



USING SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS FOR AFFILIATE MARKETING



SHARK LABS
WE BUILD BRANDS



As mentioned above, social media is one of the best sources of traffic right now. Next to Google search, social media apps will probably become your best source of traffic. Learning how to funnel traffic from these sources can lead to a significant increase in your earnings. To learn how to make use of the different apps in the market, use the following steps:

FIND THE SOCIAL MEDIA WEBSITE OR APP WHERE MOST OF YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE SPEND THEIR TIME



There are hundreds of social media apps out there. However, you do not have to participate in all of them. Instead, you only need to find the online communities where most of your target audience hangs out. If you are targeting adults between the ages of 25 and 40, Facebook, Pinterest, Twitter and LinkedIn may be the best options for you. For young adults between 20 and 25, Instagram and Snapchat are the more popular options.

There are more social media options available depending on your target country and the interests of your audience. If you can clearly define what demographics your target audience belongs to, you will be able to choose the right network.

IDENTIFY WHAT CONTENT TO SHARE IN EACH NETWORK

Each social network favors different types of content. You want to know what type of content each social network requires before you start your social media marketing campaigns.





Facebook is a truly multimedia social networking platform, in that you can post any type of content in there. However, since the time video content was allowed, it has dominated all other types of contents in terms of engagement and reach. You will still need to mix it up though by posting images, text content and links from time to time to add variety to your page.

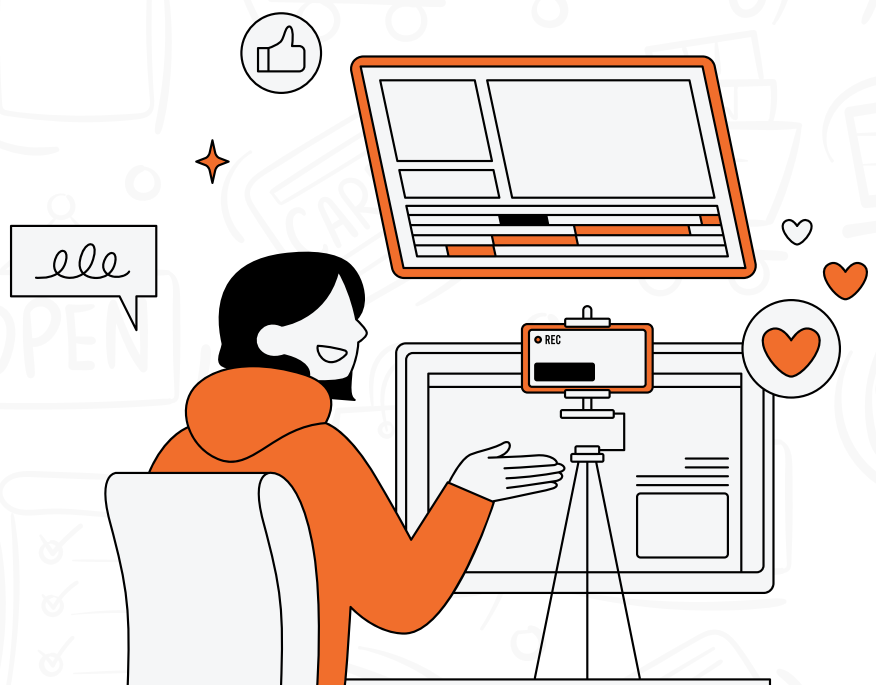
Instagram on the other hand is focused on hosting images and short videos. Pinterest is used as a tool to collect images from around the web. If you have a project for example, you can use your Pinterest account as a vision board of inspirations.



LinkedIn is just like Facebook. However, the users in this network prefer content that are related to careers, professional networking, finance and personal growth. If you post so-called viral content in LinkedIn, most users will unfollow you. They just do not want their feeds to be filled with distractions.

