

# HOW TO BECOME **A PROFITABLE** AFFILIATE MARKETER



Expert-made Step by Step Guide



BitDegree

# INTRODUCTION

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Affiliate marketing is becoming more and more popular as a great way of making money online. Many people who are entering this model of business tend to have an unfitted mindset for it. Affiliate marketing often is not a way to earn easy and quick money.

Becoming a successful affiliate marketer requires the right mindset and work ethic. Fortunately, here you can find 6 main steps you have to take to walk into the amazing world of affiliate marketing.

Let's start!

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## CHOOSE A NICHE THAT YOU'RE INTERESTED IN

Before you start doing anything else, it's vital to decide which niche suits your interests best and will be your core in creating content. If you don't pick one out, you won't be able to target the audience accurately and build your site around it. This is probably the step you should take the most seriously because it is precisely what forms the base of your affiliate marketing career. Understandably, making the ultimate choice can be quite tricky, but there's no need to worry: we wrote down a few tips that might help you make the best choice.

Think of what you are genuinely passionate about. It's obviously much easier and more enjoyable to work on something that you love and honestly enjoy. Moreover, the sheer amount of knowledge you most likely have on the things you're passionate about will allow you to come up with a variety of topics, take unique spins on it, create interesting and engaging content.

When you have identified a few potential niches, consider their profitability. Topics and subjects vary significantly in terms of popularity, and it's not very smart to pick an extremely narrow niche if you expect money to start flowing into your bank account. However, you should never base your choice on this aspect alone: no topic will guarantee success if you have nothing relevant and valuable to say. Another reason not to pick the trendiest and potentially very profitable niches is competition. Some topics (e.g., fitness, travel, or gaming) already have hefty amounts of affiliate marketers promoting their products, and it's extra hard for a beginner to be heard and seen among other affiliate marketers who already have loyal audiences.

Picking an extremely narrow niche is also a poor choice because of its limited scope: you will be creating content regularly, so you need to have a choice of topics. The amount and quality of the content you're creating are vital for the attraction of the audience and search engine optimization. It would be best if you chose a niche in which you can write 100 or more posts.

A niche that's active and constantly introducing new ideas, approaches, or products is also a smart choice, as it guarantees the pool of content ideas will keep growing. Let's take educational technologies, for instance: with technologies improving continually and e-learning getting more prevalent each year, the field of new topics just keeps on giving. Furthermore, it's relevant all around the world, so the potential audience is vast.

The niche of educational technologies is also not as competitive as impulse-buy-related niches (e.g., makeup or supplements). Plus, it gives you a real chance to stand out of the crowd with the quality of your content. When planning to make learning-related decisions, the readers are looking for informative and well-reasoned articles rather than run-of-the-mill ads and buzzwords, so a hard-working beginner has as much of a chance to shine as experienced affiliate marketers.



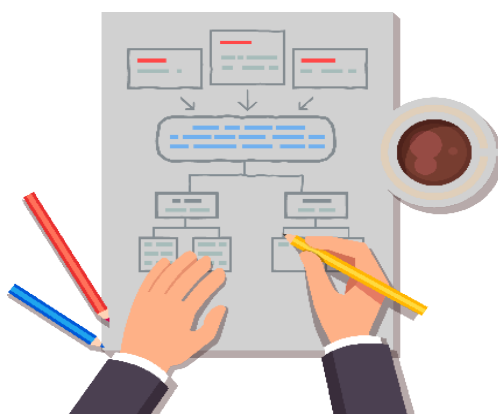
## MAKE A PLAN

This is something you have probably been hearing your whole life, no matter what you took up: plan, schedule, don't leave everything to the last minute. The reason this advice is so commonplace is simply because it's usually right. It might be fun to improvise your Friday night activities with mates, but when it comes to business, a clear plan, a defined strategy, and an established time frame make it a lot easier not only to do your job properly, but also to organize your time better, predict the results of your actions more accurately, and work consistently towards achieving your goals.

It can be somewhat challenging to plan an activity that is most likely your side hustle. We're not saying you cannot turn affiliate marketing into your primary source of income: with enough hard work and determination, you can totally do that. However, it will take time, and at the very beginning, you will probably have to juggle your usual tasks plus affiliate marketing.

