



Building an Incredible Internet Business in 2020.

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The Affiliate Marketing continues to evolve, grow, and change shape as each year passes. 2019 has been one of the most exciting years in terms of growth in the Affiliate Marketing space, including much wider adoption by major retail brands.

The growth in online spending has also triggered additional growth in the online space. Year over year sales have reached record levels, with an anticipation of new records being set in 2020.

In this document, we are going to break down the Affiliate Marketing industry by the “statistics”, and then we are going to help you understand how you can maximize the affiliate marketing opportunity in the year(s) ahead.

The State of Internet and Growth Trends

With an ever changing industry like the Affiliate Marketing one, it is important that you have a good grasp as to where it currently is, where it was, and where it is headed.

I want to give you a bit of back story and insight into the affiliate marketing industry back in 2002 when we started in the affiliate marketing world. It certainly wasn't the opportunity it is these days, but I can honestly say it feel like the opportunity even back then was infinite.

Back in 2002, there were a lot of complexities starting a business online. Not only were there technical hurdles, there wasn't a whole lot of information or resources out there to help a newcomer to the affiliate marketing space. The information that was available, was cryptic and missed out on the technical elements and knowledge needed to start. You were left to build and maintain your affiliate marketing business based on your own resourcefulness.

The data several years back is going paint a picture that shows massive growth and offer perspective. I am going to look at just the past 10 years online in terms of Internet adoption and usage. Then I am going to be referencing the last 5 years of online spending.

First the Internet usage trends. Below I have included a chart outlining growth since 2009, with the associated user counts.

Dec, 2009	1,802 millions	26.6 %	Internet World Stats
June, 2010	1,966 millions	28.7 %	Internet World Stats
Sept, 2010	1,971 millions	28.8 %	Internet World Stats
Mar, 2011	2,095 millions	30.2 %	Internet World Stats
Jun, 2011	2,110 millions	30.4 %	Internet World Stats
Sept, 2011	2,180 millions	31.5 %	Internet World Stats
Dec, 2011	2,267 millions	32.7 %	Internet World Stats
Mar, 2012	2,336 millions	33.3 %	Internet World Stats
June, 2012	2,405 millions	34.3 %	Internet World Stats
Sept, 2012	2,439 millions	34.8 %	Internet World Stats
Dec, 2012	2,497 millions	35.7 %	I.T.U.
Dec, 2013	2,802 millions	39.0 %	Internet World Stats
June, 2014	3,035 millions	42.3 %	Internet World Stats
Dec, 2014	3,079 millions	42.4 %	Internet World Stats
June, 2015	3,270 millions	45.0 %	Internet World Stats
Dec, 2015	3,366 millions	46.4 %	Internet World Stats
Jun. 2016	3,631 millions	49.5 %	Internet World Stats
Dec. 2016	3,696 millions	49.5 %	Internet World Stats
June, 2017	3,885 millions	51.7 %	Internet World Stats
Dec 2017	4,156 millions	54.4 %	Internet World Stats
Jun 2018	4,208 millions	55.1 %	Internet World Stats
Dec 2018	4,313 millions	55.6 %	Internet World Stats
Mar 2019	4,383 millions	56.8 %	Internet World Stats
Jun, 2019	4,536 millions	58.8 %	Internet World Stats

Growth over the past 10 years, over 2.7 BILLION increase.

The Internet usership has more than doubled in the past 10 years, growing by 2.7+ BILLION users. Back in 2009, 4 years after WealthyAffiliate.com started the opportunity online felt vast, but it is merely a fraction of the opportunity that exists today.

Below are some insights into the number of Internet users by location around the world, and the overall penetration in those given areas.

WORLD INTERNET USAGE AND POPULATION STATISTICS 2019 Mid-Year Estimates						
World Regions	Population (2019 Est.)	Population % of World	Internet Users 30 June 2019	Penetration Rate (% Pop.)	Growth 2000-2019	Internet World %
Africa	1,320,038,716	17.1 %	522,809,480	39.6 %	11,481 %	11.5 %
Asia	4,241,972,790	55.0 %	2,300,469,859	54.2 %	1,913 %	50.7 %
Europe	829,173,007	10.7 %	727,559,682	87.7 %	592 %	16.0 %
Latin America / Caribbean	658,345,826	8.5 %	453,702,292	68.9 %	2,411 %	10.0 %
Middle East	258,356,867	3.3 %	175,502,589	67.9 %	5,243 %	3.9 %
North America	366,496,802	4.7 %	327,568,628	89.4 %	203 %	7.2 %
Oceania / Australia	41,839,201	0.5 %	28,636,278	68.4 %	276 %	0.6 %
WORLD TOTAL	7,716,223,209	100.0 %	4,536,248,808	58.8 %	1,157 %	100.0 %

NOTES: (1) Internet Usage and World Population Statistics estimates for June 30, 2019, as of Sept 20, 2019. (2) CLICK on each world region name for detailed regional usage information. (3) Demographic (Population) numbers are based on data from the [United Nations Population Division](#). (4) Internet usage information comes from data published by [Nielsen Online](#), by the [International Telecommunications Union](#), by [GfK](#), by local ICT Regulators and other reliable sources. (5) For definitions, navigation help and disclaimers, please refer to the [Website Surfing Guide](#). (6) The information from this website may be cited, giving the due credit and placing a link back to www.internetworldstats.com. Copyright © 2019, Miniwatts Marketing Group. All rights reserved worldwide.

