



Web Analytics—Making It Real

June 14th 2010
2:30-3:45

Content Leaders:

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Connecting Great Ideas and Great People

In this session ...

- Cover the basics ...
 - We'll talk, and listen
- Goal: help you be a “better-educated customer”
 - “Lead from where you are”



Who Becky Is

- Director of IT and Member Services at EDUCAUSE



Who Kevin Is

- Initially: programmer/analyst and OR (operations research) analyst for government.
- Marketing perspective: big trades & IMO's.
- Corporate perspective: don't do things on tacit, but data-driven decisions
- Even if we're more “fluffy” ... easier to make the non-data case for things.



Who are You?

- Why are you here?
- What is your most pressing web issue?
- What is/are your role(s)?



We Don't Want to Talk About Tools

- We aren't doing product demos
- Instead, let's talk about how to figure out what all your data means
- Ultimately, it's not about the data, it's about *the thought process*



Our Goals & Premises

- "101" is not basic if you aren't doing it
- You can affect change regardless of how much “control” you have
- Hypothetical Case Study: ABC Association
(based on real experiences)



ABC Association's Circumstances



- Hybrid trade/individual
 - 4000 individual members
 - 1000 trade members
- Membership decline of 10% in past 2 years
- 33% market penetration
- 10,000 potential members
- 2 web sites, lots of traffic
 - ‘Brochure-ware’ site: 4 years old
 - 10k unique visitors/year
 - Public awareness site: 1.5 yrs old
 - Tenuous linkage to main ‘brand’
 - 100k unique visitors/year



Confusion

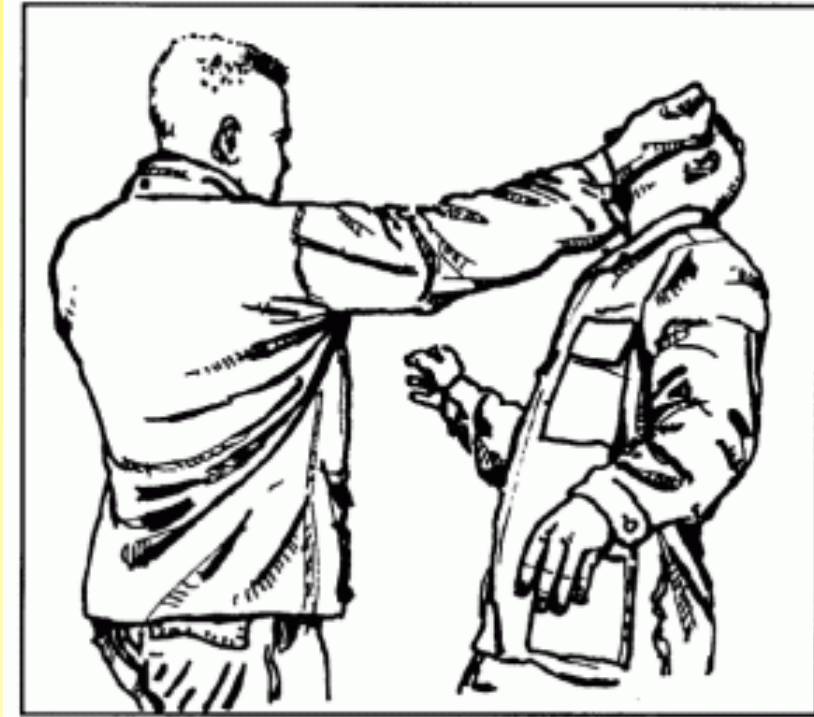
- Why is membership declining?
- How to stop the decline?
- Are the website(s) helping or hurting?
- Are competitors taking members?



What Information Does ABC Have?

- Web: basic Google Analytics
 - Traffic (unique visitors, visits, session length)
- Members-only website tracking
 - Who they are, what they did
- Email package analytics
 - Opens, click-through tracking
- Member survey: every 3 years
- Research for main web site redesign: 4 yrs ago





