

Tangible Affiliate Profits: How To Make More Money As An Affiliate

A step by step plan for cashing in on millions of
tangible affiliate products online

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Contents

WHAT ARE TANGIBLE AFFILIATE PRODUCTS.....	3
WHY TANGIBLE AFFILIATE PRODUCTS MAKE YOU MORE MONEY	4
STEP BY STEP NO COST PLAN:.....	5
SELECT YOUR NICHE.....	5
SELECT 1 OR MORE NETWORKS.....	6
SELECT MERCHANTS.....	7
WHAT TO LOOK FOR.....	8
SETUP A SITE WITH WORDPRESS.....	12
Why WordPress.....	12
SELECT PRODUCTS.....	13
WRITE YOUR CONTENT.....	13

If you've been trying to make money online by promoting affiliate products and programs, you may have decided it's not quite as easy as it might first appear. Affiliate programs can be quite lucrative however, and they are a wonderful online business choice for anyone who does not want to have to deal with providing customer support, shipping products, or handling refunds either.

Most people who are new to affiliate programs though, get their first experience by trying to sell digital products. Selling digital products through a place such as click Bank is easy to do. You don't have to wait to be approved by each merchant, and once you start earning money you'll receive a commission check every two weeks. The commissions are actually quite high for digital products as well. It's not uncommon for affiliates to earn 50%, and sometimes as much as 75% for each sale.

What you need to realize though, is that there are millions of other products which you can promote as an affiliate. Most of the general public who uses the Internet are unfamiliar with digital products. Technically, they usually understand software to some small extent. But the concept of the digital e-book is still quite new to them. And it's because of this, that sometimes selling a digital product is actually much harder to do.

To make the most money as an affiliate online, you need to promote products which people are already looking to buy. And nine times out of 10, the general public is looking to buy real products instead of digital ones. Real products are those which need to be shipped. And these are also referred to as the tangible products, because the customer actually has something they can touch once they've received it.

WHAT ARE TANGIBLE AFFILIATE PRODUCTS

Tangible affiliate programs can be found almost anywhere online. Amazon is an excellent example. They sell millions of products such as books, exercise equipment, DVDs, lawn mowers, bicycles, and even groceries. Amazon also has an affiliate program which allows you to promote most of the products they sell through their site. And any time one of those products to sell, you can receive an affiliate commission. Amazon does not pay affiliate commissions for everything they sell, but they do for most.

These physical products that they actually ship to the customer are known as tangible goods. When you promote them as an affiliate, you're promoting tangible products instead of digital downloads.

And there are tens of thousands of other merchants online who also sell tangible products, and they have affiliate programs too.

As an affiliate marketer, if you choose to promote tangible products - either instead of or in addition to digital products - you effectively increase your product line by millions. Instead of being limited to just 10 digital golf products to promote for example, you can literally start promoting hundreds of thousands of products instead.

WHY TANGIBLE AFFILIATE PRODUCTS MAKE YOU MORE MONEY

At first glance, it would appear as if affiliates cannot make as much money promoting tangible products as they can promoting digital products. This is a common mistake that many new affiliate marketers make. The mistake comes from looking at the commission percentages, instead of the actual profit numbers. If for example, you find a digital golf product which is paying 50% commissions, that looks much better to you than the tangible golf product which is only paying 10% commissions.

The key is not in the commission rates though. You need to instead look more closely at the overall numbers. If the digital product you've selected sells for \$47, and you're being paid 50% then you will earn \$23.50 for each sale. The tangible product on the other hand might sell for \$350. So even if you're only earning 10% commission, that's \$35. More than \$10 higher than you'll get from the digital product.

Now, many affiliates mistakenly assume that no one will spend \$350 for a product online. If you stop and think about this for a minute though you will realize that is simply untrue. Have you ever personally done your Christmas shopping online? Have you ever bought home improvement products? Have you ever gone to Amazon and bought many books all at once? Even if you personally have not, this is actually how most people do their shopping online.