The most important thing is to work the new activity into your daily schedule. With a job that has no boss, no timesheet, and no payable hours, it can be easy to skip a day or two – however, the more time you spend away from it, the harder it is to come back (especially when you're not yet motivated by huge earnings). Decide on how much time you're going to dedicate to affiliate marketing every day and stick to your plan. It can be an hour after lunch or two after dinner – the important thing is to turn it into a routine.

As for the strategy and tactics, BitDegree has prepared a whole separate e-book that covers those. Read about it carefully and see what kind of activities you feel more comfortable with. Consider the skills you have, the time you can dedicate to affiliate marketing, rethink the niche you chose and its target customers. Most importantly, make the decisions before you act, and follow your plan – don't wobble before you see and evaluate your first results.





## RESEARCH DIFFERENT AFFILIATE PROGRAMS IN YOUR NICHE

Once you figure out your niche and set up a plan, it's time to analyze the market and find out what kind of and how many affiliate programs are out there. Choosing the right affiliate program is not an easy task, as it requires in-depth research and comparison of alternatives.

You'll be happy to hear the first step is the easiest: finding out which companies offer affiliate programs is not challenging at all. Most of them have a separate section called Affiliate Program (or Affiliates, Partners, etc.) in either the website's header or footer. Once you find enough programs to choose from, answer these questions to make the choice easier:

- What type of brand (merchant) issued the affiliate program? Would you like to be associated with it on the professional level?
- Does the merchant provide a wide range of products/services? Are they highly specific, or something most people could benefit from?
- Can the merchant be trusted? Does it have a good reputation?
- What's the commission rate? Is it competitive enough?
- What kind of support system does the program have? Is there a manager you can talk to, or perhaps a discussion board?
- If there are any reviews and/or comments from other affiliates – are they positive?



One more metric you should get to know is the cookie period. To put it very simply, the longer it is, the better for the affiliate marketer. This period defines a time window during which a user has to perform the action for an affiliate to receive their commission, counting from the moment they clicked the affiliate's link. Thirty days is the standard period. Still, a merchant is free to offer a shorter or a more extended one: some even limit it to the length of the browsing session, so be careful not to skip this information as you're getting to know different programs.

Let's take BitDegree as an example. Not only does its program include a very competitive commission rate of 50%, but it also offers a 60-day cookie, which improves your chances to earn more. Most users don't take education-related decisions on a whim, but you don't need to feel anxious about losing your commission while they're thinking about the choices they have: there's plenty of time and nowhere to hurry! BitDegree offers over 900 courses on various topics, and the number keeps on growing, so you can be sure there is something for everyone.

Another important aspect of researching affiliate programs is testing out the actual products or services you'll have to promote. Even if a particular merchant offers a high commission rate, an excellent support system, and has a good reputation, there's a chance you simply won't find the product useful or appealing. In fact, this can happen a lot: not every product that has seemingly great attributes and social presence will be suitable for you and your audience – and that's okay. However, if you fail to test them and notice the issue in time, your efforts will go to waste: the audience will not trust your recommendations – and once you lose their trust, gaining it back is not an easy feat.

If you want to do a little research on your competitors, you can do it by joining various affiliate marketing forums and platforms, as well as just reading the blogs of such marketers. While not all of them reveal their affiliate status to the public, you can often recognize them by reviewing the links they include in their content and clickable banners: the unique URLs will include the affiliate's ID.

### All Courses in Programming Languages

The screenshot shows the BitDegree website's course catalog for 'Programming Languages'. The sidebar on the left contains filters for Topic (Blockchain, Business, Coding & Programming), Skill level (All levels, Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced), and Ratings (3.0 & up). The main area displays six course cards, each with a thumbnail, title, instructor, duration, and price. The courses are sorted by Popularity.

