

9 Earning commissions by offering third-party products online

Voluntary organisations and operators of non-commercial websites are particularly familiar with budgetary restrictions and the need to find sponsors. If you don't have a paying sponsor that is prepared to back you, an alternative would be to use an affiliate program such as the one described in the section "Using a banner ad network to acquire new customers" (Chapter 8); i.e., integrating third-party products into your website and advertising them. If a prospect is directed from your website to the third-party offering, you would receive an agent's commission in accordance with the agreed commission contract. The supplier of the third-party product generates the sales revenue, and the advertising website merely acts as an agent.

It is of course not a good idea to integrate just any third-party product that is part of an affiliate program into your own website. This method will only be successful if the third-party product relates in some way to your website. For example: you are an estate agent. You could integrate banner ads for insurance companies into your website. On the other hand, an ad for a detergent manufacturer would hardly be suitable. Affiliate programs are based on mutual agreement and ensure that the seller and the advertised product are a good fit.

Earning commissions by linking Amazon's product offering to your website

You have now created an interesting, up-to-date website including an online shop that is being used by your customers. Further development and continuous maintenance of this website generate costs that you would like to recover. What to do? The answer is quite simple: Your website should finance itself. Amazon offers one way to do this, advertising Amazon products on your website - regardless of whether the ads are for books, DVDs, software or electronics. There are many ways to advertise, which range from product recommendations via the Amazon portal to a home page link. The most important thing is to ensure that the advertised products relate to your website. For example, If you are an Estate Agent you can advertise Amazon products in the "kitchen or house and garden" categories. Again, be aware that the categories you include are strictly relevant – a link for murder mysteries is unlikely to be a success. You receive a percentage-based sales commission for every sale that is generated by directing a customer to Amazon. All you have to do is register with Amazon's free partner programme, you are not involved in customer service, order processing or product shipping.

You can apply for the free Amazon partner program at the following URL:

○→ www.use-the-internet-to-drive-success.co.uk/Amazon/

Adding value for customers and generating revenue by setting up an Internet shop for product-related advertising merchandise

There is one way to finance a website that is particularly suitable for associations and fan clubs:

- **eQuisto**

eQuisto operates an advertising shop that specialises in advertising merchandise for associations and fan clubs - the graphics are custom printed. You merely have to provide your own artwork for the printed advertising merchandise. eQuisto also features a customisable Internet shop. Ultimately this provides your own printed advertising merchandise including a shop and ordering process.

Integrating it into your website is also simple work with no additional work required on your part. eQuisto handles all shipping and invoicing. Members and fans order the merchandise they want and you get a commission for each item ordered via your website. Furthermore, you can define your own commission, which is added to the basic price of the item and the result shown as the total price. This is an ideal way to help finance your website.

The cost structure for using the eQuisto advertising merchandise shop, including a customised assortment of promotional items:

- There are no costs, neither for setting up or operating the shop, nor for the selected promotional items or printing.
- eQuisto sends you your specified commission for each promotional item sold from your collection.

Summary

Earning commissions by offering third-party products online

- An interesting way to finance your website is through affiliate networks. You advertise third-party offerings on your website and receive a commission whenever there is a sale. The advertised third-party products should relate to your website in some way.
- eQuisto's affiliate program is particularly suited to associations and fan clubs. You supply the artwork for the printing of your advertising merchandise; eQuisto supplies the promotional articles and looks after commercial administration. You receive a sales commission for each item ordered.