

# ***Post Affiliate Pro***

## ***User's Manual & Documentation***

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## **Description**

is a powerful affiliate management system that allows you to easy set up and maintain your own affiliate program and pay your affiliates commissions for CPM (cost per thousand impressions), clicks, sales or leads that they refer to your site.

Using affiliate system on your site is one of the most efficient ways to achieve more traffic, sales and better link popularity without additional costs.

This book will guide you through the process of Installation, how to Configure your system and it explains all its Features.

It also contains section Troubleshooting that will help you solve the most common problems.

Post Affiliate Pro is a product of Webradev.com – a division of Quality Unit.

If you have problems or questions that were unanswered by this document, feel free to write to us at:

\_\_\_\_\_.

## **License**

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# Installation

## Clean installation

Post Affiliate Pro is distributed as a ZIP archive. After downloading the archive you should unzip it into some temporary path.

The archive contains directory `/affiliate` where all the files are stored.

There is an easy to use installation program, that will guide you through the process of install in few simple steps.

Steps to install the system:

In order to install the system, some file and directory permissions have to be changed.

File `/settings/settings.php` and directories `/banners`, `/exports` have to be writable by PHP. To enable this, you should CHMOD them to 644 or 666.

Installation program will check it and notify you if the directories still don't have the permissions to write.

Create a new mysql database called {postaff}

Create a new user called {postaff}

Grant access to user {postaff} on the {postaff} database.

Make sure to record the postaff user's password, {yourpassword}.

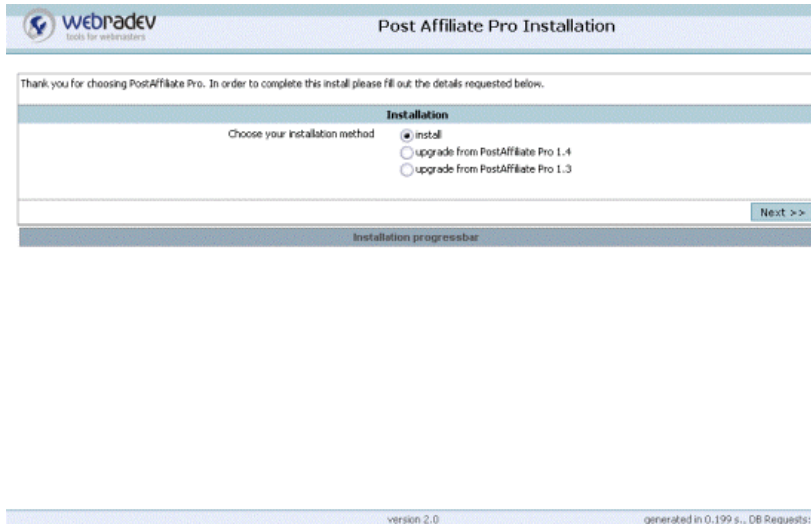
// Customize to match your db\_name, db\_user, and db\_pass.

```
mysql> CREATE DATABASE postaff;  
mysql> GRANT ALL PRIVILEGES ON postaff.*  
      TO postaff@localhost IDENTIFIED BY  
      "yourpassword" WITH GRANT OPTION;
```

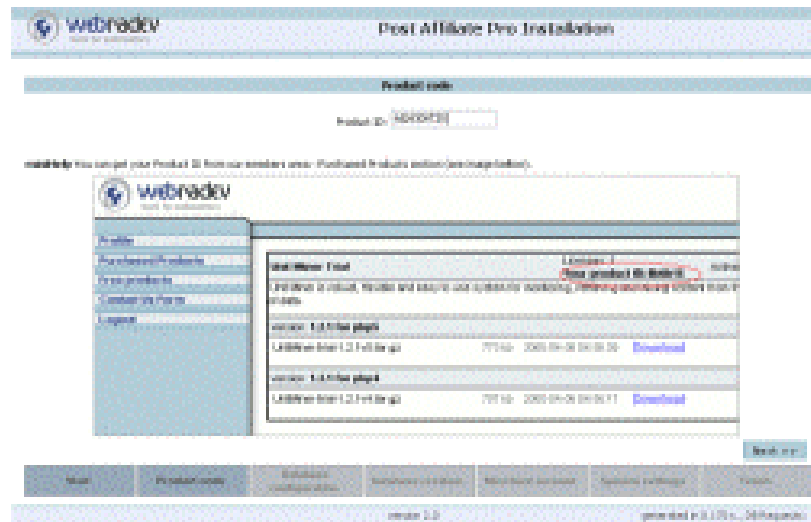
The database does not need to be named postaff, you can choose your own name and username, you will specify it during installation.

