Google Analytics 4 (GA4) - 6 months to go!

18th January 2023

Webinar housekeeping

All participants will be muted for this webinar

This webinar is being recorded. Look out for the webinar recording in a follow up email or on our website (link will be shared)

If you have any questions, feel free to pop them in the chat on this meeting or contact us using the details at the end of this presentation. We'll come back to you directly

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Your hosts

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We are AB Brand and Marketing

Formed in 1983, A top-notch crew of 22 including designers, developers, marketers, strategists and writers

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Agenda:

A recap on some upcoming changes in ad tech – GA4 and use of data

What is GA4 and why it's important to turn it on prior to July 1st, especially for eCommerce websites

Your next steps with GA4

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Recap: Upcoming changes in the digital landscape

The rise in concern over how data is used, and consumer expectation on privacy has led to industry and regulatory changes, which will in turn impact your digital marketing efforts and conversion measurement going forward.

The key changes are...

Google Analytics 4 will be the only form of data collection for Google from July 2023

Browser restrictions on use of third party cookies

(This has now been pushed by Google to 2024)

Privacy – increased focus on user control and security

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Google Analytics 4 (GA4)

What's happening?

- 'Sunsetting' of Universal Analytics (UA) as of **1st July 2023 -** from this point onward all website data will be collected through **Google Analytics 4 (GA4)**

- **IF** you are a Universal Analytics 360 user (you pay to use Analytics) Google announced on 27th October that it is pushing back the sunset date for you, to July 2024

- After 1st July 2023, you'll be able to access your previously processed data in your Universal Analytics property for at least six months. It's strongly advised that you export your historical reports if you want to continue to refer to them (We recommend using BigQuery)

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Google Analytics 4 (GA4)

What are the key changes?

- GA4 is built from the ground up

- No more multiple views

- GA4 data is event based

- GA4 is built for the cookie-less world

- It has a predictive analytics focus

- Metrics are different, so comparing data between UA and GA4 is like comparing apples and oranges.

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Google Analytics 4 (GA4)

Why should I care?

- Google is **making** you care by turning off Universal Analytics as of 1st July 2023

- So, you have to switch over by **1st July 2023** if you wish to continue recording data in your Google properties

- GA4 is a completely different platform that is still being developed – you will need to take time to learn, play and explore the new interface without panicking

- The data is not comparable

- The longer you leave it, the greater the cost to your business as:
  - You're more likely to need specialist help to turn on GA4
  - You won't have the right data to work with to influence future business decisions

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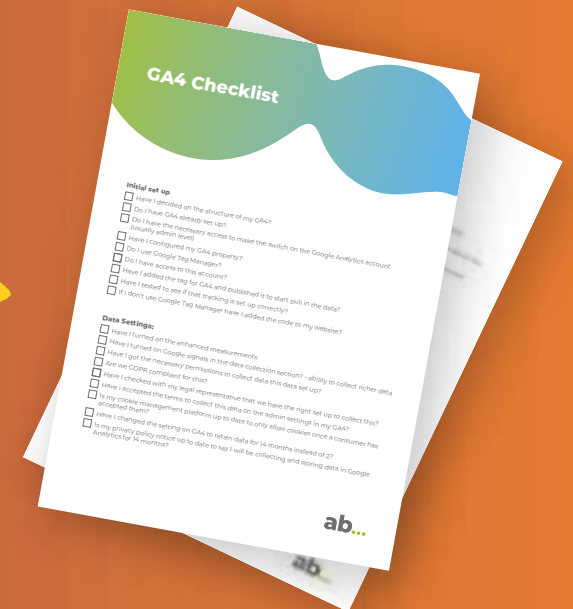# Turn on
GA4 today!

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How to turn on GA4

Google has some great instructions on how to do this. Just Google...

'Make the switch to Google Analytics 4'

There are a couple of things you need to have to hand before making the switch– check out our handy checklist

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Google Tag Manager (or GTM...)

What is GTM?

Google Tag Manager is part of the Google Marketing Suite and allows companies to quickly and easily add bits of code to their websites without the need for development work.

Why should I use it?

As a marketer, GTM is your friend! You can add bits of code to websites that are related to your marketing activities, such as conversion actions, remarketing and site analytics. This is something your company owns but you can add external permissions to if you need any help.

