

# Web Analytics - Business Outcomes – Measure and Achieve Them

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## WHAT IS A WIN FOR ME?

What are your desired business outcomes?

1. Launching a new product?
2. Capturing market share in a specific segment?
3. Setting a revenue target for a certain business unit?
4. Cutting down customer support costs by 25%?
5. Getting more from the advertising campaigns?

Identify these key metrics. This is the foundation to using web analytics as an intelligence tool.

## THE ROLE OF YOUR WEBSITE

Once you have clarity on business outcomes, the next step is to understand where and how your website can help you in achieving those outcomes.

A few examples of what your website can do –

1. Sell the product(s) online.
2. Answer questions, facilitate discussion forums and cut down support costs.
3. Capture leads for the sales funnel.
4. Build a database of prospects by getting them to sign up for a newsletter.
5. Engage customers and others before and after the trade show.
6. Promote and support sharing of your content on social media portals and RSS feeds. This can pull targeted prospects to you, and/or improve customer support and lower the cost.

Each of these adds economic value to your business. Quantify that.

If you are in a B2B model, what is the potential value of a lead? How many leads do you need on average to convert one customer? What is the lifetime value of a customer?

If you are in a B2C model, how many coupons have consumers downloaded? What is the revenue from that?

If a prospect subscribes to your RSS feed, you have a very effective real time channel to distribute information. With quality content, this becomes a nice customer relationship development channel that helps the sales force in converting leads and quantifying the gains.

How many fewer phone calls did you receive since you launched a technical support portal? Did it help in cutting down support costs?

If you did email marketing before a tradeshow, how many leads did it produce? Did it provide value to your business?

Design [information architecture](#) on your website to help this asset realize its full value.

## WHY DO THIS?



When you think of your website and the whole marketing program in terms of desired outcomes, it helps you in a number of ways.

1. You know what to measure. And as Peter Drucker says, “What gets measured gets managed.”
2. You know what your marketing is contributing to the business bottom-line.
3. It forces you to think in terms of different market segments. Organize and plan for each segment. This is a key to capturing market share and sustaining revenue targets.
4. It guides your focus to customer behavior, and not aggregates. The website gets 10,000 visits a month – so what? What does it mean to the business bottom-line, if anything?

## SYSTEM TO MEASURE AND TEST

Implement a system to measure and test how you are able to achieve the outcomes that are meaningful to your business.

What are the key components of such a system?

1. Your website
2. Analytics, to measure and test effectiveness in achieving the goals
3. A marketing system that uses a variety of channels such as search engines, social media, email marketing, display advertising, radio/TV advertising, direct mail, and trade shows.

## WEBSITE

Think of your website as a base camp for your business to scale the heights that you desire. Leverage its 24/7 presence to have a credible digital identity, and a medium to create synergies among all different marketing campaigns, online and off line.

The website information architecture takes different marketing segments into account, and helps you aim for the desired outcomes. (Read more about website information architecture...)

In cases where you have an event coming up or you would like to see the impact of a specific campaign, landing pages might make sense. A landing page is a “home page” for a specific objective; you drive website visitors for that objective directly to that page.

## CONVERSIONS

The ultimate conversion for any business is gaining a new customer. When a website visitor takes an action that you wanted him or her to take, you get a mini conversion that will lead ultimately to the final conversion.

If it's a sales transaction on an e-commerce site, it ties into the business bottom-line directly.

However, there are a series of small victories that eventually lead to market share, branding, and revenue goals. Signing up for a newsletter, joining your Facebook business page, participating in a survey or a contest, downloading a coupon, getting technical support information on your website, taking a call to action to see you at the trade show - or simply calling you - all could be meaningful mini conversions for a business.



## WEB ANALYTICS – MEASURE AND TEST

Web analytics help you implement a system they help in achieving and measuring the desired outcomes.

### DEFINE YOUR OUTCOMES/GOALS

Set up the goals in analytics. They are outcomes that help you benchmark how well the marketing program is working for you. The following sub-sections show a few examples.

#### DOWNLOAD WHITEPAPER

I want my website visitors to download a white paper that explains how to use word of mouth on the internet via a content strategy. And I am trying to achieve that using a webinar and my blog posts.

