



SHARK LABS
WE BUILD BRANDS

HOW TO BECOME an Affiliate!

MARKETER



To become an affiliate marketer, you only need to become a member of a good affiliate marketing program and start spreading the affiliate link. To make money consistently however, you need to be smart in your approach in the business.

Here are the things you will need to start with this business:

WEBSITE

As stated in the previous chapters, most affiliate programs require that you have a website before you will be accepted. Advertisers check the website to see what types of content you have. Some advertisers are extremely picky when choosing affiliates. They only accept those whose websites can bring in huge amounts of traffic. Don't worry though, because there are also beginner level affiliate marketing programs that will accept even publishers with new websites.



A PROFITABLE NICHE

You cannot just create any type of website if you want to become a successful affiliate marketer. In particular, you need to be careful in choosing the niche market. We will discuss how you can choose the right niche market in future chapters. For now, just remember that the types of affiliate marketing products that you can sell will depend on the niche market you choose to participate in. If you want to sell only high ticket items for instance, you need to make sure that the niche market you've chosen have high-ticket affiliate marketing programs.



ORGANIC SOURCE OF TRAFFIC

In the world of internet marketing, there are two ways for you to get traffic, organic and paid. While some affiliate marketers do use paid methods to earn through affiliate marketing, these methods exposes you to a higher financial risk. Those who use these methods have developed their skill over years of trial and error.

For now, you should focus on building assets that will help you gather organic visitors. This includes social media accounts and pages, forum memberships, accounts in niche specific online communities, offline traffic sources and other similar assets. You will need to think about where you will get your traffic for your website if you want to be successful from day one.





AFFILIATE PROGRAM

Revenues from ongoing businesses

by Type

by Geographic Area

by Media

MEMBERSHIP TO AFFILIATE MARKETING PROGRAM

There are tons of affiliate marketing programs in the web. However, not all of them will be suitable to offer to the type of traffic that you can get. You will need to choose an affiliate program that fits the needs of the audience. We will discuss how to choose the best affiliate marketing programs for your audience in the following chapters.

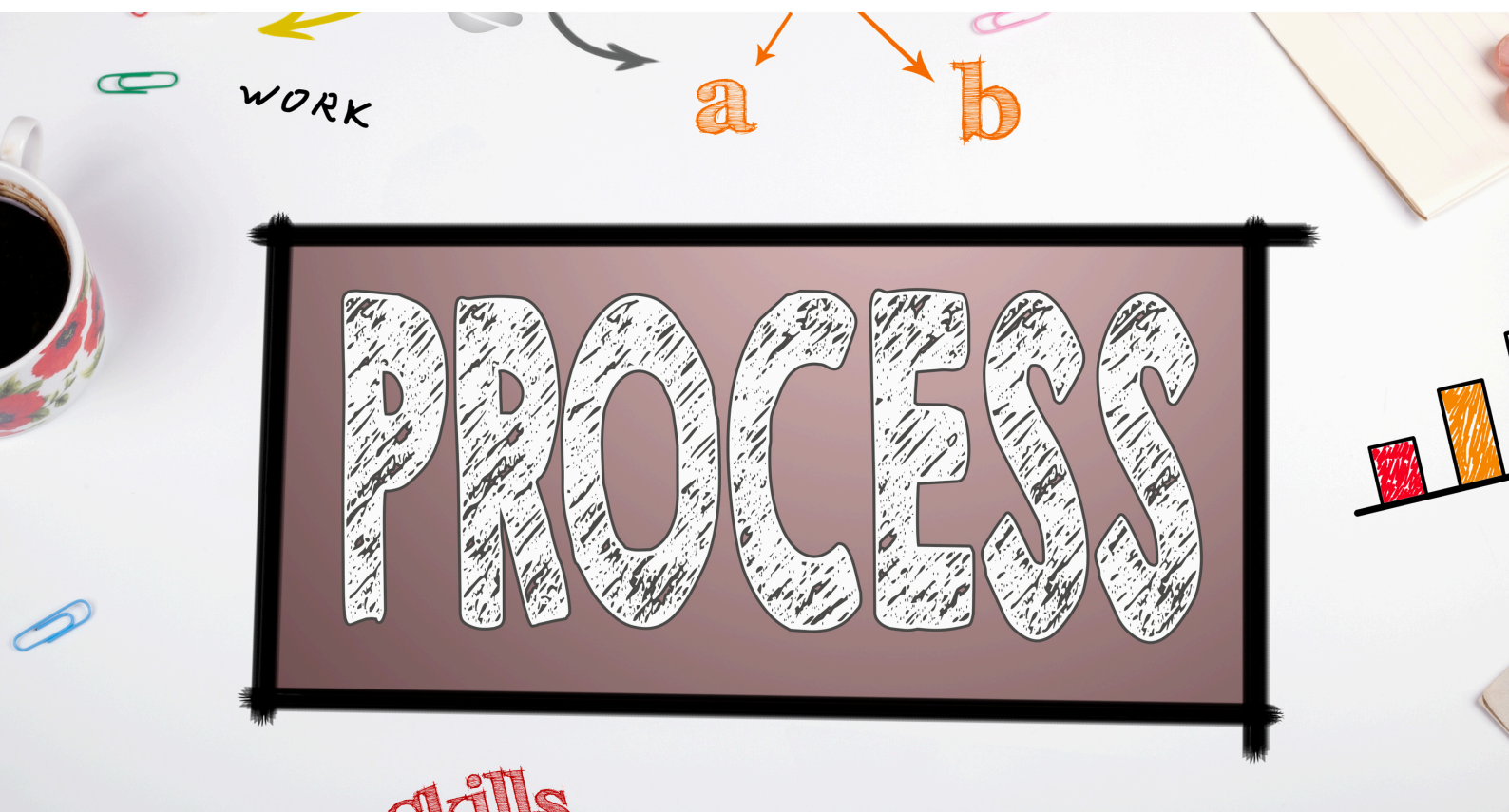
The four factors above are the minimum requirements for becoming a successful affiliate marketer. After choosing an affiliate marketing program, you can apply directly from the web. Most of the application processes just require you to fill up a form with your personal details. In addition, the application form may also ask how you plan to generate traffic for your affiliate offers and what types of products you wish to promote. The form may also ask you how much traffic your own website gets a day and what other monetization methods you use in the said website.

