



# Auditing Your Digital Presence

## MEASURING WHAT WORKS FOR YOU ONLINE

—Scott D. Meyer, 9 Clouds

Your boss has asked you. Your parents have asked you. You maybe have even asked yourself: Why the hell are we doing this digital stuff?

While it's easy to cite digital marketing efforts as the "future" or essential for brand awareness and marketing, these claims do little when it's time to decide how to allocate resources, most importantly time and money.

If the value of your online efforts is unclear, it is easy to put off doing them. On the flipside, if you are unaware of the value of your online efforts, it is also easy to throw money at the problem and feel comfortable that someone is doing something for you.

While most people do not fall in to these extremes, there is usually a bit of these issues in every organization. Knowing why you are online is essential to get the results you want. Thus, this whitepaper. We want you to know how to audit your digital properties so you can answer four important questions:

- **How are we doing?**
- **What could we be doing?**
- **What could we eliminate?**
- **What are our competitors doing?**

## THE OPPORTUNITY FROM DIGITAL MARKETING

Digital media and digital marketing are everywhere. You have heard webinars, conference talks and numerous digital marketers like ourselves tell you why you need digital marketing. You see social media logos on everything from tv commercials to the jerseys of basketball players. Does this mean you need it?

The opportunity is there and growing. According to The Social Habit in June 2012, 56% of all Americans have a profile on a social network and nearly two-thirds of social media users are active daily. Meanwhile

the Fleishman Hillard 2012 Digital Influence Index noted that 89% of consumers surveyed search online to make purchasing decisions. This means that your customers

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are definitely online and looking for information. If you can allocate your time wisely and provide useful information, it is more likely that they will purchase from you.

While the opportunity is a fact, the specifics on how to take advantage of the opportunity will differ from business to business. The general rule of digital marketing is there is no general rule. Every business is different and depending on your own goals and capacity, digital media may or may not be the best place for you.

We may not be able to tell you specifically that you should use digital media or which tools you should use, but we can help you determine what will work for you.

## CHALLENGES OF DIGITAL MARKETING

While digital present an enormous opportunity for businesses, it comes with many challenges.

Spending on digital media is increasing dramatically. According to [Wildfire](#), 75% of marketers are planning to increase spending on social media this year while the [CMO Survey](#) reports that marketers expect to spend nearly 20% of their budgets on social media in the next five years. While spending is increasing, measurable results are not. Research by [Awareness, Inc.](#) noted that 54% of marketers identified the inability to tie social media to actual business results as the leading difficulty with digital marketing. Even more incredible, despite the fact that [83% of marketers indicate that social media is important for their business](#), 53% of them do not measure their success.

Without measuring success or auditing your online efforts, it is impossible to decide which efforts are working and which ones to eliminate. What we have found in our experience conducting digital audits for businesses around the globe is that on average 30-40% of digital marketing spending is ineffective and can be quickly eliminated or reallocated after holding up the magnifying glass of measurement.

How do you do it? We recommend starting with a digital audit of your digital marketing efforts

## WHAT'S INCLUDED IN A DIGITAL AUDIT

A digital audit should look first at your digital efforts across media. We divide these efforts into a few general categories:

- **Your website/s**
- **Social media and online events**
- **Organic search**
- **Email marketing**
- **Online ads**

[SEE NEXT PAGE FOR SALES FUNNEL GRAPHIC]

We can consider these efforts as top of the sales funnel efforts. That means that they increase awareness of your product or service and drive potential customers to your digital storefront (usually a website) or your physical storefront. At 9 Clouds we offer a digital audit that dives into each of these categories. In this whitepaper we will look specifically at your website and if these media attract visitors, and if so, are they the right kind of visitors.

