

# The Affiliate Masters Course

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Become a high-earning affiliate champion

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# Introduction

The **Affiliate Masters Course** is an intensive 10-DAY course on becoming a high-earning affiliate champion.

How? By “building income through content,” the proven, **C** ➡ **T** ➡ **P** ➡ **M** way!

An affiliate business is one of the easiest ways to get your feet wet in e-business. You send visitors (i.e., potential customers) to a merchant’s Web site that you are representing. If they buy or complete a required action (for example, fill in a form), the merchant pays you a commission. No fuss, no muss!

That, in essence, is the beauty of the affiliate concept. You can be up and building an online business in record time, at minimal risk. Top-notch merchants supply everything (i.e., excellent products, ordering, credit card processing, and delivery). All you need to do is to put yourself in the path between customers and quality merchants... and earn a commission for your efforts.

So what’s the best way to put yourself on that critical pathway?

Follow the natural, proven **CONTENT** ➡ **TRAFFIC** ➡ **PRESELL** ➡ **MONETIZE** process...

**1) Recognize the fundamental reality of how people use the Web.** Eliminate offline thinking of “location, location, location.” Online, people search for solutions through “information, information, information” (i.e., **Content**). So plan to build a tightly-niched Theme-Based Content Site.

**2) Do the critical up-front thinking and planning...**

- develop the best site concept/theme, based on what you know and love... perhaps a hobby or past work experience can be your springboard.
- brainstorm the most profitable topics related to your theme.
- select the best related affiliate programs.

**3) Then put yourself into the click path of your visitors.** Achieve this by...

- delivering customer-focused **Content** (i.e., information that meets the needs/wishes of your target group).

- getting **Targeted Traffic** by building pages that please the Search Engines and rank highly on a search results page. The higher the ranking, the easier it is for interested and targeted traffic to find you. More traffic means more potential sales, which means more potential commissions for you.
- **PREselling** (i.e., “warming up” your visitors) through valuable content that establishes credibility. Once you have that, your recommendations carry more weight. The difference in Conversion Rates between visitors who arrive PREsold to your merchant’s site via an in-context text link vs. a banner can be as high as 20-fold.

**4) Eliminate dependency on any single source of income.** By diversifying into other complementary Monetization models beyond affiliate programs, you reduce risk and increase stability. You are protected in case, for example, your merchant partner goes bankrupt, or shuts down its Web division, or reduces commissions, or fails on its payments.

Multiple income streams also have the potential to make every visitor to your site count. A particular offer might not spark any interest but another one may be the match that lights a fire!

The **C ➡ T ➡ P ➡ M** process for affiliate marketing boils down to this...

Create searched-for **content** (the “**C**”) that pulls in **targeted traffic** (the “**T**”). Warm up (i.e., **PREsell**) your visitors so that they click on your recommendations with an open-to-buy attitude (the “**P**”). And then generate income through those PREsold visitors (i.e., **monetize**) using the low-risk affiliate model -- as a primary source of income (if you have no product or service of your own to sell) or as a profitable secondary source (the “**M**”).

Is this process difficult?

Not at all! But do keep in mind that this is not a “get-rich-quick” scheme. You need to bring **effort and passion** to the table. After all, you are building more than a Web site. You are building a real business!

**C ➡ T ➡ P ➡ M** works, if you work it!

Make this your affiliate business mantra and you will succeed!

The Affiliate Masters Course and its 10-DAY program will show you how to execute the **C ➡ T ➡ P ➡ M** process on your own. Each of the 10 DAYS has a specific “Goal-of-the-DAY,” a clear target that you can easily meet. By the time

you finish DAY 10's Goal-of-the-DAY, you will have a Theme-Based Content Site up and running and generating traffic and income.

Each DAY also sets an "Ongoing Goal." A Web site is always evolving. The Ongoing Goal is what you should be achieving on a regular basis. The Ongoing Goals provide the pathway for building maximal income over the following weeks and months.

