



Google Analytics.

Compiled by Michael Keogh.

The Absolute Beginner's 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 post 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. In this post, we're going to look at Google Analytics from the absolute beginner's point of view. Why you need it, how to get it, how to use it, and workarounds to common problems.

Why every website owner needs Google Analytics

Do you have a blog? Do you have a static website? If the answer is yes, whether they are for personal or business use, then you need Google Analytics. Here are just a few 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?
- Do I need a mobile-friendly website?
- 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

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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 your 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.


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.

testtubebusiness@gmail.com


Start analyzing your site's traffic in 3 steps

1 Sign up for Google Analytics




All we need is some basic info about what site you'd like to monitor.

2 Add tracking code



You'll get a tracking code to paste onto your pages so Google knows when your site is visited.

3 Learn about your audience

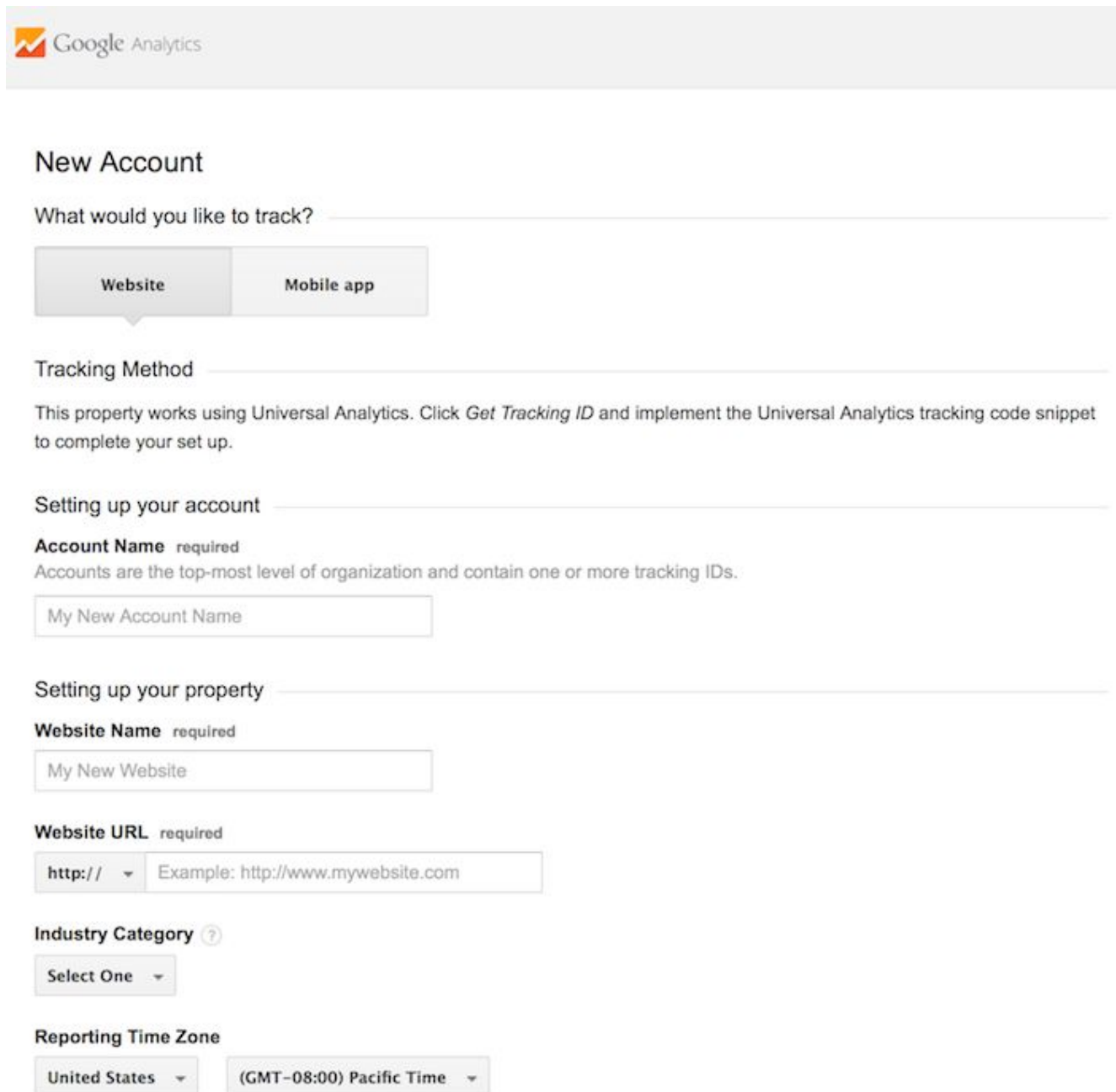


In a few hours you'll be able to start seeing data about your site.

Start using Google Analytics
[Sign up](#)
Sign up now, it's easy and free!
Still have questions? [Help Center](#)

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After you click the Sign Up button, you will fill out information for your website.



The screenshot shows the Google Analytics 'New Account' setup page. At the top is the Google Analytics logo. Below it is the heading 'New Account'. The first step is 'What would you like to track?' with a text input field and two buttons: 'Website' (selected) and 'Mobile app'. The second step is 'Tracking Method' with a text input field and a paragraph explaining that the property works using Universal Analytics and provides a link to 'Get Tracking ID'. The third step is 'Setting up your account' with a text input field for 'Account Name' and a paragraph explaining that accounts are the top-most level of organization. The fourth step is 'Setting up your property' with three text input fields: 'Website Name', 'Website URL' (with a dropdown for 'http://' and an example), and 'Industry Category' (with a dropdown for 'Select One' and a help icon). The fifth step is 'Reporting Time Zone' with two dropdown menus: 'United States' and '(GMT-08:00) Pacific Time'.

Google Analytics

New Account

What would you like to track?

Website Mobile app

Tracking Method

This property works using Universal Analytics. Click *Get Tracking ID* and implement the Universal Analytics tracking code snippet to complete your set up.

Setting up your account

Account Name required
Accounts are the top-most level of organization and contain one or more tracking IDs.

Setting up your property

Website Name required

Website URL required

Industry Category [?](#)

Reporting Time Zone

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.

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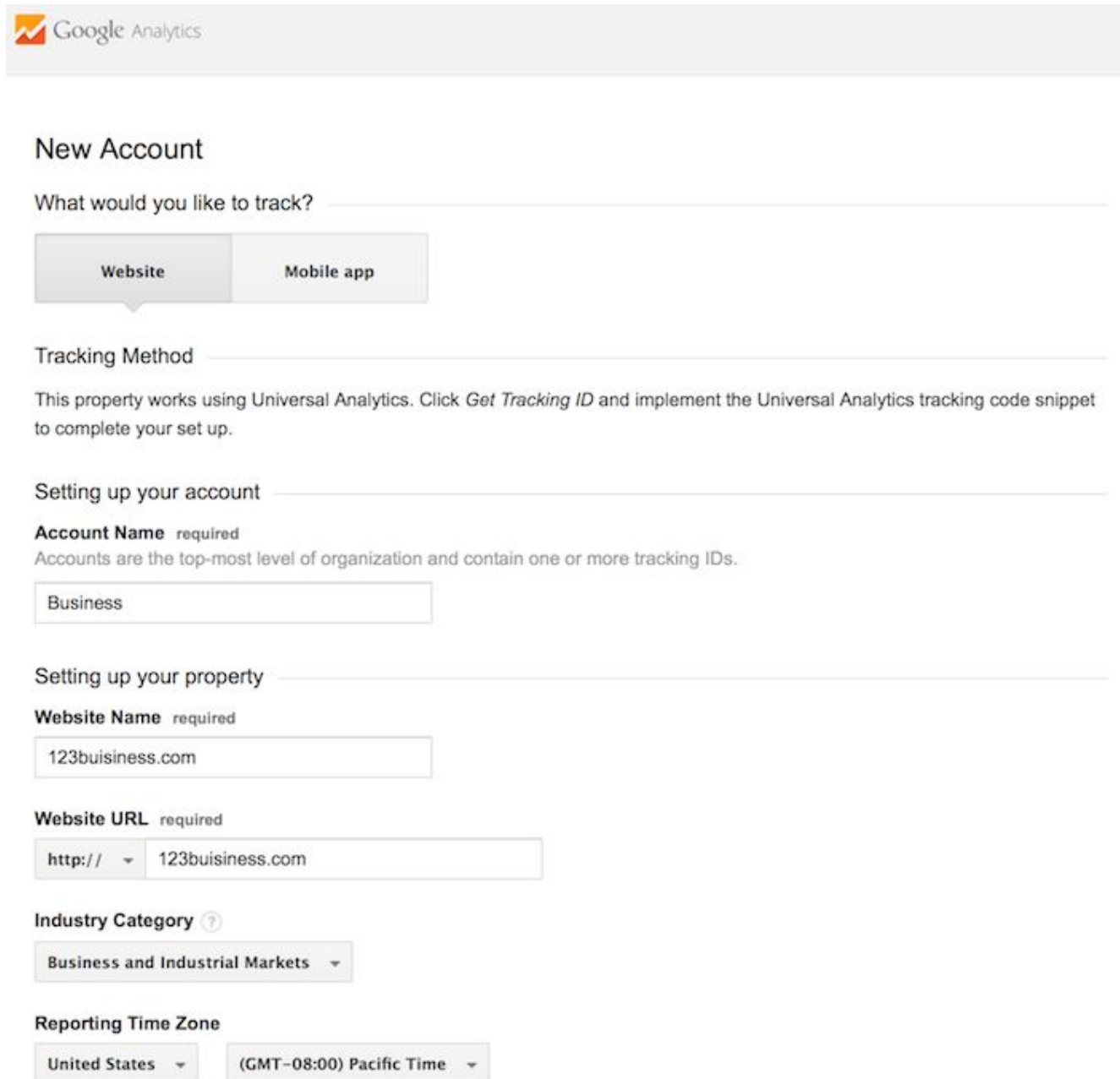
Here are a few scenarios.

- 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.

There are no right or wrong ways to set up your Google Analytics account—it's just a matter of how you want to organize your sites. 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, we're going to assume you have one website and only need one view (the default, all data view). The setup would look something like this.

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The screenshot shows the 'New Account' setup page for Google Analytics. At the top is the Google Analytics logo. Below it is the heading 'New Account'. The first step is 'What would you like to track?', with two buttons: 'Website' (selected) and 'Mobile app'. The second step is 'Tracking Method', with a note that the property works using Universal Analytics and a link to 'Get Tracking ID'. The third step is 'Setting up your account', with a required 'Account Name' field containing 'Business' and a note that accounts are the top-most level of organization. The fourth step is 'Setting up your property', with three required fields: 'Website Name' (123business.com), 'Website URL' (http:// 123business.com), and 'Industry Category' (Business and Industrial Markets). The final step is 'Reporting Time Zone', with two dropdowns: 'United States' and '(GMT-08:00) Pacific Time'.

Google Analytics

New Account

What would you like to track?

Website Mobile app

Tracking Method

This property works using Universal Analytics. Click *Get Tracking ID* and implement the Universal Analytics tracking code snippet to complete your set up.

Setting up your account

Account Name required
Accounts are the top-most level of organization and contain one or more tracking IDs.

Business

Setting up your property

Website Name required
123business.com

Website URL required
http:// 123business.com

Industry Category ?
Business and Industrial Markets

Reporting Time Zone
United States (GMT-08:00) Pacific Time

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

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Reporting Time Zone

United States ▾

(GMT-08:00) Pacific Time ▾

Data Sharing Settings [?](#)

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.

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The screenshot shows the Google Analytics Admin interface for the property '123business.com'. The left sidebar contains a menu with the following items: 'Property Settings', 'User Management', 'Tracking Info' (selected), 'Data Collection', 'User-ID', 'Session Settings', 'Organic Search Sources', 'Referral Exclusion List', 'Search Term Exclusion List', 'Product Linking', 'AdWords Linking', 'AdSense Linking', 'All Products', 'Remarketing', 'Custom Definitions', 'Data Import', and 'Social Settings'. The main content area displays the 'Tracking ID' as 'UA-64248213-1' and the 'Website tracking' section. A red box highlights the tracking code snippet, which is as follows:

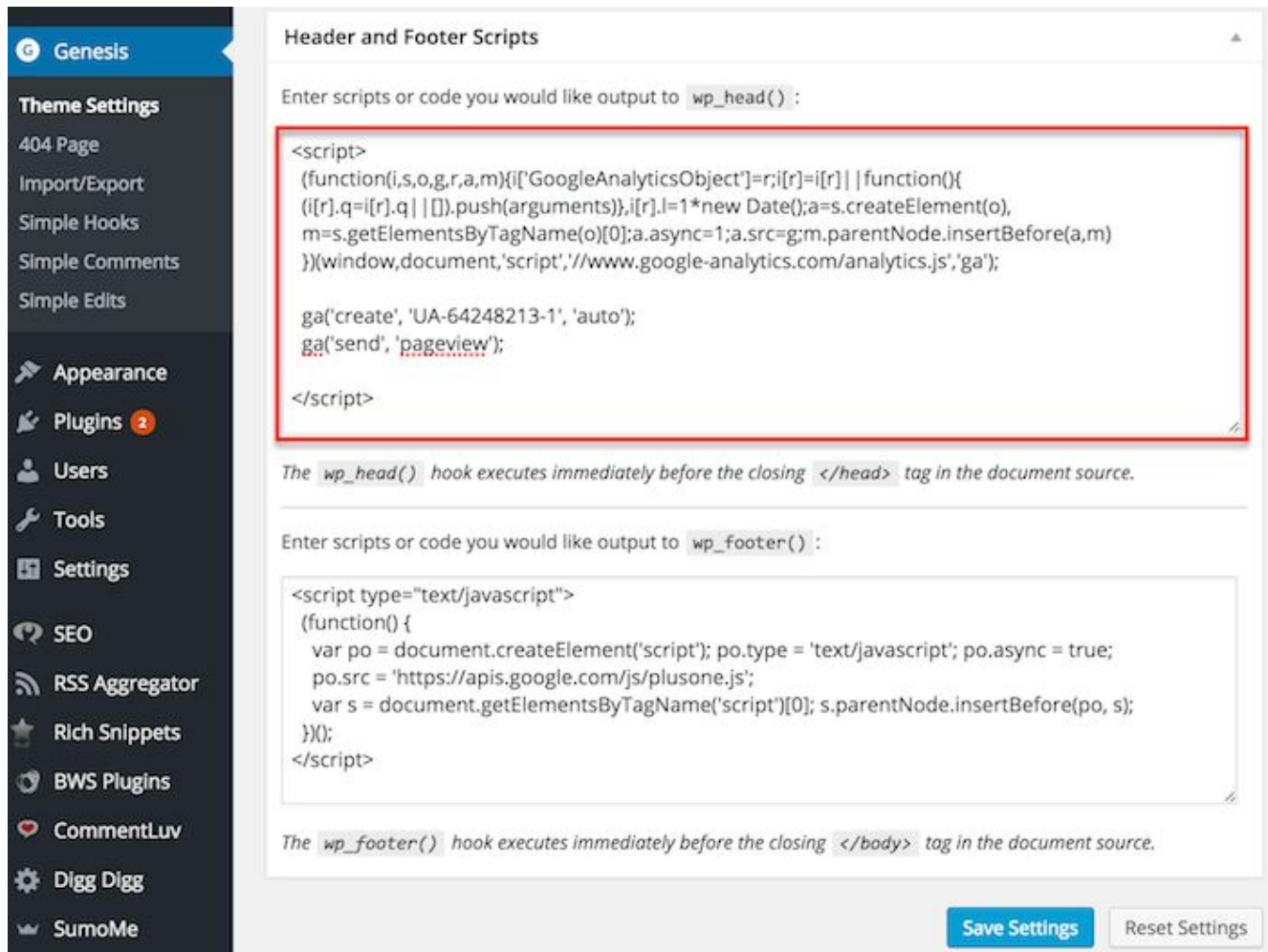
```
<script>
(function(i,s,o,g,r,a,m){i['GoogleAnalyticsObject']=r;i[r]=i[r]||function(){
  (i[r].q=i[r].q||[]).push(arguments)},i[r].l=1*new Date();a=s.createElement(o),
  m=s.getElementsByTagName(o)[0];a.async=1;a.src=g;m.parentNode.insertBefore(a,m)
})(window,document,'script','//www.google-analytics.com/analytics.js','ga');

ga('create', 'UA-64248213-1', 'auto');
ga('send', 'pageview');

</script>
```

This must be installed on every page on your website. The installation will depend on what type of website you have. For example, I have a WordPress website on my own domain using the Genesis Framework. This framework has a specific area to add header and footer scripts to my website.

