

The Beginner's Affiliate Handbook

By: Shane Wilson

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Table of Contents

- 1) Introduction
- 2) I'm new to Affiliate Marketing, where do I start?
- 3) Forums
- 4) Setting up an e-mail account
- 5) Setting up a money handling account
- 6) Where to find Affiliate programs
- 7) Disguising your Affiliate links
- 8) Ads
- 9) Tracking your Ads
- 10) Where to Advertise
- 11) Suggested Affiliate Programs
- 12) What are you waiting for, GO!

-Introduction-

My name is Shane Wilson and I want to thank you for your purchase of <u>The Beginner's Affiliate Handbook</u>. As you will soon see, the information in this book will be of tremendous help to you.

I wrote this book to make it easier for individuals like you to begin an Affiliate Marketing business. I know when I started that I was overwhelmed with the amount of information that needed to be learned and had no idea really where to start. I spent months of trial and error, setbacks and mishaps before I started to get the hang of things. I thought to myself that it would have been nice to have a book that took me basically by the hand and walked me through what I needed to know and do. So here it is, the book that will take you by the hand and save you months of time and frustration.

My advice to you is to give this book a run through before you implement anything. The second time reading will help things sink in better and then you can begin following the links and setting up accounts as desired. The majority of the sites within this book lead you to free resources to help you. Some are not, but do not shy away from these. The old saying is very much true, "It takes money to make money". Most of the sites in this book I use myself or have used and know that they are beneficial or I would not have listed them.

There is a bunch of information here so take your time, there is no hurry. Rushing into your new business is a huge mistake. Become a student and soak up everything that you can. Buy more books and read more articles that have to do with Affiliate Marketing. It is always a good idea to obtain various points of view in any business so that you can look at it from every vantage point. This is very important. I personally read 2 books on Online Marketing before I even turned on

Marketing Superstars by Mitch Myerson and The E-Code by Dr. Joe Vitale and Jo Han Mok. I suggest you pick up a copies for yourself. Very, Very helpful to me and my business. Of course I have read various others since then and continue to find books and articles to read on the subject. You can never learn enough, even the Guru's spend money every year on trainings and courses to better themselves and so should you.

Well are you ready? O.K., Sit back now and let me take you on a journey into the world of Affiliate Marketing! You are in for a treat and I wish you the best of luck in your business and future as well.

-I'm new to Affiliate Marketing, where do I start?-

If you are new to Affiliate Marketing it can be easy to be overwhelmed. There is so much to learn and things are changing everyday. As I stated earlier, it is a good idea to continue to study Affiliate Marketing and stay ahead of the game. You will not regret this.

So what is Affiliate Marketing? Well it's simple really. Affiliate Marketing is where you promote someone else's product or service in return for a commission. These commissions can range in value from let's say \$1 to over \$300 depending on the product or service. I bet your saying, "No way can I make \$300 commission from just referring someone else's product or service and it results in a sale". Well I am here to tell that not only does it happen, but it is happening as you read this book! People make \$100,000+ a year doing this. A great example of someone who is the best at this is Ewen Chia. Ewen makes well over \$100,000 a year in commissions from simply referring people to various products and services. He also has his own products and services and I have listed some towards the end of this book. You will see them soon enough, now where was I? Oh yes, where do you start.

Well, let me ask you, what do you have a passion for? What do you love to do or what is a hobby of yours? This is a very important question and should be answered truthfully. The reason I ask is you need to find your niche. Niche, what the heck is a niche? A Niche is defined as a **suitable place for somebody:** a position or activity that particularly suits somebody's talents and personality or that somebody can make his or her own (Encarta Dictionary online). So, for the sake

of the remainder of this book let's say your Niche is Fitness and more particularly Muscle Building. Now since you have a passion for Muscle Building and it is something you love to do, you will enjoy promoting products and services about Muscle Building. This is very important, you do not want to promote products or services that are of no interest to you. You will soon find yourself disliking what you do because it not something you love to do or have an interest in. When you find your niche, the thing that interests you or are good at, you will have a much easier time promoting relevant products and services.

Take some time to think about what you enjoy, love to do or are good at. Be honest with yourself. You will find that this first step is the most important one when starting your very own Affiliate Marketing business. Sit back now and reflect on this topic and continue reading when you have found your very own Niche. Go ahead, I will be here when you get back.

