



TFD Talks: GA4

Hello, we're Twenty-First Digital

But our friends call us TFD



Our mission:

We exist to build up organizations—and the people within them—to create an indispensable relationship with their audience that drives relevance, sustainability, and profitability.



Senior Strategist
Twenty-First Digital

ABOUT ME

Natalie Paschall

Senior Strategist for TFD with a passion for driving client success and achieving business objectives. As the a client account manager, she oversee client relationships, ensuring high-quality work that aligns with business goals.

With expertise in Paid Media, Reporting, and Audience Development I deliver actionable insights to drive results.

Committed to continuous learning, I hold various certifications and stay updated with industry trends.

Universal Analytics is Going Away

Why is this happening?

- Privacy - GDPR and ITP requirements
- Cross Platform - GA4 can blend together web & app data
- Disappearance of the Cookie, learn more [here](#).
- Flexible data modeling, learn more [here](#).



Need to Know

Definitions and important icons

Need to Know

Dimension vs Metrics

A **dimension** is an attribute of a data point. It describes the data and is usually text. Learn more [here](#).

Ex: Page Path + Screen Class, Event Name, Session Source / Medium

(not set) is a placeholder name that Google Analytics uses when it hasn't received information for a dimension. Most common reasons for (not set) [here](#).

A **metric** is a quantitative measurement, such as an average, ratio, percentage, and so on. It's always a number. Learn more [here](#).

Ex: Views, Users, Engaged Sessions, Event Count

Need to Know

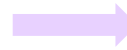
Custom Dimensions & Metrics

Configure your GA4 Data Streams to collect data that helps you understand more about website user behavior.

- Pass over the User-ID of your paywall platform, to tie engagement events back to a user
- Track site engagement metrics by Category/Tag

We use Google Tag Manager to configure dimensions and metrics to clients needs.

Reach out to us if you'd like help configuring these.



Type	Details	How it works	Standard property limits	Analytics 360 property limits
User-scoped custom dimensions	Analyze an attribute about users on your website or app.	Defined based on a custom user property .	25	100
Event-scoped custom dimensions	Analyze an attribute about an event, such as the value of the event or whether the intended action was completed successfully.	Defined based on a custom event parameter .	50	125
Item-scoped custom dimensions	Analyze an attribute about a product or service sold on your online store. For example, you can analyze the color, size, rating, or status of a product.	Defined based on a custom event parameter within an items array.	10	25
Custom metrics	Analyze the data points from an event parameter. For example, you can analyze the value of a transaction from an event parameter.	Defined based on a custom event parameter .	50	125

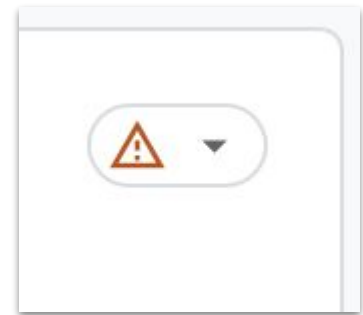
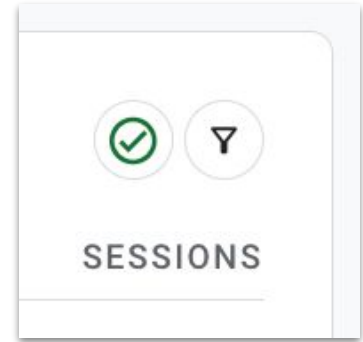
Need to Know

Data Icon Indicators

A **data quality** icon appears in the top right of each card. This icon indicates how much of the data you are seeing in the card. In the following image, you would be viewing 100% of the available data for the card.

If a data threshold is applied, you will see the filter icon. This happens when the metric you are viewing includes demographic information or audiences defined using demographic dimensions.

If you're looking for something in the main GA4 reports, and you're not finding data, chances are it's sampled, and you need to check the Explore tab.



Need to Know

Default Channel Group

Channels are rule-based definitions of your website's traffic sources.

