



Website Success Course

*Step-by-Step Training to Make Any Website
More Profitable & Easier to Manage!*

Lesson 4

Setting Up Google Analytics

By

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“Someone's opinion of you does not have to become your reality.”

Unknown

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Analytics: Customer Insights You Benefit From!

"Someone's opinion of you does not have to become your reality." The message here is not to worry about what someone thinks about you. Move on! However, website analytics give us an enormous amount of information about all of our prospects and customers that we can use to improve our Website Success!

One of the most important components of achieving Website Success is to monitor and assess the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) of your website's visitors and outcomes. This information not only tells us how close you are to achieving your goals, but it gives you a wealth of information that will help us revise your strategies and tactics to better meet those goals!

Back in the day, retailers like a local general store, may or may not have tracked how many people visited their store, but most of them kept track of how much they "had up" for the day, month and year. These men and women would sometimes do some 'back of the envelope' calculations to figure out which bills to pay in what order, how much they had to spend on new inventory or advertising, and perhaps most importantly; how much they could take home.

This was way before sophisticated POS (Point Of Sale) Systems and there wasn't much that could be accurately tracked. One of the first KPIs they began following was the average sale or "\$ per Ticket" (\$/T) for insights.

For example when I managed Radio Shack stores, we kept track of that information at a store-wide level, as well as for individual sales people. Managers and salespeople alike were rated on how many sales they made per hour, but there was special interest in \$/T. If you were lagging in \$/T, it might be because you weren't selling enough larger items, or it might mean that you weren't suggesting enough add on items. Lower performing stores almost always had a low \$/T than others in the district. (Some stores in high traffic malls would win simply because of the number of sales.)

Some sales 'sharks' would quickly size up people as they came in to determine their potential.

If they headed to the battery aisle or parts area, they would allow someone else to greet them. If they were heading towards the computers, scanners, stereos, radar detectors or CB radios, they would hustle over ASAP.

We recognized customers who often spent more than others and would fall all over each other to greet them...like my friend Dan M, who was single, had a passion for computers, a good job and a credit card with a more than ample credit limit.

We also might avoid the people who had Battery Club Cards, which entitled them to a free (cheap) battery once per month. The idea was to get them into the store where they might see something else that they wanted to buy, but in many cases they *just wanted their damn battery* and leave. LOL

I'm not saying that's a bad thing. In fact, there is a good lesson or two there when you begin to study the difference in the two prospects.

If you want to dig a little deeper on the differences in online audiences, see my [blog post on Quintile Analysis](#), where I discuss how radio stations sometimes evaluate 5 equal sets of listeners and how they often focus on the ones who are most brand loyal. (Or you can wait for our upcoming lesson on developing audience personas)

Sales Approaches

Let's talk a minute about salespeople. They come in all different shapes, sizes and motivations. I met a lot of different types at Radio Shack (and at other sales stops along the way). The two guys I most often worked with at one of my first Radio Shacks were really different – and they despised each other - which was one of my first challenges as a manager-trainee.

They were both old guys; Leo needed the money to pay for his room at the YMCA and a couple of Finlandias (or 5) on the way home at night. I think Vern had saved more and was simply looking for something to do after his wife died.

Leo was a hustler who only wanted to rack up as many sales as possible. Vern wanted to make money too, but he was just as concerned about helping the customer, which I really respected and appreciated. We probably benefitted from having them both on staff.

We will discuss how to define your online sales persona in a future lesson. It too can be measured using analytics.

Bottom Line?

Getting to know your customers and how they interact with your sales team is critical to Website Success!

Using these insights give you a **Competitive Advantage** over your competitors!

Google Analytics is installed on more than 10,000,000 websites around the world, but there is no information on how many website owners and managers are using it effectively or at all! I worked with a client recently who had not checked GA in several years! Within an hour or so, I identified some problems and opportunities that led to solutions that immediately increased her Website Success. Image what we'll learn spending a day or 2 on it!

