

ClickBank Affiliate Confessions

Interview with Rosalind Gardner

Heather Vale: I'm Heather Vale, partner of Codrut Turcanu, for [ClickBank Affiliate Confessions](#). Today I'm speaking with one of the most famous super affiliates out there, Rosalind Gardner from British Columbia, Canada, author of [The Super Affiliate Handbook](#). First of all Rosalind, even though a lot of listeners might be familiar with your story, others are pretty new to the game. So could you please give us a brief background of yourself and your websites?

Rosalind Gardner: Alright, well thank you for the lovely introduction. Where should I start? From before I became an affiliate marketer?

Heather: Yeah, what drove you to become an affiliate marketer in the first place?

Rosalind: Well, I actually was an air traffic controller and had been for about 20 years, and what I was finding was that the shift schedules were making me ill, and fortunately if, you know, if there's a good part about it, I have started a little website, a little gardening website as a hobby while I was still working as an air traffic controller, and that was back in 1997. And I could really, you know, the traffic I was getting to that site was just amazing. What it was, was a seed exchange, because I do a lot of gardening. And I was getting tons and tons of seeds. Had a beautiful, beautiful garden, and it was really pretty obvious that, you know, boy if I could find a way to make money through this site, or any other site, that it was going to do really well. So about the same time as I started thinking about how to monetize the site, I saw this banner ad that said "Web Masters Make Money" and I clicked through to it, and it was for the One and Only dating network which unfortunately just closed its doors back in December of 2005. And anyway, it explained the concept of affiliate marketing. Basically put up a link, with your unique affiliate ID encoded in that link on your own website, and if somebody buys a membership, like a dating service membership, you would make some money. So I thought, cool. You know I've been hanging around in a few chat rooms here and there and didn't really like that experience. So as a single person, a dating service membership seemed to be really an ideal proposition. So like I could support the product for sure, so that's what I did. I opened up a little, I started a site called [Sage-Hearts.com](#), and the very first day that it was basically listed on [Yahoo](#) -- and getting a listing on [Yahoo](#) was almost automatic back then -- I made a sale. And 30 days later I got a check for 10 dollars and 99 cents, and so I

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realized that, oh boy, you know that's not a lot of money but it sure was encouraging that affiliate marketing was a viable opportunity, and well, I don't know whether you actually said the name of my book, but the book that I published in 2003 is actually called [*The Super Affiliate Handbook: How I Made 436,797 Dollars Last Year, Selling Other People's Stuff Online*](#). So I came a little way from that 10.99 paycheck.

Heather: What sets a Super Affiliate apart from a regular affiliate?

Rosalind: Super Affiliates really treat their... treat affiliate marketing like a business, and you instead of just, you've seen these sites all over the place, you know you go to a page and it's just loaded with banner ads and you know links to this and irrelevant topics. You know, instead of the site having a single theme, they'll be trying to sell you know baby products on one side of the page and adult products on another. Like, and I do mean *adult* products. So yeah, that's the biggest difference, and then of course Super Affiliates sell more for their merchant partners than anybody else. Like I think the stats, and they do vary quite widely, but I think it's the top two percent of affiliates will sell 80 percent of an affiliate program products. So, yeah, that makes them pretty super.

Heather: Yeah, that's way more off balance than the normal 80-20 rule that normal people use in regular sales.

Rosalind: Mm hmm.

Heather: So before we go into the details of it, could you tell us in a nutshell, what are the tactics that you use to get into that top two percent?

Rosalind: What are the tactics that I use? Well, I mean it's a full meal deal business plan proposition. I build a site around a single theme, my biggest niche market is online dating and still, I mean I started with that, and it still is. And I, instead of doing little sites that have, you know, like one, two or 10 pages, I do really big content sites. I think that that is the biggest key, because of course search engines like content. And it's not only about search engines, it's about visitors, and that should be the primary key, is to satisfy your visitors' needs for whatever they happen to be searching for in the search engine. You know, if they type in, you know looking for girls in Philadelphia, or

