



[CASE STUDY]

**Brand New Affiliate Site
Goes from \$0 to **\$466.43**
Per Day in Only 9 Days**

Introduction

I broke this case study into two “updates” and the numbers reported are from just the first 9 days of the campaign.

What you’re actually seeing here is my method for testing products that I’m interested in promoting. I run ice cold traffic to them and if I can manage to come out profitable in the end, I build out a small affiliate funnel to promote the product.

That’s not to say you HAVE to build out the funnel... you could continue on with a direct linking campaign as long as you’re happy with the profit.

A “direct-linking” campaign is when you link directly to the affiliate offer from your traffic source. You sacrifice your chances of building a list, which I’m not a fan of (*unless you use this sneaky direct-linking trick*).

Without a list, you’re constantly scrambling to find new offers to direct link to if your winning offers suddenly disappear.

Okay, let’s get started...

Testing Ads / Products

Earnings Update #1:

From Day 1, affiliate commissions have been rolling in. Yesterday's total was \$335.38 in commissions (*see ClickBank screenshot further down*).

I set up a brand new campaign in Bing/Yahoo. My first initial ad group targeted a lot of generic weight loss keywords. My goal was to just see what would get clicks and if anything converted.

I set my Daily Budget at \$50.00 and my maximum CPC bid at \$.80. I just wanted to get fast test data. I wanted my ads to show in top slots so I could get a bunch of clicks and get some quick data.

I targeted my ads to the United States, Canada, Australia, United Kingdom and New Zealand (*Tier 1 countries*).

I decided to promote the Fat Diminisher product which, at the time, was the #1 product on ClickBank in the Health & Fitness category. Before finishing the setup of the campaign, I wanted to see who the ideal customer was for that product so I could set some demographic targeting.

There wasn't a lot on their affiliate resources page for demographics but after watching the entire sales video, I got a pretty good idea of who it was created for. Women ages 35 and up.

When I set my demographics, I decreased my bid by 90% for all men and for women ages 18-34 and ages 65+.

Here's where I screwed up, kinda...

I INCREASED my bid by 90% for women ages 35-64. Meaning I was willing to pay \$1.52 per click for that demographic. That's not really what I wanted to do. I really just wanted to be sure my ads were only being shown to that specific segment of women.

Oops.

Luckily, I had my daily budget set at \$50, so I didn't go broke. Here's why I say I "kinda" screwed up doing this...

I actually made four sales... one of them totalling \$205.00 in affiliate commissions (*this offer has three or four upsells*).

I knew I had a winner.

I had literally set up this campaign in about 25 minutes, used a redirect link created with Pretty Link in my WordPress site and sent traffic straight to the sales page.

I spent no time grouping similar keywords and creating relevant ads for each group. I threw about 350 keywords into one ad group and created two ads.

Here's the ad that had just a little higher click through rate:

Woman Loses 38lbs in 4wks

FlabbyToRipped.com/FatDiminisher

45-year-old woman loses 38lbs of fat in 4 weeks by avoiding this veggie

Pretty straight forward. All of my keywords were about losing weight fast so this ad is pretty relevant. It had an overall CTR of 1.54%. Not bad... but not great. The average cost per click was \$0.89.

The problem was, I had no clue which keywords generated the sales because I didn't use any tracking and I was paying out the nose for clicks.

Since I could tell this campaign had merit, I decided to pause it and create a totally new one but this time do it right.

I saw I was getting a lot of clicks for "belly fat" keywords and CTR's were higher than most, so I decided to create an entire ad group related to "losing belly fat".

Using the Google Keyword Planner I compiled a list of 341 keywords relating to "lose belly fat".

I set up my campaign exactly the same as the first one except for this time I didn't increase my bid for my target market, I just decreased my bid for everything else.

I tweaked my ad a bit and made it more about belly fat. I ran two variations.

Ad #1:

Belly Fat: 38lbs in 4wks

FlabbyToRipped.com/FatDiminisher

**45-year-old woman loses 38lbs of fat
in 4 weeks with no exercise!**

Ad #2:

38lbs of Belly Fat in 4wk

FlabbyToRipped.com/FatDiminisher

**45-year-old woman loses 38lbs of fat
in 4 weeks with no exercise!**

This ad group had an overall CTR of 9.20%. Pretty dang good. The average cost per click was \$0.56. My maximum bid was still \$0.80 but because my CTR was so good, Bing rewarded me with lower CPC's.

