

Site assessment sample (I have removed direct links to the existing pages)

OVERVIEW

While your website has the limitations that the SBI blockbuilder brings, it is quite nice to look at and has a very impressive page rank of 4 out of 10. I don't know what kind of traffic you're getting, but I would imagine around 400 per day?

THE MAIN ISSUE: you have excellent content, but it's poorly organized. See below for recommendations.

Some of the site elements, while cute, could benefit from a makeover; however, if you ever plan to switch to an uploaded design, then that would be the ideal time to take on the design elements.

I strongly recommend introducing some pictures to the home page, especially above the fold. Currently there is nothing but text to welcome your visitors. The web is a visual medium and you are discussing family issues; get people on the site!

1) Site concept keyword

“[SITE CONCEPT KEYWORD]” has reasonable demand and supply numbers. I don't see how repositioning your site concept could benefit your site – while there are “better” keywords out there for parenting in general, you have used most of them as T2 pages anyway, and your site's voice really requires the religious angle.

Your supportive keywords have good numbers, with the exception of “home school bible curriculum”; this is a very minor point though.

In general, I feel the site lacks the “laser focus” SBI preaches; an entire site about parenting would make sense; an entire site about home schooling would make sense also. Combining both themes pulls your content in more than one direction.

It must be hard for you to decide which way to go when you've got time to add more content.

2) Use of keywords

You seem to have grasped very well the concept of finding great keywords; many of the ones that came up in my basic brainstorming appear on your list of Tier 2s.

According to the Action Guide, your page file names should separate the keywords with dashes: creating file names like:

<http://www.CLIENTS-SITE.com/home-school-my-child.html>

rather than

<http://www.CLIENTS-SITE.com/homeschoolmychild.html>

There are people who disagree with this concept though. I prefer to listen to Ken Evoy; nobody else has earned my respect so well. He says use dashes, so I do.

Whether you think it's worth making this change is up to you. I would say, do NOT change it if you have made significant efforts at link-building to pages without dashes. Those links will not work and it gets messy to fix it (redirect from the original file name etc.) Probably best to leave it for now, but use dashes in future filenames.

3) Tier 2 analysis

Remember the basic site concept of having three tiers. Tier 1 is your home page, leading to 15-25 Tier 2 pages, which each lead to 15-25 Tier 3 pages. (You can have more!)

Tier 2s should link back home using the site concept keyword, and down to Tier 3s using the keyword on which the Tier 3 is focused.

Tier 3s should link back to the home page using the site concept keyword, and up to the Tier 2 page using the keyword the Tier 2 focuses on.

Looking through your site, there are definitely areas where this structure has not been followed.

GENERAL PARENTING CONTENT:

My first impression is – there's not enough of this. You have created what amounts to more of a homeschool website with some parenting, rather than the other way around.

Remember what your site concept keyword is: the site should be focused on that more.

<http://www.CLIENTS-SITE.com/articlesonparentingstyles.html>

This page is a HUGE missed opportunity. You must be linking from this page to suitable pages on your site, and from those back to this Tier 2. It's got great numbers; over 1700 demand and only 1 supply! Do more or less what you did here: <http://www.CLIENTS-SITE.com/ParentingArticles.html>

Talking of which, “Article Libray” is a typo in one of your headlines on <http://www.CLIENTS-SITE.com/ParentingArticles.html>

<http://www.CLIENTS-SITE.com/inspirational-family-poems.html>

Another page which should be a proper T2 – break it up and link down to each poem as a separate T3 poem.

<http://www.CLIENTS-SITE.com/family-quotes.html>

This could be used in a similar way as a launch pad for lots of T3 pages with family quotes on them.

Currently too many of your Tier 2 pages are set up more like Tier 3s. You want Tier 2s to be menus, a way for people to find your long-tail Tier 3 pages. Having the content spread out over more pages will also help you win more traffic.

<http://www.CLIENTS-SITE.com/christian-book-review.html>

This is much better – show some IMAGES of all those great books though. Maybe consider an image menu, like Louann does. People love images.

