

Supplement Income with Affiliate Marketing Programs

By Work/Career Center Columnist Dave Jensen

Whatever home-based business idea you pursue, you will likely have a Web site because consumers are making more purchases online. In fact, large companies are expanding their online marketing efforts through the use of affiliate marketing programs.

Affiliate marketing can net a decent extra income if you have a Web site. You essentially become an associate for an organization who sells products and services online. When consumers follow links from your Web site and make purchases, you receive a commission from the target site. For example, a \$20 purchase might bring a 5% commission or \$1.00 per purchase. That's not much, but with several affiliate programs on your site, the commissions can add up.

As with every new idea or venture, I recommend doing homework before you begin. It's helpful to learn affiliate marketing lingo and options so you know what kind of arrangement to set up. Powerhomebiz's [Understanding Affiliate Programs](#) and Taming the Beast's [Successful Affiliate Marketing](#) are good places to learn about the basics of affiliate marketing.

The compensation plan is important, but you want to align yourself with products and services that are in demand. Look for reputable companies that have genuine, quality products. Probably the most popular is [Amazon.com Associates](#). They have a few different affiliate options. Sites such as [ClickBank](#), [Commission Junction](#), and [Google AdSense](#) are popular as well. Also, check out All Merchants' [The Red Flags of Affiliate Marketing Scams](#) to make sure you don't sign up with a fraudulent organization.

In order to earn worthwhile commissions, I recommend maintaining several channels with a common niche that is related to your business and expertise. Affiliate marketing will not make you rich overnight. However, with persistence and a desire to creatively market your site, you can begin to generate some pretty nice commissions.