

Your Guide to Affiliate Marketing

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This guide is a sharing of what I did for my affiliate marketing business.

I tried my best to keep it short and avoid the complicating technical parts so that you will have a better idea about affiliate marketing.

Hopefully you will know what to do for your business after you read this.

Enjoy. 😊

Now, I believe you have the determination to start your affiliate marketing business. Is that enough? Where do you start?

You need 2 important things to start:

1. Goal

2. Plan

A *goal* for the big picture. What do you want to achieve in affiliate marketing? Earn \$37,000 per month or teach a league of passionate affiliate marketers so that they too can be as successful as you?

Then how are you going to achieve your goal? Spend 9 hours a day just reading and replying forum post or recruit any affiliates you bump into? You got to have a *plan* to reach your goal.

Plus, a plan will help you to focus on your goal and provide you the clear direction of what you need to do. With that you will be able to stay on track and complete your tasks on time. A lot of people fail in their affiliate marketing because they were diverted from their track either by themselves or by something else? Do you?

Goal and plan are important for your ultimate achievement. You need to apply these 2 things for whatever you start in affiliate marketing. No matter how big or small they are. If you need to post 2 replies daily in the forum to get traffic, make sure you do that.

So, let's move on to the first thing you need to for your affiliate marketing success.

1. Find A Market

There is no point for you to go into the rocket fuel market since the next energy source might be hydro, solar or electric. If you want to be successful in affiliate marketing, you need to offer what the market is looking for.

You need to do your research to find your market. Simply key your keywords of interest into search engine, look at the number of search result and sponsored ads and you will have a rough idea about how hot the market is.

Then you can spin your keywords to find the less competitive niche for you to be involved in.

Let's say you want to be an affiliate for "health supplements" but the niche you just keyed in is quite general and there are a lot of competitions. If you can be specific with your health supplement, you can then target a more specific market and customers.

Plus, you can be more focus in your marketing campaign and dedicate your offer to the right eyes if you can be specific.

But determining your niche is another huge story and that will take a lot of time to talk about. Probably I will share the topic with you in another free ebook.

So, here are some hot markets that people are interested in:

- Entrepreneurship
- Making money online or offline
- Home base business
- Finance, investment and loan
- Self improvement or personal development
- Relationship
- Health and beauty
- Weight loss

- Sports
- Pets

2. Find Affiliate Program

Since you know which market you want to be involved in, the next thing you need to do is to find your affiliate program.

Below are some of the tips you need to consider when you choose an affiliate program:

- Provides some affiliate marketing training and promotional materials - although merchant's promotional materials are effective, but it can become a me-too material. So, it is better that you write your own promotional materials
- Offers at least 40% commission
- Offers 2 tiers affiliate program or backend products which you can earn too
- Offers quality product and money back guarantee
- Good sales letter and conversion rate

You can look for your desire affiliate program by keying “your niche market + affiliate” in search engine. Let's say you are interested in digital camera, just put “digital camera + affiliate” and you will get a list of what you need.

You can also start your searches in affiliate directories like:

- Clickbank
- Paydotcom
- Paydotclickbankalert
- Linkshare – you need a website
- Commision Junction - you need a website

My Experience

I joined amazon.com as affiliate when I first started affiliate marketing and I only used PPC to generate my traffic.

Since amazon.com has so many products, I thought might as well promote more products to earn more money. So, I promoted high end product like plasma TV to medium range product like digital camera.

Then I found that it is not easy to sell the high end product even though amazon.com stated “43% bought the product after view”. My PPC cost was piling up because of my high cost per click (that is the price you pay for not doing your keyword research). Although I did get 1 sale for the plasma TV but I still lose money after minus off the cost. Luckily, it was not much. So, I decided to drop that niche.

After that I focus on products which range from \$200-\$600. You only get \$8.00 commission if you promote anything below \$200 (this is calculated with 4% commission in mind).

Then, I found that digital camera was a good conversion niche because I was able to sell 2-3 cameras every 2 days. Although I only get \$10-\$12 per camera, my customers usually buy pouches, SD cards and other accessories along with the camera which probably due to amazon.com package as well. So, my earnings from the digital camera niche were quite good. 😊

However, amazon.com only pays a maximum of 4% sales commission for electronics. So, I decided to drop out of amazon.com. I hardly promote anything from amazon.com after that. But I still visit amazon.com to get ideas of what to promote.

By the way, amazon.com only pay you when you make at least \$100 commission and you will receive the sales commission 2 months later which means that you will receive your January sales commission in March. Imagine that you need to pay your PPC advertisement at the end of this month but getting your sales commission credited 2 months later. You better have some money reserved so that your credit card debt won't pile up.

Another thing you need to know about amazon.com affiliate program is that its cookie is only valid for 24 hours. Cookie means that if your visitors didn't buy from you on the first day of visit, you will still get the sales commission if your visitors buy from you on the second day. But if your visitors buy from you on the third day, then you won't get anything.

Although it might sound that amazon.com doesn't offer an attractive affiliate program, but its reputation, discount and free shipments may help you to get more sales and earn some good money. You are welcome to join amazon.com to test affiliate marketing, just that you need to research your product, be patience and learn all you can about affiliate marketing.

