

INTERNET INCOME GUIDE TO SUCCESS

**Learn how you can make profit from your
own home in no time with this special
report.**



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Why is it good not to do SPAM?

What is spam and why is it prohibited? How to avoid it? These are the questions you need to ask yourself and know the answers to. There are many effective alternatives to finding leads on the Internet that don't involve spam.

You need to know how to avoid trouble while learning the ropes of Internet income. To avoid spam all you need to do is to use your good common sense.

Let start with what spam actually is?

There are many definitions of spam. The most general definition is the sending of e-mails that is both bulk and unsolicited. Email has traditionally been for communication, not for advertising. Bulk e-mails are annoying and without restriction and in sufficient quantity. They can be sent in tremendous bulk with very little effort and very little cost. Bad consequences, like losing Internet service or even facing civil and criminal penalties, await spammers who are caught spamming.

So, how can you possibly avoid spam when there are so many different rules and regulations? The answer is to use common sense. In a subsequent installment, we will discuss the technical rules and contracts, but for now, let's just talk about how to use your common sense to avoid spamming.

The Rules

Here are the basic guidelines for avoiding unintentionally spamming your potential customers and team members:

Never use e-mail for advertising with one, and only one, exception; when you have a clear opt-in event.

E-mails are for communicating, not for advertising. The same is generally true of instant messaging, newsgroups, Internet Relay Chat and Web-based forums and discussion boards. Your own site or other's site with their permission is the only place to advertise.

Many marketers are resistant to this, but the sooner you accept this simple truth, the better of you'll be. There are thousand of effective ways to use sites to market on the Internet. These techniques often involve using the one exception to the e-mail rule (the opt-in exceptions) as part of the process. But, the process begins with a Web page, whether that page is yours or just has your ad on it.

The spam rules usually refer to e-mail. If the e-mail has been solicited, it is not considered spam. Also, if the e-mail is not commercial, it is generally not considered spam.

How do you know whether e-mail has been solicited? While there are no hard and fast rules, that everyone can agree on, your common sense will provide you with a working definition that should be relatively safe. E-mail is not spam if it has been requested or consented to or if permission has been granted to send it to a particular recipient.

There are two kinds of consents:

- **Express**; is where someone communicates directly to you permission to send an e-mail. For example, when someone types in their e-mail address on a form on your Web page requesting more information or sends you an e-mail in response to an ad.
- **Implied**; it occurs when someone performs some act from which permission can be inferred. For example, when someone posts a URL on your FFA page or takes advantage of some other free resource you are offering. Implied consent also arises in many instances where you have a pre-existing relationship with someone.

When someone fills out a form or accepts a free service, this is generally referred to as opting in. They have opted to accept an e-mail from you. When we use the term opted, we are referring to the same concept as an opt-in-e-mail list, such as Topica, and other such free e-mail list services available on the Internet.

If the list's creator and the hosting service allows, ads may be acceptable to the list. The people who subscribe to the list are deemed to have opt-in to receive commercial e-mails sent through the list. If you send the list members e-mail directly, rather than through the list, you will be spamming.

If you are accused of spamming, you will have to be able to clearly establish a documented opt-in event to justify the e-mail. The e-mail you sent must also be within the scope of the opt-in, or you will be guilty of spamming.

So, the bottom line is that e-mail is not a tool you can rely on to generate leads or new customers. Rather, e-mail is a tool that can only be used in conjunction with some other resource through which an opt-in can first be established. However tempting it is to buy a CD of over a million e-mail addresses and blast your ad out to them, do not do it. You will be spamming if you do.

When you are advertising with e-mails in an opt-in situation, always supply a working opt-out mechanism.

Even if you have an opt-in event, you must include an opt-out mechanism in the e-mail. You need to give the recipient the option of communicating with you that your e-mail is no longer welcome. The mechanism you use must work to get that communication to you in a timely manner and you must immediately obey the opt-out request.

Opt-out mechanisms are generally of two types:

- One is **a line in the e-mail** that states that one can reply to the e-mail or send an e-mail to another stated address, putting REMOVE in the subject heading.
- The other common opt-out mechanism is to **supply a URL in the e-mail**, which if clicked on, will automatically remove someone from your mailing list.

Either one is fine, as long as it works.

A belief commonly held among Internet users is that opt-out mechanisms are untrustworthy. It's often advised that the process is used by unscrupulous marketers to confirm that you have a working e-mail address, which they will use for further spamming rather than to remove you from the list. Therefore, any mistake or negligence with your opt-out mechanism will immediately put you under a cloud of suspicion. Make sure that you timely and carefully attend to your opt-out requests.

An opt-out request must be immediately honored. Despite what many ill-informed people believe and say, you should know that it only takes one "no" anywhere in the process to void all prior expressions of consent. There is no way to trap anyone into being forced to receive e-mail from you. Nothing they do prevents them from opting out at any later point.

One tricky situation for opt-outs is the opt-in mail list. You send your mail to the list and the list then forwards it to the other members on the list. Often you will be sent a request to remove from one of the other members, but you do not have the capacity to remove them from the list.

In opt-in e-mail list situations, you should always include a statement in your e-mail advising the recipients that the e-mail is being sent through a particular e-mail list and that they must remove themselves from the list to opt-out of the e-mail. Give them the name of the list and the opt-out address.

Never annoy anyone with any kind of e-mail.

With respect to the gray areas, it helps to remember that you will never get in trouble if no one ever accuses you of spamming. If you never annoy anyone, no one should ever be motivated to report you. If you treat others as you would have them treat you, you are not likely to annoy them.

Because some people have thin skin, however, and will be annoyed where you would not be, using the Golden Rule is by no means foolproof. It helps to think in terms of what annoys the average person, but to be safe; you need to think in terms of what annoys the average person, but to be safe, you need to think in terms of what annoys the overly sensitive person as well.

It's a mystery to me why, but many aggressive marketers approach Internet marketing as a kind of war game. They want to kill your e-mail or your ad and strike you repeatedly with theirs. I don't know about you, but it sure as heck doesn't put me in the mood to join something or buy something when I have been defeated in an Internet war game of ads.

E-mail autoresponders are the weapon of choice in these war games. For example, I place an ad on Yahoo! Classifieds. I receive an e-mail that says, "Responding to your ad." The content of the e-mail clearly reveals that the sender knows nothing of my ad and could care less. He only wants to put his ad in my face, using some ridiculous pretext that his reading of my ad (which he didn't do) demonstrates to him that I am a good candidate for his opportunity.

Then, were I naive enough to respond to his e-mail and point out that I am not interested in his opportunity, I would immediately receive an autoresponse message with even more information about his opportunity. Also, in the process of responding, I would have gotten myself added to his e-mail list so that I would receive more info every week about this opportunity in which I have no interest. No matter how hard I search, I can find no way to actually opt-out from his list. Am I going to report him for spamming? You bet I am!

Another example of the war game is people who join the opt-in lists and then hook up an autoresponder to the account with which they joined the list. Even though every single one of these lists prohibits using autoresponders, they are quite commonly used anyway.

When you send out e-mail to the list, you immediately get back autoresponses from hundreds of the members of the list. They will never read the list nor your e-mail, but they will stack the list with their ads and then, on top of that, will autorespond to yours sent from the list.

Such tactics are absurd, ridiculous, ineffective, annoying, and unlawful. People get away with them only because they are technically savvy enough to hide their identities and make it so time consuming to track them down that most victims will not take the time to do it. But these are the extreme examples. Let's look at some of the more subtle issues.

If you take care to always make sure that your e-mail is pleasant, you will not only be less likely to be accused of spamming, but you will more effectively develop relationships—which is the key to any successful marketing. You should take pains to be polite and sincere in all your e-mail correspondence.

