

# GA4 Transition: Is Your College Ready?



Presented by  
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# The ONLY Social Media Solution Made for Community Colleges

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# Agenda

## We will discuss:

- Benefits of GA4
- How to migrate to GA4
- What GA4 tracks and what it doesn't
- How to track conversions
- Ways to customize reports



# Recap of Current Situation

Google is shutting down Universal Analytics on July 1, 2023 and users will have until July 1, 2024 to access old data and archive it.

## Automatic Setup Tool

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Google has tried to transition users to Google Analytics 4 (GA4) via an automatic set-up tool, but in most cases this is not the best solution.

## Different Data Model

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GA4 is completely different than UA (it was first developed for tracking mobile apps), with a different data model so reports won't match between the two platforms.

## Data Import

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There's no way to import data from UA to GA4. Now is the time to set up Google Analytics properly, with a fresh start.





# Benefits of GA4

## More Accurate Data

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No more sampling of data in standard reports even when applying secondary dimensions, filters, and comparisons.

## Easier Tracking of Info

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Event tracking is more flexible and powerful with the ability to capture more information for each event.

## Better Data Quality

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New user engagement metrics (e.g. engaged sessions, sessions per user) help identify quality traffic.

## More Powerful Reporting

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Reports and navigation are highly customizable.



# Steps to Migrate to GA4

**1. Conduct audit of Universal Analytics set-up**

**2. Set-up GA4 property and enable default “enhanced measurement” tracking**

**3. Set-up GTM**

- Use existing GTM container, but could be messy
- Create new GA4 GTM container and add code to website

**4. Configure event tracking via GTM**

- Implement custom events and/or conversions
- QA data collection for each new event, and repeat as necessary

**5. Set-up integrations**

- Google Search Console
- Google Ads

**6. Create new reports, usually using Google Looker Studio**





# Ways to Add the GA4 Tracking Code

- Add the analytics tag directly to the website via a web developer
- Rely on a CMS integration
  - Wordpress, Drupal, and other content management systems have plugins
- Use Google Tag Manager (GTM)
  - Instead of adding the GA4 code to the site, add GTM code
  - Many CMS integrations/plugins will allow you to implement GTM
  - This is the preferred method



# The Benefits of Using Google Tag Manager

1. **Increases agility and power for managing GA4 and other tags**
  - a. Easily add and remove advertising tracking pixels without the need for a web developer
2. **Track additional interactions on the website**
  - a. Clicks on CTA buttons, the navigation, main body content area, or footer
  - b. Clicks on links leading to important pages, such as Request Information Forms, applications, and open house registrations
  - c. Views of elements, such as buttons, modal windows, or featured content
  - d. Custom form tracking
3. **Conversion tracking**
  - Set up events for actions that need to be tracked as conversions



# GA4 Setup Checklist

- ✔ Enable enhanced measurement
- ✔ Configure site search parameters (if site search is implemented)
- ✔ Configure data filters, for internal and dev traffic (if relevant)
- ✔ Configure cross domain tracking (if relevant)
- ✔ Change data retention policy – change default from 2 to 14 mo.
- ✔ Implement hostname filtering via GTM
- ✔ Set up events
- ✔ Set up custom dimensions/metrics
- ✔ Set up conversions
- ✔ Link to Google Ads accounts (if applicable)
- ✔ Activate Google Signals (if applicable)
- ✔ Connect GA4 to Google Search Console
- ✔ Add users

# What GA4 tracks by default via "Enhanced Measurement" (and what it doesn't!)

1. **Page views** - whenever a page loads.
  2. **Scrolls** - whenever a user scrolls to 90% of the page. *However*, does not track smaller increments (e.g. 10%, 25%, 50%, 75%), only 90%.
  3. **Outbound link clicks** - tracks all clicks on links leading away from the current domain. *However*, does not track the text that the user clicked on.
  4. **Site search** – tracks usage *but needs to be customized* to capture the search terms.
  5. **Form interactions** - captures whenever someone interacts for submits any form. *However*, does not work on all forms and can be problematic. I found it firing on every page because of the Facebook pixel.
1. **Video engagement (YouTube)** - captures video play, progress, and complete events as visitors view embedded videos. *However*, does not work on Vimeo or other videos.
  2. **File download clicks** - captures a file download event whenever a common document or other file is clicked. *However*, does not track all file types, including .eps, .svg, .ai, .jpeg, .jpg and .gif.



