

Affiliate Marketing for Content Creators — Workbook

This workbook turns the course into an affiliate system you can run this week. Each section maps to one course module and moves you from choosing programs to disclosing legally, placing links across YouTube, email, and your blog, and tracking every commission. Fill in the worksheets, run the exercises, and use the templates to score programs, build disclosures, and reconcile payouts.

Choosing the Right Affiliate Programs

Build a shortlist of programs that fit your audience and score highest on the numbers that drive income.

Exercise: Audience-to-Product Map

Spend 30 minutes listing what your audience already buys or asks about, then match each need to a product and a program that pays a commission for it. Aim for at least eight product-program pairs.

- What tools, gear, or services do your viewers and readers most often ask you to recommend?

- For your top three topics, which specific products would you genuinely endorse, and who runs an affiliate program for each?

- Which of those programs are network-based (ShareASale, Impact, Amazon) and which are in-house, and what is each one's commission rate and cookie window?

Worksheet: Program Scorecard

List your candidate programs and score each from 1 to 5 on the six course factors. Leave the total column blank and add it up yourself, then rank.

Program / merchant name

Network or in-house

Commission rate and type (one-time / recurring)

Cookie window (hours or days)

Audience-fit score (1-5)

Commission-economics score (1-5)

Cookie-window score (1-5)

Conversion-strength score (1-5)

Payout-terms score (1-5)

Brand-trust score (1-5)

Total score (fill in)

Checklist: Program Selection Checklist

- Listed at least eight product-program pairs tied to real audience demand
- Scored each candidate on all six factors and totaled the scores
- Confirmed each program's commission rate, cookie window, and payout terms from its own page
- Checked Amazon Associates rules if including Amazon (no email links; three sales in 180 days)
- Chose two strong programs to promote first and parked the rest
- Included at least one recurring-commission program to smooth income

Disclosure and Staying Compliant

Write platform-specific disclosures and confirm every placement meets FTC and program rules.

Exercise: Draft Your Standard Disclosures

Write one reusable disclosure for each platform you publish on, in plain language a viewer would notice before clicking. Keep them short enough to paste in seconds.

- What is your one-line YouTube description disclosure, and where exactly will it sit relative to the first link?

- What is your newsletter disclosure line, and will it go at the top of the email or directly above the first link?

- What is your blog in-body disclosure sentence, and do you also have a sitewide disclosure page linked in the footer?

Worksheet: Disclosure Placement Map

For each platform, write the exact disclosure text and where it appears. Confirm Amazon's required wording wherever Amazon links are used.

Platform (YouTube / newsletter / blog / short-form)

Exact disclosure text

Placement (before first link? spoken? on-screen?)

Amazon 'As an Amazon Associate' line included where needed (yes/no)

Sitewide disclosure page URL (blog only)

Saved as a reusable snippet (yes/no)

Checklist: Pre-Publish Compliance Checklist

- Disclosure appears clearly before the first affiliate link on this platform
- Disclosure uses plain language, not just a vague hashtag
- Checked the program's terms for platform restrictions (especially Amazon's no-email rule)
- No Amazon affiliate links placed in any email, PDF, or e-book
- Each link points to the correct product with the tracking ID intact
- Tested one link from a logged-out browser and saved a dated screenshot of the disclosure

Placing Links That Get Clicked

Integrate labeled, well-placed affiliate links into YouTube, newsletters, and blog posts.

Worksheet: YouTube Description Builder

Draft the top of a real video description using the course structure: disclosure first, then a labeled link block. Plan the pinned comment and the verbal call-to-action too.

Disclosure line (top of description)

Top affiliate link 1 (labeled, e.g. 'Microphone I use:')

Top affiliate link 2 (labeled)

Top affiliate link 3 (labeled)

Pinned-comment text (repeats the single best link)

Verbal call-to-action and the moment in the video to say it

Exercise: Newsletter Placement Drill

Plan one newsletter issue that recommends a tool you use. Lead with value, then place a single labeled affiliate link, and protect deliverability.

- What useful thing will you teach or recommend before the affiliate link appears?

- How will you label the link in context, and where does the disclosure go in this email?

- Are you using a branded redirect or your provider's link feature instead of a bare URL, and is your sending domain authenticated?

Worksheet: Blog Format Planner

Pick a blog format for your next post and map where links and the disclosure go. Choose the format that matches your readers' buying intent.

Chosen format (comparison/roundup, tutorial, resource page, review)

Target product and program

Disclosure sentence above the first link (yes/no, text)

Top recommendation placement (near the start?)

Comparison table or button links planned (yes/no)

Link-management tool to use (Pretty Links / ThirstyAffiliates / none)

Checklist: Link Placement Checklist

- Most important link and disclosure are in the first two lines of the YouTube description
- Pinned comment repeats the single most relevant link
- Every link is labeled with what it is, not a bare URL
- Newsletter leads with value and keeps a healthy text-to-link ratio
- No Amazon links in the newsletter
- Blog links are managed through a plugin so destinations update in one place

Tracking Commissions and Scaling Income

Build one view of clicks and commissions, reconcile payouts, then scale your winners.

Worksheet: Tracking Setup Worksheet

Define how you will attribute earnings to each placement so you know what works. Use distinct tracking links and UTMs per surface.

Distinct tracking link or sub-ID per placement (yes/no, scheme)

UTM source/medium/campaign convention for links to your own pages

Sub-affiliate IDs used where supported (ShareASale / Impact)

Click-logging tool (Pretty Links / network dashboard)

Master spreadsheet location

Reconciliation day each month

Exercise: Monthly Reconciliation Run

Once a month, pull each network's report and match it to money received. Compute the key metrics in the Commission Tracker template and note reversals. Leave every computed cell blank to fill in yourself.

- Which placements drove the most clicks, and what was each one's conversion rate and EPC?
 - How much commission is pending versus confirmed across all networks, and did any reversals post?
 - Did each network's reported payout match what actually landed in your bank or PayPal?
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Worksheet: Scale Decision Worksheet

Use last month's data to decide what to do more of and what to drop. Rank by EPC and total commission, then pick concrete next actions.

Top two placements by EPC

Top two programs by total commission

Low-EPC program to drop or stop promoting

New content to create around each winner (tutorial / comparison / review)

Recurring program to add in a winning topic

Rate or cookie improvement to negotiate, and with whom

Checklist: Scaling Checklist

- Tracked at least one full month of clicks, conversions, and commissions
- Ranked placements and programs by EPC and total commission
- Refreshed links on best-performing existing content
- Created at least one new piece around a winning product
- Reconciled every network payout against money received
- Set aside a percentage of payouts for taxes and saved year-end statements

Your Action Plan

1. Map your audience's real buying needs to at least eight product-program pairs
2. Score candidate programs on the six factors and choose two strong ones, including one recurring
3. Write reusable, plain-language disclosures for YouTube, email, and your blog and save them as snippets
4. Add a disclosure before the first affiliate link on every platform and a sitewide page on your blog
5. Place labeled affiliate links in the first lines of your YouTube description and a pinned comment
6. Send a value-first newsletter with one labeled affiliate link and no Amazon links
7. Publish a comparison, tutorial, or resource post with in-context links and a link-management plugin
8. Set up distinct tracking links, sub-IDs, and UTMs so every placement is attributable
9. Reconcile each network's report against money received on a fixed day each month
10. Rank by EPC, create more content around winners, drop losers, and set aside money for taxes

