



tourism
northernireland

Google Analytics basics



Contents

Google Analytics: an introduction	3
How to install Google Analytics	3
Google Analytics interface	4
Audience	5
Changing the date range	6
Putting stats into context	7
Analysing trends	7
Understanding metrics	8
Useful terminology	9
New vs returning visits	9
Acquisition	10
Google ads	11
Search console	12
Social	12
Campaigns	12
Behaviour	13
User flow	14
Site content	14
Site speed	14
Site search	14
Events	15
Publisher	15
Experiments	15
Conversion	16
Overview	19

Google Analytics: an introduction

Web analytics is the measurement, collection, analysis and reporting of internet data for purposes of understanding and optimising web usage.

(Definition: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Web_analytics)

Google Analytics is an analytics tool, hosted by Google, which provides you with insight into your website activity, providing you with information to allow you to make informed decisions on your website performance, design and conversion.

Websites and web activity can be accurately measured to provide much greater insight about your site. It allows you to answer questions such as:

- Who is visiting my website?
- Where are visitors to my website coming from, in terms of location?
- How are people getting to my website
i.e. what sites are referring traffic to my website?
- How are people accessing my site via desktop / mobile / tablet?
- What pages are most popular on my website?

How to install Google Analytics

First, you need a Google Analytics account. If you have an existing Google account, then you can set up your Google Analytics using that Google account. If not, you will need to set up a new Google account at accounts.google.com.

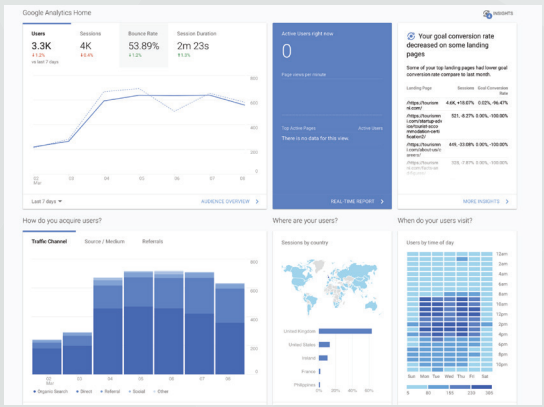
Set up your account and property

Once you have a Google account, visit www.google.com/analytics and click the “Start for Free” button. Follow the onscreen instructions to set up your account. Once you have completed your account information select the “Get Tracking ID” button.

Google will now provide you with a snippet of tracking code, this must be installed on every page of your website in order to gather data about that page. Help from a web designer/developer may be needed at this point.

Google Analytics interface

On logging into Google Analytics, you will land on the “Home” dashboard screen where you can see key pieces of data from across your website. Google also provides a useful “INSIGHTS” tool at the top right of the screen.



- Home
- Customization
- REPORTS
 - Real-Time
 - Audience
 - Acquisition
 - Behavior
 - Conversions

Along the left hand side of the main Google Analytics report items, which are categorised under four main headings :

- Audience
- Acquisition
- Behaviour
- Conversions

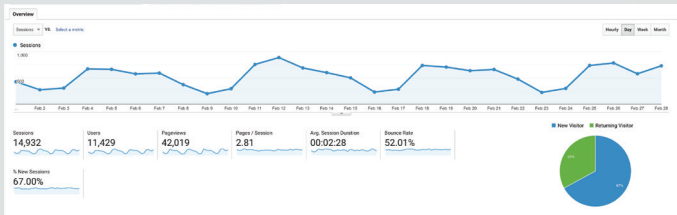
You also have the option to view your data in “Real Time” (a live view of current on site activity).

Audience

Google Analytics Audience reports provide an in-depth look at traffic to your website and the behaviour of users after they arrive.

Audience Overview

Within this page is a graph that displays sessions (visits to your website) per day. You can modify this graph to display different metrics like Average Session Duration or Pages per Session. You can also change the unit of time to hourly, weekly, or monthly



Beneath the graph are top-level session details showing you the number of Users who have performed sessions on your website, Pageviews, Pages per Session, Average Session Duration, Bounce Rate and the % of new sessions.

