

# The Ultimate Referral Process

*How To Get Lucrative Referrals  
From Key People of Influence*

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# Introduction

Have you ever noticed all the marketers in your niche partnering up and making a whole lot of money together?

Doesn't matter what niche you're in, you see this sort of stuff going on all the time. Sometimes they create products together, sometimes they do promotions together. The goal is to work together for mutual benefit – and the results can be downright amazing.

If you're smart, you'll want to get a piece of this sort of action for yourself. You can just about imagine how quickly your business will grow when you leverage other peoples' lists, traffic and assets.

But there's just one question...

How on earth do you even swing something like this?

That's exactly what you're about to discover. Inside this report you'll be learning all about the art and science of landing lucrative JV (joint venture) D.E.A.L.S. Here's an overview of the five steps of the D.E.A.L.S. process:

- Step 1: Discover Potential Partners
- Step 2: Evaluate These Partners
- Step 3: Approach Potential Partners
- Step 4: Leverage the Relationship
- Step 5: Secure Future Deals

Let's have a closer look at each of these steps and how you too can use this system to land profitable JV D.E.A.L.S.

# Step 1:

## Discover Potential Partners

The first step is for you to find and identify potential partners.

Now if you've been in your specific niche for a while, then you can probably rattle off the names of a dozen or more potential partners right off the top of your head. Write their names down, and then use the following tips to expand your list...

### **Find Partners With Big Platforms**

These are marketers who have big audiences, such as those who own:

- Big mailing lists.
- Busy blogs.
- Popular forums (and other communities).
- Big social media accounts.

To find those with forums, newsletters and blogs in your niche, search for your niche keywords alongside the appropriate words, such as "forum," "blog" or "newsletter." (E.G., "dog training blog.")

You can tell if a blog is busy simply by looking at the comment section. Look for lots of lively discussion among a whole lot of people. Likewise, a quick glance will tell you if a forum has a lot of members who engage in conversations on a daily basis.

As for whether a newsletter is big? Sometimes a marketer posts his live subscriber numbers via an email service provider app. Sometimes you can find this information on the marketer's website if he sells solo email advertising. In most cases, however, you'll just have to use your best judgment.

*TIP: Subscribe to these newsletters to be sure they're full of high-quality content. Doing so will also expose you to the newsletter publisher's partners, whom you may want to add to your list of prospective partners.*

To find those with a lot of social media followers, do two things:

1. First, check the social media accounts of all marketers and sites you discover as you use these various methods to find partners.
2. Secondly, search for your keywords on Facebook (e.g., "weight loss"). Be sure to check out both Pages and Groups when you run this search.

It's easy to gauge a marketer's social media platform, as most big social media sites (such as Facebook and Twitter) post the number of followers, fans and group members.

### **Search for Bestselling Partners**

Next up, take a trip around your niche to see who has the most popular products. You can start by searching Clickbank.com, JVZoo.com, iTunes, and Amazon.com. Enter in your keywords, sort the search results by "most popular," and you'll know who sells the bestselling products. These product creators are all potential partners.

### **See Who Controls the Traffic**

Next, go to Google and search for a half dozen of your niche's keywords. Take note of who controls the traffic on the first page of results. These website owners are all potential JV partners.

### **Check Out Advertisers**

While you're searching Google, don't forget to look at the "sponsored" results at the top and to the right of the regular results. Also, take note of who's placing advertising on the most popular sites in your niche. These advertisers are all potential partners for your next joint venture.

## **Find the Big Affiliates**

Another good way to find potential partners is to discover the super affiliates in your niche.

One good way to do this is to see who's winning the affiliate contests in your market. You may have to join the affiliate programs for the biggest products in your niche in order to see who's winning the contests.

Otherwise, try running a search for your niche keywords alongside "affiliate contest" or "affiliate leader board." For example, "dog training affiliate contest." Some vendors do post contest results on public blogs.

## **Ask Your Market**

Finally, you might survey your market to find out more about the popular marketers in your niche. You might ask your market about their favorite niche-relevant:

- Books
- Videos
- Blogs
- Facebook Groups
- Social media personality
- Apps
- Forums
- Other products

You'll get some overlap, but this sort of open-ended survey may just expose you to a few names you hadn't ever heard of before.

So if you follow all the steps above, you should have dozens if not hundreds (or even thousands!) of potential partners on your list.

But don't go rushing out to contact them just yet. You need to take this next step of the D.E.A.L.S. system before you do anything else...

