



100 TIPS *for*

SUCCESSFUL AFFILIATE SELLING

AN EXECUTIVE WHITEPAPER

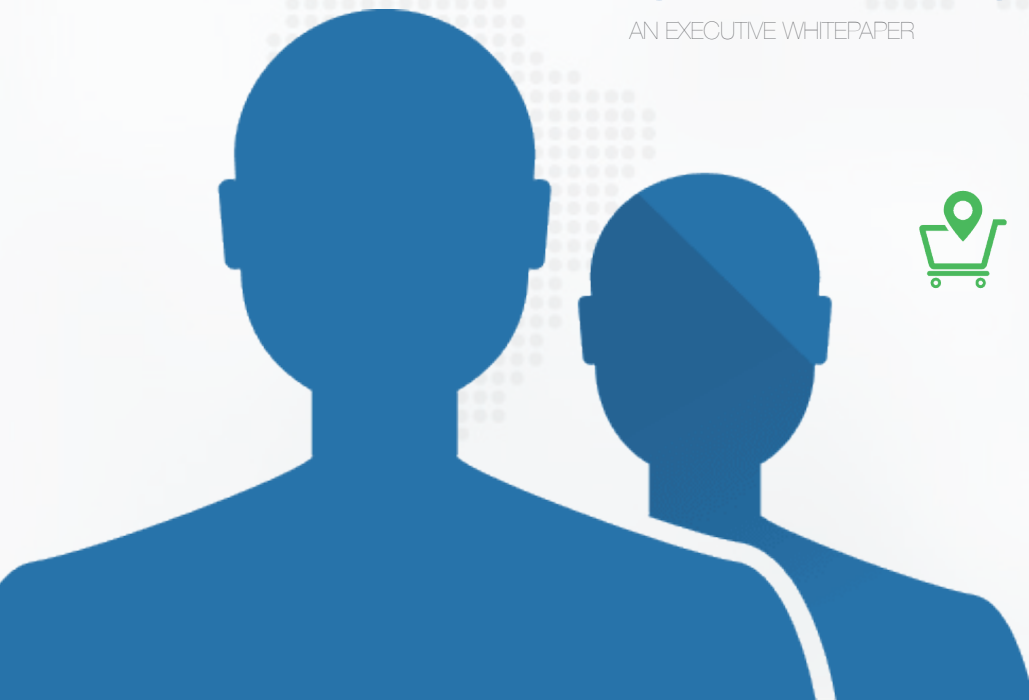




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Executive Summary

Introduction

With software affiliate sales forecasted to reach \$4.5 billion USD by 2016 (with a 17% CAGR) in the US alone, this niche business represents a huge opportunity for online entrepreneurs.

Successful online entrepreneurs know how to:

- Start a Digital Goods Affiliate Business from Scratch
- Optimize their Website for Better Conversions
- Learn How to Get and Keep Clients
- Understand How to Pick the Right Partners

For these topics above and many more, the following 100 tips will provide insights, advice, and guidance on building a successful affiliate business.

Let's get to the tips!

CHOOSE A NICHE.

1

Find a need and provide a solution. If you're going to start an affiliate business, do your research. Find a need or a problem that people have and provide a relevant solution. For example, Lee Robertson of CloudStorageBuzz.com shared: *"It all started by accident. I was looking for a service to back up my files and posted about the search on my company blog. That post started to get traffic and made me think that maybe I could create a website about the different services available and review and rate them. Eventually it grew into CloudStorageBuzz.com."*

2

Bet on your passion. Confucius said "Choose a job you love, and you will never have to work a day in your life." The same is true for building a successful affiliate business. The more an expert you are in a certain field, the more successful you'll be in providing content and solutions to your target audience. *"The readers can tell if the author really enjoys showing them new products and writing about their features. Without truly loving your business, you cannot be successful because readers will detect work that lacks honest passion,"* Julian Zitsch, APPSlication.de.

NEED A WEBSITE? GET IT RIGHT.

3

Use a simple and intuitive design. Make sure the design and colors used for your webpage are not visually overwhelming; you don't want to distract the users with too many buttons, widgets or unnecessary text. A cluttered or unstructured website can frustrate users leading them to leave your website. For example, [Softpedia](#), a popular download directory, chose to use a very clean design with delimited sections that provide a structured and intuitive hierarchy of information.

4

Your website should be fast. There are some free tools available online that allow you to measure and improve your page speed: [Google PageSpeed Tools](#), [GTmetrix](#), [Pingdom Tools](#), and [WebPagetest](#).

5

Don't overcrowd your website with banners! It's a known fact that people are paying less and less attention to banners ("banner blindness"). [Learn more](#) about how to use banners on your affiliate website from industry expert, Geno Prussakov.

6

Choose a responsive design theme. Mobile shopping, especially on tablets, is growing rapidly and making a sizable impact in the eCommerce world. If you want to remain a viable business having a website that looks good on all devices is a must. *"Mobile and tablet usage will continue to grow. Networks, companies and affiliates need to be ready for this, which means having mobile-*

and tablet-ready websites, as well as offering ways for affiliates to earn with mobile and tablet services sales.”, [Lee Robertson, CloudStorageBuzz.com](#).

7

Make sure every product has its own page. Make sure each product is listed on a separate page with pictures, a description, review(s) if available, and share icons for all the Social Media channels. If you do this, statistics show visitors are more likely to buy than leave the page. For example, [the download portal from CNet](#) makes for “easy browsing.” Each product has its own page including download button, buy button, editor’s review, publisher’s description, quick specs, full specifications and also user reviews - all organized in a clear and logical manner.

