GOOGLE ANALYTICS 101[1]

One of the free digital marketing tools available, Google Analytics is relatively easy to learn and helpful in tracking the outcomes of your social media marketing efforts.

Let us go through this in a step by step fashion. Note that almost all the information for this section is derived from Moz's excellent blog post called "The Absolute Beginner's Guide to Google Analytics" which you can find here: https://moz.com/blog/absolute-beginners-guide-to-google-analytics

If you don't know what Google Analytics is, haven't installed it on your website, or have installed it but never look at your data, then this article is for you. While it's hard for many to believe, there are still websites that are not using Google Analytics (or any analytics, for that matter) to measure their traffic.

Questions Which Google Analytics Answers

Here are some of the many questions about your website that you can answer using Google Analytics.

- How many people visit my website?
- Where do my visitors live?
- What websites send traffic to my website?
- What marketing tactics drive the most traffic to my website?
- Which pages on my website are the most popular?
- How many visitors have I converted into leads or customers?
- Where did my converting visitors come from and go on my website?
- How can I improve my website's speed?
- What blog content do my visitors like the most?

There are many, many additional questions that Google Analytics can answer, but these are the ones that are most important for most website owners. Now let's look at how you can get Google Analytics on your website.

How to install Google Analytics

First, you need a Google Analytics account. If you have a primary Google account that you use for other services like Gmail, Google Drive, Google Calendar, Google+, or YouTube, then you should set up your Google Analytics using that Google account. Or you will need to create a new one.

This should be a Google account you plan to keep forever and that only you have access to. You can always grant access to your Google Analytics to other people down the road, but you don't want someone else to have full control over it.

Big Tip: Don't let anyone (your web designer, web developer, web host, SEO person, etc.) create your website's Google Analytics account under their own Google account so they can "manage" it for you. If you and this person part ways, they will take your Google Analytics data with them, and you will have to start all over.

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[1] Source of information: https://moz.com/blog/absolute-beginners-guide-to-google-analytics

Set up your account and property

Once you have a Google account, you can go to [Google Analytics](#) and click the Sign into Google Analytics button. You will then be greeted with the three steps you must take to set up Google Analytics.

After you click the Sign Up button, you will fill out information for your website.
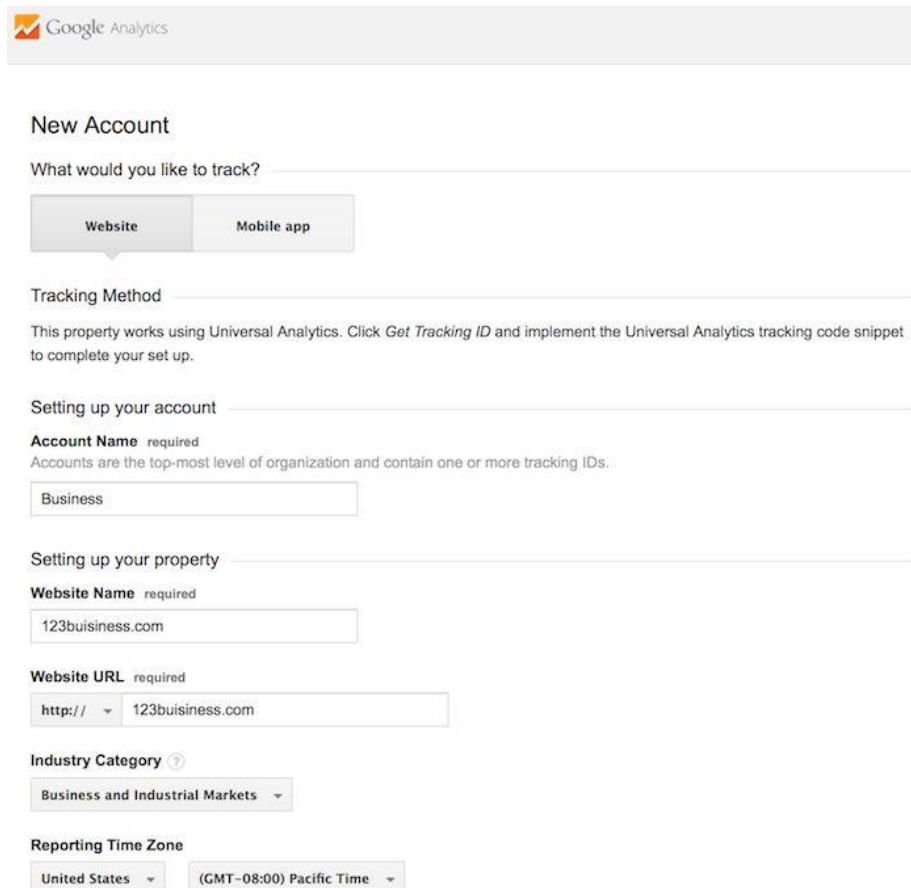
Google Analytics offers [hierarchies](#) to organize your account. You can have up to 100 Google Analytics accounts under one Google account. You can have up to 50 website properties under one Google Analytics account. You can have up to 25 views under one website property.

Here are a few scenarios.

- SCENARIO 1: If you have one website, you only need one Google Analytics account with one website property.
- SCENARIO 2: If you have two websites, such as one for your business and one for your personal use, you might want to create two accounts, naming one "123Business" and one "Personal". Then you will set up your business website under the 123Business account and your personal website under your Personal account.
- SCENARIO 3: If you have several businesses, but less than 50, and each of them has one website, you might want to put them all under a Business account. Then have a Personal account for your personal websites.
- SCENARIO 4: If you have several businesses and each of them has dozens of websites, for a total of more than 50 websites, you might want to put each business under its own account, such as 123Business account, 124Business account, and so on.

You can always rename your accounts or properties down the road. Note that you can't move a property (website) from one Google Analytics account to another—you would have to set up a new property under the new account and lose the historical data you collected from the original property.

For the absolute beginner's guide, the setup would look something like this.

Beneath this, you will have the option to configure where your Google Analytics data can be shared.

Reporting Time Zone

United States ▾   (GMT–08:00) Pacific Time   ▾

Data Sharing Settings ⑦

Data you collect, process, and store using Google Analytics ("Google Analytics data") is secure and kept confidential. This data is used to provide and maintain the Google Analytics service, to perform system critical operations, and in rare exceptions for legal reasons as described in our privacy policy.

The data sharing options give you more control over sharing your Google Analytics data. Learn more.

✓ Google products & services RECOMMENDED
   Share Google Analytics data with Google to help improve Google's products and services. *If you disable this option, data can still flow to other Google products explicitly linked to Analytics. Visit the* **product linking** *section in each property to view or change your settings.*

✓ Benchmarking RECOMMENDED
   Contribute anonymous data to an aggregate data set to enable features like benchmarking and publication that can help you understand data trends. All identifiable information about your website is removed and combined with other anonymous data before it is shared with others.

✓ Technical support RECOMMENDED
   Let Google technical support representatives access your Google Analytics data and account when necessary to provide service and find solutions to technical issues.

✓ Account specialists RECOMMENDED
   Give Google marketing specialists and your Google sales specialists access to your Google Analytics data and account so they can find ways to improve your configuration and analysis, and share optimization tips with you. If you don't have dedicated sales specialists, give this access to authorized Google representatives.

Learn how Google Analytics safeguards your data.

You are using 0 out of 100 accounts.

Get Tracking ID   Cancel

Install your tracking code

Once you are finished, you will click the Get Tracking ID button. You will get a popup of the Google Analytics terms and conditions, which you have to agree to. Then you will get your Google Analytics code.

This must be installed on every page on your website. The installation will depend on what type of website you have.

For example, if you have a Wordpress website with a plugin, there could be a specific area to add header and footer scripts to your website. See the example below:

Alternatively, if you have a WordPress on your own domain, you can use the Google Analytics by Yoast plugin to install your code easily no matter what theme or framework you are using.

If you have a website built with HTML files, you will add the tracking code before the </head> tag on each of your pages. You can do this by using a text editor program (such as TextEdit for Mac or Notepad for Windows) and then uploading the file to your web host using an FTP program (such as FileZilla).

If you have a Shopify e-commerce store, you will go to your Online Store settings and paste in your tracking code where specified.

As you can see, the installation of Google Analytics varies based on the platform you use (content management system, website builder, e-commerce software, etc.), the theme you use, and the plugins you use. You should be able to find easy instructions to install Google Analytics on any website by doing a web search for your platform + how to install Google Analytics.

Set Up Goals

After you install your tracking code on your website, you will want to configure a small (but very useful) setting in your website's profile on Google Analytics. This is your Goals setting. You can find it by clicking on the Admin link at the top of your Google Analytics and then clicking on Goals under your website's View column.
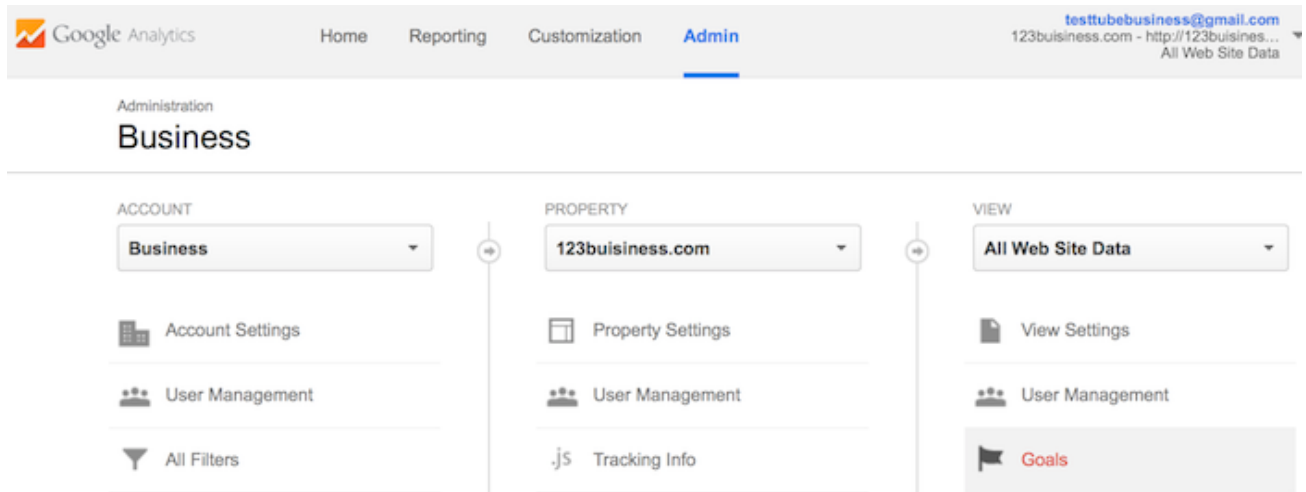
Goals will tell Google Analytics when something important has happened on your website. For example, if you have a website where you generate leads through a contact form, you will want to find (or create) a thank you page that visitors end upon once they have submitted their contact information. Or, if you have a website where you sell products, you will want to find (or create) a final thank you or confirmation page for visitors to land upon once they have completed a purchase.

