



WHAT ARE COOKIES?

A cookie is a small bit of information that a web server can store temporarily within your browser. A common use of cookies is to store information entered into a form so it does not need to be reentered on subsequent visits.

Cookies are also used to track the affiliate who sends traffic to your site, so that they may be compensated for any actions taken by the customer.

WHAT ARE FIRST PARTY COOKIES?

When a web server writes a cookie to your browser, it can do so when you are visiting the domain of that web server or it can do so when you are visiting a different domain, as long as that domain has allowed the web server access to add code to their web pages.

First party cookies are those written when visiting the domain of that web server, while third party cookies are those written when the web server writes the cookie while you are visiting a different domain. In the case of affiliate marketing, here are examples of each:

First Party Cookie: A visitor clicks on an affiliate link to abc.com. A cookie written from abc.com is written to their browser.

Third Party Cookie: A visitor clicks on an affiliate link to abc.com, but the cookie is written from affiliatedomain.com either during the click or once abc.com has loaded via a special image tag.

WHY SHOULD I CONSIDER FIRST PARTY COOKIES?

Due to spyware concerns, many users have been more careful about what outside systems they will allow to track their activity. Though third party cookies are really no more intrusive than first party cookies, many anti-spyware software applications label them as "spyware" and encourage users to delete or block them.

When your affiliate tracking system relies on third party cookies and a user has locked them or frequently deletes them, your affiliates are much less likely to get credit for their traffic and will eventually be much less likely to be your affiliate.

WHY DOESN'T EVERYONE USE FIRST PARTY COOKIES?

First party cookies, unlike third party cookies, do require the merchant to alter their site and ordering system in order to have the cookie written from their site.

This work can be completed in most cases by our staff instead of yours if necessary, but there are cases where even this is not possible. If your site takes orders through a separate domain or through some sort of third party processor, it may be impossible to use first party cookies for the simple reason that the cookie ceases to be of any value once the customer has left your site to make their purchase.