Analytics=Customer Insights

Even today, as in the past, some small businesses will only attract the success of an ad in the local newspaper by comparing the day's sales with what was normal. Even more savvy business owners might track the use of specific coupons and ads. We have more metrics on a website than the proprietor of the general store had. Therefore, we have more opportunities to assess how well we are reaching our goals and how individual parts of our sales funnel can be changed to achieve a more desirable outcome.

Among other things, wouldn't it be useful to know:

- How many visitors visited your site on a particular day or custom time period?
- How many of those visitors were new and how many had visited before?
- Where your prospects and customers came from?
- What attracted them to visit our store/site/business?
- How much time they spent on your site or specific pages?
- What products and services they considered and possibly how long they considered them?
- How far they went thru the sales process, especially knowing where they abandoned the sales funnel?
- What specific paths they took through your website?
- Which offers outperformed others?

A lot of what we'll discuss in the Website Success Course will revolve around KPIs.

In this lesson, we are going to make sure that Google Analytics is set up properly and that we can get a baseline of KPIs that will help us build our success strategy and monitor and tweak various aspects of our website.

We'll look at what each of the KPIs mean and how you can benefit from them. Watch as I reveal what is the #1 metric you get in Google Analytics and why it's so important to your Website Success!

Google Analytics

Google Analytics (GA) is one of the website statistics packages that are used to capture information such as the number of visits, the number of unique visitors, the time they spend on the site and how many pages they view. It's free and a recognized standard in the industry.

There are other options, including website traffic reports that are sometimes supplied by companies that host websites and by other services. Some of them have unique statistics. If you're already using a package other than GA, you can continue using it, but I recommend that you use GA because it's used on so many websites and has most, if not all of the metrics that small and mid-size website operators really need to effectively analyze and manage their properties.

You can begin using GA by signing in or signing up at www.Google.com/analytics. You should probably bookmark this link as you'll be using it frequently.

You need a Google account to sign up. That includes a Gmail account or anything else. There is pretty good support for getting it set up properly, but we will address account setup in the Homework section below. Hopefully it's already there! Hopefully it has been installed on all pages of your website, which is very important.

Introduction to Google Analytics

When you access GA for your website, you will open up a 'Dashboard' Overview that includes:

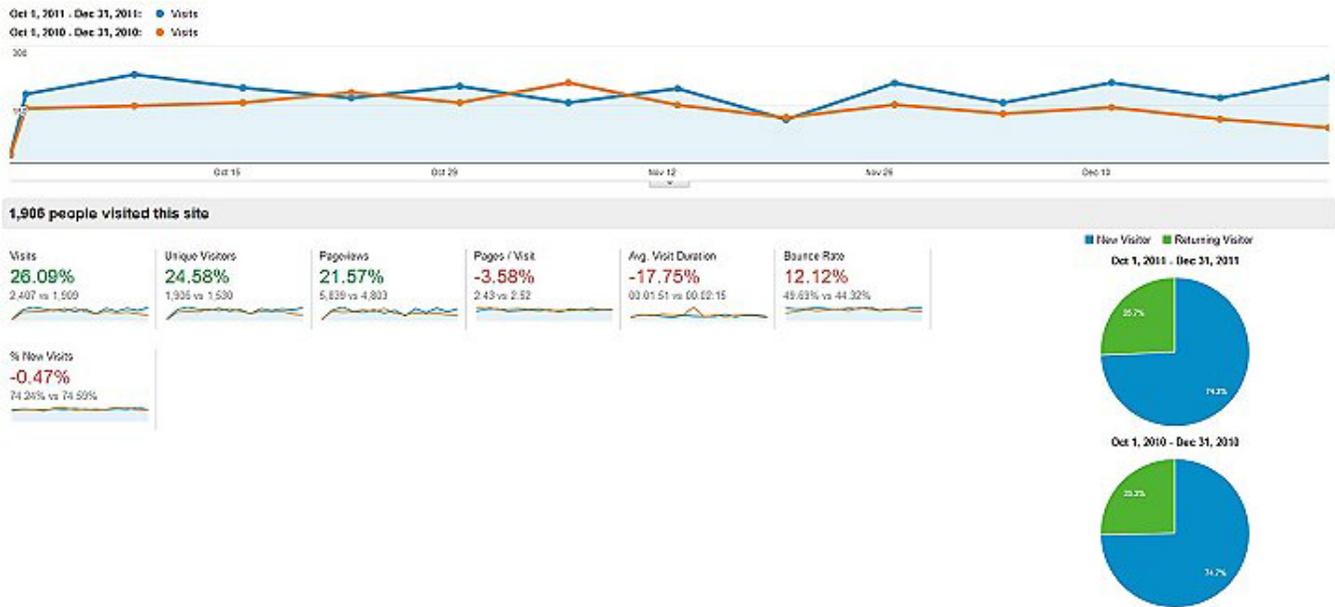
- Number of Visits
- Unique Visits
- Pageviews
- Pages/View
- Avg. Visit Duration
- Bounce Rate
- % New Visits

