

ClickBank Affiliate Confessions

Interview with Costa Dedes

Heather Vale: I'm Heather Vale, partner of Codrut Turcanu, for [ClickBank Affiliate Confessions](#)... Today I'm speaking with Costa Dedes from New York State. Costa, first of all could you give us a brief background of yourself and your various websites?

Costa Dedes: Well, Heather, I actually started working on the internet back in 1996. I developed my first product in '97, received my first check couple of weeks after I developed that product. Since then I realized that I can actually make money on the internet and I kept on working and plugging away at it. And then early 2001, I started talking to a couple of internet marketers and they actually pointed me in the right direction of building my list and how to do some search engine promotion tactics, and basically from there I got into affiliate marketing and it just kept on growing.

Heather: So it actually took you a few years after developing your own product before you decided to try being an affiliate?

Costa: Right most people actually go the other way around. They actually start affiliate marketing first and then develop a product. I never had a lot of success with affiliate marketing, so what I did was I developed a product and well, end of '96, towards '97, I uploaded the product to AOL's file directory, and I mean at that time, there as barely anything on the file directory, so I mean everyone was downloading. I was getting hundreds of downloads a week, and I was charging \$10 for the upgrade, so people were... the only way I could accept payment was checks. So I got a check in the mail every once in awhile from people. And then I learned that in order to start an affiliate business, the best way to do it is to grow your list. I started adding opt-in boxes on all my websites.

Heather: So why did you decide to go from vendor to affiliate?

Costa: I'm still a vendor, the affiliate side of it is so much easier, you don't have to deal with customer support. All you do is really set up a website for a certain niche and write a few articles or have a few articles written for you... I use [Elance](#), or if you know someone who writes good articles, you can use them. And you just work on them to get ranked on the search engines and what not, and build your list for that niche. And then really all you do is send out an email to that list and you're done doing the promotion. You don't have to worry about

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customer support for that product and you can walk away with check in hand.

Heather: What are some of your websites now that promote [ClickBank](#) Affiliate products?

Costa: Let's see, on and off, one of them is [Crickens.com](#), it's an article site, C-R-I-C-K-E-N-S dot com and it's basically anyone can upload articles on there and every once in awhile, I'll just run like, the [ClickBank](#) banner on the top of that, to see what happens. And then I have a bunch of niche sites. Off the top of my head, I can't even remember some of the URLs. One of them is [mpney.com](#) which actually right now, I'm using to push one of my own products but I can change the links on there at anytime to push different products. I actually used that site and I got ranked on the top of Yahoo for work, "make money on line", I'm on the first page. And then for "work at home" and stuff like that, I believe I'm on the second page and "make money", I'm on the third page, and those ranks are coming up.

Heather: How much do you make just as a [ClickBank](#) affiliate, not as a vendor?

Costa: Just as an affiliate, depending on how often I do an email promotion... let's see, I sent out an email two days ago for one of the [ClickBank](#) products on one of my niche sites and it netted me about \$2200 from one email. I did promote that site about four times over the past two months. In total I believe was about \$8000.

Heather: So every couple of weeks, you send out another email campaign?

Costa: Correct.

Heather: Why not more often?

Costa: I don't like to flood my email list. What I do is I'll write a newsletter with a lot of information in it, start selling these people on different ideas of what they can do, depending on the niche. Let's say we're working with the "make money" or the "work at home" niche, I'll send them like a two page newsletter. They give them lots of examples of how to set up a home business and how to set up web

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pages and stuff, and then once a week or so, I'll send out a promotion for a [ClickBank](#) product or if I'm working with someone else, with a joint venture, a partner, I'll promote their product for them as well. It just builds the trust. If you keep sending them ads, they're just going to look at you as a spammer and ignore all your emails and never open them. But if you send them a newsletter that's actually interesting for them to read, they'll open your ads no matter what and if they're interested in the ad, they'll click on it and you can get yourself a sale.

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

Costa: It really depends. If you really get into it and you go hardcore with it, you can make a lot of money. A lot of mistakes are, I see a lot of people just promoting with [Google AdWords](#). They just use this [ClickBank](#) hoplink and they send the user, the person who was searching on Google, right to the [ClickBank](#) site. The problem with that is, that's a one time deal. And basically you sent a potential customer away from your hand into someone else's hand and you'll never be able to touch that customer again. What I recommend doing is setting up a catcher page, basically you set up a [Google AdWords](#) campaign, give them a little teaser information and say, do you want more information, enter your email address and your name, click here for free information or click here to continue or what not. And this way you build yourself a list, and that one customer can potentially earn you thousands of dollars down the road as you promote other [ClickBank](#) products.

