

CJ Affiliate *Essentials*

The Best Ways To Dominate CJ Affiliate's Marketing Platform



Introduction To CJ Affiliate



Affiliate Marketing isn't a joke, it's a 6 billion dollar industry!

If you own a blog, or have been thinking about starting an affiliate marketing business.

I'm here to show you how, step by step, using CJ's system.

Despite what some internet trolls are saying (likely other affiliates trying to deter competition), you can start making revenue through the use of affiliate links, and driving traffic to them via blog, advertising, or otherwise.

There's nothing to be afraid of, you can start today.

An estimated 40% of Amazon sales are generated by affiliates. Sure, Amazon is considered the best affiliate program in the business, but they are not alone in their success.

With Amazon, you are restricted to certain "qualifying" purchases, and don't build personal relationships with product owners.

In other words, on Amazon, you can only hope to build your business with Amazon.

But there's nothing to stop you from branching out.

Introduction To CJ Affiliate



The best way to get into any online business is by first casting a big net to see what's working.

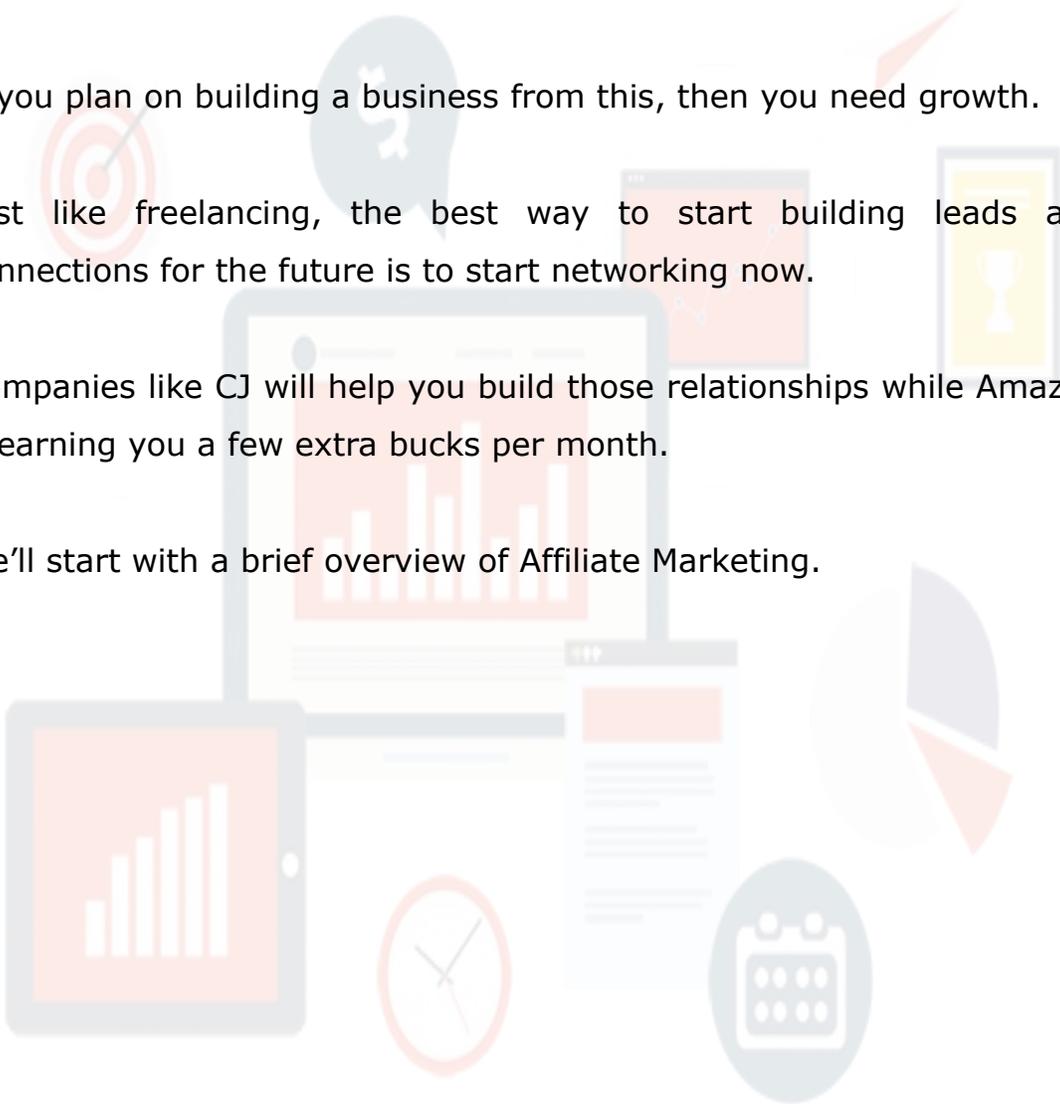
Why should you shoot for more than Amazon?

