Partner Relationship Management Buyers Guide

Software Provider and Product Assessment

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

iSG Research

Key Takeaways

Partner relationship management (PRM) is becoming a structured coordination layer within enterprise revenue operations as organizations expand indirect sales and hybrid go-to-market models. As partner ecosystems scale across regions and segments, informal tools limit visibility into pipeline activity, performance accountability and shared customer engagement. PRM platforms formalize onboarding, deal registration and governed data sharing to reduce channel conflict and align incentives. When integrated with CRM and analytics, PRM supports coordinated execution and more predictable ecosystem performance.

Software Provider Summary

The ISG Buyers Guide for Partner Relationship Management evaluates 13 software providers offering products that support partner onboarding, deal registration, pipeline visibility, performance tracking and governed collaboration across channel ecosystems. The research ranked the top three overall leaders as Salesforce, Oracle and HubSpot. Providers were classified using weighted performance in Product Experience and Customer Experience for ISG quadrant placement. HubSpot, Microsoft, Oracle, Salesforce and Zoho were rated Exemplary, while Oracle NetSuite and SAP were rated Innovative. impact.com and Partnerize were rated as Assurance, and Channelscaler, Impartner, Mindmatrix and Unifyr were rated as Merit.

Product Experience

Product Experience, representing 80% of the evaluation, focuses on Capability (40%) and Platform (40%), including adaptability, manageability, reliability and usability. Salesforce, Oracle and Microsoft achieved the highest performance as Leaders in this category, supported by breadth and depth across PRM capability requirements and cohesive, enterprise-grade platform architectures that enable secure integration and scalable governance. Leaders demonstrated enterprise-grade platform capabilities adaptable across varied enterprise roles and operational contexts.

Customer Experience

Customer Experience, which accounts for 20% of the evaluation, focuses on validation and TCO/ROI. Salesforce, HubSpot and Oracle were the Leaders in this category, showing strong customer advocacy and clear investment in success outcomes. Providers with lower performance often lacked publicly available customer validation or failed to demonstrate structured ROI measurement and proactive lifecycle engagement.

Strategic Recommendations

Enterprises should evaluate PRM as a governance framework embedded within CRM rather than as a standalone partner portal. Assessment should prioritize scalability across diverse partner types, structured deal registration controls and role-based visibility aligned to defined engagement models. Organizations should also examine the depth of platform integration and the analytics capabilities that surface patterns of ecosystem performance. Clear operating

rules, accountability standards and executive sponsorship are essential to translate PRM investment into sustained channel productivity.

The Findings

The software providers and products evaluated in this research offer product and customer experiences, but not every feature is equally valuable to every enterprise or is needed to support the relevant business processes and use cases. Moreover, having too many product capabilities may be a negative factor for an enterprise if it introduces unnecessary complexity. Nonetheless, you may decide that a more comprehensive set of capabilities is important and meets your enterprise's requirements.

An effective customer relationship with a software provider is vital to the success of any investment. The overall customer experience and the full lifecycle of engagement play a key role in ensuring satisfaction and long-term success. Providers with dedicated customer leadership, such as chief customer officers, tend to invest more deeply in these relationships and prioritize customer outcomes in line with TCO and ROI expectations. It is equally important that this commitment to customer success is evident throughout the provider's website, the buying process and the customer journey.

