

Secret Affiliate Cash

How To Make Serious Money Online



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Web 2.0 – Latest Wave Of The Internet

Over the past few years the Internet has evolved and with it came great changes. Before, people visiting the Internet were spoon fed, now they have the ability to change information they receive and are able to share information through different platforms made available. Visitors are now given the great power to alter information and comment or discuss on topics of interest, however with great power comes great responsibility!

You witnessed, were a victim of or have at least heard about the bursting of the dot com bubble in the fall of 2001. Fortunes that had been made overnight were lost overnight.

The sky was falling. It was a very scary time for a lot of people. Some said that the World Wide Web was just a flash-in-the-pan idea that had been over-hyped and that the crash was irrefutable proof of that fact.

There were, however, some survivors of the 2001 dot com bust. The survivors had a few important commonalities and there were those who insisted that the World Wide Web was more important than ever and had a very bright future indeed.

One of those who saw the results of the 2001 dot com bust as a 'glass half full' rather than a 'glass half empty' was a man by the name of Tim O'Reilly. O'Reilly of O'Reilly Media met with Dale Dougherty of Media Live International in 2004. Out of that meeting the term 'Web 2.0' was born.

The definition that Tim O'Reilly gives for Web 2.0 is: "Web 2.0 is the business revolution in the computer industry caused by the move to the internet as platform, and an attempt to understand the rules for success on that new platform.

Chief among those rules is this: Build applications that harness network effects to get better the more people use them."

Web 2.0 can be viewed as an upgrade to the World Wide Web. It is still the web but it is a new and improved version of the web.

New technologies such as blogs, social bookmarking, wikis, podcasts and RSS feeds are just a few of the technologies that are helping to shape and direct Web 2.0.

The Web before the dot com crash is often referred to as Web 1.0 now but only since the coining of the term Web 2.0.

Some of the more obvious difference between Web 1.0 and Web 2.0 are: Double Click replaced by Google AdSense, Britannica Online replaced by Wikipedia, Personal Web Pages replaced by Blogs, Content Management Systems replaced by Wikis and Directories replaced by Tagging.

These are only a very few of the differences between Web 1.0 and Web 2.0 but they are the major ones.

You will notice, if you look carefully that the commonality of many of the differences between Web 1.0 and Web 2.0 is that Web 1.0 was driven and controlled by the 'powers-that-be' and Web 2.0 is driven by users.

That is a HUGE difference, as Web 2.0 is becoming more user friendly not to mention more profitable for the Average Joe. You might even call it a power shift of seismic proportions.

Websites that could be accessed on the Internet were built and controlled by only a few and were certainly not 'interactive' but today anybody with an idea, a few dollars and little know-how can build a Web 2.0 website that is completely interactive and turn it into a money-making enterprise if they choose to.

The technology is there. It is easy to use. It is accessible and it is relatively cheap, some of it is even free.

Many websites that started out as static websites are now adding features like blogs and

forums and propelling themselves into the future of Internet commerce. Those websites who continue to ignore these rapid changes are falling further behind and will soon die out.

Expectations are increasing of regular people who now expect to be able to ask questions and get answers from websites and they expect websites to be at least somewhat interactive. The Internet has always been and still is a platform for information but with Web 2.0, it has also become a platform for participation, changing a passive audience into an active audience.

Let's look at just a few of the innovations of Web 2.0 and how these innovations have changed the World Wide Web:

Blogs: Blog is a term that is derived from the blending of the two words 'web' and 'log'....Blog. Fairly early in the history of the World Wide Web people could build personal web pages. It is true that not many people did build personal webpages but it was, nonetheless, possible.

Still, these personal webpages were static websites. The owner of the website could post information about himself or his interests but others could only read the information that the owner of the website posted.

Then along came technology. Blogging software was developed. Now those who had personal websites could not only post about themselves, but they could allow their visitors to comment on what had been posted or ask questions. It was a huge advancement and because of that technology, today blogging is big business.

People visit and post to blogs all over the Internet about any and every subject that they are interested in and the owners of these blogs have figured out that they can make their blogs very profitable.

Social Bookmarking: Social bookmarking is more or less a by-product of blogging but it is based on the same basic technology.

Social bookmarking sites such as Delicious, allow their users to upload their own favorite site bookmarks so that everybody else in the world can see and use those bookmarks.

When a user uploads his favorite site bookmarks into his online account, a backlink is created to that site. When enough people click on the link, the site that has been book marked gets indexed and gains a rank by search engines.

It is a form of user driven advertisements that is far more successful than any kind of paid advertising can ever be.

As social bookmarking sites are increasing, new software is being developed all the time that makes these sites more productive such as advertising tools and traffic driving tools.

Wiki: A short definition of Wiki is "Wiki is a piece of server software that allows users to freely create and edit Web page content using any Web browser. Wiki supports hyperlinks and has a simple text syntax for creating new pages and crosslinks between internal pages on the fly."

In short Wiki technology allows editing of material posted on a website by the author or by others.

The best example of Wiki technology in action on the Internet is Wikipedia. In the old Web 1.0 way of doing things the owner of a website had full control over all material that was posted to the website and only website owners could edit material posted on the website. On the other hand with the advent of Web 2.0 that idea has gone the way of the horse and buggy.

RSS Feed: The acronym RSS stands for Really Simple Syndication that allows the web to be driven by people rather than by the powers-that-be. Those who use RSS content use reader or aggregator technology. When users subscribe to these feeds, the reader or aggregator then checks the user's website and when the site has new content, it is picked up and sent to the user. That is a rather simplified explanation but that is basically how it works.

A client based reader or aggregator is a stand-alone program that is attached to an existing program such as a web browser or an email reader.

A web-based reader or aggregator makes the user's feeds available on any computer with web access.

Podcasts or Webcasts: As broadband internet connections and wireless networks become more common throughout the entire world, the podcast or

webcast is also gaining in popularity.

While people do still read, they prefer watching and listening to information thanks to television, hence, the advent of podcasts or webcasts.

You can find and tune into podcasts or webcasts on almost any subject imaginable today. Those who have blogs are making use of this technology to sell products and to promote their websites in record numbers.

Web 2.0 is definitely here to stay and those who are still trying to do things the old Web 1.0 way are falling behind this wave of today and of the future. However will there be changes to Web 2.0?

Well, of course, there will be. Web 2.0 is fluid and it is ever changing like technology. So new technology will be developed and as it is developed people will use it. After all people are the driving force of Web 2.0.

And, you might ask, just who will benefit the most from Web 2.0? It will be those who embrace the new technologies as they become available and it will be us...all of us.

The internet no longer belongs to the few and the privileged. Big business has lost its edge. The Internet and Web 2.0 has leveled the playing field. All of us (you, me and all those who have access to the Internet) can now compete and win.

Blogging – The Online Journal Craze

Blogging is hot right now. It might even be called a buzz word but it is also the wave of the future for Internet marketing. Blogging is the result of the use of the new technology that collectively makes what is known today as Web 2.0. You will see the term “Web 2.0 websites” used frequently but what exactly does that term mean?

Back in the murky, dusty past of the Internet in 2001, there was a happening that is now referred to as the dot com bust. People who had a great deal of technical know-how built websites, promoted them and made millions on speculative ideas that were not founded in reality.

The internet was a one-way street. Those who had the technical know-how to build websites posted what they wanted their readers to know and nothing more. The Internet was a relatively new thing and people bought into this one-way communication but only for a short few years.

Fortunes were made and lost overnight. There are those who blame the dot com bust on nothing more than technological break through....and it could be that they are right.

As the technological advances started, building websites became easier, and more people built websites and jumped on the Internet marketing bandwagon.

They began sending out millions and millions of unsolicited marketing emails daily. These emails were known as SPAM.

SPAM got so bad that the Congress of the United States actually passed the CAN SPAM act in late 2001 and it became the law of the land in early 2002. This was actually the final puncture to the already deflating Internet bubble that let the rest of the air out.