You can see the default channels as values for the following dimensions in the *Acquisition* and *Advertising Reports*:

- Default Channel Group
- Session Default Channel Group
- First User Default Channel Group

Default channel descriptions

Channel	Description
Affiliates	Affiliates is the channel by which users arrive at your site/app via links on affiliate sites.
Audio	Audio is the channel by which users arrive at your site/app via ads on audio platforms (e.g., podcast platforms).
Cross-network	Cross-network is the channel by which users arrive at your site/app via ads that appear on a variety of networks (e.g., Search and Display).
Direct	Direct is the channel by which users arrive at your site/app via a saved link or by entering your URL.
Display	Display is the channel by which users arrive at your site/app via display ads, including ads on the Google Display Network.
Email	Email is the channel by which users arrive at your site/app via links in email.
Mobile Push Notifications	Mobile Push Notifications is the channel by which users arrive at your site/app via links in mobile-device messages when they're not actively using the app.
Organic Search	Organic Search is the channel by which users arrive at your site/app via non-ad links in organic-search results.
Organic Shopping	Organic Shopping is the channel by which users arrive at your site/app via non-ad links on shopping sites like Amazon or ebay.
Organic Social	Organic Social is the channel by which users arrive at your site/app via non-ad links on social sites like Facebook or Twitter.
Organic Video	Organic Video is the channel by which users arrive at your site/app via non-ad links on video sites like YouTube, TikTok, or Vimeo.
Paid Other	Paid Other is the channel by which users arrive at your site/app via ads, but not through an ad identified as Search, Social, Shopping, or Video.
Paid Search	Paid Search is the channel by which users arrive at your site/app via ads on search-engine sites like Bing, Baidu, or Google.
Paid Shopping	Paid Shopping is the channel by which users arrive at your site/app via paid ads on shopping sites like Amazon or ebay or on individual retailer sites.
Paid Social	Paid Social is the channel by which users arrive at your site/app via ads on social sites like Facebook and Twitter.
Paid Video	Paid Video is the channel by which users arrive at your site/app via ads on video sites like TikTok, Vimeo, and YouTube.
Referral	Referral is the channel by which users arrive at your site via non-ad links on other sites/apps (e.g., blogs, news sites).
SMS	SMS is the channel by which users arrive at your site/app via links from text messages.

Quick Facts

Things are different now

- No more Views – Each Property will be made up of Data Streams.
- You will no longer be able to see today's data, today. Use the Realtime report to see performance for the last 30 minutes, or wait until the next day.
- GA4 Search Bar – You can search actual questions, for example: “how many more visits than last week?” Google will tell you the answer directly in the search bar.
- Engagement rate/Engaged sessions – The inverse of bounce rate (more on this soon)
- Average Time on Site is no longer a metric - Average Engagement Time & Average Session Duration



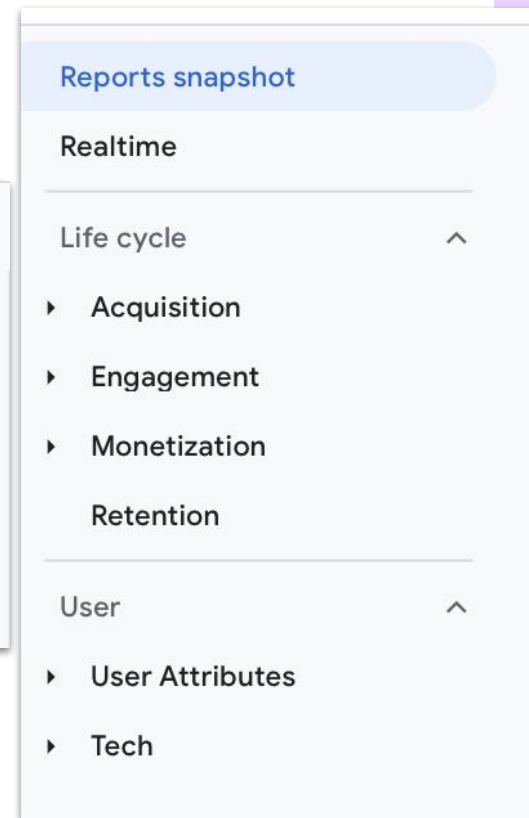
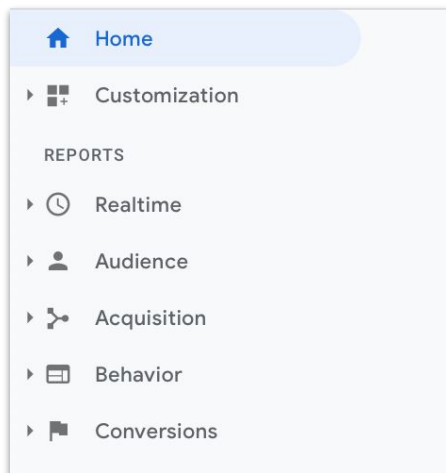
Where Are My Reports?

