



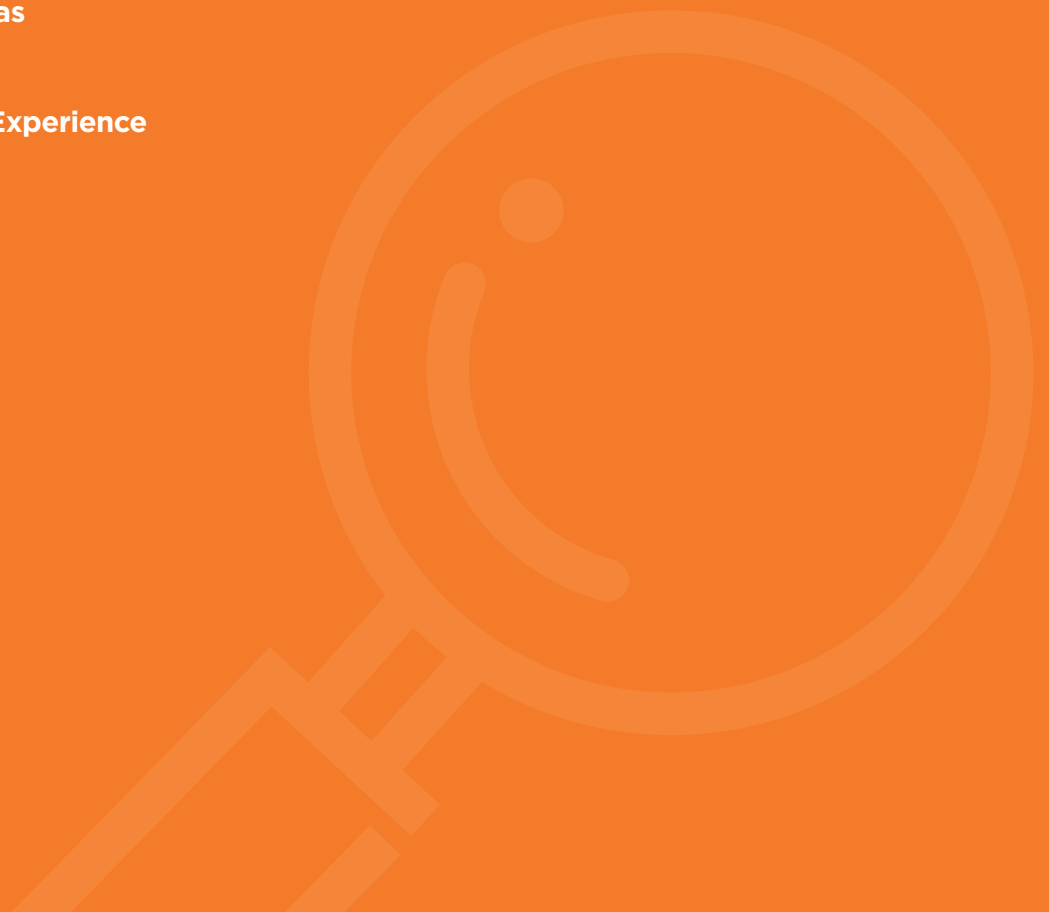
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Enhance Marketing Automation
with Web Tracking

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INTRODUCTION

Web tracking may not be the first thing that leaps to mind when you think about marketing automation, but it should be. Like perfecting a golf swing, marketing automation is all about the follow-through, and web tracking is exactly the prep you need before stepping out on the green.

Modern digital marketing is all about data. Google analytics is one type of web tracking that can provide insight on visitors interacting with a web site, and many communications platforms now have web tracking baked in as well. There's plenty of helpful takeaways provided by these tools. *Example: Is your bounce rate too high on a page? Your visitors may not be finding what they want or expected, which is why they left so quickly.*

Good web tracking goes beyond these initial visits. The benefit of using a platform with web tracking built in is it can actually determine the identity of some of your web visitors. If they already subscribe and are listed in your database, the use of cookies can now pinpoint exactly which of those subscribers are going to your web site, and what they did once they got there.