Heather: How big is your opt-in list?

Costa: I've got a few of them. My biggest one is about 25,000. They're all double opt-in. My smallest one is probably like 500 and all the way down from the 500 to the 25,000 list, their response is depending on the niche, I just promote different products depending on the list.

Heather: Once you started as an affiliate marketer, how long did it take to get where you are now with a big opt-in list and making thousands dollars every time you send out a campaign?

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Costa: It took me about a year, to build the list to the point where I can send anything out and basically, I'll get quite a big return. I was afraid when I first started building my list and I had a couple of hundred people, or a couple of thousand of people on it, I was actually afraid to send out [ClickBank](#) promotions or promotions for anything just because I didn't know what was going to happen. But over the time, I learned it's expected of a newsletter owner to send out advertisements with the newsletter. So that's what I started doing and I mean, if you put a lot of effort into it and you spend a little bit of money, you're going to grow your list fairly quickly. The fastest way I've seen to grow your list is using joint ventures. If you can find someone else who has a related website, email them or give them a call on the phone and see if they're willing to set up a campaign with you. And you can grab tons of subscribers that way into your list.

Heather: How exactly would that campaign be set up?

Costa: Let's say you have a website relating to weight loss. And there's another website that also has like health related, you know, they have a section about weight loss in there. What you can do, the easiest thing to do is create a small e-book. You know, I'll write something up in Microsoft Word and convert it to a PDF or something, or have someone else write it on [Elance](#), you know, maybe 10 pages, 20 pages, something really simple. But it'll give them a background information about weight loss. And then go ahead, I would recommend calling the website owner because I'd get tons of emails everyday and most of the time people are asking me to partner with them, and I don't have the time to read through them all and reply to them all. But when I have someone call me on the phone and say, listen I'm so and so, I'd love to work together with you on a project, here's my contact information, this is what I've done in the past, let's get something together. I don't think I've ever said no to anyone who's ever called me on the phone. So I would highly recommend calling someone on the phone, having a product ready they can give away, and then on your website, say, you have an opt-in list again and say again enter your name and your email and then as soon as the person enters the name or the email, you basically send them to the download page where you can say, here's your free report, click here to download it. And basically in that report, you can actually include links to [ClickBank](#) products right in the report, so you have your back end product

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promoting for you and you're growing your list as well, so it's a quick way to grow your list and make some sales upfront.

Heather: So are you asking all the newbies listening in to give you a call and joint venture with you?

Costa: If they've got something that will get my attention. I mean, most of them seem like they're afraid to call people on the phone, and all the phone calls I've ever received were from people that were well established. I don't think I've ever received a phone call from someone who's just starting off. But if you're out there listening, and you have a good idea, feel free to give me a call.

Heather: So when you first started sending out the ads to your list, what was the response like?

Costa: The first one I ever sent out was, I think I had maybe 500 people on my list. I was expecting maybe one sell. I think off of that, I made a little over \$500 and I was promoting a \$49 product and it was well, I guess a \$32 commission. So it was better than I expected. And like they say, like a lot of email marketers out there, they say you can expect to receive \$1 per subscriber on your list. So it came out to be about true with that mailing I did.

Heather: When did you first see those affiliate commissions start to skyrocket?

Costa: When I started doing joint ventures. Before I did joint ventures, I really, I was just getting small [ClickBank](#) checks, you know under a thousand dollars for the affiliate side of it, but as soon as I contacted other people that owned larger websites and said, hey I've got this great free e-book, or I've got this great resource for you, that's when I noticed my subscriber list exploded, and I then I was able to send out emails basically, once a week, every other week, just make money on supply and demand I guess.

Heather: What did you think when you first saw that happening?

Costa: I was pretty amazed. It felt like I found a new way to print money. All I had to do was push a button and the money would come in, in a week or two from [ClickBank](#).

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Heather: OK, so in a nutshell, the tactics that you use, you already mentioned opt-in lists, Pay per Click, and search engine optimization... any other tactics that you use?

