

Forum: [Hack Forums](#)

Thread: [SEO, Google Analytics, and Plans](#)

Omniscient - August 4, 2019, 2:18 pm

It's been rumored I am faking stats of HF and other nonsense about HF activity.

I just updated our Google Analytics.

<https://hackforums.net/Analytics.pdf>

https://hackforums.net/Analytics_Lang.pdf

I'd be happy to share live Google Analytics pages with the community and advertisers but there really isn't an public view option. Just an export. You can add users to view only but not a direct share link which I would prefer. Instead I have to export and upload to HF for easy viewing.

Stats show we're very steady for traffic and if you had the last version (January 2019) you'd see we actually ticked up.

This is our Google Search Console from past 90 days. I just took it.

You can see steady uptick and certainly some positive momentum because of our SEO efforts. Members can view my other threads with SEO screenshots to compare.

<https://hackforums.net/showthread.php?tid=5969211>

While it's true that members are not posting nearly as much as they were. We actually have increased our metrics on a number of other fronts. Because of social login integration we have increased registrations by 40% (HUGE). Our clicks from Google are higher, that's more traffic for advertisers.

One of the next phases of the change coming to HF will be increased member involvement via their profiles. We have already begun redesigning the profile page so members can customize them. I have already laid-out the coding projects to Xerotic on how new features are going to operate. I expect within 2-3 weeks we'll see major releases concerning them. My goal is to transform HF from just a forum into more of a social hub and your profile is going to be central to that.

When you visit Twitter or Facebook you start by going to your own profile page and from there you branch out and your own profile is the main URL you visit. This is exactly how HF will be. Your own profile will be your main page to visit. This means a lot of content and options need to be on that page. Your Buddy List will be integral.

I really don't want to give away all the features planned but this is a good teaser of what's to come.

Thank you.

Roberto Scorpius Malfoy - August 4, 2019, 2:23 pm

Sounds very interesting, I am looking forward to seeing the new changes.

SoulZeh - August 4, 2019, 2:29 pm

I can bet people will also think that you've managed to fake this somehow, you get morons like that though.

ZeroOne - August 4, 2019, 2:32 pm

The upcoming changes seem really promising.

Thank you Omni ?

Nuworld - August 4, 2019, 2:49 pm

Looking forward to seeing the new content and changes.

I'd be interested in knowing who's saying things are faked here.

Omniscient - August 4, 2019, 3:23 pm

(Aug 4, 2019 02:49 PM)Nuworld Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Looking forward to seeing the new content and changes.

I'd be interested in knowing who's saying things are faked here.

A member who was recently closed for ban evading. He's so butthurt he published an article with a bunch of lies and then tried to add it to our Wikipedia entry page. I let him get under my skin a bit which I normally don't allow to happen but the article was absolutely a direct attack towards me and published in a way that would probably convince others it was true. That sort of pisses me off more than it should.

Kosmos - August 4, 2019, 3:38 pm

People are ignorant enough to think that's faked? Must be new here. Those are real numbers. Under your skin or not, that's questioning your livelihood itself and that's some seriously disrespectful shit.

Nuworld - August 4, 2019, 4:33 pm

(Aug 4, 2019 03:23 PM)Omniscient Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) A member who was recently closed for ban evading. He's so butthurt he published an article with a bunch of lies and then tried to add it to our Wikipedia entry page. I let him get under my skin a bit which I normally don't allow to happen but the article was absolutely a direct attack towards me and published in a way that would probably convince others it was true. That sort of pisses me off more than it should.

Umm? Understand. However I can see your point and in fact knowing that someone is trashing our forum gets under my skin also.

Even though I'm also a member of Wikipedia and should have editorial permission
Soon this type of shit just pisses me off.

No wonder why kids can't handle rejection and or the reality of life.

Ser - August 4, 2019, 5:56 pm

Anyone who is taking the time to figure out whether or not HackForums is faking its statistics or not has too much time on their hands. At the end of the day, it doesn't matter for the users.

On a separate note, looking forward to seeing the changes that are to come.

Xerotic - August 4, 2019, 6:03 pm

It is worth noting that HF does NOT consist of merely posts anymore. We have games (blackjack, slots, Hack Game, etc), contracts, profile comments, and more that is considered activity. You can't judge HF's activity solely based on posting. That would be like judging somebody's Facebook

activity by just how many pictures they upload. We have a plethora of stuff to do on HF and while we plan to always add more... the next important objective is tying it all together. Omniscient has been saying it the past year and a half since I joined as a developer... there is a vision. It just takes time for it to come to fruition and that time is now.

Lawler - August 4, 2019, 6:30 pm

Read the topic but issue is even with increased reg the activity seems to not have went up at all. as according to google the average user spends just over 6 minutes online per visit. which would tell me that users join or login to buy an item and leave. as would be interesting to see the stats if hf allowed users to see buying links etc without even signing up.

as alexa shows you should really consider a cracking section on this forum as the 4 sites that have same criteria all rank above this site are cracking forums.

as this month most users that signed up here were looking for "deepnudes"

SIM-2470866 - August 4, 2019, 6:36 pm

The number of clicks/users I've gotten from the ads here are really amazing. I've been advertising on many forums from quite some time and still HF's ad beat all of those within 1 Month. I'm more then happy with the results. As always ignore the butthurts Omni. HF is not just a discussion forum now., its an AIO Package.

Lawler - August 4, 2019, 6:41 pm

(Aug 4, 2019 06:36 PM)NakedTurtle Wrote: [CITE](#) The number of clicks/users I've gotten from the ads here are really amazing. I've been advertising on many forums from quite some time and still HF's ad beat all of those within 1 Month. I'm more then happy with the results. As always ignore the butthurts Omni. HF is not just a discussion forum now., its an AIO Package.