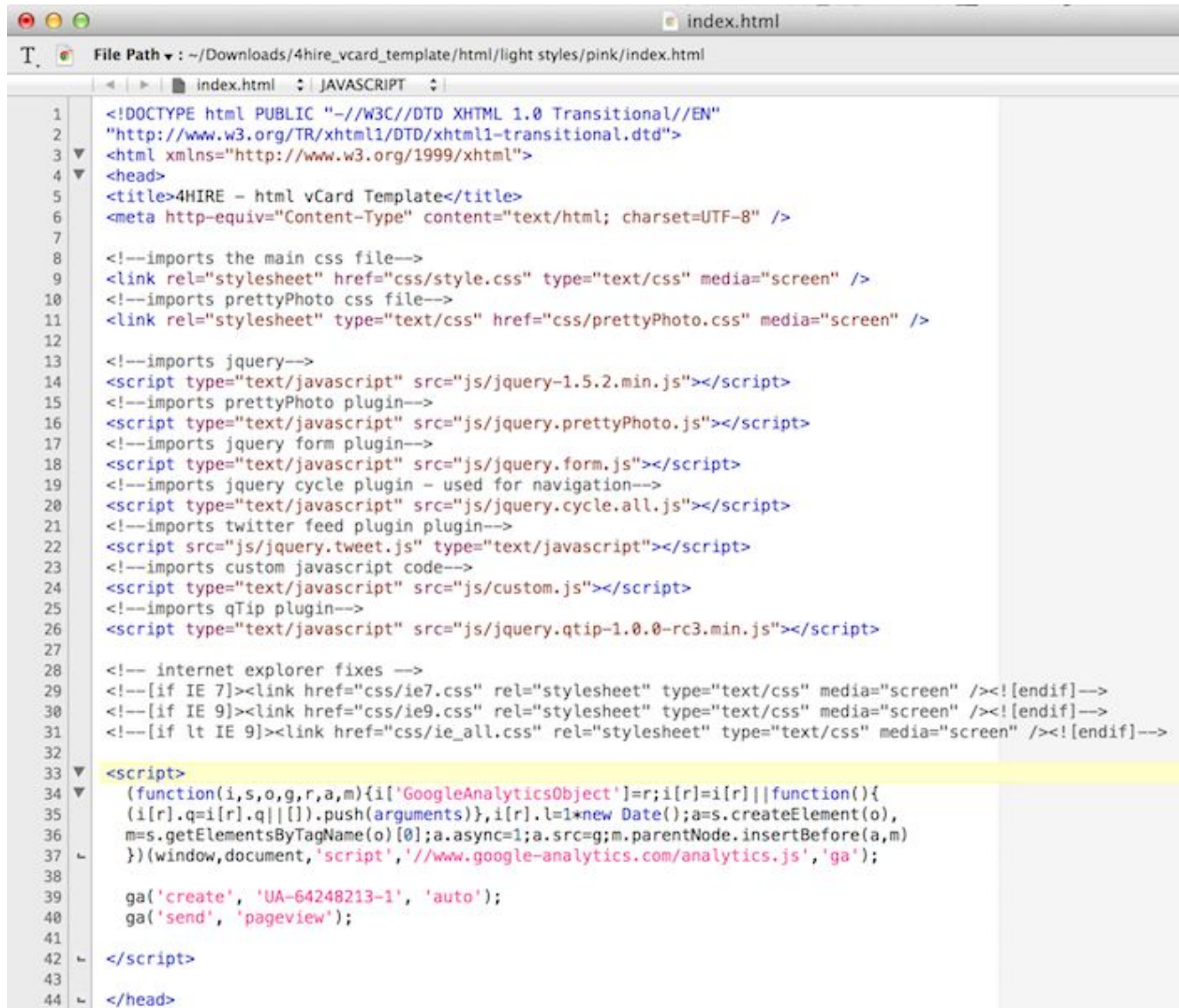
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Alternatively, if you have a WordPress on your own domain, you can use the [Google Analytics by Yoast plugin](#) to install your code easily no matter what theme or framework you are using.

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](#)).

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```
1 <!DOCTYPE html PUBLIC "-//W3C//DTD XHTML 1.0 Transitional//EN"
2 "http://www.w3.org/TR/xhtml1/DTD/xhtml1-transitional.dtd">
3 <html xmlns="http://www.w3.org/1999/xhtml">
4 <head>
5 <title>4HIRE - html vCard Template</title>
6 <meta http-equiv="Content-Type" content="text/html; charset=UTF-8" />
7
8 <!--imports the main css file-->
9 <link rel="stylesheet" href="css/style.css" type="text/css" media="screen" />
10 <!--imports prettyPhoto css file-->
11 <link rel="stylesheet" type="text/css" href="css/prettyPhoto.css" media="screen" />
12
13 <!--imports jquery-->
14 <script type="text/javascript" src="js/jquery-1.5.2.min.js"></script>
15 <!--imports prettyPhoto plugin-->
16 <script type="text/javascript" src="js/jquery.prettyPhoto.js"></script>
17 <!--imports jquery form plugin-->
18 <script type="text/javascript" src="js/jquery.form.js"></script>
19 <!--imports jquery cycle plugin - used for navigation-->
20 <script type="text/javascript" src="js/jquery.cycle.all.js"></script>
21 <!--imports twitter feed plugin plugin-->
22 <script src="js/jquery.tweet.js" type="text/javascript"></script>
23 <!--imports custom javascript code-->
24 <script type="text/javascript" src="js/custom.js"></script>
25 <!--imports qTip plugin-->
26 <script type="text/javascript" src="js/jquery.qtip-1.0.0-rc3.min.js"></script>
27
28 <!-- internet explorer fixes -->
29 <!--[if IE 7]><link href="css/ie7.css" rel="stylesheet" type="text/css" media="screen" /><![endif]-->
30 <!--[if IE 9]><link href="css/ie9.css" rel="stylesheet" type="text/css" media="screen" /><![endif]-->
31 <!--[if lt IE 9]><link href="css/ie_all.css" rel="stylesheet" type="text/css" media="screen" /><![endif]-->
32
33 <script>
34 (function(i,s,o,g,r,a,m){i['GoogleAnalyticsObject']=r;i[r]=i[r]||function(){
35 (i[r].q=i[r].q||[]).push(arguments)},i[r].l=1*new Date();a=s.createElement(o),
36 m=s.getElementsByTagName(o)[0];a.async=1;a.src=g;m.parentNode.insertBefore(a,m)
37 })(window,document,'script','//www.google-analytics.com/analytics.js','ga');
38
39 ga('create', 'UA-64248213-1', 'auto');
40 ga('send', 'pageview');
41
42 </script>
43
44 </head>
```

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

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SETTINGS

- General
- Payments
- Checkout
- Shipping
- Taxes
- Notifications
- Files
- Account
- Sales Channels
- Online Store**

Settings / Online Store Save

Store details

Edit your store information. The store name shows up on your storefront, while the title and meta description help define how your store shows up on search engines.

Homepage title 0 of 70 characters used

Homepage meta description 0 of 160 characters used

Enter a description to avoid ranking poorly on search engines like Google.

Google Analytics

Google Analytics enables you to track the visitors to your store, and generates reports that will help you with your marketing. [Learn more about Google Analytics.](#)

Google Analytics account ([how do I set this up?](#))

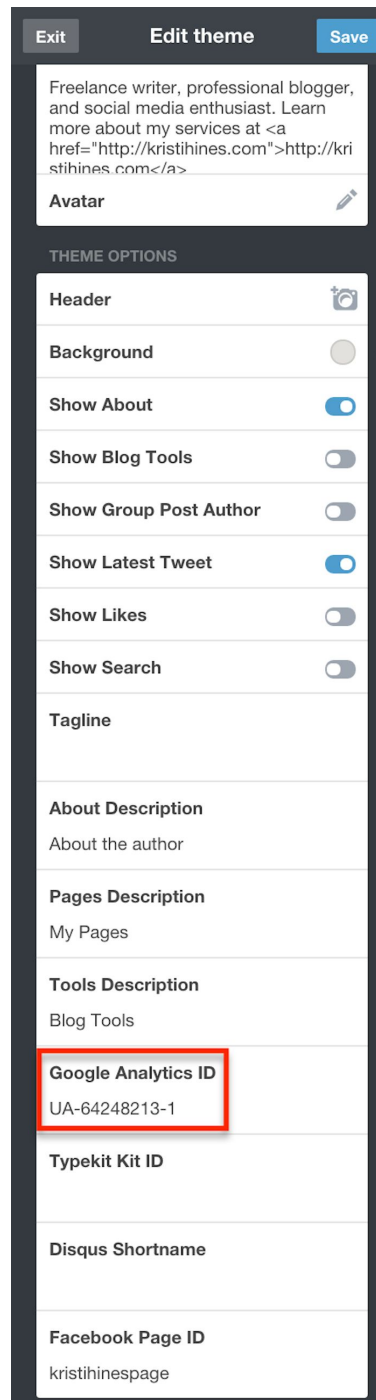
```
<script>
(function(i,s,o,g,r,a,m){i['GoogleAnalyticsObject']=r;i[r]=i[r]||function(){
  (i[r].q=i[r].q||[]).push(arguments)},i[r].l=1*new Date();a=s.createElement(o),
  m=s.getElementsByTagName(o)[0];a.async=1;a.src=g;m.parentNode.insertBefore(a,m)
})(window,document,'script','//www.google-analytics.com/analytics.js','ga');

ga('create', 'UA-64248213-1', 'auto');
ga('send', 'pageview');

