

MARKETING 101

Making Sense of Analytics

Welcome!



Embarking on the realm of analytics may seem intimidating, especially if numbers and statistics aren't your forte. However, dismissing analytics can mean overlooking valuable insights crucial for your business. It's time to shift this perspective. In this comprehensive module, we not only introduce you to analytics but aim to empower you to confidently interpret and utilize the data derived from your website and social media platforms.

In this module we are going to introduce you to analytics and hopefully get you comfortable with a comprehensive system in place to capture and analyze the stats on how your business is doing online.

During this module, we are going to cover the following:

- **How to set up your Google Analytics**
- **What metrics are important with Social and Google Analytics**
- **Conducting an audit using the information you gather from analytics**

By the end of this module, you'll not only be acquainted with the tools but also adept at utilizing them to propel your business forward.

Let's dive into this exploration together and unravel the mysteries of analytics!

Let's dive in!

- Katt Stearns

M O D U L E # 1

**Google
Analytics**

Google Analytics

Even if you've never delved into Google Analytics (GA), you've likely reaped its benefits without even realizing it.

Google Analytics isn't just any tool; it's a free website analytics powerhouse designed to offer you a deep dive into your site's overall performance. Think of Google Analytics as the tool that will tell you how people like your website.

It will look at all of the details of your website, including:



Where do people come from (social media, organic traffic, referral websites)



What pages do they visit?



What pages do they land on?



What countries and cities are they from?

And so much more...

Now, I get it. For some, Google Analytics can seem daunting and overwhelming; it's often a tool that you have to set up, but you always need help navigating.

With that said, we will walk you through how to set up and analyze your Google Analytics.

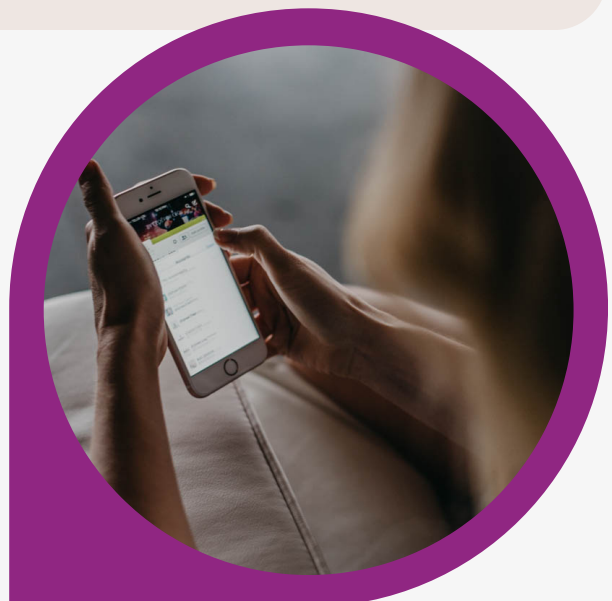
Setting up Google Analytics

For the longest time, all Google Analytics accounts were using the Universal Analytics (UA) version. However, as of the summer of 2023, Google has decided to sunset that version and introduce a new one named Google Analytics 4, or GA4.

If you currently have the UA account, you might still be collecting data. However, there's a good chance it will cease soon. It's advisable to ensure that you have the GA4 account set up to have all your data moved over and in one place.

I have prepared two documents to assist you with setting up Google Analytics if you haven't done so already:

- [Setting up your new GA4 Property \[You Previously had Google Analytics\]](#)
- [Setting up Google Analytics for the first time](#)



