

Affiliates , Avoid These Two Big Mistakes

By Julie Georg

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You hear the success stories and you see the potential for earning an income on the internet. Mistake number one to avoid is jumping in and joining a bunch of affiliate programs, then picking up the services and software that you're told you need for marketing, here and there, willy-nilly, spending way too much money, and then making yourself crazy keeping it all straight and trying to make it all work together. Do yourself a favor and do some research. Then make a plan. Fail to plan = plan to fail!

If you are already an affiliate for any program, you've probably heard that to really succeed you need a website. Mistake number two is to ignore this advice. You DO need a website. Yes, many affiliate programs give you one or more websites to use to promote their program or product. However, these aren't true sites, they are glorified sales letters. There's nothing wrong with these and you will use them, but they are not the kind of site you need to have to really succeed with affiliate programs. You need a site that is your unique web BUSINESS. If you're not building a business, you're not going to go very far.

Avoid these mistakes by planning your affiliate business and having a website. These two things go hand in hand. Your website is the presentation of you business, as well as how you DO business on the Net.

Now, a few questions:

First, what kind of affiliate business will you build?

This is why it is a mistake to just go out and join all kinds of affiliate programs - the type of business you choose will determine which affiliate programs you join. And please forget about just putting up a list of affiliate links. Be honest with yourself. Does that type

of site encourage YOU to buy? Always keep in mind that most people are on the Net looking for information, NOT the opportunity to buy something. Offer good information and you will find a grateful audience. You'll also find plenty of affiliate programs to fit with almost any kind of information!

A word of caution - if you want your business to be about internet marketing - trying to sell all those programs and services I mentioned - please consider the competition. A lot of people are doing this and few do it very well. Consider trying to work a niche market. Ken Evoy explains this really well in his free Affiliate Masters course (See Author's box at end of article).

Need some inspiration?

You can see examples of a great variety of different web businesses at <http://www.mikino.com/?assist3.html> .

Second question, what kind of site will you build?

If you've spent any time on the internet, you've seen all kinds of sites. Which ones captured your attention? Which made you want to click away as fast as possible?

The internet is full of bad sites, ugly sites, annoying sites, and sites that just float in cyberspace because they have no value and can't get listed in directories or get ranked well at the search engines. (You can forget about the little tricks you've heard about to get a page a high ranking. The engines are becoming more and more sophisticated and the tricks aren't working. Besides, this is your BUSINESS, make it respectable.) Please don't add to the junk.

Third question - How will you build your site?

Good question. Again, we're talking about the internet, so there are a lot of options out there. And of course, lots of services and software available. Do yourself a favor and forget the freebies, they simply won't give the impression you want to convey, and don't offer the functionality you'll need.

Think about what kind of site you want to have and what you will need it to do for you. Is bandwidth important to you? Do you want to own your own domain name? (Some hosting companies retain ownership) Do you want to totally design everything yourself, or save time with templates? Do you know HTML, etc? Or would you rather use a site building program that takes care of all that for you? Do you want to be able to collect email addresses? Mailout an ezine? Sell your own products and collect payments?

Answer as many related questions as you can before choosing services. (If you don't know what some of these things even are or why they matter, find out. You'll be glad you did.) Shop around and see who offers what. If you want to start small and simple, and you're willing to do the research and work to make your site viable, maybe all you need is a domain name and hosting. Don't spend \$1000's to get a lot of stuff you won't use. But if you find yourself also looking for link tracking software or mailout capability or, or, or(you get the idea), consider looking at the programs that group services together. See a comparison of 4 site-building programs at <http://buildit.sitesell.com/compare.html> . If you need a lot of functionality, purchasing these services separately can break the bank, not to mention complicate your life!

By planning your business and building a quality site, you will avoid the two big mistakes that many affiliates make. You'll be way ahead of the pack and on your way to building a viable web BUSINESS.

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 Net BUSINESS can be found in the excellent, free Affiliate Masters course. Blank email <mailto:tamsassist3@sitesell.net>

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