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eMarketing

the essential guide to online marketing

2nd edition

Rob Stokes
and the minds of Quirk

4. affiliate marketing - case study

case study: Prezybox.com

Prezybox.com is a UK online retailer in a very competitive market: gifts and gadgets. With many other players in the market competing for the same customers, Prezybox.com runs a successful affiliate programme that sees them leading the way in performance marketing.

Affiliate marketing has played a sizeable role in the growth of Prezybox.com and now accounts for about 35% of sales. Affiliate marketing has contributed on two levels, namely brand growth and sales generation. In fact, Prezybox.com has won several industry awards for its affiliate programme. In 2008, these awards included 'Best Use of Creative' and 'Best Merchant Innovation'.

A substantial element of affiliate marketing is managing relationships with affiliates. The Prezybox.com affiliate programme and its affiliate managers have been voted best by affiliates, and its affiliate managers are regularly invited to speak at industry events and conferences. How have they achieved this?

Prezybox.com has a wide affiliate base, and constantly recruits new affiliates via affiliate get-togethers, affiliate forums and blogs and through keyword searches on Google. Its super affiliates, those affiliates that drive the majority of affiliate sales, account for about 1% of all affiliates. Zak Edwards, Managing Director of Prezybox.com, says, "We tend to offer all affiliates the same opportunities for promotion, but obviously focus a lot of our attention on our super affiliates."

Super affiliates can be given extra commission as an incentive, and the affiliate managers ensure that these affiliates are up to date with all of the latest offers, new products and promotions. Prezybox.com communicates these details to all their affiliates as well. However, they use mass communication for all their affiliates and one-on-one communication, such as phone calls or instant messenger, with their super affiliates. One of the features of the affiliate programme is an affiliate resource centre, which has extensive support information for affiliates such as real time product bestseller reports.



In 2007, Prezybox.com launched a brand new content item for its affiliates: Vidibox. These are video content units – banners which contain a product video and a link to that product on the Prezybox.com web site. These video content units were very successful because the content was unique in the affiliate arena and so had a large take up amongst affiliates. Being a more interesting way of displaying content, the Vidiboxes attracted a higher click-through rate, which again made them more appealing to affiliates.

Prezybox.com's commitment to an innovative and successful affiliate programme has seen them earn immense respect in the affiliate arena, which is translating to ongoing healthy sales growth. In fact, Prezybox.com has outgrown its offices twice in six years, and looks set to maintain this successful track record.

case study questions

1. Part of affiliate marketing involves marketing a company to affiliates. How has Prezybox.com achieved this, and what are the effects of this?
2. Why does Prezybox.com communicate differently to its super affiliates?
3. What made the Vidiboxes enticing to affiliates?
4. In a competitive market, how does affiliate marketing help build a company's success? Are there any additional considerations when a market is competitive?

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