## **Step 2: Evaluate These Partners**

The thing about doing a joint venture is that you and your partner become associated with one another. That's actually a really cool benefit if your partner has a stellar reputation and you're just getting started in the niche. You can borrow your partner's credibility to boost your own standing.

However, as you might suspect, it works the other way too. If your partner has a bad reputation, then you'll become guilty by association. So that's why you'll want to research and evaluate your potential partners before you approach them. Here's how to do it...

### **Search Google**

One of the best places to get a lot of good information is to hit up Google for the answers. What you'll want to do is search for a wide variety of information, including:

- The marketer's name, including any variations he or she uses. (For example, a "Nathan" may occasionally go by "Nate.")
- The marketer's company name.
- The marketer's website.
- The names of the marketer's products.
- Any usernames you've seen the marketer use on forums or elsewhere.

What you're looking for is a pattern of complaints that indicate the marketer may have a problem with customers, product quality or business partners. This includes complaints about the marketer's products, customer service, and not honoring guarantees or other commitments. You'll also want to be very weary of marketer's who slow pay their affiliates (or worse yet, don't pay them at all).

*TIP: Sometimes you can uncover these problems faster by specifically searching for them. You can do this by searching for all the above search terms alongside keywords such as "scam" or "complaint." For example, if the marketer's name is Joe Blow, then you might search Google for "Joe Blow scam."*

But heads up...

Every big company under the sun gets complaints from consumers. You can check this out for yourself by searching for the businesses you regularly patronize (like Wal-Mart, Apple, and Amazon), and you'll even see sites dedicated to telling others about how much the company, well, "sucks" (their words, not mine).

So what you need to do is use your best judgment when you do see complaints online. If it looks like the most noise is being made by a small handful of disgruntled people – and as far as you can tell the company has done their best to rectify the situation (without getting drawn into an online fight and drama) – then the marketer can likely stay on your "good" list.

If, however, it's clear to you that this marketer or company has a pattern of valid complaints, then cross them off your list and move on.

When in doubt? If you're just not sure, err on the side of caution and remove the prospective partner from your list. There are plenty of other good and upstanding marketers to fill the void.

At this point you'll shave a few names off your list so that you end up with a shorter list of partners you know to have a long-established and good reputation in the niche.

Now for the next step of the D.E.A.L.S. system...



## **Step 3:**

# **Approach Potential Partners**

At this point a lot of people just skip ahead by contacting the prospective partner and requesting a joint venture.

You can do that. You can contact “cold” prospective partners. It can and does work.

But here’s the thing...

If you want to get a whole lot more “yes” responses, then you need to try a different tact. Namely, you need to at least be sure the prospective partner recognizes your name. That’s a minimum. It’s even better if you approach these partners with the goal of starting a dialogue and developing a relationship before the words “joint venture” ever leave your lips (or the tips of your fingers, as the case might be).

Think about it...

Imagine one of your best friends and a total stranger are standing right in front of you. They both ask you for the exact same favor, such as loaning them \$100. You only have \$100 available to lend out – so who gets it?

If you’re like most people, you’re going to choose your friend over the total stranger. That’s because we’re psychologically driven to work with or do favors for those we know, like and trust.

Your prospective joint venture partners are the same way. You see, they get a whole lot of JV requests crossing their desks every day. They couldn’t accept all these ventures even if they wanted to. So they need to be selective. And you can bet they’re more likely to do JVs with those they know, like and trust – or at least recognize! – over complete strangers.

So the point is, you need to transform yourself from a complete stranger into someone the prospective partner knows, likes and trusts. Here are six surefire ways get on their radar, build familiarity, and start developing relationships...

### **Help Them**

Before you ever ask a prospective partner for a JV, it's a good idea to help them in whatever way you can first. Here are a few ideas:

- Join their affiliate program. Of course the key here is to make a lot of money for the prospective partner. You can bet the marketer will quickly learn the name of anyone who's putting a lot of cash into their pocket. Plus this sort of activity trips the reciprocity trigger.
- Promote without an affiliate link. This will only work if you're able to drive large amounts of identifiable traffic (using a unique link) and if this traffic turns into sales for the marketer. In other words, you need to give this person enough of a traffic and sales boost that he goes looking to see where it's all coming from.
- Offer assistance when they need it. Sometimes you'll see a marketer asking for help on a Facebook Page, blog or elsewhere. If you can provide the help the person is requesting, then by all means do it.

Of course you can also offer unsolicited help, but be very careful in how you approach this.

For example, imagine if this person displayed a poorly made Kindle ecover graphic, and you offered to "fix" the graphic for him. This seemingly kind gesture could actually end up being insulting if the person created the graphic himself or had a friend or family member do it.