Costa: Forums, I'll go onto forums and you know, I'll answer questions and try to get, I'll have a signature link and direct people to my website. I mean, I'm not spamming or anything, I'm actually giving assistance to people in the forums who see my signature link, they'll click on it, head over to my website and they'll take a look at that, if they're interested, you know, they'll sign up or buy or what not. What else do I do? Let me think. I'm really big with search engine optimization and the list building. That's really my side of it.

Heather: How much time do you spend in the forums, answering questions?

Costa: Lately, I've been spending quite a bit of time because I'm getting ready to launch a new product, that's on the other side of affiliate marketing I guess. But I'm just trying to grow a presence. But on average, I think I would spend maybe ten hours a week total.

Heather: So how do you decide if you're going to use search engine optimization and get the free traffic, or if you're going to do Pay per Click?

Costa: I actually start the campaigns at the same time. What I'll do is I'll start up a Pay per Click campaign, at the same time I'll set up my SEO campaign and as my search engine traffic, my free search engine traffic increases, I'll start pulling back my paid search engines rankings until I get like, as close as possible to 100% natural search engine rankings as possible, and then drop my Pay per Click campaign off the other.

Heather: I think everybody probably wants to get free traffic instead of paying for it. So what exactly would be involved in a SEO campaign?

Costa: The first thing I do is I create the site using the metatags and the H1 and H2 header. I add links at the bottom to my other websites so I have back links, I have like a net of all my sites, they're all linked, interlinked together and then I'll just have content created or create

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content on my own. And then after I have the website set up and it's all optimized with the HTML, I'll go out and find link partners, either using my own sites linking back to it or I'll actually purchase links from link brokers or email website owners and try to exchange links with them.

Heather: What exactly do you put in the metatags?

Costa: You've got a couple of the metatags there, usually the keyword one works well. You don't want to load it up with too many of them but you'll put like probably maybe 10 or 15 different keywords into the metatag for keywords. I found out if you're using a local site, Google has picked up a new metatag. I believe it is, let me pull it up here, it's... it can actually, if you're running a local site, it can actually tell Google what zip code you're in and what city you're in. So when people type that in, it actually cross references it to figure out if it's a local site. So it'd be like metaname, zip code, and then it can put in all the zip codes in the area and then name city and then you can put in your city name, and they also have state and country metatag. And it can tell Google or Yahoo what area your website is targeted for, this way you can actually target a specific city from your SEO projects.

Heather: Besides putting the keywords into the metatags, would you also put them into the content on the page?

Costa: You don't want to put too many in there, there's a percentage ratio that's your keywords versus your formal text on the website. If you overdo it, Google will just target you as spam and ignore your website forever and you'll have, never get any search engine traffic. There's a fine line between spam and optimization. So you got to be really careful with that.

Heather: What is the percentage?

Costa: It really depends on the niche. I mean I've seen 10% works alright. It's all over the place. What I recommend is looking at your competition's website. I'd go into Google, and type in your keywords and then see what their site looks like and then look at the top ten and compare them and see how many keywords they have in their content. And that should give you an idea of what you want to aim for.

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Heather: How do you find those keywords in the first place?

Costa: I use a tool called *Good Keywords*. It's actually a free tool, it's available at goodkeywords.com and basically you type in your main key word and then it'll print out hundreds or even thousands of other keywords that are related to that and it actually uses [Overture](#), or I think it's Yahoo now... I think Yahoo bought [Overture](#). It uses their database to figure out what people have searched for in the past and then it gives you their results.

Heather: What are some specific [ClickBank](#) products you promote that do well for you?

Costa: I just recently promoted Nick Marks' [Forex Enterprise](#). And that seemed to do very well. He's also got another product that I promoted before him, and I actually did really well with that. I think from one mailing on that one product, I don't remember the exact name of it, but we did, in total sales, about \$6000 in one mailing.

Heather: And there's some kind of acne product as well?

Costa: Yup. That was Chris Gibson's [Acne Free in Three Days](#), what I did with that was... it was my first little experiment with my SEO campaign and I actually got an email from their affiliate manager thanking me for the sales. That was a couple of years ago, I actually did that. And all I did was basically set up an RSS feed and create a few, create a little content site that got ranked, I think it's like number five on Yahoo for "how to cure acne" right now. And with that site, we just sold a bunch of copies of his product, and it's pretty cool, that was my first little experiment with SEO and [ClickBank](#).

Heather: How would you pick a niche like acne?

