

Performics Affiliate Marketing – Frequently Asked Questions

HouseLinks

Below, you'll find answers to some common questions.

Q. What are HouseLinks?

- A.** Affiliate tracking links that refer directly to a merchant's domain, similar to an affiliate marketing program managed *in-house* by a merchant.

Performics has only implemented HouseLinks for the Barnes & Noble affiliate program but expects additional demand from other merchants in the future as more invest in the technological infrastructure necessary to execute a HouseLinks program.

Here is an example of a traditional link from Performics:

<http://clickserve.cc-dt.com/link/click?lid=410000000012345&pubid=2100000000000054>

This is what the link might look like for a Barnes & Noble affiliate link:

http://www.barnesandnoble.com/subjects/fiction/fiction_cds2.asp?PID=91&z=y&cds2Pid=9481&lkid=546257&lkid=j12345&pubid=k1234

Please note that the following parameter names in a standard Performics links have slightly different names for Barnes & Noble's program

Current parameter name - HouseLinks parameter name

LID - LKID
PID - PRID

PUBID and MID will retain their names.

Q. Can I build deep links to Barnes & Noble's site?

- A.** Yes. You can do so by retrieving your primary link from the ConnectCommerce interface. Copy the parameters on the end of the link (lkid, pubid) and append them to any BN.com URL.

Q. Will clicks be tracked?

- A.** Yes. Barnes & Noble are tagging their landing pages with click tags that will record clicks in ConnectCommerce in real time.

Q. How are sales tracked?

- A.** Barnes & Noble captures all relevant tracking information and provides it to Performics on an automated basis. This process is monitored by both Performics' and Barnes & Noble's systems to ensure data flows consistently and no unexpected variances in tracking exist.

Q. Will sales be reported in real time?

- A.** No. Barnes & Noble will be providing Performics with a nightly record of new and updated transactions. In the future, they may increase the frequency with which they provide this data. For the launch of the program, sales reporting will be delayed by up to 24 hours.

Q. Isn't that giving too much control to the advertiser?

- A.** The tracking system supporting this program is as robust as any other affiliate tracking system available today. In fact, there is no real change in the manner in which Barnes & Noble is tracking the program; in their former BeFree program, all activity was recorded by Barnes & Noble and

Performics Affiliate Marketing – Frequently Asked Questions

batched to BeFree in the same manner it is being transmitted to Performics today. Many of the top affiliate programs across the major affiliate networks record transactions and transmit them to the networks using similar processes.

Q. Are HouseLinks mandatory?

A. Barnes & Noble is offering only HouseLinks to its affiliates. Other Performics merchants will continue to use traditional tracking links.

Q. Will other advertisers be using this feature?

A. No other advertisers have immediate plans to utilize HouseLinks. We expect, however, that other advertisers will adopt this in the future. There are significant investments in technology and quality tests that merchants must pass before being permitted to go live with HouseLinks. Performics will provide notice for any program that will launch with HouseLinks or will migrate to HouseLinks in order to give affiliates time to make any necessary changes to their validation of Performics links.

Q. Do I have to do anything different to use them?

A. No. Affiliates retrieve and implement links in the same manner as with all other Performics merchants. Tracking is equally or more reliable than other methods. Note, if your system has validation that checks the format of links for Performics' advertisers, you will need to update your validation routine to accept links that contain the barnesandnoble.com domain.

Q. Is this compatible with afsrc=1?

Yes.

Q. Are data feeds supported?

A. Yes.

Q. What do I get out of it? What does Barnes & Noble get out of it?

A. HouseLinks should be less susceptible to ad and cookie blocking, yielding higher affiliate conversion rates and overall sales. It has also been reported that an abundance of affiliate links on your pages may result in quality score penalties by Google and other search crawlers. HouseLinks look just like any other link to Barnes & Noble, with a few extra parameters; so affiliate pages containing these links will have a lower ratio of affiliate links to other links. This could reduce the frequency and severity of quality score penalties for affiliates serving BN.com ads. Finally, links should be easier to build; you simply need to append your default (Primary) tracking IDs to any B&N.com URL to build a deep link.

Barnes & Noble hope to increase the value of the inbound links from affiliate web sites.