Go to the URL

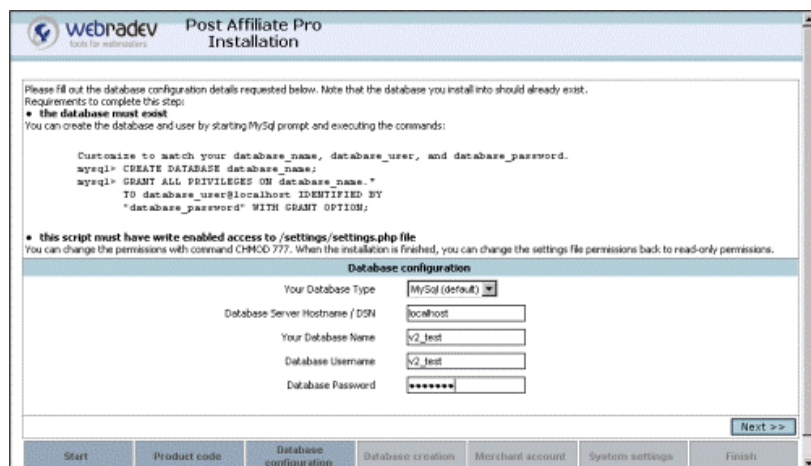
[http://www.yoursite.com/affiliate\\_system\\_directory/install/index.php](http://www.yoursite.com/affiliate_system_directory/install/index.php) to start installation. The program will take you step by step through the installation of Post Affiliate Pro.



Step 1 - choosing the installation method



Step 2 - license verification



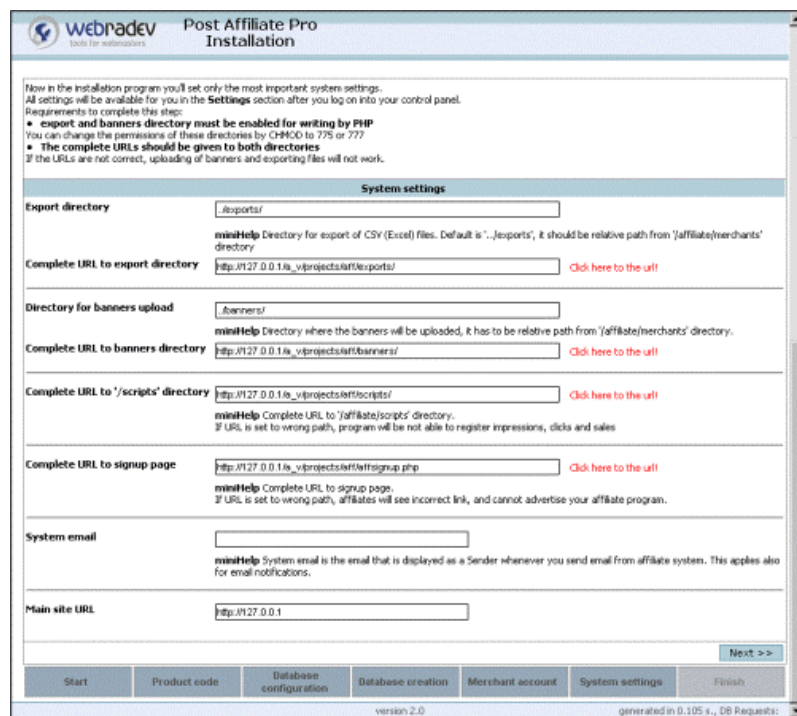
Step 3 - setting database connection information



