

# Analytic Plugin Research

It was requested that **WP Statistics** and **WP Power Stats** plugin be reviewed for possible use on the Wikimedia Foundation site.

This will outline the research done and reasons for the recommendations. To save time, **neither plugin can be recommended for now.**

## Process

Each plugin was reviewed for the following initial values:

- **Current usage:** Popularity helps to identify if a plugin is seen as valuable by the community
- **Ratings/Reviews:** Community feedback helps to identify praise and complaint against a plugin.
- **Update History:** The frequency of updates points to how active the developer is but also points to development risk. For example, frequent updates addressing new bugs from previous updates means a higher risk plugin.
- **Support History:** Active plugin support and a clear means of premium support make a plugin more favorable.

In addition, if a plugin proves favorable in these matters, it is also reviewed for code and functionality.

## Power Stats

- **Current usage:** 4 (10,000+ installs)
- **Ratings/Reviews:** 2 (4 star review but large number of 1 star reviews including reviews citing security concerns).
- **Update History:** 4 (20+ updates as recently as 2 months ago)
- **Support History:** 1 (0 of 3 support requests resolved in the last 2 months. Going back to a year support is spotty at best and the only source of support appears to be the WordPress repo.)
- **Average Score:** 2.75

With a high **D** average this is not a plugin that is recommended unless concerns raised in the reviews are addressed and support is improved significantly.

While no further research is particularly warranted, it should be noted that there are concerns with scalability with this type of plugin in general. More on that in the **WP Statistics** plugin.

## WP Statistics

- **Current usage:** 5 (400,000+ installs)
- **Ratings/Reviews:** 3 (4.5 star reviews but some reviews raise concerns with the function of the plugin, especially in cache).
- **Update History:** 4 (30+ updates as recently as 3 weeks ago. The changelog does note at least one occurrence of release addressing a breaking release.)
- **Support History:** 2 (2 of 37 support requests resolved in the last 3 months. Going back to a year support is spotty at best. There is an additional support forum that is hosted elsewhere. This may be more active.)
- **Average Score:** 3.5

With a mid **C** average this barely passes onto the next phase. During this phase the plugin is evaluated for functionality.

Key concerns include scale and performance.

In reviewing the code it was found that the plugin appears to write to the database with each page request unless certain server scripts are present, then it uses memory to cache those visits and does a bulk update every so often.

While this may appear to deal with the scale and performance issues, it is very likely that the necessary scripts are not present. This might be an avenue worth pursuing except for the next issue.

Caching will prevent accuracy because the plugin seems to work via PHP to gather information about the visits on each page load. This is an issue that was raised in several reviews and something specifically checked for in the code review.

Because of the caching used to handle scale on VIP Go it isn't going to be possible to use this plugin to gather accurate data.

It isn't recommended due to this limitation, though other potential concerns could prevent recommendation as well.