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# 2009 WAA Standards Definitions and Compliance

Last month the WAA Standards Committee released the updated WAA Term and Definitions (A total of 29 terms) for 2009 along with a call to vendors to publish their compliance matrix publicly. Also new this year is a series of questions to “Ask Your Vendor” which are answered below. Committee Chairs Angie Brown and Judith Pascual released the results of how various vendors match the industry’s independent definitions at eMetrics.

As the digital marketing industry matures you’ll begin to see the features/functions of the products differ less and less. It’s at that point that the people, access to information, vision, consulting, support and service a company provides is the real measure of difference.

## TERMS AND DEFINITIONS COMPLIANCE

In the prior version most companies provided Yes/No answers, the request this year provided some additional clarity by providing five answers to chose from:

- Yes, the same as the WAA
- Yes, but needs customization
- Yes, but currently using a different term (include additional notes)
- Yes, but available at an additional cost
- No, not available in this tool

### LEGEND: D = DIMENSION C = COUNT R = RATIO

BUILDING BLOCK TERMS				
TERM	WAA DEFINITION	TYPE	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	COMPLIANCE
Page	A page is an analyst definable unit of content	D		Yes, the same as the WAA
Page Views	The number of times a page was viewed.	C	The number of times a page (an analyst- definable unit of content) was viewed.	Yes, the same as the WAA
Visits/Sessions	The number of times a page was viewed. A visit is an interaction, by an individual, with a web site consisting of one or more requests for a page. If an individual has not taken another action (typically additional page views) on the site within a specified time period, the visit will terminate by timing out.	C	If a visitor has left a site or has not executed a click within 30 minutes, the visit session will terminate. Fully configurable to other time periods.	Yes, the same as the WAA
Event	Any logged or recorded action that has a specific date and time assigned to it by either the browser or server.	C and/or D	If a visitor has left a site or has not executed a click within 30 minutes, the visit session will terminate. Fully configurable to other time periods.	Yes, the same as the WAA

VISIT CHARACTERIZATION TERMS				
TERM	WAA DEFINITION	TYPE	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	COMPLIANCE
<b>Entry Page</b>	The first page of a visit. Entry page is the first page in the visit regardless of how the sessions are calculated. Different sessionization methods may give different results.	D		Yes, the same as the WAA
<b>Landing Page</b>	A page view intended to identify the beginning of the user experience resulting from a defined marketing effort.	D	Webtrends uses "Entry page" in a separate campaign area to support marketing efforts as suggested by WAA.	Yes, but currently using a different term
<b>Exit Page</b>	The last page on a site accessed during a visit, signifying the end of a visit/session.	D		Yes, the same as the WAA
<b>Visit Duration</b>	The length of time in a session. Calculation is typically the timestamp of the last activity in the session minus the timestamp of the first activity of the session.	D		Yes, the same as the WAA
<b>Referrer</b>	Referrer is a generic term that describes the source of traffic to a page or visit.	D	The referrer is the page URL that originally generated the request for the current page view or object. As "referring Page." Webtrends also provides referring site and referring domain.	Yes, the same as the WAA
<b>Page Referrer</b>	Page referrer describes the source of traffic to a page.	D		Yes, the same as the WAA
<b>Session Referrer</b>	The first page referrer in a visit.	D	The referrer is the page URL that originally generated the request for the current page view or object. As "referring Page." Webtrends also provides referring site and referring domain.	Yes, the same as the WAA
<b>Visitor Referrer</b>	The first page referrer in a visitor's first session.	D	The visit referrer is the first referrer in a session, whether internal, external or null. As "Referring Page"	Yes, the same as the WAA
<b>Click-Through</b>	Number of times a link was clicked by a visitor.	C		Yes, the same as the WAA
<b>Click-Through Rate/Ratio</b>	The number of click-throughs for a specific link divided by the number of times that link was viewed.	R		Yes, but needs customization

## VISITOR CHARACTERIZATION TERMS

TERM	WAA DEFINITION	TYPE	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	COMPLIANCE
<b>New Visitor</b>	The number of Unique Visitors with activity including a first-ever Visit to a site during a reporting period. Note that "first-ever" is with respect to when data began being properly collected on your site by your current tool.	C	Webtrends also tracks visitors who don't accept cookies as "Visitors Not Accepting Cookies."	Yes, the same as the WAA
<b>Return(ing) Visitor</b>	The number of Unique Visitors with activity consisting of a Visit to a site during a reporting period and where the Unique Visitor also Visited the site prior to the reporting period.	C		Yes, the same as the WAA
<b>Repeat Visitor</b>	The number of Unique Visitors with activity consisting of two or more Visits to a site during a reporting period.	C	As "Visitor who visited more than once"	Yes, the same as the WAA
<b>Visitor Referrer (Original Referrer or Initial Referrer)</b>	The first page referrer in a visitor's first session. Notes: Archiving of data after a period of time may affect the recorded visitor referrer. The visitor's "first" session may be with respect to a specific date or reporting period, or it may be with respect to the life of the data.	C		Yes, the same as the WAA
<b>Visits per Visitor</b>	The number of visits in a reporting period divided by the number of unique visitors for the same reporting period.	R		Yes, the same as the WAA
<b>Recency</b>	Time since a unique visitor performed a specific action of interest to the analyst.	C		Yes, the same as the WAA
<b>Frequency</b>	The number of times an action was performed by a unique visitor over a period of time.	C		Yes, the same as the WAA