This unlocks a plethora of options for the modern marketer. Let's review how it works, how we can take action, and how we use the data to create a personalized experience.



HOW IT WORKS

For web tracking to work, code must be added to the website. It's the same concept as Google Analytics, but the code is generated by the platform you are using. There will be a general tracking code, as well as some additional code to identify specific interactions and purchases that can transpire. We'll come back to the additional code in a bit.

COOKIES FOR WEB TRACKING

Once the code is in place, it's now important to have a way to identify and follow some of the visitors on the web site. This is accomplished through the use of cookies, which are data packets that need to be installed on the visitor's web browser. You can do this by simply sending someone an email through the platform. When the recipient opens the email and clicks on any link that opens a web browser, a cookie will be installed on that browser (whether the link is going to the site you're tracking, or anywhere else on the web). As long as that cookie is installed on the browser, they become a known user and you can see any time that individual visits the site you are tracking. And if they perform any interaction or make any purchase you have chosen to track, you can see that too.

The individual can only be tracked as long as the cookie stays installed on their browser. If they clear their cookies, reinstall their browser, start using a different browser, or switch to a different device, you will no longer be able to trace their activity back to their identity. Some platforms will still be able to view the traffic and activity, but it will now appear anonymous instead of being attributed to someone specific.



What's a Cookie?

Cookies are data packets installed on a visitor's web browser. One way to install: send someone an email through your marketing automation platform. When the recipient opens the email and clicks on any link that opens a web browser, the cookie will install on that browser. Now that person is a known user - you can see any time they visit the site you are tracking (i.e. the one with the cookie). If they perform any interaction or make a purchase you're tracking, you can see that, too.



WEB TRACKING CHECKLIST

- Take inventory of possible interactions.**
Before installing any code on the site, identify interactions and purchases that make sense to follow up on or respond to.
.....
- Work with your web developer to install the code.**
If you don't have a web developer, consult your web tracking provider for tips, best practices, and help.
.....
- Send some link-heavy emails.**
Start sending email campaigns to your target audience with a primary goal of getting a high click rate. The more recipients that click on a link and have the cookie installed on their browsers, the more visitors you can track and trace to identities.
.....
- Monitor your known users.**
If your platform allows you to see how many of your recipients are tracked or known users, make sure this number is always going up. If it's not, try sending more emails with a focus on getting them to click more links to have cookies installed. If the number is going down, then that means the cookie is no longer in play. Again, you must focus on getting those individuals to click on links to have them reinstalled.

TRACKING ACTIVITY TO TAKE ACTION

The concept of instant follow-up is certainly taking off, as **67 percent of marketing leaders** currently use a marketing automation platform.

With code in place, it's time to put web tracking to work. You've already identified specific interactions and purchases to follow up, reply, or receive alerts. Now you have the chance to set up automation rules to dictate what the follow-up, replies, or alerts will actually be. Get creative with these follow-up actions, because even if you are a marketing team of one, you now have a lot more resources to help you out.

Think of web tracking like coaching a football team. The coach can develop the plays in the playbook, but they don't play the game themselves. The interactions are designated to be tracked on the site, and the automation rules defined are the plays in the playbook. Then, the automated campaigns, responses, and triggered alerts are the athletes that actually execute the plays. The coach should be monitoring from the sidelines, but letting those players do their job: win the game.



TRANSACTIONS TO TRACK

Let's say you're hosting an event. Use web tracking to trigger a "Save the Date" campaign for anyone who visits the page with more info about the event. If they've registered, set up another automated campaign that will automatically send them reminders to attend.

AAAE successfully used web tracking and automated campaigns for their events. Not only did they boost event registration by 25 percent, but that translated to an additional \$73k in revenue!

Turn this attention to other transactions as well. If there is a membership renewal or other purchase type made on the site, identify which action signifies the start of the conversion process, and which actions indicate the purchase has been completed. Then trigger campaigns to reach out to anyone who started the process but did not complete it after a certain amount of time has passed.

About 44 percent of all cart abandonment emails are opened, and about one third of the clicks those emails receive will actually convert.

