

# **Internationalization of a Finnish SaaS through the use of partnerships**

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## Abstract

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Title of the thesis <b>Internationalization of Finnish SaaS through partnerships</b>		
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Abstract <p>The purpose of this study is to try and understand how it would be possible for the case company Agendum to increase their international sales and visibility by creating a partner program. This study was conducted in co-operation with the case company and certain methods were used to get an understanding of what worked and what did not work. For example, email templates for direct sales or a more focused approach on the company as a whole.</p> <p>The theoretical part of the study focuses on the different available partnership types and a feasible option for Agendum to begin with. The suggested programs are targeted towards a SaaS company as that is what Cyberday is. A SaaS which has a pay by month pricing framework.</p> <p>The results of the study show that for the best response to occur, there needs to be a solid sales process set up that is focused on what the potential customers need from the product presented.</p>		
Keywords SaaS, Internationalization, Partnership		

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## 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Background of study

The idea for this thesis topic originated from the author's interest in cyber security awareness and the aspect of marketing this to different countries. The overall outlook was a combination of ideas thought of when conversing with the CEO (Chief Executive Officer) and COO (Chief Operational Officer) of Agendum Oy. This thesis will discuss the objectives, processes, and outcomes of what is perceived as successful and unsuccessful tactics for internationalizing a SaaS (Software as a Service). Agendum Oy has maintained a steady business in the Finnish market for several years now, but the resources and opportunities have arisen to which they are now looking to expand the business. This paper aims to locate the best way for Agendum to flourish in different International B2B (Business to Business) markets through making use of partnership models.

*"70% of Technology sales worldwide is done through partners. World's biggest tech giant into Hardware networking devices has said over the years that more than 80% of revenue comes through the channel."* (Lohar, 2018)

Agendum Oy are currently creating their service to be used in multiple languages, this, mixed with the desire to grow is what sparked the conversation for this research-based paper. As we all know the world of sales and marketing for a SaaS has changed rapidly due to companies all over the world now needing a digitalization strategy. Agendum's goal is for their management system to be used in the cybersecurity aspect of that digital transformation.

### 1.2 Agendum Oy

Agendum Oy is a Finnish-based software company. They specialize in cybersecurity and have created an ISMS (Information Security Management System) called Cyberday. It is integrated into the Microsoft Teams application. The management system helps companies to become more cybersecurity aware and compliant. Currently, they have the frameworks GDPR and ISO27001. Companies can choose to follow these guidelines lightly or press towards becoming certified in any of these areas. It automatically generates auditing reports and introduces chatbot features to remind employees that there might be an outstanding process that needs to be checked and completed. Figure one below is a screenshot of a screen in the Cyberday application. This is where the chatbot feature mentioned above will remind you of outstanding tasks or activities that need attention. Figure two is a screenshot from the Cyberday webpage, here is all the information about the product, pricing, and

webinar registration is available. The company's headquarters is located in Tampere, Finland, and has been operating under the name Agendium Oy since 2019.

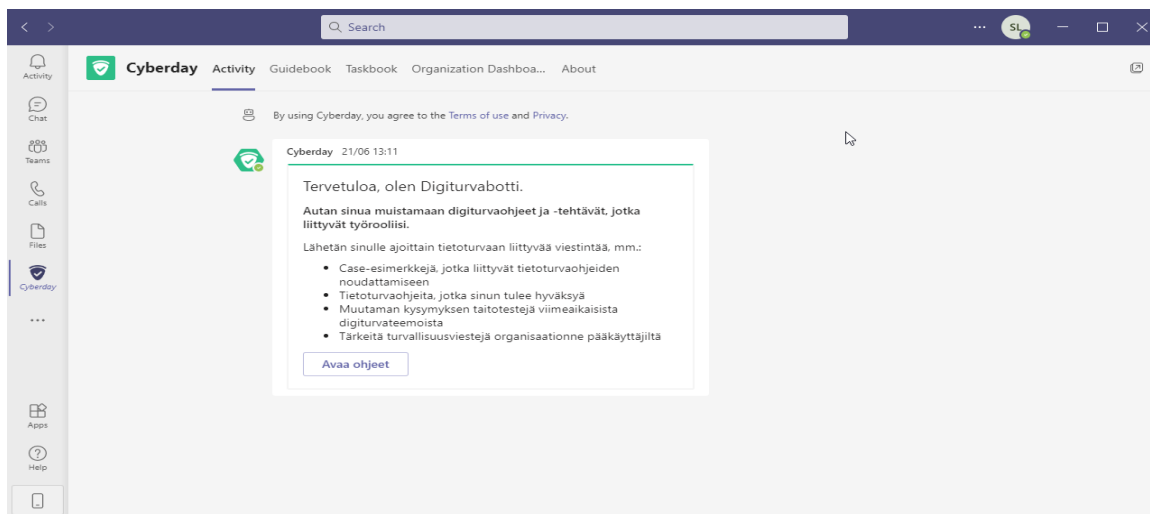


Fig.1 (Agendium, 2020)

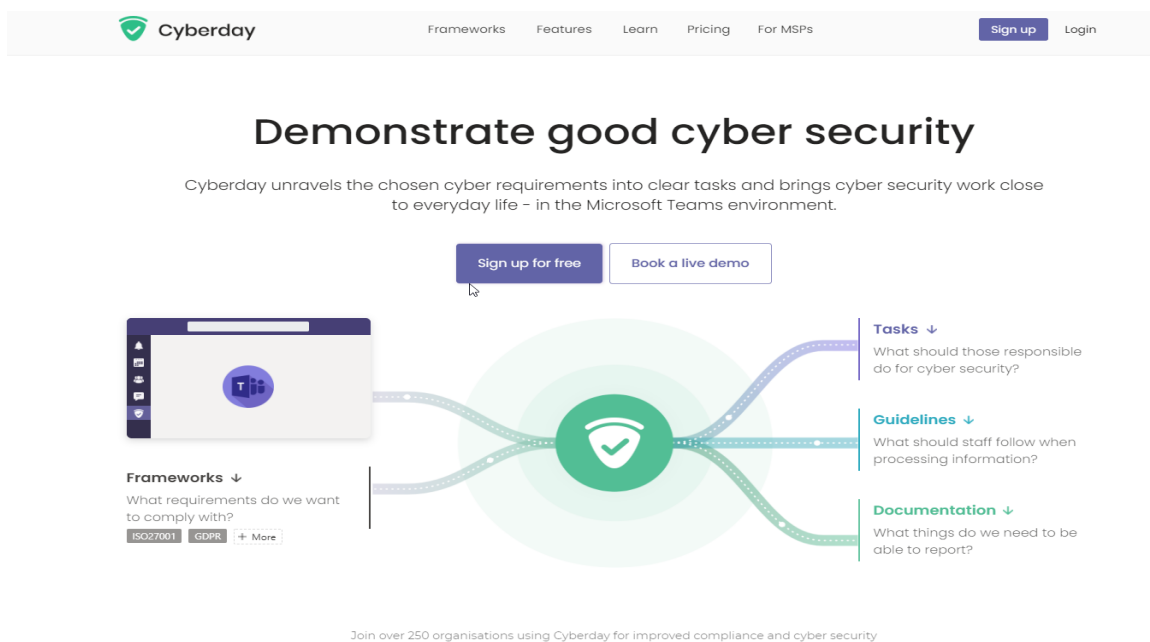


Fig.2 (Agendium, 2020)

The CEO Ismo Paananen and COO Alekski Pulkkanen are the founders of the company, and both are cybersecurity professionals. Ismo has a CIPT (Certified Information Privacy Technologist) certificate and Alekski has the CIPP/E (Certified Information Privacy Professional/Europe) certificate.