What's the bottom line? Upon completion of this course, you will have the power of **C** ➡ **T** ➡ **P** ➡ **M** working for you, helping you to build a flourishing, profitable and stable online business. **With the right process, you get the right results!**

Be forewarned about the Affiliate Masters Course, though. The material we cover will be extensive in scope. It will require *effort and commitment* on your part, as does anything important that yields rewards. Most folks have to train or go to university for years to prepare to earn a substantial income stream. Your mini-university course will accomplish this by the end of this e-book.

I don't mean to scare you. All of it is manageable. Take your time to digest the information properly before you start to work on the prescribed action steps.

Use the Goals-of-the-DAY and Ongoing Goals as your guideposts, your beacons of light. Understanding the concepts will boost your confidence level in applying them. Even as adults, we never lose our need to know why things work the way they do.

It's critical that you finish each DAY of this course before you begin the next. The DAYS build on each other. Always keep in mind that you are following a step-by-step process.

Please don't feel that you have to rush. **Work at your own pace**, as time allows. This is not a race. Sometimes, you will be able to devote large blocks of time each day to the course. At other times, you may have only 15-30 minutes per day to spend on it. In this situation, it could take you a week or more to complete a "DAY" of the course. And that's perfectly normal!

**It does not matter how long it takes you to complete the course.** The key is to set aside a realistic amount of time each day to "do" the course. You'll find it was time well, no best, spent.

Final piece of advice...

Print out a hard copy and make your own textbook! There is just too much information in the Affiliate Masters Course to learn by reading off a monitor screen.

Underline the important parts. Add your own notes and ideas. I promise you'll get lots and lots of great inspiration as you go along.

Please, please work with a printed version of this course. If you are at all serious about following this course to build a serious income stream, start right.

Here's a super little printing utility that will allow you to print 2 or 4 pages to a single 8.5" x 11" piece of paper. It saves you paper, space, and money...

<http://www.fineprint.com/>

OK. Ready to begin DAY 1 of the course?

Sound the bell. Class is in session...

# 1. DAY 1

## Intro To Affiliate Business Basics

Being a great affiliate is NOT about selling... It's about **PREselling**.

**Goal-of-the-DAY...** This is the only DAY where you have nothing to do except read the material. Actually, that's wrong. Your Goal-of-the-DAY is to understand, understand deeply, the concepts outlined here, culminating with the concept of **PREselling to maximize Conversion Rates**.

With this goal in mind...

### 1.1. Focus on Maximizing Profit

The goal of any business, including your affiliate business, is to maximize **profits**. Profit is simply your **income minus your expenses**.

As an affiliate, there are exactly two ways to increase your income (i.e., the amount of money your business makes)...

**1) Refer** more visitors to the merchants that you represent.

**2) Increase** the Conversion Rate (i.e., the percent of visitors that you refer to your merchant... visitors who deliver the response **for which the merchant pays**, whether that's a sale, or a lead, etc.).

Simple formula, right? If you refer 100 visitors per day to a merchant and 1% buy, you get paid for that one purchase. But if you send 1,000 visitors per day and 3% buy, you get paid for 30 purchases.

Yes, thirty times more! So it's pretty clear how to maximize affiliate income!

Of course, every business has expenses, too. Maximizing profits does not imply that you must minimize expenses, too. After all, if you spend no money or time on a business, you have no business! You must get the best possible traffic-building and sales-converting results for every dollar you spend... and for every hour you spend on your business.

**Time is money.** Don't count your hours as zero cost simply because they do not cost you "out of pocket." Assign your time a dollar value -- it will put your affiliate business on a solid, professional "business footing."

Let's examine expenses by asking two questions...

### **Question #1 -- What does it cost to build traffic to your merchants' sites?**

Traffic-building, no matter how you cut it, will cost you... in terms of both time and money. Spending dollars is optional, but spending time is not.

There are many ways, both offline and on, to drive targeted traffic to your merchants' sites. This course will show you the most highly profitable, time-and-dollar-effective way to build traffic to your merchants' sites...

Build your own Theme-Based Content Site -- one that is loaded with high info-value Keyword-Focused Content Pages that rank well with the Search Engines and that get the "click throughs" to your merchants' sites.

Let's break that down for closer examination. For your affiliate Web site to generate targeted traffic to your merchants, it must do two things well...