1. I wrote a blog post explaining the idea - <http://3sgconsulting.net/business-insights/capture-market-niches-paradigm-for-leads-generation> .
2. I have a event tracking code for instances when someone clicks 'Download Whitepaper' button. With that I can track how many times the whitepaper is downloaded.

I use the link building tool to associate the campaign medium (the blog or webinar in this example), and then define a conversion funnel with the three steps. With that I can easily track conversions from each of the campaign sources.

#### SUBMIT A CONTACT FORM

In B2B cases, leads to the sales funnel are critical to business growth. Getting prospects to sign up for a newsletter, or submit a question, or join the discussion forum are meaningful micro-conversions that make a difference. One easy way to achieve this is to have a contact form that the prospects would simply complete.

Set a goal for that and start tracking.

#### PLACE AN ORDER

Buy the product on-line. Isn't that sweet?

Set up several conversion funnels – product introduction pages, adding product(s) to the card, and then all the steps along the check-out process.

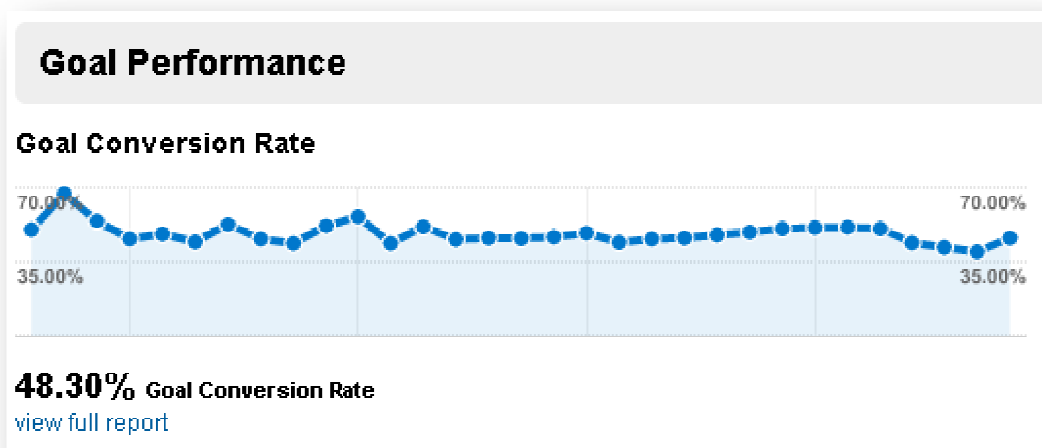
With this you measure not only the number of orders that were placed, but also how people behaved along the process.

You can use the embedded tracking code to understand nuances of customer behavior and the checkout process.

### MEASURE YOUR GOALS



Measure and analyze how well the marketing system is able to achieve the goals. Make sure to include and integrate all different marketing campaigns and channels in to this system, so you get a complete picture on the overall marketing program.



## MARKETING SYSTEM

The marketing system includes different campaigns and channels that help in leads generation, branding, public relations, relationship development ...etc. Below are examples of marketing campaigns and channels.

1. Content strategy that weaves in the social media elements and creates synergies between all different marketing avenues and also customer support.



2. Search Engine Advertising using sponsored links or pay-per-click.
3. Email marketing
4. TV, radio, magazine advertising
5. Trade shows focused on certain products or services, or specific industry verticals
6. Direct mail marketing

The marketing system is able to compare the effectiveness of all of these marketing channels, giving you a complete picture as to what is your bang for the buck from each of them.

