



Your Strategic Marketing Team

How to Obtain Funds to Market Your MSP



ulistic

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When I was running my MSP in Calgary, we were one of the top IT firms in our area. With our company growing from 3 guys to 34 employees in 7 years - you can trust we were doing something right.

This being said, it was a tough go right out of the gate as we made a lot of the same mistakes that most of you do. We didn't trust our vendors. We thought they had one goal - to beat us in the marketplace and take our deals directly.

The goal at the top of our minds was to figure out how to work with our vendors to get our share. Undergoing a lot of trial and error, we realized that the key to working with vendors is all in creating a culture of accountability with them.

With much success, our team has used the tactic above, as well as the 6 strategies below, in order to turn the task of getting market development funds into a profit center.

The MSP Problem:

More often than not we see MSP's sitting back and pleading for leads - this isn't going to work. You need to prove that you are worthy of these leads by getting out there and selling product! It's time to lose the sense of entitlement, and learn how to build relationships.

When it comes to building up these relationships, collaboration is key. It's important to remember that everyone has a role to play - including you. Your vendors have a hard time reaching into the small and midsize business market as easily as you can due to the fact that you hold a trusted advisor status - this is where your part comes into play. Let them rely on you to resell their product.

Unfortunately, the challenge here is that there are lots of resellers, and only one vendor. That's why you need to be open to collaboration and figuring out ways to build a unique relationship. Forget what they owe you, and think of what you can offer them.

Invest In Training

It's important to show your strategic partners that you understand their products and their solutions. Invest in development opportunities like technical training, sales training, and everything in between in order to prove and solidify your expertise.

After this, your next step should be to consider going the extra mile and becoming a certified partner. When it comes to your customers and clients, this may not be necessary. When it comes to working with your strategic partners and asking them for MDF money, however, it could make a world of difference.



Show Your Partners The Love - Sell Their Product!

Although it may be easier said than done, the premise is simple: Just sell their product! Do you really think your partner is going to invest in you if you can't even demonstrate that you can sell their product?

As you begin making sales, a company weekly sales reporting matrix is a great tool to investigate. With a company weekly sales reporting matrix, your partner can see what you have in the pipeline in one quick snapshot. Not only does this display your value by letting them view your sales, but it allows them to reach out to you and collaborate on sales efforts.



Create Your "Go-To-Market" Strategy

Along with a weekly sales report, executing monthly strategic calls with your partner reps one on one can be extremely beneficial to your strategy. From there, make the goal of each quarter to get all of your partners on a conference call to start collaborating on solutions. Annually, a planning meeting is imperative.

Get Noticed

- **Go out and attend local partner events.** Along with this, go out and see your distance partners when they are in town. Meet as many people and collect as many cards as you can.
- **Attend their conferences** Along with this, go out and see your distance partners when they are in town. Meet as many people and collect as many cards as you can.
- **Get people subscribed to your newsletter.** Take advantage of the fact that people want to stay in the loop.





Communicate Your Wins

So, you've invested in training, you're selling product, you're sharing your sales pipeline, and you're making connections... Now it's time to communicate your wins. Not only are you displaying your success, but you have the opportunity to improve your relationship with and increase your value to your partner. What happens from here is that those win wires get circulated internally through these companies. Writing a press release, blog post, or article and pushing it out wherever possible can work in the same way.



The Magical Question

Whenever possible, find out how your partner reps are compensated - make their deadlines as important as yours. Go out of your way to make sure you hit their compensation cut off; it's crucial to prove to them that you want to help them make money. Along with this, keep the lines of communication open always.

Be someone they want to *work* with.

The Final Step

When it comes time to actually request money, it is imperative to review your annual strategic plan and have it in hand. Of course, you may be asked to change certain aspects of your plan anyway, but they want to see where their money is going. Complete your request forms with success reports, communications strategies, and future planning in mind.

At Ulistic, we work with some of the same strategic partners you do.

We can help you create your annual marketing plan, your communications strategy, and a successful MDF request to help you achieve maximum funding for your MSP.

To learn more, give our team a call at 716.799.1999, or send us an email: info@ulistic.com