In the top right corner of the page, you can specify the date range you want to look at and you can compare the information to a different time period. For instance you might want to compare the current week or month with the previous week or month. You might also decide to compare the current quarter with the same quarter last year.

Google has also begun serving video at the top of the page that will help you better understand each section of Google Analytics.



The core information looks like the example above and is dominated by the graph of Visits.



You can display the information on an hourly, daily, weekly or monthly basis. The second example on the previous page shows that it is sometimes easier to get an assessment by looking at long periods of data from a weekly or monthly view, especially when comparing two periods.

You can see why the comparison is so valuable in that they report the differences from one period to another. In this case the number of Visits increased from 1,909 to 2,407, a gain of 26.09% (Our client was delighted with the Year-Over-Year gains of 25+%)

Where did those extra visitors come from? You can see that the number of Unique Visitors increased 24.58%, which accounted for most of the increase, and we'd want to know what tactics caused the increase in "Uniques."

We need to discuss the differences in 3 of these KPIs.

- Visits = The number of times your website (or page) was visited.
- Unique Visitors = The total number of people who visited your website, some more than once.
- Pageviews = The total number of pages viewed by all visitors during all visits.

All 3 of these metrics have been referred to at one time or another has "hits" to the website, so it's important to know exactly which KPI is being viewed or analyzed.

Further, when a webpage is sent from a server to a computer's browser, a number of components are downloaded that make up all content on the page. It can be any number of elements, including text, images and the HTML code that instructs the browser how to assemble the page on the computer that downloaded it.

Sometimes, web analytics or statistics packages will report how many of all these elements were downloaded – it could be 35 elements per page. (It could be any number of elements!) So, in this example some people see 35 "hits" for one pageview. I remember talking to someone who was bragging about getting 54,000 hits to their website in the previous month, when in actuality they had a rather small number of visitors and pageviews.

Slicing the Data

An important KPI for website managers is the Pages/Visit, which can be determined by dividing the number of Pageviews by the number of Visits.

In most cases, it is beneficial to have visitors visit more pages of your site as not. It shows interest in your content, which usually helps with conversion of visitors to buyers. There are specific tactics to increase the number of Pages/Visit.



One simple tactic is onsite linking, or linking a page or blog post to another page or blog post. (We'll have much more on this later in the course!)

Average Visit Duration is also another metric with valuable insights. The more time they spend on your site, the more they are resonating to your content. Among the factors that help increase the time on site are:

- Better Content (More of the information they want)
- More Content (Such as adding more text or a video)
- Linking to Other Pages

Bounce Rate may be the most useful indicator of how well site visitors are resonating to your content, offers, design, navigation, price, etc. Bounce Rate is the percentage of visitors who visit a website (or page) and then don't click on any other page on the site. Assuming you have more than 1 page on your site, you would typically want visitors to sample more than one page.

But not always! If people Google your hours of operation, address or phone number, it may be OK that they only hit one page of your site.

Obviously these visitors are familiar with your business. In general, the lower the Bounce Rate, the better.