## ACTIONABLE INSIGHTS

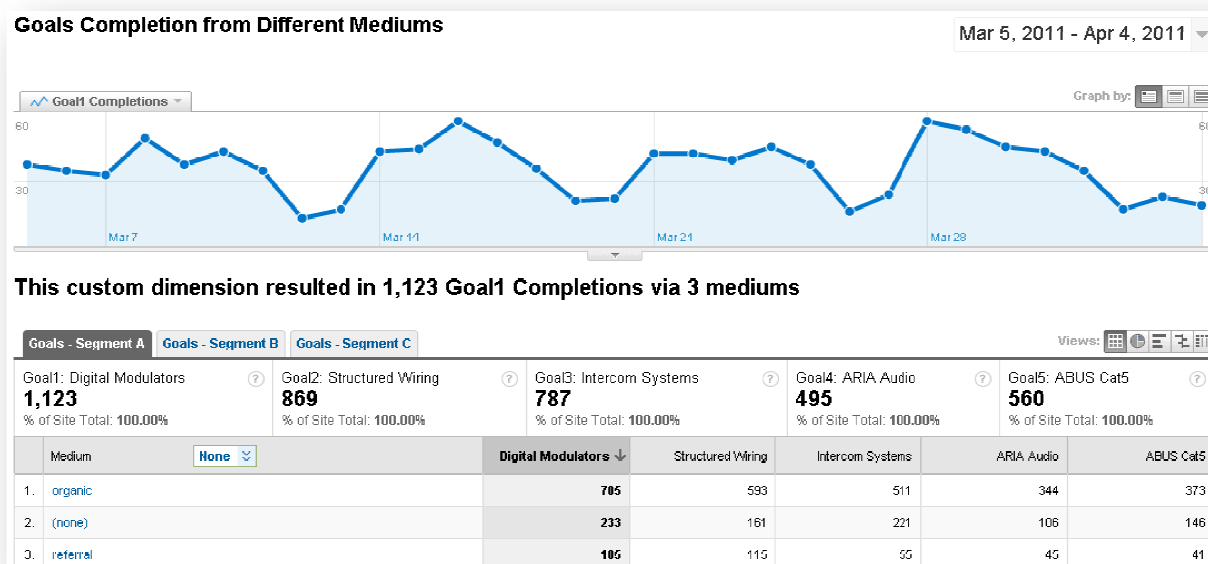
Web analytics provides you with an excellent opportunity to capture data. But, that's only the start.

1. Segment the data, filter it for different criteria. That will give you meaningful insights that you can use in your marketing and business.
2. How does a customer behave on your website? Learn that and you will know how to sell better and how to delight your customers. It's also a powerful web intelligence tool that you can leverage for business strategy and growth.

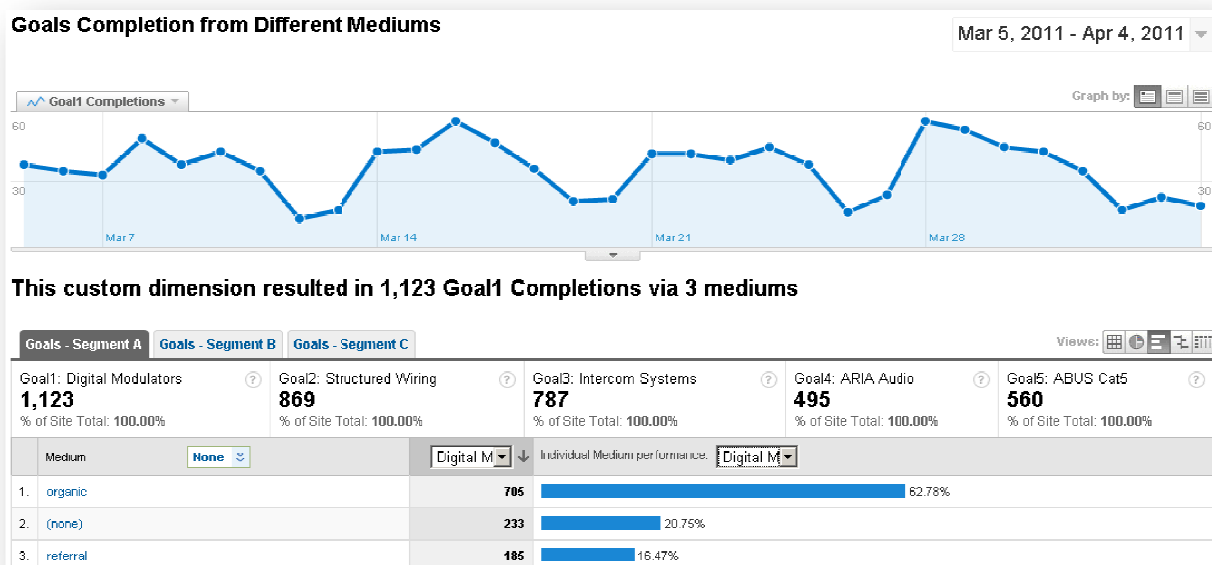
Following sections have a few examples of reports with the actionable insights.

