

Affiliate Marketing Revealed



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Affiliate Marketing: What It Is

Affiliate marketing is the act of promoting products or services that belong to someone else for a commission on each successful sale that you make.

Some marketers do this part time but it's a full time job for others. It's really not surprising why people have affiliate marketing as their main source of income. Especially when you think about the benefits of doing the business; a huge profit potential without dealing with customer service, shipping orders or any other "dirty" work.

A number of marketers combine affiliate programs with their own products or services – with affiliate programs as front end products, up sells and back end products. Here's a good example of this practice: let's say your information product is concerning weight loss – you may market items and services related to this topic such as exercise equipment, clothing, vitamins diet programs, etc. to enhance your profits.

You could of course prefer not to invest in creating your own products. The best option would be to sign up for affiliate programs that carry these so you could promote them.

While some people up sell inexpensive information products such as ebooks for them to sell high ticket affiliate products or services, others do it the

other way around – offer low cost affiliate products to augment their own high-ticket products or continuity programs, like membership sites for example.

Defining affiliate marketing can be really confusing for some. A lot of people with products for sale, offer affiliate programs for those products and declare that they sell via affiliate marketing. What they're really saying is that they are merchants or affiliate managers and they have affiliates who do the selling for them.

On the whole, affiliate marketing is selling other peoples products and services through a variety of means for different reasons. These motives range from to be able to earn an income, enhance a product or sell an extra product. Actually, many marketers use low-priced affiliate products as lead ins, or entry level products, for more expensive affiliate products and never having to create or promote their own product or service.

Now let's talk about money: considering every product and service thats sold through affiliates, affiliate marketing is a billion dollar industry in its own right.

There are currently thousands of unheard-of affiliate marketers earning very large commissions every month. The reason you haven't heard of them is that they don't belong to the Internet Marketing products business. You will find them in various consumer niches; weight loss, health care, sports, gambling, education, and financial products just to name a few.

In fact you may have probably come in contact with an affiliate marketer while searching for information or products related to your interest on the net. It's even possible that you've bought a product from one and are not aware of it.

There's an affiliate program for almost every conceivable product although not all brands have it, to their detriment. Internet giants Google, eBay and Microsoft all have their own affiliate programs.

In Affiliate marketing, everybody wins; while the product owner / creator and the affiliate marketer make money, the customer is satisfied by his purchase - truly a win-win-win situation all around.

Affiliate marketing has been in existence a long time – longer than you think. People have the notion that it started only after the internet came around. Truth is, Amway, Avon and Mary Kay are all in effect, affiliate programs with distributors or representatives doing the marketing.

Affiliate marketing may differ from person to person but the goal is the same – to make money. Affiliate marketing enables you to earn a big income without creating your own product.

Affiliate Marketing: Getting Started

It's not really hard to get started in affiliate marketing, neither is it that simple. There is some initial work to be done if you want to be successful in this business. The effort you put out though will pay huge dividends in the future – literally.

The first step is to look for a profitable market or niche. This could be researched in Google or by reading magazines. Let's go with Google first: make a list of particular topics you're interested in then do a search for each one. It's important that you sell something that appeals to you and you'll find out why later.

Give careful notice to the sponsored ads as this is an indicator that money is being spent in the market. It's just logical for business people to spend on ads that give them profits in return right?

It's the same story with magazines. Visit a library find the last three issues of a magazine connected to your interest. Again, pay attention to the ads – if they keep appearing then that means there's money to be made in the market.

Now let's discuss the competition. Statistically, 90% of all people who sign up for an affiliate program will not do the business at all. Now, of the 10% that will actually market the product, 90% will do it (or not) ineffectively and won't make much money if any. Whatever competitors are left would be almost inconsequential. Focus on promoting your affiliate products in the most effective ways. In short, forget about your competitors and let them worry about you instead.

When you've found your niche, you're almost ready to start - almost because there're some more things you have to do; have the right tools, find good programs and understand their terms, understand how to choose the right program.

Point 1: Have The Tools You Need

As in any undertaking, affiliate marketing requires the right tools to get done successfully. Listed below are the tools you'd need to become a successful affiliate marketer:

- **Email account** – This gives you a professional appearance. It's best to set up an email account associated with your domain via Microsoft Outlook or Outlook Express.
- **An Autoresponder** – a web based software that sends out an email or a series of emails to people who sign up to the autoresponder. A good autoresponder has multiple uses such as managing your ezine and for sending out periodic broadcasts to your list. A paid autoresponder service is recommended. Some of the very best on the market are [Aweber](#) , [Getresponse](#) , or [TrafficWave](#) .
- **Keyword Research Tools** – you'll need them if you want to do PPC campaigns. Stand alone web based software which you can find at [www.keywordelite.com](#) is good for this although Google has free tools you can use.
- **A List of Resources** – Start making a list of resources; article directories, PPC search engines, affiliate program directories and ezine directories.
- **Word Processor** – Very essential in writing those articles, sales letters, ads and newsletters. Microsoft Word is a highly popular choice.
- **A Website and Domain for Each Niche or Market** – You need a website with its own domain name for each niche. This site should be rich in content with affiliate links worked into the content. Preferably, there should be a squeeze page in each website where you collect the contact information of visitors in order to build your lists
- **Commission and Campaign Tracking Software** – You'd definitely appreciate this software when keeping up and organizing your affiliate products, links, commissions earned and paid, ad campaigns, affiliate tracking report sites, logins, and passwords. [Affiliate Organizer](#) is highly recommended.

The above-mentioned set of tools will help you get started although some of them may cost you money. If you're short on cash, use the "free" alternatives but be sure to upgrade at the first opportunity.

