Seven underrated Google Analytics features that boost performance

30-second summary:

- Google Analytics is an important web analytics tool from Google used in digital marketing.
- Many digital marketers and website owners use it to track and measure the performance of their websites.
- There are a lot of Google Analytics features that perform different functions. All working towards helping you get the best of your website.
- However, there are some Google Analytics features that are underrated. Many digital marketers don’t recognize them and what they are capable of doing to improve the performance of their website.
- This piece will highlight seven of them and how they can be helpful to you.

Google Analytics is a web analytics product from Google that has helped a lot of digital marketers and website owners ascertain the performance of their website. Approximately 29 million websites use it as an analytics tool. A lot of Google Analytics features are only known to a few digital marketers. Many people rush to it to check how page views they got over a period of time or how many conversations they got. To these people, that’s only what this great tool can for them – the basics. But it’s far beyond that.

There are some features it has which can help improve the performance of your website but are underrated.

Are you hearing this for the first time? Don’t worry that’s

why I’m here and this piece will discuss seven of them and how they can be helpful to your site.

1. Custom alert

This Google Analytics feature can be located when you log into your report and tap on the ‘customization’ drop-down menu. When set up, you will be alerted through emails when there is a change in your traffic or behavior of your website.

This could be on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis. For a beginner who is curious to grow his traffic or conversion, it is simple to keep your eye on it. Another crucial function of a custom alert is to automatically notify you of trends in your data.

This could be tracking and informing you in real-time about the events on your website be it positive or negative. The advantage here is that you can fix any negative development before it becomes obvious. You can follow the screenshot below to set up your custom alert.

2. Channel groupings

It’s easy to manage the traffic source to your website with channel groupings feature. This feature is on default on your analytics report and it organizes and groups your common source of traffic.

For instance, you launched an ad campaign on Facebook, and

Instagram as social media tactics to grow your small business, the channels grouping will allow you to compare and analyze the performance of each of the traffic channels.

For a marketer to want to be more specific with his traffic channel, you can create custom channels grouping and apply it to your report.

Its effect will be seen in how your data display but won’t change the data itself. To make use of channels grouping on your GA, when you sign in to your report and locate admin at the bottom left. Click on it and you will list of features which channel groupings are one of.

3. Behavior flow

When users visit your website, they move from one page or event to another in an attempt to achieve their desire which may be to get help through your content. It is a visual representation that can help you understand how your audience interacts with your site, the content they enjoy, and the ones that turn them off.

The behavior flow of your site simply displays the node, the connections to pages on your website, and exit. After consuming your content, do your audiences click on another link to learn more? Or do they bounce because they aren’t satisfied?

This increases your bounce rate and a clear indication that you need to work on that particular content. Below is a screenshot of the behavior flow from my blog.

4. Ecommerce tracking

For those who want to start an ecommerce business or those already in the field. Tracking the performance of your ecommerce website is possible with ecommerce tracking feature on GA.

As a merchant who sells on Shopify or BigCommerce, you'll want to know where your high-paying customers come from, how they interact with the products you have in your store, and which product converts more.

With the knowledge of this, you can identify the location of customers that make you smile when you remember the number of sales you have made, the products they like, and things to fix to continue to be ahead of your competitors.

Below is how to set up ecommerce tracking on GA

- Sign in to your report on GA
- Click on Admin on the bottom left and you will be in a new window
- Click on ecommerce settings
- Enable ecommerce
- Enable enhanced ecommerce reporting and save
- The final step is to set up your tracking code. Learn how to do it here.

Once your ecommerce site is being tracked on GA, you will gain insight into the following metrics on your dashboard; unique purchases, revenue, quantity, conversion rate, average order revenue, etc.

5. Demographic

Some digital marketers don’t know the importance of analyzing the demography of users who visit their websites. Age, sex, and interest category of your audience are key metrics that should matter to you.

You can use them to make decisions that can improve the performance of your website. Take, for instance, you run a small business website on women’s clothing, and your demography metrics show that 80% of your visitors in the last month were male within the age range of 18 and 24.

That’s a red flag that you’re targeting the wrong audience. A female clothing line business should have more female visitors. Also, the age range of 18 and 24 are mostly young people who are either schooling or unemployment. Hence won’t have much money to spend on clothes. Below is how you can locate the demographic metrics in your GA.

6. Site speed report

Speed is one of the key factors Google considers when ranking your website. It even became more obvious with the introduction of Accelerated Mobile Page, AMP. Not paying attention to this one of the SEO mistakes you make. Google Analytics tracks the load time of your web pages.

The aim is to give you reasons to learn how to improve the speed of your website. A web page that loads slowly is a turn off for your audiences. Nobody wants to wait for a long time for a page to load when there are many web pages competing for their attention.

It can increase the bounce rate of your website or even cost you sales if you sell online. Site speed is an indicator of a healthy site, hence the need to learn how to make it happen.

7. UTM parameters

To some digital marketers and small businesses, this might be the first time of hearing this marketing acronym. Don’t be confused, UTM simply stands for Urchin Tracking Modules. They are codes you add at the end of your URL. This is crucial if you run ad campaigns for your business.

For example, if you run an ad campaign on Instagram, Facebook, and LinkedIn and made a lot of sales, you won’t know which of the social media platforms drove more sales to you.

The only way to know that is if you add campaign parameters to your URLs which is tracked on GA. For every user who clicked on the URL, the parameter is sent to Google Analytics. The goal is to identify the platform in which the campaign performed better and intensify your strategy on it to make more sales next time.

Wrapping up

The performance of your website should be of utmost importance to you as a digital marketer, small business or someone who earns passive income online. Google Analytics has all it takes to keep your site healthy all the time.

Google Analytics features factored in all aspects of your website be it blog, ecommerce, or any other kind of website.

Yours is to take your time to identify these features, explore them, make use of them and you will be surprised at how they

can keep your website at its best all the time.

Chuks Chukwuemeka is a content creator, blogger, digital marketer, and founder of DepreneurDigest.com, an online business blog.

More about:

- *Seven underrated Google Analytics features that boost performance*