

REPORT

# Channel partner marketing support from the perspective of Polish IT resellers

REPORT PREPARED BY



SAROTA PR

AND



# Study objective and methodology

Channel Partner Marketing Support (CPMS) is an important aspect of sales activity for many reseller companies. Vendors have budgets, experience and other marketing resources at their disposal, therefore they are able to provide commercial partners with a number of tools and forms of cooperation in this field.

CRN Polska magazine in partnership with the SAROTA PR agency have decided to conduct a research with a goal to determine the needs of IT resellers in regards to CPMS tools, as well as the scale and the methods of their use. The results of the study may help in planning and forming cooperation between vendors and resellers.

The study has been conducted with the use of web interviews (CAWI) and telephone interviews (CATI) in October 2018.

## Focus group

**100 representatives of Polish reseller and system integrator companies** from the subscriber base of the CRN Polska magazine have participated in the study questionnaire.

37% were **VAR** companies, 33% **integrators**, 25% **resellers** and 5% of the companies have chosen the "Other" category.

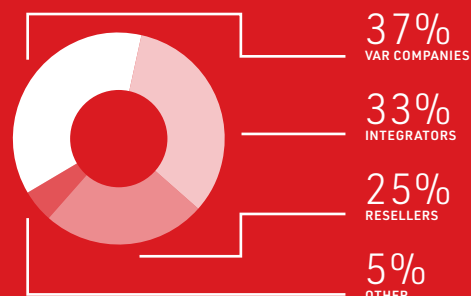
**Small** companies with 1 to 10 employees were the largest group (72%). The second largest were **medium** companies that employ from 11 to 100 people (20%) and the third were **large** companies with over 100 employees (8%).

As for the areas of activity, the ones pointed out most often were: **electronics for business** (indicated by 47% of companies), **network infrastructure** (44%), **business software** (44%) and **consumer electronics** (33%).



100

representatives  
of Polish  
reseller  
companies



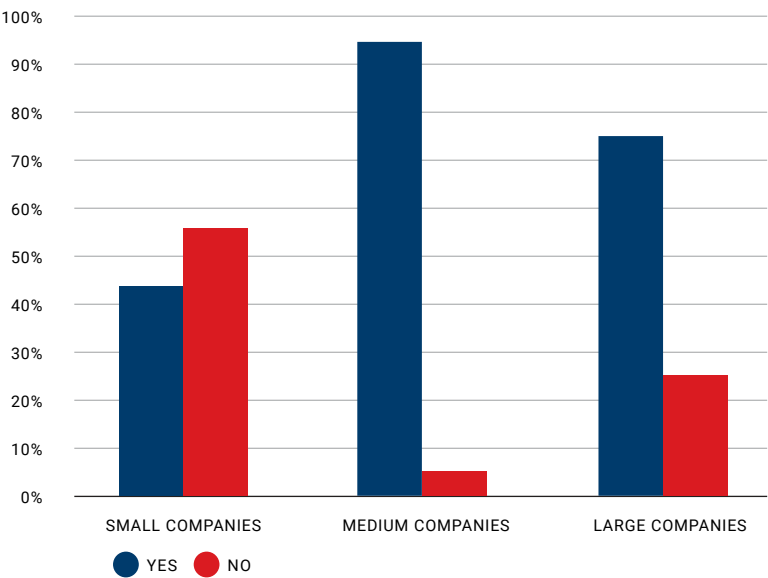
# Marketing support scale of use

Over half (57%) of all respondents indicated that their company **uses CPMS**. However, **most small companies don't receive such support** (56%), therefore medium and large companies are the main recipients of CPMS.

Among companies that don't receive or use CPMS, **40% state that they could find it useful**. On the other hand, 37% say that they don't need it.

Broken down by category, CPMS is most often used by VAR companies (63%). Among resellers, the percentage reaches 56%, and among integrators 55%.

