



8 Reasons A CRM CAN'T MASQUERADE AS A PRM

If you sell through indirect channels, your need for maintaining an effective Partner Portal has never been more urgent. As you evaluate upgrading your Partner Portal and choose a new Partner Relationship Management Solution, you may find your established CRM vendor also offering a version of a PRM.

While a CRM may masquerade as a PRM, you will quickly find that they are not as quick, easy, and cost effective to implement nor as feature complete as a PRM that's purpose built to service Partners and help you manage Partner relationships.

Here are 8 things to know about why a PRM is irreplaceable as the front-line technology to optimize your indirect sales:



1.

NOTHING IS STANDARDIZED

Current CRM solutions that offer PRM, sound tempting – but they do not provide pre-built, out-of-the-box solutions with the majority of your desired functionality **already implemented** – with best practices that have already been **proven out by companies worldwide**.



2.

TIME TO MARKET

The CRM model is to provide a “starter kit” of functionality and a 3rd party consultant to do all the integration work for you. Because CRM vendors follow this approach with PRM as well, essentially requiring you to “customize your own” PRM, it requires extensive internal resources and external consultants to develop, install, and integrate, and results in months or years of work and expense.



3.

THE COST OF THE PRM MODULE MAY BE EVEN MORE THAN YOUR ORIGINAL CRM PLATFORM COST

Some vendor's PRM options are as much as 40% more than the initial CRM purchase – which combined with the development costs mentioned above – can balloon project costs to levels exponentially higher than simply implementing a pre-built SaaS solution.



4.

LOSS OF BRAND CONTROL

The success of many companies can depend to a large degree on the perception of their brand. If you have invested heavily in your company's brand, you face two serious risks from using a CRM tool as your Partner Portal:

First, there is limited custom branding available to you in a CRM tool.

You can readily identify Partner Portals running on CRM platforms because the look and feel of the portal is that of the CRM. A purpose-built PRM tool offers highly customized branding of the portal to match the look and feel of your other web properties. A customer should not be able to see a branding difference between the two.

Second, co-branded marketing campaigns and collateral make it easy for your partners to simply personalize pre-built email and collateral with their logos

– ensuring materials with your messaging and your branding remain high quality and consistent. Most CRM solutions do not provide marketing enablement solutions for their PRMs modules.



5.

LIMITED FUNCTIONALITY

Out of the box, top-notch SaaS-based PRM tools include more features than repurposed CRM tools. Because of the architectural design of CRM, advanced PRM features such as MDF management, Cooperative Marketing Campaigns, Business Analytics, and Partner Locator simply can't be included.

You will be forced to turn to a variety of third-party companies to add these features as a series of one-offs, stitching together a harlequin costume of tools, and creating the potential for single-sign on challenges, data integration issues and a poor customer experience.



6.

LACK OF A ROADMAP FOR THE FUTURE

Companies in the PRM space compete with each other to provide the best possible feature set for their customers and a robust roadmap for the future. Each month typically sees new features in a SaaS-based PRM, all focused on providing customers with the competitive edge they need in their business. This is not the focus for CRM companies.



7.

LOSS OF FOCUS FOR YOUR IT TEAM

Your IT team may be lured with a false sense of security that they “already know and understand” your current CRM tool, and assume using it as a PRM tool will be simple because they already “know the technology.”

In reality, because CRM solutions are not out of the box, they will inevitably end up spending significantly more time working with their sales and marketing colleagues to do discovery and design and build and maintain a customized solution PRM solution—keeping them from other business-critical services.



8.

LACK OF CHANNEL EXPERTISE

CRM companies (or your IT department) may know a lot about web development and SaaS architecture. They may be experts at setting up a website using an open source tool like WordPress or Drupal. But there's so much more to a Partner Portal than just the website.

You need to engage with a company who can offer proven strategies for structuring an effective channel program, and then echo those in a Partner Portal. The value a true PRM company brings is less about the web development and much more about implementing best practices to accelerate your indirect sales.

Take a demo of Impartner PRM – the industry's only SaaS PRM tool that can have you up and running with a complete, enterprise-class Partner Portal in 30 days or less.

[Click here to see demo](#)