That URL will likely look something like this.

- http://123business.com/thank-you
- http://123business.com/thank-you/
- http://123business.com/thank-you.html

In Google Analytics, you will click on the New Goal button.
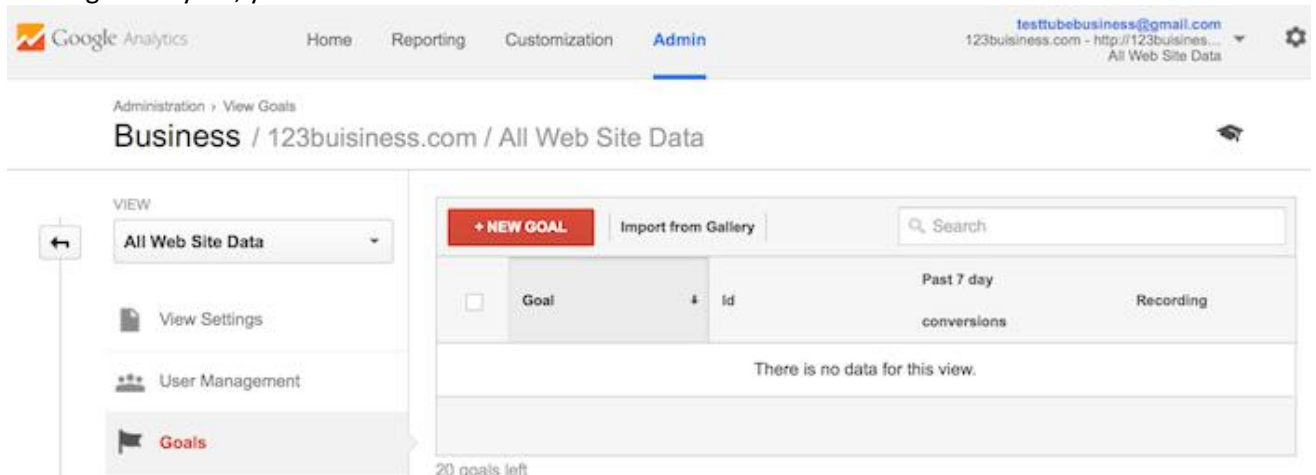
You will choose the Custom option (unless one of the other options are more applicable to your website) and click the Next Step button.

You will name your goal something you will remember, select Destination, and then click the Next Step button.

You will enter your thank you or confirmation page's URL after the .com of your website in the Destination field and change the drop-down to "Begins with".
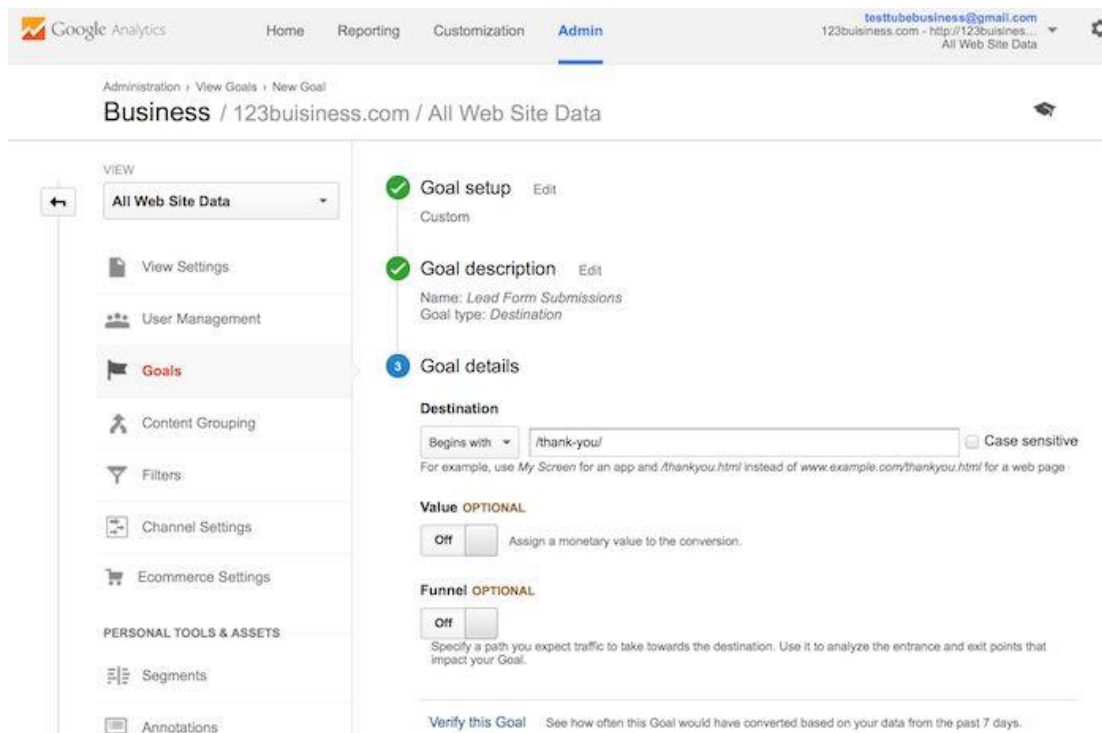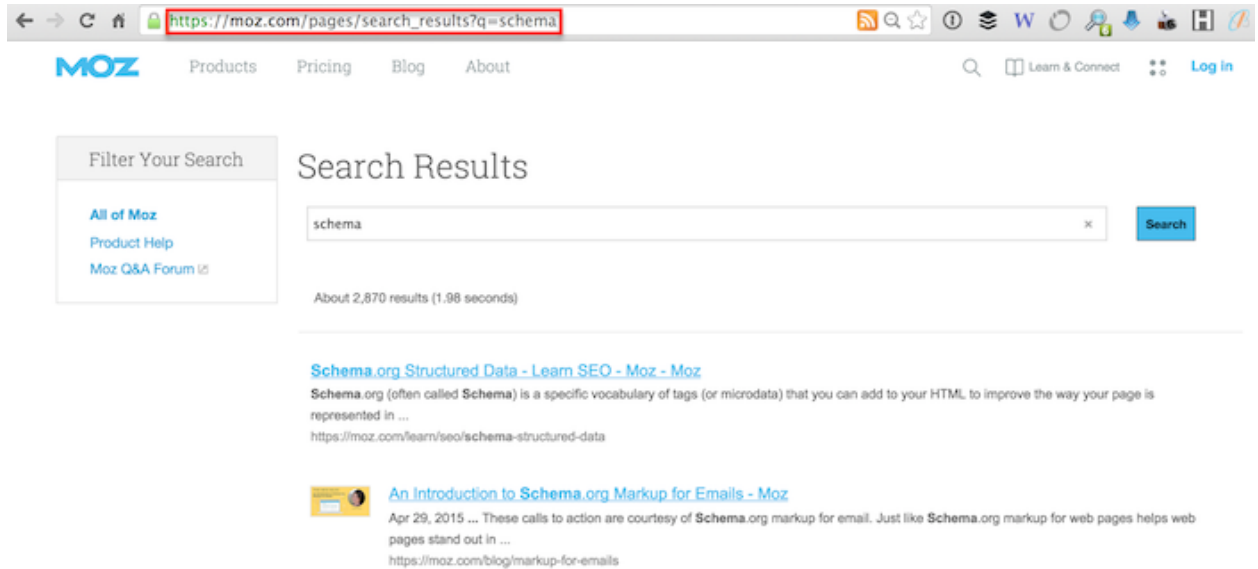
You will then toggle the value and enter a specific dollar value for that conversion (if applicable) and click Create Goal to complete the setup.

If you have other similar goals / conversions you would like to track on your website, you can follow these steps again. You can create up to 20 goals on your website. Be sure that the ones you create are highly important to your business. These goals (for most businesses) include lead form submissions, email list sign ups, and purchase completions. Depending on your website and its purpose, your goals may vary.

Note that this is the simplest of all conversion tracking in Google Analytics. You can review the documentation in Google Analytics support to learn more about setting up goal tracking.
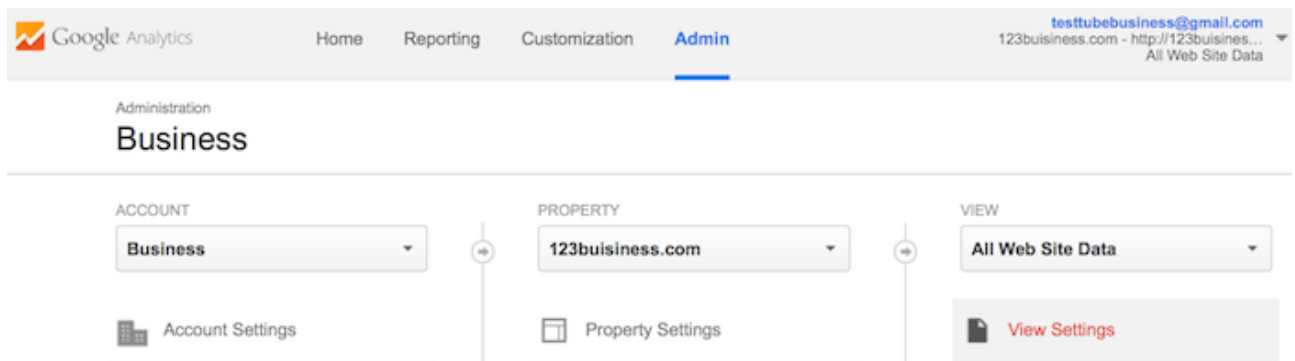
Set up site search

Another thing you can set up really quickly that will give you valuable data down the road is Site Search. This is for any website with a search box on it. First, run a search on your website. Then keep the tab open. You will need the URL momentarily.

Go to your Google Analytics Admin menu again, and in the View column, click on View Settings.

Scroll down until you see Site Settings and toggle it to On.

Look back at your URL for your search results. Enter the query parameter (usually s or q) and click Save. On Moz, for example, the query parameter is q.

This will allow Google Analytics to track any searches made on your website so you can learn more about what your visitors are looking for on specific pages.

