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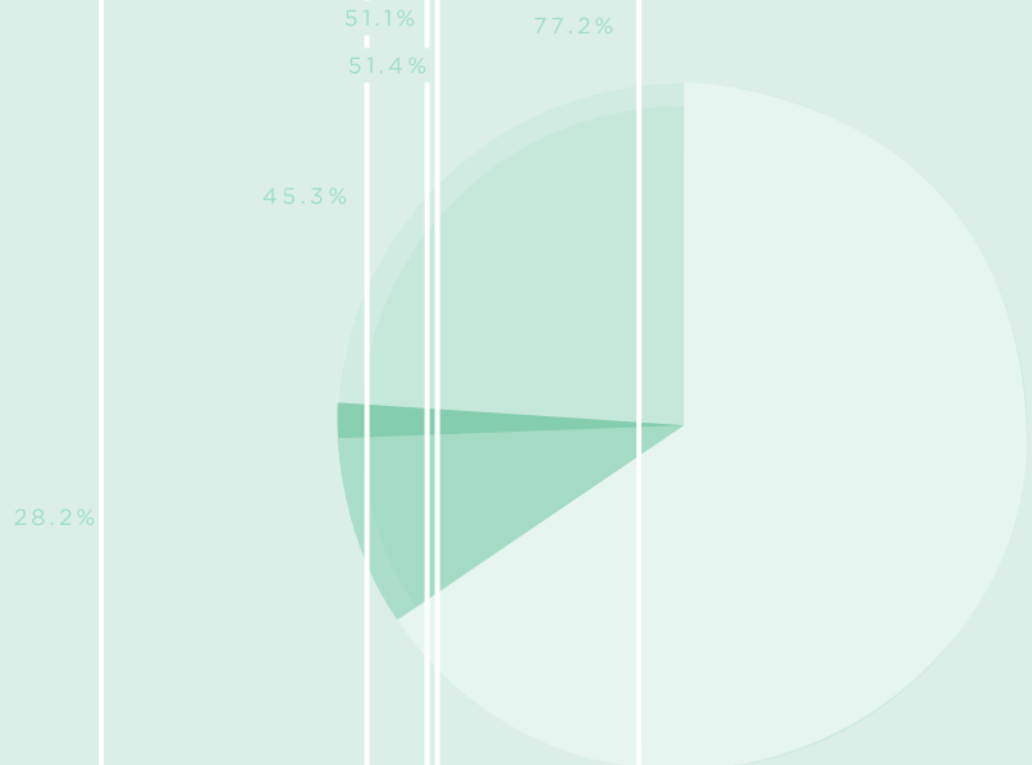
G E T T I N G

S T A R T E D

W I T H

G O O G L E

A N A L Y T I C S



Introduction

Google Analytics offer the best stats package available for your website. And what's better? It's completely free.

If you're starting a project for a new client (or for yourself), the very first thing you should do is install Google Analytics so you can begin collecting data. Having this data means you're armed with real numbers reflecting real users—allowing you to make wiser, more informed decisions in the future. Plus, understanding how visitors interact with a site and content will save you time and money.

This guide is designed for website owners monitoring their own analytics, as well as for web developers providing analytics as a service for their clients. You'll receive a basic overview of Google Analytics and take a quick tour to learn about some of the features you might miss as a casual user. We'll also talk about using Google Analytics to get the most from your statistics.

Understanding the Terms

Let's start by defining a few Google Analytics terms:

- **Visits** – This number represents individual IP addresses visiting a site. The number of visits resets after 30 minutes, so one person visiting your site twice within a half hour still calculates as one visit, but the same person coming twice two hours apart will register as two visits.
- **Pageviews** – The number of times individual site pages have been viewed
- **Pages/visit** – The average number of pages users view on a site
- **Bounce Rate** – The percentage of users that leave after viewing *only one* page (Note: Other stat systems define bounce rate based on the time period of the visit, so keep this distinction in mind if comparing stats between two different systems)
- **Average Time on Site** – The amount of time users spent on a site
- **New Visits** – The percentage of first-time site visits
- **Direct Traffic** – Site traffic that arrives at a site from a URL typed into a browser or from a bookmarked link
- **Referring Sites** – Websites that send traffic to a site by providing referral links
- **Search Engines** – Traffic that arrives to a site through search engine results

Term-Related Insights to Consider

Interpreting statistics can be complicated. Often more than one explanation for a certain trend exists, so be careful about arriving too quickly to conclusions before carefully exploring all of the possible contributing factors.

