



Novice to Advanced Marketing System



THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO

AFFILIATE MARKETING: A-Z

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The Ultimate Guide to Affiliate Marketing

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Introduction

Welcome to The Ultimate Guide to Affiliate Marketing - A to Z!

I'm really excited that you chose to download this guide. And that's because there's truth in advertising in the name – you're about to discover 26 affiliate marketing lessons from A to Z that will help you pick popular products, boost your conversions, create high-quality preselling content, generate traffic and more.

Whether you're just getting started in affiliate marketing, or you need some tips to give your current affiliate business a boost, you'll find something in this guide to grow your business!

So, without further introduction, let's get down to the nitty gritty. Read on...

A is for Add Value

If you take a good look around, you'll quickly notice that there are quite a few other affiliates all promoting the same offers. You have some competition. And that means you need to have a way to differentiate yourself from everyone else who's promoting the exact same thing.

Here's how to do it: add value to the offer. This means offering your own bonus to anyone who purchases the affiliate product via your link.

For example, if you're promoting a course on meditation, you might offer a guided meditation audio (.mp3) as a bonus.

Or offer a implementation training. Especially if you're promoting a tool! Your buyers will love to see real world examples of how you use the tool in your own business or for yourself personally.

You can see why this works so well to boost conversions. When given the choice, most people will purchase the offer that gives them more value for the same dollar. That's exactly what you're doing when you add value to an affiliate offer.

So, with that in mind, let's start by defining the characteristics of a good bonus, and then we'll walk through some examples.

The Characteristics of an Effective Bonus

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Just offering a bonus to your prospects isn't going to necessarily boost your conversion rates. You need to be sure your bonus has the following characteristics:

1. It's In-Demand

This is obvious, right? People need to WANT your bonus in order for it to be effective. And yet plenty of affiliate marketers just grab whatever product they have on their hard drive and offer it as a bonus, without even stopping to consider if their audience wants it.

Not sure if your audience wants it? Do your market research. If people in your niche are already eagerly buying a certain type of product, then offering something similar as a bonus will help boost response.

2. It's Valuable

Is the product or service you're offering something that you could easily sell as a standalone offer for \$25, \$100, \$250 or more? If so, then you're on the right track. Just be sure your bonus isn't worth a lot more than the product itself, otherwise you'll cheapen the offer.

A good rule of thumb is to create a bonus that's worth anywhere from 25% to around 100% of the offer. For example, if you're selling a \$100 course, you might offer a bonus that's valued at \$25, \$50 or even \$100.

3. It's Highly Related to the Main Offer

Ideally, the bonus should enhance the use or enjoyment of the main offer. For example, if you're promoting a career-building course, then you might offer a set of resume templates and tips as a bonus.

4. It's Easy to Deliver

Your bonus should typically be a digital product that you can automatically deliver to anyone who purchases through your link.

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Take note: What about offering a service, such as personal coaching? This type of time-intensive bonus should be reserved for high-ticket items. For example, if you're selling a \$1000 course and getting a \$500 commission, then you might offer one free coaching session to people who purchase through your link.

If you're going to offer an implementation training, either pre-record it and offer immediately or schedule a live training session using a platform like Zoom or GoToWebinar so you can automatically register the buyer. They will be notified immediately of the training even though it's being delivered at a later date.

Next...

5. It's Unique

While you can offer items such as licensed content as a bonus, ideally you should offer something unique that no one else is offering. In other words, offer something you've created.

So, now that you know the characteristics of a good bonus, let's take a look at some examples...

How to Add Value to an Affiliate Offer

As noted above, you can offer either products or services as bonuses. If you offer services, be sure to do so for high-ticket items only.

Here's a list of the most common types of bonuses, along with examples...

1. Reports or Ebooks

E.G., you're selling a dieting course, and you offer a free report on the best vitamins, supplements and other diet aids.

2. Videos

E.G., you're selling a course on golfing, and as a bonus you offer a video that shows people different grips and swings.

3. Audios

E.G., you're selling a book about traveling to Paris, and you include a set of audios people can use for self-guided tours through popular museums.

4. Membership / Access to Groups

E.G., you're selling a marketing course, and as a bonus you offer free access to a private mastermind group.

5. Tools

This includes items such as checklists, worksheets, cheat sheets, planners, templates, swipes and similar items. For example, if you're promoting a guide to selling a home, you might include a comprehensive home-selling checklist as a bonus.

6. Software/Apps/Plugins

E.G., if you're promoting a guide to setting up and running a popular blog, you might include a free set of WordPress plugins (such as a contact form, SEO, social media, etc.).

7. Done-for-You Service

E.G., you're promoting a Facebook advertising guide, and you offer to create one short ad for people who buy the guide through your affiliate link.

8. Coaching/Consulting/Critique

E.G., you're selling a copywriting course, and you offer a free video critique of a sales letter.

As you can see, there are plenty of high-value bonuses you can offer. You can offer these digital bonuses alongside digital affiliate products, or you can offer them alongside physical products.

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For example, if you're selling weight-lifting equipment such as benches and weights, you can offer a free weight-lifting guide or video as a bonus.

Your Turn

Your assignment for this lesson is to take a look at the current offer you're promoting (or you intend to promote soon), and brainstorm all the different bonuses you could offer. Then choose the best bonus based on value, how related it is to the product, and how in-demand it is in the market.

Meanwhile, I'll see you in the next lesson!

B is for Blogging

One key component of being a successful affiliate is that you need to have at least one platform, such as a blog, newsletter, or social media following, and/or a group. Ideally, you should have multiple platforms. Typically, you want to focus on the platforms you own and control, which includes your newsletter and your blog.

A bit later in these lessons we'll be talking about building your mailing list. For this lesson, we're going to focus on setting up and running a popular blog from which, you promote your affiliate offers.

Check out these tips, tricks and ideas...

1. Select a Proven Platform

If you start looking for content management systems and blogging platforms, you'll see you have quite a few options. However, WordPress.org stands head and shoulders above the rest. It's secure, updated regularly, well-supported and relatively easy to use. It's also free.

However, don't just use WordPress directly out of the box. Instead, customize the form and function to fit your niche. Be sure to use a responsive theme (design). While there are plenty to choose from within the dashboard (or directly from WordPress.org), you can seek out premium themes on site like [StudioPress.com](https://www.studiopress.com) or a page builder and theme like [Beaver Builder](https://www.wpbeaverbuilder.com).

TIP: Even though WordPress is relatively easy to install and customize, it does have a learning curve if you're completely unfamiliar with this sort of technology. You can hire someone inexpensively to install and customize WP for you. Post a project on [Upwork.com](https://www.upwork.com), or check out [Fiverr.com](https://www.fiverr.com). If you're a [MyNAMS Insiders Club member](#), check out the Facebook group for members who specialize in Wordpress.

Next...

2. Create a Variety of Content

One of the keys to creating a successful blog is to engage your audience. And one way to engage your audience is to post a variety of content to see what type of content they respond to best.

This includes both short and long content such as:

- How to articles/tutorials.
- Tips.
- Product reviews.
- Product comparisons.
- Quotes.
- Video demos.
- Infographics.
- Audios/podcasts.
- Slide shows.
- Opinion pieces.
- Tools such as checklists, planners, cheat sheets, swipes and more.
- Lists (gear lists, resource lists, etc.).
- Case studies.
- Direct-response articles.

Next...

3. Be an Authority

For best results, pick one topic for your blog in which to specialize, and then establish yourself as the expert/authority around that topic. Share unique tips, stories and content (such as case studies) that people can't find anywhere else. Become the "go to" blog for that specific topic.

Does that mean you can't blog about other topics within your niche? Of course not. It just means that you want to become known as THE source for that particular specialty topic within your niche.

4. Presell Your Offers

Sometimes affiliates put a lot of good content on their blog (such as how-to articles), and then they do all the selling in their blog sidebar, header and footer. For example, they'll have banner ads and text ads embedded throughout the blog.

Sure, that's one way to promote affiliate offers on a blog. However, that overlooks one of the BEST ways to promote offers, and that's to promote and presell them directly within your content.

The key here is to create content that's useful and incomplete. The useful part of the content solves part of your prospect's problem. But since the content is incomplete (in that it doesn't solve the prospect's entire problem), the prospect needs to purchase the offer you're promoting.

For example, if you're selling a dieting course, then you might offer a set of meal plans on your blog. The meal plans are useful all by themselves, but in order to make the most of them, your readers will want to buy the course.

Another example: if you're selling a copywriting course, you can post an article with your top ten tips for crafting awesome headlines. This tips article naturally leads to you promoting the course at the end of your post.

Note: See the lesson on preselling for more tips and examples of how to do this effectively.

Next...

5. Optimize Your Blog

Your blog is a great place to develop a good relationship with your audience and presell the affiliate offers you're promoting. It's also a good tool to generate traffic. That's why you'll want to optimize your blog for the search engines.

Keep these keys in mind:

- Write for humans. Above all, focus on creating high-quality content that your readers will love. If you do this, Google and other search engines are more likely to reward you with better rankings.
- Use keyword tools. A tool like [LongTail Pro](#), [Keyword Atlas](#) or your favorite tool will help you uncover the exact words people are typing into search engines. You can then optimize your content by including these keywords in your blog article title, links and content. Just be sure you ONLY insert a keyword if you can do so naturally – no keyword stuffing, or you'll get sent to the bottom of the rankings.
- Be sure your site is mobile friendly. Google prefers to send traffic to sites with responsive, fast-loading pages. Be sure your site is user-friendly and mobile friendly, which pleases both Google and your human visitors.

Here's the next tip...

6. Cross-Promote Your Other Platforms

In order to make the most of your blog, encourage your visitors to connect with you on your other platforms. This includes:

- Installing a social media plugin to make it easy for visitors to share your content on Facebook, Twitter and other social platforms.
- Encouraging people to like and follow you on these same platforms.
- Pointing visitors towards your landing/opt-in page so that they'll sign up for your list.

Now it's...

Your Turn

Do you have a blog set up yet? If not, your assignment for this lesson is to download the files from WordPress.org, and use their instructions to install the files. (Alternatively, you can hire someone to do this task.) Then plan useful yet incomplete content that's designed to help you sell the specific affiliate offers you're promoting.

C is for Campaign Strategy

What is your campaign strategy for generating affiliate sales?

Many affiliates don't really have a campaign strategy to speak of. Many just throw stuff at the wall to see what sticks. And this may be why the majority of affiliates struggle to make money.

Here's what you need to do instead: plan a campaign strategy. This means mapping out your exact plan for generating traffic and converting it.

Check out these keys for creating a successful campaign strategy...

1. Design a Two-Step Strategy

The overall key for you to know is that you shouldn't send new prospects directly to a sales page. What you want to do instead is first get these prospects on your list, and THEN promote affiliate offers to them.

Now let's break this campaign strategy down...

2. Create Multiple Lead Magnets

The second key is to create multiple lead magnets to draw prospects into your sales funnel. There are two advantages to doing this:

- You can segment your list.
- You can boost conversions on specific offers.

Let me explain these two benefits in more detail...

You can segment your list. Many major email service providers let you create "tags" for different groups of people on your list. You can then email these different groups (segments) separately if you wish.

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For example, you can tag people according to the lead magnet they request from you. This tells you what they're interested in, which means you can send out highly targeted ads and offers.

Here are other ideas for segmenting your list:

- Segment prospects and buyers. This isn't always possible or easy to do when you're an affiliate, but still worth the effort.
- Segment according to what the buyer purchased. Again, this isn't always possible when you're an affiliate. But if you can do it, then segment by product purchased.
- Segment by activity. For example, did someone register for your webinar? Did they participate in your contest?
- Segment by email activity. Your email service provider may have built-in tools to show you whether someone opened a specific email, clicked on a link, finished (or didn't finish) your welcome series, etc.
- Segment by buying habits (where known). For example, you can create segments based on people who take advantage of coupons and other offers.

For example, let's suppose you send out an email about an offer. You can do the following:

- Send a follow up email to the segment of your list that did NOT open the email. Perhaps use a new subject line (e.g., "Last chance!").
- Send a different follow up email to the segment of your list that opened the email but didn't click the link. E.G., perhaps you send out social proof to encourage people to click through.

Here's the second benefit of creating multiple lead magnets...

You can create lead magnets for specific offers. For example, you can create Lead Magnet A to promote Product 1, you can create Lead Magnet B to promote Product 2, etc. The idea is that you create a unique lead magnet for the top offers you're promoting. By doing this, you can create both lead magnets and an email series that are useful yet incomplete.

For example, let's suppose you're selling weight loss tools and information. Here's what you might offer:

- Offer a set of recipes as a lead magnet to promote a weight-loss cookbook.
- Offer a report with weight-loss tips to promote a weight-loss course.
- Offer a motivational video to promote a weight-loss membership site that includes a support group.
- Offer a weight-loss cookbook as a lead magnet to promote a meal-planning app.

You can (and should) cross-promote all these items. However, using specific lead magnets to promote specific, highly related products will give you a higher conversion rate than using one lead magnet.

Here's the next tip...

3. Plan Your Traffic Strategy

The next part of your campaign strategy is to determine how you'll get traffic to your lead page. This includes both free and paid advertising methods such as:

- Facebook advertising.
- Google pay per click ads.
- Blogging.
- Guest blogging.

- Search engine optimization.
- Viral marketing.
- Social media marketing.
- Content syndication.
- Joint venture marketing.
- Video marketing.

... And similar.

Note: Throughout this course you'll be learning about some of these methods. For now, I've just listed them so that you have the main strategies all in one place for easy reference as you make your plan.

Now here's the key to making all these pieces work...

4. Focus on One Thing at a Time

I've just thrown out the idea to you to create multiple lead magnets connected to different autoresponder series to promote different affiliate offers, and then use multiple traffic methods to generate traffic to these different lead pages.

But heads up...

Do NOT try to put all these pieces into place at once. If you do that, you're going to spread yourself too thin and/or get overwhelmed.

Instead, simply the process by focusing on one thing at a time. Specifically:

- Pick ONE affiliate product to promote.
- Create ONE lead magnet to presell that affiliate product.
- Set up ONE lead page to promote that lead magnet.
- Create ONE welcome email series to promote that affiliate product.
- Pick ONE traffic strategy to drive traffic to your lead page.
- Test every piece of this campaign to optimize it.

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The idea is to focus on one step of your campaign strategy at a time. Once you have the above pieces up, running, and getting results, THEN (and only then) should you add another piece.

For example, you can add another traffic method to get traffic to the lead page. Once that's working for you, then you can add one more. And so on.

Once you're getting good results, then you can create another lead magnet (just one), create another autoresponder series, and then pick one traffic method to get visitors to the lead page. And so on.

Bottom line: focus on one piece of your campaign strategy at a time.

Your Turn

Your assignment for this lesson is to start planning your two-step campaign strategy. To that end, do the following:

- Pick one product to promote.
- Plan one lead magnet.
- Plan out your initial email series.
- Pick one traffic strategy.

Once you've decided what you'll focus on first, then put your plan into action!

TIP: If you're stuck on how to create the best free offers, check out [How Free Products Lead To Profit](#). This will help you determine the best content for your niche and your skill level. Don't commit to creating something like a video training if you are uncomfortable on video. There are tons of other options for you that are equally as effective!

