-the-art PRM software provides, but if that system must connect to multiple subsystems in your existing organizational infrastructure environment, you should also be absolutely certain the partner relationship management software you are considering has very strong connection management capabilities.



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