



CHANNEL EXPERT
ROUNDUP:

What is the Future of Partner Marketing in 2024?

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The state of channel partner marketing

2023 opened with optimistic forecasts for the channel space from analysts, including [Canalys](#), which indicated a trajectory of four-year double-digit growth from the previous year.

Already a growing sector, these projections not only sparked interest in the channel's potential to drive revenue in a challenging market but also highlighted the current challenges being faced by channel partners and marketers.



This optimistic shift was also marked by strategic developments made by tech heavyweights (as detailed in the Canalys Forum EMEA 2023 keynote):



[Dell increased storage for partners](#) as part of its Partner First Strategy to drive scalability



[IBM announced a 40% increase](#) in driving its software through the channel (now 80%)



[Rapid7 implemented layoffs as part of a new structure](#) focused on leveraging managed service providers (MSPs)

This newfound focus on partnership opportunities and partner ecosystems across B2B organizations has made leveraging the channel a top priority for many. However, while the benefits of partner marketing are clear, **core challenges remain that impact performance, such as:**



70% **of marketers** agree that motivating partners to engage with programs and use marketing development funds (MDF) is a key issue



80% **also noted** that planning and executing strategies while meeting partner funding timelines is difficult

To shed more light on what 2024 holds for the future of partner marketing, **we reached out to fellow industry experts driving innovation in the channel for their unique perspectives and predictions for this year.**

Below is a full breakdown of their responses, including the latest trends and critical strategies for driving success with channel partners.

[Get in touch with an INFUSE Demand Channel expert to craft demand programs that deliver impactful outcomes for both vendors and partners](#) →



Sophy Gray
Founder, [7Demand](#)

7Demand

1 How do you foresee partnerships driving demand and ROI for organisations in 2024?

Going to market through partnerships has been a bedrock of the technology industry since the 1980s. However, the change in customer marketing has accelerated in recent years, highlighting how partner marketing needs to catch up.

[Customer marketing](#) has become so sophisticated with digital campaigns and the understanding of the buyer and their digital journey—this needs to be reflected in partner marketing to help drive awareness and opportunities, to create a more reliable demand process and revenue.

In our experience with our customers (who are primarily technology businesses who sell through a channel), they recognize that partners need more than just co-branded collateral.

Rather, partners require a whole-managed marketing concierge service to help partners become 'demand ready', and then effectively run demand campaigns. This starts with the foundations of defining joint messaging, having the right content and a good website/landing page, as well as managing demand programs with lead nurture and sales hand-over workflows.

Running these more creatively managed marketing services with partners is a higher investment per partner, but enables a more structured approach to [demand generation](#) and vitally, provides consistent ROI metrics for both the vendor and their partners.

2 Have you seen changes in the approaches to partner marketing over the last few years and how do you envisage the evolution of partner marketing in 2024 and beyond?

There is a growing sense of 'less is more' with our technology customers who no longer want to add partners of all shapes and sizes, in the hope that something sticks. Vendors are investing in building a more productive, long-term strategy with a few good partners, rather than spreading the net far and wide and hoping for performance.

This strategy comes from internal channel teams having strengthened and now being able to articulate the benefits of investing in loyal partners, rather than being driven by a purely sales approach of more partners resulting in more revenue. Vendors are building combined strategies with partners and making sure their joint proposition is aligned and represents both parties— this is a shift from vendors just 'pushing' down their own messaging and collaterals.

With a finite number of customer-facing partners, vendors recognise they need to work harder to retain and nurture relationships with partners and collaborate on joint partner marketing.

There will always be a place for PRM (Partner Relationship Management) and TCMA (Through-Channel Marketing Automation), but the type of marketing content offered will be much more geared to enable partners to build multi-touch campaigns and nurture sequences. Thus, partners will either invest in marketing skills or lean on vendors to support them.

We are getting much more involved in partner education and enablement than we used to, and our program design work is geared around collaboration with partners, not just managing the implementation of through-partner, cookie-cutter campaigns.

3 What are the most common challenges you see faced by your clients when it comes to partner marketing?

Resourcing is a common theme amongst our vendor clients as recent layoffs have influenced their capacity to deliver on projects within channel teams. **This highlights the need for flexible channel solutions that deliver vendors support while meeting their unique needs and budget constraints.**

For example, channel experts can provide supportive roles in a variety of areas (project resources or fractional roles), without vendors needing to commit to permanently expanding their teams. Talent networks will be key to bridging this gap and enabling vendors to meet their targets quickly and efficiently, without sacrificing budget or valuable resources.