Some other things that would be good to have in this business is a web page building software, and an FTP client to upload webpages to your website. What you surely can't survive without are an up-to-date browser, good computer, and reliable internet connection.

Set up a filing system for your records. From the start, make sure to back up all business information in your computer regularly. Also print hard copies and file it away for future reference and this should include all emails containing your user and password information, notice of sales. This will make filing taxes a bit easier.

Space permitting, establish a home office to give you the space and proper atmosphere for success, not to mention the home office tax deduction you'd get. If space is an issue, then try to set your work area in a low-traffic spot of your home to avoid frequent interruptions while you work.

Point 2: Know Where To Find The Best Programs

So you've got the tools and you've chosen the products you want to market. Your next move should be to find the best affiliate programs that carry them. Before you start looking, you need to have a specific objective. Once you have that, there are actually several places where you can look into.

If your intention is to use affiliate programs as up sells or back ends to a product you have, or a high value product you're promoting then you would be interested in low cost entry level products like ebooks for example. If you want affiliate programs for information products, a good place to check out is ClickBank.com

If hard goods are what you plan to promote – these are products delivered via shipping or postal mail – there are a lot of good sites where you can find them. Let's cover the affiliate program directories first:

- *AffiliatePrograms.com*
www.affiliateprograms.com
- *Link Share*
www.linkshare.com
- *Commission Junction*
www.cj.com
- *Share-A-Sale*
www.shareasale.com
- *Web Sponsors*
www.websponsors.com
- *ClixGalore*
www.clixgalore.com
- *QuinStreet*
www.quinstreet.com

Most of these sites are networks where a large variety of affiliate programs are managed. Through these networks, you can promote a lot of affiliate products and services and get a single check payment for all sales across the network.

On the other hand, you can use Google to search for products that you want to promote, and check the sites for affiliate programs. This method is best for the more specialized products. If you can't find a link for an affiliate program on your chosen site, there's usually a contact email you can use to make inquiries about a possible affiliate arrangement with the company.

Point 3: Understand The Language

Internet Marketing, in relation with Affiliate Marketing has a language that is unique, and probably unheard of outside the industry. It's a language you have to understand to guarantee that the programs you're signing for are worth your time and effort.

As you'll find out later, reading the terms and conditions *and* understanding the terms and conditions for affiliates is extremely important. These are

presented to you before or after you sign up, depending on the program you join.

Here's a glossary of terms and abbreviations that can help you learn the language:

CPC – Cost per Click is the amount it costs for every click made on an ad or link when advertising on a CPC basis. There's no flat rate but the amount you pay for the ad would be based on the number of times the ad is "clicked" on.

PPC – Pay Per Click. This relates to CPC, where you pay for each click that your ad or link receives. Google AdWords is an example of Pay Per Click advertising.

CPA – Cost per action, or cost per acquisition means you'll pay for each action taken; a click, sign up, or a sale. Actually, several affiliate programs pay on a CPA basis – you make a bit of money every time someone clicks on your link, or signs up for info through your link. A good example is Google AdSense.

CTR – Click Through Rate is commonly presented in percentage form. The CTR is the number of times your ad was clicked on by a visitor in order to view it.

CPM – Cost per thousand. This is how you pay for every one thousand ad impressions.

URL - Uniform Relay Link, simply known as link - a website address.

Affiliate Link – A URL assigned by the affiliate program for you to promote. This is how they track your clicks and sales.

Contextual Link or Text Link – An all-text link that looks like content, and usually contains multiple words; [Get Your Website Here!](#) for example, as opposed to banner ads.

Charge Back – Remember this term. It means you lose a sale because a customer cancels an order or has his / her credit card company reverse the charges. To cover potential charge backs or refunds, there are affiliate programs that hold commissions for a specified period before releasing them to you.

SPAM – These are Unsolicited Commercial Email. Commercial posts on forums and blogs are also referred to as SPAM. Most affiliate programs have very strict anti-spam regulations you must adhere to.

Revenue Sharing Program – same thing as an affiliate program but take care, some programs referred to as revenue sharing are simple MLM programs, do your due diligence.

Co-Branding – Your name or logo is placed on a reseller’s website, or on the actual product. This option is offered by a number of affiliate programs.

Referral Link – another name for affiliate link

Tracking – Method to record sales, clicks, leads, and other info related to your affiliate link. “Tracking software” is used to simplify the aforementioned chores.

HTML or HTML Code – Hyper Text Markup Language is the programming language for building webpages. HTML code is used to place affiliate links or banners on your webpages.

Partner Program - same as an affiliate program

Super Affiliate – anyone who makes a whole lot of money in affiliate marketing

Opt-In – Generally, the term refers to ezine and newsletter subscriptions, or email lists. The basic meaning though is the subscribers on an email list have decided to be part of the distribution list for information the owner periodically sends out. They do this by simply clicking on a link in the confirmation email to validate their contact details.

1st Tier and 2nd Tier – Signing up for an affiliate program directly through the company will make you first tier. You’re second tier if you’re signing up under someone else. On the other hand, if someone signs up under you, they are your second tier and you are first tier. There’s a specific commission rate for sales per tier - you get a full commission for every sale you make if you’re second tier and the person you signed up under gets partial commissions for your sales.

Joint Ventures – Shares the same concept with affiliate programs but with bigger commissions and the person doing the promotions works directly or in tandem with the owner.

Direct Mail – Promotions done through postal mail. Be aware that there are strict laws regarding direct mail and most affiliate programs have terms and conditions involving direct mail to promote their product.

Cookies – These are code written to the cookie file on a computer when a click is made on an affiliate link – or when sites that require login are visited. Cookies are not harmful to the computer and it's there to guarantee that you get credit for sales made in the future.

