

Making Money With Squidoo

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Squid Who?

Before we go into the actual ways to make money with Squidoo, let's go over what Squidoo is and how it differs from other sites. For one, Squidoo is a website, but it offers its own version of web pages, called lenses. A lens is a way of looking at some topic that the writer is passionate about that makes it come alive for the reader. Squidoo calls it an "overview" page because many Squidoo users just give a wide overview of the topic. Squidoo comes with a user community, called "SquidU," that helps newbie Squidoo users to learn the ropes.

What Are The Stats?

For a site that started small, it has become hugely popular online. According to Squidoo.com, around 900,000 lenses have already been built. Since these all have to be done manually by someone, usually referred to as a *lensmaster*, it's an amazing achievement. These lenses attract around 420,000 people to visit Squidoo.com *every day*. It's the popularity of the site, the immense traffic, and the ability to link to moneymaking opportunities that bring new people to the site every day. Squidoo.com reveals that many people make around \$1,000 per year with their lenses. In some unusual cases, people have made \$10,000 per year; however, it's possible you may only make \$40 per year, depending on the quality of your lenses and how many people they attract to them.

What Determines The Quality Of The Lens?

Squidoo assigns a hidden LensRank to each lens. It is based on an algorithm that can include the lensmaster's reputation, how many ratings and how high they are, the number of inbound and outbound links, and the actual traffic coming to the lens. The higher the LensRank, the more quality the lens is determined to have. Unlike other sites that pay more to people based on a rating system that grants more privileges to older users, this one re-rates the lens every two weeks to keep the rankings fresh.

Traffic to the lens is a major component of the quality, as it includes click-through rates. The more traffic you get to your lens, the more opportunity you have to make income from the lens. In that respect, they're just like any other Internet marketing venture. You have to attract eyeballs to the lens to get visitors to create actions that bring in income. Some of that income will be from the traffic itself. Other income might come from affiliate offers you have linked to your lens. You might be using the lens to generate leads and make money that way too. Finally, there is a way to create a Squidoo co-op page that essentially partners you with others who will take a share of the royalties for that type of exposure.

Earning Money With AdSense

It may come as no surprise to seasoned marketers that you can earn money with AdSense from Squidoo. For those that don't know what this is, it's the money generated from visitors who click the Google Ads located at the top of every Squidoo lens. Monies are collected from Google and then distributed via a formula that rewards top lensmasters and popular lenses more. Generally, the more traffic you get to your lens, the more likelihood someone is going to click on an ad, potentially generating revenue for you. However, just because you have a lens doesn't necessarily mean you'll make any money from Google AdSense. It's just a potential possibility until a sufficient number of people click on ads that have a good payout.

For Squidoo, it follows a revenue sharing model that provides 50% of the revenues generated by the lensmaster to go directly to them. The rest of it goes for operating expenses, charity, investors, and employees. There are several tiers to the system, where higher ranked lensmasters can make more from their lenses than others. You don't have to have a Google AdSense account to make this money, unlike other sites where you embed the code into the pages. This is all taken care of by Squidoo. You do, however, have to have a PayPal account where the monies from your lenses can be deposited every month. If you earn more than \$600 from Squidoo, they will want some form of tax identification, but otherwise, you will have to report it to the IRS, however your accountant sees fit.

What Generates More AdSense Money?

Traffic is a big component of AdSense income. However, so is content. Seasoned Internet marketers will be able to use their keyword skills and niche ideas to highlight lenses that can rank well with Google, as well as Squidoo. If you don't know much about keywords, you can find a useful keyword tool online to help you generate content around keywords that attract more visitors.

You should not stuff the content of your lens with too many keywords. Typically, a 1% to 2% ratio of keyword to total word count is recommended for any one keyword that you use in your content. Using keywords in headings and subheadings is a particularly powerful way to get noticed by the Google search engine.

Many of the same strategies that marketers use to generate income from AdSense on their own blogs and websites can be used with Squidoo pages. However, this is not the sole way to earn income through Squidoo. In fact, you can avoid Google Ads altogether and instead focus on different ways to earn money.

The Money Maker Lens & Modules

Google AdWords income may be automatic, for the most part, but the rest of the ways to make money will take a little more forethought and planning. A lens, while being a collection of various lists, polls, visuals, and text information, is made up of modules that you insert into the lens. Some of these modules help you to make money, and others are merely informational. In order to figure out which modules might make you money, you can start out by choosing to create the Money Maker lens when you are asked what you want to do with the lens. It might not include everything you need to make money, but it will give you a good start on how to make the lens that is targeted for income opportunities.