4 As the MDF model shifts to partner-proposed programs for securing bids for funds, and often, contributing up to 50% of their budget for marketing campaigns, what is your opinion on this new system?

We are seeing an encouraging uptake in MDF spending, or partners using vendor marketing funds, in line with vendors and partners alike investing more resources into data-driven campaigns. **This also includes more vendors relying on third-party channel consultants to guide the development of demand programs** and their optimisation with each iteration.

In general, the increase in shared funding has placed a greater emphasis on ensuring that MDF goes further, and contributes to meaningful performance.

5 Demand generation and content development are often cited as two areas of focus for partner marketers to direct their budgets. From your experience, what are the key challenges in these areas for you and your clients?

The challenge here comes back to resourcing and skills, as partners may not have the capacity to develop the right thought leadership content for every stage of the buyer journey. **They may also lack the campaign and [lead generation](#) experts necessary to build demand campaigns.**

Even larger partners who may have a marketing department, need to find solution experts, campaign experts, and copywriters—often with only one person available for these tasks. Using an agency approach here means partners can buy just what they need for the time that they require to execute these programs.



About Sophy Gray

Founder of [7Demand](#) and owner of industry event [Channel Meet Up](#), Sophy Gray has over 24 years of IT Marketing experience. Throughout her career, Sophy has launched brands, developed partner programs, devised GTM messages, led teams, introduced integrated campaigns, improved marketing operations, and delivered large-scale events.

7Demand create and manage customer campaigns, and empower partner marketing teams to match the campaign sophistication of their customer marketing peers. Their team of strategic experts spot opportunities, working alongside sharp tactical specialists to get the job done. This combination is brought to you as a managed marketing service.



Christina Carstensen

Founder, [Aega Marketing](#)



1 How do you foresee partnerships driving demand and ROI for organisations in 2024?

Partnerships have become an increased focus in many organisations. This is a result of the current economic climate encouraging organisations to foster new alliances for combined strength and efficiencies in the market. [Tech innovation](#) is another driver of demand for new partnerships that allow for seamless customer experience and implementation.

Despite economic uncertainty negatively impacting direct sales revenue, partner marketing revenue has remained strong. This has led to a higher percentage of overall revenue being driven by partners.

As partner marketers find themselves in this elevated position, in 2024 they will see a continued focus on data-driven programs, leveraging new martech that enables precise targeting, customer analytics and the measurement of partner marketing activities. [Account Based Marketing \(ABM\)](#) and [intent-driven lead generation](#) will remain central to generating demand and ROI for organisations.

This is due to the role ABM plays in allowing partners to identify and engage high-value accounts, along with intent scoring helping them to understand which accounts to prioritise within a target account list (TAL). New [AI technology](#) and data will also likely enable vendors to create personalised experiences that will improve demand generation campaigns for end customers and result in higher engagement and stronger relationships with partners.



2 Have you seen changes in the approaches to partner marketing over the last few years and how do you envisage the evolution of partner marketing in 2024 and beyond?

I have seen three areas of change that will keep evolving in 2024:



1. The face to face (F2F) to digital marketing shift

This was triggered during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. At that time, many partners were still focused on F2F events and personal relationships to drive revenue and customer engagement. **The shutdown of in-person events forced the industry to adopt a digital approach and explore new marketing tactics quickly.**

This caused some challenges for marketers due to the lack of digital marketing know-how on the partner side and brought on a surge of 'campaign-in-a-box' approaches to cater to a large network of partners who needed guidance for digital marketing and lead follow-up.



2. Sophisticated data-driven marketing approach

Many partner marketers are leaning into new technologies, creating a clear demand for data-driven campaigns (ABM and intent data being instrumental) and integrated program frameworks underpinned by data.



3. Internal Partner Marketing Advocacy

The elevated status of partner marketing means that partners are not being treated as an afterthought. However, **partner marketers need to effectively communicate their strategy, attribution models, and success metrics proactively within their organisation** to champion partner success and awareness to build on this new position.

3 What are the most common challenges you see faced by your clients when it comes to partner marketing?

The most common challenges I hear from clients are:

- ▮ **Partner engagement and commitment:** Getting partners to participate with partner marketing programs, partner portals, or the uptake of MDF remains difficult (the strict partner planning and execution cycle is another contributing factor for unused MDF).

🔥 **Resource constraints:** The growing number of partners puts pressure on partner marketing teams. This is compounded by teams having to manage many competing priorities.

