

A Beginner's Guide to
Affiliate
Marketing
Success



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A Beginner’s Guide to Affiliate Marketing Success

Years ago, there was an old adage that said, “The three most important elements for a successful business are location, location, location.”

Today, however, three of the most important elements of having a successful business are marketing, marketing, marketing.

Of course, having a unique and valuable product or service, a reputation based on integrity, and a good sense for building relationships are still foremost when it comes to running a successful business.

Moreover, once you have established a product or service that speaks for itself, and a reputation of integrity, it’s now time to step forward and market those goods or services. With more and more businesses moving online, the need for online marketing is ever-expanding. Online marketing stands to be one of the most lucrative ways for businesses to reach optimal success and increase their bottom line. Affiliate marketing is one of those ways.

What is Affiliate Marketing?

Affiliate marketing is a style of marketing wherein a business compensates an affiliate every time a consumer is directed toward that business through the affiliate website and/or its own marketing plans.

The Key Players

For the most part, similar to a board game, there are three key players in the game known as affiliate marketing.

The Seller – The seller is the company offering their products or services.

The Promoter – The promoter is someone who is willing to advertise or further promote the Seller's products or services.

The Purchaser – The last piece of the puzzle, but of equal importance, is the individual who views the advertisement, maybe clicking on it or on a link associated with it, or giving his or her personal information by filling out a form for a follow through. This can then redirect them to the seller's site whereby he or she gets to complete a transaction.

Basically, affiliate marketing is when you – as a promoter – advertise a company's product or service in exchange for revenue, otherwise known as a commission.

From the Beginning

Although your website may not be a brick and mortar store, it is still a business, and you need to treat it as one. Just as it is important to create a business plan for a new business, it is necessary to create an outline for your new website.

What are Your Passions, Hobbies or Interests? – Take some time to put pen to paper and discover what your passions and interests are, as well as your hobbies. Why is this important? Well, for the most part, anything you do in business – whether it is a brick and mortar or an online business – needs one crucial ingredient. That ingredient is your passion.

Remember, in marketing no one likes to be sold anything, but people do love to buy. If you are not passionate about what you are creating, it will show. When it comes time to associate yourself with similar goods or services to sell through affiliate marketing, you want to have a successful money making website from the onset.

Make a List and Check it Twice – Make a list and take a good look at your passions, desires, hobbies, and interests. Do any of these look appealing to you? Ask your family members, friends, and co-workers if this is a subject that is appealing to them as well. Dig a little deeper. Are you interested in gardening, for example?

There are hundreds if not thousands of sites on that subject. Why not dig a little deeper and create a sub-topic on eco-friendly gardening or roof top gardening or gardening for

baby boomers? By creating a sub-topic you are now able to hone in on your target audience.

One of the most basic tools necessary in marketing is to know your target audience. In order to effectively market your website, there has to be a need and desire for it from potential viewers. If your website teaches something or offers help in some area, then there is a better chance to market and monetize your site in the first place.

Check out the Competition – Once you have honed in on your target audience and chosen your subject for your website, take some time to check out the competition. In this way, you can see what works for that competitor, what doesn't work, and what you can do to make your site more unique and engaging.

While you are checking out the competition, you can take a look at the competitors' affiliate ads, banner ads, and links to get a good feel for how your future affiliate marketing will look.

If you already have a website established, there are a few things you want to make certain of before you look into affiliate marketing:

- Are you highly interested in this topic? Are you being authentic in your enthusiasm for the subject matter?
- Is it a site that has a lot of value and interest for others?
- Do you have the opportunity to write quite often on the subject?
- Is there a continuing need for information on this subject?
- Is there a growing interest in this subject?
- Do you keenly know your target audience in order to market to them?
- Will you have the possibility of developing many fans?

If any of these components are missing from your already existing site, you may wish to revisit your site and enhance it all the more.

Once you have an established website with a fan base, you can then move onto monetizing your site. Monetizing generally means to make money from your website.

