

Creating content for your channel portal

How to be known as the partner-centric enterprise

A recurring theme for channel marketers is how to encourage greater partner engagement on their channel portal.

To get partners actively using your channel portal, it needs to be regularly populated with partner-friendly, co-brandable content and campaigns. Having no, or being inconsistent in the amount of new content available on your portal can be the difference between adoption and abandonment

There's something for everyone

Partners have varying needs, so your content must be flexible enough to cater to all partner types – small with no marketing team and limited resources, to enterprise, with a marketing department, resources and a global audience.

Video is also more likely to be shared between team members and colleagues than print collateral. Especially when it contains helpful sales tips and business insights.

Companies experiencing the most success are those that are an advocate for partner success. Their content is partner-centric, focusing on understanding partner needs and offering solutions that save time, money and lead to business growth opportunities.

The great budget divide

Companies spend a huge amount of their annual marketing budget on internal marketing platforms and systems, and a marketing team to run them.

They then spend an even larger amount on creative agencies, that have little to no channel marketing knowledge to create enterprise branded content.

Channel marketers then repurpose these corporate assets from their marketing automation platform, which has been developed for the enterprise, and put them directly into their channel partner portal, expecting partners will happily use them.

The problem with this approach is these pieces are too inward facing, focusing solely on promoting the company and product features, often forgetting the needs of the end-user.

This is a costly mistake. Both in terms of a lack of partner engagement, and missed revenue.

High performers currently allocate 17% of their total marketing budget to channel marketing. Developing new partner-friendly content every month and creating a channel portal that delivers a great partner experience.

To be successful in the channel space, CMOs need to direct more funds to their channel portal.

I'm sorry, our time is up

One of the frustrations channel marketers face is the number and frequency of partners leaving their channel portal. The key reason for this constant churn is every time a partner revisits the portal, there's nothing new there for them. Some companies only offer new content once or twice a year at best.

Channel partners are focused on building their own brand and business to be the trusted name in front of their customers. It's now common for partners work with multiple vendors.

If you're not providing channel partners with what they need or want, instead of driving revenue, you may be driving them to your direct competitors.

Companies experiencing the greatest channel marketing success provide new, relevant and engaging co-brandable content monthly. Everything from how-to guides, data sheets, white papers, eBooks, infographics, images, videos, blog posts, and podcasts. All these types of collateral increases channel portal engagement and delivers high a rate of return.

The tailored suit

Using content and collateral from your website or your marketing automation platform will be disregarded by channel partners. Often, it's because the messaging is too inward facing, focused solely on your company and product features.

To get partners enthusiastic about using your content, it needs to be outward facing. That is, understand the business challenges of partners and highlight how your products offer the best solutions for end-users.

It also needs to be customizable, allowing partners to tailor the content for their local target market, add their logo and corporate color palette. This provides a real sense of ownership and enhances their brand recognition with their customers.

Expand your social circle

Social media is an essential element of any channel marketing campaign. Creating a social only campaign for partners to use across their channels – Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook – is an effective way to direct end-users to a landing page. This can feature both gated and ungated assets like videos, eBooks, whitepapers and case studies.

Participating in industry forums offers invaluable insight into the questions and business challenges partners are talking about.

This information can then be utilized to create a campaign that shows a real understanding of current pain-points and offers solutions.

Keep the conversation going

Creating an awareness or thought leadership campaign is an effective way to maintain partner engagement between sales or promotional campaigns.

Holiday and celebration event days as well as content that offer business tips or the top industry trends are highly popular. These types of campaigns can be easily customized by partners and sent to continue engaging with their customer base.

They enhance partner engagement and elevate the relationship with your partners.

Whether for global enterprises or partners with a small or no marketing department, limited budget or stretched resources, generating creative content regularly is challenging.

Elastic Digital has an experienced team of copywriters, designers, animators and campaign strategists. We can create an expansive range of content collateral, and effective platform-ready campaigns that fill your portal, engage partners and drive your channel forward.

To help you maximize your portal investment, we'd like to share in a short one-on-one presentation, channel content best practices based on collective data and analytics from hundreds of successful channel campaigns hello@elasticdigital.com