While you have to protect yourself from the war game spammers, you need to provide some way for people who read your e-mail to directly respond to you—where you will actually read their response. Only use e-mail autoresponders in the most controlled of situations and use them with great care.

In fact, there are really only two situations I know of where an autoresponder is appropriate. One is where someone fills out a form on your Web page and you need to confirm that the e-mail address they supplied is a valid e-mail address.

The other is when you host FFA pages. Autoresponders should rarely, if ever, be triggered by an incoming e-mail in my opinion. The only exception would be form submissions. While automation is a goal for some tasks and is being made more and more possible by the Internet, communication should be personal, not automated.

Take pains never to annoy people with your Internet marketing, whether through automation, insincerity, rudeness, or as we discuss below, misleading tactics.

Never mislead anyone.

Being bothered by correspondence one did not ask for and does not want is something that annoys most everyone. Another thing that annoys the average person is being misled. What most people want is good, solid, honest information about what they have expressed an interest in and no more.

People become annoyed when they are misled. If they request one type of information and get another, they feel used. This factor comes into play, among other places, in choosing a subject header for e-mail that you do choose to send. If the subject says "\$50 deposited into your bank account tomorrow—no strings, no obligation," and then the body of the e-mail mentions nothing about a free \$50, but proceeds to try to sell them something, they have been misled and will be understandably annoyed.

I have read so-called marketing advice that recommends using subject headings that will get people to read your e-mail regardless of whether the subject has anything to do with your offer. Nothing could be worse advice! Such "bait and switch" tactics are dishonest, immoral, often illegal, and are guaranteed to annoy the dickens out of the recipient of your e-mail. Do not do it.

Another guaranteed way to annoy someone is to spurring them to report you for spam, is to mislead them about the type of information they are requesting. If you have a Web page which collects e-mail addresses to send more info about an interesting subject, but you send entirely different correspondence from what they expected, you will certainly have trouble.

Honesty is more than just morality, it is good business practice. You don't want to start any relationship with a client, customer, or affiliate by dishonest correspondence. Trust is the most important factor in any business relationship.

So, it is very important in both the opt-in event and the subject header of e-mail to be very honest and straight-forward about the information that will be in the body of the e-mail. To do otherwise, can only make people mad and get you in trouble.

You can easily find many effective IM techniques that don't involve spam. A common response to the spam rules is to throw up one's hands and say "It's too complicated and too risky, why bother with Internet marketing?" The answer to that question is that Internet marketing is a powerful, yet inexpensive tool that can be used by people of few resources other than a will to succeed in obtaining financial success.

The Potential of Internet Income

There are three factors which assure us of continued exponential Internet growth. These three factors are: Moore's Law, acceptance of digital environments, and convergence.

MOORE'S LAW

Moore's Law describes the falling cost of digital technology. In 1980, the price of the memory chip for a home PC was \$1,000.00 (not the whole PC, mind you, just the memory). A year later the same amount of memory cost only \$500.00. Two years after, the price was \$250.00. A few years after that the same amount of memory cost only \$62.50. In 1998, the price of that same amount of memory had fallen to less than \$0.25. Now, the cost for the same amount of memory as in that original PC is just pennies. I assure you that nothing else over the years has decreased in cost anything like that! I, of course, upgraded the amount of memory used over the years.

Each time I upgraded, I've spent about the same amount of money but got more and more computing power. So, what really happened was that the computing power increased by four times every three years for the same cost.

Gordon Moore, one of the co-founders of Intel Corporation, made mathematical observations in the 1960's of the engineering practices which allowed miniaturization in semiconductor technology.

This miniaturization applies to processors and other computer components as well as memory chips. What he observed mathematically is that computers can be made four times more powerful every three years for the same cost. Some argue that this same formula has held true for a full century, if you include the mechanical computers of the early 1900's and the old-fashioned transistors that followed.

If you knew that you could get four times more raw materials every three years with no increase in cost in a given business, would you want to get into that business? The overwhelming answer everywhere is, of course, a resounding "yes!"

All businesses, even traditional businesses, must market their goods and services. Because businesses look for the lowest cost to perform their processes, more and more marketing information and marketing processes, even for brick-and-mortar businesses, will become digital.

Moore's Law ensures that Internet businesses, especially Internet marketing, will continue to grow and flourish at an astounding rate. Will Moore's Law continue to hold true in the future? Can engineers keep making computer chips cheaper? Intel's engineers assure us that Moore's Law will continue to operate for several more device generations, if not indefinitely.

ACCEPTANCE OF DIGITAL ENVIRONMENTS

The next factor that ensures continued growth for Internet businesses is the acceptance by consumers of digital environments. People have taken to Cyberspace. Despite the many predictions to the contrary, people have warmed up to digital environments with enthusiasm. Many Web communities have been formed and their participants report feeling all warm and cozy in those digital environments. Participants have developed a strong sense of identity with some of the digital communities.

As Moore's Law continues to operate, our technology becomes more and more capable of producing engrossing digital environments in which even larger numbers of people will enthusiastically participate. Online communities are forming in much the same way that communities have formed in the physical world throughout history—only much faster. The success stories of Yahoo! and eBay and others make it pure folly to think that brick-and-mortar business will go on as usual, unaffected by the Internet.

CONVERGENCE

The third factor assuring a prosperous future for Internet entrepreneurs is convergence. Simply put, convergence is the coming together of separate things. Convergence is now occurring at both the industry level and the consumer level. On the industry level, computing, communications, and media companies are merging to form such multimedia ventures as MSNBC and Disney's Go Network. On the consumer level, new devices are being used to combine computing with phones and televisions.

In the very near future, consumers will replace their phones, TVs, and PCs with one central media center (which may have several satellite devices for convenience and portability). Even our money is fast becoming digital, as we have automatic bank deposits of our earnings while we buy things with credit and debit cards. What this means is that digital products and processes become more and more important as the Internet gets closer and closer to people's everyday lives.

These three factors assure us that the potential of the Internet for the home-based entrepreneur is nothing less than incredible. In fact, the belief in these three factors has been driving our economy for some time now. Venture capitalists are pouring hundreds of millions of dollars into purely digital ventures. In the digital world, the large corporations have to compete, not just with each other but also with the home-based entrepreneurs.

The large conglomerates no longer have the exclusive advantage. Given the low cost of computing power, individual entrepreneurs now have at their disposal the raw materials to develop digital products and processes and make them available to the world.

Even more importantly, individual entrepreneurs can band together in digital environments (such as SFI's Full-Circle Success) to combine their skills and knowledge and use convergence to their advantage in a very efficient way, rivaling the large companies with the results.

How Do You Position Yourself For Success?

To obtain convergence, you must bring together computing power, media content, and information processing. To obtain the economies of scale, you should position yourself within a digital community where resources can be shared. Despite the low cost of computing, there is still power in numbers with regard to media content and information processing.

To position yourself as a marketer for one of the fastest growing digital communities in existence is without doubt the smartest move you could possibly make right now. Having done that, you can use your individual creativity, skills, and resources in an environment of freedom employing the low cost computing power at your disposal to obtain your financial goals.

Due to the three factors discussed in this lesson, there is an unprecedented opportunity available to you right now as an SFI affiliate. You have but to take advantage of it.

Introduction to Internet Traffic

Now we are going to talk about traffic analysis. Internet traffic consists of human beings with desires and interests and goals of their own. The question now is how to get into the flow of Internet traffic using value and ease of use, combined with effective traffic building strategies.

It's like water!