🔥 **Lack of partner expertise:** It is common to encounter disparity between the partners' capability and their expertise. When working with multiple partners, some will be highly engaged, highly competent, and willing to put the time in to fully understand combined goals. However, others—more commonly—will be resource-light, not prioritise what could be an 'easy win' for them, and are not willing or able to understand what is being requested. This can create a difficult environment for partner marketers to realise their full partnership potential.

🔥 **Measuring results:** Most organisations use a wide variety of goals and KPIs to measure success, and this is amplified in partner marketing as a result of two or more entities running the same campaign but having different imperatives by which to measure its success. The other factor here is that often one partner is more sophisticated than another in terms of that measurement, which can lead to tension and differing views on what constitutes as 'success'.

4 **As the MDF model shifts to partner-proposed programs for securing bids for funds, and often, contributing up to 50% of their budget for marketing campaigns, what is your opinion on this new system?**

We notice a significant difference in partner engagement when partners contribute their own marketing funds to a joint campaign. Having 'skin in the game' means they are more engaged when setting up campaigns and in the follow-up of leads or nurture. As a result, **partner marketers need to foster strong relationships with their partners to [encourage investment in joint campaigns](#).**

I have witnessed this with some of our clients (and seen it backed up in recent research studies) that marketers who take a more selective approach and focus on engaging the right partners instead of a large percentage of the network achieve better performance.

Auditing partners for digital readiness helps to segment partners and match the right campaigns to the right partners. Conducting a partner audit also allows vendors to understand which partners they should focus on to maximise return on spend.

Investing in the partner experience to encourage MDF uptake should also be considered. Vendors that invest in their own partner platforms with personalised partner portal experiences will yield higher partner engagement and, subsequently, greater uptake.

5 Demand generation and content development are often cited as two areas of focus for partner marketers to direct their budgets. From your experience, what are the key challenges in these areas for you and your clients?

The top challenges are around the attribution of leads and measuring results from partner demand generation campaigns. Companies' lead and sales processes are set up for direct sales and marketing but not always for partner-generated leads.

Sharing organisational intent data for joint lead generation campaigns is another challenge. Close communication, a documented strategy with specific KPIs, and agreement on roles and responsibilities can help to combat this.

Joint campaigns need planning and communication to enable partners to present a consistent message to the market. This is a challenge for many partner marketers given the resource constraints and number of partners being managed.

We always advise our clients to ensure to get the basics right: Focus on the creation of an up-to-date joint value proposition and assets relevant to the stages of the buying process.

Most importantly, **partners need to ensure that content is audience-focused and not product-focused.** Content needs to convey solutions to the customers' problems. Case studies should not be underestimated in any content strategy for this reason.

Some of the above challenges are overcome with a turnkey program approach, which allows 'plug and play' content and demand generation campaigns for partners.



About Christina Carstensen

Christina Carstensen is the founder of [Aega Partner Marketing](#), an agency that offers an end-to-end partner marketing service. The agency works with vendors and their partners on joint GTM strategy and execution, partner audits, and recruitment.

An expert in B2B partner marketing and technology marketing, Christina has over 25 years of experience in the international B2B media space with roles in leading media companies such as Foundry (IDG), Axel Springer, and DER SPIEGEL.

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Lee Prior

Global Concierge Account Director, [Twogether](#)



1 How do you foresee partnerships driving demand and ROI for organisations in 2024?

Partnerships are more important now than ever before given the evolving nature of the technology market and the way tech is being leveraged across the business world.

The partner ecosystem is a fundamental change to the way we do business and therefore how we support partnerships.

However, I think the biggest shift is cultural. Vendors are starting to treat partners as actual partners rather than facilitators and I think that this is a welcome trend that will continue during the coming year and hopefully onward into the future.

2 Have you seen changes in the approaches to partner marketing over the last few years and how do you envisage the evolution of partner marketing in 2024 and beyond?

The tough tech environment is likely to drive a lot of how partner marketing develops. This also means that vendors are looking to channel as a cost-effective way of building business. It comes as no surprise that many are looking at their partner programs again and on a lot of occasions finding them wanting.

This is a cycle that has repeated itself before; in times of growth, vendors are quick to question the return on partner marketing or its support—especially in the case that they look to execute campaigns internally. However, **when the market is in the same state as it is now, vendors turn to partners to extend their reach and generate more pipeline.**

Those who continued to nurture their relationships with partners are more likely now to succeed in quickly launching partner marketing initiatives. This also requires [vendors to build their partner programs and support infrastructure](#) in a way that provides the support that partners require.

