EXPLORING THE VALUE OF YOUR WEBSITE ANALYTICS

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ABSTRACT

DOI URL: https://doi.org/10.36713/epra2999

The recent wave of technological advancement has simply presented companies with a range of website analytics tools that can be leveraged for the purpose of collecting, analyzing and visualizing company's website data (Bandaru et al., 2015). In this very perspective, the study investigated the value and benefits of website analytics, specifically in reference to the marketing performance management, while presenting an overview of the ways through which the organizations can exploit the metrics system in the 21st century. In this context, literature on performance measurement was reviewed and applied to the use of website analytics. With this specific focus, the study found that companies' efforts in reference to the use of marketing metrics systems and the resulting outcomes are highly dependent upon the reasoning for the selected metrics, as well as the processing of metrics data, which may ultimately allow the businesses to further enhance customer footfall over their website. Given the fact that digital marketing has gained tremendous importance in both service and manufacturing industries, the study confirmed that the web analytics can help the businesses to harness the values resulting from it, and can ultimately result in a range of benefits resulting from marketing activities.

From this perspective, the findings of the study confirmed that the most prominent value resulting from website analytics is in the form of crucial information about the visitor's data, which can be utilized for optimizing organization's content in accordance with the interest of the users (Farney, 2011). Simply put, organizations are not just competing against their competitors through traditional front, but also over the internet, which makes it exceptionally important for the businesses to identify their users who frequently visit the website to purchase goods, in addition to those that simply visit the website for information (Waisberg and Kaushik, 2009). This can ultimately become the source of company's decisions, and may further help the business in undertaking strategies that are not just productive, but can also increase the web-traffic. In this very context, website analytics can be an important tool that can help the businesses in understanding their users' behavior in addition to their demographics (i.e. age, gender, source of traffic etc.). Considering the findings, the study further proposed businesses to consider Google Analytics initially, since it is an open and free source. This can be used by businesses to learn more about web analytics, and once the business has gained command over it; it may switch to another analytical tools so that they can further leverage the data about consumers to make informed and logical decisions.

KEYWORDS: *website analytics, marketing metrics, digital world, visitors*

1. INTRODUCTION

Web analysis, also known as traffic analysis or Web control, serves to increase efficiency and monitor long-term website success (Kaushik, 2007). This is a method for recording and evaluating information about visitor behavior, and calculating it into statistical data (KPI). From this performance metric, the right actions can then be derived which are intended to produce positive developments depending on the objectives of the website operator (Järvinen and Karjaluoto, 2015). The purpose of an audit is to evaluate the structure, design and content, in short the effectiveness of a website (Park, Kim and Koh, 2010). It is an analysis of the

site in its entirety, as much the technical part as the strategic part. Therefore, purpose of website analytics is to understand what works, or not, on a site and to make certain recommendations to improve its performance and results (Farney, 2011). The manual optimization of a website is carried out by SEO specialists who produce a detailed report of the changes necessary to generally obtain an excellent positioning when the page is searched with a series of keys that represent the contents proposed by the site (Fan and Gordon, 2014). This activity is commonly carried out for all the pages of the same site as part of an overall visibility optimization project that takes into account additional parameters such as the structure of the site, the subdivision of the topics, the construction technology, etc. This research paper is intended to identify the importance of the website analytics and to evaluate its importance with respect to the modern technology and digital world of analytics, control and monitoring.

