

# **Nicheology Affiliate Marketing Academy**

Lesson #15

## **How To Become A 5-Star Affiliate Blogger**

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## Introduction

One of your most powerful tools is your blog. That's because **your blog allows you to:**

- ✓ Pull in traffic from the search engines.
- ✓ **Establish yourself as a voice of authority in your niche.**
- ✓ Cultivate relationships and build trust with your readers.
- ✓ **Promote affiliate products and services in dozens of ways.**

Today's lesson is on that fourth (and last) point.

Let me quickly share...

**7 ways you can use your blog to  
make money promoting affiliate offers.**

Let's jump right in...

## 1. Write a Content Post That Specifically Promotes an Offer

Some of the articles you post on your blog serve the purpose of sharing good content as a way to earn your prospects' trust.

In other posts, you may create what amounts to an advertisement for a product (i.e. a direct pitch).

**Here I suggest that you combine the two,  
by sharing good content while also promoting an offer.**

Have you ever seen an "advertorial" in a magazine or newspaper? These are paid advertisements that look and read like articles.

The reason they work so well is because:

- They DON'T look like ads, so people start reading them.
- They contain useful information, so people keep reading them... right through to the advertisement (which is usually, but not always, at the end of the article).

You can do the same thing on your blog by creating content posts that promote specific offers.

Examples:

- Create an article about how to cook a big meal for an event. Include affiliate links for cookware that's designed for the purpose of cooking large amounts of food.
- Post an article about how to teach a dog to come when called. Include affiliate link for a dog-training information product.
- Write an article about different ways to style hair. Make sure all of these methods include the use of hair extensions - and then use an affiliate link to sell hair extensions.
- Create an article about how to save for retirement. Include your affiliate link to a retirement savings book or ebook.
- Put up an article on your blog about making money by buying and selling antiques on eBay. Include an affiliate link to eBay.

## **2. Post a Review**

People are always looking for reviews about specific products.

If you do your keyword research, you'll see plenty of searches that look something like this: "[*product name*] review." And that means you can pull in some traffic with your product reviews.

But that's NOT all.

**Your regular readers will also appreciate your product reviews. That's because you've developed a relationship with these folks.**

They trust you. And so they're actually depending on you to give them a good review of products on the market.

Here's how to create a great review:

**Step 1: Read and use the product.**

This one is obvious, right? Yet some folks try to take a shortcut by extracting information from the sales letter and/or reading other affiliate's reviews.

**But here's the thing:** Your potential customer could do the same thing. When he reads your blog, he's NOT looking for a sales letter summary or a rehash of someone else's opinion.

He's looking for YOUR opinion. And the only way you can offer it is by reading – and using – the product.

**Step 2: Craft an eye-catching title.**

A blog post titled "[Product Name] Review" is straight to the point... but it's also boring. Instead, you can create a little mystery by using titles like:

Example #1: The Truth About [Product Name]

Example #2: What Every [Target Market Member] Ought to Know About [Product Name]

Example #3: Seven Things You Didn't Know About [Product Name]

**Step 3: Open your review with a summary.**

Some people won't want to pick through a long review just to find out whether you recommend the product or not. That means you should open your review with a fast summary where you:

- Tell the reader what the product is and what it does.
- Share the top two or three good things about the product.

- List one or two downsides.
- And then close the first paragraph by letting the reader know whether you recommend it or not.

However, just because some people want to skim the review doesn't mean you should divulge everything in that first paragraph. You WANT your readers to keep reading, because that gives you time to sell the product.

**Here's how to keep them reading:** Arouse curiosity in this first paragraph. For example, when you're talking about a pro of the product, you can say something like,

"This product shares something you won't see ANYWHERE else (more on that in a moment)."

#### **Step 4: Provide details.**

Now you go on to provide a detailed, honest review – product flaws and all. Tell people what you liked and disliked about the product. If you used the product, share your results (along with any proof of your results).

Tip: You'll actually build credibility by mentioning the flaws and weaknesses. People will trust you more. And that means they're more likely to buy from you.

#### **Step 5: Close strong.**

You've shared the good and the bad of the product. Now it's time to once again *restate your opinion* about whether you recommend or don't recommend the product.

If you do recommend the product, quickly reiterate the reason(s) why, such as by reminding readers of the top benefits of the product. Then call your reader to action by specifically encouraging them to click on your link and buy the product.

