

Mailing List Money

How to Make More Affiliate Sales by Starting an Ezine



Brought to you by Nicole Dean from www.NicoleOntheNet.com
for MenuPlanningCentral.com & DineWithoutWhine.com affiliates

Thank you for being an affiliate!

This report is to help train you to make more money with your blog or website.

It is provided free to our affiliates at www.DineWithoutWhine.com and www.MenuPlanningCentral.com

Watch for more free training coming soon!

If you have any questions while reading this material, please send them to me at Nicole@DineWithoutWhine.com

You Need an Ezine

It's surprising to me how many work at home moms that are trying to make money online do not have mailing lists or ezines. Haven't they heard the phrase "The money is in the list?"

In my coaching, I often have to convince clients that they really do need to start and manage an ezine or mailing list. ☺

If you've got a *website* or *blog* – you do need a mailing list.

If you want to make more affiliate sales – you do need a mailing list.

Let me give you a secret. Our top affiliates at MenuPlanningCentral and at DineWithoutWhine (you know, the affiliates making \$100-500 or more each month?) – well, they have mailing lists.

When it comes to your website or blog, every web page has a Primary Function - it exists to entice your web visitor to do something. You want them to read an article and normally then act on your product/affiliate recommendations.

Every web page should also have a Back Up Function - and the major back up function of every page should be to entice visitors to sign up for your newsletter.

Why do you need a list?

Once you have that email address - you have the ability to market to that person again and again. It is the start of a beautiful relationship!

Statistics show that very few people make purchases from a website on their first visit. But, the fact that they are there at all says that they are interested in what you have to offer so you need to make a way to keep in touch with these potential customers.



You Might Need Several Mailing Lists

Now I don't want to overwhelm you, but... Many businesses will benefit from using multiple mailing lists. The goal is to develop a unique relationship with your subscribers. If you reach a large group of people; it can be very helpful to create separate mailing lists that serve these different types of people.

For example:

Your target market is made up of moms. One mailing list can only go so far to serve the needs of moms since there are so many different types of mom.

So you might set up and offer several sub lists: Moms of Babies, Difficulties of Toddlers, Raising a Teen, Frugal Moms, Moms who cook, etc.

And, guess what? You market DineWithoutWhine.com or MenuPlanningCentral.com differently to each list.

The frugal mom needs to be told how much "money" a menu planner can save her.

The Mom of a baby needs to know how much "simpler" life can be with a menu planner.

The mom of a toddler should be told how important eating together as a family is to a child's IQ and social skills - and how a menu planner makes that easier.

The mom of a teen can be told that eating dinner together as a family has statistically shown to reduce drug use in children and decrease rates of teen pregnancy - and, again... you guessed it. A menu planner is the helper every busy mom needs to make that happen!

Now, do you see how important those sub-lists can be? Instead of saying "Hey Mom, here's why a menu planner is important", you can instead address the issues they are currently facing and help them to solve their problems... and that's a good thing! (And, it helps you make more sales, too!) ☺

You Need an Autoresponder System

If you're new to the idea of a mailing list you might not realize that it is not something that you can or should manage on your own.

Even though your Outlook email program or your Yahoo email account allow you to develop mailing lists that you can communicate with the click of a button, this is not a good option. (And, it can get you in trouble with the law.)

The main reason why you shouldn't do it yourself is that email servers have filters that detect when a user is sending email out to a large number of people and that alone can get your email address flagged as a spam source. Unfair but true. It can also get you in trouble with your hosting provider.

You can familiarize yourself with US Spam laws here:

<http://www.ftc.gov/spam/>

The other reason is that you can be fined. Not a good way to build a business.

When you read up on the rules, you realize that you are safer when you utilize a system that allows subscribers to opt in and out easily and tracks how and where they subscribed. (You won't have to worry about that if you follow our advice, though.)

Another big reason to choose an autoresponder over running a list on your own is that you can easily schedule mailings with an autoresponder. You can also set up sequential email messages for eCourses. This means that everyone who signs up will receive your messages in order. So, if I sign up today, I'll receive message #1, while someone who signed up a month ago may be receiving message #15.

It's 'set it and forget it' easy!

Choosing the Right System

You have two big choices to make first. Will you look for a mailing list management script that works on your own website server or will you look for a managed/hosted solution?

