

Case study

HP Enterprise Customer Experience Center—Houston



Enabling partners helps achieve award-winning revenue—Arrow Electronics

Industry

Electronic Components & Computer Products
Distribution

Objective

Channel Partner enablement

Approach

Utilize HP Enterprise Customer Experience Center to increase partners' HP skill level, and enable partners to more effectively close enterprise HP server- and storage-based solutions

IT matters

- Showcases state-of-the-art HP facilities and technology
- Demonstrates full range of HP hardware and software portfolio solutions
- Enables hands-on and custom-designed deep dive briefings

Business matters

- Enables Arrow to use Enterprise CEC to increase partners' skill levels
- Affords access for Arrow partners to the Enterprise CEC as their own sales resource
- Empowers Arrow to maintain standing as the No. 1 HP Channel Partner



“From an HP server perspective, I take our partners to the Enterprise CEC because it allows them to directly talk to the source. At the Enterprise CEC, you are talking to the product managers or the development engineers designing the products they are going to sell. Participating partners go home feeling they are part of the bigger picture, and with a strong set of high-level personal connections to facilitate future sales.”

– Wayne Bernot, HP Industry Standard Servers (ISS) product manager, Arrow Electronics

The HP team of Arrow’s enterprise computing solutions business is focused exclusively on helping HP resellers deliver world-class HP solutions to the North American market. As part of doing business, it organizes visits to the HP Enterprise Customer Experience Center (CEC) in Houston in order to strategically educate and enable its partners to leverage HP expertise and increase sales revenue.

Arrow Electronics is a global provider of products, services, and solutions to industrial and commercial users of electronic components and enterprise computing solutions, with 2014 sales of \$22.8 billion. Arrow, an HP Enterprise Channel Partner based in Centennial, Colorado, offers premier HP enterprise products and solutions including servers, storage, software, networking, and technology services to its growing network of resellers throughout North America. Last year Arrow received both the HP PartnerOne Distributor Partner of the Year, Enterprise Group and the HP Growth Distributor of the Year, U.S. Enterprise Group awards. *Fortune* Magazine named Arrow one of the “World’s Most Admired Companies” for the 15th consecutive year. As its many accolades can attest, Arrow knows that a great way to garner loyalty among its resellers is to offer impeccable partner support—with a visit to the Enterprise CEC.

“We host Enterprise CEC events as partner enablement. We consistently see our partners’ ability to competitively propose and close and HP enterprise solutions skyrocket after a visit.”

– Wayne Bernot, HP ISS product manager, Arrow Electronics

But what role can a CEC visit possibly play in this abundance of awards and achievements? “The Enterprise CEC plays a vital and strategic part in our success,” asserts Wayne Bernot, HP ISS product manager, Arrow Electronics.

“We host CEC events, not as standard education, but as partner enablement. We consistently see our partners’ ability to competitively propose and close deals and HP enterprise solution sales skyrocket after a visit,” he says. “A partner that is fully informed about the breadth and depth of HP solutions is more effective. Through the networking and technical content covered at the center, our reseller partners become experts in building end-customer trust in HP solutions.”

Tony Post, HP Storage product manager, Arrow Electronics, adds that the center helps Arrow to inform and enable his partners at the executive, engineer and solution architect (SA) levels. “Our channel partners get the

ongoing knowledge benefit and personal resource alignment from their visits that they don’t usually get with other distributors,” he says. “Together, Arrow and HP organize and schedule a wide variety of senior resources to ensure that the experience at the Enterprise CEC is very effective.”

HP custom designs and orchestrates events

The HP Enterprise CEC presents a high-level networking and educational environment for HP Partners and their customers to discover and experience hands-on the business value of the industry-leading HP Converged Infrastructure strategy and the comprehensive HP Enterprise solutions portfolio.

Arrow, to date, has designed three different custom events: the first informs the executive; the second caters to the solution architect; and the most recent is called the OneView MVP Program. The MVP event is focused on HP OneView with the intent of turning a Partner Solutions Architect into an expert and increasing the overall skill level of the partner.

After the event is scheduled, the Arrow team works with a dedicated HP CEC Briefing Program Manager to understand Arrow’s intended goals, audience and content. The briefing planning staff works with Bernot and Post to establish appropriate speakers, including scheduling pre-briefing sessions with the chosen speakers to ensure the perfect content.

