

The Internet Entrepreneur Club's

**INTERNET PROFIT  
REPORT****FEBRUARY 2010 EDITION****INCLUDED IN THIS ISSUE:**

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Your monthly Internet marketing update: insider tips — industry news — expert knowledge

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## Site Stickiness -- One Sweet Subject

Dear Club member:

This month we're talking about making your site "sticky" -- after all, this is the World Wide *WEB*. A web isn't much good for catching anything if it isn't sticky...

...And catching customers in *your* part of the web is the name of the game!

To help you get started, we've got a

great article packed with tips on **how to build a sticky website**.

And to make sure that everything you try is based on **knowledge**, not **guesses**, we explain how to measure your site's stickiness using Google's analytics program -- which is one of the most simple AND effective programs we've tried...

...plus it's FREE! We love free!

We've also got a **checklist** with dos and don'ts, and a pile of **tools you can use** in your quest to trap customers!

Finally, we're excited about this month's club call, in which we chat with our expert, Chuck Anderson, about all things sticky!

To your success,

The Internet Marketing Center Team

### Understanding the Basics... *What makes a website "sticky"?*

A "sticky" website is kind of like the neighborhood cafe: People stop by to visit regularly, and when they do, they hang out for a while.

And, as with the cafe, the more time people spend on your website, *the more likely they are to spend money*.

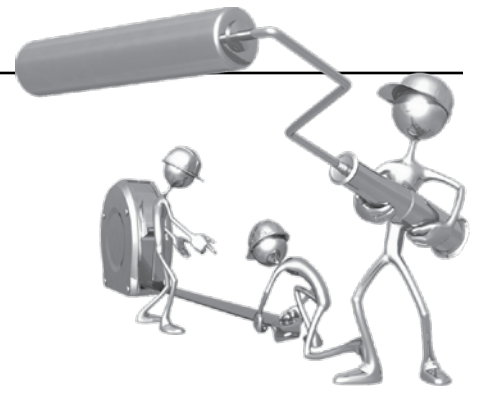
In other words, **sticky is good**. Really, really good.

...and the opposite, "**slippery**," is bad. Have you ever visited a site, and discovered that it doesn't appear to have what you're looking for, or hasn't been updated since the last time you stopped by? You likely left after just a couple seconds -- and that's *slippery*.

People "bounce" away from slippery sites, **and they don't return**. Why bother? The Internet is full of sticky stuff.

A sticky website grabs visitors' attention, and compels them to spend time exploring the site. But that's not all. **It also makes them want to come back tomorrow to explore all over again**.

The key is **anticipation**. If you can create anticipation in your visitors, they're more likely to return to your site after their first visit, and more likely to click through from your emails, because **they're already looking forward to whatever you put up next**.



# How To: Build a Sticky Website

**S**ticky website, like viral video, sounds like a bad thing, but actually, it's really good. Because sticky = \$\$\$\$. Here's how it works:

**sticky site = repeat visitors =  
increased trust = customer loyalty  
= \$\$\$**

But sticky isn't something you can just code in to your HTML. To get started, look at how your visitors use your site (see pg 5 for details) -- and then **experiment**.

## What we want:

A sticky website does these three things:

1. **Attracts first-time visitors**
2. **Holds their attention**
3. **Makes them want to return**

## 1. Attract first-time visitors

A person has to be a *first-time* visitor before they can become a *repeat* visitor, obviously. So:

➔ **Get good content, and always show it off:** If you've got the right content, people WILL come to read, watch, or play with it. If you don't have the time (or the skills) to create content, find **legitimate** sources you can draw from (suggestions on pg 7).

**Pay attention** to what content **attracts the most interest**. That stuff should be front-and-center -- it's sticky.

## ➔ Design your site to be used:

Looks aren't the most important thing about a website, **usability** is. A usable site is one that your users can operate without even having to *think* about it.

We can't possibly overstate how important usability is to the success of your site. People online have *one* reaction to obstacles: *They leave*. Lost in the navigation? *Gone*. Front page irrelevant? *Gone*. No access to anything without giving an email address? *GONE*.

