

**affirm**

A DEEP DIVE INTO THEIR  
**MARKETING**

by



**STACKED MARKETER**

[www.stackedmarketer.com](http://www.stackedmarketer.com)

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## Maximizing the Value You Get From This Report

As you read this deep dive, make a note on paper, your phone or somewhere that's convenient for you of:

- What analysis of ours do you disagree with?
- What do you see within the examples that we don't mention?
- What ideas should you implement as a result of seeing these examples?
- Any additional examples from other companies that you feel reinforce or refute this analysis?
- Other ideas that came up while reviewing this report.

After reading this report, email your notes to us at [insights@stackedmarketer.com](mailto:insights@stackedmarketer.com).

Emailing these to us will help ensure you think through your notes, makes it more likely that you implement what you commit to doing and gets you more value from being an Insights member.



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## WHAT TO EXPECT FROM THIS DEEP DIVE

The buy-now-pay-later (BNPL) industry is taking the e-commerce world by storm. Affirm is one of the market leaders in the US.

Here's what you'll find inside this deep dive:

- **How to use your partners to get traffic.** Affirm does this brilliantly by redirecting a portion of the visitors to Affirm from sites that already have millions of visitors per month.
- **How marketing to businesses is different from marketing to end consumers.** With consumers, it's all about "what's in for me". With businesses, it's all about making money & reducing costs. This will be evident once you see Affirm's web pages.
- **What is "powered by" marketing and how to use it for your e-commerce businesses.** Your business generates results for customers. You'll learn how to take those results and showcase them in a way that makes people curious.
- **Why providing "quick wins" is key to higher conversion.** Affirm gets people to see something valuable before asking for more information.
- **How to tailor your message to different acquisition channels.** You'll get inspired by learning how Affirm does this for YouTube, TikTok, Facebook and Google.



## Why did we choose to analyze Affirm?

Buy-now-pay-later industry is eating the world and Affirm is one of the companies [leading the pack](#).

Affirm also has exclusive partnerships with [Shopify](#) and [Amazon](#). In simpler terms, Affirm will be the only buy-now-pay-later provider that both Amazon and Shopify use over the next several years.

If you managed to get the biggest e-commerce companies under your sleeve, you're probably doing something right.

Affirm is also using some pretty interesting marketing strategies, as we'll later see. "Powered by" marketing (no worries if you haven't heard about it before) is one of them.

There are many lessons we can learn from Affirm and apply them to our own business, especially if you're into e-commerce and SaaS.

## Which products does Affirm offer?

There are 3 main products that Affirm offers:

- **POS (point of sale) loans.** Affirm has thousands of merchant partners (such as [Walmart](#)) where, at the point of purchase, you can select Affirm as a payment option. The POS system is Affirm's main product. Affirm has also recently introduced 2 additional products:
- **[Online savings account](#)** Affirm offers a high-yield savings account with 0.65% APY
- **[A debit card](#).** This is still in beta. With this debit card you can pay for any purchase in installments.



## Let's look at how Affirm talks to businesses

The main job of Affirm's copywriting is to convince businesses that they should let customers pay using the Affirm product. And, they do a damn good job of it. Affirm's style is a masterclass in B2B copywriting:

