

Getting Started with Parse.ly



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Welcome!

Parse.ly offers an easy way to visualize content performance across platforms and channels to garner insights and drive meaningful results.

What Makes Parse.ly Different?

Accessible, real-time insights

By leveraging a heartbeat pixel to capture fresh data every several seconds, information is constantly updated to keep you on the “pulse.”

Use Parse.ly to understand:

- Where readers came from
- How to increase readership
- How to engage your audience

Democratized data

Parse.ly provides easy-to-understand dashboards and out-of-the-box reporting that supports teams with tangible information. You shouldn't have to be a business analyst or write several scripts to untangle key metrics.

Collected content analysis

Instead of logging into several platforms and tools, Parse.ly provides a singular place to collect all of your performance data.

Add and analyze all of the following in one place:

On site: blogs, articles, landing pages, image galleries, video, audio, podcasts, and campaigns

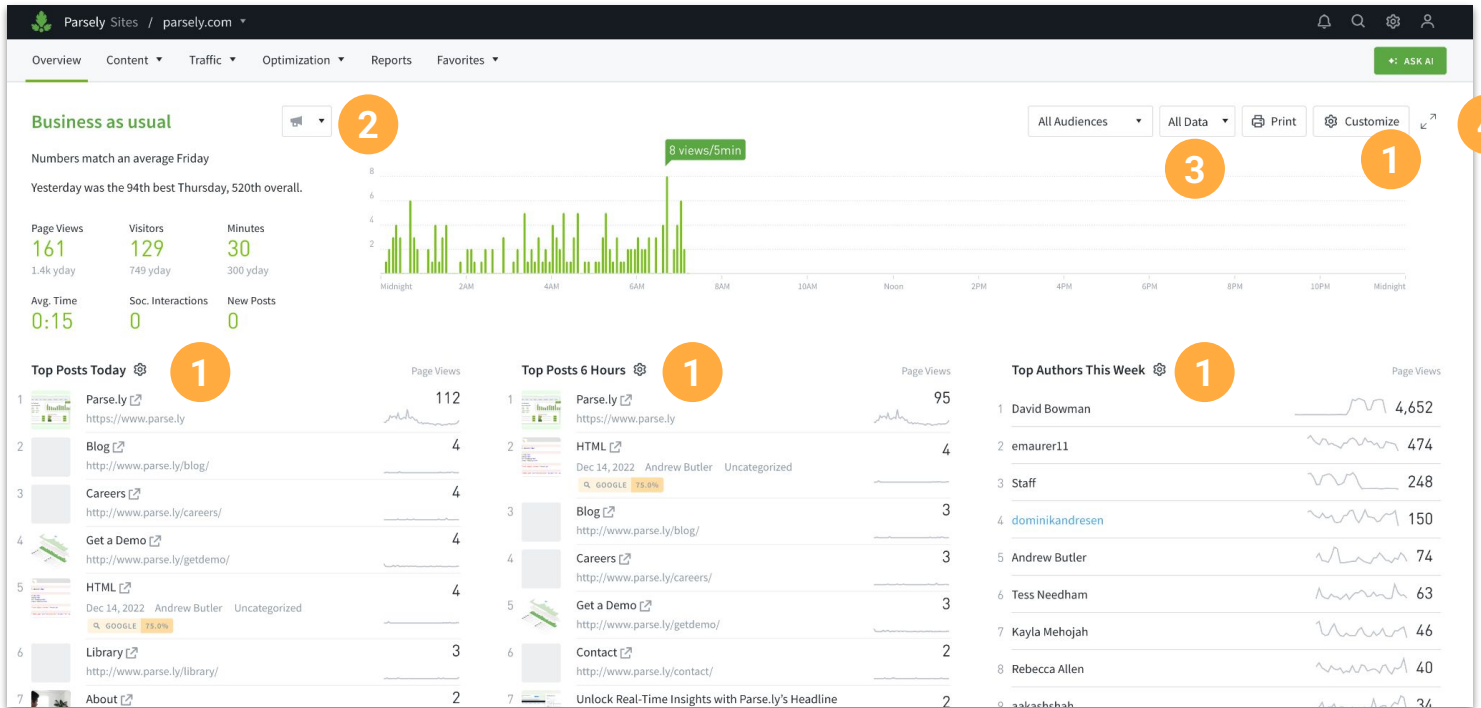
Channels: web, mobile, Apple News, Facebook Instant Articles, Google AMP, SmartNews, and iOS/Android apps

Social: Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest

Search: Google, Bing, Yahoo!, DuckDuckGo, and more

Configure Your Overview Screen

Customize the Overview Screen to quickly gather information and take action.



- 1 Click the cogwheel icons to choose metrics for each section of the Overview.
- 2 Set up alerts to email, desktop, or Slack.
- 3 Filter data by author, section, tag, campaign group or audience segments (if enabled).
- 4 Click the arrow icon to go to a full screen takeover. Customize this view separately and share a link for team meetings and executive summaries.