8

Break up text with clear, relevant headings to make things easier for the readers. If there’s too much information for a product, only keep the relevant aspects that can drive conversion, such as features, price, etc. For example, [Softonic](#) uses two separate columns for Pros and Cons and two different tabs for Softonic’s analysis and users’ opinions.

9













Have the most important action buttons above the fold. The most important action button could be the “add to cart” button. It could also be a “buy now” button, if the customer has not added goods to the shopping cart yet. Make sure that the button is prominently located above the fold.

10

Highlight your upcoming campaigns in the news section on your website (announce the Black Friday deals at least one week in advance, but don't reveal all details). [Here's an example](#) of how a company can gear up for [promotional holiday campaigns](#).

Promote top titles from all software & digital services niches with up to 70% discount!

The hottest shopping season - Black Friday/Cyber Monday is about to kick off and all affiliates gather the offers to make the best out of them; don't miss out our vendors special deals and promote world-acclaimed tools with up to 70% discount coupons! See all deals details [here](#).

123Copy DVD	Iolo	Digiarty
		
<p>Commission: 60% Coupon Code: 123CYBER2014</p> 	<p>Commission: 30% Coupon Code: AVIOLO</p> 	<p>Commission: 60% Coupon Code: WINXBF5DEL</p> 
AVS4YOU	Amplusnet	DriverMax
		
<p>Commission: 50% Coupon Code: AVS-50-BLACK</p> 	<p>Commission: 50% Coupon Code: AV40BF</p> 	<p>Commission: 40% Coupon: driver-bf-50</p> 

TRAFFIC, TRAFFIC, TRAFFIC. IT'S ALL ABOUT THE TRAFFIC.

11

Monitor what people search on your website; maybe there are products you don't promote yet, but should. For example, if you get a lot of searches for security products and you only sell utility tools, consider doing a promotion on various security software products.

12

Make use of all the **great tools available to create and improve your website.** The WordPress platform is recognized for having some great, useful widgets, such as [AffiLinker Affiliate](#), [Easy Affiliate](#), [Affiliate Power](#), [Thirsty Affiliates](#), etc.

13

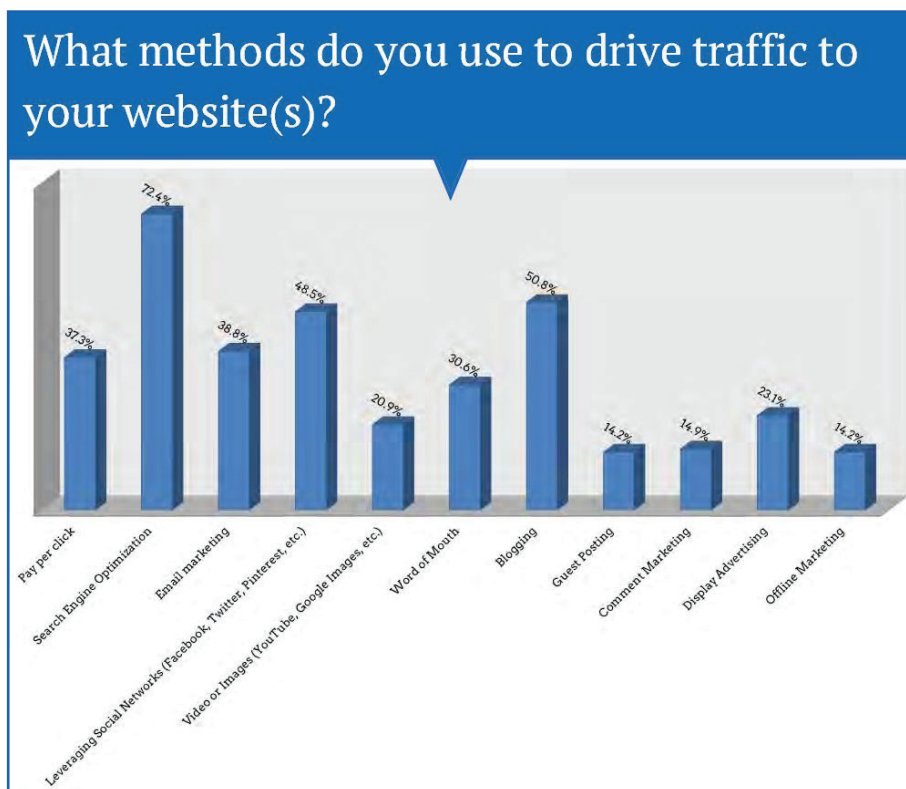
Buy niche-specific abandoned domains and redirect them to your website. This is a good way to drive additional traffic to your website. For example, if you're selling utilities software, you might consider some niche-specific domain names such as [pcutilitiesapps.com](#), [utilitiesdownload.com](#), [fixmycomputer.com](#), etc.

14

Build more backlinks to your website. In addition to your brand visibility activities, list your website on forums and reputable directories that represent your area of interest. If you're an established expert in your field, you can even include a forum section in your website, just like on [Bitsdujour](#) (a popular software deals website).

15

Improving SEO makes your website easier to find on search engines, and it boosts the web traffic of the site - meaning more potential customers. You can do it yourself or work with an agency or specialist. In the [AffStat Report 2014](#), 14% of the affiliates interviewed said they use Guest Posting, Comment Marketing and Offline Marketing as ways to increase their website traffic. Of the responses, over 20% prefer Videos and Images as well as Display Advertising; 40% are devoted to PPC and Email Marketing; 30% rely on Word of Mouth; 50% are targeting Blogging and Social Networks as means to gain visitors, and a 70% majority use SEO for a good Google ranking.



