

How to Make \$500 a Month as an Affiliate

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How to Make \$500 a Month as an Affiliate

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Affiliate marketing is one of the most common ways that people make money online. There are a virtually unlimited number of products and services that you can promote and earn commissions on, so whatever market or niche you're working in, chances are you can find affiliate offers.

Taking a step back for a moment, the way affiliate marketing works is you (the affiliate) recommend a product from a merchant, such as Amazon for example. If someone clicks through to buy the product using your special link, you will get credited for the sale and earn a commission.

These commissions can vary from a few cents to hundreds of dollars per sale, depending on the merchant, the cost of the product, the market you're working in and various other factors.

In many ways, it's very similar to working as a commissioned sales person for the vendor, except you can promote the products in many different ways, through whatever method is best suited for your particular situation.

And, you're a completely independent affiliate, of course, so you don't have to worry about working certain hours, showing up at an office for weekly sales meetings or anything else that would go along with a traditional "sales" job :-)

In this report, we're going to look at several strategies that you can use to earn \$500 per month (or more) as an affiliate marketer. Then we're going to lay out a step-by-step action plan that you could either follow directly or tweak as you see fit.

Let's dig in...

What Can You Promote?

There are literally tens of thousands of things that you can promote as an affiliate. Anything from books and movies, to common household items right through to heavy machinery and other highly specialized products.

One of the most popular affiliate programs is [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com), where you can earn a commission on virtually everything they sell. Whether you're recommending a book that you read or anything else in their massive product catalog, you can get paid for referring sales to them.



The image shows a banner for the Amazon Associates program. At the top left is the "amazonassociates" logo. Below it, a dark blue banner contains the text "Profit from our experience" and "Earn up to 10% advertising fees with a trusted e-commerce leader". The banner is surrounded by various product images, including book covers like "The Help" by Kathryn Stockett, "Dive from Space" by Arthur M. S. Michaels, and "Kill Alex Cross" by James Patterson, as well as a "Popular Science" magazine cover and a "Rolling Stone" magazine cover. The bottom of the banner features a dark blue background with the number "330" and the text "HOW DARK STAY".

Of course, there are many other alternatives to Amazon as well. Some of these other programs, such as eBay, offer a wide range of products to promote while others are focused on specific products or services, such as website hosting.

If you already have a website, chances are you can find affiliate offers that will appeal to your audience. And if you don't already have a website and are looking for ideas for niches that you can work in, you can choose from hundreds of options.

How Much Can You Earn?

This is a question that can't be answered easily. Some products will pay just a few cents on each sale, requiring a lot of referrals to reach the \$500 per month mark. Other offers might earn you that \$500 with a single sale.

Rather than asking how much you can make, the better way to look at it is what you need to do to earn \$500 per month.

The best way to determine this is to calculate how many of something you would need to "sell" each month in order to generate that \$500. If the product you're recommending pays you a \$50 commission, you would need to refer 10 sales to earn \$500. If it pays 50 cents per sale, you would need to refer 1,000 sales.

Once you have some idea of how many sales you need to make every month, you can start to design a plan for reaching that goal.

Let's look at a simple example...

Let's say you have a blog where you write about woodworking. There are lots of different things you could promote that would appeal to readers in this market:

- Project plans
- Tools
- Books
- Instructional DVDs
- Specialty wood suppliers

Project plans and books would typically pay out up to about \$1 per sale based on the relatively low prices. Tools, on the other hand, could pay out much more. If you referred a sale for a \$1,000 tool, you might earn \$75 to \$100 in affiliate commission.

Let's say you choose to promote tools, because of the higher payout. If you earn an average of \$75 per sale, you need 7 sales to reach (and slightly surpass) your goal.

That doesn't sound like many sales, but something to keep in mind is that higher priced products don't sell as easily, since there is a higher investment required on the part of the buyer. Even though you don't earn as much per sale, you might earn more by promoting a lower cost product.

We're going to look at some strategies for determining what the most profitable option is shortly.

Keep in mind that this is just one example. You can find offers related to virtually any topic - we've included a list of places to look for these offers at the end of this section.

How to Promote Affiliate Offers

There are various ways to promote affiliate offers:

- Via your website
- Through social media like Facebook and Twitter
- Classified ads (both online and in print)
- Purpose-built websites

If you already have a website, you can promote affiliate offers through the site itself, through your email newsletter if you have one, via your Facebook Page and so on. In this case, you would want to go looking for affiliate offers that would appeal to your audience.

Social media sites like Facebook and Twitter can be used in conjunction with a website or they can be used completely on their own. If you have a reasonable following on either or both of them, and you've built good relationships with your followers, you can post short promotions along with your affiliate link and generate referrals from there.

In both of these cases, one of the most effective ways to promote these offers is to review products or services that would be of interest to your audience. Ideally these would be things that you've bought and used yourself so you can talk about them with some authority.

Classified ads are another effective way to promote affiliate offers, both through online ads and through traditional classified ads in print newspapers and magazines. While you can find free classified websites and sometimes even free print classifieds, this method will typically cost you something to place the ads.

There are a couple of ways you can approach this strategy.

Number one, you can simply link directly to the offer that you're promoting. This is known as "direct linking."

