



Getting Started with Google Analytics

7 Easy but comprehensive steps

Right, so you have a shiny new website or you have a site that has been up and running for a while now – that’s great. The hard work is done and the leads and sales will start flooding in. If only!

There are multiple tasks that we should all be doing to maintain and improve our online presence; setting up and actively using analytics reporting is a must.

One of the main advantages of the internet in addition to its reach is its measurability. That old saying “Half the money I spend on advertising is wasted; the trouble is I don’t know which half;”, now through analytic tools available on the internet we are in a position now more than ever to measure the impact and conversions associated with each platform we use.



Let’s start with the basics:

1) Install the tracking code

To insert the Google Analytics code, you need to get into the HTML of your page. If you are using a service like WordPress, you’ll need to open the footer.php file to place this code.

- Copy the code Google displays for you (it includes your unique UA code).
- Paste EXACTLY THAT before the ending tag in your HTML code. QUICK TIP: Just do a search within the code to find this tag – “Ctrl+F” on a PC or “Command+F” on a Mac. In the Find box, type “</head>” (minus quotes)
- Save. As Google says, most websites re-use one file for common content, so it’s likely that you won’t have to place the code snippet on every single page of your website.
- Done! Wait for Google to recognise the installed code (can take a few hours to one day). When everything is installed correctly – “Tracking Status” will read “Receiving Data.”

Finally, check you analytics code with **Google’s Tag Assistant**. - Tag Assistant helps you verify that you have installed various Google tags correctly on your page. Most Google tags are checked including Google Analytics, Adwords Conversion Tracking, Google Tag Manager and more.

In some cases it is best to work with your webmaster, designer or agency to set this up. It is important that it is put in the correct places as you want to ensure you are using clean data and not data that is distorted in some way.

2) Getting to grips with the terminology and metrics

Understanding the metrics is an important starting point for your Google Analytics reporting and on-going measurement. The main terms you will come across are listed below. Understanding what these mean and associating them with a suitable industry benchmark will help you measure the success of your campaigns and online marketing efforts.

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Audience Overview

- **Visits** the total number of visits to your site.
- **Unique Visitors** the total number of unique visitors to your site.
- **Page views** the total number of pages viewed on your site.
- **Pages per Visit** the average number of pages viewed per visit.
- **Average Visit Duration** is the average visit length of all visitors.
- **Bounce Rate** is the percentage of visits that go only one page before exiting a site.
- **New Visitors** the percentage of total visitors who visited your site for the first time.

In audience view, you can as with the rest of the overviews; view different demographics, behaviour and technology.

Traffic Source

Direct traffic

Visits to your site where the user types your URL into their browser's address bar or when a visitor uses a bookmark to get to your website.

Referral Traffic

Other websites that refer or send visitors to your website are called referring sites

Search Traffic

Online tools that allow you to find specific web pages by using a keyword search query. The three main search engines are Google, Yahoo, and Bing. Google Analytics segments your traffic data so you can see which search engines are driving traffic to your Website, and how much traffic each search engine is generating. Google Analytics allows you to separate this data into organic and paid results.

- **Organic Traffic:** Visitors who come to your website from unpaid organic or natural search engine results.
- **Paid Traffic:** This consists of visitors who come to your website from Google AdWords ads, paid search engine keywords and other online paid ad campaigns.

Campaigns

These can be campaigns you tag through PPC, Email marketing. It is best practice to make sure you link your Google Adwords account and also to complete your Google Analytics details in the programme you use for email marketing. Large email marketing providers such as mail chimp and constant contact would have this facility.

Keywords

Keywords are a great stat that shows you the words that people have used to find you. If important keywords are not showing up here then you know you're missing out on an opportunity.

3) Social Reports



The Social Conversions Report allows you to measure the success of your social campaigns by breaking them down by network and then aligning them with your on-site goals, conversions and ecommerce transactions.

In doing this, marketers can see which networks deliver the highest bottom-line impact, and where they need a social strategy review.



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4) Set up Goals and Link to Adwords



One of the core benefits of analytics is measuring the results and effectiveness of our online advertising or marketing efforts.

Whether this is achieving a certain amount of newsletter sign ups, brochure requests or selling something directly of the site i.e. a transaction, we want to make sure that is tracked from start to finish.

Creating a new Goal

Goals are set at the view level. To find a view, click Admin, then select an account, property, and a view. Click Goals, then Create a Goal.

