

A Study of Exponent and Pramp as Technical Interview Preparation Tools

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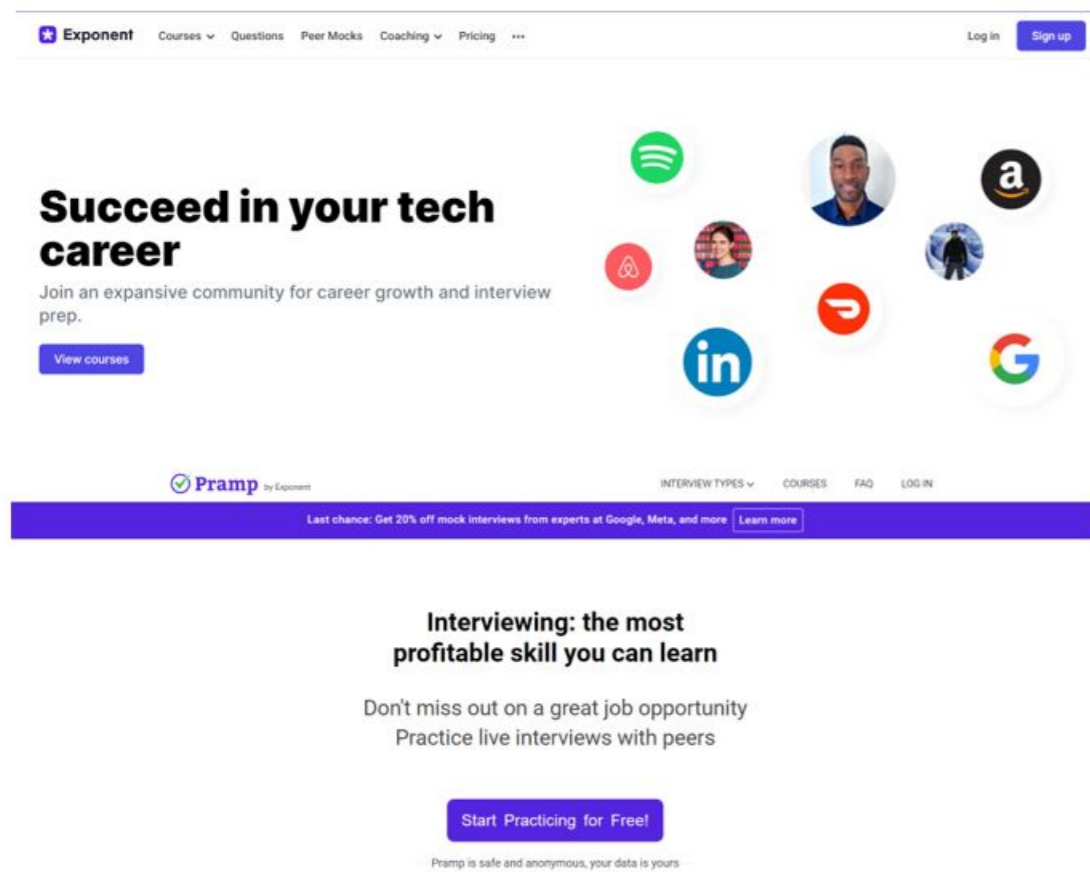


Introduction

Technology has rapidly become a critical part of the post-modern world. The drive to develop the most innovative, cutting-edge technology has never been greater. When it comes to applying for these jobs, preparing for a technical interview can be stressful for any software engineer, regardless of their level of experience within the field. First impressions mean everything in these contexts, and the demand for thoughtful and intelligent responses in a time-sensitive environment can add pressure to an already nerve-wracking situation.

Background

Fortunately, there are online resources, such as Exponent and Pramp, that are available for people who will be participating in technical interviews. These websites offer support in technical interview subjects like data structures and algorithms, project management, behavioral, system design, front end, and data science. Users can choose with areas they would like to focus on and can brush up on their skills in advance of their interviews. This project explores software engineering with the goal of determining what role Exponent and Pramp play in helping software engineers prepare for interviews.



Methodology

In order to identify the ways Exponent and Pramp are helpful to software engineers, it was necessary to examine the user class and it interacts with these sites. As a result, several secondary questions arose.