If an avid golfer has his heart set on a certain type of golf clubs, there is an extremely good chance he will spend hundreds, if not thousands of dollars buying those golf clubs. I personally have purchased thousands of dollars worth of camera equipment online. It's not uncommon for me to spend a couple of hundred dollars at a time just on books at Amazon. I spent just under \$2000 for a specific laptop computer that I won it. My

mother in law spends hundreds if not thousands of dollars each year online buying Christmas presents for the extended family.

These are not isolated occurrences. I have had websites selling various products online for years. And I have seen sales occur for \$1200 chandeliers, as well as five dollar balls of yarn. The point is, people buy stuff online constantly. And it's not unusual for them to spend a heck of a lot of money doing so.

If you, as a professional affiliate marketer, have thousands of in demand products available for sale online, you will make money. Even if those products are only paying you 10 or 15% commission, because they are tangible customers will spend much more money for them. And more often than not they will not simply buy just one thing. Once they find a product they want to buy, they will often buy accessories and related items while they're there. And as an affiliate, you earn commissions on the entire sale usually. And trust me when I say, this really adds up.

Now, promoting tangible products as an affiliate is very simple to do. The concept is actually the same as if you are promoting digital products. You identify a specific market, figure out what that market is looking to buy, and then get your own affiliate links in front of that market.

The most common approach to this is of course to create a website. So we're going to go through a step-by-step process which will help you start making much more money from your affiliate promotions right away.

STEP BY STEP NO COST PLAN:

Before we start I feel compelled to mention the obvious: nothing works the exact same way for everyone who tries it. There are many ways to change this particular plan and add your own variations to it. Everyone comes to any plan with different levels of knowledge and experience too. And because of this of course, results will vary from one person to another.

When selling anything online, results will also vary from one niche to another. So this is a basic step by step plan which will get you started. It also works extremely well in most cases. Depending on how much effort you put in setting this up, which niche is you choose to target, and how much specific experience you have you may do much better or much worse than someone else does who tries the same thing.

SELECT YOUR NICHE

The very first step of course is to choose the niche market you will sell to. How you select your particular niche is up to you. Some people prefer to select products that they themselves buy. Other people however, prefer to select products in a niche that they know many people buy from.

Our previous golf niche is an excellent example. Even if you do not like golf yourself, and you know nothing about it, you probably realize that people who do like golf tend to spend thousands of dollars on this passion. And because they do spend so much money with it, they tend to be a very lucrative market to target.

In fact, any niche which involves a strong passion tends to be extremely lucrative. Some examples include gardening, knitting and sewing, coin collecting, Harley-Davidson motorcycles, hiking, camping, home improvement, and much much more.

Notice something similar with all of these niches? They're often in what's considered to be hobbies. And as a bonus, they're also what I refer to as Evergreen. In other words, they're somewhat timeless. They're not just a passing fad that will be gone in six months or a year. This means that once you've established yourself in a particular Evergreen market like these, you can continue profiting from them for many years to come.

Tip: if you're not sure which niche you should try and sell products to, you'll find many ideas by simply looking through various affiliate networks. You can also look through the hot products area of both Amazon and eBay to see what is popular.

SELECT 1 OR MORE NETWORKS

Your next step is to sign up with one or more affiliate networks. Now, you can sign up with independent affiliate programs if you'd like. It's easiest however, to sign up with an affiliate network though because you end up having multiple merchants to choose from who have similar products. Having all of your merchants separate can result in a lot of headaches and problems later on down the road.

If you sign up with an independent merchant for example, then it may take you a while to start getting paid by them. This is because it may take you some time to generate enough sales to meet the minimum payout requirements. If that merchant does not have

specific types of products, then you'll need to go find additional merchants too. If that merchant drops a particular line of products, you'll have the same problem. And if that merchant goes away for whatever reason, you'll find yourself stuck without products to sell until you found a merchant replacement.

