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**MEPS Website Assessment Report II, Part B**   
Google Analytics Analysis

Report provided on July 6, 2022, by Pantheon and AIR for the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality

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# Overview

For this report, the American Institutes for Research (AIR) and Pantheon (the AIR team) present the methodology and results of Google Analytics analysis for the data on the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality's (AHRQ) Medical Expenditure Panel Survey (MEPS) website. We then provide recommendations for how the data should influence the redesign efforts.

# Introduction

Google Analytics is the most widely used data analytics platform on the web today. The Google Analytics dashboard can provide site owners with a source of abundant quantitative data about a vast array of statistics such as the number of site visitors over a period of time, the type of device and browser the visitor uses to access the site, or the most popular pages visited by users. The platform enables users to access data limited by a myriad of parameters such as specific windows of time or attributes such as the user’s device type.

When viewing the Google Analytics data for the MEPS site, we looked at many different features including overall user metrics, source traffic, device and operating system traffic, the most popular pages, site speed, and a few other areas. The data we compiled helps give a quick snapshot of users who access the MEPS site, how they access the site, and what pages and sections they are specifically interested in, which will ultimately be useful in helping shape the redesign efforts in the future.

# Methodology

The AIR team performed Google Analytics research in May 2022. Since the MEPS website has annual releases for their data, we realized that there are some users that may only visit the site at certain times of the year. Considering this information, we took 365 days’ worth of data. The dates sampled were between May 1, 2021, and April 30, 2022.

**Exhibit 1: [redacted]**

Since the government owns the Google Analytics account, there were certain settings that were unchangeable. One of these settings is the stripping of query parameters out of the URL (see Exhibit 2). This parameter affected our research because there were a few areas within the MEPS site that used query parameters. One such example was when we wanted to see the popularity of the methodology reports for the Household Component (HC) section. The URL to access those reports is <https://meps.ahrq.gov/mepsweb/data_stats/Pub_ProdLookup_Results.jsp?ProductType=Methodology%20Report&Comp=Household>. In this example, all the information after the “?” is filtered out in the analytics platform, which makes it impossible to see the data collected for this particular page.

**Exhibit 2: [redacted]**

### Compiling the Data

When compiling the data, we exported Excel spreadsheets from the Google Analytics Platform and created multiple sheets within a workbook to analyze trends and key insights (see Exhibit 3). Excel formulas were used to determine percentages, such as what the percentage of views was for a page when compared to the total site views. Finally, graphs and visualizations provided by Google Analytics were helpful to understand how certain sets of data compared with one another.

**Exhibit 3: [redacted]**

# Analysis

During the analysis phase, looked at overall data statistics to see what they could mean for the redesign, what areas of the site users were most interested in, what areas users were least interested in, trends within the data, and any data items that stood out from the rest. During this phase, we looked at the following sections to understand how users are using the site and who the users are:

1. Overall metrics
2. User demographics
3. User device
4. Source traffic
5. Site speed
6. Most popular pages
7. Traffic by landing page
8. Utility navigation and select a profile section

## Definition of Terms

Google Analytics uses some terms within their reporting dashboard that may be unfamiliar. To aid in understanding the data in the analysis section, Google Analytics defines the following terms for us.

**Users**: Users who have initiated at least one session during the date range.

**Sessions**: A session is the period of time during which a user is actively engaged with your website during the date range. All usage data are associated with a session.

**Pageviews**: Pageviews are the total number of pages viewed. Repeated views of a single page are counted as separate views.

**Unique Pageviews**: Unique pageviews are the number of sessions during which the specified page was viewed at least once. A unique pageview is counted for each page URL and page title combination.

**Average Session Duration**: The average length of a session.

**Bounce Rate**: The percentage of single-page sessions in which there was no interaction with the page. An interaction occurs when a request to the server is sent such as when the user clicks on a link to navigate within or away from the page.

