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Affiliate Marketing Made Simple

Section 1: How to Run a Profitable Affiliate Campaign

Maybe you are new to online marketing and you are looking for a place to start.

"Sell affiliate programs," someone says to you.

And you wonder, "How do I do that?"

It's not difficult. There are some steps involved of course.

And between you and me, these steps tend to goof people up.

They think, "Oh, but I can't do that. I've never done that. I wouldn't know how to do that."

Nonsense.

Anyone, and I really do mean anyone, can sell affiliate programs.

Some will be better than others at it, but as you gain experience and knowledge you will sell more and more.

So already we have learned two things...

Anyone can sell affiliate programs if they know how to do it and they take action.

And practice makes for better results.

Don't expect you'll sell \$100,000 of products your first week

But if you sell just one – then you are on your way to a six-figure income if you stick with.

Ready to get started?

Step 1: A Little Background to Get You on the Right Track:

What exactly is this "affiliate marketing" you hear so much about?

Quite simply, it's a relationship between 3 people:

The product owner – this is the person who, as the name implies, owns the product. They set up a system whereby a person such as yourself can sign up and become an affiliate to sell their product

The affiliate – that's you! When you join an affiliate program, you get your own affiliate link that tracks your referrals and sales. Every time you make a sale, you get a percentage of the sales price – usually between 50% and 100%.

The customer – this is the person you refer to the sales page of the product. They are the ones with the cash that will be split between you and the product owner.

But you should never think of the customers as 'cash cows' or 'ATM machines' or any such thing. They are a real life people with hopes, fears, desires and so forth.

And they are depending on YOU to refer them to GOOD products. As an affiliate marketer, that is your job.

The more your customers like you and trust you, the more likely they are to act on your product recommendations. That's why you always want to build and keep the trust of your customers.

Never try to sell them a product you don't believe in. Always think of them first, and your wallet will fill itself.

Step 2: Pick a Niche

A niche is simply a broad category in which you'll be working. For example, there's the health niche, the relationship niche, the self-improvement niche, the make money online niche... you get the idea.

All of these niches are great places to start because they are large, there is a huge audience, and they're willing to pay for products.

Once you've chosen a niche, it's best to dig a little deeper and choose a sub-niche. After all, you can't possibly cover every aspect of health for every person on the planet. But you can cover weight loss for women over 40, or diabetes, or body building for guys in their 20's.

If possible, choose a niche and sub-niche that you have some interest in. It will make the rest of the process that much easier for you.

Step 3: Choose a Product

For your first product, choose something that is a proven seller. Something that converts well, that earns at least a dollar per click, and has rave reviews. Above all else, choose a product you are proud to promote.

The best products are those that solve a burning problem or fulfill a strong passion in your niche.

Choosing the right product is so important, we've dedicated an entire section to it. *See Section 2: Finding Profitable, High Converting Affiliate Products to Promote*

Step 4: Build an Online Campaign

This is where new marketers get lost.

"How do I sell a product? What goes into a profitable campaign? How do I handle the mechanics of it all?"

We're going to try to make this so easy, you cannot fail.

In fact, your campaign will consist of only 5 parts:

- A squeeze page for gathering email addresses of your prospects
- A lead magnet which you will give away on your squeeze page in exchange for the email addresses
 - A thank you page
 - An affiliate offer
 - An autoresponder sequence

You might be wondering... "What if I direct link straight to the sales page and skip the whole squeeze page / list building scenario – wouldn't that be easier?"

Absolutely it would be easier. And foolish as well, because you will make far fewer sales when you can't follow up with your prospects.

Remember, anything worth doing is worth doing right.

So don't even think about not capturing as many email addresses as you can in this process.

Now then... how do you build a squeeze page and a thank you page?

I'm going to give you the simplest, fastest way possible – buy a third party software to handle this for you, such as LeadPages or ClickFunnels.

Both of these platforms are excellent for affiliate marketing, and they offer a wide range of high converting pages. Everything is pre-designed and fully optimized to give you great results.

ClickFunnels even gives you the ability to create entire sales funnels and auto responder sequences. You'll be needing the autoresponder right away. And once you start creating your own products, you'll want to be able to build sales funnels easily and quickly. But we're getting ahead of ourselves here...

The software will take care of the squeeze page and thank you page.

You've already chosen an affiliate offer.

That just leaves the lead magnet and the autoresponder sequence.

Your lead magnet can be a report, video, chart, cheat sheet, resource list or anything your target market would love to have.