16

Do your keyword research. This is crucial to your Quality Score on Google. Think about the terms people would use in order to find you on Google and keep these keywords as close as possible to your ad copy. Use [Google Discovery's Research Tool](#) and look for the terms with a higher CPC. *"If you're planning to make money from your blog, [keyword research tools](#) are essential. They help you determine how to best monetize your traffic, as well as how to optimize your posts to help you bring in the most revenue."* - [Keyword Research Can Help You Make Money in Copyblogger](#).

INCREASE CONVERSION.

17

Use affiliate link cloaking plug-ins. They help you manage the links on your website. It also makes it easier to send affiliate links and contributes to the trust factor for shopping. However, you shouldn't "spam" your website visitors with affiliate links on each keyword within an article. For example, [PC Antivirus Reviews](#) has suggestive names for links and they all look good for the viewer.

18











Always A/B test your product pages. Use the page that sends you more traffic or converts best and, most importantly, never stop testing your product pages!

19

Allow your customers to filter and compare products. This is especially important if you're promoting more than one product from the same niche. A well-informed customer is more likely to convert than one that needs information that is not available on your website. [SoftwareRank](#) and [TopReviews](#) allow users to compare products and grade product features in order to make an informed purchase decision.

Beste antivirus software (Windows)

Like 30 people like this. Be the first of your friends.
Tweeten 4
+1 7

Rank	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	Bitdefender Antivirus Plus	Kaspersky Antivirus	BullGuard Antivirus	Norton Security	Panda Antivirus Pro	AVG Antivirus	Avast! Pro Antivirus	F-Secure Antivirus	Norman Antivirus	McAfee Antivirus
										
De laagste prijs:										
Antivirus info:	INFO	INFO	INFO	INFO	INFO	INFO	INFO	INFO	INFO	INFO
	€ 29,95	€ 29,95	€ 29,95	€ 59,99	€ 42,99	€ 29,95	€ 39,99	€ 44,95	€ 39,95	€ 54,95
Tijdelijke Kortingscode:										
Aantal Computers:										
Computers per licentie	1+	1+	1	1	3	1	1	3	3	3
Beveiligings score										
Bescherming score gemiddeld	99%	99%	98%	98%	97%	93%	96%	95%	95%	90%
Diverse Functies:										
Anti Rootkit	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Anti Malware	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Anti Phishing	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓			✓
Anti Spyware	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Antivirus	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

20

Only provide new versions of your promoted products. Don't lose sales by forgetting to update your marketplace with the newest versions of your promoted products. Using network feeds for this is the most convenient way to ensure all of your products are up-to-date.

21

Test different headlines for your website. You have to test and see which headlines do and don't work. You won't know what headline persuades until you test many of them and then track traffic and sales. Write down your ideas and test them. *"Use headlines that clearly state the biggest benefit(s) that your product or service offers. Tell them exactly what they can get on your web page. Write 5-10 different headlines and test which one pulls the best response rate,"* an excerpt from an article by [Interactive Marketing Inc.](#)

22

Personalize your website based on visitor location. Personalize your offering, such as free delivery, a city-specific event invitation, etc. If you're going international, localize the content (translations, products, etc.). Think globally, act locally! Examples include: www.retailmenot.com, www.retailmenot.ca, www.retailmenot.fr.

23

Make use of automation. Automation tools, such as use network feeds, filters for auto-approval of comments, etc. allow for traditionally time-consuming, manual tasks to be standardized into repeatable processes. By standardizing your processes and setting expectations for service levels, you can increase customer loyalty, leading to improved retention rates.

24

Close the loop with affiliate links. If you're sending your visitors outside your website for more information on a certain product, be sure to use an affiliate link. You want to make sure the tracking cookie is in place before the customer leaves your website.

25

Create newsletters campaigns. Create monthly, bi-monthly, even weekly or daily newsletters, depending on your business, to drive traffic. If your email marketing has a commercial goal such as informing your subscribers about deals, discounts or new product releases make sure that you embed the right affiliate links in your email template. There are plenty of resources available regarding the creation of an email marketing strategy. You can use [Sendgrid](#), a complete email marketing solution provider, as well as [MailChimp](#), which delivers a complete guide to making a perfect email marketing plan.

OPTIMIZE THE SHOPPING CART.

26

Use optimized shopping carts for best conversion. Review the merchant's shopping cart and ask them about their average conversion rate. If you have your own template that converts better, implement it on the network side – some networks, such as Avangate, allow affiliates to customize their shopping cart templates for maximum conversion.

27

A/B test shopping cart templates. Test different layouts of shopping carts to see which one converts better. Ask the merchant for more templates or implement your own to test. This is only available with certain affiliate networks such as Avangate. Here are some [popular A/B testing tools](#) as recommended by affiliate marketing expert, Geno Prussakov: Google Website Optimizer, Visual Website Optimizer, LiveBall, and A/Bingo.

