

Omega Squid Studios – An Analysis

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This is a short description of Omega Squid Studios, completed as an essay for the NFIB Young Entrepreneurs Scholarship.

Purpose:

Omega Squid Studios has a theme that fuels all endeavors the company undertakes: “The Future is Squid”. To me, this motto embodies the unharnessed potential of my own personal entrepreneurship.

Omega Squid Studios (OSS) ---essentially an extension of my creative mind---***has been, is, and always will be*** a provider of original entertainment, excellent customer service, and first-rate work.

OSS is a vehicle through which I have been able to learn about small business, explore opportunities for personal growth, and offers a valued information set to interested third parties.

OSS is involved with video film making, graphics, websites, and video game design.

Origin:

The company originated for me at age 6 as I began to draw and develop a set of cartoon characters. My simple storylines and intricate illustrations developed a modest following among my instructors, classmates, and family. By fourth grade I ‘created’ Lemon Corp., named after one of my staple drawings. My first foray into the business world came by selling mini comic books and other assorted media on a regular basis during that time. At age 12, I began collaborating with other artists and kid friendly web sites online, from which emerged a new entity, Creatures Unlimited. I mowed lawns in the neighborhood to help subsidize my computer design work.

In August 2004, Omega Squid Studios was founded. I developed an interest in computer programming creating several small video games using pre-existing computer language and platforms. I released these for general use and concentrated on building a website for my fledgling company. I also began offering services with video recording/editing and tech support.

Innovation:

Breaking the mold whenever possible, the concept of ‘Squid’ is pervasive in OSS. Envision, if you will, the body of the organization being Omega Squid Studios with the following branches, or ‘tentacles’ rounding out the company as follows: Graphic & Web Design under King Kraken, Computer Hardware and Tech Support under TechSquid, the popular movie review site is SquidFlicks. eBay Consignment is

located under INK! Selling Solutions. Other network sites include Blog Suey, a blogging service, the IndependDEX, which is an independent film index, and Media Swine as a file storage service.

Strategy:

I largely use the internet to move OSS forward in the business world. I do promote myself in the real world too, but the playing field is more level on the Internet. Dozens of people have joined OSS on social websites like YouTube, Facebook, MySpace, and Twitter. Any search for “Shelby Jones”, “omega squid studios”, or “squidflicks” brings OSS to the top of a ‘results’ list.

The sites in the network, like SquidFlicks and IndependDEX, are free -- supported largely through donations and advertising. It is easy to both integrate and process donations and advertising revenue through the internet, with services such as PayPal that easily handle money transfer among checking accounts and credit cards.

My strategy is to never stop building, using experiential learning to assist me in identifying successes and failures. I look for original ways to attract customers to my business that don’t cost a lot of money to implement. Respecting intellectual property, I borrow ideas that have worked for others and incorporate them in to my own marketing plan. I try to keep my interactions with clients personal.

Company’s growth since inception:

OSS continues to experience growth. While there is still only one true employee, myself, I have enlisted the help of friends and family to identify topics/areas of interest and generate content, especially on the most popular segment of the company, SquidFlicks.

eBay Consignment has been consistent, as well as contracts for graphics and website work with King Kraken garnered from both the community at large and through advertising/ word of mouth referral. TechSquid stays brisk with requests to trouble shoot and problem solve a variety of home and business computer system issues.

The company has turned a profit, with most monies having been used for reinvestment in this virtual small business. New services, sites, ideas, and content are fueled by income generated with personal service work, like computer consulting, and from abstract contracts such as web design.

Successes:

Omega Squid Studios has been successful in attempts to reach a broad audience, earning a decent-sized following chiefly through the popularity of SquidFlicks. I have recently begun interviewing directors of feature films and posting these to the site. I’ve also begun providing screener copies of movies produced by independent directors for viewing.

A recent Facebook ad campaign helped build a fan page that has over 180 fans. To date, there have been almost 3,000 downloads of OSS games, and there are over 40,000 views combined on OSS video content. I continue to track these trends and incorporate the data into my overall business plan.

eBay consignment and design contracts as local business remains steady supplemental income.

Obstacles:

Time management is the greatest obstacle I face. It can be a challenge to manage commitments to school, extracurricular activities, family, community, and Omega Squid Studios. Another obstacle I have encountered is that the services offered by OSS are very spread out. 'Computing in the Cloud' can be a daunting task at times and it is difficult to specialize in any one area of my film operations.

The Future – Expansion & Long Term Vision

In the cyber-universe with continued production of original and entertaining websites, films, gaming platforms, and other digital media, 'squid' could get into everyone's home. I dream that one day an original creation will be noticed by a larger company and published on a grander scale. I have the determination to persevere and I believe in the possibilities. Omega Squid Studios - The Future is Squid.

Other Relevant Info:

I do indeed enjoy life away from the computer monitor. I am an Eagle Scout, an Assistant Scout Master with the local Boy Scouts of America troop, and an active member of several civic and religious outreach programs in my community. I believe it is important to be well rounded.