

Are Affiliate Programs Sensible?

By Denise Hall

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Have you ever wondered how "the big guys" earn so much money on the internet? Sure, some of them have huge advertising budgets, which puts small business owners at a disadvantage.

But some of the biggest names today started out just like you and me. They had low advertising budgets and fumbled their way around the internet trying to get visitors to their websites and sell their products.

Even though they had terrific products, they couldn't sell them if no one knew about them. They put on their thinking caps to find the easiest and least expensive way to get visitors and make sales.

They finally came up with a plan that would benefit not only them, but others as well. If they could get other people to promote their products and websites, they could earn more money.

And so, Affiliate Programs were born! What a concept! A better way to get visitors to a website and sell more products!

They offer their visitors the opportunity to "partner" with them, often for free, to help sell their products. And many of them offer two-tier affiliate programs.

So if I sign up as an affiliate I can get others to sign up under me as my sub-affiliates. I earn a commission for sales I make directly to my customers. But I also earn a

smaller commission for sales that my sub-affiliates make.

It's a winning situation for everyone! The "big guy" made money because he sold his product. However, he might not have made that sale if it wasn't for my advertisement. And I made money because I advertised his products.

The concept of affiliate programs is really not so new. It's similar to selling cosmetics or other products for many well-known companies.

For instance, I have no idea how to invent a new cologne, but I know how to sell it. Therefore, I could sign up as a representative for a cosmetics company. They, in turn, would pay me a commission for selling their products.

Why would they do that? Because they can't possibly reach all the potential customers by themselves.

By becoming an affiliate for someone who knows much more about computers and digital products than I do, I have the advantage of selling quality products that I can't create myself.

And they have the advantage of their affiliates doing some of the "leg work" for them because they can't possibly reach all the potential customers in this vast internet world.

The next time you visit a website offering products you like, check to see if they offer an affiliate program. Even if you don't wish to place an order for a product at that time, you can sign up as an affiliate.

In the future when you do order you may be able to use your own affiliate URL and give yourself the commission. Most companies allow this procedure.

In the meantime you can let your customers know that you have new products available, as well as affiliate programs for them to join. It's a great way to get backend sales.

So there you have it! The reasons for affiliate programs and why it makes sense for people to sign up. By offering well-known products on your website or in your ezine you are in a win-win situation and can potentially earn big money like the "internet gurus."

Denise Hall is the publisher of Home Business on a Budget Newsletter. Her bi-weekly publication contains helpful information, tools, tips and resources. Each issue has free ads and contests for subscribers. To subscribe

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