



Glossary Guide: Partner Ecosystem and ParTech

In today's ecosystem-led world, success is increasingly built on partnerships—not just products. As partner roles multiply and go-to-market (GTM) motions grow more complex, it's easy to get lost in a sea of acronyms, evolving platforms, and shifting strategies. This Partner Ecosystem and ParTech Glossary Guide is your go-to reference for understanding the key players, platforms, and partner motions driving growth. Whether you're new to the ecosystem or looking to deepen your GTM alignment, this resource equips you with the clarity and context needed to communicate effectively, collaborate strategically, and navigate the fast-changing partner landscape with confidence.

Partner Types

ISV: Independent Software Vendor

Develops and sells software that runs on third-party platforms.

SI: Systems Integrator

Designs and implements complex IT systems by integrating hardware and software components.

GSI: Global Systems Integrator

Large-scale SIs with global reach and enterprise focus.

MSP: Managed Service Provider

Delivers managed IT and support services on a subscription basis.

MSSP: Managed Security Service Provider

Specializes in outsourced monitoring and management of security systems.

VAR: Value-Added Reseller

Resells technology products with added services like configuration or integration.

CSP: Cloud Solution Provider

Offers cloud-based infrastructure, platforms, and software.

OEM: Original Equipment Manufacturer

Produces parts and equipment that may be marketed by another manufacturer.

Disti: Distributor

Intermediary that supplies products to resellers or VARs, often providing logistics, financing, or training.

Referral Partner

Introduces new customers in exchange for commission or fee; doesn't handle delivery or sales.

Service Partner

Delivers consulting, implementation, training, or integration services around a product or solution.

Alliance / Technology Partner

Collaborates on joint solutions, integrations, or platforms to enhance product value and drive mutual growth.

Born-in-the-Cloud Partner

Delivers cloud-native services and solutions, built entirely on cloud infrastructure, with a focus on agility, automation, and rapid deployment.

Consultancy-Led Partner

Provides business-focused consulting and technical guidance, often specializing in digital transformation, industry solutions, or strategic IT planning.

Outsourcing Partner

Manages technology operations or processes under long-term agreements, delivering ongoing support through remote or on-site service models.

Partner GTM Motions

Co-Sell

Joint selling between a vendor and one or more partners to pursue a customer opportunity.

Co-Market

Collaborative marketing activities such as events, campaigns, or content creation.

Land and Expand

Strategy that starts with a smaller deal and grows through upsell or cross-sell.

Influence

Partner usually engages early in the customer journey and focuses on recommending or influencing purchase decisions.

Sell-With

Partner jointly sells with the vendor, but the vendor remains the primary sales lead.

Sell-Through

Partner owns the sales cycle end-to-end, typically in a resale or distribution model.

Sell-To

Vendor sells its products/services to the partner, who then uses it as part of their delivery.

Build-With

Collaborative solution development where vendor and partner co-develop technology, IP, or offerings for joint go-to-market success.

Attach Motion

Bundling a service, subscription, or product to another in a single sale.

Marketplace Selling

Offering products or solutions through cloud marketplaces like AWS, Azure, or GCP.

Co-Innovation

Collaborative development of new solutions, products, or IP between a vendor and partner.

Better Together Story

Messaging that explains the enhanced value of using two (or more) partner solutions together.

Activation Plan

Structured onboarding and engagement plan for new partners to ramp quickly and effectively.

Partner-Led Growth

Revenue and customer acquisition driven by the partner ecosystem, not direct sales alone.

Partner Technology (ParTech) Solutions

PRM: Partner Relationship Management

Centralizes partner data, supports onboarding, enablement, deal registration, and performance tracking.

TCMA: Through-Channel Marketing Automation

Enables partners to run automated, brand-compliant campaigns.

Ecosystem Platform

Solutions that unify partner motions—tracking co-sell engagement, influence, and ROI across an ecosystem.

IPaaS: Integration Platform as a Service

Connects disparate systems across vendors, partners, and customers.

CDP: Customer Data Platform

Aggregates customer data across sources for unified GTM strategies.

Partner Portal

A centralized hub where partners access tools, campaigns, training, and sales support.

MDF Automation: Marketing Development Funds

Platforms that help vendors allocate, track, and approve partner marketing investments.

Deal Registration

Functionality that allows partners to submit and track customer opportunities, helping prevent conflict and enhance co-selling effectiveness.

Incentive Management

Tools that automate commissions, rebates, and rewards for partner performance.

Marketplace Management

Platforms that streamline listing, pricing, fulfillment, and reporting for cloud marketplaces like AWS, Azure, and GCP. Key for scaling digital routes to market and driving ecosystem revenue.

Co-Sell / Sell-Through

Solutions that support joint selling motions—account targeting, sales collaboration, tracking leads, referrals, pipeline, and revenue attribution across co-sell and resale models.

BI / Analytics

Built-in dashboards to track partner performance, ROI, and pipeline contribution.

Channel Learning & Readiness (CLR) Platforms

Specialized platforms to scale partner enablement, certifications and readiness.

Partner Journey & Enablement

Effective partner engagement is driven by clearly defined journeys and tailored enablement aligned to partner roles. Key components include:

Partner Journey Mapping

Laying out the lifecycle from recruitment to activation, performance, growth, and renewal.

Role-Based Enablement

Delivering personalized onboarding, certifications, assets, and support tailored to each partner and the role they play in the customer journey.

Milestone-Based Engagement

Triggering relevant tools, incentives, and resources as partners move through lifecycle stages.

Success Metrics

Defining KPIs for activation, sales contribution, certification, pipeline, and influence to track effectiveness.

Enablement Portals

Centralized platforms where partners access resources, training, and performance dashboards.

Continuous Optimization

Refining programs based on feedback, performance data, and partner segmentation.

A strategic partner journey ensures partners are equipped, engaged, and positioned to deliver business value at each step of the customer lifecycle.

As the pace of digital transformation and partner innovation accelerates, use this guide to align your strategy, educate your teams, and empower your partners.

Still want more?

Go to www.bridge.partners