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looking for you know a boyfriend in wherever. I want my site to come up and when they click on that link, I want them to have the information that they were looking for immediately. I want them to land on a page that's relevant to their search, and that's the biggest key in making good conversions on an affiliate marketing site. I even see merchants doing that where they'll have an ad posted say on [Google AdWords](#), which are the sponsored listings that you see on the right hand side when you do a search on [Google](#), and you know like, I'll type in, "wooden initials". I was looking for a gift for a friend, you know those big wooden initials? And so I type that in, and half the advertisers, you click on their links that says wooden letters or wooden initials and you come to their home page of their site and it's a wood working site, or you know it sells wood products, but they sell everything from, you know, patio furniture to wooden initials. So then you have to start digging through the site and I find that -- and most surfers would find that -- just frustrating. You know, don't list wooden initials and then take me to a catch all kind of page. So what you're trying to do is satisfy your visitor as soon as possible with as few clicks as possible. I think that really is the biggest key.

Heather: How much do you make, only as a ClickBank affiliate, without all the other programs that I know you promote as well?

Rosalind: As a [ClickBank](#)... well I sell my books through [ClickBank](#), so it would be kind of unfair for me to include that, because of course I've got all sorts of affiliates promoting my book, and I don't... I no longer reveal my total earnings... for any... let's just say that it's over a thousand dollars a day.

Heather: Wow. OK. What proportion, I know you don't want to give an exact figure, but approximately what proportion would that be of your total affiliate sales for the day?

Rosalind: Uh... OK, well let me... yeah, I don't really want to say. You know 'cuz... yeah. I have had a stalker.

Heather: OK.

Rosalind: Yeah.

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Heather: So in other words, you've blown way past that 400 and some odd thousand that you wrote about in 2003?

Rosalind: Mmm. Yeah.

Heather: OK. How much do you think it's possible to make as a [ClickBank](#) affiliate?

Rosalind: As a [ClickBank](#) affiliate? Depending on the tactics that you're using, I think it's possible to make tons of money. You know, it depends. There's lots of people who are using Chris Carpenter's [Google Cash](#) method, and if you know how to research niche markets that are not properly represented, or not, you know, don't have a load of advertisers on [Google AdWords](#), it's possible to start making quite a bit of money pretty quickly. Then again, that requires a great deal of research in terms of finding a good market and then also taking a risk in terms of spending advertising dollars and hoping that you're, you know, that's going to convert to sales on the other side. That's not my preferred method of being an affiliate marketer. A lot of people... despite the fact that a lot of affiliates are doing it very, very successfully, I think it's shortsighted. I like to have my own site because what I do is I collect visitors' email addresses through an opt-in list, and when you do use the [Google Cash](#) method and send traffic or visitors directly to the merchant's site, you know nothing about those visitors. So every nickel, or dime or quarter that you're spending on that traffic, you're not getting any residual benefits other than, you know, the per sale, if you make a sale. So, once again, I like to get back and do the big content site. Give visitors value for their time spent on my site, and then as well collect their name and email address so that I have the option of presenting them with other offers that are relevant to their initial search.

Heather: What proportion of your sales would come from that opt-in list giving you repeat sales?

Rosalind: I would think that it's... you know the tracking as an affiliate marketer is difficult. I am the quintessential lazy affiliate marketer. So I don't do an awful lot of testing and tracking. I mean I think, some of us get to a point where you're making a very comfortable living. There's no point in spending an hour or two a day or even more in doing all sorts of trying to figure out what percentage here and what

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percentage there, that's really good in the beginning. And not only that but I'm, you know, not only am I lazy. But I like to spend a lot of time away. I just got back from a month in Mexico and a couple of months ago, I spent a month in China. So, you know, I work to live. Right? Yeah, so I don't know. What... I think it's big. Like I really do notice that, well let's use my NetProfitsToday.com site for example. I have... that's a site that's dedicated for new internet and affiliate marketers, and it kind of supplements my book, you know like it's easier to make changes to a blog or to a website than it is to a book and publish the fact that there've been changes made and blah-di-blah-di-blah. So, and I work at that on a regular basis. I send out a weekly newsletter and I do probably a couple of blog entries every week. Sometimes it's more, sometimes it's less, and when I send out a promo email, like promoting a new product that may be available say for a, this week for example, I'm talking about blogging, right, as a way to get traffic to your site. And I will be promoting two books that I read last week about blogging that I think are valuable for my readers, who would prefer maybe to read an instructional manual than having to poke around the web and find out about [Word Press](#) here and find out about [Type Pad](#) there. You know, how to install them, what the benefit is, how often you should post and that sort of thing. So those will both go out with affiliate links, and I know based on experience that I will generate a large number of sales, and probably more than enough money to live on than most people make in, you know actually a month probably. So just from two... well, one e-book and one hard cover or soft cover book.