Different Types Of Modules

There are informational lenses and entertainment lenses. Squidoo isn't just a place to sell things, but is a place where lenses can be created to make money. Sometimes, lenses are used just to gain an air of authority on a topic, and thus, promote the author's own products and services in other moneymaking lenses. Other times, they are just to promote some other type of information on the Web, like a video. Then, there are the ones that make money.

All of these work with modules as the basic component to creating a lens. The only difference is that some modules will allow you to create an income stream with them and others won't. That's perfectly normal since not all lenses are about making money. It's your job to figure out what modules make it easy to make money. Or you can use this report to help you pinpoint some of the major modules that make money. We'll go over a few of the modules available to help make it easier for you.

Different Ways To Make Money

Realize, however, that you can make money in other ways too, not just by creating a lens with the right modules. There are other strategies that will bring in income. We'll discuss those as well. For instance, you can get paid to refer people to Squidoo. Just like you would look for programs that give you money based on getting others to sign up, Squidoo offers the same type of incentive. Many of the same types of strategies that you use with other Internet ventures can be combined with Squidoo to help you make money. If you are making money from advertisements on a blog, for instance, you can

drive traffic to the blog from a Squidoo page. This is another indirect way to make money using a Squidoo lens.

Making Money With Affiliate Offers

When people hear about affiliate offers, they tend to think about earning a commission on someone else's products. That's not always the case. You can offer your own affiliate offerings through Squidoo. That's because you can make money using the CafePress and eBay modules too, where your own products and services are being sold. In addition, Squidoo partners with a number of top affiliates to make selling their products and services easier to do on your lens. One of these is Amazon.com.

Selling Your Own Offers

If you are an Internet marketer who's been around for a while, you may indeed have a CafePress or eBay store. If not, it does take time, and in some cases, money, to get one set up. A CafePress store won't cost anything to set up, but it takes a bit of time to get one up and running. You do have to worry about copyright issues with CafePress. Anything you publish may be copyrighted, and thus, protected. However, it can be a fun way to get a store up and running online with minimal hassle, no inventory, and just letting your imagination run free.

eBay stores usually require that you've sold things on eBay before in order to qualify to have a store. You have to learn how to market your wares online, deal with customers, keep an inventory, and ship things when they are bought. All of this is required just to run your eBay business, and you still have to learn the ins and outs of the actual eBay site. Obviously, it's a time-intensive proposition for someone just starting out. If you already are in it, though, Squidoo provides a quick and easy way to add your eBay store to your lenses with SquidBids.

Selling Other People's Stuff

This is the route that many new people take first as the path of least resistance. They don't have to learn about another site and their policies. They don't have to create anything to have a large inventory of products to market. Best of all, they don't have to ship anything just to make a commission on it. The Amazon module is a perfect example of a module that helps newbies start selling right away.

The main difference between selling your own or someone else's products is that you stand to make more money per sale on your own stuff. However, it

also takes a lot more time and effort to create that stuff. So, it's up to you on which way you want to go when selling with affiliate offers.

It's All About Good Marketing

Before we go into some of the modules that will help you to create a lens, it's very important to understand that a moneymaking lens is not just a collection of things to buy. How many times have you felt the need to buy anything just because someone put up a huge list of items in front of your face? Very rarely. It's up to the lensmaster who wants to make money to bring in his/her skills with Internet marketing to write a lens that makes people want to buy. There are some things you can do to create a higher potential that people will take the time to read your lens, rate it, and even buy things from it.

Create Good Content

Good content is entertaining, it is fun, and it is informative! It's not just a list of things or repeating what someone else has said! Be creative, be warm, be approachable, and be an expert! That's what Squidoo was originally about: Bringing out the expert in everyone! Concentrate on eye-grabbing headlines and subheadings. Add some information and tips that help your readers. Tell them why they will want to buy your products and ask them for the sale.

Sell Those Benefits

It can't be said enough: Sell benefits, not features. Benefits are the triggers that will make someone buy your product or click on a link. A benefit answers the question in the reader's mind: What's in it for me? A really strong benefit uses a psychological and emotional trigger that will also make it hard for the reader to pull away without clicking your link. An example of this is when they might lose out for not taking up on your offer at that very minute!

Network With Others On Squidoo

Since your LensRank is going to take into account how many people rate it and how high they rate it, you want people to rate your lens to get it to pay out more. To get that to happen, it's a good idea to join Squidoo groups and to network with other lensmasters. Start to join in on the community and ask them to rate your lens. Go and rate other people's lenses too. Once you start to be more recognized, people will want to read and rate your lenses. This will increase your bottom line as Squidoo pays in several tiers, with the highest tier making more money per month than the lowest tier. The tier your lens is in is dependent on your LensRank. The LensRank is determined on your rating and popularity. Network, network, network to get that popularity up.

