265795 - Ruling on making money by surfing websites and ads, and making referrals

the question

There is a website which offers some tasks such as: asking for emails, data or telephone numbers in a particular region; marketing apps to be downloaded by people; bringing people to buy some products (marketing in return for commission), and the like. For each person I bring, they will give me a certain sum of money, such as one dollar. In return, I design an ad, market the product, publish it, and collect the data needed for the website. In most cases, it is to help companies and businessmen collect that which will help with their businesses. As an electronic marketer, my job is to collect this data, and of course I accept offers (of this type of work) that I think most likely to be halaal; I do not accept any deal that promises a quick profit, or that has to do with FOREX or other haraam activities that some sites may advertise. Now the question I want to ask you is: the website gives everyone who registers a special link that he sends to his friends, and through everyone who registers via that link, the first one gets a certain percentage of the profits made by the second, or perhaps a fixed amount of money, which does not detract from the other person’s profit at all; rather it is a percentage, as a reward only for bringing that person and signing him up. The site does not stipulate that the one who signs up must do so through any particular person, as I could sign up without any intermediary. Moreover, the website does not stipulate any payment for signing up, whether through someone else or directly. It also does not stipulate that I have to bring a certain number of people, as in network marketing, or that each person has to bring someone else through him, meaning that if you sign up on this website, you do not have to bring anyone to sign up through you. The main objective of this website is to market the products that I mentioned at the beginning, so that the website can make money and so can I. There are thousands of people who are doing marketing through this website. This signing up through another person is so that the website can reward and encourage that person to market the website and spread word of it, so that it can become more well-known. Most websites use such a system, which is called referral; it is not the main aim of the website. What is the ruling on the

profits earned by registering people through myself, or my registering through another person? Is this halaal? What is the ruling on my working and marketing through this website?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Firstly:

It is permissible to make money from surfing websites, advertising them, attracting customers and designing ads for them, so long as what the websites publish is permissible and does not promote anything that is haraam, and the payment in return is a known amount.

This payment comes under the heading of commission.

It is essential to avoid haraam tricks such as creating false accounts to give the impression that these are customers who came through you, and taking commission for bringing them, or using software to do that, because this comes under the heading of deceit, deception and consuming wealth by unlawful means.

It is not permissible to produce ads for evil and unlawful activities or products, or to help in promoting such things, because Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And cooperate in righteousness and piety, but do not cooperate in sin and aggression. And fear Allah ; indeed, Allah is severe in penalty” [al-Maa’idah 5:2].

And the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “Whoever calls people to right guidance will have a reward like that of those who follow him, without it detracting from their reward in the slightest. And whoever calls people to misguidance will have a burden of sin like that of those who follow him, without it detracting from their burden of sin in the slightest.” Narrated by Muslim in his Saheeh (4831).

For more information on making profits from advertisements, please see questions no. 98817 and 101806 .

With regard to giving people’s emails and phone numbers to the websites, it is essential to have their consent, because of what results from that of annoyance and the possibility of their data being misused in a manner that adversely affects them.

Secondly:

There is nothing wrong with this network marketing, so long as there is no obligation to buy a product or to pay fees, no matter what name is given to them.

Please see the answers to questions no. 198784, 46595, 40263, 42579 .

And Allah knows best.