Twitter is ruled by short text content. You will also find some pictures and videos in there but text conversations dominate this network. You can post your opinions and your thoughts in twitter as long as you make your message fit in the character number limit of the network. You can also react to other people's tweets by pressing or tapping on the heart icon under each tweet. The retweet option however, is the primary sharing feature for tweets. The most popular tweets in the worlds are retweeted millions of times.

Businesses are fond of twitter because they can use it to communicate directly with their fans. It works both as a customer service and a marketing platform.



FIND OUT HOW CONTENT IS SPREAD IN THE NETWORK

Each social network has a unique way of spreading content. Most social networks use a system where in users can follow other users. When a user follows you, they will see every public post you share in your account. This system is used in almost all the popular social networks today such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Snapchat. A user with millions of follower is considered an influencer or authority. They hold a lot of power in the social network because any of their posts can be seen by millions of people. As an affiliate marketer, you want your social network accounts to reach this kind of status. You can do this by sharing excellent quality posts.

Aside from increasing the number of followers, you can also share your content by encouraging engagement. This is a second feature common to all social networks. They allow users to engage with content. In Facebook for example, the network allows the users to select a reaction for the content shares. The thumbs-up icon is called the like button.



This is a form of an up-vote towards the content. In recent years, Facebook also added other reactions to convey the user's emotion towards the content. A person who finds the content funny for example, can choose a laughing emoji. If the content is sad, the user also has the option to use the sad emoji. All these reactions however, count as a form of engagement. The more reactions a content gets, the higher the likelihood will be that the content will spread.

Aside from reactions, Facebook can also leave a comment below the content. Facebook comments are powerful engagement signals because sometimes, they encourage other users to also engage in the discussion. The tagging feature of Facebook also helps content spread wider through the comment feature.



In Facebook, the newsfeed is the primary sharing feature among users. When a user shares something on Facebook, that user's followers will see the shared content in their newsfeeds. As an affiliate marketer, you want your shared content to show in the newsfeeds of your target audience. Driving the engagement up in your contents will help you achieve this. More people will discover your content if other users are engaged with the content.



Instagram also has an up-vote feature in the form of a heart. By double tapping an image in Instagram, you are able to up-vote a content. Just like Facebook, Instagram also allows users to comment and to tag other users. While Instagram also has feeds that shows the shared content of the users you follow, this is not how other people will discover your Instagram account.



Most of the content discovery happens in the search screen of the app. When the user taps on the magnifying glass icon in the bottom of the app, the search screen will show. In this part of the app, the user can search for accounts, hashtags, and places. In the same part of the app, they will also see suggested images and video content. The suggestions in this part of the app are based on the perceived interests of the said user. This perceived interest is based on many factors like the accounts followed by the user, the types of images and videos they clicked on or up-voted in the past and past searches made by the user.

For your content to be shown to the right people on Instagram, you should establish your accounts identity. You can do this by controlling the types of content you share. If your Instagram account is about gardening, you should post mostly images and videos about your garden. You can also post about significant events, but you should still increase the frequency of posting content related to your affiliate marketing topic.

You could also establish what your content is about by putting a detailed description of your account in the account Bio. This is the part just below your profile picture and your name when you are looking at your profile page. To make your content spread, you should also add descriptions below your content that are relevant to your affiliate marketing topic. Your content will also reach many other users if you include the right hashtags to it.



Twitter also uses many of the social networking features discussed above. Users in this network can follow one another to subscribe to each other's tweets. However, one does not need to be a follower to participate in the public conversations of other people. Just like with Instagram, people use the search feature to find content here. They can also find related tweets by clicking on hashtags.

Twitter is well known for its high click-through rate. Users in this network are more open to clicking on links. If many of your target audience are twitter users, you may have the opportunity to earn big.

COMPLETELY CREATE YOUR ACCOUNT AND START SHARING

If you do not know where to start in using social media, start by choosing a platform where most of your users are found and create an account there. To be successful, you will need to complete all the details of your account. In most cases, you will be required to add a profile image and a larger cover photo in the case of Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.

