

The Smart Passive Income Podcast - Session #22 (TRANSCRIPT)

Affiliate Marketing Strategies, Tips and Strategies

Show notes can be found at <http://www.smartpassiveincome.com/session22>

Hey everybody! What's up, this is Pat Flynn, and welcome to session 22. Today I'm super stoked because we're bringing back an old guest, a good friend of mine who really impressed people the first time around - Chris Guthrie from MakeMoneyOnTheInternet.com who was our guest on Session #10 - where he talked about his success with the amazon.com affiliate program, and today we're sort of doing a round table discussion (well, i don't know if you can call it a round table since there's only two of us - but anyways) we're going to be discussing anything and everything about affiliate programs - selling products as an affiliate - how to maximize your click through rates, where to find products you can promote and just a number of tips, tricks and inspirational stories from our own experience that we're happy to share with you today.

Now, for you absolute beginner's out there, selling products as an affiliate works like this - you find a product that SOMEONE ELSE HAS CREATED (or maybe it's a service - it could be a service too), and you generate leads or send people over to that product, and if any of those people make a purchase, you get a piece of the profit, or a commission.

And the reason why affiliate marketing is so beautiful, and attractive is - well, there are a few reasons. First, you don't have to create the products yourself - they are already made for you by someone else. I've created my own products before (and I still continue to do so), but it requires a huge investment in time, especially if you want it to be a product you can be proud of and one that sells well. With affiliate marketing, you don't have to worry about that.

Secondly, all you have to worry about is driving traffic through your links or channels to that product, and that's it. The product owner takes care of the payment processing, the customer service, any returns and all that stuff. Even setting up the sales page all the way down to the copy that's written along with that product - you don't have to worry about that either.

And thirdly, and most importantly for many, is that it's a relatively simple process to understand, and you can make good money from it! Last month, I believe I hit about \$18,000 in commissions from various affiliate programs that I'm a part of, which includes things totally unrelated to making money online or my blog, such as wedding invitations or solar panels. Chris, of course, sells a lot of stuff from Amazon, and we'll get into his exact figures in a second, but it's just really impressive and hopefully together we can provide you with some good tips today.

So without further adieu, Chris - dude, welcome back to the show buddy!

Pat: All right Chris welcome back to the show. Thank you so much for being back.

Chris: Thanks Pat I'm glad to be here.

Pat: Today we're going to be talking a lot about affiliate marketing. Everything that the beginner needs to know all the way to some expert techniques and strategies we can use to increase our sales or to finally get sales if people aren't using it. First of all I want to start from the very beginning. I know you do a lot of stuff. You sell products. You have courses. You create wordpress plugins. Sort of like what I do trying to do as much as possible but I know you're an affiliate marketer at heart. You crushed it with Amazon sales on all your niche sites but I really want to ask you what was your first experience with selling something as an affiliate?

Chris: I think the first thing would be going back to one of the very sites I started about six years ago was gamingvidz.com with a z. people that have been to my blog whatever know I've talked about that site and how many mistakes I've made but the first thing was through that site using commission junction's affiliate program.

Pat: I know what commission junction is but all the people don't know what that is. That's at cj.com and it's basically, would you classify it as a CPA site or a cost per acquisition site?

Chris: It's basically just an affiliate program site and companies use commission junction and their infrastructure to set up an affiliate program through them rather than having their own in house affiliate program.

Pat: So you can sign up for cj and see a bazillion different companies in all different types of industries on there giving you the opportunity to sell products for commission.

Chris: They were one of the first companies I believe, I wasn't actually doing affiliate marketing way back or the mid 90s but I believe they're one of the first companies to get into this space and yes I mean there's companies on there that, literally thousands of them and you can just sign up as an affiliate and promote products from their company.

Pat: What did you use for gamingvidz?

Chris: I actually don't remember all the ones. I know I tried one through Newegg which was kind of an interesting thing because when you think computers for them but there is a capture card like a device which allows you to capture video from your game console that I was really referring as an affiliate through there and that would have been through I believe, I can't remember who it was I think it was Newegg.

Pat: It's all good. I mean that's really cool to hear all that. You've definitely come a very long way. Now you primarily promote affiliate products through Amazon. We all know this. we talked about this the last time you came on the show but how much product have you pushed since you've started really?

Chris: Yes. I started in early January 2009 and by mid June or so I was doing several thousand dollars a month in total I've probably done close to a \$100,000 in total profit from Amazon would translate close to a \$1,500,000 in revenue.

Pat: It's crazy dude they must love you.

Chris: It's quite a bit of money but I know they have other publishers that are doing even more than that. I live in Seattle where Amazon is based as well and I've actually made contact with a few of them kind of trying to meet with them in person somehow.

Pat: You should. I mean a million and a half dollars isn't chump change. A lot of affiliate programs that I've been in. I've been their top affiliate or one of their top affiliates and they've invited me to places. they've given me gift baskets which is really cool but if you ever end up having your own product and having a sales force of an affiliate team working for you it's definitely a great thing to do because that really had a good impression on me and the company I was promoting for. It definitely made me want to promote for them. That actually leads into my first experience with affiliate marketing. As many of you know I have a website at greenexamacademy.com where I was blogging about the lead exam. I wrote a study guide for it. I created an audio guide for it and more guides in the future. That basically is what launched me into this make money online space and smartpassiveincome.com as well but my first real experience with affiliate marketing was on that site.

