

Interview between Andrew Fox and Marlon Sanders - Conducted in April 2004

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Andrew: Hi, this is Andrew Fox here and today I have a very special guest on the line. His name is Marlon Sanders and I will be interviewing on the topic of Affiliate Marketing. Hi, Marlon.

Marlon: Hi, Andrew how are you?

Andrew: I am not too bad. Good to have you on the call, Marlon. Let's just start could you just sort of give us a brief history on how long you have been in the Internet business for. Just a general background on you know your products and past history, please.

Marlon: All right Andrew, I would be happy to. By the way thank you for inviting me on the session, I am glad to be here. I started in online marketing, not Internet marketing, online marketing pre-worldwide web days when we where selling back on AOL and CompuServe. And so at the time I was primarily a copywriter, freelance copywriter, for my living. Then I started selling products on AOL and CompuServe.

You may have heard of Jonathan Mizel, that is when I met him he was running AOL classified ads at the time. Michael Enlow was really big in marketing on AOL. There is a lady named Shelia Danson was selling on line, a lot on AOL. Then subsequently I was an independent contractor with a company involved in the early days of Internet marketing pre-worldwide web back when you had Veronica Gofer and Archie.

Andrew: Yes.

Marlon: I was a copywriter there so I got involved and exposed to everything they were doing. I was writing copy for what they were doing. Then the worldwide web came along and not too long thereafter, I started doing the Internet marketing on the worldwide web and so forth. Then we started doing with Jonathan and Declan Dunn, we started doing the Internet marketing seminars.

One of my first products that I sold online was, “How To Create Your Own Products In Two Hours”. I had a product about ad copy, I don’t even remember the name of it. Ad Copy Secrets or something. I had an early product I had was “How To Double Your Website Sales”.

My first really big hit though of course was [The Amazing Formula](#). That was gosh, three or four... man, actually I don’t know I think it was 1997, I believe it was like February of 1997, when I launched Amazing Formula which to my knowledge was the first 100% digitally delivered ebook on Internet marketing that was sold on the Internet. Although I have met a few people at seminars that think or say that they sold something on internet marketing earlier. I did not see at the time any ebooks 100% digitally done on internet marketing. It is all irrelevant now.

Andrew: Yeah.

Marlon: But anyway that is my history and so basically Andrew I have been in it from day one. I have helped a lot of the people that are considered current marketing gurus. At least a lot of them bought my early information because it was one of the only things out there.

Andrew: I am a loyal customer myself, Marlon.

Marlon: Yeah, so that is kinda my background.

Andrew: Ok, well when you actually started then you said with Jonathan running the AOL classified, what year was that in?

Marlon: Oh, gosh Andrew I don’t remember pre-worldwide web pre-internet, I mean five or six or seven years ago. To tell you the truth I don’t remember. I think it was 1995, I think, because Ted Powell had a marketing cruise that Jonathan and I spoke on and Joe Cossman who has since died... past on... was there. Ted Nicholas was on that cruise. Dan

Poynter and a bunch of really awesome great people, and I think that that cruise was in 1995.

Andrew: Well that is good, Marlon you know as you said you have been there from the start and so you have watched this whole new era develop in internet marketing. When did you sort of first notice affiliate marketing come in to play, and see who some of the men guys doing it first?

Marlon: I can't remember if it was 1996 or 1997. I believe it was 1997, I think but I could be wrong on that, Andrew. I live real in the present moment so I am not a person that pays a lot of attention to the past to be honest. I live for what is going on this very moment. But having said that I think it was February 1997... if I had to check, I have the merchant account statements.

What happened, though, let me just tell you the brief story. What happens was I was trying, in either November or December or before that year whatever that year was, to do viral ebook marketing. Jim Daniel's was doing that. He had the first, what as far as I recall, the first ebook that he was just giving away on internet marketing that was Windows based. I think people did that on Bulletin Boards back in the DOS days.

Andrew: Yeah.

Marlon: But I am talking the world of Windows, right, which I think at the time was Windows 3.1 maybe, but I don't know maybe Windows 95. But anyway Jim Daniel's... I see him do it and I thought "that is a great idea... I am going to create this ebook and just give it away on internet marketing!".

It was around Christmas and so, I go into some forums (Anthony Blake's forum and the Warrior's forum) and maybe one or two others and gave it away as a Christmas present.

Like, 350 people downloaded it and 2 people bought. Honestly, it hacked me off. It annoyed me that more people did not download it and that hardly anybody bought from me... to be quiet honest, I said "screw these people I am going to sell it!"

Andrew: Yeah, I do definitely remember reading it in an interview about you Marlon, and you were trying to generate an... was was it.. an ebook that fulfilled a need?

Marlon: I had a back-end course called the “The Big Course”, which turned into “Cash Like Clockwork”. But at the time it was called The Big Course.