Internet marketers were required to get permission from recipients before they could send out marketing emails and many of the companies couldn't survive the blow. Those who did began building opt-in lists.

Opt-in lists are a big part (maybe the biggest part) of all successful Internet marketing operations that are alive and well today and that need for an opt-in list is not ever going to go away but it has been supplemented by blogs. Now Internet marketers who have blogs can give potential opt-in list members the one thing they all want...a voice.

Blogs are now discussed in the same breath and given equal weight among successful Internet marketers as opt-in lists.

You can, of course, have one without the other but it is by far a greater advantage to have both and a blog is one of the best ways available to build a long and impressive opt-in list.

People have been keeping journals of course for centuries but the Internet version of journal keeping that we call blogging is far different. Rather than it being just the details of a personal life or the musings of a single person, blogging is more a source of shared information today.

Blogs are dedicated to specific topics. These topics are as varied as the people who have blogs. For example the owner of a travel blog might post the details of trips that they have taken, invite questions and provide information about products and services.

We all know that website traffic is one of the keys that unlocks successful Internet marketing however the secret to creating an astounding amount of traffic to a blog website is social bookmarking.

There are many social bookmarking sites on the Internet. These sites allow users to upload and share their favorite bookmarked sites to lists where others can visit these sites too. Users are able to categorize their lists and create tags for each link within their lists.

Each time another user clicks on a link in a user's list a back link is created. As the back links increase, indexing is accelerated.

Many of those who have created very successful and profitable blogs make use of such Web 2.0 advancements as RSS feeds, podcasts and webcasts to enhance and promote their blog websites.

Blog software is often part of web services but it can also be purchased separately at very low rates.

When a blog is created by a user there are many choices that must be made. The first and most obvious choice is the topic of the blog. For those who plan to monetize their blog, the choice of topic is a very critical one.

If a user is already an active Internet marketer in a particular niche market, then the choice is easy but if a user is only just beginning in Internet marketing, the choice of a topic can be a lot more difficult.

Research is necessary. It is important to choose a market that is viable. There simply will not be much money made from a topic like under water basket weaving.

One of the better ways to research and find a viable topic is by visiting other blog sites and forum sites on the Internet.

You might consider going to one of the social bookmarking sites like Delicious to find out what others are concerned about or topics for which they are seeking information.

Once a topic has been selected the next step is to actually build a blog. The best and most recommended way to own a blog is to host your own domain as this will allow you to have full control of the blog and be able to do so much

more in terms of design and interaction.

There are many web hosting companies out there and many of them offer blogging capabilities. There are even web hosting companies who specialize in blogging websites. One of the better known ones is Word Press but there are a great many others out there.

There was a time when only gurus could build websites. It was necessary to be proficient in the use of HTML among many other things but that is simply no longer the case.

Web 2.0 now allows even novices who have never even thought of building their own website to do exactly that and to do it very quickly and very efficiently.

There are, of course, some things that one needs to know but these are things that are very easily learned and there are even blog websites that teach you how to build a blog website step-by-step.

Once a blog website is up and running, then it is important to get the search engine spiders to visit the site so that it can become indexed and appear in searches made on search engine sites. This is the place where social bookmarking comes into play.

There is software out there that makes it very, very easy to list your site with many social bookmarking sites all at the same time. It can be done quickly and easily.

Owners of blog sites have learned to help each other in a sense. They can ping one another's sites and create back links for both sites that are picked up by the search engine spiders.

Web 2.0 websites are user driven unlike the old Web 1.0 sites. The owner of the blog does have control of content but he also allows visitors to his blog website to add content and some even allow content to be edited by users.

Where Web 1.0 websites were constructed so that information and ideas flowed only one way (from the website to the visitor), Web 2.0 websites allow for information to flow two ways.

Many blog websites use RSS feeds, podcasts and webcasts to enhance their blog websites. Of course people still read but people also like to get information via audio and video.

Bloggers don't even have to record their own audio and video products. There are websites out there which will supply audio and video products...some of these are even free of charge.

The old idea that a blog is simply a web log or a journal is nowhere near the same as what blogs offer today that are far more than that as they are rich with information that is constantly changing.

You can find very active blogs that discuss controversial topics like politics and religion and you can also find blogs that are dedicated to nothing but pure pleasure like travel, fishing, hunting, gold, sewing, needlecrafts, boating, etc.

There are also blogs that are devoted to business concerns. It is very unlikely that you could think of a topic and not be able to find more than a few blogs that are currently discussing that topic.

Yes, blogging is a 'hot' topic of today but it is also the wave of the future where Internet marketing is concerned.

Briefly, to start blogging find a topic that you are interested in, even passionate about and go out there and start your very own blog. If you construct the site well and if you pursue social bookmarking, you can begin to create your own online empire.

Social Bookmarking – Store, Classify, Share and Search Technology

What is Social Bookmarking?

According to Wikipedia, social bookmarking is defined as: "Social bookmarking is an activity performed over a computer network that allows users to save and categorize a personal collection of bookmarks and share them with others.

Users may also take bookmarks saved by others and add them to their own collection, as well as to subscribe to the lists of others - a personal knowledge management tool."

Actually, the idea was first launched back in 1996 as 'itlist'. Other similar sites quickly followed but that all went belly-up with the dot-com bubble bust in 2001. The idea is reborn with Web 2.0 and this time around it is thriving.

Who is Using Social Bookmarking?

To sum up in 1 word....everybody! Researchers have found social bookmarking sites to be an invaluable tool as they conduct research and find the need to share information about research with their colleagues.

Professionals like doctors, lawyers and engineers are also using social bookmarking services at an all time high record.

But social bookmarking is far more than simply a tool for research. People from all walks of life are using social bookmarking.

Users of popular websites like Facebook and MySpace have found that it is very easy to share information about websites that they find to be of mutual interest.

Networks of friends can be set up so that whenever a new posting is made to a social networking site other members of the network are notified immediately by RSS feed.

With all of this instant communication happening, you can see why those who are involved in Internet marketing are very much in touch with social bookmarking sites.

These innovative marketers are joining such sites as Facebook or MySpace and while they are having a lot of fun, they are also selling their products and services.

They are getting a lot of visitors to their websites and are improving their Page Rank through relevant backlinks. They have found that social bookmarking is one of the best search engine optimization tools that have come along in a very long time.

How Does Social Bookmarking Work?

The basic concept of Web 2.0 is that it is user-directed and social bookmarking is a part of Web 2.0 so it is, of course, user directed. Social bookmarking is a way of organizing and categorizing information with the use of 'tags'.

Tags are based upon key words that identify the bookmark so this is a true user-directed way that information is organized and categorized.

When a bookmarked site is clicked on, the social bookmarking site identifies the person who created the bookmark and provides access to other sites that the same user has bookmarked.

Now, the person who created the bookmark and the tag is also provided information about how many times the link has been clicked on as well as who has clicked on it.

This system makes it very easy for like-minded people to make social connections and to identify others who have the same interests, over time this develops a community of users with mutual interests.

As a community of users develops, they sometimes develop a very unique set of key words that define resources of common interest. These unique sets of keywords have come to be referred to as 'folksonomy'.

Wikipedia defines the term, folksonomy as: "Folksonomy is a neologism for a practice of collaborative categorization using freely chosen keywords. More colloquially, this refers to a group of people cooperating spontaneously to organize information into categories.

In contrast to formal classification methods, this phenomenon typically only arises in non-hierarchical communities, such as public websites, as opposed to multi-level teams."

How will Social Bookmarking Impact the Web?

Actually, it is pretty clear right now that social bookmarking is having a huge impact on the way that information is being classified, categorized, stored and exchanged.

It is possible to believe that in the future the impact will be even stronger. Web 1.0 was static but Web 2.0 is fluid. The face is ever changing.

The technology that social bookmarking is based upon is really rather simple...there isn't anything complex about it. It is user friendly. The level of knowledge needed to gain huge benefits from social bookmarking is low.