I've since paused Ad #2. Its CTR was 8.99% and Ad #1 had a CTR of 12.21%. Ad #1 also had a lower CPC.

I let this new campaign run for two days without touching it... except for jacking my daily budget up to \$200.00. The campaign was making money and my budget was running out before noon. I would be stupid not to increase it.

The campaign was profitable but not by much. I could see which keywords were converting and which weren't but I didn't have enough data to eliminate any yet.

Really, I jumped the gun with the whole presell page thing. Since I already had a campaign that was profitable, I should've tried to optimize what I already had to the best of my ability. Get it as profitable as I could... THEN test different methods of funnelling the traffic.

I should've analysed the keywords, killed the ones that weren't generating sales and only keep the ones that have. Then my entire budget would be spent on winning keywords. That's what I focused on next.

Here were the numbers at this point for this campaign:

Total Ad Spend = \$732.40

Total Gross Profit = \$789.82

Total Net Profit = \$57.42

I'm happy to see there's a profit. I'm even happier knowing that more than \$250 of that ad spend came from test data. Also, I haven't even touched any of my non-profitable keywords... which accounts for more than 75% of my keywords.

Also, note that there were a few sales made for other affiliate products I'm promoting. I removed those sales from the numbers I just gave you. Those numbers only reflect the sales of the Fat Diminisher product sold through Bing.

Tracking

Let's talk about tracking.

I've used just about every tracking program you can think of: ClickMeter, ClickMagick, Voluum, Linktrackr, Thrive Tracking, CPV Lab, AdsBridge, and more. All are good, for different reasons.

But I like to do things my own way and not guess whether or not the software I'm using is working. I also like to "code" stuff. I'm a dork. I know just enough PHP to be dangerous but also just enough to do what I need to do here.

Since I'm direct linking, it's much easier. The destination link I put into Bing is actually a page I host myself that pulls in some data from the URL using PHP, then redirects the user to my affiliate link.

Here's what my destination URL looks like:

[**http://mydomain.com/go/fatdiminisher/?cid=bing&adid={OrderId}temId}**](http://mydomain.com/go/fatdiminisher/?cid=bing&adid={OrderId}temId})

Let's break it down.

The first part, <http://mydomain.com/go/fatdiminisher/>, is the actual page I'm sending people to on my site. It's the index.php page inside the 'fatdiminisher' folder which is inside the 'go' folder.

Next, are the two URL parameters that tell me where the traffic is coming from and also what keyword sent the traffic. The {OrderId} actually spits out an 11-digit keyword ID.

Using PHP code on my index.php page, I pull those two URL parameters and attach them to the end of my ClickBank affiliate link and the finished URL looks like this:

<http://myCBId.millions35.hop.clickbank.net/?pid=1&tid=bingx39578093586>

The index.php page does all of this in a matter of milliseconds and then redirects the visitor to the offer. Could I just use a naked ClickBank link with my tracking ID at the end as the destination URL in Bing?

Yes. But it probably wouldn't last long. Since you have to include a Display URL, it would be Clickbank.com and that wouldn't really look good to the person searching and Bing would eventually call you out on it.

The 'tid' in the URL above is ClickBank's parameter for a tracking ID. That allows me to see in my ClickBank commission reports which tracking ID led to a sale. And by including the Keyword ID in my tracking ID, I can see which keywords lead to sales.

It also helps when I start driving traffic from multiple traffic sources.

I used the same [free affiliate link tracking script that I give away here](#).

So, what's next?

There are many different ways to improve this campaign. Since the sales video does use a few case studies (*testimonials*) from men, I can create a second campaign targeting only men.

To this point, I've only made sales in four out of my five targeted countries... United States, Australia, Canada, and the United Kingdom.