You will also be asked to write a description about yourself or your page. Just fill in whatever form the account creation process gives you.

After creating the account, you should plan how and where you will get your content. It is possible to grow your social media accounts by using other people's images and videos. However, you will find more success if you have an option to create your own content.



FACEBOOK AND LINKEDIN GROUPS

One of the best ways of using social media to keep your audience tuned into the content you create is by using the group feature of social networks. Networks like Facebook and LinkedIn have features that allow you to create groups where network users can join. These groups are effective in keeping your audience engaged with the content you are promoting.

A gardening blog owner from Canada for example, can create a group in Facebook about the topic for his home town. He could then ask his friends and relatives who are interested in gardening to join the group. In the group, he could create conversation topics regularly. An active group can have hundreds to thousands of new content per day. What matters most however, is not the actual number of posts but the amount of engagement of the group members in those posts. Among the different ways to engage in post, comments are probably the biggest newsfeed ranking indicator. The more comments your content gets, the greater its reach will be.

There are two steps to social media group marketing. The first step is the process of growing the group. You can start building the group by talking adding the people you actually know to the group. If you know for sure that a person you know is interested in your affiliate marketing niche, talk to them about it and ask them if they want to join your group.

After tapping your natural circles, you can start using your other marketing tools to promote your group. You can begin by talking about it in every other post in your website. You could then leave a link to your group. You could also promote your group in your different social media accounts. If you have a Facebook page, you should link it to your group.

The easiest way to increase the number of member of your group is by introducing it to the people you meet every day who are also interested in the niche topic. If you meet a coworker for example who also likes your content, you could tell them about your group. This group is an effective way for you to create a place for all your followers to meet each other. Your follower can be from different social networks and some may even find you on Facebook. By having a group in Facebook or LinkedIn, you will have a place where they can all meet and have a conversation amongst themselves.



If you are not familiar with how social media groups work, you could begin by joining one first. Ideally, you should join one that is related to your chosen affiliate marketing niche. Observe how the manager or administrators of the group keep the users engaged. Take note of the types of content that he or she is posting in the group. The purpose of these groups is for people to have meaningful conversations about the common topic that they are interested in. However, it could also be for other purposes. Sometimes, people use these groups to build relationships. Others do it to solve problems. They do this by posting a question in the group, hoping that group members will be able to answer it.



While you are in the group, start participating in the conversation. If you see a question that you know the answer to, answer it for the person asking. Also, while you are there, observe how different types of content rise up in the groups newsfeeds. Just like in any other type of social media newsfeeds, the content in social media groups are usually shown based on the amount of engagement they get. In short, contents with a lot of comments and reactions tend to be shown to more viewers.

Also, take note of how the members interact and how they react to posts. In places like Facebook, you are more likely to see people talking in a casual manner, sometimes even using informal writing to communicate. In LinkedIn, people tend to communicate in a more respectful and politically correct way. You will need to set the tone with how people communicate in your own group in the future.

The group will only continue to grow beyond the people you add if the community becomes active. To do this, you could make the group come alive by keeping the conversations going. You could do this by sharing content to it. You may also appoint some of the most active members of the group to become your co-administrators. These people will help you police the group and to make it a pleasant place for the members. They can also help in keeping the community members active. You should not worry if the progress of growing your group seems slow. As long as you keep adding content and keep participating in your own group, it will continue to grow.



The content that you share in the group does not have to be always your own. You could put content from other sources as well, as long as they fit the purpose of the group. Every time you post a new content in your website however, be sure to post it in the group.

If the group grows, you can even use it as a way to drive some affiliate sales. The members of a group about professional networking for instance, will be interested in new books about the topic. If the group owner sees an interesting book, he could make a post about it in his book. He could then use Amazon Associate links to promote the book in the group. If some of the group members buy from Amazon after using the link, you may earn commission from it.

