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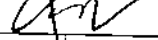
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PLAINTIFF EXHIBIT# 81 ID 2/26/16

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KEN BURKE, Clerk of the Circuit Court

By: 
Deputy Clerk

Gawker Media Moves To Uniques: Be "Even More of a Hustler," Says Nick Denton

by Choire Sicha · January 5, 2010

	Gawker	Gizmodo	Jezebel	Kotaku	io9
Jan-09	2,134,704	4,837,140	768,662	1,758,085	910,916
Feb-09	2,588,112	4,423,037	836,567	1,866,674	1,001,820
Mar-09	2,348,110	3,741,752	798,485	1,613,023	982,005
Apr-09	1,916,299	3,590,769	895,865	1,555,204	869,068
May-09	2,566,504	4,067,671	970,208	1,749,429	1,007,866
Jun-09	2,204,995	3,670,960	878,339	1,625,363	1,476,259
Jul-09	2,968,738	3,863,184	1,122,432	1,896,173	958,494
Aug-09	2,597,398	4,486,131	1,029,263	2,101,997	1,024,625
Oct-09	2,491,531	4,916,570	1,409,662	1,940,460	1,046,901
Nov-09	2,240,671	4,831,725	951,741	2,138,986	1,141,673
Dec-09	2,453,498	4,921,144	1,078,439	1,945,717	1,214,777
Target	2,376,802	4,248,774	965,914	1,809,837	1,058,044



“We all know that some pageviews are worth more than others,” writes Gawker Media honcho Nick Denton today in an internal memo. “Think of an exclusive such as Gawker’s embassy hazing pics, Deadspin’s expose of ESPN’s horndoggery, Gizmodo’s first look of the new Microsoft tablet or io9’s Avatar review. An item which gets picked up and draws in new visitors is worth more than a catnip slideshow that our existing readers can’t help

but click upon.”

And:

So we're shifting to a new number that more accurately reflects the growth of our audience. This target will encourage original reporting and original thought. The system will reward sites which recruit new readers rather than pandering to a well-established clique. Our editorial will be better as a result.

The target is called "US monthly uniques." It represents a measure of each site's domestic audience. This is the figure that journalists cite when judging a site's competitive position. It's also the metric by which advertisers decide which sites they will shower with dollars. Finally, a site with plenty of genuine uniques is one that has good growth prospects. Each of those first-time visitors is a potential convert.

What does this mean for the writers-and their pay?

The 2010 system is pretty similar to the one we have had. The individual and site bonuses will be consolidated. Each site will be given a target. The initial target is simply the average US uniques of the last 12 months.... Let's take an example. io9's monthly US uniques started 2008 at about the 800,000 level.



The target for the first three months of this year is 1.06m. If the site were to hit 1.2m, that would represent 13% over the target. Writers and editors would receive an average of about 13% bonus in addition to their salary or fees.

The distribution of the bonus pool

will be at the discretion of the site's editor-in-chief, so some will receive more and some none at all. The lead editor may also decide to "bet" part of this bonus pool. For instance she or he might decide to offer a bounty for a spy photo which would boost the site's uniques that month. Other rules can be clarified with Scott Kidder, our new head of editorial operations.

The tech team will be making more data available so you can see which stories are spreading. In the first instance, we will introduce a count that shows the number of mentions on Twitter. Tom and his colleagues will also display external referrals for each item. Later in the year you can expect those stories that strike a chord to get even greater prominence on the front page — and to remain there much longer.

But it's mainly up to you — by which I mean you and your editorial colleagues.

What can you do to bring in new visitors? Well, first of all, simply keep doing what you're doing right now! Most of the stories that resonate are also stories with high pageviews — with the flames that everyone so prizes.

Over time I'd hope writers will focus more of their energies on the stories that have the potential to break out on Twitter, Facebook or in TV coverage — which shouldn't be that big a challenge. It just means you have to be even more original, even more provocative or even more of a hustler than usual.

Happy New Year!

Nick

Read these next!

- Gamergate in Posterity
- The 40-Year-Old Reversion
- The End Of The Rodeo For The World's Greatest Cowboy
- The Twilight of the Indoor Mall
- Serial' and White Reporter Privilege
- Cash and Anxiety on the Weird New Internet

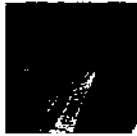
FACEBOOK

TWITTER

GOOGLE+

PINTEREST

EMAIL



Oh hi. I work here and enjoy cats and cat-related news.