There is some confusion here: <http://www.CLIENTS-SITE.com/christian-music-review.html>

I like the personal angle of having different reviewers, but not sure how to relate to each reviewer. I also find it a bit confusing that the pages open in new windows.

HOME SCHOOL SECTION:

<http://www.CLIENTS-SITE.com/homeschoolmychild.html>

Change the nav bar to read Home School 101 – this would be a reasonable keyword and more informative than “Overview”.

<http://www.CLIENTS-SITE.com/homeschoolkindergarten.html>

Here's a page loaded with resources; you could be doing more, by splitting up this great content into Tier 3s.

Also, rather than just linking out to Amazon etc., why not review the books and other teaching materials you talk about?

PREsell the items on your site by writing a proper page review before sending your visitors to an affiliate.

<http://www.CLIENTS-SITE.com/7th-grade-home-school-curriculum.html>

Same here, only much more so. Each of these “mini reviews” could be expanded with a bit more detail, a picture of the book and THEN a link to Amazon. Bingo, you'd have another page of content.

When you get the Content 2 template I'm making for you, this will be much easier.

Use a keyword followed by a title; example, “Home school Books: Parenting Today's Adolescent” as a Tier 3 title with the keyword “home school books”.

<http://www.CLIENTS-SITE.com/highschoolhomeschool.html>

Broadly similar comments to the above. I like the way the Amazon product links look on this page, but that is mainly because images are lacking elsewhere on your site.

<http://www.CLIENTS-SITE.com/homeschoolart.html>

MASSIVE page and could easily be split up into T3s. You do a much better job of preselling here and use images. Take those products away to keyword focus T3 content pages and link up and down and this will give you much more traffic.

<http://www.CLIENTS-SITE.com/home-school-spanish.html>

Another nicely done page which is really too long and should be split up into T3s.

<http://www.CLIENTS-SITE.com/home-school-history-curriculum.html>

I like the Daily Factoid widget, but it's in prime real estate on that page. I want to click on it and find out more – so will your visitors – and then it's bye-bye to your visitors and Hello! SurfNetKids.com will take the benefit of your traffic-building efforts.

You know what I'm going to say – split up this page! Lots to read here and it's too much for one page, particularly a T2. I would move all those outgoing links to a separate page; you are sending all your link juice out through those links – unless you add rel=“nofollow” to the links.

Even so, you might think it's worthwhile to make a T3 for each page you recommend. Write a T3, link out, then contact each site. Show them the T3 you have made and ask for a reciprocal link back. It never hurts to ask. They will probably be impressed that you took the trouble to write a whole page about their site.

<http://www.CLIENTS-SITE.com/homeschoolbiblecurriculum.html>

I love the quiz – should be a T3! I love the reviews – should be T3s!

(Please don't get discouraged. It's MY JOB as your consultant to tell you the unvarnished truth. Following my recommendations will make your site better for your visitors, easier for you to manage, and attract more traffic.)

<http://www.CLIENTS-SITE.com/sciencefairprojectsideas.html>

This is a decent length, with lots of great content (love the picture!), but I would question its validity as a T2. It's currently a T3 – there's no other pages to move onto. Ideally you want visitors to move into your site and explore multiple pages.

<http://www.CLIENTS-SITE.com/curriculumhomeschoolwriting.html>

Another opportunity to split up a page. Here you also use a widget – sending traffic off your site if people click on it. Move that to a T3, review the widget even.

Review each recommended resource as a separate T3 with appropriate keyword.

<http://www.CLIENTS-SITE.com/homeschoolliteraturecurriculum.html>

This should be a T3 linked down from the homeschoolwriting page.

<http://www.CLIENTS-SITE.com/home-school-video-curriculum.html>

There must be a huge number of products you could be reviewing here. I was stumped as to what a Beka was – there's an opportunity. Always put yourself in the mind of the reader. Ask the questions they will be asking.