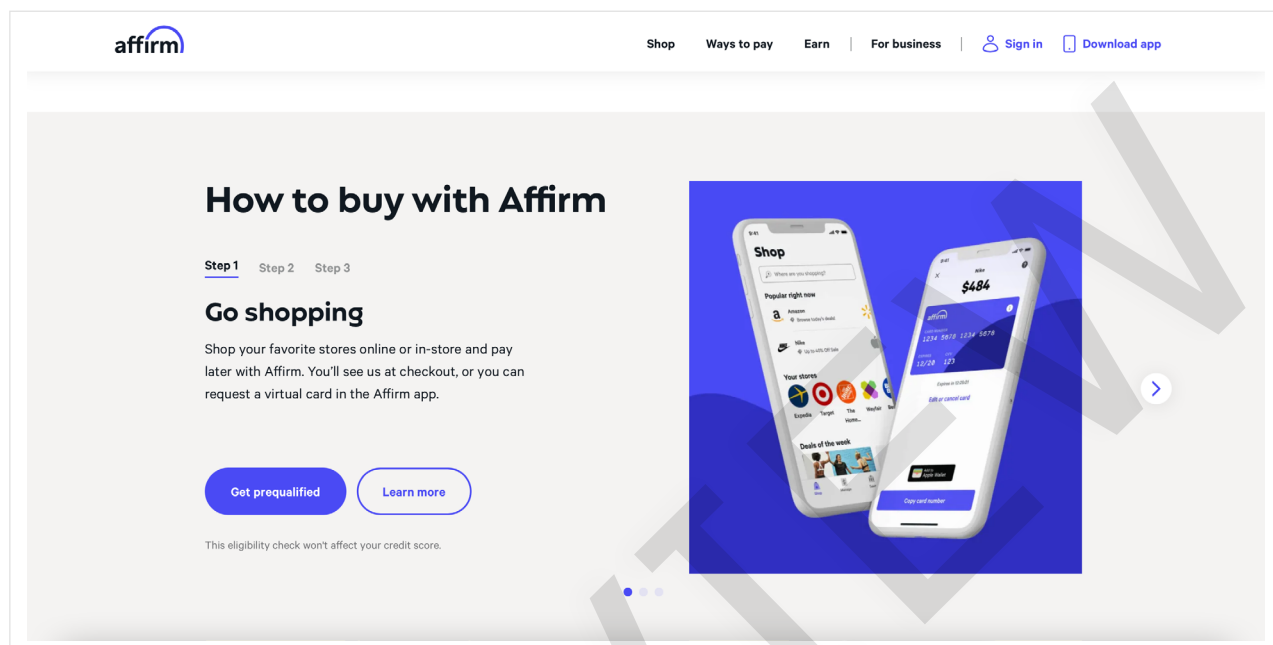
**The main key: Affirm leads with statistics about increased AOV and higher conversion rate.** These are the things that business owners actually want to hear--not cheeky copywriting fluff. With this in mind, there's a simple flow that Affirm uses to hook business owners:

- 1. Your business could have X and X improve by X percent.**
- 2. All you have to do is use our product.**
- 3. Here's some proof that it actually works for other people.**



The most effective copywriting principle--ever--is that you should be selling people on a better version of themselves. In B2B, you're selling decision-makers on a better version of their business. So instead of leading with specific features, Affirm leads with statistics that get business owners excited about the possibility of more sales.





If the debit card panel wasn't on the homepage, we'd move this panel further up the page.

**There's something cool here:** The point of this instructional isn't to actually teach customers how to use Affirm. It's to show customers that using Affirm is so easy, you don't really need to be taught.

After clicking through these slides, customers have a good idea about:

1. How Affirm actually works
2. How easy it is to use

We love this panel.

We'll skip the rest of the homepage, because it's mostly composed of more product carousels and panels like the one above. There are no new insights to learn. However, if you want to see it, [you can go to the Affirm website here](#).

## MARKETING

To determine Affirm's marketing channels, we've analyzed several interviews with its co-founder Max Levchin. We've also inspected Affirm's [SimilarWeb profile](#).

Here are the main channels we found:

### Partnerships & powered-by marketing

Many people first learn about Affirm by going to a partner website.

Suppose you want to buy a bike and go to Walmart (probably not your first choice, we know, but stay with us :) ):

The screenshot shows a Walmart product page for a Mongoose Dolomite Men's Fat Tire Bike. The page layout includes a blue header with the Walmart logo, navigation links for Departments and Services, and a search bar. Below the header, the location is identified as Sacramento Supercenter. The breadcrumb trail reads: Sports & Outdoors / Bikes / Bikes by Brand / Mongoose Bikes / Mongoose Mountain Bikes. The main product image is a black and blue fat tire bike. To the left of the main image is a vertical strip of five smaller images showing different views of the bike. To the right of the main image is a product information panel. This panel includes a 'Best seller' and 'Popular pick' badge, the brand name 'Mongoose', the product name 'Mongoose Dolomite Men's Fat Tire Bike, 26-inch wheels, 7 speeds, Black', a 4.5-star rating with 451 reviews, the price '\$498.00', and a financing option '\$47/mo with affirm' with a 'Learn how' link. Below the price is a blue 'Add to cart' button. Further down, there are shipping details: 'Free shipping, arrives by Thu, Dec 23 to Sacramento, 95829', a link to 'Add an address' for faster shipping, and notes that the item is sold and shipped by Walmart.com and has a 90-day return policy. At the bottom of the panel are links for 'Add to list' and 'Add to registry'. A 'Packaging note' is also present, stating that the item ships in the manufacturer's original packaging.