28

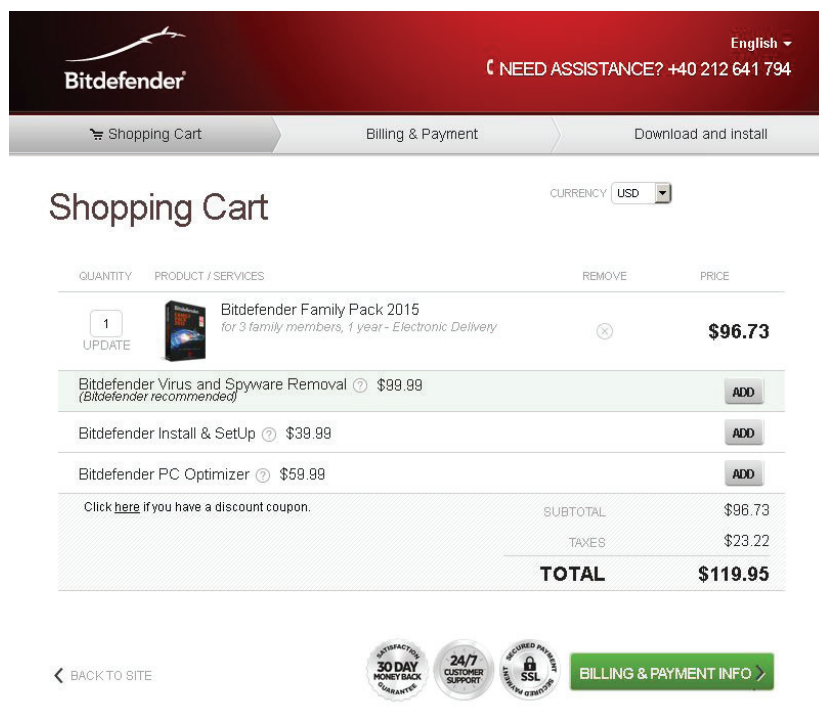
Display all cart items. It is essential for your customers to see exactly what they are purchasing. The last thing you want is your customers not knowing exactly how much their purchase is costing them, freaking out and abandoning the checkout process.

29

Single Page Checkout. Checkout processes sometimes have multiple steps in the purchase flow such as delivery address, discount codes, payment details, etc. The more steps and pages that customers need to complete, the higher the chances of them abandoning the purchasing process. A better recommendation is to offer a single page checkout flow. Customers can input their details and purchase right then and there.

30

Display a clear progress bar. If you can't offer a single page checkout, then you need to make sure your multi-step checkout has a clear progress bar. Customers want to know what is involved with purchasing from you and what comes next. If you can show them exactly where they are in the purchase process, they'll feel more secure in continuing with the purchase.

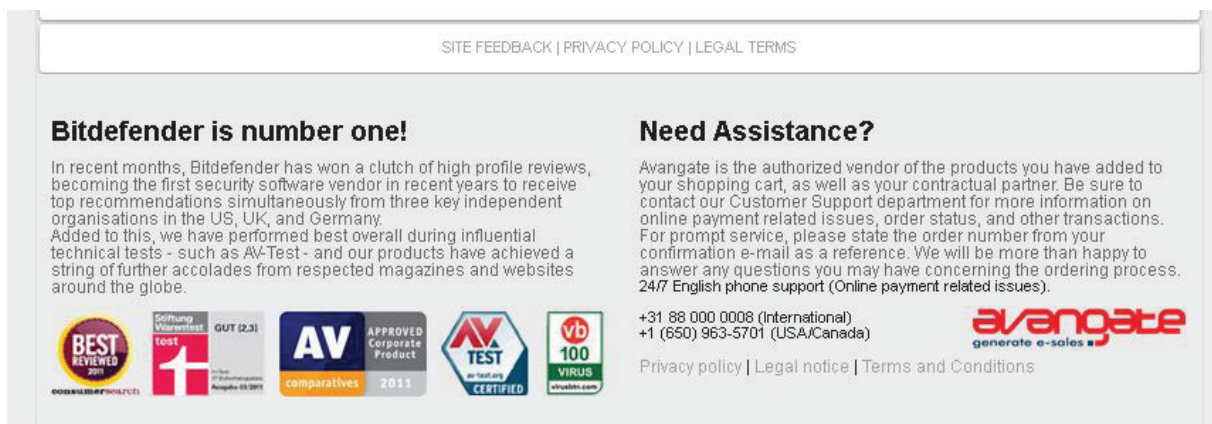


31

One column design for shopping cart. Keep the customers' eyes focused on the order, with everything designed as one column, without distractions to the right or left (such as additional columns). Additionally, single column cart designs will display better on mobile devices.

32

Display trust logos in your shopping cart. The shopping cart should display trust elements like credit card logos, certification from security audit companies, etc to instill buying confidence with your customers.



33

Avoid forcing customers to register in order to buy. Completing registration forms, as a condition to proceed with an online purchase, is a bad idea; however, if registration is required, then try to keep the process as simple as possible in order to avoid cart abandonment.

34

Offer customers incentives for registering. Offer your customers exclusive discounts, reward points or other loyalty items if they register with you or enroll in your email database. Consider offering a one-year subscription to the best-selling cloud service, a 50% discount coupon on the first purchase, etc. For example, [Trading Reviews](#) promises great freebies, market tips, trading ideas, product specials and latest news if you subscribe to their mailing list.

35

Disclose additional costs upfront. Supplementary costs include: shipping, handling, taxes, and the like. Don't keep this information hidden until the last step. Customers need to know the total cost throughout the purchase process.

36

Use thank you pages after every purchase and make sure you send an order confirmation via email or phone. Thank you pages are an opportunity for future conversions and an additional interaction with the client, so make sure to include up-sell and cross-sell promotions such as: You also might be interested in or Customers that bought this item also bought, etc. Don't forget to ask them to share their experiences on social media.

PAYMENT METHODS.

37

Verify payment methods. Test the payment process on a regular basis. Research payment method updates, test them personally, check for affiliate leaks, and fix whatever issues arise.

38

Offer a wide variety of payment options. Make sure that you offer as many payment options as possible. Customers will have their own preferences for how they want to pay, so offer as many options as possible. A really simple example is to make sure you don't just offer credit card purchases, but also PayPal and potentially other options like Google Wallet. According to the [AffStat Report 2014](#), 42% of the questioned affiliates prefer direct deposit, 34% use PayPal, and 12% use check, while 12% prefer wire transfer.

39

Localized payment methods for specific territories. If you're targeting territories with specific local payment methods, be sure the merchant's eCommerce provider supports those in order to increase conversions. For example, Boleto Bancario is the most popular online payment method in Brazil.