If your lead magnet solves a burning problem, so much the better.

We wrote an extensive article on lead magnet creation right here (link)

Your autoresponder sequence should do a good job of simultaneously educating your prospect on your topic and guiding them towards buying the program you're selling.

For example, if your niche is traffic and your product is "10 Ways to Get Targeted Traffic for Free," then naturally you will use your emails to guide them to that product.

Write about traffic methods in terms of what to do, but not how to do it. For that, they need the program.

Sell the reader on clicking over to the sales letter. You don't need to actually sell them on the program – the sales letter will do that.

Just make it clear why you love the program and how it will benefit them.

Load your emails into your autoresponder. If you need guidance, every autoresponder provides step-by-step instructions.

ConvertKit is an especially good stand-alone autoresponder for marketers and bloggers, as is Aweber.

Step 5: Set up Analytics

Do you know what makes the difference between a marketer who earns great commissions...

...and a marketer who is continually struggling?

In a word: Tracking.

If you're not tracking your numbers, then you don't know what's working and what isn't.

And if you don't know what's working, you don't know what to do more of.

Here are the numbers to keep track of:

Cost per click [CPC] – How much each click costs on ads you are buying

Cost per Mille [CPM] – How much you are charged for every 1000 views generated on display ads

Click Through Rate [CTR] – The percentage of people who click your link. If your CTR is below 3%, then you need to change your ad. Try making the headline more specific to the audience, the image more appealing, etc.

The general rule is, if your CPC is low and your CTR is high, then you're looking at a winning advertisement.

Step 6: Test, Traffic, Scale

Setting up a highly profitable campaign that gives you a 6-figure paycheck doesn't happen by chance or accident.

It happens by testing, tweaking and testing some more.

You'll want to test your squeeze page and find ways to make it convert higher.

Test your emails to see which ones are working.

Test all of your ads, tweak, test again and tweak.

It's not magic and it doesn't take any great skill. But it does take patience, persistence and diligence.

As hard as it might be to believe, given enough time and enough testing, you can in fact create a campaign that can provide you with a full time income.

And when you have a winning campaign, it's time to scale it.

If sending \$100 of traffic earns you \$200, then sending \$1000 will earn you \$2000, and so forth.

And don't forget – you're building a list which will become your most valuable asset.

Continue to market other products to your list, and soon for every dollar you spend, you'll be earning \$3, \$4, \$5 and more over time.

Knowing what each person on your list is worth over the long haul will allow you to scale your operation even further, getting fresh traffic from new sources.

Yes, a six figure income truly is possible.

And it all starts with building your first profitable affiliate campaign.

Section 2: Finding Profitable, High Converting Affiliate Products to Promote

Affiliate marketing is a great way to make money online.

You don't need to create your own products, you don't have to worry about fulfillment and customer service, and you can even start without a website of your own.

What's Affiliate Marketing?

Quite simply, you join an affiliate program to promote other people's products. You choose which products you want to promote, and for each one you get a unique affiliate URL.

When you send traffic to that unique URL, you are tracked as being the affiliate.

You get credit for each sale made, earning you a commission.

And often times it's a big, fat, juicy commission, too.

50% is standard.

But many programs pay 60%, 75% and sometimes even 100%.

Imagine that – someone else does all the work of creating the product and the sales page, and you earn 100% of the commission.

It sounds crazy until you realize that the product owner is building a very valuable list of BUYERS.

And that product owner can sell to those buyers over and over again in the future.

Even as a brand new affiliate marketer, you can begin earning money almost right away.

Of course, the first step is to actually FIND these profitable, highly converting affiliate programs so you can begin promoting them.

For our purposes, we're going to focus exclusively on digital products such as ebooks, video courses, webinars, audio training and so forth – anything that can be downloaded from the Internet rather than delivered by UPS.

Not all affiliate products are created equally. Here's how to find the ones that will make you the most money:

Choose An Affiliate Network

Affiliate networks are websites that handle all of the technical details of the affiliate process.

Product owners place their products on affiliate networks to create affiliate links, handle tracking and compute payouts to each affiliate.

And the affiliate network also acts as the go-between for the product owner and the affiliate, putting the two together so they can form a mutually beneficial relationship.

Major affiliate networks include:

- Clickbank
- DealGuardian
- JVZoo
- PaySpree
- WarriorPlus
- Zaxaa
- And others

For example, if your niche is internet marketing, JVZoo is probably the best place to start.

If your niche is weight loss, investments, personal development, relationships and so forth, you'll probably do well on Clickbank.