## 2. Hold their attention

With a foundation of great content and usable design, you can fine-tune to make your site as appealing as possible **to the people in your niche market**. The *idea* is that they will be so engaged that they won't want to leave. **The challenge is figuring out what's appealing.**

Common sense can help: If your business is "Coping with Grief," you

will NOT add appeal by adding a Tetris game -- quite the opposite.

But common sense will only get you so far. For the best results, always keep an eye on your statistics. They'll tell you more about what's appealing than common sense, hunches, and helpful newsletters combined.

That said, here are some things we find are universally appealing:

➔ **Show them you're real:** Your customers want to know who they're dealing with. And when they see you as a real person, they're more likely to see you as an expert with opinions worth listening to -- and products worth buying. Use your "About" page to show them you're not a sales robot!

Include a **photo** of yourself (of YOU, not your cat, or a cartoon version of you), spell out exactly what your business is for, and promote your social networks. ("Follow me on Twitter", "Add me on Facebook").

## Expert Advice

Jakob Nielsen, "the King of Usability" ([useit.com](http://useit.com)), says the simplest way to figure out your site's usability is **user testing**. Here's how to do it (the short version):

1. **Find some test subjects.** They should be as much like your future customers as possible, and should know nothing about the site going in.
2. **Ask your subjects to do some simple tasks with your site.** For example, navigate to the order form and fill it out.
3. **Observe them.** Where do they succeed? Where do they fail? Don't talk to them; let them talk to you. You will learn a lot, and will likely be surprised by what your users do (we always are).

## What's a Widget?

A "widget" is like an iPhone "app" for your website. Want to add a clock that shows the time in your city? There's a widget for that. Want a survey? There's a widget for that too. How about a game of Tetris? Yep, widget.

With so many fun -- and free! -- widgets, the hard part is **not getting carried away**. Before you add a widget, ask:

1. Will my customers find this widget **useful**?
2. Will this **enhance** their experience, or add **clutter**?
3. Does this widget **contribute** to my **business goals**?

**If a widget doesn't work *with* your business it WILL work *against* it.**

### ➔ Participate in your community:

Whether you're **responding to blog comments**, **conversing in a forum**, or even **answering email**, your customers should know that if *they* take the time to give *their* thoughts, *you* will take the time to give *yours*.

You can get a LOT out of your community. Not only will it provide you with plenty of fresh, free content, once people start participating they'll be back regularly to see how the conversation's going. Sticky!

➔ **Bribe them:** Offer your readers discounts, freebies, and site-only promotions. You want them to see you as an ally helping them to *save* money, instead of as a salesperson trying to *get* their money.

➔ **Add interaction:** There's *no such thing* as a sticky site with no interaction. Even the most old-fashioned news sites let their readers participate in discussions about the stories of the day.

You can get "widgets" that will add all kinds of interactivity, like surveys, games, video, polls, countdowns...if you can imagine it, there's probably a widget for it.

### 3. Make them *want* to return -- and make it easy

When a person visits a site for the first time, it's because they **hope** it has the information they're looking for. But when they *return* to a site, it's because they **expect** it to be there.

So feed that sense of expectation and they'll be back day after day!

➔ **Be reliable:** This one is EASY, yet so many people don't do it! Update

regularly and *when you say you will*.

If you say "updated on Tuesdays,"  
UPDATE ON TUESDAY.

➔ **Show them what they're missing:** Get in touch with the people who have opted in to your emails and show them why they should return: Provide a link to an interesting forum discussion, or ask for input on a poll you're conducting. You're not collecting those opt-ins because they're pretty -- USE THEM!

➔ **Tease them with what's coming next:** Did you score an interview with an industry "rock star"? Do you have a hot contest coming up? Let your audience know some amazing stuff is coming soon -- they'll watch for it!

Once you've built anticipation, make it easy for them to return:

➔ **Get bookmarked:** The most effective way to get your site into your customers' bookmarks (or "Favorites") is for you to **ask them** to put it there. ("Bookmark us! Just hit CTRL-D on your keyboard")

➔ **Feed it to them:** Create an RSS feed for your site, and make the "Subscribe" button VERY obvious.