Think of what we know about early humans and how they migrated and settled. Water is a basic human need. If early man didn't live close to water, then he had to bargain for it from others who transported the water into his area. People who didn't live close to water had to have several vessels to store what water they could get their hands on.

The consequence was that people who settled far from any river or stream had to spend a great deal of their time and resources trying to obtain and store water -- and they never really had more than just enough to get by. On the other hand, people who settled near a large river or stream could freely dip out all the water they needed in abundance. When it came to water, positioning was everything. Any map will show that large successful settlements are usually close to free flowing water.

Analogies have been made between money and water. It has been suggested that if you position yourself where money freely flows, you will obtain a lot more of it with less effort than if you position yourself in some remote location relative to the "money stream". The analogy to water is equally useful when applied to Internet traffic.

ANALYZING INTERNET TRAFFIC

Marketing Forces in Hardware and Software

Similar to how the forces of nature and history determined where rivers flow across the earth's surface; the history and forces of the Internet have shaped how Internet traffic flows across the wires and ether. For the most part, people make their initial connection to Cyberspace in one of **two fashions**:

They either dial in from home or work,

Or they connect through a network at work.

In order to do this, they have to have software that creates a TCP/IP socket. To view the World Wide Web, they also need software called an Internet browser. That socket and that browser are the first opportunities for anyone to get their attention in Cyberspace. Some socket software allows for ads to be shown as the Internet connection is established.

Browsers have three features that control Internet traffic. Those three features are "Home Page", "Favorites" or "Bookmarks," and "History." The Home Page is all important. That is the first page you see when you open your browser. You see this page over and over on a daily basis.

Internet Service Providers (ISPs) provide their subscribers software which sets the ISP's page as the subscribers' home page and even sets some of their favorites. Even though many subscribers may eventually change their home page, ISPs, by their very nature, have a natural tap into much of the Internet's traffic.

ISPs that provide an expansive and encyclopedic digital environment along with their access, such as AOL, really have a tap into the traffic. Software companies that make browsers (and there are really only two players here - Microsoft and Netscape) can have pre-set bookmarks and favorites. Operating systems can control consumers' choices of an ISP by having software built into the operating system.

Sometimes it seems like there is a battle for your attention going on inside your computer when various software packages pop up and ask to be made the "default" software. The fairness of this type of competition has been the subject of a major antitrust action by the Justice Department against Microsoft.

The History feature of a browser, on the other hand, just makes it more likely that you will return to a page once you have been there before. This, in addition to the other features, makes it more likely that pages with traffic will gain even more traffic.

Other types of software-based online marketing include software that resides on your screen independent of a Web browser and displays ads while you surf. You are paid or otherwise rewarded for the time you spend using this software. An example is AllAdvantage.

The Role of Consumer Choice

Once a user gets beyond these built-in features vying for his or her attention, it becomes more a matter of choice. The Internet user can type in a URL and go to Web pages that have come to the user's attention through word of mouth or some other media. From there, the user is likely to follow links to other similar pages.

As memories may fail, typing errors may occur and links may be outdated; this process only takes the user so far. The next thing a user looks for on the Web is a way to directly find things of interest to him or her. Search engines fulfill that function and have been the most popular sites on the Web. Yahoo! was the original Web search engine and thus, by mere force of history, has been one of the most popular sites on the Web.

As a general rule, search engines and the large digital environments of the media companies (such as AOL, Go.com, MSNBC, etc.) maintain the top traffic rankings. Because search engines exist, the choice and interests of the user are a strong factor, dispersing Internet traffic according to demographics. That is, unlike the traditional broadcast media, traffic branches off to different sites according to people's interests.

Understanding People

Stephani Richardson, the administrator of the SFI Discussion Board and one of the most successful affiliates in SFI, advises that you put yourself in the position of the persons you are trying to recruit. Think from their perspective rather than your own. This, of course, is excellent advice! People on the Web are looking for content. They seek information applicable to themselves. To be a successful Internet marketer, you must take time to think about how people use the Internet.

When staring at their Web browser, people have these choices:

**They can type in a URL that someone told them about,
They can read their home page and follow links from it,
They can look at a page in their history or in their favorites,
They can go to one of the very popular sites and follow links,
Or they can go to a search engine and follow links or compose a search phrase.**

In order to be the target of a link or be listed in a search engine, you must have a Web presence.

Two Important Principles For Your Web Presence: Value And Flow

The first principle illuminating how people use the Web is that it takes value for a Website to be "sticky." A 1998 article in Science magazine stated that Web surfers are constantly making a judgment about continuing to visit a Website or exiting the site. Two factors come into play: the value of the current page and the promise of value in future site pages.

That is, even if the current page has a low perceived value, if there is an indication that the quality of pages may improve; users will stay on the site for another page or two more. But if there is no value, they will leave the site very quickly. This is why we hear so often that "content is king." When they leave for lack of value, they are never coming back.

The second principle is that there must be a balance between the difficulty of using a Website and the rewards the user obtains from the Website. The term "flow" has been used to describe what occurs when a user loses himself in a Website. Flow occurs when the user becomes so absorbed that time and task temporarily become unimportant.

Whatever the user started out to do online, gets temporarily forgotten while they enjoy your site. When flow occurs, direction, inhibitions, and caution give way to impulse, and the user is much more likely to join or buy something promoted on the site. The site must be both interesting and easy to navigate for this to occur.

Flow is also a concept that applies to movement from one Website to another. Banners or textual links must be in context and create a smooth transition from one site to another to be effective. Otherwise, the flow is broken and interest is lost.

Traffic Building

Once you have planned a Website that has value and creates flow, you need to direct traffic to your site.

The four important goals of traffic building are:

- 1) Obtaining the right domain name,
- 2) Obtaining good publicity,
- 3) Obtaining an effective portal presence, and
- 4) Utilizing and maintaining flow in the placement of your Internet ads.

Ads, of course, can be free, exchanged, or paid.

To be an effective Internet marketer, you need to analyze and understand Internet traffic and, very importantly, you must understand that the "traffic" consists of human beings with feelings and interests and desires. You must understand that they are looking for what they want to find - not what you want them to find. You must understand that they will get there through their methods - not the methods you may prefer for them to use.

The old broadcast media methods of controlling attention do not work so well on the Internet. It's a new game. You must use valuable content and ease of use to create flow. You must properly position your site within the flow of Internet traffic. Once you get this right (and you will), you are on the road to becoming a very successful Internet entrepreneur.

Online Marketing Methods – 10 most common

Now we are going to talk about the 10 most common Internet Marketing methods used by successful SFI Affiliates.

MARKETING METHODS

The most common Internet marketing methods, particularly useful in promoting the SFI affiliate program are these:

- 1.) Doorway Pages and Search Engine Registration**
- 2.) Banner or Textual Ad Placement (Exchange Programs)**
- 3.) Banner or Textual Ad Placement (Online Classifieds)**
- 4.) Banner or Textual Ad Placement (Affiliate and Paid Placement)**
- 5.) Building Your Own Content-Rich Website**
- 6.) Utilizing an Opt-In Program**
- 7.) Hosting FFA Pages**
- 8.) Using Safelists, Announcement Lists, and Viral marketing**
- 9.) Press Releases, Relationship Building, and Offline Promotion**
- 10.) The Latest New Technique**

Many of these methods overlap or have much in common. Depending on what you read, there are various ways to describe each of these methods and various names with which to identify them. There is no particular importance to the order in which we have listed them here.

The only reason to enumerate them into the list above is for ease of learning. We will take the first five in turn and give you a brief introduction in this lesson. The next lesson will give you a brief introduction to the last five. Subsequent lessons will cover each of these methods in great detail (although not necessarily in order). Let's get right to it.