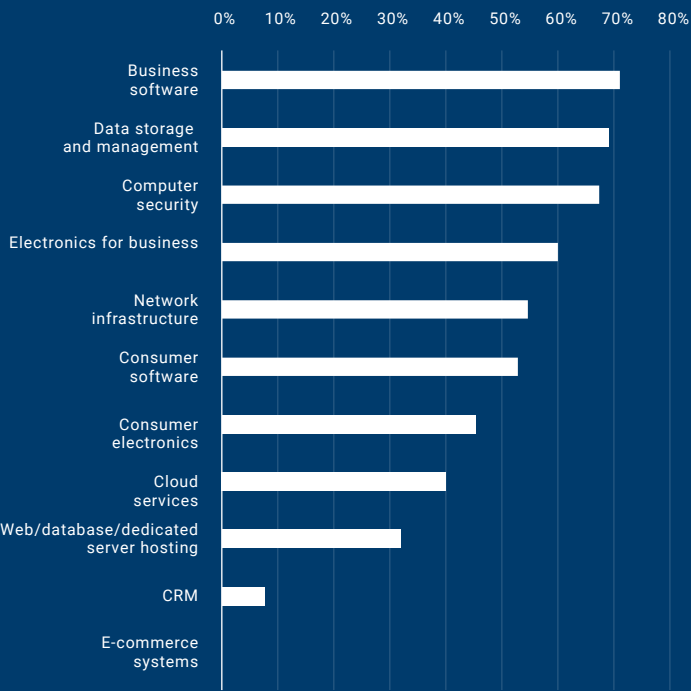
Use of channel partner marketing support



**Business software, data storage and management, and IT security** – in those three areas of activity the percentage of CPMS use is the highest, respectively 71%, 69% and 67%. Vendors in those sectors provide resellers with the widest range of marketing support.

The results also suggest that **CPMS is utilized more often by B2B than B2C solution providers**. 60% of electronics for business companies and 46% of consumer electronics companies use CPMS. When it comes to software, the situation is similar. CPMS is used by 71% of B2B software companies and 53% of B2C software companies.

Percentage of companies utilizing channel partner marketing support by area of activity