D is for Display Ads

Part of your overall traffic strategy should include display ads, which are paid ads that may come in the form of text ads, banner ads, videos and similar formats. These ads may appear on platforms such as Facebook, the Google ad network, as well as on niche websites.

Let's talk about this strategy and how to put it to work for you...

Step 1: Determine Your Goal

Before you even think about creating an ad, you need to figure out exactly what you want your ad to accomplish. For the purposes of this discussion, I suggest your goal is to get traffic to your landing/opt-in page and have them opt-into your mailing list (rather than sending this traffic to a sales page).

The second issue is whether you're targeting any prospects, or whether you specifically want to target people who've already visited your website (AKA retargeting). Retargeting works because it puts your website in front of an audience who's already shown some interest. These multiple exposures help close the sale and turn a prospect into a subscriber or customer.

The reason you need to make this decision at this step is because in the next step you're going to decide where to place your ad. If you specifically want to create a retargeting campaign, then you to select a venue that's set up for retargeting (such as Facebook, and some ad networks).

Which brings us to the next point...

Step 2: Choose a Platform

Your next step is to determine where you're going to place your ad. While you may eventually want to have multiple paid advertising campaigns running, for now just pick one. Once you get one ad campaign up, running, and generating results for you, then you can set up another campaign.

Here are some popular platforms on which to place ads:

- Facebook ad platform.
- Google Ads.
- Bing Ads.
- Sites in your niche.
- Twitter boosted posts.
- Reddit posts (in targeted Subreddits).
- Ad networks (such as Adroll.com).

Note: if you're doing a retargeting campaign, then run a search for "retargeting ad network" to learn more about your options.

Next...

Step 3: Create Your Ad

Now you need to create your ad. Depending on the platform, this may be a text ad, a graphical ad, or even a video ad.

Here's the main thing to keep in mind: your ad is too short to "sell" someone on joining your list (or to sell the product, if you're advertising your affiliate link directly). As such, the goal of your ad is to get the click, and then let your landing/opt-in page do the selling/convincing.

How do you get the click?

By showcasing a big benefit of why someone should click on your ad. If possible, you can also make people a little curious. For example:

"Discover the #1 fat-loss secret doctors use when they need to lose weight!"

The second key to remember is that your landing page absolutely needs to deliver on what you promised in the ad. If there is any sort of disconnect – if there's no "pay off" – you've wasted your ad dollars just upsetting people. People who feel like you've misled them or used clickbait are going to remember your name and website – and not in a good way.

If you're not skilled at writing ad copy, then do consider outsourcing this task to a professional copywriter. It's a worthy investment, as a skilled copywriter can significantly improve your conversion rates.

Likewise, if this is a graphical ad, then hire a professional designer to create your eye-catching graphics. You only have one shot to get a prospect's attention, so don't waste your ad dollars trying to do it with so-so ad copy and mediocre graphics.

Next step...

Step 4: Optimize Your Campaign

Now that your ad is ready to go, it's time to look at ways to optimize this campaign. Check out these two tips...

Start Small

Don't dump your entire ad budget into a platform until you've had a chance to see what sort of response you get. To that end, you need to test the platform itself, the audience (if it's a platform where you select keywords or audience demographics) and your ad. Once you have all these pieces working well and returning good results, then you can ramp up your ad spend.

Note: see the lesson on "Testing" for more information on this topic.

Next...

Select a Narrow Audience

If you're posting an ad on a website in your market, then be sure this site caters to your specific audience. In other words, it's better to place an ad on a niche site. For example, instead of posting an ad about training poodles on a general dog training site, you'll want to look for sites that focus on poodles.

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If you're posting a pay per click ad, then here too you want to choose a narrow audience. Let's suppose you're selling information about growing tomatoes. Bidding on a keyword like "tomatoes" is too broad. Instead, you'd select a longtail keyword such as, "tips for growing tomatoes."

And finally, if you're posting on Facebook, then choose a narrow audience based on both demographics and interests. The more tightly targeted your audience, the better your response rate will be.

Your Turn

Your assignment for this lesson is to research potential ad platforms. Then select ONE venue to place your first ad. Be sure this is a platform that lets you choose a narrowly targeted audience. Finally, put a plan in place to create your ad (either yourself or outsource) so that you can start testing the platform you selected.

Meanwhile, I'll see you in the next lesson!

E is for Email

As mentioned in the Blogging lesson, every affiliate needs to have a platform. And a mailing list should be one of your top priorities, because it continues to be a great way to reach your audience. Plus, it's a platform you own and control, which is important when you're talking about your most valuable assets.

So, how do you start building a list of prospects for your affiliate offers? Check out this quick tutorial...

Step 1: Decide What to Promote

Yes, you are likely to promote a variety of affiliate offers to your list over time. However, you need to decide which offer you're going to promote first. That's because your lead magnet and your initial autoresponder series will be based on this initial offer.

TIP: Check the "V" (Vet) lesson later in this course for more information about how to vet and select a good affiliate offer.

You'll also want to decide what sort of bonus to promote alongside this affiliate offer. See the "A" lesson (Add Value) for more information on this topic.

Next...

Step 2: Create (or Acquire) a Lead Magnet

Now that you know what you want to promote first, your next step is to choose a suitable lead magnet.

One option is to check your affiliate center for content, as many vendors provide rebrandable reports or other content that you can use as a lead magnet.

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However, ideally you'll want to create your own, unique lead magnet. That way, you don't miss out on a subscriber just because they've already picked up your lead magnet from another affiliate.

The key here is to create something in-demand, valuable, and something that naturally leads to the paid offer. In other words, the lead magnet should be useful yet incomplete.

For example, let's suppose you're promoting a weight-lifting guide. Here are examples of different types of lead magnets you might offer:

- *A "crash course" in weight lifting – a report that provides an overview of how to get started. Subscribers will need to purchase the course in order to get all the details.*
- *A video that shows subscribers how to safely perform the most common lifts.*
- *A report with a collection of weight-lifting tips covering both exercise and nutrition.*
- *A weight-lifter's cookbook with recipes for healthy foods. May also include a set of meal plans.*
- *A six-week lifting program to help new lifters get started.*

And similar items. As you can see, these examples are also useful items, yet subscribers will need to purchase the paid offer in order to get the most benefit.

NOTE: See the lesson on "Lead Magnet" for more information on this topic.

Next...

Step 3: Set Up a Landing/Opt-in Page

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Once you know what sort of lead magnet you're going to offer in exchange for an email address, then you can set up your lead page.

Basically, this page is a mini sales letter that minimally includes:

- A benefit-driven headline. E.G., "Free Report Reveals Three Little-Known Ways to Melt Fat Faster Than Ever!"
- A bulleted list of the top benefits of your offer. Use curiosity in your benefits. E.G., "You'll discover which tool every serious marketer ought to be using to boost conversions (but almost no one knows about it!)..."
- A professional ecover graphic. Yes, people really do judge a book (or any other product) by its cover, so make sure your product makes a great impression.
- A call to action alongside your opt-in form. E.G., "Enter your email below and click "Submit" to request [Product Name] for free!"

Next...

Step 4: Create an Autoresponder Series

The next step is to create an initial series of emails that you'll use to welcome people to your list, start building a relationship and presell the initial product that you're promoting.

Again, this is another set of content that should be useful yet incomplete. Let's go back to the example of promoting a weight-lifting product. You might create a five-email series called "The Five Best Secrets for Getting Ripped." Each email would share one secret, and then you'd promote the affiliate offer at the end of each email.

E.G., "If you loved this fat-busting, muscle-building tip, then you're going to love [Product Name]! Here's why..."

Step 5: Generate Traffic

Now the last step – you need to get traffic to your landing page. You can do this in a variety of ways, including:

- Blog about your lead magnet. (See the lesson on Blogging.)
- Do guest blogging, and include a link to your lead page at the end of your article.
- Swap landing page links with your marketing partners. (See the lesson on Joint Ventures.)
- Send your social media traffic to your lead page. (See the lesson on Social Media.)
- Use paid advertising to drive traffic to your lead page. (See the lesson on Display Ads.)

The point is, you want to send prospects to YOUR landing page/opt-in page first, rather than sending them to the sales page. If you send them to the sales page, the vast majority of them won't buy, and you'll never see them again. If they join a list, it will be the vendor's list (not yours).

By sending traffic to your lead page, you can get these prospects on your list so you can follow up with them to close the sale. This lets you build two valuable assets – a prospect list, and a list of proven buyers.

TIP: Whenever possible, segment your list. When a prospect buys through your affiliate link, move them to your buyers list. Or when someone requests a specific lead magnet from you or joins a webinar, add them to the appropriate segment of your list. This lets you send highly targeted content and offers to different segments of your list.

Now it's...

Your Turn

Your assignment for this lesson is begin planning how to build your mailing list if you haven't already done so. Ask yourself:

- What affiliate offer will you promote first?
- What sort of lead magnet would be a good fit with this paid offer?
- What type of initial autoresponder series will you send to subscribers to promote this offer?

NOTE: Ideally, over time you should create multiple lead magnets to attract a variety of subsets of your population. Be sure to segment your list according to lead magnet.

That's it for this time. See you in the next lesson!

F is for Funnel

One of the keys to your success as an affiliate is to create a sales funnel. This means presenting your prospects and customers with multiple products at multiple price points. Typically, you create an entry point for prospects to enter your funnel, convert those prospects into cash-paying customers, and then turn those customers into repeat buyers.

Here's why this is so important: the easiest sale you'll ever make is to persuade a happy buyer to buy something else from you.

So, with that in mind, let's talk about how to build a sales funnel for your affiliate business...

1. Understand the Pieces of the Funnel

The first thing you need to do is understand the main components of your sales funnel. Here are the pieces to include:

- A lead magnet. This is your free product that you use to persuade people to join your mailing list.
- A tripwire offer. This is a low-priced, high-value offer that you use to quickly convince prospects to become cash-paying customers. In some cases, you may be able to find a vendor who's offering 100% commission on a low-priced offer.
- A core offer. This is the main offer you're selling, and it's typically a high-ticket offer that goes for \$97, \$197, \$497 or more.
- Backend offers. These are related products that you cross-promote throughout your funnel.

Here's the next point to consider...

2. Be Aware of Vendor Competition

Since you're an affiliate, the customers aren't yours – instead, they belong to whomever created the products that you're selling. As such, you need to keep in mind that the vendors are also setting up sales funnels for people who purchase through your link. And you may end up competing with this vendor for sales if you're selling multiple products through the same vendor.

For example, maybe you're selling Product A to your list. As soon as you've made that sale, the vendor takes your customers and starts selling Product B, Product C, and Product D on the backend.

Question is, will you get credit for these sales?

What you need to do is review the affiliate program terms carefully. Some vendors actually ensure that affiliates get credit for these backend sales. If this fits in with the sales funnel you want to create, then jump on that offer. The vendor tends to do the work while you get the credit, which is a really good deal (and definitely not the norm).

In many cases, you're likely to set up a sales funnel that doesn't necessarily include products from the same vendor. That eliminates the problem of directly competing with the vendor, because you're not both selling the EXACT same product to the exact same customer. However, you are indirectly competing if you're selling similar offers. And that's okay.

3. Sell a Variety of Offers

As an affiliate, you have a wide variety of products to choose from that you can promote. This includes low-priced items, high-ticket offers, and recurring commission offers (such as membership sites or subscriptions). You can also choose to sell both digital products and physical products.

NOTE: The advantage of selling digital products is that the vendors can offer you a big commission rate – typically at least 50%. In some case, you may even see 100% commission offers from a vendor who's focusing on building a buyer's list.

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Physical products have lower profit margins, so you may get as little as 2% per sale, though it can go as high as 20% to 25%, depending on the product. An advantage of selling physical products is that you can go through a vendor like Amazon, which is a trusted brand. That means you tend to have good conversion rates.

So, let me give you a couple examples of sales funnels you might set up in different niches.

Let's start with a bodybuilding niche (such as bodybuilding for women).

- Lead magnet. A set of meal plans and exercise routines (two-to-four-week plan).
- Tripwire. An overview report that gives beginners a crash course in how to get started with bodybuilding.
- Core offer. A monthly membership site that provides new recipes, exercise routines and tips every month.
- Backend offers. Physical products such as whey protein and lifting equipment (gloves, bench, weights, etc.). Digital products such as a bodybuilding app, access to a private group, and in-depth infoproducts on specific topics such as nutrition.

Now a second example – this time let's suppose you're selling organic gardening pest-control information and supplies.

- Lead magnet. A pest identification cheat sheet.
- Tripwire. A report on getting rid of the most common garden pests.
- Core offer. An in-depth guide on how to identify and control garden pests.
- Backend offers. Organic pest-control sprays, a video that shows people how to create their own sprays, a report on how to use good insects to control bad insects, and similar.

And finally...

4. Cross Promote

How do you cross-promote these offers? Let's walk through the different ways:

- Cross-promote in your emails. This is one of the primary ways to promote your various offers, especially as it gives you some control if you segment your lists.
- Insert promotions on your blog (sidebar, header and footer).
- Create content for your blog and embed promos within the content.
- Promote on your social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc.).
- Promote on your thank you and download pages.
- Promote within your lead magnets.
- Promote inside groups/forums you own.

Bottom line: whenever you communicate with your prospects or customers, include a promotion (where applicable).

Tip: When the vendor has a really good funnel set up for the backend of the mail affiliate offer you want to promote, make sure you pre-sell the whole funnel in your emails.

This strategy works best if you buy the whole funnel yourself so you can really get acquainted with the entire product funnel. Your customers will really appreciate that you've taken the time to help them make further

buying decisions. This strategy can also increase your sales exponentially. Sometimes even 100, 200 or 300%! Don't ignore the importance of this tip.

Your Turn

Your assignment for this lesson is to design a sales funnel for your affiliate marketing business which should include a lead magnet, tripwire, core offer, a various backend offers. Then make a plan as to how you'll promote them.

That's it for this lesson – I'll see you in the next one!

G is for Guest Blogging

Guest blogging is just what it sounds like: you serve as a guest author on other peoples' blogs. You get exposure to their visitors, and they get free content. This is a very good way to drive traffic to your lead page, establish your expertise in the niche and build your brand.

So, with all these benefits in mind, let's talk about how to do it...

Step 1: Discover Guest-Blogging Opportunities

Your first step is to find potential guest-blogging opportunities. The easiest way to do this is to search for blogs in your niche that openly solicit guest content.

To do this, you'll search for your niche keywords (such as "car restoration" or "social media marketing") alongside search terms that are related to guest blogging. These terms include:

- List of blogs that accept guest content
- List of blogs that accept guest articles
- List of guest blogging
- Guest blogging
- Guest author
- Guest article
- Guest content
- Submit article
- Article submission guidelines
- Guest article submission
- Guest article guidelines
- Guest author guidelines
- Guest author article submission
- Article submission terms

For example, you might search for "bodybuilding guest article guidelines" (without the quotes).

Next step...

Step 2: Do Your Due Diligence

At this point, you have a nice list of potential guest blogging opportunities. Now you want to take this long list and turn it into a short list by doing your due diligence. Here's how...

Review the Blog Content

First, you want to be sure that the blog has a lot of high-quality content, as well as an engaged audience. Your name is going to be associated with this blog, so be sure this is the sort of blog where you'd be proud to post your content.

