



How I Made
\$436,797
In One Year
Selling Other
People's
Stuff Online



**I Do It,
and YOU
Can Too!**
Rosalind Gardner

The

**Super
Affiliate**

Handbook

by **Rosalind Gardner**

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Edition

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LEGAL NOTICES AND DISCLAIMER

As much as I'd love to think that every reader of the 'Super Affiliate Handbook' (SAH) will follow its advice and become fabulously wealthy by result, the truth is that I can't promise that will happen for you.

I can't guarantee that you will read the book, follow my suggestions or that you will write copy that compels your visitors to buy vast amounts of the products you will promote.

I wish I could, but I can't.

So, here's the nitty gritty legal statement.

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Some URL's in this book are affiliate links, which means that I may earn a commission if you buy a product through a particular link. This is an example of affiliate marketing in action - and the subject of this book.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am enormously grateful to both the late Corey Rudl of the Internet Marketing Centre and Allan Gardyne of AssociatePrograms.com.

Corey profiled my affiliate business success story on his 'Secrets to Their Success' site, and Allan then published information about that interview.

By result, I received hundreds of emails from aspiring Internet entrepreneurs who were interested in affiliate marketing. Their questions helped me realize that I had valuable information to share, and each and every question asked was another good reason to write 'The Super Affiliate Handbook'.

I therefore am thankful to everyone who ever asked me a question about doing business as an affiliate marketer.

With Best Wishes for YOUR Success,

Rosalind

HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF THE HANDBOOK

Thank you for choosing the 'Super Affiliate Handbook,' and congratulations for taking a positive step towards your future as an affiliate marketer. You will find the 'Super Affiliate Handbook' a valuable resource that you return to again and again as you build your own affiliate marketing business.

You are reading the 'Super Affiliate Handbook' because you want to learn how to make money with affiliate programs, and you want to do that without reading an encyclopedia or spending a lot of money.

In order to get the most out of the Handbook:

1. **Read the WHOLE Book** - I know that the prospect of starting your own business is really exciting. But before you register your own domain or sign up for a bunch of affiliate programs, read 'The Super Affiliate Handbook' in its entirety. By doing so, you will avoid the possibility of missing essential information and wasting your time and money.
2. **Stay Connected to the Internet** - There are many links to useful resources in the Handbook. To take advantage of them, you'll have to be connected to the Internet when you read the book. If you'd rather read 'The Super Affiliate Handbook' while relaxing on your couch, that's OK too! Simply take note of links in the book that you want to visit later.
3. **Take Action** - A goal without a deadline is nothing more than a wish. To achieve success, you must set highly specific goals with target completion dates, and develop a plan to meet those goals and then put the plan into action. Read the Handbook completely, and then act on your plan! By approaching your work in bite-sized chunks as described in the manual, you'll find that your project becomes easily manageable.
4. **Keep Learning** - Change is happening faster and faster all the time. This is especially true where technology and the Internet are concerned. Successful Internet marketing entrepreneurs realize that they need to stay abreast of the industry, or get left in the dust. This entails reading relevant newsletters, keeping an eye on your competitors and making regular investments in educational materials. Sign up at receive

my free newsletter to stay current on Internet and Affiliate marketing changes and developments.

Get it at <http://RosalindGardner.com>

Once you finish reading the 'Super Affiliate Handbook,' you will have all the information you need to start your own profitable affiliate marketing business quickly, easily and inexpensively.

PREFACE TO THE 2019 SUPER AFFILIATE HANDBOOK

A lot has changed since I started affiliate marketing in 1999 and wrote the first edition of the Super Affiliate Handbook in 2003.

Back then, there were no blogs and no Google.

I coded every bit of my first web site in Notepad. Dancing babies, spinning globes and the whole nine yards of ugly elements.

In 2019, new webmasters can install their first blog in just minutes and creating content is now as easy as playing with kids' building blocks. Indeed, Wordpress has moved to using block content to make content building easier for every webmaster.

Granted, getting 'found' online nowadays isn't quite as easy as it was when I started my 1st website back in 1998. Back then, I submitted my site to Yahoo! and umpteen other directories with site submission services to get my site noticed and it worked.

Now, Google is King of the Castle and webmasters must abide by his rules... which, considering the way the Internet has evolved, in my humble opinion, is a good thing.

Google rewards those who are consistent. I've been so gratified to see bloggers in the travel, food, mommy (parent), pet, fashion and beauty industries earn MILLIONS from their efforts in very short timeframes, i.e. 4 years and less.

The point is, that if you blog about a specific topic on a regular basis because it is your desire to share your knowledge about that topic, you WILL be rewarded with results on Google.

Moreover, when you add social media elements (Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest) with the same focus and passion, your efforts will be rewarded even more greatly.

So, if you have something to share for which there is an audience, you can count on being able to build an online business... even in 2019.

Best of success to you!

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'AOS', located at the bottom left of the page.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>COPYRIGHT</i>	2
<i>LEGAL NOTICES AND DISCLAIMER</i>	3
<i>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</i>	4
<i>HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF THE HANDBOOK</i>	5
<i>PREFACE TO THE 2019 SUPER AFFILIATE HANDBOOK</i>	7
<i>INTRODUCTION TO AFFILIATE MARKETING</i>	12
17 REASONS WE LOVE AFFILIATE MARKETING.....	13
PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE.....	16
WHAT IS AFFILIATE MARKETING AND HOW DOES IT WORK?	18
8 WAYS AFFILIATES EARN	19
9-STEP OVERVIEW OF THE BUSINESS-BUILDING PROCESS.....	25
<i>MARKET RESEARCH: HOW TO FIND A PROFITABLE NICHE</i>	26
1000'S OF MERCHANTS & MILLIONS OF PRODUCTS	26
CHASE THE MONEY OR FOLLOW YOUR PASSION?	28
TOPIC BRAINSTORMING	30
HOW TO EVALUATE MARKET SUPPLY AND DEMAND	31
<i>BUILD YOUR SITE</i>	39
6 KEYS TO THE PERFECT DOMAIN NAME.....	39
IS YOUR NAME AVAILABLE?.....	40
3 SITE BUILDING OPTIONS	41
7 REASONS TO AVOID FREE HOSTING	44
CHOOSING A WEB HOST MADE EASY.....	46
INSTALL A WORDPRESS BLOG.....	47
<i>CREATE CONTENT: CONVERT VISITORS TO CUSTOMERS</i>	50
6 WAYS TO BUILD CONTENT.....	50
5 'MUST-HAVE' SITE PAGES	56
HOW TO ADD A PAGE TO YOUR WORDPRESS BLOG	61
ESSENTIAL CONTENT FOR AFFILIATE SITES.....	62

CONTENT PLANNING: KEYWORDS AND CATEGORIES	66
HOW TO POST TO YOUR BLOG	72
THE ‘SECRET’ INGREDIENT EVERY ARTICLE (BLOG POST) NEEDS.....	73
ADDING IMAGES TO POSTS	75
GIVE YOUR BLOG A NEW LOOK: INSTALL A THEME.....	76
9 DESIGN RULES-OF-THUMB	83
MONETIZE YOUR SITE	89
JOIN CONTEXTUAL ADVERTISING NETWORKS.....	89
JOIN AFFILIATE NETWORKS	92
5 WAYS TO ASSESS A MERCHANT’S PRODUCT OR SERVICE.....	95
HOW TO FIND PRODUCTS TO PROMOTE ON THE CJ AFFILIATE NETWORK.....	96
BRAND NAME OR COMMISSION RATES – WHAT IS MORE IMPORTANT?	98
INDEPENDENT AND ‘IN-HOUSE’ PROGRAMS.....	100
20 QUESTIONS TO ASK BEFORE YOU JOIN AN Affiliate PROGRAM	100
8 TYPES OF MERCHANT COPY AND SALES TOOLS.....	122
22 WAYS TO ATTRACT VISITORS TO YOUR SITE	130
MANAGE YOUR BUSINESS	165
ORGANIZATION AND PRODUCTIVITY TIPS.....	165
MANAGE ON-GOING TASKS.....	169
EVALUATE YOUR BUSINESS	173
GROW YOUR BUSINESS	177
PROBLEM-SOLVING AND AVOIDANCE	185
ISSUES WITH AFFILIATE PROGRAMS.....	185
ISSUES WITH WEBMASTERS & OTHER AFFILIATES	191
27 MISTAKES TO AVOID AS AN AFFILIATE	198
WRAP UP: BECOME A SUPER-AFFILIATE!	204
APPENDIX: RESOURCES	205
BASIC SERVICES & SOFTWARE	205
SOFTWARE AND SERVICES FOR AFFILIATES.....	207
MARKET AND TREND INFORMATION RESOURCES	208

<i>ADVANCED TRAINING & TUTORIALS</i>	209
<i>GLOSSARY OF TERMS</i>	210
<i>ABOUT THE AUTHOR</i>	219
<i>AFTER WORD</i>	222

INTRODUCTION TO AFFILIATE MARKETING

This section covers some of the many benefits you will enjoy as an affiliate marketer. It also introduces basic affiliate marketing concepts, lists a number of different ways that you can earn money as an affiliate and sheds light on how affiliate marketing has grown into a huge industry since the mid-1990's.

Let's start with those benefits...

17 REASONS WE LOVE AFFILIATE MARKETING

When I started my affiliate business, I knew nothing of the benefits of working as an affiliate.

In retrospect however, I'm thrilled that I chose the affiliate marketing path primarily because of the benefits listed below.

1. **No Production Costs** - The cost to develop and produce a new product is prohibitive for almost anyone who wants to start a home-based business. With affiliate programs, production costs aren't an issue. The product has been developed and proven - all on the merchant's nickel.
2. **Low Cost Set-up** - Compared with building a store offline, becoming an Internet marketer is cheap. You probably already have a desk, an Internet-connected computer and word-processing software --- which is all the equipment you may need.
3. **No Fees or Licenses** - Those who sell products in the 'real world' must often pay for a license to distribute products within a limited geographic region. Affiliate programs, on the other hand, are usually free to join, and geographic market reach is limited only by the affiliate's ability to promote his web site.
4. **Sell Almost Anything** - What isn't sold online? That list must be shorter than the one describing all that IS sold online. There are thousands and thousands of affiliate programs selling every product under the sun. That makes it easy to find products related to your current or planned web site.
5. **No Sales Experience Required** - When I started my affiliate business, I had absolutely no sales experience. That wasn't a problem, however. The companies I affiliated with provided excellent marketing material and selling tips. Many merchants will go out of their way to help affiliates increase sales.
6. **No Employees** - Employee salaries are the biggest business expense. Although you may need or want someone to work for you on occasion, you'll never have to worry about hiring full or part-time employees while working as an affiliate marketer. When you have a project you want to hire out, it is easy to find specialists in every computer-related field who can work for you from the comfort of THEIR own homes. You pay only for the project, and never have to worry about ongoing employee-related benefits and deductions.

7. **No Merchant Accounts** - Setting up a merchant account is time-consuming and costly. However, affiliate marketers don't need merchant account. Merchants bear all the costs for payment processing. As an affiliate, you'll never lose sleep over chargebacks, fraud or losing your merchant account.
8. **No Inventory** - As an affiliate marketer, you can sell large items without storage concerns, even if you live in a small one-bedroom apartment.
9. **No Order-Processing** - Forget the problems associated with collecting and storing names, addresses, credit card numbers, etc. The merchant does all that!
10. **No Shipping** - The cost and hassle to prepare and ship products to customers worldwide could be staggering. Affiliates never have to worry about packaging supplies or postal rates.
11. **No Customer Service** - Do you hate the prospect of dealing with nasty people or customer complaints? Don't worry about it! The merchant handles the snivelers.
12. **Make Money While You Sleep** - What other business allows you as a sole proprietor to keep your doors open and keep making money even when you take breaks or after you go home for the night?
13. **Worldwide Marketplace** - The Internet is the world's largest marketplace. You can drive more visitors to your online store in a day, than a small-town merchant will see in his or her brick and mortar business in a year.
14. **Work from Home** – Working from home is considered the best advantage to having an online business by those who despised a long commute to work or prefer to work in their pajamas. Parents, in particular, value having more time to spend with their children.
15. **Work Anywhere in the World** – An online business is perfect for those who love to travel. I've used my laptop to maintain my affiliate business throughout North America as well as from remote locations in South America and China.
16. **Minimal Risk** - The product you chose isn't making money? Dump it. Take down your links and promote another! It's that easy. There are no long-term contracts binding you to products that don't sell.

17. **High Income Potential** - If you have a job, your salary or hourly wage is probably pre-determined. Maybe there's not much, other than working overtime, that you can do to increase your income. With your own affiliate business on the Internet your income potential is limited only by your desire, effort and imagination.

That's why affiliates LOVE affiliate marketing.

PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

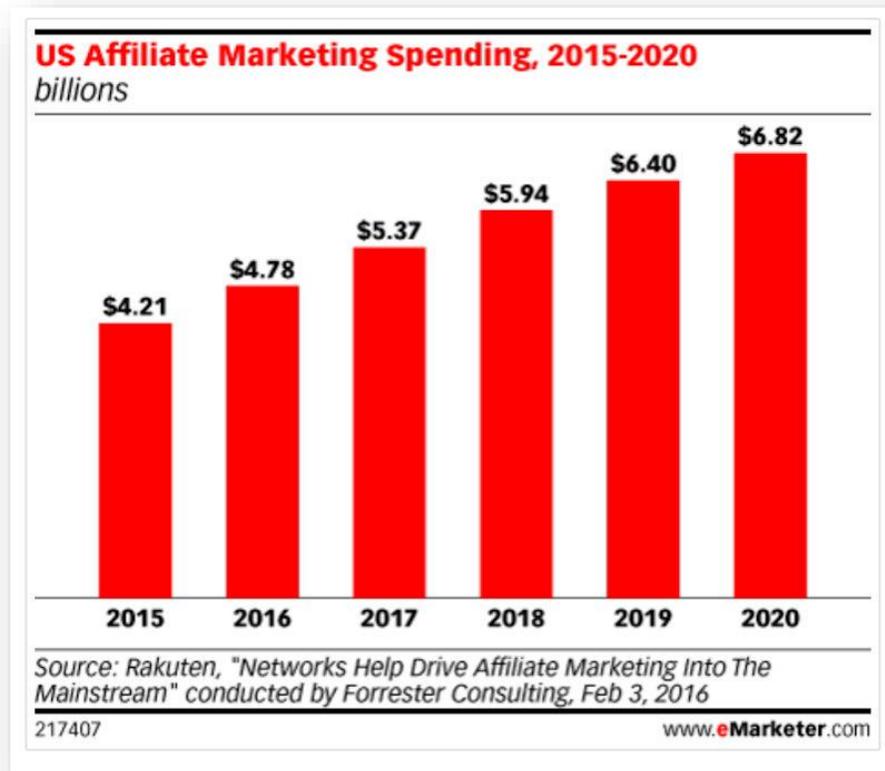
According to Amazon.com, theirs was the original affiliate program. The following statement was taken from Amazon's Associate Programs FAQ page (a few years ago).

'Our Associates Program, the first on the Web, started in July 1996.'

However, ['The Complete Guide to Associate and Affiliate Programs'](#), published by Daniel Gray way back in 1999, lists a number of sites that operated affiliate programs years before Amazon.com entered the fray. Among the first were PC Flowers & Gifts launched in 1994, AutoWeb.com in 1995, and KB Toys in early 1996. IOwn.com and ArtToday.com were both established in 1996.

With almost every big company now having an affiliate program, affiliate marketing is now an industry onto itself.

Based on a study conducted by Forrester Research for Rakuten Linkshare in February of 2016, the affiliate marketing channel is expected to continue to grow and eventually exceed \$6 billion in 2020.



More people are shopping online to find better deals and more merchants are moving their advertising dollars from offline media to online venues – and that includes affiliate marketing channels.

Indeed, sales on Cyber Monday 2018 set a record of \$7.9, an increase of 19.3 percent from the year before, according to data from Adobe Analytics. Too, Black Friday online sales also set a record - \$6.22 billion, while sales online Thanksgiving Day totaled \$3.7 billion.

All in all, affiliate marketing is big business that will continue to increase in the coming years.

WHAT IS AFFILIATE MARKETING AND HOW DOES IT WORK?

In simple terms, affiliate marketing is online commission sales made through an affiliate program.

An affiliate program is a program that facilitates the relationship between online merchants and their affiliates --- allowing the affiliate to promote that company's products or services for a commission. Affiliate programs may also be referred to as:

- Associate Programs
- Referral Programs
- Bounty Programs
- Partner Programs
- Revenue Sharing Programs

Commissions may be paid based on the purchase amount (Pay per Sale), a set value for each visit (Pay-per-click), or action such as registration or download (Pay per Lead).

Here is a 4-point overview of how affiliate marketing works.

1. You join an affiliate program and are given an identification (ID) code which is placed in your affiliate links.
2. You place your affiliate links on your web site, or in your newsletter.
3. A visitor on your site clicks that link and buys a product, service or fills out a form at the merchant's site.
4. You earn a commission for sales and/or leads generated through your links.

Pretty simple, eh?

8 WAYS AFFILIATES EARN

The most common types of commission schemes are described and listed below according to my personal preference for working with affiliate programs.

1. PAY-PER-SALE & PERCENTAGE PROGRAMS

Also known as 'Partnership,' 'Percentage' and 'Percentage Partners' programs, these programs pay either a fixed dollar amount or a percentage of sales generated by your links.

eHarmony.com is a highly popular Internet dating service available for signup through a number of different affiliate networks, including **CJ Affiliate** by Conversant (<http://cj.com>), formerly Commission Junction. eHarmony pays their affiliates a percentage of the sale of each membership.

I advertise eHarmony's service on my dating service review site at:

<http://101date.com/eharmony/>.

Helping singles meet their matches & mates online

Categories

Select Category ▾

Top Dating Sites

Match.com

eHarmony

FriendFinder

Chemistry.com

Big Church

eHarmony Review

posted on march 5, 2009 by [rosalind gardner](#) (edit)

Like 1 +1 0 Tweet 1

Find your soulmate, not just a date.

eHarmony is the best way for you to build a lasting relationship. eHarmony combines precise matching technology with the guidance of a caring and expert hand.

Research done by eHarmony founder, Dr.

For each 1-month membership sold, eHarmony affiliates earn 65% of the membership fee – or up to \$188.55 per membership sold.

2. PAY-PER-LEAD, PAY-PER-ACTION AND PAY-PER-SIGNUP

Entire networks, known as **CPA networks**, have been created to promote merchants programs, the prime objective of which is lead generation.

Pay-Per-Lead, Pay-Per-Action and Pay-Per-Signup schemes are very similar. With Pay-Per-Lead, affiliates earn a set amount whenever a visitor from their site provides a merchant with their contact information, e.g. name, address and email.

A Pay-Per-Action commission scheme pays out a commission when a visitor from your site completes a required action by the merchant, such as downloading free trial software or signing up for a free trial membership. As such, the visitor is also providing name and address information, and is thus providing a 'lead' for the merchant.

I promote TradePub, which offers free trade magazine subscriptions & technical document downloads on topics related to business, computer, engineering and trade. In exchange for a free ebook or white paper, visitors must fill out a basic form.

Tradepub, managed by RevResponse, pays their partners (affiliates) between \$1.00 and \$20.00 for sharing their resources.

For example, "[4 Steps to Creating Self-Discipline - A Comprehensive Guide](#)" is a free guide for which I am paid \$1.00 for every download.

These schemes tend to see better conversions than pay-per-sale campaigns, as the visitor doesn't have to open his or her wallet to take advantage of the merchant's offer. However, commissions paid per lead are usually quite low, which means that the affiliate must send large amounts of traffic to the merchant's site to make promoting the offer worthwhile.

An exception to the 'low commission' generality is the Financial Services category, such as credit card, loans, insurance and mortgage providers.

For example, [Lexington Law](#) pays \$45.00 for sales of their credit reporting and repair packages. They also offer the following performance incentives:

- 11 sales or more, commission increases to \$55.00 USD per action.
- 31 sales or more, commission increases to \$65.00 USD per action.
- 61 sales or more, commission increases to \$75.00 USD per action.
- 101 sales or more, commission increases to \$85.00 USD per action.

3. PAY-PER-CLICK PROGRAMS

Pay-Per-Click affiliate programs are similar to Pay-Per-Lead. Essentially you are paid a set amount each time one of your visitors clicks on your affiliate link and lands on the merchant's site.

For example, one online dating service pays up to \$1.00 for every unique visitor sent to their site --- provided you meet specific traffic criteria.

Placing Google AdSense or other contextual advertising on your site is another way that you can earn 'per click' revenue.

In the screenshot below, the Google AdSense unit is circled in red. Note how the link is 'in context' with my dating topic.

When someone clicks on the link, I earn a percentage of the money paid by the advertiser to Google.

The screenshot shows a website layout. On the left is a sidebar with a 'Categories' dropdown menu and a list of 'Top Dating Sites' including Match.com, eHarmony, FriendFinder, Chemistry.com, and Big Church. A red box highlights a mobile-style advertisement in the sidebar with the text: 'Top 5 Good Dating Sites Don't Waste Time on Fad Date Sites! See Our Top Picks & Register Free.' with a right-pointing arrow. The main content area features the title 'All Dating Sites Reviewed on 101Date.com' and a sub-headline: 'Here is a quick list of all the dating sites and services we've reviewed on 101Date.com.' To the right of the text is an image of a red pencil pointing to a checklist with five items, four of which are checked. Below the sub-headline is a list of 17 dating site reviews, each preceded by a red arrowhead. The list includes: A Foreign Affair Review, A Pretty Woman Review, Adventist Singles Review, American Singles Review, Amigos.com Review, ArabLounge: Meeting Single Arabs Has Never Been Easier, Asian Singles Connection Reviewed, BBW Personals Plus Review, BlackSingles.com Review, Canadian Personals Review, Catholic Mingle Review, Chemistry.com Review, Cherry Blossoms Review, Christian Cafe Review, and Christian Mingle Review.

Affiliates can enroll in this program to run text, image and/or video ads on their sites. The ads generate revenue on either a per-click or per-thousand- impressions (CPM) basis.

Contextual advertising is discussed in more detail later in the course.

4. PAY-PER-CALL

According to a September 2013 study by Google, “70% of mobile searchers reporting they click to call directly from the search results to connect with a business”.

Pay-per-call is a compensation model similar to pay-per-click, except that it drives phone leads to a business’ phone, rather than clicks to a merchant’s website.

The merchant pays the affiliate a fixed amount for telephone calls received from potential customers and sophisticated call-tracking technology identifies which affiliate referred the caller to the merchant.

5. PAY-PER-POST

The pay-per-post model pays affiliates (primarily bloggers) to write reviews about products, services and websites for advertisers that post 'opportunities' on services such as <http://SponsoredReviews.com/>.

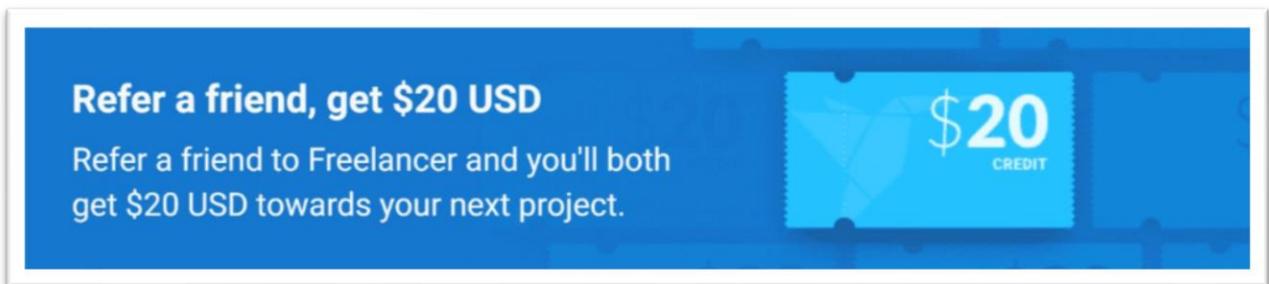
The downside to this model is that you are paid only once for the review, and are not allowed to post affiliate links for the advertiser within the review.

Writing a product review for placement on your site or blog that contains affiliate links from a pay-per-sale or percentage program is preferable to the pay-per-post scheme, as you can generate multiple referrals and earn on-going commissions from a single review.

6. BROKER PROGRAMS

Also known as '2-tier' or 'webmaster referral programs,' broker programs pay affiliates for referring other webmasters to the affiliate program. Some pay a percentage of the referred affiliate's earnings forever, whereas others pay a bounty or one-time fee.

7. REFER-A-FRIEND



[Freelancer](#) has a refer-a-friend scheme that pays into your Freelancer account to use on projects, as follows:

- You refer your friend to the site.
- Your friend then gets \$20 USD to spend on their first project on Freelancer.
- You get \$20 USD when your friend spends \$50 USD on the site.

Although that scheme doesn't exactly put money in your pocket, it is handy if you use Freelancer services.

8. "GIFTING"

Top bloggers in the food, fashion, beauty and travel industries are often gifted or loaned products that they then promote for a commission when their fans purchase those products. To qualify for 'gifting', an affiliate blogger truly needs to be an 'influencer' in their niche, i.e. have thousands, tens of thousands or even hundreds of thousands of fans who watch their YouTube videos or follow their posts on Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest and other social media sites.

Of the 8 different commission schemes discussed above, I prefer pay-per-sale and percentage programs, which are particularly lucrative for affiliates who can attain high conversion rates through well-written product reviews.

9-STEP OVERVIEW OF THE BUSINESS-BUILDING PROCESS

It's always easier to tackle a big project, when you break it down into manageable steps.

Here are the 9 basic steps involved in building an affiliate business.

1. **Market Research** - What will your site be about? First, you'll brainstorm a number of possible topics for your site. Then you'll assess demand, supply and the potential for profit in your chosen topic with easy-to-use tools.
2. **Build Your Site** – Once you've found a potentially profitable topic, you're ready to register a domain name, arrange for web hosting and install your blog.
3. **Add Content to Your Site** – Content is king. You'll learn about the different types of essential affiliate site content and look at how to develop your content – from writing it yourself, to buying existing content and outsourcing your articles.
4. **Make Your Site Pretty** – At this point, you will install a new theme to make your blog look professional.
5. **Monetize Your Site** – Next, you'll find merchants with affiliate programs; and review products and programs to determine those with the highest quality.
6. **Market Your Site** – Now it's time to bring visitors to your site. Choose from 25+ marketing methods to get a flood of traffic to your site and start making money, honey!
7. **Manage Your Business** – Managing your business with routine daily, weekly, monthly and yearly tasks.
8. **Evaluate Your Business** – Analyze your site traffic and conversion to sales.
9. **Grow Your Business** – Ask for higher commission rates, use fluctuating currency rates and other 'tricks of the trade' to increase your conversions and sales.

After your visitors buy copious amounts of your affiliate products and services, you'll deposit numerous large checks into your checking account. You will then repeat the process all over again with one of the other topics you chose in step number one.

MARKET RESEARCH: HOW TO FIND A PROFITABLE NICHE

The word 'niche' originates from the French language and is pronounced 'nitch' by Americans while Canadians stick with the French pronunciation 'neesh.' Regardless of how you say it, a niche market is a focused portion of a targetable market.

Cooking is *not* a niche.

The audience is too big and the competition too fierce to target effectively --- especially for a Mom and Pop affiliate site. It is best to carve out a niche within a niche, i.e. create a site about desserts. Better still, one could slice the dessert niche finer still into a site about pies and pie-making.

The most successful niche sites, however, usually target a combination of two and even three large markets such as 'job opportunities for stay-at-home moms,' 'internet dating for Jewish singles' or 'small breed dog training.'

To whet your appetite for some possible niches, you'll be happy to know that there are...

1000'S OF MERCHANTS & MILLIONS OF PRODUCTS

Tens of thousands of merchants from sole proprietors and Mom-and-Pop operations to major corporations such as Sony and Dell have their own affiliate programs. Shown below is a generic list of products and services sold in various categories by merchants that are part of CJ Affiliate (CJ.com), the largest affiliate network.

Scan the list to get some ideas about what you might like to sell online. A little later I will help you brainstorm your best topic through some simple market research.

- **Accessories** - Handbags - Jewelry - Shoes
- **Art/Photo/Music** - Art - Music - Photo
- **Automotive** - Cars & Trucks - Motorcycles - Parts & Accessories - Rentals - Tools and Supplies
- **Beauty** - Bath & Body - Cosmetics - Fragrance - Green

- **Books/Media** - Audio Books - Books - Magazines - News - Television - Videos/Movies
- **Business** - Business-to-Business - Marketing - Office - Productivity Tools - Travel
- **Buying and Selling** - Auction - Classifieds - E-commerce Solutions/Providers - New/Used Goods
- **Careers** - Employment - Military
- **Clothing/Apparel** - Children's - Green - Malls - Men's - Women's
- **Computer & Electronics** = Computer HW - Computer Support - Computer SW - Consumer Electronics - Green - Peripherals
- **Department Stores/Malls**
- **Education** - Children - College - Languages - Professional
- **Entertainment** - Discounts - Events - Guides - Memorabilia - Mobile Entertainment - Party Goods
- **Family** - Babies - Children - Entertainment - Teens - Weddings
- **Financial Services** - Banking/Trading - Credit Cards - Credit Reporting and Repair - Investment - Mortgage Loans - Personal Loans - Real Estate Services - Tax Services
- **Food & Drinks** - Gourmet - Green - Groceries - Restaurants - Wine & Spirits
- **Games & Toys** - Electronic Games - Electronic Toys - Games - Toys
- **Gifts & Flowers** - Collectibles - Flowers - Gifts - Green - Greeting Cards
- **Health and Wellness** - Equipment - Green - Health Food - Nutritional Supplements - Pharmaceuticals - Self Help - Vision Care - Weight Loss - Wellness
- **Home & Garden** - Bed & Bath - Construction - Energy Saving - Furniture - Garden - Green - Home Appliances - Kitchen - Pets - Real Estate - Recycling - Utilities
- **Insurance** - Commercial - Personal Insurance

- **Legal** - Services
- **Marketing** - Business-to-Business - Network Marketing
- **Non-Profit** - Charitable Organizations - Fundraising
- **Online Services** - Blogs - Broadband - Domain Registrations - Email Marketing - Internet Service Providers - Search Engine - Web Design - Web Hosting/Servers - Web Tools
- **Recreation & Leisure** - Astrology - Betting/Gaming - Camping and Hiking - Communities - Green - Matchmaking - Outdoors - Tobacco
- **Seasonal** - Autumn - Back to School - Black Friday/Cyber Monday - Christmas - Easter - Father's Day - Halloween - Mother's Day - New Year's Resolution - Spring - Summer - Tax Season - Valentine's Day - Winter
- **Sports & Fitness** - Apparel - Collectibles and Memorabilia - Equipment - Exercise & Health - Golf - Professional Sports Organizations - Sports - Summer Sports - Water Sports - Winter Sports
- **Telecommunications** - Online/Wireless - Phone Card Services - Telephone Services
- **Travel** - Accessories - Air - Car - Green - Hotel - Luggage - Vacation

So, did that list give you any ideas as to what topic you might choose?

CHASE THE MONEY OR FOLLOW YOUR PASSION?

Every multi-millionaire I know (and I now know quite a few) started their business in a niche about which they were interested, knowledgeable and even passionate.

They know what works in their industry, what does not work, and why.

Yet many new webmasters try to market products they know nothing about to people about whom they also know nothing.

So, although it may be tempting to 'chase the money,' there are 2 good reasons why it makes no sense to pursue a niche in which you have no knowledge or interest.

1. It takes a lot of time and energy to create a content-rich site that is popular and is trusted by visitors. If you can't fathom writing about a particular topic in a year from now, you should consider choosing another topic.
2. It is extremely difficult to discuss a topic about which one knows nothing. That in turn makes it impossible to write honest, in-depth product recommendations that blog visitors can trust when making a buying decision.

When you build a site around a topic about which you are knowledgeable and have credibility - or about which you are willing to learn - the result is improved conversion rates, increased sales and ultimately, success.

So, let's get started on creating your list of possible blog topics.

GO BIG - GO EVERGREEN

There are several niche markets whose products and services are always in demand. These are known as 'evergreen niche markets' and include:

1. Health & Fitness (weight loss, aging, acne)
2. Family & Relationships (dating, marriage, weddings, kids)
3. Finance (business opportunities, saving money)
4. Self-Improvement (e.g. self-confidence, education, time management)
5. Pets (dogs, cats, but NOT tarantulas, NEVER tarantulas)

The topics listed above tend to be very big markets with plenty of competition and for good reason – they affect almost everyone, except perhaps allergy sufferers who choose to stay away from pets. 🤧

Then again, allergy sufferers are a HUGE market and President Obama did a lot of free advertising for hypoallergenic dog breeds when he first got into office.

DON'T BUILD A MALL: BUILD A THEME PARK!

By the way, if you are tempted to build an online shopping mall – a site that covers hundreds of different topics to promote thousands of different products – please, bar the notion!

The trouble with those sites is that they don't rank well with Google, meaning that they don't show up in the search results.

Google rewards sites that have lots of content focused on a central theme, so when you search for a topic, the most relevant results appear.

Too, building a mall site takes lots and LOTS of time to create, and there is no point in spending all that time working on a site that won't get found.

And just in case you're thinking that you should have more than one domain to start, please read the following...

ONE TOPIC: MULTIPLE DOMAINS?

Building multiple sites all around the same theme or topic is a waste of time, effort and money for 2 good reasons:

1. If you use pay-per-click advertising services, you may advertise a keyword or keyword phrase only once with the same service. For example, if you have 10 sites focused around dating service affiliate programs, you may advertise the keyword 'dating' only once. So, to which site would you send your traffic?
2. Secondly, you'll have to work harder to get multiple sites listed with the search engines.

The only time multiple sites with a similar theme works is when you make some clear distinction between the products offered or the site topics. For example, I used to have multiple dating service review sites to make separate 'adult' dating services from more mainstream service. It's then easier to make keyword distinctions among sites that offer similar services within different categories.

On the other hand, building 3 different sites to sell the same products on each site doesn't make sense and is much more trouble than it's worth. Concentrate your efforts on getting traffic to a main site focused on a single theme, and you will be rewarded with higher listings in the engines.

TOPIC BRAINSTORMING

Consider the following questions and suggestions carefully to generate a list of possible topics for your site.

- Do you feel especially passionate about any subject in particular?
- Are you an expert in anything?
- Do you have hobbies or interests that you pursue regularly? Are you active in a sport?
- Ask your friends and family what they think you might be especially good at doing.
- What have you learned from your jobs, hobbies and general life experience? Do a skills and knowledge assessment.
- What problems have you solved in the past?

Make a list of topics in which you are most interested.

HOW TO EVALUATE MARKET SUPPLY AND DEMAND

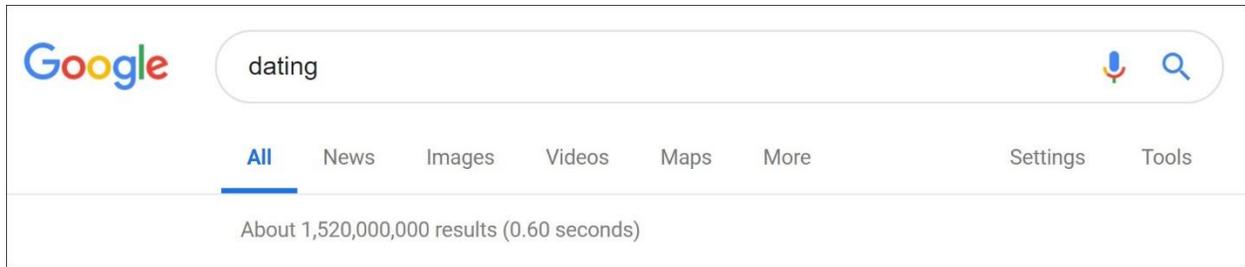
The term surfers type into the search box at Google or other search engines is called a 'keyword' or 'keyword phrase.'

For example, if you want to find a site that sells or has information about Barbie dolls you would enter the keyword phrase 'Barbie dolls' in the search box at Google.com.

The resulting listings are called 'organic search results'.

Although you will use Google to do some of your research, I want to point out how organic search engine results can be irrelevant when it comes to determining market demand.

Now, to use my own primary niche as an example, I typed the word 'dating' into the search box and the results appear as shown in the graphic below.



Yikes!

There are more than 1.5 **billion** results for the word 'dating'.

Other keywords for this topic make the prospects seem even worse. I found:

- 78.6 million results for the keyword 'personals'
- 8 billion for 'singles'
- 849 million for 'internet dating'

Huge numbers of search results might make you think that you can't compete in such a large market.

DON'T BE INTIMIDATED BY ORGANIC SEARCH RESULTS

The number of 'organic' or 'natural' search results for a keyword or keyword phrase is a poor indicator of actual competition for the following 4 reasons.

1. **Organic results may be irrelevant.** 'Dating' is a very generic keyword. Some of those pages may be about 'carbon dating.' Many of those pages may be on the sites of teenage girls who are writing about their two favorite topics – boys and 'dating.'
2. **Organic results are dynamic.** As Google changes which pages qualify to rank near the top of their listings, sites that were in the 'top spot' yesterday, may suddenly be in the 20th spot, or are completely removed from the results. Therefore, a site that looks like 'stiff' competition may in fact be no competition at all.
3. **Organic results may be outdated.** Because it appears that Google gives precedence to pages that first mentioned a topic, you'll often find that the information on that page is out-of-date.

4. **No one searches through millions of search results.** Most people click a link on the first, second or third page of Google returns, which basically makes the other 249,999,970 sites irrelevant.

The best use of organic results is to see how others in the industry promote their products and to get some idea of how you can do it better.

SEARCH TIP: ALLINTITLE SEARCH

You can limit your Google search results to pages with titles that contain all the words in your search query by typing 'allintitle:' (without the quotes).

For example, the query *allintitle:sony digital camera review* will return just those pages with the words Sony, Digital, Camera, and Review in their title.

There are numerous search tricks and techniques that help you find what you are looking for faster, and getting fast results helps tremendously as you research potential niche markets, existing competition and affiliate programs.

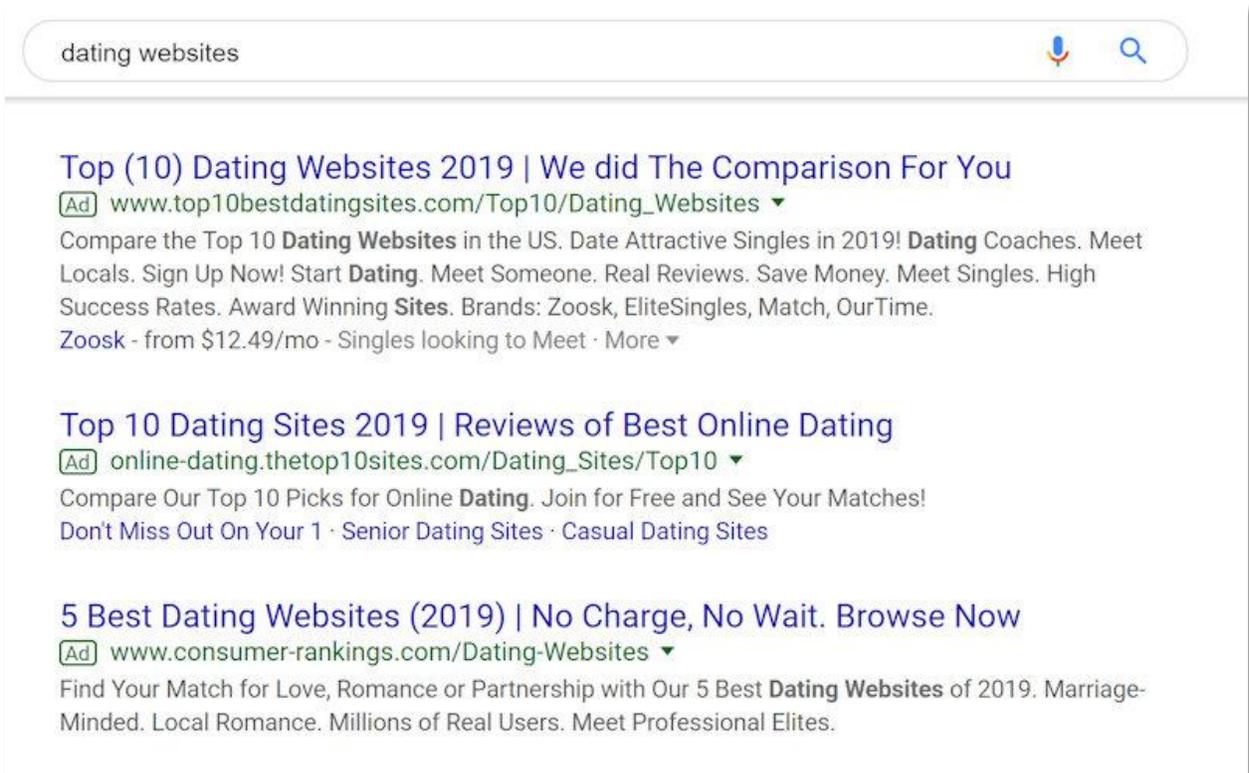
In other words, it pays to learn proper search techniques from the outset. Google provides Basic search tips and techniques at:

<https://sites.google.com/site/gwebsearcheducation/advanced-operators>

PROFITABLE NICHE CLUE #1: ADVERTISERS

The first clue to a profitable niche is to see whether there are Internet Marketers willing to pay to advertise in that market. In very general terms, if you see a lot of advertiser competition within a niche, that market is highly profitable.

