# Contents

The Affiliate Marketer’s Guide to Content Creation

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Introduction

As an affiliate marketer, creating high quality content is a key part of becoming successful. The quality of your content will impact your conversion rate and in order to convert at a high rate, your content needs to educate, entice and persuade users to buy. Although ultimately there are many factors which influence your conversion rate, content is and may always be king.

Many affiliates fall into the trap of churning out low quality content for the sake of it. Content which is rushed is often poorly written, full of grammatical errors and doesn’t read particularly well. It’s more beneficial to spend time drafting and developing a high quality piece of writing that actually converts.

Content comes in many forms and you shouldn’t limit yourself to one type.

Exploring different methods of content creation will enable you to determine what your audience reacts best to.

It’s important to remember what works well for one affiliate may not work for another. Product reviews are a great way of promoting a product and typically convert really well. However, if you drive the majority of your traffic from visual platforms such as Pinterest and Instagram you may find that your visitors aren’t interested in reading lengthy reviews but, they may respond really well to an infographic. Split test different types of content to identify what works best for you, your website and your visitors.
Editorial guidelines

When planning what content to create you should form yourself some editorial guidelines to help keep continuity across all of your content. This includes the font size and style used, your tone of voice, the format of your posts and grammar.

This way if you switch between how to posts, case studies and product reviews, despite pushing very different styles of content the tone and format with remain the same and nothing will feel out of place.

**Title** - *Serif, bold, 30pt*

**Body** - *Sans Serif, 18pt*

Tone of voice - conversational, friendly but informative, written in 2nd person

Font - Droid (sans-serif)

Text Colour - Black or White (only when coloured background)

It’s recommended that you only use ‘serif’ fonts for titles, subheadings and small snippets of text. Serif fonts have small flicks on the edges of each letter, so when used in a text heavy article, it can be difficult to read and looks overcrowded. Stick to neat, easy to read sans serif fonts for the main body of your text.

You should also be mindful of the colours you use, if you have a light background, choose a dark contrasting colour for your text and vice versa.
Engaging your audience

Try to talk to your audience, acknowledge them and spark a two way conversation, this will help with engagement as the reader can relate more and feels like the content is aimed at them.

Look to identify a problem your user may have, and find a way to answer it. There’s no point in writing about something no one cares about or wants to know the answer to, so consider what use your content will have before publishing it.

Providing useful information is really important but remember to keep a good balance of informative content and content that sells. Once you have given the reader the useful information they need to know, reinforce what a great offer or several benefits that product will have for them and follow up with a clear call to action.
The buying process

You should consider which stage of the buying process your visitors are at. Are they interested in your product but want to know more about how it works? Do they know everything they need to but want to evaluate if this is the right product for them? Are they ready to purchase or have they purchased before and are looking for other recommendations?

Understanding where your visitors are at allows you to serve the most relevant content to them. You should take a look at your referrals in Google Analytics, where are users coming from? If you have a lot of organic traffic from buyer intent keywords, then you know to promote content which convinces those users that yes, they do want to buy Product XYZ because of benefit 1,2 and 3, then serve a clear CTA for them to complete the purchase.

However, if you have a lot of traffic coming through from a social campaign inviting users to find out more about a brand new weight loss product for example, then you know they are here to find out more, what is the product called, what benefits does it have for them and so on before they decide if this is something they’re actually interested in.
Articles

An obvious one, but creating articles is one way of using content to drive sales. When you write articles you should consider how heavily sales focused they are, it’s important to have a good split of branded and generic content. Think about writing an article relevant to your niche for example weight loss tips, but not necessarily focused on a specific product. Within your article or perhaps towards the end you could then recommend using your product as a weight loss aid, this then gives you the opportunity to place a relevant call to action or link to a more detailed review without the entire post being focused on a product.
When you publish an article it’s not just the body of text which is important, you should also spend some time thinking about the title of your post. Bear in mind that users will read the title and make a judgement as to whether or not they want to read the article. Try to be intriguing and spark interest. Think about split testing various styles of titles and see which convert best. A couple of examples include:

**Example 1**

“Is your diet giving you acne?”

