Essential Website Analytics:
Picking the Metrics that Matter

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The Premise

- Most web analytics platforms offer a tremendous volume of reports and tools, but very little guidance

- Many organizations don't have dedicated "web metrics people"

Disclaimers

- Assuming that everyone has some sort of analytics system on their site.

- Our primary focus is going to be Google Analytics, but the principles should remain the same regardless of your toolset.

Today's Objectives

At the end of today's session, you will feel empowered to:

1. Approach web metrics more effectively

2. Know your top 'go-to' web metrics you should care about, and why

3. Understand how these metrics can be used in service of larger strategic goals that focus on results.

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What Makes a Great Web Metric?

- Should answer a <u>specific question</u> and provide direction that is <u>actionable</u>

- Four key attributes:

  - ▶ Uncomplex
  - ▶ Relevant
  - ▶ Timely
  - ▶ Instantly Useful

Source: Occam's Razor by Avinash Kaushik

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Ask the Right Questions

- How many people are viewing our content (and engagement opportunities)?

- Are people finding:
  - what they are looking for?
  - what we want them to find?

- Once they find the content, are they taking action?

Get in the right frame of mind

- Don't track analytics – track Business Objectives

- Lead with: What do I want to understand?

- How effectively are we:

  ▶ Growing the housefile?

  ▶ Soliciting gifts?

  ▶ Inspiring action?

Conversion: How effective are we?

- Use conversion tracking for key engagement points on the site:
  - 1st time registration
  - Donations
  - Advocacy opportunities
  - Advanced tracking can also include testing the effectiveness of promo banners, adwords, and A/B content

- How do we use this data?
  - Understand which inceptions points need to be improved
  - Understand the effectiveness of campaigns, other online/offline collateral
  - Understand what opportunities motivate our constituents to action

How effectively are we growing the Housefile?

- **KPI: Email Registration Rate**

- Metrics required:
  - ▶ Unique Visitors
  - ▶ # of email addresses acquired (non-web metric)

$$\frac{\text{Unique Visitors}}{\text{\# of email addresses acquired}} = \text{Email Registration Rate}$$

Quick Benchmark:
You should be converting between 1-4% of Unique Visitors to registered users per month.

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How effective is our call to action?

- Question: How effectively are we converting visitors to donors? Is our call to action resonating with our constituents?

- **KPI: Direct-to-donation Conversion Rate**

- Metrics required:
  - Unique Visitors
  - # of gifts made (non Web metric)

$$\frac{\text{Unique Visitors}}{\text{\# of transactions (donations)}} = \text{Donation Conversion Rate}$$

Quick Benchmark:
- Aim to convert around 1% of total Unique Visitors per months

- Average donation page conversion rate is around 25%

Are people finding what they're looking for?

- **Bounce Rate** is one of your best indicators of user-perceived relevance

"It is really hard to get a bounce rate under 20%, anything over 35% is cause for concern, 50% (above) is worrying."

— -Avinash Kaushik, Occam's Razor

- Top Entry pages → take advantage of where the eyeballs are

- Top Exit pages
  - ▶ Is this consistent with what you would expect?
  - ▶ Are too many people jumping ship mid-stream?

Why are people even here, anyway?

- What are people most interested in finding on our site? Why do they visit?

- Top internal search keywords

- Keyword bounce rates

- Does our navigation/architecture cater to user behavior patters?

To-Do List:

• Make your top 3 (consistently) searched terms directly available from homepage

• Invest in AdWords that have the lowest keyword bounce rate

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How are people finding our site?

- Top referring sites
  - ▶ Maximize landing pages from specific sites

- Top search engines
  - ▶ Invest in search engines that provide greatest traffic

- Top external search terms
  - ▶ Is this a gap between perception and reality?
  - ▶ What terms can your org "own"

Where are all the eyeballs?

- What content is getting the most eyeballs (and therefore where we should be placing our most compelling engagement opportunities)?

- Top pages viewed

- Top entrance pages

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Take specific action

What the metrics tells you	What you can do about it
Registration Rate is declining over time	•Introduce registration incentives • Streamline reg process • Articulate value proposition
Donation conversion rate is low	•More clearly articulate impact or need • Streamline donation process

Take specific action

What the metrics tells you	What you can do about it
Bounce rate is above 50%	• Match content with page-level keywords and low-bounce keywords • Look at top internal search terms to understand what people are looking for
Site traffic is decreasing over time	• Focus on SEO for top-referring search engines, low-bounce keywords
"Take Action" page visits and conversion is low	• Evaluate top entrance/exit pages • Improve placement of opportunity, increase # of inbound links • Update offer/verbiage/imagery

Things to remember

- Put all metrics in context
  - ▶ No single number is useful in a vacuum
  - ▶ Understand rates **over time**, and **compared to benchmarks**

- Find the go-to metrics that work best for your organization
  - ▶ Different orgs with different missions and goals require different metrics:

Tips for success

- Walk before you run → establish baseline metrics and methodology first

- Create a consistent means of tracking performance

- Define the strategic value of a conversion metric <u>before</u> you go through the trouble of tracking → what could you learn that would have the biggest impact?

- Be fearless: test everything, then test a wee bit more.

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Examples from CDF & ADA

- Please feel free to include as many relevant examples as you feel are appropriate