As you can see, the Internet is growing, which reflects in the overall opportunity growing for affiliate marketing. In saying this, it is very critical to offer insights into the actual online spending trends to give a more insightful picture here.

Below is a graph outlining the spending trends over the past 5 years. Based on data research provided by through various online entities, the following chart shows the current “state” of online spending and the increases that have taken place in just the past 5 years.

Year	Retail Sales (In trillion USD)	%age of total retail sales
2014	\$1,316	5.9%
2015	\$1,592	6.7%
2016	\$1,888	7.4%
2017	\$2,197	8.2%
2018	\$2,489	8.8%

In the past 5 years retail sales online have almost doubled, meaning that the opportunity for affiliate marketers has doubled during this same period. More online sales equate to more opportunity for affiliates to capture new audiences and potential customers through various forms of media online.

The growth in the last 10 years within the internet has been significant, and online spending continues to climb by double digits every year. This is a trend that is set to continue. It is anticipated that the growth charts will remain this way and I am going to be discussing this in the next section here.

The opportunity within the affiliate marketing world has never been so great, and the future of affiliate marketing has never been more promising. As the internet continues to grow in popularity as online spending continues to climb year over year. As more companies continue to dedicate a significant expenditure budget to their affiliate marketing programs, positive growth is going to continue..

The Foundational Process of a Successful Affiliate Marketing Business

There are obvious similarities between the Affiliate Marketing space then, the Affiliate Marketing space now, and the Affiliate Marketing space moving forward.

Numbers and statistics aside, the fundamental business model of affiliate marketing has remained the same.

You have an affiliate (publisher), you have a merchant (advertiser), and a customer. Your role as an affiliate marketer is to connect a customer with a product/service, often times a product/service they are already seeking to purchase.

Below is a visual representation of the affiliate marketing flow.



This process is unchanged, but the sources of traffic have changed marginally, which we will be getting into in a later section.

The Fall of Companies Not Focused on Affiliate Marketing.

We have seen a further decline and default with retailers in the last year, in particular those that have lacked emphasis or focus on their online sales channels. This is going to continue to remain a trend moving forward, as online retailers continue to thrive while those relying on offline commercial spaces to sell their products/services continue to flounder.

Some of the major retailers we have seen file chapter 11 bankruptcy since 2017 are:

- Forever 21
- Payless Shoes Source

- Fred's
- Sears
- Toys 'R' Us
- Diesel USA
- Barneys New York
- Claries
- RadioShack
- And many more.

These were at one point, thriving retail businesses. So what lead to their demise?

Well there are a few reasons, poor leadership could have been one of the main contributors. But one of the key issues with these retailers was their lack of focus within their online commerce divisions for their businesses, combined with their lack of investment in their affiliate programs.

With a lack of affiliate marketers promoting any given brand or service online, it is very difficult for companies to obtain optimal reach within the online world. It is expensive to pay for traditional media like TV ads, billboards, and ad placements to drive traffic, when smart retailers have in some cases millions of affiliate marketers working on their behalf (Amazon is a prime example of that). Affiliate marketers are paid only on a performance basis, thus offering retailers an ideal transactional relationship with their affiliate marketing team.

Those companies that have adopted and understand the power of online retail, while understand the benefits of being proactive with their affiliate programs are those that we are seeing thrive (even through recessions).

Some of the major retailers that have seen growth in the past year have been those with the largest affiliate marketing presence and that are continuing to invest in their affiliate programs & supporting channels. These networks include:

- Amazon Associates Program
- Awin
- Nike
- Walmart
- Wayfair
- Overstock
- Etsy

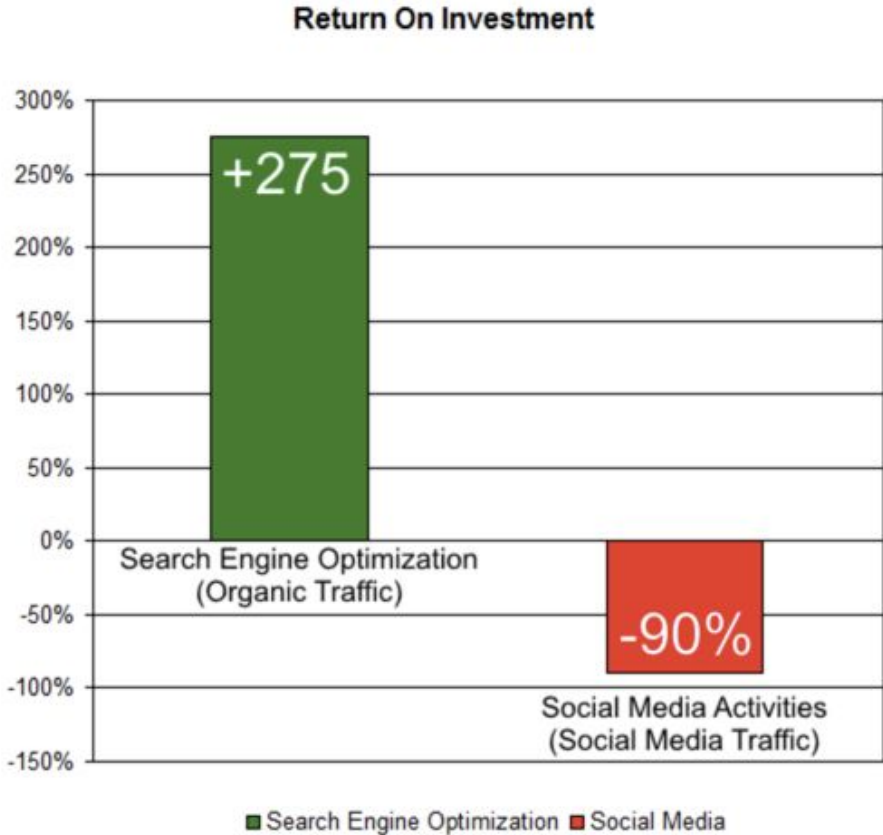
These are just a few of the 1,000's of companies out there that are taking their brands and online presence seriously through their affiliate marketing initiatives and focus on offering affiliate marketers the adequate tools and resources that they need to succeed.

As we move through 2020, we are going to see more companies failing that have lacked leadership and focus in their online sales channels and affiliate programs. This will remain a persistent reality in the foreseeable future.

The Key Traffic Stakeholders

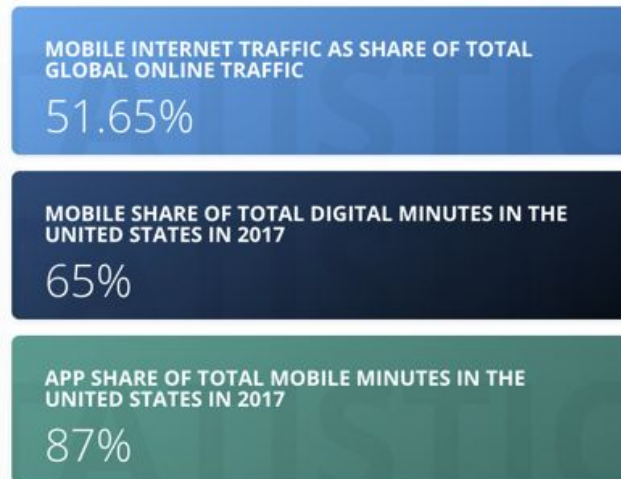
Affiliate marketers have a plethora of viable traffic sources, and it is difficult to measure which one an affiliate marketer can focus on. Convention has indicated that search traffic has converted the best, and recent data released by ProfitWorks Inc. has confirmed that this is the case.

In fact, Search Engine Optimization efforts are significantly better in terms of time and financial ROI than social media traffic.



There are many driving factors behind this, but one of the key factors is that search traffic is a much more engaged audience that is looking for information, versus social marketing which is a form of interrupt marketing (not anticipating what is coming).

Accounting for your mobile audience is critical to your “traffic” success in 2019/2020 and beyond. If you are not taking your mobile user experience into consideration, your affiliate marketing efforts are going to be impacted in several ways, one of the key ones is with your search engine optimization (SEO traffic).



[Google announced](#) that it would be taking on a mobile first initiative, starting on July 1st of 2019. Conventionally, Google based all of their indexing and rankings based on the “desktop” version of the website, and that flipped over to the mobile version of a page this past July.

Here is an excerpt from Google.

“Historically, the index primarily used the desktop version of a page's content when evaluating the relevance of a page to a user's query. Since the majority of users now access Google Search with a mobile device, Googlebot primarily crawls and indexes pages with the smartphone agent going forward.”

The mobile experience of the websites, the mobile speeds, and whether or not websites were easy to navigate are becoming more important than ever for the SEO.

This is going to continue to be a key and critical component to search rankings in Google (in particular) moving through 2020. Conventionally Bing and Yahoo (who own a shrinking market share of search) are slower to adopt the technologies that Google establishes. Websites that put MOBILE first, will rank first.

