How To Sell Digital Products On Craigslist.org

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Generate Leads With Craigslist, Go Bananas!

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Table of Contents

Contents

Generate Leads With Craigslist, Go Bananas!

Introduction

Craigslist has come a long way since it started out back in 1995, and continues to thrive today despite competition from sites like Gumtree and eBay.

Craigslist is not as fancy or complicated as eBay, it's easier and quicker to use. You don't even have to "join" to post something for sale, although there are some advantages to "joining" including being able to "repost" an ad (which may save you time later).

Craigslist also has an active "community" who connect in the "discussion forums", and anyone can join those communities to discuss like-minded issues and topics.

The number one top benefit of Craigslist, is that it is "Free" to buy and sell from. Unlike eBay, there is no "payment" processor like "Paypal" built in, Craigslist expect you to actually meet your buyer in person for hand over and payment.

There are many other advantages to using Craigslist to buy and sell. As a buyer, you remain anonymous until you decide (if ever) to reveal your details. Because you don't pay online, you normally agree to meet the buyer in person (usually in a public place if possible) to complete the purchase. If you are a seller, you don't have to divulge anything about yourself or your contact details until "after" you have a buyer you are willing to sell to.

For online marketers, business people and product creators, the benefits of Craigslist are huge, but it is tricky building up a large volume of sales due to their "no spam" policy, and how digital

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products and website hyperlinks can be viewed as "inappropriate" for Craigslist.

This book will help you:

- Publish your sales ads for digital downloadable products
- Avoid being closed by Craigslist because their "spam filter" weeds your classified ads as inappropriate for Craigslist
- Repost your ads over and over within the Craigslist terms and conditions to avoid having your account closed

"Digital Products" definition

For the purpose of this eBook, "digital products" includes an actual eBook or document, and includes hyperlinks to a website where you are driving relevant traffic to for the purpose of a sale or email opt-in conversion.

Backpage v Craigslist

Essentially, Backpage have copied most aspects of Craigslist, it even looks like Craigslist when you visit their website.

You should definitely advertise on Backpage.com as well as Craigslist.org if this is a successful way for you to generate traffic and sales of your digital products.

However, it is worth noting the difference in potential buyers is far greater with Craigslist, so start with Craigslist.

Why Craigslist's "no spam" policy may affect a seller of Digital Products

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To understand how to sell digital products on Craigslist, it is easiest to first understand how Craigslist works.

Craigslist is a free classified ad website, where you can sell something to someone else locally in person. Craigslist is not designed to sell your item or service globally, and if you want to sell something in two locations (eg. Los Angeles and London) then you would need to actually list it separately in both areas, you can't create one listing and have it sell in both areas (like you can on eBay).

Craigslist has a "spam filter" that may remove your ads if it believes you are trying to sell something in more than one area. Therefore, you need to list your digital products carefully to avoid the spam filters, and ensure you don't breach Craigslist terms and conditions, whilst still achieving your digital product sales in more than one location.

Besides the spam filter, other people who view your ad can easily mark your ad as "spam" and therefore have it suspended until verified by Craigslist staff. This is very easy for people to do, and some people believe viewers have marked their listing as "spam" for frivolous reasons, like a jealous competitor, but unfortunately you still can't do anything about this.

The key here is to keep you Craigslist ad professional, relevant to the category in which you have listed it, and not make "mass produce" it all over the different Craigslist locations around the world, otherwise it looks like spam.

There is also another problem with Craigslist that is not so well known, which is referred to as "ghosting". This is where an ad is posted by the seller, and appears to the seller as real, but is actually not live on the Craigslist website live (ie. No one can see it except

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you). This is because the spam filter has marked it as suspicious, and it has to be reviewed by Craigslist staff before it is published.

How to try to avoid the Craigslist "Spam Filter"

There is a few ways around this challenge, here are the top three:

1. *Be very careful about how you actually post ads on Craigslist*

2. *Insert an "image" which can be clicked on to go to your website where the buyer can purchase your digital product*

3. *Create different IP addresses and email accounts to open numerous profile accounts with Craigslist*

All three of the above options are somewhat frustrating to implement at first, but if you think your digital product will sell well from Craigslist, then you should seriously consider implementing one of them to avoid your ads being "closed" by the Craigslist spam filter.

