

THE *Creative* TOURIST

An Introduction to Web Analytics for Arts Marketing Professionals



An introduction
using to the free
Google Analytics
web metrics
software

**THEATRE
FORUM
IRELAND**
The Voice of the Performing Arts

 **Fáilte Ireland**

Contents

Introduction	2
Section 1: <i>What are Web Statistics?</i>	3
Section 2: <i>Configuring your Analytics Dashboard</i>	5
Section 3: <i>Key Performance Indicators</i>	7
Appendix A: <i>Google Analytics Installation Guide</i>	9
Appendix B: <i>Resources</i>	11

Introduction

The Aim of this Guide

This guide is an introduction to using the free Google Analytics web metrics software. Analytics is just one of many different web metrics applications, and other packages include Omniture, Coremetrics, Webtrends, amongst many others.

A survey conducted by Metric Mail in August 2010 showed that 49.95% of the top 1 million websites are using Analytics, and indeed all of the organisations participating in the recent Tickets for Tourists project are using Analytics.

This resource developed as part of the Tickets for Tourists project funded by Fáilte Ireland, and managed by Theatre Forum. As an arts marketing professional, you will find this guide useful if you are just beginning to analyse the performance of your website. Or, if you have more experience with web statistics then it can provide clarification and support.

This guide is designed to be used with other high quality online resources, and this document will signpost you to high quality online resources you can use in developing your analytics skills.

This guide aims to:

- Introduce the basic principles of Analytics
- Provide practical guidance for configuring Analytics to suit your needs
- Identify key performance indicators commonly used by arts organisations

There are 4 resource packs available as part of the Tickets for Tourists project from www.theatreforumireland.com and from Fáilte Ireland, Cultural Tourism & Festival and Cultural Events Unit.

1. An Introduction to Landing Pages for Arts Marketing Professionals (plus workbook)
2. An Introduction to Web Analytics for Arts Marketing Professionals
3. An Introduction to Pay Per Click Advertising for Arts Marketing Professionals
4. An Internet Marketing Cornucopia for Arts Marketing Professionals

Written by Susan Hallam, Hallam Communications Ltd (<http://www.hallam.biz>)



Section 1: What are Web Statistics (or Metrics)?

Your website can keep track of every single click from every single visitor to your site. Web statistics or web metrics is the general term for software that monitors this web visitor activity.

Google Analytics is a free web metrics application that provides detailed visitor statistics for your website. You will discover how visitors discovered your websites, how they explored your content, and help you to plan how to improve your visitor experience.

You will need to ask your web designer to install Analytics on your website, and there is an installation guide included as an Appendix to this document.



There are many reasons for using Analytics:

Avoiding making “gut feeling” decisions. Making decisions based on intuition may work sometimes, but eventually you will end up with inconsistent decisions and a scattered web marketing strategy. For example, you may not think that your customers do not like email messages, but by using Analytics you will be able to measure their interaction with your emails, and make smarter marketing decisions as a result.

Creating your organisation’s goals. You are, no doubt, keeping a close eye on your marketing budgets, and want to spend money in the right way. By creating key performance indicators (KPIs) for your website you will be able to target your spending according to where it is most effective. Analytics will help you to measure your most important activities, whether selling tickets, building your email marketing list, engaging with your audiences, handling enquiries, or other activities important to the success of your organisation.

Monitoring marketing campaign performance. The big difference between print and digital is that digital marketing measures every single click. Send a printed brochure out, and it can be difficult to measure its effectiveness. Run an online marketing campaign, and you can keep an eye on specific measures. If you have an underperforming marketing campaign, then you might want to pull the plug and put your efforts into a more successful area.

Segmenting your audience. You will have a range of different experiences that you offer to different audiences. And you will be creating different web pages with different offerings depending on your visitors’ needs and values. Analytics will measure how these types of audiences interact with your website, learn from their behaviour, and improve your offerings.



There are four steps to using web analytics successfully:

1. Define your Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). If you don't know what KPI's are, don't worry because we will talk about them in more detail in Section 3. Your KPIs aren't as simple as counting the number of visitors to your site, or the tallying the number of pages they looked at. Instead, we want to be measuring what we want them to do on the site, and these are called *desired behaviours*. For example, we might want visitors to download our brochure in PDF format, read our press release, search for events on our calendar, or join our mailing list.