Now imagine instead this person asks for referrals for ecover artists. Instead of giving them a name, you could offer to do it for free (if and only if you have the skills to do so). Now you'd have someone who is grateful rather than insulted.

So the point is, always think through the consequences before you offer your help, so that you're sure it will be appreciated rather than create bad feelings.

Next up...

### **Join Niche Discussions**

Here's a good way to get on someone's radar: thoughtfully join niche discussions on forums, blog posts and on social media platforms.

The best discussions to join are those that are hosted by the prospective partner. In other words, join the discussions on the prospective partner's blog, forum or group.

The second best discussions to join are those that are frequented by the partners with whom you'd like to be acquainted. So if you've seen a prospective partner commenting on a particular blog from time to time, then you know that person is reading it. So go ahead and join those discussions as well.

The key in all cases is to offer thoughtful commentary. Don't just comment on every post as a means of gaining name recognition. It may get you some recognition, but folks might start to associate you with the person who posts one-liners everywhere.

It's better to create thoughtful responses, especially if those responses will further engage the prospective partner.

For example:

- The prospective partner just offered a controversial viewpoint. You can agree or disagree, as long as you do so respectfully. If you agree, then be sure to offer a point that hasn't yet been made, as this will help your discussion point stand out.
- The prospective partner offered a niche-relevant tip. You can offer a twist on this tip, or perhaps even offer a link to the prospective partner's blog post where they talk about the issue in more depth. (This shows you've been paying attention to what the person is doing, and you help others by pointing them to the marketer's resources.)
- The prospective partner said something funny or even profound. If this happened on a site like Facebook (where the person has posted photos of him or herself), use a photo editing software or a meme generator to overlay the person's quote on top of his or her photo. Then post the meme into the thread. You can bet the person will take notice!

***TIP: Here's a free meme generator you can use:***

<http://www.memes.com/generator>.

Next up...

## Use Social Media to Your Advantage

The one thing about social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook is that you can tag people in your post, and generally they'll be notified that you've mentioned them.

Now, you've probably seen this tactic used all wrong by spammers. For example, you'll see some new account on Facebook befriend a bunch of people, and then tag dozens of these people in an ad for sunglasses.

Totally irritating, right? So don't do anything like that.

Instead, spend time joining in on conversations on the person's timeline before you tag them in anything. That way, they'll know who you are when your name shows up in their notifications.

Once you do tag them, be sure to tag them thoughtfully. Only tag them for something you know they'll appreciate. For example:

- Take a photo of yourself using the prospective partner's product and create a post talking about the product. Then tag the product creator.
- Write a reply to the prospective partner's blog post on your Facebook timeline. Be sure to link to the blog post and tag the author.

Next up...

## **Raise Your Standing In the Marketplace**

This is pretty simple...

If you want to have name recognition in your market, then promote yourself like crazy. Work hard at creating bestselling products. Build a big following on your blog. Publish an outstanding newsletter. Get a lot of social media followers. Get on the first page of Google for competitive keywords.

When you accomplish these sorts of things, people will know your name. And they might just contact you before you have a chance to contact them.

## **Attend Offline Events**

You can accomplish a whole lot more relationship-building face-to-face in a few minutes than you can do in a week online. That's why it's a good idea to attend offline events and get to know some of these potential partners in person.

### ***Here's a pro tip...***

Don't talk shop.

You see, everyone and their brother is going to run up to this marketer and push business cards into his hand while proposing joint venture deals. After a weekend with dozens of these types of encounters, it all becomes a blur. Your pitch will be totally forgettable alongside all the others.

So don't talk shop. Instead, do a little research beforehand on your prospective partners to find out more about their other hobbies and interests. Most people will give you a peek inside their personal life on their social media accounts. You may see where they went on vacation, learn about their kids, see their pets and find out about their hobbies.

Once you know what this person likes, then find common ground. This is the topic you should talk to them about. For example:

- "I loved your New Mexico vacation photos. Did you get over to Carlsbad Caverns while you were there?"
- "Your 1964 ½ Mustang is awesome! Mind telling me the secret of how you adjusted the carb?"
- "I don't meet too many other people with double merle blind and deaf Great Danes..."

So find something personal and go from there. You can bet this person is going to remember you and the conversation, since you were one of the few not talking business or proposing a JV.

**TIP:** Find a way to get the person to agree to give you their contact information. For example, if they ask to see a photo of your car, dog, or whatever, have them give you their cell phone number so you can text it or their email address. Then follow up and send the photo as soon as possible. You now have the door open to start building a real relationship!