If you plan on building a business from this, then you need growth.

Just like freelancing, the best way to start building leads and connections for the future is to start networking now.

Companies like CJ will help you build those relationships while Amazon is earning you a few extra bucks per month.

We'll start with a brief overview of Affiliate Marketing.



Affiliate Marketing Is Defined In Four Parts



As mentioned in the title, affiliate marketing is defined in four main parts which we're going to cover right now.

Merchant

A merchant is any entity or person who advertises their product through affiliates. The merchant is the owner of the product or service.

From your local shoe shop to the 5-star hotel in Kuala Lumpur's Golden Triangle, to cruise lines, to product start-ups.

Publisher

The publisher pushes the advertisement for the merchant's product or service. A publisher can be a website owner who displays banner ads on their site.

The publisher is looking to monetize their site, and they agree to display ads, in this case for a percentage of commission.

The organic traffic and authority of their website allows them to display the ads to a high volume of people, and they are compensated for driving traffic to the merchant.

Customer

Customers visit the publishers site. They see the ads, which are typically related to the site or article they came to read, and their clicks and purchases drive the engine. They are the fuel.

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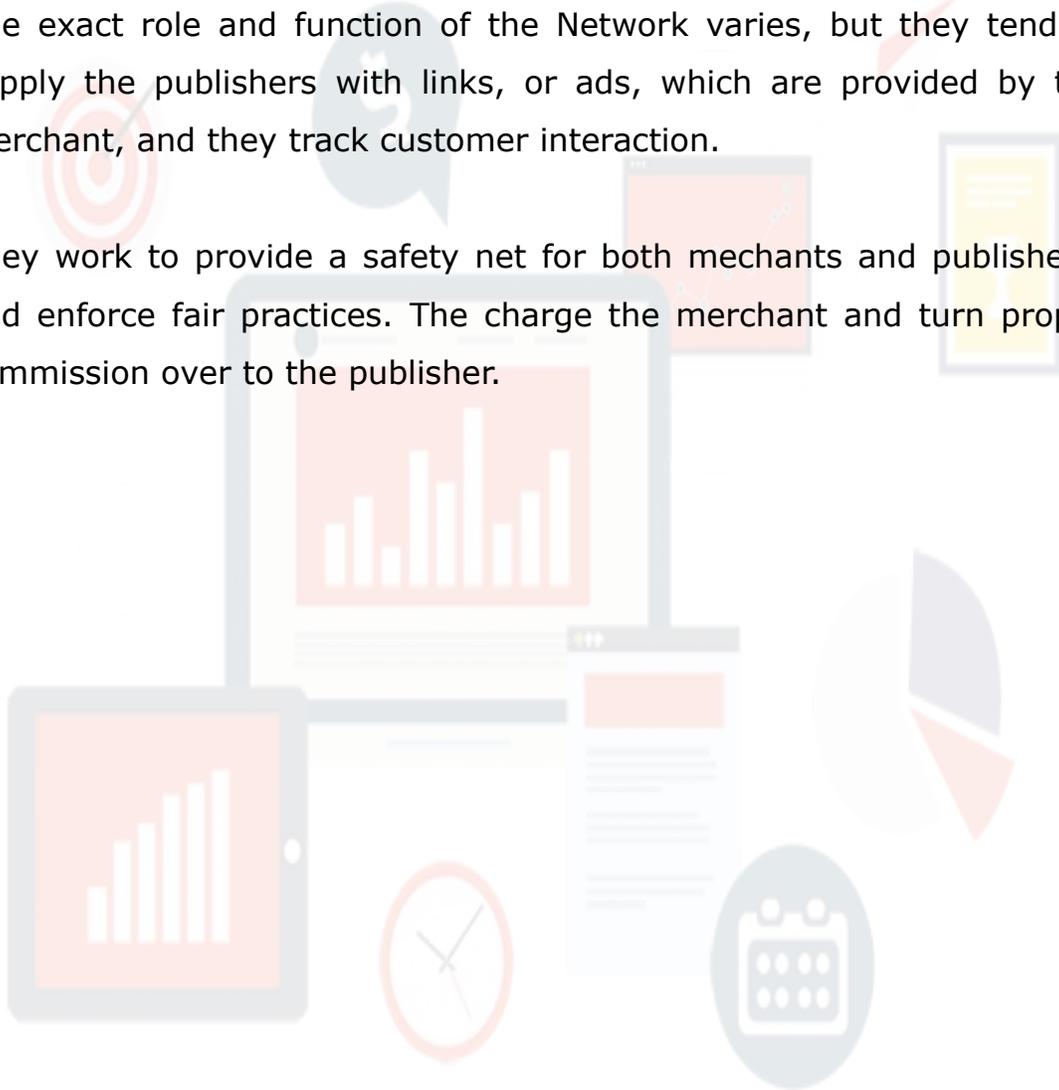