What happened was I noticed, I had Google adsense up on there for a while and this one company was always showing up on every single ad on every single page and I checked them out. It actually was a company that I had used to help me pass the exam. It was a practice exam site. I didn't have any practice exams on my own site and I had actually thought about creating my own but when I found this company I remembered the great experience I had with them and I was like hey wouldn't it be awesome if I just sold their product on my site and again I didn't know how it all worked so I basically, I didn't know any research to see if they were in commission junction which they're not or they had their own or they were in any other affiliate networks and they weren't.

Basically I actually just contacted them and I said hey do you guys have an affiliate program and they said we do. They set me up. They just gave me a special link that I just put on my site and that link brings people over to their site, offers the practice exams. It has my little cookie in it so I always get credit for any time someone purchases after going through that link. For over two years now I've just had those links up my site. I don't do any promotional work whatsoever. It's just all organic traffic coming to the site and wanting to get practice exams. I also embedded that link within the eBook as well that I sell which is one of the strategies we can talk about later but it's a perfect kind of supplement to the study guide that I give away. I get a check in the mail every two weeks for about \$2000 or \$1500 to \$2000 from that company just because I asked if they had an affiliate program. A lot of times you'll go through and you might see a company that has a perfect product for your particular website but they aren't in cj or they even don't show that they have an affiliate program because at the bottom of the website sometimes they'll have

something that says partners or affiliates. It's where you can sign up but sometimes you just have to ask. That's one of my tips for you if you're having trouble finding the perfect product to promote as an affiliate for your website. Do you have any other tips as far as finding good products to sell on your site?

Chris: Yes. Actually even just piggybacking off of what you said. If you just even contact the company and see that you're promoting their products for. I mean Amazon is a huge company so I mean I kind of just reached out to them just because I'm based in Seattle and wanted to try and meet up with them since they're local but companies that aren't nearly as huge as Amazon they're still making a lot of money online or driving a lot of revenue but if you are an affiliate with them you can find out things like getting higher payouts. You can also get just other types of perks that you might not normally get if just didn't ask. Again just kind of parroting what you said about just asking. You can apply that to almost anything else in the affiliate relationship.

Pat: Yes, totally. A lot of people and I want to get your take on this. A lot of people feel like they're not comfortable with promoting a product that they really don't know that much about. It just seems like it's a product that would work well but they don't know much about it like what do you do if you have a website about dog training and you want to sell dog training products as an affiliate. A lot of people aren't comfortable with just picking a random one out there and selling it. What would you recommend to do as far as making sure that product is good or is there any place to, would you even recommend buying that product before promoting it or what are your thoughts on that?

Chris: If we're going with the dog training niche I would just immediately just think of clickbank.com. they're huge, pretty much the biggest online marketplace for digital goods and even on the sales page of any type of dog training product or any product for that matter they're going to have some where you can contact them. Clickbank actually requires you to have an email address or a link to a contact page. You know that if it's being sold on clickbank then there is a way to contact the owner. You can just contact them and ask them and say hey I have a website in this niche. I'm getting this much traffic or you can say I've read this in the articles etc. and you could say I like to just check out your product. Can you send me a free copy so that I can investigate and decide how I want to promote it? at that point thought either, most of the time I'd say 90% of the time or more they're going to say sure he's the link. Here's an access, here's an account etc. because they want you to help promote it and help them get more sales. Likewise I'll do the same thing if people ask me.

Pat: That is actually a really great tip I didn't even think of. Obviously you probably want to have some type of website setup already so they can see it. So you're not just like a person who is just asking to get that product just to get that product but I didn't even know that clickbank required that. that's really good and I think that if any company is serious about their product they're going to contact you, give you that product and be confident that that is something that you're going to be comfortable promoting.

Chris: Exactly and then also even if we're continuing to talk about clickbank, the marketplace

shows you gravity which is just basically a way of describing how popular the product is. If you see it has a higher gravity and you're looking in the dog training niche then you can always just look for the one with the most highest gravity item is and generally speaking it should be all right. It should be a decent product. I shouldn't say it will be awesome because if you're looking at internet marketing products then sometimes there's really high gravity but they're not really quality products. They just have people that are promoting them heavily.

Pat: I think going along with that as far as getting the product in hand and making sure it's a good one I think that's key here. That's something that I really always do especially on smartpassiveincome.com because I can't and even though I have the opportunity to and I'm sure you do too. I mean I get offered JV, joint venture offers all the time for all sorts of products. I mean there's a lot of opportunity to just post a blog post about a new product or make even more money but really for the long term process if you want to have success with affiliate marketing you're going to have to promote a product that you're confident with. You're going to have to promote a product that I mean like you have to be able to kind of sort of be the customer service for that product. Even though part of the attraction behind promoting a product as affiliate is you can just get people to go through a link and then you're done with them. Then you might make money.