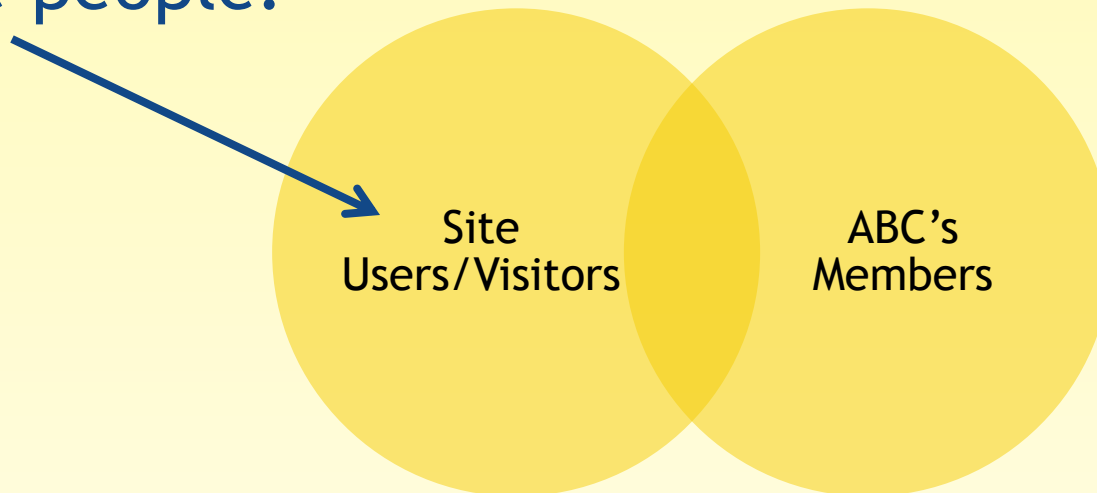
What issues strike you?

- Where would you look first?
- How would you start to solve?



Who is Coming to ABC's Web Site?

- Run a popup survey over a time-constrained period to ask who site visitors are
 - 1 week at a time: seasonal (March, May, Sept)
- Compare survey data to member demographics to see which demographics are underrepresented
- What can you do to make the site more appealing to these people?



How About ABC's Members?

- Members are typically members for a reason
- Look at members-only site usage and compare to membership demographics
- Look for patterns to see who *really* uses site
 - Who visited once... or never?
 - Who came back over and over? What did they use?
- What can be done to engage the “didn't visit” group?



Do They Know Awareness Site is ABC?

- Test identity clarity: use a popup survey to ask
 - Who they are
 - Why they visit
 - Whether they know about ABC
- Number of visitors tells us there is appeal to awareness site; design copy to promote ABC
- Tune message with multivariate testing
 - Google Analytics can do this for free



How Valuable is the Site Content?

- Download all page accesses into a spreadsheet
- Look for areas with huge institutional “push to post”
 - Surge of access, then sharp drop-off? Or worse, no access at all?
- Possible solutions
 - Review communications - do people know about it?
 - Evaluate findability - can people find it?
 - Address relevance - make content fresher
 - Encourage dialog - let people comment



Focus on more than “Top 30 pages”

- What happened with the high expectations items NOT in Top 30?
 - Can't use site to answer that question
 - Correlate with member & web surveys: issues that matter, visitor profiles
 - See what they do on site: measure trends
 - Easier to track usage, extrapolate why content isn't effective



Improvement #1: Attention Gets Results

- Research: 1,500 ABC members aren't using the main ABC site
- Action: Invite them to webinar series “Making the most of your ABC membership” & “Using your ABC membership as a business tool”
- Finding: 20% come to webinar series but website usage increases 35%
- Just communicating you're doing something special for them has a positive effect



Improvement #2: Incremental Change Makes a Difference

- Research: Awareness site popup survey shows 40% of visitors are unaware of ABC
- Action: Change messaging to emphasize ABC
- 3 months later...
 - Knowledge of ABC now 90%
 - Web conversion to main ABC site increased by 5%
 - 500 more unique visitors to main ABC site
 - 1% of conversions became members
 - 5 new members joined ABC



Are Your Changes Making A Difference?

- Study the data in your website analytics package
- Look for
 - Decreasing “bounce” rate
 - Increasing “new visitors”
 - Increasing “page views”
 - Increasing “time on site”
- Not seeing these changes? Try something else!
- There is no silver bullet...try, try again