Demographic	Language	Sessions	% Sessions
Language	1. en-gb	8,021	53.75%
Country	2. en-us	4,967	33.26%
City	3. en-us	238	1.59%
System	4. en-gb	103	0.69%
Browser	5. en	92	0.62%
Operating System	6. en-us	82	0.55%
Service Provider	7. en-us	45	0.30%
Mobile	8. en-us	40	0.27%
Operating System	9. en-us	39	0.26%
Service Provider	10. en-us	26	0.17%
Screen Resolution			

[view full report](#)

At the bottom of the Audience Overview are quick links to top Demographic, System and Mobile data, along with a chart showing the number of Sessions on your website from visitors speaking a particular language.

Within the Audience tab you'll also find the following report categories:

- **Active Users** — Users who have visited your site within 1-30 days
- **User Explorer** — Individual user identification and analysis
- **Demographics**—The age and gender makeup of your website audience
- **Interests**—User behaviours segmented by affinity and marketing categories
- **Geo**—The languages and locations of your website audience
- **Behaviour**—Comparisons of new and returning visitors, how often return visits occur and how long visitors spend on your site
- **Technology**—Visitor browsers, operating systems and networks
- **Mobile**—A breakdown of devices used to access your website
- **Custom**—Reports you define
- **Benchmarking** —Your data compared to industry averages
- **Users Flow**—A visualisation of how users move through your website

Changing the date range

By default, the past 7 days of data are shown. You can change the date range at any time by clicking on the calendar tab and selecting the start and end dates you want.

You can also compare date ranges to allow you to ascertain if there have been any significant differences in traffic levels across 'Compare to'. When using the date selector to set comparison dates, check the 'Compare to' tick box and choose between "Previous period" or "Previous year" from the drop down. Now select the date range from the calendar view on the left and then select "Apply".

Mar 2, 2019 - Mar 8, 2019 ▲

January 2019							February 2019							March 2019						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
27	28	29	30	31			24	25	26	27	28			24	25	26	27	28	29	30
																				31

Date Range: Custom ▾

Feb 1, 2019 - Feb 28, 2019

Compare to: Previous period ▾

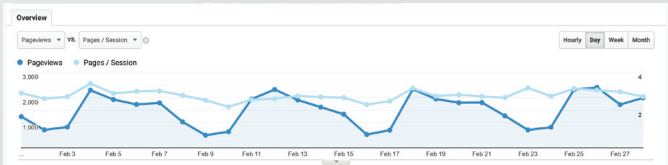
Apply cancel

If you set comparison dates, this will be applied to every report you view thereafter until you un-check the "Compare to" button.

Hovering over the graphs will provide you with additional pop-up statistics.

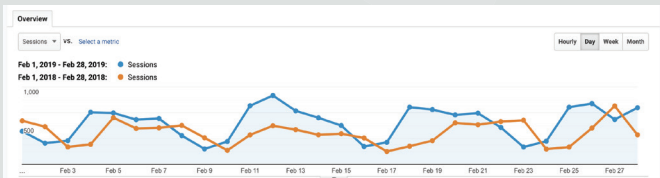
Putting stats into context

When analysing your traffic, avoid focusing on just a single metric as it often needs placed into greater context before sense can be made of it. For example, the Pageviews result by itself isn't useful because one visitor can view multiple pages and therefore perform multiple page views. However, when you consider Pageviews alongside other metrics such as Pages per Session, then it starts to become more useful.



Analysing trends

Identifying trends can be a useful method in further understanding your website stats. It is important to bear in mind however that some trends may be weekly or seasonal, so ensure that you familiarise yourself with typical website stats and weekly, monthly and seasonal trends to ensure that any difference in trends you are looking at are not just typical seasonal variations.



If traffic spikes during a particular period, then more investigation could be carried out to identify why, for example, were promotional activities being carried out to drive traffic to your website?

Understanding metrics

Sessions, Users and Pageviews

Pageviews are recorded every time a web page loads up correctly (if the page fails to load correctly and Google Analytics Javascript doesn't load, then no page view can be recorded). If a user refreshes or re-loads a page, this will be counted as an additional page view.

Pageviews are different to a session, since one session can result in multiple page views. If someone comes to your site and views the home page, then the offers page, then the home page again, and then leaves your site - the total pageviews for the visit is 3. Whilst this all occurred during just one session.

