

Get a Web Analyst

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If you are not already looking for a Web analyst, you may be looking soon. Web analytics has been around for a while. The Web channel is at the point, however, where Marketing is beginning to realize just how important Web analytics is to their future. We're talking jobs and bonuses important. This article will talk about what to look for in a Web Analyst.

What does a Web Analyst do?

Web analysis is a business process, more specifically, a continual improvement process. Using performance data, the Web analyst will help your team understand how well your Web investment/campaign is doing and how you might be able to do better. They will:

- Define the requirements of systems producing the base customer data.
- Oversee data quality.
- Create key success metrics based on business goals.
- Design and manage testing from A/B/n to focus-group testing.
- Provide the analysis revealing the customer intelligence and the ROI of your efforts.
- Provide reporting to various levels of management and line staff.
- Propose strategy, actionable solutions or suggestions for improvement.
- Oversee the process of the improvement lifecycle of test/analyze/take action.

If you want to know which half of your Marketing budget is wasted, they are the people to ask.

What Should One Look For In a Web Analyst?

You will need someone who is, by nature, an analyst. That is, someone who is an organized thinker, fascinated by how and why things work, curious about how people behave, and an avid questioner. They also need to be eco-thinkers. That is, able to conceptualize and keep in their head the workings of complex systems so they understand that the little thing over here is related to a big effect over there.

You will need someone with strong business experience. They need real world experience in understanding segmentation, acquisition, sales, conversion, lead generation, ROI, etc. The Analyst needs to have a strong grasp of both business and marketing concepts.

You will need someone with significant experience in the Web industry. They need to understand how business is done on the Web and how customers use the channel. They need to know the consequences of the customer-centric nature of the Web and the concepts coming from the fields of usability and customer satisfaction.

You will need someone with very strong communication skills. They will need to be able to communicate up and down the org chart, from the CEO to the Marketing Coordinator and across all lines of business and departments. They will need to be as effective in speaking to IT and Finance as Marketing and Graphics. In addition, the Analyst needs to be able to manage the conflicting objectives and viewpoints.

You will need someone with presentation skills, the ability to provide the right amount of information and interpretation appropriate to the organizational level and personality. One of the primary skills of the analyst is the ability to help people understand the information and the impact on the business.

You do not necessarily need a statistician, but you will need someone who understands statistical concepts so they can evaluate relevance and significance as well as communicate with those doing statistical modeling.

You will need someone who has technical skills. They need to know the details of how Web sites are built and managed. They need to be able to write and use xhtml, Java Script and SQL so they can collect the data. They need an understanding of data administration so that they can maintain and manage the variables your business needs to track. They need to be able to learn how to use complex analysis applications. They need project management skills.

And, you will need someone really smart and really creative.

Finding a Web Analyst

Obviously, this is a rather unusual and high-functioning skill-set. Oh, will you want industry specific experience too? And that is even before you begin thinking about their depth of experience in analytics.

The pool of applicants is already shallow and it's going to get much worse as the demand grows. Be prepared to pay over 100k plus incentives, perhaps much more. If you have the in-house capability and the time, you may be able to train up the right lower level staff. The options for sending them out to training are limited to one set of online courses at [UBC](#) in British Columbia.

You should go ahead and put your job opening on [Monster.com](#) or the [Direct Marketing Association Job Bank](#), but don't expect a flood of qualified applicants. You may have a better chance at the [Web Analytics Association job board](#). You can ask your Web analytics software vendor if they know of anybody. Go to the [E-metrics Summit](#) (a conference held twice a year) and pass out your business card with a note on the back saying you are looking to hire. If you meet an analyst, don't be bashful about asking them or if they have a friend who might be interested.

If you can't afford your own full time analyst, you can rent a consultant under more temporal conditions. There are a number of good analytics consultancies. Again, try the [Web Analytics Association](#) or the [Direct Marketing Association](#).

Robert Blakeley is Director of Internet Development for the Direct Marketing Association in New York City. Mr. Blakeley has worked in the Internet industry since 1993 and has worked with many companies and government agencies to improve their Web sites. These include the International Council of Shopping Centers, Atlantic City and the City University of New York. More articles by Robert Blakeley can be found at www.rblakeley.com/webwork/articles.shtml. He can be reached at rblakeley@the-dma.org. © Robert Blakeley.