

Google Analytics as a tool for understanding **visitors behaviour**: the **website of Alentejo** as a tourist destination case

MARIA GORETE FERREIRA DINIS * [gdinis@esep.pt]

CARLOS MANUEL COSTA ** [ccosta@ua.pt]

OSVALDO MANUEL DA ROCHA PACHECO *** [orp@ua.pt]

Abstract | During the last years we have witnessed a large adoption and utilization of Internet, by enterprises and individuals. The fast development of Internet and its evolution to Web 2.0 make it more friendly and consequently with a higher usage potential. Therefore, it is increasingly more important for enterprises and organizations to have an online presence and engage the visitors. The organizations that are present in the Web, independently of the type of site and business they have, should use Web analytic tools such as Google Analytics as a source of statistical information for supporting decision. The aim of this paper is to present the Google Analytics tool, show the metrics and information you can get from such a tool when applied to the tourism sector. With that purpose, we have chosen the official Website of Alentejo region promotion as tourist destination - www.visitalentejo.pt. The data reports of the Google Analytics were analysed quantitatively and some conclusions were drawn. The findings show an important practical contribution for the knowledge of the visitor profile of the Turismo of Alentejo site, as well as for the definition of the online marketing strategy.

Keywords | Google Analytics, Web Analytics, site visitor behaviour, tourism promotion, online marketing.

Resumo | Durante os últimos anos temos assistido a uma grande adoção e utilização da Internet pelas empresas e indivíduos. O rápido desenvolvimento da Internet e a sua evolução para Web 2.0 tornou-a mais amigável e consequentemente com um maior potencial de utilização. Portanto, é cada vez mais importante para as empresas e organizações ter uma presença online e atrair visitantes. As organizações que estão presentes na Web, independentemente do tipo de site e do ramo de negócio, devem usar ferramentas de Web Analytics, tais como o Google Analytics como fonte de informação estatística para apoio à decisão. O objetivo deste trabalho é apresentar a ferramenta Google Analytics, mostrar a informação e os indicadores que podem obter-se a partir de uma ferramenta deste tipo quando aplicado ao setor do turismo.

* **Mestre em Inovação, Planeamento e Políticas de Desenvolvimento** pela Universidade de Aveiro e **Docente** na Escola Superior de Educação do Instituto Politécnico de Portalegre.

** **Doutorado em Turismo** pela Universidade de Surrey (Reino Unido) e **Professor Associado com Agregação** no Departamento de Economia, Gestão e Engenharia Industrial.

*** **Doutorado em Engenharia Electrónica e de Telecomunicações** pela Universidade de Aveiro e **Professor Auxiliar** do Departamento de Electrónica, Telecomunicações e Informática.

Com este propósito, escolhe-se o site oficial de promoção turística da região do Alentejo “www.visitalentejo.pt”. Os dados dos relatórios do Google Analytics foram analisados quantitativamente e retiradas ilações. Os resultados apresentam uma importante contribuição prática para o conhecimento do perfil do visitante do site da Turismo do Alentejo, bem como formas de melhorar a sua estratégia de marketing online.

Palavras-chave | Google Analytics, Web analytics, comportamento do visitante, promoção turística, marketing na Internet.

1. Introduction

Over the last years, the Internet evolution has been remarkable. This is visible through the growing adoption and presence of enterprises in the Internet and utilisation by individuals. There are several reasons for individuals to use the Internet, but in field of Tourism, we highlight the importance of Internet as a source of information or booking in the travel planning process. For that reason, it is crucial for organizations to have their own site, monitor it and improve its performance so that the visitor has a compelling site experience and access to high quality content. For this and to optimize the online marketing strategy it is important to identify the target market segments, know the type of information they need, choose the Websites or other channels for doing the campaigns, getting better search engine results, among others.

Web analytics can help the organizations to understand the behaviour of the visitors, and therefore its usage has increased and became more popular among business and academics. According to Plaza (2011: 477), “hundreds of thousands of tourism Web owners worldwide have a Web analyser program available to them”.

The aim of this paper is to present the Web Analytic software – Google Analytics, a free tool, provided by Google and analyse the statistics data obtained for the tourism promotional site “www.visitalentejo.pt”.

The paper it is structured as follows. Firstly, the Google Analytics tool is introduced, showing its benefits, limitations and the information/reports that

can be obtained through it. Secondly, it presents a description of the site in analysis and the methodology used. Finally the results of the Google Analytics reports for the tourism site and the analysis performed are presented, ending with the conclusions.

