DATA SCIENCE AND SEO

Volume Two - Implementation

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Those of you that have read the first part of our Data Science and SEO eBook, will know the power of metrics and how we are able to use them to inform our future strategies. Aside from collecting information, one of the most important things you can do is think about how you can implement data science into your future plans.

If you harvest the right information, and are able to pinpoint who your audience are, what they are looking for and how they found you in the first place then you are sure to be ahead of the competition. In its broadest definition, mass marketing or blanket marketing is a catch-all term that relates to the idea of pushing out as much information to as many different people as possible. There is of course a greater chance to convert by virtue of more people seeing, or having the ability to see your marketing, but conversion rates are actually much lower. Another key consideration is that by mass marketing then there is a far greater risk that you will overspend and could see scant reward for your efforts. This alludes to the thought that audience is everything. This eBook will look at the importance of identifying your audience and then some of the practical tips you can implement to ensure that your marketing is as effective as possible.

UNDERSTANDING AUDIENCE

In truth, your audience, whether you know them already or are yet to discover them is the most important facet of your marketing strategy, after all it is these people that are going to enter your sales funnel and will, at some point (hopefully), become a conversion. Another consideration that you have to make is that once you have a customer, how do you retain them and how do you make them a repeat customer?

To understand your audience in greater depth, and indeed the data that lies in the analytics tools that are available to you, you have to be able to profile your audience. You have to sort through any contacts you have and make sure they are segmented and based on their behaviours across all platforms and touch points.

There are several things to look at when it comes splitting your audience and these will be explored in this chapter of the data series, but perhaps the best place to start is the four main principles of audience profiling.

When it comes to segregating your audience you have to follow these four steps:

- How you segment your audience
- Your message to them
- How you engage with them
- Measuring performance

Segmentation

Segmentation is the starting point for your audience profile. This can be done on a very basic level such as sorting by demographics such as gender, age and location etc, and at a more advanced level it is possible to also look at things such as income, attitudes and lifestyle.

Messaging

Audience profiling enables you to refine the content of your message and quantify the concepts that are preventing repeat sales. When a company is aware of what the public perception of them is, they know specifically what to focus on what needs to be shifted in order for consumers to reconnect with the brand again.
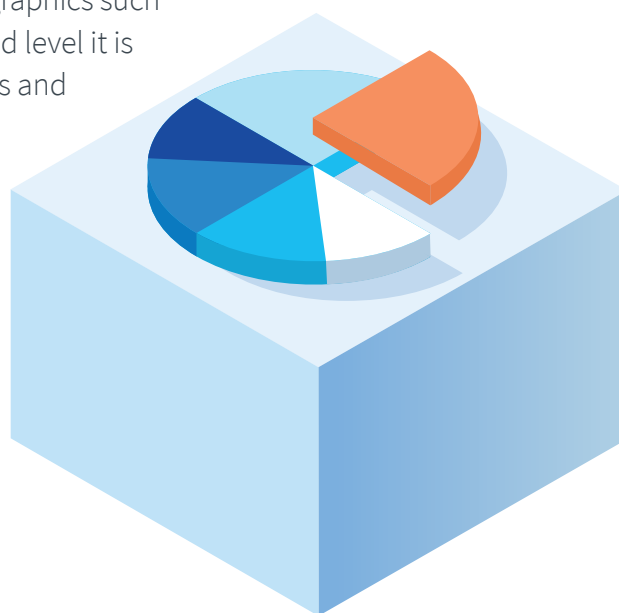
Engagement

Engaging your audience focuses on finding the best mode of messaging to impact your audience the hardest. It is important to look at how the audience engages with different marketing channels – eg targeting a younger demographic via social media because this is likely to be the most effective way of communicating with them.

Measurement

By being able to measure and quantify the impact of your marketing campaigns, you are able to continuously optimise and amend your future efforts in order to connect with your customers in the most effective way possible.

Without having the insights which points directly to successes and failures, it is difficult to determine which parts of your marketing are working and which are not. Audience profiling gives you the quantifiable data and results you need to really know which direction you should be heading.

BENEFITS OF SEGMENTATION

There are many benefits to segmenting out your data and coming up with a targeted audience. First of all segmentation ensures that your content has value, is relevant and that it is consistent. If you are one of those businesses that produce endless amounts of content without any thought as to your target market, you risk losing their trust and this can affect the conversion figures. Ultimately doing this is a waste of time, money and effort. Ask yourself, why would you want to give up these things and jeopardise the initial data collection process? In essence it ensures that your content is relevant.

