

Tips For Recruiting The Best Affiliates

Recruiting affiliates need not be painful. Consider the objective for your affiliate marketing program—whether you're looking to increase web traffic, expand brand awareness, or drive sales—and narrow in on partners most likely to help you achieve those goals.

Here's how:

Define your ideal affiliate

When defining your ideal affiliate, consider the type of business you operate and the people you aim to reach to build a successful affiliate program.

For example, suppose your business sells eco-friendly beauty products. In that case, you might focus on partnering with affiliates who have a strong presence in the sustainable living niche market, such as green beauty bloggers, environmentally conscious influencers, or zero-waste lifestyle advocates. On the other hand, if you run a business-to-business (B2B) software company, you may want to target affiliates with expertise in your industry, such as tech bloggers, business consultants, or thought leaders in your specific market.

Analyze your competitors

Look at your competitors' affiliate programs to gain valuable insights into their structure, commission rates, and recruitment tactics. Use this information to inspire and guide the development of your own program, offering competitive benefits and incentives to attract top affiliates in your niche.

Don't hesitate to reach out to your competitors' most successful affiliates with a compelling proposal, as these new affiliate partners could boost your program's performance and help you gain a competitive advantage.

Search affiliate network databases

Leverage the power of affiliate networks like Shopify Collabs, ShareASale, Impact, Partnerize, and Awin to research professional affiliates who might be a good fit for your business. These affiliate recruitment tools can help you find authority figures in the same niche as your business and facilitate outreach.

For example, if you run a fitness apparel company, you can filter and search for relevant affiliates in the health and wellness space.

Cast a wide net

Look beyond affiliate directories and consider bloggers, influencers, and podcasters with a strong presence in your niche. Reach out to potential affiliates with a compelling proposal to join your affiliate program. For instance, if you run an online bookstore, you might partner with a popular fantasy book blogger. By contrast, a jewelry brand could collaborate with a lifestyle Instagram influencer, or a supplement company could work with a well-respected health podcaster.

By strategically selecting affiliates who have a genuine connection with your target audience, you can maximize the impact of your affiliate program management efforts and drive results for your business.

Look to LinkedIn

Search for individuals on LinkedIn with relevant job titles, such as “content creator,” “influencer,” or “thought leader,” and engage with their content to build relationships before reaching out with your affiliate program proposal. Use LinkedIn for your affiliate recruitment efforts and find potential affiliate partners with the expertise, credibility, and audience to promote your products or services.

For instance, if you offer a SaaS product for HR management, you could target HR consultants, corporate trainers, or employee experience experts who can recommend your solution to their clients and followers.

Attract affiliates organically

Create a dedicated affiliate program page on your website that's optimized for search engines to attract potential affiliates actively seeking partnership opportunities in your niche.

This page should provide a clear overview of your affiliate program, including commission rates, payment terms, and any unique selling points that set your program apart. As part of your website affiliate recruitment process, include testimonials or case studies from successful affiliates, highlighting the benefits of partnering with your business and the potential earnings.

Invest in search and social ads

Search and social media advertising can be an effective affiliate recruitment tool to reach potential partners interested in affiliate programs. For example, if you run an online pet supply store, you could bid on search terms like “pet product reviews,” “pet influencers,” or “make money with pets” to attract relevant affiliate marketers to your program.

Create compelling ad copy and visuals that highlight the benefits of your affiliate program for platforms like Instagram and direct interested individuals to a dedicated affiliate landing page where they can learn more.

Attend industry events and conferences

Attend industry events and conferences relevant to your niche to network with potential affiliates. For example, if you run an online store selling high-end kitchen appliances, consider attending food and wine festivals and culinary trade shows to connect with food bloggers and recipe creators.

Use these opportunities to showcase your affiliate program, exchange business cards, and follow up with personalized emails or messages to continue your outreach efforts and build relationships.

Develop an affiliate onboarding program

Create a comprehensive affiliate onboarding program that equips your new partners with all the tools, resources, and knowledge they need to promote your products or services. Provide them with detailed product information, marketing materials, and unique tracking links generated by your affiliate software.

Guide them on best practices for promoting your brand through their websites, blogs, email marketing, and social media channels. Additionally, offer ongoing support to help your affiliates feel valued, motivated, and equipped to drive sales and revenue for your business.

Implement a referral program

Encourage top-performing affiliates to refer other high-quality partners to your program by implementing a referral incentive system. Reward them with bonuses and/or free products for bringing in new affiliates who generate sales. This strategy helps you retain active affiliates and identify potential partners who are likely to be a good fit for your program.