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Marketing To Forums: Part 2

By Dave Brown

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Although posting on forums can be a great way to send some free traffic wherever you want it, you have to do it right. Otherwise, you won't get much worthwhile traffic at all.

I've mentioned before that you should only post an advertisement in the signature of your forum postings. Don't make the message an advertisement.

But if your ad is in your signature, then you need to make sure people *see* your signature. This is obvious, but many people make it difficult to see their signature.

Typically, when you respond to a post by someone else on a forum, the original message is, by default, included with your response. Often, people will type their response and leave the original message below their response.

Here's an example of what I mean.

Here's a response to some message that someone else posted.

And here's some more of my response.

> Here's the original message
> from the person who I'm responding
> to.

Here's why this is important. Your signature goes all the way at the bottom of the message. This means that it will be below the original message that's included below your response.

How many people that read your response will continue to read the original message as well? Most probably won't. This means they'll never get to the bottom of the message where your signature is. And if that's beyond the bottom of the screen, then your signature may as well not be

there at all.

So I recommend deleting the original message from your responses. If you want to respond directly to something that someone else posted, then just include the part you're responding to **in the body** of your message. This way, your response will appear under the original message.

You always want your signature to appear immediately after **your** message.

Moving on. I've also mentioned that you shouldn't advertise off-topic products in your signature. This is especially true if you're posting on forums related to internet marketing.

And here's why.

Let's say you post a message on a forum about how to improve your search engine rankings. But in your signature, you post an ad for herbal health supplements.

Let's ignore the fact that you're targeting the wrong audience. There's another problem with this. A lot of people who read your message may be looking for good affiliate products to promote. So they might click your link just to see if this might be a good affiliate program.

In this case, you may be creating more competition for yourself. You're giving people a link to an affiliate

program that's (presumably) working for you. Usually, I would prefer to keep a good affiliate program to myself. I don't need more people competing with me.

One last issue to think about when including links in your signature. This complicates the picture a bit.

So far, I've been talking about how to effectively advertise products to other people. But there's also another good reason for including links in your signature. You may want to advertise to search engines.

Here's what I mean by that. Whatever you post on a forum will probably be indexed by search engines eventually. And if there are links in your post, then the search engine spiders will follow those links.

So your posts on forums could actually serve as incoming links to your own web sites. If this is your purpose, then you may want to formulate the title of your link a little differently.

You should base your link title on keywords that are appropriate for your web site. For example, if I'm selling a product that cloaks affiliate links, I would probably link to it with something like "cloak affiliate links" or "cloaking affiliate links". And I would use the *same* title for this link *every* time I posted it to a forum.

You can see that your approach to creating a signature for forum posts will be different depending on what your purpose is – to advertise to people or search engines. So make sure you know what your purpose is, and link accordingly.

P.S. If you missed the first article on marketing to forums, you can read it now at <http://www.dave-brown.com/articles/forums1.html>.

Affiliates need to read their Newspaper.

By Alexander Hachtman

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Millions of people check the news everyday— in the morning paper, online, and on the nightly news. But far too often affiliates do not find out what has occurred in affiliate marketing that day; this is important because affiliate marketing changes daily. There are many resources for affiliate marketers to learn about the day's happenings. The best way to learn about the changes in affiliate marketing is by visiting forums often.

Forums provide a great resource by allowing new affiliates to learn from the experts. New affiliates hear and learn about the different opinions and techniques that are used in the industry. In turn, this information helps educate the affiliates and helps them decide whether they agree or disagree on the particular subject or technique. By visiting forums often you can learn timesaving tips as well as common mistakes that you can avoid.

Here are some of the most popular forums that are most useful for affiliates

·AbestWeb: <http://www.abestweb.com/>

Who it's for: affiliate program managers and affiliate marketers.

With over 14,000 members this is a vast pool of knowledge that you can draw from.

·WebmasterWorld.com: <http://www.webmasterworld.com/>

Who it's for: webmasters and marketing managers.

For all of your questions about anything having to do with Web design, this is the place to go. There are a lot of quality discussions that are segmented as well as moderated.

·Search Engine Watch Forums.

<http://forums.searchenginewatch.com/forum/index.php>

Who it's for: webmasters and affiliate marketers.

Here you can find discussions and questions that deal with all aspects of search engines. Some of the topics include: Questions on specific search engines and directories, specific discussions on search engine optimization and web marketing, general search issues, and current issues.

·ReveNews.com: <http://www.revenews.com/>

Who it's for: webmasters, affiliate program managers, and affiliate marketers.

This site is a great location to find articles on various topics and learn about what is news worthy in the industry.

There are also forums strictly for affiliate managers. Here, managers can learn about those issues that are strictly pertinent for them, such as keeping an affiliate program in-house or outsourcing. You can visit <http://www.10xmarketing.com/affiliate-program-management.asp> to learn more about some of the options that are available to managers. These forums provide a great resource to learn about the technical details of running a program.

Forums teach valuable information about affiliate marketing that will help make affiliate sites more successful. By visiting and posting often in these forums many people become experts on certain topics. Networking opportunities will also arise. Many of these forums help industry leaders form business relationships. Forums are an amazing resource; do not overlook them because they are vital to one's success. Since affiliate marketing changes everyday, one should visit them as often as you watch or read the daily news.

Alex Hachtman, of 10x Marketing, wrote this article. 10x Marketing provides companies with Internet marketing solutions that will increase consumer visits on a regular basis, thus increasing potential sales and revenue. Contact 10x Marketing today for more information about your company's affiliate program. See <http://www.10xmarketing.com/res/ecommerce-affiliate-program.asp> for more information.



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