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Digital marketing 101 for small businesses

Learn how affiliate and partner marketing lets you **pay for results, not risk**



Do you know your **CPAs** from your **CPMs**? How does your **ROAS** stack up for your SEA?

Digital marketing can be baffling, filled with acronyms and language that even experienced marketers struggle to get their heads around.

For brands just starting out, digital marketing offers fantastic opportunities to find new customers, but the range of options can be daunting. How confident are you that you're investing in the right mix?

In this guide we're going to explore some of the most common direct response marketing channels available to you. We'll take a quick journey through Facebook and Google and then explore one of the fastest-growing marketing channels - affiliate marketing - and how it's the perfect place to start.

Packed full of advice about how to get your affiliate programme up and running, you can find top tips, walk-throughs and practical guidance.

We also talk to a couple of brands about their affiliate marketing experience and how they have been able to grow as a business through their affiliate partnerships. You can also read how one blogger affiliate decides which brands she chooses to promote.







Why is digital marketing so important?

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Every business, from the biggest brand to the smallest start-up, needs a digital marketing strategy.

That need has only grown, with online sales increasing by almost 50% in 2020.

As shops closed their doors through ongoing lockdowns, leaving people with no option but to buy what they wanted online, ecommerce purchases skyrocketed as shoppers of all ages and from all walks of life turned to the internet.

Established retailers with slick online stores were able to take advantage of this shopping revolution, but that didn't necessarily mean it was bad news for small businesses, as data showed consumers were just as keen to shop local.

A recent survey of British consumers found almost half of them have been buying from neighbourhood businesses online during the pandemic. Research from Barclaycard indicates that trend is set to carry on with more than 90% of people who have shopped locally saying they will continue as life returns to normal.

If you're a small business that's an obvious relief. But just because shoppers want to buy what you're selling, it doesn't always mean they know where to go online to find your products.

If you're strapped for time, the huge variety of solutions that companies offer to help connect you with your next customer can feel bewildering.

So where should you invest your time, energy and marketing budgets to guarantee the biggest bang for your buck and help you ride the wave of interest in online shopping?

In this guide we will help you navigate how to add new and important customer revenue sources to grow your business.

We will explain how payment-onperformance marketing provides small businesses with a vital new way to grow and acquire customers online, and we'll show you how you get started with little fuss.

Even if you're just starting out and are worried you don't have the knowledge, money or technical expertise to explore these new opportunities, we will explain how you can try one new marketing channel in particular at your own pace and with minimal risk and commitment.

You can also read how other small businesses have dipped their toes with performancebased marketing and how they're integrating it with their wider marketing efforts.







90% of people shopped locally pandemic will when life returns





Getting started

Almost two-thirds of small businesses agree that paid digital marketing is important to their future success.

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However 41% of them say cost is a barrier to entry despite a majority finding it provides a good return on investment.

Many micro SMEs (businesses with fewer than nine employees) also struggle to get to grips with how to make use of the different marketing options available. Getting into digital marketing can feel like a leap into the unknown, especially if you have little time or money to spend experimenting.

If that's how you feel, you're not alone.

Some channels may be more familiar than others. Google AdWords is one of the most common options, with its click payments meaning that if you make your ads relevant, you should attract people who are a good match for what you're selling. And if they don't buy, at least you have created awareness of your brand and products.

Adverts on these platforms

can be easy to set up and, in theory, you can have them live in minutes. But a downside is that there is little flexibility in how you can operate outside of their business models. Common search terms are also competitive, which can mean they're expensive and out of the reach for those with smaller budgets.

Another choice is paying for

adverts on social media. In fact, according to the Internet Advertising Bureau's 2020 'Powering Up' survey of small businesses, it's the most popular paid digital channel.

Facebook tends to be the most picked platform, with many SMEs using the ability to micro-target by demographic or interest.

Downsides can be the constant testing of what works and changes to the platform, as well as the time spent grappling with the jargon used.

Online display - banner advertising - is another option; again Facebook and Google offer solutions.

This can be a great way to

get in front of your potential next customer, targeting them with your products when their browsing history shows they may be a good fit.

Small businesses however can feel daunted by the prospect of display. Many consumers also have ad blockers installed that prevent banners from loading on the websites they're browsing. Additionally some businesses are concerned about the lack of control they feel they have about where their ads are appearing, as well as the privacy issues involved in using people's browsing data.