For example, if you were promoting a product on [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com), you would simply link the ad directly to the product page on Amazon. Anyone clicking through on the ad would wind up on that page immediately.

Number two, you can link to a page on your own website where you offer the visitor a review, more information about the product or something else that adds value above and beyond the product page itself. You would then link to the product's page from within the content on your own website.

Both these methods will work, but you'll often find that sending the visitor to your own website and giving them more information about the product will be more effective. If they know what they're looking for, it's quite likely they would simply go directly to the product's website in the first place. But if you offer something else of value, they will often visit your site first to see what you have to say.

Note: Some affiliate programs do not allow direct linking - make sure you read the terms and conditions of any program you sign up for before trying this strategy.

Purpose-built websites aren't that different from promoting through your own existing website. You will still offer similar things - reviews, tips & tricks for using the products, etc. - but you do so on a website that you build specifically for this purpose.

The website will contain information that is specifically about the product(s) that you're promoting, and it will be built in such a way that everything points your visitors towards your ultimate goal - getting them to purchase the product(s) you're promoting.

We're going to look at this particular strategy in detail in the step-by-step action plan at the end of this section.

Multiplying Your Results

If you want to earn \$500 per month as an affiliate, there are some "shortcuts" that will help you reach that goal faster.

Recurring Commissions

One of the best ways to increase your affiliate commissions is to promote recurring offers. A recurring offer is something that gets billed over and over again, such as a membership website like Earn1KaDay.com.



If you were to promote the Earn1KaDay website and referred a new member, you would get paid a commission every month that they continued to be a member, even though you wouldn't have to do any more work to earn those future commissions.

By promoting recurring offers, you earn this "passive" income - income you don't have to do any work for - as well as additional income by continuing to find new people to refer.

Using Earn1KaDay as an example, you earn approximately \$33 per month for any new members that you refer. Say you refer one new member per month, a pretty conservative number. In the first month you would earn \$33, the second month \$66, the third month \$99 and so on. After 10 months has passed, you could be earning an excellent income each month even though you only referred one person in that particular month.

This is a simplified example, obviously - not all the people you refer are going to remain members forever. But it shows you how recurring income can really add up without requiring any additional work on your part.

High-Paying vs Low-Paying Offers

One of the choices you have that can have a significant effect on your income is whether to promote high-paying or low-paying products.

That doesn't mean choosing between two suppliers for the same thing, one paying more than the other. It means a higher-cost, higher-paying item versus a lower-cost, lower-paying item.

If you can earn \$100 per referral it's going to take a lot less of them to reach your \$500 goal than if you're only earning \$1.

But the purchase cost is also going to be significantly higher, which means less people will buy it on your referral. Which way to go comes down to testing and tracking.

Testing & Tracking

This sounds like a complicated process but it's really not. What you want to do is test different promotions and track how well each of them does to find the one that is more profitable for you. You might just find that the lower paying alternative actually earns you more money in the long run.

For example, let's say you test two promotions - one that sells for \$100 and pays you \$10 in commission and one that sells for \$10 and pays you \$1. You recommend the \$100 product for one month and refer 20 sales, which generates \$200 in commissions. Then you recommend the \$10 product for one month and refer 250 sales, generating \$250 in commissions.

In this hypothetical case, the \$10 product would be more profitable for you even though it pays less per sale.

Focusing on higher-paying offers can be a good way to earn more, but it's not always a given that you'll earn more this way. Always test different offers to see what works the best.

Two-Tier Promotions

Another way you can earn more income from affiliate commissions without having to do any more work is to promote "two-tier" offers.

Two-tier means that you get paid a commission on any referrals you make, but you also get paid a smaller percentage of any referrals made by the people you refer.

For example, if you refer Sam to a product and he buys it, and then likes it enough to become an affiliate himself, you would earn a smaller percentage of any sales he refers in a two-tier program.

These programs are not as common, and you won't find them in every market, but it's worth looking to see if you can find one in yours. If you happen to refer someone who becomes a successful affiliate, that second tier of commission can add up quite nicely - and you won't have to spend one minute more to get it.

Increasing Your Profits with Backend Offers

This is a bit more of an "advanced" strategy, but it works extremely well so I want to at least give you an overview of how it works.

A "backend" offer is an offer that you make to people after they purchase something, sign up to receive email from you, "like" your Facebook Fan Page or take some other action that gives you the ability to communicate with them on an ongoing basis.

This is one of the more powerful techniques in affiliate marketing, because it gives you the ability to promote multiple offers to the same people.

If you build a website that refers them on to the affiliate offer, or run an ad that does the same, once they've clicked through on that offer you may never "see" them again. Sure, you might earn a commission from their purchase, but you have to keep finding new people to refer in order to continue earning income as an affiliate.

When you build what is known as a "list" - a group of subscribers to your email, a group of Facebook Fans or any other method of communication - you're able to communicate with the same people multiple times.

This lets you build a relationship with those people, so when you do promote something to them they're going to be more likely to listen to what you have to say.

Let's look at a simple outline of how you can implement this strategy.

First, you'll need something to give to people who sign up for your email list, become fans on Facebook and so on. One of the most effective things you can give them is a short report about a topic that's highly relevant to the product you're promoting.

