

# How To Use Squidoo To Build Your Business Online

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# WHAT IS SQUIDOO?

A visit to Squidoo.com and you are sure to notice more than this company's strange one-eyed, orange squid. You will find quite a bit more, including hundreds, if not thousands, of people who are making money using Squidoo as a tool for Internet marketing.

For those who may not know, Internet marketing is any form of marketing for a business that is online. The most effective Internet marketers are those who can pull in traffic from a number of different sources to make money. Squidoo is a source of income. It can help a business owner in various ways, especially when it is used consistently.

Throughout this eBook, we will explore how any type of Internet business can benefit from using Squidoo. A few important points: there is no charge to use Squidoo, though you do have to open an account. You do have to undertake the writing of your pages (though you can hire someone to ghostwrite these for you if you do not feel comfortable doing it yourself.) In addition, you do have to market your Squidoo pages if you want to get the traffic you need to make a sizable income from the company's design.

## HOW DOES SQUIDOO WORK?

Let's take a closer look at what Squidoo is and how it works and then how it can work for your business.

Visit Squidoo.com. There you will be able to browse through thousands of "lenses," which is the term the company uses to describe these long, in-depth articles. In short, they are similar to a one-page website that you get to easily manage and monetarily benefit from. Individuals can write their own lens and publish it online. People can use them to share information, stories, or how-tos on most topics that they care about.

Squidoo lenses can earn money for the publisher. However, you can do far more than just that.

- Use Squidoo to bring together people who share the same opinions that you do.
- Use Squidoo to organize several videos.
- Use Squidoo as a forum for a debate that you host.
- Use the company to help you gain recognition or be noted as an expert in the field you are in.
- Use it as a tool to help you promote products you want others to buy.

Individuals can build websites or lenses right on Squidoo within minutes. With these in place, you can then market your products or services or even dive into affiliate marketing, which is one of the most common moneymaking methods used on Squidoo.

### **HERE'S HOW IT WORKS:**

Online stores such as eBay and Amazon work with Squidoo users to get their ads posted on their sites. Other sites, like Google and Glam, place ads on the lens to market related products.

For example, your lens may talk about the Nintendo Wii. In doing so, Google is sure to place the Nintendo ads on your lens. Then, whenever someone goes to the lens and clicks on the Wii ad, Squidoo receives a commission for the sale. And, as such, you earn a commission or cut of that fee as well.

In situations like Amazon and eBay, you earn a fee based on the affiliate program. For example, you incorporate your affiliate link for a book that is found on Amazon on your lens. Amazon's ad for that book displays on your lens (which is somehow related to that topic.) Whenever someone purchases that book via clicking the link on your lens, you earn a commission from Amazon.

## **SQUIDOO'S PROFIT MODEL**

Income coming in from ads to Squidoo is clearly detailed so that there is no confusion as to how you can make money using this website's resources. Five percent of the income that Squidoo earns is sent to charity. Fifty percent of what is earned is sent to the author of the lens (you) or it can be sent to a charity that you designate. The other 45 percent goes to Squidoo.

As you can imagine, you do have to work at building up the number of lenses you have on Squidoo to earn a real income from it. Nevertheless, people have dozens of lenses and they are doing fairly well earning from this model provided by the company.

If you are considering using Squidoo in this way, you do need to research topics and choose the ones that have less competition. Long tail keywords, for example, which are far more specific, do better than short tail keywords, especially in such a competitive market as this one is.

## **WHY NOT JUST BUILD MY OWN WEBSITE?**

It may seem like a simple question, but it is one most people need to learn about. If you can, why shouldn't you just build your own website and avoid having to pay 50 percent of the earnings to Squidoo?

You could do this, and if you have the time, money to invest, and skill to do so, you may want to go down that route. Squidoo does make the process of building these pages very easy, and that alone can be a benefit to most people who are using it.

Another reason that you may want to work with Squidoo instead of sticking it out on your own is that Squidoo ranks very well in search engines like Google and Yahoo! This implies that when you put up a search engine optimized Squidoo lens, your website is likely to be ranked sooner and often times better by the search engines than it would be if you placed it on your own website.

In addition to this, there are other ways to benefit from having a Squidoo lens or two. In fact, that is what will be covered in the next few chapters. But, what is important to note here is that Squidoo does offer benefits, including the fact that it is so large that you could have a sizable following of readers very quickly.

