

Your Ultimate Guide to Audience Analysis and Consumer Behavior

Publishers and Media Edition

July 2022





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Introduction

As a digital publisher, the right messaging is key. You need to know who you're actually speaking with to keep them engaged (and returning).

With the impending loss of third-party cookies, publishers are looking for new methods of understanding their audience's preferences. Audience analysis and consumer behavior insights make it possible to create tailored messaging.

This guide will give you essential tools to map out your target audience, boost brand awareness, and drive more loyal business, all without using cookies.

Read and learn how to:

- **Identify** your audience by demographics and behaviors
- **Measure** and track key metrics for user engagement
- **Leverage** loyal audience measurements to increase your reach

PART 1

Defining your audience

- The benefits
- Defining your target audience
- Different types of audience analysis

Why audience analysis matters

No matter the effort you've put into creating something new, if it reaches no one, the hard work has no impact.

That's where audience analysis comes in.

Audience analysis refers to the study of the group of people that consume your content, buy your product or services, or frequent your app.

The main purpose of audience research is to characterize this group so that you can tweak your messaging and SEO practices according to their preferences, interests, and needs.

Your end goal is to identify the unique characteristics that define your audience and define your ideal customer.



Benefits of audience analysis



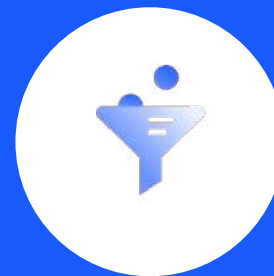
Enhance user
experience



Increase
loyalty



Expand
customer base



Improve funnel
conversion

Defining your target audience

Your target audience are the people most likely to purchase your product or service.

What's the difference? We spell it out on the right, but essentially those you aim to engage with vs. your actual audience.

There are a variety of different ways that you can conduct audience analysis, each with its own benefits and aimed at identifying your different audiences.

Target Audience

The group of people you aim to engage with.

You define this audience based on your goals, product launches, and marketing strategies.

Actual Audience

Your actual audience are the people who consume your content or purchase your product.

While your actual audience may not align with your target one, you need to still monitor this group as they are the ones engaging with you.

4 types of audience analysis for a more targeted strategy

Demographic



Identify key information such as **age**, **gender**, and **location** of your target audience.

Behavioral



Track **customer experience** and determine how your audience **reaches** your site.

Psychographic



Examine the **shared values**, **beliefs**, **opinions**, and **attitudes** of your audience.

Situational



Define **expectations** or **norms** for different situations to predict your audience's **attitudes**.

Demographic audience analysis

Demographic analysis is one of the easiest ways to get a general understanding of your audience.

On the very basic level, you want to identify key information such as the age group, gender, and location of your target audience. Other factors include education, socio-economic level, profession, and marital status.

The demographics which are essential to measure, depend on your industry and offerings.

Example:

You're a publisher offering different subscriptions to digital magazines. You offer a variety of content that targets a specific age group and gender, but you're looking to grow into new markets.

To grow your market share, you would collect and correlate demographic data, such as search interest, and determine if there are certain populations that are more likely to purchase subscriptions through your site than others.



Behavioral analysis

In a digital setting, behavioral analysis refers to how people act and react when they browse or communicate.

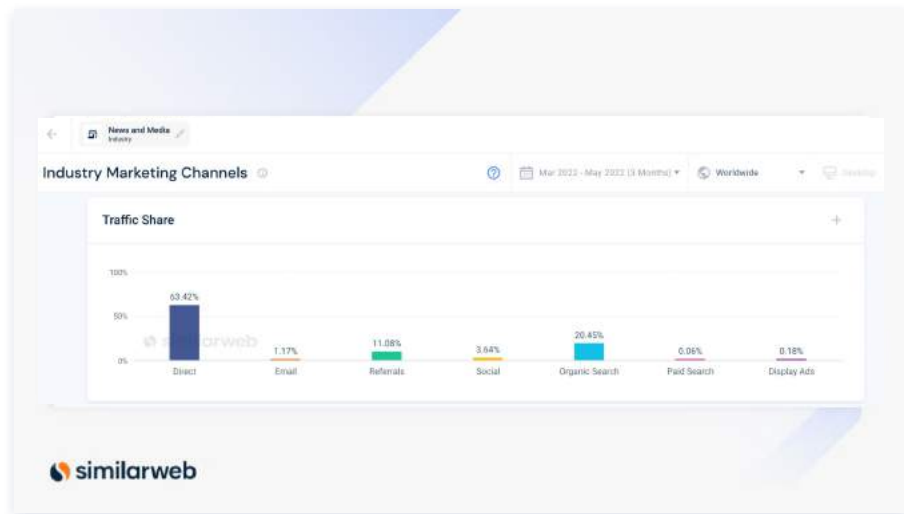
You want to track the customer experience, determine how your audience reaches your site, and see which channels bring the most traffic. **You can do this with engagement metrics.**

For instance, if most of your customers reach your website through social media and or paid marketing campaigns, you can be sure to optimize these channels for success.

Example:

You're a digital analyst for a top news site. The data shows that compared to your competitors, you receive most of your website traffic from social channels during trending events. You capitalize on this by creating more campaigns around seasonal events and become the go-to publisher for timely stories.

Analyzing behavior that indicates a higher conversion potential lets you build an effective lead nurturing strategy.