Add additional accounts and properties

If you want to add a new Google Analytics account, you can do so by going to your Admin menu, clicking on the drop-down under the Account column, and clicking the Create New Account link.
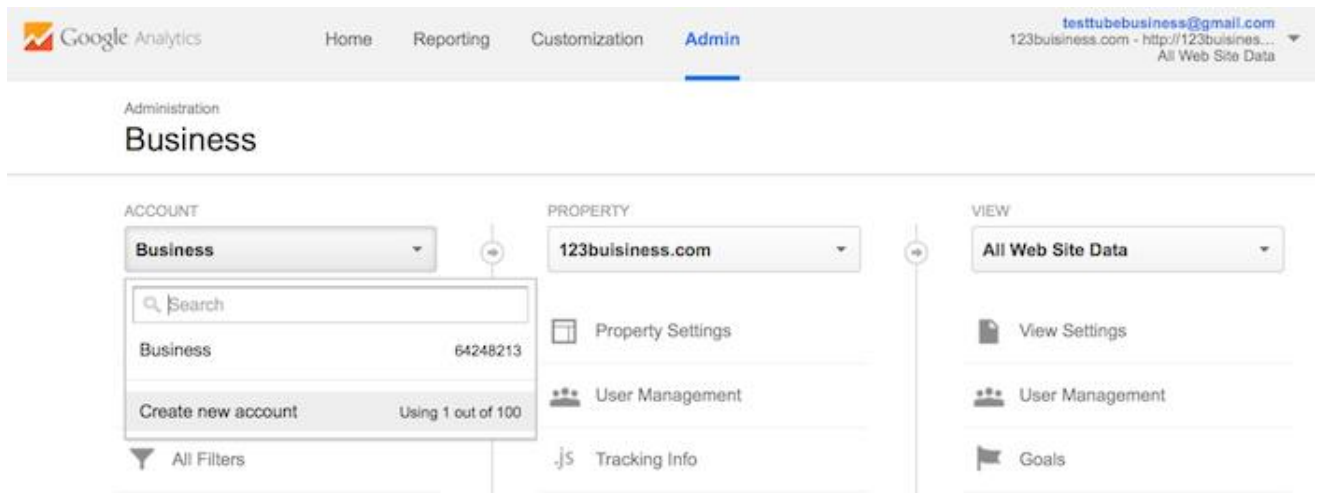
Likewise, if you want to add a new website under your Google Analytics account, you can do so by going to your Admin menu, clicking on the drop-down under the Property column, and clicking the Create New Property link.
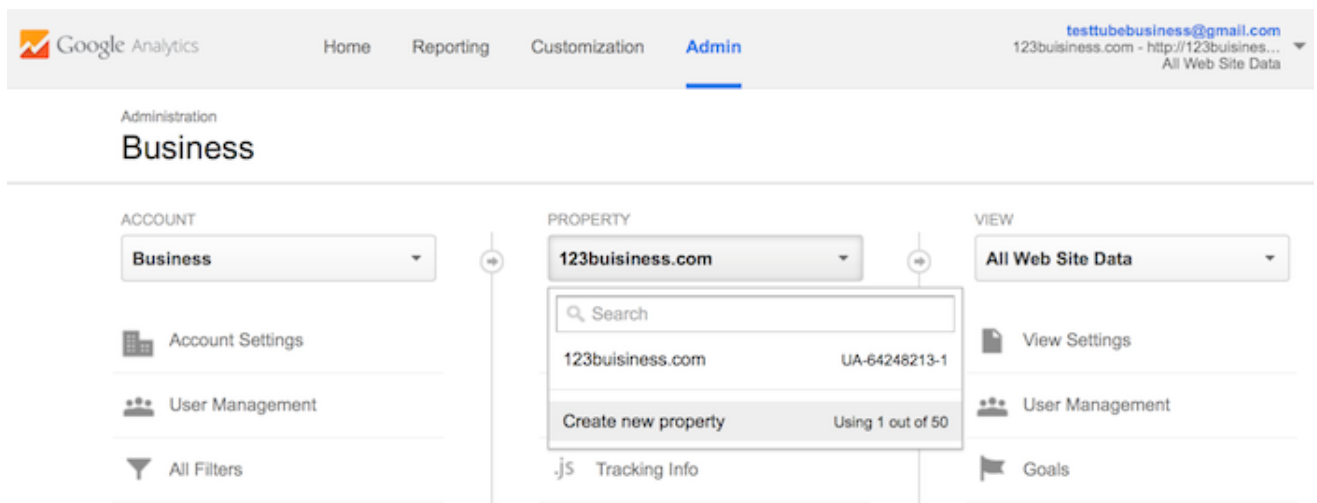
Then you will continue through all of the above-mentioned steps.

Once you've installed Google Analytics on your website(s), set up your goals, and set up site search(es), you should wait about 24 hours for it to start getting data. Then you will be able to start viewing your data.

How to view Google Analytics data

Once you start getting in Google Analytics data, you can start learning about your website traffic. Each time you log in to Google Analytics, you will be taken to your Audience Overview report. Alternatively, if you have more than one website, you will be taken to your list of websites to choose from, and then taken to the Audience Overview report for that website. This is the first of over 50 reports that are available to you in Google Analytics. You can also access these reports by clicking on the Reporting link at the top.
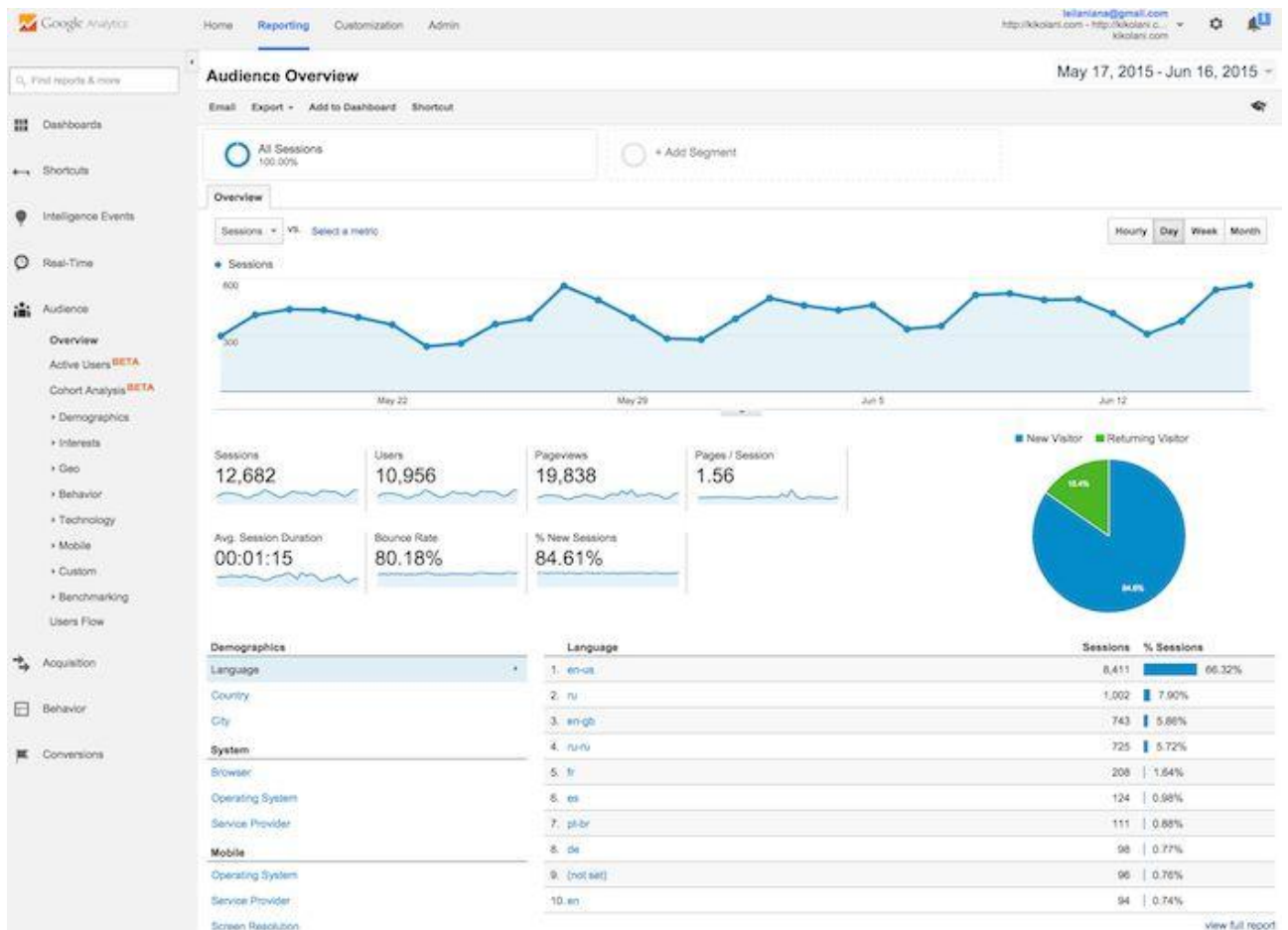
Standard report features