If you host your mailing list on your own server you may run into the same problems with being labeled as a spam source. Yet many business owners do so without a lot of trouble by taking care to set up their list scripts so that email is sent out at a rate that flies below spam filter radar. However, in my opinion, this is a huge headache and not worth the constant management and pressure of staying ahead of technology.

It's my preference to use a hosted solution. The professional services online have specialized in staying up to date with email deliverability issues and work very hard to stay in compliance so that more of your email reaches its intended destination. Another huge time saver! I don't know about you, but I would much rather be out by the pool or on a walk than to be messing with another script. I have used an online service to manage my lists since 2005 and I love it!

The service I use is Aweber – <http://moms.aweber.com>

Aweber provides you with unlimited mailing lists. It's easy to use and makes it their mission to get the highest number of your emails delivered possible, while making sure you're following all rules so you can't get into trouble.

Please Note: If you'll be writing and selling your own ebooks down the road and want a shopping cart/payment processor along with an autoresponder, either of these two services will work great for that.

1 Shopping Cart - [click here for info](#)

WAHM Cart – [click here for info](#)

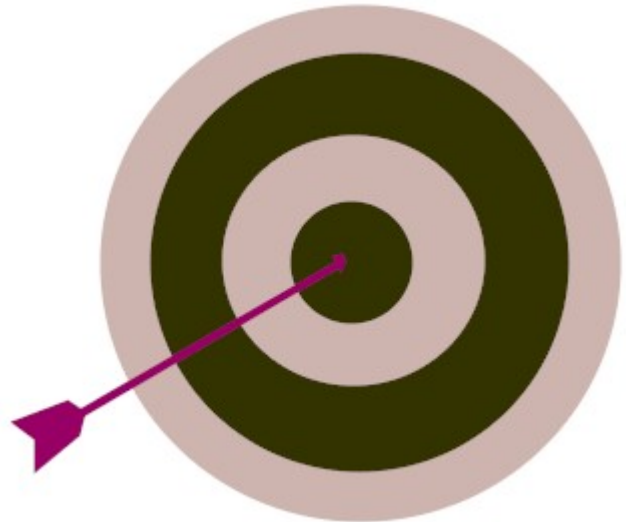
Both offer unlimited an Autoresponder system with a full featured Shopping Cart and Affiliate Management included.

Now You Need a Goal for Each List

Take some time to think through what your goals are for your mailing list.

- What information will you deliver to your subscribers?
- What do you want subscribers to do?
- What do you want subscribers to learn about you?

It will help you to have a detailed 'manifesto' for your mailing list when it comes to coming up with content and offers over time.



Also, consider the different types of common lists.

- Are you contacting leads (people interested in your topic)?
- Are you contacting past customers?
- Are you contacting affiliates?

You'd approach each type of list a bit differently.

Text or HTML



HTML Newsletters are attractive. They provide a way for you to incorporate the colors, fonts and images that you want your subscribers to see. They are very useful for branding your business. Seeing the same logo, colors and even your photograph on a regular schedule can influence feelings of trust which is so important in making your subscribers comfortable in spending money with you.

HTML newsletters on the other hand are more likely to get caught up in spam filters since a high percentage of spammers use graphical emails in an

attempt to show words that would have triggered spam filters.

Another unfortunate strike against HTML newsletters is that many users have opted to block graphics in their emails.

Text emails can seem more personal since they look like all of the other email that they get from friends and family. If you are careful with your choice of words, they will more easily pass through spam filters.

In fact, most of the top email marketers use text emails. They oftentimes have people click “reply” and answer when they send emails... they are that “real” to the other person! The other advantage of sending text emails to your list is that they are very easy to write and send. You don’t have any html to slow you down. Just write your email as if you were writing to a friend, copy it into your autoresponder and click “send”.

Which Format to Choose?

How do you decide what kind of mailing list to run?

Let’s define three basic list types you might set up for marketing DineWithoutWhine.com or MenuPlanningCentral.com.

A Tips List is set up with ‘evergreen content’, which means that the emails are not dated or time-sensitive. You can load as many tips as you like into the autoresponder and set the delivery schedule according to your preference.

If you want subscribers to receive one tip from you each week – you only need to provide 52 tips and the list will run without interruption for a whole year. Easy peasy. And each subscriber will always get every tip from the very beginning of the series.

