



Interpreting Web Site Statistics with AWSTATS

To view your AWSTATS results, use the link provided by beachdog.com. In most cases, unless you requested password-protected statistics, this is your link:

<http://YOURDOMAIN.COM/awstats/awstats.cgi>

Change "YOURDOMAIN.COM" to what is appropriate for your site.

AWSTAT Terminology

The following definitions of the terms used in the AWSTATS statistics package will help you to interpret your website statistics. Terminology is listed as the terms appear from top to bottom in the AWSTATS package.

Last Update: This tells you when your statistics were last updated. Generally they are updated every 24 hours. Occasionally it may be a little longer.

Report Period: This is the month for the statistics you will see on this page. You may choose any month from when your account was updated.

Unique Visitors: The Unique visitors to your website are visitors with different IP addresses, in other words clicks to your website coming from different computers. If someone enters your website address in 5 time this is one unique visitor, and 5 visits.

Number of Visits: The number of visits to your website is the total amount of time people have visited your website. These may not be all from the same visitor, for example one person may have clicked on your website 10 time. To determine the total amount of people who have visited your website, look at your unique visitors figure.

Pages: This figure is the number of pages people have viewed on your website. Each time someone looks at a page on your website, this figure goes up by 1.

Hits: This term is very often used instead of "Unique Visitors" to describe the total amount of visitors to your website in a certain period. The real meaning of a "hit" is when something is downloaded from your website by a visitor. This may be text, a picture, a page, a flash file etc. You will generally not need to pay much attention to this figure.

Bandwidth: This figure shows you the amount of data downloaded by your visitors. If this is nearing your monthly quota for your account, contact us to inquire about getting a larger bandwidth setting.

Monthly History: This table shows you the summary table above this for each month of the current year. This allows you to compare each figure with previous months.

Days of the Month: This figure shows you the number of visits, pages, hits and bandwidth for the current month in a tabular and graphical form.

Days of the week: These figures allow you to determine the most popular day of the week that people visit your website, in terms of pages, hits and bandwidth.

Hours: The time of day people visit your website, again in terms of pages, hits and bandwidth.

Countries: This is where each visitor to your website is located. Again figures for pages, hits and bandwidth are listed.

Hosts: These are the IP addresses of each computer that visits your website. This can be handy if you want to accurately track your visitors.

Authenticated and/or anonymous users: If you have a section to your website where clients can login, then they will be listed under this section. Otherwise if Awstats cannot determine the IP address of a visitor, they may be listed in this section also.

Robots/Spiders Visitors: Robots and spiders are used by search engines such as Google or Yahoo to index your website.

Visits Duration: This tells you how long your visitors are staying on your website. At the top of the table you can see the average time for each user.

Files Type: In this table you can see what type of files people are downloading from your website.

Pages: This section tells you which pages are being visited the most. It also tells you which page the user entered or exited your site.

Operating Systems: Here you can see what operating systems your visitors are using. Examples: Windows, Macintosh.

Browsers: The web browsers your visitors use to connect to your site.

Connect to site from: This table shows where your visitors connected to your website from. Whether they directly entered your address into their web browser, or whether they found it in a search engine or another website, this information will be listed here.

Search Key phrases: This is a list of phrases people use to search for your website in search engines.

Search Keywords: This is a list of single words people use to search for your website in search engines.

Miscellaneous: Generally a section you should not pay much attention to. The only figure that usually displays is the 'Add to Favorites' figure which is an approximate value of the amount of visitors that have bookmarked your website in their browser.

HTTP error codes: This is a list of error codes for your website. The most common one is a 404 error, which visitors will get if they enter in your website or a page on your website with a spelling error or a page that simply does not exist.

Graphical & Textual Web Statistics

AWSTATS creates graphical and textual displays of the information contained in web log files. Web logs contain plain text information about visitors to your site such as how they arrived at your site, if the visit was search engine directed, any search term entered, and the IP address of the visitor. These raw log files cannot be intuitively read. AWSTATS takes this information and breaks the data into visually readable chunks. In addition, the graphical displays indicate trends about your website over time.

Summary					
Reported period	Month May 2009				
First visit	01 May 2009 - 00:02				
Last visit	31 May 2009 - 23:58				
	Unique visitors	Number of visits	Pages	Hits	Bandwidth
Viewed traffic *	4323	8333 (1.92 visits/visitor)	52313 (6.27 Pages/Visit)	484745 (58.17 Hits/Visit)	24.23 GB (3048.5 KB/Visit)
Not viewed traffic *			169678	185217	2.79 GB

* Not viewed traffic includes traffic generated by robots, worms, or replies with special HTTP status codes.

Unique Visitors

Every computer is connected to the Internet via a connection with a unique identifier called an IP address. This IP address is logged in the server logs much like your phone number is logged in the caller ID of the person you dialed. For many caller ID devices, a second call from the same phone will only display the calling number one time--even if the second call was by a different individual. Conversely, if the same individual calls you from two different phone numbers, both calls are logged. The same holds true for measuring unique visitors to your website.

Unique IP address totals are incremented one time regardless of the number of times the visiting computer connects to your server. Therefore, if two people from the same office call up your website address for different reasons, they are counted only once yet reflect two distinctly different visitors. By the same token, if one of these visitors later visits your website from home that evening, the visit is counted a second time despite the fact that the two separate IPs are from the same person. So, unique visitors are measured as separate connections from a visitor's computer to your website's server and will generally reflect the number of different visitors to your website.

