

Data Crunching

Today's to-do list

We will look at understanding your data, cookies, measuring performance and some tools and resources to help you do all these things.

Learning objectives:

By the end of this session, you will
Understand why we use data-driven marketing.
Understand how to measure your performance.
Know what tools are available.

Data-driven Marketing

Sounds really flashy and complicated, doesn't it? But in reality, it's not. It's just the process of using all the information you collect from the platforms you use, to find out what your customers *actually* do. **It's about gaining insights into customers' motivations, behaviours and preferences. Why bother? Because data is a wonderful thing, it tells us all kinds of things we don't know.** It allows us to find out how our customers and visitors use our sites and social media platforms, and how they interact with our mailers and images. It allows us to personalise the customer experience to different groups of people.

We can use the data to create more relevant conversations with our audience. Whether that is in email campaigns or on our social media. It might be that little extra push on the product page to give the right message to the right person at the right time and in the right place. We want to capitalise on the opportunities available that we might not know about.

Every interaction that a customer/viewer makes on your website is an opportunity for you to find out more about your audience's needs and desires.

Analysis of our data will give us two core things.

- 1 – An understanding of our audience so we can target our efforts more effectively**
- 2 – An understanding of the performance of a particular campaign**

If we think traditional and put an advert on a billboard, it's difficult to gauge the impact it's had because we can't track it. **All we can do is ask people how they found us, write it down, lose the piece of paper you wrote it down on...**

With a digital advert, **you can see how many clicks, impressions, views and purchases it created.** We can learn about the demographic of the viewer, we can see how long they spent and where they went afterwards. **We can track their journey through our website products so we can see what else they look at and like.** That in turn means we can create offers and bundles to appeal to specific audiences. If they are all visiting the same pages, make it easier to do that journey, link products together – think Amazon and it's "People that bought this also bought" section at the bottom of each product. They KNOW where people go and what they buy next, so they make the process simpler to encourage more spending.

We can use our data to research potential trends, you have looked at Google Trends and the information that can give you, **not just for the best keywords but to find out what people are actually searching for.**

Ultimately, we do it to make better decisions, improve our content and processes, and be more effective.

Quantitative & Qualitative Data

Quant and what data? Again, sounds all flashy and hard work. Has anyone heard of them?

Quantitative data is numerical. It will give us a certain quantity, amount or range. It is anything that we can count or measure. It might be age or value spent and we would use tools like Google Analytics to collect it. We can include our clicks, impressions, conversions and website page speed here too, it's not all about our audience.

We can split this down again into Discrete and Continuous data.

Discrete only has fixed figures so it might be a website bounce rate – you get a percentage – the result can only be between 0 and 100. Or it could be the value of sales from that advert you ran. It could be the number of referrals from a social media campaign. It's the kind of data you would get bar graphs and pie charts to show you.

Continuous data can vary and be broken down into smaller sections. It might be website traffic, think about your Google Analytics and how it would break down, device, location or acquisition. These are the ones that give you nice wavy line graphs to show you the results and how they change over time.

Qualitative data is non-numerical. It can be observed and recorded. It's the kind of data we would get through focus groups and interviews. It's the data that we can use to create attributes, think back to our target market – gender, religion, marital status. We can use it to put people into categories so we can understand their behaviours better.

We use it to find out what motivates our customers, and how they feel about a product and it helps us understand their reasons and needs, not just to buy a product but why they choose a particular brand. What was it that drew them there in the first place?

Quantitative gives you the WHAT.

How many visitors came from the UK?

How many conversions did we get from organic search?

What was the percentage sales increase v's last quarter?

What revenue did we generate from our Google Ad campaign?

What percentage of revenue comes from social media?

Qualitative gives you the WHY.

Why have our UK visits increased?

Why has our conversion rate from organic search improved?

Why have sales decreased from last quarter?

**Why did this Google Ad generate more income last time?
Why are we not driving revenue from social channels?**

To get real insights into what's going on in our business we need to use both together. The what and the why.