3 What are the most common challenges you see faced by your clients when it comes to partner marketing?

The biggest challenge currently is engagement. **The days of exclusivity are well behind us with more and more partners adopting an ecosystem approach**, combining elements from a variety of vendors to create bespoke solutions.

While this is the right strategy, it is a notable shift from the traditional mindset for partner support. It also requires partners to log onto multiple platforms to gain access to assets which, for the most part, only cover part of the equation.

This trend means that partners risk becoming 'transactional' rather than 'strategic'. This is a real problem as more and more vendors look to plant their flag and make their case for 'mindspace'.

4 As the MDF model shifts to partner-proposed programs for securing bids for funds, and often, contributing up to 50% of their budget for marketing campaigns, what is your opinion on this new system?

Unused MDF is a hot button of mine—during my time working in a smaller tech agency, I was often amazed and appalled at just how much money was left on the table by partners due to nothing more than fear.

This is typically due to a combination of the following: **a lack of expertise or resources, the fear of investing and losing revenue, and the fear of messing up (FOMU) in front of vendor partners.**

While the vendor drive to deliver ROI on MDF spend is understandable, expecting partners to develop comprehensive plans and match funding in the face of these concerns is unrealistic. However, the alternative is not vendors simply giving funding away but rather offering greater support for partners to allow them to achieve performance goals.

In answer to the question I suppose my response is 'it depends'. If vendors abdicate their responsibility to support partners then I think MDF utilisation will fall even further, but if they embrace the opportunity to truly create a partnership with channel partners, then both parties will benefit.

5 Demand generation and content development are often cited as two areas of focus for partner marketers to direct their budgets. From your experience, what are the key challenges in these areas for you and your clients?

From my unique experience on both sides of this equation, I think the main challenge comes down to relevancy.

As a partner, you want access to assets and content relevant to your business, and the geography of the industry sector. For example, I have seen asset libraries first-hand full of case studies from the U.S. that have no context for the audience I need to attract in EMEA.

On the other hand, it can also be incredibly frustrating to manage and protect a brand identity only to have partners send out content that breaches brand guidelines to the point where the result is almost unrecognisable.

Specificity and relevancy are therefore key to navigating partnerships successfully. We use technology in combination with an appreciation of the challenges faced by all parties to deliver solutions, which engage with customers and contribute to a positive experience for all involved.



About Lee Prior

Lee Prior has worked in the channel space for over 15 years mostly in Distribution (Tech Data, Westcoast & Exertis) and as a Partner Marketing Manager for upwards of 60 vendors in the software division for Tech data.

Lee then moved over to head up vendor marketing for HPE within the Azlan Division, followed by a shadow role at Westcoast before moving on again after three years to head up partner marketing for the AV division at Exertis.

Before and after his time spent in distribution, Lee has worked with the agency side of the business but always with a focus on the technology channel. Lee is now the Global Concierge Account Director at [Twogether](#) at the forefront of driving innovation and performance in partner marketing.

[Discover how to leverage partner and channel opportunities in 2024 to meet evolving buyer needs and drive your ROI](#) →



Pascale Smith

EVP Strategy at [The Sherpa Group](#)

S H E R P A

1 How do you foresee partnerships driving demand and ROI for organisations in 2024?

Driving demand through partnerships is a key pillar of partner-led growth but I think there has been a substantial change in focus to pipeline contribution from demand generation. Traditionally, the metric of measurement in partnerships has been more focused on lead generation.

However, **partner marketers are being measured more on the quality of engagement generated by marketing and less on the quantity.** As a result, this requires a shift in how partner marketing is supported, to allow teams to move to more integrated and full-funnel campaigns, rather than just awareness-driven strategies and top of funnel marketing.

2

Have you seen changes in the approaches to partner marketing over the last few years and how do you envisage the evolution of partner marketing in 2024 and beyond?

The last few years have brought around a huge shift in attitude and focus on partnerships in general and what going to market with partners brings, in terms of value. This naturally flows through to how the organisations market together. We have seen a lot more sophistication in partner marketing, particularly in support of partner specialisation and differentiation.

Partners are ideally positioned to create new and unique propositions in the market with a vendor and gain access to verticals and audiences the vendors are unable to reach alone. This sophistication extends to various types of marketing programs that make sense in the partner space, such as partner-driven account based marketing (ABM), or demand generation programs to target verticals and through-partner marketing technologies. **These programs also allow adaptable, self-service marketing execution support at scale.**

The technology and ability to measure marketing performance will continue to enable more complex and successful programs, tapping deeper into the ability of partners to add marketing scale to a vendor organisation.

