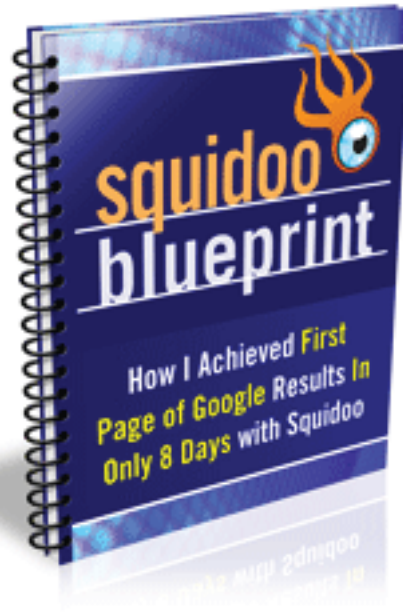http://www.squidooblueprint.info

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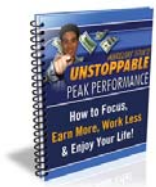
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Introduction

Over the past few weeks and months you do not seem to be able to turn anywhere without someone extolling the virtues of Squidoo! This report is based on my practical experience of using Squidoo since mid 2006.

This report will assume that you have read up on the basics of Squidoo! You will already know how to create a basic lens by pulling modules together. If you haven't got your head around that part yet then take a look at [Squidoo The FAQs](#) and also grab a copy of Seth Godin's free ebook at [Everyone Is An Expert!](#)

But Stop Right there!

Now this is the Trainer in me and I hope you will play along with me! If you haven't yet tried Squidoo go to [Squidoo.com](#) and join! Then click on create a lens! You see I am a great believer in practical learning. Play around with what you see when you have the lens creator open in front of you.

Try adding a module and deleting one! You can even try publishing because whatever sort of mess you make of it you can always delete it! In fact what I often suggest to people is that they create a lens with their own name as the Lens Name to start with. Not only is it another great way to get your name out there but it gives you a chance to see how the whole thing works.

Why Use Squidoo?

I guess that's the most obvious question to start with! It also perhaps gives me a way of explaining a little about why I like it so much!

Let's just recap on what Squidoo actually is! It's a community of people who are building web pages, which they call lenses, in a diverse range of subjects. In fact the range of topics is incredibly diverse!

The other great thing about Squidoo lens building is that it is easy! As hopefully by now you will have discovered, you have a series of modules that you can pull together and develop.

It's almost like one of those "drag and drop" type website builders. You will soon discover that you have the opportunity to tweak them as you become more adept with using their system.

Now let's think about why we as Internet Marketers should use Squidoo. Well let's first see what those nice people at Squidoo said when asked why you should use them:

- It's free;
- It's amazingly easy to set up;
- People with lenses get more traffic to their blogs and other sites;
- People with lenses earn money from the lenses themselves - In fact I use that last one to donate some money to Charity so you even get the opportunity to feel good using them!

From a Marketer's perspective this is ideal! It gives you a great opportunity to create a series of lenses around what are termed the "long tail" phrases within the niches in which you operate. You can drive visitors to your other sites in the niches in which you operate and to your blogs and of course to your affiliate links! For those of you who like me use Firefox they have also added a rather nifty Firefox extension!

In fact what I have been using Squidoo to do is:

- Generate Affiliate Income;
- Drive Visitors to My Websites and Blogs;
- Generate Subscribers;
- Turn PLR Articles into money Generators;
- Achieve Top Ten Ranking on Google For Keyword Phrases;
- Explore a possible niche to see what the level of interest is and also what level of knowledge I can develop;
- Make Donations to Charity!

It appears at the moment that our friends at Google really seem to like Squidoo. So we want to take advantage of that don't we? I know that with the majority of the lenses I create I can fairly rapidly get into the 1st to 3rd page of Google Search Results. Indeed, I recently did a demonstration Lens for the folks over at Niche Mania and within a week it was in 10th position out of 4,450,000 results. Not a bad result in a week I am sure you will agree!

Okay Paul, I hear you say, you have got me interested! What do I need to do to make my first lens? That is assuming of course that you didn't leap in earlier and have a play around!

Building Your Lens

The tips that follow are based on what I have discovered from what I have done with Squidoo these past few months.