## COMPARE YOUR MARKETING CHANNELS

One report that always fascinates me is the comparison of different traffic sources and how they are helping to achieve your goals. Look at the example below:



It shows how the three traffic sources – organic search engine traffic, direct traffic (where it says none), and traffic from referral sites – perform to achieve the goals.



What more can you do?

1. Define custom variables and identify additional traffic sources. For example, email marketing, direct mail campaign, trade shows, TV advertisements, or search engine advertising.
2. Benchmark all the channels even deeper by tracking lead conversions.
3. How much are you investing in each of the channels? Is it the optimum allocation of the marketing budget? The pictures above provide a better answer than any words.

## SEGMENTATION

Chris Anderson wrote a very insightful book, "The Long Tail." One nugget from the book I keep close to my heart is the concept that the days of "one size fits all" are long gone. Your prospects and customers have a lot of information and choices at their fingertips. A critical success factor to a business is specialization, and speaking the language of target market niches. Good news - there are many, many market niches, and the tools to identify and pursue these niches are handy.

Use them to capture market niches. You can make the competition irrelevant in many cases and open up entirely new market segments fairly easily. Read more about it in [my 'Expand the Reach' series of articles...](#)

Segment, or perish.

## EXAMPLE – CREDIBLE ORGANIC TRAFFIC FROM A REGION

I have started a Search Engine Optimization (SEO) program targeted to promote products in the state of California. I have tied specific landing pages on the website to calls to action for my target audience. I want to see how my marketing program doing to attract the right prospects, and cultivate their interest.

The people in my segment of choice have –



1. Visited my website at least three times in the past month.
2. Came to the website after searching for my products on search engines.
3. Come through organic searches, not from my paid advertising on the search engines (pay-per-click or sponsored links).

I call it the Credible Organic Traffic segment.