Follow the [step-by-step](#) flow in your account to set up a Goal. As you complete each step, click Next step to save and move on. Click Save Goal to finish. To quit the process without saving, click Cancel.

Linking your Adwords account to Analytics

1. Sign in to your AdWords account at <https://adwords.google.com>.
2. Click the Tools and Analysis tab, then select Google Analytics.
3. Click the Admin tab at the top of the page.
4. Click the name of the account you'd like to link
5. Click the Data sources
6. Click the AdWords tab, then select Link Accounts.
7. Select which Google Analytics profiles you'd like to link to AdWords. Autotagging is recommended and allows AdWords to automatically and invisibly tag your destination URLs so that Google Analytics can track them.

Once accounts are linked, it can take 24 hours to see your AdWords data reflected in your Analytics account, and you may need to sign out and back in again to see it.

5) Content Overview

The Content section contains reports designed to help you improve the content on your site to meet the needs and expectations of visitors.

The content overview specifies the top five most viewed pages over the time period you're looking at.

1. Click on the name of any page to get extremely detailed information about where the people viewing that page came from, how long they spent on the page, how many of them were new to the page, and a lot more.
2. Click on View Report to get access to information about the performance of all pages on the site.

The content overview helps point out how your content is doing in comparison to other content on your site. It is important to note that different pages will have different results e.g. news items, contact us page, about us, services or products. Do not compare apple and oranges!

Based on this data, you can develop an understanding of how well your content addresses the purpose of your site.

For example, if your landing pages have a high bounce rate and visitors spend only a few seconds on those pages, you might conclude that the page content does not meet visitors' expectations or that the page isn't designed to effectively draw visitors further into your site.

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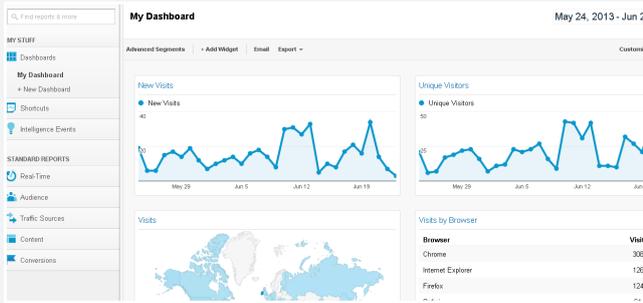


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In terms of industry Google Analytics benchmark averages for bounce rate;

- 40-60% Content websites
- 30-50% Lead generation sites
- 70-98% Blogs
- 20-40% Retail sites
- 10-30% Service sites

6) Dashboards



Dashboards give you an overview on how your properties are performing by displaying summaries of different reports as widgets on a single page. With a dashboard, you can monitor many metrics at once, so you can quickly check the health of your accounts or see correlations between different reports. To view and manage your dashboards, use the Dashboards menu on the left, found under the Home tab.

To add a report to your dashboard:

1. Click ADD TO DASHBOARD above the report title.
2. Select a dashboard from the menu, or create a new one.
3. Select the check boxes for the dashboard widgets you want to include (e.g., table, pie chart, timeline). You can edit the widget names.
4. Click Add to Dashboard.

Your new widget opens on the dashboard you selected.

7) Custom Reporting

A custom report is a report that you create. You pick the dimensions (City and Browser, for example) and metrics (Visits, Pageviews, and Bounce Rate, for example) and decide how they should be displayed. To access your custom reports, click the **Custom Reporting** tab. Your reports will be listed in the left navigation under **Custom Reports**.

To create a custom report, click the Custom Reporting tab and then click Overview under Custom Reports in the left navigation. Click + **New Custom Report** to create a new report.

The screenshot shows the 'Create Custom Report' form. It includes sections for 'General Information' (Title: New Custom Report), 'Report Content' (Name: Report Tab, Type: Explorer, Flat Table, Map Overlay), 'Metric Groups' (Metric Group, + add metric, + Add metric group), 'Dimension Drilldowns' (+ add dimension), 'Filters - optional' (+ add filter), and 'Profiles - optional'.

At IMS Marketing, we recommend that all our clients set monthly KPIs against their website, social media and marketing objectives. We provide an [in-depth analysis](#) with recommendations and optimisation techniques to improve online visibility, increase leads and overall website conversions.

CONTACT



Maricka Burke Keogh, our Digital Marketing Manager direct at (091)739450 or email maricka@imsmarketing.ie to find out how we can work with your company to reach your online marketing goals.