**Average Page Load per Second**: Average page load time is the average amount of time (in seconds) it takes for pages to load, from initiation of the pageview (e.g., click on a page link) to load completion in the browser.

## Summary of Findings

When analyzing the data for the MEPS site, we gained strong insight into who the site users are and how they are using the site. During this research, there were some areas that stood out as areas to address in the redesign efforts.

* **Direct vs. Organic Traffic**: About 62 percent of the users are accessing the MEPS site by directly inputting the URL in their browser, while only about 28 percent are accessing the site organically through search engines. [According to our research](https://www.brightedge.com/resources/research-reports/channel_share), search engine optimization (SEO) research sites are reporting that on average a site should have 50 percent organic traffic. From our interviews with external users, many of them mentioned how they use Google to search and find what they need on the MEPS site. We recommend enhancing SEO throughout redesign so the users can find the site through Google or Bing more easily which will also help attract new users.
* **Average Sessions per User**: The number of sessions in the year per user (1.5 sessions) was not high, but we believe this can be improved by regularly updating and adding content to the site, while also mentioning this new content in email updates to users subscribed to the mailing list.
* **Traffic by Device Type**: Most users (88 percent) are accessing the site using desktop computers, but there are still some users using mobile devices (12 percent). Currently, the site is not optimized for mobile use. Since mobile website usage is increasing in our society, the website should be designed so that it will load properly on a mobile device.
* **High Site Speed**: The current average site speed is very good (under 3 seconds for pages to load). One reason the site loads so quickly is because there are very few graphics on the pages. However, in the user interviews, some wanted more graphics to break up text-heavy pages. Since the user expects to come to MEPS and have everything load quickly, this should be taken into account if images are used more frequently in the redesign.
* **High Topics and Publications Traffic**: Although topics and publications were not shown to be areas of interest in our user interviews, we found that they still were among the most popular pages in Google Analytics (fourth and fifth highest pageview counts). While the user interviews showed these sections might not be necessary to focus on in the redesign, the analytics data show the opposite. This should be taken into account during the redesign process, as these sections should still be available and easy to find for the user.
* **Low Primary Navigation Traffic:** When looking at the pageviews for each landing page, we found that there were some pages such as the Discussion Forum page (653 pageviews) or the Mailing List page (1,175 pageviews) that had very few pageviews compared to the site total (2,022,319 pageviews). Because too many choices can be a bad thing for users, we recommend consolidating and organizing the primary menu to help users find what they need more easily and without being overwhelmed by the number of choices, especially choices that are not often used.
* **Low Navigation by Audience Type Traffic**: The “Select a Profile” section is not used very much by users, with only 0.4 percent of total site traffic. Because we did not see this menu often on other sites when doing a comparative analysis (75 percent of sites did not have this feature), and users on the MEPS site are not using it, we feel this menu is not necessary to include in the redesign efforts.
* **HC Traffic**: HC data pages, while not specifically under the Household section, were the three most popular pages on the MEPS website (PUF Data Detail Page, PUF Data Code Detail Page, PUF Data Search Results). We recommend making clear distinctions between MEPS component sections in the redesign effort while making the HC section a primary focus.

## Analysis Breakdown

### Overall Metrics

In this section, we present the number of users, sessions, pageviews, average session duration, and bounce rate for the 365 days sampled in the analysis (see Exhibit 4). These data give an overall picture of the traffic occurring on the MEPS website.

**Exhibit 4: Overall MEPS Website Data**  
**May 1, 2021–April 30, 2022**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Metric | Value |
| Users | 171,323 |
| Sessions | 253,655 |
| Number of sessions per user | 1.5 |
| Pageviews | 2,022,319 |
| Pageviews by returning user | 1,186,335 (58.7% of all pageviews) |
| Pageviews by new user | 835,984 (41.3% of all pageviews) |
| Pages per session | 8.0 |
| Average session duration | 3:27 minutes |
| Bounce rate | 10.3% |

**Analysis & Recommendations**

The overall metrics provide a basic overview of the MEPS site. In this section we look more deeply at a few areas—specifically, the number of sessions per user, the pages per session, the average session duration, and the bounce rate.

