



SOLUTION BRIEF

# Using Modern Channels

How organizations drive more resilience and higher performance through more connectivity and collaboration.



Challenges create opportunity. Today, heightened global risk and increased business constraints on a backdrop of disruptive technological advancements are increasingly creating new opportunities for organizations brave enough to transform. The current business landscape provides the perfect conditions for modern retail and distribution channels to become the spark that helps companies thrive and outcompete their rivals -- even in challenging times.

## Connected, collaborative channels turn adversity into advantage

No company is spared from the adverse impact of increased volatility and risk, high inflation, tighter regulation, restrictions, and scrutiny. Geopolitical tensions, economic uncertainty, and extreme weather events constrain supply and hinder vendors' ability to meet demand. High inflation puts the breaks on sales, prompting customers to be more conservative with their budgets. Tighter regulation, trade restrictions, and a growing focus on environmental and social responsibility concerns can also drive business costs up.

However, when businesses treat their channels as a connected, collaborative extension of their enterprise operating as one, they can counter the negative effects of these challenges.

Businesses acting as the conduit in connecting the downstream multi-tier distribution channels to all tiers of upstream supply, logistics and global trade provide their entire network early visibility into potential disruptions. Orchestrating a response in collaboration with the channel partners can mitigate the risk and convert disruption into an opportunity to shift demand and gain revenue and customer mindshare.

Collaboration across all tiers and types of partners, at all stages of customer engagement -- pre through and post-sale -- tightens end-customer relationships and establishes a degree of mutual understanding that, when the offer is right, helps companies, alongside their partners and customers, find solutions to overcome budget constraints and grow sales.



A channel empowered by connected data and applications can find savings to compensate for the cost-piling effects of regulation, restrictions, and public scrutiny. Expanding connectivity across all technologies supporting the end-to-end value chain further streamlines processes and speeds up partners' ability to respond to and reduce the cost of increased business constraints.

In today's world, connected, collaborative channels are vital for success. Three distinct industry use cases illustrate the effects of downstream connectivity and collaboration.

## Use Case

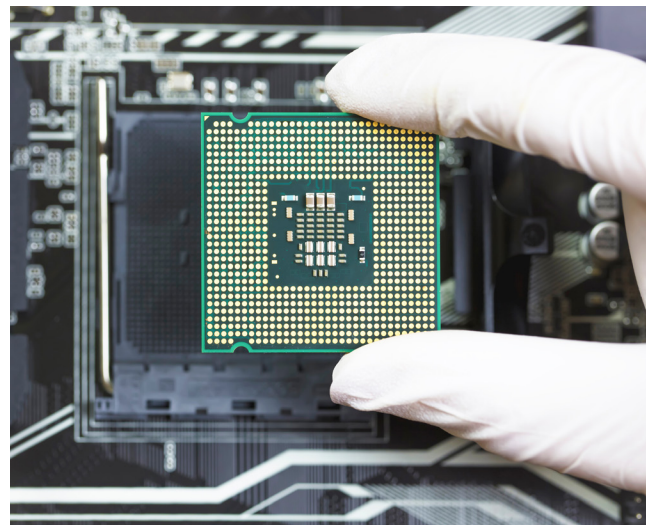
# Balancing the scales – leveraging upstream connectivity for downstream performance



This consumer electronics device manufacturer creates finished products that comprise multiple components and involve anywhere between 10 and 100 suppliers to make and assemble. However, a global shortage of semiconductor chips has affected many electronics component suppliers, impacting nearly two hundred different product categories -- from game stations to wine coolers, smartphones, and kettles. And this manufacturer wasn't immune to the impact.

A conventional response to unavailable supply is to seek alternative providers, accumulate excessive safety inventory, put unfulfillable orders on the backlog, and finally cancel existing orders and reject future sales until the backlog clears. This forward-thinking consumer electronics brand adopted a different approach.

The company took the 'orchestrator' role to rebalance supply and demand by tweaking demand side variables. They used supply sensing technology to connect to their upstream supply and logistics ecosystems, capture early signals of possible parts shortages, and assess the potential impact on demand fulfillment. At the same time, the downstream interaction with the channel ecosystem provided visibility into overall demand and partner stock levels, supported by high-quality sales and inventory data acquired through channel data management software. The brand cross-referenced potential supply disruptions with recent channel data and fed the information into planning applications, using the output to redistribute stock across partners and better align inventory levels and locations in the channel with demand. Going beyond standard approaches, the brand's marketing teams



strategically paused campaigns for affected products, redirecting efforts towards unaffected items. Collaborative initiatives with channel sales and operations teams underpinned the rollout of new marketing campaigns supported by partner rebate incentives.

By connecting the distribution channel with the upstream ecosystems and using the visibility this provided to adjust sales, operations, and marketing plans collaboratively with the partners the company improved customer and partner experience, eliminated the risk of having inadequate stock levels, and invested intelligently to optimize incentive spending.



