

Typical Bounce Rates

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Bounce rate has become one of the most talked about web metrics, and a lot has been written about what this metrics means and how it should be interpreted and used. I also wrote about Bounce Rate in my post called [Bounce Rate Demystified](#).

This post is about the follow-up question "Ok, I understand what bounce rate is and see the importance of it, now tell me, What is the typical Bounce Rate?"

To answer this very question, I conducted a survey to understand what Bounce Rates to expect for various types of sites. The sites were classified under 6 categories, ecommerce, Product Information, Lead Generation, News/Media, Branding and Other. Other was a bucket for sites that did not fit other 5 categories, some of the sites included in "Other" where social networking, online gaming, travel search engine, tool/utility, bank and training, customer support. Since most of the sites have more than one purpose, respondents were asked to select only one category to classify their sites based on the main purpose of the site.

Let's jump into the results.

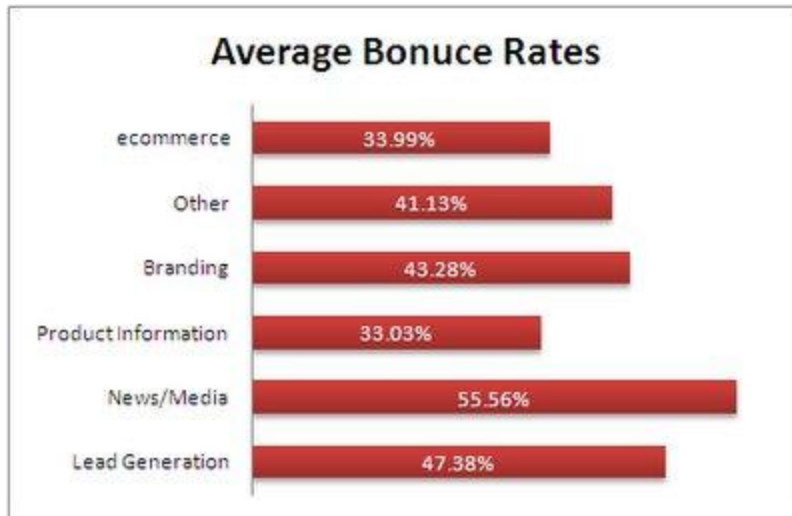
Bounce Rate Range

The table below shows the minimum and maximum bounce rates for the six categories. Bounce Rates ranged from 3.24% - 85%.

Bounce Rates Range		
	Min	Max
eCommerce	14.30%	68.00%
Product Information	3.24%	50.00%
Lead Generation	5.24%	81.00%
News/Media	25.00%	81.40%
Branding	22.00%	70.11%
Other	13.00%	85.00%

Average Bounce Rate

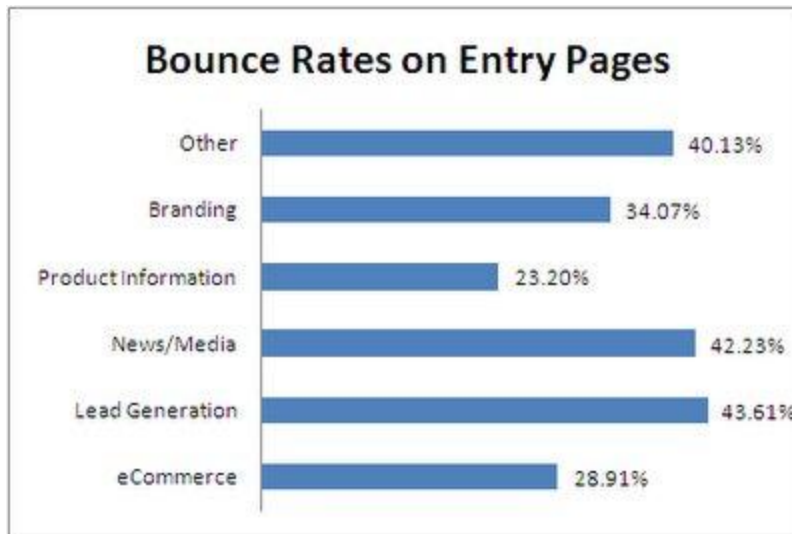
Average bounce rate of 80 sites who responded was 40.58%.



Average bounce rates were above 30% of all the six categories. News/Media sites had highest average bounce rates. This is what I had expected too, considering how users consume or reach media sites. A lot of visitors reach a news/media site via a link from another site, blog post etc. Once they read the article/news they go back to the sources that lead them there.

Bounce Rates on Top Entry Page

Top entry page is the page where majority of the visitors enter the site. The following chart shows the bounce rates on the top entry pages of various types of sites.

