



# The ultimate guide to **brand partnerships**



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### Introduction

Brand partnerships is the gift that keeps on giving, enabling advertisers to engage with new audiences, build customer loyalty with value-added rewards, and drive incremental sales growth.

In this ultimate guide to brand partnerships, you will find out why brand-to-brand partner collaborations should be an integral part of your digital marketing strategy and how you can get started via Awin's global partner platform.

#### The post-pandemic online marketing landscape

The coronavirus pandemic triggered a seismic shift in the way that customers shop and behave online. In fact, we've compressed a decade worth of digital adoption [into just two years](#).

As often witnessed, significant changes also bring about significant challenges that online ecommerce brands are now trying to navigate.

- ➔ **Over 70% of customers** are shopping online [more than they did prior to the pandemic](#). An increasingly crowded digital marketplace and rising digital ad-costs across most marketing channels are making the process of new customer acquisition both difficult and expensive for brands.
- ➔ **The challenge isn't just isolated to new customers**; online brands need to work harder to retain customer loyalty. [13% of shoppers](#) claimed they saw the pandemic as an opportunity to shop with a new brand, while [60% of Gen-Z customers](#) stated their brand loyalty has changed since the start of the pandemic. Clearly, trying to encourage repeat purchase behaviour is a problem that isn't going to go away anytime soon.
- ➔ **Brands are challenged to drive digital growth**. A variety of different sectors enjoyed (unprecedented) online profits brought about by the pandemic. But with that comes greater expectations and an increase in performance targets.

Brand partnerships is the solution for online brands; a seamless integration into your existing digital strategy and new incremental revenue stream.

### What are brand partnerships?

A brand-to-brand partnership is a mutually beneficial relationship whereby non-competing brands partner and work together to achieve mutual success.

A brand partnerships campaign enables brands to reach like-minded customers based on complimentary sectors, demographics and customer values, whilst also providing a commercial opportunity to monetise your existing customer base and onsite inventory placements and gain valuable first-party data.

Awin's brand partnerships offering opens the door to an industry-leading marketplace, operating campaigns with thousands of brands globally, across all sectors, empowering brands to better discover, track, and reward their marketing efforts at scale.





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### Types of brand partnerships campaigns

Awin's curated brand partnerships are bespoke campaigns developed to help brands meet clearly defined objectives and drive successful campaign results. The most common objectives are centered around:

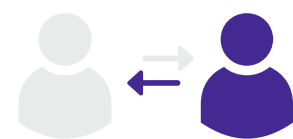
- ➔ Reaching an engaged cohort of new customer audiences
- ➔ Monetising your existing onsite inventory or customer database



A recipe for success

Find out how MyProtein generated **32% new customers** with SimplyCook

#### Be promoted



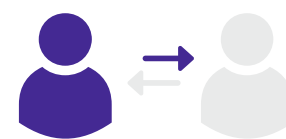
**Objective**  
**Acquire** new customers

By partnering with another brand you can **enhance your own brand reputation** through complimentary association.

Partnering with a "promoter" brand will enable you to reach and tap into their existing, engaged customer audience.

A "promoter" brand is an additional partner type that will drive quality, engaged traffic back to your site. As the "promotee", you can leverage the partner brand's customer demographic data and ensure you are providing a value-added reward that will encourage their customer to visit your site. This is a form of referral-based marketing; you should expect to pay the partner brand for driving customers to your site.

#### Promote

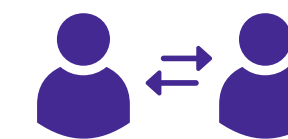


**Objective**  
**Boost** inbound revenue and enhance customer experience

Enhancing your product portfolio or service solution through the promotion of a complimentary retailer, enables brands to **enhance the user experience for converting customers**, both new and existing.

Consider your customer database as an untapped and marketable resource. In this scenario, you would promote another brand to help them reach your customer audience. The partner brand pays to tap into your database of engaged customers. The benefit of promoting another brand is twofold: not only do you drive inbound revenue, but you also enhance your customer purchase experience by providing new, value-added rewards.

#### Reciprocal



**Objective**  
**Drive** new customer acquisition and monetise existing customers

Fully reciprocated campaigns pull together a **seamless customer experience** and **maximise partnership potential**. Brands that are open to reciprocated partnerships will often see the greatest results.

Reciprocal brand partnerships often yield the best ROI for clients; leveraging each other's sites helps customers to establish a brand affinity and adds authenticity to the campaign. It's important to identify what you can offer a potential partner brand, and how the reward adds value to the customer to encourage repeat purchase.