How to Make Sure Your Website is Mobile Friendly:

1. **Use a Responsive Theme.** Most themes by default these days are “responsive”, meaning that they will automatically respond to the user's behavior and environment based on screen size, platform and orientation. This includes graphics, content, plugins, and navigation. If you are using Wordpress (which all websites are installed with at Wealthy Affiliate), your theme is going to be a responsive one.
2. **Avoid Cumbersome Themes and Plugins.** There are many themes and plugins that can slow down your website performance, and this becomes very noticeable on mobile devices.

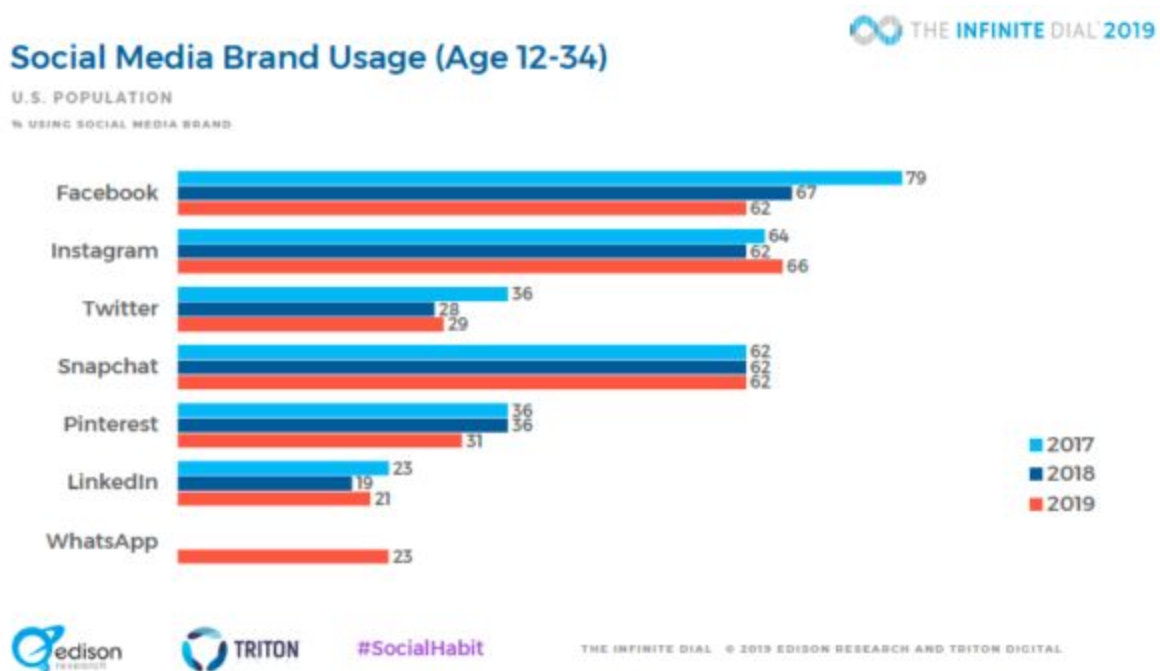
There are [tests](#) that you can run to see how your overall speed and load performances are, but we suggest that you avoid using plugins on your website unless they are necessary for efficiency and design...and avoid themes that are bloated with unnecessary features, they will only slow down your website.

3. **Cache Your Content.** There are plugins you can use to help with caching, or as a Premium member at Wealthy Affiliate you have access to automatic server-side (ideal) caching in the **SiteSpeed Extreme** platform. When you have caching in place you are serving your pages from “cache”, which is ultra fast memory storage. This improves the speed of your website significantly and decreases the load in which your website requires to serve content.
4. **Use Google’s Free Testing Software.** Google offers you a suite of testing tools that you can use to check your website speed and performance, in both mobile and desktop environments. It is suggested that you check your [PageSpeed Insights](#) to ensure your site is above the ideal 80/100 mark for mobile, the closer to 100 the better. You can also check your websites look in mobile using the Mobile Friendly testing tool. You can access that [here](#).
5. **Test Yourself for Design and Experience.** An easy way to determine whether or not your website is working properly on mobile, is to test it out for yourself. This is something that you should do regularly, in particular if you typically work on your website development from a laptop/desktop. It is important that you have a good grasp of your mobile environment, and testing it out on your mobile is an easy way you can do this.

Traffic From Social Media

Social media usage continues to increase, but unlike search where Google owns the lion's share of search, there are many different social platforms that people use, in fact the average person has 7 different social media accounts.

The key players in the social media world are going to remain the same in the year ahead. Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest growth had more or less flatlined in 2019.



From the chart you can see (in the RED), that Instagram was the only social media brand that grew in the USA in 2019. This is partly due to social media feed and people diversifying their time between social media accounts, but also do to interest fading in these networks because of the proliferation of ads.

What does this data mean to you as an affiliate marketer? Should social media be a big part of your game plan?

There is no right or wrong answer. There are close to 2.65 BILLION users on social media, that audience is close to equivalent in nature to the number of people that are on the Internet and using search. You can leverage social campaigns to create a full time affiliate business in any niche, but as social platforms put more emphasis on monetization (through ads), the value of a free profile and the related “reach” is becoming less and less value.