Helpful Links and Additional Information

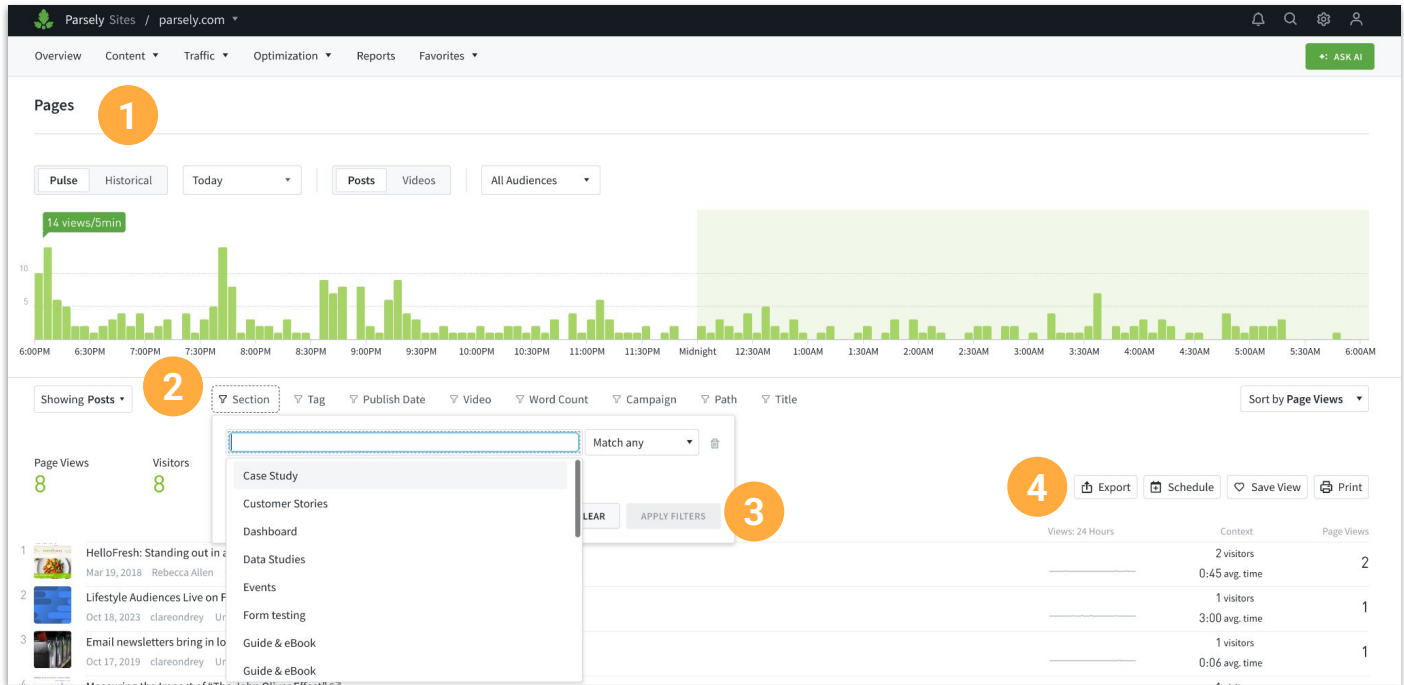
[Learn More About Overview Screen Features](#)

[Tips for Customizing the Overview Screen Based on Your Role](#)

Using Filters and Saved Views

Leverage filters to focus the analysis of your data.

Filters are available on each dashboard page as well as reports. Save filtered views for yourself or the team to access them quickly and easily in the future.



- 1 View dashboard pages that are focused on each metric.
- 2 Click to access filters to customize the content and data shown.
- 3 The filter will populate options based on site data. Use the drop down to select the desired match type (match any, match all, exclude) and then apply the filter. You can mix match types (i.e. “show me this, but not that”) as well as apply multiple filters.
- 4 Export, Schedule, Save or Print the filtered view to return to it in the future.

Helpful Links and Additional Information

[Learn More About Filtering Data](#)

[Tips for Advanced Filtering](#)

Enabling Traffic-Status Alerts

Automated alerts can keep you informed about changes in traffic on your site and with your content.

By default, alerts send when a post published in the last seven days has views per minute that exceed 95% of the max views/minute of all posts published on the site, specific section or by chosen author in the past 90 days.

Admins can customize these thresholds in the user menu under “Alerts.”

You’ll receive alerts for the following scenarios:

- *1x traffic spike:* A post’s views/min first exceeds the threshold
- *2x+ traffic spike:* A post’s views/min doubles, triples, etc the threshold
- *Still going strong:* A post’s views per minute is still above the threshold 6+ hours later
- *Back rising:* A post’s views/min falls below the threshold, but then surpasses the threshold again 6+ hours later

Set Up

For all alert types, click on the megaphone icon.



Choose desired delivery type and follow instructions to send.

Site Alert

Found on the Overview screen.

Section or Author Alert

From Sections or Author dashboards, select a specific section or author to be taken to the details page.

Adjusting Alerts & Viewing History

Navigate to Alerts in the User Menu to make changes, unsubscribe or view the history of received alerts.

Helpful Links and Additional Information

[Learn More About Alerts](#)

[Alert FAQs](#)

Referrers Dashboard

The **Referrers Dashboard** shows where your visitors come from and how each traffic source contributes to site activity. It includes both **real-time** and **historical** views, showing which channels drive audience engagement and how that changes over time.

Referrers Dashboard structure

The Dashboard is organized into three tabs:

- **Overview** displays top referrers and their share of traffic.
- **Categories** groups sources by type (Search, Social, Aggregators, AI, etc.).
- **Groups** lets you create or view custom groupings of referrers.