One thing is clear about Squidoo. It is a tool that people use to bring others together. The company really likes to see these pages bring people together to converse or talk about the subject. As such, many Squidoo pages are highly ranked and very important to their "lensmasters," which is what Squidoo calls its lens builders.

Build a Squidoo lens and find out how they work. You will find that the process is actually quite simple. This allows even those with little to no HTML experience to do very well using the service.

But, how is Squidoo more than just a website?

## **MAKING SQUIDOO PART OF YOUR ONLINE BUSINESS**

Now that you have an understanding of what Squidoo is, you can start to explore what this type of website can do for your online business. There are two main ways to use Squidoo.

1. Use Squidoo as a springboard or as your total method of making money online. You can base most of your other work off of your Squidoo lenses.
2. Use Squidoo to help you to market your current online business as a secondary page that can capture traffic and affiliate links for your business.

Either option work in creating income online. Most business owners will want to invest a good amount of time in creating effective lenses to see any real income produced from the website.

## **USE SQUIDOO AS YOUR BUSINESS**

The first way to use Squidoo is to make it the Web page that you market and the page that produces the income for you. You can consider this method similar to that of marketing a website. Everything else you do is designed to come back to this page, where your affiliate links will make your income happen.

If this is the route that you wish to take, you will want to create the most effective lens that you can, and that means doing some research. For example, you want to ensure that you have a specific enough topic that can get results for you without having to deal with the other competition, both at the Squidoo website and on the Internet in general.

- **Choose a topic for your lens that is specific**  
Rather than doing "debt consolidation" as your topic, choose "debt consolidation in Florida." This more in-depth study will help you to have less competition for the traffic available for this topic.
- **Choose keywords that help to represent your topic choice**  
Be sure to research the most effective long tail keywords available (long tail simply means more in-depth and specific as stated earlier). You can do this by researching keyword options online.
- **Know your topic**  
Beyond just selecting the topic, you should have something original, unique, and truly interesting for the reader to read. If you do not do this, the reader can easily go someplace else to learn more. You want them to stay at your lens and buy from your affiliated links.

It pays to research the topics thoroughly. You can do this through any online means including using keyword search tools. The key is to choose a topic that does not have extensive competition.

## **CHOOSING YOUR AFFILIATE PRODUCTS**

In addition to this, you may also want to choose the right product that is based on what types of affiliate programs are available. You can use any of the websites that offer affiliate program sign-ups. For example, you may wish to use ClickBank products or to sign up for Amazon's affiliate program. In doing so, you will find thousands of products that you can promote through the Squidoo lens.

- **Be Warned:** It is virtually never a good idea to have a Squidoo page that is commercially oriented. These types of lenses are regularly sent to "construction status," which means that they will be abandoned by the website. The company does not want to see ads. Rather, if you have a product or service, use your Squidoo lens as more of a review of it rather than as a sales-oriented document!

Choosing the right affiliate products is a process. You will first need to choose something that you can get behind and can really benefit from. For example, if you wish to talk about debt, then you obviously want something related to that topic.

On the other hand, many people will research the affiliate products available to them first and then create a lens around that topic. In that case, there are also services that can help you to see what options are available. For example, you can use the services at [www.CBEngine.com](http://www.CBEngine.com) to help you to choose the right products that are available to you from ClickBank. The more research that you do with the affiliate products, the better off your Squidoo lens will be.

Choose affiliate products that:

- Offer a solid return on your investment. Compare their commission amounts.
- Have a low level of competition.
- Have other programs or products that are similar to it that can be also be used on the Squidoo lens at the same time.

## **PUT IT IN PLACE**

Once you have this completed, the next step in the process is to design your Squidoo page. Do not worry. There is no HTML experience needed. In addition, there are many tutorials available online that can do just about all the work for you.

Your pages should be thorough and they should contain usable information. An opinion piece may be fine for other types of Squidoo pages, but if you wish to make money off your lens, invest in a better outline. Reviews are outstanding. Alternatively, you can choose a topic that is a problem for someone and then offer solutions to solving it in a review format.

Be sure that your writing is concise and detailed. It should be professional, yet it should never be hard to read. Leave the medical and legal jargon out of the review.

