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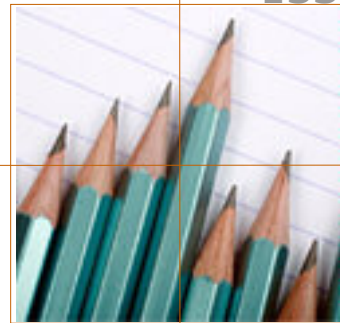
## KEEPING TRACK

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## e Business Issue



The homepage is an important marketing, sales and support tool. Unfortunately, many companies do not have a clear objective for their homepage – and they do not measure its success.

## Turning visitors into customers

Even a homepage without a web-shop could encourage visitors to become your next customer:

- Your homepage can give information, like the location and how to find your company.
- The homepage can be used to give additional information in the sales process, like customer references or product documentation.
- The more advanced homepage lets visitors register and thereby allowing you to contact them.

Any visitor to your homepage has three alternatives:

1. He leaves your homepage altogether
2. He clicks on another item that attracts his attention
3. He goes to the next step to get information about the product of service that he was interested in, and finally he “buys” the product or registers so that you can contact him.

## Measuring success

To find out how successful your homepage is depends on what the objective is, and how good you are at measuring the activities of the visitor. Active use of web-statistics should be an active part of your marketing planning.

Some of the data that can be measured are:

- Visitors: How many times was the homepage visited
- Unique visitors: By tracking information on each visitors (like IP-adress, session or cookies) the statistics can show how many times a unique computer visited your homepage
- Page views: How many times was an individual page on your homepage viewed”
- Hits: The total request for files that the web server received, such as html files, pictures or documents

## Analysing and improving

These numbers are just raw data, and should be analysed together to answer questions like:

- How long did the unique visitor stay on your homepage?
- How interested was he in your company?
- Can you make it even more interesting?
- How did he find your homepage?
- Should you exchange links with other homepages or make sure you are listed in online directories?
- Did he come to your homepage from a search engine (e.g. Google, Yahoo or MSN)?
- What keywords did he use to find your homepage? Should you spend more time on Search Engine Optimization?
- What page did he land on, and what page was he looking at when he decided to go somewhere else.
- Can you improve those two pages to make sure he becomes your next customer?

To improve the usability of your homepage you should study information about browser types and browser operating systems – and the screen size of your visitors. Not all browsers and screens are the same and your homepage needs to change as the technology develops.

You may also be interested in knowing what country your visitors came from? Today you may be targeting local customers, but international visitors may give you new opportunities, so why not add at least an information page in other languages?

Finally, the magic number that everyone is interested in is “Conversion Rate”. This shows how many of your visitors that actually “bought” from your homepage, i.e. made the final step and ended up on the most important page where they filled in enough information to make them your customers. When asked, companies report a conversion rate of 2 – 4 %, and the very successful ones may have 10 – 12%. Even those lose about 90% of their visitors, and fine-tuning your homepage by learning from the statistics may double your conversion.

Learning from your web-statistics is a very worthwhile exercise.