

PRODUCT REVIEW / ANALYSE DE PRODUITS

Crazy Egg

Product: Crazy Egg by Crazy Egg, Inc., 16220 Ridgeview Lane, La Mirada, Calif., 90638 USA

URL: <http://www.crazyegg.com/>

Purpose: To create “heatmaps” and other visualizations of how a web page is being used and where users are clicking.

Audience: Webmasters, web teams, anyone with authority over web page design and decision making, user experience librarians, analysts.

Pricing: Four plans that provide access to all the same tools but differ in the number of pages that can be tracked and the maximum number of visits per month. All have a one month free trial. The “Basic” plan is \$9 per month for 9 pages and 10,000 visits per month; “Standard” is \$19 per month for 20 pages and 25,000 visits per month; “Plus” is \$49 per month for 50 pages and 100,000 visits per month; and “Pro” is \$99 per month and 100 pages and 250,000 visits per month (all prices in USD).

Pros: There is a minimal learning curve; allows one to quickly and easily see which links are being clicked and which are not; one month free trial.

Cons: Mouse click data not included when the overlay feature, which displays the exact number of clicks per link, is exported; pricing structure is not ideal and doesn’t offer an educational or academic rate; it is not immediately apparent if one can access the data after one closes an account.

Product description

Crazy Egg creates visual representations of how patrons use a web page by capturing mouse-click data. It can very quickly highlight usability problems. Increasingly, library patrons interact and use the library’s web page more frequently than the physical library. The library’s home page often provides a combination of reference, research, instruction, and quick answer assistance. Therefore it is important to ascertain what works and what doesn’t on your library’s web page. There are many usability methods that can be employed such as usability studies, focus groups, heuristics, and surveys, as well as software such as the freely available Google Analytics (for a review of Google Analytics see page 119 of this issue).

In web page redesigns over the years at our library, we have organized usability groups, card sorting exercises, and other methods to elicit feedback from various user groups. The disadvantages of many of these methods are that they are quite time consuming to conduct and can create artificial test settings. We have also gathered statistical

information from AWStats, and set up profiles in Google Analytics and Click Heat. By far the easiest tool we have used to date has been Crazy Egg. It creates visualizations of the links our users click on, which we have found invaluable. Heat maps are generated by the ways that users are actually using the web page for real-life information finding. As many of the links on our website go to external websites (i.e., licensed databases or university websites) it is often difficult to gather information about their usage. However, Crazy Egg shows which links patrons are clicking on independent of whether the link is internal or external. As the library’s web page is usually not the patron’s final destination, but instead a route to further information, it is important to know which links are being used. As there is limited prime real estate on the web page, one can get a very good idea as to where the most valuable links and information should be placed.

Features

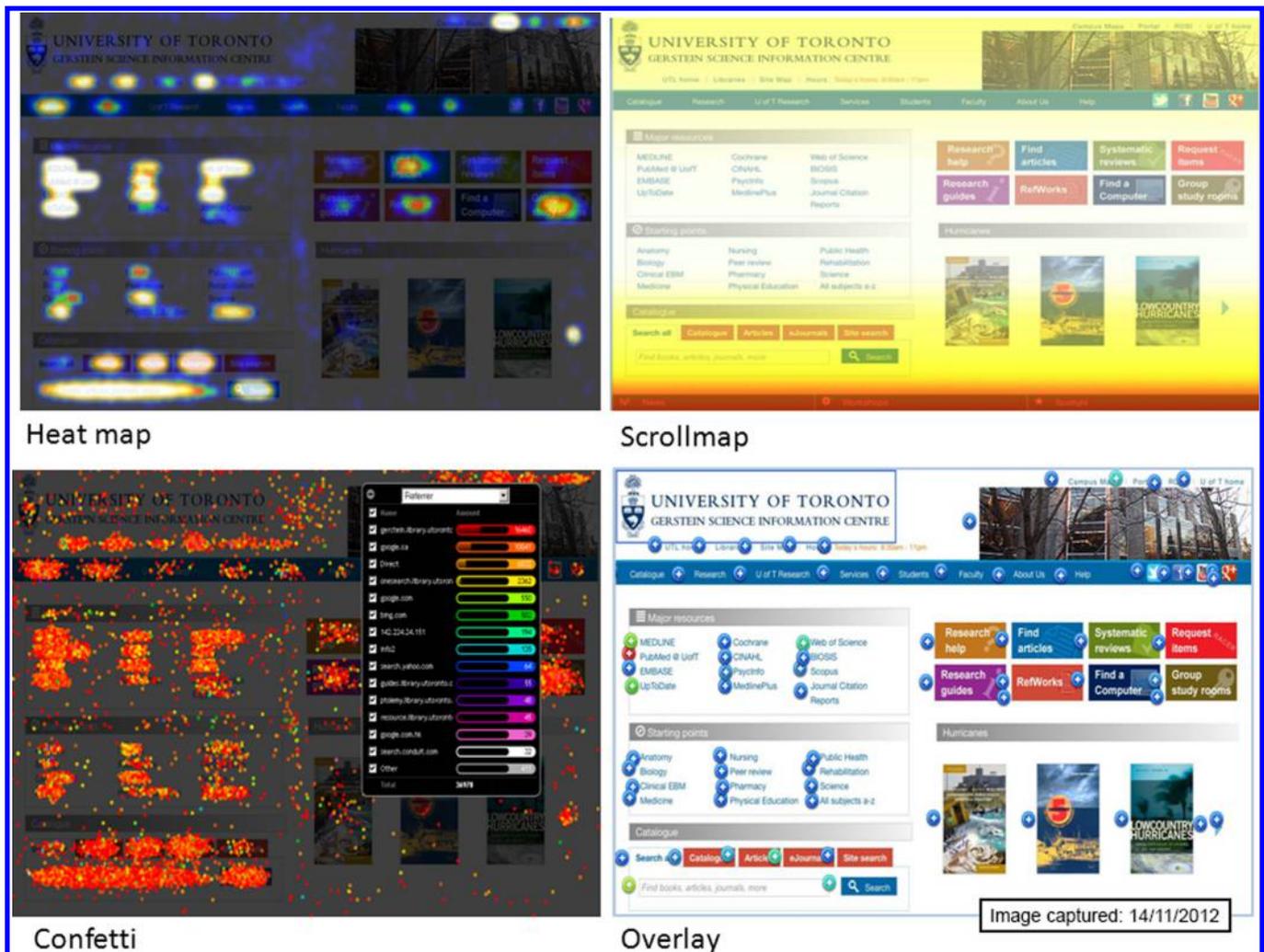
The data is presented in the following five formats:

