



The Super Affiliate Master Plan

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What Are Affiliate Programs?

Welcome to the wide world of affiliate marketing!

So, what is an affiliate and what does he or she do?

The affiliate marketer acts as a “middle man” between merchant and consumer, but without adding anything to the consumer’s cost.

Affiliates do not mark up or resell products.

Instead, the affiliate educates and directs the consumer to a product, and they receive a percentage of the sale in commission from the merchant.

The affiliate acts as an independent lead generator for the merchant by bringing in new customers.

This is a win-win situation for both the affiliate and the merchant.

The affiliate can reap a full-time income marketing a whole suite of products that he does not own. They don’t pay for product creation, don’t have to ship anything and don’t deal with customer service issues or returns.

The merchant benefits from the influx of new customers, the boatloads of cheap traffic and low cost advertising. Merchants get their product and their brand in front of thousands of potential buyers without paying a dime until someone makes a purchase.

It is truly a pay for performance arrangement.

It’s also one of the toughest types of business to earn a significant income from. Competition is fierce and almost 95% of affiliates earn little or no income.

For the lucky few, the ones that know how to do it the rewards can be amazing. This course has been created to help you become one of the few and to perform at the very highest levels of Affiliate Marketing . . .

Choosing an Affiliate Program

Before you begin your venture into affiliate marketing, it is necessary to choose the right program for you. There are almost as many programs out there as there are products! When you first start out, it's easy to go overboard signing up to as many programs as possible, but this isn't the right way to go about it.

First, you need to decide on a area of particular interest to you. What products do you know the most about and think you could do the best job of selling?

Once you identify your specialty, you begin by sorting through the available merchants and examine the structure of their affiliate programs.

Key areas to investigate:

1. When and how do you get paid?

Find out whether the program pays you weekly, bi-monthly, monthly, etc. Most programs have a minimum payout amount, meaning that you don't receive your commissions until hitting a minimum number of sales for the pay period.

You'll also want to find out whether the programs pays you via check, direct deposit, Pay Pal or any combination of the three.

2. How much do you make per sale?

Remember you'll be investing your own money into advertising and other expenses to promote these programs. Therefore, you should seek programs which reward their affiliates well. You'll also want to seek out high-value products. A fifty to sixty percent commission on a \$100 product is very good, but it's not so hot if you're promoting a \$15 product.

3. Is the program managed well? Is this a reputable company?

Larger companies usually have "affiliate managers" devoted to maintaining contact with their affiliates. Even if you go with a smaller outfit, they should at least offer clear contact information. You might want to try e-mailing them at their contact address to see how fast they respond to you. Mismanaged programs are, at best, a sign of disorganization and, at worst, could indicate a company in trouble.

The last thing you want is to be sitting on a grand worth of hard earned commissions and see the merchant go out of business before paying you.

Keeping these factors in mind, here are some great places to seek out products you can promote:

www.clickbank.com

www.cj.com

www.linkshare.com

Commission Junction (CJ) and Linkshare provide affiliate hubs for major brand corporations and mid-sized businesses. Their focus is generally on tangible products and services. Clickbank is the leading source online for affiliates of information products like e-books, software and membership sites.

And of course there's our own high payout affiliate program for our Affiliate Enhancer Software -

Discover More Here: [**Affiliate Enhancer**](#)

Five Approaches to Affiliate Marketing

As a new affiliate, one of the first things you'll want to know where and how to promote your affiliate link. Today we'll cover several options and discuss the merits of each method.

1. Direct Links via PPC Advertising

If you use PPC advertising, you can embed your affiliate to the ad and send the prospect directly to the merchant's site. This is a **really** lazy thing to do though. You might make a few sales, but it's far better to approach the process as outlined in tactic #2.

2. Linking to Your 'Affiliate Enhanced' page via PPC's

Place ads for your target keywords and direct the prospects to your capture page created with our [Affiliate Enhancer](#) software - Greet them with an invitation to subscribe to your newsletter or to download a special report. This is **Vital** because once you've collected a prospect's email address, they are yours to market to on a repeat basis.

3. Build Content Focused Sites

This approach aims for long term traffic through search engine optimization. You'll need to publish content related to the type of product you're trying to sell. Searchers will be drawn in by informative articles. Your affiliate links will be sprinkled discreetly across the site.

4. Advertise in E-Zines

This is a good method to use if you can find targeted lists for your product. E-zine ads can be purchased in most cases, and in other cases you can snatch them up for free by bartering with the list owner. Remember, rather than link directly to the affiliate site use your Affiliate Enhanced page to capture subscribers and build your list. Not only will this allow you to follow up and convert more sale (for free) but it will also enable you to shield your affiliate link.