Secondly, look at the comments on the blog. Are they actual comments from engaged visitors? Or are they spam comments? Cross off any blog with a comment section that's not being moderated and doesn't have real comments from the target audience.

Third, take note of the type of content on the blog. For example, does the blog owner seem to like tips lists? In-depth tutorials? Short and snappy articles? Graphic-heavy articles?

Taking note of what the blog owner likes to publish will give you an idea of what sort of content to submit. For example, if a blog has a lot of tips lists, you too might submit a tips list, particularly if you can offer something fresh.

Next...

Research the Owner

If the blog content checks out, then do a quick Google search on the owner of the blog. You want to make sure this person has a good reputation in the niche – someone with whom you'll be proud to be associated. Be aware of any red flags such as poor customer service, complaints from marketing partners and similar.

And then...

Read the Guidelines

If the owner has a good reputation and this looks like a blog you want to submit content to, then read the article submission guidelines carefully. For example, how does the blog owner want you to submit the content?

- Via a contact form?
- Via an email attachment?
- Copied and pasted directly into an email?
- Or maybe you don't submit the content at all, but rather just send an inquiry?

Some blog owners will immediately toss out any submission that doesn't follow their guidelines, so read them twice and follow them to the letter.

Now the next step...

Step 3: Develop Your Content

You've done your due diligence, you've read the guidelines, and you've done your research to get a sense of what sort of content the blog owner likes to publish. Now it's time to create your content.

NOTE: Check out the "Q" lesson (Quality Content) for more information about how to create content that really engages your readers. Then follow these two tips as well...

Define Your Goal

Before you write a single word, be sure to define the goal of your content clearly. For example, are you looking to drive traffic to your lead page? (Recommended.)

One good way to do this is to create a lead magnet that's highly related to your guest content. Thus, anyone who likes your article will be eager to sign up for your list to get more information.

For example, if your guest article shares 10 tips for weight loss, you might offer “Part 2” of this article as a lead magnet.

Another example: let’s suppose you’ve created a bodybuilding article that talks about a variety of lifts. Your lead page can then offer a video showing the right way to perform these lifts.

Create a Compelling Byline

The author byline is the place where you’re supposed to put a few words about yourself. But don’t do that. Instead, use your byline to drive traffic to your lead page.

The key to this strategy is to create a short ad (you generally only have a line or two) that showcases your biggest benefit. You then drop a call to action.

For example:

- Ready to slim down fast with even more fat-busting tips? Click here now to read Part 2 of this article...
- Who else wants to know the secret of nailing a job interview with confident body language? Click here to discover it for yourself...
- What you just learned about selling your own home is just the tip of the iceberg. Click here to discover how to sell it faster AND get higher offers...
- Yes, you too can housetrain your puppy in as few as 72 hours – click here to find out how!

Now let’s wrap up this lesson...

Your Turn

Your assignment for this lesson is to do a quick search right now for your niche keywords, alongside the search terms mentioned at the top of the lesson. Your goal is to create a long list of potential guest-blogging opportunities. Once you've done that, then set aside time to do your due diligence and create suitable content.

See you in the next lesson!

H is for Hard Sell

A lot of content that you post on your blog, in your newsletter, on social media, email and elsewhere are likely going to be in a soft-sell format.

For example, if you're writing about how to set up a mailing list, you might recommend the autoresponder you use. This is a soft-sell, because the promotion is embedded inside a how-to article, and this promo isn't aggressive.

Occasionally, however, you may use a hard-sell to promote an affiliate offer. Typically, a hard-sell basically looks like a mini sales letter. The content shares the benefit of the offer and then includes a call to action at the end to encourage people to click on your affiliate link and purchase the offer.

Let's talk about when to use a hard sell and what this content looks like in more detail...

1. When to Use a Hard Sell?

If you have a platform (such as a newsletter, blog, and/or social media following), then generally you'll have a mix of hard-sell and soft-sell content. In most cases, your soft-sell content should outnumber your hard sell content. People won't come back to your blog or other platform if they feel like it's just one big advertisement after another.

As such, you'll want to use your hard sell content sparingly. Typically, you'll break it out during specific occasions, such as:

- A new product is being launched. You might post a string of hard-sell articles during launch week.
- There's a flash sale going on. When it comes to a flash sale – which may run for as few as eight to twelve hours, you don't mess around with soft sells. You get right to the point of promoting the benefits and dropping a strong call to action.

- There's some other promo going on. This might be a holiday sale, an anniversary sale, or even just the roll-out of a discount coupon from the vendor.
- You want to drum up more sales for a particular offer. This works even better if you post a series of articles, such as three related blog posts.

So now that you know when to use a hard-sell post, let's find out what a hard sell should look like...

2. What Does a Hard Sell Look Like?

Basically, a hard sell is a mini sales letter. To that end, it should include the main components of a sales letter. Let's take a look at those main pieces...

Compelling Headline

Your headline (or subject line, if this is an email) needs to grab the reader's attention with such vigor that they can't help but read the next few lines of your email or post. This means the headline should do one or both of the following:

Showcase One or More Benefits

Your reader is going to be wondering, "What's in it for me?" Your headline, blog post title, or email subject line should help answer that question by showcasing a big benefit.

E.G., "Flash sale: get 50% off [Product Name] if you're quick!"

Arouse Curiosity

This can be as simple as asking a question, promising to reveal a secret, or even telling people what benefit they'll get without letting them know how it's possible.

Let me give you a few examples:

- Ask a question. “Which of These Car-Buying Mistakes Are You Making?”
- Reveal a secret. “Revealed: The #1 Way to Retire Rich.”
- Arouse curiosity around a benefit. “Land a \$100k job... Without a College Degree?”

Here’s the next piece...

Engaging Opener

Now that your headline grabbed your audience’s attention, you need to craft an opener that holds their attention. Here are different ways to accomplish this task:

Ask a Question

The idea here is to engage readers by making them think, and/or getting them to step forward and self-identify.

E.G., “What would your friends say if they knew you were running a six-figure business from home?”

Start With a Story

This is a good way to draw readers in, engage them on an emotional level, and build rapport. This story could be about you or someone else who overcame the same problem with which your readers are currently struggling.

E.G., “I still remember the gnawing in the pit of my stomach as my trembling hand opened the envelope that would tell me whether I had been accepted into my first-choice college...”

Empathize with the Reader

E.G., “It’s embarrassing when your dog jumps all over a guest – especially with muddy paws!”

Get Readers Imagining a Benefit

Here you just continue showcasing benefits. E.G., “Imagine if you looked in the mirror six weeks from now, and you LOVED what you saw –a leaner, sexier, healthier you...”

Be Direct

Here you get down to business. E.G., “If you act now, you can get [Product Name] at the lowest price ever offered...”

Next...

List of Benefits

Now that you have your prospect interested in your offer, the next thing you do is share a bulleted list of benefits of that offer.

E.G., “You’ll discover a simple way to feel full and satisfied all day long – no pills required!”

Call to Action

The final important piece of your hard-sell is to drop a link alongside a call to action. This is where you tell people what to do next and, ideally, why they should act now.

E.G., “Your next step is simple – take out your credit card and click here to get started. And do it now, because this flash sale ends tonight at midnight!”

Your Turn

Your assignment for this lesson is to plan a hard sell for your blog, newsletter or even an email. Answer these questions:

- What product will you promote?
- When will you send this email?
- Will you send multiple emails to promote the offer?
- What are the main benefits of this offer?
- How will you add value to this offer?
- Is there a natural sense of urgency, such as a limited-time discount?

Once you answer those questions, then you'll be in a better position to create an effective promo!

Meanwhile, I'll see you in the next lesson...

I is for Interview

As an affiliate, you're creating a lot of content to build bonds with your audience, generate traffic, and presell offers.

Now here's a content idea that can do all of these things: interview the vendor who created the offer you're promoting.

Here's why this sort of content works so well:

- You get to provide useful content for your audience. This works particularly well if the vendor is already a trusted authority in the niche.
- You get to be associated with the vendor. If this vendor is someone who's well known and respected, then by interviewing them you elevate your status in the niche a little too.
- The vendor will help distribute the interview. Typically when you interview someone, they'll drop a link to the interview on their blog, social media, in their newsletter or other platforms.
- You and the vendor will both make money. You'll promote the vendor's product using your affiliate link, so you'll both make money.

So, with all these awesome benefits in mind, let's talk about how to do this...

1. Spit and Polish First

If you've already made some money for the vendor, then great – you can jump right to the next set of tips and ideas below.

If you haven't generated any sales for them yet, then you need to do one (or ideally both) of the following:

1. Promote their offers and prove that you can generate sales.

2. Get your site in order – be sure you’re presenting a professional image.

It’s pretty simple, really. Any popular vendor is going to get a variety of requests and proposals crossing their desk on any given day. You need to be able to show that it’s worth their time to accept YOUR proposal. That’s why, ideally, you should demonstrate that you can generate sales for them, which will make it all the more likely they’ll say “yes” to your request.

Next...

2. Decide on Interview Format

The next step is to decide what type of interview to do. Namely:

- A text interview, where you email the questions and the vendor sends you back their answers.
- A video interview.
- An audio/telephone interview.

In most cases, you should request a video interview, as a video tends to have a higher perceived value than other formats. However, research the vendor first to see what they’re preferred format is (e.g., do they post text interviews on their blog? Video interviews?)

TIP: If you’re going to do a video or audio interview, then be sure to select your equipment, familiarize yourself with its features, and practice using it. You don’t want to have a fumbling interview just because you don’t know how do things like record the interview, mute yourself when needed, etc.

If you decide to do an audio or video interview, then the other thing you need to decide is whether you’ll have an audience for it. In other words, will you invite prospects to listen or watch live, and perhaps ask their own questions?

The advantage of this method is that a live event tends to carry an even higher perceived value than pre-recorded video or audio. Thus you can build

your list for the live event, and you'll also have the recordings to distribute widely after the event.

Next...

3. Check With Vendors

The first thing to do is simply check your dashboard, emails and other content associated with the affiliate program. Some vendors openly state that they're happy to do interviews with affiliates. In that case, get in contact using their preferred method, and let them know the benefits of doing an interview with you. (E.G., "You'll get exposure to my X blog visitors and Y mailing list subscribers...")

If that's not the case, then move onto the next step...

4. Send a Proposal

If a vendor does not specifically state on their site that they welcome interviews, then you'll need to send your proposal. Here's an example:

Subject: [Name], I'd like to interview you...

Hi [Name],

It's [Your Name] here from [Your Website]. I'm one of your affiliates, who recently generated [number] [Product Name] sales. It's a really great product, and I'm proud to promote it because [insert quick reason why you like this product so much].

The reason I'm writing today is to request the honor of interviewing you on the topic of [topic]. My [number] blog visitors, social media followers, and newsletter subscribers are very eager to learn more about [topic], and you're the best expert I know to answer their questions.

What I propose is [insert your details, e.g., "we do a quick 30-minute video interview and promote [Product]..."].

Can I count you in? Please hit reply to let me know...

[sign off]

Next...

5. Create an Outline

Once a vendor agrees to do an interview with you, then it's time for you to prepare (especially if this is a live video or audio interview).

What you want to do is create a general outline of how the interview will go and the types of questions you'll ask. You can then send this general outline to the interviewee so they have a sense of what you'll ask.

Take note, however: you do NOT want to send an exact set of questions, because you don't want to end up with a scripted interview (which will sound artificial and will likely be robotic and boring). Make it clear to the interviewee that it's a general outline, and NOT a script.

It's a good idea to base your questions on the product you're promoting. For example, if the product shares in-depth details on a five-step process, then you might ask the vendor to share an overview of the five steps along with some tips. That makes the interview useful yet incomplete, so that you can promote the vendor's product at the end.

Your Turn

Your assignment for this lesson is to select a vendor whom you'd like to interview. Then do your research to determine:

- Do they openly invite people to interview them?
- What format do they seem to prefer?
- What types of questions would you ask during the interview?

Meanwhile, I'll see you in the next lesson!

J is for Joint Venture

A joint venture (JV) is where you team up with other marketers in your niche for mutually beneficial activities. It's a great way to leverage other peoples' assets (such as their lists or traffic), and in turn they're happy to help because they get something out of it too. That's why you're going to want to add joint venture marketing to your overall affiliate marketing strategy.

Here's how to do it...

Step 1: Decide What Sort of JVs to Do

The first thing to do is brainstorm what sort of joint ventures to do with others. The key is to create something that benefits both of you. Here are a few ideas:

- Co-endorse each other on your respective platforms (newsletter, social media, and blog).
- Recommend your partner's newsletter from your newsletter confirmation/thank you page.
- Include links to each other's lead page inside your respective lead magnets.
- Do a webinar together.
- Create a report together.
- Co-write a blog article.
- Swap blog content and/or newsletter content.
- Share each other's social media content.

And similar activities.

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Note that you can do a one-off joint venture (such as promoting each other on social media), or you can agree to a more long-term event (such as including a permanent link in your blog sidebar).

Step 2: Develop a List of Potential Partners

Your next step is to find potential partners. Here's how to do it:

- Brainstorm a list of potential partners. You already know "who's who" in your niche, so start creating your list by adding the people you already know.
- Run a Google search for your niche keywords. Be sure to check out the sponsored ads as well.
- Find out who has the bestselling products in your niche. Go to sites like ClickBank.com, Udemy.com and JVZoo.com to find potential partners.
- Look for people with big platforms. For example, search Facebook for your niche keywords to see who has the most popular Pages and Groups. You can also search Google for your keywords alongside words such as "best blogs" or "top newsletters."
- Ask your network for recommendations. For example, ask your audience who they follow on social media, what blogs they read, etc.
- Ask your existing partners for introductions. This is a great way to get your foot in the door.

Next...

Step 3: Do Your Due Diligence

As always, your next step is to do some research to ensure the people on your list are people with whom you'd be proud to be associated. To that end,

search Google for each potential partner's name and business name. Cross off anyone on the list who has a pattern of complaints from customers or partners, or anyone else who has any sort of red flags.

Next step...

Step 4: Develop Relationships

People like to do business with those they know, like and trust, which is why it will be easier for you to land JV partners if you develop relationships first. (Or, at the very least, get on the radar of these folks so they know who you are.)

To that end, check out these ideas for getting your foot in the door so you can open up a dialogue and start building friendships...

Connect on Social Media

Contribute thoughtfully to the person's discussions on social media and share their content. Once you've started a back and forth on their timeline/page, then you can open up a private dialogue via direct message. Do not promote your products and links in their posts and feeds. This will not only turn them off, you'll also show others you don't respect their space. This will most likely get you blocked or banned from groups.

Help the Potential Partner

Here's a great way to get someone's attention: put some money in their pocket. If a potential partner is selling their own products, then become an affiliate and promote their products. This also proves in advance that you're a serious partner who brings something to the table.

Comment on Their Blog

Another way to engage a potential partner is to contribute thoughtfully on their blog. If you do this on a regular basis, the potential partner is sure to take notice. You can further this strategy by sharing the person's blog content on social media and/or linking to it from within your own blog. Do

not promote your products and links in their blog comments. This will get you reported as spam.

