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Affiliate Programs Explained

By Ian Simpson

More people are discovering the power of affiliate marketing to supplement or even replace their existing income. But there are even more people who would like to have a slice of this exciting world but are unsure exactly what an affiliate program is or what it consists of.

When discussing an affiliate program, it helps to compare it to a traditional networking company where a network of salespeople and distributors are recruited to sell their products to all corners of the globe.

As an example, instead of a company selling directly to their customers it sells products through a series of distributors and salespeople. In turn, the members of this distribution and sales network enjoy a very good living by promoting the products made by others.

In essence, the affiliate programs found on the internet are distribution and sales efforts taken to the online world. The affiliate web site takes the place of the distributor and sales network, and the individual is paid by the seller of the product when a sale is made. Of course there are affiliate programs where physical products have to be shipped but there are also many other affiliate programs where only software or informational products have to be downloaded.

It is easy to understand why this arrangement is so popular, from the point of view of both the merchant and the owner of the web site. The merchant benefits from increased sales and at the same time, does not have to pay for additional advertising and he can expand his network without the need for additional and sometimes expensive advertising. The affiliate on the other hand may not have a product of his own to make money from and selling someone else's product for a share of the selling price gives him the opportunity to start his own business.

Of course, effort is required on the part of the affiliate to promote his website and the product he is trying to sell. There are many ways that an affiliate program can be promoted. An example would be if the affiliate already has a website and a link added directly to the merchant site. It costs nothing to set up and is very easy to do with a little cut and paste.

All good affiliate programs will have a back office with tools to use and it is always advisable to protect

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your affiliate links and therefore your commissions, by disguising your links so that they are not chopped off or used by anyone else. You can find a good program to use to prevent theft of your commission at

<http://www.1st-4-income.com/stopcommissiontheft.html>

Commissions paid by merchants vary. You can expect anything up to 70% or even more with some affiliate programs, but these will mainly be software downloads. If you go to Clickbank you will find thousands of such programs to promote. With these kinds of commissions, it is easy to see why the promotion of software type programs is such a great way to make money online. At the other end of the scale though some affiliate programs pay a pittance, as low as 1.5% in some cases and you will have to ask yourself if these will be worth the effort.

Affiliate programs are very popular on the internet. If you do not have your own product to sell and you

want to have a shot at earning some money on the internet, then affiliate marketing is the way to go. Give a little time, effort and patience and you will be rewarded. So if you're not already familiar with the concept of affiliate marketing, why not check it out?

Ian Simpson reviews software and informational products on the internet for their value and usefulness. Subscribe to his free tips newsletter at

<http://www.information4income.com>

7 Tips to Choosing a Successful Affiliate Program

By David McKenzie

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When selecting an affiliate program to join you need to know how to choose a successful affiliate program.

Look in the wrong place and you might find a dud but look in the right place and you might be on to a winner.

Here are 7 tips to help you choose a successful affiliate program to join:

1. Look at associateprograms.com This is the affiliate central' of affiliate programs. You can virtually guarantee to find a successful program here and you can choose from tons of subject areas.

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2. Look at clickbank.com Nearly every product they have for sale has an affiliate program. Many of them are extremely good and most pay very high commissions. (some over 50%)
3. Affiliate resource sites usually offer their best affiliate programs. As affiliate resources sites are specialists in affiliate programs you can be pretty sure of choosing a successful affiliate program from them.
4. Look for affiliate programs that are offered through any ezines you receive. Chances are the ezine owner has an affiliate program and if they have a good ezine they probably will have a good affiliate program.
5. Think of things that ALWAYS sell. Like web site design, ebooks, music and travel. Stick to proven online sellers and the affiliate program will have a much greater chance of being successful.
6. Seek out articles on affiliate programs. There are many good writers out there who have been successful with affiliate programs. Try to find articles they have written to see what has worked for them.
7. Take courses. Many sites offer free online email courses for affiliates. Take some of these courses to learn more about what it takes to be a successful affiliate.

Affiliate programs are a great way to make money but one of the secrets to affiliate success is to choose the right program in the first place. Use these 7 tips to help you succeed.

David McKenzie is offering a Free Email Course "5 Tips to Being Successful with Affiliate Programs"==> <http://www.1sthomebasedbusiness.com> Click now for your FREE course!



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