The idea was, I was going to give away the ebook and sell the back end.

So it was very early. You could call some of these the first attempts at viral marketing. I mean Hotmail and other people were doing viral marketing but as far as ebook viral marketing, Jim Daniel’s (to my knowledge) was probably the first.

But anyway to make a long story short, I got mad, so I wrote this sales letter for it and at the same time I had bought... like probably November, December, and January... Corey Rudl’s course – which, at the time, was the only really big course out there, you know.

So I bought Corey’s course and it really just blew me away. Here he is showing this “car secret site”, ya know, where he has this one page sales letter and he was selling this ebook.

I thought “all gees I just... (and he is using this associate program) oh man I just... this is the answer.”

So the only thing you could really create ebooks with at the time (and) the one that I had used in November, was a product called DreamBook.

Which... it created at the time, a very crude ebook.

It certainly wasn’t a real thing of beauty. In fact, it was so ugly that my friend Patrick Anderson contacted me and he had a graphic designer and he was like “Marlon let me have my graphic designer design some graphics for this because it really needs it.”

I contacted Corey’s programmer that had done the ebook for him because he custom programmed it. I couldn’t... the guy - I don’t know - he wanted too much money or he didn’t have time or whatever.

So, I think I found InfoCourier to create the ebook for “The Amazing Formula” (my next product).

Corey was working with Hypermall so I had Hypermall set up an associate program, which was... I mean considering Assoctrac didn't exist in those days. He was using this program that was done probably just for him by Hypermall, Jawaid Bazyar. And so, Jawaid hooked me on that thing and I had a speaking gig over at NetExpo in Kauai like in February, March or April.

I was getting ready to go over there and my friend Rick Benetau had gotten me the speaking gig because he could not go. To repay him I said "I tell you what Rick... I have got this little ebook here you can sell it this month and I will give you like 80% of the profits" (or 100%, I think 80%.)

Rick had a really good mailing list at the time with his merry ezine.

Anyway, to make a long story short he promoted it while I was over at NetExpo in Kauai. Allan Gardyne picked it up and started promoting it and the thing just exploded.

I was only gone like a week and I came back and the thing had just exploded. You know... the background of the menu (the nav menu) was black and some printers were printing it out black and it had typos in it.

Andrew: {Laughs}

Marlon: You know... but I mean... we sold, like, the first month... I think maybe it was only like a half month... and we sold like \$15,000.

But I believe, as I recall, I published I think at GimmeSecrets.com I got the actual screen captured, at the current letter. That letter will probably change soon, you know soon. But anyway, I had some screen captures and like I think the second month... I think I did \$30,000 sales on it. It kept really churning out \$20,000, \$25,000, \$30,000 in sales, for...

Andrew: Which is very amazing...

Marlon: ...which is quiet a lot a money for, like, I think about two to three years.

Andrew: So you would definitely say, you know, an affiliate program almost started your sales rolling in?

Marlon: That was it. That was the only thing, yeah. I wasn't doing any advertising for it, you know. I did a little banner advertising but it really didn't do anything.

Andrew: So affiliate marketing was the...

Marlon: I will tell you what really happened behind the scenes... Patrick Anderson had figured out how to log in and check Corey's stats, because at the time, his associates.. their stats were not protected!

Andrew: {Laughs}

Marlon: If you just had the ID, you could go to their website to check the stats and you could, like, type in the ID and you could get their stats.

He goes in there and sees that Corey is writing checks, affiliate checks to people for \$20,000, \$25,000 and \$30,000.

He called me up and, like, "Marlon, these affiliate programs is how Corey is selling all of that stuff". I am like "Really?"

He is like "Yeah dude I went in there and I checked your stats".

He is like... you should have an associate program. So that is when I decided to start the associate program.

Andrew: Yeah, do you remember, I know you said your month on this but do you remember what year or so that was in then?

Marlon: God, again, I think that was early 1997, because I launched it like February so that must have been like... I think... that was like December of 1996 when he told me that... something like that.

Andrew: Ok, ok.

Marlon: I mean, as I said, these dates could be wrong. I am not a big dates person. I just you know it is all kind of foggy but I could be wrong on the dates Andrew but I am pretty sure that those are the dates.

Andrew: Ok, sure, that is good. So Marlon before you released...

Marlon: But I probably have screen captures of all of this stuff on different websites at different times. I have got a bunch of them in my product, you know [How I Sell Thousands On The Net](#).

Andrew: Do you have a link to that product, Marlon?

Marlon: I have my merchant statements and stuff.

Andrew: Do you have a link to that website, you know, to give our listeners?

Marlon: That is.... let me see what that website is. I can get the URL here, hold on.

Andrew: Ok, sure.

Marlon: That is well let me just type in Google, How I Sell Thousands, we have so many websites now that...