Attend Their Webinars

The key here is that you need to engage with the potential partner, such as by introducing yourself (first and last name) and then asking thoughtful questions. You may also want to show up early and/or stay after the webinar is over, if this person tends to talk to participants before and after the webinar.

Ask for an Introduction

If you know someone who knows someone, then ask for an introduction. This is one of the best ways to get your foot in the door, because the introduction is coming from someone they already know, like and trust.

Next...

Step 5: Draw Up a Proposal

As mentioned above, ideally you want to develop relationships first and THEN approach a potential partner with your proposal. To that end, here's an example email to send to a potential partner.

Note: You'll notice this is a somewhat informal email. That's because it's designed to go out to people with whom you've already developed a relationship. If you're sending "cold" emails (which isn't going to get as good of a response), then you'll want to send something a little more formal.

Subject: Hey, I have an idea...

Hi [First Name],

Thanks for the chat the other night about [topic]. [Insert something about the chat you enjoyed/learned/etc.].

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That actually gave me an idea that would benefit both of us...

Here's what I propose: [Insert a one-line description of what you're proposing. E.G., "Let's swap blog content – I'll create an article about [topic] for your blog, and you create an article about [topic] that I distribute to my readers."

Here's how you'll benefit: [Explain how your potential partner benefits. E.G., "You'll get exposure to my 23,887 newsletter subscribers, blog visitors and social media fans..."]

What say you?

Hit reply and let me know what you think – thanks!

[sign off]

P.S. [Reiterate a benefit and/or compliment the potential partner and/or get personal. E.G., "My readers have really been wanting to know more about [topic], and I can't think of anyone better than you to introduce them to it. I hope you'll say yes, because it would be beneficial to you and my readers would love it too..."]

Now it's...

Your Turn

Your assignment for this lesson is twofold:

1. Brainstorm the different types of joint ventures that you would like to engage in.
2. Create a list of potential partners.

Once that's done, then set aside some time to do your due diligence, and make a plan for engaging these potential partners and beginning to develop relationships.

See you in the next lesson.

K is for Keyword

As an affiliate marketer, you're probably creating a lot of content (for your blog, for social media, for your guest blogging efforts, etc.). Question is, are you ensuring at least some of this content is pulling double duty by optimizing it for the search engines?

That's what this lesson is about, as we talked about using keywords and awesome content to attract traffic from Google and other search engines. Check out these steps, tips and ideas...

1. Research Your Keywords

The first thing you need to do is figure out what words your audience is typing into search engines to find information in your niche. To do this, you'll need to use a keyword tool like [LongTailPro](#) or [Keyword Atlas](#), or your favorite tool.

What you're looking for are longtail keywords. These are multi-word keywords that are very targeted and specific. Individually, they may not get a ton of traffic. However, if you rank well for several of them, then collectively you can get a decent amount of traffic.

Why not just go for the big, high-volume keywords? Two reasons:

1. They're hard to rank for. The people who rank well for the big words (like "weight loss") have deep pockets and have had these rankings for years, or even decades. It's difficult for a newcomer to come along and swipe those top rankings.
2. The keywords aren't targeted enough. You're going to have better conversion rates if you choose longtail keywords rather than these high-volume, somewhat vague keywords.

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For example, you don't really know what someone is looking for when they search for weight loss. Do they want supplements? Tips? Exercise equipment? Recipes?

Now consider a more targeted keyword like this: weight loss nutrition tips for women over 40. Now you not only know what the searcher wants (nutrition tips), you also know who's doing the searching (women over 40).

Select your targeted keywords with low competition, and then move onto the next step...

2. Create High-Quality Content

You've got your keywords in hand, and now it's time to create content around these keywords.

But hold up there for a second...

Whatever you do, don't stuff your articles with keywords. If you do that, Google is going to slap your site down so far it will basically be invisible to your audience.

Instead, what you need to do is write for your readers first. Create high-quality content – your very best stuff – and ONLY insert your keywords where you can do so naturally. This means inserting them sparingly, and only putting them in where they enhance the content. You can include your keywords in your title, as well as once or twice for about every 100 words of content... IF you can do it naturally.

For example, a keyword such as "dog training tips housetraining" is a bit tricky to work into your content in a natural way.

E.G., imagine a title like this: "10 Surefire Dog Training Tips Housetraining!"

Ugh, awkward. Not natural. No good!

Instead, look for keywords that are easier to insert into content naturally. For example, "Dog Training Tips for Socialization" is much easier to insert

naturally because it's in a form you'd naturally use. E.G., "10 Surefire Dog Training Tips for Socialization."

Next...

3. Be Sure Your Site is User-Friendly

Another thing Google takes into consideration is whether your site provides a good experience for your visitors. That's why you'll want to make sure you provide a user-friendly, accessible site. Keep these tips in mind...

Use a Mobile-Friendly Design

Are you using a responsive theme or design that looks great on any device? If not, you should be. Most of your visitors probably come into your site on a phone at least once – and you can bet they won't be back if it doesn't look good on a small screen. Plus, Google tends to give better rankings to mobile-friendly sites.

Ensure Your Site Loads Fast

Another thing Google looks at is how quickly your pages load. To that end, be sure you don't have any unoptimized media, unnecessary scripts, or bloated code that's slowing down your site.

4. What About Links?

If you know a little bit about search engine optimization, then you know what a link from an authority site is often viewed as a "vote" that your web page has good, quality content.

So, run out and scoop up all the links you can, right?

Not so fast. Google is onto people who artificially build links, and they tend to penalize those who build them too fast, buy them, or even swap them. That's why you'll want to focus on building links naturally by:

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- Creating high-quality content. Yes, it all comes back to creating awesome content. If you focus on creating your very best content for your readers, then these readers will naturally share it – and you'll naturally build links.
- Sending your content to influential others. It's a good idea to build relationships with influential bloggers and social media people in your niche. Then when you post a particularly good piece of content, you can send it to them. If they like it, they'll link back (and in doing so, you've naturally acquired a link).

Now it's...

Your Turn

Your assignment for this lesson is to do some keyword research. Your goal is uncovering longtail (targeted, low-competition) keywords that you know you can naturally insert into your content. In other words, if the keyword is really awkward (e.g., "dog supplies Phoenix"), skip it. You only want to work with keywords that you can weave naturally in your content.

If you're really interested in using Keyword and SEO strategies to build long term passive affiliate income in your business, you may want to take a look at this [Free Webinar - Keyword & SEO Strategies To Create Products And Content That Work 24/7 For You](#)

That's it for this lesson – see you in the next one!

L is for Lead Magnet

As you learned about in the lesson on Email, you need to create a good lead magnet in order to build a list. This lead magnet serves double duty, as it also works to promote an affiliate offer.

In other words, your lead magnets are an important part of your affiliate business. They're often your prospect's first exposure to you, so you want to make sure every lead magnet you create makes a great impression.

To that end, check out these tips and tricks for creating effective lead magnets...

1. Know Your Options

Sometimes when people think of a lead magnet, they think of a report. Yes, that's one option – but there are a whole lot of other options that may be more suitable.

Here are examples of the different types of lead magnets you can offer:

- Ebooks/reports.*
- Audios.
- Videos.
- Memberships.
- Checklists.
- Templates.
- Swipes.
- Gear/resource lists.
- Planners/calendars.
- Cheat sheets.
- Spreadsheets.
- Worksheets.
- Mind maps.
- Process maps.
- Apps/software.
- Plugins.

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- Coaching/consulting.
- Courses.

**TIP: Don't refer to an ebook as an ebook, as that has a poor, low-quality connotation. Instead, refer to it as a guide, blueprint, special report, system, tutorial or similar.*

As always, do your market research to find out what your audience wants.

Now the next tip...

2. Create Multiple Lead Magnets

The idea here is to create multiple lead magnets to help you sell the major affiliate products you're promoting. That way, each lead magnet will naturally lead to the paid offer. As a nice bonus, you can also segment your list according to the lead magnet that a particular subscriber claimed.

Let me give you an example...

Let's suppose you're selling weight loss information for women. And let's suppose you've identified three key topics of interest to your audience:

- Nutrition
- Exercise
- Motivation

You line up three main products to promote around these three key topics. And then you create lead magnets around these three key topics, which naturally lead to the three main affiliate offers you're promoting.

For example:

- You offer access to a private support forum as a lead magnet to sell the motivation product.

- You offer a set of recipes and meals plans as a lead magnet to sell the nutrition product.
- You offer an exercise video as a lead magnet to sell a weight-loss course with an emphasis on exercise.

Next tip...

3. Craft a Snazzy Title

Many people decide whether to request a lead magnet based in large part on its title. That's why you'll want to invest some time in brainstorming benefit-driven, attention-getting titles.

Let me share with you a set of templates and examples...

- How to [Get a Benefit] Faster and Easier Than You Ever Thought Possible

E.G., How to Start Up a Profitable Online Business Faster and Easier Than You Ever Thought Possible

- The #1 Way to [Get a Benefit]

E.G., The #1 Way to Win a Blue Ribbon With Your Tomatoes at the County Fair

- The Secret of [Getting a Benefit]

E.G., The Secret of Creating a Happy, Fulfilling Marriage That Lasts a Lifetime

- How to [Get a Benefit] – Even If [You Do or Do Not Do Something/Possess Something/Etc.]

E.G., How to Land a Six-Figure Dream Job – Even If You Dropped Out of College

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- The Best Way to [Get a Benefit]
E.G., The Best Way to Get Rid of Black Mold
- What [Specific People] Do When They Want to [Get a Benefit]
E.G., What Real Estate Agents Do When They Want to Snag a Great Deal on a House
- [Number] [Type of] Mistakes That Will [Result In Something Bad Happening]
E.G., Five Dieting Mistakes That Will Slow Your Metabolism Down to a Crawl
- The Craziest [Type of] Trick That Really Works
E.G., The Craziest Weight-Loss Trick That Really Works

It's also important how you present this title. Which brings us to the next tip...

4. Get a Good eCover Graphic

As you already know, people really do judge a book (or other infoproduct) by its cover. That's why you want to get your ecover professionally created so it's eye-catching and looks sharp. You'll want to have your cover professionally created. If you don't know have anyone who can do it for you, check out designers on Fiverr. You can have book covers created for as little as \$5.

TIP #1: If you are intent on creating your own ecover – and you have the skills and design eye to do it – then you might look into a tool such as Canva.com.

TIP #2: Once your image is created, you're going to need a tool to render that image as report covers, Kindle and iPad screens, stand up

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book samples and so much more. I love [Ecover Authority](#) to do this. It's fast, easy and super inexpensive.

Next...

5. Polish the Interior

There are two points to make here:

1. Proof and polish the content. Ideally, get someone else to proof it, as they'll be able to spot the errors that you can't. You might even consider hiring a professional proofreader, since your lead magnet is perhaps the most important piece of your entire sales funnel.
2. Be sure the content has a professional layout and design. You can use templates for this (such as a Word template), or you can hire someone to make it look good.

This goes for any type of product you're creating. For example, if you're creating a slide-share presentation video, then be sure you use a polished slide-deck that makes a great impression. Secondly, be sure to proof the content and include professional eye-catching graphics to add value.

Likewise, do the same for membership sites, courses, tools (such as checklists, templates, etc.) and everything else you create. If you intend to create multiple items of a certain type -- such as multiple checklists -- you might hire someone to create a professional design template that you can tweak and reuse repeatedly.

If you feel completely lost about how to even get started building a lead magnet, I've got 2 items you might find really helpful.

The first is a series of trainings and checklists called "[How Free Products Lead to Profit](#)". This will help you learn about the best converting lead magnets and how to set them up. Plus you'll see how they work in multiple niches.

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The second is a full course I did called [Optin Funnel Creation/ PLR Mastery](#). In this 7-module course, you'll watch me use a really high quality piece of PLR content and build a 2 step funnel. Lead Magnet to TripWire (low cost product).

I'll demonstrate how you break apart the PLR course into easily repeatable steps using templates.

If you'd like to see one of my own lead magnet to affiliate offers, [click here](#). [This is a video training I did on one of my favorite tools](#). This lead magnet drives consistent sales in my own business.

Your Turn

As mentioned, the lead magnet is the most important part of your sales funnel. If you can't persuade people to join your list, then everything else you're promoting via email doesn't even matter because no one will see it.

With that in mind, your assignment for this lesson is to determine what sort of lead magnets to create. Keep in mind, your lead magnets should be something your audience really wants, and they should naturally lead to a paid offer.

If you don't know for sure what your audience wants, then do your research by seeing what they're already consuming (in particular, what they're already buying). Then brainstorm a variety of in-demand lead magnets you can create.

Go ahead and work on that, and meanwhile I'll see you in the next lesson...

M is for Marketing Tools

It's no secret that there is plenty to do when it comes to growing your affiliate business. However, the good news is that you don't need to do every single task manually, because there are a variety of tools available to make your everyday tasks faster and easier.

Let's take a look at some of these tools, services and platforms...

1. Content Management System (Blog)

An easy way to build a website – and especially a blog – is by installing a content management system. You'll see plenty of options floating about, such as Joomla. However, I recommend you use the well-known, well-supported WordPress.org. It's easy to use, easy to install, and there are plugins available for just about any function you can think of. Plus, there are also thousands of themes (designs) to choose from, so customizing your site is easy. If you're looking for an easy to use page builder, I highly recommend [Beaver Builder](#).

2. Email Service Provider

The next tool you need onboard is a reliable email service provider/autoresponder from a reputable company. Your platform is going to be the biggest investment you make in your business. Make sure you use a platform that can easily grow with your business.

Make sure the platform you chose allows affiliate marketing. Some do not and will cancel your account if you use it for affiliate marketing.

My favorite platform (and also one of the two platforms I use) is [Mailvio](#). This platform is built by marketers FOR marketers. The cost of this platform for 25,000 contacts is a fraction of other tools.

I do also like [Aweber](#), [Active Campaign](#) and similar providers. Look for providers that have:

- Good customer service.
- A good uptime record.
- Built-in tracking tools.
- Segmenting tools.
- Automation tools.
- Easy path to upgrade as your list grows.

Next...

3. Keyword Tools

If you're doing any sort of search engine optimization, then you need to use a keyword tool to find out what your audience is inputting into search engines. There are dozens of tools available, and some of them are even free. Use your favorite tool, or use established tools like [LongTailPro](#) and [Keyword Atlas](#).

4. Social Media Tools

Social media tools can help you do everything from uncover popular content topics to scheduling your posts to tracking response. Let's take a look at some of the most popular tools:

- [HootSuite.com](#): This is a popular "all-in-one" tool that does all the tasks mentioned above. It's also set up in a way that you can have team members use the tool to manage your social media activities.
- [PostBlazer](#): This is a great social poster for Facebook and Twitter. I've been using it for about 2 years and love it.
- [Missing Lettr](#): This tool connects to your blog by RSS and automatically builds and generates year long social media posting plans for your business. Available for Facebook, Twitter and Medium.
- [TailWind](#): This is one of the best posting tools for Pinterest and Instagram. Not only can you post your own content, you can easily grab relevant content to schedule and team up with influencers in your own niche.

5. Testing and Tracking Tools

In order to optimize everything from your emails to your lead pages, you need to test and track – and that requires a tool.

First off, if you're testing something in your email campaigns (like your subject lines), then check if your email service provider has built-in testing tools. Most of the bigger platforms do, and some providers are highly focused on helping you boost conversions.

