

# The Only 5 Things You Can Sell

By Palyn Peterson

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'The Only 5 Things You Can Sell'  
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So, you want to start an internet store do you? What is it are you going to sell? This really is the first thing to tackle, because without any products your store will fail, guaranteed. All jokes aside, let me share some insight on this broad topic.

First, do you have anything to offer that you can make? Crafts, exotic bird houses, jewelry, doll houses? Most people will answer "No" to this one, but that is ok! Lots of options are still available. In fact, most online stores do not create their own products.

Affiliate programs are another great choice. An affiliate program is when a company gives you commission to sell their products. You direct customers to their website, and that is it. You don't manage inventory, the sale or shipping. Some companies may provide web space and site creation support, but be careful about going that route -- they may want to charge you setup fees and maybe a membership fee. If the affiliate program is worth it, it will most likely be free.

Here are other points to pay attention to:

1. How much commission you will receive with each sale. 5%-10% is on the low side. Try to stick with companies that will pay you 20%-35%. I've even come across some affiliate programs that pay as much as 50%.
2. Read the affiliate agreement. Some companies state you can only sell their products on your website, and no one else's. If this works for you, great. If not, be sure to read the agreement and make sure this is not the case.
3. What the pay out amounts are. Know how much you need to make before a check is cut and mailed to you.
4. Do you receive support? Many companies offer their affiliates marketing material to help sell products. This could include website content, pictures, banners, cut-and-paste emails, and classified ads.

Some people pull in many thousands of dollars a month with affiliate programs, they can work, but remember to be careful! There are many wolves in sheep clothing just waiting to take your setup fee and monthly payments just to leave you without support and no sales. If affiliate programs interest you, there are a number of good affiliate program directories. Here are a few:

1. [www.affiliatesdirectory.com](http://www.affiliatesdirectory.com)
2. [www.associateprograms.com](http://www.associateprograms.com)
3. [www.affiliatematch.com](http://www.affiliatematch.com)

Next, a very popular and incredibly practical choice is drop shipping. Drop shipping is when a wholesale distributor maintains the product inventory, you create a store selling those products and take customer's orders at retail prices. You then turn around and send the customer's order to the wholesale distributor who ships the products to your customer, often with your company name on the package.

The customer receives their products not knowing that you are running the business with no inventory and from the comfort of your home. And no inventory means you only spend money when you are making money. In other words, you only spend money buying products at wholesale when you are just going to turn around and charge retail price to a customer. How great is that? This is one of the most popular methods of running a retail business on the internet, and for good reason!

The great majority of wholesale distributors will ask you for your TAX ID number when creating an account. Your TAX ID number can be found on your sales tax license if you have one, or usually your social security number will suffice if you do not have a license. For free information on getting a sales tax license, visit this page:

[www.futureinternetmarketing.com/inetlaw/inetlaw.htm](http://www.futureinternetmarketing.com/inetlaw/inetlaw.htm) .

When searching for wholesale distributors, be careful because there are a lot of companies out there that will drop ship products and claim to be wholesale distributors when they really aren't! They will take your order just to turn around and order from the real wholesaler. This should spell L-O-S-S to you. What's happening is that you are buying the product at a price marked up from the actual wholesale price, and then you'll need to mark it up even further when selling it to your customer. There is a big slice of the profit pie that you aren't getting!

Most distributors that offer thousands of different products in a number of different categories are usually that type of operation. Also, if the distributor wants to charge you a subscription fee, that should set an alarm off in your head. Occasionally the wholesale distributor will charge a per-drop-ship fee, and maybe have a minimum order requirement (either in quantity or dollar amount). A FEW (and I say few) legit wholesale distributors will charge a setup fee (one wholesale distributor I worked required that the first order be \$200 or more), but I have NEVER come across a legit wholesale distributor that charges a subscription fee.

If you are having trouble deciding what products to sell, try this: go shopping! Don't actually buy anything (if you don't want to, at least), just look around and see what products interest you.

Do you see a site that you think you could do better? Are you a sports fan? Sell sports equipment or memorabilia! Do you enjoy pool? Sell billiard supplies! Enjoy gardening, or interior decorating? Sell products for those!

A word of advice though, the computer component market is crammed. You will have more competition there than with most other products.

Information products are a fabulous option as well. Not only can they easily be created by you, they are even easier to distribute because they can simply be emailed to your customers.

Can you fix cars? Write a maintenance tips manual. Write an eBook on saving money around the household. Write a manual on how to negotiate with car dealers. Maybe you know how to make the cue ball jump across a pool table over what would have been an obstacle. I sure don't, and I wouldn't mind finding out!

Basically, the question is "What do you know?" Don't underestimate yourself either! A great way to get started is to use the mind-map technique. This technique allows you to jot down ideas that relate to a core idea and build a

skeleton of subjects that are all associated with each other. After only a short time doing this, you should have more than enough subjects to piece together a good eBook. For more information on mind-maps, visit these resources:

1. [www.peterussell.com/mindmaps/mindmap.html](http://www.peterussell.com/mindmaps/mindmap.html)
2. [www.shared-visions.com/explore/literature/mindmap.htm](http://www.shared-visions.com/explore/literature/mindmap.htm)
3. [www.tsd.jcu.edu.au/netshare/learn/mindmap/howto.html](http://www.tsd.jcu.edu.au/netshare/learn/mindmap/howto.html)

If you look long enough, or are just plain lucky, you will eventually come across someone selling the complete rights to a product. You can buy it from them and resell it for as much as you want, as often as you want, and retain 100% of the profits. These deals are few and far between, and can usually cost quite a bit. But do keep your eyes open for them, it may be just what you are looking for.

Hopefully a number of product ideas have sparked as you were reading this article. As you can see, there are a lot of very good options available to you. Review all of them and choose the best one, or ones, for your business situation.

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