

# Affiliate Programs

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Over the years, affiliate programs have grown in popularity, and today there are literally millions of people involved. While some are doing very well in these programs, others are not. Has the saturation point been reached, and this is no longer a viable approach? Let's discuss this a bit.

There are affiliate programs, and then again there are affiliate programs. Some are good, and others you may wish to avoid. Before you pick one, realize that the web is loaded with these programs, and you are not only competing with the other programs, you are also competing with those that have joined yours.

But don't be ready to throw in the towel. The prospects are out there, and growing daily as more and more people join the web. It does however require that you do your homework before jumping in with both feet.

Is the company you are considering reputable? This is important. How long has the company been in "pre-launch"? Some have been in this phase for much too long that the odds are they will never get started. Talk with others who are already involved to ensure that the company is on the up and up. Are they are getting paid on a timely basis? If you don't feel comfortable with a particular company, look for another.

You are going to be spending a lot of time promoting the program, and sinking some of your hard earned money into advertising it. First examine what you are currently involved with. If you already have your own web site; and if you don't why not, try to pick affiliate programs that are compatible with what you are already doing.

Many people will recommend that you get involved with one, and only one, and that you put all your effort into promoting it. While there is merit to this way of thinking, if you can get involved with programs that complement each other, you can do the promotion on your web site with little extra effort. Someone may visit your site as a result of your ad for a particular program. Many times however, they will also buy into another program you are promoting. But don't get involved with so many that your site is simply cluttered up, and has no discernable purpose.

Look for programs whose pay out plans continue as long as the person who joined under you is still involved. These residual payments can last for a long time. If you are in a really good one, these commissions can add up rather quickly.

Beware of illegal pyramids that rely on infusions of new members to pay commissions. In other

words, it should be a product or service that stands on its own merits, and one that you believe in yourself. If you don't use the product yourself, how can you honestly tell your prospects how great it is?

Not every program is a good deal. Remember, you are putting your reputation on the line as well. That is why it is so important to get involved in a good one. While getting in on the "ground floor" of a new one may be attractive, the risk is a lot higher that it might not make it over the long pull.

One of the most successful people I know in this type of business, writes a weekly column which he distributes to his mailing list. He promotes this column quite heavily, and many people opt-in to receive it, who are not currently involved in his program. He keeps the publication generic, and gives general advice. Of course, in the author credits, he includes a short blurb on his program, and a way to contact him. He gets a decent share of new recruits as a result of this newsletter.

A good way to build your list is to send your articles to other publishers. If they publish your article, you have just gotten a free ad in their publication. It also helps build your credibility as an expert. It is important that you subscribe to the newsletters you're going to send articles to since that will give you a feel for the type they accept.

If you find the right affiliate programs, and promote them properly, you too can join the ranks of the successful Internet Entrepreneurs.

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