WEBSITE OR NO WEBSITE...THAT IS THE QUESTION

Do you want to make money through the Internet but you don't have enough experience or capital to start your own online business? You don't have to worry, for a lot of online marketing options exist for you to start with. One of these options, and shall I say the best, is affiliate marketing. Affiliate marketing provides first time online marketers like you the chance to market something online even without having your own product to sell. All you have to do is to sign up with an affiliate marketing program, which is usually owned by an online merchant or retailer, and start picking the products you want to promote. As an affiliate, you are paid by the merchant for your services on a commission basis, that is whenever you have directed a visitor to the merchant's site and the visitor actually buys something. Becoming an affiliate in an affiliate marketing program is often quick and easy, and for most affiliate programs, signing up is also free. But despite these and all the benefits being promised by affiliate programs, many people are still hesitant to get into affiliate marketing. One of the reasons why a lot of people remain hesitant is the lack of a website to start marketing his affiliate products with. This now leads us to the question of whether a website is required or necessary in affiliate marketing or not. Many people say that one can do affiliate marketing even without a website to start with. Actually, one can really start promoting and marketing his affiliate products even without a website; and there exist a lot of ways on how this can be done. In fact, many affiliate marketing strategies that leads to success can exist without actually needing a website. Among these strategies are email marketing, offline promotions, writing e-books, writing ezines and engaging in online discussions like forums, chats, message boards and others. ***Email Marketing** Email marketing, or maintaining email lists, is actually the most popular affiliate marketing strategy that doesn't require the affiliate to maintain a website. In this affiliate marketing strategy, what you basically do is maintain a list of the email ads of your prospective customers and provide them with articles that are relevant with the affiliate products and programs you are promoting. Articles that you provide your contacts with need not always be promotional, for many individuals find such types of email annoying. Rather, it would be better if you provide them with something informative and just add small text ads that link to your merchant's site. ***Offline Promotion** There are many ways on how you can promote your affiliate products offline. Among the common medium used for such promotions are classified ads, brochures and flyers. Classified ads would generally work better compared to the other two because classified ads in periodicals often get a wider audience. ***Writing Free e-books** If you have a knack in writing, writing an e-book can be the best way for you to promote your affiliate products in the absence of an actual website. Just like in emails and newsletters, your readers would better appreciate your e-book if it is not too promotional but rather informative. Be sure, however, to make the contents of your e-books relative to the actual affiliate products you are promoting. And just like in email marketing, you can just place text ads or banners somewhere near the end of your e-book that links to the merchant's site. ***Writing Free Ezines** Ezines are publications or articles that aim to inform individuals about a particular topic. If you don't have a website and yet want to be an affiliate, you can well use ezines to promote your affiliate products or to insert links to your merchant's site. If you have a website, your ezine article may actually work well as content for your site. But since you have no website, you can just submit your free ezine articles to various websites that hosts ezines, like goarticles.com, ezinearticles.com and others. ***Online discussions** (Forums, Chats, Message Boards, etc.) With or without a website, you just can't ignore online discussions because they are great venues for marketing your affiliate products. In chats, forums, message boards and discussion boards with topics related to your products, you can easily find people who may be interested with the products you are promoting. With all these strategies, it may appear that one really doesn't need to have a website to start marketing his affiliate products and promoting his affiliate programs. Well, starting in an affiliate program without a website may be easy, but getting successful in affiliate marketing without a website is another thing. While one can actually gain enormous success in affiliate marketing even without a website, it is a rare instance that "newbies" like you can reach the same levels of success. Having a website is not really a pre-requisite in entering into an affiliate program, unless otherwise the program owner would require you to have one. But while this is so, I would still recommend that you have for yourself a website, if not now, then maybe at a later time. Having a website creates a lot of advantages in affiliate marketing. For one, it provides you a place where you can creatively promote not only one of your affiliate products but all of your affiliate products. With a website, you can also advertise your affiliate products to a wider market. Again, having a website is not a requirement in affiliate marketing. But with the advantages that a website can provide, I'd rather have one for myself and make affiliate marketing a lot easier for me.