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Hi, guys. Welcome to Episode seven of the Blogger Breakthrough Podcast. I'm your host, Liz Stapleton from Elizabethstapleton.com and founder of the Blogger Breakthrough Summit. In today's episode, I'm going to be answering a question a few of my readers sent in before I had launched this Podcast. I had asked them what they want to know on it. And the question is, "What is the fastest way to make money on my blog?" Now, before I can kind of totally dive in, I just want to touch on the different ways blogs make money. So you kind of know what I'm talking about.

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There're typically four different ways to make money on your blog. The first is display ads, and that could be through an ad network like Mediavine or AdSense, or through private advertisers, maybe you negotiate privately with someone to put an ad on your site. You can also make money through affiliate marketing, which is where you refer readers to products or services and you earn a commission.

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There's sponsored content. So, for example, maybe someone pays you to review a product that they send you. And then finally, creating and selling your own products. Usually, these are digital products. They can be physical products, there's just a lot more involved in terms of cost overhead and you have to figure out the profit margin. There's a whole thing there. But so, you know, part of the answer to the question of what is the fastest way to make money depends partly on how much you want to earn, and, you know, whether you're looking for kind of one-off income or consistent income and growth. I'm going to assume you're probably looking to earn money consistently from your blog and ideally as much as possible. So we're looking at growth. So let me talk about display ads first. They are certainly the easiest way to make money blogging and you can do display ads nearly from day one with AdSense. There's also Media.net. Based on my own experience, I would do AdSense over Media.net. I would not do Media.net. The thing is, you won't actually earn a decent amount of money from display ads until you have a ton of page views. And even then you'll likely move to different ad providers. So you maybe hear a lot about Mediavine and their 50,000 sessions requirement, it used to be 25,000 sessions, they've recently doubled it, and it could take a while to get there.

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And I know a lot of people have, like, a goal to be on Mediavine, but I don't think qualifying for Mediavine should be your goal. For one, there's a lot of other ad providers out there, you know. Yeah, there's AdSense, which is the basic, but you can, I think, at 10,000 pages, you can join Monumetric, which can be an increase in sort of how much you earn from ads. You know, if you hit 50,000, there's Mediavine.

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There's...Oh my gosh, I think it's Thrive Ads or something, I could be remembering the name wrong, at 100,000. So it just varies, and really by the time you qualify for those kind of higher-paying ad networks, you should actually be earning a lot more from other revenue streams. OK? Display ads is kind of like bottom of the barrel in terms of, like, it's easy money to have when you have traffic. So, you know, it's perhaps the easiest way but it's not necessarily...if you have consistent traffic growth, you'll see likely consistent growth in your ad revenue. But how high it gets? Like there's gonna be a ceiling. You know, most bloggers, if you look at bloggers that are pulling in five figures a month, most of that is not from ads, like a very small percentage is from ads. A lot of it's from product sales and affiliate marketing, and we're going to get to that. Sponsored content, too. So, but it's typically not ads.

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OK. So affiliate marketing is one of the more passive ways to earn money blogging. So, with affiliate marketing, you can start doing it typically from day one or pretty close to it. The thing with affiliate marketing is that you're really planting seeds to earn money down the road. Like you might see some conversions right away, but if you're a new blogger, and you don't have a ton of traffic, and you're not consistently driving traffic to those posts that are optimized for affiliate links, then you're not going to see consistent income. So it can, you know, you might not earn a lot to start and it can take some

time for it to build to be consistent. But it is something that is easy to start and can absolutely grow and build upon itself with time, even with, you know, very few page views. I, you know, one of my blogs really doesn't get very many page views, but it still earns a consistent like \$500-\$1000 a month in affiliate income, that varies month-to-month, but on average, it brings in a good \$6-10k a year.

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So, you know, that's nothing to sneeze about. Right? So, you know, and that's, when I say very little traffic, I mean, like 5000 page views or less. Actually, I think less. So, just kind of keeping that in mind. Obviously, the more you do, when it comes to affiliate marketing, a lot of people like put affiliate links on their site and, then they forget about the marketing part of affiliate marketing, where you need to actually drive traffic to those posts or pages that are optimized for it with affiliate links, so just keep that in mind. If you're like, how come I'm not, you know, none of my affiliate stuff is converting. I mean, it could be a lot of different reasons. But I would first look at, "Well, OK, how many people actually see those pages?" And you can dig into Google Analytics for that.

