How to find Boards

- In the RJI Online section of Google Analytics (it’s the second option in the list, aka NOT rjilinks.rjionline.org), go to the left and click “Dashboards.” Then, there should be two drop down options: Shared and Private. Click Shared to see both the Site Overview board and the Social board.
- For the UTM Tagging board, click Acquisitions on the left bar, and then go to the Campaigns board. It’s sortable by source, medium, and even campaign.

Visits by Week of the Year

- This one’s pretty easy. Basically, the traffic broken down into recent weeks but they are coded into the numbered week of the year. So, if it’s “15”, that’s the 15th week of the year. On this widget, “Other” is the current week, for reasons that are only clear to Google. Like most of the time-specific widgets, this is going to help you identify successful and poor weeks and, along with context provided by the content team, pinpoint just which posts drove the traffic.

Bounce Rate

- This metric measures the percentage of people who click onto RJI Online and “bounce” right off, or leave, without interacting with the page. For our site, the metric rests just under 70% most days and that’s a number we would of course like to lower. An ideal bounce rate would obviously be 0% but anything under 50% would be a large improvement. A 40% bounce rate would mean that only 2 in 5 visitors are leaving the page without interacting. One site I read said 70% is normal for blog-like sites, so we shouldn’t be too concerned.

Visits by Day of Week

- Obviously, this is similar to Visits by Week of Year. The days are coded by number, which “0” representing Sunday, and “1” representing Monday, etc.
- This metric will provide important editorial information like when to post certain articles that should garner tons of views, or when most Twitter and or Facebook traffic comes in, stats that can be used to maximize the impact of certain posts.

Pages Per Visit

- This metric shows just what it says: the average number of pages visited in one session. Currently, that average is just above 2 pages with frequent shifts of 1-2 pages plus or minus. From what I’ve read, an figure of two pages is a pretty solid metric. This means that users who stay and do not “bounce” are clicking through to at least one more page, if not more. This means that our content is interesting enough to warrant at least one more click, affirming that we’re putting the right
posts out there. Obviously, on days that the figure drops or increases, the context of what was posted will help determine what our readers want.

- This metric will fluctuate between Twitter, Facebook, social visitors and the average visitor to the site. From what I’ve seen, those coming from social networks tend to stay on the site for less time, often in significant ratios. Keep an eye on this and see if we can’t adapt to fit their needs and even harness that shorter attention span.

**Total Visits**

- The typical barometer of any site, Total Visits isn’t the be-all-end-all of analytic metrics. People often take its measurements too literally, thinking a huge drop in traffic might be the end when really, it’s just a bad day. Visits follow a trend, peaking in the early week and slowly decreasing as the weekend approaches. The metric is really better used in conjunction with other metrics or measurements: day of the week or unique visits, for example. Think of Total Visits as the clay we’re molding with the rest of the dashboard.

**Uniques and % New Sessions**

- This metric is a bit trickier to make sense of because it’s all about cookies. When someone visits a website, they typically get a ‘cookie,’ a tracker that identifies the user as a ‘returning user’ the next time they visit. However, cookies can easily be deleted, cookie tracking can be blocked and people often use different browsers/devices. Cookies can also be customized but that’s more advanced (but similar to UTM tracking). So in a sense, tracking users with cookies gives a blurry picture unique vs. returning visitors. It’s probably overestimated or even underestimated but if there’s ever a trend in unique or returning users, it’s typically one you can trust, since cookie use is fairly standard across all browsers. As for measuring, for uniques, the report asks “has this user visited the site prior to the selected date range?” If not, then they are identified as a unique visitor and treated as a ‘prior visitor’ from then on. Unless their cookie situation changes. And then Percent New Sessions is just what it says, uniques divided by total visits.