Doorway Pages and Search Engine Registration

A "doorway page" is a Web page that is used to lead people to the target interactive site. The doorway page contains a link to your target page. The target page is where you hope the user will take some action, such as purchasing an affiliate product or opting in to your program. The target page sells. The doorway page gets their attention and leads them to the target page. Doorway pages serve two main purposes: they are used to optimize search engine placement and they allow you to target your initial approach to different demographics.

When you join SFI, you are given links to different target pages that you can use to sell SFI products or recruit affiliates. Because these pages contain what is called a "CGI variable" to identify you as the seller or recruiter, they can not be individually registered in the Search Engines. That is, because there is a "?" in the URL (Website address), search engines will not accept them or will truncate off the most important part—your ID number.

To work around this problem with the search engines, affiliates use doorway pages. Savvy SFI affiliates design and host a Web page on another server with a different name so that the URL does not contain a question mark. This doorway page then links to one of the SFI target pages, and the link, of course, contains the CGI variable identifying the affiliates ID number to ensure proper credit. Really enterprising affiliates create several different doorway pages, each appealing to different types of people.

There is no need to work around a cgi variable in the URL, Internet marketers use doorway pages to target different demographics. Different things get different people's attention. Many of the affiliates that come into SFI do so because they are very serious about creating a successful home-based business. They find SFI while searching for information pertaining to home-based businesses or network marketing. They understand network marketing terminology and are seeking a comparison of this program with the ones already familiar to them.

Other affiliates come to SFI because they want an Internet business. They may have had little experience with home-based businesses or network marketing. These people understand Internet terminology and are looking for a great affiliate program. Obviously, you have to approach these different types of people differently to attract them to the SFI program.

Thus, it is best to have one doorway page for those seeking a home-based, multi-level business and another doorway page for those seeking a lucrative affiliate program. SFI well serves the needs of both, but they need to be drawn to that realization in different ways.

You may also want to have different doorway pages for younger prospects and older prospects; one for the highly educated and one for those with little formal education; one for those who are already financially successful but want an Internet income and one for those who are still struggling daily with bills and creditors. There are many different demographic groups that you can target with different doorway pages.

The best doorway pages are pages that attract the targeted demographic by providing useful information or entertainment, while remaining easy to navigate. Stay tuned to future lessons to learn how even the technically challenged can easily create useful content for their Websites.

Note: In SFI, doorway pages that you design yourself must be approved by the SFI administration if they do more than just contain an approved link or textual ad. That is, if you provide information or opinions about SFI above and beyond insertion of an approved ad, you must seek prior approval.

When you have your doorway pages in place, you need to register them with the search engines. There are many factors involved in doing this properly. You need to prepare your pages properly with meta tags, keywords, descriptions, keyword balancing, content indications, as well as incoming and outgoing link considerations. You then need to know the right submission procedure and schedule your submissions properly for each major search engine or directory. There is much to say on these subjects.

Banner or Textual Ad Placement (Exchange Programs)

To gain traffic for your Website, you need to prepare effective banners and textual ads. In SFI, this is already done for you. Having banners and textual ads prepared, you need to find places on the Internet to place these banners and textual ads.

One of the earliest methods devised on the Internet was banner exchanges. You agree with other Website owners to place their ad on your page in exchange for placing your ad on their page. This process has been facilitated by the emergence of several banner exchange programs.

You register with the exchange program, upload your banner and your banner will automatically appear on other registered Web pages throughout the world. In exchange, they provide code for you to put on your Web page, which hosts rotating banners from other sites. These are not particularly effective, mainly because placement in context on a page is rarely achieved. Context placement is crucial to an ad or banner being effective in drawing traffic.

Banner exchanges are very useful for one purpose, however. Most of the exchange programs allow you to target the types of pages on which your banners will be placed. If you happen to have a high-traffic Website which appeals to one demographic, but your target in a particular affiliate program is another demographic, you can "exchange" your traffic through use of an exchange program.

Say your site draws high traffic from retired people who love to garden and travel. With a banner exchange, you can have your banner targeted to sites which appeal to home-based entrepreneurs. In return, you host banners on your site which target the group which frequents your site (advertising, for example, gardening tools or motor homes). Since effective context placement is much more likely to be achieved in this situation, it usually works fairly well for all parties involved.

Banner Or Textual Ad Placement (Online Classifieds)

One of the easiest ways to get your banners and ads on a high-traffic Website is to place them on some online classified ad pages. Several major sites allow you to place classified ads for free. There are others, such as Yahoo!, that charge fees for placement of classifieds.

These can be effective depending upon the volume of ads being submitted at any given time. If it is a high traffic site, your ad will only appear for a matter of hours before it is pushed too far down by new submissions to be useful. Daily attention and resubmission is crucial to an effective classified ad campaign on the free sites.

There are links to the many online classified sites that have been effective for SFI affiliates on the SFI Team Resource Center (<http://www.sfiteam.com/>). Starting with classified ads is a good way to get your feet wet in Internet marketing.

Banner Or Textual Ad Placement (Affiliate And Paid Placement)

You can also pay to have your banner or ad placed on other Websites. This is a broad category that covers many different possible arrangements. You can pay for placement for a period of time. You can pay only for clicks actually received through your ad on a site. You can pay only for sales or sign-ups that come through a particular site.

Affiliate programs encompass the latter of these options. There are services where you can register an affiliate program and people who go to these services can sign up to host your ads. When they sign up, they download your banner or ad to their site. The service independently tracks and verifies the clicks, sales, or sign-ups, that originate from particular affiliate sites and facilitates the payments that are due.

Also included in this category are ezine ads. Ezines are e-mail newsletters that people have opted-in to receive. They are full of interesting content so that people actually read them when they show up in their inboxes.

You can pay the ezine publisher to include your ad and a link to your site in an ezine edition. Ideally, your ad will fit into the context of the information in that particular ezine edition.

"Pay-pers", which are services which pay people to receive and read e-mail or host software which displays ads on their screen, also fall under this category. You can pay to have your e-mail ad sent to people who have agreed to receive the e-mail for a small fee per e-mail. This is not spam because the people who receive the e-mail have opted to receive it in exchange for a small payment per e-mail received and read. These programs are very effective because the e-mails are actually read and the links clicked.

Building Your Own Content Rich Website

As explained in chapter one on Spam, except for safe lists and paid ads purchased from opt-in programs, you cannot rely on e-mail for Internet marketing. You must use Websites and opt-in programs instead. We discussed the doorway site concept at the beginning of this chapter. Whether a doorway page, or an independent target site, the most effective Internet marketing method available is to have a site with rich substantive content and entertaining attention grabbers.

There are hundreds of thousands of Websites on the Internet now that consist of nothing more than banner ads thrown on a page. They are all worthless! There is no point in creating a Website if it does not have content. Your Website must have both value and ease of use to be effective in drawing and keeping traffic. Do not be dismayed if you feel incapable at this time of creating such a site. Just relax and keep reading your SFI materials.

Utilizing An Opt-In Program

E-mail is a vehicle that works in conjunction with other interactive features of a Website to create a flow of communication with your prospects. In order to avoid spamming, you have to have consent from a prospect to send them e-mail. The best way to get that consent is to have them do something on your Website that establishes that consent. Such devices are called "opt-in" programs.

The simplest example of an opt-in program is to have a line on your Website which says "Join our Newsletter" and provides a form for the viewer to submit his or her e-mail address. From there, the extent and variety of opt-in programs that can be created is limited only by imagination. Often effective are contests. Viewers enter a contest to win something by entering their e-mail address.

