

**BRANDED SHORT DOMAINS
DRIVE UP TO A 34% INCREASE IN CTR
WHEN COMPARED TO UNBRANDED LINKS.**

At Bitly, we manage more than 55,000 Branded Short Domains through our [Bitly Brand Tools](#) platform. We work with some of the largest brands in the world—including 21 of the Forbes top 25 brands and 37 of the top 50 comScore web properties. All of these brands utilize Bitly Brand Tools to unleash the power of the link and enable their omni-channel marketing efforts.

THE GOAL

Prove the quantitative value of BRANDED SHORT DOMAINS

We started with a (seemingly) simple mission: prove the quantitative value of Branded Short Domains. We did this through an analysis of Bitly Brand Tools customer data.

For marketers, the qualitative value of a Branded Short Domain is obvious—it's easy to drive brand impressions and visibility when you lead all your social media efforts with your brand name. Instead, we sought to find its quantitative value: do Branded Short Domains drive higher engagement and click through rates than unbranded bit.ly links?



Entertainment

Social

News

Technology

Magazines

Business

Video

Radio

THE METHOD

Our data science team first looked through our customer base of 750+ brands, publishers and nonprofits, and only included domains with sufficiently significant Bitly traffic. Domains for this study needed to have a large number of links being shortened to those web properties, with a mix of branded and non-branded domains, and a substantial number of clicks.

That left us with the domains that had statistically meaningful shortens through the Bitly platform. Next, the team organized those Bitly Brand Tools customers into a series of categories.

We then analyzed normalized clicks rather than use raw click numbers. Large brands often have more clicks on their links due to



their larger audience, and normalizing clicks to the mean and standard deviations allowed us to level the playing field across brands.

CATEGORY	LINEAR REGRESSION COEF CONF INT	LINEAR REGRESSION P	POISSON REGRESSION COEF CONF INT	POISSON REGRESSION P	LOGISTIC REGRESSION CONF INT	LOGISTIC REGRESSION P
SOCIAL	[0.43, 0.65]	<0.001	[0.12, 0.26]	<0.001	[0.43, 0.70]	<0.001
NEWS	[0.08, 0.19]	<0.001	[0.02, 0.09]	<0.001	[0.09,0.25]	<0.001
ENTERTAINMENT	[0.02, 0.13]	0.009	[-0.01, 0.08]	.14	[0.01, 0.18]	.003
TECH	[-0.03, 0.15]	.2	[-0.03, 0.08]	.37	[-0.07, 0.14]	.5
MAGAZINES	[0.35, 0.58]	<0.001	[0.14, 0.34]	<0.001	[0.46, 0.79]	<0.001
BUSINESS	[0.39, 0.65]	<0.001	[0.07, 0.24]	<0.001	[0.46, 0.84]	<0.001
VIDEO	[-0.07, 0.27]	.44	[-0.09, 0.20]	.44	[-0.16, 0.27]	.59
RADIO	[-0.08, 0.22]	.75	[-0.14,0.19]	.75	[-0.25,0.55]	.44

Once we cleaned up the data, the hard statistical analysis began. We ran the data through a series of regression models: linear regression, poisson regression and logistic regression. Regression models allow us to use historical data to determine the factors that influenced the outcome—similar models have been used to predict box office sales with Bitly click data from our friends at DataSift.



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THE RESULTS

Our analysis concluded that *companies that utilized Branded Short Domains* consistently saw an increase in click through rates.

Across the domains we tested, we found that *Branded Short Domains drove up to a 34% increase in CTR*, with some variation below that number depending on the vertical. And this wasn't just for links the brands shared themselves - this same increase in CTR was seen across the links that were shortened and shared organically by the brand's audience.

This means that there was higher engagement and conversion rates when a Branded Short Domain was used. For brands that shorten and share a larger number of links, this impact is significant.

bitly THE POWER of THE LINK.

Bitly empowers marketers to make better decisions. Founded in 2008, Bitly has been relentlessly committed to the power of the link. Bitly shortens and provides intelligence on more than half a billion links and processes more than eight billion clicks per month from every social platform, media site and brand site from almost every country in the world. Bitly is the partner of choice for 21 of the 25 Forbes World's Most Powerful Brands and 37 of the comScore Top 50 Multi-Platform Properties (Desktop and Mobile). Bitly is an integral part of social media, content marketing, native advertising, SMS, email efforts (and more) from publishers, brands, marketers, government organizations, educational institutions, nonprofits and individual users. Bitly is privately held with offices in New York, San Francisco and Denver.

INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE?

Contact sdr@bitly.com for more information.