Ads on Google are easy to spot, as shown in the next graphic which shows the results for a search for 'dating websites.'



PROFITABLE NICHE CLUE #2: AFFILIATE ADVERTISERS

Another test for profitability within a niche is to see whether affiliate marketers pay for advertising to send traffic to their sites.

If you find affiliates advertising in a particular niche market, then you know that the commissions are sufficient to make advertising worthwhile. This then, is your best indicator of potential profitability as an affiliate marketer.

If you look again at the screenshot above, you'll see that the first 2 sites listed are affiliate review sites. Affiliate sites can be quite easy to spot as they tend to advertise using terms like Top 5, Best 10, Rated, Compared, Reviewed, Reviews, and Guide.

If you want to find more affiliate sites therefore, search for 'your niche topic reviewed' and 'your niche topic guide', i.e. digital camera reviews, compare skin care products, etc.

PROFITABLE NICHE CLUE #3: HIGH DEMAND, LOW COMPETITION

The acid test for real profitability is to find a niche topic that has relatively high demand with little competition.

To determine demand and competition levels for a keyword phrase, you need to use a keyword tool. The next graphic shows results for the keyword phrase, 'dating site'.

Keyword	Volume
dating site	1,197,744
online dating	479,697
dating	460,378
e dating	191,291
dating sites	101,027
local dating	99,637
dating tips dating advise	94,125
online dating websites	60,460
free online dating	56,894
adult dating	54,531

As you can see, search volume was very high, with nearly 1.2 million folks looking for 'dating site' online.

But as internet marketers, we also need to understand how much competition there is in any given market, and different keyword tools provide us with that information, as shown in the following graphic.

Keyword	Volume	Comp.
dating site	1,197,744	25
online dating	479,697	29
dating	460,378	50
e dating	191,291	7
dating sites	101,027	25
local dating	99,637	11
dating tips dating advise	94,125	-
online dating websites	60,460	10
free online dating	56,894	19
adult dating	54,531	28

If you look quickly at the above graphic, it's easy to see that the word 'dating' doesn't meet our high volume – low demand criteria with 460K searches versus a competition rating of 50.

The following screenshot shows results for more specialised dating sites, such as Christian, Russian, Senior and Black Dating.

25	<input type="checkbox"/> christian dating sites (search)	1,229	9	287	74.2
26	<input type="checkbox"/> russian dating site (search)	987	9	212	74.5
27	<input type="checkbox"/> internet dating site (search)	928	9	199	74.5
28	<input type="checkbox"/> top dating sites (search)	899	9	233	73.8
29	<input type="checkbox"/> senior dating sites (search)	12,289	8	105	84.6
30	<input type="checkbox"/> black dating site (search)	2,664	8	127	79.6
31	<input type="checkbox"/> 100 free dating sites (search)	940	8	130	76.1
32	<input type="checkbox"/> black dating sites (search)	892	8	115	76.3
33	<input type="checkbox"/> dating sites for singles (search)	886	8	99	76.8
34	<input type="checkbox"/> senior dating site (search)	14,100	7	86	85.5

By the way, ignore keyword searches for 'free' sites. Those are generated by people who don't want to spend money and therefore are not your target market.

The best keyword tools to use now are [Google's Keyword Planner](#) and [SEM Rush](#).

PROFITABLE NICHE CLUE #4: TRENDS

You don't want to find out that interest in the product or service you are trying to sell is rapidly decreasing after you've built your site. To evaluate and stay current on trends in the market, read the newspaper, magazines and do online research.

Let's look at how the **online dating services** niche has performed over the years and in which direction the industry is headed.

According to the '**2003** Paid Online Content U.S. Market Spending Report' conducted by the Online Publishers Association (OPA) and ComScore Networks, personals/dating category was the largest, making up almost 30 percent of total online content spending by U.S. consumers. Spending on online personal ads and dating Web sites in 2003 reached \$449.5 million, up 49 percent from 2002.

In the '**2005** Paid Online Content U.S. Market Spending Report' released in March 2006, the Online Publishers Association reported that '*Personals/Dating remained a strong second- highest revenue producer, with online content sales of 245.2 million in H1 2005*'.

Then, on February 14th, **2006** (Valentine's Day – go figure) eMarketer published an article called 'Online Dating Gets Tough'. In it, Mr. Belcher, eMarketer senior analyst and author of the report said that 'online dating is a mature market' and contended that free sites like MySpace and Friendster posed a competitive threat. Mr. Belcher, however *also* said:

'Free online dating sites, be they social networking or other, are not after the same customers as subscription-based online dating sites. Free sites are pursuing advertisers. Subscription-based online dating sites, on the other hand, are pursuing serious paying online daters.

The fact that serious online dating sites are not only surviving, but in some cases are charging higher fees, reveals that those who want such services will seek them out, and at a price.'

Fast forward to the Economic Crisis of **2009**. One might think that all online spending had virtually ceased – especially for non-essential products and services.

Well, that was not the case at all! As much as love is always in demand, people need companionship more than ever when times get tough – so don't discount a topic based on what you think might happen.

All the major internet dating services reported significant increases in paid memberships since the economic crisis began - some as much as 70%.

In **2014**, IBIS World Market Research released a report saying that they expected the U.S. dating service industry to grow at an annual rate of 4.2% from **2014 through 2019**. It sees sales reaching \$2.7 billion in 2019.

Statista reported that online dating service user penetration in 2019 is 5.5% and is expected to hit 6.2% by **2023**.

Do your homework and evaluate trends in your potential market thoroughly before you decide.

However, don't wait until you find the 'perfect topic.' It doesn't exist. There will always be some little problem or weakness with whatever niche you choose.

Choose the best of those you have researched or continue researching until you find the topic in which you are most interested and has the greatest potential for profitability.

Remember too, as you gain experience, your site will grow and evolve into something likely much larger and better than you ever hoped or expected.

Be patient and give it time... but don't spend too much time analyzing (or overanalyzing) the niche research portion of the process ... or your project may take much longer to get off the ground.

So... do it now!

BUILD YOUR SITE

Now that you've chosen your niche, it's time to start planning your web site.

In this section we'll look at how to choose a domain name, 3 basic site-building options, how to pick a web hosting service (and why you should NOT use free hosting services).

Note: Please refrain from registering your domain name until you check out the hosting section, as one of the web hosts that I recommend includes a free domain name.

6 KEYS TO THE PERFECT DOMAIN NAME

Your domain name is your business name on the web. It represents both you and your business – therefore it is extremely important that you choose your domain name carefully.

Here are 6 key things to consider when choosing your domain name.

1. **Make it Relevant** - Include at least one, preferably two, of your important 'keywords' in your name. Let's assume that your site is about dog training. So which keywords work best? Dog, puppy, pooch? Train, training or trainer? One way to decide is to learn which keyword combinations is searched for most often. Knowing that the word dog is searched for much more often than the word 'puppy' should make choosing a name that much easier.
2. **Make it DOT COM** - Although there are several domain name extensions to choose from, including .com, .net, and .biz amongst many others, choose .COM. Dot Com comes to mind first when people think of web addresses, so go with it. You wouldn't want your potential customers to head off to 'thepuppytrainer.com' if your site is registered as 'thepuppytrainer.net,' would you?
3. **Make it Memorable** - Which of the following names will you remember a week from now? DogTraining.com, DogCollege.com or DoggyU.com? Shorter names are also easier to remember.
4. **Avoid Hyphens** - One of the bigger mistakes I made when registering my first domain, was to hyphenate the name. Sometime later I discovered a site using the non-

hyphenated (hmm... that LOOKS like an oxymoron) version of my domain name - and he was promoting the same products as I had on my site.

5. **Make it Easy to Spell** - My old site 'byebye925.com' is a good example of a bad domain name. To hear the name spoken, you might guess that is spelled 'bybynine2five.com,' 'byebyeninetofive.com' or a number of other ways. For that reason, I had to spell it out each time I said it. Adding numbers into the fray adds to the inconvenience. Imagine having to say, 'B-Y-E-B-Y-E, number 9, number 2, number 5 DOT COM' several times a day.
6. **Beware of Trademark Infringement** - A trademark is a name or symbol officially registered to a third party, and unless otherwise specified, the trademark owner is the only party that can legally make use of a trademarked name. When purchasing a domain name, be forewarned that buying a domain containing a trademarked name could result in a legal battle and the registrar will likely side with the trademark owner. VeriSign's dispute policy, for example, reads: 'It is your responsibility to determine whether your domain name registration infringes or violates someone else's rights.' A court order could have your site shut down quickly. So before registering a name, do some research to make sure you won't run into trouble. Trademark research and information can be obtained at the Trademark Association (<http://www.inta.org>).

Have fun!

Get out your dictionary and thesaurus and play with words. Brainstorm a long list of possibilities and come up with something that is uniquely your own.

IS YOUR NAME AVAILABLE?

Don't overlook the option of using your own name as your domain name.

In April 2015 I transferred all the content from my Net Profits Today blog over to RosalindGardner.com when I'd had enough of both Google and Affiliate managers treating the word 'profits' in that domain name like it was a dirty word, despite the fact that my approach to sharing content with my readers had always been honest and ethical.

The beauty of using your own name is that it allows you a great deal more latitude in terms of topics you choose to blog about. You don't have to restrict yourself to one topic, i.e. your life with ADHD, but can also discuss how your pets influence living with ADHD... which EXPANDS your audience.

For example, I use RosalindGardner.com for business and RosalindGardner.me for personal posts now. I keep the business blog about Internet marketing business, but on the personal blog, I write about my life... food, travel, RVing and my dog just to name a few topics.

Now let's look at your options for getting a site online.

3 SITE BUILDING OPTIONS

I have experimented with almost every type of web-site building process since 1996.

The HTML (hypertext markup language) on my first site was hand-coded in Notepad.

Later I used site and web development tools such as Homesite, Dreamweaver and ArticleLive – a full-blown content management system (CMS). I paid a web team thousands of dollars to develop proprietary software for a dating site, which later bit the dust. Nowadays, all my sites are built on the open source Wordpress blog platform.

Over the years, I discovered that building a web site can be a quick, cheap and simple process, or it can be time-consuming, expensive and frustrating if you go about it the wrong way.

To make sure you understand your options and build your site the right way the first time, I've outlined 3 basic site building options below.

OPTION #1: HIRE A DESIGNER / WEBMASTER

Unless you personally know a website designer and are completely confident in his or her work, this option can be a total crapshoot. Due to differences in artistic interpretation, there is no guarantee that you will be happy with the result. Furthermore, design can be expensive with a 5 to 10 page site easily costing \$1,000 or more.

Cost isn't the only issue with using a designer to build your site, however.

On one project, my partners and I hired programmers to develop proprietary 'matchmaking' software – similar to that used by Match.com.

We loved the result, and the price was reasonable.

However, the final product was more than a year overdue, and although all aspects of the program's functionality were carefully articulated point-by-point in a thick contract, it took many more months to 'tweak' the site to perfection.

The point here is that even 2 teams of articulate Web professionals can incur lengthy production delays. Delays generally result in cost over-runs and missed revenue opportunities.

As an affiliate marketer, the time it takes to make changes to your site is often the most pressing factor. For example, if your merchant tells you about an outstanding deal that is only available for the next 3 days, how frustrated would you be if your webmaster / web site designer was on vacation for the next 2 weeks?

That's why it is SO important for you NOT to rely solely on a designer and to learn how to add content and links to your own site.

Don't get me wrong. I have posted small projects for graphic creation and script installations at [Freelancer.com](https://www.freelancer.com) and similar sites, and have always been very satisfied with the work done.

However, the only way I would give a webmaster total control of my web site was if that webmaster was an employee and I could count on him or her to work when I needed them.

Otherwise, using a web designer to build your site is the least favorable option.

OPTION #2: SITE-BUILDER PACKAGE DEAL

One web site building option that has most of the features any Super Affiliate would ever need in a Web site, is Ken Evoy's '*Solo Build It!*' (SBI).

Solo Build It! is a good option for someone who wants to save time and money by getting all the website building necessities in a neatly packaged bundle.

Even if you could arrange domain registration, Web hosting, autoresponders, etc., to the tune of \$25 or \$30 per month, you still wouldn't enjoy the benefit of accessing all those utilities through a single interface. More importantly, you won't be getting all the site research and analysis features included with SBI.

Moreover, newbie webmasters who use SBI! enjoy good search engine rankings without having to pay for advertising.

Not only is it an excellent business-building system for newcomers to affiliate marketing, the SBI ecommerce package will serve you well as you grow your business to include your own products. Visit Solo Build it! by SiteSell at <http://webvista.sitesell.com/buildit/>

OPTION #3: DO-IT-YOURSELF BLOG

I've saved the best site-building option for last – do it yourself – using blog technology and free software.

What is a blog?

A blog (short for 'web log') is simply a type of website that lets you add (post) and edit content via a web-based interface. Posts are listed in chronological order with the latest shown at the top of the page and content can be easily categorized according to your needs. Blog technology has made site building so simple, quick and inexpensive that anyone – and I do mean anyone – can build their own web site.

Shown below is a 2014 screen capture of my blog at <http://RosalindGardner.me/>.



And here is a screenshot of the same site in 2019.

ROSALINDGARDNER.ME TRAVELS RIVING JASPER THE DOG STUFF I LIKE BUSINESS ABOUT ROS

Consummate Traveler, RVer, Blogger and Jasper's Mom.

2018 in Review

January 9, 2019 by Rosalind Gardner — [Leave a Comment](#)

Like any other year, 2018 had its ups and downs. Fortunately, life was mostly 'up' for our little family (Ed, Jasper and myself) in 2018. Indeed, I survived jumping off a building. 😊

January						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
2018 in Review						
28	29	30	31			

February						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
	1	2	3			
2018 in Review						
25	26	27	28			

March						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
	1	2	3			
2018 in Review						
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

April						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2018 in Review						
29	30					

We rang in the New Year with friends at McDowell Mountain Regional Park in Arizona. Respecting the need to retain the sanctity of 'RV midnight' (8 PM), we celebrated London England's transition to 2018 around a propane fire pot at the Visitor Center.



Retired air traffic controller turned blogger, affiliate marketer, and author. I blog about business, traveling, food and my dog from wherever I happen to be... summer in southern British Columbia (Canada) on a small non-motorized lake and while snowbirding in Arizona during the winter. [Read More...](#)

Search this website.

Where is Ros?

That blog uses Wordpress software which is available free through the hosting services I recommend.

Better yet, even the most novice webmaster can install a Wordpress blog in under 5 minutes. No knowledge of HTML is required, as Wordpress provides a built-in WYSIWYG editor. WYSIWYG stands for what-you-see-is-what-you-get.

The entire Wordpress interface is very clear and intuitive.

7 REASONS TO AVOID FREE HOSTING

Just in case you are tempted to build your affiliate site using a service such as Blogger.com or Wordpress.com, here are 7 reasons to avoid free hosting services.

1. **Loss of Credibility** – Would YOU buy from a business that can't afford \$6.95 per month to host its own web site? I wouldn't. My impression of businesses on free servers is akin to street vending. I might buy an inexpensive little trinket, but never anything of value.

2. **Banner Advertising on Your Pages** – In exchange for space on their servers, the host places their own banner advertising on your pages. Their banners don't make you money and detract from your business.
3. **Long Domain Addresses** – Which address will your visitors remember?
http://members.atsomefreeserver.com/~johnsbusiness or http://johnsbusiness.com?
4. **Lack of Features** – Free hosts generally restrict the amount of space you can take up on their servers.
5. **Slow Loading Pages** – Most free server pages load very slowly. Slow loading pages are the primary reason people cite for failing to complete online order placement. Let's not chase our visitors away before they have a chance to become customers.
6. **No Customer Service** - Your site is down? Tough luck!
7. **Business Limitations** – Perhaps most importantly, many merchants will not do business with affiliate marketers who do not own their own domains.

Other than using a web hosting service to practice your HTML skills, free hosts are worth precisely what you pay for them... nothing.

TRUE STORY: BAD MR. FREE WEB HOST

Too many webmasters have learned the lesson about free web hosting services the hard way.

Several years ago, I placed a recently completed site on a free hosting service. While I disliked the banner ads that showed at the top and bottom of my pages, I understood that was how the company made their money and the price I paid for the space.

So, my new site was up and I submitted it to the search engines to bring in some traffic. My efforts started to pay off and **pretty soon the money was rolling in.**

Cool! I started working on new projects.

Sometime later however, I notice that the site **stopped generating revenue**, so I checked to see whether the site was offline or if perhaps the sales links were broken.

I typed in my URL and up came a different site in my browser window. Thinking I'd entered the address incorrectly, I typed it in again. The same strange page came up instead of mine. So I try it again... and again. Nope, right URL, DIFFERENT site.

My site was gone.

In its place was a full page of advertising.

Why was this done?

Well, of course I never found out, no one responded to my queries. Granted, this was a scam of the worst kind. Get suckers like me to build a site and bring in visitors, then steal their traffic.

Although this was an unusual circumstance, I (re)learned a valuable lesson – you get what you pay for. So, I pass the lesson on to you. Register your own domain name and pay for a good hosting service. Both are relatively inexpensive, and they put your business on the right track from the start.

CHOOSING A WEB HOST MADE EASY

A Web host is a service that stores, or hosts, your Web site pages on its servers (computers) so others on the Web can access your material 24/7.

Choosing a web hosting service can be the most confusing thing you have to do when setting up a new site.

So, I'm going to make this usually difficult decision VERY easy for you, by suggesting only a few hosting options, all of which specialize in Wordpress blog hosting.

Note: Having an SSL certificate is very important. It makes the difference between your site showing up as 'not secure' or 'secure' from Google's viewpoint. Being 'not secure' will lower your search engine rankings.

At the time of writing, the following services are recommended by Wordpress.org.

1. [BlueHost](http://BlueHost.com) (http://BlueHost.com) - Offers cPanel hosting at very reasonable prices and gives first-rate 24/7 support. Includes a free domain name.

2. [Dreamhost](http://DreamHost.com) (http://DreamHost.com) – Also includes a free domain name and an installed SSL certificate if you choose the first (lowest) level in the ‘Performance’ plan options.
3. [SiteGround](http://SiteGround.com) (http://SiteGround.com) - All new sites hosted on their platforms get a free Standard SSL enabled and they offer 24/7 support. I’d recommend choosing their ‘StartUp’ plan which is only \$3.95/month for the first year of hosting.

In addition to the hosting services above, I should mention that [Website Managers](#) is the hosting company that I’ve used for most of my sites for years. I appreciate their personal and quick response to support questions.

[WPEngine](#) is a hosting service that gives you free access to the Genesis framework and 35 StudioPress themes for your blog. **NOTE:** I use Genesis and StudioPress on all my sites. The link to WPEngine above gives you a 20% discount off your first payment.

Too, if you prefer to register your domain separately, i.e. not with the hosting service, then I recommend using [GoDaddy.com](#).

Once you have purchased a domain name and arranged for web hosting, it’s time to install your blog.

INSTALL A WORDPRESS BLOG

Installation of a Wordpress blog should take no more than 5 minutes and is push-button simple.

Most web hosting services make installing a Wordpress blog very easy. For example, here are the super simple Wordpress installation instructions provided by [SiteGround](#).

Note: To install your blog ‘on the root domain’, i.e. yourdomain.com, do not specify a ‘folder’ name. Just enter your chosen username and password, and you are done.

Note: Do NOT use ‘admin’ as a username. That makes your blog much simpler for hackers to access.

Once you have installed your blog, it’s time to take a tour of your administration panel.

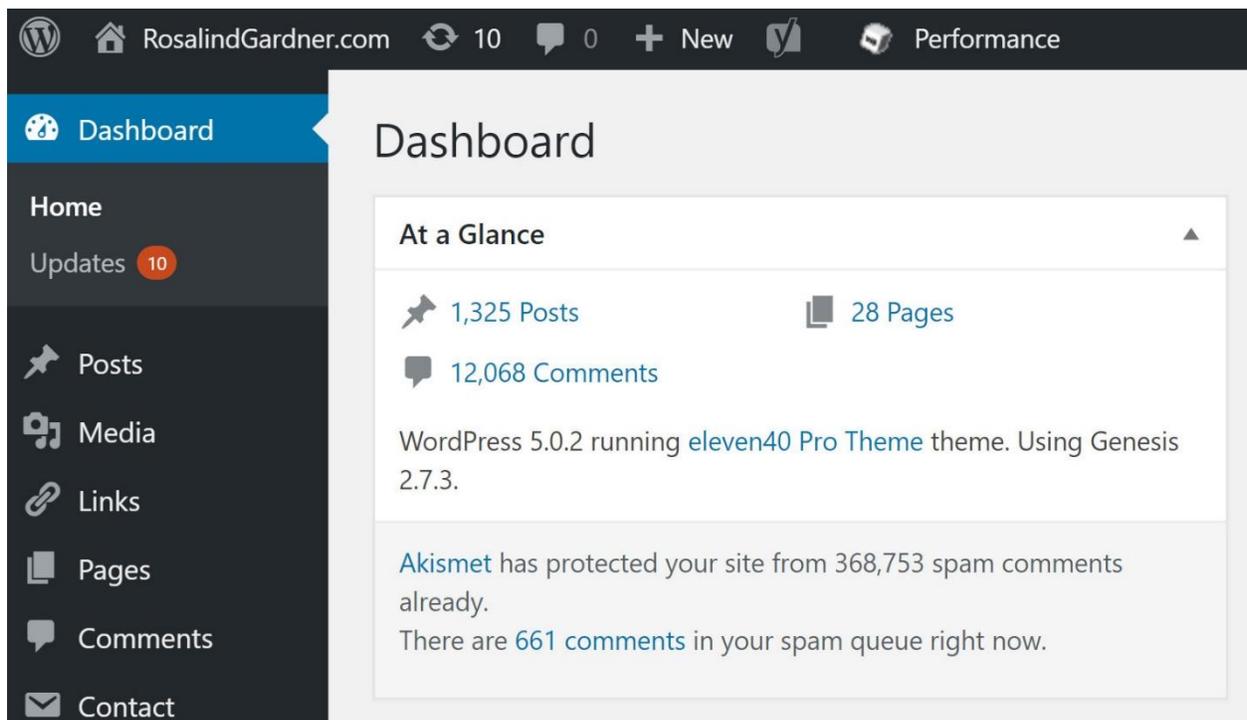
THE WORDPRESS ADMINISTRATION PANEL

To familiarize yourself with the functions of your new blog, login to your Wordpress Administration Panel.

It will be located at <http://your-domain.com/wp-admin> if you installed your blog to the root directory. If you installed your blog to a folder, then you will login at <http://yourdomain.com/your-blog-directory/wp-admin>.

After you login, you will see the 'Dashboard' or main Wordpress interface as it appears in the next screenshot.

Important Note: This is the administration panel for RosalindGardner.com which, at time of writing, is on Wordpress version 5.0.2. YOUR dashboard may look different; however, the functionality of elements discussed here will likely remain consistent.



Browse around the administration panel for a while to get a feel for it. More information about individual functions of each tab in the administration panel are detailed on the official Wordpress site at:

http://codex.wordpress.org/Administration_Panels

Alternatively, you can check out 'WordPress for Beginners' at:

http://codex.wordpress.org/WordPress_Lessons

So, go ahead, install your blog now!

CREATE CONTENT: CONVERT VISITORS TO CUSTOMERS

Unfortunately, the average affiliate converts only .5 to 1 percent of their visitors to customers.

In other words, they make only 1 sale for every 100 to 200 visitors they send to a merchant's site.

Quite frankly, I think that's dismal.

I do better than that, and I know that you can too.

My conversion rates average between 2.5 and 6 percent, and many are much higher depending on the type of product sold.

To get those results, I consistently follow my own rules in the chapter on '20 Questions to Ask Before You Join a Program.'

I also frequently purchase and test products before promoting them on my site.

But the real 'secret' to excellent conversions is great site content and LOTS of it.

In the following sections we'll look at different ways in which you can develop content and different types of content to use on your site. I recommend that you plan to incorporate all or most of the following content elements in your own web site.

6 WAYS TO BUILD CONTENT

I write most of the content for my own sites - primarily because I'm a control freak.

If I was smarter, most of my writing would be outsourced so I could take more holidays!

But don't worry if you are not a writer. Here are 6 options for content development --- 4 of which that don't involve writing.

1. CREATE YOUR OWN CONTENT

I really do enjoy writing. When asked what I do for a living, I don't say that I'm an affiliate marketer. I say that I'm a writer (or a blogger), and then I explain how I earn money as an affiliate marketer.

The best thing about writing your own site content is that you can inject your personality and create your own brand. You can portray yourself as funny, curmudgeonly or sweet – it's up to you. In time, your visitors start to recognize your 'voice.' If they like you, they look forward to hearing more of what you have to say.

Eventually you build rapport with your readers and develop friendships through your correspondence. That, more than commissions, is what makes this business so sweet.

2. HIRE A GHOSTWRITER

If you are allergic to writing, then you might want to outsource your articles to a ghostwriter.

There are numerous outlets that will connect you with ghostwriters. Some of the most popular are:

- [Freelancer](#)
- [Upwork](#)
- [Guru](#)
- 99Designs

Ghostwritten articles can be well-written or they can be terrible. The following is an example of bottom-of-the-barrel writing.

You are here looking for cell phone family plans, which ones offer the best wireless plans for the money and which have the best free cell phones.

Cell phone family plans that include free cell phones and great cheap wireless plans

We'll try and give you as much information regarding cell phone plans for families as well as finding the best deals on free cell phones and cheap wireless plans.

Whether or not your looking to simply stay in touch with your family easily or your looking to save money on your current wireless plan, family cell phone plans can do that by placing all the cell phones in your family onto one wireless plan. Another great aspect of getting a cell phone family plan is that many wireless plans provide free mobile to mobile minutes so you can stay in touch with you family without running up the bills.

Did you spot the errors?

'Your' where it should be 'you're', the worst grammar / syntax you've ever had to suffer and that's not the worst of it.

This piece of rubbish doesn't convey any useful information.

How can you tell that I hate to see garbage on the web? Hey, I'm a surfer too!

To avoid being the victim of such horrible writing, it's essential that you write project proposals for ghostwriters that clearly spell out what you want and that you pay your writers well. I recommend a minimum of \$10 per 500-word article or blog post.

Below is an example of a very well-written proposal. I suggest that you visit [Freelancer](#) to see how this compares with proposals and it won't take long for you to see the difference... and why we're ending up with so much garbage on the web.

A Well-Written Project Proposal

To achieve superior results, you need to post a superior proposal. Here is an example of such a proposal:

Project Subject Line: 6 Articles about Used/Refurbished/Unlocked Phones

Description: This project consists of 6 articles related to used cellular phones. All articles will be 450+ words in length.

Every article will include natural sounding references to 2 or more keyword phrases that will be supplied to the selected author.

Examples of the types of keyword phrases I plan to focus on are:

- *used cell phone(s)*
- *Verizon cell phone(s)*
- *used T-Mobile cell phone(s)*
- *refurbished Blackberry etc...*

Additionally, at least half of the articles must include one of the terms in the title.

Article Topics: The author has the freedom to choose article topics but each article must focus on topics related used/refurbished/unlocked cell phones. The only caveat to the author selecting his/her own topics is that I do have a list of previously done topics that

will not be repeated. I am willing to work with the author to develop some topic ideas should they have trouble.

Quality: *The articles need to be 100% unique and content rich. I expect you to do the research for topics but they must not be copy/pasted or plagiarized. Articles will be written in notepad (or similar text editor) and not copy/pasted from Word. Articles MUST be submitted as a .txt file.*

Expectations: *Articles must be written in 'American' English with grammar and sentence structure consistent with professional journalism standards. If English is not your native language, you must be 100% certain that you can provide this level of quality.*

Conditions: *I retain all rights and ownership. The content you deliver must be completely original and adhere to all copyright laws. Submitting articles for this project that you have already submitted somewhere else or submitting these articles to another buyer in the future is simply not acceptable. The first violates our agreement and the second violates Copyright Law. All content will be checked for plagiarism. If you're not familiar with U.S. copyright law, you should seriously consider not bidding.*

Bidding: *Your bid must include sample articles for review. Any bids received without samples will not be considered (unless I have previous experience working with you).*

Again, bids received without samples will be immediately rejected. Please include samples with your proposals or direct me to them.

Your articles will be expected to match the samples in quality. No revisions should be necessary. However, if an article does not meet expectations, revisions will be requested within 3 business days at no additional cost.

Please be sure to note if you have any particularly relevant experience. Include in your bid how long it will take to finish the project. Ideally, I am looking for an author that can promise a turnaround time of 3-4 days.

Please contact me with any questions. I look forward to working with you!

3. BUY RESALE & PRIVATE LABEL RIGHTS

You can buy articles, ebooks, and reports, etc. with private label rights – meaning you buy the right to use the content in *almost* any manner you choose.

Note: Most PLR sites specify that they do not want the content re-posted on article directories, so check the terms and conditions carefully before you purchase.

Typically, content is supplied as unformatted text files or Word documents, to which you can add or modify content, including the title and authors name... meaning you can put your own name on the article.

PLR packages are quite inexpensive. Most articles average less than a dollar per piece.

Here are some of my favorite sources of PLR:

- [Big Content Search](#)
- [DIY PLR](#)
- [PLR.me](#)
- [IDPLR.com](#)

I maintain a list of PLR distributors that supply content for many different niche markets at:

<http://rosalindgardner.com/blog/where-to-buy-content-for-your-site/>

4. OBTAIN WORKS IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN

Public domain works are books, poems and articles for which the copyright has expired and therefore have NO copyright protection, meaning that anyone can copy, modify and use or sell them.

Once you modify a public domain work it becomes your property. The modified work receives an automatic copyright just like it would if it were an original work.

To learn more about public domain, please visit https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Public_domain

5. USE OTHER AUTHORS' CONTENT

Several article directories allow you to use the material that authors post to those sites, free of charge.

The usual stipulation is that you will respect authors' guidelines and those of the article directory managers.

In almost all cases, authors require that you place their resource box at the bottom of the article, which invariably includes a link back to their site.

Therein lies the drawback, however.

That link out of your site is not usually an affiliate link, and I don't recommend that you post any 'leaky' links (links that don't make you money) on your site.

You're much better off using PLR articles which you can claim as your own and have no linking requirements.

If you want to get a quick start on your content by using other writers' material, start with EzineArticles.com.

6. REPURPOSE YOUR CONTENT

Repurposing content means taking your content and using it in a different way.

By repurposing your content and creating new formats for your material, you can extend your reach and increase the size of your audience. Those who read your newsletter but not the articles on your site will derive the benefit of the information in that article which before resided only on your site

Here are 6 ways to reuse your content:

1. Use a portion of an article in your [autoresponder series](#) – a series of articles written specifically to be delivered to your email newsletter subscribers.
2. Articles can be recorded to audio files and uploaded to your site for those who would rather listen than read.
3. Articles can be combined into a report, booklet or full-scale ebook and offered as incentive to sign up for your newsletter. You could also turn them into paid content!
4. Turn your autoresponder series into a downloadable report.
5. Interview experts in your field and upload the audio to your site. Have the audio transcribed and turned into an ebook or a series of articles. Use quotes from the transcripts in a variety of different articles.
6. Modify your content to suit different audiences. For example, an article entitled '6 Strategies for Successful Online Dating' could easily be re-written as '6 Online Dating Mistakes to Avoid.'

Use your imagination to find new and different ways to reuse your existing material.

Not only will you increase your reach and your profits, but you'll also save time in the process!

5 'MUST-HAVE' SITE PAGES

The number of affiliate webmasters that don't include the following 5 basic pages on their sites is appalling.

They are losing sales by result.

Do yourself and your business a big favor.

Take a few hours to create the content for these 'must-have' pages. To make it even easier for you, I include examples for your use in a few cases.

1. 'ABOUT US' PAGE

It's natural to want to know with whom you're doing business – both online and off.

When you get the impression that someone is hiding behind the typical anonymity of the Web, you're less likely to trust the products recommended on the site and therefore unlikely to buy from that site.

Having an 'About Us' page on your site instills that trust in your visitors and will increase your sales numbers.

The next screenshot is taken from my 'About Us' page at <http://101Date.com/About> .

Notice how I included a picture of myself and the reasons I had for creating my Web site. That makes me a 'real' person to my visitors and is one of the reasons that site has been so successful.

About

Greetings from the Staff at 101Date.com!

Our webmaster, site designer, writer, proof reader, editor, publisher, graphics and animation artist, site reviewer, 'feature sites' judge and jury, marketing specialist, traffic analyst; chief cook, bottle washer and keyboard duster all welcome you to our little corner of the World Wide Web.

OK, I confess..

I, Rosalind, *am* 'us'...and did I mention 'site



2. CONTACT PAGE

A visitor who makes time to send a question demonstrates their interest in your site and product offerings.

Timely responses to their questions increase the likelihood of making a sale.

Instead of using clickable email links, I recommend you use contact forms for two reasons.

1. Forms eliminate much of the spam that you get from the idiots who use email address harvesters.
2. Your visitors' email software won't be popping open when they least expect it.

Take a look at the contact form that I use at <http://rosalindgardner.me/contact/>

I use a Wordpress plugin there called 'Contact Form by WPForms – Drag & Drop Form Builder for WordPress' available through your Wordpress Administration panel for free.

3. PRIVACY STATEMENT

Every commercial web site needs a privacy/security statement.

Privacy statements explain how information on your site is collected, safeguarded and used. It is an explicit statement made on behalf of the site owner to the site user, and is a legal, binding document. Including a privacy statement instills user confidence and trust, reduces liability, and increases your web site's conversion rate.

I've included the template below that I use for the privacy statements on my sites.

Feel free to use it on your site. Simply replace YourSite.com with your site's name or URL, fill in the blanks where appropriate, and replace the words 'by clicking here' with the link to the contact page on your site.

Sample Privacy Statement

YourSite.com has created this privacy statement in order to demonstrate our firm commitment to privacy. The following discloses our information gathering and dissemination practices for this website: YourSite.com.

We use your IP address to help diagnose problems with our server, and to administer our Web site.

This site contains links to other sites. YourSite.com is not responsible for the privacy practices or the content of such Web sites. YourSite.com employs the services of _____ for the YourSite.com Newsletter. _____ and YourSite.com agree not to sell or rent the email addresses of any YourSite.com Newsletter subscriber to any third party.

Public Forums

This site may make chat rooms, forums, message boards, and/or news groups available to its users. Please remember that any information that is disclosed in these areas becomes public information and you should exercise caution when deciding to disclose your personal information.

Choice/Opt-Out

This site gives users the following options for removing their information from our mailing list database to not receive future communications or to no longer receive our service. You can contact YourSite.com by clicking here.

Correct/Update

This site gives users the following options for changing and modifying information previously provided. Change or modify information by clicking here.

Contacting the Web Site

If you have any questions about this privacy statement, the practices of this site, or your dealings with this Web site, feel free to contact us by clicking here.

4. DISCLAIMER

The purpose of a disclaimer is to let your client or customer know in very clear terms what their responsibility is and what is not your responsibility... i.e. keep you out of hot water if some weirdo decides that it might be fun to take legal action against you.

Here is the disclaimer that I've placed on the RosalindGardner.com site.

RosalindGardner.com does not represent or endorse the accuracy or reliability of any of the information, content or advertisements contained on, distributed through, or linked, downloaded or accessed from any of the services contained on this website, nor the quality of any products, information or other materials displayed, purchased, or obtained by you as a result of an advertisement or any other information or offer in or in connection with the services herein. You hereby acknowledge that any reliance upon any Materials shall be at your sole risk. RosalindGardner.com reserves the right, in its sole discretion and without any obligation, to make improvements to, or correct any error or omissions in any portion of the Service or the Materials.

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RosalindGardner.com respects the rights (including the intellectual property rights) of others, and we ask our users to do the same. RosalindGardner.com may, in appropriate

circumstances and in its sole discretion, terminate the accounts of users that infringe or otherwise violate such rights of others.

5. DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

On December 11, 2006, the Federal Trade Commission said that companies that engage in word-of-mouth marketing must disclose those relationships. Word-of-mouth marketing is peer-to-peer communication for the purpose of earning a profit.

Affiliate product endorsements placed on blogs and web pages is considered word-of-mouth marketing and therefore requires disclosure.

Rather than identify each and every affiliate link on my site, I opted to place a disclosure statement alongside my disclaimer at RosalindGardner.com.

The text of the disclosure reads as follows:

The contents of this web site and blog is written and edited by me, Rosalind Gardner.

The compensation I receive as an affiliate marketer to provide opinion on products, services, websites and various other topics does NOT affect the topics or posts I make in this blog.

I abide by word of mouth marketing standards and believe in honesty of relationship, opinion and identity.

Unlike so many who promote Internet marketing products, I am NOT a product launch monger who promotes every product – good or bad – that hits the market.

The views and opinions expressed on this blog are purely my own. I always provide my honest opinions, findings, beliefs, or experiences on those topics or products.

In rare cases, I will mention products that I have not personally reviewed. However, this only occurs when I am familiar with the manufacturer's previous products and am satisfied that he or she produces only high-quality goods. Regardless, I will mention if and when I do not have personal experience with the product.

Any product claim, statistic, quote or other representation about a product or service should be verified with the manufacturer, provider or party in question.

To create your own disclosure statement, DisclosurePolicy.org has a neat disclosure policy generator available at <http://bit.ly/HVGc7N>.

Rosalind Gardner



Super affiliate Rosalind Gardner is best known for her Super Affiliate

Handbook: How I made \$436,797 in One Year Selling Other Peoples' Stuff Online and ... [Read More...](#)

FTC Disclosure: You bet your sweet bippy I'll make money if you buy through the affiliate links on this site... and at NO extra cost to you! WOW! Click for more details.

Search this website

In addition to the disclosure statement, you must also place 'affiliate link' disclosures (disclaimers) in obvious areas on your site.

Affiliate link disclosures are mandated by the FTC. Essentially, wherever an affiliate link is used on your website that results in a commission, you must disclose this information to site visitors.

On RosalindGardner.com, you will see my 'FTC Disclaimer' graphic posted on the sidebar of every page, right below my author bio.

Disclosures are intended to build trust between the blogger and the site visitor, or between the merchant and potential client, so you should be upfront and obvious about your FTC disclosure placements.

In summary, because they help improve your credibility, increase visitor trust and sales, the 5 pages discussed in this section are the FIRST pages you should place on your site / blog. Don't do business without them!

HOW TO ADD A PAGE TO YOUR WORDPRESS BLOG

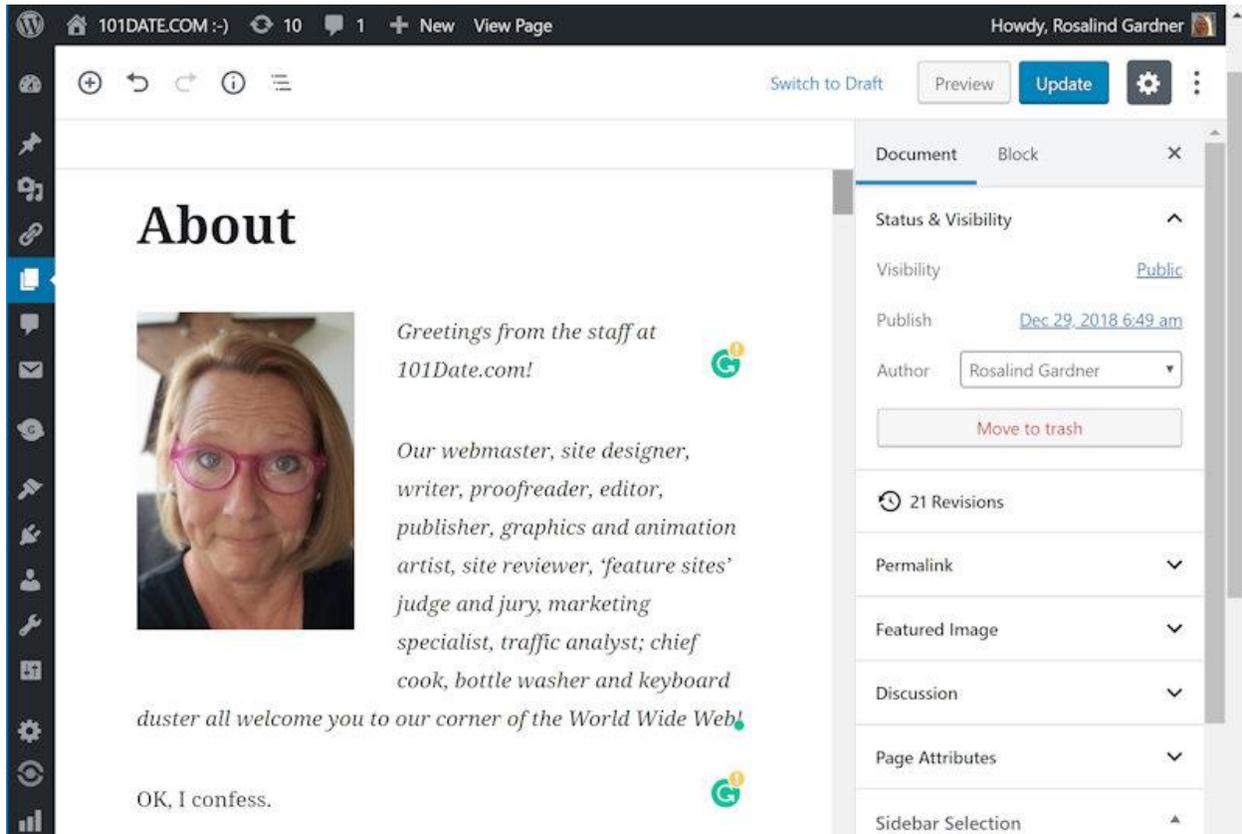
Login to your Wordpress administration panel.