As I continue to learn I will update this report and if you have subscribed to my Squidoo Revealed List then you will get a free copy!

In addition I have created a lens at How To Succeed With Squidoo which I will update periodically.

So let's get started! The first thing you need to do to get started is to create an account at Squidoo.com and setting your personal preferences.

I think it weighs in your favour if you set your income earning to be split with the charities. I have no hard evidence for that but just a gut feel about it based on experience so far and the whole ethos of Squidoo. For me at least the actual income through Squidoo itself is relatively secondary so I quite happily split my income with the Charities.

Okay so having done that you will want to take the big leap and start creating your first lens. As I said earlier, don't worry if you get it wrong at first. You can always delete it and start afresh!

What I would suggest is that you find yourself a niche! Then we need to look at what the numbers are around that particular niche. What you need to look at is:

- How many searches are there per month for the term? - look at something like the free programme at GoodKeywords. Find some of the lower rated keyword phrases (I tend to go for those in the 2,500 to 10,000 searches per month) to build your lens around.
- How many competing sites are there? - Once you have found some keyword phrases that you think you could work with take a look at how many results the phrase returns (without quote marks) in Google. If you are getting less than 5 million then you can quickly see some good results with Squidoo.
- Are there any affiliate programmes you can promote?

For your first lens I would pick a topic that you are interested in and possibly have an existing site/blog about. Then build it. Once you have tried it then focus on developing more and working your way through materials you have to hand.

I talked a moment ago about looking for Search Terms with less than 5 million competing sites. However, I have also seen some excellent performance results with both higher numbers of searches per month and results. So don't be limited by that!

Now one of the keys to success with Squidoo is ensuring that your url is the keyword phrase you are targeting. I have also seen that for each of the lenses I have created I have had more success with those that have dashes between the words.

Okay you have created your lens, choosing your long tail keyword phrase and have chosen your category. Then you have added the first set of keywords as they request and you are half way there!

Then a page appears saying "Edit Your Lens." Don't panic! I have this vision of Sergeant Jones from Dad's Army at the moment – which may mean nothing to non-UKer's! However, really do not panic! Have a play, try adding some modules and even get really adventurous and try deleting some.

You can always add them back. In fact I would strongly recommend that you do add and delete some and fill them with content and see how they look. Until you push the big button labelled "Publish" no-one will see your creation. Even when you have clicked the big "Publish" button you can go back and delete the modules you don't want or got wrong. You can even delete the whole lens!

So you have had a play and want to get building your lens. Let's look first at which modules I have found to be most useful:

The Text/Write Module

This one is a fairly self-explanatory because this is where you put your content! The module limits you to 2,500 characters each time, but of course you can add as many of them as you want. I have found that an average length article can split quite nicely across three of these modules and helps you to create the appearance of lots of content. You can also use these boxes to add links as Squidoo does allow a limited amount of html.

The Links Plexo

This module is perfect for promoting your affiliate links. You can add as many as you want although I tend to use no more than two or three at a time. Your readers can vote the links up and down and they also have the option to add their own links if you want them to!

You set the options for this in the "Submissions" tab within the module. If you do allow people to add their own links make sure that you select the option to "Ask Me First" – you don't want them just adding any old link do you!

With links in the Links Plexo I always add some text to describe what the link is about and to encourage the reader to explore a bit more. These are the products that you want your reader to buy after all. Contrast this with using the Amazon Plexo where you are promoting Amazon Products to earn a commission through Squidoo. With the Amazon Plexo Module I tend not to write anything about the links.

The RSS Feed Module

This module enables you to add an RSS Feed from your blog(s) or from sites that support an RSS Feed. This is ideal if you want to drive traffic to adsense type sites especially if you are a member of Niche Mania where the sites have the RSS Feed available.

The Poll Module

Squidoo in common with other Web 2.0 sites is all about allowing your visitors to interact with the site. This module is perfect for this in that you can pose a question to your visitors which relates to the content of your site. Now start to think about how that might help your affiliate sales and I will cover that in more detail later.

The You Tube Module

This module is really useful because it keeps your visitors on your lens for the length of the video – well hopefully! Squidoo appears to reward you for the length of time the visitor stays on your lens. Obviously interesting and relevant video is a great way to keep them there.