The number of sessions per user shows how frequently users return to the website during a given time period. When looking at how MEPS scored in this area, the 1.5 sessions per user is [average for most sites on the web](https://www.klipfolio.com/metrics/marketing/sessions-per-user). Throughout our interviews with users, we learned that a lot of users will download the PDFs or data files they need when working on a project, making a return to the website less necessary for them. One way to increase the sessions per user would be to increase the content on the website that may drive return users, such as new data tools, webinars, or news, which may help incentivize a desire to return to the site more frequently. Another way to boost these sessions could be to send out emails to subscribed users of the site with links to helpful content on the site.

We found that the number of pages per session for MEPS was higher than average. The number of pages that a user looked at on the MEPS site each time that user logged on (8.0) was more than the average of 5 pages (according to [one source](https://www.klipfolio.com/metrics/marketing/page-views-per-session)). We also found that the average session duration for the MEPS website was [high](https://databox.com/average-session-duration-benchmark#:~:text=Analytics%20is%20reporting.-,Benchmark%3A%20What%20Is%20a%20Good%20Average%20Session%20Duration%3F,be%20anything%20above%20three%20minutes.), showing that users spent a lot of time on the site. While these high statistics score well among the data community, they don’t always provide a clear picture of the user experience. It is quite possible that users are moving through multiple pages and spending a higher-than-average session duration on the site because they are struggling to find where to go, or they had to read through a lot of information to find what they needed. User interviews confirmed that some people struggled with finding what they needed quickly in certain areas such as on the Data Centers page or within the survey questionnaires. Focusing on increasing efficiency for users who are accessing specific content should be a primary goal in the redesign effort.

Although the bounce rate of 10.3 percent is low, and lower values are generally better, most sites mention a bounce rate below 30 percent should be further examined. [One site](https://www.gorocketfuel.com/the-rocket-blog/whats-the-average-bounce-rate-in-google-analytics/#:~:text=On%20the%20other%20hand%20) reports that a bounce rate that low could mean that there is a lack of dynamic content on the website. This may or may not be good depending on the site’s goal; however, if the bounce rate is an accurate reflection of user behavior, it would seem that most users enter the MEPS site knowing what to expect and are able to spend the time looking for what they need.

### User Demographics

Within the user demographics, we looked at the top countries and languages of the users accessing the site (see Exhibit 5). This information can be helpful in determining if there is a need to create multilingual options on the site.

**Exhibit 5: MEPS User Demographics Data**  
**May 1, 2021–April 30, 2022**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Country** | **Users** | **Percentage of Users** |
| United States | 147,296 | 85.9% |
| India | 3,591 | 2.1% |
| China | 2,024 | 1.2% |
| South Korea | 2,024 | 1.2% |
| Mexico | 1,436 | 0.8% |
| Other | 14,952 | 8.8% |
| **Language** | **Users** | **Percentage of Users** |
| English, United States | 153,956 | 89.8% |
| English, United Kingdom | 2,873 | 1.7% |
| Chinese | 2,220 | 1.3% |
| Korean | 1,828 | 1.1% |
| Spanish | 1,502 | 0.9% |
| Other | 8,944 | 5.2% |
| Total | 171,323 | 100% |

**Analysis & Recommendations**

The data in this section were not surprising, as the average user on the MEPS site was in the United States and a reader of the English language. Since such a small percentage of users was from other countries or spoke different languages, we do not feel there is a need to make any adjustments in this area.

### User Device

For user device data, we looked at device type, operating system, and browser (see Exhibit 6). This information is helpful to make sure information is accessible and easy to find on browser sizes that match the targeted audience’s device type when working on the redesign efforts.

