



STEP ONE: PURPOSE



Why chase an elusive unicorn? Why direct all of your energy as an affiliate at a single product when you could spread your wings wide to promote dozens of products?

If you've visited the Serve No Master website, you'll notice that there are hundreds of affiliate links and product promotions sprinkled throughout the pages. On my toolbox page specifically, you'll see more than fifty recommendations for different products and offers.

That said, the 80/20 rule is never stronger than when you look at your affiliate stats.



When I look at the numbers for the affiliate links that have been on my page for a while, I can quickly see which offers get the most interest. The two numbers you should check on your affiliate links are the number of <u>clicks</u> each link gets and, even more importantly, the **revenue** that is driven by that link.

Knowing that information, I can direct more content and more attention to the links that are already working for me rather than wasting time on links that no one clicks on. I follow the links that make the most money, and that's exactly what you should do.

If you're just starting out and if you're still chasing that elusive unicorn, then you won't know which links people are going to click the most or which will drive the most revenue until you start to test. That can take a while, so I want to give you an upper hand.

Using the tools in this booklet, you won't need to wait for three years of data to figure out what people are going to like. I'm going to give you some major advantages so that you can test only the offers that have the opportunity to be massively profitable for you.

AFFILIATE UNICORN



STEP TWO: WHY SHOULD YOU LISTEN TO ME?



I've been a full-time online marketer since 2010 when I was fired from my final job. I walked out of that office, saying, "I never want someone to be able to fire me ever again, and I never want someone to have that much power over me."

After that day, I left the world of bosses behind and went on a long and arduous journey. Along the way, I've made dozens of products, written hundreds of books, and promoted thousands of affiliate offers. My most successful offer paid me a \$100,000, while my least successful paid only pennies. I've seen every end of the spectrum, and I've learned exactly what to do and which offers to take to earn the most money.

Because of my success as a marketer, I now live on

a tropical island in the South Pacific in a hostel that I was able to buy my wife so that she could start her own business. If you like the idea of having total location independence and financial freedom, and if my message, style, and personality resonate with you, then you should listen to what I have to teach.

However, it may be that you would rather sink your roots into a specific location. If that's the case, a different type of marketing strategy may appeal more to you. That's not my life, and that's not what I teach, but there's a lot to be said for local marketing and affiliate business models.

All the same, I think you'll find the principles of this book useful regardless of your end goal, as it will help you find affiliate programs, negotiate affiliate payments, and finally capture your affiliate unicorn.



STEP THREE: UNICORN EXAMPLES

Your affiliate unicorn is the program that pays you the most money. The best type of program is one that pays you a recurring commission. This means you get paid month after month. That's the real **golden** ticket.

Other programs pay huge amounts of money in a single lump sum. Whether you are promoting satellite services or surgeries, these programs get way fewer customers than other programs, but they pay thousands of dollars every time you send them a new customer. They are low volume, high-payout systems.

You may find that these programs are the right fit for you, but I'm a much bigger fan of selling services that I know people are going to be using for weeks, months, or even years into the future.

When people start building an online

business, for example, they will need certain recurring services, such as web hosting. For a long time, hosting services were the best unicorns because they would pay a monthly commission. Eventually, however, they all stopped paying the recurring commission, opting, instead, for a single lump sum when they signed new customers.

Despite their new lump-sum model, hosting programs can still make good affiliate programs. One of my highest-performing programs is Bluehost, but it's not my unicorn because I only make money when I generate new sales. If you don't have a website set up yet, I recommend Bluehost as a provider. My link is right there, and I'd certainly appreciate it if you clicked it. They are a great program, but they only pay once for each new customer.





My real unicorns are programs like <u>ConvertKit</u>, <u>ClickFunnels</u>, and <u>PayKickstart</u>. These are services that I use all the time, and they pay me thirty percent in commission every month.

If you set up an email with ConvertKit, which is the email provider that I use, one-third of your monthly fee will go directly to me.

Let's go one step further to see how much money you can make with ConvertKit. You're only going to stay with a service that handles your emailing system if it's profitable. Why would you use something that's not making you any money? If you're paying \$30 a month and not making it back, you're going to dump that system, and I'll stop making money.

In addition to having a vested interest in signing up for a program that pays well, I

also have a <u>vested interest in your success</u>. While I get money when you use the service,

I get even more money when you have success with the service. That's my favorite type of program – the one that brings us into alignment.