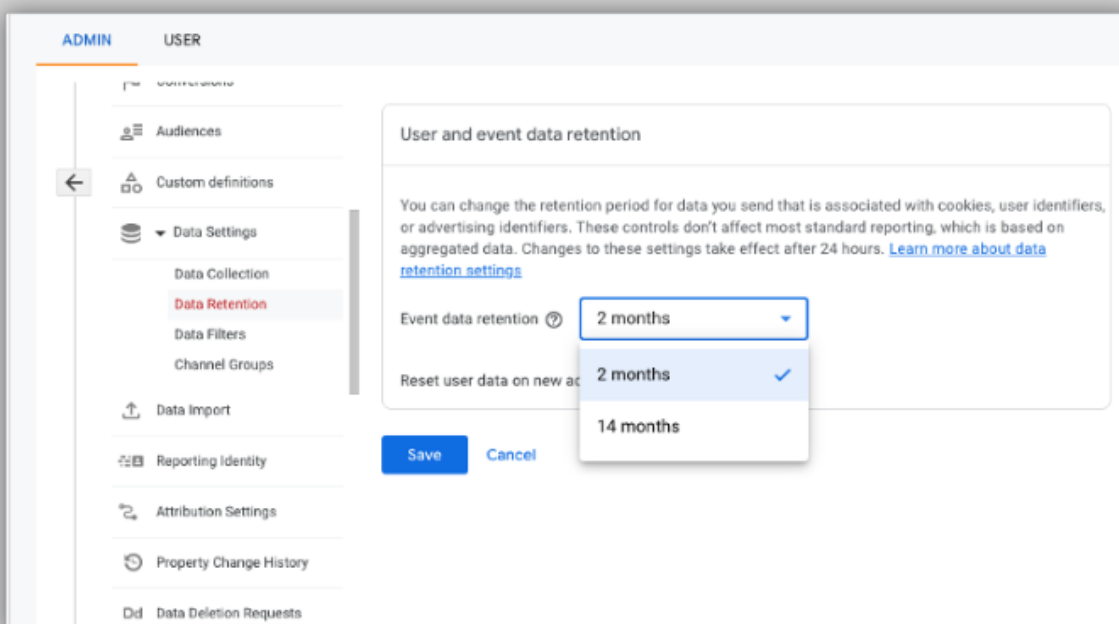
What Kind of Information Can Google Analytics Tell You?

Let's dive a little deeper into how you can use Google Analytics to better understand your customers and improve your business. Before we dive deep into that, there is an important action you need to take on your GA4 account.

By default, GA4 only stores two months of data, whereas Universal allows you to have your data never expire. Fortunately, you can extend this to 14 months or download your analytics in a CSV file.

To adjust your data retention, follow these steps:

- Log into your Google Analytics account.
- Go to the admin
- Under the property tab click on "Data Settings"
- Under the drop down select "Data Retention"
- Adjust the drop down from 2 months to 14 months
- Click Save



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You can use Google Analytics to discover the behavior of those visiting your website or app, including what pages they are visiting, and whether your goals are being accomplished (purchases, bookings, inquiries etc.). These details and insights can help you develop strategies to refine your marketing efforts.

There are several audience metrics listed in Google Analytics. Still, the main available insights you should be paying attention to track, visualize, and gain information about your audience are as follows:

Users

Users is the most-tracked Google Analytics metric. The User metric shows the total number of visitors who have generated at least one session in any time period on your website. Any time a new visitor lands on your website or app, Google Analytics assigns them a unique ID that's stored as a cookie in their browser. If the user returns to your site again later using the same browser, Google Analytics will log it as a returning user; however, if the user visits your website a second time using a different browser or through an app, they will be assigned a new client ID, and Google Analytics would count this visit as a new user.

Sessions

A session is the period of time a user is active on your site or app. If a user is inactive for 30 minutes or more, any future activity is attributed to a new session. One helpful point to note is that if a user views the website or app at midnight, a new session is not activated.

Pageviews

A pageview is a view of a page on your website or app by a user. The pageview metric shows how often visitors load and reload your web and app content in their browser.

Pages Per Session

Pages per session is a standard Google Analytics metric that's commonly used to measure engagement. Each session counts the number of pages visited as they proceed along their visitation path. Pages/Sessions can help determine how well the visitor flows through your content by displaying how many pages are visited before completing a conversion.

Average Session Duration

This metric records the average length of a session in hours, minutes, and seconds. The more relevant your site content is to the visitor, the longer the average session duration will be. Average session duration is calculated by the total duration of all sessions (in seconds) divided by the number of sessions.

Bounce Rate

Google Analytics previously identified a bounce rate as anyone who visited a single website or app page with no event triggered. However, with the increased focus on long-form content, Google has now changed how it calculates bounce rate. A bounce rate is the percentage of sessions that were NOT engaged.

Google's definition of an engaged session includes a session that meets at least one of the following criteria: a session lasting longer than 10 seconds, triggered a conversion event, viewed 2 or more pages.

This means that if you have a blog and someone spends 10 minutes reading the article and then leaves your website, it will NOT count as a bounce, whereas previously it did.

The goal of this is to still focus on having a lower number. Most websites have an average bounce rate of around 50%, and any bounce rate under 50% is typically considered very good.

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New Sessions

% New Sessions is the total percentage of first-time sessions on your website in a given time period. It tracks the number of new visitors coming to your website and the extent to which you are encouraging them to return. This percentage of new visitors indicates how well your advertising and marketing draws in new potential customers.

