

## What's LinkShare, And Do I Need To Use It?

Online affiliate marketing is one of the most effective, cheapest and fastest ways to promote merchandise. With millions of people getting access to the Internet everyday, there's a great chance for a merchant to introduce his products and services to a wider market, thereby, maximizing his revenue.

Likewise, affiliate marketing is an excellent way to generate full-time income for a home-based affiliate marketer. For someone who is jaded of going through a grueling eight-hour work routine, affiliate marketing offers a great opportunity to earn big without wearing himself out—physically, mentally and emotionally.

In affiliate marketing, both parties are benefited since as the merchant earns from each item sold, the marketer likewise earns a commission.

If you are interested in affiliate marketing but are finding it hard to look for affiliate programs, affiliates or merchants, you can start by checking sites of various affiliate networks. Many affiliate programs in the Internet are being offered through an affiliate program network, which acts as a link between the merchants and individual affiliates.

Among the most popular is LinkShare, it is through it that merchants and affiliates meet. LinkShare maintains and manages affiliate marketing programs for a great number of merchants with various kinds of businesses, products and services. It also has over 6,000 affiliate site members in its network. It gains profit from the set-up fees, monthly account maintenance fees and commissions.

Joining networks like LinkShare can be of great help in establishing your online marketing business. Whether you are a merchant or an affiliate marketer, you need to research well on your partners in order to choose the best for you.

LinkShare provides the facility of acquiring access to a large network of advertisers (merchants) who offer their affiliate programs to publishers (affiliates) who are willing to promote their products. In the same manner, it gives the merchants access to a large network of affiliates who are searching for affiliate marketing opportunities.

LinkShare is especially beneficial for an affiliate in choosing his partners since he can find his options all in one location. It would be easier for him to compare products, commission rates and other benefits given by the merchant. The merchant usually just waits for interested affiliates to sign up in his affiliate marketing program but being in the network increases his chance to

promote his products to a larger market, thus, maximizing his potential to gain huge profit.

To help you decide whether to use large affiliate networks such as LinkShare or not, let us try to look deeper into its positive and negative sides. The primary advantage of LinkShare to you as an affiliate is convenience.

As earlier mentioned, you find different pieces of information about your choices simultaneously all in a single location, so you save time and effort looking for affiliate programs or merchants.

It's also easier to track your business partner's performance through monthly reports and statements, as well as its sales and commission rates, so you know whether the affiliate program is still worth continuing. If you have signed up for several affiliate programs, you can check all your statistics for each merchandiser you are affiliated with by logging in just once.

LinkShare helps you manage and maintain all records of your visitors' click-throughs and sales transaction. It takes care of your commissions and gives it to you monthly in lump sum. Especially when you have more than one merchant partner, it would be easier for you to manage your accounts and track your earnings when you are affiliated through a marketing program network. Furthermore, every information you get is accurate and secured, so you are protected from all the risk you might encounter. Above all, you can enjoy LinkShare's benefits for free. You just have to go to their site and register your website. Instantly, you get access to a great variety of affiliate programs available for you.

So, what's on the negative side? Although, it is indeed helpful to join affiliate marketing networks such as LinkShare, there are some disadvantages, too.

For one, merchants offer lower commissions to affiliates who partner with them through the third party program network. This because they still have to pay for the use of service and the technology provided by LinkShare.

Direct partnership with the merchant cuts costs of advertising through the network and so the affiliate has bigger potential to earn more. Moreover, it is possible that your payment may be delayed for a month or more since program networks would pay you only after the advertiser or the merchant has paid them.

Do you need to use LinkShare or other networks? It depends, actually. You can opt for direct partnership with the merchant, but this choice is not applicable

all the time. There are a lot of merchandisers who offer their affiliate program only through affiliate program networks and thus, you have no choice other than joining the network to get into the affiliate marketing program.

So you are faced with "take it or leave it" situation. But LinkShare and other program networks are not that disadvantageous. After all, whether you join it or not, earning big would depend more on your promotional strategies and persistence.