Andrew: Yeah you have a very big product range...

Marlon: Let me, good grief, I don't even see my own thing in Google, let me ask Lisa, hold on here. Lisa, the URL for How I Sell Thousands, so while we are waiting for that why don't we go on here.

Andrew: Ok, sure. What I was going to ask Marlon, next is...

Marlon: Yeah.

Andrew: Before you sort of roll out a product to your affiliates to get them to sell it... I mean... do you sort of test it against your own list just to make sure that it is going to convert well?

Marlon: Well, yeah, we always roll our product to our list.

So I mean... typically what we do... not all products are great. So like recently we did a mailing just as on a teleconference to our list. It converted but it didn't convert great.

So we just told our resellers when I promoted it in our reseller newsletter...

I said “You know... a lot of times we will put dollars per unique visitor there” but in this case we just said “well it didn’t sell bad... it didn’t sell great, you know, but it sold ok and it is a high ticket so, you know, you may want to promote it to your list.”

Andrew: So you are looking at...

Marlon: So I tried it... but you know a lot of times we will give actual dollars per unique visitor, but that really doesn’t mean a lot Andrew, because that is to my list.

Andrew: Yeah.

Marlon: So I mean, I can have a product that sells to my list and that won’t sell at all to other people’s list. On the other hand, I could have a product that doesn’t sell that great to my list but if somebody gave it a really strong endorsement, that might sell really well to their list.

Andrew: Yeah, I would...

Marlon: They might have a better relationship with their list than I have. It happens.

Andrew: It does. I have had it myself where I sold some of my own products and they have sold, you know, reasonably well... but then an affiliate comes in and embarrasses me by doubling the conversion (rate).

Marlon: Yeah, I mean, I have seen it... you know... I have seen that happen. A lot depends on the relationship to the list and sometimes the timing of the offer. How often you have mailed your own list. Oh, it is YourMoneySecret.com is that URL.

Andrew: Ok could you just repeat that again, Marlon.

Marlon: Yeah, YourMoneySecret.com and that is all one word.

Andrew: Ok that is good. I will check it out later on.

Marlon: And another little cheap intro product that has a lot of some of the screen captures in there from the early... you know. Also at gimmes... well

we got it up right now, Andrew, but like I said we may be I am going to change the sales letter pretty soon.

But currently at GimmeSecrets.com (that is plural and all one word)... I have the screen captures there too, as some of the early stuff. Like I have a screen capture because I was promoting those products on HigherResponse.com.

So, like, if you go into the “whois”... now the data... we made some kind of change so it is not showing the origin date at HigherResponse.com. I took a screen capture when it was showing it and I screen captured that and I got it there on the current GimmeSecrets.com website. Like I say, we may be changing that sales letter, but anyway.

Andrew: Ok.

Marlon: That is a little bit of the history, you know.

Andrew: So when you bring up, you know, a new product...

Marlon: By the way... the way spam originated, to my knowledge, was a couple of guys (who, I pretty much know who they were) figured out in the old days that everybody was running the classified ads on AOL.

What you did was, you run a little classified ad offer free information and then you would hand... the autoresponder, didn't exist. You would hand email them back your sales letter. The big trick was you could increase your conversion 27% if you put “Dear” and put their name in there in the email when you emailed back your sales letter to them.

Andrew: Yeah.

Marlon: So someone figured out how to go into all of the people running ads on AOL which was a lot of classified ads, because they were free.

They figured out how to strip out the email addresses... and then send them the sales letter for their product. This, to my knowledge, was the original spam.... but of course, at the time, that was the only email you got that was a commercial offer.

So the word “spam” had not been originated, you hardly ever got any of it.

So the few people that knew how to do that and had custom program the software to do it, made a killing.

Andrew: Yeah, I mean, like, I remember years ago... I got started around sort of 1999 or 2000.... and spam was so hardly unheard of, and now it is huge problem.

Marlon: Yeah, and so the other thing ... the product at AOL... the big secret was that if you posted your classified ads at a certain time of the day you would be at the top of the classified ad list. That was another big secret. I sold that for like 97 bucks it was like the 'key hot point' that sold this book... this product... for like 97 bucks.

Andrew: Yeah, ok, well as an affiliate you know, they request say a copy of some of your products are you willing to give them review copies?

I spoke to Yanik Silver about this and his opinion was sort of a case by case scenario.

Marlon: Yeah, I mean if somebody was... ok, first of all let me say this... *the big affiliates don't do that.* They are making money. They buy my product and they never request a free copy.

Andrew: Ok...

Marlon: Because, they have got money. Second of all, psychologically, if they got it for free they probably don't value it. Like Allan Gardyne always buys my product, if he is going to promote it. He always has and that is his policy. He always buys someone's product. He thinks that it is important.

Andrew: Ok...