5. Purchase text link or banner advertising on high traffic sites This type of advertising isn't quite as popular as it used to be. It is most effective when you can find high traffic sites for smaller niche subjects. These sites tend to focus heavily on content and run only a handful of ads on site. Space is limited and rates are likely to be at a premium.

Beating the Odds

This will be a cold, hard dose of truth, but you need to know the facts. The majority of people who go into affiliate marketing fail to break even. Some people will earn thousands in this business, while others will struggle to generate even a few hundred in sales per month.

Affiliate marketing is very competitive and cut-throat. You've got to stay on your toes to win in this game. While I can't guarantee your success, I can provide you with some fundamental knowledge that just might help you beat the odds.

Get ready to learn how to play hardball with the super affiliates.

#1: Never Stop Searching for Profitable Keywords

Successful affiliates are never satisfied with the status quo. Even if you endured hours sweat producing research to find your target keywords, keep on searching out new ones and adding them to your list.

#2: Become Obsessed with Testing and Tracking

If you aren't testing and tracking absolutely everything – and I mean everything from your keywords, your ppc ads, your web site copy and any thing else you can think of to test/track, the odds are stacked against you.

Successful affiliates are maniacal about testing and tracking every detail of their campaigns. They are details oriented and use all of their collected data to refine their entire system on a day to day basis.

#3: Innovate and Update Constantly

Keep your approach fresh by testing new conversion tactics. If you rely on PPC engines for advertising, start throwing in e-zine advertising into the mix. If that doesn't produce the desired results, investigate banner ads, classified ads, message boards, offline media and anything else you can think of to get your message across.

Don't rely on one conversion channel. If you send your prospects direct to the merchant, change up your campaign and start sending leads to your special capture page created with our Affiliate Enhancer software and start collecting email addresses. Experiment with your content and your web copy. Try out

different headlines. Never settle for the familiar. Tweak everything until you've squeezed the maximum conversion power out of it.

#4: Pay Attention to the Industry and Communicate with Other Affiliates

The world of affiliate marketing changes every day. There is always a new tactic to implement, a change in the rules at one advertising service or another, a serious technology failure at one of your merchant's sites and so on.

Even though affiliate marketers are rabidly competitive group, they are also quite helpful and willing to trade information and tips with one another.

You should bookmark the following sites and make a point of visiting them weekly if not daily:

<http://www.associateprograms.com/>

<http://www.webmasterworld.com/>

<http://www.sitepoint.com/forums/forumdisplay.php?f=6>

<http://www.affiliatesdirectory.com/>

The Importance of Building a List

Out of all the possible approaches to affiliate marketing, lead capture and list building represents the smartest and most effective option.

Why?

A lost visitor is a lost sale. A lost visitor is the loss of potential repeat sales. Think of it this way: you're putting time and money into your advertising. If you aren't capturing your visitor's email addresses, you're basically throwing all of that traffic right down the drain.

When you capture your visitors to your list, you open a whole new world of profit opportunities – not just for the short term, but for the long term as well.

The Benefits of List Marketing

You can educate your prospects. This will increase your conversion rate by giving you the opportunity to turn hesitant prospects into enthusiastic customers.

You can market to your prospects over and over again. Your long term profit potential exists in repeat sales. Never work for "just one sale".

You can double your return on investment while lowering your advertising costs. Once you've got a list in place, you don't have to limit your offerings to just affiliate product. You can bring in any additional, related products of interest to your list and make sales immediately without going through the same advertising process all over again.

Can you see the benefits yet? Why spend money over and over again sending people to the same page and "hoping for a sale", when you can capture them to your list and have full control over the conversion process?

Any other approach leaves you at the mercy of the merchant's web copy and the customer's mindset at first contact. You've got to lure your prospects in and expose them your message multiple times. This will save you so much time and money you'll wonder why you ever did it any other way.

Haha - And Yes list building is one of the main components of our Affiliate Enhancer software - it makes it super easy to create your capture pages in less than 3 minutes:

Link Theft

Today we're going to talk about the dark side of affiliate marketing: Link Theft. It's not ethical, but it happens.

You should know that there are people out there who, for whatever reason, absolutely hate the idea of someone earning a commission off their purchase.

These are the cranky, paranoid customers of the online world. There are also fellow affiliate marketers who would deny you your hard earned commission as well.

The term "link theft" isn't entirely accurate, though it's what you'll see used to refer to this phenomenon. The accurate term, in a nuts and bolts sense, is "link altering".

Quite simply, the link thief does one of two things:

1. Erases your affiliate link from his browser window, deletes any cookies set by the link, and then proceeds to the merchant's site via the main www url.
2. Erases your affiliate I.D. and replaces it with his. He then purchases through his own link and takes his commission as a rebate.