Once you have the content written, you can easily publish the lens. This process may take you a few hours at first, but once you get good at it, you can likely publish a Squidoo page in under an hour.

There is one more crucial aspect that you have to remember: You need to come back and interact with and update your page. When you update your page, you allow the search engines to come back and re-index it. A stale lens will not rank well in Google or the other search engines.

The good news is that it can be easy to do this with Squidoo. You can even have full conversations with readers at your lens. The more interaction and updating you do, the better. Interact with your visitors. You are the expert on this topic and they often want to know more. Give it to them and you will only increase your opportunities to make more money using Squidoo in this manner.

# MARKETING YOUR SQUIDOO LENS

Now that you have your Squidoo lens in place, it is time to focus a bit on marketing it. You need to let the world know that your lens is there and that they should head over to look at what it offers. You can do this in a variety of ways (and in fact, you really should use a variety of methods to market your lens).

## SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION

One of the most important ways to market your Squidoo lens is to optimize it for search engines. As mentioned, a well-optimized Squidoo lens will be indexed quickly by the search engines. In some cases, it only takes a day or two to see these results. For SEO, or search engine optimization, you want to focus on a few important points.

### **1. Research and use effective keywords**

As mentioned, focus on long tail keywords whenever it is possible to do so. Keywords are the words people will type into a search box to find information on what they are looking for. Websites are ranked by search engines, based on these keywords.

### **2. Use keywords in your title**

The title of your page should be catchy, but it has to contain the keyword you have selected if you want it to do very well. Some even suggest making the keyword the first word or words of your title.

### **3. Use keywords throughout the body of the lens**

In particular, you will want to see the keyword in the first sentence of the lens's content, since this specifically places it as an important part of the website. You should use it throughout the Web page, but do not overdo it. Keep it to a density under two to three percent so that you do not look like you are spamming.

Search engine optimization is an important part of marketing your Squidoo lens. Did you know that when a person goes online to find something, they most often will use a search engine to do it, even if they know that one or two websites carry what they need?

More so, when they do search for it, seven out of ten times, they will click on natural or organic search engine results. These are the ones that are not paid for and are ranked based on their search engine optimization. In other words, it is a critical part of designing effective lenses.

## **SOCIAL MARKETING**

Enter Web 2.0 or social marketing. This is another area in which you can do very well using your Squidoo page. To be brief, social marketing is the means of interacting with others on a one-on-one basis.

A good way to understand it is to compare it to other forms of marketing, such as a television commercial. Instead of going out and saying, "Here's my product, you need to have it," show their audience its benefits, interact with them, and get them to come to their website only after they are very interested.

There are various social methods available. The only downfall to using them is that they can take up some time. But they are excellent at producing traffic that can wind up at your Squidoo lens. Check out some of the options for social marketing.

- **Twitter**  
One of the best to use is Twitter. Twitter.com is a free service that allows you to post brief messages about what you are doing. You get just 140 characters, but when you have a large number of followers, you can get sustained traffic from those few words. Sending a message like, "I just updated my Squidoo page on dog training," is all it takes, along with a link to the page, to get visitors there. That is traffic from interested people!
- **Digg.com**  
Digg is another useful tool. Here, you can submit a link to your Squidoo page and allow the system to do the rest for you. The more "digs" your lens gets, the more that people will see it. You can also develop a following there, which allows you to get even more hits to your lens.
- **Facebook**  
Do you have a Facebook account? Sign up and find people that know you. Then, interact with them. Whenever you publish a new Squidoo page, or whenever you make changes to the one you have, let your Facebook friends know about it. They can then follow the link you provide and interact with your page. Other social sites like MySpace and LinkedIn can work in the same way for you.

There are plenty of other social marketing websites that you can use to accomplish this same type of thing. Visit StumbleUpon.com, Del.icio.us.com, Reddit.com, and Friendster.com to talk with others. There are plenty of others as well. In fact, YouTube is an excellent tool if you are handy enough to make a few videos. They too can work to help promote your Squidoo lens or the topic within it.

Social marketing is not only effective, but it is a lot of fun. You can have large groups of people who you interact with on a daily basis helping you to make money off of your Squidoo pages.