Heather: How big is your opt-in list right now?

Rosalind: I have a couple of different opt-in lists. On the dating site it's around 200,000, and with the webmasters, it's an extremely loyal wonderful list because I communicate with them all the time, and it's around 50,000, and while we're talking about the size of opt-in lists, like size really doesn't matter in this case. It's what you do for your list. It's what you do for your visitors, your customers, your subscribers. It's you know, do you give them the information that they're looking for? Have you built credibility? And shown yourself to be an expert in your field? Can you answer the questions that they ask? And once you do all of that stuff for them, then they will respond in turn by trusting you and buying the products that you recommend.

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Heather: What's the offer that you give them to get them to originally sign up for your opt-in list?

Rosalind: I basically, well I can, let me just quickly go there and... see here, [Net Profits Today](#) and I'll just tell you what it says. And I also had a graphic done by Vaughan Davidson at [KillerCovers.com](#) so it makes it look, you know it just gives it a little bit more... it's a little bit more tangible, and all it says is, "Learn affiliate marketing from a super affiliate. Sign up for Rosalind's free [NetProfitsToday](#) newsletter now. It's a down to earth, straight goods, no hype, e-zine that will help you make sense of doing business as an affiliate marketer. We always respect your privacy." That's all it says and then below that are the opt-in, your name and email address and submit button. And it's at the bottom of every page of my site, and I recommend that highly whether you're an affiliate marketer, whether you're a merchant. Treat every page on your site like it's a landing page, and put your opt-in form on every single page of your site. You'll get way more sign ups that way.

Heather: What [ClickBank](#) products do you currently promote?

Rosalind: I promote products that are relevant to the niche markets that I work in. There's... I promote a couple of different dating books, on [Sage-Hearts.com](#), and when one of my colleagues, like internet marketing colleagues comes out with a book and you know, they're offering it through [ClickBank](#) then I, you know, then I'll promote that product too. It's hard, you know, [ClickBank](#) has so many different information products and software products, that you know, I promote what I look at, and like I review every single product that I promote, and if I'm honest about what I do and don't like about things, and if I don't actually have the time, but I've read other really good reviews about a product, then I will tell my subscribers that I haven't actually seen it but I think that maybe they should take a look at the sales copy and see whether they're interested. You know, whatever, before the price goes up. And there's not only [ClickBank](#) but of course, there's also [Pay-dot-com](#) nowadays.

Heather: Yeah.

Rosalind: Right?

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Heather: Brand new one on the block. Now when you say you review every product, are you purchasing the e-books, or do they give them to you for free, for that purpose?

Rosalind: Sometimes and sometimes. Yeah. I, you know, I will definitely buy it and sometimes if the if the author or the developer or whatever sees my name come through on a sale, sometimes they'll come back and they'll refund it for me, knowing that you know, I've got enough people that it's really, whatever. But if you are a merchant on the internet, or if you're an author with an e-book on [ClickBank](#), what I would recommend for people to do is to definitely get in touch with people like myself, and I almost hate to say that because I get so many JV offers every day, but anybody with... who promotes products that are relevant to your product, get in touch with them and send them a download link for your product. Don't even, you know, don't even ask them whether or not they're interested. Just give them a little, you know, a little paragraph about what it's about. Say that you think their visitors would be interested in your product and include the download link with it, as opposed to having to... I get this all the time, you know, I'll get a three page letter about "how good my product is blah-di-blah-di-blah, and would you like to take a look?" Well, I'm thinking OK, so now I have to write back. And I have to check and see whether they've written back with the download link. So just cut out that stuff and you'll probably get more positive response than if you do it any other way.

Heather: How could a newbie get in on that game of getting the free copies in order to review?

