Avnet Connect

Agency: purechannels Ltd

Category number: 15
Category name: Best channel marketing initiative
Programme/initiative name: Avnet Connect
Agency: purechannels Ltd
Brand or client: Avnet
URL: www.avnetconnect.co.uk

FINALIST 2014 B2B AWARDS

purechannels



Summary

Avnet faced a real challenge: They needed to increase multi-vendor purchases, amongst partners within a specific business unit – Independent Software.

With several large scale vendors in one business unit, consolidating the message effectively enough to drive partner awareness and ultimately transactional value was an on-going struggle.

purechannels was asked to come up with something that not only solved this challenge, but did so in a way that would stand out: not just in financial terms, but in overall channel terms. What could we do to give Avnet the edge?

We created a co-ordinated campaign across new and traditional media, including a video mini-series, a fully-responsive digital partner magazine, emails, telemarketing, landing page, DM and pull up banners.



The Client

Avnet Technology Solutions are a global IT solutions distributor for software, hardware and technology services, serving customers and suppliers in more than 70 countries from more than 40 offices worldwide. This particular campaign was specific to the Independent Software business unit, dealing with Microsoft, Symantec, Veeam, VMware and Red Hat.

Strategy: Broader business issues faced by Avnet.

Avnet, as a global distribution company, carry many vendor brands across many industries.

Their partner network is vast, but consists (other than 90 top tier accounts) largely of resellers who make transactions across very few vendors, typically one or two.

At the time the project was briefed, the Independent Software business unit alone carried Microsoft, Veeam, VMware, Symantec, Red Hat and a number of smaller vendors. The challenge was effectively communicating all the brand messages across their partner base. The Independent Software business unit also wanted to increase transactional value per partner and encourage (more) multi-vendor purchases.

Avnet have also been through huge organisational change over the last 18 months, with company-wide streamlining, budget cuts and personnel changes. This added pressure to all departments, especially sales and marketing, with targets stiffened and resources constantly affected.

The IT channel is facing a constant struggle with competition in terms of pricing and margins, so positioning 'the difference' that Avnet provide was key. Generating quality leads and creating a compelling argument for 'Why Avnet?' was very much at the heart of this campaign.



The Objectives

The objectives of the campaign were straight forward:

1. To encourage more partners to make more transactions across more Independent Software Vendors (ISVs).

2. To raise awareness of the other ISVs that the Independent Software business unit offer.

The Audience

The target audience was defined as all partners actively transacting with any vendor carried by the Independent Software business unit; around 290 partners.



Media Channels Used

With so many variables we needed a diverse approach. With different types of partners responsible for different levels of spend with Avnet, we had to make sure we approached them in ways that would have the best chance of success.

So we created an over-all concept around the notion of 'Connect'; ultimately connecting more partners with more vendors.

We developed a centre-piece digital, multi-vendor magazine, supported this with a number of different assets and a communication plan that ensured optimal take up and response. Not only did we have to create a campaign, but also educate the partners, provide them with other vendor details, engage them, position Avnet as the 'go-to' distributor and ultimately persuade them to increase their spend across the Independent Software business unit.



Online:

- **www.avnetconnect.co.uk:** This is a fully mobile-responsive, web-based, digital publication offering the visitor an equal experience, regardless of the type of device they are viewing it on. As the publication is hosted online, we were able to make timely updates to it, adding content at intervals throughout the campaign. The final content included:

  - An introduction to the Independent Software business unit and the key personnel with contact details.
  - A series of three videos that supported the introduction and multi-vendor messaging.
  - Vendor showcases for each of the ISVs: Microsoft, Symantec, Veeam, VMware and Red Hat, with external links.
  - Current, trending, industry articles.
  - List of benefits about making multi-vendor purchases with Avnet.

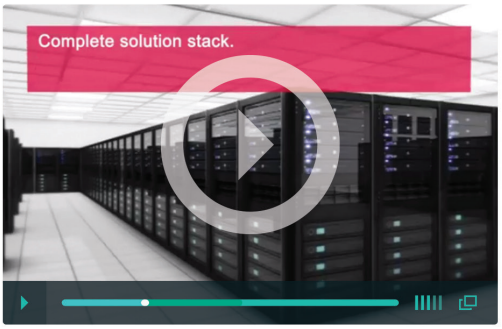


Online:

- **Videos:** We created a mini-series of videos that were available on the Avnet YouTube channel and within the www.avnetconnect.co.uk publication. We created an original footage 'Introduction to Avnet' video and then two follow up, vendor videos. Each video was added to the 'Connect' publication at intervals throughout the campaign.
- **Landing Page:** Created and hosted on the Avnet website, linking to contacts and the 'Connect' publication.
- **Web Banners:** For use on the Avnet website, linking to 'Connect'.
- **Emails:** Launch and 7 weekly follow up emails, each providing a vendor emphasis.

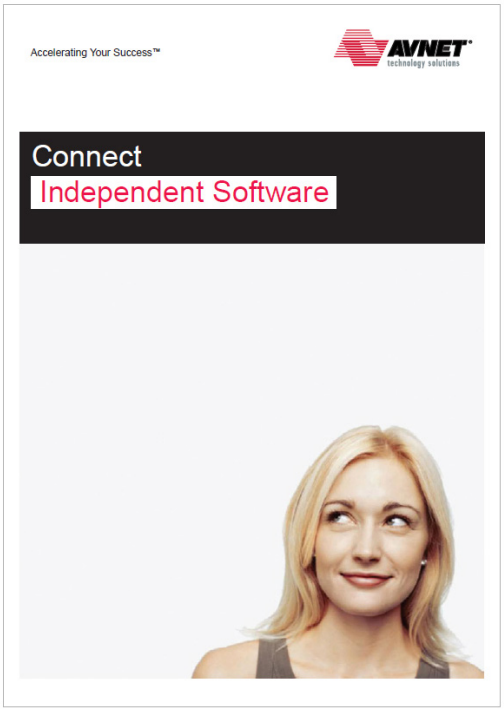






Offline:

- **DM:** We created a 'magazine' style DM and sent it to all partners as a complimentary introduction to the online 'Connect' publication.
- **PDF Version of Connect:** Created and hosted on the Avnet website, linking to contacts and the 'Connect' publication.
- **Internal Pull-up Banner:** For the Avnet office and an exhibition.
- **Telemarketing:** Launch and 6 weekly follow up emails, each providing a vendor emphasis.







The Timescales

This campaign was executed in two waves:

1. Initially a short trial, including emails and telemarketing to test the reaction and establish the required approach, gather feedback and partner insight. (2 weeks April/May 2013)
2. To create the full campaign, launch and execute. (8 weeks, October/November 2013)

The Budgets

These details were provided to judges in the original submission but are commercially sensitive and therefore confidential.



The Results

These details were provided to judges in the original submission but are commercially sensitive and therefore confidential.

Client Testimonial

"purechannels far exceeded our expectations on this 'breadth' campaign. We are always looking for ways to increase multi-vendor purchases within our business unit and purechannels have just blown us away - again. Not only with the original concept and how it all integrated, but with the diversity and creativity, not traditionally seen in the channel. Add that to the impressive turn-around time, low over-all cost and spectacular ROI we have seen, suffice to say, we are delighted."

Julie Field, Group Marketing Manager Independent Software, Avnet Technology Solutions.