2.LITERATURE REVIEW

Having an analytical system is critical to performance marketing (Fagan, 2014). For example, a specialist in setting up contextual advertising can optimize campaigns only knowing the data about purchases, preferably with a cost. Similarly, the right marketing task is needed and can be digitized, measured and controlled (Park, Kim and Koh, 2010). The term web analytics is used for any activity that is used to collect, measure and analyze the behavior and audience of a website to understand and optimize the user experience and performance of the site (Landim, Alves-Souza and De Souza, 2013). The web analytics is based on the data collected by Google Analytics measurement and analytics tools. In simpler terms, it is data on who visits the website, how did these visitors arrive, what did they do once they landed on a page, and where did they go after etc. Web analytics platforms provide huge amounts of data on the website (Carmona et al., 2012). Before begin to analyze all the information collected, one must first decide what is the purpose of the website to better focus on the most important data. To give some examples, taking the cases of an online retailer whose goal is to make sales via his website and a consultant who uses his website to present information about his service offering. The online retailer will likely be more concerned with conversion measures, such as the number of purchases made online, while the consultant will likely consider engagement measures, such as time spent on the site and the number of pages visited (Beasley, 2013).

Web analytics are of paramount importance to a website, for the simple reason that understanding the behavior of visitors will optimize the experience offered to achieve the goals set for the site (Cui and Hu, 2011). The analysis of this route will make it possible to understand where the visitors leave if they do not complete the transaction (Kaur and Singh, 2015). With this analysis, one can optimize this journey by combining certain pages and reducing or simplifying the steps of the purchase process to remove irritants (Fagan, 2014). The analysis of web data also improves the SEO by offering text tracks to use for the SEO. As explained earlier, when a business is new to web analytics, it's important to understand what actions can have the greatest impact on the business (Carmona et al., 2012). The understanding and the good definition of these will have a positive influence on the overall referencing of the site. When analyzing the performance of any website, the main goal is almost always the traffic, which is defined as the number of visitors (Tandoc Jr, 2015; Chaffey

and Patron, 2012). Yet Web analysis involves a lot more. If one uses Google analytics, for example, as a measurement tool, then one should definitely consult the 'Acquisition' section and more specifically the 'Channels' sub-section (Park, Kim and Koh, 2010). Google Analytics, like many other web analytics tools, can also tell which pages of the website have a high bounce rate which is an indicator that measures the percentage of people who entered a web page and left the site without consulting other pages, so they only saw one page of the site (Cutroni, 2010). This information can be used to analyze these pages and optimize their content. content to provide a better user experience. by gaining a better understanding of these performance indicators, it is easier to understand how visitors behave on the site and what has been the impact of paid SEO efforts.

3. METHODS

Qualitative research methods have been used in the current research paper which allows to explore the universe of a product or a service, its perception by the consumers and the associated values (Taylor, Bogdan and DeVault, 2015). It allows to explore new concepts and to identify beliefs, opinions and attitudes. It is also an alternative solution to surveys and is used in order to identify the behaviors and to understand the reasons, to explore the perceptions about the website analytics and why they are important for the websites of businesses. The qualitative approach, in a group meeting or in an individual interview, poses open questions, investigates the reflections, and adapts to the participants' way of thinking. In this research paper, the data has been collected using secondary data methods, while collecting data from academic reports, literature, existing researches and other literary material. Moreover, for the data analysis technique, content analysis has been done. The purpose of content analysis is to collect and process the data mentioned in a text to characterize it or to characterize its author (Elo et al., 2014). The text can be unique or a compilation of articles, websites, reports, projects. The content analysis thus joins the use of secondary data insofar as what is analyzed has not been produced in the perspective of this particular research (Gale et al., 2013).

4.FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Today, the Internet offers the opportunity to collect and analyze data with a precision that no other environment has ever allowed to do before (Chaffey and Patron, 2012). The vast majority of websites have a menu at the top of the page that provides access to the main sections of the site (Cutroni, 2010). All users are obviously used to using the menu to navigate, but also to understand the value proposition of the website. More and more web sites, including ecommerce sites, are choosing a level 2 menu that occupies a lot of space, to present many subcategories and thematic promotions (Beasley, 2013). The goal is always the same, to ensure that the user arrives as quickly as possible on a page adapted to his needs. The internal search engine of a website is an increasingly important navigation device (Kaur and Singh, 2015). Web surfers are bored with Google search, and more and more websites are integrating an internal search engine. According to Cui and Hu (2011), more than 25% of visitors to an ecommerce site start by searching from the internal engine, and more than 50% will use it on their journey. The big e-commerce websites value more and more the search engine in their interfaces (Landim et al., 2013). In terms of internal search engine, there are many good practices and lines of work to improve performance: tracking searches, auto-

completion, related searches, searchandising etc. The quality of the results depends on the technology used (Elastic Search, Apache Solr, etc.) but it depends mainly on the data of the catalog, and it is often at this level that the problem lies (Fan and Gordon, 2014).