As the world progresses and cyber threats are becoming more frequent and sophisticated, more companies like Agendium are required or more companies need to be using the already available resources that companies like Agendium offer.

### 1.3 Study design

The main objective of this study is to research partnership models, compare a detailed list of companies already using a certain model and determine which path would be best for Agendium Oy to follow.

The research will be focusing on B2B engagement and the process of finding the right partner for Agendium Oy. This is vastly different from the normal sales approach. Instead of contacting heads of companies to try sell them a solution for their company in specific, they will be contacted in the hope Agendium Oy can provide a working solution for their clients, so the partnered company is able to generate a larger customer base and introduce new consulting services packaged together with Cyberday to create a credible service (e.g., outsourced CISO, security management-as-a-service, gap analysis etc.).

This will be achieved by finding target groups to send marketing emails to, constructing value-based emails so we can make a solid connection between the two companies and meeting with potential partners to work out a plan on how to make this partnership successful.

#### The research problem is:

How does a small SaaS company partner with companies across the world, and how do Agendium choose a working partnership model to increase security awareness and company revenue?

#### The research questions:

What partnership model is best suited to Agendium Oy?

How to determine which companies to partner with?

### 1.4 Thesis Structure

The structure of this thesis is laid out into 6 sections. Section 1 is the introduction. This will be a background to why this thesis is being written, the case company, the study design, and the research problem and questions.

Section 2 will be the research methodology. This will entail a deeper understanding of the research methods and the partnership models and types.

Section 3 will be the data collected, analysed, and summarized.

Section 4 will be the theory behind creating the program. This section will try to encompass what needs to be accomplished at Agendum to get the partnership process started. This section will outline a sales process that needs to be followed and how it connects to Cyberday.

Section 5 will be discussing the findings and try to give an overall summary.

Section 6 will be the conclusion and suggestions for future implementations and improvements.

## 2 Research methodology

### 2.1 Research methods

There are usually two different types of research approaches inductive and deductive. The deductive approach is often used with the quantitative research method. It begins with hypothesis and the aim is to prove or disprove it by means of testing. The inductive research approach creates theory by detecting and monitoring repetitive patterns. This is the reason why in this study the research undertaken in this thesis was a qualitative approach. (O’Gorman & MacIntosh 2014, 50–52, 140, 174.)

As stated by David Silverman and which is universally accepted as the definition of qualitative research.

“Qualitative research is the type of research that finds out about people’s experiences. It helps us understand what is important for people” (Silverman, David:1997).

This approach originated in social sciences, as often, when the human aspect is explored, the points in which to study can prove difficult to capture in a simple form. Therefore, using this research method will help in the evaluation of the methods tested.

The benefits of using the qualitative research method are that it allows the researcher to delve deep into the complexity of the issue. From this complexity, it is very possible to extract more meaningful and informative results. There are several ways to conduct qualitative research, the types of qualitative methods that were chosen for this study are target groups and observational techniques.

The data analysis method used was inductive. As mentioned above it is mainly considered when conducting qualitative research as it helps to recognize patterns that then leads to a conclusion. The main point is to try to develop a theory out of the data collected, thus making a move from the specific to the general.

### 2.2 Partnership models and types

Companies typically fall into 1 of 3 categories with partnerships:

- Referral partner
- Strategic/Technical partner
- Sales/Support partner





Fig.3 (Goradia, 2020)

Figure three above attempts to describe the best practices when it comes to building a partnership program. First, you need to validate the reasons for which you are building the partnership program. Define what types of partners you would like to be in that partner program and how it should be structured. Set up a clear recruitment strategy and how many partners you want to recruit. You then need to set your partners up for success by enabling them to sell and market your product as well as you do. Locating what matters most to the partner is an important part of the path to success. Growing together can be achieved by utilizing each other's strengths and resources, this can be with co-marketing campaigns and avoiding channel conflicts. The final stage is to analyze each partnership and compare them to the goals set in the beginning, keep track of ROI (return on investment), and evaluate if the costs are worth the benefits.

#### **Referral:**

Having a referral partner means that they will generate and send leads for your product. The benefit for the referral partner is that for every lead sent on, there will be a commission involved for them. The industry standard is around 20% on the customers subscription if they stay signed up.

#### **Strategic/Technical:**

The idea behind a technical partnership is that both companies are working towards a common goal. The best possible solution for the customer by combining their resources and technology. Integration of both technologies can be utilized to aid with the final best solution.

#### **Sales/Support partner:**

These partners along with trying to market and sell their own product, will do the same for the partner company when it makes sense. This may also include shared training, development resources and certifications.

## 2.3 Partnership models

There are a variety of different models used by different companies. Some companies use a number of those different models to give themselves a better chance of appealing to a wider lead pool. Using several different models is also used to find the best solution for their clients.

After researching several models, I have chosen eight of which I feel to be of most relevance.

### **Solutions Partner program**

The solutions partner program consists of an ecosystem of companies that offer a variety of services whether it be marketing, sales, web design or CRM (Customer relation management) implementation services. This is the most used program as it opens so many different pathways for the ecosystem to function and thrive. Examples of companies that successfully use the solutions partner program are Hubspot and Livechat. As added incentive for the partners to perform there is a tiered approach with Hubspot for their partners, so, €48/m being the lowest tier and €280 being the top tier where you get the most out of the entire ecosystem.

### **App partner program**

The app partner program is designed to give companies a place to share and market their newly created applications. For instance, Hubspot again offer a marketplace with over 113,000 Hubspot customers. This enables massive visibility for you application, the best part about this is that Hubspot do not charge for placing the application on the marketplace nor do they charge a commission for each download generated through the marketplace.

### **Start-up business partner program**

The start-up business partner program is aimed at start-ups. Hubspot yet again execute this plan to perfection. They offer educational resources, programming, and reduced cost. They favour the tiered approach with three different tiers ranging from approved to gold depending how many eligible applications are generated annually. This program gives a lot of options for start-ups needing a helping hand and can prove extremely beneficial.

### **Education partner program**

The education partner program is aimed at colleges, university, or any educational institutions faulty. The program supply's these institutions with the tools needed for teaching leading courses in marketing, sales, entrepreneurship, and communication.

**Affiliate program**

The affiliate program is utilized by many companies due to its ease of use and structure. The idea is that the affiliate partner receives a unique link to which referred customers use when buying a product from the partner. The affiliate partner earns commission, and the initial company gets the sales revenue.

**Global System Integrators (GSI)**

The global system integrators program is used to deliver highly scalable application solutions that meet the demands of the larger organizations. The program and its participants design and implement strategies to help clients achieve their mission.

**Technology Alliances**

Technology alliance is for companies who want to create integrated and enhanced business-smart solutions for their product with the partners. This partnership type has the potential for opening to new markets and create a new product offering. This way it is a seamless transition for clients when using the service. These are more long-term strategic partnerships. The company sectors typically in this category are independent software vendors (ISV), business consultants and system integrators.

**Channel**

Channel partners consist of a wide range of different business types. These partners also tend to have more transaction-oriented activities. The focus is placed on improving supply chains and creating economies of scale. Examples of channel partners are Value added resellers (VAR), original equipment manufacturers (OEM), resellers and distributors. While this is not a complete list of all the types, they are the more traditional ones.

### 3 Company data

In the below table you will find a list of companies that were researched in the collection of the data. Topics included in this table are company name, the sector in which the company specialises in, the type of partner programs they have and a link to said partner program.