I think that a true, great affiliate marketer is someone who stands by that product even though it's not there's and would be able to answer any question about that product. That would just boost the confidence of any buyer in my opinion.

Chris: Definitely. I think especially in this space where we both have blogs. there's so many people that are kind of really shady so it really only takes one time of kind of breaking someone's trust you're going to kind of lose that person and then they might become someone that that's going to be saying bad things about you especially in a space where you have a blog and you're trying to build a reputation that is key but even if you have another blog say on some type of a product. You can become the authority in that type of space. That's what I did with netbookreviews.com. My goal was to be the absolute best source where people come to find reviews in netbooks. That's why I was going about getting the actual netbooks in hand so that I could review them over video and provide more in depth detail whereas other affiliates and other people that rank in Google were just copying content from cNet or other top review sites and just publishing those.

Pat: Let's actually talk about netbook reviews if you don't mind. I think that is a fantastic successful case study that I'm sure a lot of the listeners would want to dig into if you don't mind?

Chris: Yes, that's fine. The only thing I really can't disclose is the total sale price...

Pat: Because you did sell that site for a significant amount of money which is awesome. Congratulations. I know that is kind of a new kind of model that you're kind of experimenting with as far as generating an income online. Not necessarily flipping sites but really building a high authority site and then selling them for large amounts of money so congratulations to you

Chris for all the success. Let's start from the beginning. How did you, how did netbook reviews is it .com?

Chris: Yes .com.

Pat: Where did that start?

Chris: Back in the fall of 2008 one of the very first netbooks first came out and it was back when they were using Linux as the operating system before Microsoft really recognized that as being a potentially huge market and I thought I've been doing these website things, running video game forums and other little niche sites trying to find ways to make money and I thought maybe I'll just use and this is kind of an original idea but to me it sounded like let's just try it. Let me just try to do a product review site on netbooks. I just kind of went down the list of looking at domains that were already registered and looking at ones that I could just buy from others and I ended up contacting the guy that owns netbookreviews.com. He registered it back in like 2001 or something. It was a long time ago and I ended up buying that domain name for I believe it was only \$250.

I think that I got a good deal but at the time too it was also seeing a trend too. I mean netbooks weren't even popular at that time when I first contacted the owner to buy the domain from him. He didn't even know what a netbook was. he just had the idea to make like an online, he thought that books would be called like netbooks and he would sell online a netbook store which was entirely possible back in 2001 but I just contacted him and started that site up in early January 2009 I think was one of the first posts and just really started writing netbook news. At that time I didn't have any reviews because there wasn't, I wasn't really trying to contact companies. Once I started making more money writing news posts and linking to products on Amazon I started contacting companies like Samsung, Sony, etc. and asking them to send me the netbooks. That actually worked pretty well. I mean...

Pat: They'd send you the notebooks?

Chris: Yes. They sent me; I probably reviewed at least 20 or 30 netbooks, maybe more.

Pat: Do you have them all at your house right now?

Chris: That's the thing with these types of companies most of the type it's a PR team that's in charge of them so if you ever wanted to get a product to review for your website you just search whatever the company name is say Samsung, Samsung PR or Samsung marketing. Something like that and you can kind of search through the results and you eventually find out who's in charge of it. I did that. I got these companies to send me out netbooks. I just kind of lead them. I kind of come from a sales background so I just kind of try to sell them on the idea that they should give me a netbook because I have a website that is about netbook reviews. I'm like this is how much traffic I'm getting or I wasn't getting a lot of traffic at that time I just wouldn't say that. I'd say I have a website about netbook reviews and I love to promote your products can

you send me out netbooks.

They sent those out. I didn't get to keep them that was the one downside otherwise I probably would have given them away as a promotion but certain items other companies that aren't selling as expensive an item maybe \$30 or \$50 or something, maybe even higher. They might even give it to your for free but with them they kind of had this strategy and this mentality down pretty solid. It was for years they've been giving out demo products for tech companies or tech sites to review.

Pat: That's really smart. How long after you started writing content until you were able to kind of get those companies on board and they start sending you products?

Chris: I remember on my lunch breaks back at my day job calling companies and just like I'd find out the number and I'll just all them like I was the salesman. I mean I think a lot of and this is just kind of general advice a lot of what I think kind of separates people that ended up doing well and people that aren't is just kind of being willing to throw yourself out there and kind of hustle to get something done and so I was contacting companies just during my lunch break when I used to work in an old job and ask them to send out the netbooks. I think that probably started around six to seven months after I started the site.

Pat: Did you have posts up every day or was it every week?

Chris: I built that site entirely while working full time, 40 to 50 hour a week sales job. It pretty much just when I got time when I got time when I got home. I spend maybe an hour or two a day kind of scouring the news and then also looking for other things that I can report on as well that people weren't talking about. From the time I started that site it was about a little over a year and a half before I ended up selling it. I was making a lot of money from the site and then also unlike when I got fired from my day job actually when I sold this site and kind of got fired from that site I got to actually keep a lot more money.

Pat: That's really cool. That's an amazing story. As far as keyword research and stuff did that play a role in this at all or you just happen to start ranking for this keyword after you started building it?