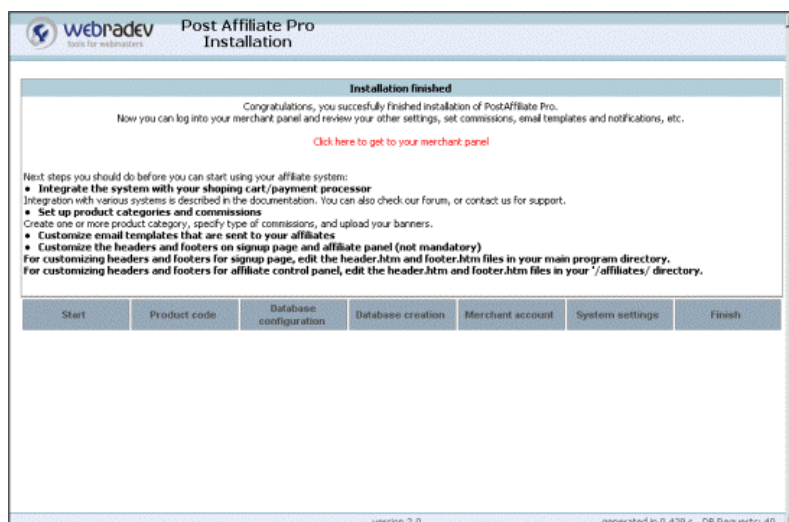
Step 4 - confirmation creating database



Step 5 - creating admin account



Step 6 - configuring basic system settings



Step 7 – confirmation screen, installation finished

After these steps the system is ready for operation. Now you should set up your product categories, commissions and banners. Before running for real you should perform more testing by trying to signup as one test affiliate, set up the banners on testing affiliate page, and check clicks and sales registration.

## Upgrade from version 1.1.x, 1.2.x

This upgrade is possible only using installer of version 1.4. If you have version older than 1.3 contact us for support.

## Update from versions 1.3 or 1.4 to 2.0

Version 2.0 uses different database structure, and there are no conflicts with tables of previous version. This allows you to use the same database without need to make database backup. The data from version 1.4 will remain intact (you can delete these tables after successful upgrade).

Steps for upgrading:

! " # "

for example, if your current affiliate system is installed in directory `/affiliate`, create directory `/affiliate2` and copy new version files there.

Leave files of old version intact.

\$ \$ ! # ! "

This file contains database connection information, and you will not need to enter them manually.

Example:

Your old installation is in directory `/affiliate`

Your new version files are in directory `/affiliate2`

You should copy the file `/affiliate/settings/settings.php` to directory `/affiliate2/settings` and overwrite the empty file that exists there.

Go to the URL

<http://www.yoursite.com/affiliate2/install/index.php> to start installation.

Choose the `% & ' (` option. The program will take you step by step through the upgrade of Post Affiliate Pro.

If there will be any error reported during upgrade, very probably the database for new version 2.0 is in inconsistent state and you have to retry the installation again.

The data in version 1.4 will be not damaged. You only need to repeat the upgrade steps in installer.

Upgrade might fail for several reasons - if your database is momentarily overloaded with another requests. Depending on number of records in previous version of database it may require some time to make a data conversion.

If upgrade procedure is still failing, contact us for support and attach also error message that you are receiving.

" ! " ! " #

This step is only necessary if you used non-english language. English language file is updated, and no action is necessary. For older language files, all language constant names changed from `AFF_G` to `L_G`.

The language file can be found in directory `/langs` in your main affiliate system directory.

! ) # ' !

After successful upgrade, log in to merchant control panel and check all settings. Many new settings were added to allow you to configure system even more. Their use is optional, you don't need to use them if you do not want.

! \*

If you customized design of affiliate panel or signup form for previous version, you'd have to do it again in version 2.

You can use the `header.htm` and `footer.htm` files from older version, but they will most probably need changes.

+ # '

When everything is done, backup and delete (or only rename) your old directory with installation of version 1.4 (most probably `/affiliate`), and rename the temporary directory `/affiliate2` to `/affiliate`.

After these steps the system is upgraded and ready to use.

## After installation steps

### Remove `/install` dir

It is recommended to remove or rename the `/install` directory to prevent somebody trying to make some action with installer.

## ***Configure your system***

You can find more details about this in Getting started section.

Generally, what you should do:

1. Integrate the system with your website and shopping cart/payment gateway
2. Check the default configuration and change it to match your requirements
3. Modify email templates
4. Create banners and links
5. Test everything

## Getting started

### Integrate system with your webpage and shopping cart/payment gateway

There are two things you should integrate:

#### Clicks registration

First you have to decide if you want to use old or new style of linking.