-Forums-

Welcome back, I trust you have found your Niche. Great! For the sake of explanation "we'll continue to use Muscle Building as our example niche". So what is your next step? Your next step is going to be Forums. Forums, what are forums? Put quite simply, forums are like chat rooms. These "chat rooms" are an absolute excellent place to begin your Affiliate Marketing business. Here you can learn the ins and outs of Affiliate Marketing, the terminology, lingo and get the latest buzz on products and services. You can post questions to something you are having a hard time with and other forum members will give you helpful suggestions and answers. Forums are also a great place to build business relationships. These relationships will help you build and expand your business bigger than you can imagine. I wish I knew about forums when I first started out, it would have saved me months of work and frustration. But hind sight is "20/20" as they say. The good thing for you is that you now know about them so you are already further along than I was.

Well now that you know about them, where do you find them and which ones are good ones. You can Google® them of course, but let me save you the time and give you a few suggestions. The first one I suggest is called I'm 4 Newbie's. This is an excellent forum for individuals wanting to enter the Internet marketing arena as an Affiliate Marketer. Some of the resources include: What's new in Internet marketing, Affiliate program marketing 101, email marketing 101 and Niche marketing 101. These are just a "few" of the many resources on this site that you can peruse. There really are excellent, excellent resources for you here. Make sure you add this site to your favorites list and visit it often.

The next forum I recommend is The Warrior Forum. This is one of the top forums, if not the top one out there and has many of the top Internet marketing Guru's as members. You will find the likes of Ewen Chia, Mike Filsaime and Willie Crawford at this forum. If you have not heard of these guys, spend just a little time in Internet marketing and you will see there names all over the place. These are guys are the top dogs when it comes to Internet marketing and Affiliate marketing. When you see a post by them everyone flocks to read what they have said. It's amazing! The best part is, you can post a question and have these guys answer you. What better people to get an answer from than the leader's/guru's in this field? I have personally received great advice from some of the top guys. This is definitely another site you are going to want to add to your favorites.

Yet another great forum is <u>Associate Programs Forum</u>. This is run by a man named Allan Gardyne who has been earning a good living with Affiliate programs since the late 90's. This is much like the other forums I have listed above, full of great help and camaraderie.

Finally, we have a site called <u>Web Master World</u>. This forum has so many topics that vary from search engine optimization to Google® adsense. There is truly a plethora of topics that will help you easily find the answer to any question you may have. All you have to do is ask.

I would advise that you add all of the above forums to your favorites. It is always a good idea to get different opinions on topics and ideas you may have. Hang out in these forums and get a better feel for Affiliate marketing. Ask questions and if you know the answer to a question someone else is asking, help out. It's good karma. Now, our next topic is going to be email accounts. Let's get started, shall we.

-Setting up your e-mail account-

After you have become comfortable with your niche by way of forum discussions, it's time to get an email account if you do not already have one. I am sure you are aware of the big "3" free email accounts out there, those being Google®, Yahoo®, and MSN®. While these accounts are perfectly fine under normal day-to-day emailing, they can pose a problem in Affiliate Marketing. The problem is the spam filters that come along with these accounts. Let me give you an example. Let's say you sign up for my newsletter using your free Google® account. Now as a subscriber you agree to accept emails on the latest in Internet Marketing from me. The problem is that most likely you will not receive my email because of the spam filters on your account. Sure these filters are good for keeping spam and potential threats out, but sometimes they are just too good for their own sake. You may have noticed that some of the top Internet Marketers advise you not to sign up with these type email accounts and some will not even let you. It would be a waste of their time and energy if their emails were blocked all the time by your account. For this very important reason you should not use these accounts to conduct your business. You may be thinking that you do not care about being a subscriber to my list or any other lists. This is a big mistake! You should be on a few lists to get different view points on products and services that are out there and/or new to the market. Being on these lists will help you stay in the loop and benefit you and your business tremendously. Even the Guru's are on other peoples lists and you should be too.

