

How To Use Google Analytics

Executive Summary

In today's world of measured marketing, analyzing data is essential for businesses but can become overwhelming due to the endless amount of data available. When used effectively, web analytics tools such as Google Analytics can help make better-informed business decisions by determining how user search behavior impacts ROI.

Google has rebuilt its analytics from the ground up in an effort to make it as intuitive and helpful as possible. While classic features such as eCommerce reporting, goals, filters, and traffic sources are still available, Google has added a number of new features that are proving to be more valuable than anything previously offered by the platform.

Whether you are an SEO consultant, a client of Slingshot SEO, an Internet marketer or an executive in a medium or large business, with a few key insights, you'll be able to get the most out of your analytics package.

This guide is intended to help you understand the advantages of Google Analytics and walk you through some of its most useful features.

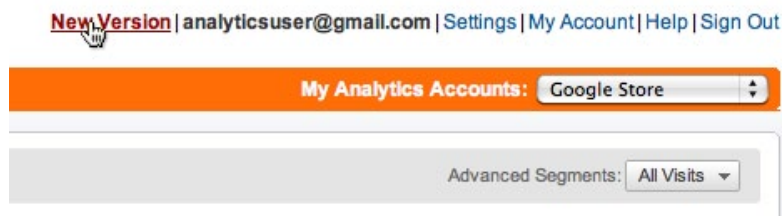
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1. Initial Steps and Notes

New Version of Google Analytics

Google released the New Version of analytics on April 20, 2011, complete with new features and a new user interface. If you haven't already done so, we encourage you to make the New Version your default platform. You can do this by selecting **Make New Version Default** at the very top of your analytics profile.



Currently, you have the ability to switch back and forth from the old and new versions at any time, but the old version will only be available until early 2012. The advantages of switching to the New Version include: access to Real Time Analytics, Multi-Channel Funnels, Social Plugin Analytics, Mobile Reporting and Flow Visualization.

Notes:

This guide is written from the perspective of an SEO agency and is meant to aid in communication with clients.

To help you transition from the old version, this guide contains screenshots and steps assuming that you are using the New Version of analytics.

Administrator Status

In order for Slingshot SEO to audit your Google Analytics account sufficiently, you will need to enable our username as an Admin. This allows our team to view and create profiles, filters and goals. To view or change each user's access type, click the **gear** in the top right corner. Under the **Profiles** tab, click **Users**. From here, you can view each email login and change the **settings** for each account.

Sharing Segments

Note that if you create a custom advanced segment, it is specific to your username/log-in information. Custom segments may not be shared across multiple users directly, even if both users have Admin access. You may have advanced segmentation that we are unable to see.

SSL Encryption

In October 2011, Google announced that it would start encrypting searches for users logged in to any Google platform. This means that if a user is logged in while searching,

your analytics will not show which keyword was used to access your site unless it was through Google PPC ads. The keywords used by logged in users will be shown as: (not provided). This is only expected to affect roughly 10% of all search queries, but this may rise over time.

Regular Expressions

The following guide assumes a very basic understanding of Regular Expressions. To review Regular Expressions, please visit [here](http://www.google.com/support/googleanalytics/bin/answer.py?answer=55582) (<http://www.google.com/support/googleanalytics/bin/answer.py?answer=55582>).

2. Maintaining Clean Profiles

Explanation: Analyzing data is essential in the world of measured marketing. The first step of data analysis is data collection, so it's crucial to make sure your data is accurate. If your data is false in any way, it's extremely difficult to go back and create data out of thin air. That's why you need to create a "DO NOT TOUCH" profile for each of your analytics accounts. This "DO NOT TOUCH" profile won't have any filters. This ensures the data is as clean and all encompassing as possible.

Recommendation: Set up a "DO NOT TOUCH" profile.

Steps:

1. Log in to Google Analytics for the existing domain. Click on the **gear** in the top right corner.



2. From the Profile Tab page, click + **New Profile** on the right hand side.



3. Under "General Information", name the profile "Backup DO NOT TOUCH", select a time zone and click **Create Profile**.

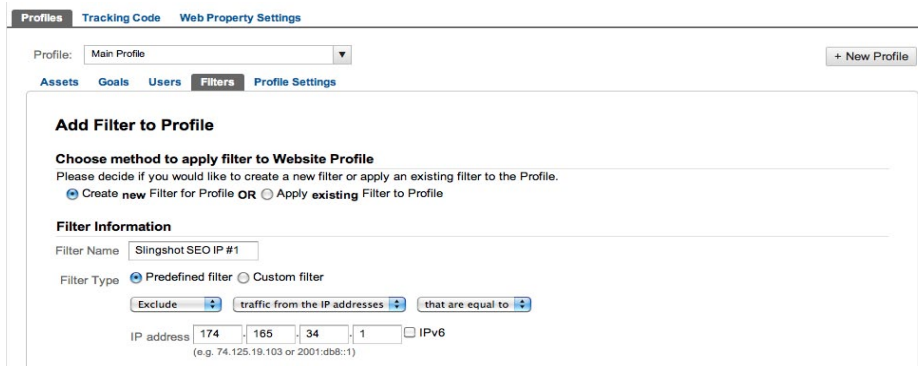
3. Profile Filters

Explanation: You can use filters to restrict your Google Analytics data based on nearly every parameter: a specific IP, a geographical location, domain, and even by keyword. Why limit your data? You will want to limit your data by filtering out traffic sources that could skew your results. Examples of other traffic sources that could be high-volume but don't have the right kind of user intent may include things such as a development company in India, your marketing manager's home IP, or any other development/marketing vendors you are working with. You can also use profile filters to create department specific profiles limiting data to only that information which each department may need from Google Analytics, making reporting easier and available company-wide, 24/7. There are many other uses for profile filters, but these are our favorites.

Recommendation: Add a filter to eliminate all Slingshot SEO IP addresses. To filter out all Slingshot SEO IP addresses, add a custom filter that filters visitor IP addresses, and include the following Regular Expression as the filter pattern: `^174\.165\.34\.([1-9]|1[0-3])$` Doing so should exclude all of the IP addresses Slingshot SEO currently uses. In addition, be sure to eliminate any IP addresses of any other outside vendors or development companies whose traffic might need to be excluded. Also, be sure to include any international offices you have whose employees might be visiting your site. You can (and should) have multiple profiles for each of your Google Analytics accounts. Create one "DO NOT TOUCH" and don't touch it unless you recognize a mistake you made in other profiles. Create other profiles with labels like "DATA Minus Employees IPs" or "DATA minus branded searches". That way you can accurately view your desired data.

Steps:

1. From the account profile, click on the **gear** in the top right corner.
2. Under the profiles tab, select a profile that you wish to filter from the drop-down box.
3. Click the Filters tab and select **+ New Filter**.
4. Select the radio button that reads **Create new Filter for Profile**.
5. Create a name for the filter in the **Filter Name** form field.
6. Select the options appropriate for what you want to setup. To exclude a single IP address, use a **Predefined filter**, choose "**Exclude traffic from the IP addresses that are equal to**" and enter the single IP address.