A **Session** is the period of interaction between your website and the users' browser. In the case of Google Analytics, if a user closes their browser or window, or doesn't actively use their browser for a period of 30 minutes or more, then this will end the Session. If the user, after the 30 minutes, continues on where they left off then this will start a new session and the person will have this registered as their second visit.

A **User** is an unduplicated visitor to your website. When a user comes to your site, their browser is issued with a cookie. The cookie records a random, unique user ID and also records a time stamp of the users first visit. The random user ID and the time stamp are combined to create a unique ID for that user.

A User can visit a site multiple times, and during each visit can conduct multiple pageviews. The user metric therefore tends to be smaller than the sessions metric, and the sessions metrics tends to be smaller than the pageviews metric.

Useful terminology

Here are a few more common words you'll come across in analytics.

- **Bounce:** the user's activity on your site just involved the loading of a single page.
- **Conversion:** refers to an activity carried out by the user which fulfils the intended web page purpose (product purchase, download, newsletter subscription etc.)
- **Entrances:** the number of times visitors entered your site through a specified page or set of pages.
- **Landing Page:** the entry page is the first page viewed by a visitor.
- **Exit Point:** the exit point is the last page viewed by a website visitor.

New vs Returning visits

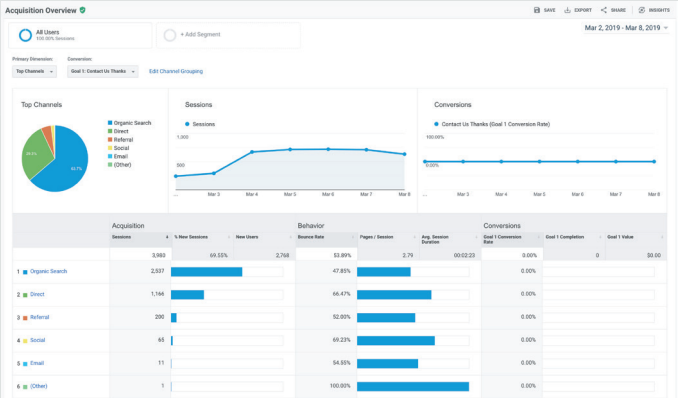
The “new vs. returning” report classifies each visit as coming from either a new visitor or a returning visitor. So when someone visits your site for the first time, the visit is categorised as “from a new visitor.” If the person has browsed your website before, the visit is categorised as “from a returning visitor.” While you want to drive new visitors to your website you also want to maintain a high level of returning visitors, which means your site is engaging enough to ensure that visitors return on a regular basis.

It is worth noting that when a user visits a site via their computer at home, then on their mobile phone, they will be classed as a new visitor on both occasions. If they then look at the site on their PC at work, they are a new visitor again. Likewise, if they clear their cookies on a device, they become a new user again.

Acquisition

The Acquisition section tells you where your visitors originated from, such as search engines, social networks or website referrals. This is a key section when determining which online marketing tactics are bringing the most visitors to your website and where you should focus marketing activities going forward.

The Acquisition Overview gives you a quick view of the top channels sending visitors to your website, as well as the associated Acquisition, Behaviour and Conversions details for each channel.



The top channels Google Analytics uses to track your traffic sources are as follows:

- **Organic Search** - Visitors who come to your website after searching Google.com/.co.uk and other search engines.
- **Paid Search** - Visitors who come to your website from a paid advertising account e.g Google Adwords or other paid search advertising software.
- **Referral** - Visitors who come to your website from another website by clicking on a link.

-
- **Direct** - Visitors who come to your website without a traceable referral source, such as typing your URL into their address bar or using a bookmark on their browser.
 - **Email** – Visitors who come to your website from email marketing activity.
 - **Social** - Visitors who come to your website from a social network.
 - **Other** - If you use UTM parameters for custom campaign tracking, the traffic linked to those campaigns is listed here.

The All Traffic section lets you quickly analyse where most of your traffic comes from—it may be a particular search engine, a social channel or even a website on which you advertise.

Just looking at traffic levels alone however will not provide you with a great deal of information, as a source which drives a large amount of traffic may indeed result in poor conversion. Some indicators of poor quality traffic include: high bounce rates and high exit rates.