Most of the standard reports within Google Analytics will look similar to this. At the top right, you can click on the drop-down arrow next to your website to switch to different websites within all of your Google Analytics accounts. Or you can click the Home link at the top.
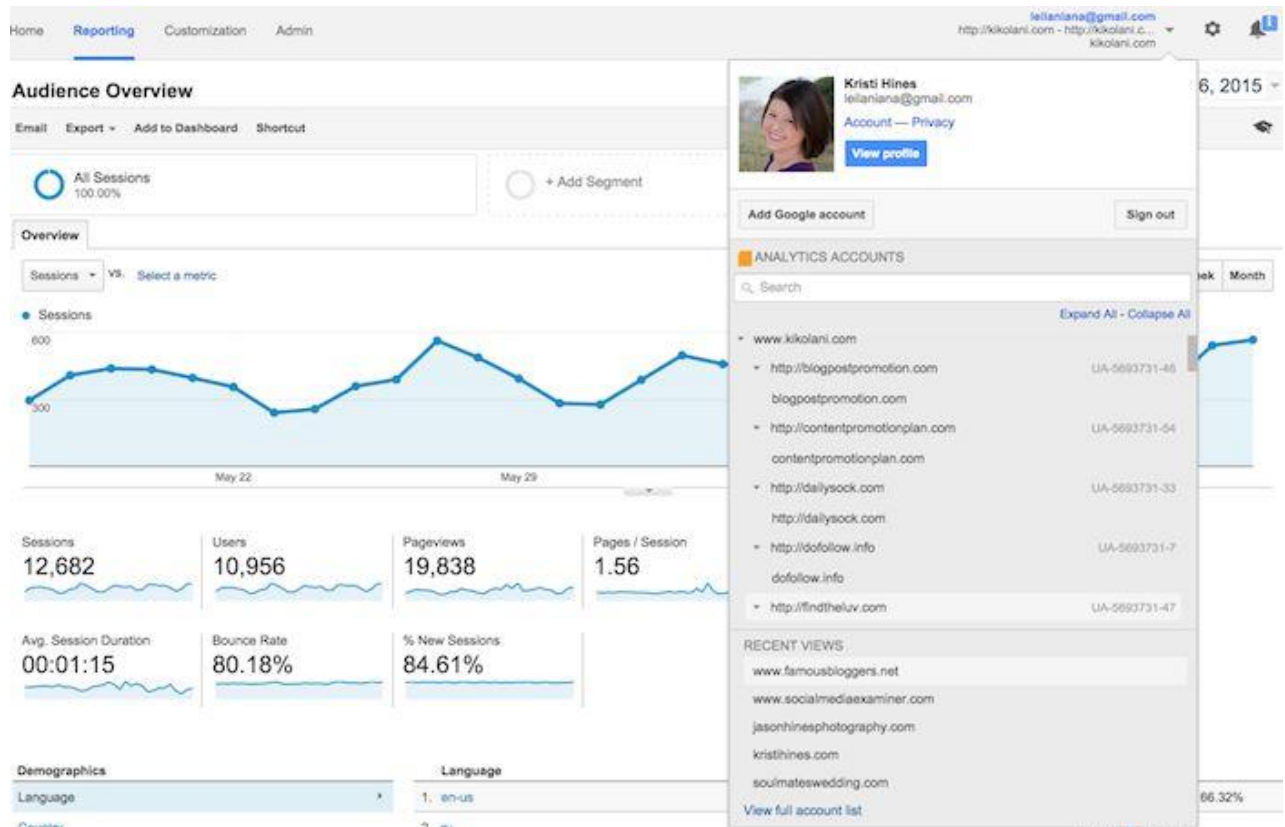
In the report at the top right, you can click on the dates to change the date range of the data you are viewing. You can also check the Compare box to compare your data from one date range (such as this month) to a previous date range (such as last month) to view your data.
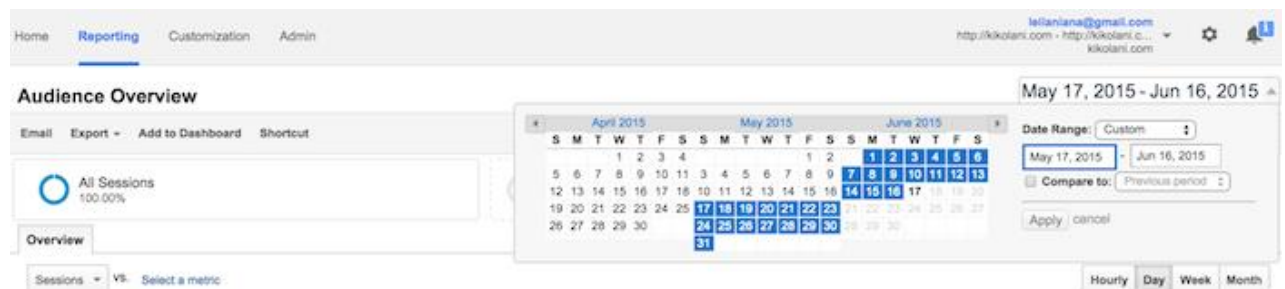
You can hover over a variety of areas on your Google Analytics reports to get more information. For example, in the Audience Overview, hovering over the line on the graph will give you the number of sessions for a particular day. Hovering over the metrics beneath the graph will tell you what each one means.

Beneath the main metrics, you will see reports that you can switch through to see the top ten languages, countries, cities, browsers, operating systems, services providers, and screen resolutions of your visitors.

You can click the full report link on each to see the full reports. Or you can click on any of the top ten links to see more details. For example, clicking on the United States in Countries will take you to the full Location report, focused in on visitors from states within the US.

Location
ALL » COUNTRY: United States

May 17, 2015 - Jun 16, 2015

Customize   Email   Export ▾   Add to Dashboard   Shortcut

All Sessions
29.29%

+ Add Segment

Map Overlay   Explorer

Summary   Site Usage   Goal Set 1   Goal Set 2   Ecommerce   AdSense

Sessions ▾

1 ▬▬▬▬▬▬ 628

Primary Dimension: **Region**   City   Metro   Other ▾

Secondary dimension ▾

Region	Acquisition			Behavior			Conversions Goal 1: Sales ▾		
	Sessions ↓	% New Sessions	New Users	Bounce Rate	Pages / Session	Avg. Session Duration	Sales (Goal 1 Conversion Rate)	Sales (Goal 1 Completions)	Sales (Goal 1 Value)
	3,714 % of Total: 29.29% (12,682)	87.75% Avg for View: 84.61% (3.71%)	3,259 % of Total: 30.37% (10,730)	86.00% Avg for View: 80.18% (7.25%)	1.42 Avg for View: 1.56 (-9.32%)	00:00:54 Avg for View: 00:01:15 (-28.02%)	0.89% Avg for View: 3.34% (-73.42%)	33 % of Total: 7.78% (424)	$33.00 % of Total: 7.78% ($424.00)
1. California	628 (16.91%)	85.83%	539 (16.54%)	86.15%	1.23	00:00:46	0.96%	6 (18.18%)	$6.00 (18.18%)
2. New York	292 (7.86%)	83.90%	245 (7.52%)	85.62%	1.30	00:00:40	1.03%	3 (9.09%)	$3.00 (9.09%)

In this view, you can hover over each state to see the number of visitors from that state. You can scroll down to the table and hover over each column name to learn more about each metric.

Region	Acquisition			Behavior			Conversions Goal 1: Sales ▾		
	Sessions ↓	% New Sessions	New Users	Bounce Rate	Pages / Session	Avg. Session Duration	Sales (Goal 1 Conversion Rate)	Sales (Goal 1 Completions)	Sales (Goal 1 Value)
	3,714 % of Total: 29.29% (12,682)	87.75% Avg for View: 84.61% (3.71%)	3,259 % of Total: 30.37% (10,730)	86.00% Avg for View: 80.18% (7.25%)	1.42 Avg for View: 1.56 (-9.32%)	00:00:54 Avg for View: 00:01:15 (-28.02%)	0.89% Avg for View: 3.34% (-73.42%)		($424.00)
1. California	628 (16.91%)	85.83%	539 (16.54%)	86.15%	1.23	00:00:46	0.96%	6 (18.18%)	$6.00 (18.18%)
2. New York	292 (7.86%)	83.90%	245 (7.52%)	85.62%	1.30	00:00:40	1.03%	3 (9.09%)	$3.00 (9.09%)
3. Texas	253 (6.81%)	87.75%	222 (6.81%)	87.35%	1.25	00:00:50	1.19%	3 (9.09%)	$3.00 (9.09%)
4. Florida	222 (5.98%)	92.79%	206 (6.32%)	88.74%	1.23	00:00:16	0.90%	2 (6.06%)	$2.00 (6.06%)
5. Virginia	190 (5.12%)	95.26%	181 (5.55%)	94.74%	1.09	00:00:16	0.00%	0 (0.00%)	$0.00 (0.00%)
6. (not set)	150 (4.04%)	91.33%	137 (4.20%)	87.33%	1.33	00:01:15	2.00%	3 (9.09%)	$3.00 (9.09%)
7. Illinois	143 (3.85%)	89.51%	128 (3.93%)	83.22%	1.39	00:01:15	1.40%	2 (6.06%)	$2.00 (6.06%)
8. Massachusetts	127 (3.42%)	84.25%	107 (3.28%)	81.89%	1.45	00:01:23	0.79%	1 (3.03%)	$1.00 (3.03%)
9. Georgia	119 (3.20%)	91.60%	109 (3.34%)	89.08%	1.14	00:00:32	0.00%	0 (0.00%)	$0.00 (0.00%)
10. Colorado	108 (2.91%)	60.19%	65 (1.99%)	73.15%	5.96	00:06:07	2.78%	3 (9.09%)	$3.00 (9.09%)

The monetary value of conversions to the goal.

You can also click on the name of each state to see visitors from cities within the state. Effectively, any time you see a clickable link or a ? next to something, you can click on it or hover over it to learn more. The deeper you dive into your analytics, the more interesting information you will find.

Types of Google Analytics reports

Speaking of reports, here is quick summary of what you will find in each of the standard Google Analytics reporting sections, accessible in the left sidebar (see image on the left).

Everything in (parenthesis) is a specific report or set of reports within the following sections that you can refer to.

Audience reports

These reports tell you everything you want to know about your visitors. In them, you will find detailed reports for your visitors' age and gender (Demographics), what their general interests are (Interests), where they come from (Geo > Location) and what language they speak (Geo > Language), how often they visit your website (Behaviour), and the technology they use to view your website (Technology and Mobile).

Acquisition reports

These reports will tell you everything you want to know about what drove visitors to your website (All Traffic). You will see your traffic broken down by main categories (All Traffic > Channels) and specific sources (All Traffic > Source/Medium).

You can learn everything about traffic from social networks (Social). You can also connect Google Analytics to AdWords to learn more about PPC campaigns and to Google Webmaster Tools / Search Console to learn more about search traffic (Search Engine Optimization)

Behaviour reports

These reports will tell you everything you want to know about your content. Particularly, the top pages on your website (Site Content > All Pages), the top entry pages on your website (Site Content > Landing Pages), and the top exit pages on your website (Site Content > Exit Pages).

If you set up Site Search, you will be able to see what terms are searched for (Site Search > Search Terms) and the pages they are searched upon (Site Search > Pages).

You can also learn how fast your website loads (Site Speed) as well as find specific suggestions from Google on how to make your website faster (Site Speed > Speed Suggestions).

Conversions

If you set up Goals within your Google Analytics, you can see how many conversions your website has received (Goals > Overview) and what URLs they happened upon (Goals > Goal URLs). You can also see the path that visitors took to complete the conversion (Goals > Reverse Goal Path).

Speaking of goals and conversions, most of the tables within Google Analytics standard reports will tie specific data to your conversions. For example, you can see the number of conversions made by visitors from California in the Audience > Geo > Location report. You can see the number of conversions made by visitors from Facebook in the Acquisitions > All Traffic > Source/Medium report. You can see the number of conversions made by visitors who landed on specific pages in the Behavior > Site Content > Landing Pages report.

If you have multiple goals, you can use the dropdown at the top of that section of data to switch to the goal you want to view or all of your goals if you prefer.

Shortcuts and emails

While you won't need every report within Google Analytics, you should explore them all to see what they have to offer. When you find some that you want to visit again and again, use the Shortcut link at the top of the report to add them to the Shortcuts in your left sidebar for faster access.

