

10 Great ways to fail as affiliate 'seller'

By Eric Koshinsky

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Eric Koshinsky
artpub@newbie-guides.com

Newbie-guides.com <http://www.newbie-guides.com>

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Only by knowing how to fail are you able to succeed.

10) mlm Pyramid schemes:

If you don't know it already, multi-level marketing and other pyramid schemes really only work for the very few who get in early. There is also a general mistrust of mlm in the public which makes them harder to work with. Don't confuse mlm with a two tiered (leveled) affiliate program that pays you a bonus on referral commissions as well. Unlike MLM, your earnings are NOT dependant on recruiting in decent affiliate programs.

9) Awful programs with terrible payouts

Be very careful in choosing what you promote. Go over promo material first, and get yourself a freebie copy (or some sample chapters etc.) to preview before you join the program. Watch out for programs that pay a 2% commission on a \$4.00 product and only send a check once you have reached \$200 in total earnings! Ok that was a bit exaggerated, but you get the point. Look for a good balance of commission rate, product cost, and payout level before you go gangbusters promoting a dud that will never produce any income. Also, do a little research on the company before hand. Contact the people giving 'testimonials', visit alexa.com to see where they are positioned, and keep an eye out for others promoting the same programme.

8) Trying to beat the system

This is normally a result of a "I'm gonna get rich quick" mentality. Trying to beat the system will always result in failure. It may not be immediate, and you may even make a little money at it for a while, but you will get caught. Many affiliate programs are now starting to make use of black-list data. This is information about individuals that have tried to scam affiliate programs, used inappropriate marketing techniques (spam), or in some way broken an affiliate Agreement. Once you are placed into such a list, you will quickly find it hard to join quality affiliate programs. The simple way to avoid this is: find quality programs that you are genuinely interested in, and promote them with integrity.

7) You have no stake/interest in the product you are representing.

There can be any number of reasons for this. You don't like it, you don't know anything about it, it is your brother's product, you only took it on because it pays \$25 per lead. Any one of these reasons

will seriously cut down your profits. Basically, if you're not into it, skip it. The less interest you have in what you are doing, the more difficult it is to succeed. More on this a little later.

6) Unrelated to your website

This is one of the biggest and most common mistakes. Usually it is caused by a strange illness called Big-Payout-itis. You can normally tell a victim of this disease because they are frequently found in a daze with \$\$ in their eyes. Keep the products you represent simple, relevant, and related to the content and purpose of your site. Big payouts are not the direct ticket to big profits. If you give your visitors a meaningful and compelling reason to click the link, you will get profits. Never forget that 20 sales at \$5.00 each and 5 sales at \$20 each are the same as 1 sale at \$100. Think of yourself, how much are you willing to comfortably spend? (DONTATION LINKS HERE)

5) No context (like a banner ad - it just sits there and looks bad)

Bare - "click me pleaz so I can make sum \$\$" links and banners will ALWAYS underperform a contextualized text link. Normally such links don't perform at all. Unless there is some reason for your visitors to click your links, they aren't much different from the guy on the street walking up to you saying "psst, hey buddy...wanna buy a watch?". Not likely. Surround your links with information that is relevant to the link and where it will take the visitor. To do this, you need to know the products or services you are recommending. Most often you know the products/services because you own or use them, or have seen first hand how they produce benefits.

4) Too many different programs/Too diverse programs

This is a very common problem. Promoting 100 different programs on 100 different subject areas - will kill your chances of success! Of course it is ok to represent several products at the same time - often you need to do this to make a solid income. Just be sure that they are related to your site's content, and don't compete with each other too much (if at all). Often it is very good to be an affiliate of several programs that complement each other. I'm sure you can see the advantages of promoting "Fast and easy birdhouse kits" alongside "Home delivery birdseed" and "Jake's guide to the birds". Compare that with a site that promotes "Ma's cookie dough", beside "Uncle Jeb's axle grease remover" and "Guido's kneecap replacement service". Which do you think will be more successful? The point is STAY FOCUSED. Know what you promote, and promote what you know.

3) No backend sales/support (ezine etc.)

You MUST have backend sales and support. If you don't know what backend is, get your mind out of the gutter, its not what you're thinking! Backend simply means systems that kick into play AFTER the initial contact/sale. The absolute best of these is running your own ezine. If you don't have an ezine and a system for collecting email addresses and information from your visitors, you need to get on it NOW! Don't know why? Its simple. If a visitor comes to your site and then clicks on a link to one of your affiliate programs, you will get a commission (assuming you presold your link well). At that point, they're GONE. You've lost them FOREVER! Now imagine that you have an ezine signup box on your site and they join your ezine. Now you have them for as long as they remain a member - possibly years! How many links will you be able to present to them? How many more will they click? It really is a no-brainer. Setting it up isn't really all that hard either. I've found that (a;lkdjfa;ldjal) provides me with an incredible package of tools for ezine management and auto-responders at a price that nobody else even comes close to matching.

2) No effort on your part

You need to work as an affiliate marketer. Anyone who tells you that you can do it on 2 hours a day while sitting on a beach is basically a LIAR! There is no question that ONCE you get established and things automated, the workload will be lower, but you ALWAYS need to work at it. If you don't, a \$4000/month affiliate income can change to \$50/month very fast! Look at it this way, when you

build a house, do you simply leave it and move to the next town and do it again? No, you live in the house, enjoy its benefits and comforts, and continually maintain and upgrade it. Building the house was the hard part, but maintaining and enjoying the house are just as important.

1) Trying to sell

Your job as an affiliate is NOT to sell the product. Let me repeat that, because I'm sure you missed it as you fell to the floor. Your job as an affiliate is NOT to sell the product.

Selling the product is the job of the main site. Your job is to get the person visiting your site to click your affiliate link with an open mindset, and an interest in buying. You are to Pre-Sell, or Promote if you prefer - the site and get the person to do what you most want them to do: Be a Curious George and CLICK THE LINK! However, you need them to do more than simply click the link. You need to make sure that they are clicking the link with an interest in what lies behind it. If they are simply clicking a banner because it is flashy, you won't have much success. However if you create an interest, a desire to know more, about the benefits, the value of clicking the link, then you will have an instant winner. The more you know about how to do this effectively, the more you will succeed and profit, just ask a href="http://myss.sitesell.com/inovative_products.html"Dr. Evoy/a. He wrote the book on it, and that book profoundly impacted my success - for the better!

Eric Koshinsky: webmaster and guide at Newbie-guides.com

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