Out of a total of **14,611** visits... Test Segment

**Count of Visits** Condition: Greater than Value: 3 → **2,982** visits delete

or Add "or" statement

**and** delete

**Region** Condition: Matches exactly Value: California → **3,003** visits delete

or Add "or" statement

**and** delete

**Medium** Condition: Matches exactly Value: organic → **9,630** visits delete

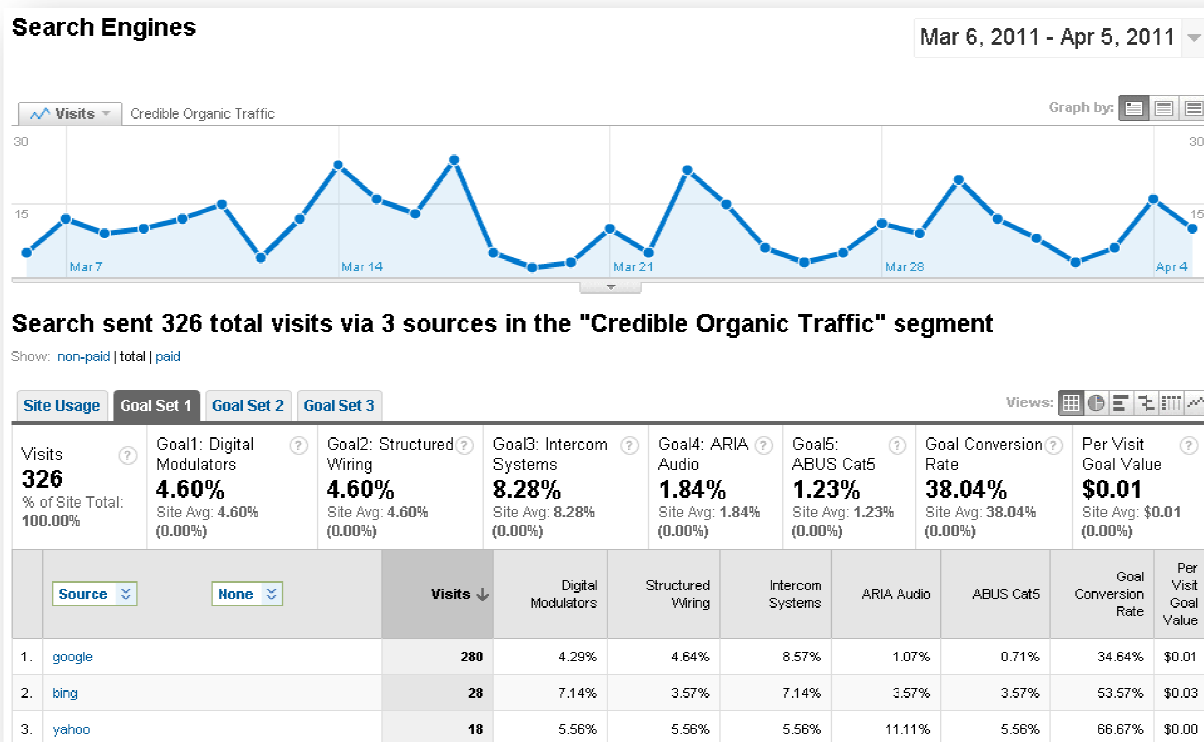
or Add "or" statement

**and** Add "and" statement

...this segment matches **326** visits Test Segment

Out of 14,661 visits, 326 people match my segment.

Am I sad or happy? It depends. Is this traffic helping me achieve my goals?



The picture tells me clearly where I need to do better, and what my ROI is.

What would make sense to do?

1. Looking at all other marketing campaigns – email marketing, direct mail, magazine advertising, using the website to create synergies between all of them, then comparing the performance for this segment. It shows clearly where the optimum return for my marketing budget is.
2. Segment even further, drill down to individual keywords, and get an even better understanding of how my prospects are behaving.
3. Refine my goal conversion funnels, and find out where I am losing visitors in this segment. That's a valuable insight about the business strategy and positioning of my products. Better yet, fix what is broken, and maximize returns from the marketing program.