Course Title	Instructor	Duration	Price
Learn Solidity with Space Doggo: an Interactive Solidity Tutorial	BitDegree Foundation VSI	16m	FREE
Learn PHP Online: PHP Basics Explained in an Interactive and Fun Manner	BitDegree Foundation VSI	1h 46m	\$44.99 \$26.99
JavaScript Tutorial: Learn JavaScript just in 1 Hour	John Bura	1h 16m	\$16.65 \$4.99
The Complete Solidity Smart Contract Guide	BitDegree Foundation VSI	Beginner	\$16.65 \$9.99
Master Python Fundamentals the Fun Way: an Interactive Python Tutorial	BitDegree Foundation VSI	2h 19m	\$26.65 \$9.99
Unity Database Tutorial: The Ultimate Unity PHP & MySQL Course	Yohann Taleb	3h 57m	\$48.32 \$2.99





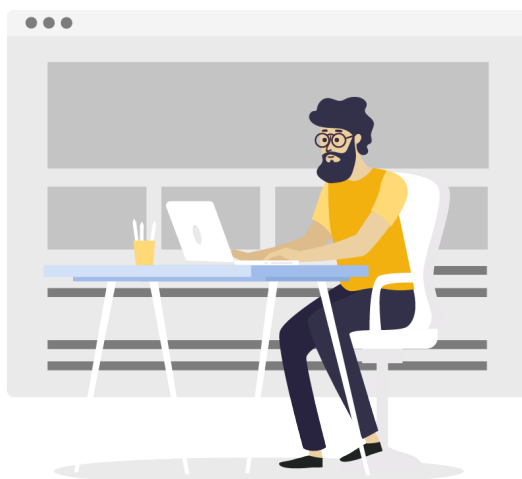
## CREATE A SITE/PLATFORM

Having chosen the affiliate program, the niche, and the strategy, you need to start thinking about your actual content. However, you need to have a place to publish it before you create it: you won't earn a lot if you just stuff the piece of content into your desk drawer once it's finished.

You can choose to publish it on social media accounts. However, they're way better for linking people to your content instead of actually hosting it: it's not convenient for longer reads, and the constant pings, ads, messages, and surrounding posts can easily distract the user from the experience. Your best bet is to set up a platform or a website of your own. It's not that complicated of a task, but you need to know the essential steps and follow them carefully.

If you are a beginner with little to no coding experience, your best option is to get familiar with WordPress. It is a content management system that millions of websites all around the world are based on. WordPress will also allow you to pick a theme from a catalog and create some basic designs. Moreover, it is free, safe, and effortless to use. Its popularity also means you have a vast user community to turn to if you encounter any issues in setting up your site.

To be able to have a publicly available website, you will have to take care of two things – a domain name and a hosting service. Simply said, the domain name is the address of your website, and hosting means storing all of your site's files in a server or a cloud for a regular payment to the service provider. Don't worry – there are really affordable options, and if you put enough effort into creating and publishing content, the payback will truly be impressive.



For a beginner, the simplest route is to pick a company that provides both domain names and hosting services (e.g., Hostinger). Make sure to have multiple options for your domain name prepared: there are millions of websites in the world, so the name you originally wanted may already be taken. As for the hosting plan, you will be able to choose one according to your needs. As a rule, the more you pay, the more you get: more bandwidth, more disk space, more processing power, more memory, more email accounts, more subdomains... You get the gist.

As soon as your website is up and running, you'll have to start creating good quality content in order to attract visitors to your new site. Now how do you do that?

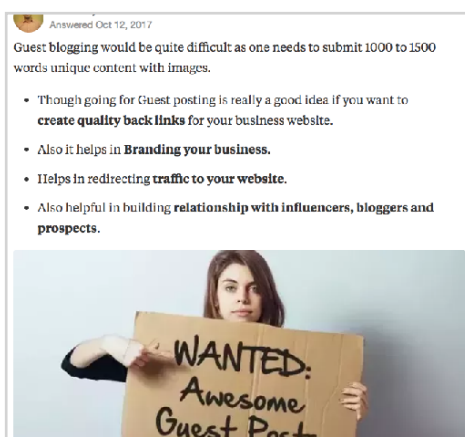


## PRODUCE GOOD QUALITY CONTENT & PROMOTE AFFILIATE PRODUCTS

In affiliate marketing, your success basically relies on content quality. You can mix and match various strategies, use banners, provide text links in forums and discussion boards, but when it comes to the most profitable affiliate marketing strategy, you need to regularly create interesting and engaging content.

One of the most popular ways to use the space in your affiliate marketing website is writing product/service reviews. This is a very common practice, and it can be really profitable when done right. Give it a try if the niche you've chosen is broad enough to contain many different types of products – you do need to have enough material to constantly create content, after all. Online courses are a good example. Take BitDegree: not only does the platform contain hundreds of courses, but the numbers keep growing, as instructors upload new courses. Thus, you can be sure you'll always have something to review and recommend. Writing reviews for online courses is a great idea, because students tend to make a decision of purchasing such products by reading comments, reviews, and suggestions.