Ideal Bounce Rates vary from niche to niche, but you almost always want it to be less than 50%. We always try and improve it, regardless of the Bounce Rate and especially on the pages with the highest Bounce Rate. We feel we're doing OK with a Bounce Rate of 25-35%, but we've seen as low as 15%

The final KPI on the Dashboard is % of New Visits and it's simply a measure of how many visitors who came to your site had never been there before. In most cases, you want the % New Visits to be pretty high – it means new people are finding you – and will indicate that new marketing initiatives are working. There may be sections of your site where % New Visits can and should be very low, such as a sign-in page for members, customers and JV partners. For a new landing page, you'd want it to be very high.

All of these KPIs are related. An influx on new visitors from a new source can behave differently than previous traffic sources, but just knowing if total site visits to a page or website are going up or down is a great broad indication.

If the number of Visits is increasing, but the Unique Visitors is level or not rising quite as fast, you know that people are coming back to your site more often. Conversely, if Visitors or Uniques is rising, but the number of Pageviews isn't, then you know your new audience is not resonating with your message.

In that case, the Bounce Rate is likely going up.

The Bounce Rate, arguably the most important metric/KPI of the site, usually goes down when the Pages/Visit goes up and/or the Avg. Visit Duration goes down.

Over time, you'll get good at figuring out a 'cause & effect' and what tactics affected which KPI and how. I was on a group coaching call not long ago and one of the participants (in a Learn to Play Music niche) was talking about his lack of sales. As I reviewed his site, I asked him if he had access to GA, which he did. I had seen things that I would have done differently and I kinda knew how it was affecting him. "Your Bounce Rate must be about 80%", I said. "78.6%" he replied. "I imagine the Average Visit Duration is a minute or maybe closer to 1:20", I said. "1:23," he replied.

Everybody on the call was pretty impressed at how close I came. With practice, you can too!

The information contained in Google Analytics All of these KPIs will be used as we begin the audit of your site and we'll measure the success of each initiative over time.

Imagine the result for the Music Man site if he were to cut his Bounce rate in half?

Or, if he could get people to stay on his site for 2:45 to 3:30?

Then, what would happen if we could increase his traffic by 20%? Or, 100%? 1,000%?

You should now be getting some idea of what we will be looking for in your site audit. All of these KPIs can be viewed overall or on a page-by-page basis. You can sometimes build your ToDo list by sorting your site's pages from highest Bounce Rate to lowest or lowest Duration to longest.

As the course continues, I'll teach you how to improve these metrics and to use other information available in Google Analytics, but for now a broad understanding is sufficient for doing the site audit and establishing your baseline.

This Week's Assignment

Install Google Analytics on your website (or blog) and verify that it is working properly. In most cases you will want the code installed on every page of the site, but it is not uncommon to remove it from pages you have no interest in.

I think you should have it on all of your pages and it's usually easier to add it to the site once, where it will show up on all pages, than to add it individually.

First you need a Google Analytics account that will allow you to generate the code that is added to your site to track the visits and duration of your viewers. If you have a Gmail account, it's very easy to add the Google Analytics 'product'.

Or go to www.Google.com/analytics to sign up for a new account. Once inside you may want to search the Help section for "Set up Google Analytics account" or "Get started with Google Analytics" for instructions.

You should spend some time learning how to best plan your setup, overview of accounts, users and views at

https://support.google.com/analytics/answer/1009618?ref_topic=1102143&rd=1

Understand that you can set up GA for multiple websites in one account, but each of them need to be set up individually and use separate tracking codes on each site. Each site will require set up of a View (formerly Profile).

Before you begin, you'll need FTP (File Transfer Protocol) access to the pages of your website or a suitable plugin if using Wordpress. FTP transfers files from your computer to the webserver hosting your site and vice-versa.

The files that make up the pages of your website are usually edited using a program like Dreamweaver, which is a WYSIWYG (pronounced "Wizzy Wig") editor. The acronym stands for **What You See Is What You Get** and it operates a lot like Microsoft Word or similar.

If you don't currently use Dreamweaver, then I might recommend that you have someone with experience add the code for you.