For example, if you were promoting a web hosting service you might give away a report called "The 5 Biggest Web Hosting Mistakes - And How To Avoid Them."

The report contains information that helps the reader make a better choice about what product to buy. And you include links to the product(s) that you're promoting within the report itself.

As they read the report, they'll be presented with links to the product that you are recommending for them, and if they click one of those links and ultimately purchase, you'll earn the affiliate commission.

This strategy will work with other types of giveaways - videos, audio, etc. - but the big advantage a report offers is the ability to include those links right within the report itself so people can easily click through.

You would give this report away in exchange for your visitor's contact information. That might mean they sign up for your email list to get the free report, or it might mean they have to "Like" your Facebook Page to get it.

The goal is to connect with them in some way that allows you to contact them again.

Once you've got that connection, you can send them more helpful information about the topic - links to useful articles on other websites, links to your own website, additional reports, etc.

Plus, you can send them more promotions, of course.

The key to making this strategy work well is to focus more on giving your readers value than on promoting things. If all you ever send them is promotions for more stuff, they're not going to listen to you for very long.

But if you give them a lot of valuable information about the topic that they're interested in, they're going to learn to look forward to hearing from you. When you do send a promotion, they're a lot more likely to take a look at it because they trust your opinion.

Multiplying Your Backend Results

Finally, let's look at a way that you can combine the last two sections - multiplying your results and creating a strong backend sales funnel - to get even more powerful results.

If you're giving away a report or some other type of content, chances are good that some of the people who sign up to receive it are going to pass it along to other people they know. This is particularly true if your giveaway contains valuable information.

Rather than worry about "missing out" on getting the people it's passed along to on your list, look at this as an opportunity to multiply your profits.

You see, if you include affiliate links in whatever it is you're giving away, those links will always stay with it when it gets passed along. So that person who got it without having to join your list will still be a potential referral for you as an affiliate.

Why not actively tell people to share the content you've given them for free? Include a brief note inside the report (or whatever format you're using) telling your readers that they're free to share it with anyone they want if they find it useful.

This is known as "viral" content. The people who sign up to receive it directly from you can share it with their friends, those people can share it with their friends and so on. It can spread far beyond the people you yourself are able to reach, and this effect doesn't cost you anything.

But all those people receiving the content are also receiving your affiliate links, which gives you a much greater chance of earning a commission.

One extremely successful example of this is the Hotmail email service. Back in 1996, email was pretty new to most people. Hotmail launched a free email service, which was completely unheard of at the time. It was free to use, the only "catch" being that it added a line to the end of every message sent that said something along the lines of, "Sent via Hotmail. Get your own free email address at Hotmail.com."

Everybody who received a message from someone using Hotmail saw that and could sign up for their own free address. It didn't take long for it to "go viral" and Hotmail wound up getting bought by Microsoft for a reported \$400 million.

That's the kind of power you get with viral marketing!

Step-By-Step Action Plan

In this section, we're going to look at an action plan that you can use to get started with affiliate marketing. This strategy doesn't require a lot of technical knowledge, but you will need to either learn how to do a few simple things or find someone that can do it for you.

Where specific skills are required, we'll provide recommendations for some training that can help you learn those skills. This training isn't required, it's simply offered in case you need to learn some new skills to put this into action.

And it should be noted that while this strategy has been proven to work by many people from various walks of life, there's no guarantee that you will see the same results. There are a lot of variables involved in this business and sometimes you need to make several attempts, adjusting course slightly as you gain experience, to find success.

Don't get discouraged if your first attempt isn't the success you hope it is. Keep at it, learn from experience, and you will be successful.

The strategy we're going to use for this action plan is to build a purpose-built website where you can promote your affiliate offers.

Market Research

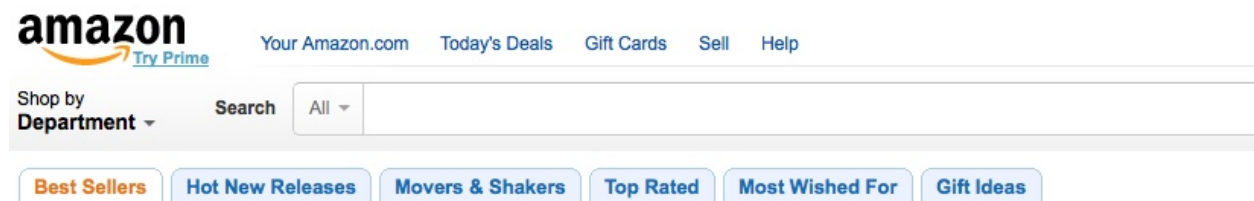
There are literally tens of thousands of markets that you can choose from when deciding on a topic for your website and product(s) to promote. For your first project, it's often best to stick with a topic that you have an interest in yourself.

You're going to be creating content for your own website, posting in forums and doing other things that will be centered on the topic. If you pick something purely because you think it can make money, and don't have any interest in it yourself, it can become a grind to have to deal with it. Better to choose something that you enjoy, at least for the first project or two, so you can have some fun while getting experience.

It's even better to pick a topic that you know something about so you'll be able to write about it, but if it's something you're interested in learning more about that's okay too.