The intended purpose of this data collection was to narrow the options that would be available to Agendum in the process of setting up their partnership program. This was accomplished by selecting companies that had common factors with Agendum (e.g cyber security, SaaS, Information management).

Company	Sector	Partnership program	Partner page
Veracode	Computer and network security	Solution Global System Integrators Technology alliance	<a href="https://www.veracode.com/partners">https://www.veracode.com/partners</a>
Coverity	Computer Software	Solution Technology alliance Standards and policy collaborations Open-source community initiative	<a href="https://www.synopsys.com/software-integrity/partners.html">https://www.synopsys.com/software-integrity/partners.html</a>
Micro Focus	Information Technology & Services	Reseller Service provider Distributor Technology alliance Training partner Strategic alliances	<a href="https://www.microfocus.com/en-us/partners">https://www.microfocus.com/en-us/partners</a>
Trustwave	Computer & Network Security	PartnerOne Technology alliance	<a href="https://www.trustwave.com/en-us/partnerone/">https://www.trustwave.com/en-us/partnerone/</a>
Rapid7	Computer & Network Security	Sales Technology alliance	<a href="https://www.rapid7.com/partners/">https://www.rapid7.com/partners/</a>
Citrix	Computer Software	Sales Technology alliance Distribution Certification	<a href="https://www.citrix.com/partner-programs/">https://www.citrix.com/partner-programs/</a>
Qualys	Computer & Network Security	Technology alliance Services	<a href="https://www.qualys.com/partners/">https://www.qualys.com/partners/</a>
Fortinet	Computer Networking	Technology alliance	<a href="https://www.fortinet.com/partners/partner-program/become-a-fortinet-partner">https://www.fortinet.com/partners/partner-program/become-a-fortinet-partner</a>
Juniper	Computer Networking	Partner advantage Cloud and managed services Reseller	<a href="https://www.juniper.net/us/en/partners.html">https://www.juniper.net/us/en/partners.html</a>

		Technology alliance Strategic alliances Solution	
Radware	Computer Networking	Channel Cloud Technology alliance	<a href="https://www.radware.com/partners/">https://www.radware.com/partners/</a>
Barracuda Networks	Information Technology & Services	Channel Technology alliance Managed service provider (MSP)	<a href="https://www.barracuda.com/partners/overview">https://www.barracuda.com/partners/overview</a>
Snyk	Computer & Network Security	Technology alliance Channel Intel Marketplace	<a href="https://snyk.io/partners/">https://snyk.io/partners/</a>
Comodo	Information Technology & Services	Managed security service providers MSP Value added reseller and distributor Technology alliance	<a href="https://www.comodo.com/partners/">https://www.comodo.com/partners/</a>
Cobalt	Computer & Network Security	Referral	<a href="https://cobalt.io/partners?utm_source=website-navigation">https://cobalt.io/partners?utm_source=website-navigation</a>
F5	Information Technology & Services	Technology alliance VAR	<a href="https://www.f5.com/partners">https://www.f5.com/partners</a>
Imperva	Computer & Network Security	Channel Technology alliance	<a href="https://www.imperva.com/partners/technology-alliance-program-tap/">https://www.imperva.com/partners/technology-alliance-program-tap/</a>
IS Decisions	Computer Software	MSP	<a href="https://www.isdecisions.com/MSP-access-security-software/">https://www.isdecisions.com/MSP-access-security-software/</a>
NetMotion	Computer Software	Technology alliance Resellers Network operators	<a href="https://www.netmotionsoftware.com/partners/technology-alliances">https://www.netmotionsoftware.com/partners/technology-alliances</a>
KoolSpan	Computer & Network Security	Channel	<a href="https://koolspan.com/trustcall-channel-program/">https://koolspan.com/trustcall-channel-program/</a>
Check Point Software Technologies	Computer & Network Security	Channel Technology alliance	<a href="https://www.checkpoint.com/technology-partners/">https://www.checkpoint.com/technology-partners/</a>
ManageEngine	Computer Software	Technology alliance	<a href="https://www.manageengine.com/partner.html">https://www.manageengine.com/partner.html</a>

Varonis	Computer Software	Technology alliance MSP Channel	<a href="https://www.varonis.com/partners/technology-partners/">https://www.varonis.com/partners/technology-partners/</a>
Spirion	Computer Software	Global alliance (MSSP, Technology, Solution)	<a href="https://www.spirion.com/spirion-partner-program/">https://www.spirion.com/spirion-partner-program/</a>
Wandera	Computer & Network Security	Technology alliance Reseller Solution	<a href="https://www.wandera.com/partners/">https://www.wandera.com/partners/</a>
TrendMicro	Computer & Network Security	Channel Technology alliance	<a href="https://www.trendmicro.com/en_fi/partners/channel-partners.html">https://www.trendmicro.com/en_fi/partners/channel-partners.html</a>
Endpoint Protector	Computer & Network Security	Distributor Reseller OEM	<a href="https://www.endpointprotector.com/partners/become-partner">https://www.endpointprotector.com/partners/become-partner</a>
BMC	Information Technology & Services	Solution providers and distributor Independent software vendors and developers Xcelerate program	<a href="https://www.bmc.com/partners/become-bmc-partner.html">https://www.bmc.com/partners/become-bmc-partner.html</a>
Proofpoint	Computer & Network Security	Channel Technology alliance Archive extraction GSI & MSP Social media protection	<a href="https://partners.proofpoint.com/English/">https://partners.proofpoint.com/English/</a>
Equinix	Internet	Referral Reseller	<a href="https://partnercentral.equinix.com/s/?language=en_US">https://partnercentral.equinix.com/s/?language=en_US</a>
Forcepoint	Computer Software	MSSP Technology alliance Authorized training center	<a href="https://www.forcepoint.com/partners/forcepoint-global-partner-program">https://www.forcepoint.com/partners/forcepoint-global-partner-program</a>
Stealthbits	Computer Software	Channel Technology alliance	<a href="https://stealthbits.com/partners/partner-registration/">https://stealthbits.com/partners/partner-registration/</a>
Zix	Computer Software	Reseller MSP & VAR	<a href="https://zix.com/partners/become-a-partner">https://zix.com/partners/become-a-partner</a>
Mimecast	Information Technology & Services	Reseller Technology alliance MSP	<a href="https://www.mimecast.com/partners/">https://www.mimecast.com/partners/</a>
Sophos	Computer Software	Reseller MSP Cloud	<a href="https://www.sophos.com/en-us/partners.aspx">https://www.sophos.com/en-us/partners.aspx</a>

