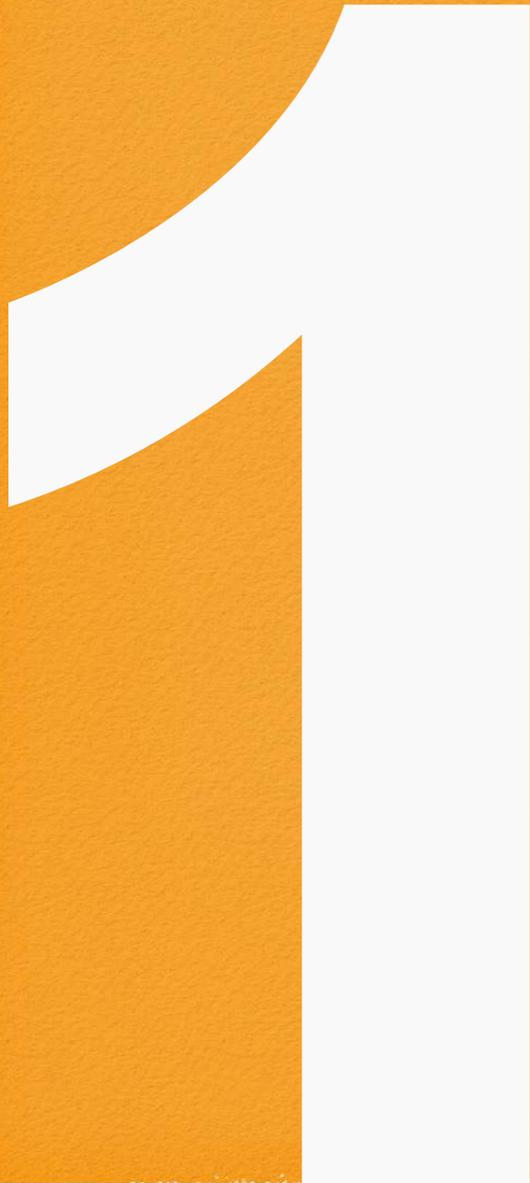


The beginners' guide to lower bounce rate.

Target
Engage
Convert



What is “bounce rate”?



In this first chapter, I will take you back to the essentials of bounce rate. This introduction aims at making sure you have a solid understanding of what “bounce rate” means and how it works, for you to better manipulate it.

Part 1: What is “bounce rate”?

Definition

Bounce rate defines the percentage of visitors to your website that exit the first page they land on. It is not to be mixed with the “exit rate”, which refers to the percentage of people who exit a particular page at any moment during their visit on your site.

As an example, if 7 people out of 10 leave your website before visiting a second page, you have a bounce rate of 70%.

Bounce rate drivers

Having a high bounce rate doesn't necessarily mean your website is doomed. Several scenarios might have happened, to which you can generally find a solution. Most likely, your visitor:

- 👤 Clicked the back button (most common)
- 👤 Closed the browser (window/tab)
- 👤 Typed in a new URL

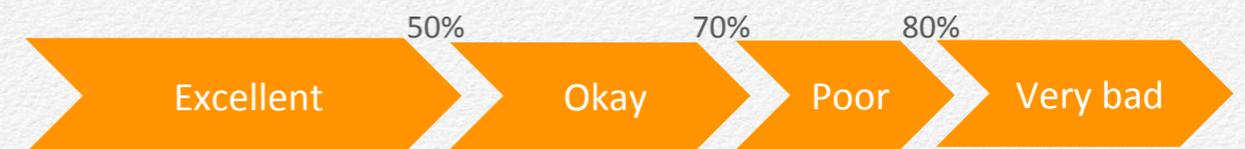
Here, visitors' “bounces” reflect their dissatisfaction due to the fact that maybe they didn't enjoy your content, landed on your page by mistake, or didn't find what they were looking for.

But don't forget to consider that he or she could also have:

- 👤 Clicked an external link/ad
- 👤 Been for lunch and had the session time out
- 👤 Reloaded the page due to slow response time
- 👤 Found what he/she needed on the 1st page

See? It's not always as negative as you may think.

