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# SCIWORTHY

A Blue Marble Space Initiative

## ABOUT SCIWORTHY

SciWorthy is a science news site where each article covers a recently published paper and is written by the scientist themselves or a science-trained writer. It has the potential to solve an important problem in science journalism – accuracy. Representing a complex scientific idea with the full complement of background knowledge required to put it into proper context is difficult among experts, and summarizing it for a general audience is even more so. We have stepped up to this challenge.

## GOALS & RATIONALE



## MARKETING

Marketing is an immense challenge for science communication due to the time investment required and the nature of the content.

We market Sciworthy at writers workshops, university departments, and social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, and Reddit. Our site is listed on two aggregators - ScienceSeeker and ResearchBlogging.

We use the mass email marketing platform MailChimp to keep in touch with our regular readers and send out an email update every two weeks with links to the latest articles on the site and other news. Our email list gains around 5 new subscribers per week.

We use Google Analytics to track website traffic, which can be viewed on the figure to the left.

## EDITORIAL GUIDELINES

We strive for an inclusive tone. Scientists have a tendency to write very long compound sentences. The purpose of this is to pack a lot of detail into the fewest words possible. While it is a useful strategy for scholarly journal articles, we tell our writers that these kinds of sentences are likely to cause the reader to lose focus. If the reader has to go over the piece multiple times to understand it, it will not effectively communicate the science. Our guidelines also require defining of terms within the text of the sentence, rather than linking externally or assuming the reader understands discipline specific jargon.

Sciworthy writers all agree that accurate headlines are the weapon against click bait. Accuracy takes precedence over sensationalism, and if we must sacrifice a small amount of flashiness for the sake of an accurate message, we will.

## CONTRIBUTOR ENGAGEMENT

Because all Sciworthy writers are volunteers, maintaining contributor engagement is a major challenge. We have overcome this challenge somewhat due to the selection pressures that ultimately cause uninterested writers to drop out and dedicated writers to stay and create quality content. We presently have two regular contributors and several who submit content once per month.

We have recently developed an incentive program that allows writers to earn points for their article contributions, for editing articles, and referring others. Those points are redeemed at the end of each quarter for Blue Marble Space merchandise such as T-shirts, mugs, water bottles, pens, and more. Data regarding the success of this incentive system is forthcoming.

Sciworthy has its own Slack.com team for editors and writers, where we stay in touch with one another and exchange ideas. It allows those in leadership roles to assign articles and set deadline reminders using various slackbots. The incentive program is also tracked using a slackbot. The Slack team is linked to a Google drive where all of the editing and writing takes place.

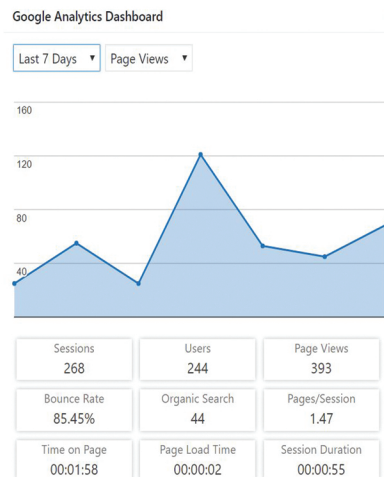


Figure 1. Google Analytics Dashboard for one week of Sciworthy.com traffic.

**Sessions:** A group of interactions that take place on your website within a given time frame  
**Users:** Unique IP addresses where a tracking cookie is first sent  
**Page Views:** the number of times the page is loaded.  
**Bounce Rate:** the number of visits in which a person leaves your website from the landing page without browsing any further.  
**Organic Search:** the number of times the site is found via search engine search terms rather than a link referral.  
**Pages/Session:** The average number of pages a person visits when they are on the site.  
**Time on Page:** The time between the first and the next page loaded  
**Page Load Time:** Time it takes to load the website  
**Session Duration:** The amount of time spent on a series of pages

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