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### Benefits of running brand partnerships

In addition to new customer acquisition and monetisation of your existing customer base, a brand partnerships campaign can offer many benefits to support your existing digital marketing efforts:



A credit check for your thoughts?

[Read how](#) MoneySuperMarket **increased referrals by 35%** via brand partnerships



● **Improves existing customer experience;** users receive value added rewards from non-competing brands

MoneySuperMarket partnered with two mobile phone contract providers to promote the MoneySuperMarket credit check service to customers who failed their credit check at the point of purchase. In addition to cancelled orders, the free credit check was also offered to customers who successfully completed their purchase, providing an additional value-added reward beyond their initial purchase.

For more information, you can view the case study [here](#).

● **Consolidates customer loyalty;** customers are incentivised to return to site

We've helped brands such as tastecard, Iceland and I SAW IT FIRST create customer reward portals for existing, logged-in customers. In doing so, these brands have rewarded and incentivised customer loyalty through the promotion of non-competing brands.

[Find out how](#) our partnership with customer reward programme solution providers can help you create your own reward programme.

● **Reduces over-reliance;** brands can diversify their performance partner mix

Brand partnerships empower brands to leverage another type of performance partner to drive traffic to your site. Partner brands can be easily identified within the Awin User Interface, allowing existing Awin clients to diversify their traditional partner mix.

● **Reach new and untapped customer audiences;** brands can leverage and engage active customers

Brands can partner across different sectors, you may be able to access new cohorts of customers that your existing marketing channels might not ordinarily reach. We partnered an SME floral brand with online clothing retailer, Boohoo, during the lead up to Valentine's Day. With the promotion of a discounted offer across Boohoo's social channels, the SME brand was able to reach new and engaged customer audiences. The post on Boohoo's Instagram feed received over 4,000 views in the first few hours of being posted.

● **Build brand awareness;** brands engage with users across purchase journey

In a reciprocal campaign with LOOKFANTASTIC and tastecard, Awin was able to leverage existing audiences to target prospect customers at various stages of the customer purchase journey. Both are well-established brands within their own right, but it is very uncommon for shoppers on a beauty retailer to also have an immediate intention of buying a restaurant discount subscription card. Through the partnership both brands were able to leverage an audience not currently in market for their product mix.

● **Boost brand image;** enhance brand profile via association

Partnering with another brand that resonates well with your target demographic can help to improve the perception of your own brand.



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### Broaden your brand partnership horizons

Brand partnerships offer new and innovative ways for brands to leverage the affiliate channel and drive revenue growth via partner diversification. Awin's global connections can help brands to expand into new territories by partnering with brands in every market that you operate. Plus, with our extensive portfolio of micro-SME businesses and agencies, we can help you to scale and level up digital strategy across niche sectors.

#### Go global with Awin partners

As a global partner platform, Awin works with brands across sectors and territories. Using our local market expertise, we can help you to partner with complimentary brands in each of the markets that you operate. An international partnership can enable you to reach new customer audiences and enhance your brand reputation in different territories. We've supported brands such as: LOOKFANTASTIC, Nike and Boohoo to expand their UK brand partnerships successes across some of their other international markets.

#### Fast-track your SME successes

Often the biggest challenge for any SME business trying to make digital cut-through is brand awareness and customer reach. By partnering with a brand that shares complimentary customer values, an SME brand can often benefit from the power of brand association.

We've supported direct-to-consumer SME beauty brand, Wild, to leverage their digital growth with the adoption of brand partnerships. Wild have collaborated with Myprotein, Boohoo and ISAWITFIRST to reach new customer audiences and boost brand awareness.





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How to identify potential partner brands

A successful brand partnerships campaign is based upon clear synergy and alignment between your target audience and your potential partner brand. You should ensure that both brands share complimentary campaign objectives, and that any potential partnership will enhance the shopping experience for your customers.

With a well aligned brand partnership:

- ➔ You'll achieve **brand awareness** and acquire new customer audiences
- ➔ Your partner brand will **monetise their inventory**
- ➔ Your shoppers will receive **added customer experiences** and rewards

Awin's brand partnerships offering simplifies the brand discovery process. We remove the need for you to outreach to brands based on unproven alignment assumptions. Instead, Awin's extensive matrix discovery document seamlessly enables partners to identify and engage with brands that have already expressed an interest in reciprocated brand partnerships.

When engaging with a new partner brand, our dedicated team of partnership specialists captures their customer demographic, geographic and behavioral profiles. Those profiles are then plugged into our matrix discovery document where you can align profile information to identify potential partners of interest.

