Google Universal Analytics Glossary

https://www.smartt.com/insights/google-universal-analytics-%E2%80%93-how-upgrade-why

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Introduction

The aim of this Google Universal Analytics Glossary project is to collect the most important Glossary for the Universal Analytics. The Universal Analytics (UA) is the previous version of Google Analytics. It was introduced in 2012 and was used by many websites for tracking their traffic.

After Google Analytics 4 released which is the new generation of Google's famous analytics platform, you might find it challenging to understand all the terminologies attached to the platforms related to the various Google Analytics versions.

There are so many reports and so much data inside the Universal Analytics and Google Analytics 4 (GA4). With huge information on the Internet sites of the different Google Analytics versions that makes kind of confusion especially for the beginners.

That's why we've compiled this Google Universal Analytics glossary to help you master essential Google Analytics definitions.

- Ameenah Al-Haidari

Account

An account is the place where all of your analytics and details in Google live. You can have multiple accounts within your workspace if you manage other businesses as well. It is generally best to maintain separate accounts for each business you manage.

Account Structure

Universal Analytics followed this traditional structure where a user could have up to 100 properties per account and create up to 25 views per property, which allowed users to create multiple properties and views to see data coming from various streams.

Acquisition

Acquisition refers to the way or the source through which a visitor reaches your website. Some of these sources can be social media, email, organic traffic, direct traffic from Google, etc.

Acquisition reporting

UA gives you insights into the performance of different customer acquisition channels, such as organic or paid ads. It helps to find out how visitors arrive at your website, which traffic source is working for you, and which pages require optimization.

Actions per Social Session

The number of social interactions per session.

Active Users

N/A

Analytics property tracks multiple domains

If an Analytics property collects data for multiple domains, the Search Console reports have data for only the single linked domain.

Analytics Tag

The Analytics tag is a snippet of JavaScript that collects and sends data to Analytics from a website. You can add the Analytics tag directly to the HTML of each page on your site, or indirectly using a tag management system such as Google Tag Manager.

App Tracking

App tracking is a screenview (a screenview is the app analog to a pageview). UA required marketers to create multiple views to access data from websites and applications separately.

Average Position

Average ranking in Google Search results.

Average Session Duration

In UA the session duration is calculated by taking the sum of all the time difference between two page views or two actions (which could include page views and events). So if a user spends 2 mins on page one and 20 mins on page two and leaves

then the session duration will be only 2 mins, the time difference between the two page views.

Assisted Conversion

Assisted conversion is when a user goes through multiple channels of your digital presence before converting to the next level in the buyer journey. For example, if a user first clicks on a Twitter link to arrive at your website, then exits and later returns to your website again from Google, Twitter will be considered as an assisted conversion channel.

Attribution

The process of assigning credit for sales and conversions to touchpoints in conversion paths. *Attribution* allows marketers to quantify each channel's contribution to sales and conversions. For example, many people may purchase on your site after searching for your brand on Google. However, they may have been introduced to your brand via a display ad or a blog. A marketer uses attribution to appropriately distribute monetary credit for purchases among the many marketing channels that may have contributed to each sale.

Attribution Model

An *attribution model* is the rule, or set of rules, that determines how credit for sales and conversions is assigned to touchpoints in conversion paths. For example, *Last Interaction* attribution assigns 100% credit to the final touchpoints (i.e., clicks) that immediately precede sales or conversions. *First Interaction* attribution assigns 100% credit to touchpoints that initiate conversion paths. These are two examples of attribution models.

Bounce Rate

Percentage of single page sessions in which there was no interaction with the page. A bounced session has a duration of 0 seconds. For example, if a user visits your website and reviews content on your homepage for several minutes, but leaves without clicking on any links or triggering any events being recorded as interaction events, then the session will count as a bounce.

Bounce Rate and Engagement

Uses bounce rate to measure user engagement.

Channels

Channels describe the various segments of incoming traffic on your website. By default, you will have channels of 'organic search', 'paid search', 'social', and 'email' each of which indicates the visitors acquired from the respective sources of traffic. You can also create more custom segments, depending on the new sources of traffic that you create.

Channel Grouping

A roll-up of traffic sources in the Acquisition reports that groups several marketing activities together. Channel groupings allow you to view and compare aggregated metrics by channel name, as well as individual traffic source, medium, or campaign name.

In the Acquisition section's Overview and Channels reports, you can see your data organized according to the Default Channel Grouping, a rule-based grouping of the most common sources of traffic, like Paid Search and Direct. This allows you to quickly check the performance of each of your traffic channels.

Clicks

Used for both Google Ads clicks and Google Search clicks.

