

THE SUPER AFFILIATE SURVIVAL GUIDE

HOW TO AVOID BECOMING AN AFFILIATE CATASTROPHE

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INTRODUCTION

Affiliate marketing is not an easy way to make millions online. The dream being sold around the block is great though, you do not have to do anything just pick a product to promote and start making money! Take my word for it, if it sounds too good to be true – then it probably is.

Affiliate marketing is most definitely a playground ripe with moneymaking opportunities but success in an increasingly competitive market is tough if you do not know what you are doing. There are a lot of affiliates who find this out the hard way.

You have the unique opportunity, through this short report, to understand what is required to avoid any affiliate failures and losing hope in the process.

The most important factor you will have to prepare yourself for when starting out, as an affiliate is to put in the initial time and dedication. I do not mean to encourage anyone to quit their day job but just realize that if they are starting out in the affiliate marketing arena they will be spending a lot of hours over the weekend, chained to the desk.

Of course once you get the hang of it and develop the right marketing strategies that come naturally to you along with a team that understands your business needs, expanding your business will be a breeze.

This short report deals with the pitfalls that you should avoid, which have become the tomb for many affiliates that are just starting out.

To generate a quality income and lifestyle through affiliate marketing efforts you will have to concentrate on the quality and not the quantity. After the advent of web 2.0 it has become relatively simpler to launch a site with great design and content; so if you are not willing to put up the same quality that everyone else is do not expect any significant returns.

Do not go overboard either, with your first affiliate effort, because at the end of the day it is your marketing strategy that has to prove itself and not the amount of effort or money you poured into a design. Aim to strike a decent balance, when it comes to your first affiliate effort and avoid the catastrophic mistakes explained below.

MISTAKE# 1 - PICKING BAD PRODUCTS

There is no doubt in my mind that the genius of marketing can even sell a bad product – but not for long! When choosing merchants and products to promote, the top mistake affiliates make is, pick a product that is not relevant to the market needs at the time.

There is absolutely no excuse for choosing a bad product with all the information and choice of products available.

ClickBank (www.clickbank.com), one of the most popular affiliate network on the web; provides affiliates with a lot of information to decide if the product is good or not. Of all the Click Bank analytics the two most important are the %refd and the %Grav.

Where %refd represents the number of sales referred to the product page by affiliates and is a good indicator of the kind of competition you are facing with other affiliates. And %Grav is short for gravity and denotes the popularity of the product among affiliates in the last 3 months; this is an indicator of the demand of the product at any given time.

So look for products that strike a decent balance between popularity in the market and aggressive affiliate competition. Do not think it wise to forego these stats.

Picking products with low conversion rates is also a mistake because all your marketing efforts will go to waste if the product or the sales pitch is just not appealing to the customers. If you really think that a product is worth promoting but has low conversion rates, talk to the merchant/vendor about improving the packaging or the pitch.

Any serious merchant will take into account what concerns their affiliates have, and you might get yourself a winning product. Just do not pick a product that has no room from improvement and currently is generating no heat in the market.

As an affiliate marketer your top priority is to make money and sell product to your customers, if the product is good and they are happy with the incentives they get from your sites, they will come back for more but if you sell them a bad product you run the chance of losing the customer for good.

Research your product and its claims, never push a product to your site unless you have satisfaction yourself. When you endorse a bad product through your site it reflect as badly on your business as it does on the merchant. Most merchants give affiliate discounts, so take advantage of that and test the product!

Picking a bad product is as good as committing affiliate suicide.

MISTAKE# 2 – LOSING OUT ON LOW COMMISSIONS

Another mistake affiliates make when starting out is not keep the promotional costs in mind. Promoting a product is never free; so do not make the mistake of promoting a product that leave you with nothing after the promotional costs are deducted.

If you come across a great product, it does not necessarily mean that it will bring you a profit. Look at the commission percentage and average a budget for the promotional and incentive costs to determine if you will be making any money.