</script>
```

If you have a blog on Tumblr, you will go to your blog, click the Edit Theme button at the top right of your blog, and then enter just the Google Analytics ID in your settings.

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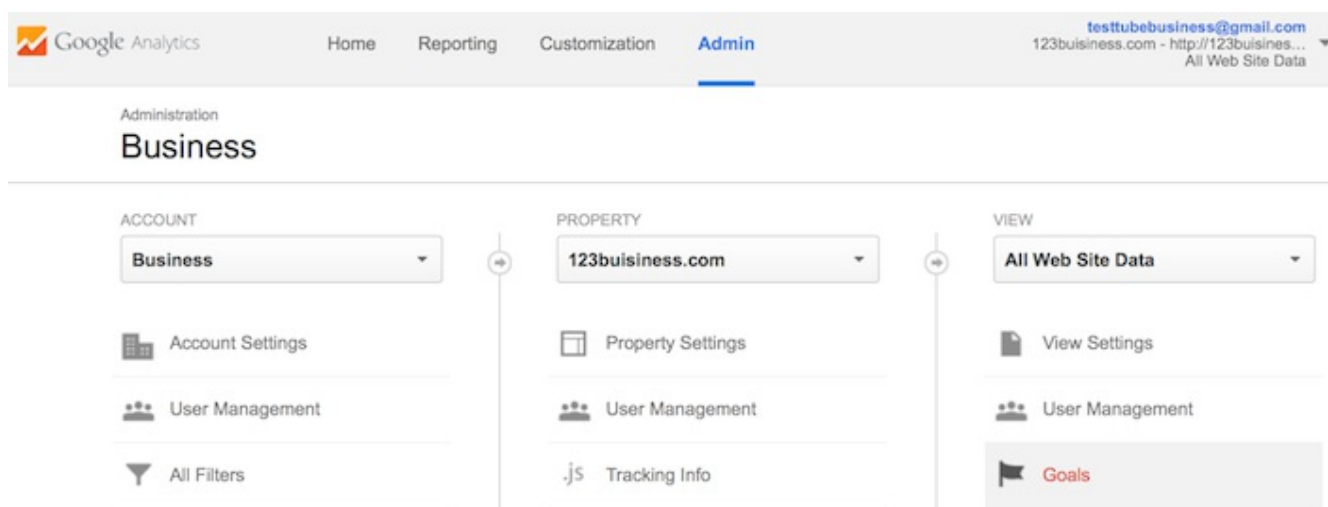


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As you can see, the installation of Google Analytics varies based on the platform you use (content management system, website builder, e-commerce software, etc.), the theme you use, and the plugins you use. You should be able to find easy instructions 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.



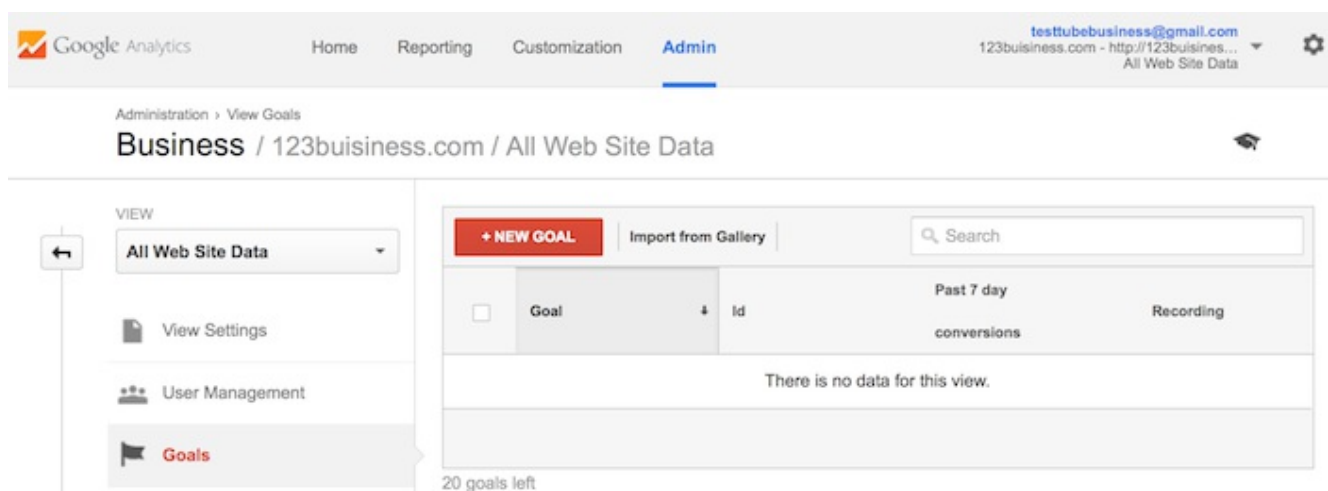
Goals will tell Google Analytics when something important has happened on your website. For example, if you have a website where you generate leads through a contact form, you will want to find (or create) a thank you page that visitors end upon once they have submitted their contact information. Or, 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.

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That URL will likely look something like this.

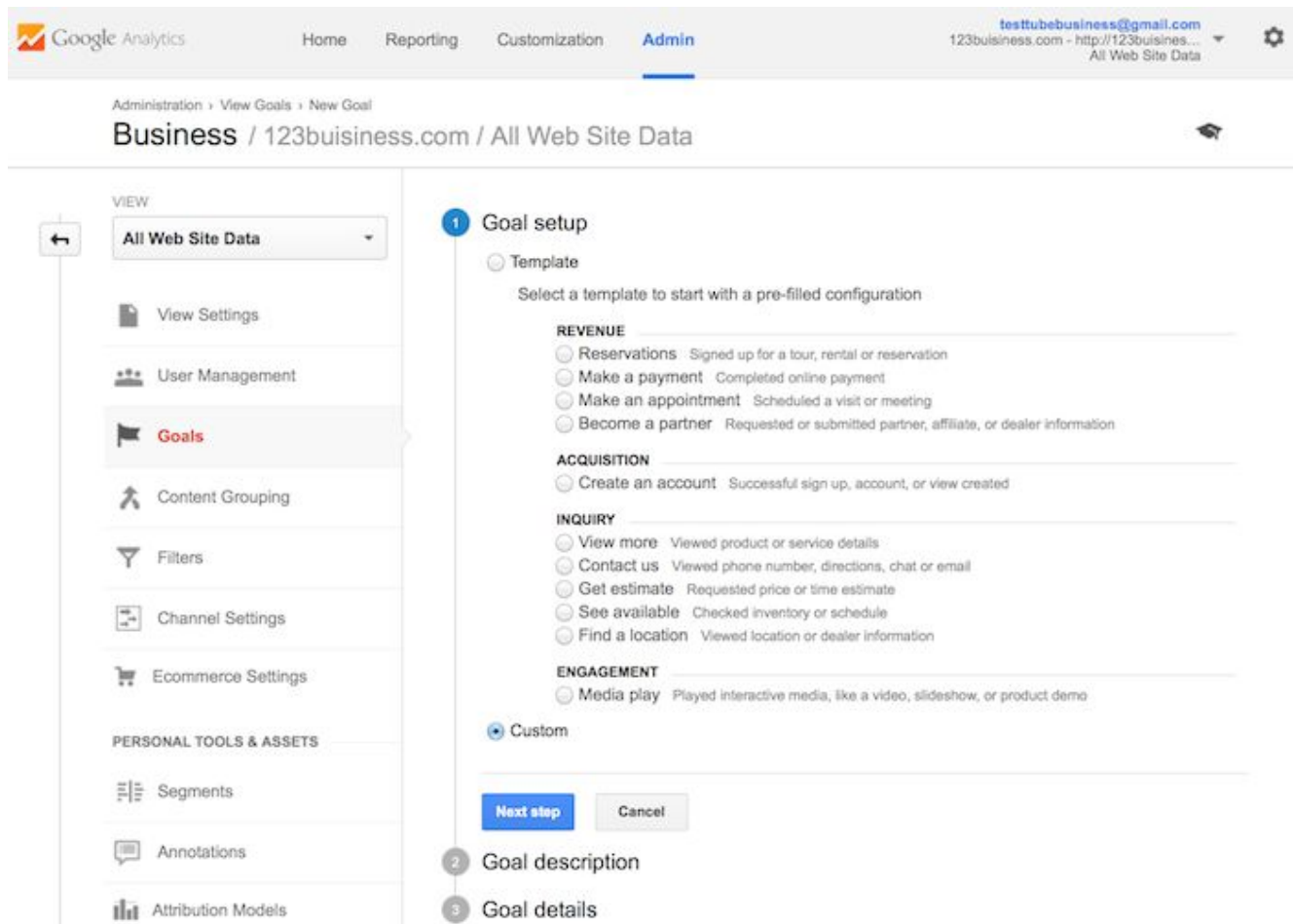
- <http://123business.com/thank-you>
- <http://123business.com/thank-you/>
- <http://123business.com/thank-you.html>

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.

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

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Google Analytics Home Reporting Customization Admin

testtubebusiness@gmail.com
123business.com - http://123business...
All Web Site Data

Administration > View Goals > New Goal

Business / 123business.com / All Web Site Data

VIEW

All Web Site Data

View Settings

User Management

Goals

Content Grouping

Filters

Channel Settings

Ecommerce Settings

PERSONAL TOOLS & ASSETS

Segments

Goal setup Edit

Custom

2 Goal description

Name

Lead Form Submissions

Goal slot ID

Goal ID 1 / Goal Set 1

Type

☒ Destination ex: thanks.html

☐ Duration ex: 5 minutes or more

☐ Pages/Screens per session ex: 3 pages

☐ Event ex: played a video

Next step Cancel

3 Goal details

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".

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Google Analytics Home Reporting Customization Admin

testtubebusiness@gmail.com
123business.com - http://123business...
All Web Site Data

Administration > View Goals > New Goal

Business / 123business.com / All Web Site Data

VIEW
All Web Site Data

View Settings
User Management
Goals
Content Grouping
Filters
Channel Settings
Ecommerce Settings

PERSONAL TOOLS & ASSETS
Segments
Annotations
Attribution Models

Goal setup Edit
Custom

Goal description Edit
Name: *Lead Form Submissions*
Goal type: *Destination*

3 Goal details

Destination
Begins with ☐ Case sensitive
For example, use *My Screen* for an app and */thankyou.html* instead of *www.example.com/thankyou.html* for a web page.

Value **OPTIONAL**
 Assign a monetary value to the conversion.

Funnel **OPTIONAL**
 Specify a path you expect traffic to take towards the destination. Use it to analyze the entrance and exit points that impact your Goal.

Verify this Goal See how often this Goal would have converted based on your data from the past 7 days.

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](#).

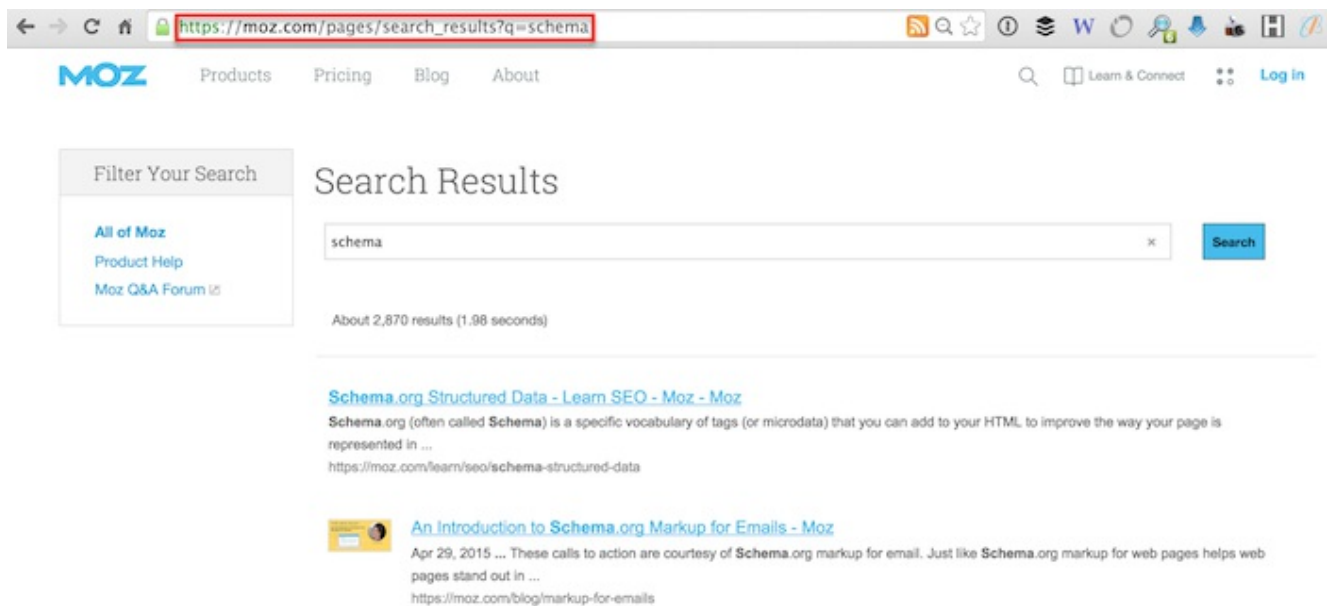
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Set up site search

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, like the search box at the top of the Moz Blog.

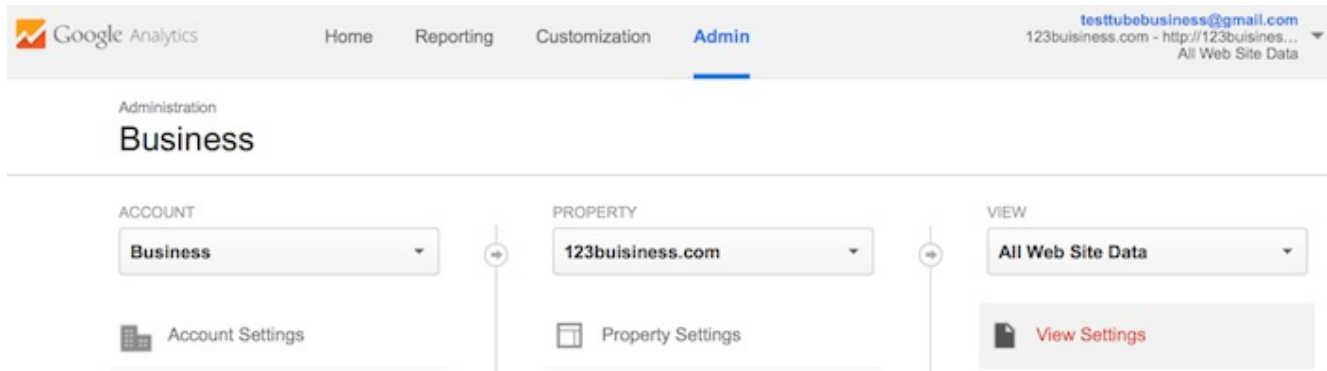


First, run a search on your website. Then keep the tab open. You will need the URL momentarily.

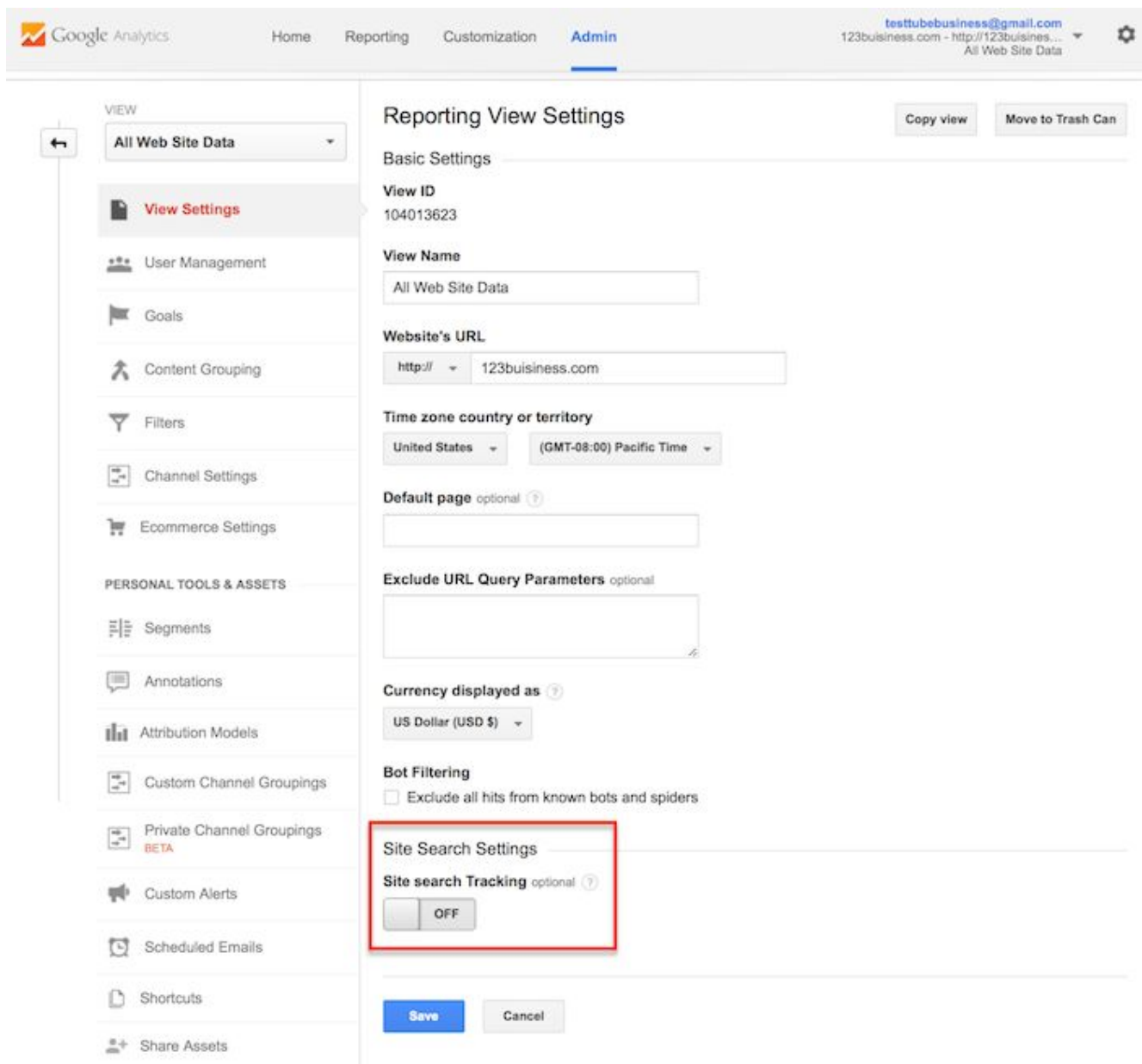


Go to your Google Analytics Admin menu again, and in the View column, click on View Settings.

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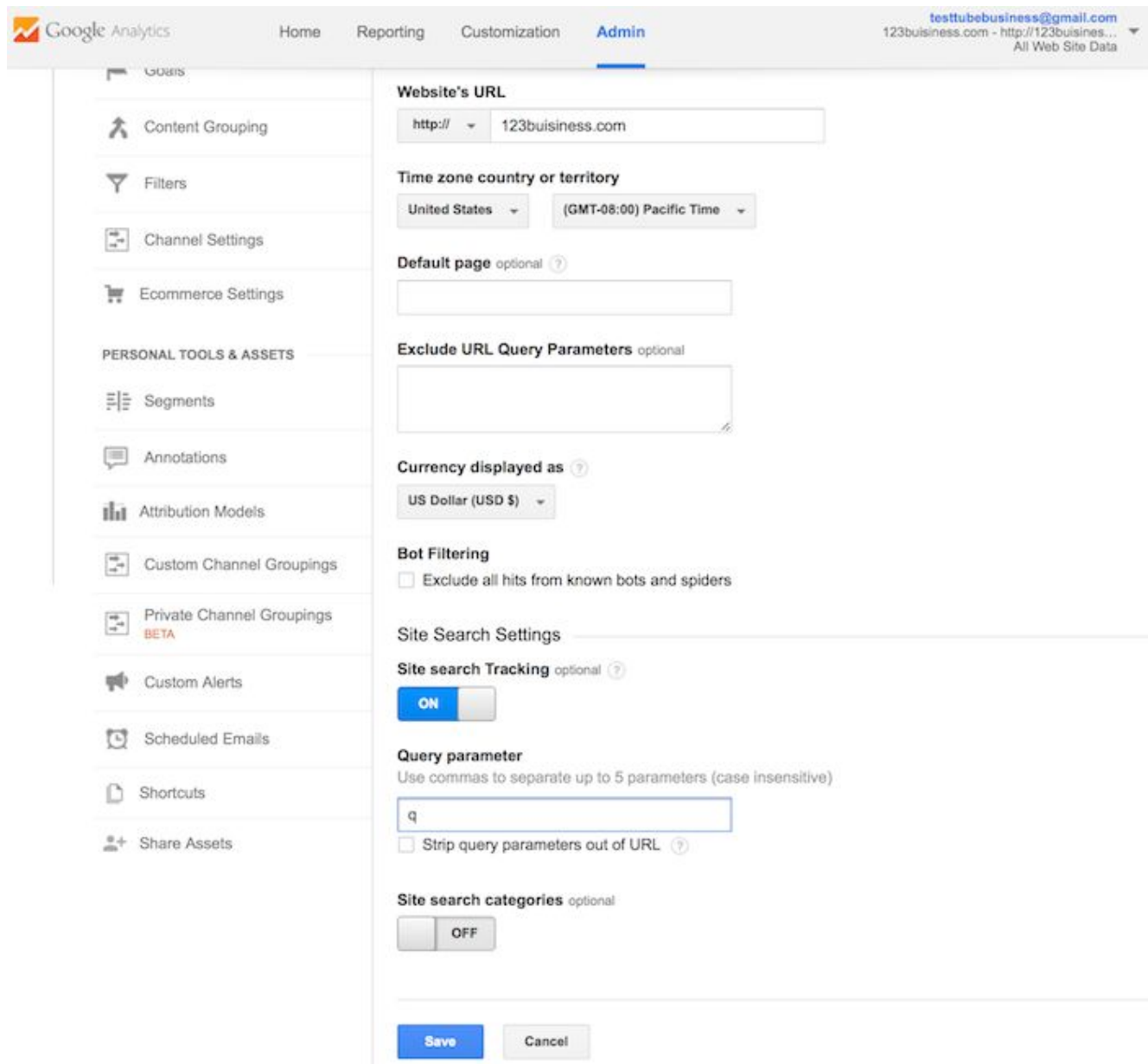


Scroll down until you see Site Settings and toggle it to On.



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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.



