Partner Enablement at Scale: What Works Across 3,000 Partners



What does it actually take to get thousands of partners ready to sell, without scaling your channel team indefinitely? Learn from **Craig Patterson**, Global Channel Chief at **Exabeam**, who has spent more than 20 years building and scaling partner ecosystems, including helping grow a channel business from $100M to more than $1B.

What's inside this guide

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WHAT YOU WILL LEARN

This guide explores how partnership leaders can move beyond making enablement available and build a system that actually makes partners better at selling, at any scale.

- Why certification counts measure participation, not competency, and what partners ask for instead: workshops, demos, and hands-on practice
- How to connect enablement to partner profitability, so the best economics go to the partners who invest in getting better
- How to tailor enablement to different partner types, like distributors, VARs, and MSSPs, and to regional and language differences
- How to tier coverage so channel managers focus on top partners while the rest of the ecosystem is supported at scale
- How Exabeam built Sherpa, an always-on AI enablement layer for answers, practice, and live deal coaching
- Which outcome metrics show whether enablement works, and how to use them to coach partners and route opportunities

These insights will help you design, scale, and measure partner enablement that is built to drive performance, not just participation.

MEET YOUR EXPERT GUIDE

Craig Patterson

Global Channel Chief at Exabeam



With more than 20 years of experience building and scaling partner ecosystems, Craig Patterson has spent his career answering one question: how do you make every partner better at selling when your channel team can't be in every conversation?

> ***"A completion metric doesn't correlate to better competency."***

At Exabeam, Craig leads worldwide partner strategy across an ecosystem of more than 3,000 partners, and launched the Exabeam APEX Partner Program in 2025. With a small team supporting partners in nearly every country, he rebuilt enablement around partner performance, combining dedicated coverage for top partners with an always-on AI layer for the rest of the ecosystem. His previous leadership roles include Aryaka Networks and Lumen Technologies.

Ecosystem Builder at Scale

Leading partner strategy across more than 3,000 partners worldwide, with experience helping grow a channel business from $100M to more than $1B.

Enablement Innovator

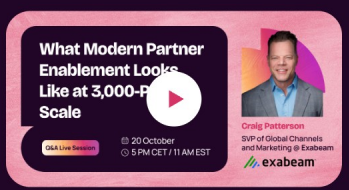
Built Sherpa, Exabeam's AI-powered enablement layer, to give partners on-demand answers, practice with feedback, and coaching during live customer calls.

Recognized Channel Leader

A five-time CRN Channel Chief, named Channel Influencer of the Year in 2023, and a member of the Channel Focus Channel Executive Council.

Craig recently joined us for a live Q&A on why traditional enablement breaks at scale, what partners actually want, and the metrics that show whether enablement is working.

WATCH THE COMPLETE SESSION



Q&A: What Modern Partner Enablement Looks Like at 3,000-Partner Scale

Craig Patterson · Global Channel Chief at Exabeam

20 October · Live session

Why access to content isn't readiness to sell

Most enablement programs follow the same model: log in to a learning platform, watch a video, take a quiz, get certified. At a small scale, channel managers fill the gaps personally. At thousands of partners across countries and time zones, they can't, and the gap between content partners can access and skills they can use in front of a customer gets wider.

The Quiz Gets Outsourced

Busy partners turn the volume down, skip to the end of the training video, and paste the quiz questions into AI. The program records a completion, but the partner is no better prepared for a real customer conversation.

Static Content Ages Fast

When products and capabilities change every quarter, recorded training goes out of date quickly. What looks like a full content library can become a content museum: available, but not changing how partners sell.

Craig pointed to a Canalys survey of roughly 25,000 partners in which, he said, 82% did not feel ready for the AI services wave, with enablement as the main reason. What partners asked for instead was more workshops, more hands-on experience, and more time in demos, rather than more PDFs and collateral.

What partners actually want from enablement

When Exabeam rebuilt its partner program, it surveyed partners and studied market trends before designing anything. The common theme was value: partners invest their time where it helps them make money and get better at their craft. Enablement that ignores either need competes with everything else on a partner's list, and usually loses.

A Path to Profitability

For enablement to work, partners need a clear, easy-to-understand way to make money from the relationship, starting with how your discount structure works.

Incentives Tied to Enablement

Exabeam unlocks an additional discount for partners who complete the full training journey and earn the highest pre-sales and post-sales certifications. The best economics go to the partners who invest in getting better.

Enablement That Fits

Distributors, VARs, and MSSPs delivering deployment services each need different enablement. Regional differences in market adoption, and the language partners learn in, matter just as much.

Partners are eager to improve when enablement helps them win. Making that link visible, through incentives and through content built for how each partner actually sells, is what turns enablement from a requirement into something partners seek out.

03 · COVERAGE

Scaling support beyond your channel team

Even the strongest Channel Account Managers can't join every partner conversation across every region and time zone. At 3,000 partners, the question isn't whether partner managers are doing enough. It's how their expertise can reach the entire ecosystem.