Tip: Text reviews are great – especially if you include screenshots or pictures of the product. But video reviews take it a step further since you can actually show someone the product in more detail, which helps people imagine owning the product. Once a person imagines owning a product, they've pretty much made the buying decision!

## 3. Get a Guest Article from the Product Owner

Imagine this:

Someone else does all the work, and you get a cut of 50% (or more) of the profits. Sounds too easy, right?

**Well, that's exactly what happens when you ask a product owner to create an article for you.**

They write the article, but you get to include your affiliate link. And so you get a commission whenever someone buys through your link!

Added Bonus: Your blog gets a boost in credibility when a well-known expert (maybe even a niche "celebrity") blogs on your site. When you associate yourself with experts, people will assume you're one too! It's a great way to instantly establish yourself in any niche.

Below is an email template you can swipe. (Note that this tactic works particularly well if you've already made some sales for this particular vendor, meaning he or she recognizes your name.)

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SUBJECT: [Name], I'd like to feature you on my [name of niche] blog...

Dear [Name],

My blog readers want to hear from you! If you have 15 minutes, then I'd like to introduce you to [number] potential prospects.

Here's the scoop...

My readers are hungry to know more about [a solution to a niche problem]. Obviously, the best solution on the market is your [name of product].

If you check your records you'll see I'm already actively promoting your product. But I think I can get you even more sales if you agree to write a guest blog post on [url of blog].

All you have to do is write a short article that answers the question, [pressing niche question]. Then I'll post your article with your byline and my affiliate link.

You should enjoy more sales within hours.

Hit reply and let me know if you like the article topic or if you'd prefer to write on [another niche topic] instead.

Thanks in advance!

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

[Your Link]

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## **4. Post an Excerpt from the Product You're Recommending**

Let me make this clear right from the get-go: **If you're going to use this killer tip, you MUST get permission from the product owner.**

Do NOT try to interpret the "fair use" law and all of that. Just get permission and you won't have to worry about stepping into any legal gray areas.

With that out of the way, let's move on the actual tip...

**The idea here is to post a teaser as a way to whet the prospect's appetite for the information product.**

Remember earlier when I said that people are more likely to buy something once they've imagined themselves actually using the product?

That applies here too, because reading an actual excerpt makes it easier to imagine ownership.



With that in mind, let me give you a few ideas of how to make your excerpt more compelling:

- 1) Use a screenshot (or video).** Sure, you could just post a regular ol' text excerpt on your blog – basically, it would look like any other article. But instead of doing that, instead you may consider posting a screenshot or a video of the excerpt. It's that psychology of ownership thing again. ☺
- 2) Create a PDF file that mirrors the product.** This one is POWERFUL. Instead of creating a screenshot, you create a PDF file that looks just like the actual product. You include the table of contents (with all but the excerpt chapter "grayed out" to indicate that the reader won't be able to read all the chapters). You can also include the author's page, copyrights, etc.

Example: If you were excerpting something out of the first chapter, your table of contents might look like this:

#### **Table of Contents**

Chapter 1: What Every Affiliate Should Know About Blogging

Chapter 2: What Every Affiliate Should Know About Video Marketing

Chapter 3: What every Affiliate Should Know About Social Media

(And so on.)

After your table of contents, you include the excerpt.

**However, here's the key:** You should end your excerpt in a cliffhanger moment!

Example: If you're excerpting out a list of 21 tips, then just include the first seven. In fact, you may even stop mid-sentence! Then you include your affiliate link with a note telling readers to click on the link to read the rest of the chapter.

Tip: You can include a page for each of the chapters. Except instead of including excerpts, you create a small ad for that chapter. In other words, you list the benefits and what the reader will discover.

## 5. Interview the Product Owner

Here's another way to get the product owner to do almost all the work while you get the benefits of:

- Sharing the profits.
- Being associated with this niche expert.

The only difference is that instead of having the product owner write an article, you interview the person.

**At the end of the interview you talk about the product (using YOUR affiliate link).**

Here's how it works:

**Step 1:** You set up a teleconference bridge line (using a service like [e-teleconferencing.com](http://e-teleconferencing.com) or similar).

**Step 2:** You ask product owners to join you on a live teleconference.

Tip: You can use the email template I gave you earlier, except modify it so that you're asking the product owner to do an interview rather than write an article. Also, ask them for 30 minutes, 45 minutes or even an hour of their time.

**Step 3:** Advertise the free (live) interview call on your blog and elsewhere. Also ask the product owner to tell his list and blog readers about the call.