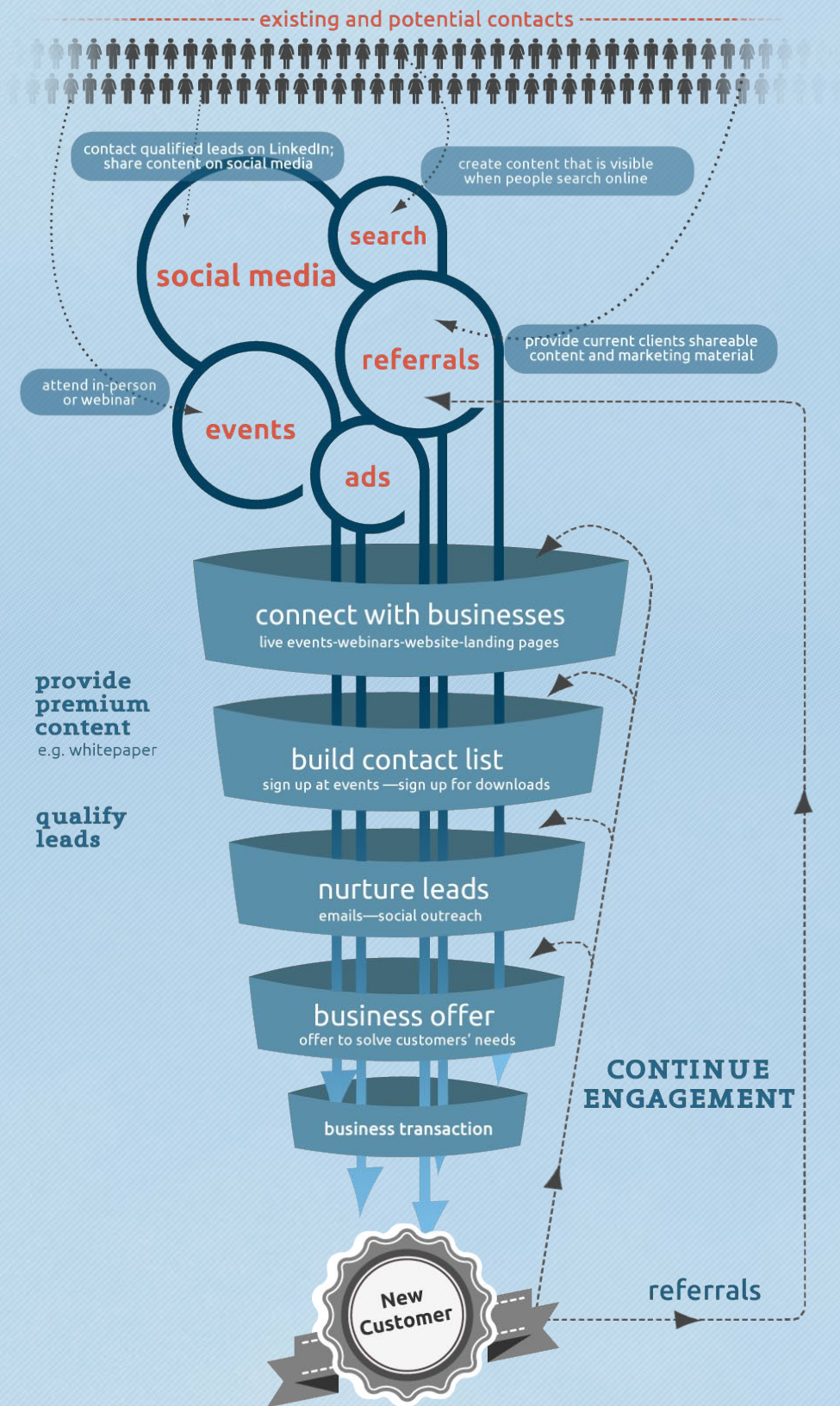
Looking at the success of each media type will enable us to answer our four key questions:

- **How is the digital media doing?**
- **What could the digital media be doing?**
- **What digital media do we not need to use?**
- **What are the competitors doing in the space?**

Looking at your digital efforts across media also forces you to look at the sales process. If you generate a lot of excitement and visitors to your digital or physical storefront, but no one buys or does what you want them to do (donate to a non-profit, sign up for an email list, take a tour, sign up for a demo, etc.), you may need to improve the middle or bottom of your sales funnel. The same media categories can help

# Creating a Complete Sales Funnel

Using inbound marketing tactics, 9 Clouds helps businesses improve their visibility online and converts views into sales.



generate leads and convert leads into sales, which we identify as the middle of the funnel and bottom of the funnel respectively. The digital audit will thus look at:

- **How are leads generated**
- **What constitutes a quality lead**
- **What is the follow up and sales process for quality leads**
- **What is the goal of our digital efforts (ie- sales, sign ups, donations, etc.)**

We encourage you to think through your follow-up and sales process as well as how you generate and qualify leads. At 9 Clouds we specialize in online lead generation and can help you measure and improve your sales conversion efforts.

Now, let's get started with the audit.