Old style creates links like:

[http://www.yoursite.com/affiliate/scripts/t.php?a\\_aid=123&a\\_bid=456](http://www.yoursite.com/affiliate/scripts/t.php?a_aid=123&a_bid=456)

New style links are like:

[http://www.yoursite.com/?a\\_aid=123&a\\_bid=456](http://www.yoursite.com/?a_aid=123&a_bid=456)

So new style of linking could be more search engine friendly, but it requires additional integration.

You can change your linking style in `Merchant Control Panel` `Settings` `Advanced` `Linking` `Style` `Old` `New`, it is `0` `1` setting.

If you use old style of linking, you don't need to do anything to integrate click tracking.

If you choose new style, you have to put additional piece of code into every page that will be the target of your banners and links.

Most often it is only your main `index.php` or `index.html` page. You will find the code that should be used in the `Advanced` `Linking` `Code` section in merchant control panel.

There are two versions - PHP code for use in PHP pages, or JavaScript code for use in HTML pages. You should choose the appropriate one and put it into your `index.php` page, usually the best place could be on the very bottom, right before the `</body>` tag. Be aware that PHP version of code should be enclosed in PHP tags `<? ?>` if there is used mix of PHP and HTML in the file.

#### Sales registration

You need to do the following steps only if you plan to use `CPM` or `CPA` campaigns. For click and CPM campaigns the first step Click registration is sufficient.

Sales registration is a way to trigger affiliate system after successful sale, so that the system can generate proper commissions for referring affiliate.

There are various ways of integration, depending on which shopping cart or payment gateway you use. You will find more about integration in `Merchant Control Panel` `Settings` `Advanced` `Linking` `Integration`.

Integration section.

You can also create an „in-house“ account, which means testing affiliate that will receive all sales that were not referred by any affiliate.

This way you can control if every sale was registered by the affiliate system. You can find more about this feature in article Tracking of all sales (also not referred by affiliates).

## ***Check the default settings***

Go to the [Settings](#) in the Merchant Control Panel, there are numerous settings that affects the system. If you have MiniHelp feature on, you'll see the description for every setting.

Important settings are:

!

Select which payout methods you want to support, and set the minimum payout options.

You can find more about these features in section Payout.

You can set the types of campaigns you want to support, how deep will be your tiers, whether to support recurring commissions, set your system currency, default language and many more, like:

- Signup bonus and referral commission
- Available commission types
- Fixed costs computation

2

You can select some ways to automatize protection against fake sales and clicks.

choose whether you'll support daily reports (you will have to make a special action to really install it, check Daily reports).

Also choose which email notifications you would like to receive and set email address for the notifications.

\*

Select affiliate signup approval (manual or automatic), and URLs where affiliates will be redirected after signup or logout.

The Post Affiliate Pro system is very flexible and you can change its behavior using many settings, so check them all and decide which of them you want to use. Don't be confused by so many settings, the system will work well also using the default configuration.

## ***Modify the email templates***

In the [Settings](#) you can modify email templates for all email notifications and confirmation emails that are sent to you or to your affiliates.

If you want to support more languages, you should define email template in every used language.

There are some default email templates preinstalled, but you should change them to match your company name or title.  
Find more about this here: [Email templates](#).

## Create product categories and set commission types

During the installation there is one product category created called **2** . You can modify this one, or create your own product categories.

Product categories are used to group set of products (or one product) that have the same commission settings.

For example, you can have category for **1** %, where you'll reward your affiliates per click, and another category for **3** ', where affiliate will receive commission per sale.

Or you can have product category called **1** " , which will have 40% per sale commissions, and another category called **3** # with 15% per sale commission.

For every **2** you can choose campaign type (CPM, per click, per sale, per lead, etc.).

If campaign is per click, then affiliate is rewarded for every click on your banner with fixed commission.

If campaign is per sale, affiliate is rewarded for every sale that was referred by this affiliate.

You can learn more about campaign types in Available commission types section.

For per sale/per lead types you can also specify recurring commissions, those are the commissions that will be generated periodically (weekly, monthly, quarterly, biannually, yearly) at the day of order. You can find more about it in Recurring commissions section.

Another setting for product category is **1** ) (default is 0, it means that doesn't matter how long time ago visitor clicked on affiliate's banner, affiliate will still get the commission from visitor's sale if the cookie was not deleted).

If you want to limit this period, enter number of days into **3** ) field.