3. Know Your Product

This can take 2-3 hours or 2-3 days depending on you and your product. But no matter how long it takes, you need to understand your product.

Let's take digital camera from amazon.com as an example. You will find what you need on the technical details, product details and product description. Read all the sections and you will have a rough idea about the digital camera of your choice. This will only take less than an hour of your time.

Let me share my little secret with you here. I spend a great deal of time reading customer reviews because it gives me a lot of ideas to write in my sales message and headline in PPC ad. The customer reviews helps me a lot on my conversion.

Sometime amazon.com will include reviews from other sites and you can leverage on this to get more information about the product.

You can then use both reviews as inspiration for your articles and promotional messages. It is really helpful. ☺

And if you want to have an in depth understanding of your product, my personal advice is that you use the product yourself. This is because:

1. You get first hand experience from using the product.
2. You will know what benefits to highlight to your prospects because you enjoyed the same benefits.
3. You will be encouraged to sell better knowing that the product is what your visitors' need.
4. You stand out from other affiliate marketers who never use the product.

Then, does that mean you have to buy all the products you want to be affiliate to?

That is where reviews come in. Read the reviews for your desire product and discussion in forums to help you promote the product. It might a little bit cheesy, but that is one of the ways if you can't afford all the product. Still, it is *advisable* to promote the product with your own experience.

4. Marketing Plan

Before you budge your head and go promoting your product blindly, you need to develop a *marketing plan*.

You must know what you need to do daily, weekly and monthly.

For me, I usually spend my day replying forums posts and list members' emails; check my PPC campaign and tweak its message; read one or two blogs and do some online research about things I don't know.

What I did weekly was writing and submitting 2 articles to article directories. It was painful job to write initially but now I actually enjoy it, probably because of my writings are creating a positive impact to my readers.

And my monthly activities are tracking my landing page visit and my articles clicks.

5. Writing The Message

Unlike the traditional business, you can't meet your visitors face to face. You can only convince your prospects through your written words. This is even tougher when you have only 3 short lines for your headline and contents for PPC ad.

So, I bet you know the best way to persuade your prospect is to highlight on the benefits. Right?

It is important that you add the WIIFT, What Is It For Them in your messages.

People are just not interested of who you are and what you want.

They are interested in what they can get if they buy your product.

So, be it Free Shipping, Discount, Easy To Use, Money Back Guarantee, Cheap, Proven System or Best In the Field, highlight as much as you can in your message.

You can apply the WIIFT in your articles, email, as well as your blog posts.

6. Generating Traffic

Since you know your product and written your sales message, it is time to draw some viewers to what you have done so far.

As mention before, I started with PPC for my affiliate marketing business. Then I move on to:

1. Article marketing
2. Blog
3. Press release
4. Classified ads
5. Forum posting
6. SEO – I am still trying to get the hang of it
7. Social networking – I am thinking to do that soon

Although all the methods are free and require some form of writing skills, I still get good traffic from them. 😊

You need to be aware that traffic might be slow initially if you generate traffic with these free methods. However, if you publish your work consistently, you will see a healthy stream of traffic overtime.

Since you are writing your materials (I suppose you don't outsource the work), be prepare to invest your time. This is because you need to research your topic, write your work, edit the piece, publish it online and not to mention the writer's block you will experience.

7. Building Website

Although I was able to make money without my website, I wasn't making big money. I was hungry for more, so I decided to build my website.

And in this case, my website is my landing page to capture leads and share with them what I know about affiliate marketing. So, I will use building landing page as the example here and I will break it down to a few sections for your easy digestion.

Why capture leads?

Capturing leads is important because not everyone buy on their first visit. Notice that most merchants' sites that you refer visitors to will have some form of lead capturing methods. They usually offer freebies to the visitors to get their details.

Since the experience and successful affiliate marketers are capturing leads, why not you?

You are just *wasting* your marketing effort and time if you refer your visitors directly to the merchants' sites.

Free tool to build your website

It will be hard to build your website if you don't know about HTML. Luckily, you can now do it with ease because there are people who offer free templates for you to use online.

Just search for "free website template" and you will get a list of them. You can use the templates as they are or make some modification with an HTML editor.

Decide on the domain name

The next difficulty was to decide on the domain name. A good domain name should be:

- Short and memorable - this might be difficult because most short and memorable domain names are taken. You can either wait for the merchant to give up the name or buy the name. But these 2 methods are not realistic because it will cost you a lot of money and time.
 - Easy to spell – lumping your name together will be tiring for your visitors' eyes thus making it easier to be misspelled. Consider this, "anneselectronicshop.com". Even I am having a hard time writing that.
-

- Related to your business – if you are selling digital camera as your affiliate marketing business, why do you put “anneselectronicsshop.com”? Isn’t “annedigitalcamera.com” more related to your niche?
- Domain name extension – if your desire name is not taken in .com, you can try .net or .biz. But you need to be sure of that decision because your visitors might have the misconception that your domain end with .com. If they key that into their browser, they will be directed to other website instead of yours. So, you should have a few choices for your domain name.
- Getting alternative – you might come across advices to get alternative for your domain name so that you won’t leak traffic to the other website. It means that if your domain is “annedigitalcamera.com”, you should get “annedigitalcamera.com”, “annedigitalcameras.com” and “annedigitalcameras.com” as well. But my personal advice is that you keep your money for the time being and work on your best domain name.

