

Services and Support

Customer Reference Program

Sales reference guide

Overview

The IBM Retail Store Solutions Customer Reference Program provides customers with the opportunity to participate in a variety of marketing and networking opportunities – including case studies, press releases, speaking engagements, and high-profile meetings with analysts and the media. These activities are an important part of our communications efforts, helping us demonstrate how solutions from IBM and IBM Business Partners enable retailers to address critical business challenges in an on demand world. For IBM customers, participation in the program offers the chance to extend their network of industry contacts, expend their relationship with IBM, and increase their market and industry visibility worldwide.

Key benefits for IBM

Customer references help us close business. They enable us to demonstrate how IBM Retail Store Solutions can help companies solve critical business challenges. Specifically, the Customer Reference Program creates opportunities for IBM to:

- *Demonstrate IBM technology and thought leadership*
- *Build industry awareness of successful solutions*
- *Enhance customer loyalty and satisfaction*

Key benefits for Business Partners

The Customer Reference Program helps spotlight IBM Business Partner achievements in the marketplace. IBM Business Partners are a valuable resource for potential Customer Reference Program accounts, particularly those involved in the Ready for IBM Retail Store Innovations application validation program.

Key benefits for IBM customers

IBM customers in retail can improve their competitive position by leveraging the IBM reputation. Participation provides customers with a platform for promoting their success, fueling their own marketing initiatives, and gaining valuable access to other retail industry experts. Other advantages our retail customers can realize include:

- *Broadened marketplace exposure and industry visibility*
- *Access to enhanced product, services and support resources*
- *Networking opportunities with peers, industry analysts and media*

How to submit customer references

1. Convince your customers to participate. We need accounts of all sizes and geographies, and we strive to cover the full spectrum of specific solutions.
2. Submit into the Customer Reference Materials Database (IBM employees only). When your customer says 'yes,' access the Customer Reference Materials Database submission form online at:
<http://w3.ncs.ibm.com/crmd.nsf/submit?openform>. (To see what you will be asked during the online submission process, select 'Download a Copy of the Questions' in the upper left portion of the screen.)
3. Update the database entry every six months (or more often if significant changes occur within the account). As the submitter, you will receive an automated e-mail to alert you when an update is needed. Simply follow the link provided and make the necessary changes. (Please note: If database entries are not kept current, they will be archived.)



What is the IBM Customer Reference Materials Database?

Stocked with IBM customer references across all lines of business, this database provides up-to-date information on successful IBM reference accounts. Customer references are among our most valuable sales assets for closing new business – and we're committed to making it as easy as possible for you to access the customer reference information you need. Because we have added enhanced features, you can access more useful tools and information than ever before. Database materials include case studies, press releases, success stories and customer references.

You can view more than 3,000 database entries – including IBM Retail Store Solutions customer reference accounts. Each entry includes valuable information, such as customer background, business challenges, solution implementation details, IBM Business Partner involvement, competition, win factors and customer benefits.

IBM employees can access IBM customer references and submit new references through the IBM Customer Reference Materials Database on the IBM intranet:
<http://w3.ncs.ibm.com/crmd.nsf/home?OpenForm>

IBM Business Partners can access IBM customer references in the IBM Customer References Materials Database through the IBM PartnerWorld® Web site:

- *Select 'Selling Resources'*
- *Select 'Customer References & Presentations'*
- *Select 'IBM Customer Reference Database'*
- *Select 'Customer reference database (PWSS – Use IBM ID)'*

For more information

To learn more about how your retail customers can participate in the Customer Reference Program, please contact your IBM account representative or send e-mail to rssrefs@us.ibm.com.

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