Be very careful about how you actually post ads on Craigslist

The main thing here to remember is:

1. Be relevant to the listing location (eg. Books)

2. Don't be repetitive with your hyperlinks, classified ad title and description and provide fresh unique file names to any image

Things that will probably alert the Craigslist spam filter to your ads are:

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- Similar wording in the title and/or description in two or more ads at the same time
- The same image "name" being posted in two or more ads
- Posting the same ad in two or more Craigslist locations at the same time
- Posting the same ad in two more categories on Craigslist at the same time
- Posting a link to the same website address in more than one ad at a time, or in different Craigslist locations ads at the same time

As you can see above, being "repetitive" on Craigslist must be avoided in order to avoid the spam filter algorithms finding them to be the same and therefore "spam".

You need to achieve ads that are all unique in titles and descriptions, as far as the spam filter is concerned. You are trying to achieve an ad that looks like it is a one-off ad, in only one category in one location. But, you can "re-post" that ad again and again in the same place/profile, as they become old. Ideally you want to "re-post" your ad (to bump it to the top of the page) approximately every week. And don't post an ad within the same profile more than once every 48hours.

Insert an "image" which can be clicked on to go to your website where the buyer can purchase your digital product

This is a commonly used tactic, which is really quite simple. You simply create your ad as an "image", ideally a JPG file. This is a normal image file extension.

You don't want it too big, you want it to fit inside the Craigslist page classified ad comfortably, you should be safe using a jpg size 500px x 500px. Make sure it is low in "size" by keeping the resolution to 72dpi. This is a web friendly format.

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Make sure your jpg ad is not too flashy, just simple and effective copyrighting. This JPG "image" can be used over and over and over – BUT, you want to save the "image" as a different "name" for each different ad or location (it doesn't matter if it's the same one for "re-posting" to the original location it was used), but you don't want to use this image "name" on several different locations – that would alert the Craigslist spam filter.

Example for the same image saved with the following different names for different classified ad locations:

> WeightLossFoodHype.jpg
> Weigh_in12345.jpg
> LossDietFast99.jpg

The Craigslist spam filter cannot see that it is the same image, all it can see is that it is a completely different name, ergo, it believes it is a different ad.

You can only upload four images to each Craigslist classified ad, however, with this tactic you normally just use "one" image to say all your classified ad info.

To create your jpg file, you can either:

- Create a jpg file from a Powerpoint slide
- Create a jpg file from GIMP, Paint or Photoshop (using the "save as" feature)

To create a JPG from your PowerPoint slide, simply create your one page slide in PowerPoint, and then "save as" a JPG.

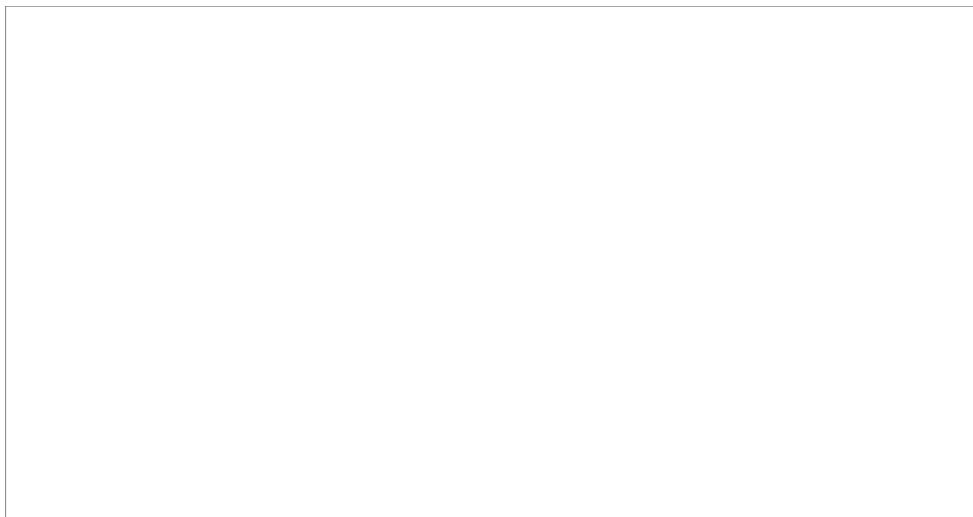**Generate Leads With Craigslist, Go Bananas!**

It is the same for GIMP, Paint, Photoshop, and any of the photo editing websites, they will all have a "save as a JPG" option.

Once you have saved your document as a JPG, you need to "host" it somewhere on the internet, as Craigslist does not allow you to host your images on their website.

Most people use Photobucket for this task. The main reasons are:

- You can do multiple uploads from Photobucket
- Every time it uploads the "same JPG" it will save it as a new file name, avoiding the "Spam Filter" seeing it as the same file
- Photobucket is free to join and free to use

So open an account with Photobucket.com, if you haven't already and upload your ad JPG image you wish to host on Photobucket.

The free account should be fine. You can always upgrade if you need to.