**Exhibit 6: User Device Data**  
**May 1, 2021–April 30, 2022**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Device** | **Users** | **Percentage of Users** |
| Desktop | 150,757 | 88.0% |
| Mobile | 19,783 | 11.6% |
| Tablet | 783 | 0.5% |
| Total | 171,323 | 100% |

**Analysis & Recommendations**

Since the MEPS website is primarily used for work-related activity, it is not surprising that most users of the website are accessing it on a desktop computer. However, it is interesting to note that over 10 percent of users are accessing the site on a mobile device, especially since the website is designed only for desktop at this time. With more and more people using mobile or tablet devices for all types of activities on the internet, creating a responsive site that is viewable on a mobile device without issue should be part of the redesign process.

### Source Traffic

Source traffic refers to how users are getting to the MEPS site. Four sets of source traffic were shown in the data: direct, organic, referral, and social (see Exhibit 7).

Direct source traffic means that the user input the website address into their browser manually or entered the page from a bookmark in their browser. Organic sources are those users who entered the site from a search engine result such as from Google or Bing. Referral traffic is from users who entered the site by clicking on a link on another site, such as <https://www.ahrq.gov>. Social traffic refers to users who entered the site by clicking on a link from a social media channel such as Facebook.

**Exhibit 7: Source Traffic Data**  
**May 1, 2021–April 30, 2022**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Source** | **Users** | **Percentage of Users** |
| Direct | 112,170 | 62.0% |
| Organic | 50,209 | 27.7% |
| Referral | 17,563 | 9.7% |
| Social | 914 | 0.6% |

*Note: A user may come to the MEPS website using more than one source, therefore the number of users is greater than the total.*

**Analysis & Recommendations**

When looking at the source traffic data, the amount of direct traffic compared to organic traffic was surprising. Most users who come to the MEPS site are returning users who are familiar with the site and most likely have it bookmarked in their browser. However, the data show there could be a lot of room for growth on the site. [According to one SEO study](https://www.brightedge.com/resources/research-reports/channel_share), sites, on average, get over half of their traffic from organic sources. This means that the site could perhaps see a boost in traffic by focusing on SEO throughout the redesign. With enhanced SEO, individual pages on the MEPS site are more likely to be indexed by a search engine, allowing for more organic traffic.

### Site Speed

Site speed helps determine how long it takes for the average user to load a page on the MEPS site. This section is broken down by browser, which can be useful for optimization during the development phase (see Exhibit 8).

**Exhibit 8: Site Speed by Browser**  
**May 1, 2021–April 30, 2022**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Browser** | **Average Page Load per Second** |
| Safari | 0.8 |
| Chrome | 0.9 |
| Edge | 1.8 |
| Firefox | 2.3 |

**Analysis & Recommendations**

The results for the site speed data were impressive. According to [one study](https://backlinko.com/page-speed-stats), most websites have an average page load speed of over 10 seconds. Google [recommends a page load time under 3 seconds](https://www.thinkwithgoogle.com/marketing-strategies/app-and-mobile/mobile-page-speed-new-industry-benchmarks/), so the MEPS website comes away with a passing score. One of the main reasons MEPS has such high speeds for page loads is because there are very few graphics and interactives on the MEPS site that could increase the load time. The downside of this is that throughout the user interview process, many users struggled to find information easily on text-heavy pages, and some specifically mentioned that they wanted a more modern site design that featured graphics to help direct their eye. This site speed section will be a key area to revisit once the redesign is underway, especially if more graphics and interactives are added to the site, as users have come to expect a quick experience when visiting the site.

### Most Popular Pages

When surveying the pages with the most traffic, we looked at the top 15 pages. We wanted to see not only how many pageviews each page had, but also how many unique pageviews there were for the pages (see Exhibit 9). The comparison between the two metrics helps determine the overall popularity of the page, since one user may access a certain page multiple times, which increases the pageview number, but may not give a completely accurate portrayal of the page’s popularity across all users.

