

Affiliate Link Cloaking

By Derrick VanDyke

CovertAffiliateLinks.com

**Feel free to pass this report on to a friend
or give it to your subscribers as a gift!**

If you promote affiliate programs, especially through ClickBank, you need to read this report...

It's easy for people to hijack your commissions by simply changing your affiliate links. And **ClickBank affiliate links are the easiest to change.**

Here's why...

When it comes to cookie tracking, there are two types of affiliate programs: "first in" and "last in."

"First in" means the person who first refers a prospect will get credit for the sale. In other words, if Jack clicks on an affiliate link that Jill is promoting and then later clicks on an affiliate link for the same products that Fred is promoting, Jill will still get credit for the sale.

Likewise, if Jack changes the affiliate link by replacing Jill's affiliate ID with his own, Jill will still get credit for the sale (unless Jack was smart enough to clear his cookies first).

"Last in" is just the opposite. In the above scenario, it would be easy for Jack to cut Jill and/or Fred out of the picture and get commission on his own sale by simply changing the affiliate link.

ClickBank's affiliate cookie tracking system is "Last in", so it's easy for anyone to hijack your commissions when you're promoting ClickBank affiliate programs.

Affiliate link cloaking masks your affiliate link and helps prevent affiliate link hijacking. It can also increase your affiliate sales by giving people a link that doesn't make it obvious that you're making money off their purchase.

Now that you know why affiliate link cloaking is important, let's take a look at some of the methods you can use to cloak your affiliate links.

Method #1: The first method is simple and uses a feature called "click tracking" that is standard with most popular autoresponders. Click tracking converts any link in your email to a tracking link - thus masking your affiliate links and tracking your clicks on each link.

This affiliate link: <http://nickname.covertlink.hop.clickbank.net>

Is converted to: <http://clicks.aweber.com/z/ct/3XH0FJN3>

The downside is, this method will only work in the emails you send through your autoreponder service.

Method #2: The second method is also simple to impliment and will work in emails and on web pages, blogs, or online ads. You can use a service like TinyURL.com to cloak your affiliate links and get a shorter URL.

This affiliate link: <http://nickname.covertlink.hop.clickbank.net>

Is converted to: <http://tinyurl.com/385kxg>

Method #3: The third method is a little more complicated, but only requires a text editor and FTP software. To start, open a text editor like NotePad and paste the following code at the top of the page.

```
<?
header("Location: http://nickname.covertlink.hop.clickbank.net");
exit;
?>
```

Note: this method requires that PHP is installed on your server. Most modern hosting companies have PHP installed. But if you don't, you can use the next method.

For the final step, you have two choices:

Choice #1: save the page as "covertlinks.php" or whatever you want to call it and upload it to the home directory on your server. Your link would look like this:
<http://yourdomain.com/covertlinks.php>

Choice #2: save the page as "index.php" and upload it to a new directory on your server. For example, if you created a directory (same as folder) called "recommends," you could then create a subdirectory within the "recommends" directory called "covertlinks" and then upload the index.php file to the "covertlinks" directory.

In this case, your link would be: <http://yourdomain.com/recommends/covertlinks>

Method #4: This fourth method is similar to method #3 except it does not require PHP. The downside is, it doesn't work with all browsers and it's possible to view the source of the page which would reveal your affiliate link. PHP does not reveal the source code of a page.

Open a text editor like NotePad and paste the following code at the top of the page.

```
<html>
<head>
<meta http-equiv="refresh"
content="0;url=http://nickname.covertlink.hop.clickbank.net">
</head>
</html>
```

Save and upload this file using choice #1 or #2 above.

Method #5: The final method uses link cloaking software to automatically create PHP redirects like the ones illustrated in Method #3, Choice #2. But instead of creating directories for each link, it stores affiliate links in a database and uses the .htaccess file and a single script to emulate the process.

The end result is, you get professional-looking cloaked links in seconds without all the hassle of creating and uploading files to your server.

Link cloaking software also stores all of your affiliate information including commission payouts, statistics login, and more... and tracks click-throughs for all of your cloaked affiliate links.

The link cloaking software I use is "[Covert Affiliate Links](#)" and you can download your copy by [clicking here](#).

Oh, one more thing. If you're not familiar with PHP scripts, you can have it installed for just \$25.

[Click here to download Covert Affiliate Links Right Now.](#)

To your affiliate success!

Derrick VanDyke