Google Analytics: Acquisition

netRivals

Data to Win.

Google Analytics: Acquisition

Abstract

Google Analytics is a very useful tool for both e-commerce and physical stores to check the effectiveness of advertising campaigns and strategies. This web analytics tool allows you to observe trends, origins or user behavior on the web as well as access to conversion and business metrics.

In this white paper about Google Analytics we will see information about user behavior based on the way they have accessed our website.

For example, the behavior of a user who has entered through a direct channel that is familiar to your company and has specifically entered your page, will be very different to that of a user who has entered through an ad that he has seen on YouTube and has found your content to be interesting.

In this guide we will learn how to detect the strategies that provide the best results and make fundamental business decisions.

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Introduction

Basic concepts

Before starting the white paper it is worth remembering which metrics you will find along the pages, as well as doing the link tagging to organize the campaigns outside Google.

Key metrics

- **Behaviour:**

  - **Bounce rate**: percentage of sessions that have accessed the website without any interaction. The higher the worse as Google understands that the page is not relevant to users.
  - **Pages/session**: arithmetic average on how many pages have been seen per session.
  - **Average session length**: arithmetic average of time spent on the website.

- **Conversion:**

  - **E-commerce conversion rate**: percentage of the sessions that have made a transaction.
  - **Transactions**: total number of transactions.
  - **Income**: total number of incomes.

Solutions

Link tagging

When you perform a campaign on a non-Google platform, you need to label those links correctly.

For example: imagine you run a PPC campaign through Facebook Ads on Facebook and Instagram platforms. In Google Analytics you will see that you have traffic from both platforms but you will not know which ones enter by organic traffic and which ones enter by PPC.

To know this we must use what is known as UTM tagging.
So let's continue with the example. Imagine the scenario that this campaign is to promote the start of the February sales.

The steps to follow are:

- You must go to
  https://ga-dev-tools.appspot.com/campaign-url-builder/

- You have to create a URL with Facebook source and medium CPC, you have to indicate also the content of the ad as in the following picture:

- You will add this link as a landing page in the campaign ads. A different one will have to be made for each campaign and even for each ad, if you want to be as precise as possible.

Traffic Sources
0 keywords

Create Shortcut BETA

Right now

6

active users on site

DIRECT CAMPAIGN

83%   17%

Page Views

Per minute

6

4

2

-26 min   -21 min   -16 min   -11 min   -6 min   min

Per second

1.5

1

0.5

-60 sec   -45 sec   -30 sec   -15 sec

Viewing: **Active Users** Page Views (Last 30 min)

