

Section I: Meet the Real Scribd

You've decided to give Scribd a whirl... but you don't want to be floundering around, trying to figure out the best way to use this powerful social networking/publishing platform while others rush past you. What you need is a "roadmap" – something to help you navigate not only Scribd's own often-conflicting rules and regulations, but all the misinformation floating around the net.

In other words, you want it to fast-track you on your way to generating serious traffic.

That's what you're going to find here.

But first, let's make sure your map is accurate, containing the most up-to-date information. The most direct route to a destination is not the only benefits roadmaps offer – they also point out natural and man-made obstacles, as well as dangers, pitfalls and alternate routes.

So let's not rush to embrace the usual optimistic traffic hype you read on many blogs and in various self-anointed guides: Before you invest time in this particular marketing strategy, we'll take time to examine some of the myths about Scribd and acquaint you with its unique advantages.

The Truth about Scribd Traffic

The first thing you need to know about Scribd traffic: It doesn't cater to the usual SEO patterns and algorithms. In fact, during 2009, Scribd deliberately and voluntarily did something no other major social networking site has ever done before – it killed 50% of its own traffic, according to an article by Techcrunch.com.

There has been much speculation as to why any company would deliberately do this. There are several reasons, but in major part, this move came as a response to Scribd realizing that a huge portion of its traffic was due to pirated works in print – works by literary giants such as J. R. R. Tolkien, Ken Follett and J. K. Rowling. In fact, CEO Trip Adler acknowledged this when he admitted Scribd was “toning down its SEO efforts and further reducing pirated content.” While they were busy ruthlessly discouraging traffic, Scribd also instituted a new database of published works, to ensure the problem of piracy eventually disappears – all new works will be checked against the database, which Scribd admits is growing daily.

The massive Summer 2009 traffic loss didn't appear to concern Scribd, apparently wisely looking towards long-term goals; and their confidence now seems justified. Current Quantcast.com analysis shows their traffic easily surpassing the 5 million at its height last spring – before the “crackdown”.

And that's without the benefit of J. K. Rowling's pirated *Harry Potter*-related content.