Affiliate Agreement – This is the agreement that contains the terms and conditions pertaining to an affiliate program. Make sure to read agreements thoroughly. Mostly, you just check a box in the online form in order to agree though some programs will want you to print out, sign and fax the agreement.

Conversion Rate – Refers to the number of sales in relation to the number of clicks received and commonly presented in percentage form.

Commission – This is the amount of money an affiliate receives per sale. They are either listed in percentage or dollar figures, depending on the company.

Associate or Associate Program – same as an affiliate program

Banner Ad – Graphic placed on your website and linked to your affiliate referral link, using your unique referral ID.

There are other terms not listed here that you may encounter. Find out what the meaning of those terms before agreeing or signing anything to avoid legal problems in the future.

Point 4: Get The Best Commission

The main question will always be "*how much money will I make?*" Well if you get the best commission possible, the answer would be "*sky's the limit!*"

One of the first things to examine when you look at affiliate programs is the commission per sale. As mentioned earlier, the figures may be presented in dollars or percentage. If it's the former, then you need to figure out the percentage by finding out the products actual selling price.

Normally, you'd want to join the programs offering a 50% commission. You can consider reducing this to 20% to 30% for the high priced products but don't go any lower than 50% on the 1st tier for lower priced products.

Find out the number of sales you'd need to earn your target income. Make sure that it's a realistic figure because some products are harder to sell than others. If it's unrealistic, look for another product to sell. The commission may be smaller but you could work your way up. Many super affiliates have started that way.

The ability to make a large number of sales every month consistently is what gives super affiliates the standing to directly negotiate for a higher commission with the product owner.

When checking out commissions, also think about what the cost of promoting the product would be to you. It takes simple math to know if your advertising costs are greater than your commissions.

Affiliate Programs: One-Time or Residual?

There's a whole world of difference between the one-time commission affiliate programs and the residual affiliate programs in terms of income. In effect, a one-time commission affiliate program pays you one commission upon the initial sale – that's all. In contrast, you get continued income either for a set term or for the life of the customer, with a residual program.

Point 5: Residual Programs Are Often Best

Hands down, residual programs are the best choice for an affiliate program. This for the simple reason that you could continuously earn profits from customers who make repeat purchases from the company, usually for the life of the customer or length of the business relationship.

While it's true that you can make as much as \$100 from a one-time commission, a residual program allows you to make the same amount every month, just from making one sale. You are provided with more income for less effort.

The residual income programs that pay for the life of the customer are obviously more attractive than the sort with a set term. It's always better to have income from one sale for as long as possible.

By and large, when you sell services such as webhosting where there's a monthly fee to be paid by the customer, a residual income potential exists. You earn a commission every month for as long as the customer pays the monthly fee. The commissions stop only when the customer terminates the contract.

This reason makes it wise to look for services that are essential to your potential customers. Webhosting services would be an excellent choice since their websites go down without it, so chances are that you're in for a long-term residual income.

The exact same thing applies to services such as Auto Responders, Tracking services and other such tools necessary to online marketers.

Another excellent source of long-term residual income is a telephone service. Virtually everybody needs a phone and long distance service so promoting a company that provides those services at a reasonable price could be financially advantageous.

For a high enough commission, promoting non long-term services can be good. There are membership websites that provide customers with training courses, and these sites can give you a hefty residual income while the customer is a member of the site. Understandably, this doesn't last long because the customer would cancel membership once they had gone through enough training from the website.

There are certain types of products that can be a source of life time residual income. Good examples are health care products like vitamins and other forms of medication. Many other companies offer life time commissions for every sale made by an affiliate – from the initial sale – even for various products that the company has for sale.

Now the important thing to remember when searching for programs is that residual is always better than one-time, and life time residual beats termed residual.

Point 6: Promote the Product and The Program

In terms of two-tiered or multi tiered programs, the tendency for affiliates is to spend most of their time and effort getting others to sign up for the program as affiliates. This is a common mistake because little time is left for the actual promotion of the product.

Preferably, the focal point of the effort should be more on promoting the product, and the affiliate programs only as you go along – recruiting the customers into the program after they buy the product. This is where the real income comes from. Besides, residual income is not always an option with multi-tiered programs.

Look at this example: you're in a two tiered program and John signs up under you as an affiliate, he may receive residual income from a sale, but you, the first-tier gets only a one-time commission from that particular sale. If you think about it, you'd be better off selling the product instead of the program since you tend to make more residual income from your own sales in the long run.

Even if it's great to have others working for you, more money could be had from your own work. This way, you set an example that helps keep that company stable. If your work is mainly promoting the program - which is free to join in the first place - and everyone follows your example, no one, not even the company will make money because the products are not sold.

You should maintain the correct equilibrium between promoting program and product. First promote the product, then the program to those who have bought the product.

Affiliate Promotion: Your Ezine

To maximize the effectiveness of Ezine marketing, you need to have a quality list and a relationship with the listed subscribers. It would be preferable to have them dependent on you for recommendations, perceiving you as an expert in your niche. Your ezine marketing campaign's success depends on this existing relationship.

Point 7: You Must Have A List

No Internet Marketer can survive without it because the money is in the list, and you'll keep on hearing that. They're willing to lose everything except their carefully hoarded email list of subscribers.

Building a list isn't complicated at all. Go for qualified leads; never buy subscribers from online vendors. It's far better to build your own list with

squeeze pages. These are advertised in Google AdWords, usually giving away something like an eBook or free report that your list might be interested in.

Visitors to this page are presented with a very brief page telling them how the report / eBook would benefit them. Everything is summed up in a couple of short paragraphs. The reason for keeping your paragraphs short is that people in a hurry will not spend an extra amount of time reading long messages. Provide them an opt-in form to receive the information.