2. The importance of the Internet for Tourism Organizations

During the last decades, the Internet growing in popularity and its use proliferated among individuals and enterprises. According to statistics made available by the Eurostat (2011^a), 95% of the enterprises¹ of all countries of EU, in 2011, have access to Internet and 69% a Web presence through a site or homepage. But, if we look for statistics of the tourism sector, namely for accommodation (with 10 persons employed or more) the percentage of enterprises with a site arise for 94% (Eurostat, 2011^b) and, according to Giannakouris and Smihil (2011), the travel agencies (tour operator reservation services and related activities) presents, in 2010, the highest proportion of sites with online ordering (almost 60%) and selling via a site (almost 50%). This data demonstrates that the use of the Internet by the tourism organization is not recent, like Buhalis (2003) report they are between the pioneers in Internet adoption and e-commerce activity. With regard to tourist destinations few do not have site in the Internet (Crouch, 2000).

¹ All enterprises, without financial sector and 10 persons employed or more.

Looking at the statistics from the user perspective, according to Eurostat (2011^c), in 2011, 68% of individuals used the Internet on average at least once a week and 39% of them use it for travel and accommodation services (Eurostat, 2011^b). Each individual have different and specific needs and, in the opinion of Buhalis and O’Conor (2006), tourism organizations should collect customer information at each stage of the visit to understand better consumer behaviour choices, concerns and determinants.

Given the growing importance of the Web and the way Internet changed the business operations, it is even more relevant, to compete globally, the online presence of tourism organizations. According to UNWTO (1999), if the destination marketing organizations do not have an online presence then they are not on-sale within key markets. For providing information tailored to the consumer and value-added services, in an efficient way, the organizations need quantitative and qualitative information that support their decisions about online strategy, and technological tools can help the organizations in that regard.

3. Web Analytics Applications and Tools

The Web Analytics defined by Web Analytics Association (2011) as “the measurement, collection, analysis and reporting of Internet data for the purpose of understanding and optimizing Web usage”, can help organizations accomplish site

goals, that should be in line with the business objective, through interpretation of visitor behaviour when he/she navigates the site.

In Table 1, it can be observed the Web Analytics applications, according to Zumstein and Kaufmann (2009). In addition to those, UNWTO (2005), suggests the following uses: Establish how effective a site or the Internet activities of an organization as whole are in providing a service to its clients and partners (for example, SMEs, in the case of a Destination Management Organization (DMO)); and benchmarking a site performance with other DMO sites.

In the market there are many Web Analytics tools, accordingly with UNWTO and ETC (2008) the number of vendors of Web Analytics software tools exceeds the fifty. Each organization may have one or more tools, but before considering which tools to pick, it is important to take into consideration the following categories of factors that can affect the selection: business needs (what is important the organization to measure and improve); human and financial resources necessary to implement and manage analysis of the data; site technical architecture; availability of internal ICT support; level of vendor support required; linkages to other information data sources. Furthermore, the tools should be assessed in relation to: reporting capability and flexibility; security; integration with historical data and external data; accuracy of the data; scalability (the tool has the capacity for future expanding of site and for changing needs within the organization); costs of ownership; and, easy to set up (UNWTO, 2005; UNWTO and ETC, 2008).

Table 1 | Use of Web analytics

Web analytic is necessary for the ongoing optimization of...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Site quality (navigation, structure, content, design, functionality & usability) – Online marketing (awareness, image, campaigns, banner & keyword advertising) – Online CRM (customer relationship management: customer acquisition/retention) – Individual marketing (personalized recommendation/content, mass customization) – Segmentation of the traffic, visitors and online customers – Search engine optimization (visibility, search engines rankings, page rank, reach) – Traffic (page views, visits, visitors) – e-business profitability (efficiency and effectiveness of the Web presence)

Source: Zumstein and Kaufmann (2009).

Table 2 | Principals Advantages and Limitations of using Google Analytics

Advantages	Limitations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Quick to set up; – Easy to use; – Free tool (non-AdWords advertisers have a limit of five million page views); – Give insights useful for several departments in the Organization; – Only use first-party cookies; (ensure reliable tracking and protect visitor privacy); – Send schedule or ad-hoc personalized report emails; – Available in 40 languages; – Based on JavaScript page tagging; – Integrated into AdWords/Adsense; – The data can be export in CSV; CSV for Excel or TSV formats; – Custom alerts by email; – Guarantee of Google Technology. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Not collect or display Personally Identifiable Information; – Cannot collect data of the users that have Cookies, JavaScript or images disabled; – Non-real-time reporting.

Source: Based on Clifton (2010); Cutroni (2010); Ledford *et al.* (2010); Teixeira (2010); Google (2011a).

3.1. Introduction to Google Analytics Tool

The Google Analytics tool, accordingly with the survey done by W3Techs.com in 16 of December 2011 (W3Techs, 2011), is used by 54,4% of the sites they monitor, which means a traffic analysis market share of 81.8%.