Metric Total: **6**

	Medium	Source	Active Users	
1.	(none)	(direct)	5	83.33%
2.	cpc	facebook	1	16.67%
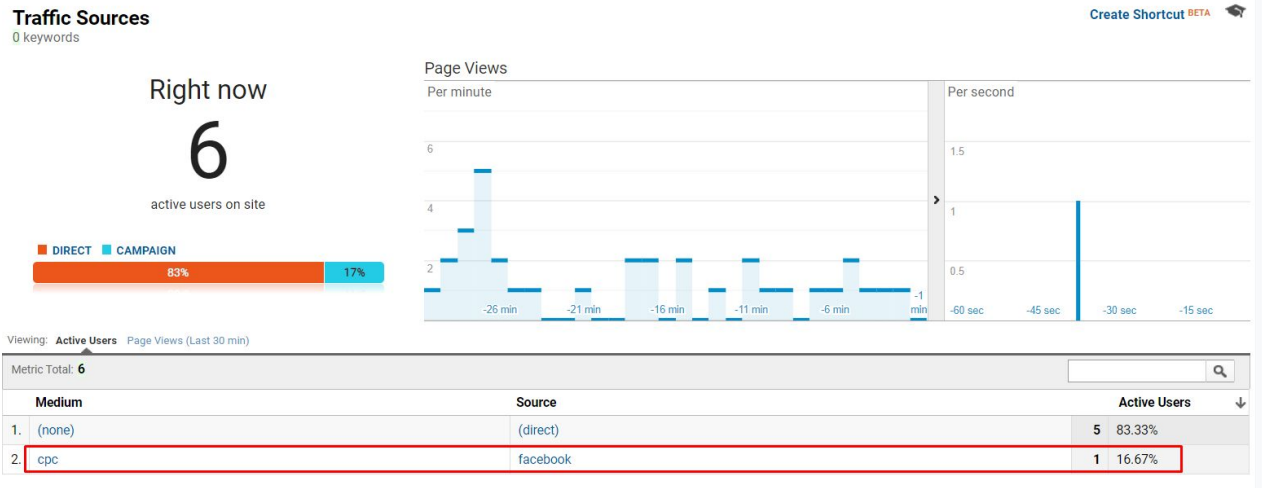
For Google Ads campaigns it is not necessary to do the same. They use the variable "gclid" which contains all the information about the session.
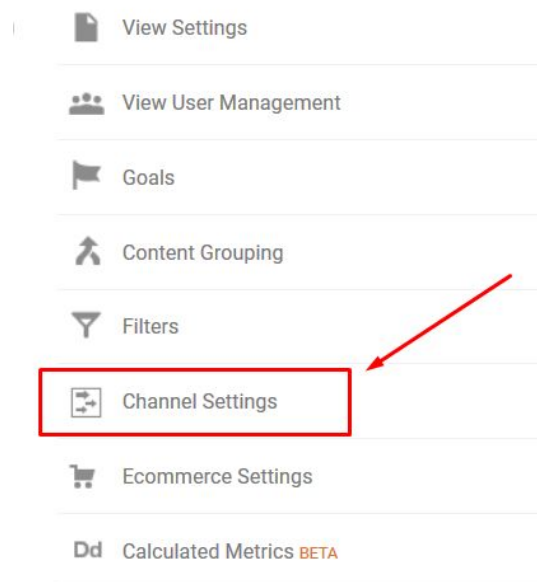
All the traffic

In these reports we will see information about all the media of acquisition of users and we will see how the traffic behaves according to the form of acquisition.

Channels

This report provides an overview of how users are being acquired. These groupings can be configured per view:

There are 9 default channel groupings:

1.	Direct	System defined	✏ ×
2.	Organic Search	System defined	✏ ×
3.	Social	System defined	✏ ×
4.	Email	System defined	✏ ×
5.	Affiliates	System defined	✏ ×
6.	Referral	System defined	✏ ×
7.	Paid Search	System defined	✏ ×
8.	Other Advertising	System defined	✏ ×
9.	Display	System defined	✏ ×

- **Direct**: the user has typed in the URL of your site directly or has clicked on a bookmark link and accessed your website. Google also uses this channel to include all traffic that does not know where it comes from.
  For example, imagine that a user clicks on a link sent to them by WhatsApp. Google will read that the user has signed in directly because it has been shown directly in the browser, although it is not really direct traffic but referral traffic.

- **Organic search**: a user has made a search in a search engine and has accessed your website by clicking on a search result.

- **Social**: the user has accessed the website through organic content (or at least not correctly labeled with UTM).

- **Email**: user has accessed through a click on a link found in the body of an email.

- **Affiliates**: this includes users who have accessed your website through a link on an affiliate page. For example, if you display your products on price comparison sites such as Idealo or Kelkoo and a user clicks on one of these links, they will appear as an affiliate.

- **Referral**: user has clicked on a link on a third page that Google does not detect as a social network and has led him to our website.

- **Paid Search**: user has clicked on a paid link in a search engine

- **Other advertising**: user has clicked on a link which contained as a ppc medium but did not indicate the type of content.

- **Display**: user has clicked on a Display ad such as a banner or video.