Make sure that this opt-in form is attached to your autoresponder. The autoresponder will automatically email instructions on how or where to download their eBook or report. It also adds the name and contact details to your opt-in list for future use.

If you don't have your own list yet, get in touch with others who have comprehensive lists. Propose joint ventures with the list owners, offering them a percentage of your commissions. Whenever possible, fix it so as to get the subscribers to go through your squeeze page to be part of the list you're building.

Treat your list well – respect it; never rent, sell or share their information with others. Do not send them spam, guarantee that what you send them is actual content and not just sales letters. And – this is important – ALWAYS back up your list. Assuming that you have an autoresponder, you'll be able to export the list to your computer, then save the list on a disk. This should be done regularly. Keep that disk safe; store it in a fire proof safe or in your banks safety deposit box.

Point 8: You Must Provide Your Readers With Content

As you build your list, it's really important that you provide them with good content to build and maintain a relationship. Simply gathering their contact information and sending out sales letters won't work.

What you should do is give them information and good content regarding the niche on a regular basis. They will surely appreciate your information and depend on you for recommendations for products. You'll be rewarded with their trust and continued purchase of your products and services.

In finding or creating content for your list, decide on the product you want to promote to them to begin with. Writing a sales letter and sending your list to the order page simply won't do. There are some marketers who

actually have this type of relationship with their lists but they had to work very hard for it. In between sales letters, they still provide some content and give away resources to list members.

Articles are good for content. Write one that is relevant to the problem, or need that the product addresses then recommend the product. Also, present your members with a review of several different products that are similarly appropriate for their problems and desires.

If you can't write, hire a ghost writer to create content for you. A lot of writers nowadays have affordable rates. There are even writers who'll do newsletters with your affiliate links added in, to send to your list regularly.

In this case, all you need to do is provide the writer with your list of affiliate links and he does the rest. Make sure that your writer is trustworthy since he will also have access to your autoresponder.

Initially, you'll have to work closely with your writer so he can learn how you communicate with your list even if it's your name that appears as the author. It's important for your list to perceive that it's "you" who sends out those emails.

Affiliate Promotion: Your Blog

Are you a "blogger"? If not then you have to be one in this business. Moreover, your blog should be within the niches for the products you promote. As an example, if you are promoting cat care products and garden supplies, you need a blog each for cats and for gardening. Blogs are highly effective marketing tools.

The fact that almost everybody is blogging attests to the popularity of this method. Blogging will give you maximum exposure and it can even become viral. Pretty simple to setup as many blogs as you need, just not so many that you have issues adding content on a regular basis.

Point 9: You Need to build your Blog

To build a blog, you definitely need to have webhosting for the domain name that you need as well. You can usually find blogging software with webhosting accounts. Installing the software could easily be installed with a click of your mouse.

Free blog accounts can be had at hosted sites like Blogger: www.blogger.com. Many bloggers prefer to have a blog hosted on their website and an identical blog at a hosted blog site. This allows them to provide links to their website each time they make a blog entry, which in turn increases search engine optimization.

My personal preference and quite popular with most online marketers is WordPress.com, but this only applies if you have your own hosting and domain name, which I highly suggest. Yes, they will host it, but wouldn't you prefer to have your own domain and hosting? You should for sure.

If you can handle it, try to add a blog entry every day. If that's not possible, post twice a week at the very least. Your blog's exposure improves when you post more often.

You can never run out of things to write about. You can get ideas by visiting other people's blogs and reading trade magazines. You can also drop by specific forums related to your product.

Then there's the option of hiring a writer to blog for you. A lot of people do this as this frees up their time considerably and allows them to do other important marketing tasks. The ghostwriter can regularly come up with appropriate topics for your affiliate links and add content according to your specifications.

Point 10: You Need Blog Readers

It's pointless to have a blog if you don't have readers. Getting readers is easier than you think. Read on for ways to go about this.

Make sure to ping the blog every time you make a blog entry. To do this, go to Ping-O-Matic at <http://pingomatic.com>. Make certain that your blog comes with RSS capabilities. This will give your readers the capability to load your blog in their newsreader, and to syndicate your work on their personal websites, giving you more exposure.

If you really want to succeed in blogging, reading and contributing to other blogs might help. Remember that regardless of topic, blogging itself is a community. Visit blogs with topics similar to yours and add a comment as much as possible, then link to one of your own appropriate blog posts.

You should also provide Trackback links when you quote other people's blogs in your own blog posts. These trackbacks will appear on the other person's blog and lead back to your own.

List your blog in the search engines. This is something you have to do just once because once listed, your blog will be visited regularly and your blog entries indexed. You should also visit the directories a few times to get your blog listed there as well.

Find sites where you could list your blog and website and add a link to them. Obviously, these sites should be related to your topic. If required, you can easily create a reciprocal link by using software provided by your hosting company. Take care in that last statement, overdoing such a practice can hurt your site rankings rather than help.

Lastly, you should put the link to your blog in your signature file. Your signature file should be included when posting in newsgroups and forums, and also in your emails.

Keep in mind that promoting a website is easier than promoting a product while it's more difficult to promote a website than a blog. So priority should be given to blogging – the results will surprise you.

Point 11: Do Not Leave Money On The Table

There are a number of ways to profit with your blog. You can get readers to your affiliate site or your own site to read your sales letters. If you do that, like a lot of people do, then you're not maximizing the use of your blog – that's akin to leaving money on the table!

Try this; add Google AdSense to your blog so you can profit from clicks on the ads. Read the Google AdSense terms of service carefully as they only allow a limited amount of ads on each page. Many sizes and shapes are available, so choose carefully. Good placement choices are at the very top of each blog post, in the middle of your article, and the side menu bar.