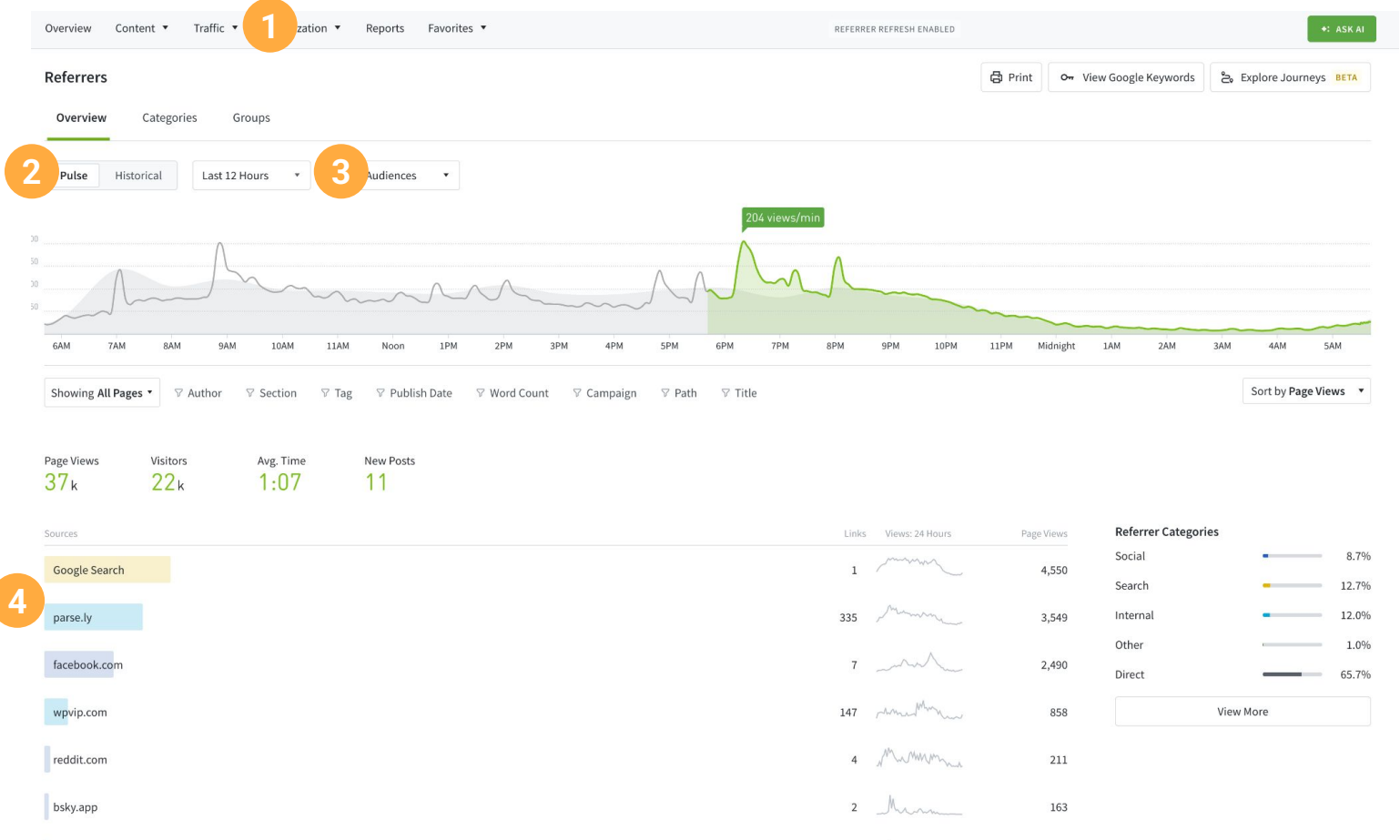
Referrer categories

Referrers are grouped into categories to help identify the types of sites and platforms driving traffic.

- **Search** – search engines such as Google (search), Bing, and Yahoo.
 - If **Google Search Console (GSC)** is connected, keyword-level metrics appear alongside this data.
- **Social** – platforms including Facebook, X (Twitter), Instagram, and LinkedIn.
- **Direct** – visitors without a traceable source, e.g. typing the URL directly, using bookmarks, following links from secure apps or messaging platforms.
- **Aggregators** – external apps or news aggregators that surface or distribute content, including Google Discover, Apple News, SmartNews, and Flipboard.
- **AI** – AI-driven platforms, tools, or chat interfaces that summarize or recommend content, including ChatGPT, Perplexity, and Claude.
- **Internal** – pages within your own site or network.
- **Other** – sources that don't clearly fit into one of the above categories.

