

AFFILIATE LAUNCHES MADE SIMPLE with Matt McWilliams

Top 10 Mistakes Affiliates Make on Social Media

I'm not sure if you heard but social media is a big deal. And it's evolving every five minutes. As social media has grown in popularity and impact, so have the number of mistakes entrepreneurs make, especially when promoting affiliate offers.



Today I'm sharing the top 10 mistakes affiliates make on social media. I've purposely kept them outlet-neutral, since tomorrow there will be a new one and by next week something will die out. These apply to Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and whatever pops up later today.

Here are the top 10 social media mistakes to avoid as an affiliate:

1. Not promoting affiliate offers at all.

Social media is a valuable tool in your marketing toolbox. Use it!

2. ONLY promoting affiliate offers (or your own offers).

To be clear, you must be selective in what you promote on social media (you should be selective in general).

Don't make every other post a sales pitch. Practice the 10-1 rule (10 non-promotional posts for every one promotional posts).

And focus more on promoting free offers and optins, rather than direct selling.

As Pat Flynn says:



3. Not having a plan.

Whatever you do, create a plan and stick to it long enough to find out what works.

I'm guilty of this one. I'm not much of a planner, but I've learned to at least create a framework for posting frequency.

Here's what mine looks like on one day, for instance:

7AM - 12PM: 1 blog post and 3 shares of other's content

12PM - 5PM: 1 affiliate offer or self-promotional offer, 2 shares of other's content, and 1 blog post or free offer.

5PM - 11PM: 1 quote image, 2 shares of other's content, 1 personal update

That is just one day's plan and it varies wildly from day to day, but the idea here is to have a plan.

Create some guidelines and follow them.

4. Not using images.

According to Jeff Bullas:

Images on twitter cause tweets to take up more space on the feed and help drive engagement. Tweets that include an image have 200 percent more engagement than tweets without images. While an image may not be appropriate for every tweet, businesses should include one whenever possible to help draw attention to their message.

That's why we always offer affiliates different-sized images for each social media network.

If you are promoting something that doesn't have them, ask for them.

5. Including your full affiliate link.

Don't use your full affiliate link in your posts. Usually they are ugly.

Consider my affiliate link for Claire Diaz-Ortiz' Work by Design Summit (you should register for it):

<https://mm216.isrefer.com/go/workbydesign/mattmcwilliams/>

It's long, complicated and screams scam.

Compare that to the shortened version of:

<http://www.mattmcwilliams.com/wbd>

Or even just using a built-in URL shortener.

6. Not following trends.

Make sure you are following trends and then hijack them.

Earlier this year, I successfully hijacked the trending hashtag of #DowntonAbbey to drive people to Michael Hyatt's 5 Days to Your Best Year Ever optin. According to my tracking (see #9 below), it had more than 1400 hits and 112 optins, which led to 2 sales.

That \$218 took me less than 90 seconds to make.

7. Not building your OWN list on social media.

Yes, you should be promoting affiliate offers (especially optins) on social media, but make sure you don't forget to build your own list, too.

In the end, your number one source of affiliate revenue will be your email list. For most people, it's 80% or more.

So make sure you are building your own list through social media.

8. Not replying to people with questions.

You go through the effort to craft a good post about an optin or product. Then someone replies with a simple question and...

Silence?

When people ask you about the products you are promoting, respond to them. Usually they are simple questions to answer.

The close rate on those people is ridiculously high (50%+).

9. Not tracking links and results.

The reason I know the results of my Downton Abbey tweets that I mentioned in mistake #6 is simple: I used a specific tracking link.

Make sure you are tracking different links that you use in different places and look at the results.

If you are spending 20% of your social media time promoting on Twitter but getting 80% of your results there, stop wasting your time on the other networks.

But you'll only know the results if you track them.

10. Promoting in a different "voice."

This might be the number one mistake I see. It's the most obvious and disturbing at least.

Someone who is typically light-hearted and funny on Twitter suddenly promotes something and they sound like a game show host, used car salesman, or worse...an attorney.

Don't promote in a different voice than your everyday voice on social media. People hate that.

If you are normally funny, be funny when you promote something. If you normally include silly images, use silly images. If you normally put a hashtag in your Tweets, use hashtags in your promotional posts.

Stay consistent to your brand and voice.

Final Word

The key takeaway from all of this is to treat social media as a tool. It's not the hammer and the nail, but one or the other.

It's a tool you must use, but you must use it intentionally.

What's the biggest mistake you've made or seen made on social media?