

Subject: Ingram Micro seeks economic stimulus grants for VARs

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By Barbara Darrow, Senior News Director
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Ingram Micro's new IMStimulus program aims to help VARs receive grants from the economic stimulus package for their customers' infrastructure, broadband and healthcare information technology (IT) projects.

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Of all the money distributed through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, 60% flows via line-item appropriations or existing contracts. But 40% goes out via the grant process, said Bob Laclede, vice president of business development for Ingram Micro Inc. U.S.

Working with the [Grants Office](#), a Rochester, N.Y., company that follows in detail which grants go for what sorts of projects, Ingram Micro can help VAR affiliates identify opportunities to get more federal money for their existing government, education and healthcare customers, Laclede said.

"From my perspective, it's another layer of value we can provide for our public sector segment," said Ryan Yu, president of [Daly Computers Inc.](#), a solutions provider in Clarksburg, Md.

Many of Daly's higher education and K-12 customers have their own grant offices.

"But as I mentioned to one CIO, 'No disrespect, but is it possible that your grant officer may not know all the grants that are out there?'" Yu said. "He agreed that it was [possible]."

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Of all the figures thrown around in the news about IT-related federal stimulus money, Laclede estimates \$60 to 70 billion will go to IT opportunities, but of that probably about \$2 to \$5 billion is what will be up for grabs at the IT distribution level. . Even that number could double Ingram Micro's run rate of technology sold into relevant accounts.

IMStimulus' goal is to help public sector VARs -- those that specialize in federal, state and local government, education and healthcare accounts. Clearly, VARs outside of those areas will flock to the business, but Laclede said existing public sector VARs already have accounts and customers are eligible for more grant money than even they know about.

Ingram Micro categorizes the IT project areas in six broad buckets: healthcare, education, public safety, infrastructure, energy and broadband. Participating VARs pay \$2,500 up front, which they can earn back in rebates over the course of an 18-month period that covers the life of most grants.

"They can actually earn twice that back, up to \$5,000," Laclede said. "That's where the stickiness comes from."

There are some 35,000 U.S. VARs affiliated with Ingram Micro, 7,000 of which are in the public sector, he said.

Distribution rival TechData launched its own stimulus tracking program for VARs a few months ago.

Despite all the fevered talk about IT stimulus money, there hasn't been a ton flowing to VARs as of yet - probably because government entities know the money will come, and they have shuffled other projects to get priority work done, Laclede said. But some projects are opening up for VARs, he said.

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