

AP's Approach to Relationship-Driven Account Management

“Trust is the glue of life. It’s the most essential ingredient in effective communication. It’s the foundational principle that holds all relationships.” **STEPHEN COVEY**

If a quality client relationship is the structure, it’s built with trust and consistency – in communication, in execution and in respectful, productive interactions.

These are all things we strongly value at Acceleration Partners (AP) and are attentive to on our client services team, especially when there’s a management transition on an account.

One AP manager in particular had done an exceptional job overseeing a long-time client’s affiliate programme. This client appreciated a high-level of detail and responsiveness in his communication with the manager and account team, which they delivered. As a result, the client trusted and valued their guidance and recommendations.

When that manager was promoted, a new account manager was put on the client’s account. Understandably, such a transition can lead to some misgivings on behalf of the client.

To re-establish trust and confidence with the client, the account manager and team adhered to the core pillars of [AP’s Client Services Methodology](#), including:

COMMUNICATE CLEARLY

When the client would email the team a question or bring up a concern or idea related to their programme, the team would respond quickly. Even if they didn't have an answer at that exact moment, they'd reply acknowledging that they'd received his email and would get back with him promptly with a more in-depth response.

At times, this also meant over communicating. In almost every case, the individuals overseeing their internal affiliate programme and the agency managing it has a lot on their plate. They are often pulled in a dozen different directions on any given day. This hustle and bustle can often trickle down to the affiliate programme management account team. To help calm the chaos, the team worked to keep communications focused on the priorities that had been established with the client – be it for that day, week, month, etc.

UNDERSTAND THE WHY

At times, the client would come to their AP account team and request that something be done that wasn't a part of their initial statement of work or on the priorities list. Instead of responding with, "No, we're not able to do that," the team delved deeper into the "why" behind the request by asking the client clarifying questions. They also engaged in active listening to ensure that they were clear on client expectations.

If it was feasible for the team to shift directions to accommodate the client, they would. They'd also carefully document each discussion and reprioritise their to-do list with the client so that everyone was on the same page.



ACT PROACTIVELY

In addition to responding promptly to the client's request, the AP account team was proactive in their management of the affiliate programme. They not only had a solid game plan for the programme strategy, but also for client calls, communications, and presentations.

This team also made sure the client was up-to-date on what was taking place within their programme – well in advance of the client inquiring about it. For example, the team consistently monitored the client's programme for fraud and search violations and would proactively update their client on it instead of waiting for the client to bring it up.

Different clients have different needs and expectations. Some prefer to be more hands-off with their account team whereas others prefer significant detail and frequent communication.

Something that all AP account managers understand is that affiliate programmes should rarely – if ever – be managed with a one-size-fits-all approach. Clients and programmes have nuanced needs. To effectively support them and cultivate long-term relationships, programme management teams must simultaneously be responsive, genuine, collaborative and strategic while keeping expectations in check.

FROM APPREHENSION TO ACCLAMATION

Although the client had trepidations about how their programme would be managed when their AP account lead transitioned into a new role, the new account manager and team was able to quickly quell any concerns by following core AP Client Services Methodologies.

At AP, we regularly poll our clients to keep our finger on the pulse of their satisfaction levels with their account teams, our service, etc. Shortly after the account manager transition, the client gave their new account manager and team scores of “10s” across the board (10 being the highest). Their feedback was also incredibly positive:

“The AP team is critical to the continued success of our affiliate programme. As a client, I could not ask for a better team from a customer support and account management standpoint.”

Learn more about our customised, collaborative and proactive approach to [affiliate programme management](#)

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