Paid advertising on social media will remain a viable way to obtain quality and high converting traffic in 2020.

The 4 Key Components of a Successful Affiliate Marketing Business.

(1) Traffic. Traffic is the basis of any successful business. Not just any traffic though. Relevant and qualified traffic is what you are after. It is very difficult to convert irrelevant traffic with affiliate marketing offers, so it is critical that you understand the idea of relevant traffic.

Relevance within the search engine space is much easier to determine. Since keywords or search phrases are the trigger points for your audience and they are the ones initiating these searches, you have an engaged and relevant audience if you target these folks correctly.

The formula for a successful search campaign, either through PPC or through SEO (in Google, Bing or Yahoo) is:

RELEVANT SEARCH TERM => RELEVANT AD => RELEVANT LANDING PAGE =>
RELEVANT OFFER

If you can understand that process, you can create high converting, high ROI campaigns. The traffic is not only predictable in terms of what people are after, it is easy to determine what your audience is after.

The key search traffic is going to come from The Big 3 again in the search traffic world: Google, Bing and Yahoo. Google's lead in this space is continuing to grow with close to 89% overall market share (desktop and mobile) in 2019.

In terms of social media, the key players in 2019 are going to remain the same. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Pinterest and LinkedIn are all going to remain viable sources of quality traffic in 2020. In 2019 we saw the sunsetting of Google + (R.I.P.), a social media platform that never really became what Google initially anticipated it would become.

Discussion platforms are also going to remain a prominent form of obtaining traffic and establishing brand exposure. These services include, but are not limited to [Reddit](#), [Quora](#), & [Answers.com](#). Relevant forums and communities are also locations that can be leveraged by affiliate marketers to extend their industry reach and to obtain traffic.

Video traffic is going to remain a prominent force. Youtube in particular should remain a key focus with affiliate marketers. There are new legislation and policies that you should understand relating to YouTube content, you should understand the new [Child Safety Policies](#) that were launched on August 21st, 2019. You can get full information about this [here](#). It is wider reaching than many imagined, and is having a broad impact on the censorship within YouTube.

Building video into your daily business activities, regardless of the industry you are operating within, can lead to another viable and significant stream of traffic to your affiliate marketing business. The audience within Youtube is an engaged one, and also one that will convert at a very high level (because video content ticks off all the elements of trust).

***Traffic to Avoid: Traffic Exchanges & Solo Ads*

As with past years, traffic exchanges and solo ad purchases are going to be sources of traffic that you want to avoid. Historically this type of traffic has been either bogus, or low converting.

Without traffic you are not going to have the ability to generate revenue. All successful affiliate marketing business start with an overall plan, but within that overall plan the initial focus is always traffic, not what you are going to sell. The continued growth of the Internet and the usage amongst users, is going to lead to growth in traffic opportunities through 2020.

(2) Trust. Trust goes hand in hand with your ability to captivate your audience, and your ability to convert your audience. As the internet grows, the content grows. As people get better at research and expect quality content, and they also expect selfless and helpful information. If you cannot provide this, you are not going to retain their attention or get the sale.

How to establish trust as an affiliate marketer.

- (1) Offer valuable content (help people)
- (2) Don't constantly pitch (which will hurt rankings)
- (3) Over-deliver
- (4) When you promote something, make a recommendation and give people choice
- (5) Always make yourself available to help
- (6) Transparency

Your website visitors often times won't know of you or your brand prior to visiting your website. You need to consider that in order for someone to trust you, you first have to take the necessary steps to create that sense of comfort. The quickest way to do so is to relay your content in a communicative manner, be helpful and offer insightful content, and to be engaging with your content.

If you can do this, selling as an affiliate marketer will become much easier and much more seamless.

(3) Customer Relationships. What makes your customers tick? What takes them from a potential or prospective buyer to actually making the decision to buy something? Your understanding of your customers and how to move them through the [The Customer Purchase Lifecycle](#) is going to have significant bearing on your success as an affiliate.

Let me once again remind you of your ROLE as an affiliate. Your role is to connect a customer and a product/service. You are going to be doing this through your media channels (website content, social media, youtube/vimeo, email, etc) and through your ability to connect with your audience in trustworthy and selfless manner.

Marketing strategy aside, there are several customer relationship focal points that you should be focusing on in 2020. For the most part these are timeless, because there is very little about a customer's behaviour that changes other than the technology that they are exhibiting their purchasing habits within.

So here are some of the relationship strategies you should be implementing in the year ahead:

- **Encouraging Engagement.** As you create your content, you want to encourage people to communicate within the areas on your website where this are applicable. This includes offer your help, suggestion others share their experiences/feedback, and in some cases opinionated or controversial discussions.