Using a question as your title engages the reader and makes them ask themselves that question. If they don’t know the answer already, they will be intrigued to see what you have to say.

You could then create an article highlighting certain foods which cause bad skin, explaining the pros and cons of over indulging on sugar, dairy and fats. To conclude the article you could suggest foods which will help improve the look and feel of skin but also recommend a product which is used to help clear up bad skin. You can then link through to a detailed product review and place a banner ad for the product to give the reader an idea of what it looks like and if they wish so they can go straight through to the merchant and read more about it there.
Example 2

“Would you use THIS on your face?”

Again this title is asking a question, but there is some mystery to it creating more curiosity as to what ‘this’ may be. The way the title is set out insinuates that ‘this’ represents an unusual trend or beauty fad of putting something odd on your face to moisturise, anti age or other treatment.

This works great at getting users to click through, but it’s also important that the content lives up to expectations. If you’re going to follow with an article about using a mud mask on your face, people will be disappointed. This is an everyday beauty treatment and you’re not giving readers any new or interesting content. However if you have come across a strange trend like using bee venom to reduce tightness and the appearance of wrinkles, then you might just have a great story!

Tell the user about the treatment, how does it work and what results could they see. Talk about which celebs are doing this and the hefty price tag that comes with it. Then towards the end of the article you can recommend an affordable and less bee-venom-involved method of reducing wrinkles. This way you have a really interesting story to engage the reader, but are still giving them useful information and a realistic product suggestion to combat their own wrinkle insecurities.
Example 3

“3 things no one tells you about weight loss pills”

Using numbers in your title is a great way of grabbing attention, it’s punchy and the reader knows that the article will have x amount of points about doing ‘this’ in x amount of time. When it comes to reading blogs people love to know the latest tips, tricks and secrets, but they also love reading about what not to do, which fads should they avoid and what ridiculous things are celebs trying at the moment.

In this article you need to make 3 clear points, think about which angle you want to come from for example do you want to highlight the dangers of some diet pills or perhaps something more lighthearted such as:

1. You will forget to take your diet pill at least once a week
2. Everyone will want to know what diet pill you’re taking and why
3. It’s far too tempting to weigh yourself everyday

Whichever angle you want to approach it from you should make sure your points are valid and live up to the expectations of the title. If you highlight any negative points about diet pills in general, focus on the product you promote and the benefits of it. Perhaps explain why this product is unlike other diet pills and won’t have negative side effects because it is made from a herbal extract for example. Then you can send the reader through to your full review.
Interviews

Another style of content which works well is an interview. This is a very conversational piece of content and the way you lay it out can make it easier for users to skim. Ideally you should carry out an actual interview and not create the content yourself, as it will be more natural and flow a lot better if you have genuine answers. There are a few ways to do your interview for example:

Firstly you could invite someone to be interviewed face to face and record their answers to type up in an interview style post.

Or, you could invite them to be filmed doing the interview for some video content, this is a lot more engaging and would work really well if the interviewee was well known in the industry.

Finally and probably the easiest option is to email the person you would like to interview with your questions and ask them to kindly fill out their answers and send back to you. You should let them know exactly what the interview is for and where it will be posted, this will help them build trust in you and they will be more likely to respond.
In the weight loss and health industry there’s a huge range of different people you could reach out to for an interview.

It may be a long shot but think about which celebrities have already endorsed products which you promote. For example, tv stars Gemma Merna, Michelle Collins and Lauren Goodger have all endorsed weight loss and beauty products for Bauer Nutrition.

You can reach out to these stars via social media, or if you can find contact details for their pr company, drop them an email and see if you can get a couple of questions answered.