I bet you are asking; "What kind of email account do I need then Shane?". Well let me tell you about a few that I know of. The first

one is offered by Yuhknow. This is a perfect email account for your business and has an array of features. With this account you can set your own level of message filtering. This will ensure that you receive the emails that you want. Also this service has language preferences, signature settings (this is what is displayed at the bottom of every email you send out) and display preferences just to name a select few. Make sure you check this site out when deciding on what account to use, you can get started for as little as \$5.97/month.

The second service where you can get an email account through and the one that I currently use can be found at <u>Go Daddy</u>. This is a good site to use for your business and has many of the same features as listed above. It is easier to just head over to the site and see what it has to offer. Plans start at \$9.97/year.

Another good service to check out is over at <u>Adland Pro</u>. Again, this site has many of the same features as the services listed above. Plans start at \$19.99 a year. There are various other email services out there that you can use but to list them all here would take up too much time and would deviate from the plan of this book. Therefore I only list the three.

All of the above services are good. It just matters what your preferences are. The pricing is different due to the different features and it is better to just look and see what each service has to offer. I advise that what ever service you pick that it has at least 25MB (Mega bits) of storage, which should be plenty.

It is important that you pick one of the above services because this is where you will be conducting your business from. But Shane, don't I need a website and all that to start an Affiliate Marketing business? This may shock you but no, you do not. It is not necessary to have a website to make money with Affiliate Marketing. This is a

huge benefit to becoming an Affiliate Marketer. You do not have to spend all that money on website hosting, domain names, website design and many other costs associated with owning your own site. Once you get accustomed to your business and are comfortable, I advise you to get your own site though. Even though it costs money, it is beneficial to you in sustaining your online business. That is for another book though;). Now we need to set you up so that you can receive your commissions from potential future sales of Affiliate products and services.

-Money handling accounts-

Now that you have an email account there is one more thing you need to do before you continue. You must find a money handling account. What is this? Well, let's say you make a commission from an affiliate product you are promoting, where does your commission go? Well, some companies will send you a check when your account with them reaches a certain predetermined amount, let's say \$50. This could take some time when you are first starting out to accumulate. I am sure you do not want to wait till that time comes. There is an alternative that most companies offer and I am sure you have heard of it.

The alternative is a money handling account. These would be Paypal and Storm Pay which are the most common. These are like online bank accounts and a very convenient and important to have. You can have your commissions deposited directly into these accounts and then withdraw them to your own bank account from there. If you do not have a Paypal or Storm Pay account I suggest you sign up for

both, they are free to obtain. It is a good idea to have both just to be on the safe side. The reason is that different companies use different payment services. With these being the most common, it is not likely that you will run into any problems getting your commissions. Like I said, they are free so there is no hurt in signing up for both.

-Affiliate Programs-

Now that you are ready to go, where do you start? Where can you find Affiliate programs to promote within your niche? For the sake of stating an example lets recall our Muscle Building niche. Well there are a lot of places on the Internet where you can find programs in this particular niche (or any other). I will list a few of the best and most popular here.

The first one and probably the most popular is Clickbank. This site is absolutely loaded with every kind of product to promote from Muscle Building to Society and Culture. There are over 10,000 products and services that are ranked by popularity. Whatever the niche is you have chosen you can find a product or service at this site to promote and make a commission from. Your commission percentages can range from 1% to 75% with USD (US Dollar) earnings ranging from a minimum of \$1 to a maximum of \$100. Very important, you will want to choose a product to promote with a high gravity. A gravity is used to rank the sellers of these products to let potential resellers (affiliates) know how well their product is being sold by other Affiliate Marketers. The higher the gravity the more success other Affiliate Marketers have had with promoting that particular product. This is a good indicator of whether a product is good to

promote or not. Make sure you pay attention to this, you do not want to be spinning your wheels promoting a piece of junk.

A second site and just as popular is called <u>Link Share</u>. This is one of the top Affiliate program sites. You can promote some of the top names in business like, Macy's, Chase Manhattan and Cingular wireless. This site is like Clickbank in that each vendor offers different commissions and pay outs. It's best to visit the site and sign up and learn about all the individual features they offer.