How to Earn Money Monetizing Your Website with Affiliate Marketing

Now that you have some basic information and have a valuable website, it's now time to get some information about how to earn money with affiliate marketing.

As a promoter, when you send a visitor from your site to another company's site as an affiliate, and that visitor makes a purchase, you will earn a commission. It's like virtual networking, where you introduce a potential buyer with a seller.

Is Affiliate Marketing Easy to Learn?

Affiliate marketing is fairly straightforward. You join an affiliate program and pick your products of choice. The merchant will provide the necessary code for your website. This will direct the potential buyer to the merchant's web site.

The affiliate program will provide the links, banners, or ads, and once you copy and paste the code on your website you can begin the referral process. Once that potential buyer converts into a consumer by making a purchase, you earn your commission.

Different Forms of Affiliate Marketing

This is simply a brief overview of some of the different forms of affiliate marketing:

Pay per Purchase – You get a commission in the form of a percentage of the sale upon completed purchase.

Pay per Click – Regardless of outcome, you get paid for referral traffic when a user clicks on an advertisement.

Pay per Lead – You will receive pay once contact information is provided by a potential customer through a contact form. If a potential consumer follows an affiliate link to a merchant's web site and completes an action, such as signing up for a monthly newsletter or giving contact information, you'll receive a commission.

What are the Benefits of Affiliate Marketing?

There are numerous benefits to learning all you can about affiliate marketing. While it may sound like a quick and easy way to make money, you do have to put in some time and effort and learn as much as you can about affiliate marketing.

These are the basics about getting started with affiliate marketing, but the benefits might inspire you to go for it.

There are No Out-of-Pocket Expenses – One of the great benefits of affiliate marketing is there is no startup fee necessary. Moreover, you do not have to pay a marketer to market your goods and services, nor do you have to pay to create, store, advertise or sell your own goods and services.

Unlike many other ways to earn money from home, you do not need to expend any money at the outset.

Work from Home – When the work from home idea first hit society, it was mostly a scheme to make money trying to sell ideas that simply did not or would not work. Today, however, with remote and telecommuting positions all over, and the Internet ablaze, working from home has not only become legitimate, but lucrative as well.

You can start your affiliate marketing endeavors during the nights or on weekends. Once you decide if it is just a form of passive income or if it is suitable to devote more time to, you can then recognize even deeper benefits:

- Saving money on clothing
- Saving money on fuel and traveling back and forth to work
- Saving wear and tear on your vehicle
- Less money spent on lunch, coffee runs in the morning and mid-day and even dry cleaning

This, of course, is dependent upon whether or not you choose to pursue affiliate marketing a bit more than part time.

Make Your Own Hours – Of course you would start out learning the basics and see if this is right for you on a more steady scale. You, and only you, can make that decision. However, if you do choose to dive in further, you can reap the benefits of setting your own hours as an affiliate marketer.

Flexibility – No need to constantly babysit your marketing efforts with affiliate marketing. You can earn passive income while you are at work, while you are away, or even while you sleep.

There is also no need to worry about answering any customer questions or issues, as all you are doing is referring business.

How to Spot a Good Affiliate Program

Once you have your website up and running, you should have a good handle on your target audience. You should also have a niche and possibly a sub-niche. For example, you could have a blog about cooking. Digging a little deeper, you could have a blog about organic cooking. And, taking that one step further, you may wish to specialize in homegrown organic vegetables and cooking.

What does this have to do with affiliate marketing? Once you have a clear and specific target audience in place, you can then delve into what your target audience, in both your niche and sub-niche, wants to purchase. Once you know your audience, you can promote various kitchen tools, cookware, and utensils that make your organic homegrown cooking easier and faster too.

If you can help somebody to do something faster, quicker, easier, then you have a lot to market there.

Knowing your target audience and associating their potential needs, wants, and desires, your affiliate attempts will give you a better chance at being successful with your affiliate marketing endeavors.

Research Products for Your Target Audience

One of the best ways to choose an affiliate is to do some research. Check out what others with similar blogs or websites are targeting. Visit forums to see what visitors are talking about, what their favorite products are in that category, and what they complain about most.