MONITORING, MEASURING AND RESULTS.

40

Monitor your campaigns and offers. Pay attention to your seasonal campaigns, and you will see that your sales are not constant all year round. The basic indicators you should watch are the number of clicks sent, number of orders, volumes transacted and number of returns.

41

Measure the purchase intention. Ask visitors who leave your website why they're leaving, and, if possible, offer them a discount for the product they were interested in purchasing. See if you can insert a small two-question survey to measure their satisfaction with your website and services; you'll find out vital information for your business.

42

Engage with web analytics tools. Whether it's Google Analytics or another tool, knowing how to read and interpret the powerful reports provided will give insight into your site's performance. If the performance is not strong, the reasons why are also in the reports. For example, maybe the words in your ad don't perform well and you need to change them. If this is too time consuming for you, you can engage the services of an agency or a freelancer specialist.

CUSTOMER FEEDBACK.

43

Add grades to the products based on customers' feedback.

People tend to trust other people's ratings. Enable a customer feedback option under the "add to cart" button to increase the product's perceived value. Most affiliates have integrated a grading system for their promoted products. For example, users can assign up to 5 stars for the products reviewed by [Telecharger](#) and [Major Geeks](#), two websites which specialize in tech, software and digital goods.

44

Make it easier for customers to send feedback. The majority of dissatisfied customers don't complain - they walk away instead, and you don't know why. If a customer has a bad experience on your site, they will likely tell other people about it, so providing a system that allows them to provide honest feedback is essential to your business. [Anti-virus4u](#), for example, asks their users to review their website in an honest and transparent manner.

45

Actively ask for your customers' opinions. Create a survey and include it in your newsletter; it's a great way to find out your customers' opinions of your business and what you can do to improve it.

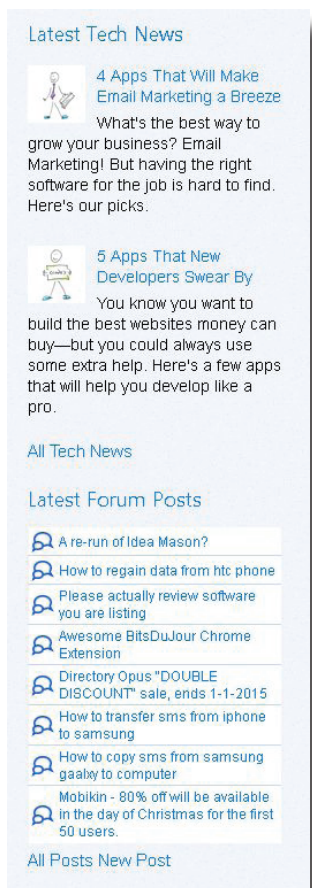
46

Use post-order emails to get customers' opinions on products they just bought. It will provide insights on the quality and popularity of certain products, as well as user-generated content.

DELIVER ORIGINAL CONTENT.

47

Talk about the latest available products and services along with related offers and campaigns on your website. It is the best way to create and promote original content. [BitsDuJour](#), a software deals website, displays on the left side “Most Popular Downloads”, “Latest Tech News” and “Latest Forum Posts” sections which are user friendly and easy to browse.




48


Work on your user-generated content. Encourage your followers to state their opinion and contribute to your brand image with their feedback and reviews. Actual customer opinions have a big impact on the overall perception of your business and products. Even a comments section for each product where users can share their thoughts is useful. For example, [Major Geeks](#), a recognized software portal has a comments section, and [Anti-virus4u](#), another software website, also encourages its users to review their products, their website and their services.

You are here: Home > Reviews

Anti-Virus4U.com Reviews




Your satisfaction is important to us. We hope you recommend us to your friends and family. Below are reviews from many satisfied customers.

Reviews by 

★★★★★ 60 Reviews WRITE A REVIEW

Site Reviews Product Reviews

 **dsgdgh** Verified Reviewer 01/06/15

★★★★★

fnghf

I had just purchased a Norton product which I had trouble downloading it. MikeD. was very kind and patient with me. I am a senior and he made me feel at ease immediately. I will always purchase my Norton products from you. What a wonderful company. Thank You so much.

49

Get advice from experts. Influencers and experts are trusted by consumers, and in so much, tip articles coming from these individuals are a big plus to your brand. Here are some affiliate marketing influencers and their websites: [Shawn Collins](#) and [Missy Ward](#) from Affiliate Summit, Rae Hoffman from [Sugar Rae](#), Geno Prussakov from [AM Navigator](#). A [Nielsen](#) study commissioned by inPowered stated “...on average, expert content lifted familiarity 88 percent more than branded content and 50 percent more than user reviews; they lifted affinity 50 percent more than branded content and 20 percent more than user reviews; finally, they lifted purchase considerations 38 percent more than branded content and 83 percent more than user reviews.”

50

Have related resources available for each product you're promoting. Make sure customers can download specification pdfs, installation manuals and other information related to the products you're promoting.

51

Craft your own reviews for products and services. Create honest and objective reviews by showing both pro and cons and exposing the good and the bad. [Softonic](#), for example, a digital goods website which successfully integrates content & downloads, offers both Pros and Cons for their promoted products.

Antivirus plus more than 30 tools to optimize your PC

ULTIMATE

Rumor: Start menu to return in Windows 8.2

The product is the newest version of the well known [Advanced SystemCare Ultimate](#). It allows you to perform **cleaning and maintenance tasks** to improve your PC's performance.

