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MAKING MONEY

BY USING AFFILIATES AND NOTHING BUT AFFILIATES

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Affiliate Marketing for The New Business

When considering Affiliate Marketing as a new business, we need to first understand it by doing a SWOT Analysis. This should allow our business to better develop a plan and create appropriate goals by using Affiliate Marketing as our sole source of revenue.

Strengths

Affiliate marketing have been long standing since Amazon in 1996¹. With it having a long history, our company has plenty of resources to draw from in better utilizing this method of revenue. This marketing method is excellent for start-ups who have little to nothing to work with, like us, and provides little to no risk. Anyone can do Affiliate Marketing and it lets us do things on our own terms. As our company has no product, Affiliate Marketing allows us to have high Return on Investment (ROI)² while simultaneously giving us the freedom to choose and pick who we choose to promote with no limits. There are no limits to who and how many affiliates we can choose.

Weaknesses

As there currently is no focus for our company, we face the problem of a staggering amount of choices. While we may choose our affiliates, we have no control over those products. To be successful with creating revenue from this, it requires a lot of work on our part in setting up our affiliates, choosing what products to promote, how we promote them, and so forth. We lack both experience and a userbase to fully utilize this marketing tactic. Before we can begin, we need to create something of value to our potential users before we can promote a product. Even if we gain traffic, we still need to be sure we have users that will click our affiliate links².

Our company may even require the need for multiple microsites³. An example of this would be YearinMusic by Spotify⁴. These are websites with minimal design and focus. They get right to the point of whatever their chosen focus is. This can become overwhelming as a start-up and is not recommended until the company gains enough traffic to warrant these sites.

Opportunities

While there may be too many choices, it does allow us to be picky and have multiple choices. With mobile usage constantly growing⁵ that means the number of users accessing the web increases. The more people that access the internet, the more potential viewers and clickers we can bring in to our site. Mobile is the direction to go. Once we establish our presence, get our affiliates, we can then generate passive income for our revenue streams.

Threats

Competition in the affiliate market is endless. Traffic can cease at any time and affiliates can end promotions at any point leaving us with no revenue⁶. Google Ad Blocking in Chrome Browsers is an immediate threat but not necessarily in ways we might think. It would limit ads or even block them, much like ad blockers in general, but at the same time may even help our company weed out fraudulent affiliates. In the meantime, we must rely on our partners to create innovated methods to work around ad blockers⁷.

As mentioned, there is affiliate fraud to be wary of. “Cookie stuffing”⁸ is where another publisher gets credit for your affiliate links by having a cookie that links back to them. This requires some minor knowledge of coding to implement into our website to prevent this kind of abuse. Alternatively, we can look into using third-party tools like Forensiq⁹ which prevent, but that can cost us money.

Building an Audience with Social Media

As the internet expands its reach across the world, the use of social media platforms is a requirement if we want to survive¹⁰. Websites that are mandatory that we utilize are Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Youtube can also be pivotal depending on how we market our affiliates. These platforms have audiences too large to ignore.

With these platforms, we can show users that we’re human and genuine by making product reviews and recommendations to products. Content we create must have value to potential consumers and must be done before we begin promotion. Users are greatly deterred by marketers to begin with so having a “sell, sell, sell” mentality would be detrimental to our success¹¹. By creating this connection and giving them value they can appreciate, they’ll be more likely to trust us and keep coming back to our affiliate links.

Almost all successful affiliates have images of some sort. This is through each platform we should be using. There can be exceptions, but images are important to retaining consumer interest¹². Another thing to keep in mind is to use tinyurl.com to shorten our affiliate links. Keeping things neat and tidy will look more attractive to consumers.

Closing Thoughts

Affiliate marketing is broad and allows for a lot of freedom¹³. Because of that, options need to be carefully considered. In a phone interview with the Director of Personae Studios¹⁴, Koh mentions that publishers can be prone to bias; having a preference to either a product or type of affiliate that can cause the publisher to spend or lose more money than necessary.

We begin by keeping our focus simple; provide value to our potential userbase and get them to believe we’re helping them rather than selling to them. We must build a brand, be authentic and transparent¹⁵ with who we are and what we promote. Offering unique content through the platforms mentioned above will help us stand out in the crowd.

It is perfectly acceptable to have multiple campaigns with the same goal, allowing the publishing company more opportunity to receive more passive revenue. Our company needs to take care in which affiliates we choose to promote taking into consideration that those affiliates are closer to the customer. That doesn’t need to be the case in all situations, such as mobile gaming. Consumers want a direct relationship with developers and publishers. We, as a company, must take advantage of that.

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- ⁹ Forensiq. (n.d.) *Forensiq*. Retrieved from Impact: <https://impact.com/ad-fraud-detection/>
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- ¹⁴ Koh, E. (2018, March 17). Phone Interview.
- ¹⁵ D'Amico, B. (2017, May 25). *What is Affiliate Marketing? The Myth vs. Reality*. Retrieved from Shopify: <https://www.shopify.com/partners/blog/what-is-affiliate-marketing>