3

What are the most common challenges you see faced by your clients when it comes to partner marketing?

There are three main areas of challenge that vendors of all sizes are continually facing:

🔸 **The first challenge is partner marketing program adoption**, a challenge featuring in many of the conversations we have with vendors. It is not enough to just have a marketing program and expect partners to adopt it. There has to be a level of partner management, concierge, or support to see it truly embedded within partners' marketing efforts.

🔸 **The second challenge is knowing what level of support to provide to partners**, as this tends to fluctuate from partner to partner. Ensuring program relevance helps with adoption, which in turn is critical for ROI. One model at different price points does not quite go far enough; you need to match the level and type of support with the skill and engagement of the partners to drive success.

🔸 **The final challenge is around translating marketing efforts into pipeline contribution**. This takes a more full-funnel approach to marketing than just bringing leads to the top of the marketing funnel. How you enable and support partners with lead nurturing and qualification should be an essential element of your partner marketing strategies.

4 As the MDF model shifts to partner-proposed programs for securing bids for funds, and often, contributing up to 50% of their budget for marketing campaigns, what is your opinion on this new system?

As a standalone for partner programs, I am not sure this system is a key benefit anymore. We are in a much more crowded space now, with partners working with multiple vendors at any one time, each with their own MDF program. Therefore, **how you differentiate your marketing program from another vendor is crucial for making MDF budgets work for you** and become fully utilised. That also necessitates a clear program structure and a proactive approach to engaging partners within it.

5 Demand generation and content development are often cited as two areas of focus for partner marketers to direct their budgets. From your experience, what are the key challenges in these areas for you and your clients?

The key challenge revolves around the opposing factors of a highly variable set of partner skills and resources combined with the need for scale. Couple this with limited resources in vendor marketing teams to support multiple partners and there is very quickly a bottleneck. **We feel that resources, time, and investment need to be put in the right areas to deliver on ROI.**

For example, not every partner marketing campaign needs unique, bespoke partner content. Similarly, not every partner needs a fully managed campaign.

Starting with the analysis of what your partners' needs are and adapting the support to the right level for the right partner allows you to resource appropriately, ensuring you are building for scale while also managing ROI.



About Pascale Smith

Pascale is Head of EVP Strategy at the [Sherpa Group](#). Sherpa is a global partnership growth agency providing partner marketing and partner recruitment services for technology companies who are serious about driving partner-led growth.



Matt Dalton

EMEA Strategic Head of Channel, [INFUSE](#)



1 How do you foresee partnerships driving demand and ROI for organisations in 2024?

Though partnerships and the channel have driven revenue for decades now, the last couple of years have seen a shift to focus on the importance of partners and the indirect channel. This has also been accelerated by the development of the partner ecosystem, which accentuates multiple partnerships (from vendor to reseller to integrators and more) to deliver on customer needs.

Though this need has accelerated, partner marketing has not kept up. However, we are starting to see that the importance of partner marketing is becoming more recognised within vendor organizations. **Partner marketers are also focused on supporting their partners with more agile, digital, trackable, and ROI-driven methods.**

Despite this initiative, the smaller partner marketing teams have to tackle this challenge along with requiring support themselves to be able to assess their partners' marketing readiness and execute marketing campaigns. Ultimately in 2024, the importance of supporting partners to generate demand and ROI will be high on the agenda.

2 Have you seen changes in the approaches to partner marketing over the last few years and how do you envisage the evolution of partner marketing in 2024 and beyond?

Partner marketing has noticeably shifted in its approach, predominantly driven by the need to demonstrate ROI from campaigns with partners. This has extended to how partners request MDF budgets within vendor organisations.

If you ask a partner what they want from partner marketing campaigns, their top priority will still be to generate leads. However, the need to show ROI and success from campaigns has meant that partner marketing teams are now focusing on more data-driven campaigns (ABM when it comes to demand generation efforts).

Alongside events, demand generation will be an important part of developing prospects for partners in 2024. From our experience at INFUSE, third parties offering demand generation services must understand the challenges faced by both vendors and partners and offer data-driven, flexible but also simple to execute solutions across all stages of the funnel.