Marlon: I don't know... many times... but I just don't have top affiliates email me for comp copies. The people who email me for comp copies have got small list and they are broke, and that is why they want a free copy of your product.

So, you know, typically... I don't. Now, if I did it, it wouldn't be because the affiliate emailed and asks. It would be because I picked out a super affiliate

and comp them a product. Which I do, on occasion, but when I do it... it is somebody that is truly *is* a super affiliate.

And, yeah, if I had someone contact me who was a true super affiliate and had truly sold thousands of dollars of someone's products and so forth, yeah, I would probably do it. But again, typically, that person doesn't ask for a comp copy.

Andrew: Yeah, that is an interesting (point).

Marlon: That person has got a lot and is doing really well and they buy your fifty, sixty, seventy... \$100.00 product, right.

Andrew: Yeah, that is an interesting point, Marlin, because you indicated,,, as you said again... giving them a free copy... it is just the psychological value behind it, it just doesn't seem to have as much value.

Marlon: I never felt people value what they get for free. I really and truly do not think people value what they get for free, because, it must not be worth much or it would not be free.

Andrew: Well, I mean it... like the old story of how many ebooks do you have downloaded on your computer.... but if you ordered a course that is \$500.00 you are going to read the one that is \$500.00, not the 100 ebooks that are on your hard drive.

Marlon: It is just like in consulting... people that do consulting know this.

if you charge a \$100.00 an hour for consulting, they are either not doing anything you are telling them to do and B, they are going to argue with you about why it won't work.

If you charge \$500.00 an hour they are still going to argue with you and they still ain't going to do it. If you charge a \$1,000.00 an hour like I do, they will listen, they probably won't argue with you, but then not implement.

But if you charge at a certain point though... you charge 2 or \$3,000.00, \$5,000.00 to help them... maybe that is for a three or four hour package... they've got a psychological commitment, so they are going to do what you recommend.

Andrew: Yeah, yeah.

Marlon: So you know, there is a lot too, it is kinda a problem with low price stuff... 50 or 100 bucks. There is no real psychological commitment there, so people buy it, skim it and then never do anything with it.

So I really think that low.. that you don't pay much for information... you are going to get what you pay for, psychologically.

Andrew: Yeah, yeah, I have actually found myself Marlon, over the last sorta year or so I have been focusing toward, you know, creating higher priced products of \$697.00 to \$1,000.00. The customers you get are people who are more committed and will not send you these emails complaining and whining all the time, as opposed to some people who would buy like a \$17.00 ebook and expect the world from.

Marlon: That is the problem. You sell something for 50 or 100 bucks and people expect like a masters degree course in online marketing.

That is guaranteed... and they want free consulting and... I mean it is incredible the demands and expectations of some of the consumers nowadays because they have just been spoiled by all the free stuff.

Andrew: {Laughs} It is so true.

Marlon: People that give away free consulting with a \$50.00 ebook, you know. In fact... the guy that contacted me the other day... he was like "Well, why should I buy so and so from you, when there is this guy over here has got his product over here on how to sell... and it is free?"

I didn't say this in the email... but here is what I thought... "Yeah, why don't you go learn how to sell from the dud that can't sell his OWN product on how to sell?"

He can't get any money for his product... but you want to tell him to tell you how to get money? That is a smart idea you got there, you know, anyway..

But isn't that true? I mean I like people trying to tell you how to sell something when they can't sell their own stuff!

Andrew: Right, right, very good point, very good point.

So with your affiliates Marlon, what sort of commission levels do you pay them at, and, are you willing to pay... to say, more active affiliates... at a higher commission?

Marlon: We really treat... we try to treat all of our affiliates like super affiliates. So I really don't have other than one or two people mostly friends... just a very small handful... that I might pay a little higher... some higher commissions too, but basically I don't.

I mean, pretty much, it is "our commission is our commission". On most of our products we pay 50 (percent) but we have got some that we pay 55 on. Like, I think with our [PushButtonLetters](#) we are currently paying 55.

Amazing Formula is 60. [Marketing DashBoard](#) I think we pay out 65 or 70 on it. I think that can go up to 80% depending on your sales volume.

Andrew: Yeah, so Marlon, how do you know any type of percentage figures? I mean, how much traffic is brought to you by affiliates and how much of your sales are made by affiliates... like, a percentage?

Marlon: Well, we are dominantly an affiliate driven company, so you could basically say all of our traffic comes from affiliates. It is not exactly true though, because a lot of our traffic comes from name recognition and so forth. It is all caused by the affiliates. I mean, a lot of that name recognition is caused by affiliates promoting it.

Andrew: Ok, that is interesting.

Marlon: So, in my book, all of our traffic is caused by affiliates. Now you know, times change and my marketing methods are going to change. I am starting to layer in some additional prospecting methods. The affiliate market place in internet marketing... and not so much in other industries... but in internet marketing is pretty vicious out there now and it is not a game, you know... it is game for grown ups, you know.