Tier Your Coverage

Exabeam's top tier of about 25 partners gets dedicated CAMs, annual business planning, and quarterly reviews against shared KPIs. The rest of the ecosystem is supported through systems built to scale, so every partner expected to drive results still gets enabled.

Free CAMs for Relationships

Automation isn't a strategy to replace channel managers. It takes over the administrative work and basic questions, so CAMs spend their time where they add the most value: relationships with high-value partners.

Meet Buyers at Technical Validation

By Craig's estimate, around 85% of the buying journey now happens before a buyer talks to anyone, as they define the problem, assess solutions, and validate options through research and AI search. When they emerge, they often call a partner to confirm what they've already concluded. They don't need a company overview. They need to reach technical validation quickly, which is why automating the fundamentals frees partners and CAMs to focus on the conversation that actually moves the deal.

Building an always-on enablement layer

With partners in nearly every country and a small team, Craig concluded there was no way to support the ecosystem with people alone. Exabeam built Sherpa, an AI-powered enablement system with three use cases that offer a useful model for any partnership team.

An Always-On Virtual CAM

Partners ask questions anytime through Slack, Teams, or the partner portal, with answers drawn from a knowledge base on products, the partner program, ICP, and use cases. Questions it can't answer well are reviewed and added back, so the system keeps improving.

Practice, Not Just Content

Partners learn a topic, then rehearse it in simulated conversations, like pitching a healthcare CISO, and get feedback on how to position it better. Learning paths lead to certification and run in local languages, with no travel required.

Coaching in Live Deals

Partners can invite Sherpa to calls with prospects, where it suggests responses in the background, such as a relevant use case when a prospect raises an objection. It turns practice into support in the moments that matter most.

Craig said more than 1,000 partners use Sherpa. He framed the live coaching layer as a deliberate bet: by his estimate, people running partner ecosystems typically have under three years to prove results, so the strategy has to be ambitious from the start.

05 · MEASUREMENT

Measuring enablement by business outcomes

Certifications, downloads, and training attendance show engagement. They don't show whether partners are becoming better at selling. Craig's starting point is the company's operating plan, more bookings, higher conversion rates, and faster movement through each sales stage, with enablement metrics tied directly to those goals.

Track Outcomes, Not Completions

Time to first deal shows how quickly new partners start producing. Sales velocity and conversion rate show which partners, in which regions, move deals forward fastest and close them most often.

Fix the Stage, Not the Partner

When a partner moves well through most stages but stalls at one, like negotiation, target enablement at that stage. And if deals in their vertical reliably hit a later hurdle, like a compliance review, prepare them before it arrives.

The same data shapes how opportunities are routed. Knowing which partners specialize in which verticals and segments, and which convert fastest, makes it possible to put each opportunity in the hands of the partner most likely to win it. Enablement data becomes an input to pipeline, not just a training report.

Key takeaways for partner enablement at scale

Across every topic, one theme repeated: partners don't become better sellers because content exists. They improve when enablement is tied to their economics, built for how they sell, available when they need it, and measured by what happens in front of customers.

From Completed to Competent

Certification counts show who finished a course, not who can sell. Measure readiness through outcomes like time to first deal, sales velocity, and where partners get stuck.

Make Enablement Pay

Tie your best partner economics to completing enablement, and tailor it to each partner type and region, so partners have a reason to invest and content that fits how they sell.

Extend Your Team, Don't Replace It

Dedicated CAMs for top partners, always-on support for the rest. Automation handles the fundamentals so people can focus on relationships and technical validation.

Practice Beats Content

Partners improve by applying what they learn, through simulated conversations, structured feedback, and support in live deals, not by consuming more collateral.

Scaling partner enablement is not about adding more content or more channel managers. It is about making the expertise you already have available to every partner, at the moment they need it.

Make your partner program a revenue engine with Kiflo

You have seen what separates partner enablement that drives participation from enablement that drives performance. Kiflo is the Partner Revenue Platform that connects your partner ecosystem to revenue: partner management, account mapping, co-selling, revenue tracking, and commissions, all in one connected motion.

WHAT YOU'LL SEE IN OUR DEMO

Build Your Partner Ecosystem

Manage partners, agreements, and onboarding in one place, without losing sight of which ones are actually go-to-market ready.

Connect It to Target Accounts

Surface partner overlap on the accounts your reps are already trying to win, and bring the right partner into each deal.

Turn Overlap into Co-Sell and Revenue

Track partner-sourced and partner-influenced revenue, see which partners actually move deals forward, and automate commissions when deals close.

450+
partnership teams trust Kiflo

4.8/5
on G2 for ease of use and support

100+
5-star reviews on G2

Ready to build stronger partnerships?

Bring your target accounts. See which partners can help you win them.

Book a demo →

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