Aside from the celebs who already use the products you promote, you could also focus on industry influencers. These people may not necessarily use those products, but you can ask them general questions about health, beauty or weight loss etc. to create a non sales focused piece of content. Think about people whose lives revolve around keeping fit or hair and beauty, do they have their own blog or large social following? Interesting people who have strong opinions in your niche are great for interviewing. Think locally, friends and family, online influencers or even people you may have spoken to through your website who have ordered through your website before.
When it comes to asking your interview questions try to define a clear aim, what is it you really want to know? Avoid wasting time on pointless or boring questions and dig for something a little more interesting.

- What’s the worst diet fad you’ve ever tried?
- Truthfully, how much weight have you lost due to taking diet pills?
- What’s your best beauty secret?
- How do you find the motivation to get up and exercise every single day?

You should avoid asking too many questions, if your interview is lengthy you’re more likely to get a lot of short answers that don’t give much away. However, if you ask a handful of questions which allow the interviewee to expand, you can get some great content from it.
Infographics

Using an infographic is a really nice change from text based content, it appeals to visual thinkers and it’s a lot more engaging and shareable than standard articles and reviews. Of course, you need to research what you will put in your infographic, ideally you want to find stats, numbers and interesting facts about your niche as this sort of information works well when displayed visually.

For example you could look into the number of people who use diet pills in each country across the world, compare things such as average amount spent on diet products per person, how many different products are available on the market, which products are most popular in each country. This sort of information can be put into graphs and charts to make up part of your infographic. You can then add some annotations, sub headings and interesting facts to help bulk out the content.

When using stats and information from other sources, remember to reference them at the end of the infographic.
Creating an infographic sounds like a big task, but once you’ve got your information together it’s really just a case of adding it to a template. There are many websites online which allow you to create infographics for free such as ‘picktochart’. There are hundreds of designs to choose from and it’s really easy to add in as much content as needed and lay it out the way you want.

When you publish your infographic you need to think about how it links to the products you’re promoting. You may have created an infographic for an actual product and therefore it is already branded and heavily sales focused.

However, if you have focused on general stats and info then you should think about placing some banner ads on this page to relevant products or perhaps a CTA through to a product review on your website.

At the end of the infographic you could add in a section such as ‘Others also read’ or ‘because you’ve read *infographic title* we thought you might like this’, this way you are following up with additional relevant content.
Video

Did you know 34% of shoppers are more likely to purchase after watching an online ad and 48% of consumers say they trust online videos ads, or how about that 70% of the top 100 search listings on google are video? Interesting stuff, and this just goes to show how influential video really is.

So, why not use it as a method of content creation on your own website! As an affiliate marketer the best use of video would be to create a product review. This gives you the chance to really highlight the benefits of a product, show the user exactly what it looks like, demonstrate how it works and give your opinions and advice.
Being on camera is a big step towards building trust with your visitors. It’s an opportunity for them to see who you are and to hear, rather than read how passionate you are about this product. You can be a lot more persuasive on camera than you can with written words, so use this to your advantage. If this is your first video review you should have a look what others are doing and what works well for them. How heavily focused are they on pushing the product, are they very honest or do they not give enough details? Testing how you react to other videos will help you to consider how viewers may react to yours. This will help you decide what you should say and show and what to leave out.

Once you know which product you would like to review you can request a sample from your affiliate manager. You should think about whether you actually want to try the product before you review it or if you will be highlighting the packaging and design, along with key points you already know about it. Your video is representing your online business, so you want to come across as professional and influential. It’s important therefore to be well prepared before you start filming.

- Write yourself some notes or prompts so that you know what to talk about next without it being too scripted. Pausing and saying ‘urm’ too much will make your video seem less professional and it won’t flow well.
- Have everything you need in front of you, your sample, notes, perhaps a glass of water and anything else you want to show in your video. The last
thing you want is to get up halfway through filming to grab something from another room, leaving your audience watching a blank screen.

- Remember to fully charge your camera before filming or if you are using a webcam have your laptop plugged in to avoid any flat battery disasters halfway through.
- Finally, make sure your lighting is bright so that the viewer can clearly see what you are filming. If the room is dark and dingy they won't be able to see the product as well and the overall quality will look poor. You should also make sure there is no background noise interrupting your review.

