

DOWNLOADABLE SOFTWARE CODE OF CONDUCT

Merchants offering downloadable software must adhere to quality, non-adware or non-malicious standards and how affiliates also present software for download.

Introduction

This code of conduct is aimed at regulating the use of downloadable opt-in software monetised through the use of affiliate links.

This type of software when downloaded on a user's computer can take a number of different formats, including, but not limited to:

'Rebate catchers' used specifically by Reward / Loyalty and other incentivised traffic affiliates. This could be a pop up reminding users to collect points or cashback when browsing if they're not logged in or referred from the original affiliate site. The software will prompt you to earn the reward by clicking via an affiliate link.

Toolbars that sit within a web browser. These may be searchable and based on searches carried out within the browser.

Widgets that may be downloaded to a user's desktop featuring affiliate links within them.

Software that offers a specific non-affiliate functionality that also serves up additional advertising.

Although very few affiliates currently use these technologies, a number have been considering adding them to their current promotional methods in order to drive extra affiliate revenue.

Given the range of software available isn't always obvious, the code of conduct will help give affiliates, agencies, and merchants increased transparency about this additional source of traffic.

The code covers all downloadable software and crucially requires affiliates to split out any traffic and revenue generated through this technology from their other affiliate activity. Affiliates must also provide clear install and uninstall options.

When considering whether to work with affiliates offering this additional promotion, merchants should ask themselves the same questions they would ask about other types of affiliates; Commission Factory and agencies should be able to provide further guidance

Downloadable Software Code of Conduct

The following guidelines regulate the use of software applications that are monetised through affiliate links from the Commission Factory network.

An application is defined as an opt-in piece of software that is downloaded and installed on a user's machine that makes use of affiliate links.

The guidelines affect software applications only.

This may be, but is not limited to, toolbar or rebate catcher technology. The guidelines state that all such software applications that are funded through affiliate marketing should:

- Be distributed through intended download only from the publisher's website and be attached to an account on the publisher's website. The application should not be bundled with other downloads and end user consent is required at all times.
- Carry a clear unsubscribe option and make it as easy as possible for customers to remove the application from their machine. This must be through standard Windows/Mac add/remove functionality and naming convention must remain the same throughout. There should be no unnecessary attempts to talk the user out of uninstalling through use of confusing language.
- Not allow any form of automatic redirection. The user must interact by way of a click before any redirection takes place or a cookie is dropped.
- Not attempt to confuse customers.
- Make it clear which sales have come through cookies dropped by the application, as opposed to sales gained through clicks through other activity. Methods of doing this can be obtained by contacting Commission Factory.

The discretion of Commission Factory will be used when determining what is judged as misleading or confusing and is not confined to the examples above.

The emphasis will be on the affiliate to secure opt-in from individual merchants prior to launching the tool on their campaign.

For affiliates with applications already in operation, there follows a grace period of 60 days from the issuing of this code of conduct during which they will be required to secure opt in from merchants.

Again, Commission Factory will announce details of how this will be monitored for their merchants.

Affiliates should liaise with Commission Factory to determine how they go about approaching merchants.