These little tidbits are golden nuggets for anyone seeking to either yay or nay a certain product.

Try Products for Yourself

Maybe you do reviews and try different products and post your comments. See what gets a reaction in a favorable manner and lean toward that product or service. Let's say for example, you have a photography site and you use a certain type of camera. This is a perfect lead-in to place that item on your blog or website. Once you begin talking about that particular camera, you can then add the link into your blog post with a higher likelihood of someone clicking on it.

This is especially true if you are somewhat of an authority on your subject and have a fan base that you have created trust with, as well. If you are authentic and trustworthy and have established a good relationship with your visitors and readers, then chances are if you recommend something that you have used or tried, then your visitors will be more inclined to use or buy that item, as well.

Associate Products Similar to Your Blog or Website for Affiliate Marketing Purposes

In the example with the photography site, if you have already written about that particular camera, then dig a little deeper. Why not blog about a particular lens that you use for certain shots? Link back to a site that sells that particular lens. Choose a banner or ad that describes that item.

Again, if you use it and favor it and have a trusting relationship with your visitors, then chances are that you will feel and write more confidently about that product. Chances

are that more visitors will click the link or on the ad, and you will have more success with your affiliate marketing.

Again, once you've done the foundational work, you can then search for good affiliate programs to match your site.

Exploring Affiliate Networks

Affiliate networks act as the go-between for the affiliate and the merchant. Affiliate networks are responsible for several things such as the processing of payments, keeping an eye on commissions, as well as payments.

Perhaps, the most well-known and considered the granddaddy of them all would be Amazon Associates. Amazon Associates has been around for more than ten years, and is a service provided by a well-known and highly trusted company.

With Amazon Associates you can earn income by advertising hundreds upon thousands of products through Amazon.com. The beauty is in the simplicity. As an Amazon associate, you advertise a product using a link on your own website and when a consumer clicks through and makes a purchase, you earn a commission.

The beauty of using Amazon is that Amazon is a trusted and well-known name. This makes it more comfortable and trustworthy for consumers to click through and subsequently make that purchase.

Affiliate networks are fairly easy to navigate and can offer you many options while browsing their directories. Some of the more popular affiliate networks besides Amazon Associates are:

- ClickBank
- PayDotCom
- ShareASale
- LinkShare
- ClixGalore

ClickBank is most suitable for digital products such as eBooks. You can expect more in commission when advertising digital products such as software, since the merchant does not have a lot of overhead. The eBook is a perfect example of low overhead costs.

For the big brand products, however, you may want to look into these affiliate networks:

- Commission Junction
- eBay Enterprise

Signing up for these affiliate networks is fairly easy. Once signed up, you can see how much earnings in dollars and cents or percentage wise you can earn. You will also be able to see which products are selling the most and which products have the most affiliates.

With hundreds, if not thousands, of merchants to choose from, you are certain to find the right matches for you, your website, and your affiliate program, as well. So, with so many options, how do you find the one that is right for you?

Choosing What's Best for You and Your Affiliate Program

Does the Affiliate Tie in with Your Website? – One of the first things you may wish to look into is whether or not the product you are affiliating with ties nicely into your website. After all, you don't want to have a photography blog and then start affiliating with cooking utensils. Try to keep it relevant. After all, if you are showing posts with beautiful and artistic photographs, then visitors are more inclined to want to take photos just like you – especially if you are an authority on a specific subject. For example, if you are a professional at taking photos of nature, then visitors may want to use the camera that you are using so that they can get the same results, as well.

Is it a Reputable Product and/or Company? – The word affiliate means to associate yourself with, so you want to be sure that you are associating yourself with reputable products and/or companies. If you are aligning yourself, your blog or your brand with a company, please make sure that it is a company of integrity – integrity meaning that the company stands behind their words and their products.

Ease of Use – For some, just the word marketing sends shivers down their spine. Then add the word affiliate and it may seem intimidating from the onset. Neither marketing nor anything that has to do with the Internet should be intimidating. An affiliate site should be easy to navigate and fairly easy to use.