If you're testing an ad campaign, then check if your ad platform offers metrics. For example, Facebook and Google Ads both offer data to help you improve conversion rates on your campaigns.

If you're testing other pages and campaigns, then you'll need to line up another tool.

For A/B split tests, you can use something like [SplitTestMonkey](#), or similar. (Run a Google search for "A/B split testing tool" to uncover plenty of additional options.)

If you're going to go a step beyond split-testing, then you'll want to take a look at a popular options such as [Google Analytics](#). An alternative to Google Analytics is [Matomo](#) (formerly Piwik).

6. Graphics

As mentioned throughout these lessons, you can add value to your content by including polished, relevant graphics. Let's talk about where to get these graphics...

Buy Graphics: You can use royalty-free graphics sites such as [BigStockPhoto.com](#), [iStockPhoto.com](#), and [DepositPhotos.com](#).

DIY Graphics: You can use a tool like [Canva.com](#) to create your own graphics or tweak existing graphics.

Outsource Graphics: Check freelancing sites such as 99Designs.com, Upwork.com, or Fiverr.com to find designers to create or tweak graphics for you.

7. Affiliate Research

Are you looking for new affiliate opportunities to promote? Or, are you wondering if a particular product sells well? Check out these platforms:

- ClickBank.com: This is one of the oldest and most reputable platforms. The site includes an affiliate directory where you can browse popular categories or search for particular types of products. Every product includes a ranking, so you can see how popular it is (i.e., you can see how well it sells).
- Amazon.com: Amazon is a great place to do research, because all products are ranked within a particular niche category. As such, it's really easy to find out what's selling well.

Your Turn

Your assignment for this lesson is to inventory the tools you're currently using. Ask yourself these questions:

- What tools are you missing?
- Are you satisfied with your current tools?
- If you're not satisfied with your current tools, what is it about them that you don't like? What sort of tools would you like to be using instead?

You may find that an honest assessment has you in search of new tools and platforms. If so, then set aside some time to research your options.

Go ahead and work on this exercise. Meanwhile, I'll see you in the next lesson...

N is for Nurture

Imagine for a moment that someone joins your list, starts following you on social media, or subscribes to your blog. What sort of impression are you making on your new audience?

They don't know you... yet. They don't trust you... yet. They don't like you... yet. And so they're not going to buy from you unless you build a relationship with them first. And that's why you need to nurture your list and other platforms.

With that in mind, check out these dos and don'ts for nurturing your list...

1. Don't Avoid Promoting

Sometimes marketers think that "nurturing your list" means you spend a period of time sending them good content, but you don't promote anything during this time.

Part of developing a good relationship with a reader is to recommend the best products to them that will help make their life better. Make sure you set the expectation though immediately in your nurture campaign. Let your readers know one of the services you will be providing is to test, vet and recommend products that will help them exponentially.

I personally like to send warm up content to my new members. In this warm up content, I send the reader to blog posts, downloads and video trainings. Every one of these has a call to action in it. This content is a much softer sell though as I get to know my new subscriber and they get to know me.

Bottom line: go ahead and start promoting right away, but be sure you're not overwhelming your new subscriber with hard sell only content. Which brings us to the next point...

2. Don't Promote Junk

This seems obvious, right? And yet sometimes affiliate marketers get caught up in big commissions and high-converting sales pages, even if the offer they're promoting isn't the best solution out there.

Don't do that.

Any short-term gain you make from a high-converting, high-commission offer is going to be lost when people start asking for refunds. Worse yet, your most valuable asset – your reputation – is going to take a beating, and recovering from that is a long, slow process.

So, ask yourself this question when you're considering whether to promote a specific product: would you be proud to recommend this product to your mother or your best friend? If not, don't promote it to your list either.

3. Do Stay in Touch Regularly

You can't build any sort of relationship if you're just dropping into people's inboxes (or timelines or RSS feeds) every once in a great while. Commit to publishing regularly, such as every week at a minimum, in order to build and maintain top-of-mind awareness.

4. Do Personalize Your Content

It's a good idea to capture first names on your mailing list opt-in form, as this lets you personalize the content. For example, you can start out an email with "Dear [First Name]."

While this tactic is an extremely effective way to get a reader's attention and make the content feel like it was written just for them, you don't want to overuse it. Go ahead and use the recipient's name once or maybe twice in an email, but don't drop their name more than that. Doing so comes off overbearing and creepy, and sometimes sleazy (like the stereotypical salesman who overuses your name).

Instead, use the word “you” generously. In other words, make your content about your readers, not yourself.

Let me give you an example...

“I’ll share my best tips for building a raised flower bed.”

That line is more about the author, as it uses the word “I” and “my.”

You can rewrite that line to make it more about the reader, simply by inserting the word “you,” like this: “You’ll discover tips for building a raised flower bed – it’s easier than you think!”

Next tip...

5. Do Send Your Best Content

Your goal here is to impress the heck out of your audience. You want to give them the sort of content in your newsletter that others tend to charge for. This helps build trust, it establishes you as a voice of authority in your niche, both of which in turn lead to higher conversion rates over the long term.

6. Don’t Be Too Corporate

It’s hard for your audience to develop a relationship with a company. Sure, people can and do develop trust in a brand. But part of your job as an affiliate marketer is to be a PERSON that your audience can trust. And that means you shouldn’t be too “corporate” with your emails – instead, go ahead and get personal.

For example:

- Embed your photo in your emails (as well as on your other platforms, such as social media).

- Tell relevant personal stories. For example, if you're writing about dog training, tell the personal story of how your dog swiped an expensive prime rib off the Christmas dinner table.
- Share other personal information. As mentioned above, you don't want to make your content about yourself – you want to keep the focus on the reader. However, you can drop in an occasional line or two of personal information to help readers get to know, like and trust you.

For example, you might share a note about how you went hiking last week, or you planted your garden, or you just became a new parent/grandparent. It's these little things that humanize you and draw people closer to you.

And finally...

7. Do Understand That Nurturing Is a Process

You don't "nurture" your list once and you're done with it. It doesn't have some expiration, as if it's an activity you do for the first month after someone joins and then forget about it.

Nurturing is a process that starts the day a prospect first meets you, and continues for the life of that relationship. This includes:

- Interacting with your audience on social media, in a group, and/or on your blog. Get your newsletter subscribers to your other platforms, where you can interact and build a better relationship.
- Continuing to send your best content and your best deals to your best subscribers/customers. Sometimes marketers send their BEST stuff to new subscribers, and take their existing and long-time customers and subscribers for granted. Be sure to send your long-time subscribers/customers special offers (such as arranging a special discount with a vendor).

Now it's...

Your Turn

Your assignment for this lesson is to walk through all the dos and don'ts you just learned and see if you've been applying them correctly to your platforms.

For example: do you get in touch with your audience on at least a weekly basis? Do you send them your best content? Do you personalize this content?

O is for Optimize Conversions

When it comes to your content and promotions, do you know what's REALLY working for you?

Not just what's making money...but what's working WELL? Do you know the numbers?

Many affiliate marketers don't. They figure as long as a campaign makes money, then all is well.

But here's the thing...

You can start getting a better ROI (both in terms of the money and time you invest) if you optimize every part of your business.

Let me give you an example...

Let's suppose you have an email series set up in your autoresponder. The first email in the series has a 1% conversion rate on a product with a \$25 commission. That means for every 100 people who open the email, one person buys, and you make \$25.

Now imagine you optimized that email to get a 2% conversion rate. Now you're making two sales and a total of \$50 for every 100 people who open the email.

Now imagine you boosted that number to 3%... 4%... 5% or more. And imagine you also boosted your open rate, so more people opened and read the email. Suddenly you could be making \$100 MORE per 100 subscribers than you originally made. Over time, this could put tens of thousands of extra dollars in your pocket.

I think that's worth optimizing, don't you? Let's find out how to start boosting your numbers using the steps, tips and ideas below...

1. Decide What to Test

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You can test and optimize conversions on just any part of your campaigns. However, in order to make the most of your time, you should focus on testing those factors that are going to have the biggest impacts on your conversion rates.

Since you're an affiliate marketer, there are some factors that are simply out of your control (like the price of the product). However, there are plenty of things you can test to boost your conversions and your commissions. Check them out:

- **Products:** You can test out different products to see what your audience responds to the best. For example, you can run a rotator script on your blog that randomly rotates a set of ads for similar offers. Likewise, you can do split tests with your email list to see which specific products produce the best results for you.
- **Headlines/Titles/Subject Lines:** This includes subject lines for emails, blog titles, and headlines on lead pages. Titles tend to be the most important part of a piece of content, so they tend to have the biggest impacts on conversion rates.
- **Calls to Action:** You can test the actual words you use in your calls to action, as well as button size, shape and color (where applicable).
- **Overall Design:** Test the overall design, colors and graphics on your lead page to boost response.
- **Product Name:** Test the product names/titles for your lead pages to optimize conversions.
- **When you send content:** In particular, test this to determine the best day of the week and time of the day to send emails to your mailing list.
- **Keywords/audience:** When you place paid ads, test the keywords you bid on (for pay per click marketing) and/or the audience demographics and interests you select.

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- Ad copy and graphics: Test your paid ad copy and graphics to improve conversion rates. Pay particular attention to the headline, benefits and calls to action.
- Video content vs. text content vs. combination: Here we're talking about your landing/ opt in page and what type of ad copy your audience responds to the best.

2. Pick Your Tools

You can use a split-test tool (like [SplitTestMonkey](#) or any number of similar tools) to automatically run your tests. If you're running an email test (such as testing subject lines), then check if your email service provider offers built-in tools.

3. Test One Factor at a Time

Unless you are experienced with running multivariate tests, it's best to keep things simple and just test one factor at a time. That way, you know any change to the conversion rate is due to that ONE factor.

For example, if you're testing your landing page, then pick just one factor to test, such as the headline. Hold all other variables constant, including design, call to action, product title, product graphics, traffic sources and so on.

4. Stop When You Get to Diminishing Returns

When you're testing some factor, such as a lead page headline, you may test several headlines to see which one is your overall winner. At some point during your testing, you'll start getting diminishing returns. That's your sign to stop testing that particular item and move onto something else.

For example, maybe you initially are able to double your conversion rate by testing headlines. But then you find that tweaks are only improving your conversions by small amounts, such as 5%. It's better to focus your time and energy on other factors that will return larger results (50%, 100%, 200% or more).

Your Turn

Your assignment for this lesson is to look at your overall business, and determine the most important parts that you'd like to test. This may include:

- The lead magnets you're using to bring people into your sales funnel.
- The paid products you're promoting.
- Your email subject lines.
- Your lead page headline.
- Your lead page call to action.
- Your overall lead page design.
- The time and day you send emails.
- Your ad placement on your blog.
- The type of content your audience responds to.

Take time now to make a list of items you'd like to test, and rank them in order of importance. Then make a plan as to how you intend to test these things.

Meanwhile, I'll see you in the next lesson!

P is for Presell

If there's one type of content that you're likely to create fairly often in your affiliate business, it's preselling content. This type of content is just what it sounds like: you use it to presell your prospects before you send them to a sales page. You want them to be warmed up and hitting the sales page with their credit card in hand, ready to buy. So, as you might expect, a good piece of preselling content really boosts conversions. You'll hear this type of page referred to a bridge page. You're creating a bridge for your reader from your content to the affiliate product.

It's a more seamless way for you to make a warm hand off to the affiliate.

For example, you send an email to your list about an affiliate product. Instead of sending your readers directly to the affiliate offer, send them to your pre-sell content (your bridge page) such as a video review or an interview with the product owner. This strategy increases conversions almost every time.

With that in mind, let's look at the different ways you can presell an offer with an article on your blog, in your newsletter or on some other platform...

1. The "Mini Sales Letter" Article

Yep, as the name suggests, this is a mini version of a sales letter. It should include:

- A compelling, benefit-driven title that draws people into the article.
- An opener that presents a problem.
- An introduction of a particular product as the solution to the problem.
- A list of benefits that solution provides.
- A link and a call to action.

Sometimes affiliates basically copy and paste parts of the sales letter to create this content. In most cases, it's better if you write it yourself to make

it unique. You can personalize this presell by hitting on the highlights of the product that you like the best.

TIP: Be sure to mention your bonus offer when you're getting ready to drop the link and call to action.

Next...

2. The Product Review

The key to a good product review is to create an honest assessment that notes the good, the bad, and the ugly of any product that you're promoting. That's because people see you mentioning the bad parts of a product, they're going to trust your reviews more than anyone who just touts the good parts of a product. In turn, this boosts your conversion rate.

3. The Product Comparison

If you know that people in your niche are undecided between two similar products, then you can do a product comparison. Just as with a product review, you need to list both the good and bad points of both products. Be sure to declare a clear winner. Or, alternatively, declare a winner based on the audience.

E.G., "If you're just getting started with online business, then you're going to want to get Product A. If you've been working online for awhile and making at least \$500 per month, then you'll want to get Product B."

4. The Inspirational Story

The purpose of this type of article is to engage people emotionally and bring them around to the idea that they, too, can achieve a goal or enjoy some benefit. The inspirational story works best when the subject of the story is exactly like the reader – and it's even better if the subject has something extra to overcome.

For example, if you're sharing information about running marathons for women over 40, then you'd share an inspirational story of a woman running her first marathon at the age of 50. Perhaps this woman even had an extra obstacle to overcome, such as asthma.

5. The Case Study

Whereas the previous article is about engaging people on an emotional level, a case study is about engaging them on an intellectual level. A good case study provides a lot of "before" and "after" data, along with proof of this data if possible. For example, a weight-loss case study would include the subject's before and after weight and measurements, along with progress pics or videos.

6. The "Objection Handling" Article

Your audience has reasons as to why they don't want to purchase the affiliate product you're promoting. For example, a common objection is that the product is too expensive or the prospect can't afford it. Another objection is that the product won't work.

Your job is to raise and handle these objections. For example, you might raise the "It won't work for me" objection, and counter it with proof (such as a case study summary) as well as a reminder that the product comes with a guarantee.

7. The "Proof" Article

This article is all about providing proof that the product works as advertised. You can include:

- Testimonials.
- Endorsements from well-known people in the niche.
- Case studies (or at least the summaries).
- Photos, screenshots, videos and similar.

For example, if you're proving that a product about writing a bestselling novel works, you might list testimonials from people who used the product

and then went on to write bestsellers. You can also include screenshots of these authors on bestseller lists.

8. The “Incomplete” Article

This is typically an informational article (such as a how-to article or tips article) that is incomplete because it only solves a small part of the reader’s problem. It then naturally leads to a mini-ad at the end, where you point to the product as the full solution to the reader’s problem.

For example, you might create a gardening article that gives people an overview of how to set up a hydroponic garden. You then point to a book on the same topic that provides in-depth details on the topic.

9. The Series

Do you want to boost your conversion rate for a particular product? Then create a preselling article series.

For example, you might create an objection-handling series that raises and handles all the major objections to a product.

Or you might mix and match the articles above. For example, you might start with a mini sales letter (direct-response) article, then share a case study, and then share an inspirational article.