If you're having trouble coming up with ideas for a market, try one of these ideas:

1. Go to your local newsstand or bookstore and browse through the magazine section. Look for topics that would be interesting for you to create a website around. If there is a magazine in the market, chances are there are plenty of people interested in it. Magazines aren't cheap to publish, so they're a good indicator of market potential.
2. Browse through the various departments on [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) and look for ideas there. You can use the [Amazon Top Sellers](https://www.amazon.com/top-sellers) page to find their best sellers in various departments, as well as several other lists - top rated, most wished for, hot new releases, etc.



Once you find something you think would be a good topic, you're not ready to start building your website just yet.

First, we need to check and make sure the market is a good "buyer" market. You want to be sure that you're choosing a topic in which people are actually spending money.

The two market identification techniques (magazines, Amazon) will help narrow this down right from the outset, but next you want to check and see whether other people are advertising for it in Google.

If there are advertisers in a market, it's a good sign that there is money being spent. Advertisers won't spend money if they're not making a profit from it, at least not for long.

The next step is to use Google's keyword tool to get some ideas for "keywords" in the market - things that people are searching for on Google.

The keyword tool can be found at <https://adwords.google.com/o/KeywordTool>

Enter a general keyword for the market as shown below and click the "search" button.

Let's work through an example. Say your research in the bookstore found the magazine "Cigar Aficionado" and you're thinking of targeting people who enjoy smoking cigars. Amazon has lots of products that are related - humidors, books, cutters, etc. - so there's opportunity there.

When we run the word "cigar" through Google's keyword tool, this is what we get:

Keyword Planner
Add ideas to your plan

Your product or service

cigar

Get ideas

Modify search

Targeting [?]

All locations

English

Google

Negative keywords

Date range [?]

Show avg. monthly searches for: Last 12 months

Customize your search [?]

Keyword filters

Keyword options

- Show broadly related ideas
- Hide keywords in my account
- Hide keywords in my plan

Include/Exclude

Search volume trends

Average monthly searches



Ad group ideas

Keyword ideas

Download

Add all (39)

Ad group (by relevance)	Keywords	Avg. monthly searches [?]	Competition [?]	Suggested bid [?]	Ad impr. share [?]	Add to plan
Cigar Humidors (...	cigar humidor, ci...	16,970	High	\$1.07	0%	
Cigars Online (26)	cigars online, cu...	22,060	Low	\$0.55	0%	
Buy Cigars (10)	buy cigars onlin...	6,070	Low	\$0.52	0%	
Cigar Humidifier (9)	cigar humidifier, ...	3,430	High	\$1.32	0%	
Cheap Cigars (15)	cheap cigars, ch...	7,880	Medium	\$0.57	0%	

We want to order the list by the most popular, so click on the "Avg. Monthly Searches" title at the top of the third column. Now here's what we see:

Your product or service

cigar

Get ideas

Modify search

Ad group (by relevance)	Keywords		Avg. monthly searches ?	Competition ?	Suggested bid ?	Ad impr. share ?	Add to plan
Cigar (421)	backwoods ciga...	✔	357,030	Low	\$0.78	0%	»
Keywords like: ...	cigar, cohiba, ci...	✔	121,590	Low	\$0.47	0%	»
Humidor (40)	best cigar humid...	✔	73,850	High	\$0.83	0%	»
Tobacco (21)	cigar tobacco, t...	✔	60,300	Low	\$0.60	0%	»
Cuban Cigars (7)	cuban cigars, cu...	✔	40,890	Low	\$0.49	0%	»
Cigarettes Onlin...	cigarettes online...	✔	29,000	Low	\$1.12	0%	»
International Cig...	cigar internation...	✔	24,240	Low	\$0.26	0%	»
Cigars Online (26)	cigars online, cu...	✔	22,060	Low	\$0.55	0%	»
Best Cigar (13)	best cigars, bes...	✔	18,240	Low	\$1.27	0%	»
Cigar Humidors (...)	cigar humidor, ci...	✔	16,970	High	\$1.07	0%	»
Cohiba Cigars (6)	cohiba cigars, c...	✔	15,670	Low	\$0.24	0%	»

The next step in this process is to check some of these keywords (from column 2 above) to see how many people are advertising on Google. So we go to [Google.com](https://www.google.com) and search for several of the keywords supplied by the keyword tool.

What you're looking for on Google are paid ads - the "Sponsored Ads" at the top and right side of the results.

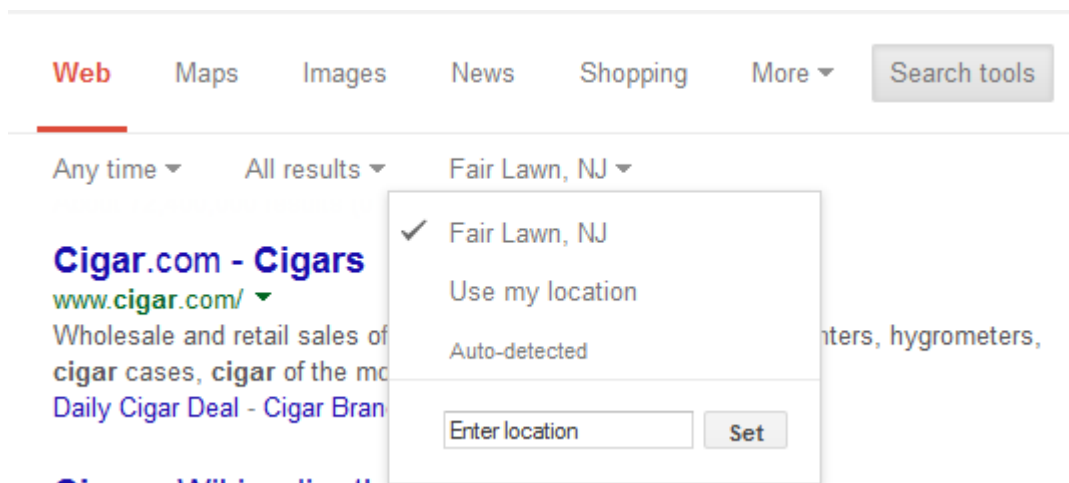
Here's the results we get for the above keywords at the time this report was written:

- Cigar Smoking: 0 ads
- Shop Cigars: 1 ad

- Cigar Pipe: 0 ads
- Best Cigars: 0 ads
- Cigar Humidor: 3 ads

This doesn't look like a great market to target based on those numbers, but one thing that you need to consider is that Google displays different results depending on where you're located.

This can have a bearing on how many results you see. If you don't see many ads for something, you can change the location from the main Google search results page. Click on the "Show search tools" link and then the "Custom Location" link.



You can enter a city or country in this box to see results from that specific place. Another problem you might run into is if you're not located in the United States, Google will default to your local version of Google. For example, in Canada, you'll default to Google.ca when you run a search.

This can skew your results because you're going to see results that are more targeted to that country.

If you want to see results from the United States instead, you can use this URL to run your Google search:

<http://www.google.com/intl/en>

If you find a topic like this example that doesn't have a lot of ads, and you find more by changing locations, it's up to you whether or not to continue with it.

Personally, I would move on to another alternative and run through the same process until you find one that has more advertisers in general. There's no sense limiting your potential right out of the gate.

For comparison's sake, I've run the "golf" market through the Google keyword tool and wound up with the following keywords:

- Golf clubs: 11 ads
- Golf equipment: 8 ads
- Golf bag: 1 ad
- Golf shoes: 2 ads
- Golf instruction: 2 ads

You can see there are more ads here so this is a more suitable market.

Setting Up Your Website

Once you've picked your market and found a few products that you can promote, it's time to set up your website. There are several steps involved in this process, the first of which is to register your domain name - the address for your website.

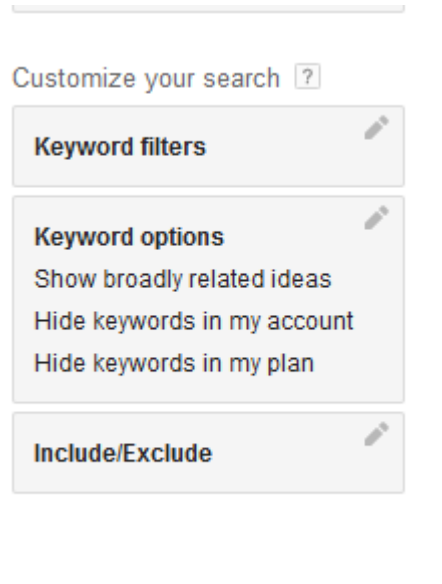
Domain Name

For these purpose-built websites, the best option for a domain name is what's known as an "exact match domain" - a domain that is the same as one of the keywords for your market.

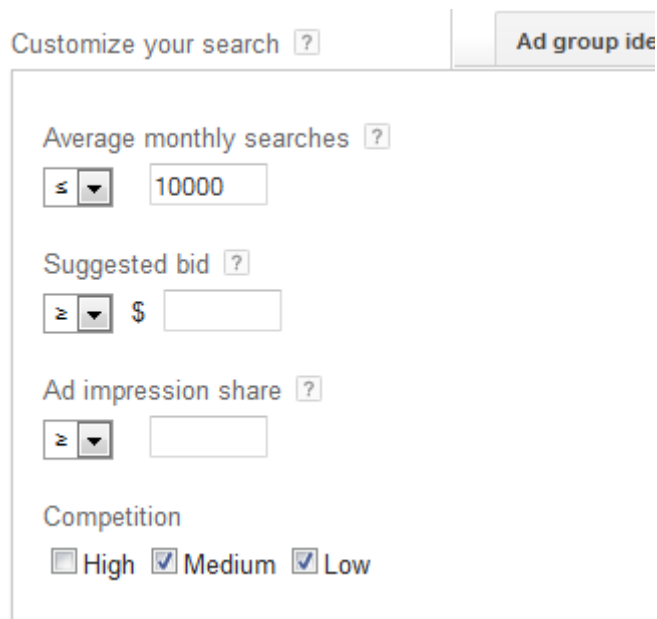
For this step, you're going to need to go back to the Google Keyword Tool and make a list of potential domain names. We want to find keywords that aren't too competitive but are still relevant to the topic and types of products you're going to promote.

The keyword tool lets you narrow down your search by filtering the results.

First, click on Keyword Filters on the left hand side.