**Exhibit 9: Most Popular Pages**  
**May 1, 2021–April 30, 2022**

| **Page Name** | **Pageviews** | **Unique Pageviews** | **URL Path** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Data Detail Page | 233,611 | 36,628 | /data\_stats/download\_data\_files\_detail.jsp |
| Data Code Detail Page | 197,309 | 34,212 | /data\_stats/download\_data\_files\_codebook.jsp |
| Data Search Results | 167,536 | 29,903 | /data\_stats/download\_data\_files\_results.jsp |
| MEPS Topics | 144,619 | 28,467 | /data\_stats/meps\_topics.jsp |
| Publications Detail Page | 131,757 | 17,498 | /data\_stats/pub\_prodresults\_details.jsp |
| Quick Tables Search Results | 121,833 | 1,567 | /data\_stats/quick\_tables\_results.jsp |
| Data Files Landing Page | 106,359 | 30,034 | /data\_stats/download\_data\_files.jsp |
| Home Page | 76,521 | 65,030 | /mepsweb/index.html |
| Data Tools Landing Page | 38,065 | 11,818 | /data\_stats/data\_tools.jsp |
| Data Overview Landing Page | 28,206 | 10,904 | /data\_stats/data\_overview.jsp |
| Survey Components: Household | 22,721 | 7,378 | /survey\_comp/household.jsp |
| About MEPS: Survey Background | 22,591 | 9,598 | /about\_meps/survey\_back.jsp |
| Survey Questionnaires from Household | 21,415 | 6,594 | /survey\_comp/survey.jsp |
| Survey Questionnaires Search Results | 19,065 | 2,742 | /survey\_comp/survey\_results\_ques\_sections.jsp |
| Quick Tables Results | 18,543 | 3,526 | /data\_stats/quick\_tables\_results.jsp |

**Analysis & Recommendations**

When looking at the data for the most popular pages, we found that the data detail pages had the most pageviews. These pages are where a user would land on to download the HC documentation or HC data files for a specific dataset. The second and third most popular pages also were in the data category as well, with the codebook pages at number two and the data search results page at number three.

After seeing the data pages land in the top spots for pageviews, we were surprised to see the Topics landing page and the Publications detail page showing up so high in the pageview count. Many of the users we interviewed did not mention topics or publications as areas of interest, but instead these users were focused on data and the survey questionnaire. When looking further into this data, we saw that there was a large difference between new user vs. returning user traffic coming to these sections relative to looking at the data and survey pages. More than 80 percent of traffic to the Publications detail page and more than half to the Topics page were new users, whereas more than 75 percent of traffic to the three data-related pages were returning users (see Exhibit 10). This shows that there is another category of users that comes to the MEPS site for topics and publications, and this group is distinct from those we previously interviewed. This separate category of users may not be as interested in downloading the datasets, but they may be more interested in viewing MEPS publications for their own research.

**Exhibit 10: New User Traffic vs. Returning User Traffic**  
**May 1, 2021–April 30, 2022**

| **Page Name** | **Top Pages in MEPS** | **New User Traffic (Pageviews)** | **Returning User Traffic (Pageviews)** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Data Detail Page | /download\_data\_files\_detail.jsp | 35,061 (15.0%) | 198,550 (85.0%) |
| Data Code Detail Page | /download\_data\_files\_codebook.jsp | 46,748 (23.7%) | 150,561 (76.3%) |
| Data Search Results | /download\_data\_files\_results.jsp | 31,731 (18.9%) | 135,805 (81.1%) |
| MEPS Topics | /meps\_topics.jsp | 83,899 (58.0%) | 60,721 (42.0%) |
| Publications Detail Page | /pub\_prodresults\_details.jsp | 108,775 (82.6%) | 22,982 (17.4%) |

Since topics pages are “keyword rich” with searchable terms, some of this extra traffic could be attributed to users finding MEPS topics through search engines. When looking further into these data, we were able to confirm that MEPS topics had about an 8-percentage point increase in organic traffic over the rest of the website, with 34.7 percent of traffic coming from search engines to the MEPS topic pages and only 26.6 percent of traffic coming from search engines to the rest of the website.

