Web Analytics

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**What is Web Analytics?**

Web analytics allow an organization to measure, collect, and analyze data from the visitors of an organization’s website. Web analytics is used primarily for marketing research. You can view the effectiveness of your website and exactly where the traffic is coming from. You can also screen the results of different types of advertising. After launching an advertising campaign, you can compare the popularity of the website before and after the ad campaign.

**Why is Web Analytics Important?**

Web analytics is used to boost your nonprofit organization’s brand. It is a way to analyze your website’s usage statistics in order to better reach your target audience, and customize web content to their needs. By knowing the effectiveness of each of your webpages, it can help you improve the quality of your content, which increases website interaction by your audience. Ultimately, it can increase audience recognition of your organization’s impact.


- **Traffic sources** – where your website visitors are coming from
- **Visitor Loyalty** – how many times the same person has accessed the website
- **Top Landing Pages** – how much each page is used as the first page of your website visitors access
- **Goals and Goal Values** – what your visitors to your site are doing that has value to your organization
- **Keyword Tag Clouds** – how much each word used to search to find your website

However before you start with web analytics, consider these questions:

- What are the objectives for your website? Why does your website exist? Your website should bring value to your organization, and you should identify what type of value you expect.
- How will you measure these objectives? Identify key, specific metrics and goals for each metric.
- What are some actionable events that can be identified to meet these objectives? For example, in order to measure your website’s objectives, do you need to collect additional information about your website’s visitors?

Once you have some direction by considering the above questions, you are ready to begin collecting and analyzing website statistics. The rest of this document discusses the use of Google Analytics to do this.
Google Analytics
Google Analytics is an easy to use and free web analytics tool. Using this tool, you can see where the traffic you are getting is coming from and glean insights into how to get more traffic to your website.

Note: If you use WordPress as a content management system, there is an add-on for adding Google Analytics to your website. This makes it simpler to add Google Analytics capabilities to your website.

How to Create a Google Analytics Account and Link to Your Website
1. Go to www.google.com/analytics
2. Sign up for a Google account (if you do not have one), or use your Google account to sign up for Google Analytics.
3. To start the account creation process, you decide which website you are going to analyze. You could also choose to analyze a mobile application. Choose whether the site you are analyzing is a mobile application or a website. In the example, a website is being tracked.

4. You must give your website a title that will be used as a reference of it within the Google Analytics website. In the example below, the website’s name is “My personal site.” This should be easy to remember, especially if you want to track more than one websites.
5. Enter the web site URL. This will be the actual website that you type in when you open an Internet application. In the example below, the web site URL is blogs.baylor.edu/monicaricks

6. Once you have created an account, then you will receive both a tracking identification number and code to place in your website’s HTML code on each page that you want to track.
7. If you are using a WordPress website, add the tracking identification number to your WordPress website by clicking on the Google Analytics add-on button and entering your tracking identification number in the site tracking code textbox.
Using Major Metrics in Google Analytics
To make efficient use of your Google Analytics account, you can track all of the key measurements that Kaushik mentions (see page 1).

Traffic Sources
Identifying traffic sources tells you where your visitors are coming from. This can help you focus on a different source if needed.

1. Click on the Traffic Sources tab on the left side of the Google Analytics dashboard page. Then click on Sources tab to view the different sources.

When you click the Sources tab, tabs will appear that tell you if visitors are visiting your website by:

- Directly entering the URL (Direct)
- Clicking on a link from another site (Referrals)
- Searching keywords in a search engine (Search)
- Clicking on email campaigns (Campaign)

There are tabs in the navigation area for each of these ways to access your organization’s website.
2. You can click on each of these tabs to find exactly what percentage of your website’s visitors is coming from each source. Below is the page on direct traffic.

3. You can view the percentages of how much of your traffic is coming from each source by clicking on the Overview tab in the Traffic Sources section. Notice the pie graph in the middle of the page that illustrates how much traffic is coming from search, referral, and direct traffic.
**Things to Consider:**

It is a sign of a healthy organization if you have a diversified customer acquisition strategy. Ideally, you would have:

- **20% Direct traffic** – If you have low direct traffic, you might have to worry that you are not very good at customer service and retention.
- **20-30% Referring sites** – Since this type of traffic is free to you, you want to have as much as possible.
- **10% Campaigns** – You want some of your traffic to be coming from people that you invited to your site deliberately.
- **40-50% Search** – If this number is too large, it indicates an overexposure to search rankings. If it is too low, you are not attracting enough people through search engines.

If the traffic sources for your Google Analytics account do not match the percentages above, you might need to reevaluate how you are gaining visitors to your website.

