

Protecting Your Profits

“How to stop thieves from stealing your affiliate checks”

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Introduction

If you are promoting affiliate programs in the conventional manner, then without a doubt you are losing money. By conventional manner, I am referring to adding your unique affiliate identification to the URL of the program you are promoting.

For example, one of the programs I actively promote is Marlon Sander's Amazing Formula. When I signed up as an affiliate, I was assigned the reseller ID number 172748. And, according to instructions, promoted the program with the following link: www.amazingformula.com/cgi-bin/t.cgi/172748

This is common practice and in theory the system works. And in reality it works to a point. However, many commissions are lost when people either decide to go to the site after removing the affiliate ID: www.amazingformula.com (aka "Bypassing") or signing up as an affiliate themselves and then ordering through their own link (aka "Hijacking").

Now, in the above example they cannot earn a commission on their first sale with Marlon anyway so replacing IDs would not be to anyone's advantage. But in most cases it would be, and you would never know that you lost a commission.

By using one of the methods I will suggest in this report, you will be able to increase your profits by 300 – 400%. Some are more bulletproof than others and of course the better the solution, the better the result. In my typical reporting fashion I will cut to the chase and give you the bottom line on what I have tested and discovered.

Solution #1: Redirecting

This is for you, if:

- You don't want to spend any money.
- You are able to upload a file to your server.
- You will settle for the least effective but better than nothing solution.

If you redirect a URL, you will advertise a link that will look like:

`www.URL.com/whatever`

However, it will send people to your affiliate site. Keep in mind though, the address bar in the potential customers web browser will display the URL that you sent them to and not `www.URL.com/whatever`.

Here is what you do:

1. Make a new directory and give it a one word name that relates to the product.
2. Create a text document with the following:

Redirect /DIRECTORY `http://www.DOMAIN.com/affiliateID`

1. Substitute: DIRECTORY with the name of your directory.
2. Substitute: `http://www.DOMAIN.com/affiliateID` with your affiliate URL.
3. Put text document in the directory and upload the directory to your public directory in your server.
4. Change text document name to: `.htaccess`

That's it. And that is what I did until I discovered some much better solutions. And if that seemed difficult and/or you don't understand, don't worry about it. You too will know uncover some far superior methods in the next few pages.

Solution #2: Pointing

Pointing is similar to redirecting but is used to redirect one specific domain to another domain. However, once they are pointed and redirected to the other domain, the address bar may still show your affiliate URL and is still vulnerable to attack <=;

Why the address “may” still be visible has nothing to do with the method of redirecting or pointing. Many web sites, for example MyBizKit.com, a complete system for automating your online business (the one I use for almost everything) hides your affiliate code for you. By the way, you can earn 25% recurring income as an affiliate of MyBizKit.com. Check it out when you have a chance and try the system for yourself.

Most good domain registration companies do provide free domain pointing. Some charge as much as \$5.00 per month for this service, but that’s a rip off. Anyway, since many programs do not hide your affiliate link from the address bar, pointing alone is not the best method of protecting your income.

You can take pointing to another level when you add masking. When you mask a domain, the pointed to domain name remains in the address bar. For example, I have registered the domain name www.synergydomains.com and it is pointed to http://www.secureserver.net/default.asp?prog_id=synergy and is masked too. So, when someone clicks a link to, or types in their address bar the URL www.synergydomains.com they are sent to the long URL above but may not even realize they were pointed to a different URL. Masking only costs around \$5.00 for a whole year.

I am not pointing and cloaking Synergy Domains to protect affiliate commission because there is no affiliate program and it is my company. Rather, I do it to avoid the long URL. This strategy may serve you for a variety of purposes too.

Solution #3 – Server Side Cloaking

This is for you if you do not know how (and do not want to learn how) to upload a file to your web server. It is quite economical if you want to point and cloak to a lot of domains. It has other advantages too.

Pros:

- You can submit your affiliate site to search engines.
- There is an easy to use control panel.
- You do not need any technical skills.
- Unlimited cloaked redirection links with one account.
- Low cost (\$39 per year, including domain registration) at time of writing.

Con:

- Viewing the source code will reveal your true link.

The company and service I recommend if you go this route is truly top notch. As for the code showing, if someone really wants to bypass or hijack you, they will. The more hoops they need to jump through the better though. Using this service, your links will look like this: <http://special.NameStick.com>

The “special” is referred to as a sub-domain. It can be a number, a word or words or anything you want. You set up a new sub-domain for each affiliate program redirection. Although, with one account you have unlimited sub-domains, you may want to have some dedicated accounts.

If you heavily promote one particular program, say... www.nichemagic.com for example <=; You could register www.visitnichemagic.com. No sub-directory and no hint that you are representing an affiliate program.