You can add more tips as you desire. This is one of the easiest and most time savvy ways to run a mailing list. You can even outsource the tip writing to a ghostwriter and just add in personal remarks and P.S. messages to each one.

A Newsletter is a regular mailing, usually weekly, with articles and recommendations. I’m sure you’ve received these types of mailings which are often called “ezines”.

An Ecourse is my favorite. It is usually a very focused type of autoresponder series that takes the reader through a series of lessons offering a variety of articles and content centered on a topic of interest.

Here is one of my ecourses: www.WebTrafficBasics.com

I've created over 30 lessons that go out to my readers every few days. Some lessons have articles, some audio, and others have interviews

You could do something similar with your list..

Examples:

"7 Ways to Save Money on your Living Expenses" (Be sure to name DineWithoutWhine or MenuPlanningCentral as the best one!)

Placing the Opt In

Be sure to put a newsletter sign up box on every single page of your site! Make an enticing invitation - do not just say 'Sign up for our mailing list!'

Yes, my [recommended autoresponder](#) offers an easy to use wizard to create these signup boxes.



First Name:
Last Name:
Email:
Subscribe

Using Pop Ins Or Exit Pops

Yes, they are annoying, but they work.

Pop up windows are most often blocked by user installed software but pop in windows can usually make it through because of how they are designed. You can program the window to appear upon entry or exit. You can also program it to only appear one time to a user, weekly, monthly or every time.

Pop-in windows may trigger an automatic 'close it' response from jaded web surfers but if the window appears when they exit, they may be more likely to opt in at that point after they've spent some time on the website.

Using a Graphic to Represent Your Ezine

There is evidence that having a visual representation for your publication can improve your opt in rate.

Don't skimp on creating the graphic. If you don't have graphic design skills, hire someone to create it for you. Ask yourself what a magazine would look like that would attract your target market – and describe this to your designer.

Get the graphic in a few sizes. A large view for a page that will tell web visitors all about your list and what it has to offer and a smaller view for using above the opt in box on your website.



Dangling Carrots & Other Bribes

Since an autoresponder will allow you to immediately deliver a digital gift, it's easy to offer a bribe to help visitors decide to opt into your mailing list.

Offer a special gift for subscribing that will attract your perfect customer. A tip sheet, a special report, a great resource list, etc. Take some time and format this freebie professionally. It will show your subscribers what they can expect from you. If they are really impressed with your freebies, they'll have a high expectation of excellence for your products and services.

Just as it is a great idea to create a graphic to represent your newsletter, it is also great to have a graphic for the freebie. It creates a sense of tangible value in the minds of your visitor.

Here is an example that I created: <http://www.easyprivatelabelarticles.com>

Using Squeeze Pages

A 'name squeeze' is a web page that has one purpose. It makes an offer and asks for a name and email address in exchange for what is offered. This tactic can be very useful when you're building a list to promote a specific product.

You will create something of value to offer that compliments your product – perhaps a special report or a useful check list. Offer it as a freebie and set it up to be delivered automatically when someone subscribes to your list. Drive traffic to the squeeze page and watch the subscriptions come in.

Again, this is also an example of a squeeze page:

<http://www.easyprivatelabelarticles.com>

Thank You Pages

When it comes to making money with your mailing list, the process can start immediately. When someone puts their name and email into the opt in and presses the submit button, you can set the form up to take the subscriber to a confirmation page.

Use this page to thank your new subscriber and give them instructions to look for your first email. If your list is double opt in, tell them exactly how to confirm their subscription. The more detailed your instructions the better!

Since those who are viewing this page have just said yes to you about a mailing list, now is a great time to make another offer. Perhaps a 'one time offer' which could be a special deal on your services or products.

Many of our affiliates have an offer for MenuPlanningCentral on their thank you pages.

I'd like to share a resource that has helped me save time and money.

Ever since I found this program, I'm spending less money on McDonalds, Wendy's ... well, you know the drill.

Instead of picking up the kids and wondering what I can pull together for dinner, I've started to plan my meals in advance - and you can, too.

Stop by this site and pick up a free report about Menu Planning. I think you'll like it.

www.MenuPlanningCentral.com

Here is an example of one of my "thank you" pages:
<http://www.free-ebooksonline.com/thankyou.htm> -- it works!