Even for me, it is like getting just too competitive. We probably are going to start layering in other methods of lead generation, but that is... to date you know, we have been an affiliate program driven company.

Why? Because look at the guys out there selling the ebook on “How To Get Traffic Using Payperclicks”.

How does he sell his book? Affiliate programs.

Look at the books (and I won't name names) but extremely popular books that spend the dominant part of the book on how to get traffic from search engines. How do they sell their books? Pretty much affiliate programs.

Andrew: Okay.

Marlon: So, you know, the people publishing pay per click book, training and search engine training use affiliate programs to get their traffic dominantly. Dominantly.

Andrew: Yeah, the next point Marlon and this is something I have been wanting to ask you for quiet a few years is... I know you run quite a lot of affiliate competitions as I am a member of your affiliate list, I see you are always usually doing a lot of competitions and rewards for your sales.

How do you find these competitions have done for you?

Marlon: They are ok, Andrew. You know, this is really the truth about marketing. Like associate programs, if you have one that is successful and that is a really big gigantic huge home run concept. But for pretty much everything else that you do in marketing, is going to work some. I believe just about everything works some.

Now, if you become a real true expert at pay per clicks like some of my friends are and you got 5,000 pay per click words, you make a lot of money from pay per clicks. I have got friends that really make a lot but they really really really work at it and they are really specialist at it. But typically in marketing, everything works some.

So, do the affiliate contests work? They are not spectacular, you know.

Typically, what happens is, one person gets excited about the contest and promotes and wins it and nobody else did that much extra, typically. Typically.

Andrew: Yeah, what types of rewards do you give them? It is like cash prices are is it one of your products or are there computer items?

Marlon: All of the above. We have done digital cameras, we have done cool gadgets, we have done cash, and we have done everything that we could think to do.

Andrew: Do you actually have, like, a sponsor that gives you these products or do you actually purchase them yourself?

Marlon: No, you know in the ideal world you get a sponsor but you know I ain't got time for that. Maybe you got time for it. I don't have time for it. I mean, it is a 100 bucks or 200 bucks or 300 bucks (purchase). I just buy it.

Andrew: That is a good point.

Marlon: I mean, nobody is perfect, nobody has got as much staff as you want and if you do you are probably really worried about your overhead, you know. We are pretty much a lean and mean machine. We don't have time to implement even a tenth of my really great, astounding ideas. You know, this is true, you just... you know you don't have time. There is a lot of things that we do that are inefficient or less than perfect.

Andrew: Yeah, well ok, so to join your affiliate program do you have to pay for it or buy one of your products are do you actually have a link there where people can just join for free?

Marlon: The affiliate link is HitsNCash.com. We actually have... we are putting up a new affiliate site and I can't even remember the URL for it.

We have so many URL's, I can't even remember them all, but hitsncash will work fine. What the deal is, if you don't buy a product you make commissions beginning with your fourth sale. No charge to join but you don't make commissions until your fourth sale. If you buy one of the products you make commissions beginning with the first sale.

Andrew: Quite interesting.

Marlon: That is a sales requirement not a purchase requirement.

In the United States, the Attorney that I consulted with said if you have a purchase requirement for your product it is a little bit too close to a chain thing.

Andrew: Yeah, yeah.

Marlon: In other words, if you require people to purchase to earn commissions, that is basically a lottery. The reason is because earning commissions is based on risks. It is based on, like, chance. If you have consideration buying the product plus chance equals lottery. Lotteries equal illegal, equal's jail.

Andrew: Yeah.

Marlon: That is what the Attorney told me. So your Attorney may tell you something different. The laws in UK may be totally different. But he said hey you can do a sales requirement, so we do a sales requirement.

Andrew: Ok.

Marlon: So we do a sales requirement.

Andrew: Ok.

Marlon: If you want to buy a product, you have got to sell three. But what happened with that Andrew, was we use to do that per product but now, it is kind of like... I don't think that we are sticking to that per product. It is basically you buy one of our products, you sell any of them and earn commissions.

Now, we do not pay commissions on your own purchase because I just think that it makes your program a sham.

Andrew: I am with you on that Marlon, I know actually I remember Corey use to actually... I think I definitely heard him say "buy it through your link."

Marlon: Yeah and you know and I just think I don't... Corey is an awesome marketer and a good friend but I don't really buy into that.

Andrew: Yeah, Marlon I am not suggesting that.. I just don't know if it necessarily is the best financial decision but it is more personal to me and I

just think of it as cheating. I just say “don’t buy through your link or I’ll just refund the product, I don’t want you as a customer”.

Marlon: Yeah, it is kind of a hassle though, what happens is we go through at the end of the month and we find everybody that bought through their own link and we remove their commission.