**1) Rank well at the Search Engines** so that it pulls in lots of targeted traffic. So far, though, that traffic is still on *your* site. Therefore, it's not generating income yet. Your visitors are just "looking around." So...

**2) Get those visitors to click through to your merchants.** (Some affiliate program models can actually place merchant offerings on *your* Web site. In this case, your traffic does not actually visit your merchant's site. But you still have to "get the click" to generate income.)

It makes sense, of course, that a Web site is the way to go. After all, this is the Net!

<http://blogorbuild.sitesell.com/>

And there are loads of other ways for affiliates to drive targeted traffic to their merchants, both offline and on.

SiteSell's 5 Pillar Program provides all the tools, information and strategies you need to PResell effectively and generate substantial commission income.

<http://affiliates.sitesell.com/>

You can easily apply these marketing theories/strategies to your other affiliate programs as well.

OK, that wraps up expenses and traffic-building. Now for our second question about expenses...

## **Question #2 -- What does it cost to maximize Conversion Rates?**

Good news! Maximizing your Conversion Rate (CR) is simply a question of doing things right. There is no extra dollar or time cost to boosting CRs at your merchants' sites. This course will show you how to achieve this goal, too.

Remember... when this course talks about Conversion Rates, we are talking about the Conversion Rate at the *sites of the merchants that you represent* as an affiliate. So we are talking about how **you** will maximize the percentage of referral visitors who deliver the response **for which the vendor pays**, whether that's a sale, or lead, etc.

If you think that it's impossible for you to change the sales-effectiveness of your merchants' sites, you are in for a big surprise.

Your primary goals are...

**1) Maximize targeted traffic to your merchants**, spending only dollars and time that maximize profits.

**2) Maximize Conversion Rates.** Do things right (no expense).

Don't do just one. Do both. Why? Because, as you saw above, your payment is determined by traffic multiplied by the CR... not "added." Your profits grow geometrically when you concentrate on maximizing both traffic and Conversion Rates.

I have spent quite a bit of time reviewing the difference between 5 Pillar Affiliates who refer high traffic to us and who deliver high Conversion Rates (% of visitors who purchase), and those who deliver low ones.

### **The #1 reason for low traffic and terrible Conversion Rates?**

Banner ads! No content!

Retinal studies have shown that Web surfers actually avoid banners. Yes, their eyes look away!



Our study found that 5 Pillar Affiliates who relied solely on banners had an average CR of 0.5%. But those who used “in-context” text links (i.e., text links that are part of the content of the Web page) averaged over 3.5%!

How’s that for a reason not to use banners?

Banners are cheesy and hurt your credibility. If visitors happen to click through (a big “if”), they arrive at their destination feeling “pitched” rather than informed. They have a resisting mindset, rather than with an open, ready-to-buy attitude.

Remember that example where you sent 100 visitors per day to a merchant and 1% bought? If you rely on flipping up some banners, it will be more like 10 visitors per day and not one person buys!

We reveal a lot about 5 Pillar Affiliates during this course. But it is not the 5 Pillar Program that is important here -- it’s the lessons to be derived. This course is about making any affiliate of any program more successful.

Conclusion?...

### **Don’t use banners.**

Yes, I know “they’re so-o-o-o-o easy.” It’s always easy to not make money. That’s how all those get-rich-quick-guys do so well... the allure of easy money. No such thing.

I must repeat... don’t rely solely on banners.

If you simply must use banners, save your “in-context” text links for super companies with wonderful products that deliver true value to your reader.

Beside the obvious futility of banners, I’ve spotted another major point. This one is more subtle, but it’s important... extremely important.

### **The #2 reason for low traffic and terrible Conversion Rates?**

After banner advertising, it’s the second most common error. And it’s an even bigger shame because this boo-boo involves a lot of work... misplaced work. If you’re going to fail, the best thing would be not to spend much time at it, right?

Reason #2 is...

### ***Selling instead of PREselling.***

Some 5 Pillar Affiliates have really made great efforts in creating sites to promote our SiteSell products. And they are building some sales and traffic. But when I

see a low CR (i.e., CR under 2%), I know that something is amiss. Great efforts deserve greater results than 1%.