5. Data collection

Cookies are those annoying pop-ups that appear on every site we visit. Thanks to GDPR we now have to give our consent for sites to use them. But **what do they actually do?**

Cookies/web cookies/browser cookies/internet cookies are small blocks of data created by a web server each time you browse a website. Your browser places them on your device while you journey through a site. They store information (which is why you have to give your consent) about items in your shopping cart, your activity, where you have been, what products you have looked at and records pages you have visited in the past. They also save information like names and addresses.

We have two types.

First-Party Cookies: these are stored by the site you visit and collect analytic data. They remember things like your language settings and login information. They are useful for functionality and help provide a good user experience. Each cookie is unique to the website you are visiting and only contains the information you enter on that site.

Examples of first-party cookies

The Greeter: the one that remembers your login so you don't have to

The Basket: the one that remembers what you have added to your cart or put in a wish list

The Personal Shopper: the one that looks at your preferences and recommends products

Third-Party cookies: **are created by domains** (the third party), not the site you are visiting. **They are there for tracking online ads.** Added to the site using a script or tag in the site's code. They are accessible on any website that loads that code. In the latest data privacy laws these are the ones that are classed as "non-essential".

Examples of third-party cookies:

The Tracker: the one that follows you around the internet to see what you buy.

The Retargeter: the one that sends you to places that sell products you may like.

The Ad-Server: the one that delivers personalised ads that target your interests.

Tools to measure performance.

There are lots of sites and tools out there that we can use to measure the performance of our marketing efforts. **Each social media platform has its own set of metrics that you can use and of course, we have platforms like Google Analytics that can give us incredible insights** into every part of our digital marketing. There are of course lots of others that allow us to look at both our quantitative and qualitative data.

For our WHAT we have Google Analytics and Adobe Analytics and for our WHY we have Hotjar, User Testing and SurveyMonkey and Microsoft Clarity.

CRO: Conversion Rate Optimisation. We use it to understand our customer's needs, what makes them hesitate, why they abandon their cart and what they think about your product and customer experience. It is the percentage of visitors who complete a specific action. That might be filling out a signup form, registering for an event or making a purchase.

Small layout changes can make a big difference. Button colour or copy, attention-grabbing headlines and images, getting important information above the fold and utilising pop-ups and testimonials can all help.

A high conversion rate means your site is working well, it's easy to navigate, formatted well and appealing to the right people.

Different people will visit your site for different reasons and they will not all be in the same place in the buying cycle. Some people might be researching, others may be ready to buy. You need to make sure that you optimise for each of these options at the appropriate places.

Conversions

Micro conversions are low-involvement commitments. Your visitor isn't giving you any solid commitment, but they are showing more interest than someone that just reads the home page and goes off elsewhere. It might be downloading an ebook or signing up for a newsletter. These are the stepping stones to the good stuff. This is where visitors learn about you and your brand.

They lead to macro conversions. **These are the actions that actually take place like checking out and buying a product or making a formal application.** We want to track both, we need to learn how one affects the other, the relationship and the timescale for visitors to go from one to another.

Hotjar

Hotjar is a site designed to help you understand how users behave on your site, what they need and how they feel. You can use the information to make your site more user-friendly and in return, you will sell more products and generate more leads without having to increase your traffic. You can view heatmaps of your site pages, see where your visitors go and follow their journey around your site.

It is designed to help you understand your customer behaviour when they are researching or ready to buy.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GhTvP_Ead68

7. Practical Brief

You now have a good knowledge of analytics tools and resources. To add to these tools, we would like you to install Hotjar on your project website. Go to Hotjar.com and sign up for free. We want you to add Recording and Heatmaps to your site, depending on which platform you are using there might be a slightly different method to install the tracking code so walk through the steps and of course I'm here to show you if you need any help.

Whatever time you have left today we would like you to update your portfolio site with an explainer blog about the various Google Tools, Search Console and Analytics. Tell us what kind of information you can collect and why. Include screen shots with your text to explain your ideas. Present the article as if you were using it to show a client why you want to install and use the various tools. You might want to include top 5 reasons or do it as top 10 tools, the format is up to you.

What we want to see:

- An understanding of the tools available
- Good blog writing skills thinking about SEO and accessibility
- An original version and a Grammarly/Hemingway checked version

Add your blog and images to your website and email your drafts and proofed versions to dms4alltrainers@gmail.com

Up next

See you next week for some more soft skills with Understanding the Brief.