



TOP 55

Channel Visionaries – 2017 TOP 55 Cloud Channel Executives

Blake Wetzel, Vice President of Channel at Rackspace

Bio:

Blake Wetzel is the vice president of Channel at Rackspace. He oversees channel efforts in support of partners across the globe. His strong leadership and varied experience have been key to his success at Rackspace, in which he has redefined the overall channel strategy. With nearly 20 years of experience in telecommunications and information technology, he is familiar with strategic thought leadership, and has a unique background consisting of sales, marketing, operations and finance experience, along with a proven track record of operational and organizational effectiveness. Over time, Wetzel has grown into a strong financial and business decision maker who combines innovative and creative thinking with a disciplined approach to drive improved results. Prior to his position, he built his career at CenturyLink with his last title being vice president of the CenturyLink Channel Alliance.

Achievements in 2016:

- Reset market strategy for the future go-to market
- Redefined contracts to bring in a larger community of partners
- Started strategic partnerships with some of the world's largest technology companies

Within a month of joining Rackspace, Wetzel collaborated with his new team to define the new market strategy and restructure partner contracts. He has been key in leading his team at Rackspace to effectively rebuild its approach to channel partnerships. Over the past eight months of Wetzel's appointment, Rackspace has defined a new indirect strategy and identified target partners that align more directly with that strategy.

Plans for 2017:

Wetzel and his team are currently in the process of implementing a newly launched and revamped five pillar partner strategy. Structured to better suit the needs of Rackspace channel customers, the five pillars include: global and regional SIs, technology go-to-market partners, software and cloud companies, agents, VARs and distributors and ISVs. The focus of the strategy is to be proactive and prescriptive about the types of partners Rackspace goes after and develop a depth of expertise around specific practice areas. By setting apart organizations and having ownership of those accounts, Rackspace will be able to go very deep within those organizations and gain a deeper understanding of best practices. With this strategy in place, Wetzel and his team can more effectively collaborate with its elite channel partners to help them meet their unique business needs.



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