

Google Analytics Terms to Know

Basic Google Analytics Metrics

Pageviews

This is the number of times users view a page that has the Google Analytics tracking code inserted. This covers all page views; so if a user refreshes the page, or navigates away from the page and returns, these are all counted as additional page views.

Sessions

A session is the period time a user is actively engaged with your website, app, etc. All usage data (Screen Views, Events, Ecommerce, etc.) is associated with a session. A visit is ended either after 30 minutes of inactivity or if the user leaves your site for more than 30 minutes (if a user leaves your site and returns within 30 minutes, this is counted as part of the original visit).

Unique Pageviews

The unique Pageviews number counts all the times the page was viewed in an individual session as a single event; so whether a visitor viewed the page once in their visit or five times, the number of unique Pageviews will be recorded as just one.

Users

Users that have had at least one session within the selected date range, which includes both new and returning users. Google Analytics is able to recognize whether a user has been to the site before through the use of cookies. This means that if a user deletes their cookies, or accesses the site through a different browser or machine, then they may be mistakenly added as a new unique visitor.

User Behavior

New vs. Returning Visitors

New visitors are those users that have not visited your site before the time period specified, while returning visitors will have made at least one visit to at least one page on your site previously. This is again determined by whether Google Analytics can detect cookies, which indicate previous visits.

Segments

Segments enable you to analyze your data in more detail, by filtering the results to show only information for certain kinds of traffic. You can also use segments to compare results between groups of visitors; for example new vs. returning, or paid vs. organic search traffic. Google also allows you to set up custom segments to for even more granular analysis.

Landing Page

The page your user entered your site.

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Bounce Rate

Bounce rate is given as a percentage, and represents the number of visits when users leave your site after just one page; regardless of how they got to your site or how long they stayed on that page.

Avg. Visit Duration

The average visit duration is the amount of time someone stayed on your site. This works like bounce rate where time will only be counted if they click through to another page on the site.

% Exit

%Exit is (number of exits) / (number of Pageviews) for the page or set of pages. It indicates how often users exit from that page or set of pages when they view the page(s).

User Flow

The user flow report shows how users moved through your site, from landing page to exit page. User flow reports can be customized to show additional detail, such as the geographic location of users or the traffic source, and also shows how many people exited at each stage of interaction.

Traffic Sources

Direct Traffic

Direct traffic is made up of visitors that type a URL directly into the address bar, select an auto-complete option when typing the URL, or click on a bookmark to get to your site (however, instances when Google Analytics cannot determine a source also get automatically assigned as direct).

Referral traffic

Referral is when a user has landed on your site by clicking on a link from somewhere else; this could be another site, a social media profile, or a local profile.

Organic Traffic

Organic search shows the users who came to your site by clicking on the organic links on the search engine results page (SERP).

Paid Traffic

The paid search results show users who clicked on one of your pay per click campaigns; these typically appear at the top and side of the SERPs and are managed via an advertising account such as Google AdWords or Bing Ads.

Google Analytics Terms to Know

Keyword

For both organic and paid search channels, Google Analytics records the keyword: the word or phrase a user entered into the search box that led them to click on one of your links.

Keyword: (not provided)

Google uses Secure Search over SSL (ie. using <https://www.google.com> instead of <http://www.google.com>), their keywords are not passed on to your Google Analytics account; instead, a (not provided) result is displayed. It's worth noting that keywords are still provided when users click on paid search results, even if they are using the secure search (a move that has led some commentators to accuse Google of bias towards those clients who advertise with them).

Keyword: (not set)

If you are seeing (not set) keyword data there is probably an error in tracking or its unnatural crawler traffic.

Custom information

Goals

For critical site objectives, such as getting users to fill in a contact form, complete an online transaction or spend a certain amount of time engaging with your site, goals can be set up to monitor the conversion rate of these activities. There are four types of goals available in Google Analytics: URL Destination, Visit Duration, Pages (or Screens)/Visit and goals tied to existing events. You can also assign a monetary value to each goal completion, to help determine the return on investment from your website or application.

<http://support.google.com/analytics/>