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Hiding in plain sight: Analytics features in LinkedIn and Twitter

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You've probably heard the old adage "Know thy audience." Both LinkedIn and Twitter now provide a number of easy-to-use but powerful analytics functions that help you better understand your followers so that you can tailor tweets and posts accordingly. Best of all, it won't cost you a dime to access the analytics functions on LinkedIn and Twitter!

LINKEDIN ANALYTICS

Who's viewed your posts: LinkedIn has made stats on who's viewed your profile available for a long time. Now LinkedIn has added a similar feature that tells you who's viewed your posts. In fact, you can access both functions using the same path. On the LinkedIn home page, click "Profile > Who's viewed your profile > Who's viewed your posts" and then select the post you want to check. Alternatively, you can go directly to your post and click the "View" stats button just above the title of your post.

The "Who's viewed your posts" function lets you select individual long-form posts to see how many views each post got over a user-selectable period of time (e.g., last 7, 15, 30 days, last 6 months, last year). You can also compare the total number of views, likes, comments, and shares each post received. The most useful feature of these stats, in my opinion, is the ability to hover over each individual data point to see the number of page views for that data point. (See Figure 1.) You can use this function to see how long a post "stayed fresh," and you can also determine if and how promoting a LinkedIn post on Twitter (which is something I always do) or another channel affected your readership.

Reader Demographics: LinkedIn also provides detailed demographic information on the readers of your posts, such as top industries, top job titles, top locations, and top traffic sources. Reader demographics information helps you determine if your posts reach the right

crowd or whether you need to adjust your content. Reader demographics are available on the same screen as "Who's viewed your posts." (See Figure 2.) You get there from the LinkedIn home page by clicking "Profile > Who's viewed your profile > Who's viewed your posts" and then selecting the post you wish to learn more about.

TWITTER ANALYTICS

Just like LinkedIn, Twitter has provided free analytics information to its users for some time. In fact, the free Twitter Analytics service has been available since the summer of 2014. What's new is that now some of the analytics functions are accessible not only from the Twitter Analytics Dashboard, but also right from your Twitter profile page.

Tweet activity per tweet: The "traditional" way of accessing information about how your tweets are doing (and of this writing, the only way documented in Twitter Help) is by going to Twitter Analytics.

The Twitter Analytics page is accessible from your Twitter home page by clicking your profile photo in the upper right

corner (Profile and settings) and selecting "Analytics" in the dropdown menu.

Twitter also makes a lot of this information available right from any given tweet on your Twitter Profile page. Just click the little stats symbol (View tweet activity) in the toolbar below each tweet and a pop-up window displays detailed information about impressions (i.e., total number of times a tweet was served in timelines and search results) and user engagement (e.g., re-tweets, favorites, link clicks, etc.).
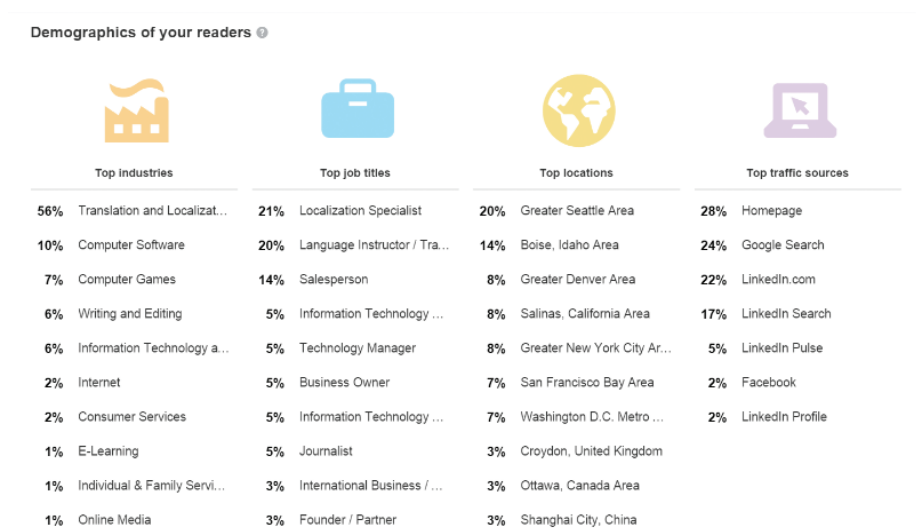
Tweet activity over time: Let's say you want to know who your top follower was (by number of followers), or which of your tweets was the most popular (by impressions) or resulted in the most mentions in a given month. Twitter provides these stats month-by-month for up to 3,200 tweets or all the way back to October 2013 right on the Analytics Dashboard.

For a graphical representation of your tweets' performance day-by-day, select the "Tweets" tab from the top menu bar of the Analytics Dashboard, which gives you access to stats for each individual

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Figure 1: Who's Viewed Your Post Stats

Figure 2: Reader Demographic Stats

tweet you sent during a user-selectable time period—up to 91 days (28 days is set by default).

TAKING AWAY THE GUESSWORK

Now that detailed analytics information is easily available to users of LinkedIn and Twitter, you no longer have to guess who reads your long-form posts on LinkedIn and how your tweets are doing individually and as a group over time. Unfortunately, users of Google+ and Facebook profiles are not so lucky! ○

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