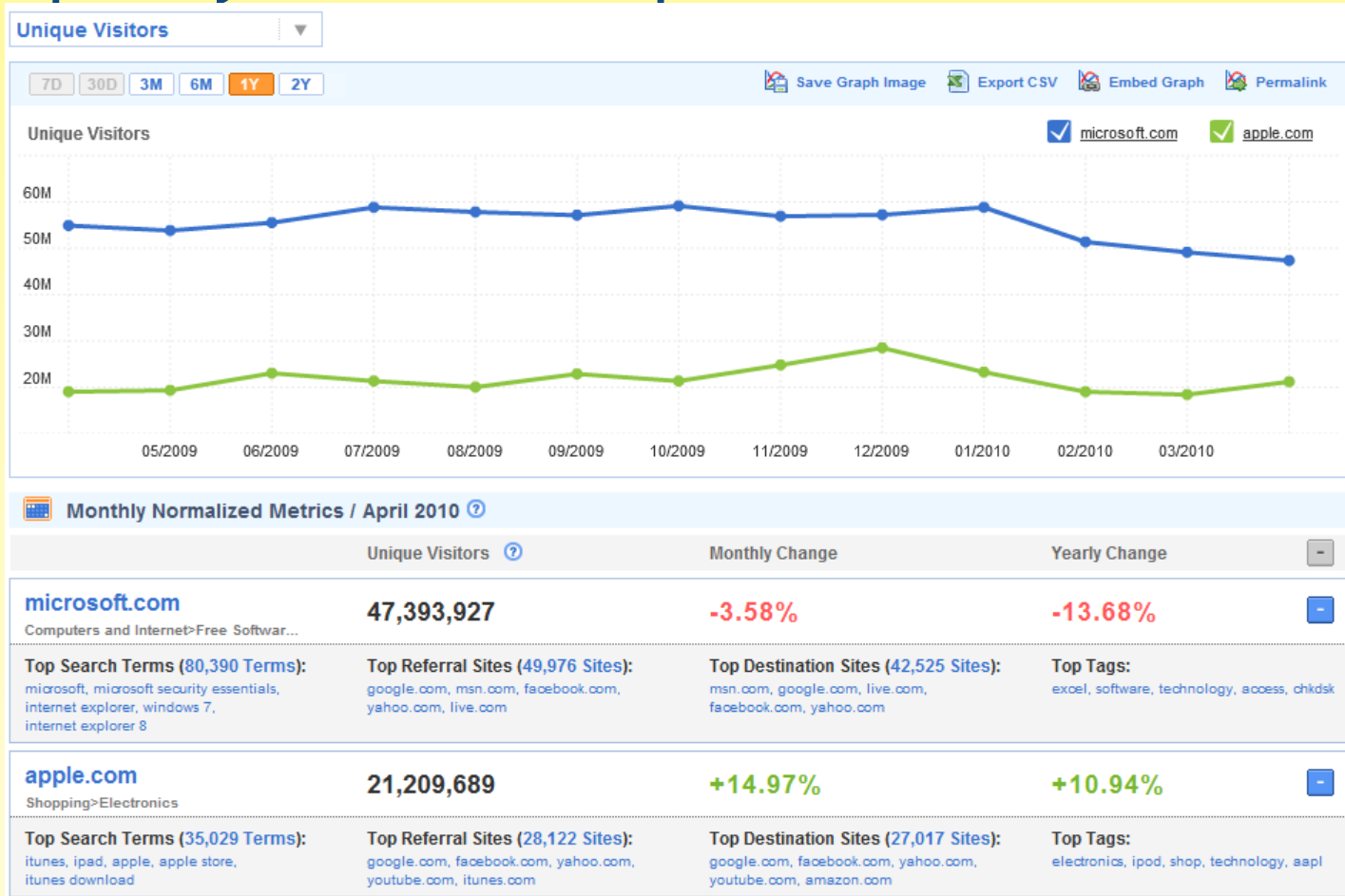
Improvement #3: Market Penetration

- Research: Comparing the results of the two popup surveys shows there isn't much visitor overlap. Current outreach is insufficient.
- Action: Improve site SEO, buy some AdWords
- 3 months later...
 - Website traffic increased by 40%
 - 4,000 more unique visitors to main ABC site
 - 10% of visitors became members
 - 400 new members joined ABC... an 8% increase!



Market Penetration: Study the Competition

- Compare yourself: Compete.com



- Also: Google Trends, HitWise

Leading From Where You Are

- Lo-fi solutions are easy and effective
- What if you can't get IT to post web polls?
 - Use a graphic. Don't need it to be glitzy popup magic. Anybody can put a graphic/link on the site.
 - Many free online survey tools.
- What if you don't have good testing tools?
 - Multivariate testing is great. But if you don't have it, run copy for a week, look at stats, swap copy, look at stats...



More on How to Improve

- Push back on wrong/opinionated thinking (HPPO)
 - Facts and data are your friends.
 - Have evidence and a clear way to articulate your relationship to your market.
- Make your content search-engine friendly
 - Define keywords: intelligently, not haphazardly.
 - 40% redesigning web site this year or next year (if average site redesign cycle is 5 years).
 - Web metrics are your primary research, guided by a bedrock of observed behavior.



Now, Your Turn

- Now that we talked about all this stuff, what's in your head?
- What are you going to do differently when you get back to the office?
- Short report out in 10 minutes....



Thank you!

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