Other Advertising	Medium matches regex ^(cpv|cpa|cpp|content-text)$

Treemap

This is a quite interesting report that can give us a pretty good picture in a few seconds. Let's see what we're talking about first:
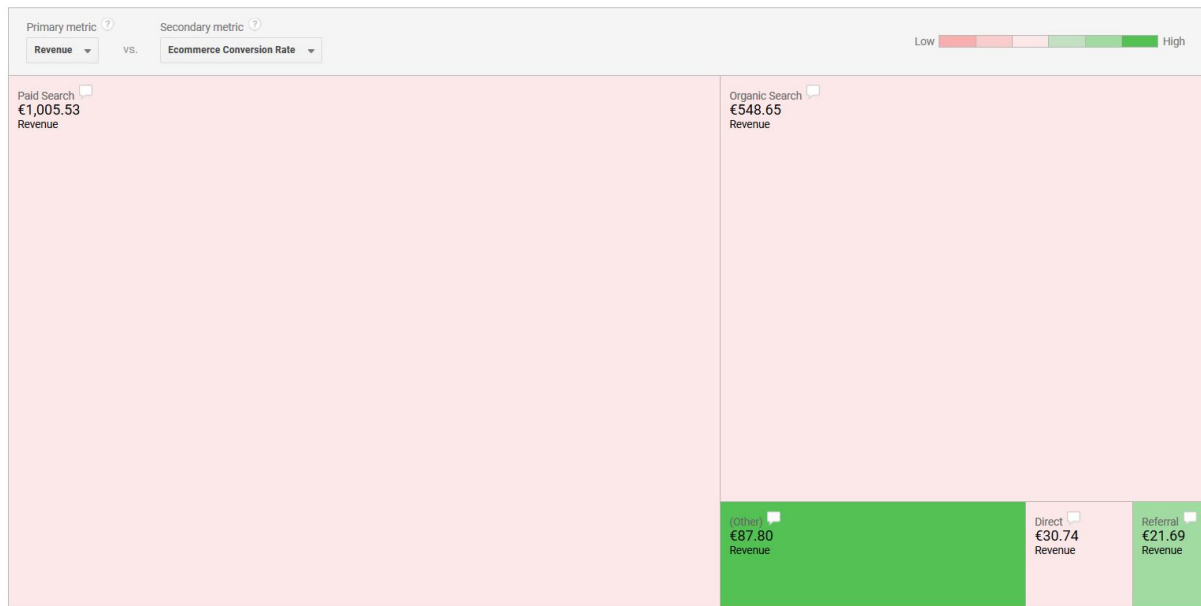
As you can see, there's one dimension and two metrics possible. The dimension is the acquisition channel, the metrics (top left) are shown:

- Main: they determine the size of each "square". In the case of the example they are the income generated by each acquisition channel.

- Secondary: determines the color, the greener the higher. In the case of the example it is the e-commerce conversion rate.

This example is very enlightening. It can be seen that by number of revenues the best channel is the paid search channel, but by quality of traffic the best is "Other".

Source / Medium

This report is the most useful for any ecommerce manager. Unlike the previous report where all the traffic sources were grouped under various criteria, in this report are the exact metrics of each source.

Source / Medium	Acquisition		
	Users ↓	New Users	Sessions
	114,038 % of Total: 100.00% (114,038)	113,500 % of Total: 100.07% (113,416)	147,784 % of Total: 100.00% (147,784)
google / cpc	90,180 (77.06%)	88,903 (78.33%)	114,397 (77.41%)
google / organic	20,226 (17.28%)	18,330 (16.15%)	24,901 (16.85%)
(direct) / (none)	3,301 (2.82%)	3,265 (2.88%)	4,483 (3.03%)
google / mybusiness	1,604 (1.37%)	1,449 (1.28%)	2,052 (1.39%)
████ -es.cdn.ampproject.org / referral	509 (0.43%)	487 (0.43%)	550 (0.37%)
████ / referral	349 (0.30%)	271 (0.24%)	418 (0.28%)
m.facebook.com / referral	226 (0.19%)	216 (0.19%)	238 (0.16%)
bing / organic	142 (0.12%)	134 (0.12%)	181 (0.12%)
yahoo / organic	48 (0.04%)	43 (0.04%)	66 (0.04%)
facebook.com / referral	47 (0.04%)	41 (0.04%)	50 (0.03%)

In the case of the view by Grouping Channels you could see google/organic, google/mybusiness, bing/organic and yahoo/organic in the same channel and it would not be possible to see the actual results of each source.