DuoCircle	Information Technology & Services	MSP	<a href="https://www.duocircle.com/become-a-partner">https://www.duocircle.com/become-a-partner</a>
NeoCertified	Internet	Reseller	<a href="https://neocertified.com/resellers/">https://neocertified.com/resellers/</a>
FireEye	Computer & Network Security	Reseller Technology alliance Cyber Risk GSP	<a href="https://www.fireeye.com/partners.html">https://www.fireeye.com/partners.html</a>
Vircom	Computer Software	Reseller MSP Affiliate Distributor	<a href="https://www.vircom.com/become-a-vircom-partner/">https://www.vircom.com/become-a-vircom-partner/</a>
Cybonet	Computer & Network Security	Sales Technology alliance	<a href="https://www.cybonet.com/en/partners/become-a-partner">https://www.cybonet.com/en/partners/become-a-partner</a>
Untangle	Computer & Network Security	VAR MSP/MSSP OEM Distributor	<a href="https://www.untangle.com/partners/">https://www.untangle.com/partners/</a>
GFI	Computer Software	Reseller Technology alliance OEM Distributor	<a href="https://www.gfi.com/partners/partner-program-intro">https://www.gfi.com/partners/partner-program-intro</a>
Tufin	Computer & Network Security	MSSP Channel Service delivery Technology alliance	<a href="https://www.tufin.com/partners/become-partner">https://www.tufin.com/partners/become-partner</a>
NetVizura	Computer Software	Business Technology alliance	<a href="https://www.netvizura.com/partners">https://www.netvizura.com/partners</a>
FireMon	Computer Software	Reseller MSP Technology	<a href="https://www.firemon.com/resellers-distributors/">https://www.firemon.com/resellers-distributors/</a>
Progress	Computer Software	Solutions	<a href="https://www.progress.com/partners/become-a-partner">https://www.progress.com/partners/become-a-partner</a>
Vectra	Computer & Network Security	MSSP Service Reseller	<a href="https://www.vectra.ai/partners/overview">https://www.vectra.ai/partners/overview</a>
Bricata	Computer & Network Security	MSSP Technology alliance VAR	<a href="https://bricata.com/partners/">https://bricata.com/partners/</a>
Indeni	Computer Software	Reseller Technology alliance MSP	<a href="https://indeni.com/partner-program/">https://indeni.com/partner-program/</a>
AlgoSec	Information Technology & Services	Channel Technology alliance Service	<a href="https://www.algosec.com/become-partner/">https://www.algosec.com/become-partner/</a>

Centrify	Computer Software	Channel MSSP OEM	<a href="https://www.centrify.com/partners/centrify-reliance-partner/">https://www.centrify.com/partners/centrify-reliance-partner/</a>
Perimeter 81	Computer & Network Security	Reseller Channel	<a href="https://www.perimeter81.com/partners">https://www.perimeter81.com/partners</a>
Infoblox	Computer & Network Security	Reseller MSP Technology alliance	<a href="https://www.infoblox.com/partners/">https://www.infoblox.com/partners/</a>
Plixer	Computer Software	Technology alliance VAR	<a href="https://www.plixer.com/partners/">https://www.plixer.com/partners/</a>
CrowdStrike	Computer & Network Security	Technology alliance Store OEM Solution Cloud Service	<a href="https://www.crowdstrike.com/partners/">https://www.crowdstrike.com/partners/</a>
Extreme Networks	Computer Networking	Distributor Reseller Technology alliance Consultant relations	<a href="https://www.extremenetworks.com/partners/">https://www.extremenetworks.com/partners/</a>
Pulse Secure	Computer Networking	Technology alliance Reseller MSP	<a href="https://www.pulsesecure.net/partners/">https://www.pulsesecure.net/partners/</a>
Auconet	Computer Software	Solution	<a href="https://auconet.com/partners/">https://auconet.com/partners/</a>
Forescout	Computer & Network Security	Distributor Reseller Service delivery Technology alliance GSI Industrial automation and control systems (ICS)	<a href="https://www.forescout.com/partners/">https://www.forescout.com/partners/</a>
WatchGuard	Computer & Network Security	Channel OEM MSSP Technology alliance Distributor	<a href="https://www.watchguard.com/wgrd-partners">https://www.watchguard.com/wgrd-partners</a>
SonicWall	Computer & Network Security	Technology alliance Distributor	<a href="https://www.sonicswall.com/partners/">https://www.sonicswall.com/partners/</a>
ExtraHop	Computer & Network Security	Panorama partner program (VAR, Global alliance, MSP)	<a href="https://www.extrahop.com/partners/">https://www.extrahop.com/partners/</a>
Esker	Computer Software	Reseller Technology alliance Distributor Referral	<a href="https://www.esker.com/become-an-esker-partner/">https://www.esker.com/become-an-esker-partner/</a>



Voimakas Software	Computer Software	Affiliate Reseller Distributor	<a href="https://www.voimakassoftware.com/partner.html">https://www.voimakassoftware.com/partner.html</a>
Devart	Computer Software	Integration Industry Reseller	<a href="https://www.devart.com/company/partners.html">https://www.devart.com/company/partners.html</a>
Rocket Software	Information Technology & Services	Independent software vendor (ISV) System integrators MSP Reseller Fulfilment Referral MultiValue cloud accredited	<a href="https://www.rocketsoftware.com/become-rocket-partner">https://www.rocketsoftware.com/become-rocket-partner</a>
Temasoft	Computer Software	Solution	<a href="https://temasoft.com/partners/">https://temasoft.com/partners/</a>
Stellar	Computer Software	Affiliate Reseller Distributor OEM	<a href="https://www.stellardatarecovery.com/partners/partners.php">https://www.stellardatarecovery.com/partners/partners.php</a>
FlowTraq	Computer & Network Security	Consulting Solution Technology alliance	<a href="https://www.flowtraq.com/about/flowtraq-partner-program/">https://www.flowtraq.com/about/flowtraq-partner-program/</a>
Wind River	Computer Software	Solution	<a href="https://www.windriver.com/partners/partner-program">https://www.windriver.com/partners/partner-program</a>
42Gears	Computer Software	Strategic OEM Channel	<a href="https://www.42gears.com/partners/">https://www.42gears.com/partners/</a>
SAS	Computer Software	Managed analytic service provider (MASP) Reseller OEM	<a href="https://www.sas.com/en_us/partners/about-our-program.html">https://www.sas.com/en_us/partners/about-our-program.html</a>
Allstate Identity Protection	Information Technology & Services	Channel	<a href="https://www.infoarmor.com/channel-partners">https://www.infoarmor.com/channel-partners</a>
Quest Software	Computer Software	Solution	<a href="https://partners.quest.com/English/">https://partners.quest.com/English/</a>
defence-byte	Information Technology & Services	Affiliate	<a href="https://www.defence-byte.com/partners">https://www.defence-byte.com/partners</a>
Brivo	Information Technology & Services	Technology alliance Reseller	<a href="https://www.brivo.com/partners/why-partner-with-brivo/">https://www.brivo.com/partners/why-partner-with-brivo/</a>

Eagle Eye	Information Technology & Services	Channel	<a href="https://www.een.com/reseller/reseller-program-overview/">https://www.een.com/reseller/reseller-program-overview/</a>
Recorder Future	Computer & Network Security	VAR Technology alliance OEM MSSP	<a href="https://www.recorded-future.com/partners/">https://www.recorded-future.com/partners/</a>
RiskIQ	Computer Software	Technology alliance MSSP Channel	<a href="https://www.riskiq.com/partners/">https://www.riskiq.com/partners/</a>
VMware	Computer Software	Technology alliance Partners connect	<a href="https://www.vmware.com/partners/work-with-vmware.html">https://www.vmware.com/partners/work-with-vmware.html</a>
Loom Systems	Computer Software	Solution	<a href="https://www.loom-systems.com/partner-program">https://www.loom-systems.com/partner-program</a>
Alert Logic	Computer & Network Security	Referral Reseller MSP Technology alliance	<a href="https://www.alertlogic.com/partners/">https://www.alertlogic.com/partners/</a>
AT&T Cybersecurity	Computer & Network Security	MSSP Solution provider	<a href="https://cybersecurity.att.com/partners">https://cybersecurity.att.com/partners</a>
Flowmon	Computer Networking	MSP Reseller Technology alliance Distributor	<a href="https://www.flowmon.com/en/partners/find-a-partner">https://www.flowmon.com/en/partners/find-a-partner</a>
LogRhythm	<a href="https://www.linkedin.com/company/logrhythm/">https://www.linkedin.com/company/logrhythm/</a>	Reseller	<a href="https://logrhythm.com/partners/resellers-and-mssps/become-a-partner/">https://logrhythm.com/partners/resellers-and-mssps/become-a-partner/</a>
ThreatConnect	Computer & Network Security	Technology alliance MSSP Channel Community	<a href="https://threatconnect.com/partner-signup/">https://threatconnect.com/partner-signup/</a>
Swimlane	Computer & Network Security	Technology alliance	<a href="https://swimlane.com/partner/technical-alliances/">https://swimlane.com/partner/technical-alliances/</a>
Siemplify	Computer & Network Security	Channel Technology alliance	<a href="https://www.siemplify.co/partners/">https://www.siemplify.co/partners/</a>
Basis Technology	Computer Software	System integrators Solution providers Business developers	<a href="https://www.basistech.com/partners/">https://www.basistech.com/partners/</a>