READ MORE BY CHOIRE SICHA ON THE AWL

I Would Die 4 U Seth Rogen

December 16, 2014: Beware of Teens

December 15, 2014

December 12, 2014: Californians Terrorized by Sky-Liquid

December 11, 2014: The Negligible Value of Transparency

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Promoted by Kaiser Permanente



Vulpes (946)

I have no idea what any of this means, but I presume this screws the writers somehow, yes?

Reply



iplaudius (1,066)

"Can't help but click upon." Yes. The elusive uponClick event.

Reply



katiechasm (163)

Where's your *penchant* for clicking, sir?

Reply



jolie (16)

I have two questions: 1. Does he just CC you on these Internal Memos or does he still expect one of the minions to forward it? 2. Did he really use the word 'horndoggery'?

Reply



Setec Astrology (324)

He did, but that's an AJ Daulerio-ism from Deadspin's coverage of ESPN exec's and talent's extracurricular hanky-panky.

Reply



jolie (16)

Sigh. I know - I read the Deadspin item. AJ can pull it off. Mister Denton? Can't say the same, mostly because I'm probably not wrong to say that he thinks ESPN is the latest killer virus we should all be panicking about.

Reply



hockeymom (143)

So basically, the writer who takes a couple of weeks/months to expose a ring of terrorists with exploding underpants who live in suburban Wisconsin will be rewarded less than the writer who happens to open an email with Tiger Woods getting a blow-job by a cocktail waitress, then posts it.

Reply



Abe Sauer (148)

John Cook is not amused by your candor.

Reply



hockeymom (143)

John Cook should be working somewhere else.

Reply



Abe Sauer (148)

But where? Who would pay him to do some of that great stuff? Those positions have already been sucked up by laid-off Conde Nast or Times or whatever old timers. There just is near zero paying market for well-researched long-form non-celebrity stuff online.

Reply



RonMwangaguhunga (242)

so tragic and so true

Reply



hockeymom (143)

I have no idea what Gawker pays. I have always assumed the goal is to get your name out there, then get hired somewhere else, get a book deal, start your own site, but not to move up the Gawker ladder. Because it doesn't appear there is a ladder to move up (plus, that's so last century).

Anyway, here's where John Cook should work.

Television.

There's still money in TV (though sadly, not local news and most of the really good investigative units across the country have been gutted.).

Networks, especially cable, are looking for content. Production houses are flexible on who they will hire (they don't need Columbia grads, they need people who can do the damn job). I'm assuming that the 60 Minutes of the world are still impossible to approach, but I always encourage people to look at "reality tv" as an actual journalism alternative. (not The Jersey Shore stuff, obvs).

Television is NOT a great place for people who really, really like to write. BUT...for someone like a John Cook who knows how to dig stuff up, a smart EP would overlook his lack of TV experience, hire him as a producer and teach him the biz. The fact that he can actually write would be a (unappreciated, probably) bonus to the production company

12/17/2014

Gawker Media Moves To Uniques: Be "Even More of a Hustler," Says Nick Denton - The Awl

Reply



HiredGoons (603)

It's all about cable.

Networks = ha!

Reply



Matt (26)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EDaHxK5MYxg>

Reply



NicFit (616)

Yeah, really, fuck those old die hard readers/commenters with their love of catnip. They've largely moved on anyway to...

Reply



Cajun Boy (132)

"PS...While you're out there digging around for more original stories, make sure you continue to crank out a new post every 45 minutes or so. Kthx!"

Reply

**thehonorablejudgepudy (2,869)**

so i assume this means gawker sites will be catering to the lowest common denominator. how quaint. if i wanted that i'd read TMZ, nypost, or people. 2010 may be year i quit denton. all the writers i like are over here, anyway.

Reply

**KarenUhOh (19)**

Pretty much where they've gone for years. We can dance all we want around the "quality writing" issue and its "value" to GM, but the only niche sought is growth, growth and more growth. There's never enough of an audience, never a stable balance between sharp content and pandering.

And, if I'm reading this right--and I think I am--there is never an alternative to up or out.

In any event, those here who've said that Gawker is not an end in itself for writers has pegged things--in 2008 dollars. Maybe someday it'll become a stepping stone again, to somewhere besides a cliff.