## **GET STARTED**

### **Step 1: Flip the funnel**

To begin, identify a specific goal for your digital marketing efforts. If you do not know the target, you will have no benchmark with which to measure success. Typical examples of goals include:

- **X number of sales**
- **X number of donations**
- **X number of subscriptions or sign-ups**

After you have identified your goal, create a value for one of your goals. If you want 10 sales for example, what would be the average value of one of those sales? \$10, \$10,000? Now we're putting numbers to our goals which will help us really decide if digital is right for us.

### **Step 2: Take a snapshot**

To start, we can take a high-level snapshot of your digital efforts vis-a-vis your competitors. This will give you quick actionable steps to improve your online visibility and improve social integration to your online efforts. This snapshot will not tell you what you should and should not be doing, for that we'll need a full digital audit. However, if you know you want to use certain media, this report will tell you how to quickly improve.

**To take your snapshot, request our [free marketing report](#).**

You will enter a few details and then be asked to run an automated audit on a website. There you can enter your website and immediately see the results of the automated report and the action steps you can take to improve your online marketing efforts

Want to see how you stack up against the competition? Just repeat the process with your competitor's website. Work in the digital space? Create a report for prospective clients so you can make recommendations when soliciting business.

There are myriad ways to use the snapshot, and it's a great way to quickly find actionable steps to improve your online marketing efforts.

**Looking for tools to help jump start your digital efforts? Check out our recommended tools here .**



### Step 3: Measure the media

Now that we know our goal and we've made a few quick changes from the automated audit, we can focus in on specific online efforts and measure the return. We will begin with the most important online media, your website.

The website is the most important because it is your home base. Your digital storefront that all efforts point to. The digital storefront is important to have because you own it. As opposed to a Facebook page or Twitter account that could be taken away or changed at any time by Facebook or Twitter, your website is controlled by you. This also means you can measure and edit the site to do exactly what you need it to do.

To measure our online storefront, we need to have access to our website analytics. Website analytics are our digital accountants, tracking every visit, visitor and what they do when they visit our store. In an offline store you might ask customers what they are interested in or count how many people come in the store. In the online world, analytics will do it for us.

If you do not already have an analytics program, we highly recommend Google Analytics because it is free and not associated with your website provider so there is less of a chance it will be biased. Plus, Google Analytics is the most popular analytics tool out there so you can find tips, tutorials and help if you need it.

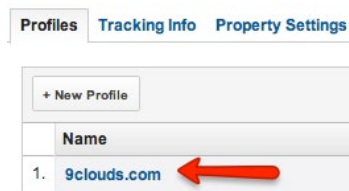
To install Google Analytics visit: <http://google.com/analytics>. If you have questions, you can visit the Google Analytics support page or send us your questions by visiting: <http://9clouds.com/contact>.

After your analytics are successfully installed, the first thing we need to do is enter the goals we created in step 1. Google Analytics allows us to enter goals on our site, such as visitors seeing a certain page or purchasing an online product, and then will measure which media do the best job of getting visitors to our end goals.

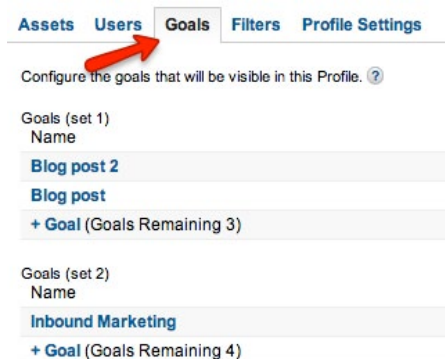
To create your goals, log-in to Google Analytics and click Admin on the top right.



Then click on your profile:



And finally choose Goals on the top navigation:



To create our first goal, simply click on the word: Goal (Goals Remaining).

Now think back to the goal you created in Step 1. If your goal is to have someone purchase a product on your site, how do you know when they have purchased? Most often after we purchase a product we end on a Thank You page, thanking us for our order. With Goals, we can measure how many people arrive on the Thank You page and that would correlate to the number of people who have purchased.

If we are not selling, but want people to read a blog post or look at our services page, those specific pages would be a goal in and of themselves.

Both the Thank You page and the specific services pages are examples of URL Destination goals, meaning you want to measure how many people get to a certain URL destination.

