

What You Need to Know to Talk to a Web Designer

Romance Novel Convention

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“Bringing authors and technology together.”

<http://rnc.veritablesoftware.com/>

Authors, and Designers, and Websites! Oh my!

- How many of you have an author website?
 - You should!
 - How many of you designed it yourself?
 - How many of you had a friend or relative design it?
 - How many of you used a web designer?
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Why Do I Need to Know This Stuff Anyway?

- It's your website, even if a designer is doing it for you
 - It's your brand
 - Do you want to give that control to someone else?
 - Maybe, if they are good
 - This presentation will help you figure that out
 - This information will help you communicate with your designer
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An Offer You Can't Understand

- Design
 - UX/UI (User Experience/User Interface)
 - Usability
 - Not talking about appearance
 - Upload – put something on your website
 - Download – get something from your website
 - Search Engine – Website that allows you to find other websites using keywords
 - SEO – Search Engine Optimization
 - Makes your website easy to find
 - Analytics – finding meaningful patterns in data
 - Domain Name – www.yournamehere.com
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It's Good to Have a Goal in Life

- What is the primary purpose of my website?
 - Most likely, to sell books!
 - Secondary purposes are allowed, but are secondary
 - What is the user's goal on my website
 - Buy some books, hopefully!
 - Get more information about a book
 - Get more information about a series
 - Get more information about you
 - Get more information about your events
 - All of which will help sell books!
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You Have the Key(word) to My Heart

- In the olden days people worried a lot about cramming keywords in artificially
 - Good content = good keywords
 - Important keywords should be important on your page
 - Never, never, never, never, never, never, ever have “click here” on your site
 - Links are considered important to search engines – so they should always include keywords
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Content is King!

- Frequent updates keep your users (and search engines) coming back
 - Consider a blog or event announcements
 - Establish who is responsible for updating the website
 - Avoid images where you can use text – search engines can't read images
 - Write content
 - Write content
 - Write content!
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I'm Not Schmoozing, I'm Networking!

- Search engines value incoming links
 - Network with yourself
 - Facebook
 - Twitter
 - Pinterest
 - Goodreads
 - Amazon Author Central
 - Network with other authors in your genre
 - Ask reviewers to link to your website
 - Ask interviewers to link to your website
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Give Your Users Some Love

- Make a good first impression
 - You have 10 seconds! aka “Readers don't read!”
 - User likelihood of staying increases after 30 seconds
 - Keep content logically organized
 - Ask someone else for help
 - What is logical to an author may not be for a reader
 - Keep the number of clicks to information down
 - Keep it concise!
 - You're not writing the Great American Novel here (er, not on your website anyway)
 - Keep the most important information above the fold
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Karate do “Yes”

- Have clear navigation
 - Have well organized content
 - Can be organized in different ways – series, characters, etc.
 - Have a dedicated page for each book
 - Cover, cover blurb, links to buy, free excerpt, etc.
 - Have up to date book releases
 - Have up to date events
 - Have in depth “About the Author” content
 - Many readers want to connect with authors, depending on your comfort level
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Karate do “No”

- Don't leave series information out
 - Seriously, if someone can't figure out which book is book one, you've lost the battle
 - Don't leave any of your books out (fresh content!)
 - Don't plaster your home page with all of your book covers
 - Don't have confusing navigation
 - Don't make pages scroll forever
 - 1-3 Screens maximum – you can ignore this for blogs
 - Don't use unprofessional looking pictures or artwork
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Karate do “Guess So”

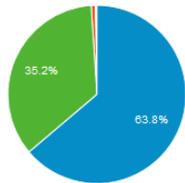
- Squish, just like grape
 - When in doubt listen to your designer
 - If they can justify a decision with how it benefits users, and therefore you, they might be right
 - If they can't explain how a decision benefits users or you as an author, they may not know what they are talking about
 - You always have the right to disagree
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Measure Twice, Cut Once

- Make sure your designer provides analytics
- Make sure your designer uses Data Driven Design
 - Look at analytics data before a change
 - Look at analytics data after a change
 - Without analytics data you have no idea if a change was good or bad