Here is some more information from the company that provides this service:

- It automatically forwards your domain to any link you want (an affiliate link or another website link) using advanced cloaking - resulting in as high as **327% increase in clicks over the regular affiliate link**. Would you like to **triple** your results with the same effort?
- It is **cloaked** (forwarded inside an invisible frame) which means instead of just redirecting to the website, **YOUR domain name STICKS in the browser's "address" bar**. Finally, you can **permanently** hide your affiliate, free website page or distributor website from your visitors - all while tracking your sales and commissions. (How many times have people "**cut off**" your affiliate code when using your link - meaning you will never be credited for that commission?)
- You can also forward it "uncloaked" for those affiliate programs that do not allow frame forwarding (they will say in their Affiliate Agreement - very few prohibit this).
- You can set up an **unlimited number of sub-directory forwarding links** (cloaked or uncloaked). For example, if your domain is <http://www.BestDomain.com> You can set up <http://WHATEVER.BestDomain.com> so you can use one domain to promote multiple affiliate programs.
- **NEW** You can customize the Title, Keywords and Description tags for your domain! This gives you **advanced search engine optimization** for higher search engine rankings. Almost all affiliate links are NOT indexed by any of the major search engines.

For complete details on this option, visit: <http://special.NameStick.com>

Solution #4 – Cloaking with Software

I implement the above two solutions for different purposes. However, personally I use cloaking software when creating most of my affiliate links.

It points – cloaks and even disguises your real affiliate link in the source code. It is also very inexpensive.

You will be able to create unlimited redirects and the software has not left a single stone uncovered.

Here is a description from the company's site:

Step One: Install this unique software on your Windows PC.

Step Two: Copy and paste your affiliate link into the Affiliate Link Cloaker.

Step Three: Come up with a simple name for a web page on your website.

Let's say you are selling an e-book called "Peanut Butter Magic - How to Spread the Wealth With One of the World's Most Popular Foods." (Ok, it's a pretty corny idea, but I just want to use this as an example.)

Your affiliate link is hop.clickbank.net/?yourID/peanutbutter.

All you would have to do is paste or type that link into the form on the Affiliate Link Cloaker software screen and then make up the name of a page that you would install on your website. You could call it "peanut" or "nuts" or even "pbutter".

Step Four: You just click a button and the cloaked link page is created and saved to your hard drive.

Step Five: Click another button and the page is automatically uploaded to your website - no html skills required!

The whole operation takes about 45 seconds!

I only recommend this if you are able to upload a file to your web server. Actually, the software even has a built in feature that does it for you but you still need to find out your user name and password to upload to your server.

Steps 1-3 | Steps 4-5

Step 1
Enter the link you want to hide:

Step 2
Enter the name of the "cloaked" page: .
NOTE: Link must start with http://

Step 3 - optional, leave blank if not used

Enter page Title (50 characters):

Enter page Keywords (100 characters):

Enter page Description (200 characters):

Enter page Body Text with HTML formatting:

[Fresh NEW Affiliate Marketing Idea of the Month](#)
[>> Click Here Now](#)

Next >>

The bonuses that come with this software are brilliant and demonstrate how powerful and important it is to promote programs in this manner.

For full details, please visit: www.randyreport.com/jealc.html

Clickbank Specific Solutions

There are two other programs that warrant mentioning. They are both specifically aimed at protecting [Clickbank](#) affiliates.

The first one, [Click Bank Guard](#) does not offer any distinct advantage over the cloaking software described in solution #3 that we just covered. In fact, for around the same amount of money you are only granted a one year license as opposed to full ownership of the software. While my reporting style is to focus on solutions and not waste time on all the non-solutions, I bring this one up because you may come across it and wonder why I do not recommend it. And since I feel there are better options, I won't go into any more detail on this one. Now you know why.

The second, [Easy Click Mate](#), has one advantage worth considering. But the advantage is not in relation to the topic of protecting affiliate commissions. As a seller of products using Clickbank, you can use this method to sell multiple products at multiple web sites and avoid paying \$50 to Clickbank for each new set-up. There is a full explanation of this at their product site.

You must have PHP available at your server and need some technical work done to make this program work. The creator of the product will install it for you at a reasonable cost (around \$30) so this is not a big deal.

The bottom line though, as far as protecting your Clickbank sales and affiliate sales is the same regardless of which solution you use. It is very easy for someone with even the most basic understanding of Clickbank's system to hijack your commission regardless of how they are directed, or redirected to the order page.

Summary:

Solution #1: Redirecting by uploading an .htaccess file is better than nothing. However, if your domain register provides free pointing, it will be much easier. But, for a small investment in one of the other methods you can have a much more effective solution. And, you will certainly save and make a lot more than what you pay by applying one of the other solutions.

To **redirect**, refer to the instructions in this report or your domain registrar.

Solution #2: Pointing and Masking is the option I recommend if you are not at all inclined to upload a file to a server and don't like the idea of using sub domains. For free pointing and cheap registration and masking go to www.synergydomains.com

Solution #3: Server Side Cloaking is a viable and increasingly popular option. There is only one company that I would trust for this, and you will find them at <http://special.NameStick.com>

Solution #4: Cloaking with Software is what I do for the most part. It is available at www.randyreport.com/jealc.html

With you in Mind,

Randy Charach

P.S. Learn how to automate your online activities at www.mybizkit.com.

Unlimited autoresponders, affiliate program, e-zine administration, shopping cart and a lot more. Fully integrated into one economical and simple to use system.