Next, under "Filter Ideas" choose Competition on the dropdown list and check Low and Medium, and for Average monthly searches choose \leq 10000 searches:



This will narrow down the search to keywords that have low to medium competition and somewhere fewer than 10,000 searches every month. This will give you a list of keywords that have relatively low competition but still get enough searches to make it worth pursuing.

Take note of any keywords in the results you get that would make a good domain. Avoid keywords with things like city names, brand names or anything else that is obviously specific to a place, person, event or other things.

You also want to avoid brand names because they are usually trademarked and you could wind up in legal trouble if you use a trademark in your domain name.

In our golf example, this is the list of keywords that we've come up with once we weed out all these other things:

- golf drivers reviews
- golf partners
- golf swing basics
- golf club ratings
- golf swing mechanics
- golf headquarters
- golf equipment review
- golf equipment reviews
- golf gadgets
- golfing news

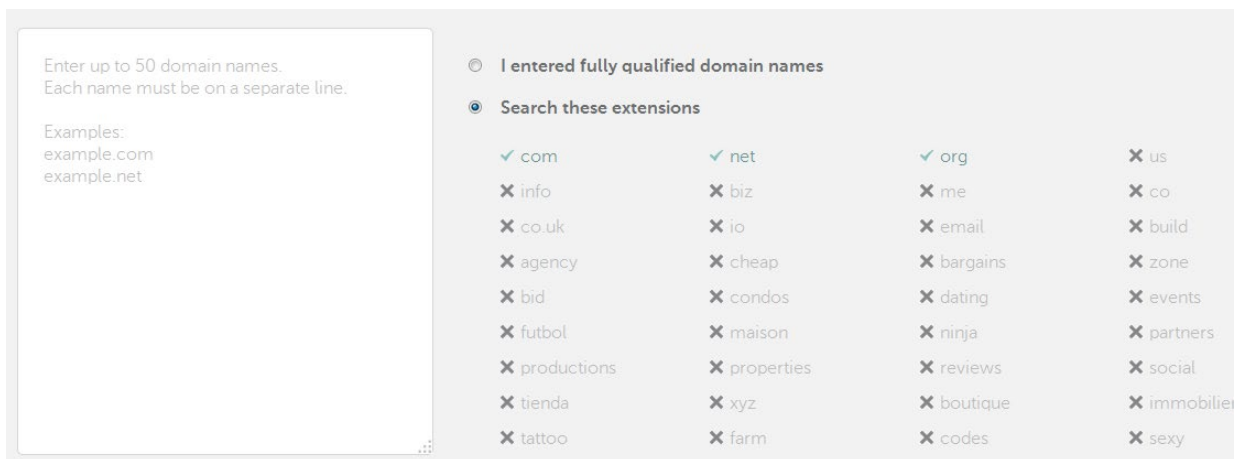
The next step from here is to run these keywords through a bulk domain checker, which will tell you which of them is available to register.

We recommend [Namecheap.com](http://www.namecheap.com) for domain registrations, and you can find their bulk search tool here:

<http://www.namecheap.com/domains/domain-name-search/bulk-domain-search.aspx>

You can search up to 50 domains at a time. Take the list of keywords you came up with and copy and paste them into the search box. The only catch here is you will need to remove all the spaces first, since you can't have a space in a domain name. So instead of "golf drivers reviews" you would have "golfdriversreviews.com".

Click on "Search these extensions" and then go down to the bottom of the page, and click on "check all" and then "uncheck all" and then come back up and select .com, .net, and .org. We don't want to consider any other extension.



The screenshot shows a domain search interface. On the left, there is a text input field with the placeholder text "Enter up to 50 domain names. Each name must be on a separate line." Below this, there are examples: "example.com" and "example.net". On the right, there are two radio buttons. The first is "I entered fully qualified domain names" and the second is "Search these extensions", which is selected. Below the radio buttons is a grid of domain extensions, each with a checkmark or an 'x' indicating its status.

I entered fully qualified domain names			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> com	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> net	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> org	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> us
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> info	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> biz	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> me	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> co
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> co.uk	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> io	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> email	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> build
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agency	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> cheap	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bargains	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> zone
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bid	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> condos	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> dating	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> events
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> futbol	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> maison	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ninja	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> partners
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> productions	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> properties	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> reviews	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> tienda	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> xyz	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> boutique	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> immobilier
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> tattoo	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> farm	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> codes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> sexy

It's not always going to be this easy to find a perfect domain name, but it's worth the effort. Sometimes you will find none of your potential domains are available and you have to do some more digging - but it's surprising how often you'll find these "hidden gems" right off the bat.

If you can find a .com available, that's best, but you could consider .net and .org names also if worst comes to worst.

If none of the domains are available, it's better to go back to the keyword tool and do some more digging than to choose a less-effective extension that might be available. If you don't have a .com, .net or .org extension it makes getting traffic to your website more difficult.

Hosting

Once you have your domain name picked out and registered it's time to sign up for a hosting account. This is where your website will "live" on the internet.

Think of the domain name as your address, the hosting as your plot of land and the website as the house you build on that land.

There are all kinds of hosting plans, varying from a couple of dollars a month to thousands of dollar a month. You don't need a big plan to get started, but you also want to make sure you don't go so cheap that you run into trouble as your website gets some traction in the market.

We recommend HostGator as a good entry-level host.