When people see that you are willing to engage, and better yet, engaging within the comments on your website (replying to every comment), you are going to build a lot of trust in your content, your brand and your affiliate product/service recommendations.

- **Email Marketing.** Email marketing will always be one of the best ways to establish long term and fruit relationships with your audience. Affiliate marketers that leverage affiliate marketing in 2020 are going to see little in terms of changes to the technology they are using, but it should be a top priority for creating long term relationships with your audiences.

One thing to consider is that as an email list matures, you are going to eventually see the open rate percentages dip below 15%, so be careful about sacrificing your "affiliate" commissions now, for the sake of building a list. If someone is on your website and is ready to buy, don't sacrifice an instant commision for the sake of building a list.

- **Authority Content.** If you offer quality content, you create trust with your audience which naturally leads to trust in your "recommendations". That is the key process. Build trust, and once you have attained that trust, at that point you can offer customer recommendations. It is the "unknown" metric, but a powerful one. When you create sound relationships and you become a respected authority, there are going to be natural "word of mouth" RECOMMENDATIONS to your website.
- **Keep Current, Keep Engaged.** It is important as an affiliate marketers that you stay on top of your industry, current events, and hot trends. You will want to establish an authority figure within your industry as this will create trust. Blog about what is currently

taking place in your industry, offer your opinion and insights on current events, and publish industry-related content with consistency and regularity.

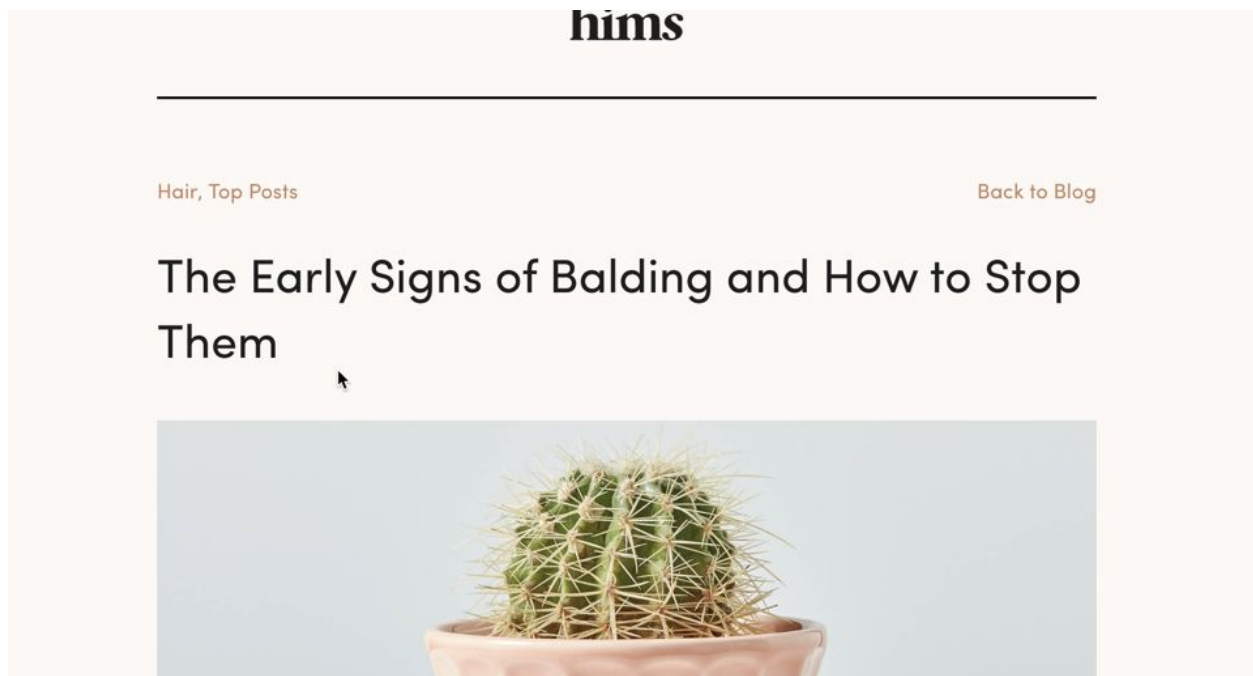
Relationships are becoming more and more critical to the affiliate marketing environment. If you can create relationships and trust amongst your audience, you can create repeat transactions and long term customers as an affiliate marketer. Remember, it is 5-6 times more likely to sell to an existing customer than it is to sell to someone that is visiting your website for the first time.

(4) Contextually Relevant Promotions.

Relevance converts. It did 15 years ago, and it will continue to 15 years from now. You can't try to sell a cup of hot cocoa to someone on a sweltering hot day, the same way as you cannot sell ice cold lemonade to someone on a freezing cold winter day at the Ski Mountain. However, you can sell lemonade on a hot summer day, and hot cocoa is the drink of choice at the ski mountain during the winter.

Let's look at some websites online that are doing it right, and some that are missing the mark. I will show you the entire flow of the process, including my initial searches to give you some context.

