

DEADLY *AFFILIATE MARKETING* MISTAKES



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Introduction

Affiliate marketing is a great way to make money, but it's not necessarily as easy as it sounds. Too many affiliate marketers are actually making HUGE mistakes that cost them time, money, and may even hurt their reputations permanently.

Fortunately, once you've identified these killer mistakes, it's easy to correct them so you can stop making them in your own affiliate marketing campaigns.

If you've been wondering why your affiliate marketing campaigns aren't as effective as you'd hoped, you might be making one or more of these big mistakes that could be seriously hampering your efforts.

In this guide, you'll learn about the most common mistakes made by affiliate marketers (even some highly experienced marketers make these mistakes!) You'll also learn how to keep from making these mistakes yourself, and how to keep from repeating the same mistakes over and over again as so many people seem to do.

So let's get started.

Mistake #1 – Focusing On Selling

I understand that the main goal of affiliate marketing, at least for the marketers themselves, is to make sales. That much is obvious. But you should never focus on “selling”.

Instead, your main focus should be on helping people. No matter what your market, you should be focused on helping your market in some way, because this is how you add value to your affiliate offers and how you get the audience in that market to trust you and want to buy from you.

It doesn't matter what your market is, your main goal is helping people. Period.

Weight loss? You're helping people get in shape and get healthy.

Internet marketing? You're helping people make money and achieve financial freedom.

Socks? You're helping people keep their feet warm and dry and look fashionable at the same time.

Always focus on helping your target customers. This will help you build a rapport with the people you'd like to sell to, making your job easier and giving you a reason to feel good about yourself at the same time!

Mistake #2 – Not Testing

Testing is one of those things that everyone seems to know they're supposed to do, but almost no one actually does.

Why exactly is testing so important, anyway?

Well, let's say you're achieving a 2.5% conversion rate. Not too bad, you might think. After all, you have considerable competition, and you aren't really standing out well in your market.

But what if one simple tweak, something perhaps as simple as adding **ONE WORD** to your squeeze page or changing **ONE IMAGE** on your blog's main page could increase that to a 5% conversion?

2.5% higher doesn't sound like all that much of a difference until you realize that's DOUBLE the conversion rate, DOUBLE the customers, and DOUBLE the **income**. From making one change! Isn't that worth it?

The thing is, you'll never know what might make a difference if you don't test.

Mistake #3 – Sticking With MMO Products

MMO, or Make Money Online, is one of the most financially lucrative markets there is, but it's a mistake to concentrate solely on that one market. Did you know that even the biggest internet marketing (I.M.) gurus have diversified into other markets?

That's because any niche, no matter how lucrative, has a maximum income cap that you can reach. Eventually, you could reach virtually the entire market, and your income will suffer because you have nothing new to sell to them and no way to add new value.

Sure, this is an extreme example. The fact is, no market has an absolute cap, because new customers are being born and growing up all the time. But think about it. Once you've hit a plateau, your income stagnates.

But if you diversify, if you branch out into other markets, you'll always have fresh products to promote. You'll always have new value to add. You'll always be able to make money because you're not pigeonholed into one specific market.

I know it may be tempting to start with the MMO niche because it can be extremely lucrative and you're learning a lot about it yourself, but unless you can help someone in that niche because you are an expert yourself, you're better off trying a niche where you have more to add.

Mistake #4 – Spreading Yourself Too Thin

The temptation is great, especially for new affiliate marketers, to spread themselves too thin by branching out into too many markets. Maybe they buy 50 domains all at once, or they set up blogs in 13 different niches in one week. But this is folly.

You should focus on one or two key niches at a time, and diversify once you've made some real headway into those niches. Unless you can hire someone to manage multiple blogs, multiple products, multiple email lists, multiple social media pages and accounts... you're doing yourself a huge disservice if you diversify too widely in the beginning.

Choose two or three markets initially, and only diversify further once you've really made some real headway into those first niches. Once you have some decent traffic, a small mailing list that's growing, some social media presence that's making a difference... then you can think about trying out new niches.

Don't make the mistake of spreading out too far too fast. You'll find that you can never make a real difference in any one niche, because you aren't putting enough effort into one to make any headway.

Mistake #5 – Joining Too Many Affiliate Programs

Another major temptation for affiliate marketers is to join too many affiliate programs because they aren't sure which one will be the most profitable for them. Well, let me let you in on a little secret.

They can ALL be profitable for you!

Trust me, as long as you're sticking to the legitimate affiliate programs with well-known companies, you're almost always going to see some nice results. There's a reason why their affiliate programs are so popular!

Choose your two or three starter niches, and then find 2-3 affiliate programs for each one. Make sure you can find at least one really hot product at each affiliate program that looks like it will convert well in your niche, and then stick to promoting that product for a while before you try something new.

If you join too many affiliate programs at once, you'll find that you take a very long time to reach the minimum payouts required for each affiliate program, because you'll be making \$2 here, \$8 there, \$22 somewhere else... it's madness!

It's much better to sell three different products via one single affiliate program than it is to sell fifty products from thirty-five different affiliate programs.

Not only that, but if you're a member of too many programs, you'll be more apt to forget the rules of each affiliate network and end up getting banned, because there's just too many to keep track of.

Some of the best or most popular affiliate programs include:

>> <http://www.clickbank.net>

>> <http://affiliate-program.amazon.com>

>> <http://www.jvzoo.com>

>> <http://www.neverblue.com>

>> <http://www.cj.com>

>> <http://www.linkshare.com>

>> <http://www.shareasale.com>

Check these programs to see which ones have products that fit with your market, and then stick with those programs for a while. You may find you never need to move past these few programs.