Rosalind: Well, I don't, you know I get a lot of requests for review copies and more often than not, I say no to newbies because like, I'll look at their site, and you know, if the site looks unprofessional or whatever, and not only that but I really... I think that if you're just starting out, then maybe you should put out a little bit, and actually you know... actually learn something. Yeah... I, it depends. You know like how much credibility does the person have or demonstrate. You know sometimes, yes, sometimes no. So I suppose all a newbie can do is try. But I think that for them to show honest effort and have a reasonably good site put together... the other way is doing what you're doing now. Asking that person whether or not they would agree to an interview. You know whether it be, it's going to be posted in a

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newsletter or on the web somewhere, that's going to be typed out or written, and that might, that might springboard a free copy of the book to that person before the interview takes place.

Heather: Now let's go back to the big content site. That's great for the search engines obviously. But of course we know that when you first started putting up your big content sites several years ago, it was much easier to get a top listing on the search engines without paying for the clicks. Someone starting out now, how can they build that big content site and expect to get good traffic from the search engines?

Rosalind: Well, you can't expect to get good traffic from the search engines right away, and that's why I, in [The Super Affiliate Handbook](#), I talk extensively about using Pay per Click advertising to advertise your site, and that's another way to draw search engine traffic because when the search engine sees that there's traffic being delivered to your site -- and the search engine doesn't care where that traffic's coming from, they only care to see that there is traffic -- then it will display more interest in your site as well. So I always use Pay per Click to advertise my site first, to bring traffic. And not only that but man oh man, you know like, I'm constantly talking about this. If you put up a site, and don't plan to use Pay per Click, you could be waiting six months to get, you know to get traffic to your site, and then when it finally does come, you may find out that your site doesn't convert. I would rather find that out the day that I put my site online using, you know 20 bucks or 100 bucks worth of Pay per Click advertising. And if it's not converting properly then I can tweak it, you know that day or the next day and then run another test and improve my conversion rates so like my money, my site is making money within a couple of days of being launched, and encouraging traffic and whatever else. But to answer your question, the best way to bring traffic to a site quickly nowadays, is not about doing, what do you call it, like writing key word density articles, because man oh man, the search engines figure that out really quick. [Google](#) especially. You can end up with your site de-listed. Doing a blog is really the best way to get traffic to your site, really, really quickly. Because it shows activity, and that's what they want to see. They want to see that the site is fresh and that there's constantly new content being added, and so do your blog and then you know, import an article, one or two a week. Make it, you know, do it in human time terms. You know, like... and then you'll get way better response from the search engines than if you, you know do a whole

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bunch of automated processes... you know you launch your site with 500 articles. That could be a problem. Right?

Heather: Would it be better to have that blog hosted on your website on a separate blog page? Or would it be better to take one of the free blogs and put links to your main site?

Rosalind: Always, always on your own site, because if you do a search on NetProfitsToday.com, since I launched my blog and my forum, what I've noticed is that every entry counts as a page so I think if you do a search on that, you know it comes up with something like 15,000 pages now. It might be more, because I've done... it's been a week since I checked. So that's, you know... that really encourages traffic once again, and not only that but it just looks more professional. Like I... in the past, I've had one site that... well, I hosted on a free server, right? And of course, there's advertising that goes, that you're not getting paid for, right? Because you're hosting on a free server and then, and then whoever it was that ran that free hosting service, decided one day that they were just going to turn the whole thing into their own personal whatever, and all the pages were gone. So I don't think that that's going to happen to Blogger.com but I still think that it looks... you want to convey a professional businesslike appearance for your visitors so having NetProfitsToday.com/blog/, right, for your web pages, is a whole lot better than... whatever, mpt.blogspot.com. Right? And not only that, but when you're in Blogger.com or if you're looking through one of theirs, there's always links to other people's blogs... you want to keep things focused on your site. Like I have, I have a rule that I don't necessarily follow all of the time, but basically any link that goes out of your site should either generate a commission, or a sale, or should, if it's linked to a good site that's linking back into your site, that's OK too. As long as you're not losing too much traffic through nonpaying links. So any site that's hosted on, or any portion of your site that's hosted off your domain, is losing money in a way.