Now when I first start building a lens I put the following modules into it:

Introduction – You should have your main keywords plus a couple of others dotted throughout and ensure that they are all bolded. It's good to add a picture to the introduction as Squidoo (and visitors) like pictures. It also makes your lens stand out from others.

One RSS Feed - these are popular because they change and therefore make the content dynamic which is always a good thing as we all know. If you have a relevant blog that is updated on a regular basis then you could add that or perhaps a RSS Feed from a relevant website.

Six Text/Write Modules - this is where I use two articles and split them up roughly three Text/Write Modules to an article. If you need to add a few keywords here and there then you can work them in and of course don't forget to bold them using

One Poll – I always include a Poll Module (you do have to search for it in their "Add Modules" section! They keep moving it so I tend to just use the search area in their Add Modules Section using "Poll" as the search term.

One Amazon Plexo - choosing relevant products from Amazon (you get a split of the earnings with Squidoo dependant on your account preferences).

Squidoo likes modules that help it to earn money for charity! Don't use the Amazon Standard Module because the Amazon Plexo enables your visitor to interact with the list by using the voting arrows and also by adding their own products. Make sure that you mark any Plexo module as requiring your approval for an addition (you will find this in the tab "Submissions") because some people will try and add all sorts.

One Links Plexo - same basic principles as the Amazon Plexo except here you are defining the links - think Affiliate Products! Now you will notice that I always add a few words about the product. Increasingly I am not doing this with Amazon plexos because we want them to be drawn to affiliate products don't we!

A Guestbook - always nice to get comments and again like all of the above they add up to plus points for your lensrank.

Day One of Your New Lens

On Day One of your Lens you should:

Add an Introduction – conveniently they have a module called Introduction already there for you.

Put a few words about the Lens and what you will be covering. Make sure you use your primary keywords (the name of your lens) in the Introduction and "bold" them. Add an appropriate picture so that your lens is already starting to look different than others and draws the reader in.

Add Some Content. This is done through the Text/Write Module. Content is vital if your lens is to be taken seriously and rated by visitors.

It's something that an increasing number of marketers seem to be forgetting that actually we do need to have content which real people can read when we are trying to get their attention!

You can use some basic html in the Text/Write Module so you can have links in there if you wish. You can also "bold" your keyword phrase which again helps.

Add some Interactivity. Web 2.0 sites are about interacting with your visitor and giving them the opportunity to make comments or take a poll. So we have the Guestbook and the Poll Module which you can add and which I will talk about a little more shortly.

Add some More Tags – When you first created your lens you will have defined a number of tags which include the url of your lens and up to three additional keywords or keywords phrases. You can add additional tags through editing the Tag Section in the right hand column of each lens. I tend to add about 20 each time using those generated by the free programme at GoodKeywords.

You will notice that Squidoo very helpfully prompt you with other keywords and keywords used by similar lenses which you can add to yours by clicking on them.

Add a couple of Plexo Lenses - Now as I mentioned earlier the Links Plexo is ideal for adding Affiliate Products. As I said the Links Plexo Module allows you to add your links and give the visitor the opportunity to vote on them.

Over the days following the creation of your lens you need to continue to modify it and develop it. We will take a look at some of the techniques in the next section.

Now take a break!

Additional Squidoo Techniques

Lens Pinging

One of the things that I do on a periodic basis is Ping my Lenses to the two main sites at Pingoat and PingoMatic. Yes you can ping just like you ping your blogs. Hopefully some time soon Squidoo will build in some form of automatic pinging. One of the great things about the team over at Squidoo is that they are very responsive to feedback and are always looking to improve.

Lens Bookmarking

I also look to bookmark my lenses using the excellent SocialBot from Niche Mania and my other favourite Onlywire.

Publishing The Lens Often

Just a mention here of how often you should press the publish button. Essentially after every change you make - not after you add each keyword because you would be there all day!

However whenever you add a group of keywords, change, move or add a module publish your lens. This lets Squidoo know that yours is an active lens and they appear to pay more attention to it.

Adding New Content

Content is good! It's what your visitors want and as I mentioned above you need to have good content on your lenses.

Adding Squidoo Money Making Modules

Squidoo likes modules that help it to make money for charities so various module which enable visitors to spend money – that doesn't include the ones you place on the lens to help them spend money with you!