Traffic Acquisition

The Traffic acquisition report is designed to help you understand where your website and app visitors are coming from. The traffic acquisition report tells you where users came from, including organic search, paid campaigns, social media, etc. You can use the information in your traffic acquisition report to make decisions about future marketing campaigns and determine the efficacy of your marketing efforts, where you should be spending more time and what areas are underperforming.

Google Analytics provides detailed information about how your content is performing.

Website Audit

Once you have your Google Analytics installed, let it spend 30-days gathering data and then you can do a small website audit by answering these questions:

- What city/country does your audience come from and does it align with your target audience?
- What page(s) do visitors land on?
- What are the most visited pages and why do you think?
- What are the least visited pages and why do you think?
- How do visitors find your website (Social media, organic, referral)
- What is the average time on your website/page?
- What do you feel is working well and what is not working well that you can improve?

Dive deeper into Analytics

Google Analytics 4 has a number of benefits to Tourism businesses to help you understand more about your visitors' preferences and behaviours. Like any new tool, there are some learning curves that you will need to go through before you are fully comfortable with the platform.

To help you drive a bit deeper into Google Analytics, here are a few resources:

GOOGLE ANALYTICS DEMO ACCOUNT:

Google has created a free GA4 demo account for web and app that you can gain access to. This free tool allows you to create custom views, metrics and reports so you can test out different settings before you make the adjustments on your own account:

<https://support.google.com/analytics/answer/6367342?hl=en#zippy=%2Cin-this-article>

GOOGLE ANALYTICS ACADEMY:

Analytics Academy helps you to learn more about all the different free and paid services Google has to offer. Start with some of their basic programs or dive deeper into advanced tools.

<https://analytics.google.com/analytics/academy/>

HOW TO ADD GOOGLE SEARCH CONSOLE DATA TO GA4:

Integrate your Google Search Console to your GA4 account to easily track organic search traffic to your website.

<https://support.google.com/analytics/answer/10737381?hl=en>

HOW TO ADD GOOGLE ADS DATA TO GA4:

Link your Google Ads account directly to your GA4 account to see the full customer cycle.

<https://support.google.com/analytics/answer/9379420?hl=en#zippy=%2Cin-this-article>

M O D U L E # 2

**Social Media
Analytics**

Social media Analytics

Of course, measuring website activity and the triggers that drive people to your website is only one part of the story. Social media is an important part of any digital strategy. That means we must also dig into social media analytics to determine things like what to post, when to post, and how much to post.

There are a number of tools and services you can use to pull social media analytics. These include social media management tools such as HootSuite and Sprout Social. But don't feel that you need to buy or use these tools; every social media platform has analytics available to help you better understand your content. (e.g. Facebook analytics).

Regardless of what source you ultimately use, there are a similar set of measurements you'll want to keep your eye on:

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FOLLOWER GROWTH RATE: Follower growth rate helps you determine whether your content (and, by extension, your business) is expanding its audience reach and catching new people's attention. The percentage of change in your follower count tells you about the health of your marketing campaigns and efforts. It is calculated by dividing the number of followers you gained over the previous month by the number of followers you had at the beginning of it.

TOTAL FOLLOWERS: This metric indicates how many users actively follow your business account, indicating that they are interested in learning about important updates and seeing your content.

TOTAL ENGAGEMENTS: Your total engagement count is the sum of the audience's interaction with your content over a period of time. This total demonstrates how engaged your audience is with the content you are posting or promoting.

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ENGAGEMENT RATE: Engagement rate measures the interaction social content earns relative to reach or other audience figures. It is calculated by dividing your total engagements (likes/comments/shares/taps forward/taps back/replies/retweets on stories) by your follower count. This metric helps demonstrate performance trends in your content and determines what content resonates best with your audience.

IMPRESSIONS: Impressions are a measurement of how many times your content was displayed, regardless of whether it generated a click or any other form of engagement.

ORGANIC IMPRESSIONS: How often was your content shown in your followers' feeds without adding any money (advertising) to the content?

PAID IMPRESSIONS: How many times was your paid content (sponsored ad or boosted post) shown to your target users?

REACH: Reach measures how many people see your content by counting actual views of your posts. This metric is different from impressions because if the same person sees your post three times, that will count as three impressions, but, three views of the post by one individual is only counted once for reach.

TOTAL POSTS: Your total posts metric indicates how much content you posted on your social channel during a certain time period. It is important to track this metric as it can help you determine whether your audience is responding well to the amount of content you are producing or if you are oversaturating their feeds.



