



AT INTERNET

Online Intelligence Solutions

SOFT TAGGING: A REVOLUTION FOR MARKETING DEPARTMENTS

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CONTEXT

Today the majority of companies understand the challenges of Web Analytics, however, lots of them still face problems setting up their analytics tools, and also experience problems during the entire life cycle of their analytics project. Implementing a new feature, correcting tagging errors, or modifying the initial tagging plan can prove to be a real battle.

Tagging web sites or mobile environments is often seen as a dreaded task by the technical and marketing services of a company as it can turn out to be both a complex and time-consuming process. This task can sometimes be the source of problems that exist between the different departments within a company.

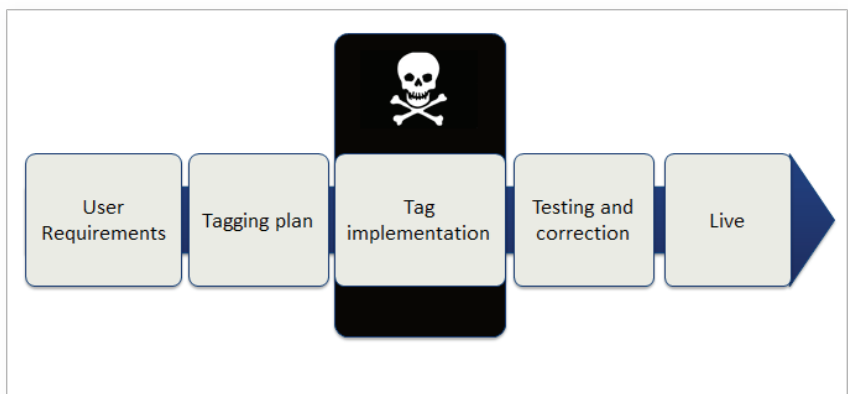
In addition to the different communication fears and problems, there is often a lack of organisation, and even a lack of understanding that exists between the different teams (technical and marketing in particular), which slows down the implementation of an analytics solution, and in turn makes the solution somewhat restrictive.

THE CURRENT WEB ANALYTICS PROJECT

The complicated process involved in implementing a web analytics solution can be largely explained by the diversity of the people involved in the project. Not everyone involved in the project has the same goals and objectives, nor do they work in the same department.

Furthermore, those who are involved in the technical implementation of the project are not often included at the beginning of the project and do not have the opportunity to take advantage of the top class assistance provided by consultants.

Web analysts have no other option but to translate user needs into a tagging plan by relying on a template proposed by the solution, and to adhere to the nomenclature that must be used.



The essential and somewhat delicate phase at the beginning of any web analytics project remains the identification of user needs which are then to be translated into a tagging plan. This is where things generally tend to get complicated.

Web analysts have no other option but to translate user needs into a tagging plan by relying on a template proposed by the solution, and to adhere to the nomenclature that must be used.

Fact: The standard tag, even when inserted onto all of the pages of the site to be audited, is generally not enough to obtain the level of detail required to make all types of decisions.

It is the famous «**variables**» which make it possible to access more accurate analyses. The variables are listed in documentation which is written and set out by AT Internet. For example, if you want to measure identified visitors, you need to enhance your tagging with an «xtan» variable. It is impossible to guess this variable if you haven't had a look at the list of different variables available.

Learning about the different variables and transferring them into a tagging plan will not bring any added value to your business decisions, however, it is essential when adopting a classic approach.

The consultant, who is restricted by this formality, will draw-up the famous tagging guide which will then be sent to a team of integrators for application. It is normally during the integration phase when the first problems are encountered; the team of integrators are not normally aware of the objectives in place, and tend to get lost in the purely technical aspects of the project.

THE SOFT TAGGING PHILOSOPHY: 20% TAGGING, 80% CONFIGURATION

The R&D teams at AT Internet have always had one key objective when working on the tag: that it should be easy and quick to implement. Our Analyzer solution is already a step ahead of its competitors but it seemed somewhat strategic for us to do even better.

Soft Tagging is a new ideology, which relies on sharing more coherent tasks. Technical teams are responsible for integrating tags, whereas marketing teams manage the analyses.

