



Module 8: Audiences & Analytics Webinar Series Review

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By Rhys Drout, Student Technology Fellow for the Museum Learning Hub, a cross-regional collaboration to provide free capacity-building training and resources, funded by a National Leadership Grant for Museums from IMLS.

For those interested in understanding how to use website and social media analytics and data to understand their audiences, I recommend [Module 8 on the Museum Learning Hub](#).

This series of webinars taught me about how museums can both start using data and use data more effectively to engage audiences. In the introductory session, [Emily Robertson](#) emphasized the importance of setting goals, collecting data, and analyzing it and how this is all a cycle! [Arturo Garcia](#) further emphasized goal setting and how metrics are important, but defining what success means more broadly helps guide the use of metrics. These themes were carried through the three presentations on: Creating an Analytics Toolbox, Building Digital Strategies and Interpreting Social Media Analytics, and Using Analytics to Understand Audiences. These webinars, taught by three different, impressive women, led to the takeaways I have highlighted below:

Technical Workshop 1: [Creating an Analytics Toolbox to Evaluate Museum Digital Experiences](#) by [Elena Villaespesa](#), Assistant Professor at the Pratt Institute's School of Information:

- Gathering and analyzing data can be beneficial for both visitors and for museums. A more user-oriented experience, based on data, can lead to increased revenue for museums.
- Collecting data from your website is a useful way to look at large scale behavioral data about how many people are coming to your website, and how frequently, where they are coming from and if they convert. You could have both commerce (buying tickets or merchandise) and non-commerce goals (such as donating worksheets etc.), and both can create traffic which can help your business! Recommended tools: [Google Analytics](#), [Omniture](#), [Adobe Analytics](#).

- Heatmaps can offer a great point of visual analysis for showing what part of your website users are interacting with the most. Recommended tools: [Crazyegg](#), [Hotjar](#), [ContentSquare](#) and [Smartlook](#)
- Usability testing with an audience focus group can be useful because you can gather a lot of data from real people, however it is much more labor intensive. Interestingly, this could be easier to do virtually now that everyone is used to using [Zoom](#), which is a great tool for museums to think about!
- If you're considering surveys, Elena points out that shorter surveys probably give more varied data and longer surveys create bias. Recommended tools: [Typeform](#), [Google Forms](#), [Qualaroo](#), [Hotjar](#) and [Google surveys](#)
- User Segmentation can help you identify the motivations of your customers through web analytics and surveys can help inform website design. It is important to design your pages with a user in mind, such as making images and key information the most accessible.
- In terms of viewing your data, [PowerBI](#) (Microsoft Product) and [Google Data Studio](#) are tools which can help you establish a dashboard that makes data easier to understand.

All of this can be overwhelming! Elena's advice was to **identify your museum's objective first, and then look through your toolbox** to figure out which tools will help you tackle this goal.

Technical Workshop 2: [Building Digital Strategies and Interpreting Social Media Analytics](#) by [Acacia Berry](#), the Founder of Archaeological Analytics:

- First and foremost, the goal of digital marketing is to draw in audiences from web and social platforms, and organizations need a detailed plan to do this.
- Traffic is Key! A lot of components go into having a well-trafficked web presence. In order to **attract traffic** and get your audience to stop scrolling, **branding** is key. To **convert traffic** from social media to your website, your **content needs to engage** them and encourage clicks and shares. Finally, to get **return traffic**, you need to focus on your **strategy to gain followers**.
- Audiences find you through referrals such as from an email with a link, browser searches such as with Google, and social media which usually starts by scrolling and then interaction such as a link click.
- You must decide what makes you unique: figure out your niche, style, and potential users. Visual theme, tone of voice, grammar, and format reflect your brand! You can look at competitive institutions to get a sense of their 'brand identity' to help you.

- Create content that will be relevant to your desired audience demographic. Age, race, location, language, politics, education, income etc. all factor into this.
- There are three types of Content: Brand Awareness, Events and Products, and Info/Stories. Many institutions focus mainly on events and products, but it isn't wise to just "sell." **You want to mix in information and stories to really engage your consumer** and make them care about your institution!
- Consider using a Content Management Systems (CMS) to keep track of your content itself, where its published and when. Customizable templates can be found on the Archaeological Analytics website [here](#).
- Each of the different social channels have different KPIs (Key Performance Indicators that show how well your post is doing) that are important, but they come down to the basic categories of Reach, Views and Engagement.
- Social Media Platforms, Scheduling Software and Website Platforms will all have places to find your Analytics, which is where you can view KPIs.

Technical Workshop 3: [Using Analytics to Understand Audiences and Optimize Your Efforts](#) by [Dana Allen-Greil](#), the Vice President of Marketing at the Monterey Bay Aquarium:

- Some terminology: **Baseline** is where you are now, **trend over time** is how you are developing, comparing yourself to the rest of the industry is a **benchmark**, and you must set **targets** for where you want to be.
- Useful resources for obtaining benchmarks include the [M+R Annual Benchmarks Report](#), [Pew Research](#) focused on how people in the US interact with technology, the [Museum Social Media Managers](#) Facebook group, and the [MCN email list](#).
- Your home page may not be the most popular page! Look at how much time people spend on various pages to figure out how to distribute your resources.
- "Direct" traffic essentially means unknown traffic. This can be things such as a Bookmark, links from PDFs, links from an app, links from a text message etc.! If you are confused about website traffic information from Google Analytics, a [Campaign URL Builder tool](#) can help explain it.

It is important to look at how you appear in Google search results. To figure this out for your organization, you can use [this](#) tool. To make your website more search friendly (better SEO), you can optimize your landing page for search engines. To do this, answer things like FAQs related to your organization, think about keywords and questions people would search, and include specific "Call to Action" messages.