Imagine you have three active search campaigns that are giving very good results, one on Bing and two on Google. If you analyze the results in the channel report, you will see that Paid Search works efficiently, when perhaps only the Bing Ads campaign is successful. You will be able to detect this in this report and not in the previous one.

Referrals

This is traffic from links pointing to the website from third party domains. Here you will find social network traffic as well.

Source	Acquisition		
	Users ↓	New Users	Sessions
	592 % of Total: 1.96% (30,242)	**546** % of Total: 1.90% (28,686)	**649** % of Total: 1.68% (38,721)
1. cdn.ampproject.org	171 (28.79%)	167 (30.59%)	183 (28.20%)
2. m.facebook.com	167 (28.11%)	162 (29.67%)	174 (26.81%)
3. jac.es	100 (16.84%)	77 (14.10%)	119 (18.34%)
4. facebook.com	34 (5.72%)	30 (5.49%)	35 (5.39%)
5. baidu.com	17 (2.86%)	17 (3.11%)	17 (2.62%)
6. googleads.g.doubleclick.net	12 (2.02%)	12 (2.20%)	12 (1.85%)
7. pinterest.com	11 (1.85%)	10 (1.83%)	19 (2.93%)
8. es.search.yahoo.com	9 (1.52%)	7 (1.28%)	10 (1.54%)
9. l.facebook.com	9 (1.52%)	8 (1.47%)	10 (1.54%)
10. youtube.com	9 (1.52%)	9 (1.65%)	11 (1.69%)

If you are using a link-building strategy you can evaluate the quality of your links.

Campaigns

This tab is very interesting as it provides information about the performance of your campaigns on different platforms.

If the links in the programmatic advertising campaigns we have done have been correctly tagged, we will be able to see very valuable information within this report.

All Campaigns

In this report you can see the results of all the campaigns that have been active during the selected time period and have provided traffic to the website.

This report is extremely useful to analyze which have been the most successful marketing actions.

Imagine that your strategy during the first quarter of the year has consisted of a campaign on Google Shopping, an Affiliation campaign and an email marketing campaign. In this same panel you will see the real performance of each campaign and you will be able to compare the quality of the traffic that each one has provided.

Recommendation

As a tip, if you use very similar nomenclatures for each campaign, you could add as a secondary source/medium dimension to avoid any confusion.

Other reports in Campaigns

	Keyword ?	Acquisition		
		Users ? ↓	New Users ?	Sessions ?
		372 % of Total: 3.00% (12,417)	271 % of Total: 2.47% (10,980)	437 % of Total: 2.93% (14,902)
☐	1. Google Merchandise Store	212 (56.38%)	148 (54.61%)	253 (57.89%)
☐	2. Google Merchandise	48 (12.77%)	39 (14.39%)	56 (12.81%)
☐	3. google merch store	33 (8.78%)	23 (8.49%)	36 (8.24%)
☐	4. (not set)	16 (4.26%)	5 (1.85%)	21 (4.81%)
☐	5. Google Swag	12 (3.19%)	12 (4.43%)	13 (2.97%)

The information obtained from these three reports is more limited. They are still important. These are:

- **Paid Keywords**: in the case of Google Ads keywords you will be able to see them with their different matches, in the case of third party platforms we will see the word that is tagged in UTM as utm_content.

- **Organic Keywords**: you will only see keywords from search engines other than Google. This is a useful report if we have a good amount of traffic from search engines like Bing as you will see which search terms are the most profitable.

- **Cost Analysis**: the information on this tab will be available from the moment you upload information regarding costs of campaigns on third-party platforms.

Other acquisition reports

Google Ads

On this tab you have access to information about campaigns on Google Ads. The only requirement this section has is to have previously linked the Google Ads account with the Google Analytics account.

The usefulness of this tab has declined in recent months, since you can import into Google Ads the pages viewed per session, the average time spent and the bounce rate.