Costa: I just scroll through the [ClickBank](#) Database, see what looks good to my eyes, and if it looks good, I mean it doesn't look like a complete lie, I'll start working on a little product, I might do a little background check to see what the market looks like for it. I knew with the acne product, I mean there's thousands of people that are interested in how to clean up their acne so I figured I would be alright in that niche, so I did well with that.

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Heather: How exactly do you determine if it's a quality product?

Costa: Sometimes I'll email the owner of the website and ask them if I can review a copy of their product. Other times I'll try to look up the background information, I'll grab the author's name on the website and do a [Google](#) or a [Yahoo](#) search on it to see if there's any negative remarks on him, him or her. And it's basically just read through the copy to make sure it doesn't look like a complete lie. Because I mean there's tons of [ClickBank](#) sites on there, like you have the "work at home" where you... it charges \$50 and you can type at home. I mean those sites, you know, what they do is they just give you a PDF file that says here's how to set up an [AdWords](#) campaign, thanks for the \$50. You know, those sites you don't want to promote because you'll ruin your reputation.

Heather: Do you start to see refunds on products like that if you do promote it?

Costa: Yeah, I mean if you look at one of those type at home products, they pay you like 50 or 60% which should be like \$30 a sale. But then if you actually look on [ClickBank](#), there's a couple indicators telling you what products are good to promote, and one of them tells you, if you look at... I forget the exact name... if there's a dollar sign earned per sale, if you look at actual earnings per sale, it'll say like \$10, whereas if you actually calculate the 60% out of whatever they're charging, it looks like you should be earning \$30. If you see that, it means stay away from it because they're getting tons of refunds. So that's a good indicator of what to promote and what not to promote.

Heather: Now, when you're building your opt-in list, what kind of things would you offer for someone to give up their email to you?

Costa: It depends on the niche again. With my acne website, I actually set up, I got a free PDF file, from [PushButtonHealth](#), and what I did was I... it was a Word file and I split it up into a couple of PDFs and I said click here and download this free guide on acne, clearing up your acne, and so I used that to grab subscribers. For like the work at home niche, I'll basically just offer a free business newsletter, weekly newsletter, and that seems to work well. You can offer, you know there's software programs out there, stuff like that, you can offer... so basically you just look for, I mean I'll go on [eBay](#) and I'll find resale

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rights for some products that are related to the niche I'm marketing in, and I'll download some of those, and I'll use those as giveaways or I'll contact someone and ask them if they have giveaways and I'll use their giveaways to promote their website also. There's a bunch of different ways to get people to sign up.

Heather: What other niches have you promoted products in?

Costa: I've got a bunch of local sites, so those don't really do [ClickBank](#) too well. Really the work at home, the health niche, and I mean I've done some like... like virus scanning stuff I guess. I don't think I have anything on [ClickBank](#) for the virus scanning. I did a lot in the health industry. [ClickBank](#) stuff. I did a lot of the, when I first started out, that's basically what I worked in was the health stuff and [AdWords](#) and list building and then I moved over to the work at home stuff, it seemed like to be a pretty popular niche. And since I already was... I was into it, I knew how to get around everyone else that was promoting the same stuff, I knew how to grab the attention of the people who were searching on [Google](#). I was able to jump ahead of everyone else.

Heather: How do you grab their attention?

Costa: We came up with a way to make some pretty interesting ads on [AdWords](#) to grab attention, and really, I mean I'm sure everyone's heard of the guy who did it, the [Rich Jerk](#), he's the one who promoted, he's the one who shared the idea with everyone else out there. But basically you create an ad title on your [AdWords](#) ad that people aren't expecting to see. I mean if you do a search right now on [Google](#), I'm sure you'll see a couple of them out there because, as I said the [Rich Jerk](#)'s shared that with thousands of other people. And that's really what you want to do. You don't just want to say, click here to make money, or cure your acne now. You want to get something that will be a little bit more interesting to the person that sees it, so they don't just skip over you.

Heather: So if you're promoting, let's say the acne product with [Rich Jerk](#) tactics, would it be something like, "Hey pizza face, click here?"

Costa: Yeah, pretty much. Exactly. Because everyone would be like, they'll see that and all the other ads around it will be like, you have

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acne, you want to clear it up? But you see, "Hey pizza face", you're like, umm alright, let me see what this is all about and you click on it. Your click-through rates will go higher up, and you'll spend less per click on [AdWords](#), so you end up getting more visitors for less money.

Heather: So are you sending those visitors straight to the merchant page, or to your own landing page?