2. Create your Management Reports. Once you decide what you need to measure, then you need to set up the reports giving the data you want to understand. For instance, we might want to know which pages on our website drove the most visitors to join our mailing list. Or what percentage of people who went to our enquiry form actually completed it?

3. Analyse your Data. It is great to produce attractive reports, but what is important is to understand what the data means to your organisation. You need to identify areas for improvement, and setting your priorities. If you aren't getting enough visitors from the search engines, then your action is to work on your optimisation. If your analysis tells you very few people are opening and reading your email newsletter, then you need to figure out why.

4. Take action on your Analytics. If you don't take action based on the results of your analysis, then you won't get any benefit to your organisation. We all know how disappointing it is to write up a report that gets read, but then nobody does anything about.



Section 2 : Configuring your Analytics Dashboard

When you first login to your Analytics account, you will see the Standard Dashboard that is provided to all users. It defaults to the period for the last 30 days, and displays information about your visitors, their behaviour, and your web content:



Visitor information: the number of visitors, the number of unique visitors (counting each visitor only once), the average time they spent on the site, the proportion of new visitors to your site.

Traffic sources: the number of visitors from search engines, the number of visitors who followed a link to your site from another site, the keywords they typed into a search engine to discover your site.

Content information: the total number of pages viewed, your most popular pages, your most popular landing pages

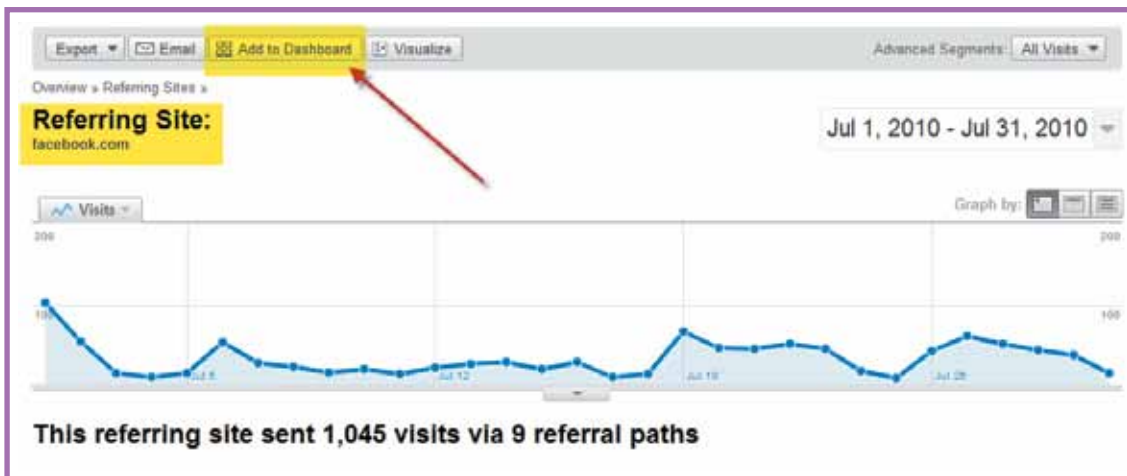
Goals: A goal is a page on your website that shows a conversion has taken place. For example, if a visitor signs up to your email newsletter, then a "thank you" page will display. We count that thank you as a signup. A goal could also be a purchase confirmation, or reading a particular page on your website, such as the membership benefits page.

*Need help understanding
Analytics jargon?
See this glossary
of web statistics
terms: [http://bit.ly/
T4TGlossary](http://bit.ly/T4TGlossary)*

Configuring your Analytics Dashboard

The Google Analytics' dashboard is a customisable collection of some of the basic standard reports most users are interested in. Your Google Analytics comes pre-configured with a dashboard that is a great starting point, but you can customise your dashboard to suit your own particular requirements. This makes it easier to see the most important statistics for your organisation as soon as you login.