Question 1: What is the background of people using Exponent and Pramp?

Question 2: Which pages do Exponent and Pramp users navigate to the most?

Question 3: What do people on these sites search for most frequently?

Question 4: What skills and courses are most popular for review among users?

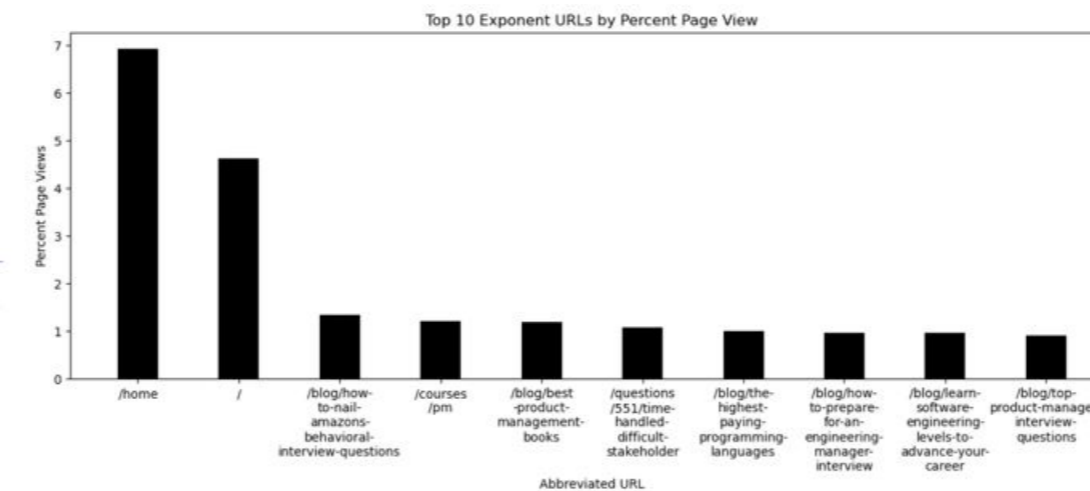
Answers to these questions were obtained from Google Analytics for the Exponent and Pramp websites. More specifically, data was collected about user demographics, pages visited (in terms of URL and webpage title), and searches then analyses were carried out on this information. Afterwards, responses to the Exponent/Pramp Technical Interview Preparation Surveys were taken into consideration in order to provide a possible explanation for this behavior.

Data and Results

The Exponent and Pramp audience statistics are displayed in the table below:

Website	New Visitors	Returning Visitors	Age 18-24	Age 25-34	Technology/Mobile Enthusiast
Exponent	73.8%	26.2%	32.26%	33.09%	48.28%
Pramp	66.5%	33.5%	45.06%	30.12%	52.43%

In terms of behavior, by URL, the Exponent homepage makes up about 6.98% of the page views the site receives. The default page makes up 4.48%. These are followed by a blog on how to respond to behavioral interview questions from Amazon (making up 1.36%) and a number of product management queries. The average time users spend on any page is 3:05. The graph below explains the specific page visits by URL listing across all of the website's content:

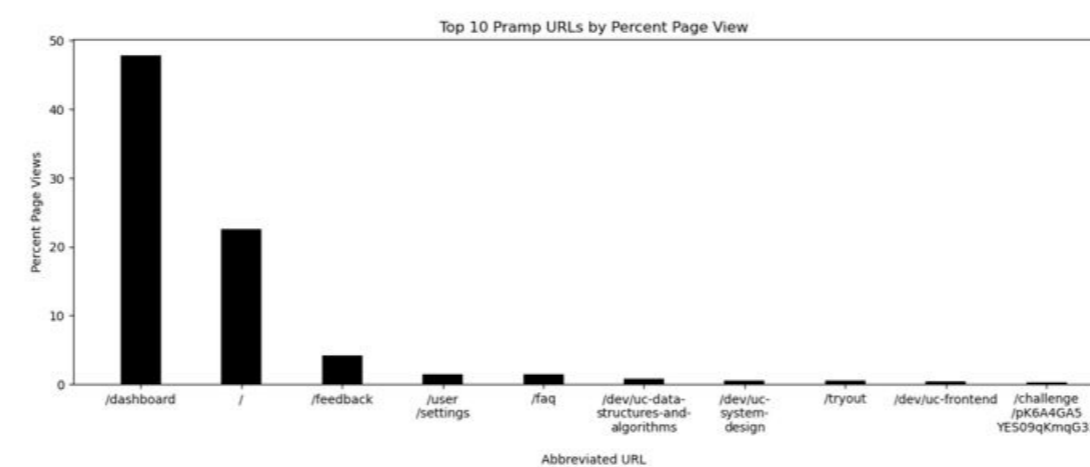


Note that the abbreviated URLs have omitted the "www.tryexponent.com" prefix.