3 What are the most common challenges you see faced by your clients when it comes to partner marketing?

There are four key challenges impacting partner marketing currently:

- **Resourcing:** Although partner marketing has definitely 'come out of the shadows' in the eyes of many vendor organisations, teams are often too small to be able to plan and execute campaigns effectively.
- **Engaging partners:** The process of accessing MDF can often be complicated and time-consuming. Ensuring that partners are engaged with campaigns can make a huge difference to its success.
- **Measuring success:** This is a long-standing problem. While there are many platforms available for campaign tracking, no matter your system, there is still a reliance on the partner to enter activities and report back.
- **Understanding and assessing partner capabilities:** This challenge is also linked to resourcing. We deliver a lot through partner demand generation campaigns at INFUSE across all stages of the funnel (top, middle, and bottom) informed by the capabilities of each particular partner.

However, partner marketing teams often lack the time and resources to deep dive into their partners and assess their capabilities of marketing, executing, and following up campaigns. This is where expert agencies come in to support partner marketers in this area with their channel expertise (such as the fellow respondents to this roundup).



4 As the MDF model shifts to partner-proposed programs for securing bids for funds, and often, contributing up to 50% of their budget for marketing campaigns, what is your opinion on this new system?

Unspent MDF is a significant pain point and frustration for everyone involved, as it can lead to valuable opportunities becoming missed. At INFUSE, we run MDF-driven demand generation campaigns managed through our agency partners or the vendors themselves, and even sometimes by working directly with partners who have received funding.

Across all of these examples, what we are finding is that **when partners have contributed their own budget, they are much more engaged in the success of the campaign**. These partners are also more receptive to receiving intelligence on how leads were generated and how best to orchestrate lead follow up, which is another positive of this approach.

The difficulty of this system is engaging partners, particularly those with smaller teams, who are under pressure and lack the time, resources, or skill set to create a compelling business case for applying for MDF.

With that in mind, **I think the MDF model will continue to evolve and be tweaked in line with empowering partners**. We are also seeing, by working with our clients, that this partner contribution method can be broached with flexibility. For example, rather than simply rewarding the top-performing partners with MDF, clients are also considering 'rising star' partners who simply require support to excel. This change is refreshing to see and a sign that the system is moving toward enabling partners of all sizes to deliver better performance.

5 Demand generation and content development are often cited as two areas of focus for partner marketers to direct their budgets. From your experience, what are the key challenges in these areas for you and your clients?

When we launched our [channel division here at INFUSE](#), we spoke to a lot of partner marketers to understand their challenges concerning demand generation. **The key challenges were:**



Content

A complete lack of content, or poor relevance in the topics covered



Leads

Ensuring the qualification, validation, and accuracy of leads



Lead nurturing

Developing an accurate nurture process for leads to support conversions



Solutions

Many lack the flexibility and simplicity necessary to enable partner marketers

By understanding these critical components of demand generation programs for partner marketers, we have been able to develop solutions to successfully execute campaigns that match the experience and capabilities of each partner.

On the side of the partner marketer, resourcing is key to the challenges they face when it comes to driving the performance of campaigns. Auditing and assessing partners is critical to the success of any campaign and remains a time-consuming exercise. This is particularly true given the pressure for partner marketers to deliver campaigns and help partners drive revenue.

With that in mind, this is why channel specialists will continue to play an important role in 2024 as they are able to support partner marketers in these critical strategic areas.



About Matt Dalton

Matt Dalton has over 10 years of experience in B2B technology media, having leadership roles in sales and marketing across print, events, digital media, and demand generation in the partner marketing space. Matt joined [INFUSE](#) to build and launch our specialist channel division, designed to create and execute demand gen solutions specifically for partner marketers.



Key takeaways

Thanks again to our contributors for sharing their valuable expertise on the future of partner marketing and priority strategies for achieving performance goals.

Main points covered:

- **The [potential of partner marketing and the partner ecosystem](#) has triggered a cultural shift** in how partners are viewed by vendors, along with greater pressure on meeting ROI targets
- **Partners are investing in data-driven efforts but still require support** that is accurate to their skill set, region, and goals to enable them to achieve the best performance
- **Resourcing is a core obstacle**, impacting the ability of partner marketers to assess the needs of partners. This challenge can be addressed by channel specialists
- **[Demand generation](#) represents a key driver** of partner opportunities when aligned with specific partner needs and capabilities
- **Ensuring partner engagement with campaigns and MDF remains an issue.** However, the evolution of the MDF system promises meaningful change with partner-funded campaigns achieving better performance and vendors supplying greater levels of support
- **Partner relationships must be nurtured** to secure long-term growth as a 'true partnership', rather than leaning on partners only in times of economic uncertainty



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