People do not have to be computer gurus to make use of the technology at all. The technology is so simple and the system is so easy to use that it will continue to grow in popularity into the foreseeable future.

Because of this inevitable growth of social bookmarking and the easily used

tagging of such things as multimedia files, it may well be just as inevitable that the design and function of databases themselves will also change drastically to be able to accommodate this new way of managing information.

How is Social Bookmarking Affecting Education?

Teaching and learning are the two components of education. The objective of transferring information and knowledge from one person to another person or a group of persons is being greatly affected by social bookmarking.

The exchange of information and the coming together of like-minded individuals into loosely knitted online communities are both impacting education as a whole.

For so many centuries education suffered from slow communication. Today the internet itself has greatly speeded up communication and social bookmarking has doubled that speed in the last few years.

Social bookmarking has created a method whereby bibliographies, papers, etc. can be easily and quickly shared and accessed by multiple people at the same time. These same resources can be altered or edited online.

Why is Social Bookmarking Important to Internet Marketing?

There are several ways in which social bookmarking is having an affect on internet marketing. It would be hard to determine just which effect is having the greatest impact.

The ability to create tags using key words which social bookmarking sites allow is very attractive to internet marketers.

It didn't take the internet marketing community long to figure out that these backlinks that are created when the links are added to other favorites lists cause search engine spiders to visit websites and that Page Rank can be dramatically increased along with the number of visitors to a website. The more visitors, means more sales of products and services.

Another asset that internet marketers quickly became aware of that social bookmarking sites provide is that they are great research tools for example a website owner might find that a 'sailing' tag is also associated with a 'boat repair' tag. That information can open doors for business expansion.

Is There a Down Side to Social Bookmarking?

To every up-side there is always a down-side and social bookmarking is not an exception to that rule.

The very fact that social bookmarking is user driven is one of the potential down sides to it. Users are not professionals, users are just people and the ability to use social bookmarking sites for fun as well as for profit does not require a great deal of technical knowledge.

As a matter of fact, it requires almost no knowledge and because users are 'amateurs', key words used in tags are not consistent. The information is sometimes scattered and key words that seem logical to amateurs don't necessarily lead to related topics.

Yet another potential down-side and one that is happening more frequently is that users are abusing the system. Since it is a user driven system it is more susceptible to abuse and misuse. There are spammers out there that are bookmarking the same site multiple times.

The idea, of course, is that the more times the link appears the better the search engine spiders like it and the more apt the link is to be clicked on and the more apt it is that the site will be visited.

What is The Bottom Line of Social Bookmarking?

The bottom line is that social bookmarking is here and it is here to stay. People are using social bookmarking sites to make social connections as well as to form communities.

From the internet marketing point of view, social bookmarking is a tool that can be used to increase search engine optimization, the number of website visitors can ultimately increase sales but there is also the possibility of the system being abused.

Like everything else...the more social bookmarking is abused, the less effective it will become.

Internet marketers are learning that they can have a lot of fun by using sites like MySpace and Facebook and other social bookmarking sites and make a lot of money in the process. It's what is known as a win/win situation and one that internet marketers are catching onto very quickly to take advantage of.

Social Networking – Fun AND Business in ONE!

Social networking isn't a new phenomenon. It wasn't invented in the twenty-first century. Every Elks Lodge, Lions Club, Chamber of Commerce, Church, Sewing Circle, Book Club, etc. that ever existed afforded an opportunity for social networking.

The members of any social networking group identify with and help other members of their group. They provide information to one another that is mutually beneficial.

They share when something of interest or something of concern is happening that is of interest to or a threat to their particular social network and the members collectively pursue the interest or ward off the threat.

Many times social networking groups are work related. For example you have very likely heard of the way that law enforcement personnel stick together and 'watch each other's backs' so to speak. This social networking group is often referred to as 'the long blue line'.

Another work related social networking group is long distance truck drivers. By using their CB radios, they stay in contact with one another and warn each other of road hazards. If one of them has a problem, others go to his or her aid.

Social networks have been around probably since the beginning of time in some form or another but the advent of the personal computer certainly put a new spin on social networking. Web 2.0 has really kicked social networking up several notches.

No longer is social networking limited to people who work at the same jobs or who live in the same communities. Social networking is now world wide and easily accessible to everyone who has access to a computer and an internet connection.

It all started with the advent of instant messaging technology but it has grown far beyond that limited ability. With instant messaging it was necessary to let others see your email address and so you lost much of your anonymity.

In today's Web 2.0 world, social networking and complete anonymity are both possible.

The online dating sites are a very good example of this compatibility. People can register and pay for memberships on online dating sites and conduct an entire relationship for many months without knowing other members real name, email address or the name of the city in which they live. All communication is conducted on the online dating website itself thus affording both social networking and anonymity.

There are Web 2.0 websites that are dedicated to nothing BUT social

networking. One of the better known ones are MySpace and Facebook but there are at least a hundred different social networking sites on the internet and probably a lot more than that.

Web 2.0 social networking sites are divided in many different ways.

There are social networking sites that are dedicated to specific ethnicities; BlackPlanet.com is for African Americans, Babbello is for Australian teenagers, FaceBox is for European young adults, Gronco.net is for Poland, iWiW is for Hungary, Migente.com is for Latinos, Mixi is for Japan are just a few examples.

Social networking sites are also divided sometimes by interests. For example you can find such social networking sites as CarDomain for car enthusiasts, Flickr for photo sharing, Gaia for gamers, Gopets for virtual pets, Joga Bonita for football or soccer, or Last.fm for music.

These are only a sample of the vast social network sites.

Most social networking sites, however, are not dedicated to a specific group. They are general membership sites and the members themselves divide themselves into appropriate groups according to interests and compatibility.

Almost all of the social networking sites are free to join. There are just a few that have membership fees for example dating sites. The site owners therefore make their money from advertisers rather than from users. A few sites are only open to those who have been invited to join by other members.

Most of these social networking sites provide you with your own page when you join the site. You can make posts to your page and you can invite others to post on your page.

The trick here is to also use the social bookmarking sites and upload links to your page posts into them with the appropriate tags containing key words.

Social networking is easy and fun. It is a way that you can enhance your online business and have a lot of fun in the process. You can meet some of your potential customers on social networking sites. You can make friends and influence people as well.

It has long been a well established fact that more businesses are actually conducted in social settings than in offices. For example more deals are made on golf courses than in board rooms in the real world and more sales are made through the use of social networking sites on the Internet than through all of the paid advertising combined.

People HATE commercials but they don't mind hearing their friends recommend a product or service. Not only do they not mind, they even go to a lot of trouble to seek out that information.

In addition to being a great way to advertise a business, social networking sites are also a great research tool and one that should never be overlooked.

Rather than having to conduct a lot of expensive and time-consuming surveys for example, you can simply look through a social networking site and find out exactly what people are thinking about.

You can find out what their problems are and what measures they are taking to solve those problems. You can find out what their interests are and how they go about pursuing those interests.

By using social networking sites as research tools, you can likely get more and better information in a single hour and for free than you could get by spending hours on sending out surveys and trying to decipher the results.

One very interesting social networking site is called 43 things. On this social networking site people list their goals and then other people with similar goals discuss how to best achieve those goals.

Some goals that have been listed are 'learn a foreign language, be a good parent, improve my memory, get in shape, lose weight, be a better gardener and the list just goes on and on. As a research tool it would be hard to beat 43 things to find out what people are interested in and concerned about.

Overall, Web 2.0 is great! It is driven by those who actually USE the internet and not by people who are sitting behind desks at large companies and who are out of touch with the real world.

Social networking is simply a group of like-minded people exchanging information that is of mutual interest. That is all it is and all it has ever been. It is important that when you are using social networking sites that you remember this and conduct yourself accordingly.