Costa: I'll send them to my own landing page, ask them for their email address, and their name and then send them to the merchant page.

Heather: Do you ever include, like a review or anything on that page?

Costa: Yeah, I'll include a review on it, like a paragraph or two. Just generally outlining the [ClickBank](#) product that I'm promoting.

Heather: And so you're just collecting their name and email on their way through to the merchant page.

Costa: Right, and then I'll set up an autoresponder, or down the line if another product comes out, I can always email everyone who signed up and say, hey look what I have, it's a new product, check it out. It'll give me some more sales on that one customer that I would have lost to begin with, if I just sent them directly to the merchant.

Heather: What kind of conversion ratio do you get, both from the people landing on your landing page and giving you their email, and also the actual sales conversion?

Costa: I got to say, I'm really bad at tracking my conversions. I don't have any numbers at all. I'm bad with that.

Heather: Well, you know, because a lot of people say track and test, track and test. So just... you don't?

Costa: I track in my head. If I'm spending more money than I'm making, then I stop the campaign or I edit it.

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Heather: That would be a good clue, yeah. Well, what kind of conversion ratio, you must have a clue on your email offers, because you know how big your lists are.

Costa: Yeah, let me just pull up the calculator here and figure out my last one. On my last mailing I actually had a 27% conversion.

Heather: Wow.

Costa: Yeah. Pretty high.

Heather: Yeah. And so I would imagine, if there's a 27%, that's the actual sales conversion?

Costa: Yeah, but that was for one of my smaller lists. It wasn't for the big one. My big list is quite a bit lower than that, because it's not as targeted.

Heather: So then, if you're getting a 27% sales conversion, what percentage of people actually clicked through to the ad?

Costa: That I don't, I don't even know. I don't have any tracking stuff on that...

Heather: It would have to be a pretty high percentage I guess.

Costa: Yeah, it would be. Like I said, it was really a niche market and it was really... just a closed off area so...

Heather: What was the niche?

Costa: It was a home and family related, one of those in there. I don't want to give it away.

Heather: OK, so after you've done one email campaign for that [ClickBank](#) product, are you done with it?

Costa: It depends. If the author contacts me and says hey, I noticed your sales. Let's work together again, here's a higher percentage... sure I'll do it again. Other times, I'll just, you know a week or two later, I'll remind the people who didn't purchase it that, the product's

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still out there and the offer's still valid if they want to go check it out. And I get a couple more follow up sales on that.

Heather: What do you do to stand apart from all the other affiliates that are promoting the same product?

Costa: I try not to promote the same products as everyone else. I mean, when everyone was promoting the [Rich Jerk](#), I mean there was thousands of people that were promoting him, and I stayed away from him. I would find other people who I thought had better products, I would promote them. But if I do have to promote someone that everyone is promoting, like I said, I come up with those funny ads for [AdWords](#) or I'll put a personal touch on it to my email list, I'll personally review the product and give my own opinion on it. This way the people who are buying it know they're getting a good deal because they know someone they trust has already reviewed the product.

Heather: Or you go into the forums and talk about the product with your affiliate link?

Costa: Right. You've got to be careful with that because some people consider that spamming.

Heather: Oh, OK. And then how do you prevent your [ClickBank](#) hoplink from being hijacked?

Costa: I actually set up my own website, it's sort of like tiny URL. You can type in any URL you want and it converts it into a smaller link that's encoded so no one knows that it's a [ClickBank](#) hoplink. And I've been using that for the last couple of weeks. It seems to be working pretty well. I can actually, since I own the site, I can actually check the stats on it and see how many people clicked on it and what not. I'm thinking about introducing the tracking to just regular users as well. I just got to do a little bit more PHP programming and so other people can use that function. But the website is [aifan.com](#). Before that I was using [tinyurl.com](#), but the problem with that is a lot of spam filterers are starting to stop that URL from coming through.

Heather: Oh, really!

Costa: Mm hmm.

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Heather: What about the other related ones like [runurl](#) and [zippedurl](#)?

Costa: I haven't tried any of those yet. I know Russell, I don't know if you know him, Russell Brunson, he has [LinkBrander.com](#) which is pretty cool. It allows you to cloak your links and send traffic to other sites, and as well, it places another little ad on the bottom of the window, promoting anything you wish. So you get sort of two ads in one there.