Help: Where Are My Usual Reports?

GA3 vs GA4

- Realtime = Real Time
- Audience > User Attributes & Tech
- Acquisition = Acquisition
- Behavior = Engagement
- Conversions ~are everywhere~
- **NEW**: Monetization & Retention

Note: All Overview Sections are customizable



Acquisition Reports

User & Traffic Reports

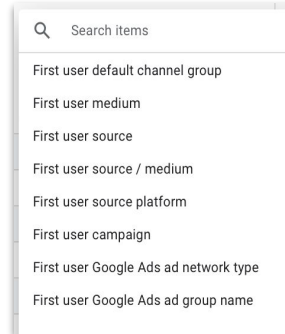
First User dimensions tie back to the first time the GA4 tag recorded that user on your site.

Session dimensions are the same as you had in GA3. Data is collected during each session, regardless if it is the first or 10th visit.

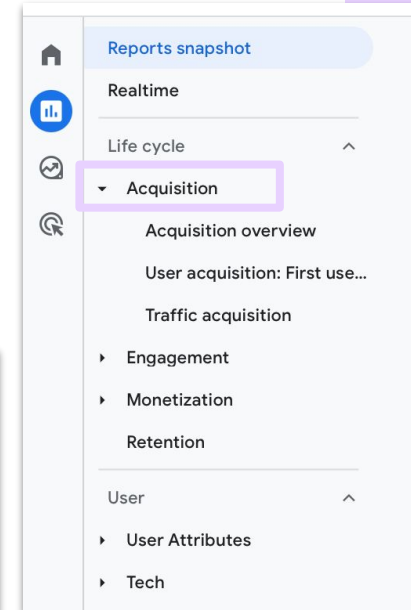
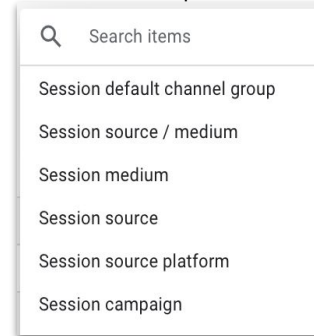
Ex: Source / Medium report in UA is the Session Source / Medium report in GA4

Learn more [here](#).

User Acquisition



Traffic Acquisition



Acquisition Reports

User & Traffic Reports

NEW Metric: Engaged Sessions: The number of sessions that...

lasted 10 seconds or longer

OR

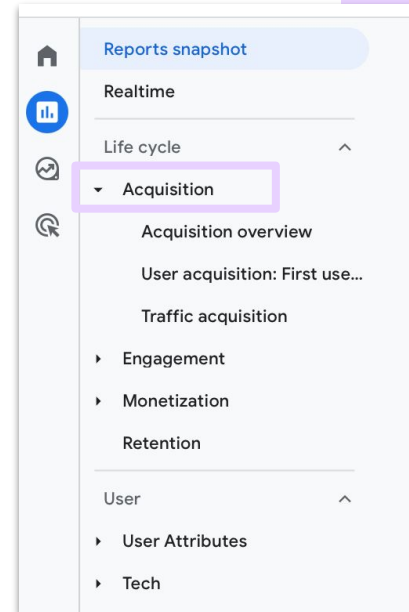
had 1 or more conversion events

OR

2 or more page or screen views

NEW Metric: Engagement Rate: The percentage of engaged sessions

Engaged sessions ÷ Sessions



Acquisition Report

Traffic Acquisition will be a frequently used report

Q Search... Rows per page: 10 1-9 of 9

Session default channel group	↓ Users	Sessions	Engaged sessions	Average engagement time per session	Engaged sessions per user	Events per session	Engagement rate	Event count All events	Conversion All events
			2,299	1m 08s	0.51	3.81	41.29%	1,090,773	6,101.
			of total	Avg 0%	Avg 0%	Avg 0%	Avg 0%	100% of total	100% of t
1 Organic Search			5,502	1m 10s	0.62	4.03	50.19%	454,147	2,491
2 Organic Social			4,441	0m 53s	0.30	3.44	25.1%	266,845	941
3 Direct			4,443	1m 10s	0.53	3.79	43.67%	281,381	1,597
4 Email			7,074	1m 53s	0.76	3.88	46.53%	58,964	652
5 Referral			9,931	1m 05s	0.53	4.00	44.32%	17,418	178
6 Paid Social			674	1m 19s	0.39	3.68	34.39%	7,209	191
7 Unassigned			41	2m 46s	0.06	2.49	5.73%	1,781	15
8 Organic Shopping	486	706	275	1m 12s	0.57	3.65	38.95%	2,579	36
9 Cross-network	84	142	76	1m 27s	0.90	3.16	53.52%	449	0