Once you’ve filmed your video you will need to edit and upload it to your website. There’s bound to be parts you want to cut out and you may also want to add some text and links throughout. You can easily edit your own videos online and there are many websites such as wevideo.com where you can make simple edits to your video for free. If you want to use video more often and require a bigger package, there are also paid options, but the basic editing package is free for personal use.
Review or Case Study

A product review is one of the best ways to sell an affiliate product. You are telling the reader everything they need to know, giving them an opinion or proof that it has worked for others and making it very easy for them to buy. There’s a few ways in which you can create a product review depending on the resources you have available.

Review the product yourself

If you can get your hands on a sample then the best way to write a great review is to try the product yourself. You can decide what you do and don’t like about it, talk about how easy it was to order and use, were there any side effects and also discuss your personal results. Giving your own opinion helps others understand the product well and gives you an opportunity to take your own uniques images of the product and your own results.

Testimonials

You could also write a review based on other people’s experience. When people leave reviews or testimonials you can quote these in your own review to demonstrate what a positive impact the product has had on other customers. You might have a friend or family member who has tried the product so why not see if they are willing to do a review for you. Any comments, before and after images or recommendations you get from other users are really useful to help convince your visitors that this is a great product they should buy.

Review without testing

You may not be able to get your hands on a sample or it might not be a product you wish to trial, for example if it is a male or female specific product then it may not always be possible. However, there will be plenty of product information on the merchant’s website and if you need any additional info about any products you can speak to your affiliate manager
and they will be able to find this out. So, you can review a product without personally having tried it. Pick out the key points the product has to offer, use the amateur images in the affiliate area to show the product and packaging and also highlight the main benefits the product will have to the customer.

**Case study**

Finally you could also do a case study, this is similar to someone reviewing it on your behalf however you can go into much more detail and really analyse the product. Ideally you would run a case study over a long period of time, rather than trying it for a couple of days you would run the study for a number of weeks instead. Let’s say you are doing a case study on the effects of a particular diet pill, you have 5 friends all willing to take part and prior to the trial you note down their weight, measurements, current diet and fitness routine.

To help gather informative results you should have each participant run a slightly different trial, for example:

- Participant 1 - does not take any diet pills
- Participant 2 - takes diet pill daily
- Participant 3 - takes diet pill and sticks to a healthy diet
- Participant 4 - takes diet pill and sticks to a strict workout plan
- Participant 5 - takes diet pill, strict workout plan & healthy diet

This way you have a varied sample and when you collect your results and you can determine which method worked best for losing weight. The stats you gather are really interesting bits of data and you can also go into more depth about how each participant found the trial, how did their moods change throughout, would they continue taking this diet pill?

This sort of content takes a while to put together, but the end result is a really high quality, informative piece of content. Whilst many affiliates will opt for a review of a product they’ve not tested, why not push the boat out and try something a little different?
Content Ideas

Now you have plenty of content types to think about and work on, you also need to think about what the aim of your content will be. What are you going to write, study or interview someone about and will that content be interesting to your audience?

There are many reviews, articles and posts already floating around the internet for every single product you decide to promote, so it’s important to focus on creating original and unique content that hasn’t been done a thousand times before. Below are some useful tips for generating fresh, relevant and timely content for your readers…

Newsjacking

Newsjacking essentially means jumping on the back of another story to promote your own brand. For example, if something hits the news and everyone is talking about it, you could think of a way of linking that story to your product or brand and use it to leverage your own promotions. As it’s a hot topic anyway, it will give your promotions a boost rather than pushing something generic which gets lost amongst bigger news stories.

If something is trending on Twitter and you can use the same hashtag but relate your tweet to both a big story and your own brand, you will instantly gain more exposure because people are currently interested in that topic. Newsjacking is about timely, relevant content and finding an opportunity to link what you do to what people are reading right now.