Free digital



Affiliate

Key takeaways

- There is a variety of paid marketing channels available.
- Typically dominated by Google and Facebook, they offer the opportunity to target consumers on their search and browsing behaviour.
- Some businesses are put off using them by the cost and complexity of their platforms, plus the time needed to master their technology.
- These options involve payment to advertise rather than payment only when a generated customer sale takes place.

Getting the **mix right**

There are pros and cons to weigh up from more tried and tested marketing channels. However, if you're just starting out with limited resource and budgets, you will probably be trying to to **keep things simple**.

You may have already tried a few of the previously mentioned tactics; perhaps you're currently running a combination of them.

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The fact is, online marketing activity can be quite shortterm focused with a mixture of trial and error, tweaking ads, changing copy and testing new tactics.

Ultimately the most common reason for trying the different types of paid marketing activity we've talked about is to drive new customers. And there is one marketing tactic that puts customer acquisition front and centre of how it operates.

We're going to spend the remainder of this guide focusing on one channel, and it's likely you may not have considered it but it allows you to take an experimental approach to marketing with minimal risk.

Affiliate or partner marketing opens up a new world to many businesses, helping to find your next customer - whether it's through some of the channels already mentioned or via influencers, bloggers, price comparison or incentive platforms like voucher code or cashback sites.

We see it as one of **online** marketing's best kept secrets.

There are a **range of low-cost options** to choose from to create an affiliate marketing programme that complements your other online marketing activity. Some businesses wait years to take the plunge with affiliate marketing, but a small business we work with recently said they wished they had started their affiliate marketing journey years ago.

Over the next few pages you will read why it could be the right choice for you, helping **deliver new customers with a laser focus on return on investment**.

Key takeaways

- The most common reason for using paid digital marketing is to find new customers.
- Affiliate and partner marketing is an underused marketing channel for small businesses.
- Affiliate marketing is focused on finding new customers for retailers.
- You don't have to experiment with other digital marketing activity first, affiliate marketing can work for you now.

Affiliate or partner marketing **opens up a new world to many businesses**, helping you to find new customers in new places.







Affiliate marketing allows you as a business selling something to work with individual affiliates who promote what you sell to their audiences.

What is **affiliate marketing**?

We know digital marketing is full of confusing jargon and acronyms so we'll try and keep our explanation of how affiliate marketing works plain and simple.

Firstly, we need to say something about the language used by people working in the affiliate marketing world.

The words affiliate and partner are often interchangeable.

So, while we'll stick to talking about affiliate marketing in this guide, if you've heard or read about partner marketing, assume it's the same thing.

To add to the confusion, others talk about affiliates as publishers and/or partners.

Affiliate is sometimes viewed as a more traditional word and, as the industry has evolved over time, many affiliates now refer to themselves as publishers. To keep it simple we'll stick to using the word



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affiliates, but again assume they're broadly the same thing.

Affiliate marketing, put simply, allows you as a business selling something to work with individual affiliates who promote what you sell to their audiences.

These audiences will be different depending on who the affiliate is. And there is **no such thing as a standard affiliate**.



Key takeaways

- Some people use the word affiliates, others publishers or partners.
- Don't get hung up on the terminology, focus on the thing they have in common: delivering sales for brands.





Who are **affiliates**?

They are a broad church: they could be a blogger, a price comparison site or have a large social media following that they share what they're interested in with.

Bigger affiliates could be wellknown magazine or newspaper publishing houses like The Telegraph or BuzzFeed or they could be huge **promotional** and voucher code websites with millions of followers, showcasing the latest offers to their deal-hungry audiences. You may be an active user of websites like Vouchercloud or TopCashback. Both rely on affiliate marketing to fund their businesses.

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There is one thing that we can say all affiliates have in common and that's how they're typically paid. If they promote your product to a visitor on their site,

who then clicks through and buys that product, the affiliate will receive a commission for doing so.

This commission payment model is one of the things that makes the affiliate channel attractive, especially to brands who are cautious about investing their marketing budgets in adverts that don't guarantee a return on investment.

Another way of looking at affiliate marketing is to think of it being defined by the cost per sale model rather than the activity that drives the sale.

Because of this, any type of online advertising can be categorised as affiliate marketing if it is rewarded for the sales that advertising generates. Ultimately that means there's no such thing as a typical affiliate.

The most common types of affiliate

To the right are a few examples of the affiliates who you might encounter or want to partner with when you're up and running.

There are many other types of affiliates besides these five groups.

You may want to work with email affiliates or loyalty platforms. Or there may be specific audiences that are important to you; students for example are represented by popular affiliates such as StudentBeans and UNiDAYS.