If you're planning to set up multiple websites (or even if you aren't yet), or already have the need for more than one, their Baby plan is a better option at a little under \$8 per month at the time of this writing. It lets you set up multiple websites through a single account.

One of the advantages of HostGator is the fact that they have various levels of hosting plans so you can easily upgrade to a higher plan as your needs grow. Choose the plan that's right for you now, with some room to grow if you already know you'll need it, but there's no need to get more than necessary - you can make that change when the need arises.

Note: When you sign up for a hosting account, HostGator gives you the option to register your domain name with them. It's not a good idea to register your domain with your web host simply because if something ever goes wrong, they control everything. By using a separate registrar like Namecheap, you can easily redirect your website to a new host if necessary, without worrying about it being locked up by the host you're transferring away from.

Platform

Once you have your domain registered and your hosting set up, it's time to get your website started. The first thing you'll need to decide is what platform you want to use to build it.

There are various ways to build websites. You can use software like Dreamweaver or NVu which are "WYSIWYG" (what you see is what you get) programs that run on your computer. Creating a website this way is similar to creating a document in MS Word. You lay everything out on your computer, type all the content into the site on your computer and make all changes locally. The software will then upload the website to your hosting service so people can access it via the internet.

Or you can use a "CMS" (content management system) like WordPress to build your site. A CMS handles all the layout and structure of your site - all you need to worry about is the content of the site. You simply type the content into the CMS, much like you would enter it in a word processor, and when you post it the layout and everything else gets applied automatically.

WordPress is our preferred platform, for a couple of reasons. First, it handles all the layout and design stuff so you don't have to think too much about it. And if you ever want to change the design of your site, it's as simple as loading a different theme - all your existing pages will be changed automatically. Doing a redesign in something like Dreamweaver means you need to update every page manually.

The second reason we recommend WordPress is that it creates websites that are more effective for getting ranked in Google and the other search engines. This can help you get more traffic compared to designing your site by hand.

Setting up WordPress is not difficult, but it goes beyond the scope of this report. There are lots of tutorials available online - a simple Google or Youtube search will find plenty, and your hosting provider will also normally have tutorials for you.

Site Structure

Site structure is something you don't need to spend too much time worrying about, but there are a couple of things that you should be sure to do.

First, you should have a "Contact Us" page on your website. It doesn't have to be fancy - just a page that tells your visitors how they can get in touch with you. It could be a form-based system, where they fill out a form and the message gets emailed to you, or it could simply provide your email address.

The second thing you should have on your site is a privacy policy page. This is especially true if you're collecting contact information to communicate with your visitors, whether via email, Facebook or some other method. But it's also important even without those things because you may be doing other things that have a bearing on privacy, such as using affiliate advertising that places cookies on your visitors' computers.

Lastly, you should include some sort of "About This Site" page where you give your visitors a brief introduction to the site, what its goals are, and so on.

These three pages are important from your visitors' perspective, but they're also important from Google's and other search engines' perspectives. They will help build your "trust" score with the search engines, which can ultimately help generate more traffic to your site.

Site Content

The content you add to your website is ultimately what's going to convince your visitors to take action - in other words, click on your affiliate links.

You can create all kinds of different types of content:

- Written reviews of the products you're promoting

- Video demonstrations showing the products in action
- Tips & tricks for using the products
- Buyer's guides for choosing the right product

The more content you have, the better, so you can also combine different types of content on your site.

For example, you might have a video showing a product in action, and link to your complete review from there. The review gives more information about the product itself and then refers the reader to your affiliate link where they can purchase it.

You can target as few or as many products as you want, too. Using our golf example, the GolfEquipmentReview.org website could have new content added on an ongoing basis. When new clubs are released, you could write about them. If Tiger Woods releases a new clothing line, that could be something else that gets added to the website.

Over a period of time, the website will continue to grow, with more and more opportunities for your visitors to click one of your affiliate links and generate a commission for you.

Promoting Your Website

"If you build it, they will come" doesn't apply on the internet. There are millions upon millions of websites and if you simply build a site and wait for people to find it, you're going to be disappointed.

To generate any revenue from your website, you're going to need traffic. In other words, real people who are visiting your site and clicking through on your affiliate links.

There are many different techniques for getting traffic, with entire training courses on just one or two methods.

There's no way we could cover them all in this report, but we're going to look at several that require little or no technical knowledge and can be done absolutely free.

Facebook

Facebook is a huge potential source of traffic, with over 900 million registered users at the time of writing this. While they offer a paid advertising platform, we're going to use them to promote your website for free. We'll do this through a Facebook Page.

You can create a Facebook Page for your website, or about the topic that you're targeting. This page can be used as a "hub" for staying in touch with other people interested in the same topic.

Creating a Facebook Page is a simple process. When you're logged into Facebook, look in the bottom right corner of the page for a link that says "Create a Page." You might need to click the "More" link to see it.

Once you click the create link, Facebook will walk you through the steps to create the page. There's not much too it, and it is all pretty self-explanatory, so don't worry if you've never done it before - it's quite straightforward.

Once you've created your Page, you can post things to it just like you post things to your own timeline. Anyone who is a fan of your page will see those posts in their timeline.