Client ID

The Client ID is used to calculate unique users. It is a randomly generated string that acts as a pseudonymous identifier and pseudonymously identifies a browser instance. It gets stored in the browsers cookies, so subsequent visits to the same site can be associated with the same user. It helps track user interactions and activities during a session, allowing you to understand your audience's behavior better.

Content Grouping

A roll-up of content in the Behavior reports that groups several pages or screens together to better reflect the structure of your site or app. Content groupings allow you to view and compare aggregated metrics by content group name, as well as individual URL, page title, or screen name.

Content Grouping lets you group content into a logical structure that reflects how you think about your site or app, and then view and compare aggregated metrics by group name in addition to being able to drill down to the individual URL, page title, or screen name. For example, you can see the aggregated number of pageviews for all pages in a group like Men/Shirts, and then drill in to see each URL or page title.

Conversions

You define a goal to indicate that a particular user action is to be considered a conversion. For example, if you define a "Form Submit" goal, a conversion will be registered each time a user submits the form. UA counts only one conversion per session for each goal. So, if a user submits the form twice during the same session, only one conversion will be counted for the "Form Submit" goal.

Conversion Attribution

UA has robust attribution modeling features with multi-channel funnels and extensive attribution reports. It is essential in assessing conversion. What's more, Universal Analytics allows you to segment your attribution reports. Also, it provides you with data-driven attribution reports that work based on algorithms and let you assess converting and non-converting paths.

Cookies and Consent Requirements

In UA, data gets into the analytics platform from cookie-based tracking. The website sends cookies (or similar identifiers) to a user's web browser, allowing for monitoring web activity during that user's session on the site.

Cross-device Tracking

N/A

CTR

Click-through rate. Clicks/Impressions for both Google Ads and Google Search clicks.

Custom Dimensions

A user-defined descriptive attribute or characteristic of data. Custom dimensions can be used to describe data not included in the default dimensions in Analytics.

Customer journey analytics: funnels, user flows and more

With UA's session-based model, user flows and funnels are based on events that happened within one visit (session). It can be less accurate when the steps in a conversion funnel were completed during separate visits.

Data Sampling

With Universal Analytics, data sampling occurs automatically when you reach the monthly limit of 500,000 sessions.

Data Set

A container that holds the data you upload to Analytics.

- Data Sets are an essential component of the Data Import feature.
- A Data Set's *type* corresponds to the specific type of data you want to import. For example, there are Data Set types for User Data, Cost Data, Content Data, etc.
- When you create a Data Set, you define a *schema*, which is the structure that joins the data you upload with the existing data in your hits.

Data Setup Organization

You need to create separate properties for your website and app. In addition, each property is recommended to include 3 distinct views. The first view is unfiltered, where you store all of the raw data. The second is a test view, in which you add filters and conduct experiments. And the last is a master view that gathers all the goals, filters, and other customizations you've tested in the test view.

Different Metrics

Universal Analytics has the 'bounce rate' metric—the percentage of single-page sessions without interaction with the page. A bounced session has a duration of 0 seconds.

Dimension

A dimension is a descriptive attribute or characteristic of an object that can be given different values. For example, a geographic location could have dimensions called *Latitude*, *Longitude*, or *City Name*. Values for the *City Name* dimension could be *San Francisco*, *Berlin*, or *Singapore*.

Browser, *Exit Page*, *Screens*, and *Session Duration* are all examples of dimensions that appear by default in Analytics. Dimensions appear in all of your reports, though you might see different ones depending on the specific report. Use them to help organize, segment, and analyze your data.

Analytics also lets you create custom dimensions to hold additional types of data you send via the tracking code, or by using Data Import, or by using the Analytics API.

E-commerce

E-commerce tracking in Universal Analytics (UA) requires extra code and implementation on top of the normal page view tracking. Standard eCommerce tracking is very similar to the outdated classic Google Analytics e-commerce tracking.

Ecommerce Data

Ecommerce data in UA gives you insights into products with a high (or low) number of sales, the average revenue, the number of products per transaction, your online store's conversion rate or changes, and trends in transactions and revenue over time.

Engagement Rate

Engagement rate is more useful than 'bounce rate', when measuring the behaviors of users who may have viewed a single page and left without taking further action. Note that 'engagement rate' isn't the opposite of the 'bounce rate'.

Events

In Universal Analytics, events are created with the help of Google Tag Manger (GTM). When we create a UA event with GTM, we set up new tracking for something new. There are 4 specific "parameters" that we can send along with every event in Universal Analytics. The parameters:

- Event Category (category is required)
- Event Action (action is required)
- Event Label (label is optional)
- Event Value (value is optional)

Event count

N/A

Event Models

Manually generated and uses the category-action-label-value schema.

