# THE AUTHORITY REPORT

WHAT IMPACT DO LOYAL READERS HAVE ON A SITE?

What's the measure of success in newsrooms? In the past, page views reigned king, as digital advertising was based solely on impressions. Quickly though, this resulted in a "click–bait" backlash among readers and journalists alike, leading digital publishers to realize that volume isn't the only metric that matters.
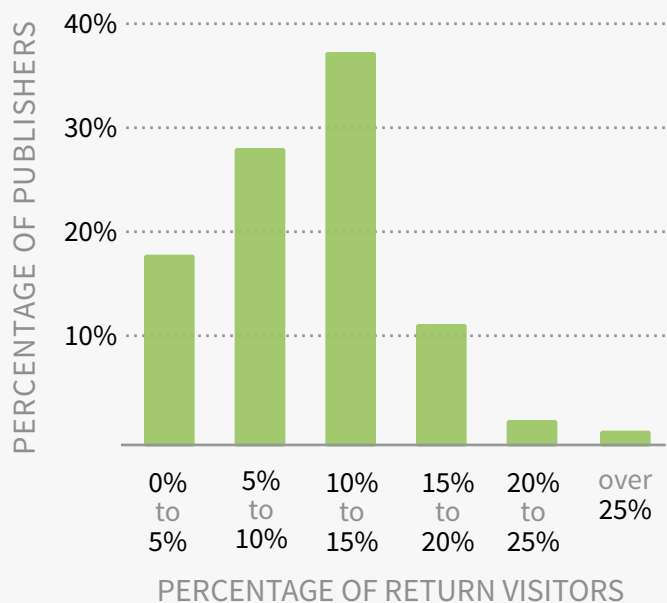
Enter a new performance indicator that now needs to be on every publisher's radar: **reader loyalty**. Why? Though page views still drive revenue, loyal readers mean better engagement with sponsored content and successful subscription or membership models. The industry is taking bets on readers that come back again and again.

How do digital publishers adopt a strategy that grows loyal readers? For this Authority Report, we explored hundreds of websites and billions of page views to find trends in returning (loyal) visitors. Does your site measure up?
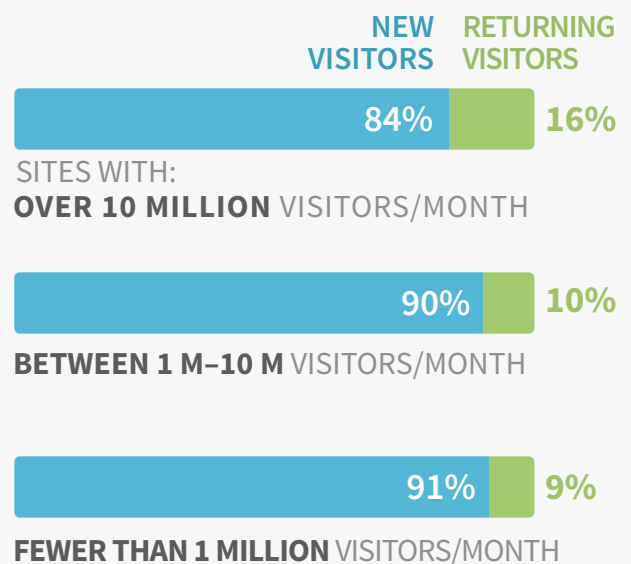
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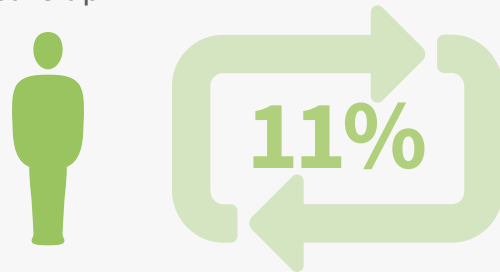
AVERAGE PERCENTAGE OF LOYAL READERS ACROSS OUR NETWORK

DISTRIBUTION OF AVERAGE LOYAL VISITORS ACROSS NETWORK SITES

PERCENTAGE OF PUBLISHERS (y-axis: 10%, 20%, 30%, 40%)

PERCENTAGE OF RETURN VISITORS (x-axis: 0% to 5%, 5% to 10%, 10% to 15%, 15% to 20%, 20% to 25%, over 25%)

DIGITAL PUBLISHERS BY SIZE NEW VERSUS LOYAL VISITORS

NEW VISITORS | RETURNING VISITORS

84% | 16%
SITES WITH:
OVER 10 MILLION VISITORS/MONTH

90% | 10%
BETWEEN 1 M–10 M VISITORS/MONTH

91% | 9%
FEWER THAN 1 MILLION VISITORS/MONTH

ABOUT THE DATA: Parse.ly analyzed a normalized sample of our client's sites from March 1, 2014–March 31, 2014. The sample includes 500 million visitors, 1 billion visits, and over 2 billion page views.