Network

An affiliate network acts as an intermediary between the publisher and merchant, alike.

The exact role and function of the Network varies, but they tend to supply the publishers with links, or ads, which are provided by the merchant, and they track customer interaction.

They work to provide a safety net for both merchants and publishers, and enforce fair practices. They charge the merchant and turn proper commission over to the publisher.



How Publishers Get Paid



Affiliate marketing is performance based advertising. Revenue is shared with the publisher when the customer interacts with their ad.

This interaction is not always a sale. There are several different possible pay structures.

The most common ones are listed below, and you should be familiar with each, as different customers will have different needs, and you will need to promote them differently.

CPA

Cost per acquisition is the most common pay structure for affiliate marketing. The most common paid acquisition is a sale. An acquisition is any agreed upon conversion.

CPM

Cost per mile is a cost per 1000 ad impressions. It is not that common in affiliate advertising because it is a high risk model for the merchant, but it is used.

CPC

Cost per click isn't as high risk for merchants as CPM, but again it is not that common in affiliate advertising. This is the model most notably used by Google AdSense.

Getting Started With CJ



Commission Junction (CJ) is an affiliate network. They are one of the largest on the web, and I don't mean like top ten.

They are frequently cited as the biggest affiliate network, even bigger than Amazon according to some reports.

The big difference between CJ and other networks is the number of advertisers that they work with. There are over 3000 advertisers, including twice as many Internet Retailer 500 companies, for a publisher to do business with.

This allows you to be more selective and only advertise products that fit well with your target audience.

In fact, when the pros and cons are listed on sites such as makeawebsitehub.com, the biggest drawback is generally "steep learning curve." That's exactly what this course is designed to help you with.

Take away the learning curve, and you'll be able to use this platform to start earning, and to grow your marketing program.

After you make an account and you get into the back end, there are thousands of advertisers to choose from, and it can get a little overwhelming.

I want to walk you through getting started step by step.

Getting Started With CJ



Step 1: Make an account

It is free to sign up to CJ Affiliate as a publisher. Go on their website and follow the links to join as a publisher until you arrive at a big long account making forum. Fill this out, and you arrive at the backend:

The screenshot shows the CJ Affiliate publisher backend dashboard. At the top left is the logo for CJ Affiliate by Conversant. A navigation bar includes links for Home, Account, Advertisers, Links, Widgets, Reports, Mail, and PayPerCall. The main content area is divided into several sections:

- Performance Summary:** A table showing performance for 'Yesterday' with columns for Commission (\$0), Sales (0), Leads (0), Clicks (0), Impressions (0), EPC (N/A), and Conversion (N/A). A 'Change From Last Year' button is visible.
- Network Stats:** A summary box showing 'New' Earnings, 'N/A' 3 Month EPC, and 'N/A' 7 Day EPC.
- Advertisers:** A list of advertisers with columns for advertiser name, product, and commission type. Visible entries include Sole Serum Cosmetics (8% USD), Apress Books (10% USD), Star Trek Television (5% USD), OTTO - SK Virtual Malls (4% EUR), and TRIVAGO AU Hotel (Lead: \$0.55 USD).
- Messages:** An 'Announcements' section with a message dated March 9th, 2015, regarding a 'Freshness Token' update.
- Tasks:** A list of tasks including 'View (2) click(s) from invalid links', 'Program Term Automatic Replacement (1)', 'Review offers pending approval (28)', and 'Review new transactions'.