TIP: One popular series is the before-turning point-after series. Before: This is where you talk about the current state the prospect finds himself in and build a case for why he doesn’t want to stay in that condition. This is a good time to create a sense of urgency for change and make a limited time offer. Turning Point: This is where you appeal to the prospect’s rational side by using data to back your claims. A good way to do this is by sharing proof such as a case study of how using your product can take the prospect from “before” to “after”. After: Here’s where you appeal to the prospect’s desire to change by sharing all the benefits they’ll receive if they order.

Now it’s...

Your Turn

Your assignment for this lesson is go through each of the types of presells mentioned above, and plan what sort of article you'd create for a specific offer. For example, if you were doing an objection-handling article, what specific objections would you raise and handle?

Go ahead and work on that, and I'll see you in the next lesson...

Q is for Quality Content

I've said it before here in these lessons: your affiliate business tends to rely on you creating a lot of content.

But not just any content. In order for your content to make a positive impact in your niche (and on your bank account), you need to create high-quality content.

How do you do that? By following the guidelines listed in this lesson. Take a look...

1. Create Compelling Titles

Your title is the most important part of any piece of content, so be sure it's compelling. Showcase the benefit of reading the article and, where possible, arouse curiosity. E.G., "The #1 Craziest and Most Effective Way to Get People to Read Your Articles!"

2. Utilize a Conversational Tone

Imagine for a moment that you're teaching a friend how to do something. You'd use a friendly, laid-back tone, right? Same with any content you create for your audience. Make it easy-going and conversational, which will help keep readers engaged. (Note: These lessons are an example of a conversational tone – easy to read, not stiff, not boring, not tedious.)

3. Engage Readers Emotionally

If there's one thing that all great novelists and other storytellers know, it's that you need to engage readers on an emotional level in order to keep them hooked. Copywriters know this too. And if you want to keep your readers hooked, you need to do the same thing.

Here are two ways to do this:

- Tell a relevant story. Be sure to really draw the reader into the story by bringing in their senses. E.G., “The dressing room smelled like an old shoe that had been doused in air freshener...”
- Get prospects thinking about the problem. Remind them of the pain of their problem. But don’t let them despair for too long. Introduce them to a solution, and get them thinking about how good it will feel to solve their problem.

Next...

4. Includes Tips and Examples

If you’re sharing how-to content, then you can add a lot of value to this content by include tips and examples. This will help clarify what you’re teaching and making it easier for readers to apply the information.

TIP: Share actionable information that creates “quick wins” for your readers. These are tips that are easy for your audience to apply, and once they do so they’ll get nearly instant good results. When readers apply these sorts of tips and get good results, their trust and bond with you will grow. In turn, this creates loyal readership and higher conversion rates on anything you’re promoting.

Here’s the next tip...

5. Format for Easy Readability

People don’t want to put forth any effort when it comes to reading a piece of content. If a piece of content so much as LOOKS like it’s going to be hard to read, plenty of readers will bail (and they won’t be back).

Chances are, you’ve done the same thing. For example, have you ever seen someone post a wall of text (no paragraph breaks) on a forum, in a group or on social media? It’s really hard to read, so most people don’t even try.

You can avoid that by formatting your content for easy readability. This includes:

- Use short sentences and short paragraphs. This creates white space, which makes content easier to read.
- Utilize everyday words. If your reader needs to crack open a dictionary to get through your content, then you're going to lose a lot of readers. Write for an audience that's at around an 8th-grade or 9th-grade reading level, which will be accessible to most. (Note: Newspapers do this exact thing.)
- Insert graphics. This makes the content more aesthetically pleasing, and it breaks up all that text and creates even more white space.
- Turn lists in paragraphs into bulleted lists. (Like this one you're reading right now.)

Here's another idea...

6. Create Content for Skimmers

Another way to boost the quality of your content is to make it accessible to skimmers. This means emphasizing the main points of your content using:

- Headlines and subheadlines.
- Captions on graphics.
- Font styles (bold, italics, underlining, etc.).
- Different fonts and fonts sizes.
- Tables and charts.
- Bulleted lists.

And similar elements that set certain pieces of content apart from the rest. You can skim through these lessons, and you'll see how to create content for skimmers. For example, the main points in every lesson are bolded.

Doing this gives skimmers the gist of your content. In addition, carefully crafted content that's bolded or otherwise emphasized can also compel a

skimmer to dive into the content and read it a little more closely. For example, a benefit-driven, curiosity arousing caption under an intriguing photo can capture a skimmer's attention.

7. Proof and Polish Your Content

The first thing you want to do is ensure the content is accurate. Double check each fact using at least two reputable sources.

Secondly, proof it to be sure it's not full of typos, grammar errors and the like. Ideally, you should have someone else proof it, as generally we tend to be too close to our content to see all our errors. If this is one of your most important pieces of content, such as a lead magnet, then you may want to hire a professional proofreader to look it over.

Third, read the content out loud, or have someone else read it out loud to you. This will help you uncover any places in the content that need a little smoothing out (such as an awkward sentence structure).

Your Turn

Your assignment for this lesson is to take one of your existing pieces of content, and go through it using the tips and ideas above to be sure it's high-quality. For example, is it formatted for easy readability? Does it use a conversational tone?

If you run into any issues as outlined above, be sure to fix them. Then keep this list handy so that you can check future pieces of content as you create them.

R is for Ready

We've been talking a lot about how to create awesome content, since doing so is a big part of most affiliates' business plans. And if you're like most affiliates, then quite a bit of this content is going to reside on your website (in particular, your blog).

Here's the question of the day: is your website READY for prime time? In other words, will your visitors be impressed with your site and have a good experience that keeps them coming back for more?

That's what you're about to find out. Here's what you need to do to create a great experience for visitors...

1. Utilize Responsive Design

Quite a few of your visitors are likely coming to your blog or other parts of your website through a phone, tablet or other device. In order to give everyone a good experience, your web design needs to be responsive. That means that it automatically formats and sizes the web page, tables, graphics and other elements in way that looks best on the viewer's device. This means that no matter what your visitor is using to view your website, the page looks great.

TIP: Be sure to space links out. This makes it easier for people on phones or other small devices to tap your links.

If you're using a content management system like WordPress and you're choosing a theme, then be sure to choose a theme that is specifically labeled "responsive." Once you have your site up and running, it's also a good idea to view your site using different devices and different browsers/platforms, so that you can ensure visitors are experiencing your site the way you're hoping they experience it.

Speaking of design...

2. Create a Professional Impression

When you're selecting a theme or otherwise creating your design, you need to do two things:

- Be sure it reflects your branding. From the colors to the logo to the way it's laid out, be sure your website showcases your brand.
- Be sure it makes a great impression. Oftentimes your prospect's first impression of you and your business is going to be based on what your site looks like, so be sure you're reflecting professionalism. If you can't find a ready-made theme (template), then hire someone to design it for you.

Now the next tip...

3. Arrange Your Site Around Your Goal

What is the primary purpose of your website? For example, is it to get people onto your mailing list? Or is it to promote affiliate offers directly?

You need to choose one primary goal, and then be sure your site is designed in a way to help you achieve that goal. So, for example, if your primary goal is to get people on your mailing list, then you need to be sure that your lead page or opt-in forms are accessible from every page of your website. Further, you should post content on your blog that's purpose is to send people to your lead page.

Now, even though you build around your primary goal, you will have a secondary goal. For most affiliates, that's to presell products. To that end, you'll have content on your blog that presells offers. In addition, you may have ads on your site, such as a "Featured Product" ad in your blog sidebar.

Next...

4. Ensure the Site is User-Friendly

Another big component of getting your site ready for prime time is to be sure it's user-friendly. Check out these tips...

Improve Page Speed

You only have a few seconds to make a good impression on a visitor. If your site doesn't fully load during that time, the visitor is likely to leave. That's why you'll want to test your page speed, and then correct any elements that are slowing it down.

Here's Google's free tool:

<https://developers.google.com/speed/pagespeed/insights/>. This tool gives you specific steps for improving your page speed. Common problems include media that's not optimized, unnecessary scripts, bloated code and too many requests.

Create User-Friendly Navigation

Is your site intuitive to use? You might assume so, but users may think differently. That's why you'll want to consider doing some usability testing.

Usability testing is where you recruit three or four people in your audience to complete common tasks on your site. For example, you might ask them to sign up for your lead page, contact you using your contact form, find information on your "About" page, and find specific articles on your blog. You can then gather feedback from users about how to improve these tasks.

For example, maybe your contact form is on your "About" page. Users may tell you that it would be easier to find your contact information if it was well-labeled and on every page of your site.

Check for Broken Elements

Here you want to check for broken links, scripts that aren't working, code that's not rendering properly and other errors. You can use web audit tools to uncover these types of errors, such as a broken-link checker (<https://www.drlinkcheck.com/>).

Create Better Accessibility

Some of your visitors may have cognitive, motor, auditory or visual disabilities. If your site isn't accessible to them, then you're going to lose a potential subscriber or customer.

For example, people with visual disabilities use screen readers to read your web page content out loud. If a screen reader can't access content, such as if the text is enclosed in a graphical format, then your site isn't accessible.

Another example: due to motor disabilities, some people navigate the web using their keyboard only. If your navigation menu doesn't work well without a mouse, then your site isn't very accessible.

[Click here to learn more about how to make your site more accessible.](#)

Your Turn

Your assignment for this lesson is to go through your site and be sure it's user-friendly, mobile responsive and makes a great impression. Use the points above as a mini checklist to ensure your affiliate site is ready for prime time.

Meanwhile, I'll see you in the next lesson!

S is for Social Media

Heads up: Your audience is gathering in large numbers on social media. And your fellow (competing) affiliates are making full use of social media to get their offers in front of this audience. Question is, are you maximizing social media too?

If not, then you're going to want to read every word of this lesson. Social media is not only here to stay, but those who use it grow more influential by the day in a variety of niches. If you want to harness some of that influence for yourself, then read on...

1. Decide What Platforms to Use

There are quite a few social media platforms available for you to join. The top platforms include:

- Twitter
- Facebook
- YouTube
- LinkedIn
- Instagram
- Pinterest

There are also some niche social media communities (such as Dogster.com).

So, which ones should you join?

The key is to first know your audience, and then research the platforms to determine where your audience is most likely to congregate.

Secondly, you need to take into consideration what sort of content you want to share. For example, if you love sharing videos, then obviously YouTube should be on your list. Or if you intend to share a lot of pictures, then you'll need to look into Instagram and Pinterest.

Will you be sharing breaking news in your niche? Then Twitter should be on your list.

What you'll want to do is pick just a few platforms to focus on so that you don't spread yourself too thin.

Next...

2. Complete Your Profiles

Once you've selected your platforms, then complete your profiles on each platform thoroughly. Be sure your profiles and pictures reflect your business branding. Also, use your profile to include a link and call to action (preferably to your lead page).

3. Develop a Goal (and a Plan)

The next step is to get very clear about your goal for your social media campaigns. What, exactly, do you hope to accomplish?

Be specific here and develop measurable, meaningful goals. For example, having a goal like "Getting 100,000 followers" is fairly meaningless. You need to be specific about how you intend to use social media to grow your business. For example:

- Are you building your brand?
- Are you establishing your expertise in the niche?
- Are you using the platforms to launch viral content?
- Do you intend to use the platform to build your list?

And so on. Again, be very specific about your goal. Be sure it's a meaningful goal that will aid in building your business, rather than a vanity goal. And then move onto the next step...

4. Create a Publishing Schedule

Now that you know your social media goals, your next step is to develop a publishing schedule that's designed to meet these goals. This schedule

should include what types of content you intend to publish, and when you intend to publish this content.

For example, if one of your goals is to use social media to launch viral content, then you'll want to do some research to see what sort of content is going viral in your niche. This includes the format (video, infographic, text, memes, etc.), as well as the topic.

Another example: if your goal is to build your list, then you need to create content that gets people clicking through to your website. For example, you might post a short video that shares some really good tips in your niche, and then at the end of the video you direct viewers to go to your lead page to get "Part 2" of the video.

The second thing to consider is how often you'll post. Social media moves fast, and people tend to expect those on social media to post more often, especially when compared to other platforms such as a blog. Indeed, many of the top social media marketers post daily or even multiple times per day. Check the top pages in your niche to see how often people tend to post, and then use that as a guideline in creating your schedule.

Next...

5. Interact With Your Audience

One of the big benefits of being on social media (as compared to a platform like your newsletter), is that it gives you a chance to interact with your audience. To that end, you'll want to like, comment on and share thoughtful posts from your audience.

You'll also want to engage visitors by encouraging them to interact. For example, post content that includes questions. E.G.,

- What is your favorite weight-loss tip?
- What is your most embarrassing moment?
- What piece of advice would you tell someone who's just starting out?
- Describe your business in five words.

Now the next tip...

6. Use Social Media Tools

While it may seem like a lot of work to post multiple pieces of content across multiple social media platforms, you can make this task pretty easy using social media tools. For example, a tool like HootSuite.com lets you schedule content across multiple platforms – just load it up, and the tool will drip-feed the content on your schedule.

The second tool you'll want to look into is a social media tool for your blog. For example, if you're using WordPress, then you might use a plugin such as WP Social. These tools display social media badges on your blog and automatically encourage your visitors to like and share your blog posts on social media.

Your Turn

Your assignment for this lesson is to do the following:

1. Determine which social media platforms are the best fit for your business.
2. Define your social media goals.
3. Develop your content calendar.

Take these steps even if you're already on social media, just to double check that you're on the right track.

If you're interested in a simple each to use checklist to ensure you're creating content with a [purpose](#) that's monetized and optimized for distribution check out Daily Content Profits. This checklist is designed so you and your team know exactly what each steps are you should take to get your content widely distributed using an easy to implement system.

Meanwhile, I'll see you in the next lesson...

T is for Target Audience

In order to have a successful business as an affiliate (or any sort of successful business, for that matter), you need to focus in on a highly targeted market. What's more, you need to understand this market. The more you know about them, the easier it will be for you to put highly targeted content and ads in front of them, which in turn boosts your conversion rates.

For this lesson, I'm going to assume that you've already selected your target market. You've found a niche who has well-defined needs and wants, and these folks are already purchasing products and services like crazy.

Now let's dive deep and learn a little more about this market...

1. Creating a Customer Profile

The goal here is to learn as much as possible about your target market. This means creating a customer profile (AKA avatar) of your ideal customer that includes as many of the following details as possible:

- Age.
- Gender.
- Location.
- Occupation.
- Educational level.
- Marital status.
- Children or no children.
- Own or rent.
- Income.
- Hobbies.
- Wants/desires.
- Needs.
- Hopes.
- Fears.
- Any sort of jargon they use.
- How they spend disposable income.

- How much they spend in your niche annually.
- What sort of products they've purchased.
- What they like about those products.
- Why those products haven't worked for them.
- Where they get their niche information (what blogs, social media pages, books, videos, etc.).

... And anything else you can find out about this audience.

So, how do you find out all this information? Follow these steps...

Do Google Research for Demographics

Here you search for your market keywords alongside the word "demographics" (e.g., dog owner demographics). What you'll find is research that other people have completed on your market.

Now the key here is to ensure you're ONLY reviewing information from credible sources. For example, if you find a poll completed by a reputable organization such as Pew Research, you can have confidence in the data. If you find information in a peer-reviewed academic article via Google Scholar, there too you can have confidence in the data.

