

MINI CASE STUDY



The P2P Journey Experience



Introduction

The [Partner-to-Partner \(P2P\) Journey Experience](#) takes partners on a guided tour of the [P2P Maturity Model](#). The model provides a framework for evaluating readiness across ten functional business areas that are critical for success in partner channels. The P2P Journey Experience program uses the P2P Maturity Model to facilitate an individualized assessment of a company’s current state of partnerships and helps it to prioritize business goals accordingly. The final stop on the journey is a discussion of next steps and capturing recommendations for achieving business growth through partnerships.

Altec, a member of the International Association of Microsoft Channel Partners (IAMCP), is focused on building a stronger and more in-depth partner channel. Altec’s goals were to find the best ways to invest more deeply in its managed partners with a target to increase the number of deals per partner and to find new tools and approaches that would help it expand their existing Microsoft partner channel. To that end, the Altec team, headed by April Blankenship, Director of Marketing and Gabriela Morales, Channel Program Manager, jumped into the IAMCP P2P Journey Experience program in March, 2016.

Through the P2P Journey Experience, Altec identified that its opportunities lie in working more strategically with top-tier managed partners, arming them with more in-depth business planning frameworks to

closely align to Altec’s priorities, and placing focus on measuring joint success.

About Altec

Established in 1985, Altec is a leader in mid-market enterprise document management solutions. Its accounting-centric products include *doc-link* integrated document management (IDM) software, check disbursement software, and customizable paper documents. Altec enables organizations to unleash the power of their financial software by enhancing productivity and communication among their customers, employees, and suppliers. An international company with 13,000 customers, Altec has integrated solutions for Microsoft Dynamics including GP, SL, NAV, AX. It is a Microsoft Gold Partner for Application Development and is Certified for Microsoft Dynamics.

Company Fast Facts	
# of Employees:	50-200
Yearly Sales:	Approximately \$15-25 million
Location:	Laguna Hills, CA (headquarters) and Tacoma, WA
Services:	Mid-market document management solutions
Specialty:	Unleashing the power of financial software
Website:	http://www.altec-inc.com/Pages/default.aspx
Microsoft Pinpoint Profile:	https://pinpoint.microsoft.com/en-us/companies/4295770352

Channels and Challenges

Altec has come a long way since its start as a paper forms business. Staying at the forefront of the technology curve has meant adding strategic alliances like the one they have forged with Microsoft and investing in cloud and mobility.

To best serve customers, Altec's partner channel model calls for both depth and breadth of relationships. On the depth end of the spectrum, Altec has approximately 50 partners working directly with its sales leadership. As for breadth, Altec's partner model consists of multiple tiers covering thousands of partners globally.

Altec has been working on further developing its partnership offerings to ultimately grow revenue. The company is well aware of the challenges that exists in doing so. A few areas that are at the top of the challenge list include:

- Joint business planning with partners in a predictable way that is aligned to Altec's process;
- Investing in and creating effective assets that partners will use and find valuable;
- Staying consistent across all partner engagement activity.

Managing challenges always comes at a cost. For Altec, that takes the form of limited availability of time and hard-dollars to develop required resources like training. As such, identifying which resources will

provide the most value to partners and the best return to the company is critical to Altec.

The P2P Journey Experience

Looking for new ideas to address its partner channel challenges, the Altec P2P team reviewed the state of their efforts using the P2P Maturity Model and approach advocated by IAMCP.

They quickly set the following goals for their P2P journey:

- **Business Planning.** Altec's senior leadership team has invested significant time and effort into business planning over the last few years and wanted to understand how to leverage that in planning with partners.
- **Marketing and Resources.** Altec is a certified Microsoft Dynamics Partner and has achieved Gold competency for Application Development. The team was interested in understanding how to use these designations to grow their business.
- **Cloud.** With investments in Azure, the team wanted to give consideration to how the P2P framework could assist in building new partner relationships while strengthening existing ones.

As prescribed by the structure of the P2P Maturity Model, the Altec team was guided through a walkthrough and discussion of maturity assessment questions. The questions cover ten critical business functions needed for partnering success. Upon completion of the assessment and a review of other P2P Journey Experience related resources, Altec noted that for the most part, they were doing the right things. Going through the process, however, helped them to uncover several major insights about their current partner model.



Insights and Lessons Learned

Altec's P2P Maturity Assessment indicated that it was in a "dynamic" state for a majority of business functions including joint business planning, leads and pipeline generation, agreements, and sales compensation. Rather than sit back and relax with that knowledge, April and Gabriela dug deeper. They used this as an opportunity to not only identify what assets need to be created for developing partners but also to conduct a quality review of existing assets and determine where updates may be needed.

As the team further contemplated the results of the P2P assessment, "frequency

and timing" emerged as important themes.

According to April, "The P2P experience made us take stock of our process and strategy to determine how often we are meeting with partners, the agenda for those meetings, and what data and materials would

supporting provide the strongest outcomes".

Altec has always been partner-focused and both April and Gabriela agreed that the P2P experience reinforced how important the partner channel is to the business. It also served as extra motivation to stay focused on an existing plan they have to create a partner portal.

Through the P2P Journey Experience, Altec has identified some new targets that they will be instituting and tracking to measure success:

- Number of new partners on-boarded;
- Number of new deals with existing partners;
- Progress towards more dynamic partnership agility in all relevant business functions (the team plans to re-assess against the P2P Maturity

model each year to mark how well they have moved forward).

Through the coming months, April and Gabriela will be meeting with their sales and

Next Steps Post P2P Journey Experience

Now that Altec has had the P2P guided tour, the plan is to share the lessons and insights

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leadership teams to further define these goals and how best to meet them.

P2P Experience Benefits

For Altec, the P2P Journey Experience gave it the benefit of diving deeper and conducting a review of its entire partner program. Areas reviewed include foundational information, process, deliverable assets, tracking of engagements, recurring activities, feedback loops, and more. “It was a great opportunity to have a 360-degree view of the business. It has helped us to prioritize and identify areas for improvement and provided us with suggestions, resources, and help to do it,” said April.

gained with the company’s leadership team to further shape the future of the partner channel. Additional prioritization and determining where and how to make investments in the partner channel are next on the agenda with education and tools topping the list. April and Gabriela are investing further in their P2P competency by attending the Microsoft [ISV Accelerator Program](#) and participating in the P2P assessment follow-on [P2P Coaching Webinars](#). They are also staying close to plans about an upcoming “P2P Workshop Road Tour” slated for delivery in their area in the coming months.

Closing Advice on P2P

When asked about what they would suggest to other partners that may engage in the P2P Journey Experience, the Altec team offered up this advice:

- Set aside the time to make this experience a priority.
- Answer the assessment questions honestly—there is no value in lying to yourself.
- Set realistic goals and expectations about what you will change and fix—it is okay to walk before you run but do not discount a stretch goal!
- It is an evolution—do not delay in the name of perfection.

“We want to set partners up for success and the P2P work helps us make the best bets.”

— April Blankenship, Director of Marketing, Altec

April provided her concluding views on what investing effort in this experience has given Altec, “With the P2P Journey Experience and the time we put into it, we are in the best possible position to build on our strengths and show partners the value of working with us.”

For more details, read [the blog](#) posts on the IAMCP website that reported on the beginning, midpoint, and end of Altec’s P2P Journey Experience.