Google Analytics is an advanced and sophisticated program that collects data, quantitative measures and analyses site traffic pattern (Cutroni, 2011) and, since 2005, after the acquisition for the Web Analytics firm called Urchin Software Inc., that Google Analytics is available to the public as a free tool. Besides that, in Table 2 it can be observed more advantages of this tool and some limitations, which can be overcome if, as suggested by Cutroni (2010), the analysts are looking for trends and patterns in data rather than absolute numbers.

The data is provided in form of reports, approximately eighty, that can be customized to the needs of the organization (Holden, 2008). The reports are created by comparing a dimension, understood as “a category for classifying information about a visit or visitor” (Tokin *et al.*, 2010), to “a numerical piece of information called a metric” (Cutroni, 2010).

Furthermore, it is possible to choose combinations of dimensions and metrics (Google, 2011^a) and associate several different metrics to a single dimension (Cutroni, 2010).

In table 3, it can be observed the standard reports available in the new version of Google Analytics, launched a few months ago.

4. Methodology

The purpose of this paper is to present the basic features of the Google Analytics, and show its potentialities as a site statistics measurement tool which can give insights about the location and behaviour of the visitor on the site. For that, we selected the official tourism promotional site of Alentejo, a region in the South of Portugal, because they, promptly, give us authorization to their Google Analytics data.

The Google Analytics allows users to select the date range of the data reports and export them in several formats, for instance Microsoft Excel or PDF (actually, only in the old version). In this article, the data analysis was made for the period 01/01/2011 to 17/12/2011 and the reports displayed in the new version of Google Analytics, except the traffic overview report.

The reports considered for analysis are categorized by Clifton (2010) and Teixeira (2010) as standard reports and the selection was made, bearing in mind those that in general might be, in

Table 3 | Standard Reporting of Google Analytics

Audience (visitors)	Conversions	Content	Traffic Sources	Advertising
Overview Demographics Location Language Custom Variables User Defined Behaviour New vs Returning Frequency & Recency Engagement Technology Browser & OS Network Social Engagement Action Pages Mobile Overview Devices Visitors Flow	Goals Overview Goal URLs Reverse Goal Path Funnel Visualization Goal Flow Ecommerce Overview Product Performance Sales Performance Transactions Time to Purchase Multi-Channel Funnels Overview Assisted Conversions Top Conversion Paths Time Lag Path Length	Overview Site Content Pages Content Drilldown Landing Pages Exit Pages Site Speed Site Search Overview Usage Search Terms Pages Events Overview Top Events Pages AdSense Overview AdSense Pages AdSense Referrers In-Page Analytics	Overview Sources All Traffic Direct Referrals Search Campaigns Search Engine Optimization Queries Landing Pages Geographical Summary	Adwords

Source: Based on Google (2001³).

our opinion, more interesting for an organization responsible for tourist promotional of a destination and for a non-commercial site. However, we are aware that the information needed depends on who will use it in the organization and more generally the goals of the site. Furthermore, the features of the site were also taken into consideration, for example, we cannot analyse the e-commerce reports or the social reports², because this site does not have these functionalities.

By using quantitative analysis, we will try to answer the following questions for www.visitalentejo.pt:

- Where are my visitors coming from?
- What type of visitors are on the site?
- What brought them to the site? Search keywords?
- The visitors arrive and stay or leave immediately?
- What technology are the visitors using?
- How they arrived at the site?
- Which content seems to interest them?

² Social reports allow to see how people shared content on your site via social actions. Examples of social actions: Google +1 button clicks; Facebook "Like" and "Send" interactions; and, Del.icio.us bookmarks (Google, 2011³).

- What cannot the visitors find by browsing?
- Whether the Tourism of Alentejo objectives have been met?
- How many searched and what did visitors search for?

In the "Language Report" it was used the Google Analytics feature called "secondary dimension" that allows to define a primary dimension, in this case "language" and then view that data by a secondary dimension within the same table. The secondary dimension chosen was country/territory. We act in the same way in the "Page Landing Report", crossing the primary dimension "Page" with a secondary dimension "Source".

4.1. Site profile

The site "<http://www.visitalentejo>" was launched in 2005 by the Regional Tourism Promotion Agency of Alentejo - Tourism of Alentejo, a non-profit private-law association constituted by representatives of Alentejo economic agents from the tourism sector

(public and private), with the goal of officially promote the Alentejo as a tourist destination and inform the tourists, namely the tourist outside Portugal (ARPTA, 2008).

The content updates of the site are made internally, with a periodicity not regular, and because the Association together with the Tourism Board of Alentejo are preparing to recast the site, which took place in 30 December 2011, it has not been a focus of attention. In the year 2011 it was planned to dedicate an investment of 5% of the total marketing budget to Turismo do Alentejo site (ARPTA, 2011). Since 2007 that statistics are being collected from the site through the Google Analytics and used as information to support the decisions made.

5. Findings and recommendations

The first standard report of Google Analytics is “Visitor Overview” which provides a general view of the key stats for the site.