Exit

Exit refers to the last page a person visited in a session before they clicked out of the page or closed their browser.

Free Products

Audience: small- and medium-size businesses

Google Analytics: measure how people engage with your business online via your website, app and other online and offline touchpoints.

Google Tag Manager: easily manage and update website and app tags.

Google Looker Studio: turn data into visual dashboards and informative reports that are easy to share.

Frequency

Frequency is the number of times a person visits a particular page over a given time period. The total number of sessions divided by the total number of users gives the frequency of a page.

Goal

A configuration setting that allows you to track the valuable actions, or conversions, that happen on your site or mobile app.

Goals allow you to measure how well your site or app fulfills your target objectives. You can set up individual Goals to track discrete actions, like transactions with a minimum purchase amount or the amount of time spent on a screen. Each time a user completes a Goal, a conversion is logged in your Analytics account.

Goal Conversions

In Universal Analytics, you can report and analyze the conversion rate of each traffic source for each goal. You may use the 'end session' point to analyze and optimize the conversion rate.

Google Analytics (GA)

Google Analytics is a web analytics service offered by Google that tracks and reports website traffic and also the mobile app traffic & events, currently as a platform inside the Google Marketing Platform brand.

Hit

An interaction that results in data being sent to Analytics. Common hit types include page tracking hits, event tracking hits, and ecommerce hits.

Each time the tracking code is triggered by a user's behavior (for example, user loads a page on a website or a screen in a mobile app), Analytics records that activity. Each interaction is packaged into a hit and sent to Google's servers. Examples of hit types include:

- page tracking hits
- event tracking hits
- ecommerce tracking hits
- social interaction hits

Impression

Impressions are the number of times your ad appeared on a user's screen. It doesn't include clicks or views, it merely counts the number of times the ad was visible.

Interaction

Any type of user engagement activity (e.g. navigating to a new page on a website) during the user's session on your site or mobile app.

IP Address

Short for Internet Protocol address. Used to identify computers on the Internet. When your computer or device sends a request, like a search on Google, it tags the request with your IP address. That way Google knows where to send the response. It works like a return address would on a piece of mail.

You can find the public IP address you are currently using by searching "what is my ip address" on google.com.

JavaScript not enabled in browsers

Analytics collects data only when JavaScript is enabled. Users can opt out of data collection by implementing a browser add-on.

Keyword

In paid-search or Google Ads reports, describes a paid keyword from a search-engine-results page. In the organic-search reports, describes the actual query string a user entered in a web search.

Landing-Page URLs that Redirect

Analytics reports the URL that results from the redirect, for example: www.example.com

Measurement Protocol

A standard set of rules for collecting and sending hits from any internet-connected device to Analytics.

The Measurement Protocol lets you send data to Analytics from any internet-connected device. It's particularly useful when you want to send data to Analytics from a kiosk, a point of sale system, or anything that is not a website or mobile app. Because, while the Analytics JavaScript and mobile SDKs automatically build hits to send data to Analytics from websites and mobile apps, you must manually build data collection hits for other kinds of devices. The Measurement Protocol defines how to construct the hits and how to send them to Analytics.

New Users

Number of users who interacted with your site for the first time.

Number of URLs Recorded per site per day

Analytics does not observe the 1000-URL limit, and can include more landing pages.

Page has no Analytics tracking code

Data for the page does not appear in Analytics.

Organic traffic

Organic traffic refers to the traffic or visitors originating from natural or organic, unpaid search results on search engines like Google or Bing. It works when your website meets all SEO specifications and appears on search results naturally.

Organic Search

Medium exactly matches organic.

Paid Product

Audience: large enterprises

Google Marketing Platform offers a set of integrated data-and-marketing analytics products with one consistent user experience which has been designed specifically for the needs of enterprise-class marketers at large organizations. Products are sold individually.

- **Platform Home:** Use the Administration tab to manage Google Marketing Platform.
- **Google Analytics 360:** Develop insights into how users engage with your business online and offline.
- **Google Tag Manager 360:** Use an enterprise workflow to manage web and app tags from a single interface.
- **Google Optimize 360:** Run website experiments and personalize content for different audiences.
- **Google Surveys 360:** Create online surveys.

Pageview

A pageview (or pageview hit, page tracking hit) is an instance of a page being loaded (or reloaded) in a browser. *Pageviews* is a metric defined as the total number of pages viewed. Repeated views of a single page are counted.

Paid Search

Medium matches regex ^(cpc|ppc|paidsearch)$ AND Ad Distribution Network does not exactly match Content.