Getting people to like your Facebook Page (become fans) can be done in various ways:

- Add a link to it on your website so people can "like" your page from there
- Promote it in other places - Twitter, forums, email, etc.
- Interact with other pages that are related to your market by commenting on posts, liking those pages and so on. Other people

who follow those pages will see yours and a certain number of them will likely click through to check it out and wind up liking it

You can post links to your website, links to affiliate offers and other things on your page and as you get more and more fans, you'll generate more and more traffic to those places.

Twitter

Twitter is similar to Facebook in that you can post updates and all the people who follow you can see them in their timeline.

You can build your network on Twitter in much the same way as Facebook. Search out other Twitter users who post about the topic that your website addresses. Follow them, reply to their "Tweets" and interact with them whenever you can. Some of those people will follow you back, other people who follow them will likely find you and you will be able to post updates for them to see.

You can post links to your website, affiliate links, interesting stuff you find and anything else that would be of value to them.

Forums

Market-related forums are a great way to get traffic back to your website. Most forums let you add a "signature" to your profile, which gets added to the end of every post you make. This signature can include a short ad of some sort, along with a link to your website, an affiliate offer or some other link that will benefit you.

Just make sure you read the rules & regulations of the forum before creating your signature. Most forums have rules about what you can and can't do, and you want to make sure you're not doing something you're not supposed to.

The key to making forum marketing work is that you have to be a contributing member of the forum. You can't just pop in and write a post

or two every so often. People won't get to know you and they'll probably think you're only there to promote the link in your signature (and they would be right!)

Instead, check in on a regular basis. Respond to other people's posts, answer questions where you can and create new threads of your own. Building a relationship with people this way will work much better, because they'll get to "know" you and trust you - making them much more likely to click through to see what you have to say on your website, or learn more about the product you're recommending in your signature.

Blog Commenting

Blog commenting is similar to forum marketing in a lot of ways. Find several popular blogs in your market and spend some time each day commenting on posts, responding to other commenters and generally taking part in the conversation.

Most blogs will let you enter a website address when you leave a comment and it will link your name to that address. You can include your own website here or an affiliate link of some sort.

As with forum marketing, just make sure you're adding value to the conversation. Don't just say things like "Great post!" and expect to get any results. People aren't going to click on your link if you just write stuff like that, and the blog owner might even remove your comments altogether.

These are just a few of the many different traffic generation methods you can use. If you'd like to learn more about the various ways to get traffic, there are lots of training programs out there, some that are specific to certain methods and some that cover many different techniques.

I've created an excellent traffic guide I believe can help you a great deal:

[The Honk Honk! Web Traffic Guide](#)

Earning \$500 a Month As An Affiliate

This action plan may not sound like it's all that complicated, and that's because it's not. It's really not that hard to start earning regular affiliate commissions. The hard part is to stick with the process and don't look for shortcuts.

Once you've been in the internet marketing world for a while, you'll see lots of offers for the latest & greatest "systems" for making money.

Some of those systems will be legitimate and some will be smoke and mirrors. But if you let yourself lose focus on what you're working on, you'll never see the results you want.

Stay focused on the goal and don't believe all the "push button" systems that you'll see. It might take a bit of time, and may even a few attempts, to get the results you want but you will get them if you stick with it and learn from your experiences.

Where To Find Affiliate Offers

There are a number of large affiliate programs, or networks of more specialized offers, that you can use to find offers related to virtually any topic.

[Amazon.com Associates Program](#)

Amazon carries products in many different categories, and you can promote nearly all of them as an affiliate. The above link takes you to their US website. If you're targeting other countries, most local Amazon sites ([Amazon.ca](#), [Amazon.co.uk](#), etc.) have their own programs that you need to sign up for independently.

[eBay Partner Network](#)

The eBay Partner Network is similar to Amazon, in that you can promote products in all kinds of different markets. EPN is a good program, but be forewarned that it is difficult to get accepted and can take some time. If you want to sign up as an eBay affiliate, you should have an existing website that you can include in your application (and it should be high-quality, both content- and design-wise) and you should be prepared to wait for some time before being accepted.

[Commission Junction](#)

Commission Junction is a network that manages the affiliate programs for many other companies. You can find offers in various markets here. As with eBay, it's best if you have a website already up and running before applying. Many vendors will only work with you if you have something to show them when applying.

[Linkshare](#)

Linkshare is another network that handles the affiliate programs for many other companies. Once again, it's a good idea to have a website up and running before applying with Linkshare

[ShareASale](#)

Another network that works with vendors in various markets. ShareASale is not as difficult to work with as the previous couple of networks, so it's not as critical to have your website up and running prior to applying.

[Clickbank](#)

Clickbank focuses mainly on products such as ebooks and other digitally delivered items. They handle the affiliate program for products in all sorts of different markets and niches, so if your market is one that is suited for information products, this can be a good place to find offers to promote. Their sign-up process is fast and straightforward with no real need to have your website up and running prior to joining.

Private Affiliate Programs

Many companies run their own in-house affiliate programs that won't be listed in any of the above networks. If there is a specific product or service that you would like to promote, check their website to see if they offer an affiliate program. There will usually be a link to it from the home page or from the site map. If you don't have a specific product in mind but want to find offers related to your market, the easiest way is to search Google for keywords in your market plus "affiliate" or "affiliate program."



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