Google Ads

The Google Ads report will show information from a connected Google Adwords account. This is useful to look at if you are running paid advertising. To connect your Adwords account go to: Admin > Product Linking > Google Ads Linking.

Search Console

The Search Console report in Analytics provides information about the performance of your organic-search traffic. You can see data like user queries and the number of times your site URLs appear in search results (impressions), along with post-click data about site engagement like bounce rate and ecommerce conversion rate.

Before you can see the Search Console reports, you will need to add your site using at search.google.com/search-console/about

To connect your Search console account go to:
Admin > Product Linking > All Products > Search Console

Social

The Social section gives you more in-depth details about social activity related to your website including Network Referrals, showing you the top social networks driving visitors to your website and which landing pages on your website received the most traffic from social networks.

Campaigns

Campaigns (the other acquisition channel) tracks visitors who come from campaigns you (or a third-party application) have set up. Campaigns use UTM parameters appended to the end of a URL a visitor would click on.

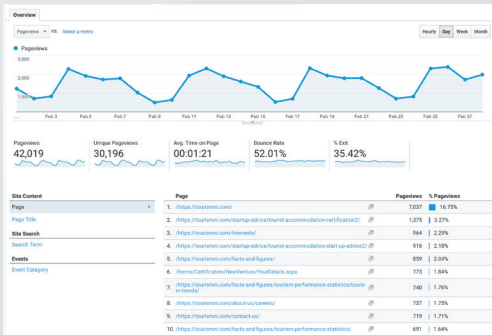
Within the campaigns section you'll also find the Keywords report which breaks down keywords used to find your site—both from organic and paid search. Unfortunately, thanks to Google's decision to encrypt keyword data, these reports aren't always useful because the majority of keywords are listed as (not provided). To see your organic search keywords from Google, you can look at your Google Search Console.

These key words can then help to form the basis of search engine optimisation activities to help drive organic traffic to your website.

Campaign	Acquisition			Behavior			Conversions <small>Goal 1: confirmation page</small>		
	Sessions	% New Sessions	New Users	Bounce Rate	Pages / Session	Avg. Session Duration	confirmation page (Goal 1 Conversion Rate)	confirmation page (Goal 1 Completions)	confirmation page (Goal 1 Value)
	17,905 <small>9.80% (182,222)</small>	73.26% <small>Avg for View: 72.74% (9.72%)</small>	13,118 <small>9.87% (132,618)</small>	42.11% <small>Avg for View: 59.73% (29.32%)</small>	3.00 <small>Avg for View: 3.23 (34.90%)</small>	00:01:36 <small>Avg for View: 00:01:40 (-3.80%)</small>	0.00% <small>Avg for View: 0.00% (0.00%)</small>	0 <small>% of Total: 0.00% (0)</small>	£0.00 <small>% of Total: 0.00% (£0.00)</small>
1. Oct 18 - March 19 - ROI	5,026 (28.07%)	79.15%	3,978 (30.32%)	41.58%	2.99	00:01:32	0.00%	0 (0.00%)	£0.00 (0.00%)
2. Oct 18 - March 19 - NI	4,321 (24.13%)	65.45%	2,828 (21.56%)	28.56%	4.45	00:02:34	0.00%	0 (0.00%)	£0.00 (0.00%)
3. Belfast ROI Search	2,724 (15.21%)	75.04%	2,044 (15.58%)	44.82%	2.75	00:01:35	0.00%	0 (0.00%)	£0.00 (0.00%)
4. AO - Golf NI - Nov 18 - March 19	1,322 (7.38%)	74.89%	990 (7.55%)	65.28%	1.66	00:00:38	0.00%	0 (0.00%)	£0.00 (0.00%)
5. AO - Golf ROI - Nov 18 - Marc 19	1,126 (6.29%)	84.99%	957 (7.30%)	49.47%	1.66	00:00:25	0.00%	0 (0.00%)	£0.00 (0.00%)
6. The Open at Royal Portrush - Podcast Special - Win a luxury golf break	1,123 (6.27%)	66.16%	743 (5.66%)	53.87%	1.61	00:00:49	0.00%	0 (0.00%)	£0.00 (0.00%)
7. GoT NI Search	963 (5.38%)	73.52%	708 (5.40%)	36.45%	3.00	00:01:34	0.00%	0 (0.00%)	£0.00 (0.00%)
8. GoT ROI Search	831 (4.64%)	79.66%	662 (5.03%)	43.80%	2.51	00:01:14	0.00%	0 (0.00%)	£0.00 (0.00%)
9. Win a luxury golf break in Northern Ireland - enter now	186 (1.04%)	57.53%	107 (0.82%)	59.68%	1.74	00:01:21	0.00%	0 (0.00%)	£0.00 (0.00%)
10. receipt-confirmation	162 (0.90%)	27.78%	45 (0.34%)	33.95%	4.15	00:02:20	0.00%	0 (0.00%)	£0.00 (0.00%)

