

Welcome to IF Consulting's weekly e-mail newsletter

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Our regular email tackles the topical issues that surround all marketing channels and their underlying strategies.

This newsletter is also available as a PDF on our Website (<http://www.i-f.com/E-comLinks02.htm>) if you want to download a version for your hard copy file.

The promise of stronger ties with channel partners

It is beginning to dawn on marketers that customers should not be the sole focus of their relationship building efforts, for their channel partners deserve close attention. Many companies, having refocused on selling through their channel partners are considering partner relationship management (PRM) systems.

Although PRM software has not enjoyed as much attention as customer relationship management (CRM) to date, the concept is essentially the same: the technology can help to gather information more efficiently, build relationships, save time, cut costs and increase revenue.

Louis Columbus, senior analyst with AMR Research Inc. believes that good PRM software implementation can help enhance relationships with channel partners. "The benefits are that you have the ability to solidify channel relationships and make them into really strong assets," Columbus said and added that maintaining good relationships with the channel has become increasingly important, as some 70% of revenue for manufacturing companies now comes from channel sales.

<http://www.tbonline.com/cgi-bin/article.pl?id=9935>

IF Comment

The increasing adoption of PRM systems is another encouraging sign of the recognition of marketing channel strategy's importance to organisation performance. Whereas companies once grappled with the needs and idiosyncrasies of end-customers alone, the recognition that channel partners also have needs that require management is very important.

The caveat that accompanies PRM however is the same as for CRM systems - the mere existence of a PRM system does not ensure success. If underlying processes and procedures (for example) continue to be below-par, simple automation of those processes and procedures does nothing to address the underlying issues.

Snippets

A number of owners of hotels that Marriott International operates and franchises are not happy. Four lawsuits have been filed in the past six months accusing Marriott of a number of charges, including: overcharging owners, splitting revenue unfairly and taking "kickbacks" from companies that sell goods and services to hotels.



Marketing Channel
Strategy Consultants
Maximizing shareholder value
through creating the best routes
to market

IF Asia Pacific Pty Ltd
An International IF Company
ABN 38 970 704 536
390 St Kilda Road Melbourne
Victoria 3004 Australia
Telephone +61 3 9867 8822
Facsimile +61 3 9866 3969

email channels@i-f.com
www.i-f.com

USA
Europe
Australia
Latin America



<http://www.usatoday.com/travel/news/2002/2002-11-11-marriott.htm>

Many privately owned business-to-business (B2B) exchanges have avoided the spotlight, unlike those much-scrutinized public companies that have brought B2C e-commerce back into the headlines. However, just like their B2C counterparts, a handful of B2B e-commerce survivors are reporting positive news on the profitability front.

<http://www.emarketer.com/news/article.php?1001827>

Technology distribution magazine *CRN* has unveiled its first annual list of influential channel chiefs. The list is made up of 25 Channel Advocates heading up innovative campaigns at leading high-tech vendors.

<http://www.crn.com/sections/coverstory/coverstory.asp?ArticleID=38433>

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