If you don't recognise who you're directing the content at, it's very difficult to create material that resonates with the user at all. Understanding the demographics, behaviour, and buying cycle sector of those in your audience is vital in the curation process.

When your audience is a targeted one, it doesn't matter how you deliver the content, it will appear consistent to the reader since it's directed to the right audience. The entire point of content is to drive the consumer towards a converting action. Without being able to identify what makes the audience interact, they may not even bother to read it.

Another benefit is that with segmentation, your audience is clearly defined and you can target and retarget bespoke lists and previously engaged individuals. It also doesn't waste time and resources.

For any business, marketing is essential and can be expensive. Developing content takes a lot of time and resources and it's imperative not to waste the resources that you have. When you know who you're sending the information to, you'll be able to direct it appropriately using the right words, tone, and images to improve response.

HIGHLIGHT GAPS AND BUILD TRUST

One of the most important things that businesses can do is to make sure they not only look after the audience that they have, but that they expand their audience. This is something that we have covered in great detail previously, and it is worth noting that this is something that runs in parallel with business growth.

Audiences are there to listen. They have come to you for information or because they are engaged with you at some point. It is therefore vital that you are talking to them, and that you are doing so in a voice that will resonate. You need to make sure that you are informing, educating or in some cases entertaining them.

An audience is one or more people who come together to listen to what you have to say and they may be may be small and private groups or large and public. Tailoring your content to fit the needs of individual groups is a must.

It is also vital that brands build trust. This is done by sending or showing the reader the content most relevant to them. Adding good quality content based on your audience profiles adds to the user experience (UX) and as a result can have a positive impact on your conversions.   Analysing your audience in essence will help you discover information that you can use to build common ground between you and them.

The following section will look in more detail at the actual data from Google Analytics (GA) and if you read the charts diligently you should be able to see where the aforementioned gaps occur. If there is a particular group or demographic that is engaging on a small scale then ask yourself, as we have, how you can engage more and what sort of content you can add to group your audience in these areas.

WHAT SORT OF DATA CAN YOU ACCESS?

The first thing to do when it comes to your audience, is to know where to look for the raw statistics and measurements. Once you have linked GA to their site you will be presented with the main dashboard. If you then use the dropdown menu, you are able to navigate to the 'Audience' tab and from here you have six view options and seven expandable sub-menus.
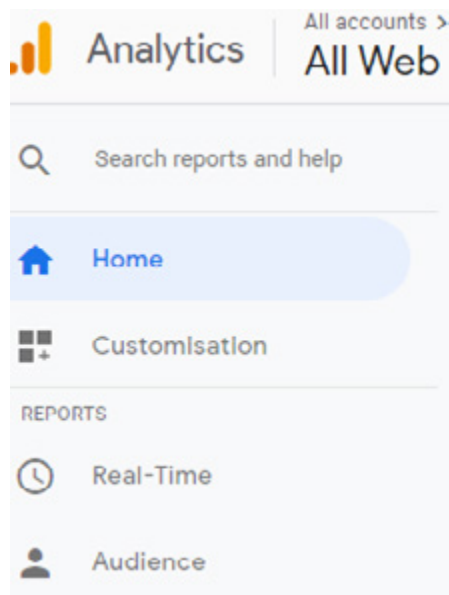
Working methodically through the options it is clear that there is a lot of useful information present. The first of the options is the main overview. This displays a selection of the more basic statistics such as sessions, new users, pageviews etc. These metrics are the ones you really want to see improve at the end of an audience building project and not necessarily during the segmentation process.

The other five view options are as follows:

Active Users – This is a running summary of the number of users of your site and as you can see from the below screenshot you can view all active users in four date brackets.

Lifetime Value (BETA) – This view shows the user the lifetime value (LTV) or revenue per user of a site over a set dated range. It dissects where the audience are finding you and thee type of marketing channel that is working. The ideal scenario here is to get Organic Search as the top performing channel, hence the importance we put on search marketing. The results from a sample account can be seen below.