Which brings us to our last point...

### Start Up A Dialogue

Some way or another, you need to get off the public forums and contact the person privately. I just mentioned one example above, where you can get prospective partner's contact info to send them a photo or something else.

Here are other examples of going from public to private (which is where the real relationship building happens):

- The prospective partner asks you a question in a Facebook conversation. Tell them you'll "PM" (private message) them.
- Send a PM supporting the person. Let's suppose people are "attacking" the prospective partner's viewpoint. You can support them within the public thread (if it doesn't lead to drama), and then privately tell them how you support and respect them.
- Send something you know the person will like. This could be a video, an article or something else – preferably related to something they recently talked about. (Either business related or a personal hobby, as long as it's something fresh in their minds.)

You've been starting friendships all your life, so I don't need to tell you how to do this part. 😊

Now once you've approached your potential partners and built a good relationship (that's the ideal), or you've at least created name recognition, then move onto the next step...

## Step 4:

# Leverage the Relationship

As mentioned, it's much easier to get someone to say "yes" to your request when you build a relationship (or at least some familiarity) first. And since a potential partner could be worth thousands of dollars to you, it's worth taking the time to do it right.

Now once you've built these relationships, you can leverage them by proposing a joint venture. But before you reach out to the prospective partner, you need to first create a really good JV and then write a good proposal.

Here's how to do it...

### **Create a Good JV**

Let me share with you the keys to creating a good joint venture:

#### ***1. Think outside the typical "affiliate" joint venture.***

When a lot of people think about joint ventures, they think about affiliate partnerships. Think outside this narrow box and come up with other mutually beneficial activities. For example:

- Do a webinar together.
- Guest blog on each other's sites.
- Swap content for your newsletters.
- Co-promote each other on your blogs, on Facebook and elsewhere.
- Co-author an article together.
- Create a product together.
- Do a giveaway event together.
- Host a weekend workshop together.



The sky is the limit, so do some brainstorming to come up with cool JV ideas that work for your needs and your niche.

### ***2. Stack the deck in your partner's favor.***

Of course you want to do a joint venture because it benefits you. But in order to get someone to say yes to your request, it's a good idea to make the offer super-attractive to them. That means you give them a whole of reward for very little work. This is particularly important when you're trying to land a deal with one of the "big names" in your niche.

For example, if you're doing a co-promotion, then give your partner 100% commissions for any sales he makes of your product.

### ***3. Make it easy on your partner.***

The idea here is to create a joint venture where your partner gets a big reward for very little work. So do everything you can to make it as easy on your partner as possible.

For example, if you're doing a webinar together, then be sure that you take care of all the details. That means you:

- Set up the webinar platform.
- Create an outline of what to talk about.
- Send out reminders to everyone.
- Record the conference.
- Edit the conference and get it ready for distribution

Basically, you do everything so that all your partner has to do is show up for the event.

### ***4. Use the "get your foot in the door" technique.***

One really good way to get a partner to say yes both now and in the future is to start with one very small and easy request. For example, you might ask a partner to contribute one tip that you're compiling into a "101

tips” book. In exchange for providing one tip, this person will get a link in the book and free publicity on your site.

Now you have your foot in the door. If all goes well, the person should get a good ROI – it only takes two or three minutes to send you a tip, but in exchange he’ll get a lot of exposure if you do a good job promoting the report.

So what happens the next time you approach this person about doing a bigger JV? That’s right, he’ll say yes.

**TIP:** *This is science. Researchers have found that if you ask for a big favor first, people will simply say no. But if you ask for a little favor that they agree to, then they’re more likely to agree to the big favor too. That’s because people like to appear consistent.*

Point is, start with a small task to get your foot in the door, and then later you can approach with a bigger JV request.

Once you’ve got a good JV in mind, then move onto the next step...

### Write a Compelling Proposal

The #1 mistake people make when they write a joint venture proposal is to make it about themselves. E.G., “I’m going to do this, that and the other thing... ”

Guess what?

Your partner really doesn’t care what you get. Primarily your partners are interested in what THEY get out of the deal. Makes sense, right? And that’s why you need to construct a proposal that focuses on the benefits they’ll get if they agree to your JV.

So let me give you an example. Let’s suppose you’re pitching the idea of doing a webinar together. Here’s an example email...

**TIP:** *If you know the person well, then you might send out something a little less formal. But you should still focus on the benefits they get.*

**Subject:** I'd like interview you for my [number] fans...

Hi [Name],

It's [Your Name] here from [Your Website]. My [number] of subscribers and social media followers have been clamoring to learn more about [specific topic]. And since you're the best [topic] expert in the field, I'd like to ask you to do a 15 minute interview online.