Yes, I agree that these efforts are better than banners. But remember... creating these sites takes a lot more work than tossing up a couple of banners. We'll see in a moment that it's misdirected work. (The good news is that this course will redirect those efforts into high-profit areas.)

Time for a philosophical perspective...

In life, the vast majority of people just keep doing the "same old thing." Life seems easier that way. But "doing the same old thing" guarantees the "same old results." So in the long run, it's actually much, much harder.

In the movie, "The Renaissance Man," Danny De Vito's character makes a profound statement...

*"The choices we make dictate the lives we lead."*

To paraphrase...

*"Where you are today is the result of all the choices and actions that you have made in your life."*

When he said that, I remember thinking, "You know, he's right. Except in rare cases of extraordinarily good or bad luck, people basically end up where they are as a result of choices they make and courses of action they take."

People tend to blame a lack of success in life on "bad luck" or "poor timing" or other people. And yes, at times, that can be accurate. A heck of a lot of factors beyond our control *can* blindside us. In the long run, however, as long as we persist in our efforts, these factors tend to even out and De Vito's statement remains valid.

Now, here's the good news...

*E-commerce is simpler than life.* Due to its digital nature, there are fewer variables... so the outcome is more controllable. Which means that we can boil De Vito's statement down to "The #1 E-commerce Reality."

This Reality is almost self-evident, yet it's so easy to forget. Your success with anything you do in the world of e-commerce flows from it. **Internalize it and act upon it... and you will succeed.**

Yes, it's that fundamental. And that leads me to...

## The #1 E-commerce Reality

*"Nothing happens by accident in the world of computers, the Net, and customer response. There is always a reason for what happens, good or bad, and that reason is YOU."*

When I see some 5 Pillar ("5P") Affiliates with CRs over 10% (and a few over 20%!), I figure that those with CRs at 1-2% or less could be multiplying their sales five-or-more-fold. How?

Not by working harder, but simply by channeling their motivation in a better direction.

Let's continue with the case of 5P Affiliates who make "great efforts" but get so-so results...

As I reviewed many of these affiliate sites (those who are getting sales but have CRs under 2%), I realized that almost half were basically one big sales letter for SiteSell products and Ken. Which means that these affiliates are **selling** (with sales copy) when they should be **PREselling** (with great, and related, content that is of value to the reader).

There's really not much point in straight selling off your site -- that's what your merchant's site needs to do. Picture this...

A visitor arrives at an affiliate's site that is really just one, big sales site. Yes, I know that the words are sincere -- I owe all 5P Affiliates a big thank you for the truly wonderful things they say. But put yourself in these visitors' shoes for a moment. They don't see inspiring, editorial content. They see a sales effort.

*But they were searching for content!*

"CONTENT!" I said. (Sorry for yelling.)

People resist sales efforts, so your click-through actually goes down. And if a visitor does click, what does she see when she arrives at an SBI! site? More sales effort. And, in some cases, many of the words on SiteSell's site are similar to the words that she's just read. Result? Poor Conversion Rate.

If your site is basically a "bunch of sales letters," you have not yet built your credibility and likeability with this visitor. Your visitor ends up feeling "pitched." And then she feels double-pitched *if* (chances are low) she clicks through to your merchant's site. That's why the CR actually goes down.

To make things worse, as she “smells” a sales effort, she becomes less likely to click! So referred traffic drops, too.

Women represent 50% of all surfers. And they control approximately 80% of all shopping dollars. To reinforce this in your mind, we'll use the feminine pronoun to talk about readers/visitors/customers. To keep things simple and even, we'll use the masculine pronoun when referring to affiliates.

OK, let's see...

- 1) Referred traffic down.
- 2) And Conversion Rate down.

But these are the two ways to increase your income. (That's what we talked about near the beginning.) We're going in the wrong direction!

Conclusion? **Don't sell!**

Instead, warm your visitor up for your merchants by PREselling her with great content that she values and respects. She'll click-through with pleasure, arriving at your merchants' sites in an open-to-buy mindset.

It's your PREselling effort that will boost your traffic-to-merchants and CR, which in turn maximizes your income.

