

V is for Value

Broadvox, like many companies, uses multiple channels to market and sell its products. However, over 80% of our SIP Trunking revenues come via an indirect channel made up of Value Added Resellers (VARs), agents, OEMs and distributors. This indirect channel is very important when you consider that the size of the addressable market of potential customers is in the millions. In order to sell to millions of customers, you must have a large and effective sales force. It is impossible for a company the size of Broadvox to implement a direct sales model to address millions of prospects. However, by building an indirect channel program and enlisting thousands of representatives, we leverage the efforts of many to increase our presence and thereby our sales.

VARs are a Trusted Source

Although larger businesses may employ consultants to determine the best Unified Communications implementation strategy for their company, small-to-medium-sized businesses (SMBs) most often rely on Value Added Resellers to examine their business needs and make appropriate recommendations.

Installing [SIP Trunking](#) and providing Unified Communications capabilities is not the same as selling broadband or Internet services. In the 1970's, installing a T1 was a difficult task; there was uncertainty with regard to the implementation of OEM and service provider specifications. A T1 needed to be tested thoroughly to ensure proper performance. Today, we have a similar situation with a SIP Trunk. Although the OEM and Internet Telephony Service Provider (ITSP) may have performed interoperability testing and have certified that the trunk will work with their IP PBX or IAD, the customer still needs to have the proper network configurations in place. A VAR has the expertise to address any issues that may arise during and after the trunk is installed. A VAR usually has a depth of experience that an SMB cannot attain, due to the number of installs he/she performs every day. And for that, most ITSPs see an immediate value in developing a talented indirect channel.

However, installing a SIP Trunk is not the most valuable service a VAR can perform for an SMB. Making an informed decision, as to whether to purchase an IP PBX or go with a hosted service, can often exceed the expertise of a SMB client. The increased need for SMBs to utilize external expertise when upgrading or replacing communications systems offers the ideal opportunity to resellers. Determining which path to choose, hosted or premise-based, is only the first hurdle in the process. The second is selecting the optimal client solution by choosing a hosted provider (or an OEM platform for premise-based solutions) with the appropriate feature selections, support requirements, security initiatives, costs and future applicability.

VARs must be able to develop ROIs, TCOs, and make technology assessments that most SMB owners do not have the time or ability to create.

A Partnership

The relationship between the ITSP and channel must be a partnership that effectively addresses the needs of customers. Broadvox has developed a nationwide team of channel managers to assist, train and inform the channel about our product offerings, value propositions and implementation requirements. We also recommend SSCA® certification from The SIP School. The SIP School and the SSCA certification are recognized by many leading companies and organizations in the Telecommunications industry. Broadvox partners with The SIP School to support SSCA® as the standard qualification for SIP and VoIP professionals around the world today, and recognizes VAR accreditation with Certified Dealer status.

Effective business communication solutions are a necessity for companies looking to stay competitive in today's 21st century global economy. However, the speed of technological change, the array of product offerings, and the rival definitions for terms like cloud computing and SIP Trunking can easily cause confusion. Business decision makers, looking to simply leverage the value of IP Communications (both in terms of cost savings and implementation of end-user features) can be overwhelmed by the multitude of product and feature choices, as well as the technical demands of ensuring a secure and compatible implementation. Knowledgeable VARs assist in the planning and transitioning to IP Telephony, whether a little-at-a-time or all-at-once. SMBs can depend on VARs for the skilled and efficient development of customized business solutions that integrate Unified Communications, telepresence, fixed to mobile convergence and other features that maximize efficiencies.

An indirect channel needs to be nurtured as well. Most of the channel partners represent multiple ITSPs and OEMs, with competing product offerings at times. Therefore, it is important to understand the individual businesses, their goals and target markets. Channel managers must be proactive in supporting channel members with product information and business and selling strategies. Additionally, the channel member needs support from both customer service and engineering talent in order to address more difficult implementations or operational issues. How well the service provider delivers support is often the key criteria to being included in the solution VARs offer their prospects and customers.

To learn how the [Broadvox VAR Partner Program](http://www.broadvox.com/partners/var-partner-program) can benefit your reseller business, visit our website at <http://www.broadvox.com/partners/var-partner-program>.