That is another reason I love the WordPress blogs, there are so many addons available totally free of charge that you can add to enhance things like adsense, optimizing for search engines, having your blog send to twitter each time you post and most importantly to automatically ping your blog to the most important ping sites. But I digress, that is another e-book in itself.

Put affiliate banners around the borders of your blog. Make sure that these banners are eye pleasing, and that all the affiliate programs are appropriate to your main topic. You should promote affiliate programs within your blog

posts through your affiliate links. You could also direct the visitor to your sales page. Always post informative content. Advertisements used as blog entries can easily turn off visitors, though sincere site reviews work well.

It may take some time but when your blog finally gains a high readership and becomes popular, you can sell advertising space on your blog to other people.

There are plenty of ways to profit from your blog so you should always look out for these opportunities. Always remember that although people love to buy, they hate to hear sales pitches. The way to do it is by informing people about your niche through your blog. Good relationships with your readers can also be developed this way.

When there's an existing relationship, this means they already see you as an expert in your field. You can now easily make recommendations to your readers and they will purchase the product out of loyalty and trust. Even if you only have a small following, the fact that they'll make a purchase every time you make a recommendation makes this more preferable than a large list with no interest in what you say. Now you see the power of blogging?

Affiliate Promotion: Using PPC

As you learned earlier, PPC or pay-per-click is very effective for affiliate promotion when rightly done. The key word here is "pay" – you pay for every click you receive on your link and if you're not careful, your accumulated PPC costs can get quite excessive.

Point 12: PPC Doesn't Always Work

In affiliate marketing, PPC doesn't necessarily work all the time. You have to know the rules of the site where you get your PPC. Google for example has rules regarding affiliate programs with Google AdWords PPC program. They allow affiliate links in their AdWords as long as it's one affiliate ad per search query, including the ad of the parent company. Additionally, they won't allow links to replicated affiliate sites.

What this all means is that considering the number of other affiliates promoting the same product you're selling, it's unlikely that your ad would be noticed and clicked on. Furthermore, if you use a replicated website for your affiliate programs, your ad would never show at all.

You're going to need a great deal of creativity if you want PPC to work properly for your affiliate programs. Use your own link instead of an affiliate link to send the visitor to your site first, but have them pass through a squeeze page first to collect their contact details.

Start small with your PPC campaigns. Search for keywords and set a budget, then test a variety of ads while working within the limits of your budget. People tend to avoid long affiliate links so keep it short.

Patience counts when using PPC, because your goal should be focused on profit for the long run. So instead of using PPC to sell, it would be more effective and economical to exploit it to get qualified leads for your list.

Point 13: Drive PPC Traffic To The Right Place

There are PPC companies that allow links to replicated websites and will even show more than a single affiliate ad at a time. Notwithstanding the added visibility and "click" potential these sites present, you still have to ensure that you drive your PPC to the right place.

Never forget your squeeze page! This is extremely important in your development of a quality list of qualified leads. Most of the successful marketers use PPC solely for this purpose.

What's more, since you're not sure if the affiliate's sales page converts visitors, it's better to bring the visitor to your site and prep them for the sale. They're more likely to be ready to buy the product by the time they click on your affiliate link.

In the internet, most buyers initially look for free information or help. The intention to buy comes later. If you can give them what they're looking for; free information and/or tools that can help them with problems, then you've won half the battle. Like what you learned earlier, it's called building a relationship – a "profitable" relationship if you must.

When preparing for a PPC campaign, put yourselves in the customer's shoes. What are their needs and what free services can you provide for that need in order to create a relationship? At what point is a customer ready to buy?

The answers to the first couple of questions are based on your niche, but as for the last – they're surely not ready to buy when they click on your PPC link. You have to get them through your process first and prime them for the sale.

No matter what you've read elsewhere, the real essence of affiliate marketing is not about signing up then selling a product. It's about building a relationship with *future* customers, to make them *lifelong* customers. In other words, building your relationship with your customers does not limit you to just one product. It's a given that at some point you will find other related products you wish to suggest.

Point 14: The Top Keywords Are Not Always Best

A significant number of marketers spend days on end analyzing keywords, fine tuning their PPC campaigns, using their conclusions as the basis. Some succeed and some don't.

Some good things about PPC are that you only pay when somebody clicks on your link, and there's no time limit for your ad so you can actually be patient and wait for that click.

In view of the fact that a lot of PPC services will display only one affiliate ad per search, the top keywords are not always necessarily the best. If for example your products are for weight loss, the common keywords like *weight loss*, *lose weight* and other similar ones won't be the most profitable.

The competition for those common keywords would be fierce, and you'd be going against big time companies with virtually limitless advertising budgets. Factor in the large number of other affiliates within the niche and you'd be buried. This is true for all popular niches.

The right course to take is through another door or window. *Children's weight loss* or *weight loss for children* may not be that common but they're probably more targeted to your products and most other affiliates might not even consider them.

Other possible less common keywords for this niche might be *weight loss foods*, *low calorie foods*, *low carb foods* or *low carb foods for women* or *men* for that matter. Just narrow your niche as much as possible that your keywords are as closely connected as possible to your product. You might receive fewer clicks but you tend to make more sales because the market you targeted was more qualified. The customers who find you are the ones looking specifically for your product.

Affiliate Promotion: Teleseminars & Webinars

Due to the efficiency of Teleseminars and Webinars, they have recently become very popular among Internet marketers.

First, let's see the difference between the two: teleseminars are held over the phone so an internet connection is not required. On the other hand, webinars are usually conducted entirely on the internet on the participants computers, or via internet capable phones that can be used to view webpages or slides online.