Psychographic analysis

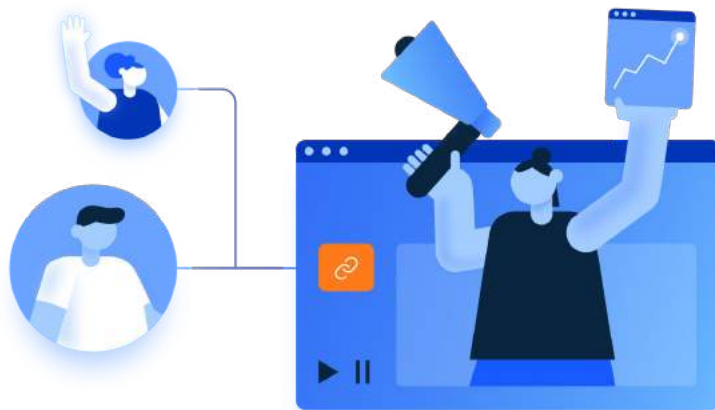
Psychographic analysis looks at the shared values, beliefs, opinions, and attitudes of your audience. These are a lot harder to identify than demographics and tougher to measure than behavior.

This includes metrics like brand awareness — what your audience already knows about you and your products. The way your audience perceives your brand relative to others in the industry impacts their decision. Sometimes a person's viewpoint can even be a prerequisite for being part of your audience.

Example

As a marketer for a new streaming service, you want to understand what your target audience expects from your product and how and why they consume content.

You can use this information to optimize and improve your website, even mimicking your competitors' strategies that are currently working.



Situational analysis

Situational audience analysis looks at the situation for which your audience is gathered. This could be a birthday party, job interview, concert – really any time when a group of people come together.

When conducting traditional situational analysis, you define expectations or norms for each situation to predict your audience's attitudes. Behavior will depend on the circumstances that lead a visitor to your content, their knowledge, their level of attention, and their ability to process information varies.

Example

You're rebranding your news website and what to determine which content will be the most relevant to your audience.

Take a look at how we break down some of the situational factors that can help you determine the best way to guide visitors through your website and eventually drive them down the funnel.

The Audience perceives you as a thought leader

VS.

No one knows who you are yet

The visitor chose your content

VS.

They stumbled upon you by chance

The user knows your product

VS.

The visitor is unfamiliar with your offerings

Viewing from a desktop

VS.

Scrolling from the mobile web

The visitor knows your top competitors

VS.

The visitor is new to your industry

Your company is widely represented across demographics

VS.

You cater to a specific niche

PART 2


Key metrics to measure

- Website demographics
- Audience interests
- Engagement metrics
- New vs. returning users
- Audience loyalty/overlap

Website demographics

Business success depends on how well you (and your entire company) know your target audience

Similarweb gets you there. Our platform allows you to collect information that lets you conduct an in-depth audience analysis, including **geographical breakdown**, **age and gender distribution**, and even **search-interest analysis**. You can identify and characterize your competitors' target audience, map the competitive landscape according to user loyalty, and target any defined audience.

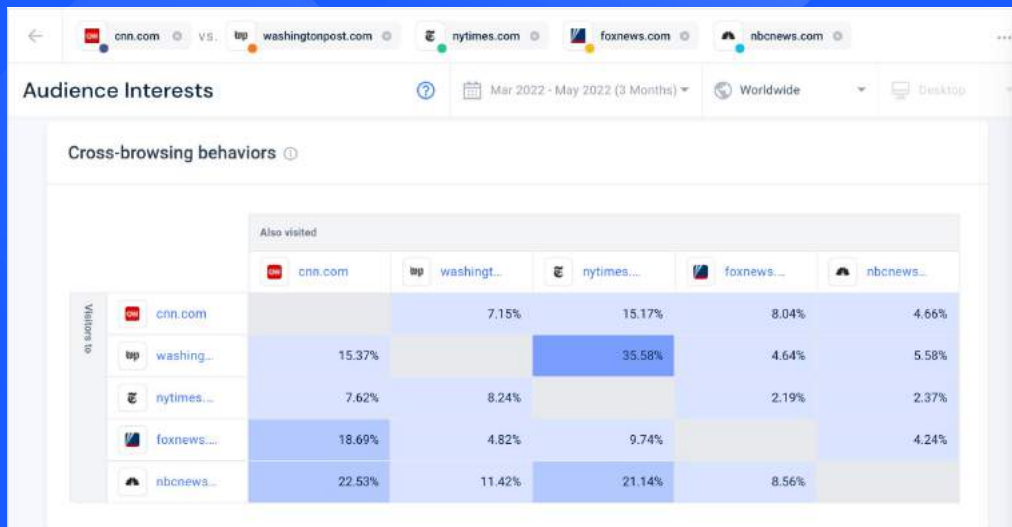
Demographics										?	Mar 2022 - May 2022 (3 Months)	Worldwide	All traffic
	#	Domain (93)	Traffic Share	Male vs Female	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+			
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	 yahoo.com	12.95%	56.5% 43.5%	19.0%	28.7%	20.4%	14.2%	10.7%	7.0%			
<input type="checkbox"/>	2	 yahoo.co.jp	8.71%	60.3% 39.7%	15.2%	27.3%	25.4%	16.5%	9.6%	6.0%			
<input type="checkbox"/>	3	 naver.com	4.51%	60.2% 39.8%	31.0%	33.1%	17.5%	10.0%	5.5%	2.9%			
<input type="checkbox"/>	4	 qq.com	3.46%	65.5% 34.5%	26.9%	36.9%	18.3%	8.4%	5.0%	4.4%			
<input type="checkbox"/>	5	 turbopages.org	3.31%	49.3% 50.7%	18.6%	43.8%	21.3%	9.7%	4.8%	1.8%			
<input type="checkbox"/>	6	 msn.com	3.27%	57.5% 42.5%	18.4%	28.3%	20.6%	14.7%	11.0%	7.0%			
<input type="checkbox"/>	7	 globo.com	3.04%	44.9% 55.1%	22.5%	36.9%	20.8%	10.5%	6.8%	2.5%			
<input type="checkbox"/>	8	 bbc.co.uk	2.53%	53.8% 46.2%	17.9%	27.4%	21.3%	15.5%	10.7%	7.2%			
<input type="checkbox"/>	9	 cnn.com	2.23%	58.8% 41.2%	16.5%	28.9%	21.1%	14.6%	11.5%	7.5%			
<input type="checkbox"/>	10	 nytimes.com	2.15%	52.6% 47.4%	21.9%	29.0%	19.6%	13.3%	9.8%	6.4%			