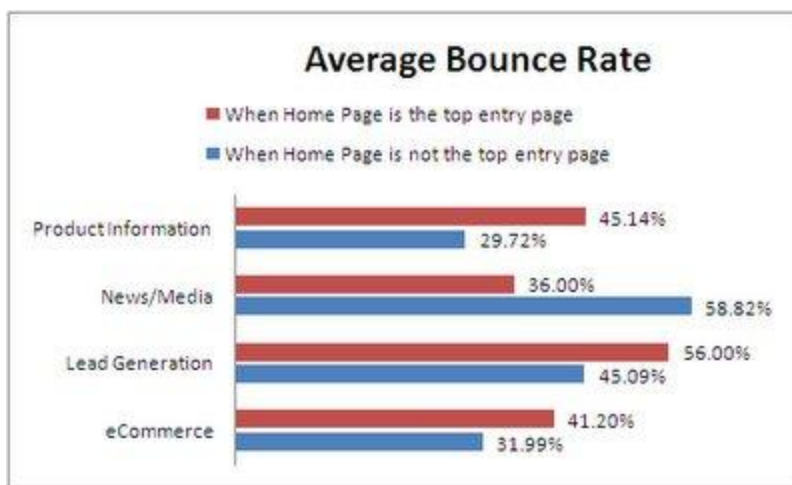
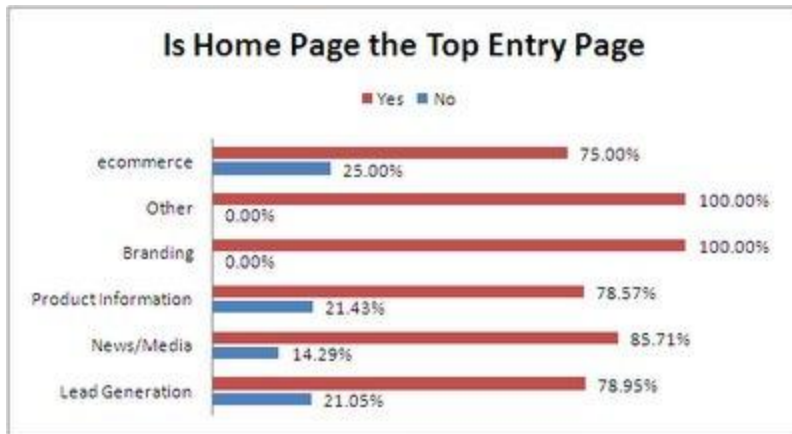


For all the site categories, average bounce rate on the top entry page was lower than the average bounce rate. News/Media had the highest bounce rate on their top entry pages. Again, as I said above, visitors enter news/media site via link from another site, blog post etc and go back to the source after reading the news/story.

Bounce Rate on the Home Page

Before the proliferation of the search engines there used be one entry page to the site and that was called home page. Almost all of the visitors entered the site though the home page. Today visitors enter the site via various pages and a lot of them might not even see the home page during their visit as I saw with some of my clients and wrote in my blog post "[Homepage - How critical is it](#)".

The following chart shows the percentage of sites that have Home page as the top entry page. The survey showed that Homepage is still the top entry page for majority of the sites.

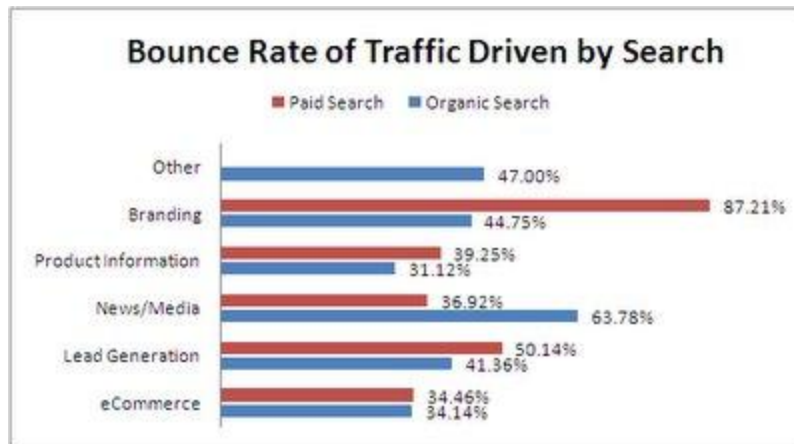


Except News/Media site other categories of sites had a higher Bounce Rate when the home page was the top entry page. I think when user enter a News/Media site via home page they know the brand name and are coming to look at what is currently available and use home page to dive deeper into the site.

One of the possible reasons for a higher bounce rate, when home page is the top entry page, is that the home page in most of the cases is very generic and shows up in search engine results pages for keywords that might not be on the home page any more. For example an eCommerce site might have showcased an iPhone on the homepage when the site was indexed. A user searches on iPhone and lands on the sites homepage. Guess what? The site is no longer showcasing iPhone and now the product that they are showing on homepage is a Blackberry instead. What does the user, who is looking for iPhone, do? Most likely, Bounces, resulting in higher bounce rate. Considering this very impact, I had

written an article called [Follow the Search](#). Check it for a tip on how to lower the bounce rate on home page.