Or, use the email button to have them emailed to you (or others on your team) on a regular basis.
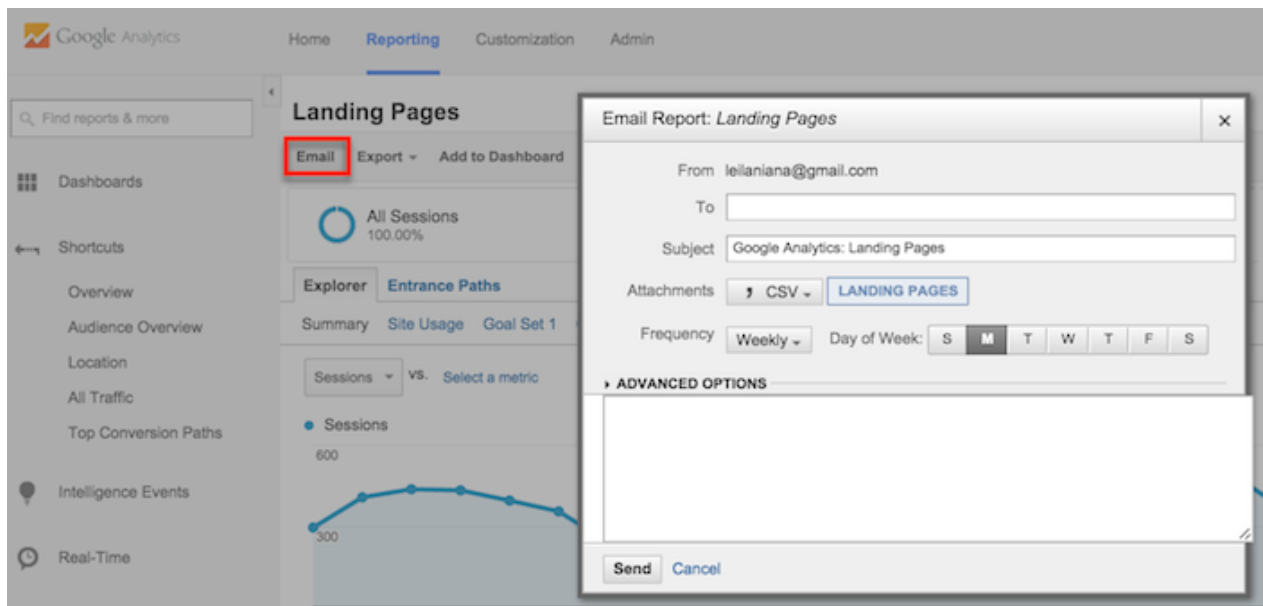
If you choose to send emails to someone outside of your organization, be sure to regularly check your emails by going to your Admin menu and clicking on the Scheduled Emails box under the View column to ensure only people working with your company are getting your data.
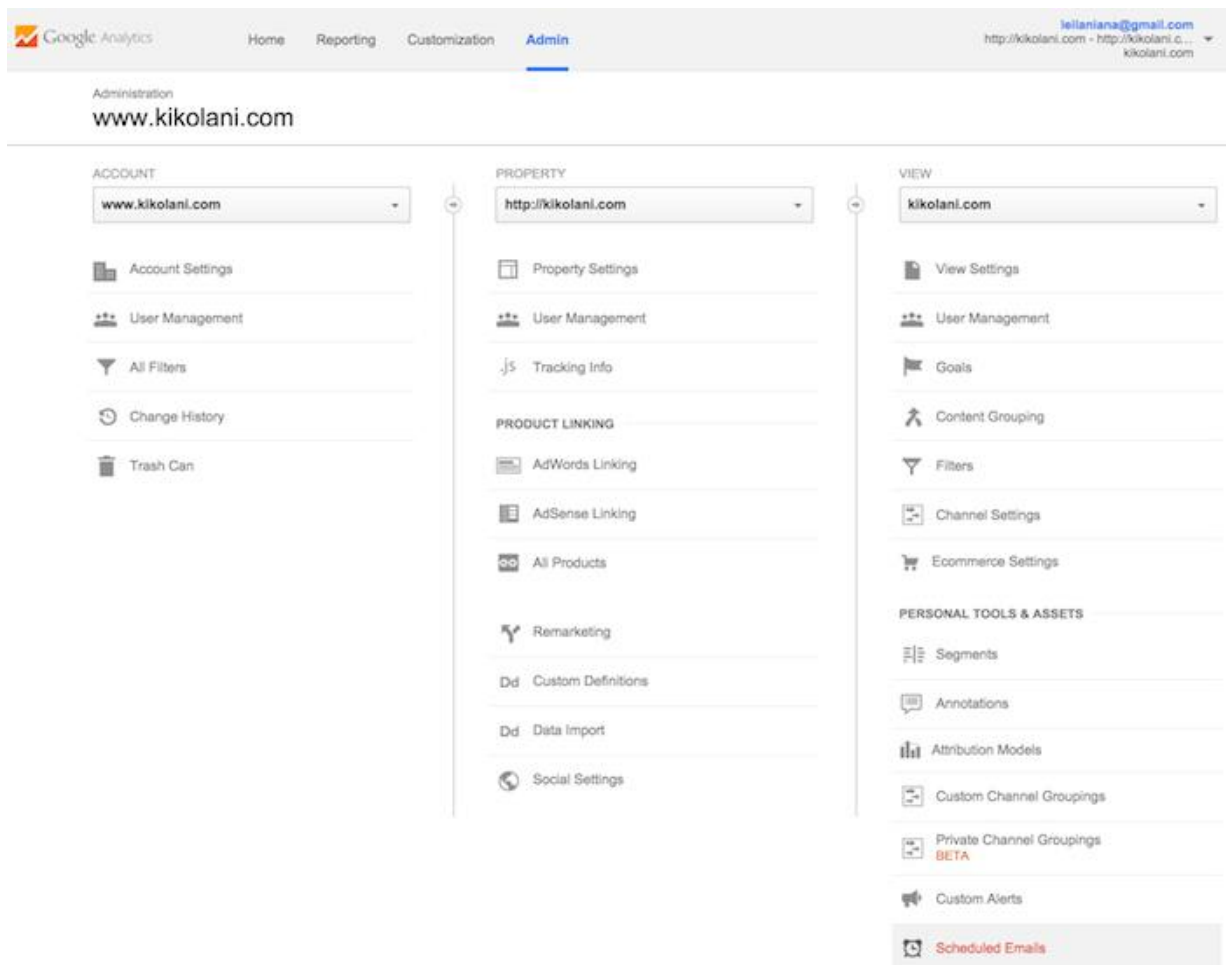
Answers to common questions about Google Analytics

Got a few questions? Here are some of the common ones that come up with Google Analytics.

How do I share my Google Analytics data with someone?

You don't have to give your Google account information over to someone who needs access to your Google Analytics data. You just need to go to your Admin menu and under the Account, Property (website) or View you want someone to see, click the User Management menu.
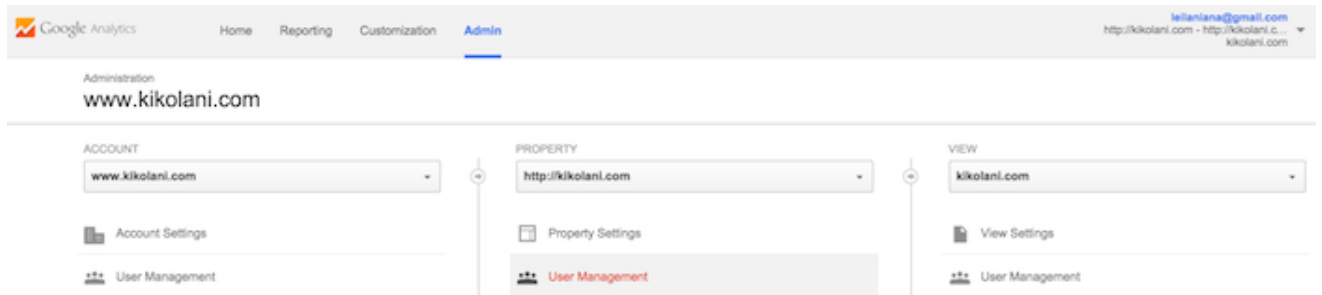
From there, you can add the email address of anyone you would like to view your Google Analytics data and choose the permissions you would like them to have.
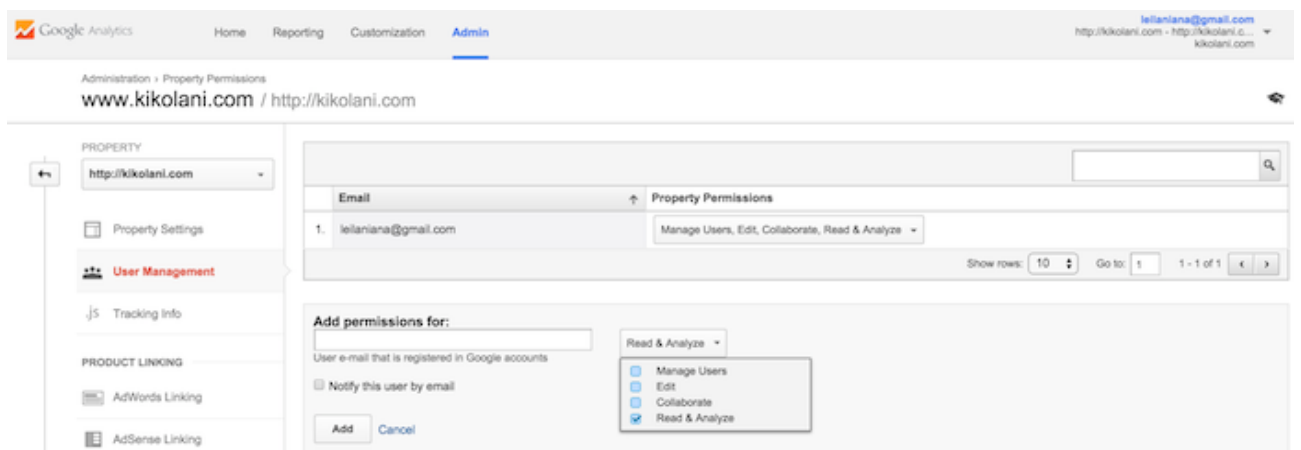
I don't like viewing the reports in Google Analytics. Can someone just summarize the data for me?

