

## SEO Trump – Montreal Web Design Consultants & SEO Experts

### Web Traffic

**Web traffic** is the quantity and quality of hits and data received by a web site. This is determined by the number of visitors and the number of pages they visit.

Webmasters monitor the incoming and outgoing traffic to see which parts or pages of their site are popular and if there are any apparent trends, for example one specific page being viewed mostly by people in a particular country. There are many ways to monitor this traffic and the gathered data is used to help structure sites, highlight security problems, or help to spot and analyze visitor behavior and marketing trends.

Some companies offer advertising schemes that, in return for increased web traffic (visitors), pay for screen space on the site. Sites also often aim to increase their web traffic through inclusion on search engines and through [Search Engine Optimization](#) .

Web traffic is measured to see the popularity of web sites and individual pages or sections within a site.

Web traffic can be analyzed by viewing the traffic statistics found in the web server log file, an automatically-generated list of all the pages served. A *hit* is generated when any file is served. The page itself is considered a file, but images are also files, thus a page with 5 images could generate 6 hits (the 5 images and the page itself). A *page view* is generated when a visitor requests any page within the web site - a visitor will always generate at least one page view (the main page) but could generate many more.

Tracking applications external to the web site can record traffic by inserting a small piece of HTML code in every page of the web site.

The following types of information are often collated when monitoring web traffic:

- The number of visitors.
- The average number of page views per visitor - a high number would indicate that the average visitors go deep inside the site, possibly because they like it or find it useful. Conversely, it could indicate an inability to find desired information easily.
- Average visit duration - the total length of a user's visit
- Average page duration - how long a page is viewed for
- Domain classes - all levels of the IP Addressing information required to deliver Webpages and content.
- Busy times - the most popular viewing time of the site would show when would be the best time to do promotional campaigns and when would be the most ideal to perform maintenance
- Most requested pages - the most popular pages
- Most requested entry pages - the entry page is the first page viewed by a visitor and shows which are the pages most attracting visitors
- Most requested exit pages - the most requested exit pages could help find bad pages, broken links or the exit pages may have a popular external link
- Top paths - a path is the sequence of pages viewed by visitors from entry to exit, with the top paths identifying the way most customers go through the site
- Referrers; The host can track the (apparent) source of the links and determine which sites are generating the most traffic for a particular page.

## Controlling web traffic

The amount of traffic seen by a web site is a measure of its [popularity](#). By analyzing the statistics of visitors it is possible to see shortcomings of the site and look to improve those areas. It is also possible to increase (or, in some cases decrease) the popularity of a site and the number of people that visit it.

## Limiting access

It is sometimes important to protect some parts of a site by password, allowing only authorized people to visit particular sections or pages.

Some site administrators have chosen to block their page to specific traffic, such as by geographic location. The re-election campaign site for U.S. President George W. Bush ([www.GeorgeWBush.com](http://www.GeorgeWBush.com)) was blocked to all internet users outside of the U.S. on 25 October 2004 after a reported attack on the site.

## Increase web site traffic

Web traffic can be increased by placement of a site in search engines and purchase of advertising, including bulk e-mail, pop-up ads, and in-page advertisements. Web traffic can also be increased by purchasing non-internet based advertising.

If a web page is not listed in the first 1-3 pages of any search, the odds of someone finding it diminishes greatly (especially if there is other competition on the first pages). Few people go past the first two or three pages, and the percentage that go to subsequent pages is substantially lower. Consequently, getting proper placement on search engines is as important as the web site itself. This is the primary objective of [Search Engine Optimization \(SEO\)](#).

There are a number of other things you can do to increase your web traffic, including but not limited to building link popularity, webrings, offering [free e-books](#) or articles and classified advertisements.

## Organic traffic

Web traffic which comes from unpaid listing at search engines or directories is commonly known as ["organic" traffic](#). Organic traffic can be generated or increased by including the web site in directories (such as Yahoo! and DMOZ), search engines (such as Google and Inktomi), guides (such as yellow pages and restaurant guides) and award sites.

Inclusion in directories or guides cannot, however, replace well thought-out, professional [Search Engine Optimization \(SEO\)](#) that is driven by expertly applying [keyword](#), [title](#), [metatag](#), [headline](#), and [content](#) algorithms and rules.

Usually, the top organic result gets most of the clicks from web users. According to some studies, the top result gets between 5% and 10% of the clicks. Each subsequent result gets between 30% and 60% of the clicks of the previous one. This reinforces the common sense notion that it is important to appear in the top results.

Because of the huge amount of information available on the web, crawlers might take days, weeks or months to complete review and index all the pages they find. Google, for example, as of the end of 2004 had indexed over eight billion pages. Even having hundreds or thousands of servers working on the spidering of pages, a complete re-indexing takes its time. That is why some pages recently updated in certain web sites are not immediately found when doing searches on search engines.

## Natural Traffic

Natural website traffic is also in some cases attributed to the name of the website, particularly when the website uses a primary dictionary term as its domain name. Common sense suggests that we can go to "Shoes.com" and shop for shoes online. One does not need to go to a search engine to find that URL. In the past many valuable names were simply undeveloped and you might see "under construction" or "free parking" listed.

Today, many high-profile domain names are in use, and therefore increase the web surfer's belief they can go directly to a site based on its name. Another example is "Porn.com" which sold for 9.5 million dollars due to the ability to save on search engines and likelihood to attract visitors by name. Another example might be "BankRate.com" in which a bank rate might be found immediately. Other examples are oddities such as "BavarianDancers.com." As all domains that represent a topic are likely registered, a visitor can find what they are looking for by typing in the topic.

For that reason the domain name market is considered to be a very big factor in not only obtaining traffic, but especially in creating a name that is easily remembered. The name eLoans is easy to remember, as will be the new domain name purchased by CNN "iReport." It is possible that millions of people will log on to report news if that brand becomes a household name.

## Paid advertising

In return for a small payment many larger companies choose to advertise their sites on other popular sites. This e-marketing usually takes the form of:

- **Banner advertising** : Banner impressions are sold by the thousands, and referred to as Cost Per Impression (CPM). As of 2004, prices range from \$1/CPM for a run-of-network to about \$50/CPM or more for specialized targeted runs.
- **Pay per clicks** : Advertisers "buy" keywords or key phrases by bidding on them against other advertisers. These Pay-per-click providers sell space on the respective search engines and sites with which they are aligned. Position is largely determined by a combination of the amount each advertiser is willing to pay and the click driving performance of the advertiser's creative - though advanced providers such as Google have started taking into account other factors such as the quality of the ad's destination and the ability of the site to satisfy visitors. Google sells paid advertisement through its AdWords and AdSense systems, which place sponsored links on search pages. Overture , now owned by Yahoo! , is one of the most popular pay-per-click advertising venues.

As users got used to seeing banners, some companies chose to make the advertisements more intrusive - pop-up ads became particularly popular to attract attention. However, most people consider pop-ups a nuisance and several software companies offer free pop-up blockers. Microsoft included a pop-up blocker in Service Pack 2 of Windows XP .

For more information, or an **absolutely free web site analysis and SEO consultation**, we encourage you to [contact us](#). Our SEO experts will be pleased to help.

**Web Traffic** is a Search Engine Optimization Knowledge Resource  
Written by the Montreal SEO Trump Web Design & SEO Consulting Team.