Heather: So what's the best software to use to blog?

Rosalind: There's a lot of different opinions on that. I use Word Press. I find it very easy. I've talked to a number of different people who use Movable Type and Type Pad and all have expressed frustrations with that. I used Word Press because it was part of the... it was an easy

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installation from my C-Panel server. On any C-Panel server, you'll see Fantastico which lets you install a number of different programs. Simply with the click of a button and you fill in a couple of different, you know entry blanks, i.e. where you want to have your, into which directory you want to have your blog installed, and it will automatically create that directory. You know, you create a user name and password and a couple of other things, you press click, and there it is. Your blog is up on your site, so it's a beautiful thing.

Heather: You mentioned that you write endorsements when you're pre-selling a product. In your book actually, you said that they can double the conversion rate. But a lot of people just don't think they're good writers, or they don't like to write. What kind of hints could you give them?

Rosalind: Hmm. That I think is probably the biggest stumbling block. I mean that essentially is what we are. We're writers. We're communicators, I mean if you want to do business on the web, if you want to do business anywhere, you have to be able to communicate what the product you're selling is about, and whether you're speaking or whether you're writing. So like I just look at it as another way of talking. That's all I'm doing is I'm sitting down and I'm telling a friend, you know, this is about such and such product, this is why I like it, this is why I don't like it. And I think that you as a new affiliate marketer, or you as an experienced affiliate marketer may benefit from using this product. So I mean don't let writing be, it should never be a stumbling block because it's just talking. Through your fingers if you will.

Heather: What are some of the key points that you're looking for in a product you're going to endorse? Not just in the product, itself but also on the sales page?

Rosalind: Oh yeah, that's really important too and in the book I discuss 20 ways to you know, 20 things you should do when you're picking a product or joining a program. You know, if the site, if you get to the site, like there's so many affiliate programs out there right? And you really do need to look at the landing page that your visitors are going to see when they click on your affiliate link, and if the page that you get to wouldn't sell you, then don't try to sell it to your visitor. Or if you think the product is really, really good and you don't think much of the, either the way the site looks or the sales copy or something like

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that, then mention that in your product endorsement. Just be really honest, just say you know, "the site looks a little bit clunky but the product is still stellar," you know, so just... but be really finicky about the products that you choose to promote. There are hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of dating services out there. I currently only promote about 35. And yet I've looked at, I've looked at so many it's unbelievable, but I'm only going to promote the best ones and the ones that are going to convert for me, and the ones that my visitors are going to enjoy. For example, you know if you're a single person and you're looking to meet somebody, you want to look at a dating service that actually has people listed, right? People and profiles listed. And the number of new dating services that contact me and ask me to promote their program and I get in there and I see, you know, they've got a hundred members, right? So I'm thinking OK, why would my visitors want to pay for this? Right? So you've got a few things to take into consideration before you promote any product.

Heather: What about specifically a [ClickBank](#) product like an e-book, what kind of points are you looking for before you'll endorse that?

Rosalind: Well, I you know... I generally read the, I read the book or I do, I do a quick read of the whole thing like and especially of points that I think are important to make, I'll look for those in the book itself. I'll look for anything that's new or unusual because it should be unique. And you know, a nice cover is important. A lot of people try to do their own covers and they look kind of hokey, and you know, a home based business is fine but you don't have to, it doesn't have to look homemade, it can look very easily, and very cheaply, it can look very professional. So... yeah, and I'm looking for credibility on the author's part. You know, what experience do they actually have. Like I just reviewed a product and actually... the title is a little bit like mine. How I Made x Number of Dollars in a Month. Well it turned out that you know, he made that much money in a month, but he's got... that was last month. We don't know how he's doing this month, so we don't know how his, whether or not his tactics or strategies in doing this, using this particular formula of his are, you know if they're going to be sustainable. So I'm not going to promote that product, well... I'll mention that you know, like if I write an endorsement about that, I'll say OK fine you know, you take your chances of buying this. It made him a lot of money in month number one but we have no idea how much he made in month number two.

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Heather: Right. So honesty can sometimes sell the product as well.