If you join a site and start just posting blatant advertisements, you are not social networking, you are simply doing advertising, which people hate. If you establish yourself as part of a group, then you are social networking and you will find that those who are members of your online social circle are the best help you can find anywhere.

Social networking is valuable in and of itself but it can be made more valuable by using social networking in conjunction with social bookmarking.

Join a social networking website. Find a group of people who are interested in the topic of your website but don't start out advertising. Make posts to your own blog on the social networking sites as well as to the blogs of others. Add those links to your social bookmarking account. Be certain that you use the appropriate key words in those tags otherwise they are worthless.

Altogether this is an excellent marketing strategy. It is a way to market your website and your products or services and have a lot of fun at the same time. You will meet people that you really do like and even admire and respect.

Friendships are not made for the purpose of profiting from them but they

usually are profitable.

Audio/Video/Podcasting – More Power To The User

Why do I Need Audio, Video or Podcasting on My blog?

Successful internet businesses all depend upon one common factor. That common factor is traffic. Traffic equals sales. Sales equal profit.

It doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out that a successful business must make sales and a profit and in order to make sales and profit it is essential that there are customers.

Getting website traffic is exactly what all the fuss is about when marketers are discussing SEO (Search Engine Optimization).

The higher a site ranks in the search results to those using key words to find products and services, the more visitors will visit. More visitors = more sales = more profits. It is just as simple as that.

Blogs have proven themselves to be very useful tools in the drive to creating more and better website traffic. People love blogs. Web 2.0 is built upon the idea of a user driven web and users want a voice.

Blogs give them that voice. It is a simple technology and it can even be found free on the internet. If you don't have a blog site or a blog on your website, you are simply missing the SEO boat.

With the increase in numbers of blogs online comes an increase in competition for visitors to those blogs and, of course, stiffer competition for Page Rank by search engines.

So, the question, "Why do I need audio/video/podcasting on my blog?" is one that can be answered rather easily. You want visitors. You want a high Page Rank. You want increased sales and profits. That's why.

Successful blogs are all about content. You've been told a million times that, on the internet, content is king and it is true. Search engine spiders consider content as one of the factors that determine page rank and there are two parts to content that are considered.

The first is how often the content changes. This is why it is very important that posts be made to blogs every single day...multiple posts are better than one long post. Key-work density is the other content factor that is considered by search engine spiders.

Links found on the Internet to your website by search engine spiders is another factor that determines Page Rank. That is the reason you should always make use of social bookmarking sites and add the links to your blog posts.

Each time you make a post the search engine spiders count it but the number of links to that post is even more important.

You can create one link but when others pick that link up and add it to their

own favorite's lists more links are created for search engine spiders to count.

You probably already know these things but did you know that the duration of visits to your site is also considered? Most visits to websites last thirty seconds or less. You can even actually see this statistic in the web-stats for your blog or website.

Search engine spiders love visitors to websites that stay longer than thirty seconds, the fact is the longer a visitor stays on your website, the better the chance is that he will make a purchase.

That begs the question, 'how do I get them to stay longer than thirty seconds?' The answer to that one is audio/video/podcasts. It is a very simple calculation.

If a visitor is watching a video that lasts for say two minutes, how long will they stay on your site? Two minutes! Videos and podcasts are mesmerizing.

When a visitor begins to watch either, they will stay awhile. Search engine spiders love that and the longer they stay, the longer they are exposed to your advertisements for products and services that you sell. The longer they see the advertisements, the more likely they are to make a purchase.

Now you should be aware of the fact that search engine spiders cannot 'read' audio and video content, that means audio/video is not going to aid you in search engine optimization but it will help with the length of the visits made to your website.

The fact that search engine spiders can't 'read' audio and video content also eliminates the duplicate content problem.

How do I get audio and video for my blog?

Just to set your mind at ease right away, you don't have to shoot your own video or record your own audio.

You can do that, of course, if you want to and if you have the equipment and the knowhow but you really don't have to.

There are an abundance of sites on the internet that will happily (and freely) provide video and audio for you. All you have to do is download them, upload them to your site and tag them, which is pretty much it. YouTube is great for doing this and you can find free videos on there on almost any topic that you can imagine and likely a few topics that you would hope to never imagine.

You can find videos on topics that are related to the topic of your website or your blog that will be of interest to your visitors and when visitors are watching videos they aren't surfing away from your site.

How Do I Get Podcasts For My Blog?

Now, podcasts you do have to create yourself. The good news is that is a fairly simple process that can be done without a lot of technical knowledge or ability.

The term 'podcast' was actually coined by Ben Hammersley in the Guardian on February 2004. The word is a blend of the two words, 'ipod' and 'broadcast' but you don't have to have an ipod to see a podcast or even to create a podcast.

Very simply; podcasting is a way to publish audio and video online which lets software automatically find and download new broadcasts over a period of time by using RSS feeds that contain a link to the multimedia broadcast file.

You can create and publish your own audio program or video program or audio/video program and feed them to your audience who can then listen to or view them.

With nothing more than a personal computer, some software and a webcam if you are doing video, anybody can create a podcast and publish it. It isn't rocket science.

What Will My Blog Visitors Think About Audio, Video or Podcasts?

The short answer is that they are going to love them. A term that is sometimes used is 'User Enhancement Optimization'.

You know what SEO (Search Engine Optimization) is but it is possible that UEO (User Enhancement Optimization) is equally or maybe even more important.

Remember...it is all about content. Content is what keeps a visitor on your website and content is what makes them return to your website. It is a well known fact that purchases are seldom made on initial website visits.

A customer will likely return to the website up to seven times before he actually drags out his credit card and buys something. You have to get them to come to your website for that first crucial visit but making them return is just as important. I can't really think of a better way to keep them coming back than giving them something as attention getting as audio or video or podcasts. Can you?

While it is true that people do read blog posts, we are a nation that is more geared toward audio and video than toward the written word.

We watch television...a lot. One picture really is worth more than a thousand words in today's technologically centered world.

Web 2.0 has created an internet that is user driven. The users are the ones who determine the success or failure of an internet business.

They are the determining factor of the way that websites are constructed. It once was said over and over that 'the customer is always right'. That is still true but in the Web 2.0 world of internet marketing, the user is not only right, he is in charge.

Web surfers no longer simply go to websites to read information. They go to websites to GET information and they love for that information to be delivered

in audio and/or video formats.

Your blog website has got to be outstanding. It has got to be original. It has to give the user a reason to visit in the first place and a reason to return often.

Think content, content, content and SEO as well as UEO and you can make your blog website successful. Audio, video and podcasts are the quickest, easiest and most efficient way to reach that goal.

Now we'll move onto the easiest business model to start off with ... and that is affiliate marketing.

Affiliate Marketing – The \$6.5 Billion Marketplace

When you watch a football game on TV, you can easily see how games are won or lost in the battle that takes place on the line of scrimmage. Offensive plays are designed to protect the quarterback and/or to open up holes in the defense so that yardage can be gained.

Defensive plays are designed to sack the quarterback or close holes that would allow yardage to be gained. Quarterbacks and coaches get the credit for wins and blame for losses but the battle is won or lost in the trenches.

Affiliate marketing is a lot like a football game just without the bruises and sore muscles. An affiliate marketer must design offensive plays and defensive plays that will put him in a position to win the affiliate wars.

When you are one of many marketers who are trying to sell the very same product to the same consumers, you had better have a plan to get at least your fair share of the market or more.

Every niche market on the Internet is highly competitive. If it isn't competitive then there can't possibly be much of a customer base to sell to. That is just the nature of all Internet marketing and in every niche.

Maybe you do have a long and impressive list of paid customers. That's great! It means you have already won several of the affiliate marketing contests and come out on top. The problem is there are always those up and coming marketers who want your customers on their lists.

Your list and your competitor's lists may well contain many of the same names and email addresses. Just having a list will not be enough to assure you of a victory when selling an affiliate product. You have to design some offensive plays that will assure that your customers buy from you and not from your competitors.