Visit Duration and Page/Visit goals would measure how engaged your visitors are when they come to your site. This could help you improve the usability of your site and quality of your content

The final goal type, Event, is perfect if you have a link that directs visitors to a different website. For example if you are promoting a live event and are selling tickets on EventBrite or on your local Chamber of Commerce website, you will not be able to measure who gets to the Thank You page because it is not on your website. We can still measure how we're doing by using Event goals. For an event goal you will need to add code to the link you want to track. For all of the details, visit the [Google Analytics support page](#) or [send us a note](#).

After we set up the measurement of the site and our goals, we can begin to answer our key questions.

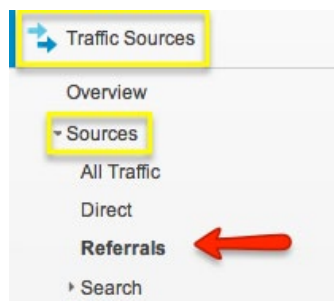
## Step 4: How are we doing

To learn how we are doing, we will look at three results: referrals, goals and geography.

### Referrals

Referrals is another name for who is sending us web traffic. If someone clicks a link on Facebook, Facebook is a referral. If someone reads a blog post and clicks a link from the blog to your site, the blog is the referral.

On Google Analytics, we can click Traffic Sources > Sources > Referrals to see which sites are driving visitors to your site.



You might be surprised what you find. Here is an example of a website's referrals over the past month:

Source	Visits	↓
<a href="#">facebook.com</a>	107	
<a href="#">t.co</a>	53	
<a href="#">pinterest.com</a>	44	

Based on this data, I would conclude that Facebook and Twitter (T.co) are my best referrals. They are driving the most traffic and I might decide to spend more time on them if they are doing so well.

However, we can look a little deeper for more clarity:

Visits	↓	Pages / Visit	Avg. Visit Duration	% New Visits	Bounce Rate
107		3.00	00:03:14	34.58%	57.94%
53		1.40	00:00:27	47.17%	77.36%
44		4.82	00:09:47	4.55%	22.73%

As we look across the rows, we will see how many web pages each visitor from Facebook looks at which is 3. Visitors from Twitter only look at 1.4 pages on average while visitors from Pinterest look at 4.8 on average.

Additionally, visitors from Pinterest stay on the site for 9 minutes and 47 seconds while Twitter visitors are only on the site for 27 seconds, hardly enough time to buy my product or service.

Based on the Pages/Visit and Avg Visit Duration columns, I might conclude that I should instead focus more time on Pinterest since the visitors are of a much higher quality. If I focused more resources on Pinterest and the data held true, I would see better results than if I spent the same amount of time on Twitter or Facebook.

However, when we look at % New Visits, I might change my mind. Almost every from Pinterest is a returning visitor, only 4.55% of visitors from Pinterest are coming to the site for the first time. Thus I can conclude that Pinterest is great to interact with current customers but less effective for finding new customers.

The final column, Bounce Rate, tells us what percentage of visitors came to the site and immediately left without clicking any links on our site. Again, Twitter isn't looking so good, since almost 80% of visitors immediately leave.

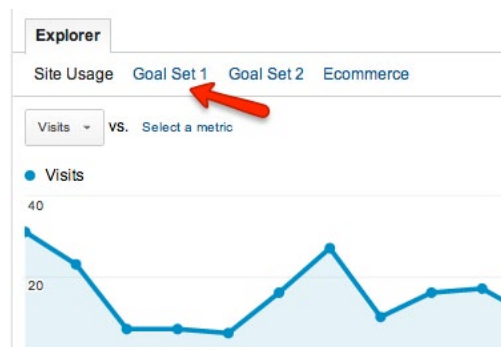
Based on these numbers, I would spend time on Pinterest to interact with my current customer base and Facebook to attract new visits.

## Goals

What if we are less concerned with how long people come or if they are a new or old visitor? Maybe we only want to focus on how many visitors did what we wanted them to do.

If we have properly set-up our goals, we can audit the success of both referrals and the site in general.

On the same referrals page, we can click on the goal we want to focus on underneath the explorer tab:



Suddenly, the data about Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest become a bit more interesting. We now look at the actual monetary value of each network:

Visits	↓ Goal Conversion Rate	Per Visit Goal Value	Blog post 2 (Goal 1 Conversion Rate)
107	31.78%	\$2.90	28.97%
53	15.09%	\$1.51	15.09%
44	45.45%	\$4.55	45.45%

In this example, of the 107 visits from Facebook, 31.78% of them did what I wanted them to do. This counts all of the goals I may have created, so if there were 5 things I wanted a visitor to do on my site, 31.78% of visitors did one of those 5 things.