You can apply the same concepts to create your blog name.

Hosting

Once you get your domain name, you will need hosting service for your landing page. Hosting is to store your landing page and all its information in a server so that it can be accessed by your visitors.

There are a lot of options for hosting service. You just need to get one that is affordable to you. You don’t need a large bandwidth and storage hosting service when you start affiliate marketing initially.

You can always change to other hosting service provider or upgrade your account when you need it later.

Freebies

You need to show some freebies to get your visitors’ attention. In my case, I have written a free ecourse for my visitors. You need to give something to your visitors if you want their details. Give them a reason to sign in your opt-in list.

However, your visitors are constantly boomed with freebies to get their details. Your visitors are growing numb to these kinds of offers. They couldn’t see the

differences between your offer and the others. Give your visitors something more than freebies so that you can stand out from the crowd.

Although it can be a struggle to write an ecourse, you can do it with ease if you refer to your mentors, ebooks you bought, articles, forums and blog posts for inspiration. It might take some time to get your ecourse done but it is worth *super* lot once you release it to attract your visitors.

What else to do?

After that, you will need to write your sales letter to encourage visitors to sign in and follow up emails to promote your products.

Then, you need an autoresponder service to help you distribute your follow up emails to all your list members. You can send your emails at your preferred time interval, preferably once a week so that your prospects and customers will remember you.

There are a number of companies offering autoresponder service, just choose the service you can afford.

My head was getting bigger and bigger everyday attending to all these tasks.

But one very odd thing was that, there was some part of me that actually *enjoyed* the heavy workload and crazy life back then!

Crazy guy...

Once you have these ready, you should start generating traffic to your landing page as in step 5.

So, there you are. The outline of what you need to do for your affiliate marketing business. I hope you have fun reading this.

Something To Keep In Mind

“You can’t be successful in affiliate marketing overnight.”

That is the first thing you need to keep in mind regardless of how many people told you that you can earn \$37,000 while you are sleeping. You can only get that kind of achievement when you understand how to play this game and you have your own responsive list.

The business you are getting involve in requires Consistence, Patience, Perseverance and Persistence.

It is true that technical is important for your affiliate marketing success but you can get those by paying for them or do it yourself. However, the thing I need to highlight here is about your *mindset*. You can pay to get the best motivational course but if you lack the determination to apply it, you will still fail in this business.

Motivation should always come from *within* yourself.

And let me share with you the 2 mistakes I made during my affiliate marketing venture:

1. Fear of failure

“What if I fail?”

That was the constant question I ask myself when I started my affiliate marketing business.

It was a struggle but eventually I decided to just go for it. I can’t really tell you what push me to focus entirely into the business, probably I thought it is time to achieve my own sales target rather than helping my boss achieve his.

Although the same question still bother me whenever I start a new project, I now learn to shift my attention to the task at hand rather then debating with myself.

2. Procrastination

The main reason I procrastinate may due to my fear of failure. Once I got through that, it was fine. 😊

Then, came perfection. I wanted to make my campaign, sales message and website so perfect that I check and check and recheck them to make sure that everything was in perfection before I launch them.

That really took a lot of my time.

And the worst thing is, I will change the contents after a few days even it is just a word.

This bad habit was so annoying until my girl friend ask me when am I going to release my projects and publish it. I usually answer her that it will be done tomorrow. It struck me when she answered:

“There is no tomorrow, only *now!*”

I still remember how I froze for a while and an idea came to me.

“Why not I ask her to help me edit my work?”

Now I will pass her my project, she will make the necessary amendments and I will publish it after I look at it again.

Thanks to my girlfriend, now I have more time to do other things. ☺

3. *Spend Wisely*

It might sound really important that you own all the ebooks and tools to make your affiliate marketing business a success.

But the reality is, you DON'T need all of them.

You just need a program that is proven to help newbie to build an affiliate marketing business and this kind of proven system can be affordable.

And for the necessary tools for your affiliate marketing success, you can find a lot of them free online. You can also find a handful of those tools in the email I revealed to you when you signed up the ecourse.

You did sign up for my ecourse, right?

If you haven't, you can do it here and start saving your affiliate marketing cost =>

www.BeyondAffiliateCash.com

So, that is what I did for my affiliate marketing business. You can use what you learn as an outline and create something better than me. 😊

I wish you all the best in your affiliate marketing venture and may we meet again in the next report.

Before we part, can I ask a favor from you? Can you give me some feedback on this report? I wish to make some improvement on my next report. You can send your feedback to =>

buddingpro80@gmail.com

By the way, if you know anyone who might benefit from this report, please send it to them. You have the right to distribute this report.

Thank you. ☺

Create your success,

Wong Michael. ☺

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