

Guide to Using Website Statistics

Too few website owners fully utilize their web stats programs. They might look to see how many hits they generated over the past month, or check to see what sites their visitors are surfing in from, but by using your web stats program to its fullest potential, you can determine so much more to effectively market your business, and expand your online hot spots.

1. Site Statistics Overview

This will tell you how many page views you had, when they came, and how long they stayed.

2. Top Entry and Exit Pages

Where do people surf into your site? If you find your top entry page is not one of your main index pages, make sure you have effective navigation on that page to lure visitors to your main page or other parts of your site. This will also show if many people are surfing into your main page and leave without exploring further.

3. Most and Least Requested Pages

This will tell you which page on your site is viewed the most. Many site owners are surprised at what pages are most popular with visitors. And if you find one particular section or article is one of the most viewed pages, you can consider expanding or offering more related content to keep your visitors longer and keep them returning.

4. Referring URL's

Wondering how much traffic your ad on a certain webpage is bringing you? Wondering how much of your traffic really does come from Google? This will tell you the referring URL's of all traffic brought to your site through links on other sites. It is also great for snooping and seeing where others have mentioned you on message boards and Yahoo Groups lists, as these rarely will show up in search engines.

5. Top Keywords

This will tell you what search terms visitors are using to find you. You may be surprised to discover that you might be gaining many of your visitors through a search phrase you never even considered! This will also help you develop additional content for your site based upon what your site visitors are searching for.

6. Location

This will tell you (to some extent) where your visitors are from ~ and even what countries. If you ship only to the US, but notice a large portion of your traffic is coming from Canada, you might consider expanding your shipping to Canada as well.

7. Browsers

This will tell you what browser (and usually what version of browser) your visitors are using. This is useful to determine whether or not you should add html components that will only view in the most recent versions of Internet Explorer or Netscape, for example. Most will also tell you what platform (and version of the platform) your visitors are using as well.

By knowing how to use your web statistics properly, you can now use that information to market your business, and even develop your website further. You can build upon the hottest parts of your site, and re-evaluate the effectiveness of your least-visited pages.