Get into the habit of brainstorming questions, such as “how homeschool” “why homeschool” “how teach”. The keywords that come back will be golden opportunities for building content which answers the questions YOUR READERS are asking.

<http://www.CLIENTS-SITE.com/homeschoolcurriculumfair.html>

Lots of content, very long page. Break it up!

<http://www.CLIENTS-SITE.com/homeschoolcurriculumcatalogs.html>

This should be a T3, unless you have more to write on this topic and can link down to T3 pages on the subject.

<http://www.CLIENTS-SITE.com/learningstyle.html>

A very interesting tool – perhaps you should illustrate the point by having one of your kids take the test and publish the results on the site? This is very powerful preselling. Tell how learning their learning style made you a better home schooler. People love that kind of review.

<http://www.CLIENTS-SITE.com/freehomeschoolaides.html>

This is definitely a T3 page.

FOR FUN SECTION:

<http://www.CLIENTS-SITE.com/christianhumor.html>

A great resource. Break it up. Use all that content to create more keyword-focused pages.

<http://www.CLIENTS-SITE.com/Christianhomeschoolteachersloungeblog.html>

It looks to me as if you lost interest in this project. Does it belong in the For Fun section either?

Don't be afraid to can an idea if it doesn't work for any reason. Time, level of interest etc.

<http://www.CLIENTS-SITE.com/schoolrecess.html>

There is so much you could do with this page. Don't just recommend freebies – review products too. And yes, split down into T3s.

<http://www.CLIENTS-SITE.com/free-e-cards.html>

There are a ton of free e-card programs and some have generous pay-per-lead affiliate programs. Worth investigating if you have time to write with authority about each (use their service and then report how it went to your readers). Do some brainstorming for e-cards – awesome keywords out there.

By the way, I do not really “get” the image at the top of the page.

<http://www.CLIENTS-SITE.com/financingyourhomeschool.html>

Interesting page. Do you get referred sales? I like the preselling you do here. There's probably potential for other topics on this subject.

<http://www.CLIENTS-SITE.com/bizyuhomeschool.html>

I love that your kids, sorry, teens did this page!

<http://www.CLIENTS-SITE.com/homebusinessandhomeschoolvideos.html>

I don't see much about home schooling here: what are you trying to achieve with this page? Sell SBI? I question whether three buttons on your nav bar should be used to promote SBI, no matter how much you love it.

Great that you won something in the video contest. Maybe you could take all your SBI stuff and make it into a T2 > T3 T3 T3 structure. Or add some actual home schooling videos and other aides that are not simply preselling SBI to break things up.

<http://www.CLIENTS-SITE.com/free-home-school-curriculum-blog.html>

Consider cutting to the chase by removing most of the intro text. Let people see the updates without having to scroll down below the fold.

<http://www.CLIENTS-SITE.com/christian-parenting-sourcesitesearch.html>

Search box at top of page – it will get used. Search box at bottom – it won't. I also found it completely confusing with that graphic that LOOKS LIKE a search box, but isn't!

<http://www.CLIENTS-SITE.com/aboutus.html>

Nice page. Shows the family, tells the story.

4) Content

In general your written content is excellent. You definitely need to show more too – more images.

I think you have fallen into the SBI content trap. Many SBI sites seem to be collections of long articles (not enough of them). The SBI content trap is: SBIs love to write – it's our main advantage over all those sites where people struggle to create any original content at all!

However, this forms a big block in people's minds. “Before I can write this subject, I have to be ready; it's going to take me DAYS to write it all!”

Break each topic down into easy-to-write (and easy-to-read) chunks and suddenly, the job is not so big anymore. Review ONE book; recommend ONE resource; talk about ONE problem of raising a Christian teenager.

Trying to do it all is daunting for you and creates pages that are long and daunting to read. Then you are faced with the problem of what to do with all that content – how DO you illustrate 1800 words? Much easier to pick a topic, find a photo, write 200-300 words and link to a suitable Tier 2.

RECOMMENDATION: Focus on PARENTING content. You have a lot of homeschooling content already, but your site is supposed to be about parenting.