As your mailing list grows, so, too, does your bill. If you're paying \$30 a month, I make \$10. However, if you get a mailing list of 50,000 to 100,000 people, your bill is in the hundreds of dollars a month, making me even more money. Of course, you're making back way more than you're paying for that list, and what's profitable for you becomes profitable for me, as well.

As you learn more about email marketing, affiliate marketing, and growing your business, and as you become more successful, I make more money. That is one reason why I love running ConvertKit.



Another fantastic affiliate unicorn is ClickFunnels. ClickFunnels has two pricing plans: \$97 a month and \$297 a month. For each person you sign up, you earn one-third of what they pay, giving you either \$30 or \$100 a month, depending on the plan they choose.



Again, I have a vested interest in helping people succeed with ClickFunnels. The more money you make, the more money I make. If you sign up through my ClickFunnels link, you'll probably sign up for the smaller pricing plan, giving me only \$30 a month. Once you have more than one hundred funnels, you'll upgrade to the higher paying program, and I will earn more money. However, you're only going to upgrade and pay more if you're making a significant profit.

The only reason I use ClickFunnels is that it makes me more money than it costs. Yes, Russell Brunson, the multi-millionaire behind the software, is a friend of mine, and, yes, I was one of the first people he showed the software to. But that's not why I recommend it; that just happens to be a connection we have. I only recommend tools that I use and genuinely believe in.

ClickFunnels is such a successful unicorn that there are affiliate marketers who make software and tools specifically built around it. They develop programs that teach you how to use ClickFunnels, and they give them away for free as long as you sign up through their link. It's brilliant, and it's massively profitable for them.

I probably won't start giving away all of my courses for free in exchange for ClickFunnels signups, but I am developing more free templates for people who sign up through my links because I know there is value there.

If I sell you a training program for \$97, I've earned \$97. However, if I give you that same program for free and you sign up for ClickFunnels under my link, I make \$30 a month. After four months, it's more profitable than the course would have been had



I sold it for \$97. Of course, Russell being a genius encourages marketers to deliver courses in the same way because it makes him two-thirds of that money. It's a win for everyone involved.



The third affiliate unicorn that I use is PayKickstart. This is my shopping cart, and it costs \$99 a month. If you sign up through my affiliate link, I get 30 percent of that. What's nice about PayKickstart is that, as your business grows, your bill does not increase. You always pay \$99, and I always earn a flat \$30 a month. While that number will never increase, it's nice to have a steady payment each month.

This is a platform owned by my friend Mark Thompson, and I was a beta tester when he first started the program. I was there through all of the problems, I've lived through the glitches, and I've seen all of the rebuilds. I stayed on board through it all, and I sent Mark a list of features and changes that I wanted. He added them all in, and, today, the software is rock solid. PayKickstart is a tool that I recommend because it's one that I use every day.

Your ideal affiliate unicorn should either pay a high commission and be easy to sell, or it should pay a recurring commission and be something people are going to stick with.

STEP FOUR: BEGIN YOUR SEARCH

How can you find your unicorn? Not everyone is in the same market. In fact, the majority of my followers are not in the Internet marketing space. They're science fiction authors, voiceover artists, and even chefs. They're people in different markets, and that means that they can't simply copy and paste my links. You must find your own program, and we're going to go on a journey together to find it.

The first part of this process is to make a list of every tool, service, program, and product that you use or that interests you. Pay special attention to the products and programs that you used when you were first starting out.

For example, if you're in great physical shape and you love writing, blogging, or recording videos about health and fitness, you might be going through an advanced program.

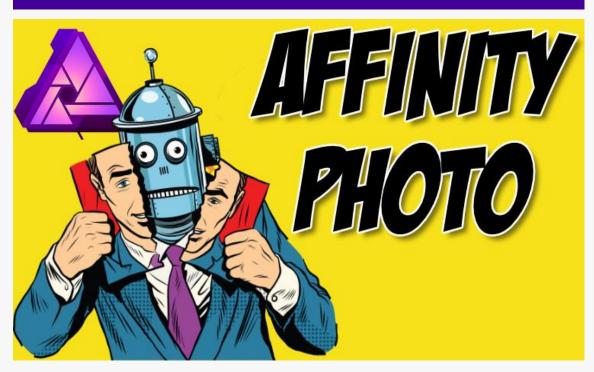
The problem here is that advanced programs don't sell very well.

The real money is in the beginner programs. For every one person who gets to the advanced fitness techniques, there are thousands who are still beginners. That's why 99 percent of the money in the weight loss industry is made at the beginning of a diet rather than at the end.

