

SILO Profits

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Introduction To SILO Profits

Affiliate marketing has changed dramatically over the last year and in order to maximize your profits and recover any loss, it's important that you identify how these changes affect your campaigns, and then rebuild them around a SILO structure.

You've likely heard of Google's "Panda Update", which took place in early 2011. With this update in the way that search engines gauge the value of websites, and therefore identify ranking or placement, affiliate marketers were forced into rebuilding their campaigns and websites so that they focused on providing genuine value to visitors.

Google no longer provided value to websites where there was little original content, or websites that had a higher ad ratio than content, or even websites with few social signals, or backlinks.

Instead, they revamped their algorithms so that only websites that were fully established, and developed on a strong foundation for quality were given top rankings. This meant that thousands of websites were instantly removed from the searches, and many of these sites lost their ranking altogether.

One example was EzineArticles.com, one of the leading article directories that housed thousands of articles, many of which were considered duplicate content.

With the Panda Update, sites like EzineArticles.com lost its foothold in the search engines, and to recover, they had to restructure their entire directory, requiring authors to submit only unique content.

Unique content however, is not the only component required in order to build a long-lasting affiliate website that ranks high within the major search engines.

Let's take a look at the most important components of a successful affiliate website.

Building Profitable Affiliate Websites

In order to solidify your place in the search engines, and to maximize your ability to reach out and connect with your target audience, your affiliate website requires a very strict and specific structure that includes all of the following:

- Constant Updates

Google tends to rank sites higher that offer fresh content so the more often you update your website, the higher your ranking.

- Social Signals

Websites with activity from the major social media sites like Facebook or Twitter are often ranked higher than websites with few social signals.

- Relevant Content

Not only should your content be unique to your website, but it needs to be relevant to the products and advertisements found within your pages.

- High Content Ratio

Your website should offer a high content to ad ratio, meaning that for every advertisement featured on your website, you should have 5-10 articles.

In addition, you should minimize the number of advertisements that appear on

any single webpage, preferably no more than 3 ads per page. Further, you should be cautious when implementing ads that appear above the fold as well as in the top sidebar of your website.

- Quality Backlinks

Backlinks have always played a critical role in establishing your position within the search engines, and it's never been more important than now. Focus on building high quality backlinks from relevant sources, such as authority sites, niche blogs and websites that share your theme and target audience.

- Avoid Repeated Ad Links

Minimize the number of affiliate links that lead to the same website or product. You should only include 1-2 links per product or website on your website. Any more than that and your rankings may suffer.

- Fast Page Loads

Not surprisingly, the time in which it takes for your website or individual pages to load plays a role in your ability to rank within the search engines.

You should always tweak your pages so that they load quickly, minimizing slow loading graphics, flash, videos or anything that may hinder your page load time. If you create your websites using Wordpress, you can download a free plugin that will help speed up your page load times.

Download Plugin: <http://wordpress.org/extend/plugins/w3-total-cache/>

One of the easiest ways of building affiliate websites that will attract visitors as well as search engine crawlers is with a SILO structure.

Building Your SILO Platform

A Silo infrastructure essentially forms the anatomy of your entire website by defining its theme, and categorizing your content based on subject matter and relevant keywords.

In order for you to build high performing affiliate websites, you need to establish a consistent theme, so that Google identifies your niche and can send you quality, relevant traffic. In addition, themed SILO websites also help on-site visitors locate relevant content, based on a category and sub-category index.

For example, if you were involved in the weight loss market you would build a SILO based affiliate site that offered 3-4 content categories, all involving the weight loss niche.

Your categories may be broken up as follows:

Category 1: Work Out Routines

Category 2: Muscle Building Tips

Category 3: Healthy Meals

Each category represents a specific segment of your overall theme. Within each category, you would feature 5-10 articles all focused on your categories topic.

To boost your search engine rankings, each category would also use relevant keywords in the title, such as "Work Out Routines", if that were a long-tail keyword that you were targeting.

Not only will this make it easier on your website visitor's, it will help boost your ranking in the search engines for each keyword string that you target.

Your website categories would then be linked as follows:

<http://www.Your-Domain.com/Work-Out-Routines>

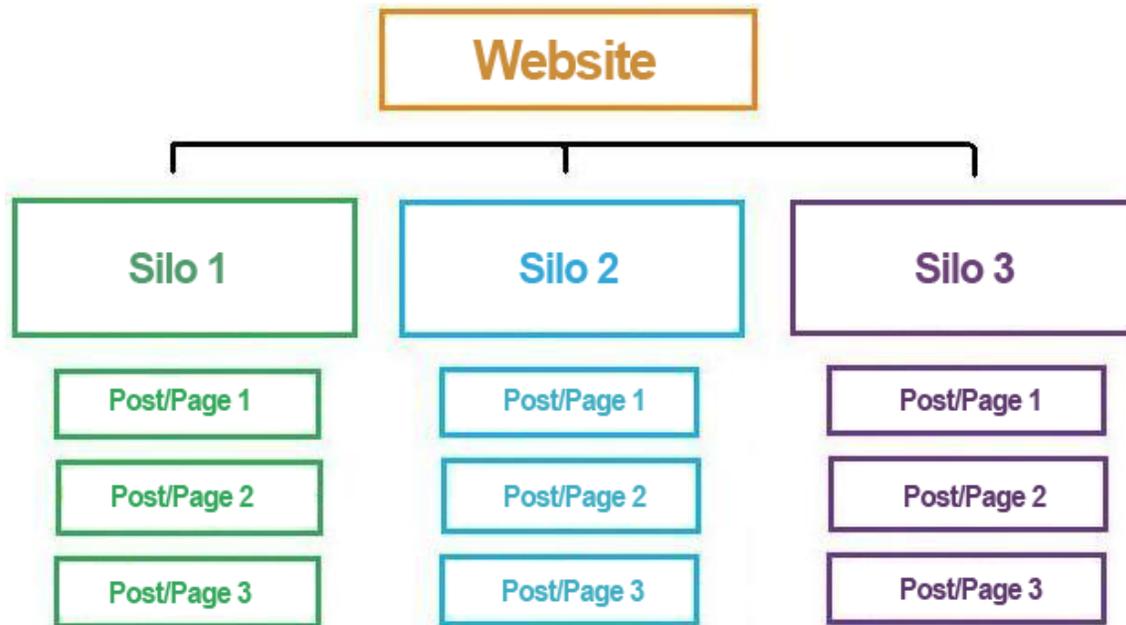
<http://www.Your-Domain.com/Muscle-Building-Tips>