Acquisition Overview

Top Channels



- Referral
- Direct
- Organic Search
- Social

Sessions

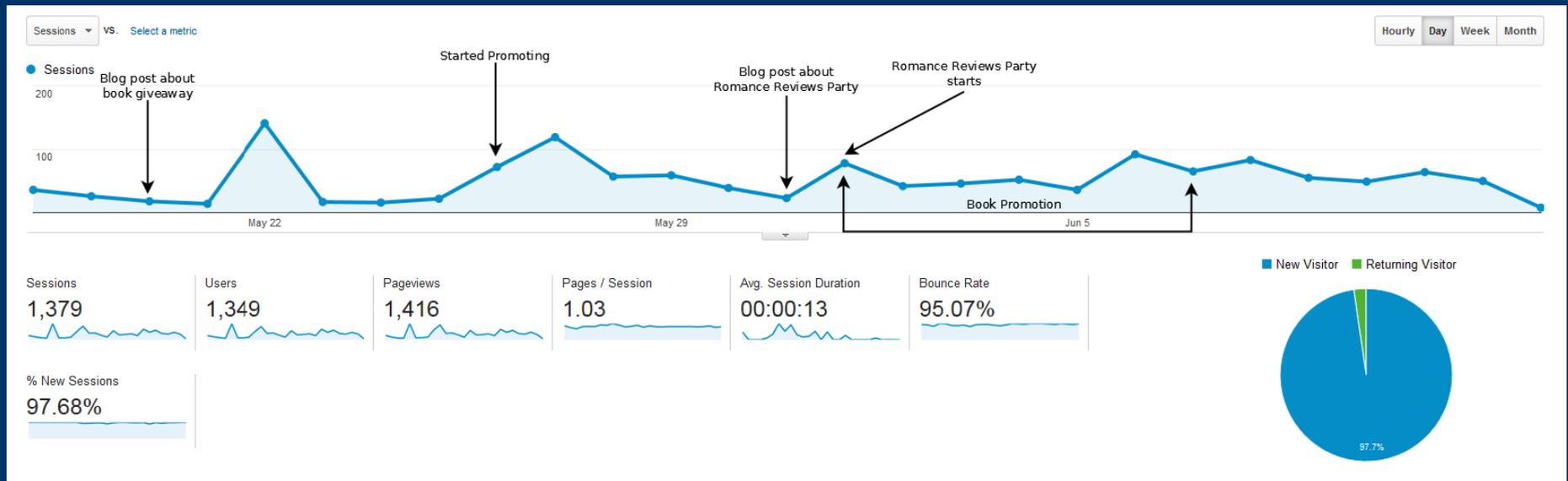


Conversions



	Acquisition			Behavior			Conversions		
	Sessions	% New Sessions	New Users	Bounce Rate	Pages / Session	Avg. Session Duration	Goal Conversion Rate	Goal Completions	Goal Value
	1,724	96.98%	1,672	95.48%	1.03	00:00:11	0.00%	0	\$0.00
1 ■ Referral	1,100	<div style="width: 63.8%;"></div>		94.00%	<div style="width: 94.0%;"></div>		0.00%		
2 ■ Direct	606	<div style="width: 35.2%;"></div>		99.17%	<div style="width: 99.17%;"></div>		0.00%		
3 ■ Organic Search	13	<div style="width: 0.76%;"></div>		46.15%	<div style="width: 46.15%;"></div>		0.00%		
4 ■ Social	5	<div style="width: 0.29%;"></div>		100.00%	<div style="width: 100%;"></div>		0.00%		

Audience Overview



Nobody Expects the Spanish Inquisition!

- Questions to ask your designer/potential designer
 - What am I going to get for my money?
 - Do you provide analytics?
 - Are you familiar with SEO techniques?
 - Have you done Author websites before?
 - Can I get references?
 - Can I see some of your existing designs?
 - Look to see if those designs incorporate the principles in this presentation
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"Mr. Miles, may I be excused? My brain is full."

➤ Questions?