- **Heatmaps** allow you to see, at a glance, which are the “hot spots,” or most clicked upon links on a web page as well as the “cool” or unused links.
- **Scrollmaps** show how far down users of your web page are actually scrolling; therefore, you can determine if the links “below the fold” are actually being used.
- **Confetti** pinpoints exactly where a patron has clicked.
- **Overlay** allows you to see the exact number of clicks for each element or link on your page. This data is available in tabular form. The Overlay allows you to scroll over each link and see the exact number of times it has been clicked. There is a colour-coded icon by each link immediately identifying are the “hot” or “cool” links.
- **List** option includes all visible and nonvisible elements and links using the names and type of links taken directly from the page code and their corresponding number of clicks. This makes it easy to see the top used links on your page (Figure 1).

Both the overlay and confetti formats allow for granular breakdown of information. For example, you can determine the referring site for a particular link, new versus returning users, search terms and engines used, operating system, browser and window width, time of day, day of week, time of click, country, and any Google Campaign variables that may have been created from a Google Analytics account.

The Gerstein Science Information Centre has been using Crazy Egg for the past three years. It is interesting to see usage trends change as the academic year progresses. For example, at the start of the new academic term, the “Hours” link is highly used. It is good to see confirmation

Fig. 1. Four visualization formats of web page usage.



that patrons are finding the hours link, and that it has not been lost in “banner blindness.” As the academic year draws to a close, the usage of the link drops significantly, most likely because patrons have become familiar with our library hours.

The granular data based on “day of the week” can provide insight into interesting behaviour patterns. For example heatmaps isolated for Friday show the hours link as a hot spot, presumably because students want to know if the library is open on the weekend (Figure 2).

The heatmaps and overlays also let us know that patrons are being selective about the links they choose, and they do not necessarily click on the first several links. These visualizations allow us to see how patrons are using our library web page to access licensed databases as well as in-house created research guides.

Crazy Egg also has a side-by-side view to facilitate comparison of two web pages of different designs or the same web page from two different time periods to see usage changes.

Other features of Crazy Egg include the ability to create multiple logins so other team or group members can have customized views of the data. IP addresses or a range of addresses can be entered for specific web pages to block tracking. Data on nonpublic pages can be tracked by using an application called Page Camera, which requires Adobe Air.