So, you ask, what is it that I can do that will assure that my customers will buy from me? The answer is just one word... **unique!**

You have to be unique. You have to offer something that sets you completely apart from your competitors. You have to make your offer for a product or service for which you are an affiliate more attractive to buy from you than it is to buy from your competitors.

If you simply send out a marketing email advertising a product or service that you are an affiliate marketer for, you need to remember that there are dozens or maybe even hundreds of other marketers who are sending out marketing email advertising the exact same product or service and many of them are sending them to the same people that you are. You have to do something to make sure that your customers buy from you...you have to be unique.

There are several ways to achieve uniqueness. One way is to have established

yourself as an expert in the field for which the product or service is being sold. You have to have become not only visible but credible, as well. This visibility and credibility is not easily achieved. It takes a lot of hard work, time and effort.

Visibility and credibility are established by taking such measures as writing and marketing articles and E-Books, posting to blogs and forums, appearing as an expert on teleseminars and webinars, etc. The fact is that when people know you and trust you, they buy from you. They will buy from you even if your competitors are offering a better deal or more incentives.

People do not like to buy from strangers. The Internet is a big impersonal and even frightening place to many consumers. They want to feel like they know and trust the people that they buy products and services from. The time, effort and energy that you put into becoming visible and credible will be the best time, effort and energy investment that you will ever make. Reputation is everything in the world of Internet marketing. Credibility makes you unique.

Another very important thing that you can do to insure that your customers buy a product or service for which you are an affiliate marketer and not from one of your competitors is to give them a very good and compelling reason to make the purchase from you. Offer something extra or a lot of different extras that will enhance the value of the product that you are marketing.

No matter what the niche or what the product is that is being marketed, there are free gifts that you can find that will make the product a better value if it is purchased from you.

For example if you are marketing an E-Book about Internet marketing, you could add several additional free E-Books concerning different aspects of the broad subject of Internet marketing.

E-Books can be downloaded from PLR sites or even from E-Book banks and repositories. Another free gift that people can't ever seem to get enough of is free utilities. There are many on the Internet and you can bet that there are some that will fit right in with whatever product or service that you are promoting.

While other marketers who are selling the very same product that you are, simply send out marketing emails that recommend the product to their lists, whereas you will be adding value to the product and doing it for free to boot.

Add extras! Add free gifts! Even better than extras and free gifts is additional help to use the product or service that is being sold. You can offer a free teleseminar for those who buy the product or service from you that will make the product or service better or easier to use.

You can most likely even get the producer or the product or service to speak at your event if you plan far enough ahead. People just love teleseminars and

they love freebies, when you add a teleseminar and free bonus together, you will have a winning play that might just score the proverbial touchdown for you.

Incentive Your Prospects

What usually happens when an affiliate marketer goes to [Clickbank](#) or [Commission Junction](#) and signs up as an affiliate marketer for a particular product or service that is relative to his affiliate marketing business topic?

The first thing he does is usually to place a logo for the product on his website and send out a marketing email to his list advocating the value of whatever the product or service happens to be. If this average affiliate marketer has any zip at all, he will make his sales letter as good as he can make it.

It will address each member of his list by name and there will be bullet points listing the advantages provided with ownership of the product or service. Then he will sit back, cross his fingers and toes, and hope to make a few sales. Well, that IS a plan but it isn't a very good one.

If this average affiliate marketer happens to get lucky and be included in the launch of a new product, he does pretty much the same thing. He notifies his list of the upcoming launch (the average affiliate marketer usually only sends one preparatory email) and then he sends out the marketing email at the launch.

He will make a few sales...very few. Of course, he won't be working very hard either and maybe he is very happy being an average affiliate marketer. There is a problem, however, with being average. Average is a very crowded place.

Average! Why would anybody want to settle for average? Doesn't 'average' mean 'common or ordinary...nothing special'? If you are not happy with being an average affiliate marketer, then you need to keep reading.

What puts one affiliate marketer above the average affiliate marketer?

The answer is uniqueness.

Being unique is a quality that sets one apart from all of others. If you want to be better than just average, you will need to develop some uniqueness in your marketing techniques that will set you above just an average affiliate marketer.

Average affiliate marketers just don't grasp the idea that in order to sell a lot of product, their offer needs to be more valuable than the offers their competitors are making.

Most affiliate marketers won't offer any incentives to their lists for buying a specific product from them rather than buying the same product from some one else.

Some affiliate marketers will offer some bonus incentives but they will be pretty ordinary and things that are really not of much value or even unrelated to the product that is being promoted.

The really GOOD affiliate marketer will offer bonus incentives that are BETTER than anything that is being offered by any other marketer and are directly

related to the product that is being promoted. The really GOOD affiliate marketer will give his customers a very good reason to buy from him.

Actually, the whole idea of offering better incentives to customers is just plain old common sense. If you can buy 2 ears of corn from vendor A for 20 cents or 2 ears of corn from vendor B for 20 cents and vendor B throws in some butter to go on the corn free of charge, which vendor are you going to buy from?

Affiliate marketing is the very same thing.

You have to offer bonuses and you have to offer better bonuses than those that other affiliate marketers are offering.

For example let's say that there is an E-Book about Email Marketing that you are an affiliate marketer for. It's a very good book that has been written by an Email Marketing Guru. It is selling for \$100 and your commission is going to be \$50 per sale that you make. There is an elaborate live launch for the product. Your competitors are offering an additional E-Book or two as bonus incentives.

How can you get an edge here? The only way that you can possibly get an edge is to offer something that your competitors are not offering. You could have set up a free teleseminar that will take place within a few days of the launch for those who buy from you or you could offer a free 30 minute downloadable audio tape that further explains certain points in the E-Book.

The people who buy from you will be getting a better deal than they could get from your competitors. The product will always be the same...but the bonuses that are offered is where you get the edge.

Tip: Never underestimate the power of 'free'. Everybody loves getting something for nothing or getting something extra. They especially love getting something that everybody else is not getting and that brings us to another point of offering bonus incentives.

If you can offer something such as a free teleseminar that is related to a product launch, you need to limit the number of people who will receive the bonus. That makes it more exclusive and thus more desirable.

This is tricky.

You don't want to make customers mad but you do want to make those who get the added bonuses feel like they have gotten something others have not gotten. You might phrase your offer to say that the first 200 people who buy the product from you will be allowed to join the teleseminar live and others will receive a transcript of the teleseminar. Like I said, this is tricky but it can be done.

The bottom line is just this: if you want to be better than an average affiliate marketer you are going to have to offer more and better bonus incentives than your competitors offer. All affiliate marketers for any product are all trying to

sell to the same basic customer base and that base is not unlimited.

In order to get an edge and rise above what is common, ordinary and average you will need to get really creative with the incentive bonuses that you offer with your affiliate product or service.

Rebates = Less Money In Your Pocket

Rebates seem to be all the rage in today's market place. Rebates are everywhere. Out in the brick and mortar world there are 'mail-in' rebates and instant rebates offered on every product imaginable from computers to home appliances to cars. In cyber space the rebate is everywhere. Rebates are offered on all kinds of programs, software, products and services.

A rebate is simply a discount in fancy clothes. The principle is exactly the same. The customer pays less than the list price for whatever the program, software, product or service might be. The customer is getting a bargain. That's true. The question, however, is what exactly is the seller getting?

The answer to the question, what is the seller getting, is pretty simple. The seller is getting less money than he is entitled to get on every sale he makes.

If the seller is giving a 50% rebate that means that he will have to sell twice the number of programs, software copies, products or services to make the same amount of money he would have made if you had not offered the 50% rebate.

The seller is giving away his profit especially if the seller is an affiliate marketer because any rebate an affiliate marketer offers his customers comes out of his commission. For example: if you are marketing a product that sells for \$197.00 and you earn \$98.50 from it, offering a rebate of \$50 means that your commission is only \$48.50 per sale.