The screenshot shows the Google Analytics Admin interface. On the left is a sidebar with navigation options: Goals, Content Grouping, Filters, Channel Settings, Ecommerce Settings, PERSONAL TOOLS & ASSETS, Segments, Annotations, Attribution Models, Custom Channel Groupings, Private Channel Groupings (BETA), Custom Alerts, Scheduled Emails, Shortcuts, and Share Assets. The main content area is titled 'Admin' and contains the following settings:

- Website's URL:** A dropdown menu set to 'http://' and a text field containing '123business.com'.
- Time zone country or territory:** A dropdown menu set to 'United States' and a dropdown menu set to '(GMT-08:00) Pacific Time'.
- Default page:** A text field with a placeholder and a help icon.
- Exclude URL Query Parameters:** A text field with a placeholder and a help icon.
- Currency displayed as:** A dropdown menu set to 'US Dollar (USD \$)'.
- Bot Filtering:** A checkbox labeled 'Exclude all hits from known bots and spiders' which is currently unchecked.
- Site Search Settings:**
 - Site search Tracking:** A toggle switch set to 'ON'.
 - Query parameter:** A text field containing 'q'. Below it is a note: 'Use commas to separate up to 5 parameters (case insensitive)'.
 - Strip query parameters out of URL:** A checkbox which is currently unchecked.
 - Site search categories:** A toggle switch set to 'OFF'.

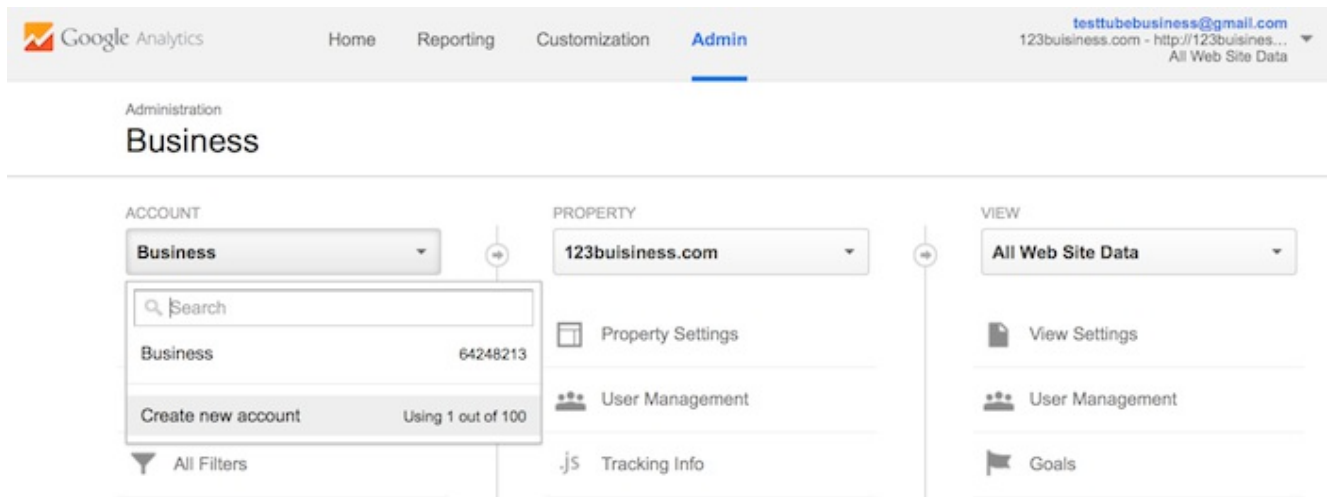
At the bottom of the settings area are two buttons: 'Save' and 'Cancel'.

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.

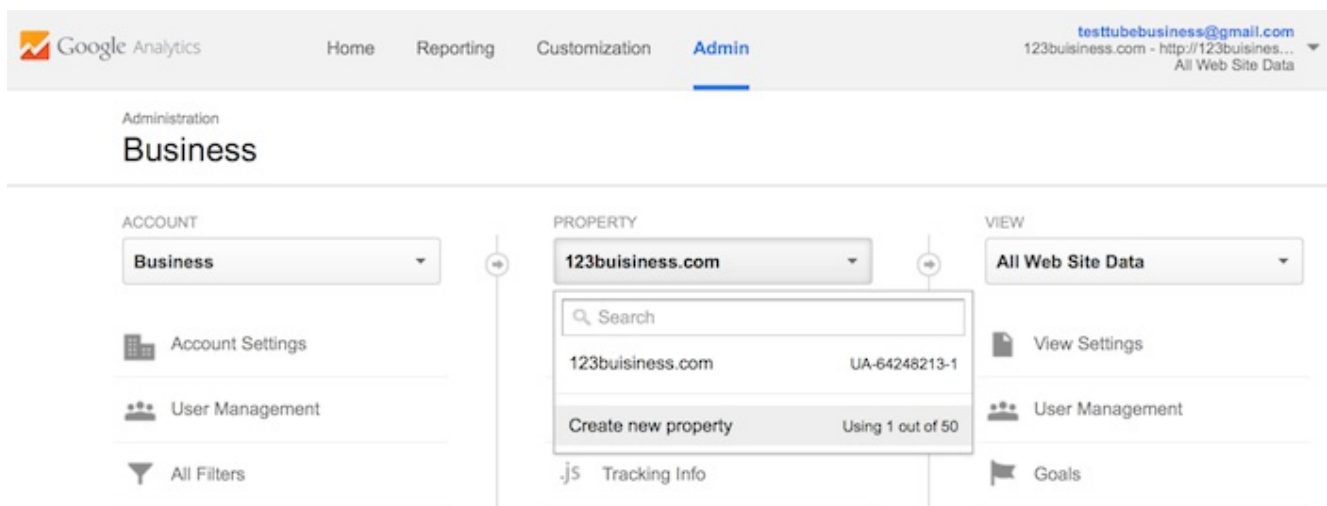
Add additional accounts and properties

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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.



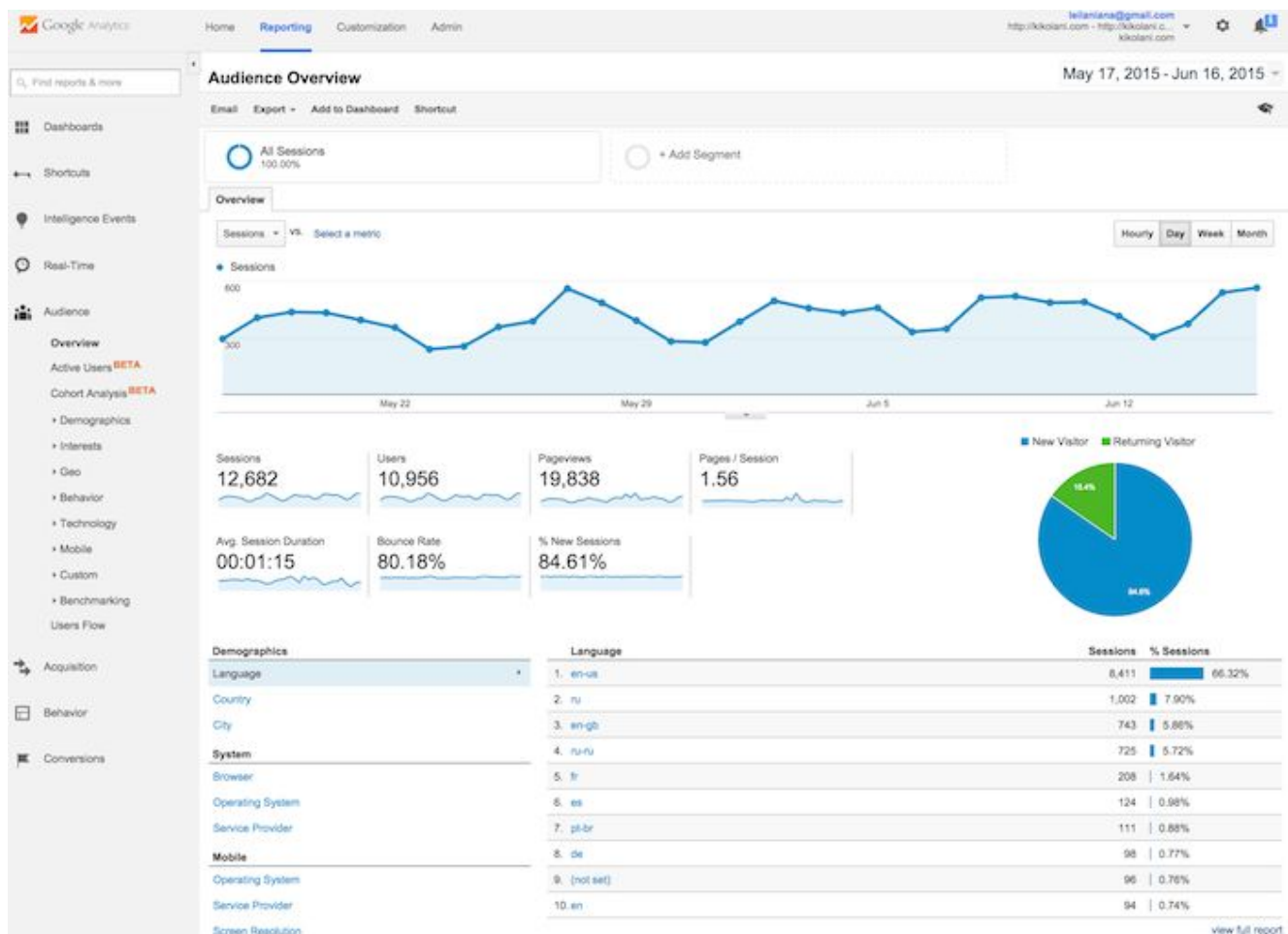
Then you will continue through all of the above-mentioned steps.

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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

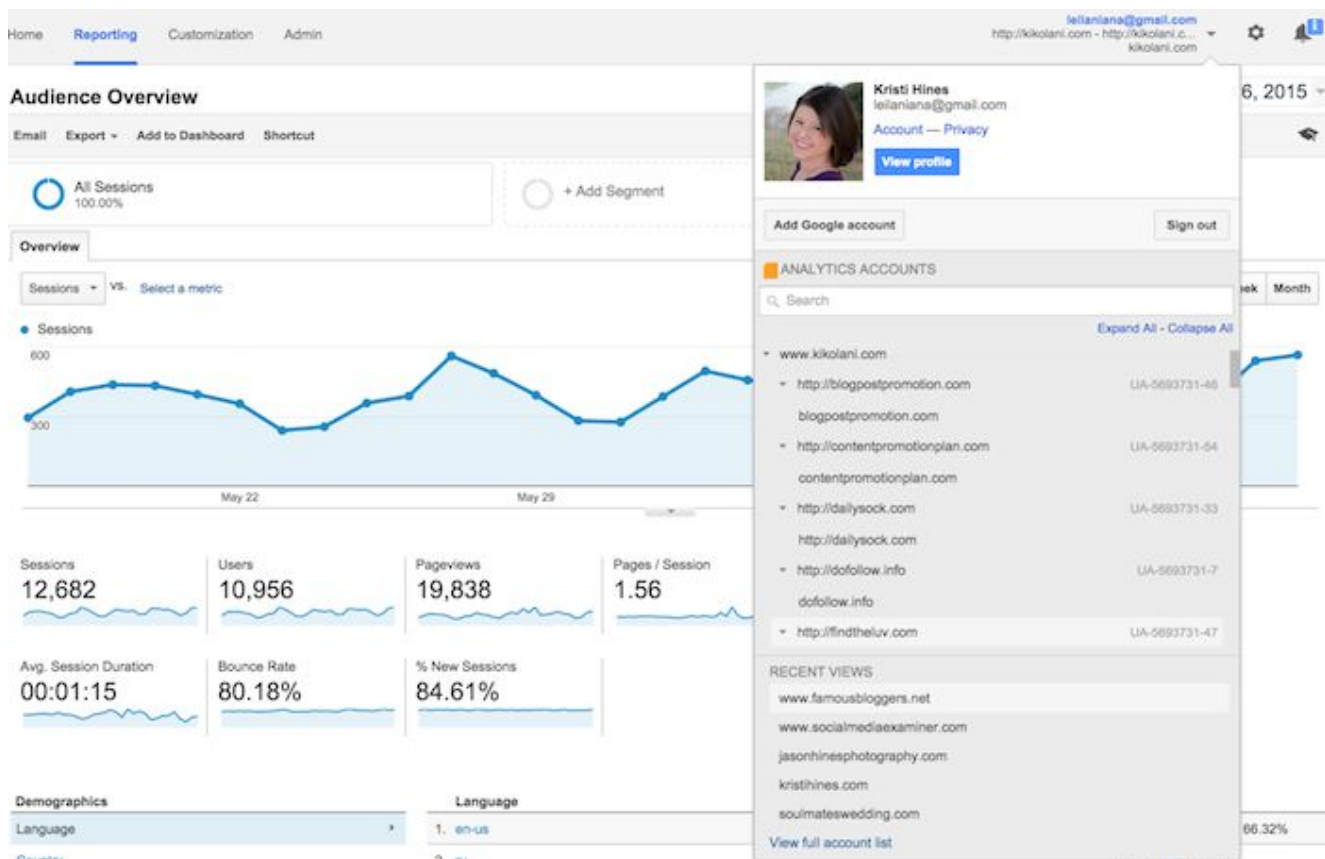
Once you start getting in Google Analytics data, you can start learning about your website traffic. Each time you log in to Google Analytics, you will be taken to your Audience Overview report. Alternatively, if you have more than one website, you will be taken to your list of websites to choose from, 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.



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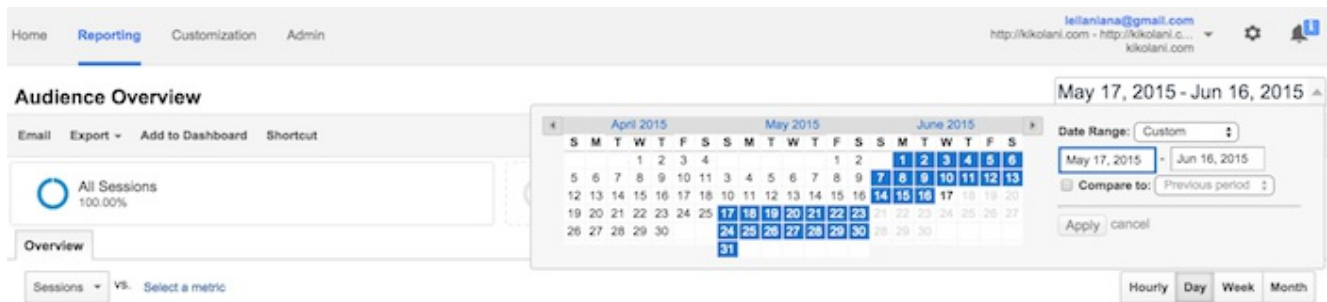
Standard report features

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.

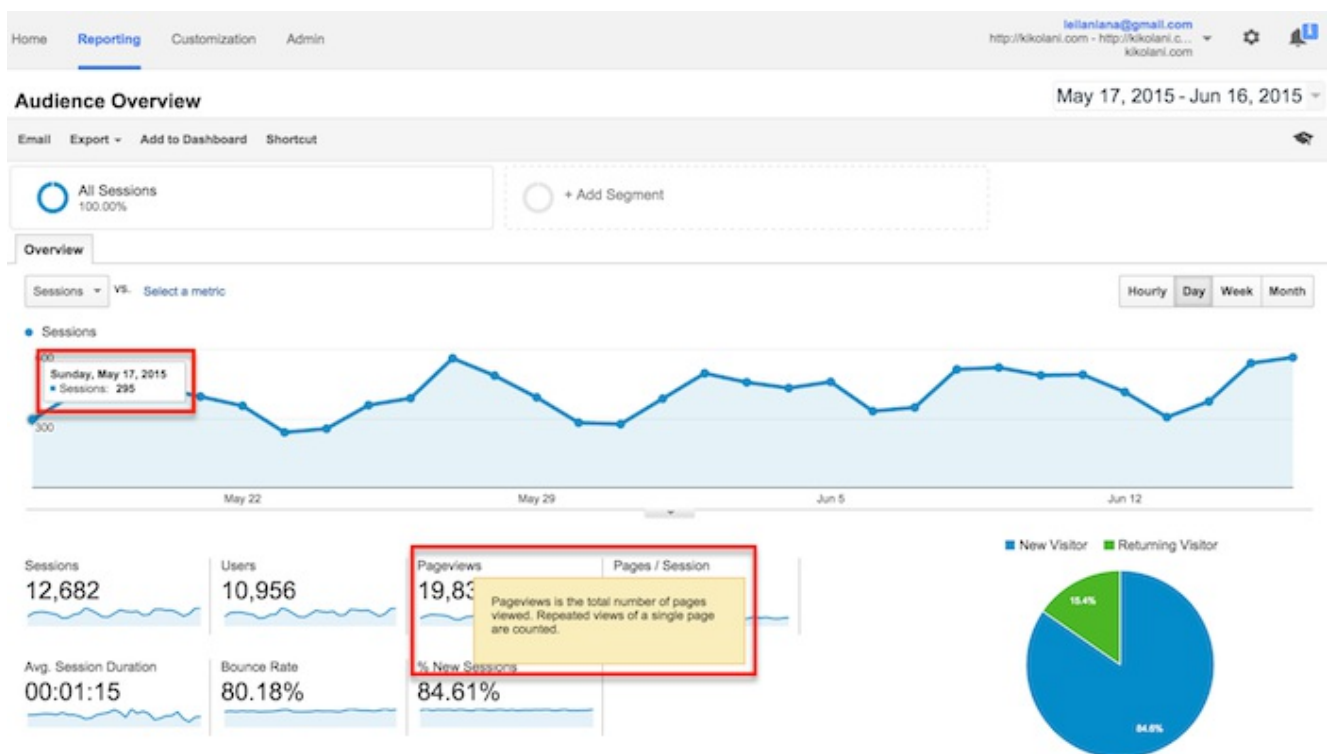


In the report at the top right, you can click on the dates to change the date range of the data you are viewing. You can also check the Compare box to compare your data from one date range (such as this month) to a previous date range (such as last month) to view your data.

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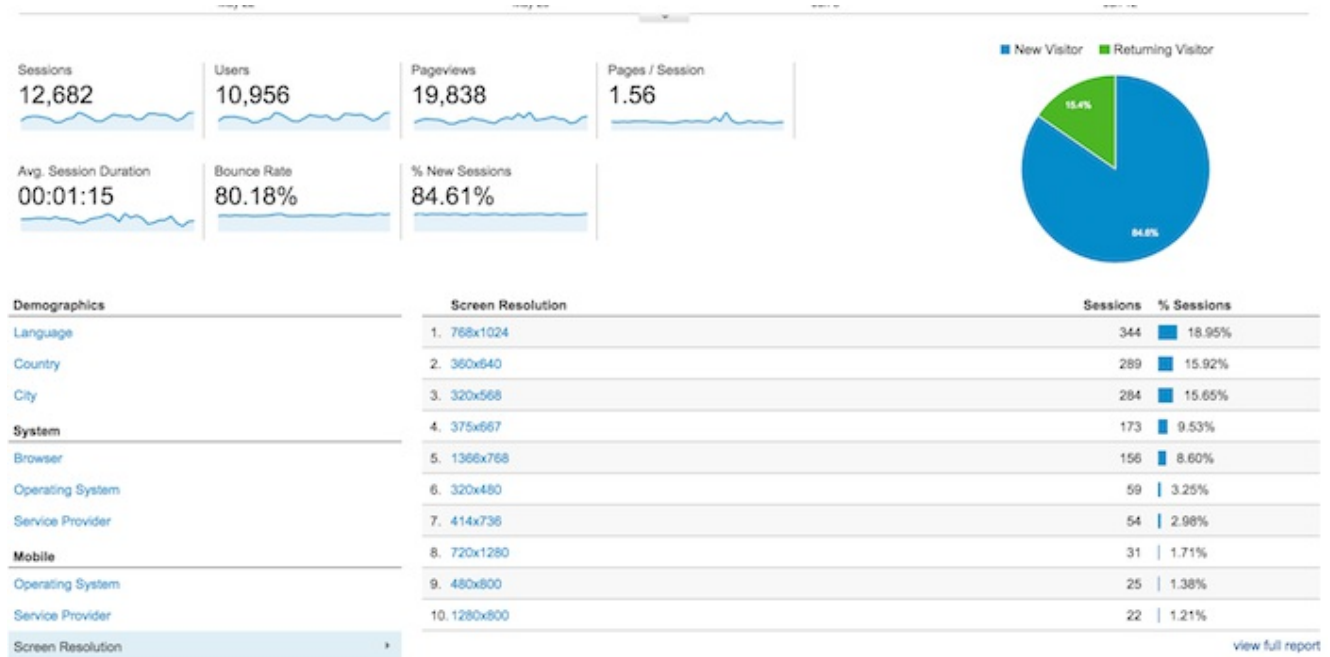


You can hover over a variety of areas on your Google Analytics reports to get more information. For example, in the Audience Overview, hovering over the line on the graph will give you the number of sessions for a particular day. Hovering over the metrics beneath the graph will tell you what each one means.



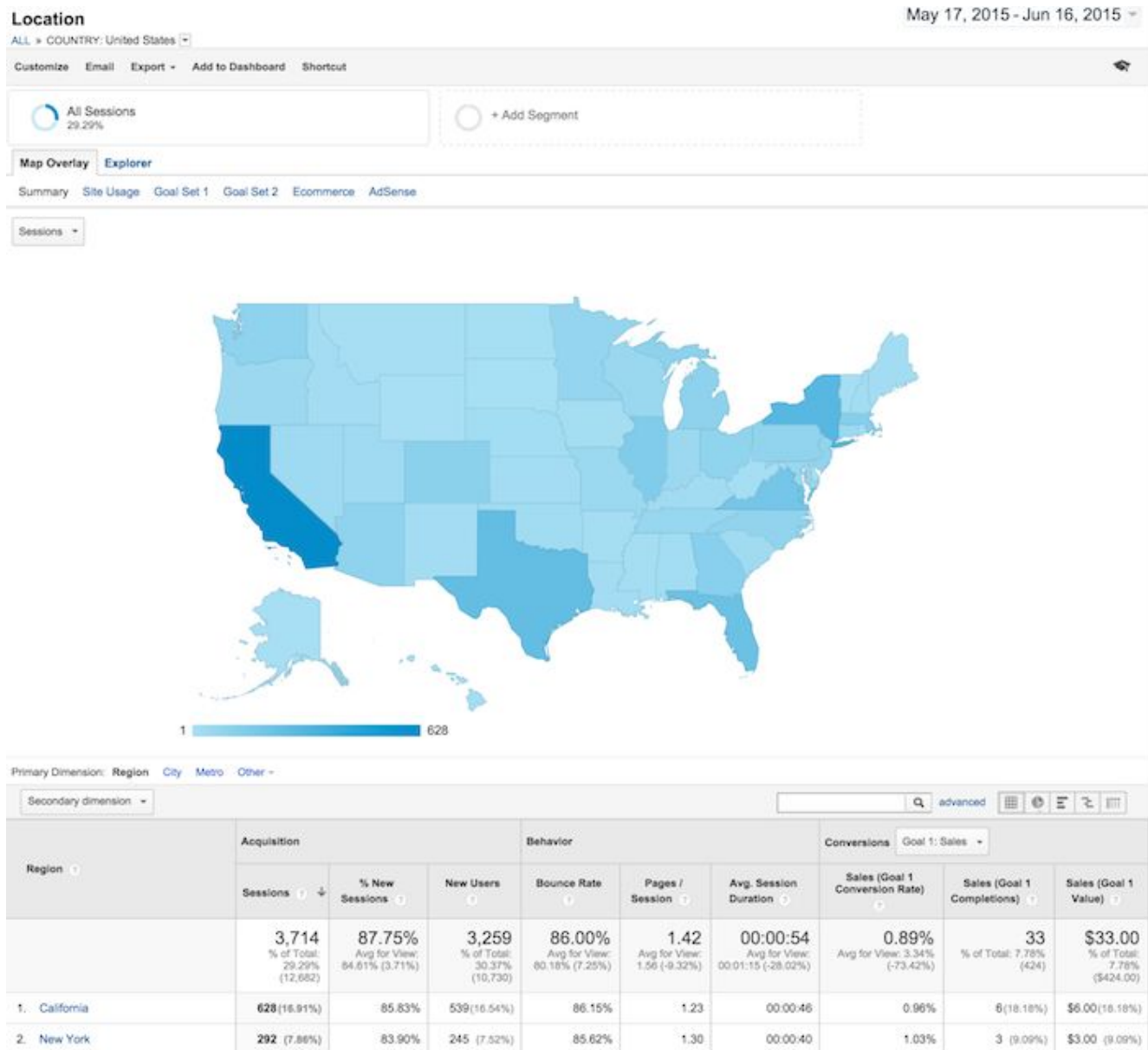
Beneath the main metrics, you will see reports that you can switch through to see the top ten languages, countries, cities, browsers, operating systems, services providers, and screen resolutions of your visitors.

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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.

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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.

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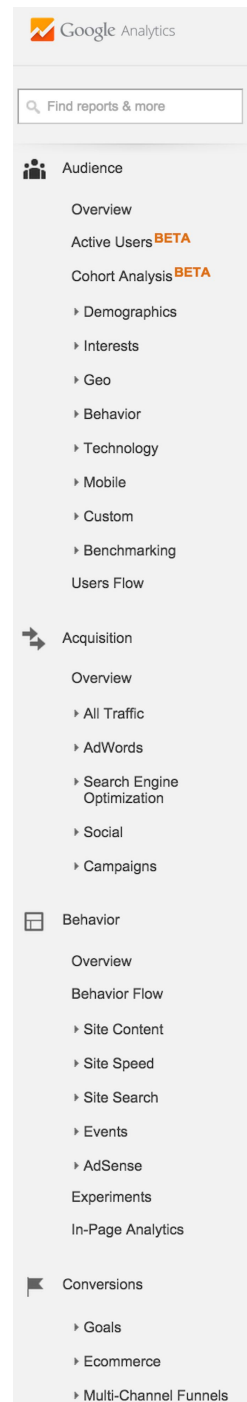
Region	Acquisition			Behavior			Conversions		
	Sessions	% New Sessions	New Users	Bounce Rate	Pages / Session	Avg. Session Duration	Sales (Goal 1 Conversion Rate)	Sales (Goal 1 Conversions)	Sales (Goal 1 Value)
	3,714 % of Total: 29.29% (12,662)	87.75% Avg for View: 84.61% (3.71%)	3,259 % of Total: 30.37% (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%)		