The best way to start learning is to click around on everything before you begin setting up. Familiarize yourself with the platform and scan the features.

Step 2: Prepare for Advertisers

Getting Started With CJ



The next step is to pick some advertisers; there are thousands to choose from. One of my favorite things about this site is that you are not restricted to working with a single merchant.

Advertisers won't just jump into your lap right away though. You need to make a solid pitch to get their attention, have a kick-ass profile, and earn their trust.

Remember, you aren't simply placing random ads. You are building a connection, and growing your network. Keep that in mind.

Start by making a list of advertisers that you think will work well with your brand, so that you can tailor your profile to their expectations.

Step 3: Setting Up Your Network Profile

Under the accounts tab, click 'network profile'. You don't have to fill out everything, but the more information you provide the more likely you are to get advertisers partnering with you.

Remember, while you are trying to show off the best qualities of your platform, you are also tailoring your profile to what the merchants you want to work with need.

Don't be modest about the type of products are perfect for your audience. This is how you re-enforce brand loyalty.

Getting Started With CJ



If you want to come across as genuine, then word your profile as if you are speaking directly to your ideal merchant.

This not only ensures that you will draw more of the clients you can work with, but they will connect with your profile immediately and see what you can offer to them. Other clients will be drawn in as well.

Don't, under any circumstances, post a first draft, unless you are intentionally trying to fail, or you want to look like an amateur who is there to be abused and cheated.

Write your first draft, then go back over it and clean it up. Finish with a quick spelling check, or run it through Grammarly, and a final typo hunt.

While the first draft might take you some time to hammer out, it's worth the extra ten minutes to make sure you look professional.

Step 4: Review Your Advertisers List.

For all the talk about casting a big net, it's best to scroll the list or re-evaluate your previous choices. Select only a few at a time, and give them some time to respond.

Don't try to engage everyone on the list at once. When you get a feel for how advertisers are responding, you can expand or shrink your daily or weekly merchant hunts as needed.

Getting Started With CJ



Click the advertisers tab on the top navigation bar. Move down the long list of advertisers. Ignore the commissions altogether.

Look for merchants who's products are aligned with your niche. Make sure they are selling something that your audience wants.

If you place a shoe ad at the top of an electronics blog, not only will it not drive traffic, it could make you look like you don't care what your readers want.

Worse, it destroys the ability to put meaningful affiliate links in your articles. If you do, you'll look like you are spamming.

If possible, choose a merchant that is both relevant, and one whose products you personally use, which will allow you to blog directly about the product with authority.

Advertiser	Advertiser ID	Advertiser Name	Network Earnings	3 month EPC	7 day EPC	7 day Sale
	3768867	(mt) Media Temple Web Hosting/Servers		44.46	94.99 US	80.00 USD
	3429691	1 Sale A Day Consumer Electronics		5.04	5.62 US	3% - 7%
	1499268	1&1 UK Affiliate Program: Domains, Web Hosting & more Web Hosting/Servers		3.49	15.92 US	1.00 GBP - 300
	1426179	1&1 USA Affiliate Program: Domains, Web Hosting & more. Domain Registrations		9.07	7.10 US	1.00 USD - 760
	630927	1-800 AUTO YES Cars & Trucks		23.16	76.15 US	12.00 USD

Getting Started With CJ



Use that search bar and find an advertiser relevant to you.

There are all kinds of filters available, so use them.

A screenshot of the CJ Affiliate interface. The top section shows a list of advertisers with columns for advertiser name, network earnings, and performance metrics. Two advertisers are visible: '3783927 - 599fashion.com Women's' and '2297498 - 6pm Shoes'. The '6pm Shoes' advertiser is selected, and its details are shown below. The details include 'Action: Sale - New Customer Sale', 'Description: A new customer makes a purchase on 6pm.com', 'Referral Period: 30 days(3)', 'Number Of Occurrences: 1', 'Commission: 7.00%', and 'Locking Period - Custom: Actions lock 30 days after event date.' There are also tabs for 'MORE INFO', 'PROGRAM TERMS', 'RELATIONSHIP HISTORY', and 'LINKED ACCOUNTS'. A green plus sign is visible in the far right column of the advertiser list.