You're advertising on a forum that doesnt allow a cracking section... what do you expect lol

sneezing panda - August 4, 2019, 6:49 pm

If I'm reading that right, you say that when we login or come to HF it will go to our profile page? Is that right?

emotionull - August 4, 2019, 7:00 pm

Interested to see how you make HF more into a social hub sort of feel.

123 - August 4, 2019, 7:19 pm

It's almost 9 months I have been in this forum just like a baby in a womb. I have learned so much here. I would really like to thank Omni and Xerotic for putting continuous effort to make HF a better place than yesterday.

Those MF's who says stats are being faked need to know if it was really about boosting stats, you wouldn't have been closed as having more members increases site activity by a lil amount if we speak statistically.

HF is about knowledge and helping hand who want to learn something new and earn few bucks with their talent. Omni; butthurts will always be there just ignore them focus on your job buddy. Positive vibes !!

Tor - August 4, 2019, 7:27 pm

I think a cool HF feature would be to see some live graph stats about members like the stats shown in the HF news threads.

Also some stats from google analytics might look cool as well if omni is comfortable in sharing them with the public.

P.S. : Omni, people's opinion about fake stats etc, shouldn't influence your mood in any way.

Mix - August 4, 2019, 8:52 pm

I heard about the whole ordeal with so-called fake shit going on and was surprised it went on for so long, to be honest. Granted to say thank you for announcing the clear up of there efforts and resolving the whole thing.

"good teaser"

Omni you have done a little more than a good teaser for the new update for HF and that's not even the start of it. I personally cant wait to see what else is to come to HF 2019 for HF has been mad so far and we still have a while to go.

Elweth - August 4, 2019, 10:53 pm

That explains the buddy requests I have been getting. Keep up good work!

Blazin - August 5, 2019, 12:11 am

Pretty stupid for people think he would fake stats when everyone knows the traffic this place gets not exactly the amount but a good estimation.

Btw really like the red theme rocking it now it's smooth.

01001 - August 5, 2019, 1:41 am

I've been a keen observer of HF stats posted by Omniscient. I don't even need to compare, as the efforts put-in by Xerotic and Omniscient are fructifying. The UI has improved, and I don't feel like I'm using a traditional Mybb Forum, the development is beyond Mybb's vision!

As far as SEO is concerned, it's all about accessing a site most efficiently, and the HF UI has had improved a lot. The site navigation is easy, and a hierarchy can be seen. Those who cannot understand what's going on HF would spread hearsay.

Spaark - August 5, 2019, 8:49 am

(Aug 4, 2019 06:36 PM)NakedTurtle Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) The number of clicks/users I've gotten from the ads here are really amazing. I've been advertising on many forums from quite some time and still HF's ad beat all of those within 1 Month. I'm more then happy with the results. As always ignore the butthurts Omni. HF is not just a discussion forum now., its an AIO Package.

When you've got your advertising clients testifying to site traffic you know you're doing a good job.

Also Omni, accept my buddy request dammit!

Cooligan - August 5, 2019, 9:37 am

Damn, I really like the sound of that news about our future profile updates.

I've been saying for a good while now that HF is by FAR the forum with the most features, sections to browse, active staff and development team, and constant updates. In my time on forums (which has been years upon years) HF just takes the cake as the greatest. The community here is spectacular, of course we have some bad apples in the bunch but what community doesn't? Both in real life and online, everywhere is bound to have some bad seeds.

Things like the HF Hack Game, the massive profile update we just had, the onsite gambling games, Bytes, Award Goals, and especially the contracts system is exactly what separates HF from the rest and makes it POP. No other forum has as good of a contracts system as we do, absolutely no other forum has even close to such a good, fun, and interactive onsite game such as the HF Hack Game. I know many forums have things like Award Goals etc, however HF has recently taken a turn with

some specific awards and really brought back the definition of earning your awards, which I love and missed.

@Omni: Don't let people tell you that you're doing a bad job, because you are doing the opposite. You and Xerotic (who I'm very glad I've gotten the chance to get to know somewhat as he's also a really good guy) put so much continuous effort into making sure HF is stable and none of us in the community would be able to show gratitude worth 14 years of excellent forum administration.. Sure things like the rep reset happened which didn't bode well with some, however we move past things like that for the better, and more long term goals that you guys have for HF.

Another key difference between HF and other forums is the quality of content both staff and especially the member base produce. Our threads such as our stickies, tutorials, guides, help desks, support groups, etc, are by far of the most high quality threads I've seen regarding that. The staff team makes sure that the community remains HQ in the HF marketplace in terms of making sure we're engaging properly, not low quality posting, and most importantly follow the rules that has allowed HF to exist for so long. I think a lot of people don't realize just how important some of those rules truly are.

Overall HF is a fantastic place so I can see why you guys have such optimistic plans for the future. I'm not the greatest when it comes to SEO but I'm glad to hear our traffic has ticked up since January. I love seeing and reading threads like this, it shows honesty and is just a nice, different kind of engagement with the community. I'm sure that one day we'll see those total clicks for the previous 90 days be up to around 5 million!

I'll always love HF and its community. Thank you for keeping it amazing.

- A Cooligan who cares <3

Omniscient - August 5, 2019, 11:49 am

Quote:@Omni: Don't let people tell you that you're doing a bad job, because you are doing the opposite

It's more about someone telling everyone else that I'm doing a bad job. Especially if it's straight-out lies. A bit hard to swallow.