It is important to bear in mind that there's no guarantee that these affiliates will be able to work with you. Where they don't, Awin's publisher directory is a useful resource to help find other opportunities.

The most common are vouchercodes.co.uk and Vouchercloud. although many other affiliates are happy to feature codes in the content they produce, such as a blog post or email.





Bloggers

Brands love partnering with bloggers because they often spend time creating content about something they're passionate about. This can mean that if they find a product they love, they will tell their audiences - which can have a positive impact on the business selling that product. Bloggers may also use their social platforms to communicate to their followers.

Key takeaways

- Any digital marketing activity can technically be affiliate marketing activity and affiliates rely on a huge variety of ways to drive traffic and sales for retailers.
- All affiliates are different, but all affiliates are paid using the same commission payments.



Social media



Price comparison

Price comparison sites such as Kelkoo will help consumers find the full range of brands selling a whole host of different products. If you're a reseller these can be important affiliates to work with. Price comparison sites are also significant for brands selling utilities, telco and financial services.



Voucher code (or coupon) sites

One of the most successful areas of affiliate marketing is those affiliates who appeal to bargain-seeking customers. Some have created sites that feature thousands of deals and discounts.

Cashback sites

Cashback sites take the commission you pay them and pass it on as a customer bonus for shopping with you. They have become huge brands in their own right and you may have seen adverts for the two biggest, TopCashback and Quidco, on TV.

Other affiliates will use platforms like Facebook and Instagram to talk about their favourite brands. Those with large audiences could be considered influencers. This is one of the fastest-growing areas of affiliate marketing.

How does the **commission model** work?

The commission for a sale is typically set as a percentage of what the product is worth.

Look to the chart on your right to see how this works in practice.

But let's say that the blogger then wants to start featuring your widget more prominently, maybe they also want to email all their readers to tell them about it. To do so they ask if you're willing to increase the commission you pay them.

Well in this case, you decide to

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keep the general commission rate at 10%, but will up what you pay this particular blogger to 12%.

In other words, the blogger has negotiated a better rate for increased exposure and. hopefully, additional sales.

This commission flexibility is something that is built into the affiliate model. You don't have to pay more, but if you want to build strategic partnerships, it's worth considering what you will receive in return for a higher commission.

That, in a nutshell, is how affiliate marketing works.

You can keep it simple or over time build personal relationships with the affiliates who are working well for you. And that's what makes affiliate marketing the ultimate payment-onperformance digital channel.

It is also important to factor

in additional costs, such as those charged by a companies like Awin who introduce you to these affiliates and we will cover that off later in this guide.

Key takeaways

- The affiliate marketing model works by paying commissions to affiliates for generating sales for your business.
- You need to understand your margins so you can decide what is an acceptable commission to pay for sales that are still profitable.
- You can benchmark what commissions you pay by looking at your competitors who are running affiliate programmes.
- In time, if you build strong relationships with your main affiliates you may want to pay them higher commissions for additional advertising exposure.







You sell widgets that cost £100.

Your margins are 30% and you work out that in order to pay an affiliate who has driven a sale for you, you can afford to pay 10% of the £100 basket (or £10).

You partner with 10 different affiliates, including bloggers who are featuring your widgets on their blogs.

Someone visits one of these bloggers and reads a post they've written with a positive review of the widget. As a result they click through to your site and decide to buy one of your widgets.

You receive a new customer who has spent £100 and, in return, you reward the blogger who wrote the review with a £10 commission (10% of the basket).



Is affiliate marketing right for my business?

We've mentioned how easy it can be to create a paid search campaign using something like Google AdWords. An affiliate programme can be just as straightforward to set-up, although the results will not be as potentially instantaneous.

Is acquiring new customers

through digital marketing a priority for your business?

Do you have a transactional website selling products or services?

Does your website have a professional **design** with no error pages and with good quality images?

Is your website user friendly with a **good** path to purchase for your customers?

Do you have **regular levels** of stock?

Can you pay a commission to affiliates for promoting your products?

Do you have some time every week to dedicate to engaging brand partners to promote you?





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But before you consider the practicalities of how to do affiliate marketing, you need to check you have all the pieces in place to launch a programme. To assist, we've put together this checklist that will help you decide how ready you are to embark on your affiliate journey:



How do I set my programme up?

If you're pretty confident you can tick everything on the checklist, then affiliate marketing could be a viable option for you.

The next step in setting a programme up is in selecting the company to help you to do so.