GTM and GA4

Using GTM to implement your GA4 code to your website is the simple way! It's also where you can add in additional event tracking and parameters for more in-depth data about your site. We highly recommend using GTM to help you make the transition to GA4.

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Google Analytics 4 (GA4)

A few reasons to love GA4

- Have two types of acquisition report – traffic and user

- New default channel groupings – now 18!

- Bounce rate is back but it's different

- You can analyse helpful content with more default metrics collected

- Report customisations – you can get rid of metrics in reports you don't need and you can filter reports to show exactly what you want

- Report libraries – create different libraries for different teams that include all the reports they need quick access to

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So, you're an eCommerce site – what does this mean for you?

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GA4 with an eCommerce site

Being an eCommerce site, it's likely that you're tracking your revenue and product information in Universal Analytics.

As we've mentioned though, GA4 is built from the ground up and the metrics are not the same, so this means that unfortunately, we can't simply move the data across. So, in our opinion the move to GA4 for you
is more urgent.

Ultimately if you have an eCommerce site – you will need to set this up manually (and likely need dev help!)

Don't panic though, you have time! And today we'll touch on:

- Using GTM tags for eCommerce events

- Ensuring you have a data layer for eCommerce events

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On to the TECHY bits

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eCommerce

Before we go into the details of GA4 and data layers, I just wanted to touch on what we mean by eCommerce in GA4.

eCommerce events in GA4 collect information about the shopping behaviours of your users. They enable you to see the customer journey to better understand customer behaviour.

Google have some recommended eCommerce events, and these include:

• Selecting an item from a list

• Viewing item details

• Initiating the checkout process

• Purchases

• Refunds

• Adding/removing a product from a cart
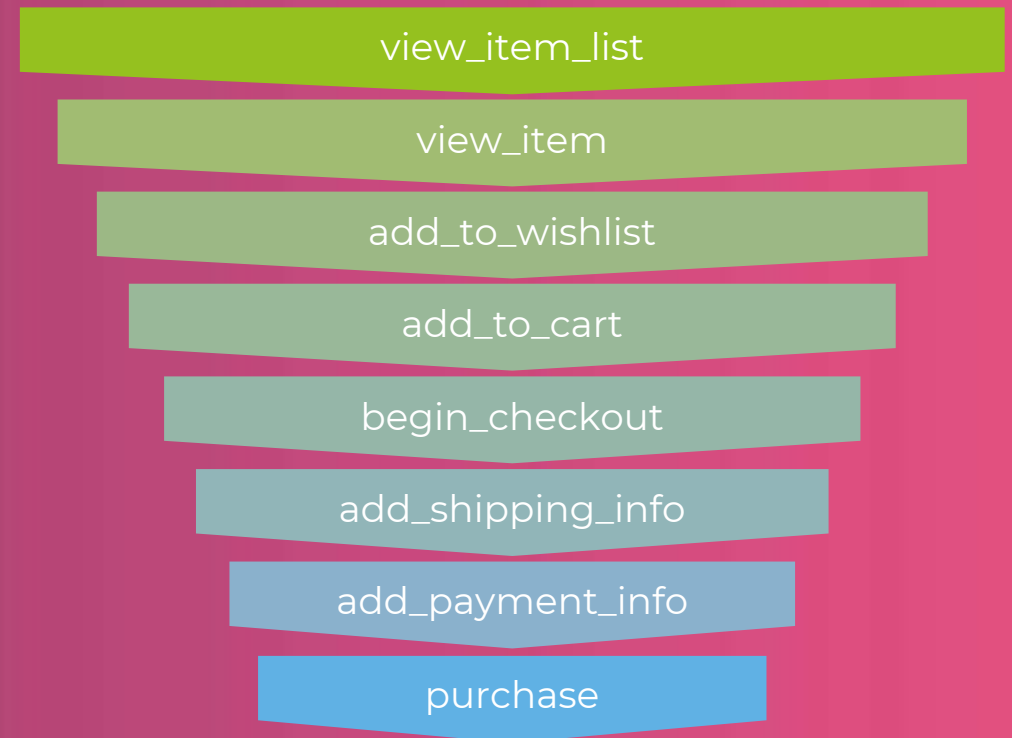
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GA4 and the data layer

Google Analytics uses two data sources – standard data and data from the data layer. Standard data that Google Analytics tracks and analyses are things like page views and clicks.

With the GA4 update, everything is measured as an event, using data from the data layer when available.

