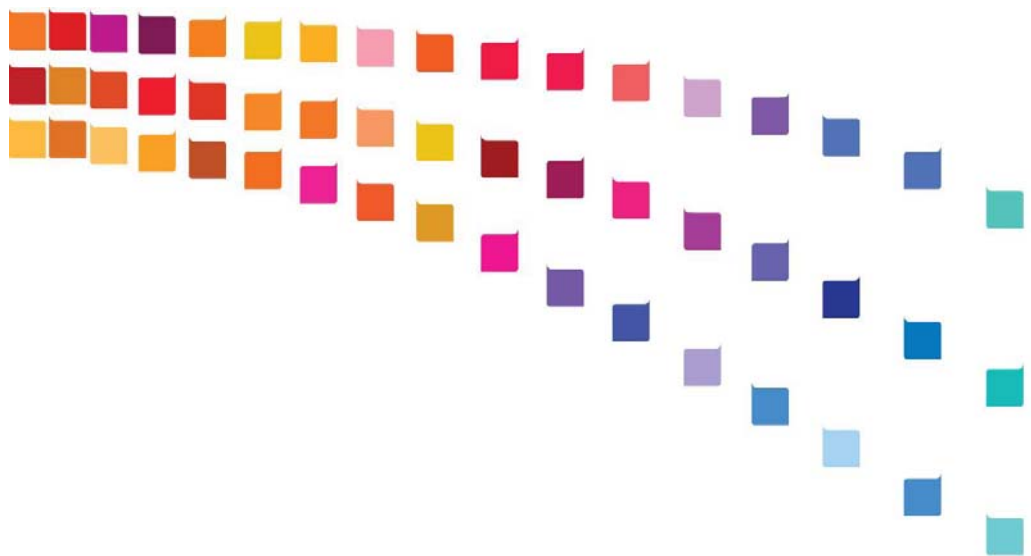




FAQs: Web data





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What is web data?

For the purposes of this brief overview, we are defining web data as data generated through visitor interactions with your website. It does not include analysis of broader digital data, such as social media.

Readers can also refer to the [Email Marketing Council best practice guidelines](#) for more detail on the topics covered in this brief review.

What do I need to know?

Web data analysis concentrates on how visitors to your website interact with your content. The primary purpose is to understand which areas of the website are “sticky” and which are not, as well as to recognise the effectiveness of your campaigns at driving visitors, and areas where your site fails to deliver the desired outcome.

Analysis tracks the route that visitors to the site use to navigate the content. This is achieved through a variety of techniques, among them the use of cookies and personalised URLs that are designed to identify and track unique site visitors. If you are using cookies and/or PURLs then you must comply with the May 2011 changes to the privacy and electronic communications (EC Directive) regulations 2003. Please see the [cookie watch](#) page of the DMA website.

If your website is transactional you can use web data analysis to trace the route that purchasers take through your website to reach the check-out: you can also track those who abandoned their shopping carts before buying and look for reasons to explain their change of heart.

Web data analysis can also help to track the response of your target audience to campaigns that aim to drive traffic towards your website. These campaigns can range from direct communications, such as mail, email, door-drop and social media activities that encourage recipients to visit the website; advertising on TV, radio, web (such as sponsored links and AdWords) or in printed media; to PR campaigns - in fact, pretty much any communications activity that points the audience towards a website for further information or the opportunity to purchase.

Spikes in visitor numbers, particularly to landing pages created for your campaigns, will illustrate the pull of your activity. Compare website visitor data for each of your campaigns as an additional metric to sales performance to understand which promotions drew the most attention – and which drew the most revenue – these aren’t always the same campaigns.

What will I do with the data?

In simple terms – learn from it. Learn which campaigns drive the most traffic to your website. Learn which campaigns result in the most purchases / enquiries / trials. Learn which search engines provide the most referrals. Learn where visitors to your site came from, which pages they accessed on your website and where they exited to.

Use analysis of visitor numbers to tailor campaign targeting and / or creative executions by testing different messages to different segments and reviewing which deliver the most visitors. Understand what content on your website holds visitors’ attention the longest, which pages get visited the most often and which see little or no traffic.



Web data can also help you to understand more about the make-up of your website users – where they come from, which devices they are using to visit etc and help to pinpoint any improvement areas of your website. Which pages are losing the most people? Is this a sign that the page is not well designed and “usable” and can be improved? When you find a shopping basket page is one of these pages, you could be losing valuable sales!

What data can I collect?

You can capture all visitor information relating to your website, as long as you have the tools in place to collect the information.

Providing you gain permission from visitors, you can also place cookies on their computers, which will allow you to recognise individuals when they return to your site, making it possible to personalise content and the offers you make to them, as well as to track the various pages they visit and actions they take. For more information please see the [cookie watch](#) page of the DMA website.

If you have content that your users find interesting and/or valuable, you can create a user area and request a log-in prior to making this information available again, you need to provide the opportunity to identify individuals with a strong interest in your offer and to track their movements across your website.

Adding transactional data from your users’ shopping carts will help you understand who your best “online” customers are and enable you to see what content these individuals view. This can help with the targeting of offers and the re-modelling of content around the information that is most interesting and relevant to your best customer groups. Combining your web data with other information you hold about the individual will help to build a single view of each interaction you have with customers and prospects across your various communications channels and touch points.

You can also collect data from your logged-in website users, which can give great insight into their collective and personal behaviours. The key is encouraging them to log in! This can be done via your own website log-in, or you may wish to look at Facebook Connect as an example of how to log people in from another site. For more information please see the [cookie watch](#) page of the DMA website.

Ultimately you can extract a lot of valuable data from website users to help to improve and tailor your website offering. The key for gathering this data is relevance; users will only give you data when they can see a clear reason and a value to them for handing it over. Make sure you signpost what they will get in exchange for the data and help them to see “what’s in it for them”.