Often, there are interactive games which pit the viewer against other players around the world, and the scores and results of the games are communicated to the participants with e-mail. Particularly interesting is one which has a slot machine interface on the site which you can play for free, but if you accumulate any winnings, you have to opt-in to collect your money.

There are many types of opt-ins. You can sign up to receive news, weather, stock tips, pictures, and many other types of information to be received by e-mail. There are many educational opt-in programs for school children (and adults) including "science facts," "strange animals," "today in history," and other education subjects. A prayer of the day, week, or month is available from many different sources.

You can also allow people to post information on your Website and thereby gain consent to e-mail them. Examples of this are business directories and FFA pages (discussed below), among many others. Remember, imagination is the only limitation.

It is both intuitive and supported by research that an e-mail inbox is a much more effective place to communicate with a prospect than a Website. But, it takes the Website to get the necessary permission to communicate by e-mail. Thus, the "Opt-In" program is a crucial step in an effective Internet marketing campaign.

One of the most effective opt-in programs on the Internet is the SFI marketing Group's affiliate program. As an SFI affiliate, you need only point people from your Gateway page to the SFI page for this very effective opt-in to be made available to your viewers.

Hosting FFA Pages

"FFA" stands for "Free for All" which is short for "Free for all to post here." FFA's are Websites where you can post a link and perhaps a short description to your Website without having to pay an advertising fee. When you post on one of these FFA sites, you will receive an e-mail from the site host confirming that your link was placed and, in all likelihood, containing an advertisement as well.

It is not an effective use of your time to individually post your link to these sites. These sites are actually rarely seen by anyone. Plus, almost all these FFA sites have a maximum number of posts that will be displayed. The old ones are dropped to make room for the new ones. In many cases, this process occurs in just minutes or hours so that your link is not on the site long enough for it to do you any good at all.

There are FFA submission services that will post your link to hundreds of these sites at once. That makes it somewhat more time effective, but even with that, this is still not a terribly effective way to promote your Website.

Should you use one of these submission services, be sure to create a separate e-mail address to use. You will receive confirmation e-mails from several hundred FFA sites after using one of these submission services. It will choke down your e-mail. Thus, do not use your everyday e-mail address when making such submissions.

An effective way to use FFA sites, however, is to HOST an FFA site. When you host an FFA site, you get to send out all the confirmation e-mails - with YOUR ad in them! There are services on the Web which will allow you to host an FFA site on their server without charge or for a small fee. There are also autoresponder services available (for free or a small fee) which you can connect to your FFA site to send the confirming e-mails.

Using Safelists, Announcement Lists, And Viral Marketing

Safelists are e-mail lists which allow you to join and post advertisements in exchange for receiving advertisements from others. You and other members send your e-mail to a list address and from there it is distributed to the members of the list. There are several such lists at Yahoo! Groups and other e-mail list services.

These also are only effective if done in bulk. That is, you must create a separate "throw-away" e-mail address to sign up for these and use group mail software to send to hundreds of lists at once. The e-mail you will receive from being a member of hundreds of lists will be in the thousands per day. Thus, it is imperative that you use a different e-mail address from the one you use for daily correspondence.

It is not easy to use safe lists effectively. Until you are experienced, you should seek the tutoring of a more experienced Internet marketer in setting this up properly. You can begin to learn, however, by going to Yahoo! Groups and searching for lists that allow advertising.

For now, just join one or two groups to become familiar with the process. Do not expect any results from the ads you post to just one or two groups, but use it as a learning process. It will be much easier for you to master the skills necessary to effectively market with safe lists in bulk if you have had some hands-on experience with the lists first.

Announcement Lists are similar to advertising lists but with a slant toward announcing new sites rather than advertising per se. Unless you obtain a list of "safe lists" from a very trusted source, carefully read the rules for each list before you post and keep your posts within the guidelines for the list.

The next Internet marketing technique, VIRAL marketing, is interesting but not very effective. Viral marketing is designed to circumvent the spam rules by hoping the recipient of the e-mail will forward it on to the people on his or her forwarding list. Since you have not sent the e-mail to these other persons directly, you can not be accused of spam.

The concept is that the e-mail will spread out to many recipients like a virus - being passed from one to another to another. Each recipient receives the e-mail from someone with whom they have a pre-existing relationship. Since a pre-existing relationship is an exception to most spam rules, the e-mail is not considered spam.

All of us have had the misfortune (or perhaps good fortune, if you have a lot of spare time) of being on a number of our friends' e-mail forwarding lists. Every time they receive a joke that they think is funny or the latest urban legend ("Watch out for AIDS-infected needles hidden in theater seats or gas pump handles."), they very generously pass it on to us and the 15 or more other people on their list.

Many of the people on their list then pass it on to 15 or more other people. Observing this phenomenon, it occurred to a number of enterprising Internet marketers to try to harness this distribution technique for marketing.

A consulting group I organized ran an experiment on viral marketing about 18 months ago. Our results were interesting. What we found was that in order for the distribution to be effective (i.e. for people to keep passing it on) it had to be either of a "hysterical" nature (ex: hidden AIDS needles or people stealing your kidneys) or it had to be humor or complete nonsense. Otherwise, it died in two generations (that is, it was not passed on more than twice).

In theorizing about these results, we considered the effectiveness of an ad traveling along with one of these hysterical or nonsensical e-mails which would survive several generations. We concluded that the state of mind induced by either the hysteria or the nonsense of the primary message was not conducive to generating response to the ad. In other words, the ad did not flow with the material and thus would not be effective.

One of the funniest things I have seen was the viral e-mail that convinced the reader that the technology now existed for an ordinary computer monitor to take someone's picture like a camera. You were then given a link to a page where you were instructed to hold your face in front of the monitor and then click a "shutter button" and count down the exposure time.

To see the results, you were taken to a full screen picture of a surprised looking monkey - which was a pretty accurate picture of you at the time! This particular viral achieved extremely wide distribution. However, it could certainly not be used effectively for marketing. Who wants to buy or join something when it has just made a monkey out of you?

Thus, while viral marketing per se does not appear to be an effective Internet marketing technique, an understanding of its limitations can lead us to consider the most powerful technique of all - sincere communication. People decide whether to pay attention to e-mail based on two obvious factors: the source and the subject. Viral e-mail, by definition, comes from a trusted source. It also has an attention grabbing subject. Its limitation is that it is either not serious at all (just humor or a practical joke) or it is too serious (warning of some bizarre danger).

There is a somewhat slower, yet very effective process, however. You can send sincere communication to someone you know (and who you know does not mind receiving e-mail from you) and sincerely tell them about your successful experience with an affiliate program such as SFI. Do not make it sound like an ad in any form or fashion! Rather, let it just be a sincere sharing with them of your experience.

Mix in other things about your life and inquire about their lives so that it is not just a single subject e-mail. They, in turn, may become interested in your program and may later join. If they do, they may later share their successful experience with others that they know. And so it continues and grows! Let's not call this process "viral marketing." Let's call it "infectious enthusiasm"!

Press Releases, Relationship Building, And Offline Promotion

While the offline world does not exist to the exclusion of the online world, neither does the online world exist to the exclusion of the offline world. Although the SFI program is primarily online, you can certainly use offline marketing in conjunction with your online techniques. You should combine offline and online efforts in effective ways.

For example, you can send classified ads and press releases by e-mail to newspapers, which will then appear in print publications. The printed announcements and ads can then direct people online to your Website. Successful SFI Affiliates use the two together effectively.

You can use the relationship building techniques effective in the offline world in the online arena as well. Relationship building and "infectious enthusiasm" are things that occur both online and offline. You can meet people online and then build a relationship which carries over to the offline world. You can communicate with people online that you have met and known from the offline world.