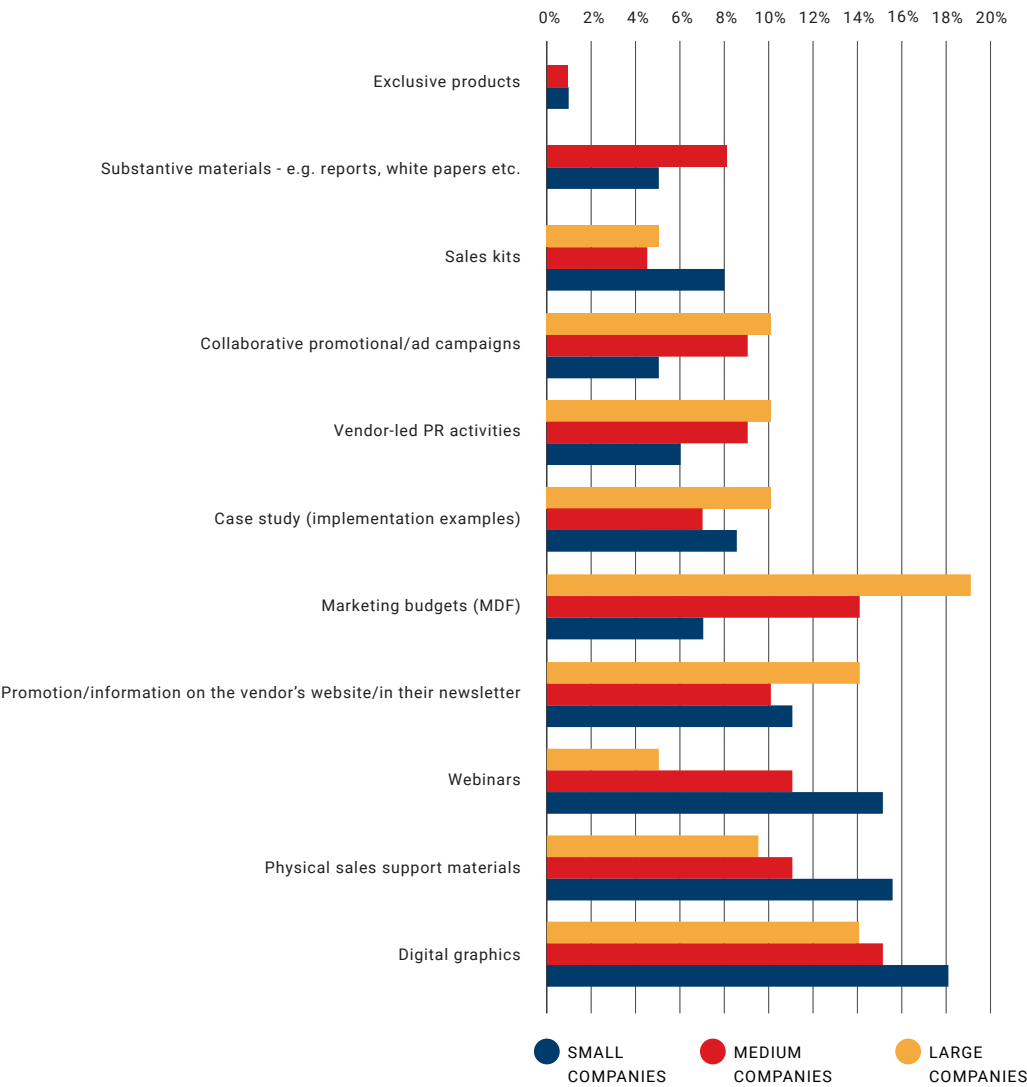


# Most reliable, sought-after and received forms of CPMS

Among small companies, three forms of CPMS are most often declared as received – **digital graphics** (e.g. photos of products, banners, etc.), **physical sales support materials** (POS) and **webinars**. The ones least pointed out were sales kits, substantive materials (e.g. reports, white papers, e-books, product videos etc.), as well as exclusive products.

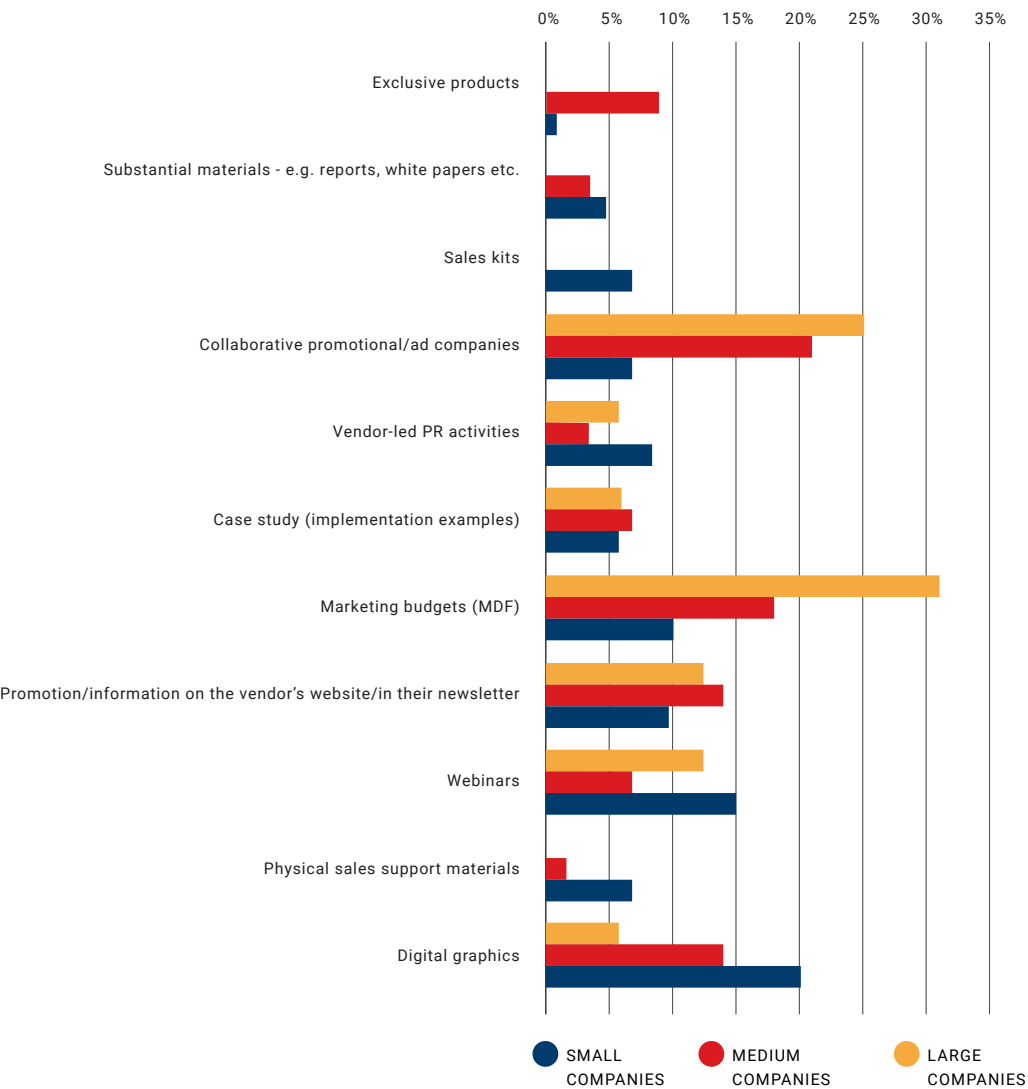
When it comes to medium and large companies, the second most frequently received form of CPMS are **MDF budgets**, which occur relatively rarely in small companies.