By signing up with an affiliate network on the other hand, you can generally find at least three merchants to supply the products you need for your particular niche. You also get the benefit of lower minimum payout amounts, automated payment such as direct deposit to your bank account, and the combined power of the sales you're making from all the merchants you belong to.

There are several large affiliate networks you can sign up for. The best two that I recommend are [Share a Sale](#), and Commission Junction. Amazon has proven to be an excellent market as well, because they have built up large amounts of trust and loyalty over the years. While not technically an affiliate marketplace, their integration of third party stores makes it similar.

Commission Junction is quite possibly the largest affiliate network out there. It has thousands of merchants, and many of them are very well known names. Commission Junction will send you your affiliate commission payments each month that you've earned \$25 or more. They have a direct deposit option, which makes receiving your funds much faster.

Share a Sale is considered a new affiliate network even though it has been around for several years. It is a smaller network, and it has many smaller merchants too. Share a Sale is very popular because they are considered to be more affiliate friendly than any other network. There are also easier to get set up with, and they have some great affiliate marketing tools too.

Link share is another fairly large affiliate network that some affiliates like to work with, and of course Amazon or eBay are quite popular too.

If you're not sure which affiliate network to sign up with, you might want to look through their merchant lists first. This will help you see how many merchants are available for the types of products you intend to promote. If you're using Amazon or eBay of course, then they have almost everything for sale. Be sure to check that you can earn commissions as an affiliate with them for the products you want to promote.

Once you've selected one or more affiliate networks to work with, if you're not signed up with them already then do that now.

SELECT MERCHANTS

The next step is to select your merchants. If you're using an affiliate network such as commission Junction or share a sale, you will need to apply as an affiliate for each merchant you want to promote. In most cases, affiliates are approved automatically. There are some merchants however, who are very particular about who is allowed to promote their products. So in rare cases you may find that you are denied as an affiliate for a particular merchant you want to promote. If you're in a large network however, there should be plenty of alternative merchants for you to select from.

If you've chosen to stick with Amazon or eBay, or other services like those, you won't need to be approved once you've been accepted to their affiliate program. This of course is because you're not promoting multiple merchants in those programs.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

If you're new to the affiliate marketing industry, you may find merchant selection to be somewhat confusing or difficult. It's not actually as confusing or difficult as it might seem, you just need to learn how each network does things.

The first thing to look for of course, are merchants who sell the products you want to promote to your niche. In fact, for this particular strategy you'll want to choose merchants who have plenty of products in your niche. If they only have five or 10 products, they will not work well. You'll want to choose merchants who have at least a hundred products or more. Once you've found those, then there are many other factors you'll want to consider. Not every one of these will apply in every situation, but I'll cover them anyway since they're the most common concerns.

- **Commission Levels:** the commission percentage earned as an affiliate is usually very important. Keep in mind however, that with tangible affiliate products you will not find merchants who pay really large commission rates. And often the commission rates will depend on which particular niche you're working in. If you choose a niche which has very low profit margins for example, you may find that the merchants are only offering about 1% to 3% in affiliate commissions. Low profit margin markets are those which compete primarily on price. These include computers, electronics, and digital cameras.

Other markets however, will pay between 5% and 10% commissions. And there are

even some who pay as much as 12% to 15%. It's quite rare to see commission levels above 15% for tangible products.

One benefit of promoting tangible products through the affiliate networks however, is that if you sell quite a bit of product for them, most of them will increase the percentage rate they pay you. Some merchants have this scaled commission rate in place from the start, while others will give it to you if you request it.

- Return rates: in most affiliate networks there is some way to determine how well a merchant's products convert, as well as how often their products are returned. This is not always easy to determine, and it's not obvious either. I could write an entire book almost on this subject alone. For just getting started however, your best bet is to explore at the affiliate network you have chosen to work with, and become as familiar with their information as you can.

Here are a couple of tips to help you get started.