In the same way, a beginner's YouTube tutorial for a piece of software or tool will have 10,000 or even 100,000 views, while the tutorial for the advanced users will have a fraction of that.

This concept applies to everyone, even me. There are tons of areas where I'm a beginner. My favorite photo-editing software is called Affinity Photo. I use this tool nearly every single day in my business. Whether I'm editing a photo, changing a letter, cropping an image, or creating a mock-up to send to my actual graphic designer, every image I use has passed through Affinity Photo in one way or another.





Despite how much I use it, I'm still a beginner at using Affinity Photo.

This is where many people stay because most people don't need to become an advanced user. Unless I plan on becoming a graphic designer or I want to create my own book cover design, there's no point in me ever going past the beginner level when it comes to photo editing.

As you make your list of products, services, and tools that you use, type each of them into your favorite search engine followed by the words "affiliate program." You'll see that some programs don't have an affiliate program. Instead, they use an ambassador program or referral program. (This means that they pay you in kind.)

For example, a program I love to refer people to is called <u>Descript.</u> I do a lot of dictation; I even dictated this book.

Descript is my favorite transcription service because they give me one hundred minutes of free transcription for every person that I send their way. What's more, they give one hundred free minutes to each of my referrals. I love that because everyone gets the same reward.



If you're reading this eBook right now and you're thinking about downloading Descript, please click the link and install the software. Even if you never do any dictation, it'll help you see how it works. The moment you download and activate your free account, we each one hundred minutes. The fact that I don't make any money from this tells you how much I love the program.

Ambassador and referral programs, while great, will never be your unicorn. Getting a ton of free stuff is not going to feed your kids, pay your mortgage, or cover your rent. Even though you might see some great referral and ambassador programs, we're really looking for affiliate programs.

For every service or tool you like that has an affiliate program, sign up. Not everyone will accept you, just as not everyone accepts me.

I was most recently turned down for an affiliate program a few months ago.

Many affiliate programs only look at how many Twitter followers you have. I have probably fifty followers; I haven't logged into Twitter for years, so I don't even know how many I have. Many programs deny me because it's such a small number, but they have no idea how big my email list is, and they don't always believe me when I tell them. They just ask, "If your email list is so big, why is your social media following so small?"

Some programs aren't going to accept you, and that's okay. You can find the best program in the world, but, if they don't let you promote it, they're not the right fit for you.

Some programs that I use and recommend have two affiliate programs. One tool that I recommend now denied me when I first applied. I saw that they had a second affiliate program on another platform, so I applied there. While the first one denied me, the second one approved me. Things don't always make total sense with these programs. They're often handled by people who have no idea what they're doing or by computer software that decides whether to approve you.



Apply for programs as you're going through this process; it will help you in the end. Only about 10 percent of the things I applied for throughout my entire career have rejected me. You'll get approved for most programs, and you'll eventually find your unicorn in one of those.

Once you've made your list of all the affiliate programs for tools you use, search for affiliate programs based on your market.

Every year, I search for "best internet marketing affiliate programs 2018/2019/2020." I want to see if there's anything new that I could test or start promoting. Doing this quick search helps me to see programs that I hadn't thought of before, and it helps me find useful tools that I didn't even know existed.

What we're doing in this phase is building up a massive list of offers. As I've said, my website is filled with hundreds of offers.

Even if a program is not going to be a unicorn, it can still make you a little bit of money; there's no reason to turn your nose up at something that's not a unicorn. The bigger your list and the faster you make it, the more success you'll find down the line.

For this process, spreadsheets are a really great tool to use. They will help you plug in data, and you can have different columns for different aspects of the list, such as the name of the program, the log-in link, and the payout or commission structure.

Some programs have complicated structures in which they pay more depending on how much you sell each month. If you have a high volume of referrals, those structures are really great.



STEP FIVE: SORT AND RANK

Step five is to sort and rank your affiliate programs. There's no perfect formula for choosing the right unicorn for you. Every market is different, but I'll give you the factors to look at to help you to find the right fit for you. You want to find programs that are the best option for you, and here are some of the aspects you should look at when deciding.

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1. Responsiveness.

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The first thing you're going to check is the responsiveness of a company. Email a question to your affiliate representative and rank the programs based on how they respond to you. Plenty of affiliate programs are wonderful but have terrible reps.

I have a program that I recommended for a long time that I'm not going to mention here because my new rep is terrible. They tried to get me to sign a new contract with a lowered commission, effectively paying me less while offering no upside.