The only limit on what you can accomplish with web tracking's follow-up opportunities is your imagination. Any interaction can be something that triggers a follow-up, whether it's using a search feature on the site, watching an embedded video, or downloading a file from a page. Marketing teams small and large now have the benefit of these resources, making follow-up on actions more feasible and timely with automatic triggers.

GET SOME INSPIRATION!

Check out SEMrush's [10 Triggered Email Automation Examples for eCommerce](#). There's a strong focus on Google Analytics and ecommerce, but the same concepts apply for other web tracking platforms and membership-focused sites.



COLLECTING ACTIONS FOR INSIGHT INTO PERSONAS

Google Analytics gives you general data, like bounce rate, top referring search engine, and time spent on a page. This is valuable when trying to assess how well a site is performing. A web tracking platform also provides data on how long a specific known subscriber has been on the site and what they did when they got there.

This can supercharge your research. It goes beyond understanding a site's performance, and now lends greater insight into subscriber profiles. Combine web tracking data with information on your subscribers and other activities they have engaged in from email interactions, event attendance, and community participation. We can decipher trends for a greater understanding on which type of subscriber seems to be getting the most out of the resources provided on the site and who is most likely to visit that site.

You'll provide a meaningful, tailored experience if you have a better understanding of which types of subscriber personas are taking full advantage of a web site, including the chance to win engagement from subscribers who may have been missing out before.



WEB TRACKING QUIZ

Q: Which pages on your site get the most visits?

A: _____

Q: Do the anonymous visitors to your site have an opportunity to opt into communications from you?

A: _____

Q: Does your platform allow you to implement lead scoring?

A: _____

✓
TIP

By visiting these pages the most, your audience is telling you this is the most valuable content for them. Think of what you can add to these pages for leading them to perform actions that are important to you, or actions that trigger important follow-ups and alerts.

✓
TIP

Remember we can only associate identities with known users that have the cookie installed on their browsers. If there is popular content on your site, consider making some of it downloadable, but only by visitors submitting a form that authorizes you to contact them. Send them some link-heavy email to get those cookies installed and increase your known users!

✓
TIP

Lead scoring metrics can be based on many activity types. Try to define different types of lead scoring metrics for your users and consider basing some of the scoring off of desired web activity on your tracked site. It's a great way to see who is interacting with your site the way you want them to, as well as find common denominators to help you profile and predict behavior of future known users.

USE AUTOMATION TO TAILOR THE SUBSCRIBER EXPERIENCE


When the conversation turns to marketing automation, it's natural to assume that means automated campaigns. **Remember: there are other important aspects of marketing automation to enhance those campaigns. That's where web tracking shines.**

The easiest way to automate is by dumping a list of prospects, leads, or subscribers into a one-shot campaign and activating. While there's nothing wrong with taking advantage of that, one size definitely doesn't always fit.

When creating campaigns, think about the possibility of letting the actionable behavior of your audience on a website dictate how and when they are added to specific campaigns.

Like basic email marketing, marketing automation is no longer a new concept, but both have a growing focus on personalized experiences. There is no greater level of customization than web tracking to allow the target audience to control their experiences through their own actions. When their actions show interest in an event described on a site, that adds them to a follow-up campaign. When their actions show they are interested in making a purchase, but appear to have been interrupted, that triggers the automated reminder or offer for assistance.

In a way, the end user is in the driver's seat, but a careful application of web tracking and automated campaigns is how the modern marketer guides them onto the specific roads to a better user experience.



When creating campaigns, think about the possibility of letting the actionable behavior of your audience on a website dictate how and when they are added to specific campaigns.

BUILD YOUR WEB TRACKING WISH LIST



Think of at **least three types of activities** that can be performed on your website and can include an automated follow-up response, to show your visitors you are being attentive to their individual needs.



Identify at least **one department that might benefit** from receiving automated internal alerts to make them aware a specific action or transaction has transpired.



Don't let anyone who shows interest get away. Even if purchases can't be made on your site, identify at least one action you want your visitors to perform on the site. Figure out how this action begins and ends. Example: work on developing an abandoned-cart style campaign to encourage them to come back and complete it if too much time elapses. This can also just be a great opportunity to check to see if they have questions and offer assistance.





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