5 Metrics to Check On Your Small Business Website Performance

Last week I was reminded by a small business CEO that I had been writing about E-Commerce but had not said anything about the small business website and how it is performing. That is a great question and as I was visiting with this CEO we talked about the frustration with so many other things to pay attention to in your business, tracking your website's performance can be a daunting task.

Web analytics platforms put an abundance of data at your fingertips. If you haven't the funds to hire someone to keep tabs on it for you, however, you may feel overwhelmed and under-inspired to dig into it. So I shared five metrics to watch and this CEO found this helpful.

How can you avoid spending a lot of time and still get a decent grasp on the effectiveness of your website? Keep it simple by focusing on a few key metrics. Several that can provide beneficial insight include:

- **Unique Visitors** – This represents the number of people that visited your site during a specific time period (last week, last month, last year, or some other time frame). It can give you a sense of whether or not your marketing efforts (both online and offline) are attracting people to your website.

- **Repeat Visitors** – If the number of visitors returning to your site is growing, it is a good sign people are finding something of value there.

- **Referral Traffic** – These are the websites and individual pages that are sending visitors to your website. As users click on external links (on other blogs, websites, social media sites, online directories, etc.) that go to your site, they are tracked so you know how many visitors come from those external sources. This is powerful knowledge than can help you identify what marketing and outreach tactics are most effective at drawing traffic to your site.

- **Exit Pages** – This metric identifies the specific pages from which visitors (who viewed multiple pages during their visits) leave your website. By seeing which pages have the higher number of exits, you can determine if that's acceptable. For example, you’d expect customers to leave your site after completing orders and viewing your order confirmation page. But if other pages have a high incidence of exits, it may be because they’re not providing adequate information or because they’re difficult to navigate.
• **Bounce Rate** – When visitors "bounce," they visit one page of your site and then leave without viewing any other pages. What's an acceptable bounce rate can vary depending on the type of business you have and what you're trying to accomplish with your website. Bounce rate could mean people found the information they needed right away, or people might have bookmarked your site to come back to it later, or it could mean they didn’t find what they were looking for and didn’t have an interest in going deeper into your site. Different sources have different ideas of what a “bad” bounce rate is. But as a general guideline, you might consider it worth investigating further if yours is over 55 percent.

• **Here is a Bonus Metric: Conversion Rate** – If you've established goals to track in your analytics (such as signing up for an e-newsletter, making a purchase, downloading a white paper, etc.), this metric can help you assess how well your copywriting and site layout are compelling visitors to take action.

There are additional metrics, as well, to give you more insight. But if you're short on time and/or in-house resources and you don't have a budget for outsourcing assistance, these basics will provide you with valuable information that can help you in your marketing efforts. You can also [reach out to your local chapter of SCORE](http://www.seminnesota.score.org/) for marketing guidance. Mentoring from the small business experts at SCORE is free, and it can help you during all phases of starting and growing your business.

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