Sometimes you'll uncover information that's quoted by a third-party source. For example, a news article (from a reputable news source) may quote statistics from a survey. Instead of relying on the news site's reporting, you should always go the source to verify the information for yourself.

Next step...

Research the Market

The next step is to complete your market research if you haven't already done so. Here you're figuring out what your market is buying. To do this, go to marketplaces such as Amazon.com, ClickBank.com, Udemy.com, JVZoo.com and similar. Run a search for your market keywords, and look for two things:

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1. The bestsellers in your market.
2. Products with a lot of competition.

Both of these are signs that a product is in-demand and your market is snapping it up.

You can also take this research a step further by running a Google search for your market keywords, and then check what the top sites are selling, as well as what paid advertisers are promoting on these sites. Again, look for patterns. If you see multiple sites selling a similar type of product, that's an indication that the product is in demand.

Get Insight in Communities

Your next step is to spend some time listening and talking to your target market. You can do this in two ways:

- Visit online niche communities. This includes blog discussions, forums, question and answer sites like Quora, Facebook groups, and other popular social media pages. Be sure to check the archives to see what topics are important to people, what they want, what they complain about, etc.
- Go offline. Check MeetUp.com to discover niche get-togethers in your area.

In both cases, you can start discussions to get more information. E.G., "What do you think is your biggest [niche-related] challenge?"

Ask Your Audience

Finally, you can directly survey your audience to get more information. For example, you can use a platform like SurveyMonkey.com to distribute and collect information about your audience demographics, their biggest challenges, and what sort of information they'd like to know more about.

2. Using This Information to Boost Conversions

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Once you have all this information, what do you do with it? The market research is obvious – when you know what sort of products your market is already buying, then you can sign up to be an affiliate for those exact offers.

Likewise, when you know what sort of content and solutions your market is looking for, then you can create lead magnets, blog posts, newsletter articles and more on these in-demand topics.

What about things like the demographics and so on? Simple: knowing this information is going to help you connect better with your audience whenever sharing information.

- *For example, let's imagine that your audience includes a lot of women over 40 who are working moms. These moms are busy with their careers, with their family, with chauffeuring the kids to events. No matter what niche you're serving, you can probably connect with these women by sympathizing with how busy they are.*
- *In a dog niche: You're a busy mom, so sometimes you wonder if you'll ever have time to properly train the family dog...*
- *In a weight-loss niche: You're a busy mom, so you don't have time to cook a meal for your family and a different meal for yourself...*
- *In a travel niche: You're a busy mom, so when you go on vacation you want to make the most of it...*

You get the point – the more you know about your audience, the easier it will be for you to create content that really resonates with them.

Your Turn

Your assignment for this lesson is draw up a customer profile that's as close to your ideal customer as possible. Be sure to include demographics (such as age, gender, location, occupation and so on), as well as information about what sort of products they purchase, their desires in the niche, their fears and so on.

Meanwhile, I'll see you in the next lesson!

U is for Unique Content

A big part of your affiliate business revolves around creating content. But the content you create just ends up in a sea of other content in your niche. Everyone and their brothers are creating blog posts, emails, lead magnets, social media posts, videos and more. And there's a good chance that your content looks a whole lot like other people's content.

If you want to stand out in this sea of content (and competitors), then you need to find a way to make your content unique. And that's exactly what you'll find out how to do in this lesson.

Let's get to it...

1. Compare (Seemingly Unrelated) Items

If you want to catch someone's attention and create unique content, then make a comparison that seems unusual or humorous at first glance. This will make people curious (so they'll click through and read it), plus the content will be more memorable.

E.G., "Why Dating is Like Being a Mine Sweeper."

2. Coin a Phrase

Most people write about niche topics using the same words that everyone else uses. If you want your content to stand out, then coin a phrase.

Take the example of an opt-in page. Going back nearly 20 years, everyone called them opt-in pages. Then marketer Jonathan Mizel created the term "squeeze page" to refer to opt-in pages that appeared before sales pages. Boom – because that was a completely unique phrase, it caught on like wildfire – and it further cemented Mizel as an expert. (Though to be fair, he was already established as a top marketing expert by that time.)

3. Chronicle Personal Stories

Here you can share stories about how you overcame a problem in the niche, the mistakes you made, the embarrassing things that happened to you, the funny moments you've experienced and so on. Not only do these stories build rapport and emotionally engage readers, they also make your content unique. Other people may tell stories too, but no one has the same stories as you.

4. Create a Case Study

The same thing applies here as with stories –while others may do case studies, no two case studies are exactly the same.

To make your case study even more unique, focus on some aspect that other people in your niche aren't doing. For example, let's suppose you're doing a weight-loss case study. Yes, you'd include all the pounds-lost and inches-lost data that people are interested in. But you might also include a unique aspect, such as a weekly survey of how the case study subject is feeling. Do they feel hungry? Deprived? Energetic? These are all things people want to know, but they're rarely covered in case studies.

5. Contribute Unique Tips and Examples

You may not have a brand-new strategy to share with your readers, but I'm betting you at least know a few unique tips that you haven't seen anyone else talk about before. You can also certainly share unique examples. This not only adds value to the content, but once again it makes it stand out from everyone else's content.

6. Critique Something

The idea here is to take the information you've been sharing and apply it in a practical way.

For example, if you're teaching people about copywriting, then you can critique a sales letter. This may be a well-known sales letter, or you may solicit volunteers from among your readers. So, instead of just teaching things like how to write better headlines, you show your audience in this unique format with a sales letter critique.

7. Complete an Interview

Different people can interview the exact same person, and people will watch it (or read it) because they're almost always very different interviews. For example, when someone is doing the "talk show" circuit on TV, people who are interested in the person will watch ALL the interviews.

Same with your audience. You can create unique content simply by doing interviews with different people.

NOTE: You can interview and be interviewed. However, it's better to be the interviewee, as that positions you as the expert/authority in the niche.

Here's the next idea...

8. Challenge an Assumption

If everyone in your niche is saying one thing, and you stand up and say something different, people are going to take notice.

For example, maybe you're creating content for copywriters. After some extensive testing, you find out that you can improve your call to action by using a different color button than everyone else is using. You can create an article about this by challenging the common wisdom and sharing your results as proof that the niche assumption may not be correct (or at least not correct in all niches/cases).

Next...

9. Create a Formula

Still another way to stand out in a crowd is to create unique formulas or systems. Whereas everyone else in your niche is sharing the same tired "step-by-step" how-to information, your content is unique because you're sharing a never-before-seen formula.

Need an example of how to do this? Check the “Y” lesson (Your Products), where you’ll learn more about how to deploy this effective strategy.

10. Compile an Alliteration

If you take a look at all the tips you’ve just learned, you’ll discover they all have something in common – they start with the letter “C.” I used this alliteration on purpose, as it tends to set content apart. You too can use this technique to make your content unique.

TIP: If you find yourself struggling to think of a word that starts with the letter you’ve chosen, just hit up Google and search for “words that start with the letter [insert your chosen letter].” To be even more specific, you might search for “verbs” instead of “words.” You’ll note that all the Cs in this lesson are verbs, which was done intentionally because the content is more action-oriented (whereas nouns can end up sounding a little more passive).

Now it’s...

Your Turn

Your assignment for this lesson is to brainstorm and write down all the ways you can make your content unique. You can start with the ideas listed above, and then brainstorm additional ideas as well as ideas for how to implement those tactics.

Meanwhile, I’ll see you in the next lesson!

V is for Vet

Whenever you're looking for a product to promote as an affiliate, you're bound to come across some mighty enticing possibilities – seemingly awesome products with great commissions. And as your star power grows in your niche, people are going to start approaching you about joining their affiliate programs.

But slow your roll – just because a product looks good at first glance doesn't mean it's worthy of your promotion. Remember, one of your most valuable assets is your reputation. If you promote something subpar, even if you did it unintentionally, your reputation will be shot... and your income will go down with it.

That's why you need to vet every affiliate offer before you promote it. You need to:

- Review the Product.
- Research the Vendor.
- Read the Sales Page.

Let's take a look at each of these in more detail...

1. Review the Product

Sometimes affiliates see that other affiliates are singing high praise for a product, and they consider that a good enough endorsement to start promoting the product too.

It's not.

In order to vet a product the right way, you need to review it yourself. Read it, use it, see if it does what it's advertised to do.

Here's the big key: if you're reviewing an infoproduct, then don't get caught up in how "engaging" the product is to the point where you're rating the product by how well it's written. Sure, an important part of a quality product

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is related to how engaging and well-written it is – and we'll get to that in a moment. But first, you need to be sure this product has substance.

In other words, does the product WORK? Does it provide good advice that will help solve the customer's problem? Is it accurate?

You're an expert, so you may need to take a step back and see the product through the eyes of the intended audience. For example, it may all seem very basic to you (which may mean you think it's not a high-quality product) – but if it's aimed at beginners, then perhaps this product is a perfect fit.

If you determine that the product does indeed do a good job of solving a problem, *then* you can look at the quality of the writing itself (or the quality of the video production or audio). Is it engaging and well-written? This is important. If the product isn't engaging, then people are likely to abandon it without finishing it. This leads to customers who are unsatisfied with their purchase, and in some cases it leads to a surge of refund requests.

I always recommend buying the product. Especially if you're going to create long term evergreen content and promotions around it. You want to experience EXACTLY what your customer will see.

Is the check out process easy?

Is the delivery or access process easy?

Is there good training and documentation provided?

Is it easy to access the vendors help desk for support?

If the product checks out on all points, then move onto the next step...

2. Research the Vendor

Your next step is to be sure the vendor has a good reputation. In some cases, you don't even need to do any research. If this product is coming from a well-known vendor who's been around for years and is known for having a sterling reputation, then you can check that box off on your due diligence list.

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If you're not familiar with the vendor, then research their name and business name in Google. You may also want to research the names of some of their other products, where applicable.

Use your research to answer these questions:

- Does the vendor have a good history of creating high-quality products? (This is what you want.)
- Does the vendor have a pattern of customer service complaints? (Red flag.)
- Does the vendor have any issues with marketing partners such as affiliates? For example, are there any complaints about slow-paying affiliates or not paying affiliates at all? (Red flag.)
- Has the vendor been in business for at least a year? (The longer someone has been in business, the better position you are in to predict their behavior. For example, if someone just started their business a month ago, you have no idea how they're going to treat customers and marketing partners.)
- Does the vendor conduct themselves professionally online, even in the face of customer complaints?

In general, shy away from anyone who doesn't have an established reputation of producing good products and quality customer service.

And finally...

3. Read the Sales Page

Your next step is to take a look at the sales page. What you're looking for is a page that makes a professional impression. Is it well-written and engaging? Will it convert?

Note: you can ask the vendor for the sales letter conversion rates. The best vendors know these numbers and are happy to share them.

Secondly, you want to make sure there isn't anything on the sales page that's going to hijack your commissions or siphon off sales. For example:

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- Is there a lightbox or popup window that appears with a link taking the visitor to another offer?
- Is there a payment option that customers can use that will NOT track affiliate links? For example, maybe you're using a ClickBank.com affiliate link, but there's a 2Checkout payment button on the page which won't give you credit for the sale.
- Are there any extraneous links on the sales page that could siphon off sales?
- Are there any links during the ordering process that take the customer away from the order form and/or cancel out your affiliate link?

In other words, make sure the sales process provides a good experience for the customer AND ensures you get credit for the sale. Sometimes even a good vendor will inadvertently put something on the sales page or order form that hijacks a commission, so do this part of your due diligence even if you're dealing with someone with an impeccable reputation.

Your Turn

Your assignment for this lesson is to use the steps above to thoroughly vet one of the products that you're considering promoting. If you've already started promoting an offer without doing these steps, then go back and do them now.

Meanwhile, I'll see you in the next lesson!

W is for Webinar

Doing webinars provides a lot of benefits for your affiliate business.

For starters, it's a great way to generate leads. If you pick an in-demand topic, you can fill up your virtual seats (and your mailing list). If you invite a vendor on the webinar, they'll even help you promote it. As an added bonus, you can distribute the recordings as a lead magnet for months or even years to come.

Another benefit of doing webinars is it helps you build authority/expertise in your niche. This is particularly true if you stick to topics in which you specialize. (You can become the "go to" source of info on one specialty topic.)

Still another benefit of doing webinars is that it helps you build relationships. It humanizes you when your prospects get to see you, ask questions, etc.

Finally, webinars are good tools for preselling content. You can create a "useful yet incomplete" webinar that solves part of the prospect's problem, while also naturally leading to the paid offer.

With all these awesome benefits in mind, let's talk about how to set up your own successful webinar...

Step 1: Pick Your Platform

First off, you need to decide what sort of webinar platform you'll use. Stick to the well-known platforms such as GoToWebinar.com, Demio.com, Zoom.us, JetWebinar.com or similar options. Whatever you choose, be sure you can record and replay your webinar.

Step 2: Prepare Your Content

Your next step is to determine what sort of content you're going to share in your webinar. The same applies here as with a lead magnet – you want to create something useful yet incomplete. For example:

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- Provide an overview of a process, and then promote the offer that shares all the details people need to complete the process. For example, you can share with people all the steps needed to write a sales letter, and then promote a copywriting course at the end of the webinar.
- Share tips for completing a process or achieving a goal, and then promote the product that provides complete details. For example, you can share 10 of your top weight loss tips, and then promote a diet guide at the end of the webinar.
- Offer in-depth instruction on one part of a process, and then promote the product that shares the rest of the details. For example, you can provide complete instructions for plotting a novel, and then you can promote a course that teaches people how to write a gripping book.

Once you decide what topic you're going to teach, then you need to decide how you'll teach it. Your options include:

- Create a slide-share presentation. You'll need to create PowerPoint style presentation to share with your audience. Each slide should highlight the main points of your webinar. You can then offer the complete set of slides as a bonus to anyone who registers for the webinar.
- Do a "talking head" presentation. Here you simply look at your camera and share the information. This is a very personal way of sharing information.
- Do a demonstration. Here you teach a process while you demonstrate it. For example, if you're doing a webinar on the topic of golf grips and swings, then you'd demonstrate these things as you share tips and other information.

Note: in order to make your webinar evergreen, don't list details of the offer within the webinar, such as the price of the product, the bonus you're offering, the guarantee and so on. These details are subject to change, so

your webinar will be outdated instantly if and when the vendor changes the price, the offer, etc.

Now the next step...

Step 3: Practice Your Presentation

There are two things you need to practice:

- Using the technology.
- Giving your presentation.

When it comes to using the technology, you want to completely familiarize yourself with all the features. That way, you're not fumbling around during the webinar trying to figure out how to share your screen, mute or unmute yourself or others, record the webinar and so on.

Secondly, you need to practice your actual presentation. Now here there's a fine line. On the one hand, you want to practice so you sound smooth and polished. On the other hand, you don't want to sound "over-rehearsed" to the point where you sound robotic.

The solution? Don't create an exact script for your webinar. In other words, don't read every word. Instead, create an outline for yourself. This outline will ensure you cover all the points you need to cover, and it will keep you focused and on track. And yet it's not an actual script, so you won't sound robotic reading something word for word.

