

YOUR GA4 ROADMAP WITH CI'S ANALYTICS TEAM

What is Google Analytics 4 (GA4)?

GA4 is Google's newest approach to measuring digital experiences. In mid-2019, Google launched a beta version called Google App + Web. Google rebranded the offering as GA4 and officially launched it in October 2020.

Why should you prioritize Web Analytics (and GA4)?

Your website is critical to your organization's success—it serves as the first touchpoint for many patrons, it is where you have key content about your organization and your art, and it is where you sell the majority of your tickets. It is where all of your digital marketing - and much of your offline marketing - points to. Your website is vital to your success.

Because of its importance, it's equally important that you are able to measure the website's performance and understand how people behave once they are on the site. Without good data, we cannot understand if the website is performing successfully, nor can we have a data driven approach towards identifying how to improve the user experience.

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What are the benefits of GA4?

An emphasis on users: GA4 attempts to create a more complete picture of the user journey by collecting data from websites, mobile apps, and single-page applications in the same GA property. It also takes advantage of several methodologies to map user behavior that spans different devices to the individual user.

Data-driven attribution: GA4 leverages machine learning to create a data-driven cross-channel attribution solution for campaigns and traffic sources, providing a better approach for attributing success to marketing initiatives.

Predictive insights: GA4 also utilizes machine learning to create predictive audiences based on users most likely to purchase and provides predictive insights easily integrated with Google Ads. Unfortunately, predictive audiences require traffic volumes that likely will not be met by most clients, at least with the current GA4 solution.

Better data: GA4 has better data relating to time spent on the website, makes it easier to measure Ecommerce product events beyond purchases (e.g., add to cart, view item), and can automatically collect certain custom behaviors that previously would require custom tags (e.g., PDF downloads, video plays).

Flexibility. GA4 is built using a very customizable and flexible data model, allowing us to create tracking solutions unique to the user experience (its content, design, features and functionality, technical setup, etc.) and our needs.

It's still free. GA4 is an industry-leading web analytics platform with a very powerful back-end engine (despite some imperfections) and it is still entirely free!

Will you need help setting up GA4?

Yes. GA4 is very technical and is built for analysts and data scientists, not marketers. But have no fear—CI's Analytics team can execute a custom implementation to help you gather excellent data and understand website performance, campaign performance, and user behavior.

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What are the main differences between UA and GA4?

Main Differences	UA	GA4
Accessing data	Reporting Interface (Primary) Google Data Studio, API (Secondary)	Google Data Studio (CI-recommended) Reporting Interface, GA4 Explorations, API, BigQuery (Secondary)
Types of trackable user experiences	Websites	Websites, Apps, Single Page Applications
How users are mapped and identified	Cookies	Cookies, User IDs, Google Signals, Machine Learning
Primary attribution model	Last Non-Direct Click	Cross-channel data-driven model
Maximum data retention period	Doesn't expire now but ultimately will expire in December 2023	14 months
Enriching the dataset with additional events	Tags in GTM	Automatic Event Tracking, Tags in GTM Automatic Event Tracking Examples: Scrolls, Outbound links, YouTube videos, file downloads
Status of time-based metrics Examples: Time on Page, Session Length	Inaccurate and mostly ignored by CI	New methodology - data is much more accurate
Building and defining content groupings	Administrative settings in GA	Code in GTM
How campaigns are tracked	UTMs	UTMs
Adjusting collected data	Administrative settings in GA	Code in GTM

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What is happening to Universal Analytics (UA)?

Google will sunset UA on **July 1, 2023**—that means users will need to make a plan to move to GA4 sooner rather than later.

Key Dates for UA Sunsetting and GA4 Implementation	
Implement GA4	Now
UA Sunsets	July 1, 2023
Guaranteed Access to UA Historical Data Expires	December 31, 2023

What are my GA4 next steps?

CI's Analytics team will help you sunset UA and get started with GA4.

A custom GA4 implementation: GA4 is more powerful but more technical. CI's Analytics team will execute a custom implementation to help you collect the data you need. We have a few options available to choose from so that hopefully all organizations can get going with GA4.

Get to know GA4: Get comfortable with collecting data in GA4 and using it—and yes, you guessed it! CI's Analytics team can help you make sense of the new interface and build custom reports and dashboards for your needs.

Make a plan for exporting UA historical data: This is a plan for the future! It encompasses exporting historical UA data in the necessary level of granularity and creating a dashboard for accessing that data. CI's Analytics team can help you export key data you'll want to have access to in the future.

Ready? Let's go!

Please fill out [this form](#) to get in touch and we'll help you migrate to GA4 with ease.