Google Analytics 10 Essentials

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I'm a bit of a geek really! I'm a certified Google Analytics Consultant, Google My Business Expert, Web & WordPress Designer with The Ruby Marketers in Chatham.

I love Google and Google My Business because it's always changing and there's always new ways to get a business to the top of Google ranking and to manage the reputation for search engine visibility, ask me about it.

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"What Gets Measured, Gets Managed"

~ Peter Drucker

What is Google Analytics?

Google Analytics is a service offered by Google that generates detailed statistics about a website's traffic and traffic sources and measures conversions and sales. It's the most widely used website statistics service.

The basic service is free of charge and a premium version is available for a fee.

Google Analytics can track visitors from all referrers, including search engines and social networks, direct visits and referring sites. It also tracks display advertising, pay-per-click networks, email marketing and digital collateral such as links within PDF documents.

In a nutshell; Google Analytics helps you to see who is visiting your site, how they navigate around it and where they leave.

Why Would You Use Google Analytics?

Having a website but not knowing how people use it is like talking without listening. Whether you're selling products, driving customers to offline stores or building your brand, Google Analytics takes the guesswork out of measuring how well you're achieving your website goals.

Now, hopefully, you are beginning to understand the power that having Google Analytics monitoring your website traffic can put at your fingertips for your business?

The 10 Essentials

Here are those essentials to ponder when using Google Analytics to track and improve your business website:

1. Gauge your website metrics
If you know what your website visitors, who are lets face it likely to be either current or potential customers, like and dislike about your site can help you make any changes needed to help your business reach its goals.

"Once you understand your customers' preferences and tastes, you are in a much better position to create a better experience for them," Daniel Waisberg author of *Google Analytics Integrations: Centralizing Digital Marketing.* Essentially it makes sense if you give your prospects a better website experience you will rewarded with happy customers.

2. How can I connect Google Analytics to my website?

If you're not already using Google Analytics, getting started is relatively easy. Visit the Google Analytics website, just Google - Google Analytics. Then click on "Create an Account" and follow the account setup instructions.

You'll get to the end and receive a snippet of Google Analytics HTML to insert into the source code for your website. This code is simply the means that Google Analytics uses to capture your website's visitors usage data. If you don't have access to your website coding to insert the tracking code, just ask your Webmaster or developer to do it for you.

3. Google Analytics 'Goals' and why should I use them?

Ok, so now you have Google Analytics' tracking code in place. You need to identify what key website visitor actions you want to monitor, see the list below. This is what your plan is for your website, what you would like your visitors to do but Google Analytics refers to them as Goals.

There are four basic types of Goals:

- **Destination.** A specific location within your website, perhaps a particular page, such as your Contact page.

- **Duration.** How long a visitor spends on your website.
- **Page Views Per Visit.** Which pages visitors view during a visit, are they following your planned pathway.
- **Events.** What actions do visitors take during a visit, including video plays, social media shares or completion of a form.

4. Finding out how people discover the website and getting them to come back

Google Analytics' Keywords report can show you which search engine keyword search term delivers traffic to your site, although Google is now more and more diluting this information. However, placing a search facility on your website can help you to find out the keywords they are using to navigate around your site.

Using Google Analytics' Referrals reporting, allows you see how visitors come to your website from other websites that link directly to yours. Getting your head around how people get to your website can help you give them more of what they want. This should increase engagement and encourage visitors to come back time and again, spending longer on your site each time.

5. Track Google Adsense campaigns with Google Analytics

Google Analytics integrates and measures the success of your Google Adsense campaigns. If your objective is to generate revenue through AdSense initiatives, sometimes known as Pay Per Click (PPC) advertising you can use Google Analytics' Pages report.

Providing you with a detailed view of which website page performed best in terms of AdSense revenue amongst other things.

6. Measure the success of Google AdWords initiatives

Use Google Analytics to find out if your Google AdWords campaigns work or don't, and why. Testing and measuring your Google Adwords efforts.

Create an advanced Google Analytics Pages report segment that includes only AdWords visits that did not convert. Then you can check your Landing Page report to look for those pages that have the highest bounce rates.

If you are not aware, bounce rate is the percentage of visitors that arrive on a page of your website and then leave, without moving on to other pages. In other words, they literally land and then bounce straight off your website to somewhere else on the Web.

7. Track e-commerce sales

Use Google Analytics' handy advanced Goal Funnel feature to analyse the success of your e-commerce efforts, even monitoring individual shopping cart transactions. Including items placed in, taken out and how many are purchased.

The Goal Funnel option gives you the ability to find out where in the process prospects are abandoning their purchase. Giving you the option to tweak the process so that you can increase the value at the electronic tills.

8. Which devices and browsers are prospects using when they visit?

In Google Analytics' Audience section, you can view the list of the devices, web browsers and operating systems visitors use to access your website. This can include even a particular model of Samsung phone for example.

If a big enough chunk of people are visiting your website via smartphones or tablets, consider developing a mobile friendly version of the site or perhaps even consider a mobile app, always looking to improve the visitor experience.

9. When are my website visitors moving away?

Google Analytics' Exit Pages lets you see the pages of your website that visitors are on when they move away from your site.

If your visitors are leaving your site before they have completed your goal, perhaps it's time to tweak the exit page design to get optimal engagement.

Or, perhaps another more engaging step needs to be added to the path you want them to follow to keep that all important engagement going and get them to the goal.

10. Sharing key Google Analytics data with colleagues

You may want or need to share the beneficial user data Google Analytics gathers with people who have a vested interest in your site.

Luckily there are several ways to do this, even automatically, if you wish. You can simply set up an email to send a report to those that require it. You can even decide how often to send the information daily, weekly, monthly, etc. and pick a particular day of the week to send it.

Some terms Used in Google Analytics

Dimensions—A dimension is a descriptive attribute or characteristic of an object that can be given different values. Browser, Exit Page, Screens and Session Duration are all examples of dimensions that appear by default in Google Analytics.

Metrics—Metrics are individual elements of a dimension that can be measured as a sum or a ratio. Screenviews, Pages/Session and Average Session Duration are examples of metrics in Google Analytics.

Sessions—A session is the period of time a user is actively engaged with your website, app, etc., within a date range. All usage data (Screenviews, Events, Ecommerce, etc.) is associated with a session.

Users—Users who have had at least one session within the selected date range. Includes both new and returning users.

Pageviews—Pageviews means the total number of pages viewed. Repeated views of a single page are counted.

Pages/Session—Pages/session (Average Page Depth) is the average number of pages viewed during a session. Repeated views of a single page are counted.

Avg. Session Duration—The average length of a session.

New Sessions—An estimate of the percentage of first-time visits.

Goals—Goals let you measure how often users take or complete specific actions on your website.

Conversions—Conversions are the number of times goals have been completed on your website.

Campaigns—Campaigns (also known as *custom campaigns*) allow you to add parameters to any URL from your website to collect more information about your referral traffic.

Acquisition—Acquisition is how you acquire users.
Behaviour—Behaviour data helps you improve your content.

The bottom line is with Google Analytics installed on your website you can track your advertising efforts across the Internet and get more bang for your buck!

Want to know more about getting Google Analytics setup for your website?

Call the office on 01634 823343 or email sian@sianmurphy.com putting "Google Analytics Please" as the subject, for more information