

CASE STUDY:
Avaya Global Partner Program



AZtech Strategies, LLC
The Channel Convergence Experts



PROBLEM:

In 2001 Avaya (newly spun off from Lucent Technologies) recognized the need to shift to a multi-channel business model to meet the changing needs of its customers and create a more supportive and consistent partner environment. At the time Avaya USA was 75% direct while its regions were more than 70% indirect. Avaya had never rationalized its channel mix and felt it was failing to attract new alliance and technology partners. Most

disconcerting to Avaya was the loud criticism from their current partner community that they were not receiving the support they needed to compete with Avaya's competitors. Avaya needed to change its culture to embrace partners and its image from an old, direct only telecommunications company to an innovative, global technology provider.

GOALS:

AVAYA ESTABLISHED THREE GOALS FOR THIS PROJECT

RATIONALIZE

SUPPORT EMERGING IP PRODUCT PORTFOLIO

Rationalize the current channel mix and establish a future channel map that would support its emerging IP product portfolio.

DEVELOP

MEET THE NEEDS OF FUTURE PARTNER CATEGORIES.

Develop and operationalize one, global partner framework that was flexible enough to include partners across diverse segments such as ISVs, Agents, VARs and Global Systems Integrators and could expand to meet the needs of future partner categories.

LEVERAGE

ESTABLISH A BRAND IDENTITY FOR AVAYA.

Leverage the launch of a global partner program to create a proof point for its new partner friendly culture and establish a brand identity for Avaya.

SOLUTION:

AZtech Strategies leveraged the excitement and creativity of building a global branded partner program as a way to gain cross- corporate support in order to accomplish all required functional and operational changes to transform Avaya into a partner friendly organization.



PROCESS:

First, AZtech conducted primary research to understand customer perceptions, support requirements and levels of satisfaction with Avaya (direct and partners) on a global basis. We then audited existing Avaya partners globally to assess their view of Avaya's strengths and weaknesses, solicit their ideas of what should be included in the new program and create a baseline of partner competencies and business models. In addition, AZtech benchmarked, via primary research, best in class multi-channel support programs across the high tech industry, focusing on those corporations with equally complex portfolios and experience evolving a partner base from box pushers to solution providers. The results of all three primary research components were packaged into a project charter document used by the Avaya project lead to successfully socialize and gain alignment for the effort across the various business units and regions and to the Avaya Officers. The team gained the executive support, budget and additional cross-functional resources needed to build and operationalize the new program.

During the second phase of the project AZtech recommended an optimal channel map and designed the global partner Framework from which we would ultimately build the partner program. We worked closely with marketing, training/education, sales support and services to reshape key areas of their organization from direct centric to multi-channel friendly. We provided the thought leadership needed to design new collateral, partner

communication and market messages. AZtech also audited operational policies and practices and recommended modifications in order to evolve existing and attract new partners.

AZtech also designed and delivered a new Certification Program Architecture to deliver the knowledge, skills and competencies necessary to support Avaya's convergence portfolio to internal technicians, customers and partners. AZtech socialize the program architecture both internally and with the partner community. We created the business case and participated in the executive management discussions to create an implementation plan. AZtech developed the program curricula, facilitated job task analysis workshops, project managed test development and validation, and created the program's branding. Once the program was fully operationalized and certificants smoothly processed, AZtech transitioned the on-going management to Avaya's training organization (Accenture).

The Global Partner Program launched nine months after the initial strategy meeting with AZtech. The Avaya Certification program was fully operationalized within 18 months and processed over 10,000 certificants within the first 12 months. In 2003 Avaya received high marks in partner satisfaction and awards from both CRN and VARBusiness.



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