

- **Special Report** -

How to Choose a Shopping Cart & Affiliate System for your InfoProduct Business

Spend Less Time On Your Business While Increasing Profits

By Nicole Dean for www.SalesArmySecrets.com

About The Author



Nicole Dean

Nicole Dean is quickly becoming known as the internet's go-to gal in the Affiliate Management field. Her unique blend of networking skills and her thorough understanding of the Internet Marketing field has enabled her to work with her mentor, Jimmy D. Brown, in www.InfoProfitShare.com

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Introduction

Special Report –

PRINT THIS OUT FIRST

How to Choose a Shopping Cart & Affiliate System for your InfoProduct Business

Spend Less Time On Your Business While Increasing Profits
by Nicole Dean

Recently I was the featured guest at a teleseminar. The topic I was asked to speak about was running a successful affiliate program – an affiliate program that “doesn’t stink”.

I talked and talked and talked some more. I was on a roll, talking about affiliate tools, recruiting affiliates... it was good, if I do say so myself. An hour later, we got to the Q&A section and the questions started coming in. The problem was that most of the people on the call were stuck well before the stage of the game that I was discussing. They loved the information I shared, but they said that they had not yet set up their shopping carts or affiliate programs because they were confused – and then they started asking questions about which cart (or ecommerce solution) to choose.

So, basically, the entire call was theoretical for them, and not something they could run off and apply, because they needed to pick a cart first. Oops!

I understand. Completely. It is tricky. And, it’s extremely important that you don’t make this decision lightly. Once you set up your system – it’s a big pain to move it. You have to court and woo your affiliates all over again to get them to move, and fight with broken links. It’s a mess. The best thing is to choose wisely in the first place so you’ve got a system that works for you and that will grow with your business.

--- Important Note --

On the other hand, inaction makes you no money. So, if this is a decision that you’ve been struggling with for some time, we need to get you through it and moving ahead to make money. It’s better to make a wrong decision, oftentimes, than no decision at all.

As my Grampa LeRoy used to say “*I gotta do something, even if it’s wrong.*”

--- End Important Note --

So, where to begin?

My main goal with this report is to make sure that you are using the right tool for the job. Any time you try to use a kitchen knife as a screwdriver, or a hammer with a washcloth over it instead of a rubber mallet - you know that you're going to struggle trying to make it work. (And, I'm obviously showing that I'm much better as an Internet Marketer than I am as a Handyman!)

To start, we have to figure out a few things... and the important thing is to look into the future of your business, not just where you are now, but where you'll be a year or two from now.

A shopping cart that is perfect for you right now may not work next year. So, as you read through this report, take into consideration your future projects so you can choose a cart that will work for you for at least a few years.

Of course, you can't pull out your crystal ball because none of us knows what our business will look like in a year or two (I sure don't, if the last two years is any indication of the next two), but I do hope that I can at least guide you in the right direction with the information in this report.

Question #1: What Do you Sell?

The tools I'll be discussing in this report are for digital products and services (and the occasional shipped item), not for storefronts.

Quick note for Product Sellers:

If you're selling candles, t-shirts, or setting up a storefront to ship physical products – you might want to take a look at [this service](#) instead -- Go to the page and try the free demo.

This report will focus on digital or downloadable items.

Here are some of your options, broken down with their benefits and drawbacks. Please read through these carefully as some options may NOT work for you.

Option#1: CLICKBANK with Easy Clickmate

The recommendation Jimmy D. Brown makes in www.SalesArmySecrets.com is to use [Clickbank.com®](#) WITH [Easy Clickmate](#)

I agree. The easiest option is clickbank. They handle everything for you – your merchant account (to accept credit cards), refunds, and paying your affiliates. It's a beautiful thing. ;)

The problem is that clickbank does have some limitation.

Who should use clickbank...

- If you prefer SIMPLE and easy.
- If you want to spend time playing rather than handling accounting and affiliate payments.
- If you don't want to pay a monthly fee for your shopping cart, or aren't confident or big enough yet to take on that commitment.
- If you don't want to handle setting up a merchant account to accept credit cards.
- If you only offer downloadable ebooks or audios or videos and have no plans for creating physical books, CDs or DVDs.

Who should NOT use clickbank...

- Anyone who wants COMPLETE control over their online business. Clickbank is wonderful, but, for those who want complete control over their business, this may be a source of frustration. Read their legal terms for more information.
- If you *ever* plan to offer a physical version of your ebooks, teleseminars, or videos, then Clickbank becomes more difficult.
- If you want to sell PLR items, resale rights items, or website templates, then skip Clickbank. (They don't allow it.)
- If you want to sell tickets to a seminar or offline expo, then skip Clickbank. (That's also against their rules.)