## ENGAGEMENT TERMS

TERM	WAA DEFINITION	TYPE	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	COMPLIANCE
<b>Page Exit Ratio</b>	Number of exits from a page divided by total number of page views of that page.	R	Supported with calculation or configuration	Yes, the same as the WAA
<b>Single Page Visits (Bounces)</b>	A visit that consists of one page view.	R	Visits that consist of one page regardless of the number of times the page was viewed.	Yes, the same as the WAA
<b>Bounce Rate</b>	Single page visits divided by entry pages.	R	Supported with calculation or configuration.	Yes, but needs customization
<b>Page Views per Visit</b>	The number of page views in a reporting period divided by number of visits in the same reporting period.	R		Yes, the same as the WAA

CONVERSION TERMS				
TERM	WAA DEFINITION	TYPE	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	COMPLIANCE
<b>Conversion</b>	The number of times a desired outcome was accomplished.	D and/or C	A visitor completing a target action. Webtrends provides multiple conversion types.	Yes, the same as the WAA
<b>Conversion Rate</b>	The ratio of conversions over a relevant denominator.	R		Yes, the same as the WAA
MISCELLANEOUS TERMS				
<b>Hit (AKA Server Request or Server Call)</b>	A request received by the server	C		Yes, the same as the WAA
<b>Impressions</b>	Number of times a piece of content was delivered to a user's browser.	C	Webtrends calls them "Content Views"	Yes, but currently using a different term

## “Ask Your Vendor” Responses:

### Are Flash and other Rich Internet Application advances considered to be page views by default?

Flash and other Rich Internet Application advances are not considered page views by default, however, users can customize these events to all count page views, if they so choose. Flash and other Rich Internet Application advances are considered different types of events.

### Does the analyst have the option to count data captured by an event tag as a “page” if desired?

Yes.

### Does the tool know about errors (status codes in the 400's, 500's) by default, or only if a special error page is created and instrumented?

Webtrends Analytics does know about errors if a special error page is created and instrumented.

### If activity consists only of non-page activity, is it counted as a visit?

Yes.

### What is your default timeout?

30 minutes.

### Are visits cut-off after any length of time?

No.

### If you resume activity after a timeout, how is that handled?

If the activity resumes less than 30 minutes from previous activity, then it's considered part of the same visit; otherwise it's considered a new visit.

**Site activity → (2 hours) → resume site activity. How many visits is this?**

Two visits.

**If two visits, what is the referrer of the second visit?**

No Referrer / Direct Traffic.

**Does the tool count a new session on external referrer?**

No.

**Google search → Your site → Yahoo search → Your site. How many visits is this? What is(are) the visit referrer(s)?**

One visit, and the referrer is Google.

**What technologies are used by your tool to calculate unique visitors?**

Compound sessionization techniques in descending order of priority:

Authenticated logon, persistent cookie, session cookie, session ID, IP+agent, each of which can be enabled/disabled at the user's discretion.

**By default, are persistent cookies used to count unique visitors? 3rd party?**

No.

**1st party?**

Yes.

**Authenticated user cookie?**

Yes. Preferred approach is for the customer to provide their own first party cookie. In lieu of that, Webtrends utilizes its own cookie in the standard tag that is issued from the customer's domain, thus also making it first party. First party cookie tracking is also used for cross-domain activity where a third party cookie is used only for replicating user IDs across the first party cookies.

**How are unique visitors counted if cookies are blocked or not logged?**

Webtrends can track session cookies or revert back to unique IP address.

**Are estimated visitors from blocked cookies included in your unique visitors counts?**

Not by default, though customers can create this calculation themselves or via a Services offering.

**Given the functionalities of your tool, are there situations that would cause one visitor to be counted multiple times: Counted via authenticated + unauthenticated? When a maximum amount of data that can be stored around a cookie or database key is reached? Other situations?**

The only instances in which the same visitor may be counted twice are:

- 1) If the visitor deletes the tracking cookie or
- 2) If the visitor is using two different machines to visit the site.

All forms of visitor tracking in Webtrends are de-duped against each other to avoid double counting of visitors under normal circumstances.

**Are cookie-based estimates adjusted to account for cookie deletion?**

Cookie-based estimates are not adjusted to account for cookie deletion, by default. Webtrends provides a feature to calculate estimated visitor counts themselves or via a Services offering.

**Do you include “zero duration” visits in visit duration measurements?**

No.

**Visit Duration Delimiters - Are timestamps for page views the only ones used in the visit duration calculation, or are timestamps for other activities (errors, events, etc.) considered?**

Time stamps for all activities are considered for visit duration. If you go from page to page on a web site, play video, pause video, have not clicked on page in 30 minutes, but have been active, the visit continues. If the video is tagged with marker points, then the visit would continue.

**Are mail servers (e.g. mail.google.com) excluded from the default search engine definitions?**

Yes. Specific lists of places that are listed as search engines exclude mail servers.

**Are internal referrers, such as might be recorded when a visitor resumes activity after a time-out, exposed in the tool and included in aggregate measurements?**

Yes. There is an administrative function for creating a list of internal referrers for this purpose.

**If Page Exit Ratio is exposed in the tool, what metric is used as the denominator?**

The denominator is Total Number of Page Views (see “Page Exit Ratio,” page 3.)

**Are any conversion metrics configured by default for particular site types?  
What activities do they measure?**

Yes. Any page, action or event on a web site may be considered a conversion, either via a tag parameter or via a URL-based definition. Several pre-defined conversion metrics are provided, including shopping cart checkouts, purchases and registrations.

**If any conversion rate metrics are configured by default, are they based on visits or on visitors?**

By default, conversion metrics are based on Events and Visits. Visitors can also be calculated.