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All right. So sponsored content can be another great way. I know a lot of bloggers that make a lot of money with sponsored content and working with big companies and stuff. In my opinion, and I know I'm kind of in the minority of this, I see it as sort of trading time for money. I'm personally not a huge fan of it. I've done, in the six years I've been blogging, I've done all of two sponsored posts.

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You know, I just, I don't. I don't know, I just don't like it. I know other people do, and it's awesome for them. It just has never really felt quite right for me. The two that I did actually were really on the nose, perfect things for my audience, so I was like, "Yeah, I'll do them." But really, it's only scaleable in terms of you can charge more, like the more you can charge, the more you earn. But there's there's a limit to that, too, right? It's kind of, the big money is when you form partnerships that are ongoing, and so it's not just like a one off. Right? Because you don't want to be constantly scrambling to find new partnerships every month to keep your income steady. So, you know, you want to kind of build those partnerships. And how much you can charge depends on a lot of factors, not least of which is traffic and engagement with your audience.

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So I know tons of people love monetizing with sponsored content. And it can be really awesome and it can really help bring in a lot of money. It's not my area of expertise, it's also just not my preferred way of doing things. But if it is something you kind of want to explore, I would recommend checking out Tracie Fobes. She spoke on this topic as part of the Blogger Breakthrough Summit in 2020, but I know she has some good resources on it.

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I'm just, I'm not your girl for learning about sponsored content, but it is certainly a way, you know, if you can build those partnerships so that, like, each month you're not scrambling to like, find the sponsorships or partnerships to make sure your income stays steady. That's my only kind of big concern in saying you should do it, is. But again, I'm not an expert at it. So I know others that are like, "No, you can totally do this."

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So but Tracie Fobes is who I'd recommend going to learn, going to, to learn about that. Ok. And then finally, I just wanna talk about selling products. This is going to likely earn you the most. Selling products isn't something you, like you, can't really start from day one unless you really know...unless you're not new I would say, and you really know what you're doing. You won't necessarily make money right away, but you likely don't need to wait until you have a huge audience.

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You don't need as big an audience as you probably think you do when it comes to product sales. Because when it comes to selling products, and this matters with affiliate stuff as well, it matters more how engaged your audience is, rather than how big your audience is. Which is not to say you

won't have a product flop. I definitely have. But it's always a learning experience. You never know. Those products could work in some other way down the road.

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You know, you may be able to tie it in with something else, maybe as a bonus or something. The thing with products is you really you can do a lot more. You have the control. You know, you can control the marketing. If you're struggling to get an audience to buy, team up, like have some affiliates for your products. That can be a great way to launch. I would always recommend launching yourself first to your audience so that you have some, like, hard data of knowing, ok, does this work? You know, no one wants to sacrifice their audience for your test bunnies, you know? But if you have, if you've sold your audience and it sold well and you're like, okay, well, my audience isn't growing very much. I don't have a whole lot of new people to sell to. That's when I would suggest, reaching out and having people be affiliates for your products to kind of partner and grow that way. That's certainly a very solid strategy that I've used in the past.

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So selling products, I think give you the most bang for your buck in terms of how much you earn, how much you get to keep, the control you have in terms of what the price is and, you know, seeing what converts, and what works, and what doesn't. But it's not like a start from day zero. So if you're looking to like "Okay, it's month one of blogging, how can I earn back like that hosting that I paid for?"

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You know, I would put ads on your site. It's not going to get you far. But it'll get you something, right? And start putting affiliate stuff in your, in your content, right, doing affiliate links. And make sure you have the proper disclosures. I have a complete legal guide I will link to in the show notes, if you're not sure what I'm talking about when I say affiliate marketing disclosures. So start with those right away and work on building your audience with an email list.

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I've talked about this in terms of how to prioritize blogging tasks in Episode Three, I believe. Yes, definitely Three. I just checked. And then, you know, start surveying your audience to see what are they struggling with most? What is a solution you can provide them? And that's a product and then you can sell it and earn more. So, you know the fastest way to make money blogging is gonna kind of depend on what kind of money you're looking for.

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Once you have a bit of audience, you can dig into to sponsor content stuff too. And, again, you don't necessarily need as big an audience as you think you do to earn some money. But hopefully, you know, kind of going through it like this, it gives you a bit of clarity and you kind of now have an idea in your head of what you want to do to start earning more on your blog. With that, I'm going to invite you to please join me next week when I share three things you should stop doing so that you can start earning more.

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I'll catch you next time.