OPSWAT	Computer Software	Channel	<a href="https://www.opswat.com/partners/channel-partners">https://www.opswat.com/partners/channel-partners</a>
DFLabs	Information Technology & Services	MSSP System integrators OEM Affiliates Distributor Reseller	<a href="https://www.dflabs.com/partners/become-a-partner/">https://www.dflabs.com/partners/become-a-partner/</a>
Damain-Tools	Internet	Channel Technology alliance MSSP OEM	<a href="https://www.domain-tools.com/partners/partner-program">https://www.domain-tools.com/partners/partner-program</a>
Service-Now	Computer Software	Sales Services Technology alliance MSP Public sector	<a href="https://www.servicenow.com/partners.html">https://www.servicenow.com/partners.html</a>
Greathorn	Computer & Network Security	Technology alliance Channel MSP/MSSP	<a href="https://www.greathorn.com/partners/technology-integration-alliance-partners/">https://www.greathorn.com/partners/technology-integration-alliance-partners/</a>
Cyberint	Computer & Network Security	Technology alliance Channel	<a href="https://partners.cyberint.com/">https://partners.cyberint.com/</a>
IntSights	Computer & Network Security	Channel Technology alliance MSSP	<a href="https://intsights.com/partners">https://intsights.com/partners</a>
Entrust	Computer Software	Channel Technology alliance	<a href="https://www.entrust.com/partners/become-partner">https://www.entrust.com/partners/become-partner</a>
Netwrix	Computer Software	Reseller Technology alliance MSP	<a href="https://www.netwrix.com/netwrix_partner_program.html">https://www.netwrix.com/netwrix_partner_program.html</a>
SiteLock	Internet	Agency MSP Channel	<a href="https://www.sitelock.com/solutions/msp-telco">https://www.sitelock.com/solutions/msp-telco</a>

### 3.1 Source of data collected

The data above was collected by sifting through company websites that had a correlation to cybersecurity. The companies collected all had partner programs implemented, some more extensive than others, for example, some companies only had one program like MSPs while others had a variety of programs like MSP, affiliate, reseller, MSSP, and so on. The

companies that had a variety of partnership programs also in many cases had pdf files link within the program explaining the process, details, and rewards in detail.

### 3.2 Data Analysis

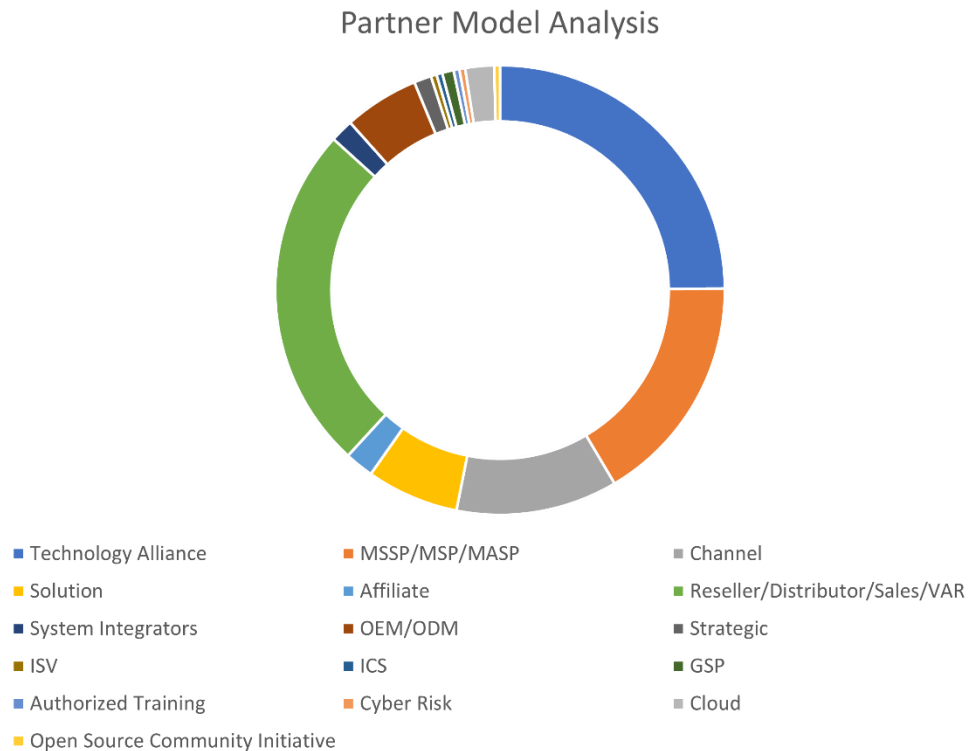


fig.4

The data collected was compiled and is represented in figure four above. It consists of 99 different companies with an even more varied list of partnership programs. All these companies also vary in speciality, they consist of data security, computer software, technology services, computer and network security, physical security, and application security. As Agendum Oy is a software company and has created an application to help combat the threats within the cyber security field, the data collected was the most relevant in trying to create a working partner program for them. As you can see from figure 1 above the most popular program types are Technology alliance, reseller/distributor/sales/VAR and MSP/MSSP/MASP. Out of the 99 companies researched 60 use technology alliance, 60 use reseller/distributor/sales/VAR, and 40 take the MSP/MSSP/MASP approach.

Going by this data Agendum will lean towards a reseller program while potentially offering a tiered rewards system that will be heavily focused on giving the best value to the partners.

Agendum will find partners that are willing and have the resources needed to source customers that need Cyberday. Although this cannot be done by this data alone, there are other factors that need to be considered. For instance, Cyberday is a very affordable with its basic monthly package coming in at €108, because of this it would not make sense for Agendum to offer compensation to their partners as the pay-out would not be substantial enough at for example 20% of sale price.

## 4 Program creation

### 4.1 Implementation of the study

The number of cyber-related crimes and average number of claims is rising quite rapidly from year to year. This can in turn make the internationalization of a SaaS difficult, it adds to the difficulty when the SaaS that is trying to be internationalized is related to cyber security. Why? Well, as the number of cyber-crimes is increasing, companies are looking for solutions to combat this. Companies would prefer to seek a local provider rather than an international one as the trust factor is there. Then adding the sales process for a company as small as Agendum will also add to the struggle.

