Christianbook.com
AFFILIATE
PROGRAM
v1.0

An introduction to
Affiliate Marketing
and the **tools** *in the*
Affiliate Lobby

THE CHRISTIANBOOK GROUP AFFILIATE TEAM

Introduction

Welcome, and thank you for joining the Christianbook.com Affiliate Program! The following is an introduction to get you started including a quick explanation of what the affiliate program is, general best practices, and explanations and directions of the tools available in the Affiliate Lobby.

Remember, help can always be found with the Affiliate Team by emailing affiliates@thechristianbookgroup.com.

What Is The Affiliate Program?

The Christianbook.com Affiliate Program is your newest revenue stream for your website, blog, church, or ministry. The program consists of thousands of members and has been running since 2005. Using session-based technology, we can track your link activity and pay fees for orders generated as a result of your affiliate marketing efforts.

Introduction

What is Affiliate Marketing?

Affiliate marketing is an industry of it's own. There are thousands of affiliate programs out there. They can differ slightly, but they all work the same. Affiliate marketing generally consists of an affiliate (you) and an affiliate host (that's us - Christianbook.com.) The affiliate is responsible for creating and maintaining links (URLs) that have unique tracking codes built or embedded into the link. When a user visits your site and clicks on one of these links, they are directed/brought to the host site. The act of the "click" to the host site is referred to as a "session" which means activity is being recorded by the host site. The host site knows whom to credit for this activity by recording the tracking code that referred the session.

Here at Christianbook.com, we use a cookie-based tracking mechanism. This mechanism tracks the sessions that you send to our store and we pay fees (commissions) for the qualifying orders generated as a result of those sessions.

How To Create Links

We offer an array of link-building tools that we will explore in more depth later in this manual. When you create your links using these tools, your individual tracking code is automatically added to the links. We provide all of our links in standard HTML format so that you can easily copy and paste them into your websites source code.

Best Practices

Link Diversity

There are numerous choices of the types of links available in the Affiliate Lobby, and it is recommended that you use all of them in your affiliate marketing efforts. Diversifying the types of links used will largely depend on the context and we encourage you to test different kinds of links in different areas of your web page. That being said, there are certain types of links that work best in specific context.

Standard Store Links - It is recommended that you have a generic store link (a link to the Christianbook.com website) on every one of your web pages. This link should be located in the same spot throughout your entire website so that your users can quickly and easily find it when they decide to start shopping. Many affiliates utilize a text based link in their navigation bar using the word "STORE."

Product Image Links - Product image links work well because your user can see an image of the product that they wish to purchase. It is recommended that you pay particular attention to what size images work best in your website, especially when working with mobile versions of your web pages.

Best Practices

Link Diversity

Banner Graphic Links - Nothing will capture the attention of your users more that a big, colorful, bright banner. As a Christianbook.com affiliate, you have the rights to use any banner or advertisement-sized graphic on our site in your own marketing efforts. (Affiliates do not have the right to change or modify the Christianbook.com logo. For more information please read through the Affiliate Program Terms of Agreement.) Banner links should be used to promote a very targeted sale/customer base. But they also should be used scarcely and wisely because users will not feel comfortable visiting a site that is full of these kinds of banners. So it is recommended that you use only one or two at a time and preferably on your web pages that receive the highest number of visitors.

Best Practices

Contextual Links

Nothing will be more effective in your marketing efforts than linking to a product that is directly related to the content of your web page. For example, if you are a blogger and the topic of your article is related to parenting, it is recommended that the products and links present on your blogposts are about parenting. Often, affiliates will miss this one simple strategy. Another example would be using a quote or scripture. If you used a specific book or translation to pull information, linking to that resource can be an incredibly effective marketing technique and one that should be utilized often.

Expand Link Placement

Links are just URLs with tracking code... where does that mean you can use them? The answer: EVERYWHERE! To be an affective affiliate marketer we recommend expanding your links to as many platforms as possible. Social media and email are critical channels to generate affiliate activity. Just read a good book? Tweet out what you are reading and include an affiliate link to the product's detail page. Just inspired by scripture? Share on Facebook the Bible you are reading and include a link to where your friends can obtain it. The same principles of linking from your web pages should be applied to any outgoing emails as well. It is recommended that you include a generic store link on every outgoing email and, when possible, use another link type to drive traffic directly to a specialty store or specific product.

Best Practices

When to contact the Affiliate Team?