- If you are missing traffic from campaigns, you may need to improve your email campaign. In some cases, you can simply add more emails to your campaign, but the presentation or the content may also need to be better to motivate people to respond. You can test the campaign ahead of time with a small focus group to see if it captures people’s attention.
- If you are missing direct traffic, then you will have to work on customer retention through keeping relevant and current information on your website, such as having a blog that people can subscribe to. URLs with high return rates suggest webpages that have been favorites or included in email.
- If your referring sites are low, you may want to encourage organizations that sponsor, donate, or volunteer to include a link from their organization’s website to your website. Social media campaigns can also help you promote your website.
- If your traffic from search engines is low, having other organizations put links to your website on their websites also increases the likelihood that search engines will list your website higher in the results. Also, you can incorporate more meta tags in order to include more key words that when searched for in a search engine will bring up your website.
Visitor Loyalty
You can also view how many of your visitors are returning to your website after a previous visit.

1. Click on the Traffic Sources tab on the left side.

2. Click on the All Traffic tab. Notice the percentage of new visitors in the middle of the page.

Things to Consider:
If the percentage of new visitors is high, then you might have a problem with customer retention, which could impact the long term sustainability of your organization’s business model. In order to increase visitor loyalty, you can perform a few simple steps found at this website which includes:

- Ensure your website contains frequently updated information.
- Allow visitors to subscribe to your newsletter which will regularly drive them to your website.
- Add a blog to which people can subscribe to via an RSS feed.
- Ensure you are serving good, current content that meets your audiences’ needs.
Top Landing Pages

You can find out which web pages are the most and least visited by doing a search for the top landing pages.

1. Choose the Content tab on the left side of the page, and then choose the Overview tab. If you want to see a timeline of a specific page, choose that page from the list.

Notice the pages of your organization’s website at the bottom. This section will tell you the amount of page views, what the bounce rate is, and the average time that visitors spend on each page of your organization’s website. The list of pages is listed from the page with the highest number of views to the page with the lowest number of views.

- The amount of unique page views is different than visits that you saw on the dashboard home page of Google Analytics. **Visits** count each time a visitor goes to any page on your website. Unique **page views**, however, eliminate multiple views of the same page.
- The **average time on page** is the amount of time visitors spend on each page of your website. Do not dwell on the average page time for Google Analytics when the bounce rate is 100%. For an explanation of why, please visit [this website](#).
- The **bounce rate** is the amount of visitors that go only to one page before exiting the website.
**Things to Consider:**

If you are able to identify which pages are effectively drawing visitors into your site (i.e., high page views), you can take best practices from a page that is working well and apply them to other pages. Be sure to look at both page views and bounce rate. You may have high page view numbers, but if bounce rate are also high, this may mean that the content may not meet expectations of the audience.

For example, maybe you have a great homepage, but if most of your visitors are landing on your site by way of your blog, you may want to include easily accessible information about your organization on the blog pages, so blog readers will know more about your mission.

Ideally, we want a bounce rate of less than 100% because we want new and recurring visitors to remain on your organization’s website. In order to keep people on the website, Kristie Hines claims you should ([http://blog.kissmetrics.com/what-you-can-learn-from-bounce-rate-how-to-improve-it/](http://blog.kissmetrics.com/what-you-can-learn-from-bounce-rate-how-to-improve-it/)):

- Ensure pages of your website contain frequently updated information.
- Add links to more pages within your website in your content.
- Improve your content. Your content may not provide the information a visitor is looking for, so you will need to carefully consider what type of content would be most important for your visitors. Also, consider using a small focus group to see if the content is effective.
- Make your pages have some sort of clear call-to-action that lets your audience actively interact with your website. Some call-to-action operations are subscribe, register, donate, event registration, surveys, polls, etc.

**Goals and Goal Values**

With Goals, you can track more complicated data patterns. A goal value tells you how much money that someone getting to this page might generate (could be event attendance pages, donations pages, volunteer interest pages, etc.).

There are four types of Goals:

- **URL Destination** – keeps track of specific web addresses for your website. Each time someone goes to that web page, they trigger the goal. These are ideal for confirmation pages, PDFs, and thank you pages because these types of pages are a signal that a visitor has interacted with your website. You can now tell if a person is interacting with your website the way you want them to.
- **Visit Duration** – tracks how many people stay on your site for a certain amount of time. You can also use this goal to track how many visits are below a certain amount of time.
- **Pages/visit** – tracks the number of pages each visitor sees before they leave the website.
- **Events** – tracks different types of events or specific actions including:
  - External links clicked on
  - Downloads
  - Time spent watching videos
  - Social media buttons clicked
A goal value places a monetary value on a goal being completed or a visitor taking a certain type of action while on your organization’s website (i.e. visiting a certain webpage). Goal values should be determined by how much value that part of the website brings in to the organization (http://support.google.com/analytics/answer/2907896). If your average donation is $100 and approximately 5% of visitors that subscribe to your blog make a donation, then you can set the goal value for each person subscribing to the blog at $5. Goal values are also used to calculate the index metric value.