And finally a place where you can find Affiliate programs is Pay dot com. This site gives you a lot of information on the companies behind the product you are potentially going to promote. There is information like whether the vendor uses paypal, stormpay or both. This site lets you see the sales page of the product you are promoting and also gives you a profile of the vendor who is selling a particular product. You can even contact the vendor and ask them any question that comes to mind, like how well other affiliates are doing promoting their product. All-in-all this site has many unique features that other sites do not. It is one you should definitely check out.

Any of these sites will do for finding something to promote. The key here is to find something that you are interested in. Find something you enjoy, like fitness for instance. To have even more success narrow it down to a subfield of fitness like my example "Muscle Building". You can narrow it down even more to a subject like "Natural Muscle Building". I just checked and "Natural Muscle Building" only has 906 sites that have to do with this exact area in Google. Hey, I just gave you a targeted niche to exploit;). Now, find a product or service on it from one of the above sites and then start promoting it (we'll get to this later). The more narrowed and defined you niche the easier it is to make money. The reason you want to

have a targeted/specialized niche is because the likelihood of other Affiliate Marketers promoting in this area will be lower. Make sure you are promoting a quality product and check out the sales page on it. Ask yourself, would you by this product or service judging from the sales copy? This is so important, something I know now that I did not know when I started. If you do this your customers will come back to you in the future. Now go to the links I provided above and find something great to offer!

-Disguising your Affiliate links-

The next thing and possibly the most important thing you will need to do are to disguise the Affiliate programs links. This is a crucial step you must take to prevent individuals from stealing your commissions or just going to a site without using your link. Whenever you promote someone else's product or service you are given an "Affiliate link" which single's you out from the other Affiliate's who are promoting that same product. The link for an Affiliate using Clickbank to promote a product or service through would look something like this: http://AFFILIATE.reseller.hop.clickbank.net. The "Affiliate" part of this previous example would be your Clickbank I.D. that is given to you when you sign up. For example, let's say you signed up for a Clickbank account and the username you chose is Arnold. You have decided to promote an e-book on Natural Bodybuilding from a company called Flex. Your Affiliate link for this product would look something like this: http://Arnold.Flex.hop.clickbank.net. This is not a live link.

I am sure you are aware of hackers on the Internet. If not, they basically are individuals who "break" into people's computer systems, steal products or commissions in this instance and just wreak havoc. These hackers have found a way to steal someone's commission's by seeing a link like the one above. I am not going to pretend I know how they do it, but I know it happens none the less. Anyways, you do not want to have your commissions stolen right? Of course not, no one does. Well there is a solution and its name is <u>Tiny URL</u>. At this site your can take your Affiliate link like the example above and have it "disquised". This is beneficial in more than ways than one. First, you deter hackers from stealing your commissions. A huge plus for you and your bank account. Second, it disguises your link from your potential customers. You see, people do not like to know they are being sold something while reading an email, at least not blatantly. You do not want your link to say "I am trying to sell you something", this is not very attractive to the reader. So, where and how are you going to use this disguised Affiliate link? Well I discuss this in the next chapter.

-Ads-

So now that you have your disguised Affiliate link what do you do with it. Well you put it in an Ad. An Ad is what will be viewed by your potential customer. It explains what it is you are selling in a subtle manner. As with your Affiliate link, you do not want your Ad to scream "I am trying to sell you something!". You want your Ad to follow the A.I.D.A. marketing approach. What does this stand for? It stands for Attention, Interest, Desire and Action. While this is not a book on how to write ads, I will briefly explain this approach. When

writing an Ad in an email or anywhere for that matter, you first want to grab the readers **A**ttention. You want to have the reader focus on your Ad and yours alone. Second, after you have grabbed their **A**ttention you want to keep their **I**nterest. You do not want your reader to click away from your ad because it is boring and does not keep their interest. Third, you want to create a **D**esire within in them that is saying, "Man, I need this product". And finally, you want to give them a call to **A**ction. Another words, close the deal. Make them believe that by clicking on your Affiliate link and purchasing that product or service that it will solve their problem. Here is a site that has an article that will explain it in a little more detail, it is called Clickz. Also this site is **full** of information on Marketing that you should check out.

If you have found a niche you are interested in it will be much easier to use the A.I.D.A approach. Do not tell lies and try to deceive your potential customer, just be honest. As crazy as it sounds, most people can tell when someone is being honest and sincere in an Ad. If you are honest people will continue to buy from you in the future.