When you need help, email us directly at
affiliates@thechristianbookgroup.com. We absolutely love to
hear from our affiliates! However, it is important for you to under-
stand that providing assistance is rarely manageable without
email. Any assistance we provide usually requires that we send
you some form of information, but that information is usually
visual (such as a report.) In fact, web building languages (such
as HTML) are visual (they are code) so if we need to provide you
that code, it is almost impossible to do so without email. Try
explaining this over the phone:

```
<div>
<a href="http://www.christianbook.com"><img src="http://g.chris-
tianbook.com/g/templates/themes/1000001/logo2.png"></a>
</div>
```

If an order was placed that you believe should have received
affiliate credit but it did not, email us. We are happy to look into
the details of each order to diagnose what may have happened
to it. Please remember to provide your order number if you are
calling for that reason. (Without it, we have no way of assisting
you.)

If you created your first, second, third, fourth (or whatever
number) affiliate link and you just want us to check it out to make
sure it is working, that is fine too! We can very easily review an
affiliate link to make sure it is tracking correctly.

Best Practices

Okay, so what does the Affiliate Team NOT Help With?

We are here to help you use our Affiliate Program. That means the tools that are available to build links and reporting. We expect each and every one of our affiliates to have a solid background in web-building languages and techniques (such as HTML, using Content Management Services, CSS, JavaScript, PHP, etc.)

In addition, we can not provide any assistance with using a software or web-based web building program (such as Wordpress.) We can provide you with the tools necessary to build your affiliate links, but fitting them into your webpage is solely your responsibility as the affiliate. Please understand, this is not meant to discourage you in any way. Simply it is impossible for us to be up to date with all of the web-building services and techniques that are now available. In addition, we do not have (nor will we ever have) access to your web source code, so we are unable to make any changes. And trust us, you don't want anyone having access to your source code (or content management service) who isn't a trained web developer and a member of your team or is someone you trust. You can do a lot of damage to your website if you don't know what you are doing.

Affiliate Lobby

The Affiliate Lobby is your portal to all things in the Christianbook.com Affiliate Program and we will explain each of the menu options here.

Link Builder

The Link Builder is the most important tool available to you. With the Link Builder you can create a myriad of affiliate links to use on your own site. We will talk about the links themselves a little later in the manual, but it is important to remember that every single Affiliate Link that you create should be done by using the Link Builder Tool. Not only does it allow for you to keep track of the links you have created, but also if you ever lose a link for any reason, the archive tool will allow you to recover the HTML so you can plug it back into your webpage.

Download Graphics

This is where we provide you with a selection of banner graphics you can use to promote your affiliate links. Unlike product images, banner graphics tend to promote larger categories (such as Bible, Homeschool, or Fiction.)

View Product Graphics

This menu allows for you to create product specific links commonly in a list form. If you have the products CBDSKU or ISBN, you can search for any product on the Christianbook.com website and quickly generate various image size URLs for use in your affiliate links.

Affiliate Lobby

There are three menu options related to the reporting of fees earned via your affiliate links/promotions.

Generate Activity Reports

This tools provides affiliate account activity including sessions, items shipped, and fees earned/accrued. Reports are generated on a monthly cycle, but you do have the option to review daily or monthly activity (simply by changing the "frequency" option.)

Generate Sales Report By Category

This tool is probably the most important marketing/research tool that you will have available. Generating a Sales Reports by Category will give you insight on the kinds of products being purchased (categories such as Bibles, Christian Living, Academic, etc.) as well as the actual products being purchased (stock number and title.) Why is this report so important? Because it allows you to see what products matter to your customers and make educated edits or updates to enhance the productivity of your links (by building more affiliate links of that product and putting that in front of your audience.) As an affiliate, you should be checking this report regularly and making necessary changes to increase the activity/sales generated from your links.

Affiliate Lobby

View Payments

Affiliate fees (earnings) are calculated monthly. If your account has met the minimum threshold ($25 in fees - roughly $333 in affiliate sales) a check will be cut and mailed to you. A list of the checks, check numbers, and value of the check are recorded here for your convenience/record keeping.

Affiliate Details

It is important that you keep your mailing address, contact information, email address, etc. up to date (so that if when we need to communicate with you we can!) This menu option is where you make any updates to your affiliate account information.

Link Builder Tool

Building affiliate links to Christianbook.com for your web site is a snap with our Affiliate Link Builder.