The bottom line is that it takes trust to induce someone to buy or join. It takes a relationship of some sort to build trust. These principles have always been true in the offline world and they are still true in the online world. The relationship begins when people first see your ad and they continue to judge you by everything that follows. An ad does not sell—it starts a relationship. The resulting relationship sells—provided it becomes a trusted relationship.

The Latest New Technique

Have you heard of "vortals"? They are single subject portals and they are the latest buzz. And, hey, what are "portals" anyway? Isn't that what we used to call "Search Engines" before they added a bunch of new features and some personalization capabilities? The only thing constant about the Internet is that it is constantly changing!

The latest tip is that you should be on a constant search for new subject specific portals (vortals) dealing with your subject and make sure your site gets listed there. Search for these vortals through the search engines by searching for words dealing with your product or service. When you find them, read the rules for posting and post a link to your site there.

One constant is that you should always stay on top of what's new on the Internet and be one of the first to take advantage of each new technique as it becomes available. You will need to stay informed and be adaptive to be successful in Internet marketing. How can you do that? There are a bunch of experts at the SFI sites just waiting for you to read their articles and ask them questions about marketing and SFI. Hang out with the right people and you can not help but be successful.

This chapter was just a brief introduction to many different concepts. Do not be concerned if you are still a little confused. You can also get more information by becoming an IAHBE member and accessing the expert advice there.

History of affiliate programs

Affiliate programs have evolved through time and in this process they have influenced on advertising for e-commerce. The Internet has created an entirely new channel for selling goods and services. The multitier commission structure supplies the missing link to make this new channel fully effective.

THE EMERGENCE OF THE WEB

Ten years ago, there was no such thing as e-commerce as we know it today. Although the Internet has been around in some form or fashion for many years, for most of its history it was used only by the military and research scientists. As the technology became friendlier, others began to use it.

The key event to the popularization of the Internet was the creation of the World Wide Web—especially the capability to show pictures and play sound from the Web, which became available around 1994. Adding that multimedia capability to the Web made it inevitable that the Internet would eventually pervade business and commerce. It did not take long.

The graphical Web was shortly followed by the capability to transmit credit card information securely online, which was shortly followed by the ability to process the card payments in real time online. A new venue to sell products and services had arisen seemingly overnight.

A NEW DISTRIBUTION CHANNEL

The Internet provides a new and quite different distribution channel for vendors to sell their products and services to consumers. Consumers can learn about, view pictures of, and order products from anywhere at anytime from the comfort of their home or office.

To sell anything, though, a vendor needs to get traffic to his or her Website through advertising. This was first approached from the old model of TV, radio, and print ads. That is, vendors went to popular Websites and offered to pay for placement of their ad for a period of time. Since the Internet is different from the old broadcast media, however, new more efficient methods of advertising were sought.

It is relatively easy to determine the size of a TV or radio station's audience. The same is true with the circulation of print media such as newspapers and magazines. It's not as easy with a Website, however. Sure, there are counters, but they can not always be trusted.

Plus, a Web page being retrieved from a server (and thus adding to the counter) does not necessarily mean it will be seen by a human being. Bots and automated processes can retrieve pages that are never seen by any human being. It became important to know whether the page views were coming from the same source or whether they were "unique views"—i.e. new people rather than the same few over and over or some automated process.

Another problem was that unless the ad is placed prominently and in context on the host site, it will not draw traffic, even from a large audience of unique viewers to the host site. So, paying a flat fee for displaying an ad on a Website for a set period of time turned out to be undesirable.

Rather than paying for a set period of time, advertisers began to prefer to pay according to the number of clicks on their banners. Standard sizes evolved for banners used to advertise Websites on other Websites. The banners can have words, pictures, and animation and serve as a link to the advertised Website. When you click on the banner, you are taken immediately to the advertised site. Thus, with "pay per click" if you did not get any traffic, you did not have to pay.

This motivated the host site Webmaster to place the banner effectively on the site so it would draw traffic. Even "pay per click" had its problems, though. Clicks could also be automated and unscrupulous hosts could cheat. Clicks also needed to be from "unique viewers" to be effective.

Thus, vendors ultimately came to prefer paying only when a sell was actually made or someone at least interacted with the site by joining an opt-in program. The vehicle for paying only for sells or opt-ins on your site from persons sent from the host site became known as "affiliate programs."

AFFILIATE SERVICES

As the popularity of affiliate programs has grown, services, such as LinkExchange, Commission Junction, BeFree, and many others, have arisen to provide centralized locations where Webmasters can pick and join affiliate programs. These services also monitor the vendors and keep them honest. They provide standardized software and interfaces to run the affiliate programs so that each new vendor does not have to re-invent the wheel when they start up an affiliate program.

As a Webmaster, you can go to one of these sites and pick out the programs you want to join. You fill out a form providing information about yourself and your Website and then you download the "banner code" to place on your site. When someone clicks on the banner from your site and buys something from the vendor, the sale is tracked and they pay you a small commission. Most provide online reporting so that you can see your how your sales are going at any time.

While these affiliate services help to promote affiliate programs for the vendors, and provide some efficiency for the Webmasters, vendors are still looking for better ways to promote their affiliates' programs and Webmasters are looking for more profitable arrangements.

BUYING FROM YOUR OWN STORE

Only a small percentage of the millions of Websites on the Internet actually draw any significant traffic. ISPs and other services provide free personal home pages and many people have designed sites more for their own amusement than any serious purpose. Nevertheless, it is advantageous to vendors to have their affiliate banners on as many pages as possible. Even the sites that do not draw significant traffic have the benefit of the loyalty of their own Webmaster.

If you have put the Amazon.com affiliate banner on your site, you will go there to buy your books rather than Barnes and Nobles because you get a little commission back when you buy from your own "store." Because of this, most vendors make it as easy as possible to join their affiliate programs and want affiliates even with low traffic sites.

After the new wears off, however, most Webmasters realize it is too much work for too little value to keep affiliate programs on their low traffic Web pages. Because vendor sites are constantly being redesigned, your banner stops working and you have to download new "banner code" and replace it on your site. As promotions change, the vendors make you change your code or the pictures stop showing up.

A few of the major vendors with affiliate programs have gone bankrupt and the links just quit working. It turns out to take a lot of time and effort to keep affiliate banners working on your site. Yet, it would benefit both the vendors and the Webmasters of the low traffic sites if this could be more conveniently and more profitably done.

A BRAIN TEASER SOLVED

There are thousands upon thousands of affiliate programs available on the Internet. A Webmaster cannot put more than just a very few affiliate programs on any one Website without losing effectiveness. (Nothing is worse than a Web page crammed full of banners.) Thus, Webmasters have become selective in choosing affiliate programs.

As competition heats up among the vendors, the vendors find themselves focusing on finding creative ways to promote their affiliate programs. Affiliate programs are excellent for marketing products and services on the Internet, but how do you effectively market an affiliate program to the Webmasters?

A few bright entrepreneurs, including SFI marketing Group's founder, Gery Carson, have come up with the answer. The answer is to have a multitier affiliate program. This solves two problems. One, it makes it worthwhile for the ordinary person to become involved in e-commerce. You can make good money even without a high-traffic Website because you share in the sales of an entire organization.

Plus, you don't have to hassle with keeping banner code for multiple programs up to date. SFI's Catalog allows all SFI affiliates to "buy from their own store" without the hassle of trying to maintain hundreds of affiliate programs your self. Two, the attractiveness of the multitier commissions effectively promotes the affiliate program without distracting from product promotions.