We spoke about it on the phone two or three times, and everything they offered me was worse than what I already had. They even wanted me to pay to be in a higher affiliate commission tier, despite there being no value from being in the higher tier.

I was considering upgrading them to affiliate unicorn status until they changed my rep; I had a lot of secondary products, training courses, and tools built that would help support their software. Then, they changed the affiliate commission down and gave me a terrible rep. Now, I'm probably going to promote them less and less.

This happens every now and then. Certain programs close their affiliate programs, change their links, or lower their commission out of the blue. That's their decision,



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but don't expect me to continue promoting a program that has violated the terms of our relationship.

If an affiliate program doesn't respond to you, sends you a copy-and-paste message, or their message doesn't feel like a human wrote it, they're probably going to treat their customers poorly as well, and that's not something you want.

When I recommend a service or tool to you, a bad experience can affect and possibly kill our relationship, and I don't want something outside of my control to affect my relationship with you. I could sell something that generates \$10 and keeps you happy, or I could sell something that's \$1,000 and makes you hate me. I'd much rather make the \$10 than the \$1,000 because, over the lifetime of our relationship, we're both going to make a lot more money together.



2. Payouts.

The next step is to rank the payouts based on initial payout amount, bonuses, and lifetime commission structure if they have one. The affiliate program for my products has a lifetime commission structure. If you start recommending my products, not only will you get a commission for each new customer you send my way, but you'll also get a commission for the lifetime of that relationship. You'll get paid forever as long as that person remains a customer. There are a few programs out there that are still like this, and they're amazing when you find them.

It's not always about chasing the biggest game in town. Amazon has a well-known affiliate program, but the payouts are pennies. Working your tail off for a program that only pays you based on purchases made in the next twenty-four hours is tough, and it's definitely not your unicorn. Yes, they're reliable, they have an excellent support team, and they give customers a great experience, but it's hard to make money there because the affiliate commission is so low.

There are a few things you want to look at here. What percentage do they pay you? How do they treat their other affiliates? What is the experience is like? I often look to see if other affiliates who are promoting the program actually use it. If they don't, that makes me nervous. If 1,000 people are recommending something that has tons of terrible reviews, that also makes me nervous. That's not the type of program I want to chase.



I want something that has good payouts and good customer experience, and that leads me to number three.



Is the service, tool, software, or program reliable? If I recommend web hosting, for example, I want to recommend a service that has high uptime and gives people a good experience. Bluehost is not the highest payout in web hosting by a long shot. One program pays \$350 per sign up, and another one still pays a monthly fee. The difference, though, is that Bluehost is reliable while the other services are not.

I don't want you to sign up for a website that will stop working after a while. It's not worth it to me because you're not going to stick with them, and I will stop earning a monthly commission. This is why I like to recommend programs that I use because I can ensure their reliability.

You want something that's going to give the person a good experience for a long time. When new software comes out, you always wonder how long the company will be around. If I jump on board with this platform, are they still going to be there in six months or a year? That's why early adopters get better prices. Not every Kickstarter gets made, so they give great deals to convince people to try it out.





4. Reputation.

What kind of reputation does the company have? What about the reputation of the owner? What do online reviews say when you search for the product? If you see fifty results that say, "scam," that should make you nervous.

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Some affiliate marketers are total jerks, who write program reviews titled, "Is this a scam?" Even though they go through a list of reasons why it's not, they're targeting the negative traffic which hurts the reputation of the product they're trying to make money from. Affiliates who do that are usually banned from that affiliate program, as they should be. I don't want the autocorrect at the end of a Google search result to be "Jonathan Green scam," and these search results are usually caused by terrible affiliates. When you're looking for a program, ensure that you choose one with a good reputation.



Sometimes you might be the only person who had a great experience with a product. I was looking to buy a piece of equipment for my office that would give us an uninterrupted power supply. I looked at a few different options and read through some reviews. The first review said, "This is the greatest thing I've ever bought. It's amazing!" The second review said, "It exploded and nearly burned my house down." The third review said, "Caught on fire." That first person is recommending the product because he had a great experience, but it wasn't a universal experience. That's why we like to look at a cross-section of reviews so that we can get the full picture.

