

Design Web Site Around Affiliate Programs

By Stephen Bucaro

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When starting a Web business, most people choose a topic for their Web site and then look for products and affiliate programs related to that topic. In this article, I suggest searching for a group of related affiliate programs first, then designing your Web site around those programs.

There are many affiliate directories and affiliate network Web sites where you can search for the best programs. For this example, I use Commission Junction <http://www.jc.com>. This affiliate network site provides a vast amount of searchable information on over 1200 affiliate programs.

On Commission Junction's front page, click on the link "Search all advertisers". This will take you to a page with a drop down list where you can select a category. In order to search the information on Commission Junction, you must be a member, but membership is free. After you login to Commission Junction, go to the bottom of the page to "Find Advertisers & links". Here you can get a list of all advertisers, search advertisers by keyword, or browse for advertisers.

Click on "Browse for advertisers". This takes to to a table where you can arrange the affiliate programs based

upon "EPC" or "Network Earnings". EPC is the average earnings per 100 clicks. It reflects the affiliate programs ability to convert clicks into commissions. Network Earnings is a rank, on a scale of one to five, of an affiliate program based on the amount of commissions paid. In the head of the table, click on the name of the parameter you are interested in. This rearranges the entries based upon that parameter.

After you arrange the entries, you have to page past all the "New" programs. I guess Commission Junction puts the new programs at the top of the list to help promote them. As you analyze the data you will discover that the programs that pay the highest earnings per click do not necessarily provide the highest total earnings.

Some important points:

- Commission Junction is not the best affiliate network. Their fees to advertisers are too high. Search Google for other affiliate networks and affiliate programs.
- Join several good programs. You don't want to build your Web site around one program that may be discontinued.
- Don't join too many programs. It takes time and work to promote each program.
- Don't be in a rush to join affiliate programs. Take your time and select a profitable category and high quality programs.

Most people get an idea for a Web site, and then look for related affiliate products to sell. Why not research affiliate programs first? Then you can learn what categories of affiliate products and services are going you earn you the most money. You can then design the topic of your Web site around the most profitable product categories and affiliate programs.

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