Chris: I think some of it had to do with the quality of the domain name. Obviously the site would rank for netbook reviews more easily than some other site. I think just having keyword in general on the domain name helps. It's a little bit less of a bonus now after Google's most recent update but from just my own sites and talking with other friends that are in this industry and doing SEO type stuff they're still seeing a bonus from the keyword domain names. It was that and also took the idea with most sites that I build is to try and be the best for that keyword.

Pat: What do you mean by the best?

Chris: For example with the netbook reviews when I first thought about building out this site

and I kind of looked at other, when I searched netbook reviews in Google I saw most people with the exception of cNet which is a huge media conglomerate owned by I believe CBS no one has really doing actual product reviews over review. I think one of the most key principles in marketing that I learned is that you've got to be different in some way than your competitors. Differentiation is really kind of what will set you apart and help you be successful or not. For me it was kind of trying to provide the best possible reviews and also I would try and do things like breaking netbook news as well. I got links by engadget and other sites as well like that that are really huge and that kind of helped as well. it wasn't even really focused on I'm linkbuilding right now rather I'm just making an awesome site and people are linking to it because it's awesome.

Pat: Great. That sounds more like an authority site I guess you could say because you want to be the best. You want to be the resource. When people think of netbooks and reviews for netbooks you want to be the site that everyone tells their friends about right?

Chris: Exactly.

Pat: I mean that's a great strategy. That's the same strategy I had with my niche site securityguardtrainingHQ.com. I do very minimal affiliate marketing on that site. Right now it's currently making a little over a thousand a month on adsense but I do link to Amazon and I do see some income coming from Amazon as well. The way that I do that is I actually have a post on there. It's called the top 10 security guard gear items. I forgot the exact title but it lists all the things that a security guard would need, why you would need them. I got really into depth what a security guard needs which is something that someone who visits my site would absolutely want. I have links to Amazon for each of those products boots, belts, flashlights, first aid kits and all that stuff. Actually that page gets viewed quite often on my site and it actually gets viewed quite often by direct links or direct traffic meaning people go directly there first. people are talking about that with maybe their co-workers or their friends or something or people are linking to it from other sites specifically which is pretty interesting and it goes along with what you're saying about wanting to be the best.

A lot of people get into this internet marketing stuff and they don't want to be the best. they just want to have the best chance of making the most money by building a billion websites that all rank for Google and all that when really the focus should be on the end user, the person who is going to be visiting your site because I mean you could build a site for Google but Google is always changing and Google isn't the one that is going to be providing the income for you. Really it's the people who click on those ads or the people who buy those products through your affiliate link. That can only be done through providing great value and like you said striving to become that best website. I mean I want securityguardtrainingHQ.com to be the best security guard training website out there. That's exactly what it is.

Let's move on. Let's talk about kind of the keys to having success with an affiliate program. Maybe you've found a product on cj.com or Amazon or clickbank or sharesale or some other affiliate network and you want to promote it for me and I'd like to get your take kind of on this too but I feel there's kind of two different routes here as far as promoting a product. It depends on

what kind of site you have excuse me. There's kind of two routes here. First is the kind of niche site route. We talked a little bit about the authority site route but the niche site route is really building sites for a specific product or a specific keyword and really the success on that depends on the work that is done before the site is even started.

For example keyword research, that is really the main thing and understanding that there are that many searches for this particular keyword which will hopefully be in your domain name, understanding that the competition is relatively low because if there's a lot of competition you could have the best site in the world but it's going to be pretty difficult to make your way into the top ten of Google which is where you want to be and also the linking strategies. I mean those are all super important things when it comes to making money with an affiliate program through a niche site but the rules are a little bit different when it comes to an authority site and I think of security guard training HQ is starting to become an authority site. It seems like netbookreviews although it is a niche site is also an authority site. In a way that it kind of has an audience based following almost.

The thing about going the authority site route and I'll just mention smartpassiveincome.com as an example. I make the most money out of that site by recommending or promoting products that really matter to those people that help them, that provide value for them, that add to my product line I guess you could say. They aren't even products that I've created but they add to my product line because they go exactly along with exactly the things that I'm teaching. Wanting to understand exactly how all those products work, becoming an actual sales rep for that particular product I guess you could say.

One of the big attractions and I've mentioned this before about affiliate marketing is you can just send people through a link and then just let it be. the company who owns that product will take care of everything else after that point but for an authority site the best way to go about it is to show people exactly how it's used to be there as a resource to use that for how to use that product and just really make people who are going to purchase that product comfortable about making that purchase.

Chris: Yes definitely. I think the niche versus authority site mentality is something where I like to do kind of both and the reason why I do both is just because niche sites even if I have the mentality of trying to make the best site you never know what Google might do and with one authority site and I guess we should kind of define the two. I think of an authority site being something where you have people that are coming back to read your site because they like the information or they're interested in making a purchase in that niche and they've recognized you as someone that they should trust and listen to your recommendations.

Whereas a niche site will be something where you've set up a site. You've created the content. Then your keyword to determine that it could be a profitable market and build some articles and it's kind of just there setting it and forgetting it. you and I come back and tweak things, add ads, add more content etc. but the more people coming in from certain search results, they're there once searchwise and then they're gone.