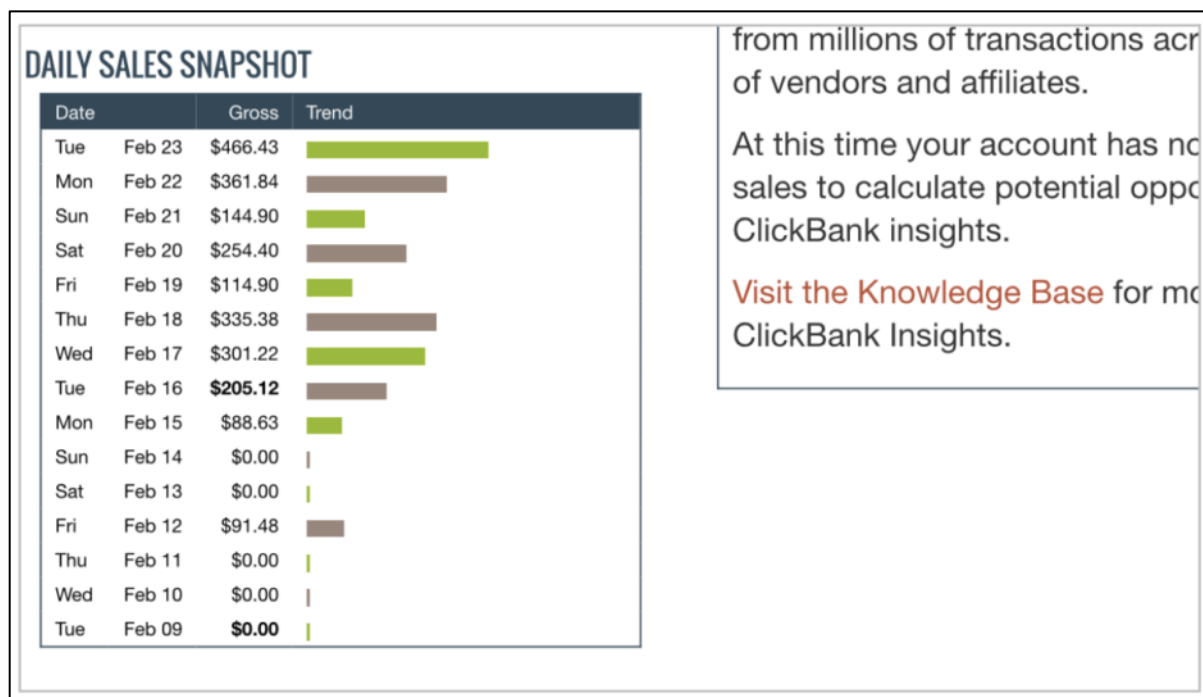
I can cut out New Zealand and maybe save some of my campaign budget there.

Earnings Update #2:

This is an update a week later of how my direct linking Weight Loss campaign did on just Bing/Yahoo.

Overall, I'm pretty happy.

Here's how my commissions look as of today:



The last two days I've really narrowed in on what's working and turned off everything else. Both days have been more than \$200 in profit after ad spend.

Most of you would be happy just keeping it running like that, a direct linking campaign making you \$200 in pure profit.

While \$200 a day is nothing to shake your head at...

Here's my plan going forward:

I need to build a list. Period.

Plain and simple. Without a list, you're left stranded when the SHTF. If the product owner decides to shut down their offer or ClickBank decides the product owner is doing something they shouldn't be and shuts their account down... you're screwed.

While your direct linking campaign might be profitable, you're relying on other people for your financial future. Not cool.

If you build your own list of people who are interested in a similar topic, you can promote any product you want. You're not reliant on an offer being around for years to come (and trust me, they never are).

Learning from Mistakes

Quick story...

Back in 2014, I decided to enter the Diabetes niche as an affiliate. I spent about a week building out a 5-page content site with the main piece of content being an advertorial that promoted a very specific Diabetes offer.

The offer was crushing it... like CRUSHING it, on ClickBank. It was the #1 offer across the whole network.

The VSL was written by a 7-figure copywriter. It had great testimonials and made some pretty aggressive claims.

A good chunk of my time that week was spent dissecting that VSL, extracting the nuggets and using them on my advertorial page.

I was extremely happy with the end result.

I decided to run ads on the Content.Ad network since my site was a content site. I submitted the ads on a Friday and they were approved to run on Monday.

Traffic starting coming in, I was getting click-throughs to the offer and I was making sales. I thought I'd hit a home run. Until I woke up Tuesday.

I went to check my stats and noticed I hadn't made any sales late Monday night or early Tuesday morning. I wasn't even getting any click-throughs. Something was wrong.

I went over to my site to make sure it wasn't down. Nope, everything was good there. I clicked one of the links on my site to make sure my links were all good... that's when I realized what happened.