Referrers Dashboard (continued)

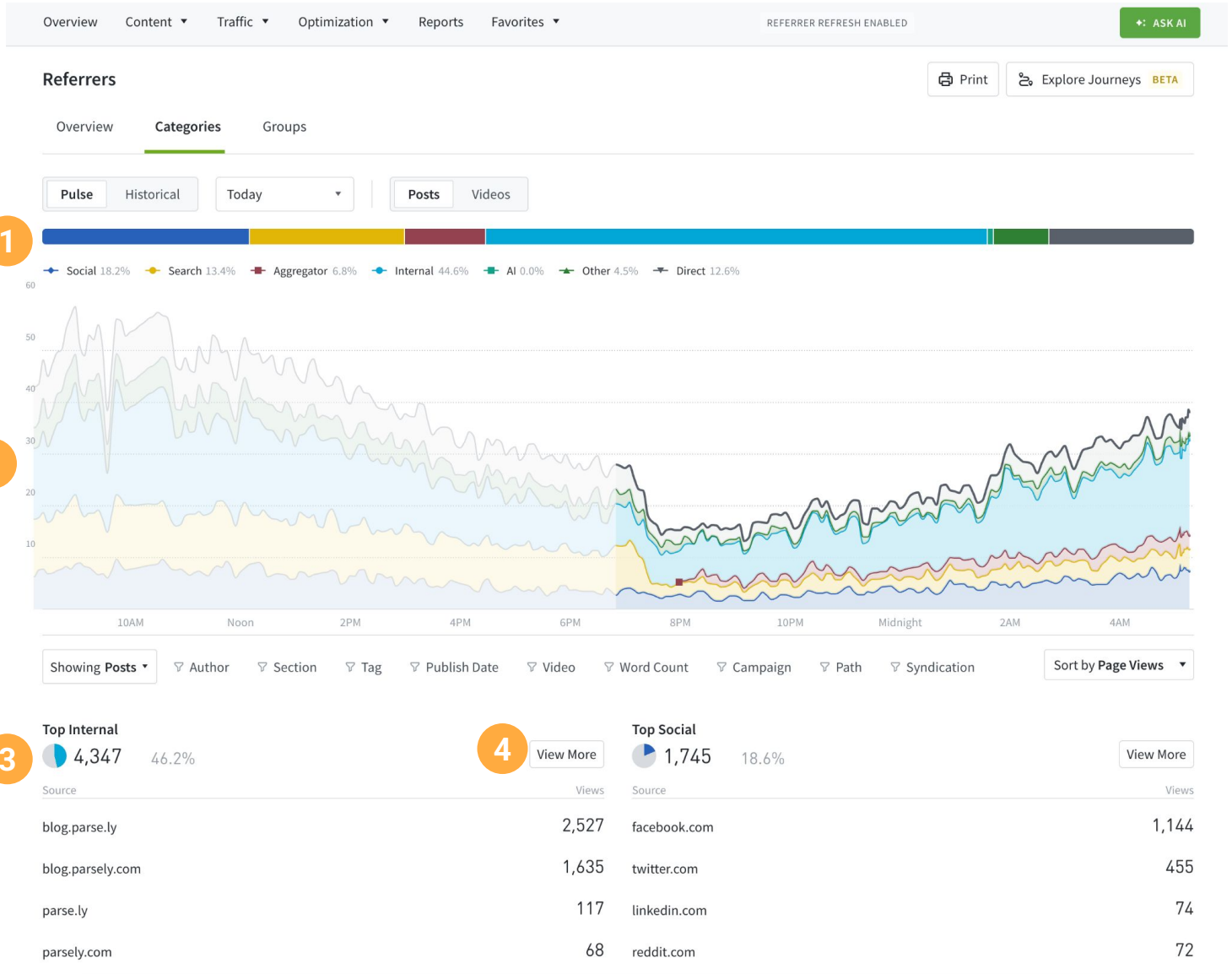
Overview



- 1 In the Dashboard navigation bar, select **Traffic** > **Referrers**.
- 2 Select **Pulse** for real-time view, between the last 5 minutes up to the last 24 hours.
- 3 Select **Historical** for comparison over the selected timeframe.
- 4 At-a-glance view of top referrers over the selected timeframe.

Referrers dashboard (continued)