Profiles Tracking Code Web Property Settings

Profile: Main Profile + New Profile

Assets Goals Users Filters Profile Settings

Add Filter to Profile

Choose method to apply filter to Website Profile
Please decide if you would like to create a new filter or apply an existing filter to the Profile.
☒ Create new Filter for Profile **OR** ☐ Apply existing Filter to Profile

Filter Information

Filter Name: Slingshot SEO IP #1

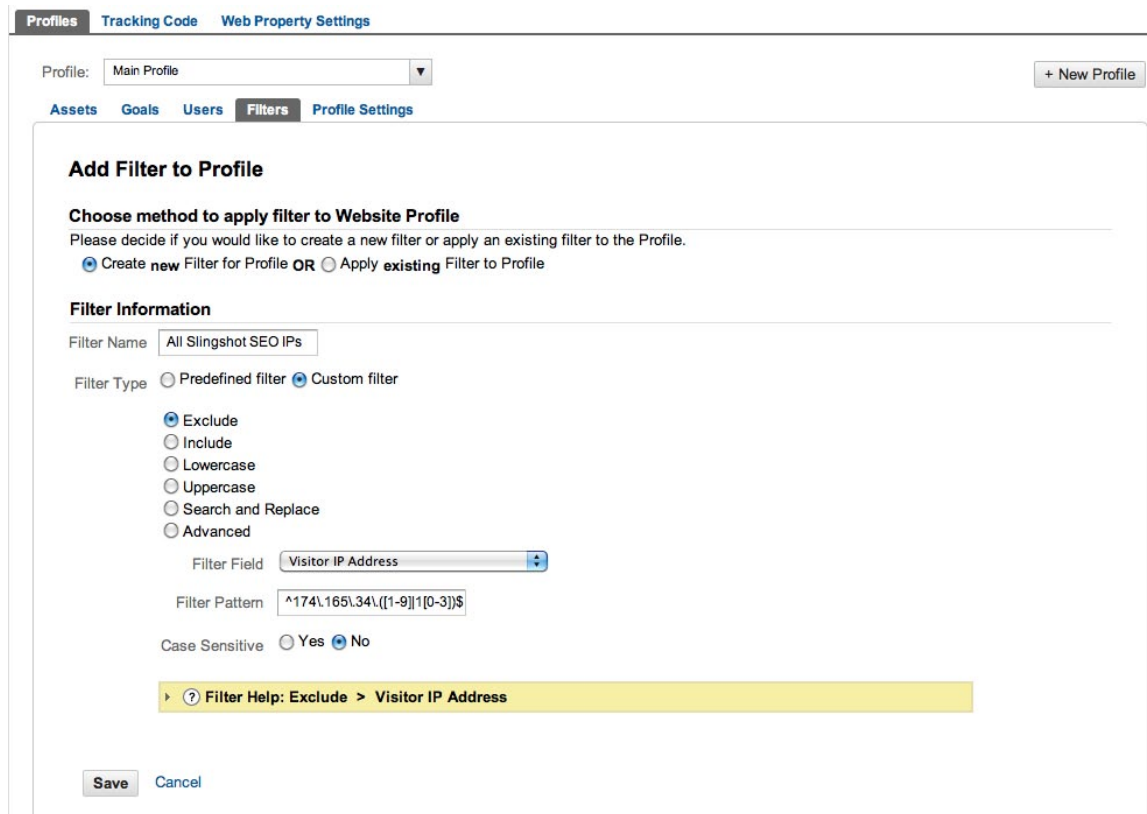
Filter Type: ☒ Predefined filter ☐ Custom filter

Exclude traffic from the IP addresses that are equal to

IP address: 174.165.34.1 ☐ IPv6
(e.g. 74.125.19.103 or 2001:db8::1)

To exclude traffic from a range of IP addresses, choose **Custom filter, Exclude, Visitor IP Address**, and enter the regular expression into the Filter Pattern box.

The filter pattern for all Slingshot SEO IP addresses is: **^174\165\34\.([1-9]|1[0-3])\$**



Profiles | **Tracking Code** | **Web Property Settings**

Profile: Main Profile + New Profile

Assets | **Goals** | **Users** | **Filters** | **Profile Settings**

Add Filter to Profile

Choose method to apply filter to Website Profile
Please decide if you would like to create a new filter or apply an existing filter to the Profile.

☒ Create **new** Filter for Profile **OR** ☐ Apply **existing** Filter to Profile

Filter Information

Filter Name: All Slingshot SEO IPs

Filter Type: ☐ Predefined filter ☒ Custom filter

☒ Exclude
☐ Include
☐ Lowercase
☐ Uppercase
☐ Search and Replace
☐ Advanced

Filter Field: Visitor IP Address

Filter Pattern: ^174\165\34\.([1-9]|1[0-3])\$

Case Sensitive: ☐ Yes ☒ No

Filter Help: Exclude > Visitor IP Address

Save Cancel

For help in generating a Regular Expression filter pattern to exclude a range of IP addresses, use [this tool](http://www.google.com/support/analytics/bin/answer.py?hl=en&answer=55572) provided by Google (<http://www.google.com/support/analytics/bin/answer.py?hl=en&answer=55572>).

7. Click **Save**.

Tracking Subdomains

Recommendation: Track subdomains within the same profile as the domain.

Steps:

1. Set up a new profile that will track the domains and subdomains together. You will need to add additional lines to your tracking code for the top domain and the subdomains.
2. Create this filter on the profile to distinguish between sub-domains:
 - A. From the Account Overview, select the **gear** in the top right corner.
 - B. Select the **Filters** tab.
 - C. Click the radio button for **Custom Filter** and select **Advanced**.

- D. For Field A -> Extract A, select Hostname and enter "(.*)" in the box.
- E. For Field B -> Extract B, select Request URI and enter "(.*)" in the box.
- F. For Output To -> Constructor, select Request URI and enter "\$A1\$B1."
- G. Make Field A **Required** and Field B **Not Required**.
- H. Select **Yes** for Override Output Field and **No** for Case Sensitive.
- I. Click **Save**.

Assets **Goals** **Users** **Filters** **Profile Settings**

Edit Filter

Filter Information

Filter Name

Filter Type ☐ Predefined filter ☒ Custom filter

- ☐ Exclude
- ☐ Include
- ☐ Lowercase
- ☐ Uppercase
- ☐ Search and Replace
- ☒ Advanced

Field A -> Extract A

Field B -> Extract B

Output To -> Constructor

Field A Required ☒ Yes ☐ No

Field B Required ☐ Yes ☒ No

Override Output Field ☒ Yes ☐ No

Case Sensitive ☐ Yes ☒ No

Filter Help: Advanced

3. Modify the tracking code for the domain and any sub-domains you want to track together.

4. Set up your links and form posts between all domains.

For more information on tracking subdomains, visit [Google's Help Center](http://www.google.com/support/analytics/bin/answer.py?answer=55524) (<http://www.google.com/support/analytics/bin/answer.py?answer=55524>).

