

A hand is shown holding a blue chess piece, likely a king, positioned above a chessboard. The chessboard is filled with white chess pieces, some of which are lying on their sides, suggesting a game in progress or a strategic move. The background is a blurred cityscape.

## Four Critical Steps to a Successful and Sustainable Incentive Program that Your Competitors Will Envy

### The Story of Effective vs Ineffective Program Management

Why one manufacturer achieved overwhelming success with their incentive program, while their competitor floundered.

## INTRODUCTION

### Incentives are a proven, motivating force for any successful sales incentive program.

Rewards and recognition for positive performance have the power to drive a sales team to reach higher and achieve more – and that means more highly engaged reps and greater revenue for you. When you consider the positive impact of incentive programs on business outcomes, a program that recognizes and engages sales reps for the long term should be a priority.

### So, how do you build an incentive program that is both effective and lasting?

A set it and forget it approach will doom any effort to failure. Maintaining long term participant engagement will enable you to grow revenue at a lower cost, so it is important to build your program for the long haul.

## CASE STUDY

The following is a study of effective versus ineffective program management and how the outcomes differed dramatically.

### *Which company do you want to be?*



Manufacturer #1:

**MOMENTUM-FUELED SUCCESS**



Manufacturer #2:

**COMPLACENT NON-PERFORMER**

Two manufacturers in the same market and industry offered similar incentive programs to the same channel reseller audience during the same period of time.

**Manufacturer #1 was successful.**

**Manufacturer #2 was not.**

While Manufacturer #1 continued to invest in driving engagement and therefore becoming best in class, Manufacturer #2 assumed they would be successful simply by copying the same program structure, but never worked to fuel its success or gain market presence. The program comparisons and accompanying results outlined in the coming pages prove how complacency guarantees failure.