Click on the tab marked 'Page' and then 'Add New'.

Once you are in the 'Add New Page' panel use content you've developed for that specific page to fill in the Page Title and Page Content.

Once you have finished entering your content, click 'Publish' to make the page visible on your blog. Otherwise you can click on 'Save Draft' to keep working on the page or work on the page later.

The next screenshot is a sample of how the filled-in text looks in the Write Page panel.



The finished page can be seen at:

<http://101date.com/about/>

Now it's your turn. Create and post content to a new page on your blog.

ESSENTIAL CONTENT FOR AFFILIATE SITES

In this section, you'll learn about the two types of content that are absolutely essential for every affiliate site – informative articles and product endorsements/reviews.

INFORMATIVE ARTICLES

Your visitors are searching the Internet for information. If you give them the information they want *before* directing them to your product review pages, your sales conversions will soar.

For example, single people who consider online dating have a number of questions about internet dating safety, background checks and how to improve their chances of success when using a dating service.

I therefore provide the following informative articles on my dating site:

- [How to Write a Personal Ad](#)
- [Internet Dating Safety Precautions](#)
- [Should I Get a Background Check?](#)

Each of these articles links to a product that is relevant to the topic. The first article links to a page with recommended dating services, and the latter two articles link to investigative services.

PRODUCT ENDORSEMENTS AND REVIEWS

The best conversion-to-sales rates are achieved when you write product endorsements and reviews for your merchants' products.

Below is a portion of the eHarmony endorsement at [101Date.com](#).

Find your soulmate, not just a date.

eHarmony is the best way for you to build a lasting relationship. eHarmony combines precise matching technology with the guidance of a caring and expert hand.

Research done by eHarmony founder, Dr. Neil Clark Warren, has shown that the compatibility of romantic partners can be measured. eHarmony uses 29 dimensions of compatibility that align in the most successful relationships to help you find your perfect match. Hundreds of thousands of people have joined eHarmony and connected with someone who is truly right for them. They've helped create hundreds of successful marriages so far ... yours could be next! 😊

Get a free personality profile to learn more about yourself and sign-up for eHarmony's service to find your perfect match!

To help my visitors decide whether a visit to the merchant's site is worth their while, I also include a list of product features on the product review page.

The benefit to affiliates for providing more information is that if they decide that the service doesn't offer what they want, they will stay on your site and look for another service that does.

The trick is to give your visitors just enough information to pique their interest without overwhelming them with text. In other words, make your review 'compelling.'

HOW TO WRITE A COMPELLING PRODUCT ENDORSEMENT

Don't you hate being on the receiving end of a sales pitch?

That's why the best way to promote products is to endorse them, honestly and sincerely.

I always give the product or service 'added value' by creating content around it. I tell my customers exactly why I think it's a good product or service. If it has a few drawbacks, but still think it's a good buy, I'll tell them that too. I give my customers enough information about the product to help them decide whether or not it is right for them, which gives me a big leg up on the competition. Then I offer 'extras' like informative articles, reports and newsletters that further increase my sales and conversion rates.

In order for your endorsement to be persuasive, you should have personal experience with the product and be enthusiastic about it. Given those two factors, writing the endorsement then becomes easy.

That's why super affiliates frequently buy the products they sell. They study the product or service inside and out, backwards and forwards. They note all the features, both good and bad.

Writing the recommendation takes time and care.

You need to carefully consider all you want to say and anticipate your readers' reactions. When you anticipate your visitors' concerns, you are able to address them before they become unanswered questions that cause them to click away.

The primary ingredient in a compelling personal testimonial is an explanation of how you benefited from use of the product or service. The product feature list is secondary.

People want to know how the product will improve their lives.

For example, if you are promoting the latest health regime, emphasizing the point that it contains coral calcium is unlikely to convince anyone of its worth. What is coral calcium? Tell your visitors sincerely how using the product made you feel more fit and energetic and that will get them interested.

If you want to see examples of product endorsements in action, watch TV infomercials. Infomercial writers are the kings and queens of ‘compelling.’

Here are some examples of product endorsements on my sites:

- <http://rosalindgardner.me/staying-motivated-with-the-garmin-forerunner-10/>
- <http://rosalindgardner.me/vitamix-the-ultimate-yummy-processor/>

See how they are personal? That’s what makes them compelling!

COMPARISON CHARTS

An alternative to individual product reviews is a side-by-side comparison review chart.

#	Site	Main Features	Membership Base	Overall Rating	Summary
1		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Choice for Matchmaking ▪ Integration with major social networks ▪ Free personality assessment ▪ Convenient mobile dating app ▪ Extremely easy to use 	The Choice for Matchmaking	 10/10 Read Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Large User Base ▪ Fun and Easy to Use ▪ Younger Adults
2		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The fastest-growing dating site in the world ▪ Guarantees you'll meet someone special in 6 months! ▪ Meet singles today with an ultra-simple member setup ▪ Extremely easy to use ▪ Employs a personality-based matching system 	The fastest-growing dating site in the world	 9.7/10 Read Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Best Overall ▪ Best Features ▪ Largest User Base
3		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Designed to create lasting relationships or companionship ▪ Search for singles instantly without a membership ▪ Easy to use, especially for seniors new to online dating ▪ Dating advice from genuine dating experts ▪ Created specifically for users aged 50+ 	Designed to create lasting relationships or companionship	 9.5/10 Read Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Designed for Seniors ▪ Serious Relationships ▪ Easy to Use

Comparisons convert to sales especially well when the affiliate has experience with the product and can express their findings using first-person terms, such as 'I found the XYZ Heart Rate monitor the most comfortable to wear.'

CONTENT PLANNING: KEYWORDS AND CATEGORIES

OK, now that you have a good idea of what content you need to include on your site, let's talk about how to decide which content you should develop first -- other than those essential site pages discussed earlier.

Build a Keyword List

As you research your topic, start building a list of keywords relevant to your topic. Your keyword list will be used to create focused content and to drive traffic to your site through natural and paid search engines.

To do this, I used a service called [Wordtracker](http://bit.ly/16hIjNj). (<http://bit.ly/16hIjNj>)

That'll show you the top results for whatever term you enter. For example, their free version returned the following results for the term dating:

Keyword	Volume ↕
dating	840787
dating websites	633076
free online dating sites	524326
dating website	461671
online dating	455354
dating sites	336123
dating matchmaking	259294

In the professional version of Wordtracker, each keyword can be clicked to drill down for more refined results.

Related keywords are important because not everybody searches for 'dating' so Wordtracker gives a list of other keywords that mean the same thing. By targeting keywords that you may not have thought of when you build your site content, you'll end up with more traffic.

A good example is the term 'website promotion'. If you were to simply target this keyword, you would miss out on all the traffic you could generate by targeting 'internet marketing', 'web marketing' or 'internet advertising'. They're all different ways of looking at the same thing.

The returns at the top of the list are usually pretty generic. However as you scroll down, more specific searches start to emerge, indicating possible categories for the site.

Take note of what you find particularly interesting, or what areas you specifically want to target.

ORGANIZE YOUR CATEGORIES AND SUB-CATEGORIES

In their excitement to get online and start making money, new webmasters often omit the planning process as time-wasting, unnecessary work.

Unfortunately, they don't establish a clear picture of how their site will be arranged, and the lack of focus and planning is sadly evident.

For example, you've probably seen sites that list 40 or more items in the navigation bar, which is simply too many to expect visitors to scroll through on every page.

You won't fall into that trap, because as you do your research, you'll develop a manageable list of site categories and sub-categories.

As you research, you will come up with ideas for site categories and sub-categories to use in your site's navigation.

After working through the terms related to singles and online dating, my list of topics for 101Date.com looked something like this:

1. Adult
2. Age-related
3. Alternative
4. American
5. Asian
6. Black
7. Books

8. Canadian
9. Candy
10. Chinese
11. Chocolate
12. Christian
13. Disabled Singles
14. Ethnic
15. Fiancée Visas
16. Flowers
17. French
18. Gay
19. Gifts
20. Greeting Cards
21. Hispanic
22. Indian
23. Italian
24. Japanese
25. Jewish
26. Korean
27. Lesbian
28. Muslim
29. Parents
30. Regional
31. Regional/Ethnic
32. Romance Tours
33. Russian
34. Sexual Orientation
35. Speed Dating

With 35 items, that's a pretty sizeable and unwieldy list, and far too large for a navigation bar.

On closer examination however, you can see that that single people who are interested in online dating are searching according to geographic region, ethnicity, sexual orientation, types of online dating (i.e. chat) and religion. They are also looking for gifts.

To shorten the navigation list, I developed a list of top-level categories and eventually got the list down to 7 lines as listed below.

- 5-Star TOP Sites
- All Reviewed Sites
- Free Trial Dating Sites
- Niche Dating Sites
- Regional / Ethnic Sites
- Religious Singles Sites
- True Matchmaking

Note that '5-Star TOP Sites' and 'All Reviewed Sites' are additional categories that were placed in the navigation after the reviews were complete. They are intended to simplify navigation to individual pages.

Break-Out 2nd Tier Categories

Because I didn't want to list every ethnicity and religion on the homepage in the sidebar, topic list needed to be broken out into categories and sub- categories, or 1st and 2nd level tiers.

So, instead of putting 'Jewish' and 'Christian' in the navigation bar, I listed 'Religious Singles Sites' as a top-level category.

As one can reasonably assume that there are singles of all religious faiths seeking partners, I built a 'sub-category' for each religion which had a dating dedicated purely to members of that faith.

As, such I ended up with the following 2nd tier categories.

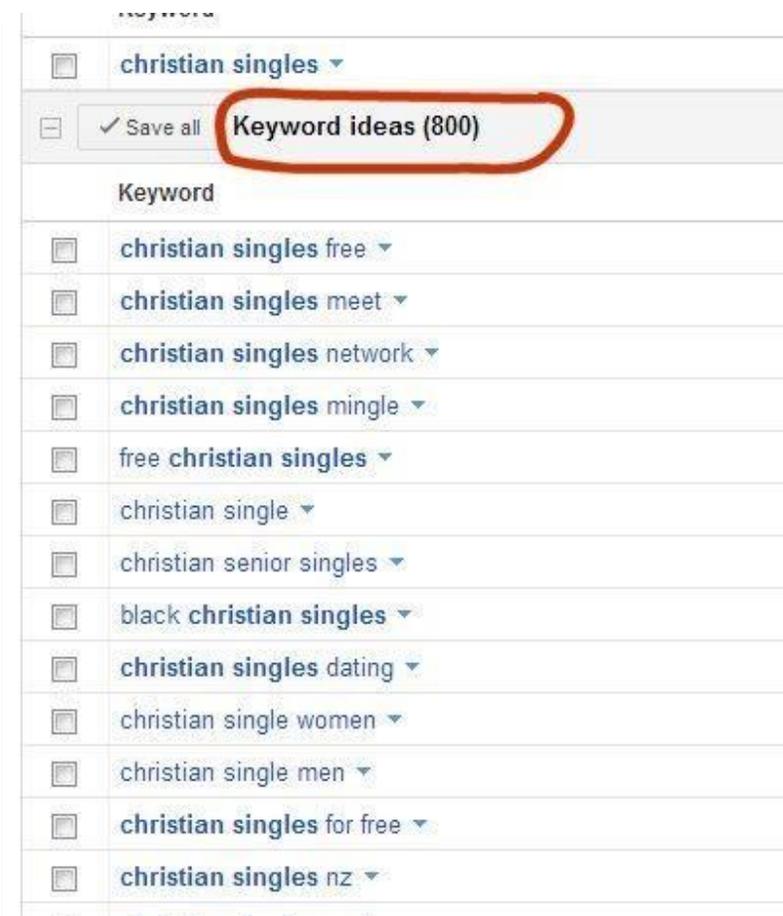
- Adventist Singles

- Catholic Dating Services
- Christian Singles
- Jewish Singles
- Mormon / LDS Dating

BUILD SEPARATE KEYWORD LISTS ACCORDING TO CATEGORIES

When creating keyword lists, I prefer to separate and export keywords according to their category or sub-category.

For example, rather than building a huge list that contains all the keywords related to 'singles,' I will create a keyword lists for individual topics such as 'dating russian women,' 'interracial dating' and 'Christian singles' and then copy the lists into separate pages on an Excel spreadsheet.



Here is an example of a list that I built around the term 'Christian singles' using the Google Keyword tool.

Going through the list, I found that Christian singles were looking for other Christians according to geographic region, sexual orientation and ethnicity as shown by terms such as 'Texas,' 'gay' and 'African American'.

Single Christians are also looking for chat rooms, cruises, magazines and specific dating services

such as Christian Single Mingle, which is now called Relationships.com. I used that information to look for products and services that I can offer to my site's customers.

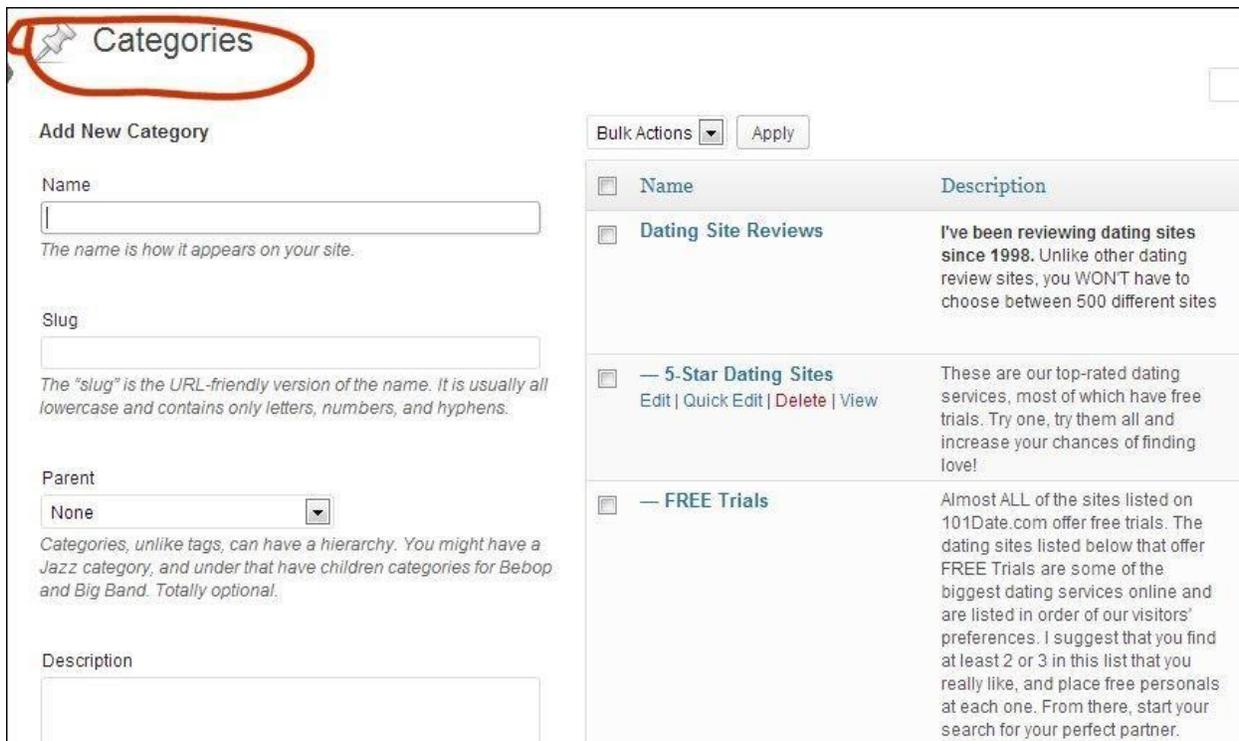
If enough searches occur for any particular sub-topic, I consider building a separate landing page on my site to serve that specific market or to promote a specific product.

More importantly, I try to build a HUGE list of keywords, each containing the term 'Christian singles' to use in pay-per-click advertising campaigns, a topic covered in a later section of the book.

HOW TO ADD A CATEGORY TO YOUR BLOG

The next screenshot shows how the category list appears for that site within the blog's Posts > Categories interface.

The number of posts and the option to edit or delete each category is also provided.



Categories

Add New Category

Name

The name is how it appears on your site.

Slug

The "slug" is the URL-friendly version of the name. It is usually all lowercase and contains only letters, numbers, and hyphens.

Parent
None
Categories, unlike tags, can have a hierarchy. You might have a Jazz category, and under that have children categories for Bebop and Big Band. Totally optional.

Description

Bulk Actions

<input type="checkbox"/>	Name	Description
<input type="checkbox"/>	Dating Site Reviews	I've been reviewing dating sites since 1998. Unlike other dating review sites, you WON'T have to choose between 500 different sites
<input type="checkbox"/>	— 5-Star Dating Sites Edit Quick Edit Delete View	These are our top-rated dating services, most of which have free trials. Try one, try them all and increase your chances of finding love!
<input type="checkbox"/>	— FREE Trials	Almost ALL of the sites listed on 101Date.com offer free trials. The dating sites listed below that offer FREE Trials are some of the biggest dating services online and are listed in order of our visitors' preferences. I suggest that you find at least 2 or 3 in this list that you really like, and place free personals at each one. From there, start your search for your perfect partner.

To add a category to your blog:

- Login to your Wordpress Administration Panel.
- Click on 'Posts' in the sub-navigation panel.

- Then click on 'Categories'.
- Enter the name, slug and description (optional) for your category.
- Choose to put it at the root level, or under a 'Parent' category.
- Add a Description (optional).
- Click the 'Add Category' button to finalize the operation.

Now that you've established your blog categories, let's write a post.

HOW TO POST TO YOUR BLOG

Writing a post in WordPress is easy.

1. Login to your WordPress Administration Panel.
2. Click on Posts in the left menu and then Add New.
3. Enter a Title and content for your post.
4. Choose a Category for your post.
5. Select 'Allow Comments' and 'Allow Pings' under Discussion if you want to receive comments on your post. (Hint: You do!)

To see how your post looks before it is published, click the Preview link in the Publish box. When you are finished, click Publish.

The next screenshot shows the ['SkyJump Las Vegas: I Survived!'](#) post in the 'Edit Post' panel on my personal blog.

The screenshot shows the WordPress 'Edit Post' interface. At the top, the browser address bar shows 'RosalindGardner.me' and the page title 'Howdy, Rosalind Gardner'. The main heading is 'Edit Post' with an 'Add New' button. A notification bar says 'Post updated. View post'. The post title is 'SkyJump Las Vegas: I Survived!' with a 'Permalink' field showing 'http://rosalindgardner.me/survived-las-vegas-skyjump/'. Below the title is a rich text editor with a 'Paragraph' dropdown and various formatting tools. The main content area contains two paragraphs of text and a photograph of the Stratosphere Tower. The right sidebar includes a 'Publish' section with 'Status: Published', 'Visibility: Public', 'Revisions: 3', and 'Published on: Mar 21, 2018 @ 18:44'. It also shows 'Readability: Good' and 'SEO: Good' scores, and an 'Update' button. Below that is a 'Categories' section with a list of categories including 'Travels', 'Food', and 'Jasper the Chocolate Labrador &'. The bottom of the editor shows 'Word count: 279' and 'Last edited by Rosalind Gardner on January 9, 2019 at 11:38 am'.

Pretty simple, eh?

Most of the Quicktag codes are self-explanatory.

For a detailed explanation of the WYSIWYG editor's 'quicktags' go to:

http://codex.wordpress.org/Write_Post_SubPanel#Quicktags

If you need more information about all the different features of blog post writing, visit the Wordpress Write Post page at:

http://codex.wordpress.org/Write_Post_SubPanel

THE 'SECRET' INGREDIENT EVERY ARTICLE (BLOG POST) NEEDS

Whether you write your own articles or use a ghostwriter, there is one secret ingredient that is more important to your article than anything else. Any guesses?

It's your HEADLINE!

If your headline doesn't compel your visitors to read the article, then it won't matter if you have written the best article in the world.

As headlines can be a challenge for new marketers, I've included several fill-in-the-blank ideas to help get you started.

- Top 10_____Do's and Don'ts
- What's HOT and NOT in_____
- When Not to_____
- Your Must-Know Guide to_____
- _____with Pizzazz!
- _____and Grow Rich
- _____on the Cheap
- 5 Ways to Get More from Your_____
- 5 No-Fail Strategies for_____
- 6 Secrets to Successful_____
- 8 Ways to Avoid the Worst Mistakes
- 9 Formulas for Fantastic_____
- 10 User-Friendly Facts for_____
- 10 Tips to Jump-Start Your_____
- 25 Quick Tips to Use Now
- 26 Holiday Gifts for_____

Create a list of possible blog post titles now.

ADDING IMAGES TO POSTS

The old proverb, 'a picture worth a thousand words' is particularly applicable to website content, as surfers have incredibly short attention spans.

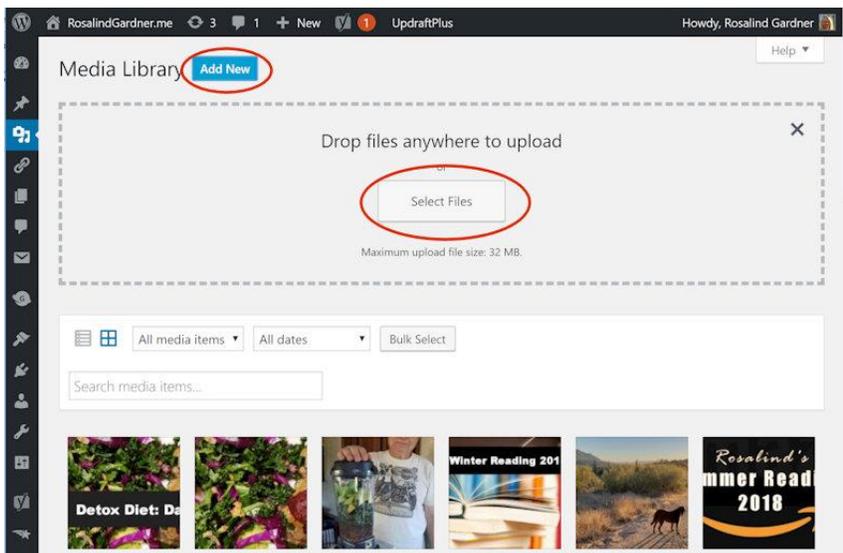
Placing product images within your endorsements is therefore essential.

For example, imagine a fashion site with endless descriptions of cut, color and fabric *without* pictures of the clothing described.

How painful!

Fortunately, your merchants will provide you with graphic images of their products.

The same theory holds true when a surfer is scanning an informational article or blog post, such as the 'SkyJump Las Vegas: I Survived!' post discussed in the previous section. I therefore wanted to add an image of the Stratosphere Tower into the post.



To add an image to a post, click 'Add Media' from within the post itself. The Media Library page will open. You click the 'Add New' icon located beside 'Media Library' the following window pops open. To upload an image, you then click on 'Select Files' and a window to your

computer will open from where you can select the image that you wish to upload.

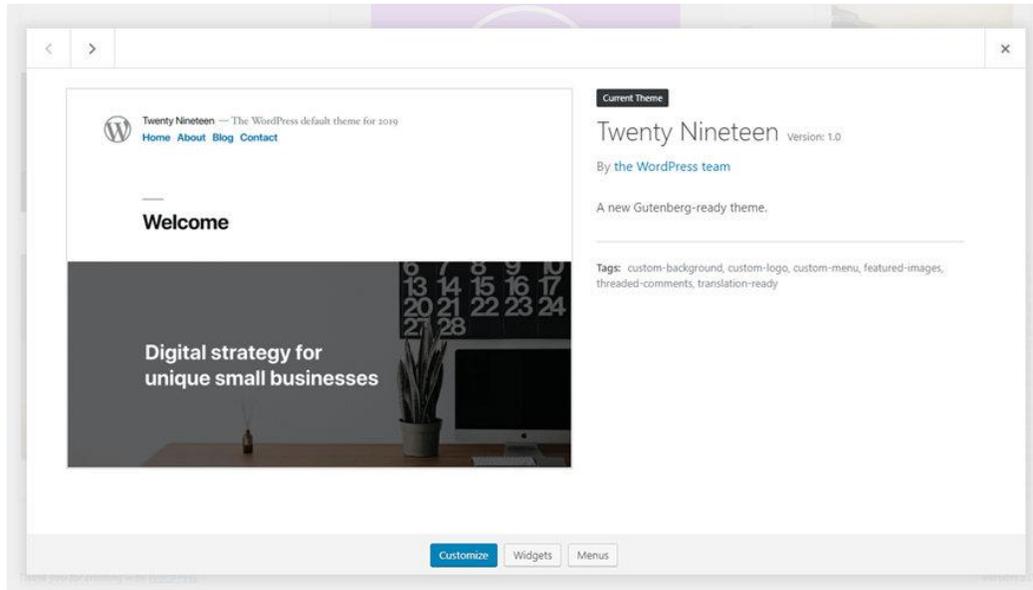
If you want to upload files from your computer, you'll have to set up a default location to store your pictures, found under 'Settings' and 'Miscellaneous'. The default setting is wp-content/uploads.

Now that you are set with all the ways to develop content and the type of content to place on your site, it's time to make your blog pretty.

GIVE YOUR BLOG A NEW LOOK: INSTALL A THEME

In this section, you'll learn how to find, download, upload and install a new Wordpress theme to your blog.

The Default Wordpress theme is pretty basic. This is what your Wordpress blog will look like 'out of the box' in 2019.



Fortunately, it's easy to change the look of your blog by installing a new theme.

WHERE TO FIND WORDPRESS THEMES FOR YOUR BLOG

Everyone and his brother is designing Wordpress themes nowadays and you can find scores of free themes available through the Wordpress site at:

<http://wordpress.org/extend/themes/>

I, however, prefer to use paid themes for the simple reason that they are thoroughly tested prior to release for sale and therefore work the way they are supposed to work.

For example, the theme that I use on most of my sites is called '[eleven40](#)' by [StudioPress](#).



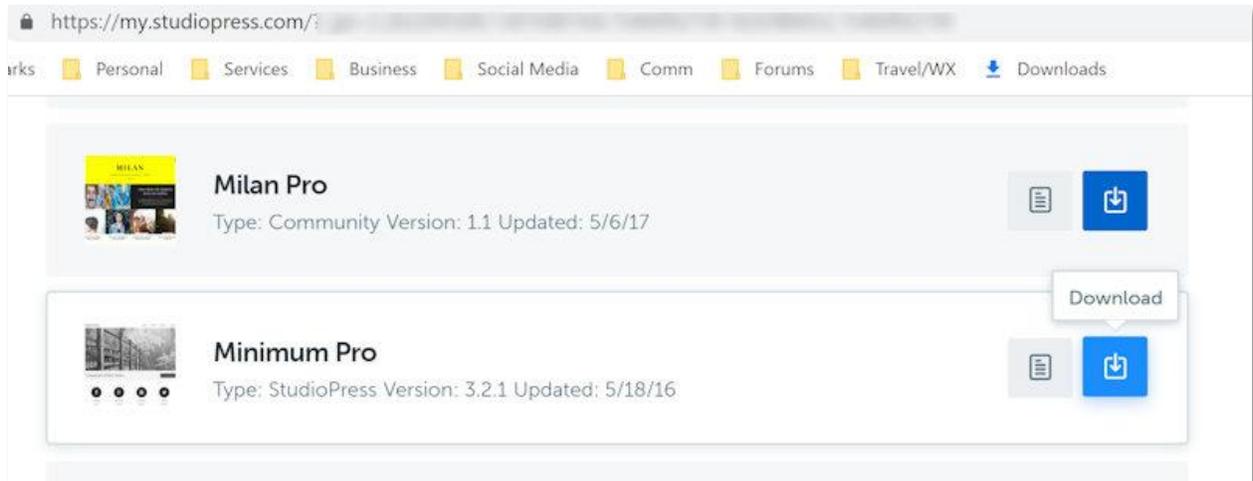
StudioPress themes are excellent for affiliate sites, generally providing space for banners in the header bar and right sidebar, and a Google AdSense component to monetize your site.

StudioPress also provides a [specialized guide](#) to help you every step of the way with installation of their themes.

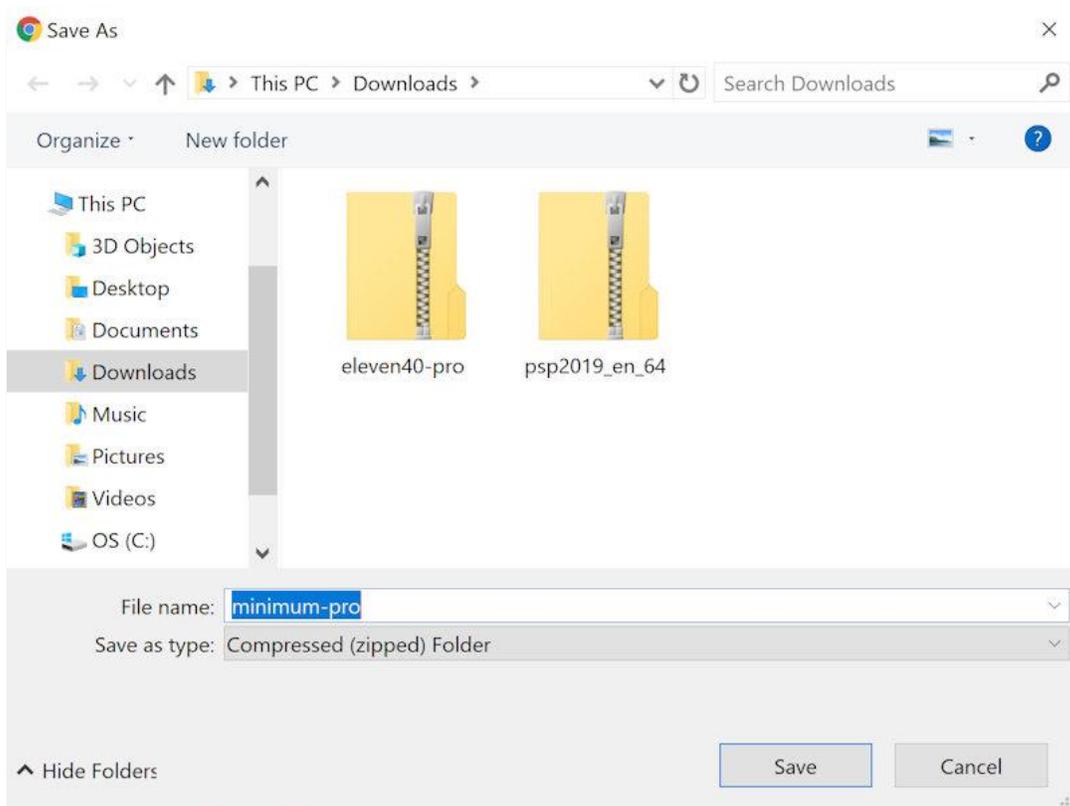
[HOW TO DOWNLOAD A THEME TO YOUR COMPUTER AND UPLOAD IT TO YOUR BLOG](#)

Themes for Wordpress are typically packaged as zipped files (extension .zip) which download automatically when you click the download link.

In the following screenshots you will see how I downloaded the Minimum Pro theme from StudioPress to my computer and upload it to my blog.

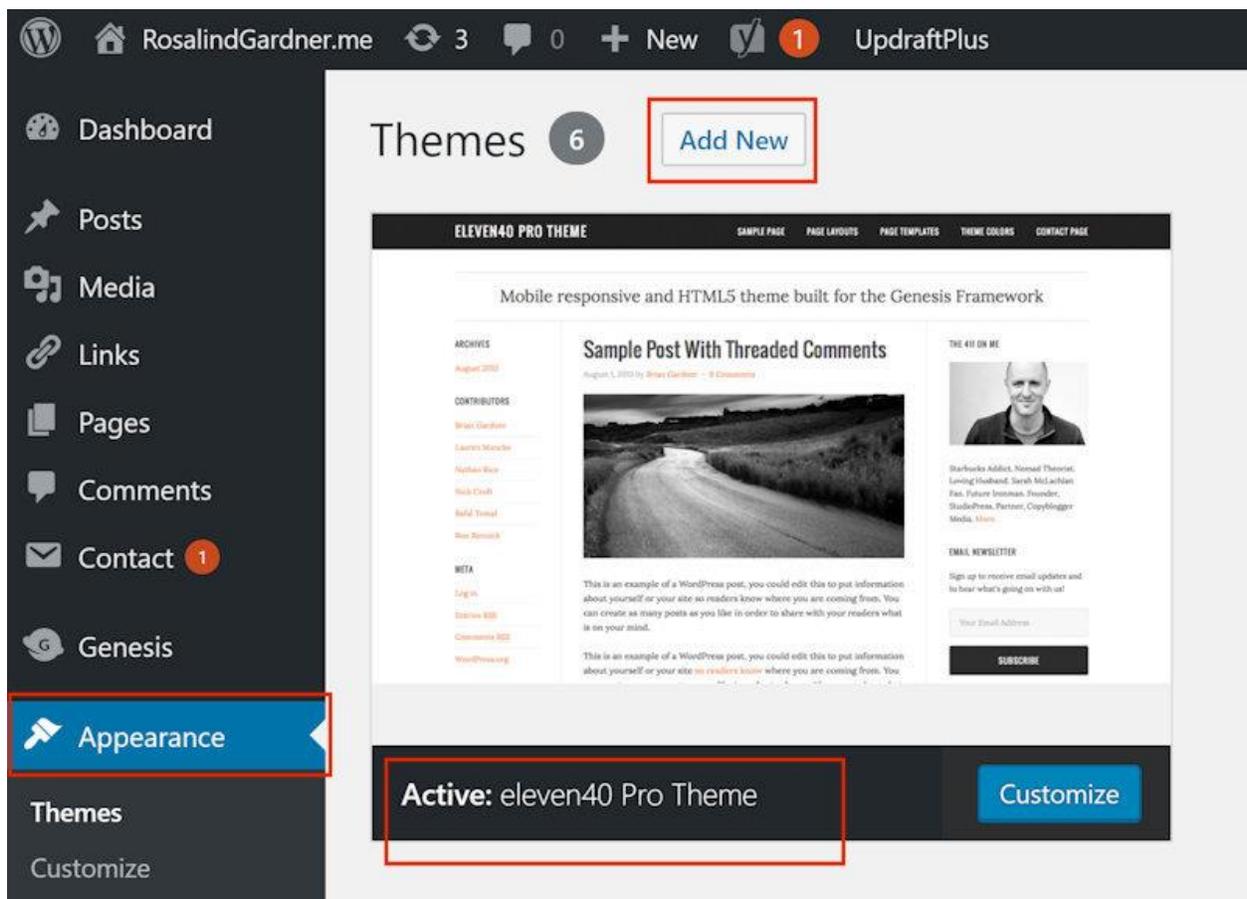


After clicking “Download”, the ‘Save As’ window automatically pops open to the Downloads folder. Click ‘Save’ and the compressed (zipped) theme file will be saved.

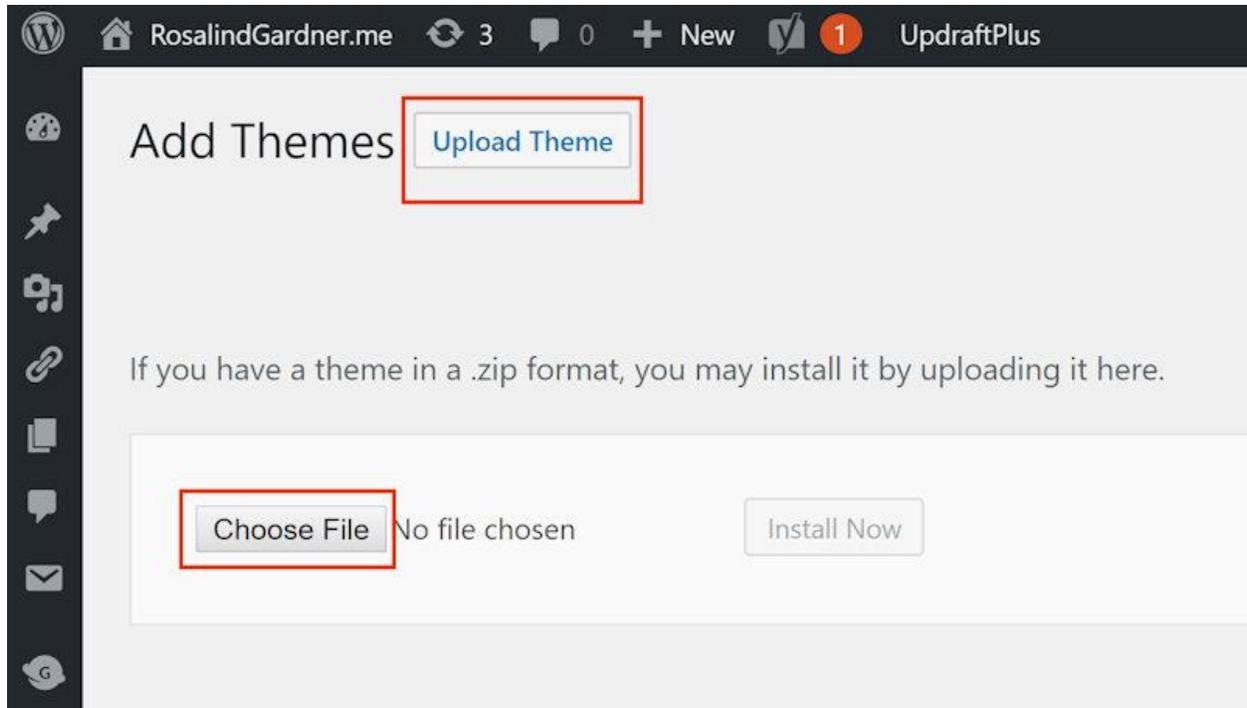


To upload the file, open your Wordpress Administration Panel and navigate to Appearance. When the ‘Themes’ page opens, you’ll see the Current and Available

Themes. In the screenshot below, you can see that the Active theme on my blog is the eleven40 Pro Theme.

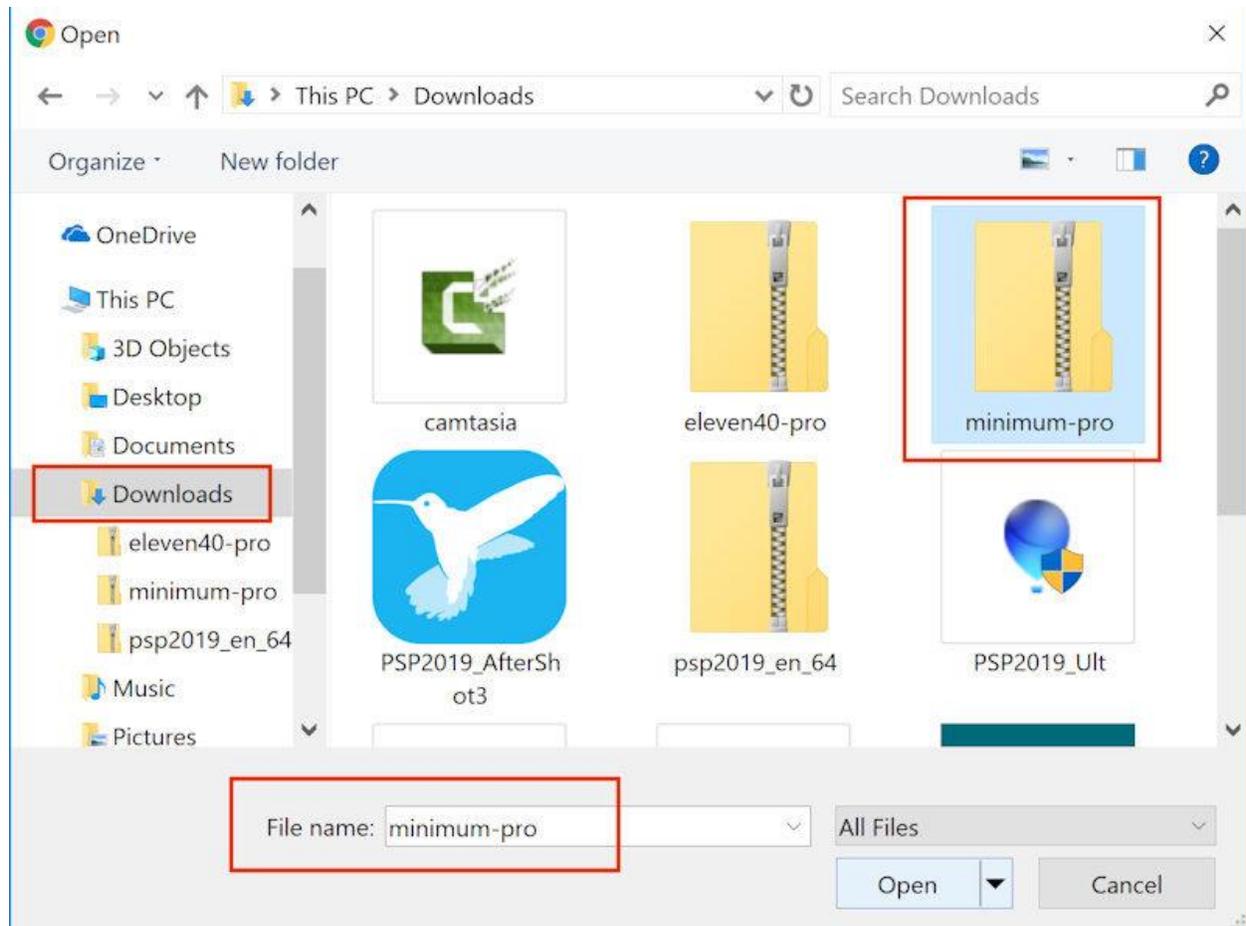


Click on 'Add New' and the page shown in the next screenshot opens. This page allows you to upload compressed (zipped) files without having to extract them to your computer first.