Trends



An average bounce rate is usually around 60 to 70%, so even if 70% of your total visitors can seem like a lot of people, it's actually not bad. Ideally, a bounce rate should be 50% or lower but this is mostly the case for popular and niche websites with loyal visitors or few competitors. A bounce rate between 70% and 80% is poor, and under 80% it is considered very bad. Again, NO PANIC!

If your website experiences a bounce rate higher than what you'd like it to be, you are in the right place; just read on.

Part 1: What is “bounce rate”?

Now, Google identified that bounce rate trends differ from one type of website to another.

Acceptable ranges per type of website:

- 40-60% Content sites
- 30-50% Lead generation sites
- 70-98% Blogs
- 20-40% Retail sites
- 10-30% Service sites

This is certainly food for thought before you start worrying too much about your bounce rate.

Also, consider the type of page you are dealing with. If you are working on the “Contact Us” page for example, high bounce rate means that visitors find the information they seek right away! Nothing alarming if they close the browser once they got your phone number. Same for sales pages, as long as your conversion rate is satisfying.

In short, there are 3 reasons for a high bounce rate:

-  The page provides **EXACTLY** what visitors are looking for.
-  The page attracts the **WRONG** kind of traffic.
-  The page doesn't present information in the **RIGHT** manner (design, content etc)

This concludes the first part about bounce rate and its mechanisms. I hope that by now you have a better grasp of how it works and what can influence it. It's time to move on to the next section of this eBook, which will help you conduct an in-depth analysis of your bounce rate.

High bounce rate? Don't panic. Use it.



Skyrocketing bounce rate usually means a website is struggling, but before you start rethinking your business model, audience, keywords or industry, let's take a closer look at your analytics. This part will help you understand the real meaning of your bounce rate.

Part 2: High bounce rate? Don't panic. Use it.

Learn from your bounce rate using GA.



It is largely accepted that bounce rates must be kept as low as possible, especially for conversion and search engine ranking purposes. Still, many people battle to find the secret recipe.

Google Analytics can lead you in this direction as it provides many useful in-

sights. First, here is what you can do:

1. Identify your “sticky” content

Go to Content -> Site Content -> Pages and see which content keeps people on your site the longest. The analytics will show you the bounce rate for each page and from there you can see which ones are working well. It might be a good idea to redesign some of your weakest pages based on their model, as long as they serve the same purpose (selling, redirecting, informing etc.)

2. Find where your best traffic comes from

Go to Traffic Sources -> All Traffic. There, you'll be able to see who sends the RIGHT people your way (a.k.a buyers, subscribers, followers). By “right”, I refer to the targeted audience interested in what you have to offer and willing to take action (buy, follow, share, subscribe etc.) before exiting your page.

Quality traffic is crucial to a website as it highly affects conversions and bounce rate.

Once you identify these sources you will know who brings you the best quality visitors, which will tell you where to focus your online promotional efforts in the future (is it affiliate forums? Other blogs? Directories?)

3. Compare your best keywords

Go deeper into your traffic analysis and click Search -> Organic to view the data. Look at your keywords and compare incoming traffic and bounce rate for each of them. Identify the keywords that attract the most visitors who don't “bounce” via organic search, and capitalize on those. This is also a good opportunity for you to refine your niche, if needed. We'll look more into this in the [SEO](#) section of Chapter 3.

Questions to ask yourself:

- What pages have more page views and therefore more potential?*
- What page design could you copy and apply to those with high bounce rate?*
- What type of content/message/layout engages and converts your visitors?*

Part 2: High bounce rate? Don't panic. Use it.

Ponder your findings

If you have an e-commerce website for example, it is important to bundle bounce rate, conversion rate and time on page while analyzing your website's performance. For example, if a visitor lands on a sales pages, spends 6 minutes reading its content and ends up buying before exiting, this is recorded as a "bounce" even though it is ultimately what you are aiming for.

