

Get your own FREE salesforce by setting up an affiliate program.

by Ivana Katz

Affiliate programs also known as reseller programs, partner programs or associate programs provide an opportunity for you to get thousands of websites driving traffic to your site and make sales for you in exchange for a commission on the resulting sales and/or leads.

The great thing about having your own affiliate program is that you don't pay your "salesforce" until they have made a sale.

You can pay your affiliates for one of the following:

1. PAY PER CLICK.

This is where you pay your affiliate an agreed amount for each click someone makes on a link leading to your website

2. PAY PER LEAD.

You pay a fee for each qualified lead. This is usually achieved by a visitor entering their personal information on an affiliate's website

3. PAY PER SALE.

This commission structure can be either a flat fee or a percentage of the revenue generated on the affiliate's website.

There are two ways you can start your own affiliate program.

1. You can have a service take care of most tasks for you. They'll handle the recruiting and administrative functions like sending out payments, tracking, reporting etc. Some examples of such service providers include:

Commission Junction - www.cj.com
Clickbank - www.clickbank.com
Clixgalore - www.clixgalore.com

2. Set up an affiliate program yourself, using on-line services, such as:

Synergyx - www.synergyx.com
Marketers Choice - www.marketerschoice.com

Many of these services allow you to do the following:

- Import/export existing database.
- Real-time reporting for you and your affiliates.
- Pay by product / affiliate / sales/ clicks/ leads.
- Single or two-tiered commissions.
- Customise commission rate for each affiliate.
- Custom destination URL for each affiliate.
- Auto-Generation of banner link codes.
- Send email broadcasts to your.

Tips for setting up successful affiliate programs:

1. Should be free to join.
2. Offer real time statistics so that affiliates can check their sales and commission without having to contact you.
3. You should provide your affiliates with proven tools they can use to sell your products (eg. Sales letters, endorsement letters, banners, ezine articles, ezine ads).
4. Offer Technical support 24/7.
5. Stay in touch with your affiliates to keep

them motivated.

6. Give your affiliates the highest commission you can.

7. Provide a website that offers a great sales conversion ratio.

Tellman Knudson, CEO of Overcome Everything says: "There are a few things that people can really bang their heads up against the wall when it comes to affiliate programs... a few things to definitely avoid doing.

1. Don't look at the little picture-don't get greedy!

If the industry standard is to give 50% commission then don't get cheap and decide to only give 15-20%... you might make more money in the short-run, but you want to think long-term. I'd rather see you give away more up front and take advantage of big, big traffic from happy affiliates.

2. Don't forget the back end - have a follow up product to promote to your customers.

It might be a continuity program or an upsell or other products in the niche... it can even be products from other people that you are recommending. Remember, it is much cheaper for you to sell an existing customer on additional products than it is to acquire a brand new customer. On your back end sales you might offer less commission to your affiliates... or maybe no commission at all.

3. Don't go in blind - know what your numbers are.

How much does it cost you to acquire a customer, to sell a new product to an existing customer... those sorts of things. What percentage of your existing customers buy additional products from you - yours or products you recommend. Knowing these numbers will really help you determine how much commission you can give to your affiliates.

Ivana Katz makes it easy for you to get your business on the internet. If you're looking for a professional and affordable website designer, visit www.web4business.com.au and download a free website plan.