While you can work directly with affiliates, companies exist that track, report and pay affiliates for the sales they've generated for you. They are known as affiliate networks; they're tech businesses that will take care of some of the heavy lifting for you by making everything work in the background while offering you software that allows you to manage your programme completely independently.

Awin is one of these affiliate networks, but there are others available.

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When deciding which network

is the best fit for your business you should consider:

- The ease of set-up and technical integration.
- The costs of running the programme as well as contract terms.
- The number of affiliates on the network that are ready for you to connect with.
- And if you're speaking to a few networks, then ask them how they support small businesses to grow their sales revenue.

It's also important you don't feel dropped into the deep end, so ask what training materials and tutorials are available to help grow your expertise.

Networks make their money by typically charging a fee in addition to the commission you're paying your affiliates. This

Key takeaways

- Networks act as a one-stop shop for tracking, reporting and paying affiliates.
- There is a selection of lowcost network providers who can help small businesses with their affiliate programmes.

will usually be a percentage on top of the commission.

So, if we use our previous widget example, Awin will charge an additional 30% of the standard 10% commission you're paying for each of your affiliate sales.

So your total cost for the \pounds 100 widget sale we mentioned earlier (where you're paying a standard rate of 10%) is \pounds 10 in commission and then \pounds 3 in network fee (30% of the 10% commission).

Therefore, the total cost that you're paying to acquire one widget sale is \pounds 13.

Another way of looking at it (and a useful comparison if you're running other paid marketing) is to understand the return on investment for every £1 you spend.

In this example every £1 is driving £7.70 in revenue for you (£100 / £13 = £7.70).

- They charge a network fee, which is an additional cost on top of your affiliate commission payments.
- Monitor your return on investment by working out how much revenue you're tracking for every £1 you're spending.

While you can work directly with affiliates, companies exist that track, report and pay affiliates for the sales they've generated for you. They are known as affiliate networks.

How do I decide what to pay affiliates?

Assuming you don't sell £100 widgets, you will **need to work out what margin you can afford to pay affiliates** to deliver profitable sales for you.

There is no hard and fast rule here but we can offer guidance on what businesses in your sector are paying for selling similar goods and services.

For example, it's common for women's clothing retailers to pay around 5% of the basket value to their affiliates. Using this rate as a benchmark, a £50 dress would therefore earn an affiliate successfully driving sales £2.50 commission on each dress. We usually find that small businesses often sell items that are more profitable, which means they have higher commissions to play with. This can give you a huge competitive advantage over bigger brands that may be less flexible in how they run their affiliate programmes.

Why not spend some time looking at our <u>directory of</u> <u>advertisers</u>. You can find the sector that you operate in as well as search for any specific brands that might run programmes with Awin.

Also, cashback sites like Quidco and TopCashback who pay their users for shopping online using the commissions paid to them by brands, are a useful additional source of information.

Over time you will hopefully build great relationships with individual affiliates and you may choose to offer them private commission rates based on the volumes of sales they can deliver or even the type of customer they're driving to your site.

Always keep something back so you can incentivise your most-valued affiliates, your programme-wide commission should be your base level.

Key takeaways

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- Do your research to understand what commission rate you should pay.
- Small businesses often have a competitive edge over big brands with higher rates, use this to your advantage.
- Always keep something back for your most-important affiliates, you can pay them higher rates privately via a network like Awin.

We usually find that small businesses often sell items that are more profitable, which means they have **higher** commissions to play with.





Now for the **technical bit**

So you've selected your network and decided on your best commission rate. The next stage is the technical bit, **adding the affiliate network tracking code** to your site to ensure you can report your sales, as well as other metrics such as clicks and banner impressions.

Awin has specially designed instructions to help small businesses with this step, as we understand it can be daunting.

We have various options for you to choose from, and this includes a "developer's guide" if you are technically savvy right down to the ability to select a plugin for ecommerce

Add the code

to your site

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Congratulations, you're now officially **ready to launch** your first affiliate programme!

The next stage is the technical bit, adding the affiliate network tracking code to your site to ensure you can report your sales.



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platforms such as Shopify. With the tracking in place, you will need to carry out some basic admin such as **building a profile page** so affiliates can read about your business and details about the products or services you sell; don't rush this part it's the **one chance you have to sell yourselves to the affiliates** that are considering who to promote, so make sure its detailed and stands out from the crowd

You should also **upload some graphical elements** for affiliates to be able to use such as your logo, some promotional banner adverts and maybe some good quality product shots if you have them to hand.









What happens **next**?

It's day one, you've logged into your affiliate user interface and you're wondering where you should start...

