

Look Sharp, Look Deep



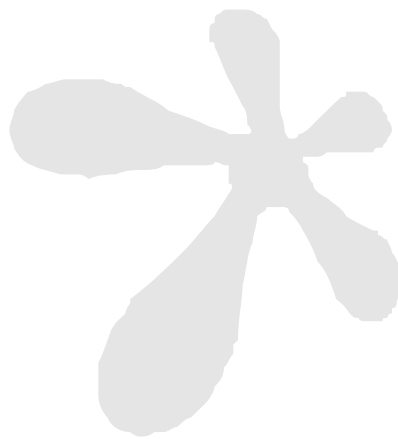
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# **WebNibbler Applied in E-learning Website**

By CCMedia

Don't scratch the surface, scratch deep



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## Operational Effectiveness

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## Operational Effectiveness Analysis on E-learning Websites

Since the "Commencement of Digital Era" in 2002 proposed by the government, digital content industry including e-learning has been arduously advocated. Then dotcom boom and technology innovation also created a brand-new channel for education reform. The new model of e-learning utilizing the Internet as the media is therefore derived. It directly changes the relationship between traditional learning and teaching. The new e-learning model has a profound impact on us and our next generations from elementary education to on job training or even extends to lifetime learning. At the same time, the revolution of learning also creates infinite business opportunities.

### ★The Essence of E-learning

According to ASTD (American Society for Training & Development), e-learning refers to the adoption of Internet technology as the means of academic instruction to accomplish learning objective. The scope covers electronic learning, the Internet learning and distant learning. The Market Intelligence Center in Taiwan broadly categorizes e-learning industry into solution providers and online teaching aids providers. Solution providers include platform/tool providers, project management providers and content providers. The target groups of solution providers are corporations and educational institutes. Yet online teaching aids providers aim to provide services to individual consumers. When providing clients with operational service or website services, it can be in an important interplay with traditional education services.

The above online learning aids providers mostly concentrate on the materials of junior and senior high school level in terms of their contents, exam database or language learning mechanism. Thanks to the advancement of the Internet environment, general computer utilization, government information technology incorporated into education policies and the like, there are more and more online learning websites featuring Webucation. For example, traditional publishers focusing on elementary or high school textbooks have begun to digitalize their materials and devote themselves into the market of e-learning.

### ★Find the Right Approach to Enhancing Operational Effectiveness

However, to manage an e-learning website particularly a paid-based one is no easy task at all. It even costs a fortune to maintain Web content on a regular basis. The cost

includes content development, material digitalization and other facets such as traffic generation, membership management, profits creation and the like. If operators are able to overview, track and analyze visitors' behavior by an analysis tool, a web analytics is surefire to your profit creation. This article probes into the issue e-learning operators

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concern from the perspective of visitors, course content, and navigation process. It can be a great reference for your future application.

To make discussion easier to understand, e-learning in this article is defined as the online teaching provider aims at individual consumers as the target group. It utilizes the way of website operation to provide online learners with professional knowledge, self-study and language learning.

### **Who are your real visitors?**

During the process of managing e-learning websites, the first task is how to generate more traffic effectively and attract more visitors to the site. However, whether various marketing campaigns and promotions can bring in real value to your site is the crux of the issue. Visitors discussed in the article actually contain three types as "initial visitors", "returning visitors" and "login members". There will be variation due to different browsing behavior and preferences. The following discussion will analyze the three types of visitors. Before we move on, you might need to think how much do you know about your "visitors".

#### **★Focus 1: Who visits?**

E-learning website operators need to differentiate the ratio of "initial visit", "returning visit" and "login visit" amongst the heavy traffic. "Initial visit" reflects how famous the site is to the general public and the effectiveness of your publicity. "Returning visit" refers to the scale of your potential clientele interested in your site. As for "login visit", it suggests to what extent your members approach your site. With the Summary Analysis, you are able to realize the number of visits, visitors, pageviews in a specific period and also the percentile of new and old visits. Last but not least, you can also know where and when your visitors browse your site.