If you want CONTROL over your online business, then you may wish to have your own shopping cart.

Keep reading for your options.

Option#2: Shopping Cart

If you wish to have more control over your online business, then signing up with a shopping cart service will give you exactly that. Control. But, with control comes more work.

There are tons of shopping carts (or ecommerce solutions, if you want to be fancy) to choose from. Just search google.com if you want to go into an immediate state of overwhelm.

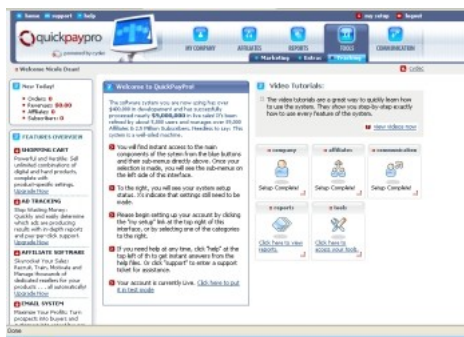
Here are two options that I personally use.

WAHMCart (a WAHM is a Work at Home Mom -- but, don't let the name of this cart scare you. It's small in price, but mighty in features and usability)



... and ...

QuickPayPro which is a little higher in price, but a bit more “manly” if the name of the other cart scares you away. Overall, they are very similar and both easy to use.



Another very popular option is **1ShoppingCart** which is the high-end solution that many of the top marketers use. It does everything but the dishes! Just be careful when looking at pricing to make sure you're looking at the Professional Package if you want an affiliate program (and I know you do).

Because 1ShoppingCart has so many different packages, I won't list that cart in my comparisons below. But, they have a very detailed list on their website where you can compare their services with the other two carts (and with clickbank).

Who should use a Shopping Cart?

These carts are well suited for selling information products (like ebooks or digital reports, audios & mp3 files, online videos), templates, PLR, resale rights, seminar tickets, physical products (that you'd ship), managing a service-oriented business like coaching or consulting, and managing a paid newsletter.

Who should NOT use their own Shopping Cart?

Honestly, if you want simple and only plan to sell a handful of downloadable ebooks or audios, then go with clickbank instead. (Clickbank is perfect for anyone who doesn't know html or really want to learn anything techie.)

If you want the benefit of being listed in the Clickbank marketplace to help you recruit affiliates, then choose Clickbank.

So, let's compare the options so far...

(All prices, features, and restrictions are current as of the publishing date, but could change at any time.)

	Clickbank	WAHM Cart or QuickPayPro
Fees:	<p>One time start up fee \$50, plus ongoing fees for every transaction.</p> <p>There are no monthly fees, but there is a \$2.50 check processing fee for every check that ClickBank issues to you.</p> <p>Read their accounting rules, as other charges do apply.</p>	<p>\$30/month ongoing for WAHMCart</p> <p>\$49.95 /month ongoing for QPP (Both programs offer discounts for purchasing several months at a time.)</p> <p>No fees per transaction.</p> <p>Even though the monthly fees may make this seem more expensive, having your own cart can be more affordable once your sales volume increases, as you market and grow your</p>

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		business.
Payments Accepted:	Paypal, Visa, MasterCard, American Express, Discover, Eurocard, Bravo, Diners Club, Carte Blanche, and JCB.	<p>Paypal is standard for both carts.</p> <p>From QPP's Website → PaySystems, Revecom, 2CheckOut, PayPal, PaymentPlanet</p> <p>* You may add a gateway & merchant account separately to accept credit cards. (explained further down in this report)</p>
Product Deliverability:	Digital Delivery	Digital Delivery
Autoresponder Included:	An autoresponder is not included, but many people have worked around this by having the download page include an autoresponder signup box to "interrupt" the download process.	Yes. This is a great follow-up feature.
Ability to Know who your Customers Are & Contact Them:	<p>No. Clickbank does not have any way to contact your customers.</p> <p>Some marketers interrupt the download process with a squeeze page. This can help you to build a customer database, but is in no way automated with Clickbank's program.</p>	<p>Yes.</p> <p>* WINNER!</p>
Ability to Know who your Affiliates Are & Contact Them:	<p>No. Clickbank does not have any way to contact your affiliates.</p> <p>Note: If you use Easy Clickmate this problem is solved. Also, some marketers have found ways around this by asking affiliates to sign up to receive affiliate tools, but, of course, only a small percentage will.</p>	Yes. Both carts allow you to do email blasts to your affiliates that include their login information and their affiliate links.