Reply

**Lindsay Robertson (9)**

I think it's the opposite. Pageviews are much easier to get than uniques. Anyone can get all the pvs they want if they're shameless enough (hello lists and galleries!) New readers, not as much.

Reply

**ericdeamer (945)**

This could probably be derided as a "cliche" or "hipster dick-measuring contest" or something but I swear to God I haven't read Gawker since . . . 2006 maybe? I'll read a post if everyone is linking to it once in awhile but I never just read it in and of itself and I know tons of other people who used to be regular readers who did the same thing. We're all dirt

poor though so probably don't matter for whatever they're trying to accomplish over there.

Reply



Abe Sauer (148)

But what about sussing out the value of the uniques?! I mean, for example, I brought in Ronbo; he's gotta' be worth at least 35 new New York media types right?

Reply



garge (736)

Where Are They Now: Ronbo. Has he been relegated to spam, I ponder at times, or is he just on an extended Club Med sabbatical?

Reply



TerseNursePornstein (58)

"Well, thanks a lot."

Reply



HiredGoons (603)

Eternal gratitude.

Reply

kitten_witawip (99)

12/17/2014

Gawker Media Moves To Uniques: Be "Even More of a Hustler," Says Nick Denton - The Awl



DEMOCOMMIES!!!!!!h!!1

Reply



Abe Sauer (148)

Also, the best part of this memo is that Denton uses "journalists" to describe other kinds of non-Gawker writers while basically interchanging "writers" and "hustlers" to describe Gawker personnel.

Reply



petejayhawk (1,249)

But hey, at least they're actually official "personnel" now. So they've got that going for them.

Reply



Choire Sicha (2)

Well one of the other things going on there is that, at all times, someone is on "news shift duty." Which is smart, I think, in theory. (If really dull in practice.) Ostensibly, this gives time for people to work on longer projects? Maybe?

I actually don't think much in this memo is wrong. Though it makes me sleepy thinking about it, so I haven't devoted much if any brain power to analyzing it.

Reply



Rod T (33)

In the Justice League they called it Monitor Duty. Red Tornado would often volunteer for it.

Reply



Setec Astrology (324)

This is my favorite comment of 2010 (and is also further evidence of your point here).

Reply



mathnet (27)

Do I understand correctly that he's asking them to write more like you?

Reply



KarenUhOh (19)

Compensation Policy 2.doh:

1. New Cadillac
2. Steak knives
3. Your own Tumblr.

Reply



Abe Sauer (148)

Nice guy? I don't give a shit. Good writer? Fuck you! Go home and work on your novel. You wanna work here - bring uniques! You think this is abuse? You think this is abuse, you cocksucker? You can't take this? How can you take the abuse you get on a post? You don't like it, leave. *I* can go online tonight with the materials you've got and bring in 25,000 uniques. Tonight! In two hours! Can you? Can YOU? Go and do likewise. Get mad you son of a bitches. get mad. You want to know what it takes to blog? It takes BRASS BALLS to blog. Go and do likewise gents. Money's out there. You pick it up, it's yours. You don't, I got no sympathy for you. You wanna' go on those posts tonight and get Tweeted, TWEETED. It's yours. If not, you're gonna be reading my Twitter. And you know what you'll be saying - a bunch of

losers sittin' around sucking off coffee-shop free wifi. "Oh yeah. I used to be at Gawker. It's a tough racket." These are the new tips. These are the Conde tips. And to you they're gold, and you don't get them. Why? Because to give them to you is just throwing them away. I'd wish you good luck but you wouldn't know what to do with it if you got it.

Reply



zidaane (373)

whoa

Reply



MisterHippity (46)

"You see this watch? This watch cost more than all the page-view bonuses you will earn in your entire life!"

Reply



Natasha Vargas-Cooper (664)

PAGEVIEW BONUSES ARE FOR CLOSERS.

Reply



stuffisthings (1,352)

(Off topic, but: I highly recommend watching the movie on basic cable, with all the swear words dubbed over. "Forget the machine? Forget the machine? FORGET THE MACHINE!")

Reply

Rw (1,458)



So late in seeing this comment Abe but Damn it's worth giving the Kudos, because I laughed out loud, so hard at this.

