

Introduction

This document provides an overview on how to interpret Analytics Reports.

Background

Analytics can email pre-configured reports showing high level website activity metrics.

These reports can contain a number of modules including;

- Dashboard
- Traffic Sources Overview
- Map Overlay
- Keywords report
- Content Overview
- Referring Sites

This document seeks to provide a business interpretation for each of these report modules.

An appendix detailing individual web metrics derived from the Google Analytics Online Help has also been provided on page 6

Interpreting Web Statistics

There is an unavoidable element of error in most web statistics and so it is important to:

- Not over-interpret individual metrics or small statistical samples
- Try to confirm a characteristic through multiple metrics
- Monitor trends and relationships rather than absolutes

Dashboard

The Dashboard is a summary of all report modules providing a quick high level overview.

Visits chart

This chart shows the fundamental metric, Visits over the period. It is quite normal for traffic to ease during the weekend and holiday periods in a business website.



Site Usage

This table show a collection of basic web metrics for the report period



Visits	The number of visitors to the site This is not a direction correlation with visitors. If one visitor came to the site three times this represents 3 visits.
PageViews	The number of times a page was viewed or displayed If during a visit, a visitor viewed a particular page 3 times then this represents 3 page views
Pages/Visit	The average number of pages viewed in a visit This is a key metric as it represents the level of visitor <i>engagement</i> with the site.
Bounce rate	Represents the portion of visitors who leave the site immediately after visiting it i.e. they 'bounce' straight out of the site
Average time on site	Average period of time that visitors spend on the site
% new visits	The portion of new visitors to the site

More details are also provided in Website Metrics on page 6

Business Interpretation

As with any advertising, the business needs to gain exposure to prospective clients. A healthy level of **visits** is paramount; particularly increasing over time. Weekends, public holidays even school holidays can impact website visits

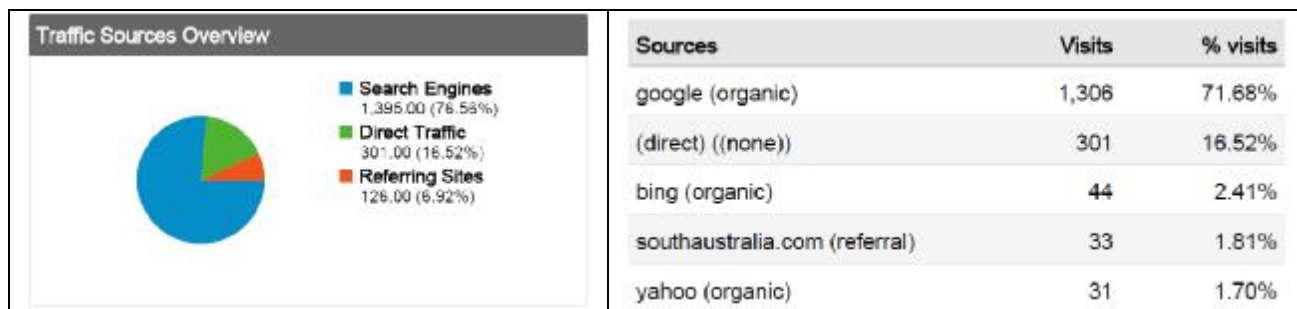
A good portion of **new visitors** who represent new prospective clients is also key.

The Pages/Visit signals the level of visitor interest and is particularly useful in later report modules to make judgments about the value of traffic sources etc.

Average time on site and bounce rate can be misleading and should be viewed in conjunction with other metrics.

Traffic Sources Overview

The pie chart provides a simple correlation between the major traffic sources ie where the traffic to your website comes from



Search engines	The search engines that visitors used to find your website Major Australian search engines are Google, Bing (Microsoft) & Yahoo Organic is the 'natural' method of searching
Direct	Visitors who typed the website address into their browser to visit your site.
Referring sites	Visitors who clicked on a link on another website that referred them to your site

Business Interpretation

Understanding where your website's traffic comes from is an important element in building your website's success; increasing traffic equates to building your online exposure.

Search engines

If your site is featuring in search engines then it is attracting visitors based on keyword searches Investigate the Keyword section to see what they have been searching for that resulted in a visitor to your site.

Google typically generates 70-98% of organic visits and Bing has an increasing presence currently at 1-3%

Direct visitors are individuals who have either

- Previously been to your site and are now revisiting
This is an important activity in purchase decision making, where clients scan various websites before returning to the most desirable ones to make a final purchase decision
- Regular visitors who are returning to check for updates, specials or to book again
- Responded to off-line adverting or an off-line referral and are visiting the website to investigate further as part of their purchase decision making process.
- Internal staff visiting the site or
- Internal staff who have the website set as their home page (not recommended)

Referrals are visitors who have found your site via another (referring) website by clicking on a link. As in off-line business referrals are an key source of business, and growing successful referring sites is an important business building activity.

Referring Sites

Because of the important nature of referring traffic this module extends the Traffic Sources Overview to focus explicitly on where referrals are coming from.

Referring Sites		
Source	Visits	% visits
southaustralia.com	33	26.19%
facebook.com	10	7.94%
google.com.au	7	5.56%
bl124w.blu124.mail.live.com	5	3.97%
truelocal.com.au	5	3.97%

Business Interpretation

It is interesting to note that this example shows traffic from:

- Facebook which is clearly being used successfully to promote the business
- An email sent from a free email account at live.com

YellowPages Online and other internet directory sites should also appear in this category if they are being used as part of your online promotion.

