

INFORMATION WORKER CONSULTING

THE CHALLENGE

Microsoft's Information Worker (IW) Solutions Group focuses on growing the Microsoft Office product line from a suite of productivity tools to a comprehensive development platform. Their business & Marketing Organization wanted to increase the number of Microsoft partners in the IW competency program. The Microsoft team knew that partners taking on a new competency typically struggled with ramping up their marketing. To combat this, they thought to offer marketing consulting hours to encourage more Microsoft partners to enroll in the IW competency process. When a partner achieved their IW certificate of competency, the customizable reward would help them grow their business.

WHY EXTRA MILE MARKETING?

Without adequate resources to execute this project internally, Microsoft sought out a marketing firm that could manage the entire process—from defining the incentives and getting the word out, to notifying partners and carrying out the marketing consulting work. They needed confidence the marketing team would communicate with their partners in a professional manner, appropriately representing Microsoft.

THE SOLUTION

Extra Mile Marketing had worked with several different divisions of Microsoft on prior projects, so when the Information Worker team started looking for an experienced, talented team known for getting things done, Extra Mile was a natural choice. Our team at Extra Mile worked with Microsoft to define the contest and rules for the incentive program, enticing partners with a high tech prize and a drawing for up to \$5000 in marketing funds if they completed the IW competency by a certain date. The promotion was so successful that we were immediately asked to develop the next two versions of this campaign. We wrote "congratulations on achieving your competency" letters that were sent along with a menu of marketing projects that the partner could select. From creating brochures, to website evaluations and direct mail campaigns, partners were able to select a marketing prize and work with Extra Mile in a way that best fit their organization.

"When I was unable to put to words what I was thinking, Kari had the insight to understand what I was really trying to say. A rare and valuable talent."

Russ Yeagley, MCP
Chief Software Engineer
Eagle Secure Solutions, LLC

Because of this marketing promotion, Microsoft was able to recruit over 100 Microsoft partners into the IW competency program. Extra Mile worked with the winners on their selected marketing projects, where survey scores showed 100% partner satisfaction. The rewards were especially meaningful to partners lacking a dedicated marketing staff.

Microsoft achieved their goal of adding certified IW solution providers while the partners used the gift of real marketing dollars to grow their businesses—everybody won. An added benefit was the tracking metrics that Extra Mile collected, a tool allowing Microsoft to learn from past successes and manage the return of the promotion. There is awareness, interest and participation in the certification incentive program within the partner community, thanks to the full service marketing from Extra Mile.



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