The eBay Module is a good one for a number of reasons. One of the really good things about an eBay Module is that if you set it to allow eBay to find the products (no more than three mind!) you can also set the length of time to the end of the bidding for the item it should use.

I would recommend setting this to the minimum which is 6 hours because that means that new content is being added automatically to your lens 4 times a day!

Adding a "Lensrolling" Link to The Introduction

Getting people to add your lens to their own lensroll brings big bonus points (lensrank improvement) for you! So I tend to create a link in the introduction by copying the "Lensroll" link which is hidden away in the right hand navigation and inserting it in the Introduction.

Adding the lens to a number of relevant Groups.

Now some people go around adding their lens to just about every group which is why you see some totally irrelevant lenses when you do some searches. To my mind there is no real point in this because the people aren't going to visit! Well, generally speaking they are not.

Other things:

Adding your lens to Stumbleupon - although I am dubious about that service's value. I think they are "fly through" visitors and they will not stay long on the whole and from my experience they are not buyers. However they do add to your visitor count!

Blogging about your lens is a good thing especially if your blog is frequently updated and pinged etc and consequently can generate visitors and of course backlinks.

Ensuring your keywords appear - with keywords I use the main keyword phrase in the title of each module has. In addition I have another closely related keyword phrase in the title and often in the subtitle and description of the module as appropriate.

Building your own network of Lenses – as you create more lenses ensure that if they are in related areas that you add them to each others' lensroll and maybe even have them as "Featured Lenses" using the Featured Lens Module.

Your Bio - Now one thing not to forget is that you can add links to your Bio or Profile and that you can edit the Bio on each Lens. So you can add in links here that you want to highlight for the particular lens that you are on. You also have the option to have the same profile for all your lenses if you wish.

Affiliate Marketing Through Squidoo

I have found that Squidoo provides me with the perfect template for generating affiliate income by guiding the visitor to the decision to buy!

The basic model I use is as follows:

Introduction – as mentioned previously you should have your main keywords plus a couple of others dotted throughout and ensure that they are all bolded. It's good to add a picture to the introduction as Squidoo (and visitors) like pictures. It also makes your lens stand out from others.

Poll Module – here you need to pose a question which would elicit an answer that would suggest that your visitor is looking to solve a problem. "Can you just say that again please Paul?" I hear you say! Well let me give you an example. Let's say that the products you are targeting are about improving the curb appeal (kerb for those in the UK) of your home. The Poll Module should contain a question along the lines of:

- Why are you looking to improve the curb appeal of your home?

Then you provide them with a series of answers which highlight problems addressed by the products you are promoting. So these might be:

- I am looking to sell and want to create good impression for potential buyers!
- I am embarrassed by how nice the neighbors homes look compared to ours!
- My kids won't bring any of their friends to visit because the front of the house looks awful!
- The local authority have told me to clear up or else!

Do you get the idea? We are getting the visitor to think about what their own situation is and the particular problem they have.

Now we go on to add two or three modules of text. I tend to add a module of text for each of the answers I have provided in the Poll Module. In those modules we provide some answers but also remind them of the problem that they might have.

So now they are thinking that they really do need to address the problem they have. It's at this stage that Squidoo provide the very helpful Links Plexo Module where we can add our Affiliate Products. Make sure that for each of the two (and no more than three) product you provide in the Links Plexo you write a description of how the particular product answers one of the answers you provided in the Poll Module.

So there you have it a very simple and effective approach to Affiliate Marketing courtesy of our friends at Squidoo!

A Few Closing Thoughts

I hope that I have shown you how easy it is to build a Squidoo Lens. Equally you will have seen hopefully how easy it is to build a network of sites that can rank well for long tail keyword phrases in Google. So let's take a moment to think about how we as Internet Marketers can really benefit from this very focussed niche site building.

Think about the PLR articles you have sat on your computer doing nothing. Each of those targeted articles is a potential lens. Imagine if you are one of those who subscribes to a PLR Membership site where you get packs of articles around particular niches each month.

A fantastic opportunity there to develop as many lenses as you want!

As I have shown you Squidoo also provides a fantastic opportunity to really build an affiliate income.

Paul Duxbury & David Bullock
SquidooBlueprint

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