The program terms tell you what the merchant is looking for out of their campaign, and I suggest you read them.

Again, you want to understand their goals, and make sure that they are in line with your own. Otherwise you are just wasting time, both for you and the merchant.

You use the green + in the far right column to apply for an advertiser's program, and if you've shown yourself as a good candidate for their product, they'll accept you.

To check the status of your application, click the status tab in the menu in the left banner.

(Displayed On The Next Page)

Getting Started With CJ



The screenshot shows the CJ Affiliate dashboard with a search filter dropdown open. The dashboard displays a list of search results for advertisers, including details like advertiser name, network earnings, and EPC. The search filter dropdown is currently set to 'Status' and shows various options such as 'All', 'My Advertisers (Active)', 'Pending Offers', 'Pending Applications', 'Publisher Expired', 'Advertiser Expired', 'Declined Offers', and 'Declined Applications'.

Advertiser	Network Earnings	3 month EPC	7 day EPC	Sale
3783927 - 599fashion.com Women's	Network Earnings: [Progress Bar]	12.55	13.04	5%
6PM.COM 2297498 - 6pm Shoes	Network Earnings: [Progress Bar]	14.02	14.73	7%
2618386 - Acne Jeans UK Women's	Network Earnings: [Progress Bar]	18.12	18.53	5%
activewearusa 3698863 - ActivewearUSA.com Apparel	Network Earnings: [Progress Bar]	3.06	6.87	5%
adipro [Logo] 4129321 - Adipro.cz Apparel	Network Earnings: New	New	New	5% - 12.5%

Check back daily, to see if you've gotten a response or if a merchant has sought you out. Most companies will give you 24 hours to respond before moving on to someone else. And the faster you get back with them, the better your chances.

Step 5: How To Place An Ad On Your Site.

In Affiliate marketing, the ad is commonly referred to as "the creative." It is given to you as a nice little chunk of HTML that you copy and paste onto your website.

Getting Started With CJ



When you are accepted into an advertisers program, you have access to their creatives, and you can begin posting them.

Common creatives include banner ads, text links, promotions, and products. These are your affiliate links that will verify that the traffic is coming from your site.

Where you place the ad will have a massive impact on its success. Place it in the content.

The internet of five years ago was all about placing ads in banners, but customers have grown used to this and don't click on them anymore.

If you place your ads in the content, especially if you make it part of the content, people stop treating it like an ad. That will mean more clicks for you, and more money.

If you are going to put it in the banner, you should consider keeping it above the fold. That just means that it is displayed on the site without the user having to scroll down.

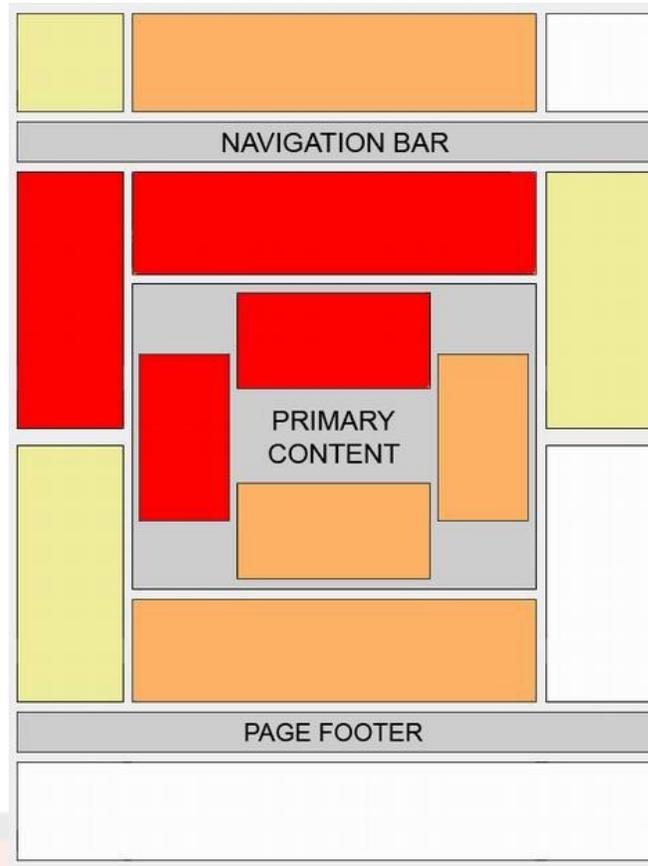
The best way to place creatives, is as clickable text in line with your articles and other readable content.