The eBay Module

Why would anyone use a module on Squidoo to sell something they're already selling on eBay? It means a tad less money, doesn't it, since now they have to share their profits with Squidoo too? If they're already making money with eBay, it may seem counterintuitive, but it does work to increase profits through increasing the exposure the auction items get. More eyeballs to your products mean more bids. More bids mean more sales and a higher selling price. That means more profits.

Better Have Your Store Up And Running

Before you can even use this module, you have to have your eBay store up and running. The module will ask you for your eBay ID to get it to work. If you don't have one, it won't work. If you put it in without paying attention to the case of the letters, it won't work. The whole thing is run with the SquidBids module. Using this module, you can let people bid on items you are already selling on eBay. It's not used to create an auction within Squidoo. Squidoo is not an auction site. It's used to link to an existing eBay store and to facilitate bidding within Squidoo. You will have to put in multiple SquidBids to put in multiple products on the lens.

It's An Auction, But It Isn't

Here is where it gets tricky. Yes, you are running an auction on eBay, but now you are advertising it on a Squidoo lens. It's an auction, but technically, it isn't. You're just using the eBay module, with hopefully other modules too, on your lens page to create income. Don't limit yourself to just the eBay module on one lens. Be creative and add other types of lenses that make money too. Add entertaining information as well!

How To Sell Using The eBay Module

Use other modules to add pictures to your lens for the items you are selling. There is a Flickr and a Text module that will allow you to add photos to your lenses. They don't actively sell anything, but they help you promote what you're selling. The same things that sell within eBay can sell on Squidoo. Add your feedback rating to entice buyers to trust you. Let them rate you or your products using polls.

Add other relevant modules to get more income, like combining an eBay module with an Amazon module for a different aspect of the niche you are marketing. In the next section, we'll discuss the Amazon module more in depth.

The Amazon Module

When people hear Amazon, they think of books. However, Amazon.com has evolved from a site that sold mainly books to one that sells a variety of different products. You can make quite a bit of money, not just by offering affiliate offers for books, but also for electronics, housewares, and more – all through the Amazon module on your lens. You don't even have to be an Amazon Associate or sign up as an affiliate partner to get to use the Amazon module. It's all set up by Squidoo, making it an ideal way for a newbie lensmasters to start making money without much effort on their part. You will be sharing the commission with Squidoo, but you will also be getting more exposure for your listings.

When You Sell Books Online

The nice thing about selling books with the Amazon module is that they go with every lens. It doesn't matter if your lens is about pickling beets; there's a book out there that will go with that topic. It may be that the books you pick don't discuss the same topics as your lens, but are used to complement the topic. For instance, you might be talking about homebrewing, and you have an eBay auction that is selling bottling equipment. Then you add an Amazon module that talks about starting a home business or homesteading, along with books on brewing.

Create a list that is varied and interesting. If they're all about homebrewing, they'll read a few titles and skip the entire module if they're not interested, leaving you without a sale. You increase your chances for a sale when you use the Amazon module creatively to complement your lens topic, not just to create a highly-targeted topic.

Selling Other Items Online With The Amazon Module

If your topic is parenting toddlers, you can opt to sell toddler items online with the Amazon module, as well as books that discuss the psychology of a toddler or how to make your kid super smart. There are so many different things that Amazon has in inventory that it's not a hard thing to find a few to list. You will want to have a good range of prices so that visitors who read your lens will find something that fits into their budget. If you only advertise high-end products and your reader is not rich, you'll lose a sale. Better one low-end sale than no sale at all. Make it easy for them to find something that they like and that will fit into their budget. Also add a few high-end things on the chance that someone will be persuaded to buy one of them, resulting in you making a higher commission.

The CafePress Module

This module is the best of both worlds. If you don't have a CafePress store, you can still sell items from the CafePress Marketplace. They sell promotional items like cups, t-shirts, mouse pads, and other imprinted material. If you do have a store, you can concentrate on selling your own products. Either way, you can use this module to create income from a Squidoo lens. It can work differently depending on whether you have your own store to promote or want to promote someone else's products, but it's still pretty easy to set up.

It Has An Automatic Pick Option

If you don't want to spend too much time setting up a CafePress module, you have the option to "Let CafePress Pick" the items you'll be showcasing in your lens via a keyword match. You enter the keyword, and it pulls up items from its marketplace that fit that description. It's not an incredibly sophisticated search engine, so you may be limited to just a few short words. It can take a bit of time for it to pull up items too. You earn a commission for the products that sell, even when they're not your own. You might not make as much as if you were selling your own products, but it's still a good way to create income streams very quickly through Squidoo.