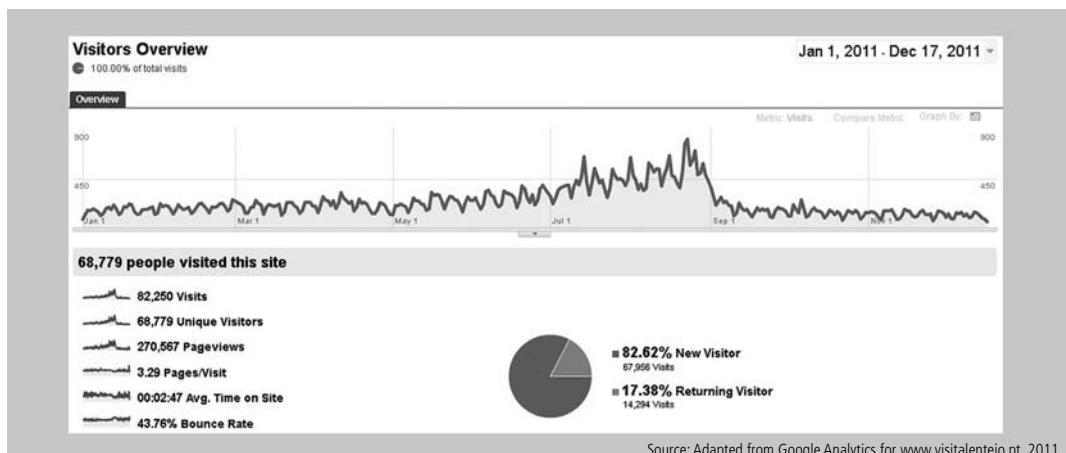
Looking for the visitor metrics (Figure 1) it can be observed that, from January to December of this year, the site received 82 250 visits from 68.779 visitors, 82, 62% of which are new visitor, i.e. they had never been in site previously.

The visits occurred during all year (see the histogram in Figure 1), but have intensified during the summer months, just as with offline visitors. The graph is broken down by day, but it is possible to select and see the number of visitors in the followings data range: hourly, daily, week, and month.

In the analysed period, there were 270.567 page views in total, which represents, on average, 3,29 page views per visit and 2 minutes and 47 seconds on time on the site.

The metric Bounce Rate, according to the analytic expert Kaushik (2010), is one of the most useful metrics, since it helps to know how many visitors enter your site on a given page, how many leave from that page without clicking anywhere on the site and without looking at any other pages. By definition, it shows the percentage of visitors to the site that only view one page. The bounce rate for the site in analysis is 43,76%. There are many reasons that may lead to this result that would be interesting to analyse, being one of them to design and usability of the site.

Deepening the visitor-oriented reports, we have the “Location Report” which shows the continent, sub continent, country or city visitors originate, accordingly with IP addresses. In the case of the “www.visitalentejo.pt”, 73,67 % of the visits are from Portugal and only 9,42% and 2,63% from



Source: Adapted from Google Analytics for www.visitalentejo.pt, 2011.

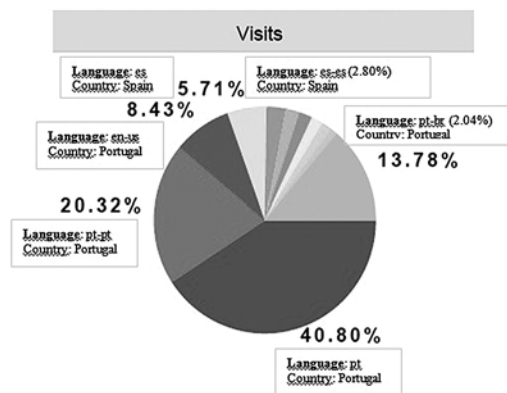
Figure 1 | Google Analytics Visitor Overview for www.visitalentejo.pt (daily data, 01 Jan 2011-17 Dec 2011).

Spain and United Kingdom, respectively (visits came from 121 countries/territories). In Figure 2, it can be observed that the total number of visits comes from 2.792 cities, but they are largely concentrated in Europe, in particular in the city of Lisbon (25,76%) and surroundings - Setúbal (2,84%) and Almada (1,85%); Porto (8,11%); Évora (4,51%) and Madrid (2,84%).

Through the "Language Report", that presents the language visitors speak, it is confirmed that Portuguese is the language more used on visitor's browser (63,16%). If crossing the dimension "Language" along with the dimension "Country/Territory", it can be observed that although 8,43% of the visits accessed in English Language they are originated in Portugal (see Figure 3). The site is available in the following six European languages: French, German, English, Portuguese, Dutch and Spanish.