For example, do you want to display how many visitors came to your website from a link on Facebook? Find this report in the Traffic Sources menu, under Referring Sites, and then just click the **Add to Dashboard** butt



This graph will now appear on your standard dashboard. You can customise your dashboard by:

- | |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adding or deleting graphs and reports modules |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dragging the modules around to arrange them in the order you prefer |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exporting your dashboard as a PDF, or sending the data to a spreadsheet for analysis |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scheduling your dashboard to be emailed to you and your team as a standard monthly or weekly report |

Hint: Don't clutter up your dashboard with too many reports. Choose only those reports that will help you to take marketing action!

Section 3 : Key Performance Indicators

Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) are the measurements of the performance of your website as defined by your website goals. These are your organisation's own, very specific goals, not general arts marketing benchmarks or your own personal performance goals. Generally speaking, your KPI's are going to be measured over time, not just once. And everybody in your organisation should agree on these goals, agree how important they are, and agree the process of working towards the delivery of these goals.

Engagement Measures

For many arts organisation, *encouraging audience engagement* is an essential goal. Your engaged audience is more likely to visit your site frequently, recommend your productions to friends, write comments on your blog, and buy tickets.

Remember, however, that not all engagement measures are created equal. It is all about quality, not just quantity. Writing a spam comment isn't engagement, and spending a long time on your website doesn't mean they're engaged; they might just be confused!

1. New vs Returning visitors: how many people keep come back to your website.
2. Numbers of email subscriptions.
3. Number of general enquiries.
4. Number of visitors coming to your website clicking from an email newsletter.
5. Bounce rate: the proportion of visitors who look at just one page, don't click on anything else on your website, and leave.
6. Downloads or other events, for instance downloading your programme.
7. Number of pages per visit.
8. Time spent on key pages.
9. Internal site search: Analytics will report if people have used the search box on your site, and the phrases they searched for



Tip: Don't forget that you might have KPI's from your funders. Think how your Analytics can show that you are meeting their goals!

Goals

Analytics Goals are like motherhood and apple pie: everybody agrees they're a great idea. We all know goals are important, and yet few arts organisations create them.

Here are some typical arts marketing goals:

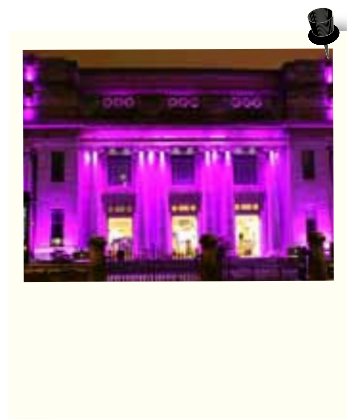
- 1 Selling a ticket: *this might only trackable when you put your Analytics tracking code on your external box office system web pages.*
- 2 Getting as far as the book tickets page: *a page view of your booking page.*
- 3 Subscribing to your e-newsletter.
- 4 Making a patron enquiry.



Traffic Measures

The number of visitors, or traffic, to your website is often a precursor to achieving your goals. You will want to measure the number of visitors, and also segment your reporting to see how these particular visitors then went on to engage with your site:

1. Traffic growth (numbers of visitors to your site)
2. Traffic by country (international visitors)
3. Top referring websites
4. Top key phrases from the search engines



Social Media Marketing Measures

Not all key performance indicators will be in Google Analytics; you may also want to incorporate data from your social media marketing campaigns. Google Analytics will produce “referral data” which means how a visitor behaves on your site if they clicked through to your site from Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, or another social media marketing site.

1. Number of Clicks from the social media sites to your own website (a “referral”)
2. Number of goals achieved with social media as the referring site
3. Time spent on your website following a social media referral
4. Number of pages viewed on your website following a social media referral
5. Number of comments added to your blog
6. Number of fans (Facebook) or followers (Twitter)
7. Number of “likes” (Facebook)
8. Number of uploads (a video, a review)
9. Number of downloads, for example a widget

Tip: You might also want to include measures from your Pay Per Click advertising. See our AdWords guide to learn more.

Appendix A: Google Analytics Installation Guide

Tickets for Tourists

Google Analytics is a free tool providing easy to use and powerful analysis of your website's visitor behaviour. As part of the Tickets for Tourists project, you are invited to a Google Analytics training course, and before the workshop you will need to have Analytics code installed on your web pages in order to capture your data.

The installation process is quite simple: create an Analytics account, and then insert the Tracking Code on every page of your website.

You will need the assistance of your web designer, or person who manages your website, in order to amend your web pages to include the code.