Well, once you have written your Ad you need to know where to advertise right? Sure, but there is still one very important thing you need to do before you send out you Ads in every direction. You need to track them and I will discuss this next.

-Tracking your Ads-

So, you have your Ad all ready to go now what? Well, you need to put a tracking device on your Ad. A tracking device, what are you talking about Shane? A tracking device on your Ad is crucial. Let me explain. Let's say you have your Ad written and it grabs the readers

Attention, keeps their Interest, creates a Desire and gives them a call to Action. So you decide to advertise in 5 different Ad services like Herculist for example. You send out your Ad and get some commissions from some sales. Great right? Well do you know what Ad service brought you the most sales? Not unless you tracked your Ad. Tracking your Ad can be very beneficial and can save you time and more importantly money. So where and how can you track your Ad?

One of the best and most popular ad tracking software services can be found at Track That Ad. You can take any product or service you are promoting and have it tracked through their system to see if your money and time is being well spent. This is so important when you are starting out. You cannot afford to be throwing money away and wasting time that could be spent on improving your business.

Money is always tight when starting a business and the last thing you want to do is throw it away. Make sure you are tracking your Ads so that the money you do spend is money well spent. Also, you can disguise your Affiliate links here as well. Make sure you check this site out and see what it has to offer besides tracking your Ads and disguising your Affiliate links.

Now that that is finished, where do you advertise your Affiliate product or service? Well, I explain that in the next Chapter.

-Where to Advertise?-

Well, here we are, where do you advertise? You will be hard pressed to find this information in any other e-book out there. Other e-books will just tell you the types of places to advertise and be vague about it at best. I am going to give you the links to the sites that I advertised in when I began and still currently run advertisements in today. I am sure you will find this information tremendously useful.

The first and easiest place to advertise is in Groups. Groups are like forums where a lot of people get together with like interests and promote to each other or discuss a certain topic. The main groups are Google Groups®, <a href="Yahoo Groups® and <a href="MSN Groups®.

These groups are fantastic places to start advertising. You can find any kind of group you can think of on any subject or niche you are interested in. All you have to do is join the prospective group and that's it. Once you are a member you can post your ad to other members of the group for free. Tell me where you can find something else like that on the Internet.

Here are some important things that you need to take note of and do when joining these groups. First, let's say you have found a group that you are interested in joining; something that has to do with fitness, like Natural Muscle Building. You want to make sure that the group is still active. What do I mean? Well scroll down on the group's home page and make sure people are still posting to the group and that those posts are to date. You will find that some of the groups you run across have been dormant for years!

Now some people will say to seek out the groups with the most members, but I say join all the ones relevant to your niche/market. The more groups the better. I think when I started out that I had

joined enough groups to where I could post my ad to nearly 100,000 thousand people, for free I might add!

Next, when you do decide to join a group make sure you choose to have e-mail's sent to you in an abridged format. All this means is to have all the emails sent to you in 25+ chunk blocks instead of individually. This really saves space in your inbox. Yes, when joining these groups you usually have to agree to have other members send you emails on there own products or services. This is only fair.

Now, to send Ads to these groups you do not have to manually go to each group and post your ad. Notice that when joining each individual group there is a <u>post to</u> email address where you can post to the group. To save you a ton of time, gather all these email addresses from each individual group. Next, on your own email account that you should have gotten already from one of the links given earlier;), under addresses make a folder that simply says Groups. Now take all the addresses you have gathered and put them in this folder. All you have to do now when you want to send out your Ad to all of these groups is just put the Groups folder in your send to line and hit send. That is it. It takes a little while to set up but it saves you a ton of time later.

One more thing, make sure your email is sent out in text format. This is to ensure that your email gets to as many people as possible. For some reason certain people's email systems will not open html type emails. Make sure it is in text to be on the safe side

O.K., now on to some other places to advertise. Groups are not the only place to advertise for free. There are tons of other places but I am only going to give you some of the best here. First is a site called Herculist, which I listed earlier. You can join this site for free and email to 700 random members for free every 7 days. You can

upgrade your free membership to a one that you pay monthly. This gives you the ability to send your ad more often and to more members. Or, for a small fee you can send your ad to there full list of over 35,000. There are various prices for various services. Start off small and track your ad. If you notice people clicking on your ads and that you are receiving Affiliate commissions, upgrade or choose a one time pay for your ad.