Different companies will offer different levels of support, but generally speaking there are broad principles that everyone should follow.

If you've opted for Awin's entry-level affiliate solution, called Awin Access, we will ensure you're not on your own.

We know affiliate marketing can be daunting and when you're faced with menus, reports and dropdowns, how do you prioritise what to do first?

Well you shouldn't panic, because

there's a **logical flow to managing your affiliate programme** and Awin will virtually hold your hand throughout with accessible and easy to understand guidance.

Firstly, if you've signed up to run a programme with Awin you'll receive a series of emails which include a whole host of helpful information.

In our emails we'll explain how to **build an affiliate strategy**, what metrics to keep an eye on and **how to measure success**.

We also offer tutorials, guides and our wiki, not to mention online chat and email support.

And if you're unsure about the user interface, we'll provide

full online training so you can hit the ground running.

Awin has also developed a <u>webinar</u> <u>centre</u> for small businesses that features interviews with brands who have recently been on their own affiliate journeys as well as plans and guidance on how to build your strategy.

Additionally, our <u>Advertiser</u> <u>Success Center</u> is an invaluable resource for brands. It contains how-to guides, FAQs and other useful information. There's even a <u>dedicated section for SMEs</u>.

It's also important to keep up to date with the latest news and <u>our website</u> is a great place to find out about general industry trends, events and insights. There's a logical flow to managing your affiliate programme and Awin will virtually hold your hand throughout with accessible and easy to understand guidance.



We are delighted to inform you that your programme is now live on Awin.

You are now able to:

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- Utilise the <u>publisher devicery</u> to search, recruit and device new online partnerships
 Start the process of <u>devicing publisher join recruents</u> to view their profiles and select who you wish to allow on loand*
 Presers to posit an Near Manager, the Aren tool for communicating with your
- publisher base

What to do first?

We would highly recommend browing our past leach, strategy which contains crucial information on how to make the most of your programme and Avin account. This heavly goals covers dely checks, how to build avaneess and tips to increasing angagement.

Start to plan out your law promotional dates for the next 6-12 months and how you will communicate these (and perhaps offer commission incentives to generate further placements) with your publishers. Give a suitable amount of lead time for them to prepare, sometimes it's not a quick fix for them to update their activity to feature your business.





Awin Access: Empowering small businesses to succeed online

Here at Awin we're proud that in just over a year, more than 1,000 small businesses have launched affiliate programmes with Awin Access.

Accessible to anyone with an online store, Awin Access is underpinned by the three principles of automation, ease of use and low-risk.

With a quick and easy set-up, supported by comprehensive and



To read some of our success stories. click below or scroll to the next page.

If you want to take the plunge and launch an affiliate programme, why not get in touch with us?

Turbocharge your online sales and sign up to Awin Access today.

Awin Access empowers SMEs to flexibly manage all their online relationships with one tracking and payment platform.



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targeted training materials guiding advertisers as they progress through their affiliate journey, Awin Access offers brands the perfect affiliate marketing solution.

Awin Access empowers SMEs to flexibly manage all their online relationships with one tracking and payments platform, giving you the tools, confidence and capabilities to unlock digital marketing at a time when you perhaps need it most.





How Down Your High Street embraced affiliate marketing

Working with partners supporting local stores

Down Your High Street (DYHS)

is an online marketplace for the UK's independent high street traders offering them a platform to showcase and sell their products to audiences around the world.

DYHS knew digital marketing was going to be important in helping to drive traffic to their marketplace and launched PPC, SEO, paid social and direct marketing campaigns.

Affiliate marketing was also in play, and with the launch of Awin Access, gave DYHS a way to try out the channel for the first time. One of the reasons the affiliate programme has been successful is because DYHS has found a selection of affiliate partners who are a good fit.

Co-founder Dan Whytock explains, "We build new affiliate relationships and book in exposure with the top performing ones on a quarterly basis. We've seen great growth in recent months because we are constantly seeking out new partnerships."

Improvements in usability have helped boost sales. Dan adds, "Investments in growing our conversion rate also increase the conversion rate of our affiliates, which we aim to double again in the next 12 months as well as the number of products we sell."

Results

Affiliate partners now **drive the highest number of sales of any other marketing channel** hitting 26% of total monthly sales with a return of £30 for every £1 invested.

Affiliate traffic converts at 3% click to sale.

Michelle O'Sullivan. who runs Awin Access, added, "This programme sums up what we are trying to achieve with Awin Access for small businesses and start-ups. The goal was always to support grass roots business and ecommerce in the UK, and help high street businesses maintain revenue while expanding their customer reach".