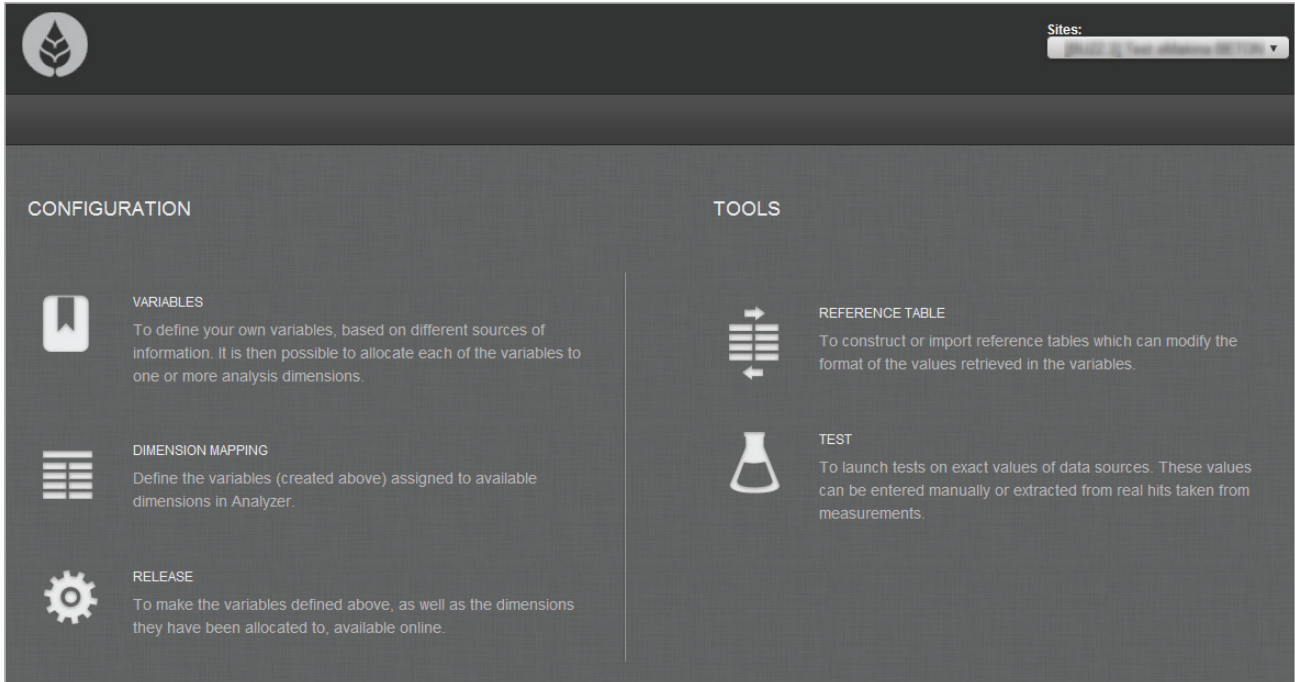
.....
***This new interface
is dedicated to
the creation of
processing rules
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.....

Specific business needs are measured thanks to the use of a «super» variable whose format has been simplified. You create the variable to meet your needs: it is no longer necessary to use AT Internet's nomenclature. You choose the names of the variables that suits best, our system will be able to interpret them.

Furthermore, the variables don't have to be used straight away as we are all too aware that a company's needs may change over time and that a certain level of flexibility is required.

This philosophy is based on the strength of a new configuration tool which is available in a new interface, Data Manager.

This new interface is dedicated to the creation of processing rules and how you want to use them. Furthermore, it is possible to immediately test the values of your new variables by creating a hit panel which will allow you to check if your variables are relevant or not.



Technical departments no longer need to anticipate needs before the project begins or to allocate a specific budget to unforeseen tagging operations. As far as Marketing departments are concerned, they will no longer have to deal with the IT Department's implementation schedule.

EXAMPLES

CREATING A VARIABLE FROM A URL

During a period of sales, an e-Commerce site manager would like to analyse the performance of sales for a particular aisle in real time without having to contact the technical teams to update the initial tagging that was put in place.

With Soft Tagging, DataManager allows users to create their own variables by using a URL parse function to automatically isolate an element of this address.

For example: <http://www.commerce.com/tv/televiseur-plasma/samsung/televiseur-plasma-samsung.php>

The variable to be isolated is the aisle (in this case TV).

With a simple drag and drop, the URL will be parsed in order to isolate the requested parameter. The variable is then associated with the analysis of your choice (aisles, site custom variables etc.). All that remains to be done is to release the variable online.