Reply



Hobbesian (255)

Always Be Generatin'

Reply



zidaane (373)

The lead editor may also decide to "bet" part of this bonus pool on some oral or a pack of smokes.

Reply



katiebakes (32)

It's more valuable currency than the Zimbabwe dollah! I think!

Reply



cherrispyte (444)

"Later in the year you can expect those stories that strike a chord to get even greater prominence on the front page - and to remain there much longer."

I do not like what I think this means.

Reply



HeyThatsMyBike (500)

That the aforementioned Tiger Getting a BJ from a Cocktail Waitress story will be on the frontpage 'til June, I think.

Reply



Jim Newell (2,872)

"The distribution of the bonus pool will be at the discretion of the site's editor-in-chief, so some will receive more and some none at all. The lead editor may also decide to 'bet' part of this bonus pool. For instance she or he might decide to offer a bounty for a spy photo which would boost the site's uniques that month."

Wouldn't this endear a site lead to his/her underlings! "I'm going to take your bonuses for this month to go buy some picture of Tiger Woods (allegedly) drinking gin at a club, sorry!"

(Hi Choire! I signed up for one of these things on your website.)

Reply



MisterHippity (46)

"Did you bet all our bonus pool money on a spy photo again? Did you? Answer me!"

"But ... but it looked like such a sure thing! It was gonna make us all rich! ... Hey, what are all these people doing here? My best friend ... and Mom and Dad? What's going on?"

"It's for your own good. You need help. You have to come with us now ..."

"No! No!! The spy photos will pay off next month, I swear! Stop it ... get your hands off me!!"

Reply



kitten_witawip (99)

That \$1,000 for the Nikke Finke photo is still sitting in a desk somewhere.

Reply



Vulpes (946)

That part right there is so a recipe for abuse, resentment, and unctuous ass-kissing. You know one of those 109 nerds is going to take the "bounty" money and buy, like, an exact replica TARDIS or something, or the Deadspin guys will buy hookers.

Reply



Maevemealone (968)

If Deadspin buys the hookers, what will the Fleshbots people buy?

Reply



Vulpes (946)

Snuggies.

Reply



HiredGoons (603)

Cheerleader hookers.

Reply



HiredGoons (603)

Also known as Cheerleaders.

Reply



phlox (204)

Gimme a "B"...

Reply



hman (53)

Hey, as long as Honcho and Hustler are still around...

Reply



TerseNursePornstein (58)

Gah, graphs and spreadsheets. Someone just tell me: How many minutes will a unique buy you on a bourbon drip?

Reply



kneetoe (1,881)

Depends on the quality of the bourbon. Here, let me show you this graph

Reply



TerseNursePornstein (58)

As long as you're diagramming, my comment's sentence structure reeks of bourbon.

Reply



Ribs (2,690)

haha, kneetoe...
more like keentoe

Reply



njcnyc (1,333)

I feel a twinge of sadness for all the really precocious, sassy and more than a little alienated young gaysters lurking out there, combing through this arcana and wondering how they'll ever get in on it. What potential is there for someone to actually support themselves in this kind of system?

Reply



Comments for the void (564)

But what are they going to do about the fact that Gawker now looks like a piece of horrendous shit? It is impossible to make out anything with that busy, busy, busy piece of shit layout going on. That shit is just downright eye raping.

It doesn't matter SFA what their content is as long as it looks like Myspace blew a buffet load of chunks on Twitter and Facebook while they were engaging in some unenjoyable sex act.

Reply



Vulpes (946)

Don't worry, it'll look like some other busy piece of shit soon enough. We all know how Mr. Denton likes to change layouts in the dead of night (or maybe morning in Hungary or wherever he's outsourced it to). And, really, none of the Gawkers sites were ever really epitomes of beautiful design.

Reply



Comments for the void (564)

No, the sites were never pretty. But in the past i recall them being at least legible.

It is impossible to make heads or tails of that constantly shitting mess now.

Reply



HiredGoons (603)

Open Caption?

Reply



HeyThatsMyBike (500)

Some one will be smart and do a sentence-at-a-time serial.

Or it will turn into twitter, so that every time you have an update, it's a new post and more uniques.

I know Foster gets mad when we get all down on current Gawker, but with this development, it's like Denton is ASKING you guys to write poorly.