Q Search items

- Session default channel group
- Session source / medium
- Session medium
- Session source
- Session source platform
- Session campaign

Engagement Reports

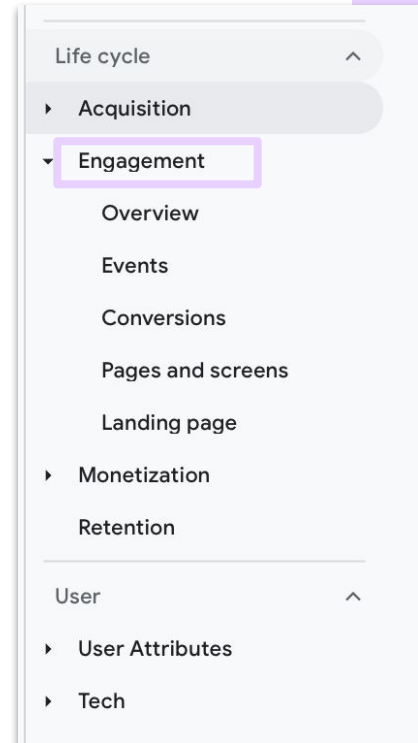
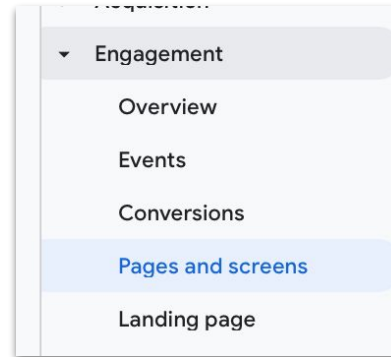
There are two **NEW** reports in the Overview section, that are helpful to gauge audience loyalty:

- User Activity over Time
- User Stickiness

Learn more about the Engagement Reports [here](#).

NEW Metric - Average Engagement Time: Average time the browser/app was in focus in the foreground of a user's device

Total user engagement duration ÷ Number of active users



Engagement Report

Pages And Screens will be a frequently used report

Search...		Rows per page: 10 Go to: 1 < 1-10 of 463 >						
Page path and screen class	Views	Users	Views per user	Average engagement time	Event count	Conversions	Total revenue	
	↓				All events	All events		
	266,322	59,893	4.45 Avg 0%	1m 40s Avg 0%	1,227,402 100% of total	346,395.00 100% of total	\$65,153.13 100% of total	
1 /Google+Redesign/Lifestyle/Drinkware			1.34	0m 32s	82,093	19,935.00	\$0.00	
2 /Google+Redesign/Apparel			1.43	0m 42s	63,868	14,261.00	\$0.00	
3 /store.html			2.78	0m 54s	46,452	7,895.00	\$0.00	
4 /Google+Redesign/Apparel/Mens			1.79	0m 57s	44,146	7,901.00	\$0.00	
5 /Google+Redesign/Stationery			1.59	0m 14s	37,832	9,621.00	\$0.00	
6 /Google+Redesign/Clearance			1.72	0m 51s	41,375	7,077.00	\$0.00	
7 /Google+Redesign/New	7,890	4,460	1.77	1m 00s	30,764	5,482.00	\$0.00	
8 /Google+Redesign/Shop+by+Brand/YouTube	7,174	5,292	1.36	0m 27s	31,211	7,271.00	\$0.00	
9 /	6,451	4,586	1.41	0m 20s	76,758	9,088.00	\$0.00	
10 /Google+Redesign/Lifestyle/Bags	5,562	3,651	1.52	0m 37s	21,782	3,793.00	\$0.00	

