

Nicheology's Affiliate Marketing Academy

Lesson #7

How To Get Free Traffic With Forums

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Introduction

Welcome back! In previous lessons you discovered how to create engaging content and distribute that content as we looked at "ezine article marketing".

SIDEBAR: We're not done with ezine article marketing by a long shot ... there's more of that to come in the future!

And while you can create articles and post them on forums, in most cases you'd get poor results. At worst, you could get kicked off the forum for "cut and paste" participation rather than **active, thoughtful** participation.

Nonetheless, niche forums are a great place to get link exposure, meet new prospects and even meet potential joint venture marketing partners. But –

**You need to approach forum marketing
the right way if you want good results.**

And that's exactly what you'll discover how to do in this lesson. We're going to talk about how to get free traffic from forums.

Let's get started...

Where To Find Niche Forums

Finding forums in your niche is fairly easy. Just go to Google and type your niche keywords followed by the word "forum."

Example: "vacation forum," "weight loss forum," "dog training forum" and so on.

There are forums for virtually every niche and certainly every revenue-generating market.

An Easy Way To Find High Traffic, Active Forums

Obviously, you want to look for forums that are busy with lots of members and lots of posts. No ghost towns allowed. 😊

SIDEBAR: An "active" forum would be one that has lots of posted messages EVERY DAY.

But, what if you don't immediately find a forum that looks very active? What then? And, if you do find a good forum, how can you find more?

It's simple: you just ask.

Let's suppose you find a "dog training" forum that has a few posts daily or weekly. You simply post a request asking for other recommended free public forums related to "dog training".