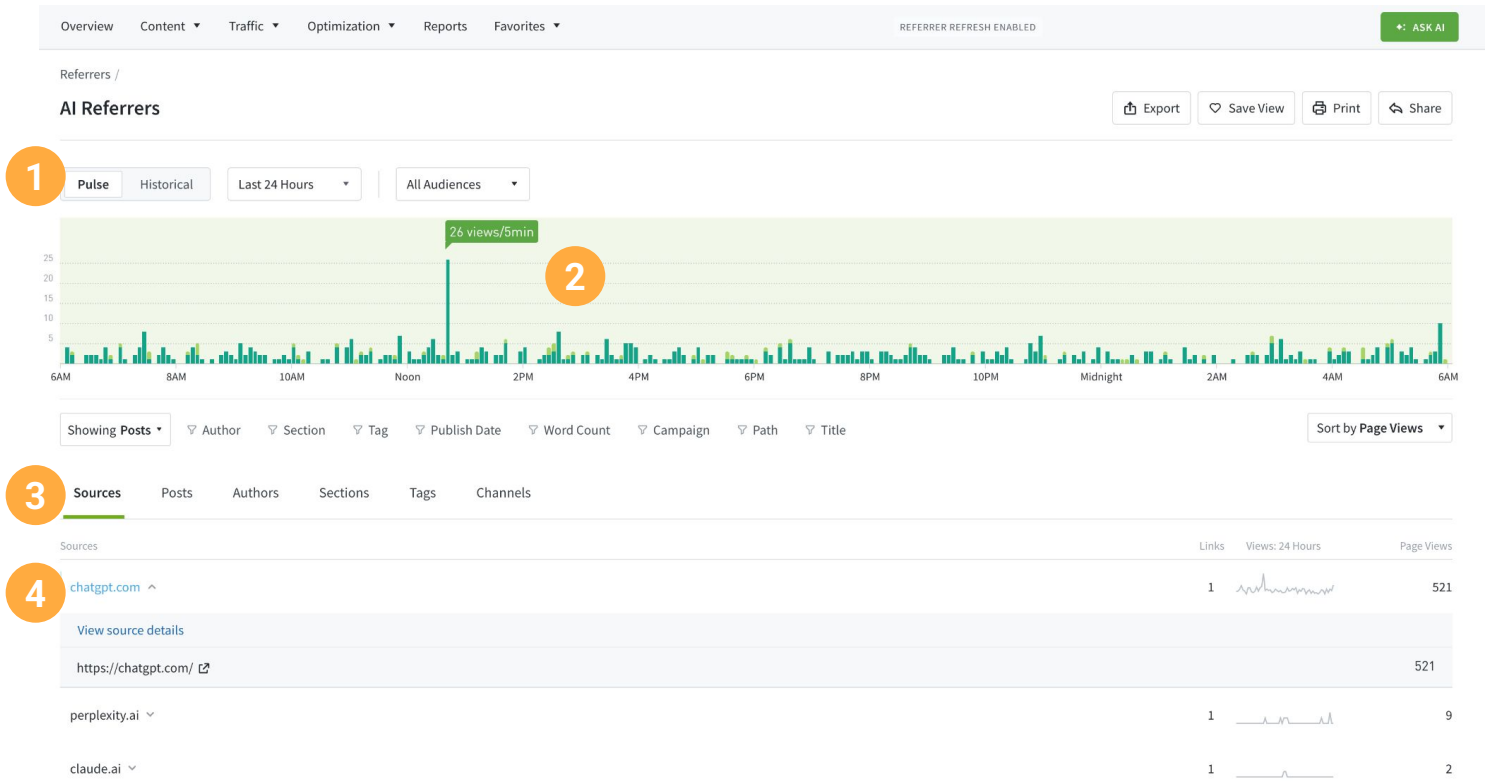
Categories



- 1 Overview of the percentage share of each referral category.
- 2 Stacked chart showing change in traffic over selected timeframe.
- 3 Top sources within each category, arranged in descending order, left to right.
- 4 Select **View all** to see all the sources within the category.

Referrers dashboard (continued)