Google Analytics can be tweaked a bit for you to add the "visit duration" dimension to each visit that qualifies as a bounce; this is called the "**Adjusted Bounce Rate**". With this tool, you basically tell Google Analytics what is the minimum amount of time visitors must stay on your page for them not to be considered as a bounce.

To determine the duration, you can look at the visit duration for all your visits that lead to conversions, and identify how long buyers usually stay on a page before they make a purchase. You can read more about this [here](#).

If you don't like to use the adjusted bounce rate, you can simply look at the relationship between **Average Time on Site and Bounce Rate** for each one of your pages. In the following table, you can see that the page with 574 views has a high bounce rate of 87.11% and you might want to discard it. Now, if you look at its average time on site you notice that this is the page people actually stay on the longest!

Avg. Time on Page ?	Entrances ?	Bounce Rate ?
00:02:26 Site Avg: 00:02:26 (0.04%)	17,913 % of Total: 100.01% (17,911)	73.68% Site Avg: 73.69% (0.00%)
00:01:35	2,970 (16.58%)	45.62%
00:04:51	641 (3.58%)	89.24%
00:06:26	574 (3.20%)	87.11%
00:03:38	553 (3.09%)	87.16%
00:03:14	544 (3.04%)	82.54%
00:02:44	511 (2.85%)	77.50%

Source: <http://www.ppchero.com/understand-user-engagement-with-customized-bounce-rate/>

This is a sign the page's content is good and carries everything visitors need. In this case, no need to start revamping the page; however, it is worth looking into making it a bit more engaging and leading visitors to dig deeper into your website.

By now you should be able to better understand what your bounce rate is trying to tell you about your website's health.

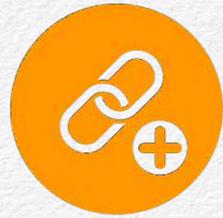
Once you analyzed keywords, traffic sources and the bounce rate itself, it is time to jump into the strategic part of the process. See you in [Chapter 3!](#)



Now, shrink that bounce rate!

3

There could be a lot of reasons for a website to experience high bounce rate. In this part, I'll identify the main factors of influence and will provide you with tricks and tips to reshape bounce rate the way you want and reach your goals. This section is key to improving your website, so stay focused and see you next page!



[Internal Linking](#)



[Smart Devices Responsiveness](#)



[Web Design](#)



[Web Content](#)



[Search Engine Optimization](#)



[Page-Load Time](#)

The big 6

As advised in the previous part, you should have been through the detailed analysis of your bounce rate and should be ready to tackle this section by now. The 6 factors on the left are essential to lowering your bounce rate, so we'll look at each of them in detail and I'll show you how to turn them to your advantage. Let's go!

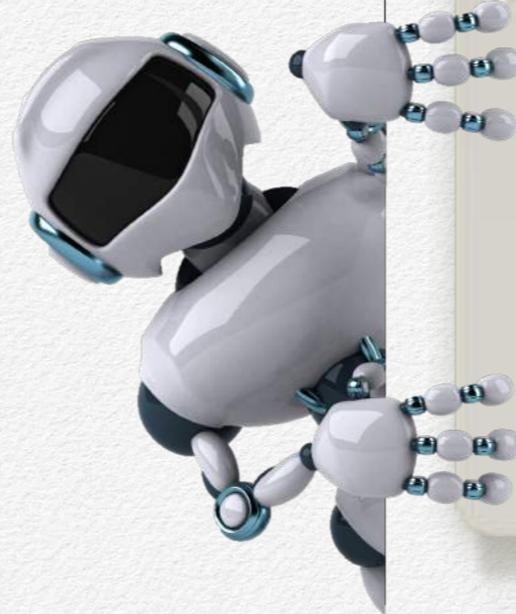
You can click on each title to access the desired section of this chapter.

1. Internal Linking

Why it matters

What is internal linking used for in general? SEO? Sure. [User engagement](#)? You betcha! External and internal links are both key for search engine trust and your website's credibility, but once your visitors land on your page, it is even more important to retain them thanks to ENGAGING and RELEVANT content. Even if you receive a lot of quality traffic, visitors will most likely leave if they find your pages boring, dry or difficult to navigate. This is when (proper) [internal linking](#) comes into play.