#### EXAMPLE – SHARE OF THE SHELF

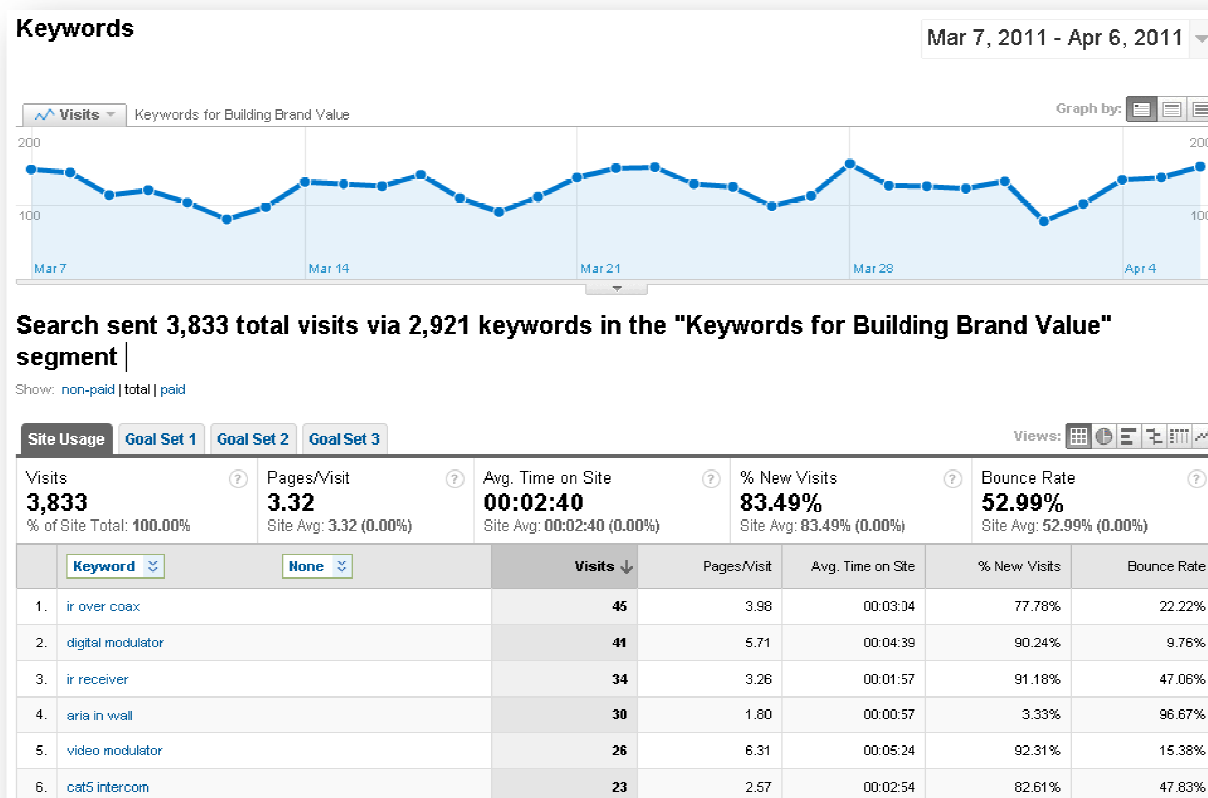
According to a Marketing Sherpa report, 89% of people search for their questions early in their buying cycle. Getting them to know you would add a lot to your brand value and exposure. Use the competitive analysis tools to find out how keywords relevant to your business are searched. Or, use that to find new market niches to pursue. Set up the marketing campaigns and website to take advantage of this traffic.

Two questions –



1. How much traffic am I getting? I liked the term coined by Avinash Kaushik: what is my share of the shelf? In other words, of the total relevant search traffic, how much am I getting?
2. What do those people do when they come to my website?

Define a segment for keywords of choice. Limit it to the target geographic region. And filter the traffic so you get to see only the search engine traffic.



What to do next?

1. Look for pages with a high bounce rate. Is your message coming out clearly? Or, are they looking for something else? Fix those pages so you capture interest and cultivate the potential for repeat visits.
2. Look at in-page analytics, and see where visitors are going and where they are clicking. It will give you a lot of information about customer behavior.
3. For market segments with promise, do multivariate testing, and understand how the prospects are thinking.