Firstly, you will have to add the data layer code to your website for each event.

The idea is that you want to track the entire 'funnel', which is each step a customer takes from first visiting your shop, right up to the final purchase.

A typical GA4 funnel of events looks like this.

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view_item_list

view_item

add_to_wishlist

add_to_cart

begin_checkout

add_shipping_info

add_payment_info

purchase

What is a data layer?

The data layer is a piece of website code that is used to pass information from your website to other platforms, such as Google. It will push an 'event' out and will often contain variables that are then used to populate information in Google Analytics.

```
dataLayer.push({ ecommerce: null });
dataLayer.push({ event: "view_item",
ecommerce: {
  items: [ {
  item_id: "SKU_12345",
  item_name: "Stan and Friends Tee",
  affiliation: "Google Merchandise Store",
  coupon: "SUMMER_FUN",
  currency: "USD",
  discount: 2.22,
  index: 0,
  item_brand: "Google",
  item_category: "Apparel",
  item_category2: "Adult",
  item_category3: "Shirts",
  item_category4: "Crew",
  item_category5: "Short sleeve",
  item_list_id: "related_products",
  item_list_name: "Related Products",
  item_variant: "green",
  location_id: "ChIJIQBpAG2ahYAR_6128GcTUEo",
  price: 9.99,
  quantity: 1
}
] } });
```

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Implementing the data layer with a standard eCommerce platform

The recommended method is to fully migrate over to GA4 and have your eCommerce software (whether that's Shopify or WooCommerce, etc.) create a GA4-compatible data layer. This will be the cleanest solution and your analytics will be set for the future.

If you are using a self-hosted platform, such as WooCommerce or Magento, you (or your web team / developers) are responsible for maintaining the site. There are plugins already available that will implement the GA4 data layer for you. Speak to your web developer about implementing this.

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If you are using a hosted eCommerce platform

If you use a hosted eCommerce supplier such as BigCommerce or Shopify, updates to software for your website are their responsibility as the supplier. Get in contact with your website representative, as they may have a GA4 data layer available as an option that just needs to be turned on (if it isn't already).

Please note that some suppliers have not yet implemented a GA4 data layer. Shopify, for example, states that its GA4 solution will be ready in March this year.

shopify

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If not using a standard eCommerce platform

This is where things can become tricky depending on your existing setup. We've had a number of clients where this was the case. If you are using a bespoke eCommerce site or 3rd party payment system that uses an iFrame, a GA4 data layer may not have been created or can't easily be. You then have a couple of choices:

If your site has a UA data layer set already, this data can be mapped to match the new GA4 format.

While this isn't the recommended solution, it will allow you to create the events using the old data layout. This should work for the foreseeable future. For information about how to migrate your eCommerce implementation from UA to GA4, see the new GA4 eCommerce migration guide.

Use Javascript to 'scrape' information

Using Javascript, a developer can create a data layer that can be injected via Gtag.
This though is best avoided if possible as it is time consuming for a developer to implement.

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Running UA alongside GA4

As UA will continue collecting data until 30th June 2023 at least, there is no need to turn it off immediately.

You can replace your UA eCommerce implementation with GA4 eCommerce events and use your GA4 eCommerce events to populate your UA property with eCommerce data.

This option allows you to continue to use your UA eCommerce reports, while enabling you to fully migrate to Google Analytics 4 when you are ready.

For information about how to migrate your eCommerce implementation from UA to GA4, see the new GA4 eCommerce migration guide.

https://developers.google.com/analytics/devguides/migration/ecommerce/gtm-before-you-begin

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What do you need to do now?

Check for GTM

Turn on GA4!

Check data is flowing

Audit your UA and decide what you need to download

Decide what you need to track in GA4 from this

We're here to help, so feel free to have a no obligation chat with us about GA4 and ask any questions – details at the end of the presentation

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Resources

As we mentioned previously, we did host a webinar back in July with Ashford's focusing on GA4 but also data privacy and cookie policies - if you'd like to go back and watch that please head to our YouTube channel and watch it here: *https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Wh950ziRa4*

Alternatively, for those that have agreed to her from us we will be sending you the slides and resources directly, and we will also be uploading all collateral (including the checklist) to our website - *https://www.ab-uk.com/ga4-webinar/*

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Thank you!

If you have any questions, please pop them in the chat and we'll come back to you or contact us using the details below and we can have a chat:

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Better growth

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