When You Sell Your Own Items

Making a CafePress store is very easy. They even have a free basic option. You can set up a sample store with some t-shirts or mugs and then use these items to market on your Squidoo lens. You will need your Shop ID to show the shop's content. If you want to add individual items, you'll have to enter the URL for each individual product on CafePress and enter it into the CafePress module. That can be a bit labor-intensive, but it allows you to create a lens that is customized and far more interesting.

Match The Niche

The whole purpose of this exercise is not just to throw up products that are in your store; you want to match or complement the niche topic on your lens. The more targeted your lens is, the better the chance that someone will bother to read or look at your links and offerings. If you go way out in left field, people just will not understand what you're trying to offer them and will walk away. If you're talking about computers, for instance, you can sell custom mouse pads in the CafePress module, which is a perfect complement. Don't offer them the T-shirt that says "Party on!" because that's just jarring. People will think your lens is broken or you're a bit weird. Check to see what your lens displays to keep things like that from happening.

Money From Referrals

Squidoo has a referral program to get people to sign up other writers who want to create Squidoo lenses. There is no tiered program, like other affiliate programs, but there's no reason you can't make money with your affiliate referral programs too through Squidoo. Just keep in mind that referral income works either as a sign-up bonus, a commission-based bonus, or both. There are always rules for how you make the referral bonus, and you won't get paid until you meet the requirements for a payout.

Squidoo's Referral Program

As a referral program, it's not that glamorous. There are no tiers. It's a simple sign-up bonus, and there is a requirement that limits the payout of that sign-up. The people you refer have to make at least \$15 in income from their lenses before they will pay you \$5 for the referral. In terms of income, it's not a very strong program when compared to other affiliate program referrals. However, it's worth a plug or two.

Other Affiliate Referral Programs

If you have joined numerous affiliate programs, you know that there are some rich referral programs out there that have juicy sign-up bonuses and great commissions from just one tier of your immediate referral. You can also earn income on the referrals from the people you referred in multi-tiered programs. Those are the best programs to target and promote on your Squidoo lens.

Pay attention to the payout terms. If you have to wait for your referrals to make a large amount of money to get paid, it's not worth it. Try to go for programs that offer an immediate sign-up bonus and then a tiered commission structure that isn't limited too much by how much your referrals are making.

Niche Them

Just like you are collecting different affiliate programs to promote on your Squidoo lens, you should be aware of what niches they can serve and then promote the referral program for that program on your lens. You don't want to promote a referral program for an affiliate that offers candy on a weight loss lens, and so on. Be as specific and as targeted as you are with selecting products for stores. This will help you to persuade people that they can make money too using the same programs you are using, and then that eventually contributes to your own income stream.

A Word About Traffic

Traffic is the real reason that Squidoo is so popular. As a community that rates itself, it is continuously improving, and Google tends to rank lens highly. When Google ranks something highly in their search engines, there is a lot of traffic that comes from that source. However, you can't just rely on traffic from Google to market your lenses. You have to use other traffic generating strategies to increase your lenses' standings in the Squidoo community if you want to be a big "Squid."

Methods To Attract Traffic To Your Lens

The same methods that people use to attract traffic across the Internet work here. You want to go to places that already have a large audience and promote your lens there with a link to get your lens more visitors. You can even promote it on social networks and ask people to rate it so that you can improve your skills as a lensmaster. Here are some classic ways by which people drive traffic to their pages across the Internet:

- **Comment on blogs** – They find popular blogs that talk about the same niche topic and then contribute to the conversation there. When relevant, they add the link to their lens to increase its exposure.
- **Submit to various search engines** – Google isn't the only search engine out there. You can index your pages and submit them to various search engines, like Yahoo!, to get wider exposure.
- **Create videos with links back** – YouTube is a very popular video platform that allows its users to put a link back to some other page on the video profile. Create a fun video and draw YouTube watchers back to your Squidoo lens via that link.
- **Update your content frequently** – This isn't just a one-time effort. Due to the way Squidoo rates the freshest content higher, you will want to constantly add a few updates to each of your lenses. That means more visitors coming to your lens as a result of your content being fresher. You can even just add a few paragraphs or modify a few sentences to make your content fresher.
- **Make your content sharable** – You will want to add the ability for people to grab your lists and promote them, using a Plexo module, or make your content easy to share by adding it to delicious.com and other link archives.

- **Be social** – Another great place to promote and share your content is on social networks. Twitter, in particular, is a fantastic place to add a single link a few times a day or a week to create more income. You do have to devote time to generating followers and friends on these sites, but it's a great way to target specific niche readers and to create more income possibilities for yourself.

Much, Much More!

This just scratches the surface of some of the ways to create income with Squidoo. There are a variety of other methods that space limitations didn't allow us to get into. As you continue to get more comfortable with the platform and the methods to make money with Squidoo, you will want to look up Squidoo's sponsorship or "co-op" services to see how to make money with them too.