

## Partner Ecosystem Landscape

# 5 Insights to Maximize Your Partner Programs & Alliances

### Insights From Industry Leaders for Cloud Partner Programs & Alliances

Bridge Partners conducted interviews with over 20 senior executive leaders in the partner ecosystem for global technology and cloud organizations. These in-depth discussions zeroed in on five key trends ISVs and GSIs want from partner programs and strategic alliances—from topics like cloud marketplaces and incentives, to the relationship between partner and cloud vendor.

While the optimal approach to success varies from partnership to partnership, the end goal is always the same: to generate marketing leads and sales. To this end, on average 60% of tech and cloud vendors, see the largest increase in revenue growth coming from ISVs, MSPs, SIs, and marketplaces—and over 50% of these companies will be adding new programs to accelerate the growth opportunities. But partner engagement is a continuing challenge these new programs must solve, as only 27% of total co-op or MDF funds are fully claimed by partners.†

With the increasing complexity and evolution of partner ecosystems—plus the unpredictable business climate—it's essential to understand how to design and where to fine-tune partner programs and alliances so everyone wins, including the customer.

†(Channel Focus Community Survey, 2022)

## 5 Trends to Watch

1. The Partner vs. Customer dynamic
2. Commitment across the partnership lifecycle
3. Marketplace incentives are lacking for partners
4. The right partner benefits matter
5. Partner funding requirements are unclear and rigid

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## Bridge Partners, Leader in Partner Ecosystem Strategy & Activation for Tech & Cloud

Now is the time to rev up your partner ecosystem's potential and business impact with our comprehensive range of services.

From partner operating model and program design to marketplace go-to-market activation, and turnkey partner demand packages—we can help you optimize partner strategies, accelerate engagement, and scale initiatives.

**15 years**

serving partner organizations and initiatives

**60%**

of top 20 global cloud and tech enterprise are customers

**200+**

partners supported: ISVs, GSIs, MSPs, OEMs, Resellers


# The Partner Ecosystem Landscape: 5 Trends to Watch

Trend	Partner Voice	Recommendations
<b>The Partner vs. Customer dynamic</b>	Cloud vendors look at ISVs as a customer-first, partner-second. Account teams try to sell ISVs more services, creating friction with the partner's product team who want to be treated like a partner, building something together.	<p><b>Approach partners from a unified, partner-first perspective:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focus sellers on helping partners sell more in the market (vs. selling partners more services)</li> <li>Account, product, and partner teams can work together to identify solution updates that are based on performance and feedback, and unlock opportunities to sell more in market</li> <li>Establish executive reviews that include account, partner, and product teams</li> </ul>
<b>Commitment across the partnership lifecycle</b>	Strategic alliances must be grounded in joint product commitments and tech investments to make the solution and partnership a success. Also, revenue and pipeline-generating activities need to be co-sponsored and executed by both the vendor and partner. One side cannot be doing all the work. Partners are very attuned to this dynamic.	<p><b>Demonstrate end-to-end commitment to partnerships:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Secure product-team-to-product-team engagement and establish a joint solution roadmap</li> <li>Build a partnership framework and taxonomy to use across the organizations to drive understanding, communication, and interoperability</li> <li>Set clear initiative goals and secure stakeholders from both organizations that are equally committed to seeing it through from start to finish.</li> </ul>
<b>Marketplace incentives are lacking for partners</b>	Marketplaces are a priority for partners, but productivity varies. Fees are tricky because ISVs already pay to run on the cloud platform (and it is viewed as a needless charge). This is especially true for large ISVs with high cloud consumption who are already making a significant contribution to the cloud vendors' business.	<p><b>Help partners secure value from marketplaces:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have a tiered revenue share model based on variables like the partner's own cloud consumption</li> <li>Give funding to help offset partner investments in standing up and managing Marketplace offers</li> <li>Provide deeper partner sales training and enablement resources to support successful marketplace transactions</li> </ul>
<b>The right partner benefits matter</b>	Incentives are a multiplier, enabling partners to do what is not possible otherwise. But all benefits are not equal, and partners see the most value when funding is coupled with ongoing engagement from the cloud vendor.	<p><b>Prioritize the benefits that matter most to partners:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to funding</li> <li>Sales support with access to the cloud vendor's sales team</li> <li>Help with building pipeline and opportunity identification</li> <li>Help in deal acceleration with targeted accounts</li> <li>Co-branded content and events</li> </ul>
<b>Partner funding requirements are unclear and rigid</b>	Partners want clearer direction on what they can do with funding that is already cloud vendor-sanctioned and associated best practices. Often large partners have non-negotiable business requirements and methods that don't fit neatly with a vendor's criteria, creating unnecessary friction and unused funds.	<p><b>Offer more funding guidance and flexibility for partners:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide prescriptive program playbooks that make it easy for partners to map a need and budget to the right program activity, criteria, and available funding</li> <li>Make MDF available to use across a partner's brand portfolio (not only at a solution-specific level) to maximize ROI</li> <li>Design for flexibility in a program's MDF criteria, particularly for \$BB partners</li> </ul>

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