

A Theme-Based Website, Part 1- What Is It?

By Julie Georg

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What is a theme-based website? The wave of the future. The best way to please increasingly savvy visitors AND search engines. A theme-based website is a site that is based on one specific theme or concept. Every page of the site focuses on a single topic that is related to that theme. For example, if my theme is Italian cooking, topical pages could include Italian chefs, Italian ingredients, Italian cooking methods, Italian cookware, etc. Such a site could easily grow to a hundred pages, each of which focuses on a different topic, all of which are related to my theme.

Why would I want a theme-based site?

A theme-based content site is a great vehicle for earning income as an affiliate. How?

Traffic:

Each topical page is a "keyword focused" content page. In other words, I build the content of each page based on one of hundreds of keywords that someone might use to search

for information related to my theme. Taken all together, my tightly focused, themed site scores well at the engines for hundreds of related terms. And we all know what that means - lots and lots of highly targeted traffic!

Presell:

Each topical page is full of valuable content. This content is used to PRESELL (we all know the importance of preselling, right?!). My visitors are not searching for sales copy. They are searching for information. I need to deliver. Using my Italian cooking example, my page based on the keyword "Italian chefs" could offer brief biographies of the top Italian chefs. I could then recommend books by or about these chefs, providing an in-text link to a book seller. What else? I could write (or find) articles about olive oil, Italian ceramic cooking pots, the Chianti region, etc. And as a good affiliate, I provide in-text links to merchants selling Italian cookware, imported foods and wines, cooking lessons in Tuscany(!), etc, etc. Think of the potential.

Consider the advantages the theme-based website has over mini-sites, which some affiliates use to try to promote an affiliate program. They may seem easy and cheap, but mini-sites are not built to do well at the search engines and rarely get a directory listing - the two places my visitors are most likely to look for me! Where they WILL find my theme-based site. Also, mini-sites are typically made up of just sales copy. I know my visitors do not want to be sold. My theme-based site GIVES my visitors valuable content while preselling. Lastly, a mini-site is pitching one product. If a visitor doesn't want that particular product they're gone. My site, however, offers multiple products or services, any one of which my visitor may be interested in.

Affiliates will also often use gateway or doorway pages. These are essentially "trick sites" which may score with the engines but don't deliver good content and so rarely result in getting the click through, the sale, or the repeat visit. Also, tricking the engines is becoming less effective as the engines become more and more sophisticated. My theme-based site plays fair with the engines and the engines love it.

Using a theme-based website I create a WIN-WIN-WIN-WIN situation. My visitors win because they've found the high-value information they were looking for. Search engines win because I've given them a site that will add quality to their search results. The merchants that I represent as an affiliate win because I've presold my visitors and they arrive at the merchants' sites ready to buy. And, last but not least, I win with growing commissions. Can you say "super-affiliate"?

Think a theme-based website is for you? Brainstorm ideas to find your site concept. Everyone has experience, knowledge, interests or hobbies that could be turned into a theme-based website. You can start building YOUR web BUSINESS. Don't have a theme? Check out Part 2 of this series. Or send me an email. <mailto:yourhelpline@mail.com>

About the author:

Julie Georg is a consultant to individuals and small businesses interested in establishing a web presence. Step-by-step directions for building a theme-based site can be found in the excellent, free Affiliate Masters course. Blank email <mailto:tamsassist3@sitesell.net>

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