

Agenda item 10. Communications Evaluation Report – September 2020

For the September Board the LEP has introduced a new way of reporting communications activity to help measure its effectiveness in raising the profile of HotSW LEP as the thought-leader in economic development in the HotSW area.

The scope of this report includes digital communications platforms and media relations activity.

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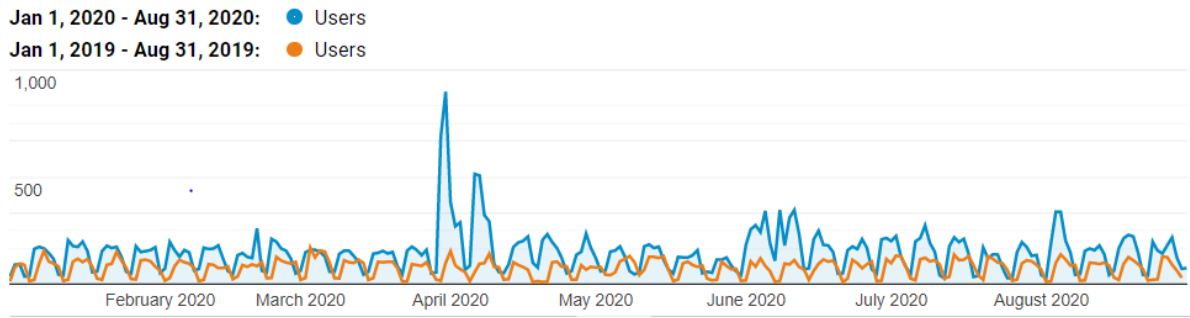
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1 Website Performance Overview – www.heartofswlep.co.uk

The website is the main platform by which we raise our digital profile, all other platforms are to drive traffic to the website.

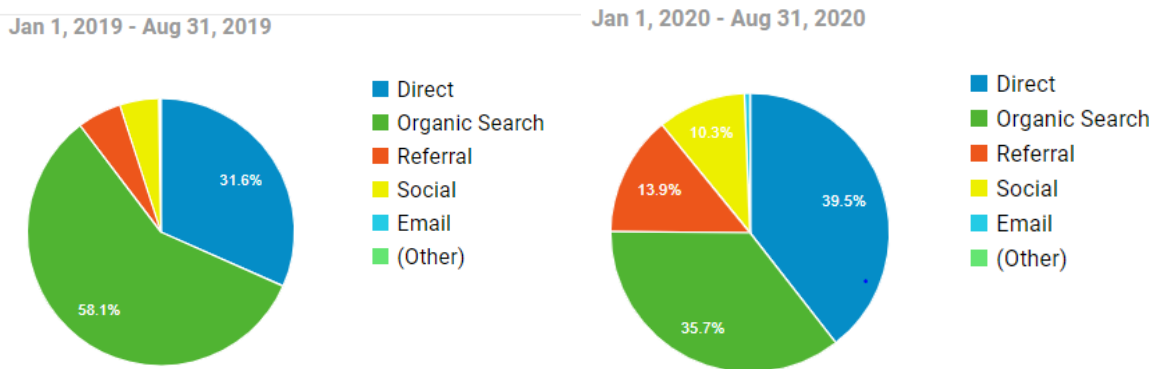
Currently the website Domain score (the score by which its profile and effectiveness ranking on key words is measured) is 45. This is the 8th highest domain score out of 38 LEPs therefore is deemed to be a good score, but there is always room for improvement.

This first stage of measurements established “Where we are now” and further Board reports will outline “Where we want to be” and the Communications operations are already underway with plans and resources tactics that will determine the “How do we get there” element of the new Digital Marketing Strategy which is currently under consultation with the LEP Core Team and SLA leads who cover some communications tasks for the Growth Hub and the Skills and Careers services.



www.heartofswlep.co.uk generated much higher numbers of website visitors in 2020 compared to 2019.

Website traffic sources – 2019 and 2020 compared:



NB – Digital industry advice is that an ideal referral ratio is a 1/3 split between direct, organic search and engagement (referral/social media) which the LEP corporate website www.heartofswlep.co.uk has achieved this year. As the diagrams below show, there is a significant increase in traffic from engagement sources – the red and yellow segments.

