

Chapter 19

Tracking site usage

How popular is your site? Is it getting more popular or less popular? How can you measure the effectiveness of your promotional activities?

Of course, your monthly earnings are a strong indicator of how your site's doing. But this is a crude—though welcome!—measure. Fortunately the Bango Members' Lounge web site lets you view much more detailed statistics on all of your Bango Numbers, slicing and dicing the data every which way. In this chapter we'll describe how you can interpret the data into the information you need to help grow your business.

What's available in the Members' Lounge?

Each time anyone accesses a Bango Number, the Bango system logs the time and date and the amount spent (if any). Within the Manage Content section of the Members' Lounge, you choose Usage Info to access all the hit data for the Bango Numbers in your package. The data is never more than 10 minutes old—so you're seeing near-real-time statistics.

By default the Usage Info page shows you a summary for the current month. This shows, for each day in the month, the total number of accesses to the Bango Numbers in your package, the number of paid-for accesses, and the total value of those paid-for accesses. The data is displayed both as a list and as a graph.

Now you can:

- Display the summary for a different month, by choosing the month from the drop-down list.
- Display hour-by-hour data for one day within the month, by choosing the day from the calendar or from the list.

- Display the data by Bango Number rather than by date by clicking View by Number.
- Change which of your Bango Numbers are included in the report, using the top-right section of the page. Select a Bango Number from the Included Numbers list and click < to exclude that Bango Number from the report. You can use the << and >> buttons to quickly exclude or include all Bango Numbers in the report.
- Download a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet file for the month you're currently viewing. This includes hour-by-hour data for every day in the month and every Bango Number in your package.

Bango may add more features to the Usage Info page over time.

Turning data into information

Raw data is like compost: indispensable, but a means to an end rather than an end in itself. The raw data available on the Usage Info page is incredibly useful, but becomes even more useful when processed. Turning data into information helps you make meaningful judgements about the data—to learn from it, and to grow your business from the results.

Bango doesn't try to interpret your data for you: it provides you with the compost, and lets you decide where to sprinkle it. A simple but effective tactic is to compare different portions of the data. Let's look at some progressively more useful ways to do this.

Trends over time

The easiest way to analyse your data is to look for simple trends over time. Here are a few things you can do:

- **Compare a sequence of months.** Can you spot any patterns in the totals for each month? You might find that you have a steady growth, even if the totals for each day are sometimes up and sometimes down.
- **Look at moving averages.** Take the average total for January, February and March, and compare it to the average total for February, March and April. Keep going, *sliding* the three months along. This tends to smooth out outstandingly bad or good months and give you a better idea of longer-term trends.

- **Try to find yearly patterns.** Many businesses experience a downturn during August as people go on holiday, and a big boost in the run-up to Christmas. When comparing one month against another, it helps to know whether the months are typically good or bad earners.
- **Try to find monthly, weekly or even daily patterns.** For example, your earnings might typically be lower in the third week of the month as people wait for their monthly salary to be paid. Or you might discover that Monday is your best day of the week as that's the day after the weekly singles charts are published. There are obvious daily patterns—not many people buy content during the middle of the night—but see if you can spot less obvious ones. Do you get a boost during the lunch hour at work? If you're selling globally, can you tell which market is most lucrative by looking at peaks and figuring out time differences between countries?
- **Compare the performance of individual Bango Numbers.** With data available for each Bango Number, you can look at patterns and averages for any combinations of your Bango Numbers. For example, if you sell both games and ringtones in your mobile shop you might find they sell at different times of day, or different days of the week.
- **Compare “before” and “after” periods.** If you change your site in a significant way—add lots of new content, introduce special offers, redesign the way that customers purchase content, and so on—then look at the data before and after the change. If the numbers go up (taking into account patterns and trends), the site change was a good thing. If the numbers go down, then you've made a mistake. Rethink your changes.

Campaign comparison

Is a promotional campaign working as effectively as it could? Would a different campaign be better or worse? One way to find out is to run both in parallel, using different Bango Numbers. You can then analyse the statistics for each Bango Number to see which campaign is more effective.

It's a good idea to run these comparisons in parallel to avoid any date-based patterns and trends overwhelming the true data. For example, campaign X in July might appear to be more effective than campaign Y in August

simply because more people are on holiday in August and so don't see the campaign.

