5 WAYS WEB VISITOR TRACKING CAN IMPROVE YOUR LEAD GENERATION CAPABILITIES

Overview of Web Activity Tracking

If you have researched a product or service either for personal or business use in the last 12 months, take a moment and ask yourself how your search began. It's a good bet that a significant percentage of your pre-purchase research occurred online, if not all of it. As a B2B marketer, you can rest assured that the vast majority of your sales pipeline in the next 12 months will come from prospects that began their search for products and services on the web – probably through some combination of Google, association websites or via direct organic research.

In response to this, companies have reinvented the corporate website. In today's online, web 2.0 world the number one priority of a corporate website is Lead Generation. It can be argued that the corporate website is now nothing more than a digital extensive of the marketing and sales departments. This change has rapidly taken hold over the last 5- 7 years. Prior to this change, in what we can loosely define as the Web 1.0 world, the corporate website was little more than an online media kit; you're sales kit folder translated into an electronic document repository that became your website. This was a world in which trade shows, direct mail and telemarketing still ruled the planet. Today, the website has a much more dynamic and active role in the sales process and with the proliferation of Marketing Automation tools at our disposal, one might say the website is the center of the Marketing Automation universe.

Web 2.0 has a distinct look and feel and some basic rules about how it functions. I will not attempt to define Web2.0 as a whole but rather, from the perspective of Marketing Automation and the corporate website. One thing that most professional marketers would agree on is that the website has become the de facto destination for online marketing activity. We want to continually drive our leads to the website and entice them to return to the website again and again. As such, your web site is a direct extension of your sales force. It needs to be interactive and dynamic. Content needs to be served up based on who the visitor is and what they are interested in. It is a destination for leads, prospects, customers and partners to interact with your company on a day-to- day basis.

This changing nature and role of the corporate website in the marketing mix has created a group of technologies that focus on identifying and profiling behavior of Anonymous and Known visitors to the website. These classes of technology are known generically as "Web Analytics", "Web Activity Tracking", and "Web Visit Software" to name a few.

Once we understand the role that the corporate website should play with respect to lead and demand generation, we must now ask logical questions.

- Who is on our website?
- How did individuals arrive at our website? Through referring domains, Pay-Per-Click
- (PPC), organic search, email campaigns....etc.
- What pages are people spending the most time on?

- What are people downloading?

The focus of this paper is exploring the importance of understanding web activity as it relates to your overall Inbound Marketing mix. The goal is to ensure that good leads on your site are identified and nurtured to Opportunity Stage in your CRM system. Furthermore, this paper will provide details on why web activity tracking can play a crucial role in understanding the positive impact of your Marketing Automation campaigns and how web metrics can improve your lead scoring processes.

Understanding the Data

What information can we gather with Web Visitor Tracking tools? A good web activity tracking solution, like Web Forensics, provides a wealth of information for the marketer to use in various ways. Critical components to a standard web activity tracking solution include the following:

- IP Address – with location mapping
- Session detail – Time in/Time out
- Page View History – number of pages, what pages, time on page
- Demographic information (if applicable) – company and individual levels
- Referring domain
- Keyword and/or query string

Gathering the data from the site visits is the first step. Savvy marketers should have a plan for how they want to use this information in real campaigns. It is important to note that the overall value of web visitor tracking is degraded when this information is disconnected or operates as a stand-alone report. The reason is that it requires additional steps, analysis and data manipulation to physically use this information in a campaign, lead scoring algorithm or nurture marketing solution. The value of raw web activity logs is dramatically improved when the marketer can apply automated process such as trigger emails or autoresponders, email individual account alerts to sales, log web interactions in the CRM solution...etc. The next phase is for the marketer to take action on the data. We will explore 5 ways marketers can make raw web activity actionable.

Five Ways to use web activity tracking

One - Getting Sales In The Loop

Knowing who is on your website is the first step. Knowing what to do about it is equally important. One success factor for using web activity tracking is to actively involve sales in the process. What sales person would NOT want to know if several of their key target prospects spent 30 minutes browsing the website yesterday? Here's what you need to do to make this information actionable.

- Integrate web activity with your CRM system – matching on name/company and populating their record in the CRM system helps sales understand the pattern of interaction.
- Proactive alerts – notify sales through summary reports and unique visitor reports via email
- Allow sales or drip campaigns to follow up with a custom email based on the

type of information the prospect viewed online.