Website analytics 2020	HotSW LEP	Growth Hub*
Website visits	27,046	79,101
New visitors	26,396	66,224
Ave length of time (mins)	2:04	1:43
Ave page views	2.09	2.2
Bounce Rate	66%	59.83%
Geography (SW%)	27%	32%
Sources (direct/organic/referral)	39/36/25%	37/19/31%
Range of landing pages (Homepage %)	17%	28.75%

What does this mean?

2020 saw a rise in the percentage of website traffic from referrals and social media, which is a good indication that traffic is being driven by targeted marketing activity and therefore reaching the right stakeholder audiences.

A greater range of landing pages also indicates that the click throughs and links on digital marketing posts are working. Increasing social media activity is helping drive this traffic.

Average time, average number of page views and bounce rate have seen a slight decline, but this could be related to quick fact finding and links to direct pages that are relevant for the audience.

In commercial platforms where increased sales are the goal of the website, it is better to achieve more page views so that people buy more. However in not-for-profit and public service websites, it can be seen as an efficient communication platform if the page views are low, meaning that the visitor doesn't have to browse too much to find the information that they need quickly.

***Growth Hub** website analytics will be incorporated as part of the next Board report, as will analytics for the forthcoming Skills Launchpad website, which is not yet live, and will be an end-user facing platform for those seeking skills, careers and training resources.

2 Social Media Performance – Engagement, Activity and Following

2.1 Twitter (Jan – August)

	HotSW LEP @HeartofSWLEP	Growth Hub @GrowthHubHOTSW	Skills and Careers @HotswskillsC
Tweets	266	520	461
Impressions	282,200	535,400	231,500
Engagement (Click, like, retweet, comment)	2,522	3,755	1,586
Visits to profile	3,287	3,079	1,328
Total Followers	4,865	1,757	649

What does this mean?

Number of tweets, impressions and engagement up on 2019, with a higher number of profile visits and website referral.

The engagement rate of @HeartofSWLEP is around ten-fold on the number of tweets, which is high and indicates prime content and interest.

Followers to @HeartofSWLEP are up to 4,865 compared to 4,598 at the start of 2020 and 4,462 in August 2019.

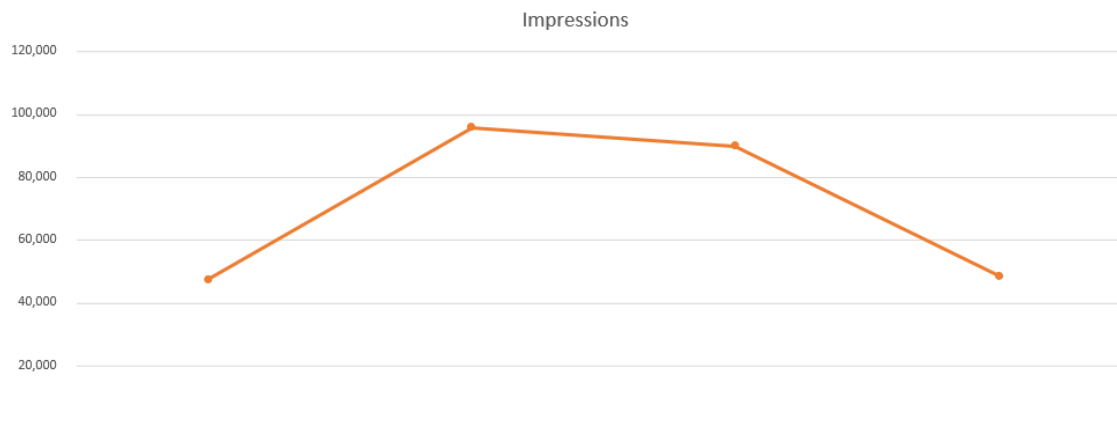
This is a rise of 5.8% in 2020, and 9.1% compared with August 2019, and a 28% increase since July 2018 when the drive to increase followers was brought into focus.