Yes! Quill Engage is a service that will take your Google Analytics data and summarize it in an easy-to-read report for you. Best of all, it's free for up to ten profiles (websites).

kikolani.com Report for the Month of May

Sessions	Pageviews	Avg Time On Site
- 2%	- 4%	- 1%

Sessions Hit Record Low For The Last 12 Months

Your site's sessions dropped by 2% from the previous month to 11,098 sessions, the lowest number of sessions over the past year. A decrease in sessions from organic search drove the drop in traffic, falling 13% to 4,734 sessions.
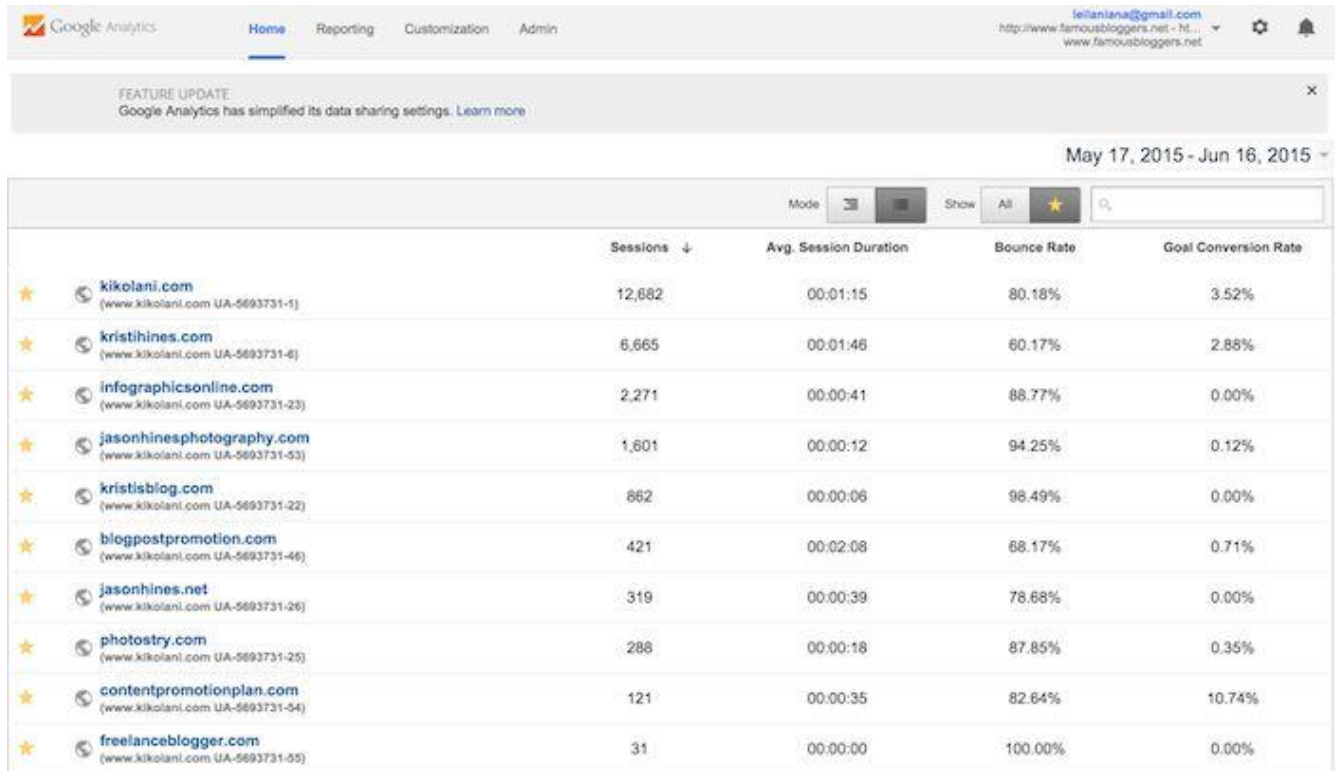
- Last month, (not set) had more pageviews and a higher bounce rate than any of your other pages (676 and 98%, respectively).

- Your site saw the percentage of total pageviews from your top ten pages rise to 28% from the month of April. Specifically, pageviews for Kikolani - Blog Marketing and Blogging Tips by Kristi Hines (your top page by pageviews) climbed 4% in pageviews to 3,850.

- Your site had fewer total pageviews last month, down 4% to 16,695. Not surprisingly, your pages per session were also down 3% to 1.5, which is better than your monthly average of 1.5 for the year.

Sessions Lowest In 13 Months
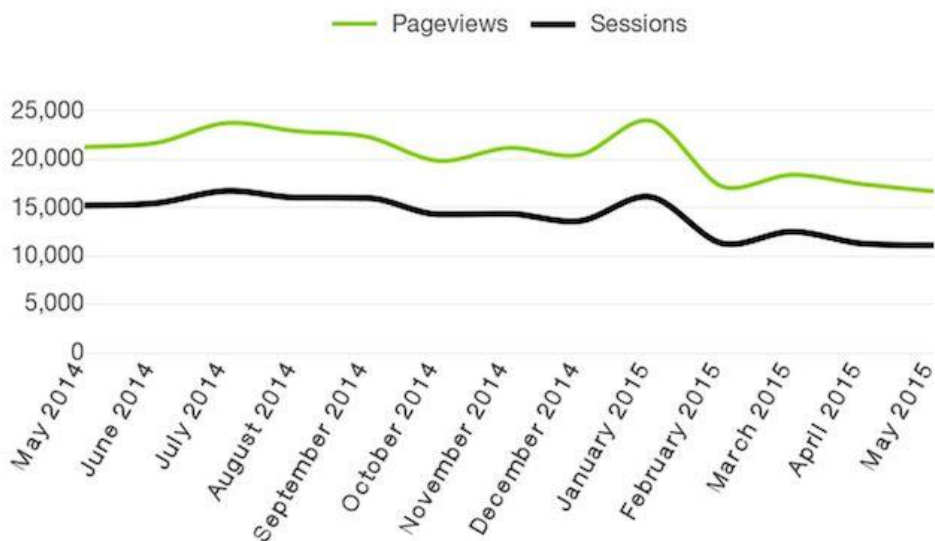
<u>I have a dozen websites, and I don't want to check each of their Google Analytics on a daily basis. What do I do?</u>

You have two options in this scenario. You start by going to the Home screen of Google Analytics. There, you will find a listing of all your websites and an overview of the top metrics—sessions, average session duration, bounce rate, and conversion rate.

You can also try business dashboard solutions like Cyfe. For $19 a month, you can create unlimited dashboards with unlimited widgets, including a large selection of data from Google Analytics, alongside data from your social media networks, keyword rankings, Moz stats, and more.

This solution significantly cuts down on the time spent looking at analytics across the board for your entire business.

Google Analytics says that 90%+ of my organic keywords are (not provided). Where can I find that information?

(not provided) is Google's way of protecting search engine user's privacy by hiding the keywords they use to discover your website in search results. Tools like Google Webmaster Tools[2] (free), Authority Lab's Now Provided Reports[3] (paid), and Hittail[4] (paid) can all help you uncover some of those keywords.

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[2] https://www.google.com/webmasters/tools/home
[3] https://authoritylabs.com/now-provided/
[4] https://www.hittail.com/
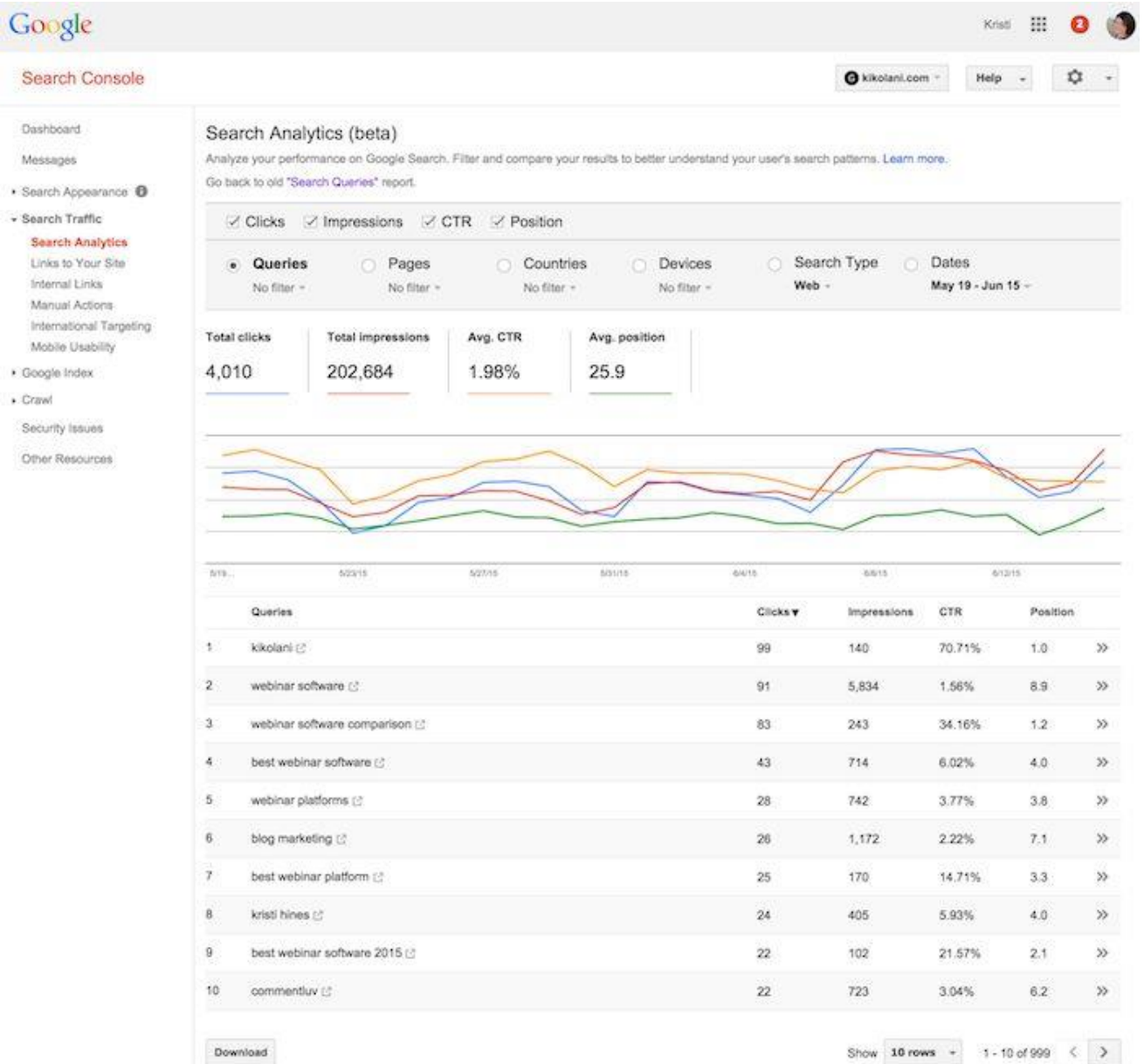
They won't be linked to your conversions or other Google Analytics data, but at least you will have some clue what keywords searchers are using to find your website.

How do I use Custom Reports, Dashboards, and Segments?