Search and Bounce Rate



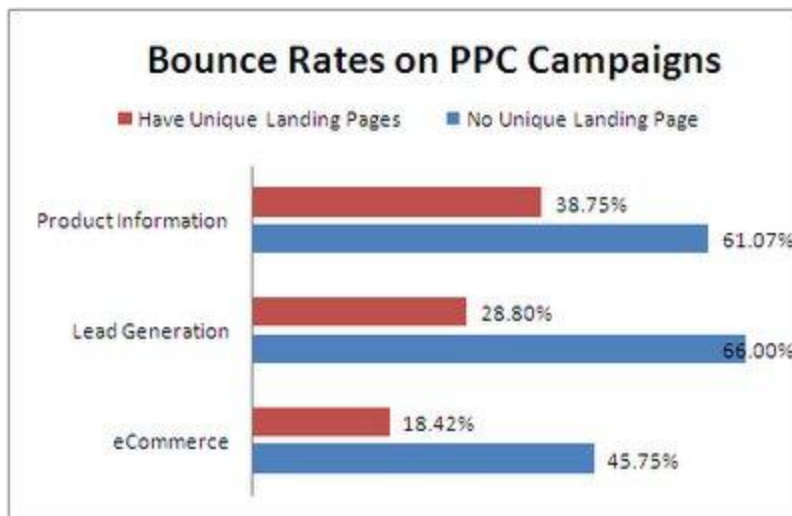
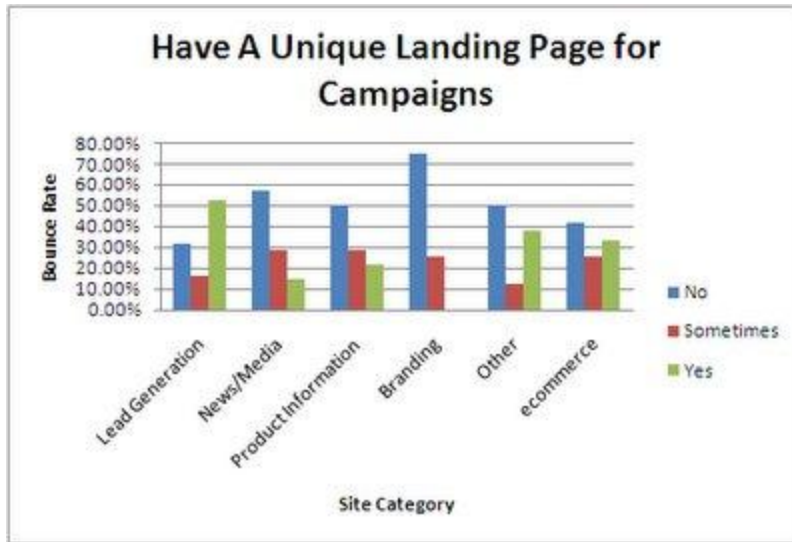
Search, paid or organic, is one of the top traffic drivers for most of the sites. The bounce rate on Paid Search was higher for all the categories except for News/Media. This is alarming considering you are paying for all the visitors. The worst of all were Branding sites. I am sure when you talk to the marketing (or campaign managers) they will say that mission was accomplished since the user did come to the site even if they left without going any further. I agree that a visitor was exposed to brand but there is more that a marketer needs to think about than just getting visitors on the site (this is a topic for another post so I won't go in details in this article).

News/Media site showed higher bounce rate for organic search than paid and lower than paid search. Again, as mentioned above possible reason is that when visitors find a new or story via search they come to a specific story and then leave after reading it, while visitors coming by paid search are either driven to home page or a landing page and expect to dive into at least another page.

Landing Pages and Bounce Rate

The question is do landing pages affect the bounce rate? Should you have a landing page? Except for lead generation sites, majority of all other site categories did not have unique

landing pages for their campaigns.



As most of the sites have a Paid Search Campaigns (PPC), I used PPC to understand if Landing pages have an impact on the bounce rates. All three categories that answered the question about landing page and PPC campaigns showed that having a unique landing page for each campaign dramatically decreased the bounce rate. There was a drop of over 25 percentage points in bounce rate when unique landing pages were used as compared to when no unique landing pages were used. I hope this gives you are reason to start thinking about having unique landing pages for your campaigns.

Summary

- Remember every site is unique so will have a unique bounce rate. Bounce rates ranged from 3.24% - 85%
- Paid search has higher bounce rate than organic search, unless you have a news/media site.
- If your top entry page is Home page then you can expect to have higher bounce rate. Using Behavioral Targeting can make your homepage a unique landing page on the fly and hence result in reducing bounce rates.
- Landing page make a significant impact on the bounce rate. Consider having a unique landing page for every campaign you run.