Amazon (NASDAQ:AMZN) is no doubt one of the world’s most famous online marketplaces. But the company also offers an opportunity to some small business owners — particularly online marketers. The platform offers a well-known Affiliate program. Interested? Here’s a step-by-step process on how you can become an Amazon affiliate.

Log In to the Amazon Affiliate Area:

Start by scrolling to the bottom of the Amazon home page. You are looking for the “Become an Affiliate Link.”
That should lead you to the splash page with lots of information about the Amazon Affiliate program. Click the “Join Now” button to get started.
Submit Personal and Website Details

The form looks long, but it is pretty easy to fill out. Just add your personal details in this section. This will be your official profile, so please make sure all information is correct.
You will then be asked to add your website details. Of course, most affiliate programs, if not all, are interested in how much traffic you get.

Next, fill in your profile. This will include things like your preferred store ID, how you build links, how you drive traffic to your website, among other things.
Verify Your Identity

In order to verify your identity, Amazon asks for a phone number which they use to make an automated phone call. When you enter your phone number, a pin number appears on the screen. The automated call will ask you to verify the pin number. It’s that simple!
Choose How You Want to be Paid

In this last step, Amazon welcomes you to their Associates program. It is at this point that you can choose how you want to be paid or do it later, but why should you? Here are your payment options:

- Check ($15 processing fee is waived for international associates)
- Amazon gift card
- Direct deposit (not available for international associates)
Once you complete the registration process, Amazon will give you access to their Associates platform where you will be able to get the affiliate links for their products.

As you get into affiliate marketing, it’s important that you disclose all your affiliate links and mark them as nofollow. Wondering why? Here are a few reasons.
In this tutorial, you’ll take a look at Amazon’s Product Advertising API. It’s an API that allows developers to access data about items for sale, seller reviews, customer reviews, and product promotions on all Amazon marketplaces worldwide.

**Basic API Concepts**

When working with the API, the first thing that you need to know is which Amazon website you wish to target. Not all Amazon websites sell the same kinds of products. If you’re a seller, you’ll really have to target your own locale rather than just the US website (amazon.com). You can find information on what locales are available on this page: Anatomy of a REST Request. Once on that page, look for Product Advertising API Endpoints and you’ll see a list of locales and their corresponding endpoints. Note that you can only make a request to endpoints where you registered. For example, if you registered as an affiliate on the US website, you’ll only be able to make a request to the http://webservices.amazon.com/onca/xmlendpoint.

**Operations** are the things you can do with the API. Here are a few examples:

- **ItemSearch** – search for items based on specific parameters such as the category, title, manufacturer, and minimum price. This returns one or more items.
- **ItemLookup** – search for an item based on an identifier such as ASIN or ISBN (for books). This returns only one item.
- **SimilarityLookup** – search for items that are similar to the item that you specified in your request.
- **CartCreate** – creates a remote shopping cart on Amazon’s servers.
CartAdd – adds item to a remote shopping cart.

Response Groups

Response groups allow you to specify which information about the products you want to include in the response. Note that response groups depend on the operation that you’re using. This means that not all response groups are available to all operations. Here are a few examples of response groups that you can use:

- Small – returns basic information about the item. Example data returned include the ASIN, Title, ProductGroup.
- Reviews – returns the URL of the iframe containing the item’s reviews.
- OfferSummary – returns the lowest price for each condition type (new item, used item, collectible item, refurbished item).
- ItemAttributes – returns all the attributes that an item has. Item attributes depend on the type of the item. For example, a book would have a different set of attributes than computer hardware. However, attributes such as the title or the list price are common to all products.

Browse Nodes
Browse nodes is Amazon’s method for classifying items. They are called browse nodes because each node can have children and each child can also have children of its own. Examples of browse nodes include:

- Books
- Electronics
- Mobile Apps
- Software
- Office Products
- Automotive

The examples given above are all root nodes. In the API you can use root nodes as the value for the search index if you don’t want to be too specific with your request. However, if you want to be specific, you can always dig in deeper towards the child or grandchild of the root node. You don’t want to just search “Books”, for example. You specifically want books about African History. In that case, your browse node traversal would look something like this:

Books -> History -> African

“Books” is the root node, “History” is the child, and “African” is the grand-child. What you want is the ID of the furthest node (the grand-child). Specify that as the value for the BrowseNode parameter in your request so that the API will only look for books on African History. You can find a list of browse nodes and their corresponding IDs on findbrowsenodes.com.
Locale

As previously discussed, there are a few Amazon locales or marketplaces worldwide, and each API request that you’ll be making needs to target a specific locale. But each locale has different valid values for search indices, browse node IDs, sort values and ItemSearch parameters. For example, the Brazil marketplace only has a few search indices available. But if you look at the Canada Marketplace, the search indices available closely match that of the US Marketplace. You can check out specific locale information on the locale reference page.