Rosalind: Honesty always sells the product. Always sells the product. I think that that... I give that as my number one reason for being successful in business. Is honesty and integrity.

Heather: If you were to bring in, let's say a thousand dollars' worth of commissions, how much would you spend on advertising to get that?

Rosalind: It all depends on the niche that I'm working in. You know sometimes, it's nothing. And sometimes, it's as high as 50 percent, but on average I would say right now, I probably make three to four dollars for every dollar that I spend in advertising.

Heather: How do you prevent your [ClickBank](#) ID from being stolen?

Rosalind: Oh, I just went through this just last weekend with a, with another merchant. When I sell my [Super Affiliate Handbook](#), if you, you know if you create a [ClickBank](#) hoplink for my Super Affiliate Handbook, and my merchant ID and my affiliate ID to [ClickBank](#) is WebVista2, so if you do that, create a [ClickBank](#) hoplink for that, you'll find that your [ClickBank](#) ID does not show up in the address bar, and it's such an easy fix. All the merchant has to do is basically create a redirect page that goes to a page that, you know, is the same, but just doesn't show up, like it doesn't show the affiliate ID. And that's how I, you know that's how I save my affiliates from losing their sales, and all merchants should be doing it, and I end up talking like, I'm getting to the point where I will almost not promote any new products where my ID shows because it's crazy. Especially in the market, if you're dealing in the internet marketing world, and especially affiliate marketing, everybody is aware of affiliate IDs so they look for that and they may swap it out like clear the cookie, swap out their ID, swap out my ID for their own so you're losing, you know, a huge number of sales based on that. But if you're working in a niche like internet dating, then you're dealing with people who really don't know, don't care. So I'm much less worried about that. Like if you're dealing with, you know, just the general public who are not interested in how websites work, all they want to do is to find a product that works for them and buy that, then you've got way less concern about having to cloak your ID.

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Heather: What proportion of merchants do you think do that, like you do?

Rosalind: Not nearly enough, maybe... you know I think we'd be lucky if it were 10 percent.

Heather: I noticed there's something else you do with your affiliate program. You don't actually generate your standard [ClickBank](#) hoplink, it's a different kind of affiliate link at [superaffiliatehandbook.com](#)-slash-whatever.

Rosalind: That's right, actually I just started that back in... just a few months ago. And what I'm using now to protect the download for the book is using a product called [DL Guard](#). And that was, that's the primary reason that I'm doing that is just to protect the download of the book. Like the book has been downloaded for free by so many thieves on the net, it's unbelievable. So that's the primary reason for that, and then the second thing that [DL Guard](#) does is, as you said, it generates a link that goes to [superaffiliatehandbook.com](#) with the affiliate ID in it. So that way, you know, if the link is up on an affiliate site, it's pointing at [superaffiliatehandbook.com](#) not [ClickBank](#). So it's actually giving me more, better page rank, better links in, and just more visibility on the net. So that for me, that's a side benefit that I hadn't really considered, but it really does work. And I wish it started a long time ago.

Heather: What about some of the other support that you offer to affiliates, things like they can contact you to get support. A lot of other vendors aren't doing that. Do you think that helps?

Rosalind: Oh, well I know it does, and because of course my you know like I've got [NetProfitsToday.com](#) happening, so I'm regularly in there and answering visitor questions, and it all ties in, like [The Super Affiliate Handbook](#) ties into that, like the subject matter. So you know, my visitors feel free to contact me with questions about either my affiliate program or anything else for that, like you know anything related to internet and affiliate marketing. So yeah, I'm absolutely sure that that helps promote the product. Because if you can't answer your affiliate's questions or if there's no way for an affiliate to get in touch with the merchant, then chances are you're losing affiliates.

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Heather: A lot of the [ClickBank](#) affiliates that I've interviewed have mentioned eventually coming to the conclusion that they should also develop their own product, but yours has become a top seller. And nearly all of them actually also mentioned that promoting your product is consistently a good sale for them. How long did it take for that to happen?