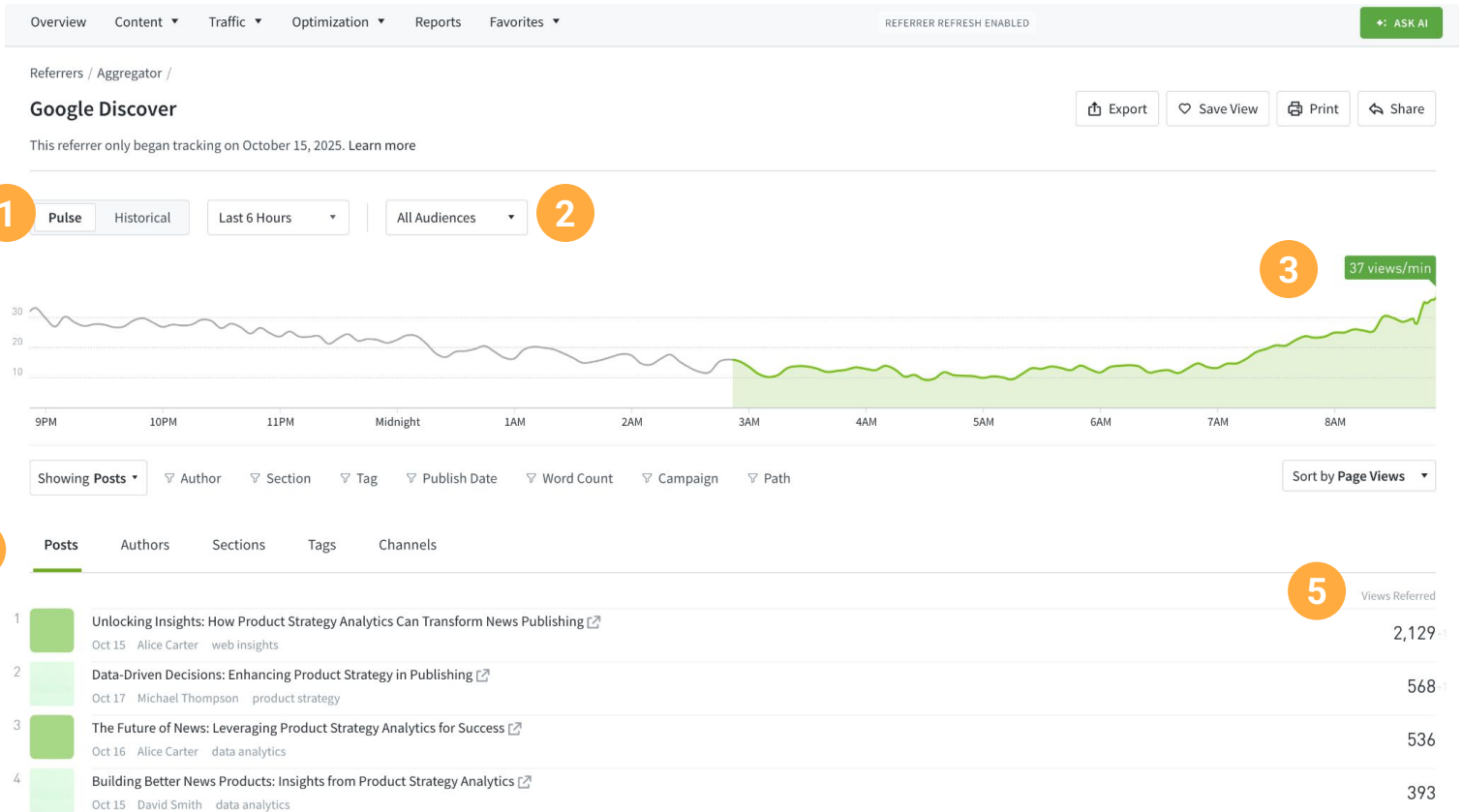
Example category details - AI



- 1 Select from live or historical data.
- 2 Timeline of total views, with performance of the selected source highlighted.
- 3 Switch between **Sources**, **Posts**, **Authors**, **Sections**, **Tags**, and **Channels**.
- 4 Hover over the source to see performance highlighted in timeline above. Expand to see source details. Click through to see posts.

Referrers dashboard (continued)

Google Discover real-time



- 1 Select **Pulse** and choose the timeframe, from 5 minutes up to 24 hours, for real-time views. Select **Historical** and choose a daily, weekly or monthly timeframe.
- 2 View all audiences, or exclude or include paid or flashlight referrals.
- 3 Traffic trend for the timeframe selected.
- 4 Switch between **Posts**, **Authors**, **Sections**, **Tags**, and **Channels**.
- 5 See views referred for top stories over selected timeframe.

Bookmarklet and Overlay for Google Chrome

There are two handy tools for instantly opening and visualizing data on your site to gather information at a glance.

Parse.ly Bookmarklet

To add it:

Simply go to [this page](#) and drag the green “Open in Parse.ly” button up to your Chrome bookmarks toolbar and it will be there for you to use in the future.

To use it:

While on a content page on your website that has Parse.ly installed, click the “Open in Parse.ly” bookmark.

Parse.ly Overlay

The Overlay allows you to view ranked content performance by position on high-volume pages, like home or section/category pages.

Choose custom time windows (e.g. two hours vs five days) and compare against equivalent past periods ranging from one day to one month. A 5-minute data view also allows you to monitor changes as they happen.

To provide statistical relevance, the Overlay will not display data unless each link or slot has at least one click in the selected timeframe.

To add it:

Log in to your dashboard and navigate to [this page](#) and drag the provided link to your bookmarks bar.

To use it:

When on your homepage or another content aggregator landing page, click the “Parse.ly Overlay” link to load the visual tool.

Metrics provided in the Overlay:

- *Clicks per Minute* (custom window, e.g. last 5 minutes) – Clicks on the selected slot divided by minutes
- *% of Page Clicks* – Clicks on the selected slot divided by total clicks on the page
 - % of Page Clicks (current window)
 - Change in % of Page Clicks (current window vs comparison period)
 - Historical % of Page Clicks (comparison period)
- *Click-through Rate* – Clicks on the particular slot divided by total page views
 - Click-through Rate (current window)
 - Change in Click-through Rate (current window vs comparison period)
 - Historical Click-through Rate (comparison period)

What Reports are Available in Parse.ly?

Essentials

Top Performers

Shows the top performing posts, authors, sections, tags, videos, campaigns, channels, referrers, or conversion labels and segments, if applicable. You can pick the metric, time period, and number of listings to display.

[View Example](#)

Also available as a spreadsheet export in CSV or XLSX file:

[Download Example](#)

Bottom Performers

Shows the bottom performing posts for posts read and published within a specific time period.

[View Example](#)

Details

Data summary for a particular author, section, tag, campaign, conversion label, segment (if applicable) or for the whole site. It's helpful for gauging performance during a certain time period, like the last week or the last month. This report is also available on the network view.

[View Example](#)

Stats Over Time

View how traffic has changed for a particular author, section, tag, page, post, conversion label, segment (if applicable) or for the whole site. You can choose a metric and the level of granularity the stats should be grouped on.

[View Example](#)

Also available as a spreadsheet export in CSV or XLSX file:

[Download Example](#)

What Reports are Available in Parse.ly? (continued)

Advanced

Evergreen Content

Focuses on content that attracts readers long after its publish date, like how-to or lifestyle content. This report compares the most-viewed evergreen content with the most-viewed content sitewide.

[View Example](#)

Audience Overview

Provides an in-depth analysis of visitor behavior. This report shows the engagement levels of visitors, who are divided into buckets based on how frequently they come to your site.

[View Example](#)

Author and Sector Comparisons

Compare individual authors or individual sections against each other over a given time period, by ranking them across a selected group of metrics.

[View Example](#)

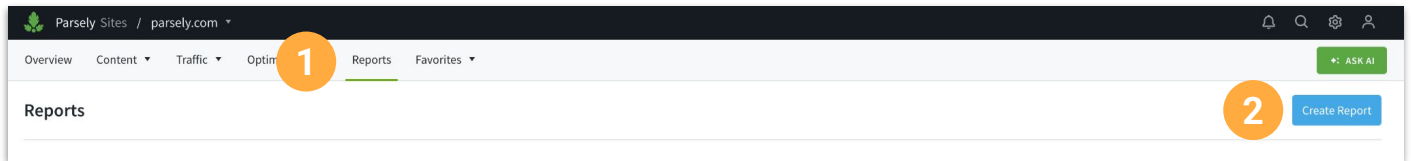
Compare Over Time

Search content or authors and see their performance over a selected period of time, with conversions, page views, or visitors as the comparison metric.