Acquisition Channel ▾	Users ?
	478,896 % of Total: 100.00% (478,896)
1. Display	**257,628** (53.80%)
2. Direct	**102,788** (21.46%)
3. Organic Search	**68,409** (14.28%)
4. Paid Search	**23,667** (4.94%)
5. Email	**15,108** (3.15%)
6. Referral	**5,869** (1.23%)
7. Social	**4,166** (0.87%)
8. (Other)	**1,261** (0.26%)

Cohort Analysis (BETA) – Much like LTV, Cohort Analysis is another part of GA was rolled out fully at the end of 2019. This view looks a things such as page views with the focus primarily being retention. It could be argued that this metric shows how engaged an audience is and how long they stay engaged. It plots the drop off over a set period of time as seen here:

	Day 0	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
All Users 5,337 users	100.00%	4.12%	1.28%	0.92%
16 Jan 2019 697 users	100.00%	3.87%	1.29%	1.29%
17 Jan 2019 1,085 users	100.00%	3.32%	1.11%	0.65%
18 Jan 2019 801 users	100.00%	4.74%	1.12%	1.25%
19 Jan 2019 529 users	100.00%	5.48%	2.84%	1.32%
20 Jan 2019 458 users	100.00%	7.86%	2.62%	0.00%

Audiences – This section of GA allows you to look at the actual performance of users against pre-set goals.

User Explorer – The User Explorer metric essentially tracks the time spent on site by a user, how they got to you and the activity when they were with you. This is a good indicator of what is working and what perhaps isn't. It looks at the duration of a visit, the channel the user reached you on and the number of page view in that session.

All of these metrics are vital and, like I said earlier, they cover the information at a top level. They represent the figures that you want to see improve overall. It is in the seven remaining sub menus that actually break the audience into their profile groups. Here are the things that each sub croup contains and looks at:

Demographics – This looks primarily at the age and gender of your audience, and it is from these charts that you can alter your tone of voice or the way you actually reach out to your audience or potential audience.

Age	Acquisition			Behaviour		
	Sessions ↓	% New Sessions	New Users	Bounce Rate	Pages/Session	Avg. Session Duration
	17,689 % of Total: 31.56% (56,049)	57.48% Avg for View: 62.90% (-8.63%)	10,167 % of Total: 28.84% (35,256)	71.50% Avg for View: 74.26% (-3.71%)	1.67 Avg for View: 1.61 (3.77%)	00:01:41 Avg for View: 00:01:15 (35.00%)
1. 25-34	6,193 (35.01%)	62.02%	3,841 (37.78%)	69.98%	1.77	00:02:02
2. 35-44	3,884 (21.96%)	57.05%	2,216 (21.80%)	70.78%	1.70	00:01:55
3. 45-54	2,758 (15.59%)	58.05%	1,601 (15.75%)	69.40%	1.65	00:01:24
4. 55-64	1,816 (10.27%)	47.03%	854 (8.40%)	73.35%	1.50	00:01:02
5. 18-24	1,693 (9.57%)	67.40%	1,141 (11.22%)	74.84%	1.58	00:01:33
6. 65+	1,345 (7.60%)	38.22%	514 (5.06%)	78.22%	1.47	00:01:02

Affinity Category (reach)	Acquisition
	Sessions ↓
	24,895 % of Total: 44.42% (56,050)
1. Lifestyles & Hobbies/Green Living Enthusiasts	11,054 (3.04%)
2. News & Politics/Avid News Readers	10,764 (2.96%)
3. Shoppers/Value Shoppers	10,279 (2.83%)
4. Lifestyles & Hobbies/Family-Focused	10,278 (2.82%)
5. Technology/Technophiles	10,101 (2.78%)

Interests – The 'interests' tabs look at the affinity categories of the audience as well as the in-market segments. This information relates a lot to your future content as it tells you things such as the readerships reading habits.

Geo – As you may expect, this looks at language and location. It can be these figures that allow you to see which future, untapped markets might be available to target and in which language.

Behaviour – Winning customers and growing an audience is equally as important as retaining an existing audience. It is in this view that you are able to see the new Vs. returning customers as well as the frequency and recency of engagement.

Technology – There is a quite a bit of background information that you can harvest from the type of browser that a user chooses to browse the internet on. Looking at the list below you can see that Safari is the second most popular for the sample and Firefox is sixth. Safari is a mobile platform running on Apple devices so the number of users can be associated this way and in the example of Firefox you could suggest that these users have a focus on security with this being the main USP.

		56,067 % of Total: 100.00% (56,067)
1.	Chrome	29,045 (51.80%)
2.	Safari	12,498 (22.29%)
3.	Samsung Internet	5,385 (9.60%)
4.	Android Webview	2,037 (3.63%)
5.	Internet Explorer	1,630 (2.91%)
6.	Firefox	1,601 (2.86%)

Mobile/Cross Device – These metrics are two separate points but I've added them together as they broadly cover the same point. Your audience could be time savvy or look online whilst they travel or when they get downtime from other jobs and work. This is something that is highlighted most in the types of device that a user reaches you on. Looking at whether they found you on mobile or tablet can be a key indicator as to how you optimise your website and your offering. We know that mobile search is on the rise and it is important that all of your sites are optimised accordingly to give the best possible UX.