I get shit 24/7 and have pretty much for over a decade so I'm mostly immune to it. But I do have some concern over the general reputation that HF has. We've never been really loved as a community and me personally even less so. But if someone searches for HF and they know nothing about the site, then they read these false claims, it's going to probably skew their experience here. Example is that I get sometimes someone joins, asks me for help on an issue, I help them and they are like "wow, you're so much nicer than I heard".

Meh, just another day at HF I suppose.

SoulZeh - August 5, 2019, 11:51 am

(Aug 5, 2019 11:49 AM)Omniscient Wrote: [CITE](#) It's more about someone telling everyone else that I'm doing a bad job. Especially if it's straight-out lies. A bit hard to swallow.

I get shit 24/7 and have pretty much for over a decade so I'm mostly immune to it. But I do have some concern over the general reputation that HF has. We've never been really loved as a community and me personally even less so. But if someone searches for HF and they know nothing about the site, then they read these false claims, it's going to probably skew their experience here. Example is that I get sometimes someone joins, asks me for help on an issue, I help them and they are like "wow, you're so much nicer than I heard".

Meh, just another day at HF I suppose.

I can understand how you feel a little shitty because it's not just you that's getting tarnished its the site, but you're doing a fantastic job... I guess people are just jealous and probably a lot of butt hurt kids that get banned that make the false claims, fuck em..

Xerotic - August 5, 2019, 12:03 pm

Thanks everybody for the feedback. Omni/HF took a chance with me as HF's developer and it's been a great experience. Just for frame of reference... I started learning how to code a decade ago when I joined HF and now I'm using my knowledge to help further the site even more. It's funny how life works out and it's great to be a part of HackForums.net. Through all the negativity we persevere because we have a strong community that cares. HF wouldn't be HF without the members we have.

Doctor. - August 5, 2019, 12:22 pm

(Aug 4, 2019 06:03 PM)Xerotic Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) It is worth noting that HF does NOT consist of merely posts anymore. We have games (blackjack, slots, Hack Game, etc), contracts, profile comments, and more that is considered activity. You can't judge HF's activity solely based on posting. That would be like judging somebody's Facebook activity by just how many pictures they upload. We have a plethora of stuff to do on HF and while we plan to always add more... the next important objective is tying it all together. Omniscient has been saying it the past year and a half since I joined as a developer... there is a vision. It just takes time for it to come to fruition and that time is now.

Amazing. Simply outstanding. HF clearly has the vision for a bright future. The hard part is coming up with the ideas in the first place. Now all there is left to do is implementation. I can't wait to see this forum grow even more. I love it so much! HF plays such an important role in my life.

Uriel - August 5, 2019, 12:35 pm

This has been interesting to follow over the last year or so. I'm impressed by how much the stats have improved overall.

Thanks for sharing this with us, and I'm hoping it continues on.

Cooligan - August 5, 2019, 1:06 pm

(Aug 5, 2019 11:49 AM)Omniscient Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) It's more about someone telling everyone else that I'm doing a bad job. Especially if it's straight-out lies. A bit hard to swallow.

I get shit 24/7 and have pretty much for over a decade so I'm mostly immune to it. But I do have some concern over the general reputation that HF has. We've never been really loved as a community and me personally even less so. But if someone searches for HF and they know nothing about the site, then they read these false claims, it's going to probably skew their experience here.

Example is that I get sometimes someone joins, asks me for help on an issue, I help them and they are like "wow, you're so much nicer than I heard".

Meh, just another day at HF I suppose.

Yeah I can believe that. After so many years it's almost hard to not be immune to it. At the same time though I totally get your outlook on HF's and your reputation, as I care a ton about my reputation as a person and my name. And if someone tried to tarnish it with lies and just petty bullscht, well I'd feel the same way.

Being confident that you know me by now and know that I only ever mean well, and also because I would want any type of constructive criticism myself, I'll be 100% honest with you bossman; me being a member I can say confidently that some people definitely do maybe almost "fear" pm'ing you for whatever dumb reason they come up with, however I have seen it over the years. You and I both know every time we've talked it's always been pleasant and nice, so I have no complaints whatsoever. But like I said I have heard from members over the years that they just don't want to

make you mad, or maybe just might not want you to take what they're saying wrong? I'm not sure, I'm just telling you what it's like in some members perspectives.

People should know that you're definitely much more approachable than some might think. ?

iNviZ - August 5, 2019, 1:33 pm

I see so much happening around HF, I don't post as much, but find myself doing other things around the forum. New HF has been amazing, keep up the great work.

Dorrance - August 5, 2019, 5:51 pm

Looking forward to seeing what's next in stored.

Kill Joy - August 5, 2019, 7:56 pm

Looking forward to seeing what the rest of the year brings.

Will you be sharing any data/results from the questionnaire?

ÇdnîS Lu?i? - August 5, 2019, 8:18 pm

This is one of the only OG forums still online to this day.

Warbiest - August 6, 2019, 8:57 am

(Aug 4, 2019 02:18 PM)Omniscient Wrote: [CITE](#) When you visit Twitter or Facebook you start by going to your own profile page and from there you branch out and your own profile is the main URL you visit. This is exactly how HF will be. Your own profile will be your main page to visit. This means a lot of content and options need to be on that page. Your Buddy List will be integral.

When I visit Reddit, my user profile is about the last thing I ever go to. I visit Reddit for the user-aggregated or user-generated stream of content.

You have to take into consideration that Twitter and Facebook are platforms that in their essence are social, they relied on small (private) social relations between the users. It's true that both have changed drastically throughout the years becoming much more like a public forum, but I think you see the point I'm making.

Hackforums is not a social platform in that same regard. The success of Hackforums comes from niche user-created content shared on a semi-anonymous platform.