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Make sure that you look at the reputation outside of your own personal experience. There are certain products that I love that other people haven't had a great experience with. You're never going to find a product that is a perfect ten out of ten with every customer. You're just looking for something where the "worst" isn't that bad. (Explosions and house fires are bad)





5. Recurring Commission.

Any program that pays multiple times gets me excited. I'm always looking for membership sites or software that pay every month. Another way of looking at this is the amount of money coming in. Of course, this means you only make money if people keep using the service. If you recommend a terrible service, a recurring payment won't matter because people are going to stop using it and you stop getting paid. It might be tempting to recommend a terrible product just for the recurring payments, but it's not going to be beneficial for your business.

Instead, look for products that you use that offer recurring payments. I love foundational tools. When people sign up for an autoresponder like ConvertKit, most people are not going to switch to a new service suddenly. It's just too hard. I have hundreds of automations, hundreds of lists, and thousands of emails all programmed into ConvertKit. The thought of moving all of that to another system is awful; I would never do it. It took me almost six months to rebuild my system last year, and I spent a lot of time redoing everything to make it more effective. I don't want to spend all that time switching to another system, and I know most people feel the same way.







6. Lifetime Cookies.

If you can't find a program with a recurring payment, look for one with lifetime cookies. This is what I offer in my affiliate program. If you recommend my product and the customer buys a second product a month later, you get paid for both products that they purchased. These programs are few and far between.

My first unicorn was Jason Fladlien. When I was an affiliate for him, I made \$100,000. I sent him hundreds of customers, each of whom repeatedly bought his other products. He's a fantastic marketer, and, during that time, I made a lot of money. Unfortunately, a lot of the other affiliate partners asked him to change business models, and he no longer has a lifetime model. When he did, though, it was Heaven for me because I knew that any customer I sent him would make me tons of money.

If you can find a program like this in your market where you get paid for anything that a customer buys, grab it with both hands and don't let go.



7. Pay Points.

Does the program increase your pay? Are there ways to get bumps? Do you get rewards for more sales? Some programs reward good affiliates, and some don't.

When I'm choosing programs, I tend to lean toward the ones that pay well across the board, but there's a lot to be said for the programs that reward you when you generate more sales. Getting paid more for success encourages further success. Those affiliate programs are rewarding people for improving their affiliate marketing strategies, and that can be part of your ranking process.





8. Ease of Sale.

How easy is it for someone to make a purchase? If it's complicated or if there's a glitch in the checkout process, people won't go through the hassle of buying it, and that's going to take money out of your pocket. I don't want that to happen to you, so make sure that the program has a secure, robust system.

Some companies are stingy, and they use the cheapest possible affiliate software. I'm not going to name names, but you'll know these companies when you see them. When I send a sale through to a company and don't get a credit, I don't recommend that product ever again. This has happened to me quite a few times. I'll sign up for the affiliate program, one of my friends will make a purchase, and the software glitches and they don't give me credit. That's a sketchy game that I'm not interested in.

Whether it's a problem with the payout technology or the process of placing an order, I don't want any part of the process to be hard. I want it to be easy for my customers to enter their credit card or PayPal information and get access to their purchase. Most good programs that you use and recommend probably have a smooth purchase process, but not all of them do. It's something you need to keep in mind when choosing a program.



STEP SIX: CHOOSE A WINNER



Once you've gone over the different factors that go into a program and ranked them, it's time to choose the program that's best for your market.

If you didn't find any programs with recurring commissions or lifetime cookies, look for programs with the best payouts and the easiest sale process.

Instead of only looking at what is easiest for you to sell, look for something

with the highest score across all of the previous eight points of rank. That's where you're going to find your first winner. You might even find three to five winners.

Now that we have some data to start from, we can begin our winnowing process. Once you've found your winner or winners, you're going to start promoting them. Ideally, you'll have a first choice from your list of winners, and that's where you should put your focus. Once you start making sales from choice one, you can go on to test choices two through five.



STEP SEVEN: BUMP YOUR COMMISSION

For each of your winning programs, email your affiliate manager and ask them to increase your payout. My friend, Joe, taught me this nearly a decade ago. He said, "Every time I look at an affiliate program, whether it's something I recommended once or a thousand times, I email them and ask for a commission bump. Ninety percent of the time, they give me a ten percent pay increase without even replying to my message."

A ten percent difference really adds up over days, months, and years of promotions and recommendations. Not every program will say yes, but if they say no, all that happens is you stay where you started. They're not going to lower your commission from fifty to forty percent. Asking for a commission bump is one of the smartest things you can because you can only ever gain from it.

I recently tried this with Bluehost, and it made a huge difference. They increased my commission by more than ten percent, and I'm thrilled with where I ended up. I can probably ask again in a few months when I have even more sales, and I'll get an even bigger bump.

