



Table of Contents

THE NEXT GENERATION IN WEB ANALYTICS	2
THE OLD WAYS TO ANALYTICS (UNIVERSAL ANALYTICS)	2
THE NEW & MODERN WAYS TO ANALYTICS (GOOGLE ANALYTICS 4)	2
WHAT'S NEW IN GOOGLE ANALYTICS 4	3
PLATFORM RELATED	3
USERS & SESSIONS RELATED	4
EVENTS & OTHER IMPORTANT MEASUREMENTS RELATED	4
GA4 MAIN CHALLENGES	5
Q&A SESSIONS.....	6



The next generation in Web Analytics

The old ways to Analytics (Universal Analytics)

Universal Analytics (UA) was rolled out in 2013 to quickly become the most commonly used digital marketing platform ever. It ruled for over a decade, while a lot has changed in the digital world. Technology has advanced and become more widespread, the way people interact with businesses has evolved, privacy concerns have arisen and been regulated by authorities (e.g. GDPR in EU).

Users nowadays use multiple devices, web and mobile applications simultaneously in their user journey, and are reluctant to share their data, that are constantly collected by a large number of 3rd party service providers. To meet the modern challenges, Google has rolled-out Google Analytics 4 (GA4), and at the same time set the final deadlines for its current web analytics platforms:

- July 1, 2023 for Universal Analytics (UA), and
- July 1, 2024 for Google Analytics 360 (GA360).

Reaching the deadline, new measurement data sent to these old systems are no longer accepted. GA4 will take its rightful place in the Google's Ecosystem.

The new & modern ways to Analytics (Google Analytics 4)

The name may indicate a simple change - UA is also called as GA3 -, but GA4 is a completely new platform.

“GA4 isn’t so much an update, but an entirely new way of doing analytics – set up to scale for the future, work in a cookieless world, and be a lot more privacy-conscious.” Krista Seiden, Founder KS Digital, Google Product Manager for Google Analytics

New data structure is used in GA4, making the historical data from UA inaccessible, and requiring to recreate the GA4 dashboards and reports, preferably in external reporting tools (e.g. Looker / Data Studio, Power BI, Tableau).

While much of the technology and terminology will be new that brings some fundamental changes, transitioning to GA4 should be considered as an opportunity, to do things differently in a more customized way. GA4 enables privacy-centred, omnichannel integration, that meets the modern requirements, which UA was not designed to do.



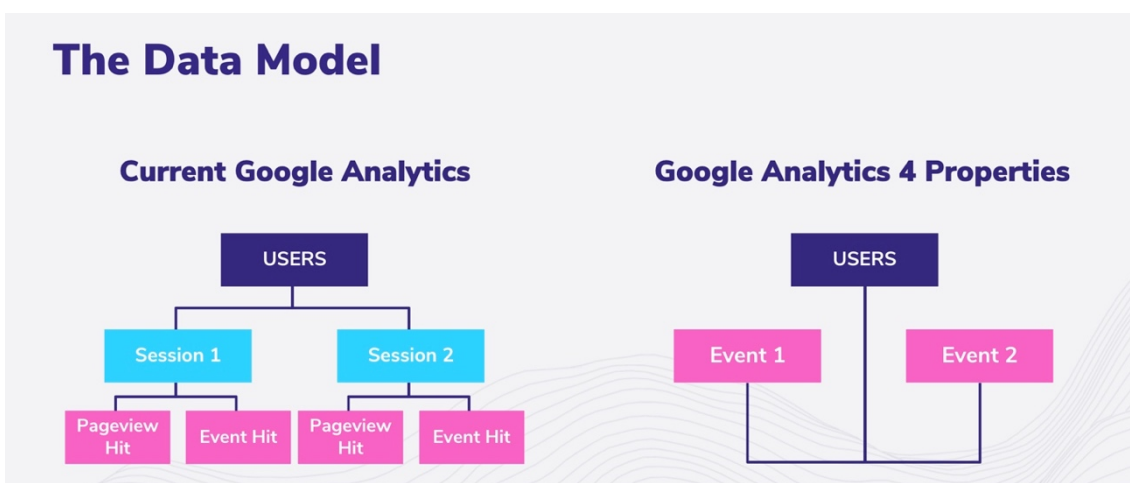
What's new in Google Analytics 4

Nowadays more and more people are interacting with businesses whenever and however it is most convenient for them - for example, searching for a product on their phone and then purchasing it later on their tablet or computer. Obtaining insight into these omnichannel user journeys is crucial for businesses to better digitally engage, understand consumer behaviour, predict and address customers' needs in more personalized ways, and provide great user experiences.

