

Introduction

There are several steps that are involved when it comes to tracking the results of any marketing campaign. Here is an example of the way most companies do it these days.

Step #1 – Plan the campaign and how to track it

This step is pretty self-explanatory. As with anything that you do that is related to your business or even to your life for that matter, it all needs to start with a well thought out and effective plan. Once the marketing campaign is planned, then next you must decide which methods you want to use to track its effectiveness.

Step#2 – Define the channels you want track

To measure the success of your ad campaign, it's easiest to do this when you divide your marketing derived traffic into subgroups that are more typically referred to as channels. Here are some of the most common types of channels and what they entail.

■ **Direct** – These are potential customers that find your business in a direct manner without being directed there by other parties. An example of this is a person that saw your web address on a print add and typed it into their web browser to get information about your product or service.

■ **Referral** – These are potential customers that find their way to your site via a third party that did not use a social media site or a search engine to get to you. Maybe your company will give the third party something like a referral bonus for this or you have a mutual agreement to have links to each other's sites on your individual websites.

■ **Organic** – This is people that find your company through search engine such as Google. They generally were looking for a type of product or service your company offers, but they were not specifically looking for your company. Many times there will be a UTM (Urchin Tracking Module) parameter that is set up to help them find you.

■ **E-mail** – These potential customers are people that came to you through such things as an e-mail campaign that you put on. Many get to you by using a 'utm_medium' with the words email or e-mail in it.

■ **Paid** – These are potential customers that came to you as a result of an ad campaign that you paid for such as a print ad in a newspaper or an ad on a web content site.

■ **Social** – These are people that found you while surfing through social media sites like Twitter and Facebook. There are hundreds of websites which fall into this category.

■ **None** – This is a catch-all category (it does not necessarily have to be called "none") that all the people who find you through other channels than those mentioned above are placed.

Step#3 – Define the Marketing Metrics to Measure

Like any responsible company does, you will want to measure the return on investment you are getting from your marketing campaigns, and one of the best ways to do this is through marketing metrics. Marketing metrics are simply a collection of numerical data that allows you to get some perspective on a marketing campaign to see if it met the goals your company set for it.

There are several ways you can generate data with which to form a specific metric. Here are a few ways in which this can be done:

■ **Web content** – This is the study of how effective what you place on your website is at both informing the people who visit the site and getting them to take some action as a result; this shows that the quality of the content actually was good enough that those people followed along all the way to the actionable task you set.

■ **Lead conversion** – This is gathering data on people from the first time they come into contact with your marketing strategy and then follows them all the way through the different stages of the lead generation process. This includes the initial contact, then on to being a sales prospect and all the way to becoming an actual customer. This metric will track where you lost potential customers in the lead process and help you develop theories as to why.

■ **Individual visitors** – This is data that tracks when an individual user first visits your website during a specific period of time and how many times that same person came back to visit it again. This metric lets you see how effective each phase of a specific marketing plan was.

■ **Tracking new visitors versus returnees** – This metric helps you to establish how effective new site content drives traffic to your website. This is one method that is not easy to get accurate. It is sometimes best done by actually asking the people who visit your website why they came there the first time or what it was that peaked their interest to make them come again.

■ **Click through rate (CTR)** – This most likely will include a web page on your site that has an action that needs to be performed in order for the viewer to proceed along further in an information gathering or sales process. It will measure such things as how many people visited the webpage and went no further or how many people visited the web page and initiated the actionable step.

■ **Bounce rate** – . It is compiled data on how many viewers go to one of your web pages and then leave without visiting anything else or taking any actionable steps.



Step#3 – Define the Marketing Metrics to Measure (cont)

■ **Page views** – This measures a number of pages each visitor to your site looks at. You can also do such things with it as learn how much time a visitor spent on a webpage to get a feel for which ones were appealing to them. The more times a page was viewed, and the longer people viewed it could help you measure a marketing campaign's success even if no action was performed by the user.

■ ****Search engine referrals** – Many search providers such as Google have special ways to track what keywords people used that landed them on your site and which search engines directed those same people to you (Google has a tool called 'Google Analytics' to do this).

■ **Social media effectiveness** – You can use such things as 'likes' on Facebook and 'mentions' on Twitter to measure the effectiveness of your advertising there. There are also other tools built into social media sites for tracking purposes too.

■ **Word-of-mouth** – Maybe the age of the door to door salesman has come to an end but never overlook direct customer feedback when establishing the effectiveness of your marketing campaigns. Some ways in which consumers were led to becoming customers of your product or service will never be known unless you ask them. You can do this by using such things as a follow-up surveys or asking a question on the purchasing form.

■ **Form conversion rate** – A lot of marketers have their web designers put actual forms onto web pages that have some call to action on them. These could seek more information or get them a discount coupon. These types of things are very easy to track and accumulate data for metrics.

■ **E-mail Openings** – This metric simply measures how many e-mails were opened based on how many you sent in a particular marketing campaign.

Step#4 – Measuring Your Campaigns (cont)

■ **Pay-per-click ads** – This is best done by what is known as 'Dynamic Number Insertion'. It is a code that is embedded into a webpage that will help you to track conversions from all of your tracking resources.

■ **Measuring the Effectiveness of Your Social Media Marketing** – All of the major social media sites have built-in analytics that helps you track the effectiveness of your posts and other messages that you put on them.

■ **Measuring Print Ads and Other Media** – This is done by making a dedicated webpage on your site that can only be linked out of so you know what the source for those links are. Setting up tracking URL's is also a good way of doing this type of thing.

Step#4 – Measuring Your Campaigns

Once you have done the planning for how you will track and measure your marketing campaign as well as set the parameters for it, and then it is time for the actual tracking to take place once your campaign has gone into effect.

■ **Measuring your "search" marketing performance** – Google Analytics is very necessary to measure traffic and other data that has to do with the traffic pertaining to your website, but it alone is not enough anymore. Here are some other things that pertain to search functions that are very relevant to marketing strategy.

■ **SEO Position** – For years many businesses have been obsessed with site ranking but that is starting to change as search engines like Google are constantly changing the way searches are done when using them. But make no mistake about it; SEO ranking is still very important.