With some systems, you have to generate a certain number of sales to get bumped; in other systems, you have to ask. Either way, we want to do what we can to generate as much revenue as possible.



STEP EIGHT: CREATIVE PROMOTIONS

Find ways to promote and recommend your affiliate unicorn on as many platforms as possible, whether it be blog posts, slideshows, podcasts, or videos.

Programs that do well for me appear in more than one place on my website. If I'm doing really well recommending a tool, such as ClickFunnels, I'm going to create more ClickFunnels tutorials, trainings, reviews, and demonstrations, and I'll add bonuses and funnels that people who purchase through my link can immediately download. As a program becomes more successful, I'm going to push it more often. Bluehost, for example, has been amazing this year. That's why I have more tutorials about how to set up your blog, security, and email system, as well as how to design your

home page using Bluehost. I talk about it more because it's working.

As you start recommending your affiliate products and services, most of your messaging will include whichever platform is the most profitable for you. It all starts out with promotions and testing to see what's working.





STEP NINE: SEPARATE YOUR PROMOTION FROM THE CROWD

There are hundreds if not thousands of people promoting ClickFunnels. It's one of the most popular affiliate programs to promote. The question is, how can I get you to choose my promotion over someone else's? Writing a great review or putting out an informative tutorial is one way, but it doesn't guarantee that they will click on your link.

Someone could watch your review of the software, want to buy it, and then search for "ClickFunnels templates." Even though you convinced the person to buy, they went out and looked for the best deal for themselves. This is what I did. The person who convinced me to buy ClickFunnels is not the person whose affiliate link I used. Someone else had a better incentive, and I used their link.

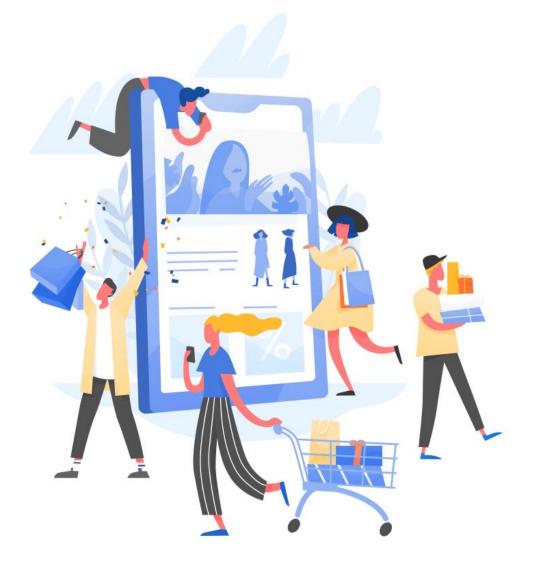
In order to compete, you want to create content that increases the value. Whether it's providing pre-written email templates or pieces of graphic design that help people use a tool, you want to create something that makes you a unique affiliate. Loads of people just say, "Here's my ClickFunnels link." However, if I add to that, "When you use my link, I give you my entire template collection: my review template, my opt-in template, my prewritten funnels, and one hundred funnels custom-designed by my graphic artist," that will really get someone's attention. They will obviously click your link rather than a basic link with no bonuses.

When you increase the value, you find more success. I'm always looking to add more benefits, bonuses, and reasons why you should choose my link over someone else's.

You could also provide additional training. The first time you sign up for ClickFunnels can be overwhelming. "I have a walkthrough on my page that will help you get started after you sign up. You've watched my review, and you like my style; now, you can go through a training process with me."



This method can work for any platform. I can create an entire training for ConvertKit and say, "If you buy ConvertKit through my link, you'll get one hundred pre-written, high-converting email templates, as well a training video where I walk you through my entire system for setting up automation and squeeze pages. This will help you start making money and get the maximum benefit from your email list."





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There's a lot more that goes into becoming a successful affiliate marketer, but you now have enough tools to get started. You have everything you need to find and promote your Affiliate Unicorn.

If you want to go to the next level, I have a very special program for you called The Affiliate Blueprint. It usually costs \$47, but I want to give you a special bonus price of just \$7 as my way of saying, "Thank you for taking action and reading this book to the end."

Click that big graphic below with all the beautiful, bold colors, and it will take you straight to a special page that nobody else can see. For just \$7, I'll take you through a more advanced affiliate training. You have enough information to find your unicorn; let me take you to the next level and help you achieve even more financial success as an affiliate. I can't wait to see you in my member's area and in my emails.