Rosalind: Oh well... and I appreciate you saying that. It does, it converts really, really well and I think once again that's just because, if you take a look at the sales page for [The Super Affiliate Handbook](#), I'm not a copywriter, I'm just a talker and I know what I did, and I put it out there in my own words and I think that makes a big, big difference, but how I got it happening like that. Well first of all, I mean it is a sales page that converts. So... but how I got it to be so popular and so quickly was I contacted Allan Gardyne of [AssociatePrograms.com](#) and asked him to take a look at my book, and he did, and he did a promotion for it about a week later, and so with all of that, and he's got just a huge, huge, huge database of subscribers and, you know, people on his site all of the time, because of his forum and stuff. So it generated so many sales so quickly that it went to the top of the [ClickBank Marketplace](#) in the business to business category basically overnight, and it stayed there consistently for two years. Now I know I'm nowhere near the top anymore, I guess what I should do is another serious promotion.

Heather: How many of [The Super Affiliate Handbook](#) are sold each month?

Rosalind: Well... let's... I don't really want to say... to be quite honest.

Heather: OK, how about, what percentage of them are sold by affiliates?

Rosalind: That's a really good question. About 80 percent are sold by affiliates. Yeah, I mean and that's huge. It's absolutely... it's like you'd be crazy to try and sell a product on your own. You know, like using a using service like [ClickBank](#) to promote your product, is absolutely fabulous.

Heather: We talked a little bit about sales conversion ratios, but what is yours?

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Rosalind: Sales conversion ratios, it's, once again it depends on the niche that I'm working in. I was looking at one today that I consider fairly low and that was 1.63 percent and some are as high as 6 percent, some as high as 10 percent. I have, I occasionally do a product endorsement that will convert at like 20 percent. It all depends but the average one, I understand is around... for all affiliates across the board, is around one percent. And I think that with just a little bit of effort, anybody can double their conversion rate, really quite simply.

Heather: What niches convert the best?

Rosalind: Any niche that doesn't require people to put out a whole lot of money initially. Like I think the big high ticket items are... your conversion rates are going to be considerably lower. Of course, you don't really need a whole lot of sales to be, you know, to make a whole lot of money with high ticket items. However, yeah, anything that doesn't let, or doesn't require a whole lot of money outlays. So anything under 100 dollars, preferably under 50. And also stuff that's in huge markets. You know, most of the gurus say oh, you've got to find a big that hardly anybody is promoting online. That's nigh impossible to do. I would rather just forge ahead in a known big market and create a unique site, and because those markets are big markets for a reason. So you know, get out there and play in them. You know?

Heather: What level of commission are you looking for, when you pick a product to promote?

Rosalind: Well, on [ClickBank](#), 50 percent. Absolutely. I wrote an article, I guess it was last week. It was called *Affiliate Commissions: What's Acceptable*, and for an e-book, I almost never accept less than 50 percent commission on something like that.

Heather: Now, it's easy to forget that you were once a newbie yourself. But what's the biggest mistake you made when getting started in [ClickBank](#) affiliate marketing promotion?

Rosalind: In [ClickBank](#) affiliate marketing promotion... the biggest mistake. Well, geez I've made so many of them. Seriously, I make

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them everyday. And that's another thing, is don't be afraid to make mistakes, right? Better to learn from the mistakes of others however but you know don't be afraid to get out there and make the occasional error because otherwise, I mean that's really your best learning tool. Way back when I first started, I bought a program to disseminate, to run my list off my computer, right? And so of course, I'm collecting names and stuff and I set my newsletter to be sent out just before I left for work one afternoon, and I forget how many people were on my list. It was probably a little bit over a thousand by that point, and when I got home, I you know, I turned on my computer oh no I guess my computer was already turned on, but I tried to connect to the internet and I couldn't. And I couldn't and I couldn't and I couldn't and then I went to bed and then I got up in the morning and I still couldn't connect to the net. So then finally I called the ISP and well basically they had taken my connection down because they figured I was a spammer. So I always recommend that people run their list using an autoresponder service like [AWeber](#). And I've used a number of different ones and [AWeber](#) is by... I've been using them forever, and they are by far my top choice. I mean their customer service is awesome. You know, if you have a problem, you get in touch with them, and they're back to you right away. And not that I've had that many problems. But I have... because I deal in the industry and I want to tell other people about how things work, I've asked a lot of... I've asked them a lot of questions about how things work, and they've always graciously and speedily replied to my requests.