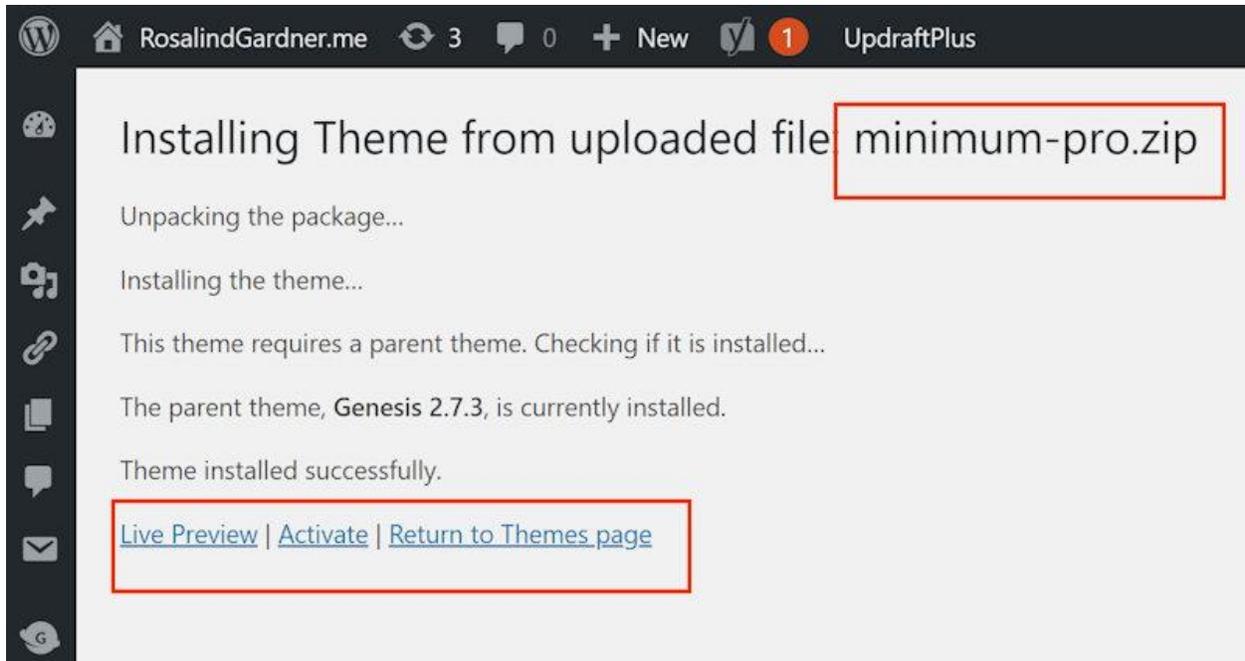


Clicking on 'Upload Theme' opens a window to your computer.

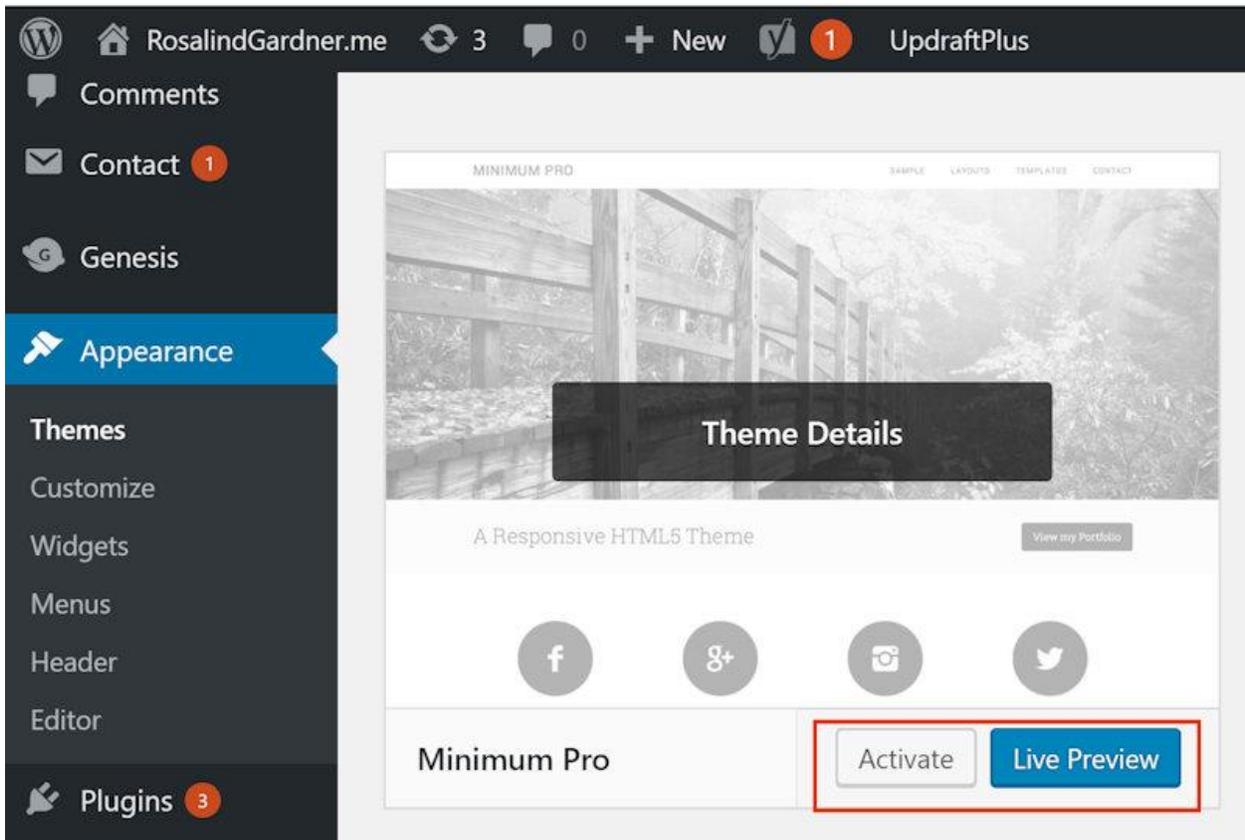
Navigate to the folder (Downloads) where the theme file is located. Select the file that you wish to upload and click 'Open'.



Wordpress will let you know what it is doing with your files and when the installation is complete. At that point, you can choose to see a live preview, activate the theme or return to the themes page.



In returning to the Themes page, the new theme is shown there. At this point, you can choose to see details about the theme, activate the theme or see a live preview.



Obviously, a new header graphic would have to be designed specifically for the site. If you're handy with a graphics program, a blank header.png is included with the files.

Otherwise, you can create a project at [Freelancer](#) or try [99Designs.com](#), the latter of which is specifically dedicated to graphic design work.

While your header graphic is being created, let's take a look at some basic design rules.

9 DESIGN RULES-OF-THUMB

While it is not within the scope of the Super Affiliate Handbook to give detailed Web design instruction, here are 9 basic design rules that good web designers generally follow.

NOTE: When you install a professional theme on your Wordpress blog, such as those offered by [StudioPress](#) and [Theme Forest](#), you won't have to worry about any of these rules. 😊

1. HUH? WHAT DOES THAT SAY?

You may love the appearance of an unusual font, however there are a couple of problems with using fonts that aren't common to everyone's computer.

If the font you use isn't on your visitor's computer, your text won't appear as intended.

Do you know what the second problem is?

Legibility!

Script and unusual fonts should be used sparingly and in a larger size, so as to be legible.

The standard and best fonts for use on the web are Arial, Verdana and Tahoma.

Text should be large enough to read without the surfer having to adjust their browser's font size display - because they won't bother. They'll go elsewhere to find the information without the hassle of having to squint.

Text should always be dark on a light background.

I broke this rule when I was just starting out, by using white text on a black background. I received a couple of complaints and comments about how difficult the pages were to read but did nothing about it for the longest time. Sales were good and the site looked 'cool,' so why should I bother to change things?

'Why bother?' indeed!

As soon as I changed over to black on white, my sales went up... way up!

There are two lessons here.

First, if one person writes to complain, it's likely that one hundred more people feel the same way. Second, there are good reasons why practices become 'tried and true.'

2. IS THAT A LINK?

If visitors can't distinguish links from regular text, they won't click your links or buy your merchants' products, therefore it is best to use standard linking practices to avoid confusion.

Unless you are using a professional theme for Wordpress, standard link colors are as follows:

- Blue – standard link
- Red – link color during mouse hover
- Purple – visited link

I discovered the value of using standard linking practices through a test I did some time ago. The link colors had been in keeping with a red and yellow color scheme.

As an experiment, I changed the link colors to the standard colors listed above, and it wasn't long before my conversion rates increased.

Needless to say, I didn't change them back to their original colors!

3. BABY BLUE AND OLIVE GREEN SHOULD NEVER BE SEEN

Different colors have different meanings and connotations.

What would you think of if you saw a men's' site with pink as the primary color?

Might it turn the average heterosexual guy off?

You bet it would!

Most of them are terrified of pink.

I also can't imagine a health and fitness site succeeding with a watery lavender and sickly olive green combination as well as it might with vibrant 'standard' colors.

Again, it's good to stick with the tried and true.

4. LEAVE 'BREATHING' SPACE

White space, or negative space, describes open space between design elements.

White space is an important layout technique often overlooked by inexperienced designers. Visually appealing design is easy on the eyes. Without adequate white space, text would be unreadable, graphics would lose their emphasis, and there would be no balance between the elements on a page.

White space takes on added importance on the Web because more of a strain is placed on the eyes than when reading printed material. White space gives our brains a break. Treat white space as more than just a background. Treat it as an integral part to your page design.

5. HOW WIDE IS TOO WIDE?

Having to scroll right to see all the text on a page is a symptom of poor design, or lack of knowledge of standard display sizes.

The standard screen resolution is 1024 X 768 pixels. However, more and more folks are using 1280 x 800 and 1280 x 1024.

Given that knowledge, you should keep designing for 1024 X 768 screen resolutions, so that those using that resolution won't have to scroll to see the whole page.

You can also use percentage or 'liquid' widths, i.e. width='100%,' which then widens or narrows the page according to each surfer's screen resolution. However, this HTML coding technique leads to your pages being viewed differently on different computer displays and in different browsers. It's better therefore to design your pages so that they are consistent across various platforms and hard-code specific widths for your HTML pages.

6. DOWN WITH UGLY BACKGROUNDS!

I continue to be amazed by those who think that their visitors will waste time squinting to read text on a floral, striped or otherwise 'busy' background.

It gives me a headache just to think about it!

Do the designers think those backgrounds are pretty?

Well, they're half right.

Those busy backgrounds are pretty UGLY!

7. BANDWIDTH HOGS

Bandwidth is an electronic resource that gets used up every time characters of information are downloaded from, or uploaded to, your Web site. As more bandwidth is used, data and information transmission times increase.

Surfers have short attention spans, and most don't have cable or fast ADSL connections.

Therefore, page elements that slow down your pages may be reducing your income as impatient surfers click their 'Back' buttons.

Bandwidth hogs include large or animated graphics, Flash, and sound of any kind. If you need graphics on your pages, make sure they are compressed to their smallest size without affecting their appearance.

8. KILL THOSE POP-UPS!

I detest pop-up windows, so in keeping with my 'do unto others' approach; I try to limit my use of them as much as possible.

However, popup windows CAN increase your conversion rates.

Exit pops with your mailing list or newsletter subscription form are particularly effective.

Here's an experiment I did with pop-up windows.

Thinking that everyone hated pop-up windows as much as I do, I changed all of the links at 101Date.com so that they would no longer open new windows when clicked upon.

The new pages simply opened up in the same browser window. I didn't really notice too much of a difference in my conversion rate, and thought I'd done my visitors a favor

However, a few months later, in another conversion rate experiment, I changed all the links so that they would open 'new' windows when clicked.

My conversions went up almost immediately.

In that instance however, I added the following warning to each page of the site.

'Please note that links that leave 101Date.com **will open a new window**. That allows you to check out the service and come back to see more in the category.'

It seems to work.

9. I HATE PUNK ROCK!

Have you ever clicked through to a Web site and had your eardrums immediately assaulted by some Webmaster's 'idea' of great music? Or how about a page that opens with a voice- over monologue?

In my opinion, this is always unacceptable.

Under no circumstance should a site broadcast noise and/or music without the visitors' permission. Even if your site is about music, your visitors should have the option as to what they want to hear, and when they want to hear it.

That's just basic courtesy.

Consider the possibility that your visitors may be in an office or library environment while quietly surfing the 'Net. Any sudden unexpected noise will disrupt what they're doing and they are likely to retreat from your site in great haste.

That's bad for business.

Note: Audio is perfectly acceptable when the visitor can click a link to listen to the recording. Hearing a real person talk about the product can also increase your conversion rates substantially.

Case in point – my sales increased by about 33% after I added an audio link to one of my sales pages.

Follow the basic rules of Web site design above and you'll give your visitors an enjoyable site experience. You'll also enjoy improved conversion rates and more sales.

MONETIZE YOUR SITE

The time has come to start making money from your site. You will do this by joining and placing links from advertising networks and affiliate programs on your site.

JOIN CONTEXTUAL ADVERTISING NETWORKS

In a report prepared by PwC in May of 2018, the Interactive Advertising Bureau reported that, digital advertising had yet another record-breaking year in 2017, as ad revenue totaled \$88 billion, a 21 percent upswing from 2016.

Would you like a piece of that pie? Then consider placing ads from contextual advertising networks on your site.

Joining these networks is generally quicker and easier than getting approved for other affiliate networks, and contextual ads can be a good source of initial income until your site has sufficient traffic to make product sales your main source of revenue.

Here is a list of popular contextual ad networks that publishers (bloggers, affiliate marketers) use to increase their revenue.

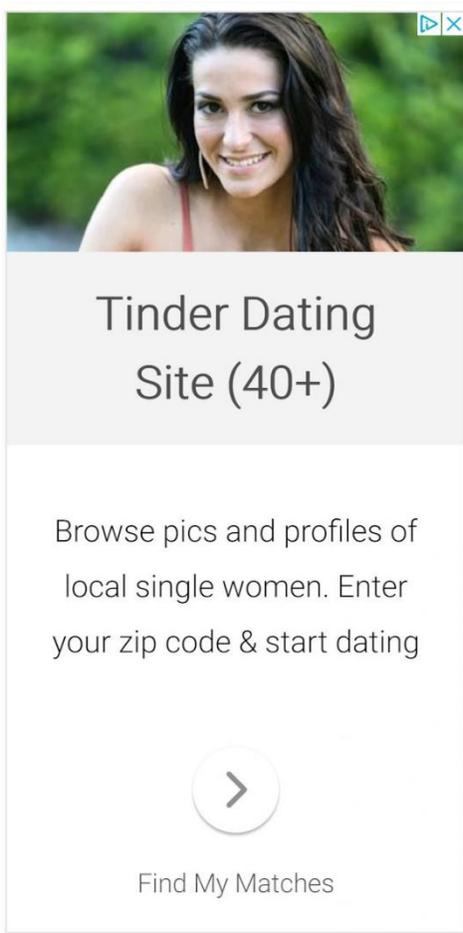
- [AdBlade](#)
- [Advertising.com](#)
- [BidVertiser](#)
- [BlogAds](#)
- [Clicksor](#)
- [Conversant](#) (ValueClick Media)
- [Exponential](#)
- [Google AdSense](#)
- [Infolinks](#)
- [Media.net](#)
- [Revenue Hits](#)
- [Skimlinks](#)
- [Vibrant Media](#)

In this chapter, we'll focus on Google AdSense, the best-known best-known provider of contextual ad units for affiliates.

GETTING STARTED WITH GOOGLE ADSENSE

Webmasters enroll in Google AdSense to allow text, image and video advertisements served by Google to be placed on their sites. Google's search technology ensures that the ads are based on the content of the page and/or the user's geographic location. The ads generate revenue on a per-click basis.

The next screenshot shows how an AdSense unit appears at <http://101Date.com>.



Therein lies the art behind making AdSense work for you.

Provided your page content is focused on a specific theme and targets just one or two keywords or keyword phrases, AdSense will 'reward' you with ads related to the content of that page.

And because your visitors are already interested in the topic, they're more likely to click on the ad. When they do, you earn a commission for the click.

How much commission?

Well, Google is not telling.

However, their reasons may have something to do with the legal contracts between Google and its premium distribution partners.

However, estimates put the rates between 40 and 60% of Adwords rates and AdSense earnings.

Although Google's terms of agreement prohibit AdSense publishers from reporting their earnings, tales of riches abound.

GOOGLE ADSENSE DO'S AND DON'TS

I've played with AdSense positioning over and over (and over again) and here are the basic points I've learned about what works best.

1. **Do NOT place AdSense on your homepage**, especially if you use pay per click advertising to market your site. Give your visitors a chance to look around before giving them the opportunity to click away.
2. **Do NOT place AdSense on product endorsement pages**. You should make more money selling the product than you will with AdSense. If your visitor decides not to buy the product, it is better that they use your navigation to find another product on your site, than click away for just a penny or two.
3. **Do NOT over-crowd content pages with AdSense advertising**. Google allows you to place up to 3 instances of AdSense per page on your site. I've seen all manner of ludicrous placement that screams 'Get me outta here!'. Those sites may earn money from AdSense, but they aren't earning money from affiliate commissions.
4. **DO put AdSense on non-monetized pages** such as a forum and general content pages that do not link to product endorsement pages.
5. **DO NOT underestimate your site's viability as an 'affiliate site'** and turn it into a full-blown AdSense site without testing and tracking your income results. Before you add MORE AdSense to your pages, try improving your product endorsements. Your aim should be newsletter signups and conversions to product sales through affiliate programs... not clicks.

With those do's and don'ts in mind, visit Google AdSense to set up an account right now at:

<http://www.google.com/adsense>

Google recommends using a **plugin** to deliver their advertising on your blog. AdSense plugins for Wordpress can be found at:

<http://wordpress.org/plugins/search.php?q=adsense>

After activation, you can adjust your settings...

By the way, my dog, Jasper the Chocolate Labrador, was earning several hundred dollars per month through AdSense advertising on his "[Jasper figures out the swimming pool](#)" video. 😊

JOIN AFFILIATE NETWORKS

Affiliate networks may also be referred to as 'pay-for-performance network,' 'cost-per-action (CPA) network' or 'marketing solution provider.'

Affiliate networks act as third-party 'honest brokers' and function as middlemen between merchants and affiliates. Merchants use affiliate networks to list their products and the details of their affiliate programs, and affiliates can apply to those they are interested in and qualify for.

For merchants, joining an affiliate network places thousands of eager affiliates right on their doorstep. The marketing value and simplicity of having another company administer their affiliate program is worth the (sometimes) hefty prices charged by the networks.

Joining an affiliate network is free for affiliates, and the process of finding and selecting programs is simplified through categorical search facilities. Because merchants pay top-dollar for a good network's management services, affiliate networks in general tend to offer higher-quality programs. Being able to access your statistics in a centralized interface is another big benefit to joining a network.

Each affiliate network is set-up and operates differently.

Networks generally handle sales tracking statistics, provision of marketing tools, and most networks consolidate affiliates' earnings into a single monthly paycheck.

To join most networks, you enter all your contact and payment details (name, address, phone number, etc.) just once. After your application is accepted, you can apply to each merchant's program separately. In some instances, approval is immediate, and in others you may have to wait a day (or seven) for the merchant to get back to you.

Some networks allow you to see a list of all the merchants in the network before you join, while others require that you sign up with their network first.

Marketing material for each merchant is readily available, and HTML code for links is usually generated with a single mouse click. You simply cut and paste the code into your

Web site pages. Banners are usually hosted on the network's servers, saving you bandwidth charges.

'MUST-JOIN' AFFILIATE NETWORKS

Although there are literally hundreds of affiliate networks, you will have ample access to merchants and millions of products through the following affiliate networks.

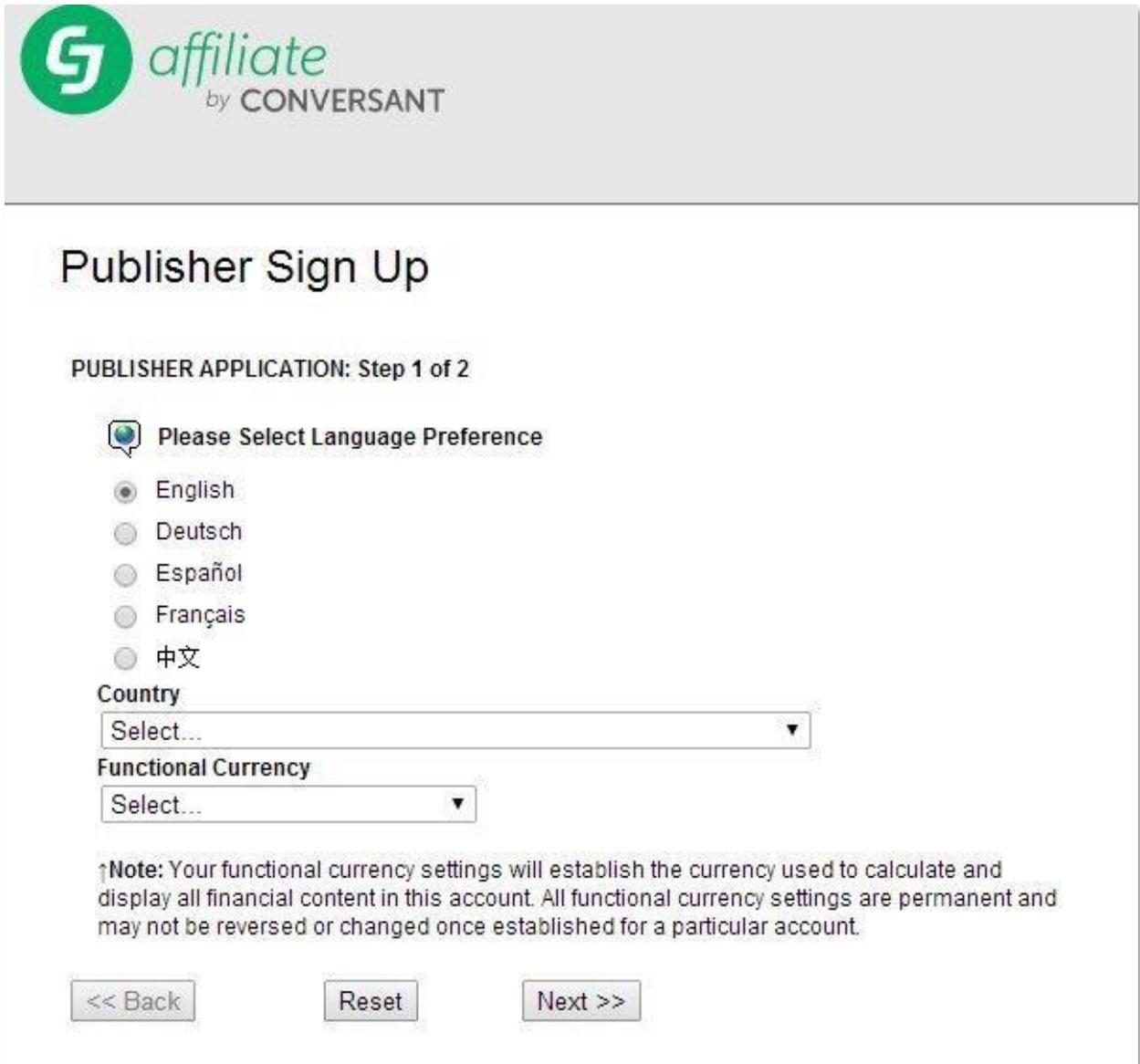
- 1.** [ClickBank](http://clickbank.com) (<http://clickbank.com>) distributes over 10,000 digital products and services through a network of over 100,000 affiliates and I can attest to the fact that the checks arrive like clockwork. ClickBank withholds 10% from each check to cover their risk of future returns. The holdbacks are credited back to your account after about 90 days. You don't have to wait for acceptance from individual merchants. Simply browse the marketplace, get and post your link, and start making money.
- 2.** [Amazon](http://amazon.com) (<http://amazon.com>) Although not technically an 'affiliate network', the Amazon Associates program is a 'must-join' for all affiliate marketers who qualify to join their program. The company offers the earth's biggest selection of books, magazines, music, DVDs, videos, electronics, computers, software, apparel & accessories, shoes, and more.
- 3.** [ShareaSale](http://shareasale.com) (<http://shareasale.com>) reports nearly 3,000 merchants at the time of writing. To sign up, Affiliates must have a valid web site address, and a valid email address in order to participate.
- 4.** [CJ AFFILIATE](http://CJ.com) (<http://CJ.com>) is the largest affiliate network and refers to its affiliates as 'publishers.' There are no sign up restrictions other than non-acceptance of sites that contain or link to sites that are libelous, defamatory, obscene, abusive, violent, bigoted, hate- oriented, illegal, cracking, hacking or warez, or offers any illegal goods or services. Turnaround time on the application is very quick.
- 5.** [Rakuten Affiliate Network](https://rakutenmarketing.com/affiliate) – formerly Linkshare (<https://rakutenmarketing.com/affiliate>) reports over 10 million partnerships in the network and claims to be the most successful pay for performance (affiliate) network of its kind. The network sends commission payment for some merchants while others process their own payments – sometimes in their own good time.

Affiliate Network Signup Process

Signing up with each affiliate network is different.

At CJ Affiliate (<http://www.cj.com/publisher>) it is a 2-step process which isn't complicated. In the first step, you are asked for your:

- Language Preference
- Country of Residence
- Functional Currency



The screenshot shows the 'Publisher Sign Up' page for CJ Affiliate by Conversant. The page is titled 'PUBLISHER APPLICATION: Step 1 of 2'. It features a green logo with a white 'G' and the text 'affiliate by CONVERSANT'. Below the logo, the heading 'Publisher Sign Up' is displayed. The main content area is titled 'PUBLISHER APPLICATION: Step 1 of 2' and contains a section titled 'Please Select Language Preference' with a speech bubble icon. This section includes five radio button options: English (selected), Deutsch, Español, Français, and 中文. Below the language options are two dropdown menus: 'Country' and 'Functional Currency', both currently showing 'Select...'. A note at the bottom of the form states: 'Note: Your functional currency settings will establish the currency used to calculate and display all financial content in this account. All functional currency settings are permanent and may not be reversed or changed once established for a particular account.' At the bottom of the page, there are three buttons: '<< Back', 'Reset', and 'Next >>'.

You then move onto the 2nd page that covers the following elements:

- **Agreements** - You are asked to read then accept their Service, Code of Conduct, Privacy Policy, Age Certification and **Certification of Authority** by clicking a checkbox next to each item.

Then you'll see the **Site Information** questions. You will have to enter:

- Web site or newsletter name
- Web site URL
- A description of your website
- Website category (select from a drop-down list)
- The number of Current Monthly Unique Visitors
- Define your promotional methods (content, search marketing etc. - Suggest you check 'Content')
- Answer 'yes' or 'no' to a question about visitor incentives. If you answer 'yes' you may require special approval from advertisers to participate in their program.

Lastly, you will provide standard contact information such as name and address --- so that they may pay you!

Note: Joining the CJ Affiliate network does *not* mean that you have joined an affiliate program. You will have to apply to each merchant's program individually.

Once you have been accepted, you can look for merchants who have products and services that you want to promote.

But first you want to consider the merchants and products themselves...

5 WAYS TO ASSESS A MERCHANT'S PRODUCT OR SERVICE

Promoting quality products is absolutely crucial to your success. Therefore keep the following 5 questions in mind as you find products and services to promote

1. **Is the product or service relevant to your customers and your site?** Banners for credit card applications look out of place on a dating service review site. I've tried to

‘extend’ the range of services on my niche sites a few times, and it has been a mistake each and every time. Those ‘added features’ serve only to detract from your site’s focus.

2. **Is the company’s site attractive and functional?** Would you buy from a site that looked unprofessional, had broken links or was a hassle to navigate? Don’t send your visitors to tacky sites. Your reputation is at stake.

3. **Is it a quality product at a reasonable price?** Would YOU buy the product you plan to sell? To sell effectively, you must believe in the products and services you carry. Listing products you aren’t enthusiastic about shows in what you say about them.

4. **Do you have experience with the product?** I’ve purchased most of the products I promote. Having first-hand knowledge about an item gives me an edge over other affiliates selling the same product. If the commission is 50%, you will only need to make 2 sales to get your money back.

5. **Does the company provide excellent customer service?** This is essential. I occasionally get email complaints from people who bought services through my site because the company didn’t respond to their request for service or information. Unfortunately, there is usually very little I can do, except use the contact number or email address given only to affiliates, and pass the request along. If you are successful in getting their concerns resolved, Bravo! That reflects well on you.

Now that you know where and how to find programs and how to assess products, it is time to revisit the CJ Affiliate Network.

HOW TO FIND PRODUCTS TO PROMOTE ON THE CJ AFFILIATE NETWORK

Once you have been accepted by a network, you will log into the interface to search for merchants and products.

At CJ Affiliate you click on the “Advertisers” button from the homepage.

When I searched for ‘dating’, I found 30 advertisers. Using the word ‘matchmaking’ resulted in 19 advertisers.

The screenshot shows the CJ Affiliate interface. At the top, the navigation bar includes 'Account', 'Advertisers' (circled in red), 'Links', 'Widgets', 'Reports', 'Mail', and 'Placements'. Below the navigation bar, the page title is 'Advertisers | Find and manage relationships with advertisers'. The main content area shows search results for the keyword 'matchmaking'. On the left, there is a search sidebar with a search bar containing 'matchmaking' (circled in red), a 'Search' button, and a 'Status' dropdown menu with 'All' selected (circled in red). The search results on the right are listed as follows:

Advertiser	Advertiser ID	Advertiser Name
	2858589	Amare Inc. Self Help
	2790913	CatholicMatch.com Matchmaking
	1588148	ChristianCafe.com Matchmaking
	5014301	ChristianMingle US Matchmaking

Network Earnings are the most important metric to look at when choosing programs on CJ. They show you which advertisers are producing the best commissions for affiliate marketers.

In the screenshot below, you can see that eHarmony tops the chart of matchmaking merchants when they are sorted according to “Network Earnings – High to Low”.

Advertiser	Network Earnings	3 month EPC	7 day EPC	Sale	Lead	Actions
722009 - eharmony.com Matchmaking		114.11 USD	112.84 USD	50%		
1522858 - Match.com Matchmaking		119.50 GBP	15.41 GBP	20.00 GBP - 45.00 GBP	2.00 GBP - 4.00 GBP	
2446099 - Match.com Matchmaking		19.61 USD	21.06 USD	50%		
4654932 - EliteSingles.com US Matchmaking		5.21 USD	7.78 USD		7.00 USD	Join Program

Another way to search for lucrative products to sell is to sort your results by 3 month EPC, High to Low.

EPC is a term used by the CJ Affiliate network and represents the average earnings per 100 clicks. The amount is calculated by taking commissions earned divided by the total number of clicks times 100.

BRAND NAME OR COMMISSION RATES – WHAT IS MORE IMPORTANT?

Sometimes it is tricky to compare two or more programs when prices and commission structures differ only slightly.

Here is an example of how the prices at Dating Direct and Yahoo! Personals *used to compare*.

Dating Direct cost \$34.95 for 3 months and \$84.95 for 12 months.

Yahoo Personals was \$44.95 for 3 months and 99.95 for 12 months.

In other words, Dating Direct was slightly less expensive than Yahoo! Personals and therefore might be more acceptable to my customers.

But I wouldn't stop researching knowing only the subscription prices.

Next, I check the commission rates.

Dating Direct paid **75% per sale** and Yahoo! Personals paid a **flat fee** per subscription.

Adding it up, an affiliate got paid **\$63.71 for a 12-month** subscription at Dating Direct and **only \$40** through Yahoo! Personals.

So far, Dating Direct is emerging the clear winner, right?

Not exactly.

Next, you need to read the merchant's fine print.

The Yahoo! fine print specified that you could earn a **75% bonus** over the base commission **for each subscription** when you generated more than 30 subscriptions during a calendar month. That raises their commission rates to between 70 and 88%.

So, here are the new commission totals for **Yahoo! Personals**:

- \$17.50 per 1 Month subscription
- \$35.00 per 3 Month subscription
- \$70.00 per 12 Month subscription

Brand name is also an important factor to consider.

By now you've probably heard that it takes 7 exposures before people are willing to buy a certain product. By offering brand name products, the exposure and trust in a product has been accomplished for you, so that you don't have to bring the visitor back to your site up to seven times, before they are ready to buy.

All else being equal, if you are given the choice between a totally unknown product, and a nationally-known brand name, it's usually prudent to choose the brand name.

So, using the example above - even if Dating Direct's commissions had been higher than Yahoo! Personals commissions, I would probably promote the latter more heavily to take advantage of their brand recognition.

Yahoo!

INDEPENDENT AND 'IN-HOUSE' PROGRAMS

What happens if you can't find a merchant that sells Barbie doll supplies and accessories through an affiliate program? Suppose you've searched the affiliate networks and directories and still had no luck?

Here's a search technique that will help you locate exactly what you are looking for.

In this case, go to Google and type **+Barbie +doll +affiliate** into the search box, including the plus signs.

The plus signs ensure that each word entered appears on the pages returned in the search results.

The pages returned in your search are not guaranteed to have a Barbie doll accessories affiliate program, as some of the sites may be affiliates themselves. But looking around their site should give you clues as to the identity of the merchant.

Other sites that are returned by your search will in fact be merchant sites.

While reviewing individual sites and pages, look for links on the site that say,

'Webmasters,' 'Make Money,' 'Affiliate (or Associate) Program,' 'Partners,' 'Earn \$' and other phrases that indicate that the company has an affiliate program.

In summary, look for products and services to promote at affiliate networks, directories and merchants' in-house' programs. However, resist the temptation to sign up for every good- looking program and product until your basic Web site is in place!

More importantly, don't join a program until you've read the next section.

20 QUESTIONS TO ASK BEFORE YOU JOIN AN AFFILIATE PROGRAM

To join the BEST program for your site – meaning the one that will make you the most money - there are several questions that need to be answered. Below is a list of 20 questions you should consider before affiliating with most merchants.

If you can't find an answer on the merchant's site, phone or email them.

If contact information isn't readily apparent on their Web site, don't waste more of your time on that merchant - find another program.

If you don't get a response within a reasonable time frame, say 24 to 48 hours, then pass on the program. They may be more responsive to their customers and current affiliates, but will you know? Discovering that they are LESS responsive when you have a real problem is a bigger problem still.

On the flip side, be sure that the answer to your question is NOT included in the affiliate package before contacting the program manager.

Affiliate managers are very busy people, and answering questions that have been covered elsewhere, wastes their time.

Not to mention that asking an already-answered question makes for a lousy first impression.

OK, let's review those questions.

1. IS THE COMPANY REPUTABLE?

You don't have to ask Dell or Sony how long they've been in business.

Your real concern here should be about promoting an **unknown merchant** that may turn out to be a **fly-by-night or dishonest** operator.

A few years ago, I was robbed by just such an operator to the tune of more than \$700! Despite sending many emails and leaving a number of telephone messages, I heard and received nothing in return.

I could have avoided that problem by doing just a little research.

CJ Affiliate requires that merchants have funds on deposit to ensure that affiliates are paid what they are due. But what happens if the merchant isn't part of a network?

Search Google for 'company name review' and see how many results you get.

None? Then stay away from that company.

2. IS THERE AN AFFILIATE AGREEMENT?

ALL merchants that are part of an affiliate network have agreements in place and most independent programs do as well.

However, if the program you are considering does not have an agreement published on the site, move on.

Without an agreement, it's much too easy for them to shaft you for money you've earned.

3. WHAT ARE THE TERMS OF AGREEMENT?

Affiliate agreements are usually lengthy and peppered with long-winded legalese.

Read it anyway.

Read it completely and carefully or you could be in for a nasty surprise.

For example, let's say you invest several hundred dollars in PPC advertising to promote a particular product. By result, you earn a thousand or two from that program during the first month of promotion.

That would be great, huh?

But maybe not so great when you learn that the company only pays quarterly.

If you end up in a dispute with a company, agreements are usually interpreted under the laws of the state, province or country in which the company is located.

Disputes are usually resolved by binding arbitration in that state, province or country. Is it worth traveling from Rhode Island to California to argue over a couple hundred bucks?

Probably not.

Protect yourself against nasty surprises by reading affiliate agreements from top to bottom.

4. MAY I TERMINATE THE AGREEMENT? IF SO, HOW?

In most cases either the affiliate or the company may choose to cancel an agreement at any time without written notice of cancellation to the other. As an affiliate, you'd simply take down your links and that would be that.

However, if you sign up to promote a merchant who runs their affiliate program 'inhouse', their affiliate agreements may contain a 'termination clause' that outlines the terms under which you or the company can end the affiliation.

I was just LUCKY.

Learn from that.

Do NOT sign an agreement that binds you to a company for a specified period of time. Your luck in terminating the contract may not be as good as mine.

Avoid companies that require signed agreements.

There are plenty of other programs that will be happy to have you join their program without strings.

6. IS MY SITE ELIGIBLE FOR THIS PROGRAM?

Pay particular attention to criteria that have been set for acceptance into an affiliate program.



REAL-LIFE EXAMPLE

Way back when affiliate programs were new, I was required to sign and return a paper agreement that bound me to a 2-year contract with a merchant. I felt uncomfortable agreeing to such a stipulation without proof that their product would convert well to sales, or that they would pay on time.

I should have trusted my intuition.

The company was excruciatingly slow to pay and I got sick of hearing 'the check is in the mail.'

Furthermore, the checks never jibed with their own statistics reporting.

Frustrated with the situation, I removed all their links from my site and effectively ended our association, about a year before the agreement expired.

Fortunately, the company did not take me to task on this point, and it all came out in the wash eventually. After an inexcusable delay, they finally paid all that was owed to me .

For example, the following excerpt is from the advertiser detail section at CJ Affiliate for its (now defunct) recruiter program:

Publishers will be accepted into the program based on the following criteria:

- Quality and appropriateness of site(s)
- Volume of traffic
- At least a one-dollar sign ranking in the CJ Affiliate network
- Own domain name
- Compliant with the CJ Affiliate publisher service agreement
- Directly related to performance marketing

My site met all their criteria, but my application was rejected.

I wrote to question their decision and asked for reconsideration.

Here is a portion of their response:

*In addition, **publishers must be based in either the U.S. or U.K.** and have at least a one-dollar sign CJ ranking, their own domain name, and a Web site that is compliant with the CJ Affiliate publisher service agreement and directly related to pay-for-performance advertising. Preferred publishers will have at least a one-star or higher Alexa rating.*

My site met all of the other 'additional' criteria, except that I am located in Canada. As I know of many sites promoting the CJ publisher program that aren't based in the U.S. or the U.K., this geographic restriction made no sense to me. I wrote again to question this point. CJ's subsequent responses were simply verbatim repeats of the previous paragraph.

Therefore, read and understand ALL the criteria thoroughly. If you don't understand a clause, ask about it.

The merchant's response may not be fair or make sense, but at least you'll have done your homework thoroughly.

DOES IT COST TO JOIN THE PROGRAM?

Ninety-nine point nine percent (99.9%) of merchants don't charge a fee to join their affiliate programs. If they do, it's an MLM, or Multi-level marketing scheme or a reseller program.

Empower Network is an example of an MLM scheme that refers to itself as an affiliate program. In order to earn income with the Empower Network, you must purchase your own membership to 'qualify' for sales earnings that you've generated within a month.

I believe MLM (network marketing) and reseller programs should refer to themselves as such, and leave the term 'affiliate program' for programs that are free to join.

To highlight the differences between MLM, reseller and affiliate programs, I compare and contrast each of those marketing methods below.