Overall Scoring of Software Providers Across Categories

The research finds Salesforce at the top of the list, followed by Oracle and HubSpot. Providers that place in the top three of a category earn the designation of Leader. Salesforce and Oracle have done so in five categories, HubSpot in three, and SAP and Microsoft in one category.
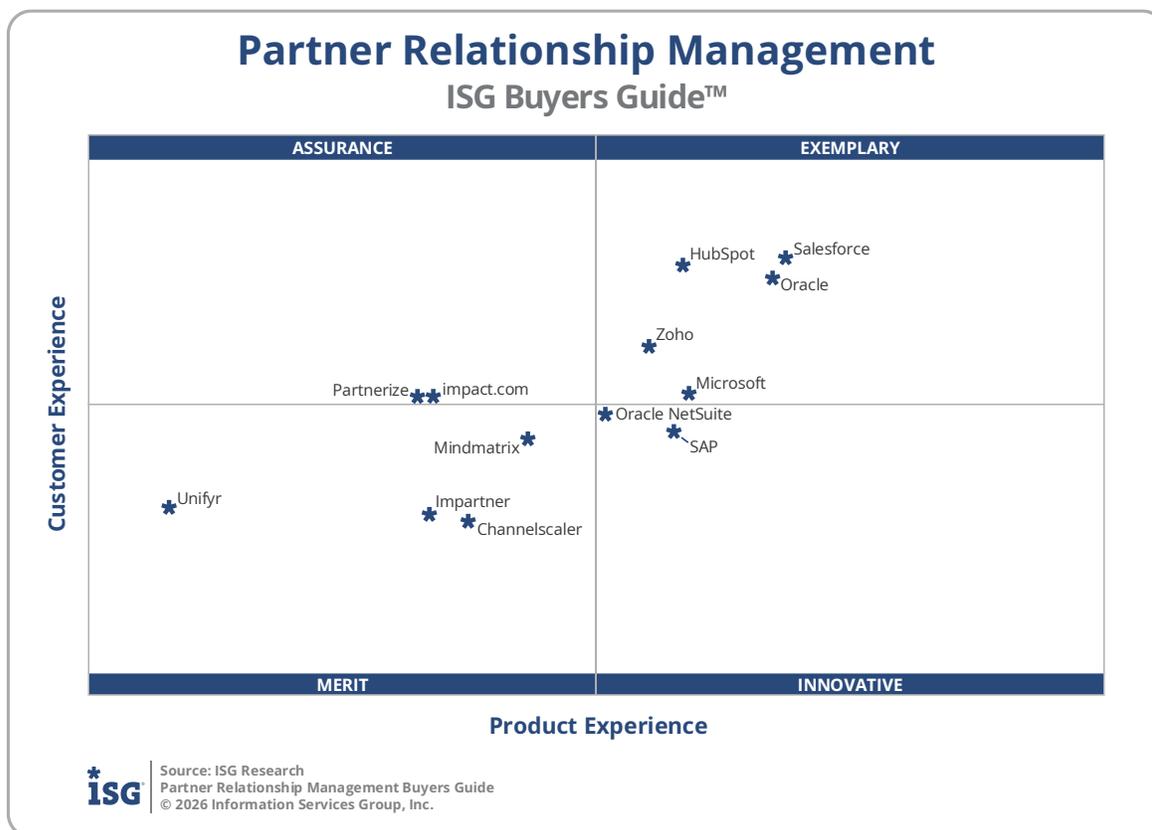
The chart below presents ratings for Product Experience and Customer Experience on the *x*- and *y*-axes, respectively, to visually classify software providers. Those providers whose Product Experience has above-median weighted performance on the axis, in aggregate across the two product categories, place farther to the right. The performance and weighting for the Customer Experience category determine placement on the vertical axis. In short, software providers that place closer to the upper-right on this chart performed better than those closer to the lower-left.

Partner Relationship Mgmt.
Overall

Providers	Grade	Performance
Salesforce	A-	*Leader* 82.6%
Oracle	B++	*Leader* 81.0%
HubSpot	B++	*Leader* 76.3%
Microsoft	B+	72.7%
Zoho	B+	72.4%
SAP	B+	70.5%
Oracle NetSuite	B	65.3%
Mindmatrix	B-	59.9%
Channelscaler	C++	53.1%
impact.com	C++	51.9%
Partnerize	C++	51.0%
Impartner	C+	49.4%
Unifyr	C-	37.2%

Source: ISG Research
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The research categorizes and rates software providers into one of four categories: Assurance, Exemplary, Merit or Innovative. Placement represents the software providers' weighted performance in meeting the requirements of product and customer experience.

Partner Relationship Management
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ASSURANCE	EXEMPLARY

(Scatter plot with axes: vertical axis "Customer Experience", horizontal axis "Product Experience")

Providers plotted:
- HubSpot
- Salesforce
- Oracle
- Zoho
- Microsoft
- Partnerize
- impact.com
- Oracle NetSuite
- SAP
- Mindmatrix
- Unifyr
- Impartner
- Channelscaler

MERIT	INNOVATIVE

Product Experience

ISG
Source: ISG Research
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Exemplary: This rating (upper right) applies to those providers that performed above the median on Product and Customer Experience requirements. The providers rated Exemplary are: HubSpot, Microsoft, Oracle, Salesforce and Zoho.

Innovative: This rating (lower right) applies to those that performed above median in Product Experience but not in Customer Experience. The providers rated Innovative are: Oracle, NetSuite and SAP.

Assurance: This rating (upper left) applies to those that performed above median in Customer Experience but not in Product Experience. The providers rated Assurance are: impact.com and Partnerize.

Merit: This rating (lower left) applies to those that did not surpass the median in Customer or Product Experience. The providers rated Merit are: Channelscaler, Impartner, Mindmatrix and Unifyr.

We advise enterprises to use this research as a supplement to their own evaluations, recognizing that ratings or rankings do not solely represent a provider's value nor indicate universal suitability of a set of products.

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