Getting the Most out of Your Social Media Analytics

To help you get the most out of your social media analytics, here is a little experiment that I encourage you to run to understand what works and what doesn't. Here are a few steps to help you get started.

1

Figure out who your ideal client is AND what they're buying. It's possible that people like what you're saying but not what you're selling. So it's worth going the extra step to ensure you're filling the needs of those you're attracting to your social media.

2

Start posting...consistently! By posting consistently, you're creating content. It's that content that will help you know and understand your audience better. You'll be able to get the answers to your questions, including when and what to post. Don't wait to try to discover the "perfect time." By posting consistently and testing different times, you'll be able to see when your audience is online and discover the best windows to post within.



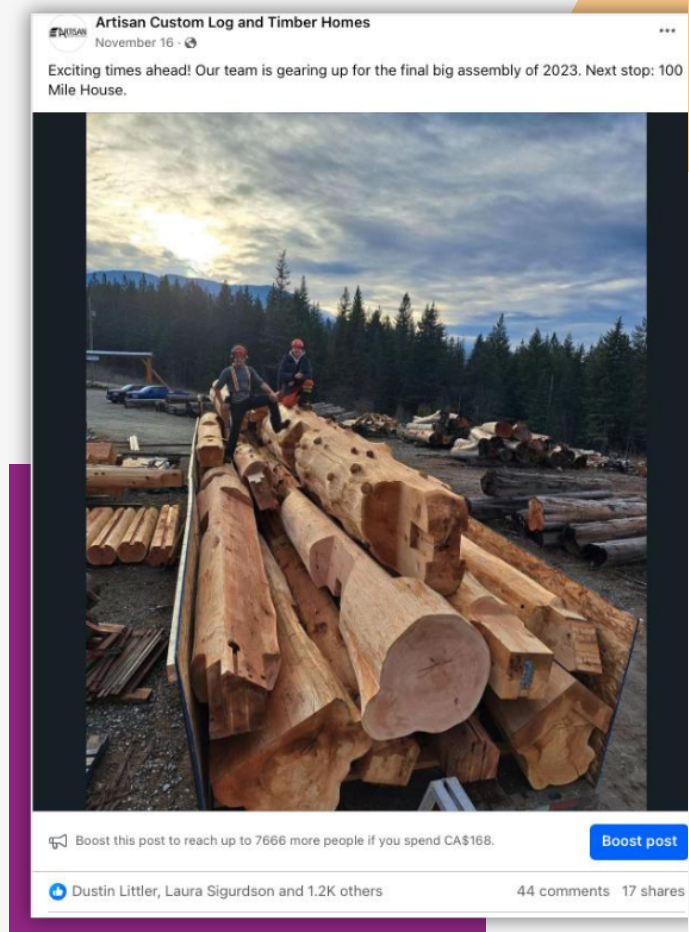
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Evaluate your post reach and engagement. Once you've consistently posted, you'll be able to compare posts and better understand the reach and engagement of your account. You'll want to duplicate what works well.

Let's take a quick example of what works well for a client on Facebook (video, posts, and status updates) to determine what performs best. First, I test posting in all forms of content and context on the page at different times. As a result, I find that images perform the best. Both single images and images with multiple photos. I also found that the best time for me to post is in the evenings.

*Note: posting constantly doesn't mean you should be sharing poor content. You still want your content to be strong (no Google images or clip art) ,but just up your frequency a bit to help you learn from your analytics.



Exercise, Exercise, Exercise

After posting more frequently for 1-2 weeks, let's start to dive a little deeper into our analytics and understand how our content is performing.

let's start to dive a little deeper.

Exercise 1 - Week 1

Take a look at the posts you published last week. Make a note of the ones that performed best. What about them made them stand out? What type of post was it (video, post, status update)? What did the post talk about? Now, make a note of the posts that didn't perform as well. Are the results what you expected? What has your audience taught you? Create more content that's similar to what worked the previous week.

Remember, your audience is speaking to you based on where you're at. So don't expect to see 100 reactions if you only have 100 followers. But listen to what your audience is saying no matter what size it is.

Exercise 2 - Week 2

Evaluate the posts from the previous two weeks and take notes on what you've learned. What content continues to outperform? What does your audience enjoy seeing most from you? What do you need to duplicate and what do you need to test further?