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%)

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.

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

Audience reports

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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 (Behavior), 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)

Behavior 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).

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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.

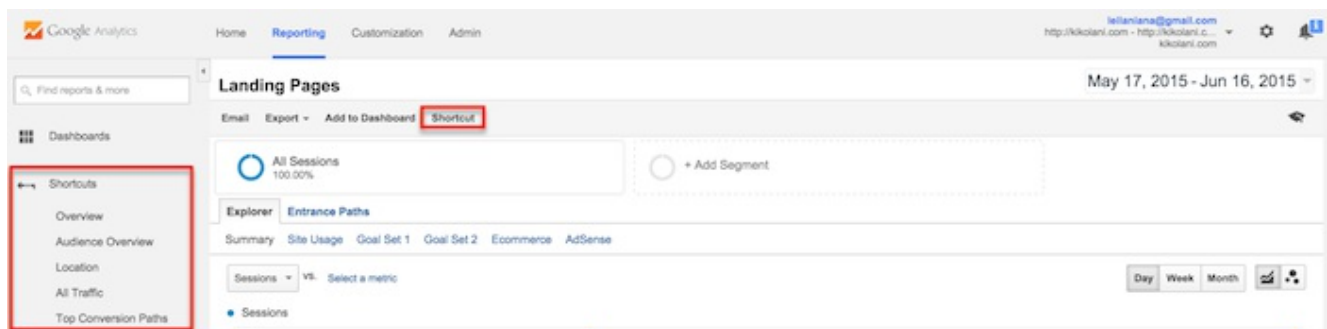
Landing Page	Acquisition			Behavior			Conversions Goal 1: Sales		
	Sessions	% New Sessions	New Users	Bounce Rate	Pages / Session	Avg. Session Duration	Sales (Goal 1 Conversion Rate)	Sales (Goal 1 Completions)	Sales (Goal 1 Value)
	12,682 % of Total: 100.00% (12,682)	84.62% Avg for View: 84.61% (0.02%)	10,732 % of Total: 100.02% (10,730)	80.18% Avg for View: 80.18% (0.00%)	1.56 Avg for View: 1.56 (0.00%)	00:01:15 Avg for View: 00:01:15 (0.00%)	3.34% Avg for View: 3.34% (0.00%)	424 % of Total: 100.00% (424)	\$424.00 % of Total: 100.00% (\$424.00)
1. /	5,026 (39.63%)	82.41%	4,142 (38.59%)	66.77%	2.07	00:02:03	6.90%	347 (81.84%)	\$347.00 (81.84%)
2. /webinar-software-comparison.html	1,084 (8.55%)	85.70%	929 (8.66%)	94.28%	1.07	00:00:33	0.09%	1 (0.24%)	\$1.00 (0.24%)
3. /optin-popup-forms.html	445 (3.51%)	87.67%	391 (3.64%)	93.93%	1.10	00:00:22	0.22%	1 (0.24%)	\$1.00 (0.24%)
4. /blog-post-promotion-tips.html	269 (2.12%)	86.62%	233 (2.17%)	91.08%	1.15	00:00:43	0.00%	0 (0.00%)	\$0.00 (0.00%)
5. /10-premium-seo-tools-try-for-free.html	257 (2.03%)	94.16%	242 (2.25%)	94.94%	1.09	00:00:28	0.00%	0 (0.00%)	\$0.00 (0.00%)
6. /how-to-contact-facebook-linkedin-twitter-google-plus.html	256 (2.02%)	89.45%	229 (2.13%)	96.48%	1.07	00:00:18	0.39%	1 (0.24%)	\$1.00 (0.24%)
7. /10-killer-tips-you-must-know-when-using-aweber.html	212 (1.67%)	90.57%	192 (1.79%)	95.28%	1.07	00:00:20	0.00%	0 (0.00%)	\$0.00 (0.00%)
8. /5-steps-to-improve-your-pinterest-profile-in-five-minutes.html	192 (1.51%)	89.58%	172 (1.60%)	94.79%	1.05	00:00:33	0.00%	0 (0.00%)	\$0.00 (0.00%)
9. /50-filters-to-keep-your-inbox-squeaky-clean.html	189 (1.49%)	82.54%	156 (1.45%)	96.30%	1.04	00:00:11	0.00%	0 (0.00%)	\$0.00 (0.00%)
10. /12-social-media-tools-scheduling-publishing-updates-compared.html	141 (1.11%)	87.23%	123 (1.15%)	84.40%	1.22	00:00:58	0.00%	0 (0.00%)	\$0.00 (0.00%)

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.

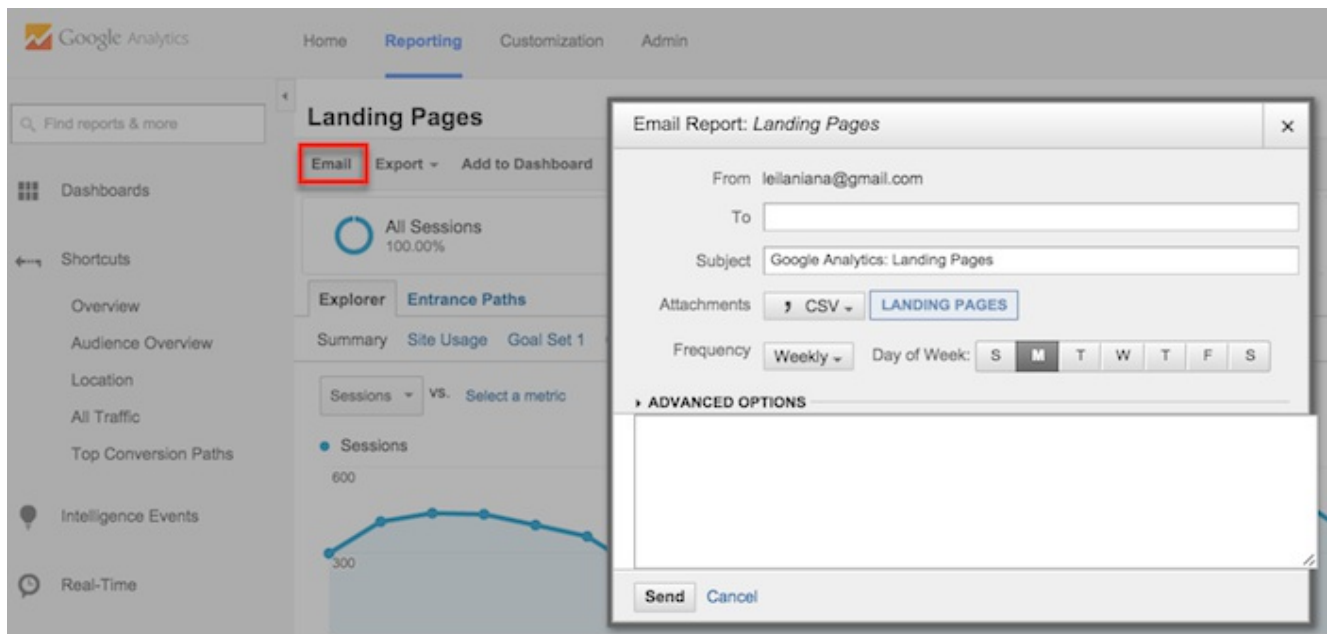
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Shortcuts and emails

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.

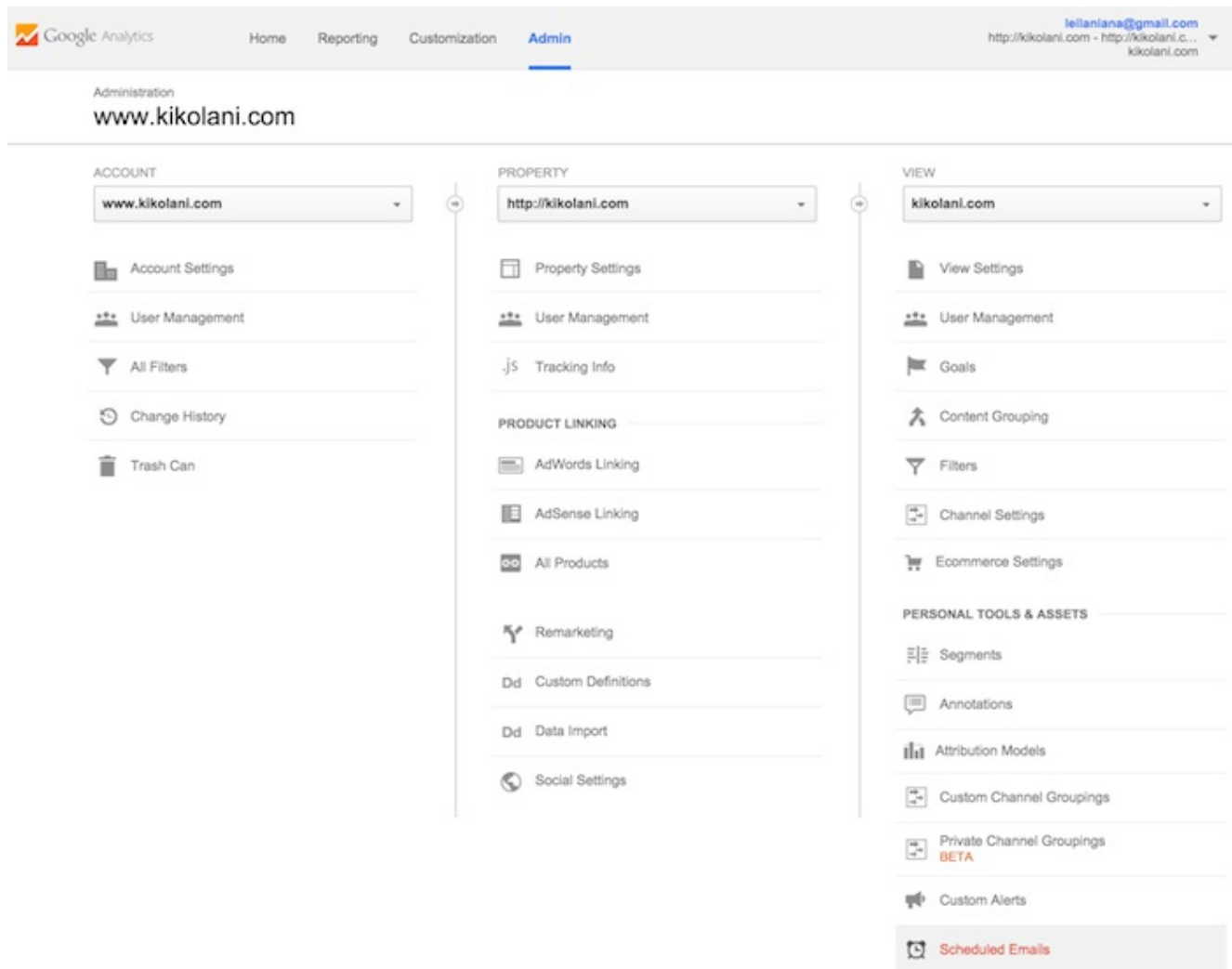


Or, use the email button to have them emailed to you (or others on your team) on a regular basis.



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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.



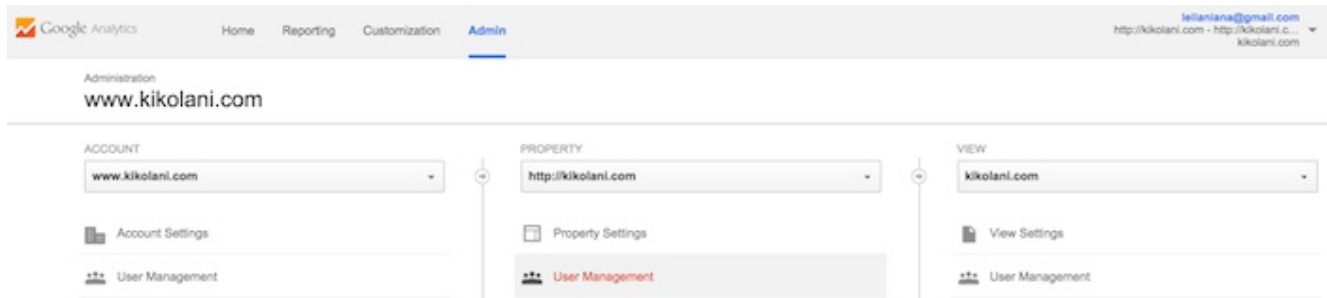
Answers to common questions about Google Analytics

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

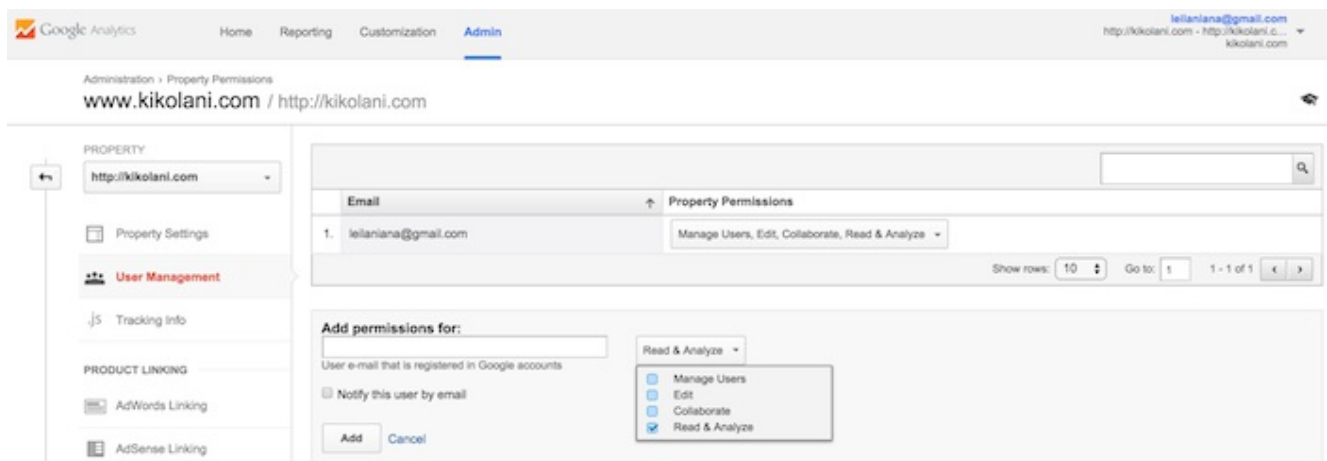
How do I share my Google Analytics data with someone?

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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).

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kikolani.com Report for the Month of May

Sessions

- 2%

Pageviews

- 4%

Avg Time On Site

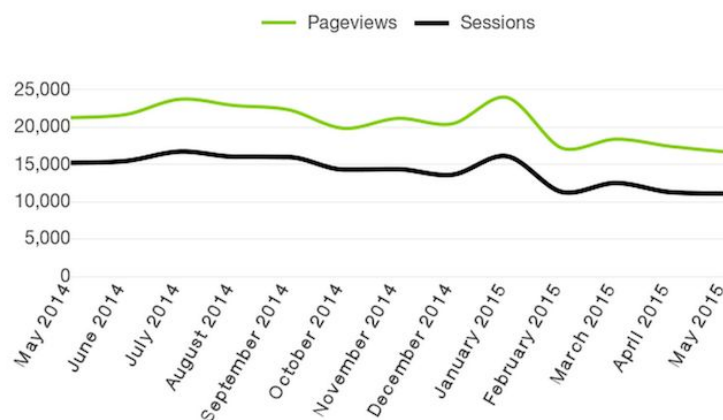
- 1%

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.

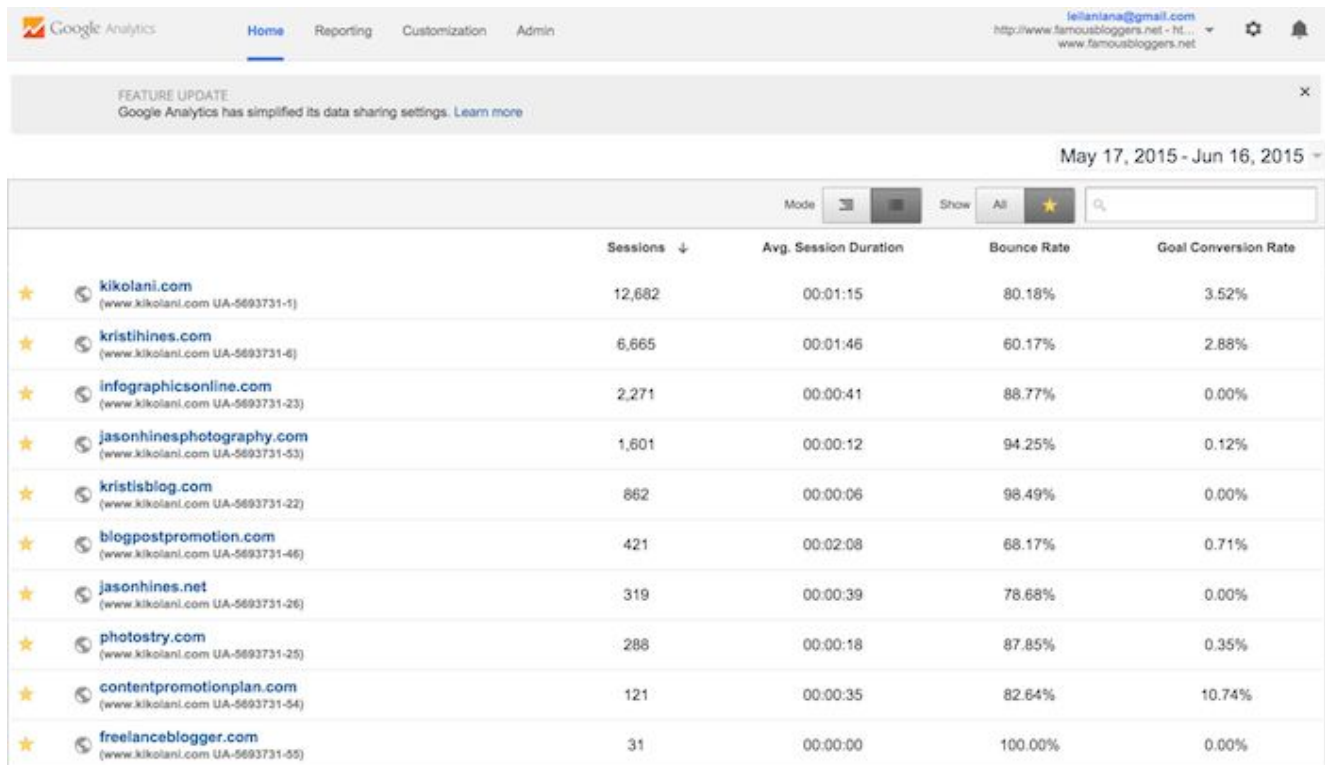
Sessions Lowest In 13 Months



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?

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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.

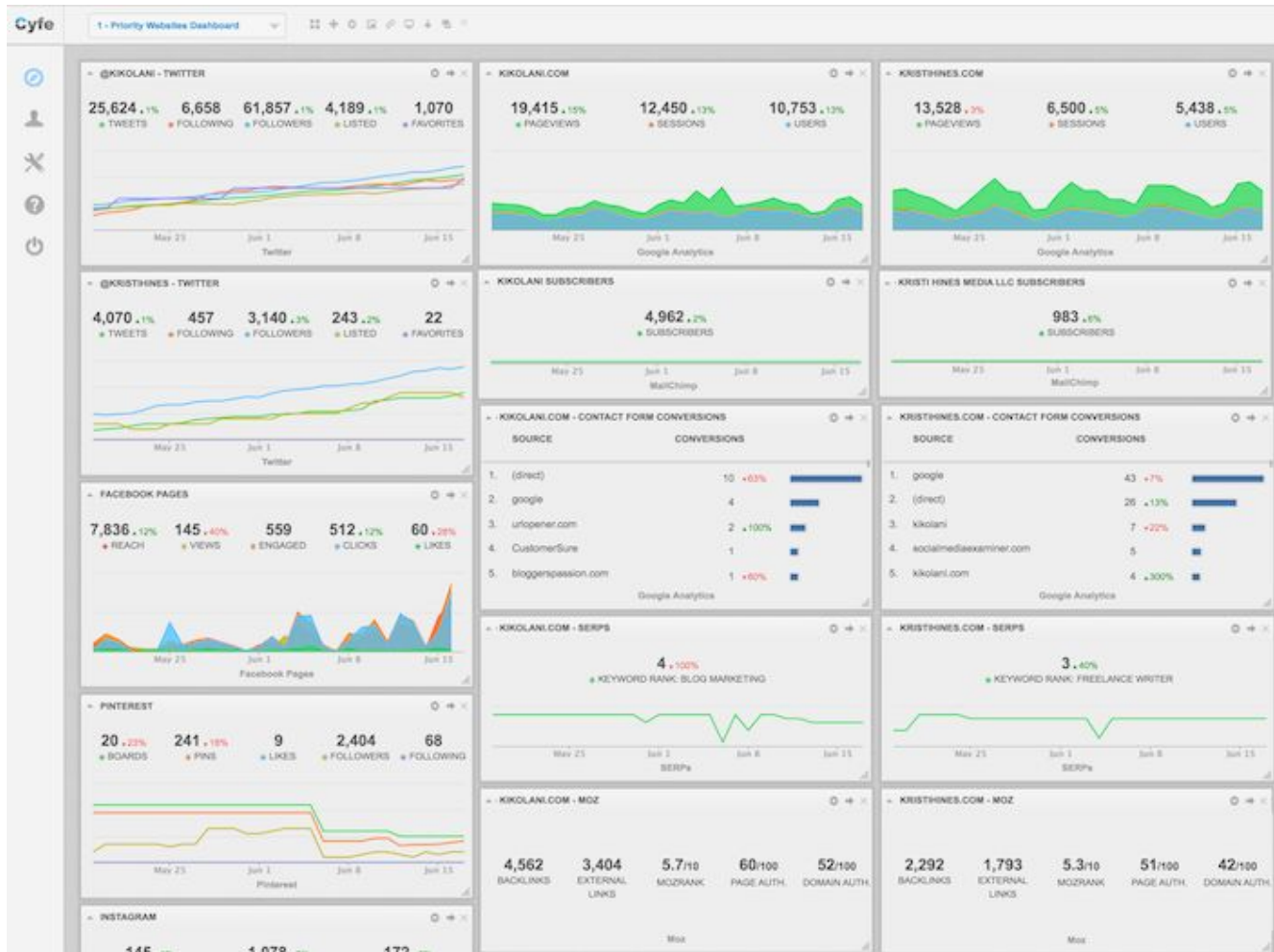


The screenshot shows the Google Analytics interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'Home', 'Reporting', 'Customization', and 'Admin'. A 'FEATURE UPDATE' banner mentions simplified data sharing settings. The date range is set to 'May 17, 2015 - Jun 16, 2015'. Below this is a table of websites with columns for 'Sessions', 'Avg. Session Duration', 'Bounce Rate', and 'Goal Conversion Rate'. The table lists ten websites, with 'kikolani.com' having the highest sessions (12,682) and 'freelanceblogger.com' having the lowest (31).

