



## Phoenix Consulting Group

### CASE STUDY: Agent Program Design

#### Situation Analysis

A small hosted communications service company had been in business for five years and had a small but very loyal customer base. The company had pioneered the application they hosted, had exceptional technology and a very rich feature set. The original founders were developers and had recently hired professional management to help expand the business. The management team was determined to grow the business by reinvesting into the company rather than through outside capital investment. The company's service was highly attractive to small and medium businesses and most of the company's new business came from web searches and word of mouth.

#### Solution

The company had many requests for partnerships and viewed partnering as an effective avenue to drive new lead generation and revenue creation. Phoenix Consulting Group was engaged to develop a partnering strategy and to implement the program. Since the company was small, they needed a simple and manageable program that could scale over time.

Phoenix Consulting Group recommended two levels of partnership for the company to recognize the differing levels of influence these partners could exert in bringing new customers in the company.

The base level partnership created visibility for the company and increased the effectiveness of customer web searches by requiring partners to post the company web banner/button on the partner site. This was very valuable to the company because these links are factored into most industry search engines and elevate a company's position in these searches. Prospects that clicked on the button would be directed to the company's site and asked to leave contact information. The company would call, qualify and close prospects and provide services. The partner would be paid a modest annuity on the resulting revenue. This was positioned as a low investment option for the partner to gain incremental revenue from their current customer base.

The premium level partnership offered greater earnings for the partner and in return required a more active commitment to selling, marketing, and promoting the company's services. Premium partnership required the partner to train their sales people on the basic features and benefits of the service, launch email marketing campaigns introducing the service to their existing customers and prospects, and to use the service themselves so they were in a position to provide first person endorsements and a practical user perspective on the value of the services.

#### Results

The program was designed and developed in 60 days including program overview, contract, business policies, simple email marketing templates, and simple external and Partners Only websites. Phoenix Consulting was asked to provide follow-on services to supplement the company's business development staff including partner management and assistance in recruitment, enrollment, and continued development of the partner sales and marketing tools. After 6 months, the company had built up a robust community of partners. New prospects were finding the company on partner sites through web searches and through active referrals from partners resulting in greater visibility and incremental revenue.

The company has most recently engaged Phoenix Consulting to extend the partner program to include a private label business model which is expected to greatly expand the company's business and leverage their operational capacity as private label partners will assume more of the marketing, sales, provisioning, billing and collection functions of their client base.