MEPS topics and publications, while not a focal point of the users during the interview process, should remain an option for users in the site redesign based on these data we are seeing from Google Analytics.

The last few types of pages that made the top list of popular pages fell into the survey components category. We found that the HC had the most accessed pages among the users, with the Household Survey Components page and the Household Survey Questionnaires pages ranking among the most popular of the popular pages.

The majority of the most popular pages were related to the HC audience. This should be considered when redesigning the website. While there should be a clear distinction among audiences with content for all, redesign efforts should meet the needs of users from the HC since that is the main audience.

### Traffic by Landing Page

One key area we looked at was the main landing pages on the MEPS site (see Exhibit 11). These pages were composed of the links in the main navigation within the side menu. Since these links are accessible to all users on all pages and act as a gateway to other parts of the site, this will help determine the areas in which users are most interested.

**Exhibit 11: Landing Page Data**  
**May 1, 2021–April 30, 2022**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Page Name (*Section Name*)** | **Pageviews**  **(n=2,022,319)** | **Unique Pageviews**  **(n=554,473)** |
| MEPS Topics (*Data and Statistics*) | 144,619 | 28,467 |
| Data Files (*Data and Statistics*) | 106,359 | 30,034 |
| MEPS Data Tools (*Data and Statistics*) | 38,065 | 11,818 |
| Data Overview (*Data and Statistics*) | 28,206 | 10,904 |
| Household (Survey Components) | 22,721 | 7,378 |
| Survey Background (*About MEPS*) | 22,591 | 9,598 |
| Publications Search (*Data and Statistics*) | 15,931 | 4,505 |
| Insurance/Employer (*Survey Components*) | 11,752 | 4,832 |
| Survey Questionnaires (*Survey Components*) | 11,752 | 4,374 |
| Workshops & Events (*About MEPS*) | 11,230 | 5,093 |
| Data Centers (*Data and Statistics*) | 11,230 | 4,505 |
| Medical Provider (*Survey Components*) | 7,965 | 2,873 |
| Data Release Schedule (*About MEPS*) | 6,007 | 2,808 |
| What’s New (*Communication*) | 4,832 | 2,220 |
| Participants' Corner (*Communication*) | 2,350 | 1,045 |
| Mailing List (*Communication*) | 1,175 | 457 |
| Discussion Forum (*Communication*) | 653 | 261 |

**Analysis & Recommendations**

The landing page data compared similarly to the most popular pages data in that the topics and data files were most popular followed by the survey components. What was surprising was how little the Communication section is used. The What’s New section had the most use, with 4,832 pageviews, while the discussion forum had the least with only 653 pageviews (and only 261 unique pageviews).

The MEPS website has 17 navigational items. This is more than almost every other comparable website we looked at in the previous report. While a lot of menu options might seem like a good thing, the [Nielsen Norman Group has done research](https://www.nngroup.com/articles/simplicity-vs-choice/) that shows this to be false. The organization found that when a user has more choices, there is a lot more effort required to try to make the right decision, and the user can easily become overwhelmed and fatigued by the options available. For this reason, it’s important to make sure that when a user enters a website, they are not affected in a negative way by too many options in the primary navigation.

Given there are so few pageviews of some of the landing pages (e.g., “Mailing List”, “Participants’ Corner”), we recommend removing certain pages from the main menu so that the user has a more pleasant experience and can easily find what they need. By implementing sub-menus throughout the site, we can provide the user a broader set of choices to begin their journey to find additional choices as they move throughout the site. This gives users the control they desire over their web experience while creating an effective and efficient site flow.