Step 4: Promote Your Webinar

Once you're ready to go, then create a registration page for your webinar (essentially a lead page), and start promoting it. You can promote it using all the ways we've talked about in the other lessons, including:

- Telling your contacts about it, including your mailing list, social media followers, and blog readers.

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- Asking your joint venture partners to share the link to the webinar lead page.
- Including a link in your byline when you share guest content on other peoples' blogs, on social media and in their newsletters.
- Using paid advertising to drive people to the webinar registration page.
- Distributing press releases about the free webinar. You can do this locally by sending press releases directly to your local media, plus you can distribute them on a wider basis using a press-release distribution service such as PRWeb.com.

These are just a few ideas to get you thinking. The point is, use your regular advertising channels to get people to your live webinar (and later, these same ads can get people to join your list so they can watch the recordings).

Your Turn

Your assignment for this lesson is to pick a topic for your webinar. Ask yourself these questions:

- Will you invite the vendor to join you? If so, review the "I" lesson (Interview) to learn how to make the most of this sort of presentation.
- Is the topic useful yet incomplete?
- Is the topic evergreen, so that you can distribute the webinar for many months to come (or more)?

That's it for this lesson. See you in the next one...

X is for Xerox

When it comes to affiliate marketing, you don't need to reinvent the wheel. You can find a lot of success by "Xeroxing" (AKA copying) certain parts of your business from other successful models.

Now before we go any further, let me be absolutely clear here...

I am NOT talking about literally copying someone's copyrighted works. Do not copy content, graphics, products or anything else. For this lesson, we're talking about "copying" ideas in more of a metaphorical sense rather than a literal sense- you "copy" something and make it your own.

So, with that warning out of the way, let's talk about how to Xerox your way to success...

1. Create a Swipe File

A swipe file is a collection of content that you gather from a variety of online and offline sources to help inspire you when you're writing. These sources may include:

- Blogs.
- Social media pages.
- Emails.
- Magazines.
- Advertisements.
- Sales letters.
- Books.
- Article directories.

And similar content.

For example, you might create a headline swipe file that you use to create sales letter headlines. You take the basics of the headline and then transform it into something unique.

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Let me give you a specific example. Let's suppose your headline file includes a real-life headline such as: "Who Else Wants to Retire Rich?"

You can take the underlying structure of that headline and use it in a completely different context. E.G., "Who Else Wants to Get Rid of Cellulite?"

Another example – let's suppose you're naming a product. You can take a real-life book such as "How to Win Friends and Influence People."

Once again, you can take the underlying structure (How to [Get Benefit 1] and [Get Benefit 2]) and use it to create a new title in a completely different niche. E.G., "How to Get Slim and Feel 10 Years Younger."

You can create files of inspiration for most any sort of content you can think of. For example:

- Email subject lines.
- Headlines for sales pages and lead pages.
- Calls to action.
- Bulleted benefit statements.
- Sales letter storytelling.
- Preselling emails.
- Entire sales pages.
- Entire lead pages.
- Entire articles.
- Pay per click advertisements.
- Facebook ads.
- Banner ads.
- Video titles.
- Blog article titles.
- Content transitions.

And so on – if there is a type of content that you create on a regular basis, then you're going to want to start a swipe file on it. And remember, use it for inspiration only, no copying. 😊

Next tip...

2. Reverse Engineer Viral Content

If you do any viral marketing, then you already know there's a bit of an art and science to it. That's why you'll want to take a peek at what sort of content is going viral in your niche. You'll want to pay particular attention to YouTube, Facebook and Twitter.

Here's what to look for as you uncover viral pieces:

- What is the topic of the content? Do you see a pattern across different viral pieces in your niche, where many of them seem to be on the same topic?
- What is the format of the content? For example, do viral pieces in your niche tend to be videos? Infographics? Memes? Comics? Quotes? Tips? Articles? Etc.

For example, maybe your research shows that people in a certain weight loss niche love motivational quotes on graphical backgrounds. You can take inspiration from this and look up motivational quotes (try BrainyQuotes.com) and embed them on a fitting background (try DepositPhotos.com).

3. See What Other Affiliates are Doing

For this strategy, you want to research what successful affiliates both inside and outside of your niche are doing. You can then take the best parts of their businesses and campaigns and use them as inspiration in your business.

Here are the types of things to look for:

- What sort of branding are they employing?
- What types of lead magnets do they put out?
- What sort of content do they use to establish their authority and expertise in the niche?

- Where are they placing ads?
- What sort of ads are they placing?
- What sort of autoresponder content do they use to turn prospects into buyers?
- How do they engage visitors on their blogs, in their groups, and on social media?
- How are they adding value to offers they're promoting?

Let's suppose you're in the weight-loss niche. And let's suppose you take a look at what affiliates are doing in various online marketing niches. Perhaps you notice that a really high-profile affiliate sells high-ticket software, and offers free installation of this software. You can take that idea back to your own niche and put it to work for when you sell software.

Another example: perhaps you wander into a dog niche and notice that a successful affiliate does a really good job of engaging visitors on social media. You realize their trick seems to be posting intriguing questions, both serious and humorous, for visitors to answer. Again, you take this back to your own niche and start asking your audience more questions.

Your Turn

So as you can see, the Xerox strategy is all about taking what works and applying it to your own business. The key is not to copy, but to make it your own. Make it unique.

One of the most important pieces of this strategy is a swipe file. That's why your assignment for this lesson is as follows:

1. Brainstorm all the different types of content you create. This includes blog posts, sales letters, lead pages, emails, social media posts, videos, press releases, advertisements and more. Once you know what kind of content you create on a regular basis, then you

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can start building a swipe file full of that type of content. Which brings us to the next point...

2. Start a file. You can create a folder on your device and start dropping “swipes” in it that catch your eye. You might also use an app (like EverNote) to help you organize this file. Apps like EverNote make it easy to snap pics of physical swipes – like a magazine cover – so that you can quickly and easily add it to your digital file.

That’s it for this lesson – see you in the next one!

Y is for Your Products

Since this course is about affiliate marketing, we of course have been focusing on how to sell more affiliate products. For this lesson, we're going to take a little detour and talk about creating your own products. Do that, and then you can recruit your own affiliates to sell them!

You've become an affiliate for a reason. Maybe you like the idea of not having to deal with selling products, customer support for those products and all that jazz.

But here's something to consider: it will always be more profitable to sell your own products versus selling someone else's products. What's more, when you sell your own products then you get one very valuable asset: the list of buyers.

If you like the idea of making more money with your business, then let's talk about selling your own products. Check out these steps, tips and ideas...

1. Do Your Research

As always, the first step is to find out what your audience really wants. The bonus here is that you already know. If you've been selling affiliate products for awhile now, then you know the exact offers your audience responds to the best. You know what's profitable. All you have to do is create something similar... yet better.

No copying or rehashing here. When I talk about creating something similar, I'm talking about creating something on the same topic. But you need to provide a fresh take on that topic. You need to present it in a fresh way.

Which brings us to the next point...

2. Create Something Unique

If you don't bring something fresh to the table, you're not going to get very many sales. That's why you want to create products with unique tips,

stories, and strategies. Even just sharing information in a unique way freshens “old” information and makes it seem new again.

Let me give you an example...

There are hundreds of books floating around that are designed to help people lose weight. If you write your own weight loss book ala “eat fewer calories, do more exercise” it’s not going to attract a lot of attention or sales.

What you need to do is create your own unique diet or weight-loss formula. One way to do this is to list out all the steps you want to include in your formula. Once you know how many steps you have, then create this formula around an acronym with the same number of letters as you have steps.

For example, if you have four-step formula, you might refer to this formula as the Fat-M.E.L.T. Formula. You’d then create the steps based on the word M.E.L.T.

Step 1 needs to be an “M,” so you might start with “Motivation.” Step 2 needs to be an “E,” which might stand for Exercise. Step 3 needs to be an “L,” which might stand for Limit (calories). The final step could be “Track” for “track your progress.”

The point is, you’re not necessarily sharing information that’s never been shared before – but you ARE sharing it in a very unique way. And that’s what is going to boost your sales.

Next...

3. Plan Your Sales Funnel

Ideally, every product in your sales funnel would be your own product (as that would be most profitable).

However, you don't need to do this. And even if you do intend to do it, you certainly don't need to do it all at once. Instead, focus on building your sales funnel piece by piece.

The first piece you want to create is your lead magnet in order to get people on your mailing list. Chances are, you've already done this. You may even have multiple lead magnets. (Good.)

The second piece to create is a tripwire offer. This is a low-cost, high-value product that's designed to quickly turn a prospect into a buyer. From there, you can create your core offer and backend offers. As you're building this sales funnel, you can promote affiliate offers. Once you've created your own product, then you can replace the affiliate offer with your product.

There are two other types of products you'll need to create to make this profitable:

- Bonus products. These are designed to add value to your offer, and in turn boost your conversions.
- Upsell/cross-sell products. These are offers that you promote from the order page.

In the case of both bonus products and upsells/cross-sells, you need to be sure these products are highly related to your main product. For example, if you're selling a book about meditation, then you might use a guided meditation audio as a cross-sell offer or even as a bonus.

Here's the next tip...

4. Focus on Customer Retention

The easiest sale you'll ever make is when you persuade an existing customer to purchase something else from you. That's why you'll want to focus on creating satisfied, loyal customers. Check out this quick list of customer-retention tips:

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- Offer unadvertised bonuses on the download page. This will surprise and delight your new customers.
- Create a customer onboarding email sequence. This sequence should remind customers of the benefits of the offer they just purchased, and then encourage them to start using the product. Once people use a product and get the benefits, they'll become satisfied customers.
- Be sure your customer service is top notch. One of the top reasons people stop doing business with someone is because they had a poor customer service experience. That's why you'll want to make sure you have a user-friendly site, an easy ordering process, and a customer service team that answers questions promptly and professionally.

Do sales funnel really get you wrapped around the axle? Check out this short but straight forward training, ["How To Create A Sales Funnel Using Tools You Already Own"](#).

Now it's...

Your Turn

Creating your own products is an optional step in this process, but it's definitely a good way to grow your business. For this lesson, your assignment is to decide whether you want to add your own offers into the mix alongside the affiliate offers. Ask yourself:

- What holds you back from creating your own offers?
- What appeals to you about creating your own offers?

Take time to consider these questions. Meanwhile, I'll see you in the next lesson!

Z is for Zero (To Your First Sale)

You've been learning a lot about affiliate marketing all throughout these lessons. Now it's time to pull together everything you've learned so that you can go from "zero" (where you are right now) to your first sale. You can use the following lesson as a checklist guide or a roadmap for getting set up and getting that first sale.

Let's get to it...

Step 1: Pick Your Niche

The first thing you need to do is select a big, profitable niche. These are people who've proven to be eager and willing to spend money to solve their problems.

Ask yourself:

- Is this niche evergreen? Will it still be around five years from now?
- Is the niche profitable? (Do your market research to find out.)
- Is this niche accessible? In other words, can you get your ads and other content in front of targeted prospects with relative ease?
- Are there plenty of high-quality products in the niche for you to promote?
- Is this a niche you know something about?
- Is this a niche that interests you?

Now the next step...

Step 2: Select a Product

Once you've selected your niche, the next step is to select your first product to promote. As you go through this process, you'll likely find several products you want to promote. Keep a note of them as you'll insert them into your sales funnel soon. For now, however, focus on selecting one product.

Ask yourself:

- What products are really popular/bestsellers? (Do your market research.)
- Did you personally review the product and find it to be of high quality?
- Did you do your due diligence on the vendor?
- Does the sale page look good/professional?
- Is the commission rate at least 50% (for digital products)?
- Did you read the affiliate agreement?
- Does the affiliate center include copy and paste materials for you to use?
- Would you recommend this product to your best friend?
- What sort of bonus will you offer to anyone who buys this product through your affiliate link?

Next...

Step 3: Create a Lead Magnet

Once you've selected a product to promote, then you need to create a related lead magnet. This lead magnet needs to help you build your list AND promote your offer.

Ask yourself:

- What does your audience really want? (Do your market research.)
- What is the best format for your lead magnet? (E.G., report, checklist, cheat sheet, video, templates, etc.)
- Does your lead magnet naturally lead to the paid product?
- Does your lead magnet include the benefits of the offer and a strong call to action?
- Did you proof and polish your lead magnet? Does it exude professionalism?
- Does the interior design and layout of your lead magnet look professional?
- Did you create a catchy, benefit-driven title?
- Did you create a polished ecover graphic?

Next...

Step 4: Set Up a Landing/Opt -in Page

As you set up your landing page, ask yourself:

- Does your page have a compelling benefit-driven title?
- Are you using short-form copy that focuses on the benefits of your lead magnet?
- Does your lead page have a professional design that reflects your branding?

- Does your opt-in form work?
- Does your opt-in include a strong call to action?

Next step...

Step 5: Craft an Email Series

Now you need to create an initial autoresponder series that builds relationships with your new subscribers and persuades them to purchase the offer you're promoting.

Consider these points:

- Is your initial series around five emails long?
- Does the series naturally lead to the affiliate offer?
- Does each email include a mix of good content/solutions followed by a presell for the offer?
- Is the content evergreen?
- Does each email have a compelling subject line to boost open rates?
- Do you intend to test and track subject lines, calls to action, benefits and offers?

Next...

Step 6: Send Traffic to Your Landing Page

Once you have everything set up, then you can start sending traffic to your lead page.

First, consider all your traffic options, such as:

- Guest blogging.
- Social media marketing.
- Search engine optimization.
- Viral marketing.
- Joint venture marketing.
- Paid advertising.
- Video marketing.
- Interviews with the vendor.

And similar methods for generating targeted traffic.

Next, let's simplify the process:

- Pick one traffic method.
- Get that one traffic up, running and producing results.
- Then (and only then) add another traffic method.

Next...

Step 7: Make a Plan Going Forward

The key to getting your first sale is to focus on one thing at a time, as outline above. Once you get your first lead magnet, landing page, autoresponder series and traffic method up and running (and getting results), then you can start adding other pieces to your sales machine.

Ask yourself these questions:

- How will you establish yourself as an expert in your niche?
- How will you set yourself apart from other affiliates in your niche?
- What sort of branding will you establish?
- What type of content will you post on your blog, in your newsletter and on social media?
- How often will you post to these different platforms?
- What will you test and track to optimize this entire process?

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- What other products will you start promoting? (What does your sales funnel look like?)
- How will you cross promote these products throughout your sales funnel?
- What sort of emails will you add to your autoresponder so that you have a hands-free way to promote your offers?
- What potential obstacles may hinder your progress on any of this?

And similar issues. The point is, think through where you're going to go from here after getting your first sale. How will you continue to grow your business?

Your Turn

Your assignment for this lesson is to complete Step 7, which is to make a plan going forward. Namely, how will you build your traffic? What other products will you promote? What potential obstacles will you need to overcome?

Plan now and be prepared, rather than just winging it as you go. ☺

Now let's wrap things up...

Conclusion

Whew, you just learned a whole lot about affiliate marketing, literally from A to Z.

Now the next step is crucial: you need to put into action everything you just learned. If you're just starting out with affiliate marketing, then I suggest you use Lesson Z as a roadmap. Decide what you're going to promote first and then start snapping the rest of the pieces in place.

If you're already an established affiliate, then I suggest you use the tips and tricks you just learned to grow your business. Pick one and get started today!