This referral data along with Pages/Visit will enable these sources to be you to evaluated as viable contributors to your business promotion.

Map Overlay

This simple chart shows where visitors originated from



Business Interpretation

As well as showing where visitors come from, the table provides associated data (Pages/Visit etc) that can be used to evaluate the source of best value traffic for your business.

Content Overview

This module shows the relative popularity of pages in the website

Business Interpretation

This module provides detail about how your visitors are using and moving between pages related to your website.

Keywords

The chart shows visits associated with the use of keywords i.e. visitors who used a search engine to find the site.



The keyword table shows more detailed information about visitors who arrived at the site as a result of a search.

Business Interpretation

Ensuring the site is associated with the optimal keywords is a key element in a successful online marketing strategy.

Website Metrics

The following information has been sourced from the Google Analytics online help www.google.com/support/googleanalytics/

Metric name	Category	Definition
Bounces	Site Usage	This field identifies the number of single-page visits to your site over the selected dimension. For example, if you apply this metric to the Ad Campaign dimension, it'll display the number of single-page visits to your site by users that reached your site via a particular ad campaign.
Bounce Rate	Site Usage	The percentage of single-page visits (i.e. visits in which the person left your site from the entrance page).
Clicks	Site Usage	This field identified the number of times a user has clicked on your Ads.
Entrances	Site Usage	This metric identifies the number of entrances to your site. It will always be equal to the number of visits when applied over your entire website. Thus, this metric is most useful when combined with particular content pages, at which point, it will indicate the number of times a particular page served as an entrance to your site.
Exits	Site Usage	This metric identifies the number of exits from your site, and, as with entrances, it will always be equal to the number of visits when applied over your entire website. Use this metric in combination with particular content pages in order to determine the number of times that particular page was the last one viewed by visitors.
% Exit	Site Usage	The percentage of site exits that occurred from a page or set of pages.
New Visits	Site Usage	The number of new visits by people who have never been to the site before.
Time on Page	Site Usage	This field indicates how long a visitor spent on a particular page or set of pages. It is calculated by subtracting the initial view time for a particular page from the initial view time for a subsequent page. Thus, this metric does not apply to exit pages for your site.
Pageviews	Site Usage	This field indicates the total number of pageviews for your site when applied over the selected dimension. For example, if you select this metric together with Request URI, it will return the number of page views over the returned result set for the Request URI for your report.
Time on Site	Site Usage	The time a visitor spends on your site.
Visits	Site Usage	The number of times your visitors has been to your site (unique sessions initiated by all your visitors). If a user is inactive on your site for 30 minutes or more, any future activity will be attributed to a new session. Users that leave your site and return within 30 minutes will be counted as part of the original session.
Visitors	Site Usage	A user that visits your site. The initial session by a user during any given date range is considered to be an additional <i>visit</i> and an additional <i>visitor</i> . Any future sessions from the same user during the selected time period are counted as additional <i>visits</i> , but not as additional <i>visitors</i> .
Unique Pageviews	Content	The total number of unique visitors to a given page.
Search Exits	Content	The number of searches a visitor made immediately before leaving the site.

Visitors Overview: How many new and returning visitors came to your site and how extensively did they interact with your content? This traffic overview allows you to drill down into aspects of visit quality (i.e. average pageviews, time on site, bounce rate) and visit characteristics (i.e. first time visitors, returning visits).

Visits: The number of visits your site receives is the most basic measure of how effectively you promote your site. Starting and stopping ads, changing your keyword buys, viral marketing events, and search rank are some examples of factors that influence the number of visits your site receives.

Pageviews: Pageviews is the total number of pages viewed on your site and is a general measure of how much your site is used. It is more useful as a basic indicator of the traffic load on your site and server than as a marketing measure.

Average Pageviews: Average pageviews is one way of measuring visit quality. A high Average Pageviews number suggests that visitors interact extensively with your site. A high Average Pageviews results from one or both of:

1. Appropriately targeted traffic (i.e. visitors who are interested in what your site offers)
2. High quality content effectively presented on the site.

Conversely, a low average pageviews indicates that the traffic coming to the site has not been appropriately targeted to what the site offers or that the site does not deliver what was promised to the visitor.

Time on Site: Time on site is one way of measuring visit quality. If visitors spend a long time visiting your site, they may be interacting extensively with it. However, Time on site can be misleading because visitors often leave browser windows open when they are not actually viewing or using your site.

Bounce Rate: Bounce rate is the percentage of single-page visits (i.e. visits in which the person left your site from the entrance page). Bounce rate is a measure of visit quality and a high bounce rate generally indicates that site entrance (landing) pages aren't relevant to your visitors. You can minimize Bounce Rates by tailoring landing pages to each keyword and ad that you run. Landing pages should provide the information and services that were promised in the ad copy.

New vs. Returning: A high number of new visitors suggests that you are successful at driving traffic to your site while a high number of return visitors suggests that the site content is engaging enough to keep visitors coming back. You can see how frequently visitors return and how many times they return in 'Recency' report and the 'Loyalty report', both under 'New vs. Returning' in the Visitors section.

Map Overlay: Use this map to visualize volume (visits, pageviews) and quality (pageviews per visit, conversion rates, per visit value, etc.) metrics by geographic region. Click on any region to zoom into the city level.