A useful Guide to Google Analytics
Erick

The key is to use actual data to make decisions on web redesigns and on making updates to existing sites.
We have to make sites easy for the user to navigate, we can’t expect them to hunt for the information.
That means we have to know what they are looking for and adjust our sites
Example of using data proactively. The Featured links were content identified by analytics as the most popular content that people wanted to see. So we deliberately front-loaded that content to make it easier for people to find.
Pay attention after a redesign too

After a redesign, monthly traffic to a group registration form decreased by almost 80% (July 1, 2017 – October 3, 2017)

This is how lack of analysis can hurt a site. The web team was excluded from the site planning. An analytics report after-the-fact revealed a massive decrease in one of the site’s primary objectives.
Configuration Tips

In order to use the data to make decisions, you have to make sure the data is actually good.

Diana / Joe
CASE STUDY: GREAT EXPECTATIONS
NEW WEBSITE

The new site will be GREAT!

Great?
It’ll be INCREDIBLE!
It’ll soar like an eagle in outer space!

My journey at Texas A&M Foundation: starting September, 2016
We expected to see a drop in traffic for the first few months because that often happens when you have a new website. We instituted a new “VIEW” for our New Website and we saw the traffic between Nov 3, 2016 and Dec 31, 2016 go up. At first I was very excited and really wanted to run to show my boss, but then I decided to dig a little deeper....
WE NEEDED TO EXCLUDE OURSELVES....

Regular expressions let you create custom IP exclusion filters.
Joe screenshot spike - ever wonder why a spike occurred and you don’t remember what happened that day?
Google Tag Manager

Making analytics easier

Joe
Joe - Large enterprises often have not just web analytics tags to manage, but also lots of other tags and pixels from various digital and marketing solutions. Things like conversion or retargeting tags, or attribution tags, testing tags, personalization tags, the list goes on and on. And to address the need for A&M to be able to manage all of these different tags across all the different places these tags have to go, across all the different web pages and properties with minimal support from the IT side, the need for tag manager is instrumental.
Tag Manager

- **Auto-Event Triggers**
  Set a tag to fire based on certain on-site events — page views, clicks, form submissions, errors, timers, and more — without any extra code.

- **Click**
  Set a tag to fire when a particular element is clicked — for example, when a user clicks “download button” inside your site or a ‘learn more’ button or a link that leads away from your site.

- **Custom Event**
  Set a tag to fire based on a custom logged event, such as a user watching a video on your site or scrolling to a certain point on the page.

- **Form Submission**
  Set a tag to fire when a particular form is submitted — no additional code required.

- **Page View**
  Set a tag to fire when a particular page is viewed, like when the page URL matches your thank-you page.

**Auto-Event Triggers**
Set a tag to fire based on certain on-site events — page views, clicks, form submissions, errors, timers, and more — without any extra code.

**Click**
Set a tag to fire when a particular element is clicked — for example, when a user clicks the ‘buy now’ button or a link that leads away from your site.

**Custom Event**
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**Page View**
Set a tag to fire when a particular page is viewed, like when the page URL matches your thank-you page.
Campaigns

Measure your traffic coming from email, social media, advertisements, and other non-website sources

Diana / Joe

Joe - By adding campaign parameters to the destination URLs you use in your campaigns, you can collect information about the overall efficacy of those campaigns, and also understand where the campaigns are more effective.

Example President's email
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Important Metrics

What are the most important pieces of data to look at?

Erick
Important Metrics

We are overloaded with data.

All data is not the same.

We have to look at the data which matters, not all data is created equally.
“Vanity Metrics”

Pageviews is not actually terribly important. This is the modern version of the 1990s counters.

Every site has its own most important metric depending on the content/audience/etc. Identify that that is for your sites.

Pageviews are usually not the most important thing to look at, even though they are usually thought to be the most important by people not familiar with analytics.
Important Metrics

So what then is important to know?

• **Sessions** - better than Pageviews
• **Visitors** - unique visitors, new vs. returning
• **Acquisition Channels** - where is your traffic coming from?
• **Bounce Rate** - how engaged are your users?
Segments

Examining data subsets

Erick
A segment is just a subset of the entire data collection.
To add a segment, go to any report and click the Add Segment button. It will then show you many pre-generated segments or allow you to create your own.
Segments can...

Let you use all of the standard dashboard reports...on just the content that you define in the segment.

"Let's shrink Big Data into Small Data ... and hope it magically becomes Great Data."

The power of the segment is that it lets you use all of the standard reports, but only on the segment that you chose. You can also compare the report findings for your segment to that of the overall data. For example - it lets you see the acquisition channel of just those pages viewed over a phone.
Goals & Conversions

Have a way to measure success

Joe -
“Goals” measure how well your site or app fulfills your target objectives. A goal represents a completed activity, called a conversion, that contributes to the success of your business. Examples of goals include submitting a contact information form (for a marketing or lead generation site).

A conversion takes place when a visitor to your site takes an action you care about and “converts” to a customer. This could be through filling out a form, completing a purchase, or by simply showing a high level of engagement with your site. This post will help you define and measure which traffic sources result in conversions.
What is a goal?

Tracked measurement of an action on your page that you have determined is valuable.
Types of goals

When most people hear goal or conversion they think of tracking revenue.

“GOAL” = $

What is a goal and how to set it up
Types of goals

MANY different types of events you can track in Google Analytics like:

• Downloads of a named PDF (ie. brochure, student handbook or PPT)
• Views of a specific page (ie. application confirmation, event registration)
• Completions of a form (ie. feedback form, inquiry form, newsletter sign-up form)
• Engagement measurements (ie. specific time on site, # pages per visit, amount of time watching a video)

What is a goal and how to set it up
What is a goal and how to set it up
More info about goal completers

What is a goal and how to set it up

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Campaign</th>
<th>Acquisition</th>
<th>Behavior</th>
<th>Conversion</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sessions</td>
<td>% New Sessions</td>
<td>New Users</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. PG/LGH Legacies_JA_April-2018</td>
<td>427</td>
<td>69.7%</td>
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<td>2. PG/LGH Legacies_JA_April-2018</td>
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<td>4. PG/LGH Legacies_JA_January-2018</td>
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<td>28.5%</td>
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Data Studio

“Beautiful data visualization starts here.”
- Google

Diana / Erick
This section of my part of the presentation is about getting across the right message. I've talked about having a new website, a new boss, and then there was a new challenge put before my colleagues and I- Create a Quarterly Report for the Board that shows how we are doing.
This is overwhelming and hard to read.
CASE STUDY: MESSAGE
WHAT HAPPENED WITH HARVEY?

HURRICANE HARVEY IMPACT - AUGUST 25-SEPTEMBER 14, 2017
OVERALL SITE IMPACT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Users</th>
<th>Sessions</th>
<th>Pageviews</th>
<th>Goal Completions</th>
<th>Goal Conversion Rate</th>
<th>Avg. Time on Page</th>
<th>Total Events</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13,338</td>
<td>16,114</td>
<td>29,918</td>
<td>1,539</td>
<td>9.55%</td>
<td>00:01:58</td>
<td>25,376</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Traffic and Conversion Trends

New vs. Returning Users

Geography

Top Traffic Sources

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<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Sessions</th>
<th>Event Category</th>
<th>Total Events</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>email newsletter</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most Popular Events

Detail of Outbound Links

An example of a data studio report that is nicely formatted, easy to read, and pulls you into the analysis.
Questions?

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GoWeb Documentation  
[https://goweb.tamu.edu/groups/analytics/](https://goweb.tamu.edu/groups/analytics/)