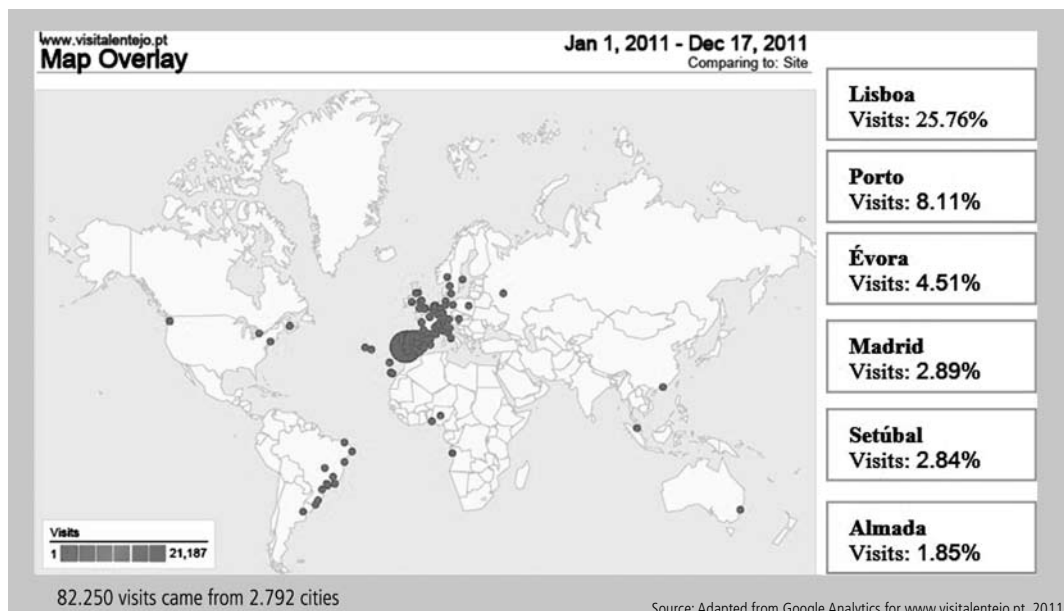
Analysing the "Traffic Source Overview Report", at-a-glance, we know how the visitors arrived at the site and which search terms they used. In the case of the site in analysis, by observing the Figure 4, we can see that 71,57% of the visits came from

search engines, namely from Google (69,85%) and looking to the keywords we see that the visitors intended to finding information about "Alentejo" and "Tourism in Alentejo", but surprisingly, in the top five keywords we also saw "River Beaches". Besides that, the traffic direct, which refers to visitors that came to the site by entering the URL or from a bookmark (Teixeira, 2010) represents only 11,31% of total of the visits.



Source: Adapted from Google Analytics for www.visitalentejo.pt, 2011.

Figure 3 | Google Analytics Language Report for www.visitalentejo.pt (daily data, 01 Jan 2011-17 Dec 2011).



Source: Adapted from Google Analytics for www.visitalentejo.pt, 2011.

Figure 2 | Google Analytics Map overlay for www.visitalentejo.pt (daily data, 01 Jan 2011-17 Dec 2011).