You aren't going to be earning very much per sale. That can't be a good thing. There has to be a better way than offering big rebates...and, fortunately, there is.

One of the big problems with offering big rebates is that **the offer attracts what is known in the business as 'cheap customers'**. Cheap customers are those who never expect to pay the full price for anything, ever or under any circumstances. They expect to get something for nothing and that something for nothing expectation will always come out of your pocket. You are simply better off without cheap customers.

The answer to the rebate question is just this: give your customers a good reason to buy from you at the full price. Even if you have to pay something for incentive bonuses, it is better than offering a rebate to the customer.

You will attract a better class of customers who will continue to buy from you. Many affiliate marketers think that offering incentive bonuses that are valuable enough to entice people to pay full price for an item is just too much trouble. They will tell you, that it is easier, quicker and just a lot less trouble to simply offer a rebate of a discount than it is to find bonus incentives.

Okay. I agree. Offering a rebate or a discount is certainly easier, quicker and a

lot less work than finding bonus incentives that are of enough value to make a customer pay full price for a product or service. However; it is simply not the best thing to do.

The customers that will be attracted by deep discounts and 50% rebates are the cheap customers and once you discount or offer a rebate they are going to expect you to do so with every product or service that you ever offer them. You are going to be working for peanuts when you could be working for the whole peanut gallery.

Don't waste your time worrying about lazy affiliate marketers who offer deep discounts or big rebates. They will attract the cheap customers that you don't want anyway and those lazy affiliate marketers will never be any competition for you.

If you are willing to go to the trouble, put in the work, and make the effort to find incentive bonuses that make it possible for you to sell products at their full price to your customers, you will leave those lazy affiliate marketers eating your dust.

Before you even consider offering a rebate or a discount on a product or service think about the reason that you became an affiliate marketer in the first place.

Did you become an affiliate marketer so that you could just barely scratch out a living or did you plan on making a very nice annual income that would provide a very nice life style for you and your family? I doubt that scratching out a living was the top reason that you chose to become an affiliate marketer.

Look at it like this: every time that you accept less than you could get for a product, you are giving away the lifestyle that you have been working for and you are settling for less than you deserve not only for yourself but for your family as well.

It really is never necessary to settle for less. It just isn't necessary to offer a large rebate or a deep discount to sell a quality product or service.

People need, want and will pay for the products and services that they need. It isn't necessary to give away your profit if you will just work harder and find incentive bonuses that will entice your customers to buy the products and services that they need from you.

Do not put a discount on the product or offer a rebate. Increase the value of the product instead. Remember this; increasing value is better than selling the product or service cheaper than the initial price. People don't always see a discount or a rebate as value. They sometimes see it as an attempt to entice them into buying a product that wasn't worth the full price in the first place.

Only the cheap customers will go for a rebate or discount. The good customers will be shopping around to see what the best incentives being offered are. If

you make your bonus incentives the very best, then you will attract the best customers and you can charge the full asking price every time and for every product or service that you promote.

How To Win The Affiliate War

Winning the ongoing affiliate war isn't easy but (unlike some wars) it IS **achievable**. The affiliate wars cannot and will not be won by lazy affiliate marketers. The affiliate marketing wars will be won by the aggressive strategists who are willing to work hard and long.

Affiliate marketing is not for the faint of heart. If you had really known how tough the competition is in affiliate marketing would you have joined the fray? It doesn't matter.

You are in the midst of it now and quitting simply is not an option for a true warrior. The only option is winning...and winning BIG!

Winning the affiliate marketing wars means winning the small daily battles and minor skirmishes one at a time and winning them decisively.

You want to become one of those super affiliates. You want to become one of those big earners that make an annual income that has more than one comma in that number on the bottom line, right?

Then you need to be prepared to work hard. You need to be prepared to do more than what is required. You need to be prepared to go that extra mile.

First and foremost, reputation counts in affiliate marketing. There are thousands of affiliate marketers out there but the ones who make the big bucks are the ones who have established high visibility and great credibility for themselves. Establishing credibility and visibility go hand in hand and establishing both are critical to your success and your victory over your competitors.

Credibility and visibility are established in several ways. Two of the most important ways of establishing credibility and visibility are by writing and marketing articles and E-Books that relate to the products and services that you sell. You must establish yourself as an expert.

You need to become the guy or the gal that others go to when they need information or need questions answered. Writing articles and E-Books (or having them written for you by a ghost writer) is one of the very best ways of establishing your reputation as a person who has answers.

Articles that you write or have written for you by a ghost writer will be uploaded into article banks for other website owners or E-zine publishers to download and reproduce free of charge. At the bottom of each 300-400 word, key-word rich article you will include a resource box that has your name and your website address in it. This helps to spread your name and news of your knowledge around the Internet to those who are the most likely to be your customers.

E-Books should only be 10 to 12 pages long but a link to your website needs to

be included on every single page as well as in the resource box at the end. E-Books are uploaded to E-Book repositories where others may download them and reproduce them just like articles.

Because it is required that E-Books cannot be altered and that resource box information must be included when E-Books are downloaded and reproduced, your reputation as an expert in your field will be enhanced each time anyone chooses to use them.

Another way to build your visibility and your credibility on the Internet is to post to blogs and forums that have topics related to the products and services which you sell. It is a very simple to find these forums and blogs. Simply type your related key word into the search box of your favorite search engine followed by the words blogs or forums, you will get many hits.

Choose the three or four of the ones that have the largest number of active members and join those blogs or forums. Be careful here. Posting to blogs and forums effectively is going to take several hours of your time every week so don't choose too many.

Once you have joined three or four blogs and forums do not go in with guns blazing posting blatant advertisements. The idea here is to build visibility and credibility.

Introduce yourself and behave as though you had just moved into a new neighborhood.

Your signature tag that appears at the bottom of each and every post that you make should have your name as well as a link to your website.

Take your time to get to know the other posters in the community and become a valued member of the group. You will be building a good reputation, visibility and credibility.

It takes time to build your visibility and credibility. While you are building them, you will also be promoting and selling products and services and you want to establish a good relationship with those who buy products and services from you. Be sure that you provide good information, good service and a guarantee if one applies.

Go to great lengths to never appear to be a cheapo or corner cutter to your customers. Always treat your customers like they are your most valuable asset, sorry they ARE your most valuable asset. Without the customers there is no business.

Never discount products or services or offer rebates. You don't want to build that kind of reputation or that kind of customer base. Instead of offering discounts or rebates take the time and put forth the effort to add bonus incentives to the products and services that you promote to give them added value.

The winners of the affiliate wars are the men and women who go to the trouble and take the time to build excellent reputations as experts and as fair and honest merchants.

People buy things on the Internet from people that they feel like they know and can trust. People buy things on the Internet from affiliate marketers who have the reputation as an expert or a guru and one who actually cares about the people to whom he sells products and services to. A positive and hard working, fair-dealing reputation will help you win the daily battles and, ultimately the affiliate war.

7 Critical Mistakes in Affiliate Marketing

Affiliate Marketing – The Best Place to Start

Everyone has to start somewhere. And, for neophyte Internet marketers, the best place to start may be with affiliate products. Rather than going through the laborious and expensive process of creating your own product (of dubious quality) and then trying to market it to the masses, why not start by finding a product that is well put-together and comes from someone who already has a high degree of credibility? You could save a lot of time, money, frustration, and will power; and you could make money in the process, too—in fact, really good money. Many top Internet marketers today still sell affiliate products, even though they make a killing on their own. Why? Because it's still fantastic money and little effort is required.

Now, with that said, it's important to mention that affiliate marketing is no walk in the park, either. It's certainly easier than pulling off a Jeff Walker-style massive product launch, but, like anything else, there are plenty of pitfalls just waiting to consume you and your money. Do yourself a favor: heed what I say and avoid those pitfalls. In this section, I will go over the top 7:

Pitfall #1: Choosing a Bad Product to Promote

Not all products are created equal. In fact, that is probably the driving motivation behind your decision to sell affiliate products: for the most part, you have accepted that there are plenty of high-quality products already on the market; and, if you create your own, it might not compare favorably.