I'll illustrate the concept with a simple example: Mary arrives on your page after googling "Puppy story" (I know. Just thought everyone likes puppies). She lands on one of your blog articles about your puppy Doobie's day at the dogspa. Great! Everything she was looking for. She reads along and quickly notices the [in-text links and tags](#) whose anchor-text exactly matches her topic of interest. She clicks, reads on, and out the window your bounce rate goes!



Benefits to user engagement

Internal links will allow you to retain visitors in the first place, to make them stay longer on your site and to contribute to their knowledge about a specific subject. Think about it: they will land on your page expecting that you have the solution to their problem - it could be a need for information, product, service etc. How happy would they be to find out that not only you can fulfil this need, but you also provide tons of related interesting stuff they hadn't even thought of!

In this sense, internal links can improve your average pages impression (therefore decrease your bounce rate), increase the overall time on site of your visitors and encourage website exploration.



Part 3: Now, shrink that bounce rate!

On top of decreasing your bounce rate, internal links can also be a great way to gain “expert” status in the eyes of your visitors and start building a relationship with them. Indeed, easily accessible related content shows the full extent of your knowledge and the solutions you provide, which encourages visitors to trust you and regularly come back to check out your new content.

Finally, internal links offer easy and intuitive navigation to your visitors, which can make a huge difference while they browse your site from a smart device (we’ll discuss this further in the [next section](#)). In short, it improves usability and user experience.

Setting up internal links is important, but you want to make right use of them. To find out more about how to properly use internal linking to boost your website, you can read my blog article by clicking [here](#).

You can also view this complete infographic about internal linking:

[Click me!](#)



If you want to boost

website engagement & conversions

with smart **internal linking & tagging**,
you should look into info**cc**'s amazing user
engagement solutions.

You can read more about them here:

www.infocc.com

2. Smart Devices Responsiveness

Catch up with the trend

As mentioned by a digital marketing company in this awesome [blog post+infographic](#) titled “8 reasons to invest in a mobile-optimized website”, the industry predicts that smart mobile devices will soon take over the computer and laptop market. As an illustration of it, research shows that Americans already spend an average of 2.7 hours a day on their mobile phone.

Increasingly, people use portable devices out-of-home and out-of-office: on the bus, on the street, on the plane etc. Everywhere, they are browsing the web from a smart device, looking for answers to their questions, solutions to their problems and products that match their needs. How unfortunate would it be if your site had exactly what they are looking for but does not make its access tablet/smartphone friendly? Keep in mind that you most likely have one or several competitors who already offer this feature and will capture your lost customers or followers.

Right place, right time

Whether smart devices are used during lunchbreak, school recess, morning coffee, on transit or at home, people usually navigate them during “free” time - which is when they are most likely to be receptive to your value proposition (not always, depending on your target. E.g. business people spend a lot of their work time on their phone and tablet too). During time off, your target audience is probably more inclined to stay on your site longer, view more pages and read more content, which would decrease your bounce rate.

Because of this, you really need to rethink your website usability if you haven't done so already. Your website might be losing a lot of traffic and love because of your “mobile unfriendliness”. Also, as the blog article I cited previously mentions, it is highly possible that lack of smart device responsiveness brings you negative user feedback and loss of loyalty.



3. Website Design

Poorly designed websites usually experience higher bounce rates even if they exploit a profitable niche, provide great content and have an amazing value proposition. Visitors don't enjoy spammy-looking, boring, cluttered and/or confusing websites.

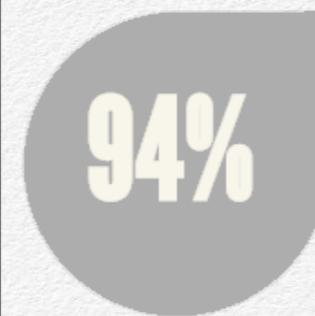
Know your purpose, audience, industry

Content is certainly crucial, but great content on a cluttered site doesn't make any difference: most visitors will exit and go look for another site with similar information and easy-on-the-eye design. Think about it! You are probably not the only one offering this particular service or product and chances are one of your competitors provides it in a nicer, more user-friendly way.