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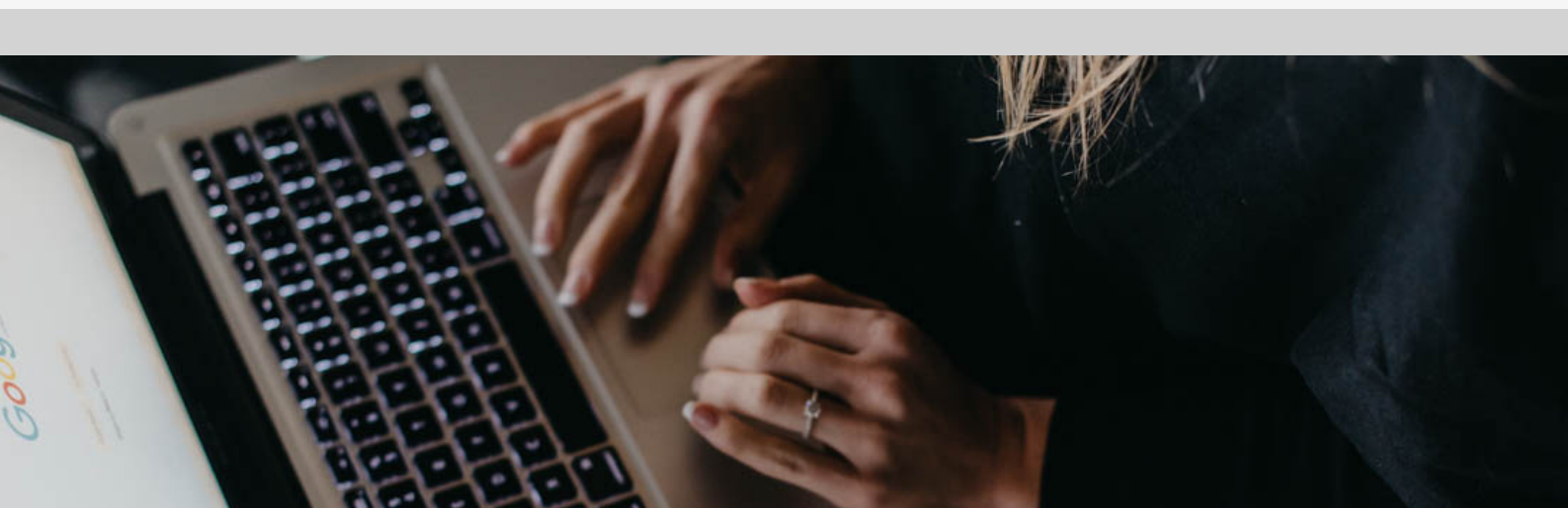
Exercise 3 - Week 3

Now that you have three weeks' worth of posts to dig into, identify the top three things you've learned from your audience. What content do they prefer to consume from you (video, posts, status updates)? What topics do they enjoy most? Now it's time to get strategic! Create posts for the week ahead that showcase the things that your audience has shown you they love most about your content.

Now let's boost it

At the end of the week, pick one post to get more exposure by boosting a post. It doesn't have to be much money (when I first started, I'd test \$3-5 to boost a post). It's about picking the most strategic post and putting some money behind a targeted ad to get some traction and action.

Continue this process to help you better understand your audience.



In Closing.

Analytics can be overwhelming at first. There is a lot of data and a lot of information and how exactly you need to use it can be a little gray. But as you spend more and more time reviewing analytics and finding what works and what doesn't work, you can better understand the signals you need to look for.

You should remember there is no magic bullet, that everyone, even the big brands out there, is testing, testing and testing content. What worked for them 6 months ago might not work now. So, like you, they are also using analytics and tools to help better understand what they need to do to improve their content and digital marketing.

- *Katt Stearns*



CHECK LIST

- Setup Google Analytics (download the additional checklists)
- Change the data retention in Google Analytics from two months to 14 months.
- Add Google Search Console Data to GA4:
<https://support.google.com/analytics/answer/10737381?hl=en>
- Add Google Ads Data to GA4:
<https://support.google.com/analytics/answer/9379420?hl=en#zippy=%2Cin-this-article>
- Review your Google Analytics at least once a month.
- Signup for a Google Demo Account:
<https://support.google.com/analytics/answer/6367342?hl=en#zippy=%2Cin-this-article>
- Signup for Google Analytics Academy:
<https://analytics.google.com/analytics/academy/>
- Ensure you have a business account for your social media accounts so you can collect analytics.
- Learn where to find your analytics on each platform.
- If you use a scheduling tool, review the analytics within the tool.
- Do a social media audit on your content.
- Review your analytics at least once a month.