In Share a Sale, when you look through the merchant list to find new ones to join, there is a variety of information that is given to you in that list.

The seven-day average commission

The seven-day average sale

The seven-day reversal

The seven-day EPC

The seven-day average commission tells you how much commission other affiliates have made on average with this merchant over the last seven days. Likewise the average sale tells you how much sales have been made from affiliates over the last seven days. The reversal number lets to know how many of those sales were canceled, returned, and refunded. And of course the seven-day EPC simply tells you what the average earnings per click is for affiliates with this merchant in the last week.

These numbers can be important in most cases. Keep in mind however that if the merchant is quite new, then these numbers will not be very helpful. If a merchant has just set up with share a sale in the past month or two, they may have fairly low statistics for the commissions and sale amounts. If however, a merchant has been in the network for quite some time, and these numbers are low or nonexistent, that usually indicates there may be a problem with either their products or their agreements. Thus other affiliates have avoided promoting them.

Some common reasons affiliates may choose to not promote a merchant include: unusually low commission amounts for the niche, unusually short affiliate cookie durations, or the presence of third-party advertising and affiliate products on the merchant's website which the affiliates will not be paid for.

There are similar indicators at Commission Junction which can help you determine which merchants to promote as well. Unfortunately these are not as cut and dry as the stats you can get from share a sale.

Commission Junction will show you the three-month EPC, seven-day EPC, and a visual representation of their network earnings. The network earnings are simply shows you how a merchant compares to other merchants in the network. A fully green bar indicates that this merchant is one of the top performers in the commission Junction network. A bar which only has one or two green boxes filled in however, means that this merchant is at the lower or lowest end of the earnings scale compared to the rest.

The three-month and seven-day EPC can help you determine how much other affiliates are earning with a given merchant, but again this isn't as helpful as it could be if there are not many affiliates promoting. This number can also be misleading, depending upon how different affiliates are promoting the merchant.

If for example, an affiliate has started a brand-new pay per click campaign in the past month, and they are doing quite well with that campaign, then the merchant's EPC numbers will reflect the success of that one affiliate. So even if a hundred other affiliates are not doing well at all with this merchant, the numbers might still look good.

Similar problems can arise with the network earnings progress bar. If there are not many affiliates promoting a merchant, it could appear as if that merchant does not perform well. Unfortunately we don't have access to all of the raw statistics we need to make a more solid determination of the best merchants to choose. That's why looking at these performance numbers is only part of the selection process.

One obvious selection criteria that many affiliates do not think about, is whether or not they recognize a specific merchant name. If there is a merchant in the network who the affiliate shops with themselves, and they like, this may be an excellent choice for them to start promoting. Likewise if there are very well known names in the merchant list for your niche, regardless of whether you shop with them or not, these are likely to be very good merchants to select. Why? Because name recognition counts. Particularly when you're selling expensive products.

- Payout and other affiliate terms or restrictions: this is actually a part of the selection process that many new and seasoned affiliates alike tend to miss. But it can be one of the most important steps. You need to read the affiliate agreement specific to each merchant you are planning to promote because it's not uncommon for each merchant to have specific terms and restrictions attached to their affiliate programs.

For example, some merchants have strong restrictions about what keywords you're allowed to use for pay per click advertising. Some merchants will not allow you to list their name, their product brand names, or even their website URL in your advertising. If you're creating a product based websites, there are even merchants who do not allow you to list the product prices on your website either.

Sometimes there are hidden payout exceptions in merchant agreements as well. This is unfortunate, but it can happen. For example, a merchant may say that you will not be paid commissions on your sales for 60 or 90 days. Or they may say that you only get paid for their first sale, but nothing else. Some will even say in their agreement, that if you make a sale as an affiliate, but the person who bought the product through you has already bought products from that merchant in the past, you are not eligible for the commission.

It's small little catches and exceptions like these that can cause major frustrations and headaches for affiliate marketers. So being diligent about reading any merchant agreement and terms specifics is an extremely important part of your merchant selection process.

