



Finding the Right-Fit Partners for Your Program

A guide to unlocking your ideal partner network

Overview

Building a successful partner referral program starts with a strategic approach to identifying and recruiting the right partners. This guide provides a clear roadmap — combining internal tools and external strategies — to help you discover, evaluate and engage your ideal partner network with PartnerStack.

Define your Ideal Partner Profile (IPP)

Before you begin your search, defining your Ideal Partner Profile (IPP) is a crucial first step. This profile acts as a strategic framework, describing the traits and attributes of partners who will most benefit from your program, be highly engaged and drive the most success. A clear IPP is a roadmap that will guide every recruitment decision.

To get started, answer these key questions to build your IPP:

Who are they?

- ✓ **Industry:** What industries do they operate in?
- ✓ **Target Audience:** Do they serve a similar customer base to yours? Are there overlaps in demographics, firmographics or pain points?
- ✓ **Business Model:** Are they agencies, consultants, SaaS companies, content creators or other types of businesses?
- ✓ **Size & Reach:** What is their company size, audience reach (e.g., website traffic, social media followers, client base) and geographic focus?
- ✓ **Expertise:** Do they have expertise in areas that complement your product or service?
- ✓ **Values & Culture:** Do their business values align with yours?



WHY THIS MATTERS

Clarifying who you're looking ensures your target partners align with your customers.

What do they look like?

- ✓ **Problem Solvers:** Do they offer solutions that naturally integrate with or enhance your offering?
- ✓ **Reputation:** Do they have a strong, positive reputation in their industry?
- ✓ **Engagement:** Are they active in their community? Do they host events or produce content that could promote your solution?



WHY THIS MATTERS

You want to look for partners with influence and credibility that can ultimately strengthen your brand and amplify your reach.

What's in it for them?

- ✓ **Pain Points:** What pain points do they have, and how can you help solve them? Are they looking for more customers? How can you help fill their funnel?



WHY THIS MATTERS

Addressing your ideal partner's goals makes your partnership mutually valuable and helps ensure they'll stay engaged.

How will you work with them?

- ✓ **Commission Structure:** What percentage or flat fee will you offer for referrals? Is it a one-time payment or recurring?
- ✓ **Referral Process:** How will leads be submitted and tracked?
- ✓ **Support & Enablement:** What resources (training, marketing materials, dedicated support) will you provide to partners?
- ✓ **Tiered Programs:** Will you have different tiers with varying benefits and expectations?



WHY THIS MATTERS

A clear structure sets expectations and avoids potential friction later on.

Strategies for finding partners

Once you have a clear IPP, you can leverage various avenues to find suitable partners. Here, a two-pronged approach combines internal and external strategies to systematically identify and recruit a strong network of partners for your referral program on PartnerStack.

Start with your existing network

PartnerStack provides powerful internal tools to help you find right-fit partners for your program. Consider the following tools and strategies to find your first wave of partners:

- ✓ **PartnerStack Discovery Tool:** The Partner Discovery Tool is your primary internal resource and the fastest way to start your search. Use the tool to tap into partners who are already active on the platform.
 - **Filtering:** Narrow your search for partners actively using PartnerStack by industry, audience, channels, location, commission expectations, existing programs, and more.
 - **Smart Matching:** Leverage AI Matches in PartnerStack, which surfaces the most relevant partners for your program.
 - **Detailed Profiles:** Review detailed partner profiles to assess their fit based on your now-established IPP.
 - **Direct Outreach:** Email partners directly from PartnerStack, saving time and centralizing your recruitment efforts.
 - **Tracking & Visibility:** Monitor your outreach efforts through the timeline view and funnel within the platform.
 - **Partner Badges:** Look for "Top Partner" or "Rising Star" badges to identify high-performing partners.
- ✓ **Existing Partner Network:** Don't forget about your current connections. If you already have partners on PartnerStack, analyze their characteristics and see if they have any connections that could lead to new opportunities.



WHY THIS MATTERS

Starting with your existing network ensures you recruit partners who are already active, motivated and easier to onboard.

