



ENCODE, INC. UTILIZES A FULL RANGE OF AVNET PROGRAMS TO INTRODUCE CLIENTS TO THE POTENTIAL OF IBM SECURITY, COLLABORATION AND PORTAL TOOLS.



Encode is an information technology consulting firm that specializes in cross-brand integration of IBM portal, security, data and messaging solutions for large enterprise and small to midsize businesses.

Encode is headquartered in Freehold, New Jersey.

Regardless of size, industry or level of IT expertise, the pressure on businesses to continually improve data security, strengthen customer and employee collaboration and enhance access to information and applications is constant, but the resources these organizations have available to modernize their systems are limited.

That's where Avnet partner and IBM Premier Business Partner, Encode, Inc., with its IBM-centric consulting and technical expertise, comes in, providing a solution that is both IBM software and integration-based, implementing it and showing clients ROI in both the long and short-term.

Leveraging Avnet's marketing programs pays dividends for Encode

Through its strategic utilization of Avnet's marketing, financing and pre-sales technical programs, Encode—a highly technical company with limited marketing resources—gains access to powerful mechanisms for effectively communicating and delivering on its extraordinarily deep knowledge of IBM Tivoli, IBM Lotus Domino and IBM WebSphere. This ability to be pro-active and sophisticated in its approach to marketing is central to Encode's relationship with IBM.

The company's IBM product knowledge is critical to making it a "go-to" resource for IBM, but so too is its focus on new business development. IBM not only refers existing customers to Encode for integration and implementation services, they look to Encode to drive new IBM footprints through webcasts, seminars, special events and ongoing lead generation campaigns. It's in executing these activities that Encode's Avnet relationship pays clear-cut bottom-line dividends.

"We leverage our Avnet partnership in a lot of ways," says Steve Shumansky, Encode's Vice President and General Manager, for whom the label 'Value-Added Distributor (VAD)' had real meaning as he evaluated competing IBM VADs for Encode in 2004. "We can purchase software through anybody, but we were looking for a distributor relationship where there

would literally be additional value. And there are a number of ways that Avnet goes well beyond that basic distributor role and has become a true partner."

On the business development side, Avnet is actively helping Encode execute several marketing tactics, such as webcasts, per year, allocating not only financial resources to co-fund the projects but human resources to generate attendance. Avnet is also helping to fund various long-duration telemarketing and direct mail campaigns.

Marguerite McCluskey, Encode's business development manager, believes that commitment and ability to drive marketing activity to open IBM "white-space" opportunities is a major differentiator between the Encode and IBM's other consulting partners. "We're not just waiting for IBM to push the business here. With Avnet's help, we're pushing from the back-side, bringing new business, and not just fulfilling the needs of existing IBM customers."

Avnet Resource Alliance program funds sales staff expansion

While webinars, events and telemarketing are valuable tools for expanding the number and quality of prospects in Encode's pipeline, transforming those opportunities into new business requires a qualified sales and consulting staff. Through Avnet's Resource Alliance Program, a program whereby Avnet helps fund new hires and new certifications in order to enable partners to reach agreed upon revenue targets, Encode hired two new sales people in 2007. "Avnet has literally invested in Encode," says Mr. Shumansky. "Of course, the terms of the agreement mean we've got performance expectations to meet from the standpoint of driving additional software revenue in the SMB marketplace, but this represents a very unique commitment on Avnet's part."

Avnet's value to Encode's sales organization doesn't end there, however. While Encode is a strong technical organization,



“Avnet’s marketing, technology and pricing specialists work with us to build everyone as a client, and once they’ve become a client Avnet will do anything they can do to help us meet their needs.”

—Marguerite J. McCluskey, *Business Development Manager, Encode, Inc.*

sales staff does participate in training and certification programs and sometimes calls on Avnet technical resources during the sales process.

Avnet Receivables Services Attachment program opens large account possibilities

And as deals move through the sales cycle, Avnet’s Receivables Services Attachment (RSA) Program provides Encode and companies of similar size with access to a critical resource necessary in overcoming what could otherwise be an insurmountable barrier to gaining new business, particularly in accounts making large software purchases – financing. “Through the RSA program, Avnet actually finances the deal and holds the paper with the customer, although the customer sees the invoice from Encode,” says Mr. Shumansky. “That allows us to have much greater purchasing power than we would have for a company our size.” Encode generally utilizes the RSA program when a particular deal exceeds the half-million dollar threshold.

Encode delivers for UNICCO

Though Encode is constantly leveraging this range of Avnet programs, as well as a cross-section of IBM programs, the partnership remains virtually seamless from the client’s point of view. In 2007, Encode was nominated for the IBM Beacon Award by one of its clients, UNICCO, and subsequently won the award for Best Service Management Tivoli Solution.

UNICCO is a best-in-class integrated facilities service provider to customers in a wide variety of markets, including corporate/commercial, plant services/manufacturing, education, retail, government, financial institutions and public venues. The company employs 18,000 people and operates throughout North America and Puerto Rico, maintaining customer facilities by providing everything from janitorial service to operations and maintenance, landscaping, lighting, and office services.

UNICCO needed to streamline the creation of user identities for nearly 1,500 widely dispersed operations people, administrators and staff who require remote access to the corporate data system centrally located in the UNICCO’s Newton, Massachusetts headquarters. They also needed to more efficiently manage those IDs as new employees are hired, as employees leave or as they change responsibilities within the company. Security was a paramount concern as well, as the ID is used to determine who is granted access to what information across the organization.

The company’s two system administrators, both highly skilled and highly paid, performed the task of creating each identity – a time-consuming 47-step process, subject to human error and expensive both in terms of the direct IT administration costs and the inefficient use of valuable IT resources.

After evaluating several competing products, UNICCO selected IBM Tivoli Manager Express (TMX) product as their identity management solution and Encode as the technology consultant that could help them implement TMX—the first installation of that product worldwide—within the 5-day window the company had established.

“Encode’s consultant knew Tivoli ID Manager Express inside-and-out; he was a top-gun,” says William Jenkins, UNICCO’s Senior Director of IT. “He helped us obtain the knowledge we needed to be self-sufficient, which is very important to the success of our operation. Our IT staff is thrilled with the results we’ve achieved.”

Those words represent strong affirmation of Encode’s business model. “Each of our consultants tends to be a black belt in his or her particular field,” says Ms. McCluskey. “And whether the client is strong in the technology arena and knows what they need or they require more of a consultative approach on the front-end, we’re able to drill down to the core business issue and resolve it through our in-depth knowledge of IBM software.”

After implementation, UNICCO was able to increase the number of users with fewer resources by establishing a central point to administer user rights, automate the user provisioning and de-provisioning process, enhance security, address compliance needs, increase user and IT efficiency and reduce IT administration costs.