In addition, you may be asked to fill up a tax form. This part will depend on the requirements of the country of origin of the affiliate program. When signing up for Amazon Associates for Amazon.com for instance, US citizens will be asked to fill up a US tax form. A different form will be required if you are applying for Amazon.ca (Canada) Associates program.

HOW HARD IS THE APPLICATION PROCESS?

For some affiliate programs, getting in is easy. Some may even automatically approve your application. There are more specialized programs though, that will ask for more requirements after you apply. The most demanding programs will have their employees scan your website for the quality of the content. If they are not satisfied with the design or the quality of the content of your website, they may reject your application.

These extremely selective programs usually do this for different reasons. The majority of them do it because they want to protect their brand. Big brands only want to be associated with websites that have good quality content. Some of them will only accept websites that have been around for a long time with hundreds of archived content. Some brands will also reject your application if they see that your website or your contents are not aligned with their target consumers. If your website is in English for example and you apply with an affiliate program for Spanish people, you are likely to be rejected.



MY APPLICATION HAS BEEN APPROVED WHAT NOW?

It is after the application process that the real work begins. Now that you have a product or service to promote, you can now start gathering traffic and funneling them towards your affiliate links. There are multiple methods on how you can do this.

First, you can use paid methods as a source of traffic. You can use advertising platforms that allow affiliate links and pay for the clicks or the views that your ad gets. With this method, you are spending money to make money. You will need a bankroll of hundreds, if not thousands of dollars to make this strategy work. You will also need to make sure that you follow the guidelines set by the affiliate advertisers.

Most of them will restrict you from using certain keywords in the advertising targeting. If you are selling Nike rubber shoes for example, the affiliate program contract may restrict you from using the keywords like Nike. They do this to prevent affiliate marketers from competing with the mother company in the advertising bidding.

The second method of sending traffic is to spread the link around the web. In the past, people used to do sleazy techniques to get clicks on their affiliate links. Some of them for instance, put their affiliate links in the signature part of their forum accounts. This way, when people see their forum comments, they also see the affiliate links. Many forums learned about this technique and now ban the use of links in the signature.





Some affiliate programs also allow the use of redirects and pop-ups to gather traffic. An affiliate marketer using redirect for example, may set up a page that will automatically redirect to the affiliate website. When the visitor visits that page, they are automatically transferred to the affiliate program's landing page. The problem with this strategy is that most people who go through the automatic redirect are sent to the affiliate program's website unwillingly. The majority of them will bounce (i.e. leave rather than continuing to see other pages on the website). This excess traffic of non-buyers will eventually take its toll in the advertiser's website. This is the reason why many affiliate programs ban the use of redirects.

Some people also use link pop-ups to send people through the affiliate link. They may set the pop-up to appear after a certain link in the website is clicked. Upon clicking the said link, another window or tab will open. This works both for desktop and for mobile browsers. When the pop-up opens, the affiliate link is triggered and the affiliate landing page starts to load.

This process of sending traffic to affiliate programs is also problematic. Aside from being prohibited by most affiliate programs, browsers also tend to have pop-up blocking technology. This prevents most of the pop-ups from opening even when the right link is clicked.

The recommended way of gathering traffic for your affiliate programs is through the use of content marketing. Simply put, content marketing is the process of gathering internet user's attention by using different types of content media. One has the option of using text, audio, images, videos or a combination of all these to invite people to go to your website.

News websites are a classic example of websites that use content marketing. They create news articles and accompany them with videos and relevant images. After creating them, they post their content in their social media properties. They spread their news articles through Facebook, Twitter, and other social media marketing platforms. When a person interested in the news sees the article, the headline and the accompanying image should compel them to click on the link of the article. This will lead them to the news website.

After reading the article, they may press the up-vote button for the content. Some may even share a link of the content to their friends. By doing this, they are spreading the news and increasing the reach of the news article. Other people interested in the news may also click on the article. Afterwards they may also share the content with their own social media followers, continuing to spread the news.

Some people who may be looking to read that specific news article may also go to Google and do a search. Because of proper search engine optimization practices, the article landed in the top spot of the search result page with its relevant keywords or key phrases. Because of this, more people from Google manage to read the content. Some of the readers who are interested in the content of the article may also choose to share it with their friends.

While this may seem like a simplistic illustration of how content marketing works, this is how it happens for most content on the web. Content creators simply make the content and share them in the relevant online hotspots. They develop their skill in getting people's attention over thousands of hours of practice.

You could also do the same with your affiliate marketing business. You could lure internet users to go to your website by creating and sharing content that are relevant to their interests and needs. In the process of viewing your content, they should also see the affiliate ads that you share in your website. A percentage of them will click on these marketing materials and make a purchase. You will receive a percentage of the sale amount that your referred customers spend.

AFFILIATE MARKETING