

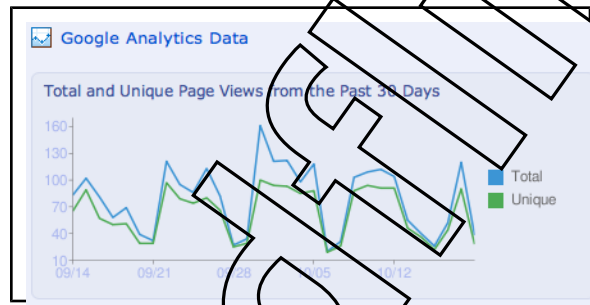
Website Performance: You Have a New Site - Now What?

by Mark O'Brien, October 2009

There is a smarter way to manage your web site day to day, and year to year.

How much work did you put in to the last rebuild of your website? I bet you spent months putting your site redesign above all other priorities. If not, chances are good the site isn't live yet.

What happens after that site that you worked so hard on finally does go live? We've been building sites for fourteen years, and we know exactly what you do after a site goes live.



The site goes live, everyone is happy, and you can finally get back to your "real" job. Because you just put a brand new site live and want to see how it is running you log in to your Google Analytics account each day to see what is happening--every day--no matter what.... for a couple of weeks. Before you know it, years have gone by, the site is way out of date, and you start the whole process all over.

This is a very predictable cycle, and it is terribly out of balance. It makes no sense to put 95% of your effort into building a website and leave only 5% for the ongoing measurement and nurturing of it.

Why don't you spend more time evaluating your site's performance and making subtle refinements along the way? There are basically two reasons.

Problem #1: You suffer from a lack of access to consolidated data.

What marketing manager doesn't have accounts with LeadLander, HubSpot, Workamajig, Eloqua, Salesforce and Google Analytics? You might not have all of those accounts, but I bet you have a few. While all of these services offer valuable and unique information, we have noticed that many of our clients simply don't have the time and attention necessary to review everything on a regular (weekly) basis. Even our clients that only have a Google Analytics account don't pay consistent attention to it.

Solution #1: We put the data you need right in front of you.

When our clients log in to NewfangledCMS 5, they are greeted with a dashboard of reports that tell them everything they need to know about their site's performance, including which pages, referring sites and search phrases drive the most conversions, which leads are most active on the site, exactly what those leads are doing on the site (second by second and session by session), and what their ranking is for specific keywords, to name a few.

This data enables our clients to get a sense of how their site is performing at a glance. Unfortunately, delivering this data only solves half

the problem, and it is almost useless without our solution to the second problem.

Conversion Rate from this Page			
Goals	Rate	Sitewide Rate	Difference
Web Smart Sign Up	0.9%	0.4%	+0.5
Web Meeting Sign Up	0.1%	0%	+0.1
Webinar Sign Up	0.2%	0.1%	+0.1

Problem #2: Even with access to data, you don't know what to make of it.

In order to frame this I'd like to describe two truths about the web business that are a bit at odds with each other.

1. There is no money in people. Scalable online business models don't rely on people. Clients can find, sign up for, and use these types of systems without ever having to talk to anyone. At most, there might be 4-8 hours of actual human engagement per client, who then happily pay the monthly fee forevermore. This is true of every system mentioned above. Their basic business model is to operate without assigning specific human beings to your account for anything more than a handful of hours to get you sold, setup, and trained. There is not anything wrong with these systems, but we have observed that some clients need more than this in order to get the most value from their website.

2. Without human engagement, there is little value. You aren't an analytics expert. It isn't your job to be able to see through analytics data and read the underlying story. You need help. Permanently assigning human beings to client accounts is messy, the margins are terrible, and resource training and allocation is an endless nightmare. But, as always, humans make the difference. Just as a website is an empty shell without smart, unique, and relevant content being continually added to it, relationships that lack a human element tend to be shallow.

Title	Visits	Conversions	
		Totals	Rates
google.com - (search traffic)	3070	15	0.5%
undrn.com	28	3	10.7%
smashintomagazine.com/2009/08/12/using-web-design-e-mail-newsletters/	19	2	10.5%
search.mywebsearch.com/mywebsearch/GGmain.html	2	1	50%

Solution #2: Each month we give you the story behind the data.

We call this solution Total Managed Support. Every month the Project Management team that worked with you throughout your entire site build reviews your site's performance with regard to content strategy, SEO and user patterns. That proactive review is followed by a scheduled call with you to review our findings and talk about your marketing priorities (online and offline) for the purpose of continually refining and customizing our research to your specific need. That call is followed by a recap email.

Why are we doing this? Wouldn't it be easier to create an automated system that just checks the site against some criteria and emails a report? Yes, that would be more efficient from every angle - almost - but it doesn't solve the problem. Using this model, we are not going to sign up 1,000 clients in the next month. Newfangled's mission is to serve a small number of clients perfectly, as opposed to rolling out an automated solution for the masses.

Who can afford a \$40k website and \$500/mo. for a service like Total Managed Support (which also includes hosting and support)? Not

everyone, that is for sure. But we are resting easy these days knowing that we've got a perfect and entirely unique solution for those who have a need and budget for this type of service.

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