- The merchants website: this is another step in the merchant selection process which many affiliates don't think of at first. It's a very good idea to get into the habit of actually looking out the merchants website before you sign up for them though. Some merchants will prominently feature a customer service phone number, or a toll-free order number, on their website. And too often if a customer calls that number, the affiliate is not credited with the sales commissions.

Sometimes a merchant will even put third-party advertisements on their website. You may find that they are running Google adsense for example, or you may see that they have products listed with affiliate links of their own. If you send traffic to them and that traffic clicks on one of their third-party advertisements, you will not earn money from that.

Even if neither of the above problems are in place however, you do need to get a general

feel of their website. Take a brief look around and figure out whether this is a place you might feel comfortable shopping at. Take a look at common things such as their shipping schedule, and their return policies. I once ordered a simple two page booklet from a merchant for example, that took six weeks to come in. Issues like that will increase sales refunds, and eventually as the word spreads people will simply not buy anything from that merchant.

Last but not least, navigate their site and see if there are any errors or problems. Sometimes unfortunately, a merchant website is simply designed horribly. Or nothing seems to work. And regardless of the quality of their products: if their website is not attractive and easy to use, it will not make sales.

When selecting merchants to promote, I suggest you choose at least three to work with in the same niche. This will give you a broader base of products to select from, and you will still have products to promote if one of your merchants goes off-line temporarily, or simply closes their affiliate program.

SETUP A SITE WITH WORDPRESS

Your next step to set up a website. For the step-by-step plan we'll use WordPress. I won't go into the nitty-gritty details about selecting a domain name, getting it registered, and setting up hosting. I also will not cover installing and configuring WordPress here. There are many reports, e-books, and large manuals which already cover these steps. So I'll work on the assumption that you already know how to do these things.

Why WordPress

There are many excellent reasons to use WordPress for a system like this. In fact, there are many excellent reasons to use WordPress for almost any type of website.

Word press is extremely easy to install, it has hundreds of add-ons available which are known as plug-ins that can automate standard tasks, or simply make most of your tasks easier. Word press is also very search engine friendly when it's configured properly. And there are thousands of design themes available around the web for WordPress.

In addition to all of that, Word press will automatically let multiple sites know each time you create new content on your site. Essentially it has a built-in self promotion feature. And this self promotion feature is extremely powerful for generating traffic, and getting listed in the search engines.

Word press is also flexible enough to be used for a variety of types of sites. Many people think that creating a Word press site means they will be creating a standard journal type blog. And this is simply not the case. Depending on the design theme you choose to use, or choose to make if you have that capability, your site can be almost anything you want it to be. It can look like a high-end magazine, it can be used as a content management system, it can be used as an article directory, and it can even be made into an online shopping site. And those are just a few of the ways you can use WordPress.

As an affiliate marketer, your job is to create as much targeted traffic to the products you're promoting as possible. And by using Word press with its built-in self promotion capabilities, and its built-in search engine optimization, you can start generating targeted traffic to the affiliate products you're promoting much faster.

SELECT PRODUCTS

Your next step is to start selecting products you will promote. For the purposes of this strategy, selecting your products will go hand-in-hand with creating your content. So let's look at that specific process.

WRITE YOUR CONTENT

Once you have your WordPress site set up and ready, it's now time to start creating content for it. And since your primary goal of this website is to make affiliate sales, there are certain ways you should create the content for the site. There are actually several ways you can do this, and they're all quite similar.

You can create content in a personalized end-user way for example. This means you will simply create blog style sites, in which you talk about various products you've tried. Alternatively, you can talk about products you want to buy.

Let's say for example, that you chose knitting as your niche. Chances are, you chose this

market because it is one you like. So you can simply blog about your own knitting projects, or those you'd like to try. Look through your merchants for instance, and find different types of cotton yarn. Then make a post on your blog about a cotton project you'd like to knit - maybe something like a cotton sweater or socks - and how you think it would look with these different types of yarn.