Received forms of channel partner marketing support



How would respondents rate the **effectiveness** of particular CPMS tools? Some differences can once again be noticed between smaller and larger companies. The former consider **digital graphics**, **MDF budgets** and **collaborative promotional/ad campaigns** the most effective. In medium and large companies the **promotional/ad campaigns** are most valued before **MDF budgets** and **promotion/information on the vendor's website/in their newsletter**.

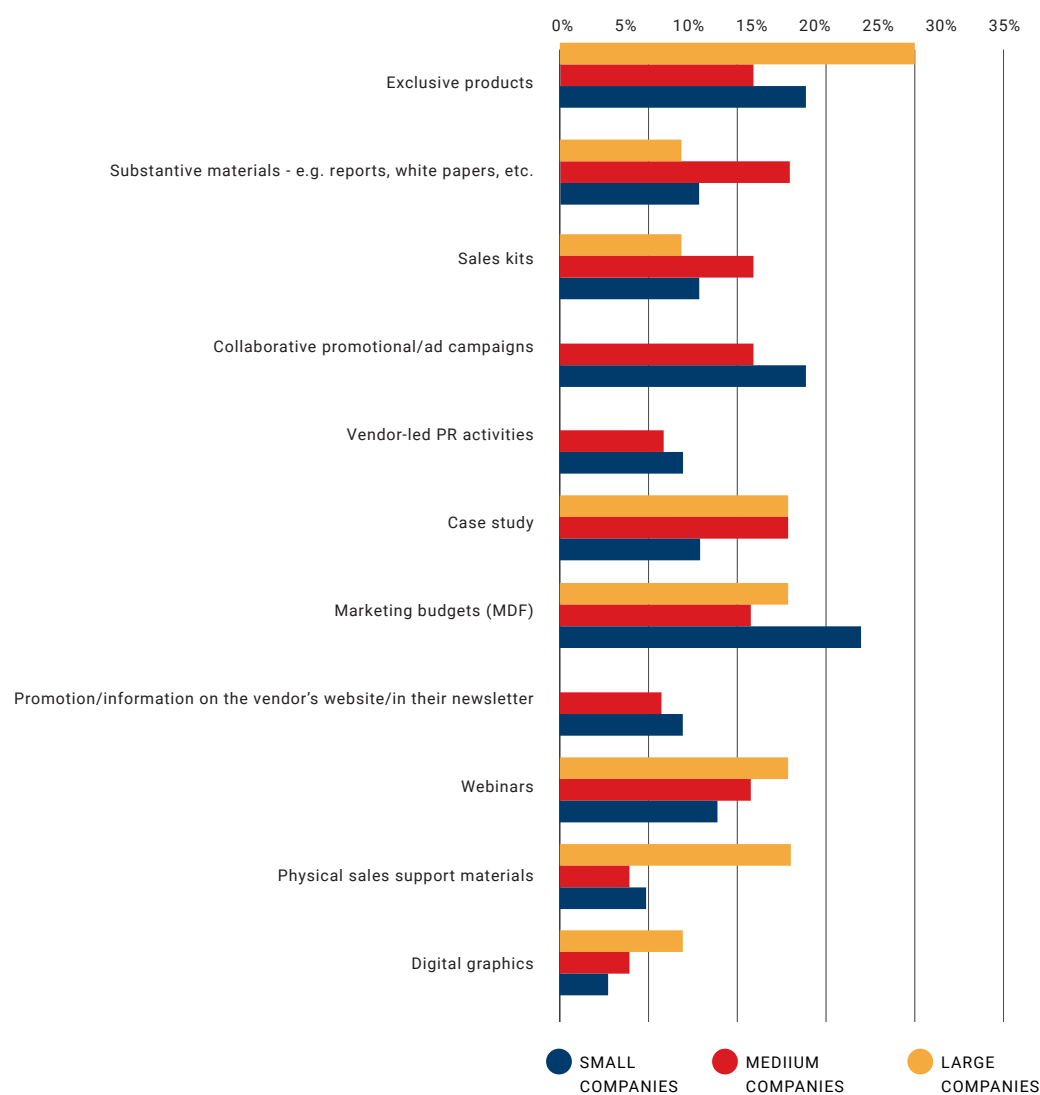
The most effective forms of channel partner marketing support, according to resellers