4. Custom Advanced Segmentation

Explanation: Advanced Segmentation allows you to create custom "segments" of data from the already filtered content in your analytics profile. These segments offer you the ability to greater analyze smaller subsets of data, as well as compare how these specific segments are producing over time.

For example, if you're a multinational corporation with both domestic and international target markets, advanced segmentation allows you to create separate segments to track web traffic from the U.S. and U.K individually. Then, you can make the most out of your web analytics by analyzing trends and making comparisons between the two markets.

Another great use of advanced segmentation involves segmenting social networks like Twitter, Facebook and YouTube. By tracking traffic from these sites, you can gain insights into how specific social media campaigns impact your bottom line.

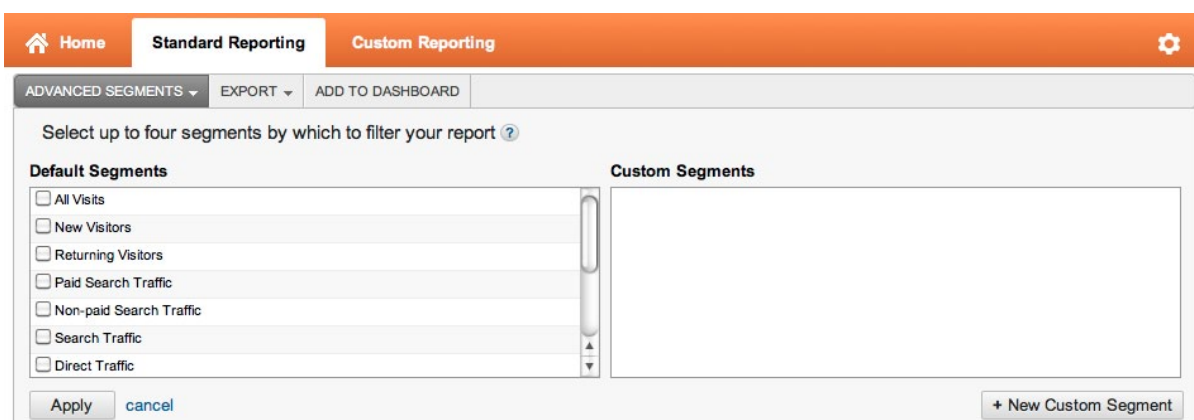
Other useful types of advanced segmentations could show you the differences between short tail and long tail search traffic, or comparisons between paid and organic traffic.

Recommendation: Begin creating advanced segments that are customized in order to track your website's unique analytical needs. Four recommended advanced segments for SEO are:

1. Organic, Non-Branded Keywords
2. Organic, Targeted Campaign Keywords
3. Organic, Targeted Campaign Keywords (including non-branded Long-Tail)
4. Social Media

Steps:

1. From the Standard Reporting page, select the **Advanced Segments** dropdown tab.
2. Here, you can view all of the default segments. To create a custom segment, click **+ New Custom Segment**.



The screenshot shows the 'Standard Reporting' tab selected in the top navigation bar. Below the navigation bar, there are tabs for 'ADVANCED SEGMENTS', 'EXPORT', and 'ADD TO DASHBOARD'. The 'ADVANCED SEGMENTS' tab is active, displaying a section titled 'Select up to four segments by which to filter your report'. This section is divided into two columns: 'Default Segments' and 'Custom Segments'. The 'Default Segments' column contains a list of checkboxes for 'All Visits', 'New Visitors', 'Returning Visitors', 'Paid Search Traffic', 'Non-paid Search Traffic', 'Search Traffic', and 'Direct Traffic'. The 'Custom Segments' column is currently empty. At the bottom of the 'Default Segments' column, there are 'Apply' and 'cancel' buttons. At the bottom right of the 'Custom Segments' column, there is a '+ New Custom Segment' button.

3. Name the segment. Next, specify the elements you wish to include. Be sure to keep in mind the difference between “or” and “and” statements. Below are a few advanced segments you may want to set up. Note the use of Regular Expressions.

Organic, Non-Branded Keywords

Choose:

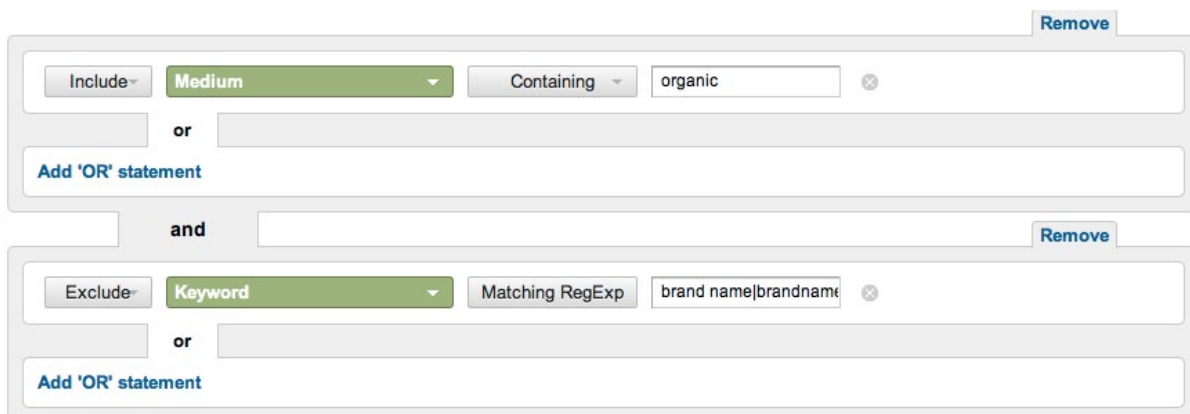
Include → **Medium** → **Containing** and type “organic” into the text box.

Exclude → **Keyword** → **Matching RegEx** and type in all brand name variations and misspellings with a pipe “|” in between to segment out all branded search terms. A pipe is a regular expression meaning “either or.”

Using Slingshot SEO as an example, we would use this text string to exclude all branded searches and common misspellings:

slingshot|sling shot|.com|.net|shot seo|seoslings|slingsht|slingshop|sling shop

[Tip: To find the most commonly used branded keywords and brand misspellings, go to **Traffic Sources** → **Sources** → **Search** → **Organic** and test your branded text string to see if any branded terms still appear in the segment.]



The screenshot shows the Slingshot SEO interface for configuring search segments. It features two main configuration boxes, each with a 'Remove' button in the top right corner.

The top configuration box is set to 'Include' (indicated by a dropdown arrow), 'Medium' (indicated by a green dropdown menu), and 'Containing' (indicated by a dropdown arrow). The text input field contains 'organic'. Below the input field is a link that says 'Add 'OR' statement'.

The bottom configuration box is set to 'Exclude' (indicated by a dropdown arrow), 'Keyword' (indicated by a green dropdown menu), and 'Matching RegEx' (indicated by a dropdown arrow). The text input field contains 'brand name|brandname'. Below the input field is a link that says 'Add 'OR' statement'.