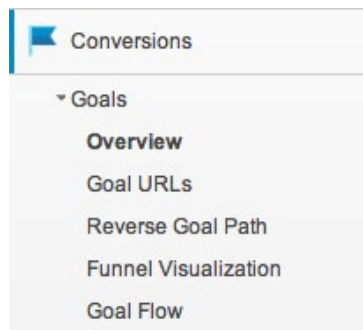
Based on the value I assigned to those goals (that we created in Step 1), I know that the average value of a visitor from Facebook is \$2.90. Wow! That makes my job as a marketer so much easier. Now I can run ads (as long as they cost less than \$2.90) and calculate the monetary return of my time spent on Facebook.

If I want a more fine-grained approach, I can also look at the individual goals. In this example, Goal post 2 is one of the five goals I created, so I can see within the 31.78% of people who converted, which of the goals converted most.

As you can see, this data confirms my previous hypothesis that I should spend the most time on Pinterest and Facebook since it has the highest value per visit.

We can take the goal analysis to a more generic look as well to look at all traffic, not just referral traffic.

To do this, click on the left hand side on Conversions>Goals>Overview:



Then in the center column, click on Source to see which traffic sources are best completing your goals.

Goals	Source / Medium	Goal Completions	% Goal Completions
Goal Completion Location			
Source / Medium			
	1. google / organic	233	44.55%
	2. (direct) / (none)	127	24.28%
	3. facebook.com / referral	34	6.50%
	4. pinterest.com / referral	20	3.82%
	5. plus.url.google.com / referral	15	2.87%
	6. hubspot_email_marketing / email	11	2.10%
	7. siliconprairienews.com / referral	8	1.53%
	8. t.co / referral	8	1.53%
	9. google.com / referral	7	1.34%
	10. bing / organic	5	0.96%



In this example, we can see that organic search, meaning when people type a word in on Google, is completing our goals at a 44% clip! That means that the best use of my time will be to improve my visibility on search.

In addition to organic search we see direct which means when people know my website and type it right in to their browser. These would be returning customers who already know you.

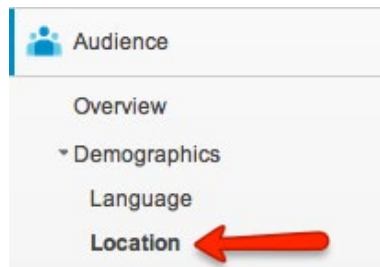
After Organic and Direct, we see Facebook and Pinterest.

Looking at our sources based on goal conversion helps us determine what we should be spending our time on.

## Geography

If we are a brick and mortar store, we might not be able to service everyone who visits us from a Pinterest link. Instead we may want to focus our efforts on visitors from a certain state or city.

We can look at our geographic success as well. Simply click on Audience>Demographics>Location to see a map of the world.



On this map you can double click to zoom in on specific countries and states.

This will help you know where your visitors are coming from geographically. Knowing this will help you determine where to spend offline ad dollars. You might want to target the areas where there is already interest or maybe you identify geographic areas where there is opportunity for increasing your brand awareness.

Within this data you again have the ability to filter based on goal conversion. For example in this data set we can see that a visitor from South Dakota is worth more than a visitor from Pennsylvania. Now I know where the best use of my marketing budget is.

Region	Visits	↓ Goal Conversion Rate	Per Visit Goal Value
South Dakota	419	44.87%	\$3.99
Minnesota	129	41.86%	\$3.41
California	70	32.86%	\$2.71
Pennsylvania	54	66.67%	\$3.52
Florida	36	33.33%	\$2.50

## Step 5: What could we be doing?

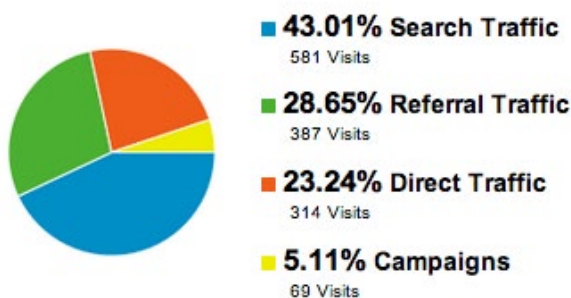
To learn what we could be doing, we'll want to know what sources of traffic and leads we are missing as well as knowing which potential customers we may be driving away with poor interface or content.