Simply writing a blog can be profitable too. In it, you can discuss problems, latest news, techniques, questions, and other topics that are closely related to your niche. Then, simply blend in the affiliate text links for products which might help your users solve the problems you're talking about. For example, if your niche is online courses, for example, students can experience a lot of different issues: high pricing, poor quality, incompetent instructors, and so on. You can be the one to solve them! If you're capable of coming up with interesting topics and writing engaging texts, blogging can certainly help you show your strengths and earn as an affiliate marketer.

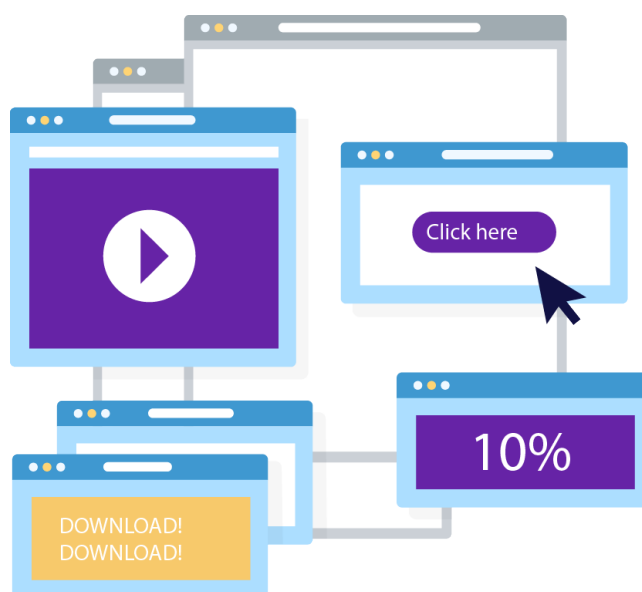


Banner ads are not technically part of the created content, but it's a part of the whole website and an important element of promotion. Many affiliate marketers (especially beginners) like putting up banners because they're visually appealing and help attract the user's attention quickly. Moreover, they're effortless to use: all you need to do is get them from the merchant and put them on your website.

Email promotions are also an excellent way to market your affiliate products because it's personal and builds up a relationship. You can send personalized emails to your target audience that include short but engaging texts in which the affiliate links are included – for example, you could send out weekly newsletters with some industry news, inspiring ideas, and suggestions. There is a catch, though: to attract and entice the audience this way, you have to have a substantial email list and user permissions to contact them via email. The quickest way to build one is to include an email opt-in into your blog or website.

Don't miss out on guest posting as well! It's a good strategy for beginners because you can use someone else's audience for your gain, while they get extra content. A chance to reach a big audience is a great start: by demonstrating your knowledge and expertise, you can drive the traffic your way. There are many sites, blogs, and bloggers who are on board with guest posting: choose one that's in the same niche as yours, so you reach the audience that's interested in the topics you cover. Make sure it's highly-trafficked, too: the whole point of guest-posting is to attract a crowd.

A lot of affiliate marketers use paid advertising to generate traffic as well. If done correctly, it can be very profitable: the more you pay, the more people see your ads, the more clicks you can generate. Nevertheless, before carrying out any paid advertising strategy, it's essential to read Terms of Service of the particular affiliate program you're participating in: some merchants do not allow it – and it's understandable. Organic marketing might get you smaller numbers, but the users are much more likely to be genuinely interested in the niche.





## KEEP REPEATING STEP 5 AND GENERATE MONEY

While this is the last item on our list, it's important to realize that there is actually no final step in affiliate marketing. You are never done; the amount of work you can do is never finite. If you want to succeed as an affiliate marketer, you must constantly create, improve, promote, and analyze. But that's also the beauty of it – the sky's your limit, and the important thing to know is





# FINAL WORD

Making your way as an affiliate marketer may seem hard at first: just like in a lot of digital businesses, there's always more to learn. We hope this guide has helped you feel a lot more confident about your capabilities, understand the steps you need to take, and get ready to plan your success.

Good luck!

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*“I find that the harder I work, the more luck I seem to have.”*

– Thomas Jefferson