RETURNING VISITOR (a.k.a. loyal visitor):
A visitor that has returned to the same web site within a 30-day moving window prior to their latest visit.
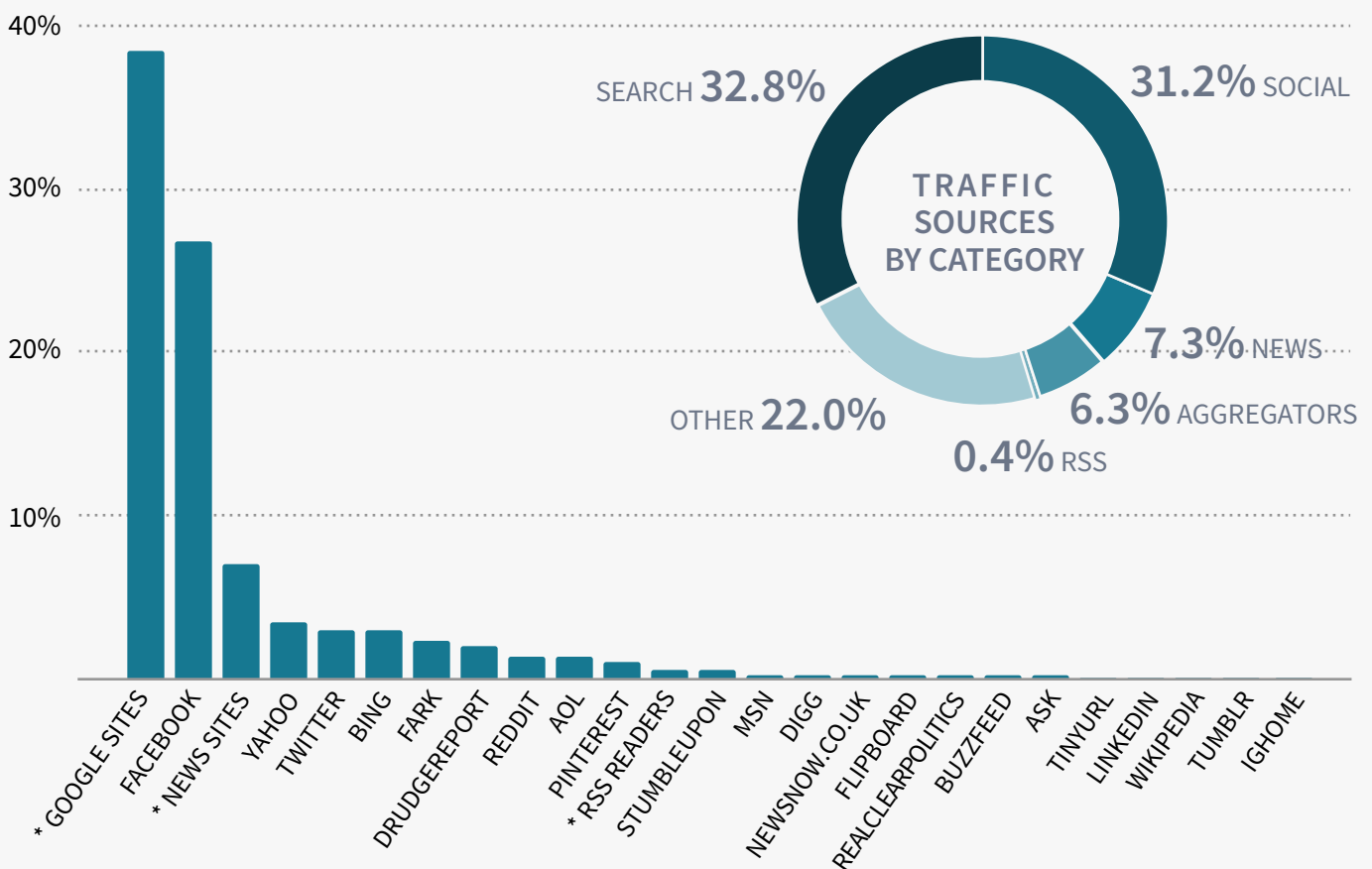
RETURNING VISITORS: TAKE-AWAYS

Publishers need to place more emphasis on how loyal their readers are as part of an overall analytics culture. Understanding reader loyalty puts other metrics in context, which shows a clearer picture of content success and reader satisfaction. Mapping the journey of loyal readers on your site, where they come from, how they engage with you and what types of posts and content they read the most will be key to growing this audience segment.

Need help getting clear insights about loyalty? Parse.ly is rolling out a beta version of Audience Loyalty Reporting soon. Get in touch with us to try it out.

THE AUTHORITY REPORT: TOP 25 TRAFFIC REFERRAL SOURCES

March, 2014

TRAFFIC SOURCES BY CATEGORY

SEARCH **32.8%**

31.2% SOCIAL

7.3% NEWS

6.3% AGGREGATORS

0.4% RSS

OTHER **22.0%**

Bar chart categories: * GOOGLE SITES, FACEBOOK, * NEWS SITES, YAHOO, TWITTER, BING, FARK, DRUDGEREPORT, REDDIT, AOL, PINTEREST, * RSS READERS, STUMBLEUPON, MSN, DIGG, NEWSNOW.CO.UK, FLIPBOARD, REALCLEARPOLITICS, BUZZFEED, ASK, TINYURL, LINKEDIN, WIKIPEDIA, TUMBLR, IGHOME

"GOOGLE SITES": aggregate of all Google-owned properties, e.g. Google.com, Google.ca, and Google News.
"NEWS SITES": external traffic from any news website to any domain in Parse.ly's network of news domains.
"RSS READERS": all external traffic from RSS reader services such as Feedly.com and Pulse.me.

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