Audience interests

The browsing interests of your audiences can help you understand user intent

Your audience's online behavior and patterns reveal important insights into your conversion funnel. Pinpoint where your audience is spending time to broaden your targeting lists.

Similarweb's audience interests reveal insights about your **purchasing funnel** and your users' **consideration state**. You can also see which other companies, solutions, or offerings your users are comparing with you to better market yourself and highlight your strengths. Audience interests can help you **stay relevant to your current users, and discover new audiences to target**.

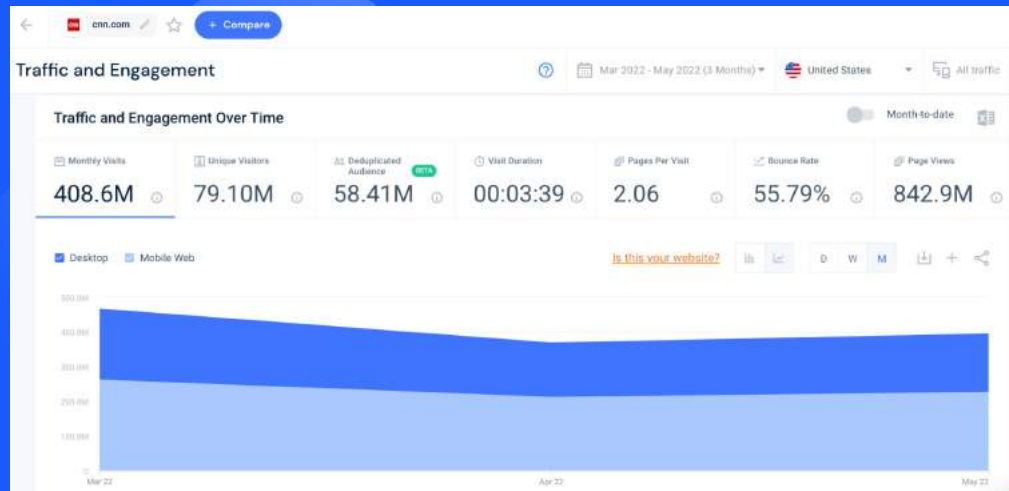


Engagement metrics

For digitally mature companies, audience engagement is largely measurable

When your entire company is on the same data page, you can understand the numbers, motivation and intention. High user engagement is a sign that your content or product is valuable to the user, and will almost always result in higher revenue.

Engagement metrics reveal something about the **quality** of your content, design, and user experience. Do customers respond better to colorful designs or more monotone, informative ones? Do videos lead to longer page views? Quantify your daily active users, bounce rate, the average page views, and so on. These tell you what your **audience enjoys** and **what they are looking for**.



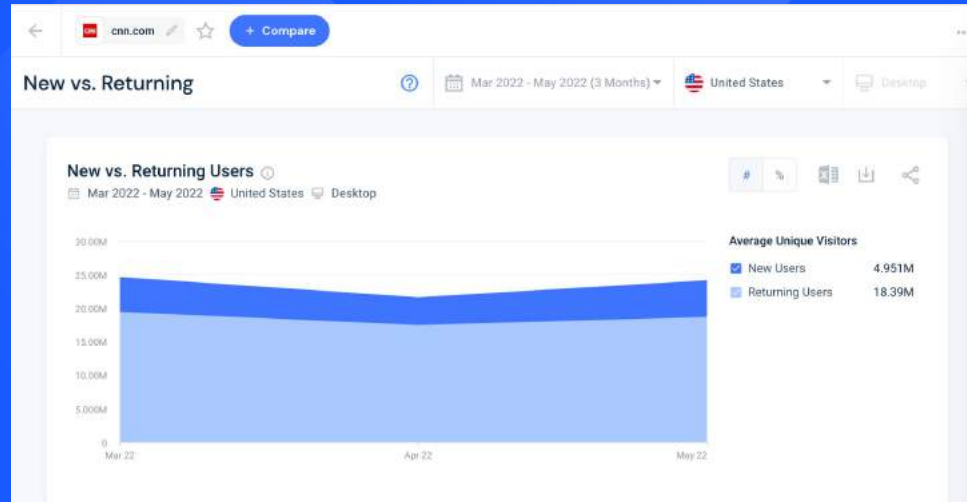
New vs. returning users

Measure the difference between new vs. returning users to your and your competitors' websites

You can predict new consumer behavior based on patterns you notice or gauge the traction of your website.

Someone new visiting your website won't have much of an idea of what to expect, while returning customers are familiar with the navigational features, the design, and your offerings. They are also familiar with the level of expertise they can expect from your content.

Similarweb lets you measure the number of new vs. returning users so you can optimize your website.

