

TreeHouse's Reseller View™ Boosts ViaWest's Partner Growth 30% Within 6 Months of Launching PRM Solution

CASE STUDY



Organization

ViaWest | www.viawest.com

Industry

Co-location, cloud computing, managed services

Employees

360

Challenge

ViaWest needed a customizable and scalable partner relationship management (PRM) solution to support its rapidly expanding channel partner program

Solution Deployed

TreeHouse Interactive Reseller View™

Outcome

The ViaWest Partner Program has accomplished:

- Automating nearly all partner support processes
- Significantly reducing the number of manual hours spent managing its partner program
- Increasing partner applications by 30 percent over the past six months

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Vice President of Channel Sales, ViaWest

About ViaWest

ViaWest is among the largest privately held enterprise-class data centers and managed services providers in North America. The company's data centers in seven states provide a comprehensive suite of co-location, cloud, and managed services to businesses of all sizes across the United States. ViaWest has a commitment to providing its customers with excellent service through customized IT infrastructure solutions.

The business model at ViaWest relies on a Partner Program designed specifically for specialized vertical partners who have referral and resell opportunities. These include a wide variety of partners from real-estate brokers, agents, and solution partners representing multiple telecom and data center providers, and consultants or providers of IT products and services such as solution providers. ViaWest is committed to building rewarding partnerships and by providing partners the resources that allow them to most effectively deliver cloud computing services.

The Problem

With 27 data centers and continued growth, ViaWest was in need of a customizable, scalable partner relationship management (PRM) solution to support its rapidly expanding channel partner program. The company had been relying on manual outreach via email and onboarding of partners through its corporate website, without a formal tracking mechanism in place. As a result, ViaWest had neither the automation, features, integration workflows, or flexibility needed to scale as the partner program expanded.

ViaWest identified several requirements for a PRM solution. "We preferred to offer our partners a full featured system that included automated onboarding, deal registration, reporting and other modules to replace the email and manual processes we had been using," said Sean McCaffery, vice president of channel sales for ViaWest. "We also wanted to provide our partners with a system that made it easier for them to do business with us, for example, enabling partners to easily register and track opportunities, and receive compensation. Having a consistent and transparent way to manage partner accounts in a single portal was another important requirement that, together with the other capabilities we were looking for, would help drive greater success for both ViaWest and our partners."


The Search

After conducting an extensive search for the best PRM platform, ViaWest narrowed its selection down to a few vendors and initially considered Salesforce.com, having previously worked with the company. However, ViaWest found that although the Salesforce PRM was robust, it was labor-intensive and expensive. The platform required integration of modules and hiring engineers to build and brand it, which made the solution prohibitively costly. Other PRM platforms that ViaWest considered weren't robust enough for the company's needs.

In contrast, TreeHouse Interactive's Reseller View™ PRM solution was easier to use and support, and offered the desired scalability by avoiding the traditional model of paying more as the number of ViaWest's partners increased. What's more, Reseller View was the only solution that delivered the exact look and feel of the ViaWest corporate website without the extra costs associated with hiring external resources.

Another component ViaWest found to set Reseller View apart from other solutions was its partner marketing enablement capabilities. For the first time, ViaWest partners were able to co-brand their collateral and marketing materials in an instantaneous, automated fashion, giving them the independence and tools they needed to sell and service customers in real time. Reseller View allows partners to easily create and deliver company branded marketing materials, consistent with approved branding standards, on demand directly from their portal with the touch of a button.

Because ViaWest targets different levels of partners, from real estate brokers to agents or IT consultants, it found Reseller View to be an exceptional vehicle for seamlessly managing each partner level. Reseller View is the only PRM solution that enables different navigation, features and content delivered to different partner types. Some partners may have complete access to information and benefits such as leads, while others have access to just a portion of the information and benefits.



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After trying out these modules, McCaffery was so impressed that he recommended switching ViaWest's entire PRM platform to TreeHouse Interactive's Reseller View PRM system to manage the partner portal. "The partner community is a critical connection to our business, yet building internally or hiring externally were cost-prohibitive to us," said McCaffery. "We came to TreeHouse because we can create materials in the partner portal that are easier to access, track and manage. TreeHouse allows for extensive customization, which is exactly what we need for our different levels of partnerships."

The Solution

ViaWest began implementation of TreeHouse Interactive's Reseller View in August 2013, and went live with its revamped Partner Connect Program just two months later in October. After this short integration period that involved staff education through webinars, the company began to experience multiple benefits of the new PRM platform. McCaffery lists ease in signing up new partners—as well as tracking partner activity—among the platform's biggest benefits. "Now that we have a time date stamp with Reseller View, it's easy to track where contracts are in progress and where they're held," said McCaffery. "It's easier to versionize contracts and put them up on the partner site. We've seen additional benefits in how we track and administer our entire Partner Connect Program."

McCaffery adds that partner marketing enablement is one of the most valuable features realized to date, which allows ViaWest partners the ability to easily customize materials by adding their own logo and information to items like datasheets, whitepapers, HTML files, Web banners and more in the portal for different levels of partners without the need to create a custom solution for doing so. ViaWest and partners alike are also enjoying Reseller View's intuitive user interface and branding elements.

"We partner with industry leaders to ensure that we're leveraging best-of-breed technologies we provide to our customers," said McCaffery. "We need to continue to support our partners with tools that help them achieve greater success. Ultimately, that gives us a competitive advantage, because partners can always decide to go to other vendors if their needs are not sufficiently met. Our Partner Connect Program is designed to reward partner commitment, build long-lasting relationships, and provide innovative solutions. We're very pleased to have received positive feedback from our partners on Reseller View's tools."

Results

ViaWest has been excited about the early results of TreeHouse Interactive's Reseller View solution. The company has automated nearly all of the processes associated with supporting partners and facilitating their success since launching six months ago. As a result, ViaWest is able to make it as simple and transparent as possible for its partners to resell or refer the company's services. At the same time, ViaWest has reduced the number of manual hours it previously spent on managing its Partner Connect Program, while helping partners achieve their business goals.

Since launch, the company has also increased partner applications by 30 percent over the past six months. With the revamped partner program's level distinctions for customization, along with many additional benefits, McCaffery feels confident that the company has the right system in place to continue delivering added value to its partners.

"As ViaWest continues to grow its channel program, tracking and measuring lead generation and deal registration are important components to mitigate partner conflict, while providing needed visibility into partner pipelines," said McCaffery. "TreeHouse Interactive's PRM system offers ease of use and intuitiveness compared with other solutions, providing access to resources that our partners need and a user interface that adds consistency to branding. As a result, our partners are now on track to help us jointly go to market with value-added solutions for our customers."