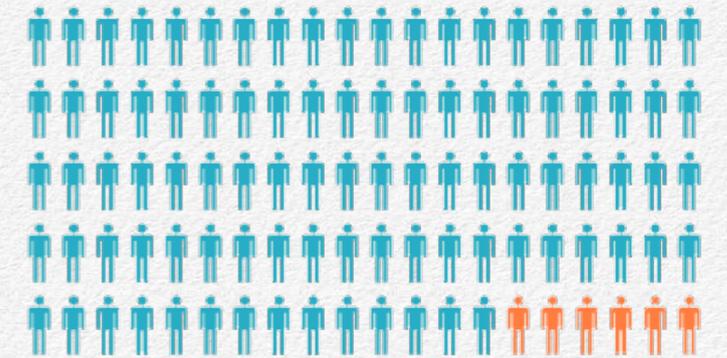
Keep in mind that it isn't only about how good your design looks, but also how usable it is to visitors and how efficiently it promotes your important pages. Does the design make key pages stand out? Does it encourage desired actions? Is your objective obvious (selling, getting subscribers etc.)? Is information easy to find? Do you look unique or can you easily be confused with any of your competitors?

Ensure you design your website specifically for your target audience too. If you address business people for example, it might

be a good idea to use a simple, modern theme where key information is emphasized and distracting "fluff" is avoided. On the other hand, if you target computer programmers you should focus more on providing all the technical and informational content necessary, insisting less on making the site look "pretty".



of people cite design as a reason they do not trust certain website.



Website Design have a trust impact



- Decrease Bounce Rate
- Increase Time on Site
- Increase Conversion Rate
- Increase Pages View

Part 3: Now, shrink that bounce rate!

The industry you are in matters too. For instance, I'd advise a travel agency to showcase large, high quality and attractive destinations photos, while a cloud accounting provider should instead keep it business-like, avoid distracting colors and media. It is also a good idea to look at your most successful competitors' websites and copy elements of design you believe could work for you too. Chances are they probably spent a lot of time and money on researching and testing them.

A well put-together website brings you credibility in users' eyes, by showing that your company spent a lot of time and effort into designing it for the sake of your visitors. Even if you like to keep your design flat or minimalist, it will encourage them to trust you.

In other words, the wrapping matters as much as the gift itself :)

To recap this section, here are the 6 elements you should focus on while (re)designing your site:

- 📌 *Your audience*
- 📌 *Your industry*
- 📌 *Your unique value proposition*
- 📌 *Easy navigation*
- 📌 *Your website's purpose*
- 📌 *Reader-friendly content*
- 📌 *Smart devices responsiveness*

4. Website Content

Shared responsibilities

Content is king! You probably heard this before and I believe it is true to a certain extent. However, it is important to know that great web content can't work well on its own to get visitors hooked, and needs to be optimized just like all the other factors mentioned in this eBook.

Your page should offer unique, relevant and engaging content to get the most out of every single visitor and prevent your bounce rate from going up. Again, find your niche, the value proposition that makes you special, and capitalize on it. Focus, focus, focus. It is more about quality than quantity of traffic. This means that you could have a very good website with amazing content, but if you don't address topics targeted to your audience you will attract the "wrong" people, and here goes your bounce rate.

Write it right

Of course, the bare minimum is for your content to be grammatically correct and be deprived of spelling mistakes. Make Google and other spelling-check integrated tools your best friends in case you have any doubt or want to proofread your work, and

be sure to use appropriate lexicon for your audience (formal, business, technical etc.)



