



GOOGLE ANALYTICS 4 PROPERTY (GA4) UPDATE

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GOOGLE ANALYTICS 4

– WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR BLUE TIGER & CLIENTS

Abstract

Google Analytics 4 (GA4) is the new version of Google Analytics. GA4 replaces Universal Analytics (aka GA3) which will become obsolete on 1 July 2023.

GA3 analytics accounts will stop processing new data on July 1 2023. However, it will still be able to get access to and download historical GA3 data for 6 months after this date. Note: GA3 data is not compatible with GA4, so historical comparison with GA4 and GA3 data will not be possible.

KEY POINTS:

You cannot simply upgrade from GA3 to GA4. These are totally different analytics systems with different data structures. **Historic data from GA3 cannot be imported into GA4.**

GA4 uses a brand-new type of measurement based on events and parameters, as opposed to the previous page-view measurement (which used events as a custom tracking option). In GA4 even a 'pageview' is considered an event. Key concepts are:

- **Events:** These are user interactions with a website or app – like page views, button clicks, user actions, etc.
 - **Parameters:** Additional bits of information that give context to each event.
 - **User Property:** Attributes or demographic information about the user.
 - **User ID:** Used for cross-platform user tracking.
- If you are using Google Tag Manager – the tags are different to before – generally existing tags will need to be re-configured.
 - A new GA4 property to store the data in and it will need re-configuring to take into account:
 - Filtering out IP traffic
 - Audience segments
 - Goals
 - Dashboards & reports
 - Referral filters
 - Users
 - Google Ads
 - Search Console
 - In site search
 - Custom events

HOW IS GA4 DIFFERENT FROM UNIVERSAL ANALYTICS?

Universal Analytics	Google Analytics 4
Relies on tracking cookies which are increasingly limited.	Less dependent on cookies and more privacy controls.
Records sequences of sessions and pageviews.	Records every interaction as an event to enable user-centric measurement.
Potential gaps in user data from privacy measures.	Predictive metrics and machine learning to fill in data gaps.
Basic reporting and data visualization options.	Advanced analysis tools previously only available in GA360.

KEY DATES:

1st July 2023: GA3 stops recording live data

1st July + 6 months: Historic GA3 data will be available for analysis within GA3 or for download for querying using BigQuery, (which is included with GA4)

1st July: GA4 becomes the de-facto Google Analytics app

Pre-1st July 2022: Install a GA4 property to allow GA3 and GA4 to collect data in parallel. This will allow YoY comparison of data in GA4 from 1st July 2023

• The interface is totally different to the previous version.

• Some data doesn't (currently) exist in the same way you can currently see it in GA3 Analytics.

• Current data and reporting are currently safe and will not go anywhere. The majority of data currently acquired from GA3 will be available in GA4.

• GA4 is more privacy focused method of online data gathering and analysis and better integration with Google's chosen post-cookie ad delivery method.

• Conversion pixels as previously used no longer work in the same way.

TRANSITION PLAN OVERVIEW:

IMPLEMENTATION

1. Create account structure
2. Add/configure users
3. Create a GA 4 property
4. Create data stream(s)
5. Enable data collection
6. Activate Google Signals
7. Link to GTM
8. Link to Search Console
9. Link to Google Ads
10. Debug: Review and compare data between GA3 and GA4 to ensure correct installation.

CONFIGURATION

11. Replicate GA3 custom events in GA4
12. Migrate GA3 goals and conversions to GA4
13. Enable any KPI events as Goals (i.e. form submissions)
14. Update/reconfigure integrations (dashboards, databases, plugins, marketing platforms)
15. Validate and bid to conversions in Google Ads
16. Migrate audiences
17. Migrate ecommerce measurement
18. Configure Adwords account for:
 - a. Import conversions (for bidding), remove any GA3 goals from conversion settings in Google Ads to avoid duplicate conversions.
 - b. Add Analytics audiences to a campaign or ad group (for remarketing).

GA4 IMPLEMENTATION EFFORT REQUIRED:

Set Up Option	Set up Tracking for Website Conversion Goals & Events	Estimated Time
GA4 Basic	Implementation & basic data tracking	2 hours
GA4 Advanced	Detailed event tracking	4 hours
GA4 Advanced+ / eCommerce	Extensive event tracking and sales tracking	6 – 8 hours

1. Basic: Analytics Set Up Only

GA4 Basic: Set Up GA4 This typically takes about 2 hours, and includes setting up Google Tag Manager and GA4, adding the GA4 code to a website, and setting up the basic configurations. This time estimate does not include any allowance for conversion tracking.

Advanced: Set Up Analytics With Tracking of Conversion Goals and Events

In (GA3), tracking was done for Goals and Events. In GA4, everything is an 'Event', but conceptually it's much the same.

For example, the tracking of Goals and/or Events can include configuring the system so that clicks on a phone number and email addresses can be tracked in Google Analytics, whereas previously these were setup in GTM. Likewise, the submissions of forms can tracked, as can access to certain pages or specific actions site visitors take on specific pages of the website.

This type of conversion tracking can also differentiate between different traffic sources (SEO vs Ads vs Social vs Email) and deliver different types, quantities and qualities of conversions (phone/email/forms).

GA4 Advanced Plus & eCommerce: Set Up Of GA4 with Conversion Goals & Events

We typically find it takes 6 to 8 hours to set up GA4 on eCommerce sites, including configure GA4 to track important conversion goals and events. Equally larger sites with extensive event tracking requirements would fall under this category.



Blue Tiger work across a plethora of industries and have strategic insight into current and upcoming trends. Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you wish to discuss anything further or just fancy a chat!