Expand beyond PartnerStack

Once you've tapped into PartnerStack's internal tools, it's time to broaden your search. Consider the following six external partner discovery strategies to uncover new partners and build your high-impact partner network:

1 Conduct Competitor Analysis:

- **Website Review:** Check your competitors' websites for sections like "Partners," "Integrations" or "Affiliates." They often list their partners, giving you a ready-made list of potential candidates.
- **Backlink Analysis:** Use SEO tools to analyze your competitors' backlinks. Many of these links will come from affiliates, bloggers or agencies promoting their products. This can reveal partners who are already active in your niche and might be open to promoting your solution.
 **TOOLS TO CONSIDER**
Ahrefs, SEMrush, SpyFu
- **Google Alerts:** Set up Google Alerts for your competitors' names or product names. This can notify you when new content (including reviews, discount codes or promotional articles) mentions them, often leading you to their existing partners.
- **Social Media Monitoring:** Track competitor mentions to find influencers and content creators promoting who could be good targets for your program.
 **TOOLS TO CONSIDER**
BuzzSumo, Mention
- **External Partner Listings:** As a starting point, we have a list of "Known Partner Directories" that mention each company's vertical. PMs can take it as a starting point, and add their own directories that they find. Since these directory pages are cookie cutter, with the same text, you can simply search Google for "+Partner" and "+Get Matched" along with other keywords and it will bring up more results, for example.

2 Explore Technology Stack Compatibility & Integrations:

- **Your Tech Stack:** Understand your own technology stack. If your tool integrates well with specific platforms (e.g., Salesforce, Shopify, WordPress), research agencies or consultants specializing in those platforms. For example, HubSpot premium agencies are often great referral partners for tools that integrate with HubSpot.
- **Common Integrations:** Look at popular integrations for your product category. Agencies or consultants who implement these integrations for their clients are often excellent referral sources. (e.g. web development agencies)

3 Leverage Existing Partners & AI Tools:

- **"Look-alike" Partners:** Use your existing successful partners as a template. Leverage AI tools (like those that analyze company data, industry trends and business models) to find similar companies or individuals.

media, SEO or partner marketing. These agencies should work with mid-market to enterprise clients, and ideally have experience with affiliate or referral programs."
- **AI for Prospecting:** AI tools can help identify potential partners by analyzing publicly available data (such as websites, LinkedIn profiles, industry reports) for keywords, company descriptions and target audience alignment.
 - ⚙️ TOOLS TO CONSIDER
ZoomInfo, Clay, ChatGPT, Apollo
- **Example prompt:** *"Give me a list of 15 digital marketing agencies in North America that specialize in B2B SaaS and offer services like paid*
- **AI-Powered Outreach:** Use AI tools to assist with drafting personalized outreach messages based on your IPP and the identified partner's profile.
 - ⚙️ TOOLS TO CONSIDER
ChatGPT, Jasper, Copy.ai
- **External Partner-Sourcing Tools:** Use external platforms to make it easy to find active partners.
 - ⚙️ TOOLS TO CONSIDER
PartnerDiscovery, LimeLight, Respona, Grovia

4 Analyze Your Customer Tech Stack:

- **Commonly Used Tools:** See what your customers are using. What other tech tools or services do they commonly use alongside yours?
- **Service Providers:** Identify companies or individuals who

service those commonly used tools (e.g., implementation partners, consultants, agencies). These service providers are often good candidates for referral partnerships as they already have relationships with your target audience.

5 Engage Through Events & Content:

- **Conferences & Trade Shows:** Attend industry-specific events where potential partners might be present. This allows for in-person networking and relationship building. Have materials ready to share at the event to promote your program.
- **Webinars & Online Forums:** Participate in online communities, webinars and industry forums where your ideal partners might congregate.
- **Content Marketing & Thought Leadership Materials:** Offer to guest blog on relevant industry sites or invite potential partners to guest blog on yours. Or, collaborate with potential partners on whitepapers, webinars or case studies. This builds trust and showcases mutual value.



WHY THIS MATTERS

Expanding beyond PartnerStack can help you uncover hidden opportunities and build a stronger, broader, and more resilient partner ecosystem.

By combining these internal and external strategies, a client can systematically identify and recruit a strong network of partners for their referral program on PartnerStack. Remember that ongoing communication, enablement and incentivization are key to nurturing these partnerships for long-term success.

How to get started

Ready to find your ideal partners? Reach out to your PartnerStack Customer Success Manager for more information.

Additional resources

- [Everything You Need to Know About Outbound Partner Recruitment](#)
- [What to Know About Bad Channel Partners — And How to Handle Them](#)
- [Improve Your Partner Recruitment Process With PartnerStack Applications](#)
- [Inbound vs. Outbound Partner Recruitment: Best Practices for Each Strategy](#)



GUIDE

[Recruit Your First 100 Revenue-Generating Partners](#)

