

time again? How frequently do they return and how long do they stay? Long enough to read your content and follow through on your call to action? Answering these questions will help guide you to make crucial decisions to optimize your campaign.

## Referrals

Whether your public relations efforts are focused on the awareness of consumer goods, a not-for-profit cause or a political agenda, chances are you're hoping to drive your audience to take some type of specific action, say at a specific online location. Hope is a beautiful thing, but not an effective way to measure the effect your work has on the outcomes of your PR work. The Google Analytics referral tab is the answer to your hopes and dreams when it comes to tracking website referrals.

Understanding Google Analytics referral data will help you make any necessary changes to ongoing efforts while also providing valuable insight for future initiatives. If you designed a campaign to drive people to a micro-site that you painstakingly developed with all the right messages and a compelling call to action, you're naturally expecting increased traffic to that site. Tracking the referral source of the traffic specifically allows you to:

- See which media placements were effective
- Understand what messages worked and
- Analyze which specific audience(s) you managed to engage.

For many PR professionals, sales may not appear to be the end goal; that is what our marketing and sales colleagues traditionally specialize in. Blurred lines, however, represent more to our industry than the lyrics of a popular Top 40 song. Finding ways to demonstrate the acquisition of cold, hard cash is a PR dream that is starting to become a reality with the help of platforms such as Google Analytics.

## Google Analytics for PR Professionals: A Checklist

### Demographics

Benchmark and track changes in age, gender, and location. Is your target audience navigating to your site? Why or why not? How do you need to adjust your campaign accordingly?

### Behavior

Explore the ratio of new vs. returning users. Are there only new kids on the block or do you have a dedicated group of regulars? What makes those returning come back? How long do they stay, and do they take action according to your plan?

### Mobile

View the ratio of users accessing your website from a desktop or mobile interface. How does this affect your campaign? If you're targeting mobile users (in terms of demographics, outlets, etc.) but the majority of clicks come from desktop users, something unexpected is happening with your campaign that you should explore and amend if necessary.

### Acquisition

Understand where your referrals are coming from to make sure that the hours of labor you've put into pitching specific media targets are reflected in incoming traffic. If your PR hits are not listed, you may need to reconsider your media outreach tactics. Don't forget to review the "revenue" tab to understand what kind of dollar signs your PR efforts might be bringing in.

### Social

If you're like the rest of us, social media has become a part of your PR role. Check out the social media value and conversions charts to help understand and justify the work that you're doing across social media platforms. Amidst a sea of hashtags, you'll find comfort in finding every tweet that turns into a dollar or two.