I'm saying this just to remind you that focusing on social interaction too much, while neglecting the reason why people sign up in the first place, could be detrimental to hackforums in the long-term.

Just take a look at any of the most active accounts on hackforums, or even the 5% of most active accounts, I'm sure you will find that a large portion of those users are either consuming content (i.e. learning from tutorials, buying services, reading discussions) or are creating content (selling services, writing about niche topics, teaching others, etc.).

Although The Lounge, for example, is one of the most active parts of the forum, it's always just been a place for people to go when there is no other content to consume. I think you'd agree that The Lounge would never be this popular if it wasn't for the rest of Hackforums being so interesting. So what I'm basically trying to say: perhaps be cautious about moving the forum as a whole into the direction of what The Lounge is.

Having said all that, I think change is good and I'm excited to see how Hackforums will continue to change.

+mK - September 18, 2019, 10:56 pm

Sorry to kind of gravedig here, but I was about to create a new thread, but thought it'd be better to

post it here.

I wanted to point something out, that I thought could potentially hurt conversion rate of visitors (or maybe not, this is all just food for thought):

If you're on Google, or someone links anyone OFF site to a Hack Forums thread, they are met with a landing page. For those who haven't registered for awhile, it looks like this:

Landing [\(Click to View\)](#)

I don't want to assume anything, but I'm going to take a wild guess and say the majority of users coming to HF are people wanting to see tutorials or products being sold. If I am coming from Google and click on search result for a tutorial on how to...."Setup a Raspberry Pi". As a visitor:I'm met with the above landing page VERSUS the thread content I'd expect to see.

Why would I click the register button if I don't know what the contents of the thread are?

What if it's presumably not something I was looking for?

What if none of the things that are listed on the above landing page are not a reason I wanted to join and I was wanted to see how to "Setup a Raspberry Pi"?

I'd be very intrigued to see what the behaviors report looks like. I don't want to beat a dead horse and it's something I'm sure you are already aware of, but the bounce rate could potentially be improved upon with this change.

What I'm proposing (or some variation of it):

Don't completely shut off the entire thread, but count the first 100-200 words within a thread and cap your landing page directly after it. We've all been on other forums, looking for the answers to our questions. The ones that say "You must register to view further". I think something along those lines would be something to seriously look into. Here is an idea of what I'm suggesting it should look like:

After [\(Click to View\)](#)

This all needs planning and I'm wondering what the stats are for NEW users vs NEW members. A new user being someone who found Hack Forums from SERP or any other off-site location. A new member would be someone who obviously registered after landing on any given thread. Are the new members bouncing after they register and find out that the content they were looking for wasn't suitable to their needs?

I haven't looked into Google Analytics in a long damn time, but I'm wondering if it's possible to use the data from the GA report and MyBB reports to create a kind of pseudo-report (for lack of better words) for HF's needs to target specific needs.

Omniscient - September 19, 2019, 11:31 am

I've experimented with the landing page a few times. Overall we lose too much registration by allowing guests to view content. There isn't really a lot of gain.

Here is what I expect from a new visitor.

1. Register
2. Posting and community participating
3. Upgrade

By allowing guests to view threads I don't even get to step one.

Quote: Why would I click the register button if I don't know what the contents of the thread are? Curiosity. Why would you register if you can see the content without doing so?

You do know that lots of sites require registration to see content such as Facebook. HF has also always been this way too.

Quote: but the bounce rate could potentially be improved upon with this change. Bounce rate got worse. Imagine you come to a thread from Google. You see the content, read it, then close the window. With a landing page you might click Register or try to view the sites main page.

btw, that landing page is very new. Probably did that 5-6 months ago to try and lower bounce rate and make it more of a promotional join page instead of the basic MyBB no permission page. Bounce rate has improved since then. The video now has almost 70k views too.

Quote: Don't completely shut off the entire thread, but count the first 100-200 words within a thread and cap your landing page directly after it.

Mm..not sure that would work any better. IMHO your example looks like that's the thread content and it's not a clear landing page with promotion to join.

Quote: This all needs planning and I'm wondering what the stats are for NEW users vs NEW members.

We get about 10-12k daily clicks just from Google and about 6k-7k daily members login. btw, that's more than any competitor for actual members who login to the site. You can view that here: <https://hackforums.net/online.php?action=today> (scroll to bottom)

All our metrics have increased since the start of the year. I am a stat whore really. You want to be impressed. Look at past 90 of our Alexa ranking which slipped a lot when our SEO was shit.

<https://www.alexa.com/siteinfo/hackforums.net> Our 90 day gain is 9k positions and climbing almost daily. And our USA rank is very good at 7600 which is much better than other competing sites. I really don't care about ranking in India, Phillipines, Turkey or some country with low quality traffic that doesn't convert for either upgrades or for member products/services. HF is the higher quality site for traffic when it comes to advertising.

At this point it's a daily routine to review all of the sites metrics. That includes Analytics, Daily Posts, Member Logins, Alexa Rank, and more. I probably spend 30-60 minutes checking in on how HF is doing. Something that I did for many years but then stopped doing it and HF slipped because of my mistake. And we continue to make adjustments that are absolutely working to increase traffic and ranking. Our SEO is spectacular but until we are Alexa top 5k again I'm not resting.

Overall I'd put our stats up against any other site and HF is still #1 except in only one metric...and that's daily posts. But when you see a 500 reply thread with 499 posts of "thanks" it's all shit and useless. What point is there having all that database activity and terrible thread content which no one will read and the search engines won't rank well. I'd rather have 5 good replies. I didn't like it when HF had 35k posts per day. It was a lot of crap being posted. I'd like to see us closer to 5k posts per day though because that be about 1 post per member per day. Part of the reason we have daily check-in. But we have so much more going on now with HF than posting so that's partially why that activity is lower. And that's okay. I want HF to be more than a forum posting community. Our metrics for page views, sessions, and unique users is very strong.