Heather: Now with the shrunken ones like the [tinyurl](#) and those kinds of things, that's just a re-direct, so when they actually get to the site, they can still see the hoplink. Do you think it still prevents them from stealing it at that point?

Costa: Well, basically when you go to a website, if you use a [ClickBank](#) site and it takes you to the website, it'll say hop= and what not, it'll say your affiliate URL, your affiliate ID. If anyone changes that, it doesn't do anything because it doesn't reset the cookie. The only way they can reset the cookie is if they know the original YourID.theVendorID.hop.ClickBank.net. If they know that URL, then they can reset the cookie, otherwise, just by changing the affiliate ID in the window, in the address that's shown at the window, it's not going to do anything. It won't hurt your sales because it's not going to reset that cookie.

Heather: OK, so they actually have to go out of their way to do that.

Costa: Yeah, they have to figure out what the vendor's ID is and then they'll have to figure out how to set the hoplink up and if they're not familiar with [ClickBank](#), they're most likely going to be able to know how to do it.

Heather: When you're choosing a product, what's a good commission level that you're looking for?

Costa: Anything above 50%. Recently, I've been looking for 60% and up. The one problem with that is, you get into the refund rates. You get the higher refund rates because the products sometimes aren't as good. I can't say they're always not as good, but you're getting into the products that they just throw it together and offer a higher

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percentage rate just to attract affiliates. You just got to be careful with that.

Heather: And what kind of price point on the product sells well?

Costa: Depending on the niche again, \$49 to \$99 seem to do well on [ClickBank](#). I've seen a couple of them for 29 that sell well. But really the 49.99, 49.97 you know that price range right there seems to do really well with [ClickBank](#).

Heather: Now I know you mentioned that if you're spending more than you're making, then you know that you're spending too much. But just as a general rule, if you were going to bring in, let's say \$5000 in sales, how much would you spend on advertising for that?

Costa: If I was doing strictly [AdWords](#)?

Heather: Yeah.

Costa: I don't look at it that way, I guess. I look at it as how many subscribers I bring in and the long term money that those people can bring me. Because I mean I can spend \$5000 upfront and you know, break even or lose a couple of hundred dollars, and over two months, I'll double that money without a problem, because I have all those subscribers in my email list now. And I stop my [AdWords](#) campaign or what not and I just use my email list to generate income.

Heather: So besides the Pay per Click, and you also mentioned buying links on other people's pages, what other kinds of paid advertising would you do?

Costa: I'll do e-zine advertising, I'll do the solo ads, I've tried banner advertising, it doesn't seem to work as some people claim. I just love email advertising. I spend most of my money on solo ads and top position ads and sponsor ads for email advertising.

Heather: But if you've already got a huge opt-in list, why do you need to buy solo ads on someone else's list?

Costa: Because there are people you'd never ever be able to touch, other people that have spent time growing their list, they have people

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on their list that you'd never be able to get onto your list. People will trust the other people... like say I advertise on a website that's related to work at home niche, and this newsletter that's going out has tons of good information and it like goes out on time every week at like, on Wednesday night, and these people just love this newsletter. When you put a solo ad in there, I mean you're guaranteed that those people are going to be looking at this email because they're expecting it and they're just happy to read this information, and they see something that is coming from this trusted source, you know. So they think that hey, let me check out this site they're recommending, and they go to it and they're happy with the site and they go through click through it and purchase the product.

Heather: How do you pick a good e-zine, or a good list to advertise on?

Costa: That's pretty hard to do, it's sort of hit and miss. I've had a lot of times where I'll spend \$500 and I make absolutely nothing just because the email is junk. What I try to do is I try to find people that I have heard of before or I know personally, and I know that their list will work. Or I'll see, you know, some of the sites will offer guaranteed click through rate or something like that. And I'll try to go with those sites. But there are a lot of spammy ones out there that say like send an email to 3 and a half million people once a day or something. Or blast your email ads off to 5 million people a month. You see that, and I mean I would stay away. What you want to look for, is you want to go type in your niche on [Google](#), so you're typing your keywords that you're looking for, go to the top ten sites and see if they have a newsletter. If they do, go down to the bottom or go to the contact or something like that and look for advertising and send them an email and say, I'm interested in putting up an ad on your website, or I'm looking to do a solo ad on your newsletter. If you can, send me the rates, and I'd like to work together with you. And I mean, those are the sites that actually work well because you have that newsletter that's related to that niche.

Heather: How much would you expect to pay for that?