Uncovering The Hidden Gems

Every affiliate network has a marketplace where you can search and browse through all of the products.

You can search by popularity, selling price, commission percentage and other factors.

For example, if you want to promote an internet marketing product, you can search under that category and then break it down further until you find the specific types of programs you're interested in.

Look at the details of each one and become familiar with how products are listed and what information is displayed.

What To Look For:

Naturally you don't want to promote just any program. You want one that your customers will

love and that will make you a lot of money.

Perhaps most importantly for your own peace of mind, you want to know if it is a high quality product that delivers on its promises.

To find out, check the refund rate. Just because a sales page converts like crazy doesn't necessarily mean you want to promote the product.

If refunds are high, stay far away. A high refund rate indicates the product isn't delivering on its promises. Also, customer service may be bad or non-existent.

If you can't find refund stats, ask for them.

And while you're at it, ask to see a review copy. Let the product owner know you plan on promoting the product and you would like to see the product for yourself.

Nearly all product owners will let you do this. If they don't, then assume they might be hiding something and stay away.

When you get your review copy, imagine you're a customer who just bought it.

Go through the product and decide if you would be happy if you paid for it. If not, don't promote it.

How Well Does The Product Pay?

Look for the percentage of payout, not just for the main product, but also for any other products in the product funnel.

For example, you might earn 100% commission on the front end, and another 50% on all upsells.

Learning what products are in the sales funnel and how much they pay may involve going to the JV or affiliate page of the product owner.

You'll also find email swipes there, banners, ads and so forth that you can use to promote the product.

Does The Product Convert Well?

This one is a little tricky. If you look at the stats next to the product, you should see some conversion figures.

But it's vital that you know that every product receives both good and bad traffic.

Meaning one affiliate might get a 8% conversion rate, while another one will get .01%.

When you average these out, the conversion rate might not look all that positive.

That said, you can still get a rough idea of how well the sales page might convert for you by looking at the stats.

What Are Earnings Per Click (EPC)?

This is a method of measuring conversion that tells you how much each click sent to the sales page is worth – on average.

For example, if an affiliate sends 100 people (or 100 'clicks') to the sales page, and makes \$200, then that affiliate earns \$2 per click.

Generally, the higher the earnings per click, the better.

Look for products that are paying at least \$1 per click.

What About The Sales Page?

Don't forget to look at the sales page. A product could meet all the previous criteria, but have a sales page that you don't want to send traffic to.

For example, perhaps your niche is women over 50 who want to lose weight.

You find a promising weight loss product, but when you get to the sales page you see nothing but photos of 18 year olds.

This sales letter probably wouldn't convert well with your audience, since the program appears to be for a much younger crowd.

You know your audience better than anyone else, so be sure to send them only offers they will truly appreciate receiving.

One more note about sales pages – read them carefully and be sure they're not making any claims that can't be fulfilled by the product they sell.

For example, if the sales page claims anyone can lose 10 pounds a week while eating non-stop, you already know this is a ridiculous claim and clearly the product should be avoided.

Is This Product A Good Fit For Your List?

Does the product solve a common problem held by your list?

Is the information something your readers would readily hand over their money to acquire?

It's easier to sell solutions to big problems the reader is already aware of, rather than having to educate the reader on why they need this solution.

Contact The Product Seller

This is a tip you don't see too often, but it can make a tremendous difference in your conversions.

Contact the product owner and ask what other affiliates are doing to get the highest conversion rates and earnings per click from their promotions. You might learn something that gives your campaign a tremendous boost.

It's also possible the product owner will bump up your commission. This is entirely up to them and you never, ever want to get pushy about this.

Boost Your Sales With Added Value Bonuses

Adding bonuses of your own to the offer can sometimes increase sales dramatically.

Let your readers know your bonus is exclusive and available ONLY when they buy through your link.

This is especially helpful when you are promoting during a big launch. Many other marketers may be promoting as well, so it's often the case that whoever offers the biggest bonuses will get the sales.

Now Go Find A Product To Promote

Finding quality, high converting and super profitable affiliate programs isn't difficult. But it does take some homework to get it right.

That's why it's best to choose a handful of affiliate products that you and your readers truly love, and focus on promoting those.

And it's especially helpful if you use the programs yourself.

This way you can tell your readers exactly what the programs are doing for you. That's by far the best and most convincing testimonial you can give.

Now it's time to go find a program to promote.

Because as soon as you do, you can be earning your own commissions in no time.