Affiliate marketing is not about being an Internet evangelist, your sole purpose is making a wad of cash for your promotional efforts. So, do not play nice, it will get you nowhere, always expect and/or ask for what you think you deserve for promoting a product.

Being a new affiliate, you might feel intimidated selling products that ask for a lot of money and offer you a hefty commission. Some have the tendency to think, customers will never buy an inflated product – this is flawed thinking because most of us are conditioned to pay for advertisements and promotional activities of products through our own pocket.

If the product is good, the customers will not mind the price tag that included affiliate promotional activities. Look out for yourself and pick products from quality merchants that reward their marketers well. Do not fall for any promises like, “if you generate a lot of sales for this product, you might get higher commission for the next”.

That is not something you can hold anyone to and there are a lot of merchants/products that pay you in the here and now. So, why waste you time on meager commissions!

MISTAKE# 3 – NOT COLLECTING LEADS

To become an affiliate marketer that has any level of significant sway in the market, it is imperative that you make your customers/traffic yours forever. If you pass your leads onto the merchant without gaining their loyalty and more importantly their emails you are losing out on a gold bucket of opportunity.

Collecting leads is what differentiates an average affiliate from a super affiliate. An average affiliate, is happy running a promotional campaign for a product and get a one-time profit from their promotional efforts. A super affiliate, on the other hand, capitalizes on the generated interest and keeps his collected leads as an in built audience for his/her promotional activities.

In the end, a super affiliate is able to generate recurring sales from the same subscriber list. This is the ideal way to keep your leads interested and thankful for your efforts as a person with expertise in the area and an eye on the industry. You keep the visitors happy by providing them quality content all the while recommending products from varied merchants making commissions and building your credibility in the industry.

It is okay to create a campaign using PPC (pay per click) Programs and SEO (Search Engine Optimization) but to direct all the targeted traffic directly to the merchant is a great folly.

Especially when it is just as easy to have them visit your landing page first, where you have the opportunity of presenting your own content and even multiple merchant offers for your visitors to choose from, once you have captured their email address.

Think about it, this is the top reason why you should bother creating a landing page in the first place. To have subscribers of your own, that you can direct to any new product that you think is worth promoting puts you above the competition; never give that opportunity up.

Bottom line, the list always trumps the one of sale – logically speaking!

MISTAKE# 4 – NOT CAPITALIZING ON YOUR LEADS

It is one thing to not create a list and an entirely different one to waste the potential of your list. You might think, who would do such a thing? Go to the trouble of creating a squeeze page and not utilizing the leads attained for maximum advantage! You would be surprised at how many affiliates never learn to keep in touch with their subscribers.

Capitalizing on your leads does take a marked effort on your part because if you are one of those affiliates that think themselves “holier than the rest”; you will not win any authority over the market.

You need to make an effort, through regular updates, to keep the interest from your audience and use it whenever you need to make profits.

Lets do the math:

If you build a list of just 50 new subscribers every month, by the end of the year you will have at least 18,250 subscribers that have already shown their interest in your area of expertise.

Sending out the offer within a weekly newsletter promoting a product with a meager \$25 commission on each sale, and if you are able to make your list responsive you can expect between 3-5% conversion on the offer that may end up with least 500 sales (out of 18,250), making you \$12,500!

The greatest benefit of these sales is that they are made without any additional promotional effort from your part! Sweet!

While the competition is scrambling for SEO to get them customers, all you have to do is push a button and send out an email!

To create a list as responsive as the example above, or more, you have to provide quality content as the top priority of your business. It also helps to flaunt your authority and credentials

though informational e-books, articles and email courses, establishing you as an expert in the industry.

The greatest benefit of having a responsive list is the money and effort you save on marketing, because lets face it no matter how hard you try getting that top spot on search engines is not easy and does not last long.

MISTAKE# 5 – PEDDLERS FOR MERCHANTS

This is one of the greatest mistakes you can make as an affiliate, create a relationship with a bad merchant. Someone who is after nothing more then creating a quick buck and not caring for anyone who buys or promotes their product.