	Partner Brand 1			Partner Brand 2	
Gender	70% Female		90% Female		68% Female
Age	22-35		22-35		36-50
Income	£25,001-£50,000		£25,001-£50,000		£25,001-£50,000
Location	UK only		Global		UK only
Values	Fitness enthusiast & Sustainable		Beauty conscious & Sustainable		Ethically aware & Foodie
Sector	Floral		Beauty		Pet Care



A taste for brand partnerships?

Find out how tastecard drove **+167% sales** during the pandemic via brand partnerships



How to find your brand partner

Awin's brand partnerships team looks at the overlap in audience profile between your brand and your potential partner brand. A significant overlap suggests that there is opportunity for a successful partnership and indicates that the prospective partner's target audience would be receptive to your brand messaging. To use an analogy, imagine that you're fishing for the same type of fish (customers), but you've decided that you want to try a new, and bigger, pond (your partner client). The opportunity to catch your favourite fish has now increased.

If you want to reach a new, and potentially untouched, customer audience you should seek a brand with a less significant audience profile overlap. To reuse our fishing analogy, you are now fishing in a completely new pond (partner brand) and looking for a new type of fish (customer). If you get the campaign right, the opportunities to scale your brand awareness and sales potential are vast.





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### Ways to partner with another brand

A successful brand partnerships campaign can take many different forms. A short-term partnership can be a quick-win to trial the cross-promotion of another brand. This might involve you promoting a new brand on an already established customer reward portal or adding a simple banner into one of your CRM sends.

To increase mutually beneficial opportunities with partner brands, you should consider a more collaborative and strategic campaign. For example, exploring different inventory placements throughout your customer journey:

- ➔ Website banners or path-to-conversion brand upsells
- ➔ Gift with purchase or post-purchase upsells on your order confirmation page
- ➔ My account pages to build engaging customer reward portals

- ➔ Order confirmation emails or weekly customer newsletters
- ➔ Social competitions or influencer campaigns
- ➔ Product packaging with QR code tracking

Some brand partnerships campaigns may require input from other teams within your organisation. Whether that's brand, development or legal teams, you should ensure all relevant stakeholder groups are committed before moving forward with campaign execution.



#### A fan of rewards?

Wolverhampton Wanderers increased fan subscriptions and generated **+510% inbound revenue** through brand partnerships.





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## Brand partnerships and the performance channel

Measuring ad spend and return on investment is challenging for brand marketers, particularly with traditional partnership campaigns. You’re often reliant on the partner brand passing back performance data which you then need to match back to your own before you can determine any sort of campaign success. Not only does that take time, but it also makes it incredibly difficult to react during the campaign or to further maximise performance by making small optimisations.

Awin’s real-time reporting technology can simplify the process.

We believe that a partnership programme should be built on the foundation of a robust technology solution which supports the recruitment of new partners, facilitates the tracking of partner campaigns, and automates manual processes like partner rewards.