Organic, Targeted Campaign Keywords Only

Choose:

Include → **Medium** → **Containing** and type “organic” into the text box.

Next, you can either use **Include** → **Keyword** → **Matching RegEx** to specify the keywords in one text string, or enter each keyword one by one as shown below:

Include

Medium

Containing

organic

×

or

Add 'OR' statement

and

Include

Keyword

Exactly matching

KEYWORD A

×

or

Include

Keyword

Exactly matching

KEYWORD B

×

or

Include

Keyword

Exactly matching

KEYWORD C

×

or

Add 'OR' statement

Organic, Targeted Campaign Keywords (including non-branded long-tail)

Include

Medium

Containing

organic

×

or

Add 'OR' statement

and

Exclude

Keyword

Matching RegEx

brand name|brandname

×

or

Add 'OR' statement

and

Include

Keyword

Matching RegEx

KEYWORD A|KEYWORD B

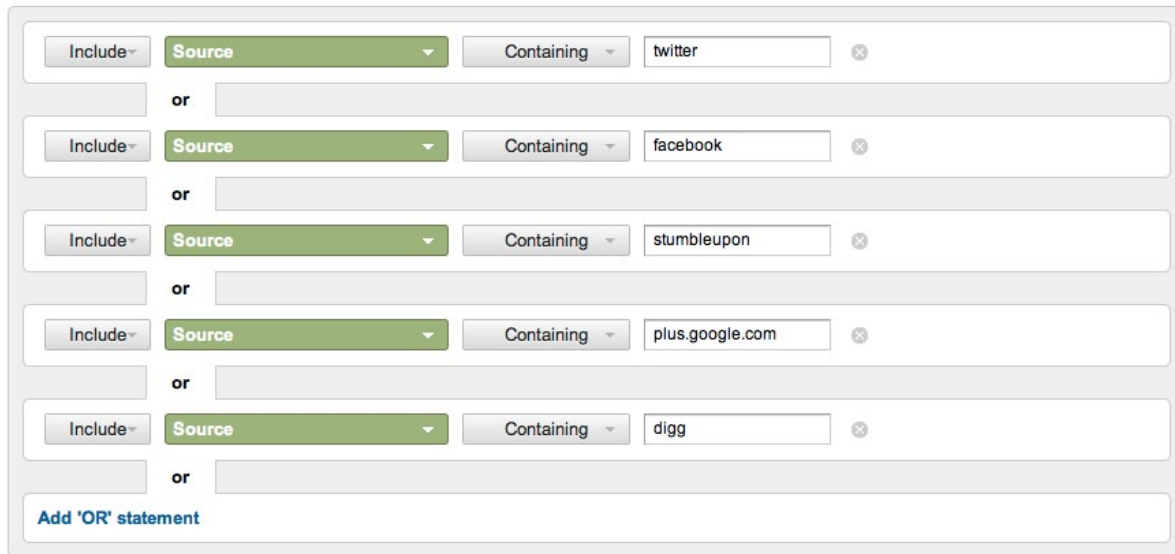
×

or

Add 'OR' statement

Social Media

You can either choose: **Include** → **Source** → **Containing** and enter each social media one by one:



OR

You can choose: **Include** → **Source** → **Matching RegExp** and enter this text string, which includes a number of different social media outlets:

```
facebook\.com|fb\.me|twitter\.com|hootsuite\.com|ow\.ly|thwirl|ping\.fm|friendfeed|brightkite|twitthat|twitterfon|twittergadget|twitturly|bit\.ly|tr\.im|cli\.gs|zi\.ma|popr|tinyurl|ls\.gd|snipr|snipurl|kl\.am|snurl|tiny\.cc|dwarfurl|blinklist\.com|diigo\.com|furl\.net|fark\.com|digg\.com|stumbleupon\.com|del\.icio\.us|delicious\.com|faves\.com|reddit\.com|posterous\.com|bentio\.com|livejournal\.com|tumblr\.com|msplinks\.com|aim\.com|lifestream\.aol\.com|netvibes\.com|bloglines\.com|technorati\.com|wordpress\.com|myspace\.com|linkedin\.com|newsgator\.com|prweb\.com|tr\.im|cli\.gs|zi\.ma|ht\.ly|^t\.co$
```

4. Test the segment by clicking on the **Test Segment** button on bottom right of the drop down. Be sure to do this so you can check if the data is being segmented properly. Save the segment by clicking **Save Segment** at the bottom.

5. Compare advanced segments by selecting them in the drop down menu. Check the box next to the segments you wish to compare and click the **Apply** button. You can compare up to four segments simultaneously.

ADVANCED SEGMENTS
EXPORT
ADD TO DASHBOARD

Select up to four segments by which to filter your report ?

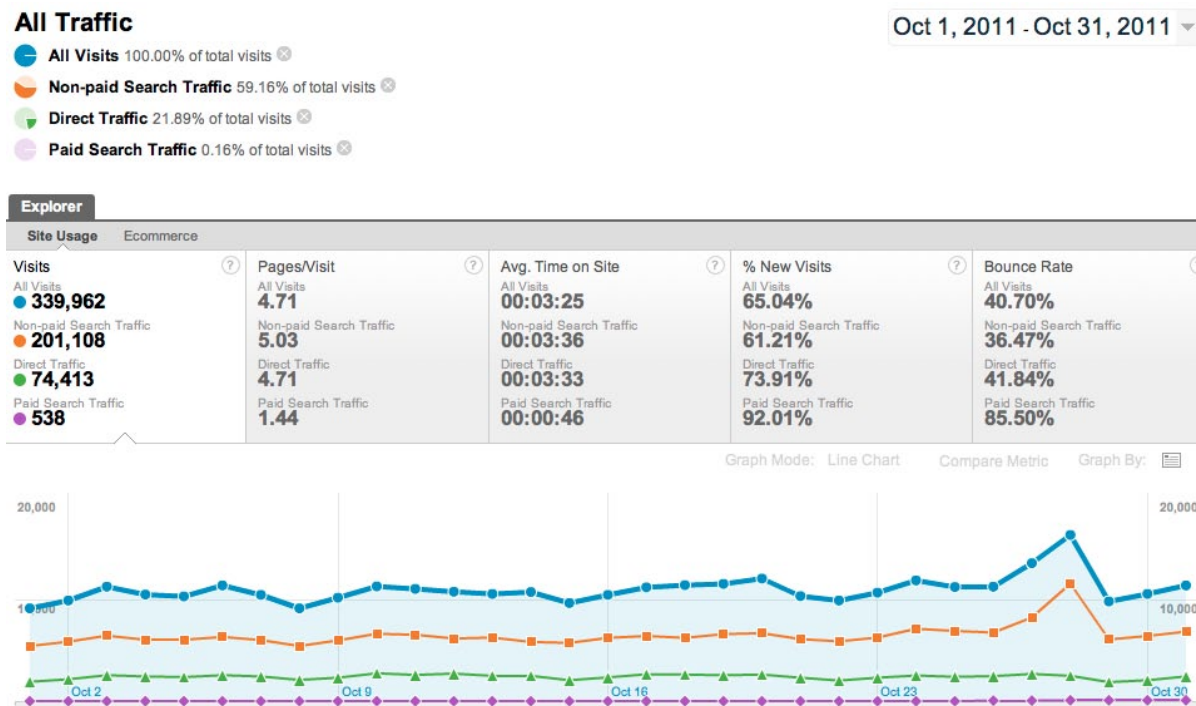
Default Segments
☒ All Visits
☐ New Visitors
☐ Returning Visitors
☒ Paid Search Traffic
☒ Non-paid Search Traffic
☐ Search Traffic
☒ Direct Traffic