1. To set up goals, click Admin and then click on Goal from the third column.

2. Click CREATE A GOAL.

3. Enter a Goal Name in the textbox under Name, and then choose Type (discussed on page 11). In this example, we chose Duration. Click Next Step when you’re done.
4. Enter the duration time. Then you may turn on Value to set a goal for how much money you want to make from the website. For the example below, we used 5 minutes for duration and $10 USD for value. Click Create Goal to finish.

5. After goal are setup, to see how often your goals are completed, click on the Conversions tab, then the Goals tab. Notice the numbers in the middle of the page. **Goal completions** refers to the amount of times that visitors completed your goal (i.e. visited a confirmation webpage). **Goal value** multiplies the amount of goal completions by the amount of each goal value is worth.
**Things to Consider:**
Low numbers mean people aren’t interacting with your organization via your website. You can adjust your practices based on the type of goal you are setting:

- **URL Destination** – Visitors not going to the confirmation pages and other similar pages could signal the fact that people aren’t interacting to your organization’s website in a way that you would like them to. One way to get more people to interact more with your website would be to make the page that you want visitors to find more accessible.

- **Visit Duration** – The visit duration being low could mean that visitors are not finding what they need or the content isn’t useful. You may need to adjust your content to be more informative.

- **Pages/visit** – If your user is not visiting enough pages each time, you have a problem that deals with bounce rate of visits. You need to more frequently update your content.

- **Events** – If there are social media buttons that no one’s clicking on, that could mean that your audience isn’t interested in social media and that social media is not an effective way to reach your audience. You should find more ways to get the word out about your organization.
**Keyword Reports**

Keyword reports allows you to look at the top keywords viewers use to search your website.

1. From the navigation menu, choose Traffic Sources, then Overview.

2. When you scroll down, Keyword is on the right. When you click on a keyword, it'll show you metric overview for that keyword, such as number of new visits, bounce rate, etc.
**Things to Consider:**

Search Engine Optimization (SEO) ensures that a website will show up in as high a position as possible during search engine keyword searches. Thus ensures more people can find your website when searching for information. Google claims small modifications to your website can be made in order to make a large impact on SEO (http://static.googleusercontent.com/external_content/untrusted_dlp/www.google.com/en/us/webmasters/docs/search-engine-optimization-starter-guide.pdf). To improve on SEO:

- Make sure you know how your viewers found your website and what types words or phrases your clients use most often to describe your organization. If you know these two things, it is easier to adjust keywords, so viewers can easily find your website.
- Utilize more meta tags. These are words that you place in the website’s HTML code that people will search for in search engines and be directed to your website. Through meta tags, you will accurately summarize the page’s content and use unique descriptions for each page.
- Include a unique title for each webpage on your organization’s website that accurately represents the content for that page. You should use brief, but descriptive titles; if the title is too long, Google will show only a portion of it in the search result.
- Consider using the most searched keywords on your homepage in the page title, page description, header, and first content paragraph, prioritizing placement respectively. This will increase page view by keywords.
- Promote your website in the right ways. Utilize social media to build a stronger online community for your organization. Ask your sponsors to include a link to your organization’s website on their website.
Google Dashboard

Google Dashboard is a tool that allows you to look at different, customized data of your website in one location, which means it is easier to access important data. It allows you to grab bits and pieces of data from various reports, and collect them all into one overview. You can have up to 20 dashboards per website. The reason you want to create a dashboard is so you can have all the important metrics in one location, rather than going to find them from different places. Most importantly, you can customize the dashboard to suit the unique needs of your company.

Creating a Starter Dashboard

1. To set up a dashboard, choose Dashboards from the navigation menu on the left, and then, in the dropdown, choose +New Dashboard

2. You have the option of Blank Canvas or Starter Dashboard. Let us start by choosing Starter Dashboard. Name the dashboard, and then choose Create Dashboard.
3. Choosing Starter Dashboard automatically display the following metrics on your Google Dashboard. Many of these metrics can also be found individually using the steps described in previous sections.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metric</th>
<th>Data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Visits</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unique Visitors</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visits by Browser</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet Explorer</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firefox</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safari</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. Visit Duration and Pages</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bounce Rate</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. In order to see your dashboard when logging into Google Analytics, in the Navigation menu under Dashboards, expand Private then choose the dashboard you want to see (for example, Starter).