

DISTINCTION IN MARKETING AWARDS PROGRAM

THE CHALLENGE

The Microsoft Dynamics Group is known for recognizing partners' technical excellence with awards, but few focus on their sales and marketing achievements. The Microsoft Dynamics Group came to Extra Mile Marketing looking for a way to reward their partners in these areas and to showcase best practice sales and marketing tactics within the partner community in order to improve success of partner efforts channel wide. They sought a program where high-impact activities with measurable returns were clearly articulated to motivate the channel at large. Extra Mile was given the task of developing and executing a program where partners would submit their most creative and impacting sales and marketing efforts of the year, with the hope of being recognized and awarded for their creativity and measurable returns. To achieve this result, Extra Mile developed what is now known as the Distinction in Marketing Awards Program.

WHY EXTRA MILE MARKETING?

With a specialty in strategic marketing and a strong background in the Information Technology Industry, we approached the project knowing its structure needed to be simple, straight-forward, and scalable for future years. The program increased partner loyalty through the awards program and motivated partners to generate new and inventive marketing campaigns based on "best practice" campaigns that this awards program unearthed.

THE SOLUTION

Extra Mile Marketing designed and executed the Distinction in Marketing Program including recruitment, selection, submission and scoring process. A panel of expert judges from within and outside Microsoft were created. We designed a themed direct mail campaign to drive entries. Case studies were written for selected winners and Extra Mile training classes were showcased to teach Microsoft partners how to execute best-of-breed sales and marketing techniques. In addition to winning the award, a trip for 2 to Mexico and \$5,000 allowance for a future marketing campaign, each winner also receives recognition by their peers at the Worldwide Partner Conference.

Many of the Distinction in Marketing application also attended Extra Mile Marketing classes to further their education. Each year's entries have improved, highlighting well-organized marketing objectives that product profitable and creative campaigns.

The number of entries received has doubled over the three years that the program has run. The positive recognition through awards has increased partner loyalty and motivation to focus on creative and effective marketing campaigns fostering a community of innovators in marketing.

"You have done a fabulous job of making this so simple to complete as a judge! The materials are excellent (binder and CD), and I loved the personalized score sheets for each judge. It must have taken you forever to pull this all together, but sure makes the process easy for each of us. Way to go!"

*Diana Wilberscheid
DiM Awards Judge*



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