Next we have <u>Free Advertising Forum</u>. Here you can post as much as you want for free and get important announcements on what's hot on the Internet. This is a great resource for you in that it is free and your ad can be seen by over 96,000 members!

Now we have <u>Free Advertising Blog</u>. This is a new site that has sprung up by <u>Mike Filsaime</u>, a top Internet Marketing Guru. You can join for free and post your ad every 7 days. This is a high traffic site that will get your ad noticed quickly. There is an option to upgrade to have your ad viewed more often that I recommend. Check the site out for details.

Yet another place is a site called <u>Adland Pro</u>. Here you can do a lot of things. Not only can you post your ad for free but you can also enter a traffic exchange, use pay per click for your ad, and even set up a free email account. I highly recommend you visit this site to understand all of what they have to offer!

Finally, a third type of place to advertise is on safelists. One of the best safelist submitters out there and one that I use is <u>Ipostad</u>. Safelists are places where you can send out your advertisements to others safelist members and not have to worry about spamming. Currently at this site, you can post your ad to over 2,574,000 members on 2,157 sites. All you have to do is join for a small fee, follow there instructions very closely and start submitting ads to

literally millions! They take care of joining all 2,157 sites for you, you can't beat that.

By no means is this all the places to advertise. I could spend hours giving you suggestions where to advertise. I just wanted to give you a few types of places to advertise to get you started. All of the previous places I have listed work. If you are having problems getting sales then you may want to make sure your Ad follows the A.I.D.A. approach closely. This usually is the problem. It's all trial and error at first. No one steps out of the box and hits a homerun no matter what they tell you. Persistence is the key. Just keep plugging away and it will all start to come together. In the next section I am going to list some programs that I have used to make commissions. These programs basically sell themselves.

-Suggested Affiliate Programs-

This chapter I want to dedicate to the lazy people out there. You know who you are, I don't discriminate. If you do not feel like searching for affiliate programs or products to promote I have a couple of suggestions for you. These programs have worked and continue to work for me. These sites have such great sales copy that they basically sell themselves. All you have to do is get someone to visit their site and they will take it from there. I will group them by the owners.

First we have Ewen Chia. He is the one responsible for getting me started. As I stated earlier, he is one of the top Internet marketers and makes a ton of money from Affiliate sales. Here are some of his affiliate programs:

Secret Affiliate Weapon

Underground Interviews

Both of these programs have generated me money and once you visit the sites you will see why. I would do them an injustice to try and describe them here, just head over to the sites and become an affiliate and start earning an income today!

Next we have Mike Filsaime. I am sure you have heard of him and his many sites and programs. He is one of the hottest Internet marketers at the moment. It is easy to make a commission selling his products and services due to this fact. When people hear Mike Filsaime they come running. Here are a few good ones.

Carbon Copy Marketing

Outsource Secrets

Finally we have <u>Gary Ambrose</u>. Again, I am sure you have heard of him as well. He has a variety of sites that are very helpful. He has come up with some pretty unique ideas as of late. Here are a few of his programs.

Nickel Mania

Nickel Mania 2

These are three of the top Internet Marketers out there. These products sell themselves. Some of them you will have to purchase but you will make the money back by becoming an affiliate and promoting them. No matter what anyone tells you, you have to spend money to make money. It's all part of starting a business. You will definitely make your money back on these products, I know because I did.

-What are you waiting for, GO!-

I hope that you have found this book to be of great use. I know that I wish I had something like this to take me by the hand when I started. That is why I wrote this book, to help others learn from my experiences. If you want to be kept up to date on the latest on Internet Marketing and have e-books, products and services like this brought right to your in-box, sign up for my newsletter today at:

The Platinum Newsletter!

Now that you're a subscriber;), get out there and put the information in this book to good use. One last thing, do not give up. You will certainly run into hard times, we all do, but only the successful marketers stay focused and persevere. Keep plugging away and eventually it will all start coming together. I wish you the best of luck in your Online career. Thank you.

Respectfully,
Shane Wilson
Platinum Affiliate Marketing
http://www.platinumaffiliatemarketing.com