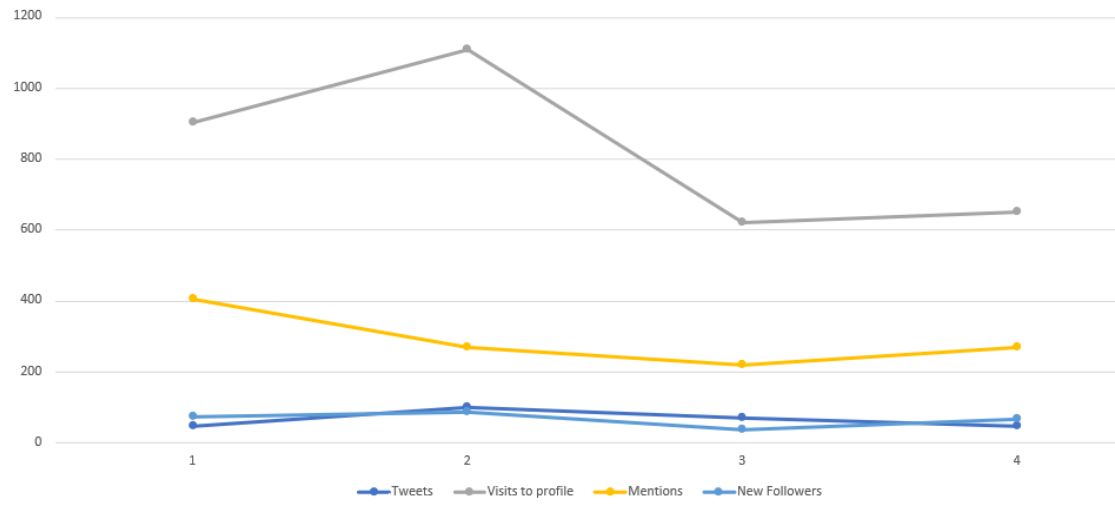
Digital industry advice is that 15% increase in followers per year is good, and our average rate of increase is 14% per year since July 2018, with an inevitable spike in early results. Increased resources and tactics in the Digital Marketing Strategy will generate a further spike in followers and engagement.

Further focus on improvement of the engagement rate and following of the Growth Hub and Skills and Careers twitter handles is also integral to the Digital Marketing Strategy, with additional staff resources having become available and a strategic approach to content development across all three LEP channels.

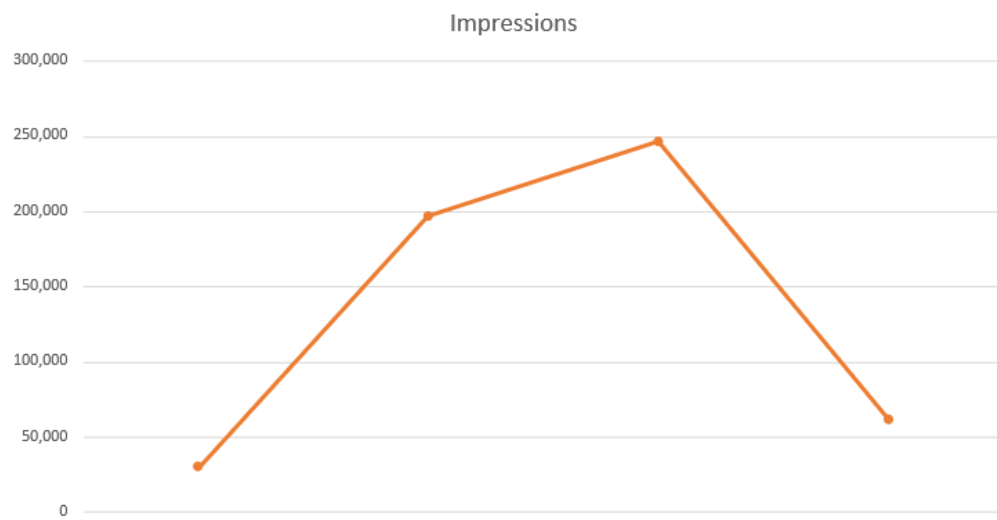
The graphs below show the metrics in visual form, the drop in performance over the last month is thought to be due to the holiday period and the significant increases over spring and early summer due to the COVID-19 economic crisis when audiences were keen to search information relating to the economy, careers and business support.

