

Channel charter

Globally distributed, locally embedded. With our partners, for our partners.



[SOFTIRON.COM](https://softiron.com)



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At SoftIron, we're 100% committed to channels and the creation of cross-company, high performance virtual field teams to build a momentum business anchored on HyperCloud.

Our partner program Softron + Co draws from the smarts of the best channel proponents in the industry, including our own sales leadership team. Capable partners benefit from selling HyperCloud, the only ready-to-run, true private cloud available in the industry today. They also enjoy lucrative margins with a vendor that's easy to do business with, unattainable with other over-distributed, legacy cloudwashed alternatives.

As well as publishing our partner program to ensure we operate within a consistent business model, in this channel charter we're keen to define the behavior that we expect of ourselves and our partners as we jointly seek to create repeatable, virtuous sales cycles. After all, one of the beauties of co-selling a scale out on-premises cloud solution is that annuity revenue streams typically result. We should anticipate multiple footprint expansions as a customer experiences the full value of HyperCloud. So, on that shared journey it's critical that that we partner cleanly and correctly over the long term for the 3-way win - namely customer, partner and SoftIron.

The rules of the road we recommend here are straightforward, based on common sense and will lead to healthy outcomes.

Good co-selling!



To get commitment, we give commitment

We follow through on engagements with partners. If a partner takes us into an opportunity, we need to stick with them to its conclusion. In turn, partners should do the same for us - representing just one vendor technology for that aspect of their customer account.

If a partner doesn't play by these rules, promoting competitor's technology within the same account, then we reserve the right to support another partner concurrently.

There are two exceptions. One, if a prospective opportunity tells us they absolutely refuse to do business with a particular partner. And two, if a customer insists that the partner show them alternative options (and we can confirm that with the customer). If you find yourself in either of these situations when working with a prospect, then it's all the more important to communicate.

Communicate expectations clearly and confidently

We all have saturated inboxes these days, but the reason for this is a surplus of information we don't need. It hasn't reduced the desire for information we do need. Don't be afraid to reach out to a partner more often than usual when working on a complex opportunity, either synchronously or asynchronously. You may notice they have a preference for one form of communication over another, be it email, Slack, or phone and video meetings. Meet them on their terms.

Most misunderstandings with channel partners arise from a lack of communication. Effective communication is the most powerful tool you have to establish a sound relationship and direct it towards success. We have to set clear expectations, and follow through on our commitments.

If we're engaged with one partner on an opportunity, and then approached by another partner regarding the same opportunity, we need to clearly and immediately communicate to the second partner our prior involvement with the first.

And if we learn critical information regarding a deal in which we're partnering, be sure to share it as part of our 'clear box' approach to everything we do at SoftIron.

'Clear box' design, and 'clear box' relationships

Hand-waving issues almost always backfires. If there's a problem, or important information our partners need to know, we are up front and truthful, every time. Be matter-of-fact, and communicate your willingness to work on mitigating problems or conflicts within the partner relationship. We should never try to hide from one partner what we're doing with another partner, particularly if they're attempting to win the same piece of business. And once we're engaged with a channel partner to win that piece of business, we must keep partner deals with those specific partners.

Keep partner deals with those specific partners

Betrayal! Intrigue! This is not the SoftIron way. Taking a deal directly once a channel partner is involved is the kiss of death to a leveraged sales model. Word travels fast within the reseller community, and nothing travels faster than hearing that a manufacturer is taking deals out of the hands of partners. Once in a while, the customer will insist on buying direct. The easiest way to mitigate this problem is to qualify the purchasing process as early as possible. If we must take the deal directly, we have to do it while following rules two and three, and start a conversation with sales and product management leadership on what we can do to keep the disenfranchised partner as satisfied as possible.



Quality in, quality out

By treating our channel partnerships with respect, and acting ethically and honestly as outlined in our charter principles above, we can maintain healthy and profitable relationships within our SoftIron + Co ecosystem.

Of course, not all partners are worth investing our time and energy in. Below are some tips for assessing the quality of a reseller partnership. Feel free to share both our Channel Charter and expected Reseller best practices with your partners as needed.

Green flags: SoftIron + Co ready!

What we look for in an ideal partner

- ✔ They ask to review quotes before they go to the customer
- ✔ They follow the deal registration process
- ✔ They make use of resources shared through [our partner portal](#)
- ✔ They submit accurate orders the first time
- ✔ They forecast deals with our sales management team
- ✔ They know our product offer and are open to demos and training sessions
- ✔ They willingly take part in educating prospects on the benefits of our solutions
- ✔ They are happy to collaborate and coordinate marketing activities with us

Red flags: reconsider pursuing

Signs this relationship might not be good for us

- ✘ They represent competing technologies in the same account without a clear explanation of their rationale
- ✘ They lengthen sales cycles by not using partner playbook guidance or sales tools made available
- ✘ Their unavailability slows down deals
- ✘ They overpromise and under-deliver
- ✘ They 'ambulance chase' other SoftIron + Co partner offers by consistently seeking to drive price to the bottom
- ✘ They don't correctly represent the full breadth of our product offer They don't get in touch when they have questions
- ✘ They bring us in only at the end of sales campaign





The SoftIron + Co mission

To build an elite, world class community of profitable, successful channel partners that accelerate SoftIron's market share growth through the mutual and unique business value we bring to customers.

More about SoftIron + Co

Thank you for your interest in joining forces with SoftIron in order to build compelling customer solutions together. Please let us know how we may assist you as you develop your SoftIron competence and integrate HyperCloud into your private cloud practice with us.

For existing partners

Please make sure you've registered on the [SoftIron partner portal](#) to stay up to date with the program and to access a variety of assets, training and marketing materials.

For prospective partners

For more information on the benefits of becoming a SoftIron reseller:

VISIT
softiron.com/partners →

EMAIL
partners@softiron.com →

All SoftIron + Co 2024 benefits are awarded at the sole discretion of the SoftIron management team. All decisions made by SoftIron management regarding partner tier attainment and the award of program benefits will be final unless otherwise determined by SoftIron.



SoftIron makes the products that underpin the next evolution of IT infrastructure.

Our blueprint is radical. Taking full control over design and manufacture of platforms optimised for selected open source software, our highly integrated products reduce space and energy footprints while delivering extraordinary performance. Challenging traditional IT manufacturing and organisational strategy, we've developed a model that enables us to create a more resilient and connected business for the customers we serve. A commitment to openness, transparency, and simplicity helps address emerging multi-faceted threats while eliminating the vendor "lock-in" so common elsewhere.

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0557-PAR-0324