I am sure some people feel like we cheated them. There is a small chance pretty much though we can see everybody that bought through their own link. I guess there is a very small chance that we might screw up on it.

Pretty much we check it all out and everything. I am sure that some people feel like we screwed them. You know the problem is if everybody buys through their own link, no affiliates ever earn any commissions because people aren’t dumb. They are going to figure out they can join the affiliate program and get the product half price. In the end, all of the affiliates get screwed because nobody gets any commission.

Andrew: Yeah, yeah, that is unfair and actually the original affiliate who might have referred that customer and then...

Marlon: Yeah, they get screwed then the person joins and they get a commission and the referring affiliate doesn’t which is why that you have two level affiliates programs. But, we aren’t two levels for a bunch of reasons. That is just what we do.

Andrew: Okay.

Marlon: I can’t say what everybody else should do but that is what we do.

Andrew: I just wanted to actually put in a very strong endorsement for your affiliate program, Marlon, because I do know a lot of people who promote it and have good results. How many products do you actually have available that you can earn commission on?

Marlon: Well, that is kinda the problem now... I think we got 20 or 25 it is, like, more than I can keep track of. It is a lot.

Andrew: That gives, you know, an affiliate a good choice where they can join you...

Marlon: Yeah, and we are actually getting ready to roll out brand new affiliate software, so you can track your hits and sell by product. The problem we have in the past is our affiliate software lumped it all together.

So if you promoted you know Push Button Letters, Amazing Formula, Give Me Money Now you would only know your aggregated hits and sales but you couldn't know just hits and sales on Push Button Letters and I thought that that really sucked.

Andrew: Yeah and you couldn't separate them apart.

Marlon: Anyway, it has been a huge... pretty big.... effort but we are switching over to this new affiliate software which will give you extremely robust affiliate statistics and we are pretty jazzed about that. We haven't rolled it out yet but we are getting ready to.

Andrew: Ok that is very interesting. So how often do you have to pay your affiliates then and by what method are you using?

Marlon: Once a month by [PayPal](#). We use to pay by check and someone in Nigeria scanned in my signature cut a check for \$100,000 and FedEx it to a company in the United States to buy hard drives.

Andrew: That is not good.

Marlon: So, I immediately realized that sending people your signature in the mail was probably not a very bright idea.

Andrew: Yes I think so definitely, not a good idea. I have actually heard there has been quite a few programs you know where people do try to scam these affiliate programs. You know, rewrite the amounts on the checks. People like Lee actually had some, Lee Benson, he had people who where, like, tricking the system and just saying that they had 20 or 30 sales. They were writing to him like the next day saying "oh I made 30 sales yesterday, can you pay me immediately I really need the money?"

Marlon: Yeah, any time somebody wants something immediate, you know there is something up. I just got a call yesterday to our customer support and the guy wanted Push Button Letters immediately cause he said that he was headed back to the UK. I said no problem, for a buck thirty-five we ship to the UK.

But I ain't Fed Ex'ing him his product, you see what I am saying, because there is something up there. Almost always when somebody wants something right now, demanding it immediately, you pretty much know that they are up to something.

Yeah, well our life is really much easier using PayPal. We use to have enormous problems with fraud and we spent a lot of money trying to prevent fraud. We just don't have fraud problems with PayPal, not like before.

Andrew: It is interesting, I mean, I am an affiliate myself for a few programs. You know Corey, actually, you know he pays by check. Well you can request bank wire if you earning decent enough commissions. A lot of other affiliates are using PayPal.

Marlon: Let me say this: Corey pays by check and he had to spend a lot of money with his bank to have this anti fraud system thing set up because I discussed this with Corey on the phone. I mean, what seems simple on the end user then is really not simple in reality. I mean he spent like I think he told me... like I forgot... I think it was like \$3,000.00 a month to prevent fraud on those checks.

Andrew: Oh...

Marlon: Yeah, it ain't as simple as it looks on the surface. So that is why we use PayPal. They have a special and I can't even remember what he called it but he has his own line of... it's like... He has this service where you know, he gives them the check numbers that he as written and only those approved check numbers for those dollar amounts can go through his checking account. So if somebody scans it in and tries to pass another check through... if it ain't on the list it isn't getting cashed.

I called my bank, and my bank would not even offer that to me. But Corey did it but I think his bank charged quite... it is not \$3,000 but I think his company... he has to pay quite a bit of money for that service. That is the beauty of PayPal. You just don't have the fraud problems.

Andrew: Yeah, and... and affiliates actually, you know, they prefer PayPal as well a lot of the time.

Marlon: I am sorry.

Andrew: I am saying affiliates prefer to be paid by PayPal.

Marlon: Well some do and some don't. You got the problem where in certain countries they can't use PayPal.

Andrew: Yeah, yeah that is true.

