

# Alliance Excellence (AE)

## Developing partnering as an organisational competence

### The Challenge

- Research from the Deloitte Fast 500 Annual Report shows that companies that can establish alliances quickly and systematically grow faster and more efficiently than those that do not.
- Companies that are systematic in their approach to partnering create four times more value from their alliances on average. (Source Booz Allen and Hamilton market research).
- Alliance maturity matters. To move from an 'Opportunistic' stage to a 'Systematic' stage companies need to use a programmatic approach. (Source ABP research assignments 2002-2021).
- The most cost effective approach to follow is an 'Alliance Excellence' best practice approach (Source European Foundation for Quality management).
- The major challenge for high growth companies is turning low value and high volume partnerships into low volume and high value alliances.

### The Process

ABP research shows that high growth companies use an Alliance Excellence approach as follows:

- They identify their current degree of alliance maturity as judged against a set of consistent and repeatable alliance best practice factors.
- They then identify current alliance excellent companies with a proven track record of repeated high growth.
- They then identify what steps those companies took to achieve high growth when they were at the same stage as their own current company.
- They then develop a defined alliance excellence programme with the goal of making collaboration a corporate competence.
- They then engage with the Senior Executive Leadership Team and explain and socialise both the value and the effort of an alliance excellence programme.
- They then secure ELT support and build an alliance excellence business case.
- They then get sign off on the business case and track it quarterly.

### The Evidence

There is an old adage which says 'Success Leaves Clues'. Nowhere is this more true than in the area of alliances and corporate partnering performance.

ABP has conducted extensive research over a number of years on high growth companies in the Technology industry and offers the following examples of alliance excellent companies:

ServiceNow, VMware, OpenText, Pure Storage, Tanium, Nutanix, Anaplan, Coupa, Delphix, Mulesoft, FireEye, Workday, Apttus, Tableau, Palo Alto Networks, Zebra Technologies, Jive Communications, Sailpoint, and RingCentral.

All had growth rates of 150+% per year for 3 consecutive years in their growth phase.

All these companies were able to successfully manage and grow their partnership programmes so that they increased both the size and the value of their typical partners.

Which is to say that they managed the partner journeys from low value and high volume partnerships into high value and low volume alliances.

All did so following a systematic and best practice based programme. This is what ABP means by an alliance excellence approach.

## About ABP

ABP is the world's leading alliance research and benchmarking organisation. We maintain a database of over 200,000 observations of alliance best practices in action.

We have over 75 companies represented in our Alliance Best Practice Community and meet quarterly to exchange ideas and develop new best practice standards in ever more complex collaborative relationships.

Ever tougher stakeholder demands, changing business conditions and increased competition means you need better operational controls, performance and risk management.

To help you, we continue to enhance our services. We don't just verify our findings in the classroom we go even further and reach out to active alliance practitioners to apply our research in meaningful and commercially lucrative ways for our clients.

### Our expertise

Selecting ABP means you'll be working with a company that strives for alliance excellence through rigorous and demonstrable best practices. It also means that we can provide the tools, experience and the expertise to establish a culture of continuous improvement in Alliance Excellence Programmes.

## Endorsements

**Samsung UK** – Used AE to initiate a strategic alliance with IBM based on mobility. Saved 18 months of wasted effort.

**IBM GTS EMEA** – Used the approach to achieve 'interlock' with key partners in EMEA including: Cisco, Anixter, Citrix, Adva, Juniper, NetApp, Schneider-Electric, IPEG, Lenovo and Motorola

**Qlik Software** – Used the approach to develop a public sector service to NHS Hospitals with PwC.

**Cisco EMEAR** – Used the approach to develop strategic alliances with SI / SO partners: Capgemini, IBM, Accenture, CGI, Infosys, TCS, BT, Wipro, Deloitte, PwC, Atos, Canopy and Tech Mahindra.

**Capgemini** – Used AE to develop increased business with its Tier 1 partners: IBM, HP, SAP, Oracle and Microsoft.

**Tieto** – Used AE to increase alliance sales with key partners: EMC, SAP, Oracle, Microsoft, IBM and Cisco.

**Accenture EMEA** – Used AE to assess 15 alliance relationships in EMEA.

**EMC** – Used AE as part of its 'Velocity' program with: Sungard, Rackspace, AT&T, Accenture, TCS, HCL, Deloitte, CSC, Xerox, Unisys, vCHS, Booz-Allen and Lockheed Martin

## Who Else Has Used it?

The following companies have previously used Alliance Excellence (AE) to improve their alliance relationships:

Accenture, Adobe, ADVA, Alcatel, Alphabet, AMD, AppDynamics, Apttus, Apple, Arkadin, AT&T, Atos, Avaya, Bearing Point, BCX, BMC, Borland, Brocade, BT, Computer Associates, Canopy, Canon, Capgemini, CGI, Cisco, Citrix, Cognizant, Commvault, Computacenter, CSC, Dassault Systemes, Dell, Delaware, Deloitte, Dimension Data, Dun and Bradstreet, EMC, Equifax, Equinix, Experian, EY, Ericsson, F5 Networks, Fujitsu, Genesys, Getronics, Google, HCL, Hitachi, HPE, i2, IBM, Indra, Infor, Informatica, Infosys, Juniper, KANA, Kaspersky, Konica Minolta, KPMG, Lawson, Lenovo, McAfee, Microsoft, Micro Focus, Mitel, Motorola, Mphasis, NEC, NetApp, NextiraOne, Nokia, Northgate, Nortel, NTT, O2, Oracle, Ordina, OpenText, Orange, Qlik, Pegasystems, Pitney Bowes, Polycom, PTC, PwC, Rackspace, Red Hat, Ricoh, RSA, Sage, Salesforce, Samsung, SAP, SAS, Satyam, ServiceNow, Siebel, Siemens, Software AG, Sungard, Symantec, Tata Communications, T-Systems, TCS, Tech Mahindra, Telefonica, Telus, Teradata, Tieto, Unisys, Verint, Verizon, VMware, Vodafone, Wipro and Zebra.

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