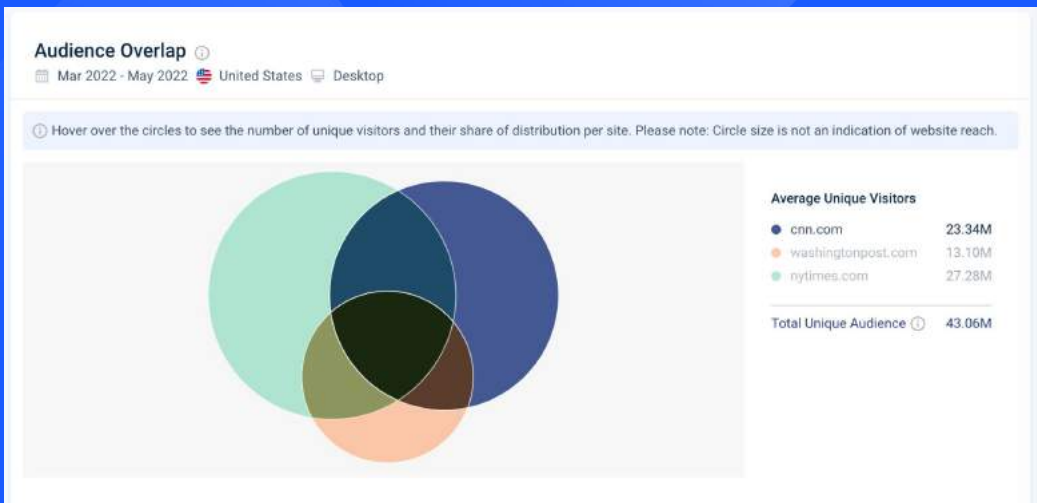


Audience loyalty/overlap

To stay competitive, you need an overview of audience behavior at the industry level

Your users are probably visiting your competitors' websites also. You need to determine which ones they frequent, and evaluate whether your audience is more or less likely to visit competitor sites.

Measure the total addressable audience, find opportunities to expand your audience, and source potential partnerships using Similarweb's Audience Overlap tool. You can then benchmark audience loyalty across websites and see who in your market has the greatest traffic share. The end goal is to improve retention and engagement metrics.



PART 3

Publishers and Media Audience Analysis

Audience demographics

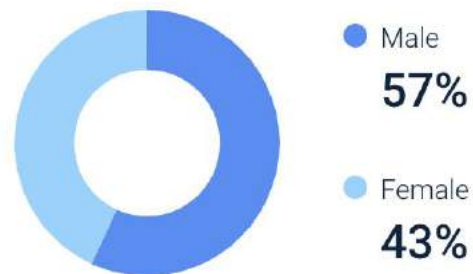
United States, all traffic, March – May 2022

Currently, males are more likely than females to visit the top 100 news and media websites in the U.S., with a split of 57% vs. 43% respectively. The worldwide gender distribution is substantially similar.

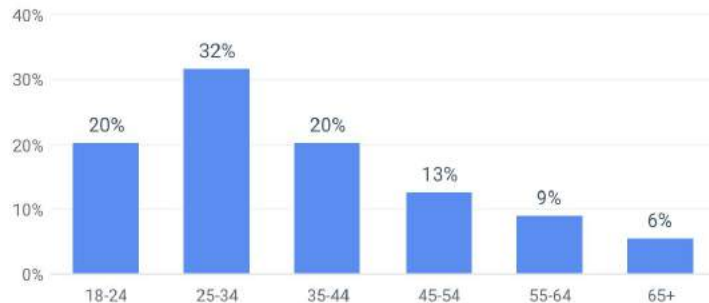
In the U.S., 39% of visitors to these websites would be considered Millennials and Gen-Z, compared to 52% worldwide. Those 65+ years old are the least likely to get their news online.

In the last three months, readers from the U.S. accounted for 18.7 billion web visits to this industry (25.6% of the worldwide traffic share) followed by Japan, China, Korea, and the U.K.

Gender distribution



Age distribution



Audience interests

U.S., desktop, March – May 2022

The cross-browsing behavior metrics reveals the percentage of visitors to **cnn.com** that also visited two of its main competitors (**nytimes.com** and **nbcnews.com**) in the same day.

Cnn.com and nytimes.com have the most overlap – we see that 15.2% of visitors to cnn.com also visited nytimes.com and 7.6% vice versa. Visitors to nbcnews.com are most likely to consume more than one news site.

Top search trends are a way to contextualizing audience interests across the wider industry and are an indicator of what's top of mind for readers. In May, the top non-branded terms in the U.S. by traffic share are *ukraine* (4.1%), *russia* (1.6%), *will smith* (1.4%), *putin* (1.4%), and *johnny depp* (0.8%).

Cross-Browsing Behaviors

		Also visited		
		 cnn.com	 nytimes.com	 nbcnews.com
Visitors to	 cnn.com		15.17%	4.66%
	 nytimes.com	7.62%		2.37%
	 nbcnews.com	22.53%	21.14%	

Search Trends

	Search Term (135,638)	Traffic ↓	Change
1	ukraine	40.5M <div><div></div>4.06%</div>	↓ 29.23%
2	russia	16.2M <div><div></div>1.62%</div>	↓ 25.56%
3	will smith	14.2M <div><div></div>1.42%</div>	↓ 88.75%
4	putin	13.8M <div><div></div>1.38%</div>	↓ 24.18%
5	johnny depp	8M <div><div></div>0.80%</div>	↑ 53.33%

Engagement metrics to watch

Worldwide and U.S., all traffic, March – May 2022

Below are the engagement metrics for online publishers and media. Use these to compare yourself to competitors and determine if you are meeting industry standards for user experience.