Marlon: We are thinking about using [WorldPay](#) which can take money from all of these other countries... kind of like PayPal... but I am a little reticent use to them just because I don't that much about them.

Andrew: Yeah, I know there are actually others promoting Jonathan Mizel's affiliate program and he is using [CCBill.com](#) where they track the affiliates payments for you. I think the processing fees are a bit higher.

Marlon: They are a lot higher and that is the problem. They are like 15 or 20%.

Andrew: Yeah, they cut you a check once a week, which is good.

Marlon: Oh, they send you a check once a week?

Andrew: Yeah, I have been...

Marlon: Really.

Andrew: I have not had time to cash them. I have got about three checks setting here. I've not had time to cash them.

Marlon: God, you know what I should do is I should probably set up a second like thing where people could like promote you know separate URL's that go through CCBill. If you needed an immediate check kind of thing you could get it.

Andrew: Yeah.

Marlon: It really sucks only getting paid once a month. I know from my standpoint I think. God, if I promote that program it is going to take a month to get your money.

Andrew: Yeah, I mean I have gotten six checks so far and it is nice getting constant money through the postal office. It has been pretty good, in fact for one of my affiliate programs now at my sites I don't even have a link for it... I only give by private invite.

I have only gotten actually about seven affiliates but you know they are all sub affiliates, so that I don't have the hassle and I just want the hassle of paying these one or two sales even though it might not be a lot. I just don't have the systems in place and in the UK it can be a bit harder to pay. You know affiliates you can't write....

Marlon: Yeah but you can pay by PayPal though right?

Andrew: Yes you can pay by PayPal. But I don't...

Marlon: I mean it is so simple on PayPal, I mean it is a piece of cake.

Andrew: Yeah, I know but the mass pay feature I don't think is available in the UK yet.

Marlon: Oh, well then that makes it a lot more difficult, yeah, but the mass pay feature hopefully they will get that in there in the UK Andrew, because it is really a great feature.

Andrew: I think that it is definitely, you know, on the cards to do. So it will be make a lot of UK people's lives a lot easier.

Marlon: You have got to be careful with PayPal, as you know. If they perceive great rich quick programs and multi level programs are against their terms of service. If they perceive you as having a get rich quick program they can freeze your account and hold the money for six months.

That happened to a friend of mine who had like a \$100,000 dollars in there or at least that is what he told me.

Andrew: Yeah, I got it. I know the same friend.

Marlon: Yeah and you know, I see the point. I see their point but you know, you saw I am saying if you might be perceived as multi level and they perceive two level affiliate programs as multi level. If you might be

perceived as get rich quick. You know, we were going to go two level but I am just too scared that PayPal would say “you are multi level you are frozen. “

Andrew: Yeah, then you are screwed up.

Marlon: Yeah.

Andrew: Ok, are you actually an affiliate for any other products yourself?

Marlon: We have some that we promote just like within our products we refer people to some other products.

Andrew: But...

Marlon: On the real start page which is the thing that you can click about to make it your start page. You know we have some affiliate program links buried in there.

Andrew: Yeah, yeah, ok.

Marlon: Well I don't actively promote... it is a rare day when I actively promote an affiliate link through email to my list.

Andrew: Yeah.

Marlon: I rarely do it, out of respect for my affiliates. It is kinda of a hard thing because there is a awful lot of products I would like to promote to my list, but I you know... I would probably make more money promoting certain products than I can my own product.

Andrew: Yeah, ok.

Marlon: If a new product comes out and it just sizzling... you know, like when instant audio hit it big, right.

Andrew: That is true.

Marlon: That Mark Joyner offer if I... the people that first promoted Mark Joyner's \$1,000.00 deal to their list, like Terry Dean. They made a lot of money off of that offer.

Andrew: Yeah.

Marlon: But the deal is, you know, I don't really like doing that because the affiliates are kind of like... "well where is my check, where is my commission?" You can't pay them a commission on somebody else's sales.

Andrew: Not fair, yeah.

Marlon: I mean, I do it on rare occasions... like. I have a friend Dave Frey and he has this really hot new product - instantreferrals.com - and I am going to promote to my list. It is a great, drop dead killer product, nothing has ever been done like it before. I am going to promote that to my list. But he is a close friend and it I very very rarely do it.

Andrew: Ok, ok. So Marlon just to wrap things up then, what are your sorta thoughts on, you know. if you have a product then you should really start an affiliate program? I mean what do you think the affiliate program holds for the future. Is it going to be harder or easier to get to the affiliates?

Marlon: Well you know Andrew... come on let's be honest *everything* is going to be harder. The more the market place matures the more players come into the market and until there is barriers to entry. The more players there are, the more competitive it is the harder it is to make money. Therefore you go try to search out niches that are not competitive.

Andrew: Yeah, that is what I am....