The respondents were also asked about CPMS tools they **lack** the most. Small companies would most often point out **MDF budgets**, **collaborative promotional/ad campaigns** and **exclusive products**. Medium and large companies mainly lack **exclusive products**, then **case study**, as well as **MDF budgets** and **webinars** tied in the third place.



Which forms of channel partner marketing support resellers lack the most?

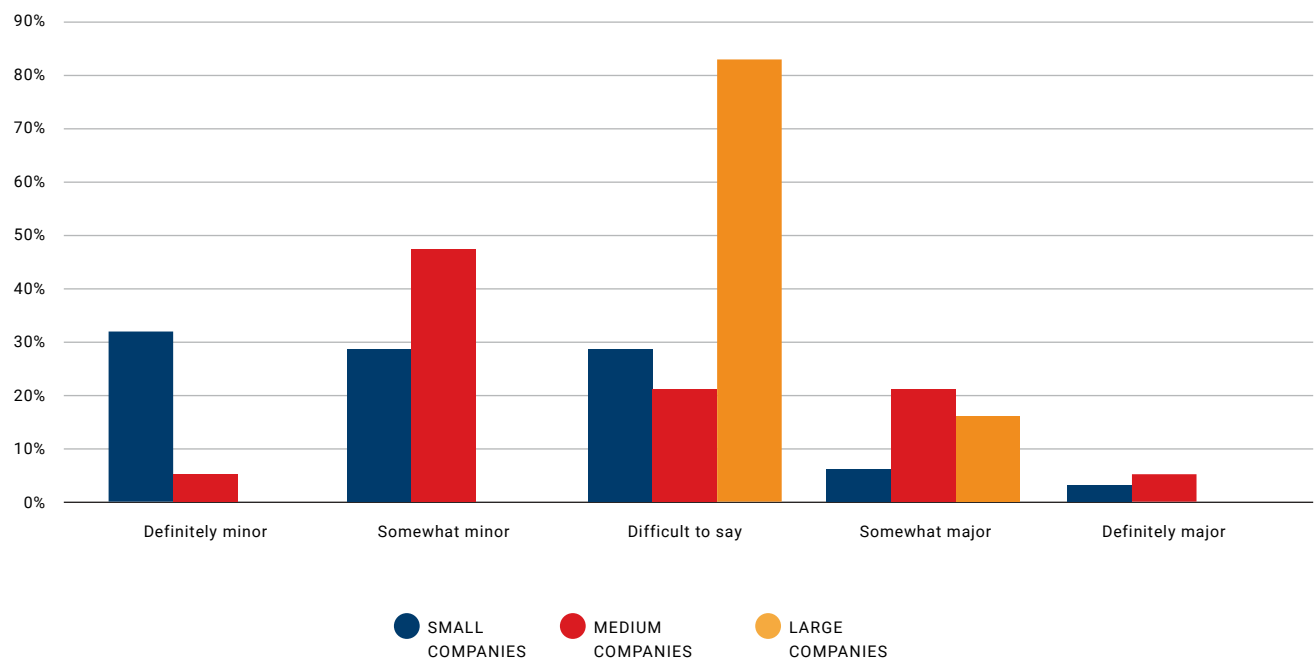


# CMPS share in business marketing activities

The share of CPMS-related actions in marketing activities of companies has been verified by the study as well. Over half of respondents (52%) pointed out that it constitutes **a minority** of all activities, while 16% say that it covers **a majority** of them.

For small companies, the proportions were as follows: 61% (minority) and 10% (majority). In the case of medium and large companies it was 40% (minority) and 24% (majority). Thus, **medium and large companies clearly base their marketing operations on CPMS more often than smaller ones.**

What part of marketing activities is covered by channel partner marketing support?