These are few term-related insights to consider:

Bounce Rate and Blogs

The nature of blogs create stats that are quite a bit different from static sites. Because the majority of site content is concentrated on the front page of a blog, blogs have a considerably higher *bounce rate*. For example, visitors view a single page, find the information they need, and then leave—and can be considered a bounce by Google Analytics because of their single-page view.

In addition, blog visitors often arrive through search engine results or referring sites to read a specific blog post—and then leave. For this reason, don't be discouraged by high *bounce rates* and low *average time on site* statistics—they aren't the best statistics for blogs.

Average Time on Site

Most sites get an *average time on site* of 3-5 minutes. Within seconds of visiting a site, most visitors decide to stay or leave.

Traffic

Direct traffic, *referring sites* and *search engine traffic* depends on the type of the site. For newer sites, both *referring traffic* and *search engine traffic* will come with time. Keep in mind that traffic from search engines depends on Search Engine Optimization (SEO) and the diversity of site content related to search terms.

New Visits

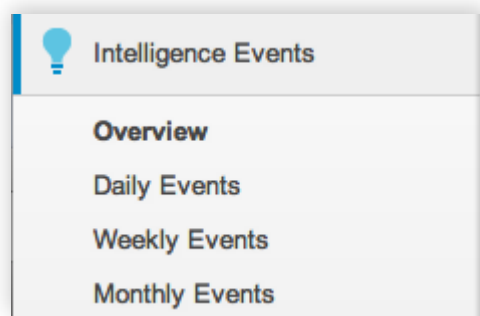
New visits offer a few important insights: A high percentage of new visits could mean that you're reaching new people—but it can also mean you're not retaining visitors and encouraging repeat views.

Touring Google Analytics

Home

Alerts

(located under **Intelligence Events: Overview**)



Stats are really only helpful if you're paying attention to them, and one way to draw your attention to stats is with alerts.

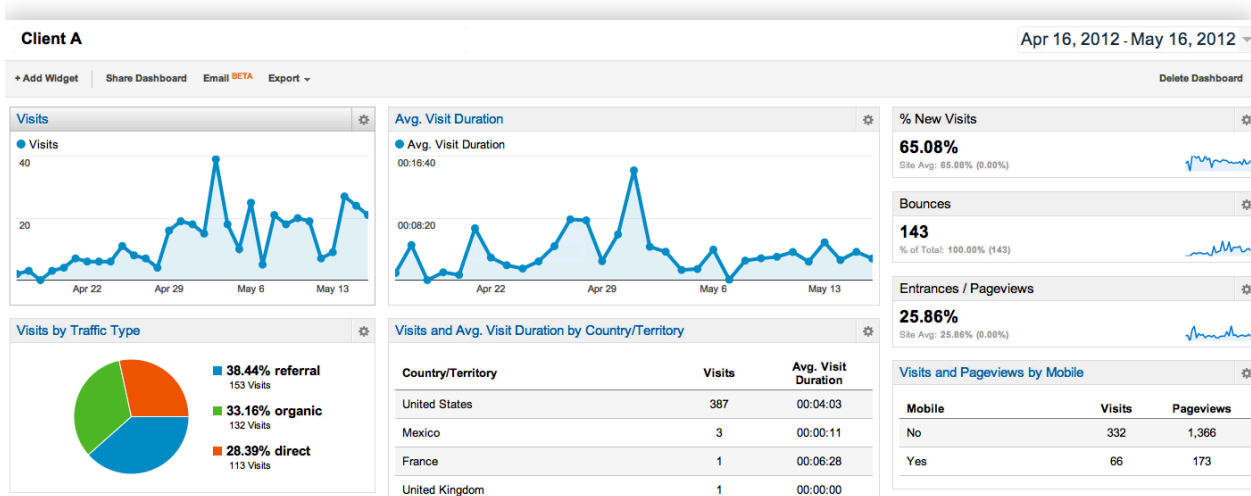
There are two kinds of alerts that can be helpful: *automatic* and *custom* alerts.

Automatic Alerts are set up by Google and will be triggered when something interesting happens in your stats. If your visits suddenly go up and you're getting a surge of traffic, it will show up in your alerts. But also more minutely detailed traffic events will get noticed, like an upsurge in traffic from Canada or a sudden drop in average time on site. These can help you notice if something is wrong or "cash in" on something right.

Custom Alerts can be set up to send notifications when specific things are happening with your site stats. You can receive these alerts by email or even text message. This can be ideal for sudden drops in traffic that might mean a server problem or sudden boosts in traffic.