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Affiliates Paid Automatically:	<p>Yes. This is one of the big advantages of choosing Clickbank – this is completely automated for you.</p> <p>* WINNER!</p>	<p>No.</p> <p>You must pay them yourself. This is not difficult or time-consuming as both carts have export features that you can use to mass pay your affiliates through paypal with one transaction.</p>
Tiers?	<p>Single tier only.</p>	<p>Allows two-tiers for your entire program, for certain products only, or for certain affiliates only.</p>
Product Price limits:	<p>From Clickbank's site: The typical retail cap for standard products is \$50.</p> <p>In rare circumstances, we can approve a retail cap as high as \$200 for standard products.</p> <p>Recurring billing limits are set at \$30 (again, there are exceptions).</p>	<p>None.</p> <p>This is a huge advantage over Clickbank. If you're planning on selling high ticket items, then Clickbank may not work for you and you'd do better using your own cart.</p> <p>* WINNER!</p>
Product Limits:	<p>Yes. There are limits.</p> <p>Clickbank does not allow the following items:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Items that have no value except to be resold. (This, I believe includes PLR and website templates, but you can check with them to be sure.) 2. Physical items. Although they do give some terms with which you can sell them, but it looked pretty regulated. <i>"You may also offer shipped delivery of printed media (books, CD's, and DVD's) as a courtesy to qualified customers (e.g., US and Canada only), provided the shipped media is clearly complementary and not essential to the operation of the</i> 	<p>No limits.</p> <p>You may sell shipped items alongside digital ones.</p> <p>You can sell PLR items, resale items, and templates. You can sell services, as well. It's your cart, so you can pretty much sell anything that isn't illegal. (And, we both know you weren't thinking of doing that anyway.) ;)</p> <p>* WINNER!</p>

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	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>originally downloaded digital product."</i></p> <p>3. Tickets to seminars.</p> <p>As of today, their list of items that can not be sold is pretty long.</p> <p>Here's where you can read the current list: Clickbank Publisher Rules</p>	
Use your Own Domain?	<p>No.</p> <p>However, if you add Easy Clickmate to manage your Clickbank account, all your links will say "YourDomain.com" rather than "clickbank.com".</p> <p>This helps with branding, and may help with Search Engine Ranking.</p>	<p>Not by default.</p> <p>However, both carts come with scripts to have all your affiliate links show "YourDomain.com" as opposed to the "ShoppingCart.com" URL.</p>
Free Trial or Guarantee?	<p>If there is a money-back guarantee after you sign up to become a publisher, I couldn't find it.</p>	<p>WAHMCart offers a 14-day money-back guarantee.</p> <p>QPP offers a 30-day money-back guarantee.</p>
Where to find more information:	<p>Click here for info about Clickbank.</p>	<p>Click here for information about WAHMCart.</p> <p>Click here for information about QPP.</p>

Option#3: A Membership Site or Recurring Continuity Program.

Another decision that can throw you for a loop is adding a membership site to your offerings. That changes a lot of factors, in a big hurry.

You CAN set up recurring payments in both Clickbank and in the shopping carts mentioned above, but they do not specialize in membership sites. (And, you won't have the ability to set up individual logins, unless you find a tool to handle this for you.)

So, here we are back at square one.

If you plan to offer a membership site, where your customers are billed each and every month that they remain a member, and they each have individual logins that you can disable if they cancel their membership, then you may want to look at some of the membership site programs available. (Many of which can also handle selling your other products or services, like ebooks or paid teleseminars.)

One of the most popular membership site programs is [Amember](#)

For instance, this site www.MenuPlanningCentral.com is a membership site that is run through Amember.

Amember has some limitations (as all of these options do), but it's a service designed and created to run membership sites. So, if you plan to offer a continuity program of some sort, then you'll want to look into this program.

	<i>Amember</i>
Fees:	One time payment of \$139.95. This is hosted on your server.
Product Deliverability:	Digital Delivery
Affiliates Paid Automatically:	No.
Price limits:	No limits.
Product Limits:	No limits.
Use your Own Domain?	Yes.

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Free Trial?	Yes, 30-day FREE trial.
Ability to contact Customers?	Yes.
Ability to contact Affiliates?	Yes.
Other Notes:	Free Installation.
Where to find more information:	Click here for info about Amember.

Want to Give Yourself a Raise? Set up your Site to Accept Credit Cards

(If you're using Clickbank you can skip this part as it's included as part of their program.)

A merchant account allows you to accept credit cards through your shopping cart. It's also known as credit card processing.

One question I get asked quite a bit by those not using Clickbank is "Should I sign up for a merchant account to accept credit cards?"

My answer is "Only if you want to make more money!"

If you're planning on using anything BUT Clickbank, you will want to sign up for a Merchant Account. Sure it'll cost you more money, but, if you're getting traffic to your sales page and it's converting, then it'll convert even better if you offer the ability to accept credit cards. Yes, you can just offer paypal, but your sales WILL increase when you add credit card capabilities.