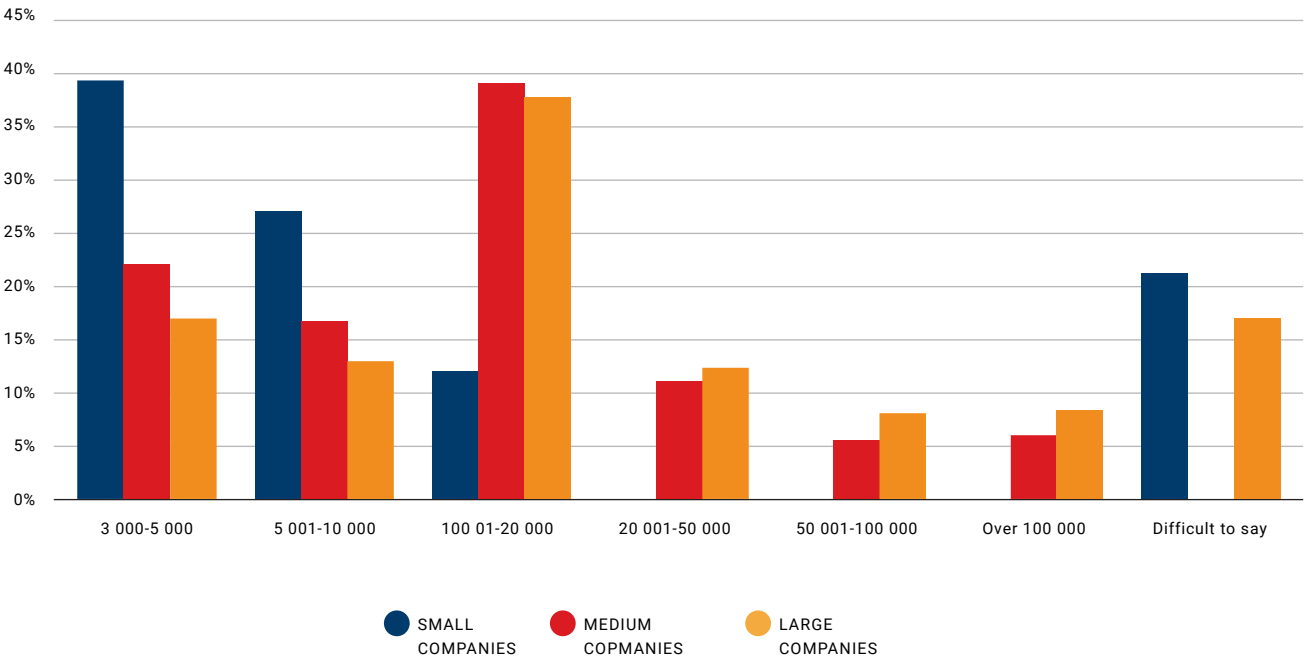


# Effective value of CPMS

One of the questions in the survey was to point out the effective, quarterly value of CPMS in the context of the respondent's company. Nearly 40% of **small business representatives** stated a value between **3 000 PLN and 5 000 PLN**, while 27% claimed it to be in the range of 5 001 PLN to 10 000 PLN. No one pointed out a value higher than 20 000 PLN.

When it comes to **medium and large companies**, 37% of the respondents consider the range from **10 000 PLN to 20 000 PLN the most effective**, and a third of the answers regarded a sum **higher than 20 000 PLN**.