If the direct traffic or coming from partner sites often arrives on the home page, the traffic resulting from the paid referencing can arrive directly on pages produced then the organic traffic will arrive on articles of blog (Chaffey and Patron, 2012). Today, having a website for a business is no longer a question, it's at least as important as having a phone number or more (Kent et al., 2011). Yet, it seems that there is still a 30-40% of companies that do not yet have a website (Cui and Hu, 2011; Kaur and Singh, 2015). The world of the Internet is a place where appearances are important, a place where one only have a few seconds to answer the questions and requirements of a customer, a place where standards and expectations are more and more. high and where the business must not only stand out, but still get to do it quickly. On the web, changing a sentence, adding an image or a link, changing a design can often make all the difference. A website should not be a static platform; it must constantly change, evolve and refine, as the business changes and web trends evolve (Park, Kim and Koh, 2010).

Online stores have access to a whole range of data through eCommerce platforms that manage the online purchasing process (Carmona et al., 2012). In order to associate sales data with user behavior on the site, it is always necessary to implement a web analysis tool. Google Analytics, once configured to communicate correctly with the eCommerce platform, allows to collect data on sales of the online store and data on visits by relating them to each other (Fagan, 2014). Other metrics include conversions, conversion rate, average receipt, value per visit and traffic sources. The set of these data correlated with the data in order to provide fundamental information to improve the effectiveness of the business (Prom, 2011). They serve to understand what are the sources of the most remunerative visits.

Valid web analytics software offers the opportunity to enhance the e-commerce by implementing a clearly measurable continuous improvement cycle (Beri and Singh, 2013). There are several excellent website analysis tools: Omniture SiteCatalyst, WebTrends, CoreMetrics. Compared to these, Google Analytics has two advantages that make it preferable especially for small and medium-sized companies: it is free and integrates perfectly with Google Adwords and the other tools of the Google galaxy (Plaza, 2011). Being free the only costs that must be considered are those of implementation and configuration: costs within the reach of any company or professional. Once the software is installed it is necessary to have internal resources or external consultants who, either continuously or periodically according to the needs, analyze the data and translate it into strategic recommendations (Turner, 2010; Prom, 2011). If the complexity of the traces is significant, it may be necessary for a developer to insert customizations in the analysis tool. In the case of large portals, developers work with marketing experts more continuously to implement changes and customizations whenever the need arises. Even in the absence of the immediate possibility of dedicating a budget to the analysis and interpretation of traffic data, it is strongly recommended to start collecting it as soon as possible so as to have them available when the conditions will be in place to convert them into useful information (Clifton, 2012).

5.CONCLUSION

Website analysis provides extremely useful information that, if properly collected from the website design and then interpreted and put into practice, could significantly improve the performance of the website. From a strategic point of view, analyzing the competition on the web means starting to understand how the competitors work, evaluating what kind of approach can be optimal for the sector. The owner of a company knows his market well, a company that does an analysis of the competition on the web, instead, observes unconditionally how the market moves on the web and find innovation and effective ways to propose the company. There is no standard for reaching the end customer while the customer with the web has no time. The web is creativity but also a concrete way to approach the final customer who can start interacting with the company, can give advice, ideas or alternative ways to exploit the products. Therefore, in order to monitor the progress of the business, business personnel and entrepreneurs need to analyze, monitor and control their website traffic using website analytics.

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