# Use Case

## Unlocking new opportunities – multi-channel connectivity and cross-functional collaboration



For consumer-packaged goods companies, extreme weather can compromise crops, and geopolitical conflict can restrict the movement of goods from and to the conflict countries. The result is shortages and unexpected price hikes for ingredients - the impact of the war in Ukraine on the availability and price of rapeseed oil is a good example.

When that happens, companies traditionally start scrutinizing product and resource allocation to optimize revenue, margin, competitive position within each category, and standing with partners.

For one snack and food supplement brand, around 20% of food supplement sales and 60% of snack sales are made through supermarkets and hypermarkets.

Working collaboratively with large retailers and leveraging demand signal management software connected to retailers' systems, the brand gets real-time inventory and sales visibility through this single tier route to market. However, optimal product and resource allocation requires collaboration and visibility into the sales through all channels.

The balance of the company's sales is generated through convenience stores, garages, fitness centers, gyms, specialist food stores, drug stores, clinics, vending machines and more. All of these outlets sourcing products via indirect distribution.

By connecting with the distributors, wholesalers, and Tier 2 resell partners, plus leveraging a channel data management solution, the brand gained insights into another 40% of their overall sales across all categories.

Additionally, armed with retailer and indirect distribution sales and inventory data and using specialized collaborative planning applications, their channel teams worked with the partners and the planning teams to create accurate plans based on correct, real-time data covering all time horizons.

By nurturing collaboration across all routes to market and reinforcing alignment between channel and planning teams, the brand ensured resilience to demand, supply, and price fluctuations. This approach enabled precise resource allocation, revenue maximization, and partner satisfaction, underpinning their continued success.



## Use Case

# Captivating audiences and fostering loyalty with holistic downstream collaboration



For a while, the software industry has recognized the growing importance of non-transactional partners influencing finding, winning, and retaining customers. The lockdown imposed by the pandemic and advancements in artificial intelligence changed how buyers engage in sales. In the post-pandemic world, most research, communication, and support that are part of the purchasing decision now happen online. Companies that can exert or enable some form of digital influence over a sale or renewal deal have become highly sought-after partners.

Developing, motivating, and rewarding this type of partner requires different programs from those created for traditional transactional partners. But even when brands have adapted their partner programs to reflect the drivers of their entire partner ecosystem, many have found that their partner marketing investments don't bring the desired returns. Lack of execution capabilities at scale, and disconnected activities outside of their overall marketing strategy and plan hinder effectiveness.

One software company took control of these factors to transform its channel marketing into an engine for growth.

The brand revamped its partner programs to accommodate the diversity of partner types and business models, guided by metrics, analytics, and flexible funding management software. Tools for channel marketing automation, lead management and nurture integrated with the funding management application helped the company expand collaboration and work with all types of partners to



deliver consistent, high-quality execution at scale. Finally, online collaborative marketing planning with the partners allowed the company to adopt a strategic, coordinated view across all partner activities, expenditures, targeted goals, and results.

Including the entire demand ecosystem in the partner programs with connected marketing, planning, funding, and execution tools to facilitate collaboration at scale helps the company achieve its objectives of attracting transactional and non-transactional partners, enabling them to succeed while optimizing marketing spending.



## Modern channels: orchestrated success through connectivity and collaboration

These case studies highlight the benefits organizations are achieving by harnessing connected channel collaboration.

- Risk mitigation and opportunity creation: Connectivity and collaboration across ecosystems mitigate supply chain vulnerabilities, foster new opportunities, and prevent revenue loss, brand erosion, and customer churn.
- Optimized resource utilization: Harmonizing direct, indirect, and retail channels and establishing cross-functional collaboration counters the effects of inflation and maximizes resource effectiveness for better margins and risk mitigation.
- Enhanced investment returns: A strategy of connected marketing planning, funding, and execution reaps dividends, fosters operational excellence.
- Robust platform-powered strategy: Executing a strategy of connectivity and collaboration mandates high-quality, real-time data and integrated tools within a platform that spans enterprise ecosystems and encompasses the entire value chain.

Modern channels thrive on orchestrated collaboration underpinned by connectivity. Success hinges on adopting a multi-dimensional strategy that spans ecosystems, functions, and applications -- fostering end-to-end visibility and aligned execution. The true catalyst for achievement lies in leveraging a platform that enables seamless orchestration through connectivity and collaboration.

## Connect Your Supply Chain

E2open is the connected supply chain software platform that enables the world's largest companies to transform how they make, move, and sell goods and services. With the broadest cloud-native global platform purpose-built for modern supply chains, e2open connects over 400,000 manufacturing, logistics, channel, and distribution partners as one multi-enterprise network tracking over 12 billion transactions annually. Our SaaS platform anticipates disruptions and opportunities to help companies improve efficiency, reduce waste, and operate sustainably. Moving as one™ Learn More: [www.e2open.com](http://www.e2open.com).