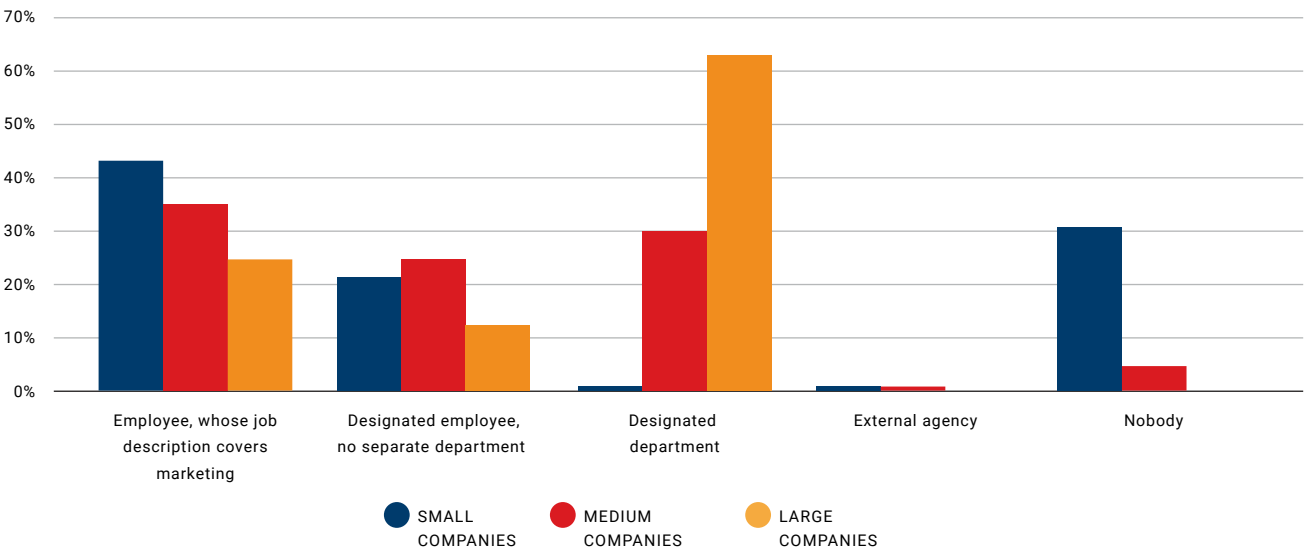
What financial value of channel partner marketing support is effective?  
(quarterly, using PLN)



Responsible for marketing in business

The respondents were additionally asked about the responsibility for marketing activities in their companies. In 40% of the cases the responsibility for marketing lies on **an employee whose job description covers this area**. Every fifth company has a **designated marketing employee** and every eight has a **designated marketing department**. In as many as 23% of companies **nobody handles marketing**, but this concerns mostly small companies – this situation applies to nearly a third of them.

Who is responsible for marketing in reseller companies?





# Summary

The results of the study show that a considerable part of small reseller companies – the ones most numerous on the market – have a significant potential to activate marketing cooperation with vendors. They don't receive external support and sometimes don't carry out any activities in this area.

Vendors are more keen to reach out to their large partners, who clearly base their marketing operations on CPMS. They have better possibilities to utilize the provided support and their positive results may have a satisfying effect on sales to a larger degree. Their activity also covers the B2B sector more often, where marketing operations tend to be challenging and such support is more required.

Smaller partners don't seem to have excessive expectations, as shown by the sums of effective quarterly CPMS value pointed out. They would like to have a level of freedom in their marketing activities, which can be achieved by participation in MDF programs. Large and medium companies have similar expectations, but they put a bigger emphasis on expert and substantive support.

Diversifying marketing support and including smaller companies that are ready to utilize it may be an idea worth considering for vendors. At the same time, resellers could increase their chances to receive marketing support through a more significant participation in contacts with people responsible for the vendor's marketing operations. A larger activity in the B2B sector may prove helpful as well.



**Piotr Sarota**

CEO & public relations consultant

SAROTA PR

*Vendors sharing their marketing resources with resellers in a way that's efficient and smart may give a competitive edge in the sales channel.*

*This effect may be achieved if the vendor-reseller cooperation is based on dialogue, trust and sharing of experience. Vendors that are able to listen to their partners' needs can expect those supported with knowledge and marketing resources to show more creativity and involvement while selling products of a particular brand to their clients. Resellers actively looking for new areas of cooperation with vendors, and those that are able to make sales through the received tools, may systematically gain larger and more advanced support.*

*Therefore, good communication is the recipe for an optimal cooperation and success for both parties. We hope that our study will serve as an incentive for it to become even better and more beneficial.*



