

Referral Partnership Guide

We created this guide to walk you through the steps to creating a successful referral partnership program. Referral partnerships can be powerful lead engines to help you increase sales while opening new networking opportunities for additional revenue potential. A referral partner is any organization that refers leads to you in exchange for shared revenue. There are many types of referral partners, including associations, banks, credit unions, software providers, Web hosts and e-commerce vendors.

All you have to do is find a partner, present the opportunity to **Valued Merchant Services (VMS)** and watch your residual income grow!

Find a Partner

There are many ways to start your search. First, think about your expertise and sales style.

- Is there a vertical market that interests you?
- Is there an industry or market in which you have expertise?
- Do you know people in your business or personal network who are in “opportunity” industries?
- What is your sales style?

Finding answers to these questions can guide you toward a particular partner opportunity. For example, if you’re interested in technology, then Web hosting

and Internet service providers may be an area to explore. If you have experience or a network contact in manufacturing, then try business-to-business firms, government suppliers or manufacturing merchants. If you’re conservative and pride yourself on delivering attentive customer service, then banks and credit unions could be a good match. It’s a good idea to look for local opportunities—such as local Chambers of Commerce or state and regional associations—where you’ll have easier access to members than with national associations. Look for partnerships that are less crowded with competitors to give yourself the edge. You can even prospect for partnerships through new and existing merchants.

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Some areas to consider:

Business-to-Business

- Make use of Google search on key words such as "purchasing agents" (by state)
- Seek industrial associations through merchants or by cold calling industrial parks
- Look for major newspapers in your area that use a purchasing card of some type
- Find companies with purchasing departments that use a card; set up their vendors
- Partner with regionally-based office supply stores to offer your services as part of the product mix in their catalog

Automotive Aftercare

- Use the Automotive Aftercare Market Solutions Kit on the VMS Training Site to gain valuable information about this market
- Car wash associations
- Towing
- Auto wholesale suppliers
- Auto repair associations in your state

Pay Fast/Quick Service Restaurant (QSR)

- Use the Pay Fast/QSR Market Solutions Kit on the VMS Brand Center to gain valuable information about this market
- Movie theater associations
- Dry cleaning associations
- Taxi/limo associations
- Drugstores and pharmacies
- Fast food associations and trade shows
- Franchise opportunities

Home Services

- Use the Home Services Market Solutions Kit on the VMS Training Site Brand Center to gain valuable information about this market

- HVAC and plumber associations
- Electrician associations
- Home improvement contractors
- Cleaning/pest control services
- Landscaper and lawn care associations

Ethnic Pockets

- Hire ethnic sales representatives to work their natural market
- Nail salon associations
- Ethnic restaurant owners associations, etc.

Franchisors

- Franchise opportunities are springing up in most of the above categories
- Become the "source" for credit/debit card processing in a franchise organization
- Attend its new franchisee training to build the relationship

Other

- Use online sources in your locality, BNI.com, USDirectory.com (for trade association information)
- Seek local groups
- Restaurant supply houses
- Linen supply houses
- Commercial realtors
- POS software vendors
- Business supply houses
- Familiarize yourself with our products and services using materials on the VMS Training Site, including the electronic VMS Product Catalog, and explore partnerships with businesses that use those products

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Present the Opportunity

Once you have found a partner opportunity, complete a Partner Services Request Form (PSRF), which is posted on VMS Training Site under Resources > Forms. E-mail this to an VMS NSD. The VMS will submit your PSRF to sales@valuedmerchants.com and work directly with the Partner Compliance team to help you draft and execute the contract. Once the agreement is executed, a Partner Relationship Manager (RM) will provide service to you and your new partner. The Partner RM is your liaison between partners and VMS, and will work closely with internal departments to ensure long-term account retention and profitability. Retention is just as important as the initial setup. Your partners will remain focused as long as you are there to remind them of their opportunities. Remember that our partner agreements are not exclusive. You still have to earn your partners' loyalty and continued referrals. As you add more partners, you'll add more merchants to your portfolio and watch your residuals increase. Your success is in your hands.

Marketing Materials

We have created a variety of materials to assist you with your referral relationships, including postcards, statement inserts, product sheets, newsletter articles on various topics, a banner ad and a referral partner splash page. These materials are available on the VMS Training Site, at www.valuedmerchants.com, under Sales/Marketing Materials > Referral Partner Sales Toolkits.