<http://www.Your-Domain.com/Healthy-Meals>

Each time you create a category, you're essentially creating a folder or section on your website that contains article content based around each topic. This groups your content together, forming a **virtual SILO**. This structure will also help you rank for long-tail keywords that appear within your category and folder titles.

A SILO simply groups your information together in specific categories that form a theme. This helps the search engines identify what your website is about, and in turns, they reward relevancy points that affect your search engine ranking.

The anatomy of a SILO affiliate website would look like this:



Visitors would land on your main page that would offer unique, high quality content as an introduction to your niche. You would then feature individual categories, titled with keywords that you are hoping to rank for.

Each category would feature 5-10 unique articles around each topic. Your advertisements and affiliate links would be embedded into the content, as well as within the lower section of your sidebar.

Avoid placing advertisements above the fold, or in the top segment of your sidebar. You want search engine crawlers to see unique, relevant and high quality content above the fold, so minimize any external links and

advertisements.

Getting Started

The easiest way to build SILO websites is by using Wordpress. The reason is simple. Wordpress is designed to make it easy to set up categories, integrate keywords and boost your search engine ranking. Wordpress also makes it incredibly easy to theme your entire site without having to manually build HTML pages, or categories.

You can download a copy of Wordpress from <http://www.Wordpress.org>

With Wordpress, you are able to quickly create a SILO infrastructure that offers both virtual and physical SILO's.

A virtual SILO is made up by the URL's to each category on your website, such as <http://www.Your-Domain.com/Weight-Loss-Tips> whereas a physical SILO is simply a navigation system, or menu that gives your visitors instant access to your categories.

Wordpress will create a navigational system instantly, by providing direct links to each category in the sidebar and possibly, the header area of your website.

You would then add unique content in the form of pages or posts into each category section.

Important Pages

When creating your affiliate websites, make sure that you include all of the following pages:

Contact Us

This page would offer a contact us form, or a link to a help desk or direct email. It's important that the link to your Contact Us page is available on every page of your website, so consider adding a link to the header or top menu of your site.

Also keep in mind that if you are hoping to rank within specific countries, you will want to add a physical mailing address on your contact page that represents the country you are ranking for.

Tip: In order to successfully rank for a specific Country, set up a category or folder on your website that targets each Country you are targeting. For example, if you are interested in targeting Canada, you'd set up a folder on your website that includes .ca

Example: <http://www.Your-Domain.com/ca> or to target the United Kingdom, you would create a folder targeting the UK as follows: <http://www.Your-Domain.com/uk>

Privacy Policy

You can easily create a privacy policy for your affiliate website by using the free Wordpress plugin available at: <http://wordpress.org/extend/plugins/google-privacy-policy/>

Your privacy policy should outline exactly how you plan to use any information or data collected by on-site visitors. A privacy policy page is required if you plan to monetize your website with AdSense.

Terms and Conditions

Create a simple terms and conditions page that features an FTC statement outlining your commissions, and that you are compensated for product or service promotions. Your terms and conditions page may substitute or include an Earnings Disclaimer page.

Creating High Quality Content

Your content is a vital component in building successful affiliate websites. For starters, you want to make sure that your content is unique and only available to your website visitor's. You can create content easily by outsourcing it to qualified freelancers on sites like <http://www.Guru.com> or <http://www.Constant-Content.com>

You can also outsource website updates and even blog post creation through <http://www.PureContent.com>

One of the most important elements of a profitable affiliate website is in offering **"sticky content"**.

Sticky content encourages return visits as it provides interaction or customization elements that will help set your site apart.

Here are a few ideas for developing sticky content:

- Create a community forum or board where visitor's can discuss your niche or theme.
- Create polls and surveys that encourage interaction.
- Create a Facebook Fan Page that leads visitor's back to your website
- Create a rewards or loyalty program with www.PunchTab.com
- Create offer based websites with <http://www.buildoffers.com/>
- Set up a comment box below each article, video or post. You can do this easily with the CommentLuv plugin at <http://www.CommentLuv.com>

- Develop customization elements that allow for tailor-made content.

For example, many affiliate websites in the Credit Repair niche allow visitors to choose from a series of drop down menus that help determine what they are interested in. Then, when a visitor has customized the search query, the website directs them to specific credit card companies based on their overall preferences.

You can hire a programmer to develop simple customization tools from places like <http://www.ScriptLance.com>

Final Tips

The key to building successful affiliate websites is in offering valuable, unique content to your website visitor's, and to keep your website fresh and updated at all times.

Integrate sticky content, engage your audience and build pages and posts around products that you are promoting. Consider setting up review pages that outline the pros and con's to various products, and offer as much information as possible so that your visitor's are able to make informed decisions about the products they purchase.

You need to go the extra mile in order to build your websites around long-term success. Your objective is to build authority websites that are established in your niche markets. We can't just create a series of landing pages and funnel in traffic in the hope of making money.

Affiliate marketing has changed, and so as affiliate marketers - we must change as well.

Best of success!