

### The Alexa Traffic rank tool

A nice way to pick up expired domains with traffic is to look at a domains Alexa Popularity ranking. Alexa is one of the foremost authorities when it comes to determining website and domain name activity levels.

Alexa monitors several domain metrics, but the one we will be using primarily is called Alexa traffic rank tool. Basically the tool rank domains in a relative system where the most visited domain is number 1, the second most visited is ranked number 2 and so forth, all the way to up to the 30 million mark or so. Alexa monitors global rankings but also national rankings. This way you can see which domain is the most popular in your country.

Since it is a relative scale you won't know for certain what a ranking says about the actual traffic numbers a domain receives. Often domains with very similar rankings will have extremely different actual traffic numbers. This is because of the way that Alexa creates the rankings. Basically it is done by monitoring activity by visitors that use the Alexa toolbar. The toolbar is usually installed by webmasters and people with technical insight, therefore the traffic numbers are also somewhat skewed. Websites and domains that fall into the interest realms of Alexa toolbar users are ranked higher than domains that do not. Even so it is one of the most reliable and used ways of determining whether an expired domain still has traffic or not. This is because Alexa actually also tracks traffic to expired domains. This Means that domain requests will still be tracked even though the domain is not live.

### Determining which domains have potential traffic

As mentioned it is impossible to say exactly how many visitors a domain has based on its Alexa popularity. But you can use it to gauge the activity level and how much the activity has fallen since the domain has been dropped. In general you will never find a domain with much traffic that has a ranking over 10 million. That being said, it is possible to for a domain to be quite an earner even with very little traffic. That is determined by the domain keyword/subject area. This article focus on finding domains with a decent amount of traffic though. Please note that you can not transfer these observations to buying established sites with Alexa rank. The Alexa rank is easiely faked, so never take Alexa stats as a buy argument when you have possible access to actual server stats.

I won't go into how to create your list of expired domains with Alexa rank in this article, look elsewhere on DNand to get tips on that. Once you have your list ready it should only contain domains with a traffic ranking of 10 million or lower. Be sure you do not include domains with fake Alexa ranking. To check if a domains Alexa ranking is fake just do a lookup on Alexa.com under the domain name and check if the Alexa article points to the correct domain. Any redirected domains will share the "end domain's" ranking and link status. If you discover an expired domain with a global Alexa ranking of 100.000 or below the ranking is almost certainly fake.

### Which metrics to focus on

Our next move is to examine each domains Alexa article. Just open up Alexa.com and type in the domain name in the top header search bar. Any domain name's Alexa article has 4 main metrics; Traffic Rank, average time on site, site links and online since. The article has six main page; Traffic Rank, Contact info, related links, keywords, clickstream and demographics.

First we look at the traffic rank details. Start by setting the data range to max under the metric stat picture. This way you can see the domains history through the last year. Alexa traffic rank provides 5 ranking details; 3 month change, 3 month average, 1 month average, 1 week average and yesterdays average. Domains with traffic usually have data information in at least 3 and preferably 4 details levels. The names that have stats from one week average are the ones we are really looking for. If they have stats from yesterday, that is even better. In my experience domains with a rank of under 2 million are the ones that are most likely to have consistent traffic. Browse the reach and pageview tabs as well. Any activity there is a further indication of traffic.

Next have a look at the keyword page. If your domain has any data here it will give you an idea of what people are searching for when reaching the page. This information is extremely important when monetising the domain, whether you are parking or developing the name.

Then access the Clickstream page. If your domain displays data here it will give you an idea of the site referrers.

Finally click on the number of site links in the main metric overview. This will lead you to a listing of currently active Alexa site linkbacks. This is important in determining the quality of the traffic. If the domain has many blog comment link from sites outside of the site niche, this can be an indication of low value traffic, on the other hand; links from relevant sites can be an indication of higher value traffic.

### Estimating traffic value

The most important factor in determining traffic value in the pre-registration phase, is the previous site theme. Or more precisely what people are looking for when visiting the domain. As mentioned the Alexa keyword and site links stats are good tools to determine a site keyword or theme. Furthermore you can do a site history lookup in archive.org, to see what the previous site owners had on the domain.

Once you have determined which keywords are relevant, perform a lookup for each keyword in the Google Adwords Keyword Tool. If you are a Wordtracker customer, use their service. Have a closer look at the CPC bids, if your domain has keywords with bids lower than 1\$ the traffic

will most likely be hard to monetise. On the inverse bids higher than 1\$ indicate a higher value traffic. The value of these bids will most likely also have a direct impact on your parking PPC.

The second most important factor in traffic value is the national origin of the visitors. The most valuable traffic is from the following regions; United States, Japan, United Kingdom and the rest of Western Europe. The least valuable traffic comes from certain Asian countries, such as China, Indian and Vietnam.

If the domain itself does not imply a specific national origin (IE it's not a ccTLD and is not obviously in a foreign language), you can attempt to determine national origin in the pre-registration phase by looking at the site backlinks. Perform a lookup in each of the major search engines for the complete domain name and have a look at the back links shown. You can also look at the Alexa Clickstream and see if the referrers might give any hints as to the traffics potential origin.

### **So... Which names should I reg?**

It is always a gamble to register available names based on their Alexa Traffic rank. The rankings can be faked using redirection methods and popunders, though this is usually not the case for expired domains. Furthermore most valuable domain names with traffic are picked up during the drop phase by professional domainers using backorder services. However with the imposed restrictions on domain tasting in the top TLDs, more traffic names slip through to the actual drop. This has made it more feasible to snatch expired domains with traffic for less than 10\$.

So... If you should choose to register domains based on their Alexa Ranking I would advise you to consider the following;

- -ALWAYS check if the Alexa article is pointing to the correct domain. Otherwise the ranking is considered FAKE.
- -Register domains with recent traffic indication, from the last week in minimum.
- -Find the balance between traffic quality and quantity. If your domain has low quality traffic it has to have a lot of it to be a profitable investment.
- -Only consider names with a traffic ranking of over 2 million if they have high quality traffic.
  
- -Look for a consistent traffic history through the last year using the graphic representation on the Traffic Rank page.
- -Names with recent- and consistent traffic rankings of below 1 million, is most likely very good investments.

You should take the above recommendations with a grain of salt. As mentioned Alexa only tries to estimate their data and in reality there are wide discrepancies in their listing order. So you never really know what you are going to get before you register the domain and point the nameservers towards some server stats. That being said, using the recommended criteria's

Written by Dnand.com

Friday, 05 June 2009 11:20 - Last Updated Thursday, 08 October 2009 01:06

---

should at least ensure that the domain would pay for itself during the next 12 months.

Finally I will include two case examples that I was lucky enough to catch using this method. I have included some actual parking stats for you to compare with their Alexa ranking. Please feel free to lookup both domains in Alexa, but please do not visit them directly as they are parked and I would like my parking pages to stay pristine.

### **Case example 1**

Domain Name: Admin Vietnam .us (remove spaces)

90% Vietnamese traffic.

People looking for translation services.

1500 UVs pr. Month

Earning: 10\$< pr month parked

[Visit the Alexa stats here](#)

### **Case example 2**

Domain Name: C c s university .info (remove spaces)

90% Indian traffic.

People looking for degree information.

20.000-25.000 UVs pr month.

Earning: 50\$< pr month parked

[Visit the Alexa stats here](#)