Marlon: And so you know, or you try to use advertising and lead generation methods that other people aren't using that gives you a competitive edge. It is a competition whether you like it or not. Whether anybody will admit it or not, even the people so... "oh we are you are not in competition with anyone." Blah, Blah, Blah, Blah. Well then, go try to sell an ebook on internet marketing and tell me you ain't in a competition, because you are.

You know, like this last week or two... you know, my we had one or two new offers that went out. We went up against Mr. X Offer by Shawn Casey and went up against the Jim Edwards offer on the Multi-media thing.

Which are both drop dead astounding killer sales letters and offers right.

Andrew: Yeah.

Marlon: So our offer, you know, it was ok, but it wasn't at that level. Hey the people made a limited amount of money, I don't care what anybody says, people ain't, most people don't have an endless supply of money that they can just spend all day long on internet marketing products.

Andrew: Yeah, I am with...

Marlon: Mr. X, where he followed a multi-millionaire around for a year with a video camera and he is going to give me the videos.

Jim Edwards, you know, how he sold however many thousand thousand thousand dollars for brand new multi-media technique that ain't nobody else using. Now you come out with a product like that and that is what you are up against.

Andrew: Umm....

Marlon: Right, so it is *that* you are competing for attention and for dollars all right. So yeah, is it going to be harder, yeah? Now if you go into a niche market can you avoid competition, yeah, for the most part?

There are an awful lot of niche markets where there is hardly any affiliate programs there, and the existing affiliate programs suck. A lot of markets don't have any recurring billing affiliate programs at all. If you go in with recurring affiliate-billing program you are the only dog in town.

Andrew: Yes. Yanik and myself actually spoke about this Marlon and that is what we were saying. You know when he did his sorta niche product that was the FigureDrawingSecrets.com and he said you know these people like joint venturing or becoming an affiliate for it and altogether they were about 50% of the people who bought and were delighted. I mean, if you tried that in the internet field especially if you weren't known, I mean, you are going to get maybe a 1% response.

Marlon: Well, if he emailed them and you tried to do that in internet marketing you are probably going to get shut down for spam complaints.

Andrew: {Laughs}

Marlon: If nobody else, your competitors will do it, you know.

Andrew: Yeah.

Marlon: Your competitors will complain that it is spam. So yes, it is competitive. But you got to go to niches or get an lead generation angle that nobody else is using.

Andrew: Ok.

Marlon: Where is all of this heading, you know, it is not negative I understand that is realistic. I do not believe that is negative, Andrew I... you know... I just think it is the truth.

I am not here to try to shovel anything on top of anybody's head or bury them in it. I just think that that is reality and that is the truth.

If you can't deal with a changing market place and you can't adjust and you don't understand competition. You just want to do something just one time, get paid for the rest of your life and never have to tweak it change it or do nothing else then keep a day job.

You know, especially in a technology business, you know, they say if you are in figure drawing or you are in some niche market where there are hardly any other dogs running the race will you know you can be lazy. So Frank to some degree, Frank Kern's under achiever method is true. You can pretty much be an underachiever with that method.

You are limited, also, in terms of income is a little difference of philosophy for me. You know, I would emphasize the affiliate program more and the pay per clicks less. But as far as a sound philosophy of profiting from niche markets that is a sound philosophy.

Andrew: Ok, Marlon, well I think that is about time up but I want to thank you so much for being on this interview. I mean, I have learned a lot and you have got so much experience and you have been there from the start and I think that this is really going to help people for sure.

Marlon: All right Andrew, well you marketing is a great life and it is a great business. You know I have a great and incredible lifestyle, I do love it. But you do have to learn and you do have to study. I spend an awful lot of my time just studying and researching and learning. I mean you got to be really really good at it you know, but within that context, it is still a great life and it is a great business.

For those people who don't know if they should do it or not, you know, I would like to encourage them you know. I have average intelligence I am not... I don't have a genius IQ. Some of the people in this business do, I don't... I have an average IQ. The reason I succeed is because I study a lot I learn a lot and I just worked at it. If you keep working at something a pretty long time Andrew you will get good at it sooner or later. You know what I am saying.

Andrew: That is true. Do you want to give us a few links to some of your most popular websites before we go?

Marlon: Well yeah, PushButtonLetters.com is real popular. Of course AmazingFormula.com and now my latest big hits was the GetItGoing.com which is the Marketing Dashboard.

Andrew: Ok.

Marlon: That has been a big hit GetItGoing.com and of course our affiliate program HitsNCash.com which we have already talked about.

Andrew: Ok that is great, Marlon, and thanks again for the call.

Marlon: All right thank you for inviting me on and I wish everyone great success.

Andrew: Thanks very much Marlon.

Marlon: All right take care.

Andrew: Bye.

Marlon: Bye bye.