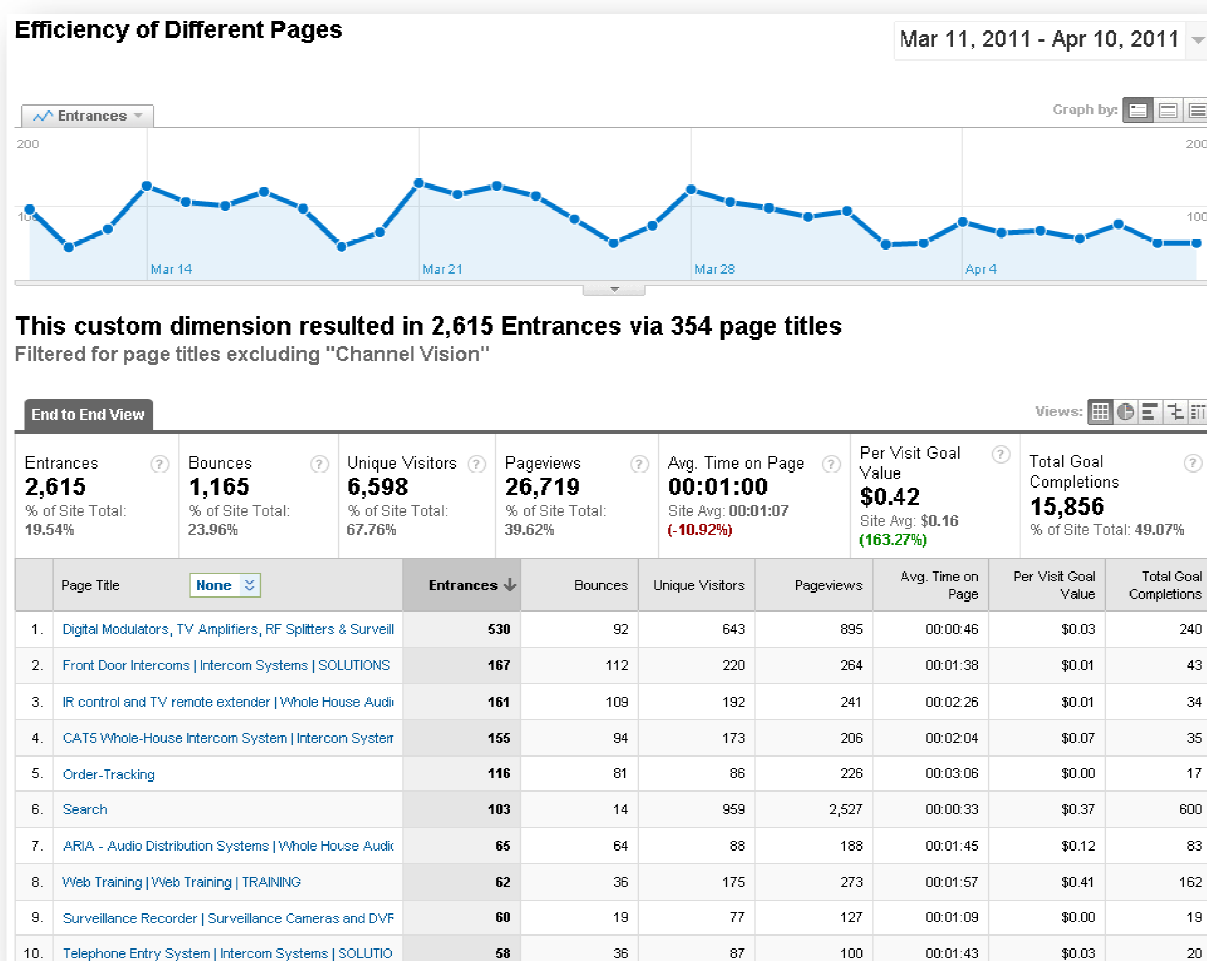
## WHAT IS VALUE OF A WEBSITE PAGE?

Look at your website pages that are viewed frequently by visitors and get answers to the following questions.



1. Do any of these pages work as my “home” page, or “entry” page to the website? This is a very critical metric that speaks volumes about design and organization of the website.
2. How many of these visitors are unique? The more unique visitors that you have, the more it’s going to help you expand your exposure.
3. What are these people doing after coming to the page?
4. Last but not the least, how many goals are converted from this pages?

Look at the report below. That’s one of the key web intelligence reports for any business.



## WHERE IS MY FRUIT?

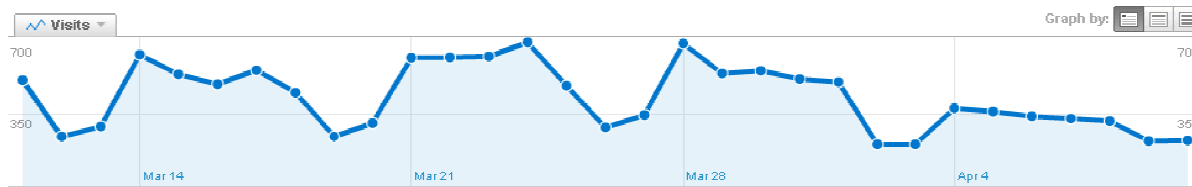
Your marketing initiatives are intended to attain desired outcomes.

How well are they working for you? This report shows it all.