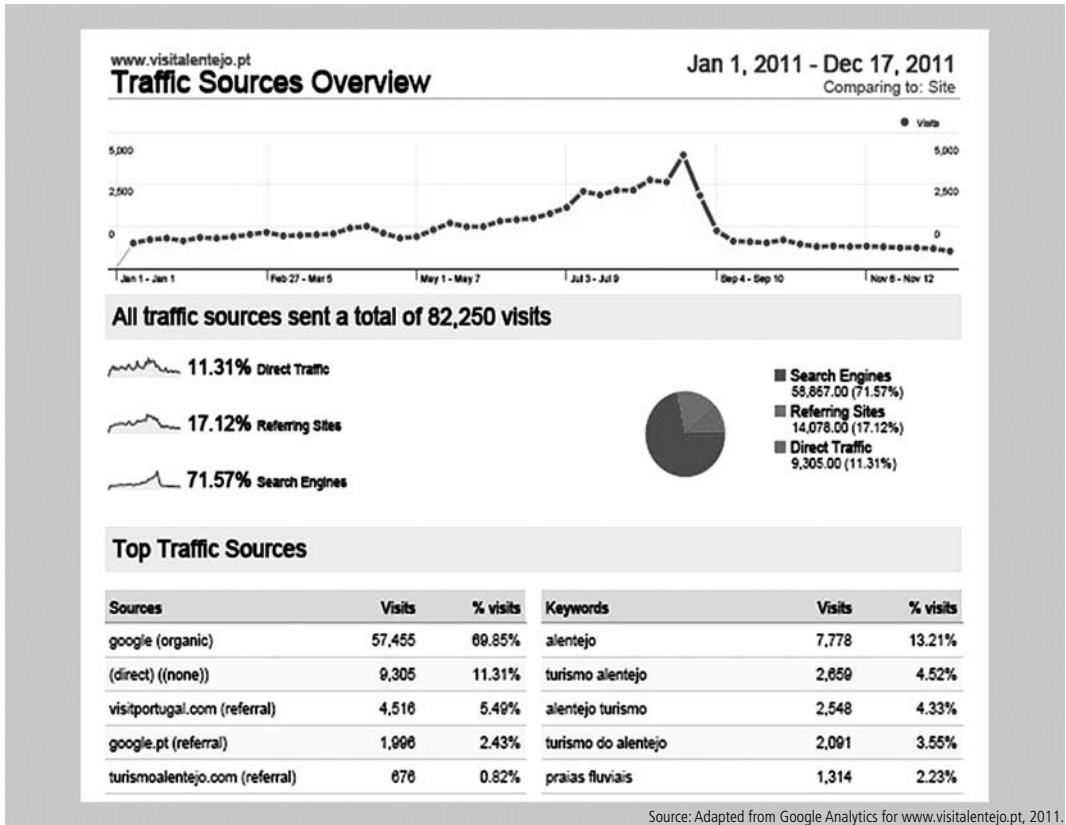


Figure 4 | Google Analytics Traffic Source Overview Report for www.visitalentejo.pt (daily data, 01 Jan 2011-17 Dec 2011).

The “Referral Traffic Report” illustrate the traffic generated by the visitors who clicked in other sites (other than a search engine) linking to the site in analysis, i.e., in this case, shows the sites that are responsible for sending traffic to “www.visitalentejo.pt” (represents 17,12% of the visits). If clicking in each one of the links of the referring site it will be forwarded to the page on that site where the link (www.visitalentejo.pt) is located. Analysing the report (see Table 4), it can be observed that the referring site that sends more traffic, in the date range specified, is the site “www.visitportugal.com”³ which is responsible for 4.516 visits (32,08%). The visitors that come from this site are the ones that have more pages view per visit and, consequently, those presenting the lower bounce rate. The site that follows in terms of average time in site is the “LosViajeros.com”³. Besides that, in the

top 7, also appears visits (3,10%) from the referring site “www.visicentro.pt”⁴, and from social network “Facebook”. The visits from the latter source stay, in average, less time on site and have a higher bounce rate (57,46%), which might mean that the pages visited are not delivering on the promise that is driving customers to the site.

In the section “Site Content” it can be observed the “Pages Report” which presents a complete list of all sites pages that were seen at least once. Analysing Figure 5, we highlight the following content page of: “Homepage” (13,86% of page views); “Festas das Flores de Campo Maior” (4,16%); “Informações turísticas” (tourist office contacts) (3,68%); and

³ “LosViajeros.com” is a Spanish travel portal, with forums, diaries, photo galleries, blogs, news, etc.
⁴ “www.visicentro.pt” is the official promotional tourism site of the Centro region of Portugal.

Table 4 | Adapted from Google Analytics Referral Report for www.visitalentejo.pt (daily data, 01 Jan 2011-17 Dec 2011)

	Source	Visits	Pages/Visit	Avg. Time on Site	% New Visits	Bounce Rate
1.	visitportugal.com	4,516	4,83	00:04:35	84,74%	15,52%
2.	google.pt*	1.996	2,38	00:02:12	88,98%	49,90%
3.	turismoalentejo.com	676	4,13	00:03:49	68,20%	30,03%
4.	visitcentro.com	437	4,01	00:03:37	83,98%	30,21%
5.	pesquisa.sapo.pt**	413	3,91	00:02:55	89,35%	38,74%
6.	facebook.com	315	2,43	00:02:02	81,27%	57,46%
7.	losviajeros.com	232	3,81	00:04:26	87,50%	26,72%

* - Search engine not recognized by Google, for such were needed additional settings; ** - Idem.
Source: own construction from Google Analytics for www.visitalentejo.pt, 2011.

Page	Pageviews	Unique Pageviews	Avg. Time on Page	Bounce Rate	% Exit
1. /apt	37,503	28,462	00:01:13	24.93%	29.74%
2. /APT/Regioes/Campo_Maior/local/Festa_das_Flores_de_Campo_Maior.htm	11,265	9,039	00:01:59	71.31%	70.01%
3. /APT/Menu_Principal/Informacoes_Turisticas/	9,966	7,841	00:00:47	55.13%	21.53%
4. /APT/Menu_Principal/Recursos_Turisticos/Onde_Dormir/onde_dormir.htm?catid=1	9,042	6,170	00:01:26	52.55%	30.06%
5. /APT/Menu_Principal/QuemSomos/Turismo_do_Alentejo/	7,267	5,180	00:00:56	29.96%	25.29%
6. /ES	6,872	5,046	00:01:10	25.12%	22.57%
7. /EN	6,441	4,661	00:01:12	33.07%	26.36%
8. /APT/Menu_Principal/Recursos_Turisticos/O_que_fazer/o_que_fazer.htm?catid=3	4,321	3,272	00:01:19	37.31%	24.23%
9. /APT/Menu_Principal/Como_chegar/	4,249	3,047	00:00:48	46.97%	16.95%
10. /APT/Menu_Principal/Recursos_Turisticos/Promocoes/	3,951	2,855	00:00:46	25.88%	14.63%

Source: Google Analytics for www.visitalentejo.pt, 2011.