From Google Ads you can make changes, while it is impossible to do the same task from Google Analytics. Google Analytics does not provide more information than can be found in Google Ads.
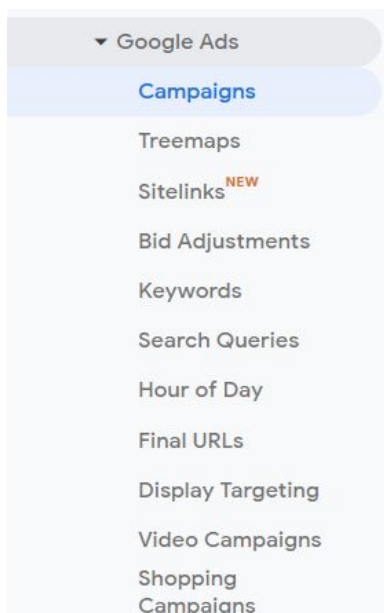
Search Console

As in the case of the Google Ads report, the only requirement to access this information is to have the Google Search Console linked to Google Analytics.

In this case, unlike the previous report, it offers us the same possibilities as Google Search Console. The filters are a little more complicated than in GSC.

From this report you can see the evolution of the organic optimization of our website.
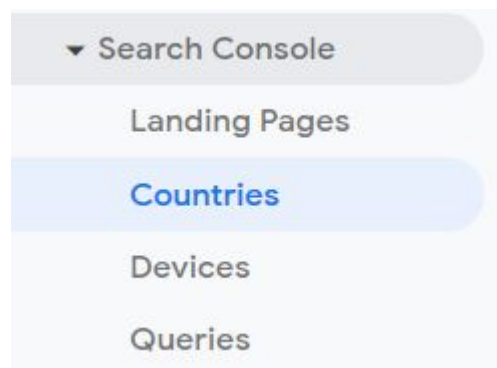
There are four main reports:

- **Landing pages**: Metrics on the specific page.

- **Countries**: you will see the organic results according to the country.

- **Devices**: metrics according to the device category.

- **Queries**: specific search terms by which your company appears.

Social

This section contains detailed information about user behaviour based on the social network through which they have accessed the website.
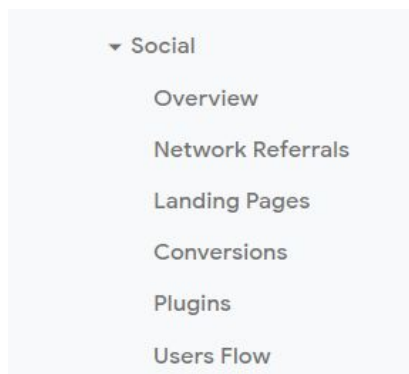
There are five main reports plus the overview:

- **Social network reference**: contains information about sessions, page views, average time spent and pages viewed per session for each of the social networks that provide traffic.

- **Landing Pages**: you can see the landing pages that users reach through the different social networks.

- **Conversions**: the conversions generated by acquired users through social networks.

- **Social add-ons**: in this report you will be able to see the number of times there have been social network interactions on your website. For example, if you have the option to share a product on WhatsApp you will be able to see how many times it has been shared.

- **User Flow**: In this report you can see which routes users take when they access different social networks.

Takeaways

After looking at the Google Analytics acquisition reports, it is necessary to take a second look on:

- It is VITAL to tag all the campaigns carried out outside Google, that is, in other search engines or in social networks outside Google, since these are automatically tagged (with the gclid tag. This sorting will allow you to clearly observe the performance of the campaigns, as well as give you important data such as the quality of traffic in each campaign.

- Differentiate between Channels *per se* and the Source/Medium tab. The first one will give you an overview of the origin of the users, if they come organically, by mail, etc. while the second one will provide you with much more specialized information, an important element that will allow you to know the scope and effectiveness of your campaigns through the different channels.

Additional information

If you want to learn more on Google Analytics for e-Commerce, you can visit netrivals.com for more information on the topic. Netrivals is a key partner of pure-players and omnichannel stores to help them become competitively smarter. The all-in-one view offered by Netrivals covers relevant and valuable e-commerce KPIs like: Price Index, Profit Margins and Conversions of e-commerce businesses. You can learn more here or even request to talk to one of their specialists here.

For more information, please contact support@netrivals.com or visit netrivals.com

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White Paper

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