

# CATALYST



Business Strategy | Marketing Communications

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## Put your analytics to work

### Maximize your Website's Effectiveness with Google Analytics

Those familiar with this free tool advocate its use. One reason users like Google Analytics is its ease in tracking marketing trends, such as where your visitors come from and how they interact with your site. With this information you can garner more effective results by writing better ads and creating higher-conversion websites. Plus, the tool is easy for your site administrator to add to your current website.

To gauge the effectiveness of your site, consider setting aside two hours a month to review the stats with your webmaster. This research is made available at no charge and many people just don't take the time to understand and analyze what is unfolding within their site. These reports are simple to read and user friendly, with lots of graphs.

To help you understand the full scope of how to read reports from Google Analytics, The Marx Group is publishing a three-part Catalyst to guide you on how to interpret the reports to their fullest potential.

### Part One

In this first section we give you more details on the following reports:

1. Bounce Rate vs. Stick Rate
2. Conversion Rate
3. Page Views
4. Building Visitor Loyalty

### Bounce Rate vs. Stick Rate: Turn Visitors into Customers

Google Analytics works 24 hours a day recording every movement into and out of your site. It determines your bounce rate -- how quickly a person enters and then immediately leaves to go to another site. It also tracks how long a person stays around - your stick rate. Writing compelling copy, choosing attention-getting graphics will engage your audience and make them want to stay. One way to know your visitors' are not being 'grabbed' is a high bounce rate. A high stick rate means you're speaking to your visitors needs.

Research shows that 75% of online sales come from repeat visits. Therefore, your main goal is to turn your visitors into repeat visitors. Give visitors a good reason to return again and again.

### Conversion Rate: Compelling Visitors to Stay (and purchase)

If interest is lost and visitors are not converted into customers, ask yourself:

- Are you telling a compelling story?
- Is your copy short and to the point?
- Are graphics engaging and quick to load?
- Do visitors have to click through many pages just to get to your shopping area?

Google Analytics help you to analyze your bounce rate, your stick rate, AND your conversion rate: if 300 visitors viewed your online shopping page and only 20 purchased, your conversion rate is 15%. What is happening, or not, to convert visitors into customers? Are they losing interest? Are they confused about the next step to purchase? A high bounce rate can mean your competition got the sale.

From the point of entry your goal is to entertain, educate and sell; to compel your visitor to move towards making a purchase. A high stick rate can translate into a high conversion rate.

Brainstorm with your team on how to improve your website pages by testing different copy, images and layouts and using Google Analytics to determine if your editing process is improving results.

### **Page Views: The Key to Visitor Retention**

Analytics provide reports designed to help you make educated marketing and sales decisions on content, pricing, graphics and more. A very important report is "Page Views." If you have specialized product pages, which ones are being viewed most often? Perhaps visitors are viewing the same products over and over but not making a purchase. Perhaps there are products that no one is even seeing because they never make it to the pages. You can use this information to your advantage.

With analytics you can follow the trail of your visitors. Perhaps you can't make the sale on the first page, but you can increase your odds that visitors stay and look around. Examine the pages that have minimal or no visits. Maybe these pages need to be omitted. Can two pages be combined? Can you add important details to pages that are being viewed more often? As your site becomes more straightforward and relevant, page views will increase.

### **Visitor Loyalty: Give Them a Reason to Come Back**

You can use Google Analytic reports to investigate how many times visitors come back to your site. Expect to see 80% as first time visitors. Still, the rule of thumb is that 70% of those will not return. Your focus is on how to make new visitors repeat visitors.

Try setting visitor loyalty and purchasing goals. Be realistic and flexible. Give yourself enough time to see results develop, especially if you are making tweaks to your site to test what works best.

### **Conclusion: Information is Power**

Your visitors are your future customers; keep a close eye on them. Their website movement can give you more information than you think. Who's visiting and where are they from? Are they new or repeat visitors? How long do they stay? How are they moving through your site? Which pages get attention and which do not? Are your visitors looky-loo's or are they buying? What will have them come back?

You don't have to spend hundreds of dollars on consumer reports when you have free reports that tell you exactly what is happening on your site. Take the time to analyze reports, make changes and then test the changes - as an ongoing process. You will find that the time and effort spent on this powerful - FREE - information from Google Analytics will give you long-lasting value. You will be better able to convert prospects to customers, and then keep those customers coming back for more.

**Page ranking will be discussed at length in Part Two.**