Behaviour

The Behaviour section reveals what your visitors do on your website. Specifically, the reports tell you what pages' people visit and what actions they take while visiting.

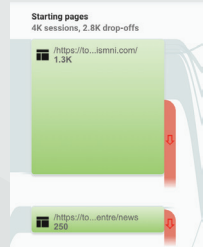


The Behaviour Overview report provides information on:

- **Pageviews**—The total number of pages viewed including repeated views of a single page.
- **Unique Pageviews**—The number of individual people who have viewed a specific page at least once during a visit.
- **Avg. Time on Page**—The average amount of time users spend viewing a specific page or screen, or set of pages or screens.
- **Bounce Rate**—The percentage of single-page visits or the number of visits in which people left your website from the same page they entered on.
- **% Exit**—The percentage of users who exit from a page or set of pages.

User Flow

The Users Flow report is a graphical representation of the paths users took through your site, from the source, through the various pages, and where along their paths they exited your site. The Users Flow report lets you compare volumes of traffic from different sources, examine traffic patterns through your site, and troubleshoot the efficiency of your site.



Site Content

This section contains reports about how visitors engage with pages on your website. You can use the All Pages report to quickly see your top content which should help determine what content performs best on your website.

The Content Drilldown report is helpful for websites that have subfolders such as domain com/blog/ and domain com/support/ or something similar . The Landing Pages report lets you see the top pages on your website where visitors enter and the Exit Pages report shows the last pages people visit before exiting your website. These are the pages you want to look at to see what you can do to keep visitors on your website longer.

Site Speed

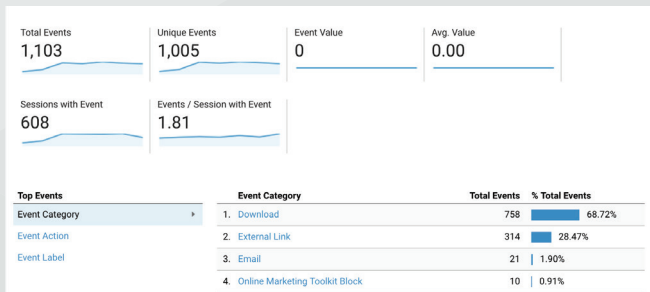
The Site Speed section has crucial reports that identify areas of your website that you may need to optimise as a slow site may mean that users give up and go elsewhere. Using these metrics, you can work toward improving page load time and page download time by optimising the content on your website.

Site Search

The Site Search section displays the metrics for visitors who use the search box on your website. Beneath these metrics, you can view quick reports for the terms searched, categories and the pages where visitors initiated a search.

Events

Events are recorded when users interact with your content for example click on a download item, view a video, or click a button. They are defined by what you want to track and are usually set up by a web designer / developer. Events can be assigned as a website goal. More information on event tracking can be found at developers.google.com.



Publisher

Within the Publisher section you can find Google AdSense reporting (if you have and are connected to an AdSense account). This is where you would see advertising results and revenue. You can find out more at google.com/adsense.

Experiments

Within the Experiments section you can find Google Optimizer reporting (if you are running this software on your website). This is where you would see results from using Google Optimizer functionality such as A/B split testing. You can find out more at optimize.google.com.

Conversion

The Conversions section shows you the path your customers take on your website, from the entrance to making a purchase or becoming a lead.

Goals

The Goals Overview report gives you a quick summary of the total number of goal completions made on your website.