- Summarize – don't clutter the sales system with raw web logs – provide only the information that is needed and relevant

Two – Extend the conversation with trigger emails

Successful marketing is always about presenting the right message to the right person at the right time. Let's say you have 3 primary solutions you sell. Solution A, B and C are sold into Hospitals. The CIO of a large regional hospital system is on your website and has spent 20 minutes on a series of web pages about Solution A. This should trigger an email campaign to the CIO with content focused on solution A. The email itself need not be something as direct as "Thanks for being on our website". In fact, this can potentially turn off the prospect for fear of privacy issues. Rather, a well place campaign 24 to 48 hours after the interaction may illicit additional interest and prime the sales force for a phone call.

Trigger emails provide an automated solution that ensures you're maximizing each web visit. Furthermore, sending out trigger or follow up emails from web visits may entice the lead to engage further, depending on the content of the email itself. When crafting trigger emails for web activity follow up keep in mind, your goal in the trigger email is to continue the digital conversation. Content, timing and call to actions in the trigger email should be designed to keep the prospect engaged over a longer period of time. Personalized trigger emails from sales are another good tactic. These emails can be simple and introductory in nature. Using a marketing automation solution you can engage sales early in the lead discovery process without bogging sales down with a high volume of unqualified leads.

Three – Maximizing your PPC/SEO campaigns

First, it is a search-marketing best practice to Never – Ever send traffic directly to the homepage. There are a myriad of research papers which explain how conversion rates statistically decrease when PPC/SEM send leads to the home page. Leads from PPC/SEM need to be directed to a keyword optimized landing page that is simple, has no extraneous navigation and is headed with an exact keyword match to the search string. This is particularly important with AdWords because it increase your Ad Quality Score (AQS) which may increase your placement above those with low AQS. Landing pages crafted as specific destinations to PPC/SEM will help track ROMI on what can be potentially costly campaigns.

What is equally important is to understand where prospects go once they've completed your landing page. It is telling to know that someone took the time to fill out your landing page and then navigated your site for 30 minutes afterwards – and then came back the next day and spent an additional 60 minutes on your site. Having post-landing page metrics in place helps you better understand your campaign's effectiveness and the quality of the lead.

Four – Use web activity as part of your lead scoring program

Web activity history is one of the single best indicators of a lead's "strength". Often referred to as Implicit Online Behavior, web activity has no secrets. A campaign responder filling out a form on a landing page can technically put whatever information they want on the form, accurate or not.

Which web pages a lead views, time spent on pages, number of returning visits (sessions) is information that cannot be altered. It is true and honest data about a prospects interest in your website and products/solutions. In fact, in many lead scoring models, time spent on a page and the number of unique sessions per week/month, carry the highest point value when assigned a grade to an unqualified lead.

What is equally important is to understand where prospects go once they've completed your landing page is crucial. It is telling to know that someone took the time to fill out your landing page an then navigated your site for 30 minutes afterwards – and then came back the next day and spend an additional 60 minutes on your site. Having post-landing page metrics in place helps you better understand your campaign's effectiveness and the quality of the lead. This leads to a much more accurate lead scoring program and ensures the best leads get the quickest attention.

Five- Manage the right metrics

B2B web metrics are decidedly different than the type of web metrics tracked and managed by B2C. The primary reason is that B2C is transactional while B2B is conversational. Interactions, whether they are on the web, with sales or in response to campaigns are part of a lengthy information sharing conversation between you and the prospect, with the goal being to become the selected solution provider to meet their business needs.

Raw web logs are not appropriate metrics for tracking and managing B2B web activity.

Metrics you should be paying attention to are listed to the right. They are metrics that will help you calculate ROMI and improve the performance of future campaigns. The metrics listed on the right are predicated on having good integration between Marketing and Sales at the process and technology levels.

Understanding these metrics will give you the right knowledge to make important decisions about which campaigns continue to receive funding, which do not and which campaigns have garnered the highest ROMI.

- Common metrics for website ROI tracking:
    1. # Of lead from inquiries
    2. # Of visits to contact us pages
- (Visitor to inquiry conversion ratio?)
    1. # Of white paper requests
    2. # Of News letter registrations
    3. #Of opt-in email addresses
    4. # Of webinar registrations &
    5. # of attendees
    6. #Of immediate sales ready leads

7. # Of inbound phone calls (click to call or chat)

- Basic lead generation metrics:

1. # Of inquiries (Weakest)
2. # Of qualified leads (Weak)
3. # Of leads in sales process (Okay)
4. # Of opportunities in sales funnel (Better) # Of closed deals (Best)

Conclusion

Web Visitor Tracking is a valuable tool, but is made that much more valuable when it is incorporated into the Demand Generation process as a whole. Set alone, web activity information is useful and interesting. Integrated with CRM, trigger/nurture marketing campaigns and the sales process, it is much more powerful.