Search items

Page title and screen class

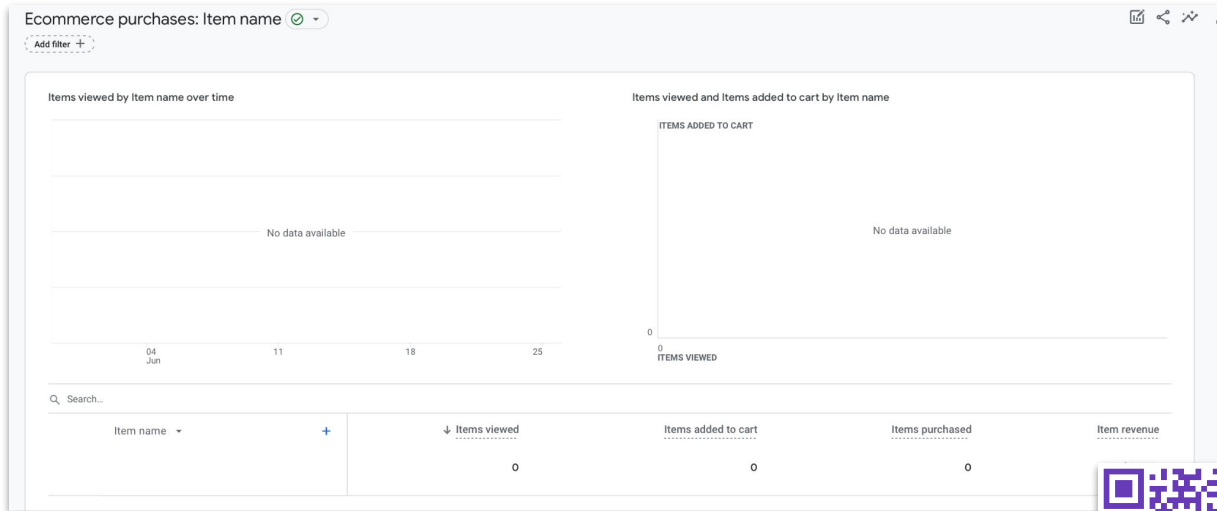
Page path and screen class

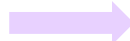
Page title and screen name

Content group


Monetization Reports


These reports will only show data if you have deliberately configured eCommerce events in Google Tag Manager. Learn more [here](#).



TFD can help you configure this report, reach out here. 



- Life cycle 
- ▶ Acquisition
- ▶ Engagement
- ▶ **Monetization**
- Overview
- Ecommerce purchases**
- User purchase journey
- In-app purchases
- Publisher ads
- Promotions
- Retention

- User 
- ▶ User Attributes
- ▶ Tech



Check Your Settings

Default settings that need to be manually changed

Check Your Settings

Data Collection

- In order to collect demographic data on users, you will need to enable Google Signals.
- **Google Signals** are session data that Google associates with users who have signed in to their Google Accounts and have enabled **Ads Personalization**.
- To prevent anyone viewing a report or exploration technique from inferring the identity of individual users, data thresholds may be applied to properties that have activated Google Signals.

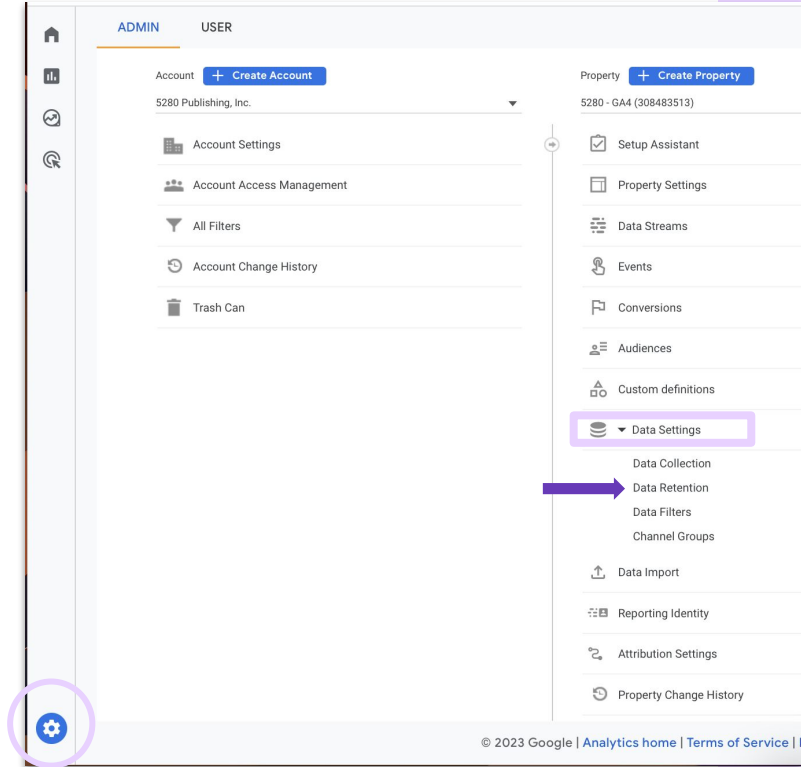
The screenshot displays the Google Analytics Admin interface. The top navigation bar shows 'ADMIN' and 'USER' tabs. The main content area is divided into two columns: 'Account' and 'Property'. The 'Account' column lists options like 'Account Settings', 'Account Access Management', 'All Filters', 'Account Change History', and 'Trash Can'. The 'Property' column lists options like 'Setup Assistant', 'Property Settings', 'Data Streams', 'Events', 'Conversions', 'Audiences', 'Custom definitions', 'Data Settings', 'Data Collection', 'Data Retention', 'Data Filters', 'Channel Groups', 'Data Import', 'Reporting Identity', 'Attribution Settings', and 'Property Change History'. A purple box highlights the 'Data Settings' option in the 'Property' column, and a purple arrow points to it from the right. A purple circle highlights the settings gear icon in the bottom left corner of the interface. The footer of the interface shows '© 2023 Google | Analytics home | Terms of Service | F'.