If you are using other web statistics tool, then please email Susan to discuss the suitability of the data you are gathering.

To create an Analytics account:

1. You need to have a free Google account to use Analytics. If you do not have a Google Account, then go to <https://www.google.com/accounts/NewAccount>. This account will give you access to a wide range of Google tools that will be useful to your organisation.
2. Once you have a Google Account, you can set up your Analytics Account. Visit <http://www.google.com/analytics>.
3. Enter your Google Account email and password and click Sign In. If you don't have a Google Account, click Sign up now to create one.
4. Click Sign Up.
5. Enter your Website's URL, making sure to select either <http://> or <https://> from the drop-down list. Enter your organisation name for this account in the Account Name field, then click Continue.
6. Enter your contact information and click Continue.
7. Read the Google Analytics Terms of Service. If you agree to these terms, select the Yes checkbox and click Create New Account to continue.



The **Tracking Instructions** page that appears contains the tracking code that you'll need to paste into each page of your site.

Add the tracking code to your pages

Google Analytics only tracks pages that contain the Google Analytics tracking code. You'll need to add this code to every page of your site, either manually or through the use of includes or other methods.

To access your tracking code:

1. Sign in to Google Analytics.
2. From the **Analytics Settings** page, find the profile for which you would like to retrieve the tracking code. Please note that tracking code is profile-specific.
3. From that profile's **Settings** column, click **Edit**.
4. At the top right of the Main Website Profile Information box, click **Check Status**.
5. Your tracking code can be copied and pasted from the text box in the Instructions for adding tracking section.

Basic installation - Copy and paste the code segment into the bottom of your web page content, immediately before the </body> tag of each page you are planning to track. If you use a common include or template, you can enter it there.

```
<script type="text/javascript">
var gaJsHost = (("https:" == document.location.protocol) ? "https://ssl." : "http://www.");
document.write(unescape("%3Cscript src=" + gaJsHost + "google-analytics.com/ga.js"
type='text/javascript'%3E%3C/script%3E"));
</script>
<script type="text/javascript">
try{
var pageTracker = _gat._getTracker("UA-xxxxx-x");
pageTracker._trackPageview();
} catch(err) {}
</script>
```

You'll need to update the "xxxx-x" in the sample above with your own Google Analytics account number.

Once you've completed this step, Google Analytics will begin collecting traffic data. You'll be able to see data in your reports within 24 hours.

For additional information regarding Analytics code installation, see

<http://www.google.com/support/googleanalytics/bin/answer.py?hl=en&answer=66983>

Appendix B: Resources

Books

[Google Analytics 2.0](#) a guide to interpreting the site statistics and turning them into meaningful information that you can use to guide your business decisions.

[Web Analytics: An Hour a Day](#) by Avinash Kaushik. A step by step guide to developing your web analytics strategy.

[Advanced Web Metrics with Google Analytics](#) by Brian Clifton, head of the Google Analytics team for Europe. You don't get more an expert than this guy, and the book is a practical guide for measuring your success.

Websites

[Google Analytics YouTube Video Channel](#): a video is worth a thousand words, and this is a great collection of how-to examples

Likewise, the [Google Business YouTube channel](#) has lots of 60 second videos that you will find useful

[Occam's Razor](#) by Avinash Kaushik: the premier source of information about Analytics, Avinash describes himself as a "Google Analytics Evangelist."

[Understanding Cookies & Google Analytics](#): Google Analytics tracking (and most web tracking software) uses cookies in order to provide meaningful reports about your site visitors. Learn more how they work, and how they influence your results.

[50 Resources for Getting the Most Out of Google Analytics](#): an amazingly compilation of tips, including everything and the kitchen sink.

[Web Analytics and Conversion Optimisation \(PDF Download\)](#) Chapter 13 of the online guide "eMarketing: the essential guide to online marketing" by Rob Stokes.

[Tracking Emails with Google Analytics](#) How to use "link tagging" to gather information as to how your email marketing campaigns interact with your website

[Tracking Social Networks Using Filters](#) Google already tracks a number of "mediums" in its reporting: organic search, paid search, referrals. This filter allows you to add a new medium of Social networking that clumps together all the social networking sites into a single statistic.