

a. Where the money changes hands

The Internet is full of valuable information available for free. Some of it is accessible on amateurish websites but much is available on professionally maintained and designed websites. The question that follows is who is paying for all this? Obviously many sites have clear business models where it is easy to see how the owners make money. These are the subscription sites, e-commerce sites, and other paid sites where a credit card is required. Other sites are sponsored by a larger organization that wishes to make important information available. In all these cases it is easy to see where the money originates and in what direction it flows. These sites are at the bottom of the Internet 'food chain' and are the real source of all the income that many millions of other sites depend on.

At the top of the Internet food chain is the user who is browsing for information. To keep with the food chain analogy the majority of all the websites on the Internet fall somewhere in the middle of the pyramid. This imperfect analogy only serves to illustrate the flow of monetary transactions between consumers and websites that actually provide a real service worth paying for.

In order to increase business, those websites at the bottom have shared their profits with Internet marketers who can drive traffic to them. These Internet marketers join what are known as affiliate programs and are compensated by transferring users from their own sites to those at the beginning of the food chain. They are rewarded for the traffic through any of several compensation models. These models include percentage revenue sharing, per click, per lead, per acquisition, and others.

The search for quality information by end-users on the Internet has forced the evolution of the marketing efforts by those service providers at the bottom of the food chain. It used to be that users looking for cars, for example, would simply type a make and model in a search engine and pick from the top results. Although that search still happens millions of times a day, users have learned to refine searches to find the answers to the exact question or problem. This behavior known as 'long-tail' searches has given rise to millions of new opportunities on the web. Professional Internet marketers have always taken advantage these opportunities but this new model has given rise to the accidental Internet marketer who decided to publish unique, worthwhile information. Through an infinity of networks designed to serve advertisers, these publishers who naturally drive traffic to their websites have the opportunity to offer advertising on small scale sites. These are the blogs, personal websites, and small-specialized sites with actual content.

The bottom line is that any website today can monetize on the traffic it receives as there are enough advertisers who could not possibly reach their entire target audience alone. This represents a golden opportunity for bloggers.

About the Author

Ada Smith is a professional Internet Marketer who helps [bloggers make money](#).

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