The process of internationalizing Cyberday started in April of 2021. We started with targeting software companies in Ireland to subscribe to the Cyberday product. This progressed to software companies in Germany, Sweden, Denmark, and the United Kingdom. The leads were generated from a variety of online tools for example Sales navigator, G2 and Clutch.io. The approach was to cold email the potential clients first creating some value for them then follow-up emails containing added value. The initial email read:

*Hi [first\_name],*

*The reason for my outreach today is that I see from your LinkedIn you work at Kneat Solutions. Given your role as Chief Technology Officer, my assumption is that finding the best cyber security solution for your company falls on your shoulders.*

*In short, Agendum Ltd has developed a cyber security compliance management application that integrates with Microsoft Teams, ensures you are meeting compliance standards and future-proofs Kneat Solutions.*

*We have re-envisioned how ISO 27001 can be used by companies to build better security:*

- ***Running security operations through daily tasks instead of traditional compliance work using GRC systems***
- ***No Word or Excel documents, we have all the tools needed***
- ***An efficient, step by step guide towards compliance and even certification***
- ***Automatic auditing report generation***
- ***No need for consultants, as your team has all the tools and knowledge available backed by our support***

*We'd be happy to tell you more in our webinar, where we present a fascinating 15 step action plan for your company to gain a competitive edge, and take the necessary steps towards getting ISO 27001 certified.*

**Sign up here:** <https://www.cyberday.ai/webinars>. No worries if you can't make it online, we will send a link to the recording for all registered participants right after the event.

There was a low response turnover as people tend not to like unsolicited marketing emails. After a couple of months of trying this method Agendum stopped. That is when the idea of potentially finding partners to help overcome the trust barrier.

This started with building up a strong list of managed service providers across different countries. Again, a variety of tools were used to gather these leads. MSPs were targeted as it gave the best chance for Cyberday to sell to different markets. An email was sent to these MSP which read:

*Subject: MSP Collaboration for Cyber Security Tools*

*Dear [first\_name],*

*I hope you are well. Just to follow up on my previous emails.*

***We are looking for MSPs to collaborate with.***

*We have several MSP partners in Finland already, and these are some of the benefits they get from our product:*

- ***Increase their portfolio to address cyber security needs without the need for added actions/expertise***
- ***Introduce new consulting services, packaged together with Cyberday to create a credible service (outsourced CISO, security management-as-a-service, gap analysis, etc.)***
- ***Enables customers to find and correct missing parts of their cyber security program***
- ***Clarifies to their customers what section of cyber security is being managed by them.***

The management system is available in English, any framework can be added for a tailored experience for your clients, and we are the only ISMS available through the Microsoft Teams environment.

We welcome you to book a meeting for a more in-depth conversation. You only need to email or call with dates that will suit you best.

*In the meantime, have look at our product and our program for MSPs (<https://www.cyberday.ai/for-mgps>)*

Agendum received more feedback and response than that of the previous method. In that, sparked the idea of creating a more comprehensive partnership model that could be tailored to a wider range of clientele.

## 4.2 Cultivating User Excitement

To first cultivate excitement for the partner program, needs to be a clear focus and offering for current users of the service. Now in Agendum, there is only one offering that can help their customers. That offering is depending on the employee number in your company. The customer pays per month like a typical SaaS model based on if their company has 1-20 employees up 1000 employees, after that the customer needs to contact Agendum for a quote. While this pricing structure is straight forward and easy to manage it does not give the potential customers an idea of why or what this product can do for them, what for this indicates how Cyberday can solve a problem we are having?

Let's introduce a man called Clayton Christensen, this man who is known for the development of the theory of disruptive innovation. He also is accredited with the "Jobs to be done" marketing model. This model, instead of focusing on the big data science or the common factors that can be found on people buying a certain product. It focuses on the motivation behind choosing a service or buying a product. According to an article in the Harvard business review "In a recent McKinsey poll, 84% of global executives reported that innovation was extremely important to their growth strategies, but a staggering 94% were dissatisfied with their organizations' innovation performance." (Christensen, Hall, Dillion, Duncan, 2016)

The problem is that companies are so focused on finding the correlation between buyers they start to forget about the motivation behind the purchase.

How can this method be applied to Agendum? According to Daniel Nilsson the first step in creating a job to be done frame of mind is customer profiles and buyer personas. By getting a deeper understanding of your end customer is the key to successfully figuring out what the problem is that needs to be solved. Creating these profiles can be done a few ways but the one concentrated on here is the value proposition canvas created by Alex Osterwalder.



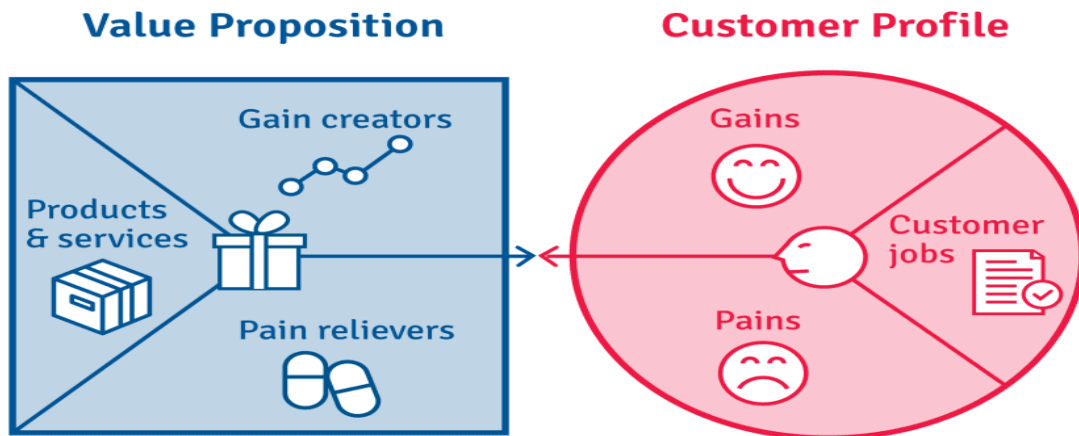


Fig 5 (Osterwalder, 2004)

As seen from figure five above the value proposition model takes the value proposition and the customer profile from the business canvas model (BMC), this allows for a more in-depth approach into customer values and needs. It begins with finding what jobs the customer need done, these jobs can have a functional, social or emotional intent. Then on to the pains, this is ant struggle the customer has before during or after the job. Lastly, the gains will be the benefits that your customer require, expect, desire or would be surprised by.

The value proposition will be designed to address the customer most important jobs, pains and gains. The problem solution fit is when the features of the value proposition perfectly match the characteristics of the customer segment profile. An example of an in-depth customer profile can be seen in figure 6 below.



## Customer Profile Telco

### Additional Details

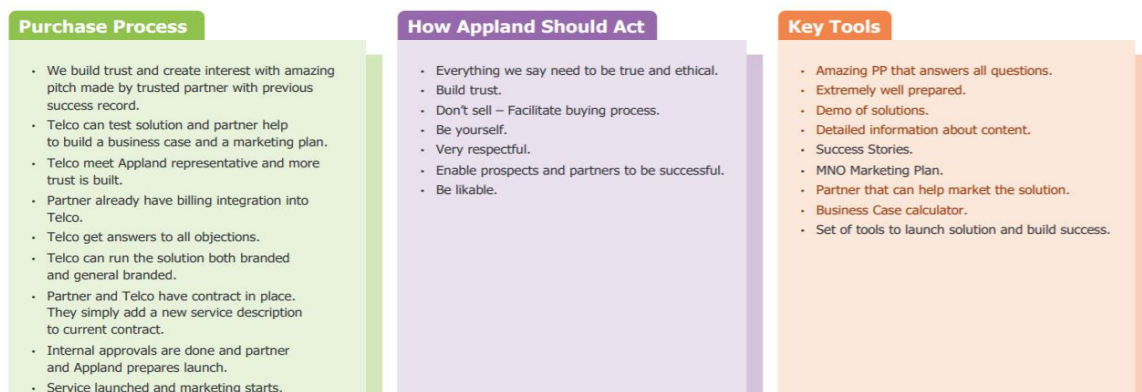


Fig. 6 (Appland, 2019)

Once this step is completed Agendum will have the insight for making a smart and effective decision into the job the customer needs to be done and how Cyberday can alleviate the strains these potential customers have.