Costa: Depending on the subscribers, anywhere from \$100, I mean I've seen them all the way up to \$3500. So it really depends on the number of subscribers in the niche that they're in.

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Heather: If I'm paying \$100, how many subscribers would be on that list?

Costa: Probably like, anywhere from 1000 to 2500, it would be double opt-in of course, so you know that they're actually real emails.

Heather: What's the biggest mistake you made when you got started in [ClickBank](#) affiliate promotion?

Costa: The biggest mistake would be, when I first started, I would just take a hoplink, throw it up on [AdWords](#), use a generic ad and spend a couple hundred dollars on it, expecting to make money and then see absolutely nothing and wonder why.

Heather: What are the big mistakes that you see other people making?

Costa: Basically the same thing. I see a lot of people that don't understand that their email list is very important. They just send traffic right to the vendor's site and hope that the vendor closes the sale. And to me that just doesn't make sense, because you're sending a potential customer away that you're never going to be able to see again.

Heather: So, you never send them direct to merchants?

Costa: No, I'll never do that anymore.

Heather: What do you think is the next big trend in [ClickBank](#) affiliate marketing?

Costa: I think, I mean, content sites are always going to be big. Email marketing is going to be big. I think it's sort of going to stay steady with what's going on now. I think more and more people are going to start getting into it and realizing that there's a lot of money to be made with [ClickBank](#) marketing. So I think there's going to be like a lot of content and niche websites popping up, that are going to be promoting strictly [ClickBank](#) sites. And I think those [ClickBank](#) malls are going to start to fade away as people will realize those [ClickBank](#) malls don't work too well.

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Heather: Some people say they do work well, but I guess it depends how you promote it.

Costa: Yeah, I never had luck with them. Most of the people I've talked say, they'll make a sale here and there. With a lot of the people I see promoting them, all they do is they put up their main web, like main mall page, that says here's a list of products, and expect people to click through them and find a product they're interested in or do a search and find a product they're interested in, and that just doesn't seem to work well.

Heather: So it's not effective because they're not actually pre-selling the products?

Costa: Right, and they don't know what that person is actually interested in. So you're just sending them to a generic site and say hey, I hope you find your product. Good luck.

Heather: So what about making like a custom [ClickBank](#) mall type of thing where you have all those links but also personal recommendations on the products?

Costa: Right, that's what I see happening with the content sites, like people are writing reviews about specific products and posting links to those [ClickBank](#) products, and just providing relevant information instead of just pointing out a link. That seems to be working well for a lot of people.

Heather: So after the listeners are done either listening to or reading this interview, what's the first thing you think they should do in their quest to become a top [ClickBank](#) affiliate?

Costa: First thing I would do is sign up with an autoresponder so you can start building up your email list. Then start contacting some of the vendors who are top [ClickBank](#) vendors and ask them if you can possibly review their site or if they can give you more information on their products, so you can write a review on it. And then from there, I mean you just start into the [AdWords](#) promotions and start building your list and providing relevant reviews to the people that are coming to your site through [AdWords](#).

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Heather: When someone's just starting out with those [AdWords](#) campaigns, how much do you suggest they would spend?

Costa: When I first started out, I think I was budgeting myself \$25 a day. Nothing more than what you can afford to lose, that's what I got to say. If you can afford to lose \$25 a day, go ahead and do it, if not, if you can only afford \$10, try \$10. Just until you get the hang of it, you know what's going on with it, and then you can start increasing your budget.

Heather: So, I guess when you first start out, you're paying that \$25 but you're not necessarily making the \$25 back in sales.

Costa: Right. Most... the first time you do it, you're most likely going to lose that \$25 and then say, I'm never going to do this again. But I recommend taking that as a learning step and as tuition I guess, and say let me see how I can fix this, and learn from there and keep plugging away at it.

Heather: For how many days would you spend that 25 bucks?

Costa: About a week.

Heather: And if it's not pulling in 25 bucks a day and breaking even at that point, then you're doing something wrong?

Costa: Right.

Heather: What final words of wisdom do you have as people are out there, to keep in mind as they're trying to become a success?

Costa: Everyone fails. Don't be afraid of it. It makes you stronger. I failed many times and I pulled myself up and I've learned from it, and I just kept on growing.

Heather: Alright, cool. Well thank you so much, Costa, for sharing all your tactics and techniques with us.

Costa: Thank you for inviting me.