Paid Search Brand

GA Medium matches regex ^(cpc|ppc|paidsearch)$ AND GA Ad Distribution Network does not exactly match NETWORK_MOBILE_APP_DISPLAY|NETWORK_CONTENT AND Brand/Generic matches Brand.

Paid Search Generic

GA Medium matches regex ^(cpc|ppc|paidsearch)$ AND GA Ad Distribution Network does not exactly match

NETWORK_MOBILE_APP_DISPLAY|NETWORK_CONTENT AND Brand/Generic matches ^(Generic|Unknown)$

Permission

The right to perform administrative and configuration tasks, to create and share assets, and to read and interact with report data.

In order to use certain features in Analytics, you must have the appropriate permission. There are 4 roles:

- Administrator
- Editor
- Analyst
- Viewer

Each role can be granted at one or more levels: account, property or view.

Property

A sub-component of an Analytics account that determines which data is organized and stored together. Any resource tagged with the same Property ID is collected and stored together. A single property can be used to track one website or mobile app, or be a roll-up of the data from multiple sites or mobile apps.

Purchases

Purchase events are fired within the Enhanced Ecommerce model. Data is pulled from a products array via Google Analytics-provided JavaScript and collected in a purchase event when you choose to send that event.

Query

Only used in the Search Console reports. Applies to the actual query a user entered in Google search.

Referrals

Referrals describe the traffic originating from link clicks on other pages. These links may or may not be on already defined sources of traffic such as social media or organic

Reporting API

A set of protocols and tools designed to extract data from your Analytics account into custom scripts or programs for more automated and efficient reporting and exploration. API is short for Application Programming Interface.

Roll-Up Reporting

Roll-Up Reporting is a special kind of reporting that lets you analyze the aggregated data that's in a Roll-Up Property. Roll-Up Reporting is only available for Analytics 360 Accounts, and only works on designated Roll-Up Properties.

Sampling

The practice of selecting a subset of data from your traffic and reporting on the trends detected in that sample set. Sampling is widely used in statistical analysis because analyzing a subset of data gives similar results to an analysis of a complete data set, but can produce these results with a smaller computational burden and a reduced processing time.

SDKs

The tracking-code snippet is only for collecting data from websites. Use the *Analytics SDKs* to collect data from mobile apps, and use the Measurement Protocol to collect data from other digital devices like ticket kiosks and game consoles. The SDKs and the Measurement Protocol need to be set up by a developer.

Screenview

A screenview is the app analog to a pageview.

Segment

A subset of sessions or users that share common attributes. Segments allow you to isolate and analyze groups of sessions or users for better analysis.

Segmentation allows you to isolate and analyze subsets of your data. For example, you might segment your data by marketing channel so that you can see which channel is responsible for an increase in purchases. Drilling down to look at segments of your data helps you understand what caused a change to your aggregated data.

Site Speed

Site speed describes the average speed at which your website is loading. This is an important metric to consider as even search engines like Google prefer and give weightage to sites that load fast.

Session

Period of time a user is actively engaged with your website or app. Has defined parameters for what may cause it to end e.g. a session will end when there has been more than a 30-minute period of inactivity (depending on the session timeout settings), the timestamp has been cut off at midnight (according to the timezone the view is set up in), or new campaign parameters are encountered. If a user comes back after a session timeout, it will start a new session. If the user is on the website when midnight arrives, a new session will be started. If a user picks up new campaign parameters while on the website, a new session will be started.

Session Calculations

a session represents the duration of time a user spends on a website. If there are 30 minutes of inactivity, the clock passes midnight, or there is a change in the campaign parameter, UA marks the session as ended and starts a new session.

Session/Traffic based Acquisition Metrics

Found in the Acquisition section in a number of different reports, such as the Channels report or the Source/Medium report. Channel or Source/Medium is the dimension being analyzed against metrics such as Users and Sessions.

Solutions Gallery

Lets you share and import custom reporting tools and assets, like dashboards and segments, into your Analytics accounts.

SocialAction

A value representing the social action being tracked (e.g., share, like, bookmark)

Social Entity

A value representing the URL (or resource) which receives the social network action.

SocialNetwork

The social network being measured (e.g., Facebook, Twitter).

Social Source

a value representing the social network being tracked (e.g., Google, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn)

Social Source and Action

A value representing the concatenation of the social network and action measured (e.g., Google: Share, Facebook: Like).

SocialTarget

The content on which the social action was taken, e.g., the path of an article or video.

Source\ Medium

Source: the origin of your traffic, such as a search engine (for example, *google*) or a domain (*example.com*).