	Sessions ↓	Avg. Session Duration	Bounce Rate	Goal Conversion Rate
kikolani.com (www.kikolani.com UA-5693731-1)	12,682	00:01:15	80.18%	3.52%
kristihines.com (www.kikolani.com UA-5693731-6)	6,665	00:01:46	60.17%	2.88%
infographicsonline.com (www.kikolani.com UA-5693731-23)	2,271	00:00:41	88.77%	0.00%
jasonhinesphotography.com (www.kikolani.com UA-5693731-53)	1,601	00:00:12	94.25%	0.12%
kristisblog.com (www.kikolani.com UA-5693731-22)	862	00:00:06	98.49%	0.00%
blogpostpromotion.com (www.kikolani.com UA-5693731-46)	421	00:02:08	68.17%	0.71%
jasonhines.net (www.kikolani.com UA-5693731-26)	319	00:00:39	78.68%	0.00%
photostry.com (www.kikolani.com UA-5693731-25)	288	00:00:18	87.85%	0.35%
contentpromotionplan.com (www.kikolani.com UA-5693731-54)	121	00:00:35	82.64%	10.74%
freelanceblogger.com (www.kikolani.com UA-5693731-55)	31	00:00:00	100.00%	0.00%

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.

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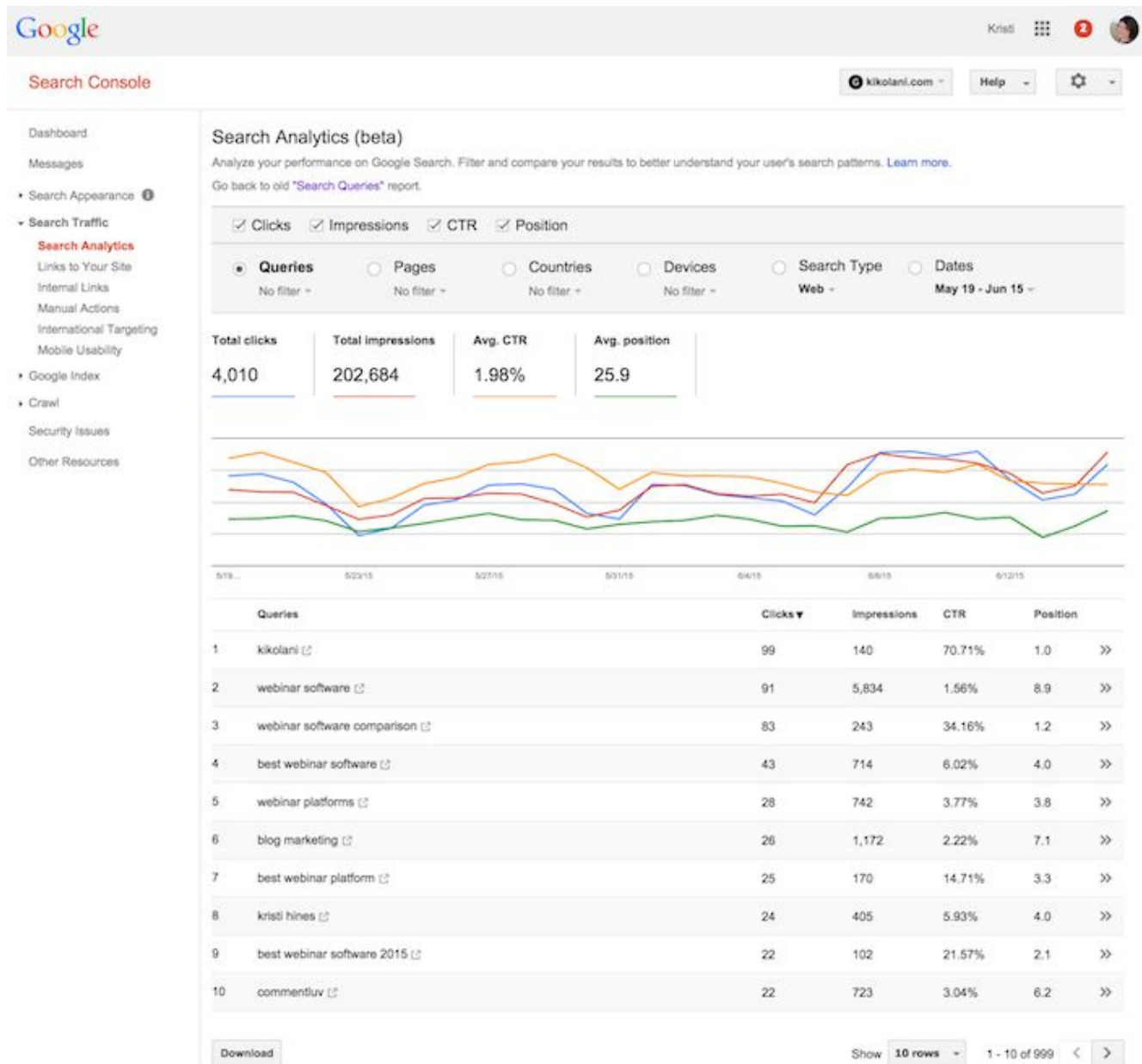


This solution significantly cuts down on the time spent looking at analytics across the board for your entire business.

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](#) (now Search Console, free), Authority Lab's [Now Provided Reports](#) (paid), and [Hittail](#) (paid) can all help you uncover some of those keywords.

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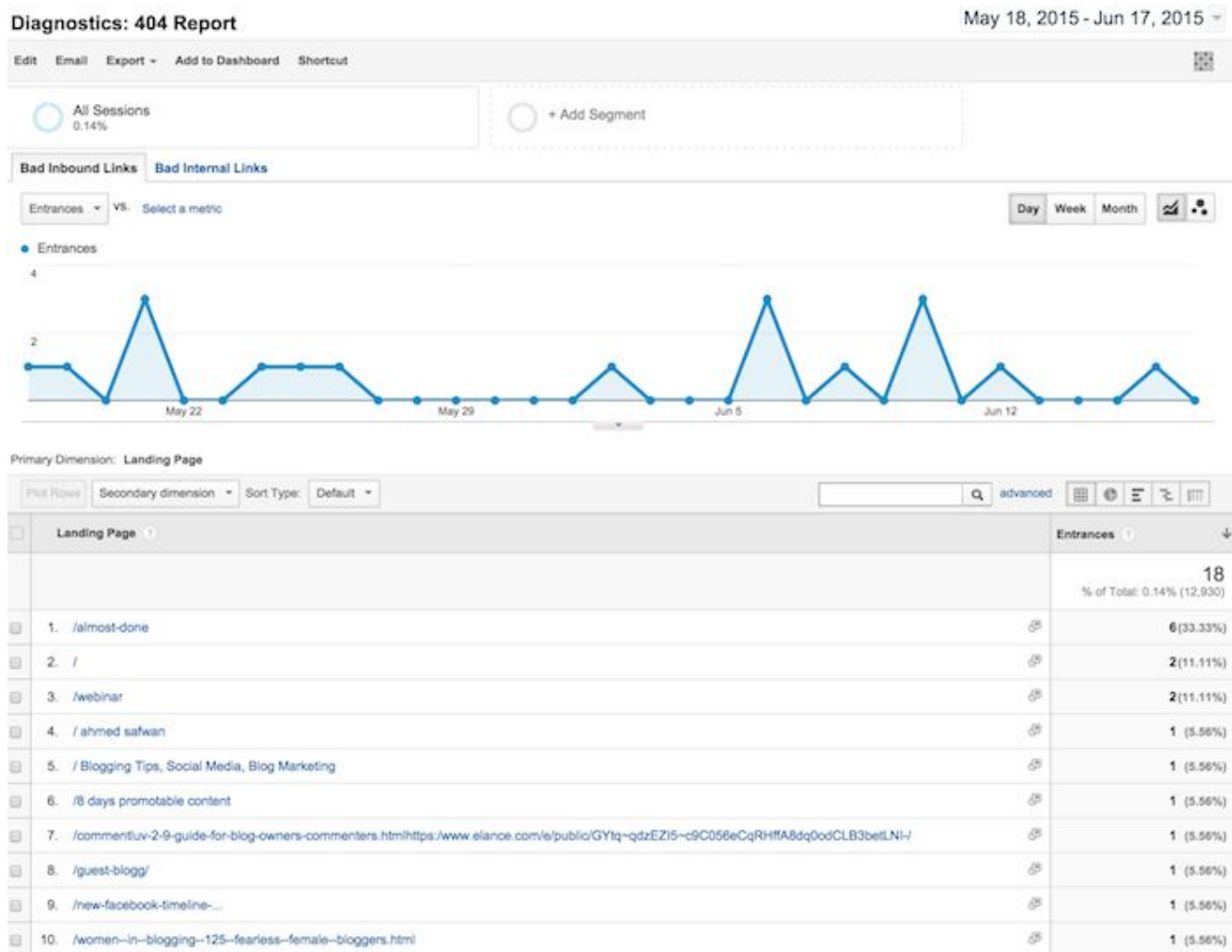
They won't be linked to your conversions or other Google Analytics data, but at least you will have some clue what keywords searchers are using to find your website.

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.

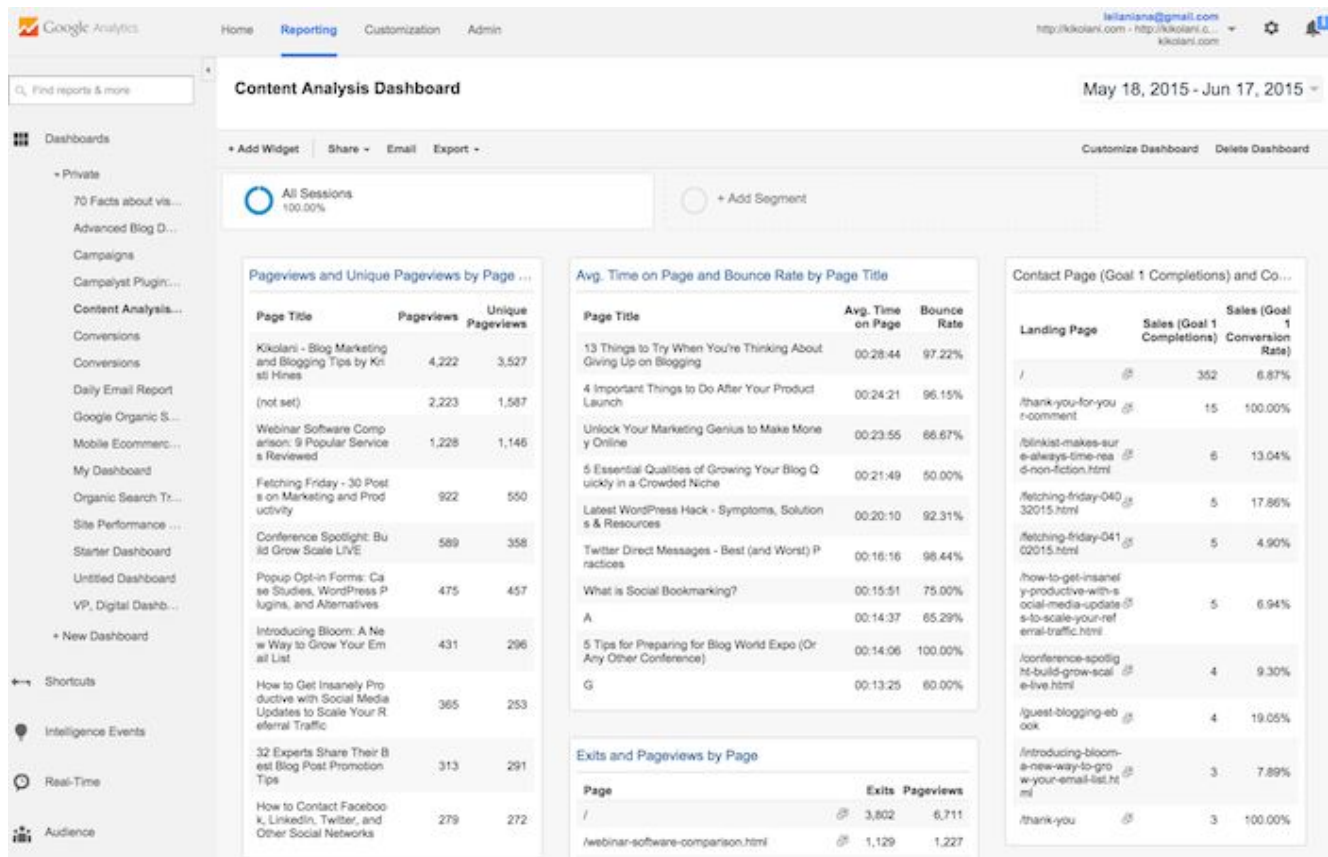
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Custom Reports (under the Customization menu at the top) allow you to create reports that look similar to the standard Google Analytics reports with the metrics you want to view.



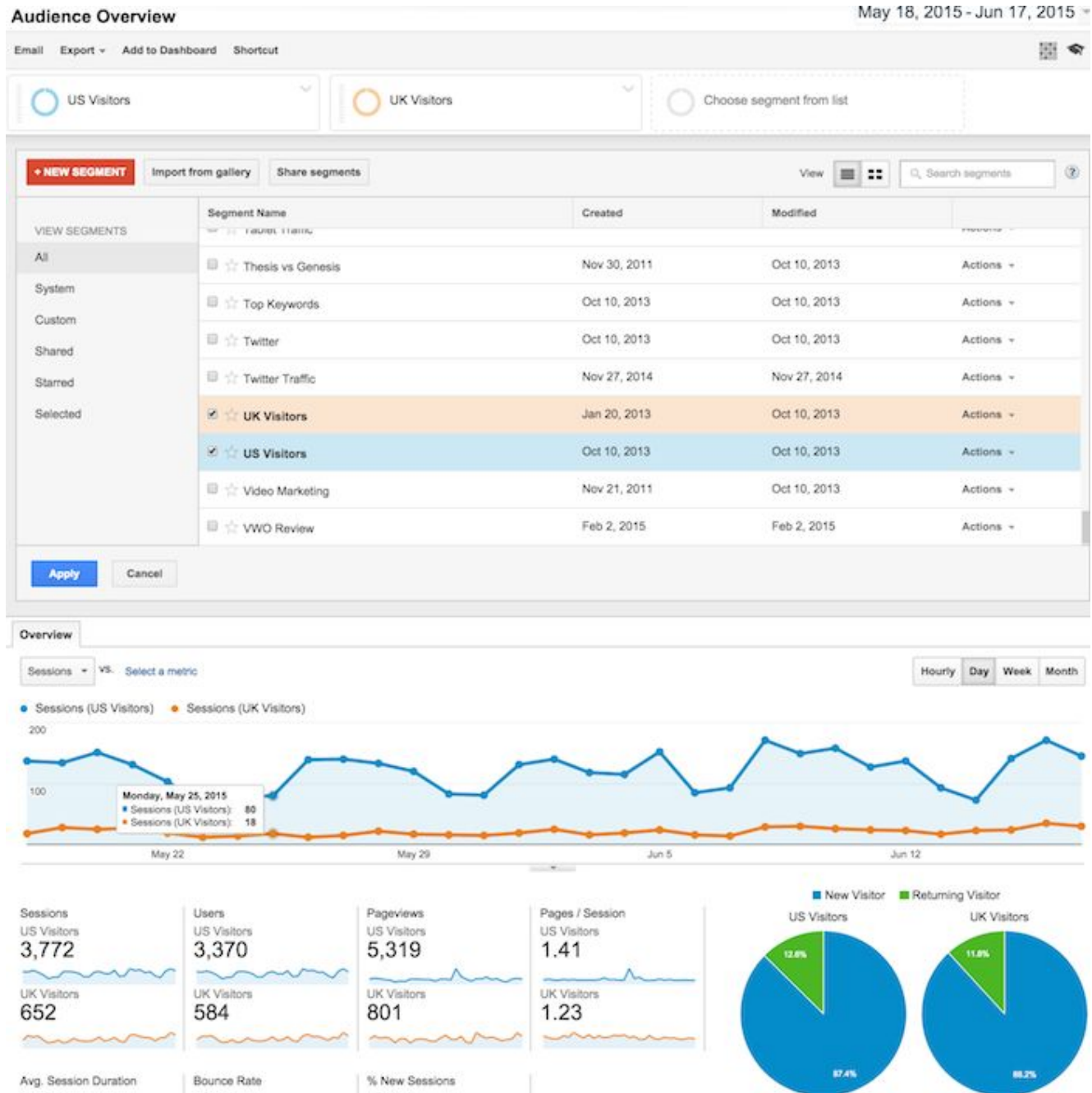
Dashboards allow you to view your Google Analytics data in a dashboard format. You can access them at the top of the left sidebar.

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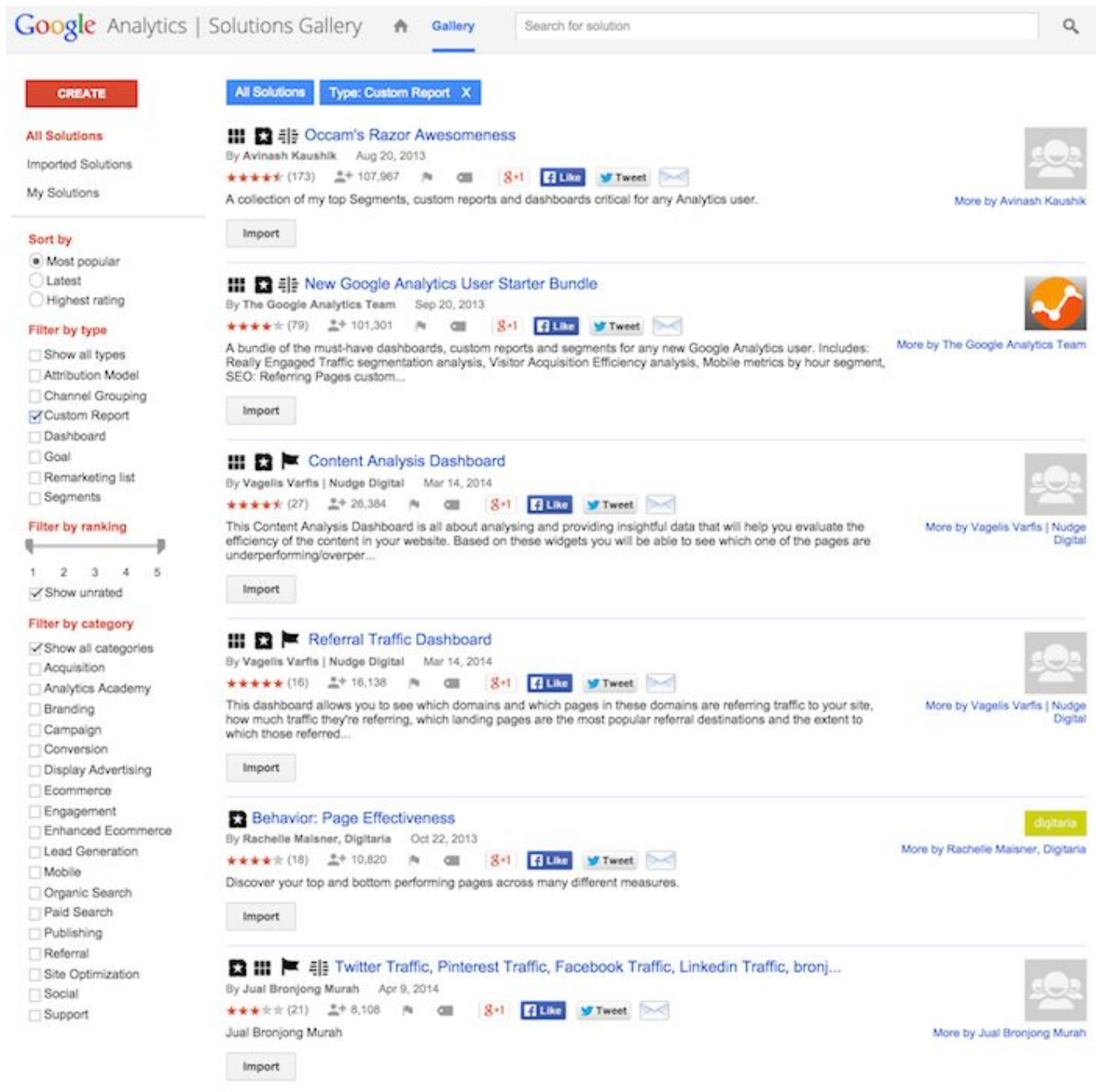
Segments allow you to view all of your Google Analytics data based on a specific dimension, such as all of your Google Analytics data based on visitors from the United States. You can also use them to compare up to four segments of data, such as United States versus United Kingdom traffic, search versus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

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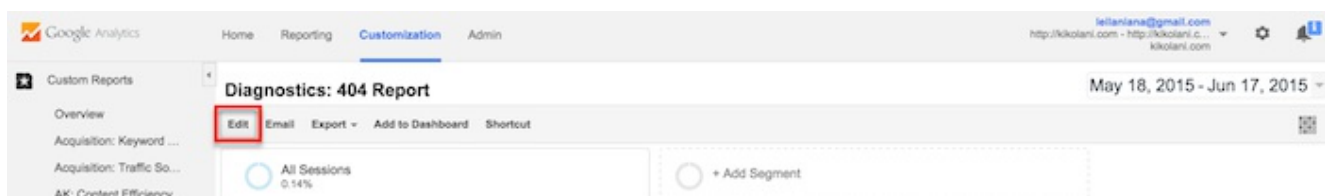


The nice part about these is that you don't have to create them from scratch. You can start by using pre-defined Custom Reports, Dashboards, and Segments from the [Google Solutions Gallery](#).

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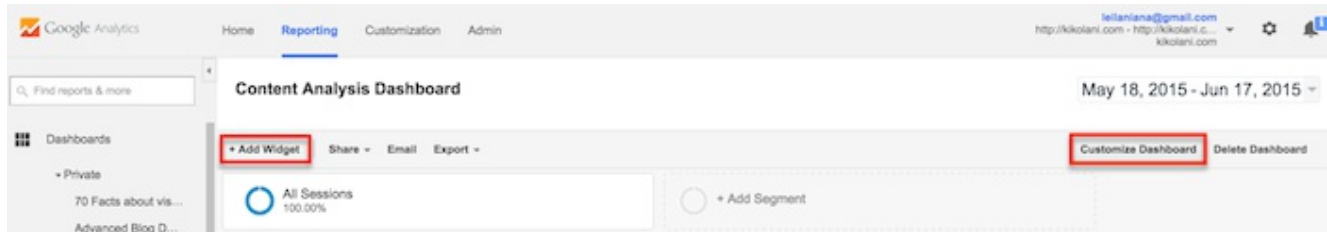


There, you will find lots of Custom Reports, Dashboards, Segments, and other solutions that you can import into your Google Analytics and edit to fit your needs. Edit Custom Reports with the Edit button at the top.

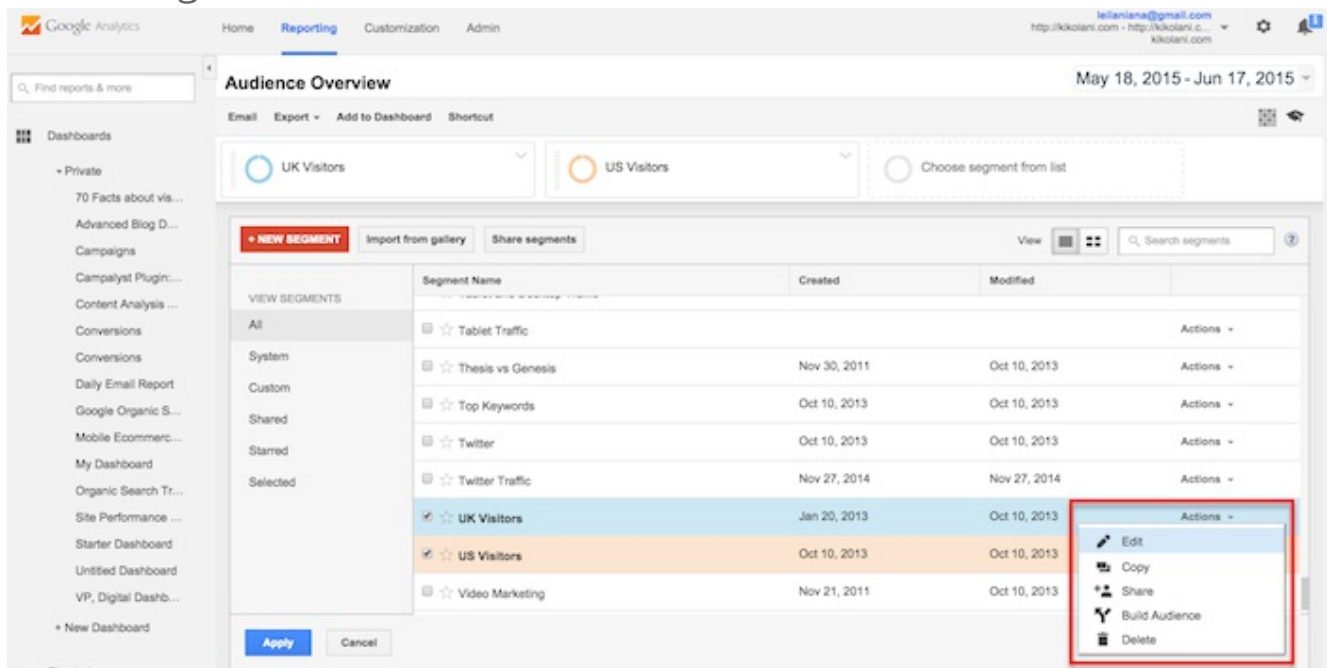


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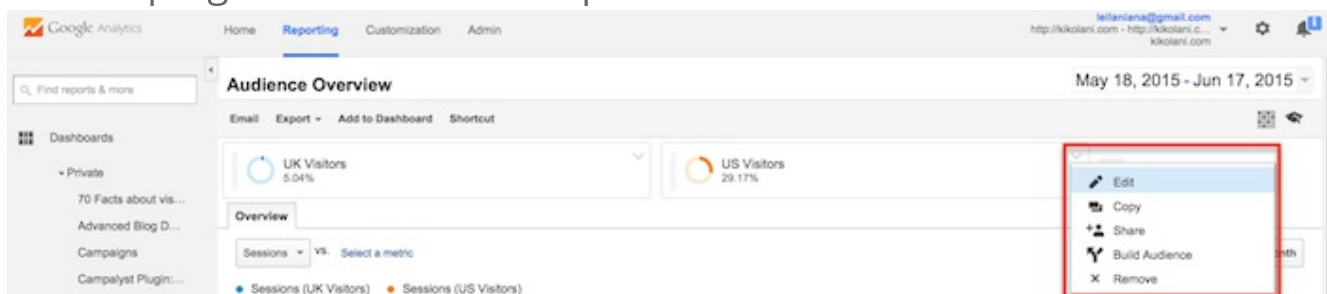
Edit Dashboards using the Add Widget or Customize Dashboard buttons at the top.



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.



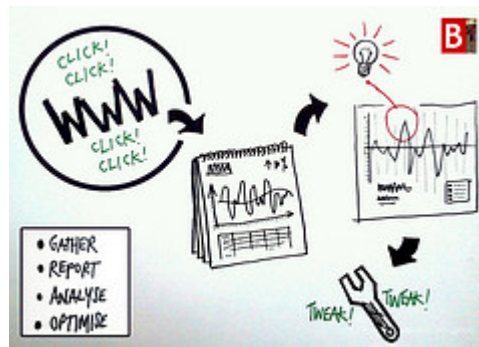
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As you get used to editing Custom Reports, Dashboards, and Segments, you will get more familiar with the way each works so you can create new ones on your own.

In conclusion

I hope you've enjoyed this beginner's introduction to Google Analytics for beginners. If you're a beginner and have a burning questions, please ask in the comments. I'll be happy to help!