Dashboards

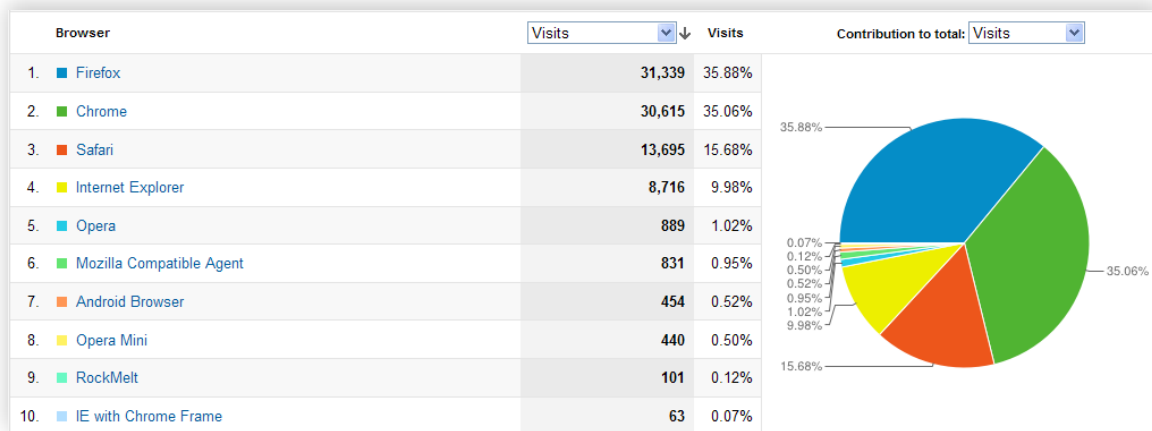
The Dashboards area allows you to create a custom view of your data. This is especially useful when exporting the information in a PDF (covered in a later section) as the export shows that report only. In this area, you can specify what information is shown like how many people are viewing a site, how people are visiting a site and more.



Standard Reporting

Browsers

(located on the default overview, but also accessible under **Audience: Technology: Browser & OS**)



Here you'll find a helpful breakdown of your visitor's browsers, operating systems, screen resolution and more. This information can be helpful for future development decisions.

For example, click on a browser to see a breakdown by version. When Internet Explorer 6.0 is down to 1%, you no longer need to consider compatibility.

Mobile

(located on the default overview, but also accessible under **Audience: Mobile**)

This area offers a breakdown of your mobile traffic (what percentage visits on iPhone, Android phones, etc). Notice you can also see the visits as a percentage of your total traffic:

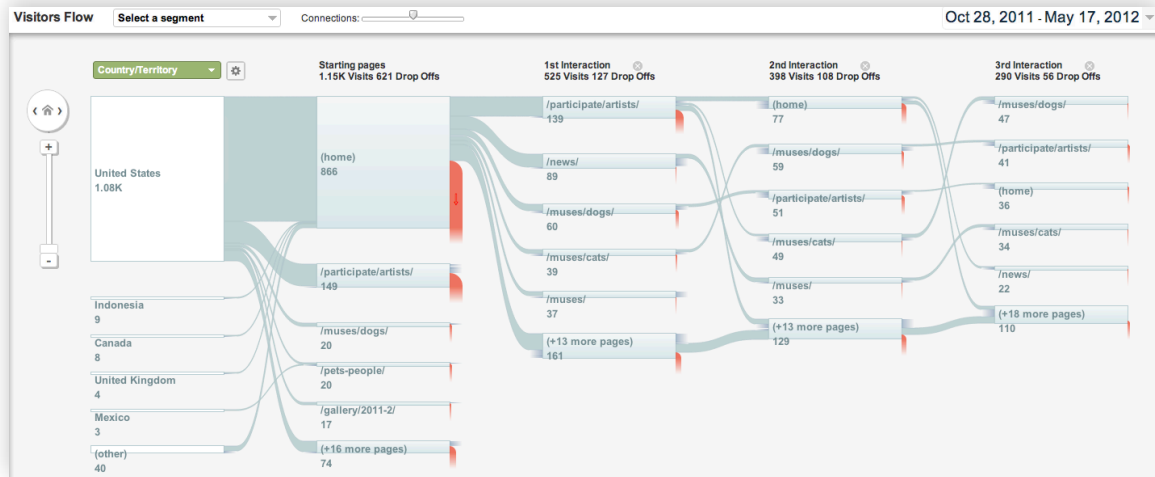
Mobile Device Info	Visits	Pages/Visit	Avg. Visit Duration	% New Visits
<input type="checkbox"/> 1. Apple iPad	1,742	2.73	00:02:40	64.87%
<input type="checkbox"/> 2. Apple iPhone	1,002	1.82	00:01:15	71.96%
<input type="checkbox"/> 3. (not set)	217	1.87	00:01:19	90.32%
<input type="checkbox"/> 4. SonyEricsson LT15i Xperia Arc	60	1.92	00:01:21	75.00%
<input type="checkbox"/> 5. Apple iPod Touch	58	1.59	00:00:58	79.31%
<input type="checkbox"/> 6. HTC ADR6400L Thunderbolt	29	1.83	00:00:14	6.90%
<input type="checkbox"/> 7. Samsung GT-I9100 Galaxy S II	21	2.71	00:01:50	90.48%
<input type="checkbox"/> 8. HTC EVO 4G	17	1.35	00:00:12	76.47%
<input type="checkbox"/> 9. Motorola DroidX	17	1.00	00:00:00	41.18%
<input type="checkbox"/> 10. Samsung GT-P7510 Galaxy Tab 10.1	16	2.75	00:02:01	68.75%

