

Automated LinkGenerator Implementation Guidelines

Overview

The Automated LinkGenerator is a Web service that allows you to create LinkShare click links for any page on an advertiser's site. It provides the same functionality as the LinkBuilder feature on the Publisher Dashboard, without having to login. Automated LinkGenerator can be found under **Web Services** on the **Links** tab.

Technology

A) Web Services

What is a Web Service?

The World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) defines a Web service as, "a software system designed to support interoperable machine-to-machine interaction over a network. It has an interface described in a machine-processable format (specifically WSDL). Other systems interact with the Web service in a manner prescribed by its description using SOAP-messages, typically conveyed using HTTP with an XML serialization in conjunction with other Web-related standards."

Why Web Services?

- Web services are able to interact with each other irrespective of the language they are developed in and hence give real-time interoperability.
- Web services use HTTP with XML for communication. These are ubiquitous technologies and any device capable of using these technologies is able to both host and consume Web services.
- Web services concepts are simple to understand and with various tool-kits provide a low barrier to entry and easy software development.
- Web services are supported by major content providers and vendors, ensuring that the Web services model will continue to be the standard file communication protocol.

How to use LinkShare Web Services?

The Automated LinkGenerator Web Service is only accessible using REST. Any language supporting REST can be used to develop applications. Languages that support REST include PHP, C++, Virtual Basic .NET, C#, Java, and Perl.

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B) REST

What is REST?

Representational State Transfer (REST) is a software architectural style for distributed hypermedia systems like the World Wide Web. REST is an industry standard and it is easy to use.

REST is used to obtain LinkShare click links one at a time.

C) Access

The Automated LinkGenerator Web Service is available to those publishers that are enabled for this feature. Publishers are required to use their Web services token to access this service.

Implementation Details

Request Format – To create an Automated LinkGenerator link, a publisher sends a URL from the advertiser's site to LinkShare in the format specified below. The URL can be sent through a browser, a tool like wget or curl, or an automated script. For each URL provided, LinkShare returns a click link. There is a limit of 1,000 links per publisher per hour.

URLs are sent to LinkShare in this format (with the token, mid, and murl parameters in this order):

<http://feed.linksynergy.com/createcustomlink.shtml?token=<token-ID>&mid=<MID>&murl=<URL-from-merchant>>

- The Advertiser ID is a unique identifier for the advertiser. It can be obtained from the advertiser detail page under the **Links** tab. Click on Advertiser Info.
- The URL is the landing page on the advertiser's site. Special characters do not need to be encoded.

A URL with these fields populated would look like this:

```
https://feed.linksynergy.com/createcustomlink.shtml?token=813cc9fbb4ecc65eb3356d7637c015c38358d4c01a3f48876d62ff7409bed1&mid=560&murl=http://www.merchant.com/productpage?prodid=1224231&buylink=yes
```

Response Format – LinkShare will return a click link in the form:

```
http://click.linksynergy.com/fs-bin/click?id=AAA111AAA11&subid=0&offerid=999999.1&type=10&tmpid=939&RD_PARAM1=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.merchantname.com%2Fsearch%2Fdetail.cfm%3Fchunk%3D25%2526mtype%3D%2526wauth%3Da%2520name%2526qwork%3D2875272%2526S%3DR%2526bid%3D8713366401%2526pbest%3D2%252E95%2526pqtynew%3D0%2526page%3D1%2526matches%3D24%2526qsort
```

Error Responses – The system will give errors for the following situations:

- The link is provided in an invalid format, which LinkShare cannot parse.
- The link does not include a Web services token.
- The link includes an invalid Web services token; for example, if the publisher no longer has Automated LinkGenerator enabled.
- The publisher is not joined to the advertiser MID included in the link.
- The advertiser MID included in the link is invalid.
- The link does not include an advertiser MID.
- The advertiser does not have LinkGenerator enabled for publishers.
- The link does not include an advertiser URL.
- The publisher has exceeded its hourly limit for using the Automated LinkGenerator tool.

