

Module 19, Lesson 2 Handout:

Social Media Partnerships

There are tons of ways to partner with others where everyone's a winner. Partnerships bring value to your audience by exposing them to other people you admire, offering opportunities to win prizes, and sharing chances to solve some of their problems that you can't solve for them. The same goes for your partners - YOU are the value they bring to their audience. Partnerships also help you grow faster and gain customers that you might not reach otherwise, and there are so many ways to execute a successful partnership. The key is ensuring the exchange is truly fair for all parties involved, and setting very clear expectations of everyone from the start.

We're going to focus on unpaid partnerships here, which can take on many creative forms. The two questions you should ask yourself when seeking a partnership are:

1. 'Who would I *love* for my program or service to be shared by?'
2. 'Who am I looking to reach?'

The answers to those two questions can help reveal potential partners, and creative ways to work together. Below are some of our favorite ways to partner with other brands and professionals. In all of these scenarios, no money is exchanged. However, **both parties benefit** through their respective audience development, organic promotion, newsletter subscriber growth, and eventually, higher sales and traffic.

Another benefit of these types of partnership is that most often for a solopreneur, they lead to some sort of actual friendship with another entrepreneur or brand contact, which can be a source of comfort, support, and camaraderie we all need.

Direct promotion: As you promote your services and sales, take note of who else is doing the same and consider proposing a mutual promotion. Regardless of what industry they are in, you can leverage social media for content sharing swaps or reposts on Instagram Story, Instagram Live, Facebook, Twitter, etc. This is basically direct advertisement, but without the cost.

Content swaps: Maybe you're not directly promoting something, but you have a steady flow of content to share with the world: articles, blogs, social posts, recipes...In this case, you are mutually agreeing to share original content on each other's platforms. They will send you a link to one of their blogs or social posts each week, and you will share it on your social media page, and vice versa. Again, it's mutually beneficial, easy to execute, and it didn't cost anyone anything.

Collaborative contests or giveaways: These are popular partnerships used to gain exposure and engagement from an entirely different audience than your own. Giveaways can be used to increase newsletter lists and social following by using a call to action to enter an email address or following and commenting in order to complete their entry to win. You get direct engagement from this partnership, and by partnering with brands aligned to your own, their audience will have an immediate association between you and the brand they already know and like. Not to mention a positive taste left in their mouth as you offer to potentially send them a prize!

Events: There are two ways that mutually beneficial, unpaid partnerships can be leveraged via live events. The first is one in which you are the expert. Often hosted by someone else, you may be the intrigue for attendees, as well as the source of information or entertainment the event is based on. Although unpaid, this benefits you in terms of experience and social proof. The other way is to partner with brands that can offer products, goods, or services in turn for exposure to the attendees of your event. This is also typically combined with promised exchange of photos on social media featuring the brand.

Those are just some of the ways you can partner with other brands, entrepreneurs, and influencers for mutually beneficial, no-cost audience growth. Always be thinking about your next opportunity to partner, as it will accelerate your business's growth faster than if you only play in the sandbox by yourself.