One other area that stood out in this section was how many Household Component users there were compared to the Insurance Component users. The Household Component section had 22,721 pageviews from 7,378 users while the Insurance Component section had only 11,752 pageview from 4,832 users. This solidified our beliefs that the primary audience for the MEPS website are Household Component users.

### Utility Navigation & Select a Profile

The utility navigation and Select a Profile navigation are shown prominently when the user enters the website (see Exhibit 12). The utility navigation includes Contact MEPS, MEPS FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions), and MEPS Site Map, while the Select a Profile section includes links by audience type. We looked at how many pageviews and unique pageviews each section had to determine the value of these links to the user (see Exhibit 13).

**Exhibit 12: Screenshot of the Utility Navigation and Select a Profile Navigation**

Graphical user interface, text, application, email

Description automatically generated

**Exhibit 13: Utility Navigation and Select a Profile Data**  
**May 1, 2021–April 30, 2022**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Page Name** | **Pageviews**  **(n=2,022,319)** | **Unique Pageviews (n=554,473)** |
| MEPS FAQ | 14,495 | 3,395 |
| MEPS Site Map | 4,309 | 1,959 |
| Contact MEPS | 2,350 | 1,045 |
| Survey Participant | 2,350 | 1,045 |
| Researcher | 2,350 | 849 |
| General User | 1,306 | 588 |
| Policymaker | 914 | 392 |
| Media | 522 | 261 |

**Analysis & Recommendations**

Other than the FAQs page, the numbers of pageviews for both the audience links and the utility navigation links were extremely small. When doing a comparative analysis in a previous report, we found that very few sites were using an audience link gateway. The data in this report further show that this audience-specific section might not be needed on the MEPS site. While we recommend removing the audience-specific section in the redesign, we still want to make sure Survey Participants are easily able to find what they need given the percentage of participants that come to the site every year. One way to solve this problem would be to move the Survey Participants landing page (“Participants’ Corner”) from the main navigation to the utility navigation. Additionally, the Contact MEPS and MEPS Site Map links were not used often by users. One option is to move these links to the footer where they are more commonly found on most websites.

# Summary of Recommendations

The recommendations from the analysis of each section are as follows:

* **Increase Return Users**: Grow the content on the website that may drive return users (e.g., new data tools, webinars, or news, which may help incentivize a desire to return to the site more frequently). When new, helpful content is added to the site, let users on the mailing list know through email updates to help drive returning visits to the site.
* **Create a More Efficient User Experience:** To decrease time spent on the site, create a more efficient experience throughout each page so that users can quickly find and download what they need rather than reading through a lot of text-heavy pages.
* **Create Accessible Content for All Users:** Since some users are accessing the MEPS site by mobile device, and this mobile usage may only grow with time, we recommend the redesign efforts should include a responsive design optimized for mobile devices.
* **Increase Organic Traffic:** Focus on enhancing SEO throughout the site to increase organic (search engine) traffic.
* **Maintain Site Speed:** Keep the page load time low while improving user experience with graphics and interactives in the redesign.
* **Prioritize HC:** Distinguish between components and prioritize the primary audience, the HC, in the redesign efforts.
* **Reorganize the Navigation:** Create a smaller, more organized primary navigation with sub-menu options.
* **Maintain Topics and Publications:** Keep topics and publications as a primary part of the site as shown by popularity among Google Analytics.
* **Remove Audience Links:** Given the low pageviews for the “Select a Profile” navigation items, we recommend removing this option from the site and adding the Survey Participants link to the utility navigation.

# Conclusion

Google Analytics provided us with a variety of quantitative data for the MEPS site. We were able to gather insights into who is using the MEPS site, what they are looking for, and what the primary focus is for the user. The data also show areas for improvement during the redesign effort. Some of these areas include the navigation, the content design, SEO, and a mobile-friendly design. We feel that by incorporating the recommendations into the scope of the redesign, the experience will be greatly enhanced for MEPS site users.