ClickBank shut the offer down. The "product had violated their terms of service". For what reasons, I don't know. All I knew was that I just wasted an entire week's worth of time building a site that was totally customized to that one offer.

HUGE MISTAKE.

I learned my lesson.

If you're going to build a site, build it around a specific problem people have... not a specific offer that solves that problem.

On that site, you can use ads that are customized to the offer you're currently promoting. If that offer goes to crap, change the ads out.

Sorry, that wasn't really a "quick" story but I think it's worth reading. Hopefully, it saves you from a week's worth of work (*or more*).

Building A List

Moving forward, I've confirmed there's a problem people are willing to pay to solve. Now I'll build a list of those people and a small email sequence to follow-up with them.

Over the last week, I drove 3,988 clicks directly to the offer I was promoting. Had I "squeezed" those clicks first, I'd probably have a list of at least 500-1,000 people right now.

What I'll do with this campaign is build what's called a self-liquidating funnel. Drive traffic to a squeeze page, redirect those who opt-in to the offer, and try to cover the ad costs with the commissions made.

I'll be happy to break even at that point because I'll be building a list at the same time. A list of people I can email offers to over and over (while building a valuable relationship of course).

Since the first update, I spent a lot of time tweaking my PPC campaign. Testing different things. Only to realize it was way too soon for that.

I did setup ad groups for each country so I could see how much I was spending and compare it to my earnings. I discovered I was spending quite a bit on United Kingdom traffic and had very little earnings... so I killed it.

I also killed the Australia ad group. For some reason, I wasn't getting any clicks there and it was only hurting my CPC's because the click-through rate was zero.

I tried pausing different keywords that cost me money but made no sales and that just ended up leaving me with very little traffic.

I found that it was the longtail keywords that had HUGE ROI because I was spending hardly anything on them (*because they rarely received impressions*) but they were converting when they did.

The problem was, I had no clue which ones to pause and which ones to leave running. It was just too soon.

The truth is, everyone who clicked my ad was a prospect. The ad qualified the traffic pretty well. Had I squeezed them first, I probably would've converted a lot later on.

That's how I started with nothing and went to \$466.43 per day in only 9 days. That's just one example, in one very small sub-niche... "lose belly fat".

There are tons of different sub-niches of the Weight Loss niche that I could go after (and will go after) but this case study was only 9 days old.

Many people are afraid to spend money on advertising for fear that they'll lose their shirt. If you do it how I showed you, starting with a

small daily budget, you can drive hundreds of people to the offer to see if it converts.

Even if you only start at \$25 a day... with an offer like Fat Diminisher, you'll pretty quickly whether your campaign is setup right. And it only takes one sale to cover your \$25 a day.

The front-end product sells for \$37 and you get 75% of that. Since I made more than 10 sales, the product owner bumped me up to 90% commission on all of my front-end sales. Pretty sweet!

Hopefully, this opens your eyes to how easy it actually is to make money as an affiliate. I literally copied the headline from the banner ad in the Fat Diminisher Affiliate Center and pasted it into Bing as the headline for my ad.

The same goes for the body copy of the ad... I pulled it directly off the banner. The targeting for the campaign was pretty easy to determine by watching the first 5 or 10 minutes of the sales video.

The rest was just throwing something at the wall (*keywords*) and seeing what sticks (*sales*). By starting with a \$50 ad budget and a high CPC bid, I can quickly see whether or not the offer converts on cold traffic. If I make no sales, I'm out \$50 but I at least learned something (*my test data*).

In this case, I made almost \$300 from \$110 ad spend (the first two days).

I don't recommend anyone to direct link... long-term. I just think you're wasting your money. Sure, you could have a \$200 per day profitable campaign like I have here but I'd rather have a \$200 per day

profitable campaign and an email list of 1,000 people who I can mail to over and over again.

A direct-linking affiliate campaign is NOT an asset. It's a temporary income stream. Offers come and go all the time.

An email list is an asset. Once you've built it, it's yours to with what you want. You can mail it every day if you want.

I just want to be sure you understand the reason WHY I ran this direct-linking campaign. It's not to show you how to build a long-term affiliate business. It's to get data. It's to test an offer (or offers). It's testing a niche and they're buying habits.

It's a quick way to gather insight into a potential affiliate niche. Once you've validated it, as I've done with this case study, it's safe to take the time to build out your affiliate funnel.