You should have included the name and contact information for someone who built or maintains your site in the Strategy Plan pages you downloaded previously.

Basic operation of Dreamweaver is not difficult and will allow simple updates to the site, but Owners and Managers usually benefit from having someone else do these simple tasks, as well as the more advanced projects successful websites often need. Oh, and Dreamweaver costs \$299 as of this writing!

Usually the GA tracking code is added to a common file of all pages of a website, so you won't need to add it to multiple pages! Google directs you to add the code in the <head> section of the page template, right before the </head> tag.

It looks like one of the following examples. First is an example of Asynchronous code and is the preferred method.

```
<script>

(function(i,s,o,g,r,a,m){i['GoogleAnalyticsObject']=r;i[r]=i[r]||
|function(){
  (i[r].q=i[r].q||[]).push(arguments)},i[r].l=1*new
Date();a=s.createElement(o),

m=s.getElementsByTagName(o)[0];a.async=1;a.src=g;m.parentNode.in
sertBefore(a,m)
})(window,document,'script','//www.google-
analytics.com/analytics.js','ga');

ga('create', 'UA-XXXXXXXX-Y', 'yourdomain.com');
ga('send', 'pageview');

</script>
```

Next is an example of Traditional Code and is being discontinued. If you have GA on an existing website, you should consider upgrading to Asynchronous Code.

```
<script type="text/javascript">

var _gaq = _gaq || [];
_gaq.push(['_setAccount', 'UA-XXXXX-Y']);
_gaq.push(['_trackPageview']);

(function() {
  var ga = document.createElement('script'); ga.type =
'text/javascript'; ga.async = true;
  ga.src = ('https:' == document.location.protocol ?
'https://ssl' : 'http://www') + '.google-analytics.com/ga.js';
  var s = document.getElementsByTagName('script')[0];
s.parentNode.insertBefore(ga, s);
})();

</script>
```

Note the 'UA-XXXXX-Y' part of the code is the Property ID. You can also find it in the Property Settings section.

Adding GA to a Wordpress site is usually done using a plugin that you add to your site using your Admin account, then simply add you Google Analytics Property ID when you configure the plugin. You do not paste all the code above; that's included in the plugin itself.

You should have included the name and contact information for someone who built or maintains your Wordpress in the Strategy Plan pages I sent you previously.

Log in to Wordpress as an Admin and select Plugins->Add New. In the Search Box, type in "Google Analytics" and press the Search Plugins button. You will be presented with dozens of options, most of which serve to place the GA tracking code on every page of your Wordpress-generated website. Select a plugin from those with the highest (5-Star) ratings. You change GA plugins, if needed, without any loss of data, but start with a highly-rated plugin.

Both ways of adding GA to your site are fairly easy and if you need help, you have many good options.

Verify

You should verify that the code has been successfully added to your site. You can read the Tracking Status Information section at the top of the Tracking Code section. To get to that page, click Admin, then Click the Tracking Code.

You will get one of three status messages when your try and verify your installation of the tracking code:

- 1) *Waiting for Data* means that the code has been detected, but data is still being aggregated.
- 2) *Tracking Not Installed* or *Not Verified* means the tracking code has not been verified on your site's Home page and you will need to try and correct the installation.
- 3) *Tracking Installed* is the message you want! It means the tracking code is working normally.

Customize Your Tracking Code

After you complete the basic set up, you can customize your tracking code to collect data that isn't tracked automatically. We recommend setting up [Event tracking](#), which lets you track rich media like videos, and [Ecommerce tracking](#), which lets you integrate any product or sales data with your other data.

Google Webmaster Tools

We'll get into this more in GWT, but you can also verify that the tracking code is working properly when you:

- Install the asynchronous tracking code on your pages.
- Go to Webmaster Central - Verification home to add your site.
- On the Verify ownership page, select Link to your Google Analytics account.
- Click Verify.

Setting up Google Analytics is critical to Website Success! Many valuable insights come from the information that is collected!

Pro Tip: If your website is also a verified property in Webmaster Tools, and you are the owner, you can associate some of your Webmaster Tools data in your GA Account.

