

Top 8 Tips In Choosing Affiliate Programs

By Jean Lam

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You probably already know that joining an affiliate program is a good start to earn money on the Internet without many of the hassles that come in selling your own product. You are just promoting someone else business and products and you collect a commission when you make a sale. You don't ever need to worry about:

- (1) Collecting the money
- (2) Delivering the product
- (3) Customer Service

Among one of the best affiliate programs, you have the Internet Marketing Center at <http://www.zineguru.com/affiliate>

If you have come across other affiliate programs and don't know which one to choose, consider the top 8 tips that I am giving you below.

- (1) Go for quality

When you promote someone else product, ensure that the latter is of good quality. Do your homework first by either buying and testing the product or getting testimonials and recommendations from other people who have bought it. Remember that any recommendation you make will reflect directly on you.

If you recommend a good quality product or service that is reasonably priced, your customers will continue to trust you and be interested in future recommendations that you make.

If your customers have a bad experience with a product or service that you recommend, however, they will likely hesitate to act on any new offers you send them.

Don't ever promote something that's going to hurt your reputation!

(2) Look for a program that offers top commissions.

It is perfectly reasonable for you to expect to be paid 20% to 50% of the profits on each product sold -- 5% to 10% is really low. Ultimately, you should look for companies who understand the "lifetime value" of new customers you send them, and who appreciate your efforts enough to compensate you generously.

(3) Make sure they have a high sales conversion ratio.

When joining an affiliate program, make sure that the site is turning a reasonable number of visitors into sales. If they're not, your efforts directing traffic to their web site will be completely wasted.

Look for sites that have at least a 1% conversion ratio (i.e. 1 out of every 100 visitors buy). Check out their web site and their sales copy to see if it "makes you want to buy." After all, while it's your job to send them targeted traffic, it's their job to turn these prospects into paying customers.

(4) Choose a program that matches the theme of your website

If your site is about internet marketing, then you shouldn't choose affiliate products related to car books to promote on your web site. Your customers see you as an internet marketing expert -- not a car expert.

You should sell for instance books or ebooks about web marketing. So it makes sense that while they will be very interested to learn what marketing books or ebooks you recommend, you are going to lose their trust and respect if you start trying to recommend car books to them.

Find out what your target market is looking for and then choose affiliate products that meet their needs while complementing your own product or service.

(5) Be sure that you're getting credit for all of your sales.

Find out what kind of tracking software the affiliate program that you're interested in joining uses. You want to go with a company that uses quality affiliate tracking software that is reliable and tracks ALL of your sales.

Why I emphasize "all" is because you want to make sure they track online, phone, fax, and snail mail orders. Many companies only track online orders, and this means that you will never get credit

for anywhere from 5 - 10% of your affiliate sales!

Also, make sure the affiliate program you join uses "cookie tracking" because this helps to ensure that you will be credited for the sales of people who don't buy the first time they visit, but come back later to make a purchase.

(6) Look for programs that allow you to access all of your sales statistics in Real Time.

Real Time statistics are important because they allow you to see how different banners, text links, and recommendations are doing. For example, on your site you might discover after some testing that a banner on your resource page doesn't pull nearly as well as a personal recommendation under your newsletter subscription box.

So you can adjust which banners and text links you use, and where they are placed, based on what you learn from your Real Time sales statistics.

(7) Look for a program that teaches you the "best" techniques.

A good affiliate program will provide you with everything you need to be successful. They'll provide you with traffic-generating banners, text links, and recommendation letter templates. And they'll also tell you which techniques work well in which circumstances.

Because their success is linked with yours, the affiliate program you join should be ready, willing, and able to teach you everything you need to know to start earning excellent commissions.

(8) Make sure the payments are made often enough

Last but not least, you would like to have your commission cheques mailed to you often, preferably once a month. Every 3 to 6 months is quite long.

Ok now, that you have these top 8 tips, you should bear these in mind before joining any affiliate program. If it meets these criteria, you probably have a winner. If not, look for a better program.

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