- Cost to Join - Affiliate programs are FREE to join, whereas resellers must BUY the products they sell. Multi-level marketers usually must buy sufficient quantities of the products they market to qualify for earnings at a certain 'tier' or level.
- Payment Scheme – Affiliates typically earn a percentage of the purchase price, while resellers retain 100% of the proceeds from product sales.
- Tiered Programs – Some affiliate programs offer webmasters the opportunity to earn a percentage in the '2nd tier' by paying a fee for each new affiliate that joins the program, while some others pay a percentage of their 2nd tier affiliates' earnings. Others pay in both situations. Although this structure is akin to MLM schemes, unlike multi-level marketers, affiliates are not required to purchase products in order to be eligible to build their affiliate 'downline.'
- Product Fulfillment – Resellers and many multi-level marketers must handle their own product fulfillment, including carrying inventory, order processing and shipping. In the case of affiliate marketing, the merchant handles all of the above.
- Product Pricing - Each affiliate sells the product for the same price. Resellers can often set their own prices, although competitors may undermine their efforts by offering the same product for a lower price.
- Lead Generation - Although affiliates can collect names and email addresses from visitors to their sites, the affiliate rarely knows exactly who buys their affiliated merchants' products. Because resellers handle product fulfillment themselves, they collect names and email addresses from those who buy their products, in addition to those who sign up for their opt-in lists on their sites. This benefits the reseller in that

they can do follow-up or 'back-end' sales to existing customers.

As with any opportunity, there are advantages and disadvantages to each type of marketing and each method can yield decent profits.

7. DOES THE PROGRAM REQUIRE EXCLUSIVITY?

An exclusivity clause is one that stipulates that if you promote that merchant's products you may not partner with merchants selling similar products.

When Barnes and Noble started its affiliate program, it had an exclusivity clause. If you sign up with them now, you'll notice that is no longer the case.

Hmmmm...

Was that clause detracting from their share of the affiliate market? Even if that company was the only provider of its type of service on the 'Net, I wouldn't agree to exclusivity.

You can be sure that the moment you agree to be exclusive, a better product or service will come along, and you'll be stuck with a bad agreement. This is your business, not your marriage. Keep your options open.

8. WHAT IS THE PROGRAM TYPE?

There are essentially three types of affiliate programs: pay-per-sale, pay-per-lead, and pay-per-click.

- Pay-Per-Sale programs are also known as Partnership and Percentage Partners programs. These programs pay either a fixed dollar amount or a percentage of sales generated by your links.
- Pay-Per-Lead programs pay a set amount whenever your customer fills out a survey or requests a quote or some information.
- Pay-Per-Click affiliate programs are similar to Pay-Per-Lead. Essentially you are paid each time one of your visitors clicks on the link through to that program's site.

As Pay-Per-Lead and Pay-Per-Click programs require huge volumes of traffic to generate serious revenue, I prefer Pay-Per-Sale programs because they are performance based.

Doing business as an affiliate is about giving your visitors valuable information so they can make good product choices.

Sending huge quantities of traffic to a merchant site so they can collect email addresses and spam large groups of people is valuable only to the merchant.

Target a market effectively, give them what they want, and you'll be rewarded handsomely with a percentage of the sale!

9. WHAT IS THE COMMISSION RATE?

This is a VERY important question! It's not the MOST important, but it is close!

It's absolutely essential that you understand commission structures and compare payout rates between affiliate programs. This will affect to what extent you promote individual products.

Let's look at some real examples.

Let's say you want to build a site around travel.

First you'd search advertisers and products at CJ Affiliate, by inputting the word 'travel' into their search box.

You can sort the results according to payout per lead, from highest to lowest amounts, by selecting 'Lead' at the top of the column.

When you click on 'Sale,' advertisers are sorted according to payout per sale, from highest to lowest.

Here is the screenshot of what I found during a quick search:

Advertiser Search Results							
Results 1 - 25 of 277							
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Apply to Program <input type="checkbox"/> Select All							
	Advertiser	3 Month EPC (USD)	7 Day EPC (USD)	Network Earnings	Sale	Lead	Click
<input type="checkbox"/>	 Expedia, Inc » View Links » View Products	\$65.16	\$102.11		Sale: 2.00% - 6.00% USD, \$0.00 - \$25.00 USD		
<input type="checkbox"/>	 CheapOair » View Links	\$25.18	\$35.03		Sale: \$5.00 - \$25.00 USD Performance Incentive		
<input type="checkbox"/>	STA Travel USA » View Links	\$24.31	\$18.47		Sale: 4.00% - 10.00% USD, \$4.00 USD		
<input type="checkbox"/>	 Travel Guard » View Links	\$19.59	\$17.76		Sale: \$16.00 USD		

What a variety of commission structures and payout amounts amongst these merchants!

As a rough guideline, **look first** for companies that pay the highest per sale and per lead commissions in your category of interest. Once you've established a short list, then you can start weeding out those that don't make the grade.

10. HOW LONG DO COOKIES LAST?

You may have heard that it takes 7 exposures to a product before people feel comfortable to buy that product. So what happens if a visitor from your site clicks through to your affiliated merchant site today but doesn't buy anything until a week later? Will you still get credit for the sale?

Whether or not you earn a commission depends on the duration of the 'cookie'.

A cookie is coded piece of information, stored on a computer that identifies that computer during the current and subsequent visits to a web site.

Some people worry that cookies put viruses on their computer, but there is no need to worry! Cookies are simply text files that cannot be used in any way to harm a computer.

Each cookie is coded to identify that computer during the current and subsequent visits to the merchant's web site.

Below is the content of a typical cookie. This one is from Amazon.com:

```
session-id-time 954242000 amazon.com/ session-id 002-4135256-7625846
amazon.com/ x-main eKQIfwnxuF7qtmX52x6VWAXh@Ih6Uo5H amazon.com/
```

More important to affiliates, is that cookies are coded to expire after a set amount of time. So, if the merchant gives cookies that last for 90 days, you get credit if a visitor from your site returns to the merchant and makes the purchase within 90 days.

If your visitor purchases the product after the 90 days, and the cookie has expired, you won't get credit for the sale.

So it literally **pays you to look for long-lasting cookies** when choosing affiliate programs.

11. WILL I GET CREDIT FOR RECURRING SALES?

What happens when you stop promoting your merchant partners' sites?

In most cases, you'd simply stop earning. Your income would stop and the checks would stop coming. Because your income is limited by the number of customers you send to the merchant in a given month, you have to keep marketing your site to bring in new customers. Over, and over, and over again.

Make a sale, get paid and that's it. Your customer may buy more of the same product from your merchant partner, but you only get credit for the first sale. The merchant benefits indefinitely from your introduction of the customer to the product, and you get only one credit?

Does that sound fair?

You bet it's not!

However, there ARE affiliate programs that **pay commissions on all recurring charges**, such as monthly newsletter subscriptions and web hosting packages.

As long as your customer keeps ordering the product, you get **residual commissions** that keep coming in month after month, after you made the initial sale.

So, here's the bottom line. If the affiliate program doesn't pay residual commissions on recurring charges, **you're losing money**.

12. DOES THE PROGRAM PAY LIFETIME COMMISSIONS?

There is a difference between 'recurring' or '**residual**' commissions, and 'lifetime' commissions.

A program that pays residual commissions pays you every time the customer renews their subscription to a specific product.

A program paying **lifetime commissions** pays the affiliate a commission for each and every product that the customer buys from that merchant, including residual commissions, if applicable.

For example, let's say that you are earning recurring commissions on Mr. Samson's web hosting subscription at Best Host Company.

If the company doesn't offer 'lifetime commissions' and Mr. Samson upgrades to his own dedicated server at Best Host Company; you won't get paid commissions on his monthly server fees because it's a different product.

If XYZ Company offers 'lifetime' commissions however, the customer you refer to them is 'yours' for life, regardless of which Best Host Company's products they buy. In the scenario above, you would be paid a monthly commission on the dedicated server fees for as long as Mr. Brown remains a subscriber.

Joining programs that offer residual or lifetime commissions is an excellent way to build a steadily increasing income. Once you make a referral, the checks keep coming in. So even when you take a vacation from your affiliate business, the checks for your residuals, will also keep coming in.

How many other businesses pay you to take a vacation?

13. IS IT A 2-TIER OR MULTIPLE-TIER PROGRAM?

A 'two-tier' program is one that offers two sources of income, the first for bringing in business, and the second for recommending new affiliates. Some programs pay a fee for each new affiliate that joins the program, while some others pay a percentage of the 2nd tier affiliate's earnings. Other programs pay in both situations.

When the subject of 2-tier programs comes up, the question often arises as to whether two-tier affiliate programs are MLM (multi-level marketing) schemes.

Well, let's take a look at a definition of 'MLM,'

'Also known as network marketing, MLM is essentially any business where payouts occur at two or more levels. For example, any company that compensates you for the sales you make,

and also pays you a small percentage of the sales made by those you've recruited as sellers, is an MLM company.'

According to that definition, 2-tier affiliate programs are MLM programs.

Does it matter?

Should it matter?

Don't let the MLM association scare you or put you off.

There are many reputable MLM organizations including Avon, Mary Kay Cosmetics and PartyLite Gifts, Inc.

MLM gets its bad reputation from companies that focus only on recruiting new members and downline-building.

Essentially the majority of 'products' these companies sell are memberships, which you must purchase in order to be eligible to build your own downline of members.

Your primary concern is whether the company you sign up with is selling real goods and/or services that benefit its customers.

Focus first on marketing the product, and **secondly** on recruiting affiliates.

That's why it's called **2-tier**.

14. ARE SALES STATISTICS REPORTED IN REAL TIME?

Can you imagine waiting a month to find out if you made a sale for a particular program?

Suppose you were spending money to advertise a program and it took a month to assess the success of your promotional efforts.

Would you join that program?

No?

Good!

When signing up for an affiliate program, be sure that it offers real-time sales tracking, or something fairly close to 'real-time.' Real-time actually means immediate, within seconds.

Some sites have statistics that are delayed by 20 minutes or an hour. That's acceptable. We can live with that.

Real-time sales reporting is another good reason to affiliate with merchants in affiliate networks like CJ Affiliate.

To be competitive, most of the affiliate networks provide real-time reporting to their merchants and affiliates. Being part of the network means you don't have to hunt around to find out whether real-time reporting is a feature of the program that you want to join.

15. ARE MERCHANT COPY & SALES TOOLS OFFERED?

Most merchants offer their affiliates advertising copy and banner ads for placement on their sites. In many cases, you'll be able to generate the code with a click of your mouse, which you then paste into your page or in your newsletter.

Some merchants also offer product data feeds for their entire range of products. Using data feeds, you can build a 1,000 item site in mere seconds!

Many merchants also host the banners from their own sites, which saves you the trouble of downloading and saving the graphic to your computer, then uploading it to your server.

Banners that are kept on the merchant's server also reduce your bandwidth.

Sales tools make an affiliate's job easier.

16. HOW OFTEN DO I GET PAID?

Compensation plans vary from merchant to merchant and program to program. Be sure you know what the payment plan is, or you could be in for a nasty surprise!

Payment schedules vary depending on the program. I'm affiliated with programs that pay **weekly, biweekly, monthly** and **quarterly**.

17. HOW DO I GET PAID? CASH? PAYPAL? FOOD STAMPS?

Payments are usually by check or direct deposit, although some companies pay in merchandise or service credits.

[PayPal](http://paypal.com) (<http://paypal.com>) has become a very popular payment method for many merchants. It is an account-based system that lets anyone with an email address securely send and receive online payments using their credit card or bank account.

That said, some merchants won't give you the option, you'll probably have to sign up for a PayPal account anyway.

Most Internet companies do business and pay in US Dollars. Be sure to confirm the currency that the company deals in however

For example, Ken Evoy's [SiteSell](http://sitesell.com) company (<http://sitesell.com>) is based in Canada.

You will automatically be paid in Canadian dollars if you live in Canada, and American dollars if you live anywhere else in the world. His program allows you to change that option if you are a Canadian who prefers to be paid in US Dollars.

18. DOES THE MERCHANT USE THIRD PARTY BILLING?

One nice thing about associating with merchants that are part of a bigger affiliate network is that you can count on the affiliate network to make sure the merchant has put enough money into their account to pay your commissions.

Some networks go so far as to indicate how well each merchant's account is funded, allowing you to choose whether or not you should promote their products. Other networks will suspend the merchant's account until they've deposited sufficient funds.

You don't get that kind of security when you sign up for a program that is administered by the company itself.

While you don't need to worry about Amazon or Match.com, it's sometimes hard to be sure about smaller, unknown companies.

One way to gain some security in that regard is to find out whether the company uses third-party billing to process their payments and handle affiliate commissions.

A third-party processor takes in money from the customers, and makes sure that the affiliate receives what is due to them.

Depending on the affiliate agreement, you may end up splitting the payment processing costs with the merchant.

For example, one dating site I promote offers a 50/50 commission split and uses CCBill for payment processing.

That fifty percent is reduced to 42.5 percent after CCBill's 15% fee is also split.

19. IS THERE A MINIMUM PAYOUT AMOUNT?

Many programs require that you earn a minimum amount before they will issue you a check.

For example, some merchants set their minimum payouts at \$50 or \$100.

This makes sense (cents?) if your earnings for the month are \$2.00 and it costs the merchant five dollars to cut you a check.

20. IS CO-BRANDING AVAILABLE?

Co-branding is a form of customization, whereby the affiliate program permits you to 'brand' a copy of the landing page on their site, with your logo and/or your site's 'look and feel.'

Visiting a co-branded site gives your visitors the impression that they are still on your Web site and may improve visitor trust in 'your' products resulting in increased sales.

Many merchants offered co-branding when affiliate marketing first began on the 'Net.

However, few merchants offer co-branding nowadays. It's simply too much work for them to approve each and every affiliate's logo graphic. For sites that allowed affiliates to automatically upload logos, there was always the potential that the logo was inappropriate and/or not in keeping with the image the company wanted to maintain.

To summarize, consider your affiliations carefully from the outset and, don't get cheated out of your hard-earned commissions.

Ask all the right questions and make sure the affiliate programs are solid prospects before you join.

GREAT PRODUCT, NO PROGRAM - NOW WHAT?

If you find a great product that doesn't appear to be supported by an affiliate program, it's time to put your knowledge of affiliate marketing to work.

Phone or email the merchant, tell them how much you love their product and ask if they have an affiliate program.

If they say that they don't, or don't know what affiliate programs are, you'll have to explain the concept and process to them.

Here are some sample emails. Feel free to adjust the wording to your needs.

Dear [Merchant Name],

I just visited [Merchant's Domain] and think that your [product name] are absolutely fabulous! I would love the opportunity to sell them at [your domain address].

I wasn't able to find affiliate program information at [Merchant's Domain], however. Is there one in place?

If not, would you be interested in an affiliate partnership with [your store name]?

Our site (URL) receives 5,000 unique visitors a day who are interested in [site theme]related goods. I know they'd also love [Merchant Store Name] [merchant product].

If you are interested, please feel free to contact me if you have any questions about how to start an affiliate program for [Merchant Store Name].

I have personal experience in with affiliate programs and can help save you time and money in the set-up.

Thanks kindly for your consideration, and I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

[Your name]

[Your full name, site address and telephone number]

If the merchant responds that they are interested in a partnership, you might consider sending them another email similar to the one below.

Dear [Merchant Name],

I am SO pleased that you're interested in an affiliate alliance with [Your Store Name] to promote [Merchant Store Name] products.

There are 3 different ways to set up an affiliate program.

Join an affiliate network that handles almost all of the work associated with the program, including processing orders and affiliate payments.

This is perhaps the most costly solution, but requires the least effort and will put '[Merchant Store Name]' in front of thousands of affiliates eager to sell your product.

Sign up with a shopping cart service that includes affiliate-tracking software. Although less expensive, this option is slightly more work in that you'll need to advertise the program to gain more affiliates.

Buy and install affiliate program software on your own server. This option is the least expensive with a one-time purchase of software, but the most time-consuming to administer in terms of keeping track of affiliate sales and payment handling.

I personally recommend that you take a look at the [ShareaSale affiliate network](http://shareasale.com) (<http://shareasale.com>).

If you have questions, please feel free to contact me.

I look forward to working with you!

Sincerely,

[Your name]

[Your full name, site address and telephone number]

With a bit of effort and some luck, you may convince the merchant to start an affiliate program for which you become the only affiliate!

That would be like having worldwide exclusive rights to market a product.

While that would be nice, it's unlikely that a merchant would go to the trouble of setting up a program for just one affiliate.

But you *should* take advantage of the situation until they actively start to market their new affiliate program.

PROGRAM EXAMPLES

Here are two examples of affiliate programs that I have joined.

One was very well run and managed, while the other – well, was definitely NOT.

A Well-Run Program

I once joined an affiliate program that sent me a welcome letter that did not include information on how to access the affiliate interface.

Their email address bounced when I wrote to ask them for the information, and their contact form was also broken!

Needless to say, I don't promote that product.

The trouble is, I can't cancel the account either.

Dumb. Dumb. Dumb.

Below is an example of an affiliate program welcome letter from the InfoGoRound.com affiliate program that contained all the necessary ingredients in its welcome letter to make working with that program easy.

Subject: Welcome to the InfoGoRound.com Affiliate Program!

IMMEDIATELY READ AND SAVE THIS EMAIL!

Hi Rosalind Gardner,

Welcome to the InfoGoRound.com (IGR) affiliate program! You are now ready to earn money simply by referring new IGR members through your IGR affiliate link as follows:

<http://www.infogoround.com/cgi-bin/click.cgi?id=rosgardner>

*To view IGR's *current* compensation details, visit this page:*

<http://www.infogoround.com/affiliate.html>

(We'll email you whenever our compensation details are updated - which of course includes news on special affiliate promotions and competitions!)

You can check your referral stats on a daily basis by logging in here:

[The Affiliate name and password were embedded in the link, therefore, no need to login.]

*And here's a copy of your IGR *affiliate* account login info:*

[Username] [Password]

We recommend you spend at least 15 minutes actively promoting IGR per day - starting today...You could earn and win as much as \$5,000 or more this month alone!

It's great to have you on our team Rosalind Gardner.

Bryan Winters - CEO, InfoGoRound.com

The affiliate welcome letter above first thanks me for becoming an affiliate then gives the information I need to assess my affiliate statistics, a link to the product, and contact information for the company should I require further help or information...a truly promising start to our affiliate relationship.

That letter provided ALL the information that an affiliate needs to start promoting their product.

ALL Merchants should be so thorough in their affiliate welcome letters.

Building rapport early in the game increases everyone's chances for success.

An Example of the Type of Program to Avoid

As an affiliate marketer of Internet dating services, I'm always on the lookout for good quality dating sites and products to offer my single visitors.

Merchants help me out when they let me know about their new products and affiliate programs.

I was therefore thrilled when one of my friendly affiliate competitors got in touch to tell me that he'd started his own Internet dating service and affiliate program.

Having launched a community membership site myself, I could fully appreciate the huge amount of time and money my friend invested to develop this new site. He was justifiably proud of his accomplishment and I was excited by the prospect of having a product to promote that would benefit everyone - my customers, my friend and me.

Unfortunately, it didn't quite work out that way.

The first stumbling block was the low commission rate.

His top rate was 30%, with no commissions on recurring sales.

This puzzled me.

As an affiliate marketer of dating programs, he would have been aware that many new sites offer at least 50% on new and recurring sales to entice good affiliates to sign up.

If commissions on recurring sales are not offered, then the rates on new sales should be increased to between 70 and 100 percent.

In most cases, his affiliate program would have struck out for me at that point.

However, as this was my friend's site, it occurred to me that perhaps his product was so unique that the potential for high volume sales might offset the lower commission.

Hoping for the best, I continued my review.

When I arrived at the site, the first thing I noticed was '*6 registered members*' prominently displayed at the top of the homepage.

That normally wouldn't be a problem, except for the fact that my customers are looking for friends and soul mates. If I sent them to a site where there are only six people to meet, they'll likely be disappointed.

Worse, by wasting their time, they lose trust in my judgment and then I lose them as customers.

That's not good.

My customers are literally my bread and butter.

Giving them what they want is how I stay in business. Paying for traffic that I send to a merchant site where there is nothing to buy, will put me out of business.

(This is how a membership site should be structured. When starting a dating service, the merchant pays for advertising to bring people to their site. To entice visitors to sign up as members, he will initially offer his services for free. When the database is large enough to attract paying customers, the affiliate program manager then invites potential affiliates to join their program.)

Although my friend's program had already struck out for my customers and me, I was still curious, so I kept on looking.

I clicked next on a link labeled 'Dating Resources.'

Expecting to find Internet dating tips and advice, I found links and banners pointing to [eHarmony](#), JDate and other affiliated dating sites instead. When I asked him about placing affiliate programs on his site, my friend said he simply wanted to supplement his income until the dating service got *rolling.*

UGH!

While I could understand his motivation, what he did NOT understand is the concept of customer 'hijacking.'

As an affiliate, you pay good money to get visitors to your site. You pre-sell your merchants' products and the merchant honors their end of the bargain by completing the sale and sending your commission check.

You don't want to pay the merchant to send YOUR customers to THEIR affiliated merchants.

I didn't need to look any further.

I told my friend that I'd wait to sign up for his program and my reasons for holding off. Fortunately, he understood my concerns and quickly alleviated some of the problems I mentioned.

Knowing when NOT to sign up for an affiliate program is sometimes a tough call.

However, the process is very simple.

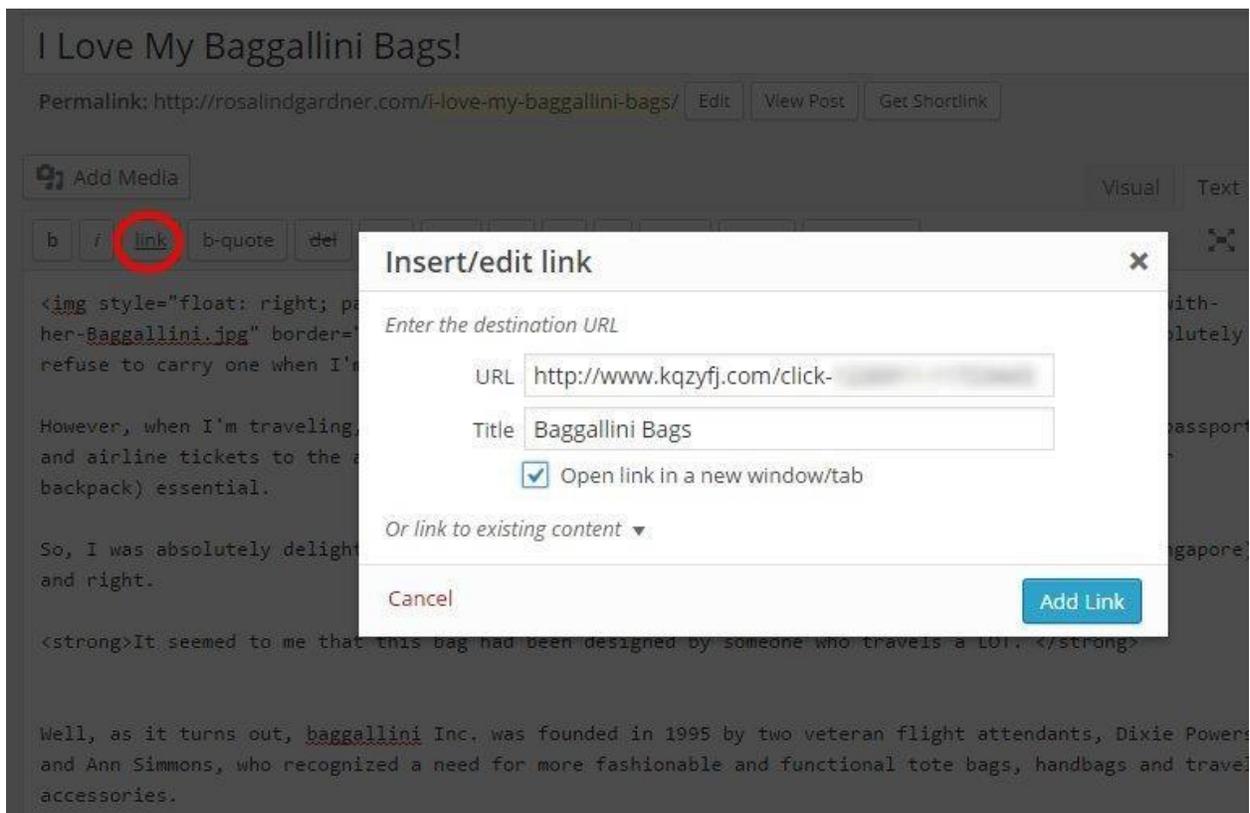
Put yourself inside your customer's head. If the product doesn't benefit them, the program strikes out.

It's as simple as that.

HOW TO INSTALL LINKS IN YOUR POSTS AND PAGES 1. Enter the

text to which you want to add the link.

2. Cursor over that text.
3. Click the 'link' Quicktab in the WYSIWYG editor.
4. Enter the URL that you want to link to into the box that appears.
5. Click OK.
6. The link will appear fully coded within your post.
7. Don't forget to click Save!



Just enter the URL, the target (whether you want it to open a new page or not), a title for the link and click Update.

8 TYPES OF MERCHANT COPY AND SALES TOOLS

Most merchants provide promotional tools and ad copy that you can place on your site.

All you have to do is visit their affiliate interface, then cut and paste their text and banners into your pages. In most cases the links will be automatically coded with your affiliate ID.

Below are 9 different sales tools that merchants may offer their affiliates. I've included examples where possible.

1. TEXT LINKS

Text links are usually formatted in HTML with your affiliate ID attached. For example, the next screenshot shows the code that I got from CJ Affiliate when looking for links for 99Designs.



99designs (3014737)
99Designs USA
<https://www.99Designs.com>

12559330

MORE INFO | **GET CODE** | **ADVERTISER**

Advertiser: 99designs Pty Ltd

Link: 99Designs USA (Text Link)

Website :

Encrypt link?
 Set link to open a new browser window? 

Destination Url:

SID:

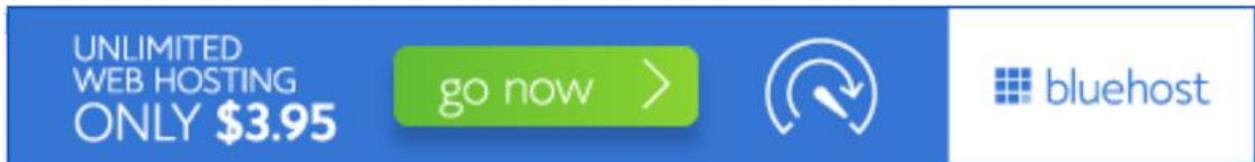
HTML | JavaScript | Click URL

```
<a href="http://www.kqzyfj.com/2t70biroi5788CF77578BBF996?cm_mmc=CJ-_-170178-_-1226911-_-99Designs%20USA" target="_blank">99Designs USA</a>
```

I selected the code (highlighted in blue) then placed that code as a link that shows up as [99Designs.com](https://www.99Designs.com).

2. BANNERS AND GRAPHIC ADS

Banners are graphic images that come in a variety of different sizes. Below is a typical 468 x 60 pixel banner ad for BlueHost.



The most popular sizes are 728 x 90 pixels, 468 x 60 pixels, 125 x 125, 234 x 60, 120 x 60, 120 x 90, and 88 x 31. 'Skyscrapers' are generally 120 x 600, which is the average window height of a computer display.

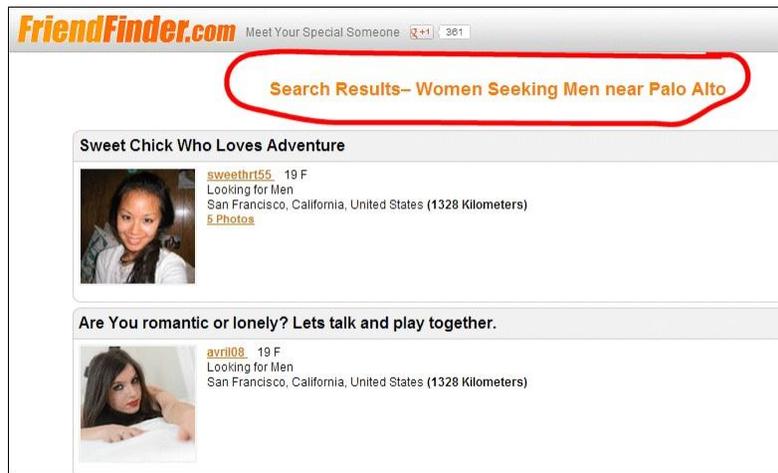
Some companies have half page banners that are about 480 x 480 pixels in size. Others offer full-page ads with numerous graphics and text and come in a zipped file that you extract to a file on your computer.

What you want to avoid are '**banner farm**' pages.

Banner clusters provide no useful content, amount to nothing more than ugly 'clutter' and simply confuse your visitors I recommend that in most cases you should use only one banner per product page.

3. CUSTOM LANDING PAGES

Friendfinder provides a number of different custom landing pages to which their affiliates can send traffic. Examples include location, gender, race and specific pages on the site. Here is an example of FriendFinder's custom landing page for 'Women Seeking Men near Palo Alto.'



The link I use that helps my customers find 'Women Seeking Men near Palo Alto, California between the ages of 18 and 25' is shown below.

<http://friendfinder.com/search/g9517-pct?show=F-M&age=1825&geo=Palo%20Alto,CA>

Note how the link is constructed to return the desired results. For example 'show=F' returns female members of the site. If we replaced the F with an M, then the page would return men between the ages of 18 and 25 near Palo Alto.

4. PRODUCT REVIEWS

Not many merchants provide their affiliates with full-scale product reviews, which is wise. Overuse of the same articles and product reviews detracts from both the merchant's and the affiliate's reputation.

I recommend that affiliates use the merchant's review as a 'guideline' for writing their own product reviews and articles.

However, if you can confirm that a specific product review or article is not used too frequently, then you can save yourself a lot of work by grabbing it and using it on your site.

Here is an example of how I used a review within my own review.

<http://rosalindgardner.me/vitamix-the-ultimate-yummy-processor/>

5. CONTENT LINKS (EMAIL COPY AND ARTICLES)

Smart merchants write their own articles and ‘advertorials’ and format them both in HTML and in plain text for affiliates to either post on their blogs or distribute via email.

Smart affiliates customize merchants’ email promotions to give it their own ‘voice.’ They recognize that hundreds of other affiliates will be using the same material, so their efforts look cheesy when they’re caught trying to pass off someone else’s material as their own.

The graphic below shows an example of an article titled “Bestsellers in Romance” provided by eBooks.com, accessed through the CJ Affiliate interface and posted on my dating blog at <http://101date.com/bestsellers-in-romance/>

6. INTERVIEWS

Very few merchants use this technique, but I think it’s brilliant.

Affiliates can publish interviews given by the merchants themselves. The interviews tend to have great conversion rates because it appears that more information is being shared with the reader than through typical product advertising.

Think of ‘infomercials’ that you’ve seen in which the creator of some miracle gel extols its benefits in response to an interviewer’s questions. It uses the same principle and sells products like crazy!

Bestsellers in Romance

posted by [rosalind gardner](#) · [leave a comment](#) (edit)



Bestsellers in Romance



A Countess by Christmas

By: Burrows, Annie

Published by: Harlequin Historical

The Earl of Bridgemere is happy to encourage his reputation as a curmudgeonly recluse if it repels the grasping females who usually attend his lavish Christmas parties. Helen Forrest is like a breath of fresh air, uninterested in his wealth and not cowed by his temper. Bridgemere's seasonal duty suddenly becomes a pleasure as he sets about making Helen his countess—by Christmas!. [more...](#)

1



Mistress by Midnight

By: Cornick, Nicola

Published by: HQN Books

Merryn Fenner is on a mission to ruin the Duke of Farne. A beautiful bluestocking with a penchant for justice, Merryn has waited ten years to satisfy her revenge against sensual, mysterious Garrick Northesk. Her family name had been tarnished at his hands, her life destroyed. And now she intends to return the favor— [more...](#)

2

7. MERCHANT GIVEAWAYS

Free stuff appeals to everyone. Some merchants provide affiliates with items that they can giveaway to their readers.

[Aweber](#), an autoresponder service, offers a free guide titled "[What to Write](#)" that includes 45+ email content templates and the complete course to writing great emails.



8. MERCHANT DATA FEEDS

Building an affiliate web site that sells between 5 and 20 products is relatively quick and easy to accomplish.

But how much time and effort do you think it takes affiliates who promote thousands of items like magazines, garden products, posters or t-shirts build their sites?

You might be surprised to learn that most affiliates can put those sites together very quickly using data feeds provided by the merchant.

A product data feed is a file which typically contains product names along with their categories and subcategories, descriptions, coded affiliate links, product graphic image URL's, prices and even applicable keywords. Affiliates can manipulate data feeds in various ways to display content on their sites.

For example, the [ShareaSale](#) network offers a variety of options for data feed incorporation including their Make-a-Page utility.

Below is a screenshot of a collection of fruit trees that I selected from [Nature Hills Nursery](#) products using the Make-a-Page function on Shareasale.



The Make-a-Page utility is SO simple to use!

Just pick your merchant (or multiple merchants), enter a keyword for the type of product you want to promote and then click 'Add' as you find those products. Once you are done, it is simple to grab the code and install it on your site.

Here are some additional options for using data feeds.

GoldenCAN.com (<http://goldencan.com>) offers a service to affiliate marketers that lets them combine millions of products in hundreds of thousands of categories, thousands of coupons and recent price drop products, multiple merchant searching and price comparisons, from different merchants - all in one line of code.

Options include store, coupon and search integration.

With store integration, your visitors can search a merchant's entire inventory without leaving your site.

Using coupon integration, you can display thousands of coupons, promotions and 'recent price drop' information from one or more merchants.

Lastly, search integration gives you a way to display search results from multiple merchants.

To see sample sites created with GoldenCan, go to:

<http://www.goldencan.com/samples.aspx>

When you signup for GoldenCan you will see FREE and 4th Click under the heading Fee-Structure. Your account is credited with 100% of your traffic to Free merchants.

For 4th click merchants GoldenCan replaces your affiliate ID with their own on every fourth click and will receive the affiliate commission should that click result in a sale.

If you're concerned about potentially losing commissions to 4th click merchants, I highly recommend that you check out [Datafeedr](http://datafeedr.com) (<http://datafeedr.com>), a service that lets you convert raw data feed files into real web pages.

The beauty of this program is that it's fast to set up and manage data feeds from many different merchants and the support offered by the Datafeedr guys is great --- if you need it.

To save time and make more sales, look for merchants that offer product data feeds.

As my daddy always said, '*Work smarter, not harder,*' and affiliate marketing doesn't get much smarter or easier than using a data feed.

In summary, use merchant ad copy and tools to kick-start your site and sales campaigns. Use copy sparingly, however. Visitors click the 'Back' button quickly when they've seen the same copy a hundred times on other affiliate sites.

Plan to replace the merchant copy on your site with your own articles, newsletters and product endorsements over time.

22 WAYS TO ATTRACT VISITORS TO YOUR SITE

The following section lists all the ways I've built an audience of hundreds of thousands of people who visit my sites on a regular basis.

The methods are listed in order of their effectiveness.

1. WOO THE SEARCH ENGINES

Posting frequent articles to your blog is the *best* way to reap traffic from Google and other search engines quickly because posts can be chock full of search-engine-friendly keywords without being spammy.

9 WAYS TO MAKE YOUR SITE 'GOOGLE' FRIENDLY

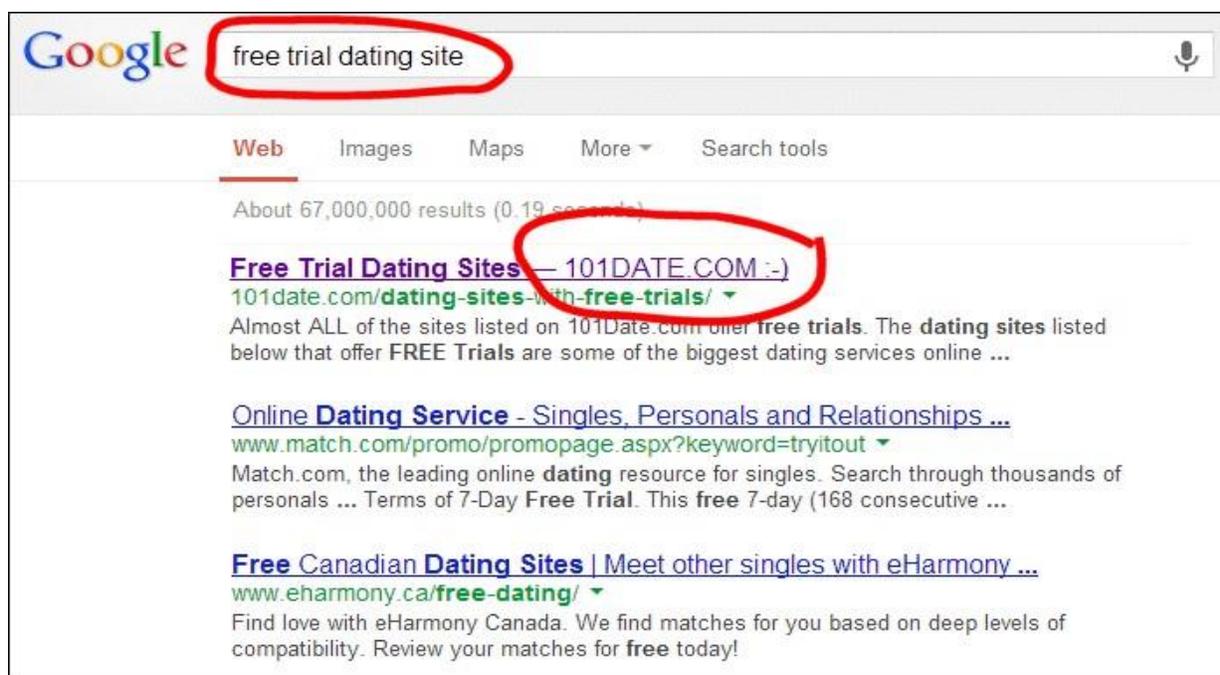
Optimizing your blog for the search engines is absolutely essential if you want your site to rank higher than those of your competitors.

High-ranking pages are even more critical if you'll be starting your affiliate business with a very small budget and don't plan to use pay-per-click advertising to bring traffic to your site.

The basic SEO techniques are as follows.

1. INCLUDE A PRIMARY KEYWORD IN YOUR POST TITLES.

Searching for 'free trial dating sites' at Google, my page about 'Free Trial Dating Sites' showed up right at the top of the listings, ABOVE both Match.com and eHarmony's listings. That page was linked to from my homepage and got quite a bit of traffic from visitors already on the site, which makes Google appreciate it even more. Jasper



2. REPEAT YOUR PRIMARY KEYWORD OR KEYWORD PHRASE WITHIN THE BLOG POST.

If you look at the free trial dating sites post, you will note that the keyword phrases 'free

trial’ and ‘dating sites’ are used fairly often...but NOT too often so as to make the text seem like spam.

3. MAINTAIN A MINIMUM WORD COUNT.

Jill Whalen, a well-known search engine (SE) expert advises that you should work with at least 250 words on a page for search engine optimization purposes.

Having fewer words in a post will also work, but Jill makes the point that you need at least 250 words to be able to repeat your keyword phrases a number of times throughout the page without seeming ‘dopey.’

4. ELIMINATE CLUTTER.

Search engines don’t read graphics or javascript. If graphics and javascript precede the first most important keyword phrases on your page, your ranking may be lowered because the search engine considers that phrase less relevant, due to its low placement on the page.

Search engine spiders prefer text, loaded with keywords, placed ‘high’ on the page, and the left side is ‘read’ before the right side. I therefore place my primary navigation on the right side of my pages so the spiders can get to their ‘food’ more quickly.

Right-side navigation is a feature included in most professional Wordpress themes such as those found at [StudioPress](#).

5. USE IMAGE ALT AND TITLE TAGS.

This screenshot shows how the text, 'roadtrip-video-recorder' shows up when a cursor is placed over the image located on my [Roadtrip Video Recorder](#) post.



The ALT tag, which stands for 'alternative text,' is primarily for use when the image is not being displayed. Although originally intended to make your site more accessible to visually impaired folks who use text readers, image title tags are another way to gain search engine rankings through effective keyword use.

Wordpress gives you the option to insert both ALT and Title tags when you upload a graphic to paste into a post.

6. WRITE FOR PEOPLE, NOT THE SEARCH ENGINES.

Contrary to what those 'SEO specialists' tell you, do NOT overuse keyword phrases on your web pages.

The search engines will consider you an engine spammer and penalize your site by having it de-ranked or de-listed. Although you should still place primary keywords in post titles and meta tags, write in a natural way that is a pleasure for your visitors to read.

7. CREATE A SITE MAP.

Your site should have a site map (or blog archive) with links that point to all the important pages and sections of your site. If your site consists of one hundred or more pages, you may wish to break the site map into separate pages.

The site map for 101Date.com can be seen at <http://101date.com/sitemap.xml> To

generate the sitemap, I use a plugin called [Google XML Sitemaps](#).

8. AVOID TRICKS AND DECEPTION.

Google makes site quality recommendations to help you avoid having your site removed from their index.

Once a site has been removed, it won't show up in Google.com or on Google's partner sites. The same suggestions hold true for all the major engines.

Don't deceive your users by presenting different content to search engines than is displayed on your pages.