All your kids have transitioned from children to teens; there must be endless great material to work with there! I know the thought of my kids becoming little men scares the heck out of me.

Brainstorm lots of keywords with “teen” or “teenager” to find great topics.

5) AdSense

I hope you are testing AdSense on your site to find out which format works best for you?

I note that the background color of your AdSense blocks is not identical to the background of your website. That may produce unwanted lower click-through rate.

Generally the AdSense is quite well-positioned, top left just inside your content. You will get more clicks if you place a big rectangle across the top of your pages, but you may feel that's just too commercial for the theme of your website.

If you're making enough money from AdSense already, I see no need to move the blocks; but you must test different formats and colors. Check Lori's PDF from the conference.

6) Look and feel

I've talked about this briefly at the introduction. For me, the main problem is a lack of images. I could live with the SBI template, unless you have a strong reason to change (and the skills to begin uploading your own HTML pages); change for change's sake is opening a dangerous can of worms.

Another visual issue is the AdSense not matching the background color; this is an easy fix, but if this is what performs best, then I would not change it for the sake of harmony. You'll have to test both to see which is better.

7) Links

You have done extremely well so far: home page is PR4! That is a major pat on the back for you. I only have one site with a PR4 home page. Good work.

<http://www.CLIENTS-SITE.com/inspirational-family-poems.html>

<http://www.CLIENTS-SITE.com/family-quotes.html>

<http://www.CLIENTS-SITE.com/christian-book-review.html>

<http://www.CLIENTS-SITE.com/7th-grade-home-school-curriculum.html>

<http://www.CLIENTS-SITE.com/highschoolhomeschool.html>

I'm guessing that maybe your older pages have earned the page rank.

You should focus your efforts on link building to Tier 2s which have no page rank. But I repeat, you have done superb work here. Most SBIers don't build links well.

We'll build you some more good, targeted links during the Chicago link exercise that I'm running.

8) Monetizing

Once you have the Content 2 templates, you can more easily build monetizing pages. I've talked at length about reviewing products on a separate keyword-focused content page, rather than just giving them a brief mention and a link.

Show the product. Talk about it with authority. That is the definition of preselling.

You also have several other affiliate programs. These are scattered about almost at random right now. When you fix your Tier 2 > Tier 3s structure, that's the time to focus your affiliate efforts more. Don't just use a banner, show sample products and write with authority again.

People are "banner blind" -- you will do better with text links.

CONCLUSIONS

CLIENTS-SITE.com is a potentially great resource that's been built in a rather haphazard way, with a lack of focus on the core SBI structure of three tiers. This has resulted in your content being disorganized.

This is not a disaster! Far from it. Much easier to move around existing content than have to write more because you don't have enough.

The great news is, you have tons of great links and have earned lots of page rank. You will not lose this by reworking your content: in fact, you will support this by having lots of Tier 3 pages supporting your chosen keyword-focused Tier 2 pages.

I think your first step will be to create a new site blueprint. Work out how to reposition your existing content; I think there are too many T2s for what you have available.

Then brainstorm new parenting-focused keywords. You have enough homeschool content (with the exception of dedicated product reviews); focus on the core theme of your site.

I'm sure you will continue to make progress and see strong growth in traffic if you follow this guideline.

Ashley Cotter-Cairns

What the client said about this report

I would highly recommend Ashley as your go-to person for all things e-business related. He provided an extremely comprehensive site assessment for me at a very affordable price. He worked in a timely manner and within a matter of days submitted a nine-page report.

He detailed many areas of improvement and even gave me guidance on how to implement those suggestions. When I needed clarification or help with the implementation, he patiently walked me through the process.

I also purchased a reasonably priced template from Ashley which has streamlined my ability to link to affiliates quickly from my content pages.

The next time (and there will be a next time) I need help with my online business, I won't hesitate to call Ashley Cotter-Cairns!

Linda Wakefield Kelley

<http://www.christian-parenting-source.com/>