



## Print Message

Member Spotlight: Alan K'necht

From: Catherine Hackney

To: Member Open Forum

Posted: 04-10-2017 12:58 PM

Message:

**Cat:** Thanks for taking the time to answer my questions, Alan. Can you tell me how you got into Digital Analytics?

**Alan:** This goes way back to something around 1996 right after I built my first website. I wanted to know if anyone was visiting it. I quickly found a java script based page counter and from that point on I wanted more. I quickly moved to processing log files with custom Perl scripts and then on to AW Stats. Once better tools started to appear on the market I leaped on them. I was an early adopter of Webtrends in Canada back in 1997. As they say, the rest is history.

**Cat:** What are some of the projects that you have enjoyed working on most?

**Alan:** With over 20 years in this field there are so many. I enjoyed most teaching analytics both at corporate level from admins to the C-suite for a number of years. There are two projects that stand out to me that I'll never forget.

First about 12 years ago, I helped Mongoose Metrics (a phone call analytics tool) develop their method to integrate call tracking (as an ROI metric) with both Google Analytics and Webtrends. From there I helped a client also tie the call tracking feature into their CRM system for tracking the point of 1st contact on the web, to the call, to the CRM and ultimately to the final sale.

A more recent project, involved developing the analytics reporting for a set of digital media displays that included facial recognition technology. By processing the data, we were able to determine peak engagement times (time of day/day of week), which ads were getting people to look and then breaking that data down by gender and age groupings.

**Cat:** What have you found most challenging about analytics of late?

**Alan:** The most challenging thing is as it always has been the constant evolving and changing technology. The techniques remain the same, but as new tools appear and the opportunities to integrate more data points become available the complexity of the project increases as well as the knowledge set required for managing these efforts.

Of course educating the C-Suite and other senior executives continues to be a challenge. At one time, just getting them to look at analytics was a challenge and then

getting them to purge the use of the word "Hits". Today, it's difficult to wean them off what for most has become meaningless KPIs of Page views and visits and getting them to look at other factors as Percentage of Quality Visits, Customer Satisfaction and impact on Sales.

**Cat:** If you had to list what your core skills are as an analyst, what would you say they are?

**Alan:** The ability to communicate is the most critical skill. While having good database and analysis skills are important, as Digital Analytic specialists, we need to be able to communicate our ideas to various levels of management or customers. This includes the ability to present data in meaningful ways, the ability to explain the data both in writing and during presentations. Combine this with the ability to understand how to communicate to different audiences (senior management vs. front line workers etc.) is a critical factor to success in the Digital Analytics field.

**Cat:** What would you love to talk to fellow colleagues about?

**Alan:** I love to talk strategy and what the future of digital analytics will entail. Right now, I love the possibility that Predictive Analytics offers and look forward to the day when tools and techniques for implement PA will become easier for small to middle size organizations to take advantage of it.

**Cat:** Alan, thanks so much for sharing with us and thank you again for being such a great supporter of the DAA Community!

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