IS YOUR DATA GATHERING DUST – OR GENERATING DOLLARS?
Collecting detailed data from your website’s interactions is easy. But too often, the information ends up gathering dust instead of driving revenue. With next generation web analytics you can cross the action chasm and turn your data into meaningful marketing activity that moves the needle and improves the bottom line. Here are seven secrets to automate analytics, gathered from industry experts and Unica customers who participated in our 2009 Web Analytics webcast series.

1. TAKE THE 5-STEP PATH TO GROWING BUSINESS VALUE
Transforming your web analytics practices takes time. Follow a logical pathway that allows you to learn, act, collect feedback and act again. These 5 steps demonstrate fiscal accountability and support defined goals:

1. Site Analysis: Gather data on basic web performance towards your key indicators, e.g. for reaching, acquiring and converting visitors.
2. Site and Ad Optimization: Target underperforming pages and advertising spends to improve structure, content, conversion rate and, ultimately, profits.
3. Segment Targeting: Deliver relevant content – including precisely targeted promotional offers – to the most promising visitor segments on your site.
4. Interactive Marketing (Online): Move beyond segmentation to maximize the value of each visitor through personalized content, email, messages and more based on individual behaviors and tastes.
5. Interactive Marketing (Online + Offline): Coordinate a complete, cross-channel marketing dialogue that integrates personalized online and offline communications for optimal communications and results.

2. BUILD YOUR BEST BUSINESS CASE TO GET RESOURCES
Executives act on what they can see. And they like to see their opportunities quantified in hard numbers. To build your best business case (and your best chance of obtaining the resources you need), do the math and help your colleagues see the potential within your efforts. Calculate ROI for incremental improvements:

- Gather baseline numbers for your website’s traffic, conversion rates and transaction values.
- Create “Sliders” or other adjustable means for manipulating the baselines by degrees. What would improvements of 10%, 20%, 30%, etc. mean to your business?
- Crunch some hard numbers that demonstrate the impact of improving your baselines.

- Use the online tool @ http://www.stratigent.com/resources/download-form/ to calculate your business impact.

3. CONCENTRATE TESTING ON ISSUES THAT MATTER
Like “analysis paralysis,” a testing regime that’s too complicated throws sand on the tracks toward progress. Instead of “slice and dice” testing that analyzes every possible permutation of your site and its performance, concentrate your testing on simple things that make a big difference.

What really matters? And where can you find the biggest bang for the smallest buck? In most cases, it’s at the “intuitive” level – the ability of your website to make visitors feel that their needs are being met and that they can have confidence in your ability to fulfill your promises. Example: one enterprise experimented with the location and messaging of the point-of-action section of their pages. By simply manipulating this one variable, they were able to increase sales by a whopping 114%. But even a 1% improvement from a test would mean a million dollars of value for a site that is driving $100 million in sales per year.

4. FOCUS YOUR PROMOTIONAL DOLLARS ON THE RIGHT VISITORS
All customers are not equal. Therefore, your marketing efforts should not be equivalent across your customer base. Take a look at your recency curve, for example. Chances are, you get your greatest revenue returns from those segments that most recently engaged your brand or site, within the last one or two months. As the months stretch on, the return per customer drops precipitously.
Now suppose you offer a flat discount to everyone. The most likely responders will be those who acted most recently; in effect, you’ve created a negative return from good customers who would have purchased anyway. The alternative? Apply your discounts and special promotions to the middle of the recency curve where your marketing dollars will have a positive impact on profits.

5. PROFILE VISITOR INTERESTS BASED ON WEBSITE BEHAVIOR
Your website attracts different kinds of people for different reasons and with different purposes in mind. That’s why generic, all-purpose messaging will fail to engage the full range of visitor interests.

Savvy web marketers deliver customized messages (offers, promotions, links, and e-mails) based on visitor behavior. In one successful model, businesses create marketing engines triggered by scores and profiles compiled from interaction data. Through a combination of keyword search data and page-visitation information, each visitor’s interests can be scored against key terms. When the scores reach predetermined levels, you can automatically present content/offers relevant to the visitor’s interests, increasing engagement and elevating returns. You can deliver marketing so personal, it feels like a service.

6. DETECT ATTRITION RISK BEFORE COMMUNICATING TO CUSTOMERS
Marketing to customers is every bit as – or more important than – marketing to prospects. Today, however, there’s no good reason to “cold call” your customers: you can use their website behaviors as leading indicators to their likelihood to be interested in renewals, cross-sells or up-sells.

Many enterprises have found that session data (recency, frequency and other details of site visits) are excellent predictors of continued customer interest (along with other customer data). With this data on hand, you can craft and time campaigns appropriate to your customers’ depth of engagement and likelihood of continued activity.

7. IMPROVE MARKETING AT THE AGGREGATE AND INDIVIDUAL LEVELS SIMULTANEOUSLY
Web analytics offer insights on both the aggregate and individual levels. Too many companies leave money on the table, however, by not taking advantage of both data levels.

- **Aggregate performance cycle:** Use aggregate data for dashboards, reporting and continuous improvement of your website’s overall performance.
- **Individual performance cycle:** With the right tools and automation, you can leverage insights on individual online behavior to personalize messaging, schedule communications and target promotions/offers for greater effectiveness.

By committing to continuous improvement at both the aggregate and individual levels, you exponentially increase the contribution your site can make to both online and offline marketing efforts.

**CROSS THE ACTION CHASM**
If you’re only using analytics to create reports rather than drive action, you’re missing out on extraordinary opportunities to improve customer satisfaction, drive sales and increase profits. Learn more about the power of active analytics by watching a compendium of key 2009 Unica webcasts, Automating Action on Analytics. http://www.unica.com/7SecretsWB

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