Next is marketing as a service that is needed by everyone. The current pricing structure and option as mentioned above can be better. The company Intercom is a prime example of a company who were able to find the jobs that their product fixed for customers and pushed all their efforts into marketing those. Intercom integrated 4 products on the 1 platform Acquire, Engage, Learn, and Support. Each one of these products was targeted for a different customer mindset.

How can this be applied to Cyberday? This is completely theoretical for Cyberday but does work as can be seen by companies like Intercom and Appland.

#### 4.2.1 Implement to Cyberday

To find how to implement this strategy into a product, the question “What job do companies hire Cyberday for?”. Companies hire Cyberday to ensure that their customers data is secure. The number one cause of data breaches all over the world is human error. “In fact, 88% of data breaches are caused by human error.” (Hancock, 2020). This brought about the idea of creating three different products within the one service.

Firstly, seeing as the workforce are the main cause of data breaches, Cyberday should be tailored to be used as an educational tool. Whether you want to train the sales team, marketing team or high-level executives. Everyone in the company should be aware of the best practices to help defend against attacks regardless of what position you hold in the company.

The next option is vCISO. Virtual CISO has all the benefits of an in-house security expert but will less cost on staffing. While many companies do have a human version of a vCISO for companies to hire, Agendum will use Cyberday for these tasks.

Finally, an option for getting fully certified towards whatever framework you want (e.g ISO27001, PCI, GDPR).

The pricing structure itself does not need to change, only the way it is presented. Agendum can still charge for the number of people using the service but now companies will see the direction they want to take whether it be to educate their employees further, virtualize their CISO or become fully certified.

For the purposes of this paper the initial steps to get the partner program initiated are described.

#### 4.2.2 Relation to partner program

An important step in this process also, is step 2 create a customer centric sales process. The basis for this comes from understanding and focusing on the customer needs. What problem does the product solve for the customer. Then, building a process around solving that need for the customer.

Getting companies excited about what you are doing and enabling them to visualize using Cyberday on an everyday basis needs to be the priority. Doing this will create a want for Cyberday therefore attracting new customers, some that will be suited for the partner program. The next 12 steps in this process according to (Nilsson, 2021) 14 step processes are not entirely necessary at this stage of the process as having a solid understanding of the

value proposition and a customer centric sales process is the key to getting more potential customers signing up. So they will just be listed as follows:

1. Benchmark competitors
2. Define the types of partners
3. Success factors
4. Define motivational drivers
5. Define the motivational and engagement programmatic elements
6. Define responsibilities and expectations
7. Define a framework
8. Build internal capacities and systems
9. Define how to measure success
10. Develop marketing strategy
11. Create partner selection strategy
12. Build a focused channel partner organization

The thinking behind this is that to have a successful partnership program it is paramount that you have a solid sales process first. You need to be able to explain who your customers are and what they need from you. The same concept can then be transferred to the partner program with slight variations.

#### 4.3 Programs that suit Agendum Oy

After researching various partnerships models and programs, it has brought about the conclusion that the best models for Agendum Oy are reseller and affiliate. These programs have the best characteristics and methods to help boost Agendum's efforts in expanding. The benefits for Agendum with each program are as follows.

The reseller program has many benefits for Agendum. Firstly, this program has been proven to be an efficient way to grow your customer base quickly while being able to put in a more relaxed effort, as most of the work will be done by the reseller. Also, Agendum will be able to reduce costs in SaaS marketing when they outsource their sales to companies with their own networks. Finally, Agendum will potentially have access to competitive prices and the benefit of knowledgeable collaboration if the right partners are acquired.

An example of a company that has an excellent reseller program is MicroFocus. MicroFocus use their reseller program to build their customer base with ease. They use a tiered reward system which gets increasingly more rewarding as their partners complete certain milestones. Here is the MicroFocus reward system:

**Authorized:**

*To become an Authorized Partner requires a formal agreement with Micro Focus. Once registered you'll gain free access to our Partner Portal where you will find our on-demand sales and technical training and certification. No revenue requirements.*

**Gold:**

*Authorized Partners can achieve Gold status by completing 2 sales + 2 technical certifications within one of the six product groups. No revenue requirements.*

**Platinum:**

*To achieve Platinum status, partners must meet Gold Partner requirements by Product Group plus achieve \$1M USD in total annual new business sales. ([www.microfocus.com](http://www.microfocus.com))*

A plethora of companies use the reseller option successfully like Wandera, Juniper, and NetMotion.

The affiliate program will suit also, as Agendum is a small business now and the affiliate program requires less effort to start and maintain. This program style entails inserting your link onto the partner page, the partner then receives compensation for the promotion of your link. There are many benefits that come with the affiliate program and Agendum are in prime position to take advantage. As this program is performance based it will drive the partners to be motivated in trying to sell the product as the more referrals equals more compensation. This will lead to widening your audience as the partnering company will have their own customer base that they will be trying to entice getting your product. Looking at long-term, this program is extremely cost effective.

An example can be seen below in figure five of a successful affiliate program is created by a company called Stellar. They have developed this program to make it very lucrative for partners, offering up to 50% per sale and a dedicated affiliate partner contact. Below are the many benefits for stellar affiliate program.

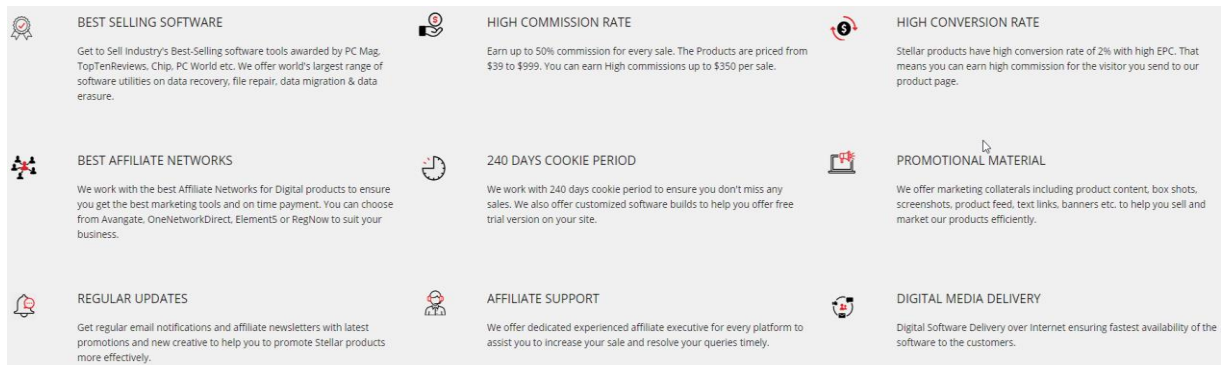


Fig.5 (Stellar, 2021)

There is the option of tailoring the above options to suit the needs and capabilities of Agendium's management system. As you can see in companies like (stationx.net and pratum.com), instead of focusing on monetary rewards for their partners they offer services to help their partners increase value in their product and help grow the customer portfolio. The services can include a virtual certified information security officer (vCISO), security management-as-a-service, as an educational tool for employees, or even providing a gap analysis feature.