Likewise, you can look through your merchants and find knitting patterns instead. Then post to your blog about these patterns you've found, that you'd like to try. Or if the patterns look complicated to you, you could blog about how you're not sure if you should try a certain pattern because it seems a bit complicated.

Let's use another example: home improvement. Look through your merchant list, and find some related products such as kitchen cabinet knobs. Then create a blog post which either talks about several cabinet knobs you like, and discuss how you think they may fit in your own kitchen redesign plans. Alternatively, create a post that's just about cute kitchen cabinet knobs. Or porcelain cabinet knobs. Or unique cabinet knobs.

And all you really have to do to create the content for these types of posts, is copy and paste the product information from the merchants.

So you don't really even have to personalize the content in any way. You can simply start out your post saying something along the lines of "I came across a gorgeous porcelain cabinet knobs today". Then copy and paste a few product descriptions and pictures into your post. You could go further of course, and make suggestions as to where you think these would work best. Along with the first product description for example, you could put something along the lines of "these would probably work best in a rustic cabin style kitchen". And the second product might be something like "these will go wonderfully in a modern steel kitchen"

You can use this technique in pretty much any kind of market. If you create a website about cooking for example, you could create posts which suggest different types of woks to use for Asian cooking. You can create posts about breadmaking machines, all in one mixing stands, and any number of other products.

This technique is actually one of the most powerful ways to sell tangible affiliate products. Try to help respective customers by giving them ideas of how to use the product. Or share with them how you're personally using it. If you're not using it, share with them how you would like to.

When you create a product post which has basic information about related products, you

are creating what's known as a comparison style post. The main difference however, is that you are not trying to compare these products based on their price. Instead, you are simply sharing similar products you have found, and possibly making suggestions for the best ways to use them.

Try to create new content in this manner several times each week. You can of course produce results much faster if you create posts like this several times per day.

Now that you know how you're creating a content for your site, you know why you chose merchants who have plenty of products to choose from. And you also know why choosing products goes hand-in-hand to creating your content. Because essentially, the product information itself is what creates your website content.

Using this technique, and assuming you have chosen merchants who have plenty of products, you can literally build niche topic product-based websites with hundreds of pages. And because you have used Word press, and you are using specific products and their descriptions, you will generate highly targeted shopping traffic to your site. And this is key to earning a lot of money as an affiliate marketer.

You can make your sites as large or as small as you'd like of course, but generally the larger the better. Remember, at the beginning of this report you chose a niche which is extremely popular. And has very passionate buyers. Passionate buyers tend to buy many things over and over again. Someone who likes to knit for example, is not going to stop with just one ball of yarn or one pattern. They may buy just one this time, but it's almost guaranteed that they will be back to buy more. So the more you have to offer them, the more often they are likely to buy through you.

So to recap: first select a great niche that is popular, and has very passionate buyers. Then select one or more affiliate networks to sign up with. Browse through the merchants in that network and select several who have many products available for your niche. Then set up your website with Word press, and start selecting your products and creating the posts for them. Do this consistently several times each week, and within a few short months you are very likely to start seeing your affiliate checks growing by leaps and bounds.

Keep in mind that it can happen much faster, or even much slower. A lot depends on what niche you choose to market to, and how consistent you are with building your affiliate website. It is possible to start making sales within the first few days, and it's possible to be making a lot of money within just one to two months. On average however, it can take about two to three months to start seeing consistent targeted traffic

and sales. And realistically, it can average about six months before you're making a substantial income.

Kathy Burns-Millyard
July 23, 2008

(Updated/Revised June 14, 2010)

A similar affiliate marketing method you may enjoy is known as “[The Conduit Method](#)” by Chris Rempel.

You may also be interested in an automated plugin tool for WordPress that is designed specifically for building tangible affiliate websites: [The Affiliate Datafeed Profit System](#).