Point 15: Why Teleseminars Work

The reason teleseminars are so effective is that people prefer to get content straight from experts rather than from a website. If you have an existing relationship with potential customers and you're perceived as an expert in your field, then those people will want to listen to you.

These customers would also appreciate content from other niche experts, so doing interview type teleseminars would also be wise. To organize a teleseminar, simply send email queries to your list and get a poll on as to what they want the topic to be. Use their responses as the basis for the questions you'll ask the guest speaker.

It won't be hard to find guest speakers willing to do a call – they don't get paid but they'll be able to promote their products, of which you are an affiliate (you should be). The guests usually agree to use the hosts affiliate link during the call so this is something to take advantage of.

You have two choices of teleseminars; a 1 to 2 hour one-time session or a teleseminar series – one session per week for a certain number of weeks.

If you think teleseminars are expensive then you're wrong. Free Conference at www.freeconference.com has free services. Payment is required only if you want the call recorded - which you should do – and the cost is minimal.

Point 16: Why Webinars Work

Webinars work just as well, and sometimes better than teleseminars. When you want to teach a course, holding a webinar would be the perfect method. Hosting a webinar however is not free of charge and there's a bit of work before the presentation.

The way it works is you'll have callers on the telephone where they'll listen to a presentation or instruction. The big advantage of these sessions is that they are visual - through the use of web conferencing software on their computers.

Whereas you only need your voice and a plan to hold a teleseminar, a webinar requires that you prepare visuals. These are used in conjunction with web conferencing software so callers get visual instruction as they listen to you.

You'll have to guarantee that the callers have downloaded and installed the appropriate software for the video call well in advance. As with all things, conferencing software is always being updated. Search the Internet for the best software to fit your needs.

To help offset the cost of the event, participants usually have to pay a fee and this is what reduces their number.

If you should charge for your webinars, keep the fees as low as possible especially if your purpose is to sell something else. If the webinar IS the product then by all means, charge the appropriate cost for you to make a profit.

In general, teleseminars are best for promoting affiliate products. For high ticket items, a teleseminar series are the way to go, while one call will do for low cost products like info materials.

You could use teleseminars as your product and charge the participants, with the connected affiliate products as back end products or cross sells. The same is true for webinars.

Point 17: Know How To Get Participation

Let's say you want to do a seminar: you've got experts lined up, outlined very good content for this purpose, and you have a product that your target market really needs. Now time to get participation.....

Your priority should be your list, so start with them. Setup a page specifically for registration purposes then notify your list; date, time, topic then how and where to register. Consider giving away some bonuses like a free ebook or report at the end of the call.

If you've got experts on call, have them notify their lists about the call as well. You might also want to buy ads in related ezines to inform interested readers about the call. Get the word out no more than one week in advance and not less than a couple of days before the event.

Limit the call to 100 participants – max. More than that and conference services will charge you a fee. Even with only five to ten people, you're good to go. The fact that these people are interested enough to make a long distance call to listen to you should give you a very high sales ratio – depending on the quality of the presentation.

You can also promote the call with PPC then use the registrations as the basis of your email list, if you don't have one yet. This is another excellent way to build a quality list of qualified leads.

As a final point, you should get the participants excited about the call. Send an email to the registrants stating what will be covered in detail, and the benefits they can receive from the presentation. Remind them of the event a day before and again a few hours before the start of the call. People normally forget about things they sign up for, so don't let it happen in this case.

Plan for your next call even before a teleseminar series ends. Inform the participants of what to expect in the near future. Have a registration page ready for them to sign up on for the next series.

Affiliate Programs: Setting Up Your Own Affiliate Program

If you've already been an affiliate for some time, you may either develop your own product or buy *master resell rights* to a product. When you have your own products or the right to resell them, you can have other marketers sell the product for you for a commission under your own affiliate program.

As you'll later learn, setting up an affiliate program for your product isn't as difficult as people expect it to be. Sometimes, you can do it free of cost if you know where and what to look for.

Point 18: Understand The Importance of An Affiliate Program

Even if there's some initial set up cost in most cases, and there's also the commissions you will pay out to your affiliates, the program's unique ability to reach people in your market allows you to gain more profit.

Through an affiliate program, you get your own private army of sellers for your product. There will be a wide variety of performances from these affiliates but the ones who truly exert effort will earn you large profits.

Can you imagine selling your stuff to the whole world all by yourself? The required expenditure of time, funds, and energy would be unimaginable and you still won't be able to reach everybody. Having an affiliated program saves you from this massive investment because they'll get the word out for you. More people could be accessed and more sales generated in a shorter amount of time.

Depending on the viability of your product, in a matter of a few weeks after you launch an affiliate program, it's possible to have orders coming in from everywhere worldwide.

Considering the virtual automation of affiliate programs, keep in mind that effort from yourself is still called for. Aside from starting the program, you still have to manage the process and ensure that both you and your affiliates continue to profit. You have to keep their motivation alive and insure that their commissions are paid on time. Provide them with every tool required to guarantee success. Be happy to pay your affiliates, they help you do what would be impossible on your own.

Point 19: Use The Right Affiliate Management Software

You can use web based software to set up your affiliate program. Write the affiliate terms and conditions, plus the affiliate agreement then post them on the website.

Decide on the commission structure for your program when writing the terms and conditions. Include the type of tier system and the commission payout for each tier of your program. Afterwards, list your program with different online affiliate directories.

In managing the whole process of your affiliate program, "manual" or un-automated means are not an option. You're going to need good affiliated management software to monitor and keep up with affiliate sales and commissions.