A goal is just that - a goal, an activity or an interaction that you want a user to achieve on your website. Typically, this can be that you want the user to contact you, to make a purchase, to register/ sign up or to book an appointment.

There are multiple ways in which you can define a goal in GA, the most common are:

- A URL destination goal is a page that visitors see once they have completed an activity, for example, a “Thank you for signing up” page or a receipt page for a purchase. A URL destination goal triggers a conversion when a visitor views the page you’ve specified.
- A Time on site goal is a time threshold that you define. When a visitor spends more or less time on your site than the threshold you specify, a conversion is triggered.
- A Pages per visit goal allows you to define a pages viewed threshold. When a visitor views more pages - or fewer pages - than the threshold you’ve set, a conversion is triggered.

Google provides goal templates within the Admin > Goals section of Analytics. You can get more information on setting up goals from Google Analytics help section but if you are not sure, ask your web developer for assistance.

Goal URLs

The Goal URLs report shows the URLs on your website where visitors convert. If you use the Destination goal type, this is the URL visitors land upon once a goal has been completed, such as a thank-you or confirmation page.

Reverse Goal Path

The Reverse Goal Path report displays up to four steps in the goal completion journey. This report shows you two things. First, it shows you the most popular pathways people take to complete a goal on your website. Second, it shows how many steps people take to complete a goal.

Funnel Visualisations

If you set up your destination goal to track multiple steps in the conversion process, you will be able to see the steps your visitors take in the Funnel Visualization. Funnel visualisation is critical for those sites with multiple steps in the goal completion process. You can find out where in the conversion process people drop out before making a purchase.

Ecommerce

For businesses that sell products through an ecommerce shopping system, Ecommerce reports will give you insights into your shoppers' journey from entry to conversion. You must specifically set up ecommerce tracking to use these reports.

Multi-Channel Funnels

Google Analytics typically attributes conversions to the last referral that brought the visitor to your website to make the conversion. Multi-Channel funnels help you understand the full journey of customers who convert on your website.

Ultimately, from the Multi-Channel Funnel reports, you will discover that it's not just one type of marketing that helps your business, but all types together.

Attribution

Attribution contains one report that helps you understand the difference in conversions attributed to the last interaction versus other attribution models, such as the first interaction.

Google Analytics offers the following example. Someone finds your site by clicking one of your AdWords ads. She returns one week later by clicking over from a social network. That same day, she comes back a third time via one of your email campaigns, and a few hours later, she returns directly and makes a purchase.

In the case above, the Last Interaction attribution is 100% credited to the direct return (the Direct Channel). The First Interaction attribution is 100% credited to the AdWords ad (the Paid Search Channel). The Linear attribution is credited evenly among Paid Search, Social Media, Email and Direct. Other attribution models are defined on this page.

Summary

Understanding what users are doing and not doing on your site can allow you to make decisions about how you might want to change your website. At the very least it also helps you understand whether or not those new potential customers are finding your site if they search for tourism businesses in your area.

Your website is a huge opportunity for you to get in front of a new audience- and the more insight that you can get about these individuals, the more you will be able to ensure that your website meets their needs and their expectations.

Here are some useful reports to look at on a monthly basis:

1. **Audience > Overview** - will show visits (sessions) and users (visitors) / new and returning.
2. **Audience > Mobile > Overview** - will help you to understand how visitors view your site by device.
3. **Aquisition > Overview** - understand which marketing channels are sending visitors to your website.
4. **Behaviour > Site Content > All Pages** - understand what visitors are looking at.
5. **Behaviour > Site Content > Landing Pages** - what is the first page visitors see (it is not always your homepage).
6. **Conversions > Goals > Overview** - how many visitors complete a goal that you have defined e.g. fill out a contact form, sign up for information.
- 7.* **Conversions > Ecommerce > Overview** - how much are you selling, where did the sale come from?

*if you sell online



**tourism
northernireland**

Tourism Northern Ireland,
Floors 10-12,
Linum Chambers, Bedford Square,
Bedford Street,
Belfast BT2 7ES

Tel: +44 (0) 28 9023 1221

Fax: +44 (0) 28 9024 0960

Email: info@tourismni.com