If you decide to pick your product off a list on Clickbank, select very carefully. Rather than haphazardly selecting the product with the highest commission, look for ones that have the highest popularity and gravity ratings. If a lot of people are buying them often, they must be better than other products for sale within that niche.

In addition to picking good products within niches, you will also want to look for good niches. Here's a stupid tip that will illustrate my point nonetheless: don't sell garden hoses in the winter. No one will buy. Focus on products that a lot of people want; and if their popularity just surged, now is the best time to get in the market.

Pitfall #2: Picking a Low Converter

As an affiliate marketer, your goal is to profit from the hard work others have done; and from the money they have spent on copywriters, product developers, and software. If you select a product that underutilizes these advantages, you are likely to benefit less.

Take, for instance, conversion rates. Not all product creators hire a topnotch copywriter. In fact, many of them just write their own copy. Many also don't

hire someone to do graphs for the sales page. Instead, they try to do their own. The end result? The page looks hideous, the copy contains major errors, and the product converts poorly.

Before you start promoting any particular product, read the sales page carefully and compare it with others. Do you feel compelled to buy? Did the graphics throw you off? Did the copy fail to reel you in for the catch? These can all amount to fatal errors for both the seller and you. You cannot help the seller at this point, but you can avoid his product and find a better one. Do yourself a favor: choose your products carefully.

Pitfall #3: Selling Snake Oil for a Snake Oil Salesman

This pitfall is especially important to avoid if you have a list. All it takes is one erroneous product promotion and you could end up with a mass exodus from your list. Again, don't make this error.

Even though you may be tempted to promote the next "biggest launch," make sure you don't buy into just anything. Several marketers have lamented their choices to promote the Rich Jerk's latest offering after list members complained that his sales page was loaded profanity and sexist comments. Don't be one of these guys. Make sure you carefully inspect anything before you promote it to your list. Unless you happen to be the Rich Jerk, by the way you probably don't want people to think you're just that—a rich jerk.

Additionally, avoid jumping on the affiliate product bandwagon for major promotions. Instead, wait until the buzz dies down slightly; and then release a comprehensive review (something most affiliate marketers do not provide) of the product. This has a much better chance of getting sales for you; and it will also help you to maintain credibility.

Last, avoid promoting products that make outrageous and fallacious claims. As Carl Sagan once said "Extraordinary claims require extraordinary evidence." In most cases, these snake oil peddlers cannot provide you with any extraordinary evidence, but they do make the claims. Avoid promoting them and becoming associated with them.

Pitfall #4: Picking Products that Offer Meager Commissions

If you're marketing to a list of people, they're only going to consider so many product offers in a given period of time, so select the ones you promote wisely. If you promote something that only generates a 25% commission for you, then you're leaving a lot on the table. In reality, you could probably find a similar product that offers a 50% or 75% commission.

In terms of the actual dollar value of the commission – don't sweat that as much. While many top name Internet marketers now say that they concentrate on promoting highticket items (since only a few sales will generate a lot of money), you can still make a killing selling relatively cheap reports. The rising

popularity of the \$7 report is testament to this fact.

So avoid the cheapo sellers, but don't worry as much about the price.

Pitfall #5: Failing to Collect Leads

Always, always, always capture leads. Rather than generating traffic through pay per click, search engine optimization, and other methods and then sending that traffic to your affiliate link, you should make an effort to convert them into list members first. Why? Two reasons: simple mathematical reasoning and the collective experience of many marketers.

The simple mathematical reasoning goes something like this: virtually everyone who would have purchased the product will opt in to your mailing list. And many who definitely would not have purchased the product will opt in to your mailing list. Instead of converting at a rate of around 1-3% (in affiliate sales), you will convert between 15 and 40% of visitors (to your mailing list). From there, you will get the chance to contact the willing buyers and the more reluctant. Additionally, once they're on a list, this is no longer a one-off effort. You get the chance to market to them again and again for months or even years.

As a marketer, one of the best tools you have available is your list. Always, always, always use your list over the one-off sale.

Pitfall #6: Ignoring the Importance of Timeliness

Generally in business, the quick often exceed those endowed with greater resources. Today, Google is no longer a small company with meager revenues, but in the past, it emerged from nowhere to exceed massively well-endowed rivals.

How does this apply to you? Successful affiliate product promotion requires you to do more than simply slap an affiliate link in an email and send it out to a couple thousand people. If you expect them to actually buy, your email should be newsworthy – not promotional.

If you can genuinely write your email as if it were a news announcement, you are far more likely to draw interest than if you send a link to an Internet marketing eBook that was written in 1998 and wasn't particularly popular then.

You need to find product launches that qualify as an "event." Find something so big that people follow the event and comment on it. If you can find such a product (say, the iPhone of Internet marketing products), it is critical that you engineer your own build-up and release, centered on the build-up and release of the product. You will want to make sure that your list members purchase from you, rather than from another list owner.

To make it short and sweet: pay attention to the clock and the calendar. If there's a big launch coming up, you need to capitalize on it quickly. There may

not be a second window for opportunity. So take it when you have it.

Pitfall #7: Ignore Important Numbers

Many affiliate marketers fail to make many of the small—yet important—calculations needed in order to run a business and ensure you are in profit. For instance, many affiliate marketers will completely ignore the portion Clickbank extracts from each sale. Instead, they'll simply look at the price and the commission.

Additionally, many will ignore conversion rates, pay per click bids, and the amount of time they put into projects. They'll also fail to make realistic estimates of how much promotional efforts will cost; and how much of a risk they'll be. They'll glaze over all of these minor details and devote the majority of their time to daydreaming about the riches they could rake in.

Unfortunately, affiliate marketing doesn't work like that. If you're paying too much for traffic; if your conversion rates are too low; if you put too much time into projects that don't have high yields – the outcome is bad. Your numbers won't add up. At the end of the day, month, or year, you may end up in debt, rather than profit. And since you're a sole proprietor, not a CEO of a corporation, which means you don't get paid at all. Even worse, you might lose some of your own money that you worked hard to get.

My Secret Weapon – Ad Swaps

How many times have you been told that money is in that list?

You set out to build your list. BUT...You soon realize that it can be a very slow process unless you are paying for traffic. Free traffic is great, but it is a slow list building method unless you can get to the top of the search engines...

...But what if you could get for **free**, all of your competitors to send traffic to your own squeeze/opt-in page? Well It is actually very simple to do and here is how!

Now I have to warn you that until you have a list of around 1000 subscribers or more you'll find it difficult to do this. But believe me it's possible as I've done it.

If you don't have any subscriber at all then ill show you how to get your first 1000+ subscribers and all for FREE...Yes that's right....I kid you not for FREE!

Right let's say you have 1000 people on your list, what you do is contact other marketers and ask them if they'd like to do an ad swap. What's an ad swap I hear you say? Well an ad swap is where both marketers send a mailing out for each other to a squeeze page where you offer something of great value for FREE. You probably received this FREE report and "Web Traffic Blueprint" videos from my website <http://HowToMakeSeriousMoneyOnline.com> and you were probably sent there by another marketer who's list you were on.

I'm sure you'll agree that this report and the "Web Traffic Blueprint" videos are not some cheap product that I've together and that is the key to a successful ad swap, don't give away rubbish products as you'll find that people will only unsubscribe from your list then your back to square one with no list.

Let me say that again so you don't over look it. Don't give away rubbish products, the key to a successful is to give away quality products.

You will also need to supply your ad swap partner with a sample ad copy to send out.

What do I mean by an ad copy?

I mean an email copy for them to send out to their lists. You want to make it as easy as possible for them to swap with you.

Here is a sample I use for one of my own lists!

