

Google Analytics is changing for the better. You need to act now to make sure you don't lose valuable data about your website.

What is Google Analytics?

Google Analytics (GA) is a web analytics service offered by Google to track and report on website traffic. It is widely used by millions of businesses and websites to measure key metrics, such as the number of website visitors, user behaviours, transactions and revenue data.

What is Google Analytics 4?

Google Analytics 4 (GA4) is the latest version of Analytics, replacing Universal Analytics (UA).

It comes with lots of new features and will become the default version for all users as of July 2023. Some of the main changes include:

- The creation of a whole new property with no historic data
- The tracking of every piece of captured data is an 'event'
- The automatic collection of several metrics (which are the 'events'); offering more insight than the old version of Universal Analytics, including:
 - Page views
 - First visit
 - Session start
 - Scroll depth
 - User engagement
 - Outbound link clicks
 - File downloads
- No more multiple views, all data is tracked under one property and is pulled through as separate data streams for websites and apps
- Anomaly detection, including automatic alerts when data anomalies are detected

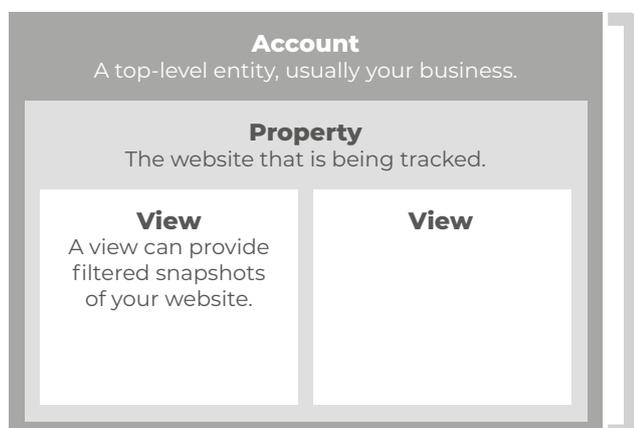
A property describes the website that is being tracked.

An event is data that is triggered every time users interact with your website.

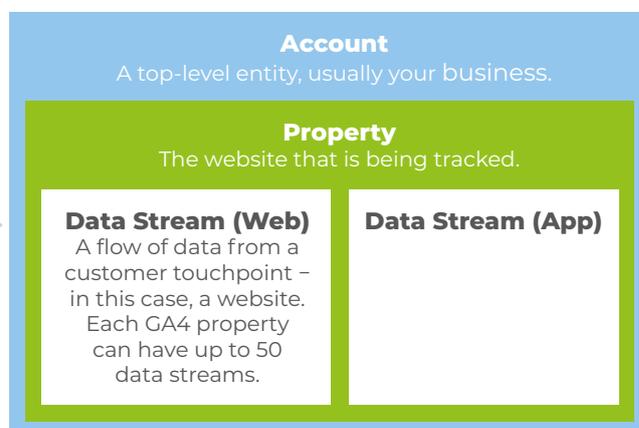
A view can provide filtered snapshots of your website.

Overall, this is a fantastic opportunity to revisit your tracked data, and decide what's important and relevant to your business to measure going forward.

PREVIOUS – Google Analytics Universal structure



NEW – Google Analytics 4 structure



Why is this happening?

The current iteration – Universal Analytics, or UA – has been around for nine years. The technology it uses, and metrics recorded are slightly outdated.

Since UA launched there have been rapid advancements in marketing technology, privacy laws and cookie implementation, as well as some seismic shifts in consumer attitudes and behaviours. These changes mean the data you are basing your decisions on may not be as complete and reliable as you think. This is why Google will be switching to GA4 as the only form of data capture within Analytics.

What will happen if I do not change over to Google Analytics 4?

All old versions of Universal Analytics will stop processing data on 1st July 2023; if you do not switch over to GA4 by this date you will have no data recorded for your website by Google. The sooner your website is migrated to GA4, the more data you will be able to collect before the switch. We are encouraging all our clients to make the switch early, ideally by end of June 2022 so that they will have at least a year's worth of historic data (privacy policy dependent) when the switch takes place.

What will happen to my old Google Analytics account and the data?

- Until 1st July 2023, you can continue to use and collect new data in your Universal Analytics property/properties.
- After 1st July 2023, you'll be able to access your previously processed data in your Universal Analytics property/properties for at least six months. We know your data is important to you, and we strongly encourage you to export your historical reports during this time.
- In the coming months, Google will provide a date for when existing Universal Analytics data will no longer be available. After this date, you'll no longer be able to see your Universal Analytics reports in the Analytics interface and all data will be lost.

What do we need to do to move our website over to Google Analytics 4?

Drop us a message at marketing@ab-uk.com. We can set up an initial call to discuss your requirements and work with you to get your GA4 account set up with all the reporting data you need for your business.

How much does Google charge to move across to GA4?

Google Analytics 4 is free, there is no cost and Analytics 360 customers will not be double charged for Google Analytics 4 hits. However, eventually there will be an Analytics 360 version with increased functionality and/or limits.



How can AB help?

AB will help you throughout your GA4 migration process from start to finish. We will do an initial audit to understand how Google Analytics is implemented on your site. From here we will:

- Manage your website's set up and transition over to GA4
- Manage existing UA properties and provide guidance on exporting data for July 2023
- Manage Google Tag Manager set up
- Manage Global Site Tag set up
- Manage any additional event tracking set up
- Provide help and guidance on privacy policy updates and cookie implementations, including big query and data retention
- Manage UTM tracking and implementation to make sure all data is measured and tracked correctly going forward
- Set up audiences that can be used across other Google properties
- Set up conversion tracking in GA4
- Provide ongoing help and support with GA4

What do I need to do now?

Start a conversation with us by messaging our Digital Marketing team at marketing@ab-uk.com, so we can start the process of creating your GA4 property. Although Universal Analytics will still be live and collecting data for the next year, it is best practice to implement GA4 as soon as possible, alongside UA so that when July 2023 comes, your account will have historical data to refer to.



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