By page title, an unspecified webpage receives 50.08% of pageviews, "Premium career advancement tools for PM, Engineering, and More - Exponent" receives 5.37%.

The top search page results, including a Google product manager interview guide, a DoorDash product manager interview guide, and a blog about preparing for an engineering manager interview blog among others.

Meanwhile, in terms of behavior, by URL, the Pramp dashboard makes up about 47.96% of the page views the site receives. The homepage makes up 22.29%. These are followed by pages consisting of: feedback, data structures and algorithms, system design, and frontend. The average time users spend on any page is 2:32. The graph below explains the specific page visits by URL listing across all of the website's content:



By page title, the Dashboard|Pramp page receives 48.06% of page views, followed by "Practice Mock Interviews Coding Problems - Land Top Jobs | Pramp" at 22.46%, then "Interview Session | Pramp" at 8.57% and "Challenge Session | Pramp" at 7.19%.

No information is available on the top search page results for Pramp.

Analysis

The results show that Exponent is most often utilized by first time users between the ages of 18 and 34 who are searching for interview questions and advice in obtaining non-entry level positions at different tech companies. Product management interview preparation was among the most popular of these upper-level positions being sought.

It is worth acknowledging that the vast majority of visitors are bound to interact with the home and default pages for the site, so while the data show an overwhelming number of views for these pages, in order to understand their ultimate intentions in navigating to the site, it is necessary to consider more specific patterns of interaction. In this case, managerial positions comprised of a statistically significant amount of page views by both URL and page title. The search data for Exponent further supports this conclusion with most interest tending towards product management as well.

Similarly, the results indicate that Pramp is also most often utilized by first time users between the ages of 18 and 34. These users, however, are visiting Pramp for its mock interviews and coding practice problems. In particular, the feedback page was more likely popular as a byproduct of users completing mock interviews and awaiting feedback on them. This explanation makes sense because "Practice Mock Interviews Coding Problems - Land Top Jobs | Pramp" and "Interview Session- Pramp", constituted about a third of all page views with respect to page title.

Finally, key courses on Pramp include data structures and algorithms, system design, and front end. Unfortunately, the hits for these pages are not significant enough to consider them as a major factor contributing to how software engineers use Pramp.

The younger audience may be using Exponent in order to climb the workplace ladder more quickly. Motivation for this could be due to a pay increase or greater decision-making input. Furthermore, the fact that this audience is primarily first time users suggests that there is a new wave of competitive individuals searching for jobs.

The interest in mock interviews and coding questions on Pramp may possibly be due to its realistic sentiment that is true to the traditional interview set up. This experience is beneficial because it helps interviewees practice their interview composure and improve it through constructive criticism.

Conclusion

This study uses Google Analytics and survey results to determine the main uses of Exponent and Pramp, which are websites geared towards helping people prepare for technical interviews.

The data show that these sites are being utilized as intended. The vast majority of the user audience consists of individuals between the ages of 18 and 34 who possess interest in technology/mobile devices. They use Exponent primarily for helping them pursue managerial positions and Pramp for mock interviews.

More work should be done to determine why the percentage of users navigating beyond the home and default pages is so low. Additional work is also required to determine why the average session time is only a few minutes. Future work should be done on a random, larger scale to discern these underlying reasons in order to allow a greater degree of generalization of the results across all software engineers.

Without knowledge of why people within the technology industry use Exponent and Pramp, adequately preparing them for technical interviews will be even more challenging and will make their interview processes more stressful. This discouraging factor may deter skilled, talented individuals from seeking employment, which will negatively impact the economy and the future of technology, so continuous investigation is important.