Top 100 global websites in the category:

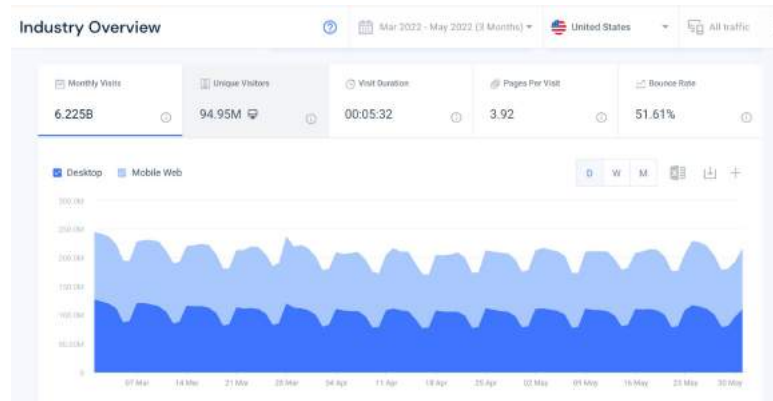
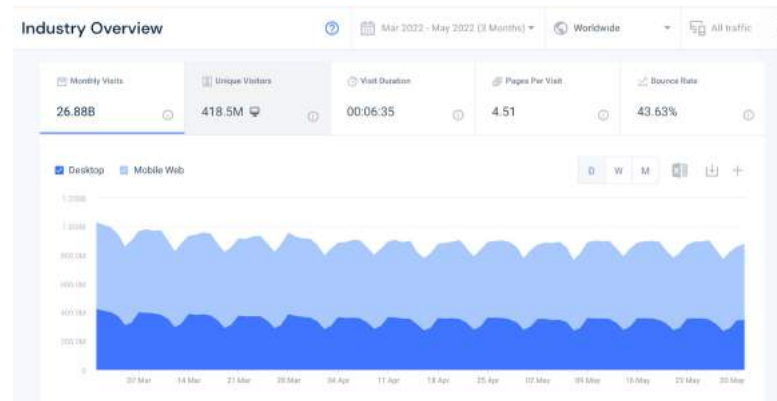
- Monthly visits – 26.9 billion
- Average visit duration – 6 minutes 35 seconds
- Average pages per visit – 4.5
- Average bounce rate – 43.6%

Top 100 websites in the category in the U.S.:

- Monthly visits – 6.2 billion
- Average visit duration – 5 minutes 32 seconds
- Average pages per visit – 3.9
- Average bounce rate – 51.6%

Top 100 websites in the category in the U.K.:

- Monthly visits – 2.0 billion
- Average visit duration – 4 minutes 18 seconds
- Average pages per visit – 3.0
- Average bounce rate – 51.6%



New vs. returning users

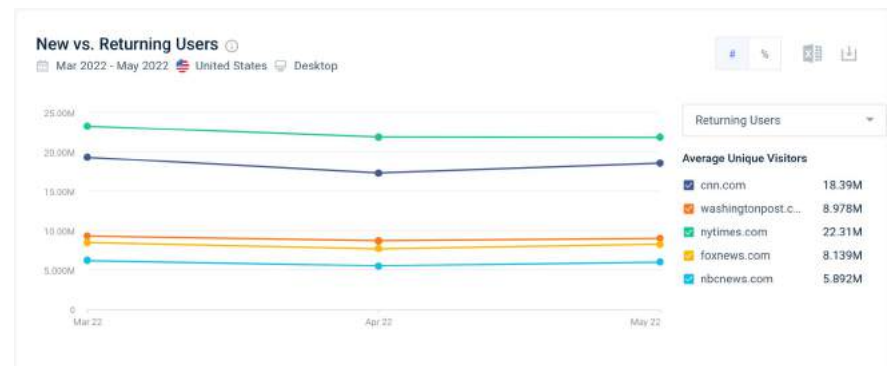
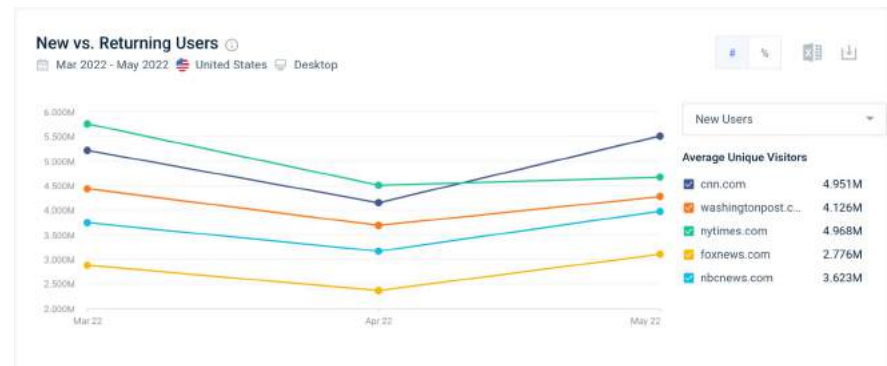
U.S., desktop, March – May 2022

Online readership over the last three months is trending up in the U.S. for both new and returning readers, likely due to the conflict in the Ukraine. It's important to benchmark individual brands against the industry average to contextualize individual brand performance.

In May 2022, the month over month change in new users for each website is below. For most of these four sites, there is a slight rebound in numbers of new users.

