

Nicheology Affiliate Marketing Academy

Lesson #11

How To Use Interviews To Sell Affiliate Products, Part 1

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Introduction

What I want to teach you how to do today is create an "interview" to use in promoting your favorite affiliate program.

The basic process works like this...

Get the author of the product you are promoting to grant you an interview in which you ask several informative questions and promote his/her product at the conclusion of the interview.

The interview is to be conducted via email. You send a series of questions to whoever agrees to be interviewed and they reply back with their answers to the questions. The interview is to be distributed in TEXT form as a PDF file. (Not an "audio" which is more difficult to encode with your affiliate link.)

Your goal is to get 5-8 pages of information from the interview.

The benefits are easy to spot...

- You encode the promotional spot to his/her product with your affiliate link prior to distributing the report.
- When someone clicks on the link to the product being highlighted at the conclusion of the interview and orders, you earn a commission.
- The author of the product agrees to the interview because you are using it to promote their offer.

Everybody goes home happy.

Now before I explain how to do it, let me give you the two basic strategies you can employ in using interviews to promote your favorite affiliate program.

- **Direct Promotion**. The idea here is simple: conduct an interview and give it away to those who visit your blog, send it to those on your list, distribute it at Scribd.com, give it away at forums, etc. Distribute the interview in all ways possible to get as many people to read it as

possible.

- **Indirect Promotion.** The idea here is to allow other people to rebrand the interview with THEIR affiliate link to the product being highlighted at the conclusion of the interview. They end up earning commissions for click-thrus and sales. Why would you do this? Because you have a box at the beginning of the interview that reads, something similar to this, "Interview conducted by Paul B Evans. For more informative interviews, articles and content, visit <http://www.paulbevans.com/>"

Of course, smart affiliates (raise your hand, that's you! ☺) will do both of these distribution processes.

I'll speak more on the second of these strategies (indirect promotion) in next week's lesson.

So, that's the basic operation.

What I want to do now is give you a run through of how to create an interview to use in this manner.

Step 1: Creating Your Offer

Why would someone want to agree to your interview? That's what you've got to determine up front in order to convince them to say "yes". Why would they do it?

Simple: Because you're offering them something in exchange.

You interview them by sending them 10-15 questions in exchange for them pitching their products and services at the end of the interview. Which you'll insert your affiliate link into the promotional spot to earn a commission on referred sales that result from distributing the interview.

You may also provide additional exposure and links for them by mentioning their names (and websites) in other marketing materials (such as articles, blog posts, press releases, and more).

Now here's the other key: Your potential partners are looking for a good return on their time investment. That means you need to make it as easy as possible on your partner while giving him as much benefit as possible in return.

Remember: Your partners have their own projects going on, and whatever they're doing will rightfully be more important to them than your project. But if you show them that you are going to bring them more sales for their project, you've got a winner.

So if they see that you're asking them to invest a lot of time for very little in return, they'll say no. But if you can offer them a LOT of benefits in exchange for a very small investment of time, they'll be more likely to say yes.

In short: Stack the offer heavily in favor of your partners.

Here are some suggestions...

- Let them know that the interview will be used to directly promote their offer.
- Let them know how you'll be distributing the interview, proving to them that they have a lot of free promotion to gain.
- Let them know they have permission to use the interview themselves in any way they choose.
- Let them know there is no "rush" and they can answer back at their convenience.
- Let them know that you'll design every question in such a way that it gives them an opportunity to promote their offer.
- Let them know you won't overwhelm them with 50 questions... you'll limit it to 15.
- Let them know they can answer the interview questions by sampling existing content they have if appropriate.

Step 2: Finding Potential Partners

Once you've figured out how to structure your offer in favor of your partners, it's time for you to find potential partners.

Obviously, your first option is to ask the author of the primary product you are currently promoting as an affiliate.

If this is a very popular product, you may not be able to secure the interview.

Don't despair!

Look for other products to promote (sometimes by "lesser knowns" who are still qualified authors) as secondary offers. You should never limit yourself to promoting only ONE product. Promote other offers that are related to the same market.

You want to look for known experts in your market.