Google Analytics 4 is built to handle multichannel user journeys and provides appropriate tools for the analysis, it uses events instead of sessions to measure performance and doesn't rely exclusively on cookies, due to privacy concerns and regulations. Some of its main features are the following:

Platform related

- The platform can collect data from both websites and mobile applications, providing a unified view of the customer journey,
- In Google Analytics 4 all interactions will be collected as events, moving away from the session focus used in Universal Analytics,
- The usual event structure of Categories/Actions/Labels are removed, and custom parameters can be attached to any events collected, providing greater flexibility around capturing details that are important for you,
- Time window for processing and displaying submitted data has been increased to 72 hours, compared to the 4-hours used in UA,
- Data retention for granular data will be limited to 14 months.



The new GA4 data model



Users & Sessions related

- In GA4 there are new ways for user identification, as it provides user-id, google signals, device id and modelling methods,
- In GA4 the default user dimension is not all users, but active users,
- Session timeout limit could be set more gradually,
- When the campaign source changes mid session, GA4 does not create a new session.

Events & other important measurements related

- The default conversion setup in GA4 results in multiple conversions within the same session, if the action occurs multiple times, while in UA only one conversion was calculated within a session,
- The bounce rate is calculated differently in GA4, resulting in lower bounce rate in general.





GA4 main challenges

You may encounter difficulties during the GA4 transition and the subsequent use of GA4. Your historical data may be missing, problems concerning the quantity and quality of the data may arise, you have to create your usual reports anew, and have to be able to integrate new features, that arrive every week, into your daily operations.

If the GA4 transition is not done correctly, and your market is highly competitive and doesn't really grow, you could expect a fall in revenue. The reasons might be hidden from you, since you won't have the right and reliable data at hand.

You might find difficulties due to any of the following issues:

- Historical data prior to the transition (from UA) is missing,
- Previous data sources and reports won't work, it is necessary to create those anew,
- Collected data differs significantly when comparing GA4 and UA,
- Less data is received than you are used to in UA,
- You are unsure about the data quality,
- GA4 data is available for a limited time, missing data will be modelled by GA4,
- On the interface of GA4, you do not see the usual reports and data, for proper data analysis it is necessary to configure those and to create new reports,
- Certain functions are new (e.g. item-scoped individual dimensions, Custom Channel Grouping), while other functions are missing (e.g. usable GA4 report filters).

Your first and most important task is to become comfortable with understanding the data in GA4. You have to gather and analyse the right data in quality and quantity, to be able to support data-driven decision making.

If you encounter difficulties that are hard to solve or you're unsure about the required solution, it is best to turn to a professional. We are providing you with **additional useful information** in our **Q&A segment**.

*"Contact us for free consultation at
www.fit2grow.io"*



Q&A sessions

Q1. Can I use my historical data from UA in GA4?

A1. Unfortunately, it is not possible to import your existing data into GA4. As a consequence, you need to build up your historical data for GA4 as well, so from the start you can analyze and visualize longer trends and year-over-year data. The earlier you start, the longer historical data you'll be able to collect in GA4.

Q2. I work with a lot of data. How can I ensure that my data won't be sampled?

A2. For large customers, an external data warehouse is recommended, to avoid sampling. GA4 users can share and store their data in BigQuery using the built-in integration. This enables you to run queries based on real data, as opposed to previously extrapolated data in Universal Analytics.

Q3. What does BigQuery offers?

A3. In BigQuery you are able to store your data without sampling and for longer periods - in accordance to your data privacy rules -, in the format that is best suitable for your reports & further analysis. On top of that it offers ***machine learning models*** that can provide you with additional growth-supporting patterns and conclusions that the human eye cannot notice. This can help you in better understanding your customers' needs and buying habits, and to design and provide personalized products/services.

Q4. What should I consider when analysing my data within GA4?

A4. GA4 processes all the traffic within 72 hours after receiving those, compared to the 4 hours in Universal Analytics. If you work with a lot of data, it is recommended to exclude the last 48 hours of data from your analysis, so you get to see all the received traffic.



Q5. What is Google Consent Mode used & good for?

A5. Google Consent Mode uses "Machine Learning" to model data that you're not allowed to measure due to lack of user consent. When large amount of data is presented, the modelling gets more precise data, enriching our otherwise incomplete reports with the modelled data.

Q6. When should I start to use Google Signals for customer identification?

A6. You should have adequate traffic to be able to use Google Signals for customer identifications. If you see "thresholds applied" in your reports, it means that you don't have the required amount of data and google won't show you some data, until you reach higher traffic volumes or you widened the selected time frame. We suggest to turn it off until this issues resolves itself.

Q7. My data in GA4 is different than in UA?

A7. Positive and negative deviations are acceptable within appropriate limits, since GA4 is a new systems using new approaches and data model. To answer this in details, we first need to see what data, in what context and to what extent it differs when comparing GA4 and UA.

*"We Measure what Matters,
You Manage the Growth."*