Confirmation Emails

Do not overlook the importance of this first email communication with your new subscriber.

Use your mailing list software codes to greet the reader by name and thank them for trusting you with their email. If your list is double opt in, tell them exactly what to do to confirm the email.

Always ask the subscriber to add your email to their address book as this helps to ensure that your mailings do not end up in their spam folders.

The confirmation email is also a great place to re-present the special offer you made on the thank you page. Make sure that you stress the time sensitivity of the offer.

If you promised a free gift, this is where you will deliver it. Give them a link to the resource you offered and tell them how to collect it.

Making Friends

Do not be afraid to be personable in your newsletter. It is not all about you - but it is partially about you. Let your readers get to know you. Share your likes, tell them about your pets, and give them a little peek into your life now and then. But don't tell long stories... it's important to respect their time.

I feel most loyal to those who I feel I have gotten to know something about.

Your readers will feel the same way.

Where do you Find Content?

Thinking of what to put in your mailings week after week can be challenging. One strategy is to introduce all new website content through your newsletter first. Always announce new products and services. If you have found a resource that you think will be useful for your readers, don't hesitate to make the recommendation.

If you struggle for fresh content there are three tools that will be invaluable to you.

1. One is hiring a ghostwriter. Sometimes it just takes a fresh set of eyes to come up with new ideas.

2. The second way to get content is through free reprint articles. You can't edit these, and you have to include the link and the author bio, but you can find some incredible articles going this route.

Of course, the ideal place to find articles that you can reprint (with your affiliate link in them) is at www.PartnerUpdates.com

3. Another excellent resource is to acquire private label rights articles. PLR articles are often offered in topic related bundles where you are paying a dollar or two for each individual article. You have permission to change whatever you want or use it as is.

My PLR site can be found at www.EasyPLR.com – you can pick up article packs on many topics that are perfect for moms

Making Offers

Many ezine owners panic when it comes to promoting. They either fail to promote at all for fear of turning off the reader - or they go overboard and try to sell them the farm.

There is a graceful and ungraceful way to promote a product.

First off, realize that if someone has subscribed to your newsletter they are at least a little bit interested in what you have to offer. They may just need to get to know you better or they may just want some time to think. So don't be afraid to include a product promotion in every newsletter.

You're an internet marketer who is using a content website or informational newsletter to earn affiliate income, so you may feel particularly challenged with product recommendations. Just approach it naturally.

If I'm a Mom and I've subscribed to your Mom site newsletter, I want to receive great Mom related information with every issue and I'm a warm market for your Mom related product recommendations so the most important thing is to remain on topic.

So, in each issue, you can include any of the following (with your affiliate link):

We recommend www.DineWithoutWhine.com

Save money with DineWithoutWhine.com

DineWithoutWhine.com saves me money and it can save you money, too.

What did your kids do at school today? Find out at the dinner table. We'll bring you back there MenuPlanningCentral.com

Sponsored by www.MenuPlanningCentral.com

Two thumbs up for MenuPlanningCentral.com

See how it doesn't need to be huge and intimidating? A sponsor ad (or classified ad) is a great start.

Of course, eventually, we recommend sending a solo ad. Again, this doesn't need to be (nor should it be) all "salesy".

Here's an example of one we provide at www.PartnerUpdates.com

Dear _____,

I am so excited. I just have to share with you a great website I found! I was getting so frustrated every day when I would realize it was already 6 o'clock, my kids are crabby, and I have no idea what our family is having for dinner. If your house is anything like my house, often dinner time is the most stressful part of the day. Finally I have found a way to make dinner time run smoothly in our home. I have subscribed to an affordable family friendly menu planning service called Dine Without Whine. Each week you receive a menu (with easy yummy recipes) and a categorized grocery shopping list sent via e-mail. All I have to do is print out my menu and grocery list, shop one day, and I'm set with quick and easy to prepare family friendly meals for the entire week. They even include side dish ideas and two brunch and dessert recipes. Dinner time has actually become enjoyable again.