## **ARTICLE MARKETING**

This may seem strange at first, but another way that you can promote your Squidoo page is through article marketing. In short, you are simply writing up a solid article that provides information, insight, or other useful knowledge about your Squidoo lens topic. Then, you also write a resource box that can help readers to follow the links you provide back to your Squidoo page. There, they can learn more and buy from your affiliate links (that is the goal, after all).

These articles can be published on any number of article directory websites. Other website owners can use the articles at their websites too, so long as they also take your resource box with them. This creates various links on the Internet that all point to your Squidoo lens (that is what your link is there for). This creates a number of unique visitors to your website on just about a daily basis.

Article marketing is helpful because it is simple, fast, and free. Like Squidoo, many of these directories rank very quickly in the search engines, which mean that your articles are going to be helping you to attract visitors rather quickly.

Any of these marketing methods should be an important part to your Squidoo lens. They all work to help you get visitors back to your Squidoo lens so that they can buy from you.

As a business model, Squidoo users can count on receiving a sizable amount of money from their lenses, assuming they design them properly and market them. The longer the lens is in place (though updating it regularly is essential), the more money that can be made. In many ways, it is an ideal residual income producer. Multiply this process by several different lenses, even dozens of them, and you could earn a fairly lucrative amount of money from Squidoo as your business model.

Now, what about that second way to use Squidoo?

## **USING SQUIDOO TO PROMOTE YOUR ONLINE BUSINESS**

Perhaps you already have an online business. You have a website or a blog and you are marketing that. How can Squidoo fit into the picture for you here?

The good news is that Squidoo can work in many outstanding ways for a business owner who is already marketing a product, service, or providing information online. In short, Squidoo can be a form of advertising or marketing for your online business. As

mentioned earlier, marketing methods drive traffic to websites (like Squidoo). This time, you want to move that traffic from Squidoo to your other sites.

Squidoo's ability to rank quickly and effectively in search engines makes it particularly beneficial to Internet marketers who wish to move some of that traffic to their own website(s) or blog(s). In most cases, the lenses you put up will be ranked within a week, most of them being far less time than that. That means that if you put a lens up today, in a few days, you could have more traffic going to your blog or website.

## **BENEFITS OF PROMOTING WITH SQUIDOO**

Why should you use Squidoo to help you to promote your other online ventures? There are many reasons:

1. You can use Squidoo as a forum for you to promote yourself as an expert. In Internet marketing, it is critical to be viewed by the consumer as someone who knows what he/she is talking about. This is easy to do when you have a launching pad like Squidoo. You can use it to provide for your views or to help you to sell your own product or service directly.
2. Use Squidoo to promote your blog or website. If you are marketing informational products, you may wish to create a product at Squidoo that allows you to move traffic to your blog where they can learn more.
3. Use Squidoo as a way of improving your search engine ranking. One of the things that search engines like is to see a website's link on other formats, outside of their own blog. So, if your Squidoo page points to your blog or website, this could help boost your rankings in the search engine results pages.

Perhaps the best way to use Squidoo for this reason is to simply benefit from the traffic that this website gets. A well-designed lens will pull people into it from the search engines. You can then take advantage of this by allowing visitors to follow links to your own website or blog. It is simple and easy enough to do.

As a promotional tool for an already established online business, Squidoo works very well. Any online business can use it like they use any other social networking or social marketing tool today.

## **SECONDARY INCOME**

As mentioned in the previous chapter, Squidoo is also an outstanding tool for making money. As an Internet marketer, you could get some extra benefits here.

- Set up your Squidoo lens to be an educational piece about your product or service. Benefit from the added traffic your website or blog gets from your Squidoo lens.

- Incorporate affiliate links into your Squidoo page as well. This allows you to make an income from the Squidoo page directly through the affiliate programs you have joined.

When you combine these methods together, you can actually wind up making a bit more money. You get the benefits of promotion and of affiliate marketing income.

## **ARE YOU READY?**

Now that you know what Squidoo can offer to you and your online business, all it takes is visiting the website and opening up an account. Design information articles that are high in quality, and you will quickly see your profits start to rise. More so, you are sure to see traffic come in from your Squidoo lens to your website or blog.

Best of all, there is no risk here. Since there is no investment to be made, besides your time, you really have no reason not to test out how well Squidoo can work to build your online income options. You may be impressed by just how easy the process of building this type of page can be.

Use Squidoo regularly to see the best benefits. There are various guides available that can help you through the process if you are unsure about using Squidoo.