Check Your Settings

Data Retention

For GA4 properties, you can set the retention period of user-level data to:

- 2 months (default)
- 14 months (*go in and update*)
- The two-month retention period is always applied to age, gender, and interest data regardless of your settings.
- Increasing the retention period is applied to data that you have already collected.

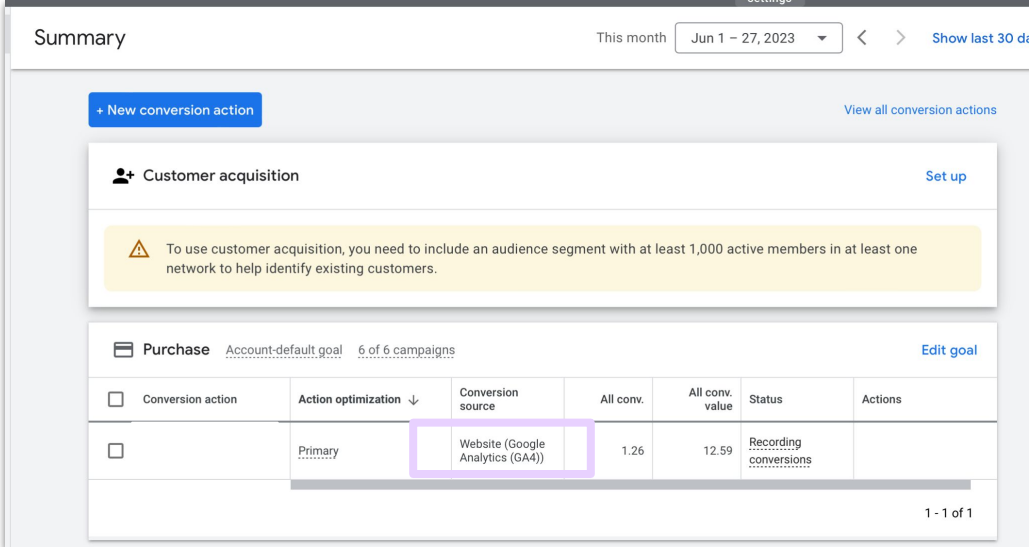


Check Your Settings

Google Ads

Are you running Google Ads? Once you've configured a conversion in GA4, make sure that your conversion actions are imported from GA4 rather than UA. Learn more [here](#)

If you haven't set up conversions yet, be sure to switch your optimization settings to click-based rather than conversion-based.



The screenshot shows the Google Ads 'Summary' page for a conversion action. At the top, it displays 'This month' with a date range of 'Jun 1 - 27, 2023' and a 'Show last 30 days' link. Below this is a '+ New conversion action' button and a 'View all conversion actions' link. The main section is titled 'Customer acquisition' with a 'Set up' link. A yellow warning box states: 'To use customer acquisition, you need to include an audience segment with at least 1,000 active members in at least one network to help identify existing customers.' Below this is a 'Purchase' goal section, labeled 'Account-default goal' and '6 of 6 campaigns', with an 'Edit goal' link. A table lists conversion actions:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Conversion action	Action optimization ↓	Conversion source	All conv.	All conv. value	Status	Actions
<input type="checkbox"/>		Primary	Website (Google Analytics (GA4))	1.26	12.59	Recording conversions	

At the bottom right of the table, it shows '1 - 1 of 1'.