Mistake #6 – Not Tracking Results

If you start seeing a good number of sales, you'll soon start to wonder which of your marketing efforts is the most productive. You'll obviously want to concentrate more of your efforts on those methods that are making you the most money. But what if you have no idea which areas to concentrate on, because you don't know which methods are working?

Enter TRACKING.

Tracking, quite simply, lets you know where your traffic is coming from and where it's going. Simple tracking is as simple as using a tracking code through your affiliate program. For example, you can create a unique tracking ID for each website you own on the Amazon affiliate network. Or if you promote products through ClickBank, you can add a custom code word to your affiliate links to allow you to find out where every sale you refer came from.

You could also go into much more detail by using your own affiliate tracking script that will allow you much more detailed information about your clicks and sales. This is advanced stuff, so you might not need it right away. But you definitely need **SOME** sort of tracking in place so you can figure out which of your methods is working best!

Mistake #7 – Giving Up Too Quickly

If I had a dollar for every person I've seen give up trying to make money online, I'd be VERY wealthy right now. The internet is littered with blogs that have only one or two posts, and affiliate accounts that never send the first referral.

What are some common reasons for giving up?

- Not making money too quickly
- Not getting traffic quickly
- Not getting accepted to many affiliate networks
- Feeling like it's too much work
- Thinking affiliate marketing is a “scam”

The one thing most of these things have in common is expecting things to happen overnight. Affiliate marketing isn't a “scam” just because you didn't make \$10,000 or even \$1,000 your first month. You can't expect to take a brand new domain with no backlinks to 100,000 pageviews a month right away. These things take time.

If you give up too quickly, you'll never know what could have been. You never know, you could be the next internet millionaire, but you'll never know if you give up before it happens!

Mistake #8 – Competition Fear

A lot of people try to stick to the “low hanging fruit”, because they’ve been told that’s what they should do as newbies. Or they do it because they’re terrified that they’ll never be able to compete against the millions of other websites out there.

HOGWASH!

You can compete in ANY niche! I’ve known complete newbies who managed to crack super tough niches like MMO and weight loss right off the bat. Is this likely? Of course not. Is it possible? Definitely.

I don’t advise new affiliate marketers to tackle these extremely tough niches immediately, but you don’t have to choose tiny, obscure niches that aren’t likely to make you much money, either. If there’s not much competition, it’s because there’s not much money there. Trust me, there ARE no “undiscovered” or “untapped” niches anymore. There may have been a few years ago, but that ship has sailed. If it’ll make money, it’s already making someone money. Probably a lot of people.

Don’t fear competition, just be wary of it. You WANT competition, trust me. Too much competition is a difficult thing to overcome, but choose niches that have a decent amount of competition, because that’s where the money is.

Mistake #9 – Ignoring Competition

While it's important not to **fear** competition, it's also important to be sensible. Expecting to make a fortune overnight in a super-competitive niche like weight loss is a sure recipe for disappointment.

What you need to do in the beginning is target niches that:

1. Have a healthy amount of competition
2. Don't have so much competition that it's difficult to get traffic
3. You have some interest or knowledge in

Notice #3 especially. If you have absolutely no interest or knowledge in a niche, it will be harder to create content, harder to identify with your target market, harder to sell products you know little to nothing about, and harder to get traffic.

Do you need to be an expert to conquer a market? Absolutely not! In fact, you could probably do well in a niche that you know NOTHING about, just learning as you go.

But if you have absolutely no interest in the subject, it's going to make it much, much easier to give up. You'll simply get bored, because your work day becomes such a grind that you'll throw your hands up in frustration and flip on the television or head out to the lake.

So how do you choose your first few niches?

Make a list of some topics you have an interest in. I'd say 10-20 topics would be enough to get started.

Now check to make sure there are:

- Affiliate products to promote
- A decent amount of competition
- Resources available for you to learn from
- Traffic sources you can take advantage of

As far as competition, you want to look for niches that have at least 50,000 existing websites. Even a few million isn't a big deal. Fifty million might be pushing it unless you have money to pay for initial promotion.

You can find out how many sites there are that mention your topic by searching Google. I search multi-word phrases in quotes to be sure I get an accurate number.

I searched for "golf" and got "About 1,310,000,000 results." Yikes. Over a billion! A search for "gluten free" came up with "About 85,100,000 results." Better, but still pretty big. "Pasta makers" came up with "About 424,000 results". That's definitely much more reasonable.

Don't fear competition, but be reasonable about it!

Conclusion

Affiliate marketing isn't for the faint of heart, or for people who find that they tend to give up too easily or jump around from one shiny new thing to another without thinking.

It's actually a lot of hard work, and it takes time to build resources like blog traffic and email lists. There are no shortcuts unless you have the cash to spend for content creation, buying existing websites with traffic, or paying for email subscribers or social network followers.

Always keep these potential mistakes in mind as you navigate your way through the precarious world of affiliate marketing. Be sure you're not making these mistakes, and don't become lax once you start making money. No one is immune to these mistakes!

As long as you work hard, keep at it, and avoid these mistakes, you're certain to start making money.

But if you give up, I can guarantee you'll fail!

Good luck!

Bonus Coupon

Enjoy this bonus coupon for 50% Off Catcha Monkey... This is one tool you can really use to get more affiliate sales!

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ADD **CATCHA MONKEY** TO YOUR SALES & LANDING PAGES

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