A common trick in the past was to include highly popular but irrelevant keywords in meta tags to get 'the click.' While that brought traffic to the site, the visitor was disappointed by results that had nothing to do with their search, and the engines appeared not to be able to produce relevant results.

Search engines now pay attention to such tactics and removes those sites using deceptive practices from their index. Avoid tricks intended to improve search engine rankings.

This includes using hidden text or links, sneaky redirects; pages loaded with irrelevant keywords and the use of 'doorway' pages. Google also recommends against creating subdomains and domains with essentially duplicate content. Google's webmaster guidelines can be found here:

<http://support.google.com/webmasters/bin/answer.py?hl=en&answer=35769>

When you follow the above guidelines you help the search engines find, index, and rank your site, which is the best way to ensure that you'll be included in their results.

9. USE A CONTENT ANALYSIS PLUGIN.

To increase the likelihood of getting found on Google, I use the [YOAST SEO plugin](#) for Wordpress which analyzes and provides a score for both SEO and readability. The screenshot below shows the readability analysis for post I wrote about the [dangers of electric massagers](#).

As you'll see, I should work to improve that post!

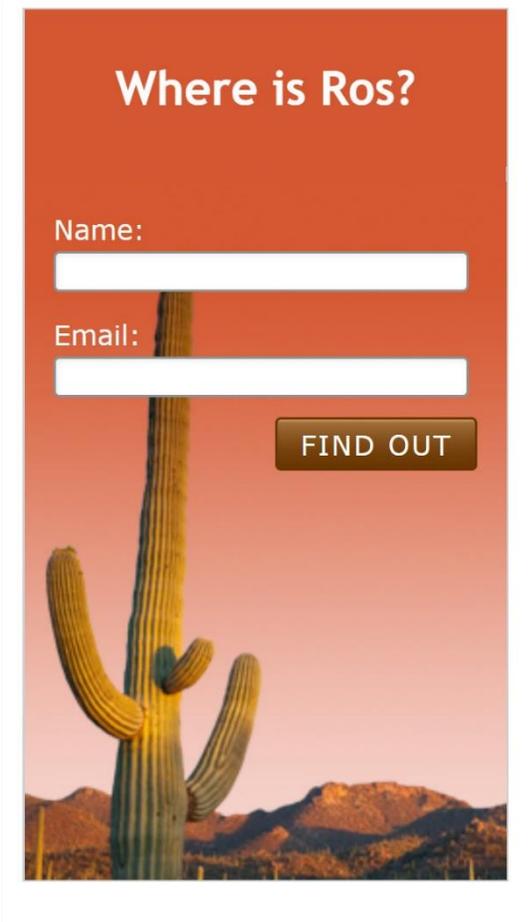
The screenshot displays the Yoast SEO interface. At the top, there is a 'Need help?' link and a 'Go Premium' button. Below this is the 'Snippet Preview' section, which shows the title 'Electric Massagers: A Warning - RosalindGardner.me', the URL 'rosalindgardner.me › electric-massagers-warning', and the meta description 'I hurt myself badly using an electric massage. Read this article to find out how and why.' There are also icons for mobile and desktop views and an 'Edit snippet' button. The 'Readability analysis' section follows, showing 'Analysis results' with a help icon. It lists 'Problems (1)' and 'Improvements (1)'. The 'Sentence length' problem indicates that 37% of sentences are longer than 20 words, exceeding the 25% recommendation. The 'Passive voice' improvement shows that 11.1% of sentences use passive voice, exceeding the 10% recommendation. 'Good results (5)' include 'Flesch Reading Ease' (score 67.4) and 'Consecutive sentences' (enough variety).

In summary, concentrate your energy on giving your visitors a good experience, rather than trying to manipulate the search engines. You'll be better rewarded with traffic and sales, and you'll also sleep better at night than your deceptive webmaster counterparts.

2. INVITE REGULAR READERS

Right after posting an article to my blog, I immediately inform my newsletter subscribers about that post by broadcasting a notice via my [Aweber](#) email marketing account.

They have signed up to receive regular information through forms on my sites such as the signup form on my personal blog, shown in the next screenshot.

A screenshot of a sign-up form titled "Where is Ros?". The form is set against a background image of a saguaro cactus in a desert landscape. It features two input fields: "Name:" and "Email:". Below the "Email:" field is a dark brown button with the text "FIND OUT" in white capital letters.

Permission-based email marketing works!

Studies have shown that permission email yields response rates that are ten times better than banners.

When visitors voluntarily sign up or 'opt-in' to receive your information, it allows you to:

- Offer products and services for sale to that subscriber;
- Survey subscribers to gather information for new products, and;
- Build a rapport with your subscribers.

Many Internet marketers invite visitors to join their mailing lists by offering a free 'ecourse.'

An ecourse is a series of informative shorter articles delivered automatically through an autoresponder service (e.g. Aweber.com) to those who subscribe. Each message is designed to bring visitors back to your site or introduce them to

your merchants' products through your affiliate links.

Studies suggest that the ecourse (or autoresponder series) should contain no fewer than 7 messages, however I know webmasters that have a year's worth of messages programmed into their autoresponders.

Visitors can also be encouraged to sign up for your ecourse when you offer them something for free. The 'freebie' can either be a report or a free sample from one of your merchants.

For example, I used to offer Michael Webb's '101 Romantic Ideas' ebook as a free download when visitors signed up to receive my 'Singles eScene' newsletter at 101Date.com.

Obtaining permission to use Michael's book was simple.

I emailed and asked him if I could use it, and he said yes. Furthermore, he also rebranded the ebook so that links inside the book are my affiliate links.

Sweet!

When visitors sign up to receive your ecourse or the free download that you offer, they are also subscribed to receive 'broadcast messages' - so you don't have to do anything extra to make sure they receive your regular newsletter.

You might broadcast a weekly or bi-weekly newsletter containing news and information relevant to your site. Regular ongoing contact builds rapport and trust with your subscribers, and encourages them to revisit your site time and again.

Use your newsletter to notify your subscribers about special promotions and sales held by your merchant partners.

It's best to link from your newsletter to a special 'sales' page on your site, as opposed to sending them directly to the merchant's site. That way you can test the effectiveness of your offers by keeping track of the number of visitors who visit that page via your newsletter.

With 150,000+ subscribers on my 'singles' list, the effect was fairly immediate and always positive. Readers rushed to the site to take advantage of the offer, and I got a nice little bonus for doing just a little bit of work.

NOT building a mailing list, or allowing it to languish is allowing money to slip out of your hands.

Think about this...

Suppose you have 5,000 unique visitors visit your blog in an average week. Despite having an interest in your main topic, the vast majority of these people will never return to your site, because they will forget about it or won't remember how to get there.

On the other hand, if you offer a free newsletter or course in exchange for name and email address, you'll get newsletter signups. At a sign-up rate of 10% you'd be getting 500 new optin subscribers per week, or 6,000 per year!

STAY CAN-SPAM COMPLIANT

I HIGHLY recommend that you use a professional mailing list or autoresponder service to broadcast your messages and keep track of your subscribers. These services automatically handle all your signups, unsubscriptions, and bounces.

The biggest advantage to having a professional service maintain your mailing list is that it protects you from spam complaints. Most affiliate networks that permit email marketing of their merchants' offerings insist that you be able to produce evidence of subscriber opt-in.

Under the CAN-SPAM Act, which became effective Jan. 1, 2004, companies are liable for illegal spam sent by their affiliates. As such, most affiliate networks that permit email marketing of their merchants' offerings insist that you be able to produce evidence of subscriber opt-in.

Shown below is a sample clause relating to the subject of customer spam complaints and affiliate responsibilities in that regard.

If Publisher conducts e-mail campaigns to its users, Publisher must, if requested, be able to supply the name, date, time and IP address where the consumer signed-up and/or gave permission to the Publisher to conduct such e-mail campaign.

Publisher is solely responsible for all consumer complaints relating to e- mail campaigns conducted by Publisher.

Publisher will respond to all consumer complaints in a timely fashion and shall immediately remove any person from its database who makes such request for removal.

In addition, all e-mail must contain a functioning unsubscribe link which, when activated by a user, actually and permanently removes the user's email address from the publisher's database.

Thank goodness that type of clause is standard practice throughout the industry!

I detest receiving offers for Viagra, 'incredible' business opportunities and other topics in which I have no interest. It's garbage pure and simple and wastes time and energy to click into the trash. The 'do unto others' rule is a good one to follow when contemplating the use of unsolicited email. The clauses above make it possible to lose your source of income, which should be a good incentive to play by the rules.

Using a mailing list service will also prevent having your ISP close your account down because you sucked up too much of their bandwidth by sending 30,000 emails to your subscribers.

Although there are a many different autoresponder services available to Internet Marketers – and I've tried and used most of them since 1998 - I now only use and highly recommend [Aweber's autoresponder service](#).

3. GET SOCIAL

Social networking and bookmarking sites can help you spread your message beyond search engine marketing of your blog.

Here is a list of the most popular Social media and social bookmarking services.

- [Facebook.com](#)
- [Pinterest](#)
- [Instagram](#)
- [Twitter](#)
- [YouTube](#)

You'll need to invest some time and energy to get your profile and messages set up on these sites, but after that, other platforms can automatically deliver your messages to these networks.

1. FACEBOOK

Facebook is the biggest social network and a fun way to market online.

I've connected with friends, family and fans through Facebook and spend far too much time

NOT doing business while on the site. However, if business is your main objective, you'll find the setup fairly simple.

First, you have to set up a personal Facebook Profile and then add Facebook "Pages" for your affiliate sites.

For example, my Facebook Profile is at <https://www.facebook.com/rosalind.gardner.biz> and my business Page is at <https://www.facebook.com/RosalindGardnerOnline>, the latter shown in the screenshot below.



The reason for setting up a separate **Page** for your business is because Facebook only allows you to have 5000 'friends' on a profile, whereas there is no limit to the number of 'Likes' you may receive on a Page.

The purpose behind either a profile or a Page is to connect with your audience and have them spread the word about you.

When people 'Like' your Facebook Page, it shows up on their personal profile, so their friends can see what they like.

With luck, their friends will click through to your Page and also 'Like' what you have to share, thereby growing your Facebook community.

Your objective should be to share information that is compelling enough to entice people to click the link to your affiliate site(s).

Another option is to look for social networking sites that are highly specific to your niche. For example, if you work in the pet market, the following sites may be of value.

- [Dogster.com](https://www.dogster.com)
- [Catster.com](https://www.catster.com)
- [Petster.com](https://www.petster.com)

Although I have set up Facebook Pages for my dating and internet marketing blogs, I am really only active on my personal [Facebook profile](#), where I talk about politics and post pictures of my dog, travel adventures, and crockpot creations.

To learn how to make Facebook marketing work for you, I recommend [Mari Smith's tutorials](#).

SHE truly is the queen of social media marketing.

2. YOUTUBE

If you are handy with video, you might want to consider affiliate marketing on YouTube.

For example, Laurie Bice Osterman's YouTube channel, [Travel Tips by Laurie](#), includes travel outfit tips, packing tips, airport security tips and more.

In addition to each video, Laurie posts a long description, including a list of Amazon product affiliate links, as shown in the next screenshot.



TravelTipsbyLaurie

Published on Mar 19, 2018

SUBSCRIBE 19K

Here are 23 travel hacks for you that have solved a problem for me over the years. My tips will help you when you are packing your carryon suitcase. You will see some tricks to use in the airplane as well as learn hacks for going through the airport. We fly very often, and these travel hacks have become a way of life for me that will help you. I talk about cell phone hacks, packing hacks, hotel room hacks, and backpack tips; plus the one brilliant hack I just heard of. Leave me a comment if you have a travel hack to share. Thanks so much for watching my videos, friends!

My Hack Helpers:

My Liquids Bag: <http://amzn.to/2G9I9E2>

Hand Phone Prop: <http://amzn.to/2plqHTu>

My Slim-Line Power Bank: <http://amzn.to/2G4drvR>

Cute Pink Power Bank: <http://amzn.to/2FMhii3>

One-handed Containers: <http://amzn.to/2G1wWb7>

Tiny Disc Containers: <http://amzn.to/2FU9s1v>

Pink Jewelry Bag (similar): <http://amzn.to/2pqQsl6>

My CarryOn Suitcase: <http://amzn.to/2pllmlv>

My Travel Tunic: <http://amzn.to/2GbhYfy>

Laurie also links to her blog and social media profiles (Facebook and Instagram) in her long description, along with an affiliate marketing disclaimer that reads “Occasionally I use affiliate links, and all opinions that POP into my head are my honest ones.”

3. INSTAGRAM

Instagram is a social networking app made for sharing photos and videos **from a smartphone**. The service is owned by Facebook.

The trick with Instagram is to make sure your profile is filled out to include your site’s URL, such as ‘Cycling Tips’ has done in the next screenshot.



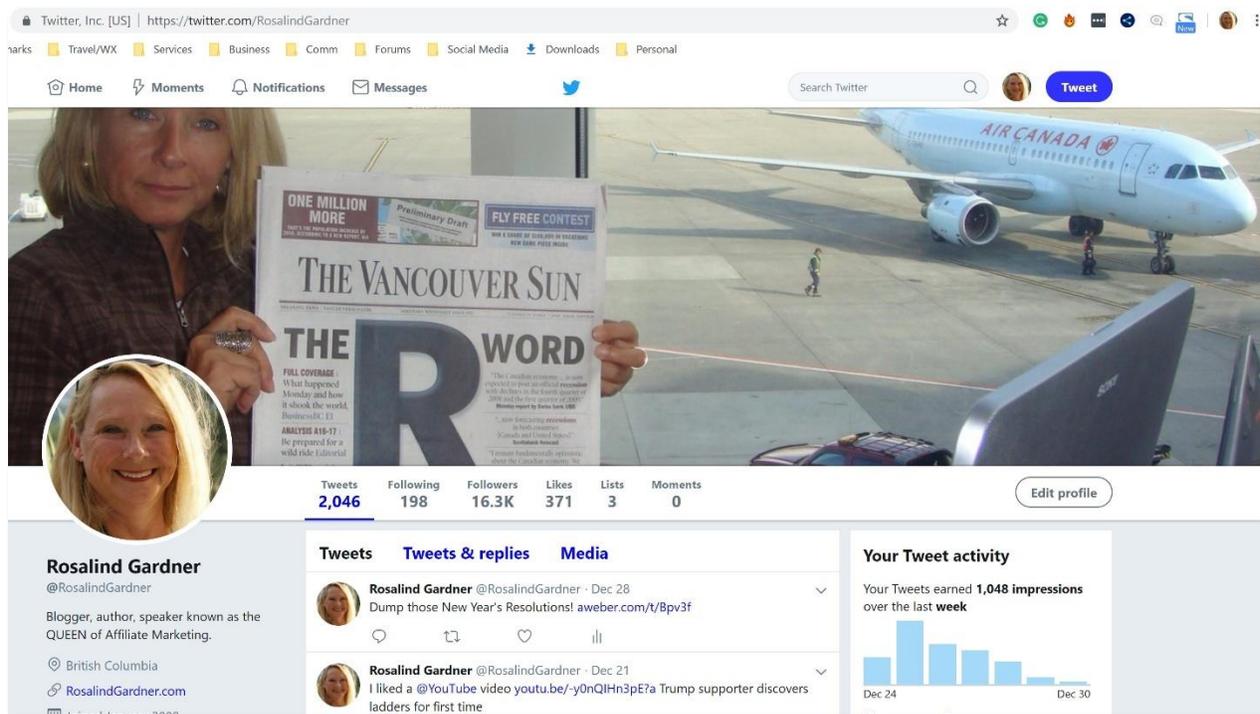
Other than including your URL in your profile, you can't place URL's (affiliate links) in the description for any of the pictures that you upload to Instagram, so you'll need to be creative with using hashtags (#) to get your pictures noticed, and just hope that folks will come back to your profile and visit your site.

I personally think posting to Instagram and 'hoping' for traffic is WAY too much of a crapshoot to invest too much of my (or your) time doing when you could be writing blog posts that get picked up by Google.

Just sayin'. :-D

4. TWITTER

With its 280 character limit on 'tweets', I use [my Twitter account](#) primarily as a way to tweet the URL to my latest blog posts, from ALL my blogs.



With 16.3 thousand Twitter followers, that approach works well enough for my needs.

BUT, other online marketers do *much* more with their Twitter accounts – making recommendations, sharing others’ tweets, and replying to tweets... and by result have many more followers on Twitter.

Basically, you should set up a Twitter account, and use it as you choose.

5. PINTEREST

[Pinterest](#) is a visual discovery, collection, sharing, and storage tool. Users create and share the collections of visual bookmarks (boards).

In March 2015, Pinterest banned affiliate links from its website, i.e. links that went straight to a merchant’s website, and then in 2016, it reversed that decision.

However, most good affiliate marketers who promote products on Pinterest still link to their blog, rather than directly to a merchant’s site. The next screenshot shows how ‘Sher She Goes’, a lifestyle and travel blogger, posted an image to Pinterest that links back to her article about the [‘The 7 Best Travel Backpacks for Your Next Vacation’](#).

The screenshot shows a Pinterest search result for travel backpacks. At the top, there is a search bar with the word "Search" and a magnifying glass icon. To the right of the search bar are icons for a profile, a person's head, and a speech bubble. Below the search bar, there is a "Results" section with a back arrow and the word "Results". To the right of "Results" are three icons: a three-dot menu, a "Send" button with an upward arrow, and a "Save" button with the text "Books Worth Rea..." and a dropdown arrow. Below these icons is a grid of six backpack images, each with a caption below it: 4. NYLON DAY PACK (black), 5. FJALLRAVEN (red), 6. LIGHTWEIGHT PACK (green), 7. VINTAGE CANVAS (brown), 8. CAMERA BACKPACK (tan), and 9. STRIPED CANVAS (dark green with white stripes). Below the grid is a profile card for "Sher She Goes | A Travel Guide & Personal Style Blogger" with a profile picture, 21.6k followers, and a "Follow" button. Below the profile card is a link to "shershegoes.com" with an upward arrow icon. Below the link is a text description: "Need a travel backpack to fit a 15" laptop, clothes, accessories and still look stylish? Read reviews of the best travel backpacks for function and flair." and a publication date: "Published July 7, 2018".

Do a search for your niche on Pinterest and you will come up with umpteen ideas for new blog posts.

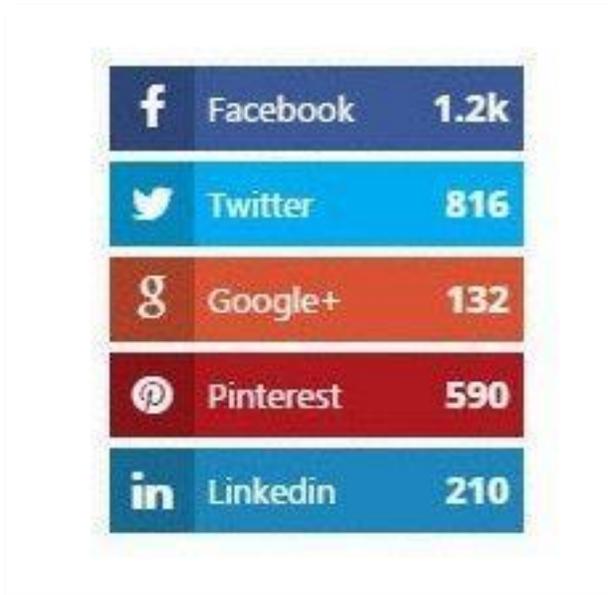
6. SOCIAL BOOKMARKING SITES

Adding social bookmark links to your blog or web site allows your readers to save and share your content.

Users click the bookmarking service of their choice, and save links to web pages that they want to remember and/or share.

The social bookmarking tool I use is the Genesis Optimized Social Share for Wordpress, because [Genesis](#) is the Wordpress theme framework that I use on all my sites.

But there are many social media plugins from which to choose – from free plugins on Wordpress to premium plugins like the [Social Share & Locker Pro Wordpress Plugin](#) from Code Canyon, pictured below.



Because bookmarks that people save are usually public and listed in order of popularity on the bookmarking service's site, many webmasters use social bookmarking as a marketing tool.

Unfortunately, the system is 'gamed' by webmasters who use bots to automatically bookmark their sites --- or get all their friends to click their links --- to achieve higher placement on the service.

This problem is pervasive amongst webmasters who promote products within the business opportunities market. It may, however, be more effective if you work in a

market in which consumers are less tech savvy, such as pet lovers or photographers.

Don't plan to try and market through each social media site. That would be way too much work unless you have a marketing team working for you.

Pick one or two social media platforms that you like and then work them like crazy!

Too, consider using social media sites as a platform to add intelligent commentary that compels folks to visit your profile, and then your blog.

4. DISTRIBUTE YOUR ARTICLES

Article distribution can be an effective way to get free traffic to your sites as it costs you nothing but time.

When your articles are published on article directories, people interested in your subject matter will read them and visit your site through your author resource box or byline.

A typical byline is 3 to 4 lines long. One of the bylines that I use when I publish articles for my personal blog looks like this:

*Rosalind Gardner is the globe-trotting blogger at
'RosalindGardner.me' where she discusses all things
travel, including; tips, deals and even diarrhea.
Visit her today at <http://rosalindgardner.me>*

Article directories generally have submission pages on which you simply fill out a form that includes fields for your name, email address, URL, title of the article, the article body and your byline.

Different directories have different formatting requirements. Some require straight text insertions, while others want the article in HTML format. A few directory webmasters will ask you to provide an autoresponder address through which their visitors can have the article sent to them via email.

Although some article submission sites will ask for your specific terms of use or author's guidelines, articles placed on most directories are freely available to other webmasters for use on their sites according to the rules of that particular directory.

For example, Rozey Gean of Marketing-Seek.com used to attach this note to the end of every article:

Please Note: *The author of this article has authorized its distribution with the requirement that it be published in its entirety, without changes, including the author's resource box. Please respect the authors' wishes by getting their permission to reprint their articles if they so request.*

I recommend [Ezine Articles](#) and [WebProNews](#) as valuable article distribution points.

5. ADVERTISE ON PAY-PER-CLICK SEARCH ENGINES

Although blogs are very good at attracting free search engine traffic, nothing drives highly targeted traffic to your site FASTER than paid advertising on the pay per click search engines.

There are now well over 500 pay-per-click search engines. I recommend that you start with an account at [Google Adwords](http://adwords.google.com) (<http://adwords.google.com>).

WILL PPC ADVERTISING BE PROFITABLE IN YOUR NICHE?

Determining whether pay-per-click advertising will prove profitable for certain categories with your niche is an inexact science, yet the following method will give you an indication of whether the topic has profit potential before you do any more work.

The first thing to do is create a short list of relevant keywords using the Google Keyword Planner (under Tools in your Google Adwords account) or [SEM Rush](#).

In the following example, I entered the term 'military dating' under Your Product or Service and then select Dating and Marriage Matching under Your Product Category in the Keyword Planner.

Under Locations, I selected Canada, United States and United Kingdom.

I then added the word 'free' under Negative Keywords, which eliminates results that include the word 'free'.

The search for keywords and ideas resulted in 57 keyword phrases all related to military dating.

Each keyword returned shows average monthly searches, whether the competition is High, Medium or Low and the suggested bid.

Your product or service		Your product category				
military dating		Dating & Marriage Matching				
<input type="button" value="Ad group ideas"/> <input type="button" value="Keyword ideas"/>		<input type="button" value="Download"/>		<input type="button" value="Add all (57)"/>		
Search terms	Avg. monthly searches	Competition	Suggested bid	Ad impr. share	Add to plan	
military dating	4,400	High	\$1.61	0%	»	
1 - 1 of 1 keywords						
Keyword (by relevance)	Avg. monthly searches	Competition	Suggested bid	Ad impr. share	Add to plan	
military dating sites	2,400	High	\$2.38	0%	»	
military dating site	480	High	\$3.07	0%	»	
dating a military man	390	Medium	\$2.88	0%	»	

On reviewing the cost per click estimates (see the screenshot below) I learned that I could expect 40.8 – 49.9 clicks, based on 1.8 – 2.2 thousand impressions, if I positioned my ad in around the 2nd advertising spot.

The cost for that campaign would run around \$45.91US per day.



Now it's time to do some math to figure out whether that campaign could generate a profit.

Assuming the site received 45 clicks per day at a cost of \$45.91 and that 5% (2.25) of those visitors buy a \$14.99 monthly dating site membership at Military Singles Connection, for which your commission is 55% (\$8.24).

Now also consider that most people who buy a dating service membership, remain with the service for an average of 5 months. So, now that \$18.54 multiplied by 5 becomes a healthier \$92.71.

Just for good measure, let's also assume that 5 more folks elect to take advantage of Spokeo's 3-month people search service at \$4.95/month for which you earn a 75% commission, or \$3.71/month per subscription.

Here are the calculations:

Dating Service Sales: $2.25 \text{ (buyers)} \times (\$8.24 \text{ commission} \times 5 \text{ months}) = \92.71

People Search Sales: $5 \text{ (buyers)} \times (\$3.71 \times 3 \text{ months}) = \55.65

Total Commission: $\$92.71 + \$55.65 = \$148.35$

Net Commission: $\$148.35 - \$45.91 \text{ (advertising)} = \102.44

Remember that we are considering only profit **POTENTIAL**. There are no guarantees that your actual results will be as successful. They may in fact be MORE successful. Only real- world testing will prove if your projections are realistic.

6. PARTICIPATE IN GROUPS AND FORUMS

Forums are like 'message boards' where members post messages for the entire group to read. Most forums are focused around a central theme.

Yahoo, Google, MSN and other major portal sites have discussion groups and clubs to which you can post messages.

Many newbies 'lurk' in forums, afraid to post their thoughts and questions.

That's SO sad and totally unnecessary. No one will bite you, provided the forum rules are followed. Even if you accidentally break one of the rules, chances are that you'll be politely reminded of the rules, asked to follow them in future, and given another chance to participate.

Responding to another group member's question with valuable information is the best way to gain respect and credibility in the groups.

To profit from forums, find and participate in forums related to your industry. Place your site's URL in your signature line. Using the rules of forum etiquette posted below; get out there and learn, participate and prosper from forums.

FORUM ETIQUETTE

Below are some general guidelines that will help you from being banned from most forums.

- Make sure your posts are placed in the correct category.

Many forums have many different topic sections. Be sure to post your messages and questions in the right section.

- Do not post:

Questions or answers which have already been answered numerous times; Negative or aggressive remarks (i.e., Flames) directed towards other users;

Anything not relating to the original topic; Any derogatory comments based on age, gender, race, ethnicity or nationality.

- Have something to say.

A message such as, 'anyone in here?' wastes time when the number of viewers who read the post is taken into consideration. Make intelligent posts that have a purpose.

- Obey copyright rules:

Respect the law and do not post copyrighted work unless you have written permission from its owner.

- Do not promote your own site, unless: It is specifically permitted by the forum rules.

- Don't Spam. Spam includes advertisements, content deemed inappropriate or illegal, and flooding of the boards (repeated and/or multiple - read 'unnecessary' - postings).

- Ensure your signature file remains a reasonable size and does not contain excessively large images or annoying animations, and follows all the rules applying to the posts themselves.

- Respect others' privacy. Don't post private addresses or phone numbers, including your own.

- Do not make needless use of: Emoticons;

Line breaks or ALL-CAPS;

Nested quotes; Giant fonts;

Swearing, derogatory terms, hate-speech, obscene or vulgar comments. (Probably the most effective way to receive a permanent or temporary ban).

If you have problems, just make a post in the appropriate forum, and somebody will almost certainly be glad to help you.

7. BLOG COMMENTING

Blog commenting is a web promotion strategy used by webmasters and site owners to increase Google PageRank as well as qualified traffic to their sites.

Google Page Rank is influenced by the link 'popularity' of your site. Google describes Page Rank as follows:

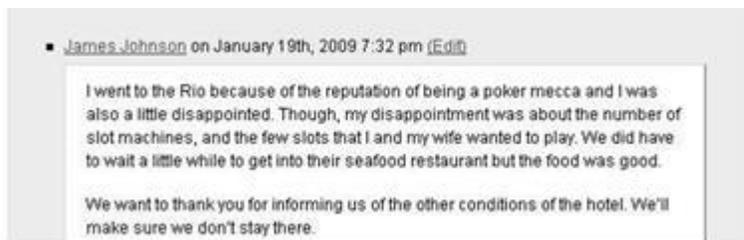
PageRank relies on the uniquely democratic nature of the web by using its vast link structure as an indicator of an individual page's value. In essence, Google interprets a link from page A to page B as a vote, by page A, for page B. But, Google looks at more than the sheer volume of votes, or links a page receives; it also analyzes the page that casts the vote. Votes cast by pages that are themselves 'important' weigh more heavily and help to make other pages 'important'.

Marketing with blog comments works 2 ways.

First, you can post comments on other people's blogs to get links and traffic back to your own site. To increase your chances of getting noticed, be sure that the comments you leave add value to the post about which you are commenting.

Simply saying 'I like your blog' will in most cases be a waste of time when the webmaster doesn't permit your comment --- and no one will bother to click on the link to your site. Here is an example of a blog comment left on my post about the Rio hotel in Las Vegas.

<http://bit.ly/HQprf>



The second way to market with blog comments is to invite reader comments and then point them to the appropriate product when they ask a question.

Here is a screenshot of how I did this on my site.

I'm pleased I found your site through a promotional email and have marked it as one to refer to frequently. As a world traveller and avid photographer, I read your piece about the SLIDE AND NEGATIVE TO DIGITAL PICTURE CONVERTER and would like to know how it worked out for you. We want to buy one in Canada that will help us do the job of culling and converting our slides to a more usable format. The boxes of slides threaten to take over the storage room so we need help soon!

Thank you.
Enid, Ontario, Canada.

■ Rosalind Gardner on January 25th, 2009 7:11 pm ([Edit](#))

Enid,

With SO many slides to process and with both of us being so busy, we ended up buying a [Nikon Super COOLSCAN 5000 ED Slides & Negatives scanner](#) on eBay.

The learning curve is a little steeper but overall the quality and the swiftness at which this scanner works made the price difference worthwhile.

Besides, we'll likely re-sell it on eBay once we've finished converting all the slides to digital images.

Don't wait for it though... we still have a few thousand to do. 😊

Cheers,
Rosalind

See the link in my reply to Enid?

It's an eBay affiliate link that is coded to search for the product to which I am referring.

To see it in action, visit the post at: <http://bit.ly/HWd1Sa>

8. USE AN EMAIL SIGNATURE

You send email every day, don't you? Well, make your email work for you! Cheap but effective, an email signature line gets your message out every time you send an email.

For example, my 101Date.com signature line is:

+++

Rosalind Gardner Online

Dating Made Easy

<http://101Date.com>

+++

My standard signature line below links to my 'business card' site and blog, which then points visitors to my other sites. Note how it also links to my Twitter account.

+++

R O S A L I N D G A R D N E R

Author, Speaker, Internet Marketing Consultant <http://RosalindGardner.com>

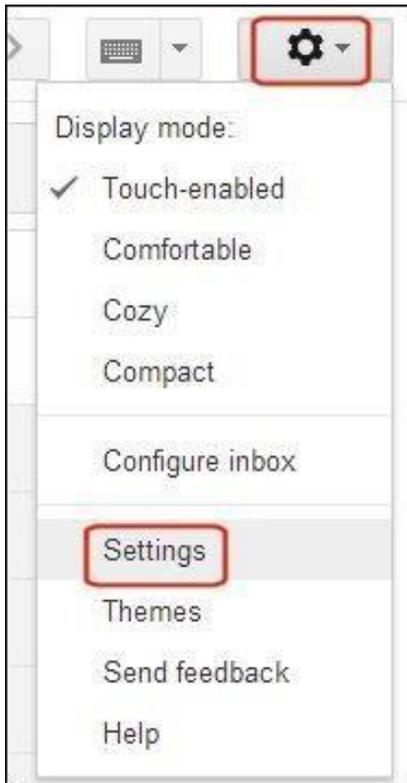
Twitter: <http://twitter.com/rosalindgardner/>

+++

Remember to add the 'http:/' before your URL, otherwise the URL won't be linked in the email that you send.

HOW TO CREATE A SIGNATURE FILE IN GMAIL

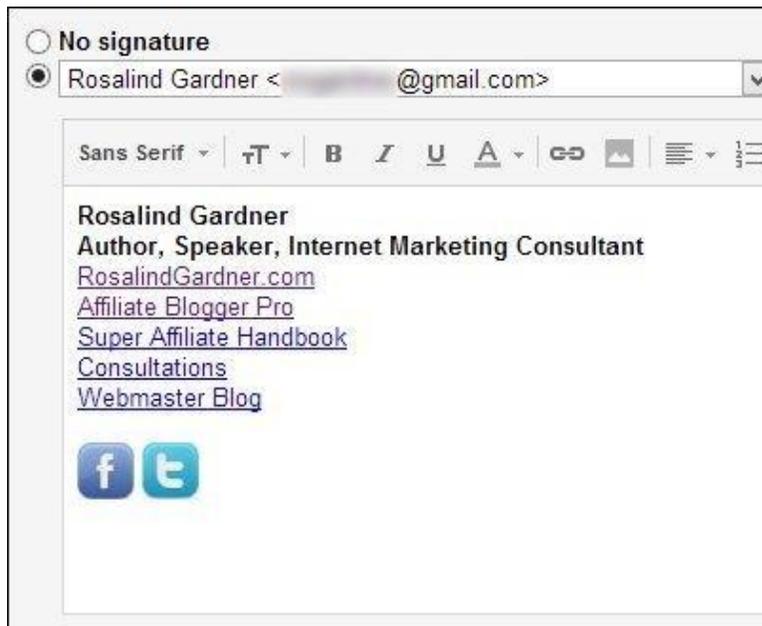
Click on the 'Settings' icon (circled in red in the figure below) to activate the dropdown menu. Scroll down the list and click on the word 'Settings' as shown in the graphic below.



The Settings page will open.

Scroll down until you see the “Signature” section with an empty text box.

Type your desired text for your signature file into the box. Format links as required. You can even add linked graphics as shown in the example shown in the figure below.



Your new signature file will be inserted automatically at the end of every email you send. Now every time you send out an email, your URL and promotional message will be included.

9. BLOGROLLING

In the same way that blog commenting can help to increase links into your site (and therefore traffic), link trading and blogrolling can also be of benefit.

As an affiliate, it can pay to exchange links with important sites within your niche. Just be sure that those sites are not your competitors' sites.

Blogrolling is the same thing, except that there is a nice little widget right within Wordpress that makes adding those links simple.

You add individual links under the 'Links' tab and then add the blogroll to your sidebar by finding 'Widgets' under 'Appearance' then clicking the 'Add' link next to the word 'Links'.

10. ADVERTISE IN NEWSLETTERS

There are tens of thousands of newsletters (or ezines) published online, and chances are excellent that there are many published on a topic relevant to your niche. Advertising in ezines is a low- cost and extremely effective way to bring qualified traffic to your site.

For a wealth of information about email advertising and to access targeted opt-in email lists where you can place your ads, visit <http://www.bestezines.com>

11. ISSUE PRESS RELEASES

Do you have an event scheduled or breaking news related to your site's topic? Send out a press release and announce it to the world!

For example, as a dating site webmaster you could survey your site visitors on their use of the Internet to meet other singles. Ask them if they've met anyone from a dating site offline. Ask if they've bought gifts online to send to their 'online' friends.

Report your results in a press release.

A well-written release can dramatically increase your sales, expose your company to the masses, and greatly enhance the image of your business or products.

12. USE AUCTIONS TO PROMOTE AFFILIATE PRODUCTS

Affiliate products may NOT be sold directly on eBay's site. Be sure you understand the auction site's rules and regulations completely before you start to place listings. The following is taken directly from eBay's Links Policy.

EBAY'S 'ABOUT ME' PAGE LINKING POLICY

The About Me page may not promote outside-of-eBay sales or prohibited items, nor may it contain links to commercial Web sites where goods from multiple sellers are aggregated by a common search engine.

Violations of this policy may result in a range of actions, including:

- About Me page removal
- Listing cancellation
- Limits on account privileges
- Account suspension
- Forfeit of eBay fees on cancelled listings
- Loss of PowerSeller status

Despite the caution above, there ARE ways to use eBay's incredible market reach to promote your affiliate business.

For example, let's say that you sell health and fitness products as an affiliate. Obviously, you know a great deal about this subject, because you are a high-caliber, 'expert' affiliate who knows how to add significant value to all of your merchants' products.

So, you use some of your expert knowledge about fitness to write a report called '3 Steps to the Perfect Tush.' Within that report you've included your affiliate links and links to your main site.

Let's say that your digitally downloadable report sells hundreds of times at a dollar or two per copy. After paying the insertion, final sale and/or eBay store subscription fees, you still enjoy a profit.

With each sale you capture the buyer's email address and add them to your list.

Within your well written report, your endorsements and affiliate product links continue to generate even more revenue for a long time to come. Do just a little bit of work to write that report and you too can use auctions to increase your affiliate income.

Join the eBay Partner Network at <https://partnernetwork.ebay.com/>

Offline marketing methods for affiliate sites are mostly a waste of time, and time IS money. However, if you have lots of both to spare, you may want to consider the following ways to go 'al fresco' with your site.

13. CAR DECALS

No doubt you've seen many cars plastered with Dot Com decals and made a mental note to yourself to check out the web site when you got home or to your office. How many times did you look up the URL? If you're like me, the answer is 'never,' which speaks to the effectiveness of ruining the paint job on your Mercedes' with your URL.

14. BUSINESS CARDS

These are highly effective marketing tools when you remember to put them in your wallet.

15. PERSONALIZED STATIONERY

Although it's unlikely that you will need to have business stationery printed as an affiliate marketer, I do recommend that you include your URL on any and all letters that you write. For example, your return address might look like this:

My Company Name

68 Someplace Avenue

Anywhere, State

USA 12345

(555) 444-2222

<http://myURL.com>

16. SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

As someone who is quite shy, the last thing I ever imagined myself doing was speaking at a conference.

But lo and behold, below is a picture of me moderating a panel at ad:tech in New York City.

I've now spoken at numerous conferences and am well past the initial fear.



Not only has speaking boosted my business, it has helped connect me with others in the industry from whom I learn and then pass that information along to my readers.

To boost your own business, consider speaking about your area of specialization at seminars and clubs.

17. CLASSIFIED ADS

Advertise your site in the classifieds section of local and regional newspapers. Do a small test first to see whether the return on investment (ROI) will be worthwhile.

18. TRADE PUBLICATIONS

The cost to advertise in a trade publication or journal can be prohibitive if you are starting a home-based affiliate marketing business on a budget. But it might still be worth your consideration.

TradePub.com offers free magazine trials in the following subject areas:

- Biopharmaceutical
- Business/Finance
- Computers

- Construction
- Education
- Engineering Design
- Farming & Agriculture
- Food & Beverage
- Government & Military
- Graphic Arts
- Healthcare
- Human Resources
- Industrial & Manufacturing
- Information Technology
- Insurance
- Internet
- Mechanical / Machine
- Meetings & Travel
- Multimedia Design
- Network / Communications
- Purchasing & Procurement
- Retail Sales & Marketing
- Telecom & Wireless
- Trade/Professional Services
- Transportation & Logistics
- Utility & Energy

Browse their extensive list of trade publications by industry, title, key word or geographic eligibility to find the titles that best match your interests. Simply complete the application form and submit it.

19. WEAR YOUR URL

Print some hats or t-shirts with your URL and logo and wear them proudly. Give them away so others may do the same. There is a slight chance someone will see and remember your site's URL until they get home to their computer.

If not, don't despair. Wearing your domain name proudly on your chest may have the beneficial side effect of helping to improve your posture.

20. GIVE AWAY PROMOTIONAL ITEMS

Become a sponsor at a conference related to your industry. Hundreds, if not thousands, of targeted consumers will be looking at your URL every time they pick up your pen or look at your mouse pad.

21. TELL YOUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY

This method works really well...well, maybe not so much.

I spent 2 years working on a major joint venture project. The day the site opened, I emailed homepage links to some of my friends and invited them to check out our wonderful new site.

Some visited immediately and we were soon the proud recipients of several rave reviews. Months later however, many still hadn't even seen the homepage.

While this method rates a 1 out of 10 in marketing terms, more often than not it ranks 1st in the 'ego boosting' department. By all means, share your accomplishments with your friends and family. With luck, they'll 'pass it on.'

22. HAPPY CUSTOMERS

This is one way to market your site that is worth its weight in gold. Happy customers spreading the word about your site is always a good thing – online, offline or via ESP.

By all means, do your best to attract free search engine traffic to your sites, but hedge your bets and use a diverse array of marketing methods.

Put some money into pay-per-click advertising to get the ball rolling.

Then start writing. Post articles, and then more articles to your blog. Broadcast them to your email subscribers, and post notices to your social networks.

Think 'income' and 'profit,' and then use the tools above to help you achieve both.

MANAGE YOUR BUSINESS

To keep your business on track, there are a number of tasks that need to be performed on a regular basis. In addition to discussing those tasks, I've included tips in this section to help you keep your business records organized and codes that will help you increase your productivity at the keyboard.

ORGANIZATION AND PRODUCTIVITY TIPS

ORGANIZE YOUR BOOKMARKS

One webmaster I know bookmarks every 'great' site he sees, without organizing those bookmarks into categorized folders.

