HARPER HOUSE
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A Glossary of Web Analytic Terms

Abandonment – Customers who drop out/off or leave during the process of conversion, like a half-filled form or incomplete purchase.

Acquirement – Process of getting visitors to your website or the number of visitors arrived.

Affiliate Marketing – A method of online marketing where other websites can sign up to sell your products for a commission.

Bounce Rate – The instances of visitors entering and leaving the same page. High bounce rates indicate the landing page needs to be improved and SEO work should be considered.

Browser – Type of browser your visitors use, typically Internet Explorer, Firefox or Google Chrome.

Click Through Rate (CTR) – Usually used as banner ads (like Google AdWords) success. It is number of clicks/number of impressions.

Click Through – When a click on a link leads to another section of the site, page, or another website.

Conversion – An activity that fulfills the intended purpose of a website like buying a product, filling up a form or subscribing to a newsletter. Conversion rate is the percentage of visitors who successfully convert.

Conversion Funnel – The defined path, like a series of steps or pages for a visitor to reach the final objective, like filling up a form or purchasing a product.

Cookie – A text file placed on the visitor's computer while browsing a website. Cookies contain information to track returning visitors. For example, when a site contains a checkbox next to a login screen to "Remember," that enables a cookie on your computer. (Also see: First Party Cookie)

Crawler Spider Bots – Used primarily by search engines (Google, Bing &Yahoo), this automated program gathers information from the internet by indexing and reviewing a website for new content, usually they go through a site every few days, but it can take up to 2 weeks for a crawler to index an entire website.

Entry Page – The first page viewed by a visitor while browsing through a website.

Exit Page – The last page viewed before the visitor exited.

Filters – A set of rules to extricate information from a large amount of data.

First Party Cookie – These cookies are placed by the websites unlike third party cookies placed by vendors. First party cookies are understood to be secure and reliable.

Hit – An often confused term, a web page is a collection of different components like programming languages, images and style sheets, each registering as a separate hit with every single request for the page. For example you may have a logo and three pictures, equaling four graphic files. Every time that page is accessed, it counts as four hits. It is misleading when a web traffic report states you got 3,000 hits last month, so don't pay a lot of attention to how many hits your site gets.

Impressions – Each view of an online advertisement is counted as an impression.

Key Performance Indicators – The crucial parameters showing the health of the website and success of its marketing strategies.

Keywords – Words and phrases entered in a search engine to reach a result page. Keywords help position websites well to attract potential customers.

Log Files – A text file created in the server capturing all activity on the website. This file is the primary source of data for analysis.

New Visitor – Visitors reaching a site for the first time. When comparing this to return visitors, you get a sense of site stickiness and your visitors' loyalty. Note: New visitors may be over counted, as most tracking code requires visitors to have cookies enabled on their web browsers. If users have cookies turned off, or have deleted their cookies since the last visit, they appear as a new visitor.

Organic Search – Users find results through unpaid search engines, unlike Pay Per Click (PPC).

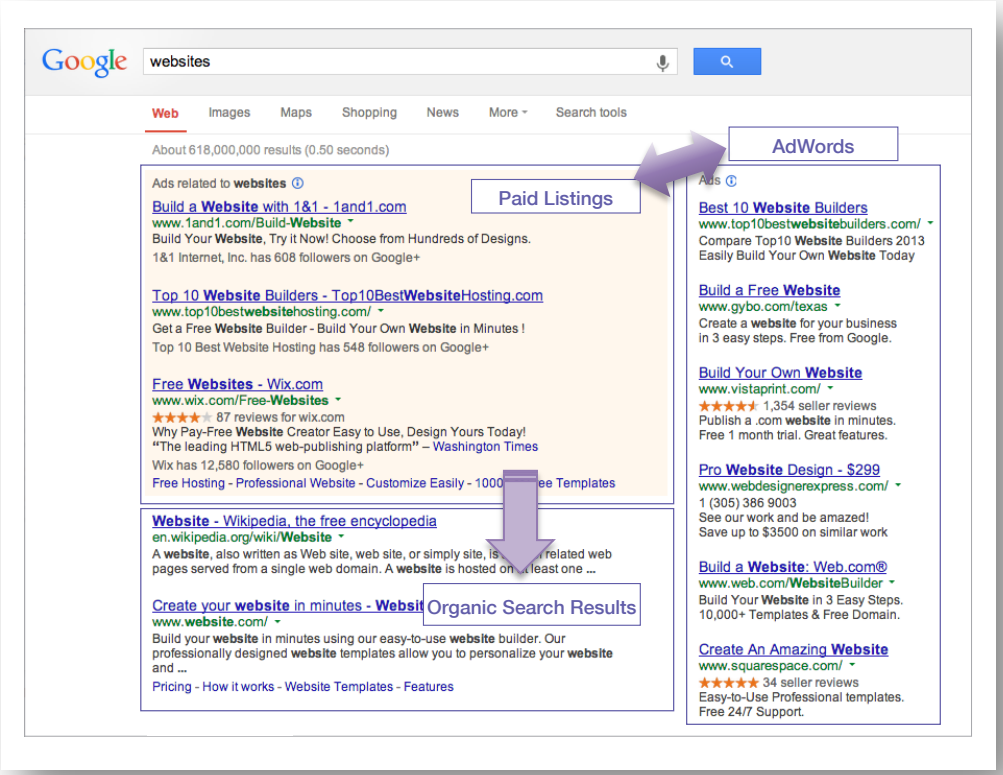
Page Duration – Time spent by visitor on a web page. Typically, the higher the time on the site, the more engaged visitors are in a site's content.

Page Tags – Tags are JavaScript codes embedded in the web page to be executed by the browser. Tags are used to generate log files used by certain web analytics tools.

Page Views – Each rendering of the web page by the server is counted as a page view. Page views define an accurate estimate of how many times pages on your site were viewed by visitors.

Path Analysis – How visitors go through the website. It is valuable information to see if visitors follow the intended site navigation.

Pays Per Click (PPC) – Pay Per Click, also called paid searches where the advertiser pays based on the number of clicks on the advertisement. Google and Overture are two popular paid search engines.



Referrer – Websites, search engines, directories or any identifiable as the origin of the visitor. One thing to keep a pulse on is how many mobile visitors are coming to your site and prepare your action plan for mobile.

Return Visitor – A visitor who can be identified with multiple visits, either through cookies or authentication. A high ratio of return visitors implies a site has "sticky" content with a loyal audience.

Search Analytics – Analyzing search terms and behavior of visitors using the website search engine.

Search Engine Optimization (SEO) – the process of improving the visibility of a website or a web page in search engines via the "organic" or unpaid search results. Typically, the higher ranked and more frequently a site appears in the search results list, the more visitors it will receive.

Session – The record of a single visitor browsing through the website. It includes an entry page, navigation and exit pages.

Stickiness – A website's capability to retain visitors, measured as number of pages visited per session and time spent on website.

Visitor – Also called unique visitor, is an individual visiting a website over a specified period of time. A visit is understood as two consecutive actions by a visitor within a span of 30 minutes.

Visitor Segmentation – The process of segregating and studying visitors based on various behavior patterns.

Web Analytics – The process of collection, measurement and analysis of user activity on a website to understand and achieve the intended objective of the website, usually one or a combination of: increased revenue, lower cost or improved customer service.

Remember: Little Things Generate a Big Impact Online.

*A key web analytics question is: "Is your website performing the way you want it to?"

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