This information is a great way to judge what kind of mobile options you need to offer, or whether or not a mobile version of your site is even needed.

Visitors Flow

(Audience: Visitors Flow)

This chart gives you a feel for how visitors interact with your site by mapping their progression of pages viewed. It shows where on your site they begin, where they move next and when they drop off your site.



Referral Traffic

(located under **Traffic Sources: Sources: Referrals**)

Who's sending you traffic? What sites have linked to you?

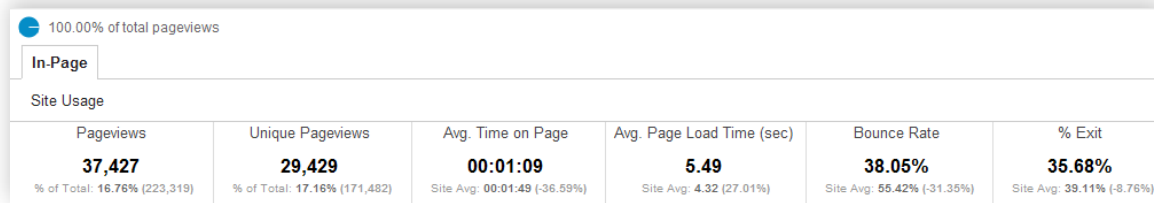
This information can be especially helpful if you're spending money on advertising, so you can evaluate these sources of traffic. This data can also offer interesting insights into new partners or joint venture partners.

Source/Medium	Visits	Pages/Visit	Avg. Visit Duration	% New Visits
1. google / organic	22,822	2.47	00:02:44	59.00%
2. (direct) / (none)	17,323	2.88	00:03:21	64.99%
3. [REDACTED] / referral	11,361	2.91	00:03:46	41.46%
4. google / cpc	5,590	2.28	00:01:35	77.60%
5. wordpress.org / referral	2,313	2.49	00:01:53	86.94%
6. [REDACTED] / referral	1,996	1.89	00:02:14	80.06%

In-Page Analytics

(located under **Content: In-Page Analytics**)

This section offers a view of your site in relation to what links were clicked by visitors.



100.00% of total pageviews

In-Page

Site Usage

Pageviews	Unique Pageviews	Avg. Time on Page	Avg. Page Load Time (sec)	Bounce Rate	% Exit
37,427	29,429	00:01:09	5.49	38.05%	35.68%
% of Total: 16.76% (223,319)	% of Total: 17.16% (171,482)	Site Avg: 00:01:49 (-36.59%)	Site Avg: 4.32 (27.01%)	Site Avg: 55.42% (-31.35%)	Site Avg: 39.11% (-8.76%)

This is excellent information for when you’re considering a redesign—or it might even be fuel to start one.

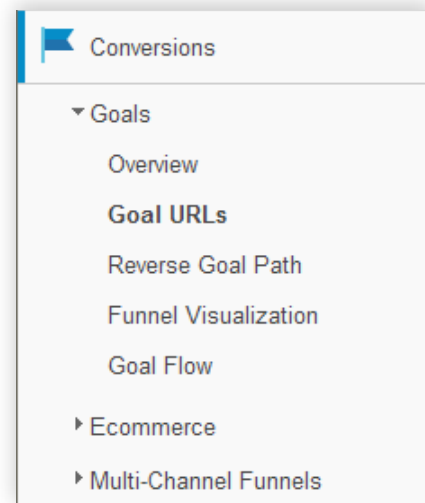
Goals

(located under **Conversions: Goals**)

Goals are a great way to track exactly what you want users to accomplish on your site.