Newsjacking is a spontaneous thing and difficult to plan, so being flexible with your content and promotions will enable you to push a story as it happens and make the most of opportunities as they arise.
Google Trends

Check Google trends to see what’s growing in popularity and what’s losing interest within your niche. This is a great indicator as to what topics and keywords are going to be popular, allowing you to predict what your audience will be most interested in.

Industry Forums and Social Media

Search through relevant social media pages, industry forums and other online communities where your audience hangs out. What do your readers actually want to know? What questions are they asking on forums and what’s engaging them the most on similar social channels?

Survey Results

If you come across any recent studies, surveys or interesting facts relevant to your niche, then turn it into an interesting article. This is a credible source of information as you can reference where your stats have come from. You can also approach this from multiple angles and give a new perspective on a story.

What’s Working for Others?

Check out sites such as buzzsumo and search for industry influencers and fellow competitors to see what has worked well for them. Buzzsumo shows you the total shares across the main social platforms for all content a site has published. This is a great way of generating new content ideas that are likely to be engaging and highly shareable.
The majority of your content will in some way require you to write. Whether it’s a full blown article or a snippet of text summarising an image or video. There’s no point spending time on new styles of content if the text you write is not up to scratch.

It’s very important to not only proofread your content for grammatical errors, but also to tighten your copy. Tightening your copy gets rid of unnecessary words, shortens sentences so they’re easier to read and makes sure the whole thing flows.

To help you polish off your content there are a few things you should bear in mind...

Don’t use ‘wordy’ copy, it’s difficult to read and won’t hold the reader’s attention, for example:

Wordy Copy
“...was conceptualised to address a glaring lacuna in the developments pace of the workflow software applications segment”

Tight Copy
“There was a gap in the market”

As you can see in the above example the tightened copy has been reduced down from 17 words to 7 and is much more clearer than the first sentence.

Don’t use complex words to try and sound clever, it will confuse your reader and often comes across as pompous. Below are some examples of alternative.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assistance</th>
<th>Help</th>
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<tr>
<td>Numerous</td>
<td>Many</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitat</td>
<td>Ease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initial</td>
<td>First</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sufficient</td>
<td>Enough</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attempt</td>
<td>Try</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
You should also bear in mind unnecessary phrases and how they can be reduced down into less words.

- In order to < To
- You are advised to < You should
- I would recommend < I recommend
- Is able to < Can
- Due to the fact that < Because
- In regards to < About
- In error < By mistake

The word ‘that’ can be removed from most sentences without it changing the meaning. This is a simple way to cut down your word count and keep things tight. ‘Then’ and ‘of’ are also non essential words which can be removed in the same way.

“Did you know that you can lose weight without exercising?”

“More protein means that your body can build more muscle.”

You should also think about the appearance of your copy, if it’s too long or you don’t have enough sentences it can look messy and hard to skim. Below are a few things to check before publishing your copy:

Copy should look visually appealing

- Keep sentences to a limit of 20-25 words
- Aim to have 5-6 lines per paragraph
- Break up your copy with headings and subheadings
- Use bullet points to highlight key points

Shorter sentences are more powerful and have a bigger impact than lengthy ones. Short paragraphs also require less concentration and therefore are more appealing to your reader.
Conclusion

So there are just a few examples of how you can create fantastic content for your affiliate website. Whilst it’s good to look at what others are doing you should also think about what others aren’t doing, is there an opportunity to create compelling content that nobody else is promoting?

Diversifying your content allows you to target different audiences, as mentioned earlier different types of content works well for different types of people.

Identifying which content converts best for your products and visitors will help you to focus your time on the what’s most valuable.

Trying new things can open many doors for affiliate marketers, a highly shareable piece of content could lead to a successful social marketing campaign, something you may never have thought to try before. It’s important not to put all of your eggs in one basket and diversifying your content allows you to do this without spreading yourself too thin.

You should always ensure your content is polished to a high standard, even if it is a short post you want to get out there as soon as possible. Whether it’s a friend, family member or freelancer, always get a second pair of eyes to proofread your copy before setting it live.

If you’re interested in diversifying your content and would like further assistance get in touch with the affiliate management team today for more support.