Custom Segments

+ New Custom Segment

Apply
cancel

6. The result is shown below:



5.Tracking Goals

Explanation: Setting up goals is one of the most important steps to consider when configuring Google Analytics. The purpose of creating these analytics goals is to track your website's user interactions and conversions. A conversion can be measured in different ways such as click-through rates, the length of time a person spends on your site, filling out a form or even placing an order. Without goals, there is no easy way to measure these activities.

Under each goal, you have a few options. Among these options is the ability to set up Goal

Funnels to track critical processes on your site. The funnels feature of each goal in Google Analytics allows you to track multi-level conversion paths, thus allowing you to see which part of your digital sales process is the weak link.

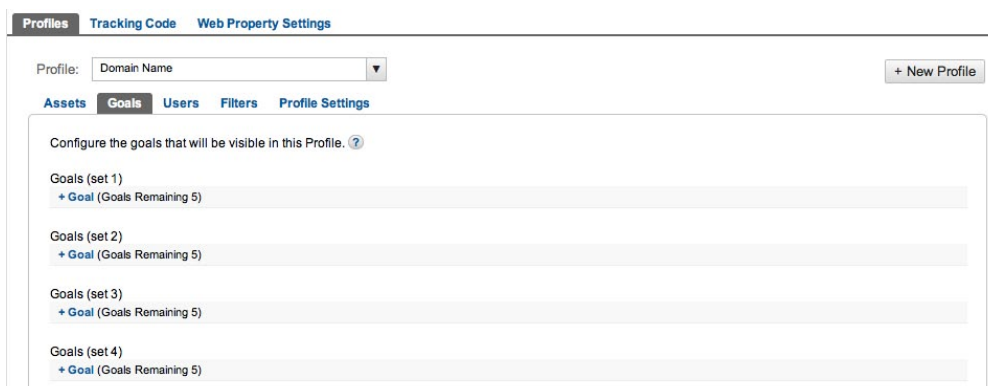
In addition to funnels, you can also assign a value for each of the goals you have set up. Use the goal value field to monetize non-eCommerce goals. For example, if each Contact Form submitted by a user is worth \$100, enter 100 in the Goal Value field. Google Analytics will use 100 to calculate return on investment (ROI) and other revenue based calculations. If you are an eCommerce site and eCommerce tracking is active for a profile, you can use eCommerce data instead for your goals. Simply leave the goal value field blank, and Google Analytics will pull in the eCommerce data you have set up.

Setup Note: The goals in each set you create do not have to relate to each other, but it can be useful to organize goals by business function; i.e. group related goals together. For example, if you're a content site, you might create goals for spending a certain amount of time on site (1 minute, 2 minutes, etc.). If these are grouped under the same set, it's easier to view and compare all of your goals related to time on site. Also, goal tracking requires a click through to a page that's on a different URL from the previous page. For example, many sales pages refresh when a purchase is completed without going to a separate URL; consequently, Google will be able to see how many people land on that page, but not how many people refresh it with a purchase. Keep this in mind when setting up your goals.

Recommendation: Set up goals for specific user behavior you wish to track as a conversion, such as a shopping cart checkout process, a form completion, or time spent on a certain page.

Steps:

1. Click on the **gear** in the top right corner to view the account overview page.
2. From the account overview, select the appropriate profile and click **Goals**.
3. Select a goal set and click **+ Goal**. You can enter up to 20 goals (4 sets of 5) per profile.



The screenshot shows the 'Goals' configuration page in the Slingshot SEO interface. At the top, there are tabs for 'Profiles', 'Tracking Code', and 'Web Property Settings'. Below these, a 'Profile:' dropdown menu is set to 'Domain Name', with a '+ New Profile' button to its right. Underneath, there are tabs for 'Assets', 'Goals', 'Users', 'Filters', and 'Profile Settings'. The 'Goals' tab is active. The main content area is titled 'Configure the goals that will be visible in this Profile. ?' and contains four sections, each labeled 'Goals (set 1)', 'Goals (set 2)', 'Goals (set 3)', and 'Goals (set 4)'. Each section has a '+ Goal (Goals Remaining 5)' button, indicating that up to 5 goals can be added to each set.

4. Enter a Goal Name and select the radio button marked **Active**.

5. For this example, we define a goal as a form completion. Let's say your website has a "contact us" form, and after the user completes the form, he is taken to a "thank you" page.

You can set up a goal to see how many users completed the form.

Select the radio button **URL Destination** and enter the Goal URL.

If the goal page URL is <http://www.yoursite.com/thankyou.html>, enter `"/thankyou.html"` and select **Exact Match**.

Goals (set 1): Goal 1

General Information

Goal Name

☒ Active ☐ Inactive

Goal Type ☒ URL Destination

☐ Time On Site

☐ Page/Visit

☐ Event

Goal Details

Goal URL

e.g. For the goal page <http://www.mysite.com/thankyou.html> enter /thankyou.html. To help you verify that your goal URL is set up correctly, please see the tips [here](#).

Match Type

Case Sensitive ☐

URLs entered above must exactly match the capitalization of visited URLs.

Goal Value optional

Goal Funnel

A funnel is a series of pages leading up to the goal URL. For example, the funnel may include steps in your checkout process that lead you to the thank you page (goal).

Use funnel ☐

Please note that the funnels that you've defined here only apply to the Funnel Visualization Report. Note: URL should not contain the domain (e.g. For a step page <http://www.mysite.com/step1.html> enter /step1.html).

6. You may also enter a goal value associated with each conversion. (Note: this is optional.)

7. You may also want to set up a goal funnel. To do this, enter the previous step leading to your Goal URL. This is especially useful in visualizing the checkout process from the shopping cart all the way down to the confirmation page after a purchase.

8. Click **Save**.

EXACT MATCH vs. HEAD MATCH vs. REGULAR EXPRESSION MATCH

When defining goals, it is important to understand the difference between Exact Match, Head Match and Regular Expression match. Here are three different scenarios that help explain the difference between these goal types:

EXACT MATCH

Example: If the URL for a completed goal is **<http://www.domain.com/careers/thanks.html>**

“Exact Match” matches the exact Goal URL that you specify without exception. There are no unique values in this URL (the goal URL is the same for every user), so we use “Exact Match.” (Note: to make reporting easier, Google recommends removing the protocol and hostname from the URL.)