## Effectiveness of Different Acquisition Channels

Mar 11, 2011 - Apr 10, 2011



This custom dimension resulted in 13,381 Visits via 278 sources and mediums

Key Biz Metrics								Views: [Grid] [Table] [List]
Visits <b>13,381</b> % of Site Total: 100.00%	Unique Visitors <b>9,737</b> % of Site Total: 100.00%	New Visits <b>306</b> % of Site Total: 100.00%	Goal: ARIA Speakers <b>209</b> % of Site Total: 100.00%	Goal Conversion Rate <b>46.90%</b> Site Avg: 46.90% (0.00%)	Per Visit Goal Value <b>\$0.03</b> Site Avg: \$0.03 (0.00%)	Cost <b>\$0.00</b> % of Site Total: 0.00%		
Source/Medium	Visits ↓	Unique Visitors	New Visits	ARIA Speakers	Goal Conversion Rate	Per Visit Goal Value	Cost	
1. google / organic	8,038	6,157	5,298	136	46.45%	\$0.05	\$0.00	
2. (direct) / (none)	2,738	1,668	1,381	33	44.74%	\$0.00	\$0.00	
3. yahoo / organic	618	497	439	14	45.79%	\$0.04	\$0.00	
4. bing / organic	546	454	385	5	52.01%	\$0.05	\$0.00	
5. tri-ed.com / referral	143	90	41	4	70.63%	\$0.00	\$0.00	
6. swhrwn.com / referral	135	112	106	0	87.41%	\$0.00	\$0.00	
7. ceipro.com / referral	95	88	72	1	49.47%	\$0.00	\$0.00	
8. search / organic	78	71	65	0	28.21%	\$0.06	\$0.00	
9. aol / organic	44	41	35	2	36.36%	\$0.02	\$0.00	
10. adli-burtek.com / referral	40	35	26	2	85.00%	\$0.00	\$0.00	

Integrate off-line marketing initiatives also and you have a very powerful system to measure and optimize the effectiveness of the marketing program.

It also shows where to allocate the marketing budget for the optimum returns.

### UNIQUE SYSTEM FOR EVERY BUSINESS

Every business is unique. So, are the business goals? And so are the objectives and desired outcomes of the marketing system.

Segmentation, customer behavior metrics, and marketing channels to use ...etc all also needs to be uniquely tailored to a business case on hand.

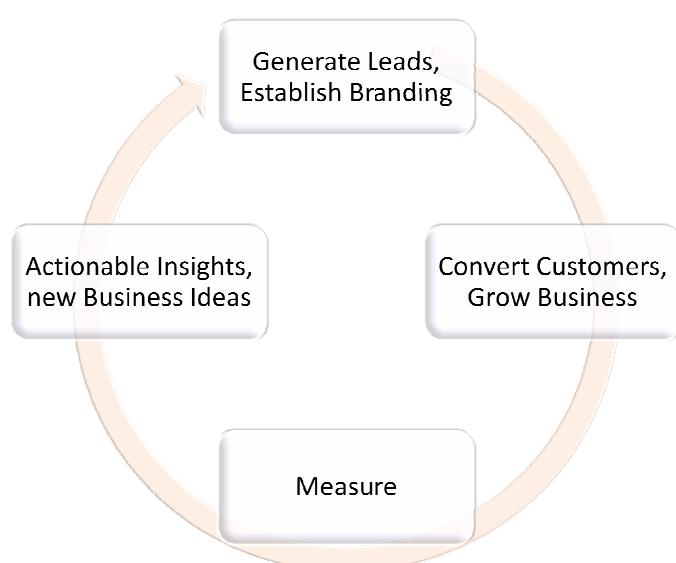
Fortunately, web analytics allow for the customization, and so you get a system designed to answer questions specific to your business. Use custom segmentation adapt the reports to your use cases. Embed the analytics implementation in to your website and marketing system, so the marketing system fits your business model like a glove.

## SUMMARY

Design and implementation of marketing system starts and continues to evolve to measure and achieve business outcomes. Clearly identify the desired outcomes, and their impact on the business bottom-line. Website design and analytics setup should be set up to achieve and measure these desired outcomes.

Segment, or perish at your own peril. Look for actionable insights. Measure and test in terms of how well the marketing system is working for you. Leverage different marketing channels – online and offline – as applicable to your business case. Use the research tools to identify potential of different marketing channels as required.

And finally, use the feedback loop of analytics and testing to refine your business strategy continuously.





## ABOUT AUTHORS

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