Figure 5 | Google Analytics Page Report for www.visitalentejo.pt (daily data, 01 Jan 2011-17 Dec 2011).

“Onde dormir” (accommodation contacts) (3,34%). As well as in the “Traffic Source Reports”, this report have a icon, next to the page name, that clicking goes directly to that page in the site.

In the section “Site Search Reports” which is only available for sites who have an internal search site. The site in analysis has some search box, but only 1,4% of visits used them (equivalent a 3,29 visits with Search/Day). However, it is important to see what the visitors are looking for, observing more particularly the “Search Terms Reports” we saw that visitors are interested and they have difficulties in find information about the following top five contents: River Beaches; Alqueva; Évora; Festas das Flores; and Campo Maior.

One of the most important reports, namely for Webmasters, is the “Technology Reports”. For the site under analysis, it shows that the operating

systems “windows” has been used in 90,70 % of the visits. Furthermore, the browsers more commonly used are “Internet Explorer” (58,87%) and “Firefox” (19,71%). Also in relation to technology issues, through the “Mobile Report”, even without a site version for mobile phones, we observe that 2,97% of the visits access to the site from mobile devices operating systems, namely iPad (42,25%), iPhone (29,93%) and Android (18,33%).

To finalize the analysis of “www.visitalentejo.pt”, it is important to refer one of the most important reports of all - “The Goal Report”. This report shows the “goals conversation”, i.e. for the goals created by the manager/owner of the site, and a “goal” can be almost any visitor activity on the site (Cutroni, 2010), the report presents the percentage of site visitors that has reached the defined outcomes. With regard to the site in analysis, the Tourism of Alentejo

identified three objectives: views of Call Centre page; newsletter subscription; and, number of referrals (send to a friend). According to the results, the visitors, in the data range specified, completed zero goal conversation.

6. Conclusion

In this paper we present the Google Analytics as a powerful tool, which provided statistical data very important for tourism organizations. We use this tool in a tourism promotional site of a region of Portugal called Alentejo (www.visitalentejo.pt), developed by Tourism of Alentejo, with the goal of officially promote the Alentejo as a tourist destination and inform the tourists, namely the tourist outside Portugal.

Through the analyses of the reports: Audience (visitors); Traffic Sources; Conversions; and Content, in the period 01/01/2011 until 17/12/2011, it was possible to obtain answers for the proposed questions. Therefore, it can be concluded that the visitors of the “www.visitalentejo.pt” are mostly from Portugal and Portuguese language speakers (82%); 62% are new visitors, i.e., it is the first time that they are in the site, and come mainly, from the capital of Portugal (Lisbon) and surroundings, Porto and Évora. The main visits from countries outside Portugal are originated from: Spain, principally from Madrid; United Kingdom; France; Brazil; and Germany, but the number of visits are not very significant considering the goal of the Turismo of Alentejo.

The visits occur over the whole year, but increase significantly in the summer period. The majority come from Google search engine with the intention of finding information about “Alentejo”, “Tourism in the Alentejo” or “River Beaches”. Besides that, the site has more visits from referral sites (17,12%), mainly from “www.visitportugal.com”, than directly (11,31%). In average, the visitors see 3,29 pages per visit and stay 2 minutes and 47 second on the site, but almost fifty per cent of the visitors leave the

site after seeing one page (bounce rate – 43,76%), this value should be targeted for a deeper analysis. Concerning technologies the majority use the browser “Internet Explorer” and the operating system “Windows”. However, it starts being observed accesses to the site from mobile devices, namely iPad, iPhone and Android.

The contents that seems to interest more the visitors are “Festas das Flores de Campo Maior”, “Informações turísticas” - tourist office contacts; and, “Onde dormir” - accommodation contacts. Only 1,4% of visits used internal search and is for search information, principally, about: River Beaches; Alqueva; Évora; and Festas das Flores. To finalize, we observed that the goals defined by Tourism of Alentejo for the site visitors were not reached, which means that it is necessary to do some modifications in the site to achieve the desired success.

The authors of this paper intended this work to present a different perspective of a tool which can be used by tourism organizations and not only by webmaster, for usability or design of the site, but also for marketers and executives, because it can give important data to know and understand the behaviour of the visitor in the most important promotional site of the Alentejo Tourism. Besides that, it can give information about the results of promotional actions and marketing campaign, with the particularity of the information be provided practically in real time.

