

Dear Friend,

With the previous issue of FIREWIRE Newsletter we finished series on Flash Tutorials. This issue covers Smart Browsing with Alexa. The site you visit displays its contents, but hides certain data that's not visible to general visitors. Your browsing would become much easy and precise if you get this hidden data about the web site you are exploring.

Alexa - The Smart Browsing

Every internet user who surfs for any information, technical or nontechnical needs a browser, i.e. a software which helps to fetch the site/sites requested. The site you visit displays its contents, but hides certain data that's not visible to general visitors. Your browsing would become much easy and precise if you get this hidden data about the web site you are exploring.

Such tools that make the hidden data visible for you are available for FREE. You just need to understand and download the tool. This article is an attempt towards making the readers aware about what is Alexa (The ultimate tool for smart browsing)? How does it help? What is the link to download this wonderful free tool?

What is Alexa ?

Alexa is a simple handy toolbar that fits into Internet Explorer 5.0 or a higher version and acts as a friendly companion that remains on while you browse. Providing you all the "Inside Information" about the site, like contact details, traffic ranking, customer reviews, related sites and other sites that direct a link to the particular site you are surfing. The amazing toolbar along with all these provides you a quick and easy search without disturbing your browsing.

With the help of Alexa toolbar you can:

- Search the web without visiting a search engine web site.
- Get name & contact details of the web site owner.
- Know about more sites similar to the site you are visiting. This becomes very useful when you're surfing the Internet to buy a particular product. Alexa might list the sites of other manufacturers/sellers of the same product, giving you a better choice.
- Share the favorite links with your friends with common interest.
- Collect the information about how many times this site has been updated in the past & how was the previous look.

Each of the utilities provided by Alexa toolbar is explored here so as to make you aware about the importance of using Alexa while browsing the Internet.

1) Alexa Toolbar - Search





The first & foremost source to find information on the Internet is a search engine. We generally visit the search engine, for example www.google.com to fetch the desired sites typing suitable keywords. Alexa toolbar has this facility inbuilt, which means that there is no need to visit a search engine site. Just key in the suitable keyword in the Alexa toolbar & press search, you will get the matching results from the Google search engine as Alexa search engine is powered by Google.

All said and done but what's so exiting about this? Hold on, along with the listing; you will also get an option to see more details about the site. When you submit the keyword, it will list sites with two separate links, one link will directly take you the web site & other link will provide you with useful information about the site. That's the auto-generated profile of the site!

- Thumb Image of the Home Page.
- Brief description of the contents.
- Average traffic ranking.
- An average review of the site.
- Links of Similar or Related sites, people who visited the site.
Alexa keeps this record & serves as guideline for every tool bar user.
- The site is online since when. The date, month & year.
- How many other sites point links to this site.
This gives you an idea about how popular/important the site is.
- Name & address of the company/owner along with email address & telephone numbers.

2. Alexa Toolbar - Site Info

According to the point no. 1 (Alexa toolbar - Search) if we select more information about the site, it displays all the information in one page, & leaves the site, where as Site info on the toolbar helps us to view the information about the site without leaving it in a drop down format from the toolbar itself. Very useful in the case where contact information is not displayed on the home page. Apart from contact details it also gives average review & links to read reviews, number of sites pointing to the current site & link to view all the information about since when its online.



3. Alexa Toolbar - Ranking

Serves as a very useful guideline to compare the approximate traffic between the two different sites generated on the same topic. Alexa computes traffic ranking by recording the web usage of millions of Alexa toolbar users. Ranking is calculated based on the 3 months data of Alexa users & their number of visits to different web sites.

It is very important to mention here that this ranking is to be treated as guideline to compare & is not accurate because it does not take into consideration visitors,

- Using browser other than Internet Explorer.
- Not using windows as their operating system.
- Visiting secured pages.

4. Alexa Toolbar - Related links



Very useful utility to find out new sites. Even though these sites are not listed anywhere in the search engine, you will be able to find them here as Alexa comprises of data from millions of users & several sites they visit. It also lists the directory category that will list all the sites related to particular keyword. For example, if you are visiting the site of a blood bank, it will display categories where the site list of blood banks is listed. So you will also get web addresses of other blood banks, thus more options and optional information.

It turns out to be very useful when you are trying to find out manufacturers/resellers of a particular product.

5. Alexa Toolbar - Tell your friend

Imagine, while surfing you reach a particular site that might be useful for you as well as your friends/colleagues with common interest. Click on the specified button, it pops up a new window where you can enter your friend's email address, site URL is recorded automatically. The most important benefit is that you don't have to open your email site and compose a new mail.

6. Alexa Toolbar - Wayback Machine

You visited a site. Now suppose next day you revisited the same site and you found a new site or an irritating 'under a maintenance' message. But you desperately want some information by hook or by crook. One chance to get it is by using this history button of Alexa Toolbar. It takes you to the Internet archives. The Internet Archive is a service using which the Internet user can visit the archived versions of the stored website.

Apart from all this, if you visit www.alex.com you will also be able to see movers & shakers, an interesting report on sites' popularity. Alexa also

calculates 'weekly reach' for each site on the net & compare it with its previous average weekly reach. If there is a drastic change, be it positive or negative, the sites are added in movers & shakers list.



160 pages found for <http://fieldan>

Note some duplicates are not shown. [See all.](#)

* denotes when site was updated.

1996	1997	1998
2 pages	11 pages	4 pages
Dec 19, 1996 *	Jan 26, 1997 *	Jan 13, 1998
Dec 29, 1996 *	Jan 26, 1997 *	Feb 13, 1998

"Alexa toolbar installation on my machine made my browsing experience smarter & interesting. Now it's your turn to decide. You get everything under one umbrella, and that too without disturbing your surfing. So hurry up and download your copy of Alexa toolbar

Regards,

Manoj Kotak.

Director - Image Online Pvt. Ltd.

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