### Running your partner activity through a performance channel



**Partner introductions**  
Introductions made easy



**Partnership directory**  
Pick your partner brands from a curated, tailored to your needs, discovery matrix



**Partner tracking**  
Effortlessly report on ROI and campaign activity with our robust tracking solution



**Opportunities to scale**  
Easily scale your partnerships further



**Intuitive reporting**  
Track performance and ROI at any time with your reporting dashboard



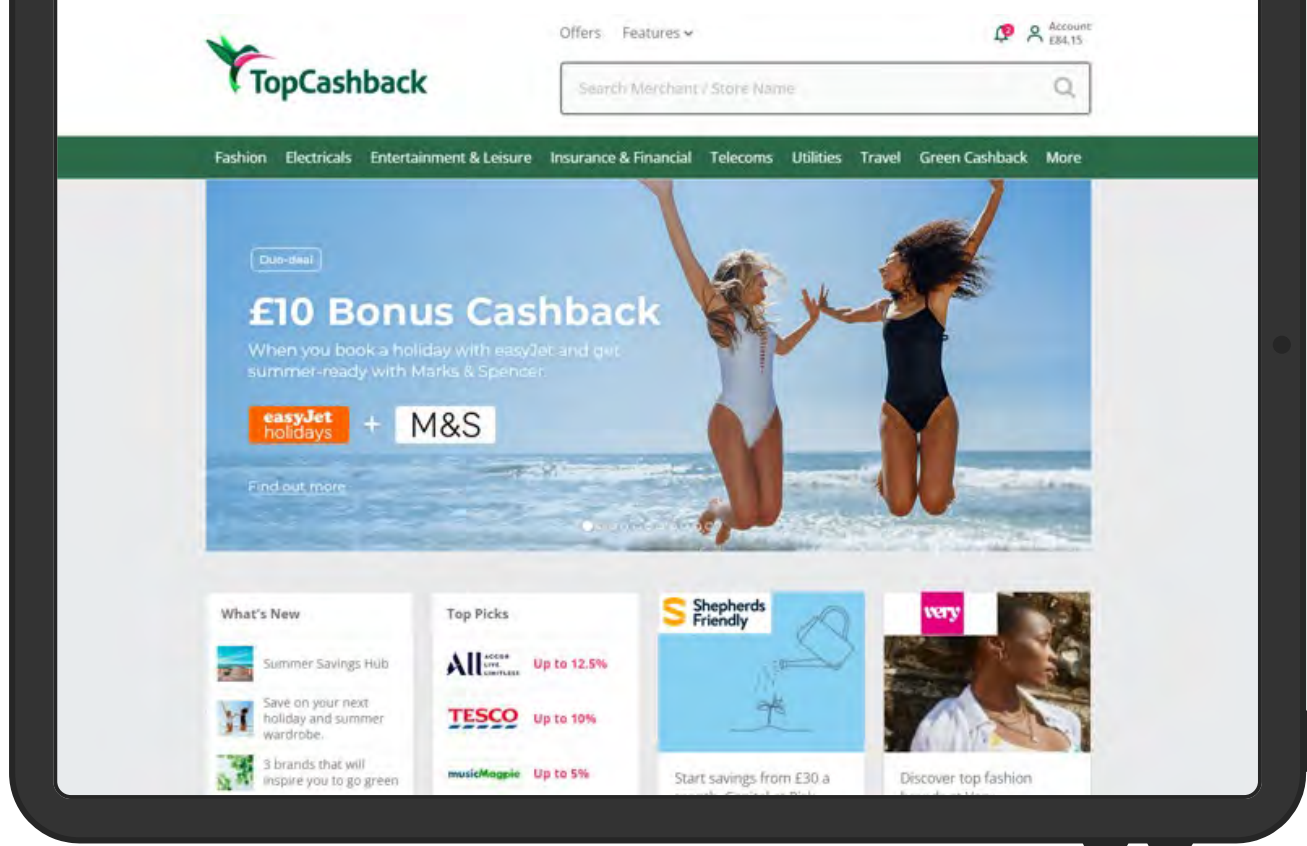
**Campaign simplicity**  
No stress campaigns, let us take care of manual processes for you



**No additional fee**  
Tracking and payments made easy, and free of cost, when promoting another brand



**Partnership guidance**  
Experts at your fingertips at all times



### Can publishers and technology partners get involved with brand partnerships?

Awin’s brand partnerships offering is not advertiser exclusive; traditional affiliates and technology partners can help to boost campaign success and consolidate brand affinity.

From an entry-level, brand partnerships can take the form of two brands sharing a publisher exposure placement. We helped to facilitate a campaign between easyJet Holidays and Marks and Spencer who shared a homepage takeover with cashback publisher, Topcashback. Collaborating on an exposure placement empowers brands to gauge synergy and be in a better position to justify the added complexity of setting up a more strategic, long-term brand partnerships campaign. Awin also acts as a gatekeeper to

an ecosystem of easy-integration technology partners, enabling brands to seamlessly implement activity without backend development, onsite limitations or internal timeframes which might restrict your potential.

Brands can use technology partners to:

- ➔ **Serve** post-purchase upsell messaging
- ➔ **Facilitate** email sends based on a desired action
- ➔ **Offer** gift with purchase technology on the basket page reducing checkout abandonment
- ➔ **Integrate** customer reward portals