## Balanced Traffic

To get started, we can look at the Overview of Traffic Sources:

There you will find a pie chart with an overview of the breakdown of who comes from which sources. Our goal should typically be to have an evenly balanced distribution of traffic. If you are not running ads, you should look to have roughly 33% of your traffic from search, 33% from referrals and 33% direct. [pull quote from "our goal should...33% direct."] This means that 1/3rd of your traffic is finding you on search engines and are probably new customers, 1/3rd of your customers read about you on social media or blogs and may be returning or new customers and a 1/3rd know your website address and are typing it directly in to their browser and are most likely returning customers.

There can be other pieces of the pie if you are running ads or custom campaigns, but the 1/3rd rule is a good place to start. You can see in this example, the site is just about even across the board, but could do more to increase return visits from direct traffic. To do that, they may want to ensure there is valuable content that current customers want to come back to see on a regular basis.



Just below the pie chart we can click through what is currently working to know what to continue using for our marketing efforts. The keyword shows how people are finding your site. If there are words you think potential customers would be using that do not appear, those are words you should include in your content and page titles.

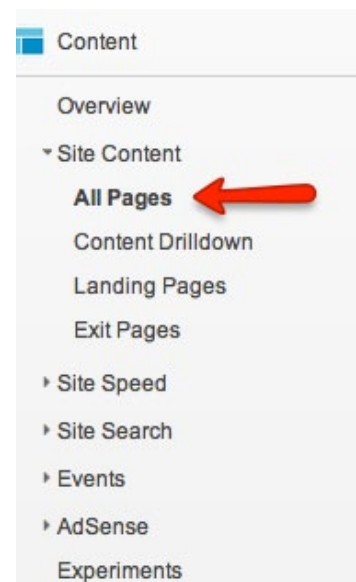
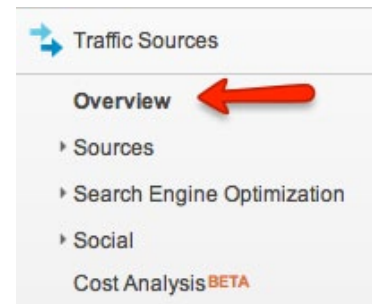
The landing page will also show where people first come on your site. Not everyone will see your homepage first, so you want to make sure that users can find your products and services from your most popular landing pages

## Successful Content

Knowing which content is most popular on your site will help you create more like it and avoid spending time creating content that does not attract visitors. To look at our successful content, we'll click All Pages under the Content section on the left-hand side:

Now in the center column you will see the most popular pages on your website. The pages always start after your domain, so if you see a page called /blog, that would be yourwebsite.com/blog. Similarly a / refers to your homepage, yourwebsite.com/.

We can look at the simple data showing which page has the most pageviews. These pages are where you will want to focus your efforts. To determine how successful a page is, consider the Avg. Time on Page. Are people reading what is on the page or does the page have a high Bounce Rate meaning they leave as soon as they see it? A look through your content will help you determine which pages need improvement and which ones are working well.



## Mobile Traffic

A continuing trend that is only increasing is mobile web traffic. More and more people are visiting websites from a mobile device with mobile access of the web expected to pass computer access of the web by 2014. However, does your site attract mobile web traffic?

We can quickly find out if people are visiting your site from a mobile device and see if mobile users are visiting for a longer or shorter period of time than other users.

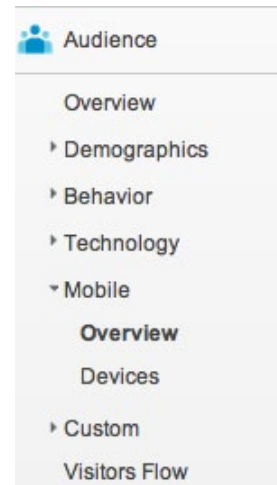
To identify mobile traffic, click on the Overview of Mobile on the left-hand side:

There you will notice a simple Yes or No telling you how many visitors came to your site from a computer or a mobile device (including tablets and phones).

To dig deeper we will again want to click on our goals and now we will see the value of a visit from a computer versus the visit of a mobile device, as well as bounce rates and time on site.

If your site is not optimized for mobile, it's very likely that your mobile visitors will have a high bounce rate and low time on site. That's a sign that you could benefit from a mobile-optimized site.