[Read more](#)

Pros

- More than 30 tools
- Complete control of the system
- Usable interface
- Cleans and optimizes your PC
- Efficient antivirus

Cons

- No advanced features for antivirus

Download

Advanced SystemCare Ultimate

52

Practice makes perfect; read articles on copywriting to create the titles and content that boost sales! Check out websites like www.copyblogger.com for ideas.

53

Produce product tours or product review videos. Place them on websites like Youtube, Vimeo, VeVo, Dailymotion, etc. and share them via your social media channels. [Matthew Woodward](#), a SEO expert blogger, makes useful video-tutorials like “[How to Start a Blog](#)” and offers a read-only version as well.

54

Interviews and testimonials. We live in very social times. People love to read about other people’s product experiences and are eager to find out opinions of influencers and experts. [John Chow](#), blogger, speaker and entrepreneur, loves hosting interviews on his website.

55

Syndicate content. Syndicate both your own content and content from related websites and blogs. Look into using syndication networks like [Outbrain](#) or [Alltop](#) to get your content exposed to traffic that you could not reach otherwise.

56

Don’t copy content directly from the vendor’s website. [Google made it explicitly](#) clear that websites built with the sole purpose of placing affiliate links will be outranked.

INCENTIVES & PROMOTIONAL STRATEGIES.

57

Offer your customers gifts within the purchase process.

Promote lesser-performing products with an additional bonus or gift or as a discounted cross-sell option to other best-selling products.

58

Send your loyal customers gifts on their birthdays. It's not rocket science to know it's a good idea to take care of your clients. Offer them a new subscription to their favorite product or online magazine, or offer them a free trial for a product they might like.

59

Don't miss the big discount campaigns of the year. Keep an updated calendar of key campaigns throughout the year, plan your promotions and communicate them to your audience in adequate time to achieve campaign success. Here are a couple of dates you should keep in mind: Black Friday, Winter Holidays, New Year's Sales, Valentine's Day, Easter, Summer Clearance, Back to School, Labor Day. *"Whether you are doing everything in-house or you are outsourcing it, take care that you have everything marketing creative related ready, tested and optimized. In function of the actions you are planning to take, this should comprise a set of banners and visuals for your websites, display, retargeting or email campaigns and/ or a new copy for your search ads."* - [How to Sell More during the Shopping Season for Affiliate Marketers](#) by Andra Ioana, Affiliate Manager at Avangate.

60

Organize localized campaigns. If your affiliate website has localized versions, it's a good idea to implement regional campaigns. For example, you can organize a flash sale during Hanami – the cherry blossom festival in Japan, or you can organize a contest on July 14th for your French customers for Bastille Day.

61

Complement your reviews with promotions. Whether it's a discount, a bundle or a chance to win more loyalty points, incentives are a great way to reward loyal customers. *“Bundle current products with content subscriptions. This way, your customers will see the added value and you will see added revenue in your account the following month when some (most) subscriptions will renew. For example, you could offer a complimentary 30-day subscription to a gardening magazine along with a \$30 minimum purchase of seeds. The following month, when users renew, you earn commission on these renewals.”* - [Four Strategies to Start Promoting Digital Goods](#), Cristian Miculi-Pop in Feed Front Magazine, June 2014.

62

Establish a loyalty program. Offer your customers member cards – or loyalty cards, rewards cards, point cards, advantage cards, or club cards. Customers use these cards as a form of identification when they interact with the retailer. By presenting a loyalty card, a customer typically receives either a discount on the current purchase or an allotment of points that can be used for future purchases. When a customer asks for a loyalty card, the card issuer collects identifying or demographic data, such as name, address, email address, age, etc.

63

Organize contests. People love contests. Pick a theme that's relevant and challenging - take time to think about the procedure and prizes; make sure you can collect demographic data or at least find out essential information from your customers. Ask people to share the contest details via social media. BitsDuJour regularly organizes contests, like [their Christmas 2013 contest](#) when they offered a prize of a Microsoft Surface 2 tablet.

ELECTRONICS & GADGETS

Win Microsoft Surface from BitsDuJour

on December 27, 2013 at 10:56 pm



64

Ask your vendors for exclusive deals. Enjoy a promotional price/gift/discount from the brand(s) you most frequent. It is a loyalization tactic and a win-win situation for vendors and customers.

65

Create bundles or special product deals. Customers buy bundles in order to benefit from discounts on each of the products in the bundle compared to the price of the products / services when purchased separately. Many affiliates practice this kind of promotion, like BitsDuJour, for example, [which promotes a record 10-app bundle!](#)

The BitsDuJour Bundle: 10 Great PC & Mac Apps!

* All Apps are Mac and Windows Compatible

 BitDefender -\$39.50-	 LastPass -\$12.00-	 Movavi -\$39.99-	 TuneUp -\$29.95-	 NTI Shadow -\$39.99-
 EarthDesk -\$24.95-	 PostworkShop -\$49.00-	 Aurora -\$49.95-	 Screen Calipers -\$29.50-	 Handwriting Fonts -\$49.95-

Ten Fantastic PC & Mac Apps - One Low Price

Give as a Gift, Makes the Perfect Present

Purchase All 10 Apps at 87% Off
~~\$394.73~~ just **\$49.95**

66

Organize special events with your vendor partners. Build trust with them and show them you're an important affiliate that can move sales by organizing a cocktail, a gaming session, etc. that might suit your business. Special events can generate more business and strengthen relationships with your merchant partners. At the Affiliate Summit East 2014 both Top Ten Reviews and Softonic organized small gatherings for their vendors.

67

Offer an incentive to new email subscribers. There's no better way to acquire new prospects than with a free magazine subscription, a 50% discount for the best-selling product, or 1000 loyalty points.

