



Understanding Engagement Rates

**SHERRY
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SHERRY SMOTHERMON-SHORT

Sherry Smothermon-Short is the owner of Painless Blog Analytics, Easy Blog School, and Cub Scout Ideas. Her years of experience has taught her how to use data to grow and improve her blog. She loves sharing what she learned with other content creators by providing information, resources, training, and services.



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Liz Stapleton [00:00:07]:

Hello, and welcome back to another episode of the Blogger Breakthrough Summit podcast. I'm your host, Liz Stapleton. And today we're diving into the wonderful world of engagement rates. Trust me, by the end of this episode, you'll be an engagement rate pro ready to tackle your blog metrics with confidence. Now let's let Sherry Smothermon Short take over and let you learn.

Sherry Smothermon Short [00:00:24]:

Next, we need to talk about engagement rate, and let me explain what engagement rate is before we jump in to find an engagement rate, on our reports. For a session to be considered engaged, one of 3 things needs to happen. Either the person needs to stay on your site 10 seconds or longer, or they need to visit 2 or more pages, or there needs to be some sort of conversion event. Now a lot of us don't sell anything, so there wouldn't be any kind of monetary conversion. And we may not have other types of conversions set up. So we're just gonna focus on the first two, on staying on your site for 10 seconds or longer and on the visiting 2 or more pages. Now another thing that you need to know about engagement rate is that bounce rate now is the inverse of engagement rate. Let's say I have a 100 sessions, and 75 of them are considered engaged because somebody stayed on the blog 10 seconds or longer or visited 2 or more page views.

Sherry Smothermon Short [00:01:26]:

If 75 is my engagement rate, the percentage of the sessions that were engaged, my bounce rate is going to be 25%. It's all the unengaged sessions, I guess, you could say. Again, bounce rate is the inverse of engagement rate. Let's find our engagement rate. We're gonna stay on this page, the our pages and screens, but we're gonna make a couple of changes. We're gonna get rid of that search, and then we're gonna get rid of our secondary dimension. What we need to do is to add our engagement rate. The way that we're gonna do that is go here under customize report.

Sherry Smothermon Short [00:02:03]:

Then we are going to go to metrics. Engagement rate is a metric, so we're gonna add the metric. And the way we do that is by clicking down here in the add metric box, and we can just start typing engagement rate, and then you'll see it pop up. And we can select it, and then we're gonna move this to the top. So I'm just gonna grab those 6 dots and drag it up here and drop it. Actually, we're gonna make that engagement rate first. Then we're gonna click apply, and then we wanna save this. And I'm going to save this as a new report.

Sherry Smothermon Short [00:02:38]:

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I'm gonna click save, and then we can go back. Now that we've got engagement rate on here, we don't want to sort by engagement rate, and let me tell you why. This, blog post here has gotten 2 visits, and it's considered, a 100% engaged. That is meaningless when you'd only had 2 views to the page. So we're gonna hover over here. If you look just to the left of views, you see that little gray down arrow? We're gonna click on that, and that's gonna sort it in in descending order by our page views. I'm gonna give myself 50 rows here, and I'm looking for 2 things. I'm looking for a blog post with a low engagement rate and a blog post with a high engagement rate.

Sherry Smothermon Short [00:03:28]:

I'm gonna just start scrolling down through here. I'm gonna skip my home page, and I'm gonna skip any category and tag pages. So let's just keep scrolling down. Let's choose this handmade hiking sticks for our high engagement rate post. And then let's see. And we're gonna use this kid's fingerprint activity for our low engagement post. Now what I want you to do once you identify those things is open each of those in, a a separate tab. So you'll have both of them open so you can look at both of them.

Sherry Smothermon Short [00:04:03]:

So what we're looking for when we have those 2 posts open is what are the differences between the 2? What do we have in that high engagement post, the the hiking stick post, that makes people stick around or visit 2 or more pages that we don't have in the fingerprint activity? Or what do we have in the fingerprint activity that we don't have in the hiking stick activity that we might need to delete out? So we're just gonna do a comparison. Let's start at the top and just review these two posts. Does one of them have a paragraph before they have a picture and one doesn't have that? Does the paragraph say something like, use this fingerprint activity for your cub scouts, where the hiking stick one may say something like, your cub scouts are gonna love making their own hiking sticks that they can actually use or even give as a gift. So think about is that more compelling than the the wording that's in that first paragraph. Think about that. What am I saying at the beginning that's gonna make somebody wanna look down through there and and stay on that blog post a little bit longer? Then I want you to look at where your links are. If one of the blog posts has some internal links pretty high up on the page and the other one doesn't, maybe you need to add some more links closer to the top for that one. Because it may be that people are saying, well, this blog post is not for me.

Sherry Smothermon Short [00:05:26]:

But, man, look at this. It looks like I can click over and learn about this other activity that I may be more interested in. Compare those 2 blog posts and figure out what do you need to do. This is gonna be a lot of trial and error on your part, and what works for my

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blog is not gonna work for your blog. That's one of my pet peeves because somebody will come along and say, oh, you must do this to be successful on your blog, or this is the only way to grow your blog. Okay. But that might not work for your specific niche and your specific voice and your specific blog. So you have to try things.

Sherry Smothermon Short [00:06:00]:

Try them out. If it works, great. If it doesn't, revert back to what you had and try something else. This is gonna be trial and error for you.

Liz Stapleton [00:06:09]:

Alright. That's it. Thanks for tuning in for the Blogger Breakthrough Summit podcast. If you enjoyed this episode, don't forget to subscribe, leave a review, and share it with your fellow bloggers. Remember, you can always learn more about our fantastic speakers in the show notes, so check those out below. And until next time, keep blogging.