▲ Summary Analysis provided by WebNibbler offers:

1.General Overview                      2.Statistics Overview                      3.Visits Overview

4. Visitors Overview                      5. Regions Overview

WebNibbler is able to collect statistics during specific days on the number of pageview, visits, initial visits, visitors, login visitors and authenticated members. And according to the conditions you program, it shows you the statistics on visits, initial visits, returning visits, new visitors, old visitors, regions and the like.

The statistical data gathered from the Summary Analysis helps you grasp overview of daily operation such as the ratio of visitors, visits, pageviews, etc. It is an essential and efficient analytics tool for you. If you are into knowing in-depth statistical analysis, we suggest you check out the Visit Analysis, Visitors Analysis. This way, you can understand visitors' behavior while they browse your e-learning site; therefore, you can further sift and convert potential visitors to your authenticated members.

- ▲ Visit Analysis provided by WebNibbler contains:
  1. visit ratio
  2. in-depth ratio
  3. visitor duration
  4. evaluation on visits
  5. evaluation on stickiness
- ▲ Visitor Analysis provided by WebNibbler contains:
  1. visitor ratio
  2. visitor stickiness
  3. evaluation on visitors
  4. evaluation on visitor stickiness

WebNibbler is able to compare and analyze visits, pageviews and visit duration. It helps you find out visitors with high stickiness and therefore the analysis could be a reference for your future conversion.

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Besides, if you appeal to e-letter, banner, key word search or ads on external sites as the means of attracting visitors, you can adopt Marketing Analysis for your evaluation reference on differentiation strategy. This way, you can further realize the behavior of browsing and consumption from the visitors attracted to your site. You can also refer to the analysis for your basis of Web content and structure modification.

- ▲ Marketing Analysis provided by WebNibbler contains:
  1. E-mail Analysis : Overview / Extended Effect
  2. Banner Ad Analysis: Overview / Extended Effect
  3. External Sites Analysis : External Sites / Alliance Sites / Evaluation on Alliance Sites
  4. Search Engine Analysis : External Sites /Internal Sites

WebNibbler is able to analyze your actual marketing campaigns. Different campaign themes attract different visitors. Once your campaign successfully attracts visitors, the next step is to segment your target groups for your reference to manage customer relationship in the future.

Once you realize who visits your e-learning site, you shall move on to figure who could be your customers in the future.

**★Focus 2: Who are your real customers?**

It is no easy task to find out the target to convert them to customer by the traffic of initial

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visits and returning visits. You cannot apply single conceptual recognition to customers on all kinds of target groups in various e-learning websites. Take e-learning website for pupils for example, there will be two extreme distributions because the users are pupils while buyers are parents. If you don't have an in-depth understanding of your visitors, you may make mistake by only focusing on managing potential users but ignoring real buyers.

If you want to gauge how visitors bring in profits to your site, you need to realize their basic information such as gender, age, education background, professions and the like besides knowing their pageviews. These items help website operators portray visitor profile and structure in a concrete way. Also, it helps estimate the ratio that visitors meet the conditions of target groups.

In order to gain the basic information of initial visits and returning visits, there are more and more e-learning websites starting to provide interested visitors with free trial services. The premise is to ask visitors to leave their personal information; that is, to become authenticated members. If these users feel satisfied after the trial period, they can buy the official program and become VIP members afterwards. There are three merits of doing so. The one is to gain visitors' information and analyze them. Another is to wipe out casual visitors who are not interested in your site. The other is to increase trial users' will to buy official programs. This can be a model to other e-learning site operators.