- cnn.com (+32.7%)
- washingtonpost.com (+15.9%)
- nytimes.com (+3.6%)
- foxnews.com (+31.3%)
- nbcnews.com (+25.7%)

The story is positive for returning user volume over the same period. Most brands saw moderate increases in the single digits — while nytimes.com was just fly of being flat, at -0.3%.



Audience overlap

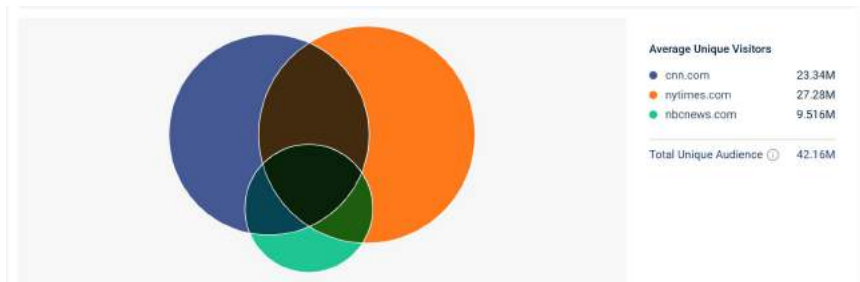
U.S., desktop, March – May 2022

Over the last three months, there were a total of 42.2 million average unique visitors to cnn.com, nytimes.com, and nbcnews.com in the United States.

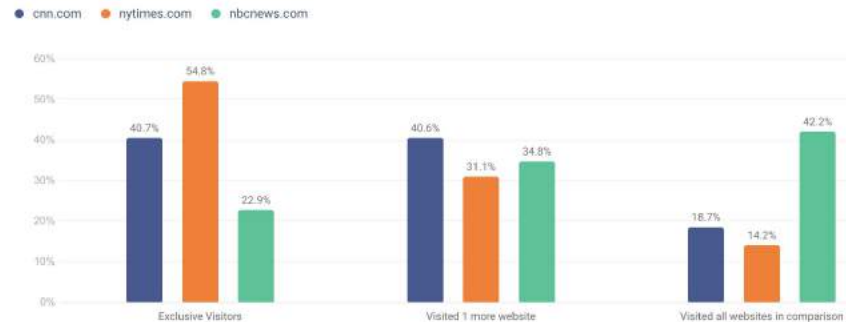
When adding audience loyalty metrics into the mix, we can see that 40.7% of cnn.com and 54.8% of nytimes.com visitors are exclusive to their website in this competitive group, indicating high brand loyalty.

However, the 42.2% of nbcnews.com visit all three of these competitors' websites.

Audience Overlap



Website's audience loyalty Comparison



PART 4

New Media: TV, Movies, and Streaming Audience Analysis

Audience demographics

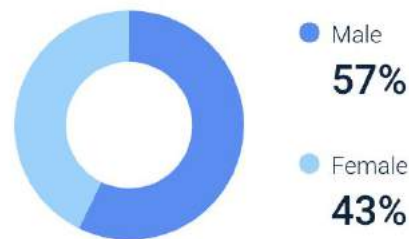
U.S., all traffic, March – May 2022

Streaming audiences in the U.S. leaned more male than female, with a traffic split of 57% vs. 43% respectively, and these trends are mirrored globally.

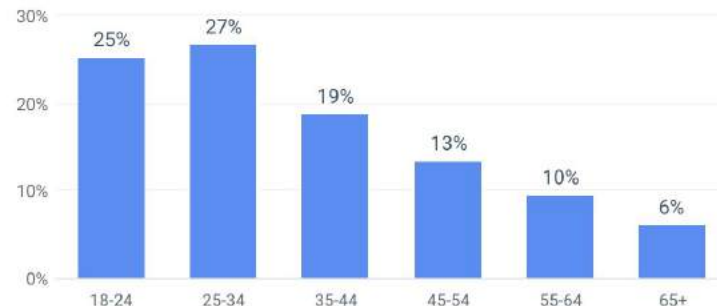
Age distribution skews younger for the top streaming services – 71% of visitors in the U.S. are under the age of 45. Only 6% of the 65+ audience appear to visit streaming services. The global audience is even younger with 75% under the age of 45.

The top countries driving traffic to streaming services worldwide are the U.S. (21.4 billion visits, 20.4% of traffic share), Russia (5.6 billion, 5.3%), Japan (4.5 billion, 4.3%), India (4.2 billion, 4.0%), and Brazil (4.1 billion, 3.9%). In the last couple months, India surpassed Brazil for the #4 spot.

Gender distribution



Age distribution



Audience interests

U.S., desktop, Mar – May 2022

Cross-browsing behavior between entrenched brands and new entrants reveals the double digit percentage of visitors to **netflix.com** and the newer Peacock and Paramount+ brands.

Search trends reveal what viewers are searching for and prefer to watch right now. It can help inform your content strategy or new releases.

In the U.S., the top trending non-branded keywords are *ukraine* (2.0%), *the northman* (1.5%), *johnny depp* (1.5%), *amber heard* (1.3%), and *nba scores* (1.0%) followed by *celtics* and *the lost city*. All of these terms have seen a significant increase in traffic in the last month and are newly trending.