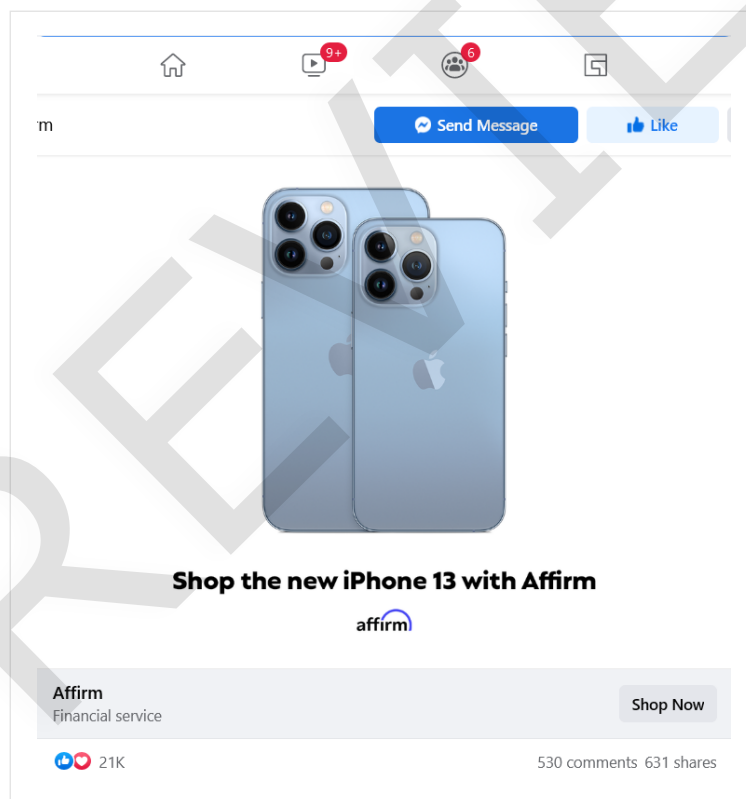
## Facebook

We can learn a lot from the way Affirm creates their Facebook ads.

In their Facebook Ads, Affirm targets two groups: shoppers who might use Affirm and businesses who want to integrate Affirm into their own website.

### Shoppers who might use Affirm

Here's one Facebook ad that Affirm runs for shoppers:



**The principle behind this ad:** Timing. This ad started running around the end of September, back when Apple released iPhone 13.

What a better way to get people's attention than to run an ad about a topic & question that's on everybody's mind? "Can I buy the new iPhone without breaking the bank?" was undoubtedly one of these questions back in September.

## Businesses

Affirm also uses Facebook Ads to target e-commerce sellers. Here's one of their more popular ads:

Affirm  
Sponsored  
28 March 2021

Switching from Klarna to Affirm was a win for iSense. Getting started was easy, and sales increased right away. [Read less](#)

“  
When we switched to Affirm,  
we immediately saw more  
customers being approved and  
more sales coming through.  
”