Additionally, the per visit Goal Value might provide insight on when it is worth investing in a mobile-optimized site. If you have 258 visitors from mobile devices worth \$2.44 each, as is the case in this example, those visitors are worth \$640 a month. Compare that to the investment cost of building or editing your site and you can make an informed decision on what to do.



## Step 6: What to get rid of?

Just as important as opportunities is knowing what to stop doing. Saving time is saving money and focusing your efforts to work smart instead of just working hard will help grow your business.

To know what to get rid of, we'll first need to know our cost in terms of time and resources. Ideally you can track the amount of time spent on different marketing efforts over at least a month to know the average investment for each network. We will also want to know the time and money investment in traditional marketing efforts so you will be able to decide whether to reallocate resources from one marketing channel to another.

When you know your investment, we can look back to step number four when we calculated the value of visits from the different networks. Now we can set-up a simple math equation.

In our example, 107 people visited from Facebook with an average value of \$2.90. That means that each month, Facebook is earning our company at the very minimum \$310. In addition you can consider branding, people who hear about you on Facebook and call or come in the store, etc., but for now we'll take a black and white approach and only consider what we can accurately measure.

Since the price of Facebook is free, we then have to consider time. We usually recommend posting at least twice a week on a Facebook page and responding to comments. Assuming this takes 30 minutes a week, we could say the investment in to Facebook is 2 hours.

As long as your salary is less than \$150/hr, we could say that Facebook has a positive ROI.

Now we can compare other marketing efforts. How much time and money are spent on them versus what we get back? If Facebook is more effective, it would make sense to reallocate resources. If traditional media is more effective, spend less time on Facebook and more on the traditional outlets.

This approach attempts to create an objective set of eyes that can act as a starting point for allocating resources. If you focus on what works and eliminate the rest, you will be working smart, not hard.

## NOW WHAT?

Auditing your digital presence gives you a data-based view of what is working and what could be working. Knowing what is happening online will help you work smarter, not harder, and provide the facts needed to make intelligent digital marketing decisions.

However, auditing the top of the funnel is only the first step. If you have people visiting your site and you are effectively using digital media, you will still need to attract, track and convert these visitors. That's where we can help.

At 9 Clouds we specialize in generating and converting leads online. Our complete digital audit provide a comprehensive look at your sales funnel with actionable steps to improve both your marketing efforts as well as your sales and conversion efforts. Over a 30 day period we monitor all of your digital properties and track leads so you know everything about your potential customers and how to best reach out to them.

After the complete digital audit, we offer inbound marketing services on all types of digital media. That means that we create content to attract visitors at the top of the funnel, provide personal outreach to leads to move them through the middle of the funnel and track their online activity to give your sales team warm, qualified leads that are ready to close. Then we provide follow-ups with customers to re-enter them in the sales funnel and make it easy for them to promote your business by referring you to their contacts online.

If you're interested in learning more, visit us online at: <http://9clouds.com>. There you can contact us with questions, request your complete digital audit and learn more about our products and services.

Make this year the year of working smart online. Audit your presence and do what works online.

## SHARE THIS

We're passionate about improving digital literacy. Help us do this by sharing this handbook. Feel free to email, tweet, post and telegraph this information to anyone who might benefit from it. If you do post or share it, we would appreciate a link to [@9clouds on Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [Pinterest](#) or our resources page on our website: <http://9clouds.com/resources>.



## NEED HELP?

### That's what we're here for

Brofounders Scott and John Meyer (brothers + cofounders) believe businesses can succeed from anywhere in the world with a little bit of digital literacy (especially from their home state of South Dakota). 9 Clouds thus helps businesses learn which digital tools to use and how to use them.

9 Clouds regularly provides free training articles and handbooks online. [Subscribe to receive updates and the latest free resources](#). Additionally, the brofounders speak frequently at conferences, workshops and businesses. If you're interested in learning more, [visit our speaking page](#).

For businesses who are looking to attract and convert leads using digital technology, 9 Clouds provides two main services:

1. 9 Clouds provides digital audits to help identify where your business should (and should not) focus its digital efforts. These audits typically yield savings of 30-40% of time and money spent on digital marketing. [Click to learn more about our digital audits](#).
2. 9 Clouds provides comprehensive digital marketing, generating and converting leads using content, social media, email, ads, monitoring, optimization, analytics and more. Our marketing efforts compliment your sales team so they have a warm list of leads every week to close. If you're interested in learning more, [visit our inbound marketing service page](#).

We hope to connect with you soon to help you improve your digital literacy.

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