There's a large choice of management software, some good ones are: Affiliate Wiz at www.affiliatewiz.com , and All Affiliate Pro at www.allaffiliatepro.com You can also use web based services such as 1ShoppingCart at www.1shoppingcart.com

Using affiliate networks to manage your program is even easier. Excellent examples are *ClickBank* at www.clickbank.com, *Commission Junction* at www.cj.com, or *PayDotCom.com* at www.paydotcom.com. These networks are typically the fastest and most simple methods of getting an affiliate program up and running.

The thing you should focus on is that the network or software you employ must provide automated sign up capability for every affiliate and assign them each an affiliate link. The service or software should also be able to track each click and sales then record the commissions earned, with the information you've provided for initial input as the basis.

The capability to log into a website to view their affiliate statistics would be an excellent option. They would be able to retrieve such things as banners and ads and change their contact information as needed. You will appreciate the fact that a significantly automated affiliate program system allows for a smoother, trouble free process.

Pay careful attention when choosing software or services. Some of these can be really expensive, although there are those that come with a very low price tag, it's important to note that some are a great deal better than others. Read customer reviews and if possible, talk to people who actually use the software or service for a recommendation before buying one.

Point 20: Keep Your Affiliates Motivated

The biggest challenge while running your own program will probably be how to keep your affiliates motivated. It's a given that some people who sign up for your program will do nothing to promote the product – no matter the amount of motivating or cajoling they receive.

Nevertheless, there will be those who'll have every intention of following through and become successful. Concentrate on these winners to make sure they stay motivated and aggressive.

Give them the tools that can help them successfully promote the program; banners, ads, sales letters, eBooks they can rebrand with their affiliate links, and articles.

Lead them to information that instructs them how to do online promotions, or provide the data personally. Try to negotiate with a fellow marketer who offers a marketing course to let your affiliates join the course at a discounted rate.

Stay in continuous contact with your affiliates. Keep them supplied with marketing based content and update them on new creatives, current promotions like sales and bonuses.

Run a few contests and award the best performing affiliate in a given period of time, a worthy prize; T.V., computer system or something with the same value. Affiliates will work harder the more valuable the prize is.

Send personal notes to these top performers and give them recognition in your newsletters and other communiqué.

Don't neglect the other affiliates who are doing their best but not making any sales. Talk to them personally and give tips and advice. Your sales increase simply by helping your affiliates succeed.

When your affiliate program is really bringing in the bucks, arrange an event for your associates. Award all expense paid trips for the event as contest prizes all year round, with the non winners paying for their way in terms of travel, lodging and meal costs.

Point 21: Find Super Affiliates

By and large, the truth is that these people will find you. They do it by signing up for your program, then outselling all the other affiliates. Keep close watch on your monthly sales reports and see the consistent top performers. They may even approach you to ask for a higher commission and if you're smart, you should give it to them.

If you want to do your own search for super affiliates, a good place to start would be with the competition. Let your competitors know about your affiliate program and give them the opportunity to join in. Offer them a higher commission than what you are normally giving other affiliates.

You can also look for those who are successful in promoting products associated with yours but not directly in competition. If your product is a vacuum cleaner for instance, find those who sell vacuum cleaners bags, and carpet powders. Once again, offer higher commissions than what you pay your ordinary affiliates.

Finally, find the people with extensive email lists but indirect competitors. Volunteer to be guest speaker on one of their teleseminars, and also offer commissions larger than the norm on sales made during the seminar.

As you have noticed, super affiliates get higher commissions than “non-supers”. They deserve it too – consider it a bonus for the extra effort they invest in their promotions and in keeping themselves current in the latest marketing trends and techniques.

You may use the number of sales being made within the affiliate agreement as the basis for the structure of commission payouts. Most of the time, this motivates your affiliates to strive to reach the higher numbers for the corresponding higher commissions. As an example, one in five sales entitle them to a 30% payout and for 5 to 20 sales give them 50%, and so on.

Affiliate Marketing: Caveats To Watch For

There is a number of pitfalls in affiliate marketing and newbies are prone to fall into them. Let’s take a look at some common though avoidable problems you might encounter in your marketing activities.

Point 22: Avoid Bad Programs

As you already know, there are good affiliate programs as well as bad ones. In order to distinguish between the two, you have to be attentive from the very start.

You should first consider how you learned about the program; was it through spam email? If that’s the case then you may very well have a rotten egg. Even if it were a good program, it’s just about to become a bad one. The problem with spam is that if you’re a victim, there are a lot of others too, including the owner of the product.

Check all information; terms and conditions, affiliate agreement, and commission structure before or during sign up. After the sign up, you should receive an email either telling you that you have been selected - if the program’s selection process is done manually – or in the case of an automated process, your affiliate link information and login info for the affiliate area of the mother company’s website.

Here’s a list of what should be found in the affiliates area: your affiliate link, a means to edit your contact and payment details, a way to see the number of sales you’ve made, and how many clicks or leads came through

your affiliate link. The records regarding commissions owed and paid to you should also be visible.

Not all good ones do, but the best programs will provide you with creatives; banners, text ads, articles, sales letters, eBooks & other promotional materials, whether or not they will be used.

Even if all the above conditions apply, the real test however comes during payment time. When you receive a commission check at the correct moment in the correct amount, that's when you can truly say that you have a winning program.

Point 23: Avoid Low Commissions

It all boils down to money. There's no other reason why anybody would promote someone else's product except for the money they're liable to make through commissions.

There's also no logical reason why you should join a program that gives low commissions on low priced products. It will simply be a waste of your time, effort and money. No sane marketer should settle for, say 20% commission on a \$50 product unless he or she thinks that \$10 dollars is worth all the trouble.