Maybe you want to see more people completing your contact form, so you set up a goal for pageviews on the ‘thank you’ page. You can also set up goal funnels, which show you the steps in the process to achieving a goal. So if you have an eCommerce site or want to follow a user’s path, you can see where in the process you’re losing people.

For example, knowing that 40% of visitors exit your site when they reach the shipping section of your eCommerce process might tell you it’s time to revamp your shipping options.



Custom Reporting

Custom Reports

Custom reporting allows you to set up the specific content you want to see. Use this feature to set up customized reports and then use the export feature to share with clients.

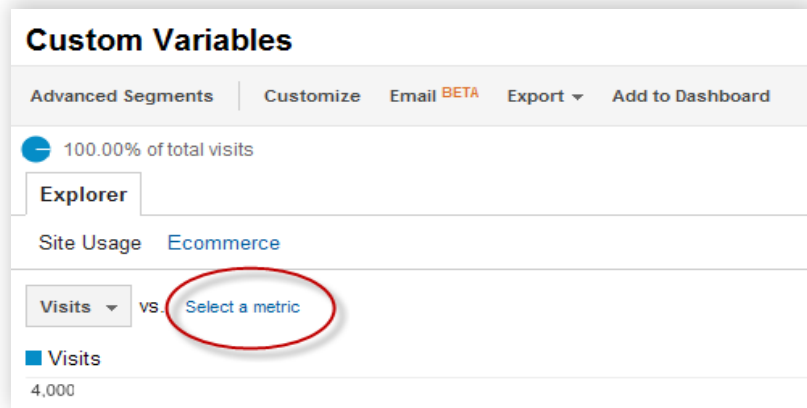
The screenshot shows a web application interface for creating a custom report. At the top, there is a navigation bar with four tabs: 'Home', 'Standard Reporting', 'Custom Reporting' (which is active), and 'Admin'. Below the navigation bar, the main heading is 'Create Custom Report'. Underneath, there are several sections for configuring the report:

- General Information:** A text input field for 'Report Name' containing 'New Custom Report'.
- Report Content:**
 - A tabbed interface with one tab labeled 'Report Tab' and a '+ add report tab' button.
 - A 'Name' input field containing 'Report Tab'.
 - A 'Type' section with two buttons: 'Explorer' (selected) and 'Flat Table'.
 - A 'Metric Groups' section with a text input field containing 'Metric Group', a '+ add metric' button, and a '+ Add metric group' button.
 - A 'Dimension Drilldowns' section with a '+ add dimension' button.
- Filters - optional:** A '+ Add a filter' button.

Extra Tips

Compare Metrics

(This option is located on most graphs.)



This option allows you to graph two different metrics together, so you can compare visits and bounce rates or average time on site and pageviews.

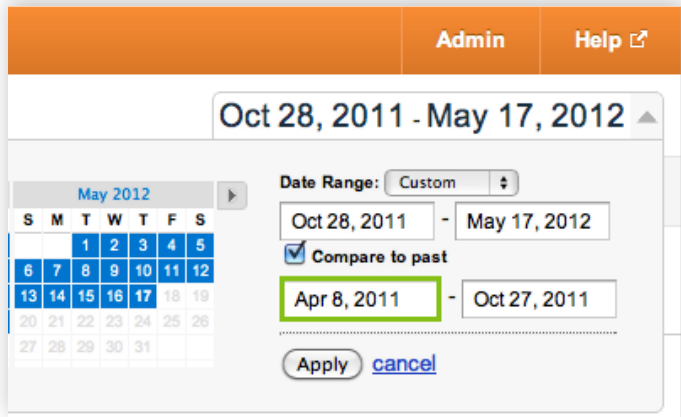
This can be helpful for tracking how a spike in traffic impacts the rest of your stats. Are you just getting a flood of visitors or is it also increasing the average time on site? Is that flood of visitors also explaining the rise in your bounce rate? Is that spike of traffic from new users?

Compare to Past

(located on most graphs when you choose the date range)

When you choose a date range for most graphs in Google Analytics, there's a checkbox to 'compare to past.' This option will allow you to compare two different time periods.

Compare this year's and last year's stats or compare different months or different weeks.



New PDF Export

If you want to share your reports with others (and don't want to give them access to your Google Analytics account), simply export a file as a PDF. The "Export as PDF" feature offers a polished report for easy sharing.