Medium: the general category of the source, for example, organic search (*organic*), cost-per-click paid search (*cpc*), web referral (*referral*).

Source/Medium is a dimension that combines the dimensions Source and Medium. Examples of Source/Medium
include *google/organic*, *example.com/referral*, and *newsletter9-2014/email*.

Tag

A tag is snippet of JavaScript that sends information to a third party, such as Google. Tags collect data, target your ad campaigns, track ads, and perform other functions. The Analytics tracking code is an example of a tag. If you don't use a tag management solution such as Google Tag Manager, you need to add these snippets of JavaScript directly to the source code of your site.

Tag ID

N/A

Time Zones Vary

Analytics timestamps data in each view according to the time zone identified in the view settings.

Total Events

A Universal Analytics event has a Category, Action, and Label and is its own hit type. For example, an event can be set up to register that a sign-up button has been clicked. The event might have a Category of "CTA", an Action of "Sign Up", and a Label that is the destination URL. Total Events increments each time a Category/Action/Label event is triggered.

Total Users

Total Users is the primary user metric in UA: Total number of users.

Tracking ID and Property ID Number

Discover more about how Google Analytics uses ad ID tracking, property ID numbers, and tag IDs to send important data to your account.

The **tracking ID** is a string like UA-000000-2. It must be included in your tracking code to tell Analytics which account and property to send data to.

The tracking ID is automatically included in the JavaScript snippet for websites, but also needs to be included in other tracking technologies like the SDKs and the Measurement Protocol for Analytics to work.

The first set of numbers (-000000, in the example above) refers to your account number, and the second set of numbers (-2) refers to the specific **property number** associated with the account.

Tracking Model

UA uses a session-based data collection method, where each interaction in a session is recorded as a separate hit type (e.g., page views, social interactions, events, transactions).

Tracking Paradigm

Universal Analytics uses a tracking paradigm based on sessions and pageviews. It collects and measures different user interactions with your website within a given period as sessions or 'hits'. Primarily, Universal Analytics tracks only page views across your properties.

Traffic Acquisition Reports

Traffic acquisition reports are especially helpful to understand how traffic sources perform in terms of total sessions on the site and driving conversions.

Treemaps Report

Explore an interactive view of your Acquisition channels.

The Treemaps report lets you visually explore trends in your Acquisition channels so you can quickly and intuitively develop hypotheses about your incoming traffic. Treemaps represent data as rectangles. The size and color of each rectangle represent different metrics, so you can combine different aspects of your data into a single visualization. Treemaps are a good hypothesis-generation tool because they can help expose the relative importance of, and the relationship between, different entities.

Unattributable

Reserved for conversions without prior events.

Unique Pageview

Total number of pages viewed but duplicates are not counted.

Universal Analytics (UA)

Universal Analytics is a version of Google Analytics that set a new standard for how user data is collected and organized. Introduced in the fall of 2012, Universal Analytics offers new tracking codes for websites and features that can more accurately measure user behavior which gives the account owner more in-depth information about user behavior.

Universal Analytics is the most current data collection technology for web-based Analytics. It uses the analytics.js tracking code for websites, an SDK for mobile apps, and the Measurement Protocol for other digital devices.

Note: The latest generation of app reporting in Google Analytics works in conjunction with Firebase.

Unique Social Interactions

Number of sessions during which the specified social action(s) occurred at least once. Based on unique combination of network, action, and target.

User ID

A user who enabled reporting of all activity as coming from a single person. Whereas, a user in GA who visits a website using multiple browsers and devices will appear to be multiple users.

User ID views

A special type of reporting view that only includes data about the subset of traffic that has a user ID assigned.

User ID views include a set of Cross Device reports, which aren't available in other reporting views. The Cross Device reports give you the tools you need to analyze how users engage with your content on different devices over the course of multiple sessions. All other standard reports and tools are also available in User ID views.

User ID views do not include all of your data. To analyze all of your data, use a different type of reporting view.

User ID view are only available to Universal Analytics properties in which the User ID is enabled. You must also create User ID views. They do not exist by default in your account.

User Timing

User Timing (ms) is a Metric in Google Analytics under the User Timings section.

View

A view or reporting view is a subset of a Universal Analytics **property** that can have its own unique configuration settings. You can create multiple views for a single property and configure each view to show a different subset of data for the property.

View Filter

A configuration setting that allows you to add, remove or modify your data during processing before it is displayed in your reports.

View filters allow you to limit and modify the traffic data that is included in a view. For example, you can use filters to exclude traffic from particular IP addresses, focus on a specific subdomain or directory, or convert dynamic page URLs into readable text strings.

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