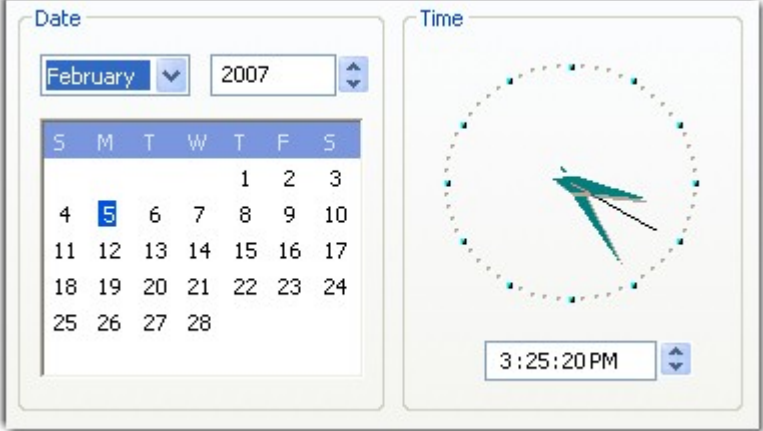
Anyway, I wanted to share as I thought you might enjoy the service as well. You can find out more by visiting here: (insert affiliate link)

Signed (your name)

See? That wasn't too scary, now was it?

Mailing Frequency

How often you communicate with your list depends a lot on the kind of list it is. If you're providing tips and content, I personally prefer a weekly schedule but bi-weekly is fine too. If you try for a monthly schedule, your subscribers may forget you in between and be more likely to hit the delete key when they see something from you.



The image shows a software interface for scheduling mailings. It is divided into two main sections: 'Date' and 'Time'.
The 'Date' section includes a dropdown menu for the month (currently set to 'February') and a text box for the year (set to '2007'). Below this is a calendar grid with days of the week (S, M, T, W, T, F, S) and dates from 1 to 28. The date '5' is highlighted with a blue square.
The 'Time' section features a circular clock face with a green hand pointing to approximately 3:25. Below the clock is a text box containing the time '3:25:20 PM' and a small dropdown arrow.

If you want to run a monthly ezine, I think you can make it work if you really focus on providing such great content that the subscriber is looking forward to it. I would recommend providing the ezine in a PDF format that will encourage them to print it out and share with others.

However, we normally recommend weekly or bi-weekly mailings, unless you're sending an ecourse and the reader expects to get the info more often.

Bringing Them Back to the Website

A favorite tactic for content site owners is to actually publish your newsletter or Ezine on your website – with affiliate recommendations worked into the content.

You then send out a simple text email with teaser text and a link to the web based version of the newsletter.

An easy way to implement this is to post one of our articles from www.PartnerUpdates.com on your website (with a banner and link to MenuPlanningCentral or DineWithoutWhine.com on the page). Then, send a note to your list telling them about the great article.

Promoting Your List

Besides the tactics we've mentioned for enticing opt ins on your website, there are other ways to promote your mailing list.

Make sure that you create one page on your site that exists just to promote the newsletter. Whether this is a name squeeze page or just an information page with an opt in box is up to you. Give this page a simple URL – or even buy a domain to be redirected to this page for easy referrals.

Now you can direct visitors to this page. Make sure you're doing the regular things to promote your page:

- Include the URL in your email signatures.
- Link to your ezine signup page in your forum signature and then be sure to post on that forum every day, answering questions and being helpful.
- Add the URL to your Author Resource Box when you write articles for distribution.
- You can also advertise your Ezine through Ezine Directories. Try a quick search in Google and you'll find several to choose from.
- Post blog comments on popular mom blogs with a link to your ezine sign-up page in the URL field.
- Buy ads in other ezines.
- Hand out business cards.
- Trade advertising with other moms.

There are a million ways to get traffic to your signup page.

Closing

Now you know how to get started with your own mailing list, ezine or ecourse.

Remember, we want you to succeed with our affiliate program. So, please let us know what we can do to help you to become one of our top affiliates. I'm very willing to do a question and answer session, but I need questions first. So, send them to me at Nicole@DineWithoutWhine.com and I'll put that together soon.

Warmly,



Nicole Dean

Recommended Resources

PartnerUpdates.com – I'm working on updating this site to include more affiliate tools and more training. Please check back often.

[Autoresponder](#) – My autoresponder of choice. This includes much training. Please don't go the cheap route. I went there and regretted it very quickly as I outgrew that system and had to move.

ListProfitSystem.com – A great course by one of my favorite teachers, Jimmy D. Brown.

EasyPLR.com – Where you can find articles for your ecourse or ezine.