Quote: I haven't looked into Google Analytics in a long damn time, but I'm wondering if it's possible

to use the data from the GA report and MyBB reports to create a kind of pseudo-report (for lack of better words) for HF's needs to target specific needs.

What do you think I already do? It's my job to analyze the data I have and make decisions on what's best to do.

Ivex - September 19, 2019, 2:04 pm

A big problem with running a forum in 2019 and moving into 2020 is that unlike 7 years ago, the average savvy internet user doesn't know what a forum is.

There was a time when if you knew a thing or two about the internet, you knew about a forum.

Why so many inactive registrations?

They're overwhelmed.

This forum has nearing 4,000,000 threads and a lot of sections to find them in. How does someone break into this community? I found it hard coming into HF so late in the game. An established userbase, if you didn't know the exact etiquette of the forum you could find yourself not enjoying your time here. And I'm an experienced forum user, been running them since I was 9. So, someone comes here out of curiosity and leaves because there's nothing on this forum to push people in a direction.

This isn't a criticism of the team or this forum - it has been modernising quite well.

However, I would suggest utilising small goal based rewards to slowly feed users into becoming active.

User signs up: they get a quick walkthrough of the various features of HF, much like a lot of GPT sites do. Users can see what the features of the forum are and learning how to use it.

Then: offer small Bytes based rewards for creating your first thread, getting your first reputation, sending your first PM, achieving your first level up on the game. A bit like the award goals system but for new users.

If you push users in a direction, they're more likely to stay active then being left to their own devices. People no longer have patience to discover what to do on their own, they want to be guided.

A goal based system and a walkthrough for new users would not only help HF but improve forums as a whole by educating people on how to use them in 2019. A forum can only be simplified so far, social media sites like Instagram will always be easier. But it doesn't mean you can't adapt a forum to be easier to use. The walkthrough could be ran by Stanley to introduce people to the HF bot.

Not only that, the existing community has a role to play. Introductions should follow a template that's pre-set when a new thread is created (can be removed but at least it's there) that allows users to make basic questions like why they've joined and any questions they have about the forum. Then, us, the community should look at these responses to help guide a user towards the parts of the forum that will help them the most.

Clearly, the issue isn't traffic or even registrations. It's getting people to engage with forums in a social media age. I believe that the features introduced to HF recently will keep members on HF longer but the ideas stated above will get them to use HF in the first place.

AnonFawkes - September 19, 2019, 2:18 pm

(Aug 4, 2019 02:18 PM)Omniscient Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) It's been rumored I am faking stats of HF and other nonsense about HF activity.

I just updated our Google Analytics.

<https://hackforums.net/Analytics.pdf>

https://hackforums.net/Analytics_Lang.pdf

I'd be happy to share live Google Analytics pages with the community and advertisers but there really isn't an public view option. Just an export. You can add users to view only but not a direct share link which I would prefer. Instead I have to export and upload to HF for easy viewing.

Stats show we're very steady for traffic and if you had the last version (January 2019) you'd see we actually ticked up.

This is our Google Search Console from past 90 days. I just took it.

You can see steady uptick and certainly some positive momentum because of our SEO efforts. Members can view my other threads with SEO screenshots to compare.

[State of SEO](#)

While it's true that members are not posting nearly as much as they were. We actually have increased our metrics on a number of other fronts. Because of social login integration we have increased registrations by 40% (HUGE). Our clicks from Google are higher, that's more traffic for advertisers.

One of the next phases of the change coming to HF will be increased member involvement via their profiles. We have already begun redesigning the profile page so members can customize them. I have already laid-out the coding projects to Xerotic on how new features are going to operate. I expect within 2-3 weeks we'll see major releases concerning them. My goal is to transform HF from just a forum into more of a social hub and your profile is going to be central to that.

When you visit Twitter or Facebook you start by going to your own profile page and from there you branch out and your own profile is the main URL you visit. This is exactly how HF will be. Your own profile will be your main page to visit. This means a lot of content and options need to be on that page. Your Buddy List will be integral.

I really don't want to give away all the features planned but this is a good teaser of what's to come.

Thank you.

I think with all the talent of HF, some top hackers should create videos and make a "HF security series"

Such as MLT, and others. The goal can be , a list of topics, such as, Phishing, Metasploit Antivirus Evasion, and multiple authors can write their piece on the topic, all the data is combined and the best data kept, to get the clearest picture of how to 'Evade AV using metasploit'

It can be like a community project, which gets peer reviewed so only true, working info gets in.

Hf could then have a series of official topics, courses, or threads, areas where the information is hosted, containing very true, up to date info.

The projenator for this idea:

I see HF as having a wealth of knowledge, and that knowledge is often found in various sticky threads.

Imagine if multiple people could combine the knowledge from several threads on the same topic, (have lots of people write on the same topic, and aggregate the best info into an all-encompassing thread/data source)

Omniscient - September 19, 2019, 3:00 pm

Quote: A big problem with running a forum in 2019 and moving into 2020 is that unlike 7 years ago, the average savvy internet user doesn't know what a forum is.

This is very true that today's users don't know what an internet forum is. But I'm not sure back in the day most did then either. It did have an audience but it was mostly geeky internet types. This is why forums about baking cupcakes never did well. Facebook came and all social accounts got sucked into that void. Now social media on FB, Twitter, Reddit, and Instagram represent the vast majority of social accounts. I mean, even Google made several attempts to break into the social account field and failed. Proof that the task to compete against these giants is nearly impossible.