RSS is a great way for you to deliver fresh content to your email-shy customers, and you don't have to count on them remembering you -- no worrying about being branded a spammer. (If you're new to RSS, we recommend Google's Feedburner. Learn more on pg 7)

➔ **Recruit your readers:** Give your readers plenty of ways to share your content with their friends: You could try adding a "tell a friend about this site" widget, or encourage your regulars to share your site with their social networks by providing a handy button (like the one available on [addthis.com](http://addthis.com)) that will do it in a single click.

(If you register on the AddThis button site, you'll get handy **analytics** that will tell you who is sharing what. More information is *always* good!)

Whether you're planning a brand-new online business, or looking to improve one that's already up and running, you *must* consider how you will make your site sticky. Experiment with our suggestions, check out your competition and use their good ideas... and drop by the Internet Entrepreneur Club forum for some inspiration!

## 9 ways to tell if your site is



or



My site features a variety of media, including images, video, and audio. **Nothing starts playing automatically.**



Audio and/or video is set to **start playing as soon as the user arrives**. No other media is included -- if you can't play the video, you're just out of luck.

I have a strong social media presence, and **invite my web users to join my networks.**



I have no social media strategy, and **refuse to engage users outside of my website.**

My users have a voice on my site: They comment on my blog posts, participate in the forum, or use the chat room. **I participate in the conversation.**



Users should keep their thoughts and opinions to themselves: **If anyone comments, I ignore them.** *Especially* if it's a complaint.

Within a couple of seconds my users can tell **what my site is called**, what **its purpose** is, and **where to find the information** they're after.



My website is a "fun" mystery game. **You can't tell what it's for** until you explore. **You can't explore** until you find the buttons -- and good luck with that!

My **best, most popular content is front and center.** I don't have boring "filler" content.



**Content? Overrated!** I **don't check my numbers** to see which articles are the most popular, and I **don't draw attention to the favorites.**

I **engage my users** with polls, questions, competitions, games, discounts, discussion, and anything else that grabs their interest!



I **never add new interactive elements** to my site. I don't like them so I assume no one else does. I **don't test** this theory.

My site has a personal touch. People who visit my site get a sense of **who I am**, not just what I'm selling.



My site is **completely focused on my sales pitch.** My users see me as a salesperson, not an expert.

I collect email addresses using a prominent opt-in box, and **keep in touch** with regular email updates.



I collect email addresses because I think I should, but I **don't do anything** with them.

I **make return visits easy**, encouraging users to bookmark my site. They can also get my content on their newsreaders via my RSS feed.



I assume that anyone who likes my site will just remember to come back eventually. I **don't want to be pushy.**



# Website Metrics That Matter: Measuring Stickiness

Online business owners often make the mistake of tracking just two numbers when they're trying to measure the effectiveness of their websites: their **visitor count**, and their **conversion rates**.

But all these two figures *really* reveal is a) how many people stopped by, and b) whether or not they opted to make a purchase. That's **not enough information** to help you make the most of your web presence!

That's why we encourage our clients to take a much deeper look into *how visitors are using their websites*. We want them to know how people end up at their websites, what they do when they get there, if they're finding what they came looking for -- and, ultimately, if they're being **compelled to make a buying decision**.

Fortunately, this information is readily available -- FREE!

The key is to narrow in on some key **metrics** in your **analytics** program that will give you clear insight into...

- **The way visitors arrive** at your site (links, search engine results, etc.)
- The pages visitors from a particular source **land on most often**
- The **amount of time** visitors from a particular source spend at your site on average, and the **average number of pages** they visit when they're there
- The number of times your visitors

**return to your website** (and whether they come back, period!)

- The pages that visitors **spend the most time** on
- The pages that visitors **spend the least time** on
- ... and the pages that seem to **send them packing**.

## "Metric"?

Metric is a term we use to describe a **measurable result** -- something you can judge objectively according to a number or formula. You can't measure "sticky," but you can measure "time spent on page."

These key "stickiness" analytics will give you a solid idea of **which areas of your site are engaging** your visitors, and which ones **throw them off the scent**. You'll also learn **if the ways your visitors are finding you are targeted enough** to make conversions a real possibility.