Pull-Down Menu Search Box

This widget packs a really big punch. It enables you, the affiliate, to display a search box on your own website that links directly to the Christianbook.com database. Typing any keyword (or author, title, ISBN, CBDSKU, and publisher) links your visitor directly to the search results within the Christianbook.com website.

Product Detail Page Link

There isn't a better way to promote products than by creating a product-specific link. This tool enables you to build a product links that includes the product's image (in various sizes) the title, author, publisher, and description.

EasyFind Search Link

You know your audience better then we do. Therefore we have created a tool that allows you to build a link based on specific search terms. A search link executes a Christianbook.com product search when it is clicked, and then displays a corresponding EasyFind search results page.

Link Builder Tool

Standard Christianbook.com Links

Some Affiliate Links are just tried and true. Included in this menu is a selection of the top performing stores over the years.

Specialty Page Link

By adding an affiliate specialty page link to your web site, you enable your visitors to browse huge selections of Christian books, music, videos, or any of dozens of product categories. Christianbook.com specialty pages not only provide a great variety of products, but also contain links to useful information like author/artist interviews and product subcategory listings that will help your customers with their purchasing decisions.

Links to Other Christianbook.com Pages

Create a link to any Christianbook.com web page. Just copy and paste the web address of the page you want to link to from your browser into the text box.

Link Builder Tool
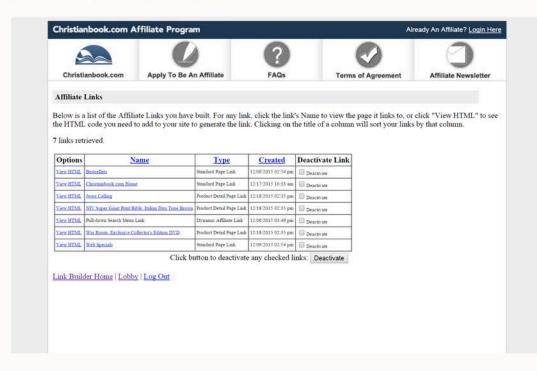
Dynamic Affiliate Link

If you plan to create numerous Affiliate Links to similar Christianbook.com pages (i.e. Product Detail Pages), using a Dynamic Affiliate Link may save you considerable time. You can use a single Dynamic Affiliate Link to connect customers to many different pages.

A Dynamic Affiliate Link is actually a template in which you specify information that uniquely identifies the page you want to link to. For example, suppose you want to create a Dynamic Affiliate Link that allows you to connect to Christianbook.com Product Detail Pages by ISBN. The Link Builder will create a generic Dynamic Affiliate Link for you.

Please Note: When creating these links be sure to format each link exactly the same way it has been generated for you. The order of the parameters must be the same as in the generated link in order for your link to track properly in our system.

For you convenience, we keep track of all the affiliate links you create so that you can reference or reuse them. Clicking on the link titled "List All Your Affiliate Links" will bring you to that list. If you attempt to create an affiliate link that you have already created once before, we will remind you with a disclaimer to view your list of affiliate links and retrieve the HTML there. (Figure 1)

Link Builder Tool

(Figure 1 - Link Builder Tool - List of Afiliate Links Created by the Affiliate)

As you become more familiar with the link building process, you may want to create specialized affiliate links of your own. We caution you to test any affiliate link that you create outside of the Link Builder tool. Again, we are not able to retrieve any activity if your affiliate link is incorrectly formatted. For those advanced affiliates, we have provided you with two additional link building tools.

Your Next Steps

Promoting your website is key to your success in the Affiliate Program. It is critical that your first priority is reaching out to new users and promoting your organization, church, blog, etc. Only after that is done can you expect to see results from your affiliate links. Think about it this way, you can put all the affiliate links you want across all of your webpages, but if nobody is visiting your website, then no one will be clicking on those links - it's that simple.

Print this PDF file and keep it as a handbook on how to utilize the tools available in the Affiliate Lobby. There are many additional resources available on the internet that will help you gain the skills needed for building websites and marketing products (many of which are free.) Test your affiliate links and review your reports often as they will guide you on what changes to make and which products to promote. Be creative in your promotional efforts. Finally, and most important, don't get discouraged. Affiliate sales are not going to happen overnight. It requires effort on your part to make your promtions a success. If you are not registering any sales after a certain time, revisit your own strategy, make changes and test, test, test!

If all else fails, email us, let us know what you are doing, and we will review your links and provide helpful pointers. We want you to succeed!