This brings us to our second philosophical premise...

**“The #1 Affiliate Reality”...**

“Your **CR** will literally vary from 1% to 10% (and at times, as much as 20%!), purely because of...

- 1) **HOW YOU REACH your visitor, and...**
- 2) **WHAT YOU SAY to her, and...**
- 3) **HOW YOU REFER her to your merchant.”**

Your CR depends upon what you do and how you do it. You do not need Lady Luck, Sir Serendipity or anyone else. There is always a reason for how well you do, and that reason always relates to what you do and how you do it.

Once you realize this, then you know success really is do-able. Some people do succeed... big-time... but not necessarily the first time. Just keep trying until you find the right approach.

To quote **Calvin Coolidge**...

"Nothing in this world can take the place of persistence.

Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful people with talent.

Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb.

Education will not; the world is full of educated derelicts.

Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent.

The slogan 'press on' has solved and always will solve the problems of the human race."

Of course, the goal of the 10-DAY Affiliate Masters Course is to reduce the amount of trial-and-error persistence that will be required before you find your own successful formula!

Why is "The #1 Affiliate Reality" true?...

Because how you reach your customer, and what you say once you reach her, and how you refer your visitor to your merchant directly affects your visitor's mindset when she arrives at SiteSell.

A positive mindset turns into a purchase with amazing regularity. A negative one is nearly impossible to overcome.

And that is what "high-CR affiliates" have known all along...

\*\*\*\*\*  
"They refer people to their merchants in an **OPEN-TO-BUY** frame of mind."  
\*\*\*\*\*

Best advice? Write "The #1 Affiliate Reality" onto a yellow Post-It Note and stick it onto your monitor...

"Your CR will literally vary from 1% to 10% (and at times, as much as 20%!), purely

because of...

- 1) **HOW YOU REACH your visitor**, and...
- 2) **WHAT YOU SAY to her**, and...
- 3) **HOW YOU REFER her to your merchant.**"

Some people contact our Support team after reading this course, refusing to believe that we have affiliates who can generate a CR exceeding 20%.

Do they do that every month? No.

But we know a high CR is not a fluke. Why? The reason is simple. Although each affiliate's CR may fluctuate in any given month, a "high-CR" affiliate does not suddenly become a "low-CR" affiliate. The good ones score high, and make significant dollars, *every month*.

And the proof is in the pudding. SiteSell's astounding success is affiliate-driven. Instead of paying for very costly advertising like other companies do, we pour our money into making you succeed by giving you the best business-building system in the world...

<http://proof.sitesell.com/>

It is amazing what a great product, successful customers and proud-loyal affiliates can achieve!

OK. Take a quick stretch and then we'll continue.

Back already? Let's go...

## 1.2. PREsell To Convert

Your strategies and actions as an affiliate directly affect your Conversion Rate. This section deals with how to PREsell effectively. (Later in the course, we will cover traffic-building in more detail.)

Let's look at examples of how "low-CR affiliates" create negative mindsets by making how-you-reach, what-you-say, or how-you-refer boo-boos. We'll begin at the top...

### 1) How to Reach Your Visitor...

**Free-For-All Sites (FFAs)** are a great example of how not to reach people. For the most part, FFAs have become so seamy and useless that no matter what you

say, you're doomed from the start. I once made a request to all 5 Pillar Affiliates for FFA success stories... not a single success story! I won't bother to ask again.

Compare this with how *smart and open-minded* your visitor feels when she finds you via a Search Engine!

## 2) What to Say to Your Visitor...

Don't write a site purely devoted to "hard-selling" your merchants' products. Imagine a visitor who hits your site and reads an immediate sales pitch. That person will resist because she does not know you. Then, *if* she clicks to your merchant, she gets another sales pitch on the SiteSell site ==> Negative x 2!

**Never devote your site to one company's product line.** No matter what you do, no matter how sincere you are, this kind of approach always ends up "smelling" like a sales pitch. It simply makes no difference that you honestly love the products -- your visitor will mistake your devotion for selling. Remember, she doesn't know you!