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Once it is uploaded, it will give you various options of formats you can use and you are looking for the URL of the Image for copying and pasting into your Craigslist Classified Ad Description. It's called the "Direct Link". This "image" will stay on Photobucket until you manually delete it from your account. You can add up to 2MB of images, so keep your image sizes small to avoid unnecessary file space being used.
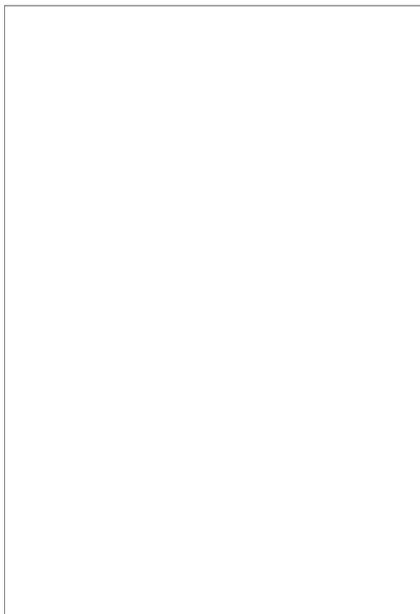
You are looking for the "Direct Link" data, that is the link you will upload as your "image" onto your Craigslist ad page.

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When you post this onto your Craigslist page it will show up as the link that it is, but, what you actually want is for the image to be "clickable" and to click through to your website, not the image.

To make this one minor change you will need to add the following codes into your copy and pasted "hyperlinked" image:

<ahref="http://www.YourWebsite.com"><img

src="http://www.photobucket.com/user/album/YourImage.jpg" align="left">

Simply change the above codes to reflect your URL (top line) and your image URL in the Photobucket folder (bottom line).

NOTE: You can save your images anywhere you like, your PHP folders, your own server, even imageshack.com offer free photo hosting if you don't want to use Photobucket. Where you host it is not a concern, it is just the "name" of the image that is important to keep unique to one ad.

Linking to PDF's

You can also link your ad to a PDF file hosted on the web somewhere, like on your Wordpress Blog. The PDF document could offer much more information than what the ad on Craigslist says, and the "Spam Filter" can't read your PDF file content, so you could use this document over and over for the purpose of giving more information to the reader, but remember to change the link location of the PDF on your Wordpress site so it shows as a different URL "name" for each different ad you post on Craigslist, because the Spam Filter will notice you linking to the same address over and over.

Create different IP addresses and email accounts to open numerous profile accounts with Craigslist

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Why would you create unique IP addresses and profile accounts, to make you look like a "different person" each time you list your ad. If your ad comes from the same IP address, then the Craigslist spam filter can see that. Multiple listings from one IP address could get your accounts closed (regardless of how many fresh email profiles you create).

It isn't hard to create "dummy" email addresses (that is email addresses you have created purely for a specific purpose like your Craigslist false profiles). Hotmail and Gmail are two well known free email hosting companies you can sign up with numerous email accounts for, for free.

Even if you change your IP address (which is explained below) you will still need multiple email addresses to post many ads on Craigslist, essentially for one Craigslist account you want:

- A unique IP address; with
- A unique email address

It is also imperative to avoid posting an ad too close to the others, most sellers recommend 48hrs between posting classified ads from one Craigslist account profile.

Here are the instructions for changing your IP address on your browsers in order to avoid the Craigslist "Spam Filter" spotting you as a multiple ad poster. You will need to obtain new IP addresses from your web host provider first.

Internet Explorer
- Open "Tools"
- Go to "Internet Options"
- Select "Connections"
- Then select "LAN Settings"

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- Enter your proxy IP address into the available "Address" box
- Enter your proxy port number into the "Port" space
- Click on "Apply Now"

Firefox

- Open "Tools"
- Click on "Options"
- Click on "Advanced"
- Select "Network"
- Select "Settings"
- Click on "Manual Proxy Configuration"
- Enter the proxy IP address into the "HTTP Proxy" Box
- Enter your proxy port number into the "Port" space
- Click on "Apply Now"

Google Chrome

- Click on the "Wrench" image icon on the top right side of your browser
- Select "Options"
- Click "Under the Hood" tab
- In the "Network" section, click the "Change proxy settings" button
- Select "Internet Properties"
- Click on "LAN Settings"
- Tick the "use a proxy server for your LAN
- Enter the proxy IP address into the "Address" Box
- Enter your proxy port number into the "Port" space
- Click "OK" and "Apply" to save the settings

If you don't find the above instructions work for your specific computer or browser, then you can "Google" the actual browser number you have, for example "how to change proxy for ???

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browser" and you will find some up to date information relevant to you.