The screenshot displays the 'Variables' configuration window. At the top, there is a 'Home' button and a 'Sites:' dropdown menu. The main area is titled '> PROCESSING: AISLE' and contains a 'URL' field with the value 'http://www.commerce.com/tv/televiseur-plasma/samsung/televiseur-plasma-samsung.php'. Below the URL field, there are two steps for parsing and deleting items. Step 1 is 'STEP 1: PARSE AND DELETE -> FIRST ITEMS' and Step 2 is 'STEP 2: PARSE AND DELETE -> LAST ITEMS'. Each step has a 'Separator' field and a 'Number of items to be deleted' field. An example box for each step shows how the separator and number of items to be deleted affect the resulting string. The example for Step 1 shows that using '/' and '4' as the separator and 4 as the number of items to be deleted will keep 'page.html'. The example for Step 2 shows that using '/' and '4' as the separator and 4 as the number of items to be deleted will keep 'http://'. On the left side, there is a sidebar with 'ACTIONS' and various options like 'FROM THE BEGINNING', 'FROM THE END', 'FIRST ITEMS', 'LAST ITEMS', 'REFERENCE TABLE', 'REPLACE A STRING', 'AT THE BEGINNING', 'AT THE END', and 'REGULAR EXPRESSION'. The top of the interface has a 'Home' button and a 'Sites:' dropdown menu.

MANAGING REFERENCE TABLES

Creating and maintaining reference tables typifies the tensions that may exist between the technical and marketing departments.

Let's take the example of a bank which has to manage different agencies that are added to its analytics tool. The agencies are managed as level 2 sites (tree structure elements which are part of the AT Internet tool). In the tagging, each agency is identified by a numerical code (a technical constraint of the tool) and not by its name.

As part of the traditional approach, each new agency which is added requires a technical intervention within the code. The tag then needs to be updated so that each newly added agency can be integrated correctly. Such frequent modifications can quickly create instabilities within the system, not to mention the lack of involvement of the different people who are part of a project as well as possible errors.

The new tool will make it much easier to maintain correspondence tables within the same interface, meaning that no more technical help is required. All you need to do is associate the updated table.

The screenshot shows the 'Variables' configuration page in the AT Internet tool. The interface is dark-themed and includes a 'Home' button and a 'Sites' dropdown menu. A left sidebar titled 'ACTIONS' contains various options like 'FROM THE BEGINNING', 'FROM THE END', 'FIRST ITEMS', 'LAST ITEMS', 'REFERENCE TABLE', and 'REPLACE A STRING'. The main area is titled '> PROCESSING:' and contains a 'Hit' section with two steps: 'STEP 1: PARAMETER SELECTION' and 'STEP 2: REFERENCE TABLE'. Step 1 includes a 'Parameter name' field and an example: 'p2" on the querystring "?p1=page&p2=123&p3=rub" will keep "123"'. Step 2 includes a 'Table name to be used' dropdown set to 'test' and an example: 'Retrieve an out of domain URL tree structure, and using a reference table, associate it with a shorter, more exact page label.' There are 'OK' and 'cancel' buttons at the top right of the configuration area.

ORGANISING TRAFFIC

For example, managing a specific partner within a campaign perfectly illustrates how Soft Tagging can help users.

Let's consider a partnership campaign which requires a specific tracking variable, e.g. `xor=AL-123`. If a partner does not use this particular variable, it will not be possible to identify it as a variable which generates traffic. In our example, the partner uses their own variable `«b47»` which is meaningless to the AT Internet tool. The partner's entire site has been tagged with this variable and the only way to justify that this variable generates traffic is to add the `«xor=AL-123»` ID to the URLs. You also need to consider all of the associated error risks.

In this example Data Manager will allow users to create a rule which will transform the parameter `b47` into `xor=AL-123`.

Traffic is then redirected automatically to the right place without the partner having to do anything.

CONCLUSION

This new approach, which is more than a technical advance, will improve the synergy between different departments of a company, by making operational cycles much smoother and improving the distribution of the efforts of both technical and marketing departments.

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Two main advantages of the soft tagging philosophy include the following: companies will no longer have to worry about the technical aspects of a project, allowing them to focus on data interpretation, and they will also save time thanks to the simplified tagging process.

It is important, however, to highlight that projects must be well-thought out in advance. Establishing a strategy with the aim of extracting the added value of data remains key.

With their vast experience and expertise, our team of consultants are involved more than ever before in this framework. They are available to help our customers in their web analytics projects and if need be help them correct previous actions to make better decisions.



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AT INTERNET - AGILE BUSINESS DECISIONS

AT Internet, European leader in the field of Web Analytics since 1995, helps companies drive their online performance and optimise their presence on all online marketing channels such as web and mobile sites, applications, e-CRM, social media etc. The company's Online Intelligence solutions provide reliable, valid, complete decision-making data.

AT Internet has placed agility at the heart of its innovation process to provide its clients with an evolutionary and 100%

modular solution that responds to the challenges faced by companies today. The strength of AT Internet's technology and the quality of its customer relations are recognised worldwide. AT Internet has more than 3,500 clients all over the world from all sectors.

The company, which has more than 150 employees, is present in 10 different countries through its subsidiaries and partners, including France, England, Germany, Spain, Canada, China, the Philippines, Japan, Estonia and Brazil.

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