Pat: I think that is a great point with niche sites. I mean your goal with a niche site is to just get people to click on those links. really I mean provide them with value so that they do click on those links but I forget who it is that said, it might even have been you who said it but especially with Amazon your primary goal is to just get people on Amazon and let Amazon do all the work after they have visited your site and take them from there.

Chris: Yes. I mean if you're doing a review and you're looking at good things are comparison reviews between two similar products because in that way you can kind of help take out the idea that they're trying to still decide about what to buy because you kind of want them to make up their mind what they're going to be buying before they leave your site through your affiliate link because then they're more likely to buy within that 24 hour cookie timeframe.

Pat: That's for Amazon right? The 24 hour cookie?

Chris: Yes and if you're dealing with other affiliate programs through sharesale, linkshare, commission junction, etc. etc. the cookie length will vary. they'll be less of that focus on trying to get them to buy because you can kind of just sent them there and you know you have the next 15 or 60 days depending on the affiliate program to get them to buy. That's one strategy I guess.

Pat: Yes. I mean let's just knock down a whole bunch of strategies we can use on our websites whether it's a niche site or an authority site or whatever. Just share as much as we know. I mean just unique strategies that we've used or we've noticed other people use to promote products as affiliates. I'll start and I've mentioned this earlier is I imbed affiliate links in some of my eBooks. I mean why not especially if it's a product that is very, goes perfectly with whatever it is that you're trying to whatever it is that you have in your eBook whether you sell that eBook or whether you give that eBook away for free. I mean that's the beauty about eBooks is it's electronic. People can actually click on those links and get sent off wherever so why not have affiliate links in there. I mean you want to disclose that those are affiliate links and really the trick is not really a trick but just to be honest about it and let them know that this is a product that you can get through my affiliate link that will help you do whatever it is that I mean that they're trying to do, whatever it is that you're trying to teach them or help them do and then more than likely a lot of those people are going to thank you for that information in helping them with giving them kind of the right direction and they'll pay you back by going through your affiliate link.

That's my first strategy. I did that with my lead exam study guide. I put affiliate links with my eBooks in there and also in my eBooks, eBook the smart way which you can get at ebooksthesmartway.com. I have affiliate links in there too just for little things like mindmeister mind mapping account or ejunkie and because of that ejunkie sends me a little bit of money every month and so does mindmeister.

Chris: Yes and I think that stuff that you do on your blog can really be kind of applied to other niches that aren't even related to online business. even just in talking about products that you

recommend and say that are good the same thing can be applied to if you're doing a site that is kind of product oriented or even if it was some service oriented thing. You could just do like bestsellers, bestseller type posts where you could do just product comparison posts. People always looking between two different popular models of products. There's other things too. If you did video reviews on YouTube you could link using your affiliate link in the actually YouTube location. You could link to Amazon from inside that area and those are a few strategies as well for just in terms of linking additionally.

Pat: Yes. I mean I think that is a great idea. The kind of dual comparison post are great. I'm just thinking of classic comparison type things like do I use eJunkie or ClickBank for an affiliate or do I buy an iPhone or do I get an Android phone. All those types of things and if you can convince a person one way or the other. I mean you can have links for both things on there and potentially make money no matter what decision they make.

Chris: Yes and I think a lot of it too just comes back to when you do your initial niche results not to take a step back but I mean if you really want to think about the niche not only in terms of how much traffic it gets but it also just what can be sold. With the NetbookReviews site it was pretty clear. I could just sell netbooks. I've had multiple failed websites that I've talked about before in the past. They weren't really selling anything so it was kind of...

Pat: Like what? Do you have an example? I'll share one after you share one.

Chris: I have a few. I'm trying to think of which ones. It's embarrassing. You go first.

Pat: This is embarrassing too but I created a site one time based purely on keyword research, keywords looked excellent and it was at howtomemorizeanything.com. It was a site where I was going to talk about memorization and helping people with passing tests and stuff like that. I wrote stuff for maybe a couple weeks and then it just totally died. My passion behind it, there was absolutely none of that. Now that I think about it after you mentioned what you're talking about as far as products what the heck was I going to sell? Now there could be potential for iPhone apps to help you study or flashcards or something. I mean it wasn't going to work so I just, that site's gone now. I was actually pretty proud of what it looked like though. Too bad it's gone.

Chris: I had a few. I mentioned the video game site before and even at the height of its popularity it was only making about \$500 a month which sounds like...

Pat: Still not bad...

Chris: I mean that was half a million page views. That is a lot of traffic to be only be making that much money but when I started just recently just after I had success with Amazon and other niches it's almost as if I didn't learn my lesson. I just really wanted to keep coming back to the gaming industry niche but I started pawndblog.com which was just a blog that I thought, because games are getting more advanced in the sense that you can take pictures inside the

actual game. I used to play halo a lot and you can take pictures inside halo of different kills or whatever and I thought it would be funny to make almost like a failed blog but for the digital gaming realm. I thought it was a decent idea and unique.

Pat: It sounded like a decent idea.