The vCISO function is when you get all the benefits of having an in-house CISO like expert advice, immediate on-demand access, ability to up or downsize your resource investment but the staffing costs are reduced. For companies like Pratum and Stationx the vCISO's are in-house experts that they rent out to the partner company. In the case of Agendium, the vCISO will be the ISMS that the partner companies can use as a consulting tool or packaging together with their current set up and providing the customers with support when needed.

Partner companies can also use Cyberday as a tool for gap analysis. This is used for locating gaps or weaknesses in your cybersecurity framework currently in place within the business.

#### 4.4 The program

The below program was created in line with above data in mind. It begins with describing the company and indicated why it would be good to partner with Agendium. It then goes into describing what benefits and struggles a company would get and has with their customer base. The use of GDPR, ISO27001 frameworks and having the tool to implement these with ease is what Cyberday was created for. It then continues onto the benefits partners get through the program, the program structure and how companies can join.

# 2021

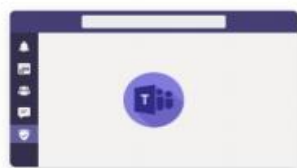
## Agendum Ltd Global Partner Program

### Demonstrate good cyber security

Cyberday unravels the chosen cyber requirements into clear tasks and brings cyber security work close to everyday life – in the Microsoft Teams environment.

Sign up for free

Book a live demo



#### Frameworks ↓

What requirements do we want to comply with?

ISO27001 GDPR + More



#### Tasks ↓

What should those responsible do for cyber security?

#### Guidelines ↓

What should staff follow when processing information?

#### Documentation ↓

What things do we need to be able to report?

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[www.agendum.com](http://www.agendum.com)



GLOBAL PARTNER  
PROGRAM

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## THE COMPANY

Agendum Oy was founded in Tampere in 2013. Our goal is to develop more digital security and new digital security experts every day.

We are developing digital security to make this possible artificial intelligence technology and we offer free information services as well as agile digital tools.

Digiturvamalli.fi is our tool for digital security management and reporting. Appcover.com is an AI -based security assistant for staff guiding you to safe operations.

## THERE HAS NEVER BEEN A BETTER TIME TO JOIN AGENDIUM.

### We are the perfect solution for your customers

As the cyber threat landscape heats up and organisations run into news about breaches "on neighbouring organisations", more and more are thinking about whether their current level of cyber security is good enough when compared to best practices.

At the same time, the compliance landscape gets continuously more complex to navigate and many end customers are requesting proof of compliance e.g. with ISO 27001, GDPR, local laws and requirements, EUCS, PCI DSS, SOC 2, NIST...

Customers are looking for a partner for overall cyber security management. We think that partner should be you - the IT partner whom the customer trusts already. And we can help you provide the service in a way that works for you.



GLOBAL PARTNER  
PROGRAM

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## WE WANT TO BE THE BEST PARTNER FOR OUR PARTNERS

Come join our growing partner base



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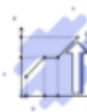
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## YOUR BENEFITS THROUGH CYBERDAY PARTNERSHIP



### **Improved cyber security level for your customers**

When the customer has a better grasp of their security level, they can spot needed improvements on their IT environment - to order from you.



### **Increased cyber security sales for your company**

Sell consulting, execute Cyberday tasks on your customer's behalf and divide security-related responsibilities clearer to avoid breaches.



### **Strengthened cyber security profile for your MSP**

Grow your portfolio on the security side with an overall management system, which is often the first thing your customer needs to understand cyber security better.

## PROGRAM STRUCTURE

### Managed IT Service Provider (MSP)

The program supports our MSP partners to offer the Cyberday solution to their customers. It can help you add value to the existing service by:

- Increasing your portfolio to address cybersecurity needs without the need for added actions/expertise
- Introducing new consulting services, packaged together with Cyberday to create a credible service (outsourced CISO, security management-as-a-service, gap analysis, etc.)
- Enabling customers to find and correct missing parts of their cybersecurity program  
Clarifies to their customers what section of cybersecurity is being managed by them.



#### 1. Recommendation

Recommend Cyberday for your customers. We'll take care of marketing, sales and support.

- |                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| Sales commissions    | ✓ |
| Own channel branding | ✓ |



#### 2. Consulting

Sell your own cyber security consulting package for customers, that Cyberday complements.

- |                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| Sales commissions    | ✓ |
| Own channel branding | ✓ |
| Gap analysis tools   | ✓ |
| Chat support signals | ✓ |



#### 3. Custom service

Your own, fully customized and white-labeled framework in Cyberday that highlights your core competences.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| Sales commissions                                | ✓ |
| White label                                      | ✓ |
| Gap analysis tools                               | ✓ |
| Chat support signals                             | ✓ |
| Customized security framework for your customers | ✓ |

## GLOBAL PARTNER PROGRAM

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### Join our Partner Program today

Join our partner program today, and discover how we can further expand your business, profitability, and success.

### How to become a partner?

Visit our partner program page at cyberday.ai:  
<https://www.cyberday.ai/for-msps>

Click on become a partner and fill in the form or set up a meeting with.

## 5 Discussion

### 5.1 Synthesis and discussion of findings

Finalizing this thesis and gathering all the relevant information, has shone a light to the best potential path to take for Agendium Oy. It can help them to progress and tear down the barrier of seamless international sales of Cyberday.

As seen and discussed in previous sections, the best way forward is through utilizing certain partnership types that would be more beneficial for a company like Agendium. The internationalization of a SaaS is never an easy task but is the goal of almost all SaaS companies. The evidence provided above from the 99 companies listed clearly states that partnership models do work and are potentially necessary for doing business abroad for a software company. Creating a landing page for existing and future partners on the company website is necessary, this helps with not only attracting new partners but having a partner portal for existing partners creates a stronger relationship and bond between both companies.

Many companies presented different packages for their partners for example, a silver, gold, or platinum rewards system. This would prove to be particularly important and useful but from the research it was only the companies on the larger side that had this option or rather companies with a large partner base. For companies like Agendium, so, companies on the smaller side of the spectrum, having the basic reward level will suit for now. This of course can be changed the more partners Agendium Oy obtain.

## 6 Conclusion

### 6.1 Suggestions for further development

The success of the future development of this program will depend mostly on the response received from current and early adopters of the program. There can be limitless room for growth in the SaaS market and with the program itself if every opportunity is exhausted and taken advantage of over the months when it begins.

As mentioned in a previous section, the larger the partner base becomes the more detail-oriented the program needs to be, for example, the tiered rewards system. Other future developments can include different partnership model types, this is not feasible now because Agendum is a small company with a small partner base and will not be able offer what is needed for a more extensive list of partner model types.

Soon it may be useful for Agendum to introduce a partnership model that is not so heavily focused on monetary rewards. Instead, cultivating excitement around why Agendum is good for business should be the main task. Some ideas in relation to this are, for example, using a rewards points system for the partners to redeem on premium services or in-depth training. Highlighting the top partners in Agendum's weekly newsletter. Offering a free customized framework that suits the partner's business needs.

Implementing a partner portal into the API (Application Program Interfaces) would be beneficial as partners can then manage their clients and subscriptions from there. Creating a leader board into the partner portal could help to introduce a fun aspect where all the partners are competing for the top spot.

In a meeting with Sophie Månsson, a partner acquisition specialist from Hubspot in was discussed about the relationship to the end customer. It is important that the customer gets the best support setting up the service as well as throughout their journey. Hubspot's partner's customers always have support from Hubspot with technical needs or any type of customer support. Agendum can implement this also but depending on the inbound traffic Agendum may need to look at hiring a customer support team if this turns out to be successful.

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