How to Prevent Balding, ForHims.com



For this example, I initiated my search in Google with the following search term:

how to prevent balding

This would be pretty typical of someone that was, well, looking to prevent balding. A very common search amongst folks that are 25+ when this starts to become a potential problem.

Within the first page of the content I was directed to the following listing.

The Early Signs of Balding and How to Stop Them - Hims

<https://www.forhims.com> › [blog](#) › [the-early-signs-of-balding-and-how-to-s...](#) ▼

One of the keys to **stopping hair loss** is noticing the signs of baldness and taking acting as early as possible. Simply put, the earlier you take action to prevent ...

After clicking the article, it goes through the relevant content that I would anticipate based on the title. It offers help and insight into balding, and then sets up a highly relevant product recommendation. The article goes on to discuss the use of pills to help with balding. Then there is a recommendation for pills that this company actually inventories and sells from their website, called Finasteride.

keep hair on your head

More hair... yes, there is a pill for that.

Finasteride treats male pattern baldness. We'll give you a free online consultation to see if it is right for you.

Shop Finasteride

This is an example of a contextually relevant promotion. There were other examples that I could have used within this article. This is a particular example of a product owner, and an authority blogger that is making contextually relevant recommendations of their OWN products.

This is often times hard than affiliates promoting the very same product, simply because there is an inherent bias when a company tells you their product is great, versus a 3rd party (independent affiliate marketer) doing the same.

To read the article and get some context, and see this example head here.

<https://www.forhims.com/blog/the-early-signs-of-balding-and-how-to-stop-them>

How to Lose Belly Fat - What Not to Do

Search this website

How To Lose Belly Fat Fast: 7 Tips For A Flat Stomach

Belly fat can be very dangerous for your health, and can cause a slew of health issues. Learn how to lose belly fat fast and keep it off forever.

How to lose belly fat fast is the most popular question I get, so I decided to share all my best tips and tricks to reduce belly fat. In this article I'll show you how to burn belly fat in an effective and healthy way through food, sleep and exercise.



I am going to use another example, but this time an affiliate marketers website and one that is relying partially on affiliate marketing, but mostly ad-driven revenue (with Google AdSense).

There is a natural draw for website owners to at some point choose “ads” as a viable way to generate revenue from their website, but the problem is that ads pay pennies on the dollar compared to what a well architected affiliate promotion could provide.

You see this more and more often these days with sites displaying OutBrain, MediaVine and AdSense ads throughout the content, but let me be clear, this can be a devastating approach to revenue if you are reliant on SEO to drive your traffic.

[Google has made it evident](#) that overuse of ads, or advertisements that detract from the readability of the content, will have an adverse impact on that website’s rankings. Here is an exact citation of what Google has stated.

“Does the content have an excessive amount of ads that distract from or interfere with the main content?”

OK, I digress. But this exhibits why affiliate marketing is becoming a much more viable solution, if you ever needed a push to move in this direction. Google is favouring sites that are not riddled with advertisements (like the one I am going to be showing).

Anyways, I performed the following search in Google.

fastest way to lose belly fat fast

And the following result came up.

How To Lose Belly Fat Fast: 7 Tips For A Flat Stomach

[https://loseweightbyeating.com > how-to-lose-belly-fat-fast](https://loseweightbyeating.com/how-to-lose-belly-fat-fast) ▼

How to **lose belly fat fast** is the most popular question I get, so I decided to share all my best **tips and tricks to reduce belly fat**. In this article I'll show you how to ...

The process is exactly the same, and the contextual nature of the promotion is the critical element that we want to focus in on here.

This particular website owner, is very much credible and has quite the story in the weight loss space. They are running an authority website that ranks well in Google, but it is completely missing the mark on “contextual” promotions site wide.

Like most websites that don't consider contextually relevant recommendations as they are creating content, this can inhibit the ability to do that later (in particular if your website is ranking, as you don't want to change content too drastically after the fact).

But there could be many ways in which this particular website could integrate promotions. There are a plethora of “fast belly fat” dieting products, services, dieting books, equipment...etc that are relevant, and that would convert very well if positioned correctly within this article. In fact this owner has her own book, as well as other “affiliate products” she recommends that she could easily and effectively integrate into this article.

This is a case of poor contextual relevance, and it is likely costly to the owner of this website.

Here is the article I am referring to, for your reference.

<https://loseweightbyeating.com/how-to-lose-belly-fat-fast/>

The 4 Key Behaviours of Successful Affiliate Marketers.

There are a lot of aspiring affiliate marketers out there, but not every single person succeeds. In fact, a fairly high percentage of people that attempt to build a business online (or offline for that matter), fail.

Why is this? Well, there are many reasons. Instead of answering to the reason why people are failing, let's look at the key attributes and behaviours that ALL successful affiliate marketers exhibit. It is much easier to learn from people that are successful and analyzing WHY they are successful, than it is to look at consistent failure and work backwards to determine why.