By result, it can take him 5 minutes or longer simply to scroll through the list to find just one of those 'great' sites amongst the hundreds of bookmarks he has stored.

Basically, he wastes valuable time every day looking for bookmarks, files and other records essential to his web business.

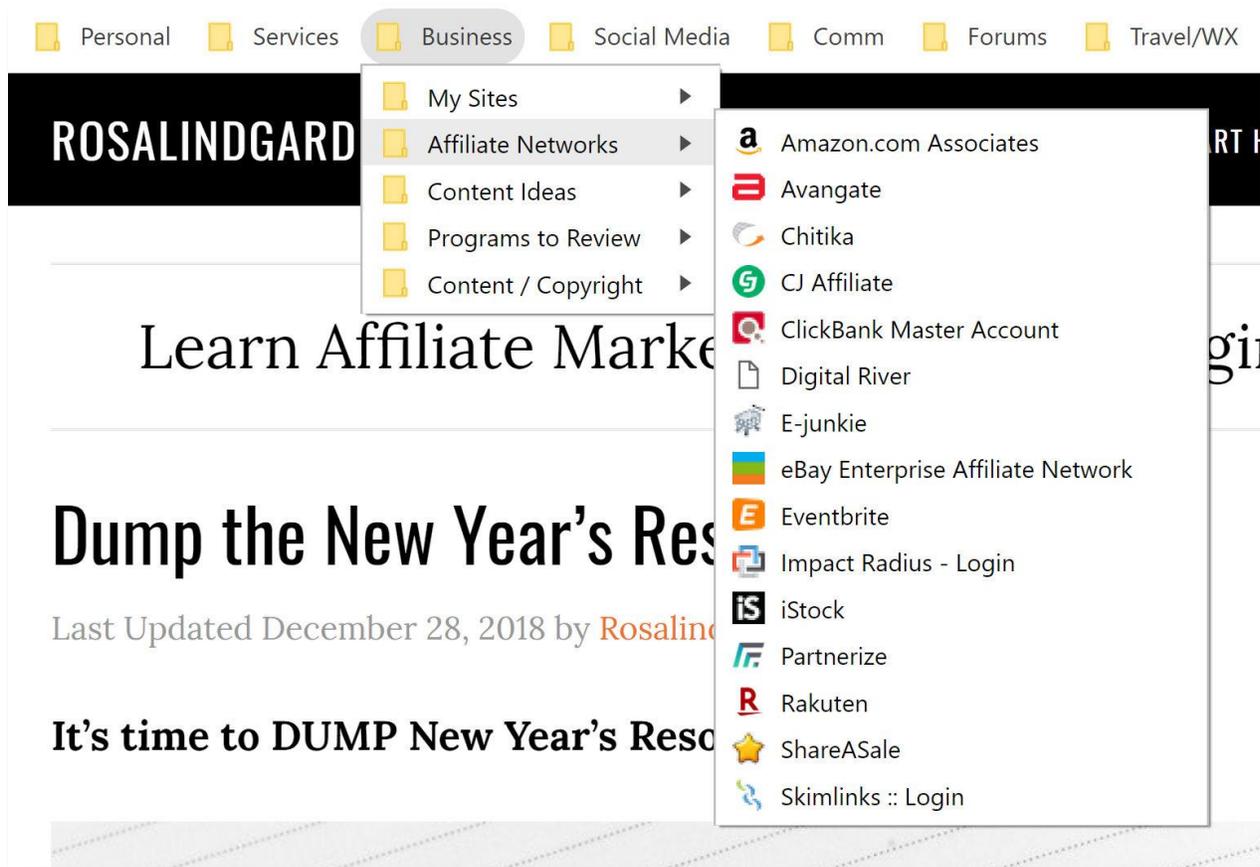
UGH!

Do you want to spend your time (life) like that?

Starting your business with good organization techniques is critical to your success.

Moreover, you'll save time – time that you can spend concentrating on marketing and making more money or, better yet, having fun.

The screenshot below shows you how I organize my bookmarks for easy access to my sites, affiliate commission information, software and sites that I use for research.

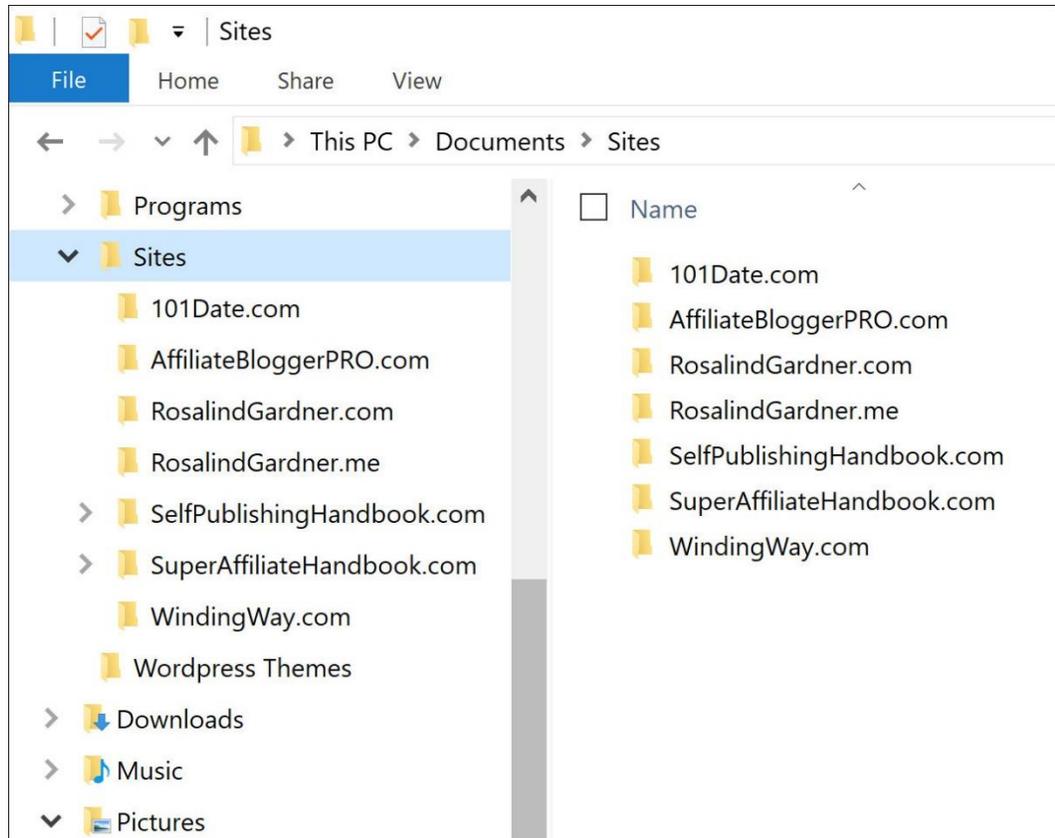


To save time on basic tasks, I recommend that you establish categories within your bookmarks, email program and computer file folders that contain documents relevant to your web business. Examples of categories include:

- Accounting / Financial
- Merchant Partners / Affiliate Programs
- Correspondence
- Newsletters
- Web Sites

Top-level categories are then broken down into more specific categories. I store all my web pages in folders named for their domains, i.e. RosalindGardner.com, 101Date.com, and RosalindGardner.me.

Look at the next screenshot to see how my site files are named and organized within the 'My Documents' folder on my computer.



All files belonging to those domains are stored in their corresponding folders.

USE A SPREADSHEET TO KEEP TRACK OF DATA

You will have different login information for many of the programs that you join. If you have a great memory you could memorize all that data, but the rest of us usually need assistance.

Here are 2 ways to keep track of your affiliate information.

A spreadsheet is basically a computerized ledger, and the best way to keep track of many aspects of your Internet business.

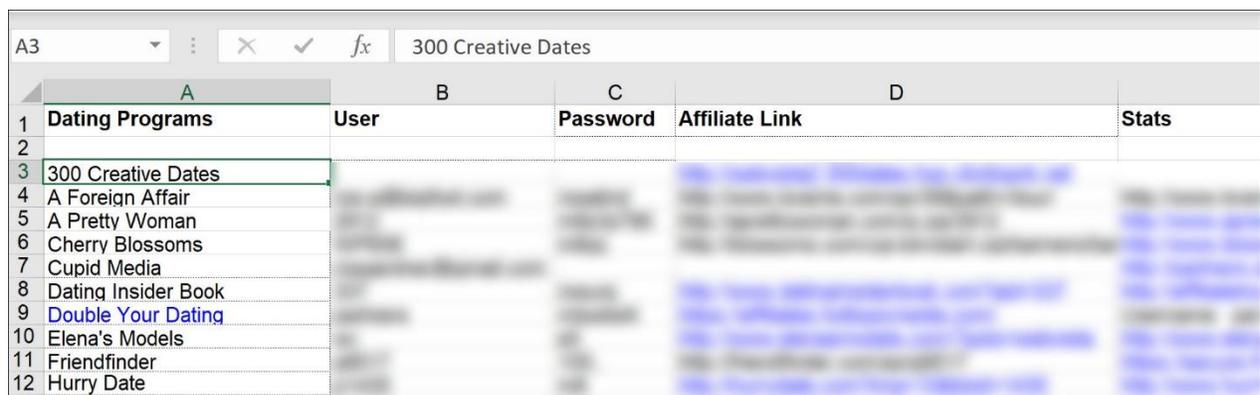
I use Microsoft Excel.

If you don't have spreadsheet software installed on your computer or a subscription to an online service such as Office 365, just Google "free spreadsheet software" to find a shareware solution that will work for you.

'Shareware' is software distributed on an honor system. Most shareware is free of charge, but the author usually requests that you pay a small fee if you like the program and use it regularly. By paying the fee, you can register your ownership of the software and in turn receive service assistance and updates.

You may use a spreadsheet to organize your data in a way that makes sense to you.

The next screenshot shows a portion of the spreadsheet that lists my dating programs.



	A	B	C	D	
1	Dating Programs	User	Password	Affiliate Link	Stats
2					
3	300 Creative Dates				
4	A Foreign Affair				
5	A Pretty Woman				
6	Cherry Blossoms				
7	Cupid Media				
8	Dating Insider Book				
9	Double Your Dating				
10	Elena's Models				
11	Friendfinder				
12	Hurry Date				

Although only 5 columns are shown in the graphic above, you can create as many columns as you like to display as much information about each program as you find necessary. I keep a link to this spreadsheet on my desktop and access it often.

Here are some suggestions for items to place on your own affiliate information spreadsheet.

- Program/Company Name
- Username
- Password
- Affiliate Links
- Broker links

- Affiliate Manager's contact info.
- Commission Info
- Remarks

USEFUL COMPUTER CODES AND MACROS

A macro is a way to automate a task that you perform repeatedly or on a regular basis. The following macros or computer codes are common across most Windows platforms and are worth memorizing for the time they can save during your daily tasks.

- Ctrl + A - Selects all (in a text)
- Ctrl + C – copy
- Ctrl + N - new window
- Ctrl + O - Opens a document/webpage
- Ctrl + P - Prints, in pretty much every program.
- Ctrl + Q - Quits most programs.
- Ctrl + R – Refreshes
- Ctrl + T - new tab
- Ctrl + V – paste
- Ctrl + W - exit screen
- Ctrl + X - 'Cuts' text. This 'deletes' the text, but copies it to your clipboard.

MANAGE ON-GOING TASKS

MONITOR YOUR SITE

Is your site online? Type your URL into your browser's address bar, refresh the page and check it at least once a day!

Pay-per-click advertising costs add up whether your site is functional or not. If your site is down, you are paying for advertising, but no one is buying.

Broken sales links are the bane of an affiliate marketer's existence.

CHECK YOUR EMAIL

Merchant partners send out new offers and the occasional affiliate newsletter, but in my experience most don't communicate with affiliates other than to advise of new offers. Likewise is true of the affiliate networks, which will notify you of new merchants and those that have left the network. Keep your eyes open for emails with the subject line: 'Check Your Merchant Status.'

You won't receive much email from customers, as most of those will be directed to the merchant.

However, if you DO receive email queries about products or services offered on your site, respond promptly with either the answer, or an offer to redirect their question as appropriate. Both the customer and the merchant will recognize and appreciate your effort. Because the customer asked YOU the question, it means that she trusts your site, and is probably planning to buy the product.

You may receive 'remove' requests from newsletter subscribers via email, despite the unsubscribe link automatically placed in your newsletters. Remove their email address from the list immediately. Justified or not, spam complaints are something you want to avoid.

RESEARCH

Spend some time every week reviewing and researching the news in your industry and technological advancements for online businesses. Learning about new methods and tools for doing business can save you time and money down the road.

I use Google Alerts (<http://www.google.com/alerts>) to notify me of news related to my site topics. You enter a search query (i.e. online dating) and where on the web you want to search -- ranging from blogs, news, video results to everything. Pick your language, the region and how often you want to receive the information. The last choice is whether you wish to receive your news via email or feed.

POST TO YOUR BLOG

You don't have to blog every day. But to get more visitors and more sales --- post as often as you can, especially when you are just starting out. Once you've established a loyal audience, post at least one new article to your blog every week to keep it fresh. This will encourage your visitors to keep coming back.

PUBLISH YOUR NEWSLETTER

I publish a newsletter for webmasters, using Aweber's autoresponder service. I recommend that you publish your newsletter at least once a week. Other Internet marketers report that their best results come from publishing once per day. After testing, you will be able to decide which frequency works best for your audience.

CHECK YOUR STATES

When I started out, I checked my stats hourly, and sometimes more often.

Now that I'm familiar with the income 'trends,' I check my 'key partner sites' daily to see how my business is performing. I recommend that you check your statistics daily until you know what to expect day-by-day and week-by-week.

Simply visit the statistics interface for each network and independent merchants and input your total revenues into Quicken or a spreadsheet. Using Quicken will also keep you informed as to whether certain checks are overdue.

Tally your income and expenses once a month to stay on top of your overall business picture. Enter data into your spreadsheets to see which direction your traffic and sales conversions are taking.

YEAR-END TAXES

Whether you operate as a sole proprietor or incorporate your business, you'll need to prepare your taxes.

SET GOALS FOR THE COMING YEAR

Although I set daily, weekly and monthly goals, I find it very helpful to set annual financial goals and then create a master plan to execute those goals on a yearly basis.

MAKE TIME FOR YOURSELF

A business that involves sitting at your computer for lengthy periods of time can lead to weight gain and repetitive strain injury if you don't take proper care of yourself. I personally try to exercise before I turn on my computer in the morning. That is the best way to not get 'side-tracked' by business interests.

Make up a 'cheat sheet' that lists your tasks and use it!

EVALUATE YOUR BUSINESS

It feels great to retrieve commission checks from your mailbox and deposit them into your bank account on a regular basis. Unfortunately, with those checks you'll find credit card statements and other bills for your business expenses. Make sure that the amount of those checks always exceeds the bills, or no one will be happy - not you, or your creditors.

To stay on top of your balance sheet and make sure your affiliate marketing business stays in the black; you must pay attention to a number of different statistics.

To learn exactly how well your business is doing and track its trends, you will need your Web site statistics and affiliate sales figures.

Once you've collected and recorded all the relevant data, the numbers then get crunched and analyzed. In the final analysis you will learn exactly where your business stands and where it tends to be headed.

Before you start recording and analyzing data, you need to answer the following questions.

Let's go through them one at a time.

WHAT PERCENTAGE OF MY VISITORS BECAME CUSTOMERS?

This percentage is known as the visitor-to-customer conversion rate, or simply, your conversion rate. When you hear other webmasters speak of their 'conversions' or say something like, 'That program converts at 1.5 percent,' they are talking about their visitor-to-customer conversion rate.

Average conversion ratios for affiliates range between .5 and 1.5 percent. Super affiliates often convert their traffic by much higher percentages. Some of my sites convert visitors to customers at rates between 6 and 20 percent.

In the following example, let's say your site receives 30,000 visitors in a month, and 375 of those visitors became new customers. The formula is shown next.

Conversion Rate = Number of new sales divided by the number of unique visitors. E.g. 375 new sales / 30,000 unique visitors is a conversion rate of 1.25%.

This is probably the most important number you will ever deal with in your affiliate business. It tells you exactly how well you convince your visitors to buy your affiliate merchants' products.

WHAT IS THE CONVERSION RATE FOR EACH AFFILIATE PROGRAM?

This calculation is similar to the one above. The only difference is that we use the commission and traffic statistics gathered from the individual affiliate programs, instead of totals for the site.

Knowing how conversion rates compare between programs is useful when deciding how to direct your promotional efforts.

For example, if you discover that Program 'A' converts at 1.25% and Program 'B' converts at 2.5%, it might be time to spend more time and effort to promote Program

'A.'

Program Conversion Rate = *Number of New Sales divided by Number of Unique Visitors Sent to Affiliate Site X 100.*

E.g. 22 (new sales) / 600 (unique visitors) X 100 = 3.66%

HOW MUCH DOES EACH VISITOR COST?

This calculation determines your 'cost per visitor'. To get your 'net revenue per visitor' simply subtract the results of this calculation from your 'revenue per visitor'.

For example, if you spent \$2500.00 in advertising, and sent 30,000 unique visitors to the merchant's site, your cost per visitor is \$.083 per visitor.

The formula is as follows:

Visitor Cost = *Advertising cost divided by number of unique visitors. E.g.*

\$2,500.00 advertising / 30,000 uniques = \$0.083 per visitor.

HOW MUCH IS EACH VISITOR WORTH?

Understanding how much your site earns per visitor will help you determine how much you can spend on advertising to acquire new customers.

To learn how much revenue you earn per visitor, you need to know your affiliate commission amounts.

Collect this data from each one of your affiliate merchant partners at the end of the month.

Recording the amount of commission you expect from each merchant also makes it easier to see if amounts are correct when your checks arrive.

To calculate net revenue per visitor, simply subtract visitor cost from revenue per visitor.

Commission earned divided by number of unique visitors.

For example, \$7,000.00 commission / 30,000 uniques - \$0.23 gross revenues per visitor.

In the examples above, each visitor would generate a net revenue of 14.7 cents.

Of course, a much easier calculation would be to subtract your expenses from your income! Assuming however that you want to know all the nitty-gritty details, let's look at how you will collect all the necessary data to make your calculations.

COLLECTING DATA

Each time a surfer requests one of your Web pages, all the details and files associated with that page are recorded in what is called the server log, which is stored on your host's server.

To access this information, your host may provide full web site statistics reporting, or just the raw logs. If all you get is raw server logs, then you'll probably want to use log analyzer software, as raw logs are very difficult to make sense of otherwise.

Here is some of the information you can derive from analyzing your Web site's server logs:

- Traffic data including unique visitors, number of visits, pages viewed, hits, bytes.
- These numbers will be broken down on a monthly, daily and hourly basis.
- Number of visitors by country of origin.
- Numbers of spider/robot visits.
- Traffic source IP addresses.
- The number of times each page on your site was viewed.

- Which pages are used as entry and exit pages.
- The number and percentage of hits by file type.
- The number and percentage of hits by browser type.
- The number and percentage of hits by operating system type.
- Whether visits originated from bookmarks, search engine, newsgroup, links from external sites (other than search engines).

Most good Web hosts give you access to your server logs. If you don't know how to find your server logs, consult your host's help files or contact them and ask.

Affiliate Program Sales Data - In addition to information about your site's traffic, you'll need to collect information about each of the affiliate program products that you sell on your site.

You should already be checking your sales and commission information on a regular basis. In addition to number of sales and commission earned, now you'll also need to determine the number of unique visitors you send to the merchant's site.

If the statistics about the product that you sell is found through an affiliate network, like CJ Affiliate, be sure you gather information about the individual product, and not your collective CJ Affiliate statistics.

GROW YOUR BUSINESS

If you aren't working to grow your business, your business will decline.

From negotiating commission increases, using 404 pages and foreign currency rates to your advantage and adding components to your site that are designed specifically for affiliates, there are a number of ways to make sure your business continues to grow.

3 WAYS TO NEGOTIATE A COMMISSION INCREASE

How much is your effort worth?

It's a sad fact that as advertising costs and other Internet business expenses increase, net profits decrease. That is, unless you do something about it.

Simply because a commission rate for a particular affiliate program is posted at 15 or 20%, doesn't mean that rate is written in stone.

This is where it literally pays to have a personal relationship with the affiliate manager.

Most program management software allows merchants to set different rates for individual affiliates. Here are a few ways to entice managers to get in there and tweak your rates up a notch or five.

1. PROVE YOURSELF

If you find an excellent product that you know you can sell, it sometimes makes good sense to sign up for the affiliate program despite low commission rates in the hope that your performance will lead to a higher rate.

You would promote the product for a few months, and during that time establish a friendly working relationship with the affiliate manager.

After proving yourself as a webmaster who knows how to drive high traffic volume and convert visitors to sales, ask the affiliate program manager to raise your commission rates. Be specific, and ask for a set dollar amount or percentage of the sale.

The worst that can happen is that the manager denies your request, in which case you may choose to drop the program, or seriously restrict traffic to their site.

In many cases, when valued affiliates drop programs or restrict traffic, affiliate managers quickly respond by negotiating better deals for those affiliates.

The key here is to prove your value as an affiliate first, then ask the company to acknowledge that value in monetary terms. It's called building leverage.

The good companies always will compensate properly, and well, there are enough good companies that you don't need to deal with those that don't value your true worth.

2. ASK AND YE SHALL RECEIVE

If you've proven yourself as a valuable affiliate who sends LOTS of traffic and generates LOTS of revenue, with whom the merchant partner likes to do business, most often they will be willing to negotiate a higher commission structure for you.

Dating service affiliate managers often email and ask me to review and list their services on my dating service review sites.

When I receive these requests, I immediately visit the site and quickly look it over to make sure that it appears professional, attractive, and suitable for my audience.

My next step is to visit their affiliate home page to check their commission rates and program specifications.

If I think the commission rates are too low, I don't just click away and forget their request. Regardless of whether or not I liked the program, I will respond, provided that their email was personalized.

If I liked both the site and the product, I tell the owner or affiliate manager that I think they've got an excellent service that might be eligible for inclusion on my site, if they are willing to raise their commission rates. I then specify the minimum terms that I am willing to accept and leave the ball in their court.

Half the time, I don't hear back from them.

That's OK, because it's the other half that counts. Merchants who understand that earning fifty percent of my sale is preferable to 90 percent of nothing are usually happy to accept my terms.

At that point, we're on our way to building a happy, profitable relationship.

3. CLAIM YOUR DUE

I recently had a call from a merchant partner asking me to send more traffic to one of their niche dating sites.

She cited that my conversions for that site were in the 40 percent range - which is very high - and that we would both benefit from the increased traffic.

The program in question pays per free member signup, rather than a percentage of actual sales, and although I don't usually sign up for 'pay per lead' programs, the company didn't offer a 'percentage of sale' option. I signed up for it only because it was one of very few in that specific niche. I used the program as inducement to get folks to my site, but once there, directed my visitors' attention to more profitable options.

The commission per lead was very small, so I didn't want to make any more effort in that direction.

During our conversation, the affiliate manager pointed out that at 20 percent, my free-to-paid member conversions were also very high, and that I should consider joining their percentage program.

I was shocked.

That was the first time I'd heard that they even offered a percentage of sales option for that program. I asked when they made that change, and was told that it had been in place for a few months. I asked why affiliates hadn't been informed of this program improvement. She told me that no notice had been sent because they were busy and under-staffed.

I did a quick scan of my sales statistics while we were still on the phone, and saw that my commissions were around \$600 less than I would have earned through the percentage program.

I felt cheated.

I may be blonde, but I'm not (that) dumb.

I bluntly told the manager that it wasn't fair to use their staffing situation as an excuse to shortchange affiliates on their commissions, and that I would stop sending traffic to the program altogether, unless they made amends.

Sure enough, she switched me over to the percentage program immediately, and sent me a check for more than \$600 to rectify the deficit.

I took a risk by stating exactly how their actions affected me, but it was a risk worth taking. I'm now happy to send that program all the traffic I can deliver.

Strive for excellence in all your affiliate endeavors, and demand that you be compensated fairly for your efforts.

(It also pays to have your facts and figures handy so that you can do the math quickly when having important discussions with affiliate program managers.)

GET THE MOST OUT OF YOUR 404 PAGES

You've probably seen '404 - Page Not Found' errors hundreds of times. If visitors find them on your site, you could be losing money.

They see that page and either click the 'Back' button or close the browser window. That doesn't have to be the case, however, if you design a customized 404 error page for your site.

Most blog themes include a 404 page to which visitors are redirected if the link they clicked doesn't exist.

This is what the 404 at 101Date.com looks like...

Not found, error 404

The page you are looking for no longer exists. Perhaps you can return back to the site's [homepage](#) and see if you can find what you are looking for. Or, you can try finding it with the information below.

Pages:

- › [5-Star TOP Sites](#)
- › [About](#)
- › [All Dating Sites Reviewed on 101Date.com](#)
- › [Article Archives](#)
- › [Contact Us](#)
- › [Disclosure](#)
- › [Free Trial Dating Sites](#)

Take a minute of your time to customize that 404 error page and reduce potential commission losses!

USE FOREIGN EXCHANGE TO YOUR ADVANTAGE

When I started affiliate marketing back in early 1998, getting paid in U.S. Dollars was a huge bonus to me as a Canadian resident. At that time, one US dollar was valued at \$1.43 Canadian. By late 2001, the greenback translated into \$1.60 Canadian.

Woohoo!

Even if my merchants' product prices and commission rates remained the same, I got a raise simply by virtue of fluctuating foreign currency rates.

For example, let's say that one month I sold 100 dating service memberships at \$29.95 for a 50% commission and earned \$1497.50 US.

In January 1998 that \$1497.50 was worth \$2141.42 Canadian, and by November 2001, it was worth \$2396.00 Canadian dollars, or almost \$255.00 CAD more than in 1998!

Unfortunately, the U.S. greenback started slipping steadily against other currencies by early 2002. On April 23rd, 2008 the US dollar was worth only \$1.01126 Canadian. Using the example above, my \$1497.50 USD commission check was then only worth a paltry \$1,469.23 CAD in October 2007 - a whopping \$926.77 LESS than it was worth in late 2001.

Here are some examples of how the US dollar performed against various currencies between 2002 and 2007.

- **British Pound**

January 2002 - 0.69824 GBP October 2007 - 0.48984 GBP

- **Australian Dollar**

January 2002 - 1.93418 AUD October 2007 - 1.11478 AUD

- **Euro**

January 2002 - 1.93418 AUD October 2007 - 1.11478 AUD

Those were fairly sizeable drops across the board... and a pretty depressing situation for non-U.S.- based affiliates who earn their incomes in US dollars.

However, there are a couple of things affiliate marketers can do to protect their affiliate income from these disastrous declines.

The first option is to work about 40% harder to bolster revenues to 2001 equivalent values. However, because I'm basically lazy, working harder is never my first choice.

The second option involves using foreign exchange rate changes to your advantage by selling products offered by merchants located in your own country, priced in your own currency.

The primary benefit of promoting 'local merchants' is to help your visitors save money by reducing shipping costs and eliminating customs duties on goods imported from the U.S. Basically, most of us prefer to shop locally if we can get the same product at the same or lower price. Your task then is to find merchants that price products and pay their affiliates in your own currency. That unfortunately is still easier said than done.

The pickings were pretty slim when I searched Google for 'Canadian' 'affiliate programs.' A site that listed itself as a directory of Canadian affiliate programs - wasn't. Furthermore, most

Canadian merchants that set Canadian dollar prices on their sites, either pay their affiliates in U.S. dollars, or are affiliated with networks that pay affiliates in US dollars.

U.K. affiliates will have an easier time finding U.K.-based merchants that pay in Pounds Sterling.

Check out the following UK affiliate networks and directories:

Deal Group Media - <http://www.ukaffiliates.com/>

AWIN - <https://www.awin.com/gb>

Trade Doubler - <https://www.tradedoubler.com/en/>

Here's something to watch for if you decide to affiliate with merchants who work in your own currency.

At CJ Affiliate I discovered that if you promote the Canadian Shopping Channel, which sells and pays commission in Canadian dollars, your commissions are first converted to U.S. dollars for CJ's purposes, then back into to Canadian dollars when they deposit the commissions in your Canadian dollar bank account.

You'd lose money each time the commission went through the exchange process.

To avoid being penalized by currency exchanges before the commission hits your bank, I suggest setting up a separate CJ Affiliate account just for affiliations with your 'local merchants.' Be sure to set the 'functional currency' on that account to your country's currency.

U.S. affiliates can also take advantage of drops in the U.S. dollar by selling for foreign- based merchants. When or if the U.S. dollar drops, you will actually get a raise on each of those promotions.

One bright note --- as of February 16th, 2009 the U.S. dollar is back up to \$1.24 against the Canadian dollar. Although not as thrilling as \$1.60, it's better than a kick in the youknow-what.

Expand your reach by taking advantage of any and all opportunities at home and abroad. It is the WORLD-WIDE web after all.

TRANSLATE YOUR SITE

There are substantial foreign markets ready and willing buy the products that you sell, but that won't happen unless they can read and understand your content!

Numerous online and professional translation services are available to translate the text of your site into virtually any language. The most popular online translation service is perhaps AltaVista's BabelFish at <http://babelfish.altavista.com/>

I wouldn't use the service to translate more than 2 or 3 words phrases unless you don't mind appearing truly weird. For example, I translated the first bit of my 'About Us' page from English into French.

The English version reads:

Ed and I have been friends since 1977, or almost 30 years at the time of writing.

When Ed retired in May 2006, I convinced him to get the hell out of the suburban Toronto rat race, and 'move west old man' to my little piece of paradise in the Okanagan Valley of British Columbia.

The French translation worked out to:

En tant qu'un écrivain indépendant / blogger / acheteur superbe de filiale - le travail est amusement et ayant l'amusement gagne ma subsistance. Êtes-vous un auteur avec le wanderlust? Avez-vous un désir situé en profondeur de stopper votre travail et de commencer à vivre votre vie à son plus plein? Je peux vous aider à remonter votre stratégie. Lisez attentivement la formation et les services de conseil énumérés à cette page. Je suis toujours heureux d'aider!

When I translated that back into English I got:

Ace has freelance writer/blogger/Super Affiliate marketer - work is fun and having fun earns my keep. Does are you have writer with wanderlust? Does C you cut has deep-seated wished to quit your job and start living room your life to its fullest? I edge help you could your range together plan. Peruse the training and consulting services listed one this page. I' m always happy to help!

I'd suggest that it's perhaps best to pay for a real translation service.

PROBLEM-SOLVING AND AVOIDANCE

Sometimes 'stuff' happens.

Here are some examples of that 'stuff' and some suggestions on how to avoid problems with affiliate programs, your site.

ISSUES WITH AFFILIATE PROGRAMS

Rejected applications and terminated affiliations happen from time to time. Read the following section to find out how to handle (and prevent) issues with affiliate programs.

REJECTED APPLICATIONS

A letter like the one I received from a merchant in the Commission Junction affiliate network (now CJ Affiliate) is very disappointing to receive.

From: Some Merchant

Subject: Sorry, your application was not approved

Date: 2008-01-16 12:31:05.0

Dear Rosalind Gardner,

Thank you for applying to Some Merchant. We regret to inform you that your application was not approved for this program. This is not intended as disapproval of the quality or value of your Web site. Each advertiser determines how many and what types of publishers they will accept in their program for various reasons. You are welcome to apply to other advertiser programs in the Commission Junction network at any time. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause you.

For assistance, please use the 'Support' drop-down menu at the top of this page.

Best regards,

Client Services Commission Junction

To avoid being on the receiving end of such a letter, be sure to read and understand all the ins and outs of the program you wish to join. Then dot your 'I's' and cross your 'T's' when submitting your application.

Of course, even affiliate managers make mistakes sometimes.

If you think you've received a letter like the one above in error, contact the affiliate program manager and very politely ask why your site was rejected. It's also a good idea to state why you feel your site is a good match for the program.

And now for the good news – I phoned the program manager after receiving the above letter, and their program manager immediately reversed the decision when I outlined the promotional methods I planned for their program.

TERMINATED AFFILIATIONS

Not getting accepted into an affiliate program, for whatever reason, is hard to take, but getting terminated once you are 'in' is even worse.

Dear Rosalind Gardner,

We regret to inform you that you have been dropped from the First PREMIER Bank advertiser program, and you will no longer be affiliated with this advertiser as of 1/23/03. This is not intended as disapproval of the quality or value of your Web site. Each CJ advertiser has the option to determine how many and what types of publishers they will approve to their program, and they may also make changes to their program which warrant removing some of their publishers. In this case, the advertiser has supplied the following reason for removal:

Website volume does not meet minimum requirement of 10,000 visitors/month.

You must remove any banners or links you are hosting on your Web site for this program at your earliest convenience. You are welcome to apply to and to host links from other Commission Junction advertisers at any time. Login to the member area at <http://www.cj.com/login.jsp> to find our current advertiser programs and to retrieve their links. Commission Junction values your participation in the CJ Network and we apologize for any inconvenience this may cause you.

Please be aware that this decision was not made by Commission Junction but by the advertiser. For assistance, please use the 'Support' drop-down menu at the top of the Account Manager.

Best Regards,

Client Services

Commission Junction

OUCH!

That's what happens when you join an affiliate program too soon. When setting up my credit card offers site, I applied early to the best merchants. As luck would have it, Christmas, New Year's and life got in the way, and I did no work at all on the site for almost two months. First PREMIER Bank saw no traffic coming from my site to theirs, so they dropped me from their program.

To avoid having this happen to you, get 90% of your site together before applying to programs. In fact, I recommend that BEFORE applying to a program, write descriptions and endorsements for the products you plan to promote.

Once accepted, all you'll have to do is add your links and use pay-per-click to drive traffic to your site right away. Not only will you build revenue faster, you'll prevent nasty occurrences such as the one above.

5 GOOD REASONS TO DROP THAT PROGRAM!

Sometimes you can't tell until after you've joined a program that it's not going to work out. Here are 5 circumstances that are sufficient cause to drop an affiliate program.

1. Program Spam

Although it may seem incredible that an affiliate program manager would spam his or her own affiliates, it does happen.

For that reason, I recommend that you create individual email addresses for the programs that you join and the services you use. For example, at the time you sign up to promote XYZ.com's product, create the address XYZ@mydomain.com.

Spam should never be condoned. If you start receiving spam to that address, drop the program.

2. Insufficient Notice of Program Changes

Affiliate managers are busy people and everyone makes mistakes from time to time. However, it seems that affiliate managers fail to realize that affiliates too are busy people.

Here is a real email that I received on August 28th.

URGENT: Change your links on August 29!

Dear XYZ Associate,

We're about to reveal some very exciting changes this week that will make it easier than ever for you to earn commissions with us! To take advantage of these changes, you must change all the XYZ links on your site on August 29. Please read below for details...

What's going on? We're updating our look and changing our name to better reflect the fun and excitement we know singles are looking for. On August 29, we will become XYZ2.com™!

What's 'XYZ2.com™'? XYZ2.com™ will be everything that XYZ.com™ is, but better. We've improved our functionality and made the sign up process even easier. We believe these changes will encourage more of your visitors to become members...and that means higher commissions for you!

*What do you have to do? You *MUST* change your banners, tiles and links on August 29, 2001. We will not be able to track or compensate you for members that are generated through old links after that date.*

Please visit our Associates area now at <http://associates.XYZ2.com> and choose from the great new selection of banners, tiles and linking options.

Want to make the most of this exciting change? Since you're changing those old links anyway, we encourage you to review how and where you promote XYZ.com.com on your site. You may want to consider including news about the exciting upgrade from XYZ.com.com to XYZ2.com.com in any newsletters or on your website. This is just the

kind of change that gets people interested, and that could translate into increased commissions for you!

Click below to log in to the Associates Program to choose your new links, but please note they will not be functional until August 29th!

See you soon!

XYZ2.com Associates Program.

In effect the program manager wanted his affiliates to change and upload all their new links at exactly midnight on August 29th.

No one goes on vacation during August, right?

Especially NOT in the Northern Hemisphere where this merchant is based. There was absolutely NO chance that affiliates might return from a week-long holiday to discover that they'd paid to send traffic to XYZ.com when their links were no longer valid.

No, not a chance.

This was more than just untimely. It was thoughtless and inconsiderate and more than sufficient cause to drop this program.

3. Program Downtime

Merchant sites and affiliate tracking goes down from time to time.

However, for affiliates who pay to send traffic to those sites, there is a certain protocol most good affiliate merchants follow. First they tell their affiliates about the outage immediately and then they compensate for lost revenue on the basis of past performance.

Some programs don't play by the 'rules' as shown in the following example.

Hello [Affiliate Name],

The site is back to 100% normal capacity and fully operational. If you stopped sending traffic you can begin sending it heavily again! Thanks tremendously!

CHEERS TO MORE TRAFFIC AND MORE SUCCESS!

Thanks,

CEO XYZSite.com

Back to normal? Stopped sending traffic? Huh? There was NO prior notification sent to affiliates that any trouble existed with the site. Although the company apologized for their 'oversight,' they didn't offer to compensate affiliates who lost out when they couldn't change their links in the nick of time.

If you ever receive a notice such as the one above, contact the affiliate program manager and demand compensation on the basis of past performance. If he or she does not respond in your favor, drop the program.

4. Customer Complaints

Do you get repeated complaints about a specific product, service or merchant?

If you have a good relationship with the Affiliate Program manager, pass your visitors comments along. Good merchants and managers will listen and make the needed improvements.

If they don't, drop the program. It's your reputation that is at stake when you recommend poor products to your visitors.

5. Late or Non-Payment

Keep track of your affiliate program earnings and the checks as they arrive.

If a check is slow to arrive, contact the affiliate program manager and let them know. If the payments are often slow to arrive, it may be best to drop the program.

It is very rare that you will come across a merchant who fails to pay his affiliates.

If you have been cheated out of commissions, contact the Better Business Bureau. Take screenshots of the affiliate interface that shows what you are owed. Then do other affiliates a favor and post your experience in the popular affiliate forums. Name names and put the 'bad guys' out of business.

In summary, I've joined, then dropped and later re-joined a program after improvements were made to either the product or the program. Don't hesitate to do the same. After all, it's YOUR money!

ISSUES WITH WEBMASTERS & OTHER AFFILIATES

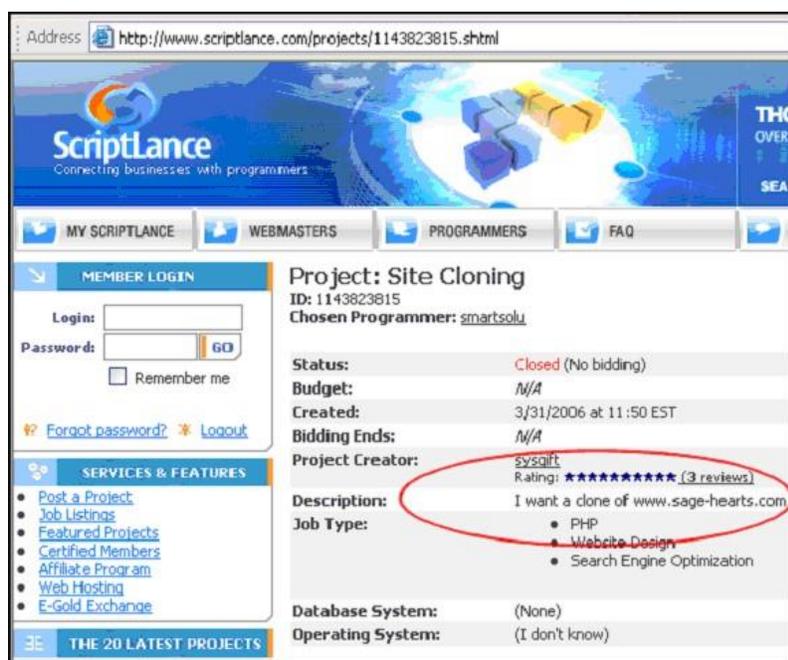
Thievery occurs on the web much as it does in 'real-world' retail stores, only perhaps more frequently and with fewer calls to justice --- unfortunately.

But knowledge is power, so in this section you'll learn how to catch thieves that will copy and steal your content and how to avoid commission theft.

CONTENT THEFT

Sometimes you will find webmasters who like your web site SO much that they decide to copy the whole thing.

For example, the figure below is a screen capture of a webmaster who requested a clone made of my old Sage-Hearts.com site through Scriptlance.



From time to time you'll stumble across a webmaster who has published an article of yours on his or her site without including a link to your site.

Cloning and copying sites and content is theft, pure and simple. You must be on the lookout for webmasters that steal your content and have them shut down as soon as possible. No one

should be permitted to profit from your hard work. Furthermore, you don't want Google to accuse you of having duplicate content and lower your search engine rankings simply by virtue of someone else's thievery.

If contact information is available on their site, I contact the webmaster and politely ask them to either include the URL to my site or to remove my article. Most, but not all, will comply with the request.

For those who don't, I sometimes trust karma to do its magic and chock it up as 'the cost of doing business.'

HOW TO CATCH A THIEF

The easiest way to catch thieves is to plant special words and phrases in your articles and on your site that only you would use. Then search for those phrases on Google.