Quote: This forum has nearing 4,000,000 threads and a lot of sections to find them in. How does someone break into this community? I found it hard coming into HF so late in the game. An established userbase, if you didn't know the exact etiquette of the forum you could find yourself not enjoying your time here. And I'm an experienced forum user, been running them since I was 9. So, someone comes here out of curiosity and leaves because there's nothing on this forum to push people in a direction.

Actually it's funny you mention this because it's a high priority for me to make HF simpler for new members but it's an incredibly hard task. However, I have a plan. The plan is Stanley and Convo. I'm hoping to use Stanley and Convo to create a type of AI that will interact with new members for helping them to understand HF and how best to use it.

Quote: However, I would suggest utilising small goal based rewards to slowly feed users into becoming active.

You mean like adding Bytes, forum games, the Hack Game, Convo, Award Goals, and things like that? That's really a giant part of what we've been doing.

Quote: User signs up: they get a quick walkthrough of the various features of HF, much like a lot of GPT sites do. Users can see what the features of the forum are and learning how to use it.

The PM on registration starts the process already and tries to guide them without overwhelming them. I think my idea to use Stanley and Convo might do even better as it could feel more personal and interactive.

Quote: Then: offer small Bytes based rewards for creating your first thread

I already do this. You get a PM on your first post which gives you a small Bytes reward then gives you links to Byte features and does some explaining. So I'm way ahead of you on this already. Many existing members are not aware of the changes that have taken place for guests and new members in just the past year.

Quote: People no longer have patience to discover what to do on their own, they want to be guided. [/quote]

Stanley....

[quote]. A forum can only be simplified so far, social media sites like Instagram will always be easier. But it doesn't mean you can't adapt a forum to be easier to use. The walkthrough could be ran by Stanley to introduce people to the HF bot.

And I again beat you to the punch and already had this discussion with Xerotic about using Stanley and Convo and maybe even doing some AI work to meld it into the site. AI libraries already exist and it's becoming easier to incorporate the technology onto an existing platform.

Quote:Clearly, the issue isn't traffic or even registrations. It's getting people to engage with forums in a social media age.

And that's the fight. I think a lot of the forum traffic has gone to Discord or maybe even Reddit. But now I feel Convo is a competing platform. I may even fork it as a standalone site/app.

Quote:I think with all the talent of HF, some top hackers should create videos and make a "HF security series"

We created the member blogs a bit ago. It's not yet fully integrated into the site. I wanted to see how it was used by members and the plan is a complete index page redesign with the blogs as part of it. Eventually my goal is that every existing member who visits HF considers their own profile page as important as their own Twitter page.

I did ask about a Podcast to also highlight more interest topics and media variety to the site.

HF is finally on the path to evolving into a fully modern platform. And I don't mean a website, I mean a platform because ultimately I'd like to have multiple apps related to the site. One for Convo, one for the forum (notifications, posting and such), and one for a feed of information such as Blogs, Podcats, Hack Game and other material we want members to be involved with.

So much to do and the challenge is doing it in a timely manner. I may even get additional paid coders involved.

Ivex - September 19, 2019, 3:03 pm

Seems like you're already two steps ahead!

Awesome work. I'll think of a good new feature you're yet to think of one day ;)

Omniscient - September 19, 2019, 3:16 pm

(Sep 19, 2019 03:03 PM)Ivex Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Seems like you're already two steps ahead!

Awesome work. I'll think of a good new feature you're yet to think of one day ;)

Realize how much I'm on this site. You might come up with an idea but it's almost sure that I considered some form of it at some point. If you saw my notes you'd be like, "WTF"!

Example is today I have an entire page of notes I took because Xerotic is off so that means I have time to come up with ideas. A team of 5 Xerotics could work for a year and still not do everything I want. I have 10+ years of notes.

Not everything we try works though. And there is always the changing nature of the internet and technology. Just a constant task to keep up. How to get ahead of the game? That's the question I try to ask myself.

BTC - September 19, 2019, 3:36 pm

I think there is a large audience that looks up hacking related stuff to learn, but choose to watch

videos. In these cases they are generally brought to Youtube from Google searching, or even go directly to Youtube to search up what they want.

I am still learning SEO, and practicing, I realized that google images had a huge part to play in my projects I was running. Now I am trying to get in to ranking higher in video searches because it would also be beneficial.

Perhaps having something like the blogs, but where people can submit videos for various things such as hacking related tutorials, maybe coding some things...could also be beneficial. Then having some sort of award goal perhaps, like the blogs, but for video guides could give users more incentive to make some videos. And then the quality of videos, content, obviously left to whoever would be approving these videos to be listed.

Of course these videos would all link back to HF as the platform, even if users choose to embed their videos or other videos on different websites.

This could draw in some more attention, although I have not given much thought to the logistics yet. The way I see it is I imagine there are many people who might search up something like "How to run kali linux on virtualbox" or something along those lines.

Rather than reading a long tutorial (lazy people) they might be more prone to clicking on the "videos" tab for their search and finding the most relevant video.

In which case they might come across a nice looking video for exactly what they need, linking to HackForums.

As I said about logistics, this would require being expanded on a lot. I have not thought through it much, just an idea I had when I was doing SEO for my own website and decided to change things to make it host videos myself. For instance users are forced to register to view the content of the forums. Although this target audience would be for more lazy people generally speaking, or people who just follow better by watching rather than reading. In which case I think those are the type of people to click off and go to a video on YouTube or somewhere which doesn't require registration. Have no idea what the best way to work that issue out would be- I'm sure somebody else, or yourself could though.

