Transport for London

Benchmarking and analytics standard

All TfL websites, applications and other digital services must be fully tagged with TfL Online-approved tracking code. 'If you can't measure it – it doesn't exist.'

Audience

- Content owners
- Developers
- Relationship managers
- UX designers

Requirements

This standard outlines the requirements and recommendations for measuring the use of TfL Online services via digital analytics software. Please refer to the Technical section of this Digital Toolkit for coding and testing requirements etc (eg where and how to apply analytics code to web pages).

1. **KPIs**

   1.1. Every digital service **must** have an agreed set of key performance indicators (KPIs) established pre-build. KPIs should be set following discussion between content owners and TfL Online's Governance and Planning and Content teams

   1.2. KPIs **must** align with TfL's digital and organisational objectives

   1.3. Benchmarking against existing or similar content **must** take place to assist with the creation of KPIs. Benchmarking should be carried out by the TfL Online Governance and Planning team, with assistance from content owners where appropriate

   1.4. KPIs **must** give actionable information on service performance and generate user insight. If KPI data does not help owners optimise a service, it is of no value

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1.5. The audience, format and frequency of KPI reports **must** be agreed by stakeholders and the TfL Online Governance and Planning team pre-build, along with review dates

1.6. A member of the TfL Online Analytics team **must** be present at the appropriate initiation and review meetings to inform and support KPI decision-making

2. Tools

2.1. You **must** build with measurement in mind, eg for websites, page titles **must** be different for each page and indicative of the content within

2.2. You **must** ensure the most up-to-date version of Adobe SiteCatalyst v15 code is added to all pages on all new websites using the methodology defined in the Analytics - coding requirements section of this Digital Toolkit

2.3. You **must** work with the TfL Online Governance and Planning team when designing digital services that are not websites to agree the most appropriate tracking technology

2.4. You **must** work with the TfL Online Governance and Planning team and TfL Group Customer Research when KPI data is being collected via online or offline surveys, or other research methodologies, to agree the most appropriate tools

Why we do this

TfL is accountable for the performance of its digital services.

- TfL Online and content owners must know how well services are working for users

- Performance data must be available in a consistent, accessible, pre-agreed format

- Performance data must empower decision-making, which continually improves users' experience of our digital services

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Standard metrics

The following measures of website traffic come as standard when the basic Adobe SiteCatalyst code is added to a website:

Visit

A visit is like a session. The clock starts when someone enters a site and stops when they leave (or are inactive) for 30 minutes or more. The count is then set to one visit. It doesn't matter how many pages they viewed, it's still counted as one visit.

Users who leave the site but return within 30 minutes are counted as part of the original session. A visit can only last a maximum of 12 hours.

We use this measure to quantify how 'popular' the website is. Measuring visits is helpful as users may come back more than once a day, often using more than one device or browser. If we only logged unique visitors, we'd either miss the value of those repeat visits or double count users who access the site through different devices.

Visits are also seen as preferable to page views, as some parts of the site naturally deliver more page views than others, such as transaction processes vs filling in a single page form. Only counting page views may then give an inflated view of how popular or viewed a website or website section is.

Because time is a factor in calculating visits, this metric cannot be used for reporting on an hourly basis.

Unique visitors

A 'unique visitor' is someone who has visited a site during a specified time. It doesn't matter how many times they have visited or how many pages they viewed.

Unique visitors can be counted over a range of periods (ie hourly, daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly or yearly).

There is no accurate way to identify individuals as visitors can use different browsers, clear their browser cookies, and access the same site from different computers or devices. Each of these scenarios identifies the user as a unique visitor.

Unique visitors are tracked by placing a cookie, or piece of code, in the visitor's browser. This links hits back to the same visitor. No personal information is stored within this cookie.

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If cookies are not accepted in the visitor's browser, a different method that involves the user's IP address is used instead.

Page views

A page view is the number of times a page or group of pages are viewed during a specific time period (hour, day, week, month, quarter, or year).

If a visitor clicks 'reload' after reaching a page, this is counted as an additional page view.

If they go to a different page, then return to the original page, a second page view is recorded as well.

Page views do not record information about who is viewing a page or the length of their visit.

Instances

Instances show how many times a particular action or event took place on a website during a specific period. It suits actions which don't need to be tracked to individuals or visits, eg when counting the number of times a search term has been used or the number of times a file was downloaded.

Custom tagging

For more detailed information, such as which elements of a form are causing users to abandon filling it in or what products they are buying, unique pieces of code known as custom tags need to be added to the webpage. This requires extra technical resource and time to test that the right data is being collected.

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Owner: TfL Online Compliance
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Version History

Version	Date	Summary of changes
1.0	07/11/2013	First issue

Review History

Name	Title	Date	Comments

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