Text links are innocent-looking, they provide the customer an easy way to "learn more" about a product, and they are right where you want them, in the discussion.

Getting Started With CJ



Here's a good chart to help you determine which ads to put where:



Where you place your ads will have a massive impact to conversion ratios. Top left corner is a logical place to start.

It is where your audience looks first.

We read left to right. The average "new" reader will catch the headline, and if they stay on the site any longer, they will often skim the left side of the page.

Getting Started With CJ



This is where the attention grabbers should be. Ads can similarly fall in that line of sight, but keep them exciting. Pictures of the product and other links can be placed elsewhere.

Affiliates often prefer massive banner ads over a simple link.

The thinking is that it will draw more attention and more clicks, and that thinking is why people fail. "To learn more click here."

If you embedded a link in the names of products as you mentioned them, you will see an increase in conversions, because people will click the link to see more information about the product.

Think about it from a reader perspective. How often do you click on big, flashy banners?

How many times have you gotten trapped on Wiki for hours clicking simple text links?

Do you see the difference?

Text links are innocuous, credible, and feel safer to the user. Plus, by their nature, they are part of the content, and don't look like advertising.

Don't forget about mobile users. 80% of the Internet population purchased something on a mobile device in 2015.

Getting Started With CJ



Mobile commerce is a big deal, but it is not without challenges. I want to talk about one in particular, screen size.

You need to think of the mobile user as the laziest strain of online shopper and visitor (potential customer).

The research shows that if something is slightly difficult on a phone, people won't do it. They won't leave and come back again on their desktop. They will forget about the missed opportunity in seconds.

So make it easy for them.

The solution is clickable pictures. Make the size appropriate, and put them in between paragraphs, and at the top of the page.

Step 6: Analytics

After you have posted your ads you need to see how they are doing. If an ad isn't working, diagnose why, and change things up.

Try to get in the heads of your audience, and figure out why they are clicking or not clicking.

Have you made the advertised product part of your content and integrated it seamlessly? Does it look artificially placed? Are you pushing the sale rather than offering it as an incentive?

Getting Started With CJ



Is it going to help your reader? Work out how to boost conversion rates with your ads, monitor it all with analytics, and try new things.

A little word of advice. You need to have the traffic before you try and monetise a site.

Even if you are thinking that you will just start out small now, and you have nothing but time to grow, I would still advise you to hold off. It is demoralizing watching a site struggle to pull revenue, and you will be inclined to give up.

It is not an attack on you. It is just human nature.

If your click rates are suffering, check again what kind of traffic your site is getting. Take the time and build up your traffic and your reputation all around.

The power of affiliate marketing is that merchants get to advertise their product on a site renowned for knowing about their industry.

It is one of the reasons it works so well, and if you want to increase your affiliate earnings you need to become a voice of authority in your industry or niche.

You do this with consistent quality content, guest blogging, press releases, SEO, and all the other normal means of driving traffic to a blog or business website.