Finally, you'll find out if the things you've put on your site to encourage return visits -- your content, forum, etc. -- are compelling people to come back again and again, and who they appeal to the most.

You can use this information to **build on what's working**, and to tweak what isn't -- and in the process, develop a website that truly converts.

## We recommend Google Analytics

Over the past 12 years or so, we've had the opportunity to check out a lot of analytics programs, finding the right fit for our own websites, and testing out the other options for our clients and customers.

And the **best** is **free!** (We love it when that happens.)

**Google Analytics** ([google.com/analytics](http://google.com/analytics)) will give you all the important insights you need on what's going on in the background of your website. Google takes you step-by-step through setting it up on your website, and offers easy-to-read reports and charts that make the numbers make sense.

If you're *paying* for something else right now, we'd suggest you give Google Analytics a spin, and see if you can get more functionality for free!

And if you're using a free program already, we guarantee you'll find a depth to Google's reporting that you can't find anywhere else.

And if you're not using ANY analytics program, **your business is in trouble**.

## What metrics to check, and why

Let's go through the actual terms for the numbers we want you to check out (as we listed before) -- and what

they'll tell you about your visitors.

➔ **Entrance Sources and Entrance Pages:** 'Entrance Sources' are where your visitors came *from*, whether they clicked through from a search engine results page, or through a PPC ad, or through an inbound link from another website ... or anywhere else.

'Entrance Pages' tell you where they land first, whether that's your home page, a landing page, or a page deep in the archives of your site.

When you know where your visitors are coming from and where they start on your site, you can learn:

- What your **best sources of traffic** are (in terms of generating new visits and return visits)
- **Which sources of traffic yield your high-quality visitors** (in terms of time spent, pages visited, and conversions)
- **How targeted your visitors are**, and whether they ended up on your site "by accident", or via your marketing efforts (SEO, PPC, strategic inbound links, etc.)
- **What pages your visitors are landing on**, and if those pages engage them, or cause them to "bounce" off your site

It's important to remember that a visitor's *reason* for clicking through to your page can be tough to measure -- sometimes they'll get to your site by a keyword that indicates they've got action in mind (e.g., "buy organic dog food"), and sometimes not (e.g., "organic dog food" -- without the "buy," they *might* want to buy dog food, but they could be interested in making it themselves, or even just learning more about it!) So remember these numbers are *guides*, not oracles!

➔ **Time on Page and Time on Site (and Bounce Rate!):** So you've got visitors -- but are they doing once they arrive? 'Time on Page' will tell you **how much time visitors from a particular Entrance Source spent on a particular page.**

This metric gives you an idea about **which pages are most engaging** to which type of visitors -- along with some clues about what those visitors are really looking for!

'Time on Site' tells you how much time visitors from a particular Entrance Source spent on your site *on average* -- which gives you an idea about **which type of visitors** find your site sticky, and **where your most quality traffic is coming from.**

If a certain page has a high 'Bounce Rate' (e.g., visitors land there, but leave immediately), then take a look at how you can make that page more engaging -- or get rid of it!

➔ **Returning Visitors:** 'Returning Visitors', or repeat traffic, is tracked by your visitor's unique IP address. It's easy for someone to arrive at your site by accident, and leave without visiting more than one page, or checking out what you have to offer. **But if a person visits your page *again* you stand a MUCH better chance of converting them to a buyer.** These are your high-quality visitors.

➔ **Most and Least Visited Pages:** These metrics are pretty simple: 'Most Visited' tells you **which pages get the most traffic** (either because people land or navigate there), and 'Least Visited' tells you **which aren't getting much love.**

Once you know which are your most visited pages, **try to figure out**

**why they're popular**, and see if it's something you can replicate on the least-visited pages.

Likewise, analyze your least-visited pages to **figure out the problem.** Do they need better navigation leading to them? Better keyword optimization? The problem isn't always obvious.

➔ **Exit Pages:** The last page a person was on before they left your website is their 'Exit Page'. Some exit pages are *good* places for visitors to leave from: Newsletter sign-ups, order confirmations, or pages that link to another site you want them to visit. **Don't worry about those!**

But if your visitors are **abandoning shopping carts**, or **leaving from a product page**, it's a good idea to make sure the page is **working properly**, and that you've provided the most valuable, complete information that you possibly can.