Anyways, I'm sure you've already thought about this, and it's a lot of work on top of the mass amount of work already being done, and to be done in the future. But I guess I just came here to say I think this could be a good idea, could help with SEO if implemented correctly. Although I'm sure there's also reasons why this would not be realistic, or worth while. I would love to see it even though I don't know what the best way to implement it would be. ?

Ivex - September 19, 2019, 3:40 pm

(Sep 19, 2019 03:16 PM)Omniscient Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Realize how much I'm on this site. You might come up with an idea but it's almost sure that I considered some form of it at some point. If you saw my notes you'd be like, "WTF"!

Example is today I have an entire page of notes I took because Xerotic is off so that means I have time to come up with ideas. A team of 5 Xerotics could work for a year and still not do everything I want. I have 10+ years of notes.

Not everything we try works though. And there is always the changing nature of the internet and technology. Just a constant task to keep up. How to get ahead of the game? That's the question I try to ask myself. Lmao. At least nobody can accuse you of sitting back.

HF 2050 = Xerotic clones working round the clock? ?

I get it though. I'm the same. I'll write pages and pages and pages of notes for my projects and there isn't enough time in my lifetime to get round to them all.

Omniscient - September 19, 2019, 4:02 pm

Quote:I think there is a large audience that looks up hacking related stuff to learn, but choose to watch videos. In these cases they are generally brought to Youtube from Google searching, or even go directly to Youtube to search up what they want.

Correct. And almost all coding help goes to StackOverflow. It's a huge issue and the DoJ needs to look into the monopoly created by Google. There did make a couple SEO changes this year that does benefit HF such as limiting results of a domain to 1 result per search. This means a search doesn't have 5 results from SO which might leave room for another domain/site.

We've never been big with Google images. It's not my target. It does bring some traffic but it's the type of quality content I am seeking.

Relying on Google services like Youtube imho is a bad idea. I'd rather use Streamable or some other platform. Google should be about data and search. It should not have content control as it does.

+mK - September 19, 2019, 6:57 pm

Quote:Bounce rate got worse. Imagine you come to a thread from Google. You see the content, read it, then close the window. With a landing page you might click Register or try to view the sites main page.

btw, that landing page is very new. Probably did that 5-6 months ago to try and lower bounce rate and make it more of a promotional join page instead of the basic MyBB no permission page.

Bounce rate has improved since then. The video now has almost 70k views too.

Yeah man, very justifiable. I'm actually not even sure what the MyBB landing page previously looked like, it was probably terrible. I have no doubt that would boost the bounce rate. I don't want to even get into the psychology of a landing page, but that was what prompted me to make my original response to this thread. For example, (I'm not saying it will help, just hypothetical) if the video were to be the first element within the tbody versus it being towards the register/login button could boost conversion due to it being front and center. Likewise, having the register/login buttons being front and center/having a brighter color (green) could convert traffic, due to visitors automatically being drawn to the brightest element on the page. I don't know how you'd do it, but if you lookup examples of bad landing pages, there are some blogs that point out common mistakes they see with low conversion rates for visitors. It's really weird to see what a minor change can make and it's what really got me into internet marketing.

Quote:Mm..not sure that would work any better. IMHO your example looks like that's the thread content and it's not a clear landing page with promotion to join.

Quote:Overall I'd put our stats up against any other site and HF is still #1 except in only one metric...and that's daily posts. But when you see a 500 reply thread with 499 posts of "thanks" it's all Clay Davis and useless. What point is there having all that database activity and terrible thread content which no one will read and the search engines won't rank well. I'd rather have 5 good replies. I didn't like it when HF had 35k posts per day. It was a lot of crap being posted. I'd like to see us closer to 5k posts per day though because that be about 1 post per member per day. Part of the reason we have daily check-in. But we have so much more going on now with HF than posting so that's partially why that activity is lower. And that's okay. I want HF to be more than a forum posting community. Our metrics for page views, sessions, and unique users is very strong.

Yeah, I knew that was a shitty example I provided. Perhaps a RED background or text, something more lively. You know those forums you go to where you must register to view the content, then once you register, you have to say 'Thanks' in a post? Something that looks more like that, but not functionality. I agree, having some fuckhead say 'Thanks' to a thread not only does nothing for SEO, those users could potentially/most likely will be unimpressed by the content revealed by doing so.

If anyone denies that you're trying to fix SEO/retention, they're an idiot. I can see the improvement anywhere I look. I'm not telling you anything new, but any decision to you decide to make has to be calculated, otherwise it could have potential unforeseeable negative impact.

Quote: We get about 10-12k daily clicks just from Google and about 6k-7k daily members login. btw, that's more than any competitor for actual members who login to the site. You can view that here: <https://hackforums.net/online.php?action=today> (scroll to bottom)

All our metrics have increased since the start of the year. I am a stat whore really. You want to be impressed. Look at past 90 of our Alexa ranking which slipped a lot when our SEO was Clay Davis.

<https://www.alexa.com/siteinfo/hackforums.net> Our 90 day gain is 9k positions and climbing almost daily. And our USA rank is very good at 7600 which is much better than other competing sites. I really don't care about ranking in India, Phillipines, Turkey or some country with low quality traffic that doesn't convert for either upgrades or for member products/services. HF is the higher quality site for traffic when it comes to advertising.

That is actually impressive. If only Bitcoin looked like that chart. ?

US based traffic is easily the best traffic for both conversion in registration and monetarily, which I'd assume is also why advertisers pay significantly higher for their traffic.

