

Don't Count Your Hit's!

By Maria Marsala

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Do you have a hosting service that provides statistics for your website? Did you notice that the number of "hit's" to your site is astronomical? Many individuals think that the number of "hit's" tells you how many visitors you've had to your site. WRONG! The correct number to find would be the number of unique visitors or unique sites. Even if one person visited your site 4 times and viewed 10 of your pages, they'd count as "1" unique visitor.

What do you do if your hosting service doesn't provide "unique visitor" statistics? According to Jim Wilson, owner of one of the most useful sites on the web, www.jimtools.com, your "best bet is page views when dealing with your server logs. Another way to go is to use a service like WebTrends Live www.webtrends.com which does a pretty good job of figuring out total visitors and first time visitors." Jim has written an excellent article on web traffic www.jimworld.com/trafficreports.html

HIT: Every time someone views a page on your site, each page, each document they could download on that page, and each graphic on that page makes up the "hit's" for that page. Example: one page with 4 pictures is equal to 5 hit's.

PAGE VIEWS: Every time someone views a page on your site, the visit is also recorded in "page views". Example: One page with 4 pictures is equal to 1 page view.

UNIQUE URL'S: Every time someone views a page on your site, during a 24 hour period of time, the page is logged as a unique URL. Example: One visitor viewing 1 page with 4 graphics would be counted at 5.

UNIQUE SITES: This is the number of unique visitors to your site. Example: Each visitor to your site during a one month period is counted as "1" unique site, no matter how many times they visited your site.

Just to show you how the numbers vary, below are some numbers from my site in September 2001.

Hit's: 77,158
Page Views: 10,855
Unique URL's: 548
Unique Sites: 5347

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