How Much Money You Earn – It is important to understand the different methods of payment. For example, you can receive pay on a flat rate or you can receive a percentage. There is also the opportunity to receive recurring commissions as long as a consumer continues to pay for a monthly service, for example.

Pay Attention to Conversion Formulas – When looking at products and merchants, take a look at conversion rates. If a merchant has a higher conversion rate – conversion rate meaning how many potential consumers actually turn into buyers – then that merchant may be worth considering more closely.

How to Choose an Affiliate Marketing Program

When it comes down to it, it really is just a matter of spending some time and doing your research. Do a compare and contrast. See what fits your needs best. Do the research.

Try an affiliate marketing program and see if it works for you. Sometimes, all the research in the world cannot compare to actually trying something.

Ask friends, family members, business owners, and co-workers what affiliate programs they use and why. Word of mouth is still a great form of advertising, as well as a great form of researching. Get others' opinions.

Summary of a Few Beginner's Tips

- Choose a niche you have experience with, are knowledgeable about, and feel passion for
- Don't be a salesman right out of the box; gain your audience's trust
- Be authentic; be vulnerable; be engaging
- Create good content – make certain you have enough to say on the subject so that your audience views you as a person of authority and experience
- Test out and review different products
- Match your products with your blog or website
- Do your research
- Try out affiliate marketing and do the necessary work

Building Relationships

Marketing has many components to it. There is the knowledge and expertise of a product, good or service. There is sometimes the actual usage of that same product or service. However, when it comes to affiliate marketing, there is more. It's necessary to build relationships first and foremost on your website or blog before you consider diving into affiliate marketing.

It is important to create your blog or website and offer a value to the visitors that come there to check out what you have to say and how you have to say it. A visitor comes for something fresh, new and unique. Do you have a unique take on a common subject? Do you offer integrity, vulnerability, and truth?

It is integral to the success of your business, website or blog to build and establish relationships first before trying to sell someone something. Remember, everyone likes to buy but no one likes to build sold anything.

Think of it in terms of actually meeting someone in person. They introduce themselves and right away try to sell you something. What's your reaction? You want to get away from them as soon as possible right? Well, the same concept is applicable to websites. You want to offer a solution to a problem for your visitor. You want to engage them, and you want to be authentic.

Once you have established your blog or website for some time, then you have gained something almost equal in value to sales – trust. Once you have the trust and respect of your visitors, they may be more inclined to trust the links or ads on your website as well.

You never want to appear as a giant billboard full of spam that will send potential buyers running. After establishing your reputation for a bit and gaining the trust of your visitors, you can then more easily earn income from your affiliate endeavors. The more a visitor trusts you, the more likely he or she will be to become a consumer.

While it may seem that filling your website with lots of ads and banners will make you money quickly, you may just find that it has the opposite impact. So, make certain to establish relationships before jumping in on the marketing bandwagon. Once you have established relationships, you will see that earning income from affiliate marketing is easier.

Moreover, another important element in any business is your mindset. If you believe that you are selling or pushing something on a potential consumer, then that mindset will resonate with them as well. Instead believe that you are offering a service to those looking for products or seeking to find the answer to a problem through purchasing a product or service. Doing so creates a win/win situation for all.

Affiliate Marketing Info Products

[**Affiliate Marketing Training With Affilorama**](#) - Top Affiliate Marketing Training Portal

[**Commission Blueprint 2.0**](#) - Complete Affiliate Marketing System For a Changing Internet / Mobile Landscape

[**Blogging With John Chow**](#) - Learn From a Pro

[**Social Marketing Tribe**](#) - #1 Resource For Ongoing Social Media Training. 100+ Hours Of Training On Topics Like: Facebook, Linkedin, Twitter, Youtube, Email / Digital Marketing

[**Free Lifetime PLR Membership in Resell Rights Weekly**](#) – Top Resell Rights Membership. Once You look over the value provided you'll know why.