**Tomasz Gołębiowski**

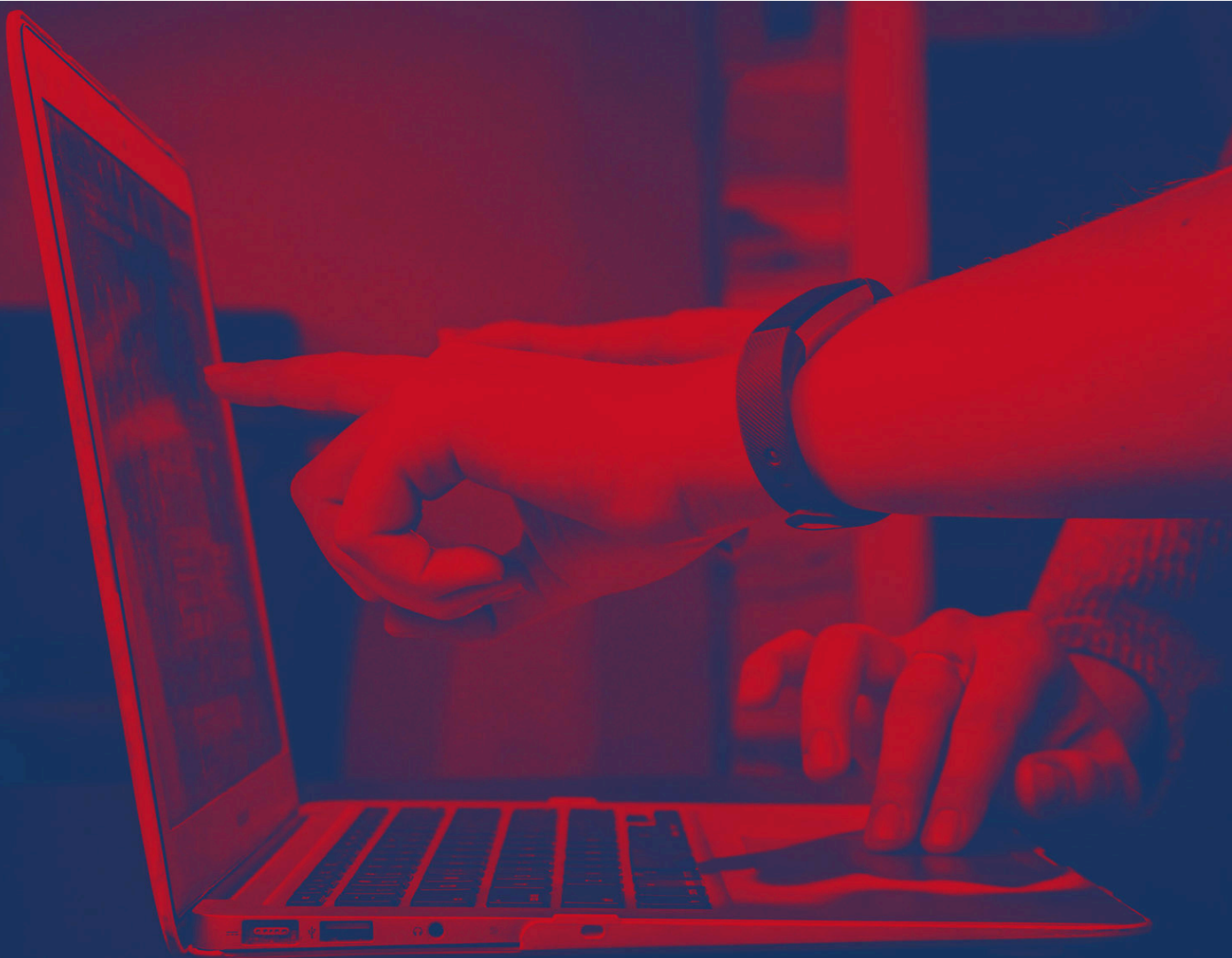
Editor in Chief

CRN POLSKA

*Polish IT companies are a very diverse group of entrepreneurs who have a significant and – in my opinion – undervalued impact on the development of the economy, keeping in mind in particular that no other industry is developing as quickly as IT and the sellers for years have been forced to constantly learn, face new business models and blaze the trail on previously undiscovered markets. On one hand they form a certain elite of the Polish economy, but on the other they act under constant pressure, expecting from their suppliers – vendors and IT distributors – a lot of support in daily activities in a very competitive market.*

*Moreover, there weren't enough initiatives with a goal to examine the preferences and needs of this particular group of entrepreneurs – Polish IT resellers and integrators. The study conducted jointly by Sarota PR and CRN Research in October 2018 on the subscribers of the CRN Polska magazine is the first initiative of this kind, but not the last one. All the following ones will be taken with this in mind: the voice of even the smallest Polish IT company has to be heard and taken into consideration by the key vendors and distributors.*

*If such studies will increase the quality of cooperation in the Polish IT sales channel, then not only suppliers, sellers and users will benefit from it, but the whole Polish economy, which – as long as it wants to compete on the global market – has to be innovative. And that is a goal worth fighting for.*



[WWW.SAROTA.PL](http://WWW.SAROTA.PL)

[WWW.CRN.PL](http://WWW.CRN.PL)