Chris: Yes but then I could probably could have spent some more time on really trying to build it out. There's not just a ton of money in that space unless you have an absolute insane amount of traffic and you almost want to look to it just the way other sites are making money in the niche before you go into it. When I look at failed blog and the other sites they're making money from just CPM banner ads and adsense etc. and they have huge networks of sites kind of all interlinking between each other showing pictures of people following cats with weird drawings on them and stuff whereas I just had this one thing. I don't know it just wasn't a very good idea.

Pat: I mean this just shows you everybody out there listening that in this space you can have a few bad ideas. I mean you can have a million bad ideas. it just takes really one good idea to really, to get to a point where you're just making good money and sometimes it'll will take a bunch of fails before you can find your place in the online world and get something going there that you're really passionate about and that will generate you and income. It may take a while. I'm sure a lot of you think I've gotten pretty lucky and I have but I've also like Chris failed quite often too in a lot of different projects. That just shows you, it's so funny that you mentioned pawnedblog. I think that is a great idea but you're right a lot of the failed blogs and stuff they also have actual hard cover books that they they've been selling at places like urban outfitters or something. That is another monetization strategy. I've noticed that they've gone into but that's a whole book publishing and a whole other mess of issues there.

Another strategy that I use which is appropriate to mention here on the podcast is actually using podcast. Chris actually has a brand new podcast make money on the internet. You can find them on iTunes and I actually have a link to your podcast in my show notes and actually you are now featured at this moment. In the new noteworthy section in the overall business category so congratulations.

Chris: No worries. You sent me the picture of it. I wasn't even that much of an iTunes user myself so I didn't even know where to find that.

Pat: You're up there. A big, bold picture of you right at the top where people click on. You've got, I think you have like 18 reviews. I'm stalking you by the way. Podcasts are a great way to do some affiliate marketing on. with anything a podcast or social networks or blogs or emails or anything my take is at least for authority sites and sites where there's a huge audience base and people that come back to me for more information the last thing that you want to do is just pound people, pound your followers with affiliate offer after affiliate offer with products that your probably even don't know much about or even if you do know about them you don't want to wear them out. Your primary purpose shouldn't be to make money it should be to provide great information that will help them achieve something or help them get to the next level somehow.

Going back to the podcast, one of the things I do is I always mention a few things. I always mention a URL. You've heard me say this. keywordresearchwebinar.com. that's actually a webinar that I did and the webinar is another strategy and that kind of plays along with this but as far as the podcast is concerned that link or that URL keywordresearchwebinar.com forwards to a particular page on my blog where I show a replay of a webinar where I talk about keyword research. That's one part of the strategy actually using a podcast, buying a domain that you could use to forward to certain areas.

Chris I know you're new to the podcast but if you ever have any podcasts or something that you want to sell that might be something that you might want to do. Get a real quick easy URL that you could share on the podcast. That is a lot easier to go to since you're talking and people can't click on your voice. I don't know if you're done that already.

Chris: Yes. I have chrisloves.com. I've used that just like a short forwarding URL system. I don't use individual domains but yes I can see that...

Pat: Chris loves whatever right?

Chris: Yes and I just use a forward slash or not a forward slash but I just use like a URL redirection program.

Pat: That is pretty smart too. Great but on that keywordresearchwebinar.com page which is on smartpassiveincome.com that shows a replay of keyword research webinar. It's about an hour and half long actually but it's really high quality information, totally free, people can understand exactly how to do keyword research there and within that presentation show people how to use a product called market samurai which is a keyword research and SEO competition analyzation tool. I don't force people on it. I just say this is what I use to do it and I also offer the kind of free ways to do the same research but people they understand how much time it takes to do it free so they get interested in the product and I show them how easy it is to use because a lot of people are intimidated by using new products like that and literally every single day I get a couple, two, three, sometimes up to four or five commissions from that one keyword research webinar webpage. It's amazing, that's \$4000 or \$5000 extra a month for me which is awesome.

Again I'm providing people with content. They're happy to get a product that helps them with their keyword research. It's a win-win for everybody. as far as the podcast is concerned I have that really quick and easy URL, forwards to a high value page where it shows a product that I recommend and also the thing with the podcast, this goes along with the blog or YouTube videos is once you post it it's up there forever. Forever how long the internet is alive and people can always go back to it. I mean people are listening to some of my first podcast episodes where I have other URLs that forward to other things that do something similar but once you post it up there it's like a little seed that you plant and every time that someone listens to it or comes across your video or reads that blog post that has your affiliate link embedded in it. It's like a little seed that sprouts and it has the potential to earn money for you.

Chris: I think there's something to be said to just in terms of different strategies. I mean the podcast can work really well for your blog and likewise too even with just the netbook site. I know we've mentioned that example a few times now but for that site it was just really easy to do video because doing a review people like to be able to see the product in action and you kind of almost want to pick the medium that best fits your goal and the purpose of the site. that can vary entirely what kind of a niche you're really operating in. that's always something to consider when you're really kind of looking at your niche and then to try and determine not only how other people are making money in that niche already because there are still niches that you can get into and make money obviously because you and I are both doing it every day but there are always ways to do something different than what is already out there.

