Filtering Out the Librarians from Web Analytics Data

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Available at: https://works.bepress.com/mryanhess/5/
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or

How I used a browser cookie to verify what IT told me

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http://www.google.com/analytics/
Finding the Real User

**Problem**

DePaul Library computers use dynamic IPs

IT was not open to creating static IPs for all staff computers

Our GA and Crazy Egg accounts use IP ranges to filter librarians from users

IT gave us mixed messages on the reliability of the ranges we were using to filter out librarians

**Solution:** Use browser cookies to filter out librarians
The Browser Cookie Filter

Library staff person works on two PCs, using IE and Firefox browsers.

Cookie is deployed for each user, on each browser, on each PC.

GA and Crazy Egg filter out the users with the cookie.
Is this really a solution?

Problems

Requires cookie to be placed on each browser, for each user on each PC

Many PCs have multiple users

Significant staff time to deploy

Requires time to monitor

Solution Failed
From Failure to Insight

Cookie filter gave us 3 months of “pure” data

We compared cookie filter to IP filter

INSIGHTS

IP filter actually filtered out many lab machines

Statistically insignificant differences (1-2% difference)

More info: See my FAIL!lab blog entries:
http://faillab.wordpress.com/2011/01/06/better-living-with-good-data/
http://faillab.wordpress.com/2011/05/19/better-living-through-good-data-part-2/