ANALYSING RESULTS

Audience analysis is, arguably, the most important thing that you can do following a marketing campaign. Seeing the results is a totally different prospective from simple saying 'yes our sales have gone up in the period following the campaign'. This is about hard data.

One of the things that you can determine from the levels of interaction your marketing is receiving is product usage rate.

This forms part of the behavioural segment of the audience split and it relates to the way we categorise purchasers. The customer can be split into one of three behavioural sub groups, light, medium or heavy user. The aim for businesses is to get the consumer to move through the stages and become a heavy user of a brand advocate.

At the light stage of user behaviour they will be aware of the brand and will try the product out for the first time.

During the medium usage stage the buyer is somebody who buys your products occasionally but may settle for an alternate brand if availability is limited.

At the heavy usage stage, the consumer buys your product frequently and would rather not buy a product if it meant moving away from your brand. These are the most loyal customers and the true brand advocates.

If you run a campaign that doesn't work the analytics will tell you this and you can alter a number of things. Based on your data you should ask the following questions:

- Have I got the right audience?
- Are they properly segmented?
- Did the content translate?
- Was it informative?
- Was it offering value?
- Was it shareable?
- Were there links to products or the main website?
- Did I send my content out/live at the right time?
- Was the CTA effective?
- What can I change for next time?

HOW TO IMPLEMENT DATA SCIENCE IN SEO

So, you have your audience, you understand their needs, and you know what you want to show them and when. The next thing to think about is how data science can be implemented on these groups to drive the best returns for your business. Here are some of our top tips and considerations for you to think about:

Optimise your budget

The main goal of every marketer is to derive maximum ROI from their allotted budgets. At time these budgets can be strict and at other times they can be more flexible. There can be seasonal budgets and campaigns budgets and of course as businesses grow there can be a larger pool to draw from.

To generate the best ROI can often be complicated and the amount of time and effort required can put a huge strain on businesses, there is a lot of trial and error and data science can help you to learn quickly and become more effective. Brands should track previous campaign performance and ask what could have been done differently. In a similar vein they should look at what has worked and why.

One of the main things that can be done here is to analyse both your marketing spend and your data acquisition. Data acquisition is the process of sampling signals that measure real world physical conditions and converting the resulting samples into digital numeric values that can be manipulated by a computer. If you compare the two of these you will be able to build a spending model, this will allow you to spread the spend over difference parts of your audience, various locations and mediums and can help individual campaigns be optimised to hit their key metrics.

Pick your channels

As well as understanding your audience in terms of who they are, you need to be able to reach them in the right channels. Adding tracking codes to your links can help you to identify where conversions come from and data science can instruct your future strategy by suggesting the areas that will deliver the highest returns.

Data science can also be used to figure out which emails appeal to which customers. How often are these emails read, when to send them out, what kind of content resonates with the customer, etc. Such insights enable marketers to send contextualised email campaigns and target customers with the right offers.

Looking at the graph below it is clear to see the referral traffic to our website over a short period of time (and excluding Google and Bing referrals). We can see that it would be wise to move spend and resource towards certain platforms and social networks as they are generating more traffic and referrals than others.
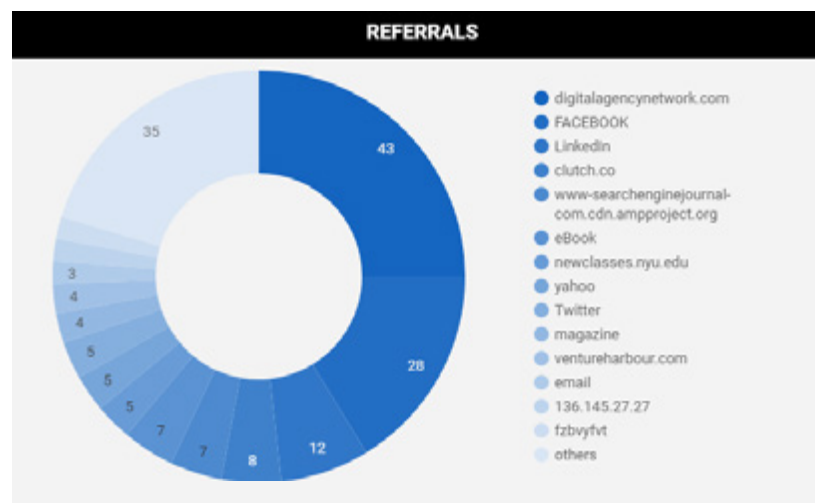
Target leads

As we mentioned earlier, when talking about audience on of the most important things to consider is where they enter the sales funnel as a lead.