Plus, this solution involves multitier training as well. Webmasters become involved in affiliate programs not only for their own savings but also to generate income from selling to others as well. This is not easy and requires training. It would be extremely costly for each vendor to establish an effective training program, providing the one-on-one communication necessary for true results. A multitier system with Team Leaders providing one-on-one training as needed eliminates the vendors' substantial affiliate training costs.

Thus, the next logical step in the evolution of affiliate programs in e-commerce is exactly what the SFI marketing Group has already done: a multitier commission and training structure.

NETWORK MARKETING AND THE INTERNET

When you step back and look at the history of e-commerce, you see that affiliate programs have independently evolved into something very similar to network marketing, which has been around for a long time. Ironically, though, network marketing itself has not taken well to the Internet.

Most network marketing companies mistakenly believe that face-to-face interactions are necessary and that recruiting can not be effectively done online. (The research is in, however, and it shows the contrary to be true.) Another factor is that many network marketing companies do not encourage analytical examination of their opportunity, which is inevitable on the Information Superhighway.

Thus, most network marketing companies only use the Internet to provide forms downloads and similar services to their existing representatives. They do not effectively use the Internet as a recruiting tool or to sell products to the general public.

Some enterprising independent representatives, however, have evolved the "downline clubs." Downline clubs sign people up on the Internet, promising to place them in multiple network marketing opportunities based on the order in which they signed up. Downline clubs theoretically offer the possibility of a large organization below you in multiple opportunities without any recruiting effort on your part.

In actuality, though, most downline clubs have been disappointing. The greed of the club founders, the hope of instant riches, and the lack of focus due to joining multiple network marketing companies have usually yielded poor results. Training and commitment are lacking, so large downlines (if they get built in the first place) often crumble even faster than they were collected.

Thus, network marketing as we traditionally have known it has not grasped the potential of the Internet and does not appear likely to do so. Plus, and perhaps because of the Internet, the old model of network marketing is less effective in any venue of late.

THE NEW PARADIGM

SFI's founder, an experienced and successful network marketer, was one of the first to recognize that the old network marketing model quit working for many previously successful marketers around the same time that e-commerce was evolving toward a similar but different paradigm. He realized that an entirely new model was needed.

He drew upon those principles of network marketing that remained viable and applied them to solve the current e-commerce challenge of promoting affiliate programs on the Internet. The results are phenomenal. SFI now has well over 7 million affiliates and the numbers of new affiliates each month is growing progressively.

SFI works because it is an e-commerce affiliate program. Unlike the old network marketing model, SFI does not require you to make unnecessary purchases or meet stringent qualifications to earn commissions. In contrast to almost all of the old network marketing companies, SFI fully embraces the powerful recruiting potential of the Internet.

The SFI opportunity stands up well to the analytical scrutiny characteristic of the Information Superhighway. It is a forerunner in the next stage of evolution of e-commerce. Adding the multitier structure to an Internet affiliate program makes the new e-commerce channel of distribution fully workable. Because of this, SFI has been able to negotiate fantastic savings and commissions for its affiliates from world-class vendors and will continue to attract more and even better deals as SFI continues to grow.

The natural evolution of e-commerce has pointed to a multitier commission structure to give life to the new channel of distribution of goods and services created by the Internet. SFI is in the forefront of this new adventure in commerce. SFI embodies the most advanced stage of evolution of e-commerce. As Moore's Law (discussed in an earlier lesson) ensures the continued growth of e-commerce, history and logic dictate that affiliate programs will continue as the distribution channel for e-commerce. It follows that SFI, representing the most advanced evolution of affiliate programs, will continue to have lasting phenomenal growth and prove profitable for all involved.

Building Your Team of Affiliates

Here we are going to talk about building your team of affiliates in SFI. So, let's start.

CHOOSING UP SIDES

When I was a kid, the boys from our neighborhood would meet at the vacant lot on the corner every Sunday afternoon to play ball. The first thing we would do is choose two captains for the day, and the captains would choose up sides. The captains would take turns picking players for their team from the ragtag group of neighborhood kids who showed up that day.

Often the outcome of the game for that day was predetermined by the choosing of sides, due to an uneven distribution of ages, sizes, and talents. Getting the right players on your team was very important to the outcome.

Team effort and healthy competition among opposing teams is the most natural of things for human beings. Cut a bunch of kids loose on a Sunday afternoon and that's what they will most likely do: choose up teams and have a competitive game between the opposing teams. The games may be different in different parts of the world, but the activity of picking teams and playing some sort of competitive game is universal.

When you join the SFI affiliate program, you have two ways to advance your business:

- 1) Build your team of affiliates**
- 2) Market products from the Website**

While you can do both simultaneously, the question arises as to which of these two tasks should be given priority. The answer for SFI is to first focus on expanding your team of affiliates. Like the kids at the neighborhood vacant lot, most ventures naturally begin by picking your team.

In SFI, like any venture, picking the right team can be the most important part of obtaining a successful outcome.

Picking your team might not be your first priority if you were solely responsible for training the affiliates you bring into your team. In SFI, the training is allocated to the Team Leaders and Group Leaders, who already have the experience and proven track record.

Were that not the case, it would be necessary for you to gain experience in Internet marketing of the products before bringing in new affiliates who would depend on you for training. After all, no one makes any commissions until products are sold. But since experienced Team Leaders and Group Leaders are available to train your new affiliates, you can follow the natural order of things and focus first on building a great team of affiliates.

ONE BAD APPLE DOES NOT SPOIL THE BARREL

In many ventures, whether those ventures involve sports or business, picking one bad apple on your team can often cause problems and interfere with the overall success of the team. (The scrawniest kid with the thickest glasses was always the last one to be picked in our neighborhood ballgames.)

The careful design of the SFI program, however, substantially eliminates this risk. SFI has "full compression" in its multitier pay plan. That is, there can be hundreds of inactive affiliates between you and the next member, and the next member in line will still be considered to be on your next level for purposes of the pay plan.

Thus, while you definitely want good, motivated affiliates on your team, you do not have to worry about excluding the bad ones in the process of finding the good ones. This said, however, you want to make an effort to find and recruit good team players.

FINDING THE GOOD ONES

When you are first getting started in SFI, you will want to hand pick several good affiliates to start your team. This activity comes naturally and does not require a lot of technical training. Even if you know very little about Internet marketing, you can begin to succeed immediately by finding and recruiting good quality affiliates. The remainder of this lesson will outline the simple steps for you to follow in order to accomplish this task.

PUT YOURSELF IN THE SHOES OF THE ONES YOU WANT TO RECRUIT

As discussed in an earlier lesson, you should always focus on the perspective of your potential recruits. Put yourself in their shoes. Think like they will be thinking.

First, you should spend some time thinking about what qualities you want in your affiliates. What are the characteristics of the new affiliates that you would want on your team? You probably want people who enjoy a good challenge and are willing to become involved in new things and learn new ways to increase their income.

You should want people who are capable of critical thinking, but also capable of taking practical, effective action. You also want to find some people who already know a good deal about Internet marketing. People who already have a good Website that draws substantial traffic would be great to have on your team.

Ask yourself, "What would these people search for on the search engines when looking for new and better ways to make money on the Internet?" Come up with a list of words and phrases with which they would likely search.

I cannot offer you any example search words or phrases. In order for this to work, you have to come up with your own search terms. If I or anyone writing about Internet promotion to a large audience were to give a specific list of words with which you should search, several thousand people would wind up at the same Websites and those poor Webmasters would be inundated with queries.

Originality is what makes this work. You have to be original and come up with your own search terms for this to work for any of you. This is your chance to use your own imagination and creativity to rise above the crowd by finding those choice spots to advertise. You do this by carefully thinking out the search terms your targeted recruits would likely use.