Goal Type: **URL Destination**

Goal URL: **</careers/thanks.html>**

Match Type: **Exact Match**

HEAD MATCH

Example: The URL for a completed goal has unique values at the end of the URL, as follows:

<http://www.domain.com/careers.cgi?page=1&id=543202>

<http://www.domain.com/careers.cgi?page=1&id=781203>

<http://www.domain.com/careers.cgi?page=1&id=605561>

“Head Match” matches the Goal URL from the beginning of the string up to and including the last character you specify. For this goal URL, you have unique values that are specific to each user, but you want to track the goal so that all of these conversions are counted. You can leave out the unique values and specify.

Goal Type: **URL Destination**

Goal URL: **</careers.cgi?page=1>**

Match Type: **Head Match**

REGULAR EXPRESSION MATCH

Example: The URL for a completed goal has unique values for each visitor in the middle of the URL, as follows:

<http://www.domain.com/careers.cfm/sid/9/id/54320211/page2#mini>

<http://www.domain.com/careers.cfm/sid/10/id/781203/page2#mini>

<http://www.domain.com/careers.cfm/sid/3/id/6051/page2#mini>

Since there are unique values in the middle of the URL, and “page2#mini” is necessary to define the goal, you cannot use “Head Match.” You need to specify that those unique numbers can be anything, so you use a regular expression to match this goal.

Goal Type: **URL Destination**

Goal URL: **http://www\domain\.com/careers\.cfm/sid/.*id/.*page2#mini**

Match Type: **Regular Expression Match**

6. Automated Reporting

Explanation: Having fantastic conversion rates is great, but it's even better to be able to communicate to your executives without doing anything.

When you set up an automatic report, you can set the report so that it emails others with the option of emailing to yourself. You can also designate the format (CSV, PDF, TSV, XML or CSV for Excel) along with a custom subject and description that features a daily, weekly, monthly or quarterly comparison.

Recommendation: Implement automated reporting.

Steps From Google Analytics:

1. Navigate to the report you'd like to receive by email.
2. Click the **Email** button below the report title.
3. If you're sending this report to others, enter their email addresses in the "To" box.
4. Edit the **Subject** and/or **Description** if desired.
5. Select a format in which to receive this report:
 - PDF** - Portable Document Format. You'll need the free Adobe Reader software in order to view this file.
 - XML** - Extensible Markup Language.
 - Excel** - Comma Separated Values. This file can be opened by most spreadsheet applications or text editors.
 - TSV** - Tab Separated Values. This format can be read in most spreadsheet applications or text editors.
6. Choose how often you'd like to receive reports from the **Frequency** and **Day of Week** selection.
7. In the **Advanced Options** tab, you can select the time period for which the automated report will stay active.
8. Click **Send** at the bottom of the scheduler.

7. Annotations

Explanation: Annotations allow any user with access to a Google Analytics profile to leave shared or private notes right on the over-time graph. The next time a dip in traffic happens due to your servers going down for an extended period of time or a spike in traffic due to the launch of PPC display ads or a press release, you won't have to run around asking what happened and when. A simple note from a colleague can save hours of real work (and frustration) for an analyst who is tasked to explain an unusually dry set of numbers.

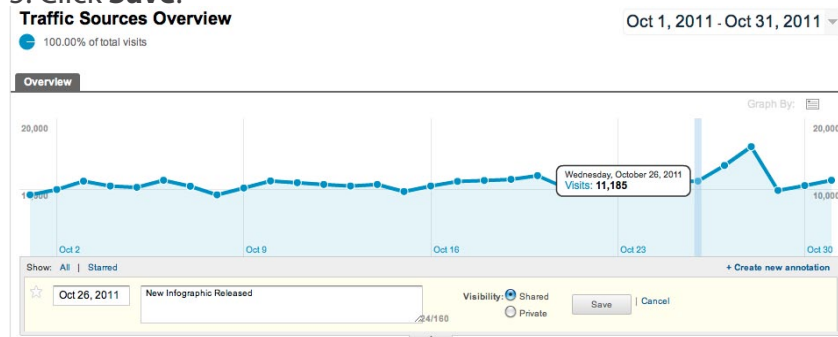
Annotations also help with getting the whole organization on board. If each department tracks their initiatives and milestones via annotations, it's easy for the rest of the company to know what everyone is doing. The same is true for communication with outside vendors such as consultants. When a department runs any kind of advertising or makes changes, it helps if they use annotations. That way, nobody wastes time trying to figure out the cause of a sudden surge of traffic. Or vice versa – if you one day decide to stop a campaign or initiative, annotations keep everyone from panicking about the sudden loss of traffic.

Recommendation: Begin using annotations to note the dates for important milestones on your site such as updates or changes to the site architecture, technical issues that might have affected site traffic, new initiatives by the marketing department, press releases, social engagement initiatives, new partnerships, etc. Make sure to set these annotations to public so that the information is shared and available to all profile users.

Steps:

1. From the overview page for a report, click on the **tab** just below the graph.
2. Click + **Create new annotation**.
3. Select the date you would like to annotate.
4. Enter a description (up to 160 characters) and select **Shared** to make it available to all users. You must enter a description in order to save the annotation.

5. Click **Save**.



8. eCommerce

Explanation: The eCommerce tracking functionality offered through Google Analytics could very well be the most useful feature of the program. Transaction data is a vital piece of information for all eCommerce website owners when it comes to analyzing online performance. Sure, it's great to measure things like conversion rates, but revenue is a far more tangible subject for most business owners. Making use of the eCommerce functionality of your web analytics application makes it easier to perform this analysis.

When eCommerce tracking is set up on your account it allows an in-depth analysis of most of the key eCommerce metrics such as revenue generation on a product level, individual product performance, conversion rates, average order value and more. Analyzing these metrics may provide information that can drive decisions which could later result in significant performance gains. Access to this information also makes understanding customer behavior and product interaction much easier. Having this information allows you to easily identify areas for improvement.