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-----  
Hello everyone! I love this forum as I'm a big believer in  
community. We can all learn from each other. I'm wondering,  
are there other similar forums to this one that you'd recommend?  
What's the most active forum for those interested in dog  
training?  
-----
```

Posting a similar message like this one will often yield recommendations for other related forums. In a short time you'll be able to identify what the top 3-4 most active forums are within your market.

Note: If you're promoting online marketing products, then here is a great forum: WarriorForum.com.

This forum is one of the busiest marketing forums, and has some of the top marketers in the industry posting on it. You can get a lot of clicks on your link. But you can't post affiliate links – and that's good, **because you should be driving traffic to your blog or newsletter list anyway!**

In addition, be sure to provide value when you post and build your reputation in this community, as it's fairly close-knit.

How To Establish Yourself in the Community

Picture this...

You move to new city. You don't know a single soul in your new neighborhood. But one day you walk out of your house and spot five or six of your neighbors standing on the sidewalk visiting.

What a great time to introduce yourself to several people at once!

The normal approach would be for you to wait until you see a lull in the conversation, apologize for the intrusion, and then properly introduce yourself. Your neighbors would likely warmly accept the "intrusion," introduce themselves to you and perhaps ask you a few questions. After a short while, you'd likely go back to your house so that the group could continue with the conversation.

Let's imagine for a moment that instead of using the above approach, you instead walked right up to the group of neighbors, pushed a couple of them aside so that you could get inside their circle, and then starting loudly spouting your strong opinions on whatever they were talking about.

How well would that go over with your new neighbors? Not very.

The same is true of a forum.

Namely, **a forum is a community**. There are certain unwritten rules and etiquette rules you are expected to follow. And just like any other community, forums also have networks of people who know and trust each other – and they'll definitely be taken aback if you burst onto their forum (their community) and act like an intruder rather than a guest.

Tip: Some people say things like, "but I've been a member of other forums for years – so people should respect me and my experience."

Sorry, doesn't work that way. That's like moving to London, being rude to your neighbors and saying, "But I've lived in big cities all over the world for the past two decades – so I should get your automatic respect."

If it doesn't work in an offline community, it probably won't work in an online community like a niche forum.

Here's a step by step plan for establishing yourself on any forum:

- **Register for an account and then lurk.** Go ahead and register for your forum account and fill out your profile. But before you start posting, spend a few days lurking. Lurking simply means browsing through the posts. Looking around. Get a feel for the forum and its style. Learn about some of the members. Understand the written rules as well as the unwritten rules.

- **Start posting (but don't be too eager).** Once you understand how this particular forum operates, then go ahead and start posting. You may begin with an introduction. Then you can move on to answering questions or perhaps posting your own questions. (More on that in the next section.)

Tip: Don't bombard the forum with posts. On forums like the WarriorForum, you'll automatically be viewed as a potential spammer. That's because forum spammers often plaster the forums with posts just to get their post count up and to get signature exposure. In other words, don't simply post an "I agree with Bob" type post. More on this later.

- **Build your reputation.** Your next step is to just continue making good posts. Answer questions as thoroughly as possible. Seek to establish yourself as an expert on the forum – not by telling people you're an expert, but rather by showing them (by helping people with their questions). The more respected you are in the community, the more clicks you'll get on your link.

How To Create Valuable Posts

You can't just blanket a forum with a bunch of "me too" and "I agree" posts and expect to build a good reputation.

Instead, you need to provide value to the forum.

Here are seven different ways you can post on a forum:

- 1. Post an introduction.** This is one of the first posts you should make on the forum.
- 2. Welcome others to the forum.** You can also post to other people's introduction threads and welcome them to the forum.
- 3. Ask questions.** Here you should post thoughtful questions. Don't post questions other members have asked a million times on the forum. And don't ask questions that you can easily find the answer to on Google.
- 4. Answer other people's questions.** Don't just give a one or two line answer. Instead, give as much information as possible.
- 5. Share your opinion.** Not every post you make needs to be full of facts and figures. Sometimes you can share your opinion – just be sure you don't state your opinion as fact.
- 6. Comment on other people's answers and add information.** If someone else has already posted a good answer to a question, you can post that you agree with the answer. However, you should also take this opportunity to post additional information that adds value to the thread (rather than merely posting "I agree").
- 7. Post about hot topics.** Finally, another way to add value to the forum is to be the first to post niche news and other hot topics. For example, if you're a member of an auction forum and you see a news article about eBay changing their fee structure, you may want to post about it. (Just be sure someone else didn't already make a similar post.)

How To Get Link Exposure

Once you've spent several days (or even a few weeks) working to establish yourself as a trusted, valuable member of the community, you can start dropping your signature link at the end of your posts. ***Be sure to read the rules of the forum first as this will vary.*** Some forums allow you to immediately include a "signature link" at the end of your posts while others require you to post a specified number of messages prior to this or be an active member for a specified period of time first.

In a previous lesson I told you how to create a resource box for an article. You create a forum signature link in exactly the same way.

Namely, **you write as if you're writing a headline.** And that means your signature line should:

- **Be oriented towards the reader and packed with benefits.** Your readers only care about themselves and their problems, so your signature link should tell them how following your link will quickly and easily solve their problems. Use the word "you" rather than words like "I." If you're directing prospects to your newsletter list, tell them what benefits they'll get for free (free is another trigger word).
- **Arouse curiosity whenever possible.** Remember, one good way to arouse curiosity is by promising to tell a "secret," or by promising a big benefit, but not letting people know how they'll get that big benefit.

Here are a few examples...

EXAMPLE: Read My Article "How To Increase Your Affiliate Commissions By 300% By Your Next Payday" by Clicking Here

EXAMPLE: Free Report: The "Travel Agents" Way To Get Free Cruises (Hint: Even YOU Can Do This!) Click Here for your free download.

EXAMPLE: How I Went From Forty And Fat To Forty And Fit! Read the whole story at my blog and learn how you can too by Clicking Here

How To Network with Others

Finally, do NOT forget that while you can certainly promote your links in most niche forums, you can also use these places to find and meet with potential joint venture marketers.

As such, **be sure to network with like-minded others** and start a dialogue, perhaps via the forum's PM (private message) features.

You just discovered the right way to use forums to meet prospects, joint venture partners and get plenty of link exposure.

The key is to build relationships and establish a good reputation first – clicks on your signature link will naturally follow.

Later on, after you're a well-established member of various forums, you may find that you get extra leeway in your posts.

Example: If someone asks a question about a product, you may be permitted to answer that question using your affiliate link. Or if someone asks a particular complex question, you may be able to post the answer on the forum and then tell them they can learn more on your blog.

New members rarely get these sorts of privileges. But those who've earned them – e.g., long time forum members who've consistently added value – often get to promote from time to time. (Just don't try this sort of thing unless you're absolutely sure it's allowed.)

The important thing is to get started.

Spend 5-10 minutes each morning or evening at forums. Instead of spending time "surfing the web" reading news or watching Youtube videos or other similar things, spend some of that time entrenching yourself in a community.