When you have come up with your list of search terms, go to the popular search engines (Yahoo!, AltaVista, WebCrawler, Google, etc.) and perform a search with the terms on your list. The sites that show up on the first three pages of your search engine results would likely be the sites also discovered by the people you want to be on your team.

If these are personal sites, rather than large, corporate venture-capital type sites, the Webmasters of these sites themselves would be a great addition to your team! Thus, you want to inquire both about advertising on the site and recruiting the Webmaster as well.

MAKING CONTACT

Any time you start to contact someone over the Internet regarding a commercial matter, be very careful not to spam. Thus, you must be careful how you contact the Webmasters of the sites that turned up in your search. If a site in which you have become interested allows free postings such as classifieds or announcements, you have hit pay dirt—but read the rules for posting on the site very carefully before posting and follow the rules!

The next thing you would look for is contact information for the Webmaster. If there is a phone number listed, you have also hit pay dirt. You can call the Webmaster on the telephone without any worries of a spam complaint. In your phone conversation with the Webmaster, explain that he or she has a Website you believe could help you recruit a team of affiliates for SFI.

If you have an advertising budget, tell them that you would like to purchase some advertising on their site. (Don't say this if you can not afford any advertising because you do not want to be misleading.) Explain further, however, that they can doubly profit from this if they will also join SFI. Tell them that they can join as an affiliate for free, and all of the recruits you obtain from advertising on their Website will also fall under them. Thus, they will profit twice from selling you some advertising.

If the Website on which you arrange to advertise this way is productive, the Webmaster will see all of the affiliates coming into the network and will soon get the idea. The Webmaster will likely start promoting on the site with his or her own affiliate number. Then you will not have to pay for advertising on that site anymore and yet it is still building your team.

If you cannot afford any paid advertising, you will have a somewhat more difficult task. Webmasters get very interested in speaking with someone who is offering to pay them for advertising on their Website. Most people who have worked to build a good Website and build good traffic to it have planned on making their money through paid advertising.

On the other hand, they will not be terribly receptive to using space on their sites for an affiliate program with which they are not familiar. Nevertheless, a polite phone call in which you give them your Gateway URL for the affiliate program (www.YourGateway.com/YourSFIID/FREE/) and a brief mention that there are presently over 7 million affiliates, some of which are earning over \$10,000 per month with this program, may well get their attention.

If there is not a phone number for the Webmaster on the Website, but only an e-mail address, you will have to be careful that your e-mail does not give the appearance of being spam. Remember that even if your message is technically not spam, a recipient who erroneously believes that it is spam may well report you anyway and cause big problems for you.

All Webmasters who list their e-mail address on their Website get a lot of spam and are, consequently, quite annoyed by it. The reason that happens is that the people who harvest e-mail addresses for the spammers get those e-mail addresses with software which searches Web pages and grabs any e-mail addresses listed. Thus, anyone who has had a Web page with their e-mail address on it up for any length of time is already on these lists and is being bombarded with spam.

Most of those spam messages begin with "I was looking at your Website . . ." In almost every case, it becomes immediately apparent that the spammer has never seen your Web page. They are clearly lying and that makes you mad right from the start. Thus, whenever you send e-mail to a Webmaster, you must make it clear from the beginning of the message that you have truly just visited their Website and are responding to the e-mail contact link you found there.

You must make it clear that this is a single message (not bulk) sent only to that Webmaster. Something very important to realize is that you can not make these things clear simply by asserting them in the e-mail. Spam e-mails that Webmasters get daily boldly (albeit falsely) assert that they are not spam. Thus, you have to PROVE that you were just looking at the Webmaster's Website by mentioning very specific things about their site right up front. Otherwise, you will not only lose their attention, but they will likely report you for spam.

Because you are responding to a Contact Us link on their Website with a single, non-bulk e-mail, you are not technically spamming them. By placing that link on their Website, they have given you permission to send them a one-time personal, non-bulk e-mail pertaining to their Website.

And if they recognize your e-mail as being honest and sincere and recognize that you have indeed spent some time at their Website, they will welcome your correspondence. It is important that the subject heading and the first sentence of your e-mail reference something that could only be known from having seen the Website.

Mentioning the domain name itself is not convincing because the spammers know that as well, but it does help to mention it. Mentioning the color scheme, the graphics, and some of the advertisers or information on the site will be convincing—if you are very accurate. The more you talk about the Website with specific and accurate information, the more the Webmaster will be intrigued by your e-mail.

You need to be complimentary and not critical of the site, of course. People love compliments. Your e-mail should not sound like an ad, but should sound like personal correspondence from someone who became excited from visiting their Website.

In your first e-mail, do not mention the SFI affiliate program by name, but rather make a general inquiry about advertising on their site for your business. (If you cannot afford paid advertising, just make a general inquiry as to whether they would be interested in an affiliate program that would work well on their site.)

After they respond with interest, it is appropriate for you to reveal the nature of your business. As discussed earlier regarding the phone call, explain that the Webmaster can doubly profit from selling you advertising and becoming an affiliate. Add that there is no charge or obligation for becoming an SFI affiliate.

BONUS PAGE

Through the whole report you have learned valuable information about affiliate marketing on SFI, these techniques and ideas can also be applied in any affiliate marketing. But in order for you to succeed you need to apply them and not sit on them. If you don't do any work, you won't see any money.

Here I'm giving you some links that will help you in your affiliate marketing career.

Article directories, where you can post your articles for FREE and get green traffic to your website or blog:

Top 5 directories that will give you the most traffic and bust your link popularity

- × EzineArticles.com
- × GoArticles.com
- × Buzzle.com
- × ArticlesFactory.com
- × WebProNews.com

Other article directories you might consider posting to:

- | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------|
| × Articles.com | × Articlebeach.com |
| × Articlepool.com | × Articlecat.com |
| × A1-articledirectory.com | × Articlecity.com |
| × Advisor.com | × Articleclick.com |
| × Afreearticle.com | × Articledashboard.com |
| × Allfreelancework.com | × Articlegold.com |
| × Article99.com | × Article-hangout.com |
| × Articleally.com | × Articlemaniac.com |
| × Articlebase.com | |

These are just a few of many article directories where you can post your articles for free and get free traffic in return.

Here are some links where you can post free ads:

- × TrafficSwarm.com
- × CLickexchange.com
- × ClickBooth.com
- × SurfNexus.com
- × TheFreeadforum.com
- × Domesticsale.com
- × Classifiedads.com
- × Cityadnet.com
- × Theadnet.com

NOTE; when you are placing raw affiliate links in your ads or article resource boxes you need to be sure that they allow affiliate links, because some directories don't, like EzineArticles.

In this matter I recommend that you create a landing page in Blogger or Blog, or Squidoo and send your visitors there and from there on to your vendors' sales pages. And it's all **FREE**.

Here are also some links to tools that will help you with your Key Word Research:

- * Key Compete
- * Word Tracker
- * Compete
- * Google Key Word Tool

You can also use these two sites, to find niches, what people are looking for today:

- * Answers.yahoo.com
- * Trends.google.com

If you are interested in building a mailing list you can use these two free autoresponders:

- * Tinyletter.com
- * MailChimp.com

For more information on SFI, go to my website www.mysfiaffiliatecenter.webs.com. There you'll find each category explained in a more plain language, and also you'll get some other tips on how to work this system in your advantage.

I hope this report was useful for you and that your start at SFI is a bit easier now. I would like to thank you for downloading this report and reading it, and I would also ask you if you could write a short review of it and mail it to this address mysfiaffiliatecenter@gmail.com. This way I'll be informed if the report is helping or not.

Thanks,
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