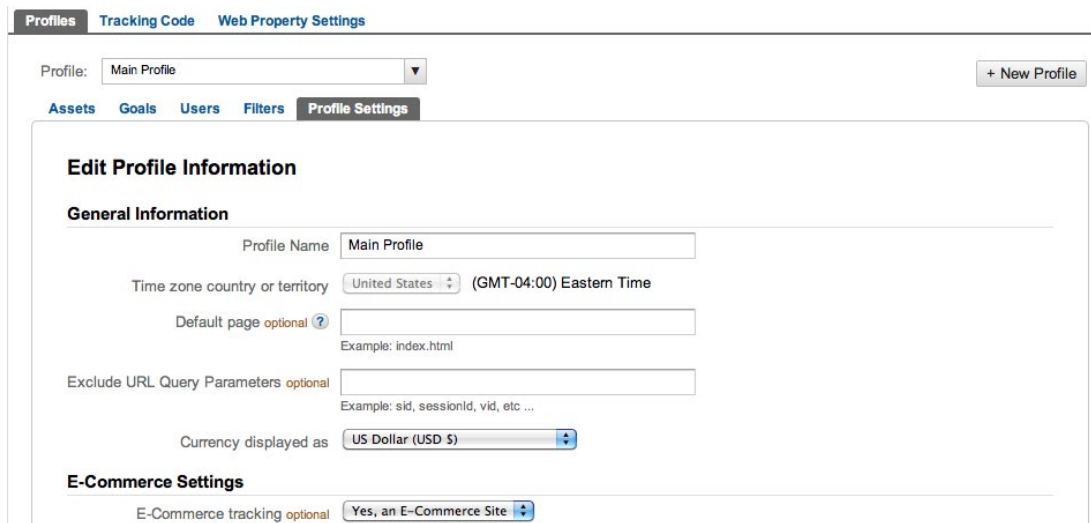
Note: If your shopping cart uses a subdomain, make sure you have enabled tracking for multiple subdomains. Otherwise, your eCommerce data will not be accurate. You can check to be sure you've enabled multiple subdomain tracking by selecting the **gear** in the top right corner, then clicking **Tracking Code**. Question 1 should be answered with "One domain with multiple subdomains" and the tracking code must be applied to all associated subdomains.

Recommendation: Track eCommerce transactions for each of the products you currently sell.

Steps:

Enable eCommerce for your reports.

1. Click on the **gear** in the top right corner.
2. Under the **Profile** tab, select **Profile Settings**.
3. Under eCommerce Settings, select **Yes, an eCommerce Site**.
4. Click **Apply**. eCommerce is now enabled.



Configure your shopping cart

After you have enabled eCommerce for your website's profile, you'll need to ensure that your shopping cart's receipt page sends the eCommerce tracking data to Google Analytics. To ensure that this is done requires adding customized tracking code to your shopping cart pages, and can be done in a variety of ways, such as using a server-side include, a module that comes with your content system, or it can simply be hand-coded into your HTML code.

For more information on how to install the tracking code, go [here](http://code.google.com/apis/analytics/docs/tracking/gaTrackingEcommerce.html) (<http://code.google.com/apis/analytics/docs/tracking/gaTrackingEcommerce.html>).

9. Multi-Channel Funnels

Explanation: Multi-Channel funnels allow you to see what role website referrals, searches, ads, and social media played in each conversion. This new feature shows the sequence of interactions during the 30 days that led up to each conversion and transaction.

By default, Google attributes conversions to the most recent referring campaign, but you may want to look at all of the different paths to conversion or determine how many conversions came from an initial campaign, such as organic search.

For example, a user might search for a generic keyword, visit your website and return later through a search using a branded keyword, introducing what we call “first touch attribution.” Those upper-funnel generic keywords should receive credit for the branded conversion. Users who return later and convert using a branded keyword were only there because of the initial non-branded keyword. By creating user-defined segments, you can track this search behavior in Multi-Channel Funnel reporting. You may also want to create a segment for branded terms to study your brand’s impact on the conversion cycle.

Notes:

Multi-Channel Funnels can only be accessed in the New Version of Google Analytics. It is located in Standard Reporting under Conversions and Multi-Channel Funnels.

Multi-Channel Funnels were introduced in August 2011 and currently only provide retroactive data starting from January 2011.

Goals will need to be set up in order to have conversion data in the Multi-Channel Funnels Report.

Recommendation: Begin utilizing Multi-Channel Funnels to analyze conversions. There are nine default segments, but it is also useful to create user-defined conversion segments to examine specific user behavior.

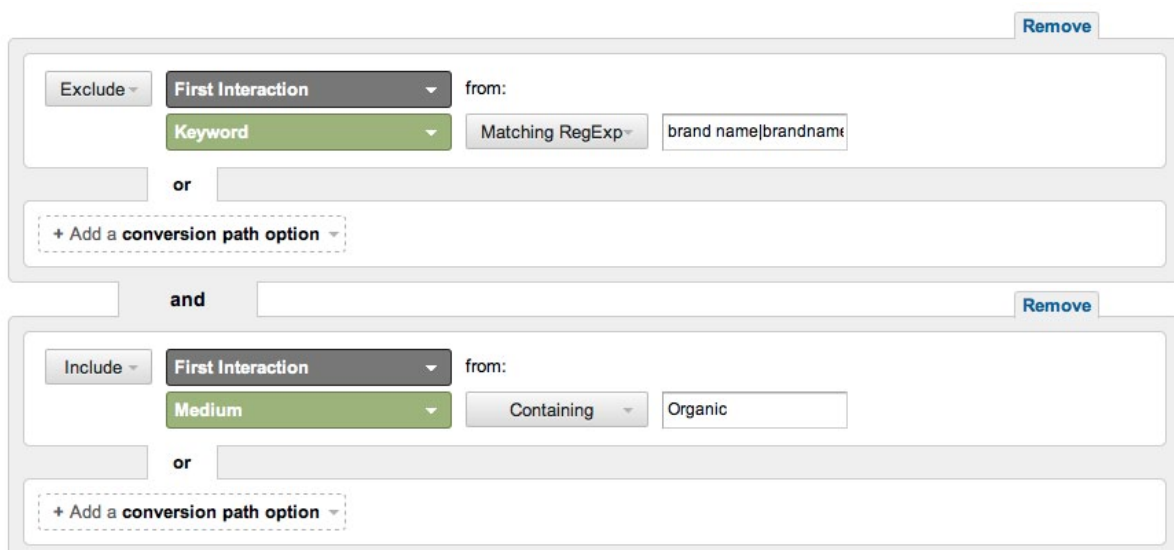
Useful Multi-Channel Funnel Custom Segments:**1. First-touch Organic Non-branded**

This segment includes only conversions where the first interaction was an organic, non-branded keyword. It is a true measure of the impact of organic search as the start of the conversion process.

Advanced Conversion Segment:

**Exclude → First Interaction → from: Keyword → Matching RegExp:
brand name|brandname|brandnamemisspellings**
AND

Include → First Interaction → from: Medium → Containing: Organic



The screenshot shows the Google Analytics Custom Segment builder interface. It features two main sections for defining segment criteria, separated by an 'and' connector. The top section is configured for exclusion: 'Exclude' is selected, 'First Interaction' is the source, 'Keyword' is the type, and the matching RegExp is 'brand name|brandname'. The bottom section is configured for inclusion: 'Include' is selected, 'First Interaction' is the source, 'Medium' is the type, and it contains the value 'Organic'. Both sections have a '+ Add a conversion path option' button and a 'Remove' button in the top right corner.