Alternatively, you can check the www.Cavency.com who gives instructions for all browsers (at the time of writing this book) and also some free proxies you can use for browsing.

How to post your first digital product ad on Craigslist

The first thing to do, is to open up a Craigslist account profile. If you intend on running a lot of ads in the same area, or different areas, you should open a few profiles to minimise the chance of being closed down by Craigslist, or "ghosted".

Open an Account

Simply follow these steps:

1. Open up Craigslist.org
2. On the upper left hand side of the page click on "My Account"
3. When it goes to the "log in page" simply click on *"Don't have an Account? – Click Here to sign up"*
4. Type in your email address in the box
5. Confirm your email address by checking your inbox in your email account and "confirming" the email

So if you intend on opening several profiles you should also consider changing your proxy for each different profile. This would greatly minimise your chances of being closed due to spamming.

Your Ad Content

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Whether you create your ad as a JPG image, or you simply type it straight into the Craigslist ad box manually, you still need to think carefully about how you write your ad.

If your ad is an image, no one is going to assume you are a local person, they will automatically assume you are a professional of some kind.

Written on the page

If you intend to simply write your ad within the Craigslist ad post box, then you need to think about:

- Title (keywords)
- Description
- Contact details

Keep your title easy to read, with appropriate keywords, for example:

"Learn How to Make Good Money by Selling your Crafts on Etsy" eBook – click here to learn more about this great eBook resource

Your description and contact details should be equally simple and straight to the point:

> *"If you have thought about making money from your crafts on Etsy, but didn't know how to go about it, then this book will really help you get started as it covers everything from how to set up your shop in Etsy, how to handle money, and how to provide downloads for purchasers, or organise product delivery by post.*

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Contact me by email in this Craigslist Ad if you want to receive a copy of this eBook for $7.50"

The important thing is to keep keywords in the title and description, but keep the information relevant to the actual ad.

How to post your digital product ad on other Craigslists

Once again it is important to drive home the "don't be repetitive" rule, and keep your ad titles and description unique. Being the one profile does not matter here if you are going to only do one ad, but do it from heaps of locations.

What is "key" here, is that you make sure your ads in the different locations are fresh "non-repetative" titles and descriptions. In fact, even making your titles "similar" will probably alert the Craigslist spam filter.

Example of "too close" title wording:

> Sue's Cookbook for Gluten Free Breakfasts
> Gluten-Free Breakfasts Cookbook
> Gluten-Free Cooking for Breakfast

A better "fresh" title wording suggestion:

> Sue's Cookbook for Gluten Free Breakfasts
> How to cook healthy GF breakfasts!
> My book on Gluten Free cooking before lunch

Make your titles as "personal" and unprofessional as you like, as if you are just a person (with no SEO training) posting it. It's how you convert on the "inside" of your ad description that really matters

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providing you have good keywords in your title, you will get most relevant traffic.

How to get heaps of digital products to sell on Craigslist

If you are not a good content creator and writer, then you should stock up on some quality "Master Resell Rights" (also called MRR) eBooks. "Private Label Rights" (PLR) is also worth a look, but you may have to put a name to the product if it doesn't have an official author.

Either MRR or PLR will allow you to keep all the sales profit from your sales. You can find plenty of MRR and PLR to claim as your own by "Googling" those words, or even buying from the WarriorForum.com direct from product creators.

Because Craigslist is free, essentially your overheads are low, just your blog, which you can get free from Blogger.com or Wordpress.com.

Warning on affiliate links

Bear in mind that you are NOT permitted to place affiliate links in your Craigslist classified ads, and your account will be closed if it is found to have an affiliate link.

Tiny.url links – banned

It is also worthwhile addressing the fact that Craigslist does not allow you to post "tiny.url" hyperlinks on your ad, and if you do, it will be closed. So any URL cloaker website tools like bud.url, tiny.url etc, will not work. You need full url addresses in your classified ads and remember to try and keep your hyperlinks to your blog or website

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only used on one ad in one location at a time. You can make your website link unique by adding a page extension like:

www.mywebsite.com/offer1
www.mywebsite.com/temporarylink

You can also create a sub-folder in your website domain:

www.offer.mywebsite.com/offer1
www.mywebsite.com/ebook

Ad Trackers

There are a few companies now offering "ad tracking" for your Craigslist classified ad, you may want to give them a look, one is www. craigslistadtracker.com. This service comes at a cost, so try with caution.

Conclusion

When you are ready to starting listing your digital products on Craigslist, the best advice you can receive is not to rush it, and see how each offer converts over time.

Always be looking for new opportunities, and be creative with your listing titles, including the keywords.

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If you are SERIOUS about making money online....

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