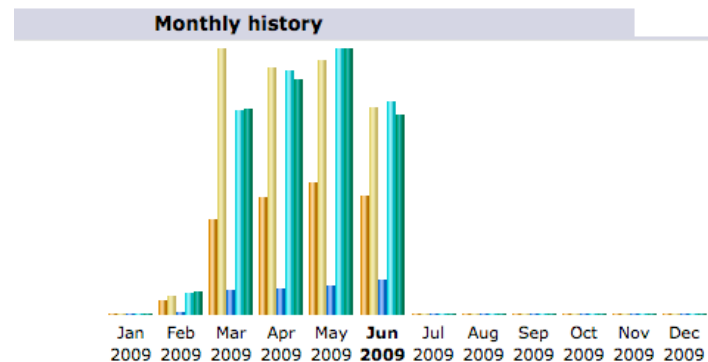
Hits

Because we often hear the term "hit count", let's take a moment to find out what this number really means. Each time a visitor types in your web address, the browser "hits" the website's server for the document that tells the browser how to display your web page. As the browser begins to display the information, it will continue to hit the server for any additional elements needed. For example, a logo will represent one hit as the server returns that image to your browser. Any background design constitutes another hit. And a music file represents yet another. Because of how hits are measured, this number is generally an inflated value and vastly different from true visitors. By the way, the more images in a website, the greater number of hits will be recorded.

Bandwidth

Bandwidth represents the total amount of data sent out from your server. All images and text take up space on the server. When these files are sent to your visitor's browser, they represent the amount of bandwidth utilized. Websites with streaming video or large music files utilize significantly more bandwidth than all-text sites such as Wikipedia. If bandwidth increases, it generally means that business is up. However, if bandwidth costs are increasing faster than profits, you may want to consider downsizing file sizes.

Monthly History & Trends



Discovery Trends

Monthly History displays visitor and bandwidth data over time. While the unique IP address is not an absolute reflection of each individual visitor to your website, it does provide a picture of the website's traffic. More than anything, the number serves as a barometer of your website's ability to grow and attract new visitors. Here, you can look for trends such as seasonal gains for your industry. For example, nurseries and garden shops will generally see increased traffic during the spring and summer months. Our goals aim at seeing a general gain in visitors over time--that is, more visitors this year than last, or this month as compared to the previous one. The image above illustrates a nice upward trend in visitors over time, which is borne out by the actual visitor count at right.

Month	Unique visitors
Jan 2009	0
Feb 2009	440
Mar 2009	3117
Apr 2009	3848
May 2009	4323
Jun 2009	3896
Jul 2009	0
Aug 2009	0
Sep 2009	0
Oct 2009	0
Nov 2009	0
Dec 2009	0
Total	15624

Reviewing **Days of the Month** may show patterns of usage. For example, a business related website generally has higher traffic during the week with less traffic over weekends and holidays. Family entertainment websites may find the reverse is true. **Hours** data may prove useful during some advertising campaigns such as through radio or television. Consistent jumps in visitors shortly after radio advertising may be directly attributable to your ads. In cases like this, businesses must actively market to this group with direct tie-ins to the website.

Robots/Spiders Visitors

Robots and spiders are automated programs that enter websites and follow internal links to all pages of the site. Robots are responsible for indexing websites for key phrases that may pertain to your website's products, services, or information. In our work, we will want to know when and which search engines robots have entered a website, so we can determine timelines on when our client's website will be found. The notable robots are Inktomi Slurp, Yahoo's spider, Googlebot, and MSNBot. New sites may not have any spiders or robots entering the

website until a link to it exists from an established site or when the site is submitted to the search engine. Consider submitting your site directly to these search engines until you are found. NOTE: Do not submit your site if you have hired us to do this for you and do not submit your site more than once. NEVER ever submit your website to a website submission service. And steer clear of link exchanges or link farms programs. Not only will none of these services help you, but also being associated with unethical websites risks banning your site from one or more major search engines.

Search Keyphrases

From a search engine optimization standpoint, this listing tells us what words drove visitors to a given website. For example, if a potential of beachdog.com enters “long beach website design” into Google and then follows that link to our page, those words will appear in our Search Keyphrases listing. Further, if another later follows the same steps, our will show two visits for the same phrase.

These phrases are important for two reasons. One, if your website is being for any key phrases related to your business, your business is already ahead of many websites. This is the first step in search engine success.

Search Keyphrases (Top 10)		
Full list		
719 different keyphrases	Search	Percent
poodwaddle	145	10 %
comments	39	2.7 %
beachdog	35	2.4 %
beach	27	1.8 %
keleigh	21	1.4 %
beachdog.com	19	1.3 %
sabrina	19	1.3 %
facebook	16	1.1 %
county	16	1.1 %
david	14	0.9 %
Other phrases	1087	75.5 %

key
client
four
visitor listing
found

Secondly, the listing can serve as an excellent tool from which you can tailor future SEO efforts. For example, if your company has just designed cell phone lanyards for carrying your mobile on your neck, you'll want to look for variations of this search term in your listing. Concentrate on creating good content about your new lanyards for visitors to find you. Your SEO efforts may focus on using variations of your product name such as cell phone lanyards or mobile phone necklaces. When those search terms appear, bingo! You've made your mark!

Conclusion

AWSTATS is just one of many web stats or traffic analytics packages. Most website traffic tools offer information that help direct SEO efforts. Understanding how to use this information may make take those visitors from "just looking" to buying your products and services.

If you are interested in seriously tracking your web statistics, we recommend running both log file statistics (what AWSTATS reads) as well as cookie-based statistics such as Google Analytics.