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## How To Evaluate A Product To Promote

Welcome to another edition of Michael Rasmussen's Internet Marketing Success Newsletter. In this issue, you'll learn how to choose which products to promote to your opt-in list as an affiliate.

Not all products are created equal, and if you choose the wrong product to promote, you could end up damaging your hard-earned reputation as a marketer (a lesson I recently learned the hard way). We've got a lot to cover, so let's jump right in.

## A Rather Harsh Lesson

Before I tell you what you should do, I'll start this issue off by giving you an example of what you shouldn't do (which, embarrassingly enough was something that I actually DID).

Here's what happened:

I recently sent out a promotion for a controversial product (which, out of respect for it's developer, I will not name here). It was product that, if used unethically, could be used to spam online forums, but if used correctly, could result in better link popularity.

Since I run the world's largest free advertising forum ([www.FreeAdvertisingForum.com](http://www.FreeAdvertisingForum.com)), I naturally thought that this product would be a good thing, since it'd get more people using the forums that weren't before.

I found out that not everyone agreed with me!

A couple hours after sending my promotion, I started getting emails and instant messages from my marketing buddies telling me that I was being 'flamed' (talked bad about) on one of my favorite discussion forums. I went to investigate, and I couldn't believe what I saw.

People were slamming me left and right for being an advocate of spam (nothing could be further from the truth - I can't stand spam), and basically accusing me of being everything but the anti-Christ.

To make a long story short, I explained to my peers on the forum where I was coming from, and I also made it very clear that I would not tolerate this type of treatment from people who had the attitude of "shoot first, ask questions later".

The end result was that I stuck to my guns, and ended up getting a lot of supportive emails from some of the biggest Internet marketing gurus around... some of them who stuck up for me on the forum publicly.

**LESSON LEARNED:** So here's what I learned out of all this. If you're going to promote something controversial, make SURE you educate people on the potential downside, and dangers of misusing whatever it is that you're promoting. I tried to do this in a 2nd email, but the damage had already been done.

I'm still going to promote the things that I think are beneficial to my readers, but next time, if it's a controversial product, I'll make sure I spend a little more time educating them on the good and the bad.

## Why This Topic?

After getting slammed publicly for one lousy misjudgment in promotion (against a backdrop of literally thousands of successful promotions that everyone was happy with), I realized the need for me to formalize my product evaluation procedure... and then educate you, my reader, so that you don't make the same mistake I did.

When you have an established method for evaluating products, everything becomes much easier, especially when you're faced with dozens of affiliate programs to choose from. So with that in mind, let's get right to the meat of this issue. These are the things you want to consider when evaluating a product to promote.

## Does The Product Developer Have A Solid Reputation And A History Of Success?

The last thing you want is to be someone else's guinea pig. If the product developer makes mistakes (which everyone does, especially when they first start out), it's going to reflect upon you, and lower the value (and impact) of your future recommendations to your readers.

The first thing you want to find out is whether or not the person has created other products before. If this is their first time, then it's very likely that the product will be shabby. This isn't always the case, but with a first time product developer, you have to spend more time evaluating it for quality.

### Look into the person's background.

What websites and products have they created before? Have they been reviewed or talked about on the discussion forums at all? Do they themselves participate in the forums? Do they contribute valuable content, or are they one of those complainers who spends all day whining and criticizing other people?

This is important information to know **before** you put your reputation on the line for them (which is what you're doing every time you recommend a product to your readers).

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If you're not sure about the person, post a question on your favorite forum, and ask if anyone has heard of them?

## Make Sure It's Something You'd Buy Yourself

In fact, make SURE you get yourself a review copy of the product. Most of the time, the product developer will gladly give you a free copy, because he wants you to promote it to your readers.

If you ask for a review copy, and they say no, don't let that deter you from just buying the product anyway. If it's worth promoting, then it's also worth buying.

Make sure you actually open it up and thoroughly check it out. It might not be created exactly how you'd create it, but is it still good? Take some time to evaluate it, and even write down all the things you like about it, and the things you don't like about it.

If it's an infoproduct, is it easy to understand? Is it well written? If it's a software product, is it intuitive and easy to figure out and use? If the answer to any of those questions is no, you might want to consider avoiding this product, because you might end up getting support requests from angry readers who trusted your recommendation in buying it.

## Evaluate Their Sales Process

Look at the price, and ask yourself, "Are they giving good value for the money they're asking for this product?" Would you pay that price?

Next, you want to evaluate their sales copy. Is it strong? Do you know what strong copy looks like? If you don't, then perhaps you could ask some people who you trust (and who are competent at evaluating sales copy) to take a look at the site, and let you know if the copy is good enough to actually convert your prospects into buyers.

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Here are a few questions to consider when looking over people's sales copy:

- Does the headline hook you, and make you want to read more?
- Do their bullets make you NEED to know the secrets that the product contains? (this applies to infoproducts, of course)
- Is there scarcity built into the offer? If not, could you add some by offering a special premium or bonus that you could supply (but only for a limited time)?
- Is there a powerful guarantee to help people feel comfortable with investing their money?

## In Conclusion

There's a lot to think about when evaluating a product for promotion. In the end, the most important question that you need to ask yourself is this:

*"Is this product a good match for my readers?"*

If you can honestly answer "yes", then that's the most important thing, but you can only answer that question after you've followed the steps and guidelines that I mentioned in this newsletter.

Never agree to promote something based on an emotional decision. Sometimes, if a product is crap, then it's crap... regardless of how well known the person behind it is.

Good luck building your business, and as always... if you know anyone who you think would benefit from this premium newsletter, please pass it along to them, but then also ask them to sign up for a free subscription themselves. They can do that here:

<http://www.MichaelRasmussen.com>

Your friend,

*Michael Rasmussen*

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