We will talk more about Google Webmaster Tools in lesson 6.

Filter IP Address

You don't want to include visits to your site by you or your staff because they will skew the information. You don't want anything to do with you crawling the site to be included in the number of visits, duration, paths or traffic sources. As an example, some companies have their browsers set to their web address as the default when it is opened. Google provides a way to filter out those visits. You may want to filter out more than one location.

Instructions for creating filters to exclude internal traffic are in Create/manage view filters. To exclude internal traffic from appearing in a report view, create a custom filter to exclude a specific IP address or a range of IP addresses.

Filter Type: Custom > Exclude

Filter Field: Visitor IP Address

Filter Pattern:

For example, if the single IP address is 176.168.1.1, then enter `176\168\1\1`.

For example, if the range of IP addresses is 176.168.1.1-25 and 10.0.0.1-14, then enter `^176\168\1\.([1-9]|1[0-9]|2[0-5])$|^10\0\0\\.([1-9]|1[0-4])$`

Remember to use regular expressions to enter an IP address.

For help finding the correct expression for your range of IP addresses, use the IP Address Range Tool in Google Analytics.

You can easily find the IP address for your current location at www.WhatIsMyIPAddress.com

Google Analytics App

There are nearly a dozen apps in the Google Play store that use the Google Analytics API to display reports and other dashboards and Google also offers an app that allows you to use a swipe-gesture interface to switch between screens that include access to multiple reports for all your Google Analytics profiles, including real-time analytics, all your dashboard stats and even goal alerts, all on-the-go. It may be something to look into!

Recommended Resources

[Getting Started with Google Analytics](#)

This is a slide deck by Digital Marketing Consultant Jeff Sauer that talks about how to measure success with GA. His 4 major sections include some of the information that I've taught you here, which may be beneficial as you get up to speed, but he also addresses some of the advanced techniques that we will cover in a future lesson. You should bookmark this link.

[21 Inaccurate Traffic Sources, Setup Mistakes and Fixes](#)

Andy Crestodina, author of the fantastic book *Content Chemistry: An Illustrated Guide to Content Marketing* shares great tips on making GA better and more accurate. Useful insights too! (BTW, I will be referencing much of what he writes about in Content Chemistry when we discuss creating content for your site, so consider [ordering it](#) & reading it ASAP)

[Web Analytics: An Hour a Day by Avanish Kaushik](#)

There are some highly rated books on website analytics available online. I wish I had time to read or even skim a few of them, but in the interests of time, I will recommend the one that most people I respect recommend. Avanish Kaushik is a rock star in the analytics world, and this book (now in its 6th printing) is a step-by-step guide to implement a successful website analytics strategy. If you have the time and inclination, this book should be included in your library. Or consider reading it once you have completed this course and are ready to ascend to the next level.

[Google's thread on installing filters](#)

Multiple pages on setting up filters.

See you next week!

Kurt Scholle

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Coming Up Next ...

Lesson #5: "Linkbuilding 101"

We'll take a little break from auditing your site to have a little fun building links to your website. Link building should be done over a period of time and you should focus on getting quality links. This lesson is the foundation of a comprehensive link building strategy. Building quality links to your site is one of the best marketing tactics there is!

Lesson #6: Webmaster Tools

In this next lesson, we'll be setting up Google Webmaster Tools and Bing Webmaster Tools, which are important for the KPIs they provide, but also for other information you'll receive from the search engines. This too is a pre-requisite for an effective site audit and ongoing management of a successful website!

Lesson #7: Auditing Your Content

We'll begin taking a critical look at your site's content, including site navigation, text, Calls To Action (CTAs), images and multimedia. You will receive more Website Success Project Plan pages to add to your plan.

Lesson #8: Competitive Intelligence

Most students and clients like this lesson a lot! We begin looking at market opportunities that can affect your targeting, messaging and CTAs. We will ethically spy on your competition to learn where they excel and where they are vulnerable. You may find other resources and opportunities as well!

All previous lessons can be found in your dashboard!

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