**▲ Visitor Analysis provided by WebNibbler contains**

1. Comparisons among target groups
2. Sifting target groups

WebNibbler compares target groups in terms of their gender, age and the like. It can be further utilized by user setting to perform segmentation analysis according to education level, professions, income, member levels, etc. The visitor segmentation helps you grasp the variation and correlation amongst different target groups. For example, you may need to figure the variation between male and female visitors as well as the correlation of different age groups between two genders.

WebNibbler even provides the function to sift target groups; users can minimize the visitor range by the multi-function default setting which make the variation amongst different target groups easier to notice. For example, you can compare 25 to 30-year-old male and female visitors with education level of college. This way, you can realize their consumption habits and preferences. With the analysis, you can reinforce your differentiation strategy and therefore maximize your marketing profits.

**★Focus 3: How to convert visitors to customers?**

Once you successfully create traffic for your website, the next challenge for you is how you can convert visitors to customers. You can boil down the process in three phases.

The life cycle of website visitors			
Phases	1. Acquisition	2. Cultivation	3. Retention
Objective	Try to convert anonymous visitors to authenticated members	Try to convert authenticated members to customers with transaction	Try to make customers with transactions continue consumption

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In terms of paid-based e-learning websites, the objective is to let users pay tuitions. This way, the most important thing on this phase is to convert anonymous visitors to authenticated members and further make them make actual purchase.

Let's rethink the issue on "to realize the essence of your visitors' behavior". There must be certain reasons that visitors decided their purchases on your site. Actually, we can boil down two reasons for it.

1. To provide visitors with the curriculum and services they really want
2. To bring visitors a satisfactory browsing experience

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One of the key factors to make visitors decide to become authenticated members or make purchase on your site is the curriculum and services you provide. A general evaluation on e-learning websites is often composed of four comprehensive indices; that is, curriculum design, interface design, interaction design and learning effectiveness of users.

Yet, how do website operators figure what visitors really need while developing new curriculum? Is there anything for reference? Some website operators intuitively come up with the utilization of online survey; however, you can try another easy way to figure this. The article probes into the issue not from the perspective of curriculum design but the facets from the utilization of a power web analytics tool. You can simply analyze users' browsing behavior so as to grasp the orientation of your curriculum design.

### ★Make every curriculum unit popular

To make every curriculum unit popular is the ideal for every e-learning website operator. The more popular your Web content is, the more profits it will make for you. This way, you can utilize Usage Analysis to find out the most popular and least popular units on your curriculum and compare them with the indices mentioned above. By doing so, you can realize why these units popular or less popular and further refer to it for your future curriculum design.

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In addition to single popular curriculum unit, the statistical data based on grouped Web content can be your reference for curriculum design as well. Suppose you have grouped your curriculum units, you can observe how these units are utilized or browsed with the analysis provided by WebNibbler.

Besides, popular units are supposed to vary from visitors to visitors. The following illustration shows that WebNibbler helps you analyze the Web content and cross examine their information so as to gain the variation amongst different target groups. You can also observe different needs from different target groups to products. If you are able to provide different visitors with tailor-made curriculum, their satisfaction level would definitely be upgraded.

#### ▲ Usage Analysis provided by WebNibbler contains

1. Web page validity
2. Web page effectiveness by sites
3. Content validity
4. Content validity by sites
5. Content segmentation
6. Content segmentation by sites

WebNibbler is able to analyze popular Web content and effectiveness overview. From the analysis on variation to different needs, you can realize what your target groups really need. Referring to the analysis, you can provide your visitors with customization oriented Web content and services

Therefore, with so many valuable outputs you can get from the Usage Analysis, you can tell it can be a very useful and practical tool for your e-learning website. If you can further combine Navigation Analysis, you are able to track less popular Web content and improve it in a timely manner. What's more, you can rearrange the Web content or increase the exposure to visitors. This way, visitors can visit your site more.

