Measuring and Reporting Impacts of Web-based and Mass Communications

   The major purpose of this study was to determine whether inserting questions with feedback in an instructional video program would enhance learning. A secondary purpose was to examine the effects of two kinds of application questions.

   Shrinking resources and the need to estimate the impact of programs require Extension to identify an effective means for reaching large audiences.

   An unexpected way to characterize Extension's online clients and to measure the impact of Extension's online resources. Over time, this Q&A process provided a database that could be used to query an online audience, which in turn suggested possible directions for managing Extension's expert knowledge and further developing online e-agents.


   A simple on-line survey was used to assess the usefulness of a new pest advisory website. The survey was low-cost and required less effort than conventional surveys.
   Such a system provides feedback from users, which can be used to improve Extension programs and generates results to be used in reporting impact data.

   This article highlights a few useful features of Google™ Analytics and demonstrates how to track the impact of Web-based content.

Many Extension Web sites are nearly invisible. The search engine optimization techniques described in this article can help bring Extension Web sites--and their content--to millions of searchers. Increased Extension productivity will result.


Internet web site developers can improve accessibility to their sites by rural clients through awareness of technological challenges encountered by their potential market. Web site developers can accommodate some of these limitations through simple web page design and less reliance upon relatively more advanced web programming languages such as ActiveX and JAVA.


To evaluate the impact of Minnesota's Small Grains website, a mail and online survey were conducted in 2003. Although the site attained a sizeable audience less than a quarter of potential clientele knows of it. Increased access had a positive impact on the participant producers' production practices and outcomes.