In exchange for your 15 minutes of time, you'll get:

- Exposure to my audience. Your name and link will appear in all promotions before the interview as well as after.
- Rights to the interview. You can give it away, sell it, add it to your membership site, or do anything else to benefit you. You have complete editing, resell and giveaway rights.
- Backend opportunities. You can promote your products from within the webinar. This will generate sales during the live webinar, as well as through the recordings for months to come.
- Access to the mailing list. You'll get to send two solo emails to the mailing list of attendees. This is a great way to make even more backend sales.
- [Insert any other benefits or perks your partner gets.]

I can't think of a better way to get so much benefit for just 15 minutes of your time. If you agree (and I think you will), then all you have to do is let me know the best day and time to set up the interview.

You can email me at [email address] or call me now at [phone number] with any questions you have, or to set up your date.

I look forward to hearing from you!

*[your name]*

P.S. You're my first choice for this webinar. However, if there's some reason you're unable to do it, please let me know as soon as possible so that I can find someone else to spotlight. Thanks!

==== End Sample

So the bottom line here is to give your partner a lot of benefits, and then create a proposal to showcase these benefits.

Now the last step...

## **Step 5: Secure Future Deals**

There are some people that are really good at landing joint ventures, but then they have no follow-through. They break their promises to their partners. They create delays. You can bet that's frustrating for all involved. And it absolutely ruins your reputation if you're the one who's not following through.

Listen up...

The "follow through" is the MOST important step. Because if you create a smooth joint venture today, then you've basically secured bigger, better and more profitable JVs for yourself in the future. People will always do more JVs with you if they had a great experience the first time.

So let me share with you a few dos and don'ts for a smooth JV:

- Don't make promises you're not absolutely sure you can keep. Sometimes we say things, even though we're not sure if we can follow through. Things like, "Yes, I'll be able to finish the sales letter today."

Don't do that...

Be honest with your partners about what you can and cannot do. If it looks like you won't be able to follow through on some part of a project, then hire someone to do it (even if it means you'll take a loss on the overall project). It's better to lose money than to lose your reputation.

- Do small JVs first. Earlier I told you to do small joint ventures as a means of getting your foot in the door with big partners. The other reason for starting out with small JVs is that it helps you hone your own project management skills. In other words, start small because it's good practice.

- Do get organized. Get a calendar app for your phone, or get a large calendar for your office. It doesn't matter what tools you use, as long as you get in the habit of scheduling.

**For example**, as soon as you set up a meeting with a partner, schedule it on your calendar. Don't just scribble a note to yourself, because that note will get lost. Put everything on the calendar right away, and you'll be less likely to miss meetings and other important events.

- Don't neglect your partners. Sometimes when things are going well, people neglect to communicate with their partners. This is a mistake, and it could lead your partners to thinking the worst. It's a good idea to touch base with your partners on a regular basis. How often you do this depend on the project. Once a week may be sufficient for long-term projects, whereas you may communicate more often for shorter projects.
- Do apologize if you mess up. Accept full responsibility, let people know you understand how your actions impacted them, and then let them know what you're doing to fix things. Then go above and beyond the call of duty to make things right so that your partners see your word means something.

So the point is, if you create a great experience for your JV partners, you'll be able to secure more joint ventures in the future.

Now let's wrap things up...

# Conclusion

## Are You Ready to Land Some D.E.A.L.S.?

Congratulations! You're now ready to land some lucrative joint venture D.E.A.L.S.! Let's recap what you've learned:

- **Step 1:** Discover Potential Partners. Here you found out where to find as many potential partners as possible (especially those with big platforms).
- **Step 2:** Evaluate These Partners. You don't want to hitch your wagon to someone with a bad reputation, which is why you learned how to research and evaluate partners in this step.
- **Step 3:** Approach Potential Partners. Here you found out the secret of getting your foot in the door and building a relationship. This is where the magic starts happening!
- **Step 4:** Leverage the Relationship. This step is all about creating an attractive JV offer and then presenting it to your potential partner.
- **Step 5:** Secure Future Deals. This may be the most important step of all, as your future profits depend on it!

I'm betting your mind is spinning with the possibilities right about now. There are so many JV D.E.A.L.S. you could do, and so many potential partners out there just waiting for you to find them and contact them.

So why wait? Start today by making a big list of potential partners. Because the sooner you get started, the sooner you'll see more traffic, more subscribers and more sales!