It's far better to develop a concept that relates to that company's products and to other products from other companies that are complementary. Develop related content that PREsells. Then "get the click" through "in-context" text links.

## 3) How to Refer Your Visitor to Your Merchant...

Banners, as we discussed earlier, are the best example of how not to refer your visitor to your merchant. In plain and simple language, people feel "pitched" when they click on a banner. And people who feel "pitched" are difficult to convert into a sale.

### Now for a critical Action Step...

Review your site or whatever other means you are using to reach, talk to, and refer visitors to your merchants. Put yourself in your customer's brain. What will she think, how will she feel, at each of the 3 major steps from above?

If you're doing everything perfectly, congratulations! You must have a high CR. If you don't have a high CR, or if you see some big mindset mistakes, consider how much higher your CR would be if a visitor...

- found you in a bona fide manner (ex., as a result of doing a search on a Search Engine),

- became “your friend” (or your “trusting admirer” if you do a truly awesome job!) because you provided excellent content
- and finally was led to a context-appropriate recommendation. (There will be more on recommendation vs. sales pitch shortly.)

Key learning point?

### **Always consider how these actions affect your visitor’s mindset...**

- 1) **HOW YOU REACH your visitor, and...**
- 2) **WHAT YOU SAY to her, and...**
- 3) **HOW YOU REFER her to your merchant.**

Get inside your visitor’s head. Realize how she will feel each step of the way. Whatever you do, consider the impact on your visitor -- if it does not make her *more “open to buy,”* don’t do it.

PREselling is really all about selling yourself (i.e., your credibility) to your customer, every step of the way. You reach your targeted traffic in a proper fashion, you deliver valuable, appropriate, editorial content, and you recommend merchants to your visitor **after she has come to respect and like you.** Your CR will soar.

### **Why does PREselling work so well?**

A sale via any affiliate program is really a *two-step process*. It requires the delivery of two “Most Wanted Responses,” yours and your merchant’s.

As an affiliate, what is your Most Wanted Response (MWR)? No, it’s not to get the sale. That’s the second step and it’s also your merchant’s MWR. Your MWR is to “get the open-to-buy click” (i.e., your visitor clicks through to your merchant with an open-to-buy mindset).

Writing to PREsell does not require genetic talent. It’s not a “gift.” Writing to PREsell is a skill you can acquire. **Make Your Content PREsell! (MYCPS!)**, the only book of its kind on the Net, shows you exactly how to do it. Learn how to...

- 1) Write to communicate.
- 2) Develop your own “voice” with flair and substance.
- 3) Spin your site/biz/self into a unique position.



**4) Honestly convince people to trust and like you.**

Everyone, regardless of what they do online or offline, needs to know how to write effectively. For more information about this **free**, must-have resource, please visit...

<http://mycps.sitesell.com/>

Let your merchant's site do its job and get the sale. I remember when I used to tell my star baseball pitcher, Joel Leonoff...

"Joel... you don't have to strike 'em all out. You've got a great team behind you. Let them do their job."

The same goes for your merchants. Let them do their job.

Our "Top 100" 5 Pillar Affiliates all provide useful content. They PREsell. Then they let the rest of their team (us here at SiteSell) get the sale.

It's a two-step process that builds to the sale...

**STEP 1 You PREsell to get an open-to-buy click-through to your merchant.**

**STEP 2 Your merchant gets the sale.**

So, whatever you do, however you do it, it should always pull your visitor one step closer to delivering your MWR...

Get an open-to-buy click through to your income-generating source!  
Whoops! I was just about to move on to the next point. Good thing I heard you asking...

"Ken, if I leave it up to the merchant's site to get the sale, I still don't see how I have any influence on the Conversion Rate. I'd much rather **sell** the visitor on my own site."

First, let's make sure we have our terms straight by examining a real case study. Elad Shippony, from Israel, is an excellent example of **an infopreneur**. He is creating fun and entertaining content to drive traffic from the Search Engines, and then monetizing that traffic, **without selling a product or service**.

<http://case-studies.sitesell.com/infopreneur-elad.html>

PREsell effectively, and your CR will zoom. But if it reads like a "hard-sell sales pitch," you'll quickly lose credibility with your audience.

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