Website Metrics

How is your website performing? That was the key question in my last column. Now let’s discuss some important metrics that you can use to get a feel for how well your website is doing. This is meant to be a “starter” for your looking into your website performance.

**Top Visited Pages** are a compiled list of the most viewed Web pages on your site, in descending order. Knowing your top visited pages will provide you with a starting point of where you should focus your efforts, in terms of optimizing site content—and increasing your conversion rate!

**Pages Per Visit (PPV)** measures how many Web pages a particular user (or group of users) views on your site in one visit. This metric is an excellent indicator in determining the quality of your site’s content and structure, and tells you how inclined visitors are to navigate to various pages once they land on your site. It is easy to calculate the PPV. Divide the “page views” by the number of “visits” to get the Average page views per visit (PPV).

The **Entry Page** is the first impression a visitor sees when landing on your site. Most people assume that the only entry page is your homepage, but this is not true. Viewers can initially land on any of your site’s pages, and in a number of ways—from a search engine link, banner ad, link from another website, or even from typing a secondary page address directly into the browser field. Identifying which of your pages are common entry pages can help you optimize your content around the various entry points.

The **Exit Page** is the last page your visitor was on before leaving your site. When you initially designed your site, you should have identified one or more paths you wanted your visitor to follow. Knowing the most common exit pages will help you determine if visitors are reaching the pages you intended. For example, are customers reaching the confirmation page after attempting to make a purchase? Any pages that are not directing visitors to complete your intended path should probably be redeveloped.

Another metric to look at is the **Top Sources of Traffic & Their Conversion Rates**. This information will provide you with an overview of the types of traffic that are coming to your site. Visitors generally fall under these categories:

- Direct Traffic: visitors who directly navigate to your site, whether from typing the site address into a navigation bar or by way of a bookmark they have set up for your site address
✓ Referring URLs: other websites sending traffic to you, online marketing links that you have set up around the Web (in banner ads, etc.), or affiliate sites that link to yours.

✓ Search Engines: Google, Yahoo, Bing, etc. (includes both organic and paid traffic)

✓ Other: links from any additional marketing campaigns you launch, like email.

I suggest that if you carefully analyze how these different groups convert to what you want your website to do, you will help yourself to make sound decisions on where to spend your next marketing dollar.

Reviewing the number of new vs. returning visitors also helps you gain an understanding of how many times a customer interacts with your business before purchasing. When reviewing this metric though, it is important to bear in mind the ultimate goals of your site. Are you trying to sell something or just provide information? If you have an ecommerce site, you want people to keep coming back to your site, to purchase again and again. But if you own a restaurant and the goal of your site is to simply provide information like menu, address, and operating hours, you may not be interested in this particular metric.

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