

Affiliate marketing is a part of online marketing as it represents a performance-based marketing model that focuses on the online promotion of products to online users. Therefore, it is closely related to online marketing and other sectors that are also part of online marketing, such as social media marketing, SEO, etc.

To be truly successful in affiliate marketing and to leverage all of the potential, regardless if your role is being a merchant or an affiliate, it is wise to explore how affiliate marketing is connected with other sectors. These connections and mutual activities can significantly boost the success of affiliate marketing.

Affiliate marketing and search engine optimization (SEO)

The first and the most obvious connection to highlight is the relationship between affiliate marketing and SEO. During the online promotion, affiliate links are shared on websites or blogs. A publisher features an affiliate link in an article or as a banner. The link can be available on all website pages, a single blog page or several pages. The decision about where to post the links depends on the publisher. As a general rule, the more exposure the link gets, the more likely it is to encourage clicks.

Merchants



The common goal that merchants have is to encourage affiliates to join the affiliate program and promote their products (or services) on their behalf. Consequently, the merchants expect affiliates to link to their websites. In terms of SEO, this activity is known as link building. It is a part of off-site optimization, and the purpose of link building is to obtain links from other websites. However, things are not always as straightforward as that.

Essentially, links are seen as a vote of trust by the search engines, and it is a recommended practice for webmasters to generate new links to their websites as a part of their search engine optimization. These links show the search engines that the website to which it is linked has some value. It must be worth it if people are linking to it.

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Be that as it may, not all links are equal, and merchants would not be happy to get just about any link. Here is why.

In link building, there is something often referred to as link neighborhood. The concept is the following. If there is an awesome website (let us call it website A), with a great reputation and lots of visitors, and that website links to another website (this could be a website B), this is an ideal scenario for website B. Search engines see this as a sort of recommendation, so the awesomeness of the website A transfers to the website B (the process also known as the transfer of link juice).

So if website B has a lot of other awesome websites linking to it, it means it is in a good neighborhood. Search engines then conclude that this website is awesome as well because otherwise, it would not be in this neighborhood, i.e. these awesome websites would not link to it.

The same principle is applied to bad neighborhoods. If a lot of spammy and low-quality website link to a certain page, this page is also likely to be considered spammy and of low quality.

Now we have merchants, who need and want affiliates to link to them. That is the goal of affiliate marketing. Having in mind the whole principle about the good and bad neighborhoods, if merchants want to make sure to follow the guidelines for the good SEO, they will need to be selective when accepting affiliates to join their program. They only want credible websites to be linked to them.

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It is necessary to avoid any spammy, low-quality websites because these links will do more harm than good. They will negatively affect SEO and the website ranking, while they are unlikely to drive any real sales because these websites have low influence and trust among online users.

Affiliates

The principle of good and bad neighborhoods is also a valid reason for affiliates who choose which affiliate programs to join. If their website enjoys a certain credibility both among the users (reflected in the number of visits, subscribers, etc.) and among the search engines (reflected as a website rank in the search engine result pages), the affiliate does not want to compromise this by linking to websites that are a part of the bad neighborhood. This could harm their SEO and their reputation.

Another criterion affiliates should think about when joining an affiliate program is the topic of their website or blog. They want to provide the website visitors with a great user experience, so even if the affiliates earn commission through the affiliate links, the links should still be relevant to the audience and their content preferences. Not only does this ensure a seamless user experience, but it also guarantees a larger number of clicks (and conversions) because the links

are truly meaningful to the target group. As a result, the affiliates have a better chance of generating income through relevant affiliate links.

When placing affiliate links, affiliates may or may not disclose that the links on the page(s) are affiliate links. This is based on their own ethics and relationship with followers, but most influencers choose to state that links are affiliates. In fact, they sometimes might use different formatting options to mark affiliate links, such as different colors or asterisks.

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Action Point

PS: I know you might agree with some of the points that I have raised in this article. You might not agree with some of the issues raised. Let me know your views about the topic discussed. We will appreciate it if you could drop your comment. Thanks in anticipation.

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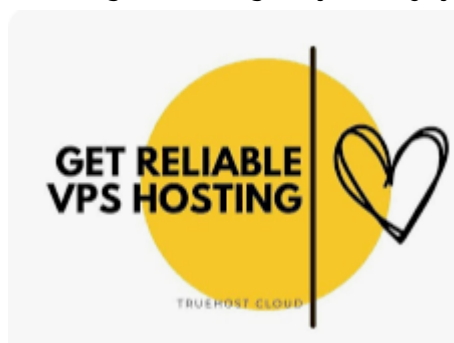
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