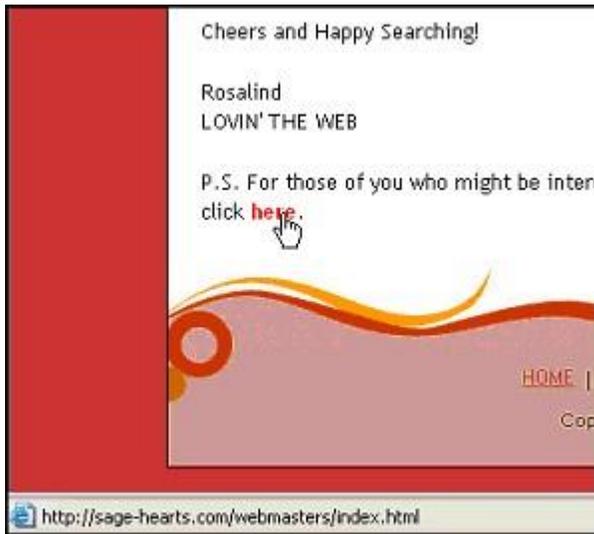
For example, my 'About Us' page (<http://101date.com/about/>) at 101Date.com begins with the paragraph:

'Our webmaster, site designer, writer, proof reader, editor, publisher, graphics and animation artist, site reviewer, 'feature sites' judge and jury, marketing specialist, traffic analyst; chief cook, bottle washer and keyboard duster all welcome you to our little corner of the World Wide Web.'

That paragraph was written in 1998, and should be quite unique on the Web. Yet it is amazing how many other sites have that paragraph on their 'About Us' pages.

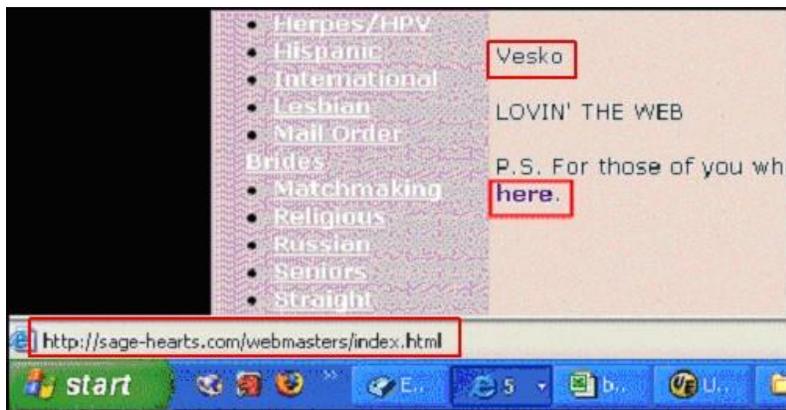
Example of Stolen Site Content

The 'AFFILIATE THIEVES - MY SITE' screenshot to the right shows a corner of the 'About Us' page on the old Sage-Hearts site with the cursor over the word 'here.'



You can see that the link to the 'Webmasters' page at <http://sage-hearts.com/webmasters/> shows up in the status bar.

Now look at the *AFFILIATE THIEVES - THIEF'S SITE screenshot*, taken from the 'About Us' page on meet-date-love.com.



When the cursor is over the word 'here' it also links to the same page on SageHearts.com (my old dating site)!

THIEF!!!

It seems that Vesko - meet-date-love.com's webmaster – is also 'LOVIN' THE WEB' (all in CAPS).

Actually, Vesko had stolen the entire site design from Sage-Hearts.com and in many cases, had forgotten to change my affiliate links to his own.

HOW TO STOP A THIEF

The *AFFILIATE THIEF GETS SUSPENDED* figure below shows what happened to an affiliate who cloned Sage-Hearts.com. Unfortunately for Vesko, I know the affiliate managers for all my dating site programs, so I just call them and tell them about the thief.



The affiliate managers are familiar with my site, so they can immediately see that the content and site design are copied.

They then cancel the thief's affiliation with their program.

What is more fun, however, is having the thief's site shut down completely. To get a thief's site shut down, first do a Whois Lookup at Whois.net.

The Whois results lists the ISP that hosts the site. Contact the ISP, and include information about your site, which will have an earlier domain registration date.

Include the links for pages on your site that have been copied, along with links to the copied pages on the thief's site.

In most cases, a Gateway Timeout on the domain will be the happy result of your efforts.

A 504 Gateway Timeout browser error means that one server did not receive a timely response from another server that it was accessing while attempting to load the web page or fill another request by the browser. This usually means that the other server is down, not working properly ... or the site is offline permanently.

COMMISSION THEFT

There are two types of commission thieves - consumers and other affiliates.

Consumers steal affiliate commissions by removing an affiliate's ID from the URL prior to clicking through to the site. It baffles (and cheeses) me that consumers would deprive an

affiliate of their rightful commission. As it costs them no more money to buy through the affiliate, I must assume that these folks are inherently mean-spirited.

How do they change the URL to cheat the affiliate? Well, for example, my affiliate URL for the FriendFinder's dating site is: <http://friendfinder.com/go/g9517>

Surfers see that URL in their browser status bar when they place their cursor over the link as shown in the figure below.



To prevent credit going to my link, a surfer could type FriendFinder's main URL, <http://friendfinder.com> directly into their browser's address window.

Or, they could right-click the link, then copy and paste it into the address window and remove the 'go/9517' portion of the link before they clickthrough to the site.

Other affiliate marketers use basically the same technique. However, they swap your affiliate ID for their own affiliate ID to get the commission when they buy the product. In effect, they are discounting their own purchase.

Responsible merchants have systems in place to prevent this type of commission theft. However, most merchants do not, so it's up to you as an affiliate to protect your commissions.

To overcome affiliate commission theft, here is how to beat the cheats.

USE A PHP REDIRECT

A better solution is to use a PHP redirect. Basically, you create a page that contains your affiliate link and then link to that page.

For example, my affiliate link for Studiopress is:

<http://www.shareasale.com/r.cfm?b=241369&u=84626&m=28169>

However, if you cursor over the Studiopress links on my blog, you will see this link in the status bar:

<http://rosalindgardner.com/go/studiopress>

THAT link goes to Studiopress and yet no one knows (or didn't until now) my affiliate link.

Setting that up is simple. Create a new file called link.php. Notice that the file extension is .php. On the new page, insert the following code:

```
<?php

$path = array(
    'affiliatelink1' => 'http://affiliatelink1.com',
    'affiliatelink2' => 'http://affiliatelink1.com',
    'affiliatelink3' => 'http://affiliatelink1.com',
);

if (array_key_exists($_GET['id'],
    $path)) header('Location: '
    . $path[$_GET['id']]); ?>
```

Upload the new PHP page to your server.

To make the links work, you must add the following to your .htaccess file:

```
RewriteEngine On
RewriteRule ^go/([/_0-9a-zA-Z-]+)$ link.php?id=$1
```

The links are then called using the following linking format:

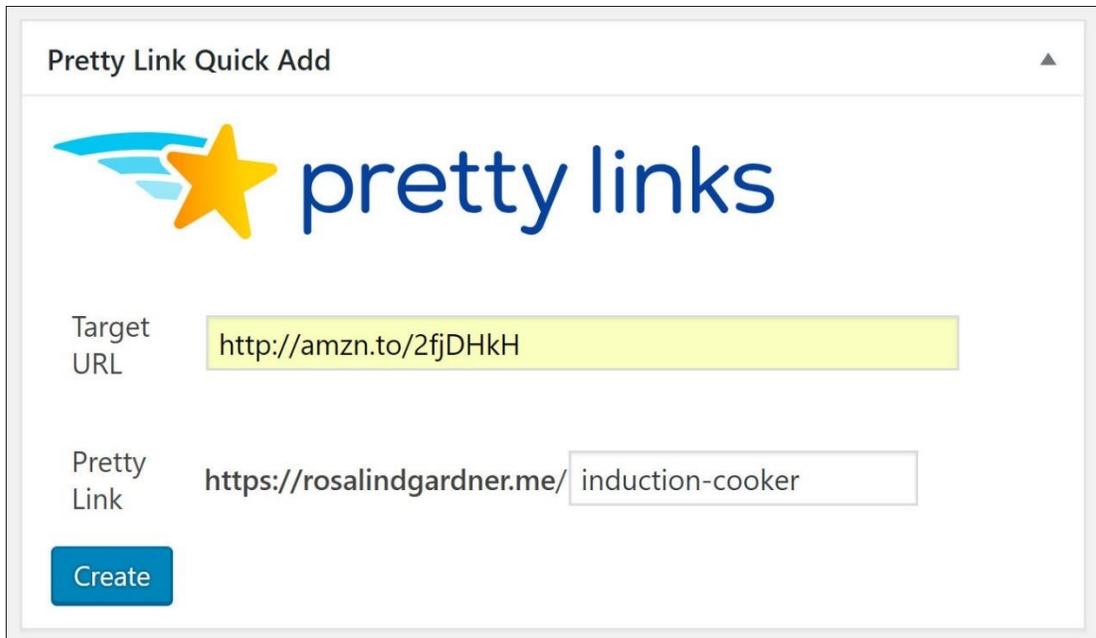
<http://yourdomain.com/go/affiliatelink1>

USE A LINK CLOAKER

If you don't want to mess with code, an easy alternative is to use a professional link cloaker / tracker such as [Thirsty Affiliates](#) or [Pretty Links](#).

Both are Wordpress plugins that allow you to administer your links while logged into your Wordpress interface.

Installing a link is as simple as going to your Wordpress Dashboard and inserting the link wish to cloak in the Pretty Links form, as shown in the next graphic.



Pretty Link Quick Add

 pretty links

Target URL

Pretty Link

After clicking 'Create' a new window pops open to show you the name of the link – in this case it's an Aroma Induction Cooker offered on Amazon.

The Pretty Links display also shows how many clicks, unique clicks and the date your link was created.

Pretty Links [Add Pretty Link](#)

Bulk Actions [Apply](#) [Search](#)

Displaying 1–3 of 3 [10](#)

<input type="checkbox"/>	Name	Clicks / Uniq	Group	Created ▼	Links
<input type="checkbox"/>	▶ Amazon.com: Aroma Housewares AID-509 Induction Cooktop: Electric Countertop Burners: Kitchen & Dining	0/0		2019-01-22 00:09:48	https://rosalindgardner.me/induct <small>Target URL: http://amzn.to/2fjDHIH</small>

[✎](#) [✕](#) [↶](#) [↷](#) [🐦](#) [✉](#) [🌐](#) [🌐](#)

You may edit, delete, view the number of clicks by date, Tweet or email the link, and visit both the target URL and the short URL from the interface.

27 MISTAKES TO AVOID AS AN AFFILIATE

We all make mistakes, which is nothing to be ashamed of or worried about. But many mistakes can easily be avoided when we learn from the mistakes of others.

Here are the most common mistakes made by affiliate marketers.

1. NOT DOING MARKET RESEARCH

Promoting products that people don't want is a futile endeavor. Test the waters before investing time and money into any new project.

2. POSTING ADS ON FORUMS

Forums and discussion boards can be good sources of information about Internet and affiliate marketing. Akin to spamming however, posting advertising on message boards gets the poster banned. Avoid acting in ways that upset the board owners.

3. EMAIL SPAMMING

Spam is unsolicited email. As well as not asking to receive it, the recipient has every right to contact the sender's ISP or the merchant involved in the offer, both of which will likely terminate their association immediately. Also be aware of unrealistic email promotions that offer deals for 'leads', i.e. \$99.95 for 500 million emails. Sending email to those addresses is spam pure and simple.

4. SEARCH ENGINE SPAMMING

There is an approach to affiliate marketing that focuses almost exclusively on search engine marketing as its primary method of driving traffic. The approach involves building scores of little sites, each of which may make a few dollars per month... for a little while.

The content on these sites is typically written according to a **keyword density formula** that involves repetitive use of chosen keywords and keyword phrases throughout the article.

Besides the fact that this method of writing usually results in dull, uninformative drivel that contributes to 'web clutter,' and does little or nothing to actually inform the site's visitors--- this method has repeatedly proven to be **unsustainable**.

Many affiliates who use this technique have their sites de-ranked and/or de-listed by search engines such as Google, which does its best to keep 'formulaic' web sites out of search engine results.

Many of these affiliates had to return to day jobs when their sites were de-listed and their traffic dried up completely.

Don't let that happen to you!

5. OVERUSING MERCHANT AD COPY

Successful affiliates set themselves apart from other affiliates promoting the same products. When you use advertising copy prepared by the merchants you're not giving your visitors any new information.

6. COPYRIGHT INFRINGING

How would you feel if you found an exact copy of your site on someone else's domain? With that reaction in mind, treat others' work with the same respect. Always ask permission to use graphic images or text found on another site.

7. SUBMITTING TO FFA'S OR DIRECTORIES

Posting to FFA (Free for All) sites is a waste of time because your site will never get seen. Worse, because most FFA's have such low rankings, your own site's rankings may decrease by association.

8. SHOUTING

Other than using capital letters to give emphasis to a few words within an email or on a web page, refrain from using capital letters. Using all capital letters in text or correspondence is symbolic of shouting, and shouting at people just makes them leave.

9. NOT RESPONDING TO VISITOR EMAILS

If a visitor emails a question to an affiliate, and that affiliate doesn't reply in a timely manner, the visitor will go elsewhere for an answer and will become someone else's customer.

10. OVERUSING POP-UPS

Getting hit by multiple pop-ups is annoying. Many surfers will close their browser completely rather than close 20 different windows and when they close your page, no sale is made.

11. USING FREE HOSTING & EMAIL ACCOUNTS

Would you buy a car from a street vendor? Using free hosting and email accounts looks cheesy and impedes your ability to sell.

12. FAILURE TO PLAN

As the old saying goes, 'Fail to plan, plan to fail.' Without a map a journey into unknown territory takes much longer, costs more money and may get you lost. Simplify the project by having a plan.

13. NOT HAVING AN OPT-IN NEWSLETTER

Without an opt-in list, your visitors come, and then they go. You have no way to contact them again. Those who sign up to receive your newsletters or ads are telling you that they're interested in the products you offer. That's like having a license to print money!

14. KEEPING POOR OR NO RECORDS

Did that check from XYZ Company arrive? Was the amount correct? If your record keeping is less than accurate, you might never know. Don't get cheated - keep track of all your business activities.

15. BUILDING A MALL

Mall sites don't get much search engine traffic, and they don't convert to sales. Highly focused theme sites attract traffic AND sales.

16. ADVERTISING OFFLINE

Most people don't jump off the couch and run to their computer to type in a URL that they see in the newspaper or magazines, so paying to advertise offline (as an affiliate) is generally a waste of money.

17. BANNER AD FARMING

Informative text results in purchases. Lengthy pages of animated graphic banners ads simply soak up bandwidth.

18. COMPETITION BASHING

Speaking ill of others only gives the basher a bad reputation. Mind your own business and do your own business.

19. ADVERTISING PRODUCT PRICES

Prices change all the time. With the exception of current price quotes placed in your newsletter, product prices do not belong on your site.

20. OUT-OF-DATE ADVERTISING

Banners or text links that expire are guaranteed to eventually send your visitor to a broken link or show a broken graphic on your page. Time sensitive advertising is best used only in email advertising campaigns.

21. USING 'LEAKY' LINKS

Do you take money out of your wallet and throw it away? That's exactly what you are doing when you pay for traffic and then send visitors to another site through anything other than affiliate links.

22. FALLING PREY TO SITE SUBMISSION SERVICES

Thinking about using site submission services & software to enhance your search engine rankings?

A keyword search on 'website submission' or 'submission services' at Google or Yahoo yields hundreds of companies offering to submit your site to the search engines for a fee. Many of these services say they'll hand-submit your site to hundreds of engines all for the unbelievably low price of \$9 - or for an incredibly good value at \$999.

In other words – don't waste your money!

23. PLACING AFFILIATE LINKS ON THE HOMEPAGE

Putting affiliate links on your homepage is like showing visitors in the front door and immediately out the back. Give them a chance to browse, sign up for your newsletter and decide that they'd like to come back to your place before introducing them to your very attractive friends.

24. TRYING TO DO IT ALL

Don't be a 'Jack-of-all-trades' and master of none. Hire an expert when required and save your time and money.

25. NOT INVESTING IN EDUCATION

Technology changes with amazing speed. Keep up on this rapidly evolving industry through research and education. Materials and courses are a tax write-off, and will pay you back many times over in additional revenue.

26. FAILING TO ACT

The first step may be the hardest, but if you never act, you'll never enjoy the rewards!

27. GIVING UP

Just as Rome wasn't built in a day, don't expect overnight riches from the 'Net. Enjoy the process, know that some days will be more challenging than others and keep going. Persistence is the single most important factor in determining success online or off. Be persistent and be successful!

Save yourself considerable frustration. Keep the 25 mistakes in mind as you build your site and you'll be well on your way to becoming a successful affiliate marketer.

WRAP UP: BECOME A SUPER-AFFILIATE!

It has been reported many times that 2% of all affiliates are responsible for 90% of all affiliate program sales.

Why is that?

Well, here are the predominant factors that set Super Affiliates apart from their less productive counterparts.

1. **Super Affiliates treat Affiliate Marketing as a BUSINESS.** They don't slap up a site with a couple of banner ads. They invest in their businesses with time, money and effort. They are determined and persistent.
2. **Super Affiliates are Focused.** They find a niche with a huge market. They research, understand and sell to that market.
3. **Super Affiliates are Super Communicators.** They know and understand their merchants' products, and know how to sell the benefits of those products to their visitors.
4. **Super Affiliates Grow their Businesses.** After building one successful affiliate site, they look for opportunities to build new streams of income with affiliate programs.
5. **Super Affiliates are Always Learning.** They stay current with industry trends to stay on top of what they need to know about how to do business successfully. In other words, they educate themselves, just as you are doing now... you, the aspiring Super Affiliate!

Those are the basics of what it takes to be a Super Affiliate. So, with those points in mind, Promote and Prosper!

APPENDIX: RESOURCES

[My Newsletter](#) – I send information and news of importance to my subscribers via my newsletter and post it to the blog at <http://RosalindGardner.com/blog/>

BASIC SERVICES & SOFTWARE

Affiliate marketing is NOT rocket science. You don't need an MBA, PhD or other degree to succeed.

If you already know how to access the Web and deal with email, you've already mastered the two activities you'll perform most frequently.

Listed below are a few services and software that will help simplify and speed up your work.

GOOGLE ACCOUNT

Google is much more than just a great search engine.

As an Internet and affiliate marketer, I use its services extensively, including:

- [Chrome](#) – a browser that combines a minimal design with sophisticated technology to make the web faster, safer, and easier.
- [Gmail](#) - advertising-supported email service. Users may access Gmail as secure webmail, as well as via POP3 or IMAP4 protocols.
- [Calendar](#) - online calendar to help you keep track of events. You can share your calendar with others.
- [Drive](#) - file storage and synchronization service.
- [Alerts](#) - email updates of the latest relevant Google results (web, news, etc.) based on your queries.
- [Webmaster Tools](#) - provides detailed reports about your site's visibility on Google.
- [Adwords](#) - Google's main advertising product. Place ads here to drive traffic to your site.

- [Analytics](#) - generates detailed statistics about a website's traffic and traffic sources and measures conversions and sales.
- [AdSense](#) – a way to earn money from your websites with relevant ads.

As you begin doing business as an affiliate marketer, you too will be using some of Google's services – likely starting with Google AdSense.

Sign up for a Google account now at:

<https://www.google.com/accounts/NewAccount>

PAYPAL ACCOUNT

Many merchants with affiliate programs pay their affiliates using PayPal and you will be asked to provide your PayPal email address when you sign up for their program.

PayPal is an account-based system that lets anyone with an email address securely send and receive online payments using their credit card or bank account.

Sign up for a PayPal account now at Paypal.com.

TEXT EDITOR

Using a text editor eliminates many of the 'formatting characters' that are embedded by more sophisticated word-processing programs such as Microsoft Word. These 'formatting characters' can cause havoc with the appearance of email messages, so using a simple text editor eliminates the potential for messages that look like a bunch of gobbledygook.

NotePad is an easy-to-use text editor, and is probably already installed on your computer if you are running Windows. I now use **UltraEdit-32**, which you can download for a free 45-day trial at: <http://www.ultraedit.com>

COMPRESSION/EXTRACTION UTILITY

Zipped files are files that are compressed to take up less space and bandwidth. An 'extraction utility' is used to extract zipped files.

Coffee Cup Software has a free Zip Wizard for Windows users at:

<http://www.coffeecup.com/zip-wizard/>

Stuffit Expander (for Mac users) is a utility that will decode and extract Macintosh files downloaded from the Internet and is available as a free download at:

<http://www.stuffit.com/mac-expander.html>

FILE TRANSFER SOFTWARE

Although you can use your web host's facilities to transfer files to your site, an easier way to transfer files fast is to use FTP (File Transfer Protocol) software.

If you run Windows, I recommend that you download and install FileZilla, which is available for free at:

<http://sourceforge.net/projects/filezilla/>

Mac users may use Cyberduck, which is an open source FTP and SFTP (SSH Secure File Transfer) browser licenced under the GPL (General Public Licence). CyberDuck is available at:

<http://cyberduck.ch/>

SOFTWARE AND SERVICES FOR AFFILIATES

This is a SHORT list of basic tools and services required by affiliates and discussed in the Super Affiliate Handbook.

[BlueHost Hosting](http://bluehost.com) – (<http://bluehost.com>) Hosting service with cPanel at a reasonable price.

[Aweber Autoresponder](http://aweber.com) – (<http://aweber.com>) MOST popular autoresponder/ mailing list service.

[SEM Rush](#) – Keyword and competition research tool.

For a much more COMPREHENSIVE list of tools for use in your affiliate marketing business, please visit:

<http://rosalindgardner.com/blog/big-list-of-internet-marketing-tools/>

OUTSOURCE SITE & CONTENT DEVELOPMENT

[Freelancer.com](http://freelancer.com) is fabulous for finding programmers, designers and writers.

[Private Label Rights Information](#) – Information about Private Label Rights along with a number of PLR distributors. (<http://tinyurl.com/yer36b9>)

MARKET AND TREND INFORMATION RESOURCES

- [Comscore Media](http://comscore.com) (http://comscore.com) – Claims to have ‘the largest consumer measurement system of its kind’ to deliver insight and expertise in the following industries; automotive, travel, pharmaceutical, retail, financial services, telecommunications, media, entertainment and consumer packaged goods.
- [Forrester Research](http://www.forrester.com) (http://www.forrester.com) - Surveys 250,000 consumers every year in 15 countries to uncover purchasing and spending habits, technology adoption trends, customer demand and buyer attitudes. Guest registration gives access to free research.
- [Online Publishers Association](http://www.online-publishers.org) (http://www.online-publishers.org) - A not-for-profit industry trade organization produces research into online advertising and media consumption with the goal of advancing the online publishing industry.
- [PRWeb.com](http://www.prweb.com) - one of the largest online press release newswires. Search news by category, country, MSA, day or trackbacks.
- [ClickZ Network](http://www.clickz.com) (http://www.clickz.com) – News, information, commentary, advice, opinion, research, and reference related to interactive marketing. You’ll find In-depth profiles, interviews, case studies, and features on cutting-edge products, companies, and trends.
- [eBay Marketplace Research](http://pages.ebay.com/marketplace_research) (http://pages.ebay.com/marketplace_research) - Introduced in late 2005 and designed to help buyers and sellers track transaction trends on eBay, this service provides average item prices, shows top keyword searches by category or related keywords, creates charts illustrating transaction trends and delivers data on completed sales over the past 90 days. Marketplace Research is subscription-
- [Amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) - Check out their ‘best of’ sections to see which ‘hot topic’ books folks are reading now.
- [Google Trends](http://www.google.com/trends) (http://www.google.com/trends) - Compare the world’s interest in your favorite topics. Enter up to five topics and see how often they’ve been searched on Google over time. Google Trends also shows how frequently your topics have appeared in Google News stories, and in which geographic regions people have searched for them most.

ADVANCED TRAINING & TUTORIALS

IMPROVE YOUR WRITING SKILLS

If you have no previous writing experience, or you want to brush up on your skills, here are books and tools that have helped me along the way. Read as much as you can on the subject, because the better you convey yourself in writing, the better your conversion rates will be.

[Grammarly](#) – I've been using Grammarly for years to help improve my writing foibles.

Grammarly is an online grammar checking, spell checking, and plagiarism detection platform developed by Grammarly, Inc. The software was first released in late 2009. Grammarly's proofreading and plagiarism-detection resources check against more than 250 grammar rules.

[Udemy](#) - Udemy.com is an online learning platform. It is aimed at professional adults. Unlike academic massive open online course programs which are driven by traditional collegiate coursework, Udemy uses content from online content creators to sell for profit.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

The Internet brings with it a language all its own. This glossary explains the meaning of the terms most commonly used. Many of these definitions rely on other terms for their explanation. Terms defined elsewhere are in italics.

A

Above the Fold: Once a web page has loaded, the part that is visible is said to be 'above the fold.'

Adware: Also known as 'spyware,' a program hidden within free downloaded software that transmits user information via the Internet to advertisers.

Affiliate: A web site owner that promotes a merchant's products and/or services earns a commission for referring clicks, leads, or sales.

Affiliate Agreement: Terms that govern the relationship between a merchant and an affiliate.

Affiliate Network: Acts as an intermediary between affiliates and merchants, allowing affiliates to source relevant programs quickly and often provide one-click application to new merchants.

Affiliate Program: Any arrangement through which a merchant pays a commission to an affiliate for generating clicks, leads, or sales from links located on the affiliate's site. Also known as associate, partner, referral, and revenue sharing programs.

Affiliate Program Directory: Information about a collection of affiliate programs. May include information about commission rate, number of affiliates, and commission structure.

Affiliate Program Manager: The person responsible for administering an affiliate program. Duties should include maintaining regular contact with affiliates, program marketing and responding to queries about the program.

Affiliate URL or Link: Special code in a graphic or text link that identifies a visitor as having arrived from a specific affiliate site.

Applet: A small Java program embedded in an HTML page.

Associate: Synonym for affiliate.

Autoresponder: An email robot that sends replies automatically, without human intervention. This is an important tool for conducting online commerce.

Autoresponder Series: An autoresponder series is a number of automated prewritten emails that get sent to your subscribers in a sequential order.

B

Bandwidth: How many bits-per-second are sent through a connection. A full page of text is about 16,000 bits.

Banner Ad: Advertising in the form of a graphic image.

Bit (Binary DigIT): A bit is the smallest unit of computerized data. It is a single digit number, either a 1 or a zero.

Bits-Per-Second (bps): A measurement of how fast data is moved from one place to another. A 56.6 modem can move 56,600 bits per second...but usually doesn't!

Blog: Acronym for 'web log,' a blog is basically a journal that is published using an online content management system. The act of updating a blog is referred to as 'blogging' and those who keep blogs, are known as 'bloggers.'

Browser: A program that allows you to access and read hypertext documents on the World Wide Web.

C

Chargeback: An incomplete or invalid sales transaction that results in an affiliate commission deduction.

Clickthrough: When a user clicks on a link and arrives at a Web site.

ClickThrough Ratio (CTR): Percentage of visitors who click through to a merchant's Web site.

Cloaking: Hiding of page code content.

Commission: Also known as a bounty or referral fee, the income an affiliate is paid for generating a sale, lead or click-through to a merchant's web site.

Co-branding: Where affiliates are able include their own logo and/or colors on the merchant's site.

Contextual Link: Placement of affiliate links within related text.

Conversion: When one of your visitors makes a purchase on the merchant's site, i.e., converts from 'visitor' to 'buyer.'

Conversion Rate: The percentage of visits to your site that convert to a sale. For example, if 1 person in every hundred visitors to your site makes a purchase, then your conversion rate is 1:100 or 1 percent.

Cookie: A cookie is a piece of information sent by a Web Server to a Web Browser that the Browser software is expected to save and to send back to the Server whenever the browser makes additional requests from the Server. You may set your browser to either accept or not accept cookies. Cookies can contain user preferences, login or registration information, and/or 'shopping cart' information. When a cookie browser sends a request to a Server, the Server uses the information to return customized information.

Cost per Acquisition (CPA): The amount you pay to acquire a customer.

Cost per Click (CPC): The amount you pay when a surfer clicks on one of your listings.

Cost Per Thousand (CPM): The amount you pay per 1,000 impressions of a banner or button.

Creative: The promotional tools advertisers use to draw in users. Examples are text links, towers, buttons, badges, email copy, pop-ups, etc.

Cyberspace: William Gibson coined the term in his book, 'Neuromancer.' Cyberspace now describes the whole range of data available through computer networks.

D

Demographics: The physical characteristics of a population such as age, sex, marital status, family size, education, geographic location, and occupation.

Digital Subscriber Line (DSL): A much faster way to move data over phone lines.

Disclaimer: A disclaimer states the terms under which the site or work may be used and gives information relating to what the copyright owner believes to be a breach of his/her/their copyright. In some cases you may wish to permit certain activities, in others you may wish to withhold all rights, or require the user to apply for a license to carry out certain actions.

Disclosure Statement: A statement acknowledging that compensation is received for product endorsements and/or sales.

Domain Name: The unique name that identifies an Internet site; comprised of two or more parts and separated by dots.

Doorway Page: See Gateway page.

Download: Transferring a file from another computer to your own.

E

Email: Electronic mail, a message sent to another Internet user across the Internet. An email address looks like this jimsmith@bubblee.com, whereas, 'jimsmith' is your user name, your unique identifier; '@' stands for 'at;' ' bubblee.com' is the name of your Internet Service Provider.

Email Link: An affiliate link to a merchant site contained in an email newsletter or signature file.

Email Signature (Sig File): A brief message embedded at the end of every email that a person sends.

EPC: Term used by the CJ Affiliate network, this is your average earnings per 100 clicks. This number is calculated by taking commissions earned divided by the total number of clicks times 100.

eZine: Short for 'electronic magazine.'

F

File Transfer Protocol (FTP): The most common method for moving files between computers, servers and Internet sites.

Fire Wall: Hardware and/or software used to separate a LAN into two or more parts for security purposes.

Flame: Derogatory comment.

Forum: An online discussion board.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ): Lists and answers the most common questions asked on a particular subject. Generally posted to avoid having to answer the same question repeatedly.

G

Gateway Page: Also known as bridge pages, doorway page, entry pages, portals or portal pages, these pages are used to improve search engine placement. Caution: some search engines will drop a site entirely if the existence of doorway/gateway pages is detected.

Graphic Interchange Format (GIF): An image file format, suitable for simple files.

A JPEG is the preferred format for storing photographs.

H

Hit: A hit is a single request from for a single item on a web server. To load a page with 5 graphics would count as 6 'hits,' 1 for the page plus 1 for each of the graphics. Hits are therefore a poor measurement of traffic to a web site.

Home Page: The first page of your Web site at the root domain, i.e. 101Date.com.

Hybrid Model: A commission model that combines different payment methods.

Hype (Hyperbole): A deliberate exaggeration for emotional effect. The addressee is not expected to have a literal understanding of the expression.

Hypertext Markup Language (HTML): The primary 'language' used to create World Wide Web documents.

Hypertext: A hypertext document has references to other documents sprinkled throughout. If you click on one of these references, you are transferred to an entirely different document. For example, if this report was a hypertext document, you could click on any italicized word, and you'd instantly be transported to the definition of that word.

I

Impression: An advertising metric that indicates how many times an advertising link is displayed.

In-house: Merchant that administers its own affiliate program.

Internet: Inter-connected networks that use TCP/IP protocols.

Internet Service Provider (ISP): The company you call from your computer to gain access to the Internet.

IP Address: A unique number consisting of 4 parts separated by dots, e.g. 165.115.245.2. Every machine on the Internet has a unique IP address.

J

Javascript: A programming language developed by Sun Microsystems designed for writing programs that can be safely downloaded to your computer through the Internet and immediately run without fear of viruses or other harm to your computer or files. Java requires a

browser compatible with Java. Using small Java programs, Web pages can include animations, calculators, and other features.

Joint Venture: A general partnership typically formed to undertake a particular business transaction or project rather than one intended to continue indefinitely.

K

Keyword: The term that a surfer types into a search engine search box. For example, someone who wants to find a site that sells printer paper might enter 'printer paper' at Google.

Keyword Density: The ratio between the keyword being searched and the total number of words appearing on your web page. If your keyword occurs only once in a page that has twenty thousand words, then it has a density of 0.005 percent.

L

Lifetime Value: The total amount that a customer will spend with a particular company during his or her lifetime.

Link: A link is a 'clickable' object that, when clicked, will take the viewer to a particular page, place on a page, or start a new e-mail with an address you specify.

Link Popularity: The total number of qualified Web sites linking to your Web site.

Local Area Network (LAN): Computers linked together in a central location, such as a business or government organization.

M

Manual Approval: Process in which all applicants for an affiliate program are reviewed individually and manually approved.

Merchant: A business that markets and sells goods or services.

Merchant Account: A commercial bank account established by contractual agreement between your business and a bank. A merchant account enables your business to accept credit card payments from your customers.

Meta Tags: Information placed in the header of an HTML page, which is not visible to site visitors.

Multi-Level Marketing (MLM): Also known as Network Marketing, MLM involves the sale of products through a group of independent distributors who buy wholesale, sell retail, and sponsor other people to do the same.

N

Newbie: Someone who is new to the Internet or Internet marketing.

O

Open Source - software for which the original source code is made freely available and may be redistributed and modified.

P

Pay-Per-Sale (PPS): Programs in which the affiliate receives a commission for each sale of a product or service that they refer to a merchant's web site.

Pay-Per-Lead (PPL): An affiliate program in which an affiliate receives a commission for each sales lead that they generate for a merchant web site. Examples include completed surveys, contest or sweepstakes entries, downloaded software demos, or free trials.

Pay-Per-Click (PPC): An advertising payment model where the advertiser pays only when the advertisement is actually clicked. Also, an affiliate program where an affiliate receives a commission for each click (visitor) they refer to a merchant's web site.

Portable Document Format (PDF): PDF stands for Portable Document Format. It's a distribution format developed by Adobe Corporation to allow electronic information to be transferred between various types of computers. The software that allows this transfer is called Acrobat.

Profit: The amount of money you earn from your sales. For example, if you sell 10 videos at \$47.00 each, and each costs \$10 to produce and ship, your profit would be \$37.00 per video or \$370.00 total.

Plugin: A small piece of software that adds features to a larger piece of software.

Portal: A term used to describe a Web site that is intended to be used as a main 'point of entry' to the Web, i.e., MSN.com is a portal site.

Privacy Policy: A privacy policy establishes how a company collects and uses information about its customers' accounts and transactions.

Publisher: Another term for 'affiliate.'

R

Real Simple Syndication (RSS): An XML-based format for syndicated content.

Referring URL: The URL used to reach your site.

Residual Earnings: Programs that pay affiliates for each sale a shopper from their sites makes at the merchant's site over the life of the customer.

Return on Advertising Spend (ROAS): How much revenue is generated per amount spent on an advertising method.

Return on Investment (ROI): This is the amount derived from subtracting your net revenues from your total costs.

Revenue: Total income for your sales. For example, if you sell 50 ebooks at \$27.00 each, your revenue would be \$1350.00.

Robots: Any browser program not directly under human control that follows hypertext links and accesses Web pages. A search engine spider is a 'robot.'

S

Scumware: Software that contains additional 'features' for the purpose of displaying advertisements. This software will modify web pages from their original content to put ads on the user's computer screen. Examples of scumware propagators included: Gator, Ezula, Surf+ and Imesh.

Secure Server: A secure server allows a connection between itself and another secure server. Secured connections provide three essential things where online transactions are concerned: privacy, authentication, & message integrity. When viewing Web pages or posting information to a secure server, you'll notice that the 'http://' that usually appears in the Web address bar changes to 'https://.' Also, on most Web browsers, the symbol of a closed padlock should appear somewhere in the browser's frame as an indicator that you are using a secure connection.

Server: The computer hardware that stores your homepage and sends and receives information through the World Wide Web.

Server Logs: Each time a user accesses a Web page, information is recorded on server logs. Server logs contain information about what pages where accessed, along with the date and time and computer's IP Address. Other statistics can also be tracked, including username, browser type, previous page, etc.

Sig (Signature File or Sig Line): Your signature at the end of an email or forum posting. Commonly consists of your email address and other contact information, a very brief information about your business, and perhaps a favorite quotation or funny phrase.

Social Media Marketing (SMM): Using social media sites such as Facebook and YouTube to promote products online.

SPAM: The term 'spam' is Internet slang that refers to unsolicited commercial e-mail (UCE) or unsolicited bulk e-mail (UBE). Some people refer to this kind of communication as junk e-mail to equate it with the paper junk mail that comes through the US Mail. Unsolicited e-mail is e-mail that you did not request; it most often contains advertisements for services or products.

Spyware - Also known as 'adware,' spyware is a program hidden within free downloaded software that transmits user information via the Internet to advertisers.

SQL (Structured Query Language): A programming language for sending queries to databases.

Super Affiliates: The top 1 or 2% of affiliates that generate approximately 90% of any affiliate programs earnings.

T

Targeted Marketing: The process of distinguishing different groups that make up a market, and developing appropriate products and marketing mixes for each target market involved.

Text Link: A link not accompanied by a graphical image.

Third Party Credit Card Processing: A 'third party credit card processor' is a company that accepts credit card orders on behalf of another company, making a merchant account unnecessary.

Third Party Tracking Software: Software located on a server other than your own, that tracks and records visits to your Web site.

Tracking Method: The method by which an affiliate program tracks referred sales, leads or clicks.

Tracking URL: A URL with your affiliate code, i.e. <http://www.bluehost.com/track/rgardner/CODE5> (track/rgardner/CODE5 is the tracking code). Visitors arriving at the site are tracked back to you through your special code, or ID.

Two-tier: Affiliate program structure in which affiliates earn commissions on their conversions as well as conversions of webmasters they refer to the program.

U

Unique User: A unique visitor to your Web site. Probably the best indicator of site traffic.

Upload: Transferring a file from your computer to another computer.

Uniform Resource Locator (URL): The address of a site on the World Wide Web.

V

Viral Marketing: Describes any strategy that encourages individuals to pass on a marketing message to others, creating the potential for exponential growth in the message's exposure and influence. Like viruses, such strategies take advantage of rapid multiplication to explode the message to thousands, and even millions.

Virus: A computer virus is defined as a set of commands, created intentionally, that will do some level of damage to a computer. A computer virus does not float around in cyberspace, but is always attached to something. That 'something' could be a text file (MSWord document), an email, a photo, a music clip or a video clip. Your computer must receive one of these 'carriers' in order to get a computer virus.

W

Webmaster: Any person who maintains a Web site.

Web 2.0: Web-based communities such as social-networking sites intended to facilitate user collaboration and sharing.

World Wide Web (WWW, or Web): A section of the Internet containing 'pages' of information, including text, photos, graphics, audio, and video. You can search for documents by using one of the many search databases. To access the Web, you must use a browser.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Rosalind Gardner's success with affiliate marketing on the Internet is proof positive that ANYONE can succeed in an Internet business.

After working as an air traffic controller for almost twenty years, the crazy schedules had started to seriously affect her health. She knew she had to leave the job before it killed her.

In 1997 after seeing a banner ad for the One and Only dating service offering webmasters a chance to make money with their web sites, she KNEW she had to give it a try.

The rest, as they say, is history.

In 2000, supported by her various online businesses, she quit her job. With nothing other than an intense desire to build a better life, she proved that business or web design experience weren't necessary to succeed on the 'Net.

Since learning how relatively simple it is to make money online, Rosalind has been writing about affiliate and Internet marketing to encourage friends, colleagues and anyone who is interested, to join her on the path to Internet riches.

Her newsletter is freely available at: <http://RosalindGardner.com>.

Her interviews have appeared in a multitude of online and offline venues, including 'Secrets to Their Success' and 'Small Business Opportunities' magazines.

Many of her Internet marketing colleagues have written about her success. Here is what Allan Gardyne of 'AssociatePrograms.com' had to say about Rosalind and the Super Affiliate Handbook.

'A perfect example is Rosalind Gardner, who earns \$30,000 to \$50,000 a month in affiliate commissions, with a very nice 40% to 50% profit margin... She explains how she attracts more than 4,500 unique visitors a day and has sales conversions that are 3 to 5 times higher than those of the average affiliate... This isn't vague theory or book learning, it's real-life, down-to-earth advice from real people like Rosalind.'

Rosalind also still offers one-on-one telephone consulting services at:

<http://rosalindgardner.com/blog/consultations/>

She also used to speak regularly at Internet and Affiliate marketing conferences... until living a great life and vacationing became more important. Just sayin'.

You **too** can enjoy financial freedom with an online business. Whether you are just starting out or want to improve an existing site, Rosalind can help you achieve your dream.

Ready to learn more about Affiliate Marketing?

Join Rosalind's Affiliate Blogger Pro multi-media training program at <http://AffiliateBloggerPro.com>.

AFTER WORD

Congratulations!

Now that you've read the whole 'Super Affiliate Handbook,' you're ready to begin your own affiliate marketing success story.

As the Nike slogan says, 'Just Do It!'

Take one step at a time and soon you'll have forged a new path in your life - the path to a successful home-based business.

Whatever you choose to do, I wish you Health, Happiness and great Success always!

Cheers,

Rosalind