

Helping shorten sales cycles by presenting real business success stories: the IBM Retail Store Solutions Customer Reference Program

Demonstrating real-world success can help close deals with prospective customers, and strengthens existing client relationships. According to a Gartner Group study, 62 percent of surveyed companies cited industry peer references as the most critical factor in choosing an IT provider.* In other words, according to companies in our target market, customer references matter more than marketing collateral, sales teams and existing provider relationships—combined.

You can be a part of the IBM Retail Store Solutions Customer Reference Program

The IBM Retail Store Solutions Customer Reference Program provides our customers with the opportunity to participate in a variety of marketing and networking activities—from press releases and marketing collateral to meetings with other IBM customers, analysts and industry specialists. Plus, showcasing our customers in the marketplace can help them expand their visibility, while deepening their relationships with IBM and IBM Business Partners.

Broaden your company's market exposure

The IBM Retail Store Solutions Customer Reference Program presents a variety of opportunities for IBM Business Partners. In particular, the program provides a forum for promoting your company's and your customers' successes. What's more, participation may be able to help advance your marketing and sales initiatives and expand your reach to new customers. Customer reference activities are a valuable part of our joint communications efforts, helping us demonstrate how IBM Retail Store Solutions enables companies to solve critical business challenges. By helping us identify and enroll new customer references, you gain the opportunity to:

- Enhance your company's marketplace visibility

- Demonstrate the success of your strategic initiatives and customer engagements in a concise and compelling way

Initiate a new customer reference

To get involved, contact clients that you believe would make strong IBM customer references and tell them about the IBM Retail Store Solutions Customer Reference Program. And to support your efforts, we have produced an informative program overview brochure – presenting key program details, opportunities and customer benefits – that you can access by visiting:

<http://www.printers.ibm.com/sales/catalogs.nsf/agdetails?openagent&unid=4BBA9850ECF11D0287256DBB00747FDE>

If your client shows interest in participating, you can work with them to complete the IBM Customer Reference Customer Consent Form. To secure a copy of the consent form, contact your IBM representative or send a request to rssrefs@us.ibm.com. Once your client has signed the consent form, fax it to your IBM representative to finalize the enrollment process. Then, the IBM Retail Store Solutions team will work collaboratively with you and your IBM representative to identify and pursue joint communications activities that best balance our mutual marketing needs.

Find out more

We look forward to working with you to generate real-world examples of our joint successes. For additional information about the IBM Retail Store Solutions Customer Reference Program, please contact your IBM representative, call 1 919 301-5701, or send an e-mail to rssrefs@us.ibm.com.

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* *Source: Customer Buying Trends. 2001: User Wants and Need, Gartner, Inc., November 6, 2001.*