Important Note!

In addition to a merchant account, you'll need to set up a gateway account. (Usually the gateway account must be set up first.)

The gateway account is the service that transmits the order securely and communicates between the merchant (ie. YOU), the customer, and your bank (where the money will be deposited).

Basically, it is the same as the machines you use at shopping centers. You swipe your card and that Point-of-Sale (POS) machine then sends the information to and fro until the authorization code is given and the transaction is completed.

There are several programs that will help you sign up for both your merchant and your gateway account at the same time. Again, this can be a hugely overwhelming decision, but don't let it slow you down. In fact, I'll share a service right now to look into.

[Here is one to check into.](#)

Now, I'll give you a little fair warning. It's a bit of a pain to sign up for a gateway & merchant account and hook it into your shopping cart. It's not technologically awful, just takes a bit of time and patience to jump through the hoops.

I'd like to offer you some advice from the trenches....

If you want to be able to accept credit cards for a big launch, sign up for your merchant account well in advance of the date you're going live. It can take awhile to get approved and figure out how to hook it into your shopping cart.

If this part is making you sweat, it can be done AFTER your site is live, so, again, don't get stuck on this. You can do it later. Don't let confusion or overwhelm slow you down. Just get your cart going and start selling, and worry about this later, if you have to.

Still confused?

By now, I hope you've at least narrowed down your options to one or two choices that'll work for you. If not, then go to each of the sites mentioned in this report and look around.

If you're still stuck, you may want to test the customer service at a few of the programs by asking questions and seeing which one feels right to you. If you've got concerns or what you think are "stupid" questions, contact their support. See if they reply in a timely manner, and, if they treat you well. If not, they just made your decision easier for you by eliminating themselves from the running.

As for me? I actually use every service mentioned in this document (between my own products and helping my clients) and each has plusses and minuses.

What is my recommendation? I can't choose a cart for you without knowing your situation. So, stop over-thinking this decision and move ahead. Yes, if you choose a cart and have to change later, it's a pain, but stalling is more painful.

It's basic math.

No Cart + No Product = No Profits

Personally, I'd rather make profits today. The thought of being stuck, pondering this decision months from now, with no shopping cart and no sales is much worse than the possibility of making a mistake.

So, whether you set up your cart yourself or hire someone to do it, start the process.

Now, Let's Talk Money and Passive Income.

Once you have your ecommerce system set up, please don't make the same mistake most other marketers make.

They NEGLECT their affiliate programs.

They sweat over their products and their advertising campaigns to make them perfect. They'll spend days on their sales page and hours setting up their shopping cart.

Then, they get to the affiliate part. And, they get lazy. Sure, they might plop a few buttons or banners in the affiliate area, but that's where it ends.

Then, they run themselves ragged, trying to market their website – all by themselves, and wonder why they don't have PASSIVE income!

I'll tell you why. Because they haven't recruited an ARMY of affiliates doing the exact same multitude of tasks that they are struggling to do. With an ARMY of affiliates, many of those tasks would be done for them by folks who don't get paid unless they bring in sales.

Their affiliates would be ...

- ✓ Blogging about them.
- ✓ Posting their articles on forums.
- ✓ Submitting articles.
- ✓ Buying ezine ads.
- ✓ Researching keywords & buying Google™ Adwords campaigns.
- ✓ Buying classified ads in newspapers.
- ✓ Posting on Craigslist.
- ✓ Creating Squidoo pages.
- ✓ Writing reports and ebooks that send traffic to their affiliate link.
- ✓ Making JV deals with the free reports from the affiliate center.
- ✓ And, more.

Personally, I'd rather invest time and effort into making my affiliate program attractive to the top tier of marketers and have them do all those things for me, while I focus on other projects and activities. Maybe it's because I live on the Gulf of Mexico, but I have other things I'd rather be doing – like going to the beach! ☺

I hope YOU won't make the same mistake, in neglecting your affiliate program, and missing out on passive income.

Thankfully, Jimmy D. Brown created a report that outlines the absolute BASICS that any affiliate program must have in order to thrive. It's called the **"5 Practices of Wildly Profitable Affiliate Programs"**. And, it's free.

[Click here](#) to get your copy right now.

Remember what I said about choosing a shopping cart. The same is true in setting up your Affiliate Program. Do it wrong, and it's going to be hard to fix. Do it right, and you'll be ahead of 99% of the competition.

I hope to see your affiliate program some day and think "that doesn't stink!"

Wishing you much success in everything you do,

Nicole Dean

PS. If you're serious about earning passive income, this is not something you can skip over and still have success. [Click here](#) right now to get **"5 Practices of Wildly Profitable Affiliate Programs"**.