This is why, it is so important to check out merchant history and if that is not available check out the product thoroughly to see if all the claims made by the merchant are in fact true of the product. If however you do find a peddler and have a bad experience with them, do the community a favor and voice your opinions so that others can avoid making the same mistake.

The customers that you send to the merchant are after all, your customers too and by recommending a product not worth its value, you are essentially ruining your reputation too.

That is okay if you are in the affiliate marketing business to make a quick buck; but if you ever want to come close to super affiliate status, you need to build a reputation in the industry and a subscriber list that trusts your opinions. Promoting peddlers will not win you any friends, not even the peddlers!

MISTAKE# 6 – MISSING THE TIME SENSITIVE WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY

So far as online businesses go, “timeliness is godliness”! You might have heard or read that any successful business venture online or offline is a numbers game and the most important numbers are the ones that show peak in interest in certain niches.

A simple example to illustrate my point would be, promoting Valentine’s Day products on the 15th of Feb!

Google Trends along with few other tools specialize in tracking online trends and to capitalize on these opportunities you need to act fast and get your promotions up and ready executed in a flash.

It can be done with little effort if you are not running a one-man band, but have an actual team of dedicated experts working for you. To build a good team you need to invest some time and value hard work above all else, that will give you another edge over the competition that is scrambling to put together a decent campaign.

Another missed time opportunity with a lot of affiliates is not lining their promotional campaign with the release of the product. This will leave the affiliates picking up scraps after all the market has been swept up by competitors.

Keep your eye on the calendar and set rigid dates for your campaigns. Imagine the hype you can create if you are able to create an “event” around the launch of the product you are promoting.

This strategy of time sensitivity has worked wonders for a lot of affiliates but even if you are not looking to create any time sensitive strategies it is just common sense to not sell a product that saw its peak sales a couple of years ago.

All in all, when you have a great window of opportunity, act on before it closes.

MISTAKE# 7 – IGNORING ANALYTICAL INDICATORS

As an affiliate and a business owner, it is your duty to stay on top of your numbers. What I mean by that is, calculating your profit margins after fee deductions from affiliate programs, team expenses and promotional investments.

Affiliates venturing in this field often fail to see the sum of all the parts and just look at the commission they make per sale to calculate their monetary targets. This leads to nothing other than frustration and the affiliate stands to lose hope in their marketing skills.

If you are not good with numbers, have someone explain it to you or take over the math for you. Whatever you do, workout a budget for everything before you start putting any money down, otherwise it will turn out to be a financial muck.

Sourcing important data about the construction of your campaign and the foundation of your traffic is something that should never be overlooked or taken lightly. These are some numbers worth investing in.

As you learn to read these numbers you will have the unique opportunity to make your site/s more and more in tune with your visitors and you will know immediately if something is not working.

Analytics tools are available a dime a dozen and they are geared towards getting you the most out of your marketing efforts telling you exactly what or where your traffic is coming from and how it is interacting with your site. All your competitors will be using these tools to their advantage so if you don't; you are missing out.

Reading analytical reports keeps your finger at the pulse of your market, and as a marketer you cannot stand to avoid that.

THE CRUX

To survive or thrive in the affiliate marketing world, you need to stay ahead of the game! It's just that simple. With over 3 million active, registered domains, the competition to get attention is stiff to say the least, but fighting for sales of the same product with other affiliates is even tougher.

This is why, you need to put all the garbage fed to you, about affiliate marketing being a walk in the park, and start to think through everything that is coming your way as a marketer. Choosing a great product with a healthy commission is a good foundation but you need to move forward with the same amount of caution as you do while choosing the product.

The Internet is laced with piranhas that prey on the weak marketers and make money for themselves. Create a list and use them wisely to your advantage. Beat your own drums

when you have to and get yourself some recognition in the industry, building a reputation for yourself.

Keep everything we have discussed through this short report in your mind when you start dabbling in affiliate marketing.

As a last word of caution, do not expect super affiliate success overnight, put in the requisite hours and you too will make a handsome residual monthly income!

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