

Three Pillars of Innovation are Essential as a Channel-Driven Company in an Evolving Landscape

By Kobi Elbaz, General Manager, Global Channel Organization

Put the words *technology* and *innovation* in the same sentence, and you'll likely hear about product development. Products, alone, will always be crucial to any technology company's success. But more and more, a rapidly growing area of opportunity lies in the experience that surrounds the purchase of a product or service. [One study](#) showed that from 2020 to 2021, customers' ranking of price and quality as primary purchase influencers dropped 3-8 percentage points, respectively. In comparison, this year "experience" factors like customer service and personalization are the top aspects influencing buying decisions.

For sellers in the IT channel and companies, like HP, whose collaboration with channel partners is essential, these shifts demand our attention. Innovation is, by definition, a moving target. But I see three steadfast ways manufacturers and channel partners can evolve together to outpace customer demands.

Put data in the driver's seat

Companies that leverage customer data grow faster. At HP, we're expanding data insights available to our partners to support a more targeted and effective sales force.

But data alone isn't a true asset. The ability to transform that information into actionable insights—in other words, to really leverage data to deliver unique customer experiences—is where growth happens. Every company must determine its own formula for success. Through [HP's Data Insights platform](#) we work with partners to act on three compelling categories: **descriptive** insights to establish benchmarks, **predictive** insights to identify new opportunities, and **prescriptive** insights to understand the nuanced needs of a specific customer.

These insights are providing our partners a tangible edge. Our channel partners can access insights derived from more than 14 billion real-time data points every week. Partners regularly using our insights platform are growing two times faster than average. By bringing data-driven insights to every request for proposal, sale and customer conversation, our partners are delivering digital-first experiences to meet evolving customer needs—strengthening the channel's role as a true advocate and expert in the customer buying journey.

Embrace all the channels

There's no question that end customers around the world value seamless relationships with their IT sellers—from in-store to mobile browsing, and across the buying and user experience. The U.S. e-commerce market alone is forecast to reach [\\$1 trillion this year](#), with global e-commerce sales hitting [\\$5.5 trillion in 2022](#)—representing 39 percent of all retail sales.

Omnichannel sales is something every seller must embrace—not only for today, but for long-term growth. Even before the pandemic shifted buying behaviors to become even more digital, it was estimated that omnichannel buyers had [30% higher lifetime value](#) than customers using only one channel. Now, we see the positive impact of omnichannel strategy becoming even more of a differentiator as buyers make multiple touchpoints [part of their regular purchasing routine](#). Partners should use data insights to improve their search capabilities, optimize content and streamline the customer experience. With omnichannel capabilities expanding as a leading driver of sales worldwide, no one in the IT channel can afford to overlook it.

Train together

Research reveals the importance of community in building sales. For example, [60 percent of sales professionals](#) say that collaborative selling increases productivity by more than 25 percent, according to Salesforce. And sales teams are [67 percent more effective](#) at closing deals when they work together.

At HP, the channel ecosystem is an extension of HP's own workforce. That's why we're introducing [HP Curiosity](#)—a single gamified platform offering enhanced training, community engagement and rewards. Through this brand-new resource, we emphasize holistic sales solutions, rather than a product-focused, siloed approach. With a centralized platform for partner sales representatives to connect one on one or participate in community discussions, we're seeing greater productivity, more growth, and stronger trust between HP and partners.

From data to training, these elements of success unlock a different kind of innovation than a breakthrough new product—but they are levers of growth every forward-looking tech manufacturer and channel partner should embrace. Without these elements, customer experiences will fall flat, no matter what new product you bring to market.

For additional details on the new partner benefits HP unveiled at its Amplify Executive Forum Roadshow, visit our [newsroom](#).