If you came into a market where there wasn't a podcast then that is one way if you're trying to be an expert on a specific niche. That's one way you'll be able to promote your affiliate products and maybe be positioned more as an authority and also more trustworthy because people can hear your voice.

Pat: Absolutely. We could talk a whole other hour about podcast and the benefit of them. I rank number one for blogging right now which is pretty cool and number two for online business and all these crazy things where people are finding me on iTunes. iTunes is a great resource. Again check out Chris' new podcast. Just look up make money on the internet and you'll find him or look up Chris Guthrie in the search bar.

Now this last part here I want to just go back and forth. Do a quick fire kind of lightning round section. We'll go back and forth. You give a tip, anything to do with affiliate marketing on your website and how to help the people out there listening, get some better commissions and higher click through rates or whatever. We'll go back and forth just for a few minutes here before we finish up. These are for people who have a blog already or maybe they have the opportunity to become the affiliate for a product or maybe they're already affiliates and they just aren't getting any income.

I'll start off and this is something that I know you've talked about a lot. Put links in your posts. I mean this might sound obvious but a lot of people especially with Amazon they put this little widgets on there and stuff but the best thing that has worked for me is actually including the links within the posts within your actual paragraphs that you're talking in.

Chris: Yes, definitely. I think that just by adding more links in general is going to help you improve your income because if you just put a single link at the very end of the post then some people might not even read through the entire article that you've written but if you kind of toss them in where appropriate throughout the post then you're going to have more opportunities for them to make more money. I would just even say this link as many times as possible and just try to make sure it looks natural.

Pat: Yes, exactly. Your turn.

Chris: The other thing too is just linking to images with products for your physical product affiliate using Amazon's affiliate program then you can link to an image of a product. You can do this manually through your coding but I actually made a wordpress plug-in. it's called easy Azon and then you can actually just search by a keyword or search by the actual item number.

Pat: In wordpress?

Chris: Yes within wordpress so you can actually create a text link or an image link for a product information block so that you can kind of do the things we're suggesting to help you out and at least for Amazon this would help you if you're looking to make money in that manner.

Pat: Yes and you created this product pretty much for you to help yourself too right?

Chris: I basically just had a lot of functionality in mind based on what I found was making me the most money and talked to a local developer here in Washington as well to help partner up and create it.

Pat: Okay, cool. I'll put a link on that. I'll put a link to the wordpress plug-in in the blog post. Again create links on another product that seems to be helping. I've actually heard other people talked about it already so that's great. Now I'll go next. I'm going to take this example from you cause we're talking about Amazon already as well but this doesn't have to just pertain to Amazon is to mention the discount prices when you're promoting these products especially on little product niche sites because I don't know if you've noticed but when you go to amazon.com and you look at a price it always shows kind of a retail price and then the sales price.

There's your immediate pitch right there. You can say click on this link to save 20% now or the discount price is huge. People see that and consciously or subconsciously they want to go buy it because they're saving money.

Chris: Yes the other thing too is you can if you're talking about discounts you can also locate just different holidays that come around. almost every company will do some type of promotion around every holiday and if you're taking the advice we suggested earlier and kind of building your relationship with your affiliate manager at these different companies they might be able to even do special deals for just you to be able to kind of promote to your audience for different products.

Pat: Nice. That was your tip. The holiday thing?

Chris: There we go.

Pat: I thought that was good. Another thing is to track your links and really keep track of your statistics. I think that's huge. A lot of people put up websites. They have all these ads in the sidebar but I doubt that many of those people how do that actually know if those are converting

or not or actually if they're getting click through. I mean they're probably know if they're actually converting but they don't know what the conversion rate is. How many people are clicking on those links versus how many people are buying through them? I mean a lot of people keep those up on there just because that's what everyone else does but why would you put those ads on there or those little 1.25 by 1.25 boxes in the sidebar of your blog if they're not getting any clicks or they're getting clicks and they're not making any sales. Really test, track your affiliate links. One easy way to do that is you could use a URL shortener. There's two that I could recommend. One is called prettylink, another one is called gocodes. they pretty much do the same thing and they allow you to put a big huge, any type of affiliate link in there that has a bunch of numbers and letters and characters in it and then it lets you create a really nice looking URL like smartpassiveincome.com/bluehost. That's actually my bluehost link.

That will be nice and easy for you to mention on a podcast or on a video if you do YouTube or even if you link to that particular affiliate product within the description in YouTube or in your blog. that's great but at the same time it lets you keep track of those links as well and I would create a different link even for the same product wherever you put it so top of the post, middle of the post, bottom of the post, sidebar. This post, that post, everywhere a post, post. I would just track as much as possible and I know it seems a little tedious but these tools really, really help you understand what's going on and not just go into it blind because the worst thing that you could do is just, I mean it's great that you're putting affiliate links on your site and hopefully they're products that will add to your product line and help your readers out but the worst thing you could do is just throw it out there and hope. I mean throw it up there and know what is going on.

Chris: Definitely. I think another thing too that you could do is if you are struggling with your banner ads even getting that many click through you're checking your stats and see that it's not doing well, you can actually just try and create your own types of advertisements. If you actually went to netbookreviews.com right now and check out right next to the featured rotating section that's just a simple text widget and it's basically a created advertisement linking to different products on Amazon and the idea is rather than having a banner ad that links to some netbook it's just simple text links.

