

Top 7 Reasons to Review your Web Traffic Analysis

By Philippa Gamse

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Understanding your Website's traffic logs is a crucial component of your online marketing mix. It tells you what your visitors do, of their own volition, so it's "market research that cannot lie!"

If you understand what you're seeing, you can make some great strategic and marketing decisions, not only for your Website, but for your business as a whole.

Here are seven key marketing elements to study in your traffic analysis:

1. General Statistics

Remember that a "hit" is recorded every time the visitor gets an image or some text from your site -- what you need to know is unique user sessions, and how much time people spend on the site -- how "sticky" and engaging it is. If you have tons of traffic, but the average time spent on your site is less than a minute -- you've got a problem!

2. Most and Least Requested Pages

So what's really hot, and what's not on your site? The most popular pages give you great clues as to what to offer more of. The least viewed pages may tell you that some of your content isn't as fascinating as you think, or this maybe a heads-up that your navigation isn't driving traffic as effectively as it should.

3. Top Entry and Exit Pages

These are great reminders that not all your visitors come through your home page, so you need complete navigation on every entry point to your site. And if people are leaving from pages that you don't want them to, perhaps you need stronger calls to action in those areas.

4. Single Access Pages

These are the pages where a visitor looks at the site then leaves immediately. Since the job of your home page is partly to filter the traffic that's not right for you, there'll always be some of these. But if you have a splash page, and significant numbers of visitors don't stay through it... perhaps it shouldn't be there?

5. Cities, States and Countries

No, your site isn't a huge hit just in Virginia -- those are all the AOL users! Unfortunately, because this information depends on where the ISP is based, it can be pretty misleading. But if you are getting a lot of hits from other countries, that might be a hint for some second language content.

6. Referring URL's

This tells you which search engines are sending you traffic, and which of your advertising and linking strategies are working. It also tells you about sites that may have links to you that you didn't know about -- check these out -- it's a great relationship builder to send a thank you -- you might even get some new business from it!

7. Top Search Keywords and Phrases

Once the search engines have listed your site, these tell you what the really hot search terms are for your business. Pay attention to these -- they may have some surprises -- one of my clients recently wrote a book on a subject that was really sought after on her site -- until she saw the top keywords, she had no idea it was so popular!

Philippa Gamse, CyberSpeaker, is an internationally recognized e-business strategist. Check out her free tipsheet "Beyond the Search Engines" for 17 ideas to promote your Website:
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