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– Wayne Bernot, HP ISS product manager, Arrow Electronics

“One of the most valuable aspects of an Enterprise CEC event,” adds Post, “is our ability to pre-brief all speakers on content and presentation goals via phone before an event.



We interview the expert speakers that HP engages and make sure we are on the same page. If not, HP schedules someone who is in sync with our needs. The presenters deliver the right message to the selected audience, right on target.”

“Once Arrow and its guests show up at the Enterprise CEC,” explains the HP Arrow account team, “we host carefully customized briefings to discuss HP technology directions and key strategies, build closer business relationships, and help expand ideas about how Arrow guests can more effectively deliver targeted enterprise and small-medium HP business solutions to better meet their prospects’ needs.”

The two-day agenda is designed to give each of Arrow’s guests an in-depth overview, coupled with a deep-dive analysis of how a custom HP solution can best accomplish crucial corporate goals. Often, the sessions expand the partner’s skill at identifying and designing more complete and profitable solutions. The center staff plans and manages the visit down to the smallest details, and asks for a five-week minimum turn-around time to create a memorable, end-to-end customer experience.

Trust the Source

The Arrow HP team boasts more than 90 staff dedicated to HP solutions, including an expert executive management lineup, highly trained inside sales personnel and certified solution architects. More than 50% of HP-certified Arrow engineers are certified at the Master Accredited Solutions Experts (ASE) level.

“We differentiate ourselves by ensuring that, in addition to our certified SAs, our sales staff are trained and HP-certified to the knowledge level of many engineers,” says Post. “Arrow holds a total of 192 different HP certifications. We have assisted 23 resellers in attaining a higher HP PartnerOne designation in 2014 alone, and count a total of 1,354 HP certifications among our partners.”

“The reason I take our partners to the Enterprise CEC is that I consider it going to the source. You can talk directly to the product manager or the development engineers designing the products. Participants go home being a part of something bigger and with a strong set of high-level network connections to facilitate future sales.”

– Wayne Bernot, HP ISS product manager, Arrow Electronics

The Enterprise CEC is a state-of-the-art facility that offers attendees the opportunity to see HP products and solutions live, hands-on, including HP’s future directions and HP roadmaps. It’s a solution architect’s dream come true. It’s an executive’s ace-in-the-hole.

At a glance

Sample Arrow CEC Agendas

Sample One (Arrow OneView MVP):

- Welcome and Introductions
- Infrastructure Management with OneView
- OneView Hands-On Session
- HP Servers Update
- 3PAR StoreServ Technical Review
- HP Helion/Cloud
- HP OneView and VMware vCOPS Integration
- Technology Services Partner Opportunities
- ConvergedSystems Overview

Sample Two (Arrow Enterprise Computing Solutions):

- Introductions and Review of Business Objectives
- HP Storage Point of View and Futures
- HP ConvergedSystems
- HP Converged Management: OneView
- 3PAR and SDS Overview
- HP Helion CloudSystem
- HP Competitive Discussion

But Bernot maintains that the true power of a CEC event comes from experience and networking with HP at “the Source.”

When I take a partner to the CEC, my main goal is to establish a relationship and on-going connection to areas of needed expertise. He emphasizes, “At the CEC you are talking directly to the product manager, or the development engineers designing the products partners are going to sell. An SA can ask questions at ‘the source’, get an answer from ‘the expert’, and then have a robust dialogue about ‘why’ it’s that way. This initial connection establishes a relationship that spans technologies and years of industry change.”

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John Szabo, general manager at Arrow Electronics offers an example. “An expert speaker didn’t have the in-depth answer to a critical question at a custom briefing. On the break, he went upstairs to the HP source and came back with a detailed answer. It’s all there at the Enterprise CEC. A real level of

respect for HP is generated as many ideas are cross-pollinated.”

Please, kick the tires

The HP Enterprise CEC makes HP products and solutions available for a live, hands-on test drive. Education and networking is key, but nothing beats kicking the tires and taking it for a spin around the block.

At every event kickoff, Arrow, in concert with HP, makes a point of telling its partners that the center is their resource to use for themselves and their prospects and customers, as well. Whatever they see, they can show to their customers.

“We really do enjoy bringing our partners to the Enterprise CEC,” concludes Bernot. “It’s a well-run facility. It takes a lot of detailed preparation and work, but our partners really enjoy it. Every time I’ve done one of these, somebody invariably pulls me aside and sincerely thanks us for opening their eyes to a very in-depth level of solution selling. It’s not just training—it’s a game-changing and memorable experience.”

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