Heather: What are some of the big mistakes that you see other people make that you've been able to learn from?

Rosalind: Well... I mean just take a look at your inbox, all that spam that you get. Right? That I think is the biggest one. It also gives internet marketers a really bad name. So that's not the thing to be doing. Not having a list is... you know, if you do have a list, don't spam, but not having a list I think is probably the biggest mistake that affiliate marketers make. They think that because they're affiliate marketers they have no need for a list. But let me tell you, that is... you know, that probably is the biggest percentage of my sales. It comes from staying in touch with my subscribers. Because otherwise, people come to your site, they take a look around, they leave and you have no way to get in touch with them again. And it's been proven that people make exposure to a product about seven times, before

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they buy, so... you know like I promote Match.com and they see Match.com advertised on TV or in magazines and stuff like that. So they're familiar with the product, so it's easier for them once they get to my endorsement page, to make a choice to buy that, maybe on the first visit. But if they don't buy it on the first visit, then and they do sign up for my newsletter, they're going to hear about it again. In, you know, the first or second autoresponder, or portion of the autoresponder series, that they receive from me. So it's just, you know, it's gentle nudging and pretty soon you make that sale. So yeah, not having a list would probably be my, you know the top one.

Heather: What's the first thing that you recommend our listeners do after they're finished either listening to or reading this interview?

Rosalind: First thing they do? Go make a coffee?

Heather: How about to help them become better [ClickBank](http://ClickBank.com) affiliates?

Rosalind: To become better [ClickBank](http://ClickBank.com) affiliates. Well, you know, get out there and find a new product. You know, always stay within your theme, right? So if you've got... you know you're not just selling [ClickBank](http://ClickBank.com) products for the sake of selling [ClickBank](http://ClickBank.com) products. You're selling products that relate to a theme that your visitors have demonstrated an interest in. So get out and find another product this week and then go out and find another product next week, and write your newsletter. You know, do your review. And put it out there. And if you haven't started a blog yet, start a blog.

Heather: And put it on your own site.

Rosalind: And put it on your own site.

Heather: Any final words of wisdom for them to keep in mind as they're out there, trying to build themselves into Super Affiliates?

Rosalind: Just, you know, have faith. Don't worry about, like I find that lack of confidence is you know, we mentioned about the writing, and people are afraid to write. Afraid of making mistakes. You get better over time, like I got an email from a fellow a couple of years ago, he says, "I don't know whether I'm reading better or whether you're writing better and I suspect that you are writing better. I'm

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actually understanding what you have to say now." I had to laugh. I mean... it's true. I read what I wrote back when and it was just... it was so constrained, and it was so... obviously concerned with appearances that, you know, it just didn't flow very well and nowadays, I just sit down and I just you know, I write, I write to my friends and I tell them what I found out this week, and so... you know, just do it, and practice doesn't necessarily make perfect, but it certainly makes for improvement.

Heather: Actually, that just reminded me of one thing. So often, I see all these offers come in, because I'm on several different lists. And it's like they just took the sales copy from the vendor. And they're all putting this same ad out there. Just write it in your own words, it would make a huge difference.

Rosalind: Absolutely, and don't be afraid to use the word "I", you know? That's how people gain trust. And you just said it too... it's like, don't use... don't use the merchant's sales copy. If you're going to do that, you know twist it around a bit. You know, just change it up a bit, because the surest way to get the visitor click off your site is if they're reading the same thing time in and time again. You know, they just get bored so. And try to be unique in your approach. You know, whether you decide that you want to be the funny affiliate marketer. Or whether you want to be the really sweet affiliate marketer, or whether you want to be out there and obnoxious or contentious or whatever. Just be something. Be whoever you are.

Heather: So choose to be either a Rosalind Gardner or a [Rich Jerk](#).

Rosalind: Well... yeah... hey, listen I looked for the Rich B, 'cuz I just thought I could do that, but that was gone.

Heather: OK, well thank you so much Rosalind for taking the time to talk with us today. It's been very valuable information for the newbie affiliates.

Rosalind: Well, and thank you so much for inviting me. It's been a pleasure to talk with you.

Heather: OK. Thank you.