



Channel Sales Incentive

How can you motivate your channel partners to be as passionate about your products as you are? Give them knowledge, skills and rewards that speak to their heads and hearts, bundled in a program that speaks their language. It's channel relationship management 101 - pure simplicity. The strategy worked for a major mobile telephone industry client of ours. And it could work for you. Here is how we did it.

Building Channel Partner Loyalty: A Case Study Near-term sales objective

The near-term program objective was to motivate 4 500 sales people and sales managers at consumer electronics retail and dealer outlets across the country to switch sell overall, and sell more across particular product ranges. Nothing your basic sales incentive couldn't handle, but the client wanted more than a once-off sales spike.

Long-term relationship objective

The long-term objective was to open a direct and sustainable communication link through the channel. This would create a mechanism for the sort of give-and-take dialogue that builds long-term relationships - and long-term sales.

Multi-faceted solution

The program was targeted directly to the sales force, but management buy-in was a key requirement for success. Sales managers and dealer principals were awarded a percentage of the total points earned by their sales teams.

A rollicking start

The program launched around the country in a high voltage, ultra-contemporary party atmosphere with a celebrity MC and a combination of live and interactive performances designed to inform and entertain. Lucky draw prizes ranging from cellular handsets to a R15 000 shopping spree added extra dazzle.

Say it like you mean it

In keeping with the high-energy program theme, communications were short, frequent and designed to engage the largest majority of participants - a youthful, trend-focused retail sales force. Multimedia delivery included sms, website, email, newsletters and AwardPoints™ Statements.

Help them sell smart

In the ever changing mobile phone industry, new product knowledge is a key requirement for

effective selling. Participants earned AwardPoints™ for successfully completing product training courses. To satisfy ongoing training needs a series of podcasts, hosted by the company's national sales trainer, explained details on new product features and benefits. These could be referenced at anytime on the program website.

Really rich rewards

The reward offering was rich and designed to make an emotional connection with a savvy, brand-conscious, tech-focused participant group. High-end products, high-adrenalin experiences and high-class travel featured heavily in a print and online catalogue collection of more than 5 000 awards. Top performers qualified for top trips awarded at year end gala events.

Fast track sales

Short, sharp sprint sales incentives supplemented the basic long-term program when the client needed to move product fast, or just spice up lagging participation.

Know your partners

Two-way dialogue over time provided information on partner needs and ways to build meaningful relationships. Channel segmentation allowed for customising offers.

Keep the financial director happy

It is not often you get high returns on a low risk investment, but this incentive program achieved just that. Supported by a pre-established percentage of sales, it became wholly self-funding. Higher sales figures meant higher incentive budget and consistently positive ROI.

The payoff

The client's outstanding mobile product, good prices and commitment to improving channel performance paid off big time. Sales results for the first 6 months after launch were 53.6% over target. Over a 5-year program period market share increased from 5% to 29%.

And if that's not impressive enough, the program was professionally recognised as number one in the industry and received client accolades as a benchmark for their channel incentives around the world.

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