In future work, we consider that would be important, to reinforce the results of this work and take a broader view of visitor behaviour, analyse and compare these data with data from other promotional tourism sites in the Alentejo region, but also from other regions of Portugal.

Acknowledgements

The authors would like to thank Agência Regional de Promoção Turística do Alentejo, especially to Dr. Fernando Pires, for providing access to the Google

Analytics data for the site “www.visitalentejo.pt”, which was essential to obtain the data for conducting this research.

References

- ARPTA, 2008, *Turismo do Alentejo*, [http://visitalentejo.pt], (Site accessed 17 December 2011).
- ARPTA, 2011, *Plano de Acção 2011*, Agência Regional de Promoção Turística do Alentejo, Turismo do Alentejo, Portugal.
- Buhalis, D., 2003, *eTourism-Information technology for strategic tourism management*, Prentice Hall, London.
- Buhalis, D., O'Connor, P., 2006, Information Communication Technology – Revolutionizing Tourism, in Buhalis, D., and Costa, C. (eds.), *Tourism Management Dynamics - Trends, management and tools*, Elsevier Butterworth-Heinemann, Oxford, pp.196-209.
- Clifton, B., 2010, *Advanced Web metrics with Google Analytics*, 2nd ed., Wiley Publishing, Inc., Indianapolis.
- Crouch, G., 2000, Services Research in Destination Marketing: A Retrospective and Prospective Appraisal, *International Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Administration*, Vol. 1(2), pp. 65-85.
- Cutroni, J., 2010, *Google Analytics*, O'Reilly Media, Inc., USA.
- EUROSTAT, 2011^a, *Statistics Database*, [http://bit.ly/rZ7kEF], (Site accessed 15 December 2011).
- EUROSTAT, 2011^b, *Statistics Database*, [http://bit.ly/bOJ5bx], (Site accessed 15 December 2011).
- EUROSTAT, 2011^c, *Statistics Database*, [http://bit.ly/vRWzkH], (Site accessed 15 December 2011).
- Giannakouris, K., Smihil, M., 2011, *Statistics in Focus 65/2011-ICT usage in Enterprises 2011*, [http://bit.ly/v7vh0b], (Site accessed 15 December 2011).
- Google Analytics for www.visitalentejo.pt, 2011, *Google Analytics Software*, [http://www.google.com/analytics/], (Site accessed 15 December 2011).
- Google, 2011^a, *Introduction to Google Analytics*, [http://bit.ly/rt3pf2], (Site accessed 20 December 2011).
- Google, 2011^b, *Analyze Your Data*, [http://bit.ly/vMO9My], (Site accessed 20 December 2011).
- Google, 2011^c, *About Social Plug-in Analytics*, [http://bit.ly/svtCHg], (Site accessed 20 December 2011).
- Holden, G., 2008, *Go Google: 20 ways to reach more customers and build revenue with Google business tools*, AMACOM, USA.
- Kaushik, A., 2010, *Web Analytics 2.0 - The Art of Online Accountability & Science of Customer Centricity*, Wiley Publishing, Inc., Indianapolis, Indiana.
- Ledford, J., Teixeira, J., Tyler, M., 2010, *Google Analytics™*, 3^a ed., Wiley Publishing, Inc., Indianapolis, Indiana.
- Plaza, B., 2011, Google Analytics for Measuring Website Performance, *Tourism Management*, Vol. 32, pp. 477-481.
- Teixeira, J., 2010, *Your Google® Game Plan for Success: Increasing Your Web Presence with Google AdWords, Analytics, and Website Optimizer*, Wiley Publishing, Inc., Indianapolis, Indiana.
- Tonkin, S., Whitmore, C., Cutroni, J., 2010, *Performance Marketing with Google™ Analytics*, Wiley Publishing, Inc., Indianapolis, Indiana.
- UNWTO, 1999, *Marketing Tourism Destinations Online Strategies for the Information Age*, World Tourism Organization, Madrid.
- UNWTO, 2005, *Evaluating and Improving Websites - The Destination Web Watch*, World Tourism Organization, Madrid.
- UNWTO and ETC, 2008, *Handbook on E-marketing for Tourism Destinations*, World Tourism Organization and European Travel Commission.
- Web Analytics Association, 2011, *The Official WAA Definition of Web Analytics*, [http://bit.ly/bDEzsn], (Site accessed 10 October 2011).
- W3Techs, 2011, *Web technology survey*, [http://bit.ly/b5MymD], (Site accessed 17 December 2011).
- Zumstein, D., Kaufmann, M., 2009; *A Fuzzy Web Analytics Model for Web Mining*, in Abraham, A.,(ed), *Proceedings of International Association for Development of the Information Society, The IADIS European Conference on Data Mining 2009, June 18-20, Algarve, Portugal*, [http://bit.ly/w3Heo5], (Site accessed 05 September 2011).