Read more here.



If you want to take the plunge and launch an affiliate programme, why not get in touch with us?

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DOWN YOUR

Turbocharge your online sales and sign up to Awin Access today.



How DYHS embraced affiliate marketing



Click below to read a different success story.



Hersey and Son's affiliate journey

As an independent father and son business, Paul Hersey's objectives were to increase brand awareness, drive quality online traffic and work with more affiliates, especially larger ones.

What they planned

- Secruit a broad range of affiliate partners to test different audiences.
- Maximise key gifting occasions and use them to showcase new product launches.
- Build a base of content partners and micro-influencers.



Hersey and Son's affiliate journey



How Awin's tech helped

Awin offers a publisher directory for all brands to use to help recruit new affiliates. You can search by keyword or use the ranking system to see which affiliates are most active.

Hersey and Son used the directory and approached a selection of affiliates, negotiating ad deals as well as scanning Awin's Opportunity Marketplace, where affiliates post their own promotional placements

Awin's handy email system, built into the interface, also allowed Hersey and Son to regularly communicate with their affiliates.

Over time, they negotiated special rates with a handful of affiliates they called their 'ambassadors.' They also posted special 'stretch and save' codes, which helped increase the average amount their customers spent.

What happened?

Hersey & Son now has an attractive affiliate programme with an excellent click to sale conversion rate of 5% and an average order value over £75.

Their commission starts from 8% and, due to the universal appeal of their 600 silver pieces, they are interesting for a number of affiliates to promote. They work with a broad mix of affiliates including voucher, cashback, reward, bloggers, social media influencers and shopping comparison.

The affiliate channel is already driving 15% of total online sales

and has positively impacted other marketing channels by expanding their re-targeting base. They are currently actively recruiting new affiliates through their <u>dedicated page</u>.

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If you want to take the plunge and launch an affiliate programme, why not get in touch with us?

Turbocharge your online sales and sign up to Awin Access today.



Click below to read a different success story.





Voice of the affiliate

Affiliates are the lifeblood of your affiliate programme. As we've seen, they come in all shapes and sizes. Finding affiliates that are the right fit for your brand and products is one of the most satisfying aspects of affiliate marketing.

Sophie Peach is one of Awin's bloggers and we asked her about how she got into affiliate marketing and how she decides which brands are a great fit for her site <u>SustainablyLazy</u>.

Can you tell us a little bit about yourself and your blog?

After having my first child 12 weeks early, I quickly realised that most of the advice and guidance for living a sustainable and conscious lifestyle didn't apply to us. I decided to start my blog to share my experiences with other parents who didn't feel like sustainable living was accessible to them or didn't know where to start.

How did you first discover affiliate marketing?

When my maternity leave ended I didn't want to go back to my day job so I started looking at ways to monetise my site. Every article I read said I should join the Amazon affiliate program but I felt it would be hypocritical considering my niche. I stumbled across Awin by chance - a brand I wanted to advertise was a part of the programme so I signed up. I was able to use Awin's search filters to find more brands that shared my values.

Why do you like affiliate marketing?

Since having my second premature baby during the lockdown, I've been able to resign from my job - something that would never have happened without affiliate marketing. My kids have high needs which take up a lot of my time but through Awin I have been able to earn a passive income on my website which allows me to work flexibly from home. I also like that it takes a big chunk of the communication out of the mix as I'm quite a shy person and find negotiating uncomfortable.

What are the things that are important to you when you choose the brands to promote?

I always check out a brand's values first because integrity is important to me. I got into sustainability six years ago when I worked on a water and sanitation campaign in rural Tanzania. Witnessing the effects of climate change and experiencing such extreme poverty is something you never forget. One of the reasons it is harder to monetise my site is because I will only work with brands that make sure the people in their supply chain are paid fairly and treated with dignity.

Can you give any examples of any interesting brand partnerships you have?

I like working with small businesses finding new ways to make eco-friendly living accessible, like Bower Collective and Wild deodorant, which deliver refills to your door. My favourite partnerships have got to be Fairtrade and non-profit organisations, like Social Stories Club, Oxfam, Samaritans and Traidcraft. It's wonderful to learn how many consumers want their purchases to mean something.

If you want to take the plunge and launch an affiliate programme, why not get in touch with us?

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Connect with affiliates like Sophie and turbocharge your online sales by signing up to Awin Access today.





Click below to read a different success story.

Voice of **the affiliate**