Here's where to find these partners:

- ➔ **Search for your niche keywords in Google.** You're looking for the top players in your market, so search for your niche's top keywords. Be sure to also take note of who's paying for the pay per click traffic (i.e., find out what products are being promoted in the sponsored ads in Google).
- ➔ **Look on forums, blogs and social media sites.** Regularly visit your niche's top forums and blogs. See who gets talked about a lot. Also see which experts regularly participate on the forums and blogs as well as on social media sites like Twitter.
- ➔ **Visit product marketplaces like ClickBank.com and Amazon.com.** Visit these marketplaces to find out which marketers are selling the top products in your niche. These folks are your potential partners.
- ➔ **Ask for recommendations.** You can ask your target market who they consider to be the top experts in the field. You can also ask your existing partners to introduce you to their partners.
- ➔ **Listen to the buzz.** You should regularly read your niche's top newsletters, blogs and forums to keep on top of the niche "buzz." Those marketers who know how to create buzz often make for good potential partners.

Step 3: Proposing a Joint Venture

Once you've put together and researched your list of potential joint venture (JV) partners, it's time to approach them and ask them to work with you on your interview.

Let me be up front with you: The easiest way to get a joint venture partner to say yes to your proposal is to first develop a relationship with that person.

That's because they're like anyone else – they prefer to work with and do favors for those they already know, like and trust.

Plus since the top marketers and experts in your niche get dozens of JV requests every week or every month, they're more likely to work with the people they already know.

That means they likely won't work with you if they don't know you, but it certainly is easier to do a JV with a friend as opposed to getting a "yes" from someone who doesn't know you.

That means you should **ideally** seek to develop relationships first with your potential partners. At a minimum, you should get your name in front of the potential partner so they have at least some familiarity with you when you approach them.

Here are a few ways to get on your potential partners' radar screens:

- Ask your existing partners to introduce you to the experts and partners they know.
- Become an affiliate for a potential partner (and make that person some money). **IMPORTANT.**
- Make a positive post on your blog about your potential partners. Many marketers use Google Alerts to monitor what's being said about them online. You can even point out your post in advance to the marketer.
- Interact with your potential partners on their blogs, on forums, on Twitter and on other social media sites.

- Recommend your potential partner's products and services - without an affiliate link - whenever someone asks a related question on your niche's busiest forums.
- Attend your prospective partners' teleseminars. Call in early to chat with the potential partner. When they ask for questions at the end of the call, state your full name and ask a thoughtful question.
- Go to offline conferences. Here you can meet face to face with the experts in your niche and accomplish in just a few minutes what might take weeks to do online.

There are other ways to accomplish the same thing, such as by releasing products and making a name for yourself in the niche. This takes time, however - and if you have that sort of time, then it's best to use that time to start building a relationship with the person.

Tip: You may choose to just skip all the relationship building and instead pay for this person's time. If your potential partner offers coaching or consulting, then you can simply ask to buy 30 to 60 minutes of their time for an interview.

Tip: You may choose to just skip all the relationship building and instead just ask since your entire purpose is to use the interview to promote their offer.

Whether you develop a relationship, get some recognition first or perhaps you need to approach the person "cold," you'll need to create an engaging, compelling JV proposal letter.

This letter should:

- **Include an engaging subject line that captures your potential partner's attention.** If the subject line doesn't get them to open your email, then your email will end up in their trash folder.
- **Answer the question on your potential partner's mind,** which is, "What's in it for me?" That means you need to spell out the benefits they'll receive clearly and succinctly.

- **Make it easy for your potential partner to say yes.** Remember, the partnership should be stacked in your JV partner's favor.
- **Tell them what to do next.** This is the call to action, where you tell your potential partner to reply affirmatively to your email.
- **Drop names for social proof.** If you already have done projects with other well know persons within the market, go ahead and drop those names in your email – especially if your existing partners are friends with your potential partners.

Here's just a quick example contact letter you can modify for your own use...

Subject: Can I give this away?

Dear [Insert Name Here],

I'd like to promote [Insert Product Name Here] on my blog, to my lists, at Scribd.com, in all the ezine article directories, on Twitter, MySpace, Hubpages and everywhere else that I can.

I just need one tiny thing from you: a short email interview.

I'd like to send you over 10 questions for you to answer that will be used to directly promote [Insert Product Name Here]. I'll create an attractive cover page, format it, convert it to PDF and then get it out to as many people as possible.