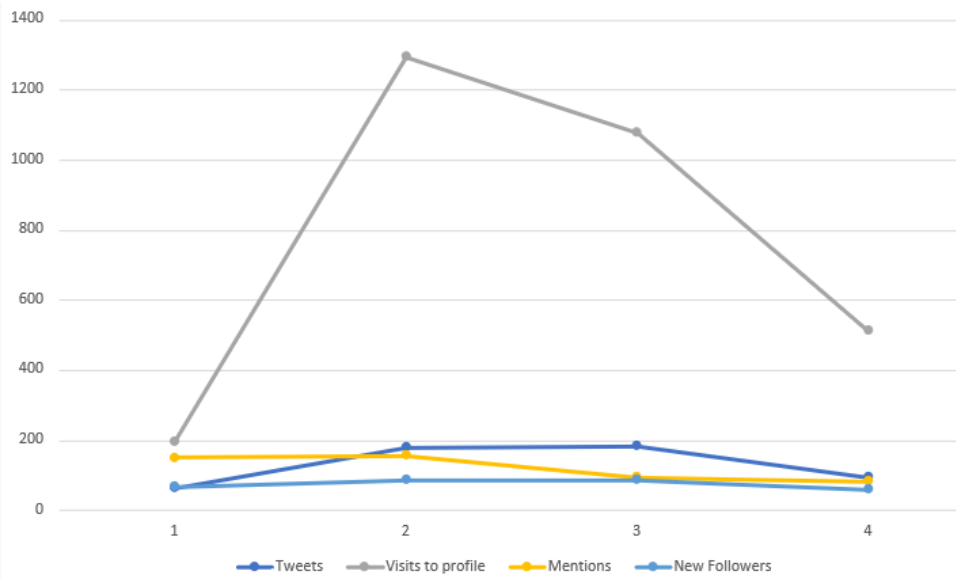
@HeartofSWLEP - HotSW LEP Account





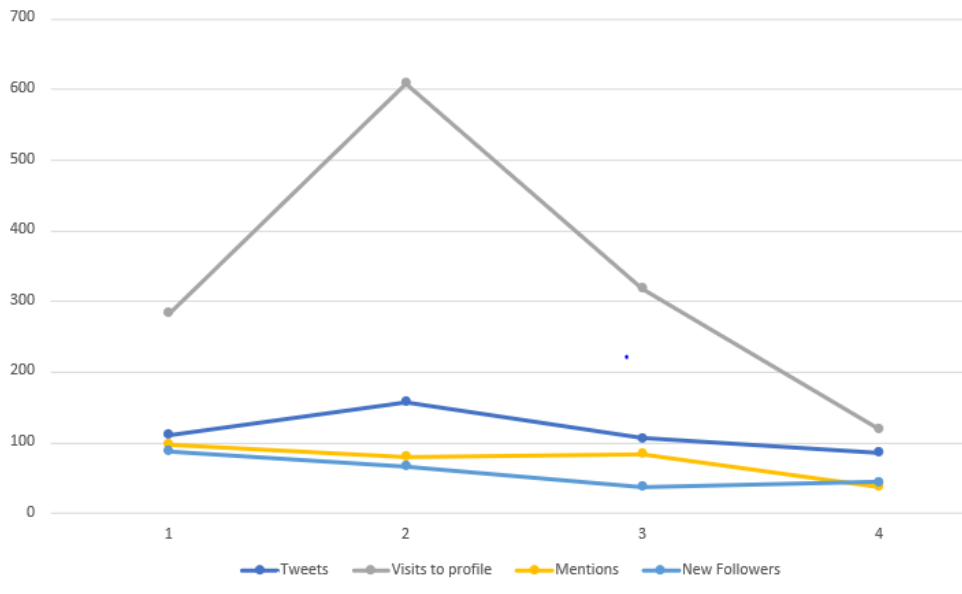
@GrowthHubHOTSW - Growth Hub Account





@HotSWSkillsC – Careers and Skills Account





2.2 LinkedIn (Jan – August 2020)

	HotSW LEP	Growth Hub	Skills Launchpad
Impressions	31,967	14,449	3,611
Shares	314	499	47
Reactions	698	312	123
Clicks	1,291	465	158
Total Followers	1,418	423	109

Greater activity on HotSW LEP LinkedIn has seen strong rise in followers - current followers for the corporate LinkedIn account is 1,418 compared to 917 at the start of the year, a rise of 55%. This is thought to be due to the increased number of posts and searches for economic topics and business support in the wake of the lockdown.

Renewed focus on Growth Hub and Skills and Careers Launchpad LinkedIn platforms is part of the Digital Marketing Strategy plan.

3 Media Relations – see appendix 1 PowerPoint slide: Media Performance 2020