E-learning website operators need to grasp the variation of different needs from different

visitors. By realizing the attractive Web content, monotonous Web content, or some Web content that visitors might overlook easily, operators can effectively grasp their own niche and develop a better curriculum for future use. There are some

suggestions provided as:

- 1 – Suggest a single visitor to opt for different curriculum in different periods of time
- 2 – Provide curriculum suitable for different target groups
- 3 – Try to increase the exposure of less popular curriculum and then decide if you want to remove it

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### Don't let him lose his bearings --- Navigation Planning

Disorientation and Cognitive Overhead are two interrelated problems that may in fact ultimately limit the usefulness of hypertext. (Conklin, J., 1987)

Problems visitors encounter	VS.	Perspective of e-learning site
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I don't know how to look for the units I want to learn</li> <li>- Faced with so many lessons, I don't know where to start and what fits me the best next.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The more lessons we offer, the more they feel contented.</li> <li>- To design a set of online learning process and to expect visitors to follow</li> </ul>

#### ★You are the one make him lose his bearings!

In fact, most e-learning sites have their default curriculum structure; that is, despite visitors' background, they all use the identical curriculum and extended materials. In a sense, visitors may feel perplexed in the snarl. Although this problem wouldn't appear in the initial stages of website operation, the problem will become serious and bring more inconvenience for visitors as time goes by.

It is important to help visitors opt for the suitable curriculum for themselves while in the face of a variety of programs. Besides a well-designed navigation process, a Navigation Analysis is required to help visitors arrange their program as well as overview if there is any discrepancy between your default navigation and navigation in real-time. By doing so, you can improve the curriculum design aiming at different target groups. By suggesting them different navigation can you increase the frequencies of their visits so as to make them feel contented from learning online.

★ **The real-time statistics helps you find the solution**

Before conducting Navigation Analysis, you might not think you will encounter the problems mentioned. However, your supposition is supposed to be based on facts.

▲ **Navigation Analysis provided by WebNibbler contains:**

1. Click path
2. Navigation
3. Conversions

WebNibbler provides complete logs of navigation of certain Web pages. It enables Web administrators to overview if there is discrepancy between your default navigation and actual navigation in real-time. The analysis outputs help Web designers better design a more customer-oriented website. The function of conversion analysis provided by WebNibbler helps website operators realize the complete conversion process and further overview the operational effectiveness.

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The output from Navigation Analysis to a paid-based e-learning website is way important. It is particularly significant to the websites that deduct the service points purchased by visitors in advance. In a word, a well-designed e-learning site and content do not guarantee profits for you. The key to managing your e-learning website is to shorten navigation process for visitors. This way, they can easily find out the suitable program for themselves and be willing to purchase points online. Once the member stickiness is formed, they will continue buying points to learn.

If a large number of visitors can't follow your designated navigation process to approach your site, the discrepancy suggests you have encountered a bottleneck in terms of navigation planning. However, sometimes the reason could be very easy to figure. It might be simply something wrong with your content classification. If this is the case, you just need to adjust your unit structure and the situation can be changed. We suggest you:

- 1 –Try to establish a well-organized site map on curriculum content
- 2 –Try to modify current curriculum structure or classification
- 3 –Try to review and rearrange a favorable navigation for visitors

◆ **Conclusion** ◆

Thanks to the advancement of today's internet environment, it has formed individual



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ways of learning and stimulated people to aspire for knowledge spontaneously. This is the very niche for e-learning website operation. E-learning nowadays is not exclusive to students any longer. Its influence has reached all walks of life. There is actually quite a number of e-learning websites with certain scale. The reason that they are able to manage their business till present day is all about their focus on correct target groups. In addition to the mature utilization of technology to develop curriculum content, these operators provide their learners with efficient and systematic approach to interactive e-learning. If they can employ a power Web analytics system as WebNibbler, they can easily realize their current operation and problems by overviewing the analyses on visitors, curriculum content and navigation planning. With the reference from WebNibbler, you can further improve the situation and further develop customization services for different visitors. This will definitely bring satisfaction to your learners. This way, your future development and business opportunities will be around the corner.



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