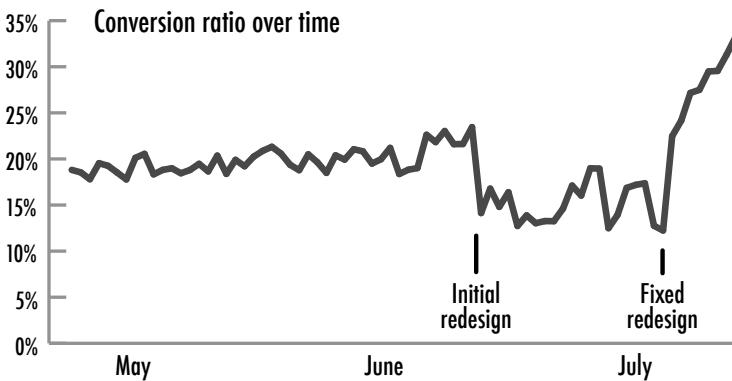
You might discover that one campaign is significantly better than the other simply by looking at the raw data: perhaps campaign X receives ten times as many hits as campaign Y in total. More likely you'll want to "drill down" the data and see how the campaigns compare over specific time periods. You might discover that each campaign has its strengths, and you can use that information to produce a new campaign Z that beats both the others.

Conversion ratio

A conversion ratio tells you how many of your browsers buy. Put simply, if you have 100 visitors and 15 purchases, your conversion ratio is 15/100 or 15%. No matter how many visitors you receive, a conversion ratio gives a good indication of the effectiveness of your site.

One goal of your mobile shop should be to maximise your conversion ratios. This is a slightly different goal than simply maximising the number of visitors to your site: doubling the number of browsers might double the number of buyers, but it doesn't necessarily make your site any more effective at convincing people to buy. And remember: you have as many conversion ratios as you have items to sell.

The raw data available from the Members' Lounge includes both the total number of visits and the total number of paid-for visits, for each Bango Number, for every hour of every day. You can use this data to track conversion ratios over time. Here's an example chart that shows how a site's conversion ratio for a special offer changed over three months:



The chart shows a slowly growing conversion ratio, followed by a dramatic drop in mid-June. The cause was a site redesign—in this case, one that inadvertently made it less likely for browsers to take up the special offer than before. Once this was noticed and fixed, conversion rates for the offer improved significantly.

Categorising customers

Throughout the book we've emphasised how important it is to know your customers. If you don't know your customers, changes you make to your mobile shop will be less effective than they could be—even damaging to your business. The statistics available on the Usage Info page give you an excellent way to help determine whether you're on the right track.

Bango has several years' experience in analysing patterns of customer behaviour. With millions of mobile content buyers, thousands of content providers and dozens of content categories, Bango is extremely well-placed to understand what makes customers tick.

From its data Bango has identified three distinct types of mobile content consumer: classified as *Grazers*, *Porkers* and *Nibblers*.

- **Grazers** consume at a small but steady rate, month after month. They're the most common inhabitants of the mobile "savannah", consistently spending between £5 and £20 each month, and rarely busting their budget.
- **Porkers** are about twenty times less common than Grazers, but spend between £30-£50 per month and are happy to go over-budget on occasion. Some spend over £100 a month on average, and £300-£400 in peak months. Porkers use Bango's "Favourites" facility and the Bango Directory, and are keen foragers for new content.
- **Nibblers** consume small amounts, and only rarely do they purchase anything at all. They're more interested in niche markets than more mass-market content such as ringtones or images.

What can we learn from these observations?

- Keep Grazers happy by feeding them with new content regularly. Grazers are predictable, reliable customers.

- Target Porkers by enticing them with special offers and subscriptions to satisfy their feeding frenzies. Include clear “buy more” links on download pages to keep them moving across the savannah to more content.

Bango has also identified other interesting buying behaviour:

- **Binging.** Occasionally, Nibblers and Grazers spend between five and ten times their normal monthly amount all at once. In effect, they take on the role of a Porker for a day. Sometimes a hangover follows a binge, with a lower-than-normal spend for a few months.
- **Classic Bill Shock.** Here a consumer with Porker-like behaviour turns into a Grazer or a Nibbler after receiving the monthly bill. This might occur as a customer upgrades to a new GPRS colour phone and goes on a personalisation spree.
- **Passing Fad.** Some consumers shift from one content type to another, for example moving from ringtones to games, as they get bored. The amount spent remains steady, however.

You can use these categories to help understand the statistics for your own site. Think about how you might turn Nibblers into Grazers, and how you can encourage Porkers to feed.