If you want to have special commissions for different affiliates, you can create more **2** within the Product category.

For example, you can have default per sale commission of product category set to \$5.

Then, you can create another special affiliate commission category for V.I.P. affiliates within this product category and set the per sale commission to \$8.

By default, the affiliates belong to standard affiliate category which is called

**0** . If you want to put some affiliate to V.I.P. commission category, you can do it in the Affiliates list, by choosing action **!**

You can also set performance rewards that will move affiliate to higher or lower commission category depending on the volume of his sales. Find more about this in Performance rewards.

**4** allow you to automatically reward affiliates connected in tiers.

Example of multi tier commission settings:

Normal commission is 10%, 2-tier provision is 2%, 3-tier commission is 1%.

Affiliate A is parent of affiliate B (means he referred him), and affiliate B is parent of affiliate C.

When affiliate C refers sale for \$1000, he'll get commission 10 %, which is \$100.

Together with him, affiliate B will get commission 2% which is \$20, and affiliate A will get commission 1% which is \$10.

## ***Add banners or links***

In the menu / **\$1** ) you can add text, HTML or graphical banners. For every banner you should specify destination URL, which is the URL where the visitor will be redirected after click.

For graphical banner, you should also specify URL of the picture, or select banner file to upload.

URL paths (destination URL and picture URL) should be absolute URLs with http:// in the beginning, for example:

## ***Test everything***

When you created your product categories, defined correct commissions, and created some banners/links, you should test the system.

The best is to simulate the whole process from affiliate's and your point of view:

1. Sign up as some testing affiliate – after approval you should receive confirmation email with your password, and you should be able to log in to your affiliate panel
2. Log in to affiliates panel, get the code for banners/links and put them onto some testing page
3. Click on the banner and check that the click is registered
4. After the click, try to make test sale and check that sale commission was registered in affiliate system (only for per sale or per lead commissions)

If you experience some problems in any of these steps, turn on Debugging and look at the Troubleshooting later in this book.

If everything works as it should, the work is finished. Affiliate system is running and you can start getting affiliates.

## Integration

### General solution

The general method of integration is putting an invisible image anywhere in the "Thank You" or order confirmation page that is displayed to the customer after the payment is processed.

This invisible image is called when the sale is processed, and it runs a code in affiliate system that will check for referring affiliate and tracks the sale.

To get the source code for this invisible image, go to [Post Affiliate Pro User's Manual & Documentation](#) in **4** **!**

The code is in the form:

```

```

(whole code should be in one line)

where:

**TotalCost** (mandatory for % commissions) - price of the product

**OrderID** (optional) - can be your unique generated order ID to cross-check the sale.

**ProductID** (optional) - the ID of the product bought.

All fields are optional, but without **TotalCost** system will be not able to compute percentage commissions.

Also, **ProductID** is required if you plan to use **2** **!**

**5** - check what it means in the later in this manual.

If you need to set total sale cost and order id, but you don't have access to their values in your "Thank you" page, situation is more complicated.

There is no general solution for this. If you know that you can register sale in some other place, where those values (total cost and order id) are available, you can put the invisible image code there.

Otherwise, consult us for advice and finding possible solution.

### osCommerce

Integration with osCommerce is made by placing invisible image in the confirmation page. To obtain the values of OrderID and TotalSale, it is connect to osCommerce database and retrieve the values from there.

You have to open **!** **)** **6** **!** file, and insert this code:

```
//-----
// Post Affiliate Pro code
// The code below will get the order_id and total value of recent order
// from the database and displays invisible image that registers the sale
// for affiliate (if some affiliate referred this visitor)
//-----
// get order id
$sql = "select orders_id from ".TABLE_ORDERS.
      " where customers_id='".(int)$customer_id.
      "' order by date_purchased desc limit 1";
$pap_orders_query = tep_db_query($sql);
$pap_orders = tep_db_fetch_array($pap_orders_query);
```

Y N N R Y N ZD N D[J

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HD . N & HJ  
Y N NB R N.NB 6Y B 7J  
Y N R N.N% N 6Y N NB 7J  
Y N N R Y N ZD N D[J

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Y B R H % & H 2 8 @N> @ 0N2>2  
H- N RDH 6 7Y N N  
HD RD N . DHJ  
Y N N NB R N.NB 6Y B 7J  
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