Font-wise

The font you choose also matters a lot. You should make your text easily readable (large enough for younger and older audience), avoid extreme cursive writings and be careful when overlapping similar font and background colors. Again, adapt it to your industry and your target audience. Some fanciful fonts can be considered a huge faux-pas for B2B websites which usually prone Arial, Calibri and other "mainstream" choices; however, trends are changing and professionals are becoming more adept of modernized fonts. You can check out this [article here](#), which shows the latest and trendiest fonts. Some of them are really neat! I personally really like the Museo Cyrillic.

Layout

There is one key element when it comes to layout: spacing. Never write full 1pt line-spacing paragraphs that would leave any courageous reader with a headache. Your text should come in

Part 3: Now, shrink that bounce rate!

shorter paragraphs written with appropriate line spacing (minimum 1.2 pt I would say). Insert a picture here and there, make it easy on the readers' eye and take away the boredom of a huge chunk of text.

Make it ACCURATE

ACCURATE is an anagram I came up with to help you optimize your new content. Keeping your content "accurate" means that it should be:

1- Authentic

Be yourself and focus on your core strengths. Don't try to cater to everyone, especially people who aren't in your target audience. Keep your content target-focused in terms of topics & keywords and visitors will most likely convert or explore your site further. Again, it's about traffic quality over quantity. Personalizing your writing style rather than copy-pasting content also helps with gaining readers' trust and building relationships with them.

2- Compelling

When you defined your audience, you should have also identified their personalities, needs, lifestyles and behaviours. In

other terms, you should know what to write about to hook them up in the first place. As an example if you have a kids clothing e-commerce, focus your articles on parenting tips, family and children apparel trends. Make sure to scatter your main keywords all over your blog posts too. Finally, here is a [good article](#) to help you come up with catchy titles for your posts and get as many clicks as possible.

3- Credible

Wherever you can, provide tangible proofs of your latest achievements and users or customers testimonials. You can directly ask some of them to explain in their own words what they feel is so great about your product or service. Visitors will most likely trust other "real people's" experiences more than your own promotional content. Also, make sure you back up your articles with references to case studies, famous bloggers articles, scientific research etc. It will make you a legitimate source of information, which will build up your credibility and expertise in visitors' minds.

4- Upbeat

Try to sound energized and to-the-point, avoid too much fluff. If needed, use shorter sentences to create a dynamic pace in your paragraph. Avoid lengthy sentences that stretch over 3 or 4 lines as they quickly lose people's attention. It is the occasion



Part 3: Now, shrink that bounce rate!

to involve readers with questions, exclamation marks etc. Making your style conversational works well for bloggers for example, but you need to be cautious if you wish to use it in other contexts. I don't believe casual speech is suitable for all industries due to the the fact that it can be perceived as being unprofessional.

5- Refreshing

Writing about a topic that everyone else has already covered isn't going to work so well for your traffic and bounce rate. Fewer people will visit your page, and those who still do will quickly realize that it doesn't contain anything new, and will simply leave. Try to bring something newsworthy and fresh to the table; it could be your point of view, your writing style or your extended knowledge. Also make sure you regularly update your content and add new articles, product descriptions, forum discussions etc.

6- Adding value

Once you grabbed your visitors' attention with catchy headlines and topics, you need to retain them with valuable content. Put yourself in your readers' shoes. What could they be expecting from a page, article or product like yours? For example, if you blog about SEO your followers surely love to read some tips about how to climb up Google ranking, while expecting you to provide solutions to their problems and an answers to their

questions. If by the end of the article they haven't found any information they can use, it is unlikely they'll stay on your site or even come back at a later date.

7- Timely

Of course it makes sense to publish news and content in a timely manner, meaning you don't want to write about an outdated event or a discontinued product, and you need to pay attention to releasing it at the best time of the day. You'll find an interesting article that talks about the right timing for publishing content [here](#). Finally, try to be ahead of everyone else as it is the best way to stand out in the crowd, get more regular followers and been seen as THE reference for anyone seeking relevant and breaking news.

8- Engaging

Finally, create content that gets people involved, engaged and makes them want to share it. It will help create and build relationships with your visitors, which is key to lowering bounce rate and improving online performance.



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