There are 4 common characteristics and natural behaviours that I have concluded existing in ALL affiliate marketers.

- (1) **Work Ethic.** The most important behaviour that all successful affiliate marketers exhibit, and that those that are aspiring to go "full time" is work ethic. People are confused by what work ethic means, that is, those succeeding have a different perception of hard work and dedication to those that are consistently failing.

Work ethic means your ability to set goals, work hard, and persist in your efforts until you achieve those goals. Many people work hard, and stop short of achieving those goals because they have created some fictional deadline. Some things can be accomplished in 5 minutes, some will take 5 years, some may be a lifetime goal that are never achieved.

Your ability to keep your eye on the prize, and sustain a high level of effort will immediately put you in the top 20% of those that are succeeding simply because the 80% is not willing to do this. Let me repeat that, 80% of people that are failing in business are doing so because they are not sustaining their work ethic.

Closely associated with work ethic, is failure. Your ability to fail, with grace, is going to be a component of driving your business forward in 2020. Each year represents a new year of entirely new failures, and the impending result of this is going to be an education that cannot be obtained any other way.

The key is being able to learn from your failures, remaining flexible to change as a result of them, and then utilizing what you have learned to hash out a new path (which could or could not work). The only bad failures are ones that keep on happening because you refuse to change your thinking, or failures that prevent you from taking action in the future (out of fear of subsequent failure)

- (2) **Focus.** What does focus mean to you, and how long can you focus on one thing. Most of us have ADHD on the internet, in fact our day to day activities encourage the split second transition between focusing on one thing to the next. But this sort of behaviour in the affiliate marketing world, is going to lead to mediocrity.

Let me make this clear. It only takes being GREAT at one thing to be very successful online. You don't need to know it all, in fact it is better that you don't. You need to know everything about ONE thing, and be really good at that. In terms of your approach to marketing, you don't need to be an expert at SEO, PPC, email marketing, developing websites, etc.

- (3) **Niche Immersion.** How often are you thinking about, talking about, forming opinions, and/or researching your niche? If your answer is not every day, you are going to have a much slower journey to achieving "expert" status (as defined by your industry), and you certainly going to achieve fractional success as to what you could have achieved if you were more committed to your niche. Immerse yourself in your niche, understand it, learn about it daily, and you will always be moving in the right direction.

- (4) **Goal Setting and Planning.** Your goal should be efficiency. Your goal should be creating goals to establish this efficiency. The reality of goal setting is that we are very bad at estimating the time it takes to achieve something. In fact, we typically "undershoot" the time required by 50%.

This means if we think something will take a month, it will usually take two. The problem takes place when we don't achieve our goals when we anticipated or slated out to achieve them, and thus it demotivates us from moving forward in our businesses.

So, my first recommendation is to not worry about your deadlines, and be willing to move them if required. We aren't perfect in our time assessments for certain jobs, and there are unknowns that will pop up within any business.

There are 3 types of goals that you should be setting with your affiliate marketing business activities.

- **Bite Size Daily Goals:** These are daily goals typically, but can even be segmented into hourly if you have some microtasks you are working on. At the beginning of each day lay out the tasks that you aim to complete, and work to achieve thee. Typically these are not financial goals, they are actionable goals that relate to productivity in your business.
- **Weekly Goals.** Weekly goals should be set, ideally at the beginning of what you determine as your work week. Naturally this could be on a Monday, but I tend to set my goals for the week on Sunday night along with my Monday's tasks so I am

ready to hit the ground running every Monday. Weekly goals can be ambitious and it is rare that you will complete every goal, but you should knock off as many of these that you can. It is OK to be ambitious with your weekly goals.

- Longer Term, Yearly Goals. You should be setting long term goals, I typically recommend staying away from goals that are more than a year away. This can be part of your vision, but I recommend longer term goals to be monthly or for the year ahead. A lot can be accomplished in a year, but you never know what can happen in business and you want to be able to remain flexible with your affiliate marketing business. Your longer term goals will likely shift throughout the year, but it is an excellent idea to set yearly goals at least once per year... and revisit these several times throughout the year.

Conclusion, and Future Guidance for the Affiliate Marketing industry.

The affiliate marketing industry in 2020 is going to remain one rife with opportunity. As the number of active internet users grows, as the middle class continues to strengthen amongst developing countries, and as people become more accustomed to making purchases online, the audience of prospective customers across every niche will grow.

We are also seeing growing adoption of affiliate marketing as the core and fundamental model that large corporations are leaning on to drive their growth in their online commerce divisions.

The affiliate marketing industry will continue to mature in 2020, technology will continue to push more and more people online (with higher regularity) and a split emphasis on mobile and desktop users is going to be critical to affiliate success in the year ahead.

To Your Affiliate Success in 2020,

Kyle & Carson

Founders of WealthyAffiliate.com