

holistic affiliate & partnership marketing

being part of the marketing mix

introduction

CMOs should consider integrating affiliate and partnership marketing into their overall marketing mix to capitalise on what their business is doing across other channels.

By doing so, they can avoid duplication of efforts, missed opportunities, and difficulty tracking results.



role of affiliate & partnership marketing

Affiliate and partner marketing is seen as both an acquisition channel and a vital performance channel due to the reward model on which it primarily operates.

Its key benefits are new customers, transparency and a strong ROI.

Usually, an affiliate program would be set up after establishing minimal foundational channels such as SEO and paid search first, which are important to drive enough traffic and awareness to a website to make an affiliate program enticing to partners and familiar to customers to increase conversion.

can help here too as well as any social presence.

Similarly, some basic PR and brand awareness

The role of the channel is to put your brand in front of new audiences beyond the search engines that SEO and PPC space covers. It collates many traffic sources, each with unique readership, audiences and user bases that may not ordinarily see your brand, and who may not primarily be searching to buy something however, if they are—there's also a partnership for that.

synergies with other marketing activity

paid search and SEO. A typical user journey being that customers and prospects discover a brand via an affiliate or partner initially, may perform research and product comparisons, go away for a consideration period and subsequently return to the website later via a search engine exhibiting stronger buying behaviour.

The affiliate channel supports several other channels. The most common being as previously mentioned, brand

Other channel synergies including advertising, PR, social media, influencers and general branding activity whether online or offline. Often there's cross over with digital PR teams who may manage influencer relationships, and their success metrics

are likely tied to upper funnel measurements, however it's possible to track them via your affiliate program in parallel to understand if campaigns drove any conversions. Affiliate and partner platforms can also attract many influencers and influencer networks, and therefore are a good source from which to build new influencer partnerships. For this reason, it's important the two channels, if managed separately, work in harmony with one another.

more familiar for customers to purchase through affiliate campaigns.

Many partner propositions operate across social channels to drive traffic to affiliate programs. Working with

Any brand awareness activity off and online such as TV, radio, and out of home will boost the performance of an

affiliate program. It will make your brand more recognisable and therefore more appealing for publishers and

and reach, with the added benefit of working on a cost per sale basis.

partners across social can boost your brands own social awareness by piggybacking off the partner audience

with other performance channels (aka how to make it easy for a cfo to understand)

A common misconception is that affiliate tracking should align with any existing marketing analytics such as

how to align reporting

The affiliate channel will always over track against GA reporting, due to the channel crossovers outlined previously linked to common customer behaviours for which partners should not be penalised. It's important to

Google Analytics. If an affiliate program is compliant with de-duplication (of transaction attribution) best

consider that affiliates fed into another channel positively, and therefore the partners' work in that conversion should be rewarded appropriately.

The ROI is likely to sit lower than paid search. Brand PPC obviously has a very strong ROI due to the customer buying behaviour of actually seeking out the brand on a search engine. It would likely sit below SEO and any

Programmatic can often provide a similar ROI or slightly better than affiliate, depending on the algorithm.

Budget for affiliate and partnership marketing should not be capped in the way other channels often are. This is due to marketing costs being tied to a sale, the ultimate measurement of performance, therefore spend directly

correlates with revenue and profit as long commission and technology costs are managed accordingly. Or put

internal email program, but be stronger than paid social, display and brand which sit further up the customer

simply, the channel is cost of sale.

practice is they should not.

- recommendations
- Set up as a minimum PPC and SEO before you embark on an affiliate program.
 Create brand awareness to boost program performance.
- Ensure harmony between digital PR and the affiliate team they are one and the same in many aspects.
 Adhere to de-duplication best practice policies.

https://iabaustralia.com.au/our-councils/affiliate-working-group/

- Account for a margin of difference between your marketing analytics.
 View the channel as cost of sale commercially it operates on the ultimate performance metrics of sale.
- Include the channel as an amplification of your above and below the line marketing, not in silo.
- include the charmer as an amplification of your above and below the fine marketing, nor in site

This series has been developed by the IAB Australia Affiliate and Partnership Marketing Working Group



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