

How to Measure the Effectiveness of your Business Website – Web Analytics

BY WYLIE BLANCHARD

MYTH # 1 IF YOU BUILT IT THEY WILL COME

An entrepreneur-friend recently asked, “how can I measure the effectiveness of my business website?” This is a very important question for entrepreneurs who are working to bring in new business through the Internet because the answer can tell you where your website is most effective, where it is least effective and where you may want to re-focus your efforts. The answer is simple.

“You can determine the effectiveness of your business website by using Web Analytics.”

What is Web Analytics:

Web Analytics is the process of collecting, measuring, analyzing and reporting Internet data for the purpose of understanding and improving online efforts – and it is highly useful for improving the effectiveness of a website. Web Analytics is not a simple process. It requires a large amount of time and effort that most people simply don't have. Luckily, there are tools available, many of which are free, that can help simplify the process. One such tool is Google Analytics, which is a free online service that you can sync to your website to help determine its efficiency. You can use it to measuring your online traffic, your online sales and Internet inquiries about your products and services.

Learn how Online Activity happens:

The initial setup of Google Analytics, or any web analytic tool, will take a little time because you will need to strategically determine what it is that you wish to learn about your website and the online activity it generates. Perhaps, you want to learn the “keywords” that consumers use that eventually lead them to your website or you may want to know which webpages on your website are being viewed the most by potential clients. That last scenario, “which webpages are being viewed the most,” is very important because the answer can potentially tell you where you want to strategically place advertisements for your services and products. If you don’t have time to set up web analytics for your website then ask your website developer to set it up for you.

I thought the Home Page would be the most viewed page on my website?

Not always. Other webpages can become the most viewed page for a variety of reasons. For instance, a specific page can become popular because there are words and phrases on the page that highly relate to keyword phrases used in search engines or because another website, that receives a lot of online visitors, created a link to your webpage on its site and its online visitors are coming to your site by clicking that link. Both scenarios are great for you because they increase the search engine optimization (SEO) of your website. However, figuring out which of the two scenarios is the determining factor is where Web Analytics comes into play because it will tell you how it happened and answering the how may give you a clue into how to approach your next marketing effort.

What else can I do with Google Analytics and other analytic tools?

Visualize Data Measuring your online traffic, your online sales and Internet inquiries about your products and services generates a large amounts of data. Easily create charts and diagrams for the information you’ve collected.

Determine the demographics of your online visitors Ever want to know where your visitors are located? Learn where they are when arrive at your site. You may learn that marketing to a certain demographic is beneficial to your business.

Learn what visitors are searching for on your site Do you have a “search box” on your site? You already want to know what keyword and phrases are being used in global search engine but what about the search engine on your website. Learn what keywords and phrases your clients are searching for once they arrive at your site.

Email Reports Do you need to share data metrics and reports with others. Setup reports, and schedule when they are sent and whom they are sent to.

What it all means:

You can determine the effectiveness of your website by using Web Analytic tools like Google Analytics. You can set it up these tools yourself or you can ask your website developer to set it up for you. By using

analytic tools you can learn how online activity occurs and then you can use that information to improve the effectiveness of your website and your online business efforts.

Here's a list of web analytic tools that will help you determine if your website is working:

- Google Analytics: A free analytics service offered by Google to help you determine what keywords users used to find your website, how your website ranks on search engines, which of your webpages users visited the most, how long they stayed on each page and much more
- Google Content Experiments: Allows you to measure different versions of the same webpage. For instance, let's say you have two ideas for how to create a product page but aren't sure which will be the most effective in generating a sale. Content Experiments will show 50% of visitors the "Version A" and the other 50% the "Version B" and then you can measure the effectiveness based on your object.
- HP Optimost - Autonomy: This helps you determine the best keywords to use in your online advertising efforts by measuring data from social media, customer feedback, call center calls and more.
- ClickTale: This tool tracks, measure and reports every movement a visitor makes within your site. Including everything the user clicks, presses or focuses on. In addition it can help improve your user forms by reporting which fields may take too long to fill, are left blank, and cause your visitors to leave.
- UserTesting: This service uses real people to test the usability of your site.
- CrazyEgg: This service helps you determine what a person will focus on when looking at your webpage. Using this information you can then make changes to the webpage to get people to focus their attention where you want it.



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Wylie Blanchard is an IT Consultant and Database Specialist. He enjoys helping individuals use technology as a tool to amplify their expertise. As a columnist, for Great Tech Pros, Wylie focuses his analysis and research on all things Business Technology. He is a father of twin-girls, gadget enthusiast and a self proclaimed pizza connoisseur.



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