

Strategic Alliances: “Eliminate Your Competition by *Partnering* With Them...”

Overview: A step-by-step guide to absolutely *dominating* your niche by partnering with competitors and related companies...

How is a Strategic Alliance *Different* than a Joint-Venture?

A strategic alliance is often more of a referral system than it's "more-involving" cousin, the joint venture.

Where a joint venture would have two companies combine finances and energies to integrate products, create a separate product or form a shared "subsidiary" company, a strategic alliance would be more of a casual relationship out of mutual benefit that would "point customers in the right direction".

So really, a strategic alliance is merely a "lite" JV - that's it.

Though strategic alliances aren't *only* used by so-called competitors, in *this* article, I'm going to focus on using this "casual approach" to dominate your niche by actually *partnering* with your competition...

How and Why to Join Forces With the "Enemy" ...

So many businesses worry *constantly* about what their competitors are doing. In fact, some people are so fanatical about tracking every single move their competitors make that they neglect to differentiate and position their *own* business - which can be disastrous.

However, few people realize just how *powerful* an alliance would be with most of their "competitors" - if they were willing to see the opportunity through the deceiving lens of animosity...

Think about these facts:

- Your competition is actively marketing themselves to *your* target market
- Your competition is spending a considerable amount of time and money to build rapport with people that will also buy from *you*.
- Your competition is investing a lot of time into research, development and innovation that could benefit *you* as much as it does them and their clients - without hurting their profits at all.

- Your competition is testing, tracking and optimizing their marketing materials *continually* - which could indirectly benefit *you* as much as it does them.

Now - what if you were able to leverage *all* of these resources while actually helping your "competitor"...

Would you do it?

Of course you would!

Here's how...

Note: *This strategy likely **won't work** with direct competitors that sell the exact same product - but it will work (very well) with "competitors" that sell similar solutions to a problem, or desire, that your market demands...*

You'll have to find a way to partner with your "competitor" in such a way that both parties can substantially benefit from the other's resources - but *without* stealing customers or damaging anyone's credibility.

Here are some examples of strategic alliances between competitors:

- **Upsell related products after the initial sale.** If your customers would benefit by having both of your products, then why not include a special offer for your competitor's product inside your own product boxes (or packaging)?

Arrange a system where either the "upseller" gets a share of the profits, or both parties cross-upsell.

(See a specific example of how I did this with one of my clients [here >>](#))

- **Integrate products and services.** If your competitor has a similar product that could complement your own, you might consider arranging a deal where both you and your competitor would offer a "bundled" package in addition to your normal offering.

This, like an upsell, would increase the sales volume of both parties. (This example would work especially well for related software products).

- **Cross endorsement.** If your "competitor" isn't really competing with your direct market, and if you could refer business to each other without anyone losing customers, then simply "trading flyers" might actually be one of the more effective (and easier) ways to partner with someone else in the industry.

Online, this is as simple as trading links.

Approaching the "Enemy"...

At this point, you're likely thinking about how to approach your competition somehow - *without* having them think that you've completely lost your mind...

While it's certainly not easy to develop an alliance with a so-called competitor, if you're able to show them just how much they could gain by doing this, chances are, they'll be open to listening to you.

Here are some suggestions that might apply to your situation:

- **Call them and ask directly.** Be sincere and to the point. Ask them what *they* would think of any given scenario or partnership proposal. This would be the way to go if you're already on "speaking terms" with them.
- **Gradually have them warm up to you.** Start communicating with your competitor. Ask how things are going, and share "struggles". Bounce ideas around. Start, if at all possible, a sort of *friendship* with them to some degree.

Once things are somewhat solid between you and them, approach them with the idea. At this point, they'll be used to working with you anyway, and it will likely just be an extension of what you're already doing together.

- **Help or Include them in something.** One of the easiest ways to turn almost anyone into a friend (overnight) is to share a marketing opportunity with them.

For example, arrange to have an article written about the problem your customers are facing - and instead of simply pointing to YOU as the answer, include your competitors as well. Notify them about this first to make sure that they're quoted correctly - and so that they can clearly see that you're doing them a favour, for no reason at all.

Continue to build on this bond, and then, as before, approach them with the concept.

I have found that it is far more effective to "speak" with action than it is with words. While you may (and will) have *some* success in trying to educate your competitors to try a partnership, chances are, it will be received with skepticism - and possibly even hostility.

In conclusion, using strategic alliances to "eliminate competition" is one of the smartest ways for both you *and* your "competitor" to reach a much larger portion of your market.

By leveraging your relationship, you can easily add a significant increase to your bottom line - as well as your partner's.

You *now* know how to turn what most people fear most (*competition*) into an asset that can potentially make you a fortune.

Take action today!

- *Chris Rempel, JV-Web.com*

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