The solution to link theft is "link cloaking". Essentially, you turn an obvious affiliate link such as www.clickbank.com/hop?=&affiliate, into an encrypted link or you mask it behind a short domain name.

There are pros and cons with each method. Link cloaking software such as Affiliate Defender and others use javascript to encapsulate your URL into an indecipherable scramble of characters. This prevents anyone from seeing the real affiliate link at the bottom of their browser window when they mouse over it.

The only problem is that your link can still end up exposed once the user clicks on to the main site. The link often "unscrambles" and appears naked yet again in the address bar.

Domain masking, when done properly, allows you to use your own short url which redirects to the merchant site while keeping your url in the address bar. You can use domain masking with any address you choose. For example, you could register one domain name to devote to your affiliate redirects.

You can use subdomains (subdomainname.mysite.com) and also directories (www.mysite.com/product).

The downside to domain masking: the technique involves what's called an "invisible frame". The frame pulls in the affiliate site within the main window. Imagine your site has a set of navigation links down the left-hand side, and clicking those links causes the main window to pull up content, while leaving the left column unchanged. This is the basis of the technique – it's just set up on one link and hidden from the surfer's view.

Unfortunately, sites like Clickbank frown upon this practice.

There's a good chance that your redirect link will break frames and wind up exposing your affiliate URL anyways. Nothing wrong with that other than the fact that you went through a lot of work for nothing!

A greater concern: frames have a bad habit of confusing affiliate tracking applications. Your referral ID might not be recorded and you wind up losing the sale.

Obviously, you are free to test out any of these "solutions". Just keep in mind that they aren't fool proof. Ultimately, the link theft problem occurs much more frequently in the Internet Marketing niche than it does anywhere else due to the large number of fellow profit-motivated customers within the niche. Link theft occurs infrequently, if at all, in other niches.

Those customers are less likely to know (or care) what affiliate marketing is – and less likely to take notice of affiliate URLs in general.

Sidenote:

Our [Affiliate Enhancer](#) software protects links in a number of different ways -

First of all by having your prospect fill in a subscription form you are able to set the 'confirmation' page directly at the affiliate link, we've also added a special code that will prevent people from right clicking on the page itself making it hard for the casual thief to view your source code.

And just for safe measure we've utilised a innovative 'tick the box link' that sends the visitor directly to the affiliate page the second it's clicked. A little different and it'll certainly make it hard work to steal your commission.

Advanced Topics

We've come to the last day of the course, and it's time to tie up the loose ends and cover some advanced topics.

As you know by now, affiliate marketing can be incredibly rewarding when done properly. There are also a lot of pitfalls you need to watch out for as well. One of these is merchant fraud.

Merchant fraud, unfortunately, does happen. Merchants can use any number of clever tactics to cheat you out of your commission. One of these methods is to offer multiple payment options to customers without linking each one to their affiliate tracking software.

For example, let's say that a merchant offers credit payments, payment via Paypal and payment via check to the customer.

The merchant tracks your affiliate ID up to the point of sale and credits you if the customer chooses to pay via credit card through the merchant's main payment gateway. However, if the customer chooses Paypal or check, your affiliate ID is immediately tossed.

The only way around this clever trick is an exercise of caution on your part. When you evaluate a potential affiliate program, check to see how many payment methods the merchant offers. Secondly, after you sign up for an account, examine your referral links. In fact, if you have the budget to spare, follow your own link and choose one of the alternate payment options and purchase a product.

Did you get credit for that sale? Great! If you didn't receive credit, though, it's time to can that merchant and move on to more ethical waters.

Here's another 'advanced' tip to consider: use affiliate networks like Commission Junction to evaluate potential merchants. Joining programs via a network is often a better choice than signing up at individual, non-networked sites. The reason is simple: membership in an affiliate network imposes stricter standards on merchant behavior.

You also have access to a wealth of data on the overall performance of other affiliates in that merchant's program.

Last but not least, you need to focus on building trust among potential customers. If your merchant site doesn't do a very good job of this, then send

your visitors to your web site. Make it clear what products and/or information you have to offer.

Again the easy way to do this is with Affiliate Enhancer

Also, be vigilant about posting your contact information in a prominent place.

Anonymity might be fun in a chat room, but it turns off consumers very quickly.

For an extra advantage, consider having your site evaluated "net cop" programs like the one at <http://www.i-cop.org/> and get your site listed in the online section of the Better Business Bureau's web site.

That's all for this course -

Don't forget to grab your copy of Affiliate Enhancer, it's a small investment in your future business and it can be self funding right away from your increased commission checks.



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PRODUCT OR SERVICE
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