All in all, if landing page thing that cuts off thread content can't work, it would be quite interesting to see what a professionally done landing page would look like (both for the end user and for conversion).

I'm going to leave these here, as they are what originally got me serious about what a landing page can do:

<https://www.thefastlaneforum.com/community/threads/the-biggest-landing-page-mistake.68353/> - The dude is kind of all over the place (like me), but makes sense once he dives into ripping apart landing pages.

<https://unbounce.com/landing-page-examples/high-converting-landing-pages/> - Obviously doesn't have a 'Forum' landing page, but their examples as to why they're good landing pages could be used to benefit HF's current landing page.

Omniscient - September 20, 2019, 9:40 am

Quote: but any decision to you decide to make has to be calculated, otherwise it could have potential unforeseeable negative impact.

Absolutely but doing nothing is not an option. Realize that SEO is more art than science. Even the best SEO's screw up. It takes measured changes and then waiting to see how it worked. Sometimes you have to wait months too. Sometimes it's immediate (2-3 days). Example was we added a new sitemap, sent that to Google and our page count in the index jumped dramatically. Unfortunately it tanked again a month later but then came back back up and is now at a reasonable 1.1m pages in the index. We are very steady now and the growth is more natural and consistent. Things are definitely looking good.

Quote: All in all, if landing page thing that cuts off thread content can't work, it would be quite interesting to see what a professionally done landing page would look like (both for the end user and for conversion).

I think being a webmaster for 20+ years and this being my main income for the past 15 does make me a professional. Please keep that in mind. I think it's forgotten sometimes that I am a legit pro.

The landing page is something I've tweaked about 5 times this year. Could it do better? Maybe so.

<https://unbounce.com/landing-page-examples/high-converting-landing-pages/>

"using video on your landing page is a great way to boost engagement and crank up your conversion rate"

I did that...

Also made the Login | Register on top bar for mobile. Added social logins which increased registrations by 30%.

I'd remove the ads too but they are actual income for the site and for the advertisers. I believe if I removed them from the landing page that they'd have lower conversion and I'd have to lower my prices. If members are going to click away then they should do so with advertisements on the site that create a monetary benefit.

If I was to do more alterations it really might be to remove the nav menu and logo. Maybe I'd toy with text size too. The "things you can do on HF" section could possibly be more bold in size to garner more attention.

Maybe add to the page some independent review sites score like SiteJabber which we have 4 stars now.

<https://www.sitejabber.com/reviews/hackforums.net> (btw need some positive reviews the trolls have taken over again)

Great discussion btw. Sending you some Bytes.

bandors - September 20, 2019, 10:15 am

I think something like PMing new users that they can get an award or something for hitting 10 posts.

Maybe make the new member PM more welcoming. I haven't seen it in... (checks date) eight years. I remember it being confusing though.

Omniscient - September 20, 2019, 10:35 am

(Sep 20, 2019 10:15 AM)Bandors Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) I think something like PMing new users that they can get an award or something for hitting 10 posts.

Maybe make the new member PM more welcoming. I haven't seen it in... (checks date) eight years. I remember it being confusing though.

Giving out awards that easily doesn't make sense to me. Devalues the rest of the awards.

bandors - September 20, 2019, 10:39 am

(Sep 20, 2019 09:40 AM)Omniscient Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Maybe add to the page some independent review

sites score like SiteJabber which we have 4 stars now.

<https://www.sitejabber.com/reviews/hackforums.net> (btw need some positive reviews the trolls have taken over again)

Great discussion btw. Sending you some Bytes.

I gotchu ?

(Sep 20, 2019 10:35 AM)Omniscient Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Giving out awards that easily doesn't make sense to me. Devalues the rest of the awards.

Some people have like 10 rows of awards now. You used to be more strict with "it should be hard for a member to have more than 10 awards." I think giving out one easy to earn award, in return for a user making their first posts is reasonable in 2019 HF. Obviously your call though.

Omniscient - September 20, 2019, 10:45 am

Quote:Some people have like 10 rows of awards now.

Very few and those are normally heavy donators. Others have just been collecting awards for a decade and they build up over time.

bandors - September 20, 2019, 10:48 am

(Sep 20, 2019 10:45 AM)Omniscient Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Very few and those are normally heavy donators. Others have just been collecting awards for a decade and they build up over time.

A little off topic, but you mentioned how post activity is down. Maybe hold a weekly contest for the most posts, or something like that.

Omniscient - September 20, 2019, 10:54 am

(Sep 20, 2019 10:48 AM)Bandors Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) A little off topic, but you mentioned how post activity is down. Maybe hold a weekly contest for the most posts, or something like that.

I don't see that as a lasting solution.

Blogger - September 20, 2019, 11:59 am

(Sep 20, 2019 10:48 AM)Bandors Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) A little off topic, but you mentioned how post activity is down. Maybe hold a weekly contest for the most posts, or something like that.

Not a weekly thing. Definitely just a temporary solution and it would lose its appeal. An annual OFFICIAL contest would be cool though. Something like that \$1000 giveaway that we recently had, but with modifications like you had to have been active for the last year(maybe verify a certain amount of posts per month for every month or something). If it was official way more people would have participated but that unofficial contest became the most replied to thread with a lot of views, etc.

Omniscient - September 20, 2019, 12:45 pm

(Sep 20, 2019 11:59 AM)Blogger Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Not a weekly thing. Definitely just a temporary solution and it would lose its appeal. An annual OFFICIAL contest would be cool though. Something like that \$1000 giveaway that we recently had, but with modifications like you had to have been active for the last year(maybe verify a certain amount of posts per month for every month or something). If it was official way more people would have participated but that unofficial contest became the most replied to thread with a lot of views, etc.

No thanks.