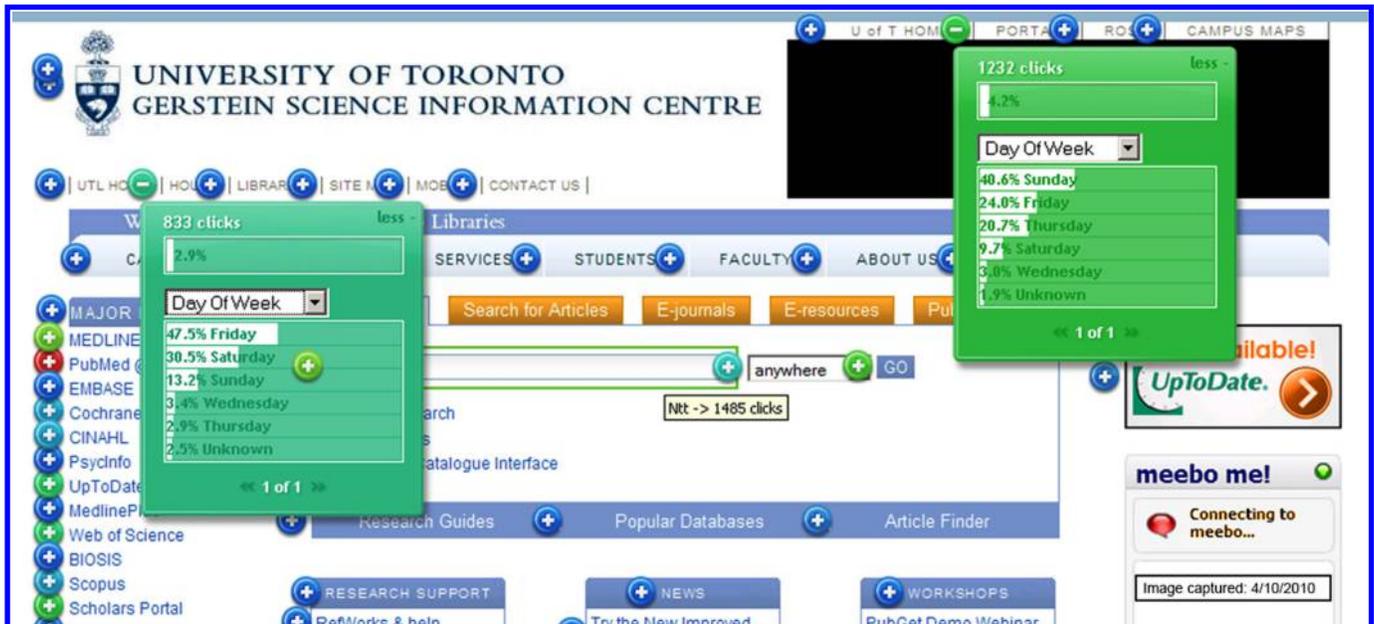
Exporting the data

All five views can be exported. Heatmaps, overlay, and scrollmaps are exported as JPEGs; confetti as a PDF file; and list as a CSV file. The downside of the overlay export is that the number of clicks per link data is not included.

Comparison with Google Analytics and ClickHeat

ClickHeat from Labsmedia is an open source tool that generates heatmaps similar to Crazy Egg’s. ClickHeat

Fig. 2. “Day of Week” facet from the Overlay display of page tracking data.



excels at quickly and clearly highlighting areas of high and low use, and can be more easily understood by people who have less experience with web usage statistics. Click-Heat differentiates between duplicate links on a page and tracks internal and outbound links, as well as nonlinked elements such as images, for a comprehensive picture of where visitors are clicking on a web page. However, Click-Heat has no built-in export function, and archiving and comparing heatmap data across different web page versions must be done manually. ClickHeat does not provide exact usage counts, but it can be combined as a plugin with a web analytics tool such as Piwik, an open source alternative to Google Analytics. ClickHeat and Piwik require a web server and knowledge of PHP and MySQL for installation and ongoing maintenance to keep up with product updates.

Google Analytics provides a freely available report called In-Page Analytics that generates a visual representation of click data on a web page. The report provides two ways to examine in-page clicks: bubbles display the percentage and number of clicks for each link on a page and you can combine these bubbles with an overlay of colour on each link, providing a simplified heatmap for quickly identifying popular and underused links. Similar to Crazy Egg's Scrollmap feature, Google has added a browser size display that shows how much of the page is visible to users without scrolling. Because In-Page Analytics is integrated within Google Analytics, you can view extended usage data at the top of the dashboard without having to leave the current view; and you can segment data into meaningful groups such as new versus returning visitors or mobile visitors for additional insights into user behaviour. However, In-Page Analytics does not incorporate outbound link traffic into its visual display, nor does it provide export functionality.

One recent improvement with In-Page Analytics is the ability to handle duplicate links on a page through enhanced link attribution. Now, with some additional configuration to the tracking code, it will be possible to distinguish between duplicate links and display the correct number of clicks to each link.

Crazy Egg requires a monthly subscription and is not a complete web analytics tool like Google Analytics or Piwik, but it delivers advanced click tracking that combines the heatmap capabilities of ClickHeat with many of the detailed click tracking and segmenting capabilities of In-Page Analytics. With Crazy Egg, duplicate link tracking is immediately available, along with outbound link and nonlink tracking, built-in archiving, and a collection of enhanced visual reports that offer a unique view into where and how visitors are clicking on a web page.

User support

The software is intuitive so one does not need to use the Help page often, except at the beginning when setting up a page to track. The Help page on the Crazy Egg site is comprehensive and arranged in groups of frequently asked questions: beginner's guide, billing, general questions, how to track a page, how to use the dashboard, and how to view results. Telephone customer support is courteous and efficient.

Compatibility

We use Drupal as our current content management system (CMS) and it was very easy to find a Drupal Crazy Egg module. Previously we used Plone as our CMS, which also worked well when adding the tracking code. In

addition we maintained standard web pages outside of a CMS and the tracking code was easy to insert.

Conclusion

Our recommendation is to subscribe to Crazy Egg in addition to using the freely available Google Analytics. The data from the two products complement each other resulting in a holistic overview of web page usage. Currently, the In-Page Analytics feature of Google Analytics is not as robust as Crazy Egg. The data from Crazy Egg allows you to “visualize your visitors” and track their mouse clicking. This enables you to see what works and what does not on your web page to better inform design, content, and layout decisions.

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