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### Getting started

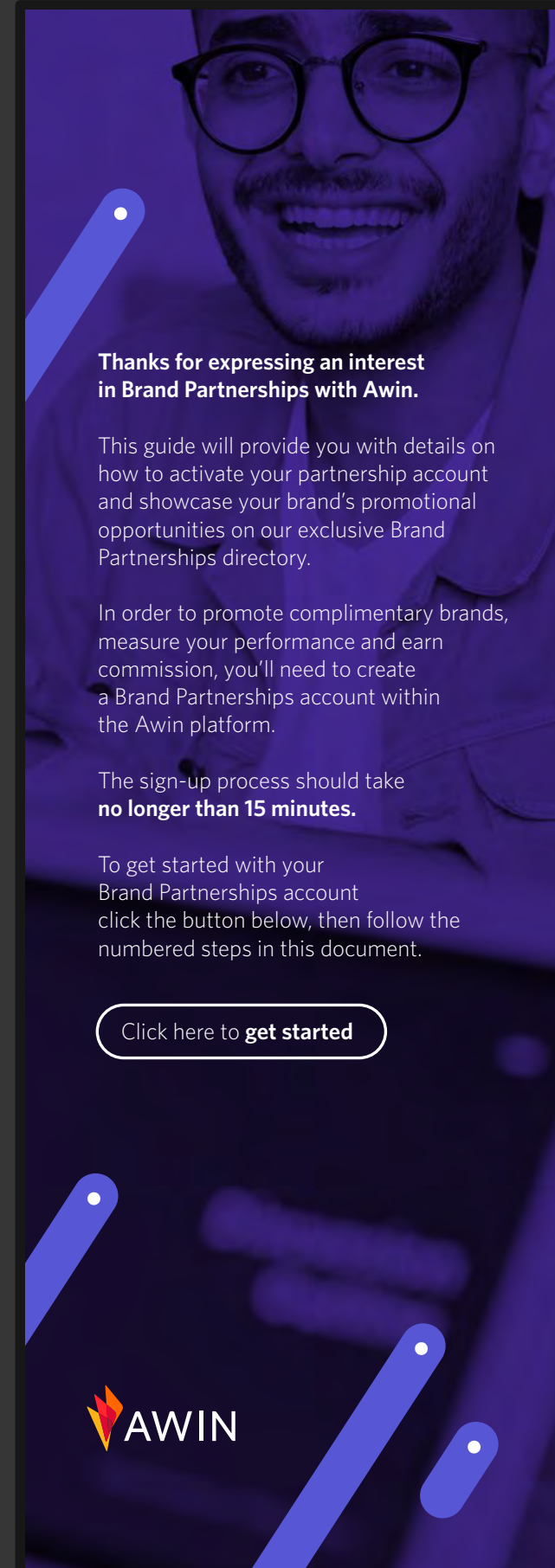
Brand partnerships will be an integral part of brand marketers’ digital strategy, not just today, but long into the future. After reading this guide, you now have all the information you require to take the initial steps on your brand partnerships journey. You can [download our sign-up guide](#) and create your Awin partner account within a matter of minutes, and one of our team specialists will be in touch to discuss opportunities that meet your campaign objectives.

#### Awin is an industry-leading, global partner platform

With twenty years of experience, our platform offers a global community of people, technology and business intelligence insights. No matter what type of partner, level of service, or tools your business needs, Awin provides solutions to drive sustainable growth.

Part of the Axel Springer and United Internet Groups, with ShareASale and Commission Factory, Awin’s global affiliate network is powered by 15 offices worldwide, over 1,200 employees, 241,000 contributing publishers and 21,200 advertisers.

Connecting businesses with customers around the world across the retail, telecommunications, travel and finance verticals, Awin generated £12 billion in revenue for its advertisers and £920 million for its publishers in the last financial year.



## Brand Partnerships Sign-Up Guide

### 01

You’ll be asked to complete some account details. Please note that the email address used to create your account must be a new email address not already registered with the Awin platform. Once your account has been created you can join your existing Awin user account – for details, please see the instructions at the end of this guide.

- a. It’s important to ensure that you prefix **[Brand Partnerships]**, with the brackets, into your company name. This will enable you to fast-track our compliance checks and be more discoverable within the Awin user interface.

### 04

You’ll now need to verify your account. You may be asked at this point to make a credit check depositary payment to Awin.

You can waiver the depositary fee by contacting [uk-brandpartnerships@awin.com](mailto:uk-brandpartnerships@awin.com) and asking for an invitation code.

### 02

You’ll then need to add some details on how you intend to promote partner brands. You can select multiple promotional types, but please ensure you select a “Primary” promotional method.

- a. [Click here](#) if you’re not sure what promotional type to select.



### 05

Congratulations! Your Brand Partnerships account has now been created, but you’re not quite finished yet. Make a note of your newly created Account ID and head over to our Brand Partnership directory sign-up by [clicking here](#).

**Our Brand Partnership directory document** houses all of our opted-in Brand Partnership clients, and provides various details to help you (and them) decide which brands you want to partner with. The opt-in process takes no longer than 5 minutes.

### 03

Next, you’ll be asked to provide further information about your primary promotional details.

- a. When completing the description, you should include as much information as possible. We recommend including information on your audience, partnership objectives and target sectors as well as details about the different opportunities you have to promote other brands.

### 06

Ensure you provide as much of the required information as possible. The more details that you provide, the more likely that complimentary brands will want to partner with you.

- a. You’ll need to insert your newly created Brand Partnerships account ID so that we can link your directory sign-up with your Brand Partnership account.

### What

Your Brand reviewed all of the is correct activated Awin. Click to activate

**Tip:** Once can invite or colleague account. and click

Your Brand completi Awin tea that you documen further in

If you hav then pleas

uk-br