**Step 4:** Record the live call. Most teleconference bridge lines provide this feature and send you a MP3 file. If you have the equipment needed to record the call from home, you can make a backup recording as well.

**Step 5:** Distribute the downloadable MP3 file on your site. Give it to the product owner to distribute on his or her site as well.

One last tip...

Be sure you get a lot of content during the call.

DON'T turn this call into a pitch-fest, because no one likes dialing in to listen to ads.

**However, if you give your listeners good content that's useful but incomplete, they'll happily listen to your pitch at the end of the call (which tells them how to get more info).**

Example: Let's suppose you were interviewing me about affiliate marketing. You could ask me questions about a handful of these affiliate marketing tips.

We'd go over several of them in detail. And then at the end of the call we'd point listeners to your affiliate link for this report.

## **6. Use Text Ads**

Not every promotion you do needs to appear within your actual blog posts. You have plenty of space around your blog to insert ads.

You can even use ad rotation scripts and plug-ins to find out which ads convert the best (so that you can show the best ads more frequently).

If you want to get ad clicks, there are a few things you need to do:

**1) Post relevant, targeted ads.** The more targeted and relevant your ads, the better response rate you'll get. So that means you'll likely do better if you post ads for copywriting books on copywriting blogs (as opposed to just posting ads for general "make money" books).

Example: It's better to post a "how to train a poodle" ad on a poodle blog instead of posting a general "how to train a dog" ad.

Tip: If you've broken your blog up into various categories and subcategories, then show ads in those categories that are laser-targeted to the topics.

**2) Test the look of your ads.** Many bloggers find that creating text ads that LOOK like content boosts their click-through rate. That's because ads that look like ads are often ignored due to the reader's "ad blindness."

Will it work for you? The only way to know for sure is to test it for yourself and see.

**3) Craft compelling ads.** You have a targeted audience. You're showing relevant, targeted ads. But you're not going to get clicks (much less sales) if you're not writing compelling ads.

**Here's the key**: If you're writing a short ad, the goal of that ad is to GET A CLICK.

Do NOT try to sell the product in that space, as you don't have enough room. Instead, all your ad needs to do is persuade the reader to click on the ad.

To do this, your ad must include a compelling, eye-catching headline and a persuasive body that includes a big benefit.

Let me give you some examples...

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Are You Poisoning Your Baby?

New research reveals "safe" foods are actually toxic to your child. Click here now to find out if your baby is really safe...

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Obviously, the above ad works on shock and curiosity. But if you had a baby, would you click through? Probably. It's a pretty emotionally charged ad.

Tip: Just make sure if you use an emotionally charged ad that there's a "payoff" when the reader clicks through. In other words, don't use a misleading or deceptive ad.

Another example:

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Former Waitress Strikes it Rich  
Waitress goes from \$7.50 an hour to \$750,000! Click here to  
get the free report that shows you how she did it - and how  
you can too!

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This particular ad would work well for an affiliate link that points to a  
squeeze page for a free report.

## **7. Use Banners and Buttons**

You don't have to limit yourself to plain text ads.

**You can also add banners, buttons and other graphical ads to your blog.**

Here again, the key is to test your graphical ads.

Example: Some folks find that blinking and flashing banners are  
ignored due to ad blindness. Whether that's true on your blog or  
not remains to be seen - so test it! (You can use an ad rotator  
to give your ads equal time.)

In most cases, affiliate product vendors provide banners and buttons for affiliates.  
If your vendor doesn't, just ask.

Otherwise, you can create your own. Here's how:

**Step 1:** Grab graphics at a cheap stock photo site like [iStockphoto.com](http://iStockphoto.com).  
Look for something eye-catching - faces, babies, money, cute animals, etc.  
(They tend to work because of the emotional reaction people get when they  
look at those sorts of photos.) Just make sure the photo is related to  
whatever it is you're selling.

**Step 2:** Use a graphics program like Photoshop™ or the free [Gimp.org](http://Gimp.org) to  
create your actual banner.

Note: Please note that standard banner and graphics sizes  
include 125 X 125 pixels, 120 X 24 pixels, 468 X 60 pixels  
and so on. However, you don't have to be so rigid. Indeed,  
you may find better results if you use nonstandard

graphics, such as ovals instead of rectangles, octagons instead of squares and so on. Test it for yourself and see!

**Step 3:** Craft compelling copy. Even though you're creating a graphical banner or other ad, what will cause people to click (or not) largely depends on the actual words you use in the ad. Refer back to the previous tip to learn how to write a good ad.