

The Magazine for LEGO® Enthusiasts of All Ages!



\$8.95
in the US

Brick Journal

Issue 34 • May 2015
people • building • community

*Behind the Scenes of BrickNerd Studios'
Batman vs Superman*

*Brandon Griffith reveals
ComicBricks*

*Jared Burks builds the
Agents of SHIELD*

**Instructions
AND MORE!**



Batman, Superman TM & © DC Comics

People

Ten-Year-Old LEGO® Lover Builds Brick Loot!

Article by Jackie Pilossoph

Photography courtesy of Brick Loot

"It just makes me happy." That's how Parker Krex described the feeling he gets when building with LEGO. The fifth-grader, who lives in suburban Chicago with his parents Erin and Steve, said he has been building ever since he can remember.

Parker's passion for LEGO has led to building something a lot bigger than a LEGO set. The Krex's are the owners of *Brick Loot*, the subscription box business geared towards LEGO and brick lovers, which they launched last fall.

"Parker actually thought of the idea," said Erin Krex. "We were having a garage sale and he was selling some of his toys to buy more LEGO sets. We just started talking about it, and we ended up writing a business plan that day."

Krex—who described herself as an entrepreneur at heart, given two other highly successful businesses she owns—said she and Parker actually prepared a mock box and gave a Shark Tank type presentation to Steve, who would be their investor. With Steve on board, the Krex's shipped their first *Brick Loot* box out in December of 2014 to over 500 subscribers, who Krex said were gained solely through social media.

"Subscription box companies have grown significantly in the last three years," she said. "People miss getting mail now that our world is all digital. It's nice for people to get a surprise every month with things they know they are going to love."

Here's how *Brick Loot* works. Customers can sign up for a one-month, three-month or six-month subscription. Once a month, they receive a box at their home, filled with new, unique and custom LEGO and brick-related items, along with other accessories.

"It starts with one idea, and then we begin searching companies that have products that fit our theme," said Krex, who explained that February's box contained *Star Wars* related items, including a light-up lightsaber, capes for minifigures and waterslide decals. "Parker does all the research to find out what companies we should partner with and what should go in the box."

"Testing out the products is the most fun part of this," Parker said. "It's not really work because it's so fun."



A Brick Loot box, with items from BrickForge, Brickstix, a kit from BrickBuildersPro, Liteup Blocks, and many other partners.

BrickLoot.com's boxes cost anywhere from \$23-\$27, depending on the length of subscription, and have an average value of \$50-\$70, according to Krex. Box items come from the company's many partners, which consist of 17 at present (Brickforge, OYO Sports, nanoblock, BrickStix, Brick Popper, Liteup Blocks, BrickBuildersPro, Abbie Dabbles, Brickmania, InRoad Toys, Brickstuds, United Bricks, *BrickJournal*, Cape Madness, Vinyl is your friend, and No Starch Press), a number Krex said is growing monthly.

Ryan Riel is the owner of *Brick Popper*, his Colorado-based company that manufactures a tool which separates LEGO and other bricks. "Erin approached me and I took a look at the website," said Riel. "They were connected to all



these other companies in the industry that I wanted a connection with, so becoming one of Brick Loot's partners made a lot of sense because I knew it would offer my product a lot of exposure."

LG Orlando is a custom LEGO instruction and kit designer, and the owner of his Atlanta-based company, *BrickBuildersPro*. Orlando has designed three custom brick kits for *Brick Loot* so far. "What Brick Loot and I are giving customers is a novelty, a work of art. Something they've never seen and something you can't buy in a store. That's special," he said.

Krex said one aspect of the business that is challenging is making the custom LEGO kits, since LEGO does not sell mass quantities to anyone except LEGO master builders.



Parker Krex.

"We have to purchase LEGO bricks from the secondary market, which for our February boxes amounted to almost 100,000 bricks from more than 60 BrickLink vendors around the world," she said.

With almost 1,000 subscribers to date, *Brick Loot* has hired a full time employee and is opening a commercial warehouse in early spring.

"As long as Parker has been alive, he has seen his father and I as entrepreneurs, and now we are seeing perhaps he's learned from us," Krex said. "He took his building hobby and helped us turn it into a big business." When asked how many hours a day he spends building with LEGO, Parker smiled and replied, "I think 24."

"Why do kids love LEGO? Because they're unlimited on the scale of the imagination," Orlando said. "Every human wants to build. Everyone has a desire to create." 



You can go to Brick Loot's webpage by going to <http://www.brickloot.com/> or scanning this QR code!