Reply



allyzay (321)

Does it say something about me that THIS is the part that is bugging me:

"The target is called "US monthly uniques." It represents a measure of each site's domestic audience. This is the figure that journalists cite when judging a site's competitive position. It's also the metric by which advertisers decide which sites they will shower with dollars."

That shit is, at best, misleading! I think they should start paying bonuses for all varieties of matrices by which advertisers and journalists (?) decide WHICH SITE WILL LEAVE THUNDERDOME or whatever he is talking about. "Hello, you get an extra 13% this month because you had the highest number of page views in the LA DMA from the hours of noon to three pm EST on August 15th, thank you!"

Reply



allyzay (321)

Also: Jezebel's uniques are ridiculously low for a website where every single post gets like 30k views and 300 comments! WTF are those ladies doing all day!

Reply



kneetoe (1,881)

If I say "sitting around eating bon bons," will I get in a lot of trouble?

Reply

DoctorDisaster (1,970)



See, this is kind of the problem. A good site should have a defined, loyal readership. Loyal readers help your advertisers know whose eyeballs they're buying; loyal readers make it easy for writers to know who they're talking to. Prizing uniques exclusively means you only want the shit that goes viral -- but who makes your shit go viral again? Oh that's right LOYAL READERS.

Should there be a bonus for grabbing a bunch of uniques with a viral story? Sure! But there should also be a bonus for stories that keep the longtime readers coming back. This prevents the churn that will quickly turn your unique-driven growth into unique-driven barely-keeping-your-head-above-water.

But don't ask me; I'm just a web designer.

Reply



delrayser (319)

I think you're pretty much spot-on. But don't ask me; I'm just part of a defined, loyal readership.

Reply



atipofthehat (797)

I thought you said "defeated, royal readership." And somehow it seemed right....

Reply



The Lone Scout (2,934)

They're attacking me for the glorious equine humor I trot out every time they post something about Sarah Jessica Parker. (I got my star back only after Richard Lawson posted "Sarah Jessica Parker Looks Like a Horse.")

Reply



LondonLee (922)

I kept thinking of Don Draper in the last Mad Men:

"Who the hell is in charge, a bunch of accountants trying to turn a dollar into a dollar ten? I WANT TO WORK."

Reply



SarahHeartburn (70)

"US monthly uniques"? Us offshore readers don't count? Pues, ¿ique te folle un pez, Sr. Denton!

Reply



SarahHeartburn (70)

And while we're at it, "US Monthly Uniques" sounds like the name of a sanitary napkin made out of old newspaper.

Reply



HeyThatsMyBike (500)

*Call Me!

(with respect to HiredGoons)

Reply



HiredGoons (603)

well played.

Reply



sailor (396)

Memo made me sleepy too. Probably a good thing I don't work for Mr. Denton, especially now.

Reply



brianvan (149)

Hey, did this make anyone think of Empire Records? We all saw how that bet turned out. (It could only be fixed with a concert.)

Reply



fek (93)

if this means i make less money, it sucks.

if it means i make more money, it doesn't!

i hope it doesn't suck.

Reply



Natasha Vargas-Cooper (664)

Maybe you need a union.

Reply



fek (93)

Maybe you could organize it! "How To Lose What Idealism You Didn't Know You Had Left In Ten Days."

There's an elevator pitch for the feature adaptation out there on this waiting to be given.

Reply



missdelite (625)

Ambulance chasers.

Actually, if there's anyone who stands to make a mint off of the new formiula, it's the tipsters.

Reply



missdelite (625)

OTOH, if I had a hot tip, why would I go to *Gawker*? Can they afford to pay more than *TMZ* or any of the other major gossip/news sites?

Reply



Abe Sauer (148)

OMG email Snyder ASAP but don't give away the tip!

Reply



sphibbs (699)

Gawker is for poor people.

Reply



El Matardillo (586)

This thread was all kinds of awesome.

Reply

Post A Comment

WHY GOD WHY?

Why God Why

THE BIGGEST QUESTION

The Biggest Question

DOG VERSUS BABY

Dog Versus Baby

THE TRIUMPHANT RISE OF THE SHITPIC

The Triumphant Rise of the Shitpic

GOOD MORNING

I Would Die 4 U Seth Rogen

CROP CHEF

Eat the Ginger

HELPFUL ADVICE

Maybe You're Sad Because You're Not Telling Yourself To Be Less Sad

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