Obviously, I want to put my affiliate link into the finished PDF to earn a commission on referred sales. Plus, I'll get other people to distribute it as well.

The bottom line is: you'll get ongoing viral traffic for [Insert Product Name Here] by answering a few questions via email just one time.

Would you be willing to do this?

I'd appreciate an answer even if you CAN'T just so I'll know to look elsewhere. I'd appreciate an answer if you CANT even more.
:-)

Thanks in advance,
[Your Name Here]

P.S. I'm already an active affiliate and have produced X sales for you during the past month alone.

P.P.S. You can use the completed interview in any way that you want as well.

Step 4: Conducting The Interview

After that, it's just a waiting game. When you find someone who agrees to the interview, then send them over your questions by email.

Upon receiving their answers to the interview questions, polish it into an attractive looking file, insert your affiliate link for any promotion of their offer, convert it to PDF and begin distributing it. (We'll talk more about distributing ANY free report in an next week's lesson.)

UPDATE: Member "On-Demand" Resource

Before we close out, I've added a set of 55 questions you can use in your interviews...

INTERVIEW SAMPLE QUESTIONS

Introduction and Opening Questions:

1. Can you tell us a little bit about what you do?
2. How did you get started in _____?
3. When did you first decide that _____ was right for you?
4. How should our listeners gauge if _____ is right for them?
5. How long did it take you to get you to where you are now, and what would you say to our listeners who are already tired and frustrated?
6. What information do you plan to pass on to our listeners today? Please just give us a quick walkthrough.

Main Body Questions:

7. What are the top 5 areas I should concentrate on in _____?
8. What advice would you give someone who's brand-new to _____?
9. Exactly how would one go about doing _____? Give us a step-by-step breakdown.
10. Can you recommend some really quality _____ for our listeners?
11. What's the absolute easiest way to _____?
12. In your experience, what's the best way to _____?
13. Do you have a formula for _____?
14. What's your favorite way to _____?
15. What are some of the key points you look for when _____?
16. Would you suggest our listeners do _____? Please explain.
17. What are some pitfalls that our listeners should be on the lookout for, and how can they be avoided?
18. What's the biggest mistake you made getting started in _____?
19. What big mistakes do you see others make?
20. What would you say is the one more important thing you've learned?
21. In your experience, why is it that?
22. What information do you wish you had when you were first starting out?
23. What do you think are the keys to becoming a successful _____?
24. What is the difference between you, and all the other _____ doing the same thing that you do?
25. How can a _____ stand out among the other _____?
26. What are some thing you do NOT recommend about _____?
27. Please share one or two of your favorite, and most helpful resource links?
28. If you could sum up _____ in _____ steps, what would they be?
29. What's one of the things that you find most challenging about _____?
30. What do you think makes the difference between a good _____ and a great _____?
31. What's the favorite part of your day as a _____?
32. What's the least favorite part of your day?
33. What's a little known secret about _____?
34. What would you say is the best kept secret in all of _____?
35. What do you consider to be the most powerful _____?
36. What does it really take to succeed in _____?
37. If you had to share exactly _____ keys to doing _____, what would they be in order of priority?

38. For each of those _____ keys, what are some goals that our listeners should set for reaching each one of them?
39. What are some realistic long-term and short-term goals for our listeners?
40. What were some of your goals early on?
41. I know you're a big believer in _____, but can anyone do this, and if so how?
42. Ok, I'll ask what's really on my mind...what's the easiest way to _____?
43. I hear the term _____ a lot. What does it mean and how does it effect our listeners?
44. What's the first thing you recommend our listeners do after they're done listening to this call?
45. Who are the people that inspired you and why?
46. What did you learn from those people that you'd like to pass on to our listeners?
47. What do you see as the next big trend in _____?
48. Give me a short comment about the following words and phrases...
49. What tools/resources would you say are essential to doing _____?

Conclusion and Call to Action Questions:

50. As we wrap things up, what should our listeners be doing for the next 30 days, 90, and 1 year to accomplish _____?
51. What final words of wisdom would you like to pass on to everyone who's listening in to this call?
52. Where can our listeners find out more about you?
53. What freebies can you offer to our listeners today?
54. What special offer can you make for our listeners?
55. Tell us a little about some of your products?

Here's what I use for recording my interviews and hosting group coaching...

<http://nicheology.org/age5>