68

Newsletters need targeted promotions. Your subscribers will more likely open and click on a link in one of your newsletters if you provide the products they're looking for with a special offer. For example, if you know someone recently bought a TV from your website, maybe you'd like to offer them a home entertainment system.

69

Run cross-selling campaigns. Recommend similar, related, or dependent products to ones previously purchased, ones that other visitors were interested in, or products that other customers bought after viewing the item.

70

Custom discount codes. What are the most valuable services an affiliate network could offer you? Apart from the product feeds that a network should have to ease your work, a feature that allows you to create custom coupons, generated from your own commission, is definitely a plus. *“Fast and easy payment, also the feature that allows the creation of custom codes so affiliates can provide additional discounts for their customers – [Avangate](#) ensures all these elements.”*, Anh Lee from [donotcrack.com](#).

CHOOSE THE RIGHT NETWORK & PRODUCTS.

71

Before starting to promote a product, simulate an “affiliate campaign arbitrage”. This is very efficient for the affiliates that rely on paid traffic rather than organic. The purpose is to buy the traffic as low as possible and sell your products at the highest price. The elements you should consider: Affiliate Commission, Product Price, Product Price if Discounted, Traffic costs, and Conversion rate from Click to Sale.

72

Product conversion rates. If you are using paid search or media buying, ask the affiliate network to give you information about the products' conversion rates (Click to Sale or Click to Lead acquisition) and EPC (Earning per Click). If you are considering promoting products or services that work on a freemium or limited free-trial model, ask the merchant information about the conversion from trial to sale.

73

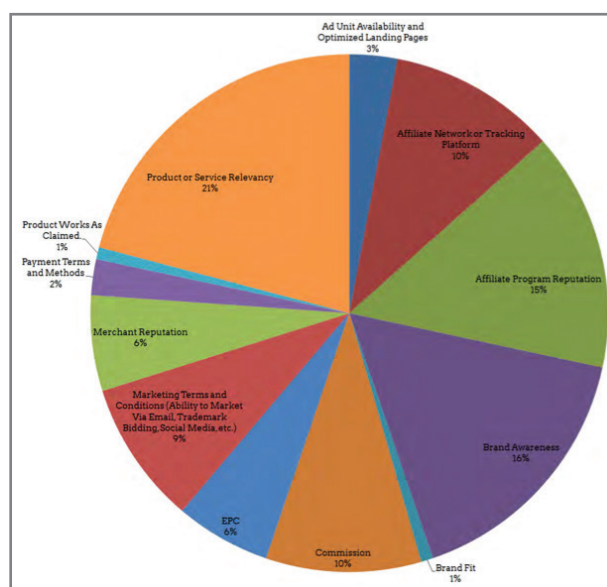
Do competitive research on the web to see how other affiliates or resellers are marketing and pricing the products/services you promote. You can use tools like [SimilarWeb](#) or [SEMRush](#) to see where they're get their traffic from, what active campaigns they are running, and what discounts/incentives they are offering to their audience.

74

Look for tool variety. It is really important that the network you choose give you all the assets you need for good promotions. *"Name the most valuable services an affiliate network could bring to you? A personal masseuse. But few companies are willing to see my viewpoint on that one. ;) Barring that, good tracking is essential. I am utterly shocked and how staggeringly bad some affiliate companies are at tracking sales. Then you also need a variety of ways to be able to promote what you are selling. Whether it is link variety, a good selection of banners, custom builds, or something else – the more tools in your toolbox, the better off you'll be."*, [Jim McMahon](#) from Major Geeks.

75

Look for product variety and relevancy. People love to options, even if they know what they want to buy, they like to have the opportunity to choose something else, similar, maybe even better than their first choice. There are some networks that specialize in a certain niche. Avangate, for example, is focused on digital goods and online services and has over 3000 vendors from which to pick and promote products. *“As a free marketer, you are the one who chooses the merchants into which you are going to invest your effort. Merchants know this, and in the course of all my time in affiliate marketing, I have never seen a merchant who requests, not to mention requires, exclusivity”*, Geno Prussakov. According to the AffStat2014, 21% of the interviewed affiliates place Product and Services Relevancy at the top of their criterion list when choosing a network to work with, followed by Brand Awareness at 16% and Affiliate Network Reputation at 15%.



76

Dedicated customer support. *“An affiliate network should provide customized offers for its affiliates. That way, an article becomes even more valuable for the reader. A really good affiliate network provides many vendors, an understandable and clearly structured website, and engaged customer service. I am very satisfied to be an affiliate of Avangate because this network provides all of the services I need most in my operations.”* - Julian Zitsch from Application.de.

77

Commission is important. Apart from the fact that you love what you do, you expect your work to pay off, that's why the payout a merchant offers is important to all affiliates. However, the [AffStat2013](#) revealed the payout as being the most important factor for an affiliate when choosing a network (over 60%); however, [this year](#) their preferences have changed and Product & Service Relevancy became the most valuable asset a network can offer its affiliates.

BRAND LOYALTY AND TRUST.

78

Out-of-the-box happenings. Organize a small gathering for your customers or show up at a business-related event where you can offer your prospects flyers, bonus cards and other promotional materials that can drive traffic and grow your business.

79

Create, maintain and segment your subscriber list. This is one of the most important assets for your business. It paves the way to increased conversions and provides you a constant audience for your promotions.

80

Create sticky email subscribing forms on the most visited pages of your website such as your Homepage or campaign landing pages. You can use the tools offered by the email marketing providers like [MailChimp](#) or dedicated optimization tools like [PadiAct](#).

