



# 5 Key channel marketing trends for 2023

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For manufacturing companies, sales partners and distributors are the lifeblood for their products and solutions. Supporting them with training, communications, rewards, recognition and analytics is vital to the relationship. Over the past few years, organizations have evolved their strategies and support to make sure their message and solutions reach the right people.

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Here are **five** current channel marketing trends companies need to be aware of and actively focus on to ensure relevancy and commitment of their channel partners.

**1 Strong partner onboarding.**

Throughout the past few years, especially given COVID's impact, organizations have shifted to a strong "Everboarding" experience for new partners, knowing that bringing a new partner on is not just a one-time event. There are critical points in their relationship that should be treated with the same due diligence, care and importance as the first interactions. Finding ways to make sure to always be in front of their partners with key information is necessary, especially with ongoing turnover concerns of partners' sales teams and Distributor Sales Representatives.

**2 Channel partner training.**

Although not a new concept, this stems from trying to bring training front and center to the key sellers of products and solutions when they need it, not when it is convenient for a manufacturer. Selling cycles can vary by vertical industry based on seasonality and buying cycles. It's important to find ways to make training available that fits a seller's needs just in time versus when it is convenient for the manufacturer.

**3 Alignment to ensure mutual success.**

Support your partners by showcasing how your success can also benefit their potential in your programs. Manufacturers are beginning to open up selling tools to help clients realize what hitting growth milestones will mean to both of their bottom lines and providing more tools, resources and custom online calculators to help channel partners "own" what their contributions could look like by making simple changes to align each organization's business goals.

**4 Creative incentive strategies and inspirational rewards.**

The days of simply matching dollar-for-dollar competitive rebate programs are continuing to evolve and dissolve. Those that are having greater success are implementing different types of incentive solutions



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and trying new ways to emotionally engage their partners, distributors and sales reps. Post-pandemic, companies that are implementing new solutions involving experiences, travel and unique non-cash rewards are seeing success vs. old-school thinking of “throwing” cash at a problem to help move their products.

## 5 Providing fresh content and partner communication.

Developing communication streams that can be automated by sales activities and verticals and have specific information that is relevant to the intended target has resulted in an increase in engagement with their intended audience, as opposed to one-size marketing automation.

What can you be doing with your partners to help ensure these five key trends are accounted for in your go-to-market channel strategies? How can you become a better partner and/or supplier and gain engagement with your channel partners and distributors to take your relationship to the next level?

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Learn more about how we build strong, lasting channel partner relationships to support sales growth and loyalty.

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