An ideal payout should be in the 50% to 75% range for low priced products. Some affiliate program owners even give bigger commissions because the real money will come from a backend product.

For high ticket items, 20% to 50% would be reasonable. Imagine what you could make on 20% commission from a \$1,000 product: \$200 dollars per sale at three to five sales per week - not bad.

Consider the amount of money you need to make every month. Get the total figure then decide on the kind of products you can practically afford to market and compute the number of required sales to make your target income. You really just cannot afford to market some products simply because the commissions won't pay you enough.

When you find a good product that interests you and you believe that it would benefit your customers, get in touch with the owner. Inform him of your abilities and ask if he or she would be willing to open a higher commission rate agreement with you. Or you could join the regular program

and show the owner what you're capable of for a couple of months – just be sure to ask for a raise after 2 months!

Check if higher commissions are given for higher sales, and also the payout for affiliate sales made by people who sign up under you. It's also important to find out if there will be residual income.

Point 24: Read The Terms and Conditions

This is one area of weakness shared by a lot of affiliates. They just don't take the time to read the "fine print" or the terms and conditions and the affiliate agreement respectively. Don't make the same mistake - you have to make sure that you understand every part of each of these legal documents.

The terms and conditions states the company's policies concerning spam, their tracking system, their liabilities and the things they will not be liable for – the failure of the tracking system to track a sale for example. The conditions on which you will be terminated from the program and the reasons that allow them the right not to pay your commissions should also be included.

The provisions are stated plainly in the document so a lawyer won't be required for translation. Read through them carefully to ensure that it is "standard" at the very least. Contact the company if there's anything that you can't figure out before you start promoting the product.

The affiliate agreement affirms your conformity to the terms and conditions and that you understand them. You should be able to find the commission structure and the time and means of payment in either the agreement or the terms and conditions.

Mainly, you'll have to check a box to signify that you have read and understand the stipulations in both documents, and your submission of the sign up form serves as evidence of that fact.

You will have to pay careful attention on the details regarding why the company may not pay you. Put it in mind that you should be compensated for every sale you make.

While it's standard procedure for a company to hold your commissions until your sales hit \$25 to \$50, but withholding payment unless you've reached

\$500 in commissions is simply unreasonable. It is also common practice to delay commissions for a reasonable amount of time to cover refunds.

Point 25: You Get Out What You Put In

This is true in every aspect in life – no exceptions. Un-sufficiently informed people sign up for programs, get replicated websites and wait for traffic to come and sales to happen.

It's only inevitable that people like that should fail. Affiliate marketing has such a simple formula that everyone should be able to understand – the more you promote the products, the more money you earn from sales. In short: *do more, earn more.*

Affiliate marketing should be taken seriously. It's a business and should be treated like one. People who can't accept that will never find success in affiliate marketing.

The time you spend doing administrative work should also include researching for new trends, marketing techniques and new products in your niche. However, 99% of your work hours should be used doing promotions; writing sales copies, emails, articles, free reports and placing ads or creating new products.

According to statistics, 90% of those who sign up for affiliate programs without screening procedures end up doing absolutely nothing. Make every effort to be a part of the 10% who will do everything necessary to promote the product.

Do not be part of the majority who sits at home doing 5 minutes of work or nothing at all and expect to earn \$1000 a week. The only way to make that kind of money in this business is to build a decently sized list in a small niche and develop a concrete relationship with that list. Once you're on that level and have quite a following, you may cut down a bit on work and still earn a hefty profit – just don't relax.

Realizing there is a lot of information here to be consumed, what will you do with this report? Will you save it to your hard drive and never open it again? Will you read it repeatedly? Will you actually use the information to begin your quest for profitable affiliate marketing?

The facts are that you most likely found this ebook through an affiliate who was interested enough in you to give you this information. They have most

likely branded this ebook with their links. Chances are they fit into the 10% of affiliate marketers who truly succeed. You see this ebook is free to download for anyone, but in fact is an affiliate program available for you to use the information provided above to profit from.

Sad but true, 90% (you know those that fail) will download this report, thinking they will take the time to read it later, but instead it gets added to the pile of digital dust already on their computer. Will you take action and join the 10%? That's strictly your decision.

If you haven't done so already, you have the option to re-brand this report. Use it as a bonus to build your list of customers and subscribers. Earn up to 50% commission from your referral's purchases.

See the [Affiliate Marketing Revealed](#) site here to take action!

In summary, building your customer base/subscribers is the path that the **10%** do. They have a blog, website, autoresponder, hosting account and their own domain name. All traffic generated is optimized to build their list.

I know that sounds like a lot to learn, setup, etc... but here's a little hint for you. It's not that difficult. Whether you know how or just don't have the time to get the process moving, there is now an option to get everything you need from one location. Including setup and training. This truly is a business in a box, ready and waiting for you. [IHaveYourWebsite.com](#)

Grab one before they sell out or raise the cost. Hosting is the only thing not provided. [HostGator.com](#) is recommended for quality and price.

I hope this ebook has given you ideas, insight and the drive to become a successful affiliate, reaching the (10%) level. Stay tuned for our next report about traffic generation to build your list of subscribers.

Recommend resource for creating your own professional style banners, buttons, splash pages, lead capture pages, thank you/login bonus graphics and more... [AdKreator.com](#) Nothing to download, it's all done online, like having photo shop but without the massive learning curve.

Visit the [Affiliate Marketing Revealed Blog](#) often for further updates!

Resources

[CPA Affiliate Marketing Systems](#)

[Affiliate Marketing Schoolbook](#)

[Ultimate Marketing Course](#)

[Project Covert Persuasion](#)

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[Affiliate Game Plan](#)