

Advantages of audience measurement using a remote marker: the Tag

XiTi acts as a trusted authority for the measurement of website audiences, thanks to its mark-up technology using Tags.

As the server which distributes the XiTi marker is independent of the hosted site, XiTi is able to measure audiences more reliably than LOG files.

1. Definition of the tools

- The Log file

Text file containing a history of communications between a server and client computers. In particular, the log file includes requests sent to the server and error messages generated by the application.¹

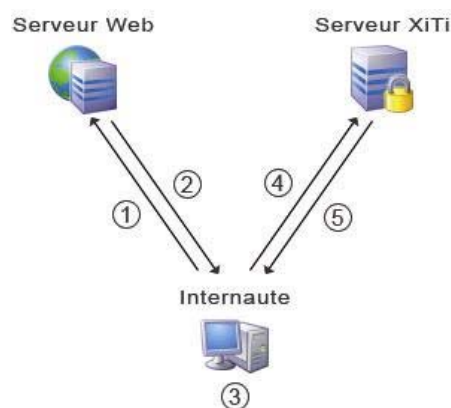
- The remote marker: Tag

A marker (*or tag*) is an element included in each page to be measured, which records its distribution. It is inserted into the source code of the page. In particular, it enables a log of connections to be generated on the third-party measurement server.²

2. Technology of the remote marker

XiTi's markers or tags only have to be inserted into the site, enabling measurements for any access platform (fixed and mobile solutions).

Log measurement software, on the other hand, has to be installed on all the servers hosting the website, making the process of retrieving and analysing the data more difficult.



- (1) The web user requests a page of the website from the server hosting the site.
- (2) The server sends back the contents of the page (images, text... and the XiTi marker).
- (3) The JavaScript marker runs on the user's computer, retrieving various items of information.
- (4) The marker then requests an image from the XiTi server, sending the information as parameters.
- (5) The XiTi server returns the requested image (1 pixel by 1 pixel).

Note: there is no interaction between the web server and XiTi's server.

¹ Definition by the Journal du Net, www.journaldunet.com, ² Definition by the CESP, www.cesp.org

3. Analysis of the differences between Logs and Tags

LOG	TAG
Installation, maintenance and costs	
Log analysis software must be installed either on the server or remotely (retrieving the logs via FTP).	No installation required, just a fragment of JavaScript code to be added to the pages being audited.
Maintenance of the server hosting the software, including regular installation of service packs and patches to correct bugs.	Everything is handled by XiTi's staff, with total transparency for the site being audited.
Difficulty updating the reference databases (geolocalisation, list of search engines identified, webmail providers, browsers, operating systems, RSS readers etc.).	Everything is handled by XiTi's staff, with total transparency for the site being audited.
Limited scope for software evolution: regularly downloading updates or buying new licences every time a new version is released.	Evolution is very simple. No impact on the site being audited, which can immediately make the most of the improvements. No additional cost.
Regular purchases of licences for software that changes little. The purchase must be repeated regularly. Problems of compatibility, reinstallation etc.	Monthly cost on the rental principle. Outsourcing approach with full budgetary control.
Heavy dependency on the software, or the host if the software is provided by the host.	Total independence from the host. Objective vision of hosting quality.
Consulting the data	
Statistical data that is very technical and difficult to exploit. Hard to read and complicated to interpret.	Fast, efficient consultation through a web interface compatible with all browsers and mobile platforms with reports via e-mail.
Reporting software	Sophisticated website (Ajax interface) with features for calculation (totals, averages etc.), managing the columns displayed in the tables, choosing graph types and display options (comparison, evolution, base 100, zoom etc.), segmentation module (Cube technology).
Cache memory and proxies	
20% of the volume of the pages viewed is placed in memory in the proxy or the browser cache.	Analysis of all information, including that contained in the proxy or the browser cache.

Methodologies

Analysis of the IP addresses of connections. Firewalls have an impact, in that a group of people connecting through the same IP address are considered as a single visitor.	Firewalls have no impact. In addition to IP addresses, cookies installed in each browser are used.
The use of dynamic IP addresses can distort the calculation of visitor data.	By placing a cookie in the visitor's browser, users connecting through the same IP address will be considered as distinct visitors.
Each server call (image, frame, pop-up etc.) is considered to be a page.	The tag is only inserted in the content section, so pages are counted precisely.

Media and dynamic pages

Measurement is ill-adapted to sites including interactive media such as Flash, streaming video, WAP etc.	Flexibility and capacity to adapt to all types of media, including secure pages.
Pages can only be recognised by their URLs.	Pages can be named dynamically with much more explicit names.
Significant handicap with dynamic pages (ASP, PHP etc.), which all have the same filename.	Ability to differentiate automatically between different pages generated by the same dynamic file.
E-mails cannot be measured, because they do not trigger hits in the server logs.	Markers can be added to e-mails in HTML format.

Site networks

The complexity of analysis and data retrieval increases with the volumes being audited. Where volumes are very high, it is impossible to distribute the load over several servers.	Centralised system with enough capacity to handle billions of pages per month. Growth of your site does not affect measurement, calculation and the generation of reports.
Difficulty in analysing sites based on different operating systems, server clusters or servers in different places.	All platforms, regardless of the network architecture, can be supported.
Impossible to obtain global information about all the sites in a group.	Shared or consolidated information for a group of sites. Horizontal analysis available with the tag.

Robots and unwanted audience

Very difficult to exclude computers within the company, and impossible using cookies.	Very simple to ignore individual computers via a click for identification or based on IP address (complete classes and subnets).
Overevaluation of data due to monitoring tools, site capture software and indexing robots (crawlers).	The marker code prevents visits by certain crawlers from being counted. Reference databases complete the distinction. Analysis of navigation behaviour makes it possible to exclude the latest unlisted robots that are not ignored by default.

4. XiTi certified by Diffusion Contrôle

XiTi 7.0 has been granted the OJD label for the certification of website traffic. This label certifies that XiTi 7.0 corresponds to the following four criteria:

- Carries out measurements based on the marker (or tag) technique
- Presents itself as a "measuring authority"
- Strictly applies the international definition of a visit
- Overcomes the various technical "biases" inherent in this type of measurement (bypassing the cache, address translation, sudden closure of the browser etc.)



To benefit from the OJD Certification Option, please [contact one of our sales advisors](#).