If you wanted to actually create your own different types of, your own advertisement and use text links in your little block where you normally have would just have a banner. It's something different than what people will normally see and you can get more money and higher click through rates as well.

Pat: Great tip. Another one of my tips is to and I don't do this as much as I should but I know one person who does. His name is Cliff Ravenscraft. You've seen him on the blog before and on the podcast a couple of times actually. He creates video reviews of the things he's an affiliate for whether it's something like an email service or a product like the Kodak ZIA or some type of microphone or something. He creates a video, high quality video, talks about all the product features probably similar to what you do with the netbook reviews once and he has this blog with a substantially large following and he links people to those reviews not directly to the actual

product off of his site. He kind of intercepts them before and kind of convinces them even further and makes them feel more comfortable with their purchase before they go out and make that purchase. I mean that is a really smart thing to do and that is actually a really great way to promote affiliate products through social media. Instead of linking from Facebook or to Twitter to a specific affiliate product which is kind of a no-no you can link to a video post on your blog or a video review on your blog of a certain product and that is a little bit more accepted especially if it's providing high value and you have more of a chance of getting click through and you get traffic on your site at the same time.

Chris: Yes. I think another thing too is if you are and I guess I'm listening to these tips and kind of when we're both talking and thinking just kind of back to a lot of this really comes back to the niche research and what niche to really move into. I think you really just want to look at what the other competitors are doing and see how you can be different. I think in almost any niche and this is really different or it can be different for every niche but there are always things that you can be doing differently than what the competitors are. In the web where there is so many different choices of people to get their information from if you're looking to become a reliable, trusted authority on a specific space just see what you can do to be better than everyone else.

I know it's kind of general advice but it really did kind of help me in terms of having some success is what I really kind of try to come up with a more clear strategy to be successful at something.

Pat: That's totally great advice. I'm always looking at my competitors especially in the make money online niche, see what they're doing, see how I can improve and kind of feel in those gaps that they're not really filling in themselves. That's where kind of my income reports came from actually which has been as many of you know has been a huge success for my site. Something that is different that not everyone else was doing and it's been huge.

The last thing I want to mention, this will be the last tip because we should finish up here. I know we could talk for days about this but my last tip is if you cannot find an affiliate product and I know this might be the case for some. You listened to this whole session and you're like none of this matters to me because I can't find my own affiliate product. Well create your own product and I mean I've done it. Chris has done it. It's been fantastic. It's great because the profit margin is just huge. You get to keep all of it. You get to become the person behind the product and hopefully it's high value, something that your subscribers or readers or any of your website visitors can purchase and be happy about and then you'll kind of establish that relationship with them. It doesn't have to be an authority site. I've created products for some of my niche sites already which are selling and are doing pretty well too which gives me the opportunity now that I've collected their email addresses to hit them with another offer for another product in that same industry or an affiliate product that someone else is promoting in that same industry.

I mean it really opens up the avenues there for you. Again affiliate products are great because the product is already made. You don't have to worry about making it. The customer service is done by someone else although like I said earlier you should worry about that as well and as

far as payments and returns and all that stuff that's all handled by someone else and all you have to do is just sit back and as long as you can provide content give them an easy way to get them to go and find that product and purchase them from your site. I mean really make it easy for them. Don't pound it in their head but just make it easy for them in a natural way and you will begin to make money with your affiliate program.

Chris do you have any last tip that you just want to get out?

Chris: No. I think that we shared a lot of stuff. It would just get back to you really just got to try. Niche research is key and also trying to be better in some way what everybody else is doing already. I think that's probably the best advice I can give.

Pat: For sure. That is a perfect way to end this. Chris thank you so much. Congrats on your new plug-in easy Azon which is so relevant to this particular podcast so I'll leave a link in the show notes. For this you can get the show notes at smartpassiveincome.com/session22, no spaces to go directly to the show notes, directly to those links. Chris, thank you. I just want to drop you to website really quick or somewhere else where people can talk to you or find you.

Chris: The best way is probably to just go into my blog. It's makemoneyontheinternet.com and like Pat I do kind of lots of random things, make money and talk about it.

Pat: Yes that's what we do. Yes man thanks a lot. I appreciate it and you're always welcome on the show so we'll hope to have you back here sometime in the future.

Chris: All right. Thanks for having me.

Pat: Alrighty guys I hope you enjoyed that interview with Chris Guthrie from MakeMoneyOnTheInternet.com - definitely check it out, wonderful guy - crushing it with amazon, and as you can tell a lot of other things going on. He was kind enough to continue to offer the discount for his Niche Profit Course which is all about how to make money on Amazon - step by step - a discount just for SPI listeners.

So if you wanted to check that out you can go to smartpassiveincome.com/amazon

And that's it! Thank you so much for your time and attention and wonderful review on iTunes, all your kind words and comments on the blog.

Until next time - all the best to you. Stay healthy, stay safe and stay profitable. I'll talk to you soon.

Bye!