Cross-Browsing Behaviors

		Also visited			
		netflix.com	hulu.com	peacocktv.com	paramountplu...
Visitors to	netflix.com		3.57%	0.45%	0.62%
	hulu.com	30.23%		2.89%	2.63%
	peacocktv.com	22.03%	16.14%		6.04%
	paramountplu...	26.01%	12.15%	4.88%	

Search Trends

<input type="checkbox"/>		Search Term (6,627)	Traffic ↓	Change
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	ukraine	789.9K <u>2.02%</u>	↑ 16.64%
<input type="checkbox"/>	2	the northman	604.9K <u>1.54%</u>	↑ 15.28%
<input type="checkbox"/>	3	johnny depp	593.1K <u>1.51%</u>	↑ 123.49%
<input type="checkbox"/>	4	amber heard	510.2K <u>1.30%</u>	↑ 110.33%
<input type="checkbox"/>	5	nba scores	376.4K <u>0.96%</u>	↑ 19.85%
<input type="checkbox"/>	6	celtics	345.6K <u>0.88%</u>	↑ 78.12%
<input type="checkbox"/>	7	the lost city	340.4K <u>0.87%</u>	↑ 21.1%

Engagement metrics to watch

Worldwide and U.S., all traffic, Mar – May 2022

Below are the engagement metrics for online streaming services. Use these to compare yourself to competitors and determine if you are meeting industry standards for user experience.

Top 100 global websites in the category:

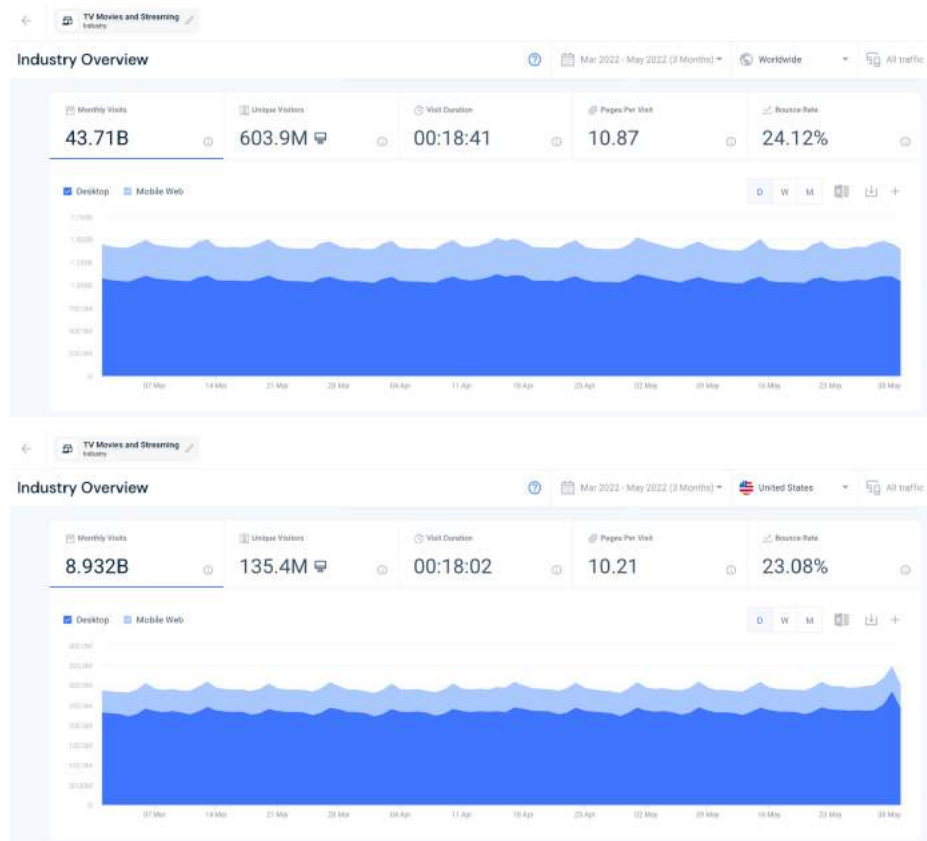
- Monthly visits – 43.7 billion
- Average visit duration – 18 minutes 41 seconds
- Average pages per visit – 10.9
- Average bounce rate – 24.1%

Top 100 websites in the category in the U.S.:

- Monthly visits – 8.9 billion
- Average visit duration – 18 minutes 02 seconds
- Average pages per visit – 10.2
- Average bounce rate – 23.1%

Top 100 websites in the category in the U.K.:

- Monthly visits – 1.7 billion
- Average visit duration – 17 minutes 25 seconds
- Average pages per visit – 10.6
- Average bounce rate – 23.4%



New vs. returning users

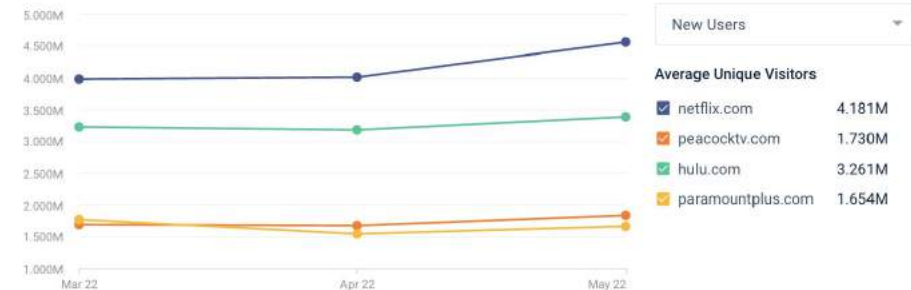
U.S., Desktop, Mar – May 2022

New users for Netflix, Hulu, and Peacock TV are all up month over month in May. The likely reason is the return of seasonal series, which may have been further influenced by Omicron's surge, keeping people at home.

Returning users were also up in May from April for Netflix and relatively flat for Hulu. However, Peacock TV and Paramount Plus, both saw modest declines, which may indicate user fatigue with the newly launched platforms.

