

Lower down the ladder

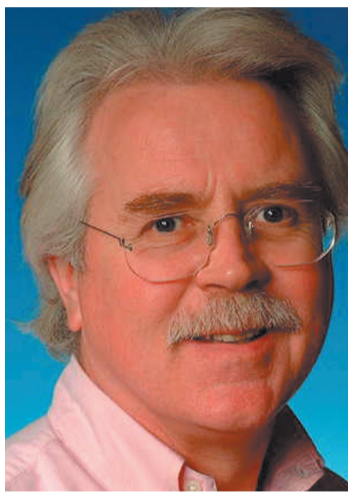
UK channel partner managers get less recognition than their US cousins, despite the channel's growing importance, writes **Keith Humphreys**

VENDOR CHANNEL partner managers in the UK are treated unfairly in terms of status and recognition, while their salary is meagre in comparison with their counterparts in the US.

A recent survey in the US revealed that the average partner manager's salary is \$145,300 (£112,000), of which 72 per cent is base and 28 per cent variable. On average, a high-tech partner manager is relatively mature (41 years old), has accumulated 14 years of industry experience, has worked at the company for about four-and-a-half years and is well settled in their current job, having been in that position for more than two years. Almost everyone has a degree, and more than one-third have a master's.

In the UK, channel partner directors of only the largest vendors receive a salary of more than £100,000. While they enjoy some additional benefits – such as a car or car allowance and additional holiday entitlement – the average salary is only three-quarters that of their US counterparts.

On both sides of the Atlantic, partner managers have seen a



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significant increase in the importance of resellers to their company over the past few years. However, they have not always seen a corresponding increase in budgets or headcount, and they are often asked to do more with the same or even fewer resources.

Competition is also increasing steadily. As prices drop and some

products become more commoditised, partner managers have to get resellers to sell more units every year to achieve the same revenue levels.

Status and recognition are major factors that are holding back the progression of channel partner managers in the UK. Staff who are involved in direct sales receive more recognition and those involved in marketing receive even greater recognition.

It appears that the closer to the end-user the manager is, the higher their status and recognition. This leaves channel-focused managers clamouring for attention.

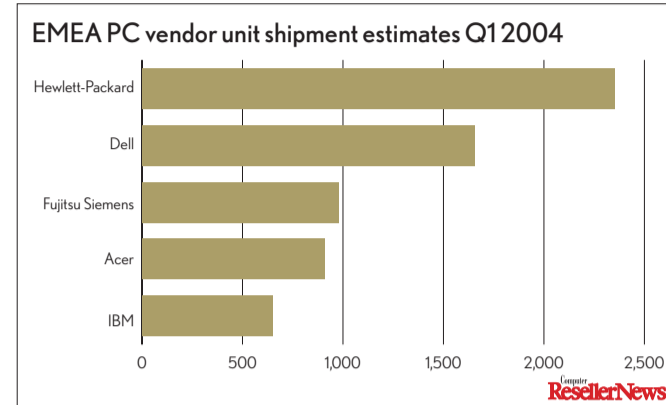
The lack of training for channel partner managers is a major reason they are held back. In fact, if you use Google to search for 'partner manager education', you experience a near-Googlewhack moment because only two items are displayed. So how can channel-focused managers rise to the top if there are no courses for partner managers? Are we baptising them by fire?

EuroLAN Research recently announced a partnership with the Technology Channels Group of Silicon Valley to coordinate its workshop training methodology in the UK. In the first one-day course on 10 June in association with CRN, managers will learn how to map channels-to-market opportunities, increase partner revenues, produce effective marketing programmes, select better and more productive partners and align the company behind partner revenue growth.

Remember the old adage: if you give a man a fish he can eat for a day, but teach a man how to fish and he can eat for a lifetime.

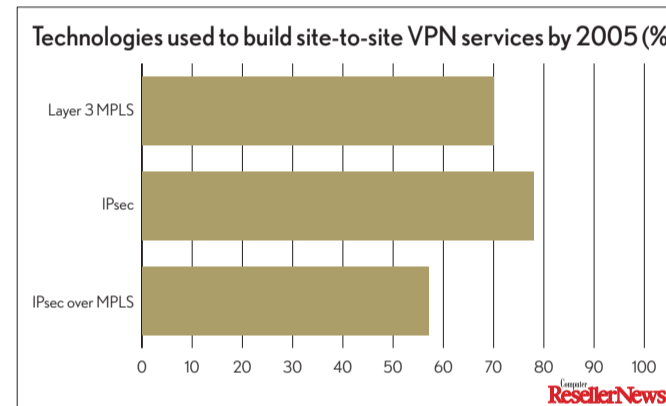
Keith Humphreys is managing consultant at EuroLAN Research.
www.eurolanresearch.com
(01202) 670 170

PCs pick up pace



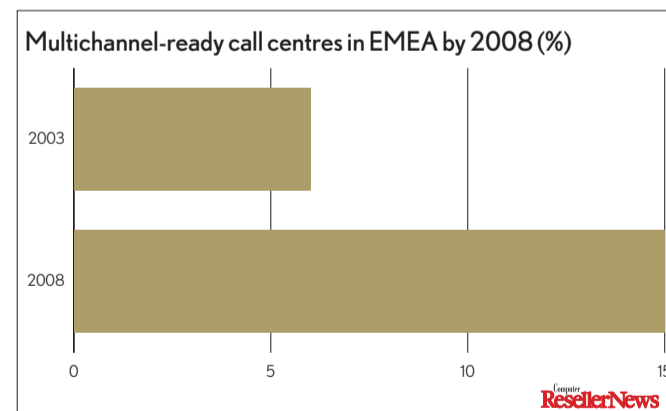
The EMEA PC market saw a 17 per cent increase in shipments in the first quarter of 2004, compared with the same period in 2003, according to Gartner. A total of 14.9 million PCs were shipped in that period, driven by aggressive pricing and strong demand among professionals.

MPLS holds VPN key



Service providers in Europe, North America and Asia will invest heavily in VPNs in the coming year, with 70 per cent of respondents in an Infonetics survey using Multiprotocol Label Switching (MPLS) as the key technology. IP security use will stay at 78 per cent, and IPsec over MPLS will double.

Centres of attention



The total number of call centres in EMEA is expected to grow by more than 50 per cent between now and 2008, according to Datamonitor. Such centres are adapting quickly for web chat, email and Short Message Service use. Smaller centres will account for 55 per cent of the market by 2008.

Average US partner manager compensation by size and type of company and department (\$)

Company revenue	Hardware	Software	Services	Marketing	Sales
Under 1m		101,667	115,500	116,000	110,000
Under 25m	163,000	143,519	237,778	130,455	180,385
Under 100m	122,778	166,615	165,000	127,889	169,706
Under 500m	125,824	135,762	109,375	110,235	163,333
Under 1bn	140,333	126,667		123,400	173,200
Over 1bn	138,111	157,730	160,900	114,744	202,500
Overall average	134,309	144,698	157,250	118,735	169,365

Average age of US partner manager by size and type of company and department

Company revenue (\$)	Hardware	Software	Services	Marketing	Sales
Under 1m		45	46	43	50
Under 25m	37	41	47	43	41
Under 100m	40	44	37	44	39
Under 500m	38	40	36	38	39
Under 1bn	40	35		36	39
Over 1bn	40	41	44	40	47
Overall average	39	41	42	40	41

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