Getting Started With CJ

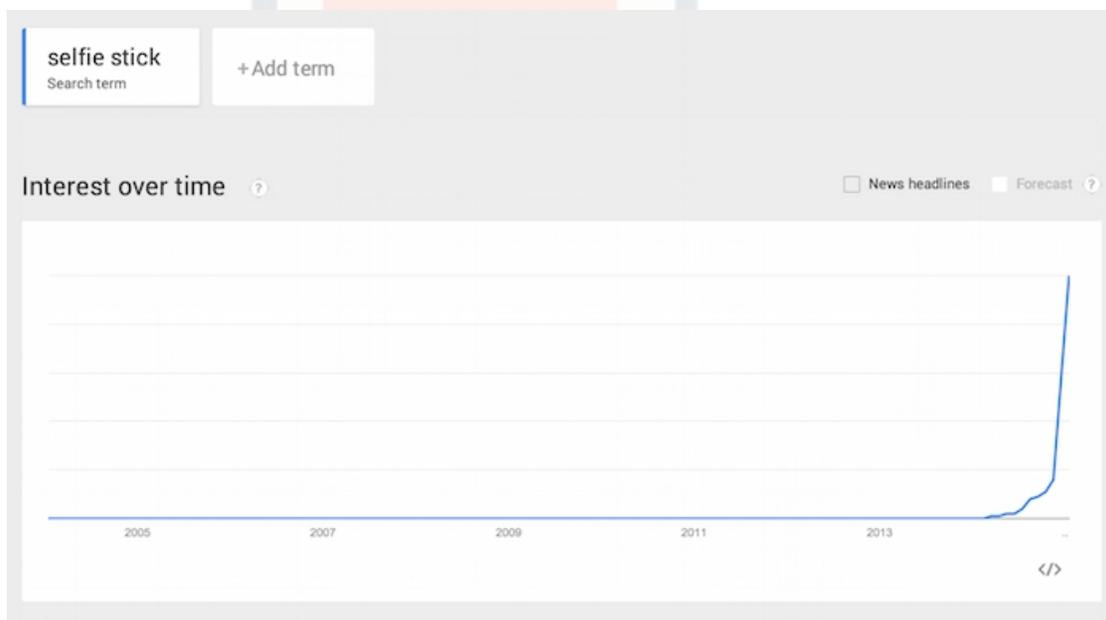


You can also do product comparisons, reviews, etc, as part of your regular content. Make a table comparing products to each other.

Post pictures of yourself using the product while you sing it's praises, and link those images with the creative.

Cater your content to the ads you are placing to cure low conversion rates and high bounce rates.

Step 7: Watch for Trends.



What was working three months ago, might not work now, and everyone knows a failed online venture that went bust because the internet changed on them.

Getting Started With CJ



As publishers we can't always change our website to reflect the newest trends, but what we can do is make sure there is interest in the ads on our sites.

CJ Affiliate makes this really easy.

There are so many advertisers on the site, that if you notice a new product in your niche primed for movement, you can usually find someone trying to sell it on CJ, and jump in early with reviews and product promotions.

Team up with other bloggers to drive traffic to your links. Be the one who announces the product to the mainstream.

You can enter into a new agreement in no time, and have the new product on your site first. This is really how you win. How many times does a product fail in the marketplace before the big move starts.

When it does, it's often the first or the best reports that can monetize the income.

If you promote it first before a sales explosion, or you do it better than anyone else, then your brand will be more trusted, get more traffic, and make more sales than the competition.

Be first, be the best, and give your readers the exclusive inside scoop.

Common Mistakes To Avoid



Selling When You Should Be Helping

Remember, your goal as a blogger is to attract an audience and become an authority.

Affiliate Marketing makes no cash if your readers don't trust you, so make sure they are coming to your product for the helpful advice and tips, not to go shopping.

It's easy to spam ads, and if you are shelling out your own advertising money in the right places, it can work, but turn-key operations like that are a dime a dozen, and most readers hate them.

When you pitch a product on your readers, make sure that it is both timely and appropriate.

Give them a problem the product can fix. Develop a need for it, and then tell them how they can solve it (by following your affiliate links).

Being genuine will slowly grow a huge readership, while being a salesman is only going to drive it away from your site.

You have to think differently with affiliate marketing.

You have to make helping your readers the priority, and affiliate links second, and I really do mean that.

Common Mistakes To Avoid



While a hard-sell push might seem to pay off for a minute, your site will quickly become known as a classified ad, and you don't want that.

Grow your email list, and instead of using it as a sales pitch, use it to encourage your followers to ask how you can help them.

If you can answer the question with a blog article that has affiliate links, then awesome, but do link-free posts from time to time also.

Remind them that they are important, and you care about their problems, not about the click money.

Helping them helps you.

Common Mistakes To Avoid



Every business owner, from the cupcake shop down the street to the Rockefeller empire, has had problems, setbacks, and slumps.

Starting a new business is hard.

It takes time, and more importantly, dedication.

It's all about staying power.

Don't focus on immediate success, but rather keep your eye solidly on long term growth.

The ones who succeed are the ones who never give up, who continue to innovate by trying new things.

That's how you come up with creative solutions and build a huge audience of loyal, ad-clicking fans.