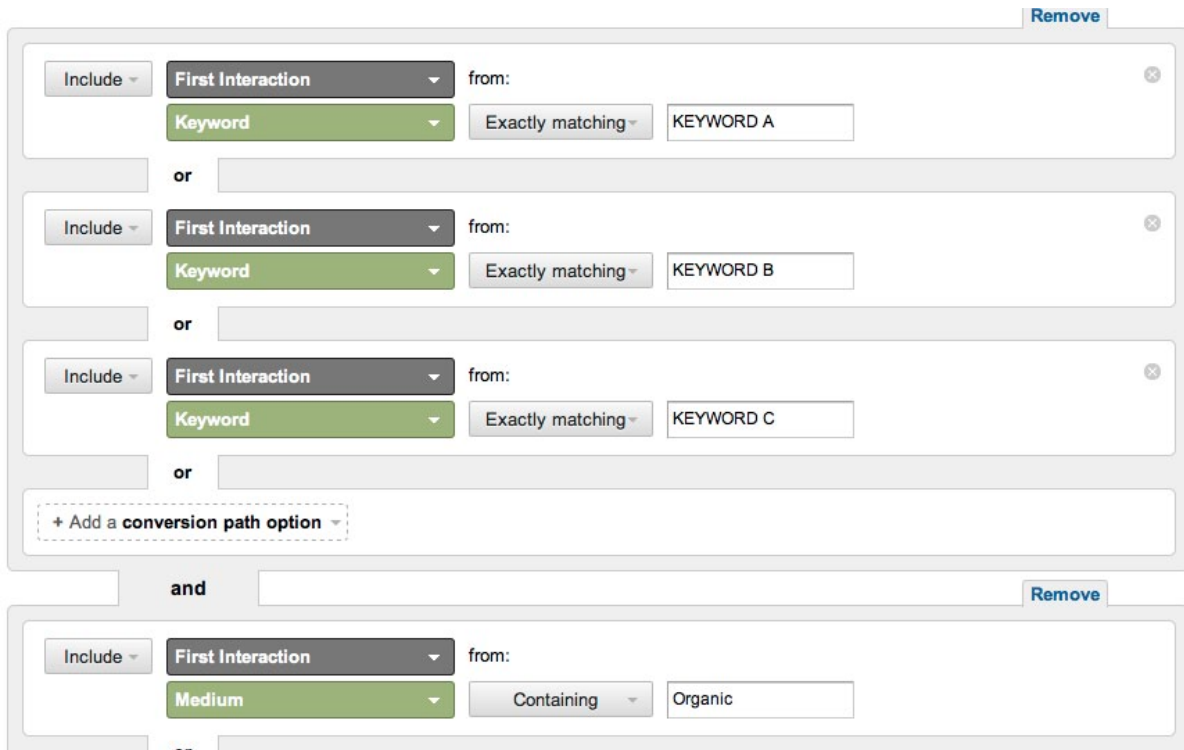
2. First-touch Organic Targeted Keywords

This segment includes only the conversions that had a targeted keyword in organic search as the first interaction.

Advanced Conversion Segment:

Include → First Interaction → from: Keyword → Exactly Matching: Keyword
AND

Include → First Interaction → from: Medium → Containing: Organic



The screenshot displays the 'Advanced Conversion Segment' builder interface. It features two main segments connected by an 'and' operator. The first segment is a 'First Interaction' from 'Keyword' with 'Exactly matching' set to 'KEYWORD A', 'KEYWORD B', and 'KEYWORD C'. The second segment is a 'First Interaction' from 'Medium' with 'Containing' set to 'Organic'. The interface includes dropdown menus for 'Include', 'First Interaction', 'from:', and matching options, as well as text input fields for keywords and mediums. A '+ Add a conversion path option' button is visible between the segments.

3. First-touch Organic Targeted Keywords (Including long-tail and branded keywords)

This segment includes only the first interaction of a targeted keyword in organic search, including long-tail and branded searches with the targeted keywords.

Advanced Conversion Segment:

Include → First Interaction → from: Keyword → Matching RegExp:
keyword|keyword|keyword

AND

Include → First Interaction → from: Medium → Containing: Organic

Remove

Include ▾
First Interaction ▾
from:

Keyword ▾
Matching RegExp ▾
keywordA|keywordB|ke

or

+ Add a conversion path option ▾

and

Remove

Include ▾
First Interaction ▾
from:

Medium ▾
Containing ▾
Organic

or

+ Add a conversion path option ▾

4. Social Media

This segment includes any conversion that had social media as part of the path.

Advanced Conversion Segment:

Include → Any Interaction → from: Source → Matching RegExp:

facebook\.com|fb\.me|twitter\.com|hootsuite\.com|ow\.ly|thwirl\.fm|friendfeed|brightkite|twitthat|twitterfon|twittergadget|twitturly|bit\.ly|tr\.im|cli\.gs|zi\.ma|popr|tinyurl|ls\.gd|snipr|snipurl|kl\.am|snurl|tiny\.cc|dwarfurl|blinklist\.com|diigo\.com|furl\.net|fark\.com|digg\.com|stumbleupon\.com|del\.icio\.us|delicious\.com|faves\.com|reddit\.com|posterous\.com|bentio\.com|livejournal\.com|tumblr\.com|msplinks\.com|aim\.com|lifestream\.aol\.com|netvibes\.com|bloglines\.com|technorati\.com|wordpress\.com|myspace\.com|linkedin\.com|newsgator\.com|prweb\.com|tr\.im|cli\.gs|zi\.ma|ht\.ly|^t\.co\$

Remove

Include ▾
Any Interaction ▾
from:

Source ▾
Matching RegExp ▾
facebook\.com|fb\.me|tw

that occurred:

Greater than ▾

0

times

+ Add a conversion path option ▾

or

10. Additional Help

Google offers many resources ranging from the very basics to advanced technical knowledge and troubleshooting help. There are many additional features offered by Google Analytics that were not mentioned in this guide. Even those with a strong command for analytics will quickly find that there is always more to learn. Here are a few helpful resources provided by Google and the SEO community for Google Analytics:

Google's Getting Started Guide

This getting started guide is the perfect place to learn about the benefits of analytics, signing up, installing the tracking code, additional resources for newcomers, intermediate users and advanced users.

<http://support.google.com/googleanalytics/bin/static.py?hl=en&page=guide.cs&guide=19779>

Google Analytics Blog

Stay on top of all major changes to Google Analytics by frequently visiting this official GA blog.

<http://analytics.blogspot.com/>

Google Analytics IQ Lessons

Deepen your understanding of Google Analytics by taking these free lessons. The lessons cover many topics, including cookies, eCommerce tracking, Regex, AdWords integration, interpreting reports, and more in-depth analysis. Slingshot SEO strongly encourages watching these videos and taking the GAIQ test to become a more knowledgeable user.

<http://www.google.com/intl/en/analytics/iq.html?>

Google Analytics IQ Test

Become Google Analytics Certified by taking this exam, which covers the topics taught in the GAIQ Lessons.

<http://google.starttest.com/>

Occam's Razor by Avinash Kaushik

Avinash is a Digital Marketing Evangelist for Google and a web analytics guru. His blog includes one-of-a-kind insights that help users get the most out of Google Analytics.

<http://www.kaushik.net/avinash/>

SEOMoz Blog

The SEOMoz community frequently includes clever Google Analytics tips and tricks that are worth checking out.

<http://www.seomoz.org/blog>

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