Lead scoring uses a points based system that allows you generate a funnel that is tailored to your brand's overall sales and marketing objectives. At the opening of any marketing campaign you should look to establish a range of values that will be assigned to each element of your campaign.

Areas such as website visits, email click through rate, number of assets downloaded or social media interaction can each be assigned a unique value. Add these metrics together and you can paint an overall picture of how your audience interacts with your brand, enabling leads to be managed more effectively.

Marketers can use data science to narrowly target leads and know all about their online behaviour and intent. By looking at historical data, marketers can determine their business requirements and the type of brands they've been associated with, in the past year therefore giving you the option to step up or scale back your activity.

Creating a predictive lead scoring system that is capable of calculating the probability of a conversion can have a direct impact on the business goals and revenue. Marketers can use data science to see which leads are exploring their social media page, what content they clicked on and more. With insights such as these, they can formulate a proper social media engagement strategy.

Sentiment Analysis

Marketers can use data science to do sentiment analysis. This means that they can gain better insights into their customer beliefs, opinions, and attitudes. They can also monitor how customers react to marketing campaigns and whether or not they're engaging with their business.

We use this particular metric a lot when it comes to social sentiment. Our social teams can harvest valuable insights from their campaigns and how they are received on social media. Once a campaign has ended we can evaluate the data and see if the campaign made a connection with the target audience.

Monitoring positive or negative sentiment pertaining to a brand's top competitors is another useful strategy that can be accomplished through social listening. This knowledge can help guide keyword expansion and ad copy within the search campaigns and differentiate you as the better alternative for consumer needs.

Real-time marketing

Data science can produce information about real-time events and allow marketers to tap into those situations to target customers. One of the biggest challenges for those working on the marketing side of the business is that they have to ensure that the business remain relevant.

The access that the public has to the internet and the connectivity and availability of mobile networks, means that businesses can and should trade 24/7. News cycles have also become shorter and attention spans decrease so being reactive is a must. Done right, real time marketing (RTM) captures (and more importantly holds) the attention of your target audience.

Marketing Land defines RTM as:

> *Real-time marketing or 'RTM' moments occur when brands and agency marketers react quickly to local, national or global events happening online or offline, in an effort to interject corporate marketing into consumer conversations via social media messaging or boost brand recognition utilising marketing platforms.*

Customer Loyalty

Loyal customers are those who help in sustaining a business and are less expensive than new customer acquisition. Data science can help marketers improve marketing to existing customers and thus boost their loyalty.

Towards Data Science gave the following example from the US: Target used data science to gain a profile of pregnant women based on their purchases before pregnancy. The company then targeted these customers with product offers during their pregnancies. This marketing strategy turned out to be a huge success in terms of purchases and loyalty for the company.

Returns in this area are often greater and if your businesses encourages repetitive buying or offers a range of products then this is something that you should be looking at in greater detail.

GET IN TOUCH WITH US TODAY

ABOUT US

Click Consult is a multi award-winning digital and search marketing agency with a focus on organic (SEO) and paid search (PPC). Part of global consumer brand business Ceuta Group, we have a team of 70-plus specialists and a portfolio of more than 60 clients worldwide.

Our complementary services include content marketing, outreach, social media, conversion rate optimisation (CRO) and international/multilingual search marketing. We can also offer training and consultation to support your teams or existing strategy.

Click was named SEO Agency of the Year 2019, adding to our long list of other awards and accolades, and also ranks within Econsultancy's 'Top 100 Digital Agencies', and Prolific North's 'Top 50 Digital Agencies'. We're also a Google Premier Partner, a Bing Select Partner and feature in The Drum Recommends.

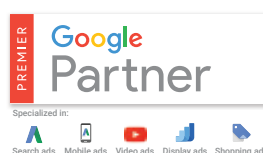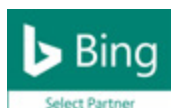## YOUR BESPOKE ORGANIC SEARCH (SEO) ANALYSIS AND REVIEW

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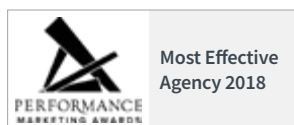
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OUR AWARDS

SEO Agency of the Year 2019   Search Agency of the Year 2018   Most Effective Agency 2018   Digital Agency of the Year 2018
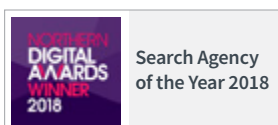
OUR TECHNOLOGIES

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