81

Actively manage your social media accounts. Distribute content adapted to each channel - YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Tumblr or whatever Social Media platform is best suited for your activity. Try to alternate your unique content (blog post, video or infographic) with the promotional content containing your affiliate links. Softpedia announces its vendors' giveaways on their website, in the News Section, on Facebook and also on Twitter:

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View summary

82

Approach influencers on Twitter. So you have chosen your business area and want to gain popularity, one of the best pieces of advice is to approach influencers on Twitter and start engaging in useful conversations with them.

83

Make sure you display all essential information in your Terms & Conditions. For example, if you decide to charge an extra fee for delivering in remote areas, ask your customers to verify if they live in the designated area so they will know upfront how much delivery will cost.

AWARENESS & ADVERTISING.

84

Change the advertisements, especially during special campaigns (Christmas season, Easter, etc). Make up to 20 versions of the same advertisement, test them and keep the ones that drive the most sales.

85

Targeted devices. Google now considers the devices from which people are searching in their page rankings. Make sure you include elements of responsive design to your site in order to improve the Quality Score as well as the overall viewing experience. All major affiliate websites have it, such as CNet, Softpedia, etc.

86

Promote your offers via SMS. Confirm the order was received, send an alert when the order has been delivered and follow-up with the customer to ensure everything went well.

87

Pay for advertorials in relevant online magazines or web directories. It provides you the visibility you want/need from the target audience.

88

Don't buy PPC ads containing the vendor's name or product name unless you clear it with the vendor first. Most vendors do not want you to put a sponsored ad next to their #1 result for their own product name. They will lose money, in addition to the commission they're already paying you. You'll be a financial burden and most probably you're going to be banned from the network to which you belong or you won't be accepted as an affiliate for the respective merchant.

89

Dig into forums and get involved. The best advertising is where real people are having real conversations and forums are goldmines.

90

Promote your offers via social media. Run ads, contests on social media. Create your own application to serve relevant offers to your fans directly via social media.

THE PRODUCTS & SERVICES YOU SELL.

91

Product or service integrity. If your goal is long term success, don't take ethical shortcuts. There needs to be a consistency in what you advise or recommend to your clients and the quality of the products you promote; there must be an overall coherence in your brand's image, the products you promote, the tone you use and the way you care for your customers.

92

It is vital to **test the products or services yourself**; don't let the brand speak for itself and don't trust what the majority says. Test it yourself and then state your honest opinion. You can ask for sample products / vouchers on services from the merchants. *"You have to write honest and individual articles about products you are using yourself. The readers can tell if the author really enjoys showing them new products and writing about their features. Without truly loving your business, you cannot be successful because readers will detect work that lacks honest passion."* , [Julian Zitsch from APPSlication.de](#).

93

Promote products from different merchants. Try not to become a one brand fan. If you're an affiliate and sell books, pick various publishing companies to promote and don't stop researching new product opportunities. Even if you are a fan of one of them, you have to offer your customers choices.

94

Be sure you're not losing money. You won't get rich from a \$1 payout. In order to make your activity profitable as well as support your marketing and promotional efforts, you'll to ensure your commission matches your business needs. If you're offering a top-selling but relatively inexpensive product, then it is ok to set a lower commission, but try to also offer your customers higher value products so you can earn more commission.

95

Offer samples and free trials. The best way to make a potential customer consider buying from you is to offer him a free trial or sample of the product he wants; this way he will know for sure that you're not trying to sell products that do not meet the quality expectations you already set. Many affiliates have this alternative, especially software and online services affiliates, CNet for example.

96

Vendors are there to help you succeed. Ask them for any marketing collateral you need, free stuff to giveaway, exclusive discounts etc. If your volumes make sense, don't be afraid to negotiate a higher commission and let them know that you're going to invest part of the extra money in more advertising for their products.

97

Create your own product. You can create a mobile app related to your field of activity, a special seasonal bundle with products from different merchants, or - the best example that suits any business – an ebook. Yes, become the expert, get recognition and the customers will come to you, not only for advice but also for shopping. For example, [John Chow](#), a recognized affiliate marketer, writes books on the side.

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98

Get inspired. You'd be surprised how many good ideas can come from product lists and reviews, available in multiple categories. Also, keep a close eye on your competition. If they're running PPC campaigns, look for what products they are promoting on their top landing pages.

99

Get started with promoting products and services with which you're familiar. If you have a security blog, then your customers will expect to buy software and services you have talked about in recent reviews, will want to know about virus or malware that may affect their systems, and will want to hear your advice and guidance on best practices in the security space.

100

Keep your business relevant. Successful entrepreneurs know how to keep their business relevant during changing financial and socioeconomic times. If people have moved on from a particular product, there's no point in continuing to promote it.



Conclusion

Now that you have the information, it's time to act! [Enter Avangate Affiliate Network](#). By joining our network you could drastically reduce the time on building the plumbing for your business and focus on driving revenues - adding that personal touch, the spark of passion every affiliate business needs!

As our affiliate, you will have:

- Up to 75% Commission
- Growing Catalogue of Over 20,000 Software and Digital Goods Products
- Comprehensive Reporting
- Flexible Discount Opportunities
- Localized Carts
- Automated Data-Feeds
- Dedicated Support
- Flexible Payment Methods

For any questions you have please contact our affiliate team at affiliates@avangate.com.

Here's to your new online journey. We wish you all the best!



About Avangate

Avangate is the leading digital commerce provider that enables companies to launch and grow online revenue streams fast. Use Avangate to manage multiple touch points, manage subscription billing, and grow distribution channels to profitably scale and enter new markets. Avangate's scalable and integrated solutions include a full-featured, modular and secure eCommerce platform, a partner order and revenue management solution, as well as a constantly expanding worldwide affiliate network. For more information on how Avangate can help you sell more software, SaaS, and online services worldwide: visit www.avangate.com, email info@avangate.com, or call 650-963-5701.