Now that you've got a sense of the key "stickiness" measures, it's time to load up Google Analytics and do a little digging into your visitor behaviour.

And *don't* worry if all the numbers and graphs and tables are a little complicated at first. You'll get it.

**Start by focusing on these metrics**, and then take some time to watch how your visitors are behaving over the period of a couple weeks, or a month or two.

You'll soon see some patterns emerge that will give you an idea of what's working at your site -- and what isn't. Then you'll know where you can start making changes and tweaks to turn your site into something truly sticky!

# Tools You Can Use



## Deliver fresh content

The #1 component of a successful web-based business is **CONTENT**. *You can't make money without it.* People don't visit your site because they want to do you a favor; *they visit because they're hungry for content.* If your website needs fresh articles faster than you can write them (good work!), try an article directory.

### [ezinearticles.com](http://ezinearticles.com)

Use up to 25 articles per year, FREE

### [ideamarketers.com](http://ideamarketers.com)

Lots of free, recent content. Paid option available

### [www.freesticky.com](http://www.freesticky.com)

Plenty of free (or low-cost) sticky content, from a huge range of categories -- Cartoons to Weather

## Nurture interaction



People *love* to interact. Give them a poll and they'll answer it; give them a game and they'll play it. Give them a forum and they'll talk -- and form an online community. Look for "widgets" or "applications" you can add. The best part? **No programming required!**

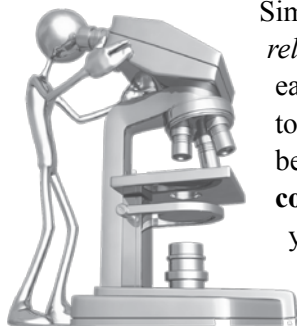
### [widgetbox.com](http://widgetbox.com)

A fantastic selection you can add to your website, social media pages, or blog. Free widgets have advertising embedded, paid, no-ads option available

### [www.phpbb.com](http://www.phpbb.com)

phpBB is a funny name for a beautiful thing: Free, customizable, easy-to-use forum software. The perfect foundation for an online community

## Evaluate yourself



Simple navigation, obvious branding, *relevant* content, clear graphics, and easy-to-use interactive elements work together to make your site stickier, because they all contribute to **clear communication** and **usability**. Check your site: Are they spending time on your pages, or slipping away? **Be ruthless** -- your customers will.

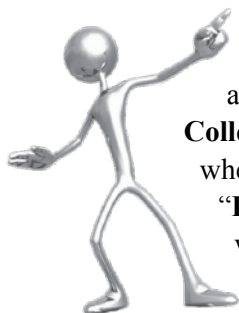
### [tools.pingdom.com](http://tools.pingdom.com)

Check how long your pages take to load. Find out if people are spending 2 *real* minutes on your salescopy page, or 1:57 loading time, 3 seconds real time (yikes)

### [clicktale.com](http://clicktale.com)

See how your visitors get around your site. *Invaluable* for spotting bad navigation, and learning unexpected things about your visitors

## Point the way



One of the most effective ways to get people to return to your website is to **ask them to -- and show them how**: Create a feed for your site, and **make the subscription button obvious**. **Collect opt-ins**, and **send out announcements** when you have news. You could even add a simple **"Bookmark this site"** reminder. Do most of the work **FOR** your visitors, and they're **MUCH** more likely to come back!

### [feedity.com](http://feedity.com)

Generates an RSS feed for your website. This subscription option is *great* for keeping your email-shy customers in the loop **without** extra work for you

### [feedburner.google.com](http://feedburner.google.com)

Manage, analyze, and optimize your RSS feeds. Even better, get statistics on your subscribers -- Google analytics can't do that!



## NEXT ISSUE

### *in the Internet Profit Report...*

We take a look at how the explosion of "smartphone" popularity is changing how we do business online. You'll learn...

- Which businesses need to get into mobile **RIGHT NOW**
- How you can boost your business with "apps"
- Where you're being reviewed -- are you in a game *without knowing it*?

...and much more!



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