A Simple Guide to Advanced Terms



Google analytics is an amazing free tool that is often under utilized. Are you aware of it's full potential?

You certainly don't need to pay for a web analytics tool unless you are using Google analytics to it's maximum.

In this article we outline some of the confusing/advanced terms in Google analytics.

Understanding Google analytics advanced terms will help with some new ideas on how you can take more advantage of this free tool.

Bonus: Understanding Google Analytics is essential. [Download a summary of the most important terms](#) and an added bonus of some ninja tricks for goal tracking in Google Analytics.

By the way, here is another post about [simplifying Google analytics reporting](#).

Engagement Rate

Standard reports -> Audience -> Behavior -> Engagement

[Engagement](#) shows how long a person is on your website. However, if a person only visits one page and leaves then Google analytics puts them in the zero to 10 seconds category.

A Simple Guide to Advanced Terms

If your main content is a blog you'll probably find that you'll have a very high percentage of people that appear under the zero to 10 seconds category.

Visit Duration	Visits	Pageviews
0-10 seconds	16,242	16,651
11-30 seconds	472	1,098
31-60 seconds	497	1,292
61-180 seconds	975	2,941
181-600 seconds	963	3,711



You ideally want people to engage in pages other than your blog!
So don't be too concerned!

Your visitors may spend a couple of minutes reading your blog content and love it....

but it's still categorized in the 0-10 seconds bracket if they leave your site straight after this post.

Bounce Rate – Beyond the basics

If someone comes into your site and leaves without going anywhere else, or is inactive on that page for more than 30 minutes, it's considered a bounce. Here are things to consider related to bounce rate:

a). It's more important to know the bounce rate for first time visitors rather than returning visitors. If visitors come back to your site then it doesn't matter as much if they bounce.

To view the difference in bounce rates select this:

Audience -> Behavior -> New Versus Returning

A Simple Guide to Advanced Terms

b). You might have a bounce rate because you haven't optimized your pages correctly. When you create a post you create a 'title tag' which is used by Google to figure out what the content is about.

If this title is not closely related to your blog post then when visitors arrive they may leave immediately.

To check bounce rates for individual pages go to the following section.

Content -> site content -> all pages

If you get traffic that's not relevant to what your site is about then you need to start to update your content especially your 'title tags' so they truly represent what the content is about.

c). To reduce bounce rate you could include related posts, include very clear calls to action to get people to further engage on the site or include links to other content early in the post (earlier gets more clicks than later).

Custom Dashboards

A dashboard is a one page view of some of the most important information that is relevant to your business.

You might create a dashboard for a standard report you want to run every week. When this report is created it can automatically be sent to relevant people.

Creating custom dashboards is quite straight forward.

If you don't want to create them yourself there are some resources available online which provide some dashboards that you can easily add to your Google analytics account.

A Simple Guide to Advanced Terms

Event Tracking

Goals within Google analytics allow you to monitor a lot of activity on your website and tracking events is additional functionality that is difficult to track in goals.

For example, if you have a whitepaper on your website and you wanted to track downloads this would have to be done with events.

To track the download you would add additional code to the download button and this is then made available within Google analytics.

So here's the format for event tracking:

```
_trackEvent(category, action, opt_label, opt_value, opt_noninteraction)
```

This breaks down as follows:

- **Category:** Pick a category for particular types of events e.g. videos, downloads etc.
- **Action:** This could be watched, downloaded etc
- **Opt_label:** Optional information to add to further identify the event (e.g. name of video)
- **Opt_value:** Optional to store integers e.g. price. You can only store numeric values in this.
- **Opt_noninteraction:** This is optional and defines how bounce rate is handled. For example, if you had a video on a page and the most important part to the page is you getting the visitor to click on the page then you may not want to count this as a bounce if someone plays the video.

You may need some developer help but once it is setup you get lots of valuable information within Google analytics.

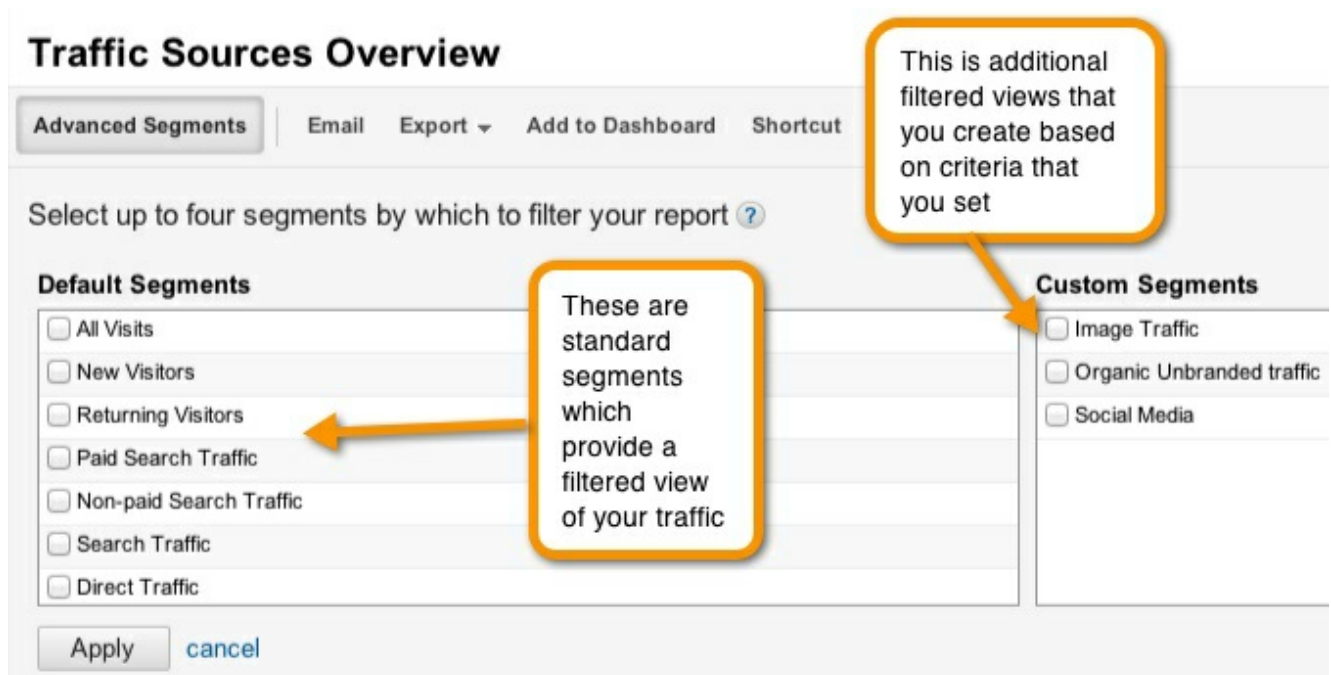
A Simple Guide to Advanced Terms

Advanced Segments

Google provides a lot of online reports showing you your data but at times you may want to drill down into specific. You do this through advanced segments.

For example, if you look at 'Traffic Sources Overview' you are looking at an advanced segment based on 'All visits'.

But you could apply another segment so instead you could display the exact same information except you only view 'New visitors'.

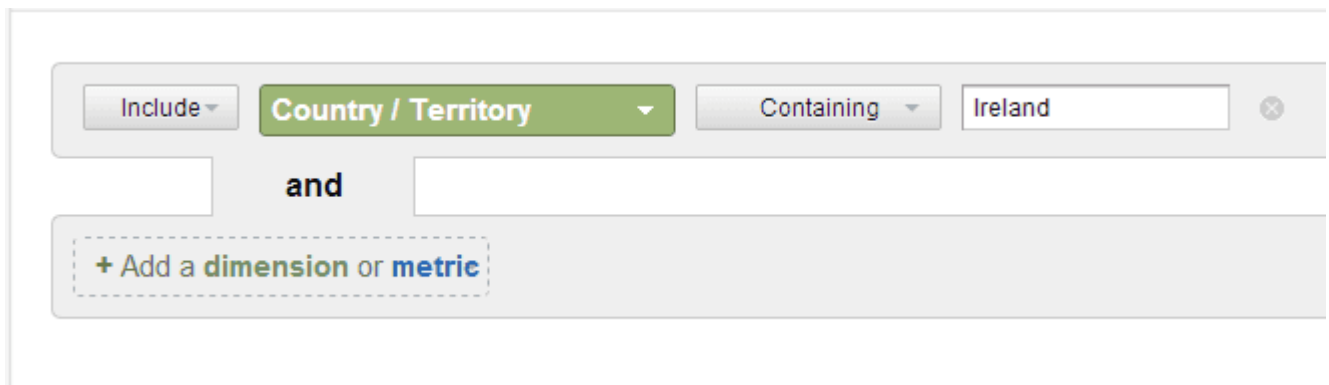


Use predefined advanced segments or set up your own

If these standard advanced segments are not enough you can create different segments based on criteria that you set out.

Bonus: Understanding Google Analytics is essential. [Download a summary of the most important terms](#) and an added bonus of some ninja tricks for goal tracking in Google Analytics.

A Simple Guide to Advanced Terms



The screenshot shows the Google Analytics Advanced Segments interface. At the top, there is a filter bar with the following elements: a dropdown menu set to 'Include', a green button labeled 'Country / Territory' with a downward arrow, a dropdown menu set to 'Containing', and a text input field containing 'Ireland'. Below this bar, the word 'and' is centered. Underneath, there is a dashed box containing the text '+ Add a dimension or metric'. The entire interface is set against a light gray background.

There is great flexibility provided so you can create segments based on the criteria available

If this is information you want to share out in your weekly report you can then also add this information on to your dashboard.

By spending a bit of time figuring out the key areas you want to track and setting up these segments this can save you a lot of time.

Here is a useful resource shared to me by Martin Antman – [34 Advanced Segment template collection](#).

Intelligence Events

This is an alerting system to warn you of anything unusual that happens within your analytics account.

There are automatic alerts where Google will report on significant spikes or dips and then there are custom alerts you can set up.

Here's an example of an automatic alert triggered when there was a significant spike in eMail conversion rate.

A Simple Guide to Advanced Terms



Spikes/Dips can be tracked

For a custom alert you can specify that you get an e-mail when something specific happens.

The screenshot shows the 'Create Custom Alert' form in Google Analytics. The 'Alert name' field contains 'Traffic Dip'. The 'Apply to' section shows 'RazorSocial and 0 other views'. The 'Period' is set to 'Day'. The 'Send me an email when this alert triggers' checkbox is checked, with a field for '0 other email addresses'. Below this is a link to 'Setup your mobile phone to receive a text message about Intelligence Ale'. The 'Alert Conditions' section has 'This applies to' set to 'All Traffic' and 'Alert me when' set to 'Visits'. The 'Condition' is 'Is less than' and the 'Value' is '1000'. An orange callout box with an arrow points to the '1000' value, containing the text: 'If traffic dips below 1,000 visitors I'll get an e-mail'. At the bottom are 'Save Alert' and 'Cancel' buttons.

Set up the alert based on the criteria you decide

Filters

You can set up filters in analytics to remove any traffic from reports based on certain criteria.

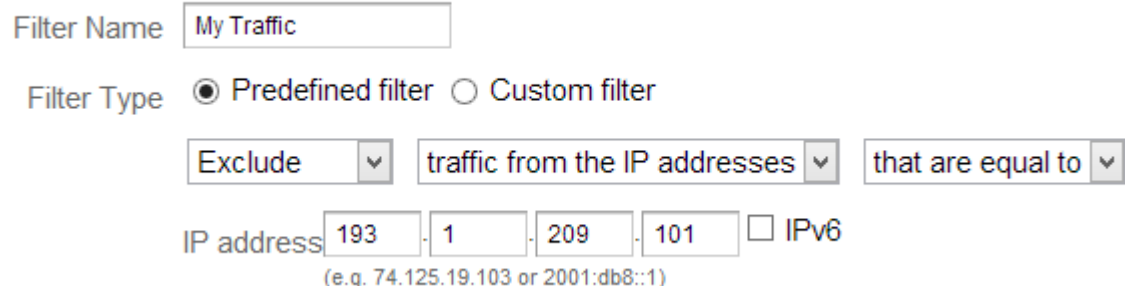
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For example you may not want to count traffic from you browsing your own website or country traffic from people accessing sub directories that you make available outside of your website to download content.

To access filters select Admin (top right) -> Filters.

From here you can set up your filters. In the following example I am excluding my IP address from any traffic reports.

Filter Information



Filter Name

Filter Type ☒ Predefined filter ☐ Custom filter

IP address ☐ IPv6
(e.g. 74.125.19.103 or 2001:db8::1)

Filter out your traffic!

Annotations

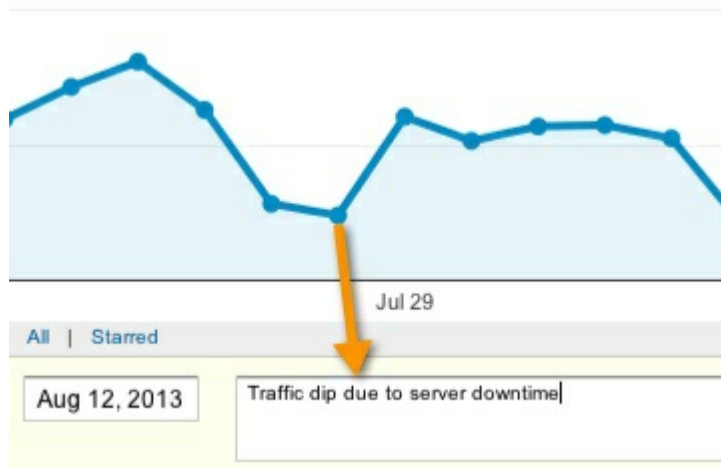
When you view a traffic report over the last year and you see some spikes or dips how do you know what they are related to?

You may have a memory like Einstein but for the rest of us we need some clues!

Google allows us to tag charts so we can review these at a later stage and understand what happened at that stage.

To put in an 'annotation' just click a part of the graph and type in the information.

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Once you add an annotation it's always available in the future

Visitor Flow

Visitor flow lets you analyze what path traffic takes when it arrives into your site. In the example below it filters out traffic from the US.

Out of 9k visitors the 8k of them only visited one page (7.91k drop offs). For the people that did move on you can see what pages they ended up on.

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Analyze the flow of traffic through your site

Understanding the path the user takes is really useful. If you know the path then you can work on ways of adjusting this to the path you want them to take!

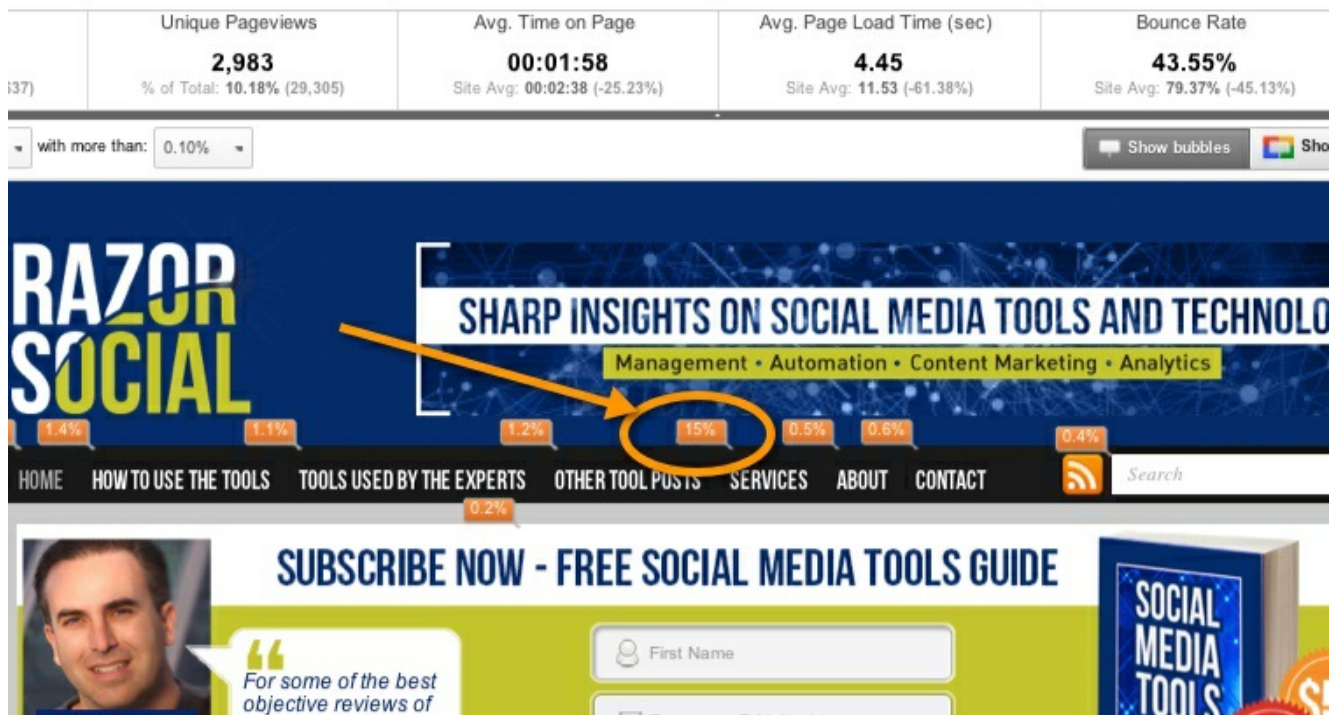
Inpage Analytics

Inpage analytics allows you to view analytics directly on any page within your website. Sometimes it's much easier to look at the pages while you view the analytics rather than page names.

You can spot some issues you may not spot if you look at raw data.

In my screenshot below you can see that 15% of people that arrive on our home page click the services menu option. We only recently added this so this is really interesting and worth investigating more!

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It's useful to check these analytics every couple of weeks and especially after a recent change

Custom and User Defined Variables

A custom variable is additional information you can track within Google analytics that is particular to your site that is not currently tracked.

For example, if you had a blog with many authors on the blog and you wanted to be able to report on traffic for that author you could add a custom variable for this.

The syntax is as follows:

```
_gaq.push(['_setCustomVar',<insert the slot e.g. slot 1>,'<enter a name e.g. category of event>','<Enter the value e.g. in this case the author name>', <insert a number 1 to 3 indicating if you are tracking at a page, visitor of session level>']);
```

This is how you'd set it up to track Ian Cleary as an author at page level:

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```
_gaq.push(['_setCustomVar',1,'author','Ian Cleary',3]);
```

Think about all the different possibilities of tracking additional items particular to your site. Another example would be tracking categories and tags within your blog. Within analytics you could filter out categories and tags and see traffic generated for each.

Summary

Google analytics is extremely powerful but we need to set some time aside to set it up correctly. How do you use analytics? What are your best reports? Have you any questions?

Bonus: Understanding Google Analytics is essential. [Download a summary of the most important terms](#) a summary of the most important terms and an added bonus of some ninja tricks for goal tracking in Google Analytics.

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