[View Example](#)

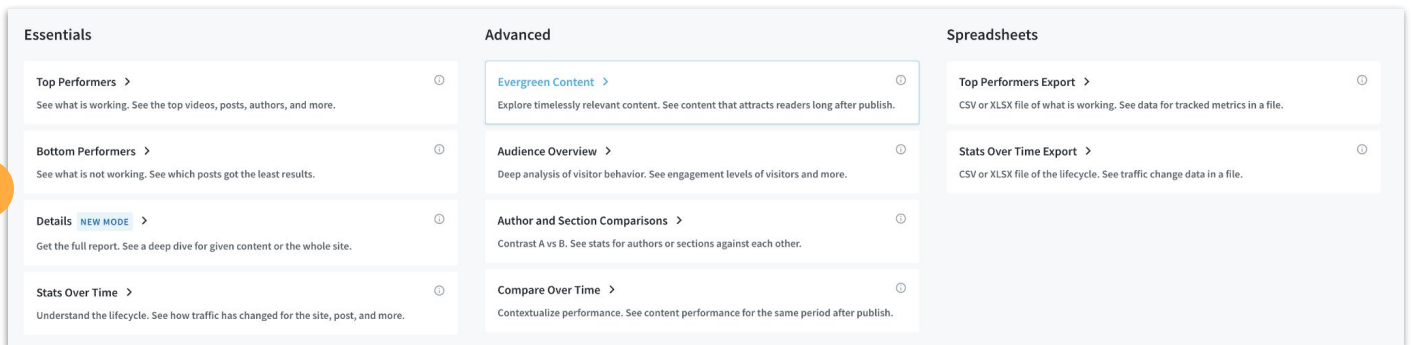
How to Create Reports in Parse.ly

Reports can be run ad-hoc or scheduled to run daily, weekly or monthly. The process to create a report is the same for all report types.

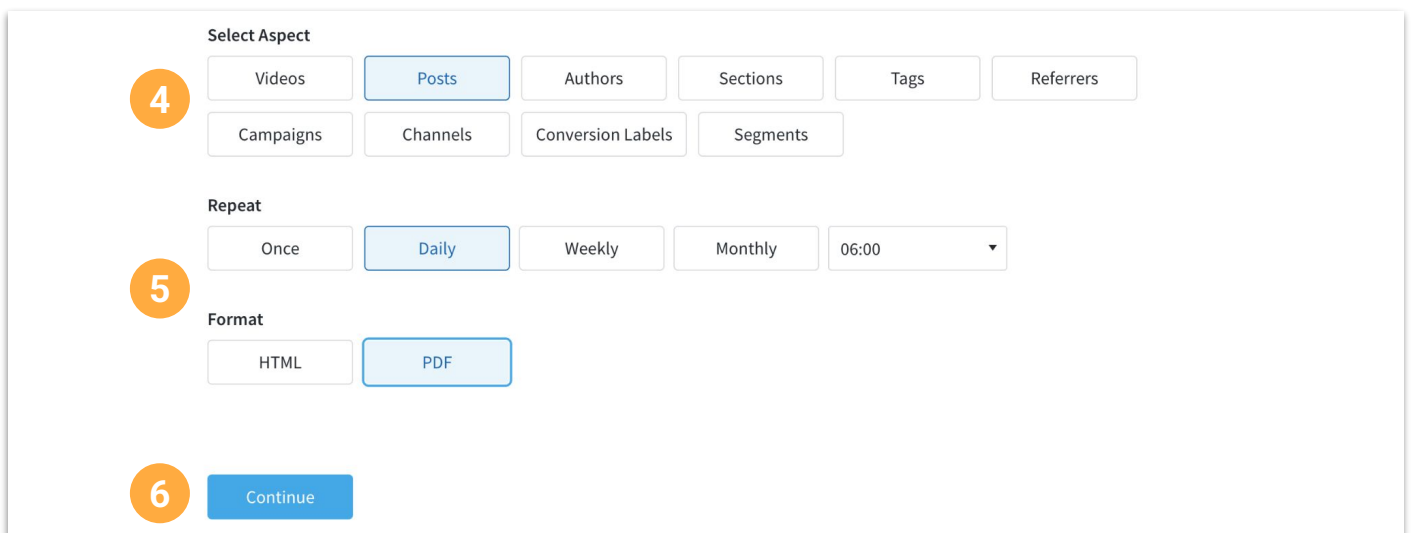


1 Navigate to the Report Detail Tab.

2 Click “Create Report”



3 Select the desired Report Type



4 Select the aspect (the subject or key detail) of your desired report. Note that Advanced Reports have a default aspect and will skip this step.

5 Choose the desired cadence and format of your report.

6 Click “Continue” to be taken to the next page to finalize.

How to Create Reports in Parse.ly (continued)

Once you have selected the type, aspect, cadence, and format, you'll then select the specific parameters and filters.

If you've created a scheduled report then you'll also specify where to send the report on a regular basis and have the ability to provide a brief report summary or detailed title for recipients.