Paul Longman *Founder and CEO, iSense*

GET STARTED

affirm | isense

124 17 2

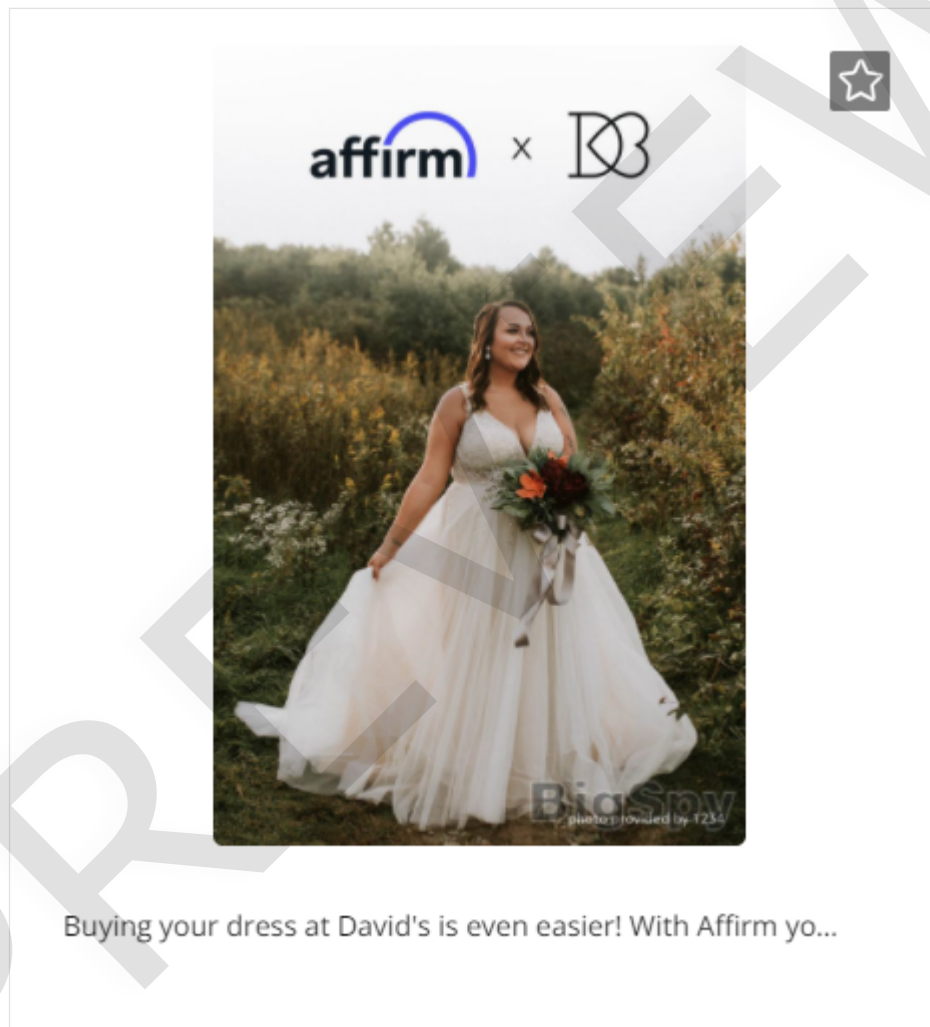
**The principle behind this ad:** Klarna is one of Affirm's largest competitors in the buy-now-pay-later industry. Here, Affirm is targeting Klarna's weaknesses (less people getting approved for loans = less money for the merchants). They're also using a testimonial (another person praising them) for the ad, rather than Affirm making the claim themselves.

Testimonials work because of [social proof](#).



## Pinterest

Yup, Affirm is on Pinterest as well. Pinterest's audience is predominantly female, so you'd expect ads geared towards that segment:



**The principle behind this ad:** Wedding dresses are one of those items that you want to buy when you get married, but don't have the funds to pay upfront. Affirm recognized this and ran this ad. With nearly 100k impressions, this is Affirm's most popular ad on Pinterest.

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## CLOSING THOUGHTS

Buy-now-pay-later is a new industry which “forces” players like Affirm to use old marketing principles in a totally new way. We’ve covered some of the ways Affirm does this, by using:

- Different ways to reiterate their value proposition in a short way
- “Powered-by marketing”
- Adapting their message differently to each marketing channel
- Using partners in a smart way to promote themselves
- Using contrasting colors to attract attention

None of Affirm marketing strategies would work as well unless they had an amazing product. We know it sounds cliché, but focusing on your product and users obsessively is one of these things you fully realize the power of after you try doing it yourself.

**You never know what will work:** We’ve analyzed the end results of Affirm’s marketing. One thing that we’ve noticed while doing our analysis is that they’ve been running a ton of ads. This could only mean one thing: They tested, tested, tested and tested.

Don’t be afraid to go outside your industry’s “conventional” marketing channels when promoting your product. We’ve experienced this first-hand recently at Stacked Marketer; we’ve tested a few “out-of-the-box” channels and got amazing initial results; sure, the demand may be lower, but the competition is too.



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