

Analytics

Free world-class web stats

Analytics is a sophisticated web traffic data collection, measurement and analysis system that Google provides for free.

Analytics was developed by Urchin, who were bought out in 2005 by Google.

Analytics provides marketing-oriented web traffic analysis features rather than the web hosting focus of traditional web statistics systems like Webalizer etc.

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Who owns your website's Analytics data?

Increasingly, well-meaning web developers are setting up Google Analytics for clients to provide quality web traffic reporting.

While I commend introducing website owners to Analytics, real problems arise if it is not implemented appropriately leaving the client without control over this important data.

This article describes how to avoid this, and a workaround if you find yourself in this situation.

It's my data - why can't I control it?

This happens because the web dev creates an Analytics sub-account (Analytics calls it a 'profile') in theirs to store your web data. This is quicker, and simplifies the web dev's access to the new website's Analytics reports.

The issue is that Analytics Administrator level access is required for advanced features and fine tuning; something that internet marketers need to better interpret the website's traffic characteristics.

Unfortunately granting Admin access also exposes all the other websites in that Analytics Account i.e. up to 50 other web devs client's.

Hence Web devs are understandably reluctant to grant admin access across their Analytics accounts.

Solutions

The most obvious solution is to create a unique Analytics Account for each client on commissioning the website.

If your site is tangled into a web devs Analytics account you could just create your own Analytics Account, and start collecting data into it, but you will lose your website's traffic history.

If preserving web traffic history is a priority (& I suggest it should be) here is a solution I use with two Analytics accounts in tandem:

- Retain the original account with the client/Internet marketer having read only access

- Create an additional Analytics account unique to the client. Analytics provides the ability to feed web tracking data to two independent Analytics accounts. The historical data is preserved and there is full access to new accumulating data – handy hey!

Refer your web dev to this Analytics article on SEOJeff's blog for the details. <http://seojeff.com/2008/04/03/tracking-data-for-multiple-google-analytics-accounts-on-one-page/>

When sufficient historical data is accumulated in the new account, disconnect the old account (profile)

This approach:

- Preserves the website history so it is accessible by all interested parties (web dev, client & internet marketer)
- Places the ownership of web traffic data back with the client (where it should be!)
- Allows the client to retain their internet statistics even if they move to another web dev or internet marketer.

Where to from here?

Check your profile

You can see if the Analytics Account on your site is one of many profiles (and hence likely to be the web dev's account rather than your own) by inspecting visiting your website, then viewing the HTML code.

Use the Find facility (Control F) to locate *getTracker* and adjacent you will see a string in quotes starting with UA Here's the one from www.succinctideas.com.au UA-1696481-1

The final section (-1 in this case) is the Analytics profile number, so if your profile number is larger than the number of websites you have, then it is likely your Analytics data is being stored in your Web devs Analytics account and you don't actually have control over it

Speak to your web dev or an Analytics expert :)

Summary

Web traffic performance data is important insight into your businesses operation online. Web traffic data over an extended period helps to establish the net worth of your businesses online

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assets.

I recommend that you take control of it as you would any other business asset reporting.

sincerely,

Peter Cornish

peter.cornish@succinctideas.com.au

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Cheers,
Peter Cornish

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