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Channel Advisor SPECIAL EDITION

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Automating your Channel Sales Presentations for 2008

16 January, 2008 By Eric Williams

How many IT Managers and other channel related individuals grew up watching MTV...? The key word here is: MT VIDEOS...? MTV realized that to get viewers, they had to invest in making TV more interesting. Vendors still relying on Power Point Presentations, PDFs and other marketing materials in 2008 are going to see change over the next three years as Automated Sales Presentations take center stage.

After advising over 300 hi-tech companies the past nine years, we've become educated in producing videos for the channel. Over 1,300 Resellers have requested their vendors put their presentations on video for in-house training and end-user solicitations ...

In 2008, IT Managers will see more Automated Sales Presentations then ever before.

Let's evaluate a typical vendor with 3-10 Channel Reps for North America.



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Do they all have the same closing percentages...? Do they all look the same...? Do they all have the same product knowledge...? Do they all use your company's approved sales pitch all the time...? Do they have it memorized...? Do they ever make a mistake, stumble, wake up late etc...? Some vendors employ a superstar sales executive with great work ethics who's extremely knowledgeable. The problem is that one individual cannot be with all of your resellers and thousands of prospects around the world at the same time.

Automated Video Presentations are always on 24x7 / 365 days a year... IT Managers surf the Internet for products in the morning, work and evenings. What if the Vendor happened to have an appealing, yet very professional, spokesperson in their video to catch their eye...? Vendors are seeing click rates go through the roof -- up to 1,500% -- with this proven methodology. Vendors investing in videos are rising up on search engines also; however, it won't be long before Marketing Directors realize they can purchase a \$99 video camera, imbed thousands if not millions of key words onto a 1-second video, then upload it to YouTube and others with their URL frozen on the thumbnail screen. Google and others Meta Tags video data through web crawlers.

If you decide to invest in videos, there are some things to be aware of. 1) Does the production company specialize in the high tech industry not mention the Channel...? Will they know how to pronounce acronyms like iSCSI & R.A.I.D...? 2) How much work and resources is this REALLY going to require from you and you staff...? Does the company know your product better than you do to write your scripts...? 3) Have fun making your videos yet remember the film crew and spokesperson is the biggest cost of production so delete the "we can re-shoot theory" if you're on a budget - make sure you're very pleased with the script!!! 4) If you're considering financing this investment with a production company, make certain you request no payments or interest for at least six months. This allows the video to pay for itself over the remaining five months after your video is ready to be seen by the world.

To start the process, first produce a 3 to 5-minute video greeting letting the world know about your company or product offerings. If you have implemented a deal registration program, this version provides resellers the correct sales tool to consistently share with prospects and integrated into email campaigns.

Second, create a longer video specifically designed to generate a purchase order from end-users after viewing the presentation. Vendors see closing percentages dramatically increase when prospects review this video before making flight reservations. Videos don't require a passport and never turn in a monthly expense report.

Third, many vendors are now producing video manuals online and shipping them out with the product on DVDs, saving technical support costs.

Fourth, produce training videos for your channel as an alternative to traveling. This significantly speeds up the number of resellers that can be certified on your technology at once. Set your segments every 15, 30 or 60 minutes for online testing, using customized grading scales. When you add up the cost of flights, transportation, hotels, Starbucks each and every month, training videos make sense in most cases.

Finally, vendors on a budget can purchase user-friendly software that records your webinars for under \$300. Read some manuals, then edit your "best of the best" presentations in-house.

Have a prosperous 2008!!!

Eric Williams, founder & CEO of Corporate Channels Inc. and ChannelVideos.com, is considered to be one of the leading channel experts in North America, having built CCI into seven divisions and with over 300 clients globally. Previously with Qualstar, he opened and managed over 250 resellers globally and was one of two key individuals that took the company from \$3M to \$68M resulting in their successful IPO.

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