Create Content Groups

Use Google Tag Manager

Content groups let you categorize pages and screens into custom buckets. The custom buckets allow you to see metrics for related groups of information.

Ex: Create a bucket for pages that are tagged “Food + Drink”

Content groups can be configured based on URL structure or data present in the data layer of a page.

Find Content Groups on the *Pages and Screens* Engagement Report



FAQs

Why doesn't my UA data match GA4 data?

Lots of possibilities, narrowing it down will take some investigation

- You have a filter on your UA traffic that blocks internal IPs.
- You're using a plug-in on your site that is firing the UA tag.
- You're not using GTM to house all of your tags and have multiple hard-coded tags firing on your site, sending multiple signals to the GA4 Tag.
- You're configured to use the Blended Identity reporting method, which uses AI to model data and fill in the gaps.
- UA creates new sessions at midnight, a user browsing your site at 11:59pm, will count as a new session at 12:01, even though they never left the site
- Conversion data is tracked differently, 1 conversion action per session in UA, every conversion tracked in GA4.

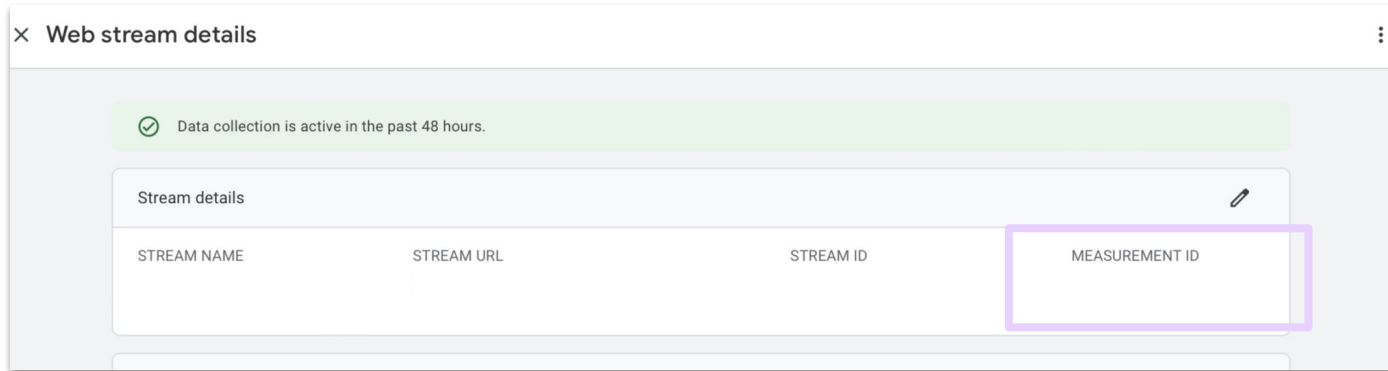
Google Tools

Google Tools

- [Google Tag Assistant](#) - Sites with Tag Assistant debug mode enabled will display in a separate browser window so that you can inspect which Google tags have fired and in which order. Tag Assistant debug mode shows what data is being passed to the data layer, and what events triggered those data exchanges.
- [Google Tag Manager](#) - When Tag Manager is [installed](#), your website or app will be able to communicate with the Tag Manager servers. You can then use the Tag Manager web-based user interface to set up tags, establish [triggers](#) that cause your tag to fire when certain events occur, and create [variables](#) that can be used to simplify and automate your tag configurations.

Google Tools

- **The Google Tag** - (gtag.js) is a single tag you can add to your website to use a variety of Google products and services (e.g., Google Ads, Google Analytics, Campaign Manager, Display & Video 360, Search Ads 360). Instead of managing multiple tags for different Google product accounts, you can use the Google tag across your entire website and connect the tag to multiple destinations.



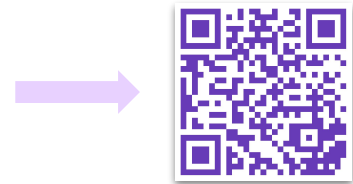
Find your Measurement ID: Admin > Data Streams > Click into Data Stream

Double Check Your Tags

Is Everything Firing Correctly?

- Open [Tag Assistant](#)
- Enter your domain
- Toggle over to your G-Tag
- Ensure Only 1 Page View event fires per page

If you're seeing two or more page view events firing per page, drop us a line, we can try to help you figure out why.



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