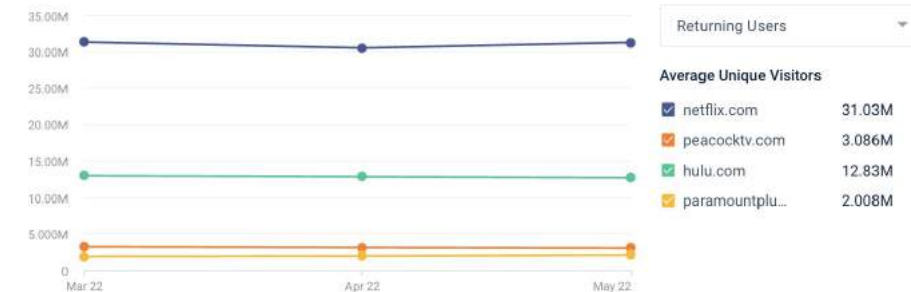
New vs. Returning Users

Mar 2022 - May 2022 United States Desktop



New vs. Returning Users

Mar 2022 - May 2022 United States Desktop



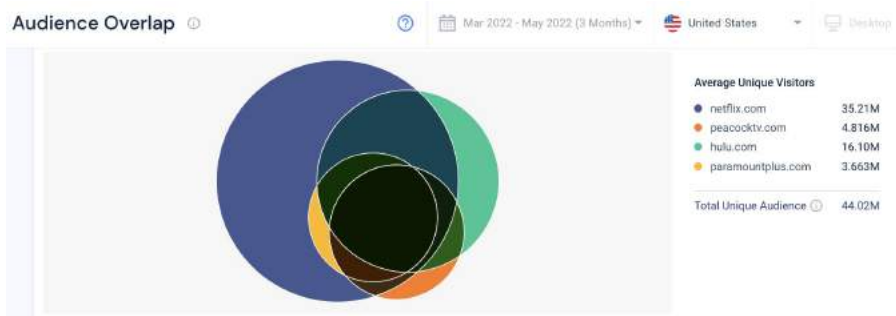
Audience overlap

U.S., Desktop, Mar – May 2022

Over the last three months, a total of 44 million average unique visitors visited any of these four brands. Netflix is clearly the market leader with the highest number of visitors.

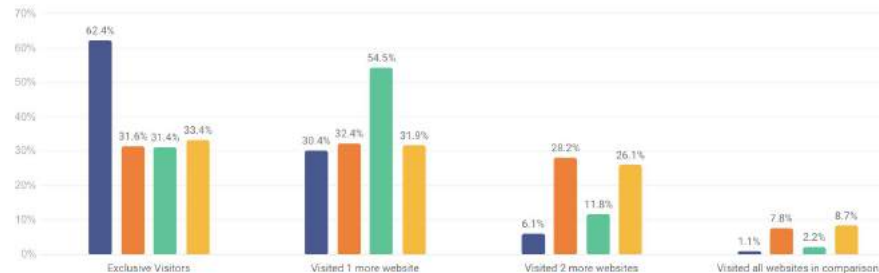
Netflix.com also had the greatest brand loyalty with 62.4% of its traffic exclusive to that site.

54.5% of visitors to hulu.com in the last three months visited only one more streaming website while peacocktv.com and paramountplus.com users were the least brand loyal.



Website's audience loyalty Comparison

netflix.com peacocktv.com hulu.com paramountplus.com



PART 5

Further reading

- About Similarweb for Publishers
- Resources to help you get started

Similarweb's data helps publishing and media brands become influential, digital first organizations.

Teams use Similarweb to:



Develop and Surface
New Content



Maximize Ad
Revenue



Drive Subscription
Growth

Similarweb provides
insights for any
website, app, industry,
and market



100M+
Websites



4.7M+
Apps



190+
Countries



210+
Industries



1B+
Search Terms



250M+
eCommerce
product SKUs

Similarweb's Publisher Suite of Products and the Relevant Teams

Digital Suite Core Offering: All Teams



Digital Research
Intelligence



Digital Marketing
Intelligence

- Share of Voice
- Audience Research
- Traffic Referrals & Ad Destinations
- Keyword Research
- Ad Creative Research



Value Add Solutions: Discrete Teams



Sales
Intelligence

- Sales Leads



Shopper
Intelligence

- Affiliate Revenue



Advisory
Services

- Customer Journey

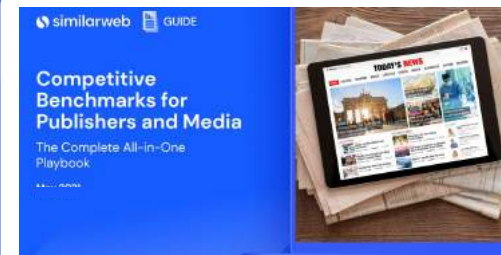
More helpful resources: Download free PDFs



Competitor Benchmarking Guide



Competitive Analysis Playbook



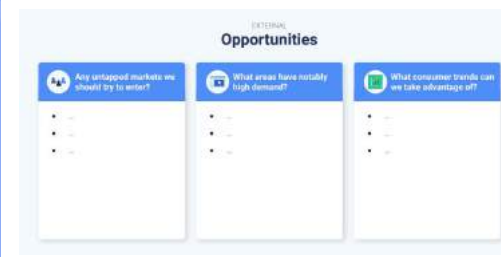
Competitive Benchmarking for Publishers and Media



Streaming Wars: Benchmarks



The Researcher's Blueprint Digital Maturity



SWOT Analysis Template



Uncover more audience insights to boost your growth

Show me how