If you're ready to move to the next level in Google Analytics, Custom Reports, Dashboards, and Segments are the way to go. Custom Reports (under the Customization menu at the top) allow you to create reports that look similar to the standard Google Analytics reports with the metrics you want to view.
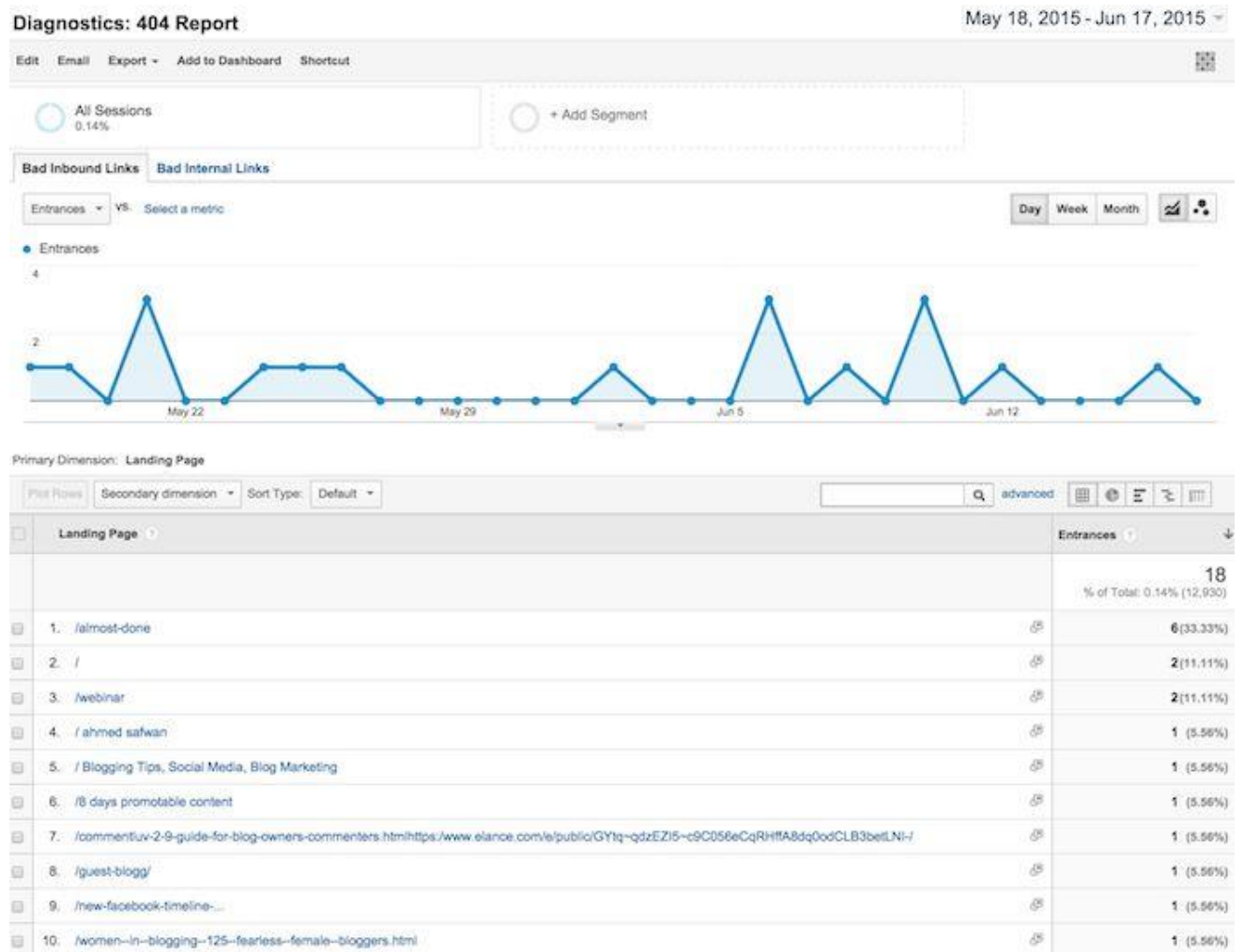
Dashboards allow you to view your Google Analytics data in a dashboard format. You can access them at the top of the left sidebar.

Segments allow you to view all of your Google Analytics data based on a specific dimension, such as all of your Google Analytics data based on visitors from the United States. You can also use them to compare up to four segments of data, such as United States versus United Kingdom traffic, search versus social traffic, mobile versus desktop traffic, and more. You can access Segments in each of your reports.

Email   Export ▾   Add to Dashboard   Shortcut

○ US Visitors   ○ UK Visitors   ○ Choose segment from list

+ NEW SEGMENT   Import from gallery   Share segments   View ▤ ▦   🔍 Search segments   ⊘

	Segment Name	Created	Modified	
VIEW SEGMENTS	☐ ☆ Tablet Traffic			Actions ▾
All	☐ ☆ Thesis vs Genesis	Nov 30, 2011	Oct 10, 2013	Actions ▾
System	☐ ☆ Top Keywords	Oct 10, 2013	Oct 10, 2013	Actions ▾
Custom	☐ ☆ Twitter	Oct 10, 2013	Oct 10, 2013	Actions ▾
Shared	☐ ☆ Twitter Traffic	Nov 27, 2014	Nov 27, 2014	Actions ▾
Starred	☑ ☆ **UK Visitors**	Jan 20, 2013	Oct 10, 2013	Actions ▾
Selected	☑ ☆ **US Visitors**	Oct 10, 2013	Oct 10, 2013	Actions ▾
	☐ ☆ Video Marketing	Nov 21, 2011	Oct 10, 2013	Actions ▾
	☐ ☆ VWO Review	Feb 2, 2015	Feb 2, 2015	Actions ▾

Apply   Cancel

Overview

Sessions ▾ VS. Select a metric   Hourly | Day | Week | Month

● Sessions (US Visitors)   ● Sessions (UK Visitors)

200

100

Monday, May 25, 2015
■ Sessions (US Visitors): 80
■ Sessions (UK Visitors): 18

May 22   May 29   Jun 5   Jun 12

Sessions	Users	Pageviews	Pages / Session	■ New Visitor ■ Returning Visitor
US Visitors	US Visitors	US Visitors	US Visitors	US Visitors UK Visitors
3,772	3,370	5,319	1.41	
UK Visitors	UK Visitors	UK Visitors	UK Visitors	
652	584	801	1.23	

US Visitors: 12.6% / 97.4%   UK Visitors: 11.8% / 88.2%

Avg. Session Duration   Bounce Rate   % New Sessions
US Visitors   US Visitors   US Visitors

The nice part about these is that you don't have to create them from scratch. You can start by using pre-defined Custom Reports, Dashboards, and Segments from the Google Solutions Gallery.

There, you will find lots of Custom Reports, Dashboards, Segments, and other solutions that you can import into your Google Analytics and edit to fit your needs. Edit Custom Reports with the Edit button at the top.

Edit Dashboards using the Add Widget or Customize Dashboard buttons at the top.
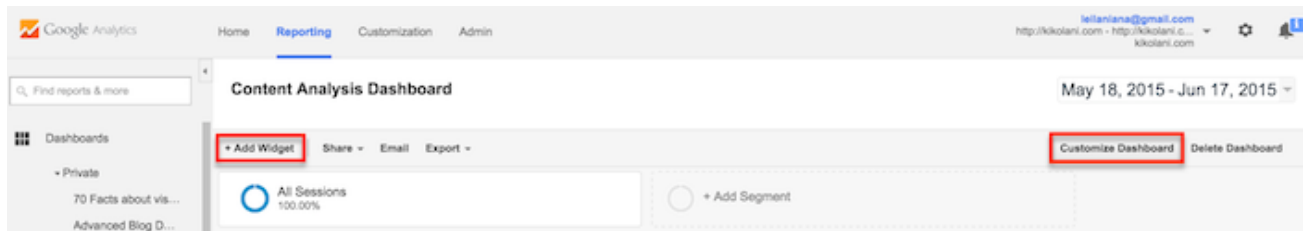
Edit Segments by clicking the Action button inside the Segments selector box and choosing Edit.
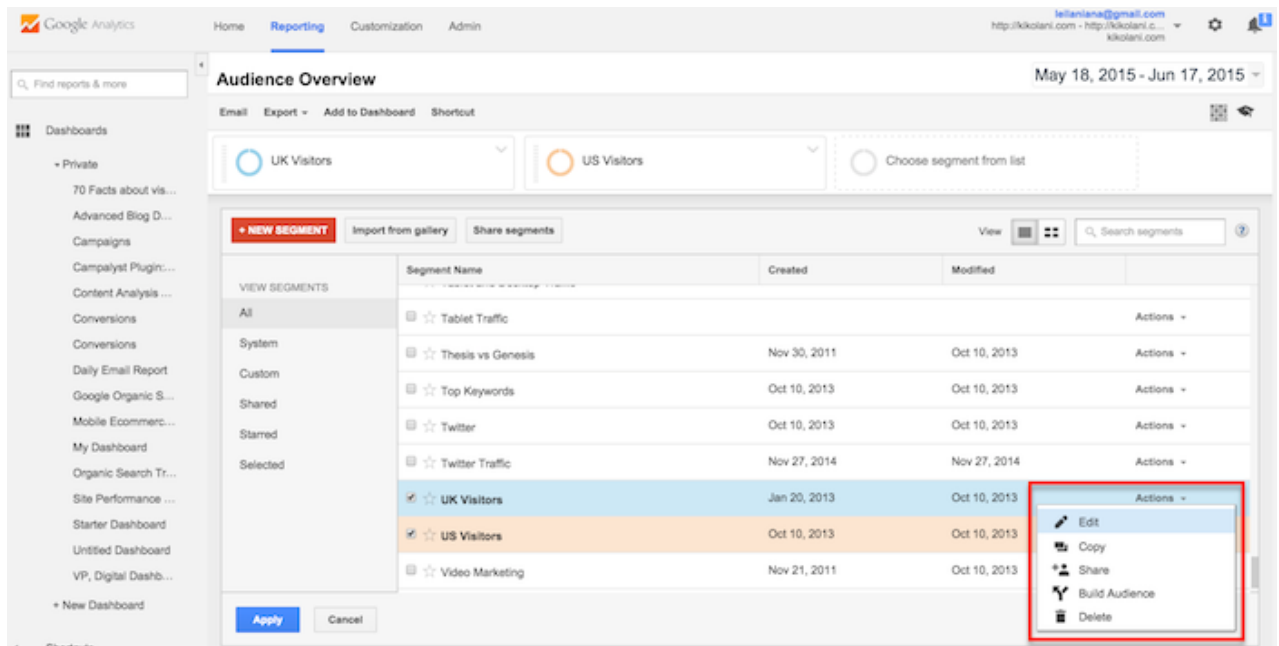
Or, when you have applied Segments to your reports, use the drop-down arrow at the top right to find the Edit option.
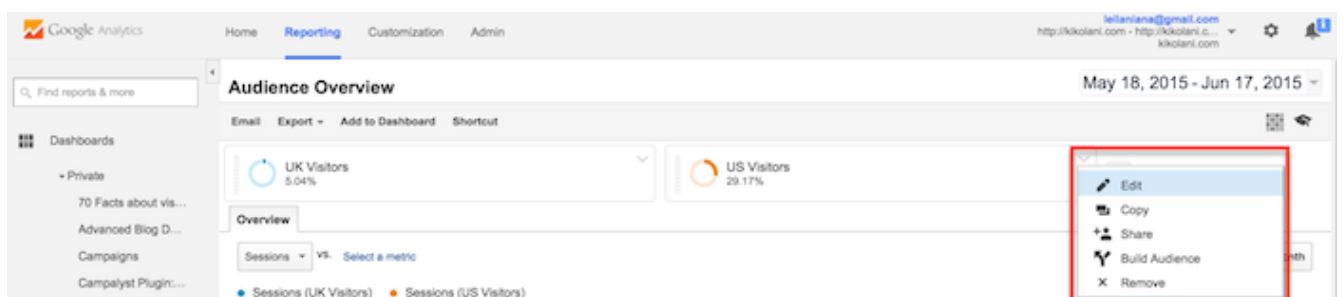
As you get used to editing Custom Reports, Dashboards, and Segments, you will get more familiar with the way each works so you can create new ones on your own.

