

Is There Really Any Way to Make Big Money With Affiliate Programs?

By Lisa M. Cope

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You here all the hub bub about affiliate programs. If you have been online a while you have undoubtedly seen a flashing banner, blinking button or an ever so dreaded "but I think misunderstood and over used" pop up window inviting you to make big money by joining a particular affiliate program. Promising you will make lots of dough doing nothing but putting a line of code on your site and running a few ads. Hmmmmm...I wonder?

Well I'm hear to tell you that it isn't that easy! But I'm also going to tell you that you can make a considerable amount of money if you WORK AT IT! Don't get the wrong idea. I am by no way trying to tell you that affiliate programs aren't worth your time or effort. I make very nice commissions from several well chosen programs. If my tone sounds a bit harsh it's only because I want it to be clear that affiliate programs are just like any other business and must be approached in the same way.

Think of it this way, if you went to work in an appliance store or started to sell Avon and your income depended on your percentage of the sales you made wouldn't you expect to have to put some effort into making those sales? Well it is the same when you sign up for an affiliate program. Your income depends on you getting the sale.

The nice thing is it's not the hard sale. You don't have to be in your customers face or pounding on their doors. You get to do the soft sale, the friendly recommendation, the informative helpful advisor. Your a gentle persuader. It's the nicer side of sales.

When you master the art of being the gentle persuader you will be making money with affiliate programs.

There are so many ways to market your affiliate programs, especially online and new techniques are around every corner. The biggest decision you will have to make is which programs are for you and what is the best way for you to promote them.

Choosing the right affiliate programs takes time and research. You don't want to just jump in and promote any old program that comes along you want to find ones that will make your job easy and fun. Look for businesses that have been around for a while that have a solid background and good rankings.

Ask yourself....What do I enjoy?

I know you may have heard this before but look for programs that are in an area of your interest, hobbies or something that your familiar with. Like if you enjoy camping, fishing or just the great outdoors. Go to your favorite search engine and do a quick search for: camping + "affiliate program" and a list of companies that sell camping equipment or related items pops up. Waa la!

Now just read through their website and look over the commission structure. Don't overlook the terms and conditions of the affiliate agreement. Make a list of the programs that you would consider joining and then narrow it down to no more than five programs to start. Resist the urge to join them all. I know it's tough but you can do it!

On to the job of promoting your new affiliate business.

There are of course many ways to promote any new business. There are way to many to list in this short article. Lucky for you there are many excellent books on the subject. Two really good ones are The Associate Program Marketing Handbook, by Marlon Sanders and Super Affiliate Strategies, by Jimmy D. Brown.

Just to give you an idea of where you can start I'll list some of the best ways that I know of to promote any business online.

First Create a free newsletter. Provide interesting content, useful information and mix in a plug or two for the affiliate programs you are promoting. You can submit your ezine to online ezine directories and promote it on your web site to get subscribers.

Participate in chat rooms or on discussion boards related to the product you're promoting. Again provide useful information be helpful ask questions. Don't post blatant ads. That is a big NO NO on most boards unless otherwise stated. If the time presents itself while you are chatting, mention the product. If it doesn't then let an attention getting signature file, that you have created give them a good reason to visit your affiliate site. Remember you are the gentle persuader.

You may also consider putting together a free ebook or writing short informative articles with useful information and a link to your web site then submit it to some ebook or article directories, like www.goarticles.com and www.makingprofit.com .

Another good thing you can do is write your own ad copy. Think about it this way. If all the affiliates are using the same ads your just another ad in the crowd. But, if you write your own ads it will give you an edge over your competition.

One more thing to remember is that nothing goes as far as your own personal endorsement. Review the product then in your own words explain the benefits and results your customers can expect by using the product. Use gentle persuade words to peek your prospects intrest and get them to click on your affiliate link that is your main objective. Let the product sales letter do the hard selling for you! After all you are the gentle persuader.

So to answer the question "Is There Really Any Way to Make Big Money With Affiliate Programs?" The answer is a resounding YES YOU CAN!

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