The screenshot shows the Parse.ly report configuration interface. It is divided into four numbered sections:

- 1 Parameters:** Includes five dropdown menus: Period (Today), Channel (All), Sort (Page Views), Limit (Top 50), and Audience (All audiences).
- 2 Filters:** Includes a dropdown menu for PAGE TYPE (POSTS) and a row of filter options: AUTHOR, SECTION, TAG, PUBLISH DATE, LIFECYCLE, VIDEO, WORD COUNT, CAMPAIGN, and PATH.
- 3 Recipients:** Includes a text area for "Send the report to these emails" with a note: "Separate emails with new lines or commas. Your email is included automatically." Below it is a checkbox for "Exclude me from recipients".
- Report Summary:** Includes a text area with a note: "Summarize the nature of the report. Leave blank for the auto-generated summary."

At the bottom, there are two buttons: "SAVE" and "CANCEL", with a fourth numbered circle (4) next to the "SAVE" button.

- 1 Use the drop-down options to select specific parameters for your report.
- 2 Select desired filters to narrow down the content and data of your report. You may choose several filters to work in conjunction to provide specific and detailed information.
- 3 Type in the emails of the people you'd like to autosend reports to, separated by commas or line breaks. If you have chosen to run the report just once, you won't see this option. Provide a simple summary, or leave blank for the auto-generated summary.
- 4 Click save to run or schedule your new report!

Glossary

Parse.ly uses industry standard web analytics metrics and nomenclature, but there are a few terms specific to the dashboard that will be helpful to know.

Engaged Time

Most analytics platforms measure time on site and identify a “session” based on a user's entry on the page and exit from the page. The Parse.ly tracker, however, constantly evaluates if a user is still active.

Parse.ly defines that by ensuring the browser tab is open and the user is engaging by moving their cursor (or finger), hovering, scrolling, clicking, watching a video, or listening to audio. After five seconds of inactivity, Parse.ly considers the user no longer engaged and stops tracking the time. If a user re-engages, that time is added.

You should use engaged time as an indicator of interest and reader loyalty. Dig into authors and subjects with high engaged time for ideas on how to expand and replicate!

Evergreen Content

Evergreen content refers to any page, post, or article that receives consistent visits and views above the typical trends and lifecycle of your website.

Because of the inherent value and high ROI of evergreen content, it's important to identify what is working and use it to guide the creation of future pieces.

Some suggestions for creating timeless evergreen content:

- Pick a specific and precise topic
- Show authority with an expert understanding of the topic
- Make the format easy to follow with lists, tips, and visuals
- Optimize for search engines with regular keyword use and good technical SEO

Metadata

Metadata is data about other data.

Parse.ly uses metadata to analyze your content for attributes like publish date, content type, word count, author, section, tags, referrers, and URL. These groupings combine with over 40 metrics to provide understanding of content performance.

Glossary (continued)

Posts vs. Non-Posts

The difference between posts and non-posts is defined for each website via the “@type” metadata passed to Parse.ly.

Values recognized as posts: NewsArticle, Article, BlogPosting, LiveBlogPosting, Report, Review, CreativeWork, Recipe, PodcastEpisode, among others

Values recognized as non-posts: WebPage, Event, Hotel, Restaurant, Movie

Recrawl & Rebuild

Parse.ly recognizes that sometimes metadata may be updated or changed. We offer the following services to ensure that your dashboard reflects accurate information.

Automatic Recrawl & Rebuild

Parse.ly’s crawler will revisit an active URL once an hour for the first 24 hours after publication in order to discover changes to metadata; when changes are found, the “last good crawl” wins and overwrites prior versions as a data rebuild.

Requested Recrawl & Rebuild

For changes to posts published in the last five days, account administrators can request a recrawl and rebuild of historical data directly within the dashboard User Menu under API settings.

For posts older than five days, please email support@parse.ly. Please note that a system-wide recrawl and rebuild can only be completed once in the annual contract scope.

Smart Tags

Similar to standard content tags that creators implement throughout their sites, Parse.ly uses machine learning models to apply tagging to all new posts with 300+ words published after April 1, 2021.

High-level Smart Tags

Roughly analogous to sections and based on the Internet Advertising Bureau’s content taxonomy, these AI driven tags are aggregated into broad categories (Sports, Health & Fitness, etc). They’re displayed on a blue background with a dotted blue line and flag in the top left corner.

Low-level Smart Tags

Based on individual entities and subjects within a post, these low-level smart tags are typically things like names, objects, events, and places. Their taxonomy is built on Wikipedia entries. They are displayed on a white background, with the same dotted line and flag.

Additional Resources

There are a variety of materials Parse.ly has created to support your usage. Please email support@parse.ly with any specific questions or needs.

Key Tools

[Dashboard Reference Guide](#)

[Reports Overview and Reference Guide](#)

[The Parse.ly Content Library](#)

[Knowledge Base](#)

Helpful Webinars

[An Introduction to Parse.ly](#)

[Suggested Parse.ly Workflows for Your Role](#)

[Media is the New Marketing](#)

Blogs & Articles

[The Beginner's Guide to Content Analytics](#)

[How to Use Audience Data to Write a Great Post](#)

[Editor's Guide to Online Media](#)

[CMO's Guide to Content Analytics](#)

[Audience Development Guide](#)

[The Content Marketer's Funnel](#)