TRACKING CAMPAIGNS IN GOOGLE ANALYTICS

(Source: https://www.shopify.com.sg/blog/14759449-how-to-track-your-marketing-campaigns-in-google-analytics)

Before you continue, you'll need to have Google Analytics set up and connected to your website. This is described in the article above.

Let's say you have several bloggers lined up to post sponsored reviews for your product launch. How could you track each of the campaigns to see which one was most effective, as well as which one was least effective?

This is important information that can help you decide if you should pay for further sponsored posts in the future. This is where link tracking, also known as UTM Parameters comes into play.

What Are UTM Parameters?

So what exactly are UTM Parameters? UTM is an acronym for Urchin Tracking Module and is the format Google uses to track URL's. The name Urchin itself comes from Google's early days (2004) when they acquired the company Urchin, which was later turned into Google Analytics.

UTM Parameters are simply small pieces of information that can be added to the end of any URL that gives Google more information about that particular link.

You've likely seen them before. A link with a simple UTM Parameter might look something like this:

http://www.website.com/**?utm_source=emailcampaign**

The part after the question mark is a UTM Parameter. When someone clicks on that link, Google Analytics for that particular website will read and record that parameter information.

The UTM Parameters

There are five UTM parameters that can be used for tracking various pieces of information in Google Analytics, three are required and two that are optional. Let's look at each one to understand more:

Required Parameters

- **Campaign Source (utm_source)** – This is generally used to describe the website or main source in which the link will be placed. For example, for example the name of the website displaying your ads or if you're using the link in an email newsletter, you may use "newsletter".

- **Campaign Medium (utm_medium)** – Medium is used to describe the marketing activity. For example, you may want to call this "ppc" if you're using this for a pay-per-click campaign or "review" if you're using the link to track traffic from a product review on a blogger's site.
- **Campaign Name (utm_campaign)** – Campaign refers to the overall campaign you're running. For example, it could refer to a product launch, a summer campaign or a particular sale.

Optional Parameters

- **Campaign Term (utm_term)** – Campaign Term is used for tracking particular keywords if you're running an Adwords campaign.
- **Campaign Content (utm_content)** – This parameter is helpful if you're split testing ads. In this case you could track each ad to see which was most effective for driving traffic.

Building Your Own Trackable URLs

All you have to do to track campaigns automatically is use Google's Campaign URL Builder tool to create a trackable URL. This tool makes it really easy to build your URL's with all the relevant information. All you have to do is enter the URL you want to track, along with the parameters to track.

Step 1: Enter the URL of your website.

Website URL *

[   ]

(e.g. http://www.urchin.com/download.html)

Step 2: Fill in the fields below. **Campaign Source, Campaign Medium** and **Campaign Name** should always be used.

Campaign Source *

[   ]

(referrer: google, citysearch, newsletter4)

Campaign Medium *

[   ]

(marketing medium: cpc, banner, email)

Campaign Term

[   ]

(identify the paid keywords)

Campaign Content

[   ]

(use to differentiate ads)

Campaign Name *

[   ]

(product, promo code, or slogan)

[**Submit**]   * Required field

Once you click submit, Google will give you your trackable URL. It will look something like this:

www.yoursite.com/?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=2014 %20summer%20sale

Once you have the URL, you can copy it and use it for your marketing campaigns to begin tracking.

Best Practices Creating Trackable URL's

Since the reports for the links are your own, there's really no wrong way to create your tracked URL's, however, there are are few suggestions that will help:

- Consider a standard naming convention upfront. Because each URL's will have multiple parameters, things can get messy and difficult to read later unless you adopt a similar style upfront for naming everything.
- Keep in mind that anyone clicking on the link will be able to see the parameters names so don't write anything you wouldn't want your customers to see.
- Parameters should all be written in lowercase letters.
- Because the URL's tend to be long, you can always consider using a link shortener service like bit.ly to make them shorter.
- Only create parameters that are necessary.

Viewing Your Campaign Reports

The URL's you create will automatically be tracked by Google Analytics as they're clicked on throughout the web. Google (and other analytics software) will record all the parameters from each link and present it to you in a handy report.

Keep in mind that sometimes it can take up to 24 hours for Google to receive and record data, so if you don't see clicks showing up right away, just be patient.

To view the information on how your campaigns are preforming, login to your Google Analytics account and on the left hand menu, click on **Acquisition** reports:
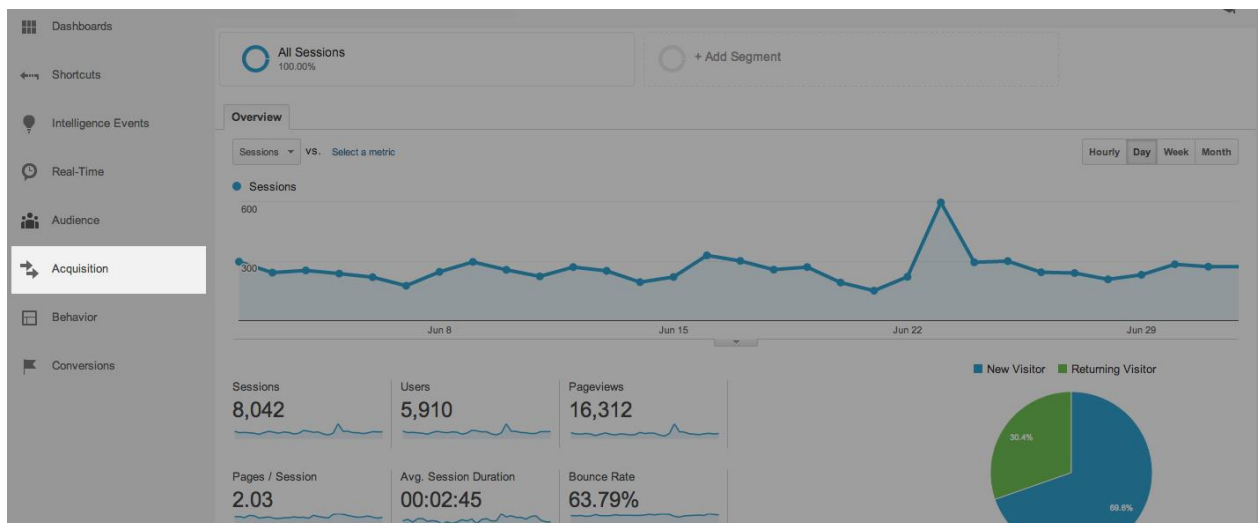
Then click on **Campaigns:**
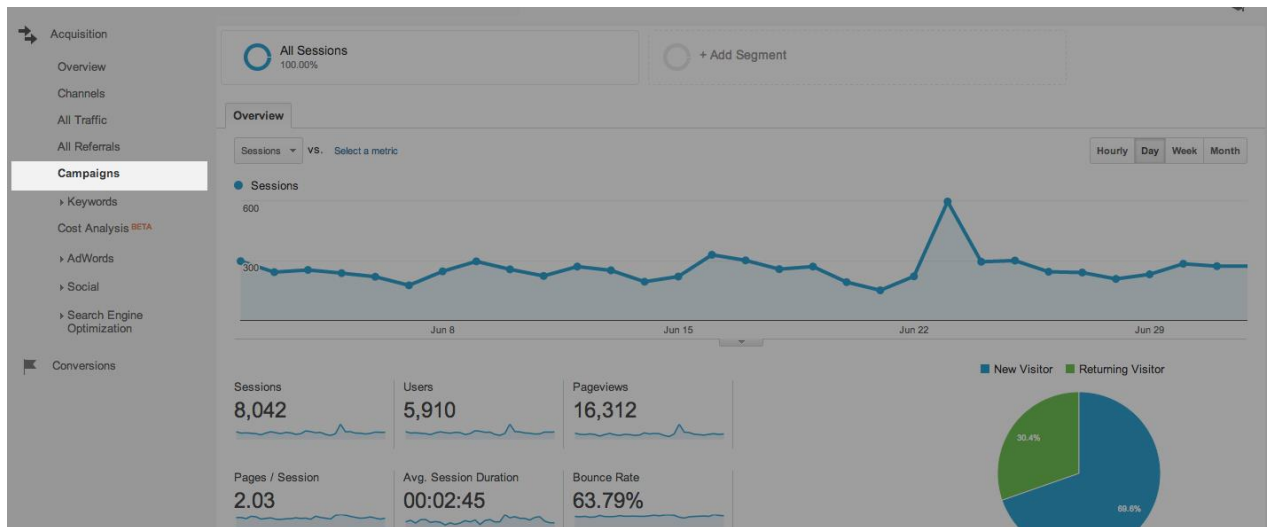
In this report, you'll have a list of all of the campaigns you've tracked. You can click on each campaign to view more information on traffic as well as information on any sales resulting from each campaign, provided you have ecommerce tracking turned on in Google Analytics.

As with any traffic source, you can view the metrics most important to you including sales, goals, bounce rate, page views etc., to determine which elements are the most effective for your campaigns.

Note: Campaigns will only show up in your Google Analytics Campaign reports if the links are clicked on.

When Should You Use UTM Parameters?

UTM Parameters are an easy way to track performance of a wide variety of online marketing initiatives. Some marketing activities you may want to track include:

- **Guest Blog Posts** - You keep hearing that content is king and that you should be guest blogging on other websites within your niche. But how effective are your guest

blog posts? Try using a trackable URL in your next guest blog post to find out exactly how much traffic and sales your posts are driving.

- **Social** - You spend countless hours building your Facebook fan page and Twitter account, but how many people are clicking on the link in your profile to check out your store? Furthermore, are those people buying from you? A trackable link in your social profiles can help you uncover the true return-on-investment of all your hard work.
- **Email** - It takes time to come up with great campaigns and crafting the perfect email to send out to your customers. Advanced email marketing programs can help you track sales from your emails but using a trackable URL in your emails is a quick and easy way to know which emails are working and which aren't.
- **Features** - One of the best ways to get lots of traffic and sales is by getting featured by bloggers, Instagrammers, media publications and YouTubers with a large following. Make sure to give them a trackable URL to discover exactly who drives the most qualified traffic to your store.
- **Banner Ads** - Using a trackable URL for banner ads will not only help you understand the effectiveness of your campaign but also will allow you to easily track the success of each variation of banner to see which one performs the best.

Besides the above examples, you can really use link tracking anywhere you can share a link and want to know more about who's clicking on it.