Building LinkShare Links

Once LinkShare has returned a click link, it can easily be placed on your publisher site.

Text Links

The format for a text link will be:

```
<a href="[CLICK_URL]" >[LINK_TEXT]</a><IMG border="0" width="1" height="1"
src="http://ad.linksynergy.com/fs-
bin/show?id=[AFFILIATE_ID]&bids=[OFFER_ID]&type=2&subid=0" >
```

- Paste the exact return value from the Automated LinkGenerator tool in place of [CLICK_URL].
- Provide link text for the user in place of [LINK_TEXT].
- The [AFFILIATE_ID] can be found in the returned URL from the Automated LinkGenerator tool. It will appear just after 'id=' in the click link. In the example above, the [AFFILIATE_ID] value, AAA111AAA11, would be found as 'id=AAA111AAA11'. Paste this value in place of [AFFILIATE_ID].
- The [OFFER_ID] can also be found in the returned URL from the Automated LinkGenerator tool. It will appear between '&offerid=' and .1. In the example above, the [OFFER_ID] value, 999999, would be found as '&offerid=999999.1'. Paste this value in place of [OFFER_ID].

Example:

```
<a href="http://click.linksynergy.com/fs-
bin/click?id=AAA111AAA11&subid=0&offerid=999999.1&type=10&tmpid=939&RD_PARM1=http
%3A%2F%2Fwww.merchantname.com%2Fsearch%2Fdetail.cfm%3Fchunk%3D25%2526mtype
%3D%2526wauth%3Da%2520name%2526qwork%3D2875272%2526S%3DR%2526bid%3D87
13366401%2526pbest%3D2%252E95%2526pqtynew%3D0%2526page%3D1%2526matches%3
D24%2526qsort">Exciting New Books</a><IMG border="0" width="1" height="1"
src="http://ad.linksynergy.com/fs-bin/show?id= AAA111AAA11&bids=999999&type=2&subid=0"
>
```

Banner Links

The format for a banner link will be:

```
<a href="[CLICK_URL]" ><IMG border="0" src="[IMAGE_URL]" ></a><IMG border="0"
width="1" height="1" src="http://ad.linksynergy.com/fs-
bin/show?id=[AFFILIATE_ID]&bids=[OFFER_ID]&type=2&subid=0" >
```

- Paste the exact return value from the Automated LinkGenerator tool in place of [CLICK_URL].
- Paste the URL of the image on the advertiser's site in place of [IMAGE_URL].
- The [AFFILIATE_ID] can be found in the returned URL from the Automated LinkGenerator tool. It will appear just after 'id=' in the click link. In the example above, the [AFFILIATE_ID] value, AAA111AAA11, would be found as 'id=AAA111AAA11'. Paste this value in place of [AFFILIATE_ID].
- The [OFFER_ID] can also be found in the returned URL from the Automated LinkGenerator tool. It will appear between '&offerid=' and .1. In the example above, the [OFFER_ID] value, 999999, would be found as '&offerid=999999.1'. Paste this value in place of [OFFER_ID].

Example:

```
<a href="http://click.linksynergy.com/fs-
bin/click?id=AAA111AAA11&subid=0&offerid=999999.1&type=10&tmpid=939&RD_PARM1=http
%3A%2F%2Fwww.merchantname.com%2Fsearch%2Fdetail.cfm%3Fchunk%3D25%2526mtype
%3D%2526wauth%3Da%2520name%2526qwork%3D2875272%2526S%3DR%2526bid%3D87
13366401%2526pbest%3D2%252E95%2526pqtynew%3D0%2526page%3D1%2526matches%3
D24%2526qsort"><IMG border="0"
src="http://www.merchant.com/productpage/12342.jpeg"></a><IMG border="0" width="1"
height="1" src="http://ad.linksynergy.com/fs-bin/show?id=
AAA111AAA11&bids=999999&type=2&subid=0">
```