Getting An Access Key

In order to make requests to the Product Advertising API, you need to have an access key, secret key, and an affiliate ID. Here are the steps to get you started:

1. **Sign up for an Amazon Account**
2. **Sign up as a Product Advertising API developer based on your locale.** Go to this page and scroll down to the bottom to find the URL for your locale. This requires you to enter the following information:
3. Once you’re done, it should show the following screen:
Thank You,
You have created a new Product Advertising API account.

Congratulations! You may now use the Product Advertising API to advertise Amazon products. Below are some resources that you may find useful. To start, click on the Manage Your Account link to obtain the access information you will need to make requests to the Product Advertising API.

Product Advertising API Resources

- Manage Your Account
- WSDL
- Documentation
- Sample Code and Libraries
- Community Forum
- Release Notes
- Application Best Practices Guide
- Articles and Tutorials

Please ensure that you use the Product Advertising API solely to advertise Amazon products and drive traffic back to Amazon and that your usage otherwise meets the requirements described in the Product Advertising API License Agreement.

Also, did you know that you can make money using the Product Advertising API to advertise Amazon products by joining the Amazon Associates Program? For more information, click here.

The Product Advertising API is brought to you by Amazon Services LLC.

5.

6. Click on the link for managing your account and it should return the following page:

Manage Your Account

The Product Advertising API uses Amazon Web Services infrastructure for account management and other Product Advertising API resources. We've created an AWS account for you, where you will sign in to retrieve your AWS account security credentials.

Security Credentials

You will use your AWS account security credentials to make calls to the Product Advertising API, authenticate requests, and identify yourself as the sender of a request.

To retrieve your AWS account security credentials:
1. Sign in to your AWS account at AWS Security Credentials Center. Use the same email address and password.
2. A pop-up message appears. Click Continue to Security Credentials.
3. Click Access Keys (Access Key ID and Secret Key).
4. Click Create New Access Key, and then click Show Access Key or Download Key File to retrieve the credentials.
5. Save the access key information in a safe location. You will use these credentials to make calls to the Product Advertising API.

Important
You can access the secret access key only when you first create an access key pair. For security reasons, it cannot be retrieved at any later time. Ensure that you save both the access key ID and its matching secret key. If you lose them, you must create a new access key pair.

SAML roles are not currently supported. You must use the root account credentials.

Your Account Information

Click here to
- View and edit your contact information, such as address and phone number.
- Set communication preferences for email subscriptions.
8. Click the link that says *AWS Security Credentials Console* and you’ll be redirected to the Amazon Web Service console. If this is your first time accessing it, it should show a modal box asking you to continue to security credentials.

9. Click the *Access Keys* tab to reveal a list of access keys that you already have. By default, there should be one listed but you won’t really be able to use that since you can’t see the corresponding secret key. If this is a new account you can go ahead and delete that.

10. Click the *Create New Access key* button to generate a new access key and secret key combination. Once generated, copy the key combination or download the key file. This is because you won’t be able to see the secret key again on the website.

11. Click the *Create Access Key* button to go to the *Create Access Key* page. You will receive a success message informing you that your access key has been created successfully. You will need to download your key file now, which contains your new access key ID and secret access key. If you do not download the key file now, you will not be able to retrieve your secret access key again.

To help protect your security, store your secret access key securely and do not share it.

12.
13. Sign up for an Amazon Associates Account based on your locale. This is where they’ll ask the details of your website and the products that you’re selling. It will also ask you to verify your phone number. Once you’re done with all that, you’ll be given a unique associate ID.

**Scratchpad**

You can use the scratchpad to play around with the API without having to write code. To use the scratchpad, first select the operation you want to perform:
Supply the common parameters. This includes the Amazon website where you want to perform the request, your associate ID, access key, and secret key.
Next are the request parameters. This is where you can choose the category to search (search index), query (keywords), specific product data (response group) that you want to return, sorting, browse node, and any additional parameter that you wish to add to the request.

Click the Run request button to send the request.
Once you get a response back, it should show the following:

Note that the XML response is what you get from the API. The rendered response is the output of the code that’s in the HTML response tab, but it’s basically using the same data that’s in the XML response.