# Custom Event Tracking Examples

GA4 Event Name	Definition	Parameters	Conversion?
application_click	Clicks to application portal websites	link_url, link_text, link_classes	yes
application_submit	Prospect submits an application		yes
button_cta_click	Sitewide tracking of clicks on buttons	link_url, link_text, link_classes	no
email_link_click	Clicks on email mailto links	link_url	yes
enroll_click	Clicks on links going to enrollment contracts	link_url, link_text, link_classes	yes
event_registration_click	Clicks to campus tour and open house registration	link_url, link_text, link_classes, link_id	yes
footer_click	Footer click tracking	link_url, link_text	no
generate_lead	Request Info form submissions	currency, value, form_id, form_name, form_destination, lead_degree_type, lead_interest, lead_start_year, lead_start_term	yes
homepage_element_click	Clicks on homepage content	link_url, link_text, element_description	no
homepage_element_view	Will fire when an element is visible in the user's viewport	element_url, element_description, element_class	no
main_content_click	Clicks on links in the main content area	link_url, link_text, link_classes, link_id, main_content_location	no
modal_view	Fires when a modal window appears	element_description	no
navigation_click	Global navigation main click tracking.	link_url, link_text, link_id, link_classes, globalnav_location	no
phone_link_click	Clicks on telephone tel: links	link_url	yes
request_info_click	Clicks on links with text such as "request information"	link_url, link_text, link_classes	yes
share	AddThis social media sharing	method, content_type, item_id	no





# Conversion Tracking

By setting up conversions, you can do the following:

- **Report on conversions:** See the actions that matter most to your institution using the Acquisition, Engagement, and Advertising reports.
- **Bid on conversions:** Import your conversion data into Google Ads to fuel manual or Smart bidding decisions to help optimize your campaigns.
- **Attribute credit to conversions:** Combine your data with data from other advertising channels to understand the touch points along a user's path to conversion.
- **Advertise to unconverted users:** Use your conversion data to create audiences of users who didn't convert and import those audiences into Google Ads for remarketing.



# Conversion Examples

New visitors - When the visitor comes to the site for the first time

Clicks on important links:

- Request information buttons (leading to a RIF)
- Apply now buttons (leading to a page about applying)
- Application portals (Applyweb, Common App, etc.)
- Enrollment contracts
- Open house and information session registration forms
- Virtual tours
- Phone numbers
- Email addresses
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Form submissions:

- Request information forms (RIF), lead generation
- Applications
- Event registrations (open house, tours, info sessions)





# Ways to Customize Reports



## Standard reports (within GA4)

- Customize using secondary dimensions, filters, and comparisons
  - Not subject to data sampling
  - Limited to the metrics Google gives you
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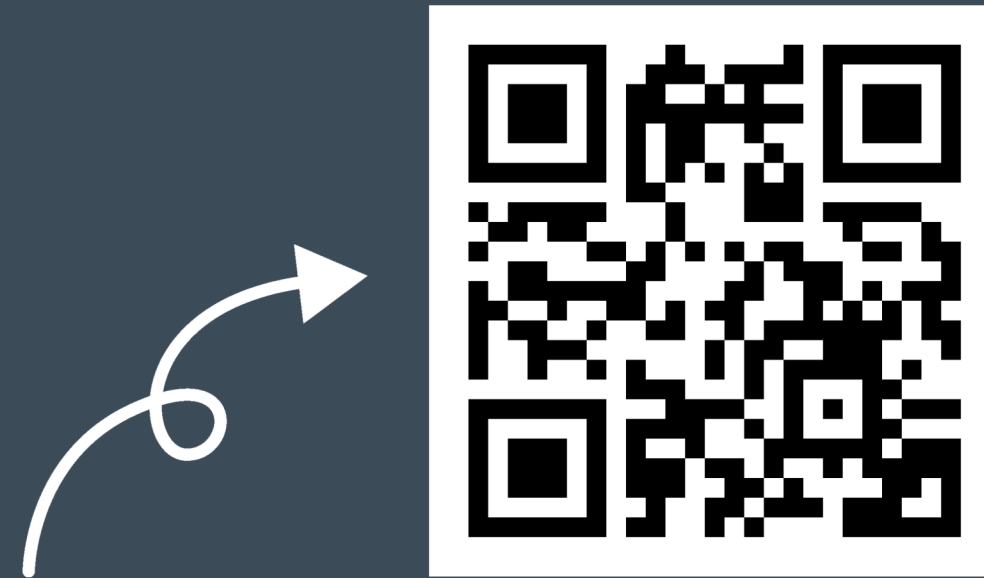
## Exploration reports (within GA4)

- More flexible - can mix and match dimensions and metrics
  - Powerful analysis of custom events
  - Subject to data sampling (can only pull in 14 mo. of data)
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## Looker Studio, formerly Data Studio (outside of GA4)

- Ultimate flexibility – combine lots of graphs/charts together on multi-page reports
- User-friendly – give non-technical users access to dashboards showing only their data





**Need help with GA4?**

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