

THE CMO'S CHEAT SHEET FOR UNDERSTANDING SEO PERFORMANCE

Website performance can be measured in thousands of ways, making it difficult to judge the impact of your SEO efforts. Quit feeling overwhelmed and focus on the following 7 metrics:

What does "Organic" have to do with online marketing?

Digital marketers associate the word "organic" with SEO to distinguish it from paid ads.

VISIBILITY

KEYWORD RANKINGS:

The position where your website ranks for a particular keyword in search engine results.

Rankings provide insight into your search visibility. Be sure to track keywords that are both important to your business and have volume.

TIP:
Be aware that Google personalizes many rankings for different searches based on geography, search history, and other factors

ORGANIC CLICKS:

Clicks to your website from organic search results.

Measure branded and non-branded organic clicks separately to distinguish between brand popularity and people searching for your products or services.

TIP:
Google Search Console only gives you estimates; Google analytics stopped providing exact organic keyword data years ago.

TRAFFIC

ORGANIC SESSIONS:

Number of sessions that began with a user clicking on an organic search engine listing.

Organic sessions begin when visitors actively engage with your website and end after thirty minutes of inactivity or when visitors leave your website.

TIP:
This number is generally a strong indicator of SEO performance, however, more organic sessions doesn't necessarily equal more conversions.

ORGANIC % OF NEW SESSIONS:

The percentage of new users that came to your site from organic search.

A higher percentage means your site is reaching new potential customers through search. Other metrics can be inflated by return visitors, but a high organic percentage shows just new user visits, at least as can be tracked through cookies.

TIP:
Keep in mind drastic changes to advertising campaigns will impact this percentage artificially.

BEHAVIOR

PAGES / SESSION FROM ORGANIC:

The number of pages visited per user session.

This indicates the quality of traffic acquired from organic search. In general, a higher pages/session indicates better quality traffic because visitors are engaged with your site.

TIP:
A high percentage can also indirectly help your SEO.

CONVERSIONS

ORGANIC GOAL CONVERSION RATE:

The rate at which SEO visitors complete actions on your site that count as conversions.

The higher this percentage, the more visitors end up in your pipeline or complete a purchase on your site.

TIP:
Set up your goals correctly to see a more complete picture of your SEO performance.

ORGANIC TRAFFIC TOTAL GOAL:

The monetary value assigned to SEO goal completions.

Total value from organic traffic allows you to approximate your SEO campaign's value based on an average lead value. For an ecommerce site, revenue will be calculated automatically. Compare this value across various periods of time in order to see seasonality versus natural growth.

TIP:
Keep in mind customer lifetime value in all cases to understand true impact.

Ultimately, the amount of organic traffic is worth little unless visitors take actions you care about.