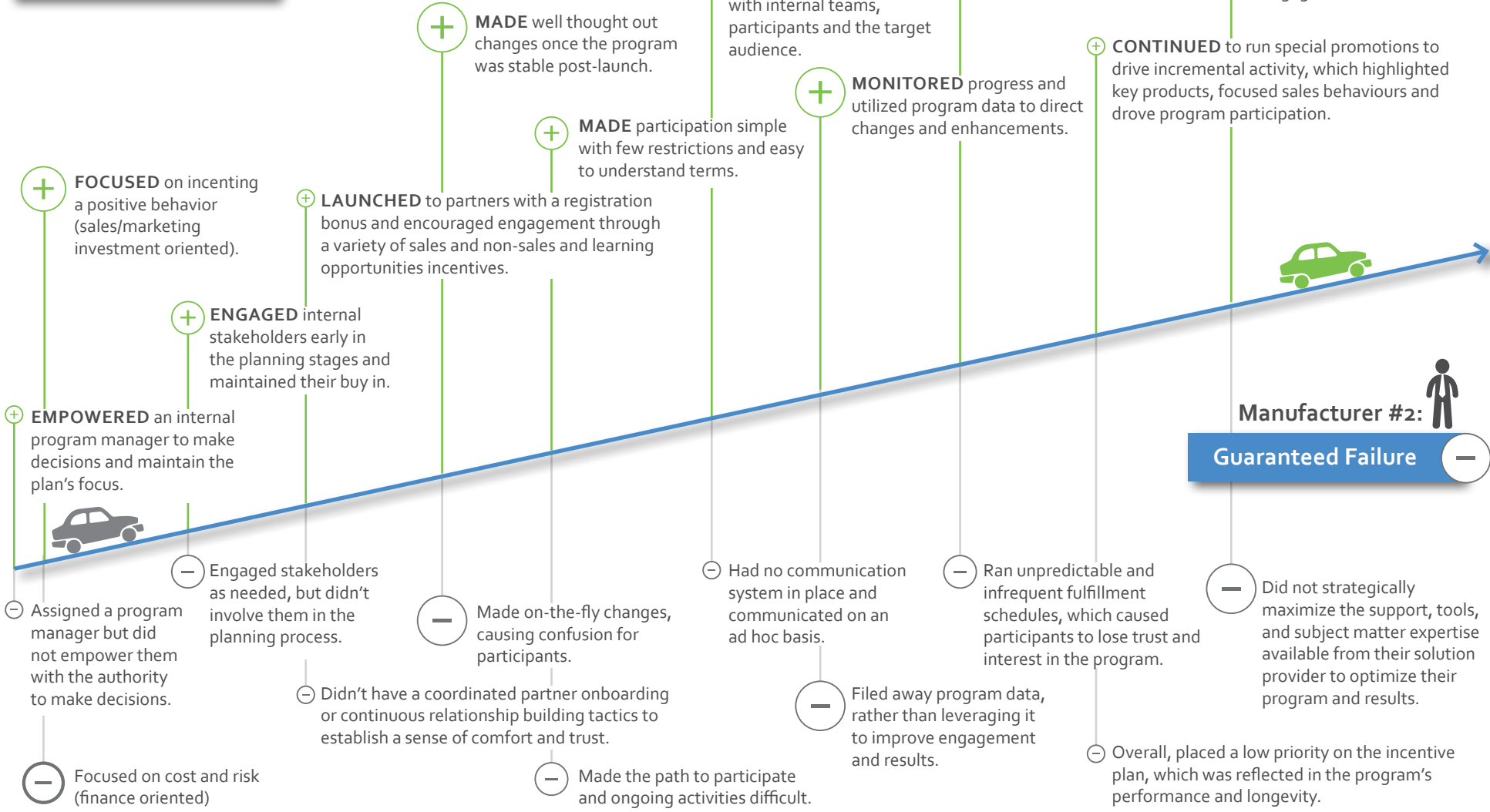
# CHANNELASSIST<sup>+</sup>

*Influence. Enable. Reward.*



**Manufacturer #1:**

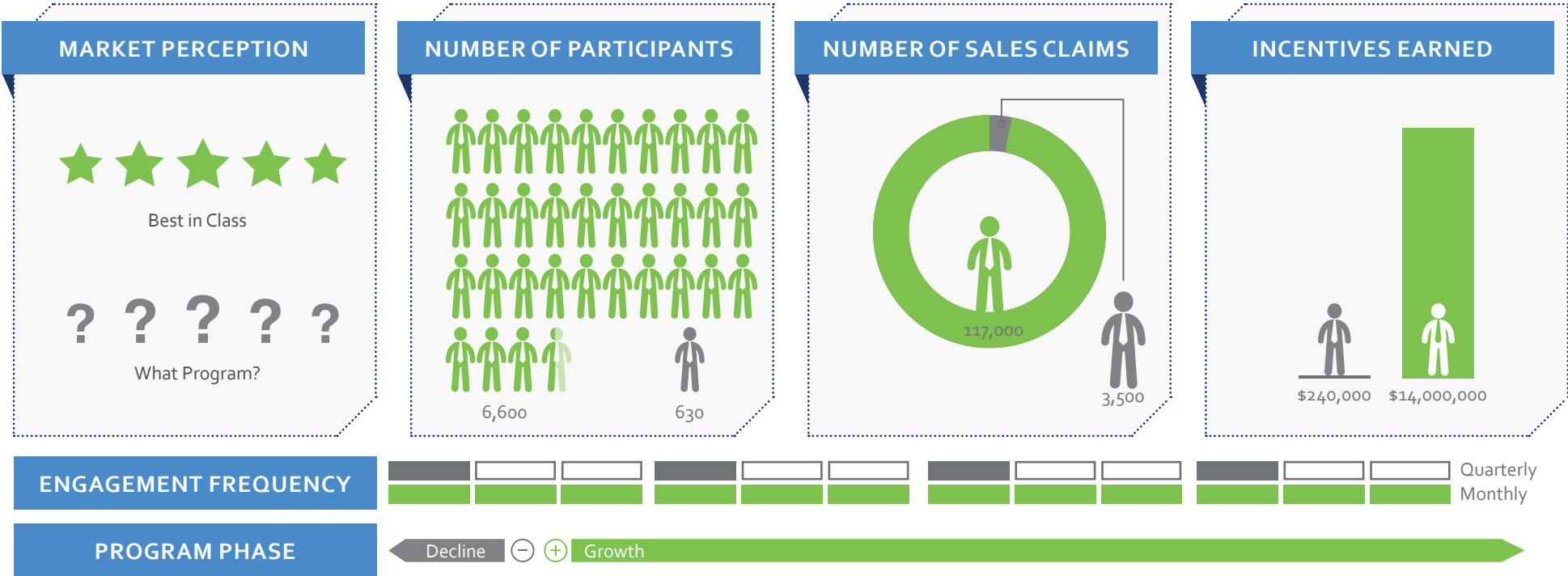
## The Road to Success



## Guaranteed Failure

**Manufacturer #2:**








## How to Avoid Becoming Manufacturer #2:


### DEVELOPING YOUR OWN SUCCESSFUL INCENTIVE PROGRAM TO MAXIMIZE RESULTS

Launching an incentive program is the easy part. Maintaining the program takes work. Just because you build it, doesn't mean they will come – and stay. Manufacturer #2 learned this the hard way. Many great companies have launched well thought out incentive plans with the right mix of features, benefits and participant enticements, but the hard work lies in growing the program and maintaining participant interest. Building a strong, sustainable program is much like building a fire:

- 

Set up a strong foundation with the right mix of materials before lighting
- 

Light the fire with an effective heat source
- 

Fan it to build the flames
- 

Keep feeding it proper fuel in proper increments, monitor the changing conditions and make adjustments.

## SOLUTION

### 4 Critical Steps to a Successful and Sustainable Incentive Program

As you saw with Manufacturer #1, keeping a program 'fired up' takes work, but by following these four critical steps, you can launch and *sustain* a successful incentive program.



#### 1. PLAN YOUR PROGRAM SET THE FIRE'S FOUNDATION

Ensuring you have a solid foundation for your incentive program with all the right elements and the right stakeholders on board will set you up for success. Focus on the needs of all participants, not just the noise of the most demanding ones. Remember, you're creating a lasting incentive program to engage all sales reps. Make your program simple enough for everyone to participate. Sales reps need to be free to focus on selling, so incentives must be easy to understand, motivating to them, easily tracked and achievable.



#### 2. EXECUTE YOUR PLAN EFFECTIVELY LIGHT IT UP

You have your plan and now it's time to execute it. Change is difficult for everyone. Roll out your incentive program one step at a time, introducing components in smaller modules. Not only will this help participants grasp and embrace your program, it will also help you keep it fresh. Create advocates out of your best members and enlist their help with the onboarding process to encourage the participation of their peers. Build a regular communication schedule that participants find timely and relevant, and remember to refresh messages and offers frequently.



#### 3. PROMOTE AND DRIVE DESIRED ACTIVITY FAN THOSE FLAMES

This is the exciting part! Keep reps interested and get them fired up by giving recognition throughout the entire sales cycle. Make the program your core resource for participant education and take every opportunity to reinforce your brand and build loyalty. Reward reps for passing tests and/or earning certifications that develop their competency with your brand. When your reps become enthusiastic and loyal advocates, they go out of their way to sell your products, first.



#### 4. MONITOR ACTIVITY, BE PREDICTABLE AND INCENT THE RIGHT BEHAVIOR DON'T STOP FEEDING THE FIRE

As your program matures, be sure to leverage captured data to generate informed enhancements, drive higher engagement and continued program growth. Have a qualified "SuccessTeam" on board to monitor changing conditions and make informed adjustments. Remember to reward participants in a timely manner to encourage continued and high engagement rates, and leverage those rewards to create predictability in your sales cycle and encourage participants to lead with your brand.

## CONCLUSION

Manufacturer #1 mastered these four critical steps and ensured the success of their program by planning it with the needs of their entire rep base in mind, executing a strong launch plan, promoting and driving desired activity and monitoring and incenting the right behaviour at the right time. Manufacturer #2, on the other hand, remained a complacent non-performer. They lacked dedicated support and continuous program building tactics. Their complacency doomed their program to failure.

**You can build a lasting, successful incentive program, achieve your desired business outcomes and drive sales growth.**

You don't have to go it alone; by working with an incentive solution partner, with an industry leading platform and a dedicated success team, you can achieve the results you want.

**With our platform, services and white glove support, we can help you to design, implement, manage and measure your incentive program.**

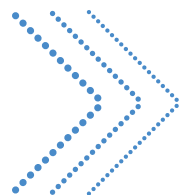
We'll help you build it right and keep the fire going on an incentive program that engages sales reps and drives revenue for the long term.

### About ChannelAssist

ChannelAssist is the pioneer of online employee engagement and incentive program management. Since 1997, they have delivered client-specific employee engagement, sales incentives and custom channel partner loyalty programs for companies from mid-size to enterprise. Their software and services drive engagement through incentives, education, recognition and rewards to drive sustainable loyalty and revenue growth. For more information, visit [www.channelassist.com](http://www.channelassist.com).

# GET STARTED

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