Subject Line:

{!firstname}, 3 F'ree Unrestricted PLR Just for You

AD COPY:

Hi {!firstname},

Today I have an incredible **complimentary** gift for you that you really don't want to miss out on.

My friend and fellow marketer Craig Dawber has allowed me to offer my subscribers an **incredible special gift** and best of all it's totally complimentary.

<http://www.YourVideoProducts.com/freplr/>

Grab your no-cost unrestricted PLR package consisting of three smoking hot eBooks.

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P.S Make you download your F'REE gifts today while you still can

<http://www.YourVideoProducts.com/freplr/>

Tip: When writing your email copy and subject lines use words like FREE, secret, special, gift etc... these are very powerful words and will get your readers excited or curious about what the offer is. The main point of this is to get the reader to view the email first of all and to finally click the links inside that email copy.

You'll learn as you go but stick to those tips and you wont go far wrong :-)

Where do I find these ad swap partner?

This is really the easy bit as they are all around you no matter what niche your in. If you've been online for any length of time then I'm sure you've heard of article directories.

If you haven't well you can find a list of directories at <http://www.swapezineads.com>

Now one of the most popular one's is <http://ezinearticles.com> and I've found many ad swap partner just by searching for related topics to my niche.

Once you've found a potential ad swap partner then it's time to approach them and ask for an ad swap.

Here's how to find and approach a potential ad swap partner:

Firstly: Remember that not everyone has heard of ad swaps before so you'll need to explain this to them and point out the benefits to up your odds of getting a reply.

Here's a template email that you can use.

Hi FIRSTNAME,

How are you?

I've been reading your article _____ which I found on ezinearticles.com and I thought you'd done a great job.

The reason I was there I was looking for potential ad swap partners. If you don't know what ad swap are then let me explain briefly.

Ad swaps are a great way to build your list of subscribers fast, how they work is both partners mail out a FREE offer for each other to a squeeze page and in return both parties get new fresh targeted subscribers on their lists. It's a win win situation

I've been doing lots of ad swaps lately to build my list, they work great and I've added xxx in just a couple of months.

I have a list of xxx and I generate on average xxx click throughs.

This is my FREE offer:

<http://YourAdSwapProduct.com>

Would you be interested in doing an ad swap with me?

If your interested then can you please let me know your list size and what kind of clicks you generate on a mailing.

Let me know

Sincerely,
YOUR NAME

Ok Craig! This sounds really easy but I don't have a list.

How do I start my list?

Okay, well if you don't have list then you need to start from the beginning, this report doesn't go into great detail of how to build your list from scratch but it will give you a few good pointers.

One of the ways to build your list is to join [giveaway events](#) and upload your free gifts in return for people opting in to your lists. If your looking for giveaway events then that easy also, just search google.com for giveaway events and you find 100's going on. Some of you may be thinking and be worried that you don't have a product or squeeze page to giveaway when I have both of these covered for you also. You have can either go to "[Instant Giveaway Products](#)" and get a product and converting squeeze ready to go or you can join "[Resale Rights Fortune](#)" and find lots of products that you can use for paying product or for use as giveaways. I recommend you join "[Resale Rights Fortune](#)" if given the choice as this gives you more options.

The key to getting lots of subscribers from these giveaway events is once you sign up for FREE your given a chance to upgrade your account, usually this is between \$27-\$47 and this enables to upload more then one give (usually 3 or more) and your gifts are put on the first couple of pages as priority so more people can see them, the more people that see your gifts, the better your chances are of someone opting in and get your gift.

If your short on cash and you don't have this option then still sign up as you'll still getting people opting into your list and slowly start to build your list.

If your looking for other ways to build your list then I recommend you take a look at "[Unstoppable List Building](#)" and "[Accelerated List Building](#)" to find out more.

One other time and tested system for building your list and getting traffic to your website is "article marketing". Article marketing been around for along time but if you ask any marketer who's been online for any length of time they will tell you the same thing.....article marketing works!

If your looking for an easy way to make money from article marketing then highly recommend you take a closer look at [Article Mass Control](#)

Conclusion

So how does all of this come together?

Well let's put it this way... I'm 30 years old and I make a full-time income from the internet. I only need to work 3 or 4 days a week and right now I'm the envy of all my friends and family.

As you read, Web 2.0 is easy for anyone to do and follow plus there are seven main pitfalls in affiliate marketing which you've just learnt. If you fall into them, your affiliate marketing will put you in debt, rather than making you wealthy.

So how can you avoid these traps, make better decisions, and ultimately become wealthy via affiliate marketing? First, start by selecting products that are actually good. As I mentioned previously, a low demand product will make few sales, no matter how hard you try to promote it. If the demand isn't there, you can't create it. Don't try.

Next, within the niches that are in high demand, look for a product that is actually a winner. Find something that converts very well. You can do this by looking for high popularity, high-gravity products on Clickbank. You can also do this by scanning sales pages to find ones with an extraordinary compelling copy, good bonuses, and reasonable prices.

In addition to choosing a product that is likely to convert well, you will also want to make sure that the claims are reasonable and that the seller is credible. One bad product could seriously knock you down a few pegs with your list members. Making a single sale and losing an otherwise repeat-buyer is rarely worth it.

Once you start generating traffic from the first part of this book for your affiliate marketing campaigns, remember to drive it to an opt-in form – NOT to your affiliate link. If you send the person directly to an affiliate link, you are likely to never hear from that person again, whether or not it results in sale. Collecting leads is critically important. If you fail to do so—as many affiliate marketers do—you are leaving a lot of money on the table relative to the amount you are spending.

Last, do yourself a favor and keep track of conversion rates, bid prices, commission rates, product broker fees, and all the other little numbers that affiliate marketers prefer to ignore. Knowing, understanding, and tweaking these numbers could be the difference between profit and debt. You can ignore them if you want, but doing so will not improve your business to be more effective and efficient.

With all of that said, you're now ready to take a crack at affiliate marketing. There are a lot of risks involved, but you already know the big seven; avoid these, and you'll sail through into profit, following the trail of past super

affiliates.

Yours Sincerely

Craig Dawber



<http://CraigDawber.com>

<http://PLRVideosCenter.com>

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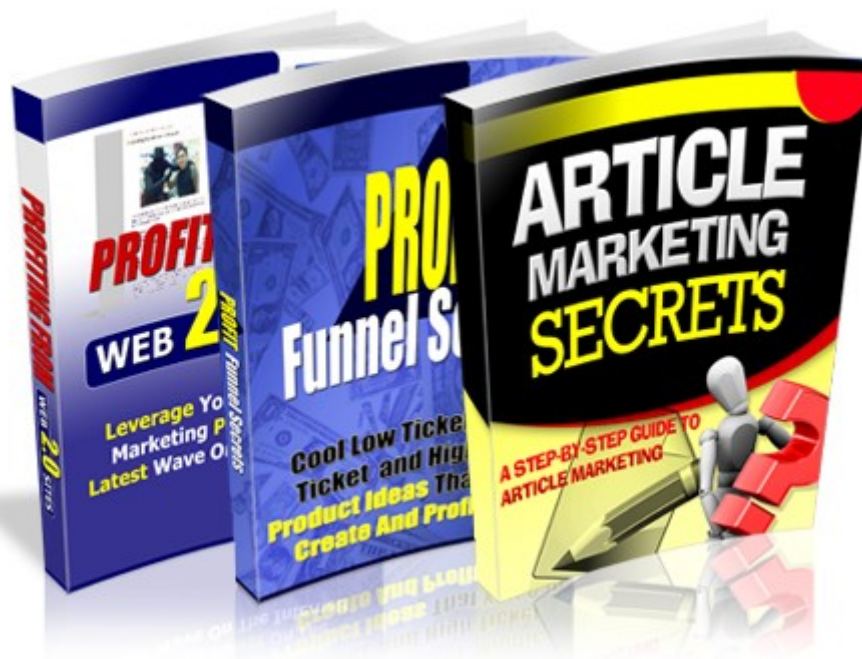


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